

# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1988





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**JULY 2 - 6, 1988**

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JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 1

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1988

PRESIDENT: JACK MOELMANN  
EDITOR: GRACE E. MCGINNIS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: DOUGLAS C. FISK

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Cover Photo: Perhaps the most unusual facade on a pizza parlor, at UNCLE MILT'S you enter through the swell shoes. See article on page 6.

*Claude Neuffer Photo*

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## President's Message



I hope that all of you had a great Holiday Season. Now we are in a new year, 1988, and another great year for ATOS. I am so glad that you are part of it. We had a great year in 1987 with membership growth, a great convention in Los Angeles, and another great regional convention in Buffalo. Our Young Organist Competition was a great success, and our ATOS International News has been met with great approval.

1988 should be just as successful and together we will further the goals and objectives of ATOS. I want to acknowledge the Buffalo Area Chapter for their most generous donation of \$1,000 to ATOS from their great regional convention. Their contribution to ATOS will go for a good cause, and we thank them for their work putting on the convention as well as their financial support of ATOS projects.

Nominations have been opened for the 1988 election of members to the ATOS Board of Directors. A director serves a three-year term and we will be electing three this year. This is your chance, as a member of this great organization, to nominate someone who can assist with your organization's administration, or to volunteer yourself to serve on the Board. Having been a member of the Board for a few years, I think that it is one of the greatest things that our members can do to help. All of our officers and directors are elected to serve. The deadline for nominations is February 1, 1988. See page 15 for nomination procedures.

Once again, we are having the ATOS Young Organist Competition. It is time for chapters to be organizing local competitions and getting ready to submit entries into this year's competition. The winner in each age category this year will be brought to the national convention, in addition to winning a monetary award and competing for the overall winner of the competition. Your help in getting the young people involved in theatre organ and ATOS is vital to the furthering of our success in preserving this art form.

One of the main events in ATOS this year will be the annual convention. This year it will be in Portland, Oregon, and there are many people working long and hard to make it a great convention. Make your plans now to attend.

I hope that among one of your 1988 resolutions is the getting of at least one new member into ATOS. I have a family next door that comes over to my house frequently to hear organ music. I gave them a membership for a year as a gift. Perhaps you have a friend or family member who would enjoy a membership. This is one way of increasing our membership. But go out and get others to join ATOS and be part of this great movement. In addition, we need to ensure that we convince people to continue to renew their memberships after the first year. Please help our membership campaign to increase ATOS.

Sincerely,

JACK MOELMANN

## Executive Director's Message



An examination of membership trends within ATOS reveals some areas where a changed emphasis for some may be due.

During the past two years the Society has increased total membership by about 350. Of that number 50% are affiliated with chapters and the other half are unaffiliated. While the last group is very important to ATOS my comments here concern new chapter members. Of the 175 chapter additions, one chapter (Los Angeles where the convention was held this year) accounted for 100. During the two years four new chapters have been formed. It adds up to virtually NO GROWTH for the rest of the chapters.

Then think about where the day-to-day work in theatre organ preservation is taking place. It is where local chapter members are working in restoration, maintenance and presentation of theatre organs. While none of these activities can be neglected, the addition of new members is also vital if the same functions are going to be successfully carried on 10 to 25 years from now.

The challenge, then, is for chapters to devote more energy to adding to the membership and even paying attention to attracting members with particular skills needed to keep the theatre organ playing. While there are many examples of the need for specific skills, a recent newsletter from Alabama highlighted a new member, Richard Parker, who has contributed extensively using his skill as an electrician. The membership committee could, in fact, make a list of "skills needed" as part of a recruiting campaign. Some prospects respond more readily knowing there is a place for their skills.

It all adds up to the conclusion that tangible preservation is in the hands of the chapters and more members are needed to keep it going. What can be done to get them?

Doug Fisk

# Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

This letter is submitted as yet another opinion and some thoughts on the subject of young peoples' interest in the theatre organ. When this subject is brought up, there are really two different problems that sometimes get interwoven as if they are one in the same. The first problem is, where are the young organists? Given the scarce exposure most young musicians get to the theatre organ, the combined efforts of individual organists, teachers, enthusiasts and certainly of ATOS have done a respectable job of nurturing a lot of fine young (under 40) talent in the last ten to fifteen years. The second and really much bigger problem at this time, and that will be even more so in the next ten to twenty years, is, where is the audience of young people? Most of us who wonder what the future holds for the theatre organ must agree that given the age composition at most theatre organ concerts, problem number two is the really scary one, and that is the subject of this letter.

Before proceeding it is always helpful to know the perspective of the writer so the reader may ascribe the appropriate amount of bias and/or credibility to these thoughts. On the one hand, at age forty and having been in love with the sound of theatre pipes for over thirty years, I am both part of, or at least near to, the "young side" of this avocation, and also a longtime enthusiast. On the other hand, at age forty I have grown up during the the era of, and as a listener to, rock n' roll and, further, have spent the last fourteen years working in commercial radio broadcasting. Since the success of a radio station depends largely on playing music that people want to hear, a great deal of my effort has gone into analyzing and anticipating what people want to hear and why. This is not to declare that these are necessarily the thoughts of an expert in musical tastes or trends, if there even is such a thing, but certainly does bring a perspective that I do not recall seeing in this magazine.

While my thoughts are not all doom and gloom for the theatre organ, I do not believe we will ever see anything more than a trickle of young people under the ages of the early thirties attending concerts or buying recordings. To see any significant numbers of these "youngsters" under say, thirty-two or thirty-three, would indicate some massive cultural upheaval that would have dethroned the thirty (plus)-year reign of the lyric-with-rhythm based music that includes all the various forms and styles of rock n' roll. Ever since the emergence of mass-appeal pop music in the 1920s, young

people have tended to be, and probably always will be, under the influence of the peer group pressure that makes most of them want to hear the same thing that everybody else is listening to, and that same thing, rock n' roll and its many variants, is proving to be very durable.

However, even if we concede that young lovers nestled in a darkened movie palace enthralled by the mellifluous renderings of a Jesse Crawford may never happen again, there are some forces at work that *may* lead to some opportunities for widening future exposure of the theatre organ.

This opportunity lies with the early thirties to mid-forties folks who are now A) old enough to be out of the extreme peer group pressures and B) are among the quickly growing ranks of those "discovering" the satisfaction of listening to, not the vocal-rhythmic based music that they grew up with, but instrumental music through the rising tide of what the recording industry has tagged New Age music. The rapidly emerging popularity in the last couple years of New Age music is a very significant development because it marks the first emergence in both recording and radio airplay of mass-appeal, original composition instrumental music since the late fifties when the last permutations of Big Band enjoyed a brief revival brought on by hi-fi and stereo (Jazz certainly is original composition instrumental music but, except for specific instances, remains on the sidelines of mass appeal). Also, despite sixty-odd years of co-existence, jazz has not accepted theatre organ into its idiom (Dan Bellomy's new album gives some hope in the jazz direction).

Until last year, New Age music was the domain of small record labels, most notably the Windham Hill label which has now reached \$50 million sales at retail solely on New Age music. Until this year no major radio stations gave much airplay to New Age music, but with the astounding success of KTWV in the trend-setting Los Angeles market, several major stations in other major cities are, or will soon be, airing New Age music exclusively.

So where is the theatre organ opportunity? There are still many hurdles to cross before you will find a recording featuring use of a theatre organ in the New Age section of your local record store. But remember, the first and really major hurdle has been crossed — this is purely instrumental music and is the first time that this "baby boomer" crowd has ever been interested in purely instrumental music. Second, much of the New Age music is composed of sustained notes

and harmonies and is arranged for organ-like textures. The remaining hurdles have yet to be crossed. As of this writing, I am not aware of any use of any kind of pipe organ in New Age recordings. The synthesizer is the primary keyboard instrument in much New Age material. Further, the theatre organ, if used in New Age music, would most likely be part of the three- or four- to ten-instrument combos that constitute most performances. Finally, like in all music and entertainment endeavors, there will have to be the "breaks." The breaks are largely a matter of luck and/or influences beyond control of the musicians that determine if their music reaches the acceptance level to enable ongoing concerts, recordings, and airplay.

If the theatre organ is to become a part of the New Age genre, there will need to be experimentation with different styles than we are used to hearing, possibly along the lines of what both Buddy Cole or Paul Beaver were doing years ago and some of the ideas recently heard on Rob Richards' album. As for the nature of the theatre organ itself, no big changes may be necessary although it is possible that an instrument with the sonic clarity and tonal innovation of George Wright's new organ may lead the way.

"There now exists the best opportunity in thirty years ..."

Aside from the now nearly extinct pizza parlor phenomenon, there now exists the best opportunity in thirty years for new exposure and appreciation of the theatre organ by a whole new, and possibly very large, audience. Hopefully, the myriad of inspiration, talent, events and the "breaks" that will enable this to happen will all come together.

To close, I want to state that I am in no way advocating the abandonment of any of the past music and traditions of the theatre organ. All of the efforts at presenting traditional organ programs and silent movie accompaniment, particularly in the setting of the remaining movie palaces, should go on in parallel to any development of new audiences.

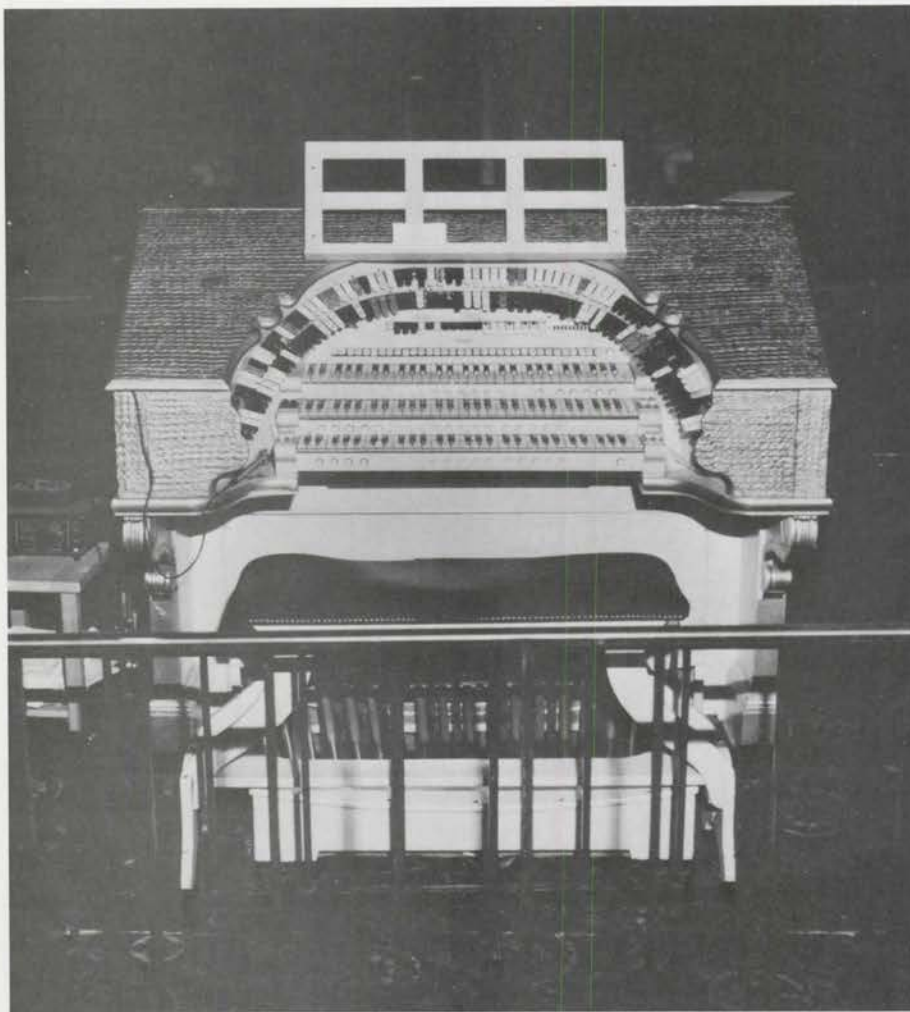
Sincerely,  
Randy Warwick  
Bakersfield, California

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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.

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# Uncle Milt's



## Pipe Organ Pizza Company

*by Gerry Gregorius*

The elegant gold console at Uncle Milt's once entertained patrons of the Oriental Theatre in Portland.

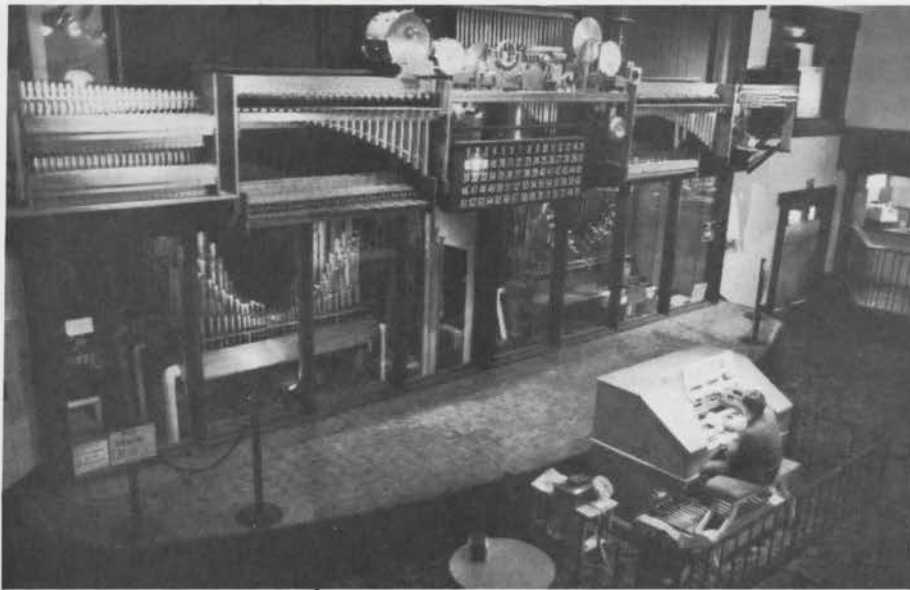
*Claude Neuffer Photo*

The Wurlitzer organ in Uncle Milt's Pipe Organ Pizza Company was originally installed in the Orpheum Theatre, Seattle, Washington, in 1926, boasting three manuals and 13 ranks of pipes along with a full complement of percussions. Shortly before the theatre was razed to make room for a new hotel, the organ was purchased by a local hobbyist and placed in storage. About 12 years later, "Uncle Milt" Kieffer purchased the organ for use in a proposed pizza restaurant in Vancouver, Washington.

A suitable building was located. Milt happened to drive by and saw it empty and boarded up. Originally constructed as a church about 1954, it had been vacant nearly four years. The large building with a balcony and ideally located choir loft made it a natural for the project. It was purchased, and reconstruction and installation of the organ began in May 1978. The grand opening of the restaurant was August of 1979.

The original 13 ranks from the Orpheum are still in the organ, but as is so often the case, additional pipes and percussions were necessary to make the organ more suitable for use in a pizza restaurant atmosphere. Suitable components were found from the organ in the Coliseum Theatre, Seattle, Washington, which had been disassembled for parts. The English Posthorn came from Big Bob's Pipe Dreams restaurant in Burien, Washington, which had closed and the organ sold. Increased wind was necessary and a larger 10 hp blower from the Paramount Theatre, Portland, Oregon, replaced the original blower. The original electro-pneumatic relays were replaced by a much larger system from the B.F. Keith Memorial Theatre, Boston, but even that proved to be inadequate to realize the full potential of the organ; consequently, a custom solid-state electronic relay was constructed and installed. The console came from the Capitol Theatre in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The organ, now 18 ranks, is installed in the front of the room, which had originally been the choir loft. The two glass enclosed chambers contain all the pipework with all percussions exposed and suspended across the entire front above the windows. Swell shades are placed high directly behind the percussions and the egress of sound into the room is complete and well balanced.



The chambers at Uncle Milt's were once a choir loft.

*Don Feely Photo*

Because of an on-going program of improvement and additions, it finally became necessary to obtain another more sophisticated console. In 1986, the Capitol console was removed and replaced with the one from the old Oriental Theatre in Portland, Oregon. This rebuilt console also saw several years of service at the Organ Grinder Restaurant in Portland. It has three manuals but utilizes every inch of space for more efficient use of additional stop tabs on the rails and controls installed in the key cheeks.

As you walk through the unusual entry, the organ is the main focal point. The spacious room has lots of wood with massive, solid timbers supporting the balcony and organ percussions. Tables with comfortable chairs and wrought iron railings complete the decor.

This organ will be heard in concert at the '88 Convention in Portland



The Pink Panther entertains youngsters of all ages at Uncle Milt's.

*Don Feely Photo*



The Pink Panther poses with organist Mark Gerlach at Uncle Milt's.

*Don Feely Photo*

### Chamber Analysis:

MAIN	SOLO
Brass Saxophone	Brass Trumpet
Tibia Clausa	Tuba
Diapason	Oboe Horn
Salicional	Orchestral Oboe
Viol d'orchestra	Tibia Clausa
Viol Celeste	Vox Humana (1)
Clarinet	Vox Humana (2)
Posthorn	Kinura
Flute	
Horn Diapason	



The crew at Uncle Milt's has as much fun as the customers.

*Don Feely Photo*



Photos by Gary Shipe

# The Buffalo Shuffle

By Geoffrey Paterson

It had been 23 years since so many theatre organ fans last gathered in Western New York for a weekend of looking, listening and schmoozing. The 1964 National Convention was one of the first held by the growing ATOE, and it is still talked about today. But where 1964 is remembered for one astonishing concert (Pearl White at Shea's), the 1987 Regional, given the inspired title, "Shuffle Off to Buffalo," will likely be recalled for one heavenly Wurlitzer (Shea's) and a few — too few — spellbinding concert moments.

"What a sound!"

"It's what everybody *thinks* their organ sounds like."

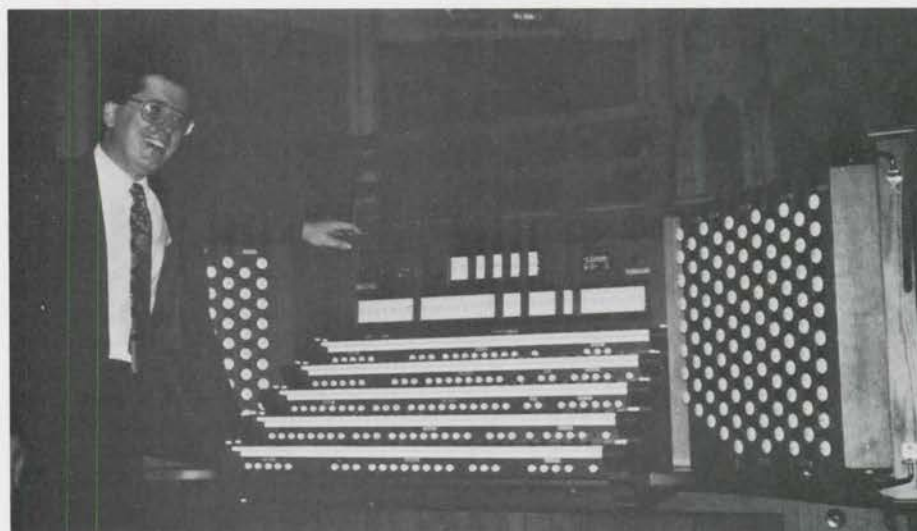
"Never heard anything like it in my life!"

"It's the Fox, the Chicago, and the Paramount all in one organ!"

Those were just some of the comments from awestruck conventioners hearing the rebuilt Shea's Buffalo 4/28 Wurlitzer for the first time. The coalescence of organ and room is synergy at its sonic best. Indeed, one observer noted of this quintessential combination: "It's not perfect, but it'll do until something perfect comes along." What seemed to charm people most was the fact that renovation has not destroyed the patina of age and the warmth it gives the theatre — something that those restored to opening-night sparkle seem to lose in the process.



Ron Rhode, Auditorium Theatre 4/22 Wurlitzer, Rochester, NY.



Walt Strony, at the console of the 5/140 Möller organ, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo, NY.



Robert Wolfe performing at the Riviera Theatre 3/20 Wurlitzer, North Tonawanda, NY.



Home base for the 451 registrants was the downtown Hilton. For a hotel that allegedly caters to conventions, meal service was woefully inadequate. But the beds were big and the ice, though far away, was cold. Many dollars worth of shuttle busses built for ten-year-olds could have been saved if the Hyatt, two blocks from Shea's had been available when the committee got around to calling. The Hilton was just a bit too far away for walking.

Preceded by a tasty wings, weck and champagne reception in the lobby, the opening concert at Shea's featured veteran Lyn Larsen. His scintillating program was no less than the tasteful musical mix we have come to expect from him. It was, alas, no more than that, either, and proved to be the biggest disappointment of the weekend. Uninspired, uncharacteristically careless in too many places, it sounded like he has lost interest but still plays to keep up appearances — much the same feeling conveyed by some of his highly touted CDs.



Dennis James (above) and Thom Gall, First Universalist Church Rochester, NY.

Walt Strony, on the other hand, took the 140 ranks of Holy Trinity's classical Möller and made more honest, inspired music in one hour than we heard for the rest of the convention. Though he is not too widely known for playing the classics, Strony presented a program full of dramatic contrasts exquisitely drawn from the organ's vast resources. He even gave us a classical version of the Crawford Stroll in a delightful French "Sortie." His inability to find the pulse during a rather rough reading of a Bach Prelude and Fugue reinforced the notion demonstrated several times that morning that the more he uses sheet music, the less he plays from the heart. The high point of the weekend came after Walt was handed the names of three hymn tunes in a sealed envelope and proceeded to improvise, cold, a brilliant series of variations on each in the French Romantic style. Had this writer not been in on the selection of tunes, it would have been hard to believe it was unrehearsed. The audience was on its feet shouting for more.

The busses left late for Rochester, held up while the drivers ate their box lunches along with the rest of us. (Why do these plastic treats always come with a piece of fruit so hard that those of us with caps, crowns or partials don't dare eat it?)

The organ in First Universalist Church is the first instrument designed and built entirely by Robert Hope-Jones. As such, it embodies a number of his radical (for 1908) theories of construction and tone. Dennis James, a musician with his fingers in many period pies, was the perfect organist to show it off, and his turn-of-the-century program with lyric tenor Thom Gall was the perfect vehicle. Barely audible at times, sounding underwinded and with no appreciable tremors, the 3/13 Hope-Jones was a bit of a let-down to those who think of RH-J as the grandfather of the Mighty Wurlitzer. But it is a virtually mint example of what he could do at the time when left on his own. The voicing and tone were sweet and lovely, and it was ideal as an accompanimental instrument. We perhaps could have done without the episodic "Battle of Trenton"; even Gall reciting titles and beating a field drum in full battle dress couldn't save what was essentially bad silent film music without the film. But the rest of the duets and organ solos made for a pleasant and unique concert that may have been just a touch too long.

Ron Rhode's concert was so unforgivably rushed that the emcee didn't even take time to tell us who was playing. The 4/22 RTOS Wurlitzer still sounds as lush and clear as ever, as does Ron's playing. It was, again, the perfect match of organist and instrument. His typically variegated program was filled with the unusual oldies he is known for — represented in this case by a Pearl White-ish "Doodley-Do," a frolicsome "Who" and a British selection (from Noel Gay's *Me And My Girl*) played in the American



Conventioneers enthralled by newly restored Wurlitzer Apollo Reproducing Grand Piano (theatre's original) on the Musicians' Gallery.



L. to R: Tim Needler, Dwight Thomas, Bob Goldstine, Louis Shindler at welcoming reception, Shea's Buffalo's lobby.



Dave Junchen (left) and Preston Kaufmann at the closing cocktail party, Buffalo Hilton.



Robert Wolfe, far right, enjoying the closing cocktail party with his manager David Cates, left, and Geoffrey Paterson, Buffalo Area Chapter member from Toronto.

style. But by rushing through the slower pieces, he caused his normally impeccable phrasing, tempo and accuracy to suffer markedly. And, like Larsen before him, the spark was missing.

The word was out that a new console star was about to be born that evening at Shea's, and Dwight Thomas was fully aware of the high level of expectation in the audience. That it made him extremely nervous was plainly, sometimes painfully, obvious through the entire program; the relaxed sparkle he displays at his Indianapolis home base was missing from this, his first full-length convention concert. Despite this unfortunate circumstance, he came across with humor, charm and a level of musical taste that has the potential of developing into something special. One hopes he will soon break away from the all-too-obvious influences of those he admires and thus avoid becoming yet another clone. Certainly his program was varied, but most of it had been done already. Give us more "finds" like that Farnonesque Ampico roll novelty, "Ivory Tips!" He showed lots of imagination in his accents and bridge-work throughout the concert, but the registrations have been done to death. His performance of Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2" was exquisitely orchestrated, smooth and exciting. Dwight Thomas is one to watch closely, because he's heading for the top.

Britain's Robert Wolfe is a bouncy bundle of energy who puts on a show like nobody else. His "schtick" is a style of performance popularized in the seaside resort of Blackpool by the late Reginald Dixon; Robert has taken the Dixon sound, put in some Horace Finch and some Ernest Broadbent, mixed it in his own way and come up with a first-class entertainment. While anathema to some who find the sound and style hard to accept at face value, the show was the liveliest of the weekend. The Riviera's lighting and effects people had a field day

while Robert bubbled and bounced briskly through about two hours of quick-steps, waltzes, marches, foxtrots, serenades, ballads and rags. Registered mostly by hand over a few key piston settings, the 3/20 Wurlitzer produced some of the most uncommon and extraordinary sounds ever heard — a refreshing change from the Crawford/Wright school. The decibel level of the organ borders on the intolerable — there is little subtlety in the instrument anymore. Wolfe got the only half-time standing ovation of the convention and, an indication that, while he may not appeal to some, his popularity in North America is nevertheless real.

A quick stop at the old Wurlitzer factory, now a run-down warehouse and small business center, served to sadly remind us of what once was the busiest pipe organ factory in the world. Aside from the faded Wurlitzer name atop the tower, the only hint of organs about the vast complex is a Lowrey organ dealer on the ground floor.

Hector Olivera closed the weekend for us with an over arranged, drawn-out performance during which he made imaginative and thorough use of the organ's resources. He rendered set pieces like the Dubois "Toccatà," "William Tell Overture," and Vierne "Scherzo" with flair and refinement, but when he got going on a "Trolley Song" in French toccata dress, or a "Sweet Georgia Brown" in jazz idiom, he just didn't know when to stop. During the latter, he did an extended solo on drums and cymbals alone which was brilliant, but even that was twice as long as it needed to be. And talk! We not only heard about how he was hired to play the concert and all about the new baby, we even got a lecture on the relative merits of pipes and electronics in a tone of voice that was insulting the audience to say the least and that turned this writer off for the rest of the concert, but most of the audience was eating out of the palm of his hand.

The closing party in the Hilton's nightclub made up for it, however, and was a great finish to a great weekend. Considering that nobody on the Convention Committee had ever run a convention before, much less been to one, the feeling is that they did a first-class job. This writer has to note a few small things which would improve future conventions: neither emcee bothered to tell us who he was (each happened to be a co-chairman); some organists played gorgeous numbers and didn't bother to tell us the title; the record shop was only open once, after the Hector Olivera concert; and, a substitution of school busses for highway coaches on Saturday should have been explained and apologized for much sooner. And please, anyone who stages concerts, make sure the PA system works, make sure the organist knows *how* it works (does he switch it on or does a sound man?) and, most important, make sure your spotlight people know how to light a horse-shoe console properly and steadily.

To the Buffalo Convention Committee and all those who helped in big and little ways, hats off and thanks for a lot of good music and good fun.



## THANK YOU!

From the Buffalo Area Chapter to all the wonderful people who shuffled off to Buffalo. We made a lot of new friends, and you made a great weekend even better!





Allen Miller (left) with Shea's organ maintenance crew members Warren Miller, John Shaffer, Michael Mancuso (front).



Convention Committee and members of Shea's organ maintenance crew, from left: Warren Miller, Michael Mancuso, Tim Schramm, Laura Whitley, Wayne Rettke, John Shaffer, Maureen Wilke, Allen Miller, Craig Whitley.



Buffalo Area Chapter members from left: Craig Whitley, Warren Miller, L. Curt Mangel, Maureen Wilke. Front: John Shaffer. Closing Cocktail Party.

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# The Municipal Organ of Portland, Maine

by Lloyd E. Klos

The 4/97 Austin, known as the Kotschmar Memorial Organ, in Portland, Maine, was the first municipal organ in America; it has been used almost continuously since its dedication in 1912. Such instruments were rather common in large cities throughout the country earlier in the century, but few remain and are in use today. The organ is the focal point of City Hall Auditorium, and has played a major part in the musical life of the city.

The Kotschmar was the gift of Cyrus H.K. Curtis, a native son, who founded the Curtis Publishing Company in Philadelphia. The company was known for such magazines as *The Saturday Evening Post* and *The Ladies Home Journal*.

Like his father Cyrus L., Curtis loved music and always had a pipe organ in his home. He and his father admired organist composer Hermann Kotschmar, a German immigrant, who had been persuaded by the elder Curtis to move from Boston to Portland in 1849. Because of his admiration for the musician, Cyrus L. added "Kotschmar" to his son's name when the boy was eight years old.

Kotschmar was little known outside of New England, but was well known in Maine. His first job in Portland was conducting the orchestra in the Union Street Theatre. His talents were wasted there, and in 1850 he performed his first organ recital for Portland's Sacred Music Society. Then he was appointed organist at the First Parish Church, a position he held for 50 years. As a composer he is best remembered for his "Te Duem in F." The original manuscript and his baton are in a glass case below the memorial plaque on the rear wall of the auditorium stage; above the plaque is a bust of Kotschmar.

The Austin Organ Company was given the task of building and installing the Kotschmar organ. It was the donor's wish that it would become one of the world's great instruments. In reality, the instrument is eight organs in one — Great, Swell, Orchestral, Solo, Antiphonal, Echo, Percussion, and Pedal, all controlled from a four-manual console. The instrument, except for the Antiphonal and Echo organs which are located above the rear of the auditorium, is installed across the entire width of the auditorium stage. There are over 6000 speaking pipes; the 195 pipes visible to the audience are non-speaking display pipes. The organ includes a number of percussions: Chimes, Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Turkish Cymbal, Crash Cymbal, Xylophone, Marimba, Glockenspiel, Bell, and Carillon. The organ uses a 30-horsepower blower.



Former Municipal Organist Douglas Rafter seated at the new Kotschmar console.

The installation used the Austin Universal Wind Chest System, which was considered a wide departure from the norm. The wind chests are huge rooms to which access is gained through double air-tight doors. The main chest is 53 feet long, 15 feet wide, and eight feet high; on the floor above are five swell chambers 16 feet high in which the pipes are located.

Upon the organ's dedication on August 22, 1912, a Music Commission was established, with the power to appoint the Municipal Organist. They engaged Will C. Macfarlane, a founder of the American Guild of Organists and organ-

ist of St. Thomas' Church, New York City, who served from 1912 to 1919. He set high standards of musicianship and did much to popularize organ music. He invited world-renowned musicians such as pianist Josef Hofmann, violinist Mischa Elman, and Organist Marcel Dupré to perform in the auditorium. Macfarlane was followed by Dr. Irving Morgan, who served from 1919 to 1921. Then Edwin H. Lemare was lured from his municipal post in San Francisco with an offer of an annual salary of \$12,000, a figure never equaled since. He served from 1921 to 1923 and was followed by Charles R. Cronham from 1924 to 1932.



View of the stage and organ as it was originally. The console is the original also.

This was a period of high prestige for the organ, and programs in the auditorium were centered on it. There were concerts every afternoon and they were well received. Sunday and evening concerts featured such artists as Dupré and E. Power Biggs. Performing the complete organ works of Bach, they attracted audiences as large as 2400 persons. In a single season, more than 50,000 were entertained.

Dr. Macfarlane returned for the 1933-1934 season, after which the Music Commission was discontinued and the Municipal Organ Department placed under the jurisdiction of the City Manager. Alfred Brinkler was appointed organist at that time. He maintained a seven-week series of 28 concerts each summer, and a short series of programs during the winter months, engaging many noted guest organists to play. Brinkler held the post until 1952, when John E. Fay took over. In 1976, Douglas Rafter was named Municipal Organist. He served until 1981, at which time Gerald McGee was named to the post. McGee is also organist of St. Luke's Cathedral in Portland.

In 1927, the organ was enlarged, thanks to Curtis, and a new movable console installed, which, with 75 feet of cable, could be placed anywhere on the stage. In 1968, Mary Louise Zimbalist, daughter of Cyrus H.K. Curtis, donated \$44,000 for renovation of the organ. City Hall Auditorium was expanded to better accommodate the organ as well as the Portland Symphony Orchestra. The organ was moved rearward 18 feet, and the Austin Company refurbished the instrument. At this time, an independent Pedal rank, the 16'-32' Magnaton, was removed. A few years later, vandals damaged the 32' Bombard pipes. They were not restored until 1975 when John Weaver, a frequent guest organist, encouraged the public to pressure the City Council to provide the necessary funds.

Free concerts have been given on the Kotschmar since its dedication in 1912. Currently, there is a summer series featuring guest organists during the last three weeks of July and the first three weeks of August. The annual Christmas concert is a Maine tradition, bringing people from distant points. The repertoire is unlimited. John Weaver, director

of the organ department at the Curtis Institute of Music (founded by Cyrus H. H. Curtis in Philadelphia), features classical organ literature; Lee Erwin, known throughout the theatre organ world, entertains with Beatles' songs and Joplin Rags. Others offer choral works.

Two men were responsible for the resurgence of the Kotschmar organ:

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“In reality,  
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Douglas Rafter and the former Maintenance Chief, Burton Witham. Rafter was just a boy when his father brought him to a concert by the then Municipal Organist, Charles Cronham. "I caught organ fever," he says, "and the sight of that wall-to-wall instrument overwhelmed me. I was determined to play it one day."

The day arrived in 1936, after the 21-year-old had become the youngest New Englander to pass the degree examination of the American Guild of Organists. On the threshold of a long career as church organist, teacher and recitalist, he responded to an invitation from Alfred Brinkler, City Organist, to give a recital on the Kotzschmar.

Every summer, he made a pilgrimage to Portland for a concert. In 1971, Rafter and his wife moved to Maine, where he became a church musician and teacher of organ at the University of Southern Maine.

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"It's like  
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He felt like the captain of the "Queen Mary" whenever he played the Kotzschmar. "It's like being a scientist in a well-equipped laboratory. You have everything to work with and are not hard put to improvise with a few basic tools, as in the case of so many church organs." Rafter is quite versatile, being equally at home with classical organ literature, orchestral and operatic transcriptions, and popular music. He has played at least one concert on the organ each year since 1936.

Burton Witham said, "I came to the opening concert with my parents and was enchanted by it. My father wanted me to be an organist, but I neglected practice." Upon his graduation from Westbrook Seminary, he went to the Faust School of Tuning in Boston and then started his own business in Gorham, Maine.

The organist, Rafter, and the mechanic, Witham, made a perfect team; each respected the talents of the other. Because of their love for the instrument, they served Portland with a degree of dedication rarely seen in civil servants. Rafter served as administrator as well as organist, and was responsible only to the City Manager.



The City Hall in Portland, Maine, the Municipal organ is located in the building with the chimney at the right rear.

Largely through the efforts of the "Friends" organizers, Peter S. Plumb and Dr. Malcolm W. Cass, and those of David E. Wallace and Gerald F. McGee, currently Organ Curator and Municipal Organist, respectively, about two-thirds of the necessary work was completed by the end of 1985. The goal, of course, is to hear the organ played to its full capabilities. David Wallace has been supervising volunteers from the Portland Chapter of the American Guild of Organists in washing dust and grime from the pipes. The "Friends" are now financially responsible for the operation and maintenance of the organ.

Witham, who began his tenure in 1938, bemoaned the sporadic financial support for the instrument. A \$1000 annual appropriation was made by the City Council, and it had to be spent by the end of the fiscal year. Witham said in 1979, "I cannot convince them of the wisdom of appropriating enough funds for major repairs." Witham's annual salary was only \$1400. "You might say it's a labor of love."

The fact that the organ was operable was deceiving. It was alive but far from well. The 25 to 30 years of neglect had taken their toll. In 1981, however, "The Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ" was formed for the express purpose of raising funds to completely rehabilitate the instrument.

The most unusual experience? "It came during a Lee Erwin concert," says Alan Kellogg, Business Manager of the Organ Department. "When firemen carrying axes poured into the lobby, I was very glad to have been there, instead of backstage. I halted their entry into the auditorium long enough to go on stage, stop Lee, and ask everyone to step outside while firemen checked out the building. To prevent panic, I never mentioned that a bomb threat had been received. After the building was thoroughly checked, we re-assembled and the concert was completed. It was a 'first' for us, and certainly a 'first' for Lee Erwin."

ATOS members, when in the vicinity, are urged to drop in at City Hall Auditorium in Portland. If they're lucky, they will hear the Kotzschmar Memorial Organ being played.

Tax-free donations may be made to The Friends of the Kotzschmar Organ, Inc., 30 Myrtle Street, Portland, Maine 04101.

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*Information and photographs for this article were furnished by Douglas Rafter, Gerald McGee, Alan Kellogg and Dorothy Bromage.*



The stage and organ as it is today, with the new console.

See next page for  
Kotzschmar Memorial Organ  
Specifications.

“There’s only  
two ways to  
sum up music:  
either it’s good  
or it’s bad.  
If it’s good  
you don’t  
mess about it,  
you  
just enjoy it.”

*Louis Armstrong*

## Opening of Nominations for 1988 Election of Directors

**NOTE:  
DEADLINE IS  
FEBRUARY 1, 1988**

It is time to nominate candidates for the National ATOS Board of Directors for the three-year term from July 1988 through June 1991. All regular ATOS members are eligible for nomination and may nominate themselves or be nominated by other members, in which case written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received before the nominee’s name can be placed on the ballot.

A nominee need have no special talent or experience in pipe organ technology or musicianship; however, nominees should have a demonstrated interest in ATOS and the time to work toward the goals and the growth of the society. While there are certain benefits enjoyed by directors, one of which is the reimbursement of certain meeting-related expenses, there are also responsibilities. Along with a willingness to participate in the administrative affairs of the society, it is most important that Board members faithfully attend both Board and Committee meetings.

The Board usually meets only once a year during Convention, so attendance of all Directors is necessary if the decisions and actions of the Board are to be truly responsive to the membership. In addition, Directors serve on one or more committees providing valuable input to the Board. The chairmen of these committees are responsible for submitting a written report of their activities and recommendations prior to the annual meeting of the Board.

Procedure to be observed in the nomination process is as follows:

1. Each nominee shall furnish a small black and white photo, together with a statement, **not to exceed 100 words**, including personal data, work and theatre organ experience, and a short platform statement.
2. All candidates must have their resumes and photos mailed to the ATOS Secretary, 423 North Stafford Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23220, **no later than February 1, 1988.**
3. Your ballot and the resumes of candidates will be included in the March/April THEATRE ORGAN. By voting for the candidates of your choice, you are demonstrating your interest in and support of ATOS objectives.

If you have any questions, write or call Allen Miller, Chairman, Nominating Committee, 167 Carriage Drive, Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033, or phone 203/633-5710.

# Specification

## KOTZSCHMAR MEMORIAL ORGAN

Austin Organ Company, 1912 / 1927 / 1968

<b>GREAT</b> (Unenclosed)	<b>ORCHESTRAL</b> (enclosed)	<b>ANTIPHONAL</b> (auditorium ceiling)	<b>SWELL</b> (enclosed)
32' Sub Bourdon	16' Contra Viola	8' Diapason	16' Quintaton
16' Bourdon	8' Geigen Principal	8' Grossflöte	8' Diapason Phoron
16' Violone Dolce	8' Concert Flute	8' Harmonic Flute	8' Horn Diapason
8' First Open Diapason	8' Flute Celeste	8' String Celeste - 5 ranks	8' Violoncello
8' Second Open Diapason	8' Dulciana	8' String Celeste - 2 ranks	8' Viola da Gamba
8' Third Open Diapason	8' Viole d'Orchestre	8' String Celeste - 2 ranks	8' Viole Celeste - 3 ranks
8' Major Flute	8' Viole Celeste	8' String Celeste - 2 ranks	8' Muted Viol
8' Bourdon	8' Voix Seraphique	8' Viol from 5 ranks	8' Unda Maris
4' Octave	8' Quintadena	4' Spitzflöte	8' Flauto Dolce
2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> ' Twelfth	4' Flute d'Amore	4' Principal	8' Stopped Flute
2' Fifteenth	4' Dulcet	8' French Trumpet	8' Chimney Flute
	2' Flageolet	String Mixture - 3 ranks	4' Orchestral Flute
(enclosed)	8' French Horn	Tremolo	4' Harmonic Flute
8' Violoncello	8' Clarinet	3 Comb. pistons	4' Salicet
8' Gemshorn	8' English Horn	<b>PEDAL</b>	4' Principal
8' Clarabella	8' Harp	32' Contra Bourdon (Gt)	2 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> ' Nazard
8' Doppelflöte	4' Celesta (from Harp)	16' Open Diapason (Gt)	2' Flautino
4' Holhflöte	Chimes	16' Violone (Gt)	1-3/5' Tierce
16' Double Trumpet	Snare Drum	16' First Bourdon (Gt)	1-1/7' Septieme
8' Trumpet	Turkish Cymbal	16' Dulciana (Gt)	1' Twenty-second
4' Clarion	Fan Tremolo	16' Contra Viola (Orch)	Dolce Cornet - 3 ranks
8' Harp	Antiphonal organ	16' Second Bourdon (from 32')	16' Contra Fagotto
4' Celesta (from Harp)	Orch/Orch 16, 4	8' Octave Bourdon	8' Cornopean
Chimes (from Solo)	Sw/Orch 16, 8, 4	(from 1st Bour.)	8' Corno d'Amore
Snare Drum	So & Ec/Orch 16, 8, 4	8' Octave Flute (Gt)	8' Oboe
Turkish Cymbal	8 Comb. pistons	8' Violoncello Celeste (So)	8' Orchestral Oboe
		10 <sup>2</sup> / <sub>3</sub> ' Quint (Gt)	8' Vox Humana
Sw/Gt 16, 8, 4		4' Super Octave Flute (So)	Valve Tremolo
Orch/Gt 16, 8, 4		32' Contra Bombarde	Fan Tremolo
So & Ec/Gt 8, 4		16' Bombarde (from 32')	
GT/Gt 4		16' Tuba Profunda (So)	Sw/SW 16, 4
8 Comb. pistons		8' Harmonic Tuba (So)	So/SW 8
		4' Tuba Clarion (So)	10 Comb. pistons
		16' Contra Fagotto (Sw)	
		Bass Drum	<b>SOLO</b>
		Crash Cymbal	(enclosed)
		Bell	16' Violone (GT)
		Gt/Ped 8, 5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>3</sub>	8' Major Flute (Gt)
		Sw/Ped 8, 4	8' Grand Diapason
		Orch/Ped 8, 4	8' Gamba
		So & Ec/Ped 8, 4	8' Gamba Celeste
		Ped/Ped 8	4' Flute Ouverte
		3 Comb. pedals	2' Concert Piccolo
			16' Tuba Profunda )
			8' Harmonic Tuba ) 1 rank
			4' Tuba Clarion )
			8' Musette
			8' Tuba Magna
			8' Marimba
			4' Xylophone
			4' Glockenspiel
			Chimes
			Fan Tremolo
			Antiphonal organ
			So & Ec/So 16, 4
			Gt/So 8
			5 Comb. pistons
<b>ECHO</b> (auditorium ceiling)	<b>WIND PRESSURES</b>		
8' Nachthorn	Great	10"	
8' Gedeckt	Swell	10"	
8' Viole Celeste - 3 ranks	Orchestral	10"	
8' Vox Aetheria	Solo	15"	
8' Vox Angelica	Tuba Magna	25"	
4' Fernflöte	Contra Bombarde	25"	
8' Vox Humana	Bombarde	25"	
Carillon	Antiphonal		
Tremolo	Antiphonal	7"	
	Echo	5"	
2 Comb. pistons			



Nothing improves the appearance of a pipe organ chamber more than clean, undented pipework. Most theatre organ pipes have been moved a few times, with significant accumulated dents, and probably with much of the original, 50-odd-years of grime on their surfaces. However, a word of caution is in order before cleaning pipes. Pipe-voicing is an art and amateurs should beware, while cleaning organ pipes, not to alter the voicing by changing the position of mouth parts on flue pipes or the curvature of the tongue on reed pipes.

**Cleaning Wood Pipes:** Use tri-sodium phosphate (TSP) in water solution following directions on the container. TSP is an excellent, suds-free, strong cleaner that leaves no residue, but some users may require rubber gloves to prevent hand irritation. Observe and mark the orientation of pipe stoppers before removing them. Use a damp rag (never a wet rag) to scrub the pipe surfaces. Do a small area at a time and avoid contact with leathered lips. Steel wool soap pads can be used if surfaces are especially grimy, but care must be used not to penetrate or damage the wood finish. Rinse pipe surfaces with a separate damp cloth and warm clear water and then towel dry. Clean the stopper and toe in the same manner. Repack the stopper, if necessary, and make any structural repairs in the pipe that are needed, such as loose glue joints, missing ears or beards, etc. This thorough cleaning takes time, about 6 pipes per hour for small pipes and about one per hour for the large pipes. However, all grime will be removed and the original, orange shellacked surface should gleam. If some surface spots are bare, touch them up with orange shellac (Zinsser Bulls Eye Shellac is very good). Don't re-shellac pipes unless it is necessary. In most cases, the old finish, once uncovered, makes a better appearance.

**Cleaning Metal Flue Pipes:** Metal pipes are made principally of combinations of lead, tin, lead/tin alloys, and zinc. These relatively soft metals can be rather easily cut and shaped by pipe makers and manipulated by pipe voicers. Some reed pipes are made of a predominately lead alloy (say 80% lead and 20% tin) which can tarnish to a very dark blue, almost black, color with age forming an extremely good protective coating against further corrosion. A predominately tin pipe metal (say 90% tin and 10% lead) has a bright, corrosion-resistant surface but cost restricts its use mainly to narrow scaled string ranks. If a bright appearance at low cost is desired, then a thin, tin coating can be clad to one side of sheet lead to form a pipe metal called "hoyt" metal which was used for Wurlitzer Vox Humanas and other reeds. Spotted metal, about a 50/50 alloy of tin and lead, is used for many flue and reed pipes. Zinc is the most rigid of common pipe metals, and for this reason it is used for the resonators of the larger base pipes of many

# Cleaning Organ Pipes

by Herb Merritt

ranks such as strings, diapasons, reeds, etc. Zinc is also used for the boots of many reeds where pipe support strength is important. New zinc is very bright in appearance but oxidizes to a dull dray color with age. Unfortunately, especially if stored in a damp unheated area, zinc can further oxidize or corrode forming a white powdery surface material, sometimes called "White rust," which can destroy the base metal. For this reason pipe makers usually give zinc portions of pipes a coating of shellac or clear lacquer for protection against corrosion. This coating is applied only to the exposed outside surface and is often inadvertently removed when the pipes are cleaned. Therefore, it is necessary to re-coat zinc surfaces after pipe cleaning. Two coats from a spray can of heavy duty, clear lacquer work very well. Protective spray coatings are not required for other types of pipe metal.

Metal pipes are best cleaned with TSP solution but with a few precautions. All string pipes and most other metal flue pipes can be flooded with cleaning and rinsing (a garden hose works very well) liquids. However, some pipes (such as some Diapasons) have upper lips that are leathered which, if soaked, would be removed. Hence these pipes must be cleaned carefully with a damp rag to avoid wetting the leather. Also, steel wool scouring pads are coarse enough to scratch and mar the surface appearance of pipes made of spotted metal or hoyt metal. For these pipes it is best to use 4-0 steel wool, brushed across hand soap as a lubricant, to scour the surfaces.

**Cleaning Reed Pipes:** It is best to first remove the shallot, reed tongue, and wedge and store them in holes bored in a 2"x4"x12" wood block drilled for this purpose. The shallot is easily removed by placing a diagonal cutter at the base of the shallot and prying up gently to exceed the wedge force. Be sure not to get the shallots and tongues mixed up; the shallots are marked but the tongues are not marked. With these parts removed, the pipe may be cleaned with TSP solution and 4-0 steel wool with mild soap to scour the surface thoroughly.

Once pipe resonators are cleaned and dried, pipe repairs should be made. Dents can be removed with a rubber hammer using a steel pipe as a mandrel. Broken seams, joints, braces, etc., should be resoldered. The pipe should be mitered or re-mitered if necessary. Next the zinc portions should be inspected for severe oxidation (the white rust discussed above). This oxide can be removed by brushing some diluted hydrochloric acid on the material, allowing the acid to act, then rinsing with clear water. This acid is avail-

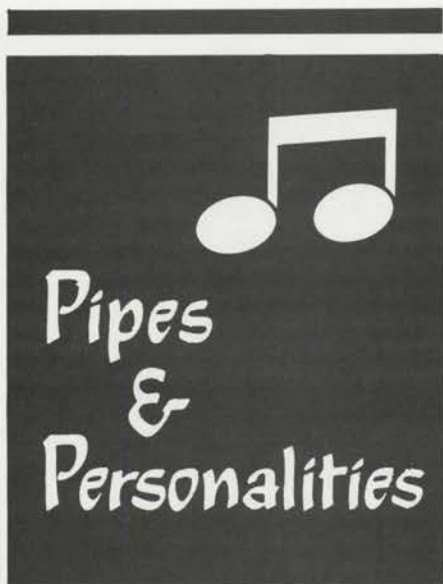
able as muriatic acid from most hardware and building supply stores. Full strength muriatic acid may act too fast to control, hence dilution is desirable to regulate speed. Some experimentation may be necessary, and rubber gloves and eye protection should be used. The pipe should be cleaned of the dirt layer before the acid is applied, otherwise the acid will not be as effective. The acid cleaning can be improved by using 4-0 steel wool to scour the surface while in the acid solution. This acid may blacken other pipe metals so be sure to confine it only to the zinc surfaces and make sure it is thoroughly rinsed off with clear water. Once the zinc is rinsed and dry, spray two coats of clear lacquer over it as a protective coating against oxidation. This acid can also be used to remove any green corrosion which may exist on the phosphor bronze tuning wires.

The reed shallots and tongue should be immersed in a mild brass cleaner (liquid Ajax with ammonia works very well) using a tooth brush to remove dirt, then rinsed thoroughly in clear water and towel dried. After air-drying is complete, the shallot side of the reed tongue should be sanded using the finest grade of crocus cloth to remove pitting and dirt particles embedded in the surface. To do this, lay the crocus cloth on a flat surface, such as glass, then roll out the reed tongue under the tips of the fingers, shallot side on the crocus cloth, and stroke it back and forth across the cloth. Then wipe the reed tongue with a clean cloth and handle it with tweezers afterwards to keep fingerprints off of it. The face of the shallot should be sanded and wiped clean in a similar manner. The shallots and reed tongues can now be reassembled into the blocks using care to achieve correct alignments. There is usually a voicer's mark on the shallot to indicate depth of penetration into the block. It takes 3-4 days to clean a rank of reeds. Do a few pipes at a time, then install and tune them to monitor progress.

Cleanliness is essential to the proper operation of reed pipes. Normally, the reed tongue makes a noise-free rolling contact as it vibrates against the shallot face. However, a tiny speck of dirt can interfere with this rolling contact and cause the reed to slap against the shallot face giving the familiar buzzy sound of a dirty reed. This problem is usually corrected by pulling a dollar bill between reed and shallot face to clean these surfaces. However, meticulously cleaned reed pipes are much less susceptible to these dirt problems.

It is also advisable to scrub all grime from chests, rack-boards, support lumber, percussions, etc., with a damp rag and TSP solution. A clean, neatly installed organ chamber is much easier to maintain. ■

(Author Herb Merritt is a Cincinnati theatre organ hobbyist who has had a Wurlitzer pipe organ in his home since 1970. Ed.)



## George Wright

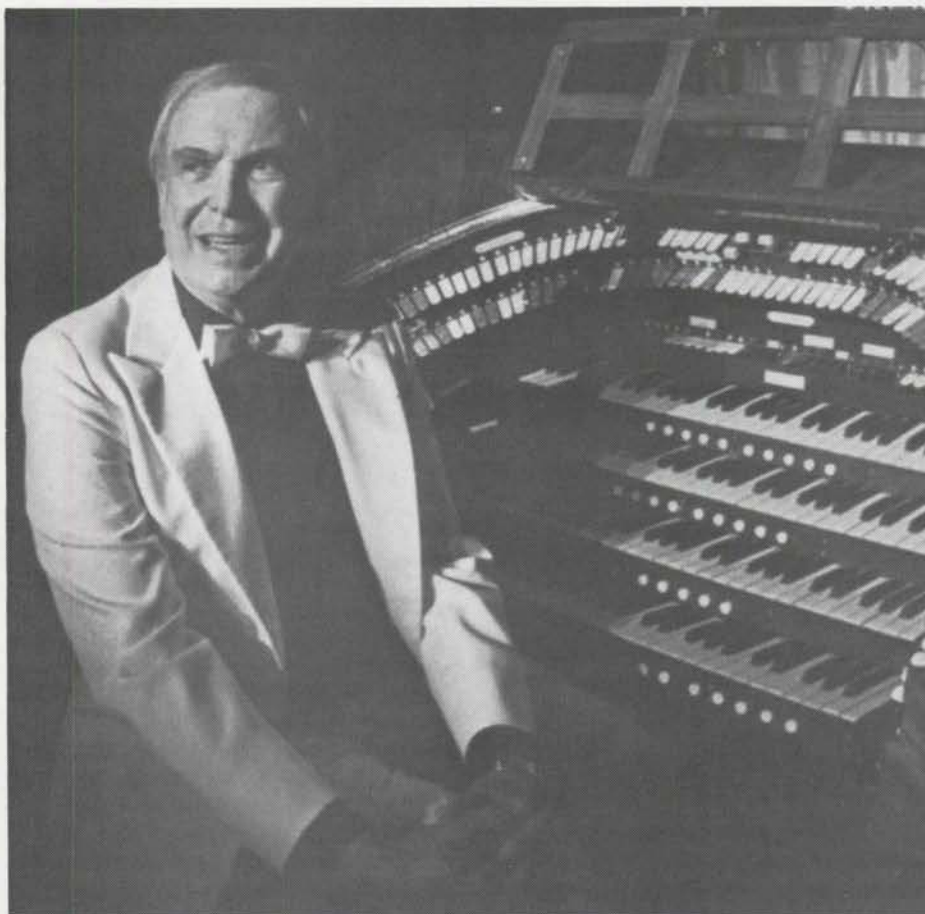
George Wright opened the Oakland Paramount's seventh annual Organ Pops Series for 1987-88 on November 14 when he walked on stage, seated himself at the console of the 4/27 Wurlitzer and played Gershwin's "Of Thee I Sing." The series has been expanded to six concerts through July, and Wright announced that he has been booked for the opening of the 1988-89 series. His new compact disc recording, "Anything Goes," has just been released and was sold in the lobby.

Two up-beat numbers in the first portion of his concert were "Little Rock Getaway" and "Deep Henderson." These will have his legion of imitators practicing for many months. An interesting diversion was "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," with apologies for jumping the Yule season.

The second part of George's program was the music of Cole Porter, George Gershwin and Jerome Kern, something to please everyone in the enthralled audience. He closed with "Night and Day." Wright played two encores: "Way Marie" for a lady in the audience named Marie who chose the key for "Night and Day," with a bit of "Frankie and Johnnie" interspersed.

The final encore was a Veterans Day tribute, with a few words about Armistice Day, George played a beautiful rendition of "My Buddy" with the first three notes of "Taps" worked in after the song's title words. It was lovely. Once again, the Master who took theatre organ from where Jesse Crawford left off into the present, delighted his audience and proved the legend to be true.

*Dr. Edward J. Mullins*



George Wright at 4/27 Wurlitzer console at the Oakland, California Paramount Theatre November 14 when he opened 1987-88 Organ Pop Series. Expanded to six concerts, series continues into July.

*Photo: Oakland Tribune*

## Another Success Story

From Vancouver, British Columbia, the news of the Orpheum Theatre is, indeed, heartening. The theatre's 60th anniversary, on November 7, launched "an entire Diamond Jubilee Season of entertainment aimed at capturing some of the magic of the years past." This quote is from an item in the Vancouver *Playboard* and was sent to us by ATOS member Bill Hale, who has been active in saving the theatre and its Wurlitzer. The next presentation involving the organ will be the screening of *Wings* in April 1988, and Buddy Rogers will appear in person.

The Vancouver *Sun* said of the November show: "Ironically, the day's undisputed star was a man who'd never seen the Orpheum before last week. Veteran theatre organist, 82-year-old Gaylord Carter, coaxed a million dollar soundtrack out of the Orpheum's Wurlitzer theatre organ." Gaylord received a standing ovation at all three programs, according to Bill Hale, from an audience that, for the most part, was hearing the 3/13 Wurlitzer for the first time.

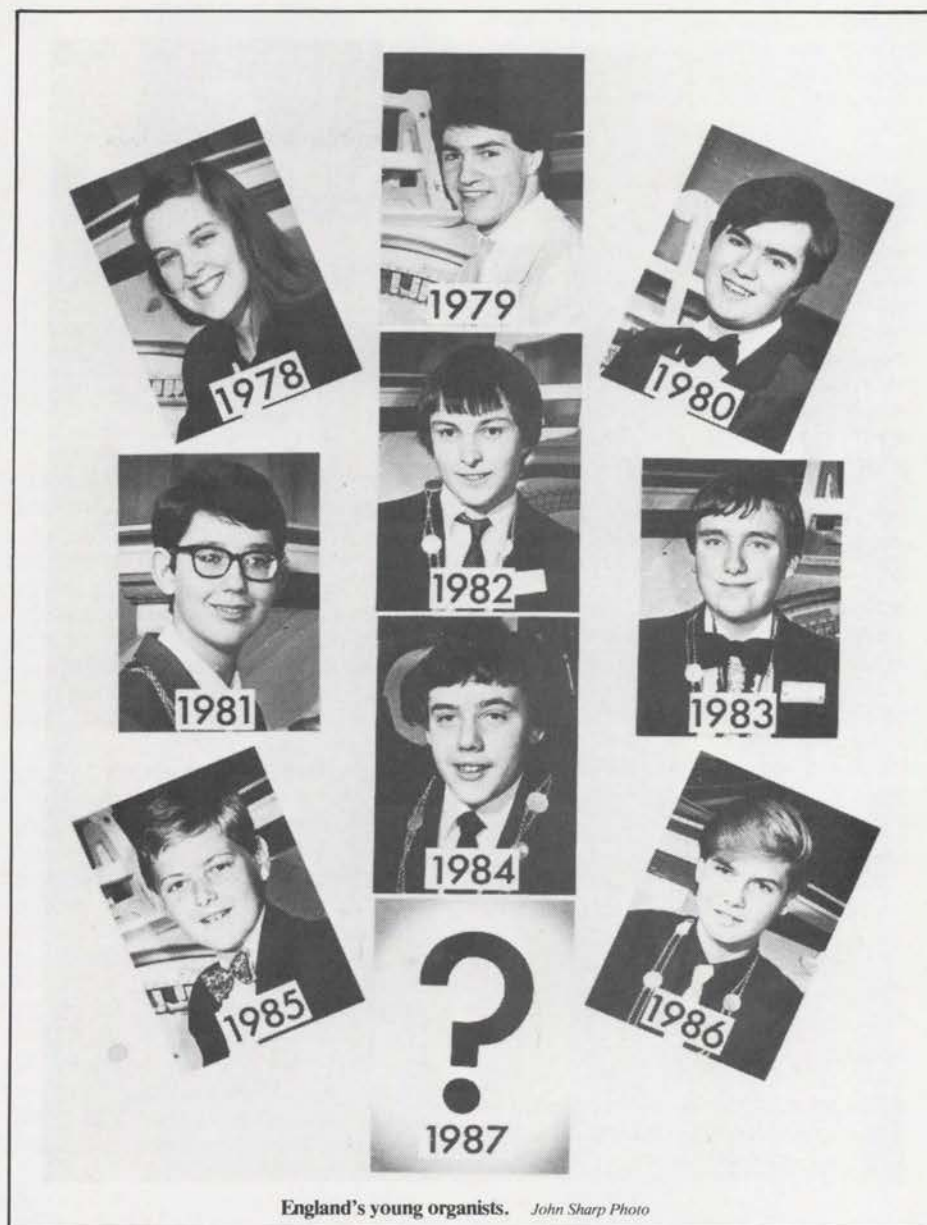
## The Joy of Competitions

At this time I am in the throes of getting acquainted with our competitors for the 1987 Chapter Competition, and looking back over the last ten years of competitions, I find the interest has increased among our young members and perfection is the key word. Remembering our first competition in 1978, at the ex-Gaumont State Kilburn, some very fine artists have matured since that day.

Winner Pauline Dixon, for example, is making a name for herself in concerts and teaching; second prize winner Carol Williams has obtained her F.R.C.O. and is also teaching and giving concerts. Janet Dowsett has made great strides concertising all over the country and has recently been made Promotions Manager for Yamaha. 1979 winner Stephen Vincent, a very fine player, is a proud owner of a Baldwin and has a very large teaching group — his style is a joy to listen to, on pipes or electronic. Our third winner, in 1980, was Michael Wooldridge, a very busy man on the organ scene; he has been to Holland and is a great exponent of the Big Band sound.

The 1981 Competition winner was Rodney Pooley, a brilliant musician. I will never forget his rendition of "Dizzy Fingers" which brought the house down. He has lots of dates in his home town of Eastbourne and is in great demand for all functions at the Floral Pavilion. In 1982 a group from the Midlands entered the competition, and John Barlow took first prize, a very worthy winner. He has so much talent and appreciates Reginald Foort-type music. We would have liked to see and hear more of John over the years, but life is hectic for these young people when they have to study for their futures. 1983 brought David Redfern to the fore, a delightful young man who combines music with a daytime job and thoroughly enjoys life to the full. At last count, he was telling me that he had played at 60 venues and hopes to soon reach 100. We are always pleased to see David and his parents, who support his interests.

In 1984 we went full circle as the winner was entered by our 1979 winner, Stephen Vincent. Winner Paul Sheffield, a cheery, bouncy young man, should go far in the theatre organ scene as he has a feel for the music he plays together with a pleasant personality. 1985, a Yorkshire entry this time to take our Chain of Office from the London area, was Peter Holt, a capable 12-year-old who is at home on pipes or electronics. Peter has been a credit to the chapter and won the national first prize this year for the 12 to 14-year-old class. We are all very happy for Peter.



England's young organists. John Sharp Photo

Our 1986 winner, Martin Harris, is a most accomplished 16-year-old who is hoping to get through to the national finals next year. He has recently obtained credits on the piano and was the winner of the Yamaha competition at the Royal Festival Hall — he is soon to go to Japan to compete in the World Final. We are sure a bright musical future awaits Martin.

Competitions can be nail-biting affairs, like when we had a tie-breaker with David Redfern and Dena Cooper. I really thought a girl would be our champion, but a re-play gave first place to David with Dena second. This hasn't deterred Dena whatsoever as she is a very good member of our chapter committee representing our younger generation. We must know the views of our younger folk so we can give them what they want in the theatre organ movement. It is the only way to keep them interested.

So, you see London Chapter is justifiably proud of its younger members, the

fun of putting on competitions is very rewarding, a lot of effort, of course, but what pleasure to see them try so hard.

I am pleased to say that all of our past entrants are making music somewhere — ice rinks, electronic organ societies, pipe organ concerts or teaching. The message I give to all chapters:

### GET GOING THIS YEAR WITH A COMPETITION ENTRY FOR THE NATIONAL!

You don't know what you are missing if you don't make the effort now!

It is so good when these young folk pop in to see you on their way to an engagement somewhere — they never forget you.

I wonder who will win the 1987 competition? I will keep you posted. Happy listening.

*Edith Rawle*

Sources for this bag of goodies were *Around the Town* (ATT), *Exhibitors' Herald* (EH), *Local Press* (LP), *Metro-nome* (Met.), *Motion Picture Herald* (MPH), *Radio Guide* (RG), *Radio News* (RN) and *Variety* (V).

**September 18, 1928 (LP) ...**

At Rochester's Eastman Theatre this week, organist JOHN HAMMOND's solo is "Lovin' Sam." It is a demonstration of what can be done with a popular jazz number on an organ possessing the resources of the Eastman instrument. In playing this number, the organist calls upon the various instruments of the trap department, among them drums, xylophone and bells, and also plays a Steinway piano from the console. The combination of organ and piano is a most unusual one, and the effort is worth noting.

**December 18, 1926 (V) ...**

Instead of the regular pit overture at the Chicago Theatre, BASEL CRISTOL, organist, and Irving Kaplan, violinist, worked an "Ave Maria" accompaniment to an educational scenic reel, entitled "Sunbeams." Even the kids kept quiet for this combination. A good novelty of serious theme.

**June 11, 1927 (EH) ...**

MORILL MOORE opened the Robert-Morton organ in the Miller Circuit's new Rockhill Theatre, a splendid 1500-seat neighborhood house in Kansas City, Missouri. Moore is also broadcasting his organ music over station WHB.

**September 1927 (LP) ...**

LES HOADLEY is at the \$50,000 golden-tone Barton which he opened in Milwaukee's Uptown Theatre.

**August 1928 (LP) ...**

BILLY WRIGHT's presentation at Kansas City's Midland Theatre is entitled "The Straw Vote."

**December 1928 (ATT) ...**

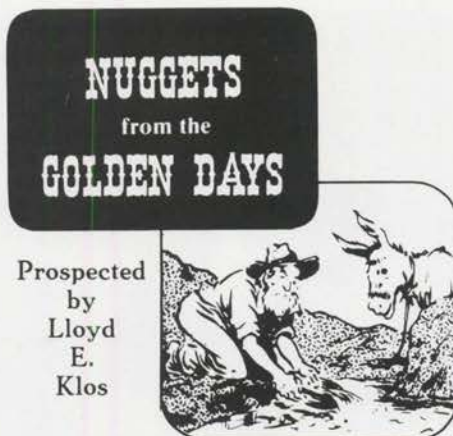
An unusually clever feature organist in his first year at Philadelphia's Kent Theatre is WILLIAM J. STEWART. His featuring is very picturesque and he has won the admiration of his patrons with his remarkable personality. He was formerly at the Logan Arcadia in Philadelphia where he also scored a hit.

**December 1928 (ATT) ...**

WILLIAM H. ANDREWS opened Philadelphia's Tower Theatre where he is featured as solo organist. He had previously played in the Frankford and opened the Roosevelt. He is very well liked at the Tower and has a nice following.

**March 1929 (Roxy Weekly Review) ...**

A short, personally conducted excursion behind the musical scenes at the Roxy Theatre in New York. Hear those chimes! Easter and chimes are appropriately paired here. And perfect chimes, more perfect than the great ones which



Prospected  
by  
Lloyd  
E.  
Klos

hang in cathedral spires. Each bell in a cathedral continues vibrating so long after it is sounded that it blurs the succeeding notes. Not so in the Roxy as a patented robot dampens each sound the instant the next note is struck. The organist can play them from the console, or in a big room by themselves. Clever shutters cut the sound or let it through. Electric hammers strike the cylinders of alloy. There are five tons of chimes, from seven to 11 feet long, and hung in a room 16 feet high.

There are three Kimball organs under one roof. A music roll plays the rotunda organ. But, it takes three specialists, all going full tilt to get all which is possible out of the grand organ in the auditorium. It is difficult to tell whether it or the orchestra is playing, so clever is its simulation of winds, brasses and strings. The main console, where LEW WHITE is king, rises throne-like in the center. He makes it talk, moan and sing. He's very good at teaching others how to do it, too. The console is of five manuals with pedals and a chime keyboard.

There are no pipes in chambers high above the floor to roll the sound overhead. All the sweet tunes, thundrous rolls, and throbbing tones come from the orchestra pit. The chambers are under the stage. Reason: Roxy needed the space the pipes would have filled for his choral stairways, a memorable feature here.

The organ console in the broadcasting studio has two manuals.

**April 18, 1929 (LP) ...**

OWEN JAMES has opened the Wurlitzer in Miami, Oklahoma's Coleman Theatre.

**May 1929 (Met.) ...**

The Senate Theatre in Chicago has gone from one picture a week to a split-week policy. More good news for the organists!

**June 28, 1929 (LP) ...**

The 5651-seat San Francisco Fox Theatre at Polk and Market streets opened today with Hollywood celebrities on the scene. With Will Rogers as master of ceremonies, the bill included a Fanchon & Marco stage revue "California Capers"; the all-talking film *Behind the Curtain*

with Lois Moran and Warner Baxter; and JAMIE ERICKSON at the 4/36 Wurlitzer.

**December 1929 (LP) ...**

At the 3436-seat Hollywood Theatre in Detroit, Marilyn Miller is appearing in the all-color, all-talking, all-singing picture *Sally*. On stage is "The Perfect Nut," Joe Christy, with the Hollywood Merry-makers. BOB CLARKE is at the 4/21 Barton.

**Circa 1930 (V) ...**

JESSE CRAWFORD's contribution for the week was programmed "A Yankee Concert," made up of a lot of real patriotic and popular flag-waving stuff and introduced "Yankee Rose." But the latter number failed to click with the audience. It hasn't the swing to give it popular appeal.

**Circa 1930 (V) ...**

HENRY B. MURTAGH entitled his offering "For No Good Reason At All," taking a lot of gag parodies and clicking like a million dollars with them.

**Circa 1930 (V) ...**

The Met has recently lost its featured organist, ALBERT HAY MALLOTTE, who has opened an organ school. His loss leaves a real gap in the show.

**June 1931 (LP) ...**

LEO TERRY is featured at the Wurlitzer in Chicago's Paradise Theatre.

**August 1931 (MPH) ...**

PAUL MILLER, who has been featured organist at the Hollywood in Gowanda, New York for the past three years, has been visiting friends in New York City.

**August 1931 (MPH) ...**

New York City organist DOLPH GOEBEL, who has returned from his European honeymoon, is awaiting a new assignment from Publix.

**December 1931 (LP) ...**

HAL BECKETT is presenting organ-ludes at the Brooklyn Fox Theatre's 4/36 Wurlitzer.

**January 8, 1932 (LP) ...**

"Eight big acts of glorified vaudeville" are playing this week at Baltimore's Century. *Two Kinds of Woman* with Marion Hopkins is the feature film, and AL HORNIG at the Wurlitzer plays a songfest.

**April 8, 1932 (Roxy News) ...**

Dr. C.A.J. PARMENTIER shares the Kimball's bench this week with CHARLOTTE TAUBER. Directing the Roxy Symphony Orchestra is Fred Waring.

**August 1932 (MPH) ...**

RUSSELL BICE at Detroit's RKO Downtown, brushed the dust off the console whose organ has been silent for a number of weeks. His opening performance seemed weak on selections, but with the assistance of the Schwab &

Wiegand banjo-accordion team, Bice got fair response and applause.

#### December 1934 (RG) ...

You will hear WILLIAM MEEDER on the new NBC organ instead of Lew White, Sundays at 8:30 p.m. and weekdays at 8:15 a.m. over the NBC Network from WJZ, New York.



**SAN SYLMAR PRESENTS REX KOURY AT THE MIGHTY WURLITZER, No. KD 2025. \$10.00 postpaid from Rex Koury, 5370 Happy Pines Dr., Foresthill, California 95631.**

The combination of Rex Koury and this 36 rank (or more) dream organ is a most enjoyable combination. As for Rex, he has been prominent in ATOS circles for many years. In fact he's a recent past president of the organization. His musical credits extend from 1930s theatre organ broadcasts which this then New York state reviewer picked up on his model 60 Philco from a Massachusetts radio station — "the youngest professional organist on the air." We recall (over many years) how we envied the talent he had for trumpet "rides" — the solo jazz improvisations heard in early 1930s dance orchestras. He was "with it" then and he still is. But not only as a pop player. For example, Rex was commissioned by the Sussex Theatre Organ Trust (England) for a "Concerto for Theatre Organ and Orchestra" to be premiered by the Worthing Symphony Orchestra (South Britain).

#### FIRST THE INSTRUMENT ...

The mostly Wurlitzer organ in the Merle Norman Musical Instrument Museum in Sylmar, California (near Los Angeles) is the brain child of J.B. Nethercutt, who heads the Merle Norman firm of beauty products. Organbuilder Richard Villemin and assistant Gordon Belt installed the original 3/17. Belt remained with the museum as organ technician and has supervised most of the additions (a 4-manual console and double the number of voices). Mr. Nethercutt is a very exacting man; he wants the many instruments in his museum in perfect condition at all times. This is to the advantage of performers. On this digital recording, the organ never sounded better.

#### Let's look at the selections ...

42nd Street Medley includes the title tune, "Shadow Waltz," "About a Quarter to Nine," "Shuffle Off to Buffalo,"

#### September 1935 (RN) ...

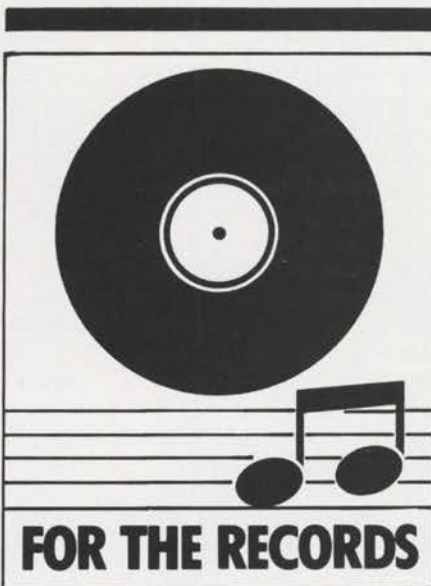
RICHARD LEIBERT, Radio City organist, will shortly inaugurate a series of organ recitals weekdays at 7 p.m. The concerts on WJZ, New York, replace the orchestra programs under Dr. Frank Black and Leo Spitalny.

#### September 1935 (RN) ...

FRANCIS J. CRONIN at the organ and Virginia Warren, soprano, will be heard today at 5:00 p.m. over the Yankee Network which includes WLBZ in Bangor, Maine; WANAC, Boston; and WORC, Worcester.

That should do it for this time. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector ■



and a somewhat surprising "Lullabye of Broadway" (was it in that film? - Nope!). Lots of instrumental and tempo variety here, and striking key changes throughout the 6:35 minutes of Harry Warren classics.

"Harbor Lights," an enduring favorite, enjoys fine expression and interesting key changes. We enjoyed the coda on the strings.

"Summer Samba" is a lighthearted, carefree tune in those catchy South American tempos. The piano is heard, also other percussers.

"Run for the Roses" is a familiar melody even if the title isn't. Fine solo Tuba and Tibia counter melody work.

Michael Landon fans will enjoy the David Rose theme which is strung throughout TV's "Highway to Heaven" with often inspiring effect. Rose's incidental music is right up there with that of Max Steiner and Eric Korngold, and Rex Koury makes the most of it with deft and sensitive interpretation.

To compare late and early David Rose, how proper to follow with "Holiday for Strings," an offbeat pop he wrote while conducting the orchestra on the *California Melodies* broadcasts in the early '40s. It was his first hit (long before "The Stripper") and its lively plucked string instrumentation and interesting key changes maintain its freshness today. Needless to say, the Koury interpretation does it full justice.

Side II opens with "Beyond the Sea," a long time favorite also known as "La

Mer." As presented by Rex, this sea is fairly calm; that is, the inevitable rolling waves are ephemeral and never overdone. We enjoyed the very different harmonies which lead up to the coda. Nice counter tunes against the opening brass melody, too.

Ellington's "Satin Doll" enjoys the bouncy treatment called for. It even has brief piano passages in the style of the Duke.

Rex's one semi-classic is Borodin's "Polovtzi Dance" which was adapted to become "Stranger in Paradise" in a popular musical, *Kismet*, in 1953. Rex injects the proper voluptuous and romantic oriental atmosphere.

A favorite "oldie" with this reviewer is "All Through the Night." Its fast-moving, downward chromatic melody is irresistible. Rex's arrangement maintains the proper tempo while adding some Posthorn punctuation, but briefly.

We have rarely heard a more introspective rendition of "Invitation" than the one Rex Koury presents here. Beautifully phrased and registered. This sensitive styling presents some deliciously impassioned moments.

Regarding 1932's "April in Paris," tunesmith E.Y. Harburg, was once asked how he could write about Paris, since he had never visited the City of Light. His sage reply was "I've never been over the rainbow, either! But I managed." So be it; "April" has a definite European atmosphere as presented in the Koury styling. There's a street organ sequence rife with percussions but mostly it's deliciously sentimental.

The digital recording (under the Klavier Audiophile label) is top quality. The review pressing was perfectly centered and the surfaces smooth and free of pops and other noise.

Jacket notes are adequate with some biography of Rex Koury (he's had an impressive career in the musical end of numerous well-known radio and TV programs) plus information about the organ and museum. It's a first class package.

Stu Green

Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising organ recordings are encouraged to send review copies to the Record Reviewer, THEATRE ORGAN, 4633 S.E. Brookside Drive, #58, Milwaukie, Oregon 97222. Be sure to include purchasing information (postpaid price, ordering address) and a photo of the artist which need not be returned.

## Closing Chords



BETTY GOULD

**Betty Gould**, ATOS Hall of Fame Organist, died November 12 in Phoenix, Arizona. Her musical career spanned a period of 70 years.

At age eleven she accompanied vaudeville acts in Midland, Michigan, and at thirteen played silents on the piano in Detroit. Her first theatre organ job was at the Oxford Barton in the twin cities,

where she was tutored by Dan Barton.

After a brief stint at the Broadway-Strand in Detroit, she moved to Chicago where she played the Lakeside, New Harding, Oriental, McVickers, Roosevelt, Tivoli, Uptown, Norshore and Chicago theatres. The International Jazz Congress designated Betty as "All Chicago Organist."

She moved to New York when her husband, choreographer Dave Gould, accepted a Broadway job. She was quickly hired by Fox and assigned to the Fox 14th Street Theatre. In early 1929 she was asked to assist in opening the new St. Louis Fox, where she played morning recitals on the auditorium Wurlitzer and through the day on the lobby Möller. Upon her return to New York she was promoted to the Brooklyn Fox.

In 1930 Betty teamed with Priscilla Holbrook for a long run as a twin-console duo at the Stapleton Paramount on Staten Island.

S.L. "Roxy" Rothafel hired Betty and Alex Richardson in late 1932 to open the

new RKO Roxy Theatre (the name was soon changed to Center Theatre) in the Rockefeller Radio City Complex. During her years at the Center she began broadcasting on NBC from the theatre, and soon had her own morning show on WMCA, where she was christened "Radio's Princess of the Console."

In the late 1930s she began demonstrating Hammond, and this led to a series of hotel jobs in New York City, Connecticut and Atlantic City. In 1949 she moved West where she played in Albuquerque, Tucson and Phoenix.

Betty returned to pipes in 1975 when she was hired by Bill Brown to help staff his Organ Stop Pizza restaurants in Phoenix and Mesa. That same year she was elected to the ATOS Hall of Fame, and she continued to play on a regular schedule until her retirement in 1984.

During the 1985 ATOS Phoenix regional convention Betty fascinated her audience by sharing stories from her long career as a theatre organist.

*Karl R. Warner*

### RICHARD S. VILLEMEN

An era in organbuilding came to an end October 10 with the passing of **Richard S. Villemén**. He recently completed 50 years as an organ serviceman. Although he had been a lifelong booster of the pipe organ, the theatre organ was his first love.

Villemén's Porterville, California, home boasted what had once been a pint-size 2/4 style B Wurlitzer which he helped blossom into a beautiful, Crawford-like studio 4/14. He was so stricken with the early sounds of Jesse Crawford that he had his home instrument equipped with a style R player with a large selection of Crawford rolls. Richard once lovingly accused the Poet of recording some of his vintage 78 Victor records from the rolls as the timing and registration matched so perfectly. A somewhat bemused Crawford replied, "I most certainly did not!" Years later, Richard remarked, "Can you imagine the nerve of a young punk kid asking a person the stature of Mr. Crawford a question such as that?" Villemén's love of the early Crawford sound culminated years later in a fine, two-record release by Doric Records. Richard brought his 4/14 to a state of tonal perfection for the recording session which was under the direction of the late Frank Killinger.

In WWII Villemén served as a radio operator on many raids into enemy territory on the fabled B-17 bombers. Strangely, one of the very planes on

which he served is on permanent display at the Tulare, California, airport, less than 20 miles from his home. While serving in the Army, he was able to sample many of the theatre organs (and cathedral organs) around the British countryside. He learned a great deal during his off-duty time by working with Wurlitzer personnel in the Isles. One with whom he worked was Tommy Perkins of the Wurlitzer staff. He once said that "it was quite an experience to be sitting holding keys for the tuner. You would hear a bomb whistle towards the earth — then there would be silence while you waited and wondered where the explosion would be. Meanwhile, the tuner was way up in the walls of the theatre, completely undaunted by any of this. Suddenly you realized he was bellowing 'NEXT! NEXT! G-D-IT, NEXT!'" Although he never cared to be known as an organist, he could play up a storm in what he called "the poor man's Paul Carson style." He had a vast repertoire of memorized music. Word of the serviceman's ability spread, resulting in a stint at the 3c/8 Wurlitzer in the Granada Bedford. However, playing the various pipe organs of Great Britain was really very much in the background. In the U.S. Army 8th Air Force, he served his country on dozens of secret bombing raids over Germany. He was involved in the Normandy invasion and was awarded the Middle Eastern Ribbon with seven bronze stars, the Distinguished Unit Badge and the American Defense Service Medal. He served the 8th Air

Force as chapel organist.

Villemén owned and operated Villemén Pipe Organs, specializing in rebuilding and re-leathering existing instruments. He was also a long-time sales and service representative for M.P. Möller. One memorable project was the removal and reinstallation of the San Francisco Fox 4/36 Wurlitzer. The large Wurlitzer in the San Sylmar Museum of J.B. Nethercutt was fully restored and installed by Richard and his crew. He was the only person at that time who was interested in taking on such a phenomenal restoration project. This was NOT just a re-leathering or rebuilding job — it was a FULL restoration: polished switchstack buss bars, new, cotton-covered cable, the entire organ refinished to look like new. It would not be an understatement to say that the demands he exacted on this job provided interest in instruments that not only sound good, but are also craftsmanship-like works of art as well. Pride, quality and art are all part of the qualities he demanded in a rebuild/restoration. Without these attitudes, you did not work for or with Richard Villemén.

During the fifties and sixties, he was the major organ studio serviceman and tuner for famed Los Angeles area studios. He preferred this type of "field work" to voicing and tonal matters. However, he could tune an organ like no one else — all from experience with the Wurlitzer people in Great Britain during WWII. His studio cards read like a *Who's Who* from the early days of the theatre organ's re-

birth: Whitney, Cole, Kearns, Vaughn and Wright. At the peak of his activity, he serviced about 300 organs throughout the western United States.

Villemin was a charter member of ATOS and the newly established Sequoia Chapter, based in Fresno. Two chapters have been most fortunate to have him work on their chapter-owned Wurlitzers, Nor-Cal's 4/32 and the 2/9 Wurlitzer for the Sequoia Club.

Richard was a true professional in every sense of the word. He never had an unkind word for others in the profession. However, he could pop out with a gem every once in a while. There was, on occasion, a lost organ soul that could rub a blister. On one such event, he verbally clobbered the individual with "False teeth, false hair, false personality — what else is left?" Those present nearly fell over because such events were, for him, so rare and very funny. We could all learn from his professional example.

With Richard's passing, there is not only a major void that cannot be filled, there is also a link to the people of the first era of theatre organ. He knew personally people such as Pope, Hirschmann, Rogers, Davey, Maas and Bolton.

We offer our sympathy to his sister, Ruth V. Dresser, and his brother, Phillip Villemin.  
*Tom DeLay*

## A REMEMBRANCE of Richard S. Villemin

by David Schutt

I remember meeting Richard about 1949 when he was getting further into the pipe organ maintenance business on a part-time basis. He and Bill Saylor had maintenance contracts on many of the church organs in California's San Joaquin Valley. Fred Perkins in Fresno had the rest of them. Dick had a five-rank Wurlitzer installed in his home. After seeing it and hearing Dick play in his style of infectious good humor, I knew that I had been seriously bitten by the theatre organ bug. There are probably hundreds of people who can trace their interest in organ music and organbuilding directly to Dick Villemin's influence. His enthusiastic and unselfish approach to the organ fascinated those of us who came in contact with him.

Dick came from a musical family of California pioneers. Dick, along with his younger brother and sister, were very precocious children. They all skipped grades in school and completed high school early.

Although the silent movie era was essentially over, as a youngster Dick was playing and fixing organs in all the nearby theatres. He probably sent more time

at theatres than he did in school. In fact, his sister Ruth remembers her teacher was very distressed because she fell asleep in class because she had been up all night holding notes while Richard was tuning an organ in a theatre. This was when she was twelve years old.

Richard was on the mailing list and an enthusiastic contributor to the original "round robin" letter that was circulated among theatre organ enthusiasts — before the days of the founding of the ATOE and ATOS. One of Richard's favorite theatre organs is the 4/14 Robert-Morton in Fresno's Warnors Theatre. He protected that organ from time, rodents (both two and four-legged), and water. When anything needed to be done to that organ, Richard was always available. He got it sounding better than ever when George Wright played a concert there for the local chapter of the A.G.O. back in 1958.

Richard loved to tell organ stories. Recently, he expressed astonishment that a very, very old lady spoke to him in the grocery store and asked, "Didn't you play the organ in the Monache Theatre?" First of all, he was amazed that anyone remembered it at all. Second, "How could she recognize me after over fifty years?" And most surprising of all, he didn't think that anyone could possibly still be alive who was a grownup when he was a cute little boy at the huge theatre organ console.

Well, I'm not surprised. At that time the Monache Theatre in Porterville was the center of cultural and social life for that rural area of the southern San Joaquin Valley. Richard had tons of musical talent and could play anything by ear. People for miles around must have been thrilled by the sounds he got out of that 2/10 Smith organ.

The Monache Theatre was Richard's "home away from home." Because it had no Tibia Clausa, he saved his money and ordered one from Organ Supply, complete with chest. He also added a third manual and a Chrysoglott to the organ. When he came back to Porterville after serving in WWII, the Monache organ didn't play very well. The Smith pneumatics were covered with rubber cloth that had hardened because of the years of disuse and the intense summer heat of the San Joaquin Valley. The first thing he did was to re-leather all the pneumatics and restore the organ to perfect playing condition. When the theatre was torn down and the organ removed,

*continued on next page ...*



Richard S. Villemin and the console of his 4/14. The console was something of an inside joke — it was loaded with dummy stops. It was the sound that mattered. The sound is pure early Jesse Crawford. We have lost a true friend.  
*Pete Sweeney Photo*

### Richard Villemin cont.

Dick installed a new console and moved it to a church in Porterville. He kept the Tibia Clausa for his home organ. The Tibia can be heard on the Doric record of Jesse Crawford's rolls. Richard recently donated the original Smith console to the Porterville Historical Museum.

This story illustrates Dick's dedication to preserving the organ. He was always a soft touch to any church, theatre, individual, museum, etc., that would keep any kind of organ from being scrapped or broken up for parts. He genuinely appreciated the love and hard work that goes into the creation of any pipe organ. Furthermore, he would spare no effort to restore a pile of parts to perfect playing condition. There are thousands of ranks of pipes world-wide that owe their lives to his career in the organ business.

Richard did not want public recognition for his achievements. He preferred to work behind the scenes. Consequently, his expertise was largely confined to an inner circle of friends of the organ. His reputation for quality work was a "word-of-mouth" sort of thing. A list of his work on important church and theatre organs would have lots of interesting surprises. His biggest theatre job was the removal and reinstallation of the Wurlitzer organ from the Fox Theatre in San Francisco. This 4/36 giant (including 32' Diaphones) was moved to the Frank Lanterman residence in La Canada, California. His largest church project was the complete re-leathering of the famed Harvard Memorial Church 4/100 Aeolian-Skinner, now being installed in Bakersfield, California.

Although we have lost another one of the great old-style organbuilders in the James Nuttall, Frank Rogers, Louis Maas, Henry Pope tradition, we are fortunate that Richard Villemin shared his knowledge so freely with those of us who are interested in the organ and its preservation. His present business consists primarily of performing shop work for other organ restorers. Dick Villemin trained Joe and Martin Lamborena in the pipe organ arts since childhood. These fine young men are continuing the business with the quality that clients of the Villemin Pipe Organ Company are accustomed to receiving. If you have a Wurlitzer, Estey, Murray M. Harris or some other make pipe organ chest, regulator or relay, you can count on an exemplary restoration job.

Richard Villemin will certainly be missed by the organ world. How I wish I could hear him play "Tip Toe Thru the Tulips," "While Strolling in the Park One Day," or "Sonny Boy" one more time. However, those of us who knew him as a friend, musician, confidant, advisor, and dramaticist have many fond memories to guide us. ■



IAN DALGLIESH

In 1928, the start of the cinema organ boom in Britain, Mr. Spurdén-Rutt designed several models of his New Electric Organestra. Builders were given to inventing names like Kinestra (Compton), but unlike Compton, Rutt didn't catch on despite obviously high standard work. Two organs were made in 1928, a 2/6 for the Palace Cinema Slough, Buckinghamshire, and a similar model for the Super Cinema Oxford. Despite much advertising in the trade press, with the usual praise from famous organists, I can only find one other unit organ opened on September 23, 1935, in the rebuilt Regal Cinema Highams Park in east London. This was a 3/6 model with the coupler manual in the middle instead of the usual top position. It had an illuminated console surround, as did virtually every cinema organ in the 1930s. There were one or two organ club concerts on this organ, and the tone was pleasant as I recall. The palace Slough organ went into a church, and the Oxford Super Cinema lay hidden and forgotten under a wide screen. The Highams Park Regal went to Bingo, and its console was covered by a rostrum.

Charles Davidson, a friend of mine who collects unusual pipe organs, discovered the Higham organ about 17 years ago and tried to coax the owners into selling it, but no luck. Eventually they gave in, but not before Charles discovered that some idiot had walked over the soundboards and destroyed quite a few pipes. Putting the organ in store, he was subsequently offered the Palace Slough Rutt by the church, and he bought it, despite its having been altered, for pipework and parts. At the time, Charles had seven pipe organs in store! He approached Bill Walker of the St. Albans Organ Museum to see if they would be keen to add it to their collection (they have a 3/10 Wurlitzer), and they said that they would!

Dennis James came over here to play concerts in May, and performed a brilliant re-opening concert on the Highams Park Regal at St. Albans. So the saga has a happy ending. The organ is on long-loan, and Mr. Davidson has also given them his Möller Artiste Player unit to be connected to the Rutt so that the public touring the museum will be able to hear this lovely organ when no organist is there.

## CINEMA ORGAN NEWS

### FROM GREAT BRITAIN

One is so terribly accustomed to write and read about Comptons and Wurlitzers and Christie organs in the U.K. that it gives me some pleasure to tell you about the rebirth of one of our lesser-known builder's forays into the realm of theatre organ. Robert Spurdén-Rutt, after years of the usual training, commenced in his own business in Leyton, east London, in 1899, and carried on a successful business building church organs until his death in the 1950s when the business was taken over by Walkers.

Mr. Spurdén-Rutt was quite a character who lived in his factory. His living room doubled as a board room and to give the impression that he employed more staff, when customers came to tour the works, he got staff to run round, remove coats, etc., and appear in other rooms! He was in awe of Jimmy Compton and Jimmy Taylor, the latter being a director of Rutt's firm. It is known that they also carried out some contract work for Compton.

Some fine American organists have entertained us this year: Rex Koury, Ron Rhode, Dennis James, Walt Strony and a first time visit by Tom Hazleton. Few organists, however, have had such an exhausting schedule of concerts and played such a wide variety of organs as Hazleton. His tour ranged from classic Southwark Cathedral London to The Plough (a pub in Great Munden Hertfordshire) which contains a superb Compton. Tom played the beautiful 3/11 Wurlitzer in the New Victoria Centre, Howden-le-Wear near Durham, and a concert on the four-manual Hope-Jones organ in Battersea Town Hall in south London. Derelict for some years, this fine organ with stop key console is being brought back to life by the COS members in London. Tom played the Walthamstow Granada 3/12 Christie in concert with Douglas Reeve and Les Rawle, which didn't give us much time to hear his talent, but the next concert certainly did! A truly brilliant performance on the largest and, in my opinion, the finest Wurlitzer in Europe, the COS London organ at the Borough Polytechnic Edric Hall, where Tom brought out the hallmark of Wurlitzer tone in a well-chosen program. Tom performed the opening concert on the beautiful home installation of our own superb organist, David Shepherd. David's home houses a splendid, mostly Compton 3/9 organ, expertly installed and voiced — nothing but praise has been lavished on this installation.

*(The false rumours of the removal of the world famous Compton from the Odeon Leicester Square London were scotched by Odeon Theatres. In fact, the world famous cinema may add several more screens by building over its dressing room block which will not affect the main auditorium which is still intact. The organ celebrates its 50th birthday this year, an a fantastic organ it remains!)*

Well, that's all from me — keep those Tibias throbbing!





3/6 Spurden-Rutt in restored condition, now at St. Albans Organ Museum.  
*David Ranger Photo*



Tom Hazleton at the console of David Shepherd's Compton. David is well happy, as you can see.  
*John Sharp Photo*

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**Hear Lyn Larsen**  
at the 4/48 Wurlitzer

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Dinner will be served in the Spanish Ballroom of the historic 1924 Olympic Four Seasons Hotel, recently given a lavish \$55 million restoration. Expected arrival at the Portland Red Lion is 11 p.m.

Enjoy the refinements and additions to the now 4/28 original Wurlitzer in the restored 33,000-seat Seattle Paramount.



We take special pride in presenting Olympia organist **Andy Crow** in a memorable afternoon concert.

It is requested that no taping be allowed during either performance, but photographing is welcome at all three distinctive locations.

**TOTAL COST:**  
**\$70 Per Person**  
*(Please deduct \$17.00  
if you will be traveling  
by automobile).*

**Registration Limited  
to 400**

# Thursday, July 7 • Encore Day

We have briefly discussed altered and extended chords and will return to them later, but we will now proceed to various kinds of SUBSTITUTE chords. These are most interesting to use in popular music and usually attract the most listener attention. Most chord substitutions can be reduced to simple rules and formulas and are not difficult to play because they are ordinary chords in an unusual sequence.

# ORGAN-IZING

## POPULAR MUSIC

by  
**AL HERMANN**



Whenever the melody of a song moves up or down the scale or chromatically, try substituting a series of 9th chords moving parallel to the melody in place of the original harmony. These 9th chords should be voiced in the following manner:

Right Hand = 5th (melody) + or - a half tone  
Left Hand = 3rd, 7th, 9th in that order  
Pedal = Root

Disregard the original harmony and use whichever 9th chord the melody is the 5th of. Example: a D melody will always be accompanied by a G<sup>9</sup> chord because D is the 5th of G. There are two opportunities in "Toyland" to apply this technique:

Measures 5 and 6; 21 and 22

Measures 29 and 30

Practice these examples slowly and always LISTEN. You should be able to hear if it sounds right (pleasant) or wrong (horrible).

Two of the longest opportunities I know of for substituting 9th chords parallel to the melody are in measures 5 to 7 in the first theme of "Winter Wonderland":

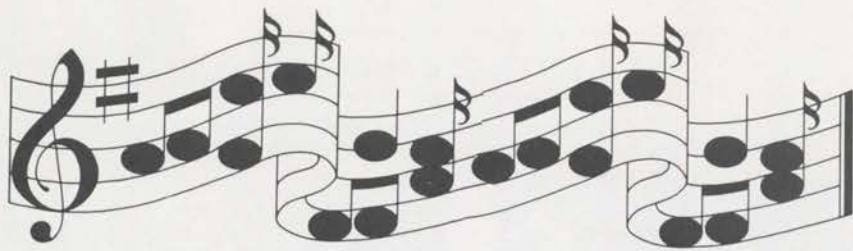
and measures 25 to 29 in "Tea For Two":

Notice that occasionally the melody moves a half tone ahead or behind and then catches up on the next beat. The accompaniment chords are all quarter notes. IF THERE ARE TWO COUNTS ON THE SAME CHORD, PLAY IT TWICE.

If any of you know of other good melodies to harmonize this way, please write and we will share them with our other readers.

**Portland** has all the fun!

**JULY 2 - 6, 1988 • 1988 CONVENTION**



# Chapter Notes

**ALABAMA**  
Birmingham  
205/942-5611 or 205/664-3606

Our October meeting at the Alabama Theatre featured Dolton McAlpin. A southeastern favorite and real crowd-pleaser, Dolton just gets better and better each time we hear him. We often wonder when he will give up his law practice and hit the tour circuit!

October 30 was our fifth annual production of *The Phantom of The Opera* starring Lon Chaney and Tom Helms. We all agree that Tom is as big a star in Birmingham as Lon Chaney. His production (including funeral procession and other mysterious effects) has become a favorite of local patrons. The sixth annual performance of this show will be October 28, 1988, and will conclude the Alabama Theatre's first Silent Film Festival which will begin in March 1988 and will include a series of five silent films. Gaylord Carter, Lee Erwin, Tom Helms and Jim Riggs will be featured organists.

Our November meeting was held in conjunction with a Yamaha HX-1 organ demonstration given by Hector Olivera. Hector's performance was outstanding and, even with the problems he encountered with the instrument, he managed to delight many of our members. The business meeting gave us a chance to approve expenditures for a new electronic relay and combination action system for the Alabama Wurlitzer. Also approved were funds for having all of the organ's reeds revoiced and repaired. The organ will be taken down just after Christmas and will be back up for Lee Erwin's performance of *King of Kings* on March 26 and 27, 1988.

The 1988 Regional Convention Committee is hard at work finalizing plans for the Alabama "Diamond Jubilee" Convention to be held October 14-16, 1988. Make your plans to attend now!

*Gary W. Jones*

**CEDAR RAPIDS AREA**  
Iowa  
319/362-9676 or 319/396-5653

We have had an interesting year. We are all grateful that Bob Ralston had only temporary discomfort following his fall from the organ lift into the open orchestra pit at the close of his concert on May 3. X-rays confirmed that there were no broken bones — for which everyone was most relieved.

Our August membership meeting was held at the Cedar Rapids Community Theatre which is the home of the 3/14 Barton installed in 1927. Joe Roost, from Keokuk, Iowa, was our artist. This was Joe's third appearance for us in recent years, and he always presents an interesting and lively concert. Joe is nearing completion of his studies for the priesthood, and we wish him well and hope to have "Father Joe" back again soon.

We arranged to have our September meeting at Bruce more, a Victorian mansion formerly owned by a wealthy Cedar Rapids family and now deeded to the U.S. Government under supervision of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. A Skinner pipe organ and Baldwin grand piano are both in the home. George Baldwin played several numbers on both the organ and the piano, and open console was available for members who wished to play the organ. George also plays there during the holiday season when the mansion is open to the public and is decorated with Christmas trees and packages in every room as it was when the family lived there. Our members were given a tour of the entire mansion which was enjoyed by all, especially those who had not been there prior to our meeting.

Rob Calcaterra was the artist on the 3/11 Wurlitzer at the Paramount Theatre for our October show. Prior commitments made his stay in Cedar Rapids the shortest of any artist we have ever had — exactly 24 hours! Greeted at the airport at 4:30 Saturday afternoon, he was taken directly to the Paramount to practice and set combinations. A short dinner hour preceded a session at the theatre that lasted until 12:15 a.m. He was picked up at the hotel at 11:00 Sunday morning so he could practice before the 2:30 concert. At 4:30 he was whisked off to the airport to catch a 5:00 plane for his return to New York. Reviewer Les Zacheis of the *Cedar Rapids Gazette* wrote: "Theatre Organist Thrills Audience." He said: "It was a

return engagement for the monarch of the organ, and his appearance was hailed with delight by the majority of the patrons who recalled his previous exploits on the keyboard and pedals." Another fine concert by a great artist, this was our 34th Spectacular since we organized in 1969.

We were saddened by the untimely death of secretary Mrs. Lahonta Anders in July. Her husband had undergone surgery and she was visiting him in the hospital when she fell ill and died instantly. Lahonta had worked diligently as our secretary for several years and will be missed for all the things she did to make our club better in many ways.

Our October meeting was presented by Jim Olver who is in charge of our maintenance crew at the Paramount. Jim selected recordings of various organists from his vast collection of theatre organ records and added his own commentary about the artists and the record labels. His efforts were appreciated by all who attended.

*John Hockaday*



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**JULY 2-6, 1988**



**CENTRAL  
INDIANA  
Indianapolis**

317/255-8056 or 317/546-1336

A gala fund-raising event, Lyn Larsen in concert, sponsored by Central Indiana Chapter, was held at the Paramount Music Palace on October 5. This event was held primarily to raise money for the Dessa Byrd Scholarship Fund which contributes to the education of our young organists. The evening began with a cocktail reception, and concluded, after the concert, by Lyn greeting the audience and autographing albums. The evening was a great success, and Lyn's performance was outstanding.

We were delighted to have our own Bill Tandy present a concert at the October meeting held at the Hedback Community Theatre.

Neal Johnston, from Sturgis, Michigan, was the guest artist at the September meeting at the Long Center in Lafayette. Neal, 16-years old, is a student of Father James Miller. It was great to hear such a talented young artist.

The relay for the Manual High School organ has been installed. The relay room has been totally refurbished, new outlets and lights installed and repainted. Swell shutters from the Hub Roller Rink in the Chicago area have been purchased and are in the process of being installed. We are so fortunate to have a group of dedicated volunteers, directed by Kevin Aikman, who work on Saturdays on the organ and also to have so many people who have contributed to the organ fund.

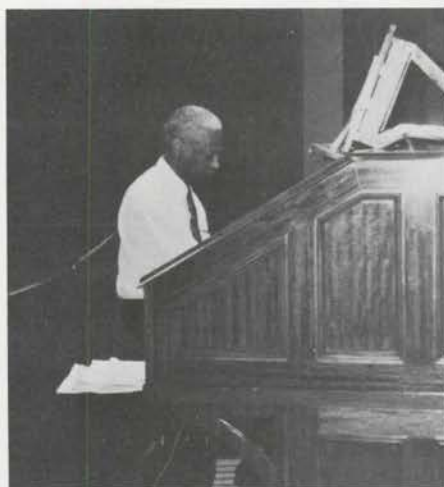
*Carol M. Andrejasich*

**Don't Forget!  
The Deadline for  
Directors Nominations  
is February 1, 1988.**

## CENTRAL OHIO

Columbus

614/652-1775 or 614/882-4085



Host Mark Williams entertains Central Ohio guests on his Conn 651.



Henry Garcia turns out a beautiful rendition of "Misty" for Central Ohio Chapter. *J. Polesley Photo*

September 20 brought us back to Worthington High School for our annual membership meeting where President Polesley extended sympathy to the families of Neil Grover and Ginny Lawrence whose mother and husband respectively recently expired. He also announced that Allen Miller has been retained to make an assessment of our organ and that his recommendations will be used as a basis for a fund-raising drive to further restore the chapter's organ.

Following the business meeting, we were privileged to hear member Henry Garcia musically articulate such old favorites as "Misty" and the ever-popular "It Must Be Him." The console was seldom unoccupied after the program as a procession of members came forth to play while the rest of us enjoyed the seasonal refreshments.

The Ohio Theatre's 1986-87 organ series got underway November 1 with Australian artist Neil Jensen. Jensen's upbeat style began with "There's No Business Like Show Business" and included a tribute to Jerome Kern which was especially heartening. Applause from an enthusiastic audience brought him back for two encores.

It was a privilege to hear Dwight Thomas, 1986 Young Organist winner, at Mansfield, Ohio, on October 30. The Warner/Kearns/Carson Wurlitzer, now a 3/22, plays from chambers on either side of the proscenium while the console rises to a left, center-stage position. Dwight, a *cum laude* Butler University graduate, is now attending graduate school at Indiana University. He projected to a nearly full house as an unaffected, wholesome performer who related well to his audience. His program featured something for everyone, and he was equally at home with such ticklers as "Ironic You and Pyscopathic Me" as he was with Irving Berlin's "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Given his potential and a little more exposure, great things are in store for this young man.

A year of happy married life for member Mark Williams prompted him to host our October 25 meeting at his and Cindy's home. Twenty-five members and guests listened attentively to Mark's pipe music on his Conn 651, and plenty of follow-up organists provided us with continuous musical entertainment. We thank Mark and Cindy for such a delightful day.

*John Polesley*

January 16	California Theatre, San Diego, California
January 19	Mershon Auditorium, Ohio State University
January 23	Phipps Center, Hudson, Wisconsin
January 26	Mershon Auditorium, Ohio State University
February 2	Mershon Auditorium, Ohio State University
February 5	I.U. Auditorium, Bloomington, Indiana
February 9	Mershon Auditorium, Ohio State University
February 13, 14, 15, 16	Granada Theatre, Kansas City, Kansas
March 2	Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor, Michigan
March 13	Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio
March 18	Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio
March 19, 20	International Film Festival, San Francisco, California
March 26	Fox Theatre, San Diego, California
April 1	Short North Tavern, Columbus, Ohio
April 23	Fox Theatre, San Diego, California
April 25	Langley Auditorium, Washington, D.C.
May 8	World Theatre, St. Paul, Minnesota
May 15	Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio
November 2/ December 31	AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND Concert Tour

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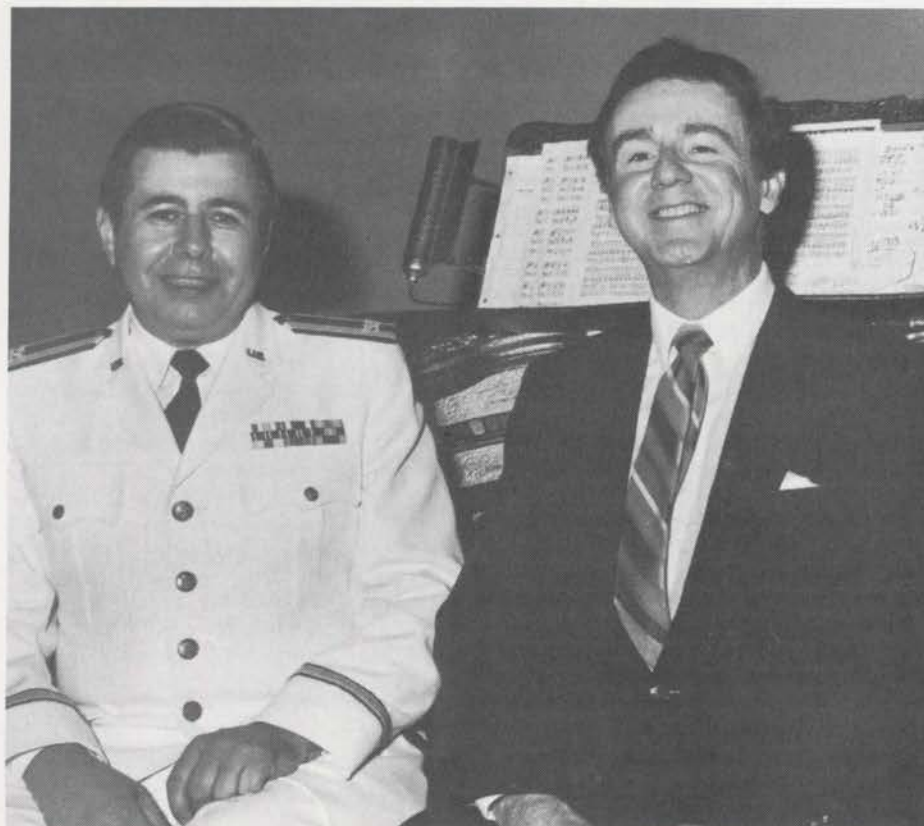
Behold! The Patio Theatre is again in full swing with a regular schedule of movie fare. A lot of love, sweat, tears (?) and cash went into the restoration of this excellent neighborhood movie theatre which is now quite similar to its original glamorous state.

To assist in the public reopening celebration and CATOE's 25th anniversary, Bob Ralston presented a program which was one of the best we've had in many a year. Bob performed beautifully at the 3/17 Barton and covered much of the gamut of the theatre's history with a program that reflected his years on the Lawrence Welk Show. This great program was further enhanced by the presence of ATOS President Jack Moelmann, who served as emcee for the evening. Laurel and Hardy added merriment to the celebration as Ralston accompanied their silent *Angora Love*. A duet with Jack Moelmann at the organ and Bob at the piano was an added treat and grand finale for this super program. Our deep appreciation to Colonel Moelmann and Bob Ralston for making this show one of our greatest.

Most of the big names in show business have been, or will be, appearing on the famous Chicago Theatre stage. And the pipe organ world has not been slighted. Gaylord Carter presented a grand, old-timer show in October, and it was nostalgia complete with organ solos and silent films. Gaylord is a master and was overjoyed to be at the Chicago Theatre console. It was a great tribute to our 25th Anniversary Celebration.

Barbara Sellers has been accompanying several silent movies at the Music Box Theatre. We are pleased to know that Barbara's talent is heard by the general public. It would be great to hear more of this around the country.

*Almer N. Brostrom*



Colonel Moelmann and Bob Ralston at the Patio Theatre for Chicago Benefit.

*Chuck Wlodarczyk Photo*



**CONNECTICUT VALLEY**

**THEATRE  
ORGAN SOCIETY**

203/357-4581 or 203/261-5269

Our fall concert season kicked off on September 26 with "1986 ATOS Organist of the Year" Tom Hazleton. Acknowledging at the offset that the Shelton organ was only the second Austin organ that he has ever played, it quickly became apparent that the organ held no secrets from this accomplished artist. Tom played over thirty selections including a razzle-dazzle arrangement of "Tip Toe Thru the Tulips," medleys from *Oklahoma* and *South Pacific* and a special tribute to George Gershwin. Tom's

formula for the evening, "Share a little music, have a little fun". Not a bad formula for any time.

Over twenty of our members shuffled off to Buffalo on October 9-11 for the Buffalo Regional Convention.

On October 17 the grand lady of the theatre pipe organ, Rosa Rio, appeared in concert at Shelton High School under the sponsorship of a local church. Chapter members participated in preparation of the organ, promotion and selling tapes and records.

The November meeting was held at Westport Piano and Organ Store in Westport, Connecticut and officers for 1988 were elected. The concert portion of the meeting was very ably handled by Greg Taylor on a Yamaha HX.

Father Jim Miller will be the featured artist at the March 26, 1988, concert at Shelton High School.

*Barry Goodkin*



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**WALTER STRONY**  
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The first day of November brought a new development in South Central Pennsylvania — the kickoff meeting for the newly formed Cumberland Valley Chapter. The meeting at the Capitol Theatre in downtown Chambersburg drew more than 100 theatre organ enthusiasts to hear Mr. Bob Eyer, Capitol Theatre organist at the console of the 3/14 Möller theatre organ. In a sterling "trip around the kitchen" performance, Bob demonstrated most admirably the breadth and capability of the existent historical instrument. He performed several upbeat numbers, played a creative organ score for the silent Charlie Chaplin film, *Behind The Screen*, and rounded out his program with a variety of tunes requested by his audience. There is little doubt in the minds of his listeners, that Bob Eyer has the gift to totally engulf his listeners with the haunting strains of the theatre organ, and to fill their hearts with joy. Terry Nace, talented teenage theatre organist from York area, played the organ during the open console period.

Gordon Madison, Capitol Theatre owner and secretary for the Cumberland Valley Chapter, welcomed those present. He elaborated on ATOS and its goals as well as on the reasons for membership in

**CUMBERLAND VALLEY**  
**Chambersburg, Pennsylvania**  
**717/263-0202**

CVC. In his opening remarks Mr. Madison indicated that in 1980, in response to an ad he saw in the THEATRE ORGAN magazine, he had purchased the Capitol Theatre's Möller organ. "The Theatre," he said with a smile "was thrown in." Today, the beautiful old landmark Capitol Theatre is rapidly becoming a cultural center, where Community Theatre, Classic Movies, The Appalachian Jubilee (weekly "live" country music show), theatre organ concerts, and number of other events are staged. The theatre is an exceptionally fine location for the regular meetings of CVC. The Möller was installed in the Capitol Theatre in 1926. At the time it was the largest theatre organ in South Central Pennsylvania, and it continues to be at the present time.

Mark Cooley, a service representative of Möller Organ Company, in Hagerstown, Maryland, is the individual who will direct the organization's effort to innovate and extend as well as to upgrade the Capitol Theatre Möller in general.

He described the present condition of the organ and the steps to be taken in bringing it to new high standards. Mr. Cooley noted that the organ has an original design flaw in that it has two Pittman Wind Chests normally found in church organs. The first step will be to remove the swell chamber and unify one of the chests in the chamber. The remainder of the steps to be taken call for projects of rewiring, releathering and building a new solid-state relay, as well as repairing damaged types and replacing missing ones. The project also calls for adding ranks of pipes: The hooded trumpet (97 pipes from 16'C) and the Horn Diapason (73 pipes for 8'C).

Mr. Cooley indicated that when these phases of the project have been completed in a long-term operation, the final undertaking will be to modify the console to accommodate unification of the Solo division. He sought volunteers from the CVC membership to help with each phase of the project. A number of individuals in the chapter have volunteered to do much of the work required.

Six new members resulted from this kick-off meeting. Several others have indicated an interest in joining.

*Max Cooley*

**Portland** has all the fun!

**CONVENTION: JULY 2-6**  
**AFTERGLOW: JULY 7**  
**Puget Sound**



414/463-2365 or 414/771-8522

September and October were busy months for our chapter. In September the Riverside Theatre featured Dennis James accompanying *The Mark of Zorro* with Douglas Fairbanks as the hero who was more macho with his mask than without. The organ score was excellent down to the knocks on the door. The performance also included two organ solos and a short silent comedy.

October's concert featured Father Jim Miller at the Avalon Theatre where, for two-and-a-half hours, the Avalon took on the character of Milwaukee's Boom-Boom Room with plenty of bumps and grinds, Dixieland, jazz and appearances by the "Wah-wah" trumpeter. All this "naughty" organ music did have its price, and Father Jim remarked that playing "In The Garden" and "How Great Thou Art" did help him make payments on his insurance policy.

The hottest news of the fall occurred in October when a local community newspaper, *The Bay Viewer*, printed a front page story saying that the Avalon Theatre was the prime site for a new neighborhood library. It is true that the city is planning to build a new library along the Avalon's street, but there is no truth that the Reference Desk will be located in the theatre balcony. The reporter was out of bounds when he cited the Avalon as the prime site. Consultation with the Library Board resulted in the information that there are ten sites being considered for their new building (the Avalon is only one of them), and it would be much cheaper to build a new building than to remodel an old one. Although the Avalon is not 100% safe from being used as something other than a theatre, it seems that the Library is looking elsewhere. In the following issue of *The Bay Viewer*, manager Eric Lavin was given equal space and stated that he has every intention of keeping the Avalon going as a movie house. We're all glad to hear that! Besides, it would be awfully difficult for those Reference Librarians to answer questions with nineteen ranks of pipes blaring in their ears.

Bill Campbell

**PORTLAND**

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**JULY 2-6, 1988**

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**PLAN AHEAD FOR THE 1988 CONVENTION!**

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**DEADLINES:**

November 10 for January/February  
January 10 for March/April  
March 10 for May/June  
May 10 for July/August  
July 10 for September/October  
September 10 for November/December

Send Chapter Notes and photos to:

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**BABSON  
COLLEGE,  
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617/662-7055

For practically all summer, our Wurlitzer has been out of commission with the console stoprails on the cellar workbench of organ-crew chairman Dick Linder. Not only have the tabs been repositioned back into their original configuration, but the pneumatics have been replaced by Syndyne electric switches. To accommodate these, considerable routing work and careful adjusting was necessary, and Dick spent his entire vacation on the project. In addition, organ crew chief Tim Hollaran negotiated the purchase of an eight-foot Wurlitzer Trumpet whose origin was a small Wurlitzer (opus 1382) in the Interboro Theatre in New York City. This replaces the trumpet we had made (Gottfried) when much of our original Brass Trumpet was stolen. SENETOS member Gary Phillips has cleaned, installed, regulated and voiced this new set so that we are now 100% Wurlitzer again.

Because of this activity, Providence-based SENETOS, headed by Alan Goodnow, kindly invited our chapter, Connecticut Valley and Pine Tree Chapters to a joint meeting on September 27 at the Providence Performing Arts Center, home of the ex-Marbro Theatre, Chicago, 5/21 Wurlitzer. Artist for the afternoon was Gary Phillips who is an integral part of the small group of devoted members upgrading this grand instrument. With

his knowledge of its considerable resources, Gary coaxed some fine sounds from it in an all-too-brief concert before open console. Thanks, SENETOS!

We presented Ty Woodward in public concert on our Babson Wurlitzer on October 24. This popular artist, who is currently organist/choirmaster at St. Cross Episcopal Church in Hermosa Beach, California, presented a fine concert to a large audience. Being equally familiar with classical and theatre organ repertoire, Ty made a good impression in this, his first, appearance for us.

He got his program underway with a spirited "76 Trombones," and the traps and percussions got a real workout. Before intermission he included some Broadway hits, some oldies and a couple of light classics. Besides a sing-along, virgorously sung by his enthusiastic audience, Mr. Woodward's second half contained some Berlin, Anderson and Rogers & Hammerstein selections. His interpretation of "Stars And Stripes Forever" was a real crowd-pleaser. Two long standing ovations, with long, loud applause and shouting, gave us two encores, "Hornpipe" by Handel and "Mame." Ty's program material, registration and easy console manner made for a pleasing, successful concert.

The following day we again assembled at Babson for a fun meeting with veteran North Shore organist Leonard Winter at the console and seasoned nightclub pianist Paul Chavanne at the Steinway baby grand. With little or no rehearsal, this pair, with just a nod or a glance, tailor their playing to a "T." There is no substitute for experience! "Hello, Dolly" was their opener, followed by a succession of well-known pieces. "Love Let-

ters" was dedicated to the late Ray Bohr; it was a favorite of his. Paul had one solo, "Maple Leaf Rag," one of Joplin's best. Audience participation was invited for the finale, "Battle Hymn of The Republic" and "God Bless America." Lenny and Paul enjoy working together, and it showed. Some great sounds were produced on their respective instruments. It was a busy, but fun, weekend of good music!

*Stanley C. Garniss*



**Do You  
Know  
Any  
Young  
Organists?**

The rules and regulations for the 1988 Young Organist Competition have been sent to all chapter presidents. If you know of a talented youngster (age 13-20) who might be interested in entering, contact your chapter immediately so he can start preparing for the competition. If you have questions, contact Lois Segur, 1930-301 West San Marcos Blvd., San Marcos, California 92069.

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*Gustav Mabler*

## THE NIAGARA FRONTIER THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

would like to announce that Randy Piazza has retired after 29 years as chairman here and that the Board of Directors is pleased to accept audition tapes from new artists interested in playing at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda, New York.

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After an enjoyable summer, which seemed all too short, we opened our season with our annual installation dinner at the Trenton War Memorial on September 18. Several members provided easy-listening music on the pipe organ during the buffet dinner. After dinner, President Joe Dorsey announced the results of the election and, for the first time in our history, there was a tie for President so a run-off election was to be held.

Plaques were presented to outgoing President Joe Dorsey and retiring secretary/treasurer Nellie Baker. Also at this time, Bob Norris, who was a prime mover of our highly successful presentation of the silent *Wings* at the Rahway Theatre, presented Elaine Dawson and Mike Cipolletti with framed photographs of themselves dressed as Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks. Bob thanked them for their inventive portrayal of the stars receiving Oscars for *Wings*. This was the first film to win an Academy Award. For the remainder of the evening, the members enjoyed a mini-concert by Bernie McGorrey, President of the Delaware Valley chapter.

The first concert of our Trenton series was held September 27. The featured artist at the 3/16 Möller was Larry Ferrari, a well-known area organist who was televised for many years on a Philadelphia channel. Larry always presents a full concert of pop music. He must have thousands of songs under his fingers, and he lets his music speak for him. All enjoyed.



Bernie McGorrey at the War Memorial Möller console. *Jinny Vanore Photo*

On October 24 a pre-Halloween celebration on the silent screen was presented by our chapter and Bob Balfour at the Union County Arts Center (Rahway Theatre). The film was the dark, dramatic Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, starring John Barrymore and accompanied by Lee Erwin on the 2/7 Wurlitzer. The scene was set with skeletons and corn stalks, ghostly taped music and even a Count Dracula seeking a victim in the audience and finding a beautiful, mesmerized woman who was promptly bitten on the neck by the vampire.

The program began with an organ concert by Lee, followed by a slide presentation of organ pipes with sounds demonstrated by Lee. This was followed by an enjoyable sing-along. After intermission, the movie was screened and ably accompanied by Lee Erwin. All enjoyed the show. Financially, it was hoped that



Andy Kasparian at Trenton War Memorial Moller Console. *Jinny Vanore Photo*



Lee Erwin at Rahway Console. *Jinny Vanore Photo*

our members would back this event and purchase the two tickets sent to each of them. We were disappointed in this respect. The efforts of the hard-working committee who produced the beautiful brochure and had good newspaper coverage resulted in an event which was fairly successful.

On October 25, the second of a five-concert series at the Trenton War Memorial featured Andy Kasparian. Joe Dorsey informed the audience that the winner of the run-off election was Bruce Williams who, in turn, introduced the concert artist. Andy's program was upbeat, with multi-sound changes that enhanced many of our favorite songs. His experience at pizza restaurants and at the Suburban Restaurant enabled Andy to play a well-rounded program. The evening ended with picnic suppers, open console and lots of social chatting on the stage.

*Jinny Vanore*



L to R: Elaine Dawson, Bob Norris and Michael Cipolletti receive Bob Norris memento of them dressed for *Wings* Academy Award Skit. *JV Photo*

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Members Martin A. Lilley and Dr. Edward J. Mullins attended the David Shepherd concert on October 3 at The Musical Museum in Brentford, Middlesex, England. The museum's 3/12 Wurlitzer, equipped with a roll player, was built in 1930 for a Chicago millionaire's residence. It was removed in 1932, shipped to England and installed in the Regal Cinema at Kingston-on-Thames where the original mahogany console was painted gold and a lighted fruit-jelly surround added, as was their wont.

It was installed in The Musical Museum in 1973, the colored glass surround removed and console refinished white with gold trim. David Shepherd's program consisted of many favorite English melodies and pop tunes played in his own style. As an "encore" for the visiting Jesse Crawford Chapter members, Frank Holland, museum curator, played Crawford's roll of "Pale Moon." They reported that it was a beautiful experience.

While in England, Ed Mullins acquired the sheet music for a rare popular tune, "Us and Company," composed in 1930, words and music by Steve Nelson, Johnny Burke and Jesse Crawford. Pictured on the cover are Mr. and Mrs. and Baby Jesse Crawford; little Jessica is holding her doll. This rarity is not listed in Dr. John Landon's definitive book on Crawford. The music was located by Ian Dalgliesh.

The Billings *Gazette*, on October 3 published an article by Addison Bragg in his "On The Town" column. Bragg's story, "Historian, fan keeps poet of organ alive," tells of Crawford's early career in Billings, Montana, in 1913. He also mentions the formation of the Jesse Crawford Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. *Steve Plaggemeyer*



Left: Joe and Ruth Vaes and Tom Neadle entertained Land O'Lakes Chapter.



3/12 Wurlitzer with roll player, The Musical Museum, Brentford, Middlesex, England.



612/689-9201 or 612/771-1771

Thirteen members attended the Buffalo Regional in New York in October. The opening concert was kicked off by Lyn Larsen at the famous Shea's Buffalo Theatre. A newcomer to us, and a highlight, was the concert by 26-year-old Robert Wolfe from England at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda. What an exciting, exuberant show he gave us! His pedal-work was amazing — a form of tap dancing, yet! The afterglow was a trip to Niagara Falls, with lunch in the Manhattan Tower overlooking the Canadian side of the Falls. There were beautiful flowers and well-landscaped gardens. All too soon the convention was over,



and we headed for the airport and home. [Some of our people traveled by car and so went their various ways to continue vacation trips.]

All God's Children — Metropolitan Community Church was the site of our Chapter Event Open House on October 25. Don Johnson, Bob Scholer, Roy Wilds and others who helped paint the chambers, have been volunteering their time, money and expertise in the installation of the chapter's 3/13 Wurlitzer/Robert-Morton. Members and friends made themselves at home in the beautiful church sanctuary, social hall and chambers. A very informal program was staged with Mike Erie and Tom Neadle leading off in organ/piano duets with a special rendition of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" to honor our Champion Minnesota Twins. Other music was provided by a six-handed trio at the grand piano (Harriet Bateman, Ruth Vaes and Verna Mae Wilson) playing "Le Secret" (also the number Dennis James played at the First Universalist Church in Rochester during the Regional); Tom Neadle in several piano solos, Joe and Ruth Vaes in organ/piano duets and open console at the church's B-3 Hammond by Joe Vaes, John Webster, Kim Crisler and Bill Eden. A relaxing, musical afternoon!

The supposedly "last concert" at the Minneapolis Auditorium featuring the Minnesota Orchestra and Hector Olivera at the 5/122 Kimball was certainly a disappointment to the many organ-music lovers who did not hear enough of Hector. We're hoping another concert can still be held before the wrecking ball begins its demolition. *Verna Mae Wilson*



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Stephen Vincent and Dena Cooper played a duet at the fundraiser.

From the moment that it was decided that our chapter's Christie was to be re-installed by our accomplished Technical Team in the Memorial Hall in the South Wales town of Barry, it was inevitable that Douglas (Mr. Brighton and Mr. Christie) Reeve would be an early concert guest. And so it was in mid-July that Douglas provided a superb performance when he entertained the enthusiastic South Wales audience (including a coach party of chapter members from the London area) in his unique brassy style. Quickly at home with the big ensemble, Douglas soon endeared himself with the perfect combination of his happy personality and his wide-ranging repertoire.

He also graciously made way for an exciting cameo spot by Peter Holt of Wetherby, Yorkshire, one of our star youngsters and winner of our 1985 Young Theatre Organist of the Year Competition, at the beginning of the second half — but not before a stage presentation from a "Grand Master" to a "Young Master" of a handsome inscribed leather briefcase on behalf of the chapter in recognition of Peter's most commendable showing in the National Young Organist

Competition and his \$400 prize as winner in his age category (13 to 16 years old). Much-appreciated advice from gentlemanly Douglas, coupled with the pride and congratulations of our chapter, led Peter towards the next phase in what we firmly believe will be an enjoyable and rewarding future for this most promising young musician.

Martin Harris, 16, our reigning Young Theatre Organist of the Year, has achieved another major milestone in his quickly developing musical career by recently becoming the winner of the National Final of the 1987 Yamaha Electone Festival held in London. As well as winning a £1000 [\$1600] prize, Martin collected a recording contract and is to visit Japan in November. He has since also played a delightful Chapter Club Night performance at Edith and Les Rawle's famed 3/19 Wurlitzer.

Martin and Peter have also recorded the South Bank Polytechnic 4/21 Wurlitzer for the popular BBC Radio programme "The Organist Entertains."

"The Younger Generation" was again the theme of our concert at the famous 4/16 Wurlitzer at the Top Rank Club in North London in August when stylish Janet Dowsett (now a nationally acclaimed demonstrator for Yamaha) played and introduced her three guests: ever-smiling Jane Darley of Ascot (now also working with Yamaha in a unique schools promotional programme), ebullient Paul Sheffield of London and diminutive Craig Boswell from Derbyshire. Combining to provide an enjoyable programme of wide musical compass, this talented quartet once again vindicated

our central chapter objective of encouraging new young keyboard exponents for the future.

Having earlier provided a fine duo Chapter Club Night at Wurlitzer Lodge, Dena Cooper (organ, violin and piano) and Suzanne Hancock — complete with glitzy custom-made outfits for each half of their programme made by Dena's Mum Judith, and their own "Dena and Sue" billboard atop the music desk of the Wurlitzer — this popular pair were again in evidence, with numerous others of our youngsters, in early September.

In an imaginative day-long sponsor-ature "Music, Music, Music" marathon, another £450 (\$720) was raised in support of our YOY Fund. Stateside friend Searle Wright and Len Rawle also provided an informal Masterclass session to complete another most memorable and productive visit to Wurlitzer Lodge.

Two other complementary "at-home" fund-raising events have been held during the late summer. First was another great fun evening at the welcoming home at Walton-on-Thames of Chapter Chairman Beck Parsons. Featuring their Conn electronic, two of our earlier YOY competition winners, David Redfern (1983) from Derbyshire and Peter Holt (1985) from Yorkshire, presented most polished musical performances, with accomplished organ and clarinet cameos by Beck and Terry's young grandchildren, Miles (10) and Samantha (13). Complemented by Terry's usual magnificent supper spread, this most enjoyable and relaxing event raised over £150 (\$240) for our YOY fund and their favourite cause.

*continued...*



Some of the younger generation with Searle Wright.

*Niven photo*

**Bill Vlasak**

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Alan and Maureen Jordan were hosts again this year for our Summer Barbecue Funday at their lovely home at High Wycombe. Organ accompaniment at the Rodgers was provided by Dena Cooper and Suzanne Hancock, with much applauded interludes by seasoned veteran theatre organ star Ena Baga. Another very happy chapter occasion.

We have also enjoyed another informal Sunday morning meeting of members at the Granada Tooting to see and hear the renowned 4/14 Wurlitzer that was restored in a monumental effort by our Technical Team a couple of years back after disastrous flooding about 12 years ago. Though still entombed following structural alterations converting the former cinema theatre into a Granada Leisure (Bingo) Club, we continue to hope that it will be possible to bring this magnificent instrument fully back into view and public performance sometime in the not-too-distant future.

Having already enjoyed Welsh, English and American star guests at Barry since the gala opening in March, it was a great delight to welcome Tony Fenelon from Australia in mid-September. His highly professional style was well matched to the big Christie and, as well as thoroughly enjoying himself and delighting his most enthusiastic audience, Tony's sensational performance amply demonstrated how and why he is justifiably regarded as one of the topmost exponents of the theatre organ anywhere in the world. By common consent, one of the finest theatre organ concerts ever to be experienced anywhere in this country. Bravo, Tony! Come back soon.

*Dr. Norman Barfield*



Smiles of joy at the days' proceeds. L to R: Dena, Chris, Suzanne, Emma



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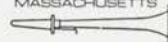
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On September 27 we celebrated the fall season with a terrific organ concert. For the first time at San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, we were honored to hear one of the stars of the 1987 National Convention, the talented and dynamic Tony Wilson. Opening with "I Love To Hear You Singing," he went on to display a well-balanced program. Tony has accepted the challenge of being the resident organist for the Lanterman Wurlitzer after a long engagement at the Great American Wind Machine Pizza Parlor. We are always impressed with the sound of the magnificent instrument at San Gabriel, and our thanks go to Mac Mc Donald and his organ crew for their constant dedication. One final word of gratitude to Tony for an afternoon of beautiful music.

Our fall meeting took place following the concert. President Stephen Ross called us to order and several reports were given. Ralph Beaudry gave us a full report on the revenue from the 1987 Convention and expressed his thanks to the committee and volunteers for a terrific success.

We can't think of a better way to celebrate Halloween than to attend a silent film. For the very first time, at the Sexson Auditorium at Pasadena College, the masterpiece *Phantom of The Opera* was accompanied by the master himself, Mr. Gaylord Carter. The purpose of the benefit concert was to raise funds for the installation of the Ross Reed Memorial Wurlitzer in the Sexson Auditorium, to begin by the end of this year. LATOS has hired Ken Crome to do the work. When completed, the organ will have three manuals controlling 20 ranks and numerous tonal and non-tonal percussion instruments. We are grateful to Bob Tall and Rodgers Organ Company for furnishing the instrument. We also thank our great artist and all the members, friends and students who made this such a promising endeavor.

Maria Olivier

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Emery Theatre again became a symphonic hall on September 27. It had been the home of the Cincinnati Symphony until 1937. The purpose this particular day was to let people hear the Emery Symphony, conducted by Robert Howes, and made up largely of Cincinnati Symphony players. The soloist was Eugenia Zukerman, flutist, who has thought so much of Emery's acoustics that she donated her services to the cause of saving Emery Theatre.

Since we are an organ society, our 3/29 Wurlitzer was used as a concert organ with member/organist Richard Jaeggi playing Bach's "Toccatina and Fugue in D Minor," and Vierne's "Carillon de Westminster" from the Third Suite for Organ. As many of the ranks added in the past ten years were aimed at accompaniment work, the organ received plaudits for its great versatility.

Much of what our chapter does at Emery is aimed at re-acquainting people with Emery's many merits. Intense interest is being shown by the various arts organizations in using the facilities of the whole complex — Emery and the building of the Ohio College of Applied Science — after the University of Cincinnati vacates the building.

Emery has been a multi-purpose hall. In addition to its years as home for the Symphony, most of the legendary musical artists have performed there. It has also been the scene of many traveling road shows — both dramatic and musical. One of its most unusual uses was as a Baptist Church after that church's sanctuary had been destroyed by fire. Result: under the stage is a baptismal tank of steel with proper plumbing for baptisms by immersion. It is opened by removing a panel-section of the stage floor.

It was "birthday time" November 6, celebrating the tenth anniversary of the installation of the former RKO Albee Wurlitzer at Emery. Searle Wright was the guest organist. His concert, dazzling in both technique and musical effects, included accompanying the Harold Lloyd silent *The Kid Brother*.

Mr. Wright spent a number of years in the early '70s in Cincinnati as choir-master and organist of Christ Episcopal Church. He also was adjunct professor of organ for part of this time at the College-Conservatory of Music of University of Cincinnati.

Hubert S. Shearin

■

"Music, verily,  
is the mediator between  
intellectual and sensuous life ...  
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but which mankind cannot comprehend."

Ludwig von Beethoven

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We are always delighted to be invited to the Astoria home of member Leonard Vernon. This time we experienced an excellent afternoon of open console on Leonard's 2/12 Robert-Morton. Five members kept the bench warm while charter members Bob and Nadine Rickett, who were adventuresome enough to bring their entire video set-up, made a videotape of the entire afternoon for future enjoyment. Our thanks to Leonard for another wonderful session on the Robert-Morton.

Oregon Chapter enjoyed our October meeting at Uncle Milt's Pipe Organ Pizza. Dick Schrum, well-known to long-time members as one of the driving forces in the early days of ATOS as well as a smooth musician, presented a varied blend of old favorites from lively jazz to romantic ballads. His dry humor spiced up his performance, particularly in his introduction to a nostalgic (for those old enough to remember) rendition of a medley of tunes played in Martha Lake's unique style. He apologized because Uncle Milt's Organ simply was not bad enough to support the Martha Lake technique.

We enjoyed watching another friend, the console, in action again, too. Some members have followed it from its first career as the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Portland Oriental Theatre and its starring role as the first console at the Portland Organ Grinder restaurant. Good to see you again, console.

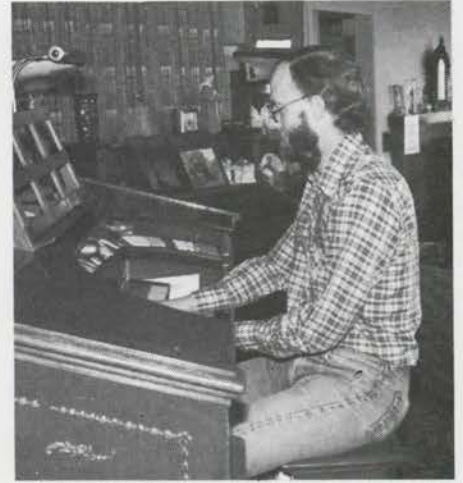
Open console followed Dick's program, and several members took advantage of the opportunity to play this fine instrument while others enjoyed Uncle Milt's fine pizza for lunch.

We had a good turnout with more than 60 members and guests present. Visitors came from as far away as Seattle and Yakima, Washington, and Corvallis, Oregon. Our thanks to Uncle Milt Kieffer for his hospitality and for the use of his Mighty Wurlitzer. And thanks, too, to Dick Schrum for the marvelous entertainment.

*Ray Hughey*



Genial host Milt Kieffer enjoys a laugh with artist Dick Schrum.  
*Claude Neuffer Photo*



Member Bob Shafter enjoys open console on the Vernon Robert-Morton in Astoria.  
*Claude Neuffer Photo*



Host Leonard Vernon offers cookies to Ruth Maas and Paul Quarino while they listen to his Robert-Morton.  
*Claude Neuffer Photo*

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**PIKES PEAK**  
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Despite our absence from these pages for some time, our chapter has been active. Since the debut of our 3/18 mostly Wurlitzer, located at Mt. Saint Francis and featured at last year's regional convention, we have been tonally refining the instrument, have received the donation of an electronic relay from a Denver area organ enthusiast, and have been conducting a series of fund-raising concerts to purchase a Posthorn.

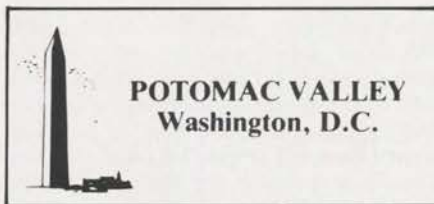
Notable concerts this last year have been played by local artists Will Lohrey and Bob Castle. However, the high point of the year came on October 11 when, for the organ's first anniversary, we had Portland, Oregon's own Paul Quarino play for us. Paul played a program which ranged from Gospel to old standards to modern pop music. His program was enthusiastically received and left us all amazed at his versatility. It was Paul who played the organ for the convention. We here in Colorado highly recommend Paul to any chapter looking for someone to play a first-class concert.

*John Grunow*



Bob Ralston at console of Wurlitzer organ in Weinberg Center for the Arts, Frederick, Maryland.

*Dan Swope Photo*



703/569-8170 or 301/652-3222

On October 25 Bob Ralston, organist for 20 years on the Lawrence Welk Show, gave a theatre pipe organ/grand piano extravaganza of super proportions to a record crowd of nearly 600 enthusiastic theatre organ fans and other enthralled persons at the Weinberg Center for the Arts in Frederick, Maryland. Included in the program were many familiar melodies as well as a medley of about 20 well-known numbers selected by the audience. Bob also provided extraordinary sound effects on the Wurlitzer to the antics in the last silent comedy short made by Laurel and Hardy, *Angora Love*, starring a hungry goat!

Chapter Vice-Chairman Floyd Werle, a master musician in his own right as composer/arranger for the United States Air Force Band (which will not let him retire completely), says of Bob Ralston's talent: "He honestly plays better pop piano than anybody else I have heard and could make a career on this alone." and on the Wurlitzer "... he presented us with a much higher order than we have heard on most of our past 'name' programs ... Moreover, he has a winning stage personality and a tremendous flair for showmanship."

The entire state of Maryland has only one theatre pipe organ installed in a theatre. That one is an original 2/8 Wurlitzer installation in what was, in 1926, the brand new Tivoli Theatre. That Wurlitzer, like many others fell into disuse and decay for decades, but restoration was begun at the urging of then president of Potomac Valley Chapter, Dick Kline, now famous for his Fox Capitol 4/37 Wurlitzer a few miles north of Frederick.

The blower motor in the basement suffered several soaking floods. In 1972 it had to be rewound in a hurry for the ATOS convention held in Washington, D.C., as recounted in THEATRE OR-

GAN in December 1972 in "Frederick's Man of the Hour." In 1976 a flood floated the console up and deposited it on its back on the Tivoli stage. In 1977 Tivoli owner Dan Weinberg gave the theatre to Frederick, and it has since been known as the Weinberg Center for the Arts. Talking pictures are prohibited.

A few years ago a Barton screw lift was installed and the organ is constantly nursed into playing condition by volunteers from our chapter, with George Johnson serving as chief organ technician.

Chairman Don Faehn did most of the preliminary work, such as ticket printing, publicity flyer composition and distribution, program preparation, lining up volunteer ushers, light operator, projectionists, sound technician, curtain puller, record sellers, finding guest quarters and transportation for Mr. Ralston, etc. After all that work, the enthusiasm of the audience caused Don to say that he is ready to start all over and do it again!

On October 31, 1987, George Johnson went on AM/FM radio WFRE in Frederick to explain why the Wurlitzer console needs to be replaced as a result of the great flood of 1976. Console replacement and modernization of the organ with electronics has the backing of Dan Weinberg, Dick Kline and others, with the work to be done by chapter volunteers headed by George Johnson.

Proceeds from the Bob Ralston performance will be used in part to further modernize the organ from the Washington, D.C. Earle/Warner, a 3/10 Kimball now owned by Potomac Valley Chapter and installed at the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland.

Potomac Valley Chapter welcomes with sincere best wishes the new Cumberland Valley chapter of ATOS. Cumberland Valley is the area generally extending from Hagerstown, Maryland, to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Cumberland President Robert Eyer has entertained our chapter several times, including a standout performance a few years ago on the famous Dick Kline Wurlitzer, and also on the Weinberg Center Wurlitzer. Mr. Eyer was among the enthusiastic attendees at Bob Ralston's delightful extravaganza.

*Jack Little*

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206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669

The annual potluck and white elephant sale to benefit the organ fund was held at Haller Lake Improvement Club where the chapter organ is housed. Young David Stratkauskas, of Langley, B.C., the chapter entrant in the 1987 Young Organist Competition, played an entertaining program on the 3/11 Marr & Colton installed there.

Our guest artist has only rare opportunities to play the pipes, as the Vancouver Orpheum Wurlitzer is seldom brought out of the pit. Fortunately, David's family is very supportive of his efforts, and his father has joined an organ crew which is presently installing an organ in a nearby church. In addition to a busy scholastic schedule, David is a trombonist and teaches the Yamaha classes at a local music store. His big band arrangements are played with obvious enjoyment and a surprising credibility for a young lad, and he includes jazz improvisation and Latin tunes in his repertoire also. Borrowing from Jean-Pierre Rampal, he included a sensitive and carefully-ornamented flute solo in an arrangement of "Georgia," evoking that special pleasure in the listeners that occurs when glimpsing the fresh growth of a young talented musician.

Several members traveled to Vancouver, B.C., for the Diamond Jubilee of the carefully restored Orpheum Theatre and Hotel Georgia, built two blocks



David Stratkauskas, guest artist for Puget Sound Chapter at 3/11 Marr & Colton.

apart 60 years ago. The organ, 3/13 Wurlitzer, is as installed, maintained but never altered in any way. Tickets were 15¢ for kids at a Saturday afternoon matinee variety show, while in the evening "Diamond Dazzle" starred the ever-vivacious Yvonne De Carlo answering questions from her fans in the audience and the inimitable Gaylord Carter at the console. He later accompanied a midnight screening of *Phantom of The Opera*, to the delight of a large audience.

The first meeting of the year for the Seattle AGO chapter was held at the Paramount Theatre. Following a business meeting during which the chairperson outlined an impressive proposal to deal with problems nearly identical to those plaguing ATOS chapters, Andy Crow played an excellent program for the group. Although it was jokingly reported that one elderly gentleman walked out during "Love For Sale," it was the most enthusiastic audience this reporter has observed at an organ presentation there, and numerous people crowded a-



Ken Gallwey doing a repeat performance as auctioneer for Puget Sound Chapter White Elephant Sale.

round the membership table in the lobby for applications or to sign up for the mailing list. Several organists played during the open console session, one of whom was Patti Simon who happened to be in town at the time assisting husband Ed Zollman in the installation of the Wilcox Wurlitzer. *Diane J. Whipple*

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It turned out to be *the* big drawing card. Two full houses for Silent Movie Nights came to see our new lobby and mezzanine just completed at the Fargo Theatre that week. November 4 was the ribbon (celluloid)-cutting ceremony with a lobby full of people and the media to hear Lance Johnson, president of the Fargo Theatre Management Corporation, the mayors of Fargo and Moorhead and other city dignitaries speak. The funds for this project were provided by the Reineke Foundation, which was represented by Alice Shiels who cut the film ribbon. A champagne reception and organ music by Lloyd Collins followed.

Then, Friday and Saturday, we presented our semi-annual Silent Movie Nights. Opening the show was theatre manager Dave Knudtson at the Mighty Wurlitzer. He played several selections of show tunes and accompanied a short film, *Ladies Please Remove Your Hats*. Next was a brief documentary of the theatre's history and the all-important role of the ATOS in keeping it alive. The traditional sing-along with Lance Johnson followed and then our own Incomparable Hildegarde, Hildegarde Krause, showed all that she is still in top form. Her last selection was a trio with Lance and Dave, as they played pianos on stage to "All Pals Together." The movie feature was *The Circus* with the great Charlie Chaplin and score by Lance Johnson.

There was much oohing and aahing over the new lobby area both nights. As close as could be managed, the basics of the 1937 streamline modern decor was brought back, with many mirrored surfaces, neon lighting, and curved walls. The exterior also got a facelift, with black glass and stainless steel.

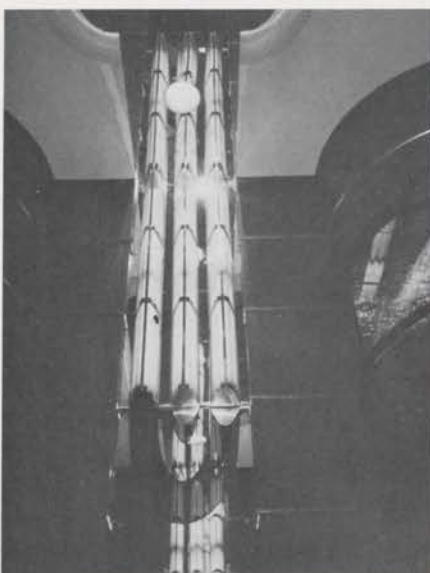
We were overwhelmed by the many people who took us up on our offer of free tours Saturday morning. But this is not the end of our projects — the lobby organ is next, and a restored marquee for spring.

*Sonia Carlson*



Above: Hildegarde Krause and Lance Johnson after performance at the Fargo Theatre.

Left: Looking up the new mirrored walls to the ceiling in the new Fargo Theatre.



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**RIVER CITY**  
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Our September 19 meeting was hosted by Keyboard Kastle with staff member Dan Cerveny performing on both Yamaha and Lowrey digital organs. Dan presented an outstanding program which included a memorable rendition of "South." During the evening Dan demonstrated MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) between the Yamaha and the Lowrey consoles which literally allowed him to play both organs simultaneously. A very enjoyable evening was capped with delicious refreshments.

In preparation for Jack Moelmann's fourth benefit concert for Omaha History Museum, our October 3 meeting was held at the Orpheum Theatre. While Jack Moelmann busied himself setting registrations on the 3/13 Wurlitzer, an original installation lovingly maintained by members George Rice and Stanley Gross, others attended to all of the last minute arrangements associated with a public concert. Advance ticket sales were tallied by some, while other workers draped the platform under the console. Harold Kenney and Bob Markworth

made their work assignments for the day of the concert. Finally, everything was shipshape for Sunday's concert.

On Sunday, October 4, Jack Moelmann presented his fourth edition of "Those Were the Days," a benefit theatre organ concert for Omaha History Museum. Jack and the Wurlitzer console rode the orchestra lift to stage level, flanked by Laura and Kimberly Markworth dressed as flappers and by J.J. and Janet Anderson dressed as typical 1920's youngsters. The first half of Jack's concert included medleys of Broadway show tunes and old time tunes. Then veteran performer Wendall Hall and his banjo joined Jack on stage for toe-tapping organ/banjo melodies. The first half of the program was concluded with a sing-along with slides.

After intermission Jack returned to the console with up-tempo renditions of "Everything's Coming up Roses," "Mame," "There's No Business Like Show Business," and "Hello, Dolly." Then he honored all branches of the armed forces with the songs of each service. Jack cued the Buster Keaton classic silent film, *Cops*, much to the delight of the audience. Jack closed the program with his legendary Tribute to America, a medley of traditional patriotic songs, ending with the "Star Spangled Banner." An enthusiastic audience recalled Jack to the console for two encores.

*Tom Jeffery*



Wendall Hall on banjo joins Jack Moelmann at "Those Were the Days".  
*Tom Jeffery Photo*

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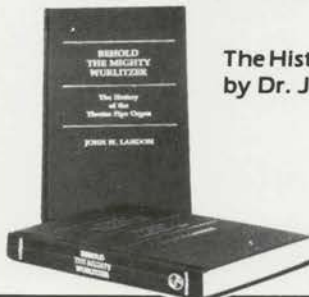


Dan Cerveny entertained on both Yamaha and Lowrey digital organs at Keyboard Kastle. *Tom Jeffery Photo*



Harold Kenney (left) and Bob Markworth plot work assignments for "Those Were the Days." *Tom Jeffery Photo*

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## SIERRA

Sacramento

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On October 18 we presented Lori Frazer Bailey, our 1981 scholarship winner, in concert. Lori is a former student of Bill Thompson and is now studying with Richard Purvis. She is also a music teacher, so our efforts to interest young people are working. A recent surgery on her left foot did not stop her from playing several selections which required two-footed pedaling. This was Lori's first attempt at theatre organ playing since she won the scholarship, but she proved that her talent is not just in electronic organs. There were times when one felt she might be fighting the organ, but she turned out to be the winner.

The highlights of her program were her personality (the audience loved her), a seldom heard "Blackhawk Waltz," "Psalm 19," arranged by Richard Purvis and a medley from *Man of La Mancha*. Her registrations were in good taste, and it was an overall entertaining afternoon.

On November 1, we were proud to present Don Wallin' in concert. Don is fast becoming one of Sacramento's favorite organists since returning here from the East Coast. You might call this program a re-dedication of the famous "George Wright" Wurlitzer at Grant Union High School in Sacramento. Don played a balanced program of fine theatre stylings. This organist does not have to take a back seat to anyone.

Don and Dave Moreno, assisted by Chuck Shumate and Earl White, spent more than 80 hours the week before the concert adjusting, releathering, tuning and revoicing this beautiful organ. It hasn't sounded this good in years. The maintenance of this organ is now under the supervision of our chapter, another one of their busy projects this past year. This is a 4/21 Wurlitzer, and many of you may have read of the fire that destroyed the console some years ago.

Don acted as his own emcee and did not kill his program as so many do with too much prattle. Because of threatening weather, the audience was not as large as expected, but each and every one of them appreciated the concert that Don played for them. Welcome back anytime, Don!

*Bud Taylor*

**All inquiries regarding membership matters should be addressed to . . .**

Douglas C. Fisk  
Executive Director of ATOS  
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Lori Frazer-Bailey at the Sierra Chapter Club Organ.  
*Art Phelan Photo*

## SOONER STATE

Tulsa

918/742-8693 or 918/437-2146

Our meeting for September was held once again in Tulsa's Central Assembly of God Church. In the absence of our president, First Co-Vice President Sam Collier presided. He told us that the console of our 3/10 Robert-Morton was ready for its second coat of paint, and that the bench was being refurbished. Wiring on the Z-tronics relay was still proceeding.

Lorene Thomas presented a delightful mini-concert on the church's 4/14 Robert-Morton. She opened with "It's a Pity to Say Goodnight" and closed with "Ruby." Open console followed. Lorene and Dick Van Dera also played some rousing duets, trading off between the organ and grand piano. [We heard "Mr. Sandman," "Sunny," "St. Louis Blues," "Hey, Look Me Over" (to name a few).] Then, after nearly everyone had gone, Dick and Dorothy Smith played more duets, mostly Gospel music.

Our October meeting was also held at Central Assembly. Before the music began, Don Kimes told us about the recent weekend trip to Kansas City made by himself, Sam Collier (who had organized it), Dr. Jim Routsong, Harold Weinland, and Bob Busby. They visited the newly installed 3/20 Grande Barton in the Granada Theatre, the 3/14 Wurlitzer in the home of Bill Wilson and Dave Weaver, and the 3/18 Kilgen installed in the home of Kansas City dentist Dr. Falwell. Sam and Don had the fun of playing all three instruments. The group also saw a 4/23 Wurlitzer in storage in the old Civic Auditorium in downtown Kansas City.

The evening's mini-concert was played by Sam Collier. Unfortunately, not all of the organ was working ... actually, most of the Great manual was dead. However, Sam played skillfully around



Don Wallin', our artist for the day.  
*Art Phelan Photo*

the dead notes, and his music was enjoyable. Open console followed.

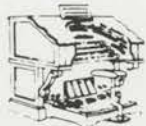
We have voted to add a Devtronix electronic combination action to our club-owned Robert-Morton. This was approved at our October meeting, and the order was placed immediately. Delivery was expected within two or three weeks, and would only add another week to the completion of the console wiring.

Vo-Tech's Dr. Wayman Penner was given a "tour" of the nearly complete console, and word was that "he was excited!" We're getting closer!

We are saddened by the death of another long-time member. Bob Weddle, former treasurer and recent Honorary chapter member, died on October 30. He and his wife, Betty, were charter members of Sooner State Chapter. We shall miss him.  
*Dorothy Smith*

"Music, not being made up of objects nor referring to objects, is intangible and ineffable; it can only be, as it were, inhaled by the spirit: the rest is silence."

*Jaques Barzun*



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Toledo Chapter is in action again! On October 25 we were proud to present a theatre organ concert and silent film festival at the historic Palace Theatre in Marion, Ohio. The Palace is a good example of the atmospheric theatre design with deep blue sky ceiling with twinkling stars. Under this 1928 splendor, Mr. Bill Yaney entertained the audience with the sounds of the 3/10 Wurlitzer followed by accompaniment of four entertaining silent comedies from that era.

November brought us back to the memorable installation in the home of Larry and Janet Evritt in Defiance, Ohio. Larry now has the organ playing 23 ranks, and an overflow crowd was treated to THREE professional theatre organists: Melissa Ambrose and John Lauter (from Detroit) and Toledo's own Bill Yaney, who recorded this organ last year. The open console artists who played afterward were no slouches either! A bountiful buffet dinner was served at intermission and afterward we were entertained with a Charlie Chase (no relation to President Evan Chase) silent comedy as well as the roll player which turns the theatre organ into a gigantic band organ sound.

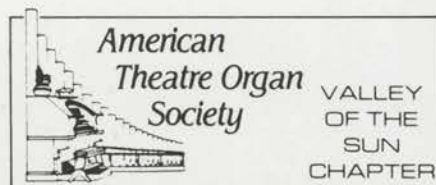
In the meantime, Evan Chase is serving on an advisory board to help preserve and restore the 1927 State Theatre in Toledo. If this is successful, another theatre pipe organ will be installed in those empty chambers. TATOS is also assisting the Tiffin, Ohio, Ritz Theatre to acquire a theatre organ for their barren chambers. We believe an historic theatre doesn't have life unless a theatre organ breathes within.

To crown 1987 as one of our best years, Bill Yaney presented a concert and silent movie program at our own installation at Toledo's old Ohio Theatre (St. Hedwig Cultural Centre). The organ is now up to ten ranks plus percussions and traps — chambers are full! The large crowd gave Bill a standing ovation last November 14 as theatre organ in the Toledo area gains new ground against modern entertainment and wins new audiences!

*Evan J. Chase*



Palace Theatre, Marion, Ohio, lovely historic marquee. *TATOS Photo*



**Phoenix**  
602-972-6223 or 602-278-9107

August 9 found us at the Organ Stop Pizza restaurant in Mesa, where we were treated to an outstanding concert by young British organist Simon Gledhill. We heard both British and American music that day. Included were a Sidney Torch composition and a Jerome Kern medley. Simon also played some novelty tunes and some marches. It was Gledhill's "very first ever concert for ATOS," and we look forward to hearing him in Portland next year.

Members John and Bette Underwood opened their home to us on September 20 for a scrumptious potluck. In addition to all of the good food, there was an open console session on the couple's three-manual Allen 6500 theatre organ.

We are all pleased that Clark Wilson will be joining the Organ Stop staff after the first of the year. Clark played for our October 25 meeting at the pizza parlor. His varied program included some tunes of the 20s, music from *Madame Butterfly*, a Wagner transcription and a medley of songs from *Brigadoon*. Welcome to the Valley of the Sun, Clark!

*Madeline LiVolsi*



Bill Yaney at the Marion, Ohio, Palace Wurlitzer. *TATOS Photo*

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**WOLVERINE CHAPTER**  
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Throughout the summer months, we presented several of our own members in a series of weekly Wednesday half-hour "brown bag" luncheon concerts at the Cleveland, Ohio, Grays' Armory 3/15 Wurlitzer. The concerts met varying degrees of success but were greatly enjoyed by the audiences. Unfortunately, the hot summer weather caused the organ to become unplayable, and the concert series ended abruptly in August.

Our September social gathering emphasized the classical aspects of our pipe organ enthusiasm as we met at Cleveland's St. Ignatius Church. Peter Miller, St. Ignatius' organist, performed for us on the 3/33 Schantz, presenting a variety of selections from the classical repertoire. The sounds of the instrument filled the church beautifully, with the instrument's 5-second reverberation enhancing the music with stately grandeur.

On October 25, we returned to downtown Cleveland's Judson Manor, a favorite among our members, to hear our own Paul Kamas at the 2/9 Kimball. Along with his selections, including "It's Only a Paper Moon," "Sweet Sixteen," "Meditation" from *Thais* and a polka medley, all performed with Paul's special artistic sensitivity, we also enjoyed a short business meeting and a delightful round of open console.

WRTOS opened its 1987-88 concert season presenting perennial favorite Larry Ferrari in concert at the Cleveland Grays' Armory 3/15 Wurlitzer on Halloween night. The response was fantastic, and Larry performed spooky favorites "Hall of the Mountain King," Gounod's "Funeral March of a Marionette" and "Phantom of the Opera," highlighted by two on-stage jack-o-lanterns.

We will present Ty Woodward in concert at the Cleveland Grays' Armory 3/15 Wurlitzer on February 27. Tickets are available in advance from: WRTOS, 1234 Bolivar Rd., Cleveland, OH 44115.

Best wishes for 1988 from all of the Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society.

*Jim Shepherd*

## Recognition Plaques Presented To Life Members



At the 1987 meeting the Board of Directors authorized the presentation of recognition plaques to those members who have expressed their faith in the goals of the American Theatre Organ Society by becoming LIFE members. The contribution necessary to earn the designation is a gift of \$1,000.

The plaques pictured are those presented to the first two so honored. They are **Edith M. Riehle** of Orchard Park, New York, 1986, and **Leo Klise, Jr.** of Columbus, Ohio, in 1987. Two additional members have made the same commitment carrying a 1988 date. They are Ruth Villemín Dresser of Malibu, California and Dale and Mary Ann Mendenhall of Fair Oaks, California. Dale serves as national treasurer of ATOS.

Membership categories encouraging additional gifts to ATOS were created by the Board in 1984. Each year participation by the membership has grown, and these funds have played a significant part in the Society's ability to create new programs, particularly the Young Organist Competition and more recently the monthly newsletter.

Congratulations and "thank you" to our pioneer LIFE members!

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*Joan McFadden, President, Quad Cities Chapter ATOS*

### THE VERY BEST

"Bob Ralston's performance was most memorable and entertaining... excellent registration... by far the most exciting program of the ATOS Convention."

*Grant I. Whitcomb, Reviewer, Theatre Organ Magazine*

### ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE

"Bob Ralston's shows on April 5th and 6th, 1986, were, as usual, a financial success for all concerned. But more importantly, we were able to present the one man who has consistently drawn some of our largest and most enthusiastic audiences."

*Russell E. Shaner, Program Chairman, Rochester Theatre Organ Society*



# Still making history on our 50th anniversary

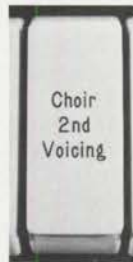
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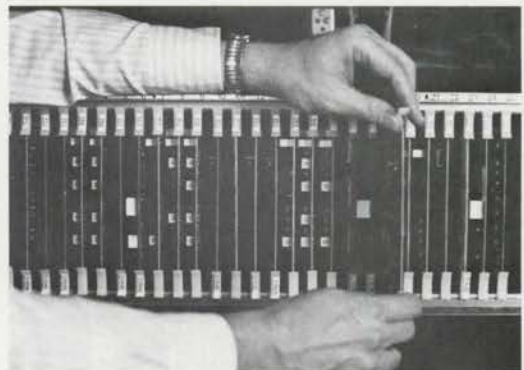


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Alterable to Pedal		Salicet	4	Clarion	4	String	4
Bass Drum		Twelfth	2-2/3	Tibia	4	Vox Humana	4
Cymbal		Piccolo	2	Solo String	4	Piccolo	2
		Tierce	1-3/5	Tibia Tenth	3-1/5	Chiff	
		Fife	1	Piccolo	2	Solo to Accomp.	
		Chiff		Alterable Voice		Alterable to Accomp.	
		Solo to Great		Alterable F (forte)		Snare Drum	
		Alterable to Great		Alterable Piano Mode		Snare Drum Roll	
				Alterable Sustain		Tom Tom	
				Chiff		Claves	
						Wood Block	
						Sand Block	
						Castanets	



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