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April/May 1979



Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

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Editorial Address

THEATRE ORGAN
P.O. Box 1314
Salinas, California 93902
Phone: (408) 663-3238

Advertising Address

ATOS Advertising
2231 North Burling Street
Chicago, Illinois 60614

ATOS Corporate Office

ATOS
6900 Santa Monica Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90038

Office of the President

Thomas O. (Tommy) Landrum
4815 Leonard Parkway
Richmond, Virginia 23226
Phone: (804) 353-8376

National Headquarters

ATOS
P.O. Box 1002
Middleburg, Virginia 22117
Phone: (703) 364-2423

National Officers

Thomas O. (Tommy) Landrum, President
Erwin Young, V.P.-Treasurer
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National Board of Directors

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Curator

Paul Abernethy
P.O. Box 2480
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EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor — George Thompson
Associate Editors — Lloyd E. Klos,
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Editor-Emeritus — W. "Stu" Green
Photographer — Bill Lamb
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Cover Photo

The keydesk of the 4/16 Page organ installed in the 1920s in the Avalon Casino on Santa Catalina Island. The island was purchased in 1919 by Bill Wrigley, Jr. and developed as a training location for the Chicago Cubs. The theatre and ballroom have remained unchanged since they were constructed over 60 years ago. This organ will be heard by those attending the Encore following the convention.

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1974 – Lloyd E. Klos

1975 – Joe Patten

1976 – Floyd and Doris Mumm

1977 – Les and Edith Rawle

1978 – Len Clarke

President's Message

It is with regret that I must announce that, because of illness, our National Secretary and National Board Member Reidel West has asked to be relieved of any further duties.

She has always been an inspiration to the team and her enthusiasm went a long way toward organizing the Alabama Chapter.

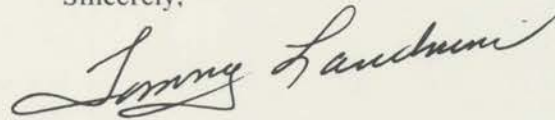
Inasmuch as John Ledwon received the next highest number of votes in the last election, the board has appointed John to complete the unexpired term of Miss West which ends July, 1980.

The board has appointed Betty Mason acting secretary through July, 1979.

The annual Board of Directors meeting with chapter representatives will be Sunday afternoon, July 8, 1979. Chapters are urged to have an officer or designated representative present at this meeting.

Hope to see you all at the convention.

Sincerely,



Tommy Landrum
President



NOTE: As we go to press, word was received of the death of Reidel West. Her "Closing Chord" will appear in the June/July issue.

THE OTHER WRIGHT

Bill Wright at his beloved 4/20 Robert Morton in the Midland Theatre, Kansas City. He played at the Midland from 1927 to 1930, "when they didn't figure they needed live music anymore." Bill would meet the Morton again.

by Bill Wright
As told to Stu Green

Our subject is one of the veteran silent film cuers whose organ playing career spanned the decades since the birth of "talkies" and continues merrily on into the present. His story provides a view of the organ scene in the Midwest during the "silent era," and the lean years that followed. Bill never stopped playing organ, preferably pipes, and sought out such opportunities with exceptional success. In fact, he's playing pipes for pay right now.

Even close friends are unaware that I am English by birth. Any accent is long gone. My father and mother were a most implausible couple. He was a British Episcopalian and she an Irish Catholic. Yet it all worked out beautifully for 48 years. Dad had two claims to fame: (1) he had some royalty in his background (the Duke of Bilgewater, or some such name), (2) his grandfather was one of the architects of Liverpool Cathedral, which took 25 years to build.

One Sunday my father decided to take his family to the cathedral to show off grandfather's accomplishment. Mother wasn't overjoyed by the prospect but she got me and twin brother Teddy, and older brother George, into our blue serge suits and stiff white collars, and off we went.

I can still remember entering that enormous edifice and hearing the wonderful music. Later my father





After a disastrous bout with bistro playing, Bill went into theatre management — always managing to get assigned to a theatre with an organ. Here he's shown broadcasting the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Raymond Theatre in Pasadena, Calif., which later became the Crown Theatre. Bill was on the theatre's management staff from 1943 to 1964. His next assignment was the Eastland Theatre in West Covina, Calif. It had no pipes, so Bill played intermissions on a good quality plug-in.

complained that I had spent more time looking over my shoulder at the organ loft than I did at the pulpit. He didn't fathom that I had been "hooked" on organ. Neither did I.

My father was a stained glass artisan who plied his trade in the Liverpool area. One day he came home and announced that he had a new job — in the "promised land" — which narrowed down to Independence, Missouri. After the long sea voyage and railway trip we arrived in

Independence and settled in a house in the suburb of Fairmount Park. That was really "out in the sticks" in 1911, and the half-mile trek to the street car end station got rather sticky during the warm and humid September of our arrival.

Father had no trouble adapting to the new land; he went right to work for the Kansas City Stained Glass Co. It wasn't so easy for mother. Like all Europeans planning to emigrate, her English friends had warned her

that lions and tigers roamed the streets unchallenged in the U.S.A. Her particular hangup was a fear of being scalped by "wild Injuns." She had read those Westerns back home and now she was right in the country where the savages ran wild. No amount of explanation by my father could budge her from the fear that our family was in constant danger, especially while walking through the rather dense forest to the street car terminal. Each small noise terrified her.

The matter reached panic proportions when a newly wed couple moved in next door. It's unlikely that people today are familiar with the wedding "shivaree," wherein the newlyweds were provided a rough-house "serenade" by their neighbors at a time when they'd rather be doing something else.

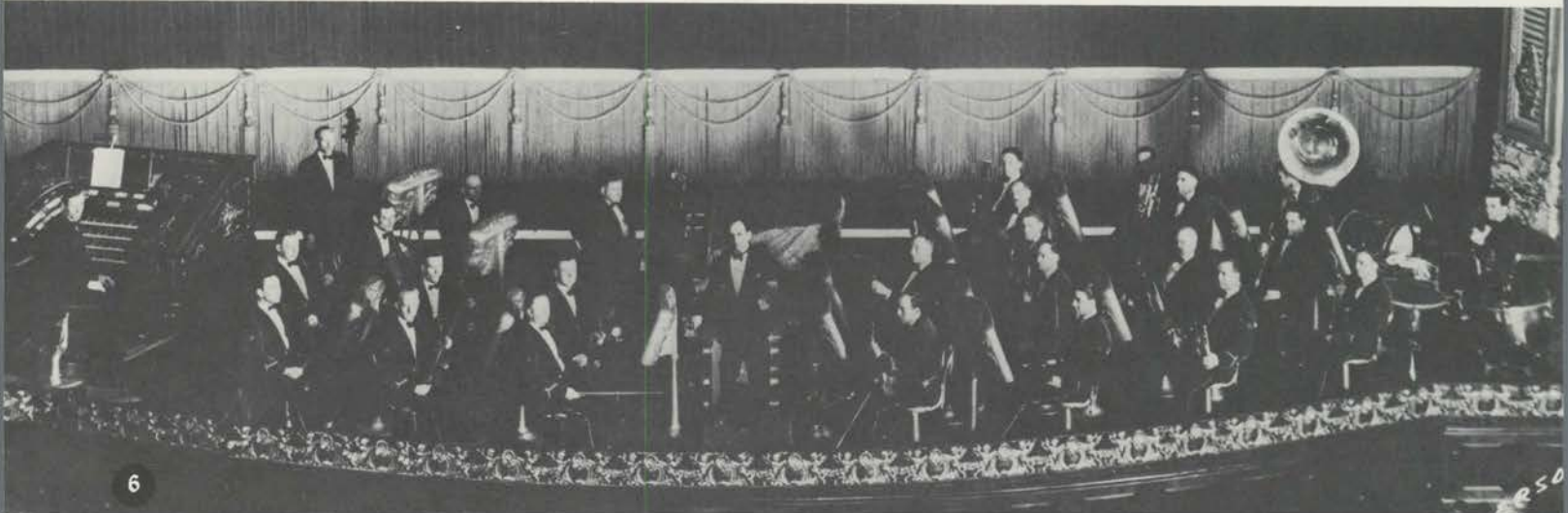
It was about 5 o'clock in the afternoon when the couple took possession of their new home. My father hadn't yet come home from work. Mother was preparing supper.

Then the noise started. The neighbors were coming to "shivaree" the couple. It was distant at first, but it kept getting closer. There was the sound of drums, war whoops and gunfire. It was only the neighbors shouting, beating on washtubs and firing their shotguns skyward. But to mother it meant only one thing.

"Indians! It's Indians coming to scalp us all!"

She went white but quickly recovered and took command. She locked the doors, pulled down the shades and we all hauled furniture to blockade the doors. That was the scene when my father arrived. The "serenade" next door was in full swing and dad couldn't enter his own home. When he finally got in he was somewhat testy; he was hungry and

In 1928 the Loew's Midland Theatre orchestra numbered 25 musicians, including Bill Wright at the Robert Morton. The conductor at this time was Gerald Carbonera. This is how they looked with the orchestra elevated for the overture.



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it took at least 15 minutes to convince mother that he wasn't Geronimo!

When I was 13 I was drafted to play the reed organ in nearby St. Ann's Church. The new priest, a wonderful little Irishman named Fr. Bob Hayes, conducted his first mass with music sung by the ladies' choir, as usual — awful! After mass the good father confided to the male parishioners that if the music couldn't be better, he'd prefer none. The ladies of the choir overheard him — and quit. That suited the priest; he was partial to male choruses. Fr. Hayes was a fine musician (and pinochle player).

With me accompanying, he soon had an all-male choir singing for services. The news of our singing prowess spread rapidly. Within a year we were invited to sing at the big cathedral in Kansas City, where only the best groups were heard. Thus I was introduced to the pipe organ. It was rather scary for me; I had never even seen an organ with a pedalboard before, but there I was, accompanying the choir on a pipe organ with pedals. And there were stops with strange sounding names! I somehow muddled through and afterwards, Fr. Hayes, while praising

his choir, insisted that I had a talent for organ playing and should have lessons. I sure felt the need of lessons after being confronted with that puzzling pipe organ. But the experience only whetted my musical appetite.

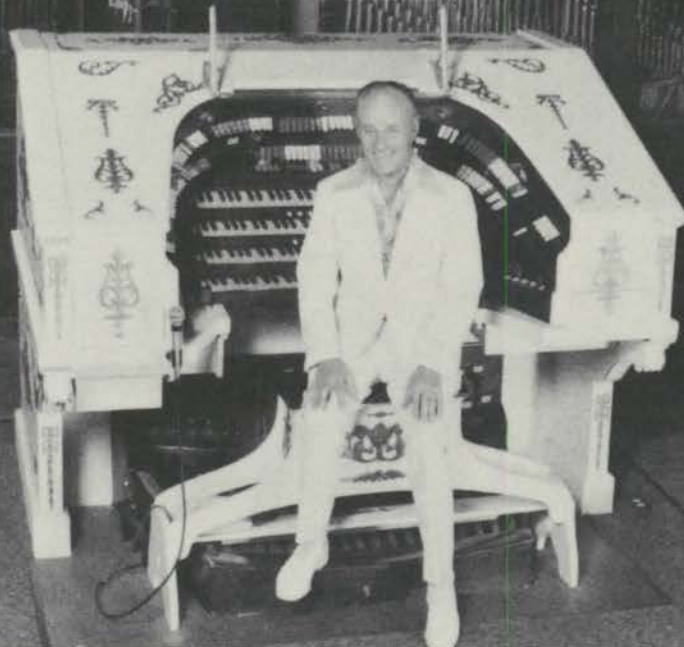
Not long afterward I skipped night school classes and attended a movie house showing a Western. I think the title was *When Bearcat Went Dry*, with my favorite cowboy actor, Harry Carey. The Wonderland Theatre was equipped with a small Estey organ with lots of display pipes I later discovered were nonspeaking dummies. At the console was a little white-haired lady church organist. Naturally, I sat in the front row and even screwed up the courage to talk with her. She explained about playing for movies and that she was paid \$25.00 a week. I marvelled at the way she could play and talk simultaneously, something I've never been able to do.

My first engagement in a theatre came about as a fluke. It was shortly after World War I and Harry S. Truman was a big hero in Missouri, so Democrat "boss" Tom Pendergast picked him to run for Judge in eastern Jackson County. There was a 2-party political system rampant in

Missouri then, both Democrat factions; Pendergast's "Goats" and Joe Shannon's "Rabbits." Republicans? Few and far between. The "Rabbits" decided to have a rally at the Fairmount Park Theatre. The regular pianist at the theatre was a rare Republican and wasn't going to play for no Democrat rally.

Dad, who favored the "Rabbits," suggested that I was a pretty good honky-tonk piano player, so I got the job. I played a half hour, then the sing-along — "A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight." The "surprise speaker" was no less than Harry Truman, fresh from the battlefields of France, decked out in his Rainbow Division uniform. A "Goat" among the "Rabbits!" But he got a rousing response, and later won the judgeship easily. For my piano play-in' I received a salary of three dollars — easy money!

My first organ job was at the Strand Theatre in Chillicothe, Mo., playing a great big 2/3 Robert Morton pit organ, all pipes and noisemakers in one swellbox. Like the lady said, I got \$25.00 for playing movies six nights and one matinee, week after week. The Strand was distinguished by many nonpaying attendees —



Bill is reunited with the "most wonderful Morton of them all," the 4/20 from the Kansas City Midland Theatre, reinstalled in the Plantation Restaurant in Solana Beach, Calif. It was a stage installation with colorfully illuminated pipework mounted behind glass panelling. It was here that he contributed several memory tunes to the recording he and his fellow organists played on the Morton when the restaurant's demise was imminent.

rats! When the front seats weren't occupied I would often hear the pitter-patter of tiny feet behind me. I'd turn around and find myself eye-to-eye with a huge rat chomping a piece of discarded popcorn. Creepy! But I never missed a musical beat.

Six months of that was enough, after which I went to Kansas City and got a playing job at the Regent — six hour shifts, no breaks — and no air conditioning. That must be the place the term "sweatshop" was hatched.

I was playing in Hutchinson, Kansas, when I read in the *Kansas City Star* that M. B. Shanberg, owner of the Midland Circuit, was opening a beautiful new house in Kansas City. I sat right down and wrote a letter to "M.B." Talk about luck! The next day a telegram brought the reply: "You're hired. Report immediately." Within a few hours I was on the Santa Fe Chief, bound for my new job.

When the Chief pulled into Union Station around midnight, there was a huge crowd waiting and a loud band blared its brassy greeting — to me?

Well — no, darnit. It seems that film thespians Ramon Novarro, Aileen Pringle and Charles "Buddy" Rogers were on the same train, there to assist with Loew's Midland The-

atre's grand opening next day. Well, at least I was there to assist in that opening, too, so I waved to the crowd before the stars detrained. A little borrowed glory.

The 4,000-seat Midland Theatre was really something special, and its 4/20 Robert Morton was a dream, after some of the clunkers I'd encountered on the circuit. But it should have been a 4/36 to accommodate that huge auditorium. Little did I know then that I would again play the same wonderful 4/20 Morton 50 years later in Sandy Fleet's "Olde Plantation" restaurant in Solana Beach, California, and find it in mint condition. Every moment of that 4-month engagement helped me relive the thrills of my original engagement, one of which was playing overtures with the 33-member Midland Theatre orchestra.

But there were many "bugs" during that first week. For the overture, the orchestra would come up on its elevator. The overture finished, conductor Dave Rubinoff (later Eddie Cantor's network radio conductor) would push the "down" button; often nothing happened. The projectionist started the movie. The audience took a dim view of trying to see the movie through the still elevated orchestra. Conductor Rubinoff could be heard throughout the house

swearing in Polish. Finally, the stage electrician put in a new fuse, and the orchestra sunk out of sight, accompanied by cheers from the audience.

The first thunderstorm revealed a leaky roof above one of the organ chambers, which wiped out the entire Tibia Plena rank. The Robert Morton Co. of Van Nuys, Calif., had a whole new rank there in one week flat, pipes and chest.

Air conditioning was something new in 1928 and ammonia was used as a coolant before they developed Freon. One afternoon I was playing the matinee. The humidity was high and soggy. The outside temperature was 90 degrees F. and the audience numbered about 1500.

Suddenly there was a terrific explosion, just below the console. It lifted me at least six inches off the Howard seat and in a minute the house was saturated with ammonia fumes. One of the compressors had blown and I was directly above it. I broke into the National Anthem as 1500 people scrambled for the exits, while I sat there crying ammonia tears. The blowers cleared the fumes out and the audience returned, but without the air conditioner it sure got hot and sticky before the show ended.

Despite the growing pains, I have wonderful memories of the Midland, which was one of the last refuges of live vaudeville. Perhaps the largest gross ever realized by the house was the week Sousa's Band appeared, shortly after the opening. Jack Benny was our master of ceremonies for a spell and he introduced, among others, a ventriloquist named Edgar Bergen, and his wooden foil, Charlie McCarthy. Bergen used to play poker with the musicians between shows — until they noticed that he invariably won the stakes. Also unforgettable were George Burns and Gracie Allen. What a wonderful couple they were!

We had a "mutual admittance" arrangement with the nearby Pantages Theatre, so our personnel could see their shows and vice versa. That led to the nicest thing that ever happened to me. One night the crew from the "Pan" arrived to see our show, including some mighty cute usherettes. The littlest and cutest sat right behind the console, and for the rest of the evening I had trouble trying to concentrate on accompanying the movie.



Bill first encountered the Page organ in Catalina Island's Casino when he supplied the music for some bathing beauty contests held there in the mid-'50s; he was always accompanied by Irene "for my protection from those lovelies." About the organ Bill says, "It has enough stopkeys for a 36-ranker but it fills the house nicely with just 16 sets — but with super unification. It's real brassy." This 4/16 will be heard during the ATOS Convention.

After the show, there was a date — which lasted until 4 ayem! When I took Irene home her pappy threatened to blow my head off for keeping his daughter out so late. Then Irene confessed; she wasn't an usherette but the "Pan's" ticket seller. There was more than a pretty face here.

I managed to calm down Irene's dad enough to escape, but at home things were hectic (remember, I was only a youth!). When I told mom about meeting Irene, the girl of my dreams, she reminded me that I was engaged to be married to another local girl. In the excitement of meeting Irene, I had plumb forgotten!

But 50 years later, Irene and I are still going strong.

1930 was a sad year for pit musicians. It was difficult for us to face the fact that we just weren't needed anymore. When my contract with the Midland expired in July, I took off in my Model T on a frantic search for work. First stop was St. Louis, where I found the musicians "on strike." This seemed most peculiar, since they probably wouldn't be working anyway. The St. Louis trip wasn't entirely a loss. I managed to meet organist Milton Slosser and we had an all-night session at the Ambassador Theatre's Wurlitzer, a 4/20, I believe.

Next I chugged into Chicago. I auditioned for the manager of the Piccadilly Theatre on a 4-deck Kilgen. He wanted to hire me for intermissions but feared the Chicago AFM local wouldn't approve my transfer from Kansas City. How right he was! I visited the Chicago Local.

I was confronted with a fat little guy with a big cigar, who talked out of the side of his mouth — business agent James C. Petrillo.

"Sonny, we got too many Chicago organ players walkin' the streets. If you take that job, you'll be sorry."

I got the message — and high-tailed it back to Kansas City. The problem remained, a job.

After some deliberation I decided to try the bistro route. True, I couldn't warm up to the '30s-model Hammonds, but I decided to give the watering holes a try. I should have known better.

One midnight wife Irene walked into the bar where I was "Hammondizing," to find a big blowzy blonde sitting on the bench with me, belting out "Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar." As I recall, I was trying to play something else.

I didn't get much sleep that night, but I did get an ultimatum.

"Make up your mind, Bill! It's either night clubs or me. One's gotta

go!" I somehow gathered from her tone of voice that playing in a bar can be hazardous to a happy marriage. Thus ended my bistro career.

That's when I went into theatre management, something I was hip to, and for the next 46 years I managed to get assigned to theatres which had organs, one being the Wurlitzer-equipped Raymond in Pasadena, Calif. If the house had no pipe organ, I hauled in my trusty Conn 645, else I'd con a local music store so I could play intermissions. I just couldn't fathom working in a theatre without an organ.

As mentioned previously, after "retirement," I did a four month stint at the Solana Beach "Plantation," sharing the console with World War II Colonel Earl McCandless, and youngsters Ty Woodward and Chris Gorsuch. In fact, during that period of glory, when my Midland, Kansas City Morton flowered briefly, the four of us managed to cut a record for the Doric label, *Many Melodies on the Majestic Morton*. Naturally, I contributed tunes that reflected those wonderful days at the Midland Theatre when I first met Irene. Memories!

Speaking of Irene, she has very few comments to make about my organ playin' career, but one of them is:

"If Bill doesn't play an organ every day — he ain't fit to live with." Somehow I've got to whomp up a

Irene and Bill Wright have been lovers for over 50 years. They met while Bill was playing in Kansas City and she was the cashier at a rival theatre. This gag photo was made on their 51st anniversary.





Bill was prominent on the roster of organists when the Pasadena Crown Theatre enjoyed a brief moment of glory when it was renovated and the Wurlitzer put in top shape during 1977. It was the same organ Bill had played during his theatre manager days in the late '50s, enlarged by a French Trumpet rank which had been added for a George Wright concert some years previously.

closer for this opus, and I think I have it. I have a small problem, even while playing the 3/19 mostly Wurlitzer in the Paramount (Calif.) Ice-land rink, where I currently provide the music for ice skaters.

People keep approaching me and asking whether I am related to THE George Wright, even asking me to autograph his albums.

My reply is usually, "Sure, George is my father" — and it's true, despite the fact that I have better than 20 years on the famed GW. In fact, my family is loaded with George Wrights. My father, a brother and a nephew were all christened "George Wright." None are musicians. No one has more admiration for organist George Wright than I, but frankly, I'm tired of being the wrong Wright. I guess I'm destined always to be "That Other Wright," as this story is headlined. So be it. I'm living a happy life with "the cute little cashier, Irene" and I still manage to dredge up pipe organ jobs. Who could ask for more? □

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Reginald Foort Moller Finds Safe Haven

The 5/27 thirty-ton Reginald Foort Moller organ has finally found what appears to be a permanent home, after a relatively brief sojourn as a pizza organ in San Diego. The huge "portable" instrument probably has the record for a total number of moves; it was assembled and disassembled 187 times during its "portable" days (1938-39) in England. When the pizzeria folded in San Diego, the instrument was purchased by J. B. Nethercutt, Chairman of the Board of Merle Norman Cosmetics, a well-known pipe organ aficionado (his 4/35 Wurlitzer will be heard during the 1979 ATOS Convention in Los Angeles). Nethercutt and his San Sylmar Museum Curator, Gordon Belt, sought a safe haven for the venerable instrument and the City of Pasadena was interested.

On January 29th, the City accepted

the organ, issuing a long Resolution loaded with "whereases" giving some history of the organ and stating that "same is hereby gratefully accepted." The Resolution closed with:

"On behalf of the citizens of Pasadena, this Board expresses its deep appreciation to Mr. Nethercutt for donating this most valuable and unique instrument to the City of Pasadena for use in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium for the enjoyment of all."

The Resolution was signed by the members of the Board of Directors and the Mayor. Bids are being sought for the installation. It will not be installed in time for the ATOS Convention in July.

In addition to the Resolution, Nethercutt was given a plaque commemorating the event. □

Mayor Ellis Jones, Walter Benedict (Director of the Pasadena Civic Auditorium Operating Co.) thank J. B. Nethercutt (right) on behalf of Pasadena citizens.





An Organ Transplant

by Lloyd E. Klos

Another theatre organ transplant has been accomplished. It involves the 3/8 Wurlitzer, Opus 1492, which was originally in the Capitol Theatre in Worcester, Mass. and is now a major asset in the 401-seat Eisenhart Auditorium in Rochester, N.Y. The story of this instrument, the buildings which have housed it, and the people associated with it, is interesting.

The 1884-seat Capitol Theatre was built by Elmer R. Daniels, who had been in the theatre business in Worcester and Lynn since 1911. Among Mr. Daniels' closest friends was E. M. Loew who became one of the country's foremost movie magnates.

Daniels helped Loew start his empire by selling him his first movie theatre, the Dreamland, in Lynn in 1919. Mr. Daniels was also part owner of Worcester's Family (later the Phillipps), the Olympia, and Park theatres. He managed all three simultaneously before building the Capitol at 68 Franklin St.

In partnership with three other men, Mr. Daniels built the Capitol in 1926 at a cost of \$1 million. He

Above Photo — July 4, 1978 was "Independence Day" for Gale Smith as the console was moved from his garage to Eisenhart. On truck are Bob MacDuffie and Fritz Parker. In front (L to R) are Tom Lockwood, John Bruton, Jerry Shaughnessy, Gale Smith, Doug Crocker, Gary Newman and Lloyd Klos. (George Lockwood Photo)

installed the city's first theatre air conditioning ("air-cooling," they called it then), a ceiling which cost \$49,500, a three-manual style E Special Wurlitzer, costing \$25,000, and he hired a 17-piece orchestra.

The house was atmospheric: the ceiling was a replica of the heavens. Stars twinkled, clouds drifted, and the moon rose on one side of the auditorium, and by the time the show was over, was descending on the other.

Worcester's Capitol was opened on Christmas Day in 1926. At the Wurlitzer was Ernest H. Johnson. His career had begun in Leominster, Mass. in 1910, playing a nickelodeon



Ernest H. Johnson, organist at the Capitol in Worcester for over 20 years. In lieu of Wurlitzer name plates, the console had colored designs on both sides. Several switch boxes were installed after the organ was in the theatre, noticeably one on the bench and one on the right jamb. (Leo Lajoie Collection)

when he was 17. He later moved to the 1107-seat Strand Theatre in Clinton, Mass. where he accompanied the silents.

"One day," Johnson recalled, "the Strand's manager told me that they were going to install a Wurlitzer, and I was given a month to learn how to play one." He traveled to Newburyport and spent three weeks studying the intricacies of the larger instrument. During the last week, he returned to Clinton and practiced nights into the wee hours. He mastered the Strand's Style B, Opus 1293, and retained his job there. This was in early 1926.

