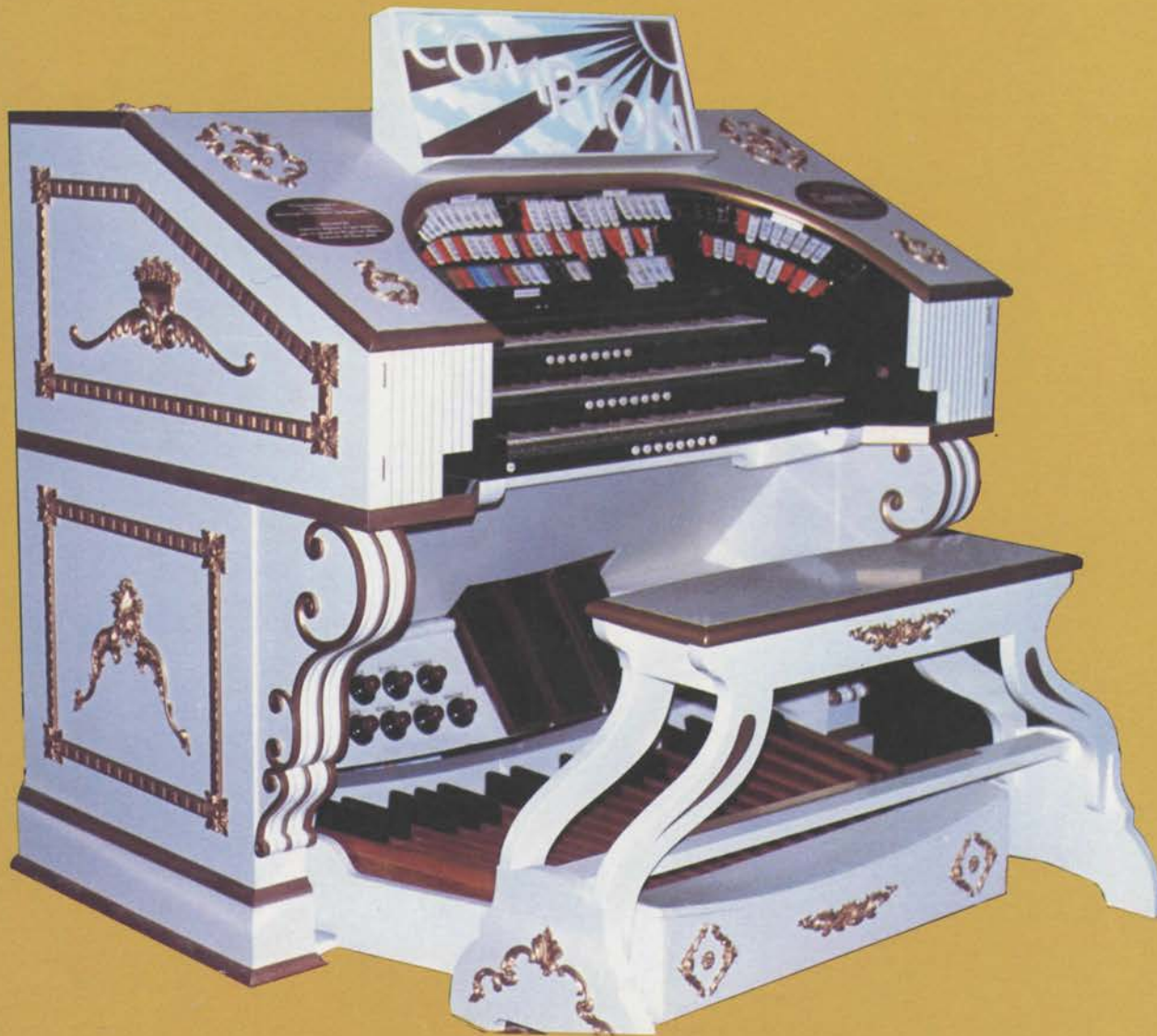


THEATRE ORGAN

November/December 1982

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Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

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Cover Photo

3/8 Compton theatre organ installed in the Memorial Theatre, Ballarat, Victoria, South Australia. See story starting on page five.

American Theatre Organ Society



"PIPE UP! Join the ranks" is the theme we hear as it goes 'round the country. Our fall membership drive got off to a good start in October, and the chapters who are participating all seem to be most enthusiastic. We are indebted to Geoffrey Pater-son for designing the colorful poster and to Bob Gilbert for getting it produced. Our sincere appreciation to Thelma Barclay, chairman of the drive; Rex Koury, hono-rary chairman; Richard Sklenar, promo-tion chairman; and to their many willing committee workers who contributed

ideas. The purpose of this drive is twofold: 1) to get renewals to National before December 31, thereby eliminating the costly postage in mailing back issues and ensuring that you receive your magazines on time, and 2) to create and increase interest in ATOS for prospective members.

The search for a permanent home for our Archives continues. Do you have any suggestions? If so, please share them with us. Let us hear from **you!** If you need a tax deduction before the end of the year, either monetarily or through a gift of materials to the library, keep ATOS in mind! Or, give a membership as a Christmas gift to a dear friend.

It is time for those of you who wish to serve ATOS as a director on the national board to send in your resumes. I can assure you it is a most rewarding feeling to know you are helping promote our society. Please consult the specific instructions elsewhere in this issue.

I wish for you and yours a joyous holiday season, and may the new year to come bring the best of everything.

Lois F. Segur, President

Letter from the Editor . . .



Dear Readers:

Let me begin by quoting some excerpts from two letters I have received:

"I've been looking over the last few issues of THEATRE ORGAN, and I think the name of the publication should be changed to THEATRE ORGAN PEOPLE, because there's mighty little about the former and a lot about the latter.

" . . . considering the abysmal igno-rance of most of us (yours truly included) about the inner works of the theatre or-gans themselves, their care and feeding,

etc., should we have articles on chandeliers?

"So. How about telling us about setting tremms? How are Wurly tremms different from Robert-Morton tremms, if they are? How do regulators work? Some sectional drawings would help. How are pipes voiced? How many varieties of tibia are there, and how to they differ? Are modern adhesives better than old-fashioned hot glue for re-leathering? What is the story on Perflex? How are keys re-bushed? And, for people like Weisenberger to answer, how does the har-monic content of a stop vary as the trem changes the pressure in a cyclic manner? And so on ad infinitum. How does 'Suitable Bass' work?

"Then, there are questions about playing techniques. Shirley Hannum's (I know that's not her name now) articles were great, but all too few.

"Also, when an installation is described, please give us an analysis by chambers. How is it unified and duplexed? What is the stop tablet layout? What is on second touch?

"No, I don't mean that you should leave out the personalities altogether, but keep in mind that many of the members are out in the 'sticks' and don't have the experts to consult. . . . We'd love to learn."

And, "What about blowers? I'd be interested in technical details of design, but even a non-technical organ nut would have some talking points if someone knowledgeable in the field presented an article. For instance, what's peculiar to an organ blower that would be dif-ferent from a blower on a blacksmith's forge? What are the pros and cons of rotary and solid-state converters to get three-phase from single-phase? How have blowers developed through the years? How is the output pressure determined? What about maintenance and lubrication? Does electric power vary much from silence to full or-gan? How can wind noise and mechanical vibration be handled? What about unusual installations?

"What about walls and insulation for chambers, to prevent neighbors' complaints — at minimum cost?

"What about power supplies? The development of solid-state units — history and problems with batteries and generators — how ratings should be estimated — typical current requirements of organ parts.

"And multiplexing and solid-state controls."

I think the writers of these letters deserve an answer, and as the points raised concern many of you, I have chosen this means of replying.

Because our readers cover a wide spectrum of interests in the the-atre organ world, ranging from musicians with little or no technical knowledge to technicians with little knowledge of music, I believe the only acceptable course for THEATRE ORGAN is a balanced content which has something in it to pique the interest of each reader — **inso-far as possible**. Obviously, each issue cannot meet such a standard, but over several issues we should come close to it.

But here is the sticker: THEATRE ORGAN is not a commercial magazine. Those who make up the editorial staff, like the officers and directors of the ATOS, are **unpaid volunteers** who contribute their time and effort to further the work of the Society. We do not pay for the material we publish, nor do we have reporters and photog-raphers to send after the stories we would like to publish. So . . . we have to depend on the members — you — to provide the articles, stories and photographs out of which we make up each issue.

Shortly after I agreed to tackle the job of editor I went after techni-cal articles to improve the balance of the magazine's content. I asked a number of technically knowledgeable people to write individual arti-cles, or series of articles, and they all agreed to do what I asked. In addition, a few qualified persons have volunteered to write such arti-cles. However, thus far I have received nothing.

ATOS and THEATRE ORGAN can only flourish to the degree that each member contributes according to his or her ability. I am not speaking here about money, essential though that is. I mean the physical and mental effort required to produce the magazine and carry out the programs of the Society.

THEATRE ORGAN will become more balanced and more thorough in its coverage of the organ field as soon as **you** supply the material we need to make it so.

Sincerely,
Bob Gilbert, Editor



BALLARAT'S COMPTON

A Triumph After Years of Work !

Compiled by Geoffrey Paterson

from the *Opening Night Program* booklet and an article by Eric Wicks in *VOX* (Journal of TOSA Victoria).

Ballarat, Victoria, is roughly sixty miles west of Melbourne, founded on some of the richest gold mining country in Australia. It has a wonderful climate for growing flowers, begonias in particular, and has been a musical center for the area since the 1860s.

In 1875 an opera house opened, built at a cost of £12,000 for Sir William Clark, one of Victoria's wealthy pastoralists. It was designed by architect George Brown in the traditional nineteenth century European style and opened as the Academy of

Music, later becoming Her Majesty's Theatre.

Ross Thorne in his book *Theatres of Australia* said "This is the oldest operating theatre in Australia. Historically and architecturally speaking, it is probably the most significant theatre in Australia today." While the facade remains in cement-rendered Victorian decorative style, the interior has been modified and a second tier added, but the theatre remains unique and close to its original conception.

Since 1879 it has been the home of the Royal South Street Society and is

the scene of their annual music competition, the Eisteddfod. The society was formed as a young men's debating society; they held their first musical competition in 1891 for voice and pianoforte, drawing 260 competitors. Today more than 30,000 participants appear in the ten-week competitions, with prizes and trophies totalling over \$20,000 (Australian). The Eisteddfod is the largest and most famous in Australia and since 1971 has included an electronic organ section, through the encouragement of the Ballarat Theatre Organ Society, featuring a

Facade of Memorial Theatre, Ballarat.





Hubert Selby and John Atwell, artists on opening night, June 12, 1982.



Interior of the 107-year-old Memorial Theatre, as seen from the stage.

special prize for the competitor with the best theatre organ potential.

The Ballarat Theatre Organ Society was formed in 1970 as an autonomous chapter of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia, Victoria Division. A mere five weeks after the founding meeting the society held its first concert with English organist Vic Hammett presiding. Fundraising events were immediately commenced toward the purchase of a theatre pipe organ, through concerts, social evenings and other functions. With an anonymous donation of \$2000 to add to their funds, the society was able to purchase an English Compton organ from the estate of the late Bill Witt, a

member of TOSA Melbourne, who had shipped it from England in 1971.

A wonderfully successful series of outdoor concerts was held for a period of 11 years from 1971 through 1981, attracting crowds of up to 1400 people and raising nearly \$20,000 in total. These were claimed to be the largest outdoor concerts in Australia, attracting people from various parts of Victoria and interstate. They were held at various locations around Ballarat thanks to a portable sound-shell specially made to fold and fit on a trailer. Called "Organ Music in a Country Garden," "Organ Music at the Old Mill" and, in later years, "Organ Music for the People," these concerts featured well-known theatre organists supported by talented Ballarat artists, including winners of organ sections at the local Eisteddfod.

To stimulate local interest in organ music, a 15-minute "Organ Spot" with notes and comments regarding various theatre organists, by a Ballarat member, was conducted on a weekly basis over the local radio station for a period of seven months.

Funds have come from many other sources, including further anonymous donations, and monies gratefully received from the Victoria Division of TOSA and from the Victoria government.

When the organ was purchased, an agreement was reached with the Royal South Street Society, which had purchased Her Majesty's Theatre in 1965. It seemed the logical place to house Ballarat's first theatre organ, and the first theatre organ installation in any provincial Australian city.

The instrument was originally a 3/6 (7r) Compton installed in the Ritz

Console on lift at stage level, taken from right balcony.



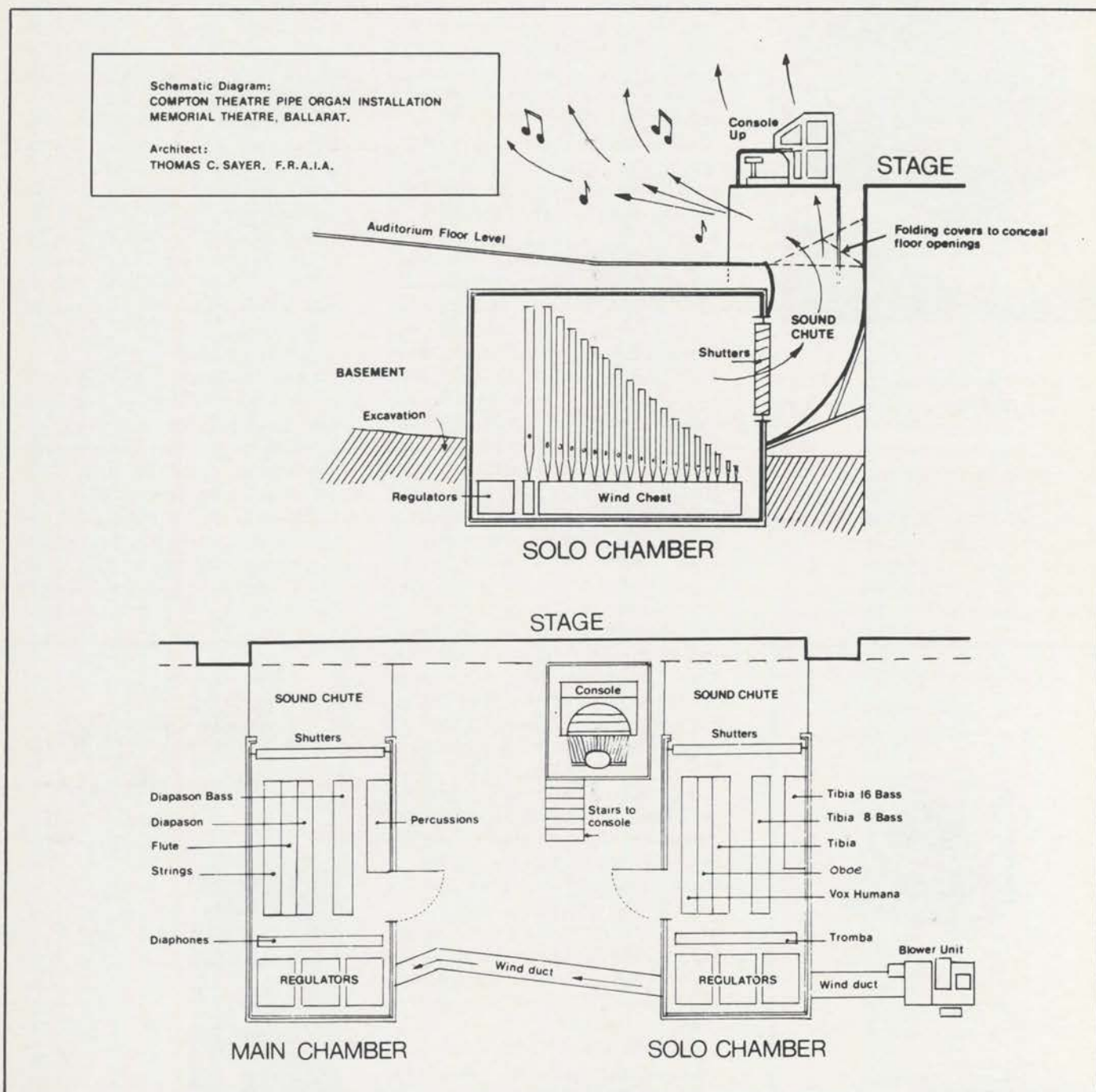
(later ABC) Cinema, Warrington, Lancashire, built by Union Cinemas and opened on August 23, 1937. Though sources differ as to whether it was Harold Ramsay or Alex Taylor who opened the organ, it was played in its heyday by many well-known English organists including Ramsay, Reginald Porter-Brown, Reginald Dixon, George Blackmore and Hubert Selby. The instrument was factory number 379 and is dated on the organ itself 21 May, 1937. The instrument was originally equipped with an illuminated "fruit jelly" surround and one of Compton's unique Melo-

tone units, both of which have since been removed.

Specifications which were suggested by English organist David Shepherd, and added to and detailed by John Atwell, were adopted, and organ builder George Stephens was appointed overseer of the project. Complete plans and details of the whole project were prepared and supervised by the late Tom Sayer.

After several conferences with experts, including visiting English organists, it was decided to install the organ in a unique arrangement of "underground" chambers. The the-

atre was not built to house an organ, and it was impossible to infringe upon the large stage area with special built-in chambers. Fortunately, however, there happened to be a large basement area below the stage front. Therefore it was decided to locate the chambers and other equipment in the basement directly in front of the stage. It was also necessary to build sound chutes to carry the sound from the brick and concrete chambers to the theatre. This in itself is quite unusual, as there are very few theatres in the world that have had chambers built in this position. Most were, and are, situated to





David Johnston tries the Howard seat (modified).

each side of the proscenium, under or upon the stage itself, or on a sub-floor above the proscenium.

As the sound chute openings are directly under the orchestra area, special steel frames and folding timber covers had to be made so that the chutes and console pit can be covered when the orchestra is using the area. To obtain the desired ceiling height of 14 feet in the chambers, the basement

had to be excavated a further six feet.

Another problem was to find a lift which would raise the console from the basement to stage level, a distance of approximately 14 feet. It was decided to use a stationary hydraulic fork lift with a special reconstructed steel frame platform for the console. Access to the console is from the basement, and the lift can be operated from there or from the console.

The design of the understage chambers was the "brain-child" of retired architect Tom Sayer, who made great personal sacrifices to design and supervise a most unusual theatre organ installation. Tom was a great friend of all, and we were all saddened by the fact that Tom left this life on April 28, 1982, the day the first sound was heard from the instrument he had nurtured for so many years.

The Ballarat Theatre Organ Society presented a gala Festival of Music to officially open the Compton on Saturday and Sunday, June 12 and 13, 1982.

A trumpet fanfare hushed the audience of 250 which had gathered from across the continent for the opening concert. Then came the supreme moment as sound filled the theatre, and Hubert Selby brought the white and gold decorated console into view. Now a resident of Perth, Western Australia, he has been playing organ since he was 13. Classical training at Rochester Cathedral and theatre organ study with the great Sidney Torch led him to a career during which he played most of the theatre organs in England on tour with one of the major circuits or as solo organist for the BBC. Founder of the Cinema Organ Society in Great Britain, and for many years its president, Selby was a most appropriate choice to be first in concert on the Ballarat Compton, having played it in its original Ritz, Warrington installation. His program, built on tunes of the thirties and forties, was designed to let the audience hear the full range of the instrument, and included a tribute to Harold Ramsay, who drew up the original specification. Selby was joined by trumpeter Geoffrey Smith and saxophonist Barry Currie in a selection which proved the Compton to be a beautiful accompaniment instrument.

After the interval, Mayor Alf Hancock of Ballarat officially opened the organ, and John Atwell took over the

console for the remainder of the evening. Showing the Compton's ability to adapt to different musical styles, he accompanied soprano Helen Burnham in four songs which made up what for many was the most delightful portion of the evening's program. Atwell, a Ph.D. and research scientist by profession, is a versatile organist at home in both the classical and theatre idioms. Currently accompanist and arranger for the hundred-voice Maroonah Singers, he rendered considerable assistance with his valuable advice regarding the specification of the Compton. The different approaches to registration by Selby and Atwell heightened the audience's enjoyment and interest, of course, as did John's tour of the organ's pipe-work and kitchen.

The value and importance of being able to raise and lower the console was most apparent, enabling the organist to present his solos in full view of his audience but removing the distraction of console lights and swinging legs from the work of a soloist.

The end to a wonderful opening night came with a duet by Hubert and John playing "My Way." Ballarat's Compton was at last a reality.

It was unusual on opening night to see an American Howard seat allied to an English Compton console, and on which the two organists appeared to be perched somewhat uncomfortably. One of the virtues claimed for the Howard seat had been eliminated because the two halves were bolted together and didn't move with the organist's legs as he pedalled, although that probably also eliminated one of

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BALLARAT'S COMPTON STOP LIST

PEDAL

Acoustic Bass	32
Trombone	16
Diaphone	16
Tibia Bass	16
Bourdon	16
Tromba	8
Diapason	8
Tibia	8
Strings	8
Flute	8
Bass Drum Tap F	
Bass Drum Tap P	
Drum Roll	
Snare Drum Roll	
Cymbal Tap	
Cymbal Roll	
Cymbal Crash	
Traps to 2nd Touch	
Accomp. to Pedal	
Great to Pedal	
Solo to Pedal	

EFFECTS TOE PISTONS

Siren	
Auto	
Firebell	
Cymbal Crash	
Snare Drum - 2nd Grand Crash	
Train Whistle	
Police Whistle	
Birds	
Cymbal Roll	

ACCOMPANIMENT

Tromba	8
Diapason	8
Tibia	8
Clarinet	8
Oboe	8
Strings	8
Vox Humana	8
Flute	8
Tromba	4
Octave	4
Tibia	4
Strings	4
Vox Humana	4
Flute	4
Twelfth	2½
Flautina	2
Chrysoglott	
Snare Drum	
Castanets	
Tambourine	
Block	
Sleigh Bells	
Tom Tom	
Sand Block	
Octave Coupler	

TREMULANTS

Tibia	
Diapason	
Tromba, Oboe	
Vox Humana	
Main	

GREAT

Tromba	16
Diaphone	16
Tibia	16
Clarinet TC	16
Strings TC	16
Vox Humana TC	16
Tromba	8
Diapason	8
Tibia	8
Clarinet	8
Oboe	8
Strings	8
Vox Humana	8
Flute	8
Tromba	4
Octave	4
Tibia	4
Strings	4
Flute	4
Tibia Twelfth	2½
Flute Twelfth	2½
Piccolo	2
Fifteenth	2
Flautino	2
Tierce	1½
Xylophone	4
Glockenspiel	4
Orchestra Bells	4
Chimes	4
Sub Octave	
Octave	
Solo to Great	16
Solo to Great	8
Solo to Great Pizz.	8

SOLO

Tromba	16
Diapason	16
Tibia	16
Clarinet TC	16
Tromba	8
Diapason	8
Tibia	8
Clarinet	8
Oboe	8
Strings	8
Vox Humana	8
Tromba	4
Tibia	4
Tibia Twelfth	2½
Piccolo	2
Xylophone	4
Glockenspiel	4
Orchestra Bells	4
Chimes	4
Sub Octave	
Octave	
Unison Off	

ACCOMPANIMENT

2nd TOUCH	
Tromba	8
Diapason	8
Tibia	4
Chimes	
Great to Accomp.	4
Solo to Accomp.	8

EFFECTS TABS

Aeroplane	
Surf	

the seat's alleged vices.

