

Theatre Organ

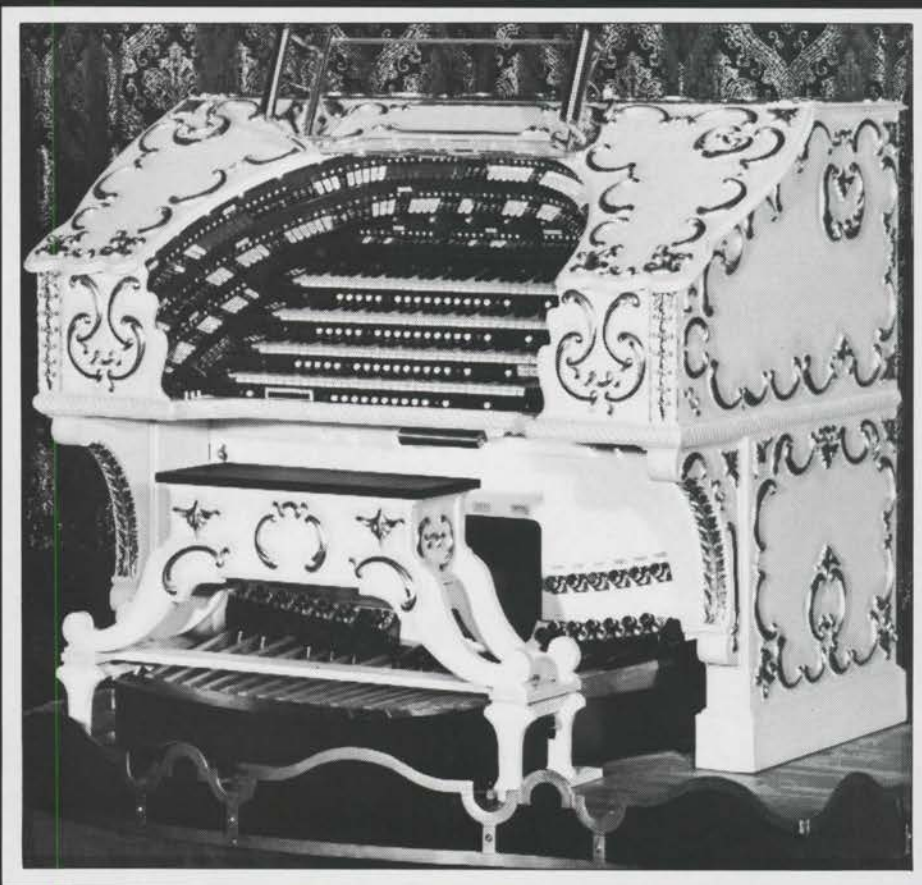
JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1989



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VOLUME 31, NUMBER 6

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PRESIDENT: JOHN LEDWON
EDITOR: GRACE MCGINNIS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: DOUGLAS C. FISK

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COVER PHOTO:

Tiny at the console of the 235 Special out of the Fox Oakland Theatre. This picture was taken at the John Leininger residence in Shingletown, Northern California. It was played on this occasion for members of Nor-Cal Chapter. Photo: Courtesy of Erwin A. Young.

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President's Message



Well, here it is, THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY, AND HAVE I GOT A DEAL FOR YOU! Tired of being mauled at the malls? Frustrated trying to find that perfect gift? Running out of time for shopping? Give an ATOS membership for a gift. To do so will be rewarding to both you and your recipient. You, for knowing you helped get another individual interested in theatre organ, and the recipient who now can experience the Wonderful World of Theatre Organ!

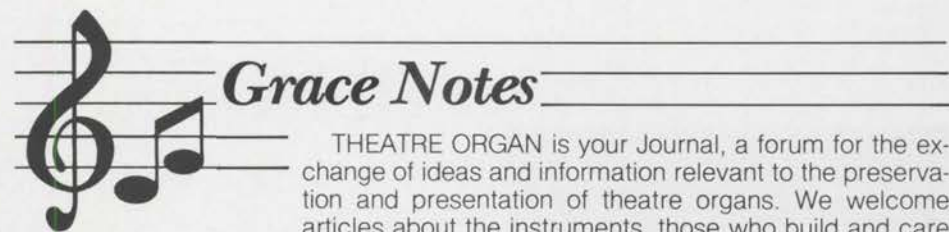
We are a unique group, you know. How many organizations can you think of that get together just for the enjoyment of music and camaraderie? To help preserve a portion of Americana? To have just plain fun? ATOS folks do . . . and accomplish things, too!

To all of you who have worked so tirelessly this past year toward the goals of ATOS, we thank you. May next year be even more successful than the past year. There is much to do: increasing membership, interesting more young people in the technical aspect of theatre organ, putting more instruments in places where the public will be able to enjoy them, encouraging more people to develop an appreciation for the theatre organ sound, to mention only a few. How does ATOS accomplish all these things? (If you have been reading my President's Messages for the past year or so, you probably already know the answer.) By you, through your generous giving of your time, your knowledge, your talent and all the little things that make you and me, me. YOU do make a difference and the entire ATOS family thanks YOU!

On behalf of the officers, directors and the entire staff of the American Theatre Organ Society, have a fantastic and rewarding Holiday Season and the most wonderful New Year!

Sincerely,
John Ledwon

PS. Don't forget the gift memberships! THANKS!!



THEATRE ORGAN is your Journal, a forum for the exchange of ideas and information relevant to the preservation and presentation of theatre organs. We welcome articles about the instruments, those who build and care for them, those who play them, and those who love the music that comes from them.

We are pleased to hear regularly from so many chapters and would like to remind correspondents that space limitations require us to request that they avoid long song lists from concerts, lists of open console players, lists of officers and board members and menus from chapter socials (all of local interest). Chapter Presidents and secretaries are published annually in July/August. We would also like to hear from members who, for whatever reason, are not affiliated with a chapter but who may have news and ideas to share with the membership.

In answer to one reader's question, we would like you all to know that the entire staff of THEATRE ORGAN is volunteer — there are no paid writers or editors — and perfection is reserved to the gods alone. The nicest thing about this work is the people we have come to know and love, and their dedication to these marvelous old machines known as theatre organs.

Grace E. McGinnis, Editor



Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

I have recently purchased an old, valve-type electric church organ and am hoping that some of my fellow members may be able to help me in its restoration. The organ is a 2 x 61-note keyboard with a 30-note pedalboard and 39 stopkeys. The initials AWB are printed on the front of the console, and a plate on the back gives Serial No. 130460 and Model No. MO35.

There is a separate speaker cabinet containing an amplifier and nine speakers with a name plate MK311 and No. 100434. The valves in the tone circuits are Ecc 82. The organ was made in Germany after the war.

I would appreciate receiving any details as to its maker and any copies of any servicing details that may be available. Stop tablet No. 21 has been broken off, and I would appreciate a replacement if somebody has a spare.

The other alternative I am considering is the removal of all the electrics and replacing them with modern technology. Have any members tried this idea, and if successful, can they please send me details of the suppliers of such parts?

Yours faithfully,

Jim Jepson

48 Salisbury Street
Levin, NEW ZEALAND

Dear Editor:

While attending the convention in Detroit this July, I wore a pair of suspenders (braces to our English friends) that had the keyboard imprinted on them. Many people asked me where I got them, and I was unable to answer at that time as the suspenders had been a gift. I have since learned that they were purchased from: The Music Stand, 1 Rockdale Place, Lebanon, NH 03766, and it is my pleasure to be able to answer their question through this column.

Sincerely,

James R. Weber
Decatur, Illinois

Dear Editor:

On page 46 of the September/October THEATRE ORGAN, is an item entitled "News from Rodgers" about the renovation of the Washington Cathedral's Skinner pipe organ, specifically the installation of a microprocessor control system. Our readers should know that this is only a small part of the renovation that has been ongoing for several years, primarily of the organ itself rather than an accessory.

Several years ago, a contract was awarded the Wicks Organ Company to rebuild and install Direct Electric action

in all of the chests. The chests of one division at a time were dismantled, the old electro-pneumatic action removed, the topboards shipped to the Wicks factory where the Direct Electric units were installed, and then returned to the Cathedral where the chests and pipework were reassembled. Also included in the job are new relays and solid-state circuitry.

The job was well underway at the time of the concert there during the National Convention in Richmond, and is now nearing completion. This should free the Cathedral of the tremendous expense of releathering and insure reliability for the future. This work is also being handled by the R.A. Daffer firm representing the Wicks Organ Company.

Sincerely,

Russell Joseph
Bella Vista, Arkansas

Dear Editor:

May I take a moment here to raise my glass in my right hand and bright bouquet in my left as my toast to all the wonderful folks who painstakingly organized and hosted the Greatest Show on Earth. It truly was a great convention in Detroit. I took home with me memories of new-found friends and music, music, music.

The folks in Detroit are wonderful — they truly went out of their way to make me feel at home. I would like to especially thank Gil and Penny Francis — they were like family to me.

Theatre organ is so alive as was greatly demonstrated throughout my stay, this same toast goes out to all the performers who gave new life and meaning to the theatre organ.

Will you all join me in this toast as we raise our glasses to those who made this the Greatest Show on Earth. God bless them all.

Sincerely,

Ron J. Aselton
Sauble Beach, Ontario

Dear Editor:

National ATOS Convention? Why did the Detroit chapter subject their guests to the nightmare of the Westin Hotel and the degradation of downtown Detroit? A more sensible choice would have been either the Hyatt Regency or the Radisson at Dearborn Fairlane Town Center. There you would be safe and have everything at hand. It actually would have been closer to concert events by bus.

Also, it is apparent that attendance at conventions is steadily declining due to the great expense involved. Five days would be more reasonable and would greatly reduce the registration and hotel expense.

Let's weed out the mediocre performers and present the real artists that conventioners deserve. The disaster at the magnificent Fox is a good example. Thanks, Ron Rhode, for saving an unbearable situation.

Yours truly,

Lyman Nellis
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Dear Editor:

Paris in the spring is renowned, but you really should see London in all her glory of riotous spring colors! The recent Safari to England was the best. It was a showcase for London and South of England Chapter's Young Organist Competition winners, an extremely talented and dedicated group of young people.

The Rawle family, Les and Edith and Len and Judith, are so dedicated to the organ it is the heart and soul of the family, and the love and warmth was projected to all of us who were privileged to hear their two organs.

The English countryside at this time of year is simply magnificent! The colors are breathtaking. All this enhanced our trip over to Wales.

To hear all of England's best organists in concert, whether it be on antique organs or restored organs or theatre organs, is something I would love you all to see and hear.

Elizabeth B. MacIntyre
New Port Richey, Florida

Dear Editor:

I thank you for publishing my letter. However, two numbers somehow got mangled. You gave Gary an extra half-hour to play (this would be nice, but it just doesn't happen); his music is heard from 6:30-7:00. And my address is missing a one, which might cause some of my mail to go astray. I would appreciate a correction.

Sincerely,
Phil Marten

2111 East Howard Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207

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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WURLITZER'S STYLE 165X:

THE *Quintessence* OF THE SMALLER THEATRE ORGAN

by George Baker

Audiences attending theatre organ recitals today often include among their most enthusiastic listeners fans born long after the close of the theatre organ's golden age. This welcome infusion of young blood is a healthy sign, and one that augers well for future theatre organ appreciation and preservation.

Some younger fans reason that because most of today's surviving theatre pipe organs are supersize organs located in large movie palaces that these giants were the dominant types of organs in use during the halcyon years.

A reasonable deduction, but such was not the case. Centerpiece theatre organs, such as the New York Paramount and Shea's Buffalo Wurlitzers, the Atlanta Fox Moller, and the Ohio Theatre Robert-Morton, in Columbus, were the exception, not the rule.

For every dazzling Jesse Crawford Special, there were dozens of small organs busily entertaining audiences in the Bijous, Plazas, and other houses of fewer than a thousand seats.

The fact is that two out of every three theatre pipe organs in the great days were relatively small instruments, usually consisting of from four to six ranks, and played from two-manual consoles.

These smaller organs were the faithful workhorses of the nation's film exhibitors. Most were played steadily for twelve hours a day, seven days a week, in some cases by inadequately trained organists who lacked the skill and musical imagination to develop the full combination and registration potentials of their instruments. The smaller organs and their

organists were seldom, if ever, mentioned in theatre advertising. Under-maintenance of the organs was often the rule, rather than the exception.

Downtown, however, managers of the larger theatres, well aware that proper organ maintenance as well as keyboard talent helped sell tickets, lavished the kind of care on their instruments that was seldom extended to the 2/4 and 2/6 Cinderellas in the smaller houses.

When the nation's film theatres were wired for sound, many of the big organs survived for another decade by presenting organlogues and brief, clear-the-house opening and closing programs between showings of the feature film. At the same time, most of the smaller organs were abandoned immediately after the installation of sound equipment — left to the hazards of neglect, fire, flood, theft, and vandalism.

While some of the faithful workhorses can be found today in the snug havens of residences and private studios, most fell into disrepair or were junked not long after the advent of sound films.

Few people realized it at the time, but with benefit of 20/20 hindsight it is clear that the doom of the theatre pipe organ industry was triggered not by Al Jolson and the Warner Brothers but several years earlier by the successful development of electrical sound recording and development of dependable audio amplifiers and dynamic speakers. In the phonograph industry, Victor and Columbia began early in 1925 to phase out production of acoustic records, and a year later were rushing to keep up with an enthusiastic public demand for the new electrically recorded discs.



*Don Macdonald, President of Piedmont Theatre Organ Society,
at the console of the Earl Gilbert Wurlitzer Style 165X.*

Although the conspicuous signs of the theatre organ industry's decline would not surface until the late 1920s, most film exhibitors were quick to realize that electrically recorded sound was not only welcomed by audiences (unlike acoustic recordings played in theatres, which earlier audiences had jeered), but could result in substantial cost savings as the redundant organists and orchestra-pit musicians were dropped from the house payrolls.

In the early months of sound film production, few producers or exhibitors anticipated any need for recorded speech as part of the giant step in sound technology. In this respect, the industry's adumbration was slightly out of focus. Most moviemakers believed that there was simply no need to record dialogue, that the public preferred to let the camera tell the story with an occasional assist from subtitles. Sound films — so the prevailing wisdom of the day ran — would simply be silent films (no spoken dialogue) with an overlay of recorded background or mood music — the same type of music that organist and theatre orchestras had been supplying for years.

In film studios, musicians would continue to compose and arrange musical scores for pictures just as they had for silent films, but with an important cost savings for the studios — there would no longer be a need for the studio to print and distribute thousands of copies of cued musical scores to the nation's theatre organists and orchestra leaders. ("Cue: Organist or orchestra conductor — A subtitle 'They went thataway, Sheriff,' William Tell Overture, finale, fortissimo, until love scene, etc.")

Some of the most important leaders in the film industry greatly underestimated public demand for spoken dialogue. Speaking at the Harvard Business School symposium on the film industry organized by Joseph P. Kennedy (then a successful film producer and distributor), Marcus Loew, a major exhibitor (Loew's theatres) and producer (MGM), predicted accurately that sound films would make it possible for theatre owners to effect substantial cost savings by dropping their organists and musicians.

But Loew foresaw no demand from the public for talking actors. In his view, the future sounds coming from theatre screens would essentially be the same kind of accompaniment music that organs and orchestras had been playing in movie houses. The only change he envisaged was that accompaniment scores would be recorded by the film studios (either on discs or on film), rather than played by theatre musicians.

Other industry leaders speaking at the Harvard symposium with Loew included Adolph Zukor, Cecil B. deMille, and William Fox. All were of the same general opinion — recorded sound, as far as movies were concerned, was strictly for music, not for speech. Talking actors were not only not needed — they could (and in fact would, in some cases) prove to be an audible embarrassment. A few producers refused to concede that there was any need or demand for either recorded dialogue or music. In their view, the talkies were merely a passing fad.

Fad or not, by 1929 a wave of insecurity was sweeping the ranks of theatre employees. Organists, musicians, stage-

hands, and variety entertainers all averted their eyes from the big marquee banners reading "100% All Talking — See and HEAR!" Once the Western Electric crews rolled the big speakers into position behind the sparkling new perforated sound screens, the organs and their consoles were no longer assets in the eyes of theatre owners and their accountants. Overnight, they became unwanted liabilities. Many were given away or sold for token prices to schools, churches, temples, and professional musicians.

Notwithstanding the stampede to install sound equipment that was well under way in 1929, a few owners of smaller theatres continued to play silent films — with the usual piano or organ accompaniment — until well into the 1930s. Not until 1933 did the studios finally notify film exchanges and exhibitors that the optional silent prints would no longer be available. Exchanges reported that the conversion to sound was, practically speaking, complete. The few remaining holdouts shuttered quietly.

Ironically, the bleak outlook facing the theatre organ industry had arrived on the heels of some significant technical improvements, including advanced unification, that Wurlitzer had begun to offer to potential buyers of smaller organs. In



1928, the short (less than two years) but significant blooming period for Style 165 and 165X organs was at hand.

Just as Maurice Ravel's "La Valse" is generally regarded as the apotheosis of the Viennese waltz, so the Wurlitzer Style 165X theatre organ in the eyes of many theatre organ experts represents the ultimate in development of the smaller theatre organ.

Not familiar with the Wurlitzer 165X? You are not alone. Wurlitzer built only 19 Style 165 (single chamber) and 165X (two chambers) organs — less than one percent of its total output of more than 2,200 theatre organs over a 25-year period. The Style 165 and its related 165X arrived too late (1928) on the theatre organ scene to capture any significant share of the then declining theatre organ market.

What made the Style 165X a standout among smaller organs?

Neglect and vandalism have taken their toll on the console for Wurlitzer Opus 1939, which saw long service in the Dominion Theatre, Hounslow, England, before pipes were destroyed during air conditioning installation. Console is now in storage.

John Sharp photo

First, it was a musically well balanced package of essentials — Flute, Diapason, Salicional, Vox Humana, Tibia, and Trumpet. Second, unification on the Style 165 and 165X was advanced to a degree previously unknown in smaller organs. Both Tibia and Flute ranks were unified at 16, 8, 4, 2-2/3, and 2 feet, thus re-creating the conditions that made possible the famous Crawford tibia sound.

The 165 and 165X — like their predecessor Styles D and DX — had a Tierce — a 1-3/5 foot stop derived from the Flute rank, and sounding two octaves and a third interval above the key depressed, while a twelfth sounds one octave and a fifth interval above the key depressed, thus bringing extra brilliance to the ensemble sound by adding harmonics to the unison pitch stops.

The two-manual Style 165X console, with its 56 stop tabs and 10 combination pistons, was available either in mahogany or a deluxe ivory-and-gold ormolu finish for \$14,850 plus shipping. The ivory-and-gold finish was particularly popular in Britain, where consoles were conspicuously prominent during the organ programs that, by custom, were an important part of British cinema presentation.

The net result of Wurlitzer's perceptive blend of musical



and engineering skills in the Style 165X is a rich, melodic sound previously available only on selected larger organs. Small wonder that the Style 165X quickly became a favorite of audiences (the rich Crawford sound), organists (advanced unification cleared the way for improved performance), and theatre owners (big-organ sound at small-organ cost).

Doctor Donald Macdonald, president of the Piedmont Theatre Organ Society and a practicing physician in Union County, North Carolina, has had a long-running love affair with the Wurlitzer Style 165X that extends over nearly half a century — starting in 1942, when he was engaged as relief organist at the King's Theatre in his native Dundee, Scotland, to play for sing-alongs at Saturday morning children's shows and assist Tom McBride, the regular organist at the King's. Don was then a junior medical student with additional academic credentials in classical organ studies.

"I shall always remember the tingle of excitement over first contact with the Wurlitzer organ in the King's Theatre,"

Don recalls. "I do not believe that Jesse Crawford at the New York Paramount, or Reg Foort with his giant Moller at the Drury Lane, London, could have experienced a greater thrill than I did on my first rehearsal at the King's Theatre in Dundee.

"True, some of the pedal contacts were erratic, the reeds were out of tune, and the action a trifle sluggish, but the baroque red plush and gold auditorium of the King's resounded splendidly with that glorious tibia-vox combination, and I speedily uncovered the mysteries of glock, chimes, Chinese block, crash cymbal, snare drum, and second touch, discovered the beautiful tonal flexibility of extended ranks, and explored a fascinating array of effects on the toe studs."

With the musical stewardship of the Saturday morning children's shows established, Don was next engaged to serve as associate music director with Tom McBride for the wartime Garrison Theatre shows that played from time to time at the King's Theatre in Dundee in the course of touring England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Garrison Theatre shows were essentially prepackaged vaudeville bills, usually consisting of a line of chorus girls, comedians, acrobats, dancers, and other variety turns. But musicians were not included in the entourage. At a typical rehearsal of a Garrison Theatre production at the King's, the individual acts would hand their music to Don Macdonald, often adding oral cue instructions such as "When I twirl my cane twice, give me a four-bar intro, then straight into chorus, verse, chorus, repeating the bridge while I finish my patter, and we come in together on the last chorus."

Illusionists and conjurers were easy — "Over The Waves," or "Destiny," played softly and misterioso.

"Vocalists could be a problem, particularly if they did not understand that their failure to hear the organ on stage was because the organ chamber openings faced the audience, not the stage," Don remembers. "If a vocalist persisted in demanding that I play louder, I got my revenge by doing what was asked — playing at full organ, knowing that little if any of the vocal solo would be heard above the Tibias, Trumpets, and Diapasons of the Wurlitzer.

"The most fun was accompanying the dancing girls, even though they quickly gave me to understand that I did not set the tempo — they did, and I was merely to follow them. A hand twirl meant 'pick up the tempo,' and a hand held palm down meant 'slow it down.' Their bouncy fox-trot numbers gave me plenty of opportunity for snare drum, Chinese block, and xylophone, not forgetting the traditional cymbal crashes on the high kicks. They always got a great reception from the audience.

"Garrison Theatre rehearsals usually ended by 5:30 p.m., and there was just time for a cup of coffee and a sandwich before the house opened at 6:30. Meanwhile, I had to select music for the organ solo program that ran from 6:30 to 7. I generally played a musical comedy medley that ran for about 12 minutes, a novelty, such as 'Teddy Bears' Picnic,' one or two pops, a slow ballad, and sometimes a tango, using the Wurlitzer castanets.

"Just before curtain time, the stage manager would signal me by an inconspicuous yellow lamp on the console to finish

Close-up of console for Opus 1915, now in Peterborough Technical College, England. Signs of wear on expression pedals reflect frequent use by college and visiting organists.

John Sharp photo

what I was playing and prepare for the opening chorus.

"Intermission afforded no rest for the organist of a Garrison Theatre unit. The lowering of the curtain at the end of the first half was my cue to push the 'up' button and let the console rise to 'overture' level for a 15-minute intermission concert. I would play numbers like 'All The Nice Girls Love a Sailor,' and 'There's Something About a Soldier,' and the audience joined in the choruses with gusto. All too soon the yellow lamp would flash — my signal to end the number and take the lift back down to 'picture' level. If I lingered too long, the stage manager would override my lift control and bring me down ignominiously — a fate I suffered once or twice.

"The second half of the program typically included the usual comedy skits, ballads, illusionists, and comics. After the finale, in which the entire company appeared, the curtain fell, and after a moment's silence I played one verse of 'Abide With Me' in E flat — full organ, and no tremos. The entire house of fifteen hundred soldiers, sailors, and airmen and their dates was on its feet, singing.

"Then, after a brief pause, a snare drum roll (careful, don't hit the steamboat whistle by mistake) with shutters open, and 'God Save The King' in the key of F. It was a strong finish. Somehow, audiences seemed to draw a fresh measure of sustenance from the Garrison Theatre shows that would help carry them through another three war years.

"Throughout the war, Gaumont-British (owners of the King's Theatre) continued to contract with Wurlitzer for regular maintenance of the King's 165X, and we did not have a single cipher or other mechanical breakdown.

"The King's Wurlitzer was a little gem of an organ. In the usual pattern of Style 165X installations, it had Diapason, Salicional, and Flute in the Main (left) chamber, and Tibia, Vox, and Trumpet in the Solo (right) chamber. The console, resplendent in ivory and gold ormolu, was mounted on a lift at the left end of the orchestra pit. This little organ was an inspired android that acquitted itself nobly in those dark war years, when the duration and the outcome of the conflict were grim question marks."

The Rise & Fall of 165s

Wurlitzer shipped the first of its 19 Style 165 and 165X organs in May 1928 (to the Krystall Palast, Berlin), and the last in December 1929 (to the Freeport Theatre, Freeport, Illinois). But by late 1929, the party was over for the theatre organ industry, although the winding-down process would continue for several more years.

Theatre owners who in late 1929 had not yet converted to sound were in a stamped to make the change. Organists in large and small theatres alike faced frightful job insecurity at a time when unemployment in all professions was rising ominously. Dismissal notices by the hundreds were tucked into organists' pay envelopes. Organ chambers were padlocked, many for the last time. Thoughtful theatre managers draped Spanish shawls or felt dustcovers over their consoles, but most were left exposed to the ravages of dust, rodents, and vandals.

The Wurlitzer Style 165X, born with bright promise less

than two years earlier, faced the grim, *fin-de-siecle* decline along with the entire theatre pipe organ industry.

Had not sound films dealt a knockout punch to the theatre organ industry in the late 1920s, it is quite possible that the Style 165X organ — which was in brisk demand on Wurlitzer sales reports during 1928 and 1929 — would have surged ahead in sales to replace the long-run popularity of the Styles D and E as favorites among owners of smaller theatres.

Well over half of Wurlitzer's year-in, year-out sales of theatre pipe organs had been for instruments of fewer than ten ranks, with the six-rank Style D and the seven-rank Style E among the leading choices by owners of smaller theatres.

Wurlitzer's combined sales of three- and four-manual organs of fourteen or more ranks accounted for only about one-third of total units sold. The biggest demand from theatre owners was by far for the popular two-manual console with an organ of from four to six ranks. Over the years, these smaller organs were Wurlitzer's consistent breadwinners.

Wurlitzer's Style 165 organ — and the optional (for an additional 10 percent over list price) 165X — thus appeared to be the ideal product for owners of smaller theatres. Improvements in tibia and flute unification invited favorable



comparisons with the famous Crawford tibia sound. Owners of small houses noted that the organ's six ranks could be fitted comfortably into the often cramped areas behind the box seats of converted playhouses, or in the shallow chamber of shooting-gallery type movie houses serving the neighborhood trade. The Style 165 and 165X were indeed worthy successors to the popular Styles D and DX, which for years had been the leaders in sales to smaller theatres.

Advances in Wurlitzer tibia and flute unification were not confined to the 165 and 165X, but were reflected in other models as well, resulting in changes in Wurlitzer model designation. Style B became the Style 150; E became the 175; F became the 190, and so on.

As a Style 165X organ was designed for installation in two chambers — usually on opposite sides of the stage or screen — instead of the customary single chamber most often associated with organs designed for smaller theatres, a patron seated in the center area of a movie house equipped with a

The eye-catching ivory-and-gold ormolu console for Opus 1915, first installed in the Regent (later Gaumont) Theatre, Dudley, England, and now Britain's only playable Style 165X organ, located at Peterborough Technical College. Billboard-style music racks were frequently used in Wurlitzer's British installations.

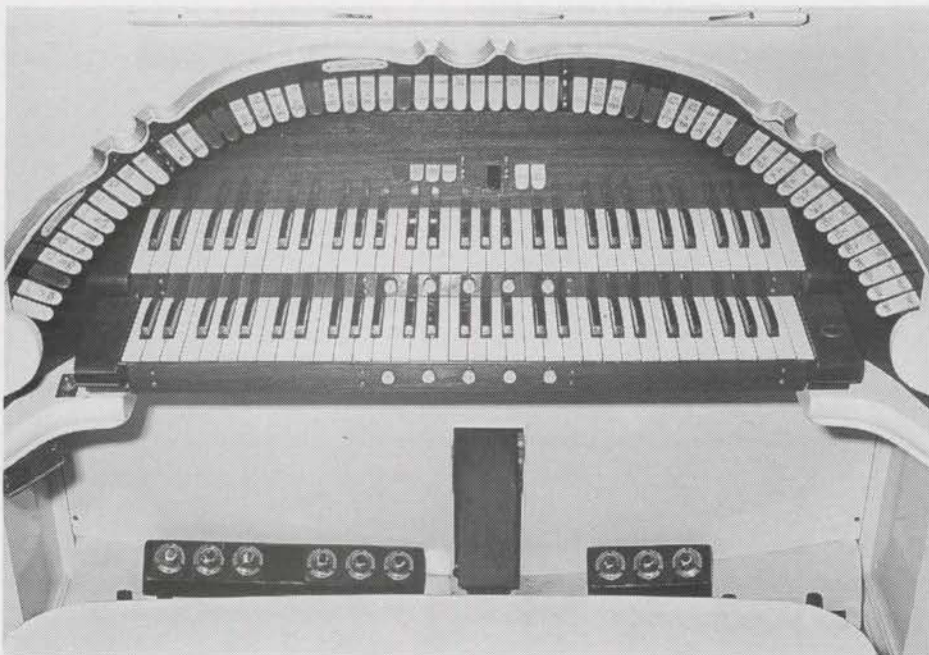
John Sharp photo

Style 165X could enjoy a true stereophonic organ effect — a treat previously enjoyed mostly — but not entirely — by audiences in the deluxe houses. The Style 165 was not the only small organ to be offered with an option for two-chamber installations. Several Style B organs (four ranks) were sold as divided instruments.

In a typical Style 165X installation, the Trumpet, Tibia, and Vox Humana ranks carried the melody in the Solo chamber, while Flutes, Salicional, and Diapason/Diaphone lent accompaniment in the opposite (Main) chamber. Bourdon was derived from the bass pipes of the Flute rank. If the organ was to be installed in a single chamber (Style 165), the Tibia rank was connected to a single tremulant. If the installation was intended for two chambers (165X), the Tibia was connected to the tremulant that also served the Trumpet rank.

Two or more chambers were standard for the big theatres, but prior to development of the Style 165X, the managers of smaller theatres had to make the best possible use of their close quarters, and placement of all organ pipes in a single chamber had been the general rule.

A few Style 165 and 165X organs were designated as Style 165 Special, or Style 165X Special — the “special”



indicating some alteration or addition ordered by the customer, such as Post Horn instead of Trumpet, special percussion or traps effects, or — at least in one case — a three-manual console instead of the usual two-manual keydesk.

