

# THEATRE ORGAN

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## Cover Photo

Shea's Buffalo Theatre in 1926. Insert shows console today. See story starting on page five.

Black and white photo courtesy of Theatre Historical Society. Color insert by Allen Miller.

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# American Theatre Organ Society

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The 32nd National ATOS Convention is now history. And what a Convention it was! The organs and organists were great, and the 939 people who attended had a great time. Many thanks go to the Los Angeles chapter members and to Convention Chairman Ralph Beaudry. Thanks, also, to San Diego Chapter which hosted the Encore in San Diego after the Convention.

Your Board of Directors met prior to the Convention to pave the way for the coming year. Changes have been made to the Young Artist Competition which will be announced soon. We have formed a Chapter Affairs Committee, chaired by new Board member Bob Markworth of Omaha, which will provide much needed interface between the chapters and assistance where and when requested by chapters. We hope that this committee will be able to help you with any problems you are having and to provide information for you which ATOS has on various subjects. We also hope to foster an interchange that will bridge the gap that sometimes seems to exist between chapters.

Board member Allen Miller has been working diligently on the new Technical Manual. Because of the extensive editing that needs to be done before production can begin, it will be a few more months before the manual is available. I appreciate the many letters from members expressing an interest in this manual. The ATOS *International NEWS* will

announce how you can order one as soon as the manual is available.

Speaking of the ATOS *International NEWS*, the Board of Directors voted to continue its publication. In fact, starting in January 1988, it will be expanded to eight pages, made a separate publication (not included in THEATRE ORGAN), mailed separately, and will include the classified ads now found in the Journal. This will make the ads more timely and will give monthly service to members who may wish to advertise.

These are just some of the highlights. A complete recap of the Convention will be in the next issue of THEATRE ORGAN. Again, thank you, Los Angeles and San Diego, for a great Convention and Encore.

Sincerely,

Jack Moelmann

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



In many ways ATOS is similar to all other associations. There are chapters throughout the country (in our case, the world) plus a national membership body with a Board of Directors working to keep a sense of direction for the association through publications and by offering help and advice to the chapters. But we are also very different from virtually every other association because of the financial investments chapters have made in theatre organs — and now three who own the

theatres which house them. This makes many chapters significant business operations! All run 100% by volunteers! Few other associations in any field are structured in this manner.

The significance of this structure has special meaning for the national body:

- A) The "preservation" theme is carried out in theatres, churches, other public buildings and in private homes nationwide in large and small communities.
- B) When problems occur (and in preserving theatres and theatre organs there are many), the National Board must have or develop expert advice to give quickly.
- C) The chapters must know how to get this advice and to make use of it.

The key point here is that everyone must work together and support both the local and national effort to continue to keep the "preservation" job going.

Sincerely,

Douglas C. Fisk



# Exemplary!

## *Renaissance for a Stately Queen*

### **A Brief History of Shea's Buffalo**

When Shea's Buffalo first opened its doors to the public on January 16, 1926, a new era of popular entertainment dawned for the people of Buffalo and Western New York. For Michael Shea, premier showman of the area, it marked the culmination of a theatrical career that had flourished since the 1880s. For the next 25 years, Shea's Buffalo remained the mecca for all — young and old alike — who sought the finest in stage and screen entertainment. Every type of talent known to show business graced the Buffalo's stage at one time or another. The list of greats is endless: George Burns and Gracie Allen, the Marx Brothers, Bob Hope, Red Skelton, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, even Jack Dempsey. Virtually all the well-known theatre organists such as Jesse Crawford, Henry Murtagh and Lloyd Del Castillo have played the Mighty Wurlitzer at Shea's. The orchestras of Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, and Harry James have appeared there; magician Thurston the Great, crooners Bing Crosby and Rudy Vallee are only a few of those who have played Mike Shea's lavish showplace.

Simultaneously, most of the great movie stars of that glamorous era were represented on the Buffalo's silver screen. Audiences laughed at Chaplin, swooned at Gable and Taylor, were left breathless by Garbo and were just plain thrilled by Astaire and Rogers. This glorious entertainment continued throughout the difficult years of the Great Depression and the trying times of WWII.

As a result of the United States Supreme Court's anti-trust decree of 1948, Shea's Buffalo became part of the Loew chain of theatres and was operated as a straight film house until 1964 when Leon Lawrence Sidell purchased the building and its contents and then leased it back to Loew's, who continued to operate it as a motion picture theatre until July 1973 when the Loew Corporation terminated its operation. Meanwhile, the City of Buffalo had foreclosed on the property for back taxes in December of 1974, and ownership passed to the city.

There was talk of demolishing the building until the Friends of the Buffalo Theatre be-

came involved. Led by L. Curt Mangel, III, the theatre's chief engineer, the Friends formed a non-profit organization to work toward restoration and maintenance of Buffalo's premier showplace as a viable perform-

ing arts center. During this period, substantial restoration was completed, thanks to more than \$750,000 in grants. Chandeliers were cleaned, the monumental task of restoring the Wurlitzer was begun and numerous electrical

Shea's Buffalo — Grand Lobby, 1926.

*(Theatre Historical Society photo)*





Patrons crowd lobby for Welcome Back Wurlitzer rededication program, April 1984. (Allen Miller photo)

and mechanical problems were corrected. Through the years, many of the paintings and marble statues had disappeared, but several graceful sculptures and original furnishings remain. A large painting at the head of the grand staircase, entitled "Mignon," was restored by a volunteer who painstakingly removed years of dirt using raw potato as the cleaning agent. A portrait of Michael Shea stands, flanked by two alabaster lamps, in the lobby. The entire theatre was reseated and recarpeted. The new carpet is a reproduction of

Shea's Buffalo, 1926.



the original 1926 design.

Through the efforts of the Friends, the theatre was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975. In December of that year, the Common Council of the City of Buffalo voted unanimously to enter into negotiations with the Friends for a three-year use agreement to operate the theatre. In addition, the Friends returned live entertainment to the theatre's stage. Through the efforts of the Friends, the preservation of Shea's Buffalo has now become a community undertaking — a project with which every citizen of Buffalo can personally identify.

#### Shea's Buffalo Theatre

Shea's Buffalo was one of the most elaborate theatres produced and is regarded today as one of the finest intact movie palaces in the country. Designed by Chicago architects C. W. and George Rapp, it has Italian marble walls and Czechoslovakian crystal chandeliers and resembles a European opera house. Its architectural style is French Renaissance in the Louis XIV style with a modern American adaptation. The ceiling is covered with an infinite variety of interlacing woodwork designs on curving panels with many variations of the primary shades of golds, pinks and blues. The designs include shields, scrolls, conventional flowers and plaques. It has been said that the decor is so exquisite that the addition of one more bric-a-brac would have caused it to be "overdone." Indeed, the atmosphere is quietly stated elegance.

The theatre was built in exactly one year at a cost close to \$2 million. The entrance rises to an impressive 100 feet, and the lobby is 80 × 30 feet with a foyer which is 22 × 90 feet. Inside the auditorium, the ceiling dome measures 56 × 70 feet and is 89 feet above the orchestra floor, suspended from the roof which

(Theatre Historical Society)

is yet another 15 feet above. This distance equals the height of an average seven-story building.

The interior, with its painted ceilings and gilded moldings, was designed by Tiffany Studios of New York. The theatre was built for maximum comfort with seating for 4000 patrons, according to Better Theatres Supplement of *Exhibitors Herald* which ran a major article about Shea's Buffalo when it opened. Today, the seating has been rearranged for 3150. Elevators were provided for both the 50-piece orchestra and the organ console. The eye notes the elaborately decorated proscenium arch which has a height of 50 feet. The 100-foot-wide stage has an opening of 66 feet and is 28 feet deep. The stage has 50 lines from which lights, curtains or scenery are hung. The original grand drape, weighing almost 1200 pounds, is still in use and can be raised and lowered by one man through the use of counterweights. Shea's has the capability of showing 70mm as well as films on its 30 × 60 foot screen.

#### Shea's Buffalo Wurlitzer

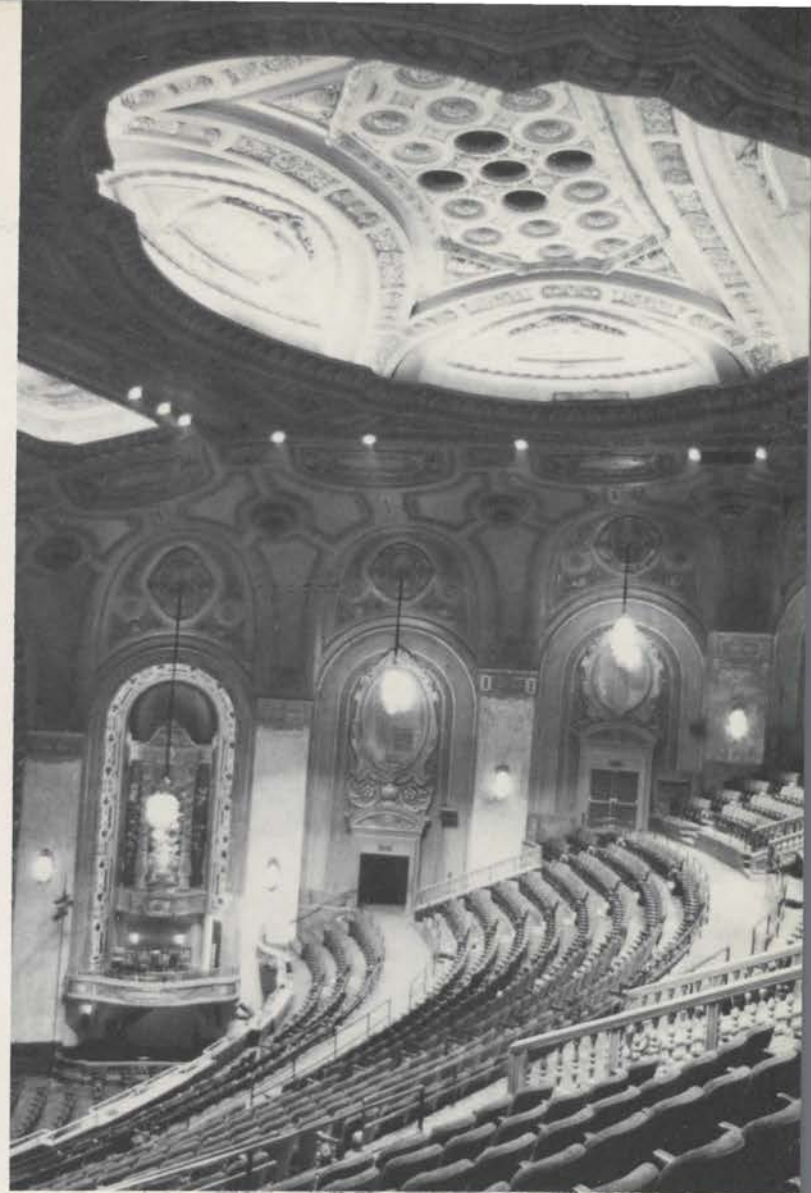
The Shea's Buffalo Wurlitzer was one of the largest and finest in the country and reflected the close relationship Michael Shea had with Fanny Wurlitzer. It is known that the Buffalo was greatly influenced by Michael Shea's visit to the Uptown Theatre in Chicago when it was first built. Shea, upon hearing the Uptown Wurlitzer, is said to have told Fanny that he wanted the same organ — with lots of strings. The Buffalo organ did, in fact, turn out to be an identical sister to the Uptown organ. Not only were the ranks the same, the original chest layouts were also identical. While both were called Style 285s, they were quite different from the normal 285 in that neither had an Echo Division. The organ contained three Tibias, seven ranks of strings and ten ranks extended to 16' pitch. The Solo Vox Humana was of unusually large scale with domed tops and was voiced on 10" wind.

Many of the traps and effects were either large scale or very unusual. The bass drum is so large it would not pass through the chamber door. In addition to the usual snare drum, a larger field drum was also included as a second snare drum. Special effects included wind, a special aeroplane effect and a real, swinging locomotive bell.

The proximity of the Wurlitzer factory, just 20 miles to the north, and the fact that this was to be the largest organ in the area and would be available for demonstration to prospective customers, led Wurlitzer to expend extra care in its construction and installation. Best of all, it was tonally finished by Wurlitzer's two top voicers, Joseph Carruthers and James Nuttall, who normally did not go into the field for final voicing. In fact, Wurlitzer rarely tonally finished their organs! This extra care, plus the shape of the organ chambers, the generous tone openings, the contours of the auditorium, and the fact that the organ was almost too big for the room, gave the Buffalo Wurlitzer its unique character and its rich, overwhelming sound. J. Meakin Jones, sales manager for Wurlitzer in the theatre or-



Shea's Buffalo lobby.



(Dan Wilke photo) Rotunda in auditorium of Shea's Buffalo Theatre.

(Dan Wilke photo)

gan days, said that Wurlitzer considered the Buffalo organ to be, tonally, one of the three finest instruments they ever created.

The instrument is located in six large chambers — three on each side of the theatre behind sculpted arches to the left and right of the stage. The arches are framed in open lattices bathed in mood-lighting. Centered in these arches are small balconies which support large flower pots containing porcelain floral arrangements flanked by spiral columns which support ornate crowns containing mood-lighting for the flowers. The area behind the arches is completely open, giving the organ unimpeded tonal egress.

Unfortunately, as was the case with most theatre organs, the Buffalo Wurlitzer had a relatively short life. With the advent of sound motion pictures the use of the organ was drastically reduced. Also, the use of coal to heat the theatre resulted in the chambers and pipes becoming encased in coal dust. Massive leaks in the roof's drainage system caused tons of water to cascade through the chambers undetected.

In 1946, Wurlitzer was looking for work, and Farny Wurlitzer convinced the theatre management to replace the damaged pneu-

Shea's Buffalo from the stage, 1926.

(Theatre Historical Society photo)





16' English Horn (Post Horn) during reinstallation in Brass Chamber. (Allen Miller photo)

matics and get the organ playing again. The project was monumental and costly and was never finished.

In the 1960s, efforts were begun to get the organ playing again. Some water-damaged tremulants were replaced with church organ tremulants and a number of patchwork repairs were made, enough that the organ was played at the 1964 ATOE Convention. The theatre showed signs of neglect at that point; the organ was without an operating combination action and there were runs in the cable, but the instrument sounded glorious! Performances by Gaylord Carter, Lowell Ayars, Tom Sheen and Pearl White (who played the daylight out of the Buffalo organ), led to recordings which served to convince people ten years later that the organ was worth saving.

The restoration project, however, was simply too much for a volunteer crew with no funds and little encouragement from Loew's, and the work was eventually abandoned. Since it was thought that the organ would probably never play again, some parts were removed and were incorporated into other organ projects. Numerous pipes were stolen, including the Brass Trumpet, a rare set that was voiced on 12" wind.

Abandoned again, the organ sustained further, even more devastating damage from water pouring in through defective roof drains. Virtually every bit of water which fell on the theatre's immense roof poured through the organ chambers. Chamber ceilings fell in, crushing pipes and filling them with wet plaster which eventually hardened again. Wood pipes, including 16' Bombardes, came unglued. Chests and percussions were badly damaged. Steel screws holding brass weights onto the reed tongues rusted

through and the weights were lost; magnets and armatures rusted as did most of the wood screws.

By the time the Friends of the Buffalo began to think about restoring the organ, the damage was so bad that there were even mushrooms growing in the Solo chamber, and it looked hopeless. There was serious thought given to junking the organ and starting over with another instrument, but the original organ still had too much going for it.

### The Restoration

Since it was obvious that the restoration project was going to be extensive, a number of technicians and organists were contacted for advice. It quickly became evident that the job was going to require a professional, skilled in all phases of theatre organ restoration, to oversee the entire project. Allen Miller was hired as organ restoration consultant.

A modernized stoplist was drawn up to utilize the original ranks in the most versatile manner. This required enlarging the stoprails to the maximum number of stoptabs possible. It was decided that the console would be professionally rebuilt and that a new relay system would be installed. Beyond the restoration of the regulators, the chamber work would be done locally. With the help of more than 50 volunteers, restoration was begun.

Just before it was to be removed, a large Voice-of-the-Theatre speaker enclosure fell from a scaffold tower onto the top of the console, breaking the entire horseshoe in two. Glue-joints cracked open, and the console literally had to be taken to Dave Junchen's shop in Woodstock, Illinois, in small pieces. At this time, Junchen-Collins became a part of Barringer Studios, and the entire operation moved to Pasadena, California. When Barringer Studios discontinued all organ work, the Buffalo console was left with contracted

work unfinished. In the meantime, the console case had been re-veneered and refinished in the Chicago area; however, the finish was deemed unacceptable, and the console was then stripped and sent to Gorsuch Enterprises where it was given an oiled finish which also was unacceptable. At this point, the console was sent to Ken Crome who completed its rebuilding along the original plans. It was refinished two more times because of problems with the new finishes adhering to the oil finish. Finally, in December of 1982, the console arrived back in Buffalo, a fitting Christmas present to the organ crew, and an incentive to complete the project.

To save on the cost of console rebuilding, the organ crew wired most of the console devices under the direction of Allen Miller, who wired and assembled the console electronics for the Z-Tronics Multiplex relay system. A two-memory combination action system, built by Neil Shaw of Ontario, Canada, was selected on the basis of its sound design and the proximity of the company should major service ever be required.

Because of the extent of the water damage, the crew decided to replace all magnets, pallet guide pins and primary spool assemblies and to re-cover all pneumatics, pallet valves and gasketing. Where warpage was encountered, the chests were completely stripped and disassembled, planed flat and reassembled. To accomplish this efficiently, a workshop was established in what was once a rehearsal room on the seventh floor above the dressing rooms. Each chamber was disassembled and chests, pipes and other parts were taken to the workshop for rebuilding, then later reinstalled. Regulators were re-covered by Organ Supply Industries and Eric Brugger of Erie, Pennsylvania. Mr. Brugger's outstanding work returned the regulators to their original condition, even to the use of double gussets.

The new Organ Supply high pressure mag-

Solo: (Front to rear) Saxophone, Gamba, Quintadena, Gamba Celeste, Oboe Horn, Trumpet, Tibia, Solo String, Vox Humana. (Dan Wilke photo)





nets were found to be unreliable on pressures over 10 inches. The organ has pressures up to 35 inches, so tooling was designed to modify every magnet to exact Wurlitzer operating specifications. The modified magnets work perfectly, and have the advantage of ease-of-cleaning armatures and no tendency to hiss. In addition, we have found that a small bit of dirt in the magnet tends to cause the note to go dead rather than to cipher.

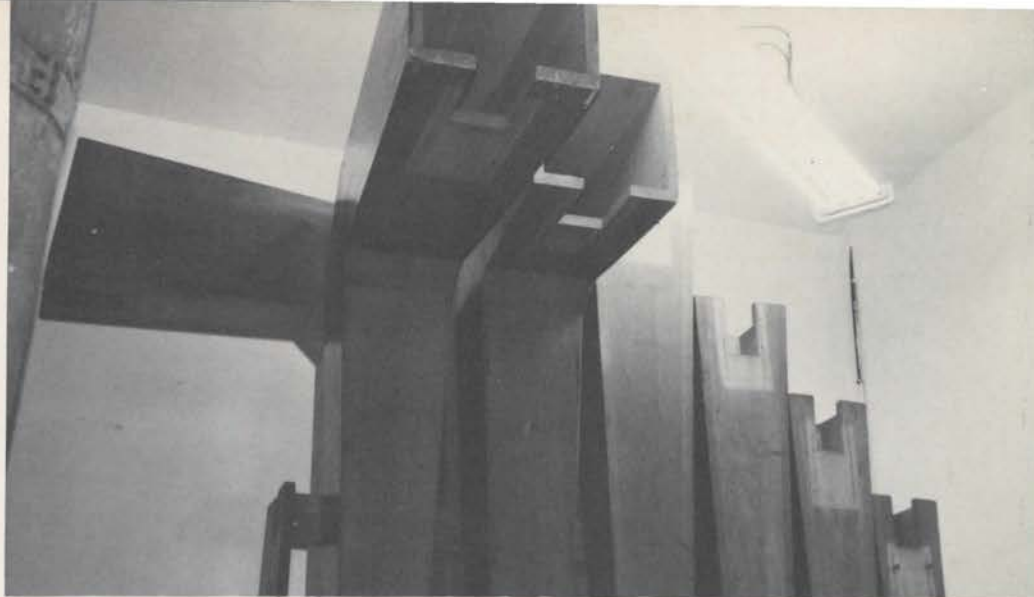
Because the windlines were removed during the chest and regulator rebuilding, it was possible to place bass offsets on separate untremmed wind, add five more regulators and tremulants and correct some original wind problems where tremulants had never worked properly. The added tremulants were built by the organ crew and are exact copies of the originals.

Some of the work was purely mechanical, such as gluing the 16' Bombarde wood resonators back together. Other work was more demanding; for example, the Master Xylophone bars were stolen during the rebuilding operation and every percussion company contacted was unable to supply a set of bars of this scale. However, crew member Walter Martin ordered Brazilian rosewood and manufactured new bars by using drawings made from an original set. The bars were tuned by cutting and sanding the undersides and ends and testing them against a strobe tuner. This process took over a week.

