

# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



MAY/JUNE 1993

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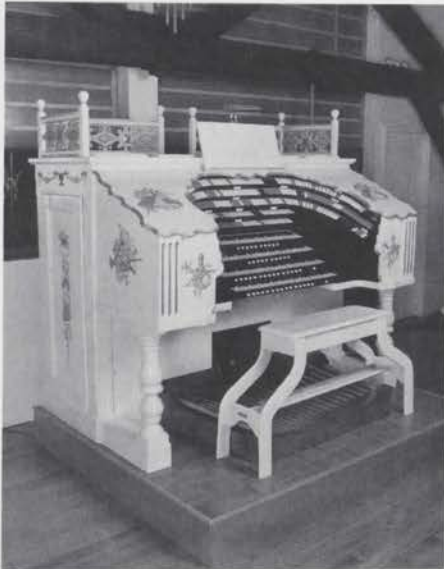
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Dennis Werkmeister's 4/31 Hybrid.  
Photo by Donald Spangler

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## President's Message



The increasing costs to attend National ATOS Conventions is a topic very much on the minds of a great many of our members. I would like to take this opportunity to address this issue, and to let you know that those of us at the national level are also very concerned about the rising costs of conventions.

When an ATOS Chapter hosts a convention, their members are responsible for planning the entire convention schedule. That means signing contracts with the hotel, the bus companies, and the artists. It also means signing contracts for the rental of the buildings in which theatre pipe organs are located. All of the costs for presenting the convention are taken into account, and the convention budget and registration fees are based on these costs. The proposed budget is then submitted to the Convention Planning Coordinator, and he works closely with the chapter to be sure that all costs are as low as can be negotiated. To help insure that costs are as low as possible, and that all goods and services are the best available for the money, all contracts must be approved by the Convention Planning Coordinator prior to being signed by a host chapter.

For years, ATOS has had some of the lowest convention costs of any similar organization. However, over the past several years, the costs to present a convention have increased, due to several factors. For example, the airlines no longer will give us free artist tickets, in advance, in exchange for being named the "convention airline." In the past, this has amounted to literally thousands of dollars of savings that we no longer have. Now the cost of flying the artists to the convention is added to the registration fees.

Another reason for the increased costs is that we must pay higher rental rates for venues. If we want to hear the organs, we have to pay the rental cost, and those costs are often high because of union rules, and are non-negotiable. We take it or leave it.

The rates charged by bus companies have steadily risen. It costs much more

for bus transportation than it did just a few years ago. This is due to increased operating expenses, and the fact that many of the bus companies have purchased newer and more costly vehicles.

Most of our conventions have to be in large cities because that is where the organs are located. The overall costs for all services are generally higher in the larger cities. Some have asked why downtown hotels are used. One factor is that most outlying hotels are unable to accommodate a convention as large as ours. Another factor is cost of transportation. In many cases, bussing costs would be considerably higher if an outlying hotel were used. Often venues are located near the downtown area, and are within walking distance. Where possible, suburban hotels are used. However, I would like to point out that last year, when an outlying hotel was used, many of the conventioners were unhappy that they were not in an urban area "where the action is."

Let me assure you that your National ATOS Officers and the members of your Board of Directors are committed to keeping the costs of attending conventions as low as possible. Among the suggestions considered by the Board of Directors to make it more affordable to attend ATOS conventions was the idea that we hold them every other year. Another idea was to meet for fewer days.

Perhaps you have some ideas as to how the convention costs can be held down. If so, please take the time to write a letter and let me know your thoughts. I will present your ideas to the Board of Directors at our next meeting in July.

Vern Bickel



*Artists wishing to sell records,  
tapes, or CDs  
at the Convention  
please send to:*

**Convention Record Shop**  
c/o Patti Simanski  
706 288th Avenue  
Burlington, WI 53105  
414/878-0688

*June 20, 1993 is the cutoff date for  
material received to be included  
in the Convention.*



## Pipe Piper Update

Please add to the list the following:

### CALIFORNIA

Sylmar - San Sylmar Museum

15180 Bledsoe Street

4/37 Wurlitzer

### ILLINOIS

Elmhurst - York Theatre

150 N. York Road

3/7 Barton

### TEXAS

San Antonio - Scottish Rite Cathedral

308 Avenue E

4/55 Moller

Corrections ...

### ARKANSAS

Little Rock - University of Arkansas

Medical Center Auditorium

2/8 Hybrid

### TENNESSEE

Knoxville - Tennessee Theatre

604 S. Gay Street

Bristol - Paramount Center

3/11 Wurlitzer/Kimball

*Great thanks to Russ Joseph, John Henderson, Willis Johnson, and, above all, Gordon Belt: Mr. Belt for three years of tolerance while the San Sylmar Museum has been left off the computer printout. I can admit to at least two of those years; for those, there is no excuse. Many thanks to all who have sent in corrections/additions/deletions for this now fairly vast listing. There is no way we can keep it up-to-date without your help.*

Tom L. DeLay



River City Theatre Organ Society recently finished the construction of their chapter organ studio/chapter meeting facility. Currently the chapter is installing their 2/5 Barton; plans are to enlarge it to a 2/8 or 2/9 instrument. The organ will be made available to members and to local organ teachers for instructing young people in theatre organ playing. We are soliciting donations of pipework, chests, percussions, toy counters, swell shades, electric stop actions, etc., from the ATOS membership. If you have any of the items mentioned or deemed suitable for our installation, please contact Bob Markworth at 402/453-7769 anytime. River City Chapter is a registered (503)(c)(3) organization.

## THE ETONES

### Electronic Theatre Organ Owner/Enthusiasts

by Jack Moelmann

*(somehow put in charge of this, and an expert in nothing except I love and want to preserve theatre organ for all of mankind)*

It has been suggested that we have in THEATRE ORGAN a continuing section dealing with electronic organs, and I agree. For the past few years, we have had a sub-group within ATOS dealing with and producing a newsletter for the Electronic Theatre Organ Owner. This group has expanded to some 375 members thus far. The purpose is to recognize the electronic organ as an instrument which has certainly done many wonderful things since its invention just as the "pipe" organ. After all, where would many of us who are interested in the theatre pipe organ be today if it weren't for the Hammond? As the current head of this group (and that only means an administrator to keep track of the mail, produce the newsletter, and answer questions as best I can), I am a TRUE LOVER of the theatre pipe organ, play them around as you can tell, but reality sometimes has to prevail in that most people don't want, can't have, or whatever, a real pipe organ in their home. The space limitations, the ability or willingness to maintain one of them, and the cost associated with them leads most of our members in ATOS to have an "electronic" in their home, but they fully support and defend the theatre "pipe" organ in its intended environment — that of a theatre, auditorium, high school, or some place where the tonal quality of the instrument can be achieved. I think that even the best concert organists that we have in ATOS today each have an "electronic" in home which they use for their own enjoyment, practice, their visiting friends, and other reasons. The electronic being more practical than having a real pipe organ even though they might want to have one.

There is all of this talk about the "juicers," "plug-ins," and all of the other name-calling. Let me tell you that a pipe organ draws more electrical power "juice" than an electronic. Today, with electronic relays, MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), synthesizers, etc., there are many who have pipe organs in their homes that have the latest and greatest of these modern devices connected to their "pipe" organs. If Robert Hope-Jones had all of these new state-of-the-art devices available, what would the theatre pipe organ that we know and love today be like? I can't imagine, but then I can, also.

Anyway, this is a start of a continuing section in the Journal where we can talk about innovations in the electronic world, MIDI, electronically sampled voices, and a whole lot more. I don't have any specific article to write for this issue, but only wish to introduce the subject and hope that you will like to read it. Any input would be greatly appreciated for the electronic group newsletter as well as this column in the Journal. Send them to me.

Please remember that we are the American Theatre Organ Society and not the American Theatre "Pipe" or "Electronic" Organ Society. We are trying to preserve an art form on the best instruments that we can have. Personally, I have both electronics and pipes, and depending on who I talk to, I have either an "electronic organ with pipes" or a "pipe organ with electronics." Very complicated world we live in, but I hope that this column will be of interest to many, and we need your help. Next issue we will publish a good article on electronics in THEATRE ORGAN.

### 1993 Election Results

We all owe a big "Thank You" to Margaret Ann Foy for her work tabulating the votes in the 1993 ATOS National Election for the three open positions on the Board of Directors. The results of the election are as follows:

Steve Adams	1467
Bob Markworth	1325
Tom DeLay	1239
Bob Maes	1080
Dick Clay	983
Gary Jones	720

Ballots received: 2378      Ballots disqualified: 13      Write-ins: 39

I wish to thank all of the candidates for your participation in this election. Although only the top three, by vote count, can be seated on the Board of Directors. To the others, please try again as ATOS will continue to need top-notch people in positions of leadership. *Harry Heth, Nominating Chairman*

# Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

While visiting some friends in Freeland, Pennsylvania (a coal mining town), I came across some interesting facts researched by Mr. Charles Stumpf.

In 1910, Freeland had three motion picture houses: the Star, the Lyric and the People's. The Star showed three reels of motion pictures plus vaudeville acts for 5¢ admission.

The Refowich brothers, Jack, Ike and Moe, were among the motion picture pioneers in N.E. Pennsylvania. They intended to open the most modern theatre with all the latest equipment in February 1914. But the worst storms in 20 years struck the area and delayed the opening of the 670-seat Refowich also known as the "cozy" theatre. Two weeks later the acoustic masterpiece was hit by some snow drifts topping 15 feet in some areas with the storm labeled as the worst since the blizzard of 1888.

Because of continuing bad weather, patrons were few but now "Big Feature Nights" would begin ... 5¢ for balcony seats and 10¢ for the main floor. Children could sit anywhere in the house. However, if a child was admitted alone, he was ushered to the first six rows. No loud talking or disturbances were allowed and uniformed ushers kept things under control.

By October 1914, the People's began to advertise in the local newspaper. This was almost unheard of at the time. Most movie houses were always full of patrons. The People's theatre installed a pipe organ at the cost of \$2,000 and was the first in the area to have such a prize ... so it claimed.

By 1915, the People's installed a new electric ticket-selling machine because of increased business. One year later, the Refowich was busy installing brass rails to control theatre patron flow and glass cases for movie posters.

How sad I was as I looked toward the corner of Centre and Main. All that remains is an office building with large letters ... Refowich. How sad that the people of Freeland, Pennsylvania, have no entertainment center except their televisions, cable hookups and video machines.

Sincerely,  
Ed Baykowski  
Colonia, New Jersey

Dear Editor:

Yesterday I received a letter from Vernon Bickel, President of ATOS, and upon reading it I became so angry that I had to

wait twenty-four hours before attempting to answer it.

Just why is ATOS getting into the credit card business? Who authorized this agreement with MBNA and who is MBNA? Why was the membership not consulted before such a commitment was made with a financial corporation? Does ATOS really need the money this arrangement will provide and do ATOS members need recognition by a credit card company? Why does ATOS need a *special card*? I ask anyone using a credit card, "How many times are you asked to comment on, or explain, any organization publicized on your card?" This whole arrangement is just another case of a credit card organization trying to find another way to rope in customers.

When I joined ATOS approximately thirty years ago it was a "fun" organization. Memberships, concerts and annual meetings were reasonably priced and everyone was friendly and anxious to work to keep theatre organs and organists available both locally and nationally. Today everything is money, money, money — and egotism — and ATOS has lost its "fun," at least for me, and I suspect many other members feel the same. Attending a national meeting has become financially out of the question for a large percent of the membership. Hotel rooms at \$60 to \$100 a day, or more, banquets at \$30 to \$50 a plate, etc. I realize as well as the next person that prices are ridiculously high these days, but I don't think that ATOS has to stay at the top hotels and eat the highest priced foods.

I am a member of "Puppeteers of America," an organization of professionals and hobbyists interested in all aspects of puppetry. We hold our annual "Festival" not at the most expensive hotels but on the campuses of universities and colleges where we occupy the dormitories and have our meals, including the annual banquet, in the school dining rooms. The cost is usually twenty-five to fifty percent less than that of an ATOS meeting. Perhaps it might be a good idea if the ATOS Board shopped around for facilities that are more affordable for the general membership rather than expensive hotels and luxury meals. It should be remembered that the theatre organ was made and used for the enjoyment of people of average means. I have been a theatre organ enthusiast since I first heard one in 1928. Having been in vaudeville during the golden days of theatre organ, it has been my pleasure to hear theatre and radio

studio organs, and to meet organists throughout the country. I have an interesting collection of theatre organ memorabilia, scrapbooks, records, tapes and model organs. Despite these interests I plan to allow my ATOS membership to expire. It is no longer a "fun" organization. I think there are many things ATOS could do to be more helpful and attractive to its membership than to get involved with credit cards.

Robert V. Longfield  
Morro Bay, California

Dear Editor:

It was a pleasure to welcome ATOS members Ed Mullins and Martin Lilley to my home here last October. I wonder if 'Eagle Eye' might correct one or two facts in Dr. Ed's report (on page 60 in the January/February issue, which reached me this week). My house here, designed with accommodation for a pipe organ, was built on the part-time, self-build organized basis (excuse the pun!), and I received a tremendous amount of help during construction from our well-known British enthusiast, Les Rawle. Concerning the organ (which had been transferred from Leicester to Northampton in 1935), the previous owner died in 1967, at about the time that the foundation brickwork for the house was being laid. Although I purchased the organ later that year from his widow, Mrs. Johnson, I was able to leave it where it was for several years. When it was practicable to store components here, dismantling and removal piecemeal took place, to which Les and other enthusiasts contributed.

Actual re-installation, however, became a more long drawn out activity — there were other priorities. One of the definitive landmarks, so to speak, was on 30 October 1976, during a visit to the UK of ATOE/ATOS founding member Judd Walton, who came here one day with Les Rawle. Some actual measurement planning for disposition of chests etc., within the chamber was done that day. But I eventually decided that professional assistance would be a good idea, if the re-installation was not to become a retirement project — which of course I might not live long enough to see! So having consulted Les, I approached member (Richard) David Pawlyn. He and his organ company technicians spent two principal periods, each of some weeks, working on the job, initially around January 1984, after which part of the organ was playable, and again around

(continued ...)

THEATRE ORGAN

## LETTERS cont.

January 1985, which more-or-less completed the installation.

While there have been many instances of members completing organ transplant projects more quickly, I am sure that everyone with experience of such will agree that the tremendous amount of work involved can only really be appreciated when a person actually assists with carrying out such a project.

In conclusion, my greetings to all members and organ slave labourers, and if any visiting the UK would like to see and play Opus 1199, just give me a call before you come on 0923-267057 (of if dialing internationally, 44-923 267057).

Sincerely,  
Michael Candy  
Hertfordshire, England

Dear Editor:

I wish someone would compile a list of videos of silent movies with pipe organ accompaniment. For example, you can buy *The Wedding March*, *Old Ironsides*, *The Ten Commandments*, *Wings* and *The Last Command*, all with Gaylord Carter at the Sargent-Stark Wurlitzer, from Movies Unlimited, 6736 Castor Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19149. Of these, *Wings*, illuminated by various original compositions, is my favorite. If you want to spend two hours awash in melody, boot this one up in your VCR.

Lee Erwin, who has recorded behind many a Keaton, Arbuckle and Langdon feature, is not specifically credited in the Movies Unlimited catalog. Most silents are said to have "music score," a few listings proclaim "organ score." If you are lucky in the latter group, you might get Lee at the Wurlitzer, but take care, Hammonds abound!

Can any reader supply more information on current offerings? Or will the organists themselves tell us what of their own pipe organ work they know to be available.

Sincerely,  
Robert Gates  
Mendham, New Jersey

Dear Editor:

May a small group of enthusiasts ask publicly for help with some mostly technical information in order to put together and perhaps make functional a 2/3 American Foto-Player Company Instrument, plus its traps. We have been asked to lend a hand with a possible restoration of this organ, which was once installed in the Osborne Theatre, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. We have a horseshoe console and two cabinets, each with their chests and what must have been densely

packed pipes, plus percussions and effects.

We should be most interested to hear from readers who are familiar with the workings of such instruments. Among the "problems" are these: what horsepower Motor(s) originally supplied the wind pressure? Were there regulators employed for each chest? What were the characteristic wind-pressure(s)? What functioned from a vacuum arrangement? How many windlines were run into the two cabinets (pipechambers), and did the wind duct sizes differ? What was a typical layout of these chambers or cabinets? We may have all the pipe-work and most of the percussions and effects, but "things" are clearly missing!

If you think you can help with advice, knowledge, or experience, please write to OTOS privately or in Letters To The Editor.

Yours sincerely,  
John S. Batts, Secretary  
Ottawa Theatre Organ Society  
P.O. Box 72105  
329 March Road  
Kanata, Ontario, Canada  
K2K 2P4  
613/828-4856

Dear Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to give John Ledwon a standing ovation and applaud most enthusiastically his statements regarding certain chapter politics and personality clashes.

Our founding father, Richard C. Simonton, established an organization with plenty of foresight in mind. He set out to form an organization that could be enjoyed by a great number of people, with one common goal ... to enjoy the mighty theatre pipe organ as a hobby.

As a result and nearly forty years later, his enthusiasm has spread world-wide, forming chapters throughout the world. Over 6,000 members and their families share in this love.

However, not mentioning any in particular, several chapters have prospered and been more successful in promoting and extolling the words "theatre pipe organ" in their area than others. When this happens, the "leaders" act as though they do not have time for the general membership or others and become "distant," often acting only for their own personal gains or enjoyment. The chapter's non-profit treasury becomes quite sizable — almost out of hand — and the chapter is suddenly no longer a "hobby organization" but takes on the proportions of a business.

I can't help but get weary over the "power-hungry" leaders who treat all

others who genuinely want to become involved with a cold shoulder. To them an uneducated enthusiast is worthless.

1993 marks my twentieth anniversary in ATOS, and I still get a chill down my spine or even a tear running down my cheek when a selection of music is being played with clarity and sensitivity. I still want to share my love of the theatre pipe organ with everyone I come in contact with. Certainly I don't expect them to feel the same emotions as I do but what the heck!

Am I now in the minority? I certainly hope not. Thanks, John, for renewing my faith and bringing to light some important issues.

Respectfully,  
Jim Koller

Dear Editor:

As the person who has been entrusted with the rebuilding of the Radio City Music Hall Grand Organ, I wish to answer Mr. Adams' letter in the March/April 1993 issue. My response will be based on fact, and it is my sincere hope that this information will make for a clear understanding of the wonderful project that the Music Hall management has made possible. The plans for the work now underway have been researched and reviewed for more than six years.

First, a bit of background. In mid 1957 I joined the Music Hall in-house organ staff. I had been in the pipe organ field since September of 1955, and when the offer was made to become Associate Organ Serviceman, I was very pleased that this opportunity had come about.

Mr. Louis Ferrara headed the Organ Maintenance Department and was my teacher and, later, my good friend. Louis had been on the original eight man installation crew which had the task of installing the Wurlitzer in four weeks time from mid-November to mid-December of 1932. With great and loving care Mr. Ferrara taught me every aspect relative to the care and maintenance of the great instrument. We cared for the three-manual studio organ as well.

I can assure Mr. Adams that there was no lack of competence or unwillingness to keep any of the vast action system in excellent condition. They layout of the relay action, combination system, the entire organ action for that matter is in my head along with quite excellent maintenance records which are on file in my office. I can recall working with Louis through the night to repair a complicated relay malfunction. The organ was always ready for "House Opening" the following morning.

(continued ...)

## LETTERS cont.

There is no doubt in my mind or that of my staff with regard to our ability to repair, rebuild or maintain the Wurlitzer action, we have done it for many years now. Mr. Ferrara was a fine teacher and often told me that once I learned to take care of the Music Hall instrument, any other pipe organ would seem simple in comparison. You know, he was right.

Dick Leibert (Chief Organist) and Raymond F. Bohr (Associate Organist) were at the console for most of my early years, although Mr. Leibert was on a Sabbatical when I first came on staff. Ashley Miller played most of the evening shows at that time and Joseph Surace was the Assistant Organist.

As Staff Organ Maintenance Men, either Mr. Ferrara or myself were required to be on duty at any time the organ was played for a stage show presentation. Once the motion picture began we were free to repair actions in the shop and, at scheduled times, we could go on break. The tuning and major maintenance work were done during all-night work sessions.

In 1964 I left the Music Hall Staff to begin my own organ service business. In a few months time the organ maintenance department at the theatre was eliminated and the organ placed on a contracted maintenance service basis. Mr. Ferrara joined me in my Service Company and remained until 1972 when he retired. In May of 1973 I was asked to become District Representative of the Schantz Organ Co. and continue work with this firm, a position I enjoy very much. Ronald C. Bishop, Pipe Organ Service has continued to operate as an independent Pipe Organ Service Company attending to the maintenance needs of Schantz and other fine organ installations.

In late 1976 I was asked by Raymond Bohr to make a complete review of the Music Hall Organ's condition and I signed a maintenance contract with the theatre in early 1977. I have been there ever since.

Relative to Mr. Adams' comments on the work done in the 1960s, our inspection of the instrument (late '76 - early '77) showed that minor repairs had been made to the stage right relay, the secondary chest pneumatics had been replaced for the most part, many reservoirs had been re-leathered and the stage right console stop tablet pneumatics done. In addition some minor tonal regulation work had been completed. Nothing else was done at that time except some minor repair work to the shutter system. My wife re-leathered the stage right console pneumatics again in the mid 1980s as they had given out along with the traveling cable

which was replaced until such time as the restoration work could begin.

The organ has continued to work with its original primary pneumatics until very recent years, these will all be re-leathered along with the secondary pneumatics as we work through the various chambers. It is interesting to note that 90% of the offset chests are still operating on their original leather, these too will be re-leathered as we move through the process.

Before passing any judgement on the original relay vs. solid-state matter, one must have an excellent idea of the instrument's layout within the building.

The original prints call for *two manual and pedal relay rooms*. During the course of installation in 1932 it was decided to put all the relays in *one room*, keeping the second allocated room for a maintenance shop, which it remains today.

Please also keep in mind that the Music Hall Organ has relays for everything and two sets of identical relays. All these action systems were then placed in this one room stacked on top of each other. The entire set of units is coded so that we can easily locate what relay part belongs to what console.

A Mr. Cross, who had charge of this portion of the installation, is noted as making many, many very interesting and colorful comments as he worked and worked to complete this "one relay room" installation. This room is located on the third floor of the 50th Street side of the building with entrance to same gained through an *active* dressing room.

In addition, the original plans for the consoles call for them to be placed on separate elevators at each end of the Orchestra pit elevator (like several other theatres). The space for these elevators is still visible at each end of the pit, in fact the motor driven footlights have been cut short in both of these locations. This fact can be noted as well if one will walk down to the front of the theatre on either side.

The consoles ended up in what was to be Soloist stage openings complete with their own curtains. To this day, the consoles do not fit all the way into these alcoves (they hang out just a bit). Needless to say, maintenance work on the consoles can be difficult. The new solid-state system will make this situation 100% better.

As the organ's consoles had been designed for the elevator locations, what to do with all the extra console cable that had been pre-made at the Wurlitzer plant. Mr. Cross and his helper constructed a storage cable box in the already jammed relay room and pulled it back up through the conduits.

This jammed condition of the relay room has provided a real challenge to all of the folks who have worked in it over the years. We have done extensive repair work on both relay units and even the most minor adjustment costs a great deal in time and money because of the cramped conditions. If rebuilding of the existing actions was done, large portions of the units would have to be dismantled and removed to another location so that space would be available to work on all areas. When Mr. Cross was given that "job" way back in 1932, he had no choice but to put the relays in place any way that he could, and, as an end result, the conditions for any major renovation do not exist.

We have performed some real "miracle" renovation projects on these relays over the past few years, having to jack up certain of the relay units to get at others. As already noted no major renovation work can be done in this area. Please keep in mind that the organ must remain operational and you cannot disconnect one relay without involving the other due to the layout.

The combination machines and their setterboards are located a block away (third floor, 51st Street side of the building). Here again the entrance to the combination room is through an active dressing room. Over the years very few piston changes were made for this very reason. The organist would have to go to the third floor early in the morning, make the changes, take the elevator down to stage level and check the settings. If they were incorrect for any reason he would have to go back up to the third floor and try again.

Perhaps through this partial description of the building one will realize that the stage is a city block wide. Two of the most important entrances to the organ are through much used dressing rooms.

Upon the completion of our study the Peterson system was selected because of its excellence, ease of maintenance and space requirements. The new head end of the system will be placed on one wall of the existing organ maintenance shop which has a new private entrance. The remainder of the system will be placed within the consoles and so arranged that maintenance, when required, will be a simple operation.

For the first time the organists will have capture type combination actions with multi-memory levels. Due to the simple cable connections, the consoles can be involved in Production Numbers in a manner never before possible. The console alcoves will remain as "home base."



## LETTERS cont.

In addition, it will be possible to place either or both of the console on the stage and orchestra pit elevators. Imagine the console coming up on the pit elevator as the curtain goes up with the Music Hall Orchestra coming up on stage elevator number one. Together they will perform the Music Hall's famous Bach Festival Overture (the organist being able to hear the organ front and center). Upon completion the console moves off the stage right into the wings and the Orchestra moves forward onto its elevator. Then it descends for the start of the show.

The other console would be used while the audience enters and leaves. Just a theatrical thought, and possible with the new system.

I know full well that the Wurlitzer firm would be using solid-state relays today if they were still in business and believe me they would have been the first ones to suggest such a system for the rebuilding process.

The theatre gains two much-needed rooms in the process. The service staff will be able to get at any part of the action system within minutes rather than hours, and the Grand Organ will be available for any use the Production Department wishes to make of it.

In no way will the stop specifications be changed, nothing "needless" will take place and there *will be no emasculation of anything*. No person on this earth has more respect and love for the Grand Organ than myself. This wonderful instrument has brought great joy to three generations of the Bishop family.

I can hear Dick Leibert and Ray Bohr saying it's about time we can set the pistons (they both hated that elevator ride).

I am most grateful to the Music Hall for making this project possible. This truly grand organ has given the theatre and the public more than 60 years of service and joy and it will be ready to give many, many more years as the rebuild is completed.

Next year I celebrate my 40th year in the pipe organ field. Please know, Mr. Adams, that the Radio Music Hall project is being done to perfection. I invite you to come and hear the results. They will be well worth your time.

Ronald C. Bishop  
Senior Pipe Organ Technician  
Radio City Music Hall

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.

Editor, THEATRE ORGAN  
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## A Very Special Event.....

On July 10, 1993,  
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This privately owned music salon must be seen to be believed: with the opulent decor and reverberant acoustics of a full-sized theatre, the Victorian Palace is a fitting home for the largest Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ in the world.

Attendance is limited to 350  
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The cost for this very unique event is \$46.00 per person (100% of the profit from this Gala goes to benefit the Hopeful Heart Fund.) This includes transportation from the ATOS convention hotel, complimentary refreshments at intermission, and a demonstration of several of the larger orchestrions housed in the Victorian Palace.

For those living to the far west & north of Chicago, ask about special arrangements for driving yourself (if it is more convenient.)

Send in your check today, to:

Hopeful Heart Productions  
Post Office Box 578121  
Chicago, Il 60657



*Hopeful Heart Productions is a private fund which provides much-needed financial support to persons involved in the arts who are facing life-threatening illnesses such as cancer, AIDS, stroke, etc. Mr. Larsen accepts no payment, fee, commission, or royalty for any live performance or recording which is sponsored by Hopeful Heart Productions. Your support is greatly appreciated by many!*

# May We Introduce . . . Scott F. Foppiano

Scott is in great demand as a classical church organist and also as a theatre organist. His thorough educational background has prepared him to play anything that an audience may request. He has the capability of adjusting to any situation that may arise.