In late 1926, Johnson learned of the Capitol Theatre's opening in Worcester. He wrote a letter to one of the managers, Charlie French, requesting employment, and was hired. Johnson became synonymous with the Capitol instrument. Movies were of the silent variety for awhile, and when sound came in, the organ was used for sing-alongs and spotlight solos. From 1927 to 1938, it was used for broadcasting over WTAG. Then Johnson played it until 1947

over WORC. Saturday morning kiddie shows were enhanced by his playing for awhile, and then the instrument fell silent for 20 years.

In December 1966, the Capitol was closed, having been purchased from New England Theatres Inc. of Boston, by a Worcester accountant. It since has been remodeled into two theatres under the name of Paris Cinema and operated by Esquire Theatres of America.

According to the Worcester Telegram, the organ was purchased by Assumption College, but never installed. It then passed into the hands of an organ repair firm, and upon its being advertised for sale, was sold to three members of the Rochester Theater Organ Society. They proposed installing it in the Dryden Theatre which is adjacent to the George Eastman House, a leading museum of photography.

When that idea failed, Gale E. Smith, RTOS officer, became full owner of the organ. Its parts were stored in several places; the console, relays, traps and toy counter in Gale's garage. Thus his car was forced to take the very changeable Rochester weather. What devotion to the cause these enthusiasts possess!

The Capitol Theatre in Worcester, Mass. in June 1962 before renovation. Notice the ornate area above the ticket booth and original marquee and signs which were replaced the following year. (Worcester Gazette Photo)



In 1969, the idea for a new auditorium for the Rochester Museum and Science Center complex evolved. After the Columbia School announced that it would re-locate, its three-acre plot on Goodman St. became available. The school's gymnasium, which had a small stage, lent itself to conversion to a small auditorium which interested museum officials.

Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. M. Herbert Eisenhart, funds became available for the purchase of the property and conversion of the gym. (Mr. Eisenhart, former president of Bausch & Lomb, was a long-time supporter of the RMSC).

Then began three years of planning, countless meetings with zoning officials, planning committees etc. Three sets of plans were drawn for the auditorium (to be named for its benefactor). The first was impractical, the second was too expensive. Finally, with approval of the third set, bids were submitted and work began in October 1973. A target date for completion was set for September 1, 1974.

It was seen that the interior of the structure, due to space on either side of the stage's proscenium, lent itself to the installation of a small pipe organ, and this fact was brought to the attention of RMSC officials by Donald S. Hall, Director of the nearby Strasenburg Planetarium, and an RTOS board member. Museum officials thought it an excellent idea, provided it didn't increase the cost of construction.

It was indeed fortunate that the first two plans were rejected; they provided for one pipe chamber on one side of the auditorium. But when the third set was drawn, the areas on both sides of the stage were utilized for chambers, thereby keeping with accepted practice in many theatres.

The Capitol Wurlitzer was then purchased by the Rochester Theater Organ Society from Gale Smith, and for the sum of \$1 (which was ceremoniously paid at the dedication) transferred to RMSC in exchange for its use at certain times. RTOS will maintain the instrument as part of the agreement.

From 1974 to 1978, the entire organ was fully refurbished. Relays, pipes, chests, pneumatics, wiring, blower, motor, and the console were completely gone over, and much new material substituted for old and worn

parts. As an experiment, half the pneumatics were leathered, the other half covered with Perflex to compare the lasting qualities of each.

Due to activities commensurate with RTOS' Tenth Anniversary, restoration necessarily slowed in late 1974. Thanks to some classes in organ renovation two years before, a trained reservoir of manpower was tapped. Restoration was done at Gale Smith's home several nights a week under his direction, and as components were finished and assembled, Saturday mornings found another crew under Doug Crocker and Gary Newman at Eisenhart, installing them. Following the auditorium's opening in September 1974, work schedules there had to be altered to dovetail with the schedule of events.

On July 4, 1978, with representatives of newspapers and television crews standing by, the console was moved from Gale's garage to the auditorium. Waiting for it was a dolly which will enable it to be moved to any location in the stage area.

Though most felt that July 4 was "Independence Day" for Gale Smith with the moving of the console, it didn't quite work out that way. RTOS president, Tom Lockwood, stipulated that the instrument would be dedicated on October 12. Three months of wiring-in of the console,



Don Scott at the 3/8 console prior to a practice session. (Dick Harold Photo)

voicing, tuning, elimination of air leaks followed, with Gale Smith merely changing his theatre of operations, joining the installation crew several nights a week. The final rank was activated the evening of October 11. The opening day, Columbus Day, was symbolic. The opus of the organ is 1492, the date always associated with that explorer.

For the dedication, RTOS chose nearby Canandaigua organist, Don

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Interior of Eisenhart Auditorium, showing console and chamber screens. Chairs can be removed, and risers on the rear wall folded out of the way for displays, exhibits, dancing or pizza parties. Seating is 401.

(Dick Harold Photo)

Scott. It was a natural. Don holds the record of most concerts played for RTOS in its 14-year history, eight. A protégé of the late RKO Palace organist, Tom Grierson, Don played the final show at the Palace in 1965 when the house was slated for demolition. In 1967, he performed the first concert on the transplanted ex-Palace 4/22 Wurlitzer in the Auditorium Theatre. He had also cut a

recording on that instrument, proceeds earmarked to enrich funds for RTOS purchase of the organ.

October 1978 was proclaimed "Theatre Organ Month in Rochester" by Kodakville's mayor, Thomas Ryan. The first of several days of festivities was for the media and the workers who labored an estimated 14,000 man-hours on the project. Other days were reserved for RTOS

Upon arrival at its new home, the console was placed on a dolly to facilitate movement about the stage area. Originally, it was planned to paint the keydesk grey to conform to the interior decor, but wiser heads prevailed, the old paint stripped, and the beautiful mahogany brought to a fine lustre through extensive waxing and buffing.

(George Lockwood Photo)



members, Science Center personnel, members of the museum society, and the public. Due to the small size of the auditorium, each group of listeners had to be handled on a production-line basis. As one recital finished, those listeners would leave, and the next would be seated. All were admitted thru advance reservations, only.

Space limitations preclude mention of the scores of workers who unselfishly devoted their time and talent to the project. So many, that to inadvertently leave out one would be an injustice. Suffice to say, the talents of all workers are deeply appreciated, and were duly acknowledged, each getting a certificate of recognition, the work of Gale Smith, and Douglas Crocker, the installation chief.

The new installation will be ideal for open console sessions, master classes, film programs, organ demonstrations and special shows where the intimate atmosphere of the 401-seat auditorium is a factor. It will not serve as a substitute for the RTOS monthly concerts at the Auditorium Theatre as long as that house continues in operation. □

Closing Chord

William M. Gage, veteran theatre organist in the New York Metropolitan area, died on March 2. He was 69.

Born in New York City, and inheriting a love of music from his parents, his early experience as a theatre organist was acquired in houses in Montclair and Washington, N.J., and Stroudsburg, Pa. Following the end of the silents, he became a technician for CBS, and thereby became friends with a number of theatre organists who were broadcasting then. Gage also worked behind the scenes in television. He played the final organ concert in the Brooklyn Fox in 1970, and in recent years, was organist at the Casa Italiana, a cultural center in Newark.

Bill Gage was a familiar face at ATOS conventions, and was an avowed recording enthusiast. His biography will appear in a future issue of THEATRE ORGAN. □

Recollections of Vic Hyde Veteran Vaudevillian

PART II

As told to Lloyd E. Klos

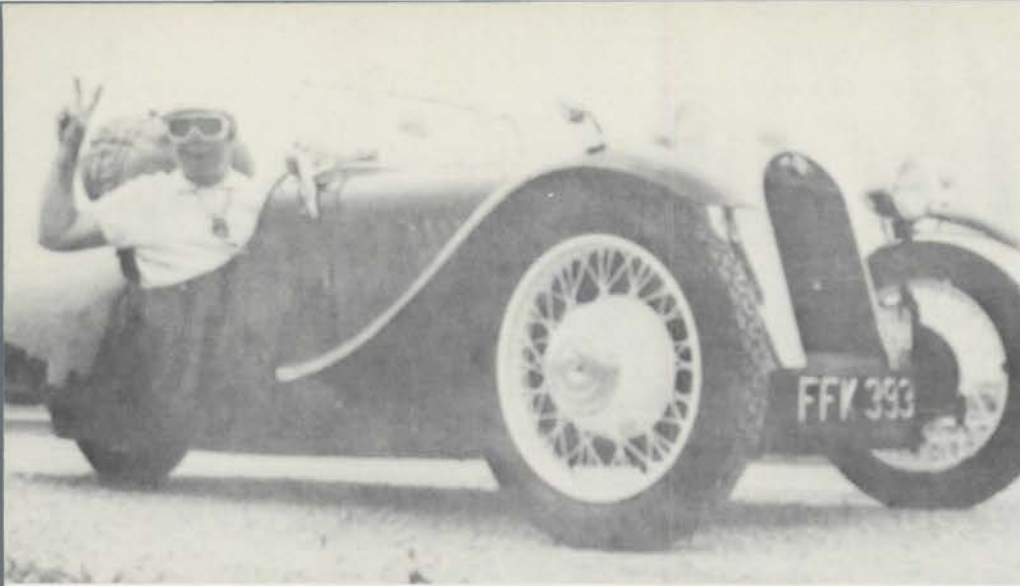


"You may recall that in the great band era, the show was put on the orchestra elevator, and raised hydraulically, to avoid having to hire a bigger crew of stagehands. I played the Strand Theatre in New York in 1940 with Guy Lombardo's band performing in this fashion.

"The point I want to make is this: With my doubling in two places, and my act requiring a pile of paraphernalia, I literally went thru hell to keep my schedule. I *had* to have my equipment set up on the rising bandstand before the show started at the Paramount. Then when the show ended and the console down, I would haul my stuff out thru a tight opening past the console, one piece at a time, grab a cab to the Mirador for the next show there, and return to the Paramount before the film ended. Round and round it went! I even managed to squeeze in benefits for flood relief, Greek War Relief and the USO.

"Don Baker, seeing my frenzied activities, probably has a never-to-be-forgotten image of this character. Don always put on a great organ program on the Queen Mother of all Wurlitzers, perhaps of only five-minute duration, and during my stint at the Paramount, always worried that I would not get back in

◆ Vic poses with his 3-trumpet, 4-trombone aggregation in front of his antique Rolls Royce. An automobile buff, he owns 41 classic and vintage cars. (Hyde Collection)



One of Vic Hyde's cars is a 3-wheel Morgan, shown here ascending Pike's Peak.

(Hyde Collection)



When Vic (second from left, top row) toured England in 1949, this photo was taken in London's Casino Theatre. Seated, second from left is the Duchess of Kent with her two children. Seated at right is the Dowager Queen Mary, and to her right, the future "My Fair Lady," 14-year-old Julie Andrews, who was appearing in the play *Humpty Dumpty*.

(Hyde Collection)

Vic poses with two famous actors, Charles Farrell (L) and Ralph Bellamy at the Palm Springs Racquet Club in 1939.

(Hyde Collection)



time. Once he got started, the organ console would be ascending, and it would be impossible for me to get my props moved in. Not long ago, Don called me for old times sake.

"Speaking of hydraulic lifts, I recall playing the Oriental Theatre in Chicago, where I was featured 13 times, twice more than Ted Lewis. (I worked cheaper!) The pit is very deep, and in its center, was an 8-foot square section which would rise, and my act was set upon it for its run. One day in checking my props, I discovered a valve trombone missing. I assumed someone had stolen it during the film. Later, we found the gold-plated horn mashed flat. It had fallen under the platform which crushed it on its descent.

"I recall the Capitol Theatre in Washington where the orchestra and organ console platforms were raised to varying heights. It was customary, besides an organ program, that the 50-piece orchestra do a pre-show overture. My showing was arranged that as soon as the orchestra began the overture, my one-man band section of the stage would rise with my playing 'Tiger Rag.' Conductor 'Happy' Phil Lamkin would stop the proceedings and inquire as to what I was doing. Pointing out that because of my one-man-band status, the actors, not considering me a professional, wouldn't allow me to perform with them. So, I decided to help out with the overture. After exchanges of words, he decided to allow me to do my routine in place of the overture. I recall that Red Skelton was on the same bill.

"At the end of the vaudeville era, there were some theatres still trying to hold onto weekend vaudeville. Among them were the Comerford Theatres in Pennsylvania. Scranton, Wilkes Barre, Pottsville and Hazleton theatres all had pipe organs, but due to the depression, no organists. It was my great pleasure to go to the theatres early in the morning, and for hours, play the organs while the cleaning personnel were busy. With no maintenance and not being used daily, the instruments sounded very wheezy. One could flick a tab for a drum effect, and a siren would scream instead!

"In show business, there is a constant effort to present something different. Now, I'm aware that Jesse Crawford is in the Theatre Organists



The great pianist, Eddie Duchin (L) talks with Vic Hyde while on tour. (Hyde Collection)



Vic Hyde also toured for the USO during World War II. Here he is shown with the future majority stockholder of the California Angels, T/Sgt. Gene Autry. (Hyde Collection)

Vic Hyde with actor John Boles at Atlantic City. (Hyde Collection)



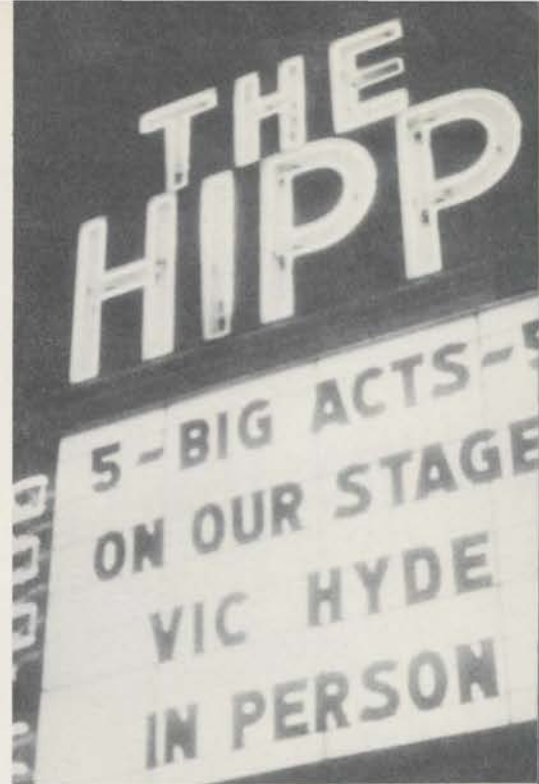
Hall of Fame, but I wonder if THEATRE ORGAN readers know that at one time he had a 'name' band. He had purchased the old Ray Robinson band intact, put two white Hammond organs in front of the band for his wife and himself, and went on a theatre tour. I was booked into the Capitol Theatre in Washington as an act to work in front of this musical aggregation, they playing for me.

"I recall the displeasure of the musicians in trying to blend with the 'mighty electronic' organs. Nothing made a wind instrument sound so empty as matching volume and tone against the two Hammonds. Not meaning to degrade the greatness of the Poet of the Organ, I quote from *Variety* of August 4, 1937:

'Wind-up is a return here (Washington) of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Crawford and their two Hammond organs, this time backed by a 13-piece dance band. Directing with baton while seated at the organ, and getting up to movable mike nearby to make announcements, gave an informal air which went over big in straight organ shows, but with band, it was a little flat. Whole show seemed to clash between spectacular dance tunes and soothing organ stuff. Both were surprisingly good and house went for them, but Crawford's aim to make a unique blend, didn't blend. One of the best features of band portion was use of quartet of euphonium horns, which Crawford claims are being introduced in dance unit for first time. Big and boomy, they look and sound plenty smart, and arrangements make full use of them. Mrs. Crawford's solo was "Chloe," and Jesse gave 'em "When Day Is Done," both socks. Finish with hefty flash on "Merry Go-Round Broke Down" and applause lasted through trailer.'

"From the *Washington Post*: 'The Jesse Crawfords have returned, this time backing up their Hammond organs with a fully complimented dance orchestra. It's a new and different combination, this organ-orchestra affair, and turns out a lot of music with some original effects. We still think, though, that Mr. and Mrs. Crawford attempt a lot of things with those electric organs which make mechanical noises instead of tonal beauty.'

"Personally, I will never forget my



Vic's name appeared on the marquee of Baltimore's Hippodrome Theatre when vaudeville was still in business, and theatre organs were a part of the bill. (Hyde Collection)

feelings about my performing with this electric organ-orchestral background. One of the most weakening feelings a wind instrument performer gets is when he tries to compete against electronic background. No matter how hard I tooted on those four trumpets, the touch of the right foot on those two organs would make me sound like a mosquito in a beehive! I suffered, but one of my slogans is: Grab the money and run like a thief!

"I have searched through six large books of press clippings, checking advertising and press reviews, trying

Vic poses with "Mr. Wonaful," Lawrence Welk at Milwaukee's Riverside Theatre, while touring with the Champagne Music-Maker. (Hyde Collection)



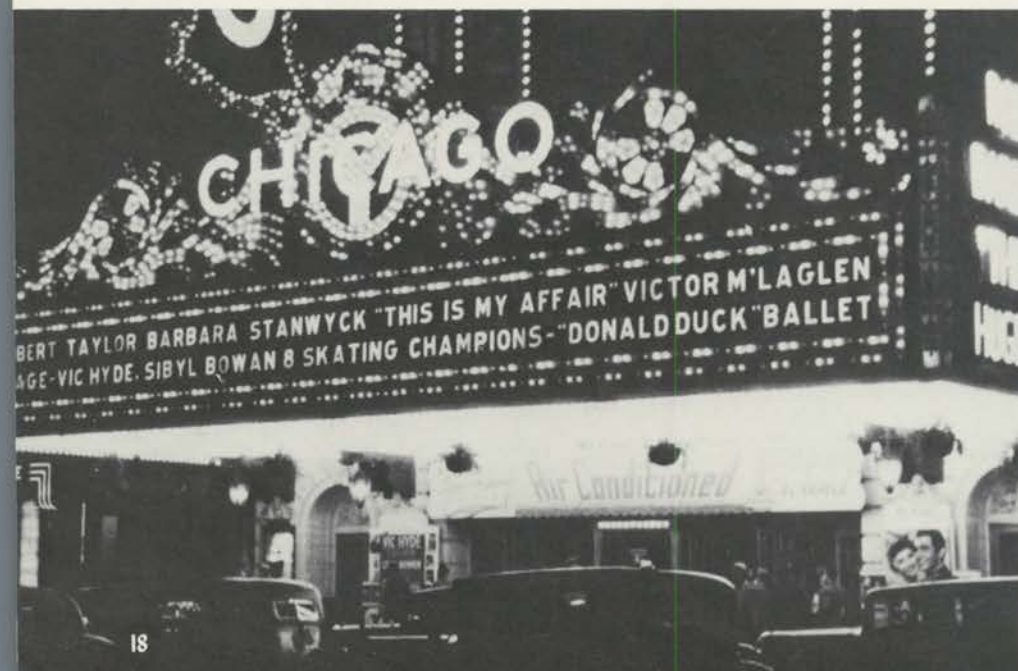


When the Lombardo Brothers' Orchestra appeared at New York's Strand Theatre in 1940, this photo showed Vic with his 4 trumpets, Leibert and Carmen on drums, Victor on cymbals and Guy directing. (Hyde Collection)



Before Frank Sinatra made it big in the early forties, he and Vic Hyde shared the latter's dressing room at the Metropolitan Theatre in Providence, R. I. Vic topped the bill in those days. "The worm has long since turned," he says. (Hyde Collection)

The Chicago Theatre is one of many theatres in which Vic performed his novel act. His name appears on the glittering marquee here in 1937. (Hyde Collection)



to find names of organists in the theatres I've played: Metropolitan in Boston; Metropolitan in Providence; Hippodrome in Baltimore; Capitol, Loew's State, Paramount, Roxy and Strand in New York; Olympia in Miami; Palace in Cleveland; Fox and Michigan in Detroit; Chicago, State-Lake, Oriental, Marbro, Southtown and Downtown in Chicago; Riverside in Milwaukee; Million Dollar, Orpheum and Paramount in Los Angeles. All these theatres used the pipe organ, yet very little mention is made of the organist.

"During their heyday, I recall organists showing their displeasure that they were not billed in advertising. I have one 12-inch square ad for a show at the New York Paramount, taken from a 1937 *Daily News*. On the bottom in small print, 'A New Popeye Cartoon' and in much smaller print, 'Don Baker at the Organ.' Perhaps the theatre managements felt that if they gave organists billing, they would get too popular and then demand more money!

"All eras come to an end; entertainment complexions change. My career began in the final years of vaudeville. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, I have kept abreast, changing my act as conditions warranted. I traveled with twenty-three top name bands: Carmen Cavallaro, Eddie Duchin, Shep Fields, Glen Gray, Ted Heath, Horace Heidt, Woody Herman, Harry James, Hal Kemp, Guy Lombardo, Vincent Lopez, Ozzie Nelson, Orrin Tucker, Tommy Tucker and Lawrence Welk, to name some.

"Then came 10-day bookings at state fairs for 10 years. Now, the one-nighter, star-format is used. Then to England (TV came later there), and a 110-theatre tour. Next came a 6-month tour of Australia's Tivoli theatres. I have visited schools and colleges for the past thirteen years, and in 1972, toured theatres in South Africa where TV has not achieved the prominence it has here.

"An old vaudevillian has to adapt to the changes as much as the theatre organist had to do. The electric organ, because of its portability, became a breadwinner for many theatre musicians. However, having played a church pipe organ, I can say honestly that no electronic can



Vic poses with another trumpeter, one of the world's greatest, Harry James, on the boardwalk in Atlantic City. The men wore their trousers high in the late thirties and early forties!

(Hyde Collection)

give that satisfying feeling to the performer which the inspiring pipe organ can. And, the two-second delay, from the pressing of the key to the sound in the auditorium is an experience which only a veteran theatre pipe organist can feel and never forget.

"Thanks to ATOS, some of us can relive our past enjoyments. I should have joined fourteen years ago! My career, now forty-four years in show business and still booked every day, has me much in love with pipe organs, and my one dream is to locate one in an abandoned theatre, rebuild it, and die sitting at the console like the Phantom of the Opera!

"Kidding aside, as a comparatively new member of ATOS, I hope to be of some good to the organization. (He already has thru this contribution.) Being an avid collector of Rolls Royce automobiles (a charter member and past director of the Rolls Royce Club). I love to be put to work to make a club hum with enjoyment." □

CATOE PREMIERES YOUNG ARTIST

by Almer Brostrom

Here we have a talented and versatile young musician, Lance Luce! CATOE had the privilege of sponsoring Lance's debut concert last year. Praise resounded from all in attendance at this excellent concert.

Lance Luce was worth all of the praise and congratulations bestowed. It is always a great treat to hear a soloist perform with ease and in full command of the instrument. Lance gave a beautifully balanced program. The melodies included the popular "Send In The Clowns," "Five Foot Two" done in skating rink style and Lisa Minelli's song "New York, New York."

Lance included his 1978 Yamaha Contest winning arrangement of "Summertime." The closing number was "Second Hungarian Rhapsody." A rousing standing ovation brought on "Trumpeter's Holiday" as an encore.

Lance is very much at ease with the mike and spikes his comments

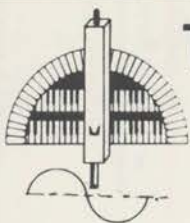


Lance Luce at the 3/10 Wurlitzer at Downers Grove High School. (Bill Lamb Photo)

with delightful humor thus enhancing his winsome personality.

His musical career started with a guitar, but his eye soon caught the store's organ display where he was taking guitar lessons. When Lance was 10 years old an organ came home and he was on his way. His first public performance was for a local organ club but he soon branched out and played a short program for ATOS in Washington, D.C. on pipes. He gave many performances for clubs at both electronic and pipe organs including intermission interludes for three years at the Royal Oak Theatre, Detroit.

Lance has been heard at other theatres in the Detroit area plus many social functions. Roller rinks are also part of his musical experience and he is now in his fourth year performing at Skateworld of Troy. He has played for regional meets of the Roller Skaters Society. He has added a church job to his schedule in addition to teaching. Here is a young chap, full of talent, who should be heard to be more fully appreciated. □



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NOISE

by John Muri

Our noisy organists are incorrigible; they insist on revving up the decibels. They can't resist that feeling of power, and they don't care what all that sound is doing to the audience's ears. A story is told of the once-famous organist Abt Vogler, who played his version of "The Storm" so loudly and so ferociously that for miles around all the milk turned sour. We learned last September that one desperate music-hall management was demanding that rock-band music in the hall be played no louder than 105 decibels and that a penalty be levied against groups making more noise than 105.

We could do with a lot less noise and a lot more music. I gave up regular concert-going years ago because of senseless audience applause and yelling. I knew I'd had enough the day a man sitting next to me at a Kirsten Flagstad concert started yelling "Kirsten! Kirsten!" after each number. Everyone stared. Even the soloist looked up in alarm.

I remember Saturday afternoon, January 27, 1978. The New York City Metropolitan Opera performed Massenet's *Thais*. Directly after the stormy first scene of the second act comes the "Meditation," a violin solo with orchestra, representing Thais' contemplation of her sinful life. It is a moving interlude. The "Meditation," played adequately by the Met concertmaster, came to its close, and before the last notes had ended, the audience-claque began banging, yelling, and clapping. The shock was traumatic. Was this racket a suitable reaction to a spiritual event? If anything, it called for the silence of contemplation. Had there been that moment of silence, I would have concurred and participated in the ovation, but I can't believe that emotional theatre experiences, musical or otherwise, demand spontaneous interruptions by yelling and banging audiences. At the close of the performance, the screaming would suggest that one had been transported suddenly to a madhouse, or that the theatre had been discovered in flames.

The sincerity of such behavior is questionable.

We may applaud in sympathy for an artist encountering special difficulties, and there is nothing wrong with such displays of warmth and support. But applause as a duty?! To an artist, the finest applause occurs in a silent theatre when its audience sits motionless in deep attention. The old chestnut "you could have heard a pin drop" describes a moment of genuine rapport between performer and audience. No amount of noisy clatter can approach the richness, the sincerity, and the beauty of such moments.