During the chest rebuilding phase, the smashed, broken, battered and stolen pipework was repaired or replaced by Allen Miller Associates, who also built a new Trumpet. Standard pipe metal construction was used with scaling and voicing to match the brass trumpet sound. This not only saved the extra cost of brass resonators, but also reduced the possibility of another strike by the midnight brass-snatchers!

The entire organ was rewired with telephone cable, incorporating a short cable with a connector at each bottom board. Now, when any chest problems occur, the entire bottom board may be unplugged and taken to the shop for inspection and maintenance. The Z-Tronics driver boards are installed in cabinets, one on either side of the theatre, for ease of maintenance. The local telephone company provided the labor and the materials for this undertaking.

As the organ became functional again in the fall of 1983, Allen Miller began the final tonal finishing and regulating. John Shafer was hired to assist with this task and, in the process, learned the special skills which would enable the organ to be maintained in top form. Every pipe was completely cleaned and re-shellacked, its stoppers and lips releathered and then it was revoiced as necessary to its original condition. The speech of each pipe was checked and corrected. It was found that some pipes had been experimented upon previously, and some, such as the 16' English Horn and 16' Clarinet, required complete revoicing. The Saxophone, which was an early, very loud set, was revoiced to the softer, gurgling sound desired today. New upper extensions to the top of 2' pitch were made for the



Restored 16' Bombarde in Brass Chamber. Extensive water damage had caused pipe glue-joints to fail so wood pieces fell to the floor along with the ceiling. (Allen Miller photo)

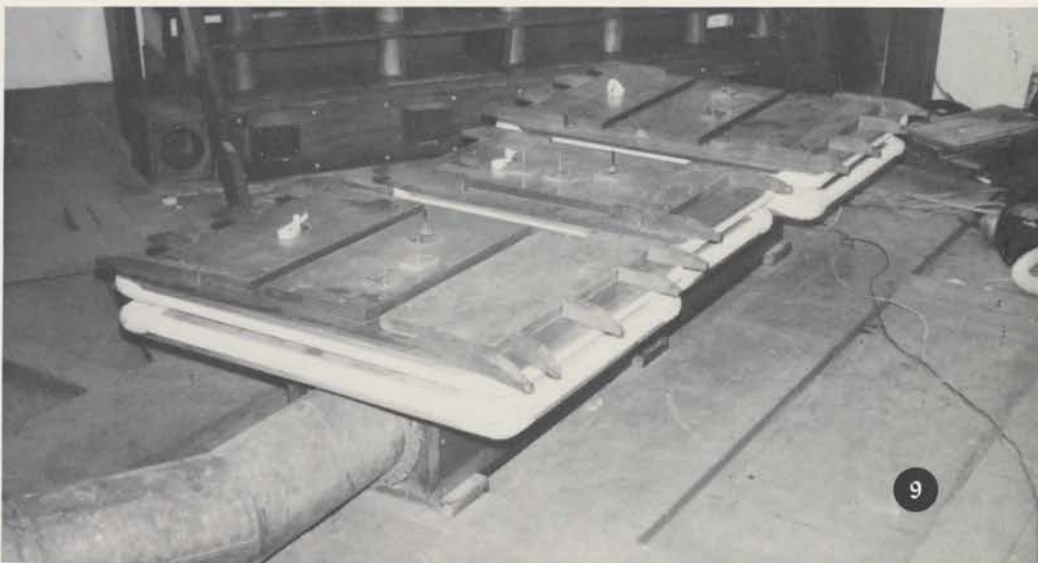


Tremulant shows water damage, an example of the condition of the entire organ before restoration.

(Allen Miller photo)

Restored Brass Chamber regulators during reinstallation. Organ was removed and rebuilt one chamber at a time.

(Allen Miller photo)



Tibia Clausas and Concert Flute. The setting of balances between octaves and ranks was done from the center of the balcony using a note-playing device which interfaces with the Z-Tronics relay. Tonal finishing was thus accomplished from the "ideal" seat in the auditorium.

After eight months of extensive work, the organ was ready for the public and was officially rededicated on April 27, 1984, with Lyn Larsen at the console and Jack Bethards and the Shea's Buffalo Orchestra on stage. Since that night, the organ has been used for performance intermissions, as live music for a ten-week run of the "Niagara Follies," and for solo performances by Rob Calcaterra, Walt Strony, Tom Hazleton, Dennis James, Robert Wolfe, Father James Miller, Ron Rhode, Carlo Annibale, Tim Schramm, Lance Luce, Lou Hurvitz and Chris Elliott. Lyn Larsen made a digital audio recording on the organ following his return engagement in September of 1986. This recording is expected to be released as a cassette tape in the near future.

The Shea's Buffalo Wurlitzer has received the highest possible praise from visiting organists. Lyn Larsen said, "The organ is a crisp, clean jewel." Walt Strony called it "the finest playing original Wurlitzer (in a theatre) in the entire country — honest!" From Dennis James, "One of the great ones is back — indeed it is." Father Miller observed, "This is 'The Wurlitzer.' Let all those who wish to return to 'new' come, hear, and let this organ be the 'standard.'" Tom Hazleton called it the "Queen of Wurlitzers — the sound of the San Francisco Fox with the volume turned up — this is the definitive Wurlitzer." Ron Rhode exalted, "My expectations have been met and surpassed, to my great delight. We organists owe a debt of gratitude to each person who has dedicated so much time to achieve this end result."

These accolades are well-deserved by the organ crew, which continues to refine the organ and is still restoring and replacing some of the percussions, traps and effects, including the tuned tympani, sleighbells, drums, cymbals and the locomotive bell. It is hoped that a grand piano can be found and installed in one of the side boxes to replace the original piano which no longer exists.

While more than 50 individuals contributed considerable time and effort to the project, special thanks must go to L. Curt Mangel, who convinced us that it could be done, to Charlie Koester, Gordon and Thelma Gillette, John Shafer, Warren Miller, Walter Martin and Maureen Wilke who took on the most repetitive tasks and acted as the "glue" that held the crew together, and to Allen Miller for his continuing guidance and expertise.

Shea's Buffalo Theatre is now operating "in the black" as a first class performing arts house and is the focal point of the renovation of downtown Buffalo's Theatre District. The rebuilding of the organ marks the realization of a dream and the beginning of a new era for Shea's and the Mighty Wurlitzer. □

*Research and text provided by:*

**Dr. Charles W. Stein / Allen R. Miller  
Peter M. Filim / Bolling Peterson**

## PIPE LOCATION BY CHAMBER

### Shea's Buffalo Theatre Wurlitzer

*All are on 10" wind except as noted.*

#### MAIN CHAMBER (Lower left side):

- 16' - 8' Tuba Profunda (15" wind)
- 16' - 4' Horn Diapason (16' octave in diaphonic, metal resonators)
- 16' - 8' Clarinet
- 16' - 2' Concert Flute (16' Bourdon — stopped wood pipes)
- 8' - 2' Viol d'Orchestre
- 8' - 4' Viol Celeste
- 8' Open Diapason
- 8' Salicional
- 8' Krumet
- 8' - 4' Dulciana
- Chrysoglott

#### FOUNDATION CHAMBER (Upper left side):

- 32' - 8' Diaphonic Diapason  
(32' octave unenclosed, on 35" wind; 32' C through low F in 8' are diaphonic with wood resonators on 25" wind; 16' - 8' in foundation)
- 16' - 4' Tibia Plena (open wood pipes, leathered lips, on 15" wind)
- 16' - 2' Tibia Clausa (stopped wood pipes, leathered lips, 15" wind)
- 8' Vox Humana (6" wind)
- 4' Harmonic Flute  
(open metal pipes pierced with small hole midway up the length of the resonator, 15" wind)

#### BRASS CHAMBER (Upper right side):

- 16' - 4' Tuba Mirabilis  
(16' C through 8' F are reeds with wooden resonators; 25" wind)
- 16' - 8' English Horn (15" wind)
- Xylophone (Master scale)
- Tympani (12 tuned Kettle Drums)
- Train Whistle (3 calliope-type pipes on about 35" pressure)
- Train Bell (real locomotive bell, pneumatical tipped)

#### SOLO CHAMBER (Lower right side):

- 16' - 8' Solo String (15" wind)
- 8' Trumpet (12" wind, new Allen Miller Associates)
- 8' Brass Saxophone
- 8' - 4' Tibia Clausa (stopped pipes, leathered lips, 15" wind)
- 8' - 4' Gamba
- 8' - 4' Gamba Celeste
- 8' Orchestral Oboe (12" wind)
- 8' Oboe Horn
- 8' Quintadena
- 8' Kinura
- 8' - 4' Vox Humana (large scale, 10" wind)
- Marimba-Harp
- Orchestra Bells-Glockenspiel
- Cathedral Chimes
- Tuned Sleigh Bells
- Extra-large Bass Drum, Chinese Gong
- Snare Drum, Field Drum
- Cymbal and Crash Cymbal
- Tambourine, Castanets, Chinese Block
- Sand Block, Tom-Tom
- Triangle, 2 Birds, Doorbell, Horse, Boat Whistle, Surf, Auto,  
2 Wind Whistles, Police Whistle

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# PIPES &

## Personalities

### A First In Oakland

Jonas Nordwall and Tom Hazleton captivated the audience at the Oakland Paramount on May 30 when they played the newly installed slave console in tandem with the 4/27 Wurlitzer. Helen Crawford's slave console, from the New York Paramount radio and recording studio, had been purchased by Dick Loderhose who subsequently sold it to the late Reinhold Delzer of Bismark, North Dakota. Preston "Sandy" Fleet purchased it from the estate of Mr. Delzer and donated it to the Paramount. Following the intermission, Paramount Manager Peter Botto said a few words of appreciation to Mr. Fleet, who was in the audience.

The organists played duets of Ferde Grofe's "On The Trail," a Jesse Crawford-style "High Hat" and Jacques Lemmens' "Fanfare," with the second organ part arranged by Richard Purvis, who was in the audience and with whom Tom Hazleton had studied for more than five years. Tom accompanied his charming wife, Mimi, who sang "Juliet's Waltz" from Gounod's *Romeo and*

Jonas Nordwall (standing) and Tom Hazleton at the Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer where they premiered the duet console on May 30.  
*(Scott McCue photo)*



*Juliet.* Mimi has a lovely, dramatic soprano voice.

A costumed "French Maid" appeared on stage and said she had surveyed the audience during intermission for requests, and that "The Flight of the Bumblebee" was the most-requested piece. Jonas and Tom said that they did not know it, whereupon the "Maid" replied that she did and sat down and played a stinging rendition of it. It turned out that she was JoAnn Ross, a pupil of Hazleton.

The artists' classical training was evident in their precise technique when they played J. S. Bach's "Sinfonietta of Organ Cantata No. 29," Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre" and a lusty "Runway Medley." Their final duet was the Berceuse and Finale from Igor Stravinsky's *Firebird*, which was magnificent. The entire program was a well-balanced and carefully planned premiere for the first dual console on the West Coast. These talented organists demonstrated their musicianship as well as a flare for showmanship and theirs will be a hard act to follow.

However, house organist Jim Roseveare and Jim Riggs are scheduled to present a two-console concert at the Oakland Paramount on January 30, 1988.

DR. EDWARD J. MULLINS

### Dwight Thomas — A Real Winner!

A featured organist at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, and winner of the 1986 ATOS Young Artist Competition, Dwight Thomas played a concert for Connecticut Valley Theatre Organ Society on April 4. Just barely into his twenties, Dwight's performance on the recently installed 3/13 Austin theatre organ in the Shelton high school was



Dwight Thomas

*(Don Feely photo)*

complete with standards, showtunes, classical, novelty and Ragtime numbers, each of which was a fully developed, original arrangement including correct verse and bridge — a musical detail missed by many current performing artists. Tempos and expression shadings were carefully controlled and always appropriate, and registrations were highly varied, yet never failed to fit the selection. In addition to his use of the 40 manual pistons and generals at his disposal, Dwight varied his tonal shadings with many hand-registered changes. The beautiful sounds we heard from the Shelton Austin are of special note inasmuch as the balances between voices sounds much different at the console than what is heard in the auditorium. Particularly outstanding were the Boellman "Toccata" and "Somewhere Out There," which produced vivid mental images of the music video for this reviewer. During and after the concert, many patrons complimented the technical crew for the sound of the instrument. The results were largely because of the skill of the organist and not any "improvements" which had been made on the organ.

A very stormy night, on top of a wet spring, had led to local flooding which necessitated an announcement by local police, toward the end of the concert, that the main roads near the high school had been closed. Dwight thus shortened his program, and while his final selections were not rousing "show stoppers," he still left the audience with a warmth which surely dried off dampened spirits.

Dwight's clean-cut good looks and his warm, friendly personality quickly won the hearts of his audience. His introductions were complete, nicely delivered and not too lengthy. From start to finish, every detail and every aspect of this quiet young gentleman was highly professional. If this concert was any indication, Dwight Thomas is headed for the top; in fact, he is already up with the top ten or so theatre organ "veterans." An opportunity to hear this young artist should not be missed.

Dwight Thomas will be featured at Shea's Buffalo Theatre during the 1987 Columbus Day Weekend Regional Convention.

ALLEN R. MILLER

JULY/AUGUST 1987

## World Wurlitzer Premiere

On the evening of May 19 a sellout crowd heard the opening concert on the St. Paul World Theater's 3/21 Wurlitzer (see May/June 1987 THEATRE ORGAN). Hosted by J. Michael Barone, of Minnesota Public Radio's *Pipedreams* fame, the opening featured the artistry of Hector Olivera.

As he traditionally does, Mr. Olivera gave a superb performance and thrilled both theatre and classical organ buffs as well as those not familiar with the organ as a concert instrument. A standing ovation attested to the reception of both artist and organ.

Chambers in the World are very shallow, with hard, brick walls. This, together with the excellent acoustics of the theatre, gives a striking brightness and presence to the organ. Tonal finishing by Terry Kleven and Bob Swaney also contributes much to the ensemble.

However, in the hours before the concert there were moments when its success seemed very doubtful. On the day before, Michael Barone and World Theater Director Marilyn Schultz brought Olivera to the theatre to witness the last frantic moments of tuning, regulating, fixing of noisy swell shutters and the like. A 4:00 p.m. promotional radio broadcast on MPR went off without incident, although the last cypher was cleared less than four minutes before air time.

Hector Olivera, fortunately, is as competent an organ builder as he is an artist, and he announced after the broadcast, "I am wearing my jeans, so where do I start?" Organ crew chief Jim Moe quickly dispatched workers to various trouble spots, and the final 16' Tuba installation, reed and Tibia regulating also commenced. Trems were set to the artist's liking, and the crew (and Hector) took care of many other problems which he noted.

After a deli-dinner the entire group returned to the theatre to resume their tasks, and the electronic crew arrived and started their final cleanup work on the Trousdale combination action. Olivera was at the console directing the operation with Gary Mertz and Dale Eason changing bad IC chips and rectifying wiring and contact problems. All involved displayed great fortitude as the organ was not pronounced ready until after 1:30 a.m.

After a short night's sleep, the crew returned for a final tuning and tonal finishing before the organ was turned over to Olivera — now as a performer — early in the afternoon. Fortunately, things went better this time, with only minor problems and an occasional cypher.

After our artist had returned to his hotel for a much-needed rest, Terry and Bob did a final touch-up on the reeds, and Jim Moe made a final check of all the other details. When he questioned Terry about the operation of the combination action, Terry's response was, "There isn't any combination action. Nothing works." The problem was quickly traced to a dead five-volt power supply, but the concert was less than three hours away! Jim made a quicker-than-reasonable, 15-mile round trip through rush hour traffic to his business

where he borrowed a lab power supply. This was quickly wired in, and a quick check indicated that everything seemed to be working properly. Unfortunately, however, none of the preset combinations for the concert had been recorded, and all were lost when the power supply died.

Olivera was contacted at his hotel, as Michael Barone was to pick him up at 7:30 (the house was to open at 7:15), and his response was, "That will be no problem. I can sneak in to the pit and set the combinations without playing — I know what they are."

Know what they were he surely did! Thirty-two pistons were deftly set in the darkness of the pit at 7:45, and at 8:05 the Wurlitzer rose from the pit into the spotlight. The concert most certainly did not reflect any of the anguish and panic that had preceded it.

For the crew, the artist and the theatre staff, the evening did not end with the final encore and ovation at the World Theater. An after-show dinner was hurriedly arranged which included a champagne toast by Marilyn Schultz and an enthusiastic thanks and wish for further success from Olivera. The crew was relieved to hear this after what they had been through earlier.

With this euphoria still prevailing, the group moved on to the Minneapolis Auditorium where the big Kimball was fired up. After building the 122-rank ensemble up to full organ and savoring the roll of sound in the cavernous hall, Olivera's reverently uttered expletive reflected the feeling of all who were in the auditorium. And with this splendid ending to a superb evening, the group finally went their various ways. All were thrilled by the events of the day and by the knowledge that the World's Wurlitzer (and, it is hoped, the Minneapolis Auditorium Kimball) will provide more such delight and inspiration in the future.

JIM MOE

## Double, Double, Toil And Trouble

A tone is doubled in a chord; a clarinetist doubles on the saxophone, features are doubled at a cinema. All these things, however, are doubled in the same place. However, when a theatre organist has booked two engagements in different cities for the same day, that could give new meaning to Shakespeare's words — double could be trouble!

Contracted to play his *King of Kings* score in Kingston, Ontario, recently, Lee Erwin discovered that he was expected to play that same score at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York, on the same night. Double trouble! Lee knew that Jeff Weiler, in Chicago, was close enough to travel to New York, and a quick phone call found that Jeff was available and willing to cover the Mineola date leaving Lee free to fulfill his Canadian commitment.

A short time later, Lee was to learn that Jeff had double-booked a performance of *King of Kings* at the Genessee Theatre in



Jeff Weiler (left) and Lee Erwin.

Waukegan, Illinois, and a showing of *Diary of a Lost Girl* at the Music Box Theatre in Chicago. You guessed it! Lee was scheduled to appear at the Royal Oak Theatre in Detroit on the night prior to Jeff's double date, so he could easily fly to Chicago the next morning to continue the game of Musical Organ Benches that they seemed to be playing.

For those of us who love the silents and the theatre organ, it is encouraging to learn that there are enough bookings available that this could happen. Let us keep the fire burning and the cauldron bubbling with such delightful "toil and trouble."

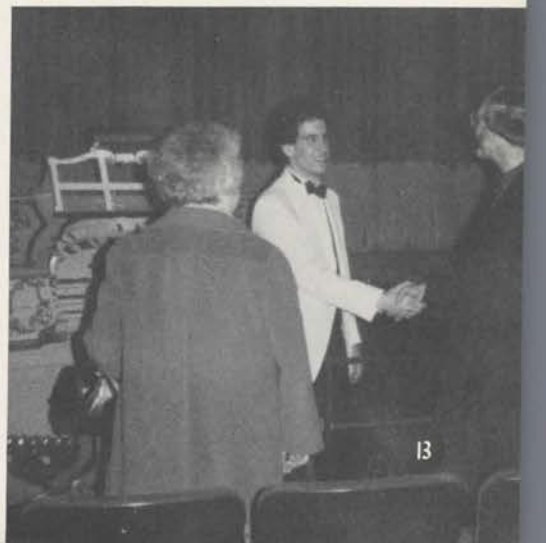
MARLIN SWING

## Jeff Weiler In Demand

An oft-heard song of the Christmas season, the lyrics of which begin with "Oh, the weather outside is frightful," could have been appropriately vocalized by the citizens of Cedar Rapids and most of Iowa on March 29 when the weather, apparently unaware that it was spring, chose to vent driving rain, sleet, snow and biting winds for the entire weekend. Despite the weather, however, several hundred brave and hardy souls invaded the opulent beauty of the Cedar Rapids Paramount Theatre to view the C. B. De Mille classic *King of Kings* and to enjoy the accompanying musical score which was composed and performed by Mr. Jeff Weiler at the console of the Wurlitzer. This Lenten event was sponsored by area churches with all profit directed to charitable causes within the community.

Jeff's rendition was positively flawless and

Jeff Weiler receives congratulations from members of Cedar Rapids audience following his accompaniment of *King of Kings*.



added an extra depth to an already meaningful film, and many gathered at the console at the conclusion to express their praise and appreciation for his performance. This young artist is certainly to be considered as one of the up-and-coming "new breed," and any group planning an event embracing the voice of the pipe organ would do well to take a good look at Jeff Weiler.

JOHN HOCKADAY

April 12 in Waukegan, Illinois, was truly a "Sun-Day." The sun shone brightly and the music flowed effortlessly within the Genessee Theatre as the 1927 film, *King of Kings* was shown with accompaniment by Jeff Weiler. Mr. Weiler's score is exceedingly beautiful, filled with many wonderfully sonorous, original melodies, well-executed counter melodies, and smooth key changes all sensitively merged with the film. The music became part of the film, and there was no sense of time lapse between 1927 and today . . . seated in the theatre that day, it WAS 1927.

Mr. Weiler handled the theatre's Barton very well despite the fact that there were several unplayable notes, because of lack of maintenance on the part of the theatre, and some glitches from the booth. Weiler is certainly cool and calm under pressure. It is a pleasure to hear such a fine young musician using his talent in the milieu of silent film accompaniment.

