

THEATRE ORGAN

February/March 1978



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THEATRE ORGAN (title registered U.S. Patent Office) is published bi-monthly by the American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., a nonprofit organization, Ray F. Snitil, President. All rights reserved. Entire contents copyrighted © American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., 1978. Office of publication is P.O. Box 2329, Livonia, Michigan 48151.

POSTMASTER: Second Class postage paid at Livonia, Michigan. IF UNDELIVERABLE, send form 3579 to ATOS Circulation Department, Box 1314, Salinas, California 93902.

THEATRE ORGAN

JOURNAL OF THE
AMERICAN
THEATRE ORGAN
SOCIETY

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 1

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1978

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The 3/13 Wurlitzer in Vancouver's Orpheum Theatre. See story on page 5.

Commercial Illustrators Ltd. photo

PAST PRESIDENTS

Richard Simonton
Feb. 1955 — Oct. 1958

Judd Walton
Oct. 1958 — July 1961

Tiny James
July 1961 — July 1964

Carl Norvell
July 1964 — July 1966

Richard Schrum
July 1966 — July 1968

Al Mason
July 1968 — July 1970

Stillman Rice
July 1970 — July 1972

Erwin A. Young
July 1972 — July 1974

Paul M. Abernethy
July 1974 — July 1976

HONORARY MEMBERS

1959 — Jesse Crawford

1960 — Fanny Wurlitzer

1961 — Mel Doner

1962 — Leonard MacClain

1963 — Eddie Dunstedter

1964 — Reginald Foort

1965 — Dan Barton

1966 — W. "Tiny" James

1967 — Erwin A. Young

1968 — Richard C. Simonton

1969 — Judd Walton

1970 — Bill Lamb

1971 — George and Vi Thompson

1972 — Stu Green

1973 — Al and Betty Mason

1974 — Lloyd E. Klos

1975 — Joe Patten

1976 — Floyd and Doris Mumm

1977 — Les and Edith Rawle

President's Message

Again the time has come when nominations for four seats on the national board of directors are being accepted. In this issue, the formal notice has been printed with the requirements outlined. Nominations must be sent to National Headquarters and postmarked no later than April 15, 1978 to be valid. The official ballot will be mailed to each member in May.



About 22 years ago, a group of individuals interested in theatre organ met and formed the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts. As the membership grew, individual members grouped together and were granted charters to function as chapters of the American Theatre Organ Society. Individual membership in ATOS has grown, as have the number of chapters formed throughout the years, to over 6300 members and 56 active chapters.

ATOS is a "fun organization" based on preserving and furthering the use and understanding of the theatre pipe organ and its historical tradition. The National Headquarters has directed the members and chapters towards these aims and purposes. Through our combined efforts, we are attracting more enthusiasts, more organs are being restored, or saved, more concerts are being played for the public and more artists are given the opportunity to perform at theatre pipe organs.

Our society publishes this very impressive magazine, the official journal of ATOS. In addition to interesting articles, it is also a clearing house for chapter and individual member news. The quality of our magazine is unsurpassed.

As an organization working together — the national office, the chapters and individual members — an organizational "clout" is garnered that is most impressive. The American Theatre Organ Society is now recognized as an authority in theatre organ. We are being called upon regularly for advice and information by individuals, companies, civic organizations and other influential groups. We should all be mighty proud to be a member of ATOS.

Let each of us every day "preach the gospel" of theatre organ and ATOS.

Sincerely,

Ray F. Snitil
RAY F. SNITIL

at Vancouver's Orpheum . . .

FOORT SAYS FAREWELL

by George S. Francis

"First heard November 8, 1927. Rebuilt 50 years later by dedicated members of the American Theatre Organ Society under the supervision of Kenneth A. Hodgson. Returned to the Orpheum and the City of Vancouver in dedicatory concert by Reginald Foort, F.R.C.O., November 12 and 13, 1977." So reads the small golden plaque affixed to the console's facsimile signature, "Reggie", during Foort's twin concerts there, marking his world's farewell appearance.

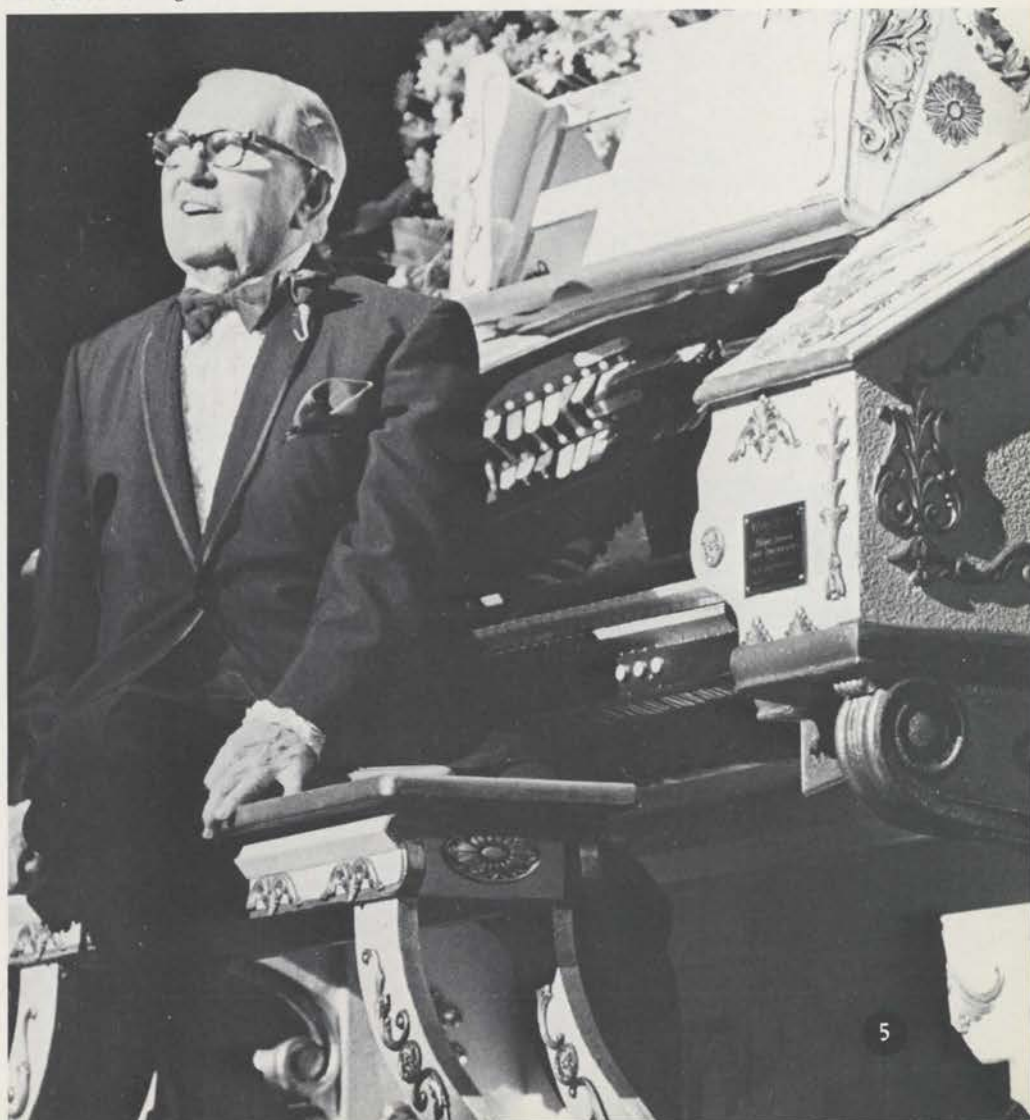
They were two memory-filled nights attended by packed houses to the top rows of the balconies — 5576 devotees; 2788, each performance. Each was a different program and hundreds attended both.

Producer Herb McDonald had inserted postal reply cards in the black and gold souvenir theatre programs, asking they be returned with name and address, plus two more of "friends." From them a newsletter mailing list has been formed. The return, better than six percent — a high average — has resulted in a starting list of over 1500.

More important, analysis shows an audience breakdown indicating half the audience had never been in the newly-renovated theatre before; a third were from places far removed

Mr. Foort acknowledges ovation as console reaches concert level.

(Peter Hulbert Photo)





Ken Hodgson, supervisor of Wurlitzer rebuild, with assistant Bert Blok putting final touches on the complex switch stack system.

(Wayne Leidenfrost Photo)



Albert Paull, Norman Schmidt, and Ralph Johns making adjustments in main chamber.

(Wayne Leidenfrost Photo)



Erskine MacPherson and George Francis preparing toy counter for concert.

(Wayne Leidenfrost Photo)



Dan Bohline was responsible for eye appealing cosmetology on Orpheum console.

(Wayne Leidenfrost Photo)

Mike Leader and sound engineer Frank Killinger record the Foort concert using Swiss-made Studer equipment.

(Peter Hulbert Photo)



from the metro Vancouver area and for many it meant overnight in a hotel. Many were from Portland and Seattle, some from Calgary and from the mid-province, Okanagan city of Kelowna. A number travelled from Vancouver Island and Victoria, meaning long and fairly expensive ferry trips to the mainland.

Since there are virtually no more theatre organs playing publicly in Canada now, most having disappeared into homes, and the Orpheum's now being the country's last to still perform on its original stage, aficionados have been starved for the old sound. They proved it by the distances they travelled to hear it again. The second draw was the esteem in which Reggie is held by Britishers. There are thousands of those in that southwest populated corner of the vast province of British Columbia.

He did not disappoint. Making public thanks, he began by expressing pleasure with the rebuild by the ATOS volunteers under Hodgson. To old timers, if memory served, it seemed the 3/13 Wurlitzer — a standard Model 240 — had never sounded better. Part of that sound was the Orpheum's new acoustics, now heralded by world concert hall critics as one of the world's most acoustic-perfect theatres. The new natural reverb is sharp, clean and seconds long. It has become a lively hall.

What may be said about Reggie's program choice not said before in a hundred ways? He said his numbers were to be *his* favorites of 65 years on the bench. To most of the audience that meant a grin to companions and putting on the "I remember when" look. Many were heard later to say: "Made me think of friends not remembered for thirty years."

He played them all — a parade of nostalgia done with the easy charm and sweet voicing of the master's trademark.

Fed by closed circuit television, in a room below stage packed with the finest Swiss-made Studer tape machines and 12-channel mixer, Frank Killinger of Doric Recording, Monterey, sound engineered the 15 i.p.s. masters of both shows in entirety. From them he edited a stereo album as a continuous groove of numbers linked with theatre presence, applause and some of Reggie's chat.

The "live in concert" record (Foort's 301st) is being released under the Doric label in the U.S., the Amberlee label in the U.K. and in Canada under a new label: Quest Organ Master — the first in what will be a long series there.

There were other firsts. After the house lights dimmed and the stage bathed in blue and rose, two young butlers in gray cutaways revealed the console draped in its heavy padded cover and encased with a great, wide, bowed red ribbon with a huge card reading "To Vancouver With Love." When all were removed and masses of golden flowers arranged the width of the console top, a semi-circular, twelve-foot high organ screen of thin gold tubes that terminated in 220 tiny light bulbs, went to full brilliance and chased around like a theatre marquee, under the blue-white arc spotlights.

Then came Reggie's music on a silver tray, followed by a red rose for his lapel on a silver salver. For its first performance in 20 years, only one tune sufficed — "Happy Days Are Here Again."

The screen's lights dimmed to a glow and became stationary, the arcs were subdued, softened with pink, and during the rest of the production the audience forgot the cavern of the empty stage to the right. The screen is a permanent asset to the Orpheum's organ and is to be used at all concerts. It was designed by Cameron Porteous, the city's leading stage designer.

Net proceeds of the concerts were turned over to the city by Mr. McDonald a few days later in a ceremony before the Councillors in the Council Chamber. The sum reimbursed the city loan grant of \$16,500 which had been advanced to pay for organ parts and for some of the labor in the restoration and the lift overhaul. Mayor Jack Volrich expressed surprise. He said the return was an event the Chamber had not witnessed for a long time. He said Council never expected to see the money again.

Next Vancouver performer will be Ann Leaf, February 11 and 12, followed by Rex Koury, April 29. The fall production on September 30 will feature Ron Poll, staff organist at the city's popular Organ Grinder pizza restaurant. Christmas '78 will star George Blackmore. □



Autographs eagerly sought by concertgoers.

(Peter Hulbert Photo)

Console of the restored Wurlitzer style 240 Opus 1746 shipped from the factory to the Orpheum September, 28, 1927.



Lee Erwin talks about little mother and Carnegie Hall cinema

(The following interview between Lee Erwin and Marlin Swing took place after an evening performance of a silent film program at Carnegie Hall Cinema in New York City. Mr. Swing is with the Columbia Broadcasting System and he teaches at the Mannes College of Music. He is also a member of the New York Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society.)

- Q.** The Ben Hall Wurlitzer certainly sounds good in its new home. Why does it sound so different from the way I remember it in Ben's apartment?
- A.** The most important reasons why it sounds so different are that the Carnegie Hall Cinema auditorium is a perfect match for the organ,

Peter Schaeble knew exactly what he was doing with the installation, and Randy Gilberti keeps it always in perfect tune.

Q. I have lots of questions I want to ask about the organ and all the people who helped with the installation. But first I think we should talk about the way the organ is being used these days.

A. It's getting plenty of use. In addition to the silent film programming we have recorded music tracks for all the Buster Keaton films.

Q. Well the audience certainly approved of your accompaniment for the Harry Langdon film this evening. I don't know when I've heard that much applause at the end of a film.

A. We have great audiences here at the Carnegie Hall Cinema. I would estimate that the average age (of our audiences) is well under 30. Silent films with live organ accompaniment is a new experience for them and they really do let you know when they like something.

Q. Do you always have such good crowds?

A. Usually we have wall-to-wall people if the publicity is right.

Q. How do you manage to play 4 performances in one day? That's a lot of playing.

A. That's no problem. It's easy to play when you have an auditorium full of enthusiastic people. But you do have to be careful, because our audiences here take their films seriously.

Q. Careful? In what way?

A. Well you can't just sit at the console and "noodle." You have to do your homework.

Q. How do you do your homework, exactly?

A. I nearly always have a 16mm print of each film well in advance and I screen it many times, time it, make my own "cue sheet" and then compose all the necessary themes and incidental music that I will need.

Q. What do you do when you can't see a film before the first showing?

A. You "wing it" and hope for the best; but I don't like to do it that way because, as I have said, our Carnegie Hall Cinema audiences take their films seriously and I do too. They become very vocal if the film is out of focus, misframed, or if there's any other mistake on the part of the projectionist. I'm sure they would start throwing things at the organist if he tried to make fun of the film by playing all the wrong music.

Q. What would be an example of the wrong kind of music?

A. Almost any music that is really well known: like playing the Moonlight Sonata because there's a moonlight scene, or playing a pop tune because the *title* fits the scene but the music doesn't. But especially music that is full of the silent film musical clichés of the 20s is wrong.

Q. That rules out most of the music suggested on the old cue sheets and a lot of the complete original scores.

A. Of course it does. That music worked O.K. back in the 20s, but it would not work now, especially here in New York. Today's audiences of young people have different ears so we have to cater to their tastes — and it's a pretty sophisticated taste — because they will be our only audience from now on. You won't find many people who saw *Birth of a Nation*, when it first came out, in a movie theatre today!

Q. So, what does the future hold in store for the theatre organ?

A. Who knows for sure. But I predict that the organ will be used for live accompaniment for films indefinitely. There will be a new generation of film buffs ready for the old films every 10 years or so.

Q. But the big movie palaces are nearly all gone. Radio City Music Hall has a closing crisis nearly every year. Where will the theatre organ go when they are all torn down to make way for a parking lot?

A. They won't all be torn down. The newest trend is to restore the old houses and make them work as civic theatres, because that's less

expensive than building a new one. The organs are being used in the ones that are left; and don't forget high school and college auditoriums. I still have hopes that the former Brooklyn Loew's Kings Theatre instrument will be installed in the Town Hall Auditorium in Manhattan. The theatre organ did survive the advent of sound films, the death of live organ music on radio and then on television. If the popularity of the pizza parlor craze comes to an end it will find a new home somewhere.

Q. What is the specific future for the Wurlitzer in Carnegie Hall Cinema?

A. The management is very enthusiastic about the organ. During last summer, as you know, we did shows at least once a week. There are plans for using it on a daily basis.

Q. But there aren't that many silent films available.

A. There are plenty of films, but what I mean by using it every day is that the organ would be played every day even when they show sound films. Not as intermission music, but a short organ concert between films, and perhaps a 30 minute concert every day before the first show.

Q. But you couldn't do all that playing.

A. Certainly not. There would be a job for several organists, like at Radio City Music Hall.

Q. But the programming at Radio City Music Hall is so different from the Cinema programming.

A. Yes, it is. Carnegie Hall Cinema is a "repertory theatre": a daily change of films and, usually, a double feature. That's over 700 films a year! And films from all over the world. Last week I played a Soviet film, *New Babylon*. Another Russian silent is scheduled for next month.

Q. I had planned to see the Fritz Lang, German film *Siegfried* but I couldn't be here. I know you were doing a lot of homework on that film. How did you finally solve the problem of *not* using any of the Wagnerian music?

ANN LEAF WINS A ROUGH ONE

by Stu Green

A. I finally decided on a very abstract score since the film was abstract — but wonderful. We hit upon the idea of pre-recording an entire performance, and at given intervals during the regular shows the pre-recorded version was played through the theatre sound system along with the live organ. So, at times we had two organs playing at the same time!

Q. How did the audience react to that?

A. Apparently no one knew. I asked some of our regular customers after each performance, but no one detected our very effective "trick." Since the organ chamber is situated on stage, directly behind the screen, there was no separation between the two organ parts. It was a very successful experiment.

Q. Is it possible that Carnegie Hall Cinema might be the one place in the country where silent films could be shown on a daily basis?

A. I doubt that the management would change their present policy because it's a very successful operation, but who knows what might happen in the future.

Q. The set-up is certainly ideal for it to be the Silent Film Capital of the World!

A. Yes. The organ is perfect for films and the location is perfect. A lot of out-of-town people don't realize that the Cinema is actually in the Carnegie Hall building at 57th St. and Seventh Avenue, probably one of the "safest" corners in the heart of Manhattan. A subway stop is right at the door and there are many parking lots and garages in the immediate neighborhood. It would certainly be fun if we could have silent film seven days a week!

Q. One more thing before we finish up this part of our talk. How did the rumor get started about a fire that damaged the organ?

A. I don't know. There certainly was no fire. "Little Mother" is alive and well and completely intact. And now it's time to get her started up and ready for the last show tonight. We'll talk later. □

On Dec. 3, 1977, Ann Leaf played a concert which displayed much more than her musical expertise. To use a vernacular term, she exhibited a determination to do her bit for her audience which can best be termed "guts."

The concert marked two noteworthy events on the southern California theatre organ scene: (a) the introduction of the 2/10 Wurlitzer in San Bernardino's 2500-seat California Theatre to the concert scene, and (2) the reappearance of concert impresario Jack Reynolds on the So. Calif. scene after a decade in the Bay Area. Both events are worthy of note.

The two-manual, 10-rank Wurlitzer has been given some maintenance for many years by a local enthusiast but really needs a general overhaul, as events will bear out.

Ann Leaf talks to her audience while waiting for the cipher in the pedals to be fixed. She finally played her show without pedals. (Pegpic)



Actually, at its best, the organ is small for the large house. The volume of sound is perhaps adequate but never voluminous. And the organ is incomplete. It is one of those rare 10-rank Wurlitzers which includes a Posthorn in its original stop complement. However, that ubiquitous, unorganized band known as "Midnight Organ Supply" stole the Posthorn pipes some time ago, so Ann was working with a 9-rank organ.

Because the organ is relatively small and lacking in solo voices, Ann opted for a movie show rather than a straight concert, and well she did.

Reynolds, whose skills in promoting LA organ concerts a decade ago are well remembered, did most of his promotion for this show in the San Bernardino area, hoping to introduce a theatre organ revival locally. He decided on matinee and evening shows. While the 2:00 p.m. show attracted fewer than 400, it was an encouraging start. Outside, the weather was beautiful, with a temperature up in the 70's while most of the USA was in a refrigerated state as brass monkeys were being dragged indoors by the score. Even so, the atmosphere in "San Berdoo" was heavy with "smaze." No matter, it was fine weather for outdoor activity. So a small matinee turnout was anticipated.

To guard against the unforeseen, Reynolds hired organbuilders Les and Olive Pepiot to stand by — just in case. The man-and-wife team had done some patching during the days



Window cards promoting concerts are a rarity these days. Jack Reynolds believes in them. (Pegpic)

before the show. But no one could have predicted what would happen to test Ann's mettle.

The afternoon show started a few minutes late. The console, located in the left extreme of the orchestra pit, is not on a lift, so Ann just started her overture, "Everything's Coming Up Roses." She had completed only a few measures when it happened — a jarring pedal cipher sounded out. Ann quickly slipped into that key to minimize the dissonance, but the tone persisted.

By now, the Pepiots were busy in the chamber, pulling pipes. It was no

San Bernardino's California Theatre is well-maintained. With the organ put in top shape the house could become a factor on the southern California organ hobby scene. (Pegpic)



ATTENTION ALL CHAPTERS!

National Headquarters has sent a form (for listing the 1978 officers) to 1977 chapter officers, to be returned to Headquarters immediately!

If you are a newly elected officer please check to make sure this form has been returned to National Headquarters by your chapter.

It is important that National Headquarters have this list immediately because it is to be published in the next issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

simple one-pipe cipher. Every octave E-flat on the pedalboard was affected, on every rank of pipes. It was one of those dreaded relay ciphers. Meanwhile, the projectionist had started the film. Somehow, the word was passed on to him to rewind and await a signal.

Ann stopped playing and waited for the flaw to be corrected. She fielded questions from her audience about the organ and about her career. To say the least, she was magnificent in her handling of a difficult situation; she had no idea as to whether repairs could be made which would enable her to continue. But she never expressed that fear. Gradually the volume of the cipher subsided, and Ann figured the organ was ready. She put down some pedal stops and there was the cipher, loud and penetrating. She quickly cut off the errant pedal voices. She gave the projectionist the signal to start and went into the Spanish motifs appropriate for *The Mark of Zorro*. The

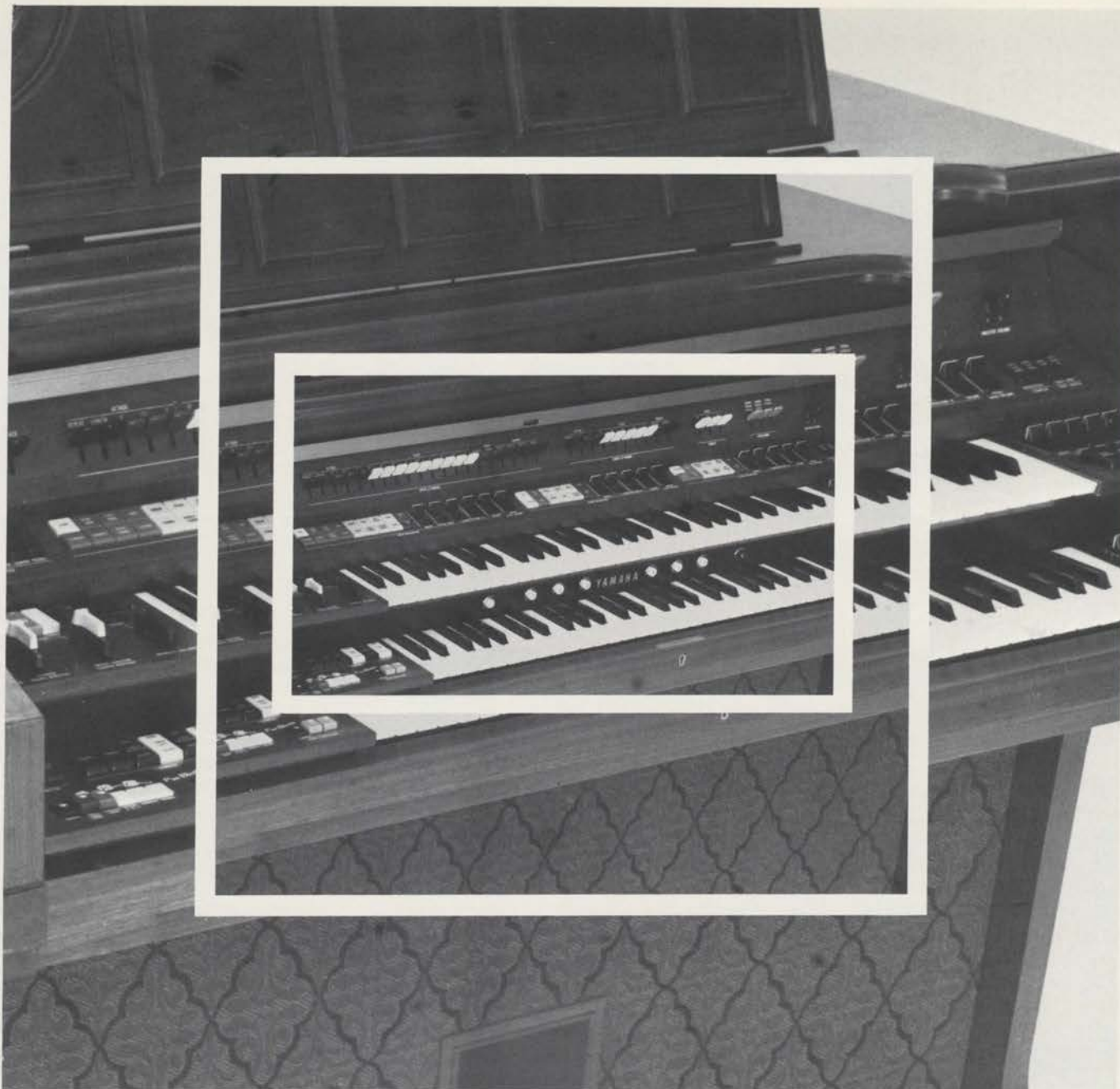
organ sounded okay. It wasn't until much later that we learned that she had accompanied the antics of a young Doug Fairbanks using only the manuals. A second cipher lasted less than a minute.

After intermission, the Pepiots had some of the pedal ranks playing, but only the soft ones. If Ann needed a loud bass passage she had to double it with her left hand. Ann opened *Steamboat Bill Jr.* with a rolling "Father of Waters" from Grofe's Mississippi Suite. When star Buster Keaton had performed his final pratfall, the writer approached to photograph Ann at a "new" console. It was then that we learned that much of the pedal division was still disabled.

The point is that the average listener did not know that Ann Leaf was working under a very real handicap. Being the trouper she is, she made the best of what she had available and thus presented a very listenable score for two silent classics.

Incidentally, she played an "atmospheric" score for *Zorro*, meaning the music fitted the scenes in an artistic way without calling attention to the selections, titles or other associations. She had more fun with *Steamboat Bill*, throwing in tunes whose titles pointed up the scene, perhaps more forcefully than the actual music. Either way, Ann made a success out of what could have been a disaster. Her audience never knew how close they had come to an impasse where the show couldn't go on. The organ behaved perfectly for the evening show and attendance was much higher.

As for the theatre, it is safe for the moment, under lease to a local light opera theatrical group which has been doing SRO business. It is hoped that this proof that the organ can also draw audiences will help generate some maintenance funds. □



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and Auto Rhythm Unit. And that means they're as easy to play as a spinet. (Yes, chords with one finger!)

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Rebirth in Alaska...

OUR LAST FRONTIER

by Lloyd E. Klos

J. Allan MacKinnon gets in some practice time at the Kimball. Swell shades are located above the chamber.

(F. Butte Photo)



Theatre organs are installed in a myriad of places, all far remote from the original intent of the builders.

On May 2, 1977, a milestone in the theatre organ movement was reached when a 2/8 Kimball was dedicated in the lobby of the cavernous State Office Building in Juneau, Alaska.

The Juneau installation is believed to be the first in a governmental office building.

The organ, Kimball #7019, had an interesting history. In 1924, W.D. Gross, pioneer Alaskan and founder of the motion picture business in that territory, decided to install a new pipe organ in his Coliseum Theatre in Juneau. That was the year of the first documented correspondence between Gross and C.M. "Sandy" Balcom's organ sales company in Seattle.

However, because of financing problems and Gross' desire to get a custom-built organ, it wasn't until 1928 when the deal was finally consummated that the organ was shipped to Juneau and installed.

The talkies were slowly eradicating the silents by then, so the organ's future in the theatre was clouded, even during installation. The first organist lasted just two weeks; he was that bad! Replacing him was Carol Beery Davis, who, for six years, was the fulltime organist at the Coliseum. After that, she worked part-time between chores of raising a family.

She worried about the instrument in those days, because the theatre was built on pilings over the waters

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of the Gastineau Channel. The floor was thin, and corrosion from the salt water could have been devastating to the organ's mechanical parts.

When silent movies became passé, the organ was used very rarely. Enter W.D. Gross again. In 1939, he built an apartment-theatre complex in Juneau called the Twentieth Century. He made provision for housing the organ in triangular-shaped chambers on both sides of the proscenium arch of the theatre. In 1940, the Coliseum's organ was re-installed in the new house. The console was located on the main floor in a shallow pit, center stage.

The move to the new theatre saved the Kimball from destruction. In the mid-1940's, the Coliseum was destroyed by fire. Theatres with organs in Ketchikan and Anchorage suffered similar fates. For a few years, the Twentieth Century's Kimball was occasionally used for patriotic celebrations, holidays, festivities and community events. Mrs. Davis taught on it, her star pupil being J. Allan MacKinnon, who later was to be graduated from Princeton where he studied advanced organ.

By 1950, the organ fell into disuse, but in 1951, Franklin Butte, a radio engineer from Portland, Oregon, and employed in a Juneau radio station, took an interest in the instrument. (The story of the initial restoration was in the Fall 1963 THE-ATRE ORGAN).

Following a concert which re-dedicated the Kimball, it was used occasionally for radio shows, Thanksgiving programs, etc. In the early 1960's, Al McKinnon returned to Juneau and played the Kimball regularly until 1965. It was used sporadically until about 1970. By that time, rats and moisture had taken their toll.

The organ was removed from the theatre, but as in so many cases, the main cable was cut. Enter Miles Remley, Juneau resident and pipe organ enthusiast. He bought the instrument for a fraction of its value. Recognizing its historical worth, he said, "I couldn't stand to see a piece of history go to ruin." After storing part of it in his home and the remainder in a warehouse, Remley sought a building big enough to restore and install it.

In 1975, he donated the Kimball to Alaska, with the proviso that it re-

main in the state. It was stored in the new State Office Building until officials said they needed the space. The organ would have to go. The threat existed of its being auctioned off as surplus property.

The state employees, to their everlasting credit, contacted Al McKinnon, Mrs. Davis and civic leader Connie Boochever. Through the last named, the Greater Juneau Arts and Humanities Council set up a tax-exempt fund to receive people's donations. Another "Save the Organ" crusade was on!

For a year and a half, funds were collected through such activities as a television auction and club-sponsored dinners. Coffee cans were placed in bars, coffee shops and restaurants. Some pledges for \$100 were received.

Within 18 months, \$20,000 was raised. In addition, Senator Mike Gravel helped to receive a \$10,000 contribution from the Lilly Foundation for the organ's restoration. Another \$30,000 in state museum funds were earmarked for installing it and building a glass showcase for the pipes.

Where the restoration would be done, was discussed. Some thought the work should be "farmed out," but thanks to Mrs. Davis, the instrument went back to the firm which originally shipped it north in 1928, Balcom and Vaughan of Seattle. The firm enjoys a national reputation as one of a few firms in the country which restores theatre organs.

Mrs. Davis journeyed to "the lower 48" to see progress made during the refurbishing, and has noth-

A sizeable crowd gathers on all levels of Juneau's State Office Building whenever the Kimball is played. Don Meyer is at the console. (F. Butte Photo)



ing but high praise for the employee-owned company and its president, a 35-year associate of Sandy Balcom, William J. "Bill" Bunch. The wood of the console had been terribly abused. But from a single eight-inch scrap of the original, found inside the case, the company matched new mahogany to that original piece to build a new chocolate-hued console.