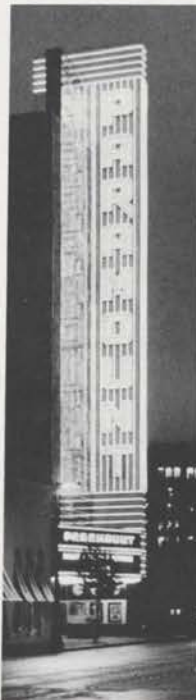
However, for Sunday afternoon's concerts, Cinema North, Melbourne, had come to the rescue with its Christie organ bench, on which Cyril Pearl looked far more comfortable as he rose into view for a happy hour of music played in his popular rhythmic style. A natural musician, completely self-taught, Cyril began as a trombonist with a school band, turned to piano and began a long career playing with dance bands throughout Melbourne and suburbs. His jovial personality and toe-tapping rhythm make him a favorite with audiences everywhere. To please the eye during his concert, he accompanied breaks featuring the girls of the Ballarat Calisthenics Club.

After the interval, David Johnston entertained with a bright program which included a humorous version of the late Vic Hammett's interpretation of "The Village Band." David then took the audience, many of whom were not at opening night, on a tour of the organ. Then came a Chaplin silent, *The Skating Rink*, to show the organ's original purpose, a sing-along, a tribute to the late Tom Sayer with two songs he composed, "Somehow, Sometime, Somewhere," and

"Have a Nice Day." A ballet interlude by the Carol Oliver School completed the afternoon. Johnston has been musical director at Melbourne's Naughty Nineties Music Hall for many years, and is well known in Ballarat as a participant in the society's outdoor concerts and as an adjudica-

tor for the organ sections of the Eisteddfod. As one of the most popular organists in Australia today, his inclusion on the program was a natural choice.

A comment heard on all sides was the wonderful quality of sound that filled the theatre, and the way all the



GEORGE WRIGHT PARAMOUNT ORGAN PREMIERE

Recorded *live* in concert on November 7, 1981, on the occasion of the inaugural of the Wurlitzer pipe organ of the Paramount Theatre of the Performing Arts, Oakland, California, coinciding with the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the theatre.

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ranks came together, blending into a harmonious whole rather than a collection of individual ranks. It was noticeable also that the sound was fine in all parts of the theatre, from the stalls to the "gods." The organists were delighted with the sound at the console. The famous American organist Ashley Miller, who played in concert on August 22, has said: "I haven't played that many Comptons, but the installation at Ballarat was the best one I've played yet."

Many had good reason to be happy on opening night. George Blackman, founding president of the Ballarat Theatre Organ Society, had that night seen and heard the Compton, the purchase of which he negotiated, rise from the pit making beautiful sounds. "This is the happiest night of my life," he said. Warwick Kittson, current Ballarat TOS president, said: "It's been a long time, and we've come a long way since our society was formed."

The past ten years have seen constant work and planning, hundreds of hours spent building chambers and



Cyril Pearl at the Compton on Sunday afternoon, June 13, 1982.

overhauling the organ, and of course that other basic essential of the enterprise — raising the money. To all members of the Ballarat TOS go top marks for having the persistence, zeal and determination to see through such a great project. The addition of

the Ballarat Compton, located between Melbourne and Adelaide, to a circuit which includes organs in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, should make Australian tours for overseas artists a practical, and attractive, possibility. □

GLOCKENSPIEL CELESTE

by Leon Berry

The term "Celeste" is generally thought of as meaning "sharp." I would like to point out that while the effect of a celeste is obtained by tuning one rank of pipes sharp of another, the name itself means "Heavenly," and also that other names have been applied, such as "Unda Maris," which literally means "Waves of the Ocean." At this point I can't resist telling about the time the Hub Rink, where I worked, bought the Wurlitzer from the Bailey Theatre in Buffalo, parts of which were subsequently used to augment the rink organ. Several of the skaters who had become organ "nuts" went along to help dismantle and move the instrument. While one young man was removing a bottom-board from the main chest he noticed the round tag which Wurlitzer always used at this location to identify the cable, and thinking it was an inspection tag remarked, "Unda Maris, what a nice name! I wonder if she still works at the factory?"

The effect produced by tuning a pipe slightly sharp of another is a

"beat," or tremulant, and a sort of three dimensional feeling or depth is achieved. "Increased brilliance" could be said to describe the upper register.

After some preliminary experiments, I tuned a set of Glockenspiels sharp of another set and added them to the organ in my home, and consider the results most gratifying. The set which is tuned sharp is thirty notes beginning at tenor C. Using a Conn Stroboc tuner, I set it sharp enough of A-440 to produce a beat of 4 cps at this lowest note, which is on the slow side for a tremulant but a pleasant undulation nevertheless. Of course, the beat increases in speed with each note until it doubles at each octave, and at 16 cps is no longer an undulation, but a shimmer. If the bells did extend higher than this, I doubt it would be reasonable to continue the tuning on this plan. However, as they follow the tempered scale they are usable alone as well as together with the other set, which incidentally is thirty-seven notes from tenor C.

A Glockenspiel bar may be raised

in pitch by grinding the end of it. It may be lowered by grinding some of the metal away at the middle of the bar on the underneath side. As it can only be checked for accuracy at intervals, it is advisable to practice on a few spare bars to get the feel of it first. Raising the pitch seemed to require more grinding than lowering it, as I recall.

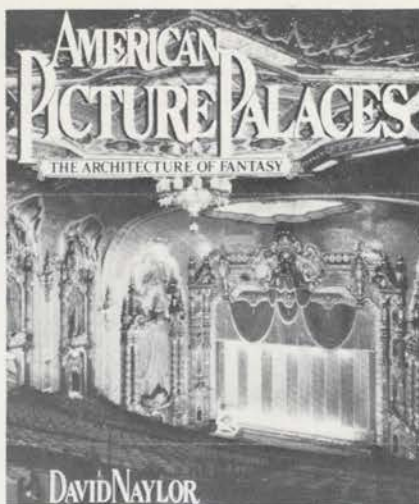
Many tuners, especially on church organs, do not tune a celeste rank to a tempered scale, but adjust each pipe to produce the desired beat with the other rank, which is tempered. Strings, such as a *Viole d'Orchestre*, are the ranks most commonly matched with a celeste rank. A *Dulciana* is generally paired with an *Unda Maris*. However, *Gemshorns* and *Flutes* are often provided with celeste ranks. The name "Harp Celesta" is frequently applied to an organ percussion essentially the same as a "Chrysoglott," but in this case "Celesta" in no way implies that anything is tuned sharp, but does allude to the Heavens. "Chrysoglott," by the way, means "Golden Voice." □

BOOK REVIEW



AMERICAN PICTURE PALACES — THE ARCHITECTURE OF FANTASY by David Naylor. 224 pages. \$29.95 (plus applicable sales taxes). Van Nostrand Reinhold — Mail Order Service, Box 607, Florence, Kentucky 41042.

When Ben Hall's "Best Remaining Seats" was published in 1961, everyone thought that it was the definitive book in its field, the Moving Picture Palaces. However, David Naylor has further researched the subject and the product of his labors is a book which can be the equal if not superior to the Hall volume. "American Picture Palaces" is every bit as informative and educatingly entertaining as BRS.



Though it is predominantly a picture book (283 photos, 69 in striking color), the text concentrates on the evolution and demise of the great temples of the motion picture, the architects and the styles as promulgated by each. The contributions of the leading architects, Thomas Lamb, John Eberson, Rapp & Rapp and C. Howard Crane, are noted, but lesser known designers are given their due also.

The idea emphasized is that the movie ticket buyer, by entering one of these palatial edifices, was introduced to an entirely different world. He may have imagined his being in a garden of the Pharaohs, a temple in the Middle East, or a Pagoda in the Orient. It all added up to a feeling of escape for a couple hours for the tired housewife or the harassed businessman. One wonders if some people, being overwhelmed by the incredible atmosphere, ever saw the movies!

For the theatre organ buff, there are two pictures which highlight his favorite instrument. One shows the Moller console in the San Francisco Fox lobby. The second has Roxy posing at the five-manual keydesk of his three-console Kimball before delivery. There are 32 pictures in the book which show theatre organ consoles. A big share of the photos have never before appeared in print.

For the theatre buff, and for the theatre organ enthusiast, this excellent volume will prove an asset to grace any coffee table, and is a must for any aficionado's library.

LLOYD E. KLOS □

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The Life and Times of ROLAND NUTTRELL

edited by Lloyd E. Klos

When the theatre organ was enjoying its first great era in the twenties and thirties, Baltimore had an organist whose activity was well known. He was Roland C. Nuttrell, and he graciously consented in 1977 to share his musical life with THEATRE ORGAN readers. He was not sure that he could be classed as the leading theatre organist of Baltimore, but "I was Loew's workhorse in the city for many years.

"During the late twenties, through the forties," he said, "I was known as a 'house organist,' whose duties included opening and/or closing the house, playing overtures, stage shows, intermissions, a Sunday half-hour recital before the show began (by law, we could not begin our regular show until 2 p.m.), and playing as a member of the orchestra (on which contract I was included). I also sub-

stituted as soloist between engagements of featured players, or whenever the soloist was not 'available.' In short, a jack-of-all-trades or a 'workhorse.'

"Loew's operated four theatres in the city for some years. They were: Century, Valencia (atop the Century), Stanley and Parkway. They were all fine houses with Wurlitzer organs (except the Stanley, which had a 3/31 Kimball), and with orchestras until the inevitable inroads of sound. The Century and the Stanley retained their orchestras, while the other two went all-sound with occasional use of the organ alone.

"In 1923, at the age of ten, I was enrolled in the men's and boy's choir at Grace and St. Peter's Episcopal Church. A 3/53 Austin had been installed in 1922 and it was considered the last word in modern organ. This

choir experience with accompanying organ was probably the awakening of my interest in music.

"In 1922, the Metropolitan Theatre, operated by Warner Brothers, opened its doors. It was a first-run house for many years and where in 1926, they presented the first Vitaphone program in the city. The management rejoiced in the presentation of a 15-piece concert orchestra and a new Robert-Morton organ, the first real cinema organ installed in Baltimore.

"The organist was John Varney. In future years, our paths were to cross many times to our mutual benefit, since his work paralleled mine in some of Baltimore's first-class theatres. Though older than I by some years, the playing of silent pictures by this fine organist was just about the best I've ever encountered and was a great inspiration to a budding young student.

"Another item which caught my ear in the early twenties was a noon organ recital from WRC in Washington. The organ was located in the Homer L. Kitt studios and was played by George F. Ross, an announcer; Gertrude Smallwood, Parley D. Parkinson and others.

"When Loew's came to Baltimore in 1926 with the purchase of the Century and Parkway theatres, they proceeded to install Wurlitzers and feature them. This was the final incentive. I just had to be able to play one of those one day!

"In the summer of 1926, my parents presented me with the choice of summer camp or enrollment in the fall term of the Peabody Institute's Preparatory School. I chose the latter. The late Bart Wirtz, the head of the cello department agreed, through my father's intercession, to test me for musical aptitude. He gave me my

Mr. Nuttrell at the console in the John Kuczinski residence in 1976.

(Nuttrell collection)



first piano lesson in his Mt. Washington home and it was on this occasion that I discovered middle C.

"Upon entering the Prep, I was assigned to Nevin Fisher for piano instruction. I am greatly indebted to this fine teacher for much patience and inspiration. Theory, notation, rhythm, etc., were taught in classes. Mr. Fisher assigned a piece called 'The Old Fan,' and we went to work. Much difficulty followed, but he assured me that one day 'The Old Fan' would open up for me. It did and I played it from memory at the first student recital in which I ever participated.

"At the conclusion of four years at the Prep, I applied for admittance to the Conservatory as an organ student. Times had begun to get very bad in 1930, almost as bad as my rendering of the 'Moonlight Sonata' which I offered as proof of my dubious ability. The charitable comment by the director was, 'You need more piano.' I was accepted as an organ major and piano minor only, I'm sure, because they needed the money.

"I was assigned to the late Louis Robert, eminent Dutch organist, teacher and recitalist, who was head of the organ department from 1923 to 1938. He really went to work on me. Our first lesson consisted solely of how to position oneself on the bench and the importance of this. He assigned Bach's 'Little Preludes and Fugues,' and so we began.

"At one lesson, the organ in his teaching studio was experiencing generator trouble. It cut in and out with predictable results. Mr. Robert caustically commented that my performance even made the organ object! This great man was very kind to me, considering my musical ignorance. One of his most notable students was the incomparable Virgil Fox, who was graduated in 1932 with all the honors Peabody could bestow.

"My musical ability gradually improved after I received permission to practice on the three-manual Kimball at the Stanley Theatre. While I was in high school I had been permitted to practice on some of the Loew's organs. After joining the musicians union, I played for special shows and personal appearances in any theatre whose organ was not used regularly, but was still playable. I played a kiddie show every Saturday morning at the Stanley in 1931.

"It was at this time that Loew's decided to use the organ as part of the regular program at the Stanley. My father had suffered business reverses, along with most everybody else, and I had to withdraw from the Conservatory. No more money. Luckily, I was at the right place at the right time when Loew's needed someone and I got the job at the Stanley. Now that I had some money, I didn't have the time to return to school!

"The Stanley was a beautiful 3500-seat deluxer with all the trimmings and appointments. The orchestra was composed of many excellent players, some of whom taught at the Conservatory and who could not be taken in by some 'joker' of a guest conductor. The guest-conductor vogue was then in full swing.

"Orchestral musicians are a hard-bitten lot. They are buffeted about by the resident conductor and all the 'guests' who had more friends in the home offices than talent with the baton. It didn't take long to determine whether the conductor was a leader or a follower. He was subtly and cruelly tested by the orchestra, which would lag in tempo or the drummer would double-time a march, and other devices were tried to challenge the leader's ability.

"On one occasion, our exalted guest conductor was running about backstage in search of his striped morning trousers, which had been purloined by a flute player! The or-

chestra elevator was on its way up for the overture, with our flute player serenely sitting on the missing trousers! When we reached stage level, our pompous friend made his entrance from the wings, clad in an oversized pair of work pants, hastily borrowed from a stage hand! He conducted in high dudgeon while the orchestra had trouble playing because of laughter. His one claim to musical fame was a periodic rendering (meaning: to tear apart) of Victor Herbert favorites on his fire-sale violin.

"When the Stanley was taken over by Warner Brothers, I gave a two-week notice and accepted a job with Loew's at the Valencia. As noted before, the Valencia was atop the Century. This unique theatre was done in a Spanish motif with floating clouds and twinkling stars on the ceiling, and other Eberson appointments. It was a 1500-seat house which, when combined with the 3000 downstairs in the Century, made this a real center for fine entertainment. However, there was one difficulty with my new arrangement.

"The new job started during the second week of my notice period at the Stanley, about eight blocks away. In order to appear for all scheduled times in both theatres, I had to negotiate with a colleague to cover for me at the Stanley. I sometimes wondered if folks strolling along the main thoroughfare thought I was a waiter late for work, as I would dash along the

Roland Nuttrell at the Stanley Theatre's 3/31 Kimball in 1932. He began his theatre organ career at this house, playing for kiddie shows in 1931, and then was featured organist for three years. (Nuttrell collection)



street, clad in tuxedo (the standard uniform) in broad daylight! This went on for six days.

"The job at the Valencia lasted only a few months, and then we were transferred downstairs to the Century with its stage band shows, and pit orchestra under the direction of George Wild.

"While there, we had a famous cellist from the New York Capitol who was to conduct and play quartet music as part of his stint. His orchestrations were complete, except for an organ part. I received a guitar score! At the end of the first day's struggle, I obtained the piano part and wrote it out. There was no more trouble until the end of the week when I asked the cello 'virtuoso' to autograph my score. He flew into a rage, and accused me of trying to steal his material for which, he said, he had paid 'thousands of dollars.' I quietly handed him the part and told him to forget it. I heard no more of the incident, or of him.

"We had a sister act in blackface. Part of their routine called for one of them to come down to the console and 'smooch' with me. It was embarrassing and added to the laundry bill, as I also received a lot of lampblack. It got a big laugh, especially from my colleagues.

"On one occasion, our resident conductor, George Wild, thought it would be a great idea to have the spotlight organ soloist play the overture with the orchestra. It was a debacle from the beginning with the organ much too loud and frequently on the wrong page! A conference in the conductor's office later revealed that our soloist saw no point in playing with the orchestra unless he could be heard. The idea of being but one instrument in the ensemble never occurred to him. It was really not his fault. He was an entertainer who used the organ as his medium and he was not an organist. At the same time, I think our conductor was trying to deflate his impossible ego.

"As a result of this, I was reinstated for overtures, a move which produced a decidedly icy response from the organist-entertainer who refused to speak to me for about three weeks!

"I think back on a remark made by one orchestral musician when he observed, 'We don't know what he conducted; we played 'Poet and Peasant.' That seemed to sum up some of

our conceited conductors' and soloists' attitudes.

"During my tour of these theatres, I was privileged to associate with many really fine solo organists. Some of these fellows were well-rounded musicians and included Paul Tompkins, Bob West, Lester Huff (all at the Stanley), and Al Hornig, Harold Ramsay, John Varney and Harvey Hammond at the Century.

"We enjoyed our work during those years. In spite of the problems which inevitably arose, we made good music. Of necessity, we had to be good readers. Time is costly and rehearsals were not always lengthy enough to iron out knotty problems.

"There was the inevitable battle with the bottle. Some of our members patronized a fine hotel bar nearby. One Saturday night during the last show, our drummer and a trombone player were much the worse for their day's activities. The drummer leaned over and pleaded, 'Harry, keep me straight. What's the next cue?' Harry replied, 'Finale.' Thunder arose on the downbeat. It was not finale at all, but a light ballet act! This occurred several times until the situation mercifully straightened out. Thunder and lightning were manifest downstairs after the show. As I was in the pit, I didn't witness it. Several were fired on the spot, and because this conduct was strictly against union rules, trials were held and fines levied.

"Once when I was substitute soloist, we experienced recurring difficulties with the console elevator. It rose to stage level, stopped, and promptly began to descend. A touch of the but-

ton sent it up again. This happened several times before the benighted mechanism stubbornly refused to lower the console from stage level! There was much consternation on the part of the management until an electrician got it down and out of the way of the screen. The gulf between that console platform and the lowered pit seemed like the Atlantic Ocean!

"Probably the most hilarious situation I ever experienced occurred one Saturday night before a capacity audience in the Century. The act on stage was 'Ted Healey and His Three Stooges,' plus his 'trained' bear. As the act progressed, it became increasingly evident that the bear had something on his mind. He failed to respond in the normal way and finally made his intentions completely clear by choosing the exact center of the stage and relieving himself according to the call of nature.

"One could sense surprise, consternation and finally dismay at this unexpected event. Evidently the bear had not responded to his trainer's admonitions before the show. Things quickly degenerated into pandemonium!

"Backstage, for a brief time no one knew quite how to proceed. The electrician finally compounded the error by pushing the main switch, plunging the entire house into complete darkness, except for the brilliant spotlight from the booth. The effect was catastrophic! The house was in a complete uproar, doubled up with laughter. Another stagehand finally closed the curtain and the lights came back on. In the complete backstage confusion, someone opened the curtain only to reveal a stagehand with scoop, trying to clean up the mess!

"To continue the show was impossible. The orchestra members were completely convulsed; further playing was out of the question. Conductor Wild straightened up long enough to give me the cue to 'take it away.' I did, but I was in just as bad a condition as everybody else. They got the screen down and opened up on trailers for coming attractions which I accompanied, somehow. The audience continued to howl all the way into the first reel of the feature.

"Next day, the papers, in the style of 'Variety,' headlined: BEAR IN SHOW AT LOEW'S CENTURY LAYS AN 'EGG.'

"As talking pictures gained in



popularity, pictures got longer and better and the need for stage shows and orchestras diminished. Many pits already displayed potted palms instead of musicians (no pun intended). Orchestras remaining were reduced in size. We no longer rejoiced in a full ensemble with viola, cello, French horn, etc. Woodwind players had to triple on flute, clarinet and saxophone. Microphones were placed before our two remaining violinists, and more organ was demanded for support. At the end, we had reduced from 30 to 11. The featured organists were kept on when the stage shows and pit orchestras were abandoned. I went into radio.

"I was fortunate to have cultivated the acquaintance of a news editor at one of our local radio stations, WCAO, 'The Voice of Baltimore.' Over midnight coffee (five cents a cup), we talked of many things. One idea of his was the possibility of a midnight program of organ music and poetry reading. As I needed a job, I was interested. He made overtures to the station's management, and I interceded with Loew's city manager, William K. Saxton. The idea met approval, and 'Nocturne' went on the air in May 1937 at the Parkway Theatre, and stayed until May 1957, a long period for a locally-originated program. Poetry readings were by Charles Purcell.

"The organ-poetry show was accomplished by remote control. I was at the Parkway organ, while the poetry reader was several miles away in the studio. This was managed by a series of cues not generally detected by our listeners.

"We relied on several devices to broadcast a complete program. One involved transcribed verses. By using subtle musical cues, I would signal the engineer in the studio when it was time for a verse. Engineers are not always musically alert. One of our stalwarts was utterly convinced that as soon as the program hit the air, he was free for a half hour to indulge in his favorite outdoor sport — the shooting of rats with an air rifle!

"I played softly and gave the musical cue — nothing. Another cue — nothing. On to the next number. He suddenly remembered and then it all came through at 78 rpm. They were recorded at 33-1/3! It was awful. I'm firmly convinced that Walt Disney must have heard one of these pro-



At the 2/8 Wurlitzer in Loew's Parkway in 1947. It was on this instrument that Mr. Nuttrel played for the "Nocturne" shows for 20 years. Charles Purcell read poetry. (Nuttrel collection)

grams and got the idea for the voice of Donald, the famous duck!

"At the end of that particular program, he thought it was a big joke. His main concern was that he might have hit several rats that night. After several similar performances and other infractions, he was finally dismissed.

"In 1939, the area in which the Parkway was located experienced a plague of rats. The management did all it could to eliminate the nuisance, but the rodents stayed on. A favorite nesting place was inside the console, and many a night I played the program with my feet up on the bench, or with a garter around each trouser leg!

"When *Gone With the Wind* made one of its periodic visits and the theatre opened at 9 a.m. and closed at 1 a.m., the organ wasn't available. So we went downtown to the old stamping ground, the Century, for a couple of weeks. When the organ acted up and needed attention, we used standby transcriptions of the entire program.

"Throughout the life of the broadcast, I continued to play in the Loew's theatres for any special work needed. We had personal appearances, audience participation broadcasts, etc.

"Al Jolson appeared at the Stanley for Warners, when the orchestra was no longer with us and the pit was filled with potted palms. For the appearance, the pit elevator was to rise somewhat higher than usual. Both pit and

console elevators could be controlled from the backstage switchboard. The pit rose on schedule and continued to rise until no one could see Jolson except the balcony patrons! He was at a loss for words for once in his life! Simultaneously, the console was descending! It was finally straightened out when a regular stagehand took over from a substitute electrician.

"At this time I decided to resume organ study. My teacher was Richard Ross, a Peabody graduate and former student of Louis Robert. Richard had developed into a brilliant concert organist and concertized throughout the country and Europe. He was studying with the noted Joseph Bonnet in Paris when the outbreak of World War II brought him home. It is to Richard Ross that I owe much of my knowledge of the standard organ literature, conducting, choir training and much more. We became fast friends and had many musical and gustatory adventures until his untimely death at the age of 39 in 1954.