KEVIN McKELVIE

*The Eagle*, starring Rudolph Valentino, Vilma Banky and the redoubtable Louise Dresser, recently had a delightful showing at the Music Box Theatre in Chicago. The reason for this delight was the marvelous organ score provided by Mr. Jeff Weiler. Contrary to the popular belief that music to silent films must be endless repetitions of "Hearts and Flowers," an original score with a real thematic unity tracing the development of plot and character is a revelation. Mr. Weiler's sensitive and individual score reflected each nuance and mood, carefully modulating the overwrought sentimentality inherent in the silent-film acting style. This reviewer, having suffered through the efforts of less talented keyboardists, realizes the importance of a well-performed *original* score to the enjoyment of one of our greatest art forms, the silent film.

BRADLEY VIETH

## Renaissance Makes Two

The Renaissance Theatre in Mansfield, Ohio, completed its second successful season this May, and the beautiful Wurlitzer has had a variety of sounds coming from its chambers.

Donna Parker came from Indianapolis to renew her friendship with our Wurlitzer — she had practiced on this console during her early years of study. Her program ranged from Helen Crawford's "So Blue" to the lively "Dizzy Fingers."

Dennis James arrived for Valentine's Day complete with turban and brought back Ru-

dolph Valentino in *The Sheik*. Dennis has mastered the art of accompaniment of the good old silents.

No superstition prevailed when Tom Hazleton brightened our April Friday the thirteenth. He found tones in our twenty ranks that had not been heard before, and he recalled having made his first recording on this organ when it was still in the Kearns' residence. For us Ohio Buckeyes, he really moved us by playing "How Great Thou Art" as a tribute to Woody Hayes, who had passed away that day.

Walt Strony closed the season with a concert that not only proved that he does not spend all of his time in a pizza parlor, but also that he has an excellent classical training. His footwork can tax the best speedometer. "Tico Tico" blended with "The Flight of the Bumblebee" dazzled our eyes and our ears! The evening ended all too quickly, and we hope he will come back soon.

We must congratulate our maintenance gang — they have put in many hours keeping the chambers in order, and they are becoming very good tuners! Do come and see us.

VIRGINIA E. WHITE

## Dennis James And Red Skelton

Dennis James recently performed at the Ohio Theatre as part of a sellout Red Skelton Show. He notes that he found a folio of Skelton tunes from which he assembled and performed a medley. He was surprised to learn that Red writes five musical selections each morning and has a backlog of thousands of tunes in his file. Red's compositional style is highly reminiscent of the popular music of the 1910-1930 period and, James adds, is "a natural for inclusion in theatre organ concerts."

## Happy Birthday, Hollywood

No, not Hollywood, California (which is celebrating its 100th this year), but the Hollywood Theatre in Portland, Oregon, which celebrated its 60th anniversary with a week's worth of silent films representing the early years of the theatre.

The Hollywood Theatre in Portland, Oregon, in 1927.



Dennis James and Red Skelton at the Ohio Theatre in Columbus where they performed for a sellout audience.

Opening night was a gala event featuring a "Come As Your Favorite Actor" contest, free popcorn and soda-pop, and Portland's colorful Mayor, Bud Clark, who unveiled a plaque designating the Hollywood Theatre as an historic landmark. Of course, the best part of opening night was the organ prelude and *The General*, cued by Paul Quarino on the Rodgers organ.

The week progressed with Gerry Gregorius accompanying *Seventh Heaven*, *Sunrise and Flesh and the Devil*. Bob Hansen accompanied *King of Kings*, *Metropolis*, *Beau Geste* and *Don Juan*. Paul Quarino also played for *Wings*.

Oregon Chapter ATOS, the Historic Preservation League, Northwest Film and Video Center, The Organ Grinder Restaurant, Rodgers Organ Company and several area merchants were responsible for the major funding and organization behind this highly successful silent film series. So successful, in fact, that we're on again for the Hollywood's 61st birthday!

TERRY ROBSON □

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**NUGGETS**  
from the  
**GOLDEN DAYS**

Prospected  
by  
Lloyd  
E.  
Klos



This time, we emphasize reviews of organ presentations. Sources were *Variety* (V), *Metronome* (Met) and *Motion Picture Herald* (MPH).

1927 (V) Organ entertainment by EDWARD MEIKEL in Chicago is always novel. In this show, with the feature picture *Blonde or Brunette*, Meikel had the preferred and common sided in their singing. The lads in the audience joined the red-haired ladies, somewhat refuting the popular statement, "Blonde or Brunette."

Circa 1928 (V) ALBERT HAY MALOTTE pleased with excerpts from *Carmen*, including the "Toreador Song" a-la jazz, on the organ.

Circa 1928 (V) HENRI A. KEATES titled his stuff "A-la Cafeteria" and served it that way. "Help Yourself" was the key line to every slide, so they helped themselves, and how!

Circa 1928 (V) Mr. and Mrs. JESSE CRAWFORD were others who gave the period a recall with their organ recital. Mr. Crawford at the main console and his wife at another in the centre of the stage down front, impressively played "Jerusalem," intermingled with "The Holy City," a most happy choice for the occasion.

Circa 1928 (V) HENRY B. MURTAGH, solo organist, used what looked like music publishers' slides for the straight playing of a pop number, explaining that since Paul Whiteman introduced this particular song recently, there have been many requests for it. Devoid of novelty, the solo relied on Murtagh's ability to click on straight talent. He put it over easily.

Circa 1928 (V) ALBERT F. BROWN used the nearness of Mother's Day as the topical reason for his solo number, "Mother of Mine." Lyrics on a transparent screen fade, revealing a picture tableau, a gray-haired mother sitting before a fireplace over which is a big framed painting of a boy. Bernie Grossman sings from behind the painting. His voice is all which is required for this sort of number. Easy sentimental mother slush was avoided and results more substantial as a consequence.

April 1930 (Met.) For the past year, Miss BASEL CRISTOL has been playing at the Balaban & Katz Tower Theatre in Chicago, a sound house. Needless to say, she is the only

human touch on the program. Despite the marvelous success of the talking pictures, her audiences still acclaim the organ solo. Miss Cristol thinks the most entertaining type solo is the one consisting of community singing, built around a theme, using a subject of general or timely interest.

She avoids solos written in the first person, for they are uninteresting and she also avoids annoying gag slides, especially the type which nag the audience to sing. Not to let her public forget the good music entirely, she inserts occasionally a popular classic, which meets with their hearty approval.

On the whole, Miss Cristol believes the field for solo organists is still unlimited, for the organ is the only instrument left for sound houses.

Miss Cristol's parents were Lithuanians, worshippers of the Jewish faith, who emigrated to Ireland. She was born in Ireland and when her parents emigrated to the United States, she came along. Her name is unusual, her racial and national aspects are unusual — and Miss Cristol is a striking person herself with thick, auburn, bobbed hair and bright, brown eyes. You'd look at her twice.

She considers herself a Chicagoan. Here she attended grammar school and was graduated from McKinley High. She spent most of her life with music and much of her study was achieved through scholarships. She won prize after prize, and has had the distinction of playing as soloist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

"I love this work," she says. "It is long hours of hard, actual work, planning organ novelties or solos. But when the audience applauds, even if just a little, I feel repaid."

February 1931 (V) ADOLPH GOEBEL is entering his third year as featured organist at Loew's Theatre in Yonkers, New York, and still going strong, thanks to G. H. Miner's management, a Robert-Morton organ, and Harry Blair's organ specialties.

March 28, 1931 (MPH) RALPH TUCHBAND at the New York Paradise Theatre, offered a mediocre novelty called "Happy Home" at his first program. Ralph played well and had the audience singing with him, but there seemed to be no "meat" to the novelty, seemingly just thrown together. This is no reflection on Ralph, but it is on whoever was responsible for his playing it. The songs chosen for the audience to sing were good, and they joined heartily in singing all of them, except the "drunk" chorus of "Sing Something Simple." The balance of the program consisted of the singing of "Home-Made Sunshine," "Take a Walk," "Tie a Little String Around Your Finger," and a final chorus of "Little Things in Life." This boy makes a presentable appearance at the console, is a good musician and plays in the manner which makes singing enjoyable. The reception accorded him at the finish of his solo was very good.

May 23, 1931 (MPH) DON & KAY at the Staten Island Paramount, presented for their first solo at the twin consoles, a clever and well-played novelty, "Sleepy Time Moods." Both consoles raced up simultaneously as Kay

on the right and Don at the left played a peppy arrangement of "Sleep, Sleep, Sleep." Little, demure Mrs. Kay announced that they would play the favorite "Sleepy Town Express." Word slides were superimposed on the screen of a train as Kay played the melody and Don played many novel and natural train effects. They followed with "Sleepy Time Gal," played in a most pleasing and harmonic combination. Then "Asleep In the Deep" as a pedal cadenza. (Modern lighting effects at the base of the consoles enhanced this bit). "Please Go Away and Let Me Sleep" was presented in a most unusual way, first as a straight spot solo and then with a comedy cartoon film with words for the audience to sing, designated with a bouncing ball. At the show caught by the reviewer, few were in the house, but they did sing and apparently enjoyed the entire novelty. This fine team closed their solo with the playing of "Here Comes the Sun," which the audience joined in singing.

September 26, 1931 (MPH) EDDIE SCHWARTZ at Brooklyn's Bushwick Theatre, engaged as guest organist for the 20th Anniversary program of this RKO house, had to work under difficulties but succeeded in making the audience sing beyond all expectation. Unfortunately, the house is not equipped with a slide machine and the organist was forced to play old timers and songs which have been outstandingly popular. Using a mike to make his announcements, Eddie sold the idea of singing right from the start. The numbers were "Hail Hail, the Gang's All Here," "Sweet Rosie O'Grady," "School Days," his own singing of "When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain," a chorus of the same song for the audience to sing, "Beach With You," "Moonlight Saving Time" and a final chorus of "Sidewalks of New York." The solo was very well done and apparently (from the applause at the finish), the organist would be a box office attraction in no time if kept on at this house.

September 26, 1931 (MPH) HAROLD RIEDER at Jersey City's Stanley Theatre, presented an entertaining solo called "Radio Popularity Contest" which was built in a manner to give the reigning radio favorites and the songs associated with them, a big hand. Rieder opened by announcing the solo and explaining that the winner would be determined at the finish by the greatest applause for the particular star. Just before the singing of each number, a photo of the artist was shown and then those in the audience who favored the star, sang the song. The numbers used were "Just One More Chance," "For You," "In My Arms," "Many Happy Returns of the Day," and "Love Letters in the Sand."

Special presentations like the above were a means to keep organists employed after the demise of silent pictures, especially in the larger houses. Imagination, creativeness and originality coupled with an engaging personality, were hallmarks of success in this business.

That should do it until next time. So long, sourdoughs.

JASON & THE OLD PROSPECTOR □

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# Letters to the Editors

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

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  
4633 SE Brookside Drive #58  
Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

Dear Editor:

I would like to share an idea to increase public interest in theatre organs, both locally and nationally, May I suggest that each artist have a full knowledge of the *ranks and traps* of the organ whenever he does a show. He could then plan to intersperse his program with melodies that will include all of the ranks and traps which only theatre organs have. Too, the organ crews deserve to hear the full potential of their labors of love. I am sure that audiences, both old and new, will be amazed at the quality of the theatre organ when fully exposed to ALL of its sounds — it's a shame that many of these are seldom heard. It is my opinion that this type of program could be carried out on a national scale for the benefit of all.

Sincerely,  
James P. Nibbe  
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Editor:

Who ya gonna believe?

In the January/February, 1987, issue of THEATRE ORGAN, on page 6, under 5/223 Ruffatti in the Crystal Cathedral: "This is the *seventh* largest organ in America and the largest west of the Allegheny Mountains."

On page 25, under Crystal Cathedral, Garden Grove, 5/233 Ruffatti/Aeolian Skinner: "Fredrick Swann will be heard at the *fifth* largest pipe organ in the world . . ."

It seems to me that if an organ is the fifth largest in the world, it would also be the fifth largest organ in America, or if it were the seventh largest in America, it could not be the fifth largest in the world!

I would like to see an article in THEATRE ORGAN about the largest organs in the world, especially the largest theatre organs. Could you help me out?

Sincerely,  
Frank Hoffman  
Mason City, Iowa

(Would anyone like to submit an article on this subject? Ed.)

Dear Editor:

Those of us who entered the theatre organ field in the 1950s remember only a *very* small number of radio producers of theatre organ music. Among these few, not as many as can be counted on one hand have been able to continue their programs more than a few seasons.

So far as my memory and present information serve, only one such person has been on the air continuously for a quarter century. This individual is Don Robinson, who has produced his own organ program that span of time without interruption on radio station WLFH, Utica, New York. The steady and hard work such has entailed speaks of a devotion which can be claimed by only a very few people on either side of the footlights. Added to that is the good personal example he has set, for always he has shown himself business-like and courteous.

It seems to me that this man should be given some appropriate recognition by the National ATOS, preferably some award commensurate with the quality and quantity of such extraordinary contributions.

Meanwhile, here's a toast from one child of God to a remarkable person and professional for longstanding work which has brought only increasing credit to all the theatre organ field. Congratulations and three "Huzzahs!" to Mr. Robinson and long may he wave!

Billy Nalle  
Wichita, Kansas

Dear Editor:

As a member of Los Angeles Chapter, I have recently moved to the Jacksonville, Florida, area. Because there is no chapter here, I've come to appreciate this bi-monthly magazine. I would appreciate hearing from members in this area.

I would also like to add my opinion regarding John Ledwon's article on young people's interest in theatre organ. I am 29 years old and love the theatre organ! I don't think the lack of interest in the organ is the younger generation's fault entirely, but rather four factors which limit the interest: Money, Time, Politics and Prejudice.

First, very few of us "youngsters" can afford such an expensive hobby. And not too many parents are willing to spend the money to buy an expensive organ and pay for lessons for a child who would want to make a profession as a concert artist. Fortunately, the ATOS, with members contributing the money, preserves this wonderful hobby.

Second, time is another commodity one may have difficulty using for this interest. In this world of make-things-happen-fast, it is easy to push organ interests aside in favor of other enjoyable interests that cost less and do

not require long-range planning.

My third point has to do with what I have observed when traveling through many states and visiting seven chapters, preserving without the promoting of theatre organs. Funds are raised to rebuild an organ, contracts to house the unit are signed with theatres and other public facilities, and then it just sits. The chance of getting in and having open console is bogged down because the building management has restricted access to the organ. I think chapters of ATOS need to be educated in business in the sense that income (contributions) are a result of marketing a product (the organ), reinvesting funds, establishing objectives, taking action and evaluating the results.

Prejudice is the area I want to hit the hardest. Although it is touchy, it is a hard fact that should be addressed from all angles. Many times I have felt that the older generation does not want new blood, they only want to remember the way it was. When was the last time you saw grandparents bring children to a concert to get them interested? Another type of prejudice I have experienced is the judging of a player by name only. I recently attended a benefit concert where some of the "greats" played, and frankly, at 70 or 80 very few artists have the same dexterity they did at 30, but they continue to slop through "Dizzy Fingers" and "Tico Tico" and the audience "Wows" because HE played for us. And what about the individual who works long hours on an organ, then is made to feel that it is a privilege, given only to the elite, to play it?

I would like to add a fifth consideration — education. I see our magazine and chapter gatherings fulfilling the history, current events and social aspects of theatre organ. What seems lacking is the education about the mechanics of the organ, and for performers, very little is shared. Only through apprenticeship can one learn how an organ works. Many of the technicians I have spent time with have only told me who not to listen to and how there is only one way to do it right.

When I became a member of ATOS, I was sent the magazine only, nothing to tell me what is available in terms of archived data and memorabilia or back issue articles. As for theatre organ style of playing, I again struggle to learn how it was done — listening to recordings and picking out parts has been my primary form of learning. It would be wonderful if one of the "greats" would be willing to publish an arrangement in our magazine from time to time.

As a problem such as the decreasing interest in theatre organ is identified, the first step is to search out the cause of the problem, establish objectives to resolve the problem and then take action to meet those objectives. My personal motto is: "What can I do to get results?" If everyone in ATOS asked himself the same question, the interest at all ages will increase, and I thank John Ledwon for identifying a problem about which all of us can do something.

Sincerely,  
Christopher E. Secrest  
1003 West Madison  
Starke, Florida 32091

Dear Editor:

Last month another "history" of the movies was presented on national television, "Happy Birthday, Hollywood." In the past several years there have been at least a half-dozen such "histories" presented on TV, but not one of those shows acknowledged that background for the silent movies was played on *theatre organs*. The "Happy Birthday, Hollywood" program stated near its end that silent movie background was played "by a girl at a piano."

It's no wonder that, except for a handful of enthusiasts, theatre organ and its music is practically unknown today. I have the pleasure of associating with a group of thirty or more teenagers, and not ONE of them knew what a theatre organ was. Recently I took a group of these young people to a silent movie that was showing at a local theatre, and afterward we went to a pizza and pipes. The kids were amazed, and have talked about the organ, the movie and the beautiful theatre ever since. These kids were brought up in a small city and had not had the opportunity to see or hear a theatre organ.

If thousands of dollars can be raised to re-install organs for the enjoyment of a relatively few people, why can't ATOS raise the money to make a video tape of theatre organ history for presentation on national TV and as gifts to libraries and schools and local TV stations? This could introduce theatre organ to millions of viewers, and some of the costs could be covered by sale of the cassettes for home use.

Other organizations find the time and funds to present their interests and hobbies — many of them on PBS stations — so why can't ATOS?

Bob Longfield  
Morro Bay, California □

## Closing Chord

### RAYMOND F. BOHR, JR.

Raymond F. Bohr, the last chief organist of Radio City Music Hall, New York, died May 15 after a long illness.

Bohr was born in Nyack, New York, on November 2, 1919. He started studying piano at age six, and although he never took a degree in music, he was fortunate to have had some excellent private instruction. Before WWII he studied with Robert Morse at St. John's Church in Greenwich Village, New York City. Bohr continued private lessons even after Dr. Friedel moved to St. Bartholomew's Church, and remained under his tutelage until Friedel died. Friedel was President of the Examining Board of the American Guild of Organists.

Fascinated with pipe organs since his boyhood, Bohr added a homemade pedalboard to the piano in his parent's living room. At age 14, he took a job with M.A. Clark and



Ray Bohr at the Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer.

(Photo courtesy John Landon)

Sons, who built and maintained pipe organs. He obtained permission to practice at a local theatre where the police found him practicing away one morning at four o'clock, enraptured with the instrument. Having sung in the choir of Grace Episcopal Church in Nyack since he was six, he began sneaking into the church after hours to try playing some jazz piano pieces on the pipe organ. One day the choir master caught him red-handed, but, being impressed by the sounds the boy was producing from the organ, gave him the job of helping as relief organist for choir rehearsals. Bohr also convinced the manager of the Rockland Theatre near his home that the 2/7 Wurlitzer in the theatre needed restoration. Bohr did most of the work himself, and once his ability as a musician became evident, the theatre manager hired him as regular organist.

Bohr also held church organ posts in Haverstraw and Pearl River, New York, before going into the Army in WWII. The only time he touched an organ during the war years was when he played a memorial service at Iwo Jima for the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

After WWII Ray Bohr took a position as organ demonstrator for Wurlitzer while continuing his classical organ studies. He became associate organist at Radio City Music Hall in 1947, and at the same time retained his job demonstrating for Wurlitzer. He began playing the pipe organ in the Rainbow Room at the top of the RCA Building in Rockefeller Center. During those years, he also became organist for the television show, "Bride and Groom," a post he was to hold for a year. He continued as associate organist at the Music Hall until he was advanced to chief organist in 1973 after Dick Liebert retired. Bohr served longer as organist on the Radio City Music Hall staff than anyone other than Liebert. Liebert's last performance at the Music Hall was on May 9, 1972. After a leave of absence of several months, he notified the Music Hall that he would not be returning, whereupon Ray Bohr was appointed Chief Organist in

this coveted position which he held until the Music Hall closed and reorganized in 1979. Bohr's last performance was on April 25, 1979.

Bohr's career, however, did not end when the Music Hall closed to reorganize. Shortly thereafter he joined Ron Bishop as associate in the Northeast District representation of the Schantz Organ Company, a post he held until his death. Bohr is also remembered for a

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number of outstanding recordings of theatre pipe organ music which were made at the Paramount Theatre in Times Square, New York City, and the organs at Radio City Music Hall.

A scholarship in Ray Bohr's name has been established at the Juilliard School of Music, and contributions to this Scholarship Fund may be mailed to: The Juilliard School of Music, 144 West 66th Street, New York, New York 10023.

DR. JOHN W. LANDON



Joseph Seal

(John Sharp photo)

## JOSEPH SEAL

Joseph Seal died on February 6. He was one of the most popular and best-known theatre organists in Britain. He began his career at the Rialto Cinema, Blackburn Lancashire, the county where he was born in Darwen. He then played the Regal Altrincham, Cheshire Compton, and later the Lonsdale Cinema Carlisle, a famous 2/9 Christie, where he began to broadcast for the BBC. His signature tune was "D'ye Ken John Peel," a Cumbrian tune which will always be associated with him.

Union Circuit took over the Lonsdale in 1935 and chose John to open their spectacular and prestigious Ritz Cinema in Belfast, Northern Ireland, with its superb 4/11 and Melotone Compton. So successful were he and the organ, that Seal remained there for 15 years, sometimes broadcasting twice or more a week. In 1937, Union was taken over by ABC, and in 1951 ABC brought Seal to London to become Musical Director in charge of organs and organists for this vast circuit. He played little after that and his offices were at the Regal Kingston in London.

John Seal's recording career spanned the 78s, 45s and LPs, and all were issued on major labels such as Decca and Pye and sold millions over the years. Over 20 LPs were made on the Regal's marvelous 3/12 Wurlitzer, and even after the organ was moved to the Music Museum at Brentford, he continued to record it. He became Controller of live entertainment at ABC and Variety booking manager, organizing one-night stands at major ABC houses throughout the U.K. In the early 1950s he got

ABC to purchase three E-type Hammonds, had special surrounds built for them and acquired trucks to transport them so it was possible to tour cinemas that had no organs or where the pipe organ was in poor condition. His playing was always immaculate, and his registration clean right till the end. He played thousands of broadcasts in his time. A true great!

IAN DALGLIESH

## PEARL HAUER

Pearl Hauer, organist, pianist and teacher, died on April 24 in Warrenton, Virginia. She was 90.

Born in Mohawk, Tennessee, she moved to the Washington, D.C., area as a teenager and studied music education at Catholic University. During the silent film era, Mrs. Hauer played organ and piano in Washington theatres, including the Chevy Chase, Home, Rialto and York. She played piano at the Hay Adams Hotel, and during the late thirties had a program on WRC on which she played requests for musical selections.

She retired in 1962, and gave piano and organ lessons. A resident of Falls Church, Virginia, and a member of the D.C. Federation of Musicians, Mrs. Hauer is survived by a son, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

LLOYD E. KLOS

## SIR GEORGE THALBEN-BALL

Sir George Thalben-Ball, the "Doyen" of British concert organists, passed away on January 18 at the age of 90. He was organist at the Temple Church in London for 60 years. In 1927 he recorded a 78 record that was to make history as the first million-selling organ record; it was with Master Ernest Lough singing

"Oh, For The Wings of A Dove," by Mendelssohn. Of Cornish descent, he was born in New South Wales, Australia, as his parents were there at the time, he told me. Nobody was more British than Sir George. He studied under no less than four Knights of the organ, became a professor at the Royal College of Music and was heard on thousands of BBC broadcasts. He also produced an enormous amount of 78 records. For many years he was a musical advisor to the BBC and became a leading adjudicator of festivals and colleges,



Sir George Thalben-Ball

an arranger and composer of organ music and trumpet fanfares for great occasions. He was given the C.B.E. in 1967, and in 1982 was Knighted by Her Majesty. He was a household word in the U.K. as far as classical organ was concerned, but he told me that he had tried his hand at various theatre organs "for a lark" and admired the genius of John Compton whose organs he sometimes endorsed in advertising.

IAN DALGLIESH □

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# CINEMA ORGAN NEWS FROM BRITAIN



by  
Ian  
Dalglish



Although Norman Barfield wrote about the rebirth of the Barry Christie, I must mention that it was a great moment to be there and to hear and see the great Doreen Chadwick, Len Rawle and the other two organists rise up playing one of the truly great theatre organs of the U.K. Probably the finest of its make, brilliantly installed by Les Rawle and crew in a most delightful cinema-like hall, it is an understage job just as though it had been designed that way. Without a doubt, this is one transplant that actually has the organ sounding better than it did in the Regal Edmonton in London. There the poor organ spoke through the right side of the proscenium arch from over large chambers, and some of the pipework was never heard to advantage — but now — wowie! The reeds, strong point of Christie organs, really do get their chance!

Lew Williams, one of your finest players

and a great "Torch" exponent, was able to pull off a "Torch Triple" by playing three of the beautiful organs on which Sidney Torch made many of his brilliant recordings. The State Kilburn, on April 12, saw Williams bring about some of the choicest registration I have heard on this famous organ. Again, Les Rawle had done magic with the regulation of the pipework and tremols. Lew then played the former Regal Kingston 3/12 Wurlitzer, played by Torch during his days on the organ-mad Union Circuit, now in the Music Museum at Brentford in West London; here, again, this organ sounds out better in this old church building which houses the museum than it did lost up in the roof of the large Regal. April 15 saw Lew play the Edmonton Christie now at Barry in South Wales. All that was missing, as I told Lew, was being able to play the Marble Arch Regal 4/37 Christie —

The late Reginald Porter-Brown at the theatre console of the dual-purpose Compton in the Guildhall, Southampton, England, which reportedly celebrated 50 years of thrilling musical magic.



that wonderful one is in storage in Cornwall, sadly still not put together.

By the very nature of the theatre organ scene these days, organs come and go, some changing hands for the better and some that just can't find new owners. The Decca Studio Wurlitzer is one of the lucky ones. A mere 2/5, it was one of the most recorded theatre organs of all time, and not just solos, by even more did it appear on dance band records in the palmy thirties and accompanying singers like Gracie Fields and Vera Lynn. With the death of Bob Freeman of Ormsby in north-east England, this delightful little gem has been purchased by John Hattersley and will be installed in Scotland — not a land ever well-equipped with theatre organs, even in the heyday.

Our Channel Islands, which are nearer the coast of France than England, had just two organs, both Comptons — one in the Regal Guernsey and one in the Forum Jersey. The Forum Jersey organ is now out of its cinema and is to be reinstalled in the new Rotunda Multi-purpose Sports Hall at Fort Regent. So, at least that's another one saved.

As 1937 was a boom year for theatre organ installations in the U.K., there will be some celebrations this year. The fabulous dual-purpose Compton of the Guildhall Southampton celebrated with a special week of events, and part of that was centered on the great masterpiece itself. Thomas Trotter, a brilliant young organist, was heard by millions playing on the radio using one of the two four-manual consoles, a classic style "push-on-push-off" illuminated button affair and a four-manual theatre horseshoe console. Doreen Chadwick, Byron Jones and the brilliant William Davies played. Richard Smithers was also featured (he is manager of the building), a former ABC star known on the circuit in the 1950s as Tony Fenton, his "nom de console."

Gladly I can report that more of your best players will be able to get more dates to play over here making the trip worth their while. Playing one concert is completely useless and doesn't serve any artist well. The cost of travel to the U.K. is very high, but now that we have so many venues, there are lots of organs where concerts are given regularly.

Sadly, we have lost four organists recently: Joseph Seal, most famous and popular; Harold Stringer, also a long-serving ABC Circuit organist; Harold Meredith, a former Granada organist, and the "Doyen" of our classic organists, the world famous Sir George Thalben-Ball. Sir George is perhaps best known for winning a gold disc for his 1927 version of "Oh, For The Wings of A Dove," with master Ernest Lough, recorded on the Temple Church London organ, one of the all-time greats. George was Knighted in 1982. I believe that four Knights of the organ drew the specifications for the "Royal" organ of Westminster Abbey in 1937 — that year, again! And, NO, they did not include an illuminated console that changed colour either!

On the recording front, a recent release is one of the finest LPs to come from our country by a gifted youngster, Simon Gledhill, playing the gorgeous three-manual Compton



Simon Gledhill at the console of the splendid Compton of Ossett Town Hall in Yorkshire.

of Ossett Town Hall, Yorkshire. "The Spirit of Youth" is on the NTOT label. It's a stunner; the playing is brilliant and the recording and organ faultless. Gledhill's technique is amazing, and he really gets the best from any organ I have heard him play. By far, the best

recording to come out in a long time — I highly recommend this. Write to NTOT Records, 137 Towngate, Ossett, West Yorkshire, England WF5 0PN. The price is five pounds, but you might best inquire as to postage.

On the Turners Record label of Merry-Go-

Round fame at Northampton, with its brilliant 3/19 Wurlitzer, their sparkling young star, the very popular Nicholas Martin, has made what I think is his best LP, "Just For You." These are available from Organ Literature or direct from Turners Musical-Merry-Go-Round, Wooton, Northampton NN4 0HU, England. Again, check for price and postage.

Did you know that John Compton brought out a pipeless theatre organ in 1935? Well, he did, and very nice they were with 12 large, disc-type generators, the theatre version was called Theatrone and the church version called Electrone. One of the theatre organs was installed in the Rex Cinema Aberdare in South Wales and played by Doreen Chadwick when she was a teenager. Until fairly recently it stayed quiet, but now enthusiast D. R. John of Neath, Wales, has purchased it and restored it to playing order, and he told me that Walford James came over to try it. Doreen Chadwick told me that she followed Walford at the Rex Aberdare and had not seen him since about 1939, so she was delighted to share the Barry concert with him.

One of the first ever Welsh language feature movies, *Coming Up Roses*, is released. It is a story about a group of people who try to keep a 1930s cinema going — guess what cinema it's about — yes, the Rex Aberdare!

All the best. □

## ORGAN-IZING POPULAR MUSIC

by  
**AL HERMANN**



The foundation of all arranging techniques is a knowledge and understanding of Keyboard Harmony. I am sure that all of you who play popular songs on the organ are familiar with the construction of the necessary basic chords, so I will skip over all that and explain three other kinds: altered, extended, and substitute chords.

The basic Triad consists of the 1st, 3rd and 5th tones of a scale. Raising or lowering any note of a chord by means of accidentals makes it an altered chord. Technically, a minor chord can be an altered chord in a major key and a major chord can be altered in a minor key. An augmented chord is an altered chord except when it is formed on a whole tone scale.

Any chord can be extended by adding other scale tones. Major chords can be extended by adding the 6th, major 7th or 9th. The 6th tone of a major scale is always one whole tone

above the 5th. The major 7th is one-half tone below the octave of the root. The 9th is actually the 2nd note of the scale.

In order to make use of these chords, it is necessary to know how each altered note or added note changes the SOUND of a chord. Experiment at the keyboard. Play all the common chords in various positions and listen to the sound produced by changing or adding the notes described above.

For additional explanation and musical examples, see Lesson 54 in *ORGAN-izing Popular Music*, distributed by Columbia Pictures Publications. □

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## Organ Installers Seeking Donations From Organ Lovers All Over The Nation

When James Carter died, his residence Wurlitzer, which came from the Royal Theatre, Bloomfield, N.J., was given to Cinnaminson (N.J.) High School. The James Carter Memorial Arts Council was formed to oversee installation of the organ; organist Larry Ferrari, a friend of Carter's, was involved in the project.

A campaign for donations, made through national media publicity, resulted in funds coming from all parts of the nation. Installation costs were \$15,000; alterations to provide organ chambers added \$35,000 more. To pay off this debt required ten years.

At the time of installation it was decided to design a home-made relay

—See CINNAMINSON—  
Back Page

## DTOC WILL HAVE FREE MUSIC SHOW

In honor of Michigan's Sesquicentennial, Detroit Theatre Organ Club will present *Michigan Musical Memories*, an evening celebrating 150 years of popular music about the great state of Michigan, plus compositions by notable Michiganders. Organist Scott S. Smith will accompany soprano Judith Wharton Donakowski on the superb DTOC Wurlitzer organ.

To be performed at the Senate Theatre, 6424 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, on Oct. 24th at 7pm, admission to the concert is free. Further information may be obtained by calling (517) 882-5115.

## Hazleton Dedicates Organist's Organ!

Tom Hazleton on Saturday, August 15th, after seven years of preparatory work by David Shepherd's team of professional organ-building friends, gave those friends recognition by playing a dedication concert on the residence three manual Compton console that connects with nine ranks of pipework by Compton, Christie and Wurlitzer. Shepherd's home is located at Holbeach, Spalding, Lincolnshire, England. Hazleton is currently on tour in Britain.

Shepherd recently replaced an electronic division with empty pipes which were dedicatingly filled by Hazleton.

## Feature Del Castillo Song This Month

This month's ATOS Archive Song Special is Theatre Organist Lloyd Del Castillo's *Around The Sundial*. It is Archives Catalogue number 10031, and the price to you, post-paid, is \$2.25. Order from Curator Vern Bickel, 1393 Don Carlos Court, Chula Vista, Calif. 92010.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Please Write The Mayor

ATOS members who have had an opportunity to visit, hear and play the Lanterman 4/36 Wurlitzer are aware the organ and residence has been willed to the City of La Canada/Flintrige. The organ will remain in the house, which will also serve as the city hall.

To help promote complete care and use of the famed instrument, ATOS members are asked to write Mayor Bixby Smith, 1327 Foothill Blvd., La Canada/Flintrige, Calif. 91011, and urge the city to present the instrument in frequent concert programs, and authorize full maintenance. The organ will undoubtedly create great interest and provide excellent entertainment for the community.

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## Former RTOS Editor Donates To NEWS

Gale E. Smith, former editor of the Rochester Theatre Organ Society newsletter, *The Blower*, has made a sizeable donation to ATOS *International NEWS* as his contribution to keep the publication going.

He handed his check to Preston Kaufmann, a member of the Theatre Historical Society Board of Directors, at the society's convention in Oregon which was held just prior to the opening of the ATOS meet

## Pine Tree Given Wurlitzer Organ By Author Q. David Bowers

### Conn-Val Busy With Three Organ Projects

Organ activity is extensive for Conn-Val Chapter. Members are near completing restoration of the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Springfield, Mass. Paramount Theatre, and the unit has been donated a late model 4/17 Marr & Colton organ which it is hoped will be installed in the 1,800-seat Warner Theatre in Torrington, Conn. There is also a 3/33 Wurlitzer in storage the chapter would like to erect in the Palace Theatre at Waterbury, Conn.

In addition to all this organing, it is reported funding has been granted to bring the Thomaston Opera House up to state fire and safety codes which means the chapter can once again present its 3/15 Marr & Colton organ in concert at that venue.

### Scary Night Will Benefit Wurlly Fund

Friday night, Oct. 30th, Gaylord Carter will accompany the silent horror classic *Phantom of the Opera* in Sexton Auditorium at Pasadena City College. The single performance will be a benefit with proceeds earmarked for the installation of the LATOS-owned 3/27 Wurlitzer in the auditorium. Carter will play his score on an electronic instrument.

Q. David Bowers, author of *Nickelodeon Theatres and Their Music*, has donated a 2/9 Style 210 Wurlitzer organ to Pine Tree Chapter. "The organ is an outright gift. There are no strings attached, but I hope to be in the front row when it is set up for everyone to enjoy," he said.

Bowers has also installed a Wurlitzer Style K photoplayer in his home after two years' restoration work by Tim Westman. Largest survivor of its type, it has four ranks and was first installed in the Pastime Theatre in 1915 in Coshocton, Ohio.

### Also From Ohio

The organ donated to Pine Tree Chapter was in Keith's Theatre, Dayton. It was rebuilt by David L. Junchen during 1970 and installed in the Roy Haning residence. Haning at one time had the country's largest orchestration collection.

Bowers purchased the instrument early this year and Dorothy Bromage, chapter secretary, arranged to have a crew go to Ohio the last weekend of May, pack and transport the organ to Maine where it is now in storage.

## Jensen Named To Director Position

Neil Jensen has been appointed Musical Director of the Orpheum Theatre, Cremorne, NSW, Australia, he advised the NEWS by telephone July 14th. The theatre, which is located in Sydney's elite suburb area, is installing the former Wilson Theatre (Fresno, Calif.) Style 235 Wurlitzer 3/11 organ. It will have three added ranks, Jensen said.

The organist, who tours the U.K. in October, will be in the U.S. to play a special Halloween show at the Fort Wayne, Ind. Embassy Theatre October 30th.

## IT'S PORTLAND NEXT YEAR!

Portland, Oregon will be the next Convention site with Oregon Chapter hosting the event July 2nd through 6th. The afterglow, it is reported, will be hosted by Puget Sound Chapter.

## Ever Hear Of This Spec?

Does anyone have a record of an organ specification that included a Tibia Tierce, factory installed? Please send your proof to Judd Walton, 8870 Mosquito Road, Placerville, Calif. 95667.



POTHOLE POTENTATE Marion Tierney, right, makes first sale of Motor City Chapter's Parking Lot Patch Certificate to Chapter President Robert Duerr and his wife, Virginia. Each dollar contributed to the fund paves one square foot of the parking lot. During the recent L.A. National Convention, Motor City member, and newly elected National Board member Dorothy Van Steenkiste took on the task of being a 'Tar Tycoon' and peddled numerous certificates to conventioners. She packed away dollar bills for the parking lot improvement.

—Ray Van Steenkiste Photo

## PTL Selling Theatre Organs; Had Vision Of Big Installation

PTL, the religious group founded by its now deposed leader Jim Bakker, is selling its collection of theatre organs to help offset the great deficit confronting the organization. There are reportedly three theatre instruments housed in containers stored at Crome Organ Company in Los Angeles. It is also reported that Walgreen Drug Store heir Jim Walgreen has already entered a bid for the lot.

Organman Ken Crome has given PTL officials an estimated value of the instruments. He was surprised to learn that his appraisal of the total worth of the organs fell far short of what was paid when the collection was assembled.

When Jim Bakker's PTL world blew apart following his admission of extra-marital fun, theatre organ also lost out in one respect—the creation of a theatre organ that might have out-sized famed Radio City Music Hall's big Wurlitzer.

Bakker, it is reported, once heard the Music Hall giant and had visited a Cincinnati organ-equipped pizza parlor. The great sounds of these two instruments converted him and he had a vision of a magnificent Wurlitzer or Wurlitzer-style pipe organ being played for his television ministry.

Through the good offices of an organist friend, the gateway to Wurlitzer or theatre organland opened and it wasn't long before three pipe organs had found their way into shipping containers, eventually stored at Crome Organ, awaiting shipment to a huge temple to house them. Of course, the temple did not rise.

One of the instruments purchased was the former Dallas Palace Theatre Publix #1 Wurlitzer. This came from a wealthy Texan. The organ ended up sans console because the Texan is said to have bought it back.

Another of the organs was a classical-built Robert-Morton from Glendale, Calif. Presbyterian Church. The organ was removed due to earthquake damage to the building. This addition was listed as originally being from a Los Angeles theatre.

The third organ to go into a container was the former NBC Hollywood Studio Welte/Wurlitzer. Originally a Welte, Wurlitzer ranks were added when it was installed in the station. The console apparently went elsewhere because Crome noted it was not with the containerized organ.

According to figures disclosed by PTL officials, the price paid for these organs was in the neighborhood of \$326,000. Crome said he queried church officials about this and asked if any organ builder had been consulted when the collection was paid for. They admitted there had been no pre-purchase talks held.

Crome, in answer to official request concerning an estimated value of the organs, said that if \$70,000 is realized from their sale, it could be considered absolute maximum.

## Walton Tells About Wurl Locations

Honored this year as the Technical Award recipient, Judd Walton was on hand to accept it at the Los Angeles Convention. He also gave out information on four Wurlitzers that have been something of a mystery. They are: Opus 963 which was sent to Spain in 1936 as a Style 235. With eruption of the Spanish Civil War, the theatre in which it was installed was bombed and the organ destroyed.

Opus 1067 went to Sweden as a Style E and eventually was broken up for parts.

Opus 1285 was installed in the Florida Theatre, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Subsequently it got religion and went to a Catholic church. From there it went out in pieces.

Opus 1852 was a Style 190 in Calcutta, India, which was played by German and English organists until wartime when rambunctious kids got into the theatre and tore the organ apart.

Walton closed his acceptance speech by playing *That's My Weakness Now* on the organ—a mouth organ he brought with him.

## Rosa Rio Plays Two Organ Programs

International Organist, Rosa Rio, will appear at Proctor's Theatre 3/18 Wurlitzer in Schnectady Aug. 6th, at 7 and 9:30pm playing the class-silent film *Sparrows*.

She will also be featured performer on the Shelton High School 3/17 Austin organ in Shelton, Conn. Oct. 17th at 8pm. For tickets call (203) 929-1652.

## Delaware Doing Dual Moller Organ Re-Do

At least 25 percent of the membership is active in the restoration of the dual console Moller organ in Philadelphia's Convention Hall, according to an announcement made at the ATOS Convention Chapter Representatives meeting by Earl Strausser, secretary of Delaware Valley Chapter.

It was also disclosed that current restoration work on the organ in an Allentown theatre has been completed and the instrument is fully operable. Name of the theatre and make of organ were not given.

## College Produces Film, Organ Shows

Two departments of the College of the Sequoias in Visalia, Calif., work together to produce two types of entertainment not only for students, but local citizens of Visalia and Tulare, according to Bob Vaughn, popular silent film organist.

There is an active film study course and an excellent music department. Combined, the two present silent film and organ concert productions.

"There is a three-manual Allen organ in the auditorium on a regular orchestra lift; a very up-to-date projection booth and well-equipped stage; and the auditorium itself offers superb sight lines due to the steep rake of the orchestra floor," Vaughn explained.

"I'm a newcomer on the COS scene, but they do like their movies. There is also wonderful cooperation from both the Visalia and Tulare newspapers, and on my first appearance there (last March 21st), it was to a 'good house'. And there were intimations I will return in the fall.

"Tom Hazleton and Rex Koury have played COS, and local organist Pete Sweeney is no stranger there," Vaughn added.

## Pilot Senior Show A Hit At Kalamazoo State

A pilot senior citizen program June 7th at the Kalamazoo State Theatre attracted an audience of around 600. Southwest Michigan Chapter assisted in the production of the show. Member Ken Butela, at the Barton, opened the program and played for a sing-a-long. Scott Smith then presided and accompanied two silent films. The State Theatre Vaudeville Association and Irving S. Gilmore Foundation, plus State management, also supported the show.

## School Searching For Henry Ford's Estey

A search is underway by the University of Michigan to locate the Estey organ that once graced Henry Ford's mansion. The console resembled an upright piano case-work with three manuals, full pedal clavier and player unit. Anyone having information about the instrument is urged to contact Dorothy Van Steenkiste, 9270 Reeck Road, Allen Park, Mich. 48101.

## UCLA Prof Goes For 4/36 Wurlitzer!

Tom Harmon, Professor of Organ at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), has a soft spot in his musical heart for the theatre organ. And his heart was filled to capacity July 2nd during a visit to the Lanterman residence in La Canada/Flintridge, Calif. He put the 4/36 Wurlitzer through its paces, both classically and theatrically, according to Gene Burrows, trustee for the estate. Harmon said he intends to return soon for another session.

## LONG CENTER HAS ORGAN SOCIETY

Long Center for the Performing Arts in Lafayette, Ind. has a wide awake Board of Directors. The officials have approved a plan for raising more than \$40,000 for a major expansion and renovation of the mostly 3/17 Wurlitzer installed in the former Mars Theatre. A major source of funds will hopefully be provided by the newly formed Long Center Theatre Organ Society.

Area enthusiasts will be asked to join at levels ranging from \$10 up to \$500 with funds to be used for the organ project and as a guarantee of funds to continue the organ series and ensure complete maintenance of the instrument.

The fund drive was kicked off by a major grant from longtime benefactor Warren North of nearby Brookston. The Gannett Foundation and a local bank are also making major contributions to the drive.

Sportscaster/organist Ken Double, who has been involved with Center manager Carroll Copeland since 1978, said, "The instrument has come a long way since its original installation, and has been improved over its '84 ATOS Convention show with outstanding technical work done by Kevin Aikman.

"Involved are new Wurlitzer chests throughout the organ, additional strings and an oboe horn, a rebuilt and enlarged toy counter, larger blower, and new lift mechanism to replace the four-poster Barton now being used," Double said.

Official kick-off for the fund drive is slated for early August. Work on the organ will follow Double's concert next June, with a complete instrument ready for re-dedication in the Fall of '88.

## Series Artists

Artists for Long Center's 87/88 season: Ty Woodward, Bill Vlasak, Bill Tandy, and Ken Double. This is the fourth annual series, and the eighth year of concert presentations at Long Center!

## Chapter Has Fund For Wurl Re-Do

Chattanooga Chapter is currently restoring the Wurlitzer organ in the Tivoli Theatre, now a performing art center. A total of \$30,000 has been granted for the project, it is reported. The theatre's stage house is also being expanded to accommodate larger productions.

## Polsley Heart Attack Victim At Conclave

Dr. John Polsley, of Urbana, Ohio, suffered a heart attack on Overture Day and spent his convention in a local hospital's intensive care unit. He was well enough to fly home the last day of the meeting, it was reported.

## Chapter Needs Funds To Complete Organ

Central Ohio (Columbus) Chapter asked for financial assistance at the Chapter Representative meeting in Los Angeles to help the unit complete installation of the former RKO Palace Theatre Wurlitzer in a local high school. It was not learned if the chapter has launched any type of campaign to obtain funding in the Columbus area.

## Five Bucks Bought Five Console Minutes

"Save The Voice Of Minneapolis By Playing It" blasted the headline of a half page advertisement placed by the Minneapolis Star and Tribune in its June 20 issue. The ad urged everyone to join the paper's columnist Barbara Flanagan in rescuing the dual console Kimball municipal organ.

To carry out the campaign, Tom Hazleton played June 26th. On Saturday, the 27th, from 8am to 8pm, anyone desiring to play could preside at either console and play five minutes by donating \$5. Karl Eilers opened the day with a "Wake Up" concert, and at 9am Michael Barone hosted a radio broadcast over Minnesota Public Radio. After that it was open console!

—Verna Mae Wilson

## James Will Team Up With S.D. Symphony

Dennis James teams up with the San Diego Symphony in their new music palace, the former Fox Theatre, for a three-performance silent film series Jan. 16th, March 26th and April 23rd, 1988. It was not learned if he will play the 4/32 Robert-Morton organ in the house, or bring in an electronic.

James reported the current silent series is being well received at Frauenthal Center, Muskegon, Mich. "The 3/7 Barton is under care of the local organ club and members have worked diligently to have it ready for this five-day series," he said.

The artist also returned to the ST. Louis Fox Theatre on Aug. 3rd in his third annual appearance at the Wurlitzer.

## RECORD NEWS WANTED!

All producers of theatre organ albums, CDs and cassettes are invited to send information to the NEWS. Please include title of the issue, format—LP, CD or cassette, recording organist/s, price, including all shipping, and where to order. Please do not send critiques or reviews; they should be mailed to *Theatre Organ Journal* for publication.

## Bohr Final Tape Is "Best Ever Made!"

Shortly before he died, Radio City Music Hall Organist Raymond F. Bohr sent the Editor of *ATOS International NEWS* a copy of the final recording session he had at the Hall. In a telephone conversation he expressed the opinion that it was the best thing he had ever done and hoped to release it on a long play album. His wish, however, was stymied by Music Hall management in refusing permission to produce a disc.

With the tape was a letter dated December 19, 1986 in which he noted: "I'll write at length after Christmas. I'll tell you the whole story of the recording..." Unfortunately, he was never able to follow up with the explanation due to his precarious health condition.

The tape has seventeen selections on Side A, and fourteen on Side B. Several avenues are currently being explored to make the tape available as a memorial to this wonderful artist.

## Many Play Lanterman Organ At Open House

Over 150 members, their wives and friends signed the guest book at the Lanterman residence Sunday, June 28th between 12 noon and 4pm, and the 4/36 Wurlitzer was played continuously during the period. There were many top name artists at the console.

The organ, which is being completely restored by the Myers brothers, performed throughout the four-hour period without malfunction. Earlier in the week the brothers dismantled the console and spread it around the studio—manuals, stop rails were out, and individual worn clavier pedals were traded with units in better condition on the slave console. Although the slave unit was playable, there were no duets during the afternoon.

Plans are being discussed to present a silent film show at the residence in the near future.

## Campaign Underway To Save Theatre

A campaign is underway to try and save the lavish Loew's Jersey City Theatre, a Rapp & Rapp architectural triumph. The 4/23 Wonder Morton organ originally installed here is now in Santa Barbara, Calif. and may be erected in the Arlington Theatre.

## Chapter Profit Goes To Local Organs

Donations made by Central Indiana Chapter to Long Center and Manual High School organs were made possible by the \$5,000 record store profit racked up during the Indianapolis ATOS Convention. Bob MacNeur organized and managed the shop.

## British Organist Backs International Name

A popular British organist and active Cinema Organ Society member backs the idea of an international organ-ization. "I have had a dream of ONE British national society, with all local ones affiliated and the national body affiliated with ATOS in an International organ group," he said. ATOS National Vice President Russ Joseph recently advocated re-naming the Society *Theatre Organ International* in view of the fact the club is already international in scope.

## Happy Ending For Lost Wallet

Old Town Music Hall co-proprietor Bill Field found a wallet after one convention show. He called the Biltmore Hotel but was told room numbers of guests could not be given out over the telephone. He then drove to the hotel, but the desk clerk still refused to divulge room numbers. He turned to leave.

Just then a man walked up and asked, "Are you Coffman (the other co-owner)?" "No, I'm Field," was Bill's reply, "and I've got your wallet here!" It was the rightful owner.

## Pizza King Gets Fox

Mike Ilitch, owner of the Little Caesars Pizza empire, will buy the Detroit Fox Theatre and plans to spend \$15 million to make it an entertainment showcase. He plans to use the office building for his business operations. The Fox still retains the 4/36 Wurlitzer and the 3/12 Moller in the lobby.

## TOO MUCH!

Sorry about that. Four pages fails to offer adequate space to do justice to what is being heralded as a great convention! Watch for complete coverage in a forthcoming issue of *Theatre Organ*

## Bay Theatre Planning Three Opening Shows

Three gala premiere pop concerts are slated to herald opening of the former New York Paramount Theatre Studio Wurlitzer organ at the Bay Theatre in Seal Beach, Calif. Lyn Larsen plays the first program Sept. 20; Tom Hazleton will be heard Oct. 18; and Chris Elliott will be at the console Nov. 15.

Each artist will play two performances—at 1 and 4pm. All seats are \$10 and may be ordered by enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope with remittance to: Bay Theatre Concerts, P.O. Box 1375, Upland, Calif. 91785. Performance time preference is requested.

## Aussies Had Extended Stay Leaving L. A.

by Eric Wicks, Editor, Vox

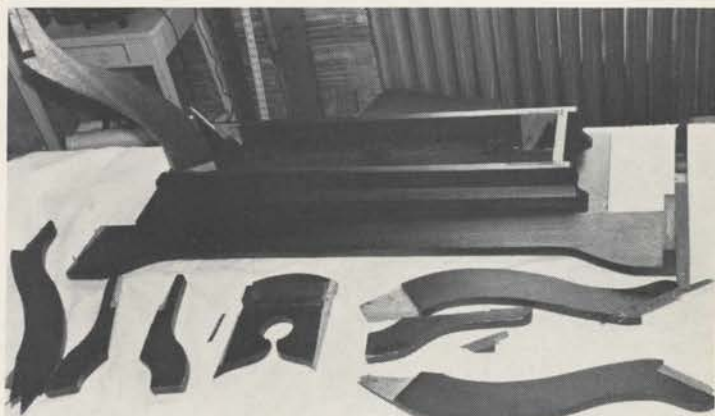
Eleven of the 29 Australians who attended the ATOS Convention had their stay in Los Angeles extended unexpectedly when the Continental 747 on which they were heading for Sydney went roaring down the runway, then instead of taking off, slammed on the brakes.

A suspected faulty landing gear proved eventually to be instrument malfunction.

So the Victorians and two New South Welshmen spent an exhilarating four hours relaxing in LAX before they finally took off at 12:15am. Most would have preferred more time with the former San Francisco Fox Theatre Wurlitzer at the Lanterman home which they had enjoyed the day before.

## Tommy Wayne Dies

Organist Tommy Wayne, 46, died Friday night, June 26th. Death was due to cirrhosis of the liver, it was reported. He had served as a resident organist at the Panama Hilton and had played in pizza parlors during his career as a theatre organist.



REDESIGNED—All neatly laid out are the pieces of the former Shea's Buffalo Theatre Wurlitzer bench. This reduction to firewood was made possible when solid shaft walls and the elevating platform tried to put the bench between them. Obviously, the bench gave in. A new one costs between \$4-600.

## Possible Site For Hall Organ In College

ATOS officials plan to investigate Westchester (N.Y.) Community College's 400-seat auditorium as a possible home for the Ben Hall Memorial Wurlitzer organ. The instrument was formerly installed in Carnegie Cinema.

## Builders Will Have October Conclave

American Institute of Organ-builders will hold its annual convention Oct. 4th through 7th in Nashville, Tenn. Headquarters for the event will be the Marriott Hotel.

## You Can Now Visit The Tampa Theatre, Organ

Those who enjoy visiting organ installations can see the Tampa (Fla.) Theatre and its Wurlitzer by contacting Al Hermanns, 1398 Temple Street in Clearwater, Fla. 33516. When you write about coming for a visit, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for his reply.

## Countries Represented At L. A. Convention

Some of the countries represented by members attending the L. A. Convention in June: Australia (29), Canada (13), Great Britain (22), Ireland (1), Republic of South Africa (1), Scotland (2), and Sweden (1).

## Wurly With Classy Chasis Finds Home

"Your Jan/Feb issue, including ATOS International News, informs us that the 3/8 Ritz, Chatham Wurlitzer is due to play again," writes Erskine MacPherson, Puget Sound member. "It was intended for a complex in the new town of Telford, but this has been changed and the organ is now set for the Buttermarket in nearby Shrewsbury. It will be the only Wurlitzer still playing that sports an illuminated glass surround. This was due to the late Harold Ramsay, who designed the instrument and was a terrific showman," he said.

The Buttermarket is a several hundred year-old red brick building, formerly terminal of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal in Great Britain. It is being restored to provide a restaurant, bar, dance hall and main hall, where the organ will be erected.

"Let us hope the organ doesn't shake the old building to such an extent that is has to be moved, similar to what happened in the Buckingham Town Hall several years back," MacPherson added. (Buckingham lost its Wurlitzer when the structure was rated unsafe due to the vibratory condition created by the Wurlitzer, it has been reported—Ed).

## JAMES HEADLINED IN NEWSMAG!

Well, one of our boys has finally made the big time. Dennis James is featured in a two column color view in the July 6th issue of *Insight*, The Washington Times national weekly newsmag.

Under the headline *Recapturing the Sound of Silents*, the article

briefly reviews James' career as an organist and his extensive silent film work, plus citing the background of silent film music.

Only one omission was noted in the article—no mention was made of Dennis' association with or the work done by ATOS in the presentation of silent films.

## Mayor Proclaimed It L.A. Organ Week!

Because LATOS' postoffice box was not attended every day during the recent national convention, a proclamation by Mayor Tom Bradley designating June 21st through 27th as *Organ Week In Los Angeles* did not get exhibited during the conclave.

A large, colorfully illuminated-type scroll, the proclamation cited many facts about the organization and conveyed the Mayor's best wishes "for your continued success in all endeavors."

## Such A Bargain!

Pasadena Civic Auditorium's famed Foort five-manual Moller organ was a real bargain when the BBC sold it to Hilversum Radio in Holland. According to well-informed Britishers who attended the recent ATOS Convention in Los Angeles, the selling price was \$600!

## Organist, Band Leader Dead At 71

Harold Bensteel, 71, died at Lagonia, Mich. June 16. He was one of the last big band leaders, playing under the name of Ben Steel's band in the midwest. He was a theatre organist in Los Angeles and also played keyboard instruments in many supper clubs throughout the southland.

## Car Takes Off At Carter's Ebell Show

Wilshire Ebell Theatre, where Gaylord Carter played the Paramount silent film *Running Wild*, is located in one of the better sections of Los Angeles. Apparently that is the reason a thief picked it to pick a car. The car selected belonged to ATOS member Pete Sweeney of Fresno, Calif., who drove to the theatre rather than take the bus. An expensive camera went with the car.

## Four Old Pop Tunes Added To Archives

Just added to ATOS Archive files are the songs—*I Love You California*, *When Yuba Plays The Rumba on the Tuba*, *Stairway to the Stars*, and *Cuban Love Song*.

Copies of these are available to ATOS members. Full particulars are available by writing Curator Vern Bickel, 1393 Don Carlos Court, Chula Vista, Calif. 92010.

## Organ Ranks, Concert Series Upped By Club

Now that Alabama Chapter has saved the ornate Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, it is planned to increase concert presentations from two to four and add seven more ranks to the Wurlitzer organ.

## Former Organist Made Two 78s

Dr. Orrin Hostetter, Pasadena, Calif. organ owner who has the former Granada Theatre, Santa Barbara 4/17 Wurlitzer installed in his home, was quite active as an organist during the theatre organ era. He recorded two 78s for Capitol Records. One disc, #57-90029, on which he is listed as Marcel Laurence, has the selections *Trees* and *At Dawning*. The other, #57-90031, which was released under his own name, has *Parade of the Wooden Soldiers* and *Doll Dance*.

Hostetter is no longer able to play his Wurlitzer due to suffering a debilitating stroke. Local organists frequently visit his home and play for him.

## Wurly Horns In On Morton Territory

A Wurlitzer has at last horned in on what has long been considered 'Morton Land'—Hawaii. Jack Darr, ATOS member of Irvine, Calif., donated his Style D Wurlitzer to Aloha Chapter. The organ came from the Ventura (Calif.) Theatre. It will be installed in Bishop Museum auditorium, it was learned.

## 'Duchess' To Stay In London Odeon Cinema

Latest report about London's famed five-manual Compton organ—"The Duchess"—in the Odeon Leicester Square Cinema declares it stays put! The film palace is due to close for refurbishing, and sources close to the Rank Organisation have confirmed the organ will remain and be played.

## Bank Furnishes Space For Work On Organ

Santa Barbara (Calif.) Chapter has been given space by Wells Fargo Bank in a building where components of the 4/23 Robert-Morton Wonder organ can be worked on. The organ is slated to be erected in the Arlington Theatre.

## CINNAMINSON

—Continued From Front Page—

system to save money. Unfortunately, though the system worked, it proved unreliable when put to demands of professional organists. At a meeting held last April 4th, the Tri-State Pipe Organ Society, which had stopped meeting for about three years when a portion of the auditorium ceiling fell and made further work on the organ impossible, was reorganized. The society, whose membership includes about 75 percent ATOS members, have now taken on the job to complete the instrument.

Nationally-known Organist Andy Kasparian has volunteered to head the project and has recommended installation of a Z-Tronics relay. The crew has backed him to the extent of contributing almost \$2,000 toward the new system. At least \$6,500 additional will be needed to finish it.

Once again the volunteers must depend on lovers of theatre organ. They are seeking Patrons at \$1,000, Sponsors at \$250, Life Members at \$100, Friends at \$25, or Members at \$10—or any amount that can be afforded.

"All contributions are tax deductible (#EO-510-165-599) and will be acknowledged. Patrons, Sponsors and Life Members will receive certificates suitable for framing," it was announced by Robert L. Fischer, Jr., secretary. Contributions, payable to Tri-State Pipe Organ Society, may be sent to him at 413 Horace Avenue, Palmyra, New Jersey 08065.

## Husband Of Ann Leaf Dies During Sleep

Russell Butler, husband of noted theatre organist Ann Leaf, died in his sleep sometime Thursday night or early Friday morning, July 9/10. Cause of death was not given.

## Lou Volpano Named To Head Chicago Theatre

Lou Volpano has been appointed General Manager of the Chicago Theatre. It is reported he is well-versed in the knowledge of theatre organ, as well as its utilization in programming.

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## CHAPTER NOTES

### ALABAMA Birmingham

205/942-5611 or 205/664-3606

We were presented a golden opportunity in March with the opening of the new Macy's department store in the Riverchase Galleria. Macy's joined with local fine arts groups and allowed them to sell "preview" tickets for a special opening before the public grand opening. Each \$10, tax-deductible ticket allowed a patron to enter Macy's before the general public — the entire amount of the ticket went to the fine arts group which sold it. A \$1500 grand prize was awarded to the group which sold the most tickets. Guess who won first prize? Alabama Chapter ATOS, of course! By selling 1010 tickets and taking first prize, we raised \$11,600. Marsh Piano and Organ provided a Technics G-5 electronic organ, and members Christine McPherson, Mark Landers and Vice President Gary Jones entertained Macy's patrons for hours!

April found us at a crowded, covered-dish chapter meeting hosted by Freeman Andress at the Birmingham Wedding Chapel. Members viewed the progress of BWC's fantastic Wurlitzer installation.

We continue our popular and VERY SUCCESSFUL classic movie series which will include Tom Helms at the console for a one-performance-only showing of *The Phantom of the Opera* on Halloween night. Classic movies run every other weekend on Friday, Saturday and Monday nights with a Sunday matinee. The organ is played for all performances. Write us for a schedule of events at the Alabama Theatre: Alabama Chapter ATOS, P.O. Box 2372, Birmingham, Alabama 35201.

GARY W. JONES

### CEDAR RAPIDS AREA

Iowa

319/362-9676 or 319/396-5653

"Break a leg!" took on new meaning for artist Bob Ralston at the Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids on May 3. At the conclusion of his brilliant concert, Bob acknowledged the standing ovation of 1411 enthusiastic fans and then stepped off the organ lift — right into the open orchestra pit. Chairman Chuck Collingwood and head technician Jim Olver jumped into the pit to offer first aid, and a few minutes later Bob was back on his feet

telling the audience, "Nothing has been hurt except my dignity." Well, more than that had been injured. Bob had sprained all four limbs and suffered multiple internal contusions. Fortunately, however, hospital X-rays revealed no broken bones.

"Aside from that, Mrs. Lincoln, how did you enjoy the show?" is an old joke, but, aside from the mishap at the end of Bob Ralston's show, the large audience here in Cedar Rapids did, indeed, love him and the sounds he coaxed from our beautifully maintained 3/11 Wurlitzer. And Bob told us how thrilled he was that everything was working on the organ as he extended kudos to the entire organ crew, Jim Olver, Chuck Collingwood, Leonard Santon, Dennis and Tony Fisher and Scott Wiley.

Bob rose from the pit playing an exciting, double-time version of "One Morning in May." He included in the first half of his concert a piano rendition of the themes from "Rhapsody in Blue" and the "Warsaw Concerto" on the concert grand furnished by the Cedar Rapids Symphony (with whom we often reciprocate letting them use our pipe organ). At one point, after praising our beautifully blended Tibia and String ranks, Bob



Bob Ralston at the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids.

noted that one thing was missing — a trumpet. Jim Olver then handed Bob a gleaming brass trumpet pipe, a sample of the recently delivered rank which is expected to be installed by fall. A sing-along and more favorites brought us to intermission.

The main feature of the second half of the concert was a thirty-minute medley spontaneously compiled by Ralston from audience requests. Bob's years with the Lawrence Welk Show prepared him for pulling off this feat in a glorious manner — he knows all the good, old songs that the senior citizens love, and he knows just how to play them in a lilting, attractive and (when called for) exciting style. Bob's showmanship is apparent in the way he intersperses witty comments into his program. He is a humble person, grateful to all who make his theatre organ concerts successful; for example, he gave special recognition to program chairman George Baldwin, who is retiring after 28 years at Armstrong's Department Store, and who had told Bob fifteen years ago at a Lyn Larsen concert right here in the Paramount that "he would like to have me come here and play sometime, but," Bob teased, "he didn't tell me I'd have to wait fifteen years."

We are always impressed when an artist comes into town several days early to be sure he gets intimately familiar with the instrument. Bob did this, and it paid off for all of us — it permitted Bob to appear on Dave Hinman's radio show, which helped sell extra tickets — and every bit of extra help was appreciated. Saturday evening before the concert was a social evening at Zuber's Restaurant in the Amana colonies with Bob as the guest of honor. At our afterglow on Sunday, members of our chapter were joined by representatives from Quad Cities Chapter and Land of Lincoln Chapter. We are grateful, too, to all of our wonderful members who volunteered their time to make the concert such a great success. And to Bob Ralston, when we said "Break a leg!" just before the show, we didn't REALLY want you to — and we're glad you didn't!

JOHN HOCKADAY

**CENTRAL  
FLORIDA  
THEATRE  
ORGAN  
SOCIETY**



Tampa

813/685-8707 or 813/734-5721

Springtime for us has been unusual and delightful. Our club has twice been treated to programs that would be the envy of any theatre organ buff.

On March 22, at the residence of Ken and Ruth Hunt, we heard their 3/17 Wurlitzer being played with the Tampa Bay Pops Orchestra Wurlitzer. This was one of our chapter's most thrilling events and we truly appreciate the generosity of the Hunts and the orchestra, and the planning by all concerned. What a



Ken and Ruth Hunt's 3/13 Wurlitzer and the Tampa Bay Pops Orchestra.

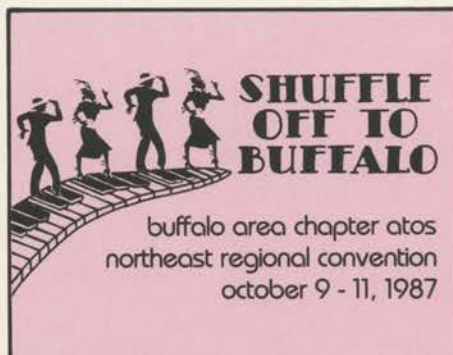
highlight for our chapter — what a sound! And what fun!

Mr. Walter Draughon invited us to his beautiful home in Ft. Myers for our April 12 meeting where we enjoyed the music of his organ ensemble, of which the main organ is a 3/15 Wurlitzer. Many of our members came by chartered bus, and all enjoyed the entire day. Like the home of the Hunts in Clearwater, Mr. Draughon's home has been designed to house a full-size pipe organ, and the sounds were fantastic. All will remember the fun of that day.

Because the restoration of our 3/19 Wurlitzer in the Tampa Theatre now involves the relocation and addition to the ranks of this fantastic instrument, we have decided not to have any more public concerts until this work is completed. However, many of our members are playing the organ each week before the scheduled events at the theatre, and this should increase our membership. The one sad note that we have is the leaving of one of our favorite friends and organists, Mr. Ken Brown, who is returning to the New Jersey area where he played, since 1945, in many clubs and theatres. He will be greatly missed.

Come and visit us when you are in our area. We have great music.

PAUL and ELLIE DANIELSON



## CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER

Indianapolis  
317/255-8056  
or 317/546-1336

Our March meeting was held at Classic Keyboards and featured Martin Ellis as guest artist. As usual, his program was great and was enjoyed by everyone.

We sponsored Neil Jensen in a concert at the Hedback Theatre on March 28. Neil, who hails from Australia, played to a full house. This was Neil's second concert in Indianapolis, and he never ceases to amaze his audience

with all the wonderful sounds he manages to produce. Members and guests had an opportunity to meet and visit with Neil at a reception following the concert.

Ken Double presented a concert at the Long Center in Lafayette in April. Members donated the Wurlitzer Concert Flute and Tuba Horn which have been installed. The Long Center organ also has a new Wurlitzer solo scale Tibia.

CAROL M. ANDREJASICH

## CENTRAL OHIO

Columbus

513/652-1775 or 614/882-4085

Capital University campus was the site of our March 22 meeting, and we again got to view and play Larry Krueger's 3/12 mostly Wurlitzer organ. This organ was acquired from the Commodore Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio, and has been embellished with four additional ranks, a new relay and a three-manual Barton console. We regret that Larry has this treasured instrument up for sale and we may lose it, but we did enjoy his program of contemporary tunes and the open console which followed. We are indebted to Larry for hosting our meeting, and we trust that his instrument will find a good home in our geographic range.

After a ten year hiatus, Hector Olivera returned to the Ohio Morton console on April 26 to bedazzle his audience with his unbelievable agility and adeptness at the keyboard.

A diminutive, bespeckled performer emerged from the pit attired in a white coat with black piping, played two fast numbers and then delighted his bemused audience with intentional discordant notes. We heard a melodious "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise" followed by "Moonlight Serenade," the latter in such a strikingly Glenn Miller fashion that you had to look up to verify that the full

## 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 1¼" 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.

### DEADLINES

November 15 for January/February

January 15 for March/April

March 15 for May/June

May 15 for July/August

July 15 for September/October

September 15 for November/December

Send Chapter Notes and photos to:

**Grace E. McGinnis**

4633 SE Brookside Drive, #58

Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

Phone: 503/654-5823



Larry Krueger opens the program at Central Ohio meeting in Capital's Campus Center. (John Polsley photo)



Central Ohio member Betsy Richards takes a turn at the Kruegers' 3/12 Wurlitzer. (John Polsley photo)

orchestra wasn't there. Classical numbers and his clever arrangements of some standards led to his closing "Tico Tico" and "Flight of The Bumblebee" — a truly remarkable performance. His encore was a rousing "Battle Hymn of The Republic."

We learned that Hector had polished off a performance at a Pittsburgh high school the night before, arrived in Columbus at six in the morning (after only three hours of sleep), practiced some two hours on the Robert-Morton and proceeded with his concert at 2:30 that afternoon. What a guy!

JOHN R. POLSLEY



Chicago Area

Theatre Organ Enthusiasts

312/794-9622 or 312/892-8136

From "Far and Wide" they converged on the Aragon Ballroom the afternoon of May 3 for a trip "Down Memory Lane." Organ and nostalgia buffs heard organist Hal Pearl take care of the organ nostalgia as he has played the Ballroom's 3/10 Wurlitzer from the "Good Old Days" to the present. Hal really appeals to his fans with his varied stylings and program.

In addition to the organ music, Tony Baron and Band supplemented the menu with a wide range of danceable melodies, not only for the crowd but also for the dynamic ballroom dancers, Terry and Chris Stel, who presented a great segment of the entertainment.

This chapter-sponsored event was planned for 2000, but more than 2500 attended and gave truth to the statement, "The more the merrier." And a merry group it was! Eleven busloads came from such diverse places as Madison, Wisconsin; member Bob Roppolo's 19th Hole Tavern; Milwaukee and Kenosha, Wisconsin; and Freeport, Ottawa, and Peoria, Illinois. This was ballroom dancing at its best, giving full credence to "a good time

was had by all!"

Alas, business must go on, thus our nomination social in May at WGN Studio. Local organist Jerry Kinsella performed at the 3/11 Wurlitzer/Kimball organ. His program of classical and contemporary music was well done and greatly appreciated, and we thank Jerry for his excellent theatre organ presentation.

Copernicus Center for the Performing Arts was the site of the Oriental Theatre Organ Fund-raiser in April which was, as always, a huge success. A surprise anonymous donation of \$2400, plus the donated raffle items, gave a greatly appreciated impetus to the Fund. Mildred Berry and Virginia Ferroli headed this successful effort, and we thank them and their assistants for a super job.

Our chapter and the Owl Cinema Club sponsored a wonderful show at the Hinsdale Theatre in March with Tom Wibbels at the console of the 3/32 Kimball performing numerous playing styles and moods. This organ was installed and is maintained by Jim Glass, who does a superb job, and we are always grateful for the chance to hear this excellent instrument. Our deep appreciation to Jim and to Tom Wibbels for his beautiful program.

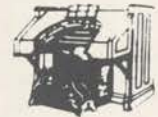
Joint socials are thoroughly enjoyable, but tricky to accomplish. In March we, together with Joliet Chapter, extended invitations to Land of Lincoln and Windy City for a fun afternoon with Don Walker at Joliet's Rialto Theatre. Don gave the instrument a good workout using his excellent registrations and styling to present a well-received program. Open console followed as did a lavish spread of refreshments. Cooperation was fully displayed here — thanks to all.

Our area theatres, especially the neighborhood houses, have the unique facility of closing and opening so often that any report of their status can rarely be accurate — this can be frustrating. The Chicago Theatre, however, is steady and sturdy, and with our John Peters on the staff it should remain so. There have been many big names and some very good shows — Frank Sinatra filled the house for five nights this spring. Wish you were here.

ALMER N. BROSTROM



CONNECTICUT VALLEY  
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, INC.



Thomaston

203/357-4581 or 203/261-5269

In April the accent was on youth. The artist for our April 4 concert at Shelton High School was Dwight Thomas, winner of the 1986 Young Organist Competition. Despite the all-day rain and broadcasts of flood warnings, the people who braved the weather were treated to a very smooth performance of traditional theatre organ stylings. Dwight appears regularly at the Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, and his musical artistry and engaging personality were in quick evidence to all those who came in out of the rain.

Our April 25 membership meeting was held in the home of Beth and Ernie Boda in Stratford. As you enter the spacious studio on the first level of their beautiful home, your first reaction is to wait for an usher to escort you to



Rosa Rio gives an affectionate hug to Dwight Thomas after his concert at the Shelton (Connecticut) High School. (Rita Goodkin photo)



John Cook and Ernie Boda at the console of the 3/15 Wurlitzer in the Boda residence. (Rita Goodkin photo)



Tom Wibbels at the Babson Wurlitzer for Eastern Massachusetts Chapter. (Paul Callahan photo)

your seat — your attention is immediately focused on the deep red velour and gold lame curtains in front of the swell shades and framed by floor-to-ceiling columns on each side. The 3/15, Style D Wurlitzer was originally installed in the Lafayette Theatre in Buffalo, New York. To the left of the console is a restored Ampico reproducing piano, and in addition, there is a miniature grand piano and an assortment of electronic equipment.

The day began with open console followed by a business meeting and dinner break. The artist for the evening was John Cook, who was a finalist in the 1986 Young Artist Competition. John is a very talented high school senior from Braintree, Massachusetts, who presented a totally professional program which made full use of a very fine instrument. For those who might wonder where the artists of tomorrow are, be assured that, for two days in April, there were two very talented young artists in evidence in Connecticut.

A camera and sound crew from a Hartford television station filmed Rosa Rio at the Shelton High School 3/12 Austin as she accompanied a silent film to the delight of an audience of young students. A segment of the film is expected to be shown on the nationally syndicated *PM Magazine* program.

The fall concert series at Shelton High School has been announced with Tom Hazleton on September 26 and Jim Riggs on December 5.

The chapter Executive Committee has accepted with regret the resignation of President Colver R. Briggs.

BARRY GOODKIN



Milwaukee  
414/463-2365  
or 414/771-8522

Our February social was held at the Racine Theater Guild. Our guest artist was Bill Campbell, and some 35 members attended to hear Bill play a variety of music dating from

the WWII era. After the program, many tried their hands at the Wurlitzer.

On March 15 we presented our spring concert at the Riverside Theatre with featured artists Clark Wilson and Rob Richards. This was our first attempt at a dual booking, and everything went well. Rob brought his "Fusion" program to Milwaukee for the first time. "Fusion" is the combination of the Wurlitzer and the Yamaha FX-20 computerized electronic organ with a digital disk drive, and it certainly lets Rob show his imagination as a musician and talent as a duet and trio arranger.

Clark's playing was his usual outstanding job. His program was well balanced between standard ballads, opera and light classical music. It was obvious that the two artists had put a good amount of time into putting the program together. The two musicians provided one of the best concerts we have had to date.

Our April social was held at the Avalon Theatre where the Wurlitzer has seen increased usage this year because of the cooperation of new manager and member Phil Marten. Phil has volunteered a lot of his time to any member who wishes to play the organ — just call and he will be glad to set up playing time for you.

BILL CAMPBELL



Babson College, Wellesley  
617/662-7055

Few New Englanders knew the name of Tom Wibbels before March 14, but several hundred certainly do now after his scintillating concert. It is difficult to find the best adjectives to describe this young man's multitude of talents, but "wonderful in all respects" will have to suffice. His sense of humor comes through in his music as indicated by his opener, "Married I Would Get," and his penchant for "bump and grind" music, so popu-

lar in the Chicago area which he calls home, was evidenced in his arrangement of "Ballin' The Jack." His selections ranged from the classical "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" to a fast and bouncy "One O'Clock Hop." Just before intermission he played a short sing-along — always a popular feature with us.

Our recently hospitalized, 84-year-old member, Clayton Stone, who was to celebrate a birthday soon, was honored by Tom with a rendition of "Happy Birthday" which included Chinese, German and marching band versions — novel and imaginative.

The second half of his concert featured another bump-and-grind with "Alexander's Ragtime Band," dedicated to the long-gone Old Howard and Gaiety Theatres where Sally Rand and others "waved their feathers." The audience rose as one while applauding the final "Climb Every Mountain," and this led to an encore, "That's All." Tom was generous in his approval of our Wurlitzer, our organ and stage crews and our hospitality. My notes say, "He really put our organ through its paces!" What more is there to say except, "Thanks very much, Tom, and come back again."

The club assembled at Babson on March 22 to hear guest Cheryl Linder in what will probably be her last appearance for us as she is acquiring a mate in June. This attractive young miss opened her mini-concert with a fast "Fandango," complete with much double pedaling. She remembered Bach's birthday with the Fugue portion of his "Prelude and Fugue in G Major." Her fiance, Tim Drewes, himself a musician and composer, wrote "The Babson Rag," which our organist played for us. Her encore of "Tijuana Taxi" showed that she could pilot our Wurlitzer most adroitly. On behalf of our club, Persis Garniss presented a surprised and pleased Cheryl and Tim with a solid brass G-clef set of wind chimes for their future home as a token of appreciation for her many appearances for us.

We gathered around our 235 Special again on April 26 for a joint meeting with members of SENETOS. It was announced that Tim Halloran would be organ crew chief and Dick





Walt Strony at the Trenton War Memorial for Garden State. (Jinny Vanore photo)



(L to R) Michael Cippoletti, Bob Balfour with "Oscar" and Elaine Dawson. (Jinny Vanore photo)

Linder would continue as organ crew chairman. In sincere appreciation of their generous and valuable volunteer services, program chairman Gordon Creamer presented SENETOS President Alan Goodnow and members Gary Phillips, Jim Hayes and Ken Duffie with certificates of appreciation for the seven long sessions they spent improving our organ. Our own Babson crew was not overlooked, and a similar certificate was accepted by Tim.

SENETOS member Mrs. Dorothy Elliott was our guest organist and gave us an enjoyable short concert, opening with a very Spanish "Valencia." Other ballads were followed by a nice "Musetta's Waltz" from *La Boheme*. Dot likes some of the oldies-but-goodies, as her "Manhattan Serenade" and "Petite Waltz" indicated. Her encore was a J.C.-style "Smile." Her easy, listenable style was rewarded by a beautiful bouquet presented by Jim Hayes before the afternoon social hour. A large cake with "Welcome to SENETOS" in icing was among the goodies. Come again, neighbors from Rhode Island!

STANLEY C. GARNISS



New Jersey  
609/888-0909  
or 201/445-1128

The fourth concert of the series at the Trenton War Memorial featured Walt Strony on March 15. This was a return engagement for Walt as far as our members were concerned as Walt had previously performed a concert on our newly installed Robert-Morton theatre pipe organ in the Immaculate Heart of Mary Chapel (formerly the Broadway Theatre) in North Bergen, New Jersey. At that time, Walt played such an outstanding concert, adapting to the organ which still needed finishing

touches, that our members eagerly anticipated his March 15 concert, and they were not disappointed. The record shop was hard put to keep up with the demand for his cassettes after the program. Our usual picnic took place on the stage afterwards, and Walt was surrounded by admirers all evening and was barely able to take time out to enjoy the food. The program and the sociability made it truly a memorable day.

The final concert of the series on April 12 was to have featured George Wright, who had verbally agreed to play it when it was planned early in 1986. Excitement ran high, and members were all keyed-up to hear George. Tickets were sold to people from New York and Pennsylvania, all wanting to hear him, as he has not appeared on the East Coast for many years. In the course of finalizing details of his arrival, etc., we were advised by his answering machine that he was in Japan and would be unable to do the concert. We were most fortunate, however, to have Ron Rhode accept the April concert date on short notice, and on April 12 we were treated to an outstanding concert by this young man. This, in spite of a bit of jet lag resulting from the fact that he had played a concert for the Oregon chapter the night before. He flew in on Sunday morning, set pistons, took a short nap and played a delightful program that afternoon. Unfortunately, he was unable to stay for the picnic supper, but he left knowing that many of his records and tapes had been purchased and would give hours of enjoyment to everyone.

Richmond Takes Jersey! This could be the headline reporting the silent film presentation by Garden State on May 9 at the Union County Arts Center (formerly the Rahway Theatre). The silent classic, *Wings*, winner of the first Academy Award, was screened with accompaniment by Lin Lunde from Richmond, Virginia. Our vice president and program chairman, Bob Norris, has a theory: "It pays to advertise!" Flyers, advertisements and newspaper coverage overwhelmingly proved his theory. What a joy to behold! What excitement to see the theatre filling with lines forming around the block. This was something not seen in Rahway for many years. Our



Ron Rhode at the Trenton War Memorial Möller.

(Jinny Vanore photo)



Lin Lunde at the Wurlitzer in the Union County Arts Center (Rahway Theatre). (Jinny Vanore photo)

metropolitan area offers so many wonderful and diverse activities that pipe organ and silent films really have competition. After holding up the performance for 20 minutes to allow everyone to be seated, the program opened with Douglas Fairbanks (aka Michael Cipolletti) and Mary Pickford (aka Elaine Dawson) in flapper costumes taking us back to 1927 and the first Academy Awards. An "Oscar" was presented to Bob Balfour for his years of dedication and service to the theatre and its Wurlitzer pipe organ. There was also the usual suspense with the opening of the letter and the announcement that *Wings* had won the Award. The lights dimmed, and the audience was fascinated by the actual aerial photography and wonderful story line. Lin Lunde was outstanding — his accompaniment of the film was superb. At first the audience was subdued, but by the second half all were cheering or drying tears as the film built to its climax. It was a wonderful evening, and we are hopeful that we may have won new converts to theatre organ and silent films.

JINNY VANORE

### JESSE CRAWFORD Billings, Montana

Our members selected the name *The Poet* for our chapter journal by an overwhelming majority.

A delegation of our members traveled from Billings to Missoula on March 29 for member Andy Crow's performance at the Wilma Theatre. Owners of the Wilma Theatre, Bob Sias and Eddie Sharp, purchased and removed the 3/10 Robert-Morton from the Orpheum Theatre in Spokane, Washington. It had originally been installed beneath the stage in the Orpheum; consequently, much of the pipework is mitered. It was installed in the Wilma in 1950.

The stage has recently been restored and renovated, making the Wilma available for



Andy Crow at the console of the 3/10 Robert-Morton in the Wilma Theatre in Missoula, Montana.

(Dwayne L. Bondy photo)

stage presentations as well as motion pictures. Bob Ranstrom is the theatre manager, and maintenance is directed by John Ellis, Professor of Organ at the University of Montana in Missoula. They also have their own Organ Preservation Group. The Wilma is one of the few intact theatres left in the United States.

Andy Crow's console-raiser was "Paramount on Parade." In his opening remarks he stated that we were there to have a wonderful time. He played two novelty tunes with the lift in concert position, then lowered it for the sing-along. The three slide-illustrated songs were: "Give My Regards to Broadway," "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" and "You're A Grand Old Flag."

Andy then accompanied two Harold Lloyd silent comedies, *Never Weaken* and *Why Worry*. Crow resides in Olympia, Washington, where he accompanies silent films on a



Wilma Theatre Building in Missoula, where Andy Crow played for Jesse Crawford Chapter.

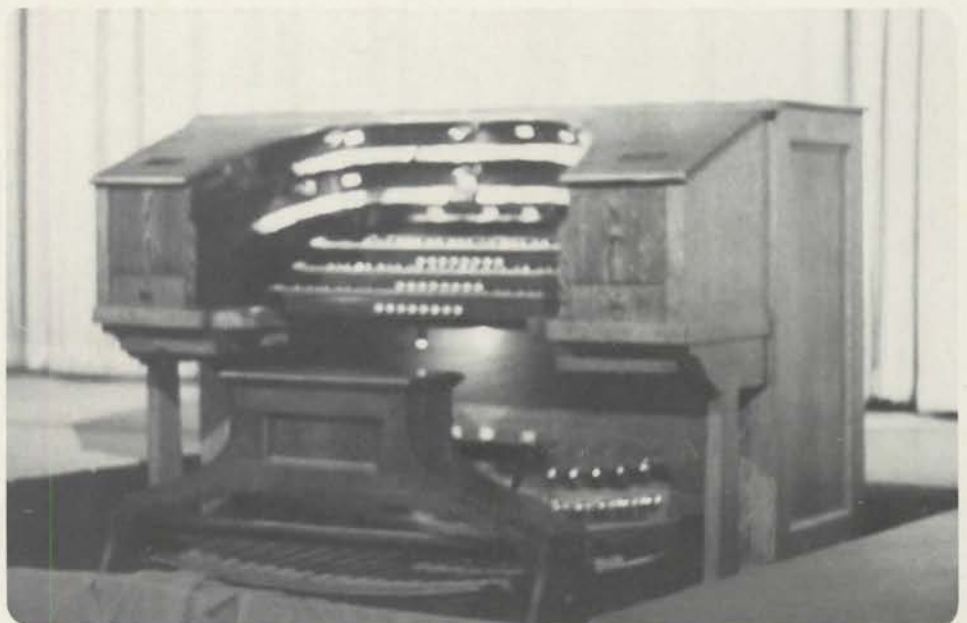
(Dwayne L. Bondy photo)

regular basis. This was evident in the masterful way he cued Harold Lloyd through his hilarious antics to the delight of the audience.

On May 10 members met in Billings to listen to phonograph recordings of Jesse Crawford, Buddy Cole and Dick Hull, as well as the tape of Andy Crow at the Wilma. We went out for dinner afterwards.

Our tax-exempt status application is pending with the Internal Revenue Service. Upon its approval, we will seek funding from charitable trusts and foundations to purchase a chapter organ. A Style 185 Wurlitzer, Opus 201, was installed in the Babcock Theatre in Billings in 1919, but was removed after a fire in 1935. Five days after being accepted as an ATOS chapter, we received approval from the owners of the Babcock to install an organ in the theatre.

STEVEN K. PLAGGEMEYER



3/10 Robert-Morton was originally in Spokane, Washington, Orpheum Theatre, now in Missoula, Montana.

(Dwayne L. Bondy photo)



**Land O' Lakes Chapter**  
AMERICAN THEATRE  
ORGAN SOCIETY

**St. Paul-Minneapolis**

612/689-9201 or 612/771-1771

Since our last report, we have celebrated the 98th birthday of our oldest member, Arma Neff, at a special birthday event, organized by Rob Calcaterra and hosted by the city of St. Paul, in the marble entrance hall beneath the statue of the Indian God of Peace. After greetings to the assembled guests from Mayor George Latimer, we were treated to a short violin concert by Arma, accompanied by Rob, who had flown in from New York City for the event.

On April 5 we heard an afternoon program on the Powderhorn Park Baptist Church Robert-Morton played by Karl Eilers. Despite restrictions by the church on musical selections and the need to hand-register the instrument (the console has no wind for the combination action at present), Karl presented a balanced, interesting and well-executed program. Thanks to Terry Kleven and Bob Sweaney, the organ was in tune and everything worked.

Other organ events in the area have included a presentation of the 1922 silent classic, *Nos Feratu*, accompanied by Dennis James, at the World Theater in St. Paul; Rosa Rio and her husband, Bill Yeoman, at the Phipps Center for the Arts in Hudson, Wisconsin, and a "Concert to Celebrate Easter" at the soon-to-be-demolished Minneapolis Auditorium.

Plans for re-installing the 126-rank Kimball and the 26-rank theatre organ section are continuing, and use of the organ will be frequent right up to November when removal is scheduled to begin. An address for ordering tapes of the final concert series will be included in the next issue. These tapes have been digitally mastered by a professional crew and should be excellent!

Last, but by no means least, the chapter has signed an agreement with All God's Children Metropolitan Community Church of Minneapolis permitting the installation and use of a theatre organ in their sanctuary. In addition to regular chapter events, use of the organ for personal practice and for public concerts is covered in the agreement. After almost thirty years of on-again/off-again searching, we

have found a home for an instrument of our own. Initially we will have a 2/8 instrument and will expand it to a 3/14 as we rebuild a console and chests.

ROGER R. DALZIEL  
for VERNA MAE WILSON



**LOS ANGELES**  
THEATRE ORGAN  
SOCIETY

California

818/792-7084

Our membership meeting took place at the Valley Organ Society Club House in Burbank on March 15. We were privileged to hear the talented Tony Wilson in a mini-concert. President Stephen Ross conducted the meeting in which we learned about the current status of the 1987 Convention, the prospects for the Ross Reed Memorial Wurlitzer and information about coming activities for our chapter. Refreshments and open console on the Rodgers followed the meeting. Our thanks to President Virginia Klomp and Vice President Dick Sheafor of the Valley Organ Society for their hospitality.

From Australia, on his third continental tour of the United States, we were delighted to hear the dynamic Neil Jensen in a dazzling performance at the San Gabriel Auditorium on April 4. This young artist is a virtuoso and can communicate very well with his superb

musicianship. We all enjoyed the beautiful selections from *Forty-Second Street*, *La Cage aux Folles* and *Showboat* plus his encore, "Prelude in G Minor." We also wish to thank our organ crew for a super job: "Mac" MacDonald, Randy Becker, Harold Donze (the crew calls him the "Organ Godfather" because of the many years he has worked on it), Vince Fisher, Tom Handforth, Bob Pasalick, Fred Williams and Carl Nebe, who tuned the organ. Our final word of gratitude goes to a world class performer, Neil Jensen. Welcome to our city — and our country!

MARIA OLIVIER

*Motor  
City  
Theatre  
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Society, Inc.*



Detroit

313/537-1133

Our third annual Young Theatre Organist Competition was held at the Redford on March 15. Faith Sunman, an eighth grade stu-



Motor City Chairman Bob Duerr presents a plaque to Faith Sunman, winner of the Young Theatre Organists' Competition. (Bill Vogel photo)

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Penny and Gil Francis with Rob Calcaterra at the Redford Theatre after Rob's concert for Motor City. (Dorothy Van Steenkiste photo)



Lee Erwin at the Royal Oak Music Theatre for Motor City. (Dorothy Van Steenkiste photo)

dent from Sterling Heights, was winner of the Junior Division and overall winner. At 13, Faith may be the youngest contestant in this year's ATOS Competition. Previous winners Melissa Ambrose and Colleen Feldpausch were in the audience lending their support. Chaired by Dorothy Van Steenkiste, committee members were Virginia Duerr, Gil and Penny Francis and Peggy Grimshaw.

Les Hamilton and Bob Kynaston, both of whom are on the staff of the Fisher Theatre in

Detroit, entertained 13 of our members of our stage and production crew at a dinner and seminar at their home at Commerce Lake on March 16. Following an excellent, home-cooked dinner, the members learned about lighting and production techniques which will prove useful in the many shows we produce during the year.

Lee Erwin was, as expected, well received when he appeared at the Royal Oak Theatre on April 11. Composer of over 70 silent film

scores, Lee accompanied Buster Keaton's *Our Hospitality*, a takeoff on the Hatfield-McCoy feud. The night of April 10 Lee was interviewed by Hal Youngblood on his *Night-time Detroit* show on WJR.

Rob Calcaterra made a memorable first appearance for Motor City in a concert at the Redford on May 9. In addition to popular and classic selections, Rob accompanied a sing-along and a short Harold Lloyd comedy.

The following afternoon Rob conducted a comprehensive seminar at the Redford on styling techniques in theatre organ performance to which the public was invited. Even though it was Mother's Day, the attendance was sizeable and resulted in the recruitment of three new members.

Our Fourth Sunday artist for March, Barry Rindhage, was pre-empted by the setting up of a rock show at the Royal Oak that night. He will be presented later this year. Larry Peck played for our Fourth Sunday program at the Royal Oak on April 26. Larry has played piano with the Rex Morgan and Sammy Kaye orchestras and currently teaches piano and organ.

Coming events at the Redford include John Lauter on October 3, Dennis Minear on November 14 and Tony O'Brien on December 12.

For more information write: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219, or phone 313/537-2560 or 313/537-1133.

DON LOCKWOOD



Les Hamilton (standing) and Bob Kynaston (far right) conduct a seminar in their home for members of Motor City's production staff and stage crew. (Dorothy Van Steenkiste photo)

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Ashley Miller autographs records at his concert for New York Chapter on the 4/26 Wurlitzer at LIU. (Robert Welch photo)



Ralph Ringstad and the Chaminade organ crew: (L to R) Bob Atkins, Ken Ladner and Brother Bob Lahey at the console of the 3/15 Austin-Morton. (Robert Welch photo)

**NEW YORK  
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY  
New York  
914/457-5393**

We celebrated the advent of spring with a concert on April 5 at Chaminade High School in Mineola, Long Island, featuring Ralph Ringstad at the school's unique 3/15 Morton/Austin theatre organ. An extremely talented young artist, Ralph played with confidence and precision, demonstrating his musicianship and his ability to get the most from this fine instrument by playing every genre of theatre organ music.

It had been several years since we had visited Chaminade, and in that time Brother Bob Lahey, Ken Ladner and Bob Adkins, who compose the Chaminade crew, have succeeded in transforming the Austin (originally installed in the Queens Village Theatre) into an instrument having all the tonal qualities of the finest of mighty theatre pipe organs. The organ now includes a Wurlitzer Tibia and Vox, several Morton ranks, one of which is a Post Horn, and a beautiful three-manual Robert-Morton console described by Ralph Ringstad as "user friendly."

Ralph opened his program with the up-tempo "San Francisco, I'm Coming Home Again," and presented a well-balanced fare including such old standards as "You're The Cream in My Coffee" and "As Time Goes By," along with the more contemporary "Just You And I" and "If Ever You're In My Arms Again." A rousing "Under The Double Eagle" followed the intermission, and Ralph

showed off the brass with the Purcell "Trumpet Voluntary." The enjoyable afternoon concluded with open console.

May 3 found us at Long Island University where Ashley Miller rendered a truly superb performance on the Brooklyn Paramount 4/26 Wurlitzer. Ashley opened his program with a swinging arrangement of "The Best Is Yet To Come," and no opener was ever more prophetic! It was vintage Ashley Miller, and that sustained applause and bravos from the audience showed how much they appreciated hearing those wonderful Miller arrangements performed by the maestro himself with all the style, feeling and musical accuracy that we have enjoyed for so long on his recordings. Even from across the vast floor of the LIU gymnasium, it was obvious that Ashley was truly "into" the music, and the result was one of those exciting, rare and memorable theatre organ experiences.

A Cole Porter medley was the highlight of the first half of the concert, and the second half, which opened with "Something's Got To Give," indicated that Ashley was in full command of both the instrument and the audience. A spring theme medley and other seasonal selections followed. Responding to a request, he played "Granada," and to the audience's enthusiastic approval he responded that "we'll be here all night if I keep playing requests." This met with enthusiastic audience approval. But all good things come to an end, and our time at LIU was quickly running out as Ashley closed the program with an up-tempo "Beyond The Blue Horizon." This was unquestionably theatre organ at its best — a memorable performance. Once again,

thanks to the dedicated efforts of Bob Walker, Glenn Gneiss and Gary Phillips, the Mighty Wurlitzer was in fine voice.

TOM STEHLE



**NORTH  
TEXAS  
CHAPTER**

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

There is an oft repeated saying about getting the job done by giving it to a busy person. That seems to be especially true with our chapter. Among the busy people we rely on to get things done is Bill Hanson. Bill is organist



Bill Hanson played for North Texas Chapter on his new Allen. (Irving Light photo)

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Jean Hanson (left) with "Frankie" Bruce at refreshment table in Hanson home.

(Irving Light photo)

at one of the larger Dallas churches and, in addition to the services, is called upon for weddings and other functions, and as though this weren't enough, Dr. Hanson has a busy dental practice. However, he still finds time to answer a call to play intermission music on the chapter's Robert-Morton in the Lakewood Theatre on Friday and Saturday nights (as do several other of our busy professional organists), and he is quick to agree to play a chapter organ program when asked.

The Hansons, Bill and Jean, recently purchased an Allen Digital theatre organ which they have now installed in their home. Bill has a larger-than-average music room, but he was still concerned about accommodating the five large speaker cabinets plus the console in this area. He found the solution in the attic, a large open area adjacent to the peak of the vaulted ceiling of the music room, where he created a "chamber" and a grilled opening into the listening area. Bill found time to do all the construction himself and is now justifiably proud of his completed installation.

On April 26 the Hansons gave our chapter an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful results of their installation. Bill played a program of

familiar music which included a medley of Disney tunes that he says are popular with the Lakewood Theatre patrons. Open console and refreshments followed.

IRVING LIGHT



President Gordon Wright chats with Irving Light (right) at meeting in Hanson residence. (Irving Light photo)

OHIO VALLEY CHAPTER  
 ATOS EMERY THEATRE  
 Cincinnati  
 513/721-2741 or 513/721-2742

"Down the valley of a thousand yesterdays  
 Flow the bright waters of Moon River . . ."

Those two lines of poetry were probably read more times on radio than any others. The half-hour program of organ music and poetry ran 42 years on WLW in Cincinnati, and that show is brought to life biennially at the Emery Theatre by the Ohio Valley chapter. "Moon River '87" featured stars who had performed on the radio show: singers Ruby Wright and Marian Spellman; Cecil Hale reading poetry; Bill Myers as master of ceremonies, and member Gene Wilson was organist. Gene was a member of the band that appeared on WLWT's long-running *Bob Braun Show*.

April 24 was the show at the Emery, and it played to a nearly full house. This is the material from which dreams have been made! During the entire 42 years of the radio show, the opening theme was Fritz Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois," and the number played at mid-point was "Vilia." Our show was broadcast live over WVXU-FM from Xavier University. As part of the radio nostalgia, an appearance was made by Himan Brown, long-time CBS producer of radio dramas.

With the help of the University of Cincinnati, owners of Emery Theatre, new carpeting has been completely installed on the lower floor, and the two sides of the theatre on the lower level have been painted. The tarnished, dowdy appearance of this theatre is slowly disappearing.

In late July, our chapter will celebrate nine continuous years of weekend nostalgic movie runs. Most have been double features, and all have had "lead-ins," intermission concerts and "payouts" on the Mighty Wurlitzer.

Long-time organ crew chief Tote Pratt has relinquished that position and is now organ curator. His advice, counsel and planning will still be available, but he won't be involved in the gymnastics performed by organ techni-

August 12 ..... Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio  
 August 15 ..... Music Box Society Convention, Columbus, Ohio  
 September 17 ..... Madison Civic Center, Madison, Wisconsin  
 September 20 ..... Wagnall's Memorial, Lithopolis, Ohio  
 September 25 ..... 1st Congregational Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan  
 September 26 ..... Symphony Hall, Detroit, Michigan  
 September 27 ..... Institute of the Arts, Detroit, Michigan  
 October 3 ..... Ars Musica, Ann Arbor, Michigan  
 October 10 ..... 1st Universalist Church, Rochester, New York  
 October 11 ..... School Auditorium, Berlin, New Hampshire  
 October 16 ..... Roberson Center, Binghamton, New York  
 October 18 ..... State Museum, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania  
 October 17 ..... Museum of Glass, Corning, New York  
 October 30 ..... I. U. Auditorium, Bloomington, Indiana  
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Ron Rhode autographs records for fans at Benson High School in Portland. (Claude Neuffer photo)



Andy Crow at the Wicks console in First United Methodist Church in Olympia where he played for Puget Sound Chapter. (Diane Whipple photo)

cians in keeping the "monster" in playing condition. Tote was in charge of the development of the organ as it was increased from its original 19 ranks (when it was in the RKO Albee Theatre) to its present 29 ranks. Prior to his involvement with the Emery, he had spent a number of years as an organ designer.

HUBERT S. SHEARIN

**OREGON**  
**Portland**  
**503/771-8098**

Ron Rhode and the gorgeous 3/24 Kimball in Benson High School provided us with excellent entertainment on April 11. Even



Ron Rhode at the 3/24 Kimball in Benson High School. (Claude Neuffer photo)

though the organ does have some problems, it is still an instrument of great beauty. Mr. Rhode knew what he had and how to use it. He gave us a polished presentation and skillful playing in the Lyn Larsen school. His verbal introductions were delightfully brief and informative. An orchestral transcription of the Overture to *Die Fledermaus* was well conceived, brilliantly executed and orchestrally accurate. What was a satisfying climax to an excellent evening, of course, prompted an encore. We look forward to hearing more from this organist.

BOB SHAFTER

**PUGET SOUND**  
**Seattle**

**206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669**

We enjoyed a leisurely April day in Olympia, meeting first in the lovely home of Tom and Fran Solberg for renewing friendships and enjoying open console on the Wurlitzer pipes and the grand piano in their spacious living room.

Our second stop was at the First United Methodist Church for a concert by Andy Crow on the Wicks organ there. Andy has long been the organist on this beautifully voiced instrument which is particularly outstanding when heard nearest the chambers in the chancel area where the choir is normally seated. Andy included serious works in his program, although his light-hearted humor always makes his concerts entertaining. A

brilliant rendition of Jean A'Laine's "Litanies" dazzled the audience.

In addition to his service and theatre playing, Andy devotes time to composing and arranging. A most unique selection on this program was "Were You There," a very moving rendition based on the Negro spiritual. Christ was portrayed trudging along the pathway, carrying his cross to the hilltop site of his crucifixion as Andy used the resources of the organ masterfully to create the tension that built to a thundering climax and then subsided to a quiet and mournful repetition of the original theme.

A planned program on the Baldwin electronic in the rotunda of the State Capitol Building had to be cancelled as there was a



Andy Crow at the Baldwin in the Washington State Capitol Rotunda — where he didn't get to play (see notes for Puget Sound). (Diane Whipple photo)

## Father James Miller

"Father Jim"  
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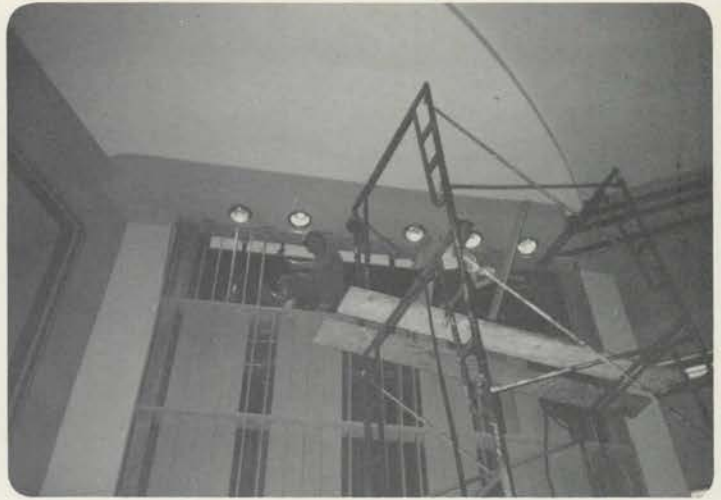
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South organ grille uncovered from 1950s to be returned to 1926 grille. (Sonia Carlson photo)



Beginning demolition of north grille in the Fargo Theatre. (Sonia Carlson photo)

special session of the legislature convening at the same hour.

Major construction projects have made Seattle traffic a daily nightmare and are causing ongoing suspense for "Paramount Watchers." A transit bus tunnel is being carved through the downtown area, the destination to be a terminal immediately north of the Paramount Theatre. Meanwhile, a \$162 million Washington State Convention and Trade Center is being built straddling the I-5 Interstate to the south of the theatre. The Downtown Theatre Task Force plans to study ideas for preserving downtown theatres, while the Visitors and Convention Bureau planners consider the feasibility of using the Paramount on occasion in conjunction with activities at the convention site.

DIANE WHIPPLE

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We were fortunate to have perfect weather for our spring Silent Movie Nights April 24 and 25. The program was fun and fast-paced as it took us back to the music of the WWII era. The Fargo Theatre Big Band All-Stars, the 188th Army Band Chorus and several female vocalists brought back such tunes as "Saturday Night Is The Loneliest Night of The Week," "Milkman, Keep Those Bottles Quiet" and "For All We Know." There were

some extra specialties, a Spike Jones' routine of "The Fuehrer's Face," a local "Andrews Sisters" rendition of "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," and "Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree," plus a jitterbug. Part I was brought to a close with the Band and Chorus performing the theme songs of the various armed forces.

Part II consisted of the 1925 comedy, *The Freshman*, in which Harold Lloyd strives to be the most popular man on campus. This was scored by Lance Johnson.

Several special events occur each month at the Fargo Theatre, and our new orchestra pit is being put to good use. The Fargo-Moorhead Civic Opera presented the Music Hall Follies featuring the American premiere of Jacques Offenbach's *Croquefer*. The first half consisted of 15 acts in the vaudeville tradition, including a trained-flea act. Some-

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North grille with new "face," neon yet to be installed.  
(Sonia Carlson photo)

how, Emile lost his trained fleas, but they turned up in time to plague the next act, a group of women singing a Strauss waltz. *Croquefer* was hilarious. With such cast names as Hothead, Bash-Your-Brains, Sulphur-Flower and Froth-to-Death, it had to be crazy. The action took place in Ironeater's (Croquefer's) castle battlements somewhere in France in the Middle Ages. The Mighty Wurlitzer will never be the same after this experience — it was part of the Offenbachian Quintet with flute, clarinet, trumpet and piano.

Work continues on the organ grilles as they are being returned to the 1930s, closely following their original design. The use of scaffolding and the labor has been donated — all we have to purchase is the neon. We are also looking forward to the lobby reconstruction which will be starting soon, so all can be completed by early fall. During all projects, the theatre remains open for business-as-usual.

SONIA CARLSON

**The River City  
Theatre Organ Society  
Omaha, Nebraska**

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Our March 21 meeting was held at the Old Mill Shopping Center location of Keyboard Kastle, Ltd. Our guest artist was Dan Cer-

veny, who demonstrated his skill on both Yamaha and Lowrey organs. His concert was greatly enjoyed by the 42 members and guests, and five members took advantage of open console on the fine instruments. A very enjoyable evening was brought to a close with refreshments. We are indebted to our hosts at Keyboard Kastle for their hospitality.

George Rice and the Bellevue Little Theatre (formerly the Roxy) hosted our April 18 meeting. The theatre's 2/5 Wurlitzer was installed and is lovingly maintained by George Rice. On the day before the meeting George held a tuning session, assisted by Harold Kenney and Dick Zdan. On the day of the meeting, an informal luncheon was attended by a dozen members, and 34 members enjoyed the program at the theatre by guest artist George Rice. George's mini-concert was augmented by a silent film; Dick Zdan favored us with a sing-along and Wendall Hall joined in on banjo. Seven members took advantage of open console.

TOM JEFFERY



**Denver,  
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We have had a busy spring. In spite of an early spring snow, 70 members and guests traveled to the home of Joel and Jerri Kremer in Parker to enjoy a delightful program by Joel on his 4/28 Hybrid organ which is now controlled by a Devtronix computer system.

Opening with "Hooray for Hollywood," Joel included selections by Tin Pan Alley composer Harry Warren, Sousa's "King Cotton March," and medleys of tunes by George Gershwin and Hoagy Carmichael. His closing number was the finale from the *First Organ Symphony* by Vierne. Coaxing by his listeners brought an encore, the George Wright "Boogie." The reception following the concert was a choco-holic's delight — everything was chocolate!

In early April more than 60 of us journeyed to Pueblo for a weekend in Southern Colorado. Everyone had a wonderful time and enjoyed concerts at Pueblo's Memorial Hall and the Mount St. Francis Convent in Colorado Springs.



George Rice at the Bellevue Little Theatre's 2/5 Wurlitzer.

(Tom Jeffery photo)

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John Grunow played the Mount St. Francis Wurlitzer, which he helped to install, for the Colorado theatre organ chapters. (Don Zeller photo)



Joel Kremer at his 4/28 Hybrid for Rocky Mountain Chapter. (Don Zeller photo)

Hector Olivera was in fine form as he put the newly restored 4/58 Austin Orchestral Organ through its paces for a crowd of 600 at the Memorial Hall. Opening with the "Star Spangled Banner," he went on to play a program of classics, transcriptions and popular music ranging from the Bach "Prelude and Fugue in A Minor" to the "Trolley Song." The Great Victory Memorial Pipe Organ was dedicated on March 12, 1920, "in loving remembrance to soldiers, sailors, Red Cross and all war workers of the City of Pueblo . . . who so nobly sacrificed time, money and life that the world might live." With this quote in mind, Hector's closing was an especially appropriate medley of patriotic melodies, and, of

course, no Olivera concert would be complete without his special rendition of "The Flight of the Bumblebee."

After an overnight stay in Pueblo, the group traveled to Colorado Springs and was treated to an excellent concert by Colorado Springs' own John Grunow who was making his debut at the Mighty Mount St. Francis Mostly Wurlitzer. And a grand debut it was! John chose "Spring & Love" as a theme for his program, and enthralled us with such favorites as "Another Openin', Another Show," "Harlem Connection," "A Kiss in The Dark" and "Linger Awhile." We certainly hope to hear more from this young performer.

In late April, we returned to the home of Joel and Jerri Kremer for a special concert by the popular Portland entertainer, Jonas Nordwall. Jonas entertained 85 people with a program of classical and popular melodies on the Kremer's 4/28. He put the computer to good use in several numbers, playing duets with himself and other fancy tricks not possible on a standard organ. Among his selections were the "Coronation March" by Meyerbeer, "Don't Worry About Me," and Joplin's "Elite Syncopations." Following a standing ovation, Jonas encored with the Bach "Gigue Fugue."

After the concert, guests were treated to a delightful assortment of goodies prepared by our resourceful refreshment committee: Priscilla Arthur, David Hagerman and David Love. It was a wonderful evening, and we hope to be able to sponsor more concerts of this nature in the future.

DONALD D. ZELLER



Jonas Nordwall at the Kremer 4/28 organ for a Rocky Mountain Chapter concert. (Don Zeller photo)




ATOS President Jack Moelmann is put in the stocks at his recent birthday party.

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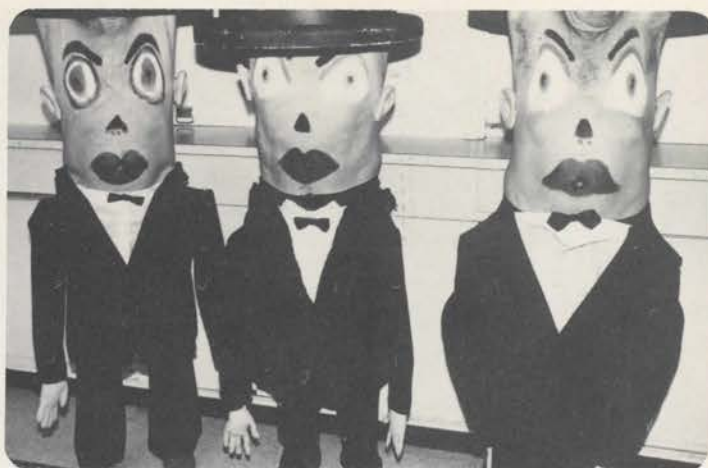
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Birthday cake for Jack Moelmann had a hand-painted picture of Jack at the 4/36 Fox Wurlitzer.



The Whistlers were the hit of Sierra's "Pipe Dreams" show. (Beverly Grube photo)

our talented artists, a line of high-kicking chorus girls and, to cap it all off, a silent movie and performance by our own Jack Moelmann. This is the first time in 55 years that a theatre pipe organ has been installed in an original movie palace/vaudeville theatre. There will be three opening night shows. Friday night will be limited to those who give a tax-deductible donation of \$100 or more and will include a pre-show party as well as two tickets to the show. We will try to hold some of these special tickets for out-of-town ATOSers who would like to be \$100 helpers, so if you are interested, call Dennis Ammann at 618/654-6060 as soon as possible.

The second night will be for the general public — same show — no party. Tickets for this show will also be available for ATOS members. Call for information.

The Sunday show will be a matinee with special focus on senior citizens. We will try to finalize dates and times and get the news to area chapters, but please feel free to call Dennis for information. There are only about 1000 seats in the Granada, so try to get your requests in as early as possible.

Friends staged a surprise birthday party for ATOS President Jack Moelmann with a dinner at a fashionable early English, pub-type restaurant in St. Louis. This very special chapter member was locked in the stocks and was surprised with a fantastic birthday cake which was decorated with a "painting" of Jack at the Fox Theatre 4/36 Wurlitzer. Word has it that the cake tasted as good as it looked!

DENNIS AMMANN

### SIERRA Sacramento 916/967-5060 or 916/483-7351

The George Seaver Memorial Organ, which is sounding better all the time, has had a good workout the past three months. Don Croom was presented in a very fine program on February 8, featuring our Little Jewel and the "M.U. Lator" computer. He demonstrated many sound effects that we have heard in the movies of late, but the big surprise of the program was when he introduced Tom Thompson. They pleased the crowd with a duet at the Wurlitzer. Tom was a former teacher of Don's. Their fans were thrilled with their presentation, and we found them to be very gracious artists. It was an afternoon of fine music and entertainment.

On March 8 the Fair Oaks Club House filled with organ fans in high spirits for a concert by Jerry Nagano. Jerry played one of the finest programs he has done in several years — we heard old and new tunes, show tunes and novelty selections that Jerry has not featured before, all played with fine technique in tasty arrangements. This was a new Jerry Nagano. It was a day of fine entertainment and good listening!

April 3 featured a revival of the Sue Lang production of "Pipe Dreams." She also directed this fine entertainment. This year the show featured several new acts, singers, dancers, comics, Barbershop Quartets and several fine organists. The show-stealers were "The Whistlers," Rex Koury and the Sweet Adelines. Don Wallin did a fine job as accom-

panist to most of the acts. New organists to the show were Hal Randall, Karen Cuneo and Kay Ruland. Sue Lang's All Girl Band did a fine job of opening the show; dance students from Judette Studio were very entertaining and Madam Louise Tetrzini performed selections from *Carmen* as Robert Rasmussen slowly cut her gown away. The almost full house certainly left with the feeling that they had been royally entertained.



Sue Lang produced and directed Sierra's "Pipe Dreams" show. (Beverly Grube photo)



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Tom Thompson and Don Croom finish a duet at the Sierra Wurlitzer. Tom was Don's teacher at one time and made a surprise appearance at this program.

(Art Phelan photo)



Jerry Nagano at his Sierra Chapter concert.

(Art Phelan photo)

Sierra Chapter has ordered a Z-Tronic relay to replace the wind relays. Also, they are planning to modify the chambers to allow the swell shades to open into the auditorium, and we hope to have the piano installation completed soon.

May 3 was a great day in many ways —



National Treasurer Dale Mendenhall takes a snooze for the "Pipe Dreams" show. (Beverly Grube photo)

beautiful weather, a great audience and an excellent concert by Larry Vannucci. Larry's program left no doubt that this man knows theatre organ. He certainly gave the Wurlitzer a workout with fine registrations and arrangements that had his audience at full attention. Outstanding numbers included "The Blues While The City Sleeps," and a Gordon Kibbee arrangement of "Somewhere Along The Way." His novelty numbers were a treat and his jazzy renditions of the oldies brought the house down.

Don Wallin presented a mini-concert at Grant Union High School playing for the faculty and students. The reaction was very favorable for Sierra Chapter to continue the renovation of the Mighty Wurlitzer at the school.

BUD TAYLOR

## SOONER STATE

Tulsa

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Our March meeting was held in the home of Phil and Laura Judkins. Phil had announced that this would be our last chance to hear his 3/11 hybrid theatre pipe organ in its present setting. He and Laura have decided to sell their house and build a new one, designed around the instrument and with more room for guests. We've always had a crowd at the Judkins' house, and so we more than agreed with their decision.

Phil opened the program with an appropriate "This Could Be The Start of Something Big." He then played a number of other selections, including "Sunny" and his closing "Fox Movietone News." Eleven of our playing members participated in open console where we heard everything from Gospel music to "Nola."

The next day Phil began his dismantling project. Their house has been sold, and plans are well underway for the new one.

April found us journeying to Pryor for a meeting around Hervey and Janice Barbour's 2/11 Kimball. We were pleased with the large gathering of those who made the drive from Tulsa. The Barbour's home is designed around the organ, and our many new members were impressed (and inspired) by the installation. For the benefit of the newcomers, Hervey told a brief history of the instrument and its move from Oklahoma City in 1979. Those of us who had been part of the "Pipe Packers Platoon" well-remembered the cold winter day we removed those huge pipes from the auditorium of the Fine Arts Building at Oklahoma City University. We were delighted to hear Hervey play "Misty," "I'll See You Again" and "Georgia on My Mind," before open console again allowed demonstration of the versatility and talent of our playing members.

We then adjourned to Pryor's First Christian Church to see the installation of their "new" pipe organ, a 3/14 Kimball which had



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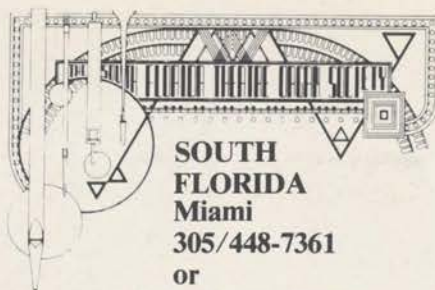
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belonged to members Bruce and Martha Wilson of nearby Claremore. Hervey had designed the layout and supervised its installation in the church, and we were impressed at how neatly it fit behind and on either side of the baptistry.

The console of our chapter's Robert-Morton has been returned to Tulsa to Sam Collier's garage where work is progressing nicely on the wiring of the Z-Tronics relay components.

DOROTHY SMITH



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## SOUTHEAST TEXAS

At a winter meeting at the home of Buster and Betty Matteson we were entertained by Harry Heth. Harry has played a number of concerts for us at our home theatre, the Jefferson, in Beaumont, at the pizza restaurants in Houston and at the Mattesons. He first came to the Jefferson one evening about 10:30 to play the Robert-Morton for the first time, and played until about 2:30 a.m. I don't know how much Harry liked playing the Morton, but we very much liked listening to Harry play the Morton. Harry plays from a very large repertoire and plays it all very well — from classical to pop. He has also attended work sessions with our chapter, since he has worked as an organ builder and a demonstration artist, and has really helped us with the restoration of the Morton. You can hear a wave of excitement run through our membership each time it is announced that Harry Heth is going to play for us.

On March 15 we presented Carter Bidwell in a free concert on the 3/8 Robert-Morton in the Jefferson Theatre. Carter played a mixture of old tunes from the 1920s and '30s plus some of the newer selections. In the year that Carter has been a member, he has become one of the primary members of the organ crew as well as one of the chapter's main artists. During his concert, he was able to demonstrate



South Florida Chapter presented the classic film, *Wings*, at the Olympia Theatre in Gusman Cultural Center in downtown Miami on March 6. (G. W. Gerhart photo)



Lin Lunde poses by the Wurlitzer 260 following his highly acclaimed performance accompanying *Wings*.



Harry Heth played for Southeast Texas Chapter. (George Hockmeyer photo)

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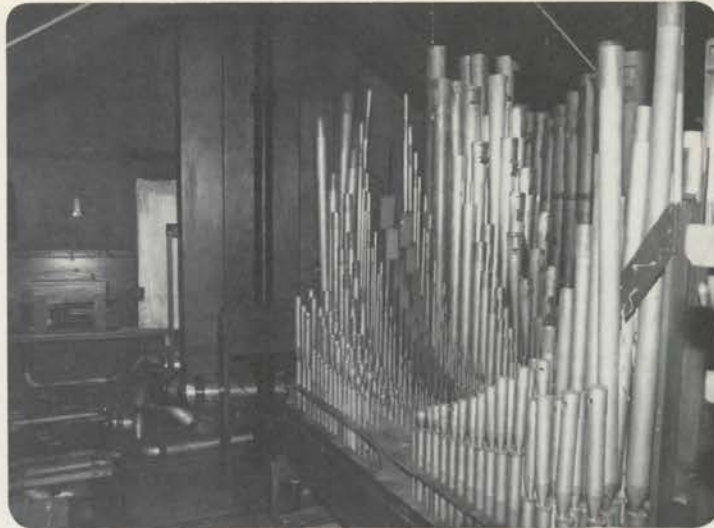
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Three-manual LeNoir console from Lyric Theatre in Camden, New Jersey, now installed in Paul Wasserman home in Toledo, Ohio. (TATOS photo)



Attic chamber of Paul Wasserman's home installation. (TATOS photo)

the newly releathered Flute rank, including the Piccolo, Tierce and Twelfth stops which had not been playable for many years. This was Carter's first theatre organ concert, and the enthusiastic group of about 130 gave him a much-deserved standing ovation. It was, indeed, an afternoon enjoyed by all.

FLOYD BROUSSARD



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Greetings from Toledo! Our April meeting was held at a "pioneer" theatre organ home installation. In 1952 the late Othedus Campbell installed the Style 185 Wurlitzer from Toledo's Pantheon Theatre in his home near Maumee Bay. To the original seven ranks he added a Marr & Colton Tibia from a theatre in Mishawaka, Indiana, and the three-manual console (a rare Benjamin LeNoir) and relay from the Lyric Theatre in Camden, New Jersey. Although the organ was neglected for many years, its new owner, Paul Wasserman, has done much to get it playing again. Detroit's John Lauter played to a full house and did a great job! John is well liked in this area, and he plays with a very pleasant style which really makes you picture yourself in the heyday of theatre organ. He is currently resident

organist at the beautifully restored Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Our concert at Toledo's old Ohio Theatre (St. Hedwig Cultural Center) on April 26 featured Bill Taber, resident organist at Akron's Civic Theatre. Although Bill is doing more organ building than concerts these days, he concluded his concert season with us. Bill's 1920's style was well received! As usual, another rare silent film was accompanied by the artist, proving once again the tremendous popularity films over 60-years-old have with our audiences!



Bill Taber takes a bow at Toledo's April concert at the Ohio Theatre. (TATOS photo)

We started May with great news — the new roof on the theatre is now finished.

Our final concert of the year will be November 14 — our Second Annual Silent Film Festival! We will feature Toledo's own Bill Yaney, our resident organist, playing a concert and a festival of rare silent films. This year we are using a railroad theme. It's no secret that many theatre organ fans are also old-time railroad fans, and some of the most thrilling silent movies featured railroad chases and suspense! We will be rounding up films to show the best and most entertaining. We're also glad Bill Yaney is a strong supporter of our chapter. His recent digitally recorded cassette made on the Larry Evritt 3/18 Wurlitzer is excellent! Those interested may contact Bill at Great Lakes Organ and Piano, 419/882-1851; the cost is around \$11.

EVAN J. CHASE



We closed out the old year with a bang-up pipe organ and dance revue at the Byrd Theatre. The show ran four performances and was seen by 4368 people. On screen was *Miracle on 34th Street*, and despite its many showings on TV, the Byrd still packed them

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Byrd Theatre organist Lin Lunde.

in. Chuck Rhode shared the spotlight with Lin Lunde, who played a sparkling overture and accompanied the audience in a traditional Christmas sing-along. Chuck, who is a marvelous tenor, was positioned in the alcove containing the Wurlitzer harp. On the opposite side of the proscenium was David Newman at the Wurlitzer grand piano. The organ had been tuned just before the show and never sounded better. The show ran for forty non-stop, fast paced minutes and featured the high-kicking Burdettes, a dance team that has become something of a tradition in Richmond. The two original Brenograph machines were used for the sing-along, which the audience joined with as much enthusiasm as an old-time revival.

Later in December we held our annual Christmas party at the home of David Barnett. David owns a 2/7 Wurlitzer which was installed at one time in a theatre in a Washington, D.C., suburb.

Buster Keaton's *The Cameraman* had two showings at the Byrd in January. Lin Lunde provided his original score for the film. The picture did very well because of the good reviews in the local paper.

On March 1 the Byrd presented Bill Zakafoose and The Continentals in concert with a guest appearance by Eddie Weaver playing the Mighty Wurlitzer. The Continentals is a band reminiscent of the Big Band era of the 1940s and '50s. The house was packed for the event.

Virginia Chapter presented Mike Crowley in a private concert at the Byrd on March 28.

Mike is the new managing director of the Carpenter Center (Loew's) in Richmond and is quite a good organist. He played theatre organ in his home town of Tulsa, Oklahoma, when he was a teenager. Everyone enjoyed Mike as he is a most pleasurable person with a keen sense of humor.

Lin Lunde played two showings of Buster Keaton's *The General* on April 24 and May 1 at the Byrd. On May 2 the manager of the Mosque, Mr. Carmen Barefoot, conducted a tour of that fabulous old theatre for club members and their guests. The Mosque is the home of the famous Wurlitzer that was recorded by Reginald Foort in the late fifties. Those records are legendary and are still eagerly sought by collectors. Mother's Day was a gala day in Richmond as VTOS and the Byrd presented Eddie Weaver in concert. Eddie's shows are always wonderful, and he always seems to find the talent to complement his playing.

Meanwhile, work continues at the Carpenter Center, and some progress has been made. The blower was turned on recently, but much needs to be done to muffle the sound. The piano plays from the console, but none of the pipes play. Much has to be done in the way of repair work and replacement of missing pipes. Bill Floyd, who obtained the organ for

the theatre about five years ago, has moved to Florida, and a brass plaque was recently installed on the side of the console to remind us all of the unique theatre organ that Bill Floyd gave to Richmond.

From the looks of things, theatre organ is alive and well in Richmond and getting better all the time.

MILES RUDISILL



## WOLVERINE CHAPTER

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In March, Roger and Sue Mumbrue of Bloomfield Hills were hosts to the chapter. We enjoyed the music from their Wurlitzer which is one of the finest home installations in the country.

In April we visited the home of David Brewer to hear and play Dave's Marr & Bartlitz, certainly one of the most compact home installations. In both homes we enjoyed afternoons of good cheer, friendship and good music, and, thanks to the chapter distaff, good snacks.

CHARLIE and BETTY BAAS □



(L to R) Fred Page, Ed Brockhahn, Dave Brewer and Gerald Elliott at Wolverine meeting in Brewer's home.

(Bill Vogel photo)

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