Bill Bunch says that his firm "probably got the job on Franklin Butte's recommendation. He came to Seattle and spent a week with us, helping with the restoration and we had a ball.

"We worked on the organ for almost a year. The console had gotten wet in the pit and the base had to be rebuilt. All of the normal overhauling had to be done. We found the people in Juneau delightful to work with and most enthusiastic.

"The instrument was sent to us in a container van, and returned the same way, via Alaska ferry. So shipping was no problem.

"The installation is really something to hear, acoustically. It sounds like a much larger organ, and is most effective, in my opinion."

Following the months of rehabilitation, shipping back to Juneau, and installation work, the organ sounded

forth in its new home in dedication ceremonies on May 1, 1977. At the console was Mrs. Davis, and in the words of Allan McKinnon, "She played the organ for a lot of years, so it was appropriate that she be the first to play it now."

At the dedication, the crowd was attentive to the mechanics of the instrument, as well as its sound, because pipes, toy counter and percussions are displayed in a glass enclosure. The nearby Kimball upright piano, played from the console, displayed the movement of its keys. The swell shades opened and closed above the pipe chamber. The drums and chimes were heard, their strikers visible to the eye. When Mrs. Davis finished her stint, Al McKinnon took over, playing bits of Bach and ragtime of Joplin.

McKinnon believes the acoustics of the building are excellent for instrumental music, though the human voice does not carry across the vastness of the lobby. Empty, the building's reverb holds a note for six seconds. With a large crowd to absorb sound, the period is cut to two seconds. The overtones are most impressive when Bach is played.

The residents of Juneau are well aware of the new installation. The

man in charge of the organ's maintenance and security, Richard Engen, says, "I believe the organ helps people relate to the state in a more positive manner. The lobby seems to have been built with that in mind. It gives people reason to come to the state building, aside from dealing with the bureaucracy."

Furthermore, the organ's location is dramatic in itself. It is situated across from another addition to the state building's lobby, and dedicated at the same time — the "Old Witch" totem pole. Thus, with the organ pipes, totem pole and live trees which reach toward the high ceiling, five stories above the floor, the State Office Building in Juneau is unique in its accouterments. And, above all, the pipe organ enjoys a unique location.

Editor's Note: THEATRE ORGAN is grateful to Miss Connie Stewart, administrative assistant at the Governor's House in Juneau, and to Bill Bunch of Balcom and Vaughan Pipe Organs, Inc. of Seattle for their assistance in forwarding material used in the preparation of this feature. □

Franklin Butte was also a featured artist during dedication ceremonies in May. It was he who helped save the organ with an earlier restoration project in the sixties. (C. Maki Photo)

Though Alaska may be our last frontier, its citizens do dress up for important occasions. Here, J. Allan MacKinnon performs for the grand opening on May 1, 1977. He was a prime mover on the "Save the Organ" committee. (F. Butte Photo)





Private Paris Organ Safari

by Bill Reeves

Back in 1949, as an (earplaying) amateur organist with a Hammond Model B at home, I decided, with my wife, that we needed a trip to Europe. An impoverished high school teacher in a constant state of financial embarrassment at the time, I had to sell this organ to help finance our trip; but, as we decided to live in Paris for the winter, I vowed to investigate the organs there, and in the fall of 1949 away we sailed from New York on the small French liner *De Grasse*, an old ship used as a troop transport in World War I, but comfortable. It offered us the opportunity to practice our school French on the ship personnel before reaching Paris, but I think it was Chaucer who first noted, about 1400, that school French was quite unlike the French

of Paris, and we found out how right he was — early!

Arriving in October, we found Paris cold-d-d. My wife, appalled at the prices of warm winter coats, bought a length of thick wool and set about with a French pattern in the metric system with her thread and needle in our hotel room to make herself a winter coat. She couldn't understand the French directions, couldn't fathom the metric measurements, and with every stitch, in her ladylike mild profanity, called upon the Lord to witness that she could never complete this blankety-blank project. But complete it she did, emerged into the freezing weather with a beautiful, warm, grey coat which got her through the winter with, shall we say, fine style. She was



Bill and Doris say goodbye to serge in Paris in 1950.

wearing it the day we visited the Louvre which, like most buildings in Paris during the nation-wide fuel shortage, had no heat. We could see our breath as we gazed on the Venus de Milo, and with chattering teeth I told my wife we'd have to get out of there before we got cirrhosis of the Louvre!

About that time I got an itch to play an organ, and on a friend's recommendation I looked up a kind of church-convent-school which he knew had a pipe organ. A courteous French nun, mistaking me for a real organist, said she'd be pleased to allow me to practice, and led me into a small auditorium with an ancient, but electric, instrument the make of which escapes me. We got it turned on, but it wouldn't play. Together we monkeyed with stop tablets until we finally got a hoot out of it, but turning on more stops seemed only to cancel all sound altogether, so I had to be content with one rank and also in this sacred atmosphere avoid my customary tunes like "Five Foot Two" and stick to the very few more dignified numbers I knew, such as Pearl Curran's "Dawn."

Disappointed at this fiasco, nostalgic for our sold Hammond, and yearning to run off some of my old popular stuff of the twenties and thirties, I next looked up the French Hammond Agency which had an American manager fluent in French who invited me to sit up to one of their old Model A organs, the only kind he had. So, attired in my hat and heavy overcoat in the freezing showroom, I boarded the demonstration model and was in the midst of "Ida, Sweet as Apple Cider" and

The Reeves in mid-Atlantic on the Queen Elizabeth returning from Paris in 1950.



"Am I Blue" when in walked a beautiful young woman whom the manager introduced as Mademoiselle Somebody, associate organist at the great Gaumont-Palace Theatre. She spoke no English, but conveyed to me that she liked my "American" style of playing, and would I please continue? No, I wouldn't, not with a pro around, and I persuaded her to take my place, where she gave us a delightful concert. She had come in to complain to the manager that the Gaumont organ was always on the blink in one way or another, that she refused to play it anymore, and that she wanted a Hammond installed behind the curtain.

This gave me a bright idea, and, since it was morning, I went straight from there to the stage door of the Gaumont and inquired for the organist, who came in shortly, invited me into the basement where we entered an elevator which proved to be the rising console of the mammoth 4/14 Christie pipe organ, and together we rose majestically into the 6000-seat empty auditorium. He was the very personable, friendly Tommy Dessèrre, who was to preside at this organ for a total of 30 years until 1960 when the 1500 pipes were auctioned off. But I have never learned who made the winning bid, how much it was in francs or dollars, and where it was re-installed. But, despite Mademoiselle's complaint about it, somebody got a honey. Its tones were beautiful, and it made even me sound good!

First Tommy played, and then courteously allowed me to run off "Make Believe" and other of the six or seven hundred old popular pieces I knew. All this reminded me of an account I had once read of the black American pianist-organist, Fats Waller, who, down on his luck in his youth, bummed his way to Paris and looked up the internationally famous Marcel Duprè, organist at the Church of Saint-Sulpice, who, as Tommy had done with me, invited Fats to join him on the organ bench where, as Fats later related it, "Fust he play de God-box, den I play de God-box." Racial differences quite apart, Waller and Duprè became instant friends with a curious common bond.

This recollection gave me another brilliant idea. One Sunday morning my wife and I made our way to the

Church of Saint-Sulpice to hear the great Duprè and were directed up a long stairway to the organ loft, already full of Marcel's friends and admirers waiting to hear him play. The console was located right outside the pipe chambers, which meant that this instrument must originally have been an old tracker-action type, close enough to the pipes to be operated by mechanical levers before the invention of electrical switches. Somebody in the years since had electrified and renovated it but had left the console right there next to the louvers and pipes. Just then Marcel Duprè himself stepped in, recognizable from photos we'd seen, and after nodding to his friends, seemed fascinated by my wife's hand-sewn coat and cute little French hat. Ordinarily not the forward type, she nevertheless took immediate advantage of this opportunity to introduce us, to tell Marcel that we were leaving for America in a few days and that we couldn't go without hearing him play, that we had unfortunately missed his concert tours in the United States, but had heard his records and considered him the world's greatest organist. Well, that, and the coat, did it! Ignoring me, Marcel invited her, as he had with Fats Waller, and as Tommy had with me, to join him on the organ bench, where, because of the cold, he played the service in his beret, overcoat, and mittens with the fingers cut out.

Duprè could do what many musicians can't do — all the time he played, never missing a note, he carried on a conversation with my wife beside him, discussed his love for his children and grandchildren and how much he enjoyed them as a family man. Then came the big closing Bach number, the only piece for which Marcel didn't read the notes, and for which he whipped off his fingerless mittens and opened up that organ with everything it had. So close to the pipes, and in such a small room, we were stunned, deafened, but it was the most terrific Bach we'd ever heard! We've never forgotten it, and have always counted this occasion one of the great experiences and privileges of our lives.

In two days we sailed for home and have never revisited Paris, but we have our memories, if you'll pardon me, to keep us WARM! □

DINNY'S COLYUM

as
transcribed
by
Del Castillo



Us riters we don't always know just what we are gettin into, like for instince I got to gabbin on about how many holydays we got in this country, strichin from end to end so to speak I counted up 36 witch dont leave much time to get a weeks work done especially sence the gov. has changed all the holydays to week ends irregardless of which day of the week they is really on so as to give all the workers a extry day off. Like for instince Washintons Birthday comes on Wednesday and Memorial Day comes on Tuesday but they move the both of them up to Monday witch seems pretty silly to me but then I dont have to work five days a week so I guess maybe I would feel different if I did.

Of course all the holydays I men-shuned aint reely official or they is only in certain parts of the USA like for instince Patriarts Day in Noo England Gen. Robert E. Lee in the South and Johnson Day in Texas and Huey Longs Day In Looisiana. But now the latest I read about and this is pretty confusin is Sun Day witch will be on Wednesday the 3 of March. You would of thought the least they could do if they want a holiday about the Sun would be to put it on Sunday but I guess that would be too easy.

So anyways accordin to our mayor here in LA who is Mayor Bradley and is one of the Bored of Directors of Sun Day this is to lead the USA into the Solar Era. So now you know why we got another holyday and what it is for. Here in LA they already got a So. Cal. Solar Energy Assoc. and like they say, they know that here in LA it wont rain on May 3, so they are goin to have a lot of events only they don't know what they are yet. Well, that figures. Politishans are like that.

Up in San Francisco they are goin to have a Solar Festival and a Magick Show. Of course the big noise will be in Washinton where they will be a Solar Fair and a Public Concert and a Conference of Experts at Geo. Washinton University. Like Mayor Bradleys says, in 1970 they had Earth Day, so now we get to have Sun Day. I spose pretty soon we will get to have Moon day and it will be on any old day except Monday.

Some of the things they are planin to do are pretty cute. Like for instince they will have a sunrise celebrashun on Cadillac Mountin in Maine which is the spot where the sun hits the United States first. Then they will have a tour of the Solar Homes, a whole dozen of them, that has been bilt in Martinsburg, W. Va. Then they will be a Sunrise Concert at the United Nashun Bildin in Noo York. The big idea is to get people to usin Solar Power and givin it a fair shake like if somebody puts up a solar house they will be a law that nobody can put up a higher house next to him that will keep the sun out. And like they will have laws that will keep the bilders from chargin too much, and then some more laws that will give a cut on the taxes, and I spose it must be a pretty good thing because they is a lot of important men that is runnin it.

I pick up a lot of informashun out of the paper, like for instince did you know that they is more organs sold than any other insterment except pianos and geetars? That's a fact. I guess. If you can beleave everythin you read in the papers. Like it says that in 1950 they was one organ sold to 17 pianos, but in 1960 they was only one and seven-tenth pianos to one organ. That piano must of been a dilly. But probily it was better than in 1975 when they was only one eleventh of one piano sold more than one organ. All I know is that if they was only goin to sell a part of a piano the best part to leave out is those last half a dozen notes at the top which sound like hittin a tin plate. □

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In Retrospect...

A REFLECTION

on the

WESTERN RESERVE REGIONAL

by Betty Heffer

As Lowell Ayars reminded us, a great measure of the success of our theatre organ conventions consists of the joys inherent in sharing the music with friends old and new.

And so it was in Cleveland, Ohio last November as the Western Reserve Chapter welcomed fellow ATOS members to its Super '77 Regional Convention during the Thanksgiving Day weekend.

The meeting and greeting, the conversation cum coffee, the touring together in inclement weather — all helped establish the leitmotif.

A recitative proclaiming that Dennis James "must be a juggler to manage all those stop tabs and keyboards

and pedals simultaneously" was provided by a local resident who had won two tickets of admission from a radio station. With a background of classical piano, she was enthralled with Heidi's contribution to the Saturday evening program at Gray's Armory. With her first exposure to a Wurlitzer accompaniment of a Laurel and Hardy comedy, she was enchanted. Another convert to theatre organ, folks!

Now for a scherzo or two. We, the audience at Keith Chapman's concert in the Cleveland Convention Center, were seated on the stage. And when Keith requested the aid of two itinerant page turners capable

Registration desk, (left to right) Phyllis Merhan, Elaine Hawks and registrants.

(Packard Photo)





Masonic Auditorium, Tom Hazleton concert.



ATOS President, Ray Snitil welcomes conventioners. (Packard Photo)

Dick Geyser, SUPER '77 co-chairman and Rodney Elliott WRTOS chairman (standing at mike).

(Packard Photo)



of reading music, his volunteers became Little Denny and Little Tommy. They could indeed read music, as Dennis James proved in a duet with Keith on the big Skinner and as Tom Hazleton proved the following morning with his concert on the Masonic Temple's 4/40 Austin.

Wisconsin's Perry Petta won the Youth Organ Playing Competition, and the encouragement of all young theatre organists will reward their future audiences as well. Runners-up Phil Bordeleau and Chris Phillips accredited themselves in fine fashion.

John Muri, who played the opening program at Gray's Armory on Friday evening, projected us onto a vicarious trip through legendary lore. His memorable accompaniment of *The Vanishing American* led us into becoming involved, engrossed, and empathetic with the role of the Red Man in the pages of our national history.

The splendor of the church equalled the splendor of the organ for Richard Fettkether's Sunday afternoon concert. A powerful Casavant is housed in the First United Methodist Church — truly beautiful in every way.

And oh — the theatres! The murals, the ceilings, the pillars, the winding stairways, the chandeliers, and the restorative efforts: — the Playhouse Square Theatre Tour provided them all.

Now back to Lowell Ayars. Lowell played — and sang — the closing program in Gray's Armory on Sunday. How appropriate that he sent us on our way home on a positive note — "I'll Be Seeing You."

Thank you, Western Reserve. We enjoyed seeing you.

Linda Mathews, daughter of Gottfried, the organ builder, and Dick Canda, local Wurlitzer dealer. (Packard Photo)



John Muri and Claude Hawks, MC and co-chairman. (Packard Photo)



Perry Petta, youth organ playing competition winner.

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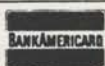
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An Evening With Edna Sellers

PART I

Transcribed and Edited by Lloyd E. Klos

During the 1969 ATOS Convention in Chicago, a surprise guest was presented to the audience at Mundelein Seminary, former theatre organist, Edna Sellers. This gracious lady was married to another theatre organist, Preston Sellers, and when the latter was installed in the Theatre Organists Hall of Fame in 1976, the writer felt that the Sellers family was an excellent subject for a feature story in THEATRE ORGAN.

When Edna performed in the twenties, this publicity photo showed an appearance which was in trend with the times. (Sellers Coll.)

Thanks to CATOE executive Russell B. Joseph and his wife, Florence, Mrs. Sellers spent several hours during a visit to their home in late 1976, talking over the great days of the theatre organ as they affected her family. Through electronic gadgetry, this conversation was recorded, and following is the edited transcript of the highly interesting session.

RJ. — Well, Edna, here we are with a warm fire on the hearth during a typical chilly autumn evening. First of all, we'd like to know where the Sellers family started.

ES. — I was born in a small town in Iowa and had my early education there. When the family moved to Lincoln, Nebraska, I finished high school and worked in a small theatre there, playing silent pictures on a piano. I was 17 or 18 then.

RJ. — Were your parents musically inclined?

ES. — My father played the violin and was an "ear" player; mother sang in a church choir. Neither was trained. I don't really know where I got my love of music. They knew I had an interest for it when I was two.

FJ. — Was there an opportunity to take music lessons?

ES. — Just from small-town teachers. I was about 10 when the first one to whom my father took me said, "Mr. Smith, why didn't you bring

this child to me sooner? I should have had this little girl a long time ago."

FJ. — Well, ten is a bit late to start study.

ES. — Yes, but I could read music and play by ear. However, that isn't the answer. Kids need training early. My primary instruction was on piano. Then our local church organist began teaching me the rudiments of basic church organ. Several months later, she retired and turned her job over to me. I believe I was 12 then.

After I was graduated from Lincoln High School, I went home for the winter in Manilla, Iowa, and in the spring left for Chicago and more music study. The job picture was better in the big city, too. I stayed with friends in Lombard, until I got a job in the Wurlitzer store. A talented violinist with whom I attended high school, lived in Chicago on the South Side. I looked her up and moved in with her while I was at Wurlitzer's.

FJ. — What did you do at the store?

ES. — I sold records. I had walked down Wabash Avenue, saw the store, went in, and talked to someone who told me to "go up and see Mr. Noble; he may have something in records." He did, and gave me the job.

FJ. — But, you weren't displaying your talent by selling records.



ES. — No, but I had to get a start some way.

FJ. — You found out about the Wurlitzer organ there?

ES. — Yes, It was at the wholesale division, about two or three blocks away. I went down there, made arrangements to practice on it and secured a teacher.

RJ. — Wasn't that organ a demonstrator?

ES. — Yes, and it was a theatre-type instrument. This was in the late teens, and shortly after, I got a job in the small Boston Theatre on Clark Street, near the Planter's Hotel. They had Harding's corned beef and we used to eat in there.

RJ. — There was no organ in the Boston, was there?

ES. — Oh, yes. It was a lovely little organ which had a stop I never found on any other instrument — a Gemshorn.

RJ. — It must have been a church-type organ.

ES. — Yes, but I don't recall the make. I worked there for awhile, alternating on the organ for pictures, the piano for newsreels, then back to the organ for the feature.

My second job was the following summer in Orchestra Hall. Mildred Fitzpatrick, a fine organist and teacher, got me the job, and carried me along as her substitute or second shift. Orchestra Hall ran silent pictures and employed an orchestra. The organ, though, was a klunker.

RJ. — That was the original organ, a 4-manual Lyon & Healy.

ES. — Yes, it was.

RJ. — How did you meet Preston?

ES. — While living with my violinist friend, we'd invite other musicians in and have musical sessions, doing both classics and popular. She was playing in an all-girl orchestra at an old Ascher house, the Oakland Square, which was around the corner. It had a small, but very pretty Kimball. Knowing the manager who always passed me in, I went in one night. Hearing the organ, I said to him, "You've a new organist." He said, "Yes, and isn't he great?" He told me to go backstage and have one of the girls introduce me to him. That's how I met Pres. I thought he

was the finest organist I had ever heard.

FJ. — Was he just starting out, too?

ES. — He had been transferred from another Ascher house. He was born in St. Louis in 1894, and had also come to Chicago in his early years.

FJ. — What was his musical education?

ES. — Private teachers. Pres had exhibited a talent for music, but his parents were adamant that their son was not to go into any kind of music endeavor. This was about 1904 and it was considered "sissified" for a boy to be interested in any such thing. However, his older sister respected his desires, bought him his first piano, and paid for his first lessons, if not all of them.

RJ. — Did he play in any theatres or churches in St. Louis?

ES. — No, but an amusing sidelight concerns his being approached when he was about 15 to play a private party. He accepted eagerly for spending money, and only later that evening realized that the "party" was in a large home, with many female inhabitants who frequently took male guests upstairs. He was playing piano in the parlor, and didn't realize until later where he was! His parents found out, much to their horror, and of course, this further strengthened their feelings about musicians.

I believe Pres started playing organ when he arrived in Chicago, at a little old theatre on Chicago Avenue, the Hub. The owner-manager was crazy about him. Pres was largely

Chicago's Tivoli Theatre looked like this when Preston Sellers played there. Console of the 3/15 Wurlitzer is shown at the right on the orchestra lift. The organ had beautiful Tibias, according to Edna Sellers.



self-taught as an organist, but he was so natural at it. He had all basics; there was never anything missing in his work.

I used to sub for him; he'd want some afternoons free. That's when I started to get my basic theatre experience and it worked out very well.

RJ. — In the meantime, he had changed jobs?

ES. — Yes, he went to the Chateau, another Ascher house on the North Side. I moved to the area, being a block away from the Chateau. I'd go in there and go ga-ga at Pres while he played. After my Orchestra Hall stint that summer, we got married. I believe he next went to the Covent Garden, while I followed him into the Chateau.

RJ. — Were the organs in those houses good-sized instruments?

ES. — The one in the Chateau was a beautiful little Kimball, and the one in the Covent was a great big 4-manual Wurlitzer with an echo in the rear of the balcony. What tone! It was just lovely. Pres then left the Covent for the Pantheon on N. Sheridan, and I followed him into the Covent.

RJ. — He paved the way and you followed!

ES. — Yes. That's the way people helped each other. I was very fortunate to have known him in the early years of my career, because he gave me tips and advice.

RJ. — His name as a musician was made before yours?

ES. — Oh, yes. He was well known and had good jobs, too.

RJ. — Was the Covent his stepping stone into the large loop houses?

ES. — Yes, I believe it was. But we had a musicians' strike at that time, and there were two theatre chains with which he was dickering. One would state a salary, the other would raise it, back and forth. This landed him at the Pantheon and from there, they put him into the Senate on W. Madison St. I followed him into the Pantheon and then into the Senate. This was just before our son was born. I wasn't doing solos then, just accompanying the pictures. When talkies came, we went into solo work.

RJ. — And you played for vaudeville?

ES. — Oh, yes. I was at the Senate and saw the beginning of stage bands in the middle twenties. The house had a 3-manual Kimball. Preston was so happy with the installation at the Covent, but dissatisfied with the Senate organ's sound. He went to B & K and got permission to take certain ranks from the Covent and install them in the Senate. Organ maintenance man Ken Simpson was a great help in this endeavor. I'm sure some of the brass such as the Tuba Mirabilis was transferred, and they probably enhanced the Tibia, Diaphones, Kinura and the pizzicato. When the work was finished, Pres had a completely balanced instrument and one of the finer sounding organs in the city.

RJ. — After the Senate, where did you and Preston go next?

ES. — He went into the Oriental shortly after it opened in 1926. Henri A. Keates was there, and when he was sent elsewhere, Pres went in. Balaban & Katz had taken over Paramount-Publix by then, and John Balaban had heard Pres at the Senate. He went downtown and said, "Listen, Preston Sellers has *got* to come downtown. We *have* to have him there." That's how he got the Oriental job.

RJ. — You followed him into the Oriental?

ES. — Yes, but first, we did a stint at the Marbro in 1930. However, our daughter was on the way, and Pres and I were scheduled to do a double at the Chicago. Jesse and Helen Crawford had been doing their act on twin consoles there. One of the B & K executives came in to observe the show one night. As I finished my solo, and pivoted around on the Howard seat to take my bows, he observed that I was "great with child" and immediately told the manager to give me maternity leave.

We went to B & K and told them we wouldn't be able to do our presentation until after the birth. *Variety* found this out and inserted a cute little squib: "Due to an act of God, Preston and Edna Sellers will not be opening at the Chicago Theatre until it's over." In the meantime, the stage band was released at the Marbro and they had to fill with an act. So, after Barbara's birth, our double was booked into the Marbro

instead of the Chicago.

RJ. — By then, one of the consoles in the Chicago was gone, I believe.

ES. — Yes, one of them was moved to the Marbro and organ installers hooked it up. This was the first time Preston and I did a double, and it was a big thrill for both of us. That instrument was truly beautiful!

RJ. — Did you ever play the Paradise Theatre?

ES. — Yes.

RJ. — The instrument in the Paradise was the same size as the one in the Marbro. How did they compare in sound? I understand the Paradise was not as good as the Marbro.

ES. — No, because of the placement of the chambers in the Paradise. The instrument itself was good, but you couldn't get out of it what you could get with the one at the Marbro.

RJ. — I take it that you both had the opportunity to play overtures etc. with the orchestra.

ES. — Oh, yes.

RJ. — Were you paid by the week or month?

ES. — By the week. But you had to work awfully hard. It was a seven-day week with no days off. And it was a pretty full day as they opened at 9 a.m. To prepare a solo, you had to practice after the last show was

Edna enjoyed her theatre days as she had the opportunity to meet the great stars. Among them were the noted team of Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon, seen in this photo, autographed for Edna and Preston. (Sellers Coll.)





A glamour shot of Edna, taken in the thirties.



(Sellers Coll.) A publicity photo of Preston Sellers, taken in April 1932.

(Klos Coll.)

over, or early in the morning before the orchestra rehearsed. It was usually on Fridays, a real tiring day.

FJ. — You didn't have much leisure time.

ES. — We didn't have any.

RJ. — You had to have a sub to give you relief periods in a 15-hour day though.

ES. — We had second shifts. A lot of organists worked these. The main one was on the solo shift, and the other was filling in between. I did some of that work, too.

RJ. — Did you ever play the Mc-Vickers Theatre?

ES. — I never played there.

RJ. — What other loop theatres did you get into?

ES. — I was in the Chicago one summer. Basel Cristol was playing there,

and during her trip to Europe, I subbed for her.

RJ. — Did Preston play the Chicago?

ES. — Yes.

RJ. — Were there any other loop theatres either of you played?

ES. — The State-Lake, but that was later. They had a small instrument, not beautiful, which was incompatible with the theatre. (That organ was later installed in the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco).

FJ. — Were there times when you and Preston were separated?

ES. — We had some. From 1937 to 1943, I was at the Chicago Arena which was a winter operation for ice-skating and hockey. One summer, they put on an ice show, and the ice melted very fast! No air-conditioning then. The Arena had a 4-manual

Wurlitzer which was difficult to play. The action was very slow, and because of the size of the structure, the sound went to the other end of the building and came back. Also, the organ loft was glass-enclosed.

RJ. — You got into broadcasting about this time?

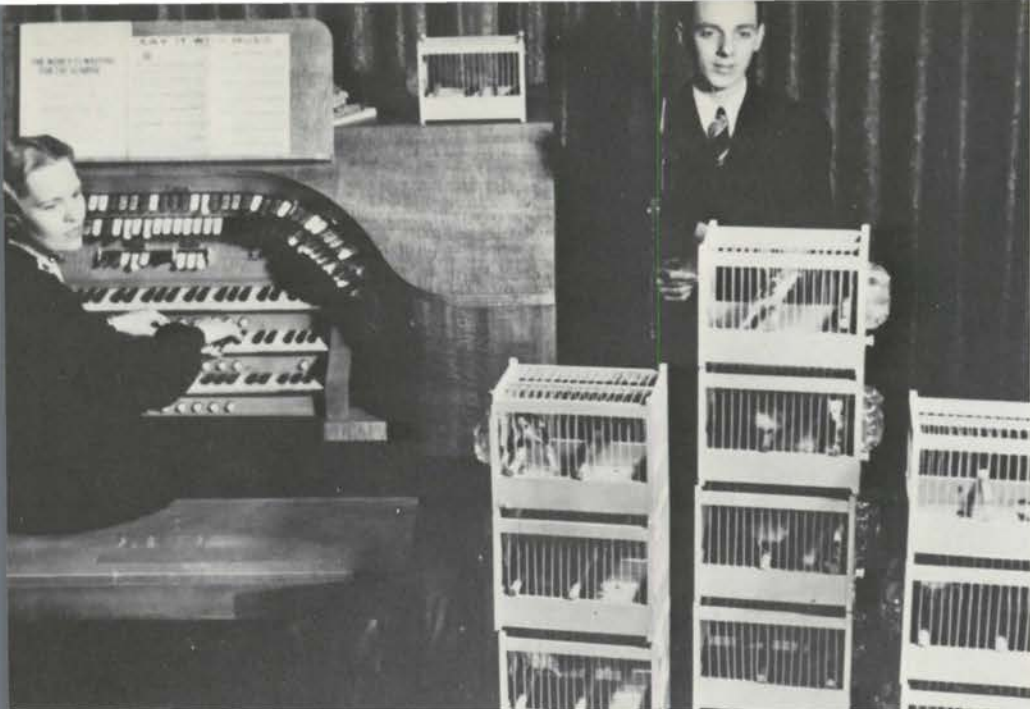
ES. — I went to WGN in 1936. Studios were in the Tribune Tower.

FJ. — What did you play for radio?

ES. — Some soap operas, solo programs and some accounts.

RJ. — Do you remember specific programs?

ES. — I did a stint for Libby when it was booked thru an agency. I doubled between WGN and the Arena after I was given permission. Then, I went to work in a Green Bay, Wis. lounge for a time. I lived there but



In early 1936, Edna played for the Sunday morning program, *The American Warblers*, which featured singing canaries on WGN. Announcer was Dick Lawrence. Preston played the show later. (Sellers Coll.)

had good help to oversee the children. Pres was working in Chicago. He did a long stint at WGN also.

His most renowned work was a network show over WGN, playing for canaries on Sunday mornings. It was the *American Warblers* and was known thruout the country. I did the first work with the canaries in 1936.

In the summer of 1937, something very bittersweet happened which I will never forget. I had programmed a show as a salute to George Gershwin. An hour or so before air time, came the terrible news that Gershwin had died in California. I debated: Should I play it or not? With a terribly heavy heart, I did and it was well received. I had an eerie feeling that day. Gershwin was one of our giant composers, straddling both classical and popular.

FJ. — Did Preston ever take out-of-town jobs?

ES. — Once in awhile he did.

RJ. — That WGN organ is a hybrid of the Wurlitzer once in the Drake Hotel and the Kimball in the Tribune Tower. Then they moved it to their new studios on Bradley Place. Did you ever play it there?

ES. — No. I've been invited but have never gone.

RJ. — CATOE was recently given the privilege of taking care of that organ.

ES. — That's good. I'm glad to hear that.

RJ. — Aside from your radio work in Chicago, where else did you play over the air?

ES. — I had a stint at Oklahoma City's WKY 4-manual Kilgen in 1944. It had a marvelous Posthorn which I accidentally struck during a radio show. After that, I ended up padding it so this wouldn't happen again!

RJ. — Was there any other non-theatre work you did?

ES. — Yes, I did some work at NBC.

RJ. — Was that WENR in the Civic Opera Building?

ES. — No, it was at the Merchandise Mart. Worked at WBBM, too, and did a long stint with Franklin McCormick and his poetry readings. Also worked with Milton Charles there. That was nice — a very nice job. Good people, fun, real lovely people. Occasionally I played at WENR.

RJ. — What was Preston doing all this time?

ES. — He was at the Oriental, primarily. After that, he went to WGN. Following the Oklahoma stint, I went into the Oriental for almost three years.

FJ. — That was for solo work?

ES. — Yes, matinee and evening every day.

RJ. — What did organists do between solo spots?

ES. — They'd rest or go over the next week's solos.

RJ. — You had only about 2½ hours between spots which wasn't long enough to do anything away from the theatre, yet too much time to sit around, doing nothing.

ES. — Well, I didn't sit around! Barbara, then 14, was studying with a fine piano professor, Mr. Wells, in the Fine Arts Building, and doing very well. For a long time, I had wanted to study advanced piano, but had been too busy. She urged me to sit in during a lesson and meet Mr. Wells. Between shows one day, I did. Much impressed, I started taking lessons with him. There were a couple good upright pianos in the theatre and I had one moved into my dressing room. Five hours a day I devoted to practice which got my hands back in shape, delving into the literature I hadn't studied before: Brahms, a lot of Bach, and Chopin. That's where I got into a deeper appreciation of the classics with orchestration etc. Mr. Wells was so wonderful as a teacher.