Our audiences love him. His vibrant personality and exuberant energy rub off and you become involved in the action that is taking place, whether a silent movie, sing-along or concert.

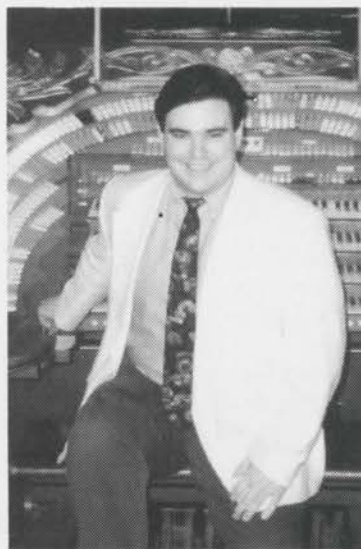
Born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1965, Scott began his musical career at the age of eight playing the organ in church. He has been a church organist and choir director ever since, and is presently the Organist and Director of Music at Northbrook Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Michigan.

While in the seventh grade, he had his first experience seeing and hearing a theatre pipe organ and was hired as a staff organist of the Orpheum Theatre in Memphis. Upon completion of high school he moved to Charlotte, North Carolina. Scott has been the recipient of many organ, vocal and instrumental scholarships during the years he attended Winthrop College, the North Carolina School of the Arts, and Mars Hill College from which he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Organ and Vocal Performance. His teachers included Dr. John S. Mueller, Dr. John L. Hooker and Mrs. Donna Robertson.

The years that followed found him playing at some of the world's most notable instruments in both churches and theatres, including the Cathedrale de Notre Dame de Paris, the Thomaskirche in Leipzig, E. Germany, the Crystal Cathedral, the Chicago Theatre and Radio City Music Hall.

While maintaining a busy schedule at church, teaching privately and directing the choirs, Scott also keeps an extensive performing and recital schedule. He is one of the staff organists at Detroit's Fox Theatre and also plays at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor.

As Chairman of the Young Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of the American Theatre Organ Society, he is working closely with Jack Moelmann to arrange meetings and activities for the members during the convention.



Scott has been an adjudicator for the Motor City Theatre Organ Society's Organist Competition for the past two years and is very eager to help the young organists further their careers.

Scott has a great deal of energy and really works hard in preparing programs that will please his audience. A young man eager to display his talent and concertize all over the world. He is making plans to make a recording in the near future.

## George Wright

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# From Concept to Cabaret

*Dayton, Ohio's  
Huffman District  
gains a theatre organ  
in  
Dennis Werkmeister's  
Carriage House  
Organ Loft*

*Story and Photos by John Polsley*



*Exterior of the Carriage House.*

It is a strange affliction, 'The Organ Lover's Syndrome.' It starts with an innocent inoculation — a chance exposure to one of these grand instruments, followed by another and then another until the disease becomes all pervasive, ravishing and insatiable. That's the way it all began with Dennis Werkmeister — a malady so insidious, yet so demanding that it came to insinuate itself into most every major decision he made. From his first experience in Radio City Music Hall, at the age of five, to the realization of his own 4/31 hybrid instrument some 40 years later is a long story, one characterized by extraordinary patience and a lot of careful planning.

His first chance to acquire his own pipes came a year after his graduation from the University of Dayton, when he spotted in the "for sale" column of a local newspaper a style 3, Opus 88, 2/7 Wurlitzer, which had at one time been the house organ for the Strand Theatre in Altoona, Pennsylvania. He quickly purchased the instrument and immediately set about the arduous task of releathering and rebuilding its chests and console. Ultimately, he found a suitable dwelling in the outskirts of Dayton in which to install his prized possession — which by this time included a Tibia Clausa and had grown to eight ranks. The generous 12' x 40' chamber in the basement of his home easily accommodated all his pipes and allowed room for later additions.

The real opportunity to draw a blueprint for the future expansion of his organ came about as an outgrowth of his friendship with the late Stanley Todd. Stan was the owner of the Shadynook Restaurant, near Oxford, Ohio, and had installed in his eating establishment what at that time was the largest theatre organ in Ohio, a 4/30 Wurlitzer. He had studied under Jesse Crawford and his playing skill as well as his reputation for beautiful registrations were legend. It was Stan to whom Dennis put the question "In your opinion, what ranks have the 'prettiest sounds' that I should consider adding to my organ?" Without hesitation Stan replied: "capped reeds." Acting upon his advice, over a period of time Dennis located and added to his organ a Moller French Horn, an E.M. Skinner French Horn and Flugel Horn, a Moller Corno D'Amour, a Kimball Waldhorn, a Salicional and Musette. These ranks, together with a second Tibia, brought his organ up to a respectable 2/17 — but then you know us organ enthusiasts — we're never quite satisfied with what we've got — we always think we have to make it a little bit better or a little bit bigger.

Well, the occasion to do this came about when Dennis learned of the availability of a three-manual Moller console (pictured in *The American Theatre Organ Encyclopedia*, Volume 1, p 372) which was in storage in Milwaukee. As it turned out this proved to be the original keydesk of Roseland, Illinois' State Theatre. It was a highly unified 3/12 which featured a roll top and had been especially down-sized to accommodate the theatre's console lift dimensions — but more about this later.

It all came together in 1986 when Dennis and his wife, Carol, happened upon an advertisement in *Homes* magazine. There, described in some detail, was a listing of a Dayton residential property which had a two story carriage house in the rear. It looked ideal. Here was a staid, frame home, built in 1894, suitable for a residence, while in back was this well-preserved, free-standing structure which presented excellent possibilities for organ installation. The carriage house even had a musical tradition; it seems it was constructed in 1921 by one Harry Ford, the original inventor of the grand piano moving dolly, whose business it was to move and store pianos. The Werkmeisters purchased the property in June of 1987 and after six months of intensive restoration not only had their

house ready for occupancy, but also the renovation of the second story of the carriage house was nearly complete, even to drywalling. The first floor of the building, with its 12' ceiling, made an ideal location for windlines, blowers and tremulants while the adjacent floorspace afforded ample room for a large workshop. The second floor, with its cathedral ceiling, was finished in the motif of a cabaret. One end was enclosed to provide for a 30' x 13' undivided chamber: more than adequate to allow for expansion of his organ. In addition to new exterior siding, the building was completely insulated and equipped with temperature and humidity controls. With all wind and trem noise on the lower story, the second story chamber became whisper quiet.

After installation of two sets of horizontal swell shades and the acquisition of a second Vox Humana and a 16' Waldhorn, 19 ranks were playable by November of 1988. Untuned percussions and the toy counter were placed to the rear of the studio on a balcony; wind to the organ was supplied by a system of 7 blowers: a 2hp Spencer to deliver 10" of wind to the main and solo divisions, a Dayton 1hp blower for percussions and antiphonal divisions, supplemented by a 1hp Wicks blower for some additional antiphonal pipes requiring 5" pressure. A 5hp kinetic blower running in parallel with two 3/4hp "Windjammer" blowers delivers a static pressure of 18" which serves his high pressure ranks including the Solo Tibia. The blowers are started in sequence and with so many separate wind supplies there is the obvious advantage that should a certain portion of the organ require servicing the whole organ need not be disabled. A Devtronix Multi-Action Organ Control provides electronic switching, combination action and play-

*"It's hard to imagine life without an organ project in the wings."*

back; in point of fact it has enabled Dennis to wire in his old two-manual keydesk as a slave console.

Certainly the centerpiece of Dennis's installation has been his augmented Moller console. Upgraded from three to four manuals, the stoprails have been expanded to accommodate 316 stops. The left to right progression of stops within each division is retained. The left two-thirds of the top and middle bolsters are dedicated to the Solo and Accompaniment divisions respectively, whereas the bottom bolster serves the Great division entirely. The Bombarde stops are relegated to the right upper and middle stop rails and the remainder of stops, relating to the pedals, antiphonal and tremulos are assigned to the backrail. The extended curved bolsters made necessary the customizing of the shell of the console, but the resulting new front dimension has been scaled proportionately so as to retain the true Moller console configuration. Having an artistic wife has proved a real asset; instead of the traditional gold end trim, she has created decorative designs for the ends and front of the organ which feature delicate pastel colors. These consist of hand mixed soft blues, tans, and mauve with gold accents. The top of the console is decorated with an intricate lattice pattern not unlike those

seen on some Robert-Morton and Barton keydesks.

In the past 12 months the organ has gained a marimba which is suspended on a studio crossbeam just in front of the toy counter. A used Deagan instrument, which was built in the 1940s, it has been equipped with an electronically activated solenoid action, designed jointly by Dennis and Herb Merritt of Cincinnati, Ohio. The details of this non-pneumatic striker system will be the subject of a separate article in a future issue of THE-ATRE ORGAN.

Have the Werkmeisters achieved the ultimate? Is there anything more in the grand design for the future? Sure, it's not really finished. Ask Dennis; he'd like more strings and some additional reed voices, maybe another rank of Diapasons. At the present time 27 of a planned 31 ranks are playing but even without the additional four ranks there's his latest acquisition to explore: a MIDI interface board installed in an IBM AT computer. With "Cakewalk" software this wondrous device can act as a MIDI sequencer, allowing pre-recorded music to be played back through his organ. Even as the organ is being played, MIDI files can be played out as sheet music. The computer's CRT display of a given selection's tracks permits assignment of each to any one of 12 available channels. Registrations for each channel (manual or pedal board) can be chosen to fit the music; the uncanny symphonic effects one can create are awesome. It is as though one is standing in the middle of a chorus of instrumental voices — a greatly potentiated "unit orchestra" if you will — the very thing Wurlitzer strove to create. Be that as it may, something tells us Dennis won't be content with status quo; like he says "It's hard to imagine life without an organ project in the wings."



*View of the Cabaret from the rear.*

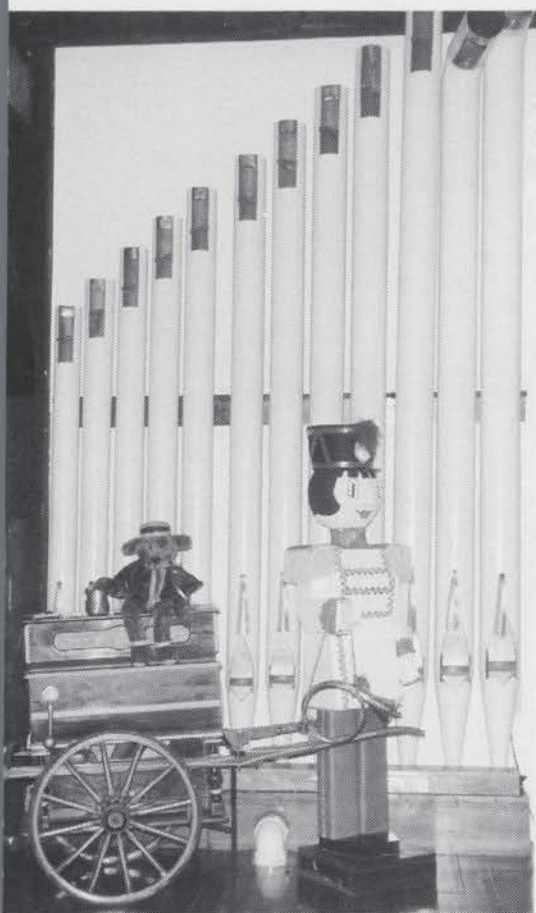


*Antiphonal Division and Percussion loft.*

Dennis Werkmeister tuning  
the Corno D'Amour.



Solo Pipe Chamber from left to right:  
Brass Sax, English Post Horn, Tibia Clausa, Salicional, Trumpet,  
Waldhorn, Musette.



A wooden soldier and Hurdy Gurdy stand in front  
of the open diapason.

## Rank Summary

RANK	NO. PIPES	PRES-SURE	MANUFACTURER
1. Post Horn .....	61	13"	Schopp
2. Tuba .....	85	15"	Wurlitzer
3. Trumpet .....	61	10"	Kimball
4. Orchestral Oboe .....	61	10"	Wurlitzer
5. Krumet .....	61	10"	Trivo
6. Musette .....	61	10"	Schopp
7. Corno d'Amour .....	61	5"	Moller
8. Brass Saxophone .....	61	7"	Schopp
9. Waldhorn .....	73	7"	Kimball
10. Clarinet .....	61	10"	Wurlitzer
11. Flugel Horn .....	61	5"	E.M. Skinner
12. French Horn .....	61	10"	E.M. Skinner
13. Antiphonal French Horn .....	61	5"	Moller
14. English Horn .....	61	5"	Estey
15. Solo Vox Humana .....	61	8"	Wurlitzer
16. Vox Humana .....	61	6"	Gottfried
17. Vox Humana .....	61	5"	Aeoline
18. Antiphonal Vox Humana .....	61	5"	Wicks
19. Open Diapason .....	85	15" & 10"	Wurlitzer
20. Tibia .....	85	10"	Wurlitzer
21. Tibia Minor .....	85	10"	Barton
22. Flute .....	97	10"	Wurlitzer
23. Quintadena .....	61	5"	Moller
24. Antiphonal Stp. Diapason .....	97	5"	Wicks
25. Antiphonal Open Diapason .....	61	5"	Wicks
26. Harmonic Flute .....	61	5"	Skinner
27. Viol de Orchestre .....	97	15" & 10"	Kimball/Wurlitzer
28. Viol Celeste .....	61	10"	Wurlitzer
29. Gamba .....	61	5"	Skinner
30. Salicional .....	73	7"	Austin
31. Salicional Celeste .....	67	5"	Wicks



# BETTY GREY: Theatre Organist Undaunted

by Erle Renwick

The master of ceremonies at the Horticulture Show, Chicago World's Fair, 1934, could not bring himself to say "Hortense Ragatz" when it came time to introduce this young and talented organist. But he could say "Betty Grey." And so, Hortense Platt Ragatz became Betty Grey from that moment on.

To think that ten years later in June 1944, I was so close to and yet so far from what would become my very favorite entertainment. After finishing boot camp at Great Lakes, I was stationed for the month at Wright Junior College on Chicago's north side beginning an 11-month electronics training course in the US Navy. I met a girl while on liberty in Milwaukee, whom I later married. On my last weekend in Chicago, my girl friend and I went swimming in Lake Michigan

at a beach within view of the now-gone Edgewater Beach Hotel. Little did I realize at the time that I would some day meet and hear the very popular entertainer who was playing theatre organ in this beautiful and famous hotel on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Betty Grey was playing the big 3/12 Moller theatre pipe organ, providing music for conventions and benefit shows as well as for regular floor shows with the big bands, dancers, magicians, vocalists and other show stoppers. The theatre pipe organ was located in the spacious multi-terraced Marine Dining Room, which could seat as many as 1400 dining and dancing patrons. When she wasn't playing the Moller she was playing a Hammond organ which was moved onto the bandstand for accompanying vocal-

ists and playing specialty numbers with the band — a unique feature at the time. She had been featured organist there since October 11, 1941.

Back in 1928, just before the advent of talking movies, Hortense Platt (Betty Grey's real name), a twenty-one-year-old country girl of modest means from Dubuque, Iowa, who was already an accomplished pianist, was preparing for a new career playing the theatre pipe organ in concert and accompanying silent movies, when suddenly it all came to an abrupt end — sound movies came in. Technological obsolescence overtook Hortense Platt as it did almost all other theatre organists, and, as Betty put it, "I went out, along with my mother's hard-earned money."

Born in 1907 in Dubuque, Iowa, she began studying piano locally at the Florence B. Lally Pianoforte School, showing unusual talent at an early age. Upon graduating from high school, she pursued more education and training as a pianist enrolling in the Dubuque Academy of Music. So impressed with her seemingly natural gift, her professor suggested she continue piano studies with the European concert artist Silvio Scionti at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago.

"Good idea, but," according to Betty, "trick was to get there for lessons — 187 miles away — train 3:00 a.m., return at midnight same day. Double fare because my mother wouldn't allow me to go to Chicago alone. This was about 1776 — things not too wild at that time. Mother was a task master."

While studying at the conservatory, Hortense continued to show great promise with a successful future as a pianist assured, and on June 11, 1926, she graduated from American Conservatory of Music. Life was about to change for Hortense Platt, pianist.

"Yes, I had a teenage dream. Let me explain. After winning two yearly piano scholarships at the American Conservatory of Music, Chicago, strange as it may seem, I dreamed of rising on that four-manual organ console at the Balaban & Katz Chicago Theatre. However, studying organ right then was impossible because of the lack of money."

To Hortense's surprise, an almost unknown Aunt Susie living in Canada sent her a check for educational use. Hortense contacted Arthur Gutow at the Chicago Theatre asking whether or not he would take her as a student of the organ for ten lessons. He agreed to do so for \$100. After the ten lessons he left town to open the Michigan Theatre in Detroit.

Betty goes on, "I then contacted Milton Charles, organist at the Chicago Theatre, he having replaced Jesse Crawford. He was delighted with my ability and helped me to achieve my dream."

"My first try-out was at the Tivoli Theatre. The Marx Brothers were performing at the time. When it came time to press the button and the organ would go up, I was so excited I almost missed pressing the button on time to 'rise and shine.'"

"I then became the understudy for the great Milton Charles. One day he asked me where I lived, and I said Iowa. He questioned me further. 'Yes,' I told him, 'I get up at 2:00 a.m. to take the 3:00 a.m. train, take my lesson at 10:00 a.m. and return by midnight back home in Iowa.'"

"His response, 'Never pay me again. I will give you two lessons each time you

come.' My reply, 'My mother will pay you as long as she has the means.'"

Milton Charles introduced Hortense Platt to Louis Lipstone, Director of Balaban & Katz, Chicago, and later Director of Music, Paramount Pictures. He liked her work. She then started playing featured organ music and silent movies for Balaban & Katz, rotating as relief organist for such organists as Milton Charles, Faith Bayton, Dean Fosselar (Amos 'n Andy theme) and others at the Chicago, Tivoli, Central Park (Oriental), Roosevelt and Uptown theatres.

This young lady theatre organist had made the grade in the eyes of Milton Charles as evidenced by this letter of introduction he wrote to organist Arsene Siegel calling her, "... a fine organist and capable of any relief work you might have for her. Lipstone has heard her and likes her. Regards, Milton Charles."

In the meantime, she joined the organ faculty at The Chicago School of Organ, Gunn School of Music.

*"God bless the  
theatre organ for  
what it has  
given me —  
lifelong  
happiness."*

Hortense Platt had just begun her rise to stardom as a theatre organist in fulfillment of her teenage dreams when, almost immediately, "talkies" arrived. Almost all theatre musicians became unemployed. Like other Chicago theatre organists, both the well known and the not-so-well known, Hortense found herself without a job and with little hope of ever finding one. She decided to return home to Dubuque. Luckily, sound movies had not inundated the small town theatres yet. She started playing the Strand Theatre for silent movies and sing-alongs.

H. Merrill Wills, Chief Meteorologist at Dubuque University, visited Hortense and her family. He said he had been observing Betty and her musical progress and felt that she was at a crossroads. He asked Hortense to step into his car so that he could drop her off at the university to register to finish her college work. He expressed fear that she would not finish her education unless he were to take her immediately to the school to register. Years later while Betty was playing the

Moller pipe organ at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, an elderly man tapped her on the shoulder and said, "I am Wills, the former meteorologist. I knew you would make it to the top."

In 1932, she married Carl Ragatz, her high school sweetheart. They met at age 14 and are still happily married to each other after sixty-one years! After the wedding, Hortense and Carl moved back to Chicago.

The first hotel engagement for Hortense was playing a Hammond organ in the Gold Coast Room of the Drake Hotel in 1934.

That same year, on June 30, 1934, she started playing a Hammond organ at the Chicago World's Fair Flower Show. Jesse Crawford was playing at the main theatre and for the outdoor concerts. She recalls that after she completed her performances, she used to watch Jesse Crawford perform. Sally Rand, the bubble dancer, asked her to work with her, but Hortense had other plans. She accompanied Mary Margaret Nobel, lyric soprano, St. Louis Civic Opera Co. in the Horticulture Building. It was during this fair that Hortense Platt Ragatz became Betty Grey.

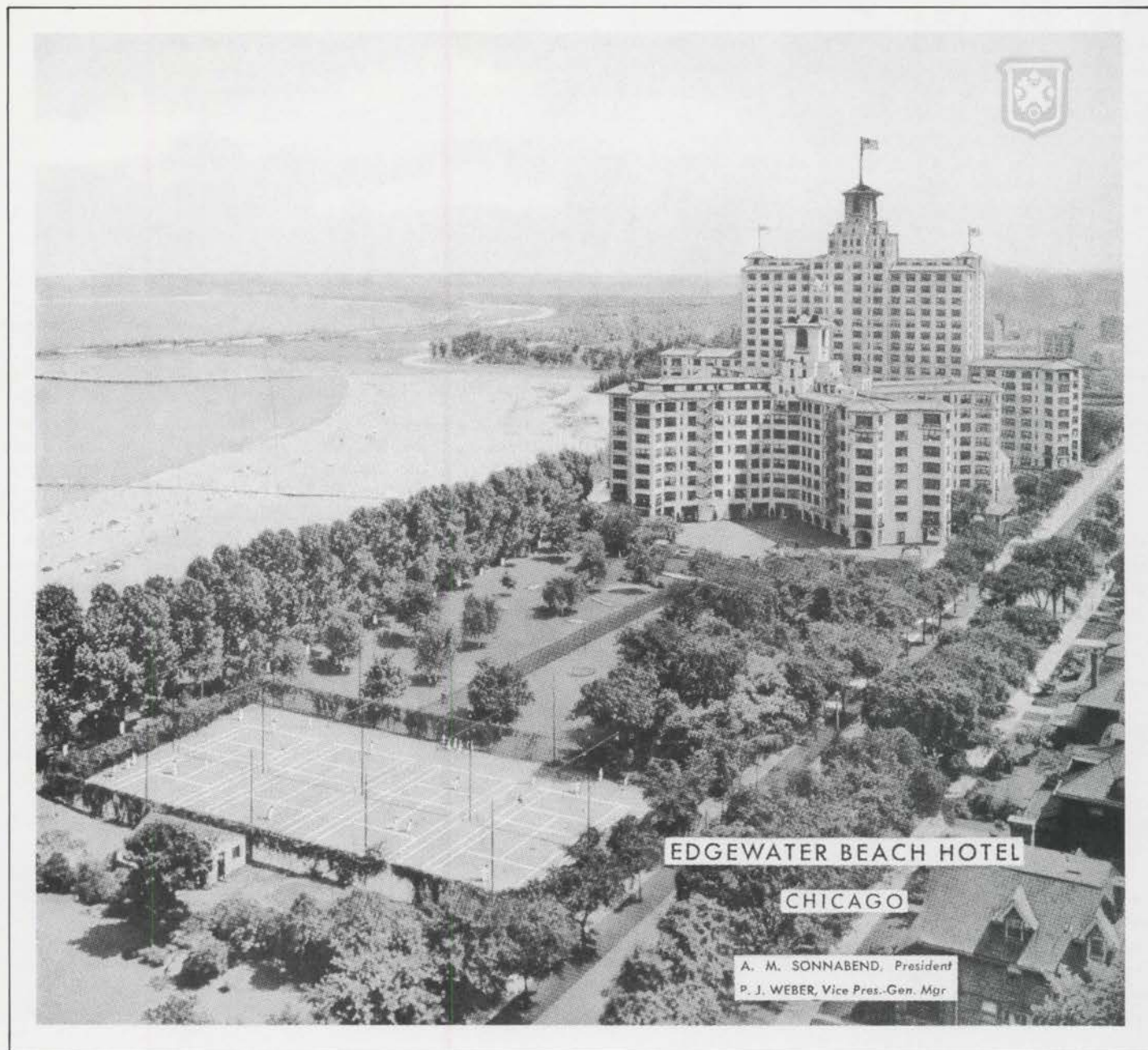
Yes, Hortense took one organ lesson from Jesse Crawford on a New Year's Eve at which time he revealed to her the registrations he used when he played the Hammond organ.

According to Betty, the invention of the Hammond organ was a miracle: It brought back the demand for organists! After moving to Chicago, she took an odd job close to the Hammond studios off Michigan Boulevard in order to use every lunch hour practicing to master this new, spectacular instrument.

In 1936, an offer came through the Hammond studios. The Park Hotel in Madison, Wisconsin, wanted an organist with a college degree. Betty fit the bill. She was to play organ music and accompany Dorothy Arnold DiMaggio — according to Betty, a duplicate of Marilyn Monroe — in the Blue Room, Circular Bar and the Victorian Lounge. "Come hear Betty Grey from the Century of Progress and one year at the Drake Hotel." While at the Park she was featured Sunday through Friday over radio station WIBA from the Oak Room.

In 1938, Betty was at the Oak Room and Tropical Room of Hotel Fort Des Moines, playing the Hammond for late supper dancing — "featuring Betty Gray at the electric organ," and "at the organ of a million tones." She accompanied "Sonya" on the electric organ and would gladly play "your favorite number upon request." Easter deLuxe dinner cost \$1.25.

While in Des Moines Betty teamed up



EDGEWATER BEACH HOTEL

CHICAGO

A. M. SONNABEND, *President*  
P. J. WEBER, *Vice Pres.-Gen. Mgr.*

with organist Doc Lawson to play the dual console organ at the Paramount Theatre.

One day while Betty was playing in the dining room at the Hotel Fort Des Moines, Mr. Eitel was having lunch with the hotel's manager. It happened that Mr. Eitel's brother was manager of the Bismark Hotel, Chicago. Betty was asked to come to Chicago to play at the Bismark. This was a welcome move for Betty, since she and husband Carl were actually living in Chicago where Carl had a brokerage business. At the Bismark she replaced the well-known Chicago organist Mildred Fitzpatrick. At the Bismark cocktails were 60¢ each, while a full course dinner could be had for \$1.85. For three years Betty was a headliner at the Walnut Room, Bismark Hotel, Chicago.

Charlie Dawn, music critic for the Chicago Evening American, wrote on June 27, 1938, "Modie and Le Maux, ballroom dancers, and soprano Darlene O'Day, assisted by Betty Grey at the organ, complete the specialty program Managing Director Roy Steffen has arranged. Incidentally, the console of the electric organ is wheeled out on the floor . . . and it's the first time I've ever seen an organist actually participate in a floor show . . . from the stage floor."

In 1941 Betty played on the Bamboo Terrace, Glass House and Emerald Room (main dining room) of the Graemere Hotel, Washington Blvd. at Garfield Park, Chicago, sometimes called a miniature Edgewater Beach Hotel — a very high class hotel, according to Betty. She was featured with Lew Story's orchestra.

After three months at the Graemere, during an intermission she was sitting in the lobby when a gentleman went to the desk to ask to speak to the organist. When he learned that the organist was a female, he expressed surprise and said that he just wanted to inform the organist that the organist position at the Edgewater Beach Hotel was open for the first time in fourteen years.

"Needless to say, I got an interview within a day. There was one hitch. The hotel owner-manager Bill Dewey really wanted a man organist. Remember those days? But I coaxed him into trying a woman, as I mentioned that a woman looks more attractive sitting at an organ than a man looks in a tux. He apparently agreed with me, since the hotel called me a week later to open with Wayne King."





Betty and husband Carl with Captain of Mississippi Queen.