"In 1940 I enrolled in the University of Maryland and began the long trek toward acquiring a college education. This was completed in 1947 after many evening classes at U.M. and long summers at Johns Hopkins.

"At the same time I was accepted as a teacher of mathematics and science in the Baltimore Public Schools. A church job was added. With all of this activity, I was getting

five hours of sleep a night and no days off. Many a night I lowered five or six seats in the front row of the theatre in order to get a few winks, only to awaken just in time to slide onto the bench at midnight to begin the program. I also did a lot of sleeping on the all-night street car, the operator arousing me at my destination.

"Some nights when I wasn't too sleepy and needed practice, I'd become engrossed in my work only to find out that my monitor was telling me that I'd been on the air for almost a minute, playing pedal scales!

"In 1953 I resigned from the Church of the Holy Nativity, where I'd been playing for ten years, and accepted a similar position at St. Timothy's Church in Catonsville, Maryland. In 1963 I felt it was time to slow

up some. I resigned the St. Timothy's position and, for the first time in years, had weekends to myself. I didn't play a note until August 1976.

"Then, through the courtesy of the Rector of Grace and St. Peter's Church and with the consent of the regular organist, I received permission to practice on its magnificent 3/53 Austin. The organ had been completely refurbished and revoiced, and had many changes in its speaking registers. It is now one of the largest and finest instruments in the city. In this way, I kept my hands and feet limber, while the responsibility for regular duties and boy-choir training were the domain of the regular parish organist. And so I was back where it all started for me, 54 years ago."

Mr. Nutrell died in 1980. □

Questions and Answers on the Technical Side

by Lance Johnson



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Q. Recently I built a tremolo using the same dimensions as a Wurlitzer tremolo. I cannot even get it to beat with the use of small weights, helper springs or through the adjustment of the slide. What could be wrong? (I made the slot larger in the wind box in order to get a deeper beat.)

A. You must make the wind box slot the exact same size in area as your Wurlitzer model in order for it to operate. The ratio of slot size to plate size is critical. When the slot is too

large air escapes too quickly, so that the plate will jump to the top and stay in the upward position.

Q. I have just purchased a two-manual, ten-rank Wurlitzer and would like to know if the chests should be rewired. It is evident that the wiring was done over by the previous owner and, even though I am not an expert on wiring, it looks very crude. Cables are not strapped down and the soldering looks amateurish. Would you recommend that it be rewired?

A. If the wiring looks amateurish, chances are it was done by an amateur. Your wiring should most certainly be re-done unless you want endless trouble.

Q. I own a large steak house and gambling casino and would like to know if I could install a theatre pipe organ in the dance area, even though the ceiling height is only ten feet. Would there be room for the taller

pipes, etc.? Could I use it for dancing, sing-alongs or just plain entertainment like the pizza parlors? (I want to dump the rock bands.)

A. Unless you want soft dinner music, I would suggest installing it in a room with at least a two-story ceiling with the swell shades on the second floor level. You should visit some of the better pizza parlor installations to ascertain what is involved with a pipe organ installation. It also helps to begin with a large base of working capital, in case it doesn't pan out.

Q. I have a Robert-Morton theatre organ with an annoying problem. When I turn the blower on one note in my 16' Bourdon chest ciphers until the reservoirs are filled. I first suspected that the valve spring had broken or the valve was misaligned. I opened the chest and found neither to be the case. Where do I look next?

A. It seems to me that you have an obstruction in the chest magnet which prevents the armature from seating until full pressure is in the chest. Clean out the magnet recess and try it again.

Lance Johnson, owner of Johnson Organ Company since 1954, builds, repairs and maintains both theatre and classical organs. He also is an accomplished artist on both types, and holds a bachelor of music degree in organ. He is a founding member of the American Institute of Organbuilders, and is chairman of the Red River Chapter of ATOS. □

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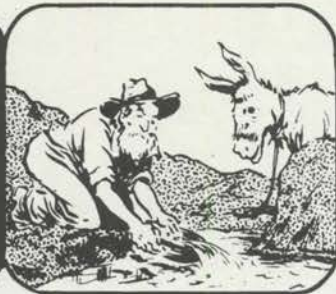
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NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



This time we unearth some nuggets on lesser-known theatre organists. References were *Local Press (LP)*, *Around the Town (ATT)*, and *Motion Picture Almanac (MPA)*.

August 30, 1916 (LP) WILLIAM S. O'BRIEN opened the two-manual Hook & Hastings organ in the 2638-seat Circle Theatre in Indianapolis.

December 1928 (ATT) The patrons of the Fox Palace Theatre in Worcester, Massachusetts really think it worth their while to listen to the magical strains RUSS HENDERSON draws from the organ. He has, during his two-year reign here, established a large following, and broadcasts over WTAG. Previously, he had been featured at some of the houses in Clinton, Massachusetts. He employs solos and novelties which are readily received by the patrons.

December 1928 (ATT) MALCOLM THOMPSON is the featured organist at the Sedgewick Theatre in Mt. Airy, Pennsylvania.

December 1928 (ATT) WENDELL ENGLISH, solo organist at the State Theatre in Toledo, Ohio, does his own arranging and originates novel ideas. English features solos, slides, and novelties, and broadcasts over WSPD, Toledo. He is the only solo organist in the city.

December 1928 (ATT) MILLER SMITH is the solo organist at the Mosque Theatre in Newark, New Jersey. He has been a decided hit since he was first featured there, four years ago. Two of his successful compositions are "I Dream of a Cottage and You," and "A Fantasy." Mr. Smith has devoted three years at the Institute of Musical Art, and is a college graduate from Park, Missouri.

December 1928 (ATT) Although this is JERRY THOMAS' first year in Proctor's Grand Theatre in Albany, New York as solo organist, he has created a large following. He features many novelties and adds to his numbers many original arrangements. He formerly filled a successful engagement in Keeney's Theatre in Elmira, New York.

December 1928 (ATT) EMILE CATRICALA is solo organist at the Lincoln Theatre in Troy, New York where he has been featured for four years. He is well liked and his novelties and slide numbers are a great hit. WILLIAM A. LEEMAY, associate organist, opened the house seven years ago. He is well liked and is a brilliant player.

September 1930 (MPA) EDDIE FORD, who attended the Yale School of Music, is playing at the Colony Theatre in New York. He previously served as organist for 18 months at the Roger Sherman Theatre in New Haven, 14 months in the Publix in Tampa, and the Aztec in San Antonio.

September 1930 (MPA) LEONARD SMITH is solo organist in Chicago's Avalon Theatre. Now in his fifth year for the National Playhouse organization, this graduate of the American Conservatory in Chicago has played the Capitol, Stratford, Highland and Jeffery theatres there. He has

written several compositions, best known of which is "Waltz Caprice."

September 1930 (MPA) EMIL KOEPEL is featured organist at Loew's Park Theatre in Cleveland after ten years in Toronto and other Cleveland theatres. He does feature presentations and novelties.

September 1930 (MPA) HAROLD J. LYON is organist at the Million Dollar State Theatre in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. After attending the University of Pennsylvania and the American Conservatory of Music, he played the Strand and Rialto theatres in Waterloo, Iowa in 1925 and 1926; the Legion Theatre in Marshalltown, Iowa in 1926; went on tour in 1927, and has had several engagements since, including broadcasts.

September 1930 (MPA) WILLIAM H. MEEDER is in his third year as organist at the E. F. Albee Theatre in Brooklyn. He served at the Lyceum Theatre in East Orange, New Jersey in 1921 and 1922, and the Regent Theatre in Elizabeth, New Jersey from 1922 to 1927.

September 1930 (MPA) EDWARD MEIKEL, who has been an organist in midwest theatres for almost 20 years, is the originator of the "Organ Club" style of solo. In 1911, he was playing piano in a storefront nickel show, and then spent ten years with A. H. Blank Enterprises in Davenport, Iowa. For five years, he has been with Balaban & Katz' Uptown, Tivoli and Harding theatres in Chicago.

September 1930 (MPA) MC NEIL SMITH has been solo organist at the Marquette Theatre in Chicago the past four years. He attended Chicago Musical College and has learned much about pipe organs by tinkering with them.

September 1930 (MPA) HAL FRIEDMAN is the featured organist at Netoco's Morton Theatre in Dorchester, Massachusetts. Formerly a violinist, he joined the Netoco chain as organist, being featured in several of its houses.

September 30 (MPA) LEO WEBER is solo organist at Loew's 83rd Street Theatre in New York. He has had tenures in the Salam (Massachusetts) Theatre, the Branford, Stanley, Newark and State theatres in Newark, and Loew's Jersey City.

November 2, 1930 (LP) Loew's Century Theatre announces the return of stage shows, direct from the Capitol Theatre in New York. Featured this week are the Chester Hale girls, the Seven Uyeno Japs, Jans Whalen and June Worth. The show is produced by Arthur Knorr, supervised by Louis K. Sidney, with Allan Rogers as guest master of ceremonies. George Wild directs the concert orchestra and AL HORNIG is the solo organist. On the screen is *A Lady's Morals* with Grace Moore, Wallace Beery and Reginald Denny.

February 21, 1931 (MPH) Since Loew's Great Lakes Theatre in Buffalo shifted its policy on December 26, LLOYD "WILD OSCAR" HILL has been using the "radio" idea in his "everybody-sing" programs.

February 1931 (LP) HUGH E. WILCOX is organist at Fields Corner Theatre in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

November 7, 1931 (MPH) EGON DOUGHERTY, solo organist at Loew's Triboro Theatre in Astoria, Long Island, is resuming community singing.

That should do it 'til next time. So long and Season's Greetings, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

A New England First . . .

PIZZA, PIPES & PANDEMONIUM

by Walter J. Beaupre

The grand opening on September 28 of New England's first pizza/pipes restaurant complete with mighty Wurlitzer was a success story which may well have begun in an iron lung. Once upon a dream . . . Bob Ayrton was a Waterford, Connecticut, building contractor with a lovely wife Esther and a bright future. Then polio struck, and Bob had consider-

able time to think while recuperating in an iron lung. What would he do differently with his life if and when he ever got out of that contraption? When Bob announced to Esther that he thought he would like to play the organ, she said, "Then let's buy one!"

Bob Ayrton wasn't interested in formal lessons — he just wanted to

play. Eventually he found himself playing nightly for 7½ years in the Golden Spur Pancake House where he was also manager. Sure, Bob had heard theatre pipe organs, including a final concert by Rosa Rio on the Crown Theatre instrument in New London, but that was back in '42. As fate would have it, he played his first theatre pipes while visiting in Beaumont, Texas. This was the instrument in the Jefferson Theatre saved by Al Sacker. Bob Ayrton was now hooked on pipes.

Fortunately for Bob and Esther there were others in eastern Connecticut who shared their enthusiasm. One was an accountant named Carlton Swensen, who just happens to be the stepson of the late Stillman Rice. Need more be said? Jack and Pat Lewis of Waterford also decided to take the plunge. For seven long years this courageous quintet dreamed and schemed. They visited pizza/pipe restaurants all over the U.S. They even invested in a 13-rank Wurlitzer.

When the A&P Supermarket in a Groton shopping center became a vacant building, they decided to act. Organist Andy Kasparian was contracted to spearhead the drive. It was soon decided that the 13-ranker probably wouldn't fill the large space effectively. Andy asked his agent and "gal Friday," Margaret Sabo, to scour the country for just the right available instrument.

Opus 1002, a Wurlitzer of 15-17 ranks (the original specs are fuzzy) had first been installed in the State Theatre, Long Beach, California. It was later moved and expanded to



Pandemonium a few weeks before opening. Bob Waldeck on key-holding duty.

(Beaupre photo)

Entrance lobby has old movie house ambiance.

(Beaupre photo)



thirty ranks elsewhere in the state. When its second home was sold the new buyers weren't interested in the organ to serenade an office building or parking lot. Opus 1002-plus was available.

The augmented Wurlitzer was packed into two semi-trailer trucks and shipped east. You guessed it: damage in transit! The metal Diaphone, Ophicleide and 16' strings

were flattened, and the relay box was wrecked beyond reasonable repair. All this arrived at the former A&P late in April, and on May 3 work began. Andy Kasparian was chief of organ operations and Margaret Sabo, Don Wallin and Phil Preston signed on to assist. Lyn Murdoch, from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, soon joined the organ crew, and local telephone engineer Bill Perkins volun-

teered his wiring expertise. Engineer Bob Walton from TRACOR arrived in August, as did Bob Waldeck who works for an aircraft company and is also organist at Faith Lutheran Church in Groton. Early in September Allen Miller took over direction of the organ crew to supervise tonal finishing and work out some of the "bugs."

Bob Ayrton confessed to this



Perkins and Walton wire solid-state relays.

(Beaupre photo)

Manager Bob Ayrton — gleam in his eye?

(Beaupre photo)

Crew chief Kasparian up to his elbows.

(Beaupre photo)



Californian Phil Preston does some off-chest drilling for Trumpets.

(Beaupre photo)

Veteran technician Margaret Sabo proves that a woman's place is in the chambers — under the chests!

(Beaupre photo)



ATOS interviewer that he should have hired a full-time carpenter at the outset. The construction required for adapting a theatre installation to a pizza parlor was unbelievable! The main and solo chambers are completely lined with silver metallic insulation for maximum live acoustics. The organ was rebuilt entirely — down to the screws in the chests.

Steve Schlessing and Don Wallin will alternate as featured artists. Steve, a student of Lyn Larsen, played first in Phoenix and then four years in the Houston Pizza & Pipes. This talented youngster has played SENETOS concerts in Providence and demonstrated his prowess at Eastern Massachusetts open console sessions, so he already has a southern New England following. Don Wallin



Organist-turned-technician Don Wallin does some remedial "reading."

(Beaupre photo)



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started life in Seattle, studied organ with Olympia's Phil Raboin, played the Big Top Pizza in Sacramento for four years and the Pizza Machine in Stockton for 3½ years. If the opening night response to Don is any indication, he'll soon have many fans in southern New England. How did the Wurlitzer sound? With all the percussions and toy counter working along with two Tibias, Open Diapason, Trumpet, Post Horn, Brass Saxophone, Vox Humana, Diaphone and Gamba, the sound was rich, lush, spine-tingling, acoustically very live, and at times overpowering. One wife (who is not precisely what you'd call a theatre organ fan) was heard to say — loudly — "I haven't had so much fun since those beerhalls in Germany!" That says it all.

Will the busy manager of *Pizza, Pipes & Pandemonium*, Bob Ayrton, ever take a turn at the console for paying customers? Modestly he says he'll leave the playing to the professionals, but he had a gleam in his eyes which said, "I wouldn't be too sure about that." □



Youthful U.R.I. Grad Lyn Murdoch rebuilds the chests from scratch — or in this instance, varnish. (Beaupre photo)

Steve Schelling plays one more set for the ATOS camera. Thanks, Steve.

(Beaupre photo)



PRACTICAL DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF PIPE ORGAN CHAMBERS

by Lee Haggart

It must be understood that the suggestions contained herein are the result of many years of experience and are of necessity empirical. No exact formula for design can be given, since the variable factors of even a simple chamber are many and their effect decidedly complex. The usefulness of this article is that of a guide in design, based virtually in its entirety upon the actual tone chamber construction of satisfactory installations, past and present. Organ tone reflection rooms must meet the following requirements:

1. Unusually rigid supporting structure for walls, ceilings and floors.
2. Exceptionally smooth plaster finish, resembling glass as nearly as possible.
3. Rectangular shape, approximate ideal ratio 2:3:5, with avoidance of anything approaching a square form.
4. Grill openings as near to 100% of the largest side of the tone reflection chamber as possible.
5. Adequate cable conduits and power sources.

Now let's examine the above five requirements in detail.

1. Due to the intense sound pressure changes in the enclosure containing a pipe organ, a strain is placed upon the structure of the room itself. Medium or light construction will most likely result in sympathetic vibration of the supporting members and the walls, ceiling and floor. This condition will reduce necessary reflections by absorption of the frequencies causing the unwanted sympathetic vibration. Construction should, therefore, be of solid concrete, heavy hollow tile, or crossbraced wooden studding.

Concrete or concrete and steel construction, in almost any thickness is sufficiently rigid for chamber use. This is not meant to apply to concrete pre-fabricated slabs that are sometimes used as wall partitions between

rooms. These slabs will not vibrate in sympathy with the higher frequencies, but will go into motion as whole units at low frequencies.

Hollow tile blocks when used should be of at least 4" width. Tile is probably the best material for the construction of the tone room. It is easily plastered, forms an extremely rigid wall and offers less transmission of vibration mechanically.

Wooden construction should use studding of at least 2" x 4" stock, strongly crossbraced, spaced on 16" centers as a maximum. The crossbracing is required to limit the possibility of the entire wall vibrating as a unit at a low frequency.

Plasterboards such as "Sheetrock," "Gyplath" and "Buttonboard" make excellent tone chamber wall, ceiling and floor construction. It is heavy enough in itself to resist vibration at middle and high frequencies, but it will respond at low frequencies if not well secured to studding and bracing. When used on floors of tone chambers it is, of course, necessary to install a rough finish floor first.

Metal lath should be securely fixed. In metal lath and plaster rooms, care must be used to support the open centers between the studding by means of wire or wooden bracing. Sympathetic vibration of metal lath often produces a low-pitched, penetrating "buzzing" sound.

Brick construction in any thickness from one brick width is satisfactory.

In all specifications for contractors or builders make it plain that solid, rigid, vibration-proof construction must be used; including one or more of the previously-mentioned materials or equivalents.

Doors or hatches when used must be of heavy construction, preferably with an "ice box" type of lock. The jambs should be lined with felt to

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limit vibration, and if a key-type lock is necessary, a padlock and felted hasp is recommended instead of a bolt or spring-type lock. The doorway must have at least a 42" clear opening to allow the passage of the pipe chests.

2. All pipe organ chamber surfaces should resemble glass surfaces as nearly as possible. Surfaces such as would be presented by glass would be nearly 100% reflective and would therefore be near perfection for tone rooms. A finish known to the trade as "Keen's Cement" is recommended for coating the interior surfaces, walls, ceiling, and where possible, the floor. Keen's Cement presents a surface not unlike that of marble or slate. If this particular plaster is not available, the material used should be of the "hard plaster" type and must be trowelled smooth. The plaster mixture must not contain large-grain sand or any of the many acoustic materials.

Under no circumstances should acoustical tile, acoustic plaster, Celotex or rock wool be used as a pipe organ chamber interior finish. These materials are designed to eliminate reflections and therefore defeat the purpose of the tone reflection chamber. Wooden walls, ceilings and floors may be used, provided care is exercised in making the construction solid. Here again, a smooth finish is essential. Finished tongue-and-groove (T&G) boards with a coating of "hard" Duco or some similar varnish or enamel will contribute to the reflective properties of the wooden surfaces. A hard varnish or enamel upon plaster finishes also aids reflection. "Masonite" and similar board may be used as interior finish. However, it is difficult to keep materials of this type from vibration unless extreme care is exercised in installation.

3. Organ chambers of rectangular form, in a ratio of width, height and length of 2:3:5 have proven most satisfactory. It is realized that each building presents both construction and acoustic problems and often it is not practical to build a rectangular chamber. In such cases, make the design as close to the rectangular as layout will permit. Avoid anything approaching the square in form. The square shape presents extremely difficult acoustic problems and is rarely satisfactory in tonal results. Triangu-

lar forms work moderately well, particularly if the three sides are of rectangular shape, that is, the walls of a triangular chamber should approximate a rectangle in form. Ventilator ducts, water pipes or heating conductors must be vibration-proofed with hair felt or asbestos [not in 1982! -ed.] and should be covered where possible with a finish corresponding to that of the surface of the tone room. Where added cost will permit, it is beneficial, although not essential, that the corners of the tone chamber be "coved."

In particular, it is excellent practice to have the ceiling and wall corners on the grill side of the tone chamber coved. That is, a smooth curved surface extending from all adjacent surfaces to the edge of the grill opening itself.

4. In a tone reflection chamber based on the 2:3:5 ratio, a practical example would be, width 7'0", height 10'6", length 17'6". The largest side 10'6" x 17'6" should not be limited by the grill structure to less than 80% of this value, or approximately 8'3" x 14'0". A tone room limited by a grill of less than the optimum dimensions indicated acts like a Helmholtz Resonator and the opening itself becomes the virtual sound source. This causes severe unevenness in intensity throughout the complete frequency range of the organ.

Consideration must be given also, in calculating the grill opening, to the amount of blocking of the area that will be caused by the ornamental grillwork itself. It is not uncommon for grills to cut down the possible tone

area by 50%.

To grillwork, also, applies the "must" rule regarding solid, rigid construction, with emphasis upon watching for possible vibration of the grillwork as a whole at the low frequencies. Ornamental or display pipework may be used if due care is observed in the use of heavy metal (or wood) in their construction. In considering this, remember that display pipes can easily cover all but 20% of the opening.

It is customary to cover the back of organ grills with some form of screening cloth. Usually, if not warned, the architect or builder will allow the drapery specification to be drawn by the interior decorator. This procedure usually finishes with the openings covered with heavy canvas or velvet drapes. Instances have been noted where, "for acoustic reasons," the decorator has put in hair felt backing upon heavy velour drapes!!! These materials are highly detrimental, as they absorb a wide range of the higher frequencies and cause the organ to sound "tubby" or "overbassed." Light net cloths or "metal cloth" drapes are recommended, as they cause but little loss of any of the organ tones.

Nylon or rayon cloth make excellent grill coverings. They are reasonably opaque to light, yet offer little impediment to sound.

5. All conduit runs for the organ cable; all wind conveyances (plumbing), all convenience outlets, lights and switches for either the console or organ chamber, should be installed by a competent electrician or metalsmith in accordance with local wiring codes.

In each chamber a duplex 115 volt AC outlet is required. The conduit and outlet can be placed anywhere except on the floor. It is preferable to have the entire floor clear. Of course, provision should be made for one or more ceiling lights.

It will be necessary to install a conduit (or Greenfield flex) between the console location and the organ chamber. A 3" conduit with a bend radius of not less than 36" will be required.

In any of the conduits intended for the organ cable the electrician should leave in the conduit run a pull-wire of about #14 AWG galvanized iron, or equivalent.

The wind lines must have all lengthwise seams soldered. All adjustable elbow joints and seams must be sol-

dered completely around the pipe. All "joins" of pipe lengths must be completely soldered. Tinnners and sheet-metal men are notorious for the use of "gunk" plastic to close seams and joints because they make wind conveyances for ventilation systems at low pressure wind. Organ-supply wind at almost any pressure will promptly blow out all of the "gunk" and paper tape and the wind lines will leak like a colander.

The material presented in this article has been condensed from a longer pamphlet written about 25 years ago for distribution to architects and builders. Many successful organ installations have used the principles outlined. Following these suggestions is good insurance for proper sound from your pipe organ. □

For The Records



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

THEATRE ORGAN GREATS.
Aurum deluxe two-record set played by 13 noted organists on nine organs. \$14.95 postpaid from the Music Market, 43 West 61st Street, New York, NY 10023. Include \$1.50 extra for postage.

This two-record set is a collection of representative selections played by





Gaylord Carter and fan.



Ray Bohr.



Ashley Miller.