A total of nineteen Style 165 and 165X Wurlitzer theatre organs were shipped from the factory at North Tonawanda, New York, between May 1928 and December 1929. Of these nineteen organs, ten were shipped to and installed in smaller theatres in the United States, while nine were exported — five to Germany and four to British venues. Of the five exported to Germany, two were subsequently re-exported to England, where one eventually was reduced to junk as a result of neglect and vandalism, while the other, fifty years later, made its way back to Germany for regular service in a Frankfurt cinema museum.

Where are they now, these nineteen small organs with the big-organ sound, that blossomed late and faded from public view when sound films arrived? Based on Judd Walton's list

of Wurlitzer factory shipments plus independent research by individual theatre organ owners, it is evident that Style 165 and 165X Wurlitzer theatre organs have achieved a somewhat stronger survival rate than have theatre organs as a whole. Ten are known to be playable today. The rest have vanished, in some cases without leaving a trace.

Of the ten surviving Style 165 and 165X organs, none exists exactly as first installed by Wurlitzer crews. The least altered and best preserved of these is probably Opus 1966, now in the Earl Gilbert residence in Getzville, New York. Piano (a Wurlitzer Organette player) has been added, and minor modifications made. The nine other surviving Style 165 and 165X organs all have been altered in varying degrees, some to a point where they now can only be defined as hybrid theatre organs. (See list page 15)

Earl Gilbert's 165X

Although the term “mint condition” is often wildly misused today, it can be applied with accuracy to the Wurlitzer Style 165X owned by Mrs. Stella Gilbert and which was played daily by her husband, Earl, prior to his death in May 1989.

The Gilbert organ's superior condition is a result of several factors that involve technical skill, knowledge of musical principles, good audio perception, and adherence to the tenets of the ATOS preservation clause.

The 2/6, opus 1966, was installed by Wurlitzer technicians during October and November 1928 in two chambers of the medium-size (1,500 seats) Gaiety Theatre in downtown Utica, New York. The good acoustics of the auditorium — a former legitimate playhouse — enhanced the rich sounds emanating from the chambers located behind the box seats that flanked the Gaiety proscenium. The pleasing tones of the Style 165X were welcomed by the theatre's owners as well as by the customers. But it was not to last.

In late 1928, sound films were fast displacing silent movies and theatre pipe organs. The Gaiety was sold and closed. Dust began gathering on the custom-made green velour dust cover that draped the Wurlitzer console.

After a short dormancy, the Gaiety came to life again with a new lessee — Fox Theatres Corp. — and a new name — the Utica Theatre. The still-new Wurlitzer, however had become redundant. The former vaude-film policy was dropped. Organists, the pit musicians, stagehands, and electricians were no longer needed.

“The entire show is on the LIFE-SIZE screen,” Fox trumpeted in Utica newspaper advertising, referring to the huge new screen that nearly filled the theatre's 38-foot wide proscenium opening, dwarfing the old 9 by 12 picture sheet.

But in 1930, movie attendance began a long downhill slide, and by late 1931 had reached critically low levels. The Fox organization, in financial difficulties, gave up its lease on the Utica Theatre.

After a short hiatus, a new lessee reopened the house with a film-plus-organ policy designed to attract customers by using the Wurlitzer to showcase the excellent acoustics of the theatre through sing-alongs and organ interludes presented between showings of the feature film.

Console for Opus 1920 as it appeared during its years at New Beach Holiday Camp, Sussex, England. As the single swell pedal indicates, the organ is a Style 165, designed for installation in a single chamber. Scroll design above stop rail is typical of 1928 Wurlitzer production.

John Sharp photo

John Roblin, of Pittsford, New York, recalls the excitement of the lively organ programs and sing-alongs presented at the Utica in his student days. "The Utica organ had an unusually fine tone, and even customers who knew nothing of music spoke enthusiastically of the Utica Wurlitzer's performance," he reminisces. "The combination of good pictures and the organ programs brought in the ticket-buyers. There was a special quality about the Utica Wurlitzer. By generating a rich overall tone quality in an acoustically lively house, it brought an extra dimension in entertainment that the other downtown theatres lacked."

But by degrees the Utica Wurlitzer fell silent. The console was pushed from its fixed position at the left end of the orchestra pit to the cramped area under the stage apron. Concealed from view by the up-ended pedalboard and its green dustcover in the gloom of the abandoned orchestra pit, the console escaped the scrutiny of vandals, organ dealers, and a procession of theatre managers. As time went by, fewer people knew of the organ's existence. Movie attendance in downtown Utica dwindled, and in the 1950s the house closed its doors for the last time.

But Earl Gilbert knew the organ was still in place, and he suspected — correctly, as it turned out — that the organ and its console probably were in good condition. When the building wrecker's barricades went up outside the Utica Theatre, Earl knew it was time to act. He quickly called on the property owners, and made his bid for the organ.

"They seemed surprised to hear that there was an organ in the theatre," Earl recalled. "But I knew the organ was there, and I made an offer that they accepted."

Removing a theatre organ is not only a difficult job that requires reserves of patience as well as skill, but the most important part of any removal is a careful note-taking and photographing preceding the removal. "Some people, on buying a theatre pipe organ, rush in and start grabbing pipes," Earl observed. "That's all wrong. First, consider that the Wurlitzer crews had good reasons for installing the ranks in the particular pattern that was selected. The important first step is to take photographs, and measure the chambers and the placement of the ranks before you start dismantling anything."

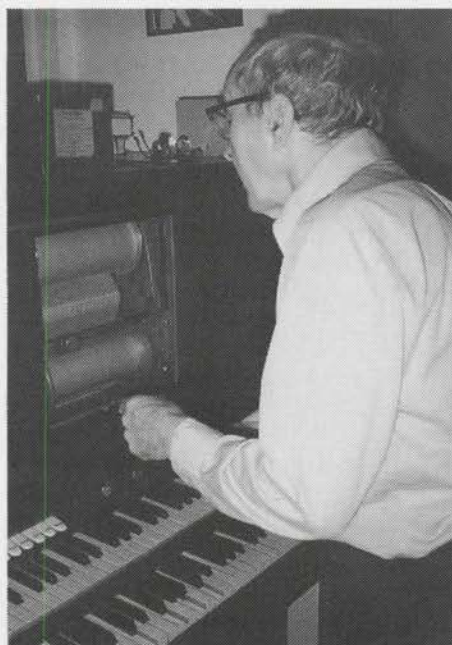
Earl Gilbert believed that the word "preservation" in the ATOS constitution and bylaws means just what it says. He took a dim view of theatre organ owners who try to "improve" their organs with added ranks, manuals, and wind pressure. Such alterations are not "preservation," he pointed out, but merely

genteel vandalism. And there is a matter of simple economics in favor of preservation: The market value of a hybrid is never equal to the market value of an unaltered original.

Pointing out that the Wurlitzer installation specialists in the 1920s knew what they were doing and did not operate on a hit-or-miss basis, Earl insisted that an unrestored Wurlitzer theatre organ is a jewel that needs no "improvement."

■ ■ ■

*Earl Gilbert believed
that the word
"preservation"
in the ATOS constitution
means just what it says.*



Earl Gilbert adjusts tempo for a Sousa march played on a Wurlitzer 'O' roll.

Proof of the value of this strategy lies in the vibrant, exciting tones of the Utica Wurlitzer, now installed in a specially designed studio at the Gilbert residence in Getzville, New York. Following a brief storage period after its removal from Utica, opus 1966 was installed in 1961 with its original 1928 mahogany console gleaming and unscarred.

The console is centered in a 20' x 12' studio with an 8' ceiling. Chambers, each 12' x 7' x 9' high, are located at opposite ends of the long dimension of the studio. The chamber walls are lined with rock-hard plaster, which (next to concrete, as recommended by Robert Hope-Jones) produces masterful sound reverberation.

The goal of nearly every theatre-organ owner is to achieve "the real theatre organ sound." Some theatre organs in

residences have it; many do not. Earl Gilbert's installation unquestionably has "the real theatre organ sound." "How was it achieved?" Earl explains:

"This organ is a complete and unaltered Wurlitzer organ, direct from the theatre. It is not a 'home installation,' since it is installed in a special building designed just for the organ.

"The back walls of each chamber are covered with the hardest board available. Reverberation starts from these outside walls, which are 34 feet apart — from the outside wall of the Solo chamber to the outside wall of the Accompaniment chamber. The sound hits the solid wall of the closed shutters, and is bounced back to the rear wall about 7 feet back to the real wall of the chamber.

"This is happening in both chambers simultaneously, so the listener hears two dimensions of natural reverberation. Some sound leaks through the shutters to cross the studio and strike the other set of shutters — a distance of 26 feet from the opposite outside wall.

"These additional dimensions now make a total of four dimensions. When the organ is being played, the sound is also reverberating across the studio from one set of shutters to the set on the opposite side of the studio, and thus a fifth dimension of natural reverberation is blended with the other four dimensions.

"In this way, the natural reverberation sound that would be heard in a theatre of the size the organ was designed for is re-created — and the result is 'the real theatre organ sound.'

"I should say the 'real small theatre sound,' because if you listen attentively here or in a small theatre, you will note the absence of overhead reverberation that is present in a large theatre.

"A moderate level of continuous, natural reverberation, flowing in an acoustical environment of planned, overlapping dimensions, is what produces the 'real theatre organ sound' here.

"People sometimes say to me, 'What makes your tibias sound so good?' But there is nothing unusual about my tibias. They are standard Wurlitzer tibias. They were properly voiced, to begin with, and they have not been fiddled with, or 'improved,' as some put it, by people who really don't know what they're doing. The secret — if any — in the good tibia sound here is that the tibia rank is in its own separate chamber, and is permitted to maintain and express its unique personality without having to compete unduly with the Diapason, Flute, and Salicional ranks, as is the case in some installations.

Others have a somewhat different interpretation of the ATOS preservation clause.



Main and Solo Chambers are at opposite ends of the Earl Gilbert studio. Percussions and traps speak from the chamber at rear of Organette (a Wurlitzer roll player designed in the 1920s for theatres seating fewer than 300).

Dave Junchen's Restoration Philosophy

David Junchen, organ rebuilder and author of the *Encyclopedia of The American Theatre Organ*, has mixed feelings about the desirability of trying to recapture the theatre organ sounds of the 1920s.

"The danger of trying to recapture the past is that it can never be done," he states. "In many cases, organs were installed hastily or even incorrectly in order to meet deadlines, and their performance was far from optimum. If an organ did not sound its best following installation, it is pointless to talk about returning it to its 'former glory.'

"Our goal should be to voice and regulate an organ to bring out the best performance — not to try to return to something that never was.

"Keep in mind that the sale and installation of theatre pipe organs was a very competitive business. Theatre owners bought organs from manufacturers who could deliver and install a product at a competitive price and by a date that would match the scheduled opening of the theatre.

"No organ manufacturer ever admitted to cutting corners in the manufacture or installation of the product, but when the heat was on, they did what was necessary to get a contract or to meet a theatre's opening date. This could account for less-than-perfect voicing of pipes, hasty or poorly planned installation in chambers, and inadequate regulation.

"In short, many theatre organs installed in the so-called golden days were performing at far less than optimum. Just as we tend to view the past through rose-colored glasses, we tend to recall certain organs as sounding quite splendid, when the truth is that they often sounded only middling to downright poor in performance.

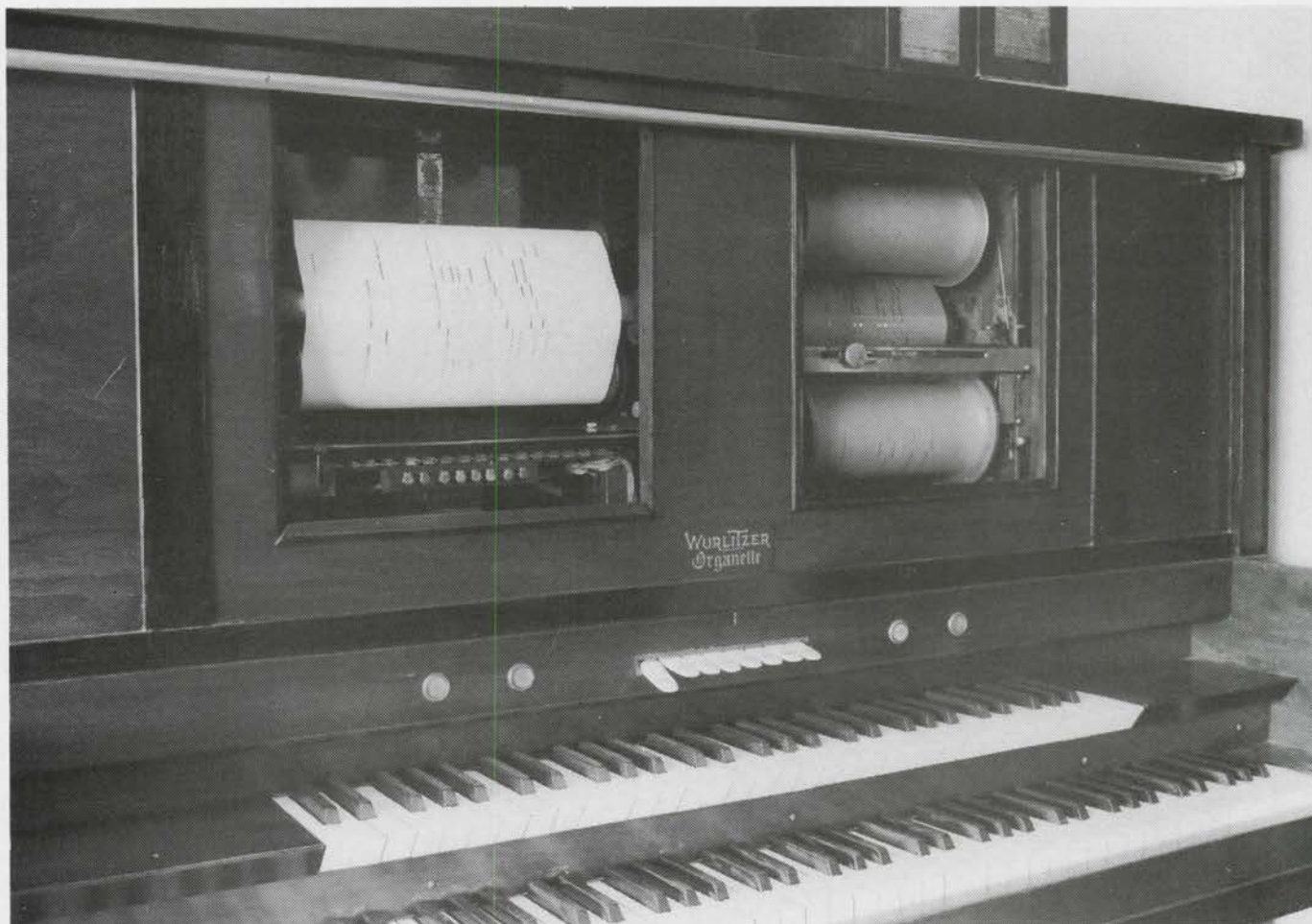
"To be blunt, the word for the performance of many theatre organs in the so-called golden days was 'ho-hum.' The exciting musical sounds that should have been there just were not there in too many cases. And when you add the factor of careless or downright poor musicianship that unfortunately was often the case with some organists, the result was

often a sorry and disappointing performance.

"There were exceptions of course. At the New York Paramount, for example, Jesse Crawford and Dan Papp — the house organ maintenance specialist — worked continuously to achieve and maintain optimum performance. Unfortunately, some theatre owners spent little or nothing on organ maintenance, and the inevitable result was poor performance and a ho-hum response from the audiences.

"You wouldn't buy a new car, and then refuse to have it serviced and checked over from time to time. Yet, this is what some theatre organ owners did, and are still doing.

"Most theatre organs that are still in their original venues sound much better today than they ever did in the so-called golden days. This is because most organs today are in better repair, are better maintained, and are more skillfully played than was the case in the 1920s and early 1930s. Today, the level of musicianship is far superior to the average theatre organ performance of those days.



Originally, Earl Gilbert's Organette player accommodated Wurlitzer 'O' rolls in identical spool boxes (left and right), thus permitting the operator to switch quickly from "hurry" music on one roll to "romantic" music on the other. The left spool box was replaced with a standard player spool box that accommodates conventional piano rolls. Tubing from both tracker bars has been T'd to connect Organette piano with Wurlitzer 165X pipes, permitting melodies generated by either 'O' rolls or conventional player rolls to take on new dimensions expressed by Tibia, Vox, and Flute.

"Good restoration should also mean developing an organ's personality to its full potential."

"Knowledgeable theatre organ audiences today expect what I call an 'enhanced sound,'" Dave continues. "By 'enhanced sound,' I don't mean converting the exciting theatre organ sound into a harsh or strident sound — which, unfortunately, is what some restoration crews have done.

"By 'enhanced sound,' I mean regulating and voicing the organ to perform at its optimum, which often means bringing out subtleties of expression that may have been dormant in the organ for fifty years or more.

"When I hear someone say, 'This organ sounds just like it did when it was first installed,' I sometimes want to reply, 'As bad as that, is it?'"

"A good restoration should not mean simply adjusting the organ components to the level of operating efficiency — or inefficiency — that existed in 1928 or 1929.

"Good restoration should also mean developing an organ's personality to its full potential — often a potential that after the dormancy of many years can now be brought up to maximum capability," Dave says in summing up his restoration approach.

Within the community of theatre organ owners today there is room for a wide latitude of philosophies and attitudes toward the remaining theatre organs that have survived into the 1980s. ATOS and most of its member chapters subscribe — on paper, at least — to the principle of preservation of the remaining instruments.

But does "preservation" mean simply maintaining the level of operating efficiency — or inefficiency, as Dave Junchen puts it — that prevailed in the 1920s?

Or, does "preservation" by inference also include skilled voicing, tuning, and placement of components to bring out

the full potential of the organ — in many cases, a potential not previously realized?

Meanwhile, fire, flood, and vandalism — as well as planned destruction, such as the dismantling of organs for parts and the assembling of grotesque consolidations that frequently are merely morasses of musical contradictions and redundancies — continue to take their toll. With each passing year, the total number of playable theatre pipe organs continues to decline.

Only ten of the nineteen Style 165 and 165X theatre organs built by Wurlitzer in 1928 and 1929 are playable today. While the survival rate for Style 165 and 165X organs is better than for most styles and models of Wurlitzer organs, it is a thoughtful and sobering reminder of the growing need for a constructive allegiance and adherence to the ATOS preservation clause. Otherwise, we shall one day have nothing left to preserve.



Rock-hard wall surfaces in the Earl Gilbert chambers help generate "the real theatre sound." Angle of the open louvres indicate prescribed path for the Wurlitzer's rich Tibia-Vox combination.

The nineteen Style 165 and 165X Wurlitzer theatre organs, with Opus numbers, factory shipping dates and disposition:

OPUS 1875. 165.

May 24, 1928, to Krystall Palast, Berlin, Germany. Disposition unknown.

OPUS 1978. 165X.

May 15, 1928, to Del Paso Theatre, Sacramento, California. Junked.

OPUS 1900. 165.

June 28, 1928, to Amazon Theatre, San Francisco, California. In 1959, to George Thompson residence, Salinas, California. Two ranks added; some modifications.

OPUS 1915. 165X.

July 26, 1928, to Regent (renamed Gaumont) Theatre, Dudley, England. Moved to Peterborough Technical College. The sole remaining playable Style 165X in Britain.

OPUS 1920. 165.

July 30, 1928, to Union Theatre, Munich, Germany. In 1932 moved to Lido Theatre, Hove, England. In 1961 moved to New Beach Holiday Camp, Earning-on-Sea, Sussex. In 1973, to Hampshire Theatre Organ Trust. Later, to Edinburgh Organ Club. In 1984, moved to Frankfurt, West Germany, film museum.

OPUS 1937. 165X.

August 21, 1928, to King's (renamed Gaumont) Theatre, Dundee, Scotland. Unknown date, sold for parts.

OPUS 1939. 165X.

August 24, 1928, to Alhambra Theatre, Berlin, Germany. In 1930 moved to Dominion Theatre, Hounslow, England. Pipes destroyed during air-conditioning installation. Console to storage, State Theatre, Grays, Essex, England.

OPUS 1941. 165X.

August 25, 1928, to Rink Theatre, Sydenham, London, England. Destroyed during World War II.

OPUS 1943. 165.

August 28, 1928, to El Campanile Theatre, Antioch, California. In 1957 moved to restaurant. Later moved to a California residence.

OPUS 1944. 165 Special.

August 29, 1928, to Europa Theatre, Dusseldorf, Germany. Disposition unknown.

OPUS 1966. 165X.

October 11, 1928, to Gaiety (renamed Utica) Theatre, Utica, New York. In 1969, installed in Earl Gilbert residence, Getzville, New York.

OPUS 1971. 165 Special.

October 13, 1928, to El Camino Theatre, San Rafael, California. Unknown date, moved to residence. Added ranks; other modifications.

OPUS 1982. 165X.

October 30, 1928, to Muir Theatre, Mill Valley, California. In 1966, to Friends Church, Bell, California. Added ranks; other modifications.

OPUS 1991. 165 Special.

November 12, 1928, to Roxian Theatre, McKeeks Rocks, Pennsylvania. In 1936 console destroyed by flood; organ, with replacement Marr & Colton console, moved to Robert Yates residence, Glenshaw, Pennsylvania.

OPUS 2015. 165X.

January 10, 1929, to Kamera Theatre, Berlin, Germany. Disposition unknown.

OPUS 2025. 165.

February 15, 1929, to Jean Goldkette, orchestra leader, Chicago, Illinois. Moved to WGN radio studio. Added ranks; replacement console.

OPUS 2926. 165 Special.

February 21, 1929, to Coleman Theatre, Miami, Oklahoma. Shipped with three-manual console.

OPUS 2068. 165 Special.

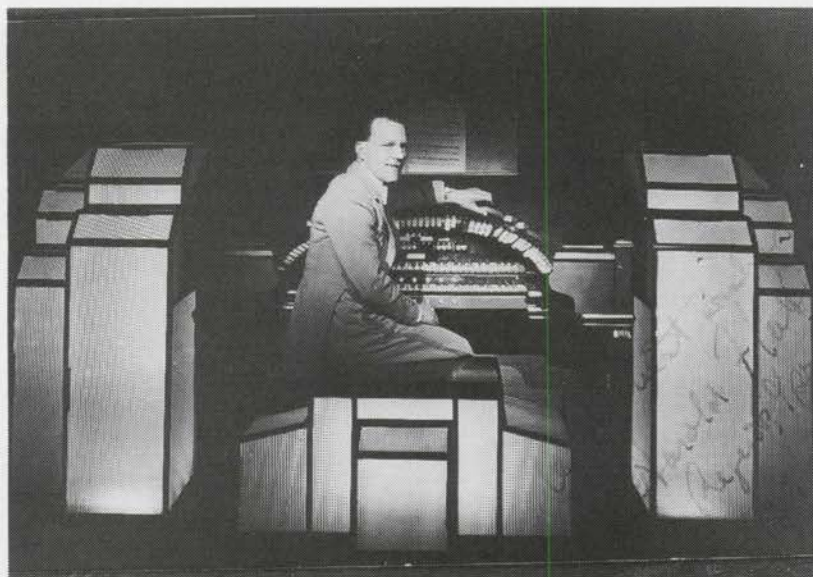
September 16, 1929, to Regent (renamed Gaumont) Theatre, Ipswich, England. In 1961 moved to David Hayes residence, where parts merged with another organ. Console to Kay Gilbert residence, Yoevil, Somerset, England.

OPUS 2090. 165.

December 31, 1929, to Freeport Theatre, Freeport, Illinois. Unknown: date, moved. Disposition unknown.

Specifications: WURLITZER 165X

PEDAL		ACCOMPANIMENT		SOLO		TOE STUDS
Bass (Diaphone)	16	Contra Viol (Tenor C)	16	Bass (Diaphone)	16	Horse Hooves, Surf, Bird,
Bourdon	16	Bourdon	16	Tibia Clausa (Tenor C)	16	Triangle, Horn, Gong (Single),
Trumpet	8	Vox Humana (Tenor C)	16	Bourdon	16	Gong (reiterate), Whistle,
Open Diapason	8	Trumpet	8	Vox Humana (Tenor C)	16	Siren.
Tibia Clausa	8	Open Diapason	8	Trumpet	8	PUSH BUTTONS
Cello	8	Tibia Clausa	8	Open Diapason	8	Doorbell on right cheek.
Flute	8	Salicional	8	Tibia Clausa	8	Signal to projectionist or
<i>On first or second touch via</i>		Flute	8	Salicional	8	stage manager on left cheek.
<i>selector switch: Bass Drum,</i>		Vox Humana	8	Flute	8	
<i>Kettle Drum, Cymbal,</i>		Octave Diapason	4	Vox Humana	8	
<i>Crash Cymbal</i>		Piccolo (Tibia)	4	Octave Diapason	4	
		Salicet	4	Piccolo (Tibia)	4	
		Flute	4	Salicet	4	
		Vox Humana	4	Flute	4	
		Piccolo (Flute)	2	Twelfth Tibia	2 ² / ₃	
		Chrysoglott		Twelfth Flute	2 ² / ₃	
		Snare Drum		Piccolo (Tibia)	2	
		Tambourine		Piccolo (Flute)	2	
		Castanets		Tierce (Flute)	1-3/5	
		Chinese Block		Cathedral Chimes		
		Tom-Tom		Xylophone		
		Sleigh Bells		Glockenspiel		
				Chrysoglott		
		<i>On second touch: Trumpet, 8;</i>		<i>On second touch:</i>		
		<i>Tibia Clausa, 8; Cathedral</i>		<i>Trumpet (Tenor C), 16;</i>		
		<i>Chimes, Triangle.</i>		<i>Tibia Clausa, 8.</i>		
		<i>Five adjustable combination</i>		<i>Five adjustable</i>		
		<i>pistons</i>		<i>combination pistons.</i>		



Harold Flatman and Style 165 Special console are dwarfed by light boxes at the Regent (later Gaumont) Theatre, Ipswich, England. Audiences soon wearied of watching colored lamps behind translucent glass change color with expression variations in the music, and the light boxes were scrapped. Organ was later sold for parts. Console went to storage in Somerset.

John Sharp photo



Len Rawle at the gleaming white console for Opus 1920 when it was in service at a Sussex, England, holiday camp. The Style 165 organ now supplies accompaniment for silent films in a Frankfurt, West Germany Cinema museum.

John Sharp photo



The author expresses appreciation and gratitude to those who contributed to this article, particularly Ian Dalgliesh, Earl G. Gilbert, David Junchen, Lloyd Klos, Dr. Donald E. Macdonald, John Roblin, Harvey Roehl, Arthur Sanders, George Thompson, Judge John J. Walsh, and Robert Yates.

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Every ATOS member has enjoyed the talents of **DON BAKER**. Why not honor one of Theatre Organ's all-time greats with something he truly loved . . . a **Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ**.

The Mid-Florida Theatre Organ Society has selected the site of one of Don's last concerts as the location of this memorial.

The Lake Brantley High School Auditorium is a new state-of-the-art facility complete with loft space on either side of the proscenium. The instrument will be a Wurlitzer, professionally rebuilt, restored and installed with assistance from members of the Mid-Florida Chapter.

All expenses, including acquisition, restoration, installation, architectural work and structural modifications will be borne by the Mid-Florida Chapter.

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Please help us make the dream of the Don Baker Memorial Organ a reality. It is the goal to have the entire project completed for a dedication concert series beginning in February of 1991, Don's birthday. At that time, a special cast bronze plaque with a bust of Don and a list of individual and group contributors of \$1,000.00 or more, will become part of the installation.

Over the years, Don gave so much to the preservation of the theatre organ and now we have a unique opportunity to give something back.



Don Baker

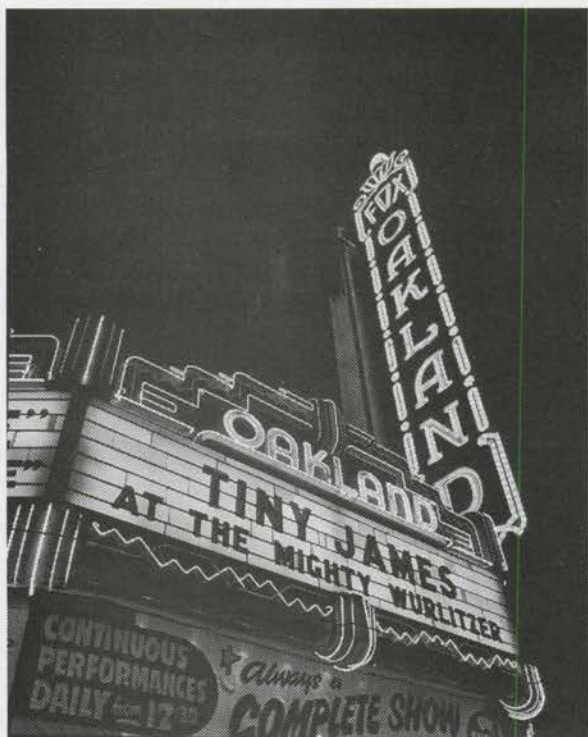
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TINY JAMES AT THE ORGAN

by George F. Thompson



With the untimely passing of W. "Tiny" James last May, the ATOS lost one of its most dedicated founders and an organist of great ability as well as a distinctive registration style that was widely copied.



His musical background began in high school where he developed a working knowledge of most instruments in the band and orchestra. His positions in the band and orchestra were tuba and string bass. He studied music seriously and developed a keen interest in orchestration. This led to piano lessons and, upon learning that a theatre organ could be orchestrated, he became fully involved with the pipe organ.

Unfortunately, at the time, silent movies were giving way to sound and the organ lost its prestige, being used only for intermissions, sing-alongs and, once in a while, as an augmentation to the orchestra if a stage program was presented.

Tiny had, by this time, established a friendship with several theatre managers who granted him access to some of the best organs in the Bay Area for practice. Of course it was depression times and, therefore, no funds were available to keep the instruments in good playing condition. It became necessary for a practicing theatre organist to do his own maintenance and repair work as well as use his own funds for parts.

Naturally, income from music declined rapidly except for a small surge in work when the electric organ was introduced. These were put into many cocktail lounges and dance bands. Tiny acted as relief organist for many of the organists who wanted time off.

By the middle 1930s it was apparent that another source of income was needed to survive. Therefore, Tiny, like many others, took on whatever came along. For quite some time he operated the Giant Dipper at the Neptune Beach Amusement Park, a popular entertainment center in the Alameda-Oakland area, now long since closed.

His close association with the theatre industry helped him in becoming a theatre projectionist. He followed this trade for many years as a relief man. He was a member of I.T.S.E. Local 162. All these jobs were on a "when needed" basis, including theatre organ intermission opportunities.