Applause has become meaningless. Television people have put their laugh and applause tracks indiscriminately alongside the most undistinguished material. TV audiences applaud on cue as grimacing cheerleaders acting as masters of ceremony nervily demand "a great big hand" for anyone who can give his or her home address, recite some of the alphabet, or tell how many children there are at home. I have heard of standing ovations being given to a stenographer and to a scrub-lady. What sort of performer needs applause like that? A plague on all applause-meters!

But if people don't applaud, will the managers think that people don't like you? Sometimes your job hangs on applause. It did in the late twenties when community singing with organ accompaniment was the rage in movie theatres. You had to play at least one encore. To get none was something to worry about. Audiences soon caught on to the fact that they were expected to ask for more. Most of the time they were obliging. It was bad going when audiences were slim. Such groups were backward about both applauding and singing, be-

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

cause they felt self-conscious when not surrounded by crowds doing the same thing. Then you had to force an encore to fill up your allotted time. That was embarrassing. Full houses never gave problems. A few aggressive singers always helped the organist get things going.

A good deal of our talk is noise, too. There is the noise of idle conversation. We can reduce the time required for board meetings considerably by insisting on getting all the business done first. Then and only then will there be time for social talk. With abandon, we throw words around in vague or indeterminate meanings. All through this century we have puzzled over the meanings of words like *ambience*, *version*, *interpolate*, and *artistry*, we have wondered about locutions like *frame of reference*, *contact*, *finalize*, *update*, *dialogue* and empty verb-forms like *relate to* and *boggle the mind*. Much music criticism, particularly the pretentious gibberish of the rock-music crowd, makes the relatively plain talk of theatre organ people a model of clarity.

Aside from applause, there is unwarranted noise in theatres. There isn't much to be done about that until larger audiences permit the employment of more supervisory personnel (all right, then — more ushers).

Some of our music is noise. The topic is too large to treat in a short article; suffice it here to discuss how to play well on badly out-of-tune or "lousy" organs. First, make a list of all the badly out-of-tune pipes. Then mentally eliminate the keys in which those notes are played. For example, if the 16-foot diaphone low D is badly off, and if you think you *must* use that diaphone, play only in keys in which it will not be necessary to play that D. The keys of D-flat, E, F-sharp, A-flat, or B will make it easy to avoid the ugly D. When a relay on a two-manual organ develops a frightful run and nobody's around to fix it, play on only one manual, using open harmony. You can get by for hours if you don't play too muddily. In concert, while you wait for the repairman, make a novelty or comedy show out of it. Do some imitations, use percussions, and play pieces that don't call for too much organ.

Peter Shrag, in his *Decline of the*

Wasp, says that our old Anglo-Saxon culture, the one that produced the entertainment patterns of the twenties, has given up, and that the action everywhere is being made by minorities of uncouth boors. Could be. But nothing can yet match the eloquence of silence after tumult. The breathless hush that occurs whenever a great conflict is resolved, or whenever a great decision or revelation is made, makes all the noisy plaudits, bangings, and uproars sink to nothingness. In his "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," Vincent Blasco Ibanez says that "the plaudits of the world are as a woman's whim." Not being a woman's libber, he might have fairly said the same of the whims of men; but he was dead right about the relation between applause-noise and whimsy. □

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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 10¢ postcard to get it to VOX POPS Editor, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. If the contributor can afford a 15¢ stamp, why not include a black and white photo which need not be returned.

Chicago Area Enthusiasts (CATOE) have hit upon a novel way of promoting their campaign to save the Chicago Theatre — that great American institution of summary edu-

cation, the bumper sticker. Lyn Larsen accepted one from Dick Sklenar to plaster on the back of his vintage Packard. Sklenar, ChicagoLandMarks Director, already employs one to hold the fender on his ancient Vega.

While we are in the area of the Windy City, there's a new pizzeria to announce, on West Peterson Avenue. It is the pride and joy of Jimmy and Mario DeLuca, especially the 2/11 Wurlitzer (soon to go 3/11). Organists are Gary Hanson, Perry Petta and Cindy Casper. Perry noticed a plethora of phone requests for upbeat tunes on certain nights, always the ones when the loan company next door was open evenings. Doing a little sleuthing, he traced the requests to the loan company. The employees somewhat sheepishly admitted that the phone requests had originated with them; they could hear the organ through the walls and needed bouncy tunes to keep them from going to sleep during evening office hours.

CATOE's recent vaudeville show, another of their pitches to keep the wrecking ball away from the Chicago Theatre, was so successful, reports George Wright, that another one is planned for the Chicago on May 20th. This one will star the Glenn Miller orchestra and George Wright.

Dick Sklenar looks skeptical as Lyn Larsen (right) suggests some possible applications for the CATOE adhesive strip. (Bill Lamb Photo)





A pleased Bill Brown examines his new rank of Tuba Mirabilis pipes, a precision re-creation of a Wurlitzer set.

Bill Brown, well known organ enthusiast and restaurateur has been augmenting his Wurlitzers with new copies of some of the rarer Wurlitzer ranks. He recently surprised organist Ron Rhode with a new Tuba Mirabilis. The new rank was installed while Rhode was concertizing at the Atlantic convention so that it would be a surprise to Ron upon his return to the Mesa Organ Stop Pizza. The new rank was made to match a Wurlitzer 15" pressure set by Allen Miller of Bloomfield, Conn. Bill Brown was so pleased with the new set that he immediately ordered another for his third pizza emporium. Miller has built quite a number of new ranks for Brown, most of which have been copied from either rare or exceptionally well-voiced Wurlitzer ranks, including a Gemshorn and Gemshorn Celeste, Solo String, Oboe Horn,



Newly fabricated set of Quintadena pipes, still on the voicing machine. Getting the voicing right is a Miller specialty.

Brass Saxophone, English Horn, Tibia treble extension pipes, as well as two Serpent ranks which are not copied from Wurlitzer sets. Miller has also produced copies of the rarer Krumet and Quintadena ranks.



Tonal consultant Allen Miller (left) discusses restoration of Solo Chamber pipework with Curt Mangel, Executive Director of Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

Ever wonder where those replacement ranks and single pipes came from when a long neglected organ is revamped for use in a new location? There's a clue in the previous item — the name of Allen Miller. Since he left Austin, Al has started his own business — copying Wurlitzer pipes, exactly. In the past, it was the usual practice to have a replacement rank fabricated by a pipe-maker skilled in the making of church organ pipes, using theatre organ pipe scales for guidance. Too often the resulting pipes missed the mark by miles. We know of one case where an irate customer returned Tibias built by a church organ specialist three times, claiming they all sounded like Stopped Diapasons. A Tibia is a fairly simple, straight-forward

proposition. How about the complex field of Reeds?

Al Miller to the rescue. With years of TO experience behind him, he decided there was a wide-open field for exact replacements. He was correct. His first Post Horn went to Garrett Shanklin's 2/11 Wurli in Groton, Mass. This led to two more Post Horns and two Serpents (a most non-Wurlitzer voice) for Bill Brown's pizzerias in Phoenix, plus six new ranks for Ron Walls' Roaring Twenties pizza organ. Conventioneers in Atlanta heard a sample of Al's work at the Music Grinder Pizza in Marietta, Georgia. He did the tonal finishing on the Wurli just prior to the Convention. All of that was in 1978. This year Al is building electronic String Basses and 32' pedal units for four new restaurant installations. He has also revoiced and customized several old Rodgers electronics, plus a new "Trio," a model he regards as "a real beauty."

It would seem that Al Miller has found his niche, one of importance to all who revere the theatre instrument.



Bill Reeves, a sometime contributor of articles to this publication (his most recent, "Confessions of an Ear Player" was a dilly), has discovered what became of the style 235 Wurlitzer removed from the Los Angeles Carthay Circle Theatre many years ago by hobbyist Harlan Helm who started to install it in a converted supermarket building, then gave up. We lost track of it at that point. Bill Reeves informs us that it was found making music for a southern California dance studio, by electronics craftsman Sam Willey (who is noted for his custom electronic organs). The owner wanted to unload the pipe organ, so Sam bought it from him and it's now in storage, says Bill.

It's an historic instrument. The Carthay Circle was a premiere house where such biggies as *Gone With the Wind* had first runs. One of the organ's noted pilots in those days was Chauncey Haines.



George Wright's concert on the London Gaumont State Theatre's 4/14 Wurlitzer, set for May 27th, has been cancelled, and it's a heart-breaker for George. It had to be called off on account of the pre-

carious condition of the U.S. dollar. At the fee he had agreed on, he would end up as the concert's sponsor because the once almighty buck has since nosedived drastically on the international market.

George was aware of some slippage during his concert at the Gaumont State last year.

"I went into a sandwich shop for a snack. They charged me seven dollars for a very ordinary tuna sandwich," recalls George.

He has no idea as to how many greenbacks that sandwich would set him back today, but if increased costs in other areas are indicative, George feels he couldn't afford it.

"I hate the idea of having to cancel," says George. "London is my favorite foreign city, and the English are my favorite people overseas. I am grieved to disappoint them, as well as myself."



The Shea's Buffalo Theatre has been the object of a complete program of restoration to its original lavish splendor, and the 4/28 Wurlitzer will be no exception. Friends of the Buffalo Theatre Organ Restoration Committee, consisting of Charles Koester, Curt Mangel, Harvey Elsaesser, Gordon Gillette, Dr. Charles Stein, Irv Toner and Richard Kerr, have selected Organ Consultant Allen R. Miller of Bloomfield, Connecticut, to oversee the technical and tonal aspects of the Wurlitzer restoration project. The stoplist has been updated to increase the versatility of the instrument and many hours have been spent drawing up standards and selecting materials to be used in the restoration. Every part of the large organ is to be restored or replaced to original condition or better. Sufficient funds have been allotted to assure perfectionist treatment of the project at all stages.

The console has been disassembled down to the last board, and is being completely refurbished by the Junchen-Collins Organ Corporation. A new Z-Tronics multiplex relay will be installed, greatly reducing the size of the console cable, and a self-contained solid state combination memory system will enable the console to be moved via its own dolly to the orchestra lift, thus allowing central placement for organ concerts as well as its original lift position.

Chest restoration will be accomplished with volunteer labor under professional guidance in a new workshop recently created in the basement of the huge theatre specifically for the organ restoration. Enthusiasts who remember this fabulous instrument from the 1964 National Convention will be in for a real treat when the rebuilt organ is featured in a grand reopening planned for 1980.



Bob Pereda, longtime friend of the late Fred Feibel, continues to honor the great organist. Early in November, Bob performed a recital at Piedmont College, which is 80 miles north of Atlanta. "It is a most picturesque setting in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains. It was a most enjoyable two days. There were also a chapel service which was telecast, and a taping of two half-hour radio broadcasts. Everything was fine and the people real hospitable. Only snag was that 11 of the organ's ranks were unplayable, but enough were working so it wasn't too bad." Among the mostly classical numbers Bob played was "Pixie Patrol" which Mr. Feibel composed for his daughter's seventh birthday.



Shirley Hannum, now Mrs. Alan Keiter, had an opportunity to visit the scene of some early triumphs when business brought her husband to Los Angeles in February. For both it was a brief escape from the well-frozen Philadelphia winter. It will be recalled that Shirley's musical career was hyped by a record she cut for the Malar label and a concert played for the Los Angeles Chapter during a 1972 visit.

This time there was time for some relaxation and sight-seeing. The Keiters divided their leisure between dodging the Frankenstein monster and the *Jaws* shark during the Universal Studio tour, were tweaked by Dopey at Disneyland (it didn't rain this time) and helped celebrate the marriage of organist Jay and Judy Rosenthal.

But, as always Shirley wanted to get a whack at some of those gorgeous pipe organs Los Angeles is noted for. She and Alan were in luck. The Dick Simontons opened the doors of their 2-organ home to them.



Shirley went west again.

Later they made it to the Great American Wind Machine pizzeria where Candi Carley invited Shirley to give the excellent 2/11 Wurlitzer a workout, then to San Sylmar where Shirley was asked to stand in during one of the regular tours for the digital computer recordings which tourists usually hear played on the now 4-manual, 35-rank organ (it was a 3-decker last time Shirley played it).

They also found time to enjoy a couple of hours at San Gabriel Civic Auditorium for a go at the 3/16 Wurlitzer. "A good installation, an easy organ to play," said Shirley.

After almost a week of balmy southern California, Alan and Shirley arrived home in one of the worst snow blizzards in Philadelphia history. Come to California for a recharge anytime, kids!



In the December issue, we revealed how the Old Prospector cried upon hearing his first theatre pipe organ in a darkened theatre. Well, word comes to us from L. Howard Regan in Potomac, Maryland, a frequent attendee at ATOS conventions, that

he had a similar experience as a small boy at the 2472-seat Olympia Theatre in New Bedford, Mass., about 1925. "The film was *East Lynne*. When a blind female was about to fall off a cliff, and the organ music got to be forcefully dramatic, I started wailing en tutti sforzando, and had to be removed from the premises. My dad managed the Olympia Shoe store next door, and my mother parked me there and returned to see the rest of the movie. Later on, about the age of 12, we used to attend Saturday morning shows, the organist playing sing-alongs. The console was painted in glittery white, but I have no idea what make it was."



Writing in the (English) *Home Organist* magazine, organist Robin Richmond states that the 4/14 Christie from the Paris Gaumont Theatre is again for sale. Elaborate plans to re-install it in the Paris area seem to have fallen through. This development must be a downer for organist Tommy Deserre, who played it for most of the years it was heard in the Gaumont.



Perhaps a change in program format is a good thing once in awhile. This was proved on December 31, as RTOS observed the 50th Anniversary of the opening of Rochester's RKO Palace Theatre and its 4/22



John Muri at Rochester. (Dick Harold Photo)

Wurlitzer, Opus 1951. The program, held at the Auditorium Theatre, included organ music by John Muri; six acts of vaudeville; a 1915 silent short, *One Night Stand* with Chester Conklin and Mae Busch; a sing-along; and the whole program emceed by Rochester's gold dust twins of radio, George Haefner and Jack Slattery.

Well advertised in all media, the show brought an audience of 1625, the largest RTOS turnout in over a year. Good weather helped as over 200 lined up at the wicket for more expensive tickets. Mr. Muri, who accompanied the vaudeville acts flawlessly presented a segment of tunes which Palace organist Tom Grierson broadcast over WHAM, December 24, 1928, the first Palace program to be heard by the public. Fourteen birthday cakes, including one baked in the form of the RTOS console, were cut and pieces distributed to patrons leaving the theatre. A grand event, involving much preparation and effort on the part of all concerned.



That hard-to-find organ record of the *Star Wars* score was taped by John Nemo, west coast record producer, and played by Trinity College organist John Rose, of Hartford, Conn. on the 28-year-old Austin in the Cathedral of St. Joseph. It's 8,000 pipes would indicate circa 125 ranks of straight organ.

Commenting on the project to a *Hartford Courant* reporter, organist Rose said: "The *Star Wars* score is really romantic-symphonic 19th century school, and is exactly the sort of music that can be successfully transcribed to the pipe organ. *Star Wars* was good musical fun as well as challenging."



From Sullivan, Wisconsin, Matt Smith advises that he and organist Marty Dohm are starting restoration work on the 3/14 Barton organ in the Madison Civic Center.



The competition was rough but good ol' Billy Nalle came through with flying colors according to a review in the *Wichita Eagle*. It was Century II's 10th Anniversary party and the public could wander freely

among the various slices of the pie-segmented complex to enjoy the Wichita Symphony, the Wichita Choral Society, the Dance Theatre of Kansas, the Music Theatre, the Community Theatre (drama), two local jazz combos, the Trotter Puppets or the Wichita Wurlitzer. The *Eagle* reported that upward of 2000 were in attendance at any given time. It also reported that the Exhibition Hall with its 4/37 Wurlitzer piloted by Billy Nalle "drew and held the largest audience."

The audience members applauded at the close of a tune and many hot-footed it to the box office to latch onto a pressing of Wichita Theatre Organ's Album No. 1, which they brought to Billy for an autograph. Some danced if the mood moved them. Quite a demonstration of the 53-year-old "Mother's" (and Billy's) pulling power, considering the competing attractions — Wichita's best.



Jim Paulin, who formerly played at Radio City Music Hall, is currently playing the Wurlitzer in the Bella Roma pizzeria in Concord, California. 1975 ATOS conventioners heard the circa 3/14 played by Dave Reese, reports Elbert Dawson.



About that organless Bob Hope TV Special at the Ohio Theatre in Columbus, Dennis James reports that he was filmed at the 4/20 Morton console for a special opening segment "but they edited me out." Anyway, the \$10-per-second payment bought Dennis some new furniture, he tells us. Dennis did a March stint for CATOE, cueing the silent *La Boheme* (a silent opera yet!) starring Lillian Gish, who was scheduled to be present.



The E.R.A. boosters and N.O.W. should get a lift from the (English) Theatre Organ Club's announcement that attractive and talented organist Doreen Chadwick has been chosen TOC's Patron for 1979, after competing with such able stalwarts as Ernest Broadbent, Nigel Ogden and Len Rawle according to the *TOC Newsletter*. She replaces Arnold Loxam, who wore the mantle during 1978. We aren't quite sure what the



Doreen Chadwick.

(J.D. Sharpe Photo)

award of "Patron" means but we assume that it has much to do with the recipient's contribution to the English organ scene. In which case, Doreen is a most appropriate representative.



We reported awhile back that the 2/6 Wurlitzer, heard for many years in Rudy's Supper Club, Vallejo, Calif. had been silenced, was due for removal and would be replaced by an electronic. That has come about; last we heard the Wurlitzer was in Dick Villemin's organ shop at Porterville, Calif. for some work before going to the purchaser. The replacement electronic is an Allen, and is used mostly as part of a combo. Organist Dave Quinlan, who played the Wurlitzer says results with the Allen are good.



What were you doing on Friday, November 22, 1963? People remember that fateful day, just as anyone living on Sunday December 7, 1941 remembers it. One person who recalls the former date is organist Byron Melcher. He was in Dallas, preparing to play for festivities at the Trade Mart, following the motorcade of the Kennedy entourage downtown. According to Jim Bishop in his *The Day Kennedy Was Shot*, Byron practiced many times on an electronic, "Hail to the Chief" that fateful morning. The motorcade speeded past the Trade Mart, enroute to Parkland Hospital, and by then, all knew something was terribly wrong.



And still another pizza emporium with theatre organ has opened in the

east. Billed as "the family pizza restaurant and ice cream parlour," the Paramount Music Palace opened in Indianapolis on January 30, and will be open every day except Monday. Its pipe organ, the nucleus of which was the 4/20 Publix 1, once in Oakland's Paramount Theatre, was completely rebuilt and augmented. It is now a 4/42 with all the major percussions and effects. According to Dr. John Landon, the instrument bears the marks of Lyn Larsen's expertise, as he spent two days helping with the final touches. "With 42 ranks, including what they call the 'Trumpet Imperial' on the back wall above the balcony, it has plenty of power. The entire organ, however, is very smooth and has a finished sound." John adds that the manners of the first nighters were abominable, with loud talk drowning out subtleties in the music played by Bill Vlasak and lovely Donna Parker.



When Chicago Chapter member Harry Koenig visited Detroit to play a social for the Motor City Chapter at Ann Arbor's Michigan Theatre, he was afforded the red carpet treatment. Fred Page arranged for playing visits to the Redford's 3/10 Barton, the 4/36 Wurli in the Fox, the 3/13 Barton in the Royal Oak and DTOC's 4/34 Wurli in the Senate Theater.

"It was a weekend crammed with organ music. The Fox session lasted

until four ayem, but it was all worth losing some sleep over," writes pooped wife Cathy.

Harry is still denying that he's 80 years old, as one reporter wrote. We believe him; at 80 he wouldn't have even attempted that weekend.



Veteran theatre organist Jack Skelly, who has attended several ATOS Conventions of late, holds a unique record. Currently at the Westchester County Center at White Plains, he says, "I have done more playing hours in the Broadway area than any other organist. It's at least 20,000 hours and even surpasses the playing time done by Dick Leibert in his 40 years at the Music Hall." Though Jack's musical activities have centered mainly around the New York Metropolitan area, and he has intimate knowledge of many of the console greats of the past, he has still to discover what happened to ex-RKO Chester Theatre organist, Paul De Toledo Galvao (Paul Brass) Can anyone assist?



Bert Buhman is planning the umpteenth annual summer series of programs at the School of the Ozarks, utilizing the school's mighty Wurlitzer. He says the programs will be on Sundays, July 8 and 15. They will be instrumental, excepting four songs by Will Wooldridge, Bert's "dermatologist friend and the Yul



Harry Koenig gets a whack at the DTOC Senate Theater 4/34.

Bryner of the Ozarks." There will also be a silent movie and sing-along. Folks returning from the ATOS convention will find it worth their while to stop off and enjoy a program which has become traditional in this part of the country. Ticket information can be had in advance by contacting Bert at the school, Pt. Lookout, Mo. 65726. Better order well ahead of time; the series is always sold out.



Gary Rickert of Oak Forest, Ill. is rebuilding and installing in his home the Kimball organ which was originally in the 1400-seat Lincoln Theatre in Chicago Heights. The house opened on June 23, 1921 with three films, one an eight-reeler. An organist who was very popular in this theatre was Gene Alders. Aside from the above information, Gary has no background on either theatre or organ. Yet his plans call for the compilation of a pamphlet on the history of both, copies to be given as souvenirs to visitors at his home. Can anybody supply material or pictures to Gary for his worthwhile project? His address is 15224 LaPorte, Oak Forest, Ill. 60452.



Another elusive organist is one-time Roxy organist Emil Valzco, who recorded under several aliases e.g. Nan Wynne and Franklyn Ferris. Last we heard he had moved to South America and was in music publishing.



Al Sacker informs us that the organ in the Houston Pipe Organ and Pizza Emporium is basically the 3/13 Wurlitzer originally installed in the St. George Theatre, Staten Island, N.Y., enlarged to 31 ranks with Morton, Kilgen, and Moller ranks. This was the unidentified instrument heard on Al's "Music of the '20s and '30s" platter.



We have always admired the enthusiasm of North Texas Chapter's retiring chairman, Charlie Evans. Writing in the group's newsletter, The Keraulophone, Charlie waxes warmly:

"This has been a monumental year

for the North Texas Chapter of ATOS, and I have very much enjoyed my tenure as your chairman . . . With your help in the past year we have paid off the debt on the Robert Morton, our membership has increased from 88 to 117, and we have had some great programs and times together. Please continue your support, and our mutual joy in the love of the theatre organ."

Charlie was speaking for many ATOS officers there, but he put it so well in so few words.



Lew Williams at the Marietta (Ga.) pizza Wurlitzer. His star is rising. (Stufoto)

One of NTC-ATOS' rising stars, Lew Williams, is getting national attention, after his fine showing at the Atlanta '78 ATOS convention playing the pizza restaurant Wurlitzer in Mariette, Georgia. In June he will play a concert on the former John Seng mostly Wurlitzer at the Mundelein Seminary for CATOE, then on to Cedar Rapids for a concert for CRATOS. Gosh, we knew him when . . .!



Another "save the organ" campaign is looming, this time in San Diego, Calif. Considering the millions of bucks involved in most "save the" projects, this one should be a cinch. This time there's no surrounding block to buy as part of the package because it's the 65-year-old open air Austin straight organ in Balboa Park. The goal is \$100,000 in donations to pay for a major overhaul and

a new console. The instrument was presented to San Diego as a gift by sugar kings John and Adolph Spreckels in 1914. It has been heard in concert played by some of the world's great organists over the years. Described as "the world's largest outdoor organ," it is currently heard in Sunday concerts played by Jared Jacobsen. It is due to be played during the ATOS 1979 Convention by Hector Olivera.

The need for repairs is urgent. One problem is deteriorating leather. Another is the tendency of insects to nest in the reed pipes. Their juices corrode the brass tongues. Pollen from Eucalyptus trees is inhaled by the blower and settles in shallots. Without the needed restoration work the organ will soon be due for retirement.

Those desiring to contribute to the "Save Our Spreckels Pipe Organ" campaign can send donations to "S.O.S.", Casa del Prado, San Diego, Cal. 92101.



A letter from John S. Edwards, manager of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, informs us that a recent item stating that a contract had been signed with Neil Shaw for an electronic organ for Chicago's Orchestra Hall, is not true. He adds that a committee is considering a new organ made possible by a very generous donation. He expects the committee's decision shortly. Our goof. Sorry.



From Warsaw, N.Y., Irv Toner reports he had a fine time accompanying nine acts of vaudeville during the North Tonawanda Riviera Theatre's "Old Fashioned Vaudeville Night" in February. Irv, who accompanied silent films in the waning days of that genre, had never before accompanied live acts on stage but he reports that the 3/17 Wurlitzer lived up to its "unit orchestra" designation. Irv added his own mini-concert to the show. This makes the second vaudeville show since December at the Riviera.

"Perhaps the idea is catching on," says Irv, a bit hopefully. □

THEATRE ORGAN
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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

by Lance Johnson

Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

**QUIZMASTER
and Organbuilder**
LANCE JOHNSON
Box 1228
Fargo, ND 58102

Q. Could you please tell me the pressures required for our 2/8 Wurlitzer as follows:

A.
Switch stack and relays 12"
Console 14-15"
Main Chest 10"
Vox Humana 6"
Tibia 10"
Tuba 10"
Diaphone and Open Diapason . . 10"

Q. Many of our Tibia pipes and Diapasons have lost their leather in the upper lips. Is it correct to leather the lips 1 1/2" up the inside of the larger pipes and get smaller up through the scale?

A. Here are the vertical dimensions for the C's:

	8°C	4°c	2°c	1/2°c	1/4c
Tibia Clausa	2-3/8"	1-1/2"	1-1/4"	3/4"	1/2"
Diaphonic Diapason	1-1/4"	3/4"	5/8"	7/16"	1/2"

Q. There are two reservoirs under the main chest. What are they for?

A. The large regulator is for the main chest and offsets. The small one is for relay and switch stack. If the relay and switch stack are not in or near the main chamber, use it for your offset chests for the 16' octaves.

Q. On a Wurlitzer toy counter, how does one wire up such things as the horses hooves, castanets, Chinese block, etc. Also, how are the reiterating percussions wired?

A. There are three wiring systems for wiring Wurlitzer percussions.

- 1) Percussions playable on pedal but nowhere else on the organ.
- 2) Percussions playable on the accompaniment manual.
- 3) Percussions playable on the toe studs.

1) If you have, for example, four percussions on pedal such as the bass drum, Tympani, crash cymbal and tap cymbal, you will first notice that the wiring under the console lid for those stops is different than that of the speaking stops around it. There are two separate wires for each percussion. One wire goes to a common buss in back of and in the bottom section of the console called "pedal traps." One wire from each pedal percussion is wired into this one terminal. The other wire from each stop goes to the trap assembly chest action. These traps do *not* play through a relay before going to the percussion action. The terminal is then fed from the common buss on the pedalboard for that purpose.

2) For the accompaniment traps, the contacts under the console lid will look like all the others on

nearby speaking stops. The wires from these percussions go to the bottom magnets of the percussion assembly relay box. The output on this box, which are the terminals on the outside and towards the top, go to the percussion actions.

3) Percussions playable from toe studs are wired directly to the percussion actions on the trap assembly.

Reiterating percussions will play only if the contact breaker on the motor pneumatic is adjusted so that they make contact when the pneumatic is not filled with air. As the pneumatic moves forward to strike a percussion instrument, the contact is broken, causing the pneumatic to return to its deflated position. The system is designed like the breaker on an old doorbell. The contactor on the motor pneumatic has an adjustment screw which has to be very carefully regulated for proper reiteration.

Q. Is it standard practice to have couplers on the pistons? In church organs they don't seem to be used very often, as I find them to be left in the neutral position.

A. Most theatre organ builders included all stops found on the rail in their combination system. Couplers in theatre organs, especially the sub, unison and super couplers are extremely useful.

Q. On our Bourdon 16' offset chests, I am puzzled by the size of the wind hole. For example, the chest for the largest pipes for the 16' octaves is only 2 1/4" in diameter, whereas the second chest has a hole 4" in diameter.

A. Wurlitzer for some strange reason never found any use for large holes in bass chests. I suppose their reasoning was that since these notes were usually played one at a time on the pedals, the wind feed hole need only be large enough to accommodate one pipe at a time. Very likely your smaller bass chest was fed by

a 4" conductor and the two chests were connected in tandem with the larger pipes being fed by the smaller chest. Wurlitzer usually bored two holes in the medium sized chests so that the installers could string chests together on one common wind supply and save having to run separate conductors to all offset chests.

Q. Is there any difference in pressure for the Wurlitzer Tuba and Tuba Horn?

A. Wurlitzer built Tuba Horns and Tubas are on either 10" or 15" pressure. If you are referring to your style F, the pressure would be 10".

Q. I am planning to wire an electrical relay into my Wurlitzer as the pneumatic relay has no more room for added pipework. Should I wire the relay on one of the spare contacts in the pneumatic relay or can I wire the two relays off the same key output wire?

A. You can just wire your new relay off the key spreader and in that way, your couplers will also effect both relays.

Q. Where is the customary position for a toy counter and percussions in the solo chamber on a style F Wurlitzer?

A. The Wurlitzer architects usually placed all percussions towards the rear of the chambers on several levels to save floor space. I personally like to have the traps assembly positioned near the shades and on a direct light-of-sight to the console for the best affect. If you have the small scaled tuned percussions found on two-manual Wurlitzers (and sometimes small three-manual), the tuned percussions will not be very strong. Playing the organ at half to full power will just about completely mask the percussions. □

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See page 40.



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information, if applicable, and if possible a black and white photo which need not be returned.

SOUNDS FROM THE SILENT SCREEN, Gaylord Carter playing the 3/16 Wurlitzer in San Gabriel (Calif.) Civic Auditorium. Pelican (stereo) No. LP 2011. \$6.98 (plus 6% sales tax for Californians) post-paid from Pelican Records, Box 34732, Los Angeles, Calif. 90034. Also available in many record stores.

This one is addressed to silent movie buffs. For years veteran organist Gaylord Carter has barnstormed the country, presenting silent film classics to his distinctive organ accompaniments. He's so well-known and respected in this field that we'll spend no space on biography. The instrument is fast becoming the most-recorded organ in grooves. So, to the material.

Those who contemplate purchasing the record would do well to Xerox the following title lists, because the complete information does not appear on the record jacket. The music selection is reconstructed from dog-eared cue sheets and original score piano lead sheets Gaylord has retained from the premiere and ex-



Gaylord Carter.

(Jim Osborn Photo)

tended run showings of three silent film classics at the Los Angeles Million Dollar Theatre (Gaylord's first big job). All were shown there in the mid '20s. The jacket lists only mood titles; we tried to delve further.

Gaylord's music for *Ben Hur* (1925) varies widely from what is heard on the soundtrack added to the film circa 1930 for revival showings. That's because Gaylord plays from the original cue sheet; the synchronized score wandered far from the Mendoza/Axt cue sheet. For example, the love theme on the soundtrack is the smooth middle theme from Liszt's "Les Preludes." On this record we get the old original.

While we don't have the *Ben Hur* selection titles, those who have seen the film will easily recall the scenes from the music. Thus, the ponderous accents herald the scene on the Roman trireme where the galley slaves time their rowing to the steady beat of hammers (Gaylord has the slaves pulling those giant oars at a speed more reminiscent of a Harvard rowing team; he was in a hurry).

The story is all there in music, the majestic opening, the sea battle, the glory of ancient Rome, the famous chariot race, Ben Hur's romance with Esther, the growing religious feeling, return to the Holy Land just in time to witness that earthshaking event. This occupies about one half of one side.

The second half is devoted to Gay-

lord's music for the early Garbo starrer about a *femme fatale*. When we heard the music, it awakened many recollections, yet the titles of the half-remembered tunes were not provided in the jacket notes. We persuaded Gaylord to list them for our readers.

For *The Temptress*, Gaylord plays from the Ernst Luz original score with some inclusions from the Lan-Franchi/Leo Forbstein additions as presented at the Million Dollar in 1926. Under the main title we hear "Azora Prelude" (Henry Hadley); later the love theme, "Love's Sorrow" (Zamecnik). The male lead, played by Antonio Moreno, is identified by "Habanero and Vaquero's Song" (Victor Herbert). The scene where Garbo joins the engineers' mess is accompanied by "La Serenata de l'Argentina" (Harry Olsen) and "Intermezzo" from *Azora* (Hadley) cues the quarrel and breakup scene. An Argentine paso doble, "Sangre Terrera" accompanies a chase se-

quence and "Dramatic Agitato" (Domenico Savino) describes the bursting dam and flood sequence. Titles are not necessarily listed here in the order Gaylord plays them.

One whole side is devoted to music for the Douglas Fairbanks Sr. starrer, *Thief of Bagdad* (1924), one of the silent screen's most ambitious and romantic fantasy epics. For this one, Gaylord lets his imagination soar, departing from the cue sheet when feels he has a better offering, although many of his cues are from the original James C. Bradford cue sheet.

The opener, "Caliph Theme" was adapted from a theme by Leo Delibes by Gaylord, and the "Thief Theme" is from Gaylord's memory of what was used during the mid-'20s screenings. "Hindoo Song" (Bemberg) is No. 10 on the cue sheet and the Mongol Prince theme is No. 48 — "Within the Walls of China" (Lively). Anna May Wong is shadowed by Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Eastern Romance" and a Carter original, "Or-

iental Dance," identifies Doug's comic sidekick played by Snitz Edwards. Music for the underwater sequence was reconstructed by Gaylord from what he recalls was used at the Million Dollar showing. The love theme is "Ah Moon of My Delight" (No. 30 on the cue sheet) and the whirlpool effect near the close is where Doug carries off the princess by enveloping her in the invisible cloak, as they steal off to the magic carpet and sail across the night sky which comes ablaze with the truth that the erstwhile thief learned during his quest for the princess' hand — "Happiness must be earned."

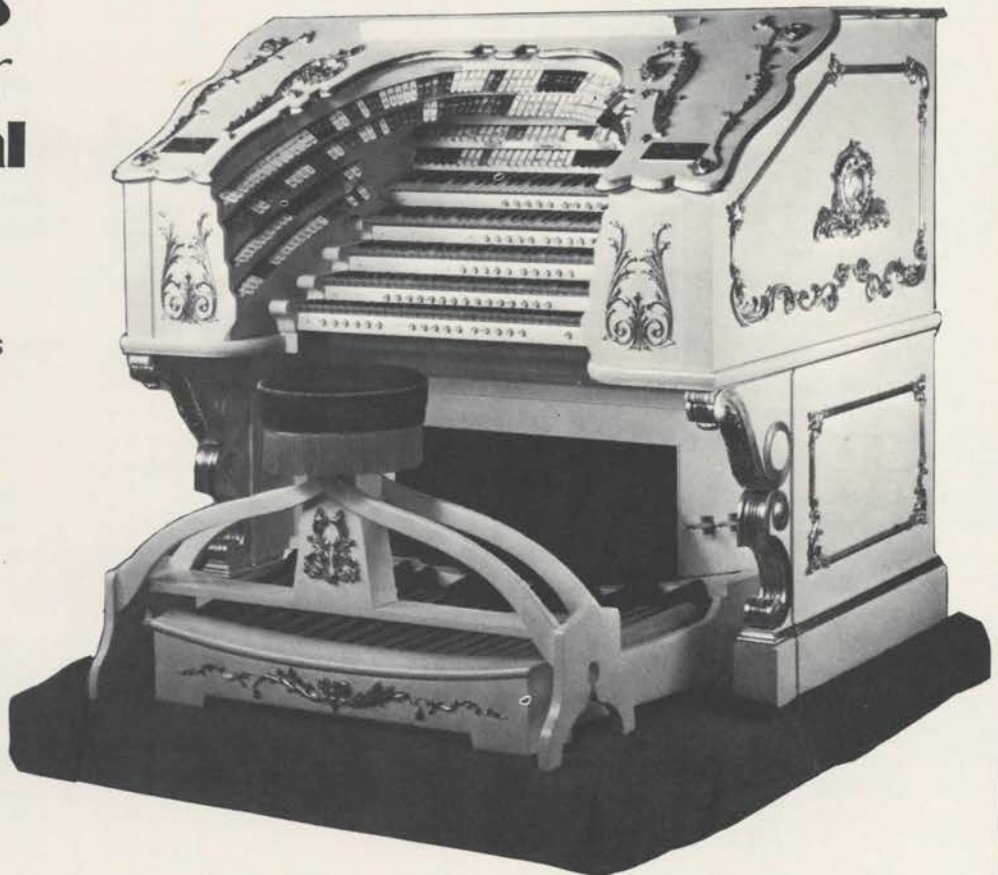
There's a monumental quality in Gaylord's presentation, especially with regard to the *Thief* scoring, an air of authority which seems to state "this is *the* authentic version" e.g. "the real stuff."

There is also a couple of minutes of Gaylord Carter autobiography in his own voice. It was a big undertaking but Gaylord has had years of

Mightiest Wurlitzer To Star In ATOS October Regional

ATOS is planning a big regional event at Wurlitzer World Headquarters in DeKalb, ILL. Save the dates of October 25th through 28th for a weekend at the grandest Wurlitzer of them all. The program will be educational as well as entertaining. Full details in the June/July issue.

THE
MIGHTIEST
WURLITZER



rehearsal while cueing these same films in countless cities and hamlets. The quality of his performance therefore comes as no surprise.

Miking is good. We caught a couple of out of tune treble pipes in places but old pro Gaylord quickly abandoned them. Surface of the review pressing is smooth but slightly warped at the outside edge, not enough to cause "stylus jump."

Even for those with no interest in silent film cues, the music is assembled in such a manner that it adds up to a Gaylord Carter concert even without movie references. Recommended.

GOOF CORRECTION DEPT. In a recent column we reviewed Hector Olivera's "660 Peachtree Street" album, and directed orders to Hector's manager, Walt Molt, in Pittsburgh. We received a loud "Haaaaaallllppp!!!" from Walt, who was up to here in orders, but without means of filling them. We should have directed mail order purchases to Atlanta Landmarks Inc., Fox Theatre Bldg., 660 Peachtree Street N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30308. Sorry, Walt and disappointed purchasers. We didn't mean to discombooberate you.

ORGAN STOP PIZZA PRESENTS WALTER STRONY. \$7.00 post-paid from Organ Stop Pizza, 5330 No. Seventh Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85014.

This is Walter Strony's first album played on the ex-Harvey Heck residence mostly Wurlitzer, a 4/27. It has since been rebuilt to meet pizza parlor needs (mainly the replacement of soft accompaniment voices such as the Dulciana). It sounds magnificent in its current home. So does Walt Strony, a young man we have kept track of since he was a small boy with a precocious interest in theatre organs. His best known instructor was the late Al Melgard.

Walt's program consists largely of familiar old chestnuts given new life through his intricate arrangements. Only a couple fall into the "over recorded" class, his opener, "Another Op'nin', Another Show" and "You Light Up My Life" (which is fast catching up with "Lara's Theme"). We assume that the selec-



Walt Strony. A 100 percent increase in musicians for *The Stars and Stripes*.

tion of tunes played here was strongly influenced by pizza patron requests. It's just good business to be able to announce a much requested tune is on a record "available here."

"This Nearly Was Mine" (*South Pacific*) is one of the most sensitive ballads presented here. It's in big organ perspective and registration, and there's an intensity in the presentation which could become overbearing if extended. Here, it comes out just right. "I've Got Rhythm" gets a peppy playing with lots of registration switches. Walt sometimes cuts down to Glockenspiel and Xylophone for comedic effects. For some reason he makes contrapuntal allusions to "Concerto in F" and "Rhapsody in Blue" during "Rhythm." Clever but it doesn't improve the music, and is of value only if the background is known to the hearer. The music buffs will get it, but no matter, even disregarding the parenthetical inserts, it's a spirited rendition.

Walt pulls some registration magic during "Stardust." He starts out with a "boom trap" accompaniment which he maintains almost throughout. On this he superimposes some very simple but ethereal stuff e.g. the soloing of the Chrysoglott for a few measures several times, also the Tibia alone, and it's beauty. We should mention that Walt includes the lovely verse with melody on Tuba accompanied by a Vox Humana chorus. Devastating!

The bright reeds open Friml's

"Donkey Serenade" which gets a good standard treatment with lots of stop changes, plus a George Wright modulation.

Walt's treatment of Kurt Weill's "My Ship" is simply gorgeous. Perfect phrasing and registration (lots of Chrysoglott). The setting is further enhanced by between chorus allusions to either "Cathedrale Eng-loutie" (Sunken Cathedral) or Ravel's "La Mer." We can't decide which. Either way, it's a beauty.

To us, the weakest choice is the one classical selection, Louis Vierne's "Carillon de Westminster," not due to any faults in Walt's performance, but the inherent weakness of the music itself — repetitive to the gates of Dullsville. Walt does the best he can, considering the material.

A much brighter spot is Walt's closer, the familiar "Stars and Stripes Forever" (Sousa). The organ has a fine array of brass and traps to simulate band sounds. Especially effective is the rare Serpent, a voice several shades keener than a Posthorn (the organ has one of those, too).

Of course, the moment all auditions look forward to is the Trio with its Piccolo ornamentation. Will our hero be able to conduct the band while making that all-important treble frippery come alive with only two hands on the manuals? We stand at the converging points of our stereo speakers with baited breath. Sorry to report, Walt Strony doesn't attempt the finger buster. Like several recording organists before him, he hired an unidentified piccolo player to do the honors, but failed to admit the substitution in the jacket notes. Walt! Despite the 100 percent increase in the number of musicians, the "Stars and Stripes" comes through a thriller.

But there are even better moments, such as the selections from *Star Wars*. This unoriginal music, which borrows from "Born Free" (played backwards) and the William Walton Coronation marches, gets a socko presentation. The opening and march sequence compares favorably with the one on the recently reviewed "Contemporary Pipe Organ" disc played by Greg Rister. Again, the Serpent, provides a cutting edge to an already sharp brass section for majestic fanfares. Then there is the Princess Leia theme, and best of all, the jazzy music which accompanies

the scene in the space creatures' bar, where the non-humans resemble everyman's picture of a mother-in-law. There are good musical moments here, and Walt makes the most of a descriptive score.

Recording is top grade, with good miking and smooth grooves on the review pressing. Jacket notes provide some familiar theatre organ history (remember, pizza chompers aren't always TO fans) and some biog on Walt Strony.

Our only recommendation to Walt for his next record: relax a little, and don't try so hard. □



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 Mr. Editor,

I read John Muri's article "Trash" (THEATRE ORGAN Oct./Nov.), with much empathy.

Like Mr. Muri, I feel it is time we gave the adjectives "fabulous" and "fantastic" a break. Mr. Muri's own writing style at least shows some originality in the use of the English language.

Regarding the theatre organ and bad taste. There should be a point in each musician's life known as maturity, and that, I believe, means knowing the difference between good

and bad music and having the wisdom to apply the right sounds at the right time. A friend once remarked to me that "there are no such things as bad organs — only bad organists." Perhaps this is something of a hard line statement, but nonetheless contains at least an element of truth.

In addition to the "five most horrible organ cliches" mentioned in the Muri article, I would like to add the following two: (a) organists who persist in drowning out an already full organ ensemble with octaves and octaves of Post Horn; and (b) organists who jiggle the crash cymbal tab at the end of a piece. Finally, I would like to say that I think that theatre organ clubs, by creating a demand for musical talent, have done more in the last twenty or so years to upgrade the general standard of music for the organ, than perhaps any other influence.

Yours sincerely,
Baden Pike
South Australia

Dear Floyd and Doris:

As an ATOS member I noticed your "Happy Holidays" greeting in the Dec./Jan. issue of THEATRE ORGAN, and it prompts me to express what I have thought about stating a number of times.

The design and typesetting of this publication are most pleasing, and you are certainly to be commended most highly for this superb work. Each issue I receive causes me to wonder just how such a fine product could be brought out so consistently.

It seems to me there must be some organization in the field of publications that gives recognition to such outstanding efforts — comparable to the Oscar — Emmy — or perhaps a "Wurli" — and THEATRE ORGAN should have the highest award.

Throughout my years of teaching I've produced newsletters enough to know how many things can go wrong technically, and how many headaches there can be coordinating the efforts of a number of contributors in different places.

So — I want to state my greatest appreciation for your efforts in THEATRE ORGAN quality and attractiveness.

Yours sincerely,
Hugh Lineback
Siloam Springs, Arkansas

Dear George Thompson:

In October of 1976, the National Broadcasting Company presented a television program to celebrate their "Fifty Years" of radio and TV broadcasting. The three-hour program presented representative material from everything that had been on the air during those fifty years including plays, symphonies, dance bands, "soaps," comedies, vaudeville, etc., but not one mention of theatre organ or organists, despite the fact that theatre organs were on the air several hours every day presenting concerts and background music for most dramatic programs. Many broadcasting organists were as well-known to the radio audience as were the leading "stars" of drama and comedy.

Again, in October of 1977, NBC presented "Fifty Years, A Closer Look," and again not even slightest acknowledgement was given to theatre organ or organists.

In March 1978, CBS presented their anniversary program and they, too, completely overlooked the contribution of the theatre organ to broadcasting.

In October of 1978, there was an anniversary broadcast from the Columbus Theatre and though the organ had been used previous to the broadcast, all we saw on TV was the console at picture-level with lights aglow.

In December of 1978, NBC broadcast a tribute to the Radio City Music Hall, "Ann Margaret and the Rockettes." Ah — surely at last theatre organ would receive some exposure; but the two hour program showed everything in the Music Hall but its famous theatre organ. The Mighty Wurlitzer remained hidden behind its drapes.

I find it hard to believe that there has been no official protest from

FIT FOR A KING!



The L.A. Chapter has chosen a superb hotel for our Convention. ATOS conventioners will have a "royal" time in the luxurious Bonaventure!

REGISTER NOW

ATOS about this disregard of the theatre organ's contribution to entertainment throughout the past fifty years. There may have been a few members who, like myself, sent protest letters to the broadcasting companies, but I can't help but wonder how we can call ourselves "theatre organ enthusiasts" and not even protest such negligence. ATOS membership may comprise only a very small portion of the audience for these programs, nevertheless sponsors still appreciate comments about their programs. Pillsbury sent me a very nice thank you letter for my comment on the Radio City program.

I believe that ATOS should send an official protest to NBC, CBS and the sponsors of these programs.

Robert V. Longfield
Carmichael, California

Dear Editor:

Can any THEATRE ORGAN reader tell us the current whereabouts of Rudy Lewis, one of the great resident names at both the Gaumont State and the Trocadero Wurlitzers in London and of broadcasting in the 1940s and 50s, and last heard of living in Canada? We would certainly like to extend our chapter greetings to him.

London and South of
England Chapter

Dear George,

While reading the February 1979 THEATRE ORGAN, "Questions and Answers" by Lance Johnson I noticed one in particular on page 31. While it was correctly answered in one way it wasn't necessarily correct in another way.

On a Wurlitzer Style 135, the piano keyboard was divided at middle C because it was to an advantage to do it that way. If a piano is wired into an organ that is a different method of obtaining piano with pipes than was the Style 135. If the organist wanted a fox trot bass on piano, he could turn on pipes above middle C to desired combination. He could play his right hand down there, then on the above keyboard for quick change effects giving him a "3rd keyboard." He could feature piano on the upper-half likewise. He could turn on pipes on both halves and play as a two-manual console.

A Wurlitzer Style 135 is hard to find. I have never seen one. I know of two that have been cannibalized. If more people would keep these scarce instruments like they are we would have a club that is preserving these instruments instead of just saying that we are.

Yours very truly,
Earl G. Gilbert
Getzville, N.Y.

Dear George:

Even though THEATRE ORGAN is already just about 99.44% perfect for *bona fide* TO nuts like me, there is one important area I wish you and your staff would pay a bit of attention to. Like me, the vast majority of ATOSers probably do most of their theatre organ listening via records and tapes played on home stereo systems. This is at best a begrudgingly acceptable substitute for the original, but it is the *only* easy access many members have to theatre organ.

I have a vague feeling — strongly supported by ignorance of the intricacies of stereo electronics — that something needs to be done to make my own system squeeze out more authentic theatre organ sound. But what can I do short of pumping power sufficient for electrocution into speakers the size of Patton tanks? There must be components that do an unusually good job of re-creating the sound and *feel* of theatre organ, but my search for information has netted only a single sentence in a recent edition of *Consumer's Guide*. Without the time and facilities for checking out the thousands of available components in their countless combinations, my increasingly befuddled state shows "negatory" signs of improvement.

Experts are bound to exist among your staff, or the remaining ATOS membership, who could write a brief paragraph or two from time to time on the subject of stereo. At least, I'm sure there are readers who have hit on satisfying combinations of components that they would be anxious to brag about. Any information, especially on *standard* speakers would be very welcome so far as I am concerned. Also, has anybody tried a sub-woofer? What about four-channel, particularly the relatively inexpensive Hafler method of capturing out-of-phase information on a disc or tape? A similar

system was described in a flier that was included with the Malar recording of Gaylord Carter at the San Diego Fox organ (MAS-2013).

Unless I'm the only one in the organization really interested in stereo that provides the closest thing possible — within the limitations of available recorded material — to real theatre organ, you would be doing a service by including a stereo section in THEATRE ORGAN.

Best regards,
Larry B. Craven
Norfolk, Virginia

Editors Note:

We have contacted audio experts and expect to present an article on this subject in the near future.

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I have a record album titled *The Fantastic Raymond Shelley*, recorded at a concert at the Fox Theatre in Detroit in 1961. The album number is Columbia 1593.

I imagine that other selections were recorded at the concert, however, I have been unable to locate any other recordings by the late Raymond Shelley.

I am most anxious to locate any other albums/recorded tapes by Mr. Shelley and hope that someone out there in the organ world can help me.

If it isn't desirable to sell any such recordings perhaps an arrangement can be made to rerecord them.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

E.A. Benedict
Carmel, California

Dear Sirs:

I enjoyed the story covering the history of the Wanamaker store organ. You are probably aware that the store was recently reported to have been sold to Carter Hawley Hale Stores as I recall.

I wonder now, what the future holds in store for the organ? A large corporation must, of necessity, be rather unsentimental when it comes to the use of floor space. Perhaps there was some stipulation in the sale regarding the organ. Let us hope so.

Very truly yours,
Les Drew
Rio Rancho, N.M. □



**THE GREAT
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

CONVENTION '79

**24th ANNUAL ATOS
NATIONAL EVENT**

LOS ANGELES

SAN DIEGO

OVERTURE

Sat., July 7



CONVENTION

Sun., July 8 -

Thurs., July 12



ENCORE

Fri., July 13

DETAILS



CONVENTION '79

Overture
BEFORE THE CONVENTION
HEAR
GEORGE WRIGHT
AT THE
SAN GABRIEL CIVIC AUDITORIUM
PRESENTED BY THE
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER
PROGRAM AND
TRANSPORTATION
\$7.00

ARTISTS

- DEL CASTILLO
- CANDI CARLEY
- LEANDER CHAPIN CLAFLIN
- RAMONA GERHARD
- TOM HAZLETON
- DENNIS JAMES
- GORDON KIBBEE
- REX KOURY
- MARIA KUMAGAI
- LYN LARSEN
- JOHN LEDWON
- ASHLEY MILLER
- JERRY NAGANO
- BUDDY NOLAN
- JONAS NORDWALL
- MIKE OHMAN
- HECTOR OLIVERA
- TOM SHEEN
- WALT STRONY
- BILL THOMSON
- TY WOODWARD



SOME HIGHLIGHTS

Convention time is coming near... another session of fine organ listening... sightseeing, plus so much more. After each day's activities, there'll be jam sessions nightly in the electronic organ showrooms and the Record Shop will be filled with goodies for listening pleasure back home.