Oh, before the piano-study period, we had a stint when we drove to the South Side and took organ lessons from Arthur Dunham. He was at Sinai Temple and later moved to the Methodist Temple downtown, playing a big Skinner there. It was such a pleasure to attend his 30-minute noontime recitals.

FJ. — What part of your musical life was the most enjoyable?

ES. — I liked my radio work very well, but I enjoyed the Oriental more because I worked with big bands there. The organ was so beautiful.

RJ. — It is interesting, Edna, that the Oriental organ today (Dec. 1976), while not in top mechanical condition, is considered by many organists on the circuit to be one of the most exciting organs they have played.

ES. — I've believed that all along.

RJ. — I had several contacts with prospective artists for our 1977 ATOS Convention in Chicago, and the first thing they asked was, "Where will I be playing? The Oriental, I hope!" This Publix No. 1 (with Posthorn), is especially responsive and brilliant, due to shallow chambers, and no ornamental plaster screens or heavy drapes to impede the egress of sound. The organ (20 ranks) is not as big as the one in the

Chicago (29 ranks), but it has a sound all its own.

ES. — I do agree with that!

(Prior to the 1977 ATOS Convention in Chicago, CATOE workers did the most thorough restoration job the Oriental organ ever had.)

FJ. — Were there times when you wondered where the next job would be?

ES. — No, I didn't worry. In those days, they rotated us. One week, I'd be at the Tivoli; the next week, the Marbro; then on to the Granada. It was after talking pictures arrived that things started to slow down.

RJ. — Did you play the Avalon?

ES. — I played the Avalon Wurlitzer one week. The manager was Harry Beaumont.

RJ. — Ever play the Uptown Wurlitzer?

ES. — Oh, yes.

RJ. — It was a sin that the organ was taken out, and it is now up for sale. Jesse Crawford liked certain ranks on it and he moved its Tuba Mirabilis and an English Horn to the Chicago, adding to its majestic sound.

How many other theatres did you play?

ES. — I don't believe I missed any with the possible exception of competing houses, mostly on the South Side. They were all B & K theatres. I played the Norshore on Howard Street and the Tower on 63rd.

FJ. — How about the Harding?

ES. — No, I never played the Harding, and I was always glad I didn't because I never liked the instrument. B & K had an organist there, however, who had a long tenure and a marvelous following, Eddie Meikel.

RJ. — One thing people today find difficult to understand is that many organists had followings, as you said. People would relate to how an organist accompanied a silent picture. I can remember many a time hearing people say: "I'll wait for that picture until it comes to the . . . theatre because I want to hear . . . play it. That organist really makes the picture come alive."

ES. — It is very satisfying to remember the following we had. Pres and I had wonderful, loyal people. We surely did!

FJ. — When the movies were advertised in the papers, did they list who were playing them?

ES. — Oh, yes. "Edna Sellers At the Organ" . . . "Preston Sellers At the Organ."

RJ. — They were always on the Marquee, too.

ES. — That's right.

RJ. — What we'd like to hear about are some of the unusual and interesting incidents which took place during the Prestons' time in the theatres, such as when you had your children.

ES. — I don't believe it was all so eventful. I did bring the kids to the theatre and they often sat on the bench with me. I had Buddy at the Oriental one day, and one of the performers brought him out onto the stage. Two or three times this happened.

FJ. — That wasn't the easiest thing for you to bring up two children.

ES. — It was difficult, but I was fortunate to have good nurses and housekeepers, so the children were well cared for.

RJ. — Barbara got her first exposure to music by hearing you in the theatre, didn't she?

ES. — Both did. Barbara did some of her practicing after school in my dressing room. Both came for the stage shows, and talked with the stars. Duke Ellington appeared many times, and I remember a Sunday when we did seven shows at the Oriental. One day, I was practicing the piano which could be heard down the stairwell. I heard footsteps outside, and when the scuffling continued, I opened the door, and there was the Duke! I said, "Oh Mr. Ellington, I hope I haven't annoyed you." He said, "Annoyed me! You know we all like good music, too and I *had* to find out where this was coming from. You just wait until my arranger gets here in a day or two. I want you to meet Billy Strayhorn." He was a Juilliard graduate, and he did all of Ellington's arrangements then. I met him and listened to him do the Rachmaninoff Concerto. I played for him, he played for me, and we had a ball!

Later on, Ellington was back, playing a nightclub on the North Side,

and Bud took me to hear him. I sent for him to come to our table, and said, "Duke, do you remember the Oriental Theatre when you came upstairs and wondered who was playing the piano?" He said, "Yes, I do remember very well. My trombone player still remembers you, because he used to listen to you, too." That was nice.

RJ. — Were there any other stars with whom you had interesting experiences?

ES. — I had one complimentary experience involving the fellow who wore a top hat, carried a cane, played a clarinet, and was famous for the song, "When My Baby Smiles At Me."

RJ. — Ted Lewis.

ES. — Yes! He and his band were there a week. One day, I went in and picked up the band as the curtains closed at their finish. Lewis came over to the edge of the stage, looked down at me and said, "Now that little lady — let's give her a hand! She came in and played with our band on the last number." That was wonderful. Nobody ever did that to me before.

RJ. — I always thought it was pretty marvelous when the organist picked up the last few measures of the orchestra's presentation and effected the transition from stage show to movie. There weren't too many organists who could do it properly.

ES. — The temptation just got the better of me. I just *had* to play along! Another time, we had a movie with Walter Pidgeon and Jane Powell. A sweet, young thing, Jane played his daughter and sang like a doll. Her last number was Schubert's "Ave Maria." The organ was so beautiful, and the idea of playing along with this gorgeous voice occurred to me, so I did it. The manager came down and asked, "Who told you to do that?" I said, "Nobody told me; I just did it." He replied, "You keep it in for the duration of the movie." I got a kick out of it and it enhanced the end of the picture.

RJ. — Those are the things we like to read about in THEATRE ORGAN. We read about the routine things, but the anecdotes make a narrative come alive.

(CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE)

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

by John Muri

*"The old order changeth, yielding place to new
and God fulfills Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."*

According to the poet Tennyson, King Arthur spoke those words when he was dying. To state the matter bluntly, one may say that nothing lasts forever, and that one ought to be glad that it doesn't. Still more bluntly, one may say that progress in this world is made by fires and funerals, realizing, of course, that only a small part of truth can be told in any wisecrack. Surely, King Arthur was referring only to the beneficial effects of change. Change without improvement effects stagnation in art as it does in anything else, while the pursuit of change for its own sake is a futility.

Current changes are the results of economic and other forces at work, centered in what is called the mass media. The popular music scene came about by our leaving a whole generation of young people without theatres to attend and good music to hear. Now they flock by thousands to assemblages where untrained and untalented performers temporarily satisfy their desire for a living emotional experience. Artificially manufactured fashions keep recurring, seemingly original and triumphant, and then dying of their excesses.

Nobody needs to argue that tastes have changed. It was apparent in the fifties that there was a serious shortage of hit tunes. The trend became noticeable in the forties. The sixties dated the beginning of the great music subsidies and building projects like Lincoln Center. In 1966, the president of the National Arts Councils of America observed that "everybody wants to build a cultural center . . . (but) if you put people into a beautiful hall and don't give them quality, in two years you'll have an empty monument." Things looked pretty good in the sixties. One statistician reported that in 1963 more people went to concerts than to baseball games. In 1966, orchestras were subsidized to the tune of eighty million dollars.

Change was in the wind, though. Popular music became ethnic and country-Western, mixed with rock. AM radio people were the foremost promoters of the new pop stuff, with FM following reluctantly. Of course, films and television (imitative institutions that they are) had to follow suit. The classical people started wondering, too. By 1969 they were worrying whether or not all solo performers would be deserted by the public.

Do we organ-addicts have to concern ourselves with the problems created by all-encompassing change? Probably. Some would say that we are trying to hold back the clock (1) by trying to keep alive an instrument that can be much more efficiently built with electronic technology, (2) by trying to perpetuate a library of music that is presumably dated in style and complexity, and (3) by trying to hold on to old buildings and entertainment procedures that seemingly will never attract a large public.

Wood and leather rots. Insulation and music paper crumbles. Paint scales off and ivory yellows. Water leaks in. There are forces that insidiously nullify our efforts at preservation. Is there a lesson in this for the historically minded?

We are creatures of time. Using it to good advantage, we try to study the past as a guide to the present and the future. We act a little more intelligently in the present if we avoid the mistakes of the past. Anyone who does less takes unnecessary risks. One pauses, then, to hear some enthusiast say that the works of the composers of the nineteenth century are passé and that their compositions (if played at all) must be

Mr. Muri's opinions expressed herein are his own and do not necessarily reflect the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN Magazine.

played in the light of the new musical idioms of the last quarter of the twentieth century.

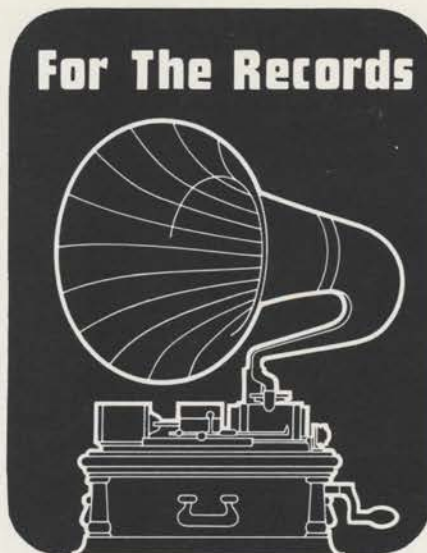
History does not support such a view. Every revolution in music has failed. It failed in the fifteenth century, it failed in the time of Beethoven, and it failed in the early years of this century, when wild romanticism in music was rejected. There is plenty of evidence that most of the successful innovators of our time worked in harmony with traditional methods and purposes. There have always been fashions in music, and time after time their excesses have been rejected and the musical world has returned to a steady progress that has continued for 2500 years.

Will there be a place for theatre organists in the years to come? Will temporal change bring back large audiences to theatre organs? Silent films will probably never return, at least in this generation. Producers will make silent films only on rare occasions when silence becomes a part of the action. A whole art-form could be built on genius-inspired silent film, but there appears to be no market for it. Even if such a thing were to happen, the films would have to fit a modern pattern that is non-narrative. Movie-critic Pauline Kael believes that general audiences have lost the narrative sense. Their years of TV watching have conditioned them to enjoy shock and action, even when those elements have no logical basis. Kael sees structural disintegration in the movies and finds it "rather scary to see what's happening." A second part of the pattern embraces the non-rational, when anything goes and critical standards are pitched out the window. You are supposed to accept everything in a "new" film, preferably in a kind of narcotic lassitude. If this kind of film-making continues, Kael says, cinema is going to become "so lacking in audience appeal that in a few years the foundations will be desperately and hopelessly trying to bring it back to life." If this is an accurate assessment of the situation, what hope do organists have for film accompaniment work? Clearly, it would have to be a kind of non-music or aleatory music, something that was never a part of the theatre organ age.

Change and loss are in the nature of things. Woody Allen is reported

in *Esquire* as being upset about "the constant struggle against annihilation and death" which is "absolutely stupefying in its terror and renders one's accomplishments meaningless." He can't seem to take the world on a day by day basis. Dorothy Parker, another cynic, said that no man ever came to a happy ending. People who worry about such stuff are too egocentric. Does it really matter much if all of our "immortal" words or sounds are destined to vanish? It is better to live the way Walter Pater recommended in 1876: burn each moment of every day with a hard gem-like flame of experience. Since everything is born, grows, declines, and dies, we must live to maintain the ecstasies of the moments given to us.

Music offers no exception. A great piece of music will last a number of years, become too familiar, and then die in neglect. Something new will pre-empt the time and interest of concert-goers. Changing life-styles, like television and other electronic wonders, eliminate whole institutions. See what happened to the coal industry when oil and electricity became cheap. Look at it, now that prices have risen. In the long run, music will take its course as it always has. In the short run, we shall do well to tolerate and adapt to the popular fancies of the moment, living, as Pater recommended, with a "hard, gem-like flame." □



ME AND MY WURLITZER. John Ledwon playing his 3/26 studio organ. Alpha No. 7703 (stereo). \$6.50 postpaid from Alpha Records, Box 115, Newbury Park, Calif. 91320.

John Ledwon started playing a plug-in at 11 years of age, encouraged and propelled by parents who had hopes he would seek a career as a concert organist. To rivet his interest they purchased a 3/11 "assembled" Wurlitzer and installed it in their San Fernando Valley (Calif.) home. They were partially successful; John developed a healthy respect and preference for pipes but a concert career didn't appeal to him. He wanted to teach music. So his college

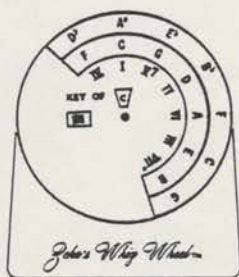
courses were in public school music. For the past decade he has taught music at Newbury Park High School (Calif.), not far from his Agoura hill-top studio home. He has recently come into national prominence as chairman of the Los Angeles chapter or ATOS.

From a biographical sketch by veteran theatre organist Del Castillo, we quote: "John is definitely a comer . . . To those who have followed him through the years, his musical development has been outstanding, whether playing, teaching or producing musical comedies at Newbury Park (high school)." Meanwhile the 3/11 has grown to a 3/26, augmented with carefully chosen ranks to combine, in the 22,000 cubic feet of studio listening area, to form one of the most complete and attractive recording organs in southern California. This is John's first recording with it as a 3/26, although he has several previous releases.

The program adds up to a variety show, presenting many types of music but always with the theatre organ aficionado in mind.

Whether John is presenting the heavily tripleted semi-rock of "Sh-Boom" or the romantic schmaltz of Romberg's "Deep in My Heart," he displays an understanding of the intent of the writer and the feel of the time the selection reached peak popularity. This latter quality is particularly evident during the E.T. Paul march, "Napoleon's Last Charge," a worthy relic from the early days of this century. Of course march time is limited as a means of expression (example: the French regiments never get out of step during the battle nor during the retreat from Waterloo in the E.T. Paul version). Still, John crams a lot of dramatics into the selection by variations in his arrangement which never appeared in the sheet music. In an entirely different aura, John pictures an incompetent but romantic knight, Don Quixote, pursuing his dimwitted Dulcinea in the title selection from *Man of La Mancha*.

But John Ledwon's forte is his treatment of groupings of 1920's tunes and later, 1940's titles. Rather than give them cursory treatment in order to list the titles, John provides each one a loving pat on the fanny which puts each tune into its most effective musical and historic perspec-



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tive. His intros and lead-ins prepare us, and the registration takes full advantage of the magnificent instrument he has assembled.

The '20s medley includes: "I Want to be Happy," "Four Leaf Clover," "Carolina in the Morning," "Bye Bye Blackbird," "Charleston," "Tea For Two" and "Hallelujah."

The '40s set includes: "Big Wide Wonderful World," "Sentimental Journey," "Oh What a Beautiful Morning," "You Are My Sunshine," "Over the Rainbow," "Zip-a-dee Doo Dah" and "In the Mood."

The jacket front has a fine color shot of John at his console (which came from a Plattsburg, N.Y. theatre) plus views of the chambers and the stuido. Technically, there are a few flaws. The end chord of Man of La Mancha is cut off abruptly. There are a few spots where our lightweight tonearm tends to jump heavily modulated grooves, a condition remedied by the addition of a few grams of weight to the pickup head.

Jacket notes are detailed, giving much information about the organ, the organist and the music. This is a disc which grows on one; with each

playing there seem to be new and enriching discoveries.

ALL THROUGH THE KNIGHTS. Don Knights at the Compton organ, Odeon Theatre, Leicester Square, London. Deroy (stereo) No. 1336 (Volume 82). Available in Great Britain from Deroy Records, Eastwood, Cove, West Scotland. In the USA from Stanley C. Garniss, 35 Union Street, North Easton, Mass. 02356. \$5.50 postpaid.

Don Knights' excursions into the recording field are infrequent. His previous recordings have been played on 2-manual Comptons but this time his instrument is the Compton 5-decker (17 ranks plus Melotone, we recall) in the Leicester Square Odeon, London, an instrument which will be forever linked with the name of the late Gerald Shaw, its most memorable resident player.

From all we have gathered over the years, this particular instrument is mechanically and tonally more "straight" than theatrical, and entertainment specialists must work hard to obtain a theatrical sound. Don Knights, an old hand at theatrical styling (he dates from silent movies), succeeds admirably. He is effective in all styles of music presented here, but we find his lilting treatment of the Viennese melodies of Robert Stolz to be among his best efforts, perhaps because we have knowledge of and familiarity with these lighthearted operetta tunes.

Selections are: "Here We Are

Again" (theme), "Paris Medley" (which covers most of Side 1), "Repasz Band March," "Officer of the Day March," "Memories of Robert Stolz" (Viennese potpourri, about one half of side 2), "Heartaches" (shades of Ted Weems' band and whistler Elmo Tanner!), "Happy Feet" (from the Paul Whiteman movie *King of Jazz*), "Mr. Wonderful," "Little Girl," "Au Revoir."

Don's marches are exceptionally well played; he thinks like a brass band and the organ provides the instruments. On tunes with less rigid rhythm requirements he does some swell pedal phrasing which should not be confused with "pumping." In his presentation he tends toward the medley idea, segueing from one selection of a group or type directly into the next, sometimes with a modulation separating them. This gives the effect of the fondly remembered late night organ broadcast of yore. About one half the grooves are occupied by two such groups, one Parisian, the other Viennese (Don is very hip on Vienna's light music).

The playing style is easy and uncomplicated, with melody dominating. There is variety in registration but this would seem to be secondary to expressive playing. Don had little time to become familiar with the Odeon Compton. Because the house is booked solid, he had to record between 2:00 and 7:00 a.m. (also the hours of minimum outside traffic noise in the busy London downtown). The late hour might have had something to do with an occasional minor clinker. He had a



John Ledwon and his Wurlitzer.



(Stufoto) Don Knights at the Odeon Compton.

(John D. Sharp Photo)

narrow escape during "Little Girl," but he did break out of a musical cul-de-sac. Don's recreation of 1929 organ jazz during "Happy Feet" is painfully accurate; he's a stickler for detail even when the bill calls for corn. So, corn we get, but briefly.

Recording is generally good, although the first selection is weak in the pedal bass department. And our review pressing was off center enough on Side 2 so that a slight "wow" was audible on sustained tones. Side 1 was perfectly centered.

Don't forget to fade out the music on the first beat of the final chord of "Gaitie Parisienne" (the last of the Paris medley) to avoid experiencing a rasping schmeer glissando, the only item we would argue over with Don.

Over-all, it's a pleasant and listenable melange of varied musical styles.

BILLY NALLE: SHOW BUSINESS, played on the RTOS 4/22 Wurlitzer organ. Telarc stereo No. 5031. \$7.00 postpaid from RTOS, Box 8114, Rochester, N.Y. 14657.

Billy Nalle's records are few and far between and worth anticipating. His first, played 20 years ago on the N.Y. Paramount "Dowager Empress" and entitled *Swingin' Pipe Organ* has long been a sought after set of grooves. Several more Nalle albums have been released across the years and we'll venture to state that we've never heard a cut wherein Billy wasn't in complete control every second. He's one of the most exacting craftsmen in the business. Which is as it should be because his often complex arrangements wouldn't settle for less. *Show Business* follows the discipline pattern established when Billy cut those two sides of swingband jazz tunes for RCA in 1958. The program heard here is much more varied in titles, playing styles and general mood; only the Nalle enthusiasm remains unchanged.

The instrument is one of the most attractive and well maintained organs on the scene today, thanks to its dedicated owners, the Rochester Theater Organ Society. It is located in a good acoustical environment, the Auditorium Theatre, and beyond that we'll say no more because readers are bound to know its story.

Billy Nalle first came to our attention in the mid-'50s when he was experimenting with free jazz improvisations as cue music for New York-produced soap opera broadcasts. Needless to say, he's never been out of our sight since, because he's an innovator, and that adds up to interest value. There's a good brief biog of Billy among the extensive jacket notes, another reason for buying the record.



Billy Nalle

But there are better reasons. A new Nalle record release is something of a musical event, and this one is among his best.

The selections include three originals which stack up well with the standards he presents. In the "That's Entertainment/No Biz Like Show Biz" style is his opener, "Show Business," which is as effective as either of the over-recorded titles to bring the spotlighted console into view. "As Long as He Needs Me" features the Wurlitzer's strings and later, full organ, before an introspective denouement. Harmonic treatment is often unusual, but that's a Nalle characteristic. "I Love To Hear You Singing" is pure Jesse, despite what the jacket notes say, and one of the best recorded recreations of the Crawford trademark arrangement. The inclusion of "Million Dollar Baby" is a lively concession to Billy's dad, who zeroed in on his future wife while "she was selling china, in a 5 & 10 cent store." "Sylvia," long a favorite of baritones, does very well as a melodic tour-de-force sans words. The Wurl's solo and color reeds come off very well. One of today's truly lovely melodies is "Alphie," a selec-

tion which defies the rule that a tune must be repetitious and easily singable. "Alphie" wanders, in a beautiful way, and Billy is there with just the right nuances to fulfill one of the most memorable arrangements on the disc. Billy has fun with "The Trolley Song" in a non-Judy way which in no way detracts from impressions which linger from the memorable movie. Lots of melody variations here. Then there's the Glenn Miller big band theme, "Moonlight Serenade." It's a natural for organ because Miller's arrangement was big and full, with those clarinet-topped Saxophones sounding much like a reed-topped Tibia chorus. "Center City Rag," a Nalle original, sounds like they was whoopin' it up at the Dirty Shame saloon with plenty of nickels in the player planner.

In his jacket notes Billy writes of "Ah Sweet Mystery of Life:" "I was struck all over again with the beauty and sweep of an inspired piece of music." Victor Herbert's tune is constructed so as to invite harmonic ornamentation. Naturally, Billy is right there with the ideas. In places where the melody is allowed to sing simply there are moments of magnificence but too soon the harmonic development becomes the focal point and the tail may seem to wag the dog. It gets big and thunderous, even goes into an improvisation. Then, in a moment of apparent madness, those years of electronic playing suddenly re-assert themselves and Billy reverts to a brief moment of "hammondry." Zounds!

Billy's closer is a fine tribute to Duke Ellington with a sensitively played "In My Solitude" which is interlaced with an empathetic Nalle original called "Mood Sultry."

It's a concert with no dull moments. Even when Billy stretches "Mystery of Life" out to 6 minutes and 34 seconds, there are no yawns, just a question: what'll he do with it next? Finding out is an adventure. The changes in volume and registration variety are noteworthy. Telarc Records deserves a huge "thank you" for resisting any urges recording people too often get to tamper with the frequency and dynamic ranges. Thus Billy was able to play his arrangements without the bass and treble roll-off and dynamics squeeze so common with the majors.

The cover bears photos of Billy at work and generous notes about the music, organist and theatre. Like previous Billy Nalle releases, we predict this one will be a winner.

DON THOMPSON AT THE RIVIERA, OP-005 (stereo). \$6.50 post-paid from Don Thompson, 58 The Esplanade, Toronto M5E 1A6, Canada.

Don offers forty-eight familiar tunes played in danceable tempos, in clusters of 3 or 4 of the same general type. Dance styles include polkas, foxtrots, waltzes, quicksteps and barn dances.

Titles are: "Shall We Dance," "La Paloma Blanca," "I'm in a Dancing Mood," "Top Hat," "Cheek to Cheek," "Red Roses for a Blue Lady," "Cabaret," "Steppin' Out With My Baby," "If You Were the Only Girl in the World," "All Alone," "It's a Sin to Tell a Lie," "Moon River," "Edelweiss," "Roses of Picardy," "Where or When," "Blueberry Hill," "Tea For Two," "Rose Marie," "I Love You" (with verse), "Cecilia," "Daisy," "Three O'clock in the Morning," "Little Sir Echo," "Peggy O'Neil," "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland," "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," "Loveliest Night of the year," "And the Band Played On," "Ain't She Sweet," "Who's Sorry Now," "Nobody's Sweetheart Now," "Margie," "Dinah," "When You're Smiling," "Walking My Baby Back Home," "Heart of my Heart," "Show Me the Way to Go Home," "Side By Side," "My Blue Heaven," "Peg O' My Heart," "Sleepy Time Gal," "Have You Ever Been Lonely," "Anniversary Waltz," "Always," "Together," "Charmaine," "Diane," "Fascination."

The tunes are mostly accorded one chorus each, and with such brief duration there is little time or need for expansive treatments. The emphasis is on maintaining a danceable tempo, rather than expressive playing, and in that area Don succeeds. He manages to make the 3/17 Wurlitzer in the North Tonawanda Riviera Theatre sound often very British, coming up with combinations not unlike those of Reginald Dixon (emphasis on mutations).

Bill Gallaghers' recording does

justice to a fine instrument. The cover photo shows Don in white formal attire dancing with famed ballroom dancer Anna Bohn in a deserted Toronto street.

This one is for dancing, uncritical listening or for Don's army of fans, who will love it.

A LYN LARSEN CONCERT, played on the Detroit Theater Organ Club's 4/34 Wurlitzer in the Senate Theater MC-101 (stereo) \$6.50 post-paid from Musical Contrasts, Inc., 415 South Main Street, Royal Oak, Michigan 48067.



Lyn Larsen.

(ESTMIM Photo)

Here's a collection of very listenable music recorded on one of the largest and best sounding organs available today. A special design of Wurlitzer evolved for the Detroit Fisher Theatre, it is now carefully maintained in the Senate Theater, for this record by Dave Brewer and Walter Plumhoff. Frank Laperriere, Mac McLaughlin and Ted Amano did the first rate taping.

Selections are: "In the Good Old Summertime," "Giannina Mia," "Shine On Harvest Moon," "In the Garden," "Radetzky March," "Midnight in Mayfair," "St. Louis Blues," "That's a Plenty," "Italian Street Song," "My Heart At thy Sweet Voice," (*Samson & Delilah*), and "Comedians' Gallop." Lots of vari-

ety in the tunelist.

All selections are played with impeccable technical skill, contrasty registration which fully exploits the goodies on the great instrument, in arrangements which give this reviewer an agonizing case of *déjà vu*. The harmonic and rhythmic effects applied often seem very familiar. True, Lyn admits that his pop organ "teachers" were the records of George Wright and Jesse Crawford. We must be very appreciative of Lyn's Crawford recreations because they help keep the great organist's contributions alive. However, Lyn leans much heavier on the stylings of George Wright. The selections on this record are peppered with the effects Wright originated on his Hi-Fi label and Dot recordings years ago but timeless in their musical values. Mr. Wright is still very much on the scene, making records and playing concerts. Is it conceivable that Wright could be accused of swiping Lyn's stylings and effects, which George originated on records years ago? We sought out the Wright originals of many of the devices heard here. One by one they turned up, a snatch here, a filler there, the juxtaposition of a roll in relation to the direction of the melody line, phrasings, the stings and stabs, the Glock ornaments, the Posthorn emphasis effects — many of them can be located, some times in the arrangements of other tunes.

True, Lyn applies the effects expertly but he doesn't credit the lifts, trick by trick. Which raises the question; is it fair to Wright? But even more to the point, is it fair to Lyn Larsen? As much as we may admire a flair for imitation, it's still imitation. We feel that a wonderful talent and ability such as Lyn Larsen's shouldn't be dependent on any other organist's accomplishments. And this is far from the first record on which Wright trappings have been heard on Lyn's records.

We have known Lyn since his first public concert at the Orange Theatre in Orange, Calif. when he was 19, even wrote the jacket notes for his first Malar record. We have been most happy with the success he has enjoyed. That's why we urge him to speak for Lyn in his music.

A.J. Miller's low key album design is attractive. Jacket notes are the usual. □

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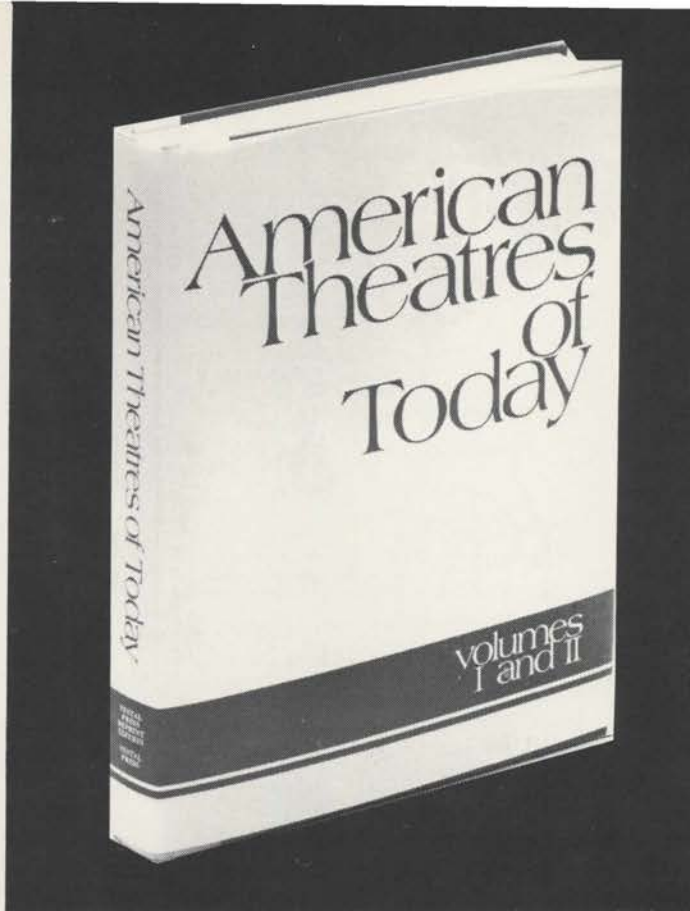
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VOX POPS



Conducted by Stu Green

Readers are encouraged to submit interesting sidelights on the organ hobby (exclusive of chapter news items) material they believe will be of general interest about local organ activities and installations and the people who work at the hobby. We know "there's VOX POPS in them there chapters" and it only requires a 9c postcard to get it to VOX POPS Editor, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. If the contributor can afford a 13c stamp, why not include a black and white photo which need not be returned.

Sorry we must open on a minor chord, but as we go to press the major wire services are reporting that the Radio City Music Hall in New York will close following the Easter show, after 45 years of operation. Declining attendance was given as one reason. Once "the showplace of the nation," the huge theatre, which always featured a stage presentation with its first run G-rated movies, has suffered from the lack of appropriate films and security in Gotham. If you attended a Music Hall evening performance you were also running a chance of being mugged on the streets. At this writing no information was available as to the fate of the 4/58 Wurlitzer but we have high hopes that a wealthy ATOSer or organization will rescue it.

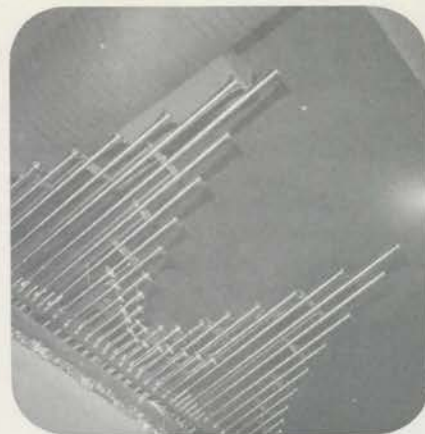


The trio of San Diego, Calif. spaghetti and pizza chain of organ-enhanced eateries no longer exists. The Mesa installation (3/14 Wurli) survives but the Pacific Beach (5/28 Reggie Foort Moller) and the Solana

Beach (4/20 Robert Morton) pizzerias are closed and the instruments disposed of. Owner Preston "Sandy" Fleet explains that the two restaurants operated continually at a loss, and, as a businessman, he couldn't afford to sustain them. The Mesa installation, on the other hand, has always shown a profit and will continue to operate.