As the economy picked up in the late 1930s the Southern Pacific Railroad began hiring student firemen. Tiny, being a rail fan, decided to apply, was accepted, and having qualified was put to work on the extra board. He soon realized that because of being away from home and not being able to keep up with his music, a more stable form of career was needed.

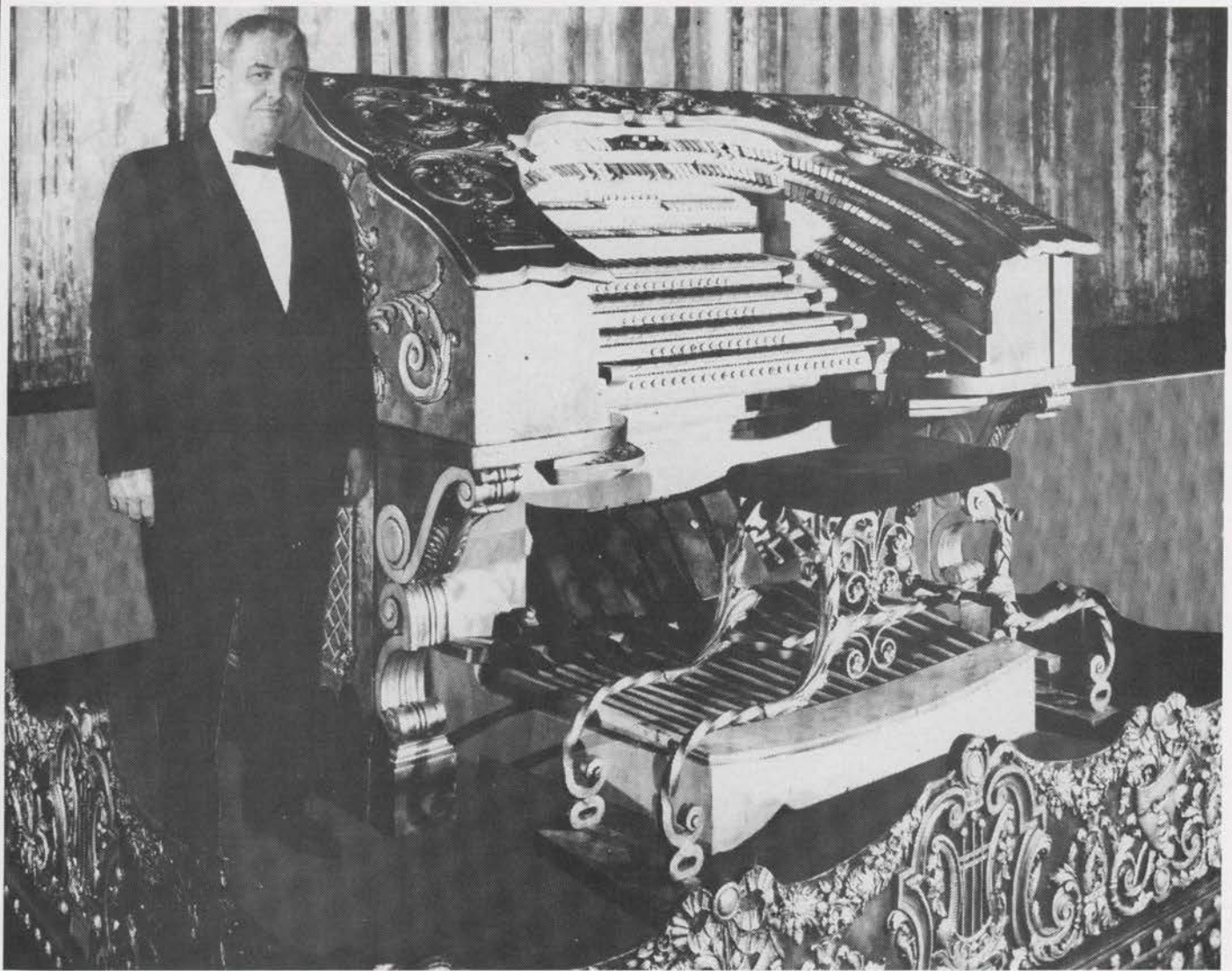
Tiny became an accountant by self-teaching the basics and then he took a course at a local business school. He became a qualified accountant and took a position in the Alameda County Auditor's Office. The regular hours made it possible to spend time maintaining some usable pipe organs in local theatres, fill in when needed and time to practice. He remained in the Auditor's Office, climbing to the position of Senior Auditor where he remained until his retirement in 1975.

Keeping the remaining theatre organs going had, by this time, become a continuing chore. However, with assistance from fellow enthusiasts, the organs began to perform reliably. Included in this endeavor were Judd Walton, Bob Jacobus, Ron Downer, Fred Clapp, and others. All became Charter Members of ATOS.

At this time a round robin letter was being circulated around the country by Alden Miller of Minneapolis. Miller was a theatre organ buff, and his letter gave out information on programs being given and, on occasion, offered technical hints.

These letters brought into focus the fact that a national organization and a magazine devoted to the subject was feasible. More people were interested in listening to the unique sound of the theatre organ and the preservation of these instruments than had been perceived.

A number of organizational meetings were held in 1954. Many of these meetings were held at the residence of Tiny James, who, together with his friend Judd Walton, did a major portion of the planning. Walton was an official of the California Farm Bureau Federation as



Tiny James standing beside the Fox Theatre, San Francisco, 4/36 Wurlitzer.

Photo: Courtesy of Erwin A. Young

well as an expert on pipe organs, especially Wurlitzer. He obtained the services of Charles Rummel, attorney for the Farm Bureau, to write a suitable set of Bylaws for a non-profit organization such as the Farm Bureau and similar groups.

All the material and input were explored at a meeting at Tiny's home in the late fall of 1954, in which most differences were ironed out. A meeting was then scheduled for February 1955, at the home of the late Richard (Dick) Simonton, in Los Angeles. Since all the groundwork had been done, the February meeting became the first (Charter) meet of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts. (This title was changed to "Society" at a later date).

Meanwhile, Tiny felt that a larger membership could be obtained in several ways, one of which was with well-made high fidelity records. Hi-Fi had caught the public's fancy and a good organ solo recording would be a showpiece for a well built hi-fi set.

Cook Records of Stamford, Connecticut, produced a set of 33 RPM's in stereo using a unique two-stylus pick up. These were recorded by Reginald Foort, a gifted organist from England. These records sold well and helped in boosting the number of theatre organ records being planned.

The double stylus system didn't last long. A single split stylus was developed for recording and playback which made the use of stereo more viable.

Tiny and his lodge brother friend, Frank Killinger, a sound engineer and ATOS Charter Member, decided to see what could be done along these lines. The result was a superb disc called "Intermission Time." This was recorded in mono on the Model 235 special Wurlitzer in the Fox Oakland Theatre.

While discussing recordings it must be stated that Tiny made several records, all of them engineered by the late Frank Killinger.

Everett Nourse, staff organist at the palatial San Francisco Fox Theatre housing a beautiful 4/36 Wurlitzer shared four records with Tiny. Everett played one side while the other was soloed by Tiny. The playing style of these organists was very different and allowed for a great variety of music. Frank Killinger engineered these discs with precision, and they were released in stereo.

The organ itself was in concert condition, being kept that way by organ experts, Judd Walton and the late Bob Jacobus. It was a case where the organ was the pride and joy of Robert Apple, Fox Theatre manager. He helped keep the instrument in shape by donating funds when available, to assist the efforts of Bob and Judd who furnished as much of their time as possible.

Other records made using this organ featured the one and only George Wright. Unfortunately, this great film palace was demolished in 1963, and the organ was sold to a private party.

Our man, Tiny, also did justice to the San Francisco Orpheum Theatre Robert-Morton Organ. This was a large 4/22 Morton with excellent tonal qualities which was kept in shape by ATOS member Ron Downer and Orpheum projectionist Ernie Langley.

Aside from his work as an auditor and recording organist, Tiny kept himself busy playing for openings, fashion shows, lodge programs, and whatever came along that used organ music of the popular fashion. He was "hooked" on theatre organ stylings and played with heart and soul, which is evident on all his recordings.

He served as ATOS National President (1961-1964) and was a member of the Board of Directors almost continuously. He was designated as Honorary Member of the Year in 1966.

Tiny also served as Chairman-Manager of the Home Organ Festival. This was an amalgamation of home organ clubs which met annually to see the latest electronic organ products being exhibited by manufacturers, listen to well known organists and take part in nightly jam sessions. It was an informal affair, attended by amateurs from all over the country and fun was had by all. ATOS gained many members from this annual bash and great numbers of authentic theatre pipe organ records were sold.

Tiny James, whose given name was Winfred, was never addressed except by the name "Tiny." He was a large, heavily built person; 6'4" tall, weighing 280 pounds. Large in more ways than size. Although even tempered, he could be provoked when his principles were compromised. He was very outgoing and enjoyed being with people who were enjoying life. All of this entered into his style of playing organ. As a Life Member of Local 6 Musicians Union, he was popular with his contemporaries.



Having a ball on Bill Blunk's 5-manual Marr & Colton at a Jam Session during the 1966 Portland ATOE meeting. Photo Courtesy of Glen James



Above: San Francisco Orpheum gets attention from Tiny James with Ron Downer in the pit, 1975. At left: Tiny James playing at the Fox Oakland for a special showing. Photo taken during intermission. Photos Courtesy of Judd Walton



Tiny and Gaylord Carter comparing notes.

Bill Lamb photo



Tiny with Honorary Member Fanny Wurlitzer at 1964 ATOE meeting.



Tiny and Reginald Foort. Mr. Foort was Honorary Member in 1964.

Bill Lamb photo



Congratulating Honorary Member Erwin Young at 1967 ATOE meet. In the foreground, the late Ben Hall and Al Mason who became ATOE President in 1968.

He played all types of theatre music; ballads with feeling, marches with verve, novelty tunes using his special style of registration, and if any tune would adapt, he would include a chorus of "Chicago Style" to give the music that extra lift.

In listening to his recordings, you will notice the melody is always in the forefront, the accompaniment counter melodies always contained a continuing movement, a product of good orchestration and registration.

While playing, the listeners would see very little movement at the console except for busy hands moving without effort from manual to manual, with an occasional quick flip of a finger for a tab change. Meanwhile, he danced the pedal board with the grace of a ballet performer. His playing was truly poetry in music. He never made unnecessary motions and seemed relaxed and completely engrossed in his playing.

Tiny has now left us, but his bereaved family and host of friends will take some solace in the records he made which will bring back many happy memories.

The console has lowered into the pit and the spotlight has been shut off.



Board of Directors 1966. Tiny James at far right.

Photo Courtesy of Bill Lamb

Note from Paul J. Quarino, Assistant Editor:

I, too, was privileged to know Tiny James through ATOS and the Home Organ Festival. He helped further my career on many occasions. When playing in those Home Organ Festival jam sessions, I would always wait for Tiny to be at one organ before I would join in; then I knew the melody and chords would be as written. He and his music were a great source of inspiration to me. When I made my first theatre organ recording at the San Francisco Orpheum Robert-Morton, in 1975, Tiny was present to help me with the entire session. That made the experience a pleasure. Tiny's contributions to ATOS and the theatre organ world are immeasurable.

OPENING OF NOMINATIONS for 1990 ELECTION OF DIRECTORS



Note: Deadline is February 1, 1990

It is time to nominate candidates for the National ATOS Board of Directors for the three-year term from July 1990 through June 1993. All regular ATOS members are eligible for nomination and may nominate themselves or be nominated by another member, 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 the committees are responsible for submitting a written report of their activities and recommendations prior to the annual meeting of the Board.

The Board is currently taking action on several exciting programs which should increase public awareness of ATOS and set a course for the future. This is a great time to become involved in the national level of ATOS.

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 statements and photos mailed to the ATOS Secretary, P.O. Box 902, Lake Arrowhead, California 92352, **no later than February 1, 1990.**
- 3 ■ This year we are again using the separate mailing of the ballots and resumes of the candidates. While this method is much more costly than placing the ballots in THEATRE ORGAN, we hope that it will encourage many more of you to vote for the candidates of your choice, thus demonstrating your interest in and support of ATOS objectives.

If you have any questions, write or call Jack Moelmann, Chairman, Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 165, Scott AFB, Illinois 62225. Telephone 618/632-8455.

RULES AND REGULATIONS AND TAPING REQUIREMENTS for the 1990 YOUNG ORGANIST COMPETITION have been completed.

They have been sent out to all chapter presidents and former contestants.

We are anxious to get the material into the hands of new contestants. *

Anyone desiring information may call:

DOROTHY VanSTEENKISTE

at 313/383-0133 or by sending in a request to:

DOROTHY VanSTEENKISTE

9270 Reeck Road • Allen Park, Michigan 48101

We encourage all our members to contact their schools, music studios and teachers. Make your theatre organ available to these students early so that they will be ready for COMPETITION!

* If you are unaffiliated please call and we will arrange for a chapter to sponsor a candidate if you have one.



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Membership Secretary
R.D. PAWLYN

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HP20 1NN Great Britain

★ NOTICE ★

In order to facilitate the timely publication of THEATRE ORGAN, the ATOS Board of Directors has relocated the Advertising Office to Portland, Oregon, where the Journal is printed. THEATRE ORGAN is pleased to announce the appointment of Terry Robson to the position of Advertising Manager.

All Correspondence Relating to Advertising in the THEATRE ORGAN JOURNAL

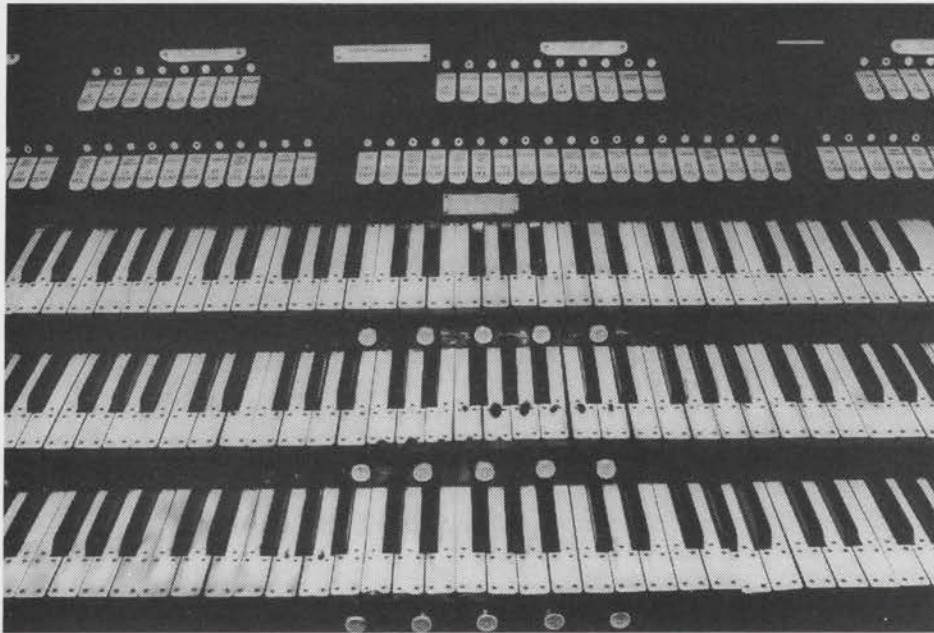
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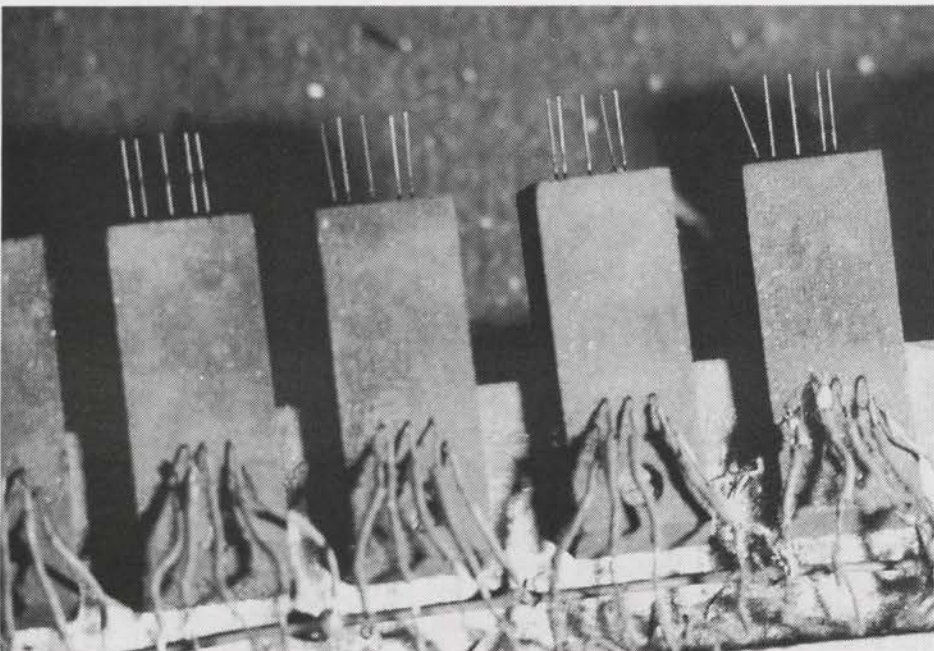
Here's a horror story to curl your hair!

(BUT WITH A HAPPY ENDING!)

by Victor C. Searle



Keyboards showing wear through ivory. Tops were held on with six brass screws.



Pedal key contacts showing wear and poor condition.

Imagine yourself sitting down to a 3/12 Wurlitzer console in a luxurious department store. You are on a second-floor balcony, and behind you, in the middle of a central court, five stories high is a gorgeous 30-foot statue, elaborately carved from a 500-year old tree and lavishly decorated with gold and silver leaf. In such surroundings, what a sound this organ should have!

Look at the console. It is obviously a Style R-20 residence Wurlitzer, with 89 stopkeys in two straight rows. You wonder why all of them are down! Take a good look at the manuals. The Solo seems okay, even though each ivory on the organ is screwed on with six tiny brass screws. But the Great! Up from middle C for an octave, there are deep grooves worn clear through the ivories and a quarter-inch into the wood. Every key is at a different level. The Accompaniment is even worse, with warped keys rubbing against each other. A good look at the console case shows that the latest paint job seems to have been done with Hershey's Chocolate Syrup, although nicks and scratches here and there testify to numerous attempts at camouflage, including ivory and gold.

Well, maybe it will sound okay. To turn on the blower, you have to crawl through a 3½' doorway into a cubbyhole. Back to the console — let's see what it sounds like.

First open both chambers. The Solo is to your left, Main on your right, shutters visible from the bench, although hidden from the public by thick red velvet curtains. The rubber matting is gone from the expression pedals, but you bravely push them both open. A glance right and left shows only **one** of the fourteen Solo shutters open and but **two** of the eighteen Main ones! Push a piston — nothing! So, let's try a scale on the Great. Middle C: Brass Trumpet. D: Concert Flute. E: dead silence. F: Clarinet. G: Salicional. A: Piccolo. B: Tuba 16' and so on, up the scale!

Is there a toy counter? No, but the keys rattling a quarter-inch from side to side make a lovely Castanet! Chimes? Chrysoglott? They are there, hanging in front of the shutters, behind the velvet curtains. But nary a clunk!

To compound the horror, think of yourself having to play this monstrosity for fifteen minutes, three times a day, six times a week, for thirty-five years!

This should furnish you some lovely nightmares for a few weeks.

THIS ISN'T FICTION . . .

such an organ is, or was, exactly as described until just a short time ago.

Regular readers of THEATER ORGAN may recall several articles about the Wurlitzer organ in Tokyo's Mitsukoshi Department Store. Back in 1928, a big-wig from the store visited Wanamaker's in Philadelphia and was so impressed with the organ and the similarity of the Grand Court to that of the Tokyo store that he decided then and there to buy an organ. Visiting Wurlitzer's New York showroom, he casually asked the price of the demonstrator organ there. It was Wurlitzer Opus 2099, with 12 ranks and an automatic player. When the salesman mentioned a price in the vicinity of \$35,000, the visitor whipped out his checkbook and bought it on the spot, the easiest sale Wurlitzer ever made!

They had the organ dismantled and sent back to the factory, where every inch of the wooden parts was painted silver, inside and out, supposedly to tropicalize it, and then it was shipped to Tokyo. Preparing a balcony location for the organ would take some time, so it was temporarily erected in the Seventh Floor Exhibition Hall.

Finally, in 1932 the instrument was moved to its permanent home in the balcony. There was no regular organist until 1951, so the auto-player saw plenty of use in those pre-war days. The last roll played was "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere," and this only remaining roll is still in place on the tracker-bar today.

The war years were almost fatal to the organ. Although the store itself escaped bombing, the war effort required more and more metal, so the original attractive antimony grillework was removed and carted off to be melted down. In a like manner, every third baluster support on every stairway in the store was sawed off! These were very attractive spiral brass pipes and they probably made excellent bullet casings. How the pipework itself escaped confiscation is not known. The blower motor was also taken, and so the organ remained mute until the war was over.

Sometime in early 1946, an organ-loving GI "liberated" a 7 hp motor from some US Army installation and once again the organ became somewhat capable of producing sounds. The auto-player and combination action no longer worked, and the organ itself was quite decrepit.



Hiroshi Matsuzawa

In September of 1946, another organ fan appeared on the scene — Vernon Brown, a civilian with the Occupation Army. Shocked at the miserable condition of the organ, he wrote to the factory in North Tonawanda for repairing advice.

Of course, by this time, Wurlitzer was long out of the organ business, but Brown's letter was forwarded to Hugo Hellstern, who had done the original installation in Tokyo. Although he was retired, Mr. Hellstern very kindly supplied a great amount of information which enabled Vernon (amateur though he was) to carry out a fairly comprehensive repair job.

For him it was a labor of love, and in the course of his work, he learned a great deal about the innards of organs. This was to stand him in good stead when, years later, he acquired and completely rebuilt an old tracker organ from Organ Clearing House in his home. This instrument is a real showpiece, and a must for visiting firemen to see when in Tokyo.

In 1950, the Japanese National Broadcasting Corporation decided to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Bach's death with a series of nationally broadcast organ concerts. Still in my teens, I was at that time organist at the Eighth Army Chapel Center in Yokohama. I had taken two years off from music school to live in Japan with my parents where my father was on General Mac

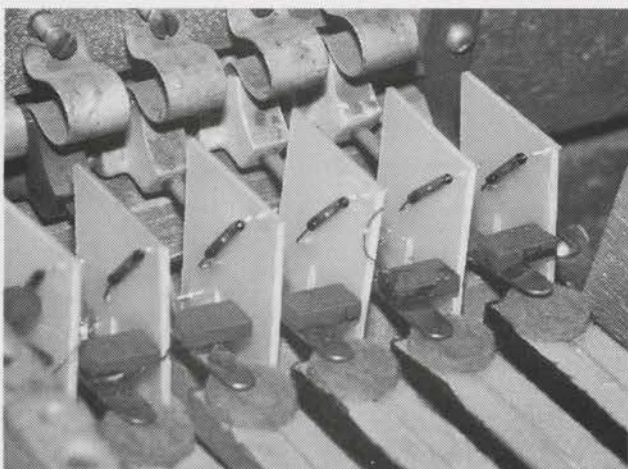
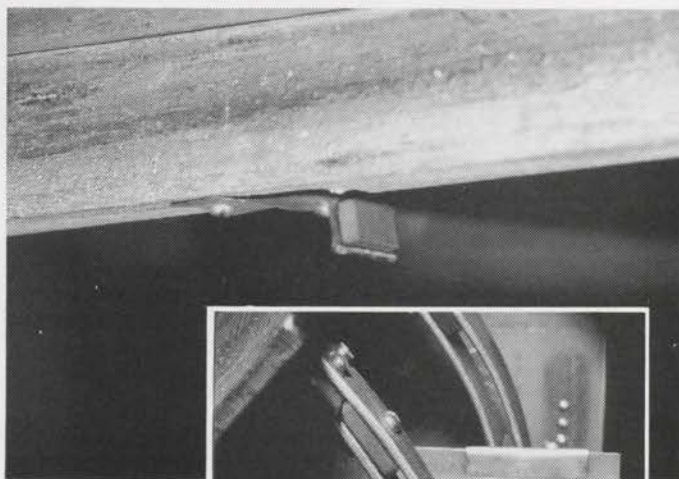
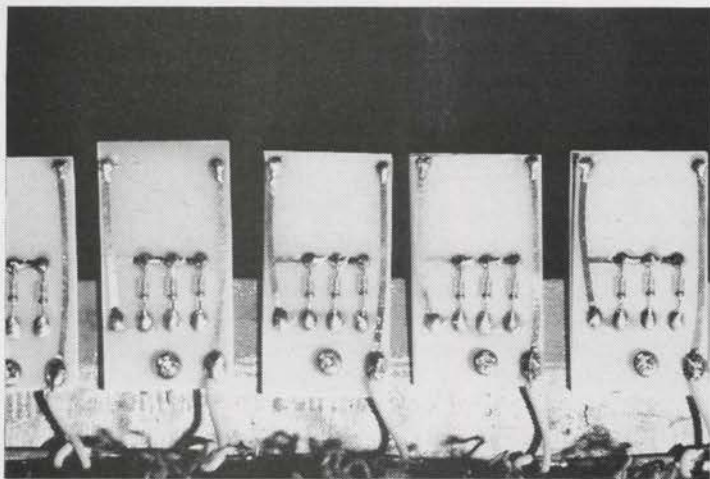
Arthur's staff, and I was invited to give the opening concert in May of 1950. Even after Vernon's work, the organ was just barely playable. However, the interest aroused by this series led to the employment by the store of a staff organist, Mr. Hiroshi Matsuzawa. Since 1951, he has been struggling three times a day, six days a week, to provide music for the customers. It was through his efforts that the organ became a symbol for the department store, along with the two bronze lions which guard the front entrance.

As the years passed, however, the organ went from bad to worse to impossible. By the spring of 1985, the only way to make anything resembling music was to have all stops and couplers on. There were so many dead notes on each manual that performing "Silent Night" for example involved playing G-A-G on the Great, E on the Solo for the first two measures; D-D-B on the Great, C-C on the Accomp and back to G on the Great! How Mr. Matsuzawa escaped being committed to the funny farm is still a source of amazement.

Since Mitsukoshi's mandatory retirement age is 60, Mr. Matsuzawa was scheduled to end his career last year. Realizing that no other performer would put up with an organ in that condition, the store authorities asked the leading Japanese musical instrument manufacturer about the possibility of repairing the organ. This firm being the Japan agent for several European builders, they at once replied that it was absolutely unrepairable and that they should seriously consider purchasing a new Baroque tracker organ from Germany! If this was not feasible, they would be willing to dismantle the organ, take it to their factory and get a technician from Casavant (of all places!) to come out for six months and try to do something about it, all for the paltry sum of \$100,000!

Faced with these two equally unacceptable alternatives, it was almost decided to retire both Mr. Matsuzawa and the organ and install a Yamaha Electone. Hearing this rumour, Vernon (who had kept in touch with Mr. Matsuzawa through the years) was extremely upset, and since I had helped him a bit in working on his own organ, he advised the store to get a "second opinion" — mine.

It was extremely fortunate that Phil



*Clockwise from top:
Pedal keying diode boards,
turned on by magnetic switch
on underside of board.*

*Keying magnet mounted on
pedal keying shorting bar.*

*Arndt magnetic pedal con-
tacts replaced worn out con-
tacts on expression shoes
and crescendo pedal.*



Magnets mounted on stop tab levers and magnetic switches which replaced defective contacts.

Wickstrom from Los Angeles was spending a year in Tokyo studying Japanese. Phil is a superb technician and expert on theatre organs, while my experience has mainly been in building classical instruments. We took a look at the poor beast and found that it was quite repairable. We realized that it would be a tremendous job, but along with the formidable challenge, it would preserve a historic organ and perhaps earn us a tiny niche in Japanese organ history. We estimated we could do it for a quarter of the "expert" quotation. However, since the organ had to be used three times a day, we could only work at night or on days when the store was closed. We figured it might take over a year to complete the project.

Our proposal was eagerly accepted and we began work in October 1985. The first task was to get all the shutters working. Actually, only a few pneumatics had to be releathered; the outsides of the shutters had been painted so many times that they were just glued shut. A good kick got them all moving. The next day, unaware that we had begun work, Mr. Matsuzawa opened the expression pedals and was almost blasted off the bench.

In all his thirty-five years at the console,

he had never heard either the Chimes or the Chrysoglott. Christmas was approaching, so we decided to releather these pneumatics first. Sometime in the past, an "organ technician" (not Vernon!) had recovered them with camera bellows material! We were able to do this work in my shop, so we spent the available store time getting notes to play again. Of the 852 pipes, 268 were silent. Dirt in the reeds was the problem in many cases, but there was an extraordinarily large number of dead magnets. Restoring the autoplayer seemed to be a hopeless job, so we cannibalized it for magnets while we had replacements sent from the U.S.

The way the organ had originally been installed was unbelievable! Many dead notes had never been soldered to contacts, magnets, spreaders or switch-fingers. We came to the conclusion that when it was originally assembled, Wurli- tzer had already realized that their market was dying, and not really caring, they just threw together any parts that might have been lying around the factory.

While Mitsukoshi was closed January 1-3 for the 1986 New Year, we recovered all the keys, replacing many burnt-out contacts. Re-bushing and aligning was a major task. It was decided to strip off the

chocolate syrup and the other 17 layers of paint, and now the console is in its original mahogany, oiled and rubbed down to a beautiful lustre. Expression pedal mats were replaced, the combination action pneumatics releathered and the stopkey contacts exchanged for reed switches with magnet actuators. The expression and crescendo pedals, along with the regular pedal contacts got similar units.

Perhaps the weakest point in the original design was the trem and wind system. The entire Solo (four ranks) had one puny trem which extended all the way down to the lowest note on the Tibia. We switched regulators around, and rewound a large part of the organ since many of the zinc wind trunks were deteriorating. Now the Tibia has its own trem, the Brass Trumpet and Oboe Horn are on one, and the Orchestral Oboe has its own.

The entire ensemble lacked brilliance because the original 2²/₃' and 2' stops were unified from the Main Concert Flute, a rather nondescript voice. These two stops on the Great were wired to the Tibia rank. The Tibia offset chest stood in the middle of the chamber, making it almost impossible to get around. This we mounted on a side wall so that now there

is room for another four-rank chest (if we can locate one) and suitable pipes.