She started at the Edgewater Beach October 11, 1941, replacing Herbert Foote, who retired. Her instrument was a Moller 3/12 theatre pipe organ. She shared the spotlight with many famous dance bands. Both Russ Morgan and Xavier Cugat featured her on the organ playing with the band. She says the slow response of the pipe organ made it a little difficult to maintain the rhythmic beat of the organ with that of the orchestra. She accompanied Vaughn Monroe as he gave private performances for the guests in their rooms. "The clientele included shieks who gave watches in appreciation and movie stars who caused their waitresses to faint from the shock of waiting on them. We had everything, even the Chicago Symphony members for the Christmas Eve celebrations. For Egyptian floor shows there were live camels — always the best of everything."

On June 11, 1952, the Beach Walk opened for dancing under the stars and strolling through the gardens. There was non-stop dancing with a continuous dance beat provided alternately by the dance band and Betty at the Hammond organ.

She continued a very successful 13-year engagement until the hotel was sold in 1954.

"You might ask, 'How could you do this with two growing boys, a husband and a sick mother?' The answer — cooperation. Our home was always supervised either by my mother or my husband. Our one day off each week was

very special with the children. My mother was happy to supervise because she believed in using talent, if you had one, and she wanted me to make use of my education."

"The hotel had inspectors come monthly to evaluate the entire hotel from entrance to exit. They reported, '... The floor show came on about 9:15 p.m., and it was very well done; all numbers were good and well announced by Mr. Dorsey. There was dancing throughout the evening, and the announcement of another floor show at 11:25 was made, but it was not posted on the board near the shell. The organ music between numbers of the band was the best we have heard for dancing, and many people remarked about it — how good it was. The woman who played the organ was personable, well groomed, smiled nicely, and just as many people danced during her numbers as during the band numbers.' This was the Hammond Model A. This is the nicest compliment I have ever received — being compared to Tommy Dorsey."

"Then, in 1954, the hotel was sold, and I felt that we should move to Florida to take advantage of the climate after Chicago with its cold and miserable winters."

The roster of big bands with whom Betty shared the spotlight looks like this: Henry Brandon, Frankie Carl, Xavier Cugat, Bernie Cummins, Jimmy Dorsey, Tommy Dorsey, Shep Fields all-reed

orchestra, Ralph Flanagan, Horace Heidt, Woody Herman, Richard Himber, Art Kassel, Wayne King, George Liberace (director of house orchestra, Edgewater Beach Hotel), Victor Lombardo, Johnny Long, Freddie Martin (Merv Griffin vocalist), Vaughn Monroe, Russ Morgan, Johnny Olsen, Phil Spitalny with Evelyn and Her Magic Violin, Charlie Spivak, Claude Thornhill, and Orrin Tucker.

The hotels where Betty was featured at the Hammond organ: Drake (Chicago, 1934), Park (Madison, 1936), Fort Des Moines (Des Moines, 1938), Bismark (Chicago, 1938-40), Graemere (Chicago, 1941), Edgewater Beach (Moller theatre pipe organ and Hammond, Chicago, 1941-54).

She played a Hammond organ daily over radio station WIBA, Madison, Wisconsin.

She played in these theatres (in Chicago, except as noted): Biograph, Central Park (Oriental), Tivoli, Chicago, Roosevelt, Uptown, Strand (Dubuque), Paramount (Des Moines).

In September, 1954, the Ragatz's moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

The Hammond Organ Co. paved the way for Betty to play at the Lauderdale Yacht Club. "Arriving in Ft. Lauderdale, I had one audition at the fine conservative Lauderdale Yacht Club, and played there for 20 years until 1974."

Betty has said numerous times in our conversations about her career that she could not have done it all without husband Carl at her side supporting her all the way.

"So having recently concluded a season at the Community Presbyterian Church here, I am reminded of the musical song, the words being, 'There will come a day, youth will fade away, and what will they say about me?'"

"Well, Miss Clairol has not faded away. I am studying Spanish. I am a student of Interior Designer Robert Kelstrom, and we are redesigning our home at the moment, and my husband and I are 'Cruising Down the River' on the Mississippi Queen — great fun!"

"I am still dreaming while playing on my three-manual organ — sometimes trying to improve a musical selection as Eddie Dunstedter did, or playing a Crawford technique he originally called the glissando, or mimicking those famous popular tunes only Milton Charles could arrange."

"The only difference between dreaming now and dreaming as a sweet 16-year-old teenager is that the first digit has changed from 1 to 8."

"God bless the theatre organ for what it has given me — lifelong happiness."



# ATOS Chicago '93:

**Two Pre-Glows  
... take your  
choice!**

**Saturday, July 3**

**PRE-GLOW ONE:  
Downers Grove**

Chris Nelson at the 3/10 Wurlitzer followed by cocktails and an elegant candlelight dinner at the historic Baker Hotel and living legend Leon Berry at the unique 3/10 Geneva pipe organ.  
*Limited to 250.*

**PRE-GLOW TWO:  
A Dinner Cruise**

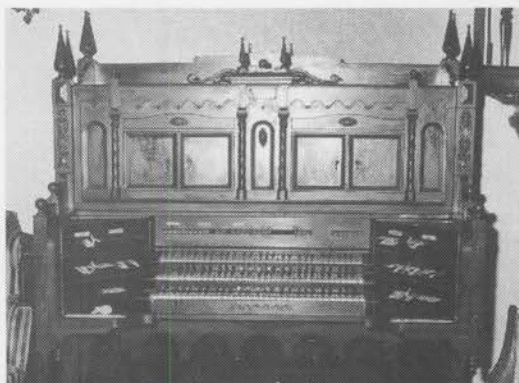
on Lake Michigan aboard the fabulous cruise yacht, *The Spirit of Chicago*. Top deck is reserved for us. We'll dine in air conditioned comfort while watching Chicago's spectacular fireworks display and hear the 1812 Overture live from Grant Park.  
*Limited to 125.*

**REGISTRATION  
from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.**

The Palmer House, Mezzanine.



*Stanley Field Hall*

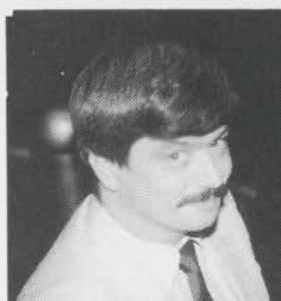
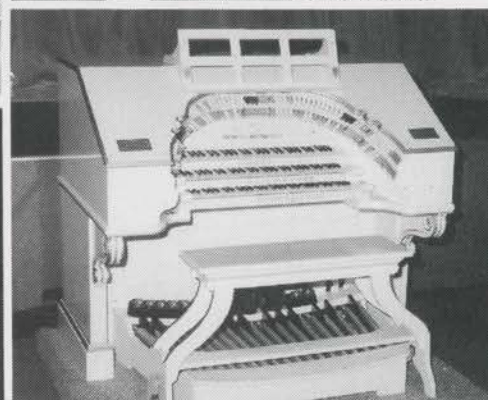


*Baker Hotel 3/10 Geneva*



*Leon Berry*

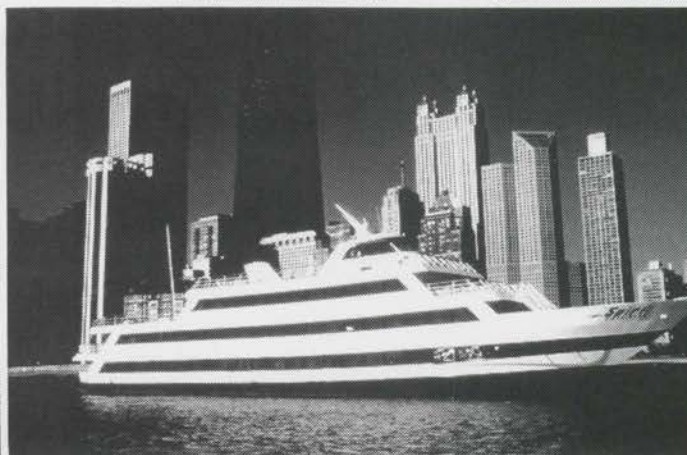
*Downers Grove  
3/10 Wurlitzer*



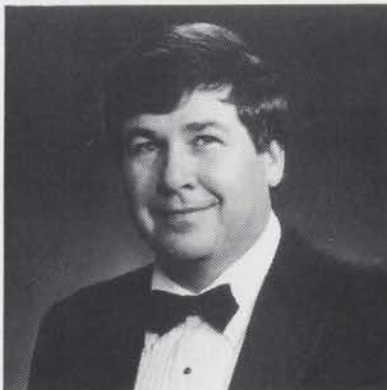
*Chris Nelson*



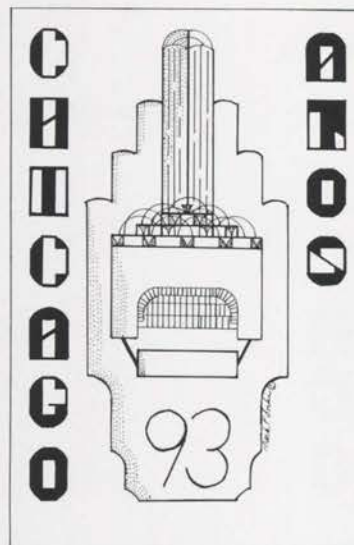
*Palmer House lobby*



*Spirit of Chicago*



*Bob Ralston will play the 3/10 Wurlitzer at the Aragon Ballroom with Tony Barron and his orchestra.*



## Sunday, July 4

### Registration

9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Mezzanine, Palmer House.

### Chapter Reps Meeting

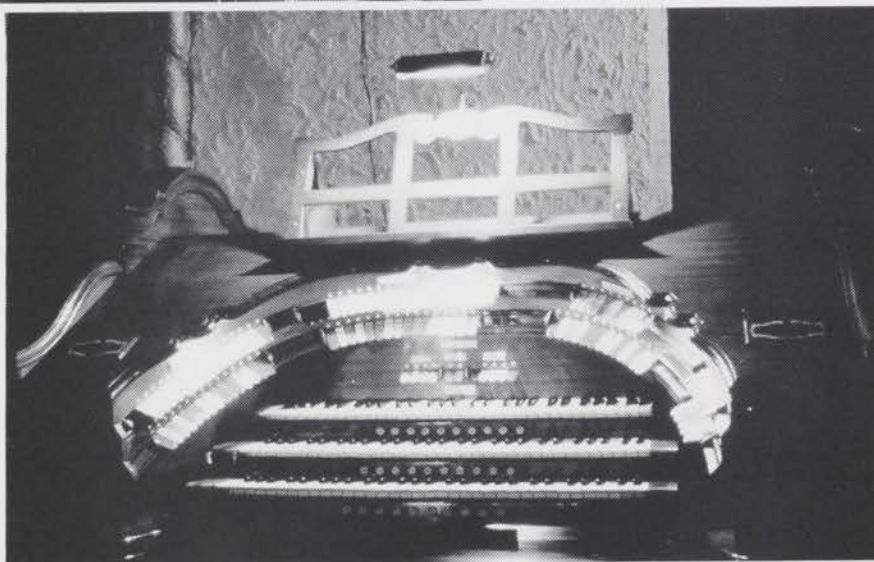
1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Palmer House

### The Aragon Ballroom

3 p.m. to 6 p.m. - with Bob Ralston at the 3/10 Wurlitzer, the Tony Barron Orchestra and Cocktails. Bring your dancing shoes and mingle with fellow conventioners.

### Civic Opera House

8:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. - Dennis James at the 3/50 Skinner.



*Aragon Ballroom 3/10 Wurlitzer*

*Civic Opera House 3/50 Skinner*

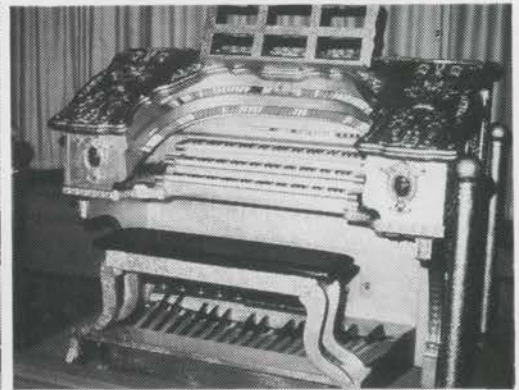
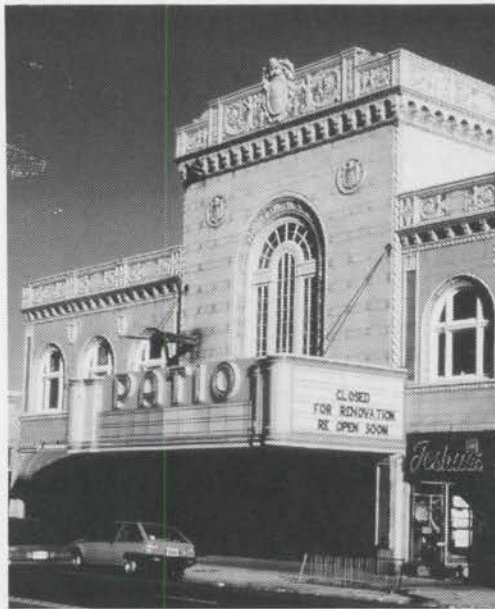


*Dennis James will play at the Civic Opera House 3/50 Skinner*





*Rich Lewis will play the Patio Barton.*



## Monday, July 5

### The Patio Theatre

9 a.m. to 11 a.m. - with Rich Lewis and the Young Organist winners at the 3/17 Barton in this splendid atmospheric house.

### Membership Meeting

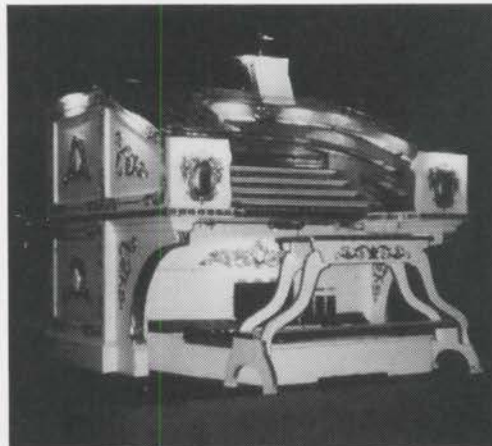
3 p.m. to 4 p.m. - at the Rialto

### The Rialto Square Theatre, Joliet

4 p.m. to 6 p.m. - starring Simon Gledhill and the newly updated 4/21 Barton Grande.

### Optional Dinner

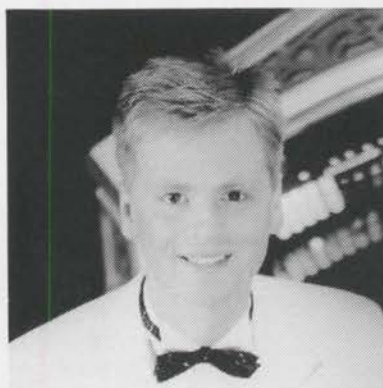
6 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. in the and Kay McAbee in concert. Tom Gnaster at the grand piano will be an added attraction. Limited to 450 conventioners. Those not attending will board the buses after the Gledhill concert to return to The Palmer House.



*Rialto 4/21 Barton*



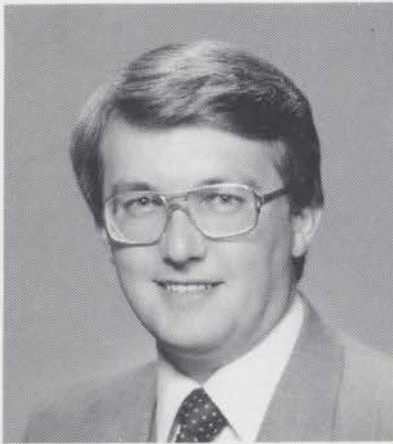
*Tom Gnaster*



*Simon Gledhill*

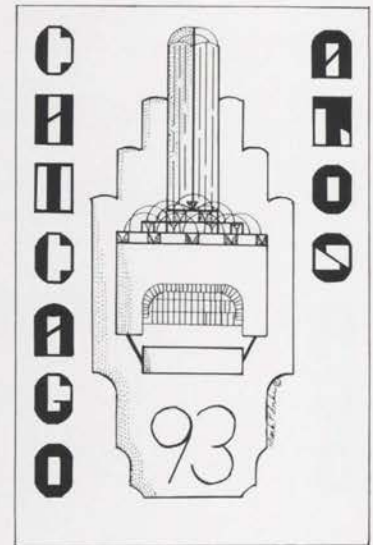
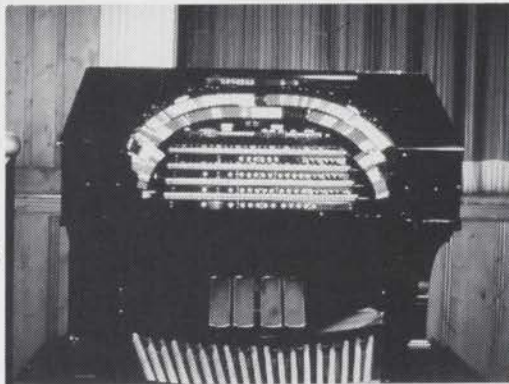
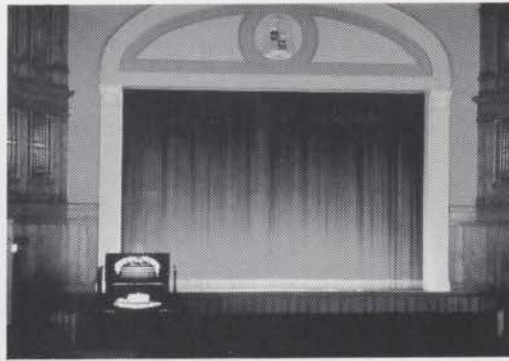


*Kay McAbee - optional Rialto banquet and concert.*



*Jonas Nordwall*

*Mundelein  
4/24 Wurlitzer/Gottfried*



## Tuesday, July 6

### Mundelein

9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. - with Jonas Nordwall in concert at the 4/24 Wurlitzer/Gottfried on the fabulous campus of St. Mary of the Lake University.

### Tech Seminars

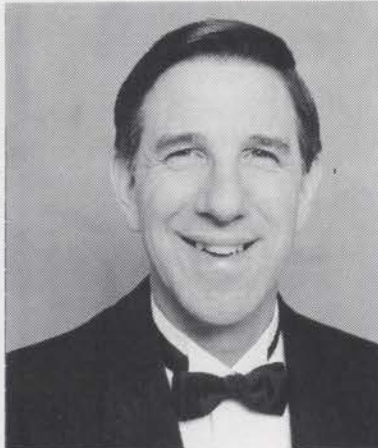
2 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Palmer House  
Allen Miller, John Muri

### The Gateway Theatre

8 p.m. to 10 p.m. - with Dick Smith playing the renovated 3/17 Wurlitzer/Kimball followed by an OPTIONAL JAM SESSION and free refreshments. Those not opting to attend will board buses after the concert to return to The Palmer House. A nationally known artist will lead Jam Session.



*Gateway Theatre 3/17 Wurlitzer/Kimball*



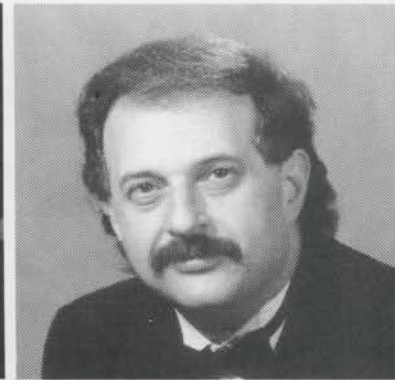
*Dick Smith*



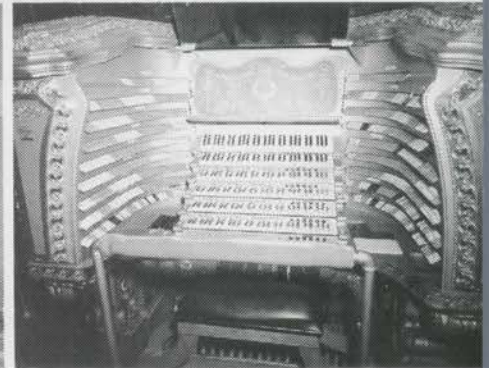
*Allen Miller*



*John Muri*



Walt Strony and Frank Pellico will play the Chicago Stadium 6/51 Barton Grande.



## Wednesday, July 7

### The Chicago Stadium

9 a.m. to 11 a.m. - featuring House Organist, Frank Pellico and Walt Strony in concert at the 6/51 Barton Grande. SAVE THE STADIUM!

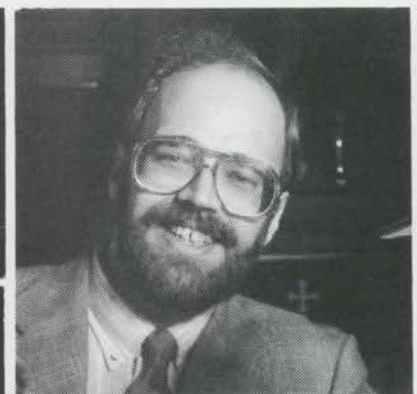
### The Tivoli Theatre

2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. - with Kurt von Schakel and a live vaudeville show on stage. Introducing the newly installed 3/10 Wurlitzer (formerly at Maine North High School). John Muri will cameo.

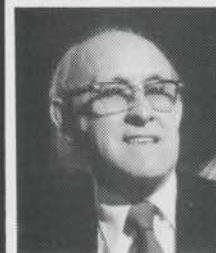
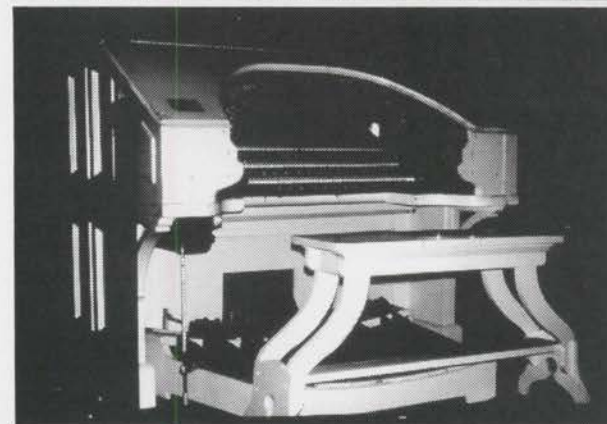
### 1993 ATOS Banquet

Evening - in the Stanley Field Hall of the Field Museum.  
7 p.m. - 8 p.m. - Cocktails  
8 p.m. - Dinner  
Entertainment provided by Bill Tandy; access to museum exhibits. Unlimited attendance.

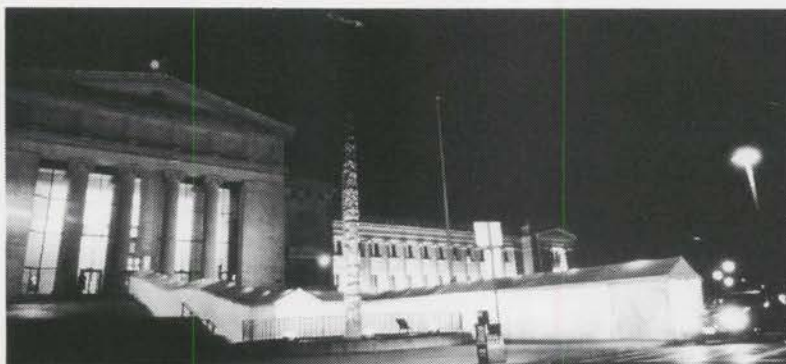
*There will be a lottery for airline tickets for those flying via United and using reservation No. 530ER. Must be at banquet to win.*



Kurt von Schakel  
John Muri



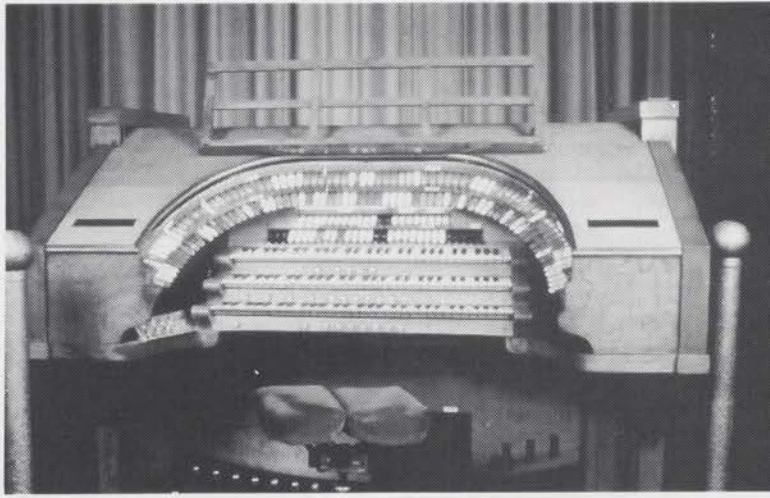
Tivoli 3/10 Wurlitzer



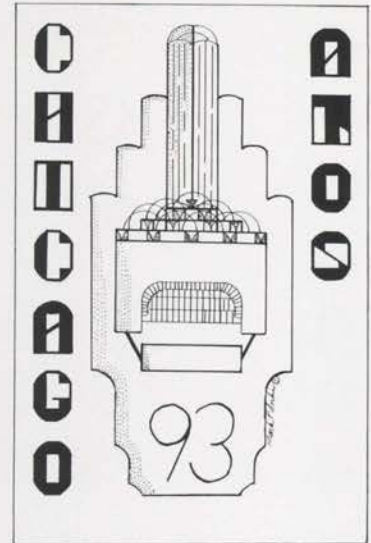
Field Museum



Bill Tandy



*Congress Theatre 3/41 Kimball*



*Stan Kann*

## Thursday, July 8

### Congress Theatre

10:30 a.m. to Noon - Stan Kann presiding at the 3/43 Kimball in this huge movie palace.

### Afternoon Seminars

at The Palmer House  
 Movie Palaces — Joe Duci Bella  
 Young Organists Meeting  
 Electronic Organ Owners  
 Group - Jack Moelmann



*Jack Moelmann*



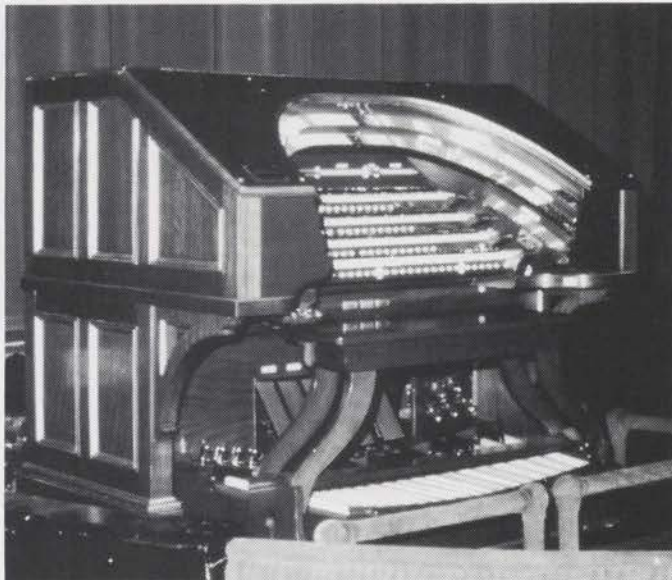
*Joe Duci Bella*

### The Chicago Theatre

8 p.m. to 10 p.m. - starring Ron Rhode at the 4/29 Wurlitzer in Chicago's premier theatre. What a spectacular finish to ATOS-Chicago 1993 Convention! There will be a farewell reception in the Chicago Theatre Grand Lobby following Ron's concert.



*Ron Rhode*



*Chicago Theatre 4/29 Wurlitzer*



*Van Der Molen's 3/19 Robert-Morton*

*Clark Wilson*



## Friday, July 9 AFTERGLOW

This optional event is limited to 282.

### Morning . . .

The Van Der Molen Studio 3/19 Morton with Clark Wilson at the console of this often recorded pipe organ.

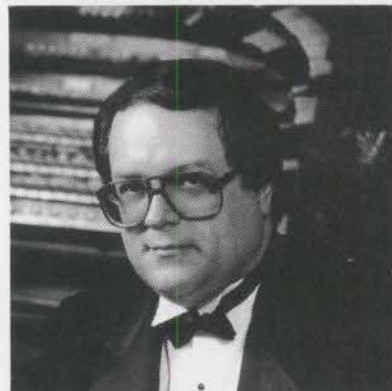
Krughoff's Wurlitzer Park featuring Charley Balogh playing the 4/33 Wurlitzer — another favorite recording organ.

### Afternoon . . .

The First Baptist Congregational Church with the Trio Con Brio. Tom Hazleton, Donna Parker and Jonas Nordwall; the pipe organ is a 4/76 Kimball with authority.

The Afterglow will begin at 9 a.m. with a 5 p.m. scheduled return to Palmer House.

Please Note: Circumstances beyond the control of ATOS, CATOE, the artists or venues may dictate changes to this schedule. We do not anticipate any major changes and invite you all to join us in this celebration of the finest collection of theatre pipe organs anywhere!



*Charlie Balogh*



*Krughoff's 4/33 Wurlitzer*



*Trio con Brio*



# Schedule of Events

## Preglow

### Saturday, July 3

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- 9 a.m. Registration - Palmer House  
**PRE-GLOW I**
- 4 p.m. Downers Grove North High School  
Chris Nelson at 3/10 Wurlitzer
- 6-7 p.m. Cocktails at Baker Hotel
- 7 p.m. Dinner  
Leon Berry at 3/10 Geneva  
Limited to 250 Conventioneers.
- PRE-GLOW II**
- 7-11 p.m. Spirit of Chicago Dinner Cruise  
on Lake Michigan.  
Fireworks and 1812 Overture.  
Limited to 225 Conventioneers.

### Sunday, July 4

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- 9 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. Registration
- 10 a.m. YTOE Meeting - Jack Moelmann
- 1-3 p.m. Chapter Representatives Meeting,  
Palmer House
- 3-6 p.m. Cocktail Party - Aragon Ballroom  
Bob Ralston at 3/10 Wurlitzer  
Tony Barron Band
- 8:30 p.m. Civic Opera House  
Dennis James at 3/50 Skinner

### Monday, July 5

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- 9-11 a.m. Patio Theatre. Rich Lewis and Young  
Theatre Organist winners. 3/17 Barton
- 3-4 p.m. Rialto Square Theatre -  
Membership Meeting
- 4-6 p.m. Simon Gledhill at 4/21 Barton  
Optional to first 450 or Free Evening.
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner in Rialto Rotunda
- 8-9:30 p.m. Kay McAbee in concert. Tom Gnaster, piano

### Tuesday, July 6

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- 9:30-11 a.m. Mundelein - Jonas Nordwall at  
4/24 Wurlitzer/Gottfried  
**Palmer House Seminars & Meetings**
- 2-3 p.m. Allen Miller
- 3-4 p.m. John Muri
- 4-5 p.m. Pipe Organ Owners Meeting -  
Laurel Haggart
- 8-10 p.m. Gateway Theatre - Dick Smith at  
3/17 Wurlitzer/Kimball
- 10:30 p.m. **OPTIONAL JAM SESSION**  
Free refreshments; \$3 bus fee.

### Wednesday, July 7

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- 9-11 a.m. Chicago Stadium - Frank Pellico,  
Walt Strony at the 6/51 Barton.
- 2-3:30 p.m. Tivoli Theatre - Kurt von Schakel at  
3/10 Wurlitzer. Vaudeville on stage.  
John Muri cameo.

7-8 p.m.  
8 p.m.

Optional ATOS Banquet at Field Museum  
Cocktails, Exhibits  
Dinner, National Awards, Airline Lottery  
Bill Tandy, artist. Includes access to  
museum exhibits.

### Thursday, July 8

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- 10:30-12 Congress Theatre - Stan Kann  
at 3/43 Kimball.  
**Palmer House Seminar & Meetings**
- 2-3 p.m. Movies Palaces - Joe Duci Bella
- 2-3 p.m. Young Organist Competition and  
Scholarship meeting - Dorothy  
Van Steenkiste
- 3-4 p.m. Electronic Organ Owners Meeting -  
Jack Moelmann
- 4-5 p.m. Devtronix Users Group - Dr. Dee Williams
- 8-10 p.m. 4/29 Wurlitzer. There will be a farewell re-  
ception in the Chicago Theatre Grand Lobby  
following the concert.

### Afterglow - Friday, July 9

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Home installations will include Clark Wilson at the 3/19  
Robert-Morton at Van Der Molens, Charlie Balogh at the 4/33  
Wurlitzer at Krughoff's and the Trio con Brio at First  
Congregational Church, 4/76 Kimball.  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Return to Palmer House.)  
*Schedule may be changed if circumstances dictate.*

## Theatre Historical Society Archives Hosts ATOS Convention Open House

Chicago convention attendees who are unable to go on the  
Afterglow may wish to attend the special Open House for  
ATOS at the Theatre Historical Society Archives on Friday,  
July 9 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Archives is located at  
152 N. York Road, 2nd floor, in Elmhurst, Illinois, a west  
Chicago suburb.

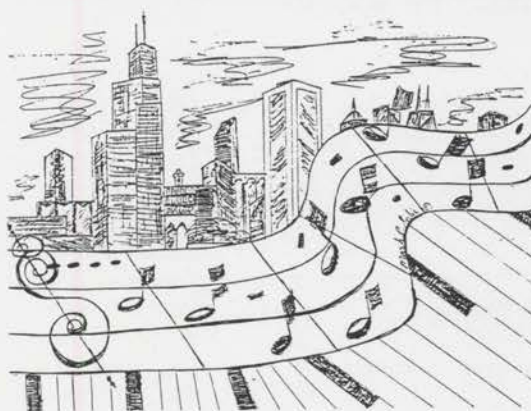
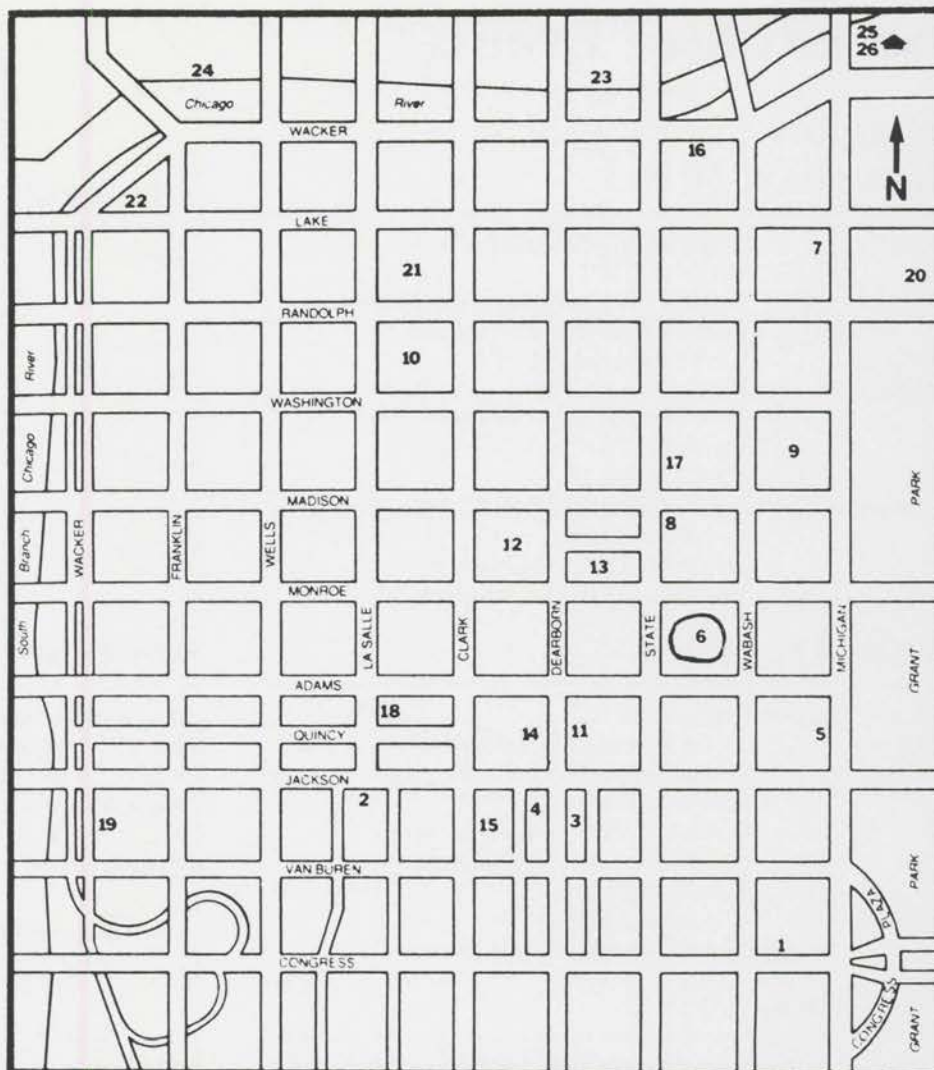
THS was founded in 1968 by the late Ben Hall, a well-  
known ATOS member and theatre history expert. The  
Archives is a treasure trove of information for ATOS mem-  
bers interested in knowing more about a theatre from which a  
particular organ may have come. THS volunteers maintain  
files on over 9,000 theatres with well over 100,000 photos,  
blueprints, newspaper ads, and artifacts, just the things that  
avid organ owners or stewards wish to know. This splendid  
new 3,000-square-foot archives, research facility, and museum  
is in re-built space over the lobbies of the newly renovated  
York Theatre.

The THS Archives is located in downtown Elmhurst, two  
blocks north of the Metra train station. Trains leave down-  
town hourly from the Northwestern Station, about six blocks  
from the Palmer House and take about 25 minutes to reach  
Elmhurst. Metra schedule and ticket price information can be  
had by calling 312/322-6777 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Archives Director (and ATOS member) Bill Benedict keeps  
regular hours during the week. For a current schedule or fur-  
ther information contact him at 708/782-1800. The FAX  
number is 708/782-1802. Information sheets will also be  
available at the convention record shop and at the "Movie  
Palace" seminar by THS President Joseph DuciBella to be  
held during the convention.

## Loop Architecture

1. AUDITORIUM BUILDING  
(in Roosevelt University)  
430 S. Michigan Avenue
2. Board of Trade  
141 W. Jackson
3. Fischer Building  
343 S. Dearborn
4. Monadnock Building  
53 W. Jackson
5. Orchestra Hall Building  
220 S. Michigan
6. PALMER HOUSE  
STATE & MONROE
7. Carbide and Barcon Building  
230 N. Michigan
8. Carson Pirie Scott & Company  
State & Madison
9. Chicago Public Library  
Cultural Center  
78 E. Washington
10. City Hall/County Building  
121 N. LaSalle Street
11. Federal Center and Plaza  
Dearborn between Adams  
& Jackson
12. First National Bank Building  
and Plaza  
Monroe, Madison, Dearborn  
and Clark Streets
13. Inland Steel Building  
30 W. Monroe
14. Marquette Building  
140 Dearborn
15. Metropolitan Detention Center  
Clark & Van Buren
16. North American Life  
Insurance Building  
(Jeweler's Building)  
35 E. Wacker Drive
17. Reliance Building  
32 N. State Street
18. The Rookery  
209 S. LaSalle
19. Sears Tower  
233 S. Wacker
20. Amoco Building and Plaza  
200 E. Randolph
21. State of Illinois Center  
Clark Street between  
Randolph & Lake
22. 333 W. Wacker
23. Marina Towers  
North bank of Chicago River  
between Dearborn & State
24. Merchandise Mart  
North bank of Chicago River  
between Wells & Orleans
25. Tribune Tower  
435 N. Michigan Avenue
26. Wrigley Building  
410 N. Michigan Avenue



## Travel Information

If you are traveling by air, why not take the CTA's subway/elevated from O'Hare Field to downtown Chicago, exit Monroe Street, 1½ blocks from the Palmer House. Cost \$1.50.

If you prefer to take a bus, the Continental Airport Transport Company will take you directly to the Palmer House Entrance for \$13. (Round trip - \$24).

If you are driving and staying at the Palmer House, you may leave your car directly across the street at the Mid-Continental Plaza parking or at the Adams-Wabash self-park for \$14 a week/day, or \$11.50 a day weekends.

## Chicago: Architectural Wonderland

Volumes have been written on the architectural wonders of Chicagoland. The city has been an architect's challenge since the great fire of 1871 leveled the business district and most of the surrounding residential areas. That challenge was met with the construction of many masterpieces that are preserved and quite a few that have survived successive waves of modernization. The map illustrates how close the Palmer House is to many of these landmarks — new and old. Further information will be available at the Hospitality Center for those wishing to take a tour of these architectural treasures.

From the Puget Sound Pipeline  
September 1990

## TWO GALS TAME THE MONSTER!

Long time Bremerton member, Beth Adkison, is nearing the completion of a major pipe organ installation in her home. What an interesting story it is! How many theatre pipe organs have had two single gal owners, both having purchased, installed and maintained the same instrument in their respective homes? Most likely none other than this lucky pipe organ!

The story begins on May 16, 1925, when the Wurlitzer factory shipped a Style B, Opus 1059, to the Astoria Theatre in Astoria, Oregon. One year later the instrument was re-installed in the Liberty Theatre in Astoria, where it remained for 24 years.

Then it was sold to Bill Blunk in the early 50s for \$250. Bill installed it in the BLUE -C Roller Rink in Astoria. After a very few years, Bill removed the organ and moved the entire instrument to Indiana, only to return with the organ to Oregon in the 50s.

Once again it was installed in a skating rink in Astoria, this time the Viking Rink.

In March, 1961, Bill Blunk was preparing to install his newly acquired 5/24 Marr & Colton in the Viking Rink and Opus 1059 was sold to Laurel Ruby (Laurel Haggart). A long article appears in the August 1964 edition of *Bombardier* about Laurel and the "Monster," as she affectionately referred to her new pipe organ. Laurel enlarged the organ to 7 ranks and sold it in 1966 to Don Rittenberg of Portland. Don worked on the organ components but basically kept it in storage until he moved to Longview, Washington, where it again was placed in storage.

Enter Beth Adkison! After 16 years of storage in Longview, the Rittenberg family advertised the organ for sale in a little nickel newspaper! And Beth couldn't resist.

After building a new home to accommodate her new Opus 1059, the installation process is now almost complete. The seven sets are: the original four, Flute, Salicional, Vox, Style D Trumpet, plus Tibia, Clarinet and Oboe Horn. Six ranks are now playing.

Congratulations to Beth on a monumental task. We look forward to the day when 1059 is ready for its Grand Entrance!



Opus 1059 console.

# The Shoestring Saga of Opus 1059

by Beth Adkison

Yes, I have a pipe organ. Wonder of wonders. No, it isn't anything I planned for. Ten years ago I would have laughed if anyone had even suggested such a thing. Pipe organs were for people who had money. I certainly did not fall into that category. I got bit, good and hard, about ten years prior to 1986 with this strange pipe organ bug when I went to a concert in Seattle with some friends. I love that pipe organ sound, but the most I ever thought to own was a fair to middling size electronic organ. I had a very nice Gulbransen, the Premier model, as well as a piano and an antique pump organ. Why should I even consider anything more?

In 1986 my house was up for sale, plans were all in place for building a new house, and I was very busy working full time, and trying to attend meetings of three different organ clubs. Out of the clear blue sky, here was a pipe organ — the right size, a Wurlitzer, at the right price. The timing couldn't have been bet-

ter. I did not build the house to accommodate the organ, as stated in the newsletter article. The house plans needed only minor changes to fit the organ. An upstairs storage room was turned into a pipe room by raising the roof. The stairway was moved forward about four feet so that a blower room could fit under the stair landing. The house is all open space, upstairs and down, and the swell shades open directly into that space.

Getting the organ in the house proved to be a story all by itself. First, the organ was moved from Longview to my old house and most of it stored in the garage and a spare bedroom. Then, shortly after, the house was sold and I had to be out by the end of the month. So, the organ was moved to a mini-storage unit along with most of the other household goods. I moved into a small apartment while the house was built. That was supposed to be a matter of three months — it was closer to five. Then came the big moving day. Everything had to be moved once



*Opus 1059 in storage in Longview, Washington. Somewhere in here is a pipe organ.*



*One great moving crew! L to R: Marlin Mangels, John Nafie, Bob Montgomery, Mr. Nafie (John's father), Mel Retzlaff.*



*The present home of opus 1059.*

more. And, of course, every time we went to move the organ, it was raining — HARD. The last time was the worst. Hard rain and a lot of fresh turned dirt and clay to slip around in. I don't know what I would have done without the help of friends and family. I know none of them will forget that November 1987 moving day. Several of them have told me they will never move me again.

Once I was moved in, the real work began. I knew just about as much as Laurel Haggart when she bought the same organ in 1961. And like Laurel, I decided to do as much of the work as I could myself. It has proven to be an education, a real learning experience. Once again, I would have gotten nowhere without the help of my organ club friends. So many of them have helped along the way. Mel Retzlaff did so much when it came to moving heavy parts around; Don Myers told me how to lay out and place chests and relays in the organ room; Mel, Earl Winters, and Marlin Mangels did so much to get the blower working. It took almost four years from the day I moved into the house until the organ was playable.

There is no denying there is a lot of work to putting a pipe organ together

and most of this one had been packed in packing cases for almost twenty years. Hours were spent cleaning chests (removing three mice nests), replacing missing or broken parts, recovering pneumatics, and just figuring out what goes where. Pipes were dented and badly bent. A lot of them were broken and had to be resoldered. Mel did that for me. The insides of chests and regulators were black with coal dust. Parts of the frame had to be made. The toe boards were damaged and broken. It was very interesting unwrapping pipes wrapped in twenty-year-old newspaper.

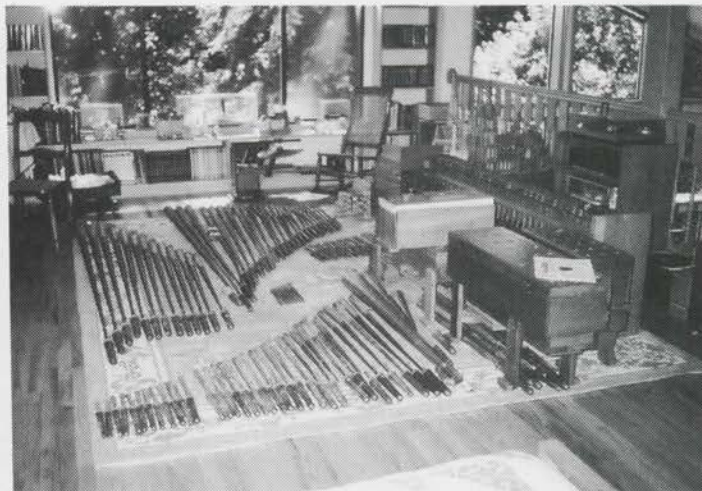
I decided to retain and operate the original four-rank organ just as it did in 1925, and to go ahead with the work already started on the three additional ranks. A new rectifier was bought because we could not find one when we picked up the organ. The Tibia and the Oboe were already wired into the relay rack. The Clarinet had to be done from scratch. When I unpacked the pipes I found I had two sets of Oboe pipes — an Oboe Horn and an Orchestral Oboe. I put the Oboe Horn on the chest to start with because it was in better shape overall but have since replaced it with the Orchestral Oboe which sounds better. Very

little windline came with the organ so we decided on PVC with a metal trunkline from the blower. That metal trunkline has since been replaced with wood which seems to be quieter.

I shall never forget the first time we turned the blower on and air found its way into the chests. Pipes started sounding off all over the place. Mel Retzlaff, Don Myers and I were hopping all around trying to find the pipes that were speaking, and stop them! What excitement! And windleaks by the dozen! There was still a lot of work to be done. But the day finally came when we could sit down and actually play the organ. And it sounded really good! Much better than I had even hoped. Especially the Tibia. This was very surprising considering the Tibia pipes were made up of three different sorts of wood pipes, none of them Wurlitzer. The Tibia Clausa came from one source, the next octave from another and the remainder of the wood pipes apparently came from a photoplayer. They all sit on Wurlitzer chests; the regulator is Wurlitzer, and the tremulant for that rank is from Balcom and Vaughan. Don Myers spent hours straightening pipes, doing all the tonal finishing and tuning. That guy is something of a miracle worker.



*More pipes laid out on balcony prior to placing on chests. This is the Style D Trumpet. Note the many dents.*



*Oboe ranks and tremolos laid out on upstairs balcony floor.*



*Chests and relay were slid upstairs on this ramp and rail arrangement through the swell shade opening.*

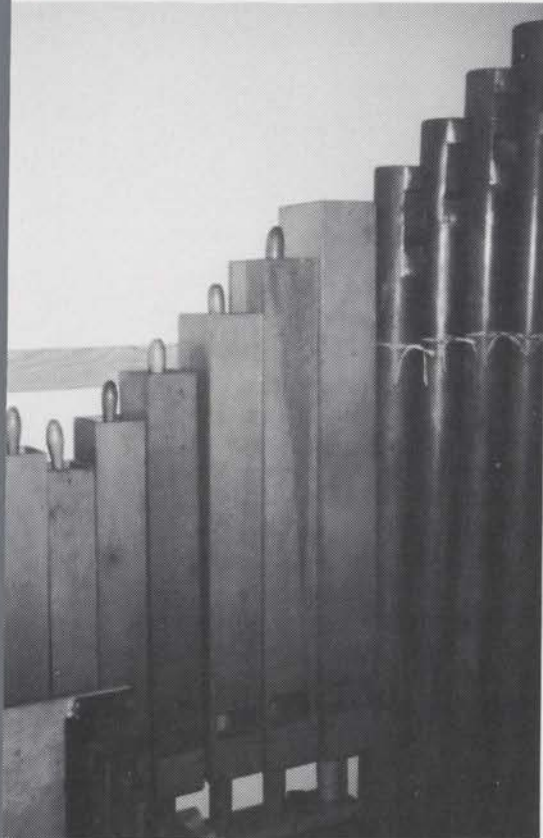


*Moving the larger pieces up to the organ room. Mel Retzlaff on the right directing family members.*

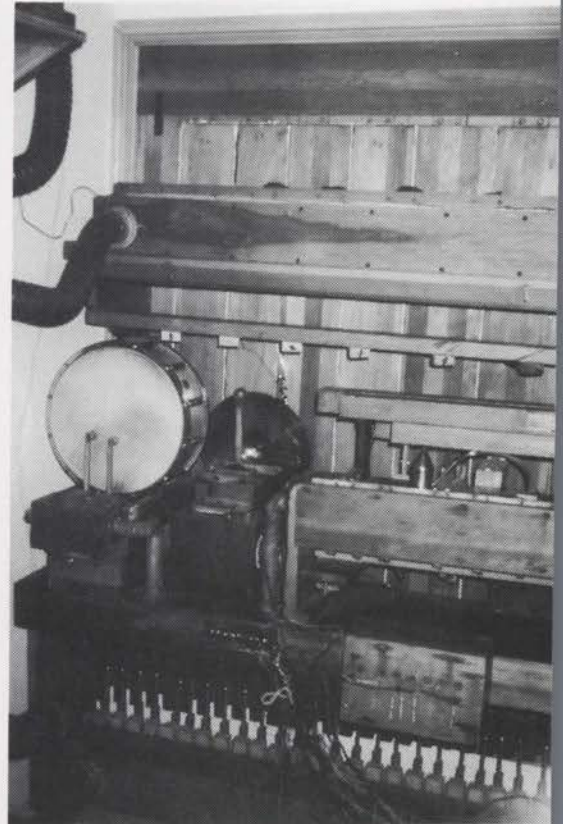
*“It seems I have taken up a hobby that will never end.”*

And still the work goes on. I don't think it will ever be finished. I think the organ has been rewired at least three times in an effort to make it more efficient. The two-horse, single phase Orgo-blow may have been fine for the original four ranks but it just barely makes it for the seven now playing. I am actively looking for a good 5hp blower. Along the way I have acquired a very nice Cryso-glott and that has been added to the Xylophone and the Glockenspiel. Then, since I had four reeds and three flute ranks, it was decided that I needed to balance things out by adding a Diapason. I am still in the process of getting that installed. A new contact rail was installed on the accompaniment manual, second touch was added on the accompaniment. The couplers and the presets still have to be wired in. Once the Diapason is wired, the stop rail will have to be done over. It seems I have taken up a hobby that will never end.

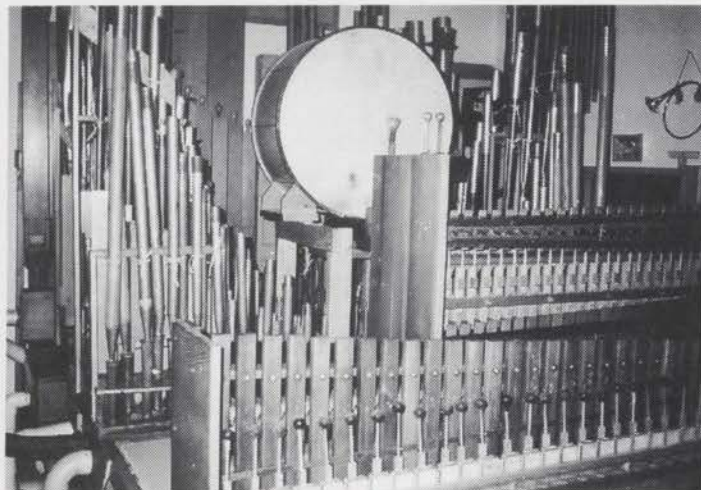
Meanwhile, I am having the time of my life playing this instrument and showing it to anyone interested. I get a lot of satisfaction and enjoyment from it. I am convinced that buying it was one of the best things I have ever done. I have spent more than I paid for Opus 1059 on the additions and other parts but I still haven't put out as much money as a good electronic organ costs. Maybe I don't have all the fancy features of the electronics, or even the larger pipe organs, but this organ fits the house and I do have that wonderful pipe organ sound — theatre pipe organ, that is.



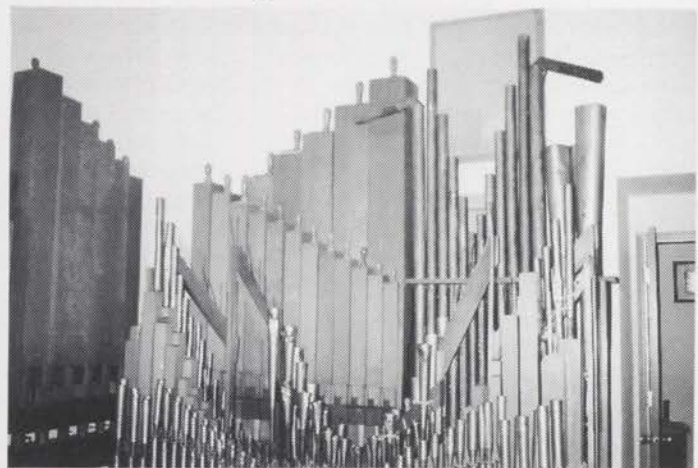
*On the back wall is the Tibia Clausa and the largest Diapason pipes.*



*The traps or “toy counter” with the glockenspiel underneath sitting in front of the other swell shade. The Chinese gong is just out of picture at the upper left hand corner.*



*Pipe room from the back corner. Xylophone and Chryso-glott in foreground, three rank chest with Clarinet, Tibia, Oboe and bass drum immediately behind. At extreme right you can just see the top of one swell shade.*



*The original four ranks of the Style B Wurlitzer. Bourdon pipes against the wall with the four-rank chest in front holding the Trumpet, Flute, Salicional and Vox Humana. Door to chamber on the right. Ceiling on this side of room is 12' high.*

# Pipes & Personalities

## News from Rodgers

### Phoenix Suns Choose Organ From Oregon

A Rodgers Oxford 945 digital organ has been purchased and installed in Phoenix's new American West Arena by the Phoenix Suns NBA basketball team.

The three-manual instrument includes a Rodgers PR-300 digital sequencer/sound module, giving it pre-record and playback capabilities and nearly 400 organ, orchestral and sound effects voices.

The Rodgers organ was selected by Suns' owner, Jerry Colangelo. Low maintenance and the Rodgers' GS Standard Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) capability, allowing it to communicate with and play other musical instruments, were major factors in the decision.

"The new Rodgers organ leads the crowd better than computer sound effects," according to Robert Whiteaker of NORAM Associates, Inc., Rodgers' Phoenix dealer. "It's spontaneous and not boring like taped music."

The new organ features a special "theatrical style" Flash EPROM allowing it to sound much like the giant theatre organs of the past. The sound module generated voices are used for contemporary music and the creation of sound effects. The organ was originally scheduled for installation on the new 19,000 seat arena's sixth level, but the organ impressed the Suns enough that the location was changed to a second level position among the private boxes. Special spot lighting has been installed to make it more visible.

Rodgers Instrument Corporation of Hillsboro, Oregon, is one of the largest and most respected builders of organs of all kinds in the world. Among its many notable installations are New York's Carnegie Hall and the 194-rank pipe organ at Second Baptist Church, Houston, Texas.



Paul Quarino photo

### Minding The Monkey: Minding The Store

Senior staff organist Paul Quarino's camera catches seven-year veteran Don Feely changing shift with newcomer Donna Parker while the monkey watches. Other Organ Grinder organists are Kurtis Knight, Dean Lemire and, sometimes, Jonas Nordwall. Owners Dennis and Judy Hedberg have assumed management duties, and Paul Quarino minds the store for them two nights a week to give them a break.

## News From



German architect Horst-Bernd Streicher-Dennert is an organ aficionado who decided to pursue his passion for the king of instruments by attempting the world record in organ playing. For his effort, that he hopes will land him in the *Guinness Book of World Records*, Mr. Streicher-Dennert chose a large, three-manual Allen Organ. Both organist and organ were up to the task, with Mr. Streicher-Dennert playing the Allen for more than 18 hours in the small French town of Puy-en-Velay, about 60 miles from Lyon. He started at noon on December 31 and played into the New Year.

For his first selection, Mr. Streicher-Dennert chose the French national hymn "La Marseillaise." Included in the marathon performance was a song of goodwill to a free Europe. During the 18-plus hours, Mr. Streicher-Dennert played music of all styles, from baroque to pop.

Mr. Streicher-Dennert, a resident of Siegburg, Germany, is a composer of European national music with peace overtones.

## Save The Elsinore

by Rick Parks

After many years of ups and downs, the Elsinore Theatre in Salem, Oregon, soon will become a performing arts facility with a Wurlitzer pipe organ. Currently, the owners, ACT III Theatres of Portland, Oregon, operate the house featuring second-run movies at \$1.00 a seat.

A group of concerned citizens started a non-profit organization, "Save the Elsinore" in 1980, after hearing about the possible demolition of the building. Working with theatre management, Save the Elsinore was able to produce up to 18 stage shows a year. The shows were very successful and Salem residents realized the potential of this architectural jewel. At that time first-run films were shown and the owners were Luxury Theatres of Portland, until three years ago when they sold all of their theatres.

Late last year the Save the Elsinore Theatre Committee merged with a newly formed community auditorium group and became Salem Theatre-Auditorium Group Enterprises, Inc., or STAGE, Inc. Negotiations began between STAGE and ACT III for a purchase agreement. In February, a press conference was held in the theatre's lobby. An ACT III spokesman announced that the purchase price

will be \$300,000 and that \$25,000 had been received for a down payment from STAGE.

The community and several businesses have donated over \$102,000 towards purchase. Several grants are being applied for to aid in purchase, restoration, and improvements.

The appearance of the structure is that of a castle on the exterior and in the interior, complete with stained glass windows and murals depicting characters and scenes from Shakespeare plays. It is truly one-of-a-kind.

Installation of a 3/16 Wurlitzer was begun in 1986 by the organ's present owners, Rick Parks and his father, Clayton, who will continue to maintain it. The organ has been heard on weekends, for tours, and special shows featuring silent movies. It is the only regularly played organ in a theatre in Oregon. There are plans to enlarge the organ to 21 ranks. A larger three-manual console and a new computer relay system will control the instrument. Electric stop actions will replace the old combination action. The Solo String and 15" Solo Tibia from the theatre's original Wurlitzer (opus 1257) will be included in the organ's specifications. The original 8' swell shades for the Main and Solo will also be reinstalled. The organ will be donated to the theatre when the building becomes community-owned.

Good things come to those who wait. In this case, they also require funding. If you would like to help this project become a reality, send your tax-deductible contribution to: STAGE INC., P.O. Box 6002, Salem, Oregon 97304.

## Look Beyond The Organ

by Cecil Whitmire, President of Birmingham Landmarks, Inc.

I am a long time member of ATOS, but I am writing this as President of the Alabama Theatre about a group of people who are very special.

The Alabama Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society is a unique group. True, their main goal is to maintain the beautiful Publix One/Crawford special that has been a major part of the Alabama Theatre entertainment scene for 65 years, but this group helped save the Alabama and since 1987 has volunteered their services for everything from sump pump repair to fixing seats.

Operating a large theatre for the performing arts is difficult at best, but when the theatre was purchased no one knew anything about operating one. Sure we had been in the theatre for almost 17 years working on the organ, but this did not prepare us for the task at hand.

After the new owners, Birmingham Landmarks, Inc. purchased the theatre in 1987, the entertainment was 80% classic movies and theatre organ music. This was easy, but in 1992 the theatre hosted 241 nights of entertainment including Wayne Newton and the Broadway play *Love Letters* with Stefanie Powers and Robert Wagner. Only 22% of the booked nights were movies. The organ is used less and less, and this month the organ console is being dismantled by members of Alabama Chapter to ship to Crome Organ Company in Reno, Nevada, so it can be electrified and rolled out of the pit so the theatre can have space for a 36 piece orchestra.

The members of Alabama Chapter decided some time ago that the beautiful organ that is so dear to their hearts needs to stay in the building it was designed for, and they are working hard to see that the Alabama Theatre stays in business a long time.

The theatre responsibilities that are assumed by the Alabama Chapter are: ticket sellers, ticket takers, ushers, projectionist, stage hands, stage manager, painters, maintenance, organist, and the list goes on ...

These people volunteer for work at the theatre because they have the vision to look beyond the organ.

As I travel, I visit old theatres throughout the country and I find problems between theatre management and organ people. The difference in the Alabama Theatre Organ Society and others are the goals of the theatre organization and the organ society are the same. We both want to save and preserve the finest theatre with the finest theatre organ.

Birmingham Landmarks, Inc., the owners and operators of the Alabama Theatre, thanks and congratulates the members of Alabama Chapter and hopes the association of the two organizations always remains close.



Dickie Bell - one of three staff organists.



Linda Whitmire - Managing Director of the Alabama Theatre.



Larry Donaldson - Crew Chief for the Mighty Wurlitzer.



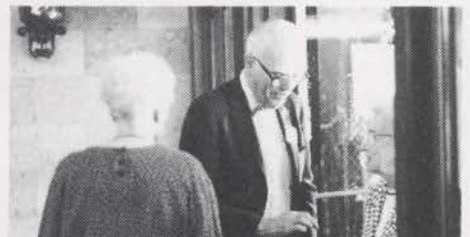
Cecil Whitmire - President of the Alabama and one of the staff organists.



Tom Cronier - Sound Engineer.



Richard Parker - Executive Vice-President of the Alabama Theatre.



Freeman Andress - Vice-President of the Alabama Theatre.



William Hampton - Assistant Managing Director of the Alabama.



Pat Seitz - Box Office and President of Alabama Chapter.



Betty Johnson - selling souvenirs for Alabama Theatre and ATOS.



Dan Liles - Lighting Board.



Bill and Sadie McClure - Alabama Theatre ushers.



John Muri.

[The following reprint was submitted by Atlanta member David Tuck. — Ed.]

## Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Muri

by William D. Eggert

(Last month the SFSA's (Silent Film Society of Atlanta) official court composer, John Muri, composed and performed another wonderful score for our feature film. We are truly fortunate to have a musical artist of John's caliber as a member. John is a feisty gentleman who has no trouble speaking his mind. We are grateful when he graces our meeting with his presence. We reprint with pleasure the following tribute to John from QUIET TIMES, their official newsletter.)

This past summer I spent a memorable Saturday afternoon in June in a darkened theatre in the company of SFSA members John Muri, Charles Walker, and John Barrymore ... Messrs. Muri and Walker are also members of the Atlanta chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS). Mr. Barrymore was there in spirit and on celluloid. A storm was gathering outside in the humid Atlanta skies, but John Muri, theatre organist extraordinaire, was causing his own musical tempest at the keyboard of the restored organ at the converted theatre of the ATOS location at Theatrical Paraphernalia on 10th Street.

The three of us had converged at the theatre for taping of the musical score for this month's screening of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. John and Charles were reprising their roles of accompanist and sound engineer respectively from their successful scoring of our February screening of *Flesh And The Devil*. After setting up the movie to start, Charles headed back to his taping controls at the rear of the theatre. I had a front row seat to enjoy the artistry of Messrs. Muri and Barrymore.

As the movie unreeled, John's eyes rarely left the images of Barrymore skittering across the screen to glance at notes or keys. John had about three yellowed song sheets at the organ for quick reference, but 98% of his score was drawn from his enormous musical library stored inside his memory banks. There was no rehearsing for this taping (unless you consider over sixty years of accompanying silent films rehearsal). John accompanied the film superbly, in one take. As his feet floated over the pedals, John's fingers danced atop the keyboard, occasionally flipping numerous red and white stops with the ease that one shifts gears in a car. At John's command the theatre organ rumbled in competition with the thunder outside, as his music mirrored the rhythm of the film. Fragments of *Carmen*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *The Mephisto Waltz* were subtly woven into John's seamless score, blending into one with the film. The music swirled around the organist, theatre organ, screen, and eventually surrounds the theatre patrons in a whirlpool of sound ...

John Muri is a remarkable person. Into his eighth decade, John still plays with the enthusiasm and zest of the teenager he was when he first started accompanying silent films during the 1920s. He is a kind and gracious man with a spirited sense of humor. "You have to be a centipede to play those big theatre organs ..." he remarked that day. But the jokes stop at the keyboard. John is an artist of passion and conviction, and a purist when it comes to the topic of accompanying silent films. He feels that the music should subtly underscore the film, and never overshadow it. John states that an organist must have vision and imagination to be a successful silent film accompanist. Unfortunately, he feels that accompanying silent films is a lost art form. But as long as we have enduring musical artists of John Muri's stature, silent films will never be truly silent ...



Walter Strony at the 3/12 Kimball/Wurlitzer pipe organ following a performance for the Shakey City Organ Group in San Jose, California.

## Strony Plays for Shakey City

Saturday evening, February 20, 1993, the celebrated Mr. Walter Strony played for the Shakey City Organ Group on a 3/12 Kimball/Wurlitzer at the home of Jack Gustafson and Richard Quiqley in San Jose, California. The opening number was Cole Porter's "From This Moment On," followed by selections from *The Phantom of the Opera*. It was thrilling and emotional with the sound of the organ ranging from a powerful Cathedral to just a whisper. Walter's ability to play in any key was well demonstrated on "Nola." It was interesting to have him use the accordion on second touch. Next was a wonderful fantasy on the opera *Carmen* that made good use of the many sound effects the organ has available. Walter then played "Night and Day" and closed the first half with a flashy "Tico, Tico."

A rousing medley from *42nd Street* opened the second half of his program. "Londonderry Aire" was next played with great expression and feeling. Walter's vast amount of talent was then perfectly displayed in a medley from *Kismet* including the "Polevetsian Dances." Walter drew upon many sounds in the organ to create the feeling of being at the Mosque in Bagdad. A cheering and standing ovation brought him back for an encore. Walter asked for requests, made notes, and on the spot produced a stellar medley as if he had worked on the arrangement for months. Included were "Jalousie," "Thoroughly Modern Millie," "Serenade," and the very lovely Jerome Kern's "All The Things You Are."





Jeff Weiler at Paramount Theatre, 4/27 Wurlitzer.  
Ed Mullins photo

## Weiler Cues on West Coast

by Dr. Edward J. Mullins

ATOS Director Jeff Weiler appeared at the Oakland, California, Paramount Theatre on January 30. This was the second performance of the 1992-1993 Paramount Organ Pops Series and Weiler's first appearance there. His console raiser was one of his own untitled compositions. Then he accompanied a bouncing ball sing-along film for the tune "Tramp, Tramp, Tramp." Another novelty number, "Get Up and Go Home," also his own composition, followed.

An added attraction was Wichita, Kansas, pianist Dave Harris who played Louis Moreau Gottschalk's "Grand Tarantella" for piano and orchestra with Jeff playing the orchestral parts on the 4/27 Wurlitzer. Harris is a senior, majoring in piano, at Wichita State University. The two musicians collaborated last October 24 at Wichita's Century II when Weiler accompanied Charlie Chaplin's *Gold Rush* and *Haunted House*, a Buster Keaton comedy short.

Weiler then cued the 1928 Gloria Swanson silent film *Queen Kelly*. He departed the next morning for Hartford, Connecticut, where he accompanied Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* on February 1 at the Art Deco Horace Bushnell Memorial Auditorium on a 4/80 Austin pipe organ.

Jeff Weiler maintains a busy schedule and resides in Chicago.



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# A Pig In A Poke

by Dennis Hedberg

If you stop and think about it no one really buys a thoroughbred theatre organ anymore. All anyone ever buys is a miscellany of ingredients that at one time may have been what we call a theatre organ and with a lot of planning and work could possibly become one again. Even the purchase of so-called "original installations" do not come with pedigrees and those that claim to are usually, knowingly or unknowingly, tainted.

Organs have been continually altered for centuries. Subsequent builders have always put their marks on previous builders' work. The theatre organ seems particularly prone to this phenomenon. Perhaps this is due to the "unit" nature of their design. It is relatively easy to relocate a unit organ's resources either within itself or with other instruments. Because unification expands a rank's utilization value, simply changing a rank can have an enormous consequence in the organ's signature sound. Sometimes such alterations are judged to improve an organ and at other times organs have been ruined; the most ruthless ruinings being attributed to "midnight-organ-supply." There is always a question as to the musical appropriateness or the authorization of such alterations. This brings me to two articles appearing in the March/April 1993 issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

One is the "George Wright Discography." The other is "An Acre of Seats in a Palace of Splendor." The common denominator here is the San Francisco Fox Theatre and its 4/36 Wurlitzer. Both Mr. Wright and the Fox Wurlitzer play a significant role in the development of my own instrument, The Organ Grinder. Even though I have only vivid memories, photographs and recordings of the Fox, its inter-rank tonal and dynamic relationships have been my bible along with Mr. Wright's guidance in interpreting those relationships.

Now what was once the San Francisco Fox Wurlitzer lies in crates waiting for reinstallation somewhere. Wherever it ends up, one thing is certain: it won't ever sound the same as it did when it acquired its great reputation. One reason is obvious. The San Francisco Fox Theatre is gone and so is its acoustic splendor. The other reason is not so obvious.

In 1942, a twenty-something George Wright regularly performed at the Fox. Even at that young age he recognized certain shortcomings in this particular issue of North Tona-wanda. One was the unfinished, buried nature of its sound. With the concurrence of Paul Schoenstein who was responsible for maintaining the Fox's organ at that time and with the full approval of: Mr. Sturdevant, Fox West Coast Theatres District Manager; Herman Kersken, Fox Theatre Manager; Mr. Dunne, St. Francis Theatre Manager; Elmer Hanks, Purchasing Manager and Comptroller for Fox West Coast Theatres in

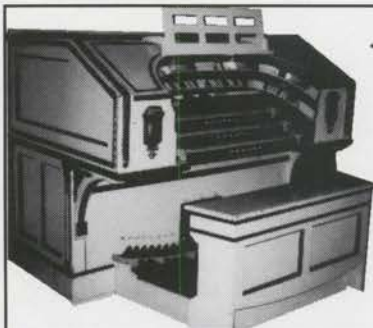
Northern California, George Wright began overseeing a series of modifications to the Fox Wurlitzer. The Fox's management recognized talent when they heard it and trusted George's insights.

In addition to removing sound-muffling drapery in front of the Fox's chambers, ranks were also changed or relocated within the organ. A Robert-Morton Violin replaced the Dulciana in the Main Chamber. This modification provided a celeste rank for the Salicional. The original locations of the Saxophone in the Solo Chamber and the Vox Humana in the Orchestral Chamber were transposed. This was done to improve the Saxophone's clarity.

As I have frequently commented in my reviews of his recordings, George Wright's emphasis is always on the music. It matters not to him whether Wurlitzer or any other builder constructs pipework as long as it suits his musical needs. The five Fox Wurlitzers encompassed three Tibia Clausas. George felt San Francisco's Solo Tibia contributed nothing useful. The Robert-Morton in the St. Francis Theatre had already been taken out of service, its console disconnected and stored. Having obtained the necessary approvals from the gentlemen mentioned above, the Fox Wurlitzer Solo Tibia Clausa from Tenor D on up was interchanged with the St. Francis Robert-Morton Tibia Clausa. The results as a solo rank and as an ensemble rank so impressed George, the Robert-Morton Tibia Clausa stayed at the Fox to become his favorite over the two remaining Wurlitzer Tibias. Since the early 1940s, both live and in recordings, this has been the Fox sound we West Coasters have come to revere.

Now comes the irony. In the always baffling displays of Southern California intelligence (or is it tastelessness?) the chairman of the Los Angeles chapter offered to sell certain pipework collected but never installed by the late Frank Lan-terman. Among others, the inventory was shown to George Wright who spotted an incomplete (nothing below Tenor D) Robert-Morton Tibia Clausa. Could it possibly be? Yes! Because Paul Schoenstein had the habit of inscribing his initials and the last two digits of the year on note 37 of any rank he installed. Keeping his thoughts to himself, George negotiated a very reasonable purchase price for the rank. After all, it was just an old, incomplete Robert-Morton Tibia.

It will be up to the future to determine if the chairman of the Los Angeles chapter knew what he had just sold. At any rate, George Wright now has his favorite Fox Tibia which we will soon be hearing on future recordings of his Hollywood Philharmonic Organ and the City of Glendale has its "pig-in-a-poke."



Asbury Park 3/11+ Kilgen

## Free Summer Theatre Organ Concerts

3:00 P.M. Asbury Park Convention Hall on the Boardwalk in Asbury Park, New Jersey

July 11	Michael Britt	Aug. 8	Candi Carley-Roth
July 18	John Cook	Aug. 15	Bernie Anderson
July 25	Ralph Ringstad	Aug. 22	John Cook
Aug. 1	Don Hansen	Aug. 29	Ralph Ringstad

**Sept. 5 Ashley Miller**

Starts September: *Trenton Concert Series*

Trenton War Memorial 3/17 Möller - Tickets available by mail at regular prices  
For further information or directions, write GSTOS, 907 Best Ct. Ridgewood, NJ 07450



## Kimball Will Be Installed In Michigan Theatre

Urban Services, Inc., non-profit owner of the 1,600-seat Michigan Theatre in downtown Jackson, Michigan has announced plans to install a Kimball Theatre organ. The house was built in 1930 according to designs by Maurice H. Finkel with chamber space, but the idea of an organ was abandoned early on, ostensibly with the advent of talking pictures.

The two chamber spaces were then used for a sound system and an eight-foot-square air shaft running from the basement to roof through what will become the main chamber. The shaft is no longer used. It is thought a Barton organ would have been installed originally, considering that company's close relationship to the Butterfield chain which ran exclusively throughout Michigan.

—See KIMBALL, Page 4—

## CD Produced To Aid Save Organ Campaign

Tom Hazleton has recorded the dual Moller organ in Philadelphia's Convention Hall and a compact disc, backed by Brant Duddy and Irvin R. Glazer, is ready for distribution. All proceeds will go to the fund being established for preservation of the hall and organ.

Talk of a restoration fund gained credence last year when it was learned the city was considering demolition of the cavernous hall so the property could be redeveloped.

At that time, Glazer, who has been serving as coordinator for rehabilitation of the organ, noted the answer is to try and save the building. The compact disc is the first step.

## Two British Clubs Celebrate Birthdays

Great Britain's Theatre Organ Club and Cinema Organ Society are celebrating anniversaries this month. TOC will have its 55th anniversary event May 9 with two concerts, one played by Phil Kesall, the other by Mike Slater.

COS celebrates its 40th birthday with its gala Grand International Theatre Organ Festival at the end of the month.

## Canton Palace Kilgen Undergoing Complete Rebuild

As a result of a grant through a local foundation, funds have been made available for a complete rebuilding and reno/restoration of the 3/9 Kilgen organ, Opus 3604, in the Palace Theatre, Canton, Ohio. Announcement of the restoration project was made by Bob Beck, who is staff organist at the theatre and general manager of A. R. Schopp's Sons, Inc.

The firm of C. E. Kegg, Inc., of Uniontown, Ohio has been employed to do the job. Plans call for the organ to be expanded to 11 ranks, with two additional ranks being an 8' Trumpet and 8' Post Horn. The instrument will also be updated with solid state combination action and an update to its 12-year-old Z-Tronics relay. Chambers are being reworked and prepared by Palace stage manager Paul Fowler. The new Post Horn is under production at Schopps along with re-voicing of the 16' Tuba and 8' Dennison Saxophone.

Re-installation will take place during May and June. A gala event is being planned for the weekend of Sept. 10 and 11, which will feature Clark Wilson at the console. Plans call for establishing a regular series of concerts in the future.

## Muri's At It Again— It's A Wurlitzer!

by Scott S. Smith

The Dean of Theatre Organists, John Muri has recently purchased a 2/7 Wurlitzer from a church in South Carolina, it is reported. Plans are to set the instrument up in the building in Atlanta, Georgia in which Muri resides.

He had previously assembled about a 3/15 Wurlitzer-hybrid in his stately Detroit home, which he reportedly wanted to use for recording purposes. Upon leaving Detroit, the organ was sold and subsequently broken up for parts.

Muri will lecture and perform for the '93 ATOS Convention in Chicago in July.

## Sydney Opera House Will Have Devtronix

A Devtronix Multi Organ Control system has been ordered for the 5/112 pipe organ in Sydney Opera House. It will be installed by Australian organman Ron Sharp.

## Music Hall Prexy Delighted Public Shows Interest In Big Wurlitzer

James A. Mc Manus, President and CEO of Radio City Music Hall, answered Dr. Fred Bock's letter of concern about the Hall's big Wurlitzer organ. Bock wrote the top theatre official following a tour of the theatre late last year. In answer to his question about the organ, his tour guide remarked, "Oh, they only use that for the Christmas and Easter shows. Nobody wants to hear organ music!" But the theatre head dispelled that remark when he wrote Bock last March 15:

"Thank you for your letter of February 26. I'm delighted that you have such a serious interest in our Wurlitzer organ. I, too, appreciate the dramatic effect the organ produces during performances on our great stage. It is truly one of the great treasures at Radio City Music Hall and we all look forward to the completion of its restoration. We take pride in providing our audiences the very best entertainment the Music Hall has to offer and the Wurlitzer is a vital part of our heritage.

"Thank you for taking the time to write me.

"Best regards, /s/ Jim Mc Manus."

*International*  
**ATOS NEWS**  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY

Volume Seven      May 1993      Number Nine

## Restaurant In Downtown Trenton Installs Kimball Organ; Place Is Also Night Lounge

Owners Chuck McSloy and Ron Abata have been installing a 3/12 Kimball organ in their Casalido Restaurant in the downtown area of Trenton, New Jersey. The instrument was originally erected in the Bagdad Theatre, Portland, Oregon.

It is reported the 40's style Art Deco eatery is primarily a luncheon venue and during evening hours it becomes a cocktail lounge.

The organ is not yet finished, but is playable. Plans for presenting the organ in a premiere debut had been made for early April.

Organist Charley Balough was to have played the opener, but unexpected problems have resulted in this event being postponed for the present.

## Recession Hits Store, But Organ Still Plays On

by Dr. Ed Mullins

On the evening of March 1, while listening to "Market Place Radio" on National Public Radio, KEMC Billings, they did a piece on the Mitsubishi Department Store in Tokyo, Japan.

The announcer told of the store, one of the most opulent in the Orient. The Wurlitzer organ was playing a background of *El Condor Pasa* while daily noon organ concerts were being described.

Due to a down-turn in business the store was now closing half an hour earlier than it had been in

—See Tokyo Wurly, Page 4—

## Convention Roundup Shows Some Sellouts

Early April reservations for the ATOS Convention extra events were booked as follows:

The July 3 Pre-Glows, One—Downers Grove and Baker Hotel have open reservations; Two—Lake Michigan boat cruise, sold out.

July 5—Joliet Rialto Theatre Dinner and McAbee Concert still has limited reservations open.

July 7 Banquet—unlimited reservations available.

July 9—Afterglow limited to 400 reservations—still available.

July 10—Sanfilippo Charity Concert. Complete information will be found in current issue of Theatre Organ Journal.

## Airline Tickets Will Be Banquet Door Prize

A special door prize will be awarded at the ATOS Banquet at Stanley Field Hall. It is two tickets anywhere in the contiguous United States served by United Airlines, providing the registrant uses the ID #530ER in making reservations on United Airlines to fly to the convention.

## Adams Praises Work At Victorian Palace

When he resigned last November as head of the organ project in the Victorian Palace addition to the Sanfilippo residence in Barrington Hills, Illinois, Steve Adams felt somewhat concerned about the direction the job might take. He wasn't certain it would follow the design planned by the late David Junchen who created the massive 5/78 organ specification.

However, his fears were quickly dispelled when he accepted an invitation to visit the Palace. He had been invited along with 450 other guests to hear Lyn Larsen playing 22 ranks of the instrument at Christmas, but was unable to attend. But he was then asked to visit March 15 and was able to accept the invitation.

He was given a complete tour by Fred Gollnick, and a demonstration of the elaborate computerized lighting system by Robert Ridgeway. Jasper and Marian Sanfilippo narrated the on-going decorating work, and joined Adams in listening to the organ.

"Years of careful planning by Dave Junchen really paid off in the organ," Adams reported to the NEWS. "But credit for its success is also due General Contractor Tom Foerster, and the organ crew who made moment-to-moment decisions all along the way.

"And much credit goes to the Sanfilippos for carefully following the drawings and instructions left by Dave before his death. The organ is stellar!" he declared.

Chicago conventioners have an opportunity to see and hear the new organ in its lavish Victorian Palace setting July 10 when the grand addition will be open for the charity concert. Lyn Larsen will be at the console.

Full details for ordering tickets are published on page 29 of the March/April issue of Theatre Organ Journal. Reservations should be made without delay.

## So. Calif. Is The Land Of Give-Away Organs

Recently Southern California ATOS member Greg Rister was given a 2/5 theatre organ. This was considered most unusual.

But this month another organ give-away has set a precedent and has established Southern California as the "Give-Away" center of organedom.

Latest to fall heir to an instrument is Kyle Irwin of La Canada. He has just hauled away a Kilgen Petite Ensemble 2/6 pipe organ; it was going to be tossed into a dumpster and toted away to the junk pile; he arrived at the right time in the right place. In addition to the new acquisition, Irwin has two electronic organs, a Conn Orgatron, a circa 1876 pump organ and a Reproduco pipe organ.

## Don Thompson In Australia

Don Thompson is slated to play a concert at the Capri Theatre in Goodwood, a suburb of Adelaide, Australia, on May 9.

## From Opera House To Theatre To Opera House; A Wurlitz In Two of The Three Places

In Poughkeepsie, New York there is an entertainment spot that had its gala opening February 1, 1869 as the Collingwood Opera House. It continued to be the leading entertainment mecca in the city for many years. During July and August 1891, a new roof was put on the building, the auditorium re-seated, redecorated from floor to dome and improvements made to the stage. In 1905 the stage was enlarged.

During the year 1918, the opera house was purchased by a group of city business men. They had built a movie theatre—the Stratford—and secured the opera house for continued legitimate fare. In 1921 they closed the Collingwood for renovations. A gala reopening as the Bardavon Theatre took place January 1, 1923—as a legitimate theatre.

Then, in 1924, Paramount Publix Theatres took over its operation, along with the Stratford, and instituted a film policy in both. In 1925 Publix ordered a Wurlitzer Style E (Opus 1237—shipped 12/26/1925) for the Stratford; the Bardavon continued picture accompaniment with an orchestra.

Three years later the Bardavon dropped its orchestra and installed a Style E (Opus 1861—shipped 3/17/1928), which was given its gala opening April 9, 1928. It was touted first as costing \$15,000. Another newspaper ad a bit later dropped the cost by \$1,000. Then it escalated to \$15,000 and wasn't mentioned again!

The Bardavon continued as a top first-run house, with stage shows. Later on only films were screened and during the 1960s the organ was sold and removed. Demolition of the Stratford began March 8, 1958. No one knows where its Wurlitzer went.

Finally, the Bardavon closed during September 1975. It was to be razed to make way for a parking lot. This was halted when a group of local citizens campaigned to save the house as a performing arts center. In September 1976, the Bardavon Opera House, Inc., group started operating the theatre under the volunteer administration of Stephen and Julia Dunwell. The structure was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in February 1978. During September 1979, Robert Cole was named the first paid Executive Director.

In the ensuing years, 1980 through 1992, improvements were made in the building and in 1985, Johannes A. Vanderlee, a member of New York Theatre Organ Society, noticed an advertisement in ATOS' *Theatre Organ* for a Style E Wurlitzer for sale in Poughkeepsie, N. Y. He investigated. Next month, what his investigation brought to light is what has aided the present Bardavon Opera House.



*Mauling the manuals and pedals isn't the only kind of labor Tom Gnaster, left, understands—nor does Jim Stenke only filter sounds out of recordings as a recording engineer. Here the two are seen taking a break from Tom's "Top Hat" recording session at the Granada Theatre, Kansas City, Kansas, in Bob Maes's kitchen preparing an "ethnic Polish dinner". Tom's dexterity enables him to clasp a coke glass for cutting dough, while Jim industriously grates cheese.*

## Ed Sullivan Theatre Once Had An Organ

by Joseph C. Sweet

When it was built in 1927, designed by noted theatre architect Herbert Krapp, the Oscar Hammerstein Theatre—now better known as the Ed Sullivan—was an extravaganza of Gothic-style resembling a cathedral. CBS is currently restoring the theatre for David Letterman's use.

But when first opened, the 1,200-seat theatre had a pipe organ in a retractable orchestra pit. No one seems to know what happened to the instrument after the theatre became a casino-style night club in the 1930s—or when it was re-named the Billy Rose Theatre.

Later on it became the venue for radio shows—the Fred Allen Show, Major Bowes Amateur Hour, Jackie Gleason's "The Honeymooners," The Merv Griffin Show—and finally the Ed Sullivan Show.

## Barton Heard During Tours

Each year, beginning on Memorial Day and continuing through Labor Day, there are tours once each day at the Al Ringling Theatre in Baraboo, Wisconsin, which includes a demonstration of the Barton organ.

Each tour takes about 45 minutes and a \$2 charge per person is made which is used to support general operations.

## Organ Rehab Stirs Purist Reaction

Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer organ was given considerable publicity in the Metro Section of the New York Times April 10 issue. It has also prompted Wurlitzer purists to complain the instrument is losing its original relays.

Headlined "A Matinee Idol Gets a Makeover," the article published photos showing George W. Wesner at the second console (right side of the house facing the stage), and another of Richard Bishop examining pipework.

Several statements in the article were embellished and somewhat overblown: "...with more than a million moving parts, from leather-and-metal relays, to puffing pistons, to a great blower with 60 foot fan blades in the basement." Ron Bishop, who has serviced the organ since 1956, noted the organ does have more than a million parts. "I added it up one day," he said. The 60 foot blower blades blew by without comment.

Currently there are organ aficionados complaining about the abandonment of the original relay system which will be replaced by solid state electronics. Bishop said it would have been a waste of money to refurbish the organ without taking advantage of changing technology.

### Ralston Making Recording

It was reported late last month that organist Bob Ralston is recording a new CD release on the 4/34 Founders Church Wurlitzer in Los Angeles.

### Theatre And It's Wurlitzer Featured In "Raw Way" Magazine Photo Essay

Theatre organs have figured in all types of themes. One that is seldom seen is currently a photo essay featuring the Rahway Theatre, Rahway, New Jersey. Although the pictorial treatise is titled "Opening Night," in the May issue of Playgirl, it could very easily have been headlined "The Raw Way at the Rahway!" It deals in bare facts. The principal character (the only one, in fact) is a male nude photographed in various poses throughout the theatre.

The essay ends at the two manual Wurlitzer console (a Style E, divided, 2/7, Opus 1923, shipped 8/3/28). One feminine member of ATOS who happened to see the magazine feature remarked that she thought appurtenances on the console (stop tablets) were the only items in the photos that measured up!

It is said this particular photo theme made its appearance several years ago in another magazine and displayed another nude on the bench of the massive Robert-Morton four-manual console in the Elks Temple #99, Los Angeles. A similar idea is said to have involved a famous theatre and its equally famous four-manual Wurlitzer with an interesting bench sitter. But it has never appeared in print.

Does any reader have other ideas for employing theatre organ consoles in novel ways that are certain to attract new members to the Society?



**JUST LISTENERS**—Organists Sean Henderson, Clark Wilson and Tony Fenelon, with California Disneyland chef Tim Kopaceski, pictured in the lobby of the Capri Theatre, Adelaide, attending a concert by another convention artist. Wilson played the main convention concert April 11 for the Theatre Organ Society's "Sizzlin' Pipes" conclave April 9 through 12 in Australia and then enjoyed the other programs.

### John Nelson Hailed For New Teaching Idea

John Nelson, Bay Area organ and piano dealer, has been holding "Educational But Fun" registration classes for Nor-Cal Chapter members at the Berkeley Community Theatre. The classes are reported to be very popular and informative, according to a news item published in The Windsheet, Nor-Cal chapter newsletter.

### Hammond Adds To Products

A ProPortable organ in the classic Hammond B-3 tradition is the latest addition to the Pro Line series of keyboard instruments from Hammond Suzuki, USA.

### Midland Morton Now In Music Hall Chambers

Installation of the four-manual Robert-Morton organ originally erected in Loew's Midland Theatre, Kansas City, Missouri, is progressing smoothly in the Kansas City Civic Music Hall.

Winding has been completed and work on the console is being finalized; a computer has been added.

No date has been announced for the opening of the organ.

### Dickinson Club Now Cataloging Library

Several donations and purchases of recordings and sheet music are now being cataloged by Dickinson Theatre Organ Society. Once the work is completed, both the sheet music and recording collections will be available to members.

To build the collection it was announced that all donations are tax deductible at fair market value. Any type of organ recording, pipe or electronic, is accepted by the Society.

### Murphy's Law Holds Up Volume Completion

When the reprinting of Volume One of the *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ* was announced, the distribution date was set for March. Printing and bindery schedules have caused delays and the books are now scheduled for delivery to Showcase Publications April 26. Distribution will be started on that date.

### City Honors Crotty For Wurlitzer Donations

ATOS member Peter L. Crotty of Valley Center, Calif, was honored by the City of San Bernardino April 4 with a colorful illuminated proclamation for his generous donation of organ components to the Wurlitzer organ in the city's California Theatre which is a performing arts center. He was also recognized as a major contributor in the Alexandra Room project which will be designed and constructed on the upper floors of the theatre building as an elaborate reception area.

Crotty donated a Wurlitzer Brass Saxophone, Wurlitzer 15" Solo String, Wurlitzer Vox Humana, Moller 16" Pedal String and numerous other components including a special transformer to connect the 10 horsepower blower for the solo chamber;

At the present time the organ is a Style 216, 2/10 Wurlitzer which will eventually become a four-manual behemoth. It will have three blowers.

The presentation of the illustrated testimonial was awarded Crotty during a concert at the theatre by Stan Kann.

Crotty also recently donated a Style 216 Wurlitzer to Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society.

### Listener's Request Prompts Organist To Play Answer

One evening while listening to Dave Dawson's talk show over Radio Station KCMO, Kansas City, organist Don Keilhack heard a man call in and say he "sure wished he knew someone who remembered the old tune "She'll Be Comin' Round The Mountain".

Keilhack went immediately to his Casio keyboard, then called Dawson's producer. A short conversation ensued and the producer then set the levels for keyboard through the phone, and Keilhack went on the air.

"Dawson had just had some woman on screaming at him and saying Hitler had good ideas," Keilhack related. "So I told him I would play "Comin' Round The Mountain" for the man who wanted to hear it, then something special for the woman praising the former Nazi leader."

After finishing the hillbilly —See BROADCAST, Page 4—

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417490, Sacramento, Calif. 95481

## KIMBALL

—continued from page one

The Kimball, Opus 7020, was originally installed as a 2/7 in Jackson's Capitol Theatre, literally just around the corner from the Michigan. By the mid-1970s, water had destroyed the contents of the main chamber; the console and solo chamber remained intact..

The remains were removed when the theatre was purchased by the bank next door for expansion. Part of the Kimball went to a church, where it since has been abandoned. The remainder went to a private buyer; a recent divorcee forced sale of his collection, which included parts from the historic Kimball formerly in Dickie Hall at Albion College in nearby Albion. Another private buyer acquired this collection and donated it to Urban Services.

Current plans are to restore the Capitol Kimball to its original specification, with possible expansion later. Emphasis is being placed on maintaining Kimball authenticity.

Restoration and installation will be overseen by Lansing Theatre Organ, Inc. Inquiries may be made to David Daniels, Daniels Sound, 1316 Wildwood Ave., Jackson, MI 49202.

## Donated Organ Fills Space As Famous Item

In Gardner Hall, Gardner, Maine, the Wurlitzer organ donated by Q. David Bowers is stored in an area that is well advertised as to its contents.

A sign attached to the storage area reads: "Note: This space houses 5,000 pieces of the famous Bowers Theatre Organ donated to Johnson Hall by Pine Tree Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society."

Pine Tree volunteers are erecting the organ as funds come in to continue restoration of the building.

The auditorium is on the third floor of the structure and the organ will be used to accompany silent films and for concerts.

## Big Spencer Set To Power Baker Organ

Orlando Area Theatre Organ Society members Warren Thomas, Ted Campbell, Wayne Tilschner and Ron Bower devoted time during evening hours to clean, paint and balance impeller blades of the 15 horsepower Spencer blower that will supply air for the Don Baker Memorial Wurlitzer the chapter is installing in a local high school auditorium.

On March 10, Ted Campbell threw the switch to start the big Spencer. As the motor started to "roar" and impeller blades turned, the installation team stood back and congratulated each other for a job well done.

## Mills To Play Two Shows In Eastern States

Allen Mills will be in the East this month to present two concerts. On May 16 he plays Shea's Buffalo Theatre, and on May 22, his concert will be presented at New York Military Academy.

## Thomas, Larsen Set To Play Century II, Wichita

Dwight Thomas will present "Say It With Music" on May 22 in Century II Exhibition Hall, Wichita, Kansas on the 4/36 Wurlitzer. Lyn Larsen is slated to appear there August 28 in concert and possibly conduct a workshop.

## With Organ It Might Have Been Cheaper

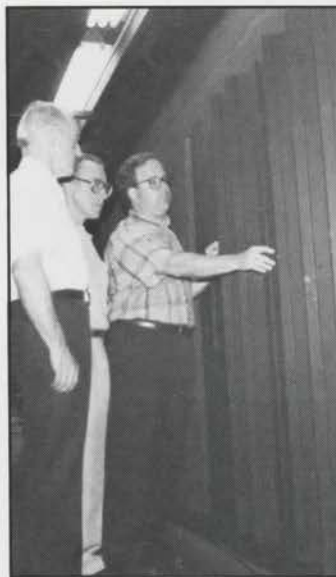
On Oct. 2, Harold Lloyd's "Safety Last" was screened in Royce Hall, University of California at Los Angeles. Musical accompaniment was played by Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, with music composed and directed by Carl Davis.

Admission was a paltry \$25 for general seating—\$50 for priority seating—and \$175 for "Gala Tickets." And someone says there's a depression in California?

## Son Became A Family Physician, But Follows Dad's Footsteps In Partial Style—Dad Was An Organist

When his son was a teenager, retired organist Dean McNichols used to take him with him to various organ locations in Southern California. He displayed interest in music and started piano lessons at age 5 and did learn to play organ. But he went to medical school and became a doctor. He is a practicing family physician in the Bellingham, Washington area.

"Now, all of a sudden Ken has become interested in theatre organ activity and played a one-hour concert for the Mount Baker Organ Society on the Wurlitzer organ in the Mount Baker Theatre; and he has been concertizing quite a bit in local churches," McNichols proudly noted.



*For peeking into chambers and being able to get a good view, Steve Ross opens swell shades of one chamber of the R. C. Simonton 4/36 Wurlitzer for Dr. George Clark, left, and Willi Wiesinger, center. Wiesinger visited this and other Los Angeles area organs during a trip here from Germany. Dr. Clark sold his Wurlitzer to Wiesinger. Ross and Gordon Kibbee have been maintaining the Simonton organ.*

## Vaughn Plays Piano

Bob Vaughn will accompany the silent film "Broken Blossoms" May 26 at the Hilton Hotel, San Francisco. He will use an electronic organ or piano.

## More Boat Space Now Available

To accommodate additional reservations for the Lake Michigan Cruise July 3, 1993 ATOS Convention planners have obtained an extra 100 seats and will fill orders as they are received, it was announced late last month.

## BROADCAST

—continued from page three  
number, Keilhack swung into a big production number of the German National Anthem, "Deutschland Uber Alles" (same tune when Hitler was Fuhrer).

"Dave went wild, then asked me to play other things," Keilhack continued. "I played 'Twelfth Street Rag' (named after Kansas City's 12th Street), 'My Happiness' (Dave's favorite, and produced here in Kansas City by Vic Damone Studios, for whom I worked when in high school—Vic was a good friend and cut a disc of me playing Dick Simonton's Wurlitzer, to be used for a DeMolay ritual), and I played Dawson's show off the air with 'Star Dust'.

"Dave was all excited and interviewed me in between numbers about my position as pit pianist with the Starlight Theatre here in K. C. in the 1950s—the orchestra was virtually the K. C. Philharmonic. We had the top show stars from New York and Hollywood.

"Now Dawson's producer wants me to play another keyboard concert over KCMO. He thinks the Casio keyboard is an organ. I wish I had the Simonton Wurlitzer here to play over the air," Keilhack concluded.

## TOKYO WURLY

—continued from page one

the past 40 years. It was also noted about discount stores making in-roads into Japan. The feature ended with talk about some of the special services the store offered—and the organ then became louder and the music drew to a close.

It was undoubtedly the best I have ever heard the organ sound over the years; my last visit there was in 1981. The organist wasn't identified, but the style sounded like Hiroshi Matsuzawa.

## It Wood Be Poplar

In a recent round-table discussion about the different types of wood found in pipe organs, and their relative uses, the fact came up that Wurlitzer used a great deal more poplar than other builders. The most knowledgeable craftsman responded with, ". . . well, of course they did; they knew for sure that their organs would be playing poplar music!"



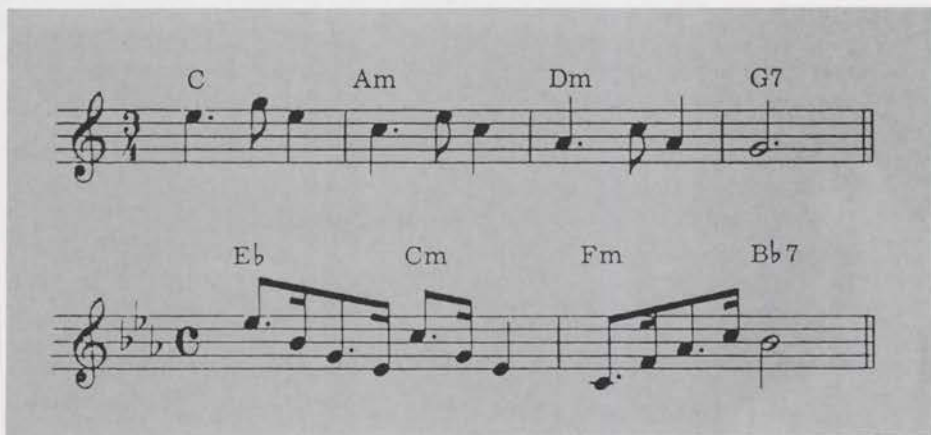
# ORGAN-IZING POPULAR MUSIC

by  
**AL HERMANN'S**

## IMPROVISING — PART 2

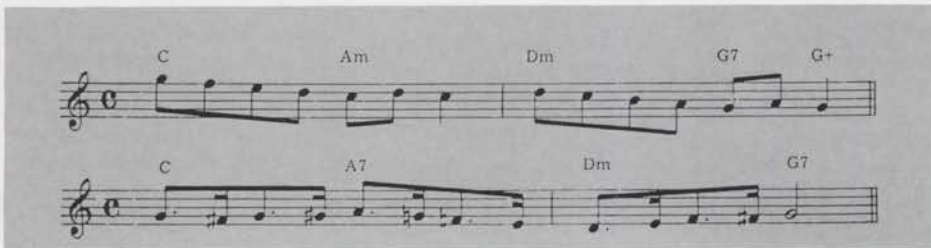
All melodic improvisation must have a suitable harmonic foundation. If you have not mastered the I vi ii V<sup>7</sup> chords presented in the March/April THEATRE ORGAN, continue studying and practicing them in C, F, G, B<sub>b</sub> and E<sub>b</sub>; the keys most frequently used for popular music.

The next step is to improvise short themes using the notes of these chords. Begin on any note of the I chord and move in either direction.



Make up dozens of little tunes on the notes of these chords. When you hear one you like, write it down or memorize it in all five keys.

When you can do this easily (it may take a month), make up themes using passing scale tones and accidentals.



Play these many times and LISTEN to them. Then make up many others. Your first attempts may not be very artistic or original, but with perseverance most organists can develop considerable skill for improvising short melodies. This can even lead to composing worthwhile songs or organ solos.

Additional instruction and examples are presented in Lesson 52, ORGAN-izing Popular Music, Book 2.

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# "An Acre of Seats in a Palace of Splendor"

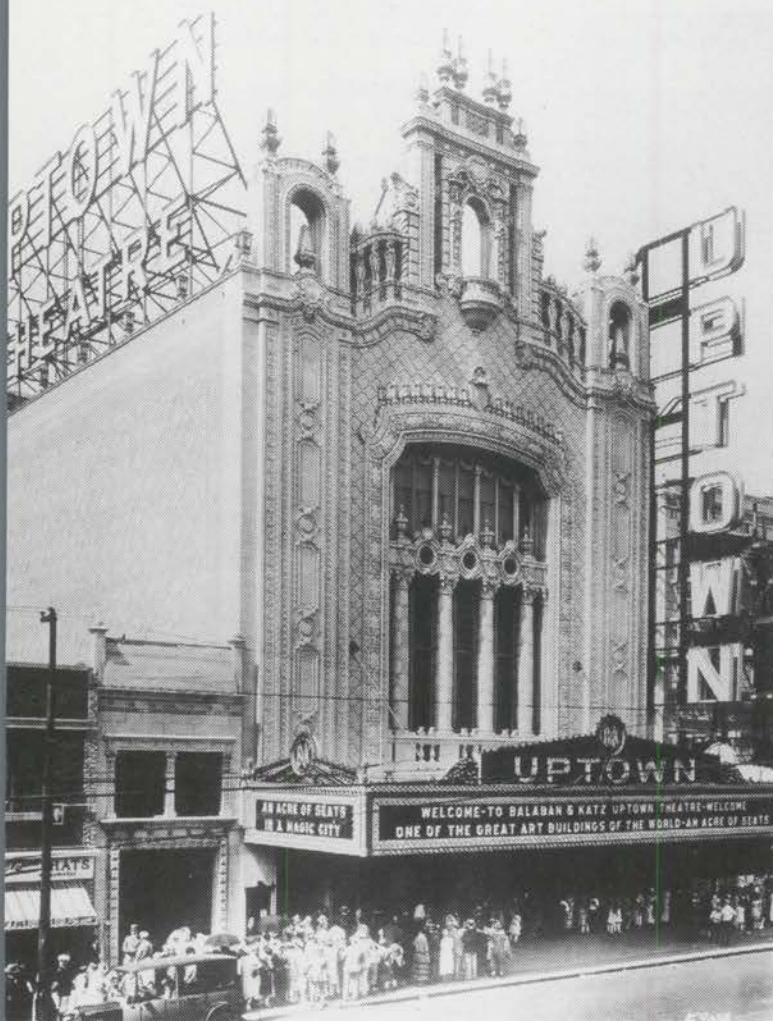
## UPTOWN, CHICAGO

Opened: August 18, 1925

Capacity: 4,381

Architect: C.W. & George L. Rapp

Organ: Wurlitzer 4/28 Style 285  
Opus 1060



*The only disappointing feature of the exterior is the vertical sign, a nose-thumbing counter blast at Chicago's asinine taxation of such advertising by square footage. Note the tapestry brick with which much of the building is clad.*

THSA Archives



*Joe DuciBella, Uptown fan supreme, has identified eight distinct levels in the auditorium, including the curious ambulatories above the sidewall arches. The organ screen, for once blessedly open, might have been an alternate take on the facade, or vice-versa.*

THSA Archives

Once dominance of the South Side and Loop districts had been secured by the Tivoli and Chicago, respectively, Balaban & Katz was ready to take on the North Side, where their pretty little Riviera, opened in 1919, was already starting to look pretty little. The largest movie house ever built in Chicago, the Uptown would also prove to be the Rapps' largest and the last B & K theatre to open before the merger which installed the circuit as the tail wagging the Publix dog.

In a rare departure from Francophilia, the Rapps here employed Spanish modes, but it is scale and size rather than ornament which first impress, especially the complex procession of alternating low and high spaces from the entry through the grand lobby, stair lobby, inner foyer and orchestra rear to the 101-foot height of the auditorium. An auxiliary lobby out to Lawrence Avenue flanked house-left, as if the Rapps had wanted to work in every design that came into their heads. Perhaps no other movie palace ever offered such an assortment of superior public spaces.

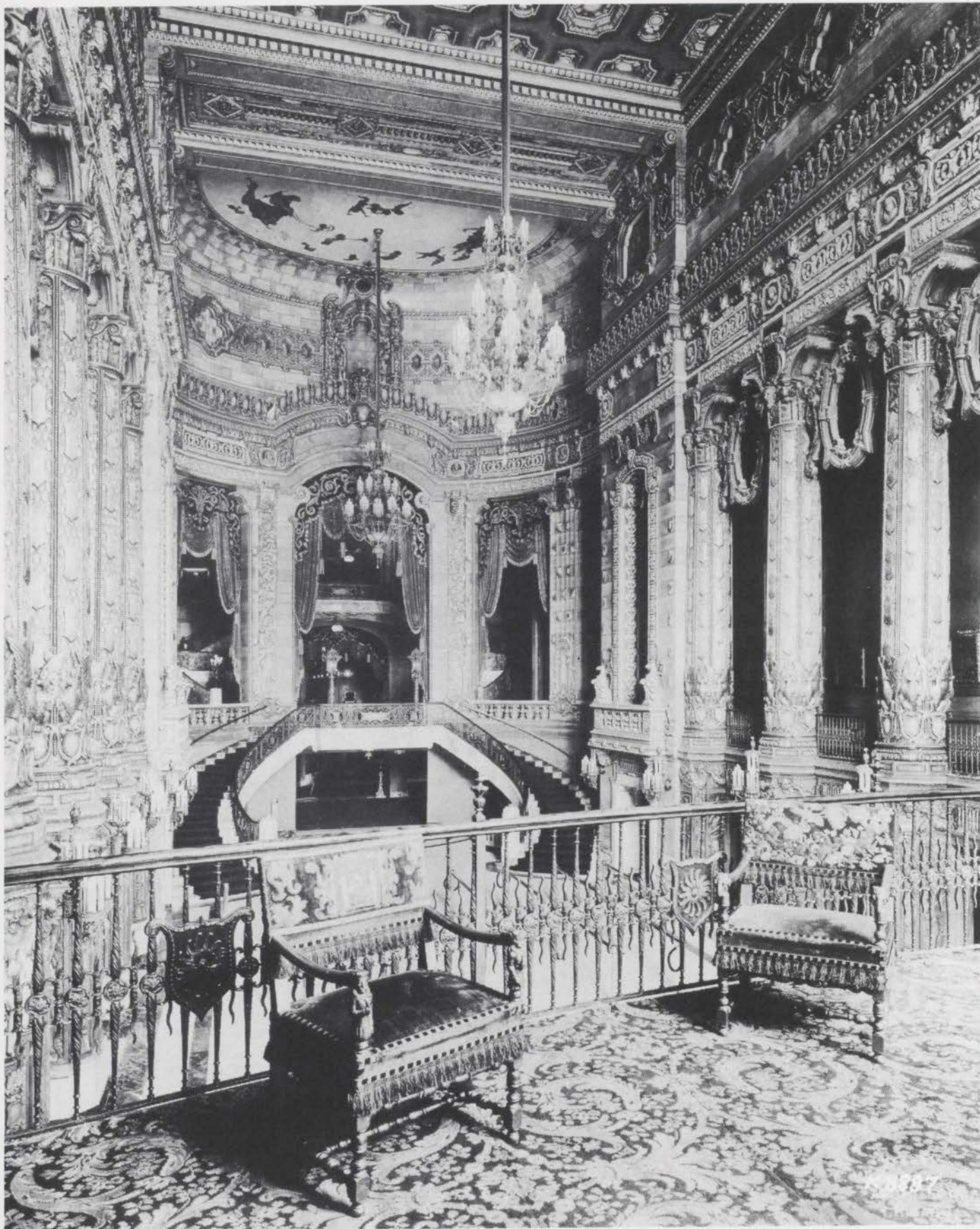
Despite a payroll of 131, the Uptown made money from the start, and remained profitable well into the 70s. It was leased to Spanish-Language operators in 1978, only to be abandoned in December 1981. Shortly after, the shuttered house was badly damaged by bursting water pipes, and has never reopened. Many proposals to revive the Uptown have come and gone, but to date not one has worked out.

Wurlitzer's largest Chicago installation, the Uptown's organ never quite enjoyed the esteem and affection granted the Chicago's. In specification, it was most like Shea's Buffalo, but lacked a 32' Diaphone. Its position as largest was lost in 1932 when the two-rank Brass division was moved to the Chicago, where it remains. The rest of the organ has been broken up.

Steve Levin

For membership information:  
THEATRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
York Theatre Building, Suite 200  
152 N. York Road / Elmhurst, Illinois 60126





*The grand lobby, seen here from the "music room" above the entry, repeats the successful configuration of the Tivoli and Chicago lobbies on a vaster scale. The quatrefoil openings in the frieze above the staircase conceal never-used organ chambers.*

THSA Archives

# CLOSING CHORD

Lee Prater



Leland J. Prater was born on January 22, 1910 in Pocatello, Idaho, where he grew up and become enamored of the piano. When in his teens, the Prater family moved to San Francisco, Lee got a job as an usher in the famous Fox Theatre where he became acquainted with the well known house organist, Everett Nourse, and Lee became hooked on the theatre pipe organ. He gave music lessons out of his truck/van.

Lee graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with a degree in Forestry. As a gymnast he almost made the U.S. Olympic Team. He joined the U.S. Forest Service and moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where he served for many years, especially as a photographer, until he was transferred to Forest Service headquarters in Washington, D.C. Although formally retired in the 1970s, he never quite quit, and until the end, was building an immense catalog of photo negatives of national forests, for which the Forest Service was preparing an award at the time of his death on April 1, 1993.

In his retirement he gave music lessons to groups and to individuals for Jordan Kitt's Music Co. He could play George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" entirely from memory.

Perhaps Lee's most famous accomplishment was the publication of a series of documents known as "Cinema Organ

Styles" in association with the late Bill McMains. Some of the titles are "A Primer of Cinema Organ Styling" (in two parts, "Light, Lush & Lively," "Front Row ... Center," "Tickets Please!," "Organ Chords," "Organ Rhythms" and "Icing the Cake, Volumes 1 and 2." Some of these were reviewed in THEATRE ORGAN, May/June 1975, page 44 and Aug./Sept., 1975, page 50.

Lee served as ATOS Membership Secretary from mid-1979 to mid-1981. He was also chairman of Potomac Valley Chapter during 1979-80, and in that role cleared the way for a Wurlitzer to be installed at George Mason University, with title vested in Potomac Valley Chapter.

A ship's chef once taught Lee how to bake pastries. Whenever Lee joined in an organ work party, which was often, he would bring homemade pastries, to the great delight of the workers.

Lee raised his two sons, Robert and Chris, as a single parent, often playing them to sleep using organ or piano. Both sons exhibit considerable musical talent.

Those fortunate enough to have known Lee Prater enjoyed being in the company of a real gentleman, and a very talented musician with an encyclopedic knowledge of musical structure and harmony. He displayed his phenomenal talent as recently as December 1992, while playing open console after a Potomac Valley Business Meeting.

Those wishing to do so may send a donation in his memory to Potomac Valley Chapter, ATOS, c/o Treasurer Donald D. Faehn, 6024 Greeley Blvd., Springfield, VA 22152-1212.

Jack Little



RE-ISSUE

**THE FAMOUS RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL ORGAN.** Ashley Miller at the RCMH auditorium organ. Available from: Milco Music, P.O. Box 32, Closter, NJ 07624. Prices are: CD \$15.00, Cassette \$13.00 PPD. Selections are: Poinciana, A Foggy Day, Indian Summer, Someone To Watch Over Me, Non Dimenticar, Musetta's Waltz, Fascination, Czardas, Minute Waltz, and ending with a Waltz Medley. Artist's note: these recordings are 33 minutes.

ORGAN: ★★★★★

RECORDING: ★★★★★

PERFORMANCE: ★★★★★

Reviewer's note: This recording represents Ashley Miller at his best, and is one of my favorite recordings. The transfer from analog to digital is excellent.

Bob Shafter

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## If Stan Won't, Lyn Will

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For some time the ATOS membership renewal form has listed different categories of membership, with a request that you contribute beyond the basic dues to assist ATOS in accomplishing its goals.

Response to this request has grown each year. We are pleased to recognize those who have responded by publishing the following list, and we thank you for taking the extra step.

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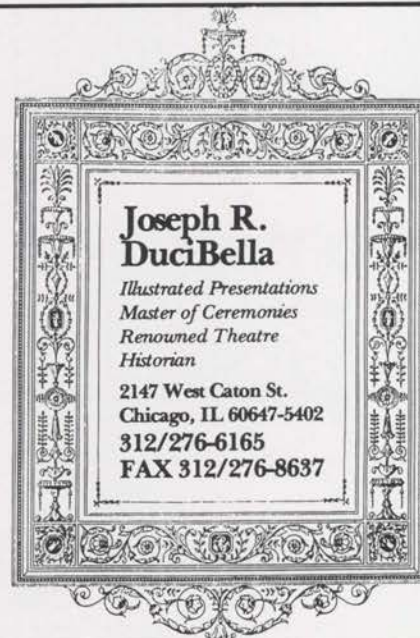
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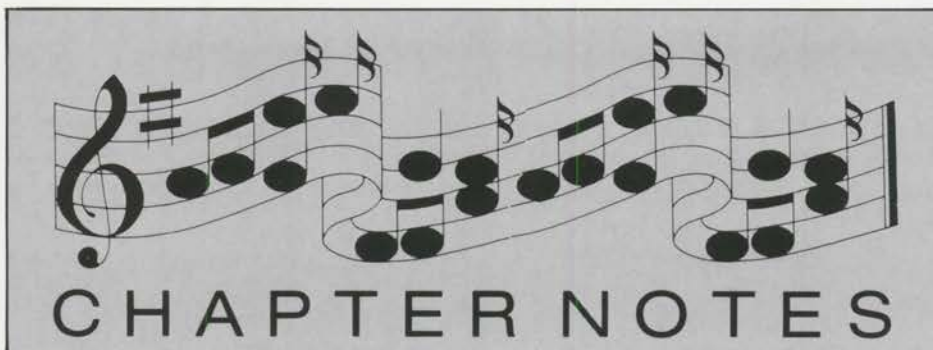
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# CHAPTER NOTES

## ALABAMA

Birmingham

205/591-3445 or 205/870-8217

Our chapter had our last meeting with the old Bertha on January 24. We were treated to a wonderful concert by Bobby Woods who is organist at First Lutheran Church of Birmingham. Bobby used a good mix of classical and popular music.

The day after this program Big Bertha was disassembled for her much-needed "vacation" in Reno with Ken Crome and Tim Rickman of Crome Organ Company, who did a whirlwind job of mounting all new Syndyne stop action magnets (SAMs) on the bottom bolster and creating two new stop rails above that, wiring it all perfectly and beautifully, and sending it back to us air freight. Tom Helms was contracted to supervise the disassembly, wire in the new electronic stop

action, and patch up the manuals and pedalboard while the SAMS were being done by Crome Organ. Chapter President Pat Seitz volunteered to be Tom's main assistant, and both put in many 10 and 12-hour days throughout the end of January, all of February, and the first two weeks of March, working on the console when theatre availability made that possible, and rebuilding manuals at Birmingham Wedding Chapel (graciously made available by owner Freeman Andress) when the theatre was booked.

Organ crew chief Larry Donaldson oversaw progress, helped with work on weekends when he could be in Birmingham, and agreed with Tom that the keys and pedals needed more than patch work; at the request (and expense) of the Alabama Theatre folks, the pedal keys were rebushed; three manuals had their keys rebushed; naturals had edges rounded and were polished, sharps were stripped and repainted, and all were leveled, adjusted, and had second touch adjusted also. Future visiting organists may not notice the complete redoing of the stop action, but the "new" manuals are a dream to play, compared to their prior condition!

One week after the main stop rails were re-installed, the new back rail and side short rails arrived from Crome Organ, if possible more wonderfully done than the main ones, and were wired into the console in their turn. We really can't thank Ken Crome enough for his swift and perfect work, as well as his willingness to work with us to take care of glitches that arose during the process.

During the rebuild process, our chapter met on February 7, to celebrate our 20th birthday. The organ console was at this point reduced to a "Moorish coffee table," but board member Tom Cronier produced a very fine multiple-choice "guess the song and artist" program, through the magic of Devtronix and disc recordings of chapter programs from the past. Chapter correspondent Virginia Robertson won the potted plant with 14 out of 20 correct.

After enjoying birthday cake and catching up on the progress of the rebuild, many members made the tour of the working parts of the theatre. The backstage area has been transformed in the last year, and the new theatre offices in the mezzanine-level commercial space are beautiful! New seat covers throughout the mezzanine and balcony also add much to the theatre's ever-improving appearance.

Because of a heavy schedule of theatre bookings and the necessary smoothing out of the new electronic stop action, we will not have a March meeting. We look forward instead to our April meeting when our own house organist, Cecil Whitmire, will put aside his fund-raiser's hat and entertain us on the "new" Alabama Wurlitzer.

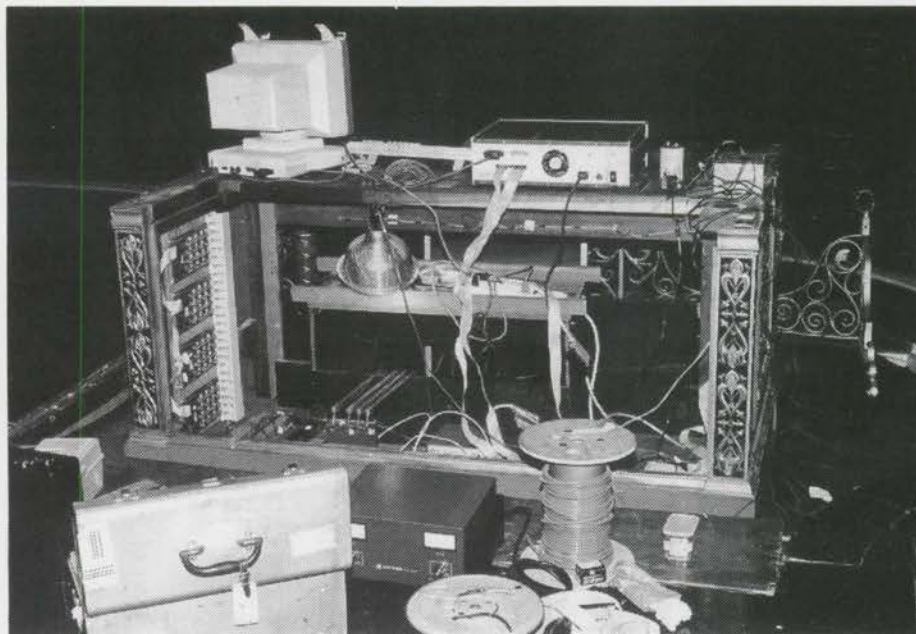
Virginia Robertson  
and Pat Seitz



Tom Helms leveling second touch on the Great manual. Pat Seitz photo



Tom Helms being eaten by the re-assembled console (checking fit of new Bottom Bolster). Pat Seitz photo



Our "moorish coffee table" before rewiring.

Bill McClure photo



## CENTRAL FLORIDA

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Attendance at our meetings on the second Sunday afternoon of the month continues to be encouraging. A total of 80 members and friends attended the December meeting; 36 people attended in January; and 55 people in March. We thank all who have made the meetings successful.

The January meeting featured a mini-concert by guest artist, Harry Lansing. He presented an excellent program on the 652 Conn Organ at the home of Joe and Peg Mayer in Largo. Our February meeting was graced by the presence of Joyce Aldred, a professional organist from England who made contact with President Bill Shrive through these notes in *THEATRE ORGAN*. Joyce presented a truly outstanding program. Our own chapter mentor, Al Hermanns, presented a short program on organ style, form, and registration which was of interest to both organists and non-organists.

Building alterations for the Baby 2/4 Wurlitzer in the Pinellas Park Civic Building are moving toward completion. Ron Larko reported excellent progress on the organ with the installation of the chests and the blower parts. Work on the wiring is well underway.

John Otterson reports that much of the electronic rail on the Tampa Theatre organ is in place, and the piston action is expected to be completed shortly, allowing more flexibility in registering.

Several new members have been welcomed into our Chapter: Joe DeNitto, Alice Scrivens, and Dawn Wooliscroft.

Tom Wooliscroft reported that a silent film (Buster Keaton) with organ accompaniment was presented in connection with the annual Gasparilla Festival in

February. It is hoped that this might become an annual event with more publicity and larger attendance.

Tampa also held a "First Night" Celebration on New Year's Eve. "First Night" was started in Boston 17 years ago. It has been adopted by many other cities and involves, in many places, a parade and a variety of cultural groups. Our chapter may be part of the First Night Celebration in 1993. St. Petersburg is considering a First Night Celebration for next year.

Our January newsletter, *The Stoplist*, featured an Up Close & Personal column on John Ambler, who moved to Florida from Massachusetts three years ago, and who writes these notes. John remembers seeing his first theatre organ at the old Paramount Theatre in Springfield, Massachusetts during the thirties. He was dazzled by not one — but two — organ consoles coming out of the darkness at the Radio City Music Hall in New York City. As a retired United Methodist pastor, John has a long acquaintance with church organs, and was a fan of the organ concerts sponsored by the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter at Babson College in Wellesley. Retirement in Florida allowed time to become active in the Central Florida Chapter. John hopes to attend a national ATOS convention.

Our March *Stoplist* features President Bill Shrive. Bill's early interest in mechanics and skating rinks led to his involvement in organs and player pianos. It was at a roller rink with a B-3 Hammond and 8 Leslie speakers that he met his wife, Becky.

Bill began his career as a restorer of player pianos and nickelodeons in 1982, and has worked on as many as eight pianos at once! Peter Jennings featured a reproducing Ampico piano on one of his TV specials. The piano was restored by Bill Shrive. Becky is an enthusiastic partner with Bill, hosting many of our chap-

ter meetings, and proud of her cousin, the house organist at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda, New York, the old home of the Wurlitzer factory. (The company name may still be seen on the water tower.)

Bill was introduced to Central Florida through John Otterson's Sunday theatre organ radio show, and has been a dedicated member (and worker) since 1989. Bill acquired a personal 2/4 Robert-Morton organ for his home in Pinellas Park, in 1990. The organ came from the Regent Theatre in Newton, Kansas. From that theatre it was moved to the 1st Baptist Church of Newton in 1939. Bill purchased the organ, and with the help of chapter members, moved it to his home. Two bedrooms were converted to organ chambers. (Becky is an understanding wife!) The organ consists of Violin, Diapason, Flute, and Vox Humana, plus xylophone, carillon harp, chimes, and a full toy counter. The blower is a 3hp Spencer. A duplex Robert-Morton roll player is attached to the organ and will play by itself. Bill is also the proud owner of a Welte Mignon reproducing player grand built in 1928.

The Pinellas Park "Baby" Wurlitzer was a gift from Bill and Becky Shrive, and our treasurer, Ginny Lawrence. It was Bill who worked with the administration of Pinellas Park concerning the installation of the organ in the city auditorium. Bill also collects clocks from around the world. Becky is a collector of music boxes and items of country design. Bill comments: "My grandchildren are getting an early introduction to theatre organ, and its music, with one granddaughter showing particular delight in the organ and piano."

(Note: Your correspondent thanks the Editor of *Stoplist*, June Hermanns, for this information on Bill and Becky Shrive.)  
*John Ambler*

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## CENTRAL INDIANA

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Our opening program for 1993 was held on January 10 at the Hedback Theatre, with Warren York warding off the winter doldrums at the console of our 2/11 Page-Wurlitzer. His theme for the program was "Say It With Music," and he said it beautifully. Highlights following Warren's original arrangement of "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" were "You Took Advantage of Me," "You Made Me Love You," and "I Get A Kick Out of You." Warren's arrangements are always tastefully and artistically done, along with a pleasant patter as he introduces them. Besides his accomplishment in playing the pipes, he's an expert at tuning and fixing them, too!

Our own Tim Needler presented the February 14 program on the 3/26 Wurlitzer at Manual High School. Tim has performed for us often, but this was the first time he's played this instrument for a monthly meeting. He studied piano and classical organ as a youth, but is mostly self-taught on the theatre organ, and has developed a distinctive style of his own. Tim took us back to the early thirties with his opener "Who," then followed appropriately with "My Funny Valentine" to celebrate the day. Some other numbers included a rag "Pegasus" using the organ and piano, several favorites from the Big Band era, and "Chicago" as a promo for the upcoming National Convention.

Our late winter concert at Manual High School on February 28 featured a treat with English artist Simon Gledhill at the console of the 3/26 Wurlitzer. The Sunday afternoon program attracted a large audience, including groups from the Chicago and Cincinnati areas. Simon opened his program with "Another Opening! Another Show," plus two other numbers from *Kiss Me, Kate*. Some other pieces included "A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square" and a medley of Ray

Noble compositions, with "Good Night Sweetheart" ending the first half of the concert. After intermission came a group of eight Harry Warren favorites, including "You'll Never Know" and "Lullaby of Broadway." Cecile Chaminade's "Pierrette" was a light contrast, followed by Jerome Kern and Noel Coward pieces. "Poet and Peasant Overture" concluded the program.



Simon Gledhill at Manual High School, with President Barbara Johnson.

John Ennis photo

Simon was very generous with the number of selections he played. He used the full resources of the organ with his robust style; yet his wide range of dynamics accommodated the nuances of the softer music. He offered a variety of happy numbers, mostly British and American popular favorites, but there were some light classics, too. A diversity of selections, along with his witty, pleasing presence, made this a thoroughly delightful performance. If you have half a chance, be sure to hear Simon Gledhill!

The status of the Chapter's Barton organ is still in limbo. The instrument remains in storage, as the Warren Township School Board has not yet acted on our proposal to install the organ in their high school auditorium.

We're looking forward to a program at Manual High School next November when Lee Erwin will play his original score to accompany the silent movie, *Wings*.

Do you have a copy of our Jelani Eddington's premiere recording of the Manual High School 3/26 Wurlitzer? It's available in CD and audiocassette tape.

For full details see the ad elsewhere in this issue of the Journal. *Paul Roberts*

## CENTRAL OHIO

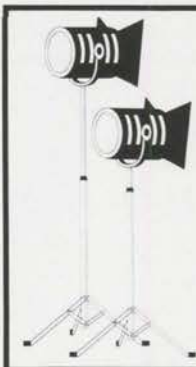
Columbus

513/652-1775

We rallied around our 3/16 Wurlitzer on January 17 at the Thomas Worthington High School when 30 members and guests showed up. After details of the planned Ralston concert were presented by concert chairman Tom Hamilton, and other business concluded, Neil Grover introduced the featured artist for the day, Mark Williams. Mark has appeared on several previous occasions and has never disappointed us; certainly Sunday was no exception. Opening with "Louisiana Fairytale" he followed with a beautiful rendition of "Impossible." What distinguished his playing was his deliberate choice of simple registrations, emphasizing the separate and distinct solo voices of the organ and resorting to more full orchestral choruses at appropriate times as in the bridge of this selection. "If I Were A Rich Man" was played in a similar fashion and in "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" from *Roberta*, he used the delicate voices of the Vox Humana together with tuned percussions, reverting to a sub-octave Tibia for the bridge. "Climb Every Mountain" was especially impressive, reviving a memorable piece of music in this famous stage and cinema production *Sound of Music* which ends in a crescendo that leaves one fairly breathless. But then there's the nostalgic "Romance," the signature tune of the late Roger Garrett, which Mark played so realistically in the tradition of Roger that one could almost envision that charismatic house organist of yesteryear pivoting around to face the audience on his Howard seat.

Other members followed Mark at open console while many of us imbibed in the food delicacies of the day. A memorable afternoon and an artist growing in stature with every performance.

*John Polsley*



# Ashley Miller

a.a.g.o.

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## CHICAGO AREA

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The January social at The Congress Theatre featured Fred Arnish at the 3/43 Kimball — that's right, 3/43 and still growing! Fred, co-owner Art Fike and their dedicated crew are bringing this fantastic collection of pipes into harmony for the July Convention with taskmaster, Stan Kann starring.

In February, we returned to the comfortable atmosphere of The Nineteenth Hole which sports a fine Barton theatre pipe organ as well as a souped-up Hammond. With Don Springer providing the main feature, the duets performed by Don and owner Bobby Roppollo were the whipped cream topping on an afternoon of desserts!

The CATOE Board held its February meeting at The Tivoli Theatre, where the CATOE owned 3-10 Wurlitzer from Maine North is being installed. Tivoli owner Willis Johnson provided a tour of the chambers and Fred Arnish entertained movie-goers with his styling. This organ is playing well right now and should be in top condition for Kurt von Schakel and his live on-stage revue at the Tivoli during the convention. John Muri will cameo. John played this organ when it was installed in the Indiana Theatre in Indiana Harbor, Indiana. It has always been a fine Wurlitzer opus 942, having been used by the Wurlitzer Company as a demonstration organ.

The CATOE convention committee continues to meet, fine-tuning convention details. Registrations are flowing in steadily and we're all looking forward to a great time with extraordinary venues and artists! See you in July! *Hal Pritchard*

## CUMBERLAND VALLEY

Chambersburg, Pennsylvania  
717/263-0202

Several members attended the liquidation auction at the M.P. Moller, Inc. facility in Hagerstown, Maryland, in January. It was a sad occasion to see the birthplace of so many wonderful instruments (including Chambersburg's Capitol

Theatre Moller) cleaned out from top to bottom. On the bright side, virtually everything was sold, not hauled to a landfill.

Chapter President Bob Eyer, Jr. played the world-famous suspended Chandelier Organ for the last time at the start of one of the auction days; several hours later it was sold to a private buyer. Also attending were Mark Cooley, Stan and Ruth Gossard, John Hooper, Bob Maney, John McBride, and Nelson Rotz. *Bob Maney*

## DAIRYLAND Milwaukee, Wisconsin 414/421-5177



Dairyland's been "away from the feed trough" as far as reporting since our Regional, but not "out to pasture!" Social Chairman Fred Hermes publishes advance activities in BARTOLA, monthly newsletter, and a review of happenings since Wisconsin's coldest in 1991 negates the assumption that Regional efforts left members inert, frost-bitten, and out of touch. So sound the cowbells while we recount and enumerate some of the post-action.

Each spring and fall, formal concerts at the Avalon and Riverside theatres bring the finest to Milwaukee, a sort of

extension of the Regional. Bill Vlasak and Father Jim Miller honored us with their concertizing, plus a Jonas Nordwall appearance at the Oriental, a KTOS/DTOS shared event. Guest appearances by Walt Strony and Clark Wilson at Piper Music Palace, resident artists Dave Wickerham, Ralph Conn and Gary Hanson, and Kimball concerts at the Oriental contributed to the appeasement of our musical appetites. Home installations at Bill Campbell's, Jim Petersen's, Fred Hermes' and Bob Leutner's were settings for mini-socials.

Long to be remembered are the picnics! In Baraboo, Home of the Ringlings, we visited America's Finest Playhouse, gift of Al Ringling, which houses a circus-style Barton organ. And on an August afternoon, Jack Moelmann hosted us at his Lake Geneva summer home.

Most recently, the Milwaukee Jerome B. Meyer Metal Organ Pipe Manufacturing Plant was toured, where details of pipe making and voicing were demonstrated. Three generations of the Meyers have made organ pipes since the turn of the century.

So, seriously speaking, there's a Valentine Party soon approaching at Bill Gans', and it's only February! Thanks to an involved membership, Dairyland looks forward to 1993, with all the pipings!  
*Dorothy Schult*

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## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

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Knights Auditorium, Babson College, Wellesley Hills, December 20, was the locale of our annual Christmas party with over 70 present, including some of Babson's staff. A fine, sit-down catered dinner was served with good fellowship abounding and followed by a most enjoyable concert by member Robert K. Love on our 235 Special. Bob never fails to present a variety of tunes, be it on a theatre pipe organ, a church or a concert instrument, such is his versatility. It was a wonderful afternoon and our organ was up to his demands — a nice prelude to Christmas.

We again got the new year off to an auspicious beginning in the person of Clark Wilson concertizing at Babson on January 9. Clark is no stranger to us and attracted over 500 enthusiastic patrons to this winter program. Our artist opened his very enjoyable evening with a fine Sousa composition, "The Mystic Shrine March," so suited to the unit orchestra with its traps and percussions. Included in his program was a sensitively played ballad, "Not While I'm Around" from *Sweeney Todd*, some Cole Porter, Jerome Kern and Rodgers & Hammerstein selections. His medley from the latter's, *South Pacific*, was outstanding as was Romberg's "Serenade" from *The Student Prince*.

Clark is equally able to handle classic music as displayed in his reading of Puccini's "One Fine Day" from the opera, *Madame Butterfly*, and his moving finale, "Finlandia." Wilson had his audience "exercising their tonsils" with his popular sing-along slides. He also played excellent accompaniment to one of Laurel and Hardy's best silents, *Big Business*, as he closely followed the screen's actions.

Clark had a beautiful and relatively unknown song as his encore, "I'd Love to Call You My Sweetheart." With many

registrational changes and use of the combination pistons throughout his program, double pedaling, excellent choice and variety of selections plus easy console style, our organist certainly won friends for himself and for the organ.

The annual meeting was held on January 24 with reports and comments on club happenings for the past year as well as plans for the coming months. If there was a theme evident it would be summarized with "we need more younger folk to carry on, more involvement of members and more money to implement improvements to our musical jewel."

With Allen Miller continually applying his expertise in tonal regulations plus a dedicated organ crew we have the ingredients for another good year with President Donald Phipps at the "helm."

Stanley C. Garniss

## GARDEN STATE

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



Snow, poor visibility and a 28° temperature were no deterrent, as many people attended the Dennis James silent film program on February 21 at Trenton War Memorial. Dennis superbly accompanied the film *The Student Prince in Old Heidelberg*, starring Ramon Navarro and Norma Shearer. Garden State was fortunate to have Dennis visiting in Cherry Hill where his parents live, and we were able to contract him for a concert while here. Everyone enjoyed the film and appreciated Dennis's excellent accompaniment. He skillfully wove into the theme threads of Sigmund Romberg's familiar music. All know and love the music from *The Student Prince*. One of our members, Art Cox, organized a group of people from a leisure village, and about 50 boarded the bus and attended the concert. Many remarked that they had not heard a theatre organ since they were young and really enjoyed the wonderful sounds of the organ. We



Dennis James at the Trenton War Memorial Moller.  
Tony Rustako photo

are hoping that this enthusiasm will continue and we will be seeing them more often. Many thanks to Bea and Art Cox for organizing and executing this bus trip for the film and buffet dinner afterwards.

Immediately following the concert almost all of the audience remained, in spite of the snow, and enjoyed a delicious buffet. Open console on the big Moller supplied easy listening music for the diners.

Garden State Chapter is twenty years old and plans are being made to celebrate with a gala party. Special invitations are being sent to all the charter members. The 20th anniversary committee is headed by its first President Bob Balfour, Virginia Messing, the chapter's attorney, and Secretary/Treasurer Jinny Vanore. The celebration will be held on May 16 at the Casa Lido Restaurant in Trenton, with the added attraction of a newly installed 3/12 Kimball theatre pipe organ. Plans include a concert, happy hour, open console, delicious buffet and dancing to the wee hours. A special souvenir program is being prepared. Our nearby chapters will be invited to join us in our celebration.

Jinny Vanore

## NE ORGAN SYSTEMS

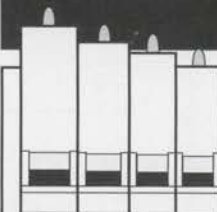
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## GULF COAST

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We have not held a board meeting since our last chapter notes but one is planned for the end of the month before our next program featuring Clark Wilson. We'll fill you in on details later.

There will be a school-kid's program for some 1500 county students and a program for the general public that same evening. We are all looking forward to both these events. Last year, we got raves on our daytime efforts with the children. They loved being introduced to the organ, the music and to the delightful entertainment Ken Double presented. To think so many of them had never seen or heard a pipe organ! Perish the thought!

Our Prez-of-many-hats, Scott Brodie, has done a successful job contacting the school board to get permission for the transportation of these students to our theatre for the program. Our number one chauffeur, Byron Melvin, is sidelined at this time with the "punies," so our number two chauffeur, Burt Canada, is filling in nobly.

Our veep and money controller (what there is!) is in the midst of preparing a legal description of our organ and its lift, so that our attorney can present it to the city fathers for some sort of legal description defining our ownership of the organ. This is a difficult task and B.D. Rhea, M.D., has been at it for some time. Building the whole organ is one thing, but describing it in handwriting is something else. Another true labor of love.

Our local radio station, WCOA, has let us tape another announcement about our next program on the 4/25 Robert-Morton in our local Saenger Theatre. They broadcast this announcement at regular intervals and it helps with our publicity. Good for them and many thanks. We have been offered the chance to do this before each concert and we certainly will take advantage of it.

For our kids' day we have a surprise to present to the children. Then if this

works, we will know to try it again. If not, then we won't. Also we are working with a local dancing school to present some featured dances at our Kevin King show in August. This, too, will be different from other efforts and we hope most fervently they will "fly."

Our peripatetic expert technician, Jimmy Scoggins, has just returned from one of his jaunts to Europe. This time it was Rome with all the sight-seeing and looking and exploring anyone could do. Such tales he can store up for telling later. Must be fun!

Here's hoping CATOE has great success with the convention this July.

Dorothy Standley

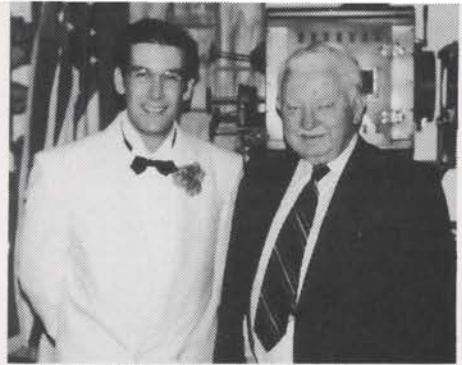
**JESSE CRAWFORD**  
Montana &  
Northern Wyoming  
406/259-5555



Charter Member Mrs. Harvey Darling, of Kalamazoo, Michigan, donated two pieces of sheet music to the Jesse Crawford Archives in January: "Gee! But I Hate to Go Home Alone," words by Joe Goodwin, music by James F. Hanley, was published in 1923 and, according to the cover, was "originally introduced by Jesse Crawford famous organist at the Chicago Theatre." The other piece, "Within the Prison of My Dreams," words and music by Mrs. Jesse Crawford, was published in 1926 whilst Helen was also at the Chicago Theatre.

These are real gems for the archives for which we thank Betty Darling for her kindness and thoughtfulness. Betty began collecting sheet music back in 1970. She found them at music shops, garage sales and antique fairs. She wrote that "I almost never see any old organ music nowadays." You are not alone, Betty!

Another Michigan chapter member, Gilbert G. Francis of Livonia, is also a collector of sheet music that has a picture of an organ console or organist on the cover. Jesse Crawford has been the largest part of Gil's collection, followed



Jeff Weiler (left) and Bob Vaughn in the green room of the Oakland Paramount. Ed Mullins photo

### "Within the PRISON OF MY DREAMS"



Sheet music cover composed by Helen Crawford and published in 1926. Jesse Crawford Archives

by Don Miller, noted Detroit organist.

Charter Member Jeff Weiler of Chicago performed at the Oakland, California, Paramount Theatre on January 30 as part of the 1992-1993 Paramount Organ Pops Series. Jeff is a National Director of ATOS and a skilled accompanist of silent movies. He cued *Queen Kelly*, starring Gloria Swanson.

On October 24, Weiler accompanied Charlie Chaplin's *The Gold Rush* on the 4/39 "Crawford Special" Wurlitzer in the Exhibition Hall, Century II Center, Wichita, Kansas. This instrument was originally installed in the New York Paramount Theatre at Times Square, with two organ consoles. This is where Jesse and Helen Crawford reached the pinnacle of their success.



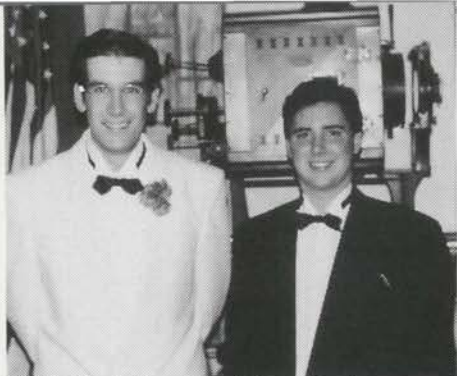
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July 25 ..... Lyle Studio, San Diego, California  
July 26 ..... Spreckles Organ Pavilion, Balboa Park, San Diego, California  
October 2 & 2 ..... Wheaton Village, Wheaton, New Jersey  
October 16 ..... Symphony Hall, San Diego, California  
October 17 ..... World Theatre, St. Paul, Minnesota  
October 29 ..... Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver, B.C. Canada  
October 31 ..... Arlington Theatre, Santa Barbara, California  
December 4 ..... Symphony Hall, San Diego, California  
January 4, 1994 ..... Old St. Mary's, San Francisco, California  
January 8 ..... Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California  
January 20 - February 3 ..... ITALY Glass Music Tour  
February 11 & 12 ..... Tucson Symphony, Tucson, Arizona  
February 25 ..... Symphony Hall, San Diego, California  
March 26 ..... Phipps Center, Hudson, Wisconsin  
April 22 ..... Symphony Hall, San Diego, California



Jeff Weiler (left) and pianist Dave Harris.

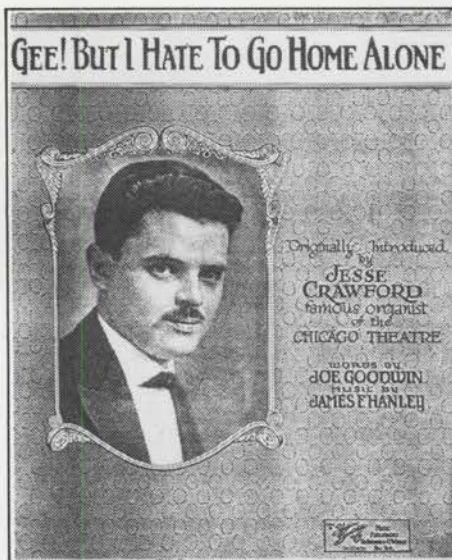
Ed Mullins photo

**JESSE CRAWFORD cont.**

Wichita pianist Dave Harris came with Jeff to the Oakland Paramount. The duo gave a flawless performance of Louis Moreau Gottschalk's "Grand Tarantella" for piano and orchestra; the "orchestra" being the 4/27 Wurlitzer played by Weiler. Charter members Dr. Ed Mullins and Bob Vaughn paid a visit to Weiler and Harris backstage in the Paramount green room before the performance. Mullins presented Weiler with a copy of "The Covered Wagon" cue sheet edition of our journal, THE POET, and also collected his 1993 dues.

Jeff departed for the East the following day where he accompanied Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* on the 4/80 Austin organ at the Horace Bushnell Memorial Auditorium in Hartford, Connecticut, on February 1. The *Metropolis* cue sheet will be available during the July ATOS convention in Chicago in the record shop. The Jesse Crawford Archives continues its search for sheet music featuring Jesse or Helen Crawford on the cover to complete our collection. Please write to: 3115 Second Avenue North, Billings, Montana 59101-2002.

Ed Mullins



Cover of sheet music published in 1923 when Jesse Crawford was playing at the Chicago Theatre.

Jesse Crawford Archives

slides from the chambers, and other areas of the organ to give those members who do not get a chance to see the insides of the Barton a first hand view! Many members also enjoyed the last opportunity to play the Barton before the renovation began.

The renovation continues, with the top half of the console out for restoration — new stops and keyboards repaired. Chambers are being cleaned and painted, and new ceilings are being installed. New chamber layouts have been completed which will include some new pipework. All the existing pipes are being evaluated on a rank by rank basis. Fred Gollnick, (his father installed the Barton in 1925-26)

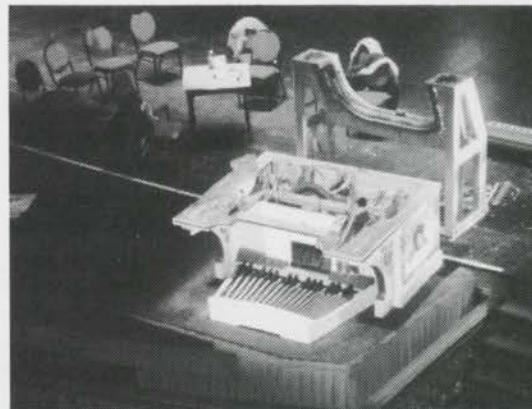


Work begins with (L-R) Jim Bradley, Bob Maes and Terry Kleven removing tubing from the back of the Barton.

is overseeing the new chamber layouts and the pipe evaluation.

It is really nice to see so many of our members helping with this huge project. Some of our volunteers come down weekdays to work on re-leather projects and other tasks. We are currently running three different work crews in the theatre to make this dream project a reality!

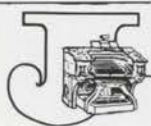
Taylor Trimby



The Aftermath...

**JOLIET AREA**

Joliet, Illinois  
815/774-6516 or  
815/725-0024



Tom Gnaster entertained us on January 24 at the Rialto Theatre. He played a wonderful program on the 4/21 Barton that was designed to help us beat cabin fever. The theme for the day was "Picnic on Stage" — and we had everything that was needed — from picnic food, bugs and bug lights, to beach wear and crashing surf. Tom played "June is Busting Out All Over" along with some other great tunes like "Nola," "Someone to Watch Over Me" and "Tea for Two." His show was great, and we can't wait to have him back to play for us again.

Our February Social was held at the Rialto Theatre with Taylor Trimby at the console. It was the farewell social, as we cut the cables to the console. Taylor played a sing-along and also showed

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Last week, beginning with March 1, we had a whole week of balmy, sunny days with temperatures of 45° and the snow melting at the rate of 4" a day. That was March 8 when I started typing my Chapter Notes. On March 9 (Tuesday) is snowed all day, leaving us with another 8 inches!

The Organaires had their January 21 session at the World Theatre in downtown St. Paul. John Zetterstrom, "keeper of the keys," was able to arrange this session, there being a free night at the World. I was not able to be there but I know the Organaires enjoy trying their skills at the big Wurlitzer.

Father Jim Miller was the guest artist at the Phipps Center for the Arts in Hudson, Wisconsin, on January 23 and 24 in fine fettle, as usual, and in a good, humorous mood. His Fats Waller tunes brought smiles to people in the audience. The piano was especially rebuilt for his appearance. He uses it so well in his jazzy style. After the Sunday afternoon concert there was an open house, refreshments and buffet at my home.

Member Lou Hurvits, at the World on February 5, played for the Coronation of King Boreas as part of the Winter Carnival Festival.

On February 13, another Family Concert was held at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis, similar to last year's program, for the benefit of the Mighty Kimball being installed in the Minneapolis Convention Center. Once again Mayor Don Fraser and Michael Barone were the hosts.

John Jefferson White, longtime chapter and ATOS member, passed away on March 4, one week after he celebrated his 80th birthday on February 25, 1993. The following comments are from the homily presented by the Rev. John Rettger at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis where Memorial Services for John were held on March 6.

# Father James Miller

"Father Jim"  
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"John had a passion for playing bridge and had won trophies for playing in bridge tournaments over the years until just recently, when he finally gave up the game. He excelled in mathematics and outscored everyone on a math comprehensive at Kenyon College, Minnesota, where he graduated. Also related was his interest in astronomy and organ repair, and, of course, his profession as an accountant and as the owner of a Mobil station and later the spring company, the latter where LOLTOS finally got to use his services.

"Last but not least, was his interest in music, as evidenced not only by his organ repair business, but his membership in the Land O'Lakes Theatre Organ Society and the ATOS and that he could play the piano, organ, guitar, banjo, violin and the theremin. He was always a willing worker in the Chapter when we had garage sales to build up our Treasury. He was elected to the Board and Vice Presidency in 1980.

"His wife of many years, Dorothy Winn White, died in 1987. She was the mother of his daughter Marge, who lives in England, and two sons, who will carry on in the organ repair business. In January 1988, John married Irene, a good friend of Dorothy's in Ellensburg, Washington, who plans to stay in Minneapolis for the time being. We shall miss John."

Verna Mae Wilson

## LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

081-422-1538



Len Rawle opened his house to London Chapter, on January 22, to hear his organ. Sadly it wasn't a full house but those who made the journey had an enjoyable time hearing Len put his Empire Leicester Square Wurlitzer through its paces. On January 24, Martin Harris played the ATOS monthly concert at Kilburn. He gave a fine performance with well-balanced selections to suit all tastes.

The chapter was well represented at



Mike Erie at the Wurlitzer at the World Theatre.

Windsor the following Sunday to hear William Davies play the Compton organ, in the Memorial Hall, with its new Tuba rank. This was an excellent concert with William Davies in top form. His well-selected programme included the Scherzo from the *Concerto Symphonique* by Henri Litolf also the Scherzo from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, two specialties of William Davies.

Another successful evening was held at Wurlitzer Lodge in January with Ena Baga. "Showtime" with Len Rawle at Wurlitzer Lodge was a fun evening, enjoyed by all. Phil Kelsall put all his talent and style into the ATOS concert at the Cannon, Harrow, in February, pleasing the audience immensely. Michael Woolridge played at Wurlitzer Lodge the last Friday in February. His programme included his favourite Big Band sound and was enjoyed by all present. There have been one or two programmes on British TV featuring the theatre organ. Our own member Doug Sharp was featured on "Bright Lights, Big City" playing the Compton organ at the State Grays. A small group from the London Chapter met at Harron School on February 22 for a brief tour conducted by the Custodian, Mr. Arthur Arnold.

The original Old Schools building, completed in 1615 and founded by John Lyon, was particularly interesting. Famous names carved on the paneling were Robert Peel, Sheridan, Byron and Winston Churchill to name but a few. Mr. Walker, the Director of Music, demonstrated the individual stops of the Walker organ in the Chapel — reached by an enclosed spiral staircase — and the Harri-

(continued ...)

## JIM RIGGS

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## LONDON cont.

son and Harrison organ in the Speech Room. The Chapter was due to visit this organ on the 1991 Safari but unfortunately it could not be seen as it had to be completely covered for the Harrow Shakespeare play in June. Throughout the tour Mr. Arnold gave us many historical facts about the school. The afternoon was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Our thanks to Mr. Arnold for this opportunity. It is intended to have another tour in the summertime. Once again numbers will be limited.

We are pleased to announce that the chapter Wurlitzer organ, originally in the Granada Welling, has been found a home in a leisure/arts complex in Woking, Surrey. We have a band of volunteers waiting for the green light to start on the installation once some building work has been completed.

Jean Pitteway

## LOS ANGELES

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Candy Carley-Roth returned to the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium Wurlitzer for the January LATOS concert. Many of the tunes on her program are included in her recently released tape recorded on the Capitol Theatre 3/17 mostly Wurlitzer in York, Pennsylvania. The opening country western medley set the tone for a concert of toe-tapping music which included "Dizzy Surprise Medley" (a combination of "Dizzy Fingers" and "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise"),



Chris Gorsuch, Pasadena City College.

Sousa's "Stars and Stripes," and, of course, "Hoe Down!" Even "Joy," the title tune from the tape, based on Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" had a beat. "What I Did for Love" and "Tears in Heaven" were dedicated to Gene Davis, Dick Shaffor, and Del Castillo, LATOS members who have passed away in the last year. Candi brought the house down after her second number when she announced that she was saving one number for an encore! The organ sounded great even though the Tuba offset chest had water damage; it has been a rainy winter in Southern California!

In February a new face and name appeared on the bench. Chris Gorsuch from San Diego played a delightful concert for LATOS at Pasadena City College on the Ross Reed Memorial Wurlitzer. Chris is a competent voicer and tonal finisher in both the theatre and classical organ worlds. He is also an advocate of using electronic systems combined with pipes to achieve the greatest finished instrument with budget and space considerations. Chris is also a great artist at the console playing many of his own arrange-

ments. He plays show tunes, jazz, and classical, frequently introduces a pop number with a classical intro. Medleys from *Gypsy* and *Wizard of Oz*, a scherzo on a Mendelssohn theme arranged by Richard Elsasser, a "Frankie and Johnny" inspired by George Wright, a sonata for the 23rd Psalm, and the overture from *The Marriage of Figaro* are only examples that made for a wonderful evening of organ listening. Over fifty people from San Diego arrived by bus and private cars to hear their home town artist.

Wayne Flottman

## MANASOTA

Brandenton, Florida

813/755-1058

Our hosts for the February meeting were Frank and Marjorie Schertle in Sarasota. We spent a pleasant evening discussing the progress of work on the Campus of the University of South Florida at Sarasota/New College where a 1927 residential style Aeolian pipe organ is under restoration by members of this chapter.

Frank demonstrated the capabilities of his Hammond and others enjoyed playing and listening to open console later in the evening. There were delightful refreshments served by our hosts on their Florida-style lanai.

At our last big Saturday work session, considerable progress was made on the task of removing and replacing the grille cloth. Sixty years of seashore atmosphere have discolored the original "gold" fabric to a lovely chocolate brown shade. Also, the fabric is now quite fragile and there are many holes and rips where inquiring fingers have poked around to find out what was concealed behind the grille. Soon new cloth will be ready for another generation to explore.

Progress is being steadily directed by Lanny and Leslie Hunter and Norman Arnold, assisted by Yvonne and Frank George on the several hundred pneumatics in the relay room on the third floor. The blower room is entirely refinished in like-new condition.

Several hundred man-hours have been contributed so far, but there are many more months yet to go. Trying to work between the hours available outside University activities and within our own personal free time is sometimes frustrating. About half of us are retired, so there is always an opportunity during the week, or even at night to get in an hour of production. The University has been most helpful and cooperative with the Society, for which we are both grateful and thankful.

Carl Walker

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by Patrick Lajko

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## MOTOR CITY

Detroit  
313/537-2560



Redford Theatre patrons were urged to dress as their favorite film comedian during the two-day run of the seldom-seen film *Harold Lloyd's World of Comedy* in February. Sandy Krueger and Andy Knechtel, who dressed as Charlie Chaplin, were awarded top honors in the contest.

A video documentary of the Redford Theatre is being produced through a local cable company and should be ready by mid-summer.

Our fall schedule makes it possible for out-of-towners to attend two programs, one at the Detroit Theatre Organ Society and the other at the Redford Theatre, all on the same weekend in September and October.

Patti Simon and Dick Kroeckel will appear at the DTOS 4/34 Wurlitzer at the Senate Theatre on Saturday, September 18, at 7 p.m. and Walt Strony will perform at the 3/10 Barton at the Redford Theatre on Sunday, September 19, at 3 p.m.

Father Jim Miller will be at the Senate Theatre on Saturday, October 16, at 7 p.m. and Dave Wickerham will be the artist at the Redford Theatre on Sunday, October 17, at 3 p.m.

A possible Sunday morning concert at the Detroit Fox is also being planned for each weekend. Details are as yet incomplete.

Tickets are \$10 for the Senate programs and \$8 for the Redford concerts and may be ordered from Dorothy VanSteenkiste, 9270 Reek Road, Allen Park, Michigan 48101, or by calling her at 313/383-0133. A suggested list of convenient motels will be included with all ticket orders.

Lance Luce will appear at the Redford Theatre, with Mike Przybylski at the piano, on May 22.

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



Sandy Krueger and Andy Knechtel took top honors at the film comedian look-alike contest at the Redford Theatre.  
*Ray VanSteenkiste photo*

THEATRE ORGAN



House organist George Batman, Jr. plays the Sunnybrook Ballroom 3/14 United States as members Keith Gramlich and Bob Walker look on.



Bernie Anderson



Dwight Beecham

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Recorded and Produced by A. Alan Botta

<b>CUT 1:</b>	
Kreisler Medley .....	11:45
Caprice Viennois	
Liebesleid (Loves Sorrow)	
Liebesfreud (Loves Joy)	
<b>CUT 2:</b>	
Zieguener - Coward .....	3:51
<b>CUT 3:</b>	
My Ideal - Whiting, Chase .....	2:45
<b>CUT 4:</b>	
Nimrod - from Enigma Variation ...	2:25
Edgar Elgar	
<b>CUT 5:</b>	
You Are Free - Jacobi, Kreisler .....	3:38
<b>CUT 6:</b>	
Toy Soldier March - Kreisler .....	2:03
<b>CUT 7:</b>	
One Night of Love .....	3:28
V. Schertzinger	
<b>CUT 8:</b>	
The World Is Mine Tonight .....	2:52
H. Marvell, G. Posford	
<b>CUT 9:</b>	
I Can't Begin To Tell You .....	3:18
J.V. Monaco	
<b>CUT 10:</b>	
Sweet and Lovely - Gus Arnheim ...	3:32
<b>CUT 11:</b>	
By The Bend In The River .....	3:42
<b>CUT 12:</b>	
I'm Going To Live Till I Die .....	2:05

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## NEW YORK

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We continued our annual tradition of sponsoring a winter break, this year with a February 27 bus tour and organ crawl through eastern Pennsylvania. Our first point of interest, following a rest and lunch stop at the Lehigh Valley Mall in Allentown, was Allentown's Nineteenth Street Theatre, a small art deco gem that houses its original 3/7 Moller. Following greetings and some background information from Jim Feller, curator of the organ and the theatre (which now operates as a performing arts center), organist Dwight Beecham explained the layout of the organ and played a delightful mini-concert to demonstrate this rather unique instrument. Dwight then relinquished the bench, and several chapter members took turns at open console.

After an hour's bus ride through the snow covered rolling hills of Pennsylvania, our group arrived at the Colonial Theatre in Phoenixville. To the strains of "I Hear A Song Coming On," our own chapter's talented young organist, Bernie Anderson, rode the Colonial's console up into the spotlight. Bernie's forty-five minute concert showed off both the impressive resources of the 4/32 Kimball as well as his own keyboard talent. Again open console followed with several members taking advantage of the opportunity to play this exceptional instrument.

Thanks to Sam LaRosa, our host at the Colonial and crew chief for this organ, the big Kimball was in top form.

From Phoenixville, it was onto the bus for the ride to nearby Pottstown and the famous Sunnybrook Ballroom, where a delicious full-course dinner awaited our group of hungry New Yorkers. House organists George Batman and Glenn Eschback were on hand to greet us and to demonstrate the 3/14 United States organ with an enjoyable selection of dinner music. Open console followed dinner, and while some members played, others toured the chambers. After much coaxing, we finally succeeded in getting everyone back to the bus for the trip home to New York and the end of a thoroughly delightful day.

On February 20 the board of directors met at the Lafayette Theatre in Suffern, New York. Among items of business, plans for coming events were discussed, and board members had an opportunity to hear and play the chapter's latest addition, the 2/9 Ben Hall Wurlitzer. Dave Kopp and Bob Raymond, Jr. are serving as house organists, and are now playing for the movie audiences every Saturday night.

*Tom Stehle*

MAY/JUNE 1993 • 57

## NOR-CAL

San Francisco  
Bay Area  
415/282-3183

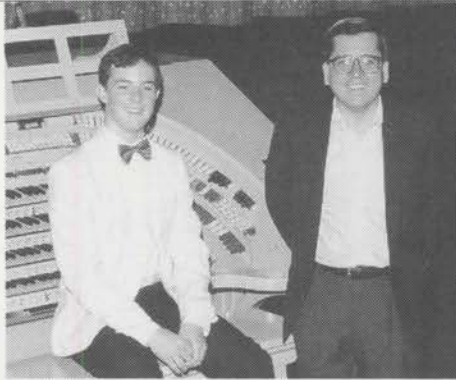


David Reece played a delightful program for us at Bella Roma Pizzeria in Martinez on January 24, cramming a lot of music into the afternoon. He gave us a wonderful mix of show tunes, romantic ballads, old favorites and plenty of great jazz as only he can play it. It was enjoyed by all, and was preceded by the excellent food and drinks on the Bella Roma menu. David responded to having a much more appreciative audience than usual by his varied registration and interesting arrangements.

As NorCal's concert reviewer, I am expected to be as objective as possible, impartial, and to avoid using superlatives in describing concerts. In the case of Sean Henderson's February 14 concert at the Castro Theatre, holding to those requirements is very difficult. For a young man barely 14 years old to prepare a very ambitious and varied full-length program and then perform it with apparent ease is extremely rare. Walter Strony, from whom Sean has been taking lessons, was among those in the audience enjoying the concert. Sean was the Junior Division winner of the 1992 Young Theatre Organist Competition, and is from Australia. His competitors for the 1993 title will have to work very hard.

Bill Vlasak played a marvelous program for NorCal and the public at Berkeley Community Theatre on March 6. Limited to the music of a single composer, it was extremely effective. It was also well played, with interesting and varied registration and exciting arrangements that gave the audience new insight into the versatility and potential of this organ. He used the newly installed saucer bells and the other tuned percussions deeply blended into his arrangements as orchestral instruments. After this concert, I think he will be much more widely known in the Bay Area.

*Evelyn Woodworth*



Sean Henderson, 1992 Junior Division Young Organist winner, with proud teacher, Walt Strony.

## NORTH FLORIDA

Jacksonville  
904/268-9537

The meeting in January was a first for us. We met outside our Florida state borders. What Florida resident, including any transplant, would consider such an idea? Georgia resident and ATOS member John McCall invited the chapter members to join him and his circle of arts-and-music-lover friends in the Valdosta-Tifton area or an "Auld Lang Syne" farewell-to-the-McCall-Home-Theatre organ concert on his Allen theatre organ. Nary a tear was shed on this "sad" occasion (as often happens at "farewell-to-the-theatre" final concerts) since this fine electronic instrument will continue to be played, but before much larger audiences than previously possible. It is being installed with its own custom theatre sound system in its new home, the newly renovated Tift Theatre for the



Mark and Carrie Renwick at John McCall's "Farewell to the Allen" concert.



Relaxing after the concert (L to R): Mark Renwick, Berrien Cheatham, Carrie Renwick.

*Michael C. Kelly photo*



Guests (L to R) Irene Kelly, Wayne Diller, Dr. and Mrs. John Hunt at "Farewell Party."

*Michael C. