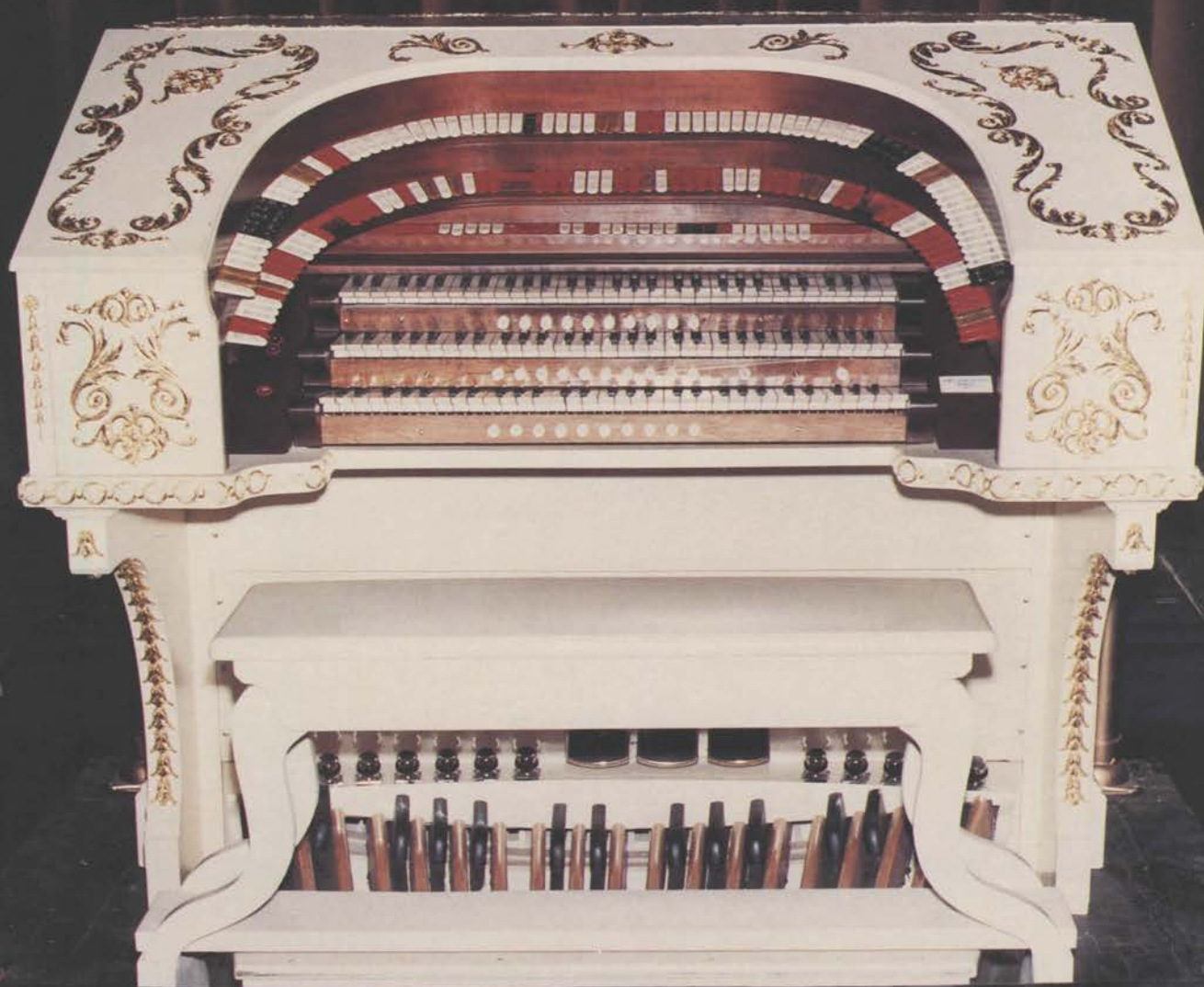


THEATRE ORGAN

January / February 1984

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Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society



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Editorial

Robert M. Gilbert
3448 Cowper Court
Palo Alto, California 94306
Phone: 415/494-1870

Advertising

Len Clarke
1839 Weeg Way
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068
Phone: 312/692-9399

Back Issues & Binders

Vernon P. Bickel
1393 Don Carlos Court
Chula Vista, California 92010
Phone: 619/421-9629

President

Rex Koury
5370 Happy Pines Drive
Foresthill, California 95631
Phone: 916/367-3345

Vice President

Michael L. Ohman
1038 - 560 North, E
Provo, Utah 84601
Phone: 801/377-0008

Secretary

Timothy S. Needler
5440 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46208
Phone: 317/255-8056

Treasurer/Membership

Robert E. McGillivray, Ph.D., CPA
P.O. Box 1651
Huntsville, Texas 77340
Phone: 409/291-2430

Board of Directors

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Corporate Office

American Theatre Organ Society, Inc.
1393 Don Carlos Court
Chula Vista, California 92010

National Headquarters

ATOS
P.O. Box 43
Olivenhain, California 92024
Phone: 619/727-6534

Curator — Archive/Library

Vernon P. Bickel
1393 Don Carlos Court
Chula Vista, California 92010
Phone: 619/421-9629

Journal Staff

Editor — Robert M. Gilbert
Editor Emeritus — W. "Stu" Green
Associate Editors
Lloyd E. Klos — Historian
Grace E. McGinnis — Chapter News
Peg Nielsen — Recordings
Geoffrey Paterson — Concerts
Photographer — Claude V. Neuffer
Art Director — Floyd Mumm
Advertising — Len Clarke
Publisher — Robert E. McGillivray,
Ph.D., CPA

Design & Typesetting

Pica Studio
Livonia, Michigan

Printing & Mailing

Scott Publications
Livonia, Michigan

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Cover Photo

Console of the 3/17 hybrid organ in the Long Center for the Performing Arts, Lafayette, Indiana. See story starting on page five.

Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette

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American Theatre Organ Society



Now that the holidays are past and the tempo of our daily lives is getting back into the slow lane, your President, Officers and Directors of ATOS are once more moving back into high gear with a dedication toward further achievement of the many goals we have set for our Society. As this is written, I have just returned from a very productive series of meetings held by your Executive Committee in San Francisco. Considerable action was taken on several pressing matters, and on others resolutions were prepared for presentation to your National Board. The minutes of these meetings will be published in the next issue of THEATRE ORGAN and I will also go into some detail on all the subjects upon which action is being taken.

At this point I feel that I should touch upon the matter of the lateness you have been experiencing in receiving your copies of THEATRE ORGAN. There have been several factors which have contributed to delays in getting out the last two issues which are too numerous for me to try to detail here. At any rate, we **are** taking steps to get back on schedule and every effort will be made to see that you will very soon be receiving your copies on time.

There is one item I must bring to your attention at this time. It is the matter of MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS. Please, oh please — if you have not sent in your \$20 renewal remittances I must urge you to do so as soon as possible. As our day-to-day financial business is dependent upon income from membership dues it is obvious that our treasurer requires your cooperation in this financing of the needs of our Society. Send your remittances to: Dr. Robert E. McGillivray, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1651, Huntsville, Texas 77340.

On one matter I can express considerable delight — the growth of our Society! While each year we lose a few members for one reason or another, it is pleasing to note that we are gradually accepting more new members than we lose. In this regard, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome to our ranks the new EGYPTIAN CHAPTER, which is located in the Boise, Idaho, area. This chapter's activities will be centered around the 2/8 Robert-Morton in the Egyptian Theatre in Boise, and the enthusiasm being generated by this group is indeed exciting! It is also quite possible that I will be in the happy position of being able to welcome at least two more new chapters before the end of the year.

Again, best wishes for a wonderful 1984 to all of you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rex Koury', written in a cursive style.

Rex Koury, President



The Light at the End of the Tibia

submitted by
Central Indiana Chapter

The trials and tribulations of refurbishing and installing a pipe organ are well known to THEATRE ORGAN readers. Each story has its own distinctive variation. Lafayette, Indiana, now has a success story of its own. This story, to be complete, must include the renovation of the theatre in which the organ is installed as well as the organ itself.

Carroll Copeland, Vice President, Tippecanoe Arts Federation, and Ken Double, with the help of countless others, are proud to show off the new 3/17 instrument now operating in the former Mars Theatre in Lafayette.

The Mars Theatre opened in 1922 with Ed Wynn headlining the stage show and Dean Kendall at the console of a 3/11 Wurlitzer. Seating capacity was just over 1200 for opening night in downtown Lafayette's premier showhouse. Its history is a carbon copy of the history of hundreds of other similar theatres.

Fourth Avenue Amusement, of Louisville, Kentucky, owned the Mars, and was preparing to cease operations. One of the company's owners, Dennis Long, had Lafayette ties. His father went to Purdue University in neighboring West Lafayette, and in his memory, son Dennis offered the theatre to the city as a gift.

Although the Mars was hardly in mint condition, Lafayette Mayor James Riehle realized the need for a performing arts center, as Purdue University's theatres are in constant use. Their 6000-seat Hall of Music is

Facade of the Long Center for the Performing Arts, formerly the Mars Theatre.

(Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette)



too costly and cumbersome to function as a city arts center. The city's symphony orchestra needed a home, as did the Tippecanoe Arts Federation — an umbrella organization governing arts groups in the surrounding area. Mayor Riehle accepted the building.

Copeland, a past chairman of the Central Indiana Chapter of ATOS, and Ken Double immediately saw the opportunity for an organ installation.

The Wurlitzer originally installed in the theatre was purchased by ATOSer Al Mason, and removed from the Mars in the early sixties. It is now playing in the Palace Theatre in Marion, Ohio. Copeland and Double began the search for a new instrument, plus the funding and expertise needed for installation. One of the three searches proved to be easy. Two have been exhausting.

As associate organist on staff at the

Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, Double called on restaurant manager, Bob MacNeur, who with John Ferguson jointly operate Midwest Organ Specialties. They installed the Long Center instrument and did an outstanding job, from initial layout and design right through to final voicing.

The search for funds has been an interesting one. A couple of local concerts on an electronic organ raised some money, but nowhere near the \$50,000-plus needed for purchase and installation.

A Wurlitzer instrument was located in Michigan. It was available for \$17,000. There Warren North of Brookston, Indiana, entered the picture. A good friend of Double and Copeland and an organ enthusiast, North, a retired farmer, bought the Wurlitzer and donated it to the city. It needed work, but at least they had an instrument. This 2/13 Wurlitzer was originally installed in 1914 in the Criterion Theatre in New York City.

In 1979, with the theatre in need of major renovations, a \$1,000,000 bond issue was proposed, with \$40,000 earmarked for installation of the organ. After months of work and preparation, and community support, a technical flaw in city ordinances prevented the bond issue from passing. This proved to be a serious blow, not only to the organ project but to the operation of the theatre as well. Nonetheless, shows continued to be booked, the symphony performed, and the building functioned, but without an organ. The project took a prominent spot on the back burner.

Early in 1981, the project got a shot in the arm. It was discovered that an organ was available as a donation, an instrument in the estate of an Illinois man, Ron Scranton, who had passed away in 1980. Ron's widow was seeking to dispose of the organ. Copeland and Double quickly inspected the instrument. What was found was amazing; two consoles including a three-manual Morton that was partially rebuilt, with completely rebuilt chestwork, nearly 20 ranks of pipes, plus percussion, toy counter and more. The gift was accepted gladly. Double and Copeland were fortunate to get the organ installed and playing, and this gave the entire Long Center renovation project a boost.

Their plan called for combining the best parts of both organs, selling off some parts for revenue, plus trading



View of stage and front of the house with the organ console up in concert position.
(Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette)

View of the rear of the house, Long Center.
(Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette)





into place.

The 3/17 hybrid organ now shapes up as follows:

CHAMBER ANALYSIS

Main Chamber (left)

Tibia Clausa, 85 pipes	Marr & Colton
Vox Humana, 61 pipes	Kimball
Tuba Horn, 61 pipes	Wurlitzer
Concert Flute, 97 pipes	Marr & Colton
Salicional, 73 pipes	Wurlitzer
Celeste, 61 pipes	Wurlitzer
Clarinet, 73 notes	Peterson Electronics
Open Diapason, 73 pipes	Marr & Colton
Chrysoglott, 49 notes	Robert-Morton
Bass Drum	} Robert-Morton
Tympani	
Tom-Tom	
Crash Cymbal	
Tap Cymbal	
Wood Block	
Tambourine	
Castanets	} Midwest Organ (new)
Brush Cymbal	
Roll Cymbal	

Below: Close view of the right side of the stage and chamber area, showing the beautiful detailing.

(Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette)

Above: Ken Double at the console for the dedication concert. (Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette)

parts to Midwest Organ Specialties to help offset the costs of installation. Despite this, there was still a need for funds. Help arrived on two fronts. The first was through the *Lafayette Journal and Courier* newspaper. Its publisher, Mal Applegate, arranged a Gannett Foundation grant of \$8000. Secondly, through the diligent efforts of Copeland, the new Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission provided \$10,000. Members of the Commission saw a functioning arts center downtown as a benefit to the city and fortunately believed the organ project to be a benefit to the center.

After four years of agonizing over money, parts, the building, after trips all over the Midwest, after long distance phone calls all over the country, the pieces of the puzzle fell together. The people to install it, the plans for installation, and the funding needed to get the job done were at hand.

In November of 1981, General Builders of Lafayette did an immaculate job of restoring the chambers. They donated \$6000 worth of professional work in preparation for the installation. This company's donation was just one of a number of such gifts. In December, the wind lines went in and the blower was installed. On January 4, 1982, the first pieces were set in the chamber. Bob MacNeur and Jess Jude, of Midwest Organ Specialties, hauled the pipework and chests, reservoirs and tremulant



Shuffle
String Bass, 32 notes

Midwest Organ (new)
Peterson Electronics

Solo Chamber (right)

Tibia Clausa, 97 pipes
Vox Humana, 61 pipes
Viol d'Orchestre, 73 pipes
V d'O Celeste, 61 pipes
Post Horn, 61 pipes
Kinura, 61 pipes
Orchestral Oboe, 61 pipes
Brass Trumpet, 61 pipes
Wood Diaphone, 18 pipes
Xylophone, 37 notes
Glockenspiel, 30 notes
Chimes, 25 notes
Peterson solid-state relay and combination memory unit

Robert-Morton
Wurlitzer
Robert-Morton
Robert-Morton
Gottfried
Dennison
Wurlitzer
Wurlitzer
Robert-Morton
Wurlitzer
Wurlitzer
Wurlitzer

These ranks, plus traps and percussions are jammed into chambers where just 11 ranks were housed before. Those narrow spaces, plus the big swell shade openings, combined with the magnificent acoustics of the balconied house have produced a dynamic sound that is exceptional.

Sights were set on opening concerts

Solo Chamber, Long Center.

for February 25 and 26, 1983. Ken Double was the artist at the console on both nights, playing to full houses.

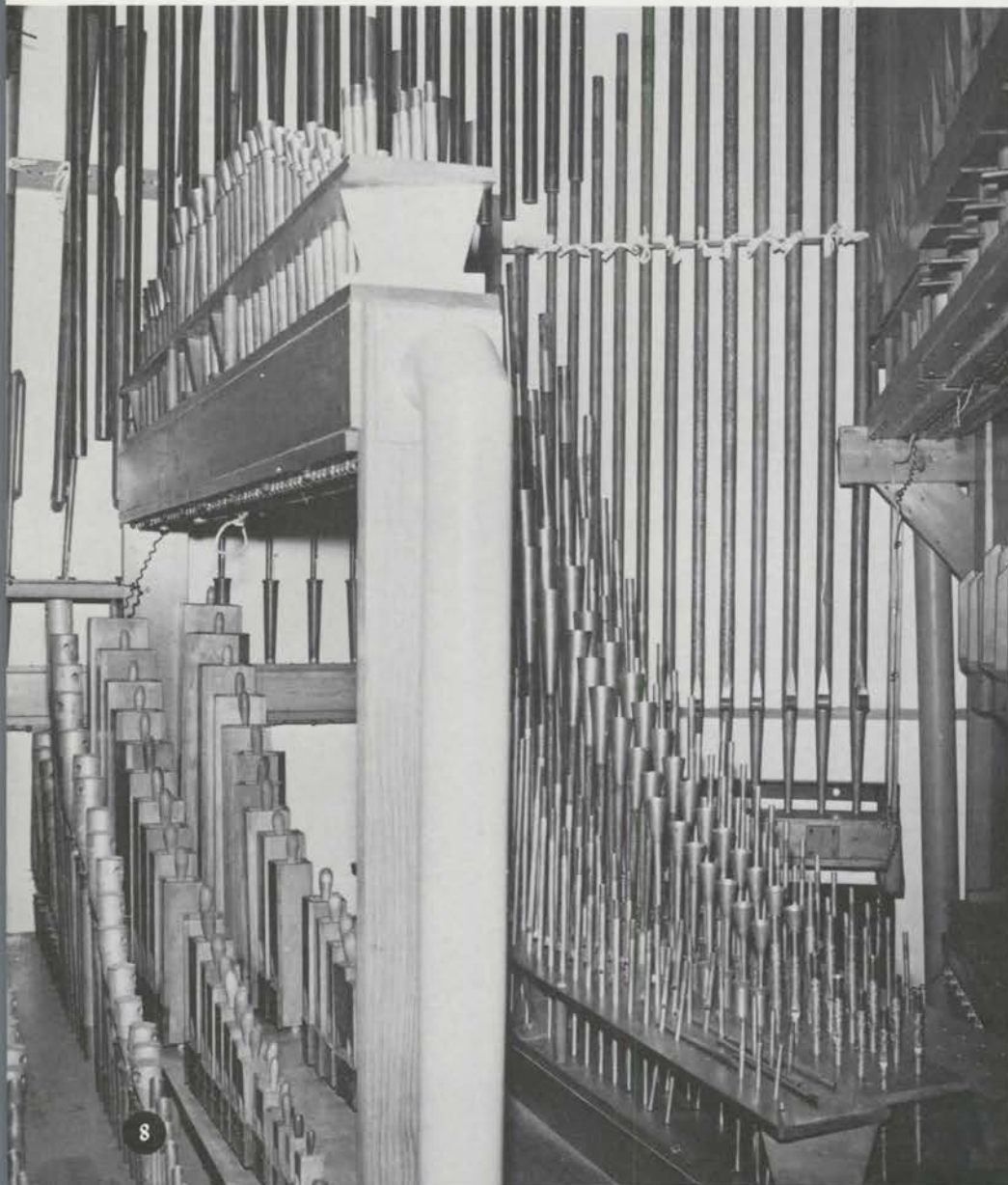
The emotional wear and tear on the people involved in such a project is tremendous. Mere words can't describe the joy experienced when a letter from the Gannett Foundation says, "Yes, you can have \$8000." Or, conversely, the disappointment experienced when prior to that Gannett letter, it's wondered if the \$200 needed to rent that truck to haul pipework from Illinois to Lafayette is available. Nonetheless, Double, Copeland, and all concerned feel tremendously satisfied in accomplishing this project.

While there are two ranks yet to be completed, when it is finished, Lafayette will have a great instrument to show off for years to come to Hoosiers in the area, and to theatre organ fans from all over the country. □

(Photo by Camera Craftsmen, Lafayette)



Main Chamber, Long Center. (Photo by Gene Ward)



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LANCE JOHNSON

a multi-talented man

by Grace E. McGinnis

Lance E. Johnson, the technical expert who answers your questions in **THEATRE ORGAN**, has achieved national prominence for his work with theatre organs. The story of this multi-talented gentleman, however, has its beginning in a small town in Minnesota where he first became intrigued with the sound of pipes while still in grade school. Lance's chosen profession of organ builder and restorer began as a childhood dream when he sat in the pew behind the organist in Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Fergus Falls. He knew then that he wanted to play that organ, and he knew that he wanted to give it its voice. Today the Johnson Organ Company, the Fargo organ building and maintenance firm that Lance established in Fergus Falls in 1954, and moved to Fargo in 1964, is in the forefront of what has become a major revival in its field.

When Lance was ten he asked the organist at his church to give him lessons and was turned down. No organ playing, he was told, until he had mastered the piano. "I didn't like piano," he says, "I took lessons for three or four years and dreaded every one of them. Finally, I quit."

About the time this organist refused him lessons a second time, Lance discovered the organs in the showroom of the Roy Olson Music Store. Every Friday night during junior high school, while his friends were going to movies, Lance could be found playing the organs on the sales floor. "I must have driven them crazy," he speculates, "but no one ever threw me out."

Lance recalls that Mrs. Dorothy Preus, the organist at the First Lutheran Church in Fergus Falls, was flabbergasted when she learned that his own church organist would not give him lessons, and she offered to start him as a student. This was, according

to Lance, a turning point for him and he found himself in seventh heaven even though the organ, a 1926 3/16 Holtkamp, was "certainly not acceptable tonally as organs built today."

About this same time, Lance's parents gave him an old reed organ for Christmas, and wisely bought another as a spare. "My father and I took one apart in the basement to see how it worked," Lance recalls. "We tore it down, modernized and motorized it, and got it working again." The word spread that this young man was capable of restoring reed organs, which were becoming popular as antiques,

and Lance found himself swamped with work. He made himself a toolbox from an orange crate, printed some cards, and he was in business.

He began his work with pipe organs in much the same way. When he was at North Dakota State University he bought an old 2/3 Barton for \$100 from radio station WDAY in Moorhead. His mother was horrified when he tried to sneak the nearly unrecognizable worn-out parts past her and into the basement. He recalls that she referred to it as "all that kindling." That "kindling" took Lance three days and nights to assemble, and launched him into organ building. "Ninety percent of what I've learned over the years has been in the same way," says Lance, "tackling a job and learning from it." Lance had discovered theatre organ music on records a few years earlier, and learned to play the WDAY instrument by imitating performances by George Wright and others.

Music had not been his choice of major, however, when he enrolled at North Dakota State University after graduating from high school in 1956. "I was looking for something in

Lance tuning his residence theatre organ in 1958. The Barton 2/3 was installed in his parent's home in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.





Lance rebuilding a three-manual Wurlitzer console in 1976.

music and somehow connected with broadcasting, so I went into electrical engineering. Everybody was talking about electronics in those days." Lance became disillusioned with engineering because there was no music in the curriculum, and he found himself spending his time drawing up stop lists for organs, reading books about organs and listening to records of organ music. He also became involved with the campus AM radio station, first as news director and then as a disc jockey. He recalls that the station manager would not let him air theatre organ music.

About this time, another opportunity opened for Lance. He was asked to teach organ at the same music store he had haunted while in junior high school. This experience made him realize that an education in music was what he wanted so he enrolled in Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where he received his Bachelor of Music degree in classical organ.

Never one to idle away his time, Lance continued to rebuild and service pipe organs during his college years. While in his last year at Concordia, he was installing a 20-rank organ in his own church and carrying 24 credit hours. "It took nine months to build, and that organ is still one of the finest things I've ever done," he says. "Even today I'd have a hard time matching it. That Bethlehem Lutheran Church organ just worked magic."

Lance's first theatre organ job was helping Gerhart Ephart install the old Minnesota Theatre Wurlitzer Publix No. 1 in the Reiny Delzer home in Bismark, North Dakota, in 1960. Ephart was a stern taskmaster and every facet of this installation was professional in the strictest sense. "If any part of my work did not meet his standards, he made me do it over," says Lance. "He was fresh over from Germany and adhered to the highest standards of excellence."

Since 1958, Lance has built organs for churches in the six upper Midwest states and band organs which are now spread around the world. At one time he built band organs for G. W. MacKinnon who was the largest dealer in automated musical instruments in the world. After he graduated from college, he joined M. P. Möller Inc., not to build organs, but to sell their models in the Dakotas. While with Möller he studied reed voicing with Adolph Zajic and Homer Lewis so he could repair reeds and become more proficient in voicing. He also learned about flue voicing from Möller's Eddie Olson. "However," Lance says, "I was happier building my own organs, which is the basic reason I left Möller after two years."

In 1967, Lance borrowed money to build two demonstration organs and opened his first shop in Moorhead. The year before he had headquartered in the basement of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church parsonage in Fargo, where he was building his first organ for a Fargo-Moorhead congregation. These two demonstration organs, plus the St. Matthew's installation, spread the word. "I was deluged," he recalls, "and for a while I was signing a contract a month and employed three or four full-time helpers." He adds, "It's been the same ever since, except during times of recession. When the area's economy suffers, the organ business is devastated."

The Johnson Organ Company is located today in Fargo. Its basement shop area is filled with woodworking tools and materials which Lance first mastered in his uncle Orlyn Pederson's cabinet business in Fergus Falls. Several reed organs stand there awaiting restoration. "I'll never refuse to work on them," Lance vows. "The lowly reed organ is responsible for where I am today."

"Pipe organ technology really has changed very little since they were developed in the early Renaissance," he adds. "An organbuilder of today can recognize and work on pipe organs four or five hundred years old. The materials may have changed, and some electronics have been added, but the principles remain very, very similar."

The work at Johnson Organ Company is about evenly divided between rebuilding and new construction. Organ cases, pipe chests, reservoirs and



Lance at the three-manual Barton at Bud's Roller Rink in 1965. The organ was his former residence 2/3 Barton increased to 3/7, with console by Johnson Organ Company.

some consoles are built by the Johnson company. Wood pipes are made by Gerald Schjelderup, who operates his own pipe-making business in the Johnson shops. Metal pipes are custom-made to Lance's specifications in West Germany or by several East Coast American firms. The mouths are cut and pipes tuned at Johnson's.

Final tonal finishing takes place after an organ is installed. Lance spends several weeks at the church producing the particular sound he's heard in his mind. "No two organs sound just alike, and no two organbuilders do their tonal finishing in quite the same way," he says. "A fine

Lance at the 3/9 Wurlitzer in the Fargo Theatre.





Complete shop drawings are made for each organ project before construction begins.



Craven Nichols working on a new reservoir.

organist could possibly recognize the work of one organbuilder or another, but the differences are more apparent to builders themselves." Today, more than 80 churches hear music from organs designed by Lance and built by his firm.

Best known of Lance's many contributions to the world of theatre organ is his work with the Fargo Theatre and the seminal role he has played, along with Ted Larson and Dave Knudtson, in bringing silent films with organ accompaniment back to life in Fargo. Lance had noticed the theatre's Wurlitzer deteriorating in obscurity when he took a date to the movies while in college. He wanted to buy it, so the manager let him look at it. He recalls that the console was in incredibly bad condition — dirty beyond belief. It hadn't been touched since the last time it was played in the 1940's. "I found the blower in the basement," Lance remembers, "and started it up with a wheeze and a funny noise. While I went upstairs to check the pipes, it started to smoke. The manager could smell it, and you

know how deathly afraid the theatre business is of fire. He rapidly showed me the door and wouldn't let me back." Lance tried the next manager several years later, but he was more negative so Lance again postponed his quest.

In 1973, Lance happened to meet a fellow theatre buff, Dave Knudtson, who had just moved from Grand Forks to Fargo to be program director for KTHI-TV. Dave had an advantage which Lance didn't, a membership in the stagehand's union. They asked the current manager of the Fargo Theatre to lunch and made their pitch. The local chapter of ATOS wanted his permission to restore and play the organ at absolutely no cost to him. He agreed. "The very next night Dave and I rescued the pedal board from the popcorn and started the organ up after the last show. Only three notes played. It was in miserable condition, but Dave and I had come too far to quit, and we pledged to make it play."

"The key contacts were virtually insulated with dirt," says Lance,

"and it was so far out of tune it sounded like two cats with their tails tied together. I got out my vacuum cleaner, and Dave went to work on the console. By 4:00 a.m. we had it playing. It sounded horrible, but now we knew we were its masters." They slept all day and returned after the second show the next night. "We got some more dead notes out and did some touch-up tuning. Dave's a real organ buff. He announced 'This is a magnificent instrument! The public has to hear it!'"

Lance had already made a contact with the area's premier classic film expert, Ted Larson of Moorhead State University. Ted had asked Lance to play *The Phantom of the Opera* back in 1970, and when Lance and Dave had the Fargo Theatre Wurlitzer in playing condition, their first thought was of Ted. "He hit the ceiling," Lance says. "He had been interested in doing something like this in the Fargo Theatre all his life."

The first silent film night sponsored by the ATOS chapter was in 1973. The program included a Harold

Lance's son, Mike, preparing low pressure principal pipes for voicing.



Routing pallet slots in pallet and slider chest. Johnson Organ Company uses this type of chest on all their church instruments.





Lance and his sister, Sonia Carlson, working on the junction board for the Weid Hall (Moorhead State University) theatre organ owned by the Red River Chapter.



Gerald Schjelderup of Artisan Builders (operating in the Johnson shop) sanding new Tibia pipes.



Lance working on the 2/7 hybrid organ in his home in Dilworth. The pipe chamber occupies the front sleeping porch.

Lloyd comedy, organ solos and an old-fashioned sing-along with Lance at the console. "I'll never forget that moment," Lance says simply. "We sold every seat in the house to hear an organ that hadn't been touched for 30 years . . . because they'd said there was no interest in it."

That Lance has many talents is evidenced by a facet of his business which would not ordinarily be associated with organs. He restores classic wooden speedboats! His 1946 Century Seamaid is elegant evidence that

he does this well, too. It has placed highly among Twin Cities antique boat enthusiasts at exhibitions. "The skill in working with wood is really the same that I use in building organs," he contends. "Restoring classic boats requires the same machinery, same wood, same precision woodworking, plus lots of time and patience." This, for Lance, is a labor of love. After a full day of work on organs in the shop, Lance and one or another of his sons often return to work on boats — their own or for

others. "I restored my first classic boat about ten years ago when the recession had cut into my business so deeply that I'd have done anything," he says. "These wooden speedboats haven't been built for 20 or 25 years since fiberglass became the standard material. All the people who once could work on them just aren't around anymore."

Lance is a director in the national organization of classic Century boat owners and hobbyists, and has organized several shows and boat parades

Larry Moen wiring new magnets into an old Wanger in theatre organ.

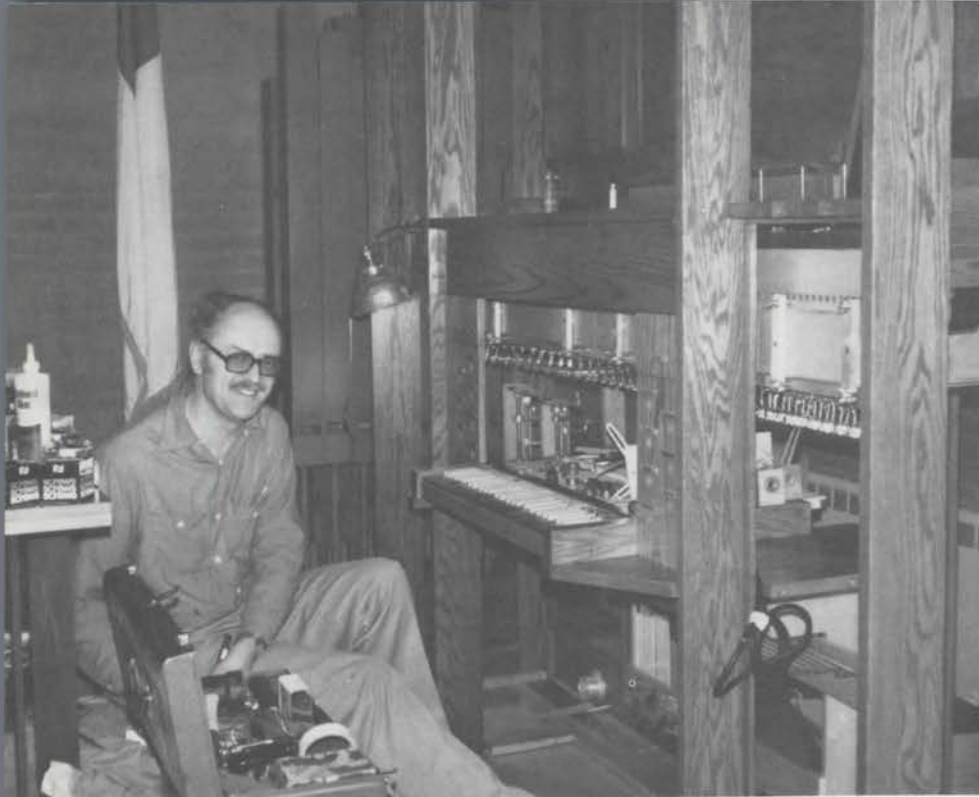


Lance working at tracker voicing machine.



Head Voicer Craven Nichols at the voicing machine. Old Peterson tuner on wall is wired into voicing machine to facilitate rough tuning.





Above: Assembling tracker organ at Dilworth Lutheran Church, Dilworth, Minnesota.

in his area. But he does not limit himself here, either; he is a sailboat enthusiast, too, and spent ten years as head instructor of the Sailing School operated by the Pelican Lake Yacht Club. He also taught non-credit courses in sailing at Moorhead Area Vocational-Technical Institute from 1970 to 1978, writing his own curricula for beginning and intermediate sailing. Lance applied his ingenuity to sailboats, too; a device for controlling the sail, called a "crank cunningham," is his invention.

Specification of Tracker-action Organ, Dilworth Lutheran Church

Manual

Spitzflöte (54 pipes)	8'
Dulciane (54 pipes)	8'
Oktav (54 pipes)	4'
Flautino (54 pipes)	2'
Mixtur III (162 pipes)	
Zimbelstern	

Pedal

Gedacktbas (30 pipes)	16'
Manual to Pedal coupler	

Lance met his wife, Judy, while he was playing his restored WDAY organ at Bud's Roller Rink in Moorhead (he played there from 1963 to 1973). She came to the rink with some people he knew, and when he asked her what her husband did for a living, she replied that she was recently widowed and would Lance like to see a picture of her five children. Overcom-

ing his initial reluctance to date a woman with five children, Lance invited Judy to go sailing the next week. Six months later they eloped to South Dakota. When they came home the children surprised them with a cake they had baked themselves. Within a week they had all come down with chicken pox. After this auspicious beginning, Lance subsequently adopted all of the children, and in 1977 their son Lance II (Skip) was born. Skip is a true theatre organist, according to Lance, and loves to improvise, especially on his favorite stop, the Chryso-glott. The Johnson's first child, Nichole, was killed in a traffic acci-

Below: The 1/8 tracker-action organ built by the Johnson Organ Company for the Dilworth Lutheran Church. The facade contains polished aluminum pipes from the Spitzflöte. The case is made of red oak; manual keys have rosewood naturals and hard maple sharps. Manual stops divide at tenor B/middle C. The pedal rank, located at the left side of the case, uses electric action.





Skip Johnson, age 5, at the organ in the Johnson home.

dent in 1975. Besides Skip, the family includes Marilou, 21; Michael, 20; Gregg, 18; Suzanne, 16; and Joe, 14.

Guests at the Johnson home in Dilworth use the back door instead of the front because the front porch is a full pipe organ chamber. "Playing is a wonderful way for me to work out problems," says Lance. "Theatre organ is basically improvisation, and it's a fine form of self-expression."

In 1973 Lance was invited to attend

Model 165 Band Organ Specifications

Melody (22 notes)

Flute	8'
Violin	8'
Viol. Celeste	8'
Violin	4'
Brass Piccolo	4'
Fife	2'
Clarinet	8'

Counter-melody (14 notes)

Brass Trumpet	8' (hooded)
Bariton	8'

Accompaniment (10 notes)

Flute	8'
Diapason	4'
Violin	2'

Bass (6 notes)

Flute	8'
Diapason	4'
Trombone	8' (hooded)

Percussion (22 notes)

Glockenspiel	4'
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Traps

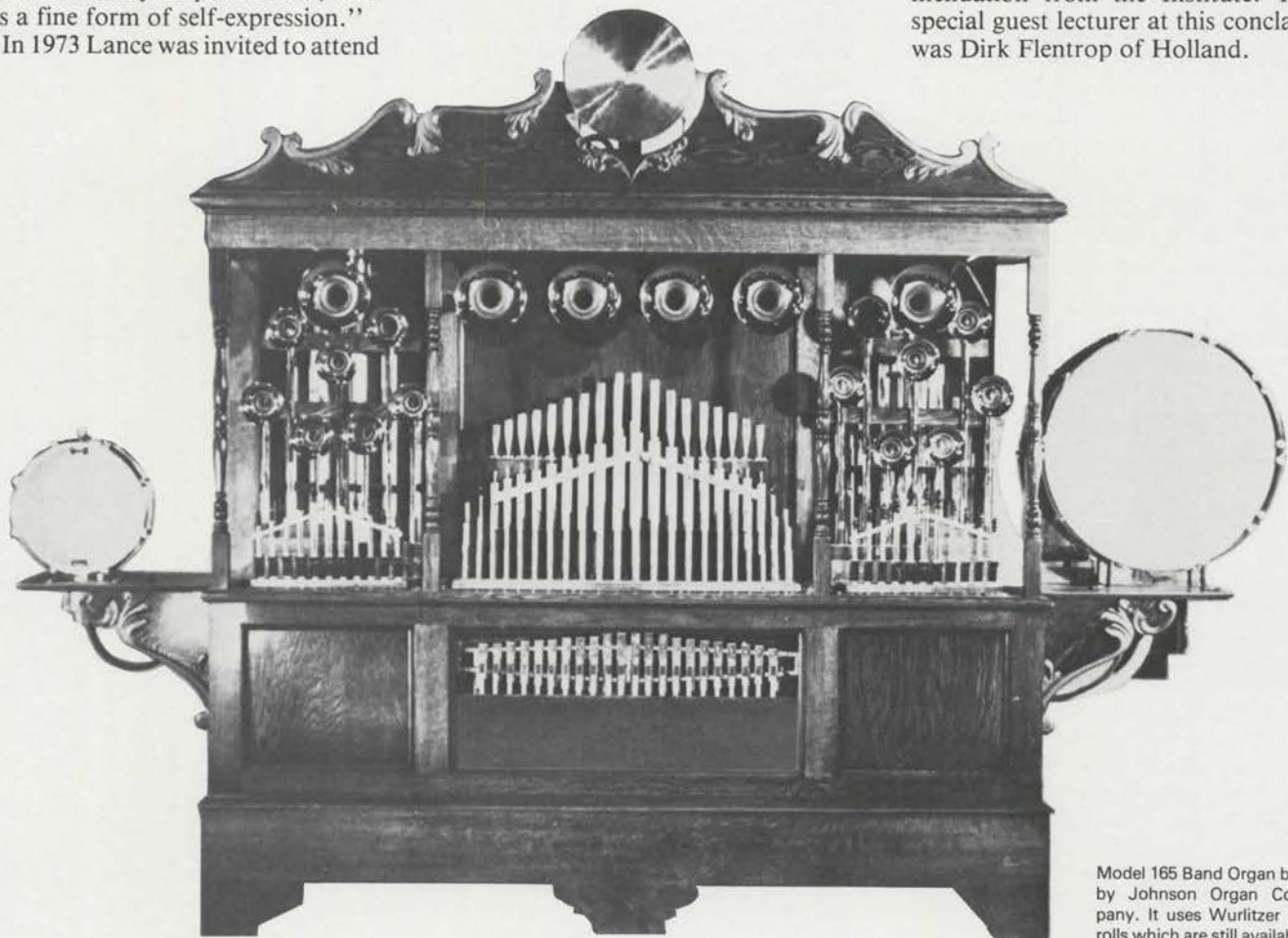
Bass Drum
Snare Drum
Triangle
Cymbal
Castanets

The organ uses open toe voicing on 8" wind. Reeds and wood violins for band organs are made by Johnson Organ Company.



Son Mike restoring a 1939 Chris-Craft mahogany in-board speed boat for Johnson Boat Service, which handles restoration of speed boats and sales for Johnson (no relation) Sailboats of White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

the first convention of what is now known as the American Institute of Organbuilders. The meeting was held in Washington, D.C., and Lance was not certain that it would be worth his time to attend. Apparently it was though, as he was elected to the first board of directors and participated in the writing of the bylaws. In 1978, while serving as the AIO National Convention Chairman, he was elected Vice President and received a commendation from the Institute. The special guest lecturer at this conclave was Dirk Flentrop of Holland.



Model 165 Band Organ built by Johnson Organ Company. It uses Wurlitzer 165 rolls which are still available.

Lance has been a member of the American Guild of Organists since 1960 and serves on their Professional Concerns Committee. He does not play church organs anymore, however, because, as he says, "I am not willing to spend enough time working up music. I would rather pound on the theatre organ and play my own arrangements."

Lance has also been consulting and working with Ron Bishop, who is the chief maintenance man for the Wurlitzer in Radio City Music Hall. His company produced two new sets of pedal board sharps, made of rosewood-capped walnut, for this organ. Lance spends one week each year in New York working with Bishop on this magnificent instrument.

And we're not through yet! Lance's first book was published in November, 1982, and at the time of this writing is two-thirds sold out. This book is about the cyclone of Fergus Falls, Minnesota, which happened in 1919.

Building and rebuilding pipe organs, band organs and speedboats; playing the theatre organ; teaching sailing; writing for THEATRE OR-



Johnson family portrait. Back row: Gregg, Lance and Michael. Middle: Suzanne, Judy and Joe. Front: Skip (Lance II) and Marilou.

GAN; writing books; raising a family; serving the AGO and AIO; and, occasionally, playing for his own pleasure all combine to make Lance Johnson a truly multi-talented, interesting individual who speaks for us all when he says, "The organ provides a

magnificent heritage of music. When you're indoctrinated with it as a child, it stays with you for a lifetime."

(Some of the material in this story was adapted from an article by Nancy Hanson in the Fargo, North Dakota, Guide, October, 1981.) □

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THEATRE ORGAN CONCERT REVIEWS

by Grant I. Whitcomb

Considering the large number of reviews of theatre organ presentations that have been written over the years, very little has been said on the subject of how reviews should be written — or, by whom, for that matter. Nearly a dozen years have passed since we were admonished in these pages to “tell it like it is” in such reviews. In spite of this sincere advice, many reviews still fall short of this ideal. The questions which must be answered are why this should be, and what can be done to mature the writing of reviews.

If it were possible to deal intelligently with only the second of these questions, this article could have been entitled “How to Write Theatre Organ Reviews.” Certain guidelines could be established in the hope that they would be followed and the problem would be almost solved. Unfortunately, the world of theatre organ is far too complicated and too *young* to withstand such a simplistic approach. Although unique in its own way, theatre organ music has had to evolve just as all forms or styles of music have had to begin with small, select audiences. The music we call “classical,” for lack of a better term, was originally played before members of nobility in palace drawing rooms long before public symphony concerts were envisioned.

Jazz was originally performed for the benefit of a few aficionados in the gin mills of New Orleans and Chicago a score of years before it arrived at Carnegie Hall. And so it is with the evolution of the theatre organ concert.

Before attempting an analysis of theatre organ concert reviewing, it is advisable to establish some historical perspective in order to arrive at a definition of what constitutes a valid concert in the 1980's. It may surprise some people to learn that the presentation of two-plus hours of popular and light classical music on a theatre

organ is a relatively new idea which has come about as a direct result of renewed interest in this instrument and its music. Although ATOS and its chapters are largely responsible for this format, particularly in connection with National Conventions, several other groups are also involved. There are numerous local organizations which have transplanted theatre organs to high school auditoriums, municipal facilities, and private theatres and clubs. In addition, there are those all-too-few movie palaces that have been restored with their original organs intact. These types of facilities have made it possible to present concerts as we know them today.

Originally, the theatre organ was not developed as a concert instrument. It was designed to substitute for and augment an orchestra for the accompaniment of silent films and live stage presentations such as vaudeville. Those famous organists whose names appear in the ATOS Hall of Fame did not play *concerts* during the silent film era. They played overtures, interludes, and the score for the film being shown. In a sense, the theatre organist's solo performance was one of the “acts” in the shows of that era, as indicated in the printed programs from the larger theatres. Though most of these famous organists were stars in the true sense of that word, they were seldom seen or heard as individual entertainers for more than 15 or 20 minutes at a time. Finally, the economics of theatre operation absolutely precluded any possibility of having a couple of hours of pure theatre organ music in prime time.

These short interludes or mini-concerts, however, were instrumental in creating a love for theatre organ music which survived in the memories of many people during the period of inactivity that was to follow. In the relatively short history of the theatre organ, use of this instrument began to decline almost at the moment it

peaked. With the advent of “talkies,” the economics of theatre operations, which had been responsible for the development of the organ as a money-saving device (substituting for an orchestra) now reversed, and both the organ and organist became a pure expense. All of this was taking place just as the “Great Depression” was beginning to affect every facet of society. Although most of the theatres remained intact during those years, theatre organs fell into disuse as the continuous double feature, “Screeno,” and dinnerware giveaways replaced all forms of live entertainment. With the exception of a few major houses in the largest cities who could afford to employ organists for sing-alongs, or interludes between shows (while one audience exited and another found seats), most theatre organists had to abandon their profession or go into radio, hotels, night clubs (playing electronic instruments), churches or teaching. In many cases it was a combination of all of these.

All of this background information is needed in order to understand what happened next. As the depression, World War II and the “New Look” passed into history, the status of theatre organs remained unchanged. They were, for the most part, silent in theatres that were then surviving quite well — TV being in its infancy. However, with the advent of the 1950's, theatres and their organs began to disappear from the scene. This unfortunate activity began slowly, but was destined to accelerate rapidly and ultimately would engulf even the great movie palaces during the next decade. At the same time, however, there was a slight stirring here and there as a handful of theatre organ enthusiasts began to communicate by newsletter, and, finally, face to face in the more populated areas as they learned of one another's existence. Their zeal knew no bounds as they began to beg, cajole and petition theatre owners or managers to permit rejuvenation of their instruments. The reaction of theatre people ranged from total disinterest to full cooperation, but the average attitude was one of amused tolerance toward these “organ nuts.” The enthusiasts accepted this appellation without resentment and even wore the badge proudly.

We are now ready to set a fictitious but typical scene for an early theatre organ event and its write-up. After

several months of ringing out wires from cut cables, patching leather, soldering broken wind lines, and removing rodent droppings from the solo manual, etc., the restoration crew working on the Majestic 3/17 Wurlitzer has announced that nine ranks are now playable. Although the combination action is inoperative, stops can be set up by hand. Because the 42 members of ATOE in this large mid-western city were spread out over a wide area, it was decided to have an open console meeting before snow or holiday obligations would interfere with attendance. Also, the program chairman had been in touch with Charlie Stonefinger (currently playing at the Maxwell House) who said he could drop by after work on a Monday morning and render a few tunes on the organ he used to play in 1928. The meeting was set for the last Monday in October, 1959, starting at 1:00 a.m.

And so it was that 27 of the faithful showed up at the Majestic. After dealing with two ciphers, a blown fuse and a sluggish lift, the organ behaved quite well. Charlie showed up about 2:15 a.m. and played for a whole hour, and there was a young fellow who demonstrates for the Parker Organ Co. who really sounded fine. Everyone was much too excited to go home to bed. At the diner, most of the group were still talking excitedly about the event at dawn. Suzie said she would write up a review of this affair and send it in to THEATRE ORGAN.

Bearing in mind that the above scenario, with minor variations, would take place scores of times throughout the country over the next decade, one can understand why it might be difficult to review such events with objectivity. Because everyone involved was a participant to the degree of being part of a relatively small community of enthusiasts, the tendency was to describe all the organs and performances in superlative terms which were quite often undeserved. It is also important to note that this type of event was totally private. The general public was not only not invited, *they were excluded*. The theatre management would have been quite upset (for insurance reasons) had non-enthusiasts been invited in off the street. Finally, this type of event is a perfect example of a "non-concert," and should never be reviewed as a musical event. Such an activity should be re-

ported as a semi-technical, semi-social, semi-musical get-together. Mentioning a few of the problems encountered would be appropriate, and a very generalized description of any of the console performances would be enough. Later in this article we will deal with the specifics of reporting (as opposed to reviewing) such events.

Moving forward in time, we find that the 1960's began to bring forth some of the major elements involved in authentic concertizing. Much of this activity was in connection with ATOE/ATOS National Conventions in locations where the state of restoration of the instruments was fair to good and the major concerts were played by professionals. At this time local non-affiliated organizations had also begun to form. Prime examples were the Detroit Theater Organ Club with its Fisher Wurlitzer relocated to the club's own Senate Theater, and the Rochester Theater Organ Society with its RKO Palace Wurlitzer relocated to the Auditorium Theatre. This latter group was one of the first to promote concerts of theatre organ music to the general public instead of relying on an audience of enthusiasts only. Some of the other major concerts during this decade were, unfortunately, of the "Farewell" variety at such famed locations as the San Francisco Fox and the New York Paramount.

During the 1970's, and right up to the present time, we find a gradually increasing number of organ installations capable of providing a setting appropriate to presenting a full-fledged concert of theatre organ music. We are now ready to define the basic elements of such concertizing:

(1) **The Organ.** Assuming at the outset that we are dealing with a theatrically-voiced instrument, the name of the original manufacturer, size and acoustical setting are far less important than the degree of restoration and maintenance achieved by those responsible. The basic resources of the instrument must be totally available and the organ must be properly tuned. Anything less would detract from the performance and be beyond the control of the organist.

(2) **The Organist.** Though the qualities necessary in an organist who is going to play a full concert and satisfy the audience are both numerous and difficult to define, there are certain

elements which must be present to some degree. Not necessarily in the order of their importance the list should include talent (musicianship), experience, console personality, imaginative programming, some originality of style and a sense of humor. Bearing in mind that the goal is to *entertain* the audience, this mix can be an either/or situation. As an example, there are organists who are tremendously talented but may not be able to create rapport with the audience. There are also performers with limited musical talent who nevertheless have the ability to create an enthusiastic audience right from the moment the console rises.

(3) **Programming.** There was an axiom from the days of vaudeville . . . "Never follow a banjo act with another banjo act." Unfortunately, theatre organists have been known to ignore this ancient advice and play programs involving too much of the same thing. The constant balladeers tend to put the audience to sleep, while the percussion fanciers may cause them to squirm in their seats. Then there are the lecturers who deliver a lengthy dialogue before each piece, contrasted with the silent types who invariably play too long and perhaps too loudly to compensate for their vocal silence. One dangerous area which theatre organists should avoid is the field of "education," wherein the audience is subjected to a wealth of "unpopular" music perhaps not particularly suited to the instrument. Originality is certainly important, but not to the exclusion of familiarity. The most reliable formula would probably be a mixture of various types, styles and rhythms affording the organist an opportunity to show off the resources of the instrument as well as his or her particular talents.

(4) **The Audience.** This is perhaps the most important element to consider, and it has changed from the old days. It no longer consists of a small group of enthusiasts who will accept whatever is presented from the console of a real theatre organ. The mix will consist of those who came *eagerly* — the enthusiasts or fans of the artist. Then there will be those who came *willingly* — senior citizens establishing a link with the past or younger people desiring a different musical experience. There will also be those who came *somewhat reluctantly*, exhorted

by friends and associates to buy tickets and support the cause. Finally, there will be those who were *forced to attend* by enthusiast spouses or parents. If the organist's program is of sufficient stature to please some members of these last two groups, the ultimate goal has been reached.

In addition to the above factors, it is assumed that this concert was advertised to the general public and people purchased tickets. Now we have gathered together what constitutes a genuine theatre organ concert which should be subject to a critical review — let the chips fall where they may. If the organ is out of tune or acts up, the restoration people will have to take their lumps. If the organist's performance exhibits some lack of musical integrity this will have to be noted. If the program is dull, repetitious, boring or poorly planned this should be covered. If the audience is found wandering around the lobby or overpopulating the rest rooms, the reviewer will have to determine the reason. The problem now is how to do this fairly, honestly, and, if possible, cleverly and constructively.

Having arrived at the definition of a theatre organ concert, we can now develop a format for the writing of reviews. However, it is important to first pose and try to answer three very basic questions: What is a review? What useful purpose does it serve, if any? Who reads reviews and why?

According to the dictionary, to *review* means “. . . to examine or study again; . . . to look back on; . . . to give a critical evaluation of.” The primary purpose of a review is to report, or at least highlight, what took place for the benefit of those who were not present, and to give a critique of what took place for the benefit of those who were there. As to who reads concert reviews, one must bear in mind that the world of theatre organ is both limited and gigantic. In terms of audiences, instruments and performing artists, it is somewhat limited compared with other types of music, but it involves at least half the planet in terms of geography. For this reason the largest group reading theatre organ concert reviews are those who did *not* attend the event. This is particularly true regarding conventions and other major concerts taking place only once at one location. Therefore, the reviewer needs to place emphasis on re-creating the scene as well as reporting what took place, with only

secondary emphasis on critical evaluation. In this respect, theatre organ concert reviews should be entirely different from reviews of movies, plays, musical revues, etc., because usually the reader cannot buy a ticket and go to see or hear for himself. When the final chord of the encore dies away it is over, with only a tape recording and the reviewer's columns remaining.

It is not possible to establish an unyielding formula for the successful writing of reviews, but the suggestions presented in the following paragraphs should help to make the job easier. The first step, as any good Scout knows, is to “be prepared.” Out of the hundreds of concerts and events the writer has reviewed over two decades, less than ten percent had a printed program listing what the organist was going to play, and the concerts deviated from the program at least half the time! If you have a good ear and an excellent memory (or are old enough not to identify Gershwin and Kern tunes as “elevator music”), you may be able to rely on a few notes scribbled on the back of an old envelope. Far better, if permitted, is a small battery-operated cassette recorder which will afford the opportunity to review unique registrations, rhythm and key changes, countermelodies or other improvisations, on which you might comment, as well as the tunes played in the order presented.

Writing the review chronologically will add a certain authenticity and reality to your efforts, as well as following out the mood and content of the programming. If the artist's program is varied and well-balanced, the review will invariably be easier to write and will read less like a song list. This brings up the question of whether the review should include every single tune the organist played. Usually not, but there are exceptions such as a program consisting of lengthy production numbers. When it comes to medleys of tunes or the honoring of a recently-deceased composer by playing one chorus each of a dozen of his “hits,” highlighting is advisable providing a sufficient number of the tunes played are covered to indicate the type and content of the sample being presented. There has been a considerable difference of opinion regarding the subject of naming tunes in reviewing. Some claim that this bores the reader. If it does it is most likely the result of dull and un-

researched writing, producing a “list of tunes” rather than a review of what was played and how it was presented. On the other hand, reviews written without specific reference to the actual musical content will tend toward broad and sweeping generalizations leaning either in the direction of undeserved praise or harsh and captious judgment. In the final analysis, a chronological highlighting will usually serve to re-create the event for the reader and live up to the dictionary definition of a review.

Though it may be difficult to be critical of the performance or content of a theatre organ concert, it is possible to accomplish this constructively and without humiliating anyone. In spite of a few concerts here and there that were rather badly played or presented, the writer has never attended an event which was — to paraphrase the Supreme Court's definition of pornography — “. . . totally without any redeeming *musical* value.” Usually something is good, and whatever was done well should be praised before the damnation begins. This approach will usually cushion the criticism, thereby making it both palatable and constructive. To cite a couple of examples, let us suppose that a very competent organist played a program which was a bit boring because it involved too many ballads and no up-tempo numbers. Instead of bluntly stating that the organist's program was bad, even though this was true, one could say “So-and-so selected a program of totally romantic music perfectly played and registered most appropriately. However, it was too much of a good thing. We are sure there were theatre organ fans in the audience who longed for some percussion other than the chimes and a smattering of rhythm. We hope that in his next program So-and-so will include a few up-tempo numbers which we know from past concerts he performs with equal skill.”

A second example could be a concert where the programming was excellent but the playing was sloppy, involving unplanned registrations, dropped phrases, loss of rhythm, a few false notes, etc. Again, instead of bluntly stating that the organist played poorly one could say “The only distraction noted in this excellent and well-planned program was a certain lack of familiarity with this organ — probably due to a tight schedule. We hope So-and-so can check in a day

early before his next concert so that his technique will be equal to his musical taste."

It is anticipated that many purists with a critical bent will object to this relatively mild type of criticism. They would like us to be more blunt and, they hope, thus do away with mediocrity. Unfortunately, it is not that simple, for two very important reasons: First, the field of theatre organ concertizing is still too young and immature to withstand any rugged criticisms. The reference here is not so much to the performing artists as it is to portions of the audience. There are some loyal and long-time theatre organ enthusiasts who are not blessed with superior musical tastes and they would be very upset at blunt criticism. Secondly, there is the matter of simple economics. Top-flight musicians are expensive in terms of fees and travel expenses. If you are going to present such talent, the setting will usually be a theatre or auditorium with a seating capacity in four figures, and a large theatre organ. Such artists will usually draw a good paid audience and that solves the problem. However, what happens to the group that wants to present their beautifully restored 2/7 Wurlitzer in a 400-seat neighborhood theatre? They cannot make expenses with S.R.O., so they must either charge outrageous prices for tickets, or settle for less well-known talents whose concerts may be less than perfection. The problem here is obvious. We cannot afford to discourage and lambast the second team for the sake of trying to create 100% pure critical

evaluations. As previously stated, let the chips fall where they may. But, let them *fall* — don't throw them.

In addition to the chronology and critical evaluation aspects of concert reviews, as discussed above, there is the ideal of making the reviews interesting. This brings us to the subject of who should be writing concert reviews and what particular qualifications they should possess. Although it is obvious that anyone who is going to write articles or reviews should have the ability to express ideas and impressions in written form, this particular talent may be less important in this instance than having a good knowledge of the theatre organ and its music. Whether such knowledge is the result of actual experience in playing a theatre organ or extensive listening to recordings and concerts is immaterial, but a sufficient familiarity should exist that the reviewer can both evaluate and describe registrations, use of countermelodies, second touch, and various other devices and techniques unique to the theatre organ. Considerable familiarity with popular music from ragtime to rock is essential, because such music will make up the majority of what is going to be played at most concerts. If you are old enough to remember what Herbert Hoover looked like, this will be the music of childhood and youth which you will remember easily. If you were born during the Eisenhower Administration, you may have a problem. Extensive knowledge of light classics or so-called classical organ literature is not necessary because

most of this type played at theatre organ concerts will be the old chestnuts from Bach and Widor that are all too familiar.

Most of the popular music previously mentioned will be derived from operetta, musical comedy, revues (Follies, Scandals, etc.), and movies. The reviewer should have some knowledge of these, or be prepared to do some research, in order to make the review more interesting and perhaps informative. Sometimes the organist may provide interesting facts or anecdotes regarding songs, composers and shows which should be incorporated in the review. In any case, material of this type should often be included to break the monotony that might otherwise develop. Even the most creative writer will find difficulty avoiding "So-and-so began the group with . . . , then he played . . . , followed by For his concluding piece we enjoyed" Such a review could become very boring to read unless these stock phrases are well laced with knowledgeable comments on the organist's style, registration and interpretation, as well as informative notes regarding the music itself.

For the purpose of illustrating this type of reviewing, let us create a fictitious concert where the organist has played a medley of Jerome Kern tunes — seven in all — lasting about 20 minutes. To avoid the "list of songs" syndrome, the reviewer is going to highlight three of the songs played and incorporate his knowledge of theatre organ technique and the history of

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musical comedy. The review might read something like this:

"A medley of tunes by Jerome Kern is always appropriate to a theatre organ concert, and the selections chosen were an excellent cross section of prime musical comedy hits over the years. Highlighting the best of these, So-and-so began with tunes from the 1927 musical *Showboat*, opening with the classic "Ol' Man River." The first chorus was played in a stately manner with shimmering string accompaniment and varied solo stops with a gradual build up arriving at nearly full organ. The organ went to full voice, off-tremulant, for the last three measures and the effect was truly electrifying. By way of contrast, Kern's plaintive "Yesterdays" from the 1933 musical *Roberta* was a study in modern harmonies in an almost funereal arrangement gradually evolving into a Tibia and Vox combination with Harp accompaniment and a final portamento to a single chime note. The concluding number was from a long-forgotten 1939 musical, *Very Warm for May*, which only ran eight performances. The love song for this show, however, is as immortal as anything Kern ever wrote and So-and-so's interpretation of "All the Things You Are" was perfectly phrased and registered in a Tibia-dominated first chorus and featured rhythm in the concluding chorus."

This type of reviewing is primarily designed to re-create the event in the mind, and, it is hoped, in the "ear" of the reader if he is musically inclined. The facts about musical comedy add something of interest and serve to create an aura of authority from the reviewer. They are not necessarily the result of years of experience or massive research. A glance at the *Musician's Handbook (Standard Dance Music Guide)* will produce all of the data contained in the above paragraph. The only element involved requiring considerable experience is a knowledge of theatre organ technique. This is truly essential and is the major prerequisite required of anyone who is going to write this type of review of a theatre organ concert.

Before concluding the portion of this article dealing with reviews, there is another type of event taking place in the world of theatre organ requiring some definition other than "concert." Though these events are often promoted and advertised as concerts,

and even the tickets may bear this title, when the entertainment consists of a mix of silent comedy accompaniment, vaudeville acts, comic console antics, marching band imitations, the "Beer Barrel Polka" as a Toccata & Fugue, and so on, it is not a concert, it is a SHOW. The organist for such programs should be judged as a *showman*, not as a musician, and his program should not be subject to evaluation by the standards set up for a formal concert. This type of event should be reviewed with emphasis on novelty, originality and audience reaction. As there are several talented individuals who present such programs, they are worthy of note and proper reviewing of their efforts. Finally, it may well be that such events will be more likely to attract and satisfy the general public than the more formal presentations in concert form. It is hoped, therefore, that groups promoting such events will stop calling them CONCERTS, as they may be doing a disservice to themselves, the console artist, and, ultimately, the all-important box office.

All theatre organ activities not already defined should be *reported*, not reviewed, in the sense that this function has been described. This would include such events as open console meetings, organ crawls, chapter meetings (whether in homes, theatres, auditoriums, restaurants, clubs or other establishments housing theatre organs), mini-concerts, cameo performances, and trials of new installations or restoration projects in progress. A report, being a record or summary of some such activity, should follow the old journalistic guidelines of Who, What, When, Where and, to some extent, How. There will be some restrictions suggested, however, as detailed below.

The preparation of a report on some chapter activity to appear in Chapter Notes, for example, should be a succinct narrative of the event, with emphasis on the organ or organs and environments involved, rather than who played or what and how they played. If three or four people played it would be appropriate to identify them and perhaps mention one item of their repertoire which was particularly well performed. However, if 22 people played it would be best not to attempt naming them or your report is likely to read like a roster. The writer is well aware of the fact that everybody "likes to see their

name in print," but your report is not being written for the benefit of those who were there. It is for the information of many hundreds of readers thousands of miles away who are very interested in what kind of organs you have in your area and what kind of activities you are enjoying. They are not interested in the names of your members or a description of the cupcakes baked by Mrs. Jones for the afternoon repast. This type of information would only be appropriate for a chapter newsletter or bulletin. When in doubt as to what to write, imagine yourself reading about an organ crawl in London or an open console meeting in Alaska. The type of information that would interest you is probably exactly what organ buffs in these distant locations would like to read about in a report from your area.

In conclusion, it is appropriate to note that the greatest amount of material on the subject of the theatre organ and its music is to be found in the pages of this journal, chapter newsletters, and non-affiliated publications. The largest library will yield very little other material and, because of this, serious reviews of concerts, shows, and major events really make up what will someday be the history of the rebirth of this art form. We have come a long way from the days of the "organ nuts" image, but we still face further maturation if we are to be taken seriously. It is fitting that, at the same time a major effort is in operation to foster growth of our membership, we should reappraise the effectiveness of the reviews and reports of our varied activities. It is earnestly hoped that the guidelines set forth here will be of some help in improving the quality of our communications, still the lifeline of this international organization.

* * *

Grant Whitcomb has been a member of ATOS since 1959 and has served as chairman of two chapters. He has written reviews for chapter and other organization newsletters and for THEATRE ORGAN for many years. He grew up in New York City, where his musical tastes and interests were influenced by his parents who sang in operetta and musical comedy. His love of theatre organ music dates from visits to the major theatres of the area in the '30s and '40s. □

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A Third Life for This Wurlitzer

by Lowell J. Boberg

The 3/11 Wurlitzer Opus 1256 that first came to life in 1926 at the Loew's State Theatre in Norfolk, Virginia, is now living in Salt Lake City. This is its third life, and from all signs it will be a long and happy one. Not every theatre organ of that grand and glorious period when organs sighed, sobbed or thundered according to the mood of the scene before it on the screen has been so lucky. But this one has been resuscitated not once but twice.

After movies began to talk and organists vanished from the theatres, the Loew's State organ languished silently for years, the console losing many of its vital parts to other organs

in the region for their restoration. It appeared as though rigor mortis was getting ready to set in.

It was at this point in late 1963 that rescue came and the organ was given a second life. It was Dean Robinson of Himrod, New York, who purchased it. In doing so, he fulfilled a lifelong dream of having his very own theatre organ. He even gave it a home of its own, a barn on his property, which he remodeled and decorated to place the organ in the best possible acoustical setting and to give the structure a very attractive atmosphere. Once installed, it was given the name of CIPHER HILL organ. CIPHER HILL be-

came a popular gathering place for organ enthusiasts in the Seneca Lake vicinity. The organ's second life was indeed a happy one. (For the foregoing historical background the author is indebted to Lloyd Klos' article which appeared in THEATRE ORGAN, Vol. 14, No. 4, "The Cipher Hill Organ," page 5.)

Then came a change. The Robinsons moved to a smaller location, one which boasted neither barn nor living room in size that could adequately accommodate an organ of the Cipher Hill proportions. So, sadly the organ was put up for sale. In early 1973 it was sold and moved to Ambler, Pennsylvania, for temporary storage and eventual resale. It was at this point that Dr. Conrad Jensen, prominent heart surgeon of Salt Lake City, came on the scene. Dr. Jensen had long been an avid organ buff, having owned several large electronic organs. While attending the 1973 ATOS convention in Los Angeles, he learned of the availability of the Cipher Hill organ. He also had been won over by the authentic theatre pipe organ sound. He immediately dispatched two local theatre organists to Ambler to check out the instrument. They were Mike Ohman, already well known as one of the outstanding theatre organists in the West; and Krehl King, fresh out of high school and then an organist of great promise, now one of the staff organists of the nationally famous Organ Loft of Salt Lake City. Mike and Krehl found much of the organ still packed in the U-Haul that had carried it from Himrod and the remainder in storage. Inspection met with approval, the purchase was completed and the Cipher Hill organ began the long journey to Salt Lake City tightly packed into two vans, one driven by Mike and the other by Krehl. The vans left Ambler on September 6 and arrived at the Jensen residence on September 10.

The Jensen home is located in what is known as the Bench area of Salt Lake City, the part sloping down from the high water mark of the ancient Lake Bonneville to the valley floor. Many of the homes there facing the east are two-level with the top story being level with the street in front and the bottom floor, because of the steepness of the slope, level with the back yard area.

The Jensen home is one of these. An immense family room occupies

The console of the Loew's State/Cipher Hill/Dr. Conrad Jensen organ as it is in its third "life." It is now a 3/14 organ with tuned percussions and toy counter and 151 stop tabs.





The Dr. Conrad Jensen family room as it appears now with the Wurlitzer console at the left and the Rodgers 330 church organ at the right. The pipe and speaker chamber is located behind the two consoles.



A closer view of the family room with drapes open revealing chimes and Rodgers organ speakers.

most of the bottom level. Immediately adjacent to it is the room directly under the two-car garage. Long before the Cipher Hill organ purchase, this room served as the hideout for the many speakers of the electronic organs the Jensens had owned. It was a very easy matter to convert the wall dividing the two rooms into a pattern of grills.

When the Cipher Hill organ arrived, the family room became the repository for everything that came in the two vans — ranks of pipes, console, regulators, etc., while Dr. Jensen faced the challenge of arranging space to house his new giant, sans console, in the adjacent room. The room was adequate in size, being the exact size of the garage above it, but the problem was one of height (or depth). The standard-height ceiling could not possibly accommodate the longer 16' pipes in upright position. In a flash he came up with a solution — excavate and lower the floor level! He immediately hired an excavation crew and in three weeks' time the new

floor level stood 42" lower than before, comfortably able to accommodate most of the 16' pipes vertically. "When I first saw the completed excavation work," commented Harry Weirach, one of the technicians aiding Dr. Jensen, "I thought it would make a wonderful indoor swimming pool."

Installation work began immediately but moved sporadically over the next eight years with a number of technicians working on a spare-time basis. Slowly the family room changed back to its original condition as pipes and parts, one by one, disappeared into the chamber area. Assisting in the building or rebuilding of the organ at various times, though not all at one time, were Mike Ohman, Harry Weirach, Doug Eddington, Bill Petty and Cal Christensen. In spite of the careful transfer of the parts from the East, there were some missing. Replacements had to be found. Over the space of eight years, organ installation had become a way of life at the Jensen residence.

But all worthy projects sooner or later reach a culmination. The final drive to this point began when Cal Christensen, himself a 2/7 Wurlitzer owner and top rank technician as well as player, began working on the project on a four-days-per-week basis. Things began happening that pointed toward a conclusion. Installation of the original pipe ranks was completed. Then three additional ranks were added — Oboe Horn, Trumpet and Post Horn.

And that was not all. The tuned percussions and toy counter of the Salt Lake City Elks Club Wurlitzer were added. Dr. Jensen had purchased them with the idea of adding them to the Rodgers organ he still had, but instead decided to incorporate them as part of the pipe instrument. These additions brought the number of tabs on the stop rails to 151. For air power, as three-phase electrical power was not readily available, a two-phase motor driving the three-phase motor by use of V-belts was employed. The motors and

JoAnn Harmon, well known local organist, who played the dedication program on the Jensen organ.

Dr. Conrad Jensen, left, proud owner, and Cal Christensen, right, who brought the final stages of installation to conclusion.





Two-phase motor on left drives blower motor on right with V-belts.



Two views inside the chamber. Note the neat arrangements of ranks that allows for work space. Original floor level of the chamber was at the bottom of the door in the background, indicated by the white mark.



Organist Eugene Breinholdt enjoys open console at the Jensen organ.

blower were installed in a small room adjacent to the pipe chamber. The only tuned percussion unit outside the chamber is the piano, which appears very normal as part of the family room equipment.

Cal Christensen, through his tireless efforts, brought what has really been the patient painstaking work of many to its present state of completion during 1981. As all organ lovers know, there is no such thing as a really permanent end. As long as there is life, and space available, there is always the temptation to add, to enlarge. But for the present the Dr. Jensen organ is enjoying a temporary state of completion.

On Sunday evening, November 22, 1981, the "new" organ which began

in Loew's State in Norfolk, then became the Cipher Hill organ, and now the Dr. Conrad Jensen organ, formally began its third life. The occasion was a joint dedication party and Beehive Chapter of ATOS meeting. Fifty-five friends of Dr. Jensen and members of the Beehive Chapter enjoyed a combination business meeting and dedication program with Dr. Jensen as the genial host and JoAnn Harmon, well-known Salt Lake City organist, playing the dedication pro-

gram. Open console followed. It was a most enjoyable evening.

Yes, the organ that first sounded in Norfolk, Virginia, in 1926, and again in Himrod, New York, through the 1960's, is alive and well and living in Salt Lake City. Its genial owner gives it not only tender loving care, but also star billing with star performers to match at the many gatherings — church, social and civic — at the Jensen home. What theatre organ could ask for more? □

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PIPES & Personalities

Good And Bad News From Florida

Early in 1984, "Tweedy Brown's Music Palace" will open in North Fort Myers, Florida. The Palace will include three restaurants and a 450-seat common dining room. One of the restaurants will be called "Tweedy Brown's" and will serve primarily pizza. Two existing Fort Myers restaurants are expected to open satellite outlets in the Music Palace. An old-fashioned ice cream parlor is to be included also.

The centerpiece of the common dining room will be a 4/34 mostly-Wurlitzer organ. The organ was originally a 3/11 Style Balaban 1A Wurlitzer, first installed in the Paramount Theatre in Steubenville, Ohio. It was sold to George Merriken and installed in his home in Silver Spring, Maryland. Dick Peterson bought the organ in 1981.

The group behind the Music Palace is headed by Dick Peterson, well-known as the owner of Peterson Electro-Musical Products of Worth, Illinois. Others in the group include Fred Pillsbury of St. Louis and Tom Stephens of Chicago. All three have winter homes in the central Florida Gulf Coast area.

The bad news is that J. Burns Pizza & Pipes in Tampa has closed. Future plans for the restaurant and the organ it contained have not been released.

Chicago Revisited

by Leonard Smith

The following article was submitted by Margaret Johnson of Whittier, California, a pupil of Leonard Smith. The material originally appeared in The AMICA News Bulletin, November 1983. It is reprinted by permission.

In July 1983, I had the pleasure of attending the convention of AMICA

in Chicago. It was in Chicago that I made piano rolls in the early twenties. I was referred by a teacher to the Gulbransen Company and I used to go to their factory, where they would sit me down at a piano and give me a piece of sheet music. It has been interesting in the last three years to search and to find some of these rolls.

My sixty-year love affair with the Chicago Theatre was finally consummated on July 17, when I played the four-manual Wurlitzer pipe organ for the 1983 convention. Although I played many Warner Bros. and Balaban & Katz theatres during the years 1923 to 1931, I never had the pleasure of playing at the Chicago. So, at the ripe old age of 81, I finally realized a lifelong ambition.

That grand old theatre in the Loop was always considered the top spot by organists — especially those born in Chicago like myself. Sorry to say she needs a bit of refurbishing, but the organ was in fairly good condition. No problems with ciphers, or sluggish response.

Retracing my steps a bit; after graduating from high school, I got a job with the International Harvester Co. in their general offices at 606 South Michigan Boulevard. On Saturdays we only worked until 1:00

p.m. So after a quick lunch at the Harmony Cafeteria or the Automat, I would hie myself to the seat nearest the organ at the Chicago Theatre, and sometimes sit through three shows to watch and listen to the performing organists.

The Chicago Theatre had organ concerts at 11 o'clock on Sunday mornings, so I frequently missed church to listen to Jesse Crawford, Milton Charles, Albert Hay Malotte, Arthur Gutow and others.

Chicago is still the throbbing, vital city I remember, but like all cities, has changed in many ways. I wanted some music which I haven't been able to get in California, so I took a walk over to Jackson and Wabash Avenues, but Lyon & Healy is no longer there. Then I crossed the street to the Kimball Building, thinking I would visit the American Conservatory of Music, but it is now on Michigan Boulevard.