While many people may argue that we should have done an authentic restoration, back to the original, we decided to make use of modern technology. Every magnet in the organ now has a fly-back diode which should end burnt-out magnet problems. The Tibia transfers are transistor-driven and Phil built a 30-amp solid-state rectifier to replace the old generator which was run from the blower motor shaft. The commutator was so pitted that it seemed ready to conk out at any moment.

As the work on the organ proper neared completion, it was asked if there was any hope for the player. There had originally been about 200 rolls, including many by Jesse Crawford, but a year's search failed to turn them up. Phil made a futile trip to the States to see if he could locate some, so the final decision was a compromise.

Wurlitzer Band Organ rolls are readily available, and when the store is full, the organ needs lots of guts, so we built a completely new roll player to take 165 rolls. The store officials wanted the console keys to move, but this being impractical, we wired the 165 register changes to move the stopkeys, so the customers can enjoy seeing the organ in action.

Adding the roll player suggested

another project, because there are a number of percussion controls cut in the 165 rolls. Therefore, we went "whole-hog" and built a complete toy counter, playing from the Accomp and Pedals. These are controlled by eighteen On/Off lighted buttons in a new set of key-cheeks. Some Wurlitzer toe studs were also added. The toy counter is suspended next to the Chimes in front of the Solo chamber. Naturally, the red velvet curtains were removed early in the game and replaced by fishnet drapes, which let the percussions be seen, as well as allowing free egress to the sound.

Although there were many loose ends, the project was complete enough to have a dedication concert on November 2, 1986. Mr. Matsuzawa played Japanese folk songs; Phil's "Sentimental Journey," "Around the World in 80 Days" and "Syncopated Clock" showed how a theatre organ should really sound. I played Bach, Clarke, Purvis and Sousa! The program had to be repeated twice, and parts were nationally televised.

The store officials are so thrilled with their "new" organ, that they have decided not to put Mr. Matsuzawa out to pasture, but make him *Organist Emeritus* for life. We are happy for him, and now that he has an instrument that plays, he is making excellent progress toward being able to utilize all its possibilities.

The work is now completed, and everyone is "gung ho" about enlarging the instrument. A glockenspiel and xylophone are now under construction in my shop, and Phil will be scouring the U.S. for a new chest and four extra ranks to add to the Solo.

It has been a real source of satisfaction to both of us, and also to the several junior high boys who got into the tight spots where we big foreigners couldn't wriggle (especially since Phil got stuck and had to be forcibly yanked out!) This being the only Wurlitzer in the Orient, we feel it has been an historic project and we hope that any ATOS members visiting Japan will come and take a look at our pride and joy, the *Mighty Mitsukoshi Wurlitzer!*

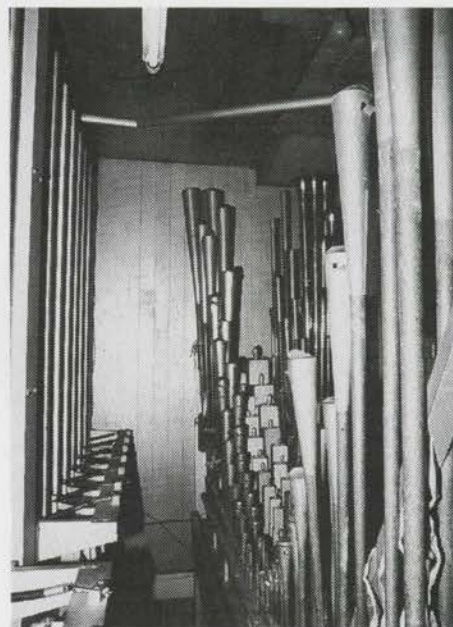
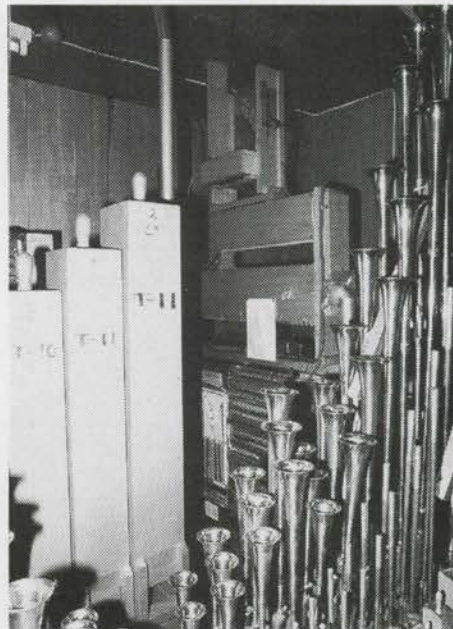


Keyboards after recovering.



*Music is the electrical soil in which
the spirit lives, thinks and invents.*

BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)



Solo Chamber: Oboe Horn, Tibia, Orch Oboe and Trumpet.

Mitsukoshi Wurlitzer Opus 2099 Specifications

PEDAL

Tuba 16'
 Bass 16' (Diaphone)
 Bourdon 16'
 Tuba 8'
 Diapason 8'
 Tibia Clausa 8'
 Clarinet 8'
 Cello 8'
 Flute 8'
 Dulciana 8'
 Acc to Ped 8'
 Great to Ped 8'
 Solo to Ped 8'
 *Bass Drum
 *Rhythm Cymbal
 *Woodblock

ACCOMPANIMENT

Contra Viol (TC) 16'
 Tuba 8'
 Open Diapason 8'
 Tibia Clausa 8'
 Clarinet 8'
 Oboe Horn 8'
 Salicional 8'
 Voix Celeste (TC) 8'
 Flute 8'
 Vox Humana 8'
 Dulciana 8'
 Octave 4'
 Piccolo 4' (Tibia)
 Salicet 4'
 Octave Celeste 4'
 Flute 4'
 Vox Humana 4'
 Dulcet 4'
 Chrysoglott 49 bars
 Solo Sub Acc 16'
 Solo Octave Acc 4'
 *Snare Drum Tap
 *Snare Drum Roll
 *Maracas
 *Castanets
 *Tambourine
 *Triangle
 *Woodblock
 *Sleighbells

GREAT

Tuba 16'
 Bass 16'
 Tibia Clausa (TC) 16'
 Clarinet (TC) 16'
 Oboe Horn (TC) 16'
 Contra Viol (TC) 16'
 Bourdon 16'
 Trumpet (Brass) 8'
 Tuba 8'
 Open Diapason 8'
 Tibia Clausa 8'
 Orchestra Oboe 8'
 Clarinet 8'
 Oboe Horn 8'
 Salicional 8'
 Voix Celeste (TC) 8'
 Flute 8'
 Vox Humana 8'
 Dulciana 8'
 Octave 4'
 Dulcet 4'
 *Twelfth 2²/₃' (Tibia)
 *Piccolo 2' (Tibia)
 Cathedral Chimes 25 tubes
 Solo Sub Great 16'
 Solo Unison Great 8'
 Solo Octave Great 4'
 *Glockenspiel 32 bars

SOLO

Tuba 16'
 Trumpet 8'
 Tuba 8'
 Open Diapason 8'
 Tibia Clausa 8'
 Orchestra Oboe 8'
 Oboe Horn 8'
 Clarinet 8'
 Salicional 8'
 Flute 8'
 Vox Humana 8'
 Octave 4'
 Piccolo 4' (Tibia)
 Salicet 4'
 Flute 4'
 Twelfth 2²/₃' (Flute)
 Piccolo 2' (Flute)
 Cathedral Chimes
 *Xylophone Tap 32 bars
 *Xylophone Roll

TREMULANTS

SOLO:

*Trumpet & Oboe Horn on one
 *Orchestral Oboe independent
 Tibia operated by Vox Trem stopkey

MAIN:

VOX HUMANA: (with Tibia)

TUBA:

ACCESSORIES

Solo and Main Expression Pedals
 Crescendo Pedal (operates Great and Pedal stops)
 with 3 indicator lights*
 5 Combination Pistons per manual (operates Pedal stops also)
 *5 General Combination Toe Pistons

*TOY COUNTER PISTONS

*Steamboat Whistle
 *Nightingale
 *Woodblock
 *Triangle
 *Crash Cymbal (Toe)
 *Tympani Roll (Toe)
 *Snare Drum Roll (Toe)

SOLO CHAMBER

Brass Trumpet 8'	61 pipes
Tibia Clausa 8*	73 pipes
Oboe Horn 8'	61 pipes
Orchestral Oboe 8'	61 pipes
Trems: Tibia; Orch. Oboe; Trumpet & Oboe Horn	
Cathedral Chimes (in front of shutters)	
Toy Counter	ditto
Xylophone & Glock	ditto

MAIN CHAMBER

Tuba 16'	73 pipes
Open Diapason 16'	85 pipes
Clarinet 8'	61 pipes
Salicional 8'	73 pipes
Voix Celeste 8' (TC)	61 pipes
Bourdon 16'/Flute 8'	97 pipes
Dulciana 8'	73 pipes
Vox Humana 8'	73 pipes
Trems: Vox Humana, Main, Tuba	
Chrysoglott (in front of shutters)	

*AUTO-PLAYER

Plays Wurlitzer #165
 Band Organ Roll (10-tune)
 *New Additions, 1986



Bob Shafter, Review Editor

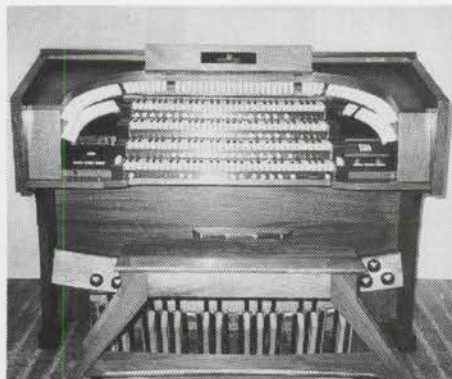


Korla Pandit

TAPES

KORLA PANDIT live at Granada Organ Club, Seattle, 1965. Available from Mike Copner, 11225 Magnolia Blvd., #200, North Hollywood, CA 91601. Cassette Tape \$9.95 plus 75¢ postage.

Even though Korla Pandit is trying to make a comeback, this tape is probably for serious Korla Pandit collectors only. This tape was recorded live, and the quality is, shall we say, poor. There has been no attempt made at editing, so you get absolutely everything, including the "Testing, testing, testing," at the beginning. It would also be appropriate to mention that this was when Korla Pandit was into his "Mystical-Far-East" phase. As much as comparisons are unfair, I'm going to anyway. After you've listened to this tape, put on George Wright's "Lotus Land."



Wyvern Touring Organ

HAROLD BRITTON PLAYS POPULAR ORGAN FAVOURITES (classical) and **THERE GOES THAT SONG AGAIN** (theatre) Trevor Bolshow. Wyvern Touring Organ. Available from Beaumont Studios, Beaumont House, Summerland, Honiton, Devon, England, UK. Price 7 pounds sterling, each cassette, postpaid.

A remarkable electronic instrument that on one hand sounds very classical and on the other hand sounds very Wurli-tizer. Witness the joys of microprocessor voicing. This instrument has a slight electronic tinge, but I'm sure most people wouldn't notice if they weren't told.

Both artists are adequate to the task, what you might call solid, and the organ is well recorded.

For Popular Organ Favourites, the classical tape, the selections are: March Triumphal, Cuckoo & Nightingale, Giga, The Swan, Nun Danket, Allegretto, Priere a Notre Dame, Symphony No. 1 - Final (Vierne), Tuba Tune, Concerto No. 2 1st movement (Vivaldi/Bach), Elfes, Stars & Stripes, Nationsong, Trio Sonata No. 6 - First Movement (Bach), Sortie in B flat (Lefebure-Wely). As an aside, the "Sortie in B flat" is an interesting piece that would appeal to the most romantic listener.

For There Goes That Song Again, the selections are: There Goes That Song Again, I'll Never Smile Again, She Shall Have Music, On the Air, Taboo, It Might as Well Be Spring, Sweethearts, I Remember You, Dancing With My Shadow, Please, Cornsilk, The Touch of Your Lips, A Gal in Calico, Out of the Dawn.

A FAREWELL TO PIPES — THE FINAL CONCERT. Don Baker live at the Redford Theatre. Includes Don's dialogue with the audience. Available from: Fred DeWitt, 107 East Lauren Ct., Fern Park, Florida 32789.

(At the request of Mr. DeWitt, no review of this recording will appear in *THEATRE ORGAN*. Ed.)

EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSA III & IV. Live at DTOC. Available from: Rosa Rio Studio, 130 Mill St., Huntington, CT 06484. \$10.95 each, or both for \$19.95, postpaid.

III tune list: Teddy Bears Picnic, Everything I Have is Yours, Romance, Ice Castles, Hill Top Blues, You're the Cream in My Coffee, Sunny Side of the Street, A Gal in Kalamazoo, The Merry Widow, Canadian Capers, Everything's Coming Up Roses, Let Me Entertain You, Small World, Together Wherever We Go, When Day is Done, Street of Dreams, There's No Business Like Show Business, Mimi, The Song is You, "I'll Follow My Secret Heart, There's a Small Hotel, You and the Night and the Music, Vocal (Thank You).

IV tune list: Everything's Coming Up Roses, That Old Black Magic, You Made Me Love You, Can You Read My Mind, Give Me the Simple Life, If Ever I Would Leave You, Stompin' At the Savoy, Liebestraum, Misty, The Song is You, Blue Skies, Always, My Secret Heart, Moonlight Cocktail, Spring is Here, Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea, Love is Here to Stay, Angel's Chorus, En Revant, Saint Louis Blues.

1964 - CELEBRATION - 1989. Lyn Larsen at the Theatre Pipe Organ. Available from: Musical Contrasts, P.O. Box 16876, Phoenix, AZ 85011. \$12.00 plus postage.

This tape presents some problems because it falls outside the parameters of the usual kind of recording that is reviewed in this column. Because it is an overview of Lyn Larsen's career, 13 recordings spanning 25 years, it can't be reviewed according to an overall performance, or an overall recording job, or an overall instrument. I found it quite interesting, however, that Lyn Larsen is secure enough with himself that he would let us look back 25 years when he was certainly less experienced than he is now. There are some real eye/ear openers here, both with the instruments and the performances. The following tune list will match up the piece with the instrument: Strike up the Band - Wiltern Theatre, Los Angeles; Me Too - Rialto Theatre, South Pasadena; Ruby - Avenue Theatre, San Francisco; Poor Butterfly - Paramount Theatre, Portland; Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man - Paramount Theatre, Brooklyn; Somethin's Gotta Give - Paramount Theatre, Brooklyn; They're Either too Young or too Old - Radio City Music Hall; Nola/Poly - Senate Theatre, Detroit; Because and Satyr Dance - Shea's Theatre, Buffalo; Jamaican Rhumba - Century II, Wichita; Somewhere in Time and Clarinet Candy - V.O.S. Center, Phoenix.

All in all, this tape is a splendid overview of Lyn Larsen's career.

BOOK

STEVE MILO'S EASY LADDER OF CHORD PROGRESSION AND DICTIONARY OF CHORDS FOR ORGAN AND PIANO. Available from Stephen P. Milo, P.O. Box 225, Bonita Springs, Florida 33959 (winter) or P.O. Box 1726, Hyannis, Massachusetts 02601 (summer). \$10.00 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling.

This 16-page volume contains a concept which could make chord playing a snap for the play-by-ear crowd. It's even an eye-opener for those who hadn't realized what they might have already been doing.

After a brief biography of Steve Milo, there are two pages of additional author's notes regarding the "theory of chords." This would have been more appropriately called keyboard harmony, which it is.

The first thing you will see is a drawing of the left and right hands with the fingers numbered as they appear throughout the book. I sincerely hoped it was a printer's error, but alas, the numbering matches the text. Anyone who got as far as the second of the six free lessons is going to have to do some serious rethinking to consider the left hand little finger as 1 and the left hand thumb as 5, especially since emphasis throughout is on the left hand.

It would have been nice if Mr. Milo had been a bit more expansive concerning chord inversions. Not many people play all their chords with the root at the bottom. More explanation of keeping an eye on the root might have been helpful. Minor chords are also glossed over briefly when, in reality, they are an equal to major chords, though his system works for both.

The remainder of the book consists of charts spelled out in each of the twelve major keys with a drawn keyboard and plenty of space for personal notes to be written in. In these charts, it should be noted that a fair amount of them do not exist in musical notation, meaning they are misspelled. Kat spells cat, but it's not right.

The concept of this book has merit, but some serious errors need to be corrected. Perhaps auditing the first four weeks of a freshman music theory class would solve the problem.

Gerry Gregorius

VIDEO

A CHURCH ORGANIST'S PRIMER PART II, Sally Cherrington, instructor. Video cassette in VHS available from the Allen Organ Company, 150 Locust Street, Macungie, PA 18062. \$29.95.

Have you ever found yourself seated at an organ and it doesn't have a familiar tibia or a tab marked tambourine anywhere in sight? This video could possibly help you. Of course, we are talking of the traditional classical organ. The 56-minute cassette is the second in a series of which the first covered manual and pedal technique. This one deals with Registration, a real bugaboo for a lot of people.

It begins with a basic discussion of pitch levels, grouping of stops into tonal families and then moves on to a discussion of mixtures, reeds (chorus and solo), and their appropriate uses. Registrations are shown on the screen while musical examples are played. There is also an historical overview of the traditions of classical organ construction from many centuries ago to the present. Though brief, it is enlightening.

Though you might expect it, this video is not entirely "dry as dust." Ms. Cherrington introduces a few lines of humor throughout the instruction. I particularly found her reference of using "mutations as spices" and then holding up two jars of spices a real hoot. There's nothing like a graphic example to make you remember.

The brief musical examples are impeccably played. However, if you can already play the pieces performed, you should already know most of the suggestions given on this cassette or else there was a definite void in your training.

How could this possibly apply to a devoted theatre organist? Remember that the theatre organ evolved from the classical organ, or really the romantic orchestral organ of the last century. Picture this. How many of you have sat at an unfamiliar organ, plunked down a chord and started moving tabs about at random until, finally, something says to your ears, "That's pretty," whether it is or not? The registration principles presented here are perfectly suited to the theatre organ and could save a lot of time. A worthwhile addition to your video library.

Gerry Gregorius

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.

Journal of
**American
Organbuilding**

Quarterly Publication of the
American Institute of
Organbuilders

This publication is devoted to the dissemination of knowledge regarding the design, construction and maintenance of pipe organs in North America. Although primarily a technical journal for the benefit of organbuilding professionals, it is also a valuable resource for architects and project consultants, church musicians, building committees, seminary and university libraries, and anyone involved with the design or renovation of contemporary worship space.

Far from being the "lost art" that the average person believes it to be organbuilding in the United States and Canada is maturing and thriving in hundreds of small and large shops throughout the continent. At the same time, serious challenges lie ahead for those promoting the pipe organ in an era of limited budgets and competing options. Readers of the *Journal of American Organbuilding* will benefit from the thoughtful exchange of information and ideas intended to advance this time-honored craft.

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619/421-9629



NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by
Lloyd
E.
Klos



With our holiday greetings comes this collection of items of interest to all. Sources were *Metronome* (M), *Local Press* (LP), *Jacobs Magazine* (J) and *Diapason* (D).

November 1925 (M) . . .

The new \$8 million Metropolitan Theatre in Boston was recently opened and presented a spectacle of magnificence seldom equalled in a theatre. This 5000-seat house, possessing a grand lounge large enough to accommodate 2000, was packed to its doors for its premier, and thousands were turned away. It is estimated that, on the first day, 30,000 visited the theatre.

Magnificent murals and 10,000 electric lamps decorate the auditorium domes, the central one representing the conception of music and drama, encrusted with 250 gems, costing \$10,000. The building's marble is valued at \$500,000.

The 4/26 Wurlitzer organ, built and installed at a cost of \$100,000, possesses 3100 pipes and is said to be the first ever constructed with French Horn and Tuba ranks.

The 35-piece orchestra, in accordance with the policy of Boston theatres, is much smaller than those used elsewhere. A 12-piece orchestra gives concerts in the Grand Lobby. The musicians have been provided with splendid quarters and showers, with private rooms for the concertmaster and manager. The orchestra is situated on an elevator which raises it to concert level for featured numbers, and lowers it for incidental playing. An innovation is the series of 600-candle-power spotlights which play upon the orchestra during its numbers.

The theatre also has a press room with messenger boys in attendance, and a projection booth on the mezzanine floor which permits the film machine to focus directly on the screen without optical distortion.

An electrical chart, showing the vacant seats, enables the ushers to determine exactly how many there are and their location.

April 7, 1926 (LP) . . .

The Lincoln Theatre in Rochester, New York, announces the opening of the new mighty (2/3) Wurlitzer pipe organ with the "world's finest photoplayer," TOM GRIERSON, at the console this evening.

August 1926 (M) . . .

When the Paramount Theatre in New York opens this fall, you can meet your friends in any of 25 rooms, foyers, or lobbies. Each will have a definite name and luxurious appointments. Entering the box office lobby, one passes into the foyer, thence into the Grand Hall which is lined with Breche Centella marble, imported from Italy at a cost of over \$500,000. The main lounge, known as the University Room, is in the basement where there are also a ladies' lounge, dressing room, and ladies' and mens' smoking rooms.

Leaving the Grand Hall and passing upward, one finds the intermediate mezzanine lobby, which leads to the loges. Here also is a men's smoking room and a ladies' rest room.

The most novel rooms ever incorporated into a theatre are the club and fraternity rooms. Here, you can lounge in luxury and await your friends. These rooms are named: Elizabethan, Marie Antoinette, Chinoiserie, College, Jade Club, The Galleries, Peacock Alley, Grand Hall, Hall of Nations, the Rotunda, Music Room and Fraternity. The College Club and Fraternity rooms will be decorated with insignia and colors of colleges, clubs and fraternities.

The Paramount, rapidly nearing completion, will be one of the great art buildings of the world, with almost 50% of the space devoted to promenades, lounges, rest rooms and comfortable conveniences for its patrons.

February 19, 1927 (LP) . . .

At Rochester, New York's Victoria Theatre, R. WILSON ROSS is playing the \$30,000 mammoth (sic) Marr & Colton three-manual orchestral organ, featuring "Where Do You Work A-John?"

May 1927 (J) . . .

EARL ROLAND LARSON, a talented young organist-composer in Duluth, is also taking part in the newly organized manuscript section of the Duluth Matinee Musicales, which will present some of his new songs at a recital soon.

Mr. Larson was born in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and began his early study of piano and organ with Paola Cote at Wesley College. After the World War, he directed an orchestra for five years at the Strand Cafe in Venice, California. Since then he has been at the Wurlitzer in the Lyceum, Duluth's leading theatre, and at the First Methodist Church's large Hutchins organ.

Versatile and skillful performances have characterized his work. He has an aptitude for producing good photoplay melodies, some of which have been published: "The Enchanted Grotto," "A Venetian Night," "Fancy Free," "Autumn Color," and "Romany." A brilliant future is forecast for the young man by all who have heard him.

May 1927 (J) . . .

GENE BYERS started playing the pictures when Mary Pickford was beginning to shine as a star for the old Biograph Studios in New York. Owen Moore was scarcely known, and Douglas Fairbanks and Charlie Chaplin had not yet come into prominence.

Those were the old five-and-ten-cent days when a show consisted of a two-reel picture, a comedy, and an illustrated song. Three-reelers were regarded as long, and it was considered entertainment enough for several days to sit through five reels of the old Pathe hand-colored Passion Play.

At an early age, Gene became interested in, and later owner of, the Electric Theatre in Monticello, Iowa, where he acted in all capacities from janitor up. Picture music was limited to piano and drums and he became adept at both. He regards his playing of "Hiawatha" on a cornet, accompanying himself with piano, bass and snare drum, as his most distinctive achievement up to that time, and the one which revealed the talent which placed him at the theatre organ console.

A streak of ambition led him to abandon theatre work for engineering study at Iowa State College, receiving a Bachelor of Science. However, during the depression following the war, he returned to playing theatre organs in Cleveland, Chicago and Milwaukee.

His coaching on theatre organ was from Claud B. Ball, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. For the past three years, Gene has been with the Rainbow Theatre Corp. of Milwaukee, which owns and operates the Rainbow and Climax theatres there.

In summer, his favorite hobby is golf in winter, he dances and skates. Often accused of being bashful or shy, he denies it: "I just look that way." In addition to being a good musician, Gene Byers is a regular fellow.

September 9, 1929 (LP) . . .

The management of Loew's Rochester Theatre announces the engagement of organist D. KENNETH WIDENOR with the first showing of *Lucky Star*, a Fox Movietone picture with Janet Gaynor and Charles Farrell.

After playing in the leading theatres of his native Omaha, Mr. Widenor went to New York to further his musical studies at the Institute of Musical Art from which he was graduated in organ and compo-

(continued on page 38...)

OLIVERA RETURNS TO CONCERT CIRCUIT

Following his four standing ovation/encore concert for Atlanta AGO at the Fox Theatre Sunday, Sept. 10, Hector Olivera attended a reception and suffered what was thought to be a heart attack. He was rushed to a hospital and was later sent home, misdiagnosed, only to return the following day still feeling quite ill. It was then determined he had suffered a collapsed lung.

The problem was apparently brought on because of Olivera's hyper, super high strung dedication to his concert work which created exceedingly stressful conditions. His doctor ordered him to stop smoking, lift nothing heavy, get plenty of rest and even discouraged the very thin lightweight bundle of nerves against coughing. His energy level, according to his doctor—and audiences who have seen him in action—far exceeds his body's effort to keep up with such expenditures of strength he displays when at the console of an organ.

Hector's wife, Alison, told the NEWS the doctor, unaware of the physical and mental exertion Hector puts into his playing, suggested the

—See—Olivera—Page Two—

EDNA SELLERS HONORED BY MUSICIAN'S UNION

Edna Sellers, well-known theatre organist, who was hospitalized for the third time this year during the first week in October, was honored by Chicago Federation of Musicians who headlined "90th Birthday Celebration," published a photo of her taken in 1941, featured her theatre organ career and reproduced a letter from Mayor Richard M. Daley on the front page of the Federation's September issue of *Intermezzo*.

"You have graced many of Chicago's famous theatres and halls..." Mayor Daley wrote. "This is a remarkable milestone in your fruitful life and as Mayor of Chicago, I extend best wishes for a happy birthday, and hope that the years ahead are filled with good health and much happiness," he added.

MOORHEAD ORGAN INFORMATION TURNS OUT TO BE INTERESTING FACET FOR T. O.

What first was considered merely a quest for information about the organ installed in Weld Hall at Moorhead (Minn.) State University has turned out to be an interesting facet of theatre organ importance. The question was published in the July issue of the NEWS asking what the make and size of the instrument is; there was no indication of the import this organ enjoys in its area until the following letter was received from Lance E. Johnson, President of Red River Chapter. He describes the installation below:

This instrument is a hybrid 2m/7r made up mainly of Wurlitzer and Kimball components. It is housed in two chambers in Weld Hall which is a student assembly hall remodeled into a movie theatre for the University's film program. The theatre is used for the various courses on silent film as well as a school-sponsored film series for the student body and "Summer Cinema" which is open to families in the community each Monday evening from mid June to mid August.

ATOS organists are brought in to score silent films for many classes where the students also learn what makes up the theatre pipe organ and its role in silent photoplay.

The organ, one of three owned by Red River Chapter, is used frequently and has become a very popular feature with the student body. It was installed and finished by Lance E. Johnson with help from club volunteers in 1980.

PCC WURLITZER HAS EXCELLENT TONE; LARSEN DEDICATED ORGAN OCTOBER 14

In the finest tradition—having the ultimate in theatre organ sound—Saturday night, October 14 established unequivocally that Los Angeles metropolitan area now has one of the most beautiful sounding Wurlitzer theatre organs to be heard anywhere in the country.

The 3/24 J. Ross Reed Memorial Wurlitzer, owned by Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society and installed in Sexson Auditorium at Pasadena City College, was brilliantly dedicated by Lyn Larsen, who presented the instrument in a program that exhibited its vast musical range and also accompanied a Buster Keaton silent comedy, exhibiting the basic purpose of the theatre organ. Interestingly enough, Larsen has now dedicated the same instrument in three different locations—the Roaring Twenties Pizza Parlor, Lansing, Mich., Standard Industries complex, La Mir-

ada, Calif., and its new home.

Within his program Larsen introduced the added dimension of the marvel of modern electronics which further enhances the ability of the Reed Wurlitzer to meet the challenge of new musical modes through the miracle of overlay recording. He used this medium in two selections, one a classical number by Handel which prompted fellow-organist Stan Kann to congratulate Larsen following the program by telling him it was one of the greatest arrangements he had ever heard played.

Considering the instrument was made ready for its debut within a time period that prompted more than one qualified organman to predict that it was next to impossible to have it playable, the Wurlitzer behaved admirably and coughed

—See—WURLITZER—Page Four—



Volume Four November 1989 Number Three

JUNCHEN'S NEXT VOLUME DUE JAN. 1

Volume Two of *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ*, by noted organman David L. Junchen, is scheduled for release January 1, 1990, it has been announced by the publisher. Junchen told the NEWS the book is nearly 100 pages larger than Volume One and contains over 1,000 illustrations.

Orders are now being accepted with a special limited-time discounted price of \$59, which will be available through Jan. 31, 1990. Thereafter it will sell for \$65. Buyers should add \$4.25 for shipping charges. California residents need to add sales tax based on the rate in their tax district. It may be ordered from Showcase Publications, P.O. Box 40165, Pasadena, Calif. 91114.

To Be Old Folks Town

Wurlitzer's former national headquarters in DeKalb, Illinois, covering 70 acres, is being converted into a retirement village. Sale of the five-building facility was \$1 million.

NEW YORKER DONATES ORGAN TO MUSEUM

ATOS member Ian MacKenzie, St. James, N. Y., has donated his 2/8 Wurlitzer organ to Nassau County Department of Recreation and Parks, Division of Museum Services, to be moved and re-erected in Castlegould, a huge mansion built in 1912 by financier Jay Gould. It was purchased in 1917 by Daniel Guggenheim.

His widow donated the property to the Institute of Aeronautic Sciences and later the Navy acquired it. In 1971 it was deeded to Nassau County.

The mansion originally had a pipe organ, long since gone, that played into a skylighted palm court and the huge living room. The Wurlitzer will go into the empty chambers.

New York Chapter volunteers will assist in moving and erecting the organ in the Sands Point mansion. Original home of the Wurlitzer was a theatre in Niagara Falls where it was installed in 1916. —from *The Horseshoe*

San Sylmar Wurlitzer Getting New Leather

San Sylmar Wurlitzer is currently undergoing extensive releathering and plans have been completed to add a Devtronix relay to the organ after the first of next year, it is reported by Gordon Belt, organ curator.

"Over 20 years have passed since the organ was installed and we discovered that the condition of some of the leather was in need of replacement," he said. It is expected work will be completed before the annual Christmas parties are held at the museum in Sylmar, Calif.

Installation of the Devtronix Multi-Action Organ Control system will be made shortly after the first of the year since it could not be added to the Wurlitzer prior to the holiday events planned at the famed antique auto and musical museum.

Chapter Has Benefit To Raise Organ Fund

Members of Mid-Florida Chapter, Orlando, held a fund-raising barbecue Oct. 3 for the Don Baker Memorial/Lake Brantley High School Organ Project that has been undertaken by the group with a completion deadline of February 1991. The instrument, apparently a two-manual Wurlitzer, will be installed by chapter volunteers.

It was also announced that a home must be found for the chapter-owned 2/8 Robert-Morton organ. The Baker Memorial project honors the late Don Baker who resided in the area at the time of his death.

Successful Seminar Guarantees Repeat

Joliet Chapter's pipe organ seminar, which had weekly sessions from Aug. 16 through Sept. 27, attracted 21 members for each class. Instructors were organists Lee Maloney, Leon Berry, Fred Arnish, Larry Henschen, Jack Olander and Tom Wibbels. The success of the classes has guaranteed another series next year.

RTOS OBSERVES ITS 25th ANNIVERSARY

On Oct. 18, Rochester Theatre Organ Society observed its 25th anniversary featuring Britisher Robert Wolfe in concert, and an on-stage reception afterward. The Society also issued a commemorative brochure dressed in a silver and blue cover.

According to facts and figures given in the booklet, the club has had 10 presidents, 10 vice presidents, 9 secretaries and 9 treasurers. Of the 50 charter members, 19 are still active. Seven are deceased. There have been 22 honorary members.

EARTHQUAKE!

At 11pm Oct. 18 the NEWS succeeded making telephone contact with organman Edward M. Stout at his East Bay residence and obtained the following brief account of conditions in the San Francisco Bay Area following the massive earthquake the previous

See—EARTHQUAKE—Page 4

MAES GOES ON BUYING BINGE

During late September and into October, Bob Maes, Kansas City, Kan., went on an organ buying binge that started in Texas, took in New York and ended—or at least limbo'd for the time being—in California, until he finds more to buy.

His first deal was agreeing to handle sale of the 3/19 Wurlitzer owned by Joe Butler, Jr., Frederickburg, Tex. The organ has been broken up for parts. Then, early in October Maes bought an original Style D Wurlitzer (2/6) and a 3/12 church organ from Charles Shubert in Baldwinville, N. Y. He will break up the 3/12 and keep the Style D intact.

On Oct. 9 he was in Manhattan Beach, Calif. completing purchase of an excellent 3/9 Wurlitzer. After signing the papers for it, the organ was packed in a large shipping container for a high seas journey to West Germany. Scheduled to leave Oct. 12, German TV people were on hand to film the loading of the organ for later viewing in Europe. It is going to Willie Wiesinger in Celle, West Germany, reportedly about 80 miles from Hamburg. Willie vows he will keep the organ intact. It had been advertised for sale in Theatre Organ Journal for over a year and was owned by Dr. George L. Clark.

Maes also hauled organ components from the midwest for Ken Crome. Arriving in the area, he was unable to locate the organ man and learned later Crome was cooped up in chambers at Pasadena City College with Lyn Larsen shaping up the Wurlitzer for its dedication later that week.

On Oct. 10 Maes trotted out to Thousand Oaks and made a deal to buy up the long advertised 3/12 Barton organ with its brand new Peterson relay. He offered an amount and the owner countered with an offer of \$1,100, noting she had been pestered by many people to break up the instruments for parts. Maes took the offer and plans to use parts of it in his 4/20 Barton installed in the Granada Theatre in Kansas City, Kan.

When he went out on Friday, Oct. 13 to load the organ for shipment east, he discovered three exceptionally fine Wurlitzer ranks that alone are worth more than what he paid for the entire organ.

Although he wanted to remain in southern California to attend the opening of Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society's J. Ross Reed Memorial Wurlitzer, it was not possible. He had the Kansas City, Mo. Symphony Orchestra booked into his Granada Theatre on Sunday and had to return for that event.

ATOS Winner Has Cameo Spot At Long Center

Long Center for the Performing Arts, Lafayette, Ind., presented the first of its new season concert series with Ken Double in concert, a 15-minute cameo played by this year's Young Organist Competition winner Barry Baker, a silent film, sing-along and tap dancing act on stage.

It is reported Baker's bit was sensational; Double, of course, is always well received, and the tap dancers also made a big hit. Billed as 'Fischer and Schuette,' which are the last names of the duo, what wasn't advertised was the fact both were just five years old. The show drew an audience of around 950, it is reported.

SCHOOL DEDICATES DONATED LINK ORGAN

by Marion Roehl

Another theatre organ has been saved! On Sept. 16, State University College at Cortland, N.Y. re-dedicated Old Main Auditorium in memory of Ralph Adams Brown and the newly installed Link organ, which was a gift from the family of Edwin A. Link, Jr. Organist Searle Wright played the dedication program.

Originally installed in a Cleveland, Ohio theatre, it was later purchased by Duane Airly of Painesville. He stored it for a number of years and eventually sold it to Link. It was erected in Link's studio behind his home and the organ man did a great deal of work on it over the years. Link left it to State University at Binghamton, but the school could not use it and Cortland became the recipient. Lauren and David Peckham of Breesport, N.Y. renovated and installed the organ.

DEVTRONIX MOVES

No longer requiring extensive warehouse space for stocking organs, Devtronix has moved to smaller headquarters at 1823 Avondale Avenue, Sacramento, Calif. 95825, it was announced last month. The firm is now involved entirely in electronics, namely the new Multi-Action Organ Control system which was developed by Dick Wilcox. The new telephone number for the firm is 916/971-9704.

Another Nor-Cal Big Spender Turns Up

Last August the NEWS advocated that all chapters should be as fortunate as Nor-Cal. Member Bill Schlotter paid \$26,000 to underwrite complete rehabilitation of the ornate four-manual Wurlitzer console for the chapter's 32-rank organ now being installed in Berkeley Community Theatre.

Now here it is November and the NEWS is again advocating all chapters should be as fortunate as Nor-Cal. This time there is a second 'organ angel' who has just paid the sum of \$25,000 for the former Radio City Center four-manual console and the organ's 25 horsepower blower. In addition, this 'angel' has also purchased 12 ranks of 73-note chests, an 8' Unda Maris, 8' Trombone, 8' French Horn and 16' Violin Diapason (reportedly all Wurlitzer!) which will be donated to the Nor-Cal project and will increase the size of the organ to 37 ranks! (Apparently another rank was added previously.) And it is reported that the stark modern Center console will also be added to the organ along with the fancy cream puff keydesk.

And just who is this haloed harbinger of Wurlitzer goodies? None other than Rudy Frey, who is well known to the organ world because he has been known to travel far and wide to attend organ concerts when the big ones are advertised.

Rudy will now be able to stay home and hear the finest artists on one of the finest instruments—one he helped make possible.

BUFF ADVISES CALLING RIGHT PEOPLE

by Dale L. Boring

For those who travel and have time to ogle organs, heed the example of George Nitschman of St. Louis Chapter. George recently attended the National Cash Register headquarters in Dayton, Ohio for a month's training on servicing the newest money tills produced by the company. When at home his hobby is playing organs—in his residence, his church and open console sessions wherever they occur.

While in Dayton he called the secretary of Ohio Valley Chapter in Cincinnati and was given a name to call at the Emery Theatre. He did and was invited to come over (about 40 miles from Dayton) and tour the theatre. While there, before showtime, he played the 3/29 Wurlitzer for about 45 minutes. He stayed over for pre-show organ concert, played by Gene Ostenkam, and the evening film.

His next safari was Shady Nook Restaurant, in Hamilton, which is close to Cincinnati. He met organist Martin Bevis and was invited to play the 4/31 Wurlitzer, which came from the Capitol Theatre in Cincinnati, while Bevis had his dinner. The late Stan Todd and his wife, Virginia, spent three years erecting the organ in the restaurant.

George noted that by calling the right people (normally chapter officers) ahead of time he finds other organ aficionados are willing and happy to arrange visits.

James Donates \$100 To CIC School Organ Job

Organist Dennis James has donated \$100 to Central Indiana Chapter's Manual High School Wurlitzer Organ Project, it was disclosed in *Cipher*, the chapter newsletter. The organ, which will be a 3/25 Wurlitzer, is replacing the 3/17 Louisville Uniphone organ and will be featured in next year's national convention in Indianapolis.

-For Emergencies-

Another problem created by Olivera's illness—concert venues where he was scheduled to play had to scramble hurriedly in search of replacement artists. The NEWS was contacted and was able to supply addresses, but not telephone numbers. A file of telephone numbers for just such emergencies will be started and all organists are solicited to send theirs to be used in the event similar last-minute cancellations arise.

Organ Lit Issues Catalog

Catalogue "X" has made its debut for The Organ Literature Foundation (all 52 pages) and is available for \$1 (foreign—\$2 or 4 international reply coupons sea-mail; \$3 or 8 coupons for air mail) and is refundable with the first order received. The catalogue lists 693 books and 421 theatre organ records. It may be ordered by writing OLF, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, Mass. 02184. OLF is a member of ATOS.

—OLIVERA—

—Continued from Page One—

artist should not be so emotionally involved—until he was shown a video tape of one of Hector's concerts. It was then the physician understood how hyper the musician becomes in his playing and issued the restrictive conditions noted above.

As a result of his "problem," Hector was forced to cancel concert engagements until the middle of October. At that time he was sufficiently recovered to resume playing, but with assistance in his concert travels and planning. He also is attempting to be something less than a high voltage dynamo when at the console.

It must be reported that as a result of Hector's superb four standing ovations/encores, "it appears that whenever there is a happening at the 'Mighty Mo,' it gets the 'Mo Mightier,'" critic Clay Holbrook noted in his review of the Olivera performance. "Several thousand attended the show, coming from as far away as Ohio. Atlanta Chapter ATOS assisted the AGO with some of the promotional details of the concert and it is hoped continued successful ventures featuring the Might Fox Theatre Moller will insure more events being planned," he added.

British Organist Writes Three Organ Pieces

Nigel Ogden, popular young British organist, has recently published three selections for organ—*Afternoon Tea With The Duchess*, *Penguin Playtime* and *Leprechaun In London*. Issued through the music publishing house of Stainer and Bell, they are currently on sale in local music stores. Ogden is also president of Northeast Theatre Organ Association. The group owns the New Victoria Centre, Howden-Le-Wear where they have installed their own Wurlitzer organ.

KILEY PLAYS AT FAIR

During the recent fair at Topsfield, Mass., America's oldest event of this kind, John Kiley was heard playing a Hammond X-66 equipped with a good Leslie speaker. It is reported that in prior years as many as six electronic organ builders were represented on the fair grounds.

NOLAN TRIBUTE SHOW ATTRACTS BIG CROWD

by Ken Double

Buddy Nolan is a name remembered in Fort Wayne, Ind. On Sept. 10 the Embassy Theatre presented "Tribute To Buddy Nolan" concert and drew 1,512 patrons. Showtime was delayed 15 minutes to permit the 400 walk-up patrons time to get tickets and find seating.

The long standing popularity of the late organist, and co-sponsorship of the program by Hilliard Gates, General Manager of WKJG-TV, who created a 30-second commercial that was played free of charge regularly for two months prior to the show, were responsible for the big attendance and Embassy officials now are considering making it an annual affair. Proceeds of the evening go to a newly created on-going organ maintenance fund.

Record Firm To Release Berlin Music On New CD

Newport Classic Records has announced it will release in January the *All-American Music of Irving Berlin* with Dwight Thomas at the console of the Paramount Music Palace Wurlitzer and the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir in a 65-minute digital CD.

Production of the record includes John Ferguson, general coordinator, Robert Ridgeway, recording engineer, and Lee Fernandez, producer. It is expected the record firm will disclose its address in the December issue of the NEWS.

ALLEN MILLS PLANS TO MOVE TO COAST

Organist Allen Mills, has resigned his church position in Schenectady, N. Y. after 15 years and plans to move to the west coast. He will end his association there after the playing of the Christmas Eve service. He will retain his resident position at Proctor's Theatre.

The move to the west will be made shortly after the first of the year and he plans to become a "bi-coastal commuter," returning to Schenectady to mount and play the shows he has been producing for several years.

He has again this year created the coming Christmas Show at Proctor's. It will play four performances Dec. 9 and 10. Advance ticket sales are reported to be exceptionally good.

Roehls Retired Into New Recording Role

Harvey and Marion Roehl, recently retired from their Vestal Press business, couldn't quit and sit—so the two have a new business address for their new business. It's Marion Roehl Recordings and features from the Roehl Collection Wurlitzer Carousel Organ, Regina Disc Music Box, 'Autopiano' Player Piano, Tanglewilde Circus Calliope, 'Reproduco' Piano/Pipe Organ, Silent Movie 'Fotoplayer' and Seeburg Coin-Operated Saloon Piano audio tapes. There's an attractive little catalogue available by sending 25 cents in stamps to 3533 Stratford Drive, Vestal, N. Y. 13850-2222.

New Ownership May Effect CATOE Relations

Toronto producer Stephen McKernan is heading a group that has made a first installment payment on the \$21 million purchase price for the Chicago Theatre. It is reported plays and musicals will be presented. In recent months the theatre has been leased frequently as a four-wall deal at \$5,000 per day. Both Montgomery Ward and Sears have used the house, paying not only the rental fee, but all costs involved in staffing, production and support services.

It was not learned what arrangements will be made concerning Chicago Area Chapter's association with the theatre Wurlitzer; the club has invested thousands of dollars in its restoration and did have an agreement with the City of Chicago relative to using the organ in public presentations as a means of recouping the vast amount of money the club has spent on the instrument.

It is also unknown if the organ blower has been repaired following its failure during the CD recording session by Rob Calcaterra earlier this year. The disc was not completed.

Competitor Club Covers ATOS British Safari

ATOS' British competitor, Cinema Organ Society, went all out in its current Autumn '89 issue with coverage of the ATOS Safari '89. Authored by Ian Macnaught, COS Scottish Secretary of East Kilbride Keyboard Klub, his overall impressions were that the event was money well spent, "although it could have been a whole lot better with the right artists and someone controlling the items played throughout the week."

He noted he would attend another such event—"If I'm allowed to after writing this report!"

COS Journal also featured a story about the San Francisco Fox Theatre Wurlitzer in a new series "Gallery of the Great American Theatre Organs." It was written by Christopher Sykes, a British musician who has made a particular study of the American Theatre Organ scene.

Other items concerning the stateside colonies included a lengthy profile on Lyn Larsen, and a picture centerfold 'Gala Day at Great Munden,' an event organized by Simon Gledhill at the famous Plough Pub in honor of Ron Rhode's visit to Great Britain. Organist Nigel Ogden provided music for the evening on the three-manual Compton theatre pipe organ.

Seng Satisfies British Concert Audiences

John Seng won acclaim from British audiences during his concert tour in late September and early October, it is reported by David Lowe, who hosted the popular American artist during his stay in England. Seng returned to the States in time for his concert at the Avalon Theatre in Milwaukee.

XTMAS PARTY WILL BE GIFT FOR BARTON ORGAN

A Christmas Party, which will serve as a gift to the 4/21 Barton organ in the Rialto Theatre, Joliet, Ill., is well on its way to being sold out, according to an announcement posted by Joliet Chapter. Set for Dec. 14, the First Annual Christmas Gala includes dinner from 5:30 to 8pm; Ken Double in concert from 8 to 9:30; a short business meeting and then desserts on the Rialto stage.

There are many other surprises in store for all—this includes the general public. Tickets are \$18.75 per person for the entire evening's festivities. All profit will go for repairs to the Barton organ.

Tickets may be ordered by enclosing check or money order and SASE to JATOE Christmas Gala '89, P. O. Box 471, Joliet, Ill. 60434.

Big Cost Involved In Restoring Joliet Barton

Joliet Chapter is currently discussing ways and means of building a fund for repair and restoration work on the 4/21 Barton organ in the Rialto Theatre. A preliminary budget includes \$4 to \$800 for repairing roof leakage over the solo chamber; \$800 to \$1,000 for revoicing, making minor adjustments to ranks of pipes in the theatre; \$3,400 to \$3,800 for major pipework adjustments in a voicing shop; \$6,000 for a new Posthorn, \$3,000 for a new English Horn, \$500 for a Solo String; and a new electronic relay that brings the total amount needed up to between \$17 and \$21,000.

Allen a-La-Foort Style For Traveling Organist

British organist Nicholas Martin will play a new Allen Digital Theatre Organ which has been given modification on the idea of the famed Foort Touring Moller—it is easily dismantled for moving on tours Martin will be playing for Flynnedale Musical Enterprises.

The new instrument was ordered because on previous concert appearances Martin often played electronic organs of the modern orchestral type which are not suited to his theatre organ style.—COS Newsletter

Brown Breaks Up Center Wurlitzer For Parts

Phoenix organ buff Bill Brown has broken up the former Radio City Center Theatre 4/34 Wurlitzer after failing to attract a buyer for the complete instrument, it was learned last month. Bay Area organ buff Rudy Frey reportedly spent at least \$25,000 buying the Center's four-manual console and 25hp blower. He also spent another hefty sum at Brown's abode picking up parts from other instruments that are being disposed of.



WURLITZER WONDERLAND—Colorado's pure mountain air around Woodland Park will be enhanced by beautiful sound late next year when Martin Meier and Tim Stoddard have their 4/36 Wurlitzer organ installed in their *Bed and Breakfast* residence, which is a Greek Revival and Georgian architectural gem. Excavation for chambers will start soon and it is expected installation of the organ, which was formerly in Denver's Organ Grinder Restaurant, will get underway next March. Meantime, console and some percussions are displayed in the living room and provide interesting conversation pieces. A year-round operation, the bed and breakfast residence is about an hour and a half drive from Denver. Information regarding luxury accommodations may be obtained by calling 800/728-8282.

November 1989

EARTHQUAKE!

—Continued From Page One—

afternoon:

Apparently there were no injuries to any organ people in the area.

Partial collapse of the ceiling in Castro Theatre has damaged the Wurlitzer console. Chunks of plaster broke away and due to the initial heavy earth jolt, they not only fell 35 feet but were hurled about 15 feet from their ceiling position and crashed onto the console, smashing the top of the horseshoe casework; the music rack smashed onto the manuals causing some damage. Stout said that had the quake happened several hours later, when the theatre was open and the pre-show organ concert was on, the organist would have been severely injured or killed.

Both chambers at the Castro appear free of damage. Due to complete lack of power in the city, the organ could not be turned on to determine if wind lines have been ruptured.

Stout said it is too early to predict what will be done about re-opening the theatre. It will be necessary to scaffold the auditorium. He said there are pieces of plaster still hanging above the console that could break away and cause more damage if the area should experience further severe aftershocks.

He said it has been reported in Oakland the Grand Lake and Paramount Theatres have plaster damage and that some of the Paramount stage rigging crashed onto the stage.

The Stanford Theatre at Palo Alto, which has been undergoing complete refurbishing has minor plaster damage.

He was not able to learn if there was damage at Berkeley Community Theatre where Nor-Cal Chapter is installing its 4/37 Wurlitzer.

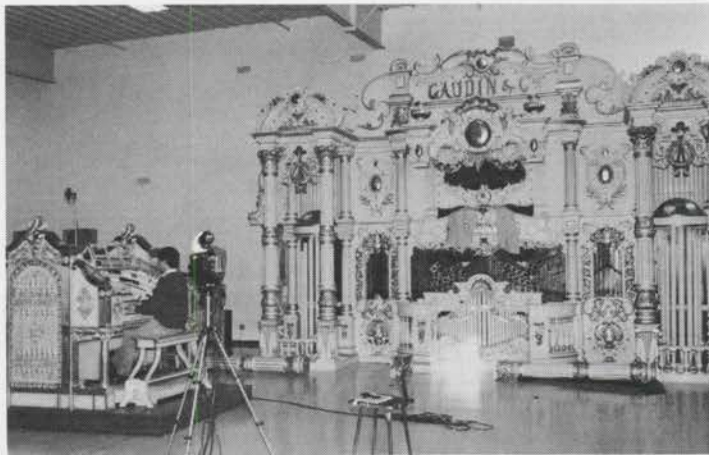
Special Shows Set For Zeiterion Wurlitzer

by Bob Legon

A special doner's show, starring John Cook at the console, is being planned for Dec. 10 to honor those who have contributed funds for the re-installation of the original Wurlitzer organ in the Zeiterion Theatre, New Bedford, Mass., and a First Night concert on New Year's Eve will feature Dennis James. The instrument was first installed in 1923 and opened by the late Mrs. Jessie Gunn Payette.

Two Organ Programs

Many southern California organ buffs who enjoy *Gee Dad, It's A Wurlitzer* show over KPCC-FM 89.3 Sunday nights from 7 to 8pm, also tune in KUSC-FM 91.5, for the 9pm organ program broadcast over that station the same evening.



RON RHODE plays the recently installed Robert Gilson Wurlitzer in Middleton, Wisc., making a digital recording for private use. In background is a Gaudin Orchestrion which is part of the Gilson collection. It is the largest automatic musical instrument of its kind ever built and has approximately 1,200 pipes. Gilson has recently completed fabrication of his own set of 32' pedal pipes, using a set of vibrators from the RKO Boston Theatre 3/15 Wurlitzer.

Stanford Theatre Organ Nearing Completion

Stanford's mostly Wurlitzer organ will be played from the former Grauman's Chinese Theatre Wurlitzer console, according to David Banks, one of the men involved in rebuilding the 3/21 instrument in the theatre at Palo Alto, Calif. The keydesk was purchased from John Ferguson, Indianapolis, and is being modified; in its original home the three decker controlled 19 ranks.

As of Sept. 30, 10 of 11 ranks were playing in the main chamber through a temporary two-manual console. The solo side was partially playable and by Nov. 1 it is expected to have the entire instrument in operation. David Packard, owner of the theatre and organ, has designed and built the electronic relay that plays the instrument.

Work started on the organ during 1987 and has been carried out by many volunteers. Some of those contributing their time, in addition to Banks, are Ken Eaton, Chris and Judy Luscher, John Johnston, Kevin King, Carl Pinow, Mike Riggs, Joe Smith, Rudy Frey, Al Seff, Chuck Ingstrom and Chris Nichols.

Chapter Will Again Bid For '92 Regional Meet

Land O' Lakes Chapter, St. Paul, Minn. plans to bid for the 1992 Regional Conclave after being turned down in the attempt to host the '91 event. "We were told we didn't have enough local members who also belonged to ATOS," it was noted by Verna Mae Wilson.

"We do have enough organs for a regional—World Theatre, Phipps Center, chapter-owned organ in Metropolitan Community Church, Powderhorn Park Baptist Church, the Kilglen at Red Wing and the organ in Cederhurst mansion. So we will re-submit a bid for 1992," she added.

Rhode's Byrd CD Given Title; Will Be Out Soon

Discussion by members of Virginia Theatre Organ Society regarding a title for the compact disc recorded by Ron Rhode at the Byrd Theatre several months ago brought forth suggestions of—*Hello Blue Byrds*, *Two Rhodes To Richmond*, etc. These apparently fell by the wayside when organist Lin Lunde and David Barnett, former National Secretary, put in an appearance at the meeting and talked the committee into titling the CD *The Bryd Sings*.

It is reported the CD should be ready for distribution soon.

Landmark Status For Two Ornate Chicago Theatres

City landmark status is being considered for Chicago's Uptown and Regal (former Avalon) Theatres. Owners of both theatres have agreed the structures should be designated landmarks.

—WURLITZER—
—continued from Page One—

up but three ciphers; they were quickly cleared by installer Ken Crome and Tom DeLay without interrupting Larsen's playing.

As stated to the NEWS by Stephen Ross, LATOS member who headed the project for the Society and was involved in every facet of the installation, "the superb cooperation of all concerned, from school officials, the J. Ross Reed family, Sexson Auditorium stage personnel to the valient crew of Society volunteers who worked under direction of Ken Crome, who erected the organ for LATOS, is beyond descriptive praise."

Crome's dedication to this installation was, in a manner of speaking, twofold: although he is recognized as one of the country's outstanding theatre organ technicians, it is the instrument he personally assembled over the years, planning it for his own residence, and then being the one to erect it after its several moves into a permanent home was undoubtedly responsible for the obviously intense devoted effort to bring the organ into top playing condition within the very limited time allotted after the dedication date was set.

Aptly summing up the new installation, Larsen told the NEWS, "The entire metropolitan community in this area now has one of the finest Wurlitzers with indisputably a magnificent Wurlitzer sound in a setting which provides the means of promoting theatre organ in many ways. Its entertainment value to the public is now limited only by the imaginative creative ability of those mounting presentations. It has all come together and is here awaiting exposure to the many musical cultural forms of exploitation that will enhance its future and value to the community."

A complete illustrated feature story about the organ and its opening is being prepared for publication in a future issue of Theatre Organ Journal.

THE STRANGE LETTER—PART III

In the caption of the photo showing Helen and Jessica Crawford last month, it was stated Jesse, too, was pictured. He wasn't—in this photo. The one selected for publication did show the family of three, but it inadvertently got lost in a shuffle on the editor's desk. When the error was discovered it was too late to have a replacement photoengraving made and Jesse just couldn't get in the scene.

Sister Angela Morone' closed her letter to Lt. Col. Thompson Hoyt of Tucson, Ariz. saying she would be visiting him and wanted to know if he would be interested in adding the small Wurlitzer console to his collection.

A telephone call to Col. Thompson prompted the NEWS to write the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah. It was concluded prior to this that Sister Angela had never wired the little keydesk into either Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer or the famed Tabernacle organ. This was substantiated by an answer from John Longhurst, Tabernacle organist, who noted—"We know nothing of the matter discussed in your letter, nor of Angela Morone' to whom it is addressed. Is it possible someone is pulling our leg? The answer to that, of course, is an unqualified "YES!"

One reader, a member of the Mormon Church, offered a plausible explanation that could be the unknown author's devious means of creating a personality for the letter. On the Temple roof stands the statue of trumpeter Angel Moroni. This could have been the inspiration for giving Sister Angela identity.

In any event, Sister's attempt to unload the famed Wurlitzer miniature console on Col. Hoyt was a lost cause. He told the NEWS he does collect organ memorabilia, but not consoles—standard size or miniature!

We are still hopeful the little keydesk will turn up some day.

Kay McAbee: Prime Judge For The 1990 Young Organist Competition

by Dorothy VanSteenkiste

Inducted into the American Theatre Organ Society's Hall of Fame at the 1985 Convention in Chicago, Kay McAbee has credentials that are very impressive and his mastery of the theatre organ is evidence of his playing skills.

His early training, at age five, on the piano and then, age twelve, at the organ led him to become church organist at age thirteen. While in high school he attended an anniversary week program at the Rialto Theatre in Joliet. The stage show used the 4/21 Grande Barton Theatre Pipe Organ. At one hearing, he was "hooked" on the theatre organ sound.

After graduation from high school in 1950, he attended the Chicago Musical College and later, the American Conservatory of Music. While at the American Conservatory he became staff organist for the W.W. Kimball Company and also for the famous Kimball Hall. He traveled extensively playing concerts for both Kimball and Conn.

It was not until 1953 that Kay played his first theatre organ. It was a 3/14 Wurlitzer in the Paramount Theatre in Aurora, Illinois. He thoroughly enjoyed his times at that console — until just a year later, in 1954, a flood interrupted the flow of music. Not wanting to be kept from this "new" sound, and with the help of several friends, he rebuilt the organ. Once it was in playing condition, Kay cut his first record, called "Organ Echoes."



Kay McAbee

While all this was going on, Kay was accompanist for several Choral Societies and was a guest artist at Orchestra Hall. In 1958, Kay and his friends rebuilt the organ that 'began' his theatre organ career — the one he had heard in the Rialto in 1948. That one had also been damaged by water.

During the 1960s his reputation as a

theatre organist brought him many honors, including concert engagements at both of the theatres where he had rebuilt the organs, plus the Coronado Rockford (4/17 Barton). He was also staff organist for the Trianon Ballroom in Chicago (3/13 Wurlitzer). In 1960 he was asked to demonstrate the new 2/8 Wicks Theatre Organ at the Music Trade Show at the Palmer House in Chicago. He was also asked to play many classical concerts in the mid-west. Of these, the most notable for Kimball fans, was the concert at the First Congregational Church in Chicago (4/95 Kimball).

Kay has been a featured artist for at least five ATOS National Conventions. He has played concerts for many organ clubs including, Rochester Theatre Organ Society, Detroit Theater Organ Club, and many ATOS Chapter-sponsored events.

Currently Kay is house organist at the Ramada Classic Hotel in Albuquerque, New Mexico, presiding at the only five-manual Kimball Theatre Organ console that Kimball ever made (originally the center console in the Roxy Theatre in NYC).

In the Chicago Area he is often called "Mr. Kimball." Kay is known to bring out the full resources of the organ and for his ability to "play to the audience."

We are honored to have Kay McAbee as our prime judge.



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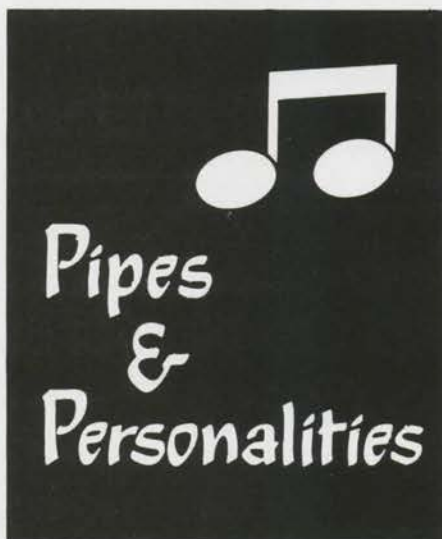
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A SMALL TRIBUTE TO A FALLEN GIANT

Entering the theatre through the side doors, tall, attractive, and always nattily dressed, he would stride by the marble columns, through gilded salons, promenades and crystal-chandeliered grand foyers and lobbies, reconnoitering the waiting thousands who were restlessly anticipating the oncoming presentation under the grandiose proscenium. There the Mighty Wurlitzer was waiting for him. Here, four or five times a day, seven days a week for fourteen years, he would play their music on the Times Square Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer. With its extremely high, barrel-vaulted ceiling and extremely tall and shallow organ chambers, the sounds of the organ playing in this 4000-seat theatre caused the late Ben Hall to remark: "Hearing the Wurlitzer in the Times Square Paramount is like playing a theatre organ in the Sistine Chapel." In Detroit, in 1982, THEATRE ORGAN'S Geoffrey Paterson wrote: "He says all he has to say in less than eight bars, and when he opens up an organ in his broad, lazy rhythm, there is simply no sound like it." At all of the Wurlitzers this man played after the demise of this great movie palace, he tried his best to make them sound like the Times Square Paramount. There will never be another theatre like that, or its West Coast facsimile, the unforgettable San Francisco Fox, but for those of you who heard them, the sounds of their Mighty Wurlitzers will live forever. Play on, Don Baker, forever . . .

John Mecklenburg

Nalle Is On CD Now



Billy Nalle

The Other Side

There have been so many highly complimentary letters written about David Junchen's *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ, Volume I*, that we thought our readers might appreciate an opposing viewpoint. We have replicated the following from the original, without editing, to show that we believe in fair play:

A Letter From:

SUBLIME ORGAN BUILDERS

Our Motto:

*"At Sublime Organ Builders,
Every Tone is a Nice Tone"*

October 12, 1985

Mr. David Junchen
Showcase Publications
Post Office Box 40165
Pasadena, CA 91104

Dear Mr. Junchen,

Your "Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ, Volume I" arrived here, and after scrutinizing it closely, we find it terribly disappointing.

For one thing, some of your statistics are appallingly incorrect. Anyone vaguely familiar with pipe organ history knows that Bennett Op. 876 (Liberty Theatre, Davenport, IA) had a 36-note Solo Ukelele, with low C missing, which was very frustrating to organists accustomed to the 37-note model.

For another, your attempt at "humor" to cover up your careless, shoddy research is disgusting. For example, to poke fun at the Frazee ad department's slogan "Favorably Known for Frazee Tone" is terribly rude; many people obviously *did* buy organs from them or they would not have been the industry giant that they were. Equally in poor taste is your implication regarding the Marr & Colton symphonic registrar names reflecting the quality of their organs. We have a Marr and Colton organ, and every single pipe speaks!

Furthermore, we resent your including so many small theatre organ builders such as N. Doerr, E.C. Malarkey, and Hutchings, while overlooking larger organ builders like us; in the past 27 years we have removed organs from over 34 theatres, and have carefully preserved them in an unheated building on the coast of Maine.

Regretfully Yours,

Peter Flunk, Sole Prop.
Sublime Organ Builders

Two major recording firms are re-releasing albums of Billy Nalle's organ music on CDs. One is from the "Pipe Organ Spectacular" combination package from *Readers Digest Records*. Artists in this package have varied since the first such offering of theatre organ albums in 1969, but the Nalle album has been retained in each new release, continuing to draw strong response. It has, as of 1989, been released four times. It was recorded on the DTOS/Senate and Plattsburgh/Strand Theatre Wurlitzers.

The second release, in some ways more significant, is "Big, Bold & Billy," from Project 3 Records of New York. It was recorded by the legendary Bert Whyte in 1971. The organ was the Wurlitzer from the former Brooklyn Paramount Theatre, now Long Island University. The album was the first to be made in four-channel sound, issued also in LP, and was the all-time best seller in theatre organ recordings through 1975. When the Project 3's new owners reviewed the company product, they unanimously decided to re-release this album, which has not been available since 1977, in CD under the title "Spectacular Theatre Organ."

We talked to Billy in Wichita and he said, "Apparently, my vinyl children never know when to retire, but stay in the theatre wings waiting to be summoned by the master of ceremonies. What a *happy* problem!"

When asked about his own "retirement," Billy replied that it simply means no concert schedules, frequent traveling, demanding obligations or deadlines. He has now been able to reorganize his home (including his office), and can devote more time to writing articles and coaching several hard-working musicians on piano as well as organ. In 1987, Billy helped to found Wichita's first parish of the Anglican Catholic Church, St. Joseph of Glastonbury, and is one of their three layreaders. He seems to be delighted to have more time now for friends and activities, both social and musical. Billy sounded almost inordinately proud of having "shed enough Crisco from his Mason-Dixon Line" to weigh what he did during his New York years (150), and he said that he feels "mean, lean, and light on the hoof."

From his home, Maison Riviere, which sits beside one of two rivers in midtown Wichita, Billy says that he feels like he lives in the country because of the lush setting and the city's largest park just across the river. His automotive pal, a hatchback Honda named "Mr. Pip," enables him to be in three places simultaneously, and Billy says that he, himself, feels like Mr. Pip — well voiced and well regulated. We say that he sounds like a man contented in his pursuit of happiness.



Gaylord Carter, age 84, at 4/27 Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer. Dr. Ed Mullins photo

“Flicker Fingers” Celebrates 84th

Gaylord Carter returned to the Oakland, California, Paramount Theatre 4/27 Wurlitzer on July 15. A mal-functioning of the organ's power supply occurred at the onset of his program making the left Solo chamber shutters inoperable and only the Tibia tremulants working in the Main. Carter apologized for the problem and continued the show with his delightful accompaniment of a Harold Lloyd comedy.

The organ maintenance crew, under the direction of Roger Inkpen, had the Wurlitzer back in perfect working order after the intermission. Carter then cued Buster Keaton's *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, with its exciting storm and flood sequences, to its happy conclusion.

Five days later, July 20, Carter made his fourth appearance on the Pat Sajak Television Show. This time they had a three-manual electronic organ with real bells for Carter to cue Sajak's "Silent." Carter revealed to the television audience that he will celebrate his 84th birthday on August 3. Happy Birthday, "Flicker Fingers," with many more to come.

Ed Mullins

JOURNAL PROBLEMS?

contact:

DOUGLAS C. FISK

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Rodgers Pipe Organs International

Pictured above is the Rodgers three-manual Oxford 925/eight-rank pipe organ installed at Shinil Presbyterian Church, Seoul, Korea, at a special Evangelistic Service for over 3,000 attendees who completely filled the church. There are now six Rodgers pipe organs installed in Korea in addition to the scores of smaller Rodgers electronic church instruments.

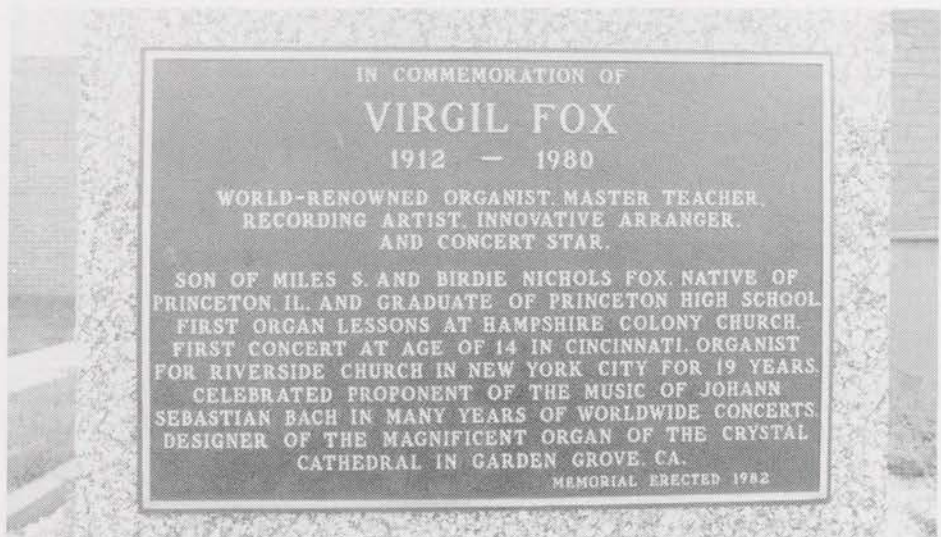
Rodgers is represented in Korea by Samick Musical Instruments Manufacturing Company, Ltd.

In addition to the Korea installations, Rodgers pipe instruments have been installed in Hong Kong, New Zealand, Australia, Italy, Norway, Japan, Spain, Scotland, England, Germany, and Holland. The export of pipe organs is a rapidly growing segment of Rodgers Instrument Corporation business and one that fits well with Rodgers' worldwide reputation for superior quality electronic church organs.

Look What I Found

In the early part of this summer, I had occasion to go to Princeton, Illinois, on business, and one of the stops I had to make was at City Hall. I parked in front, got out of my car and found myself facing this beautiful bronze plaque commemorating Virgil Fox. Not knowing much about Virgil Fox, I made an inquiry of one of our members, Selma Johnson, who found an old recording of Fox with some information on the cover. The fact that impressed me the most was that, since 1946, he had been the organist at Manhattan's Riverside Church which overlooks the Hudson River. The jacket notes stated that the "great Aeolian-Skinner Organ is considered one of the finest organs in the United States, not only for its size and almost inexhaustible resources, but for the sheer beauty of its sound." Mr. Fox frequently gave recitals there, and critics claim that this was the perfect combination of organ and organist.

Richard P. Withenbury



Virgil Fox Memorial Plaque outside of City Hall in Princeton, Illinois.

Richard Withenbury photo



ORGAN-IZING

POPULAR MUSIC

by
AL HERMANN'S

ENDING — 2

Ending #1, described in the July/August edition of THEATRE ORGAN is the easiest and most useful Ending for slow and medium tempo songs. In Ending #2, the chromatic motion creates a more modern sound.

After playing the final I chord, change to the major chord that is a half tone above the I chord. The right hand plays an arpeggio upward on that chord ending on the 1st and 3rd or 3rd and 5th of that chord. Then return to the I chord by moving each part down a half tone.



Study these examples and figure them out in G, B \flat and E \flat .

Notice that the next to the last note in the arpeggio is held with the last note, and both move down together to the 1st and 3rd or 3rd and 5th of the I chord. This Ending will usually sound best on slow songs. After playing and listening to these examples, review Ending #1 and listen to the difference. Apply one of these Endings on everything you play until you can play them easily.

PIPE ORGAN PARTS FOR SALE

Kilgen (Dennison) Tuba 16', 97 notes	\$1200	5 rank Morton chest	\$1000
Kilgen (Dennison) Kinura	\$ 800	Page 1 rank Tibia chest	\$ 100
Wurlitzer-Vox	\$ 350	44 note Kilgen 16' Tuba chest	\$ 200
Wurlitzer-Violins (pair)	\$ 900	Kilgen 8' Tuba chest 12 notes	\$ 100
Wurlitzer 16' Diaphone-85 notes	\$1200	Kilgen 8' Tuba chest 12 notes	\$ 100
Kilgen Vox with chest	\$ 200	Offset Kilgen 11 note chest	\$ 100
Wurlitzer Clarinet	\$ 650	Wurlitzer Tibia offset	\$ 350
Austin Clarinet	\$ 300	Wurlitzer offset String	\$ 250
Morton Flute 8'	\$ 100	2-61 note direct electric String chests	\$ 130
Morton Vox	\$ 100	Reservoir — all re-leathered	
Kilgen 8' String	\$ 200	Wurlitzer 20 x 30	\$ 400
Morton 8' String	\$ 400	Wurlitzer 20 x 30	\$ 400
Kilgen Tibia	\$ 500	Wurlitzer 30 x 30	\$ 400
Wurlitzer Chrysoglott	\$ 800	Kilgen 36 x 44	\$ 175
Kilgen (Deagen) Xylophone	\$ 300	Kilgen 36 x 44	\$ 175
(Master size)		Kilgen 20 x 15	\$ 100
Kilgen (Deagen) Block (Master size)	\$ 300	Kilgen 25 x 35	\$ 100
Wurlitzer Chimes	\$ 300	Blower 5 hp Spencer	\$1500
Wurlitzer Toy Counter	\$1500	3 man Kilgen console	\$4000
Wurlitzer tuned Sleigh Bells	\$1500	134 stop tabs / double bolster / re-leathered	
Wurlitzer shades - pair	\$ 500	with 3/9 relay and combination-action	
4 rank Kilgen chest	\$ 800	and Morton switchstack	

CONTACT:

M.R. Faulwell • 4306 Lake Drive • Lee's Summit, MO 64064

After 6:00 p.m. 816/373-0257

NUGGETS (continued from page 30)

sition in 1920. While in New York, he played at the Rialto, Rivoli, Capitol and Criterion theatres.

He left New York to become solo organist at the new Capitol in Montreal, one of the finest theatres in Canada. After two years, he went to Chicago's Roosevelt until he accepted a two-year Philadelphia engagement.

Mr. Widenor holds the degree of associate in the AGO, is a charter member of the New York Society of Theatre Organists, and a member of the National Association of Organists. He will be featured in solos, classical and popular, at Loew's Rochester.

December 1934 (D) . . .

The Van Dusen Organ Club in Chicago, headed by theatre organist, EDWARD EIGENSCHENK, has announced its 1934-35 season of lectures, recitals, classes and social activities.

Season's Greetings to all our friends!
Jason & The Old Prospector

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It's a joy to share, so we meet other enthusiasts, learn of the history of the ATOS from guests Ben Hall, Richard Simonton, and then, the one and only Gaylord Carter, with his usual flair, brings down the house . . . (not Bernie's, but the Brooklyn Paramount).

Amid all this fun, Bernie gets a very clear message: "MY WIFE SAID THAT'S ENOUGH!"

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CLOSING CHORD



Earl L. Miller

Earl L. Miller, of Bradford, Massachusetts, died suddenly June 24, at the age of 43.

Miller was organist and choir director of Christ Church, Andover, since 1982, chapel organist at Brooks School, North Andover, since 1982 and municipal organist, Portland, Maine, since 1988. He was a member of AGO, the Organ Historical Society and ATOS.

Earl Miller was a recognized authority on the performance of music from the Victorian and Edwardian eras. A writer, composer, teacher and lecturer, he performed throughout the United States, Canada and Europe. Well known as an organ designer and consultant, Miller had worked in recent years with the Andover Organ Company of Lawrence, Massachusetts. He was instrumental in arranging for a restored theatre organ for the newly renovated Town Hall Auditorium in Andover and creating the design for its installation. He was a collector of reed organs and harmoniums and maintained an extensive collection of Baroque wind instruments. In keeping with his interest in Victorian and Edwardian music, Miller collected and catalogued an extensive library of out-of-print music, primarily organ works, but also including choral and piano literature.

Albert W. Fanter

Albert W. Fanter, 81, of Sunset Hills, Missouri, passed away recently. A long-time member of St. Louis Chapter, ATOS, he was best known for his work as a church organist, most recently at Bethlehem Lutheran in Hyde Park and Christ Lutheran in south St. Louis. He was also staff organist for many years at radio station KFJO.

Mr. Fanter was most helpful to the St. Louis chapter this past July when they presented the silent *King of Kings* at the Kirkwood Theatre accompanied by Mark Gifford on a Rodgers with Kurzweil synthesizer. *Dale L. Boring*

Frank W. Holland

It is with deep regret that the Trustees of The British Piano Museum Charitable Trust announce the death of Frank W. Holland, M.B.E., founder and director of The Musical Museum, on 11 September 1989.

Developed from a personal interest, Frank Holland set up his private collection in 1963 at St. Georges Church, Brentford, Middlesex. In 1966, he transferred the collection to an educational charity — The British Piano Museum Charitable Trust. Since its foundation, Frank Holland worked tirelessly to promote the importance of automatic musical instruments both as part of our social history and as a record of the performances of important pianists from the early 1900s to about 1930.

From the beginning, Frank Holland insisted on live demonstrations and his lecture tours of the collection gave a visit to the Museum a distinctive quality which is legendary. His wide range of interests, particularly in aspects of technology, created a true collector's museum. In pursuit of instruments and publicity for the Museum, he established connections throughout the world where the collection is now recognised as one of the most comprehensive of its type. Wherever enthusiasts met to discuss and admire automatic musical instruments, his contribution was always warmly welcomed.

Frank Holland's tenacity, humour and enthusiasm will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

The Trustees of The British Piano Museum Charitable Trust wish it to be known that The Musical Museum, Brentford, Middlesex, created by the late Frank W. Holland M.B.D., and his work for the preservation and demonstration of automatic musical instruments for the benefit of the community, will continue under their management in accordance with the terms of the Trust.

*Michael J. Ryder,
Chairman of the Trustees*

Joseph B. Cline

Joseph B. Cline of Westmont, Pennsylvania, an organist for 62 years died in July. He was 91.

Mr. Cline, after early piano lessons, became an organist when 20. He played the Garden and Lyric theatres in Camden, New Jersey, until advent of talking pictures. During the thirties, he played with a band, was organist for seven Masonic lodges, and played at the Philadelphia Naval Aircraft Chapel.

In 1947, he purchased an organ for his home, and neighbors would stand out front to hear his renditions of show tunes, ballads and popular and classical music. In spite of failing eyesight, he could play for three straight hours by memory.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and many nieces and nephews.

*It is music's lofty mission
to shed light on the
depths of the
human heart.*

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-56)

HISTORIAN'S SEARCH CONTINUES

Ever since it was announced that the list of active charter members was again being researched and updated and that all remaining active charter members would again have their membership cards stamped CHARTER, as was done in the past, I have been receiving much encouraging mail. One member sent me a very accurate example of the stamped word CHARTER as it appeared on the original cards, even down to the red ink. Another member photo-copied four different membership cards of his, showing how the stamp and method of printing varied over the years. Others have written giving their current address. I've noticed in my research that some of you have retired and moved to another part of the country. One member shared with me the fact that he may have been the first ATOS member in New York City. And it goes on and on. If you know of any charter members who are inactive please let me know or tell them we want to include them, and let's get them reactivated. You can write to me: PAUL J. QUARINO, ATOS Historian, 3141 S.E. 90th Place, Portland, Oregon 97266.

Chapter Notes



Ron Carter.

Gary W. Jones photo

ALABAMA Birmingham

205/942-5611 or 205/644-3606

August — a month for hot weather and a “hot” concert. Ron Carter from Atlanta ventured over with a wonderful group of friends and family to provide his first chapter meeting performance at The Alabama Theatre. Ron’s concert was exciting and showed his versatility as both organist and performer. His selections and arrangements were enjoyed by our whole crew and Ron was right at home with his Alabama Chapter friends.

Movie palaces and theatre organs are both grand and wonderful things, but are even more special when they bring two people together for a lifetime commitment. Theatre patrons Fred Osborne and Ola Jones had met through mutual friends over a year ago, and their first date together was a jazz concert in July 1988 at The Alabama. Things progressed and soon the jazz concerts, regular classic films and other public performances were a regular part of their dating routine. What more appropriate place to “pop the question” than at the theatre that had helped bring them together. A call from Fred to chapter Vice-President Gary Jones gained them access to the theatre and under the premise of a photo-session of the historic building, Fred was able to coerce Ola into helping. Once inside and down front near the console, Fred proposed, Ola accepted, and the rest is history (or will be in May 1990, the tentative date of the wedding!). Alabama Chapter members are all romantics at heart, and everyone here is thrilled to be a part of this young couple’s new life together.

Gary W. Jones



Fred Osborne and Ola Jones at the Alabama Theatre.

Gary W. Jones photo

ATLANTA

404/428-4809 or 404/948-0267

On July 16 we were invited back to the lovely Marietta home of Gordon and Linda Johnson to hear another performance on their 2/7 Wurlitzer-cum-piano, this time by Lloyd Hess. (See our report in the March/April '89 THEATRE ORGAN for description of the organ.) Lloyd grew up in Western Canada and then lived in Dallas, Texas, for twenty years before coming to Atlanta a year and a half ago. He studied piano with the Toronto Conservatory of Music for six years, and picked up organ on his own. He has been active in church music since the age of nine, and has played popular music all his life, too. He began playing theatre pipe organ in Dallas and for several years was one of the staff organists at the Lakewood Theatre. He served three terms as program chairman for North Texas Chapter. While in Dallas, he played accordion in German restaurants and for private parties. He is now a church organist here and has played in several churches other than the one where he is the main organist.



Lloyd Hess at the Johnsons' 2/7 Wurlitzer.

Lloyd opened his program with some Dixieland tunes, which used to advantage the organ’s brass, particularly the trombone in the pedals. He then moved through some expressive pops selections, a classical number and several German selections. The piano, playable from the organ, was used frequently on lively upbeat tunes. His very professional performance was very well received; the Wurlitzer never sounded better! Glad he’s joined our chapter!

The Johnsons served refreshments in their downstairs recreation area, and Gordy conducted tour after tour of the organ chambers. We appreciate very much the Johnsons’ hospitality and their continuing invitation to hold chapter programs at their home.

Then, on August 20, we returned to Charles Walker’s Theatrical Paraphernalia (“Tenth Street’s Largest Theatre” — 70 seats) to hear member Rick McGee play the 2/9 mostly Robert-Morton (“Tenth Street’s largest pipe organ”). The organ had started out as a 2/4 Morton in the Rialto Theatre at Macon, Georgia, in 1921. Charles acquired it in '80 or so, and installed it in his T.P. auditorium but with a different Robert-Morton console with more stop capability. About 1986, he added a Seaburg windchest and five more ranks: two (Pilcher) Strings, a (Pilcher) Clarinet, and (Austin) 16’ Trumpet and a (Stan-Dart) Tibia. He added a piano earlier this year.

Rick, a native of Atlanta, began studying piano at the age of seven. In his youth, he used to wander into the Fox Theatre here on Saturday mornings to listen to our “Mr. Theatre Organist,”

(continued)

ATLANTA cont.



Hosts Gordy and Linda Johnson serve refreshments.



Rick McGee on the 2/9 mostly Robert-Morton at the Theatrical Paraphernalia.

Bob Van Camp, practice on the 4/42 Moller. He'd discuss organ playing with Bob, and before he knew it he was an organist, having learned pretty much on his own. Rick was staff organist at the Music-Grinder, and later Showboat Pizza in Marietta in the late '70s and '80s. He was staff organist at the Excelsior Mill in Atlanta in the mid '80s. Rick has played programs for Atlanta Chapter before, and for Alabama Chapter at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. He also played the year-end program for the Atlanta chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He has held a church-organist position since the age of twelve!

Rick played a very pleasant variety of numbers for us, including Porter's "From This Moment On," Joplin's "Solace," a *Mary Poppins* medley, some numbers from the Marx Brothers' film *The Cocoanuts*, and a few more. It was a most enjoyable afternoon. Rick plays beautifully.

Bill Hitchcock

**See You
In Indianapolis??
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Members of the chapter, comprising the Organ Committee at Shea's Buffalo Theatre, were pleased to be able to arrange visits to Shea's during the summer, for organists stopping in Buffalo to see, hear and try the theatre's 4/48 Wurlitzer.

Prior to the ATOS convention, we welcomed Barry Niven and English organist Martin Harris as they visited the Buffalo area before going on to Detroit. Martin made the most of his time at the console, playing with sensitivity and feeling, qualities rarely present in the renderings of young performers. Though admittedly he had not as yet played such a large organ, he executed both popular and light classical selections with ease. A scheduled tour of the theatre by about 70 people from Michigan received an unexpected private concert when Martin agreed to play while they relaxed in their balcony seats.

Following the convention, John Smallwood and organist David Lowe, members of the Cinema Organ Society, paid a visit, with David spending an enjoyable afternoon at the keyboards. In the evening hours, they enjoyed a tour of the QRS Music Roll factory, accompanied by Chapter Vice-President Maureen Wilke, who was able to arrange the private visit. Also visiting Shea's was Bryan Jensen, associated with the Free State Organ Society based in the Baltimore area. Bryan, who is employed by the Smithsonian Institution, had heard reports about the fine instrument at Shea's from others in the theatre organ world, and was anxious to try it himself. After both listening to and playing the organ, he pronounced the happening his most memorable experience of the decade.

August found our members traveling to Lockport, New York, to the First Presbyterian Church where we heard a Moller 3/43 organ (straight). The members were able to look into the chambers which were spotless and neat. Several members then took their turns at the organ.

Upon leaving the church we headed to the Erie Barge Canal where we enjoyed a supper cruise. We boarded our boat and traveled 12 miles east on the Canal while receiving a lesson in past and present history of the Erie Barge Canal. Arriving back at dockside, we went to the Lockport Senior Citizen Center where we were greeted with coffee and cookies and enjoyed playing the 2/8 Wurlitzer. The members of the Senior Center were great hosts and enjoyed the music by several club members at the open console.

We are looking forward to a good concert year at Shea's Buffalo theatre with five concerts. *Norma J. Marciniak*

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

**DOUGLAS C. FISK,
Executive Director of ATOS
P.O. Box 417490
Sacramento, California 95841**

Bill Vlasak

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CENTRAL FLORIDA

Tampa

407/870-7861 or 813/251-8325

The June meeting took place at the home of John and Eloise Otterson, with some 35 members attending. Fellow member Al Hermanns, well known for his Organ-izing articles in THEATRE ORGAN, played a fine program on the Otterson's Hammond Concorde, illustrating some musical ideas from the 50s to the present. A loud and vicious rain and wind storm, for which this part of sunny Florida is well known, accompanied Al's program. At times it was hard to tell which was Hammond and which was nature. Anyway, it was a pleasant afternoon and everyone had an opportunity to play the Concorde and socialize.

Our July and August meetings were combined into a single get-together at the Tampa Theatre. For this meeting, there were 34 of our members present, 18 from the Mid-Florida chapter, and nine guests. After a brief business meeting, the several "house organists" — volunteer CFTOS and MFTOS members — played short programs. Then more than a dozen members of the two chapters had the opportunity to play the 3/12 Wurlitzer which is owned by the City of Tampa and which is maintained by CFTOS, with considerable input from MFTOS.

About a week later, a city employee walked across the darkened theatre stage and fell into the organ pit and onto the console. He was able to crawl out and left the theatre under his own power. Unfortunately, the console was badly damaged. A bolster was cracked on the right side, several Solo stop tabs were badly damaged as well as a few Great stop tabs. The piano hinge holding the top console cover was ripped loose, and the bench was broken into several pieces. Obviously the man who took the tumble was good size!

Although temporary repairs have been made, and the organ is still apparently playable for movie intermission work, its overall integrity and reliability are now in question. As the organ is the property of the city, it remains to be seen what will be done to bring the console back to almost concert quality. At present, the Central and Mid-Florida chapters have had to put on more or less permanent hold any planned concert series, and the resultant loss of what would have hopefully benefitted the two chapters, the organ, and greater exposure of the general public to theatre organ music.

Finally, we want to mention that the Central Florida Chapter is planning a fitting tribute to Don Baker, in the form of a Don Baker Memorial Theatre Pipe Organ to be installed at Lake Brantley High School in Altamonte Springs, a suburb of Orlando. CFTOS was involved in a benefit concert Don gave at that school prior to his death. It is planned that the organ, a Wurlitzer of modest size, will be in pristine condition when installed with details such as nickel plated screws and tension springs. It will do proper justice to the memory of Don Baker. We encourage all members to support this activity in any way possible.



Al Hermanns entertains fellow members of CFTOS.



CENTRAL INDIANA

Indianapolis

317/255-8056 or 317/787-4865

Between 60 and 70 members of the Central Indiana Chapter journeyed north to Fort Wayne for a two-day meeting in August. Saturday's agenda began with a visit to St. Mary's Catholic Church for a mini-recital by Louis Schindler on the 45-rank Kilgen installed in this magnificent structure. Then it was on to the Plymouth Congregational Church where Mr. Ken Stein, Director of Music, played the 4/72 Aeolian-Skinner installed in the front of the sanctuary and then played the classic Allen organ which is located in the balcony area. We were allowed open console at both churches.

After dinner we traveled to the home of Bob Goldstine to hear him play his three-manual Rodgers Marquis. In addition to the organ, Mr. Goldstine's living room also boasts a 7' Yamaha grand piano! We were privileged to hear Mr. Dyne Pfeffenberger and Mr. Mahlon Houlihan play the Yamaha. During open console, both instruments were utilized.

Byron Fogt's house was next on our agenda. Byron has installed a 3/17 Barton/Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ, originally from the old Olympia Stadium in Detroit. His program included "Probably," "Abba Dabba Honeymoon" and "The Entertainer." Open console followed, as well as a tour through the organ chambers.

Sunday morning we gathered at the Embassy Theatre for coffee and doughnuts and open console at the 4/15 Page organ. This console has been newly restored by our own Kevin Aikman and Carlton Smith and is a pleasure to play. Members of this chapter are not hesitant to perform during open console and the two hours passed quickly and were enjoyed by all. After a brief meeting, we were treated to a brilliant concert by this

(continued...)

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Barry Baker at the Embassy Theatre 4/15 Page Organ. *Barry Johnson photo*

year's winner of the Young Organist Competition, Barry Baker. This young man is exceptional! Some of his selections were "Let's Do It," "My Romance" (played with such sensitivity!), Leroy Anderson's "Promenade" and a big-band rendition of "Something's Gotta Give." Mr. Baker concluded his program with a Cole Porter medley. For an encore, he played a rousing "Varsity Drag." What a great talent. Be sure to catch his performance at the 1990 National Convention here in Indianapolis.

Work progresses steadily on the new Manual High School 3/25 Wurlitzer. Volunteers spend Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings (under the direction of J.K. Aikman) working to see that this instrument will be ready for the '90 Convention. Our chapter is very excited about this project. Much time and money have gone into making this installation one of the finest in the Mid-West. One of our latest fundraising ventures was a Gigantic Flea Market held in the lobby of the Manual High School Auditorium. Not only did the profits surpass our expectations, but also the extensive publicity brought us several new members. The organ was played during the sale by various members and generated additional interest from the crowd. Several patrons made donations to the organ fund over and above their purchases. All in all, a most satisfying day.

From all of us to all of you: a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year!

Barb Johnson

CENTRAL OHIO

Columbus
513/652-1775

We were privileged to have sixteen chapter members attend Father Jim Miller's performance at our home on June 18. Some sixty attendees heard the "Padre of the Pits" put our 3/13 mostly Wurlitzer through its paces. He opened with his familiar theme, "The Best Things in Life Are Free." His lilting, nostalgic arrangement of the 1939 Johnny Burke "What's New?" featured the Vox and strings. Reaching far back in yesteryear, we heard a straight-laced version of "When You Wore A Tulip" become a lively Ragtime melody and eventuate in some real jazzy improvisation. To our late, departed member, Alice Lombard, for whom this was to be the last concert, Father Jim dedicated "When Your Hair Has Turned to Silver" and "Alice Blue Gown." This event was a successful fundraiser for the Champaign County Arts Council, and Father Jim endeared himself to many of our local residents, some of whom had never heard a theatre organ, let alone an artist of his magnitude.

On June 25 our chapter held its meeting at Worthington High School. We learned that we now have 89 paid memberships and that we had been the recipient of a donation from Worthington Food Industries toward the further restoration of our organ. We then welcomed back member Lois Hays who, incidentally, is a former cheerleader and a graduate of Worthington High School. Lois opened her program with the all-too-familiar "Romance" in tribute to the late Roger Garrett who used this tune as his theme song. Emulating the late Dick Leibert, Lois played the beautiful "Come Dance With Me" and "Autumn Leaves." Appropriately, she concluded by honoring the coming Independence Day with "America, The Beautiful."

Through the generosity of the Renaissance Theatre group in Mansfield, Ohio, we held our August 27 meeting in this beautifully restored performing arts center. To have the Warner/Carson 3/20

Wurlitzer at our disposal was a thrill, indeed. We were impressed again how right this instrument is for the size of the theatre; the resonance, the depth, the echo so essential in embellishing the rich tones developed by the organ are all there — in tribute to its initial voicing as well as its careful maintenance.

The usual business meeting was dispensed with, and Vice-President Jim Blegen, after thanking the host organization for graciously accommodating us, introduced the featured organist, President Henry Garcia. Henry began with a stirring rendition of "The Birth of The Blues." The memorable "You And The Night And The Music," with his generous use of 9th and 13th chords, produced a lilting and haunting refrain which was indelible. In fond remembrance of his late good friend, Roger Garrett, Henry dedicated "Romance," which had been Roger's theme song. Appropriately, Henry concluded his Sunday performance with "How Great Thou Art" and "In The Garden." His playing style certainly earned him plaudits from his appreciative audience. One could not help but admire his precise timing and careful, deliberate registrations.

At open console, a whole array of talent stepped forward to make this a truly great afternoon and a great opportunity. We won't forget the generosity of the Renaissance group. *John Polsley*



Central Ohio's Margo Burkhart brings the Renaissance Theatre's mighty Wurlitzer to life. *John Adams photo*



At right: Central Ohio members enjoy Renaissance Theatre volunteers' hospitality. *John Adams photo*



CHICAGO AREA

312/951-1098 or 312/282-0037

Theatre pipe organ functions and baseball games are not the best of mixtures! Especially when they occur on the same day and a few blocks from each other. It so happens that the Music Box Theatre and Wrigley Field, home of the Cubs, are nearly neighbors which causes grave parking problems. Wrigley Field was a sellout on August 13, the day of CATOE's Music Box Theatre social. Yes, there were some empty theatre seats. Regardless, Perry Petta presented a great program on the theatre's Allen organ which was greatly appreciated. Perry has a lot of organ-playing experience in this area and in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, sector, his home base. We are sorry for the competition, but appreciate Perry's presentation and look forward to more.

SOLD OUT are welcome words when presenting a program of almost any sort. It usually means that general appeal is one of the requisites. Also, that other items in the program are appealing. What was originally an appeal to augment the funds for rejuvenating the Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer organ has blossomed into popular appeal and includes the Geneva organ in the Baker Hotel in St. Charles. This hotel has a beautiful setting on the Fox River and has been used several times in the past for our gatherings.

To Mildred and Leon Berry goes the credit for a successful fund-raising program this past fall. It is titled "Baker Bash" (this year is #2), and sold out a month before its scheduled date! It consists of a banquet and raffle, plus an organ program by Leon Berry and also a cash bar, all resulting in a delightful afternoon of entertainment for a good purpose.

The Gateway Theatre home of Copernicus Center, the Polish Center for Performing Arts, and general use for many occasions, is managed by our Vice-



Perry Petta at Music Box Theatre Allen 6500.

President, Dennis Wolkowicz. Dennis launched a successful summer season with local talent presenting organ intermission music. He is to be congratulated for his innovative ideas and we anticipate continued events to come our way in the future.

And now we are approaching the final decade of this century with hope for peace throughout the world. Help if and when you can.

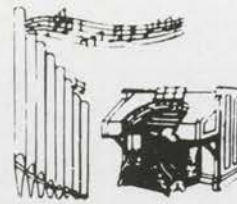
Joyous Holidays to all from all of us.

Almer Brostrom

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95841**



CONNECTICUT VALLEY

203/357-4581 or 203/261-5269

On September 8, Governor William O'Neill led the participation of a capacity audience in the opening night ceremony of the sixtieth anniversary of Hartford's Bushnell Memorial Hall and the rededication of the recently restored Austin 4/75 pipe organ. Thomas Murray presented a program of Dvorak, Schumann and Mendelssohn, among others, and although before the restoration the instrument had been allowed to deteriorate through years of neglect and abuse, it could never have sounded better. The instrument is in the tradition of symphonic organs but also includes effects built into theatre organs such as drums and cymbals.

The restoration was undertaken by the Austin Organ Company, the original builder, and because of the size of the project several former employees had to be lured out of retirement to work on it. Members Allen Miller and Don Hyde were involved in the restoration. A large number of chapter members were in attendance for the rededication ceremonies.

A number of our members were permitted to witness a testing of the organ before the rededication. Bushnell organist Doug Tester played a popular tune, a light classic and a classical selection. Wade Bray demonstrated the full capabilities of the instrument with several popular melodies, and Brian Colton and Allen Miller each played a number of popular melodies associated with theatre organ. Don Hyde, as narrator, and David Senek accompanied a parody of "Peter and the Wolf" which left no doubt that this major instrument should be seen and heard by all organ enthusiasts who can find their way to Hartford's Bushnell Memorial Hall. Happy Birthday and welcome back Austin opus 1627.

Barry Goodkin

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Restoration of the Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Capitol Theatre's original 3/14 Moller continued unabated over the summer months. Chapter President and technical director Mark Cooley has spent time almost every day in the organ workshop above the theatre, and was joined nearly every Saturday by members Dean Faulk and Gil Singer.

Among the many improvements Mark has made to the design of the organ is the re-engineering of the Solo chamber's main chest. Each rank of pipes now has its own reservoir — rather than sharing reservoirs as before — so that the tremulant can be used with individual ranks or in any combination. Formerly, the tremulant could not be used selectively — it was either on or off for all of the ranks playing. Also, for each rank, the speed and depth of the tremulant are adjustable. Mark's innovations will add considerably to the versatility and sound quality of the Moller.

Plans for our growing chapter's 1989-90 social and restoration activities will be discussed at the September meeting. Our membership is looking forward to another busy, active year. *Bob Maney*

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August 27 was the date of our annual picnic. Held at the lakeside home of Fred and Veryl Hermes, this year's outing featured a pig roast. We were blessed with perfect weather as over 100 happy picnickers "pigged-out" on chicken, corn, salads and, of course, delicious, roasted pig. After the meal the crowd moved to the Hermes' "Basement Bijou" for a program by Clark Wilson. Clark showed off the lovely Solo voices of the 5/38 Wurlitzer while being accompanied by the unusual visual effects of a Brenograph; he also rattled the plaster with full organ. Open console followed for those not intimidated by the huge Wurlitzer. Our hearty thanks go to the Hermes for their hospitality, to Clark for the lovely program, and to Clark and Gary Hanson for preparing the organ so beautifully.

Carrie Nelson



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One of our most distinguished members, Earl L. Miller, age 43, died suddenly

on June 24. This Board member was not only a fine church organist and choir director, but an able composer, writer, lecturer, recitalist, and teacher who also recorded several LP's. Earl was currently Municipal Organist on the big Austin, City Hall, Portland, Maine and was installing a theatre pipe organ in the Andover Old Town Hall.

Under the direction of Dick Linder, Organ Crew Chairman; Tim Holloran, Organ Crew Chief; Gary Phillips, Technician, our stalwart crew of Dave Marden, Stu Hinchliffe, Murray Bubar, Vernon Miller and John Del Balso plus occasional help from Walt Wilson and Carl Getz have been laboring on our pride and joy Wurlitzer all summer.

The original relays and switchstacks have been disconnected, and our new Z-Tronics relay system is being installed. This also entails revamping our console stop rails to accommodate future additional ranks.

With Babson College using the Richard Knight Auditorium, work has to be scheduled for no interference, plus most of the crew are still fully employed. Several items are taken home to keep the project moving.

As the tedious undertaking cannot be completed in time for our first fall meeting on September 24, we are returning to our old "home," Stoneham Town Hall, with its splendid 2/14 Wurlitzer, after an absence of several years — a nice change of venue. *Stanley C. Garniss*

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A summer business meeting was held at the Pascack Theatre in Westwood, New Jersey, June 24. The main attraction for our members was a mini-concert by our favorite, Ashley Miller, well-known concert artist and member of the National Board of Directors. He lives nearby and is very generous with his talent and support of our chapter.

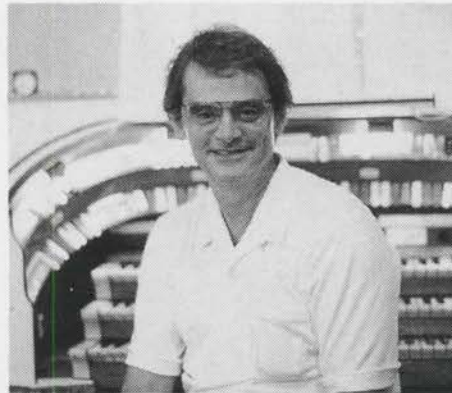
In June, Ashley also played the Kilgen theatre organ at the Convention Hall in Asbury Park for a two-day Gem show with 30 exhibitors, many of whom had never heard a theatre organ. They loved the sounds which are a specialty with Ashley.

In July 18 Garden State members attended the National Convention in Detroit. We enjoyed the variety of concerts, new talented organists performing, and we especially appreciated the fine organs. The *piece de resistance* was the Detroit Fox Theatre — opulent, resplendent in color and size. My reaction: "Wow!" We look forward to the thrilling sound of the great Fox Wurlitzer after the dedicated crew puts the finishing touches to it. Compliments go to Motor City who sponsored the convention which was interesting and fun-filled.

Labor Day heralds the end of summer, especially at the Jersey Shore. Almost everyone wants to enjoy for the last time the ocean and great sandy beaches. The people who traveled to Asbury Park were treated to a special new attraction. On September 3 a free "pops" theatre organ concert was given in the huge convention hall, situated at the north end of the famous Asbury Park Boardwalk. The theatre organ is a 3/8 1/2 Kilgen with pipe chambers either side of the huge stage. The artist was Leroy Lewis who is a well-known performer in the New Jersey shore area. He was responsible for the



Ashley Miller at Pascack Wurlitzer. Jinny Vanore photo



Leroy Lewis at Kilgen organ, Ashbury Park. Bob Raymond photo.

Wurlitzer installed behind glass in the Surf City Hotel. Leroy also installed a similar organ in the Hilton Hotel, El Panama, where he played about five years. This was Leroy's final "Farewell to New Jersey" concert sponsored by Garden State. He leaves very soon for Florida.

The day was beautiful, and as the many visitors strolled the boardwalk, they were enticed into the hall by the music. About 500 pamphlets describing the artist, organ, Garden State and the coming Rosa Rio concert at Trenton were handed out.

The atmosphere was informal, Leroy varied his program playing music from countries around the world, show tunes and other popular music. Quite a few inquiries were made about our chapter and the afternoon was very successful. The Chamber of Commerce has requested more concerts. Jinny Vanore

GULF COAST

Pensacola, Florida

904/932-3133 or 904/433-4683

"The song is ended but the melody lingers on." This is the way our chapter feels after closing our first concert season on our 4/23 Robert-Morton in the restored Saenger Theatre in downtown Pensacola.

Donna Parker was our last guest in our first series. She was a delight to work with and listen to. Either our organ is, (1) as great as we think it is, or (2) our technicians, Jim "Sleazy" Scoggins and Curt Goldhill are supermen (true), or (3) our artists are exceptional (true again) and go that extra mile for us, or (4) all of the above. Whatever it is, we like it. Donna's program was varied, enjoyable and her accompaniment of a funny, short, silent comedy was an audience pleaser.

Our general step-and-fetch member, B.C. Melvin has been busy in the blower room making a door for the relay. Both he and our President-of-many-hats, Scott Brodie, have seen to the repair of the organ lift. Now if we can just get through another hurricane season without a hurricane!

We held election of officers at the historic district home of B.D. Rhea, M.D., who built our magnificent console and did so much work on restoring abused pipes, re-leathering and outfitting the second chamber, etc. (continued...)



Officers of Gulf Coast Chapter: B.D. Rhea, MD, Ed Burton, Curt Goldhill, Dorothy Standley, B.C. Melvin, Scott Brodie (with Mrs. Rhea) at the Rhea home.

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GULF COAST cont.

Carol Pollock, Manager of the Saenger Theatre, was our guest at our last meeting and she decided to join our chapter officially. She provided excellent insight into staging and presentations of our efforts at re-introducing theatre organ music to the general public. After all, let's face it, several generations have passed through those hallowed doors at the Saenger since the old organ played. We have to play catch up.

We voted on our artists for the coming 1989-90 season. We decided it was time to open membership to several who have requested this privilege. Letters of application will go out to these prospective members. This will bring us into the parameters of National guidelines.

Ms. Pollock assured the Chapter that the theatre will cooperate and allow us to enjoy open console for our members when the occasion arises.

Also on our agenda was a discussion concerning our local Arts Council grant. We filled out multi-papers, presented our format to them, then met with the governing body. The result was not favorable at this time, but we were told we could re-apply at a later date if we still showed good intent. We do. *Dorothy Standley*



Donna Parker at the 4/23 Robert-Morton, Saenger Theatre, Pensacola.



Jesse Crawford's first organ position was at 2/8 Kimball in Billings, Montana. Steve Plaggemeyer located the organ in the First Church of Christ Scientist. It now boasts a Moller console.



Mullins at Midnight. Ed Mullins tries out the 3/10 Robert-Morton theatre organ at the Wilma Theatre in Missoula, Montana, after the house closed.

Steve Plaggemeyer photo



**Montana-Northern Wyoming
406/248-3171 or 406/259-5555**

MONTANA MAGAZINE, July/August 1989, featured member Ken Kajkowski of Deerlodge, Montana, where Ken and his wife, Juanita, operate Kajkowski Family Organs. An ex-New Yorker, Ken relocated to Montana in 1978. He recently built a tracker pipe organ which is for sale. Ken also restores player pianos and operates a full piano shop in his home.

In August, President Steve Plaggemeyer and Secretary Ed Mullins took a trip to Bozeman where they played the 2/7 Wurlitzer in the Ellen Theatre, the only original theatre organ installation in Montana. They also went to Missoula where they tried out the 3/10 Robert-Morton in the Wilma Theatre.

The first pipe organ in Montana was the \$4000, two-manual, 7- or 8-rank Kimball with tubular pneumatic action which was installed in the Gem Theatre in 1913. The Gem opened February 22, 1913, with Professor Roscoe Kernern at the console. The following day, the permanent house organist started, 18-year-old Professor Charles Crawford, who later changed his name to Jesse.

The theatre, then known as the Empire, burned to the ground March 10, 1950. Fortunately, the pipe organ had been removed. Recently Steve Plaggemeyer found the organ in the First Church of Christ Scientist in Billings. The late Miss Myrna McNeill was a prominent theatre organist who played in many Billings theatres. She was also a devout Christian Scientist who, no doubt, was instrumental in the church's acquisition of the organ in 1948. The pipework has been changed to electro-pneumatic action, with the old Kimball pneumatic tubes left on the chests. The instrument now has a two-manual Moller rolltop console; the nameplate reads "Console by M.P. Moller, Hagerstown, Maryland 1948." Ranks are Bourdon, Clarabella, Dulciana, Flute d'Amour, Gamba, Stopped Diapason and Trumpet (which was substituted for the Vox Humana). *Ed Mullins*



Steve Plaggemeyer at console of the 2/7 Wurlitzer, Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, Montana. Ed Mullins photo

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On June 28, President Lee Maloney traveled to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to play a social for the ATOS chapter there at the Paramount Theatre. The Paramount is blessed with a 3/12 Wurlitzer that Lee turned on like a fresh Christmas tree. But when he traipsed over to the old Iowa Theatre, now a civic center, and sat down at the famed Rhinestone 3/17 Barton, Lee was in organist's heaven. This is one Barton that roars and brought repeated demands for MORE from the Cedar Rapids and Quad Cities chapters.

Fresh from the ATOS convention in Detroit, ATOS President John Ledwon played a combined JATOE/CATOE social at the Rialto Theatre in Joliet. Ledwon proved to be concert quality in both selection of material and style. His opening medley from *Phantom of The Opera* was a hit with the more than 400 in attendance. Following John and without any familiarization time, Russell Holmes, winner of his division in the Young Organist Competition, presented a fine cameo that displayed his talents and his English heritage. Edith Rawle, legendary for her promotion of young talent in England, accompanied Russell to Joliet.

JATOE President Lee Maloney and CATOE President Bill Rieger shared emcee responsibilities. Bill introduced CATOE's entrant, John DiVona, who was received warmly by the audience. The cooperation between the two clubs was

evidenced by the sumptuous spread on the Rialto stage that defied consumption. Presided over by hostess Lile Zuber, both food and graciousness were dispensed in equally charming amounts.

Hall Pritchard



LAND O'LAKES

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As far as the organizers (Curt Oliver, Gail Hanson, Mike Erie and Verna Mae Wilson) were concerned, our SUMMIT AVENUE ORGAN CRAWL on August 26 was a huge success! Seventy-one members and guests turned out for this one-of-a-kind chapter event on a what started out to be a muggy day but cleared by the time we met at 3:00 in the parking lot of the beautiful Cathedral of Saint Paul. The cornerstone for this building was laid in 1907, with the first mass on Palm Sunday in 1915. It overlooks the whole downtown of St. Paul from its lofty location on Summit and Selby Avenues.

After a slight delay for a wedding, we were invited by Roger F. Burg to enter by a back way, where he played the Ernest M. Skinner Sanctuary Organ, an Electropneumatic, built in 1927. He also used an Aeolian-Skinner Gallery Organ, another Electropneumatic, built in 1963.



Mary Downey at the Maryhill Retreat at the Aeolian, while Ken and Eugenie Hreha, and Curt Oliver look on.

Both organs are hooked together and played by remote control from the Sanctuary. There was a limited time for Roger to demonstrate his skill at the Skinner, but at least we had a taste of the magnificent full sounds from these two organs.

We were fortunate, indeed, to have such a prestigious organist play for us at the Cathedral. Roger began his musical career in high school and continued his music studies at St. Thomas College in St. Paul. His teacher was theatre organist Richard Kenney, who studied with Eddie Dunstedter. From 1964 until 1975, Roger was organist at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. In 1975 he began playing at the Cathedral of Saint Paul and is there still. Besides his musical prowess, Roger has been in charge of the Hennepin County Libraries for the last 20 years!

(continued...)

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L to R: Mike Kline, Verna Mae Wilson, Mary Downey, Curt Oliver and Gail Hanson in Oliver's home, organ in background.

A very congenial person, he was delighted to play for us. Instead of accepting an honorarium, he elected to become a member of ATOS.

After our visit to the Cathedral we crossed Summit Avenue to begin our tour of the James J. Hill Residence. Completed in 1891 at a cost of \$200,000, designed by the Boston firm of Peabody and Stearns, who found the form to fit the rugged personality of its client, the mansion became the pride of St. Paul.

When the Canadian-born James J. Hill began his career in transportation in 1856 as a 17-year old clerk on the St. Paul levee, oxcart trails were the principal roads to the sparsely populated west. His railroad was named the *Great Northern* in 1890 — and had the flattest grades, the straightest track, and the lowest rates. His locomotives were the most powerful and his trains the longest. After Hill's death in 1916, his wife Mary maintained the mansion until her own death five years later. In 1925 the Hill daughters bought the house from the estate and presented it to the Archdiocese of St. Paul, which occupied the property until the Minnesota Historical Society acquired it in 1978. The residence has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark since 1961.

The two-story art gallery of the Hill House features a double sky-light, and the handsome oak pipe organ built by



Art gallery of the James J. Hill House; George S. Hutchings pipe organ, built in 1891.

George S. Hutchings in 1891, (1,006 pipes, mechanical action) was beautiful to behold. Member Curt Oliver, described the organ briefly and then played it for us. How lucky we are to have such a talented member in our chapter!

Curt then introduced another guest artist — none other than Mary E. Downey, St. Paul's *Poel Laureate of the Keyboard* and one of St. Paul's most distinguished musicians. Her career as composer, organist, recitalist, accompanist and teacher spans more than 80 years. Undaunted by the fact that men dominated the field of music, Mary published her first composition when she was just nine years old. Later, using the name of M.E. Downey to mask her femininity, Mary wrote and published a variety of major works, many of them winning international acclaim. For her eloquent *Requiem Mass*, Mary received the National Award for Outstanding Achievement, presented to her at the White House by Bess Truman. While barely in her teens, Mary began her career as organist at the old Garrick Theatre in St. Paul, playing for silent movies. When still in her teens, Mary was urged to study in

New York under the tutelage of Pietro Yon. During this time she taught at the exclusive Bovee School in New York, where Efreim Zimbalist, Jr. was among her students. While traveling throughout the U.S. conducting master classes and performing in recitals and concerts, these engagements often brought Mary back to the Twin Cities. In the 1950s she returned to make St. Paul her home. Her daily programs of organ music, broadcast on WTCN Radio, sponsored by the Minnesota Federal Savings & Loan, are still remembered. Mary has been organist or guest organist in several area churches as well as accompanist for the South St. Paul Men's Chorus, 3M Choruses, and the St. Paul Christmas Choral Pageant, the latter held annually in the old St. Paul Auditorium where she played the huge Skinner pipe organ.

Following Curt's introduction, Mary "took over" and had our instant attention. Even in her nineties, it was like she didn't want to stop, so forceful and tuneful was she! After Mary's stint at the Hill organ our group was divided into smaller groups and brief tours through parts of

(continued ...)

November 18	Symphony Hall, San Diego, California	<h1 style="text-align: center;">DENNIS JAMES</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">Theatre Organ Concerts, Classical Recitals, Silent Film Accompaniment</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DENNIS JAMES PRODUCTIONS P.O. Box 15487 Columbus, Ohio 43215 614/463-9536</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOW BOOKING 1990-91 PERFORMANCES</p>	
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December 2	Gray's Armory, Cleveland, Ohio		
December 5	Al Ringling Theatre, Baraboo, Wisconsin		
December 7	Oscar Meyer Theatre, Madison Wisconsin		
December 27	Ann Arbor Chamber Orchestra, Ann Arbor, Michigan		
December 30	Austin Symphony, Austin, Texas		
December 31	Austin Symphony, Austin, Texas		
January 11, 1990	Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio		
January 14	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan		
January 26	Castro Theatre, San Francisco, California		
February 15	Paramount Theatre, Denver, Colorado		
February 17	Symphony Hall, San Diego, California		
February 25	Short North, Columbus, Ohio		
March 4	Shea's Theatre, Buffalo, New York		
March 11	1st United Methodist Church, San Diego, California		
April 7	Symphony Hall, San Diego, California		
April 18	Strong Museum, Rochester, New York		
April 23 thru August	France/Germany/Switzerland/Austria/England Concert Tour		
July 29	Konzerthaus, Vienna, Austria		

LAKE O'LAKES continued

this elegant home were conducted by learned, pleasant guides.

All too soon we walked next door to the MARYHILL RENEWAL CENTER, formerly Louis J. Hill's home, and now conducted by the Daughters of Mary, a worldwide religious congregation founded in France in 1790 during the French Revolution.

Sister Isabelle Wright greeted us with a warm welcome. This lovely home, which houses a three-manual Aeolian Organ #1294, built in 1912, was unlike any organ we are accustomed to. The organ is situated in the main retreat which had a beautiful lattice-like ceiling. Curt briefly described the intricate manuals and stops, and started the open console period, including Mary Downey, who played this organ steadily for two days on the occasion of Louis Hill's death in 1948. The ladies in charge at the retreat never heard such interesting and different music as on that day. Karl Eilers played a march or two — we even heard "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

After open console, we departed for Curt Oliver and Gail Hanson's home at 611 Summit Avenue, another mansion where we enjoyed refreshments and a big birthday cake for Mary who would celebrate her 94th birthday the next day. Needless to say, she was completely surprised and thrilled. Curt and Gail presented her with a bouquet of roses. Again, there was open console at Curt's 2-manual Estey Minuette pipe organ, shaped like a grand piano in creamy white. His home is filled with musical instruments — an upright piano on the first floor and a Hammond on the second floor. Song sheets were passed out and there was a Sing-along, Mary smiling and obviously enjoying every minute.

We were pleased to see members from out of town — Willmar, Stacy, White Bear Lake, Robbinsdale, Hastings, Red Wing, Minneapolis and Stillwater, Minnesota; and Siren, Prescott, and Hudson, Wisconsin.

Verna Mae Wilson



Stan Kann, organist and hilarious entertainer; regales audience with his exploration of what you get when you order from catalogs.

Zimfoto



Los Angeles directors on stage of Sexson Auditorium: (L to R) Donn Linton, Ralph Beaudry, Irv Eilers, Maria Olivier, Vern Rodgers, Frank Rounds, Robert Kambeitz, Wayne Flottman, Frank Way. *Zimfoto*



Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society

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Our new "baby" is about to emerge in Sexson Auditorium at Pasadena City College. Of course, we are talking about the 3/24 pipe organ now known as the J. Ross Reed Wurlitzer. The scissors lift has been delivered, the swell shades are installed and the console has been rebuilt. The chests are all re-leathered and each pipe has been cleaned by eager and dedicated volunteers. By the time you are reading these chapter notes, the organ will be complete and the gala dedication and premiere concert with Lyn Larsen will be history. Many thanks to Dick Obert, Paul Gaddis, Ralph Beaudry, Sam Dickerson and Stephen Ross for their devotion to this endeavor and the donation of many hours of hard and tedious work to help Ken Crome keep the project on schedule.

The August 27 general meeting was held in Sexson Auditorium. Members were shown a video of restoration and installation work done in the shop and the auditorium up to that date and were able to see the expanded organ chamber openings and the new screens that will allow the instrument to be heard. Unfortunately, the only "working" pipe in the auditorium at that early date was one wielded by LATOS President Donn Linton to open the meeting. ATOS President John Ledwon was present and it was announced that he has been appointed to the staff at Pasadena City College to teach a theatre organ class this fall.

Wayne Flottman



Ralph Beaudry narrates the video story of the work being done on installation of the Ross Reed Wurlitzer organ as Frank Way stands by.



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The few of us who attended the convention really enjoyed being with you all again. The restoration of the Fox Theatre is something to behold, and should give incentive to all chapters to forge ahead. Motor City is to be congratulated.

We have been kept busy with a delightful concert by Nigel Ogden on the Torch Christie. It was an afternoon spent on a musical trip which kept the appreciative patrons shouting for more.

Our YTOE gave us a program on our Friday Club Night showing off their various styles. It is good to see we have a number of young artists to keep the theatre organ alive in years to come.

Sunday brought our weekend activities to a close with Simon Gledhill giving a concert at the former Granada Harrow eight-rank Wurlitzer. We had taken a chance on a summer concert, and we were not disappointed. Simon played all the old theatre organ music, and one would think it was 20 ranks, not just eight.

We are pleased to announce, on behalf of the younger generation, that they raised 400 Pounds with their efforts on a weekend of activities. This goes toward our competition expenses which seem to increase with every year. We have



London Chapter "High Jinks:" (L to R) Peter, Martin, Emma, Dena, Russell, Geoffrey, Georgina, Anika.

seven finalists this year. It is so exciting for these young people and the interest in the national competition is greater this year than ever.

Our concert at the Top Rank Club at Kilburn was most interesting. Rob Pooley and John Barlow gave us some nice sounds, and it is good to know that both are still interested in the theatre organ since winning the ATOS and other competitions in the electronic field.

We have had the pleasure of a visit to the chapter of Searle Wright on his yearly visit to England. A quick telephone call

to members got about three dozen to come along to Wurlitzer Lodge for a get-together and a great evening of theatre organ music and fellowship. As always, another overseas visitor, Eric Gilham from Australia, telephoned and joined in with our members. We hope any others in the London area will give us a ring as there is always a member to take you to theatres and show you around.

May the London chapter extend hearty greetings during the Holiday Season to all ATOS members. Keep the wind in those pipes going!
Edith Rawle

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Organist

"The melody, forceful and dramatic at first, became a haunting echo, and then a lighter, almost lilting refrain. Finally, with another resounding crash, the hall went dark and the movie screen hanging above the stage flickered to life..."
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With heartfelt sadness we report the passing of one of our charter members, Don Baker. Don did so much to help us get started and played several concerts for us. The last, just prior to his death, was to help us with our project of installing a theatre pipe organ at Lake Brantley High School. We are very grateful indeed to report that this project will henceforth be known as the Don Baker Memorial Organ. Don truly was one of theatre organ's all time greats; coupled with his warm personality, he was the consummate professional. Don was always willing to help a chapter and promoted theatre organ for over sixty years. We are asking every member of ATOS to help with this project. What better way to honor a great theatre organist than with a great theatre organ? Donations can be sent to MFTOS, 1216 Chelsea Place, Orlando, FL 32803. If anyone would like more information concerning this please call me at 406/870-7861.

On a much happier note I am glad to report that I have spoken directly with Rob Calcaterra on the phone, and that he is out of the hospital and recovering completely. He will be resuming his concerts this fall. Our newest member, John Smart of Lake Helen, has a 3/15 Wurlitzer. It is currently being restored and installed in his home by Matthews and Shaffer Pipe Organs of Kissimmee, Florida. The chapter was having difficulty providing instruments for our monthly meetings, which we solved with the purchase of a Baldwin Cinema II. This will provide us with something until we have a pipe installation. Our good friends at CFTOS in Tampa are progressing quite nicely with their 3/12 Wurlitzer in the Tampa Theatre. Together with them we are continuing to promote ATOS and theatre organs in the Central Florida area. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at St. Marks Lutheran Church in Winter Park.

Cliff Shaffer

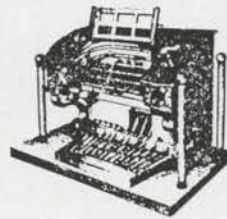
**See You In
Indianapolis?**

AUGUST 4 - 8



A pretty grill is like a melody. Bob Duerr performs his rendition of "Light My Fire" in hopes of making the Hit Parade with chapter members at Motor City's annual picnic as Tom FitzGerald, son Allen and Cornell Candea look on.

Ray VanSteenkiste photo



MOTOR CITY
Detroit
313/537-1133

Many members attended the annual picnic held this year at Murray Lake, a private preserve near Ann Arbor, on July 23. Chaired by Irene FitzGerald, a large grill was provided as was a large tent should the weather turn inclement. The day turned out to be warm and sunny and members enjoyed socializing and the usual variety of picnic activities.

Our sixteenth annual private charter moonlight cruise on the 87-year-old excursion steamer *Columbia*, America's oldest passenger steamer, attracted over a thousand people for a three-hour cruise on the Detroit River the evening of August 3. Dance organists Bill Holleman, Fred Bayne and Don Haller provided dance music at a Conn on the second deck, while vocalist Fran Carmody, accompanied by Sharron Patterson at a Yamaha (courtesy of Virg Howard and Hammell Music), entertained on the third deck and led a sing-along. Additional dance music was provided by a harmonica band and the barbershop quartet Four-of-a-Kind serenaded passengers on all four decks of the 216-foot steamer. This year's cruise was again chaired by Don Lockwood.

John Lauter was featured at the 3/16 Barton at the Royal Oak Music Theatre for our Fourth Sunday program the morning of August 27. John began organ lessons when first joining the chapter and is now staff organist at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor.

Steve Schlesing will play for our Christmas Show at the Redford Theatre on December 9.

Don Lockwood

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Don Lewis played Yamaha Electone and Baldwin concert grand for North Texas.



North Texas heard Don Lewis at Dallas family Music Center in August.

Irving Light photo



NORTH TEXAS

Dallas-Fort Worth

214/256-2743 or 214/233-7108

While restoration work continues on our Robert-Morton in the Lakewood theatre, our chapter continues to hold our meetings in members' homes and organ marts. This necessity has afforded us the opportunity to enjoy some of these locations for the first time. Such is the case for our August meeting which was held in the Dallas Family Music Center as guests of Don Lewis, who entertained us on the Yamaha organ and the Baldwin concert grand piano.

Don is an exceptionally talented musician who gained his early musical training on the piano and has transferred his keyboard capabilities to the organ in recent years. He is not wedded to a single style or type of music and plays selec-

tions that include Big Band and other oldies as well as more recent numbers and sacred music. Don's approach to the Yamaha and its extensive imitative tonal resource is very individual. Don browses the many sounds, each reminding him of a particular song or orchestral arrangement. He then works out his own arrangement, using these sounds, reminiscent of what he hears in his mind. This "ear" for music is particularly useful to Don, I am sure, in his employment — demonstrating keyboard instruments for sale.

More importantly for us listeners, it also equips him to play a wide variety of exciting music, all beautifully orchestrated. His rousing rendition of Dolly Parton's "Nine to Five" resulted, he says, from hearing the "funky" guitar sounds of the Yamaha. Using this sound as his pedal base he built a country/western arrangement that had his audience tapping toes. In contrast, his arrangement of "America, The Beautiful" was richly symphonic, incorporating choral voices, harp, orchestral ensemble, with

tuned tympani in the pedals. A thrilling offering. From his opening medley using rich theatre organ ensemble to his closing sacred selection, a piano/organ duet (the organ part, digitally pre-recorded), Don's program was a real delight and left us wanting to hear more. I hope we have an opportunity to do so soon. Thank you, Don.

At the August meeting, President John Friedel told of the progress being made on the Robert-Morton restoration in the hands of Houston organbuilder, Keith Henderson. By leaving the tuned percussion actions until last, it is still hoped that we can have the rest of the organ playing in September. While the organ has been out of action, several chapter members have redecorated the console and bench in off-white with gold leaf trim. John thanked Irv Light, Gene Randolph, Rod Keener and Gordon Wright for their combined work on the console redecoration. It is expected that this will relieve the darkness of the stage environment and add to the theatrical excitement of our organ presentations.

Irving Light



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What makes a chapter picnic special besides ants and yellowjackets? For us it was getting to see and hear the newest pipe organ installation in our area, the one in the home of Don and Alva James. Their new "baby" started life as a 2/4 Wicks in the Granada Theatre in La Grande, Oregon, and is now in its sixth Oregon home where it has grown to seven ranks with four tuned percussions and a full toy counter (an eighth rank is on the way). We last heard this organ on March 12, 1988, when it was in the home of Nicki and Jerry Gaylord, and we were eager to get acquainted with it again at open console — which we did! It has just the right sound for the James's house, and we are all anticipating future meetings there so we can follow the growth and development of this charming "child."

Another summer delight was the return of the Gerry Gregorius-Kurt von Schakel duo for a concert at Uncle Milt's Pipe Organ Pizza in Vancouver. Gerry and Kurt have made two National Convention appearances and have performed in Chicago and California this past year. They manage to keep a fresh approach to their programs and what they did with Milt's 3/18 Wurlitzer and a Steinway grand piano left their audience clamoring for more — we'll not soon forget "Baby Shoes!"

Members Loren (Captain Kimball) and Karen Minear are busily preparing the chambers in Cleveland High School for the installation of the Kimball pipe organ from Benson. The Minears and their loyal crew of chapter volunteers spent most of August and early September carefully removing and storing the instrument. They are anticipating a spring 1990 completion, and we can hardly wait to hear the new sounds from an old friend.



Oregonians picnic on the James' porch so they can hear the organ.

Claude Neuffer photo



Picnic on the porch.



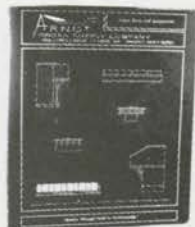
Kurt von Schakel and Gerry Gregorius bring "A Touch of Class" to Uncle Milt's.

Irv Ewen photo



Maryjo Olsen, Bob Shafter and Terry Robson relax while Paul Quarino entertains on the James' 3/7 Wicks.

Claude Neuffer photos



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POTOMAC VALLEY

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On August 26, about 50 persons attended a chapter cameo concert held at Hope Lutheran Church in Annandale, Virginia, mostly on a 2/14 Lewis & Hitchcock pipe organ. (That organ was described in Potomac Valley Chapter Notes in the March/April 1989 issue). Chapter Vice-Chairman Floyd E. Werle, along with members Dick Baxter, Lee Prater, and Bob Stratton, provided the entertainment on the organ and on piano, sometimes duet, sometimes solo, to the delight of those present.

Chapter Chairman Fay Marvin then provided highlights of the Detroit ATOS 1989 Convention in the form of brief video tape excerpts of many convention events, for the benefit of those who did not attend the convention.

Following those activities, a sociable pot luck supper was enhanced by another video tape of Floyd Werle at the 2/8 Wurlitzer in the Weinberg Center for the Arts, Frederick, Maryland, on May 30, accompanying the Air Force Tactical Air Command Band. A great time was had by all.

Jack Little



Potomac Valley Chairman Fay Marvin introduced the artists. (Top to Bottom): Rev. Richard Baxter, George Johnson, Floyd Werle.

Dan Swope photos

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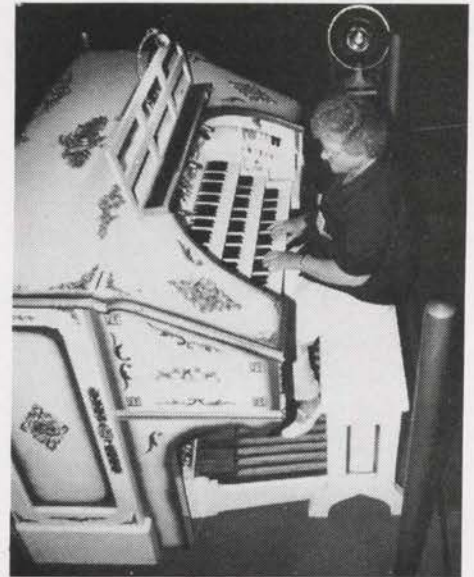
On July 16 we met at the Capitol Theatre in Davenport, Iowa. The featured guest artist was member Charlotte McCoy from Davenport. Charlotte, a native of Milton, Wisconsin, began piano lessons at the conservatory there at the age of eight. She continued her music education at Augustana College under the capable tutelage of Dean Swanson. In 1969 she started playing professionally. Currently, in addition to giving piano and organ lessons, she is the "Conference Organist" for the Royal Neighbors, a fraternal insurance company headquartered in Rock Island. Since 1975 she has played in many locales across the country. Charlotte presented an outstanding program which included "Begin the Beguine," "I Left My Heart in San Francisco," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." She concluded her program with an unusual arrangement of "St. Louis Blues," wherein she played part of the melody on the pedals!

After the program, light refreshments were enjoyed by members and guests, while others took advantage of the open console period.

On August 20, a very special chapter social was arranged by member Bill McFadden, who said in his advance publicity that there would be many surprises for everyone. Approximately 65 persons took to the highways to travel to the rural residence of Robert and Marcia Tuttle just east of Poplar Grove, Illinois. Their 120-acre centennial farm has been in the Tuttle family for three generations. The nine room residence, built in 1859, was remodeled in 1910. The house is furnished with the usual antiques and with many very uncommon antiques. Robert's interest in antiques began at the age of ten when he was given an Edison Gram-a-phone. Since then he has collected all kinds of mechanical and electronic musical equipment, which he has repaired and refurbished so that most are in working condition.

Surprise #1 — We had the opportunity to tour their home and to play some of the fine instruments which included a 2/4 Kilgen Organ; a 2/15, tracker, John Brown Organ; a player piano; a grand piano; and, of course, a modern three-manual Wurlitzer 950 electronic organ.

Surprise #2 — The group was directed to "Bijou" as the sign stated over the entrance to the barn. As we got near the barn, we could hear the beautiful sounds of a pipe organ filling the air. When we got in the barn, no one was seated at the organ. What was happening? Robert had



Charlotte McCoy at the Wicks organ in the Capitol Theatre.

pressed the remote control that he had in his pocket to start the player organ! Inside the barn we were thrilled to see a fully equipped mini-theatre with antique wooden seats to accommodate about sixty persons. What we heard was a 2/4, two-roll Page Player Organ and an attached "phantom" piano. The theatre included a small stage, silver screen, and floodlights. In a small room at the rear were two commercial-size movie projectors and controls for the theatre. The organ pipes and toys were located in a room to the right of the theatre and could be viewed by removing the pictures from the walls. The volume of the organ was controlled by horizontal shutters located above the piano.

Only two Page Player Organs were made, circa 1925. One was destroyed in a fire in 1937 in a theatre in Huntington, Indiana. Mr. Tuttle acquired this organ in 1972 from the Liberty Theatre in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Surprise #3 — After the tour the guests were free to roam the premises and to play any of the instruments that they desired, or to just sit in the shade and talk to friends. The afternoon passed enjoyably, but we were getting hungry. A car sped into the driveway, horns blaring. It's the food! Within minutes all of the guests were seated and enjoying this wonderful buffet. Buffet? This was a banquet: chicken, ham, casseroles, salads, beverages, and cake.

Surprise #4 — Bill McFadden had arranged for a special guest artist — and we were all anxious to know who it was. Aren't you? It was none other than . . . Father James Miller and Father Andrew Rogers from Fenton, Michigan. After dinner Father Jim entertained us at the "Bijou" for about an hour. His playing of a small organ, such as this, and making

(continued...)



Arthur Felts at the Kilgen organ in the Tuttle residence.

it sound like a large organ could only be surpassed by playing a large organ. He played some of the more popular theatre organ selections, a classic or two, and some requests, all of which was a perfect ending to a perfect day. Father Andrew and others entertained the guests during the afternoon open console period on the Page organ.

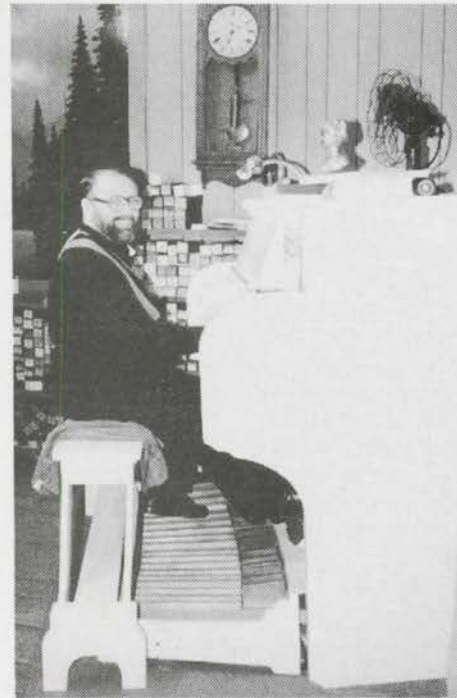
To close the program, Bill McFadden arranged to have the group sing "Thanks" (from the movie *Too Much Harmony*) to the Tuttle in appreciation of their hospitality. The organ accompaniment was played by Lee Maloney.

So if all of this sounds like a good time, maybe your chapter should contact the Tuttle for a visit to their fabulous farm.

Richard P. Withenbury



Above: Martin Leon at the "phantom" piano in the barn at the Robert Tuttle farm.



At left: Surprise guest artist Father James Miller at the Page organ in the barn at the Robert Tuttle farm.



RED RIVER
 Fargo, North Dakota

318/287-2671 or 701/232-6325

The middle of August, Greg Merrill, a new member of Land O'Lakes Chapter, came to play movie prologues and intermissions at the Fargo Theatre. It's always interesting to hear a new talent and important to provide the opportunity. Especially enjoyable were "Laura" and "Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams."

Red River Chapter took part once again in the annual Arts Fair held at the West Acres Regional Shopping Center the second weekend in September. Our booth was back-to-back with AGO. The fair gives various arts organizations a lot of exposure, providing brochures and opportunities to have people sign up for mailing lists, etc.

The Fargo-Moorhead Civic Opera is using the theatre once again for a chorus production of Christmas music, and also presenting *Pirates of Penzance* next May. About 90% of all special rentals request that the Wurlitzer be a part of the events.

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**RIVER CITY
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Our August 19 meeting was hosted by member Lois Thomsen in the Circus Room of the Holiday Lodge in Fremont, Nebraska, where she presides at the console of her Hammond Regent on Friday and Saturday nights. Lois entertained us with her delightful theatre stylings as we enjoyed our buffet dinner. After a brief business meeting chaired by Dick Zdan, our program continued with Jeanne Cooper accompanying our sing-along slide show, which included both old favorites and funny parodies. To round out the planned entertainment, Dick Zdan skillfully cued a well-known Laurel and Hardy comedy, *Our Navy*. Many thanks to Lois Thomsen for her fine hospitality and also to Bob Markworth, our expert projectionist. Fifty-two members and guests were in attendance, in spite of competition from John C. Fremont Days, a local celebration.

Two of our Fremont members, Lois Thomsen and Bob Tookey, were featured in an interview column in the *Fremont Tribune* affording excellent publicity for River City Chapter and for the theatre organ, in particular. Bob Tookey is a professional entertainer and teaches organ and piano locally. It was interesting to note that Bob's mother was an organist at the old Empress Theatre in Fremont.

With a lot of help from his friends, Bob Markworth has been engaged in a major rebuild job on his 3/14 Kimball theatre pipe organ, which includes the addition of an eight-foot Vox Humana, bringing the instrument up to 15 ranks. Members assisting Bob have been: Paul Kanka, who releathered all chests; Joe Hogya, who built new Kimball double-valve winker regulators and pull-out drawers for both sides of the console, which will house controls for percussions and special function stop tabs; Stan Gross, who has been rebuilding regulators, and Wendall Hall who has been rewiring stop key relays. In addition, new stop tabs have been engraved, new PVC wind lines added, and an additional 2 hp, 300 cfm blower at 30 inches of pressure and an additional phase converter have been added. We are all anxious to hear this fine instrument re-premiered.

Tom Jeffery

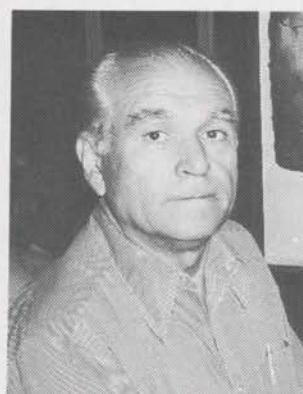


River City "regulars" enjoying an evening of good music and fellowship.

Tom Jeffery photo



Our lovely hostess, Lois Thomsen entertained us during the dinner hour.



Chapter President Dick Zdan did a splendid job of cueing Laurel and Hardy's *Our Navy*.



Our own Jeanne Cooper did the honors for a sing-along with slides.

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Two exciting events happened here in the month of August. First, we moved our two-manual Wurlitzer console from Joe Barnes' shop to the fabulous Fox Theatre. Joe and his helpers had installed a Peterson relay and it was ready for completion of the wiring. Our console will sit on the first level mezzanine as soon as we are sure that all is working well. Member Rick Schroeder tells quite a history about how we obtained this console from the Majestic Theatre across the Mississippi River in East St. Louis, Illinois, quite a number of years ago. He helped move the console down a filthy, littered stairway through more dirt and litter out to the waiting truck on a bitter, cold day. Many of our members, he recalls, thought we were wasting our time and money, but as all things turn out well in the end, the entire organ in the Fox Theatre did play well until it needed a new relay. Our President at that time, John Ferguson, said, "We will all be proud when this organ speaks again." Now, after nearly 19 years, it is about to do just that in its new incarnation as the Fox Lobby Organ. The console never looked better, and at least the Fox Theatre will be warm!

The second event was our annual Covered Dish Bar-B-Que at the home of Col. Jack Moelmann. His new three-manual Rodgers theatre organ with Kurzweil was unveiled and played for all of us to hear for the first time. The installer, Mark Gifford, also did his bit by letting us know just what a super organ can produce tone-wise. He and Jack took turns at the console and the piano. While dinner was being cleared away, there was open console and those who played it said it compared to the fabulous Fox Theatre 4/36 Wurlitzer — I say it has more voices and more combinations than that one. Jack showed a silent comedy made about 1925 and everyone laughed their heads off, especially the children. Last, but not least, Jack and others showed us pictures taken at the conven-

tion in Detroit and gave us a run-down on the various fine organs they either heard or played around the Detroit area. The Fox Theatre there is a sister to our Fox Theatre, and I am sure much more money was spent on our Fox and its organ back in the 1970s. It is currently being kept up in great style by Marlin Mackley who prepares it for every event.

Dale L. Boring

SOONER STATE

Tulsa
918/742-8693 or 918/437-2146

We held our July meeting once again at Tulsa's Central Assembly of God Church. Phil Judkins presented the mini-concert on the 4/14 Robert-Morton, a trip down memory lane for him. He opened with "This Could Be The Start of Something Big," then Milton Schlosser's version of "Chattanooga Choo Choo." He included Ashley Miller's version of "Non Diminica" and the theme from *Charades* (a memory of Jesse Crawford and the Chicago Theatre), and closed with "Jealousie."

Before the music began we heard reports of Phil's trip to Europe which he and his wife, Laura, had recently taken, and which included sights of several cathedral organs. We also heard from John Roberts about the Organ Safari to Great Britain in which he and his wife, Charlene, had participated. And Dorothy Smith reported on the Colorado State Organ Workshop which she and Betty Weddle had attended.

Our August meeting was also held at Central Assembly. Lorene Thomas was the mini-concertist and presented an enjoyable program that opened with "Lulu's Back in Town." She also played an abridged version of "Rhapsody In Blue," and closed with "Stompin' At The Savoy." At open console she played "My Tribute for an encore. Five others played at open console, as well.

We are on the final stages of the installation of our Robert-Morton at Vo-Tech! The crew, consisting of Harry Rasmussen, Dan Kimes, Sam Collier, Don Kimes, Phil Judkins and Lee Smith (who is chief "gofer"), are completing the wiring of the electronics and finishing up various miscellaneous chores (such as putting new drumheads on the snare drum, repairing a couple of chryosoglott hammers, and fixing some small valve guides). It won't be long, now, before we shall have music.

Dorothy Smith



CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS: PLEASE NOTE

To help ease the burden on the editorial staff of THEATRE ORGAN, please observe the following: Type all copy, double-spaced, on letter size (8½" x 11") white paper, leaving 1¼" margins on top, bottom and both sides. Do not use erasable paper. Please include your name, address and telephone number. Type photo captions on Scotch (3M) Post-it Note sheets (#654, 3"x3" or #655, 3"x5") and attach to BACK of photo. DO NOT use any kind of tape or rubber cement to attach captions to photos, and DO NOT attach photos to sheets of paper.

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Ken Butela at his Conn 650 theatre organ.



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On September 6, a special "Meet the Candidates Night" was held at the Cultural Center (old Ohio Theatre) to give the public a chance to meet local political figures. What better occasion for our theatre organ to be played — by Bill Yaney, house organist.

On October 17, the AGO and TATOS got together for a meeting and demonstration of our theatre organ and silent film, with Mr. Yaney in residence at the console once again.

TATOS personnel have been on the road of late — with trips to Dr. John Pol-sley's installation in Urbana, Ohio, the Akron Civic Theatre, and individual tours of some Chicago theatre organs, thanks to CATOE.

Our previous program of the year was a great success — combining rare silent film and theatre organ accompaniment — the local news media hyped the film angle, too.

Evan J. Chase

WESTERN RESERVE

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With fond reveries, we recall the concert the Cleveland Grays sponsored May 13 at the 3/15 Wurlitzer in Grays' Armory. Because of his untimely death last June, this was to be the last theatre organ concert of Keith Chapman's career. His selections for the capacity crowd that evening included "Mary's a Grand Old Name," J.S. Bach's "Sinfonia to Cantata #29" and a rousing "Stars & Stripes Forever." This concert also marked the first use of futuristic computerized MIDI technology at the Grays' Wurlitzer, as the artist "accompanied himself" in performances of "Kit-ten on the Keys," Handel's "Royal Fire-works Music" and — to honor all mothers on the eve of Mother's Day 1989 — "The Lost Chord." Recalling that Dr. Chapman

performed the dedication concert at the Grays' Wurlitzer in 1971, we are thankful for all he shared with us throughout his lifetime.

On May 21, members and friends of Western Reserve Chapter gathered in Canton, Ohio, at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. The architectural splendors of this Victorian Gothic 1870's church, designed by the same architect famous for creating St. Patrick's in New York, were matched by the aural splendors of artist Charles Blair presiding at the console of the 4/73 E.M. Skinner. His selections, masterfully performed that afternoon, included "The Lost Chord" and an "Andante Cantabile" from Camille Saint-Saens' *Organ Symphony*. The distribution of a complete stoplist and offer of ample "open console" time were exemplary gestures that all organizers should aspire to provide their guests.

Our June gathering was a social held at the Medina County Administration Building, where chapter member George Krejci performed at the 3/6 Austin organ. One of only nine unified instruments built by Austin, this little gem packs a surprising array of tonalities with unification extending from 32' through 1-3/5'. Having suffered from vandalism and general neglect, the organ sprang to life after a six-year hiatus. Always a delightful entertainer with upbeat rhythms, George included that afternoon "Everything's Coming Up Roses," Clarke's "Trumpet Voluntary," "You Made Me Love You" and "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles."

The highlight of our summer activities came August 20, as member Joe Luckey and all of Erie Area Theatre Organ Society hosted our chapter for a concert by Father William Biebel at Gannon University's renowned "Pipe Dreams" 3/14 Robert-Morton/Tellers pipe organ. We quickly became fans of Father Bill's inimitable style as he performed such favorites as "This is All I Ask" and the "Clarinet Polka." Many members also enjoyed a special buffet dinner, featuring a "Make Your Own" sundae bar, at the University's cafeteria following the afternoon's entertainment. Thank you, again, EATOS!!

Jim Shepherd

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On August 20, some 26 members and friends of our club enjoyed a fun afternoon at the Butela residence where they enjoyed good potluck food. The program opened with a sing-along using the sound tape of Rob Richards' recent concert at the State Theatre. Ken Butela entertained on the Conn 650 theatre organ, playing some old and familiar compositions including selections from *Cats*, *Ice Castles* and *Evergreen*. Dick Barden also played several numbers on the organ, while Gerry Derhammer followed playing a composition on the piano. Ken closed the program with a few improvisations on the piano and organ.

The program committee announced plans for Christmas organ music at the State Theatre in Kalamazoo. A Christmas organ concert featuring a nationally known artist is also scheduled at the State Theatre where the Barton 3/13 will be played.

Many favorable remarks were made concerning the Afterglow II concert at the State Theatre last July 8, when Rob Richards was the featured organist.

Janet Corstange

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Back in 1964, Wolverine Fred Bayne was one of about a dozen organ buffs who got together to form the Wolverine Chapter of what was then ATOE. Now, twenty five years later, it was fitting that charter member Fred had the opportunity to represent the chapter he had helped create at the National Convention in Detroit. He shone as the cocktail pianist at the Westin Hotel on opening day.

Later in the month, the chapter convened in the home of members Chuck and Sharron Patterson. It doesn't make any difference whether you come to the Pattersons in midwinter, mudsummer or when; there is always that same warm welcome that seems to say "We're glad you're here." So it was on July 16. The absence of a featured organist wasn't even noticed. Sharron kept us entertained without one. But, yes, she did relinquish the organ to a few guest artists. Melissa Ambrose took a turn and then introduced one of her students, Susan Lewandowski, who impressed us with her smooth playing after only one year of lessons. And, yes, it would have done Father Jim Miller's heart good to see and hear his one-time pupil, Melissa, pumping away at the little pump organ and playing "A Closer Walk With Thee."

In August once again the congenial crew of Wurlitzer House, consisting of Dave Voydanoff, Glenn Rank and "Pop" (Glenn's Dad) hosted our chapter for an annual picnic in Algonac. Due to the threat of rain, most of the picnicking was done on the porch and inside, but that didn't dampen the spirits of those how came one bit. Good music prevailed, bolstered by good food.

Charlie and Betty Baas



Susan Lewandowski at the Patterson's Hammond.
Marvin Spear photo



Fred Bayne at the Westin Grand.
Bo Hanley photo

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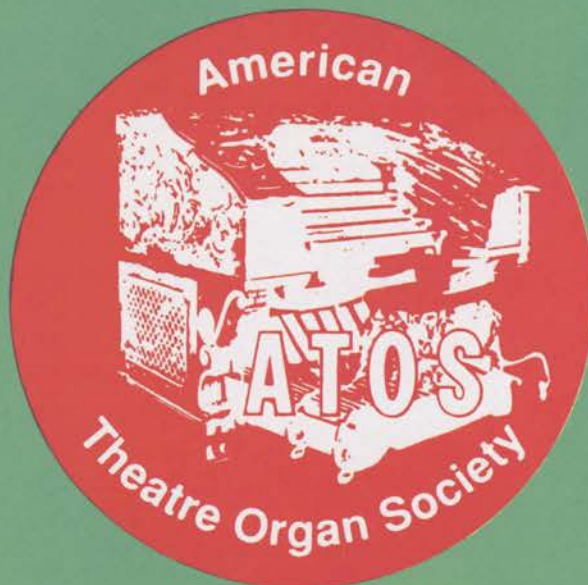
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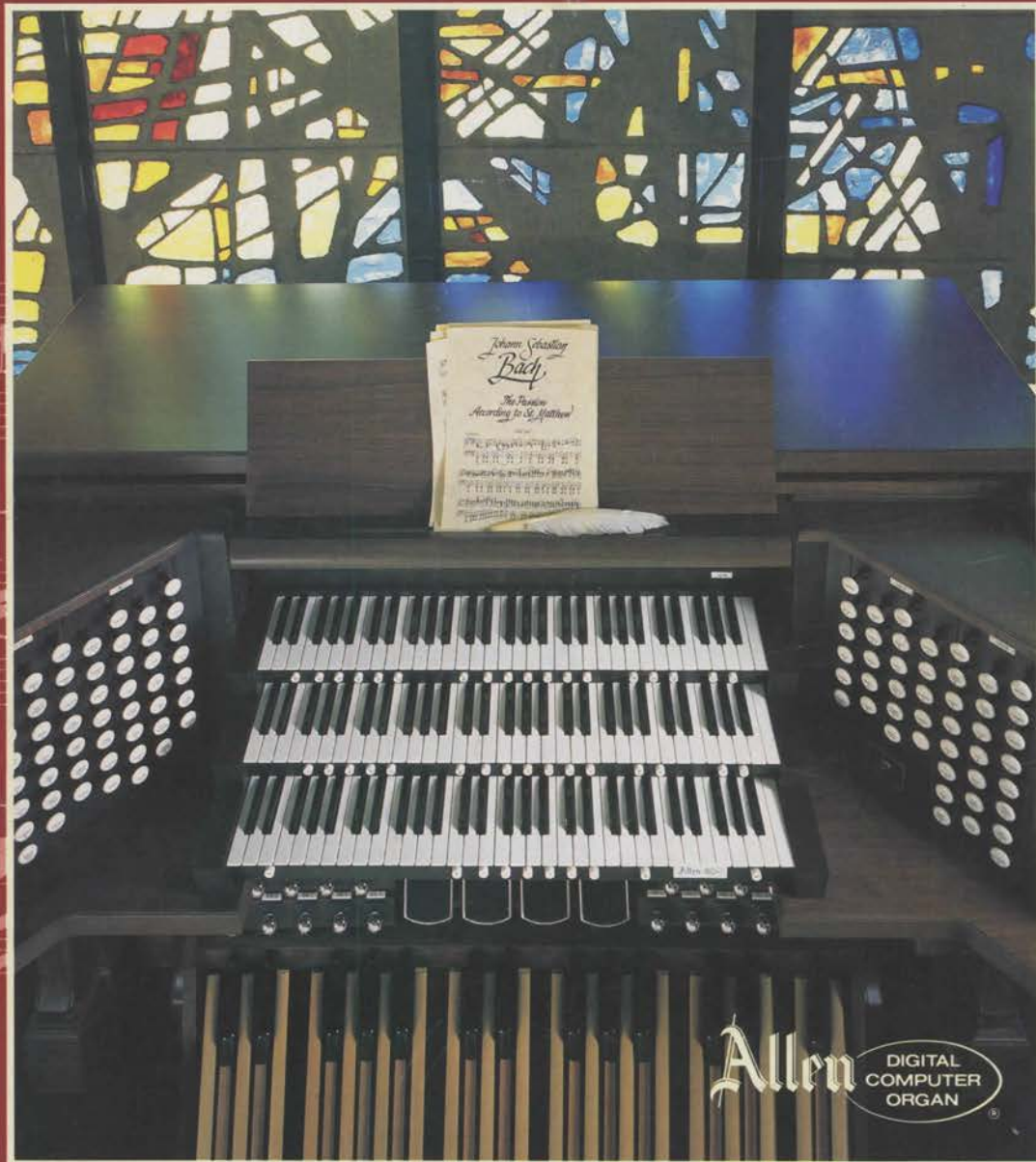
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