13 well-known organists. Some qualify as "greats," others still have a way to go. Sharp-eyed readers will note that photos and biogs of 15 organists appear on the jacket. The truth is that two of the advertised organists do not play on these records. Reginald Foort and Richard Liebert are the two missing players. But they are "represented" by two of their arrangements played by other organists. Deceptive merchandising? Not at this point; it's all admitted in footnotes or fine print. But wait!

The jacket notes offer generous biographies of the organists (including the two not heard) and Don Wallace's brief history of the theatre organ is well done. But then the flim-flam starts; there is gross misrepresentation concerning some of the instruments heard and their locations. For example they have Crawford playing a "4/36 Wurlitzer in the NBC Studios, San Francisco." No way! There was a circa 18-rank Wurlitzer in those studios but Crawford never recorded it. Fact: the NBC organ was purchased by Dick Simonton who enlarged it to 36 ranks with a four-manual console and installed the composite in his Toluca Lake, California, home. But even so, that error is academic; Crawford recorded "Smile" on the Whitney Studio Morton in Glendale. Then the jacket has Eddie Dunstedter playing a 4/34 Robert-Morton in the Fox Theatre, Redwood City, California. Never!

The Redwood Morton was a 3/14. It was purchased by Lorin Whitney who built a special recording studio for it in Glendale. He had enlarged it to about 24 ranks at the time Eddie's "Open Your Eyes" was recorded initially. And they tell us Gaylord Carter recorded "The Perfect Song" on "the 3/26 Wurlitzer at Warner Bros. Studios, Burbank." More flim-flam; Warner Bros. once had an organ of 17 or 18 ranks in its Hollywood studio, never Burbank. It was eventually purchased by actor Joe Kearns who built his Hollywood home around it and increased ranks to 26. That's where Carter taped it. There are other similar gaffes in the organ list. We don't know whether they were due to ignorance of facts or purposeful, but with such informed individuals guiding the project as Lee Erwin, Don Wallace and producer Richard Bradley there can be little excuse for putting Rex Koury at the 4/36 Wurlitzer in the



Doreen Chadwick, Gaumont State, Kilburn (Wurlitzer).



Del Castillo.



Ann Leaf.

New York Paramount Theatre when the recording was made in Wichita, nor Don Baker at the 4/34 in the Detroit Fisher Theatre, when the recording was made in the Senate Theater, Detroit. Although in the latter two cases the organs are correctly identified. Just mislocated.

Perhaps we are nitpicking in favor of accuracy, so we'll get to the music. There are two categories of organist presented: (a) living ones, (b) dead ones. The latter are represented by Crawford and Dunstedter (Foort and Liebert are not heard).

Contributing organists and their selections: Don Baker/"Limehouse Blues"; Ray Bohr/"As Time Goes By"; Gaylord Carter/"The Perfect Song"; Del Castillo/"Peanut Vendor"; Doreen Chadwick/"Musetta's Waltz"; Jesse Crawford/"Smile"; Eddie Dunstedter/"Open Your Eyes"; Lee Erwin/"Blue Tango" and "Sherlock Junior"; Rex Koury/



Don Baker.

"Here's That Rainy Day"; Ann Leaf/"Come Dance With Me" and "Inspiration Tango"; Lance Luce/"Summertime" (prize-winning Yamaha arrangement); Ashley Miller/"The Song is You"; and Rosa Rio/"Forgotten Melody."

The organs, other than those already mentioned, are a pleasant cross-



Lance Luce.



Rosa Rio.

section of recording-ready pipes. The most frequently heard here is the 2/12 ATOS-owned hybrid in the New York Carnegie Hall Cinema; Bohr, Miller, Erwin and Luce used it for their contributions. Ann Leaf recorded on Al Erhardt's 3/15 Wurlitzer, and on this recording it sounds good in close-up perspective. Del Castillo does his "Peanut Vendor" on the 4/61 Robert-Morton in the former Elks Club in Los Angeles. Del uses a small weight to hold down a key for



Rex Koury.

the peanut whistle effect, one of his favorite concert tricks. The 4/14 Christie in the Edmonton Regal Theatre (England) is Doreen Chadwick's instrument. Rosa Rio plays the one-time Brooklyn Paramount Wurlitzer.

Some of the tunes were newly recorded while others were borrowed from the archives of record companies, according to jacket credits. All of the recording is first class. It would be difficult to select a favorite from among such a galaxy of stars, but the drive, nuance and expression exhibited by Don Baker during "Limehouse Blues" sticks in our consciousness. Then there's the touching ballad treatment of "Rainy Day" by Rex Koury, and Rosa Rio's brief but lovely caress of Crawford's "Forgotten Melody." But why go on? There's something plus to say about all of these selections.

The review pressings were smooth and well centered (wow free), but one



Lee Erwin.



Jesse Crawford.



Eddie Dunstetter.

side had a low-pitched "thump" through several selections. This can result from a slight warp in the surface. As we have often stated, if there are defects, send 'em back for replacement or refund.

Incidentally, there is a companion book which complements this record set. We have not seen it but it bears the same name as the album. Add \$5.00 to the payment for the records and it will be yours.

The price may seem high for 15 tunes, but when the prospective buyer considers that the fee covers representative playing by 13 star-class musicians on nine fine theatre organs, it makes sense.

TOM GNASTER: TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME. \$8.50 post-paid from Together, 347 W. Hickory St., Chicago Heights, Illinois 60411.

Tom Gnaster is an accomplished musician, and in many facets of the art — organist, pianist, composer, ar-

ranger and conductor. His musical ability extends into both classical and popular fields. He hasn't had the public exposure enjoyed by many a lesser artist, and that's a pity. This album should do much to correct that condition. Incidentally, the album title refers to his dual role here as organist and pianist, thanks to multi-track taping. Tom has put together an interesting program. Outside of one current pop the tune-list consists of standards, one original specialty and one classic. He appears also as pianist on the latter two.

Most of the arrangements are Tom's although he admittedly reads "Nola" from the sheet music. His arranging imagination is delightful. Who but Tom would have the audacity to play "Someday My Prince Will Come" with the shade of Richard Wagner looking over his shoulder! And yet, "A Kiss in the Dark" comes through very well with hardly more embellishment than well-chosen registration to suggest the fabled times of composer Victor Herbert. One of the highlights is his piano and organ treatment of a U.S. folk song. The same combination is heard during Tom's classical selection, a bright and lilting closer. One could never fathom the piano and organ being miles apart. So much for Tom Gnaster.

There's a second gifted man lurking in the wings. Like Tom, he doesn't honk his own horn with a volume commensurate with his contributions. He is Allen Miller and his area of skills cover just about every phase of organ building. The organ is described as a 3/15 Marr & Colton (in the Thomaston, Connecticut, Opera House). The original ten-rank M&C was rescued from the Palace Theatre in Danbury, Connecticut, in 1967 by Connecticut Valley Chapter members. A three-rank Kimball console replaced the missing original when it was installed in the Thomaston auditorium. Lyn Larsen recorded his album "Out of a Dream" on the 3/10. Then a church model M&C was donated and Allen Miller, who had been masterminding the project all along, added five ranks.

But to do this he had to adjust (re-voice) existing and added ranks to work as an ensemble. One result is the excellent string section (four ranks). Miller built new sets of Posthorn and Krumet pipes and fashioned a second Tibia from the church organ Stopped

Diapason. Wind pressure was altered to the new requirements, ranging from 6 (Vox) to 13 (original Tibia) inches of pressure.

The point we are trying to make is that this is no longer a Marr & Colton but an instrument far superior to any M&C in our playing experience (there were four). It should be dubbed "An Allen Miller Special" because of his applied know-how and taste. Let's examine the selections.

"Cheek to Cheek" is the typical console riser, played in a Fred and Ginger dance tempo and with lots of key changes to keep interest high. Get that massed String chorus!

Jacket-note writer Geoff Paterson stated it well when describing the Gnaster treatment of "The Way We Were" — "Strings and Voxes reflect on past loves — nothing is forever, except perhaps, memories." The organ says it to perfection. Exceptional phrasing.

Composer Felix Arndt died three years after writing "Nola" (1915), thus probably depriving us of a wealth of followup novelty tunes. Yet "Nola" (the name of his intended) remains a masterwork of concise and interesting melodic musical turns. Tom plays it from the sheet music for an undiluted dose of Arndt, using some of the organ's fine pitched percussers and Posthorn emphasis among continual registration changes. A definitive "Nola."

This reviewer has had a soft spot in his head for "Garden in the Rain" ever since hearing Maurice Cook play it as part of his slide novelty at a Central New York Loew's house circa 1930. The tantalizing ballad melody is a grabber and Tom milks it for all of its syrupy nuances. Tom is especially assertive with organ Strings and they come to full fruition during "Garden." Gorgeous balladry and the Tibia drips with fresh dewdrops.

During the one-minute-plus rendition of "Button Up Your Overcoat" Tom demonstrates one of the effective applications of the Posthorn — to emulate the riff-brass of the jazz orchestra. He uses it for punctuation much as the danceband orchestrators did with trumpets in the '20s and '30s. Jazzy!

"Berceuse for a Connecticut Yankee" has nothing to do with the Mark Twain fantasy. It's the meanderings of a Chicagoan transplanted to New England, where echoes of the early



Tom Gnaster (1970's photo).

days of the republic still infiltrate the sensitive musical mind. Tom plays two parts, soloing on the Steinway grand and accompanying himself on the organ, then vice versa. It's a contemplative and affectionate 3/4 tempo treatment of "Yankee Doodle" with Chopin overtones. Both organ and piano comment seriously and the depth of Tom Gnaster's musical acumen is aptly stated.

Side Two opens with a somewhat Straussian "Belle of the Ball." Old timers will pick up a reference to "After the Ball" and the classicists may be reminded briefly of Ravel's "La Valse," but it's the big ballroom scene in the best Kostelanetz style which predominates.

Next, a very distinct high point. Who but Tom Gnaster would think of juxtaposing the works of songsmith Frank Churchill and opera composer Richard Wagner! Tom has made a very successful mix of "Someday My Prince Will Come" and the star-crossed "Leibstod" from Wagner's opera, *Tristan und Isolde*. He does this with musical expertise and taste. It's a heartstring tugger to those who can visualize both a popular (*Snow White*) and classical (*Tristan*) romance on the same playbill. At last, *Tristan* with a happy ending!

"Chong, He Comes from Hong Kong" opens with a bong on the 30-inch Zildjian Chinese Gong recently added to the organ. It's 1920s Hollywood oriental with lots of Strings and good rhythmic structure in the Sojin/Anna Mae Wong tradition. The gong is a tintinnabulating beauty.

Phrasing for "A Kiss in the Dark" is said to have been inspired by a Beverly Sills recording. Yet those plentiful mordents in the first chorus

are pure Jesse Crawford — and that ain't bad! The venerable Victor Herbert tune which outlived the short-lived show (*Orange Blossoms*, 1922) is played in the best Herbert ballad tradition, a worthy memory teaser.

Tom again returns to the piano augmented by organ for his finale, "Scherzo from Concerto Symphonique No. 4" by French composer Henry Charles Litolf. Don't let the heavy-sounding title scare you; it's exciting music as played on the piano and organ by Tom Gnaster. One would never guess that the Steinway and organ are actually 70 miles apart! It's a lilting composition with plenty of dynamic range for the hi-fi addict, and imaginative melodic imagery for the average listener who likes to be lifted from his chair by bright musical approaches. A fitting finale to a fine program.

Recording is top drawer. The review pressing was glossy smooth. The disc is packaged in an attractive cover designed by Geoffrey Paterson. Geoff also wrote the extensive jacket notes, which indicate much library research for the music commentary. Each selection is provided with a time and place setting which improves understanding of the music. This is a first-class package.

JERRY. Jerry Nagano at the Reginald Foort 5/28 Moller organ. JCP-1002. \$9.00 postpaid from Jerri-Co Productions, 905 Alfred Place, Montebello, California 90640.

So much has been written about the "BBC/Foort" Moller, we'll try to keep history to a minimum here. It was designed as a massive portable concert organ which was hauled from theatre to theatre in Britain by truck until WWII intervened and it replaced the BBC's Compton (destroyed by a Luftwaffe bomb) in a Wales studio for the duration. It was an important factor in worldwide British troop morale. Later it did a hitch in the BBC's London "Chapel studio." Then it was sold to the Dutch Broadcasting Co. and moved to the Hilversum studio in Holland. After the death of its chief protagonist, Cor Steyn, it fell into disuse. Rescued by enthusiast Sandy Fleet, it was moved to the USA and reconditioned at the Moller factory and shipped west for installation in Sandy's San Diego pizzeria. From there it was purchased

by cosmetics magnate J. B. Nethercutt and donated to the city of Pasadena. It is now housed in that town's civic auditorium, but with a difference.

Its designer, Reginald Foort, specified a compromise — part theatre organ, part romantic concert organ. From long experience we have determined that this rarely works to the advantage of either type of organ; the differences in purpose, tonality and mechanics are too great. In this case the theatrical side suffered. Considerable effort and money had been spent by previous owners to make it sound more theatrical, even to replacing some regulators, tremors and entire ranks of pipes. Results — zilch!

But that was before Dave Junchen got his pipe lovin' mitts on the huge pile of organ parts piled in the auditorium workshop. Dave and his helpers constructed the organ in chambers prepared when the auditorium was designed 50 years ago, but not used until now. The difference we mentioned is that the theatre organ voices now sound theatrical. Gone are the tubby Tibias that pleased no one. Yet no changes or replacement of ranks has taken place. Junchen shrugs off the vast improvement with, "I just played with the tremors a little." Whatever he did he created a treasure for theatre organ fans — while leaving the battery of "straight" organ voices intact! Tricky!

Jerry Nagano is a young man whose star as an organist has been rising ever since he was "discovered" during the LA Chapter-sponsored "Stars of Tomorrow" 1973 competition, as masterminded by Deke Warner. Since then Jerry's concerts have been increasing from coast-to-coast. He is currently staff organist at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium where this album was taped. How does he do it? Hard work plus talent. Of course teachers Gaylord Carter, Tom Hazleton and Gordon Kibbee helped.

One of Jerry's special talents is in the judicious selection of material to record for its entertainment value. Thus we have the current "After the Lovin'" as well as the turn of the century "Napoleon's Last Charge," a Wallery "Ain't Misbehavin'" and Eric Coates' moving "Oxford Street." Let's examine the widely varied program.

"This is It" is a curtain raiser borrowed from a Warner Bros. cartoon.

It is played in fast fox trot tempo, replete with Tibia'd "ooh-hoos" and low buzzy reed honks. Somewhat reminiscent of early George Wright (on HI-FI records), it has a big organ sound and a Welk ending.

"You Go to My Head" is distinguished by a Harry James soaring trumpet solo played on the Chorus Trumpet. It's slow and sensuous.

"Ain't Misbehavin'" solos an irresistible 16' Tibia, Musette and Sax combination during the first sultry chorus. There's some of composer Fats Waller in the arrangement but is mainly Jerry, not a Fats recreation. For some reason Jerry cues in a few bars of "Makin' Whoopee." It's all in slow drag tempo with innuendos close to the composer's intent.

"Napoleon's Last Charge." March composer E. T. Paull, a contemporary of John Philip Sousa, was forever overshadowed by the glamor of the "March King" Marine Band leader. Yet his marches are every bit the high steppers then popular. Paull had one distinguishing characteristic which is puzzling: he always provided dramatic scenerios for his marches, starting with their vivid cover pictures and titles — "A Signal From Mars," "The Midnight Fire Alarm" and "Battle of the Nations." To compound the drama Paull would add pungent notes above the notation at the start of a phrase. For example, in "Battle of the Nations" would appear such lines as "Death in the sunken trench," "The cavalry charges," or "The call for reinforcements." (Note: the above phrases are based on memory; not having seen the notation in over 50 years, we have given approximations.)

The trouble is, there was nothing in the music to suggest the dramatic turns. One rule that Paull (and most march composers) observed was unbroken tempo. So Paull's maddening musical picture of Napoleon at Waterloo has the French army marching stolidly into battle to a cheerful tune, getting the tar beaten out of it, and retreating in disarray — but never once getting out of step. The march tempo never breaks, even for the bugle calls. Well, times were simpler then, and besides it's a fine march. Jerry milks it for what drama he can inject through some thrilling registration changes. We are happy he exhumed this worthy memento of the early twentieth century.



Jerry Nagano.

"Down by the Riverside" is a classic framework for jazz improvisation. Jerry first establishes his theme then goes into a buzzy brass takeoff with many flatted third blues implications and then jazz effects fill the rides, some of which we've heard before. It's all done at a fast clip and the results are ear-pleasing.

"There's a Trick to Pickin' a Chick-Chick-Chicken" is played in solid 1927 fox trot tempo (the year of its publication). The whistling chorus with a Crawford "ooh-hoo" is especially appealing. Good long-ago entertainment without sounding dated, and no eggs are laid.

"After the Lovin'" again features that sharp Chorus Trumpet with molto charisma. The medium tempo is suited also to the well-quinted full combinations which follow plus some burnished brass ensemble. Nicely phrased, it's the only current tune in these grooves.

Jerry tells us that the second chorus of "Let's Get Away From it All" is in the George Shearing style, and he makes his point with spare registration and the Shearing upbeat tempo.

That long-ago Bing Crosby charmer, "Moonlight Becomes You," is given the lush treatment, using the juiciest combinations available from the instrument's three Tibias and the Vox. Tres Sexy — and on a Moller yet (thanks, Mr. Junchen!).

For some reason composer Eric Coates' music is largely ignored by both his countrymen and USA organists, although his descriptive orchestral music is admirably suited to organ transcription. All we hear of

Coates is his vivid but over-programmed "Knightsbridge March." Leave it to Jerry's perspicacity to dig out another gem — "Oxford Street" from the *London Again Suite* (1936). It's a lively scherzo describing the hustle and bustle of London's Oxford Street shopping area. Except for a couple of minor melody alterations, Jerry remains true to the composer's notation, and certainly to his intent in picturing a lively pre-WWII scene in London. Now that Coates has been discovered, how about his enchanting "Cinderella" Suite, recording organists? Any takers?

Recording is excellent. There is ample stereo separation. As for the review pressing, it was slightly warped but not enough to cause an audible "thump" or throw the pickup, at least during review playings. Jacket notes are adequate but lack the detailed info about the music featured on his previous album, *Meet Jerry Nagano*, which we understand is still available. The cover shows a slightly transmogrified "fish eye" view of the five-deck console and its four rows of stopkeys.

This one is a real goodie. We recommend it both for instrument and player.

THE CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS.

John Rose playing the 4/140 concert organ in the Cathedral of St. Joseph, Hartford, Connecticut. Towerhill No. T-1009. Available in stores at \$8.98 or from Towerhill Records, 6000 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, California 90028, in which case include \$1.50 additional to cover postage and packaging.

The time to be jolly always results in a flurry of recorded holiday music, most of it consisting of the same carols one tires of quickly via radio broadcasts. Therefore we have selected one to whet jaded musical appetites. True, the tunelist includes many of the old chestnuts but with a difference — the arrangements.

John Rose is no stranger to this column, despite the fact that he records on a huge romantic church organ in a very live acoustical environment. Nothing theatrical here. We have reviewed his *Star Wars* release played on this same instrument, also his *Introduction to the King of Instruments* album. In both cases Rose was aided and abetted by the arranging skills of

Robert Edward Smith. While serious composer Smith may have been somewhat uneasy in handling the very theatrical *Star Wars* score, he is right at home scoring traditional carols to provide an appeal which some listeners may find lacking in the basic selections. He has arranged 12 of the 14 carols, and in a manner which enhances them for the benefit of the jaded listener. This album might well be titled *Christmas Music for People Who Are Tired of Christmas Music*. It will require many hearings to absorb all the musical values Rose and Smith have provided here. Incidentally, the 4/140 Austin sounds just as magnificent as it did on the previously reviewed albums. It has plenty of striking solo reeds and a big romantic Diapason-dominated ensemble sound. In addition to the organ, Smith has scored some of the carols also for Harp and Percussions. We recall complaining in the *Star Wars*



John Rose.

review that the St. Joseph organ lacked the percussions required for that film score. Well, Rose has 'em now, albeit external to the organ, both pitched and non-tonal. The Tympani are strikingly used, as are the various Xylophones, Bells and Harp. It would all be so much simpler if Rose would play Smith's dramatic scoring on a theatre organ!

Selections: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing," "Pastoral Dance" (Milford), "Carol of the Bells," "From Heaven High I Come to You," "All This Night My Heart Rejoices," "We Three Kings," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "Joy to the World," "I Saw Three Ships," "Angels We Have Heard on High," "O Little Town of



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

MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MARCH 1, 1983

It is time to nominate candidates for the National ATOS Board of Directors for the three-year term and the two-year term from July 1983 through June 1986. (See special notice below.)

All regular members of the Society are eligible for nomination, and may nominate themselves or be nominated by others. Written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received before the nominee's name can be placed on the ballot. In addition, each nominee shall furnish a small black and white photo of him/herself, together with a brief autobiography which should include personal data, work and theatre organ experience, and a short platform statement.

Bethlehem," "Away in a Manager," "Good Christian Men Rejoice," "What Child is This" (Greensleeves), "Silent Night."

Note that there is a wealth of not overly familiar titles here as well as the old favorites. The performance is first rate and the arrangements include such surprises as an off-mike female voice carrying a brief but lovely counter melody during "Silent Night." Although he isn't credited we suspect that Towerhill's president, Michael Nemo did the recording: he knows the instrument and hall from experience. It's very good recording, especially considering the liveness of the church. Jacket notes are adequate and aimed at the uninitiated fan who can still get a kick from learning that the CCCC grunter is more than 37 feet long. The fine color console photo was shot by Michael Nemo. Surface of the review pressing was glassy smooth with not a trace of warp. This one is well worth owning — and giving.

Price change on record reviewed in the July/August issue:

ORGAN FANTASIA: LYN LARSEN. MCI - 103 stereo. \$8.75 post-paid from Musical Contrasts, Inc., 415 South Main Street, Royal Oak, Michigan 48067.

The price on this album was increased after the review copy was sent to THEATRE ORGAN.