It would be most regrettable if the Chicago Theatre were to be demolished. It most certainly is a real Chicago landmark, and deserves a better fate than extinction. I can think of nothing which could possibly replace it, and I hope the people of Chicago and the powers that be, will do whatever is necessary to preserve it for pos-

A seldom seen Estey Minuette self-contained pipe organ being offered for sale in the Classified Ads section of this issue.





The Forum, Wichita, Kansas. (Photo courtesy of The Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum.)

terity.

Thanks to AMICA, I finally played the organ at the Chicago Theatre.

* * *

On the site of today's Century II Center in Wichita, Kansas, there once stood an auditorium seating 5500. Known as "The Forum," it was built in 1911 and was used until the mid-sixties, when it was demolished to make room for the Century II Center.

The Forum was the pride of south central Kansas. In 1914, some 20,000 theatregoers thrilled to five performances of the roadshow production of *Ben Hur*. The show required much special scenery, including a treadmill large enough to accommodate a 12-horse chariot race. A moving background was used to give the illusion that the horses were racing around the track. Alas, there was no pipe organ in The Forum!

* * *

Billy Nalle plays his next concert in Wichita on March 24, the second program in the 1983-1984 Wurlitzer Pops XII series at the Century II Exhibition Hall.

The artists for the third concert in the series will be Jack Bethards and his Golden Gate Orchestra, with Lyn Larsen at the Wichita Wurlitzer.

Ticket and reservation information for these concerts is available from the Central Ticket Agency, Century II, 225 West Douglas, Wichita, Kansas 67202.

As a result of the interest stirred up by the broadcasting of Nalle's recordings by WQXR, New York, and his 1983 concert by Wichita station KSOE, Wichita Theatre Organ is preparing to release its first live concert recording, the content of which will be taken from Nalle's 1983 concert.

WQXR has engaged Billy Nalle to record six segments of original music for use as logo identity with its call letters during station breaks. Since Duncan Pirnie first broke the "classical only" barrier at WQXR by using seg-

ments from Nalle recordings on his programs, he has played segments from the recordings of two other famous theatre organists — Ashley Miller and Lee Erwin.

Wibbels Shares Show With S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A.

The warm enthusiastic response from those who attended the November 11 show at the Royal Oak Music Theatre in the Motor City, in spite of "Hazardous Weather" warnings issued by the local weather bureau, made the long drive from Indiana well worthwhile for young Tom Wibbels and his party.

Displaying excellent showmanship and a fine sense of humor, Tom made good use of the many capabilities of "The Golden-Voiced Barton." His program ran the gamut from the semi-classical "Trumpet Voluntary" to the more modern "The Way We Were." Tunes from the Gay Nineties, the Big Band era and Broadway shows, sentimental ballads and Latin rhythms, all helped to provide something for everyone during the evening.

Following the intermission, the chorus of Detroit Chapter One of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America appeared in a program of typical barbershop harmonies.

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Tom then returned to the console with a medley of Big Band numbers, a fine improvisation on the tune "Exodus" featuring a deftly-performed pedal solo, and his closing theme "For You Only" as thanks to the audience, the chapter and the many workers who made the show possible.

For the statistically minded, the Royal Oak organ is one of three 3/10 Bartons that were installed by the Butterfield chain in Detroit area theatres in 1928, the others going to the Redford Theatre (home of the Motor City Chapter) and the Birmingham Theatre. The one from the Birmingham Theatre is the only one that has been removed from its original home, and it now resides in Theatre Organ Pizza & Pipes in Pontiac, Michigan. The Redford instrument remains almost as it was except that a piano has been added in the pit. The Royal Oak instrument was severely water damaged during the '50s, with four ranks being totally destroyed. Thanks to Mert Harris and his Motor City crew, the organ has been restored and enlarged to 16 ranks and a piano has been added in the pit. Theatre organ enthusiast Marian Cook purchased the instrument a few years ago and donated it to the Motor City Chapter for use and safekeeping. It is hoped that the organ will continue to entertain audiences from its original setting for many years to come.

To sum things up, it was a great show with a fine organ in a magnificent and well-maintained theatre.

FRED PAGE

A Ghost At The Console?

Reprinted from the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 15, 1956:

TORQUAY, England, Aug. 14 [Reuters] — Vicar Anthony Rouse is having a "haunted organ" removed from his church here, hoping that the



Rob Calcaterra uses a chalkboard during the theatre organ seminar he presented in Rochester, New York.



Rob at the 4/78 Aeolian-Skinner after his concert presented by the Hershey Chocolate Foundation. The response to this concert prompted an invitation for a return engagement in the spring. (Photo by DiNunzio)

ghost that plays it will accompany the instrument. He and several churchgoers insist the organ often has played at night, when there was no one in the church, ever since 1883 when the organist died. A temporary organist once refused to play, Rouse said, because he could "feel" someone sitting at the instrument with him.

Olivera Plays A Mighty Wurlitzer In A Palace Of Splendor

An Olivera theatre pipe organ concert can stimulate a recovering theatre anywhere. Thousands have strayed from the great theatres and their mighty organs, but Olivera called them back on a recent Sunday afternoon (November 6, 1983). They came almost 4000 strong, nearly a sell-out in one of the largest of the few remaining movie palaces, the fabulous Fox Theatre in Detroit. Hector Olivera is slight of build, a comparatively young organist who displayed incomparable ability in completely controlling this versatile Wurlitzer.

Native Detroiters, who were spellbound during the concert, were seen during intermission standing in astonished wonderment while marveling at the marble splendor of the palatial lobby. Another organist at the console of a smaller pipe organ on the promenade level of this grand lobby played Olivera's theme song, calling the strolling audience back into the auditorium. Once back, these thousands sat in total silence. This was a captive audience and they knew that once again, from these very walls, with their towering balustrades concealing golden organ grille-work, a world-renowned organist would bring forth a musical sensation the likes of

which can be heard only in places like this fabulous theatre.

In the months and years ahead certainly those who attended this concert will remember that this magnificent theatre is still in downtown Detroit and whenever organists like Olivera play it's mighty Wurlitzer they'll be there.

As the glittering lights of greater Detroit, Windsor and the Ambassador Bridge slipped away on the twilight flight back to Fort Wayne, this writer was confident that another operating theatre organ was helping to revive and save its own palace.

JOHN MECKLENBURG

Calcaterra A Busy Man

Judging by reports received, Rob Calcaterra is a very active organist and teacher. So busy, in fact, that we were unable to catch up with him to obtain additional details.

Among his concerts and teaching seminars have been a theatre/classical concert at All Souls' Unitarian Church in Indianapolis, which also included some ragtime numbers on the piano; a concert at the World Theatre in St. Paul and a seminar at Lorraine's Keyboard Studio in Minneapolis; and a theatre organ master class on the 3/8 Wurlitzer in Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester, New York.

Calcaterra played a late-night program at the Grand Lake Theatre, Oakland, during the '83 ATOS Convention, followed a few weeks later by a classical/theatre concert on the 4/78 Aeolian-Skinner in the Hershey Theatre for the Hershey Chocolate Foundation. This was followed by a series of four seminar/concerts for the Baldwin Piano & Organ Co. in their stores in the New York City area. Since then he has been sailing the seas on a cruise ship.

Rob Calcaterra acknowledges a standing ovation after a concert at All Souls' Unitarian Church in Indianapolis.

(Photo by Joe Badger)





Nor-Cal Chapter Treasurer, Etta Nevins, in her hobby shop in Menlo Park, California.

At 77, She Works Seven Days A Week

Nor-Cal Chapter Treasurer Etta Nevins is not ready to retire yet, even at age 77. "Maybe when I'm 80," she says, "but I'm afraid I wouldn't know what to do with myself."

In addition to her work as treasurer, which she has efficiently handled for many years, Etta owns and operates a hobby shop in Menlo Park, California. Although the shop is open seven days a week and she has no regular employees, Etta manages to attend virtually every Nor-Cal concert (she also attended the recent San Francisco Convention '83) and do a bit of travelling to visit her children and grandchildren.

When Etta and her late husband bought the business in 1949 it was primarily a smoke shop, with some toys and hobby items. The tobacco sales declined as community traffic patterns changed, but the toys and hobby goods continued to sell, so she changed the business to a hobby shop. It is a narrow store, stocked with kits and supplies from floor to ceiling, with high island displays down the middle which leave just two narrow aisles to get about.

Nevins' store is her life, and the

customers who frequent it are almost like family. "I have men in their thirties who come in now bringing their five- and six-year-old kids, who say they grew up in here," she said. Some customers rely on her to stock them with hobby equipment they can't get at home. A customer from Saudi Arabia comes in about once a year, and another from Australia comes several times a year. Both have long lists to fill.

(Based on an article by Barbara Wood in the Peninsula Times Tribune, July 31, 1983. Times Tribune photo by Gregg Webb.)

Steak And Organ In Alaska

On a trip to Alaska it was such a delightful surprise to find a beautifully restored organ at Steak 'n Pipes Restaurant in Fairbanks. The "Empress" organ is played regularly by Clyde Phipps, formerly of the Albany, New York, area.

The organ was rebuilt and installed by Robert Franzke, a member of ATOS when he was living in the "lower 48." Bob does all the maintenance on the organ, which was built in 1927 by Kimball, one of three Kimball organs purchased by "Cap" Austin

Lathrop for use in his Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau theatres. The Juneau organ is now in the Washington State Capitol building in Olympia; the Anchorage organ was accidentally destroyed. When the Fairbanks theatre closed in 1962, Bob purchased the organ. Friends helped him move and place it in storage, where five years later the console and several other parts were severely damaged by waters from the 1967 flood. Because of this, when the restaurant first opened in the early '70s, a Kansas City theatre's Morton pipe organ, which was in storage in Fairbanks, was purchased and installed. Parts of it still remain, along with those parts of the Empress organ which Bob has been able to repair. More than 20 ranks were replaced with others of different tonality.

Bill Herndon and other organ buffs assisted Bob in the 1973 rebuilding of the organ, at which time a Gottfried French Horn mounted on a Geneva chest was added. Additional ranks of pipes have been purchased by Bob to eventually enlarge the instrument. One is a Clarinet from the Aeolian-Skinner organ of the Cathedral of Sts. Peter and Paul, which is also known as the Washington or National Cathedral. Bob has to build a specially-shaped chest for this to fit into the space available in the two chambers. He also has a Cor de Nuit and Vox Humana by E. M. Skinner. To quote him, "These have a two-rank Skinner chest which I may change from a straight chest into two units. This chest has its own regulator and tremolo. These are from the Skinner organ, Opus 358, built about 1924, purchased from Jim Glass of Hinsdale, Illinois. Then I have a Gottfried Oboe d'Amore, which will also have to have a special odd-shaped chest built for it. The Morton Kremone, after reworking its reed tongues, can be put back on its original chest and the Kimball Kinura now on that chest can then be mounted on its own Kimball chest. I also have seven ranks of Kimball pipes from the theatre in Anchorage. These include a Tuba, three Strings, Harmonic Flute, Tibia and Vox." The organ is powered by a solid-state 12-volt power supply and a 5 hp blower located in the basement of the building. (For those who may want to write to him, Bob's address is P.O. Box 80502, Fairbanks, Alaska 99708.)

FLORENCE HARVEY □



This is the cover of Bob Ralston's new album, recorded digitally on the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Oakland Paramount.

Stu Green, Editor Emeritus of Theatre Organ Magazine, comments: "Bob Ralston has truly captured the spirit of Vienna in his latest theatre pipe organ album, "A Salute to Johann Strauss."

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NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



With Valentine's month here again, we include nuggets about lady organists who played during the great era. References were *Melody Magazine (M)* and *Motion Picture Herald (MPH)*.

May 1924 (M) Miss IRENE JUNO first studied music in Ithaca, New York, played in orchestras, and developed with the more pretentious pictures. She next took up directing as the big vaudeville road shows began to be organized, and for two seasons, was featured on "big time" as the only woman leader of an orchestra, playing with big musical comedies. She studied organ with Dr. J. Fowler Richardson of London and New York; also had the benefit of instruction from Ernest Möller, mechanical expert in building and caring for organs, and the nephew of M. P. Möller, organ builder in Hagerstown, Maryland.

When L. J. Chamberlin installed Möller organs in houses of his Pennsylvania circuit, Miss Juno was with him as a featured organist, and created a big reputation in that area for over two years. She was next engaged for solo organ playing at Crandall's Strand Theatre in Cumberland, Maryland, remaining there for one year, and then returning to Washington two years ago. Since then, she has progressed steadily until today she stands at the head of the picture-playing profession as a woman organist and musician.

The secret of all this accomplishing (outside of the preliminary hard work of strenuous application and study, of course) evidently is that of constantly "catering," according to the lady who states:

"In building a score for a picture story, I always use music which appeals to the general public, for I would rather hear an audience pat its feet and whistle the popular airs than cough and squirm through a dry classic. Personally speaking, however, I find cue sheets to be of little aid. I would rather get a press sheet from the manager and then work out the story in my own way. Regarding the 'request' numbers, and we have plenty of them in our theatre, I always try to work them into a program as soon as possible."

And there you have the big "secret" which, after all is really an open one to musicians possessing the intuition dis-

Lloyd E. Klos has contributed more than 100 features, plus book reviews, obituaries and numerous small items to *THEATRE ORGAN* since joining *ATOS* in 1959. Named associate editor in 1967, he launched "Nuggets" that year, and "The Unaffiliateds" in 1982. A free-lance writer-researcher, Lloyd has also served the Rochester (New York) Theater Organ Society in several capacities since 1969. □



played by Miss Juno, and that is — please the people if you would place yourself high in any public profession. This astute musician continues:

"A goodly amount of improvising is necessary to good picture-playing, especially so in weaving smoothly together the different music numbers used. Picture audiences of today are demanding more and more from organists and musicians, and a constant study of your public, united with the equally constant formulating of new ideas, is necessary if one would be successful in playing the pictures. I always try to keep one jump ahead of my work."

Keeping "ahead of my work" sounds simple as told by Miss Juno, but it surely can't be much of a sinecure to find time to compose a number of organ novelties which have been used with great success in recitals. Furthermore, from a bunch of newspaper clippings at hand, it is quite obvious that the lady does not "play" at playing the pictures or make merely a pastime of music, but approaches her work seriously and earnestly, and therefore accomplishes.

June 1925 (M) Everything this spring seems to be offering the little clinging vines a chance to see and be seen. With all the conventions of women composers, pen women, and International Council of Women, it is right in line to introduce one of our own talented women, a member of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra of Washington, D.C., Mrs. NELL PAXTON, organist.

Nellie, you know, is a famous name, the subject of song and play. Who is there who does not remember the time the young hero told the wide, wicked world that the deep-dyed villain hadn't done right by "Our Nell," and who hasn't heard the song "Darling Nellie Gray?" So, our Nell Paxton is doing her best to live up to her famous name and is stepping right along.

She was born in Liberty, Indiana. That the home town is mighty proud of this accomplished daughter is evidenced by the letters she receives, telling her they listen with pleasure to her playing on Saturday night over WRC. She has recently been added to the Crandall's Saturday Nighters, and is a welcome addition to the program. Very frankly admitted being scared to death the first time she played before the mike, she is quite acclimated by now. Gets a telegram every Sunday morning from her father and mother who tell her how much they enjoyed the show.

Mrs. Paxton, who, of course, was not Mrs. Paxton then, played for movies years ago when there was only a piano. She devoted some time to this work, but when war was declared, like all patriotic youngsters, she dropped everything, went to Washington and did her bit in government work. During the next few years, she met and married Kent Paxton, and made Washington her home. With time to spare, she again took up music, and for the past four years, has been organist with the Crandall Circuit, playing at the Avenue, Grand, Savoy, and finally at the Metropolitan. She plays organ with the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Breeskin, and recently received much favorable comment for her work in Tschaiakowsky's famous "1812 Overture," which director Breeskin gave by popular request.

May 23, 1931 (MPH) IRIS VINING WILKINS at the Fox Wisconsin Theatre in Milwaukee, offers an organ concert rather than a selection of popular numbers.

Until next time when we will present another "pot luck" column, so long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □



BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF THEATRE ORGANISTS

by Dr. John W. Landon

ADLER (First name unknown)

Organist of the Empress Theatre (Kimball), Anchorage, Alaska, in 1920's.

AHERN, EDWIN CHARLES

Born Chicago, Illinois, January 4, 1886. Studied piano privately in Chicago, Illinois, beginning at age six through age 14. At age 14 enrolled in Chicago Conservatory where he studied piano under Guisepppe LaVerdi. Studied pipe organ under George Schappert. Arrived on the West Coast in 1907 where he directed a theatre orchestra in Aberdeen, Washington. In 1914 he was hired by William Southern to play the Kimball theatre organ in the Grand Theatre in Bellingham, Washington. In 1922 and 1923 he played the Kimball pipe organ in the Liberty Theatre in Bellingham, Washington. On March 25, 1926, he opened the Avalon Theatre Wurlitzer. He initiated half-hour concerts at noon at the Avalon Theatre in October, 1926. He taught piano and organ from his studio from 1926 on.

AKIN, MARY

Played the Royal Theatre in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in 1926.

AKIN, NITA

Played the Majestic Theatre in Wichita Falls, Texas (a small Smith organ). Was organist of the First Methodist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, and taught at Midwestern University in Wichita Falls.

AKKERS, MADALYN

Played the Beverly Hills, California, Hotel in 1930.

ALBRECHT, ELMER

Born in Chicago in 1901. Albrecht studied piano privately and played both piano and organ in theatres. He later led his own band. He composed and published a number of songs. Albrecht died in Chicago in 1959.

ALDAG, PAUL

Played the Borough Park Theatre in New York City (a Loew's theatre) in 1927. Served on the staff there with Miss Victoria Pownall.

ALEXANDER, JOE

On the staff with organist Lillian Truss at the Alabama Theatre (a Wurlitzer Publix No. 1), Birmingham, Alabama, in 1927. Also played the Piccadilly Theatre, Rochester, and the Paramount Theatre, Springfield, in 1929.

ALEXANDER, MILDRED

Born in Durham, North Carolina. Studied classical organ at Duke University and theatre pipe organ under Bob Van Camp at Duke University, Page Auditorium. Did graduate work in harmony and theory with Professor John Mooney of the University of Iowa. Alexander did radio work and played church organs starting at age 12. Was graduated from high school at age 15 and immediately became musical director for Radio Station WDNC in Durham, playing a number of remote broadcasts each day on a two-manual Wurlitzer pipe organ in the recreation room of a local church. This job continued until she was 19. Alexander then moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to play a remote broadcast on the theatre pipe organ at Loew's State Theatre over Radio Station KOME. In 1945 she moved back to Raleigh, North Carolina, as musical director of the 50,000-watt NBC outlet, Radio Station WPTF. It was a three-manual Wurlitzer in the auditorium studio. Some of her broadcasts were carried on the NBC network originating over WPTF. Alexander later was on the staff at Radio City Music Hall and was the only woman to have held that position.

Alexander later went into network television playing a Hammond organ. She "retired" when her last child was born in 1958. That same year she began preparing material for publication by Hansen Publications, Inc., including her instruction books "Mildred Alexander Method of Complete Organ Mastery," and Arrangement Books. Alexander took a position with the Hammond Organ Company as an educational consultant, and toured for them playing the organ and instructing. She has played for a number of theatre organ groups, including Rochester, Detroit, Buffalo, Eastern Massachusetts, Portland (Oregon), San Diego, Vancouver (B.C.), Indianapolis, Hollywood, the Kirk of Dunedin, etc. She has recorded three pipe organ records, "Alexander the Great," "Live at the Wiltern" and "Thoroughly Fabulous Millie," all recorded at the Wiltern Theatre, Los Angeles, California. □

Mildred Alexander.





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.

Hello ATOSers:

I'd like to put a question and a challenge to organists and musicians everywhere: What do the songs "Suzy Snowflake," "Winter Wonderland," "Frosty the Snowman," "Jingle Bell Rock," "Jingle Bells," "Let It Snow" and "Sleigh Ride" all have in common? Most people will say they are all Christmas songs, right? **WRONG!**

These songs are all *winter* songs. If you really check the words you'll find that there is not a word about Christmas in any of them. There are prob-

ably many other songs like these which all get played right up to Christmas, and then we never hear them again.

Yet winter continues two and a half months after December 25 every year. Now there is no disrespect for Christmas in this at all. I certainly play Christmas songs to the twelfth day of the season, but I do play the winter songs all winter long to the beginning of spring.

I therefore challenge my fellow organists and the music industry to play these winter songs all winter long. In

fact, I play them in the middle of summer, when it's 100° outside. Then everyone feels cooler.

Without sleighbell effects and other devices we can certainly make these songs more effective and then maybe winter will be all the more bearable from now on.

My very best from EMCATOS and the Pine Tree Chapter.

Robert K. Legon

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find my check to cover another year's dues. I've been a member of the Society since 1960 and find it more interesting each year. I'm not an organist; I find my enthusiasm in organs is as sincere as if I was.

I have never seen anything in THEATRE ORGAN about any theatre organs built by the Skinner company, but have read that there were a few. Can you tell me if any still exist and if so, where they are located?

Yours truly,

Kenneth E. White
165A Whitney Street
Auburn, Maine 04210

Dear Sir:

My thanks to ATOS and its members. I have been informed of Mr. William McMains' demise as of August 28, 1976, and that his most valuable organ teaching materials and solos can be had via Harmony Cottage, P.O. Box 706, College Park, Maryland 20740.

His Vintage Theatre Organ Series can be had via Hal Leonard Publishing Co., P.O. Box 227, Winona, Minnesota 55987.

Art Jansson
Sedona, Arizona

Dear Mr. Gilbert:

You probably don't get fan mail about your Classified Ads department, but put me down as a satisfied user of this feature.

As a result of my want-ad in the Sept./Oct. issue, I recently received a large package containing photocopies of the information I was seeking. As the sender did not include a name or address, I cannot respond directly with my "thank you" and reimbursement.

Perhaps you could find space in your Letters to the Editor column to include my thanks and appreciation to the anonymous benefactor who spent time and money answering my request.

Sincerely,
Donald F. Hodge □

COMING ATTRACTION

THEATRE ORGAN is happy to announce the addition to our writing staff of **Mildred Alexander**, internationally respected in organ circles because of her long active career in playing, teaching and writing. Always striving for improvement in her own playing, "Millie" publicly declares "Nobody's perfect, and I'm the perfect example." Her articles promise to be amusing and informative, because she will openly share her "goofs," as well as the knowledge gained from her sometimes painful, sometimes hilarious experiences.

1984 ATOS CONVENTION INDIANAPOLIS

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE — SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Cardinal Music Palace
Fort Wayne — 4/37 Wurlitzer
Chris Elliott

Embassy Theatre
Fort Wayne — 4/15 Page
Walt Strony, Lyn Larsen
and orchestra

Hedback Theatre
Indianapolis — 2/11 Page
Lin Lunde

Manual High School
Indianapolis — 3/16 Uniphone
Dennis James

Long Center
Lafayette — 3/17 Wurlitzer
Tom Hazleton

Paramount Music Palace
Indianapolis — 4/42 Wurlitzer
Donna Parker, Bill Vlasak

Paramount Theatre
Anderson — 3/7 Page
Lowell Ayars

ARTISTS

Lowell Ayars
Dwight Beacham
Chris Elliott
Tom Hazleton
Dennis James
Lyn Larsen
Lin Lunde
Jonas Nordwall
Donna Parker
Richard Purvis
Walt Strony
Bill Vlasak

Purdue Hall of Music
West Lafayette — Baldwin,
Allen, Rodgers
Dwight Beacham,
Tom Hazleton, Jonas Nordwall

Scottish Rite Cathedral
Indianapolis — 5/88 E.M. Skinner
Richard Purvis

— OPTIONAL —
Pipe Dream Restaurant
Kokomo, Indiana
3/14 Wurlitzer
Bill Tandy

Manual High School
Indianapolis — 3/16 Uniphone
Young Artists Concert

Paramount Music Palace
Indianapolis — 4/42 Wurlitzer
Late night jam sessions

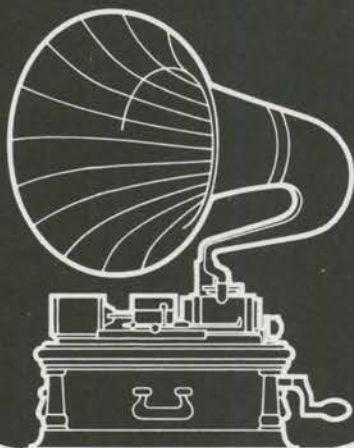
AFTERGLOW

Springdale Music Palace, Springdale, Ohio — 4/36 Wurlitzer
Karl Cole, Dave Weingartner

Emery Theatre, Cincinnati — 3/26 Wurlitzer
Bob Ralston

Boat ride with cocktails and dinner

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.

DWIGHT BEACHAM PLAYS THE ALLEN SYSTEM 620 THEATRE ORGAN. No. DLW-1019 (stereo). \$4.00 postpaid from the Allen Organ Company, Macungie, Pennsylvania 18062. (\$5.50 outside the USA; add \$5.00 more for air shipment).

Yes, this is an electronic instrument, a tonally remarkable one from the theatre organ viewpoint. This column normally reviews pipe-generated music but not exclusively. We've been hearing favorable comments about the Allen Model 620. The Allen Company was slow to enter the T.O. market, but when they did it was full steam ahead. Much of the credit for steering the usually conservative builder in this direction was the personable young man who does the playing. We have known Dwight Beacham since he was a teenager. Even then he had a medium-size Wurlitzer playing in his southern California home, thanks to understanding (and encouraging) parents. Beacham abandoned his teaching career to join Allen as a demonstrator of the firm's concert and church organs a few years

ago and Allen found out it had a T.O. champion on its hands. Then Allen developed its computer tone generating system and started building modest horseshoe models. There has been a steady improvement over the years and the three-deck Model 620 is the best yet, in our humble opinion. One feature we admire about Allen's theatre models is that they put nearly all of the switching of tonal facilities on the stoprail where it belongs. This is in contrast to the products of some electronic organ builders who crowd all sorts of tonal switches on the two side jambs or on the straight board beneath the stopkeys. On a theatre pipe organ console about all one would find on the side jambs would be the blower switch, the console elevator switch and perhaps the console lights switch. So, Allen stole a march on the competition!

Other builders have made great strides in simulating theatre organ voices via tone generators, notably Rodgers and Conn. The Allen 620 compares very favorably with their

best efforts, yet it has its own personality. It doesn't seem quite so Tibia-oriented. In fact, its massed Strings (with Celestes, we believe) are especially satisfying. The brass reeds are very good. The only T.O. voice we missed on the recording is a Vox Humana. If it's there, it's inundated in the combinations.

Let's examine the selections.

Side 1: "I Won't Dance." Lots of key changes. A typical "console riser" in the "big organ" sense, with a few harmonically out-of-the-ordinary passages on a calliope combination.

"Answer Me." Lovely ballad played in the Beacham style with frequent modulations and tempo changes. Interesting phrasing.

"Rainbow on the River." Dwight obviously patterned this one on the legendary Jesse Crawford 78 rpm recording. It sounds fresh and stimulating and adds credence to the general opinion that JC's arrangements were so right. So is Dwight's re-creation.



Dwight Beacham and the Allen model 620.

"Junk Man Rag." Typical rag, the type which works so well accompanying a silent comedy.

"The Thrill is Gone" is an oldie (first recorded by Rudy Vallee in the '20s). Dwight includes the verse which adds up to preparation for the tear-stained chorus with its alternating moments of melancholia and desperation. It is a selection well-suited for subtle phrasing, and Dwight misses no opportunities. His varied registration helps make this perhaps the finest ballad treatment on the platter.

"Hooray for Hollywood" is that fine old potboiler which serves as an opener for so many TV shows dealing with "Tinseltown." It has schmaltz, bombast, sentimentality, color and enthusiasm, as presented here in full hoopla.

Side 2: "Love Me or Leave Me" is played in the style of a '20s dance orchestra (except for the chromatic closing fanfare) even to including a few "bumps" which song stylist Ruth Etting (whose name will be forever linked with the tune) wouldn't consider a part of her routine. No matter; it's all good jazzy fun borrowed from another era and in a big, broad style.

"Time in a Bottle" is understated. It's a pretty tune, mostly ballad but with an occasional hint of rock effects. The Allen strings shine and scintillate in places.

"Our Director" is that familiar march tune to which many high school poets added words for use as a sports rally song or even a school song. Dwight gives it the full brass band treatment with brief traps and a Piccolo solo trio followed by the whole band passing in review.

"Sapphire," a novelty instrumental in the "Soliloquy" style, gets the most lengthy treatment on Side 2. It's one of those tunes which repeats an arresting phrase through a number of variations and contrasting interludes, some in tempo, some not. Good phrasing here.

"Choo Choo Ch'Boogie" is just that, complete with a steam engine takeoff which is well done — but Dwight, this recording was miked in a church, not a pasta emporium! Well, perhaps some listeners will remember the huff and puff days of rail transportation. We do. The tune is sometimes reminiscent of "Chicken Reel" but that's forgotten when Dwight piles on the "walking pedal" effect with more gusto than a flagon of Schlitz.

Next, a hymn, which contrasts sharply with the previous selections.

If you like "The Old Rugged Cross" you'll love Dwight Beacham's closer, "Shadow of the Cross." It is played with theatre organ registration, faultless phrasing and varied combination changes. A good denouement to a contrasty program.

Playing is tasteful, sometimes thrilling. Dwight Beacham has maintained high musical standards since he was a teenager. We have never heard him play other than well. On this disc he's at his best. Recording is good, although there is some question as to the wisdom of perhaps too "live" acoustics. The taping was done in a very live church for the natural reverb. However, there is some tendency to blur registration, but not much. There are no jacket notes, but the price is right. What do you expect for \$4.00 — excellent arrangements, well played on a very pipe-like instrument? You'll get them all.

AROUND THE WORLD: A Musical Trip with Don Thompson. \$7.99 postpaid from Pipe Organ Presentations, 3678 Arcadian Drive, Castro Valley, California 94546.

This could be dubbed "our regular Don Thompson record review." True, Don's recorded efforts have been the subject of many of these columns lately. That's because Don is a bundle of energy; he puts out a lot of grooves. This one is being released on disc (recall that his recent Christmas album was available on cassette only) and is played on the 3/13 Wurlitzer in Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in San Lorenzo, California, where Don is the featured organist.

By this time every reader knows that Don had decided to be an organist by the time he was four, started piano lessons at seven and started teaching himself to play the organ at 15, that he attended Cambridge and Oxford but enjoyed playing for ice shows, vaudeville (er, music halls, that is), ballrooms, bars, TV and radio, to a much greater extent; that he has played in U.S. pasta dispensaries for the past 15 years. All that is well known so we won't embellish.

The idea of a musical trip around the globe dates from silent movie slide novelty days, but thanks to Don's immense repertoire, this one is novel. Generally, he soft-pedals the obvious

titles — at least as much as possible without diminishing sales possibilities to pizza munchers. For example, the trip starts at the City by the Bay. Instead of leaving his heart there, Don dug out the exciting theme from the '30s MGM movie, entitled simply "San Francisco." Here are the tunes.

"San Francisco" opens with a "California Here I Come" fanfare. It's pleasant to hear the lively theme from the long ago Clark Gable/Jeanette MacDonald starrer played once more, and with such verve. No 1906 earthquake suggested, though the movie did.

NEW BRITISH THEATRE ORGAN RECORDINGS!

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MR RESIDENT

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\$8.00 each postpaid airmail**
Make cheques payable to The
Cinema Organ Society



COS TAPES
23 Aveling Park Road
London E17 4NS
England

"Orange Blossom Special" (traveling music) opens with a train whistle which sounds more like a 1920 Klaxon auto horn. Train effects dominate but do not overcome the music.

"New York, New York" gets a conservative treatment. It's well registered and played in the same mood as it was in the memorable movie. Nice solo Tuba among the many registration changes.

Scotland's entry is "The Skye Boat Song." It opens appropriately with a bagpipe sequence then to a baritone melody accompanied by well-executed arpeggios on a Flute/Tibia combination. There are also wind effects, probably to indicate stormy weather. Don should know; he was born in the area.

Representing Hungary is Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* to which Don devotes six minutes and twenty seconds. The glowering opening bars are followed by a lilting fast passage (most Hungarian *Zigeuner* music consists of alternating fast and slow sections). Don takes a few liberties with the old war horse but what the heck — it's pure circus music anyway and the overall effect is good entertainment. It's one of his best.

Don offers "Zorba's Dance" with an accurate understanding of the Greek folk dancer's requirements.

Spain is represented by "Malagueña." It features a sharp brass reed in solo, probably the Posthorn. The very good piano is also heard. Although listed with "Malagueña" on the jacket, the second Spanish entry, "Granada," is not heard on Side One.

The last tune on Side One is a lively Italian "Tarantella" which apparently honors Italy although it is not listed on the jacket. It solos the very effective accordion played from the organ manual.

Side Two opens with a lilting "Marche Lorraine," complete with drums and traps, for France, followed by the "Granada" (for Spain) previously mentioned as missing. It has lots of interesting key changes.

Don's "Arab Folk Music" set has got to be authentic; he lived for some time in the Middle East, observing local customs and music. The result here is quite exotic but different from the Hollywood "cooch dance" approach, although the seven veils are never very far away.

Don's Austrian entry is Strauss' "Tales from the Vienna Woods,"



Don Thompson.

and "Hava Nagilah," with lots of piano and a sharp reed, represents Israel. Both come off very well despite small melodic liberties taken with the Strauss selection.

Mellow brass opens the Australian "Waltzing Mathilda" and it closes in march tempo with a flurry of traps. "Hawaiian Wedding Song" gets a tender and rather subdued playing with wind effects; it's one of the prettiest tunes of the trip, and ends on a familiar "G.W." progression. Soon it's back to the USA with an upbeat "California Here I Come." Solid entertainment throughout by a master of the art of pleasing audiences.

The music presented here represents many places Don Thompson has visited in his meanderings about the planet, and he obviously warmed up to the project with fervor. The result is bound to please his large ring of fans. Recording is good although a few splices can be sensed and near the start of "Tales" there is a tape speed mismatch that sensitive ears will catch.

Don's notes on the music and the places represented add much interest. The usual misinformation about the

original location of the Joynt organ follows Don's notes. We do not blame him for that as the same myth appeared on previous records made on the transplanted and augmented Fresno State Theatre Wurlitzer as well as on the Joynt brochure. The jacket includes two photos of Don (he informs us that he shoots his own cover photos). Incidentally, pay no attention to the listing of selections on the jacket; they are not in correct order. The record label lists them in order.

The review pressing was smooth and free of flaws. Best of all, this pioneer pizzery organ sounds fine under Don's guidance.

* * *

Remember the Toledo Paramount? Of course it's long gone via the steel ball route and its 4/20 Wurlitzer remains silent in storage. The organ's mentor and champion for many years was organist Virg Howard, who administered much TLC. Just before the steel ball hit, Virg recorded a number of tapes and released one set of tunes on disc under the title *Now is the Hour*. We recall giving it a favorable review at the time. That was years ago.

Long-time reader Eric Reeve now informs us that Virg also has available on cassette *Now is the Hour* plus four additional cassettes he recorded on the 4/20. He adds that not many sets are left but that Virg will sell them at \$7.00 plus \$1.00 postage each to interested collectors. The title of the four-cassette package is *Paramount Pipes*. If interested, write to Virg Howard, c/o Howard's Organs and Pianos, Westgate Shopping Center, 3301-3B Central Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43606.

* * *

Collectors of vintage George Wright recordings are offered a two-record set of tunes, including "Swanee," "Caravan," "Begin the Beguine," "Moon River," "South," "Lazy River," "Alley Cat" and more. The selections are from Wright's series on Dot label records played on his studio organ during the '60s. Order number for the set is S65893. Send \$9.87 plus \$2.40 shipping to Publishers Central Bureau, One Champion Avenue, Dept. 226, Box 1187, Newark, New Jersey 07101. □

News from the
Unaffiliated
Groups
 Lloyd E. Klos



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

An afternoon program on Sunday, September 25, opened our fall concert season, with Neil Jensen, 25-year-old organist from Australia, at our 3/11 Wurlitzer. He was delayed in his trip from Rochester, making it to our Empire Theatre only one hour before the concert. This allowed him only time to set his registrations, as our audiences start arriving 50 minutes before showtime. He didn't need any practice, though, as he played a good program with something for everyone. This was Neil's first concert for ESTMIM.

Rex Koury on Saturday, October 15, played an evening concert. This great artist last performed here in 1973, and we hope he will return much sooner next time. In addition to his many numbers in the first half, his Dolores-&-Joey sing-along was a lot of fun and very different. After intermission, his silent movie, *Rex Koury At Home*, was shown and enjoyed by all. He also played fine arrangements of "Stars & Stripes Forever," "China-

town," and selections from *The Student Prince* and *Carmen*. It was a wonderful program which rewarded Rex with two standing ovations.

All of us were saddened by the passing of 91-year-old organist and former ESTMIM board member, Luella Wickham, on November 1. "Wicky" played a number of concerts and silent film shows for us, the last program being in June 1975. Our condolences go to her family.

CHARLIE RICH



*Lockport
 Theatre
 Organ
 Society*

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

Tom Wibbels, who hails from the Midwest where he performs at the Pipe Organ Place in Elkhart, Indiana, made his initial appearance here on September 13. The artist drew a standing ovation, the first time a performer was so honored at the Lockport Senior Citizens Center. What's more, it was done in absolute silence, every one of the 250 standing in a moving tribute to the artist.

The program was a "salad," something for everyone. There were great numbers from the Big Band era, selections from Julie Andrews films,

and light offerings from Broadway and Hollywood musicals. Tom then provided the accompaniment to the Laurel & Hardy laughter, *Liberty*, one of their last silent films before the pair switched to talkies. The sing-along encouraged sopranos and baritones to their utmost. All in all, it was a delightful evening and the artist promised to return next season. Profuse comments from departing concertgoers ranged from "Great" to "Bring him back again."

After four years and the expenditure of 15,400 man-hours of toil, the 2/8 Wurlitzer was dedicated on October 26 before a full house. Taking part were Mayor and Mrs. Thomas C. Rotonco, Jr.; Bette Dale, for whom the Center is named; Diane E. Seifert, president of the LTOS; Linda Van Buskirk, executive director of the Center; Rev. Otto Struckmann who gave the invocation; and Harold LeValley, LTOS program chairman and master of ceremonies. A dozen who were directly responsible for the organ's installation were given framed certificates.

Rex Koury, veteran theatre organist and currently ATOS president, performed the musical niceties which included a wide range of selections, a sing-along, and the Larry Semon film comedy, *Kid Speed*. The highlight of Rex's program was a sequence of 17 old-time radio themes. Acting as announcer in several dialects was Harold LeValley who once had a stint in



Tom Wibbels, who played at the Lockport Senior Citizens Center on September 13 (shown here at the 3/10 Barton in the Pipe Organ Place in Elkhart, Indiana.)

show business. The predominately senior-citizen audience showed its appreciation with gusto. The concert was part of a four-week eastern tour, and to this reviewer's way of thinking, "The Boy with Miles of Smiles" improves with age. A key to the City of Lockport was given Rex by the Mayor, proof of the positive feelings of all those present.

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

This organization kicked off its twentieth concert season on September 23 at the Auditorium Theatre, and if the first event was an indication of what is in store for the remainder of the 1983-84 season, we are in for a spectacular series. Australia's personable Neil Jensen, making his first tour of the States, was the artist and performed most creditably on the 4/22 Wurlitzer. Neil, a protégé of an RTOS favorite, Tony Fenelon, gave the 1600 concertgoers a broad spectrum of music: tunes by Romberg, Gershwin, Strauss, Tschaiakowsky, Saint-Saëns and Anderson. High points were "Galloping Comedians" and the overture from Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. Equally at home with ballads as he was with sprightly airs, Neil honored the standing ovation with "Thanks for the Memory" and the hand-clapping "Waltzing Mathilda." All we can say is that if Tony Fenelon doesn't formulate another American tour soon, this young man, Jensen, will make everyone forget Tony.

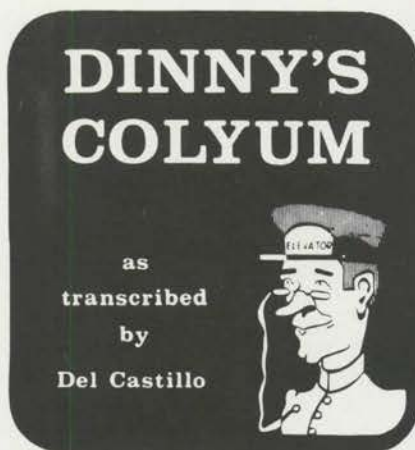
After an 11-year absence, Eddie Weaver returned to the Auditorium Theatre for his fourth appearance, on October 15. Eddie's brand of musicianship, coupled with a keen sense of humor, had been sorely missed here, and it is hoped 11 years won't elapse before his next RTOS concert.

Eddie knows what his audience enjoys and he gives it to them in a rich kaleidoscope. He played over 50 numbers, plus ten more in a sing-along. Exhibiting a trick which only training in counterpoint can accomplish, he played "My Secret Love" and "Dancing Tambourine" simultaneously. From "Swanee" to "Chariots of Fire," Richmond's Weaver of Songs offered something for everyone: four operatic favorites, several rag-time tunes, a medley of love songs, a country-Western medley, three themes of the Big Band Era, and toward the end, an impression of a parade passing by. It was a grand evening for the 1261 who came, including one RTOS member who flew from Maine via Boston to Rochester just for the privilege of hearing this Hall of Famer perform.

The club presented its fourth annual Silent Film Festival, October 28 and 29 at Eisenhart Auditorium. Veteran organist, Lee Erwin, was at the 3/8 Wurlitzer for the three shows. With Halloween's nearing, *Phantom of the Opera* and *Haunted House* were substituted because of inability to procure two other films. Buster Keaton and Harry Langdon were the featured silent comedy stars.

The remaining artists for the season, as announced by Program Chairman Paul Hoffman, include Hector Olivera, March 24; Lin Lunde, April 13; Chris Elliott, May 18. February is reserved for organ maintenance. Information can be obtained by calling 716/544-6595, or writing RTOS, Box 17114, Rochester, New York 14617.

LLOYD E. KLOS □



Well, Crismas is long gone by, but it seems like it has got so you cant get away from it except maybe a few months in the summer. By the time you get thru payin your Crismas bills its about time to rassel with your income tax, and then along in the fall you begin to see the Crismas ads showin up in the noospapers. The whole thing has got screwed around from what started out as a relijus holyday and now has got took over by the department stores. They is a place here in Los Anjelees where I live that the guy who owns it dont bother to take down his Crismas lites at all but he just turns them off from March to September like.

I kind of figure that the song riters is as mixed up about it as everybody else. Crismas is too popular not to have songs about it for the songriters to make some jack off it. Funny thing about that. Some holydays cash in on

a lot more songs than other holydays. Now you take holydays like Thanksgiving or Labor Day or Noo Years and they pratically aint no songs at all except Old Lang Sign and I Been Workin On The R.R. or take the wars for instant. They is a passel of songs about the Civil War or World War One, but what do you get about the Spanitch American War or the Vietnam War or World War Two. They was not popular wars so they aint any songs to speak of about them. Crismas is different. From the time all the Santy Klausen begin to show up on the street corners or in the department stores when you get fat ones and skinny ones all ringin bells and goin Ho Ho Ho, you get Jingle Bells bangin away at you everywhere you go. And if it aint Jingle Bells it is Silent Nite which aint anything but silent or Come All Ye Faithful and bring your money with you.

I got to kind of like makin a chart of all the different kinds of Crismas songs, the ones for the kids and the ones for relijus peeples and the ones about weather and then the funny ones and snappy ones and the quiet ones. I spose I otto put the relijus ones at the top because that is the way that Crismas started. So I started out with A Dusty Fidaylis and Holy Nite and O Little Town of Bethlehem and Joy To The World and Hark The Herald Angels Sing and all like that here. They is the ones that the young singers get together and serrynade peeples houses, but they is also the ones that sing Jingle Bells and Silent Nite which

is good songs but I get too much of before December 25th.

So the next kind is the pretty quiet ones and of course the one that everybody knows best is White Christmas that Bing Crosby sings. But I like just as well some of the other quiet ones like I'll Be Home For Christmas, and Merry Xmas To You with those chestnuts roasting on an open fire, and Silver Bells and like that there. And then the ones about the weather like Winter Wonderland, and Let It Snow, Let It Snow, and Winter I like where it says that's the time to squeeze her

when its winter.

Then there is a raft of toe tapping songs like Slay Ride, and Brazilian Slay Bells, and Rudolf The Red Nose Reindeer and The Parade Of The Wooden Soldiers and Santa Klaus Is Comin To Town and All I Want For Xmas Is My Two Front Teeth and so I wind up with Jingle Bells again except that I can get onto the toys for the kids with the March Of The Toys and that pretty quiet one Toyland. So that's enough of that, and what did YOU get for Xmas? See what I mean? You can't get away from it. □

Closing Chord

Claude Newman, of suburban Minneapolis, Minnesota, died of heart failure on October 19, 1983, at the age of 70. He was one of the most active members of the Land O' Lakes Theatre Organ Society for well over 20 years.

He owned a magnificent 3/18 Wurlitzer, which he affectionately called "Goldie," and generously made it available to LOLTOS at least two or three times a year for concerts. The organ's superb sound, acclaimed by audiences and by many outstanding organists, was due to Terry Kleven's wizardry. (See THEATRE ORGAN, July/August '83, p. 42, for another picture of the console and news of sale to Proctor's Theatre, Schenectady,

New York.)

In 1938, at the age of 25, Claude founded Woodcraft Hobby Stores in the Twin Cities, specializing in top-quality model railroad equipment. He also developed a line of small wood display cases that are works of art.

Claude was a friendly host on his hobby show for about 30 years, starting in the earliest days of Twin Cities television. He is survived by his wife, Sedonia, four children and seven grandchildren.

JOHN ZETTERSTROM

A native of Chicago, **Edward F. "Eddie" Osborn**, 68, died December 1, 1983, in Cincinnati where he had resided in later years. He was a Lieutenant Commander in the Naval Air Force assigned to a carrier during World War II where, aside from regular duties, he entertained the crew on a Hammond organ. □

After his release from the Navy, Eddie became well known and admired while performing at a popular restaurant in the Loop and at Chicago's Union Railroad Station, which presented organ music during Christmas holiday season when train travel was in vogue. Later, he joined the J. C. Deagan Co., and finally became associated with the Baldwin Piano & Organ Co., where he remained as Vice President until his retirement.

Eddie always presented a cheerful disposition which manifested itself in his music. He will be remembered by many for his Wurlitzer pipe organ recordings entitled "Fabulous Eddie." □

LEON BERRY

Clarence P. Smith, 80, father of popular East Coast organist Dick Smith, died of a heart attack on December 3, 1983. A resident of Poway, California, he leaves his wife, Amy, and daughter, Martha, in addition to Dick. A memorial service was held on December 8 at the Church of the Brethren in San Diego. Dick played for the service.

Caroline Wellington, wife of James F. "Duke" Wellington (Transportation Chairman for the 1983 ATOS Convention), died on November 28, 1983. A resident of Kensington, California, she was a member with "Duke" of the Nor-Cal Chapter. In addition to her husband she leaves a daughter, Susan Bordner, a son, James H. Wellington, and three grandchildren. □



Claude Newman and "Goldie."

(Edwin Hirschhoff photo)



Eddie Osborn, Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer, Chicago, around 1956.

the theatre organ

it's been around
longer than we thought

by Matt Dickerson

Most of us generally think of the theatre pipe organ as one of the great American "inventions" of the twentieth century. However, the creative minds of organ builders were going strong as far back as the 1700's!

Yes, that's right — organ builders were just as interested in the building of large show-organs then as they were in the 1900's. Excellent examples of this can be found in pipe organs which have a vintage that make this story hard to believe.

For example, there is an organ in the Weingarten Benedictine Abbey Church, Southern Germany, that was built by J. Gabler in 1737. Many people think that any organ from a time period such as this would logically have one of those "classic" specifications with very little 8' tone and lots of upper work, such as Mixtures and Mutations. Not so! The 8' tone dominates this instrument, just as it does in a fine theatre pipe organ. There are a limited number of stops whose pitches exceed the 4' tone. One manual on this instrument, the "Oberwerk," has mainly 8' stops, Celestes and a Mixture. And what about the Pedal? It's got powerful 32' and 16' stops, and a seemingly out-of-place Mixture, as does the Oberwerk.

Other instruments have toy animals walking out of their tiny houses perched high on Ruckpositivs. Weingarten has what appears to be "bunches" of grapes hanging over the organ console; these are really the bells of the Pedal Carillon. There are even pipes made of ivory, namely the 2' Flageolet. This unique instrument has been accordingly called a "huge rococo cinema organ." And to top it all, this huge tracker (partly pneumatic now) show-organ had a de-

tached console! Those familiar with the construction of tracker pipe organs know that the consoles as a rule are attached to the organ case. It seems that the builder of the Weingarten instrument foresaw the detached

console of the electropneumatic theatre pipe organ, accredited to Hope-Jones.

Bach himself was known to like special effects, especially tuned percussions. He was also known to specify these in his organs. Just think what he'd do if turned loose on a Wurlitzer!

In a way, the fact that there was an interest in theatre-type instruments seems to slightly lessen the uniqueness of the idea that our own Wurlitzers and Mortons were totally original, but the one thing that they didn't have back in the 1700's was the pizza parlor in which to put their show-organs.

(A detailed account of the Weingarten organ can be found in *The European Organ; 1450-1850*, by Peter Williams, Indiana University Press; also available from the Vestal Press, of Vestal, New York.) □

Questions and Answers on the Technical Side

by Lance Johnson



Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

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

Q. We are in the process of raising the pitch of our theatre organ from A = 435 to 440 Hz. Most ranks came in quite well, but now we find that the wood Harmonic Flute will not tune sharp enough. Is there a formula or special procedure for knowing how much to cut off the pipe?

A. I suppose one could calculate the amount to cut off, but this would be a waste of your time. The easiest way

would be through trial and error, but rather than doing each pipe consecutively, just do all the C's and G's first so you will see the pattern of how much to remove, thereby saving much time.

Q. I have just begun to replace the leather on pouch boards on our church organ, which is a Hinners. As the new leathers are flat, will they stretch to allow the valves to seat themselves? How long must I wait before turning on the wind? What are the cardboard discs for? Is there any danger of the discs coming off before the organ is ready to play?

A. The leather will stretch but you do this in the following manner: After cleaning off all the old leather, re-apply glue and lay the pouch dead center on the hole while rubbing the outside edges so the glue can spread and penetrate. As you are doing this, you will have to push down against

the valve so the leather can become cup-shaped or dished. After the glue has set, re-insert the spring making absolutely certain that this spring goes back into the valve recess inside so it can't slip out. Then glue the disc (which is the spring retainer) back on, and place the pouch board upside down so that you can place a weight on the retainer until the glue dries completely. Since much time is required in installing the pouch blocks and bungs, you can plan on turning

the wind back on as soon as the chest is airtight.

From an organbuilder comes this information: Apparently Wurlitzer, at one time, built AGO-style pedalboards with not only concave pedals but radiating as well. Many have commented on Wurlitzer's unusual pedalboard configuration having all the pedals stand vertically, even on the outsides. Now we have two styles. □

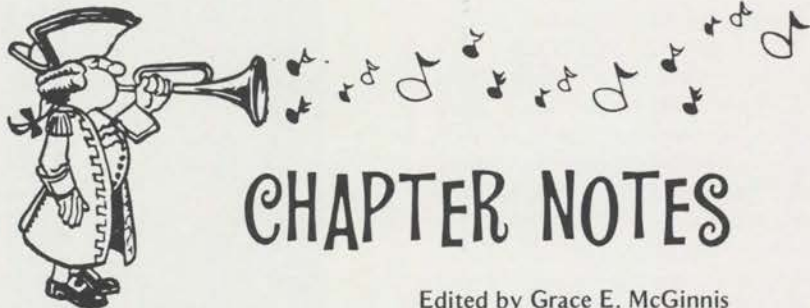
theatre organ. We claim to have "discovered" Kurt, and look forward to his return to Atlanta.

Eight members ventured, on November 5, to the Mid-Tennessee Organ Bash and Cave Crawl sponsored by Roy Davis. Two private residence organs were heard and, of course, the highlight was the banquet served in the Grand Ballroom of Cumberland Caverns in McMinnville, Tennessee.

November 13 was a "Choir Loft Party" at Grace Methodist Church in Atlanta. Our own members, Sue Goddard and Gregory Colson, organist and choirmaster at Grace Church, presented a light musical program on the 4/71 Schantz as 60 members sat in the choir loft.

Our excitement grows as work progresses on the installation of the 4/31 Wurlitzer in an Atlanta restaurant, The Excelsior Mill. This organ was originally installed as a 4/17 in the now-closed Showboat Pizza. Expected opening date in February, 1984. Work is being done by some of our members under private contract.

WARREN WILLIAMS



CHAPTER NOTES

Edited by Grace E. McGinnis

ac/atos

atlanta chapter. american theatre organ society

Atlanta

404/963-6449 or 404/457-4731

Fall has been busy for Atlanta Chapter. Our September meeting was a recorded listening session at the theatre of member Charles Walker. Recordings of historic Fox Möller organ music were heard, along with a slide show of most of the artists. The first of October, during the Atlanta Mid-Town Festival, we presented four live

theatre organ shows at the Walker Theatre using a silent film, sing-alongs and organ music on the 2/4 Robert-Morton. This event attracted many who heard silent-movie accompaniment for the first time on theatre organ.

Kurt Von Schakel, of Indianapolis, Indiana, was our featured artist on October 23 on the 4/17 Page at Winn Sound, Inc. Warehouse. Kurt returned for his second presentation with us this year and again filled the building with over 100 friends and members for a dazzling afternoon of

**CENTRAL FLORIDA
THEATRE
ORGAN
SOCIETY**



Tampa

813/685-8707 or 813/863-2264

In October, 37 members and guests met at the home of Eleanor Bassett in Ridge Manor. Eleanor has a fine 2/4 Robert-Morton which we have all enjoyed hearing and playing at previous meetings. After the business meeting, our chairman, John Otterson, entertained us with a fine selection of well-known tunes. After the program, open console was enjoyed by everyone. We thank Eleanor for her invitation and hospitality. This will probably be our last visit as Eleanor plans to sell the organ.

Our November meeting was held at Central Music in Clearwater. A report was given on the Tampa Theatre Wurlitzer installation. Progress is still being made, and we are working to get the ciphers and air leaks corrected.



Kurt Von Schakel at the 4/17 Page, Winn Sound, Inc. Warehouse, Atlanta.

This involves checking the valve pallets and putting new leather on some. After the mechanical work is done, then in a few weeks we can start checking the wiring and the relay.

Our chairman reported that a new radio station, WOCR-92FM, which calls itself "Classics 92," will be playing theatre organ music every other week on Saturday from 7:00 to 7:55 p.m. The first program was aired on November 12 and John Otterson hosted the program playing a variety of recordings along with information about the organists and organs. The publicity should be beneficial, and the program a good outlet for theatre organ music.

SANDRA SHOOK



CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER

Indianapolis

317/255-8056 or 317/786-2160

Central Indiana Chapter met at the Zion Evangelical Church of Christ on Sunday, October 9. Tim Needler called the meeting to order. Over 40 members and guests were present. Mary Drake was the featured organist for the day, and she presented a varied program of beautiful songs. Kevin Bennett and Dr. Mallory Bransford also contributed to the afternoon's program.

The November meeting was held at the beautiful 39-room mansion of Bob and Wanda Hawkins in Anderson, Indiana. President Tim Needler opened the meeting which was attended by 160 members and guests. Tim was also the featured artist of the day. Bob Hawkins gave a brief history of his home which was built in the period 1935-37. It has 22,000 square feet and is heated by gas and dollar bills, Bob said. The organ pipes are under the central reception room floor. The original player console is in an alcove outside the reception room, the sound coming from grillwork in the floor of the reception room. An additional slave console was added recently. The organ is a 2/10 E. M. Skinner, probably built in 1925.

Central Indiana was pleased to host Western Reserve Chapter of Cleveland in September, and the CATOE and Land of Lincoln Chapters on No-

vember 19 and 20. Walt Strony gave two concerts on November 18 and 19.

WAYNE R. PIPHER



CONNECTICUT VALLEY THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, INC.



Thomaston

203/378-9192 or 203/583-8334

Our 1983 concert series continued with Jim Benzmiller's appearance at the Thomaston Opera House on September 17 and 18, and a most welcome appearance it was. The hall was filled with elegant sounds from both chambers as Jim went back and forth across the manuals and the pedalboard. Our Marr & Colton always sounds good; however, Jim had it sounding unusually so, thanks to original stop combinations and good-for-organ arrangements. A well-

ordered program that drew from different decades of popular music and stage musicals included favorites of the entire audience which was loud in applause. A very satisfying evening of organ music thoroughly enjoyed by an appreciative audience strongly suggests a concert well done and a future return engagement. Thank you, Jim Benzmiller!



GRACE E. MCGINNIS.



CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS PLEASE NOTE

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

Type all copy, double-spaced, on letter-size (8½" x 11") white paper, leaving 1½" margins on top, bottom and both sides. Do not use erasable paper. Please include your name, address and telephone number.

Type photo captions on Scotch (3M) Post-it Note sheets (#654 - 3" x 3" or #655 - 3" x 5") and attach to **back** of photo. DO NOT use any kind of tape or rubber cement to attach captions to photos, and DO NOT attach photos to sheets of paper.

Send Chapter Notes and photos to:
Grace E. McGinnis, Associate Editor
 4633 SE Brookside Drive, #58
 Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

DEADLINES

December 1 for January/February
 February 1 for March/April
 April 1 for May/June

June 1 for July/August
 August 1 for September/October
 October 1 for November/December

On October 9 our meeting was the occasion of our annual autumn open house at the Thomaston Opera House which is now in its 100th year! Following the business session, open console prevailed from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. From 4:00 to 5:00 we heard formal presentations from the console by Alan Goodnow and Linn Murdoch of neighboring Southeast New England Theatre Organ Society. Alan Goodnow has played for us before, so we expected and heard from him fine music fitting to be bestowed upon one TOS by another. SENETOS maintained the standard with Linn Murdoch also. Many thanks, Alan Goodnow, Linn Murdoch and SENETOS. Following the Goodnow-Murdoch presentation, we enjoyed more open console until 8:00. A fine day was enjoyed by all.

In October, we continued our series with Lyn Larsen, also at the Thomaston Opera House. To say that we have heard Lyn before would be an understatement — this is his tenth engagement at the Opera House! These comments should probably stop right here, in view of that, but editorial license will be exercised just a little. This program of Lyn's included a good measure of music that demands the best out of our Marr & Colton as well as the full talent of the artist. "Wedding Day at Troldhaugen" and Ashley Miller's arrangement of "Poinciana" were two such, and justice was done. Enough of editorial license. Ten years needs no embellishment.

On the twelfth, we had our November meeting in Farmington at the Westfarms Mall. Our host was Duane Boise, manager of the Lowrey Organ Center which provided two fine electronic instruments for the day's activities. Open console was the order of the afternoon until five o'clock, at which time the local restaurants quenched our thirst and fed us. Important business following dinner was the election of officers for the coming year.

With our minds at ease about the coming months, we were quite ready for the evening's feature presentation. Our host had arranged for Jim Lanni to play for us. This young man, for whom electronic instruments are obviously an attraction, had us listening with great pleasure to very unique musical sounds. A very individual style of playing made for interesting



Walter Strony meeting the audience and autographing recordings in the lobby after his concert at the Avalon Theatre.

as well as very pleasant music. Our sincere thanks go to Duane Boise and Jim Lanni for a rewarding meeting, indeed.

Coming attractions at the Thomaston Opera House include: March 17, 18 — Dan Bellomy; May 19, 20 — Jonas Nordwall. For tickets and information call or write Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Connecticut 06483-0426. Telephone (203) 888-9696.

W. F. POWERS



Milwaukee

414/463-2365 or 414/771-8522

Many events have happened since our last report including two concerts, two programs for visiting chapters and numerous socials. Two outstanding young artists presented concerts, Clark Wilson on April 24 and Walt Strony on November 13.

Clark Wilson displayed his exceptional registration skills by bringing an amazing variety of sounds out of the 2/7 Wurlitzer at the Racine Theatre Guild. Some of the veteran con-

certgoers in the area felt that they had just heard the organ for the first time. Clark selected an entertaining variety of new, traditional and classical music to display the organ at its best. He also succeeded in demonstrating his own versatility, ranging from sensitive interpretations of many beautiful ballads such as "Spring Is Here," to artistic productions of "Trumpeter's Lullaby" and "Valencia." He closed with the impressive Toccata in F Major from Widor's *Symphony No. 5*.

Walt Strony orchestrated the 3/12 Wurlitzer at the Avalon Theatre beyond anything we have heard from that organ before. He brought some echoes of his 1983 Convention concert at the Castro Theatre (which four of our members had enjoyed hearing), and presented an impressive variety of music from a light medley of songs from *Ain't Misbehavin'* to pensive ballads and strong classics, closing with his own fabulous arrangement of the "1812 Overture." It was a show-stopper in every sense, even though he could not find room in this theatre to fire the cannon. When pressed by applause for an encore (a somewhat unreasonable request after he had just done-it-all), he was still "In The Mood" and showed us some new variations on even that well-known theme.

A special concert on March 12 was co-sponsored by DTOS and the Milwaukee Area Technical College. Local concert artist John Weissrock

demonstrated the exquisite orchestral voices of the 3/38 E. M. Skinner organ in the Cooley Auditorium of MATC. After the concert a reception/social was held at the Riverside Theatre with open console and supper served by DTOS members. In the evening John played a concert on the 90-rank Kimball/Kilgen at the Gesu Church where he is organist. We were happy to have many members of CATOE, LOLTOS and JATOE as our guests for this full day of music.

Members of DTOS prepared the 3/14 Barton at the Oscar Mayer Theatre in Madison for a Silent Film Cavalcade accompanied by Gaylord Carter on October 14 and 15. A busload and several cars full of DTOS members enjoyed the fine program. DTOS members were also pleased to entertain a busload of Land O' Lakes members, who had come for the festival, with a whirlwind tour of seven organs in the Milwaukee/Racine area during the next two days. They heard organs in two churches, two theatres, an auditorium, a pizza parlor and a residence (Fred Hermes' 5/36 Wurlitzer) demonstrated by our own members, Gary Hanson and Gary Mc-Withey, and local artists John Weissrock and Perry Petta.

We have also enjoyed several entertaining socials featuring programs by our own members, Gary Hanson at the Barton in Madison, Ralph Conn at Kipp's Supper Club, and Bill Campbell at the 4/23 Barton in the Lechowicz residence in Deerfield. Thanks go to CATOE for inviting us to share in some of their social meetings.

DTOS members do sincerely appreciate the dedication, time and effort which Chairman Fred Wolfgram has devoted to keeping us very active and promoting theatre organ in Wisconsin. Thanks, Fred!

PAT JAMESON



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

EMCATOS again went to college at Babson on October 16 for another course in music on our Wurlitzer! Bob Legon introduced his long-time good friend, Stanley Cahoon, as our



Former RCMH organist Jimmy Paulin at the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter Wurlitzer. (Photo by Paul Callahan)

member "guest." Stan was organist at the three-manual Robert-Morton in the Rialto, Leominster, and at the Boston Metropolitan's 4/26 Wurlitzer back when. An always listenable "Memories of You" was his opener to a nostalgic program of eleven familiar numbers. His *tour de force* was his "Lover" finale with rapid fingering and his nice little extra touches being well-received.

Our much anticipated concert weekend of October 22 and 23 with Jonas Nordwall was pure pleasure. It was his first appearance with us, but his records and playing at National ATOS Conventions gave him great advance publicity. President Nick Lupo welcomed all to our concerts and Concert Chairman Erle Renwick introduced our artist. A clue of things to come was the absence of the music desk from the console indicating a completely memorized program.

Saturday's first number was a relatively unknown "Greatest American Hero," after which Jonas welcomed us to Class 101A in light of our location. Our organist was in great form with meticulous attention to detail in a most varied program from oldies right up to current Broadway hits. A highlight for many was his rendition of Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance No. 4," so well known since Prince Charles' wedding. It was properly majestic and measured with Jonas' registration just right. A complete

change of pace showing Mr. Nordwall's "fingerbusting" speed was his "Dizzy Fingers." Our artist screened a short promotional film of the Organ Grinder Restaurant operation in Portland, Oregon, with himself at the console and a chamber tour. With Halloween coming, he accompanied a hilarious Harold Lloyd film, *Haunted Spooks*. He also played a short sing-along for a well-rounded program.

Sunday's performance was essentially different with "Consider Yourself," from *Oliver*, his opener and another thoroughly enjoyable presentation played professionally through to a standing "O." Jonas is a true musician with imagination, sensitivity, a thorough knowledge of his chosen instrument and an unpretentious manner topped with a rather dry humor.

Another talented organist graced our bench at the November 20 meeting in the person of James Paulin. Jimmy is classically trained, but is equally at home playing gospel, disco or pop. He played Radio City Music Hall's Wurlitzer from 1972-1976 and the re-dedication of Reverend Ike's United Palace 4/23 Robert-Morton. With only a short get-acquainted session with our Wurlitzer, he quickly was right at home as he opened with a spirited "'S Wonderful." As it was close to Thanksgiving, Jim included an uplifting "We Gather Together"

in a joyous mood. His biggest production number was a rocking "There's No Business Like Show Business," which built to a climax amid the shouts and cheers of an approving audience even before the finish of his generous performance. James Paulin has an engaging console manner with a cheerfulness that comes through in his playing. He really put our Wurlitzer through its paces and it would be a safe bet that they'll be reunited again before long!

STANLEY C. GARNISS



**KINGSTON
Kingston, Ontario**

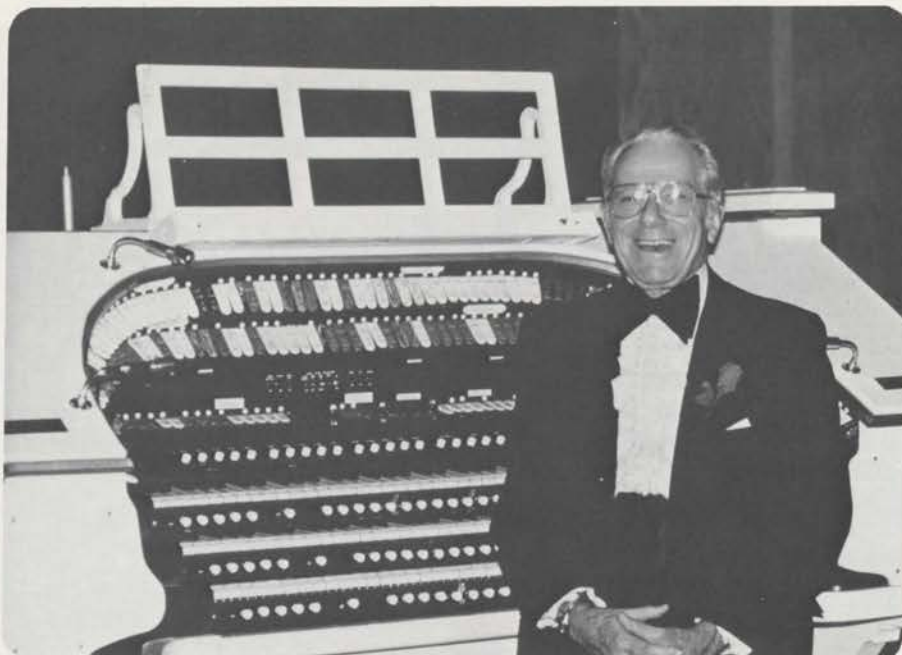
613/544-1991 or 613/542-2638

Our third concert season got off to a rousing start with two back-to-back concerts by ATOS President Rex Koury on October 21 and 22. These were well attended and the warm audiences put our guest artist in top form. The silent comedy and Rex's fine paintings drew an especially enthusiastic response.

Shortly before, 40 members and friends made a happy bus trip to Syracuse to hear Australia's Neil Jensen. This outing was enlivened by a sing-along en route with TO accompaniment pre-taped by John Robson, and by a fine pre-arranged group dinner at the town of Parish, New York.

In September, our 3/21 Kimball was the central feature of the local Arthritis Society's kickoff concert with none other than Ashley Miller at the console and with local artists Barbara Marrison, soprano, and Bob Jackson on the trumpet. This very successful evening not only raised a tidy sum for the charity, but also introduced a whole new audience to the magic of theatre organ.

In addition to forthcoming field trips for members, our coming concert dates at Canada's largest theatre organ will include, on February 3, a full-length silent feature, *The Mark of Zorro*, accompanied by the old master Lee Erwin who made a big hit with our university crowd last year. Our season will conclude on April 27, 28 with concerts by a newcomer to



Rex Koury ends his Canadian concert on the Kingston Kimball with a huge smile.

(Photo by Frank Pratt)

our area, Andy Kasparian.

We have also been doing our bit toward cross-pollinating the classical/church organists in our area — our John Robson is a member of the local chapter of the RCCO, and their members have been turning up at our events in increasing numbers. On November 13 we hosted their group at a special open-console night, with each participating classical/church organist being allotted prior familiarization and practice sessions.

Our organ has become so busy! After Rex Koury's Friday concert we had to re-arrange the front of the church, where our installation is, from concert to church configuration (moving console, piano and church furniture) for a wedding to be held Saturday afternoon, then back to

concert set-up for Saturday night and back to church arrangement again after the concert for three church services featuring the organ in its sober mode the following day. On top of weekends like this, there is a full practice schedule through the week. Yes, our members are fully appreciative of this full-time practice opportunity!

FRANK PRATT

LAND OF LINCOLN

Rockford

815/965-0856 or 815/399-8536

On October 27, Gaylord Carter presented a Harold Lloyd Film Festival, the best attended public program we have presented in the last few years. The success of the program was attributed to a number of factors: the



Gaylord Carter at the Barton console, Coronado Theatre.

public acceptance of Gaylord Carter and his Flicker Finger Presentations, the improved economy of the Rockford area, and the placement of five billboards in our market area plus radio, TV and newspaper coverage in which Carter appeared to promote the show. The program consisted of two Harold Lloyd films, *For Heaven's Sake* and *Billy Blazes, Esq.* In addition, Mr. Carter played a short concert and a sing-along. Following the program, a reception for the artist was held on the stage for members and friends of our chapter.

ORRILL DUNN

* * *

A highlight of our October social at the Coronado was the appearance of Rex Koury, our National President. Rex was on tour and stopped off in Rockford and spoke to our group, bringing greetings from ATOS. He spoke of some of the goals ATOS hopes to achieve, citing the need for each local unit to grow — the need for hustle and promotion for new members to keep up the growth. ATOS is working on the archives, considering a new central headquarters and working for membership growth. It is prospering as 1200 new members joined for a current total of approximately 5500 members. One of his favorite projects is the Young Artist Award. Under Rex Koury's leadership, much should be achieved. He is a warm, friendly, multi-talented gentleman.

BARBARA NICHOL

**ATOS 29th
Annual Convention**

July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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Indianapolis
SATURDAY, JULY 7
THRU
THURSDAY, JULY 12
1984



Land O' Lakes Chapter
AMERICAN THEATRE
ORGAN SOCIETY

LOLTOS
St. Paul

715/262-5086 or 612/771-1771

With most of us settled down after the ATOS Convention, our chapter got back into the swing of our own little events with a concert at the Sheldon Auditorium Theatre in Red Wing, Minnesota, where Karl Eilers, a super organist from the chapter, played the 2/9 Kilgen, familiar to him like the back of his hand, with great

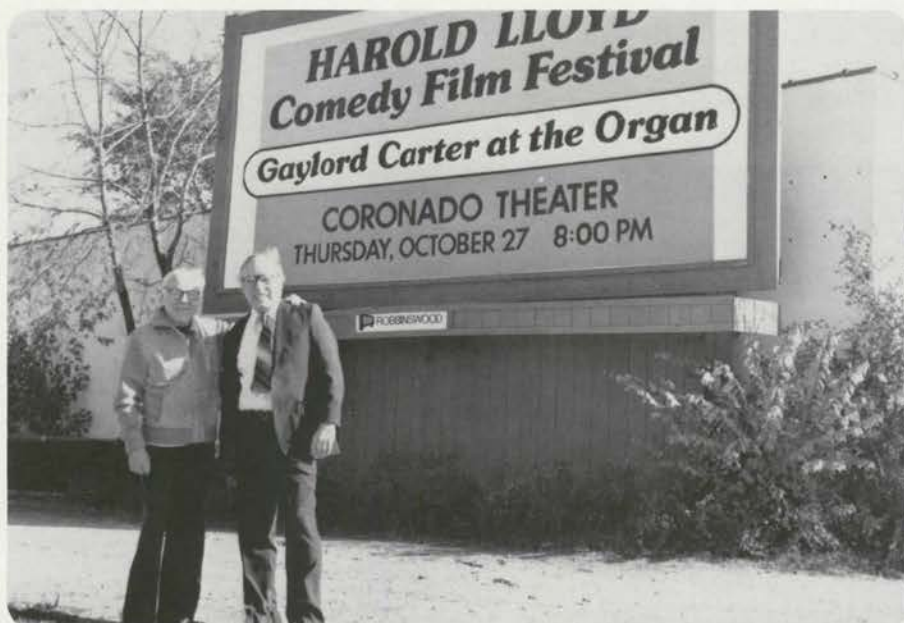
style. Karl brought along a guest artist, Scott Walter, and we were treated to a delightful selection of piano-organ duets.

The Music Festival at Bob Schmidt's Indian Hills Resort, over the Labor Day weekend, was thoroughly enjoyed by those from LOLTOS and by local residents, even though the weather was not the most pleasant. Paul-Wesley Bowen, at his best, was the featured organist. Others on the program were Dr. Kerry Grippe, concert pianist from the University of Iowa, Sylvia Hartman with her harp, and one of the singing waitresses from the Rigoletto Ristorante, Ann Stover, a great performer with a beautiful voice, and, of course, Don Taft with his little furry friends.

On October 2, Tom Neadle, accomplished pianist and organist, played for chapter members at the residence of Mark and Dee Dalquist in Edina, on their 3/7 Wurlitzer pipe organ, a very pleasant afternoon in their beautiful home. Tom has a distinctive way with the organ and played tunes that made us want to tap our feet.

The Fall Organ Crawl, arranged by our own Whirlwind Tours (Marge Shepard, Mike Erie and Verna Mae Wilson), seemed, from all accounts, to be a huge success. Thirty-five of us boarded our chartered bus for Spring Green, Wisconsin, on October 15, where we toured the remarkable House on The Rock, and, as Ed Hirschhoff emphasizes, this place defies any description! The scheduling of organists and organs in the Milwaukee/Madison area was arranged by Fred Wolfram, Chairman of Dairyland Chapter, and what a wonderful job he did! After the tour of the House on The Rock, we proceeded to the Heritage House for dinner where we were joined by 33 members of DTOS, and then on to hear Gaylord Carter in the Oscar Mayer Theatre at the Civic Center in Madison. The films were oldies — Buster Keaton and Rudolph Valentino. It is difficult to visualize these silent films without organ accompaniment, and Carter is certainly a master of this art.

Following the movies, we drove to Milwaukee where we stayed at the Ramada Inn, and early next morning enjoyed a full (not pizza) breakfast at the Pipe Organ Pizza where Gary Hanson entertained us at the 4/20 hybrid followed by open console. Then we went to the Avalon Theatre where



Gaylord Carter and Orrill Dunn, LOLTOS publicity chairman, standing before one of five billboards promoting Carter's Coronado appearance.

we heard Perry Petta on the 3/11 Wurlitzer. Perry, at 22, is one of the youngest artists we have heard, and we immediately hired him to play for us in November. From the Avalon, we proceeded to the Riverside Theatre where we heard Gary Hanson again on the 3/13 Wurlitzer 235 Special. There was open console here, and Mike Erie and Tom Needle could hardly wait to try that organ. Other open console players were Alice Rabus, Marge Shepard, Bernard Mullaney and John Zetterstrom. Dinner on Sunday was at the world-famous German-style Karl Ratzsch Restaurant. After dinner we were treated to a brief concert at the Gesu Church by noted organist John Weissrock at the 90-rank Kimball-Kilgen. Such acoustics in that cathedral! We were spirited away then to the well-known basement theatre at Fred Hermes' home. What an eye-opener! Artist Gary McWithey of Dairyland Chapter played here for a spooky Frankenstein silent film. Gary played two other concerts for us on Sunday and Monday at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Milwaukee Technical College. He is one talented musician as well as a perfect host, along with Fred Wolfgram. We left for home on Monday — a very exciting, music-filled weekend!

The small home organ group, the Organaires, has been meeting monthly since the September schedule resumed. Bob Duwe and Bill Lundquist are busy perfecting their pipe organ installations, and we do enjoy trying out their instruments.

We were saddened by the death of Claude Newman on October 19, in Naperville, Illinois. Claude was the former owner of "Goldie," our favorite Wurlitzer at Cedarhurst, which he sold to the Procter Theatre in Schenectady.

The Phipps Center for The Arts in Hudson, Wisconsin, where the former KSTP pipe organ is now installed, was the scene of another silent film extravaganza on November 6 and 7, with Gaylord Carter accompanying the films. He is one swell fella! This show was an eye opener to the residents of Hudson who attended, and both nights were sold out.

We are almost at the end of this lengthy saga, concluding with our annual election meeting on November 20 at the Phipps Center. We were happy to have Perry Petta with us

again, and he played a fantastic program, even with a cipher occurring once in awhile!

VERNA MAE WILSON

LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND 8956-32369 or 1-788-8791

With virtually the whole of the flood-damaged and long-moribund 4/14 Wurlitzer of the world-famous Granada Tooting in Southwest London fully renovated and back on wind by early October, it fell to our State-side member, Lowell Ayars, to have the privilege of the first real "work-out," and what a rewarding experience it was for the chapter technical team who have labored so long and hard since the beginning of the year. Now that the Tooting sound is at last "for real" again, we eagerly look forward to resuming full public presentation. We are hopeful of more good news on this truly massive project in our next report.

During his busy stay in the UK, Lowell also played the farewell concert for our well-known member, Father Gerard Kerr, at the vintage Compton theatre organ which he and our late chapter chairman, George Harrison, so lovingly installed in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church at Hornchurch in Essex. Now moving to nearby South Woodford, Gerard has already made it clear that his sights are set on yet another "Compton-in-a-church," his third, the first being the 3/6 in St. John Vianney at Ilford which was formerly in the Ritz Cinema at Nuneaton in the Midlands.

Fulfilling a plea made by some of our chapter's leading young theatre organists, our October in-theatre concert presentation featured Michael Wooldridge (from Portslade near South coast Brighton, and trained by beloved veteran Bobby Pagan), Janet Dowsett (of Fleet, Hampshire, and now a highly proficient touring demonstrator for Kemble-Yamaha) and John Barlow (from Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire, our reigning Young Theatre Organist of the Year) who gave truly outstanding performances at the reknowned 4/14 Torch Christie in the Top Rank Club Edmonton in Northeast London. Fully theatrical, with organ and orchestra lifts and auditorium lighting complementing the now thrillingly restored instrument, these three dedicated and talented young chapter members acquitted

themselves superbly. They certainly vindicated our central objective of the encouragement of new young console talent for the future.

Our October Chapter Club Night at Wurlitzer Lodge featured Chapter Vice-Chairman and Stage Director Len Rawle playing the 3/19 Wurlitzer that he and his parents had inaugurated in the purpose-built family home at Northolt in Northwest London just 23 years ago, initially as the 3/8 from the Granada Wandsworth Road in South London. Paradoxically, while this very special instrument of the theatre organ enthusiasts' world has been played and enjoyed by more guest organists than any other instrument of any make anywhere in the world, it has only ever had one "resident" — Len. Characteristically basing his program on his penchant for thinking of, and looking for, "new sounds," Len provided both a memorable and instructive evening in his own inimitable style, prefaced by a short medley played on the original "core" sound of this archetypal home installation. Since augmented by the addition of the five-rank Wurlitzer from the West End Cinema in Birmingham, and other well-chosen ranks from Wurlitzers formerly in London's Leicester Square Theatre and Troxy Cinema, Stepney, to bring it to its present 19-rank complement so widely loved and enjoyed by so many from all parts of the world, the extraordinary range of sounds which Len created was truly amazing.

Dr. Ed Mullins from the Nor-Cal Chapter was a most welcome Club Night guest. Jack O'Neill (also Nor-Cal) had been around earlier and left a much-appreciated donation to our chapter organ restoration fund in the ATOS (All That Odd Small-change) collection pipe in the music room at Wurlitzer Lodge.

DR. NORMAN BARFIELD



LOS ANGELES
THEATRE ORGAN
SOCIETY
California
213/792-7084

Our "Fall Organ Season at San Gabriel" proved to be both artistically and financially one of the best series LATOS has yet presented. Stan Kann's program featured not only beautifully played ballads and light classics, but his wild and wacky

vacuum cleaners and other household gadgets, also. He then "topped" himself with a superb accompaniment to the great silent film, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

George Wright's program, too, was out of the ordinary as the second half was devoted to a tape demonstration of his magnificent new "studio" organ installation. Specially installed speakers reproduced the instrument so well that George was able to play duets (à la Jesse and Helen Crawford).

Candi Carley closed the "season" in her bright, upbeat fashion. She not only played some fine 1980's numbers, but also had guest artists Rolf Ericksen on piano and LATOS member Carl Bender on violin. Our audiences for all three shows were unanimous in their praise for this first-class entertainment.



Candi Carley, featured artist for LATOS at San Gabriel. (Zimfoto)

Because of the extensive refurbishing our Crew Chief Carl Nebe and his technicians have been doing on the Wurlitzer in San Gabriel, the funds for maintaining the instrument (which is owned by the city of San Gabriel) are nearing depletion. So, LATOS sponsored an Open Console fund raiser and attracted over 100 members and local residents (many of whom play organ) and \$401 was raised for the organ fund. This program, too, drew enough praise that we plan to have regular spring and fall benefit



LATOS San Gabriel show featured Candi Carley at the organ with guest artists Carl Bender, violinist, and Rolf Ericksen, pianist. (Zimfoto)

open console sessions. Our special thanks to professionals Fernand Martel and Candi Carley for donating their talents to this benefit.

RALPH BEAUDRY
(See also the joint report under Sierra Chapter.)

**NEW YORK
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY
New York
201/573-9567 or 201/473-0559**

In 1930, the last of the Loew's Wonder Theatres was opened on Broadway at 175th Street in New York City. That same year Judge Crater disappeared. Loew's Theatre, unlike Justice Crater, has resurfaced. Completely restored to its original elegance, it now enjoys life as The United Palace, a house of worship headed by the Reverend Ike whose broadcasts from there are heard nationwide.

Ashley Miller performed there for our October concert using the 23



ATOS Organist of the Year, Ashley Miller, played the Wonder Morton at the United Palace for the New York Chapter.

ranks of the four-manual Wonder Morton with the same authority he displayed for years at the big Wurlitzer in Radio City Music Hall. A friend who attended the 1930 opening of this Loew's told me that, back on that night, the orchestra lift would not operate because of an open door somewhere below, and thus delayed the overture. On this occasion, Ashley's overture was also held up because the door to the pit was locked. The open door on that inaugural evening was easier to detect than finding the key at this concert. An agile Ashley Miller made an unusual artist's entrance by jumping down from the stage into the organ pit to reach the lowered console. Fortunately, the lift worked and he soon re-appeared to the sounds of "There's No Business Like Show Business," having just experienced a new facet of the sentiment of that song.

His concert produced several surprises, one being guest cellist Thirzah Bendokas. With Ashley Miller orchestrating the Morton and Ms. Bendokas' virtuosity, the two gave a concerto quality to a rondo by Boccherini, a gavotte of Popper and the Schubert-Casals "The Bee."

A light show was another surprise — even to Ashley. A stagehand, either believing he was adding to our enjoyment or just inspired by the music, manipulated the controlboard backstage, producing some annoying activity: curtains opening and closing, stage drops raising and lowering, lights changing colors and two enormous candelabra flashing on and off when the opened curtains exposed them on the garishly appointed stage. Mr. Miller endured some very noisy tremulants and an instrument which has become very brassy-sounding of late, to deliver a package of very pleasant theatre organ playing.

MARLIN SWING



John Ingram entertained on new Rodgers Trio, October 1983. (Wally Eakins photo)



International theatre organist, Weldon Fianagan. Weldon played Dallas' Palace Theatre 20 years. NTC-ATOS concert artist, October 1983. (Wally Eakins photo)



San Francisco Bay Area
415/846-3496 or 415/524-7452

See joint report under Sierra Chapter.



**NORTH
TEXAS
CHAPTER**

Dallas-Fort Worth
214/256-2743 or 214/233-7108

The theatre organ interests in this North Texas area got an unexpected and most welcome boost on November 1. On that day, after only a few days advance notice to our officers, the "Valley of Dallas" Scottish Rite Masons announced their first public concert on their 1925 Wicks theatre organ to be played by Clark Wilson of Indianapolis on November 12. They further expressed their pride in the restored Wicks organ and their eagerness to share it.

Our chapter has utilized this organ in the newly redecorated and restored Scottish Rite auditorium for three public concerts since the installation was completed in 1981, and most recent being the September 1982 concert by Fr. Jim Miller, proclaimed by members of both organizations as

"the best ever." Perhaps that helped spark their interest in sponsoring a high quality public concert of their own. We in ATOS commend their action and will gratefully partake of and support this and future concerts which they offer. For the future, they are planning a four-concert series in 1984, with the first to be held February 26. Others are projected for April 15, August 19 and September 16. Tickets for the four concert series are \$20.00 with all proceeds to benefit the hospital charities of the Scottish Rite Masonic order. Artists for the series have not been announced as yet.

At our last two chapter meetings our membership has had the opportu-

nity to hear the latest and finest electronic theatre organs being offered by two of the leading makers, Rodgers and Baldwin. On August 21 we were the guests of Mr. Chris Climer at the Baldwin Family Music Center of Dallas for a concert on the new Baldwin computer organ. Staff organist Don Lewis presented a varied and exciting program on the instrument which showed off its many features, primarily those that appeal to avid theatre organ buffs. His program ranged from a Broadway medley to a rollicking country "Rocky Top." A high point was a gospel-inspired medley including "You'll Never Walk Alone" and "Climb Every Moun-



Console of 2/15 Wicks in Scottish Rite Auditorium, Dallas. This installation will be featured in a four-concert series in 1984. (Wally Eakins photo)

tain." Don confided that he had learned his gospel styling as a youth from a revered black housekeeper who was a talented Pentecostal gospel pianist. He obviously learned his childhood lessons well.

We experienced a triple treat for our October meeting as guests of Mr. John Ingram and the Tyson Piano and Organ Company of Dallas. The main treat was the newest Rodgers Trio theatre organ and its very authentic electronic reproduction of that theatre pipe sound we love to feel and hear. The other two treats were the two very talented organists who played the Rodgers for our thorough enjoyment.



Don Lewis — organist on Baldwin organ for NTC-ATOS, August 1983. (Wally Eakins photo)

Leading off was Tyson's manager, John Ingram. John is a popular organist both in Dallas and in California where he was entertained in hotels and nightclubs for 25 years. John's opener was "I Got Rhythm," and indeed he has, as he demonstrated with several other selections. John showed his sensitive side with rich melodic arrangements of "Orchids in the Moonlight" and "Stars Are the Windows of Heaven," both of which showed off the rich theatre organ sound of this new Rodgers.

Truly a tough act to follow! But the next performer, international concert and recording artist Weldon Flanagan proved to be more than adequate for the task. Weldon, a well-known radio and television personality, is a recognized theatre organist having been organist at the Palace Theatre in Dallas for 20 years. More recently he was principal organist at the Landmark Pizza until that establishment closed its doors earlier this year. Weldon is now on the staff of Tyson's. He



Bill Langford at the Benson High School 3/24 Kimball, where he played for the Oregon Chapter.

(Photo by Claude Neuffer)

proclaims his traditional approach to the theatre organ, decrying arpeggiators, rhythm units and other of this ilk. He then proceeded to prove his point with rich theatre organ registrations and stylings including two Jesse Crawford arrangements, "I Love to Hear You Singing" and Jesse's radio theme, "Forgotten Melody." His "Stars and Stripes Forever" was complete with a perfect piccolo obbligato and had all toes tapping. Weldon's artistry is evident in his carefully chosen registrations and styling. His glissandos were all fingered and smoothly flowing. How we would

love to hear him on theatre pipes once again! His performance on this fine Rodgers was the next best thing. NTATOS publicly thanks Don Lewis, John Ingram and Weldon Flanagan for an exceptional theatre organ experience.

IRVING LIGHT

OREGON Portland

503/244-2141 or 503/253-6874

On October 29 we traveled to Astoria, located at the mouth of the Columbia River at the Pacific Ocean. A fine turnout assembled at the beautiful home of Leonard Vernon to hear Loren Minear at the 2/12 Robert-Morton. Leonard's house is located high on a hillside, with a large picture window looking over the town and the great bridge spanning the river to Washington. The organ was first installed in 1926, in the Indian Theatre in Roseburg, Oregon. It has a very fast pedal response and keen Morton strings.

Loren Minear is a true organ buff, a fine musician and technician. Over the years he has been rebuilding and caring for many organs in our area. His program included bright marches as well as many smooth ballads. Loren's styling makes good use of registrations for rich bass solos. This was followed by open console with many members happy to participate. As an unusual bonus, after the meeting most of us enjoyed a two-hour



Loren Minear and Leonard Vernon, after Loren's concert at Leonard's fine 2/12 Robert-Morton.

(Photo by Claude Neuffer)



Eric Liebmann at the Temple Theatre, Tacoma, for the Puget Sound Chapter.
(Photo by Ken Gallwey)



Paul Quarino in concert for Puget Sound Chapter at Greenwood (Seattle) Pizza & Pipes.
(Photo by Ken Gallwey)

voyage on a brand new sternwheel riverboat! Our chapter is grateful to host Leonard Vernon and to organist Loren Minear. Thanks, also, to our board members for organizing this event.

About a year ago we heard Bill Langford at the Benson High School 3/24 Kimball. His program was so well liked that we were fortunate to have him at Benson again on November 19. Bill is not only a famous organist, but is also a master showman. He was, for 18 years, at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward, California, the first ever with a pipe organ. His performance there no doubt contributed to the rapid spread of the pizza organ throughout the country. He has also traveled across the country giving many concerts on pipes, TV and radio. Bill is currently at Pizza & Pipes in Santa Clara, California.

Although working without presets, Bill proceeded to give what many of the audience described as one of the best ever heard on this organ. Many of the ranks do not appear on the stop rail and must be coupled to the manuals where desired. These voices contribute much to the organ's tonal re-

sources but require an unusual technique for a theatre organ. Bill's enthusiasm for this instrument and its piano were much in evidence throughout the concert. Thanks to Bill Langford for another outstanding performance. We hope he will be available for future concerts. Thanks, also, to Benson High and to our organ maintenance crew.

BUD ABEL

PUGET SOUND Seattle

206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669

The October meeting of Puget Sound Chapter began at the Temple Theatre in Tacoma which houses a 2/10 Kimball. Our artist was Eric Liebmann from Bremerton, who opened his concert with several show tunes including "Hello, Dolly" and "Mama." He told us he hailed from Chicago, so naturally that was his next song. Especially nice were his arrangements of "Make Believe" and "The Second Time Around." Eric has entertained professionally for over 30 years, and his ability to merge medleys was superb.

Next on the program was Sharon Meyer, a new member of our chapter and a regular Saturday afternoon organist, who played the matinee program at the Pizza & Pipes in Tacoma. Meyer played a very up-tempo program, sure to be liked by the younger set. We especially enjoyed her arrangement of "Over the Rainbow."

Jane and Homer Johnson did the final program of the day on a Rodgers console (with pipes in the basement) at their home. Jane began with "Strike Up The Band," and Jane and Homer closed with a Gershwin medley. It was great! The day concluded with open console on the Johnson's Rodgers, a nice ending to a day filled with music.

On November 6 we were entertained by Paul Quarino in concert at the Greenwood Pizza & Pipes in Seattle. His program was varied, but mostly a nice mix of old songs, slow ballads, Latin and up-tempo. Paul explained that the added piano to this instrument included a damper pedal, and he made good use of it in several songs. I particularly liked his theatre organ arrangement of "One Alone" from *The Desert Song*. Quarino has been playing since he was ten years

ashley miller
a.a.g.o.

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old, has been a music educator, was nine years as a traveling artist for the Wurlitzer Company, and currently plays for the Rivercrest Congregational Church, the Organ Grinder Restaurant and a local theatre in Portland, Oregon. I found his program one of the most outstanding of the past year.

We congratulate Jack Becvar on the conclusion of two great years as our chairman, and we look forward to new directions with Tom Solberg as our chairman for 1984. Happy New Year to all from Puget Sound.

CHRISTINE PRIDE

RED RIVER

Fargo

218/287-2671 or 218/236-9217

Patrons saw beautifully restored antique cars parked in front and were greeted by a costumed doorman the evenings of November 4 and 5 at the Fargo Theatre. Not knowing what kind of success we would have with two silent movie programs on consecutive nights, we were extremely pleased to sell out the first night, even having to turn some away, and to come within 100 seats of a second-night sellout. Since *Wings* is quite a long movie, the evening consisted of movie only, scored by Lance Johnson, with one intermission.

We tried another new item that weekend — free tours of the theatre. Three tour guides and two hours were not nearly enough, as we were mobbed by curious people who had never had an opportunity like this. Next time we'll know to have more guides and time available.

The week following the show we started another project — replacing the stage floor. For several years we've talked about putting a band on stage to play with the Wurlitzer, and now we are making the actual plans to

do that in our spring show along with some other attractions on stage. Downstairs there is one dressing room left to restore and one bathroom which will be turned into a shower facility.

The annual free noon organ Christmas concerts began December 12 at the theatre with visuals provided by Christmas and wintertime slides.

SONIA CARLSON

SAN DIEGO

California

619/279-2867 or 619/561-2269

San Diego's concert series reached its climactic finale with the spectacular duo of Cheryl and Wayne Seppala. With the stage set, Wayne on organ



Cheryl and Wayne Seppala on the bench of San Diego Chapter's 3/15 Wurlitzer in the California Theatre.

and Cheryl at the piano, "From This Moment On" these extraordinarily talented artists captivated and entranced the large audience. Along with their duet capabilities, Cheryl and Wayne demonstrated their versatility in solo numbers, then concluded their dazzling first half with the familiar "Autumn Leaves" and the piano orchestral score of "Deep Purple."

With the audience anxiously awaiting, the second half began with a round-robin playing of "Just One of Those Things," "Great Day," and, with Wayne on the piano and Cheryl at the organ, a duet of the popular "New York, New York." Wayne and Cheryl, again in the second half, made full use of the features of the 3/15 Wurlitzer. The stereo effect of the chambers was very evident in arrangements of Jesse Crawford's "I Love to Hear You Singing" and "Malagueña." To climax this most unusual program, two more duets, "More" and "Warsaw Concerto," induced the audience to demand, with a standing ovation, an encore. Cheryl and Wayne graciously obliged with the showtune classic "There's No Business Like Show Business." Cheryl and Wayne are an unbelievably talented duo who presented a concert of class and versatility with a touch of humor. We are looking forward to hearing much more of these two marvelous artists in our 1984 season.

During 1983 San Diego has had many accomplishments. We presented eight successful concerts and inaugurated a plan of "get-acquainted" socials by geographical areas so we know fellow members in our area. To increase our membership, we present free mini-concerts played by chapter members for members, friends and prospective members.

Our final mini-concert for 1983



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"Rags to Riches" group (L to R: Bob Brooks, Greg Breed, Charlie Porter and Coulter Cunningham) played comedy to semi-classics for San Diego's mini-concert.

was a special event. On October 29 fifty-four members enjoyed a catered box lunch social in the lobby. Following this, our October General Membership Meeting was held while the stage was being set for the afternoon concert. Over 100 members, friends and guests anxiously awaited the start of the concert. First on stage was Organ Crew Chief Charlie Porter playing a medley of familiar favorites. In the number two spot was Greg Breed. In his first concert since studying music for 14 months, Greg was cool and calm and amazed the audience. We will definitely be hearing more from Greg. Next artist presented was Coulter Cunningham, who displayed his knowledge of both classical and standard music. The finale for the afternoon was our resident comic-artist Bob Brooks. Dressed in "tails," professor Bob attempted to educate the audience to great music through his selections of "Cipher in B Sharp Minor," "Nervous Breakdown," "Chinese Spaghetti," and silent movie chase music, complete with fireworks and powder. The afternoon

was well worth the time put in by these four players and by Galen Piepenburg who coordinates all these concerts. It was extraordinarily enjoyable!

CONNIE REARDON



Ron Musselman, Master of Ceremonies for the four-chapter Fresno Organ Bash, announces the next event.

(Photo by Rudy Frey)

SIERRA

Sacramento

916/726-5132 or 916/332-2837

153 ATOSers from all parts of California arrived in Fresno October 8 for two fun-filled days of organ music and camaraderie! The "Fresno Organ Bash" featured four dandy organs, three of them theatre organs and one classical instrument which, with its tremulants "goosed up," came close to its Morton/Wurlitzer counterparts. These were played by as many "pros" and half a dozen more who tried them out in open console sessions.

Sierra Chapter, fresh from their successful "River City Encore" day following the '83 Convention, organized the "Bash" to help bring ATOSers in California together for some socializing and fun. Nor-Cal, Los Angeles, and newly-formed Tri-Counties Chapters participated with

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The SOLO bus, with Richard Hoff in the doorway and Jack O'Neill loaded down with recording gear. (Photo by Rudy Frey)



Don Cover at the console of the 3/55 Aeolian-Skinner organ in the University Presbyterian Church, Fresno. Dick Cencibaugh and Chaumonde Porterfield stand by. (Photo by Rudy Frey)

the wholehearted support of their members which resulted in a sell-out weekend!

Dave Moreno of Sacramento and Tom DeLay of Fresno spearheaded the project as there is no ATOS chapter (yet!) in Fresno. For several years Dave has maintained the 3/23 Wurlitzer in the Pizza & Pipes Restaurant in Fresno, as well as being a fill-in organist on their staff, so, working with DeLay, who for years has kept the Warnors Theatre 4/14 Robert-Morton in top-notch condition, the two of them lined up the locations, arranged for special deluxe motel accommodations at a bargain rate, worked with the individual chapters, and, of course, saw to bus transportation in Fresno and, finally, that each instrument was in concert-ready condition. They even put together a fact-filled 12-page souvenir booklet which gave the history and specs on the four organs heard as well as historical data on all the other theatre instruments ever installed in the San Joaquin Valley!

For everyone's convenience, getting

to Fresno was "on your own." LATOS chartered a 41-passenger bus although another 11 drove or flew. Many Nor-Cal members boarded Amtrak in Oakland and were joined by Sierra members who boarded in Stockton while the rest drove in carpools.

Because of the sell-out, the "Bash" motel, Village Inn, had to turn over half the people to the Water Tree Inn a few blocks away — no problem, for once in Fresno two huge school buses, one labeled "Solo" and the other "Main," were used for transportation, picking up participants from their motels and taking them to the various pipe organ locations.

First gathering spot was Pizza & Pipes for lunch, registration and good organ music provided by their staff artists Bev Lloyd and Jim Brown. Ron Musselman of Fresno acted as MC for the "Bash," introducing the artists and keeping things moving on time. 4:00 p.m. and the group was at Bethel Temple Church to hear the 3/10 Robert-Morton played by Tri-Counties President John Brown.

John, a "pro" organist, is thoroughly familiar with Mortons as, just a few days before, he had presented the first Tri-Counties program on the Morton in Anaheim High School. Richard



Greg Moore, organist at Bethel Temple, looks over the console before playing. (Zimfoto)



Lance Luce

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Villemin had installed the Bethel Morton, most of which came originally from the Alhambra Theatre in Los Angeles; the console, however, is from the Alhambra Theatre in Sacramento. Loren Whitney had been organist for Bethel years ago, and it was through his help they acquired this great theatre instrument.

The group went to dinner at Farmer's Market, a collection of gift shops and restaurants near downtown Fresno. The choice of menus ranged from German to Chinese with almost every nationality's specialties being available!

The evening program was presented by Dick Cencibaugh at the University Presbyterian Church, where he is organist. A modern building with much of the organ fully exposed behind the altar area, the 3/55 Aeolian-Skinner proved to be an absolute sound delight even to die-hard TO buffs! The orchestral voicing of this late Skinner, Opus 1294, built in 1954 for a church in Princeton, New Jersey, almost overshadowed the "pure" organ voicing Cencibaugh used on several selections by Bach. Leroy Anderson's "Sleigh Ride" was the most modern selection played, with human assistance on the sleigh bells, but Cencibaugh chose a well-balanced program and, with his delightful sense of humor, won over the entire audience.

The "It's-been-a-long-day" crowd then retired to their motels while the die-hards trooped back to Pizza & Pipes for more organ music during an open console session that lasted past midnight!

Sunday brunch was served at Pizza & Pipes while various artists entertained. It should be noted that this organ came from Buffalo's Hippodrome Theatre, although some substitutions of ranks and pipework have been made over the years.



Dan Bellomy at the Warnors 4/14 Robert-Morton.
(Photo by Rudy Frey)



Jerry Nagano, Los Angeles Chapter's artist on the Warnors Morton.
(Photo by Rudy Frey)



Beverley Lloyd, staff organist at Fresno Pizza & Pipes.
(Photo by Rudy Frey)



John Brown, chairman of Tri-Counties Chapter, at the 3/10 Robert-Morton in Bethel Temple.
(Photo by Rudy Frey)



Bert Atwood represented Nor-Cal Chapter at the Warnors Morton.
(Photo by Rudy Frey)



Jim Brown, staff organist from Sacramento Pizza & Pipes.
(Photo by Rudy Frey)



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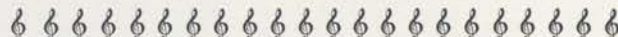


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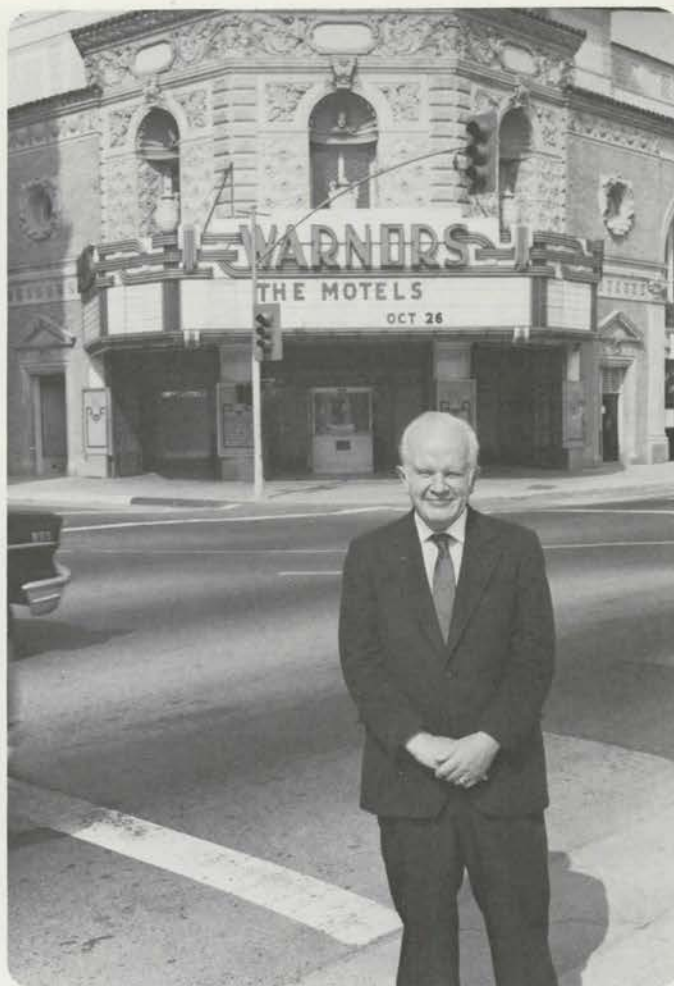
Dick Cencibaugh at University Presbyterian Church.

(Zimfoto)



Anna Olive and Sachi Amano talk things over at Fresno.

(Zimfoto)



Warren White played for Sierra Chapter at Warnors Theatre. (Photo by Rudy Frey)

The Grande Concert at the Warnors Theatre in downtown Fresno started at 1:00 p.m. with an artist from each of the chapters doing a mini-concert and concluding with a "Special Guest Artist???" It should be noted for those who have never been to Fresno, this instrument is an original installation and, similar to San Francisco's Orpheum, the chambers are under the stage where everything is spread out up-front and really gets into every corner of the vast house. Frank Caglia, owner of the

Warnors, has restored the auditorium to its original condition and the intricate ceiling artwork and the chandelier are as they were when the house opened in 1928!

Leading off was Bert Atwood of Nor-Cal coming up on the fast-rising lift. (It's known as the fastest lift in the west!) Although Bert said it was his first public concert, he could have fooled the crowd and it was obvious he enjoyed the thrilling sound of this "snortin'" Morton!

After a brief intermission to change

the piston settings, Warren White, representing Sierra, came up for a program of "oldies-but-goodies" played in the traditional intermission-music manner.

Jerry Nagano from Los Angeles was third and, although this was his first public outing on a Morton, demonstrated the skill and musicianship which won him the post of staff organist on Pasadena's five-manual Möller.

Time for the mystery artist, and it was Dan Bellomy who, unknown to

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most of the buffs present, has had a love affair with this Morton for a good many years and is ready to issue a record he made recently on this instrument! While Dan is noted as a jazz and electronic artist, he played some warm and beautiful ballads and then, to demonstrate what can be done on pipes, played a couple of jazz numbers as fast as anyone could on a Hammond! Great sound and a great conclusion to a wonderful weekend in Fresno!

RALPH BEAUDRY

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Sooner State Chapter's October trip to the Russell Joseph's in Bella Vista, Arkansas, has got to be one of the most fun things we've done as a group in a long time! When we discovered that the van we'd arranged to rent for the two-hour trip was not available, Joe Crutchfield, Bob Benton and Phil Judkins immediately volunteered to drive their cars, for which we owe them a tremendous thank you!

Hervey and Janice Barbour and their two little girls, Harry and Beth Rasmussen, and Bob and Betty Weddle had driven down separately and

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greeted us when we arrived, about an hour later than we'd planned. Our hosts, Florence and Russell Joseph, had lunch ready for us and then we descended to the recreation room where the organ was.

First, Russell told us the history of the instrument. When his son enrolled at the University of Wyoming in Laramie some 21 years ago, he discovered a beautiful 2/4 Wurlitzer theatre organ in the university auditorium. During his senior year, the school decided to replace the Wurlitzer with a classical organ and, after nearly a year of negotiations, the Josephs acquired the Wurlitzer. The move to Wilmette, Illinois, was made with pipes packed in coffin boxes, and Russell and his two sons installed the organ in their home there. During the move, Russell discovered some clues to the organ's beginnings. It had originally been installed in 1925 in the Roark Theatre in La Junta, California, where it was played by a Mrs. Mann (who was then 80 years old). Its owner, a Mr. LaRosa, later donated it

to the University of Wyoming.

The Joseph's retirement home in Bella Vista is designed around the organ with the chamber at one end of the room and the console at the other. It is all "pure" Wurlitzer, two-manual console and four ranks plus a complete toy counter. Nothing is refinished, and nearly all of its original leather and skiver skin is intact.

"A small instrument takes more ingenuity to play to get the same effects as a large one," Russ said. Then added, "If the note's not on the music, you won't hear it." He then proceeded to demonstrate for us with varied selections which showed off the organ's capabilities: "Jeanine," with accompaniment in the Chryso-glott; "Jalousie" on all percussions; "Wedding of the Painted Doll," with melody in the Xylophone; "A Bird in A Gilded Cage," complete with bird whistle; and, "Because You're You," with drums in the accompaniment. Afterwards we heard music from some of our playing members and a tape made by Bob Ralston when he visited them not long ago. We also inspected the *spotless* chambers and picked up an idea or two about home installations.

Dinner was at one of Bella Vista's four country clubs, and then it was time to head back home. Special thanks go to Chairman Lee Smith for

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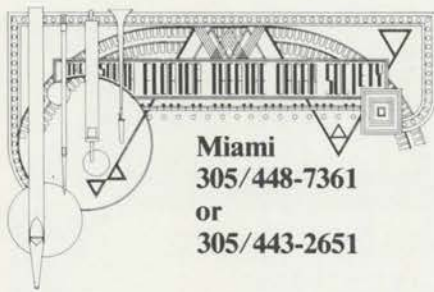
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his work in arranging the trip, to Bob Benton and Oz Redding for their help telephoning, to Harvey Young for letting us park our cars at his airport, and, of course, to our hosts, Florence and Russell Joseph, for a delightful afternoon!

November found us back at Central Assembly of God Church with open console on the 4/14 Robert-Morton. Work by Phil Judkins, Harry Rasmussen, Oz Redding and Lee Smith was very evident by the organ's improved sound! We heard music by Sam Rhoades, John Barydyt, Joe Crutchfield, Lorene Thomas, Phil Judkins and Dorothy Smith. A business meeting before the program included approval of a mid-year assessment to improve our treasury, and announcement that the swell shades to our club-owned 3/10 Robert-Morton had been moved from storage to the Vo-Tech High School Auditorium that day by Lee Smith and Harry Rasmussen. The next morning a crew consisting of Phil Judkins, Harry Rasmussen, Jack Beindorf, Elmer Schmall, Darwin Kirkman, Vic Thomas and Lee Smith met at the school to install the framing and set up the shades. Winding and wiring will come later. We're on our way!

DOROTHY SMITH



Miami
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Chapter President Michael Kinerk welcomed 28 new members to the South Florida Chapter during an Oc-

tober 4 recital by Wayne Smith at the Binder-Baldwin Auditorium in South Dade County. A teacher and church organist, Smith played two organs, a three-manual Rodgers 321 and a two-manual Baldwin Cinema 235. His program ranged from Broadway tunes to spirituals.

On October 29, the chapter co-sponsored a Halloween showing of *The Phantom of the Opera*, a 1925 silent movie starring Lon Chaney, at Gusman Cultural Center in downtown Miami. The hall's original Mighty Wurlitzer was played by Gaylor Carter, who is celebrating his 60 years in show business. Besides performing brilliantly with the 1925 flick, Carter also entertained the audience with a delightful Harold Lloyd western comedy.

The chapter's annual Christmas concert and meeting was held December 11 at the home of Mildred and Calvin Jureit and featured John Steele, a Michigan resident who was the founding president of the South Florida Chapter. The organ in the Jureit home is a 1926 three-manual Kimball which Calvin Jureit restored. It stands on a revolving platform in a living room stretching 40 by 32 feet with a 14-foot ceiling. There's an additional space ten feet wide running the width of the room which houses the 18 ranks of pipes plus five electronic ranks. There are Marimba, Drums and Percussion stops plus computer equipment for playing the instrument electronically.

In February, 1984, the chapter will co-sponsor an organ-accompanied silent filmfest at Gusman Cultural Center in conjunction with the Greater Miami Film Festival.

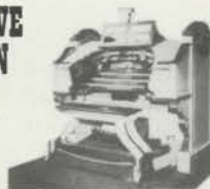
JO WERNE

TRI-COUNTIES

See joint report under Sierra Chapter.

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On September 24, the alarm clocks started to ring around 5:00 a.m. as members prepared to meet the bus for a weekend trip. Our first stop was the open courtyard in downtown Springfield, Ohio, for those important brown-bag lunches. The State Theatre in Springfield was next on the agenda where we heard Bob Crowley play the 1927 3/7 Wurlitzer. After a short program, we were delighted to participate in open console.

We then headed for Indianapolis where we checked in at Day's Inn. After dinner we were greeted at Manual High School by Tim Needler, chairman of Central Indiana Chapter. The organ was a 3/16 Uniphone from the Louisville Pipe Organ Company, and Dwight Thomas, a personable young man, was the artist. Dwight played in a professional manner for one so young. He had us swaying with "In the Mood," and a resounding rendition of the "Washington Post March" concluded his program.

Our next destination was the Paramount Music Palace. It is fabulous! Technically, it is an engineer's masterpiece. The two artists who play regularly on the 4/42 Wurlitzer are Donna Parker and Bill Vlasak. Bill was the artist that night, and he pleased us with a little bit of everything which was the music we love. Donna Parker also played a few selections. We were ready to leave when we were told that there was another artist to hear, and, as the console rose, we saw a 12-year-old boy at the console. Brian Holland's playing was nothing short of fantastic.



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Sunday morning we had a guided tour of downtown Indianapolis followed by a trip to the Hedback Community Theatre. We walked into a beautiful lobby that had been completely renovated. Bill Hedback, who had formerly owned the building and had given it to the theatre company, gave us an interesting history of the theatre. A lot of hard work and generous grants made the theatre a place of pride. We heard a 2/11 Page organ. Tim Needler at the console gave us a very enjoyable program. His "Amazing Grace" was played in a subdued manner followed by an upbeat "42nd Street." Open console followed.

It was then off to Kokomo, Indiana, and the Pipe Dreams Restaurant which is a miniature edition of the Paramount Music Palace. Bill Tandy was the organist, and he amused us with his funny remarks as he played some of our favorite tunes while we munched on sandwiches and ice cream. Open console followed and was welcomed by our members.

Our program chairperson, Carolyn Carson, who planned the trip with the expert help of Tim Needler making arrangements in Indiana, made this the event of the year.

The October 16 meeting of WR-TOS was held at Vince Aveni's Fabulous Musical Museum of Yesteryear which houses numerous completely restored, self-playing musical instruments. Two recent additions are a Porter Automatic Displaying Music Box and a 65-year-old Phonolizt Violina.

Our featured organist on the 2/6 Wurlitzer was Doug Powers, son of our assistant organ curator, Charles Powers, and his wife Tillie. Doug and his wife planned a unique printed program entitled "The Wurlitzer Looks at the Movies." He played songs from D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of A Nation* and *America*, and from *Wings*.

THINK: INDIANAPOLIS!

After each song title, he gave a brief description of its part in the movie. He finished the program with selected organ solos from eight more movies.

With five days notice, our own Bill Taber filled in for our annual concert on October 29. Following "The Star-Spangled Banner," Bill opened with an Irving Berlin medley followed by a silent movie and several other novelties including "Little Sir Echo," with singer Hilda Block hidden in the Solo Chamber. "I Wanna Be Loved by You" involved the audience as people who had purchased souvenir pipes during intermission were invited to "blow along." The program also included a sing-along and two duets with Jim Timko on piano.

Our annual meeting for the election of officers was held at the Grays Armory on November 13. Following the election we held a Wine & Cheese Party with open console.

JIM SHEPHERD



WOLVERINE CHAPTER

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Instead of our usual monthly meeting in October, Wolverine Chapter members were invited to a "private party" concert at the Detroit Theater Organ Club's Senate Theater, hosted by member Fred Page. Several other organ clubs were invited to this concert, too, including three groups from Ontario, Canada. The featured artist was Ken Saliba who is well known in the Detroit area for the various classical and theatre organ concerts he has played. Recently Ken was an owner and featured organist at Pied Piper Pizza Peddler in Warren.

As usual, Ken's artistry was a pleasure to hear. He played a lovely and varied program on the Mighty Wurlitzer, including something for every musical taste. Ken introduced his talented young student, Rick Cucchi, who then accompanied Ken's vocal rendition of a cute song, "Ring Them Bells." The audience was extremely appreciative of the grand finale of "Rhapsody in Blue," featuring Ken at the Wurlitzer grand piano with Rick providing the orchestral accompaniment at the organ console. Ken and Rick were given an enthusiastic standing ovation following that excellent duet. It was a terrific program that will be long remembered! We feel very fortunate to have heard Ken one last time before he moved to California that very week. He will certainly be missed in the Detroit area. As for Ken's gifted student, Rick Cucchi, we will eagerly anticipate hearing him play more in the future!

On November 13 about 35 Wolveriners met at the Union Lake home of Lester Hamilton for a really terrific afternoon. Good music abounded from Lester's beautiful-sounding three-manual Devtronix organ. This organ compares most closely with a theatre pipe organ with ranks numbering in the high twenties. It certainly sounded very realistic and is a most impressive installation which even includes several sets of Conn pipes and a player piano. Some of the real percussions were featured during the afternoon as were some of the electronically-produced sound effects such as bird calls.

We were very fortunate to have a number of our fine organist-members present to provide us with almost continuous beautiful music that afternoon. Since Fr. Jim Miller's schedule has been so busy recently, it was a special treat for us to have him with us that day, and he certainly entertained



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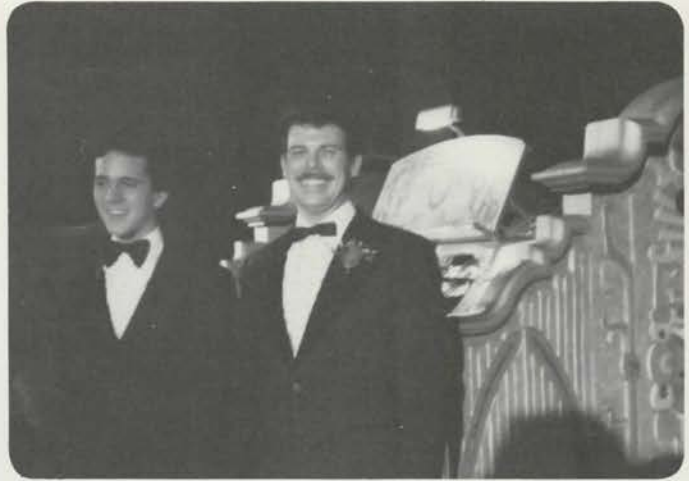
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Lester Hamilton's Devtronix organ.

(Lester Hamilton photo)



Rick Cucchi, left, and Ken Saliba, right, following their performance on the DTOC's Mighty Wurlitzer at the Senate Theater. (Carol Brown Photo)

us grandly!

Besides enjoying the afternoon of good organ music, everyone enjoyed Lester's creatively decorated home located on beautiful Commerce Lake. Birds and squirrels coming to the bird feeder provided extra interest to the view. Les Hamilton was certainly a marvelous host, and he was readily available to explain things about the organ. Our thanks to Les for being such a gracious host, for sharing his home and organ with us, and for making this meeting one of our best ever — a truly memorable day!

It was a rainy afternoon on Novem-

ber 20, but Rick Cucchi and Mary Jo Degens made their own sunshine at the Macomb Theatre. There was a good turnout, in spite of the weather, of members of Wolverine, Motor City and DTOC who were the invited guests of the Macomb Theatre Organ Club. It is so encouraging to have such talented and gifted young people (Rick and Mary Jo are both 17) who will carry on as theatre organists in the future!

Rick and Mary Jo's program was delightful, as were their personalities shining through! Each one had a turn at playing the 3/9 Kilgen plus some

duets with Rick at the organ and Mary Jo at the piano. A young friend, Lisa Zarna, vocally joined the instrumental entertainment for some numbers. Their encore, "New York, New York," was a combination of all their talents, Mary Jo at the organ, then Rick at the organ joined by Mary Jo at the piano and sung by Lisa. It was a fine performance! Wolverine Chapter thanks the Macomb Theatre Organ Club for inviting us and Rick Cucchi, Mary Jo Degens and Lisa Zarna for the delightful entertainment.

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Our New Feature . . .

Concert Artists' Playing Schedule

(as of December 9, 1983)

Here is the first installment of The Console Concert Bureau directory. This list of artists and their scheduled concerts is as complete as available information would allow. Supplementary lists will be published when compiled.

Artists and concert producers are invited to contribute information to The Console Concert Bureau, 12931 Haynes Street, North Hollywood, California 91606. The Bureau may be reached by phone at 213/980-7544 between 4:00 and 5:30 p.m. or 7:00 and 9:00 p.m. (Pacific Time). In the event you must leave a message be sure to give your area code with your phone number, and the best time to return your call.

JIM BENZMILLER

October 14 — Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

REV. BILL BIEBEL

October 27 — Grays Armory, Cleveland, Ohio.

ROB CALCATERRA

March 24 — Empire State Theatre, Syracuse, New York. April, May, June — Europe.

GAYLORD CARTER

March 24 — Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California.

KEITH CHAPMAN

June 25 — AGO Convention, San Francisco, California.

KARL COLE

February 26 — Empire State Theatre, Syracuse, New York.

CHRIS ELLIOTT

May 12 — Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware. May 14 — Toronto, Ontario. May 18 — RTOS, Rochester, New York.

LEE ERWIN

February 28 — Carolina Theatre, Greensboro, North Carolina. March 17 — Victory Theatre, Dayton, Ohio. April 3 — Winthrop College, Rock Hill, South Carolina. April 6 — Chaminade High School, Mineola, New York. April 10 — Binghamton, New York. May 7 — Carolina Theatre, Greensboro, North Carolina.

DENNIS JAMES

April 25 — Lockport, New York. April 28 — Empire State Theatre, Syracuse, New York.

ANDY KASPARIAN

April 18 — Riviera Theatre, New York, New York. April 27-28 — Kingston TOS, Kingston, Ontario.

JEAN KING

February 25 — Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware.

DON KINNIER

April 18 — Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.

REX KOURY

April 12-14 — Kirk of Dunedin, Dunedin, Florida. July — England.

LYN LARSEN

April 6 — San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, San Gabriel, California. April 28 — Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware. May 4 — Century II, Wichita, Kansas. May 13 — Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California.

ANN LEAF

June 23 — DTOS, Detroit, Michigan.

WARREN LUBICH

October — England.

LANCE LUCE

April — Australia.

LIN LUNDE

April 13 — RTOS, Rochester, New York.

KAY McABEE

February 26 — Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.

BILLY NALLE

March 24 — Century II, Wichita, Kansas.

FATHER JIM MILLER

June 9 — Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware.

JONAS NORDWALL

May 12 — Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio.

HECTOR OLIVERA

March 24 — RTOS, Rochester, New York.

DONNA PARKER

February 9-11 — Kirk of Dunedin, Dunedin, Florida.

DICK SMITH

March 10 — Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware.

WALT STRONG

April ? — Embassy Theatre, Fort Wayne, Indiana. May ? — Sioux City Civic, Sioux City, Iowa. June 2 — Paramount Theatre, Denver, Colorado.

BILL TABER

March 4 — Redford Theatre, Detroit, Michigan.

DON THOMPSON

March 8 — Capitol Theatre, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. March 11 — War Memorial, Trenton, New Jersey. March 17 — DTOC, Detroit, Michigan. April 1 — Joe Koons, Long Beach, California. April 3 — Laguna Hills, California.

TOM WIBBELS

March 31 — Binghamton, New York.

WINIFREA

September — England.

GEORGE WRIGHT

May 18 — Colonial Theatre, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. May 19 — Capitol Theatre, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. □

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Wurlitzers; 3/8 Opus 1591, Flute-Tuba-Diapason to 16', Violin-Celeste-Clarinet-Tibia-Vox to 8', five percussions, toy counter, \$20,000 or best offer. 2/7 Opus 1946 (Mpls. Arena) 16' Double Trumpet, 16' Tibia Plena, Post Horn-Clarinet-Violin-Celeste-Diapason to 8', 2 1/2 octaves of Brass Piccolo, all large scale pipes, 20" wind, toy counter, \$18,000 or best offer. 2/5 Opus 1145, Flute 16' Trumpet-Tibia-Salicional-Vox to 8', 3 percussions, toy counter, \$11,000 or best offer. 2/4 complete, \$6,500 or best offer. All organs complete and original. Delzer's, Box 1334, Bismarck, North Dakota 58502. Phone: (701) 223-3225.

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