23 ARTISTS

21 ORGANS



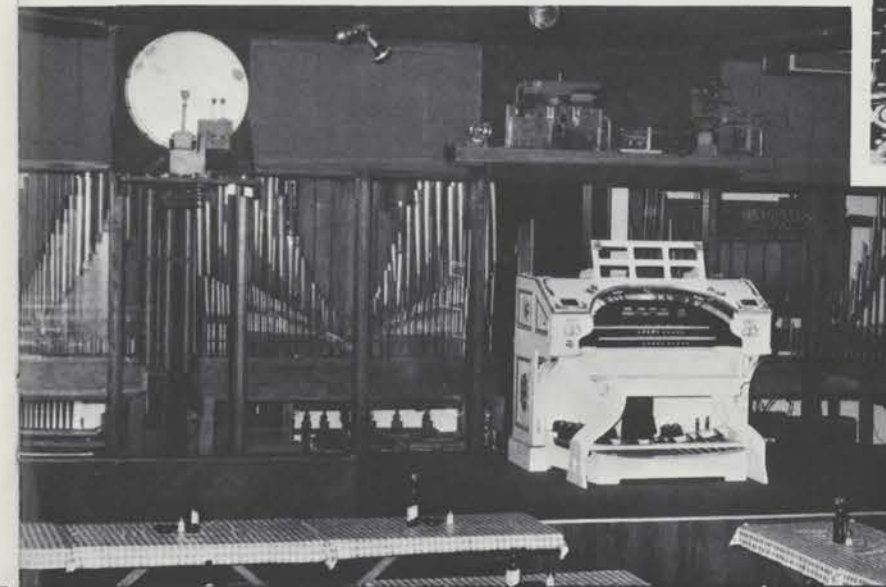
Moderne elegance is the Wiltern Theatre's setting for its 4/28 Kimball Organ. Building is a California Historical site and is threatened with imminent demolition.



Your day to San Diego will begin with a scenic trip on Amtrak... then you'll enjoy the sounds of three distinctly different organs... Wurlitzer, Robert Morton and the outdoor 4/57 Austin Organ in Balboa Park.

... Wurlitzer music will entertain you in the organ-equipped Great American Wind Machine pizza restaurant, at Reseda. Now a 2/10, conventioners should be able to see a new three manual console in operation.

The Orpheum Theatre, below, is downtown Broadway's only remaining showcase organ-equipped... a 3/13 Wurlitzer. Movie palace decor of the Twenties sets the scene for a fine concert in the 2,200 seat house.



A FUN TIME

AWAITS YOU

CONVENTION '79



In the former lodge room of the Los Angeles Elks Club sits a magnificent 4/61 theatre-concert Robert Morton Organ. The console was recently painted white.



Following a tour of the amazing and beautiful San Sylmar museum, you will be treated to a concert on the 4/32 Wurlitzer, pictured above on Cloud 99. Below, sit in awe as the 4/78 Moller entertains you in America's largest theatre, the Shrine Auditorium.



Opened to San Diego's populace in 1929, the Fox-movie theatre turned legit-musical operation—still houses its 4/32 Robert Morton.

Encore
 LATOS PRESENTS
 A NOSTALGIA EVENT
 AT THE AVALON CASINO ON
 CATALINA ISLAND
GAYLORD CARTER
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 SEA & LAND TRANSPORTATION,
 LUNCH AND CONCERT
 \$25.00

A SESSION WITH GEORGE WRIGHT

●
Seminar-Type Format
**See Registration form
 for details.**

OPTIONALS ● CHOICE OF ONE

- 1) LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
 2/10 Wurlitzer—Bill Thomson
- 2) OLD TOWN MUSIC HALL
 4/26 Wurlitzer—Buddy Nolan
- 3) PIPE ORGAN PIZZA
 3/17 Wurlitzer—Tommy Sheen
- 4) R. C. SIMONTON RESIDENCE
 4/63 Aeolian-Skinner—Ty Woodward
 4/36 Wurlitzer—Gordon Kibbee

ADDITIONAL ORGANS

- CROWN THEATRE
 3/11 Wurlitzer
- KOON'S CYCLE SHOP
 3/34 Hybrid
- SAN GABRIEL CIVIC
 3/16 Wurlitzer
- BAY THEATRE
 4/42 Wurlitzer
- WEST CULVER BAPTIST
 3/12 Wurlitzer
- CALIFORNIA THEATRE
 2/13 Wurlitzer
- IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN
 4/70 E.M. Skinner

REGISTER TODAY. Charge It!
MASTER CHARGE & VISA

Schedule of Events

DAY	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
<i>Overture</i>			
SAT. JULY 7	REGISTRATION 12 Noon - 8 P.M.	No-Host Cocktail Party Bonaventure Hotel 5 - 7:30 P.M.	A Presentation of LATOS SAN GABRIEL CIVIC George Wright
<i>ATOS Convention '79</i>			
SUN. JULY 8	REGISTRATION 9 A.M. - 9 P.M. WILTERN THEATRE John Ledwon	SHRINE AUDITORIUM Tom Hazleton Chapter Representatives Board of Directors Meeting Bonaventure Hotel	CROWN THEATRE Rex Koury
MON. JULY 9	TOURS A&B: Koons Cycle Shop Del Castillo/Jerry Nagano Bay Theatre TOURS C&D: West Culver Maria Kumagai	TOURS A&B: West Culver Maria Kumagai TOURS C&D: Koons Cycle Shop Del Castillo/Jerry Nagano Bay Theatre	SAN GABRIEL CIVIC A Session With George Wright
TUES. JULY 10	S A N D I E G O CALIFORNIA THEATRE Dennis James	Lunch FOX THEATRE Ashley Miller	Dinner and Space Theatre BALBOA PARK Hector Olivera S A N D I E G O
WED. JULY 11	ORPHEUM THEATRE Ramona Gerhard NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - 10:30 A.M.	ELKS BUILDING Jonas Nordwall IMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN Leander Chapin Claflin	Banquet, plus Crystal Palace Band and Show Artist Autograph Session
THURS. JULY 12	TOURS A&B: San Sylmar Lyn Larsen Wind Machine Candi Carley/Mike Ohman TOURS C&D: Optionals	TOURS A&B: Optionals TOURS C&D: San Sylmar Lyn Larsen Wind Machine Candi Carley/Mike Ohman	SAN GABRIEL CIVIC Walt Strony
<i>Encore</i>			
FRI. JULY 13	A Presentation of LATOS Boat trip to Catalina	Lunch in Casino Ballroom Casino Theatre, with Gaylord Carter and silent film Late afternoon, free time Dinner on your own	

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE

LOS ANGELES



SAN DIEGO

Our convention headquarters will be the Southland's most modern and newest hotel, providing a breathtaking vista of greater Los Angeles either day or night. Thrill to the eight-story atrium lobby with its numerous lakes and fountains, while glass-enclosed elevators whisk guests to their rooms.

Twelve food and beverage facilities operate in the building, plus room service . . . enough to satisfy even the hungriest. There are also food emporiums located within walking distance of the hotel.

This year's banquet will take place in the California Ballroom; unusual coloring and lighting will make this a dramatic setting, with plenty of room to wander about. Following dinner and the annual awards, entertainment will be provided by "The Crystal Palace Band", plus an autograph session with Convention '79 organists . . . then the night is all yours.



TRANSPORTATION: Overture package includes trip between San Gabriel Civic and Hotel. Access to the various convention sites will also be by buses. Encore price includes, besides lunch and concert, busing between hotel and ocean, plus sea transportation to island and back.

PHOTOS: Picture taking at your pleasure, but please, no flash pictures during concerts.

TAPING: To assure maximum enjoyment by all, we respectfully request conventioners refrain from tape recording concerts.

TRAIN: Advance registration will include the Amtrak train to San Diego. Late registration may require transportation by bus.

HOME TOURS: Self-conducted tour information of home installations will be available at the registration desk.

QUESTIONS?? Additional information may be obtained from Convention Chairman, 7500 Reseda Blvd., Reseda, Calif. 91335.


Photo credits: All pictures, collection of Tom B'hend, except San Sylmar, by Dennis Mallard; Wind Machine, collection of Mike Ohman; and Shrine Auditorium by John Ledwon.

Eight page convention announcement section designed for the Los Angeles and San Diego ATOS Chapters, hosts for the convention, by Preston J. Kaufmann.

REGISTRATION FORMS - MAIL TODAY!

HOTEL FORM

Complete and cut-on outside of heavy black line

RETURN RESERVATION FORM		Los Angeles Bonaventure	
AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY July 7-13, 1979		(213) 624-1000	
WESTERN INTERNATIONAL HOTELS Partners in travel with United Airlines 			
(PLEASE PRINT)			
Arrival Date _____	Hour* _____	Departure Date _____	
Name _____			
Address _____		City _____	State _____ Zip _____
SHARING ROOM WITH _____			
*Reservations subject to cancellation after 6 P.M. unless held by a deposit or guarantee of payment			
<input type="checkbox"/> Please hold room on a payment guarantee basis. If the reservation is not honored on the day of arrival or is not cancelled before 6:00 P.M. on that day, the room will be billed for one night and then the reservation will be cancelled.			
PLEASE CIRCLE DESIRED ACCOMMODATIONS			
Single		\$44.00	
Twin (2 beds/2 persons)		\$56.00	
Double (1 bed/2 persons)		\$56.00	
IF RATE REQUESTED IS NOT AVAILABLE, NEAREST AVAILABLE RATE WILL BE ASSIGNED. ALL ROOM RATES ARE SUBJECT TO APPLICABLE TAXES.			

MAIL HOTEL RESERVATIONS TO:
BONAVENTURE HOTEL
 Reservations Department
 5th & Figueroa Street
 Los Angeles, Calif. 90071

Please print . . .

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

OVERTURE - \$7.00 per person (optional) \$ _____

(NO tape recorders, "flash" photographs or movie cameras permitted during the performance.)

CONVENTION - \$110 per person \$ _____

(postmarked by June 15th, just \$100 per person)

GEORGE WRIGHT WANTS TO KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE HIM TO DISCUSS AT THE SEMINAR, BY JUNE 1st . . . jot down your ideas on a slip of paper and enclose with your registration form . . . NOW!

OPTIONAL TOURS (select one)

- ___ 1) Loyola
- ___ 2) Old Town Music Hall
- ___ 3) Pipe Organ Pizza
- ___ 4) Simonton Residence
- ___ Undecided

MAIL CONVENTION REGISTRATIONS TO:

REGISTRAR
 CONVENTION '79
 7500 Reseda Blvd.
 Reseda, Calif. 91335

BANQUET and Entertainment - \$17.50 per person (optional) \$ _____

ENCORE - \$25.00 per person (optional) \$ _____

TOTALS \$ _____

_____ Check Enclosed (make payable to "CONVENTION '79")

_____ Please CHARGE IT!

Bill to MASTER CHARGE # _____ (or) VISA # _____

Expiration Date _____ Signature _____

THE CHICAGO THEATRE

...more than just memories

by Richard J. Sklenar

The Chicago Theatre, mother of all the movie palaces, is threatened with destruction. The story is a familiar one: sagging revenues; higher labor costs; lack of product; increased demand for the land on which the theatre is situated. But, as has happened in other cities, another chapter in an increasingly familiar story is being written. Theatre organ enthusiasts are in the forefront of the preservation movement to save the Chicago Theatre. In Columbus, Atlanta, Buffalo, Syracuse, and Marion, Ohio, among other cities, hobbyists who got started preserving pipe organs have helped in successful efforts to "recycle" vintage movie palaces. Some have even been more ambitious. ATOSers Dennis Wilhelm and Michael Kinerk are helping to preserve Old Miami, an entire neighborhood.

To date no challenge has been as great as saving the Chicago. The theatre is not closed. A wrecking date has not been set. The building has not been seized for back taxes, nor is it part of a city renewal project, nor has a major donor graciously donated it to the community. Symphony and opera music both have suitable homes so the project is not likely to become a pet project of high society. The Chicago still operates seven days a week from 9 a.m. to midnight as a marginally profitable

movie house, occupying 48,000 square feet of the primest commercial space on State Street, which is undergoing reconstruction as a pedestrian mall. Two alternatives have been proposed for the building, which is mercifully unencumbered by other commercial space being attached to it.

The first plan, discovered last July, is by Plitt Theatres, present owners of the building. It calls for a 34-story office building replacing the familiar buff-colored terra cotta facade of the Chicago. Principal tenant of the building would be ABC, from whom Plitt bought 125 theatres (including the Chicago) in 1974 and 175 more theatres in 1978.

A second, more realistic plan, was unveiled by realtor Arthur Rubloff as part of his North Loop Redevelopment plan last August. This plan calls for demolition of every building in seven square blocks of downtown Chicago, including nine movie theatres (the Oriental Theatre, now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is included in this plan). The Chicago Theatre block would contain a new central public library and a parking garage.

The response of Chicagoland citizens to these plans has been ChicagoLandMarks, Inc., the nonprofit community-based group incorporated last July to stimulate public

participation in the effort to preserve the Chicago Theatre for future use. The incorporators of CLM were Bill Barry, former chairman of CATOE, and Doug Christensen, former CATOE vice chairman and program chairman for the 1977 ATOS convention and their wives. They all strongly believe that among all of the distinctive features included by Rapp and Rapp in the *first* movie palace built in a downtown area in the United States the finest

The Balaban family has given strong support to the "Save the Chicago" movement. Cherry Balaban Robins and son, Tony Robins, an architectural historian, flew from New York to meet the press and cut the cake at a ChicagoLandMarks party for the theatre's 57th birthday in October. Josie Balaban Couture has donated the last copies of *Continuous Performance*, the biography of A.J. Balaban, builder of the theatre.



is the 4/29 Wurlitzer pipe organ. Without the magnificent room which is its home the organ would lose its distinctive voice, a voice so unique that, according to George Wright, Jesse Crawford called it his favorite organ.

ChicagoLandMarks' immediate goals include acquainting the people of Chicago (and the U.S.) with the theatre as it is today, what it represents, and why it should be preserved. CLM is also working to fund expert consultant studies of possible future uses of the premier movie palace as a popular performing arts center, details of the building's condition, and what would be required to restore and maintain it. Ownership of the Chicago in its new role is an open question. CLM is structured to own and operate it as a non-profit theatre, if need be, but the City of Chicago could also do so.

ChicagoLandMarks has taken other steps in what it knows will be a long, hard fight. It has applied for tax-exemption from the Internal Revenue Service. It has named Richard Sklenar, immediate past chairman of CATOE, as a director and newsletter editor, a position he once held with CATOE. Three separate successful letter writing campaigns have been organized. Petitions have been circulated. Booths have been peopled at street fairs. Countless meetings have been held with local officials, realtors, and the present building owners. Beauchamp Carr, the man who helped raise \$2 million to save the Atlanta Fox, volunteered much information. Press relations have been established. A recent event was a 57th birthday party for

Help Save the . . .

CHICAGO THEATRE

For more information contact:

ChicagoLandMarks, Inc.

3658 W. Wrightwood Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60647

the theatre on a rainy morning in late October. Two separate landmark designations are currently being sought for the theatre. Designation as a federal landmark, with inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, is being carefully shepherded through the maze of paperwork by CLM volunteers. Others are at work guiding the effort to have the structure designated a landmark by the City of Chicago. The group has also joined the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the ChicagoLandMarks Preservation Council.

One of the most important CLM tasks has been fund raising. The group is currently raising \$10,000 for a consultant study, half of which is available as a matching grant from the National Historic Trust. Interested ATOS members may write ChicagoLandMarks, Inc., 3658 W. Wrightwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60647 and request membership information. "Save the Chicago" bumperstickers are available for \$1.50 each, postpaid, from the same address. Individual CATOE members have been quick to respond to the plight of the Chicago and hope that sup-

port will be generated from the national ranks of ATOS.

As the flagship of Balaban and Katz, ABC-Great States, and now Plitt Theatres, the Chicago has received special care. It is in remarkable shape considering it is about five years older than most cinemansions. The building is in good enough shape to be operated with live acts without missing a beat of its 57-year-old mechanical heart. This was proved on September 24th when CATOE and 3700 friends filled the place for a variety revue which used everything: stage, lights, rising orchestra pit, dressing rooms and organ. It all worked, thanks to CATOE volunteers. That show proved two things: that the Chicago is still a functional building of style and grace, and that there is a vast, forgotten audience which can be attracted to the Loop with imaginative, quality programming.

Historic preservation has taken on increased importance in this country. This is evidenced by a dramatic increase in federal funds available for such projects. "Adaptive reuse" is saving many worthwhile buildings. Movie palaces can be recycled in a much simpler way. They need only be put to the use they were intended as presentation houses, not just movie houses with hot dog stands thrown in the lobbies. ChicagoLandMarks is proud of its unique role as the first citizens group to raise its voice in Chicago to say "No, we think there are other visions for the future of downtown Chicago." "No, we don't think public money should be used for site acquisition and clearance so that developers may make profits

A family affair: Doug and Betty Christensen, Ann and Bill Barry, incorporators of ChicagoLandMarks. They know the group's success will depend on a strong volunteer corps backing a professional staff. (MegPix)




A four-foot long cake was cut by McNeil Smith (left) who was an usher on opening day. Cherry Balaban Robins, son Tony Robins and Ward Rapp, grandnephew of C. W. and George Rapp, architects for the theatre, were present at the 57th birthday party hosted by ChicagoLandMarks in October. (MegPix)



from projects upon which they have decided without consulting the community." But if ChicagoLandMarks has said "no" in those ways, it has also said "yes" in many other ways. It has said "yes" to citizen participation in community decision making; "yes" to an increasingly bright future for downtown Chicago; and "yes" to a future for the Chicago Theatre. Chicago has a distinguished architectural and theatrical past. Rapp and Rapp created the movie palace here. Balaban and Katz perfected movie exhibition here in those palaces. ChicagoLandMarks has taken on the large task of convincing people that the Chicago Theatre is more than just memories. The job is an enormous one but this city has been known to do the impossible. If art, commerce, and government come together nothing is impossible here. □

DINNY'S COLYUM

as
transcribed
by
Del Castillo



Seein as how the ATOS Convenshun aint so fur off, I got a few ideas on it that I thought maybe I ought to give the fellers who is runnin it the benefit of. As I understand it the idea is that they will be three days in Los Angeles and three days in San Diego, but that dont seem so sensible to me. If they is to be a California Convenshun I think we ought to make it cover the state better, so the thing to do is to have three days in San Diego, three days in Los Angeles and three days in San Francisco. That way we can really give all the three California cities that have a lot of organs and a lot of organ players a whack at it. As a native Californian. — and dont give me any cracks about I come from Massachusetts because everybody here knows that a native Californian is

anybody who has lived here more than a year — I would like to see all them Easterners who has to live in rain and snow and blizzards all year a chance to see what a great place this is. Of course rite now while I'm a-writin this the temp. has gone down to 58 and it is stormin so hard they is puddels on all the streets and sidewalks, but who is perfect?

We got this gal here who runs the transportashun system for the state, her name is Ms. Gianturco and she is a humdinger and she would like to get people to like her better than when she tried to let only the people who had three in a car use the fast lane on the freeways and that made everybody mad. So I think we could get her to put out a rule that every car that has a ATOS sticker can use the Dimond Lane, which is what she calls the fast lane, so it wouldnt be no trick at all to get from San Diego to San Francisco. Of course they is a 55 mile speed limit but nobody pays no attention to it so you could whiz doen from Los Angeles to San Diego in a couple of hours.

Then we got this Caltrans committee which is trying to keep these Amtrack trains a-runnin, and they are havin a bad time gettin enough people to use them. So I think we could get them to make up a skedule to put on extra trains for the three places provided they was ten passengers, which is about what they get now. And then for a extra attractshun we would get them to stop at San Clemente, and we could probibly get Pres. Nixon to come out and say hello to them espeshially if we would buy his book which he will personally otograph for \$50 a copy.

Of course if they is a policemans strike it might be a little harder to

get around L.A. I aint sayin they will be but it seems like the police department in every city has to have a strike sometime this year, and now that Noo Orleans had their turn so they had to turn the Mardy Grass off why maybe they think it is L.A.'s turn. But even if they was, now we got the L.A. City Council workin on bustin up the old taxicab monopoly, you could probibly get a cab easy to get you from the Ambassador Hotel to the Wiltern Theayter for five or ten bucks. Or you can figure out ahead of time how much change you would need for a bus ride, on account that if you dont have the right change they wont let you on the bus. So you can see we got everythin workin right just like in a big city, except for the one thing that Gov Brown made sureof, which is that we got a surplus in case of a emergency like a earthquake and Gov Brown is goin to see that we keep it that way.

Maybe they is one thing I should ought to warn people about and that is to bring along there swettters and raincoats and umbrellas. Of course we always have perfect weather in July, but just in case. And then of course you gotta bear in mind that when youre in LA you gotta find time to go to Disneyland and when your in San Diego you have to go to the Zoo. Organ playin is organ playin and that's what you come to hear, but they comes a time sometimes when after fifteen hours of it you want a little change, so that's what we got Disneyland and Magic Mountin and Knotts Berry Farm and Sea World and the Universal movie tour here for. So dont go back home and complain that you didnt know about them things. Music is Music, but Fun is Fun. □

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NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



This time, Jason and I bring you another "pot luck" column of nuggets from all over the country. References were *Motion Picture World (MPW)*, *Local Press (LP)* and *Around the Town (ATT)*.

May 1924 (MPW) Standing room only was the case when the new \$15,000 Page pipe organ in the 350-seat Gem Theatre in Newark, Ohio was recently dedicated. WILLIAM DALTON, well known organist of the Grand Theatre in Columbus, motored to Newark to give a special midnight concert on the beautiful instrument. The following day, Prof. BERTON BUCKETT, assisted by FRANK REYNOLDS, the Gem's house organist, dedicated the organ with a series of recitals.

The Gem has been crowded since the installation of the Page, and many compliments have been paid the proprietor for installing so exclusive an organ in such a comparatively small theatre. Two weeks were required to install it under the supervision of Don Maus. A marimba, xylophone and Degan chimes are included.

Jan. 1, 1927 (MPW) After one of the biggest fights in the history of the village, Wayland, N.Y. has just gone on record in favor of Sunday motion picture shows, 489 to 333. Theatre owners stood the expense of having ballots printed. Overcoming opposition, the owners promised that if the election were carried in their favor, they would not open Sunday nites until 8:45, by which time, the church congregations would be dismissed.

Feb. 1927 (LP) JOHNNY MC CARTNEY, new featured organist for the Grand Theatre in Centralia, Wash., will offer a special number with each change of the theatre's bill. A well known organist of exceptional ability, he will offer added features on each program.

July 1928 (LP) ARTHUR MARTEL broadcasts weekly over WBET, Medford, Mass., using the Metropolitan Theatre's Wurlitzer in Boston. DEL CASTILLO is also doing weekly broadcasts over WNAC from his organ school.

Aug. 1928 (Syracuse U "Daily Orange") Riviera Theatre owner-manager Harry Gilbert has appointed high school student W. STUART GREEN to assist featured organist BARTHOLOMEW WRIGHT at the Wurlitzer organ in the southside Syracuse nabe house.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) At the beautiful ace house of Bala-ban & Katz, the Chicago Theatre, MILTON CHARLES is the solo organist. Charles has long been featured with the B&K houses. He is as versatile as he is popular, and can feature community singing or concert numbers. In fact, for a long time, he gave concert recitals at the Chicago Theatre on Sunday noons, which were a tremendous hit. Charles, a composer with many song hits to his credit, also teaches organ.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) Shea's Buffalo (N.Y.) Theatre is fortunate in procuring the most promising of Pietro A.

Yon's pupils, DWIGHT BROWN, a solo organist who has held the attention of the critical Dallas audiences at the Palace Theatre there for seven years. Mr. Meutra and Mr. Yon are personal friends of Mr. Brown, and the celebrated Jesse Crawford recently sent a wire of congratulations to him. He broadcasts over WGR, Buffalo, has been very successful with his own compositions, and features interesting novelties and slides.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) Syracuse, N.Y. has another meteor at the B. F. Keith's Theatre in the garb of CARLETON A. JAMES, who has been spreading his light for three years in the form of his own compositions which have met with decided success. He was featured in the Strand Theatre in Syracuse for two years and is very well liked by his patrons. Roy Marshall, since 1920, has led the 11-man orchestra at Keith's.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) BILLY BARNES, one of the youngest organists in the country, is featured at Loew's State Theatre in New York. Barnes, who plays only restricted, high-class numbers, has personality, is a great artist, and broadcasts over WHN. He and "Skeet" Haithcox recently composed a new number titled "Drifting Along," which is being handled by the Clarence Williams Publishing Co.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) One who has captured the fancies of the ultra modern sophisticate is LEONARD MAC CLAIN, solo organist at the Strand Theatre in Philadelphia. One of the most popular organists in the East, with 50 pupils studying under him, he specializes in presentations and novelties for the organ. He has been with the Stanley Co. for the past ten years and has been favored at the leading houses for many years, having opened many of the Philadelphia theatres.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) FRANK R. WHITE is being featured at the organ at the Tivoli Theatre in Newark, N.J. He was formerly at the Cort Theatre in Chicago, and was on the staff of New York's Roxy Theatre when it opened in March 1927.

Dec. 1928 (ATT) F. DONALD MILLER, guest organist at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit, has created a large following at that house which is billed as "The World's Most Perfect Theatre." Miller combines originality, novelty and classics in his organ features and is admirably fitted to play in such an impressive theatre. Paul Leash directs the orchestra.

GOLD DUST: 4/25 MACK EDWARDS, Pittsburgh's Aldine . . . 8/25 BANKS KENNEDY at Chicago's Capitol; ROBERT J. BERENTSEN, Rochester's Eastman . . . 9/25 ALBERT HAY MALOTTE, Chicago's Uptown; JOHN PRIEST, New York's Colony; LEO TERRY, Chicago's Capitol . . . 11/26 KARL WRIGHT, Butte, Montana's Rialto; ERNIE MILLS, Rochester, N.Y.'s Riviera . . . 1/27 TOM GRIERSON, Rochester's Riviera . . . 2/27 ROY PARKS, Toledo's Palace Marr & Colton . . . In these Chicago theatres in 1928: RAMON RICHELIEU MORSE, Broadway and Strand ths.; ARSENE SIEGEL, Uptown; LEONARD SMITH, Avalon; WALTER STEELY, People's; M. TATHEM, Norshore; GEORGE VLACH, Shore; "Walter at the Organ," State; W. WHITLOCK, Riviera; KEN WIDENOR, Tivoli.

That's all for now. See you in June, Sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector

Music For Those Who Cannot See or Hear!

We who are privileged to see and hear, to enjoy the splendor of the mammoth theatre organs of today, do not perhaps realize how a great number of our countrymen do not enjoy this pastime.

Recently a program was put on at Pizza and Pipes in Bellevue, Washington, for the Lighthouse of the

Blind, of Seattle. Past Chairman, of the Puget Sound Chapter, Thelma Barclay, sat at the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer for two hours and brought smiles and laughter to the group, which ranged in age, from young to old. This was great enjoyment for those whose only recognition was in feeling the sides of the console, touching the massive pipes and feeling the pedalboard, as it was being played. They realized a new sensation.

Their awareness comes from the feeling of the vibrations. Their keen sense denotes the high and low pitch, and they can feel the pulsing rhythms.

Because of their inability to see or hear, the pizza parlor is a place they would not particularly choose for entertainment. But through the kindness of owners Betty and Jack Laffaw, (who are also chapter members) and their luncheon of pizza, these people discovered a whole new world of music.

The Wurlitzer of 10 ton, with 16 rank, with it's beautiful white and gold console, created for them a wonderful presentation. Further, the addition of the dancing puppets created by clever Genny Whitting, and the bubble machine delighted these people, although they could not see, they imagined. Their interpreters (mostly volunteers) and some family, gave hand movements across the pizza table, or for those with slight sight, the lip movement, known as the visible sign languages, plus some written expressions, and tactical approach was used to bring the organ and person together.

They were particularly surprised at the "sound" of the surf, Tonto (the horse) and they enjoyed the siren

and other unusual sounds, of which there were many.

Bill Carson, also a member of the Puget Sound Chapter, and the technician for this wonderful instrument, was there to talk and explain further technical data through interpretation.

Steve Ehrlich, the leader of this group, works at the center, is sightless and has a volunteer, Ruth Coppersmith, who indicated that these people enjoyed the old favorites, just like we do. Hearing some singable numbers they joined in, even if slightly out of tune, and the smiles told us that they enjoyed the participation.

They requested Star Wars, and the vibration on the nearby tables where they sat, gave them the realization of the mightiness of this huge organ. This Wurlitzer was built in 1925 for the Academy of Music Theatre in New York City, and for the past two years has been installed in this modern and beautiful building, east of Lake Washington and Seattle.

After the picture taking for guests with the console background, (a momento for them) we know they will not forget the experience, nor will the chapter member who experienced that heartwarming feeling of a chance to share in this love of ours for the memories of yesterday to the visions of tomorrow. In addition, it gave everlasting joy and appreciation to those who otherwise would not have been enlightened to the greatness of the mighty pipe organ. It is hoped that similar programs will be planned for other communities, throughout our chapters.

It was a small, small world, made bigger, through the efforts of those who can see, for those who cannot.

□



Feeling a pedal board opens a new world to those who cannot see or hear.

Steve Ehrlich, although deaf and sightless, can feel the vibrations of the organ.

Thelma Barclay talks to the group during her program.



ATOS Chapter Chairmen and Secretaries

ALABAMA

Linda Whitmire, Chm.
2436 Wine Ridge Drive
Birmingham, AL 35244

Joan Aured, Sec'y.
423 Golf Drive
Birmingham, AL 35226

ALOHA

Frank Loney, Chm.
700 Richards St., Apt. #2703
Honolulu, HI 96813

Claire Watson, Sec'y.
1515 Ward Ave., Apt. #1404
Honolulu, HI 96822

ATLANTA

James E. West, Chm.
319 Kings Highway
Decatur, GA 30030

Mrs. Norma Simmons, Sec'y.
Rt. #3, Highway 92 South
Fayetteville, GA 30214

BEEHIVE

Calvin E. Christensen, Chm.
5390 Emigration Canyon
Salt Lake City, UT 84108

Clarence E. Briggs, Sec'y.
1608 E. Stratford Ave.
Salt Lake City, UT 84106

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Dr. John W. Landon, Chm.
809 Celia Lane
Lexington, KY 40504

Virginia Marsh, Sec'y.
1959B Spring Station Drive
Lexington, KY 40506

CEDAR RAPIDS

Douglas A. Wiley, Chm.
4400 Deer View Road N.E.
Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

Jeanne Kays, Sec'y.
1359 H Ave. N.E.
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

CENTRAL FLORIDA

Charles G. Stanford, Chm.
13401-A Quintin Lane
Tampa, FL 33618

Winona A. Sullivan, Sec'y.
3932 Eden Roc Circle W.
Tampa, FL 33614

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10315 E. 42nd St.
Indianapolis, IN 46236

Mrs. Mary Drake, Sec'y.
5130 W. 11th St.
Indianapolis, IN 46224

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3400 Sommerford Road
Columbus, OH 43221

Robert Shaw, Sec'y.
59 Parkview Ave.
Westerville, OH 43081

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60 N. Century Drive
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Ione Tedei, Sec'y.
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Roslyn, PA 19001

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158 Forest St.
Waltham, MA 02154

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446 Grove Street
Westfield, NJ 07090

Margery Vitakis, Sec'y.
404 Hamilton Road
Glen Rock, NJ 07452

GULF COAST

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Dorothy Standley, Sec'y.
381 Euclid St.
Pensacola, FL 32503

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Valley High, Rt. #2, Box 41
Yorkville, IL 60560

NOTICE — These names and addresses are correct according to National records. If you see any errors, please inform National Headquarters at once.

KIWI (New Zealand)

Norman J. Dawe, Chm.
39 Hoteo Ave.
Papatoetoe, Auckland

Mollie L. Granwal, Sec'y.
17a Omaha Road
Remuera, Auckland

LAND O'LAKES

Marjorie V. Shepard, Chm.
1341 N. Kent St.
St. Paul, MN 55117

Mrs. Joan Johnson, Sec'y.
3401 Texas Ave. S.
St. Louis Park, MN 55426

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Winnebago, IL 61088

Donald E. Rublee, Sec'y.
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Rockford, IL 61107

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41 Inglehurst Gardens
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England IG4 5HD

Les Rawle, Sec'y.
47 Doncaster Drive
Northolt, Middlesex, England

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3865 Blackwood
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Miles Lilly, Sec'y.
20101 James Couzens
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Allen W. Rossiter, Sec'y.
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3360 Georgetown Place
Santa Clara, CA 95051

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3 Diprose Street
Pimlico, Townsville 4812
Queensland

Jennie Hastings, Sec'y.
3 Chubb Street
Belgian Gardens, Townsville 4810
Queensland

NORTH TEXAS

Richard Nichols, Chm.
2516 Little Creek Drive
Richardson, TX 75080

Lorena McKee, Sec'y.
13406 Noel Road #254
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OHIO VALLEY

Hubert S. Shearin, Chm.
5300 Hamilton Ave., Apt. 310
Cincinnati, OH 45224

Blanche Underwood, Sec'y.
668 Enright Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45205

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Paul N. Haggard, Chm.
916 N.W. 39th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

Luella Lingenfelter, Sec'y.
2225 N.W. 56th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73112

OREGON

Terry Robson, Chm.
540 S.W. 5th St.
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Rockville, MD 20851

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750 Hemlock St.
Edmonds, WA 98020

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10334 240th Place S.E.
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Mrs. Betty Tyler, Sec'y.
11 Roseacre Lane
Webster Groves, MO 63119

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6632 Avenida la Reina
La Jolla, CA 92037

Mrs. Daphne J. Hoskins, Sec'y.
747 Van Nuys St.
San Diego, CA 92109

SIERRA

James C. Hodges, Chm.
1100 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Mrs. Betty Wilmunder, Sec'y.
P.O. Box 491
Carmichael, CA 95608

SOONER STATE

Mrs. Dorothy Smith, Chm.
5439 S. Boston
Tulsa, OK 74105

Mrs. Betty Weddle, Sec'y.
3513 S. Indianapolis
Tulsa, OK 74135

SOUTH FLORIDA

Albert W. Combs, Chm.
5010 East Palm Court
Hialeah, FL 33012

Edwin S. Pannebaker, Sec'y.
3980 SW 4th St.
Miami, FL 33134

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Al Sacker, Chm.
1135 Liberty Ave.
Beaumont, TX 77701

Mary Louise Hollabaugh, Sec'y.
3415 Pelican
Orange, TX 77630

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Robert S. High, Chm.
3958 E. Justin Lane
Tucson, AZ 85712

Mrs. Louise Townsend, Sec'y.
8830 Calle Bolivar
Tucson, AZ 85715

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Jamboree Heights
Brisbane, Australia

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29 Parinari St.
Algerster, Brisbane, Australia

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Mrs. Lillian P. James, Chm.
611 Nansemond Street
Portsmouth, VA 23707

Rev. Paul W. Parker, Sec'y.
P.O. Box 6267
Portsmouth, VA 23703

TOLEDO AREA

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3664 Watson Street
Toledo, OH 43612

Mrs. Ann Moxley, Sec'y.
111 Sunset Blvd.
Toledo, OH 43612

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Cleveland, OH 44102

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1311 N. Genessee
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Convention Hotel Facilities

The 24th National Convention of ATOS will be headquartered at the new, fabulously beautiful 1500 room Bonaventure Hotel in the heart of Los Angeles Bunker Hill district.

Designed by John Portman, the 35 story hotel is distinguished by its 5 circular bronze-tone glass towers. The atrium-lobby is the size of two football fields with a one acre "lake" meandering across the lobby floor. Registration (for both hotel and the convention), hospitality room, record-gift shop, and the electronic organ showrooms are all located on the lobby floor.

Convenient indoor parking is available in the adjacent World Trade Center and Arco Plaza garages. Besides the five restaurants in the Bonaventure (from a fast food hamburger counter to the elegant Top of the Five) many fast food and unique restaurants are located in the adjacent World Trade Center and "underground city" in the Arco Plaza. Guides to all restaurants in the vicinity will be part of each conven-

ioneer's kit.

Guaranteed convention rates at the Bonaventure will be \$44 per day for a single, \$56 for a double (and up if larger accommodations are desired).

Other nearby hotels (all within easy, safe walking distance) include the Biltmore (515 S. Olive) \$48 single, \$58 double; Los Angeles Hilton (930 Wilshire Blvd.) \$37 single, \$49 double; Hyatt Regency (711 S. Hope) \$46 single, \$56 double; and Mayflower (535 S. Grand) \$26 single, \$30 double. Further away (a short cab ride) are the Alexandria (Spring at 5th) \$20 single, \$23 double; Holiday Inn (750 Garland) \$28 single, \$35 double; Travelodge (1710 W. 7th Street) \$18 single, \$20 double; New Otani Hotel & Garden (120 S. Los Angeles St.) \$39 single, \$49 double.

Rates quoted above are 1978 prices but the Bonaventure rates are guaranteed as quoted! In addition, the Bonaventure convention rates will be available from July 6th through July 15th for those who wish

to come early or stay later to take in the other sights of Southern California.

All Gray Line tours depart from the Bonaventure Hotel and include the following all day tours: Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Magic Mountain, Lion Country Safari, and the deluxe Hollywood tours. Half day tours are offered to Universal Studios, NBC Studios, Los Angeles City, Movieland Wax Museum, and Movie Stars' homes. Complete information and prices will be available at the Gray Line desk in the Bonaventure lobby.

The Convention committee plans to have the hospitality desk manned every day. All Los Angeles/San Diego convention personnel will have distinctive badges so they may be easily recognized and a Convention official will be available at the hospitality desk to help solve any problems which may arise. Everything is being done to insure this will be the happiest, most interesting and musical convention thus far in ATOS history.



CHAPTER NOTES

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Deadlines

- Jan. 1st. for Feb./Mar.
- Mar. 1st. for Apr./May
- May 1st. for June/July
- July 1st. for Aug./Sept.
- Sept. 1st. for Oct./Nov.
- Nov. 1st. for Dec./Jan.

ALABAMA

A flurry of snow and activity ushered in the New Year for the Alabama Chapter. The new officers elected at the December meeting were introduced by outgoing Chairman Alleen Cole. Those assuming their duties were: Linda Whitmire, chairman; Gordon Nicolson, vice-chairman; Joan Aured, secretary/treasurer; and Ola Fee, JoAnn Radue, Larry Donaldson and Alleen Cole, directors.

Due to the illness of the outgoing program chairman (and National ATOS Secretary) Riedel West, the new officers set to work a little earlier than normal to organize the January program. Cameo performances were presented by three of our members, Ruth Farris, Alleen Cole and Cecil Whitmire.

Another member was featured in February, as Dan Liles gave us his version of "Fantasy Island" centering around the Alabama Theatre and the Wurlitzer organ. The program was followed by birthday cake and all the trimmings as the chapter celebrated the beginning of another year of activity.

An idea which has long been discussed by the chapter finally came to

pass. Linda Whitmire has produced a slide program on the Alabama Theatre and organ. After writing the script, she had it professionally narrated, backed with theatre organ music and taped on cassettes

to be used with the slides. Initially this will be used in promoting our spring concert on April 6th with Dennis James and after that time, our members across the state will be taking it to other civic organizations to acquaint them with our activities.

JOAN AURED

(Editor's Note: Other chapters, take note, this is an excellent idea.)

BEEHIVE

The first meeting for 1979 was held on February 3rd, at Larry Bray's Organ Loft, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Past Chairman Leland Lay called the meeting to order and introduced the new officers for 1979. Brigadier General Murray A. Bywater, USAF



Alabama officers for 1979 are: (front row, L to R) JoAnn Radue, Linda Whitmire, Alleen Cole, Gordon Nicolson; and (back row, L to R) Ola Fee, Joan Aured, Larry Donaldson.



Beehive officers for 1979: (L to R) Clarence E. Briggs, secretary-treasurer; Calvin E. Christensen, vice chairman; Leland Lay, past chairman and Brig. General Murray A. Bywater, USAF Ret., chairman, in front of the Organ Loft console.



Some of the loading crew in Virginia, February 7th. (L to R): George Johnson, Doug Wiley, Bob Burkhardt and Don Smith. The lines in the foreground are the beginning of the heaviest snowfall to hit the Virginia-Washington D.C. area in many years.



Erwin Young covers the Barton console for shipment to Iowa City.



Loading crew takes a break. (L to R): Doug Wiley (CRATOS), Erwin Young (Potomac), George Johnson (Potomac), Bob Burkhardt (CRATOS), George Mather (Potomac) and Bob Adams (CRATOS). Not pictured is Don Smith (CRATOS).

Ret., chairman; Cal Christensen, vice chairman, and Clarence E. Briggs, secretary-treasurer.

The meeting included a report on the renovation of the Capitol Theatre presented by Committee Chairman Harry Weirauch. A presentation by Dr. Paul Hansen covered the success that he has had in recording "live" pipe organ accompaniment for many of his silent films. Most of the members remained for an evening of entertainment involving dinner and dancing. New chapter member Steve Killebrew provided the dinner music and Linda Peterson handled the dance music portion of the program.

Calvin Christensen presented a report on the new by-laws and the status of our pending incorporation as a nonprofit organization.

The Capitol Theatre is now open and virtually complete. It has been completely renovated and is now owned by the Salt Lake City/Salt Lake County Bicentennial Commission for the Performing Arts. The pipe chambers were not disturbed during the renovation, and we hope to have the console refinished and connected in time for a concert next fall.

CEDAR RAPIDS

The chapter has obtained a theatre organ and has an operating theatre available for its installation, a combination in this day and age that can be considered a rarity.

It all began when CRATOS member Howard Burton told the chapter board that a small Kilgen organ was available in Minnesota. While the

Kilgen was being evaluated, member Bob Burkhardt contacted the Englert Theatre management in Iowa City and their enthusiasm convinced the CRATOS that a larger, more complete instrument was called for. A search for the proper organ was instituted.

Ex-National ATOS President Ray Snitil contacted Erwin Young at National Headquarters and found out the Barton formerly in the Virginia Theatre, Alexandria, Va., was in storage and could be purchased. Negotiations were begun and resulted in four CRATOS members traveling in two 24-foot U-Haul trucks to Virginia.

The CRATOS members were met by three Potomac Valley members and the organ was loaded, between snow storms, for the journey to Iowa. The crew had left for Virginia on February 4th, and was back in Iowa on February 10th, a round trip of over 2,000 miles in less than ideal driving conditions. It speaks well for the help from Potomac Valley members and the crews assembled by CRATOS.

The crew from Cedar Rapids included Doug Wiley, Bob Burkhardt, Bob Adams and Don Smith.

The Potomac chapter members were George Johnson, Erwin "Cap" Young and George Mather, Jr.

The 3/11 Barton organ purchased by CRATOS was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre, Newport News, Virginia, in 1931. In 1968, the organ was removed from

the Paramount Theatre and reinstalled in the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria. The organ was featured at the 1972 National ATOS convention in the Washington, D.C. area. Around 1975, the organ was removed from the Virginia Theatre and placed in storage, where it has been until the present. It was the last Barton theatre organ to be built and had been extensively overhauled in Alexandria.

The Barton organ now owned by CRATOS was covered in the June 1969 issue of THEATRE ORGAN, Vol. II, No. 3.

The Englert Theatre in Iowa City, where the organ is to be installed, was built in 1912. The seating capacity is about 900 including main floor and balcony. The theatre is in an excellent state of preservation. It was used early in its career as a legitimate theatre and was converted for motion pictures at a later date. The Englert originally was equipped (in 1927) with a 3/9 Barton organ, removed about 1930. All that remains of the initial organ installation, beside the memory, are two fine pipe chambers and a blower room.

To get the organ installed and playing as soon as possible, CRATOS is going to need a lot of help. Anyone interested in helping please contact Doug Wiley, or Bob Burkhardt.

CENTRAL FLORIDA

The chapter is proud to report the recent purchase, by the City of Tampa Arts Council, of a 3/12 Wurplitzer organ for installation, by the chapter, in the Tampa Theatre. As a result of this project we were in need of more knowledge about rebuilding

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See page 40.

an organ and were invited to visit pipe organ craftsmen Klug and Schumacher who had installed the 3/25 Wurlitzer in J. Burns Pizza & Pipes in Tampa. Their technical knowledge has become an aid in rebuilding the existing organ available to us. Arriving at the Klug & Schumacher Company in Lakeland, members were treated to an enormous display of pipework and given technical explanations of releathering wind chests and adjusting pitch and tonal characteristics of various pipes. Several society members had the opportunity to try a small five-stop tracker-action organ that Klug has for sale. We were allowed to wander through the warehouse to see the immaculate shop area and were very impressed with their operation.

We were treated to an extravagant buffet supplied and prepared by Mrs. Schumacher and Mrs. Klug. After the meeting everyone left fully inspired to start work on the Tampa Theatre organ.

Since we are a new chapter of ATOS, we will be looking forward to any help or information that would aid us in putting this organ together.

WINONA SULLIVAN

CENTRAL INDIANA

For a month always brimming with delightful holiday activities, the December meeting was certainly a highlight of pleasure for the 89 attendees. The Christmas spirit prevailed at the Hedback Theatre as members Mary Drake, Jack Pollock and Floyd Perry presented a program of beautiful seasonal music at the 2/10 Page organ. The fellowship of the members and open console following the meeting certainly made everyone present aware of the spirit of Christmas.

The January meeting was held at the Wilking Music Company warehouse showroom. A duo organ program was presented by Sue Landes playing a new Lowrey SCT spinet, and Jerry Downs playing a new Lowrey H-4 console. Sue and Jerry's musical arrangements for the two organs combining the Grieg A Minor Piano Concerto with the theme from *Love Story* was only one of the exceptional examples of their abilities as professional organists. Their program certainly made braving the bitter cold and snow well worth-

while to the 63 members present.

The most exciting happening in Central Indiana and Indianapolis in many years occurred with the opening of the Paramount Music Palace on January 30th!! The Paramount Music Palace, a family pizza restaurant and ice cream parlor, featuring the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ, is taking the Indianapolis area by storm. This Wurlitzer was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California, in 1931. It was purchased from the previous owner in Los Altos, California, and taken to Los Angeles for rebuilding. The organ was a Publix No. 1, Opus 2164. A total redesign of the organ increased the number of ranks to 42. Most of the percussions are located outside the chambers. The enclosed main and solo chambers have glass louvers and the console is on a rotating elevator. The 500-seat building was designed and constructed around the organ.

Two exceptionally fine artists, Donna Parker and Bill Vlassak, share in playing this Mighty Wurlitzer. Donna was appointed the first official organist for the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team. She worked as organist at pizza restaurants in Phoenix, Arizona, and Grand Rapids, Michigan. She still maintains an active concert schedule. Bill also has been organist at restaurants in Phoenix and San Francisco. He is assistant organist at the Ohio Theatre in Columbus and is active in concerts and other playing engagements. As can well be expected, members of the Central Indiana Chapter are totally delighted to have the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis.

Robert MacNuer is the general manager of the Paramount Music Palace, 7560 Old Trails Road, located at I-465 and East Washington St. (or U.S. 40).

The February meeting was held at the North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis. This is one of the older and larger churches in the city. The original organ, which was installed in 1931, was a four-manual Kimball with thirty some ranks with pipe chambers on each side above the console behind the pulpit. In 1960, 17 ranks were added in the back of the church with its own separate console, but also playable from the console in the front of

the church. Tim Needler, with his masterly proficiency of the music and the instrument, presented a program of two classical selections, a popular ballad, and improvisations on patriotic themes that gave all those attending a chance to thoroughly enjoy this beautiful organ. It is always a treat to have Tim play for us and we appreciate his time and work to provide us programs.

BARBARA ATKINSON

CENTRAL OHIO

No February could be brighter, no Central Ohio event more eloquent than a keyboard visit from Rex Koury at the console of the Marion Palace Theatre Wurlitzer, February 10th. Needless to say, Mr. Koury's unique styling, renditions of nostalgic tunes, including the musical accompaniment to a Harold Lloyd movie, made for a fascinating evening. We are especially grateful to Tom Yannitell and his group of volunteers for enabling Central Ohio to enjoy yet another theatre organ in the grand tradition of yesteryear.

COTOS held their February meeting in the home of Chairman Bob Richards where, in spite of a torrential downpour, some 40 members turned out. After a short business meeting Bob's wife Betsy regaled us with both contemporary and classic numbers at their Conn 651. Open console followed.

The Worthington High School Wurlitzer project continues to emphasize completion of the right chamber air trunks. No less important however, has been the immense work of verifying circuit continuity, labeling terminal strips and completion of wiring which has been under the able direction of Ed Lawrence.

JOHN R. POLSLEY, M.D.

CHICAGO AREA

And suddenly it is spring, well almost, for we Chicagoans. What a welcome sight after the horrible winter. But CATOE keeps going.

Even though snow arrived early this winter, a very interesting social was held the first Sunday of December at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Their 1906, 2/15 Austin sounded great with Ned Siebert at the con-

sole. Ned is with the Kimball Organ and Piano Co., as designer for their electronic organs. He played a well-rounded program of classical and Christmas music and also for some carol singing.

Blower troubles arrived last year in our area. The Oriental Theatre organ blower lost two blades during a showing of nostalgic movies. They were temporarily replaced for the rest of the movie run and the new owners said they will buy a permanent replacement. Then CATOE's organ at Des Plaines North High School had two blades crack and we have replaced them. So all is well again — we hope.

Weather or not, CATOE enthusiasts ventured out to hear David Hamilton in concert at Downers Grove North High School. Attendance was low, but enthusiasm was high as David gave forth an interesting program. He is a Scotsman with an excellent musical background who possesses a wide and varied background in the music world.

The program was further enhanced by John Frigo, a jazz violinist, who surprised the audience with his versatility. David did an excellent accompanying job and was highly complimented. A sing-along and good comedy completed a very interesting program.

The following Sunday the CATOE gang of over 100 attended a social at the Deluga Brother's Pipe Organ Pizza recently opened. Paul Swiderski played a varied program and Gary Hansen, one of the establishment's organists, also showed off the organ. Open console time was ample as was the sociability.

Sally Rand fanned, in part, the Chicago Theatre's last variety show to a full house. Many requests followed for more such shows and this shall be, as another variety show is

scheduled for May 20th which will be entirely different in many ways.

The 4/24 organ at St. Marys of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Ill., is being brought back to near original by CATOE members. Missing pipes are to be replaced as should the smiles of many organ enthusiasts who have long been concerned about this organ and its former Chicago Theatre console.

The Montclare Theatre organ left home and landed in a pizza restaurant in Lombard. Sallys Stage group did the negotiating and rumors reach us that they will install a similar operation in North Lake.

The Pickwick Theatre (Park Ridge) organ's missing ranks are to be replaced by the theatre owners. Paul Lewis, former manager, is now back in full charge of the theatre. We wish him well as this theatre is a beauty and so is the magnificent Wurlitzer.

Pipe Organ Pizza of Milwaukee, the Deluga Brothers, now have a similar pizza spot in Chicago at Peterson and Lincoln Avenues. Scheduled organists are Gary Hansen and Perry Petta of Milwaukee and Cindy Kasper of Park Ridge, Ill. The organ is from the Sheboygan Theatre (Wis.). It is a 2/11 Wurlitzer and has some interesting additions. This organ has a superb sound and is a welcome addition to the north side of Chicago. Our best wishes for success to the entire staff.

ALMER BROSTROM

CONN. VALLEY

In January, Lyn Larsen was at the Thomaston Opera House Marr & Colton pipe organ in concert. Some very stiff New England winter weather kept this writer, unfortunately, from attending. Subsequent firsthand word, however, confirmed

that the concert was of Lyn's usual high order and the miserable weather kept only a few of us of considerable distance from attending. Lyn is very popular at Thomaston.

Our February meeting was also at the Opera House. As the occasion celebrated our chapter's eighteenth birthday, Program Chairman Paul Taylor, assisted by Jim Morris, had arranged for appropriate playing of the pipes by ATOS member Frank Cimmino, staff organist at the Suburbia Restaurant in Wanaque, N.J. With business out of the way promptly by 3:00 p.m., Frank got on the bench and proceeded to pipe our celebration in fine manner. We had glorious music then birthday cake and coffee were served by our most capable social committee of Eleanor Bassett and assistants. Plenty of time remained for open console, always a popular feature of our meetings. Our party was a great success. Thanks go to all those involved, including our guest artist.

Our 1979 Scholarship Competition will be held Sunday, April 29th at the Thomaston Opera House. This is an enjoyable event and the talent uncovered promises to be surprising.

By the time this is in print George Wright's concerts for March will be history, but there is still time to publicize Ann Leaf's forthcoming appearances at Thomaston Opera House on May 19th at 8:15 p.m. and on May 20th at 3:30 p.m.

EASTERN MASS.

At Richard Knight Auditorium, Babson College, on January 27th, EMCATOS had its monthly gathering under Chairman Royal Schweiger's direction. Arrangements for a bus to New York for Ray Bour's March 25th program were announced

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Mark Renwick at the Eastern Mass. Chapter Wurlitzer.

(Paul Callahan Photo)

by Tim Holloran.

Tim brought along a Vox Humana tremulant he and partner Tim Bjareby, of the Eric Andrew Organ Co., had built along Wurlitzer lines for a customer. He invited inspection and questions as an educational feature of the evening.

After an appropriate introduction, Mark Renwick, our evening's soloist, mounted the console bench for his lusty opener, "June is Bustin' Out All Over." Mark, now a university student, joined the club when reaching the pedals was a problem, and he has certainly grown physically as well as musically! His variety of eleven numbers showed careful preparation in his stop selection. As his finale, "I Love a Parade," faded away, much deserved applause rewarded Mark for his thoroughly enjoyable mini-concert. Another "parade" followed as many playing members and friends kept the pipes singing during open console until both hands of the clock were vertical.

On February 24th, at Babson,

Treasurer Al Winslow read a favorable advance ticket sales report for our spring concerts with Hector Olivera.

The entertainment of the evening consisted of three members in "cameo" concerts led off by Mrs. Carol Bray Moeller, daughter of the late, well-known "Flying Fingers" Lewis Bray of Boston theatre organ and teaching fame. His bright, breezy style has "rubbed off" on Carol which befit her enjoyable '20s and '30s program selection.

Organ crew chief and former chairman, Art Goggin, followed, with an introduction by Royal. "He fixes, he installs, he plays." Play he did, showing his thorough knowledge of our Wurlitzer with a varied program including several Irish numbers.

One of our hardest working members and organ crewman, Bill Carpenter, our third organist, obviously gets much pleasure at the console and extracted some nice sounds from our pipes.

Three distinctive styles, requiring many registration changes, made our 235 Special sound like three different organs. The palette of tone colors available from 13 ranks is nearly inexhaustible. Each performer received a very satisfying approbation for the pleasure they dispensed.

The evening's entertainment was not quite over as more good music followed in the informal open console period. Some of our "pros" also took their turns making a "joyful noise" — just about the best around — before adieus were in order.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

GULF COAST

Nothing is more thrilling than hearing a theatre organ play in a theatre.

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The crowd was with us all the way. The very air in the old theatre was charged with enthusiasm the night we presented our "Farewell to the Organ" concert and silent movie. Harold Lloyd had the audience hanging from their seats as he hung from the top of a building in the classic silent film *Safety Last*.

We were delighted to welcome guests Jack Goodwin, James West, James Thrower and James Jobson who came down from Atlanta to hear our Robert Morton and to tape the excellent original scoring composed and played by Tom Helms of

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our chapter. Lee Lanier came over from New Orleans to join in the fun. He is familiar with the Robert Morton in the Saenger Theatre, New Orleans. Lanier was enthusiastic over our movie and the accompanying music. He said he would like to show it in New Orleans.

The New Orleans Saenger's Robert Morton has to be one of the jewels in the crown jewels of theatre organs, thanks mainly to the efforts of Barry Henry, M.D. of that city.

The first of the year saw the election of officers for the chapter: Tom Helms, chairman; Barclay D. Rhea, M.D., vice chairman and treasurer; Dorothy Standley, secretary. Bob Sidebottom and Gordon Thiel were voted to serve on the board of directors.

Tom wears many hats in our chapter. The first as chairman, then he is crew chief for "Lola" — our beloved RM. After that he is program chairman. If you can fit another hat on top of these three, it's public rela-

tions. He arranges the publicity in the local newspaper and radio stations plus TV interviews. This year he had two interviews on the two local TV stations prior to our last performance. This was great publicity for our program and really brought in the crowd.

After the performance in February, Tom dons his crew chief hat. The theatre is about to begin work on restoration and we must move the console and the chamber to protect them.

Dr. Rhea continues in so many ways to help the chapter. His advice is invaluable. His expertise is priceless. His home workshop could be dubbed ATOS Emergency Room. When we needed more horns for the car scenes in our latest production he mounted truck and "beep-beep" horns that were played from the console along with our ah-oo-gah horn. Made the chase scenes sound like 1923! What would we do without our chief mentor? His work on the grand

piano that will be wired into the console will be covered later on in an article of its own. Right now the piano is finished and waiting "in the wings" for its stage debut.

DOROTHY STANDLEY

LAND O' LAKES

With the strains of two recent winter concerts still lingering, the chapter is looking forward to a series of spring and summer concerts.

On January 21st, LOL member artist Paul Wesley Bowen played a concert for the chapter at the 3/15 Barton at Brookdale Cicero's. It was Super Bowl Sunday but 96 members and guests preferred the music bowl and were amply rewarded.

Outstanding in a concert rich in variety was Paul's exciting interpretation of "Caravan," a gem from the '30s by Duke Ellington and Juan Tizal. It was especially appealing the way Paul put it all together — the snake charmer . . . the rolling wagons of the caravan creeping across the desert . . . the mysterious sounds and, under it all, the incessant rhythm driven on and on with his brilliant pedal work.

Never relying on the trite, Paul favored the audience with fourteen selections — some seldom played (on the organ) favorites and some rediscovered melodies, running the gamut from "In the Mood" to "Parade of the Midgets." Paul's interpretation of "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes" was unforgettable.

While it may admittedly be difficult to be objective about an artist who is also a member of one's chapter, we feel compelled to express ourselves about Paul Bowen. To us, he is exceptional, simply because he produces music demanding almost superhuman skills, endurance and music knowledge. We have heard



Chairman, crew chief for "Lola" and program chairman, Tom Helms, at the Saenger Theatre Robert Morton.

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Paul Bowen relaxing between numbers at the 3/15 Barton at Brookdale Cicero's. (Edwin C. Hirschhoff Photo)

him many times. He always satisfies, but at this concert Paul was at his best.

Other activities of the chapter included a general meeting of the five "home groups" to discuss programs and the addition of new members for this active program.

The Board of Directors is again reviving the prospects of acquiring a chapter organ and a home for it. This matter has varied in intensity over the years from *ppp* to *ffff* and, while prospects may presently be somewhat remote, a breakthrough resulting from some present flurry of activity would be very welcome.

The LOL chapter invites correspondence from other chapters who have been successful in acquiring a "place of their own." Information on fund drives, organ acquisitions, costs and the like would be welcome.

In the meantime, the chapter is taking some satisfaction in being involved with St. Paul's Civic Center project which will include a large

pipe organ installation. Chairm'm Marge Shepard and other chapter members are continuing to provide important information to the St. Paul Cultural Advisory Committee, which has responsibility in the matter.

EDWIN C. HIRSCHHOFF

LONDON AND SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Our first major chapter presentation of the year features the great Ashley Miller playing first at the 4/16 "Torch" Wurlitzer at the Gaumont State Theatre Kilburn in North-west London.

Ashley then goes North to play the 4/20 "Queen" Wurlitzer in the Free Trade Hall in Manchester in a concert promotion by our good friends of the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust (LTOT).

In the meantime, chapter fellowship continues to be keenly promoted through our exceptionally enjoyable monthly club nights at "Wurlitzer

Lodge," Northolt.

This year's series began early in January with a super "Members Night" at the console following our second annual general meeting. Highlight of this delightful evening was the welcome appearance of our distinguished member Doreen Chadwick, who was in London for the weekend for a public concert at the 5/17 illuminated Compton organ in the prestigious Odeon Theatre in Leicester Square.

At this event Doreen had been confirmed as the new Patron of the British Theatre Organ Club (TOC).

This was only a short while after the issue of her most appropriately titled new disc *Princess of the Theatre Organ* on the Doric label. Featuring the brilliant 4/14 British-built Christie organ in the huge Regal Theatre at Edmonton in North London, a favourite venue of Sidney Torch in the 1930s and of Vic Hammett in later years, this exciting platter is exemplary of Doreen's vibrant style. She also has another new disc imminent — this time at the "Queen" Wurlitzer which she played so often in its original home in Manchester's Paramount-Odeon cinema.

First Chapter Club night proper at the end of January featured our talented young member Byron Jones from Wales — who is himself the proud owner of a 2/6 Compton pipe organ formerly in the Regal Cambridge. Byron was partnered by a fine Welsh tenor Allun Davies whom he has accompanied for several years throughout the UK.

Our February meeting featured Matty Ross from nearby Hillingdon who formerly played for the ABC circuit and at the Regal Uxbridge. Although virtually blind, Matty is now much in demand with clubs in the West London area, where he plays electronic organs and piano, and is



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a particularly sensitive and stylish player.

Now our standard practice, these three events were all prefaced by fine performances by the rapidly developing 16-year-old Pauline Dixon, winner of our "Young Theatre Organist of the Year" competition held at the Gaumont State last November at the instigation of Mr. Bill Weir, the imaginative and enthusiastic manager there.

A copy of a five-minute documentary film made "live" during this competition by the British Government's Central Office of Information for worldwide dissemination in its "This Week in Britain" series was also shown to members at the February club night.

Pauline has also had a spot during a recent concert featuring Len Rawle and George Blackmore at the 3/13 Compton preserved by our colleagues of the Windsor and District Theatre Organ Trust.

We are exceptionally proud of the unique achievement of our well-known member Ralph Bartlett, genial and evergreen General Secretary of the TOC. Originated by Ralph as the "Robinson Cleaver Fan Club" in 1938, and taking its more widely-embracing title in the 1950s, the TOC has through his untiring efforts been the bastion of British theatre organ enjoyment for an incredible four decades — and still has Ralph and "Robbie" Cleaver at the helm.

At an on-stage ceremony at the Granada Kingston recently, with the great Robbie at the 3/10 Wurlitzer console, Ralph was presented with a commemorative plaque and a "This is Your Life" photographic album.

Warmest congratulations, thanks and best wishes must go to Ralph for his quite magnificent work for the

British theatre organ cause, not only from all of our chapter but also from theatre organ fans the world over.

Another most welcome if long-awaited major event on the British scene has been the inaugural concert at the famed "Trocadero" 4/21 Wurlitzer now reinstalled by the British Cinema Organ Society (COS) in the Edric Hall of the Borough Polytechnic in South London — only a short distance from the original cinema.

Like the opulent Gaumont State, the Trocadero was built in the 1930s for the renowned Hyams Brothers. Made famous in the halcyon years by the great Quentin Maclean, this historic instrument was rededicated by modern day keyboard wizard William Davies — with the BBC simultaneously cutting one side of a new disc to complement on the other one of the first-ever stereo broadcasts made in Britain by Bill Davies on this fine instrument in its first home during the 1950s.

Our heartiest congratulations thus go to the COS (to which most of our chapter members also belong) for all their dedication and hard work in bringing a huge and difficult project to fruition and for its future success.

Our chapter party at the 1979 Convention promises to be the largest ever with almost 40 so far booked — and notably including Doreen Chadwick for the first time. All will be wearing our attractive new chapter lapel badges and they will certainly be called to account at future chapter functions.

NORMAN BARFIELD

LOS ANGELES

Our opening concert for the '79 season featured Del Castillo at the Wiltern Kimball. After his own



Del Castillo does it again.

(Stufoto)

"Wiltern Fanfare" console riser, Del played a medley of 6/8 march tempo tunes. Highlights of his program were selections from *The Nutcracker Suite*, *South Pacific*, and a "bouquet of waltzes." His delightful wit inspired a medley of "octave melodies" including "You Are My Lucky Star;" "Horses, Horses, Horses," and "Tara's Theme" from *Gone With the Wind*, all involving octave jumps. Then a waltz turned upside down, "The Danube Blues"! As his closer Del invited non-musical sentences from the audience and composed instant music to "clotheslines are for the birds" and "We'll meet at Wilshire and Western" which became a 6/8 march to round out a memorable program. Because this program was sponsored by several of our chapter members, not the chapter itself, the door donations could go to the Ledwon Organ Restoration Fund. Del generously contributed his entire artist's fee and part of his sales from records to the Fund. In all a truly memorable concert which substantially swelled the restoration fund for John Ledwon's soon-to-be-rebuilt residence Wurlitzer.

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Gaylord Carter. A "triple feature special" at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium Wurlitzer. (Stufoto)

In February, Gaylord Carter's program attracted one of the largest crowds in LATOS history to San Gabriel's Civic Auditorium. It was a "triple feature special" with the audience roaring with laughter all the way! First, a 2-reeler titled *Thrills and Spills* composed of the wildest chases and cliff-hangers from many different silent comedies. Then Laurel and Hardy in one of their funniest movies, *That's My Wife*. After intermission Buster Keaton in *Seven Chances*, one of the rarely seen and funniest of all silent comedies, ending with hundreds of prospective brides chasing Buster all over Los Angeles. Gaylord's accompaniment, as always, was in perfect timing with the films.

Del Castillo will be a featured artist at Convention '79 at the world famous Joe Koons Motorcycle Shop 3/34 Wurlitzer-Welte organ. Gaylord Carter will present a program at the Casino 4/16 Page, Santa Cata-

lina Island for the encore program following the National meeting. This event is sponsored by the Los Angeles Chapter. Los Angeles and San Diego are both geared up to bring all ATOSers the greatest convention ever. See you here in July!

RALPH BEAUDRY

MOTOR CITY

Lee Erwin appeared at the Redford Theatre, January 20th, at the 3/10 Barton for a concert and film presentation. The film was the silent classic *Lilac Time* which by intermission had itself turned to lilac due to an expiring projector bulb. The film resumed after intermission until it became apparent that the end would be sooner than we had expected. Lee ad-libbed with the audience until all efforts to correct the problem had failed. Lee, the pro that he is, seemed to satisfy the audience by revealing how the picture ended.

Lee finished his program with several more selections and the appreciative audience acknowledged their approval. His professionalism proved once more that the show must go on.

In February, Hector Olivera made a return visit to the Motor City for a concert on the 16th at the Royal Oak Theatre and again the following night at the Redford Theatre. We had learned that Friday was his birthday.

On Friday, Harry Hadfield carried a present and a birthday cake for Hector down the aisle. Lance Luce went to the piano and the audience joined in singing "Happy Birthday." Hector's birthday present — John Thompson's *Teaching Little Fingers to Play* — brought many laughs from the audience.

On Saturday night, he pretended

to use his new "Little Fingers" book he had placed on the music rack. During the program, Bonnie and Clyde (alias Marge and Jerry Muehl) called Hector to the Redford stage where they produced yet another surprise birthday cake, at which time Tony O'Brien went to the Barton and again the audience sang "Happy Birthday."

Two fun-filled nights and a lot of great music made our audiences very happy.

Our fourth sixteen-week film series began in February at the Redford Theatre. Every other weekend an average of 2000 people are entertained by a popular film from the last forty-odd years, each preceded by a half-hour musical overture by a chapter member at the Barton, who also plays during the intermissions.

DON LOCKWOOD

NOR CAL

Porter Heaps provided our December program mixing a dab of Christmas here and there to remind us of the season. Mr. Heaps is a resident of our area and we pried him from AGO long enough for a delightful afternoon in Redwood City. A well-balanced program and a good crowd enjoyed his humor and his music.

Our January 21st meeting featured Warren Lubich at the Redwood City Wurlitzer. Warren is a past chairman of Nor-Cal and presented a concert at the Avenue Theatre for the 1975 National Convention that many will remember. With years of experience on the bench, he has developed into a fine entertainer with a unique presentation of most interesting music. Warren enjoys old and not-so-popular numbers and he did many of these plus melodies from Victor

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Herbert and Franz Lehar. It was a fun afternoon with a big turnout considering the Super Bowl was competing.

The following officers were elected for 1979: Jim Dunbar, chairman; Dan Lovett, vice chairman; and retained were Isaleen Nadalet as secretary and Etta Nevins as treasurer.

Residents of the San Francisco Bay Area are pleased and grateful that there are two theatres being re-equipped with pipe organs. The Oakland Paramount is receiving bids for the installation to be started soon. The Castro Theatre in San Francisco is receiving the 4/20 Wurlitzer owned by the Taylor family. It will be awhile before music emerges from any of these chambers, but it is happening. We are waiting word on the rumor that the San Jose Fox is looking for a replacement for the 3/13 empty chambers in this house that is being refurbished, and soon to open.

Members and guests of the chapter traveled to the East Bay town of Martinez on February 11th to hear Jim Riggs at the Bella Roma Pizza 3/15 Wurlitzer. Jim opened his program with a rousing Fats Waller tune, "Howdy Baby," then a wide variety of melodies, some of which are rarely heard, such as "Deep Night," "Spaghetti Rag," "By A Waterfall," and "Shadow Waltz." To close an excellent Sunday afternoon concert, Jim's encore was "It's Like Looking for a Needle in a Haystack."

Jim Riggs told his audience that he has never had an organ lesson, and only limited instruction on the piano. He had obtained much of his musical background by copying a player piano. This talented 22-year-old artist has certainly done a lot of listening and watching, followed by much practicing at an organ. He has



Jim Riggs at the Bella Roma 3/15 Wurlitzer, Martinez, California.

been playing for Bella Roma Pizza at Concord and Martinez since last November.

Heard during open console time were Warren White, Florence Lydon, Bill Taylor and Pat Patterson, who had enough courage to work around the dud or mis-labelled stop tabs.

JIM DUNBAR AND
FLORENCE LYDON

NORTH TEXAS

It's been a hard winter with severe weather, including several ice storms, forcing postponement of some of our meetings, but that hasn't affected chapter activities too seriously. We've had two good pieces of publicity stimulating interest in the theatre organ in our area. Jim Peterson has appeared on one of our local TV stations in a documentary discussing theatre organ history and construction. He was shown at his shop commenting on various phases of theatre organ activity and displaying various parts and equipment involved in his work. Jim was the ramrod behind our acquisition of the Loew's Wonder Morton from Jersey City. With

programs like that TV show and the organ installation projects he's involved in, plus his active interest in ATOS and our local chapter (of which he's a past chairman) it's easy to see why Jim is developing a national reputation as a real authority on theatre organs and what makes them speak the way they do.

Lew Williams is another chapter member who has been doing his share of spreading the word about theatre organs. Lew was a guest on radio station KERA in Dallas and talked about theatre organ history and potentialities. Along with his commentary during the interview Lew presented several excellent examples of theatre organ music beginning with some good Jesse Crawford oldies and ending with Lew himself playing John Beck's El Paso Plaza Wurlitzer in John's home. It was a good program and stimulated theatre organ activity in our area. Incidentally, before his recent sad demise, (see John Beck obituary in Feb./March THEATRE ORGAN) John stipulated that the chapter could continue to meet at the organ room in his home and advised his heirs to work with the chapter in so doing. John donated his body to medical science and his organ installation remains as a fine memorial to a real theatre organ enthusiast.

The ice storms we mentioned earlier resulted in the postponement of our February meeting at the Gordon Wright residence. This turned out to be an important session with election of officers for the coming year and detailed discussion of Wonder Morton plans and progress. Our 1979-1980 officers are as follows: Richard Nichols, chairman; Lew Williams, 1st vice chairman; Neil Grower, 2nd vice chairman; and Lorena McKee, secretary; Robert

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McGillivray, treasurer.

Chairman Richard Nichols then began a discussion on the plans and programming for the refurbishing and installation of the Wonder Morton. It was apparent from Richard's comments that the organ committee had really been doing its homework. A trip was made to the storage warehouse the weekend before, and all possible items inventoried with pictures of them for the record. Richard outlined the organizational setup for the organ installation. The entire project was spelled out in a very professional manner, with Jim Peterson as the main technical guide, and various other chapter people serving as parts and procurement officer, finance officer, work sessions leaders and coordinators, instructors in various crafts and phases of the project, architectural officer (for planning chambers, etc. in the auditorium where the Morton is to be installed) and a project director to serve as coordinator for the whole program. With this planned program a lot of the fiscal, administrative, procurement and other detail has been lifted from Jim Peterson's shoulders and he is thus free to devote his attention to the technical aspects of the whole refurbishing and installation program. With the program outlined by Richard, the project should proceed very well. Three work locations have been established, namely Jim Peterson's Fort Worth shops, Gordon Wright's shop at his home in Dallas and the shop at Gene Powell's Organ World in Garland. Planning is under way to establish work times, teams and training programs for all interested chapter members. With the publicity mentioned earlier and the discussion of the Wonder Morton among chapter members, our membership has increased con-

siderably and it looks like there will be plenty of manpower (and womanpower, too) available for the project.

Gordon Wright then presented some slide pictures and pertinent information on what theatre organ building involved, with a stereo tape of Lee Erwin at the Kings Theatre Wonder Morton in Brooklyn providing background music. The console for our Wonder Morton weighs only 2600 pounds. It should be fun moving that into place and developing a suitable lift, if a lift is possible in the organ's final home.

After adjournment it was open console at the Wright's Rodgers, while Gordon took groups of members up to the organ chambers where he is installing his own 20-rank Wurlitzer. These tours with Gordon helped many of the members not familiar with the construction aspects of theatre organs see what they were getting into in the rebuilding and installation of our pride and joy, the Wonder Morton.

Hopefully, as we get into spring, the weather, available time, materials and willing workers will permit us to move the North Texas Chapter's Wonder Morton a long way down the road toward completion.

JOE KOSKI

OHIO VALLEY

The chapter is now in show business on a regular basis. To bring everyone up to date, our Wurlitzer, originally from the RKO Albee Theatre in Cincinnati, is now installed in the Emery Theatre, a downtown auditorium owned by the University of Cincinnati. (For more details on the installation, see THEATRE ORGAN, June/July, 1976, pages 17-19.) Thanks to generous gifts to both the university and the chapter from

members Mr. and Mrs. John J. Strader, Emery is now completely equipped for 16 and 35 mm film projection of the highest quality. At Emery we have the largest flying screen in Ohio. It can be lowered for pictures and raised electrically for storage, stage productions and organ-only shows. Once all this marvelous equipment was installed, it seemed a shame not to use it. So, beginning late last summer we turned Emery into a classic movie house. Whenever Emery is not booked for another attraction, which is most of the time, we offer classic films on Friday and Saturday evenings and Sundays continuous from 2 p.m. Since we *are* a theatre organ society, the mighty Wurlitzer doesn't sit idle at these shows. There is an organ interlude between film showings and a mini-concert featuring the organ and spotlighted organist just prior to the start of the film. The organ is also played for a half hour after the doors open before the first show each day. In this way, we have exposed many people to the theatre organ who would not think of coming to a silent film show or organ concert. Attendance at our films is growing and we have a small core of customers who come each week. Admissions are low — usually \$2.00 or less. The theatre staff is made up entirely of chapter volunteers. Film booking and projection are handled by honorary member Fred Baum, a former theatre operator. He is ably assisted in projection and house management and operation by Ken Aultz. Organists at the shows are Marilyn Libbin, Herb Wottle, Glenn Merriam, Jim McCormick, Jack Tarr, Henry Garcia and Allen Ross. At this writing, Marilyn usually plays on Friday and Saturday nights with the others handling Sundays and occasional Fridays and Satur-

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days. Both Marilyn and Glenn have been the subjects of newspaper feature articles. People who come to the films are often surprised to find that we are actually a noncommercial, nonprofit organization and that everyone working there is a volunteer. Upcoming programs are on a recorded announcement on our office telephone. If you're going to be in Cincinnati, call (513) 721-2741 and find out what we'll be showing.

In the more traditional vein, we presented two organ and silent film feature shows last fall. Gaylord Carter and Dennis James both appeared in benefits, generously contributing their time and talents toward our Emery Theatre Renovation Fund. UC has given us permission to raise money for a much-needed renovation of Emery. While no major work has begun, there have been numerous little (and some not so little) improvements, and our presence and activities there have prevented Emery from becoming another parking lot. We have received support from both the university president and the dean of the College-Conservatory of Music, which controls Emery. Our weekly film series and feature organ shows have greatly increased public awareness of Emery and its potential. After bringing an organ back to life after decades of slumber, we are going to do the same thing with its new theatre-home. We are looking forward to the future and the developments it will bring.

Lee Erwin was in town during October and made a record on our Wurlitzer — the first. It has a "Moon River" (pre-Henry Mancini) theme and is scheduled to be released at our "Moon River Memories" concerts on March 30th and 31st. Lee and a number of other original cast members from the old

WLW radio program will provide an authentic re-creation of the famed "Moon River" in another benefit for Emery. The record will also be available by mail. More details will follow later.

At our January meeting at Emery we were treated to a private organ and piano concert. Marilyn Libbin presented a number of tunes that she plays at the weekly film series and one of our newest members, Heidi James, gave a fine performance at the grand piano. Heidi received a "pink slip" in the form of her new membership card from Jack Strader as she sat down to play. We are happy to have her as a member.

Be sure to look us up if you're passing through Cincinnati. Emery Theatre is located at 1112 Walnut Street at Central Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45210.

MIKE DETROY

OKLAHOMA CITY

Our membership has been growing at each meeting, and we now have 40 members. We started the '79 season with our first meeting at the Civic Center console and an explanation of the console, an organ crawl, and visit to the shops maintained for the chapter by the city, where the "ready-to-install" toy counter was displayed.

Lou Ann Rice played for the Republican State Convention and cued the entire show as if it were an old time silent film. (However, the Republicans were anything but 'silent'.)

Curt Chambers is to bring his Tulsa students to Civic Center on March 23rd for an afternoon of playing and demonstration of the Kilgen.

The Barber Shop Quartet state convention is to be held at Civic Center and Dorothy Hamilton has

been invited to play the organ. The organization is very enthusiastic about the Kilgen and is giving it a great amount of publicity, along with our chapter and its aims, and wants to work with us on a permanent basis.

We have an upcoming annual Arts Festival lasting a week which not only utilizes the Civic Center, but the beautiful plaza in front of the building, with two stages going full blast day and night, with everything from rock to square dancing. One day will be devoted to the organ. Throughout the day, the audience will be invited every fifteen minutes from Greg Robertson and Wendell Boaz's super mobile studio on the plaza. Both are members of our chapter. Six organists will be utilized, each playing for an hour.

Officers elected for the '79 year are: Paul N. Haggard, chairman; Jack MacDonald, 1st vice chairman (program director); Wendell Boaz, treasurer; David Bridges, 2nd vice chairman (special concerts); and Luella Lingenfelter, secretary.

Our chapter needs a bird whistle for the toy counter, the kind that uses oil and has a small ball inside. (We will pay for it.) If you have one, write us.

PAUL N. HAGGARD

OREGON

Our 1979 activities got off to a late start because of snow and ice storms during January. However, on February 17th we were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Hedderly to hear Jack Coxon play their 2/6 Wurlitzer.

As previously reported, this organ started life in a Chicago theatre as a 2/3, with a Flute, String and Diapason. Installed in its present location, Bert has added a Vox, Trumpet and Tibia, bringing it up to a standard

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Jack Coxon, playing Bert Hedderly's Wurlitzer for the Oregon Chapter in February.
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

Style D complement. Also added is a fast-speaking electronic diaphone and toy counter. A room on the main floor serves as the chamber, and speaks directly into the living room. The sound is clear, mellow and never overbearing.

Our artist, Jack Coxon, has an extensive background in theatre pipe organ, starting with practice at the Portland Paramount and Hollywood theatres. He also played professionally at the 4/18 double Wurlitzer in the Egyptian Theatre in Coos Bay, and is now on the Organ Grinder staff. He also helps out at the Oaks Park skate rink as needed.

Jack's program featured cleverly linked song titles: "Somebody Stole My Gal" and "Oh Baby Where Can You Be?" In addition to fine playing, Jack maintains an excellent rapport with his audience. Included in the program were: "If," with complex and beautiful accompaniment, "Hindustan," complete with verse, "Japanese Sandman," "In A Persian Market," and a very lively "Oh, By

Jingo." This was followed by open console.

We are grateful to Bert and Gwen Hedderly for the opportunity to hear and play this lovely little organ.

BUD ABEL

POTOMAC VALLEY

Our December Christmas party meeting was held at the University of Maryland Adult Education Center in College Park, Maryland. Chapter member Earl Sharits provided before and after dinner music. Chapter member Frank Lybolt came up from Norfolk, Virginia, to play for two after-dinner silent films, a Buster Keaton spoof on a blacksmith's apprentice and a Charlie Chaplin spoof on Carmen. The instrument was a rather poorly-maintained Hammond B3 provided for chapter use by the University of Maryland. It was fixed up by a few chapter members for a reasonably good Hammond sound. These same chapter members are working to install a 3/28 Kimball in the 750-seat auditorium at the Adult Education Center. If all goes well, this instrument,



Ardis Sneddon entertains at the Wurlitzer Model 950 electronic organ.

which was originally installed in the Warner Theatre in downtown Washington, D.C. should be playing by 1980. The University Adult Education Center is a complete facility containing housing, banquet and restaurants in a single complex.

The new chapter officers were introduced by Bob Stratton, the outgoing chairman. They are: Lee Prater, chairman; George Johnson, vice chairman; Harold Andrus, treasurer; and Dick Haight, secretary.

On a cold, wet snowy Super Bowl Sunday, our meeting was held at the Campbell Music Company warehouse in Shirlington, Virginia. Chapter member Ardis Sneddon was our artist and she provided a surprising number of guests with a nostalgic program of songs. Ardis played the program on a Wurlitzer, Model 950 with a built-in synthesizer.

A second artist, Campbell Music Co. staffer Dennis Schafer, gave those present a complete change of pace making the Hammond Concord give out with disco and other modern sounds. Dennis also played a Hammond "Porta-B" version of the staple Hammond "B" models. Both artists deserved and got a long and loud round of applause at the conclusion of the concert.

RICHARD R. HAIGHT

PUGET SOUND

Our February meeting took place at the Bellevue Pizza and Pipes, where we were privileged to hear Gregg Smith at the 3/17 Wurlitzer from the Academy of Music in New York City, now completely refurbished and celebrating its second year in this location.

Gregg Smith presented a well-received program of varied repertoire. (He was a part of the resur-



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rection crew of this Wurlitzer.) His first appearance in this field of public pipe organ began when he was 14 years old at the Portland Convention banquet in 1966. Since 1960, he has had pipes in his home. During his program he mentioned that while working on the set-up of this installation, he was at the right place at the right time. When the power was first turned on he played "Moonlight Serenade" as the first number. Ironically, on this particular day, he played it again, with "Sunrise Serenade" as his closing number, since it was the eve of the total eclipse of the sun here in the Northwest.

Open console followed the meeting. Our special appreciation to members Jack and Betty Laffaw who allowed us the privilege of our meeting and concert.

This is the only pipe organ available to the public east of Seattle and has given families with small children, plus school children by the busloads, an opportunity to learn

about the pipe organ and its music.

We know the keeping of a beautiful sounding organ is most important. We of the Puget Sound Chapter are very fortunate that we have Bill Carson, who was not only instrumental in setting up this and many other installations but has been continually on the spot whenever they need voicing and innovations. He was also in on the installation of the big Tacoma Pizza and Pipes, the Seattle Pizza and Pipes and has traveled to California on many occasions to give extra work on the other four Bill Breuer organ installations. While this hobby is time consuming, it is also fun and a challenge for him, he says. Twenty years of unusual experience and learning the voicing of organs and the making of reeds and working with Lee Haggard on the Wurlitzer, has given him the knowledge and expertise. He is a master of gimmicks and odd sounds, all so very necessary with silent movies at these Pizza Parlors. His statement of the differences in the



Bill Carson, organ installer and maintenance expert.

various organs cannot be questioned but they are all his favorites.

Bill recalled the first installation pains of this Bellevue 3/17 Wurlitzer and all the help by Don Myers and Genny Whitting on the relays and anything else that had to be done, plus Gregg and sister Cathy Smith, on relays and shellacking, with his wife, Mary, doing releathering with sons, Howard, Don and Mike pitching in, too. Jack and Betty Laffaw waded into the work, with their two sons, Brian and Brad, and young daughter Joan at the task, and even Grandmother cooking the dinner and bringing it down for the whole gang. There were also many others, but as we all know, it is never possible to acknowledge all who have helped at these installations, or even name them. Each has tremendous pride as they enjoy hearing someone play. The "Now" project is the addition of an unenclosed Bass Tibia. "This," Bill said, "came out of someone's massacre of pipes and pieces and was added to the wall and will further enhance the organ." A large dedication plaque is mounted



Gregg Smith at Bellevue Pizza and Pipes.



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nearby for Bill Carson and his crew and we feel that this is indeed only a token of appreciation we all feel for Bill, who, as a custom engineer, really dedicated himself (and his friends) to our cause so that we may be further enriched by the music of this beautiful white and gold Mighty Wurlitzer. When you are out our way, stop on Highway #405 at Bellevue and N.E. 8th and see and hear something truly worthwhile. Dick Schrum, Tom Cotner and Gregg Smith take turns at the Bellevue Pizza and Pipes, and the Seattle Pizza and Pipes in Seattle, at 85th and Greenwood.

In addition to the activities of our chapter, many of our members attended a concert by the Seattle Home Society at the Haller Lake Club House, where Jonas Nordwall played to a full house at a Rodgers organ and, while not a pipe organ, we who knew him applauded his efforts, and were happy to see him.

Talking about devotion to organ music and those who play, Dick Schrum, of our chapter and Past President (1966-1968) of the ATOS was invited to the Detroit Theater Organ Club to concertize at their 4/34 Wurlitzer located in the Senate Theater. This organ was built for and originally installed in the Fisher Theatre. We call this dedication, because it was 16 degrees below zero when he played there on February 17th.

THELMA R. SMITH

RED RIVER

All spare moments these days (and nights) are being spent at the Fargo Theatre, where we are installing our own three-manual Wurlitzer console and relay, in order to have them ready for our show April 19th. Rob Richards is returning to



Red River members hoist the relay into the north gallery at the Fargo Theatre. (Sonja Carlson Photo)

play a concert and also score the Valentino movie *Son of the Sheik*.

The backstage area and north gallery at the theatre were cleaned by our members to make way for the relay. Much of the wiring has to be done evenings, during regular movie hours, so we have made a temporary 'house' around us, in order to work unobserved by the audience. We have the relay connected to both chambers and tested and we moved the existing 2-manual Wurlitzer console off our lift and to the left side of the orchestra pit, where it was originally placed. Our console now sits on the lift and is re-assembled. It was necessary to take the console apart since it wouldn't go through the theatre doors. We should have both consoles playing the same organ (the original 2/7 Style E) later in March. To our knowledge, this will be the only two-console, two-relay setup other than Radio City Music Hall. Lance Johnson has

donated the snappy Post Horn from his residence organ to the chapter and it has been used in the theatre since this January, temporarily playable from the two-manual. A few years ago, we had added a Moller Trumpet, so currently there are nine ranks. We hope to add more of our own ranks as time and money permit. Just after Christmas the gang gathered at the theatre to set up an assembly line in the dressing rooms to re-leather the 8' Violin which was the only manual chest that had not been done out of the original seven ranks. We managed to complete the job in less than four hours.

Since the future of the Fargo Theatre is important to the community as well as to us, we approached the owners about securing historic landmark status and they were agreeable. We authorized Ron Ramsey, an instructor of architecture at North Dakota State University in Fargo, to proceed in having it nominated as a historic place. Mr. Ramsey has had considerable experience in such projects.

After our January business meeting at the home of Jerry Schjelderup, Lance presented a slide show and description of the International Society of Organbuilders Congress which he attended in Amsterdam last September. Then we had an opportunity to see and hear the piano recently restored by Jerry, a cabinet maker, and Craven Nichols, a piano and organ technician. These two men are currently restoring an Ivers & Pond baby grand, discovered under dirt and props backstage at the theatre, for use in the theatre lobby. Jerry is also working on a 2/7 Kimball for installation in his home. The program following our February meeting was provided by Mike Nelson who had a slide show on European organs with an example of each

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on tape. Mike spent a year or so in Vienna studying organ and composition.

SONIA CARLSON

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Our December business meeting was held on November 19th, because of the holidays and members being away from home. We met at Bill and Pricilla Arthur's home, had great food and were entertained by Lenny Baylinson, organist and entertainer who really put out a great program at Bill's Rodgers theatre organ.

Our work crew, headed by Dick Lewis, finished the work on the 3/19 Kimball organ. The chapter gave the Masonic Lodge a Christmas program with Bill Johnston, Bill Arthur and Frank Gandy at the console. We also had a lovely dinner before the concert courtesy of the Rocky Mountain Consistory Lodge.

The Paramount Theatre, now fully refurbished, opened on February 3rd, 1979 with the showing of the original *The Phantom of the Opera* with Bob Castle at the console of the Wurlitzer. On February 21st there was a showing of *The Iron Horse*, sponsored by the National Railway Historical Society. On February 22nd *The White Desert*, filmed in Colorado, was shown with an afternoon and an evening performance. Both of these great films were accompanied by Bob Castle. Needless to say, it was a sellout.

The Organ Grinder Restaurant is officially open here in Denver, Colorado. It really is a thing to behold. According to Peter Wiley, vice president of personnel and marketing, this is the biggest one in their chain and very lavish. The outside is covered with natural wood applied on a slant. The edges of the building are bordered with 10 watt clear theatre



Lenny Baylinson at Bill Arthur's Rodgers.

marquee lights. The interior is also covered with natural wood and the low wattage bulbs are all over the place. A special effects switchboard by the organ console, controls the chamber lights, house lights, silent movie projector, and all of the spots. The organ was installed by their own crew, from Portland, Oregon, headed by Dennis Hedberg. The restaurant is advertised as the home of the world's largest theatre pipe organ. Mr. Hedberg, commented that the organ, as it now stands, is a 4/37 Wurlitzer, circa 1927, and was installed in the Portland Theatre (later called the Paramount) in 1928. (*Editor's Note: The organ was a 4/20 Publix #1, Opus 1831.*) The organ is mostly the original Paramount organ minus the Dulciana, Horn Diapason with various other changes.

The entire solo brass and foundation division is out of the Liberty

Theatre in Portland. The 32' Diaphones are from the Broadway Theatre in New York, except for the low CC which came from Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood. The 16' Tibia in the main chamber is from a Robert Morton church organ.

The Glock and Chrysoglott are off in pitch by 440-435 to make it sound like a giant music box. The Glock is 440 and the Chrysoglott is 435 and it really sounds great.

The 2/6 Wurlitzer we bought from Almosa, Colorado, is in storage right now. As soon as we have Fred Riser's 2/6 Wurlitzer playing, we will start overhauling this one. We have two organizations offering a home for it. Don Wick, technical chairman, is working on this and when it is finalized, we will announce the fortunate organization and where it will be installed.

FRANK R. GANDY

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ST. LOUIS

Members of the St. Louis Chapter and the Metropolitan Organ Club were guests of the South County Ludwig/Aeolian Music Center for the premier showing of the new Kimball K800 "Fascination" theatre organ on January 28th. The organ was set up in the center of the shopping mall and two staff members, Norm Kramer and Gene Sederquist, played music ranging from "Stardust" to "Mickey Mouse." Refreshments and open console on a variety of instruments followed a musical program that demonstrated the versatility of the new organ.

Ice hockey enthusiasts are quite familiar with Norm Kramer's style as he was stadium organist many years for the St. Louis Blues and traveled all over with them from Madison Square Garden to Texas. He was featured in *Sports Illustrated* as a necessary and all-important "seventh player" of the hockey team. Norm at one time purchased a 2/9 Wurlitzer theatre organ from the old Majestic Theatre and worked for six months along with seven girls in an effort to de-install it. Finally, deciding it was too much for him, he sold it to the St. Louis Chapter and the installation of that organ in the Kingsland Theatre is now our pet project.

Former Chairman Ken Iborg hosted our February meeting in his home and played a fast-moving program of show tunes on a two-manual Conn electronic. Ken concluded an outstanding performance with "Mobile Mud" composed in the mid-twenties by Wilbur Robison and this he played in an early theatre organ style using the Tibias for counter melody in a brilliant expression of musical interpretation. Ken's mother decorated two huge cakes for re-



Norm Kramer. Hailed as the seventh player on St. Louis Blues hockey team.



Ken Iborg entertains St. Louis members at his Conn electronic.

freshments and these beautiful creations proved artistic achievement has many facets in the Iborg family.

BILL ANTHONY

SAN DIEGO

The first big event in 1979 for our chapter was the presentation on January 28th of Ramona Sutton Gerhard at our Style D Wurlitzer in the California Theatre. Ramona's varied and well-rounded program brought forth enthusiastic applause from the audience. As always, her selections were tastefully registered and flawlessly executed. A big "thank you" to the dedicated and hard-working organ crew as well as everyone else

who pitched in to make this concert a wonderful success.

Our February membership meeting was held on February 25th in the California Theatre. After a short business meeting, it was time for fellowship and fun with an open console session.

Work is progressing at a steady rate on the six additional ranks being installed on our Style D Wurlitzer. Due to limited resources, our chapter is in need of a regulator and tremulant in order to complete the installation. Eventually, we will also require a 3-manual console to accommodate the additional ranks of pipes. Anyone interested in donating these items is urged to contact the writer, Tim Kreifels, by calling (714) 459-9569. All donations are tax-deductible.

"San Diego Day" promises to be a truly unforgettable experience for those who will be attending the 1979 National Convention. Many members of the San Diego Chapter are working diligently on plans to insure that this segment of the convention will be a highly noteworthy event.

TIM KREIFELS

TOLEDO

Wonderful, wonderful! These words can best describe the Dave Ring concert held January 20th at St. Hedwig's Cultural Center (the old Ohio Theatre) in Toledo. TATOS is very proud that Dave is a member of our society and the restoration chairman for our Marr & Colton project.

Dave's colorful styling, true orchestral arrangements and exact pitch have earned him the name of the Pied Piper of the organ field. He started studying at the tender age of five and for eight years appeared on a very popular weekly radio and TV

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program, *Uncle Jules' Kiddie Carnival*. At age 20, Dave appeared in concert in Phoenix, Arizona, where he also dedicated several church pipe organs. Dave rebuilt the Michigan Theatre pipe organ in Muskegon, Michigan, and assisted in the restoration of the Paramount pipe organ in Phoenix. Besides playing in local night spots and churches, Dave is staff organist for the Family Motor Coach Association of Cincinnati. He is presently engaged in the restoration of the old Eastwood Theatre Barton pipe organ in a residence.

Dave's concert was superb. His soft, mellow tones made him an instant success. He started his concert with a show-stopping arrangement of "Begin the Beguine." His concert brought forth a variety of song styles featuring show biz songs and Hawaiian songs, complete with the sounds of surf and sea gulls. The audience stomped their feet and rhythmic clapping filled the theatre when Dave saluted the neighborhood with several polkas.

The highlight of the evening was Dave's playing of "76 Trombones."

His electronic theatre organ was tied into one rank of the old Rivoli theatre organ, and we got to hear a part of this magnificent organ speak for the first time in many, many moons.

We at TATOS thank our assistant restoration chairman, Art Howard, for working long hours to make this all possible. A very special thanks to Dave Ring who carried on in the old show biz tradition "The Show Must Go On." Dave spent the two weeks before his concert in the hospital, getting out just in time to perform. With courage and performance like this, we know our Marr & Colton will soon be a reality.

ANN MOXLEY



Dave Ring, Toledo's own Pied Piper of the organ field.

SOONER STATE

Our news goes back to include the Christmas party held early in December last year at the home of Bruce and Martha Wilson in rural Claremore. As always, the Wilsons were gracious hosts. The "planned potluck" supper was delicious, the fire was cozy, the decorations were beautiful, and impromptu music on the 2/12 Hillgreen-Lane was delightful. Bruce has sold the Hillgreen-Lane to new member John Price, and plans to replace it with a 3/12 Kimball.

In January we met in Christ Chapel at Oral Roberts University for a Sunday afternoon concert presented by Chad Weirick at the 4/21 Wurplitzer. Special guests attending were Paul Haggard, chairman, and Jack MacDonald, vice chairman, of the Oklahoma City Chapter. Chad's program included many well-known favorites, ranging from "When You Wish Upon a Star" to "How Great Thou Art." We have since learned that he was playing a farewell concert for us, as he has left ORU and returned to his home in Rockford, Illinois.



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The principal business of our February meeting, held in Bill Roberts' piano store, was election of officers for the coming year. Phil Judkins, retiring chairman, presided.

Phil spoke briefly on the accomplishments of the chapter these past few years, pointing out that not only did the chapter itself have a pipe organ of its own, but that there were now seven *other* pipe organs owned by individual members as well. He told of plans to start a series of technical sessions, designed especially to aid those with still-not-installed organs, but open to all interested members. The sessions are to be presented by our own technical experts.

Officers elected for the coming year are Dorothy Smith, chairman; Lee Smith, first vice chairman; Harry Rasmussen, second vice chairman; Bob Weddle, treasurer; and Betty Weddle, secretary. Phil Judkins will serve as program chairman.

Our first priority for the immediate future is to find a home for our 3/10 Robert Morton; second priority is to enlarge our membership. We hope to do both!

The meeting closed with refreshments provided by our host, and open console at the music store's Gulbransen.

DOROTHY SMITH

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

The first meeting of the year was in February at the residence of Lois and Larry Seamands. After a short business meeting, members and their guests were treated to an organ concert by member Ralph Cloos at the Seamands' Conn 650 organ. A fine assortment of well-known classics and organ "oldies" made for a very entertaining program. Open console and a delicious buffet dinner followed the concert.

ALBERT J. BEGANY



Ralph Cloos at the Seamands' Conn 650 organ.

WOLVERINE

Sunday, January 21st found about 35 Wolverine members and friends gathered at the Rochester home of Lawrie and Rosemary Mallet. Although the weather outside was blustery and cold, the atmosphere inside was warm and congenial with lots of hot coffee and refreshments. The Mallets' 3/9 Wicks hybrid was in good voice as several took a turn at the console. The "low pressure" (3" to 8" wind) organ is still under construction as Lawrie continues to make refinements. The instrument began as a tubular pneumatic church organ with straight stop rail console. Wicks later converted it to direct electric action. Lawrie added five ranks, three tuned percussions, and rebuilt the console into a horseshoe style. The organ now utilizes direct electric and electro-pneumatic actions and a recently further rebuilt console with three manuals.

The February meeting was held at the Dearborn residence of Dave Brewer and his mother. Dave's 3/16 "Marr & Barlitzer" was assembled from parts of several organs — some with interesting history. A specially designed high-hat cymbal is one of several of Dave's own unique innovations. The Brass Trumpet and Brass Saxophone are said to have started

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out in the very famous Chicago Theatre. Dave's second Tibia is a Bartolina which was originally in a Bartola Pit Organ.

Our First Saturday Series is continuing at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing under the direction of Scott Smith. In January, we featured Jim Boutell from Detroit and in February, John Putnam of Lansing played

the 3/11 Barton. John usually MC's these productions, but was convinced to apply his playing talents for a change. Both artists were well-received and this program continues to be a great way to keep the public informed about our activities in the theatre organ world.

It looks like a very interesting year. April 22nd will find us at the Detroit



Dave Brewer at the console of his 3/16 "Marr & Barlitzer."
(Ed Corey Photo)



Lawrie and Rosemary Mallett at their 3/9 Wicks.

(Ed Corey Photo)

Theater Organ Club for a party hosted by Wolverine Chairman Ed Corey with Vice Chairman Don Jenks at the 4/34 Wurlitzer; on May 20th we will visit Meadowbrook Hall and its large 3-manual Aeolian with an artist to be announced; and, June 10th will be another visit to John and Louise Rinn's St. Clair home with 2/9 Wurlitzer. If any ATOS members are in our area when we're having a meeting, please feel free to join us. We're always glad to have guests from near and far.

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Beautiful Conn 3-manual, 32 pedal, deluxe theatre organ, Model 650, Walnut. Delray Beach, Florida 33444. Phone: (305) 278-3632.

16' Trombone, 12 pipes with chest \$300. Robert Morton Trumpet 8', 49 pipes \$350. Duane Dennis, Box 249 B, Newark, New York 14513. Phone: 1 (315) 331-4113.

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2/6 Style D Wurlitzer without horn, with Chimes and Chrysoglott, no Toy Counter. Hamilton Square Baptist Church, 1212 Geary Street, San Francisco, California 94109. Telephone: (405) 673-8586.

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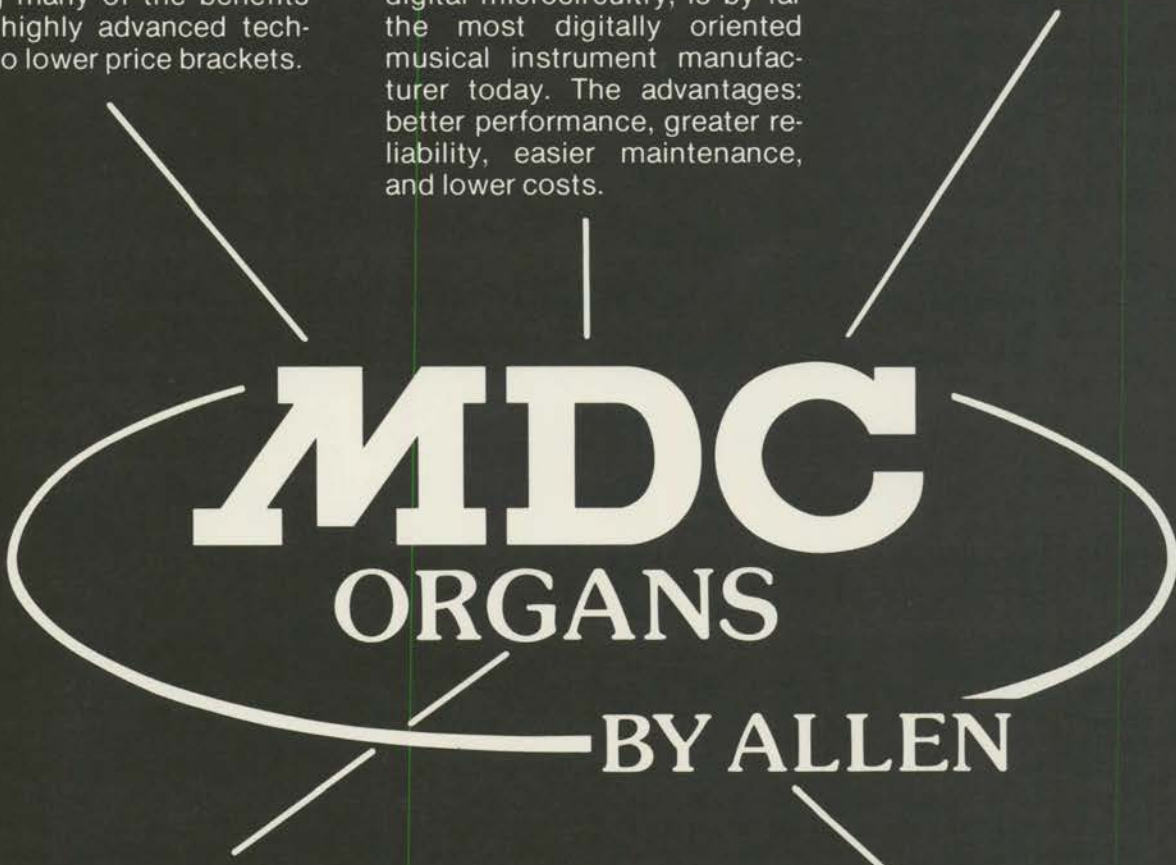
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*PHOTO: John Muri, organist, playing instrument ensemble at the Peachtree Plaza.
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THIS IS A STORY

There once was a dad. Who bought an expensive toy. Mom wanted him to play the tunes they knew when they fell in love! Dad felt like a star. Daughter made a bowl of popcorn. Got out her guitar. And they danced. And sang. And had fun remembering the good ol' days.

Dad even tried some "funky music." It sounded great. He pressed lighted pistons. Hit handsome silver toe studs which instantly changed registrations. He sounded like a million bucks!

You know what? Not one of them played worth beans. But don't say anything. They're having the time of their lives.

Now daughter says she hopes her parents will remember her someday by giving the organ to her. She wants her kids to grow up with music, too.

Sound like a fairy tale? This story could happen to you. Have you considered trading up to a **Rodgers Trio**? Next time you sit down to play, think about the added versatility and excitement that a RODGERS TRIO could bring.

RODGERS. Helping others live happily ever after.

What's your story? Please tell me more. Send literature on the new Trio to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

clip and mail coupon to:
 Director of Marketing, Rodgers Organ Company
 1836 N.W. Couch Street, Portland, Oregon 97209

RODGERS ORGANS