SPECIAL NOTICE

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

Section 4.4 ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE

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

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

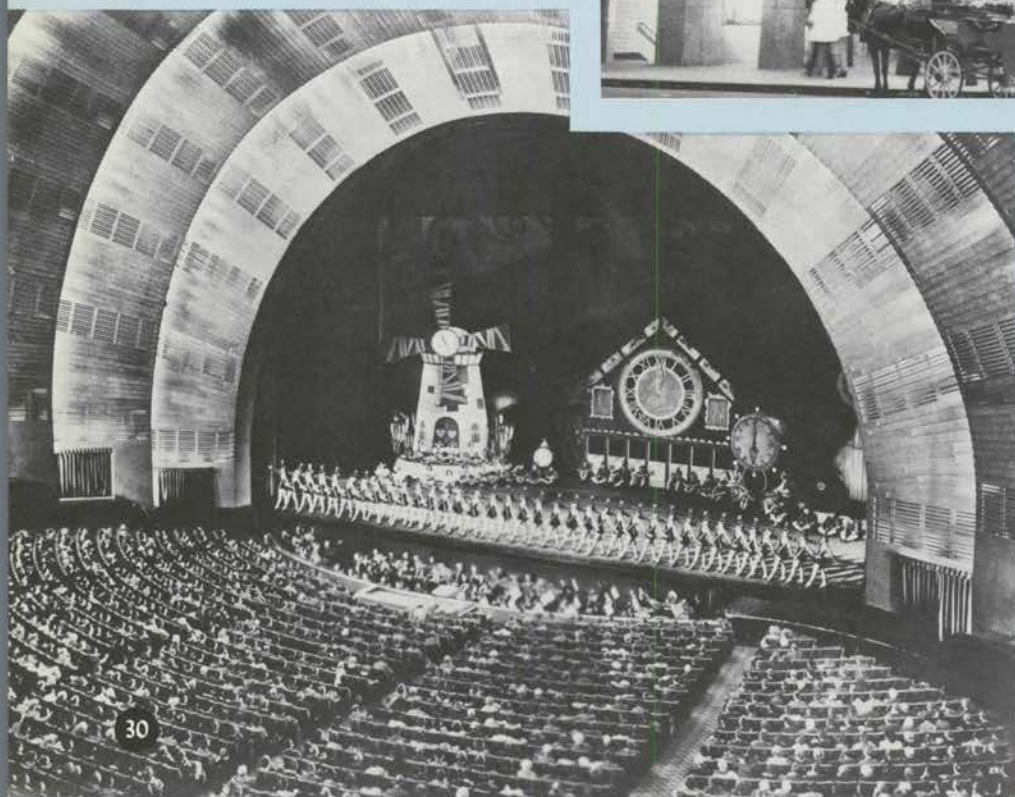
(ii) At the second election following adoption of these Bylaws, the three (3) Directors receiving the highest number of votes who are elected at the annual meeting or by written ballot shall each hold office for an initial term of three (3) years; and the one (1) Director receiving the fourth highest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

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

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL MARKS 50th BIRTHDAY

Right: Exterior of the Music Hall. Photo taken in October 1972.

Below: Interior of the Music Hall, showing a typical stage show of years past, with the 36 Rockettes in one of their precision routines. Between the first row center seats and the orchestra is the booth containing the light control console, from which all the stage and house lights are controlled.



Many Happy Returns!

The Music Hall opened December 27, 1932. The opening show ran for more than four hours with no movie, just spectacle after spectacle on the stage. At the twin consoles of the mighty 4/58 Wurlitzer were Dr. C. A. J. Parmentier and Dick Leibert. Erno Rapee conducted the symphony orchestra in the pit.

Until very recently, the Music Hall maintained a policy of first-rate films and spectacular stage shows, and the organ was a part of every show. The theatre now is used for a variety of shows and concerts. Only special films, such as *Napoleon*, are shown. In March the Gershwin opera *Porgy*

and *Bess* will open for a four-week run. The famous Easter and Christmas shows are presented as always, and the Rockettes are still doing their precision dance routines.

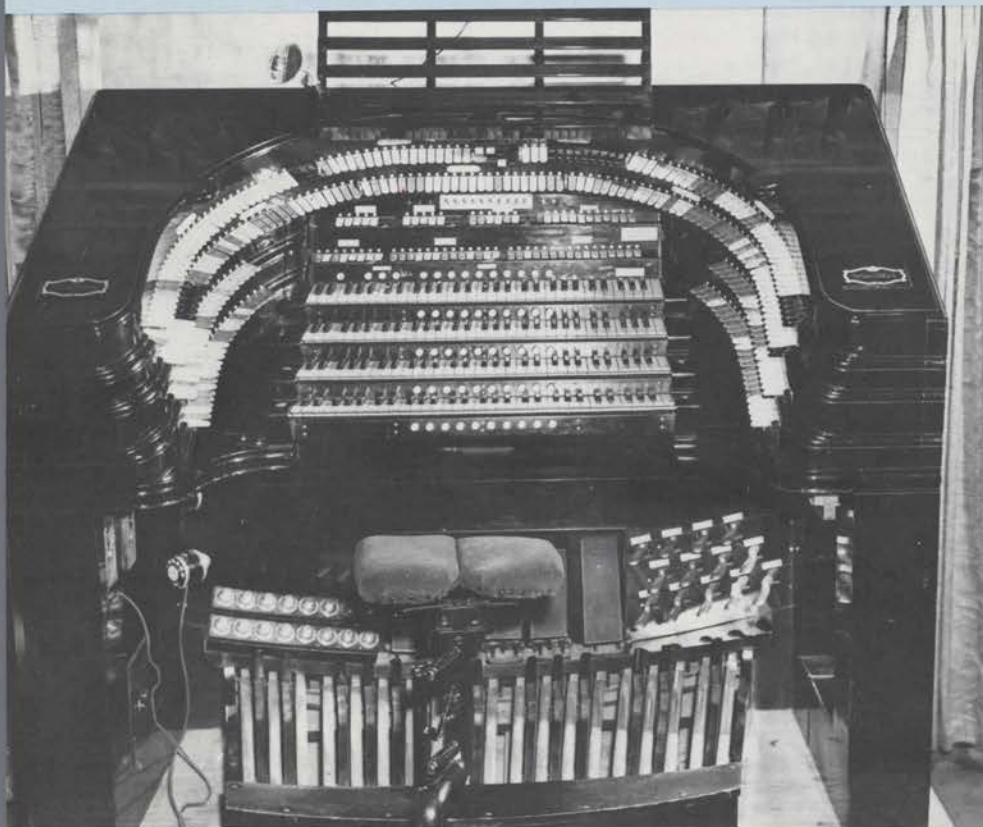
With Dick Leibert as Chief Organist for forty years, starting on opening day, many well known artists played there during the years. Ray Bohr was

second in length of service with 32 years. Jack Ward was a staff organist for 16 years, and Ashley Miller played for seven years. Deszo Von D'Antalfy, Alexander Richardson, Jimmy Rich, Dr. Edward Bebko (Eddie Baker), James Paulin, Betty Gould, Mildred Alexander, John Detroy and Rob Calcaterra have also played the



Cass Parmentier, Ray Bohr and Leroy Lewis discuss the Salute to Ray Bohr held at the Radio City Music Hall November 10, 1974, celebrating Ray's 27th anniversary at the Music Hall. (Victor Parmentier photo)

One of the twin consoles of the Music Hall organ. When the organ was installed in 1932, Wurlitzer had developed a console with simple lines, omitting the ornamentation usually found on their theatre instruments.



An unusual view of the left-side (prompt) console in roll-out position. While the organists generally prefer to reach the console through the stage curtains, backstage access is available through the square opening under the right stopjamb, necessitating a crawl across the pedalboard. (Geoffrey Paterson photo)

RCMH Wurlitzer.

The Music Hall is now operated by Radio City Music Hall Productions, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Rockefeller Center. When the change in management occurred the position of staff organist was eliminated, and organists are now engaged for specific shows. During the showings of *Napoleon* Leonard Raver and Frederick Swann were the console artists. For the 1982 Christmas show the organists will be Robert MacDonald and George Wesner III.

Schantz is under contract to maintain the organ, and their representative, Ron Bishop, is Director of Pipe Organ Maintenance Services at the Music Hall. Ray Bohr is associated with Ron, and Lance Johnson is a consultant in a program of continuing renovation of the venerable instrument. No changes have been made or are contemplated; it is maintained exactly as it was installed, with much TLC. When needed parts cannot be obtained they are manufactured on the premises in the organ maintenance shop.

Unlike other twin-console organs, the two consoles of the Music Hall Wurlitzer are identical, fully operational in every respect. Each console has its own 73-note relay. The instrument can be played from either, or from both simultaneously.

In terms of hours of use, the RCMH Mighty Wurlitzer has undoubtedly seen more service than any other organ. Long may she and the Music Hall continue to thrill the public! □

THE PARAMOUNT SOUND

by Dolton McAlpin

The Paramount Theatre in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, is no more. The venerable old theatre, opened in 1920, was razed in 1979 to make way for (you guessed it!) a parking lot. While the heroic efforts of Tom Mitchell, former manager of the house, and other Baton Rouge citizens to save the building from demolition were unsuccessful, a Jackson, Mississippi, couple have rescued the Robert-Morton pipe organ from a similar fate. The North Jackson residence of Tippy and Bob Garner has become the permanent home of the six-rank Morton.

Stories about the Baton Rouge Paramount and its Robert-Morton have appeared in these pages over the years. The organ was installed in 1928 as opus 2412, one of literally hundreds of similar two-manual, six-rank organs which Robert-Morton produced at their Van Nuys factory during that time. Though the organ was used heavily for a two-year period, the last silent feature was shown at the Paramount in 1930, sounding the death knell for the instrument. In 1931 the maintenance contract on the organ was terminated, and by 1934, the theatre management declared the organ unusable.

The little Morton remained a dusty and forlorn ghost, apparently doomed to silence, until it was discovered in

1958 by Donald May. By that time the console had been cut loose and placed in an alley where, of course, it was rained upon. Don completely rebuilt the organ, secured and rebuilt an identical console, and the Robert-Morton was once again heard in public at the Paramount in April, 1966. The first organist was Bob Courtney.

I had the good fortune to be a student at Louisiana State University at that time and I saw the full-page Sunday supplement article in the newspaper about Don and the organ. Shortly thereafter I became a fixture at the Paramount. It was my pleasure to play the Morton every weekend for the largely college crowds until my graduation in 1968. Some of you may remember the two albums we cut on this organ, which were released by Concert Recording. After my departure from Baton Rouge Tom Coeaux continued the weekly programs until the use of the organ declined with the declining patronage of the downtown theatre. The last public performance of the organ was in July, 1978, at which time I was pleased to accompany silent movies during the Baton Rouge Summer Arts Festival. Though the crowds for this event were large and enthusiastic, time was growing short for the Robert-Morton.

Even though the organ was used

rarely in its last years in the theatre, Don kept the instrument in first class condition. When the owners of the building decided to close the theatre and tear the structure down, they asked Don to remove the organ from the building and place it in storage, which he did with extreme care. Consequently, when the Garners bought the organ in 1980, it was in superb condition, though a bit worse for wear because of two or three moves to different storage locations.

When Tippy and Bob loaded the Morton onto trucks and brought it to Jackson, they faced an immediate problem: where to put it. This is, perhaps, a common problem of those who acquire pipe organs for their homes, but in this case the problem was particularly severe because the Garners were already the owners of an eighteen-rank classical pipe organ. This organ was installed in large chambers which Bob had built at the south end of an enormous family room in their home. So, for the last two years, the Garners have lived with one pipe organ installed in the chambers and one pipe organ stacked and jammed into every available nook and cranny of their house.

Finally, earlier this year, the classical instrument was sold and removed and Tippy and Bob began in earnest to install the six-rank Morton.

Although the division of the pipes, percussions and traps between the chambers is identical to the way the organ was installed in the Paramount, the location within the chambers of the various parts of the organ has been altered significantly. In the Garner installation the organ will not be cramped, as it was in the theatre, and the spacious chambers will allow future expansion of the instrument. Bob hopes to add a Concert Flute immediately, and make other additions over time. When Bob built the pipe chambers, he thoughtfully covered the walls with Keene's Cement, a very hard plaster which is highly reflective. Additionally, the chamber arrangement is such that both the blower and tremulants are remote from the chambers themselves, thus drastically decreasing the noise level of the organ.

Don May, of course, is quite ex-

The newly-refinished console awaits completion of wiring into the organ.





Bob Garner checks out the reiteration relay which was added to the orchestra bells.



Installing a pipe organ requires many skills. Here Bob solders joints in a new tin wind line.

cited about the renaissance of the Paramount Morton and has spent many weekends in the Garner home helping with the installation and regulation of the organ. His knowledge and assistance have been invaluable to Tippy and Bob because he has come to know this instrument so well in the last twenty-four years.

During the time that I was playing the Paramount organ, Don purchased and installed in the organ a Wurlitzer Diaphone. After the organ had been removed from the theatre, this Diaphone was acquired by the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, for installation in the three-manual, eight-rank Robert-Morton which has now been re-installed in the Saenger Theatre in Hattiesburg. C. G. Soley of Laurel, Mississippi, generously donated to Tip and Bob a Robert-Morton wood Diaphone which is now

Don May adjusts a balky violin pipe.



safely installed in the left chamber. Mr. Soley is the owner of the 3/13 Robert-Morton in the Seale Studio in Laurel.

The Garner installation is now virtually complete except for the final tonal regulation. It holds the promise of being the very best home installation I have ever heard. I am, of

course, delighted that this particular organ, for which I have great sentimental attachment, has been saved and will soon be playing again, more gloriously than ever. I am particularly gratified that it was acquired by two long-time friends of mine, who will give it the care that it needs and the public exposure that it deserves. □

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE "THANK YOU" TIME

The "PIPE UP!" membership drive is well on its way and we are now getting reports on the results of the fall concerts. We find the beautiful posters are being used to good advantage. Please remember that chapters and individuals can obtain posters at \$1.00 each from: Vern Bickell, 1393 Don Carlos Court, Chula Vista, California 92010. One chapter ordered fifty. Back issues of THEATRE ORGAN may be ordered from the same source.

There are many people to whom thanks are due. First of all, Lois Segur, ATOS president. Lois has been very supportive and in constant touch. National Director Richard Sklenar, who is promotion director for the drive. He has done all the editing and his help is greatly appreciated. Rex Koury, our Honorary Chairman, has been most encouraging.

Jack and Betty Laffaw, owners of Pizza & Pipes, Bellevue, Washington, have been very helpful, as has Carolyn Houghton, who handles public relations for them. Ralph Beaudry, Los Angeles, has generously agreed to be a liaison person, as has Myra Sentner of San Diego. On the East Coast, David Barnett of Richmond, Virgin-

ia, will help in the same capacity. Lance Johnson, Red River; Al Erickson, Cedar Rapids; Lee Smith, Sooner State; and Joe Gray of Oregon have been most helpful. Jack Becvar, Puget Sound Chapter chairman, and Marilyn Schrum, Vice Chairman, are hard at work to make the drive a success.

To one and all a most grateful THANK YOU. THELMA BARCLAY



from
Connecticut Valley Chapter

Konsole Kapets

by Shirley Hannum Keiter



CREATIVE LISTENING

With the start of the new concert season, concertgoers again will attend programs played by organists from around the world. And again, they will emerge after each program with an assortment of reactions. What causes one person to feel bored while another feels exhilarated? Everyone reacts differently to the same artist and program. A lot depends on creative listening. Below is a checklist of ten points to help on the road to listening creatively.

1. Variety of types of music. Has the artist programmed current music as well as nostalgic and, perhaps, classical throughout the concert? Or vocals amid organ music? Or a piano piece, if a quality piano is available?

2. Variety in the speed of the music. Have there been too many ballads, or too many "Ritual Fire Dance"-type pieces in a row?

3. Variety of keys. Modulation within a song, provided it's done well, always adds excitement and an uplift to the arrangement. Has the artist used this technique without overdoing it? Also, a more subtle road to boredom is the use of only one or two keys. A concertgoer can usually pick up what key the artist is playing in by watching the pedals. Has the artist programmed too many pieces in a row of the same key?

4. Variety in volume. Has the artist demonstrated the capabilities of the instrument, from quiet to ear-splitting, without too much emphasis on either end of the spectrum?

5. Variety in registration. Has the artist used a good balance between ensemble (combinations of strings, Flutes, Tibias, etc.) and solo (Tuba, Trumpet, etc.) registration? Has one rank or the toy counter stood out predominantly throughout the program, or was there a refreshing change from one selection to the next? Or did the artist frustrate the listeners by making too many tonal changes?

6. Phrasing and touch. Does the music "breathe," as a singer would? Is each phrase "contoured" in shad-

ings of volume? Is there variety between smooth, detached, and short keyboard attack?

7. "Console" presence. Has the artist displayed an engaging personality from the console while also displaying musical acumen with a good balance between history-giving and music?

8. Harmonic structure. Have the harmonies been generally aesthetically pleasing? Is there a feeling of "completeness" as the artist finishes a harmonic thought, or is there frustration while the unresolved harmonic question is never quite answered within each phrase?

9. Notes or music? Is the artist making music or playing notes? Whether the artist uses sheet music or not, it is possible to play a selection without any concept of the piece as a whole. Is the arrangement cohesive?

10. Is the artist playing from the heart or head? Too much emotion or too much mechanical playing can destroy an otherwise perfect program. Did the artist display a happy mix of the two in the selections on the program, in the phrasing, in the use of the swell shades, in registration?

This checklist should help all concertgoers to be able to evaluate what made the overall performance what it was to you, the individual. Happy listening!

Erratum:

In "Shortcuts to Chords" in the July/August issue, under "Diminished Chord," the three chords should read: F Ab B D; F# A C Eb; and G Bb Db E.

We Hope Y'all Have
An Extra Nice
Holiday Season



NORTH
TEXAS
CHAPTER

Shirley Keiter made her theatre organ debut as a cameo artist during the 1967 ATOS convention, has toured as a theatre organist and served as house organist at the Lansdowne (Pennsylvania) Theatre. She was minister of music for two churches for 14 years. Shirley composes organ, choral and handbell music and teaches for a piano and organ dealer in suburban Philadelphia.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

from
WESTERN RESERVE
Cleveland, Ohio



PIPES &

Personalities

Breaking and Entering?

The *Wall Street Journal* on July 2 had an interesting item on pizza parlors with organs, specifically mentioning the three-manual Wurlitzer in the Roaring '20s Pizza restaurant in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The organ was originally in Jersey City's Stanley Theatre. Stanley Warzala, veteran ATOS member, tells us an amusing anecdote which occurred when the organ was in the theatre.

"Some years ago, our New Jersey group was scheduled for a meeting there, Bill Floyd having made the arrangements. About 75 showed on a bitter, bitter cold morning, only to find the place closed and locked. Bill could not be reached, no one answered phone calls made to the theatre, and knocking or kicking on the doors hurt cold hands and feet. Along came a policeman and asked what the problem was. After telling him, he got out of his car, picked up a crowbar and attempted to pry open the door. Unfortunately, no one took a picture of this amazing scene! Dick Loderhose finally awakened the watchman, and by waving a greenback at him, which apparently was music to his eyes, he let us in for sounds which were music to our ears."

Marian Cook Honored By Thayer School of Engineering

Marian Miner Cook (Mrs. John Brown Cook), well known in theatre organ circles, was the recipient of The Robert Fletcher Award for 1982 from the Thayer School of Engineering of Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. She is the first woman to receive the award.

Mrs. Cook has had an active continuing interest in education, the social sciences, and the arts. In 1979, a gift was made to the Thayer School to honor the memory of her late hus-

band, John Brown Cook, Dartmouth '29, former president and chairman of the Board of Reliable Electric Company. The fund supports the Cook Engineering Design Center.

The Cook family has also funded the library for the Bradley Mathematics Center and, with colleagues at Reliable Electric, provided funds for the construction of the 360-seat John Brown Cook Auditorium in Dartmouth's Murdough Center linking and serving Thayer School of Engineering and the Tuck School of Business Administration.



Marian Miner Cook.

Mrs. Cook is a trustee of the Claremont McKenna College in California, a governor of the John Brown Cook Association for Freedom at the Claremont Colleges, a founding member of the John Brown Cook Foundation, a director of the American Institute of Nautical Archeology, a director of the California State University Foundation, and a member of the Diadames of the Child Care League, Inc. In addition, she is a Founding Member of the Music Center and the Museum of Art in Los Angeles and has provided endowment for construction of the LaBrea Story Theatre in the George C. Page Museum complex in Los Angeles.

Gaylord Carter Opens LATOS Concert Series

The opening concert in the first annual LATOS Concert Series on September 25, 1982, featuring Gaylord

Carter's "Sixty Years of Chasing," was considered the high spot of the LATOS year.

Presented in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, the five-manual Moller console slowly rose as Gaylord played the full version of his theme, "The Perfect Song," to the sound of thunderous applause. This was followed by a series of film clips from silents that he had accompanied throughout his career, including many famous chase scenes, the ever-popular *Phantom of the Opera* excerpts, and featuring rarely seen footage from D. W. Griffith's masterpiece, *Intolerance*. Gaylord then played three of his own compositions before the intermission.

The feature film, Harold Lloyd's *For Heaven's Sake*, which Gaylord played at its original showing in 1926 at Grauman's Million Dollar Theatre, was presented after intermission. The Pasadena audience seemed to enjoy the film as much as the original audience, judging by the laughter filling the theatre. The program closed with two encore selections, after which the audience rose in a cheering standing ovation.

Film Series in Carolina Theatre After Fire

To reopen the 54-year-old Carolina Theatre, Greensboro, North Carolina, following its restoration after a fire in July, 1981, the Piedmont Chapter and the Greensboro United Arts Council set up a series of well-known silent films, all accompanied by Lee Erwin on the 2/6 Robert-Morton.

Opening night was September 10, with Buster Keaton's *The General*.

Gaylord Carter at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

(Zimfoto)





View from the projection booth.



Upper lobby.



Organ chamber behind left arch. An empty room behind center arch may be used for expansion of the organ. Note unrestored area above right arch.

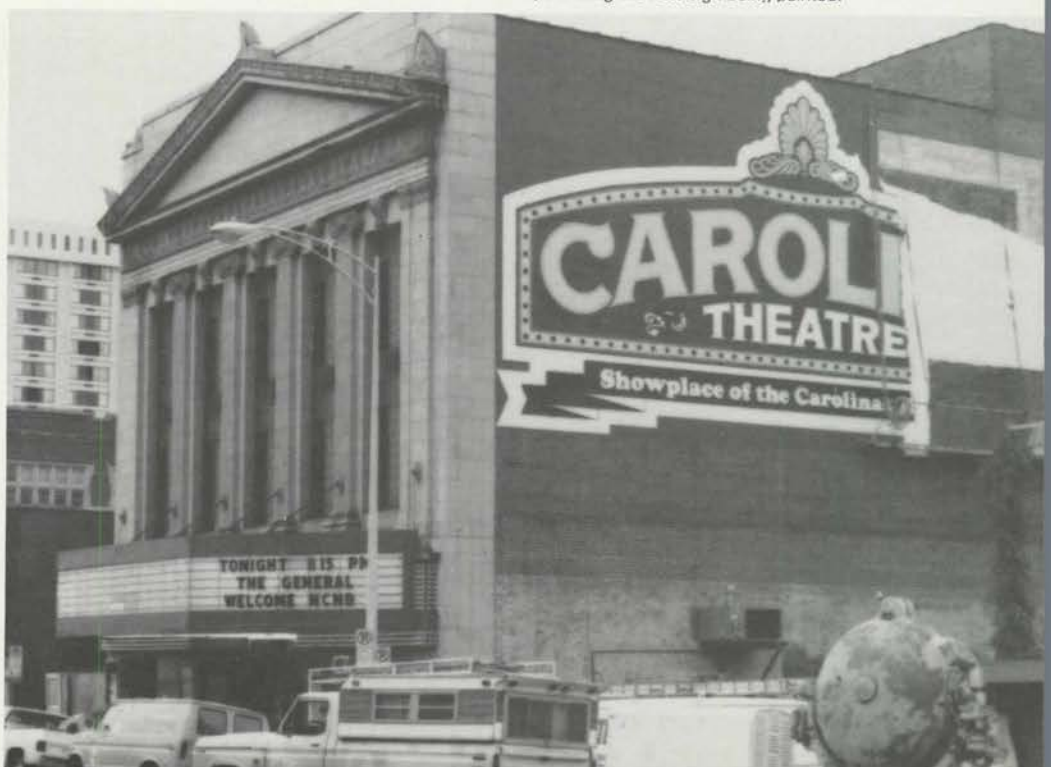


Organ console opened for repair before show.