Sandy Fleet has disposed of his organs thusly: the Solana Beach Morton has been donated to an organization (details later). The 5/28 Moller has been sold to J.B. Nethercutt (sponsor of the San Sylmar, Calif. Tower of Beauty Museum) and its disposition has not been determined. Rumors that it would be installed in the Hollywood Pantages Theatre are untrue, according to Gordon Belt, who speaks for Nethercutt. The Trompette-en-Chamade which had been added to the Moller goes to a Bakersfield Church, where it will be added to the heretofore homeless Harvard Chapel organ, so long a cause celebre of organist Virgil Fox. The style D Wurlitzer which was also installed with the Moller, goes into storage.

Conditions attached to both the Morton and the Moller is that both remain intact. Conversely, the 4/28 assembled Wurlitzer which Fleet bought from George Allen has been broken up for parts, with roughly three-fourths of it (about 20 ranks) donated to the Oakland, Calif. Para-



Sandy's Trompette-en-Chamade. To church, with a Harvard accent. (Stufoto)

mount organ project. The remainder was donated to the San Diego ATOS chapter.

We can't help but wonder how these vast changes will affect the ATOS Convention planned for San Diego.



Gunnar Anderson, intermission organist at the Mount Baker Theatre in Bellingham, Wash., recently took a vacation trip to Panama. He had a goal; to find out what had become of the 3/27 Wurlitzer which had been such a solid draw at the Panama Hilton hotel in Panama City until a Canadian firm with no interest in organs bought the hotel and removed the organ, later selling it for a reported 10 grand. Gunnar managed to locate one of the Hilton's last or-



Gordon Belt presents Sandy Fleet with the check from Merle Norman Cosmetics paying for the transfer of the 5/27 Reginald Foort Moller to the J.B. Nethercutt Company.

ganists, Pablo Herrero. The experience had made Pablo a pipe addict, and he became the unofficial champion of the stored organ. He was determined that the organ, which had originally been installed in the Atlantic City Warner's Theatre, would be heard again in Panama. He started doing the rounds of possibly interested parties and hit pay dirt at the Continental Hotel. There was a glimmer of interest when he told about what a draw the organ had been while installed in the Hilton's "El Bombarde" cocktail lounge. It took a lot of convincing, but finally the owner of the Continental hotel decided to buy the Wurlitzer, whose price had meanwhile risen to a reported \$45,000.

Chambers are being built in the Continental. It is expected that it will be playing by July 1978. The organist? Pablo Herrero, naturally.

It will be recalled that the Wurlitzer was moved from Atlantic City to Panama City in the early '60's by Leroy Lewis and technician Ted Campbell. They installed it in the Hilton and Lewis was the first staff organist. He was followed by Bill Coffman, Lyn Larsen and Pepi Bustamente, among others. Another one saved.



Ken Veneron sends a clipping from the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle which indicates that some reporters assigned to cover organ events could profitably do some woodshedding, else develop an ear for music. Reporter Larry King innocently discovers that such a thing as a theatre organ exists, describes what it was designed to do, provides some history of the RTOS 4/22 Wurlitzer involved, how the "talkies" silenced it, discovers that the instrument functions only when there is an organist, compares the organ's obsolescence with horse drawn carriages and the Model T (Ford) and adds: "Something better replaced it."

But not a word about the concert played in Rochester's Auditorium Theatre by no less than Del Castillo.



Games played by the Tampa Bay Rowdies soccer team are "cued" much like a silent movie, reports John Tyner. The organist is Leora Birk, playing the three truncated manuals of a Conn model 580, plus



From tiny press row room, Leora Birk keeps the Tampa Rowdies musically inspired. Note microphone position just below the lower keyboard.

an organ-top Electric Band synthesizer. As the players are introduced at the Florida playing field, each one comes on to a brassy fanfare. When the game starts, Leora tailors the music to the action. When the Rowdies are advancing, it's ascending chromatic chords. As they near the opponents' goal, the music speeds up to a gallop, followed by the "charge" trumpet call. When the Rowdies score, its pure pandemonium, and the Electric Band provides a rising siren while Leora

makes with "The Rowdie Song."

Should the team miss a goal Leora has a sour "lamentation chord." But officials who clap a penalty on the Rowdies are assaulted with a facetious "Three Blind Mice" roaring out of the Tamps Soccer Stadium's PA system. Should the ball approach the Rowdie's goal, it's slow music and if the opponents score a goal, it's the "Funeral March."

Sometimes Leora cues the ball as it bounces on the ground with Wood Block "plocks," quite a trick considering the organ is located in a glassed-in box atop the grand stand far above the field. To be in sync, she must hit the Block button while the ball is still in the air.

This is Leora Birk's third year as official organist for the Rowdies, and she has yet to develop a whit of sympathy for the opposing teams. No wonder she has become such a plus morale factor to rooters for the Tampa team.



Add Syracuse N.Y. to the list of cities wherein a group of dedicated citizens are trying desperately to save a movie palace, 3000-seat Loew's State. Spokesman Jim Foley says that Syracuse Area Landmark Theatre (SALT) needs \$100,000 to buy and repair the Thomas Lamb — designed house. Its 4/20 Wurlitzer is long gone, having been spirited away to storage in California 10 years ago by an organ broker who paid \$5,000 for it. SALT wants it back but the cur-

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rent owner refuses to sell. If SALT can raise the theatre's purchase price, matching federal funds will help toward establishing the ornate house as a performing arts center.



Lee Erwin. Doubling on tape. (This photo was made by movie star Gloria Swanson when Lee visited her.)

Lee Erwin reports that the late Ben Hall's "Little Mother" Wurlitzer has been giving good service since it was installed in the New York Carnegie Hall Cinema last March. Lee has also been playing silents on a plug-in in the downtown Bleeker Street Cinema. He's totalled 148 performances between them since March, scrambling between the two houses. Sometimes there's a scheduling foul-up and Lee finds himself listed to play both houses at the same time. After an unsuccessful search for a substitute to alleviate one such problem, Lee settled the matter by taping his score for the Bleeker Street Cinema's show. Which brings up a question? Is it still a silent movie show in the full sense of the phrase if a soundtrack has been added? Without a visible musician I want my nickel back.



ATOS member Dave Broskowski recently visited Mrs. Dan Barton for the purpose of gathering information for an article in process to be entitled, *The Barton Story, the Man, the Company, the Product*, being written by Dave.

While in Oshkosh, Dave examined an original 3/21 Barton church installation still in use (actually one of many in the area). "It has a smooth

romantic-era ensemble, which really blends... a true straight design with straight chests, straight-rail Barton style church console, lower pressures, and differing scales from their theatre work. Especially notable was the 8' Doppelflote and an excellent 16' Violone in the Pedal. Barton manufactured all of their wood pipes in their Oshkosh factory," writes Dave.

From another source we learned that Dave also took time out to play weekend interludes before the show at Milwaukee's atmospheric Avalon Theatre on a late 3/9 Wurlitzer during July and August. The organ is maintained by the Dairyland chapter and features a "gorgeous Tibia and Vox Combination".



We lost a couple in the Bay Area of San Francisco. The 2/9 Wurlitzer, for many years the only distinguishing quality at the "Lost Weekend" watering hole in San Francisco, was silenced and removed, reportedly because of the complaints of other tenants in the building. It was "replaced" by a — Yamaha! Also closed down are the pipes in Rudy's Supper Club in Vallejo, replaced with a plug-in." For years Dave Quinlan played a 2/6 Wurlitzer there, often expanding to a jazz combo on weekends. No info has been received regarding the disposition of the instruments.



A clipping from a Clearwater, Florida newspaper indicates that the organ in the Kirk of Dunedin is perking once more, a rebirth which has given it voice after a year of si-

lence caused by a disastrous fire. Its mentor, Terry Charles, writes, "It's really something, the way this new concert series is taking off. The organ is much better than ever before. We are getting a terrific response." Good news!



Bob Ralston. Only slightly incorrigible.

Organist Bob Ralston is prominent in *Lawrence Welk's Musical Family Album*, a photo-autobiography with a running commentary by the maestro (\$12.95, Prentice-Hall). Some of Welk's comments are revealing: "Musically, Bob and I don't always agree. But after a little hot and heavy discussion (during which I pointed out that I was the boss!), Bob agreed to do it my way, with no baubles, bangles or birdcalls."



From Columbus, Ohio, we learn that Heidi James has been commissioned to write an original silent movie accompaniment for Harold Lloyd's *Safety Last* to be scored for piano, organ and the Columbus Symphony orchestra during the Ohio Theatre's 50th Anniversary celebration on March 12. Says Heidi, "I'm up to here in manuscript paper." Wonder if she has any special organist in mind for that show? (Your Vox Popper is available, Heidi!).



The electric sign which usually announces shows and exhibits had a different message on Dec. 29, 1977. There would be a wedding in Wichita's Century II Exhibition Hall, present home of the former N.Y. Paramount "Dowager Empress" 4/36



Wurlitzer (now 4/37). Organ enthusiasts Mike Coup and Karen White were married by Judge Robert Stephan before 200 invited guests. ATOS Director and Past President Dick Simonton was best man.

After the ceremony, the reception was held in the same hall. The desire to include the famous organ in the festivities was easily explained. The groom has been a major driving force in getting the Wurlitzer a permanent home in Century II and is the current president of the sponsoring organization, Wichita Theatre Organ Inc. From all reports the bride has become as enthusiastic as the groom in the TO cause.

The reception was sparked by organ music played by local artists Tom Taylor, Alan Malaby, Jim Sanford and Carl Packer. Rick Shindell came all the way from Toledo, Ohio, to participate. The final performer

was WTO resident organist Billy Nalle.

It was a warm and inviting setting as the guests danced on the attractively decorated stage, never far from Mother Wurlitzer's console.



Charlie Balogh. 'Hitched.'

(Stufoto)

Another wedding of interest to TO fans took place at the Fountain Street church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, on Nov. 3, 1977. Married were Charlie Balogh and Carrie Adams. The bride and groom met where they are both employed, the pipe organ-equipped Roaring '20s pizzeria, reports Barbara Gedris. Charlie, who is a staffer at the '20s, will be remembered as the young man who presented a most attractive concert on the Trenton (N.J.) War Memorial Moller during the 1976 ATOS convention.



A TOAST TO THE NEWLYWEDS — The best man, Richard Simonton, left, and the Matron of Honor, Connie Ficklin, right, offer well wishes to Karen and Michael.

Elsewhere in this issue is the account of Reginald Foort's farewell concert at the Vancouver Orpheum. Nothing was mentioned about the reception held Nov. 11 for the retiring organist nor the remarkable PR man who brought it to fruition. The man responsible for both the concert (including the organ restoration) and the party was Herbert McDonald, long prominent in western Canadian promotional work. Herb held the party at his home on a mountain side west of Vancouver. For Reggie Foort it was like an episode of *This is Your Life*. He had brought wife Betty, the first time she had gone along on a concert engagement. At Herb's long bar, the Foorts met a score or more of people who had figured in Foort's past, for example, Irv Pearson, a member of Foort's traveling organ crew in Britain in the late '30s, Peter West who had sung to Foort's accompaniment at the Regal Theatre, Kingston on Thames — when Peter was ten! There were Frank and Teddy Killinger. Frank had released the recording of Foort's reunion with his beloved 5/27 "traveling Moller" in San Diego and who had come to Vancouver to record the organist's farewell concert for immediate release. There was Ken Hodgson who headed a group of ATOS volunteers in the seven-month organ restoration project, and Hodgson's teacher, Stan Haddon, who had maintained the 3/11 all through the vaudeville salad days. And alderman Bill Gibson was there. Bill had supported the loan which made the restoration possible. Reggie met some of his relatives who live in western Canada for the first time — cousins Ted and George Foort, both born in India.

Foort was visibly shaken when alderman Gibson read the inscription on a plaque to be attached to the Orpheum console which credited the veteran player as the "rededication organist." "It was just my way of celebrating my wife, Helen's birthday," said Herb McDonald. And the cake was there to prove it.



Several correspondents, notably Tom De Lay and Elbert Dawson, provide details about the retirement of Alexander Schreiner as organist at the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City after 53 years of service. Schreiner bid farewell to the enormous



Alexander Schreiner. A distinguished career included a smattering of theatre work.

choir during its Christmas party. Even then, he managed a "first," — he sang "A Pretty Girl is Like a Melody" to the gals in the 375-voice vocal group. Born in Nuremberg, Germany, his family moved to Utah in 1912 and it wasn't long before the gifted Schreiner made his musical presence known.

Theatre organ buffs will appreciate his two stints in that capacity, first at the American Theatre in Salt Lake City, playing a 4-manual Kimball, very straight. Then he obtained a leave to try his hand at the Los Angeles Metropolitan Theatre's style 285 Wurlitzer. His engagement lasted six months (in the late '20s), after which he returned to church duties in Utah, never again to play a theatre instrument. He is best remembered as the organist (along with Dr. Frank Asper) who played the Tabernacle organ for a memorable series of Sunday morning CBS radiocasts which spanned the decades. He is also a composer and teacher. Welcome to leisure days, Dr. Schreiner.



SHORTIES: LA Dodgers organist Helen Dell's musical greeting to an opposing team during the 77' World Series — "Send in the Clowns." . . . The only known "X-rated" organ console in a theatre is in the Riviera,

North Tonawanda, N.Y. It's an original 1926 Wurlitzer installation, decorated with female nudes . . . The long-going restoration of the 2/11 Kimball in Elkhart, Indiana's 2100-seat Lyceum Theatre now has the instrument playable, reports prime mover Peter DeYoung. The 16' pedal Bourdon has a 10-2/3' mutation to obtain a 32' effect . . . RTOS (Rochester, N.Y.) knows how to attract an audience. More than 1500 attended the Dennis James Halloween concert at the Auditorium Theatre . . . Multiple trumpeter Vic Hyde once owned 15 Rolls Royces, but now settles for a German Tempo truck. The Tempo carries his band wagon calliope with fewer alterations . . . A comer: 16-year-old David Peckham, who created a sensation playing the newly refurbished 4/22 Marr & Colton in Elmira, N.Y.'s Samuel Clemens Performing Arts Center at a Nov. 19 concert there . . .

Visiting British organist Ron Curtis, here on a concert tour, delighted RTOS members by turning a goodly portion of his fee back into the organ fund, the first to do so of the 72 organists who have played for the Rochester club . . . Bill Blunk invites



Ron Curtis. Generous.

organ fans passing through Portland, Ore., to drive the 11 miles to Sherwood to enjoy his 5/24 Marr & Colton in the refurbished Oriental Theatre . . . Model railroaders who attended the November show in St. Paul's (Minn.) Har Mar ballroom were afforded the additional bonus of ATOSer Claude Newman playing interludes on an unspecified theatre pipe organ according to *Model Railroader* magazine . . . In 1971, downtown Chicago had 16 theatres with a total of 24,024 seats. Since then, the Bismarck, Michael Todd, Monroe, Clark and Marina City theatres have

shuttered permanently. Lucky the Oriental has been saved, else the loss of seats would have totalled 8,697, or 36 percent . . . The Land O'Lakes ATOS chapter has 224 members, with eleven pipe organs in homes, or in progress, reports news-hen Bea Englund . . . Carolyn Beck reports that Dr. Rainsford A. Brown, Bettendorf, Iowa, has donated his home installation, a 3/20 Wicks, to Rust College, where it has been installed in Morehouse Auditorium . . . George Faxon, organist at Boston's Trinity Church, Copley Square, is seeking information about theatre organist Deszo D'Antalfy's descriptive compositions. D'Antalfy was one of the original staffers at the New York Roxy . . . Scratch the 3200 seat RKO Keith's Theatre in White Plains, N.Y. It opened on Nov. 7, 1927 with a youth named Jack Skelly at the 3/10 Wurlitzer . . .



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Mr. L. Hudson
The Cinema Organ Society
22, Oakwood Close
Chase Road, Southgate
London, England N14 4JY

December 3, 1977, was a great day for the theatre organ in Beaumont, Texas. ATOS prexy Ray Snitil and treasurer Erwin Young were there relative to the establishment of the Southeast Texas Chapter, which is centered at Beaumont with its fine 8-rank Robert Morton organ in the Jefferson Theatre. The visitors ran into an unexpected helping of Texas hospitality. First, Mayor Ken Ritter issued a proclamation, loaded with "whereases" extolling the wonders of the theatre organ and proclaiming Dec. 3 as "Southeast Texas Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society Day." Then Mayor Ritter, who is a nephew of famed Tex Ritter of the movies, gave Ray and Erwin the keys to the city of Beaumont and made them Honorary Citizens of Beaumont. Declared "Cap" Young, "Talk about civic cooperation! The whole town of Beaumont is theatre organ-conscious. Ray and I were treated like kings!"

All of which must be most satisfying to Al Sacker, the organist who worked so long and hard to convince the city that it had treasure in the Jefferson Theatre. You've done it, Al.



Bob Legon writes from Malden, Mass. of the arrival of "Andre" at the New England Aquarium at Boston where he immediately dove into his favorite tank of water. Andre is a tame seal who spends winters at the aquarium, but is freed to summer in Maine. He swims both ways. His arrival back in Boston is an annual event and this year WBZ-TV covered Andre's return to his winter quarters on Nov. 2. What set the presentation apart was background music dubbed in from George Wright recordings, Bob says the organ music set the scene of Andre coming ashore to be greeted by a delegation of humans very effectively. He adds that it reminded him a bit of scenes in *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (which also featured a seal) with George Wright doing an unintentional and invisible Captain Nemo.



We can't begin to thank all the wonderful people who were so thoughtful as to send Season's Greetings cards to THEATRE ORGAN staffers. We can't possibly acknowl-

A TRIBUTE TO BUDDY COLE

A certain glow has left this earth
And reached the great above;
Another star now lights the sky
In brightness of its love.

It leaves us with such sorrow
This dark and saddened day;
But the world is so much richer
For his having passed this way.

The happiness he gave us
Through his music and his song;
The memory of his cheerful smile
Will linger on and on.

For this man was a giant
In a world sometimes so small;
It makes me wish with all my heart
I could be half as tall.

So sleep in peace, dear Buddy Cole
We weep for you in prayer;
We ask that God watch over you
In special loving care.

For there is a special place for you
In the hearts of young and old;
But there will never be for us
Another Buddy Cole.

by Max E. Schloss

edge them by mail, but they are very much appreciated. Thanks, friends!




(Pegpic)

If your VOX POPS column seems a little truncated this issue, the photo will explain. During the recent holidays your Vox Popper took a dive and the result was a bifurcated wrist. The heavy dose of plaster-of-paris proved something of a handicap and it slowed us down considerably.

It also proved that one-armed Vox Popping can be somewhat limiting. Try getting the stopper out of a bottle with one arm useless. Try tying

your shoe strings one handed. Try getting into your wet suit for a plunge into Mare Nostrum. Hope the knitting is complete by next issue. □

moving?



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VI THOMPSON
THEATRE ORGAN
P.O. BOX 1314
SALINAS
CALIF. 93902

WURLITZER BUILDS THE MIGHTIEST

by Jerry Kenney
The Wurlitzer Co.

Plans to build Wurlitzer's last theatre organ began when the Company acquired a new corporate headquarters facility. A large auditorium, Wurlitzer Hall, was planned for these facilities as a showplace to highlight the more than 12 decades of Wurlitzer musical history. In order to accurately represent the best of theatre organs, it was necessary to design an instrument that would occupy most of one wall, measuring 40' by 72'.

Like any job that is done with infinite care and patience, the task of building the last and mightiest of the Mighty Wurlitzers has taken a great

deal of time. Progress has been painstakingly slow.

There is still much work to be done. The Mightiest is nearing completion now, but before long, the sounds of those mighty giant Tibias will reverberate through Wurlitzer Hall, as the Mightiest of all Wurlitzer pipe organs claims its permanent home and place in the theatre organ history.

First, as a representative of the quality Wurlitzer sound, the organ had to be 100 percent Wurlitzer. This meant the Mightiest had to be built with only Wurlitzer parts which had to be located and acquired. If

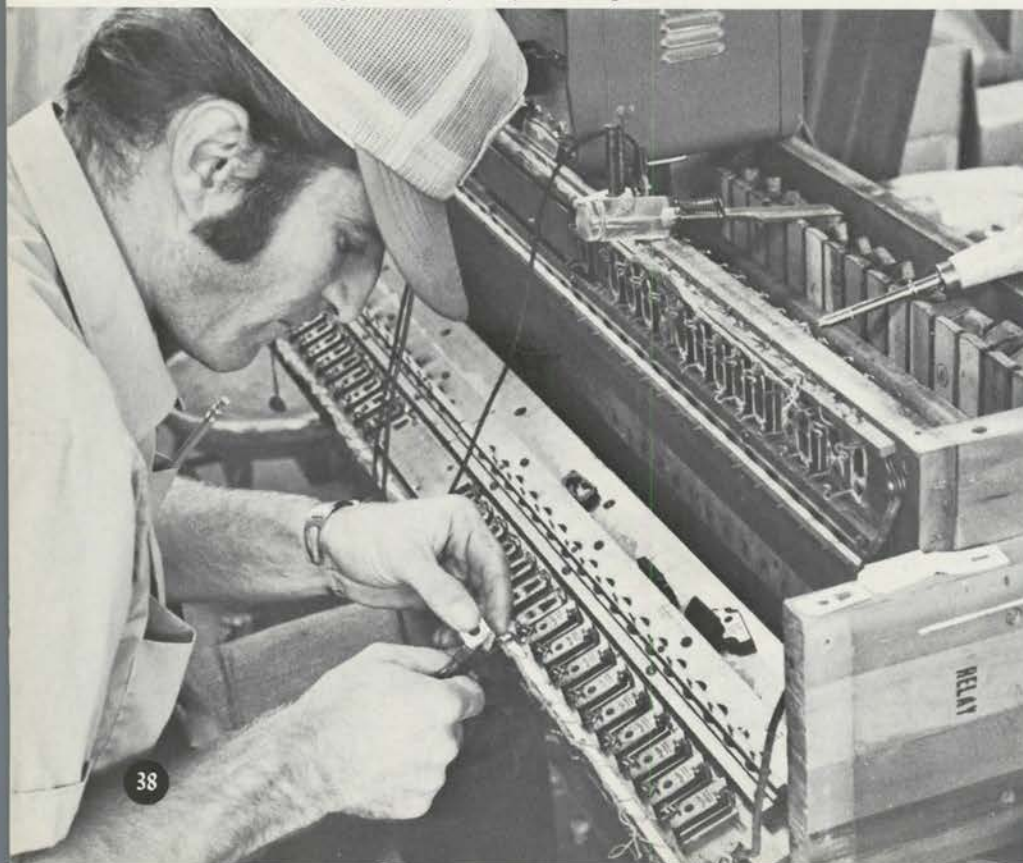
the original parts could not be located, Wurlitzer then fabricated the parts to factory specifications. The parts then had to be restored to their original condition. This meant replacing worn leather in the relays, checking miles and miles of cable, replacing broken wires and refurbishing and repairing pipes and traps. Expression chambers had to be built and the cables layed before installation finally began on the Mightiest Wurlitzer.

In the past, Wurlitzer had built only three five-manual consoles, and none of these were available for use in the new organ. So, after a four-manual console had been located and modified to accept five keyboards, the console was then shipped to the Wurlitzer organ plant in Corinth, MS, where the Company's finest craftsmen gave the console its finishing touches.

A symbol of all Mighty Wurlitzer theatre organs, representing the best of their unmistakable sounds, this new organ will be assigned the final Wurlitzer opus number to mark the historic significance of this installation. When completed, the organ will have five manuals, 65 ranks, 341 stops and over 7,200 pipes. The Mightiest will also boast a duplicate percussion section.

After more than a year of planning, Wurlitzer's last and mightiest pipe organ is in its final stages of installation at Wurlitzer Corporate Headquarters in DeKalb, IL. The largest Wurlitzer theatre organ ever built, this instrument even surpasses in specifications the 4/58 Mighty Wurlitzer in Radio City Music Hall. □

Work progresses slowly as relays on the Mightiest are rebuilt.





Wurlitzer furniture designers inspect the console of the Mightiest Wurlitzer before it is sent to the company's organ plant in Corinth, Miss.



Ready to roll, the console of the Mightiest Wurlitzer is prepared for shipment to Mississippi.

Behind the scaffolding, work nears completion on the expression chambers that will cover one wall of Wurlitzer Hall.



the letters to the editors

Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

Address:

George Thompson
Editor
P.O. Box 1314
Salinas, Calif. 93902

Dear Editor:

What, *really*, constitutes theatre organ music? Is it a style, a state of mind, a location, an instrument, a personality, a type of musical selection, or what? Recent months have seen many views expressed in these pages as to just what constitutes the essence of theatre organ programming. Please let me add a few of my own.

But, before I do, let me re-state a truism: No one can legislate taste. What is one person's *Tibia* is another's *tripe*. Depending upon personality, education, degree of exposure to various styles of music, blood pressure, sugar and hormone levels, we are all different from one another. There is no way this side of the heavenly pipe chambers that everyone will appreciate a musical experience to the same degree. So, there must be room, always, for the individual differences among us. It's a free country, kids!

For some of the ranks of ATOS, the *mechanical* side of theatre organ is the chief interest. Granted, we could never dispense with their talents and expertise. But, some among them could care less for the finesse

in registration, modulation and arrangements that delights the *trained musician* who attends the same concert.

Then there are some in every audience who simply revel in hearing the same tired handful of basic musical bromides ("Lara's Theme," "76 Tombones," etc.) and who will tolerate little else. These persons sometimes assert that they go to concerts to be entertained, not educated. Perhaps a tape recording of their favorite selections would be better for them than a *live* artist, particularly if the tape were played through the pipe chambers. But a *live artist* means much more than sound *reproduction*.

Being a musician and an occasional concert artist myself, I believe that an organist who sits down at the console of a theatre organ to play for others has a unique opportunity and responsibility. Surely he *must* entertain and delight, but he can, and frequently does, painlessly *educate*. He should not, I agree, play over the heads and abilities of the average listener. ATOS is *not* AGO! A long list of classical organ works simply does not belong to the theatre organ "tradition," particularly when the organs themselves do not have the tonal characteristics to carry off that musical genre in the first place. On the other hand, I feel it is sheer idiocy for someone to write off the artist as "too classical" when the organist cuts the tremis now and then. One would think that the tremulants controlled such person's pacemaker!

One who plays theatre organ music in public should attempt to balance his selections and attempt to play something to please everyone, if possible. Perhaps the old cliché has some truth: "Something *old*, something *new*, something *borrowed*, something *blue*." Some of the finest theatre organ concerts I have ever attended had just that combination! Any true theatre organist is attempting to *communicate* with his audience, to share his feelings, his humor, his ideas, his love and joy with them. The language he uses is *sound* — musical sound. Just as we who speak the English language with one another combine words used by Chaucer and Shakespeare with words of the street people of 1970's, the theatre organist is justified in

combining the musical language of the Crawford of yesterday with the sounds of the present.

As for the debate in the most recent issue of THEATRE ORGAN: that of playing the *notes* or playing the *music*, I feel that it should be noted publically that there is an important difference between the theatre organist and the organist who performs the classics in public concert. The theatre organist must be adept at improvisation, arranging and orchestration as well as the literal art of key pushing. The presentation of real theatre organ music is an extension of the organist's personality. *What* he plays and *how* he plays it *both* constitute his art. If, however, he chooses to play classics, then he should do so, but only with the care and integrity that the classics so greatly deserve.

The theatre organist who poses as a pedagogue is a fool. However, there is no reason why he cannot still uplift and educate with the joy and enthusiasm he puts into well-practiced music. After all, an artist's program is, first of all, *his* program, for he has chosen the selections. While he must keep his audience in mind, it is true that the audience, for their part, must give him a chance. Communication is two-sided. It is the clever, unfamiliar music that gives a program its personality, while the familiar music gives a program its flow, warmth and pacing. Both are necessary.

True music is an art, not merely a business. That is true of theatre organ music as well. A true artist can create a spell that brings enjoyment, culture, happiness to those who come to enjoy, to listen and to appreciate — in short, who are willing to hear what this live, individual artist is trying to say. The occasional unreasonable crabby critic in our midst should not upset either the artist or listener, or stand in the way for the majority for whom the glorious music of the theatre organ in all its diversity is one of the delights of life in this old "vale of tears." Keep theatre organ music coming — and enjoy it!

Rev. William Edward Biebel
Erie, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Thompson,

I am writing to you in hopes that one of your ATOS members could

shed some light on an instrument of great interest to me. The instrument in question is the 3/11 Marr and Colton once located in the Feeley Theatre, Hazelton, Pennsylvania.

A friend of mine has a tape of Leroy Lewis playing the organ in the Feeley Theatre. This tape was made in the late 50's. The sound of that instrument has to be about the most lush theatre organ sound I have ever heard.

This past summer my friend stopped in Hazelton, Penn. on his way to the national convention. He found the Feeley Theatre all boarded up. Checking around, as near as he could determine, the organ had been removed many years earlier. It is my hope that someone might shed some light as to where this instrument went.

Thank you for your interest.

Dr. Alan Goodnow

Dear Editor:

I would like to express a word of thanks to Mr. Tom Hazleton for his concert on November 22, 1977 for LA-ATOS on the Elks Organ, and to commend him for being a most capable organist.

About the organ: it is a concert organ, not a true theatre organ, although it does have a horseshoe console. Instead of having stop tablets for each rank available on each manual, ranks can be borrowed from one manual to another by means of inter-manual couplers. The Robert Morton organ is an original installation, dating from 1926, thus, it has not been completely reworked, like many organs which have been moved from place to place, hence it requires much maintenance. Originally, there were 59 ranks, but one rank (the Tibia Molis) is permanently missing; 11 ranks are in the echo chamber, which can be played from either the main console of four manuals, or from a separate two-manual console; and the remaining 47 ranks are divided between four chambers (Solo, Unenclosed Great & Pedal, Swell, and Great & Choir).

Due to lack of sufficient maintenance personnel, the organ wasn't up to a standard of perfection, and a few ranks were disconnected for the concert. But there were still 50-plus ranks working in good shape (that's more than most theatre pipe organs ever have working, and any *good* or-

ganist *will* be able to get something good out of that much of an organ). Once again, Tom proved his excellent capability by working with the organ, instead of letting the organ work against him. He also demonstrated many capabilities of the organ, and concluded his concert by playing several numbers from the small console, which shows the beauties of the echo organ as it is played into the entrance lobby of the building, and up the main staircase.

Most unfortunately, many people who call themselves theatre organists are not true theatre organists, but only Wurlitzer organists. If it is not a Wurlitzer, they do not know how to handle it. Certainly, on an instrument the size of the Elks organ, any organist worthy of being called an organist can find something to work with. Mr. Tom Hazleton has proved that he is a virtuoso organist through his desire to perform on the Elks organ and through his capable handling of a good organ which is not a Wurlitzer.

If your club has a good organ, and it isn't a Wurlitzer (or even if it is), and you are looking for a top organist to perform for a concert, may I suggest and recommend Mr. Tom Hazleton? And thanks again, Tom, for a very enjoyable evening of listening to a wonderful organ concert.

Sincerely,
Paul Duerr
Member, Elks Organ
Maintenance Crew □



"The last mile." ATOS Vice President/Treasurer Erwin Young leaves the cockpit for the final time, July 31, 1977, after maneuvering United Flight 56 from San Diego to Dulles International Airport. Cap retired after 32 years as a pilot.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

by Lance Johnson

- 1. I have a 30 amp modern rectifier that I use on my 3/15 Wurlitzer and I was wondering if I am overloading it? I am afraid of having it blow out and quit during a concert.**

Ans. The rectifier you refer to is slightly underrated and should handle your requirements. If it was being overloaded, you would have known it long ago with fuses being blown on the secondary side.

- 2. I have a mostly 3/15 Wurlitzer which uses a Spencer Orgoblo, 5 hp, 1200 rpm, rated at 13 inches pressure. How much can this blower be pushed? I am trying to keep the pressures down with no pipes over 8½" wind. The tonal percussions, toys and console work on static wind. I enjoy and indeed appreciate your fine column, and more power to you!**

Ans. My question at this point would be, what pressure was your organ voiced on? If you have lowered the pressure, the pipework will not blend and the tonal character will be altered. You would be bound to have many slow reeds. If you intend to keep this pressure, your blower will suffice as long as you don't add any more pipework or raise pressures. If your organ was mostly voiced originally on 10" wind, your blower would be borderline. Normally an organ of this size, especially if it had a few ranks on 15" wind, would have a 10 hp machine shipped with it.

- 3. I have a relay which is just about full, that is, the contacts at the short bar already have wires attached. I still want to add tonal percussions. What is the easiest way to do this?**

Ans. There are two methods; One would be to add more contact blocks. Unfortunately most relays don't have space. The other method would be to build a diode circuit divider by removing one stop from the contact block and wiring it to a buss bar, which forms the basis for no more than three gang switches. Each switch will have to be loaded with diodes to prevent circuit "flyback." Wire each switch to the new stops and wire stop wires to switch action magnets. It can also be done completely with solid state and eliminate all gang switches. The chest magnets on these "new" stops should also have spark suppression diodes installed to reduce current on relay contact. Diodes are available from Resiner or Durst.

- 4. When you depress a note from the keyboard, a short bar moves in the relay causing a number of contacts to be common. This then goes to the buss bars and the rank is not playing unless the switch is energized. I can't understand why you cannot have multiple contacts (several wires on one pin) in the relay. Since the short bar goes down, all the contacts are positive anyway. No one has yet to give me a satisfactory answer.**

Ans. Let me answer your question with this illustration; Let's say you have wired the lowest pedal relay note so that one contact is wired to the Tibia 8', Tuba 8' and String 8'. Now you register the pedal so that all three of these stops are on. If you register only the Tibia 8' in the Solo manual and play the bottom C on the keyboard, you will also hear the Tuba 8' and String 8' play. How? The lowest pedal relay note was energized by the low C on the Tibia which you played on the Solo. The positive impulse traveled to the relay spreader, through the Pedal Tibia 8' gang switch all the way down to the pedal relay where you wired it

also to the Tuba 8' and String 8'. Since the three stops were on in the pedal, they will all play together on the Solo. In conclusion, when building an organ on the unit system, where notes are being played more than one pitch on more than one keyboard, it is necessary to isolate each unit note by means of an electronic or electro-mechanical relay.

5. Why does a magnet fail?

Ans. If you mean electrically, there are several problems; Rodents have been known to chew on magnets especially in country churches. The lead wires can break off at the terminal if acid was used as a flux. During the twenties, some firms used acid not knowing what it would eventually do to the connection. Then the cross-over wires between the two poles can break from being brittle with age or because they were not well-protected when manufactured. Wurlitzer magnets will fail because of the dipping varnish reacting with the wire and paper core causing the wire to break.

6. When playing a sustaining chord for more than a few seconds, my regulators sink down and collapse which naturally eliminates the trem and the chests that I presume are starved for air. My blower is a kinetic with a 10" outlet, reads 1000 cfm, 1165 rpm and wind at 4". It is now driven by a 3 hp motor at 1750 rpm with static pressure at 12". I believe that the cfm goes down as the wind pressure goes up. Is this correct? How do I know if the blower is large enough for my instrument? I have only one 16' stop, the Tibia Clausa. The 10" outlet reduces to 8" and feeds across the chamber. Then it T's off into 6" lines, one to each regulator. The 8" goes into a wind trunk. Off this trunk is a 3" supply to the Vox only, since the Vox has its own regulator. My organ is a 2/7 hybrid.

Ans. You are correct in assuming the volumetric capacity is reduced by speeding up the blower and increasing the pressure. The blower now would have about 1/3 its original volume capacity which is

Do you have any questions?

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marginal for your application. The most glaring problem would be the size of your conductors. I would increase the blower feed from 10" to 14". Then the supplies to your regulators should be increased from 6" to 10". With three tremas going and with all that unification you are using up more air than those conductors can deliver.

7. My Wurlitzer regulator has two wires that stick up through the top and when depressed, the top elevates. My friends tell me not to push these rods down as the factory set the location of these rods. Are they correct?

Ans. Those two rods are connected to dowels just under the top and when the regulator top drops, the rods push the flappers open to admit more air. They are in three stages: The small cone valve, which is evident by the bolt and two nuts loosely on top, opens first. When more air is needed, the second valve, which is the small flapper, opens to admit more air. When larger demands are made on the regulator, the top continues to fall and pushes the large flapper open. The theory is to slow the regulator down so that it can be tremulated. Pushing them down will do them no harm. The three stage flapper system also prevents the regulator from tremulating on its own.

8. I have two reed pipes that are slow, like two to four seconds. I would appreciate some help on this.

Ans. Assuming the tongue and shallot are clean; try this: with one hand hold the pipe upside down and hold the tongue down firmly

against the face of the shallot. With your other hand free, use a nail set or scratch owl and bur-nish the tongue the full length. Do this only gently at first to avoid removing too much curve. To test, put the pipe back in the hole and peck the key. If the pipe will start, then you have corrected the problem.

9. What is the make-up of the Wurlitzer style 235 and how does it compare to the style H?

Ans. The style 235 is a 3-manual eleven rank organ as follows:

- Harmonic Tuba 8', 16' . . . 85 pipes
- Diaphonic Diapason 16' . 85 pipes
- Tibia Clausa 8' 73 pipes
- Clarinet 8' 61 pipes
- Orchestral Oboe 8' 61 pipes
- Kinura 8' 61 pipes
- Viol D'Orchestra 8' 85 pipes
- Viol Celeste 8' 73 pipes
- Salicional 8' 73 pipes
- Flute-Bourdon 16' 97 pipes
- Vox Humana 8' 61 pipes

The Style H is three manual, ten ranks with the same ranks as the 235 except without the Salicional 8'.

Note: The chamber designation for the Violin II in the last issue of Q&A, question 3 should be S, not M.

Correction: Our reader Gary Rickert pointed out that my answer to the rush of air through the magnet problem with dead notes was incorrect. The answer should have been to re-leather the primary, not the secondary (Unless there is no primary). □



Carl Norvell, Cap Young and Betty Norvell at the Holiday Inn in Corsicana, Texas, where Carl is inn-keeper. He was the fourth president of ATOS, serving from 1964-1966. Betty was national secretary during that time.

Emery Theatre Organ Dedicated

by Al Kuettner
Director of Information
University of Cincinnati

Photos by Peggy Palange

Gaylord Carter acknowledges applause of audience.



Downtown Cincinnati, Ohio is, what they call, undergoing progress. One entire side of Fountain Square, as well as other large areas in the immediate vicinity, have been brought to ground level by the wrecking ball. New buildings — higher, brighter and more contemporary — will rise from the earth for new generations to work in, eat in and be entertained in.

One of the buildings that bit the dust was the well-known Albee Theatre, located on the south side of the Square. For a number of years, the Albee was the home of a fine Wurlitzer theatre organ but its pipes had long since grown silent with "progress." The talkies were in, and no longer were the likes of Hy C. Geis, Grace Baucom, Johanna Grosse, Lee Erwin and Gaylord Carter needed at the keyboard.

That's what everyone was thinking — and resigned to — until the Ohio Valley Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society got into the act. The Albee organ would live, the Society said. Quicker said than done.

Let's start with 1968. It was then that RKO-Stanley Warner Theatres, owners of the Albee, decided to give the organs remaining in their theatres to charitable and educational institutions. The Ohio Valley Chapter of ATOS was contacted to see if a suitable home could be found for the fine instrument.

After a long search, the Ohio College of Applied Science-Ohio Mechanics Institute, then an independent institution, announced its willingness to house the organ. The beauty of that offer was that the college owned the Emery Theatre at its Central Parkway and Walnut Street location in downtown Cincinnati. The college is now part of the University of Cincinnati.

The Emery was the former home of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, a facility possessed of fine acoustics, a seating intimacy that gives the audience in the 1,680-seat house a feeling of being a part of the performance and a convenient location.

The Emery was built through a \$500,000 gift from Philanthropist Mary Emery, and for almost 25 years the Cincinnati Symphony played most of its concerts there. Conductor Leopold Stokowski called the acoustics "superb — the power of the orchestra in the smaller hall seems

greater, but the blending of the instruments is above reproach."

The years between the two world wars were the great days for productions at the Emery. Walter Hampden and Maurice Evans were there in Hamlet. Mme. Schumann-Heinck, Fritz Kreisler and Rachmaninoff were there in concert, and Anna Pavlova, Russia's prima ballerina, danced on the Emery stage during her farewell American tour.

In recent years, several other theatres in downtown Cincinnati followed the Albee into disuse, but the Emery stood — waiting.

The word went out to ATOS members that volunteer help, and money, were needed to dismantle the Albee organ and install it in its new home on the Emery stage.

Mr. and Mrs. John J. Strader, prominent Cincinnati theatre organ lovers and philanthropists, responded with substantial contributions. The couple then expanded their generosity by securing the largest theatre screen in the state of Ohio and by having the excellent professional theatre projectors and sound equipment modernized and overhauled.

For the next eight and one-half years — years, not months — members of ATOS worked to restore the Albee organ in its new home. One retired radio-television engineer spent

The Emery Wurlitzer with view of swell shades in the background.



The Emery Theatre foyer.

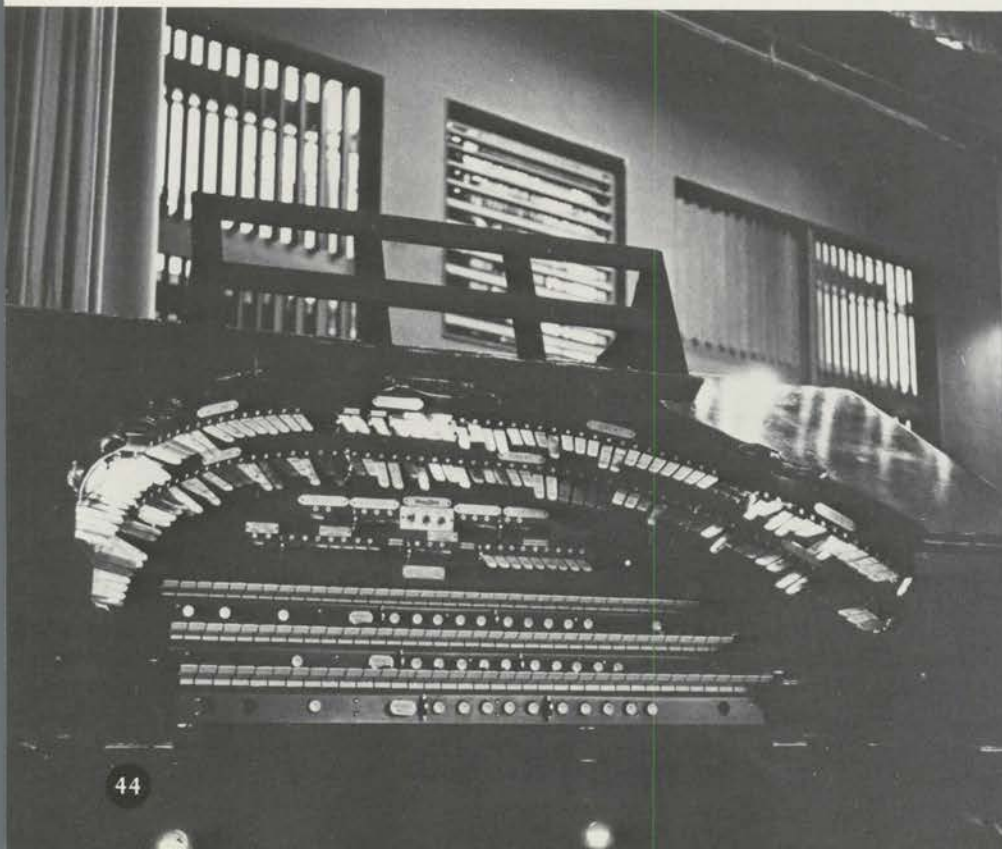


A full house for the dedication of the Emery Wurlitzer.

almost the entire time in the sub-basement of the Emery, installing the electrical panel and connecting wires that would produce the right sound when a key was depressed on the organ out front.

Finally the task was finished, and on the weekend of October 21-22-23, 1977 the rebuilt organ was dedicated before full houses of cheering music lovers and theatre buffs. Gaylord Carter was there, tickling the ivories while old silent films were projected on the huge screen.

The organ is truly magnificent, better than it ever was in the Albee. When removed from that theatre, it had three manuals and 19 ranks. When it was newly installed in the Emery, it had an additional rank, a pedal violone stop from the Austin



organ once installed in the Liberty Theatre in Covington, Ky., across the Ohio River. The rank was donated to the chapter by member Herbert E. Merritt.

A special Chinese gong was added to the organ's percussion section, a gift from members Philip and Blanche Underwood. Mr. Underwood had recently retired from Station WLW after 42 years as an engineer. The station had given the old gong to him as a keepsake from the days when WLW originated a number of live radio programs that were heard all over the country.

By the evening that Gaylord Carter touched the dedication keys, more than 20,000 volunteer hours had been spent on the organ's restoration. But, audiences have proclaimed the labor an effort well worth all the energy.

Now starts the next phase, the eventual restoration of the Emery Theatre. It has been only sparsely used in recent years and major repairs and renovation must be made before the house is truly suitable for the renewal of concerts. Yet, those dedication audiences, filling the place wall to wall, clearly indicated that the Emery could again be a popular theatre.

Beyond its use for entertainment, it is an ideal place for rehearsals and performances of the University's famed College-Conservatory of Music, now in need of more space for its many activities. The science college next door, which is entered through the theatre foyer, could make good use of the space for large lectures.

Leaders of the Organ Society and the University have held several preliminary conferences on what might be done with the Emery Theatre. The University wants to cooperate to the extent possible, but no fixed schedule for Emery renovations is possible at present because of outstanding capital commitments to various academic units.

Those who earnestly desire completion of the Emery project feel that a way will be discovered through the unique relationship between the University and the Organ Society. A master plan is being developed. How it will evolve, and when, is not known; but neither was the timetable known in advance when the old Albee organ was dismantled. And listen to its great pipes now. □

New Pizza Showplace in Florida



Resident organist Don Baker at the 3/27 Wurlitzer at the J. Burns Pizza Shoppe in Tampa, Fla.

(Gladys Henderson Photo)

Now, Florida has another spectacular showplace. J. Burns Pizza Shoppe in Tampa with Don Baker as resident Organist.

J. Burns and Bud Hatcher have gone "all out." A brand new 600 seating capacity building with a 3/27 Wurlitzer. All pipes can readily be seen behind glass windows. Each note on all the percussion instruments lights up a tiny bulb as Don strikes the keys. The pizzeria is complete with color wheels, strob lights, crystal revolving ceiling balls, bubble machines, silent movies, life size animal characters, pizzas and a gift shop. Some 3800 lights throughout the building are operated from the console by Don.

Charles Stanford and Tom Hoehn are Don's associates at the organ.

Don Baker has had visitors from throughout the entire United States ranging in age from six months to 90 years. This is a fun place for one and all. Another must for visitors to Florida. □

WE'RE NUMBER 1!

And we're busier than ever! Work now in progress at Junchen-Collins includes:

WURLITZER — rebuild and enlargement of Boston Paramount (pictured at right) for midwest pizza parlor

WURLITZER — enlargement of 3-manual console from 135 to 200 stops for Pied Piper Pizza Peddler, Detroit, Michigan

MOLLER — rebuild and historical preservation of 1915 instrument at United Methodist Church, Poolesville, Maryland



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NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



It's Valentine's month again, so Jason and I salute all those gals in the ATOS whose work for the cause is immeasurable. We lead off with three mini biographies which were found in July 1926 *Melody*, and May and December 1927 issues of *Jacobs Orchestral* magazines respectively.

FRANCES TIPTON has served as organist in the Clemmer Theatre in Spokane, Wash. for about seven years.

To talk to this charming young lady, one would never guess that she is considered the best "one-man orchestra" in Spokane, or that nine years ago, she was playing piano in a small house in that city. When the organ came into its own, Frances didn't continue playing pictures via the piano. She studied the parts of the organ herself and soon accepted a position. It was in a "small joint," as she puts it, but in two years' time, she had played every theatre in town.

During her lengthy stay at the Clemmer, she spent two winters in California, where she played at the Cameo in Los Angeles, and the Raymond in Pasadena. While at the Cameo, she met Roy L. Metcalfe, organist at the Raymond, and acting upon his advice, joined the Los Angeles Theatre Organists Association. She became Mr. Metcalfe's assistant and substituted at the Raymond during his vacation. After returning to Spokane, she organized the theatre organists club there.

In Los Angeles, she had the privilege of playing engagements at the Metropolitan, which was Henry B. Murtagh's stronghold, and the Forum Theatre's monstrous Kimball.

The Kimball organ in the Clemmer, while not a modern unit organ, is a very beautiful instrument. It has four manuals and an echo organ, the latter containing six ranks of pipes. Through her ability and long association with the Kimball, Miss Tipton is able to get better results than any other organist who has played upon it.

Besides pictures, Frances plays divertissements and stages prologues to the various Universal pictures presented there. She is keen about her work and is a source of much inspiration and help to her friends and associates.

Miss AVELYN M. KERR is an enthusiastic type of person. Her numerous activities benefit by that quality, whether she is at the theatre organ console, writing her Milwaukee column for the *Jacobs* Magazines, or conducting her automobile business as she plans to do this summer to the exclusion of most other interests.

Miss Kerr has had a wide and varied experience in the theatre organ playing. She was among the first to play theatre organ, starting with a Bartola, and since then, using almost every style theatre organ which is made. She spent one year with the Marquette Piano and Organ Co. of Chicago, demonstrating and playing openings, and there she learned to know the mechanics of the organ. Miss Kerr

is thoroughly workmanlike, and was clever enough to see the advantage of acquiring this knowledge.

One year was spent at the big Wurlitzer organ of the new Rex Theatre in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. Then last March, she opened the new Wangerin Unit Organ at the new Lake Theatre in Milwaukee. Last June, she joined the Saxe Amusement Co., and since then, she has been working at the Mirth Theatre in Milwaukee, where her solos and community singing have become very popular.

For the coming summer season, Miss Kerr plans to devote her time to her automobile business; work with and for the music magazines of Walter Jacobs, Inc., with special attention for *Melody*, the piano and organ edition of the Boston music magazine *Triad*; and to her new school. She has recently opened the Avelyn M. Kerr School of the Organ, which uses the \$25,000 Marr & Colton Wisconsin News Broadcasting Organ (WSOE) for practice, instruction and demonstration. Miss Kerr designed and supervised the construction of this organ and broadcasts programs with it regularly.

BASIL CRISTOL is one of Chicago's most entertaining musicians. She comes of Irish stock, having been born in Dublin. As a pianist, she has appeared with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, playing a piano concerto with that fine organization on one of their programs.

Her theatre organ experience has covered a period of over five years in many of the city's leading houses, including the Chicago, Uptown, Tivoli, Riviera, Central Park and Roosevelt. She has appeared at several of the Sunday morning recitals held at the Chicago Theatre with great success, and has, for the last five months, given the same sort of concerts at the Tivoli Theatre on the south side. She is opposite Milton Charles on the Tivoli-Uptown rotation, usually going on the bill with Benny Kreuger while Charles appears on the program with Ulderico Marcelli.

She is a capable improvisator and also presents slide novelties very effectively. But, aside from Mrs. Jesse Crawford of course, women organists do not seem able to get as far as they should with "the firm" (as Balaban & Katz are familiarly known here), and Miss Cristol is no exception.

There is, of course, no reason why a woman cannot be as efficient an organist as a man. It is only a question of time until all producers recognize this; many of them do now, for that matter. But until that time comes, Miss Cristol and many other really fine women organists will not be likely to have the recognition and the opportunities their ability deserves.

Jan. 7, 1928 (*Variety*) At the New York Paramount, Mr. and Mrs. JESSE CRAWFORD presented a varied program at the Wurlitzer: "Among My Souvenirs," "Diane," "I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me," and "The Song Is Ended," plus these hits from Broadway shows: "Up In The Clouds," "S' Wonderful," "My Heart Stood Still" and "Varsity Drag." (Jesse, of course, played the ballads, while wife Helen did the numbers with rhythm. Then came the duets. What a pair!)

That does it for this time. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

ALABAMA

BIRMINGHAM

Alabama Theatre, Third Avenue
4/20 Wurlitzer. Often.

Recreation Hall, S. Side Baptist Church
3/9 Kimball. Periodically.

ALASKA

ANCHORAGE

Uncle's Pizza, 1900 Gambell.
3/8 Robert Morton. Daily.

JUNEAU

State Office Building.
2/8 Kimball. Friday Noons.

ARIZONA

MESA

Organ Stop Pizza #2,
2250 W. Southern Ave.
3/25 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

PHOENIX

Organ Stop Pizza #1, 5330 N. Seventh.
4/29 Wurlitzer. Daily.

Phoenix College.

2/10 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

CALIFORNIA (North)

CAMPBELL

Capn's Galley #3, 1690 S. Bascom.
3/27 Wurlitzer-Morton.
Nightly except Monday.

CARMICHAEL

Big Top Pizza, 5800 Winding Way.
3/20 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

CONCORD

Bella Roma Pizza #2.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Daily.

DALY CITY

Capn's Galley #4, Serra Monte Ctr.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

FREMONT

House of Pizza, 20 Fremont Ctr.
2/7 Robert Morton. Thurs. thru Sun.

HEALDSBURG

Johnson's Winery, 8329 State Hwy. 128.
2/7 Marr & Colton. Often.

MARTINEZ

Bella Roma Pizza #1, 4040 Alhambra Ave.
3/12 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

MODESTO

Pizza Machine #3, Alpha Beta Ctr.
2/9 Wurlitzer. Daily.

PINOLE

The Red Vest
2/10 Wicks. Nightly.

PLEASANT HILL

Pizza Machine.
2/6 Wicks. Nightly.

REDWOOD CITY

Capn's Galley #2, 821 Winslow.
4/26 Wurlitzer-Morton.
Nightly except Monday.

SACRAMENTO

Arden Pizza & Pipes, 2911 Arden Way.
4/20 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

Golden Bear Playhouse

State Fairgrounds.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

Grant Union High School
1500 Grand Ave.
4/22 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

Municipal Auditorium.
4/46 Estey. Periodically.

Sierra Inn, 2600 Auburn Blvd.
4/16 Robert Morton. Nightly.

SAN FRANCISCO
Avenue Theatre, 2650 San Bruno Ave.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Friday evenings.

Cinema 21, 2141 Chestnut.
2/6 Robert Morton. Occasionally.

SAN JOSE
The Thunder Mug
Winchester and Williams.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

SAN LORENZO
Ye Olde Pizza Joynt, 1951 Hesperian Rd.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Wed. thru Sun.

SAN RAFAEL
Marin Pizza Pub, 526 Third.
3/13 Robert Morton. Nightly.

SANTA CLARA
Capn's Galley #1, 3851 Homestead Rd.
3/12 Wurlitzer. Nightly except Monday.

CALIFORNIA (South)

ANAHEIM
Shakey's Pizza, 2815 W. Lincoln.
2/9 Wurlitzer. Nightly except Monday.

DEATH VALLEY
Scotty's Castle
3/15 Welte. Daily.

DOWNEY
Shakey's Pizza, 12030 Paramount Blvd.
2/6 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

EL SEGUNDO
Old Town Music Hall, 146 Richmond.
4/24 Wurlitzer. Regularly.

FRESNO
Pizza & Pipes, First at Shields.
3/23 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

Warnor Theatre, 1402 Fulton.
3/14 Robert Morton. Periodically.

FULLERTON
Shakey's Pizza, 601 N. Placentia.
3/12 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

GARDENA
Roosevelt Memorial Pk.
18255 S. Vermont.
4/17 Wurlitzer. Regularly.

GLENDALE
Whitney Recording Studio, 1516 Glenoks.
4/34 Wurlitzer-Morton. Often.

LEMON GROVE
Southland Music Ctr., 3459 Imperial Ave.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Often.

LONG BEACH
Koon's Motorcycle Shop
1350 E. Anaheim.
3/22 Wurlitzer-Welte. Saturday nites.

LOS ANGELES
Elks' Lodge, 607 S. Parkview Ave.
4/61 Robert Morton. Often.

Haven of Rest Studio, 2400 Hyperion.
3/13 Wurlitzer-Kimball. Daily.

Universal Studios, 100 Univ. City Plaza.
3/13 Robert Morton. Often.

Wiltern Theatre, 3790 Wilshire Blvd.
4/37 Kimball. Often.

ORANGE
Orange Theatre.
2/8 Wicks. Periodically.

THE pipe piper



This is a reasonably up-to-date listing and schedule of use of theatre pipe organs in public locations in the United States and Canada. Additions, corrections or deletions should be reported promptly to Lloyd E. Klos, 104 Long Acre Rd., Rochester, N.Y. 14621. Remember: We cannot keep this list current if updated material is not sent to the above address. Deadline is December 1 each year.

Editor's Advice: Status and use of each installation are subject to change. Inquiry is recommended before visiting.

PARAMOUNT
Iceland Amphitheatre, 8041 Jackson.
3/19 Wurlitzer. Regularly.

PASADENA
Crown Theatre, 129 N. Raymond Ave.
3/14 Wurlitzer. Weekly.

RESEDA
Pipes 'n Pizza, 7500 Reseda Blvd.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Nightly except Monday.

SAN DIEGO
Fox Theatre, 720 B Street.
4/31 Robert Morton. Often.

Organ Power Pizza #1
5375 Kearney Villa Rd.
3/12 Wurlitzer. Daily except Monday.

SAN GABRIEL
Civic Auditorium, 320 S. Mission Dr.
3/16 Wurlitzer. Often.

SANTA ANA
Pipe Organ Pizza, 1717 Old Tustin Rd.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

SYLMAR
San Sylmar Museum, 15180 Bledsoe St.
3/32 Wurlitzer. By appt. or thru tour.

WESTCHESTER
St. Roberts Hall, Loyola College.
3/10 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

COLORADO

COLORADO SPRINGS
City Auditorium, Kiowa & Weber.
3/8 Wurlitzer. Often.

Majorie Reed Auditorium
Cascade & Jackson.
3/9 Wurlitzer. Monthly.

Mt. St. Francis Auditorium
W. Woodman Valley Rd.
2/8 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

DENVER
Aladdin Theatre, 2010 E. Colfax Ave.
3/14 Wicks. Weekends.

Paramount Theatre, 16th St.
4/20 Wurlitzer. Rarely.

PUEBLO
Memorial Hall, Elizabeth & Union.
4/65 Austin w/traps & per. Rarely.

CONNECTICUT

THOMASTON
Thomaston Opera House, 158 Main.
3/13 Marr & Colton. Often.

WATERBURY
Civic Center, 137 Main E.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

WILLIMANTIC
Windham Tech. School, Summit St. Ext.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON
Dickinson High School, 1801 Milltown Rd.
3/28 Kimball. Often.

FLORIDA

DUNEDIN
Kirk of Dunedin, 2686 U.S. Alt. 19
4/23 Wurlitzer. Monthly.

MIAMI
Andre Hall, 4150 SW 74th Ave.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Often.

PENSACOLA

Saenger Theatre, 118 S. Pflax.
2/8 Robert Morton. Occasionally.

TAMPA

Pizza & Pipes, 103 Fowler Ave.
3/25 Kimball. Daily.

GEORGIA

ATLANTA

Fox Theatre, 660 Peachtree St. NE
4/42 Moller. Periodically.

HAWAII

HONOLULU

Hawaii Theatre, 1130 Bethel.
4/16 Robert Morton. Daily.

Waikiki Theatre, 2284 Kalakua Ave.
4/16 Robert Morton. Fri. & Sat.

IDAHO

BOISE

Ada Theatre, 700 Main.
2/8 Robert Morton. Occasionally.

MOSCOW

University of Idaho.
2/6 Robert Morton. Occasionally.

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO

Aragon Ballroom, 1106 W. Lawrence.
3/10 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

Chicago Stadium, 1800 W. Madison.
6/62 Barton. Often.

Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State.
4/29 Wurlitzer. Often.

Civic Opera House, 20 N. Wacker.
3/50 Skinner. Often.

Montclare Theatre, 7133 W. Grand.
3/10 Barton. Weekends.

Moody Bible Inst., 820 LaSalle.
3/14 Kimball. Regularly.

Oriental Theatre, 20 W. Randolph.
4/20 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

Patio Theatre, 6008 W. Irving Pk.
3/17 Barton. Occasionally.

Sally's Stage, 6335 N. Western.
3/11 Barton. Nightly.

WGN Studios, 2501 Bradley Pl.
3/11 Wurlitzer-Kimball. Often.

CRYSTAL LAKE

Martinetti's Restaurant, 6305 NW Hwy.
2/8 Wicks. Nightly.

DES PLAINES

Main North High School, 9511 Harrison.
3/10 Wurlitzer. Often.

DOWNER'S GROVE

Community High School
N. Grant & Main.
3/10 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

ELMHURST

Elm Rink, Roosevelt Rd. & Route 83.
4/24 Hybrid. Daily.

HINSDALE

Hinsdale Theatre, 29 E. First.
3/21 Hybrid. Periodically.

JOLIET

Rialto Square Theatre, 102 N. Chicago.
4/21 Barton. Saturday evenings.

LA GRANGE

Lyons Township High School
100 S. Brainard.
3/21 Moller. Occasionally.

LAKE FOREST

Deerpath Theatre, 272 E. Deerpath Ave.
3/10 Geneva. Periodically.

NORRIDGE

Axle Roller Rink, 4510 Harlem Ave.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Daily.

PARK RIDGE

Pickwick Theatre, 5 S. Prospect.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

ROCKFORD

Coronado Theatre, 312 N. Main.
4/17 Barton. Often.

SPRINGFIELD

Springfield High School, 101 S. Lewis.
3/11 Barton. Often.

ST. CHARLES

Arcada Theatre, 105 Main E.
3/16 Geneva. Often.

Baker Hotel, 100 Main W.
3/10 Geneva. Periodically.

WAUKEGAN

Genesee Theatre, 203 N. Genesee.
3/10 Barton. Occasionally.

INDIANA

ANDERSON

Anderson Music Center.
2/6 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

Paramount Theatre, 1124 Meridian.
3/7 Page. Weekends.

ELKHART

Lerner Theatre.
2/11 Kimball. Occasionally.

FORT WAYNE

Calvary Temple, 2901 N. Clinton.
2/7 Marr & Colton. Regularly.

Embassy Theatre, 121 W. Jefferson.
4/15 Page. Occasionally.

Village Inn Pizza, 4224 Coldwater Rd.
3/12 Barton. Nightly.

INDIANAPOLIS

Hedback Community Theatre
1847 N. Alabama.
2/10 Page. Often.

Manual High School, 2405 Madison Ave.
3/14 Louisville-Kilgen. Often.

VINCENNES

Vincennes University Auditorium.
3/14 Wurlitzer. Often.

WHITING

Hoosier Theatre, 1335 119th.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

IOWA

CEDAR RAPIDS

Iowa Theatre.
3/14 Barton. Periodically.

Kirkwood Community College.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Often.

Paramount Theatre.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

DAVENPORT

Capitol Theatre, 330 W. Third.
3/10 Moller-Wicks. Periodically.

SIOUX CITY

Municipal Auditorium, Gordon Dr.
3/12 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

KANSAS

WICHITA

Exhibition Hall, Century II Center.
4/42 Wurlitzer. Often.

LOUISIANA

BATON ROUGE

Paramount Theatre, 215 Riverside Mall.
2/6 Robert Morton. Weekly.

NEW ORLEANS

Saenger Theatre, 1111 Canal.
4/26 Robert Morton. Weekly.

MAINE

PORTLAND

State Theatre, 609 Congress.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

SACO

Old Orchard Beach High School.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

MARYLAND

BETHESDA

Baronet Theatre, 7414 Wisconsin Ave.
2/8 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

FREDERICK

Weinberg Ctr. For the Arts.
2/8 Wurlitzer. Closed for Renovation.

ROCKVILLE

Bailey Studio, 140 Congressional La.
2/11 Moller. Often.

MASSACHUSETTS

GREENFIELD

Garden Theatre.
3/9 Marr & Colton. Occasionally.

SPRINGFIELD

Julia Sanderson Theatre, 1700 Main.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

STONEHAM

Stoneham Town Hall.
2/14 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

WELLESLEY HILLS

Knight Auditorium, Babson College.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Often.

MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR

Michigan Theatre, 603 E. Liberty.
3/13 Barton. Often.

BAY CITY

Scottish Rite Temple, 2655 N. Center Rd.
3/28 Moller w/toy counter. Often.

DETROIT

Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave.
4/36 Wurlitzer. Rarely.
3/12 Moller. Rarely.

Redford Theatre, 17360 Lahser Rd.
3/10 Barton. Often.

Senate Theater (DIOC), 6424 Michigan.
4/34 Wurlitzer. Monthly.

GRAND RAPIDS

Roaring Twenties, 4515 28th St. SE
3/34 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

GROSSE POINTE FARMS

Punch & Judy Theatre, 21 Kercheval Ave.
2/6 Wurlitzer. Rarely.

KALAMAZOO

State Theatre, 404 S. Burdick.
3/22 Barton. Saturday Evenings.

LANSING

Michigan Theatre, 215 S. Washington.
3/12 Barton. Sunday Evenings.

MT. CLEMENS

Macomb Theatre.
3/9 Kilgen. Occasionally.

MUSKEGON

Michigan Theatre.
3/8 Barton. Often.

ROYAL OAK

Royal Oak Theatre, 318 W. Fourth.
3/16 Barton. Often.

SAGINAW

Temple Theatre, 203 W. Washington.
3/11 Barton. Often.

MINNESOTA

BROOKLYN CENTER

Cicero's Pizza #3.
3/15 Barton. Nightly.

EDINA

Cicero's Pizza #2, 7101 Frances Ave. S.
3/15 Barton. Nightly.

LILYDALE

Diamond Jim's, 801 Sibley Mem. Hwy.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

MINNEAPOLIS

Civic Auditorium, 1403 Stevens Ave.
5/20 Kimball. Occasionally.
5/24 Kimball (straight). Occasionally.

MOORHEAD

Bud's Roller Rink, 2120 First Ave. N.
3/7 Barton-Johnson. Weekends.

Performing Arts Theatre, Moor. St. Univ.
3/8 Wurlitzer. Often.

RED WING

Sheldon Auditorium.
2/8 Kilgen. Periodically.

ROSEVILLE

Cicero's Pizza #1, Har Mar Mall.
3/12 Hybrid. Nightly.

Har Mar Mall Ballroom.
Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

ST. PAUL

KSTP Studio, 3415 University Ave.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

MISSISSIPPI

MERIDIAN

Temple Theatre.
3/8 Robert Morton. Weekends.

MISSOURI

KANSAS CITY

Russell Stover Auditorium
1004 Baltimore.
3/8 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

POINT LOOKOUT

School of the Ozarks, Highway 65.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Often.

ST. LOUIS

Fox Theatre, 527 N. Grand.
4/36 Wurlitzer. Rarely.

Old St. Louis Noodle & Pizza Co.
3/? Barton. Daily.

MONTANA

- BOZEMAN**
Ellen Theatre.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Regularly.
- MISSOULA**
Wilma Theatre.
3/10 Robert Morton. Occasionally.

NEBRASKA

- OMAHA**
Orpheum Theatre, 409 S. 16th.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

NEW JERSEY

- ASBURY PARK**
Convention Hall.
3/7 Kilgen. Occasionally.
- ATLANTIC CITY**
Convention Hall, S. Mississippi & Pacific
7/455 Midmer-Losh. Rarely.
4/42 Kimball. Occasionally.
- BOUND BROOK**
Brook Theatre, Hamilton St.
2/4 Wurlitzer. Saturday evenings.
- EATONTOWN**
Mahns Bros. Bicycle Shop.
2/9 Robert Morton. Occasionally.
- GLOUCESTER CITY**
King Theatre.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Periodically.
- MONTVALE**
Montvale Roller Rink, Chestnut Ridge Rd.
2/8 Robert Morton.
Daily except Mon. & Wed.
- NEWARK**
Casa Italiana, 985 S. Orange Ave.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Sundays, Sep. thru May.
- OCEAN GROVE**
Ocean Grove Auditorium.
4/30 Hope-Jones. Occasionally.
- PITMAN**
Broadway Theatre.
3/8 Kimball. Sundays.
- RAHWAY**
Rahway Theatre, 1601 Irving.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Often.
- SUMMIT**
New Hampshire House Restaurant.
2/4 Kimball. Often.
- SURF CITY**
Surf City Hotel, Long Beach Island.
3/15 Wurlitzer. Nightly, May thru Sep.

- TRENTON**
Soldiers & Sailors War Memorial
W. Lafayette.
3/16 Moller. Periodically.

- WANAQUE**
Suburban Restaurant, Belvedere Ave.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Nightly, Wed. thru Sun.

- WESTWOOD**
Pascack Theatre.
2/8 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

NEW MEXICO

- ROSWELL**
Pearson Auditorium, N. Mex. Milit. Inst.
3/14 Hilgreen-Lane. Periodically.

NEW YORK

- BINGHAMTON**
Roberson Ctr. for Fine Arts, 30 Front.
3/17 Link. Monthly.

- BROOKLYN**
Long Island Univ.
385 Flatbush Ave. Ext.
4/26 Wurlitzer. Often.

- Walker Theatre.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

- CORNWALL-ON-HUDSON**
New York Military Academy.
4/30 Moller. Periodically.

- ELMIRA**
Clemens Perf. Arts Ctr., State & Gray.
4/22 Marr & Colton. Periodically.

- GOWANDA**
Hollywood Theatre.
2/6 Wurlitzer. Sunday evenings.

- LAKE PLACID**
Palace Theatre
3/8 Robert Morton. Rarely.

- NEW YORK CITY**
Beacon Theatre, Broadway & 7th Ave.
4/19 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

- Carnegie Hall Cinema, 883 7th Ave.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Weekly.

- Plaza Recording Studio, Rockefeller Ctr.
3/14 Wurlitzer. Often.

- Radio City Music Hall, Rockefeller Ctr.
4/58 Wurlitzer. Daily.

- United Palace, 175th St.
4/23 Robert Morton. Sundays.

- NIAGARA FALLS**
Rapids Theatre.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Rarely.

- NORTH TONAWANDA**
Riviera Theatre, 67 Webster.
3/19 Wurlitzer. Daily.

- ROCHESTER**
Auditorium Theatre, 875 Main E.
4/22 Wurlitzer. Monthly, Sept. thru May.

- ROME**
Capitol Theatre, 218 W. Dominick.
3/7 Moller.

- SYRACUSE**
Mills Bldg., State Fairgrounds
3/11 Wurlitzer. Monthly. Sep. thru June.

- UTICA**
Proctor High School, Hilton Ave.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

- WESTBURY**
Westbury Theatre, Post Ave.
2/6 Midmer-Losh. Often.

NORTH CAROLINA

- GREENSBORO**
Carolina Theatre, 310 S. Greene.
2/6 Robert Morton. Periodically.

NORTH DAKOTA

- FARGO**
Fargo Theatre.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Weekends.

OHIO

- AKRON**
Akron Civic Theatre, 182 S. Main.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

- CINCINNATI**
Emery Auditorium, Univ. of Cincinnati.
3/20 Wurlitzer. Often.

- CLEVELAND**
Gray's Armory, 1234 Bolivar Rd.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

- COLUMBUS**
Ohio Theatre, 39 E. State.
4/20 Robert Morton. Often.

- Pipe Organ Ristorante
3/21 Moller. Daily.

- St. Joseph Girls Acad., 331 E. Rich.
2/7 Robert Morton. Periodically.

- HAMILTON**
Shady Nook Steak House, Route 27.
4/33 Wurlitzer. Nightly except Monday.

- LORAIN**
Palace Theatre.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

- OLMSTEAD FALLS**
Lampighter Inn, 7068 Columbia Rd.
3/11 Kimball. Nightly except Monday.

- SPRINGFIELD**
State Theatre, 17 S. Fountain.
3/7 Wurlitzer. Weekends.

- WILMINGTON**
Wilmington College.
2/7 Wicks. Rarely.

- WORTHINGTON**
Worthington High School
300 W. Granville.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Periodically.

OKLAHOMA

- MUSKOGEE**
Muskogee Civic Center.
3/17 Robert Morton. Often.

- OKLAHOMA CITY**
Civic Center Auditorium.
4/16 Kilgen. Rarely.

- Showplace Rest., Aeromeridian Plaza.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

- TULSA**
Christian Crusade Aud., 2808 S. Sheridan.
3/10 Robert Morton w/traps. Sundays.

- Christ's Chapel, Oral Roberts Univ.
4/21 Wurlitzer. Often.

OREGON

- COOS BAY**
Egyptian Theatre.
4/18 Wurlitzer. Saturday evenings.

- PORTLAND**
Alpenrose Dairy Park
6149 SW Shattuck Rd.
2/5 Kimball. Occasionally.

- Benson High School, 546 NE Twelfth.
3/18 Kimball. Often.

- Imperial Skating Rink, Union & Madison.
4/18 Wurlitzer. Daily except Monday.

- Oaks Park Roller Rink, SE Spok.
4/40 Wurlitzer. Daily.

- Organ Grinder Pizza, 5015 SE 82nd.
4/41 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

- Scottish Rite Temple, 709 SW 15th.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Often.

- SHERWOOD**
Oriental Theatre.
5/24 Marr & Colton. Weekends.

PENNSYLVANIA

- DORMONT**
South Hills Theatre, 3075 W. Liberty.
2/6 Wurlitzer. Often.

- DURVEA**
The Cinema Club.
3/27 Kimball. Nightly.

- ERIE**
Gannon College, 109 W. 64th.
2/10 Tellers. Periodically.

- HERSHEY**
Hershey Community Theatre.
4/45 Aeolian-Skinner. Periodically.

- INDIANA**
Manos Theatre.
3/8 Robert Morton. Often.

- KENNETT SQUARE**
Longwood Gardens.
4/169 Aeolian w/traps. Periodically.

- LANSDOWNE**
Lansdowne Theatre, Lansdowne Ave.
3/8 Kimball. Weekends.

- MARIETTA**
Marietta Theatre, 130 W. Market.
3/26 Wurlitzer-Page. Occasionally.

- PHILADELPHIA**
Wanamaker's Store, 13th & Market.
6/469 Hybrid. Daily.

- PHOENIXVILLE**
Colonial Theatre.
3/13 Kimball. Periodically.

- PITTSBURGH**
Keystone Oaks High School
1000 McNealy Rd.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Often.

RHODE ISLAND

- PROVIDENCE**
Columbus Theatre, 270 Broadway
2/6 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

- WOONSOCKET**
Stadium Theatre.
2/8 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

SOUTH DAKOTA

- LEAD**
Homestake Opera House.
2/5 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

TENNESSEE

- CHATTANOOGA**
Tivoli Theatre, 709 Broad.
3/14 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

- KNOXVILLE**
Tennessee Theatre, 604 Gay.
3/14 Wurlitzer. Weekends.

- MEMPHIS**
Orpheum Theatre, 197 S. Main.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Sundays.

TEXAS

- BEAUMONT**
Jefferson Theatre, 345 Fannin.
3/8 Robert Morton. Often.

DALLAS
Fine Arts Theatre, 6719 Snider Plaza.
4/27 hybrid. Periodically.

Landmark Pipes & Pizza
6522 E. NW Hwy.
3/11 Barton. Nightly.

FORT WORTH
Casa Manana Theatre, 3101 W. Lancaster.
3/11 Wurlitzer. Often.

GARLAND
Organ World Studio.
4/7 hybrid. Often.

HOUSTON
Pipe Organ Pizza
Mem. City Shopping Ctr.
3/31 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

UTAH

PROVO
Pizza & Pipes.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Daily.

SALT LAKE CITY
Capitol Theatre, Second & Main.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Under repair.

Organ Loft, 3331 Edison.
5/42 Wurlitzer-Morton. Saturday eves.

Pizza & Pipes, 4400 S. State.
3/31 Wurlitzer. Nightly except Sunday.

VIRGINIA

ALEXANDRIA
Alexandria Skating Arena
807 N. St. Asaph.
4/34 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

RICHMOND
Byrd Theatre, 2908 W. Carey.
4/17 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

Mosque Auditorium, 6 N. Laurel.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Often.

WASHINGTON

BELLEVUE
Pizza & Pipes #3, 550 112th NE.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Daily.

BELLINGHAM
Mt. Baker Theatre, Commercial St.
2/10 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

BREMERTON
Masonic Temple.
2/8 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

BURIEN
Big Bob's Pipe Dream, 630 SW 153rd.
4/42 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

MT. VERNON
Lincoln Theatre.
2/7 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

OLYMPIA
Olympic Theatre, 506 S. Washington.
2/9 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

PULLMAN
Physical Sciences Bldg., Wash. St. Univ.
2/7 Robert Morton. Periodically.

SEATTLE
Haller Lake Improvement Club
12579 Densmore.
3/8 Wurlitzer. Often.

Pizza & Pipes #1, 100 N. 85th.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

Queen Anne High School, 215 Galer.
3/10 Kimball. Rarely.

TACOMA
Pizza & Pipes #2, 19th & Mildred.
3/17 Wurlitzer. Nightly.

Temple Theatre, 49 St. Helens.
2/9 Kimball. Occasionally.

WISCONSIN

BARABOO
Al Ringling Theatre.
3/9 Barton. Occasionally.

MILWAUKEE
Avalon Theatre, 2473 S. Kinnick Ave.
3/8 Wurlitzer. Weekends.

Organ Piper Pizza, 4353 S. 108th.
3/28 Moller. Nightly except Monday.

Pabst Theatre, 144 E. Wells.
4/20 Moller. Often.

Pipe Organ Pizza
620 W. Oklahoma Ave.
4/16 hybrid. Daily.

Riverside Theatre, 116 W. Wisconsin Ave.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

CANADA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER
Organ Grinder Restaurant #2
3/12 Wurlitzer-Hinners. Daily.

Orpheum Theatre, 884 Granville.
3/13 Wurlitzer. Occasionally.

ONTARIO

TORONTO
Casa Loma, 1 Austin Terrace.
4/18 Wurlitzer. Monthly, Sep. thru May.

Organ Grinder Rest. #1.
58 The Esplanade.
3/13 hybrid. Nightly.

Closing Chord

Stan A. Todd, well-known organist whose Shady Nook Steakhouse and Dinner Theatre at Millville, north of Cincinnati, is a mecca for Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana organ enthusiasts, died suddenly early Sunday morning, January 8. He was 57 years of age, and had performed at the console of his four-manual Wurlitzer Theatre Organ on Saturday evening.

Born in Perry, Iowa, he was educated in Des Moines schools, attended Culver Military Academy, and later attended Drake University. He served with military intelligence during World War II, and in 1943, married Virginia McKimmy, who survives.

From 1948 to 1950, Stan Todd studied with Jesse Crawford in New York City, and they became close personal friends. He also knew and worked with Eddie Layton, Rosa Rio, Buddy Cole, and other leading organists, and for a time headed his own musical group.

The Todds purchased the Shady Nook Restaurant in 1960, and nine years later built an extensive ad-

dition to house the 17 ranks of organ pipes which Mr. Todd had purchased from the main studio organ of WLW — the pipes which had played the famed *Moon River* program for many years. These were electronically connected to Helen Crawford's four-manual Wurlitzer "slave unit" from the Chicago The-



Stan Todd

atre, the latter being installed on a lift to rise to stage level at the beginning of each theatre-restaurant performance. A Baldwin grand on stage could also be operated from the organ console.

The Shady Nook stage also includes a motion picture screen, and guest artists accompanying films have included Gaylord Carter, who is scheduled for a return engagement late in March, and Lee Erwin. Rosa Rio, Ann Leaf and Searle Wright have also performed at Shady Nook.

A licensed pilot, Mr. Todd was a member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the Ohio State Restaurant Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Travel Club, the Ohio Valley and Cincinnati chapters and other organizations.

Mrs. Todd is planning to continue operation of the unique dinner theatre, with films and guest artists featured.

Byron F. Olsen of Moline, Ill., and one of the leading lights of the Cedar Rapids Chapter, died on December 23. He had been ailing for some time.

A retired executive of Sears Roebuck, Byron and wife, Ev., traveled extensively, and their trips took them to Alaska, the West Indies and Flor-

ida. He loved the pipe organ and often played the instruments in the Quad Cities area. His friendly presence at future ATOS conventions will be greatly missed, as he attended a goodly number of them.

Dr. Melvin Hazelton Doner, age 68, died Sunday, November 20, 1977 in Winona, Minnesota. "Mel" was the first editor for the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of which he was a founding charter member. He was elected to the ATOE post by those assembled in Dick Simonton's home on the evening of Tuesday, February 8, 1955. He had flown from Winona, Minnesota, for the event. As editor, he was a member of the first Executive Committee of ATOE which was later reorganized into the Board of Directors when ATOE was incorporated.

As editor, he produced the first eight issues of the new organization's magazine, then called the *Tibia*. In 1961 he was recipient of ATOE's Honorary Member Award, the organization's highest honor.

Dr. Doner, an entomologist, joined the J.R. Watkins Co. (now Watkins Products Inc.) and developed a line of insecticides, animal nutrition and medicinal products. He was one of the first commercial entomologists in the country and one of the first to do research with DDT.

In August, 1967, he resigned from Watkins and joined the Winona State College Biology Department Faculty where he served until ill health forced him to retire in 1976.

Dr. Doner was a founder of and member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Winona, a founder and former member of the Hiawatha Valley Bird Club, past member of the Junto Discussion Club and a former member of the Rotary Club of Winona. He was a member of many honorary national scientific fraternities.

He married Eleanor Welsh in January, 1935, at Portage, Wisconsin, who survives him as do two sons, David M. of Bloomington, Minn., and Dr. Landis W. Doner of Wyndmoor, Penn., and two daughters, Mrs. John N. (Diane) Dosier of Forest City, Ill., and Mrs. Carmine (Linda) Rosetti of Colorado Springs, Col. He had five grandchildren.

Mel was an avid record collector



Mel Doner

and searched for countless thousands of hours for organ records in the old 78 rpm days in Salvation Army Stores, Disabled Veterans stores and the like. He undoubtedly accumulated the largest private collection of theatre organ records in the world, which he later sold to Doric Records, Inc. to be preserved. He knew many of the great theatre organists, and was fiercely devoted to his theatre organ hobby.

He was revered by his students who presented him with a Pictorial Retirement Plaque when he retired from teaching which read as follows: —

"Professor Emeritus Melvin H. Doner.

In recognition of Dr. Mel Doner — who left industry in 1967 to join the Biology

Faculty at Winoma State University where he served as gifted teacher, versatile scholar, stimulating colleague and trusted friend of students until his retirement —. His dedication, adaptability and perseverance have inspired us; and his ability to retain his enthusiasm and sense of humor in spite of severe physical trauma amazed us. His uncanny ability to attract pretty girls, however, shall forever remain one of the great mysteries of Science. Signed by the members of the Biology Department., Winona State Univ."

With the passing of Mel Doner, theatre organ has lost a great friend and enthusiast. He will be missed by the many, many friends he has made through the years.

We publicly express our deep devotion and heartfelt sympathy to his wife, Eleanor, and to his family.

Robert S. Jones, 62, of 1401 Park Court, Kansas City, Mo. died Sunday November 20, 1977.

He was former musical director for radio station KCMO and KCMO-TV, before he retired in 1965.

Mr. Jones joined KCMO radio in the late 1930s. During this time he broadcast the Wurlitzer model 260 daily from its original installation in the Newman (later Paramount) Theatre. He performed in several early live shows on KCMO-TV. He was an Army veteran of World War II.

He was a most valued member of the organ community and his passing removes a treasured link with the era of live organs.



Dr. Edward Eigenschenk.

(Fred Becker Coll.)

Edward Eigenschenk, a leading theatre organist in Chicago for almost twenty years, died there on December 4 at the age of 74.

A classical organ student of Joseph Bonnet and Louis Verne in Paris, and theatre organ under Frank Van Dusen, he began his theatre career in the early twenties. Some of the theatres he played in the Windy City were the Woodlawn, Fulco Little Model, Michigan, Roosevelt and Kimball Hall. He published a book *Theatre Organ Jazz* which was used while teaching in the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

For over 45 years, he was organist and choir director of Chicago's Second Presbyterian Church.



MUST BE POSTMARKED BY APRIL 15, 1978

It is time to place names in nomination for the National ATOS Board of Directors for the two-year period from July, 1978 through June, 1980.

All those who wish to run in this election are asked to send a photo and short resume.

Written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received at National Headquarters before the nominee's name can be placed on the ballot.

Mail to . . .

ATOS National Headquarters
Post Office Box 1002
Middleburg, Virginia 22117

Clyde Derby, popular long time organist in the Sacramento area, died on Saturday, December 3, 1977, after a lengthy bout with cancer. He was 57 years old.

Clyde was a founder of Sierra Chapter and one of its most active members. A scholarship fund has been established in his name. Clyde was equally at home on either pipes or electronic and had been house organist at the Greer Inn Robert Morton organ since its opening in 1964. For many years he had a 2/8 Wurlitzer installed in his Carmichael home. He is survived by his wife Kathy D., daughters Lisa Ann and Mary Lynn, and a brother William. □



Clyde Derby

ELON COLLEGE TO OFFER THEATRE ORGAN COURSE

At the request of Dr. Paul Abernethy, former President of ATOS National, Lee Erwin has prepared a course of studies for organ students and young professional theatre organists who would like to improve their techniques in silent film scoring and popular music playing.

The course includes a short history of the organ in the United States; the early history of the theatre organ; the preparation of modern organ scores for silent films, and a summary of current trends in all aspects of theatre organ playing, including electronic instruments and synthesizers.

Arrangements are being made for the course to be offered by the music department of Elon College between the end of the regular school year and the beginning of the summer session.

For information contact Lee Erwin, 306 East 15 St., N.Y.C. 10003, (212) 777-5643; or Dr. Paul Abernethy, Box 2480, Burlington, N.C. 27215.

IT'S IN NEW YORK

Binghamton, the city where the Robert Morton is in the Forum Theatre, mentioned in the cover story on page 8 of the October/November 1977 issue, is located in the state of New York. Sorry for this geographical oversight.

The Editor



CHAPTER NOTES

Let us know what's happening in YOUR Chapter!

Send Photos and News to:

GEORGE THOMPSON
P.O. BOX 1314
SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93902

Deadline for all material is the FIRST of the month PRECEDING Publication.

Copy for April/May Issue must be in by March 1, 1978

ALABAMA

It's always a pleasure to have one of the real "master" organists in our midst . . . but in November we were fortunate to have *two* of them here . . . at the same time yet!

First of all, Don Baker came to Birmingham in early November for the purpose of cutting a recording on our Alabama Theatre Mighty

Wurlitzer. When Don, his wife, Anne, and his recording engineer, Max Schloss, arrived, he checked out the organ and, becoming familiar with the surroundings, Don went right to work making his recording. The release of this new record is expected to be in April, 1978. Thank you, Don, for choosing our organ for your latest recording. We feel this is quite an honor.

Our thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Harless, and Beatrice and Ola Fee for being hosts and hostesses to the Bakers and the Schlosses during their stay in Birmingham.

Of course, we can't overlook a word of gratitude to Chuck Hancock, work crew chairman, Larry Donaldson and the rest of the work crew for putting our "Big Bertha" in tip-top condition for the recording session. A very special thank you to Chet Rataski and Paul "Mack" Abernethy, from Raleigh, North

Carolina, and to Tom Landrum, from Richmond, Virginia, for their help in tuning the organ and their technical advice and assistance in preparation for the Don Baker recording. Our thanks to *all* who had any part in making this recording a success.

Our next special event was on November 10, at which time Gaylord Carter did a beautiful concert at the Southside Baptist Church here in Birmingham. The three-manual Kimball theatre pipe organ was, for many years, the studio organ for Birmingham's Radio Station WAPI and was acquired by the church through the efforts of one of their members.

"Flicker Fingers" was in rare form and did a tremendous concert to an almost full auditorium. Gaylord played a well rounded program which offered something for everyone from 8 to 80. Of course, there were encores, and no one seemed anxious to go home, but all good things must come to an end.

The Birmingham "welcome mat" is always out for you, Gaylord.

Thanks to Joan and Lee Aured for having Gaylord as their house guest. Who had the most fun — Gaylord, the Aureds . . . or Onyx (Joan's poodle) who won Gaylord's heart?

Besides the usual festivities of the Christmas Season, December 26 was the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Alabama Theatre and

Norville Hall at the Alabama Theatre 50th Anniversary Party in December.

(Tom Hatter Photo)



With Gaylord Carter are Ann and Don Baker at Gaylord's concert in November at the Southside Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

(Tom Hatter Photo)



first concert played on our Mighty Wurlitzer, so we had a dual-purpose celebration for our meeting.

Norville Hall, who always seems to come up with some interesting surprises on his programs, ran true to form and gave us a delightful "bill of fare" which was a combination Christmas-Anniversary program. He was assisted by M.C. Jim Ferguson. Jim sang some solos, and also led the audience in singing carols. Norville did a medley of Christmas songs and had as his theme, "The Miracle of Christmas." He also included his rendition of "Intermezzo" from *Cavallaria Rusticana* in special memory of Lillian Truss, who played the very first public concert at the Alabama Theatre on that December 26, in 1927.

The 1978 officers are Alleen Cole, chairman; Riedel West, vice chairman and program director; Betty Crowe, secretary-treasurer, and board members are Lee Aured, Gordon Nicolson, Ima Jean Price and Larry Donaldson. We thank the nominating committee for their time and work in this important task.

JO ANN RADUE

BEEHIVE

On October 30, members were treated to a meeting held at the Pipes and Pizza in Provo, Utah. This beautiful Wurlitzer and beautifully decorated building are owned by members Calvin and Annette Christensen who very generously let the chapter hold a meeting at their Pipes and Pizza in Salt Lake City and also in their home in Emigration Canyon.

The main discussion of the meet-



Clarence Briggs (left) and Calvin Christensen at the Pipes and Pizza in Provo, Utah.

ing centered around the ever-present concern of the restoration of the pipe organ that has been taken out of the Capital Theatre while the building is being remodeled. Members feel that outside of the chapter there is not enough interest and concern about putting the organ back into the building, restoring it, and then making sure that the public will be able to enjoy hearing it play again.

The Christmas spirit seemed prevalent on December 11, when a meeting was held at the beautifully Christmas decorated Organ Loft. The owner, Lawrence Bray, and his friends transformed the building into a magic Christmas atmosphere.

Election of officers for 1978 was held: Leland Lay, chairman; Murray Bywater, vice chairman; Darlene Walker, secretary-treasurer.

A special thanks to Mr. Bray for his interest in the chapter and his cooperation. Members consider it a special treat to try their hands at the Organ Loft Mighty Wurlitzer.

MAXINE V. RUSSELL

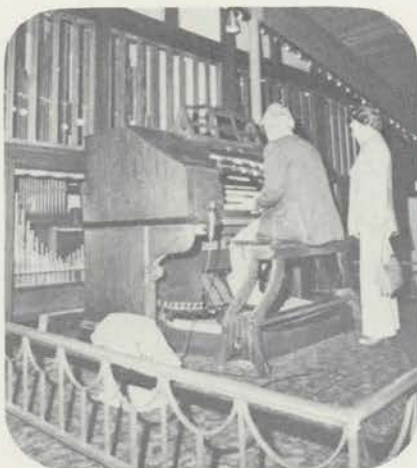
CENTRAL OHIO

Our first meeting at the Pipe Organ Ristorante took place in November. House organist Ted Gysan, at the Mighty Mo, entertained the general public and our members until official closing time. Ted has an abundance of gimmicks to add entertainment to his programs — one being the playing of T.B.B.T. or Teddy Bear Break Time, to which his followers have become accustomed. On occasion he puts on an "anything goes" show including the silents, sing-alongs, etc. Ted gave

our members a short private concert which included Scott Joplin's "Echoes of the Snowball Club." He acquainted our members with the features of the Moller and open console began. Apparently our members did their homework because all appeared at ease with the organ. Some did accept assistance with registration from Bob Shaw. Since Bob helped with the installation he was well-qualified to give expert advice. We had a number of guests who expertly controlled the Moller, including Carl Creager, a member of the Motor City Chapter before moving to Dayton, Ohio. Our thanks to the Ansel family, owners of Pipe Organ Ristorante, for making such a great evening possible.

Once more we thank Carlos Parker for arranging for our use of the Ohio Theatre for our Christmas party and to Carlos and Tom Hamilton for the use of the Morton. Concert artist for the evening was Dennis James who played a program of Christmas music. Dennis is an outstanding artist and members always agree each concert we hear is the best yet. Following his program Dennis gave us an informal, terrific short course on the use of the Morton with a discussion of the six categories of sound, registration tips, balancing of manuals and a question and answer session. Were it not for the itchy fingers of our organists we cheerfully could have kept him talking the rest of the evening. We consider ourselves fortunate in having Dennis at the Ohio Theatre, value him as a member of COTOS and appreciate his willingness to help the chapter and members in every way he can. From this point to closing a constant flow of organists took advantage of the opportunity to play the Morton and members and guests who did, performed admirably. With the fabulous array of good food, the companionship and good music we were sorry to end this thoroughly great meeting.

Neil Grover has acquired a number of Bill Dalton (now deceased) records which are jacketed as being performed on a Hammond X-66. Many members who purchased the record are of the opinion it sounds like pipes. Neil is offering these at \$5.00 postpaid and generously donates \$1.00 of each sale to the Chapter's Wurlitzer Fund. If interested,



Krehl King at the Provo Utah, pizzeria console with Lucille Dale looking on.

contact Neil at 5567 Crawford Dr., Columbus, Ohio 43229.

We are happy to share the news that COTOS is now listed in the *Who's Who* publication of the Greater Columbus Arts Council.

IRENE BLEGEN

CHICAGO AREA

This is the second edition of these notes for this correspondent but I am about to "retire" (again) since Marie Pond has been elected *Vox CATOE* Editor in a special election and will also be writing these notes. She was elected at a social meeting at Maine North High School in December which featured Jack Olander at CATOE's own Wurlitzer, along with two of his students from the vocal music program at the school, and lots of open console time for members. Refreshments were arranged by Val Escobar and Helen Near and CATOE thanks them.

The Maine North Wurlitzer is fulfilling its educational purposes in many ways. About 50 members of the Chicago Audio and Acoustic Group were recent visitors. This group of professional audio engineers and technicians toured the chambers, guided by Crew Chief John Peters, saw a slide show about organs and theatres by Bill Benedict and heard "Professor" Bill Hansen talk about organ design. Walter Strony then played a program to demonstrate what the organ sounds like. This past fall 40 people were enrolled in an 8 week course in theatre organ which was an adult education course in the local school district. Jack Olander was the teacher and spotlighted his students at a recital to end the course on November 28. CATOEers enrolled in the course were Thelma Douglas, Barb Meisner, Al Kuhlen, Dorothy Zaremba, Carl Hansen, Al Bilgen, Jim Koller, Geoff Naylor, Ted Gorski, Ed Tooke, Scott Striker and Harry Koenig. The course will be repeated again this spring.

In addition to CATOE's three Honorary Life Members (Leon Berry, Pearl White, and George Wright) three other people were named Honorary Members for 1978. They are Bill Lamb, official ATOS photographer, Peter Miller, managing director of the Chicago Theatre, and Mickey Gold, manager of the Oriental Theatre.


The books for the "Chicago '77" convention were officially closed in early December when ATOS accepted the audited convention financial statement. ATOS and CATOE split the net profit in half (the standard convention agreement) with each receiving \$2903.53.

Wagonmaster Alden Stockebrand's bus trip to Ft. Wayne on October 30 and 31 was a success thanks to him, refreshments on the bus by Marie Pond and Ione Tedei, and the hospitality of Bob Goldstine and the Embassy Theatre Foundation. In addition to John Muri playing *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* at the Embassy, we had open console there for three hours, stopped at the Village Inn Pizza Restaurant to hear Cal Prott at the 3/10 Barton, and visited Ray and Ione Danford's home to see and play their 2/7 Wurlitzer. Lou Shindler was on hand to show off the 2/6 Marr and Colton in the chapel at Calvary Temple. Later was joined by Wurlitzer's David Ashby (who is overseeing the installation of their 5/65 Wurlitzer in the company's Dekalb, Ill. headquarters)

at the piano for some fine gospel playing while the CATOE chorus joined in a hymn fest. Thanks to all our friends in Ft. Wayne.

Rob Calcaterra played the Chicago Wurlitzer for our November social meeting. The program was well-chosen and well-played. Rob is extremely busy at Indiana University where he is studying, but found time to play for us. We expect to see and hear more from him now that he has broken into the theatre organ world. Following Rob's program we were the guests of Stan Zimmerman at the Beautiful Sound, the local Allen dealer. That developed into quite a jam session with Kimball's Ned Siebert, Stan, Rob, David Ashby, and Bill Tandy (who spells Don Springer at the Barton in Joe and Mike Bortz's Sally's Stage) all sitting in.

Tom Cotner had to return to Park Ridge's Pickwick Theatre in December to play his debut concert for CATOE. Tom had just moved to St. Louis where he has been named resident organist at the Old St. Louis Noodle and Pizza Co. Tom's show



GEORGE WRIGHT In Concert

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY. . . .

" . . . A master arranger for the instrument. His original and daring registration gives the organ rhythmic vitality and zip in performance. . . He makes it swing."

The New York Times

"On stage to play a Bach chorale or a Gershwin song, he seems to be re-creating the music. He apparently does nothing that no other organist does, yet he accomplishes results that none of them seem to come near accomplishing."

Hollywood Citizen-News

"His program had humor and was always musical. He has brought theatre 'pops' organ back to a nation which had forgotten it."

Theatre Organ

"Sponsored by the San Jose Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, he gave a display of musicianship that must be heard, live, to fully appreciate. He had them in the palm of his hand."

Tabs and Drawbars

For concert information and availability contact:
J. NELSON MANAGEMENT
900 Andersen Drive, San Rafael, California 94901
(415) 457-0255

was filled with surprises including a slide projector that wouldn't work, and a mystery guest vocalist. What wasn't a surprise was the fine music that came from the 3/11 Wurlitzer. My favorite was "What I Did For Love," played just as beautifully as it was at the July convention.

Member Scott Striker, a student of Kay McAbee, recently presented his second concert at the Style D Wurlitzer in Illinois Benedictine College, Lisle. He was presented with an autographed picture of President Carter and a letter from the White House. Another rising young organist to watch from our area is 16-year-old Perry Petta. Perry won the youth playing competition at the Cleveland regional and can be heard playing pizza organ in Milwaukee, his home town, where Walter Strony has been giving him lessons.

TOM TIBIA

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Connecticut Valley is justly proud of its efforts to insure the perpetuation of the "theatre organ sound" through its scholarship awards program established in 1970. C.V.-T.O.S. was a pioneer in this field — contacting organ teachers in the area and providing them with material explaining just what we meant by "theatre organ" so that they would be better able to interest and inspire students to compete in the scholarship program; and giving interested students an introduction

to the "theatre pipe organ" at the Thomaston Opera House and arranging practice sessions on "pipes" at the Opera House and at Bethwood, the home of Harold and Eleanor Weaver.

In 1977, the scholarship committee broadened its scope to include music education in the form of an arrangement competition. Entrants were asked to submit their own arrangements of required music — choice between the currently popular "Now That We're In Love," or the golden oldie "Lovely Lady." Judges of this competition were Lowell Ayars, Don Baker, Bill Irwin and John Muri.

On Sunday, December 4, 1977, the C.V.T.O.S. Scholarship and Music Education Committee presented another "first" — a Theatre Organ Workshop conducted by Lowell Ayars at the Thomaston Opera House. The workshop idea is the "brain-child" of "singing" concert organist-educator Ayars who conducted a similar session at one of the national conventions. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania as a Master of Fine Arts in organ and education, he is well-qualified to teach as well as perform. His warm personality and easy, friendly manner create the perfect atmosphere for an instructive and enjoyable "learning" experience.

The workshop is designed to help all organists get the most from their instruments — be they electronic or pipes (and the majority of us have

the electronic versions in our homes). You don't have to have three manuals and 15 ranks to make beautiful music. Lowell Ayars has proven this many times in his playing of many of the smaller organs at our national conventions. Even if you are not an organist, you will find the workshop understandable and fun.

The session was conducted in an informal manner with participants encouraged to ask questions any time they might arise. Lowell first made it clear to all that the opinions he was about to voice were his alone, and his illustrations referred to no specific persons.

Lowell began his program by playing a number making all the mistakes in technique that are commonly heard. At the conclusion of this amusing demonstration, he analyzed the errors and how easily they can be avoided. His discussion covered improper use of the expression pedal, lack of phrasing, unimaginative registration and numerous other failings heard in both amateur and professional performances. Using the "guinea pig" technique, Lowell had volunteers play and then explained how their interpretations could be improved. The volunteers were young Keith Lambert, a scholarship winner, and Joe Sweet.

The two-hour session just flew by, and we were all reluctant to bring it to an end. In response to requests to "please sing something," Lowell Ayars delighted all by singing Oley Speaks beautiful "Sylvia." Bert Rankin just happened to have a copy of the sheet music in his pocket. To wind up the afternoon, he continued at the Marr & Colton console with "You're the Cream in My Coffee" and "Among My Souvenirs."

In thanking Lowell Ayars for the wonderfully instructive and enjoyable afternoon, Scholarship Chairman George Lewis, remarked that this was just Part I, and he hoped that we would be able to have a Part II at a later date — a sentiment which was shared by all present.

JUNE L. GAREN



Lowell Ayars addresses an attentive Connecticut Valley workshop session.

(P.A. Miller Photo)

EASTERN MASS.

In the absence of both Chairman "Pete" Hoagland and Vice Chairman Craig Johnson, former Chairman Dick Linder, acting on their



Fr. Bill Biebel at the 3/13 Wurlitzer for the Eastern Mass. Christmas meeting at Babson College.

(Paul Callahan Photo)

behalf, opened our November Babson meeting. The first item was a membership count with election of officers on the agenda, but without the necessary quorum, it had to be postponed.

Former member Dr. Alan Goodnow (now with SENETOS) was then introduced by Dick as our first artist of the evening and opened with a lively up-tempo "That's Entertainment" followed by a selection of enjoyable theatre organ stylings. His total lack of practice time certainly was not apparent and a good round of applause resulted.

Cheryl Linder, one of our younger, but talented Misses, was then presented by her Dad. Her program ranged from the classical writings of Ernst Pepping and J.S. Bach to selections from *Sesame Street*, all well-played. Her young musical friend and fellow member, Julie Feltman, then took over at the Wurlitzer as Cheryl joined her with piccolo and then with a bass trombone for two numbers — such versatility! Julie then soloed on the Wurlitzer with a well-registered group of six popular selections, played with the cool confidence of one twice her years. Both of these gals are going places!

Open console attracted much to the bench with much variety of registration, style and selections, bringing enjoyment to all present.

Our Christmas meeting at Babson in December was especially worthwhile with a good turnout of members and guests. Election of officers was quickly accomplished with Chairman Hoagland announcing

only the office of V.C. requiring a written ballot as there were two candidates. Royal N. Schweiger will head EMCATOS with incumbent Craig Johnson as V.C., Secretary Rosalie M. Fucci will serve again as will Richard A. Metzger as treasurer. Directors are Erle Renwick and William Carpenter, with alternates Timothy Holloran and David J. Marden.

Erle Renwick proposed that the chapter give recognition to Clayton Stone, presently hospitalized, for his unsung work on our organ (which he doesn't play), chairman of membership committee, goodwill ambassador for our cause, etc. The title of Member Extraordinaire was suggested and unanimously passed with a plaque to be presented. This chapter "Hall of Fame" honor will be sparingly bestowed.

Program Chairman Johnson then introduced our special artist of the evening, Fr. Bill Biebel from Erie, Pa., faculty member of the Cathedral Preparatory School. His priestly habit belied his warm, friendly manner and unquestionable love of the theatre organ. Fr. Bill was a new name to the majority, but won many proponents with his easy individual style, constantly changing colorful registration, program selection and rapport with his audience. Had he been born two generations earlier, perhaps he would have been "called" to play heavenly music on a unit orchestra! Jesse Crawford's ballad style is part of his artistry as is that of Lyn Larsen. He opened with an appropriate Christmas medley, both

traditional and popular, and his program included wide variety such as Gershwin, some of Crawford's recorded tunes, Richard Purvis and even a composition of his own called "The Maestro," dedicated to Lyn Larsen.

Craig had a short console interview with Fr. Bill to add further interest. There was even a sing-along of "White Christmas" to show his versatility. At the conclusion of his program, a long, well-deserved applause brought the unlikely encore of "Hard-Hearted Hanna" and "Peace on Earth" with just-right registrations to fit.

The evening was over all too soon, but its influence had us departing with Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men seeming most appropriate.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

GARDEN STATE

The 1977-1978 concert season got off to a grand start on Sunday afternoon, September 25, with the appearance of George Wright at the Trenton War Memorial Auditorium. Over 750 theatre organ enthusiasts turned out to hear the living legend of the theatre organ perform at the 3/16 Moller. Mr. Wright presented a diversified, well-balanced program which earned him an extended standing ovation from the highly appreciative audience.

The War Memorial Auditorium was pressed into service again by the GSTOS, less than a month later. On Saturday evening, October 22, Keith Chapman made the relatively short trek up from Philadelphia to accompany a silent film. Over 400 people were enthralled by his intricate scoring of the Douglas Fairbanks film, and several comments expressing utter disbelief at the precision of the whole affair were overheard by the hard-working, but not too-surprised crew, Mr. Chapman was well rewarded by the audience for his work, and in reply, he played a Bach classical number as an encore.

PETER PANOS

The October meeting was held at the Trinity Methodist Church in Clifton, N.J. It was a delightful surprise to find a small, perfect Wurlitzer in its original setting. Built in 1930 for the church, it has a horse-

shoe console and while the Diapason rank gives a firm foundation for hymn playing, one only has to put on the Tibia and tremors and "Gee Dad! It's a Wurlitzer." There was open console for an hour. A short meeting was held, then members settled down to enjoy a wonderful organ concert by David Kopp, a senior at Montclair State College. Considering that the Wurlitzer has only five ranks plus chimes, Dave's registration was imaginative and well-chosen. The entire program with the "Poet and Peasant Overture" as a finale was excellent.

Our November meeting was held at the Old Rahway Theatre in Rahway. It was a lively one with much discussion about chapter member's attendance at meetings and concerts. Five of the six members running for office for 1978 were present. All in all it was a good get-together. The remainder of the morning was an outstanding musical treat by Frank Cimmino, house organist at the Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque. He is well-known and many people came to hear and enjoy his program. Frank brought his new Christmas records with him "literally hot off the press." These are being released by HMR Recordings.

JINNY VANORE

GULF COAST

We have been "silent" during the past year but we have been anything but quiet! The first thing we have learned in this "Murphy's Law" of ATOS-Land is the price and quantity of midnight oil. How we have burned it and used it!

Tom Helms, our very capable premier organist, was elected chairman, Norman Jeter got the nod for his assistant and treasurer and Dorothy Standley was secretary.

We have met with the city council to be heard in the plans for restoring the beautiful Saenger Theatre, home of our own Robert Morton. They were amazed to hear all the chapter had done and was doing to save the theatre and what we did to restore the organ to its present stage. More midnight oil here.

Our chapter, under the talented direction of member Dr. Rhea, undertook to restore an old Brambach pit piano and to wire it into the console. The piano is now a work of art

and a joy to behold. A grand piano that is once more GRAND.

We have sponsored several events at the organ featuring it and other soloists. We have staged two silent movies that were very well-received. Lee Erwin, was our guest organist that night and he performed like the trooper he is and gave a great show.

After the concert Dr. and Mrs. Rhea hosted an "After the Theatre" reception for members, guests and Lee.

Chicago had to be another highlight of the year for the three delegates from here who attended.

We have printed bumper stickers to advertise our chapter and promote the restoration of the theatre. We have given many concerts, both for free and for admission. We find the "freebees" are well-attended and do much to build up good will and let our voice be heard.

Since we have done so much to the lovely organ, many other organizations in town have asked that we participate in their functions. First was the city when they celebrated the re-opening of the theatre as a performing arts center. Tom Helms played for them along with all the VIP's. Leif Erickson was MC; coming from Hollywood to do the honors. Our organ and organist were utilized when the SPEBSQSA (Barbershoppers to the unknowing) gave their annual concert. Same with a local sorority who asked Tom to play accompaniment for their acts in a vaudeville show. All very well-received. Tom does more than his share of providing good music for these events. He gives a very comprehensive description of the theatre and its history. He will ask the audiences if any of them have heard the organ before and with the response he starts his speech. Everyone enjoys the bit of memorabilia about the theatre and its old times.

Our Robert Morton was also heard accompanying a district choral group from the United Methodist Church. Our last performance of the year came in December when Tom was asked to play for a local music study club. Here again he gave the history of the organ, the theatre, in relation to the others of the Saenger chain, and the plans for the future of both. After a very enjoyable concert the 300-plus members were conducted on a tour of the theatre by

chapter members. All were amazed to see behind the footlights and under the stage. Most had never been backstage in any theatre so it was an exciting experience for them.

We have not only enjoyed our own performances but have travelled to other cities to see and hear how their affairs are coming. Tom played a concert for the Birmingham Chapter in May and in November the Atlanta Chapter invited him to play on the mighty Moller at the Fox. Quite an honor for our Tom! Jack Goodwin and his lovely mother were hosts for a reception for Tom and the Atlanta Chapter after the concert.

In 1978 we hope to see our being-restored Saenger Theatre fully restored and then we will shine! The concerts we have planned are visions of sugar plums dancing in our heads!

DOROTHY STANDLEY

JOLIET AREA

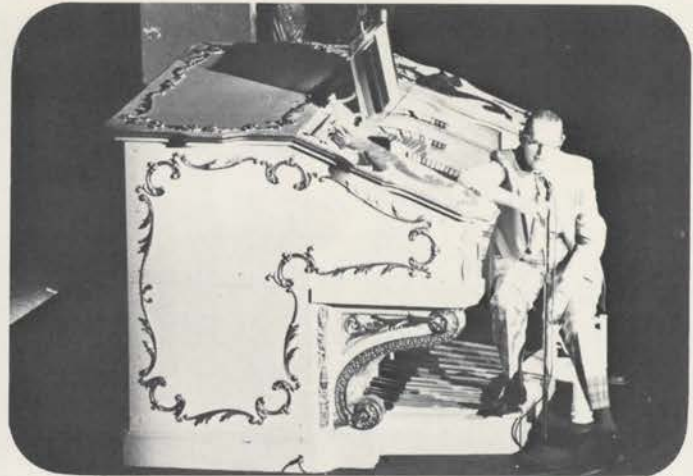
The Rialto Theatre was the place to be on October 29, as Rob Calcaterra delighted the audience with his original score to the 1925 silent film classic *The Phantom of the Opera*. The surprise-filled evening began as Rob was carried down the main aisle via the shoulders of his fiendishly fitted friends. As the ghoulish procession lurked about, one could hear the strains of a mysterious chant being intoned. Then, as if by magic, charming Rob Calcaterra arose from his coffin, floated to the 4/21 Barton Grande and played the traditional "Toccata und Fuge in D Moll" by



Rob Calcaterra at the Rialto, Joliet, Barton console.
(Bill Lamb Photo)



Rockford's Swedish Men's Chorus, the Sveas Soner, in concert at the Coronado Theatre. (Bob Schmoock Photo)



Bob Coe at the Coronado Barton in December.

(Bob Schmoock Photo)

J.S. Bach. But the night was still young!

Next on the program was a Halloween sing-along which was written especially for the evening by Rob himself. Familiar tunes such as "Baby Face" were cleverly transformed into their Halloween equivalents, i.e., "Pumpkin Face." The silent feature immediately followed.

However, during the second half of the program, the Lady Barton, not wanting to give all the attention to her nimble-fingered organist, decided to cease functioning! Thinking quickly, the versatile performer hopped off the organ and onto the theatre's grand piano, which he played completely in the dark! The quick-thinking organ crew attached a car battery to the generator, and the organ was again able to be utilized for the last few minutes of the movie. Rob closed the show with a few of his tasteful theatre organ renditions. What an outstanding performance by a first-rate showman!

Sunday, December 11, found the Rialto being utilized for three live stage shows which were sponsored by the Caterpillar Tractor Company for its employees and their families. Once again Rob's keyboard artistry amused the audience as he opened each show with his fun-filled Christmas selections. Then the organ was lowered to picture level and Rob proceeded to play for all of the seven acts. After each show was completed Rob played exit music as was the custom of the theatre organists of the 1920's.

It is a pleasure to know that Rob Calcaterra will continue to enter-

tain upcoming generations with his fascinating arrangements, which he performs in the style reminiscent of the original theatre organists.

DIANA WURZINGER

LAND OF LINCOLN

On December 6, LOLTOS hosted 75 members and guests of the Rockford Kiwanis Club, for tours of the Coronado and a slide and commentary program on the inner workings of the Barton organ. December 10, we hosted three shows at the Coronado, on a day billed as "Holiday Entertainment." Bob Coe provided organ music for all three shows. In the morning, several hundred young people from an area children's home and youth groups were invited as guests of LOLTOS for a short concert, silent movie and the antics of Clown Alley #22 under the direction of Cousin Otto. (He is really ATOS-LOLTOS member Gene Lee.)

In the afternoon, senior citizens of the area were our guests for a silent, Western feature picture, concert and sing-along. In the evening, Bob was joined by Rockford's famed Swedish Men's Chorus, the Sveas Soner. The chorus is directed by Dr. Bernhardt Westlund, and is accompanied by Mrs. Maureen Staublin. They presented a delightful program of Christmas music, as did Bob Coe on the organ. The closing number was a beautiful arrangement of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" with organ, piano and full chorus. A great ending for a fine program, which was well-attended in spite of a week of blizzards and cold weather.

Coming LOLTOS concerts are

planned for April 20 with Lyn Larsen and June 15 with Rosa Rio.

BOB SCHMOOCK

LOS ANGELES

The extremely popular and talented Tom Hazleton proved his total mastery of the Mighty Morton for his November appearance at the Elks Building.

Observing that the four-manual 61-rank Morton was as much a concert instrument as a theatre organ, he proceeded with a compromise between a "recital" and a "concert."

From his opener, "War March of the Priests" through Shubert's "March Militaire," Tom showed the brilliant might of the Morton. And to show that it can be pretty too, he led it through Schubert's "Serenade" and a number especially written for a roll player, "Dreams," employing the celestial set of echo ranks high above the hall. But none were prettier, we thought, than his medley from *Showboat*.

Included as a special tribute to his former teacher, Richard Purvis, was one of that master's own compositions, "Fanfare," followed by "Melody in Mauve," dedicated to colleague, Bill Thomson.

To show that the Morton can be solemn, he played "Now Thank Thee All Our Lord," and "Solemn Melody," again using the pretty echo pipes.

Although concert artists do not normally improvise, he challenged his audience to start him on an uncharted course with but two notes, from which he developed his own theme . . . on the spot.

Two highlights of the evening were his version of the popular "Plop, Plop, Fizz Fizz" commercial in "Fantasia and Fugue" and his unique finale in which he had his entire audience move to the stairs of the lobby to listen to three ballads played on the auxiliary two-manual console in the lobby. Those eleven ranks of echo never sounded prettier.

We congratulate Program Director Dean McNichols for presenting an artist of the calibre of Tom Hazleton, and our Crew Chief, Dick Stoney, and his group of volunteers who keep the organ up to his standards.

BOB HILL



Chairman Ron Werner signs the papers for the purchase of the Redford property in the offices of Community Theatres.

MOTOR CITY

The culmination of our "Buy the Redford" fund raising drive came on November 7, 1977 at the offices of Community Theatres, where we formally signed the papers for the purchase of the Redford property. On hand for the occasion was our board of directors as well as officials of Community Theatres, owners of the Redford.

One-fifth of the purchase price has been paid from the proceeds from our fund raising drive. The balance will be due over a ten year period. The property includes the 1500-seat Redford Theatre, the 3/10 Barton pipe organ, five stores, several offices and two parking lots. Our thanks to all who contributed to make this moment possible.

But, this is not the end — only the beginning. The State Attorney General has allowed us to continue to solicit funds to help the "Buy the Redford" project. Your tax-deductible donations may still be sent to:



Irving Goldberg (right), of Community Theatres, accepts the check for down payment on the Redford property. Board member Chuck Harris is seated between Mr. Goldberg and Fred Pellerito, business manager of the theatre chain.

MCTOS, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

Our annual meeting was held at the Redford Theatre on November 5, followed by a potluck dinner in the lobby of the theatre. Chairman Ron Werner reported on the purchase of the theatre and presented John Muri with a lifetime honorary membership in the chapter. John has always been a friend and has done anything he could to help the chapter.

Three of our youngest organists, Chuck Harris, Tony O'Brien and Kevin Werner, as well as veteran John Muri, entertained at the Barton prior to the meeting. After dinner Don Grimshaw showed slides of the 1977 convention and Gil Francis supplied slides of activities at the Redford. Open console followed.

The Saturday, November 19, appearance of Hector Olivera at the



(Don Lockwood Photo)

Redford Theatre was sold out well in advance of the program. What few tickets there were for the Friday performance were quickly sold at the box office that night. His dancing feet tapped their way into the hearts of our audience. In addition to a well-rounded program, Hector accompanied two Buster Keaton two-reelers, *Coney Island* and *Goodnight Nurse*.



Outgoing Chairman Ron Werner presents John Muri with a lifetime membership in the Motor City Chapter. Newly elected Chairman Larry Gleason (seated) expresses his approval. (Fred Page Photo)

On December 7 John Muri played a special program for the Michigan Railroad Club at the Redford Theatre, to which chapter members were invited.

The annual Christmas party, held at the Redford Theatre this year, was also billed as the Redford "Christening," it being our first official chapter activity there as building owners. The meeting included entertainment, open console, snacks and a champagne punch.

In mid-December, the Southfield Public Schools were invited to an educational program at the Redford Theatre, featuring a visual trip through the theatre and chambers, and, of course, plenty of organ music.

Our chapter has been given yet another theatre pipe organ (chapter-owned organs now total four). This most recent acquisition is the 3/30 Hilgreen Lane in the Madison Theatre in downtown Detroit. Unplayable for many years, the organ's only value is for salvageable parts.

Intermissions continue at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, with chapter artists supplying theatre pipe organ music between films

on Friday and Saturday nights. (This once was a commonplace occurrence for chapter artists at the Royal Oak, Redford and Punch and Judy theatres before changes in ownership relegated this activity to nearly a thing of the past.)

Second Sunday artists at the Michigan Theatre Barton in Ann Arbor were Herb Head in November, and Henry Aldridge, Greg Yasick and Larry Kass in December. Our Fourth Sunday artist at the Royal Oak Theatre Barton in November was Grace Joslin.

DON LOCKWOOD

NOR-CAL

The chapter has been on the go this year, ranging from 100 miles north and 50 miles south of San Francisco. Our northern-most jaunt was in October when we were guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Leiniger outside Shingletown, California. Tiny James was our featured organist performing at the Wurlitzer he is so familiar with — from the former Oakland Fox. John Leiniger installed the instrument to duplicate the chambers as they were in the theatre. Tiny verified that the lady spoke as well nowadays as in the days when in the theatre. It was our treat to hear Tiny again after too long an absence. During the intermission Tiny poured champagne as a special treat. It was truly a great day and well worth the long trip.

On November 6, we met at one of the newer eaterys in the East Bay. The Pizza Junction in Rheem has a 3/9 Wurlitzer. Installation of the organ is unusual with the console located on the second floor balcony between dual chambers. Every seat has an excellent view in this two-floor arrangement. Under the expert direction of the resident organist, Harvey Blanchard, we were entertained with continuous music for nearly an hour. He opened with "Chicago" and ran the gamut of old and new melodies so pleasant to hear. Following Harvey's concert, Jack Gustafson provided a detailed accounting of the recent completion of the organ, in which Jack has been deeply involved. The organ is a hybrid with no previous history. Kind of like an orphan who has made good on its own. Jack then opened the open console portion playing several arrange-

ments in his own style. Other contributions to open console included Warren White, Bill Taylor, Ken Federick, Fred Clapp, Jerry Miller, Warren Lubich, Don Creswell and Jimmy Paulin. Katherine Whaley, owner of the Pizza Junction, was a most gracious hostess for the meeting.

Our December meeting was held at another new pizza parlor, previously unvisited by our chapter. The New Bella Roma is also located in the East Bay, at Concord. One of the two features was a gleaming white and gold 3/16 Wurlitzer between a pair of chambers containing meticulous arranged pipe work. Two more ranks are yet to be completed plus the installation of a grand piano. The former Cincinnati Keith Theatre would be proud to see the fine installation keeping the grand ole lady sounding forth. We were anxious to hear the new addition to our organ rich area, but a delay was necessary in order to accomplish the election of next years Board of Directors. With the balloting complete, we turned our attention to the second feature, the resident artist, Dave Reese, who opened with "Winter Wonderland." Dave's concert proved he continues to be one of our fine area musicians. He always produces arrangements, coloring and technique to ensure the most in listening enjoyment. Open console included Warren Lubich, Gordon Pratt, Creston and Don Crestwell, Jim Parker, Fred Clapp and Jim Dunbar.

We have been privileged, for the past few meetings, to have Jimmy Paulin, of Radio City Music Hall fame, perform during open console. Jimmy is currently engaged as staff organist at the Sierra Inn in Sacramento. This bombastic artist is a great talent and always willing to entertain us.

NORTH TEXAS

The acquisition of the Wonder Morton by this chapter is naturally the big event of the year for the chapter. (The story of removal and transport to Texas will be a feature in the April issue of THEATRE ORGAN.)

Meanwhile the chapter has continued the regular schedule of interesting events.

The November meeting was held



Lew Williams during open console at Dale Flanery's refurbished console. (Koski Photo)

at Whittle Music Company's Organ Auditorium with well over a quorum present. Naturally, much of the business session dealt with the progress of the Wonder Morton on its way to Texas and compliments to workers. The business session adjourned to hear some of the great talent we have in our chapter. Danny Ray and Lew Williams put on a fine program, each playing Gulbransen Rialto II's, sometimes in solo, sometimes in duet. It was a unique and enjoyable program.

The Christmas meeting was held at Dale Flanery's home. Members arriving early got a chance to really see the innards of Dale's completely refurbished console as it was still in refurbishing status right up to concert time. Dale and his crew, including wife Margaret, spent several days and nights working practically around the clock in order to have all pipes, toy counter, chimes, etc. functional for Danny Ray's concert. Fortunately, there was enough business at the business session and a pre-concert serving of refreshments to give Dale, Larry Hasselbring and several assistants time to finish all the wiring involved.

Danny's concert tested all the wiring and judging from the results and the audience's enjoyment, all the craftsmanship, as well as the musicianship was top notch. Dale got his chance to check the workmanship and performance when he took his turn at open console. It was a fine meeting, with several new members added to the rolls, and everyone going home with the Christmas Spirit in full bloom.



Dale Flanery finally gets to play his just-completed-console-rebuilding-project as the last artist during open console at the Christmas meeting.

(Koski Photo)

By the time this appears in **THE-ATRE ORGAN**, there will be more plans made, refurbishing begun and decisions made. We're really finding out what some of the other chapters that have acquired their own theatre organs have been through. It seems a little rough at times, but golly, ain't it fun? A very happy and prosperous New year to all from the North Texas Chapter.

JOE KOSKI

OK CITY

One of the more pleasant surprises at each meeting is the uncovering of talent within the membership, reason enough to be a consistent attendant at meetings.

After a short business meeting in November at the Queen Ann Cafeteria and surrounded with some 35 long slender brass trumpets, (no drooling, they are only decorations and mounted on the walls), we had a very interesting talk by Mrs. Cecil (Dorothy) Hamilton entitled "What I Want To Be When I Grow Up."

Using the Jesse Crawford (biography) as a base, she revealed how her life and the theatre organ had been as one, from childhood to the present time.

Her descriptions, either as a student, or listener-in-person, and the incidents involved in getting to these concerts throughout the country, were as interesting as the lives and facts about such organists, as Crawford, Dunstedter, Slosser, Milton Charles, Wade Hamilton, and many others, with which she almost has a library filled.

To us elders she brought back nostalgia of the good old days, and to the newcomers she opened up such an interesting avenue with the theatre organ and the artists who performed on them, that we have asked her to continue the talks as a part of future meetings, and also made her Historian-Librarian of the chapter.

As an organist, teacher and historian on the pipe organ, she has few peers.

The Sooner State Chapter, "up the turnpike," sent us some very interesting material from the Ritz Theatre of Tulsa and Milton Slosser, which we are adding to our library.

PAUL N. HAGGARD

OREGON

In October we began a weekend organ trip with a visit to the Atonement Lutheran Church in Newport, where is installed a delightful two-manual Wurlitzer. This organ has been rebuilt for religious use and its sound in this building is truly inspiring.

Then it was on to the beautiful bay view home of Mary Pitts where she and the late Richard Pitts installed a large Wood theatre organ. This instrument was formerly located in the Oaks Park skating rink in Portland and was moved to the Pitts' house when it was replaced by the 4/18 Wurlitzer. It is unusual in that there are no preset pistons, but it has four manuals, making it easy to play. Thanks to our gracious hostess,

The October "Round Robin" featured, in addition to the six-rank Wurlitzer at the home of Ed Maas in Eugene, Oregon, a ride behind a live steam Atlantic type locomotive.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)



Gerry Gregorius at the 2/6 Wurlitzer in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hedderly.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)

Mary Pitts, we had a very enjoyable musical afternoon, with members and guests participating.

The next morning we assembled at the Egyptian Theatre in Coos Bay. Their original Wurlitzer has been doubled by the addition of a second organ and the console enlarged to four manuals. The two organs, played together, provide a really massive ensemble.

Our final stop was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Maas in Eugene, where Ed has his six-rank Wurlitzer. He has added a third manual and a

player mechanism. Two sets of swell shades, one behind the other, gives a great dynamic range. A special bonus was riding behind Ed's live steam Atlantic type locomotive!

Our November meeting was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hedderly where we heard Gerry Gregorius at the 2/6 Wurlitzer. This organ is believed to be Opus 169, first installed in the People's Theatre in Chicago about 1919. Originally three ranks: Flute, String and Diapason, Bert has added a Vox, Trumpet and Tibia. Because there are no relays, the Tibia and Flute are wired together, with a ground switch to select either rank as desired. This very clever arrangement gives the Tibia full use of the Flute unification. There is also a fast speaking electronic 16' pedal bass, plus a xylophone and glockenspiel.

Gerry Gregorius is a polished professional whose artistic registration and arrangements produced an unbelievable variety of beautiful tones from this modest instrument. He is very adept at combining a sustained melody with rhythm chords with his left hand while playing right hand embellishments.

This organ is proof that a home organ does not have to be large to provide an excellent variety of beautiful tones with plenty of power. Thanks to Gwen and Bert Hedderly for their hospitality and to Gerry Gregorius and his fine music.

Our annual Christmas party was held at Benson High in December and began with a wonderful pot-luck dinner. There was plenty of fine food and time to visit with friends and their guests. Special credit is due Bob and Laura Burke who organized this dinner and to Bob who also worked with the crew to service the organ for the occasion.



Jonas Nordwall played the 3/18 Kimball at Benson High School for the Christmas party.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)

Following the dinner we moved to the auditorium where we heard a special program played on the 3/18 Kimball by Jonas Nordwall. Jonas is staff organist at the Organ Grinder Restaurant and is internationally known by his recordings here and in Australia.

His program included many little-known, but beautiful Christmas carols. These were played with great artistry and delicate registration bringing fresh enjoyment to the music of the season.

Following the program came the election of chapter officers, with Gerry Gregorius named to return as chairman for 1978.

BUD ABEL

PIEDMONT

In December members and guests gathered at the home of Dr. Paul Abernethy, former ATOS National President. The December meeting has grown to be something of a tradition, thanks to the hospitality of Doc and Mrs. Abernethy.

A short business meeting was held during which progress reports on two of the chapter's projects were given and new chapter officers were installed.

According to Mac Abernethy, the Elon College organ has progressed to the point where he is able to play a full chord from the console. Funds are still needed to buy a combination action for the organ.

The second project, that of rebuilding the console of the Morton in the Carolina Theatre in Greensboro, North Carolina, is coming along, too. The console has been removed and will soon be reconditioned. The theatre has been purchased by the Greensboro Arts Council and will be used as a center for the performing arts. Seats have been recovered, the floor has been cleaned of chewing gum and coke residue, the stage area is being rebuilt and, happily, the popcorn counter in the lobby has been demolished. The Greensboro community has shown an enthusiastic interest in shows put on by the PTOS and we hope to put on many more in the future.

Val Valentine gave a report on a project which is still pretty far down the road, the purchase and rebuilding of the Carolina Theatre in Winston-Salem. The chapter has an organ in storage and hopes to be able to install it there someday.

After the business meeting we got down to the real reason for our get-together, organ playing and listening. Our featured artist, Howard Manly of Greensboro, led off with selections from *Showboat*. Howard has an easygoing style and is a master of registration changes and modulations. He followed with traditional Yuletide songs and wound up with numbers from the twenties.

Rosa Rio

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Open console followed refreshments and Warren Apple, a student of organ at the North Carolina School of the Arts, put on a sparkling performance which shows he has been paying attention at school. Don McDonald was followed by Frank Netherlands of Stewart, Virginia. Despite some minor lapses of memory, he got some beautiful sounding registration combinations out of the organ. The author wishes that he could play half as well as these guys who protest that they "haven't played in five years." Jim Thaxton then gave us some more contemporary numbers and then it was go-home-time.

ERNIE VAUPEL

PIKES PEAK AREA

PPATOS ended 1977 with election of new officers and with projections for the new year. Officers elected for 1978 include John Grunow, chairman; Gene Roley, vice-chairman; Scott Christiansen, secretary; and Larry Wood, treasurer. Mike Gregorich, Robert Boyer, and Jack Hall will also serve on the executive committee. With this fine group of people we hope to have the leadership to finish pending projects in 1978.

The foremost project for our group to complete this year is the final installation of the Wurlitzer from the late Chief Theatre. After three years of restoration work, the organ is ready for the final installation. Chambers have been completed for the new home in the Colorado Springs City Auditorium. Hopes are for the Main Chamber to be playing from the console by Memorial Day with Solo Chamber completion as soon after as time and funds allow.

Over the holiday season, while

the City Auditorium was unavailable for our use, our group spent many busy weekends tuning and reworking the long neglected Austin organ installed in the City of Pueblo Memorial Hall. This great organ came to our groups attention about two years ago. The 4/66 concert organ was installed in 1919 complete with traps and percussions. The Austin Company has been most helpful with information and advice to help us complete this project which we greatly appreciate.

The last public performance on the organ was presented for the late President Woodrow Wilson while he was visiting the city. Hopes are to have the organ ready for a presentation to the city in 1978 with a regular concert series to follow in future years to assure this fine instruments continued use.

The PPATOS was host to many visitors in 1977 and we wish to thank them all for stopping and allowing us to show them our projects. With visitors from California and Rhode Island here this year we hope they will spread the word to all points in between to visit beautiful Colorado.

Best Wishes for a prosperous New Year.

SCOTT CHRISTIANSEN

POTOMAC VALLEY

As noted recently in this column, the chapter has lost several in-theatre meeting places. We are fortunate to have remaining a number of nearby member owned pipe organ installations whose owners are willing to accommodate us. However, chapter growth has almost exceeded the best planned capabilities of home owners to cope with the increasing size of the average attendance. These generous, cooperative



Dick Smith at the 2/7 Wurlitzer in the home of Delores and Roy Wagner.

(Harold R. Richmond Photo)

individuals deserve special mention for their active support of chapter needs pending the availability of our own Kimball in the theatre at the Maryland University Adult Education Center.

For the October meeting, Dolores and Roy Wagner again opened their attractive home organ studio in Glen Arm, Maryland, to 85 appreciative guests. Because of limited space in the organ studio, two large screen, closed circuit television receivers were set up in an adjacent room for guests who would play "musical chairs" and exchange seats with those in the main studio at intermission time.

Roy has remarked that his 2/7 Wurlitzer Style E is unique in that it is essentially the same as the day it was made. He has "successfully resisted all temptation to modify it." Details about the organ can be found in the December, 1972 issue of THEATRE ORGAN magazine. Its sounds are true and ample.

Chairman Al Baldino quickly disposed with the business part of the

"A James family show
is an adventure in showmanship."



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meeting which involved a report of the progress made on our Kimball restoration and housing project. Then to the scheduled performer, Dick Smith, who entertained us, informally, with a varied and exciting musical evening.

Currently Dick is appearing at the Millrace Tavern, Baltimore. He feels at home at the console of any electronic organ, as well as that of the mighty pipe organ.

The organ responded beautifully and precisely to our artist's fine performance and expertise in handling keyboard, pedal and registration. Roy Wagner expressed his appreciation to the console crew for their many hours of voluntary assistance in preparing the Wurlitzer in perfect pitch prior to the concert. We in turn thank the Wagners for their hospitality and highly successful efforts in making the evening of top notch entertainment available to us.

The November meeting was held at the Alexandria Roller Skating Arena on Sunday, November 20, 1977.

A dual treat. The artist was Jimmy Boyce performing at his 4/34 Mighty Wurlitzer. He is a charter member and another of its perennial, most enthusiastic and popular performers. One hundred and twenty members and friends turned out for this pre-Christmas opportunity to again hear and see the unique instrument in concert.

A short business meeting was conducted by the chairman, Al Baldino. A slate of officers for the 1978 season was elected, to include Robert Stratton, chairman; Karl Hoffman, vice chairman; Marion Long, treasurer and Mark Hurley, secretary.

Jimmy Boyce, whose musical education began with the piano at age 5, progressed to the organ at age 12.

At 15 he was organist and choir-master of a metropolitan church. A graduate of Peabody conservatory, Jimmy, as a teenager, turned to theatre organ style listening to Art Brown and Milt Slosser at Loew's Capitol Theatre in downtown Washington, D.C. The indelible impression made by the fabulous sights and sounds of these early-day organists led eventually to Jimmy's purchase of a 4/34 Wurlitzer which had as its original home, the Center Theatre, a part of the Rockefeller Center complex. Within four years, Jimmy, with the help of members of ATOS and friends, had completed the monumental task of dismantling, transfer of the Wurlitzer, and installation of all 34 ranks at the Alexandria Roller Skating Rink. The instrument's speaking voices and percussions are spread unenclosed, for all to see, across the entire end of the huge arena and sing forth majestically. No swell shades here — all changes in volume must be made by stop variations. Jimmy Boyce, master of the console, does this to perfection.

Jimmy's ability to create sparkling new sounds and re-create the traditional theatre sounds of the past have earned him rave reviews at local, regional and even national meetings of the ATOS. On the "other side of the screen" portions of the movie *Scorpio* was filmed at the Rink in 1972. Boyce became one of the few theatre organists to appear in a motion picture.

Mr. Boyce played our November program with the expertise and quality to be expected from a professional of his calibre — a well balanced program.

The organ, as usual, sounded very big and full, as an instrument of its size, in its huge, cavernous setting,



Jimmy Boyce at Alexandria Roller Skating Arena 4/34 Wurlitzer.

should. Jimmy credited his assistants, Lester Martin and George Mather, for the many hours of work they continue to contribute in maintaining the organ.

Our thanks again to Jimmy Boyce and to the management of the arena for the use of the hall and the pipe organ.

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

RED RIVER

Mother Nature dropped the worst blizzard in years on Fargo just in time to stop our show at the Fargo Theatre on November 10, causing us to postpone it one week. By then, another storm was brewing, but we made it anyway. Our organist for the evening, our sixth show in this series, was Rob Richards of Phoenix, who played concert selections of something for everybody, accompanied two silent comedies — Harold Lloyd and the Our Gang Kids, plus two sing-alongs. A reception for members and guests followed at the theatre.

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Currently we are gathering the information needed for getting our tax exempt status. We are looking for financial aid, in the form of grants, to help pay for the installation of our chapter Wurlitzer in Moorhead Senior High School. Lance Johnson and Reiny Utke will go before the school board's January meeting to present the drawings, cost estimates, plans for usage of the organ by us and the school and will have a contract ready for signatures. If things go our way, we could move some of the components into the school auditorium right away, with the major structural work to be done during summer vacation. Possible completion date would be Spring of '79. The console of our 3/12 Wurlitzer appeared on a local TV news feature in December when Lance was interviewed at his organ factory (Johnson Organ Co., Inc.).

Following our November meeting, we looked at the many pages of blueprints for the Fargo Theatre, built in 1925, noting the Greek columns, arches, ornate organ grilles, etc. wishing the theatre still looked that way. After two major remodelings, alas, there's nothing left of the original decor . . . sigh.

SONIA CARLSON

SAN DIEGO

On November 13 and 14 we sponsored our eighth concert of the year when we presented Bob Ralston at the Pavilion in Pacific Beach. It was our first attempt at giving the public a choice of two nights to hear the same artist . . . and well worth the effort. To see this talented musician take command of the 'Mighty Mo' was an exciting event. The following review, by Terry Sullivan, appeared in our chapter newsletter:



Bob Ralston at the Pavilion in Pacific Beach where he played the 5/29 Moller.


(Ed Minder Photo)

"Surprise! Can Bob Ralston really play a theatre pipe organ? He can indeed, and exceptionally well! I had heard many rumors, read mixed reviews, and watched the Lawrence Welk Show. I was apprehensive as I went to his concert when he played the 5-manual Moller on November 14. Yes, he did all the standard tricks (He's an entertainer — he knows what an audience enjoys) but a pleasant surprise — he was in total control of the most formidable of instruments. He is definitely a pipe organ organist. He had fresh arrangements ranging from pop to light classics with genuine theatre styles — which many refuse to acknowledge he can do. The audience responded to this entertaining artists' warm personality with standing ovations. His unusually extensive repertoire was topped only by the sparkle and clarity of his playing. It is to be hoped that soon he will be properly recorded on a theatre pipe organ. Note to other chapters when arranging concerts — do consider

Bob. You'll find that one of the top names is also one of the top talents."

December 4 found us enjoying our annual Christmas party at Organ Power #1 at Kearney Mesa where everyone had a chance to play the 3/12 Wurlitzer following our business meeting. The chairman's annual report was read and Coulter Cunningham reported on the recent regional convention in Cleveland. Election of officers for 1978 was followed by their installation, and we congratulate the following: Marjorie Greer, chairman; Lois Segur, vice chairman; Mary Hill, secretary; Ruby Sinclair, treasurer; Charles Porter, programs; Jerry Sullivan, publicity; and Bob Brooks, membership.


Due to the closing of the Pacific Beach and Solana Beach restaurants, our concerts will now be held at Organ Power #1 in Kearney Mesa. We invite you to join us. Work is progressing steadily on the installation of our Wurlitzer D in the California Theatre — the faithful crew



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working diligently every weekend. In the next issue we hope to give a more detailed report on our progress.

My highest praise goes to the dedicated and enthusiastic officers and members of this chapter all of whom give so willingly of their time and talents. It was a privilege to have served as their chairman this past year.

LOIS SEGUR

SIERRA

We don't know who "done him in," but there he lay in his black coffin with an ice-pick through his chest, and blood soaking his white shirt-front. As the various "mourners" arrived for the "service" at Grant School auditorium they solemnly viewed the body and were startled when it greeted them with: "How nice of you to come. Did anyone bring the ice? I've got the pick."

Promptly at four o'clock the service began as six white-gloved pall bearers bore the closed coffin from the lobby, down the aisle and placed it beside the gleaming white organ console. Jim Hodges announced that we had been unable to get an organist to play the service, but horror of horrors, the coffin lid opened and a hand slid out followed by a masked body in a flowing black velvet cape. Moving to the console, the wraith removed cape and mask to reveal, not the phantom of the opera, but concert organist Rex Koury.

The first half-hour of Rex's program was music of the season, mysterious numbers including Alfred Hitchcock's theme, "Funeral March of a Marionette," and a weird number accompanied by sound effects that Rex had taped on his electronic organ at home. The lights dimmed and *The Cat and The Canary*, of 1927 vintage, reeled off foot after

foot of shudders with Rex skillfully adding just the right nuance of music to match the screen action. Rex is that ideal showman — top organist with a great personality. Two comments were overheard from the audience: "How can that man possibly sit at that organ and play two hours of such beautiful music?" and "I'm glad I couldn't see the organ (console) from where I sat. I would have been watching him play instead of watching the movie."

A near-capacity crowd assembled at Big Top Pizza and Pipes in Carmichael in November to hear former Radio City Music Hall organist Jimmy Paulin, Jr. at the 3/17 Wurlitzer. They came anticipating the best and they were not disappointed. The old "goose bumps" came with his opening number "S'Wonderful," and continued throughout his entire program. (The way Jimmy grabs handfuls of keys from manual to manual in "Zippity Doo Da" has to be seen to be believed.) Following his concert, many of those who couldn't get enough of Jimmy's music and showmanship went to the Sierra Inn, where he is house organist, for more of the same. We're hoping he'll be around for a long time.

On Wednesday afternoon, December 7, a Memorial Service for Clyde Derby was held at East Lawn Memorial Park. An overflow crowd filled the chapel for a short service in memory of a very popular person, a fine organist, and one of the founders of Sierra Chapter. Even during his extended illness, Clyde was always a very enthusiastic member and contributed greatly to the success of Sierra Chapter. We'll miss him very much.

The Sierra Inn (Greer), being in a state of remodeling, was unable to

accept us for our Christmas party, which has always been held there in the past; so, Sunday afternoon, December 11, found us at the Golden Bear Theatre for an afternoon at our Seaver Memorial Organ. With the console opened, Ray Anderson, assisted by Herb Dunkley and Art Phelan, explained how the organ works. A sing-along of old pops and Christmas carols was next on the program, with Louise Daggett leading the vocals, Joe Gustin at the organ, and Carroll Harris at the slide projector. It was then open-console time and several of our members, some of whom we've never heard before, took over to be followed by two of our professional members, Jimmy Paulin and Jim Riggs. Louise and Sue Lang, with Joe back at the organ, then lead us in more carols to conclude the first half of the program. It was a cold, rainy, blustery day, so everyone made a fast drive to The Breakers, a beautiful new restaurant just across the street from the Cal-Expo fairgrounds. Following dinner, Chairman Art Phelan introduced the new board members, presented an honorary membership to Kathy Derby in appreciation for all she and Clyde have done for Sierra Chapter and awarded door prizes. Again we thank Cindy Carleton, our social committee hostess, for another successful occasion. We'll miss Cindy, who offered her resignation due to pressing family matters.

KEYSANPEDALS.

SOONER STATE

Our program for November was a most enjoyable concert presented by Chad Weirick on the Oral Roberts University 4/21 Wurlitzer. This was the first formal program we have



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Organist

heard from Chad, and it was truly delightful. We are looking forward to more of the same. There were a number of guests in the audience, hopefully budding "enthusiasts" and eventually new members. Nobody was brave enough to follow Chad at the console, so the meeting adjourned at the close of his performance.

Our annual Christmas party was held in the rural home of Bruce and Martha Wilson, north of Claremore, Oklahoma. Bruce handed out specification sheets for his 2-manual 12½-rank Hillgreen-lane-Geneva-Moller-Reuter-Wilson pipe organ as we entered. The console is a 1927 Geneva which Bruce obtained in 1975 from B.L. McCrary, Oklahoma City. The Hillgreen-Lane chests, pipework, blower and power supply were originally installed in the First Christian Church in Lawton, Oklahoma. The swell motor is a 1939 Reuter 8-stage and the swell shades are Moller. The Moller unit chests and more pipe work are from the Oberlin Music Conservatory, Oberlin, Ohio. Bruce and Martha designed and built the Wilson solid state relays, "assisted" by their two young sons, Derek and Deshayn. Advice and more assistance were also given by Phil Judkins, our chapter chairman, and by B.L. McCrary. The living room of their home is designed around the organ, with the pipes installed in the garage; they speak into the upper part of the extra-high wall at one end of the living room. Entertainment was impromptu open console, with music — Christmas and otherwise — played by Phil Judkins, Harvey Young, Joe Crutchfield and Dorothy Smith. It was a lovely beginning to the holiday season!

DOROTHY SMITH



National ATOS President Ray Snitil presents charter to Al Sacker, chairman of the newly-formed Beaumont Chapter during ceremonies at the Jefferson Theatre. William H. Tunstall (left) Houston ATOS chairman, and Erwin Young (right) National ATOS vice president/treasurer, look on. (G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

After having three organizational meetings in June, July and August of 1977 to form a Southeast Texas Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, the chapter did hold the first regular meeting on Septem-



Al Sacker at the 3/8 Robert Morton in the Jefferson Theatre. (G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)

ber 4, 1977 in our headquarters, the beautiful and historic Jefferson Theatre with its famous Robert Morton pipe organ. Truly, our chapter covers the Southeast Texas Metropolitan Area as the following officers and board of directors will indicate: Al Sacker of Beaumont is chairman, Floyd Broussard of Orange is vice chairman, Ruth Lindholm of Silsbee is secretary, Anne Kopke of Beaumont is treasurer, Tim Hart of Beaumont is membership chairman, W.D. Hargett of Beaumont is *Vox-Setcatos* editor, Dora Brammer of Port Arthur is archivist, Thelma Debes of Groves is house chairman, Ruby Holleman Monroe of Beaumont and Wayne Ruggles of Vidor are the two directors — at-large.

Al Sacker played intermissions during the SPEBSQSA (barbershop singing groups) District Contest in the Jefferson on September 9, giving much pleasure to many people who hadn't expected so much of a novelty

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The 50-year-old Jefferson Theatre in Beaumont, Texas.

(G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)



Interior of the Jefferson Theatre, headquarters of the new Southeast Texas Chapter.

(G.R. Hockmeyer Photo)

in an "old theatre." Also a quote from the *Port Arthur News* of September 27, 1977, "Fashions and fun were the keynote at Beaumont's Jefferson Theatre as the style show-musical review *Raisin' Cane* was presented to a full house on Monday night. Not to be overlooked is Al Sacker, Jefferson Theatre organist who entertained the audience before showtime and also provided accompaniment throughout the evening. Sacker and his console magic are reason enough to go to any show at the Jefferson."

Our organ work crew is second to none! The Robert Morton is being repaired and serviced by fifteen organ technicians including Spence Adams, Ed Berkely, Floyd Broussard, Bill Calhoun, David Givens, Bill Hamm, Bill Hargett, Nick Harper, Ralph Lindholm, Keith Morgan, Bob Neyland, Melvin Reeves, Wayne Ruggles, Al Sacker and Bill Tetley, Gladys Berkeley, Billie Luginbuhl, Shirley Hise and Ann Kopke help mightily, too, by bringing iced

drinks and snacks to some of the pipe organ work sessions.

The October meeting was held in our headquarters building, the ornate Jefferson Theatre, where after a short business meeting, two silent films were previewed, *The Girl and Her Trust* (1912) and *Barney Oldfield's Race For A Life* (1913). Both silent films were accompanied with pipe organ music with Al Sacker at the console. Refreshment time was on the stage while open console was being enjoyed by many of the chapter members.

The Sunday, November 6, 1977 luncheon meeting was a very memorable event in the short history of our newly formed chapter. Rarely is a chapter privileged to be invited to a former mansion, and rarer yet is for that mansion to have a pipe organ with two consoles! THEATRE ORGAN will publish the story of this wonderful edifice in the next issue. We were, indeed, thankful for this wonderful experience, for as of this writing, our chapter has been

granted permission to "take over" and service this magnificent Moller pipe organ with its Duo-Art Player in exchange for recitals and future meetings of our chapter.

At the meeting of the chapter on December 3, the ATOS Chapter Charter was presented in person by National President Ray Snitil. For most chapters this a big, auspicious occasion but in Texas it automatically becomes colossal.

Beaumont's mayor, Ken Ritter (nephew of Tex Ritter), issued an official Proclamation declaring December 3 as ATOS Southeastern Chapter Day. Ray Snitil, who was accompanied by V.P. Erwin Young, were given keys to the city and made honorary citizens of Beaumont. There were TV and radio interviews as well as newspaper coverage of these events.

Needless to say, everyone in Southeast Texas was aware that a new ATOS chapter was officially on its way. The meeting was a huge success.



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W. D. HARGETT

SOUTH FLORIDA

We did it! The week of December 19-23 will be remembered by the members of SOFTOS as the time when the Maurice Gusman Cultural Center Wurlitzer 260 special organ spoke once again for the people of Miami. Silent since stage shows were ended at the then Olympia Theatre, it spoke forth under the capable fingers of Hal Stanton, former organist for the Florida State Theatres, to which this house once belonged. Karl Cole, Art Venecia and David Thurmond each played noon hour concerts as the week's series progressed. Sponsored by SOFTOS, the Miami Offstreet Parking Authority and backed by the Miami Merchant's Association, the series was well received by the community. It was the culmination of a six-year crusade by chapter members.

The year 1977 was an active year for SOFTOS. Five times we met at Andre Hall with Pete Dumser, Art Venecia and Hector Olivera at the ivories. Betty Lee Taylor accompanied silent films on two "Return to the 20's" evenings. April found the club in West Palm Beach at the home of Johnny DeMiller and his "home brew" theatre organ with Ms. Marti Lynch, of the Rodgers Organ Company, as guest artist. August was a review of convention tapes at Ralph Anderson's, with open console at his Rodgers 33E. In November, SOFTOS was the invited guest of Preston Dettman at his recital at

Christ The King Lutheran Church, Miami, and co-sponsor of a Fr. Bill Biebel concert on an Overbrook Music installation of the Allen Organ Company.

Christmas was celebrated once again at the home of Cal and Mildred Jureit and their throbbing 3/14 mostly-Wurlitzer organ. Jim Benz-miller made the trip from Stevens Point, Wisconsin, to do the honors.

Jim, a featured artist at the Chicago convention, specializes in New Orleans style jazz arrangements. The balance of his concert consisted of familiar light classics, Broadway show medleys and current ballads. Or as Jim put it, "The songs everybody knows and loves and most organists hate to play." The Christmas concert was a special treat by a superior artist.

The kickoff meeting/New Years party, January 1978, was at Andre Hall with our ever popular Betty Lee and a film from Bob's vast library of silents.

STEVE FITZGERALD

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Chapter members enjoyed a special treat at the home of William P. Brown on November 12. In addition to his two pizza parlor organs, Mr. Brown also has a 5/22 Wurlitzer home installation. That evening Lyn Larsen presented over an hour of captivating music, including Lyn's own composition, "Lovers Belong to Sorrento." Following the concert, members and guests were able to try their hands (and feet) at the Wurlitzer during open console. Our special thanks go out to Bill and Barbara Brown for their wonderful hospitality.

Our Christmas party was held at the Mesa Organ Stop Pizza Parlor.



Ron Rhode joined Lyn for piano and organ duets at Lyn's Christmas program.

Ron Rhode took time out from his holiday chores to play an assortment of Christmas songs for us. "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town" all right, but according to Ron, he's coming by Amtrak! Following his musical presentation, Ron gave us a capsulized explanation of the presets and pistons on the Organ Stop 3/23 Wurlitzer. Many members took advantage of open console time.

Another holiday organ activity was the Lyn Larsen Christmas Concert at the Phoenix Organ Stop Restaurant. The concert was a sellout. The special added attraction this year was Ron Rhode joining Lyn for piano — organ duets on two Chopin pieces and a "Nola — Polly" combination. We also got to hear Lyn and Ron sing together, which isn't an everyday occurrence! Dave Lindsay accompanied the two artists, and also handled lighting effects for the entire concert.

Our vice-chairman, Steve Schlessing, gave a Christmas concert at the First Southern Baptist Church on

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Lyn Larsen and his mother after his Christmas program at the Phoenix Organ Stop Restaurant.

December 17. He played a variety of songs of the season. Joining Steve for two of his songs was vocalist Esther Burkholder.

One of the events we have planned for 1978 will be a dedication concert performed on our recent restoration project, the 2/9 Wurlitzer at Phoenix College.

MADELINE LIVOLSI

WESTERN RESERVE

From sunrise to sunset of 1977, the WRTOS organ-ites now offer you highlights from several and exciting, innovative months of activity.

Dear Diary,

1/30 George Krejci has (you wouldn't believe it) silent movie cue sheets from the 20's . . . music from the mysterious to love themes and the all-important "huff-puff" chase music. George entertained us with his know-how and can-do at the Lamplighter Inn. A most worthwhile meeting!

2/26 "Everything is Coming Up

Roses" whenever we can enjoy Larry Ferrari "en concert." A super music fest as always which included Ben Turpin in the silent movie, *She Didn't Say Yes*. In the morning there had been a spectacular Leroy Anderson Festival on the 5/167 E.M. Skinner pipe organ at Cleveland's Public Hall.

2/9 *Lost and Found Department* — Long-lost Akron Strand 2/9 Wurlitzer Style F Special found in a Baptist church in Barberton, Ohio, by Harold Wright and Bill Taber (new owners) . . . last lost chords played by Denny Richards. The entire organ came out through a trap door in the ladies room of the church. Honest!

3/27 Did you know there's an Austin pipe organ at the Masonic Temple in Cleveland? Dr. Robert Bray, a specialist of the "classical touch," played, among other compositions, "An Organ Sonata in E Major" by Jones Rogers. Very impressive!

4/23,24 Today, twenty-nine of us more stalwart non-Saturday morning sleeping members bused it to Erie, Penn., to tour the Durst Organ Supply Co., guided by Denny Unks. Sometime thereafter, Joe Luckey of Gannon College welcomed the Pittsburgh and Cleveland clubs to enjoy John Mitchell's performance at the Tellers organ. Through the pouring rain, the bus schlossed to Buffalo and into Tonawanda (dinner enjoyed in Niagara Falls, Canada). On the way to North Tonawanda, we stopped at the Wurlitzer plant. Randy Piazza, chairman of the Niagara Frontier Chapter, and chapter members, greeted us at the Riviera Theatre where we enjoyed great company and a musical bash on the Wurlitzer therein. Shea's Buffalo Theatre was our last tour stop and then homeward with a golden sunset!

5/7 That Lyn Larsen is something

else! Charming, talented, and handsome (in any order). His inventiveness and original interpretations enhance any musical theme. His accompaniment to the hilarious silent comedy film *Flying Elephants* with Laurel and Hardy made this choice comedy even funnier.

5/22 Gordon Hegfield's concert at the Wurlitzer in the Lorain Palace Theatre was immensely successful. We're all proud of this young man!

6/4 SUPER '77 SNEAK PREVIEW at Public Hall featuring theatre organ artists Keith Chapman and Lowell Ayars. Lowell sang beautifully to his playing, and Keith dedicated the Coronation March of 1937, "Crown Imperial" by William Walton, to Claude Hawks, chairman of our forthcoming ATOS Regional Convention Thanksgiving weekend, November 25, 26, 27. Claude has been the person most instrumental in arranging the "big event."

8/21 The rain pattered over our picnic at Rosemary and Al Boehlein's but didn't dampen our spirits.

9/8 Have you heard of the Music Box Association? It's an organization similar to ATOS representing a group of dedicated collectors of not only music boxes, but, in general, all types of automated or antique musical instruments including band organs, player pianos, player organs and even an occasional theatre pipe organ. Hundreds of collectors from all over the world assembled in the greater Cleveland area for their 1977 convention held at the Bond Court Hotel!

Time and space doesn't permit me to tell you at this time about the fabulous SUPER '77 happening — except that it was a success from beginning to end! Will follow through on this event next time around . . .

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WOLVERINE

Due to circumstances beyond our control, this column has not appeared for a few months, so we'll do our best to make up here.

Our first Saturday programs have been extremely successful at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing, Michigan. On the aforementioned day of each month, the 3/11 Barton pours forth with an hour of music by a selected artist, followed by an open console period. Since our last writing some of our programs have included Father Jim Miller, John Lauter, Jim Boutell, Scott Smith, Burt Castle, and Barry Rindhage. October's first Saturday marked the kickoff for the campaign for "Da-Capo, Inc." to buy the 1500-seat theatre for use as a performing arts center, with the pipe organ intact. The group hopes to own the theatre and attached arcade building by next October. In November, David and Jo Lau graced us with their slide/tape show of ATOS Organ Safari in 1976.

As for our regular programs, we've had a succession of good ones. In May, we had Gary Reseigh at the DTOC Wurlitzer; Scott Smith at the Temple Theatre Barton (marking the 50th anniversary of the theatre) in July; a wonderful (but wet) picnic at the residence of Lawrie and Rose-

mary Mallett, who have a 2/10 Hybrid, better known as "Father's Folly" and Donna Parker at the new Roaring Twenties Pizza Parlor in Grand Rapids in a special program (just for us) at the 3/33 Wurlitzer. Dennis James also appeared at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing for a midnight showing of *Phantom of the Opera* on Halloween. In November, the 3/14 Wurlitzer in the Royal Oak



Donna Parker at the console of the Roaring Twenties 3/33 Wurlitzer. Above the console is the exposed Austin Bourdon. (Ed Corey Photo)



This sign welcomes you to the Roaring Twenties Pizza on 28th Street in Grand Rapids, Mich. (Ed Corey Photo)

residence of Chuck Harris was featured, and, of course, our annual Christmas bash was at the Detroit home of David Voydanoff and Glenn Rank, better known as "Wurlitzer House," the name derived from David's 3/16 Wurlitzer, and Glenn's partially-installed style H.

Officers for the coming year are: Scott Smith, chairman; Barry Rindhage, vice-chairman/treasurer; and David Jones, secretary.

Maybe this year's resolution will be to keep you better informed. □

Al Sacker

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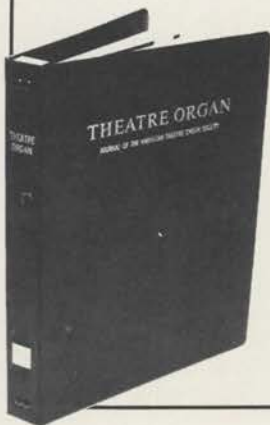
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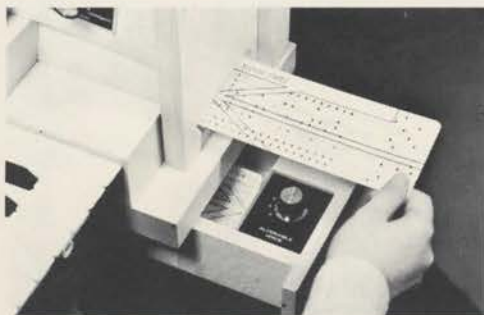
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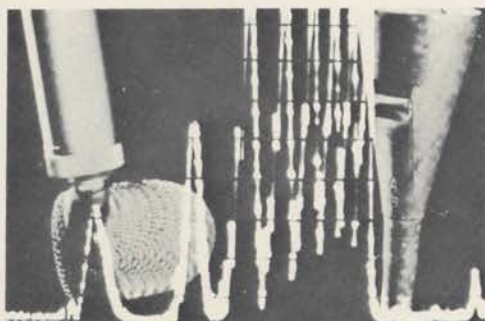
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