Lee Erwin at the 2/6 Robert-Morton, Carolina Theatre, Greensboro, North Carolina.



Outside view of the Carolina Theatre, showing the new sign being painted.



SEASON'S GREETINGS

from your



South
Florida Chapter

Others in the series include Chaplin's *The Kid* on November 14, Harold Lloyd in *Safety Last* on December 26, Keaton's *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* on February 13, 1983, and Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* on April 17. A special extra show featuring Erwin accompanying *The Phantom of the Opera* took place on October 29.

The fire was confined to a stairwell and the upper lobby, but the entire theatre, the organ console, and the pipe chambers suffered smoke damage from the burning rubber-backed carpet. The fire doors closed, but not soon enough to keep out the smoke.

Both the theatre and the organ were insured. After settlement of claims was completed Piedmont Chapter members started the long clean-up and restoration project on the organ in January, 1982.

All the pipes were removed and washed in trays built for the purpose. The chambers were cleaned and the walls painted. The pipes were replaced after a new protective coating was applied. The blower was taken out, motor and bearings rebuilt, an air filter constructed for it, and then it

was reinstalled with shock mounts on a specially-built concrete platform to substantially reduce vibration. Other improvements and repairs were made to the organ as part of the restoration project.

Ashley Miller Visits San Diego ATOS Wurlitzer

Upon his return from a concert/workshop tour of Australia, Ashley Miller visited the San Diego area for a week before going on to the East Coast. Members of the San Diego Chapter opened up the California Theatre and wheeled out their 3/14 Wurlitzer for an afternoon practice session. Ashley expressed pleasure over the stops provided on the new console, as well as the overall sound of the organ. As another feature of his visit, he conducted a workshop at the San Diego Piano Exchange, offering instruction in both classical and theatre registrations, following a long day which included an hour's concert. While staying with Mildred and Coulter Cunningham, Ashley spent several hours playing the Rodgers-Morton electronic/pipe organ they have installed in their home, and finding all kinds of new sounds on this one-of-a-kind instrument.

Acoustic Consultant Invents Mightiest Whistle

A high-power whistle, based in part on his studies of organ pipe acoustics, has been invented by R. J. Weisenberger, who writes "The Acoustical Consultant" column for this magazine.

A prototype of the whistle was built and it was tested at the Cincinnati International Airport on July 30 and 31. A sound level of 120 dBA was produced at a distance of 100 feet at a frequency of 440 Hz, with air at a pressure of 15 PSIG. Such a sound level is far in excess of that produced by any

Season's
Greetings



PUGET SOUND
CHAPTER

single-tone high pressure steam whistle.

Whistles of Weisenberger's design would be useful for disaster warning applications. A patent is pending on the design.

Dennis James Schedule A Busy One

In a recent letter Dennis James gave us a run-down on his playing schedule since early September and for the next several months, and it appears that he won't have much time to relax.

The American tour of *Napoleon* concluded on September 9 and 10 at Wolf Trap Farm Park near Washington, D.C. Performances were given in mid-October in Tokyo and a return engagement is scheduled in Toronto from December 26 through January 6 at the new Thompson concert hall, which is pipe organ-equipped.

James' thirteenth annual Indiana University silent film series opened on September 11 with a "History of Silent Film Comedy" show featuring Mack Sennett, Mabel Normand, Laurel & Hardy and Buster Keaton.

Ashley Miller tries out the San Diego Chapter Wurlitzer in the California Theatre. Pictured with him are (l to r): Lois Segur, ATOS President; Coulter Cunningham, former chairman of the San Diego Chapter; and Sandy Fleet, ATOS Director.



Inventor R. J. Weisenberger standing behind whistle prototype — before the test!



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NOTE: These are the correct rates. The rates shown on non-chapter member's statements are wrong because of a printing error.

The series continued on October 31 with Abel Gance's horror short *Au Secours*, coupled with the German expressionistic silent *Nosferatu - A Symphony of Terror*. He will finish the series on February 26 with *The Mark of Zorro*.

Dennis appeared as soloist with the Eastman-Dryden orchestra for the sixtieth anniversary celebrations at the Eastman Theatre in Rochester.

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The Eastman School of Music had a full motion picture music program and full deluxe presentations were run at the Eastman Theatre all through the twenties. Those shows were re-created on September 30 and October 1 with a program that included organ and symphony orchestra segments, and closed with Chaplin's *A Dog's Life* scored for organ and orchestra.

Dennis accompanied *Wings* at the Elco Theatre in Elkhart on October 7 and *The Eagle* at the Palace Theatre in Canton, Ohio, on October 8 and 9. He did two programs for EMCATOS on the Wurlitzer at Babson College in Wellesley on October 23 and 24. Then to Providence for *Phantom of the Opera* on October 29 (midnight), played on the newly-installed 5/21 Wurlitzer at the Ocean State Center for the Performing Arts. Back to Columbus for the Ohio Theatre's sixth annual Halloween show at midnight on October 30, and to Indiana University for the Halloween show there on October 31.

On November 19 James went to London to serve as a judge for the London Chapter's annual Young Organist Competition, and to the London Film Festival for the premieres of two new orchestra and organ scores for the silent films *Show People* and *Flesh & the Devil*, plus a showing of a recently-rediscovered Chaplin film, *How to Make a Movie*.

On December 17, 18 and 19 he will be performing with the Chicago Symphony the Handel Organ Concerto No. 13, "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale," plus providing the continuo organ part for the oratorio "Israel in Egypt." The program will be broadcast nationwide, so ATOS members will be able to hear it in their own communities — just check the Chicago Symphony broadcast schedule.

His 1983 schedule includes: January 23 - LATOS concert and film at Pasadena Civic Auditorium; January 29 - Concert and film at the California Theatre for the San Diego Chapter; February 26 - Indiana University silent film series; February 27 - Embassy Theatre, Fort Wayne, silent film *The General*; March 19 - Ohio Theatre 55th Anniversary program, silent film with full orchestra and organ.

Starting in late March Dennis will undertake a solo world concert tour. The exact dates are still being arranged, but programs are now slated

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in New Zealand, Australia, Holland, England and Scotland. He plans to visit as many overseas theatre organ installations as possible and hopes to report to the ATOS on the status of a number of obscure ones.

In the middle of the tour he will return to Columbus for a screening of the French film classic *The Passion of Joan of Arc*. The original score calls for organ, orchestra, piano, four soloists and full choir. It will be performed at the Broad Street Methodist Church on May 22.

Dennis has acquired the rights and is now booking the film *Robin Hood* as performed at the ATOS convention in Detroit. The cost of production is now well within the scope of ATOS sponsorship, and four performances have been set for the coming season.

**Season's Greetings
from Detroit**



Motor
City
Theatre
Organ
Society, Inc.

AN UNUSUAL COMBINATION

Classical Organist from Italy Plays Benefit Concert on Morton in Fresno's Warnor Theatre

by Ron Musselman

The month of May offered a fair amount of theatre organ concert activity for enthusiasts in California, but the most intriguing event of the month went unheard by most organ buffs, theatre or classical. In fact, I would have missed it too, had it not been for a press release spotted on a desk at the radio station where I work. What caught my eye was the Warnor's letterhead incorporating a drawing of the theatre's unmistakable facade. The copy below explained that the Mt. Carmel Catholic Church was sponsoring a concert May 25 to benefit its Poverello Kitchen (a rescue mission-type community service) which had recently been damaged by a fire. The concert, "The first full organ recital since the re-opening of the Warnor Theatre," was to be played by Giancarlo Parodi, a European *classical* organist. An all-*classical* concert played on one of the most rip-roaring theatre organs ever built! This promised to be a most interesting evening. And ultimately, it was, in the most positive sense of the word. Unfortunately, the event was under-promoted and the resulting turnout was barely 150.

In looking ahead to the concert, I visualized a well-trained and educated European musician agreeing to play a benefit concert in an American theatre, not realizing what he was getting himself into, and trying out the machine the day before the concert, muttering to himself, "What *is* this thing, anyway?" Would the performance wind up being an embarrassment to both artist and instrument? After all, an eminent American classical organist had done a concert on a particularly fine Wurlitzer a few years back and managed to make it sound like a monstrous accordion. And the ultra-vivid tone colors of the

Warnor's 4/14 Morton contain some real pitfalls for the uninitiated — a loud, nasty Posthorn, sizzling, keen strings, and a bright, penetrating Tuba, just to mention a few. The instrument has the potential to do almost anything, but the organist must possess a good deal of skill tempered with taste to make it "sing." In the wrong hands, it has been known to sound quite coarse and ugly. In the case of Mr. Parodi, there was a lot of evidence that he would acquit himself well. He graduated from the Paganini Academy of Music in Genoa, well schooled in piano, organ and organ composition. He has played extensively in concerts all across Europe with orchestras, choruses and vocalists, as well as a soloist. His work has gained him praise from a long list of respected critics. He teaches at Trento University and has had several essays published. He has broadcast on both television and radio in several countries, and is a recording artist with several albums to his credit. So he had all the makings of a "heavy hitter," one of the most important being a large and varied repertoire.

Rushing up to the ticket office on the evening of the concert, we plunked down the cash for two tickets, then hurried through the lobby into the Spanish Renaissance auditorium and settled back into our seats on the main floor just forward of the balcony rail. Not more than 75 people were seated around us in the mostly-empty house, but there were several latecomers. The massive four-manual Morton console was already up at solo position on its lift . . . no dramatic show-biz rise into the spotlight tonight. Finally, at about 8:20, Father Flavio Trettel entered from stage right and strolled over to a microphone to greet the audience (com-

prised largely of church members) and introduced the artist. After the introductory remarks, which were peppered with Father Flavio's infectious sense of humor, out walked Giancarlo Parodi, tall, bearded and distinguished in a conservative blue suit. After acknowledging the applause with a shy smile and a nod of the head, he took his place on the bench. It became evident that he was in unfamiliar territory when he pulled out a piece of paper and referred to it as he began setting up some registration by hand. I could appreciate that almost everything about this instrument must seem foreign to him. But after the lengthy initial setting up, the awkwardness ended. He opened with a lively "Noel Votre Bonte' Grand Dieu," which alternated between medium reed combinations and softer passages on the Concert Flute before a classical-type "full organ" ending which brought down the house. Even at less than full-throttle, that Morton can really stir up an audience. The second piece was a rather sensitive rendering of "Theme and Variations" by Morandi. Bringing us up to intermission time was a composition in four parts which covered a wide range of tempos and registration textures. He extracted some beautiful sounds from the three-rank String Celeste (unison, sharp and flat).

Following intermission, as the artist commenced playing, out of the chamber came the sound of a theatre organ bird call! All in good taste, though. The piece was "St. Francis d'Assisi," in which, according to Father Trettel, St. Francis is communicating with the birds. It was well played and Parodi's use of the silent movie effect actually enhanced this peaceful, pastoral "musical picture." Next was the familiar Widor "Toccatina," and here the 14-rank organ sounded more like 100 ranks. And the rousing final chord brought another round of enthusiastic applause. Following two works by the contemporary composer Hidas (which concluded with an appropriate thunder-and-lightning finale), Mr. Parodi was given a standing ovation. He responded by playing a lengthy medley of popular Italian standards, and several people in the largely-Italian audience could be heard singing along in more or less the same key. At the conclusion, the artist bowed to the audience as they applauded him, then turned to the console and bowed to it.

That gesture undoubtedly came from the heart, for he had reportedly "fallen in love" with the instrument, having been surprised and pleased with what it could do. This was evident in his playing. He really liked the big Tuba and made use of it several times. The strings were also used more than once, and the untremmed Krumet was highlighted, sounding for all the world like an ancient Krummhorn. He seemed at times to be showcasing the excellent pipework for the listeners as much as he was the music.

On the whole, it was a most enjoyable concert. We walked out of the theatre in an afterglow of high spirits. It was as much a victory for Giancarlo Parodi as it was a concert. We had watched a man enter an unfamiliar situation, grapple with a foreign beast, and manage to produce some excellent music. □

News from the

Unaffiliated

Groups

Lloyd E. Klos



*Lockport
Theater
Organ Society*

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

Our August 11 concert at the Senior Citizens Center was a great success, artistically and attendance-wise. The affair was a sellout, all 420 seats occupied. Carlo Annibale played a very entertaining program on the 2/6 Wurlitzer. Included were Broadway show tunes, contemporary selections, and the oldies which our people enjoy. There was a medley of hymns, and as a surprise, a couple



Carlos Annibale practices for his August concert at the Lockport Senior Citizens Center.

numbers composed by Carlo's wife, Doris.

One thing the concert emphasized is that we need a larger blower if we are to add two ranks. A search is under way for one and if you have one available, please call me at (716) 439-6643, or write me at 33 Ontario Street, Lockport, New York 14094.

HAROLD LeVALLEY



*Niagara Frontier
Theatre
Organ
Society*

**(NFTOS) — Buffalo, New York
716/834-2712**

When theatre mogul, Edward H. Bebko took over North Tonawanda's Riviera Theatre last winter, he instituted organludes before the first show, at intermission, and following the final show, on Friday and Saturday evenings. The policy has had an electric effect. Attendance is up several hundred percent, enthusiasm of the audiences for the 3/20 Wurlitzer is overwhelming, and the youngsters are profuse with their favorable comments. Ed's father, the renowned Doc (Eddie Baker) says that "the organ, thanks to a fresh maintenance crew who know what they're doing, never sounded better. It is a pleasure to play this organ for a live, appreciative audience. It is a situation which is every

theatre organist's dream come true." The Riviera thus joins a very select list (Radio City Music Hall, Anderson, Indiana, Paramount to mention two) who employ a theatre pipe organ in its original installation as part of their programs. Furthermore, where do you find another theatre owner who employs his father to furnish organ music?

LLOYD E. KLOS

RTOS



*Dedicated to preserving the sound of the
"King of Instruments"*

**Rochester Theater Organ Society
(RTOS) — Rochester, New York
716/ 266-8251**

After its usual three-month summer hiatus, the Rochester Theatre Organ Society launched its 19th Auditorium concert series on September 17. A good crowd was entertained by the fourth appearance of Canada's Ambassador of Musical Good Will, Don Thompson. Three times, Don has been selected to lead off an RTOS season, and he again acquitted himself favorably.

He has come a long way since his initial appearance here in 1972. One can see the improvement, a greater degree of self-assurance, and as always, a commanding microphone presence, without a lot of undue chatter. It keeps the audience receptive to his easy-going banter.

Don performed a goodly number of classical selections, which were a relief to him after the "many evenings of constant requests for the mundane" at Toronto's Organ Grinder Pizza. His schedule there allows him to travel, and his Rochester concert, on the heels of his English swing, launched him on a tour of eastern U.S. installations.

Perhaps the high point of the program was his rendering of a sizable Sigmund Romberg medley. His "Variations on the Mickey Mouse Club Theme," brought a good response, and a number not often heard on the circuit, "Vilja" was done in

style. A standing ovation was rewarded with some jazzed-up numbers, notably Glenn Miller's "In the Mood."

LLOYD E. KLOS

Empire State

theatre and musical instrument museum

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

This past spring, ESTMIM member John Mazzae, former theatre organist, played a series of silent films on an electronic in Utica's Stanley Theatre. The house once had a 3/12 Wurlitzer, which Mazzae, Harry Brecknell and others in an eight-year effort, rebuilt and installed in Utica's Proctor High School. It's a great sounding organ in its new location.

Our own 3/11 Wurlitzer got its annual ten-day workout during New York State Fair Week. It was used almost four hours a day for interludes, background music for fashion shows, concerts and silent movies. Organists included John Fiscoe, David Conway, Karl Moser and Catherine Thomas.

John Fiscoe, a member of the New York State Police, was the object of an August feature in the Syracuse *Herald-American's Empire Magazine*. Dave Conway is taking classical organ and theory as a college freshman. Karl Moser is also starting college. Thirteen-year-old Catherine Thomas was making her sixth public appearance this year. She is a five-time Yamaha festival winner, and in addition to her theatre organ and



From NYS Trooper uniform to formal dress as a theatre organist. That is the varied life of Syracuse's John Fiscoe. He's at the ESTMIM 3/11 Wurlitzer console at right.



piano studies, is taking a classical organ course at Syracuse University.

Thanks to Bruce Carter, Mike Conway and Walter Shannon, we have a new theatre easel and newly-painted announcement signs for the

Mills Building entrance and lobby. Manager Ron Squires of Syracuse's Landmark Theatre, had a very attractive Landmark exhibit near our auditorium entrance during Fair Week.

CHARLIE RICH □



Another of the young breed, getting a start in the theatre organ idiom, Syracuse's Dave Conway.



Letters to the Editors

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

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

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

Dear Mr. Klos:

Your item in the May/June 1982 "Pipes & Personalities," requesting input on Sigmund Krumbold, brought back a rush of nostalgia for me.

I was born and raised in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and at a very early age became deeply interested in motion picture theatres. This was in spite of limited exposure to Poli's vaudeville theatre, and observing construction and opening of Poli's 3048-seat

Palace and 2193-seat Majestic. The original Poli's never had an organ, a piano being used to accompany the silents in this large house. The Palace and Majestic had organs, but the customers couldn't see the consoles.

In 1926, our family moved to Flushing, New York. I visited every theatre possible, noting the organs. One of the best was in the Flushing Theatre, and it had a horseshoe console, one of the first I'd seen. Don

Baker had one of his first organ-playing jobs at this theatre.

In November 1926, the New York Paramount opened and we attended on the second day. I was spellbound by this theatre — amazed at the orchestra elevator, but absolutely stunned when I saw the gold and white Wurlitzer console rise into the spotlight. Jesse Crawford presented "Organs I Have Played," a resume of his musical career. As a boy of 15, I had never been so awe-struck at anything. It engendered a lifelong love of the theatre organ, though I never was able to play one.

I was attending high school then. The Paramount changed shows every week, and it was only 40 cents until 1 p.m. I spent many Saturday mornings there, enjoying the Publix stage shows, and always Jesse and Helen Crawford. Sometimes our family went on Friday evenings, arriving before the admission price changed at six.

With four shows a day, there was an interval which had to be filled before the evening's stage show. We were always treated to extra movie shorts and much to my pleasure, organ interludes. We had no idea who accompanied the silent films on the organ, but Crawford never did. The names of the "filler" organists were flashed on the screen, Sigmund Krumgold and Egon Putz among them. The latter, I had the feeling, was basically a pianist as he never seemed to change registrations. Krumgold's style was opposite to that of Crawford, rarely playing ballads, but specializing in the classics. One



thing about the Paramount organ: When you sat in the first row of the balcony, you had no trouble hearing it! I thoroughly agree with everyone who ever said or wrote about the instrument; it was the best Wurlitzer ever produced, including the Radio City Music Hall's 4/58. Nothing approached it for the ideal sound. The poor Roxy Kimball was lost under the stage!

The Paramount had a white-haired gentleman, attired in evening dress, who played in the music room of the Grand Lobby for waiting patrons. A nearby sign said he had a repertoire of 1000 pieces and would play requests. He had a typical middle-European name which I can't recall.

About 1929, my mother, aware of my deep interest in the theatre organ, arranged for us to meet Jesse Crawford in the studio which housed a 4/21 Wurlitzer. We had a short, cordial meeting since it was obvious I wasn't an organist. But I got to see the 4/21, and it was the thrill of the day. In later years, I was an avid fan of Fred Feibel when he played that studio organ daily on the radio.

I'm sure I haven't added to your background information on Sigmund Krumgold, but it availed me the opportunity to relive those very wonderful days when the New York Paramount was in its prime.

Sincerely,
Charles M. Fletcher
Logan, Utah

Dear Editor:

A special thanks to all those who took the time to return the election ballots which were mailed to all members in April. I especially enjoyed the notes which were included in some of the envelopes. Several people asked, "Is this an all-male organization? Why are there no females on the ballot?" The answer is simply that no women volunteered to run for the Board of Directors. Some sent personal greetings, others sent changes of address or made inquiries and a

few just vented their thoughts and gripes about ATOS. Whatever the comment, it spiced up the monotony of opening 2093 envelopes. Also, my mailman is still speaking to me.

Margaret Ann Foy
Denver, Colorado

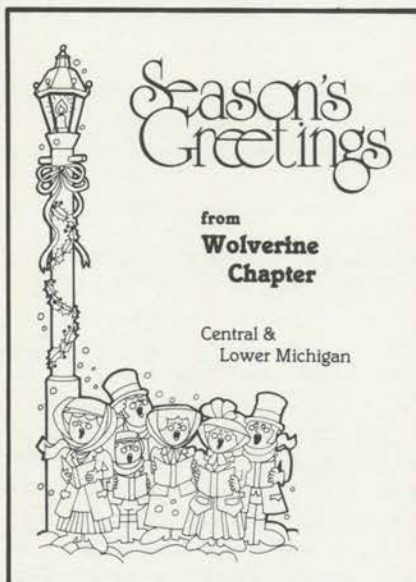
Dear Sir:

It appears to me that the National ATOS, as well as the chapters, have forgotten — ATOS, American Theatre Organ Society. At conventions it means theatre pipe organ concerts by artists of recognized excellence. At the convention in Detroit too much time was wasted on events ATOS unrelated.

At the Detroit Fox, the Friday evening showing of *Robin Hood* was certainly ATOS unrelated. It belongs at an assembly of the Cinema Historical Society. Here we sat in total darkness in one of the most elaborate theatres left in the United States with one of the few great Wurlitzers in the United States, watching a small-screen black and white vintage movie, listening to an orchestra! The so-called theatre organ artist for the evening did little to display the magnificent organ.

Is it any wonder that attendance at conventions is diminishing each year? When is our organization going to realize what ATOS stands for?

Yours truly,
Donald Steadman
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



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CHAPTER NOTES

Edited by Grace E. McGinnis

ALABAMA Birmingham

205/979-8132 or 205/785-4864

Summer meetings are usually difficult to entice good membership attendance, but with an active group like the Alabama Chapter it is no problem. The common interest is the Wurlitzer in the Alabama Theatre, which is in better shape now than it has been in forty years, thanks to Larry Donaldson, Ola Fee, Sam Troutman and their Saturday work crews. The brilliant program which was presented by Rick McGee of the Atlanta Chapter, and the special snack presented by Betty Crowe, Bea Fee and Alice Kenerdine after the meeting was a winning combination and an example of how to do it.

Mr. Rick McGee came to Birmingham the day before our meeting and guided the preparation of the organ so that it would respond exactly to his desired timbre. The result was obvious by the applause for his masterful control of the instrument. Mr. McGee, we predict, will be an artist in great demand in the future.

Mr. Floyd Hauffe, Chairman, has encouraged increased open membership and, as a result, our roster is greater than it has ever been. This boasts of a large list of active, working members. For instance, we learned on a Thursday that the city of Birmingham purchased the Ritz Theatre. Permission to acquire and remove the theatre organ was granted, a work crew was organized, and the organ was removed and stored on Saturday and Sunday. Those of you who know the work involved in removing the pipes, chests and blower from a height of forty feet can attest to how much was done in just four days. We are sorry to see the loss of another theatre, but are happy that we had the opportunity to save the theatre organ.

The Alabama Theatre in Birmingham was sold on June 25, 1982, to Pedro Costa and Nelson Head. They have great plans for the renovation and operation of the theatre in the future which will include good use of the Wurlitzer organ. Another step in the right direction.

Our meetings have been changed to two o'clock in the afternoon on the second Saturday of the month at the



Krehl King, chapter member and staff organist at the Organ Loft, opened with a mini-concert on the Wurlitzer. (H. Weirauch photo)



Lowell Boberg gives report to the assembled members. (H. Weirauch photo)

Alabama Theatre, and we can seat at least twenty-four hundred. Y'all come!

RAY KENERDINE

BEEHIVE

Salt Lake City

801/467-5700 or 801/486-9098

Members of the Beehive Chapter enjoyed the rare treat of a cook-out at the residence of Cal Christensen who lives high above the smog of Salt Lake City in a beautiful home he built himself amid the natural beauty of Emigration Canyon. While residents of the Salt Lake Valley were sweltering, the Beehive Chapter members were basking in the first cooling touch of fall in Cal's backyard on the evening of Friday, August 13. The sharp air added zest to the appetites as hamburgers were grilled and tasty salads prepared. Forty members and guests enjoyed the food and came back for second helpings, thanks to the skill of Wayne Russell, chapter secretary, and Chairman Clarence Briggs.

The business meeting followed with Chairman Briggs presiding. He brought the chapter members up to date on current pertinent events, one of them being the appointment of Lowell J. Boberg as director to fill the unexpired term of Bill Petty who recently moved to California. He also spoke of planned meetings of the chapter, one for September and one in conjunction with the Organ Club of Salt Lake City.

Harry Weirauch, co-chairman of the Capitol Theatre Organ restoration, then reported on the progress of that project. Nearly 5000 man-hours

have been expended to this point, and all that remains for completion is checking the work out and installing the rank of Trumpets, long on order but still not arrived.

Following the meeting everyone enjoyed a pleasant open console session.

LOWELL J. BOBERG

CENTRAL FLORIDA THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



Tampa

813/384-1854 or 813/863-2264

In August our meeting was held at the Baldwin Family Music Center. During the business meeting our chapter representative, Earl Wiltse, gave us a fine report on the National Convention. Also, member Dr. Robert Hines demonstrated the Vibraharp which he donated to the chapter. The tone is beautiful, and it will eventually be installed in the theatre. After the meeting the members were entertained by Bob Speaker, one of our members who is associated with the Baldwin store in Tampa. Bob's program included a variety of well-known tunes. His "Tico-Tico," which featured hands on pedals, was especially well done.

Our September meeting was held at the Torell's home in Dunedin. The good news was announced that the re-wiring of the twelve chests has been completed, and wiring from the chests to the electronic driver boards is underway for the Tampa Theatre Wurlitzer installation. After a short concert by Sandra Shook, members enjoyed open console on the Torell's Baldwin Cinema II. New members we would like to welcome are Jesse Chow, Mr. and Mrs. Blake Braley, and Robert Alexander.

SANDRA SHOOK

CENTRAL INDIANA

Indianapolis

317/283-3410 or 317/786-2160

A pleasant July afternoon found Central Indiana Chapter members meeting with friends and guests at the Piano Showcase, a piano and organ

sales company. Tim Needler, National Secretary and chapter member, brought the group up to date on convention news and new laws and by-laws. We were honored to have a guest, John Robson, from Kingston, Ontario. The Kingston chapter was recognized at the convention as a new chapter. Tim Needler then presented the program for the day on a Kawai organ. This was a new instrument to Tim, but he did not have any problem producing music from the organ.

August 9 found the chapter virtually up to their elbows in spaghetti. Bob MacNeur and wife Donna Parker MacNeur, manager and organist at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, allowed the group to have this spaghetti dinner on the restaur-

ant's night off. This was a money-making project to help build the Dessa Byrd Memorial Fund which was established in her memory to help further education for young organists in this area. Dessa Byrd Rappaport was a local pipe organist who played several of the pipe organs in this city in the '20s, '30s and '40s. She was elected to the ATOS Hall of Fame in 1976 and passed away in May, 1977.

The main star of the evening was Dennis Minear, organist from the Cardinal Pizza in Fort Wayne. Virginia Byrd Rechteris, sister of Dessa and an organist in her own right, played the Paramount's Mighty Wurlitzer to accompany Berneice Fraction, a local lyric soprano. Following these organists, Ken Double, organist



A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS

Let us know what's happening in YOUR chapter. Our goal is to make this section as interesting and useful as possible for all of our readers. Here is how YOU can help:

DO remember you have an international audience;
pay attention to deadlines—we have to meet them, too;
check the spelling of artists' names;
tell us about theatre organs in your area, public and private;
tell us about theatre restorations in your area;
tell us about your community involvement, new artists, scholarships, promotional programs involving your chapter;
tell us about coming events and how visitors to your area may obtain tickets;
tell us who is playing what organs and where;
include photos whenever possible; and
send your chapter bulletins to the editor—they are very helpful.

DON'T include the program each of your artists plays—mention, perhaps, an outstanding arrangement;
include news that is only of interest to your local chapter, or gossip, menus or other trivia.

SEND news, photos and chapter bulletins to:
Editor, THEATRE ORGAN
3448 Cowper Court, Palo Alto, CA 94306

All copy for Chapter Notes is to be typewritten, double-spaced, on 8½ x 11 white paper, with 1½" margins all around. Photos should be black and white for best reproduction. Type each photo caption on a separate sheet and attach to the photo.

DEADLINES

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

and local TV sports commentator, played some of Dessa's favorites. Two hundred members, guests and friends attended. The Memorial Fund was increased by a nice amount, and everyone attending had a great deal of fun and entertainment. A few club members provided the necessary services for distributing the food and drinks, and that was fun, too.

A new pizza restaurant and pipe organ home has begun in Central Indiana. Dr. John Elleman's Pipe Dream opened in downtown Kokomo in mid-July. Bill Tandy of Chicago has become the organist for this venture. The decor of the pizzeria is "neat," and after only a week or two of operation was making a big hit in Kokomo which is only about fifty miles north of Indianapolis, not too far for chapter members to visit even for an evening.

Ed Morris was host for the August chapter meeting, a popular meeting as it is also a pitch-in dinner. Ed has a pipe organ installed in his home and a nice big swimming pool in his backyard. Both of these installations kept young and old alike busy for the afternoon.

Fall will soon be with us with its hazy days and leaves turning. Our chapter is planning a bus tour to Columbus, Ohio, in September in lieu of a meeting. With beautiful weather and scenery, this should be an outstanding event of the fall season.

MARY LOU HARRELL

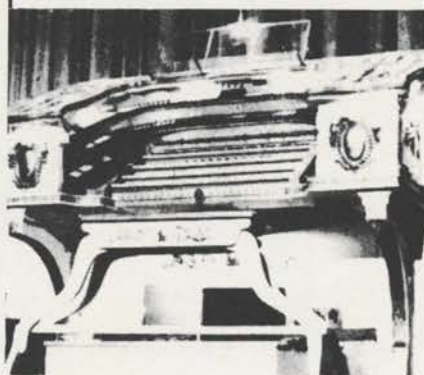


**Chicago Area Theatre
Organ Enthusiasts**

312/470-0743 or 312/627-3245

Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiast's September show, "Remember Radio," at the Chicago Theatre was an entertainment success. The board of directors of Plitt Theatres has presented the city of Chicago with an offer to "swap" the Chicago Theatre and the Page Bros. Building for a parcel of land in the city's North-Loop Development Scheme. CATOE is setting its sights on keeping the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer in the Chicago Theatre. The Schubert Organization toured the theatre on Septem-

HOLIDAY GREETINGS
from
Members of J.A.T.O.E.
and
The Rialto Theatre, Joliet, Ill.



ber 15 and the organ was part of their tour. CATOE's Dennis Wolkowicz did the musical honors. Bob Chaney continues to play intermissions at the Chicago on Friday and Saturday nights.

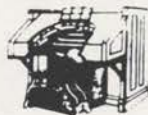
CATOE's Halloween Spook Special at the Patio Theatre was a great success. Rob Calcaterra played the Barton organ in concert, sing-along, and silent film accompaniment for a Harold Lloyd film.

Warmest Holiday Wishes from
CATOE!

CHRISTOPHER CARLO



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



Thomaston

203/378-9192 or 203/583-8334

Our August meeting took place at the home of Gen Roberg in Plymouth, a great setting for a gathering of organ enthusiasts. Lovely lawns outside, and inside a mellow-voiced pipe organ, built by the late Jack Roberg, provided picnicking opportunities without and console exercise within.

The evening portion of the day's program was carried on at the Thomaston Opera House where, promptly at 6:30, Allen Miller presided at the console of the Marr & Colton for the playing of the overture. The main events were two fine old motion pictures, *Singin' in the*

Rain and *On the Town*, both starring Gene Kelly. An intermission, complete with popcorn, lent authenticity to the evening.

Thanks to Gen Roberg's kind hospitality and the efforts of the opera house crew, we enjoyed a very memorable meeting, indeed.

Again this September, Bill Hastings and Joe Colliano held open house for ATOS friends in their luxurious residence on Cape Cod. Their home is complete with Wurlitzer pipe organ, electronic organ, grand piano and numerous objets d'art. Program manager Bob Bailey had arranged for an afternoon organ presentation by Earl Rounds. Earl plays the organ very well, indeed, and he entertained an attentive audience for over an hour, which seemed like a fraction of that. During the evening open console he favored us with additional music.

After dinner we re-assembled in the "Jobi Music Hall" which seats seventy or so people comfortably. Our hosts began the evening program they had prepared for us with Bill Hastings at the console to open with "Spring is Here." He was later joined by Joe Colliano at the piano for some great music-making. These two are a unique combination of keyboard talent and hearing them makes it easy to understand why their summer benefit programs on behalf of the North Truro Historical Society are so popular.

After the assembled guests had, with reluctance, allowed our hosts to leave the keyboards, open console was again in order, as were delicious refreshments with which to cap a day of music and hospitality that was memorable, indeed. Many, many thanks to Bill and Joe.

September 25, 26 console artist Larry Ferrari again held forth at the Marr & Colton in the Thomaston Opera House. Larry is well-known to us, having played at Thomaston a number of previous engagements, so we anticipated a varied program of well-arranged music to include some old favorites, some specialty numbers, some light classics and some musical stage selections all competently played with Larry's own registrations that make our organ sound so magnificent. We were not disappointed, and it was good to see and hear Larry again. Larry enjoys what is today unique employment for an organist. He has a regular radio pro-

gram in Philadelphia that features organ music. What a great way to keep in practice.

Pizza, Pipes, & Pandemonium restaurant in Groton is now open with organists Steve Schlessing and Don Wallin holding forth at the console of the thirty-rank Wurlitzer. Even with only eleven ranks speaking to begin with, the organ sounds very well, indeed. Also, the pizza is good! Allen Miller has been engaged to perform final tweaking of the instrument which, incidentally, has been fitted with multiplexing electronic relays.

On December 4 and 5 Rosa Rio and Ted Malone will be on stage at the Thomaston Opera House. Their performance last year was a highlight of our concert season. For tickets and information contact Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Connecticut 06483. Telephone (203) 888-9696.

W. F. POWERS

DAIRYLAND Milwaukee

414/463-2365 or 414/771-8522

The lakeside Racine home of Fred and Veryl Hermes and their five-manual Wurlitzer was the site of this year's DTOS picnic on August 15. Members of CATOE, JATOE, and LOLTOS were invited to join us, and some traveled quite a distance to do so. The outdoor activities were preceded by open house and open console at the Riverside Theatre in Milwaukee. Visitors to the theatre enjoyed coffee, doughnuts, and guided tours, as well as the chance to hear and play the magnificent 3/13 Wurlitzer.

Back at the Hermes' home, picnickers enjoyed a feast with bratwurst, corn, and all the trimmings (including perfect weather). Gary Hanson led off the open console session as Fred demonstrated the special lighting effects of his basement theatre. Thanks, Fred and Veryl, for a very lovely day!

Our September social took us north to West Bend and the lovely home of Dick Daggett. The organ is a twelve-rank classical hybrid installed in a specially-built music room. Dick played a few selections, both classical and popular, which were followed by open console and refreshments. Many thanks to Dick for his gracious hospitality!

The mighty Riverside Wurlitzer

was heard September 25 as part of two shows given by the Meno-Har-Monee Barbershop Chorus. Gary Hanson played spotlight solos before the shows and during intermission. The audience loved it and even broke into a spontaneous sing-along several times. The organ never sounded better, and the theatre never looked better, thanks to the work done by the Riverside Committee. They not only spruced up the theatre, but also provided technical help during the shows.

Our next show will be at the Avalon Theatre on November 14. The featured artist will be Jerry Nagano making his first appearance in our area. We are looking forward to hearing him.

CARRIE NELSON

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS Boston

617/244-4136 or 617/754-1508

After summer's hiatus, EM-CATOS resumed activities on September 26 at Babson with President Bill Carpenter at the helm. Reports were read, including that of newly appointed secretary, Gordon Creamer.

Tim Bjareby noted that all jobs have occupational hazards, even his as program chairman. The artist of the evening withdrew at the last moment — not an enviable predicament. This forced Tim to keep it "all in the family," and, instead of one organist, we had eight playing members, including Tim with his amusing style imitation of certain members. Even without preparation each gave a creditable performance with the varied stylings showing to good advantage the Wurlitzer's countless palettes of tonal color.

Next month's fall concert series brings Dennis James on October 23 and 24 in his eagerly anticipated first chapter appearance.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

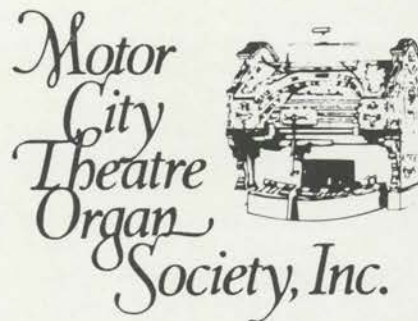
KIWI Auckland, New Zealand 540-919

The date — September 12. The place — Starlight Cinema, Papatootoe. The event — Kiwi ATOS annual organ spectacular when a large and enthusiastic audience listened to members of the chapter on a variety of organs. Members taking part were John Davies, Bernard Strochi, Ian

Johnston, Richard Hore and Bill Mitchellhill. Assisting artist was Petit Ann Croul who gave a bracket of vocal numbers. This annual event helps to keep ATOS in the public eye, and also raises funds to help some deserving charity.

Four years ago, ATOS member Les Stenersen purchased a 2/8 Wurlitzer which was originally in the Regent Cinema in Auckland (see THEATRE ORGAN, Vol. 20, No. 6). Members of Kiwi ATOS, assisted by willing helpers, have now restored this instrument, and at a recent meeting several took the opportunity to play the organ and thrill to the magic sound of pipes. This was preliminary to the inaugural concert, hopefully early in November, when at a gala concert will again be heard the pipes of this wonderful music machine.

NORMAN DAWE



Detroit
313/537-1133

Some 600 conventioners from the Third International Sons of the Desert Convention meeting in Detroit converged on the Redford Theatre for a Laurel and Hardy Film Festival on Friday, July 30. Held on one of our regular bi-weekly movie weekends, the influx of Laurel and Hardy fans swelled our audience to near house capacity.

Arriving at the theatre in vintage motor cars, celebrities included two stars from the films to be shown that evening, Anita Garvin, who struggles valiantly to capture an elusive cherry that has escaped her fruit cup in *From Soup to Nuts* (1928 silent), and Rosina Lawrence, who plays Mary Roberts, the real heiress to the gold mine, in *Way Out West* (1937 sound). Fr. Jim Miller was at the console of the Redford Barton to accompany *From Soup to Nuts* and to provide music for a sing-along as well as incidental music throughout the evening.

The annual chapter picnic was held



Frank Doka (left) and Jerry Muethel have been busy restoring the formerly all-white Punch and Judy Wurlitzer console to its original walnut finish.

(Ray Van Steenkiste photo)



Harry Koenig performed at both the 3/10 Barton and the grand piano during his September program at the Redford Theatre.

(Bill Vogel photo)

at Murray Lake, a private park near Ann Arbor, on the first Sunday in August. Many chapter members took advantage of open console at a Baldwin electronic organ loaned by Smiley Bros. Music Company in Birmingham for the day-long event.

Harry Koenig appeared in concert at the Redford Theatre on September 18. Although most of his program, which consisted of audience-pleasing favorites and old standards, was presented at the console of the 3/10 Barton, Harry also showed his expertise at the grand piano on stage. His pro-

gram was well received by the enthusiastic audience, with proceeds going to the Cancer Research Fund at the Wayne State University School of Medicine.

Sigmund Ross, who began his career sixty years ago accompanying silent films, was the artist at our Fourth Sunday show at the Royal Oak Theatre in July. During his long career, Sig played in most of Detroit's better movie houses.

In August John Steele was featured at the console of the 3/16 Barton in the Royal Oak Theatre for our Fourth

Sunday program. John has played for three ATOS conventions and plays locally at Theater Organ Pizza and Pipes in Pontiac.

Presiding at the console of the Michigan Theatre Barton in Ann Arbor for our August Second Sunday program was veteran theatre organist Warren Colby, who began his career playing for silent films.

Barry Rindhage played for the September Second Sunday show at the Michigan's 3/13 Barton. Barry is from Saginaw and has played for many chapter functions.



Sigmund Ross was the artist at the Fourth Sunday program at the Royal Oak Theatre in July.

(Fred Page photo)



Veteran theatre organist Warren Colby appeared at the 3/13 Barton in the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in August.

(Bo Hanley photo)

Frank Cimmino
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The formerly all-white console of the 2/6 Wurlitzer in the Punch and Judy Theatre in Grosse Pointe is being restored to its original walnut finish by Jerry Muethel and Frank Doka. No First Sunday programs were scheduled at the Punch in August or September.

George Wright will appear at the Redford on November 27, and Ron Rhode and the Ford Chorus are scheduled there on December 11. For more information write: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219.

DON LOCKWOOD

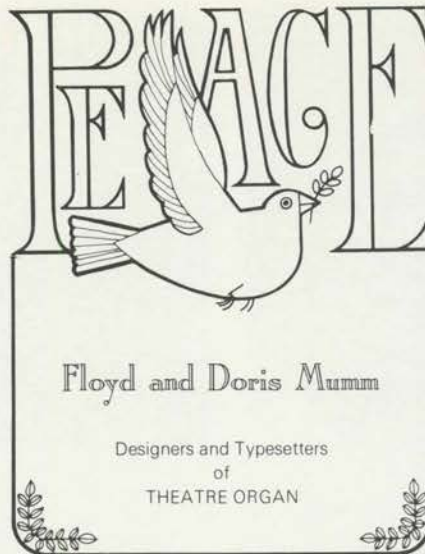


*Nor-Cal
Theatre
Organ
Society*

**San Francisco Bay Area
415/589-6683 or 415/524-7452**

Nor-Cal's August meeting was our annual picnic Sunday, August 15, at the home of Jack Gustafson in San Jose where a 3/10 Kimball/Wurlitzer is installed. Jack kicked off the festivities by opening the console to the membership. Jack is an accomplished organist and his artistry at the console inspired many to have a go at it. The chambers face a large sliding door which was opened to allow the picnickers outside to hear the organ.

Jack Gustafson's parents encouraged him to take piano lessons when he was eight years old. He wouldn't practice, so they sold the piano. When he was a freshman in Elmhurst, Illinois, high school he heard Ethel Smith's "Tico-Tico" record and took organ lessons. He played the Hammond organ in the high school auditorium and by the time he was a senior he helped install the 4/12 Gottfried/Wurlitzer in the Elm Roller



Rink in Elmhurst. He landed the job as resident organist at the rink when he was only seventeen. He later played in an ice rink.

He continued his organ studies with the late Dr. Edward Eigenshenk at the American Conservatory of



"Jack Gustafson Rides Again" at the 4/23 Wurlitzer in Redwood City, California. (Ed Mullins photo)

Music in Chicago. Jack played a number of concerts in the Chicago area and later, in the sixties, moved to California. He played at the Cap'n's Galleys Pizza & Pipes in Santa Clara and Redwood City for several years. He is currently rebuilding, tuning and servicing player pianos. He has three record albums to his credit recorded at Santa Clara, Redwood City and Campbell pizzerias.


Jack returned to Redwood City Sunday, September 19, to play a concert for Nor-Cal. His opening number was "Again," and Gustafson said, "after five years," he was back at this very familiar console. He knew his way around the 4/23 Wurlitzer from the Fifth Avenue Theatre in Seattle.

His rendition of "I Want to Be Happy" was remarkable for his two-handed percussion effect with the Xylophone leading into "Tea for Two" when he played the melody with his left hand using the Piano and Tuba with second touch while his right hand played very intricate embellishments on the Xylophone, ending with a tripletted finale on the Xylophone.

Jack also has a lovely ballad style, as was evidenced in his "Smiling Through." He played a clean melody line and used two-handed portamentos effectively. His program was a well-balanced and well-chosen selection of pieces to satisfy all musical tastes. He played a tribute to the late Princess Grace of Monaco, "True Love." He concluded his program with a rousing Sousa march, "Under the Double Eagle."

We sincerely hope we won't have to wait another five years to get Jack Gustafson back on the bench again. Nor-Cal is indeed grateful to Jack for allowing us to have our picnic at his home and for giving us such a wonderful musical presentation.

ED MULLINS



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It rained on our picnic! We Oregonians never let a little rain stop us, though.

(Claude Neuffer photo)

**OREGON
Portland**

503/244-2141 or 503/253-6874

As customary, no chapter meeting was held in July, being replaced by the National Convention.

On August 29, amid a string of beautiful days, we scheduled our annual picnic at Blue Lake Park, a few miles east of Portland. We were assigned a lovely spot with outdoor tables, benches and trees to provide choice of sun or shade. However, we were betrayed by the weatherman and greeted with a light drizzle as we began to arrive. Then the heavens opened up with a heavy continuous downpour. As we were about to disband, a noble park attendant drove up in a pickup truck and, not only sent us to a nearby covered A-frame building, but also used his truck to move many of our food boxes and our coffee equipment to the protected location. Live electric outlets provided power for heating food and coffee. Such is the nature of our membership that, in spite of the weather and the understandably light attendance, everyone had a wonderful time. Fortunately, we did not have an outdoor pipe organ. It would have

blown bubbles. Thanks to our hero, the park attendant, who rescued us from a total washout.

September 18 and 19 we participated in an organ crawl with our good neighbors to the north, the Puget Sound Chapter. This began Saturday morning at the Olympic Theatre in Olympia, Washington, and featured Andy Crow, the famous Northwest

organist, at his 2/10 Wurlitzer. It is incredible what he can do with only two manuals, using presets and second touch.

Then, by bus and autos, members came down to Portland for an early evening dinner at the Organ Grinder restaurant. There, Paul Quarino was at his best playing the fantastic 4/44 Wurlitzer. No doubt the several ranks of 32'-ers did a good job of shaking down the fine pizza.

The next morning we assembled at the frightful hour of 9:30 at the Oaks Park Skating Rink. Here we heard the 4/18 Wurlitzer with the console enclosed in a small chamber with a glass window and the pipes unenclosed. The organ is suspended on a platform in the center of the rink and roars out in all directions uninhibited by any walls or shutters.

After a fast, stirring performance by veteran staff organist Don Simmons, we traveled across the Columbia River to Uncle Milt's Pipe Organ Pizza Co. in Vancouver. Milt gave us



Paul Quarino plays the Portland Organ Grinder 4/44 Wurlitzer.

(Claude Neuffer photo)



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a history and description of the 3/18 Wurlitzer, after which we were treated to a beautiful and artistic program by Wendy Kieffer. We were then allowed a generous open console session with many members playing.

Then it was back to Portland to the Roseway, the only theatre in Portland with a pipe organ. Here we saw Charlie Chaplin in a silent comedy accompanied by Bob Hansen and entertainment by Gerry Gregorious. The three-manual Morton console is located center stage, and the pipes are on the left side. Several additional ranks are to be added in a chamber being prepared on the right side. A 16' string is to go backstage. All of this will further enhance the organ in the fine acoustics of this theatre.

We are grateful to Puget Sound Chapter for joining with us in this unusual and most enjoyable event.

BUD ABEL

PIKES PEAK AREA Colorado Springs

303/687-6530 or 303/633-4407

The Pikes Peak Area Theatre Organ Society hosted Phil Silberhorn of Lombard, Illinois, at their August meeting at the Colorado Springs City Auditorium. PPATOS members were deeply impressed with the playing skills of young Silberhorn who played a forty-five minute program on the 3/8 Wurlitzer.

Bob Boyer, producer of the society's weekly radio program, "Pipes, Pedals and Fidelity," recorded over three hours of Silberhorn's creative playing for future programs. This alone is quite a credit to Silberhorn as Boyer airs nothing but the finest quality theatre organ music on the program.

Silberhorn graduated from Lombard High School in June, and presently has thirty students under his di-



Don Simmons, at the Oaks Park Rink, plays a lively tune that goes to the feet of Bert Miller, of Vancouver, B.C. (Claude Neuffer photo)



Phil Silberhorn at the Colorado Springs Auditorium 3/8 Wurlitzer.

rection. Without exception, Phil Silberhorn is one of the most gifted artists the PPATOS has seen, and we hope he receives the justly due exposure to join the ranks of other up-and-coming professional theatre organists.

MARTIN G. MEIER

PUGET SOUND Seattle

206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669

September meant a fantastic trip for our group. We hired a bus out of Seattle (some folks drove their own cars) and headed south. First stop, Olympic Theatre in Olympia, program and silent movie with Andy Crow on a Wurlitzer built in 1924 and installed in 1925. The theatre is scheduled to become a Performing Arts Center which should enhance the use

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FRANK CIMMINO
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Bob Hansen at the Roseway Theatre Robert-Morton.



Wendy Kieffer at Uncle Milt's Pizza in Vancouver, Washington.

(Christine Pride photo)

of this pipe organ. Andy's program was varied and competently performed. Also, we enjoyed several vocal solos by Carrie Richardson.

A tour of Tom Solberg's installation came next, and several members shared open console time. The Solbert Wurlitzer originated from the Liberty Theatre in Hoquiam, and in 1930, was expanded to nine ranks and installed in the Fox Theatre in Centralia.

It was a beautiful, sunny, warm afternoon and a great day for the safari to Portland where Paul Quarino and Russ Chilson gave us lots of space music and flashing lights with our pizza at the Organ Grinder. Whatever they are doing there, it must be right because they have people standing in line to get in for several hours on Friday and Saturday nights. The balcony is filled with video games and rides, and clerks are going about selling

tickets. It appeared as though the young people really enjoyed it.

Sunday morning Don Simmons played our concert at Oaks Park Skating Rink. He played as he might for the roller skaters. The pipes are suspended from the roof trusses over the rink. Very impressive sound! This is one of only three pipe organs that remain in roller rinks in the United States.

Wendy Kieffer played the concert at Uncle Milt's in Vancouver, Washington, on a Wurlitzer that came from Seattle's Orpheum Theatre. Wendy played with great authority. She really knows the instrument exceptionally well. Also, it was very obvious that she has been doing her homework. She's an excellent young musician. Following her program, many of us enjoyed the privilege of open console. It's still a great sounding instrument!

Last, but not least, our bus headed to the Roseway Theatre in Portland to hear the eight-rank Robert-Morton there. Gerry Gregorious began with a march, then "Always," and a nice arrangement of "Finger Fling." Gerry



Uncle Milt's in Vancouver, USA, welcomes the Puget Sound Chapter.

(Claude Neuffer photo)



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Gerry Gregorius at the Roseway Theatre in Portland.

(Christine Pride photo)



Lloyd Collins at Dick Lewis's 3/8 Marr & Colton.

(F. R. Gandy photo)

played with a lovely quiet style, and the organ displayed an exceptionally sweet mellow tone. Especially nice was his closing selection of songs from *Porgy and Bess*. Bob Hansen began after intermission again demonstrating the beauty of sound with this instrument. He not only plays well, but is also actively working with the voicing and expansion of this organ. Soon they expect to have eighteen ranks.

Hooray for our bus driver! It was a safe and wonderful journey!

CHRISTINE PRIDE

RED RIVER

Fargo

218/287-2671 or 218/236-9217

Our first business meeting after summer recess was held at Dave Knudtson's home on September 19. We discussed possible projects for the coming year, one of which is a souvenir booklet on the history of the Fargo Theatre. This would be a timely project since the theatre is now a historic landmark on the state level. Another proposal is for a recording by chapter members on the Fargo Theatre Wur-

litzer. Of the eight dressing rooms at the theatre, we are now using five and will make two more usable this fall. The meeting was followed by a report and slides, by Sonia Carlson, on the Detroit Convention and of the Pipes and Pizza Restaurant in Billings, Montana, which opened in 1981. To finish the evening, the chapter watched a video excerpt from their 1981 spring show.

The combination action and the Chrysoglott are installed now in the chapter organ at Weld Hall, Moorhead State University. The large and very heavy Chrysoglott was moved into the chamber in four sections and lifted into place with an electric chain hoist. This is an "economy model," with the Chrysoglott being the only percussion for the present.

SONIA CARLSON

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver

303/343-3930 or 303/233-4716

Our regular meeting was held June 27 at the home of Dick Lewis in Lakewood. After the meeting we had a very charming gentleman entertain us

on Dick's 3/8 Marr & Colton which is installed in a three-car garage and is one of the neatest jobs ever beheld. Our organist of the day was Lloyd Collins from Red River Chapter. Lloyd opened with his background of playing at the Fargo Theatre and then hit all sixty of us between the ears with his regular opening theme coming up on the lift. WOW! He gave us a good hour and a half of some of the finest music in a long time.

On August 15 we held our annual picnic at the home of Jack and Nancy Walden in Loveland. Jack's 2/12 Kimball theatre pipe organ was in excellent shape, as usual. Harry Heth of Houston, Texas, was the organist of the day and really gave us a fine program. Harry came up last year and played on open console, so we invited him back to be the star this year, and star he did. Lunch was potluck, and everyone was pleased and well-fed.

Organ enthusiasts Eric Schröder and Ray Allan of Kynsna, South Africa, paid us a visit in July. Chapter President Guy Powell took them to the Denver Paramount and Aladdin Theatres, and to Dick Lewis's where they saw and played the organs. We



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Ray Krebs at the console, with Dr. John Dapolito looking on.



Wayne and Cheryl Seppala.

had a marvelous time with them, and Guy even took them up into the Rocky Mountains to Berthoud Pass where they had to put on jackets. A far cry from African temperatures.

At our September meeting at the Paramount Theatre, we were pleased to have Ray Young entertain us on the big Wurlitzer. Ray is currently appearing at the big lodge in Estes Park, Colorado. He is well-known in our part of the country because he was one of the featured organists at the Denver Organ Grinder. He plays for a church, teaches, and entertains when not asleep. Great music and entertainment for a Sunday afternoon meeting.

Saturday evening, October 16, we will have Bob Ralston at the console of the Wurlitzer in the Denver Paramount Theatre. Everyone is looking forward to this concert as Bob played in Colorado Springs last year with a tremendous foot-tapping and hand-clapping program.

We have been having all these

"goodies" this year because many chapter folks are pulling together and doing their jobs. Let us hope that 1983 will be another good year for us. We even had Hector Olivera in concert on September 8, doing a special Kawai DX series keyboard concert. Everyone who could get into the Vaughn/Knight Campbell music store auditorium had a wonderful time.

FRANK R. GANDY

SAN DIEGO California









714/489-5539 or 714/692-9194

August 1 was a gala celebration for the world premiere of the Allen model 675 three-manual theatre organ held at the home of Wayne and Cheryl Seppala. Through suggestions advanced by the ingenuity of Wayne to the Allen Organ Company, this exciting instrument was created. The joy of musical expression on this unique Allen was shared by many guests, in-

cluding talented Ray Krebs. Superb performances by Wayne and Cheryl followed. A great arrangement of "Taking a Chance on Love," and Rachmaninoff's "Prelude in G," an excellent representation of the classic sound, were interpreted by Wayne. A romantic interpretation of "Meditation," "Just One of Those Things," and an impressionistic arrangement of "Stardust" were Cheryl's expression in artistry.

September 4 was one of the hottest nights of the year, and it took a brave and dedicated audience to come out to the California Theatre to hear an organ concert. But come they did! And what a treat they had in store! Stan Kann was the organist in a program which pleased the listeners' ears.

Stan, who immediately strikes you with an abundant personality, is a good talker and has a sense of humor. Even his display of odd and old vacuum cleaners, however, could not detract from his well-prepared pro-




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Admiral and Mrs. Roger Paine, who bought the first Allen 675 off the production line.

gram. There was nothing he played that was not familiar, yet the pieces sounded refreshed as we were hearing them again after a long absence from programs. Of all the outstanding pieces he played, one of the best was "Gallop Comedians." Just before closing he played a medley of Victor Herbert favorites which pleased everyone.

A September 26 general meeting was held at the home of Deke and Dottie Warner in Escondido. Deke showed a videotape recording of an appearance by Stan Kann on the Sun-Up San Diego Show the day before his concert. This was followed by open console at Deke's three-manual organ.

JANE K. DAPOLITO
GALEN PIEPENBURG

SIERRA
Sacramento
916/726-5132 or 916/332-2837

June 20 Sierra presented "Emil Martin & Friends" at the Fair Oaks Community Club House. Emil presided at Sierra's 2/9 Wurlitzer with his friends playing drums, trumpet, piano, and two alternating on the

vocals, all coming together for a "pipe organ plus" concept that worked very well. The music was a collection of nuggets from the '20s, '30s and '40s. The positive audience response indicated that mixing pipes plus other instruments should be done more often, particularly in an effort to attract newcomers to our concerts who are not "pre-hooked" on the pipe organ. In publicity it can be billed as an instrumental combo, thus widening the appeal. This show also was Sierra's first experiment at selling food. The club house features kitchen facilities, so a crew headed up by none other than National Vice President Dale Mendenhall served to the concertgoers. Our thanks to Emil Martin for a great show and to Carroll Harris for setting it up and publicity.

With the National Convention always in July, Sierra Chapter takes a mid-summer break until August and our annual picnic. Held this year at the picnic facility just outside the Fair

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Oaks Club House, the pipes were within audible distance of the picnic tables. Following the feast and a brief board meeting, an open console session had several members playing, including Fred Dajas and "old pro" Bud Taylor.

Early in September Sierra's Wurlitzer went up to ten ranks with the addition of a reed best described as a Kinura/Krumet. Perhaps a "Krunura?" Anyway, it adds a nasal-buzzy reed to the original Style E's relatively smooth, some would say dull, specification. Other recently added ranks have been a String and Trumpet.

September 19 was a Sierra Members Concert with our local professionals and advanced hobbyists playing about twenty minutes each. Joy Lindberg did a very nice job at the chapter's 2/10 Wurlitzer, and John Wyatt added a new twist to the "pipe organ plus" idea as he was joined by a banjo player. The duo has had considerable opportunity to work out arrangements as they do their numbers regularly at the Pizza Machine's 2/10 Wurlitzer in Stockton. Also included for this program was chapter comedian Tim Rickman who did his Veg-a-matic demonstration parody called "Sledge-o-matic" with a sledgehammer as the do-all utensil. Tim customized the monologue for his ATOS audience to include how Sledge-o-matic cures bulky magnets, ciphering pipes, stuck keys, etc. It was a fun day with some surprisingly fine organ music, too.

RANDY WARWICK

SOONER STATE
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Members and guests of Tulsa's Sooner State Chapter spent a delightful evening at the home of Perry and Pauline Catts for their August meet-

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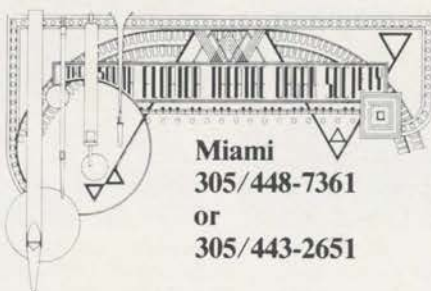
ing. Entertainment was open console on the three-manual Custom Rodgers, performed by several of our playing members. We also heard selections on the Bösendorfer grand piano played by new member Lorene Thomas. The business meeting included a presentation by Vice Chairman Bruce Wilson of the commitment required for installing our club's 3/10 Robert-Morton in the new Vo-Tech High School auditorium. As funds are limited, the chapter is undertaking to do most, if not all, of the work involved. This will entail participation by all members, not just the "dedicated few."

September found us at Central Assembly of God Church to hear a concert by Lorene Thomas on the 4/13 Robert-Morton. She had saved her organ music, from our August meeting, for this occasion. The instrument was formerly housed in Tulsa's Downtown Rialto Theatre. Three ranks have been added to the original theatre installation, but only the Chrysoglott remains of the original toy counter. Lorene's program was delightful and varied, some Richard Purvis selections, lots of George Gershwin, Widor's "Toccata" from his "Symphony No. 5," and Böellmann's "Toccata," all very well played. Lorene's style includes lots of full choruses, an infectious smile, and a bubbling personality.

Chairman Lee Smith announced that our anticipated concert by Rob Calcaterra is to be a reality! Rob, chief organist for Radio City Music Hall in New York City, is to perform on the 4/21 Wurlitzer in Christ Chapel at Oral Roberts University on October 23. As it is university policy not to charge admission to any events held in the chapel, our chapter members raised Rob's fee among themselves by pledges for the entire

amount. We feel this to be an exciting, and rare, opportunity for Tulsans to hear theatre organ, both older people who remember this glorious kind of music and younger ones who don't know what they're missing! And we hope this free concert will turn up other enthusiasts in our area who would like to join our group.

DOROTHY SMITH



Our 1982-83 season got off to a fine start on September 12 with a concert by Lin Lunde in Gusman Cultural Center. This is the old Olympia Theatre in downtown Miami with its original installation 3/15 Wurlitzer with

Piano and 32' Diaphone. Lin played an exceptionally fine concert and the organ sounded great! The theatre is beautiful. It was a bright sunny day and there was plenty of parking space just half a block away, but our audience was rather small. Despite this, it was still a good start because all who did come were very impressed and enjoyed it immensely.

The other concerts we have arranged for this season are: October 19, Rex Koury at André Hall, 4/15 Wurlitzer; December 1, Lyn Larsen at Calvin Jureit's 3/18 Kimball which has been completely rebuilt and revoiced by Dave Junchen; March, Rob Calcaterra at André Hall; April, Karl Cole at André Hall.

December 5 we are planning a large spectacular with the Pro Musica Orchestra at Gusman Cultural Center called "A Night in the Tropics." This will star Hector Olivera with a symphony orchestra in a "pops" concert featuring Latin music. Hector will be performing three major works with



Gusman Cultural Center, Miami, with original 3/15 Wurlitzer, including Piano and 32' Diaphone. Upper right corner of piano visible between chambers on left and proscenium.

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Gusman Cultural Center, Miami. Both chambers on this side, Solo above and Main below. Piano is unenclosed between chambers and proscenium.



Gusman Cultural Center, Miami. Console is now in the first box (originally at right side of orchestra). 32' Diaphone behind sky above console (no shutters).

the orchestra, Gershwin's "Cuban Overture," Rodrigo's "Guitar Concerto," and Gottschalk's "A Night in the Tropics." The rest of the afternoon will be the inimitable Hector.

RALPH ANDERSON



American Theatre Organ Society
VALLEY OF THE SUN CHAPTER
Phoenix
602/963-6259 or 602/955-0395

VOTS members have had a productive and profitable year thus far and are looking forward to an even more exciting fall.

The summer started by members contributing to a successful raffle by selling their share of tickets and then getting together for a fun evening at the Mesa Organ Stop for the drawing.

The June meeting was carpooled to Tucson and was hosted by the resi-

dent organist at Tucson's Organ Stop, Dave Wickerham. We had such a good time that the business meeting was postponed and we proceeded to hear a beautiful (but too short) concert by our host. The rest of June was spent on work nights for the organ at Phoenix College.

Our most devoted members attended the National Convention and the July meeting, later that month, was primarily concerned with letting everyone know just how good a time was had by all and, for future reference, what they had learned about hosting a convention. Hmm — next year San Francisco, but someday Phoenix . . . ?

Meanwhile, back to reality — fellow member and manager of the Mesa Organ Stop, Mike Everitt, had agreed to put on a benefit concert there. August 22 found us with a sold-out crowd and four of the very best organists, Lyn Larsen, Ron Rhode, Walt Strony and Lew Williams, giving us their time, talent and an outstanding program. Another talented organist and entertainer in our area,

David Lindsay, kept us all in stitches with his superb MCing capabilities. After each organist "did his thing," and they had really given us more than we thought possible, there came the "Finale." All the performers tried to show us that their talents extended far beyond playing the pipe organ. With Lew on the piano, Ron on the oboe, Walt on the viola, Lyn on the claviette and Dave on the organ, they played (???) "Yes, We Have No Bananas." You would have to see and hear it to believe it, but they really got an "A" for effort. They were all presented with plaques to express our gratitude and devotion for such a beautiful experience and a superior financial success. It really meant a difference in how well we will be able to work on our projects.

In September we held our annual picnic at the Keith residence in Prescott. This is the time of year when we all are ready for some respite from the valley's 100-degree-plus temperatures, so needless to say, a COOL time was had by all.

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Don Jenks at the console of the 3/12 Moller in the lobby of the Detroit Fox. (Carol Brown photo)



Bill Taber at the Detroit Fox 4/36 Wurlitzer. (Carol Brown photo)



Don and Shirley Jenks hosted our Wolverine Chapter picnic, during which we were entertained on their Rodgers 33-E. (Max Brown photo)



WOLVERINE CHAPTER

of the American Theatre Organ Society

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

Our August meeting took the form of a potluck picnic at the home of our vice chairman, Don Jenks, and his wife, Shirley, in Brighton. We really appreciate the Jenks' sharing their beautiful home and spacious yard for this purpose. A number of our members provided the afternoon's entertainment by taking turns playing the Jenks' lovely-sounding Rodgers 33-E. Not only were our appetites satisfied by the wonderful array of food,

but our musical and social appetites were satisfied as well.

It is always a thrilling opportunity to visit the fabulous Detroit Fox Theatre, so it was indeed exciting to be able to have our September meeting in that magnificent structure! Prior to the concert, Don Jenks did a great job of playing the lobby 3/12 Moller pipe organ. Our special artist for this day was Bill Taber from the Akron, Ohio, area. He presented a very nice concert for us on the beautiful 4/36 Wurlitzer in the theatre. Bill has a delightful record to his credit, "The Civic Sound," recorded on the Akron Civic Theatre's Wurlitzer. After Bill's concert, open console provided several of

our members the rare thrill of playing that gorgeous instrument.

We are truly grateful to the Fox Theatre management for so kindly allowing us the use of the theatre for our chapter members only. Also, we very much appreciate the assistance of Greg Bellamy and his crew in serving as a liaison and in making the theatre and its organs available for our use.

Following our morning program at the Fox, a large group of our members gathered at the Theater Organ Pizza & Pipes in Pontiac for lunch and more organ music provided by John Steele.

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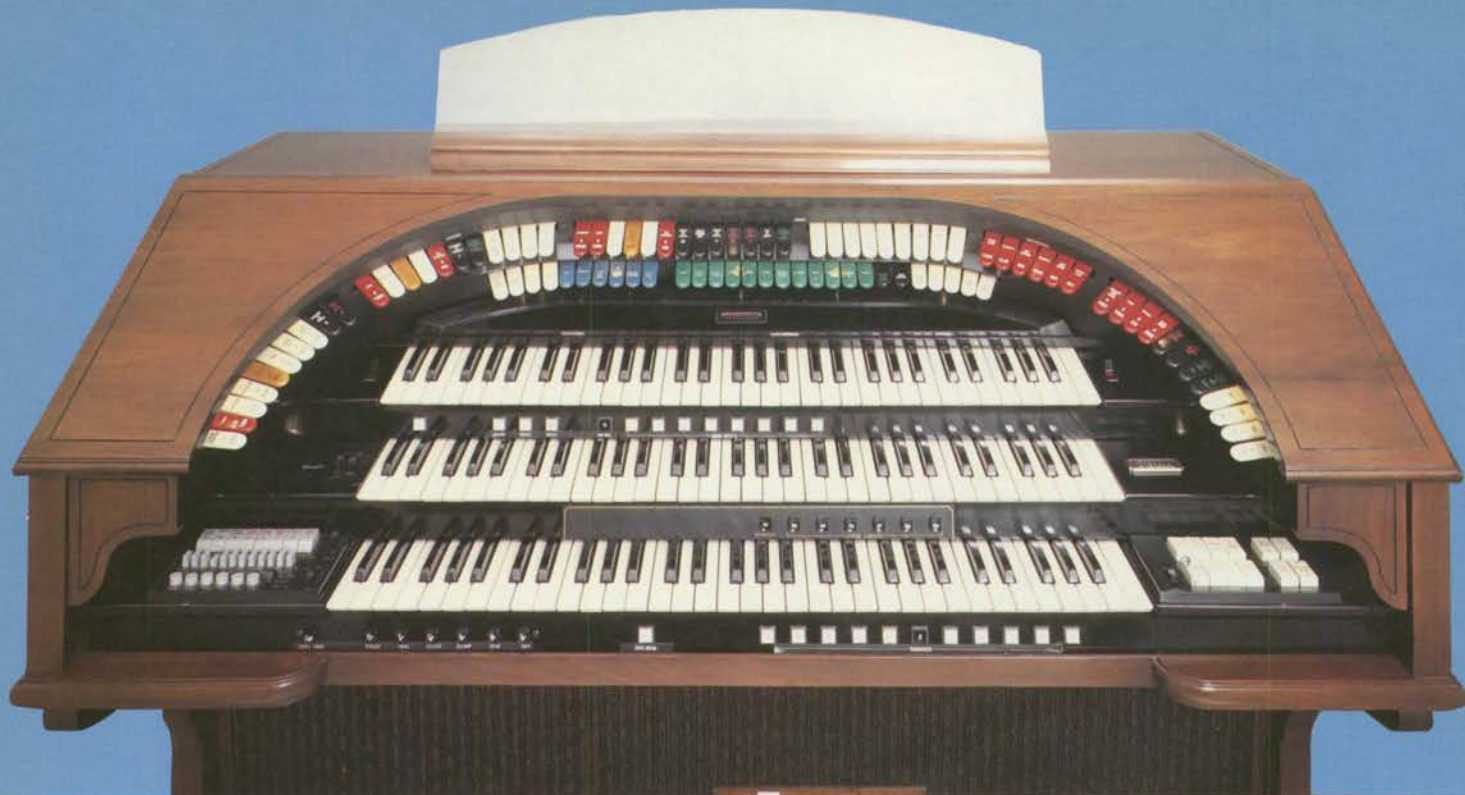
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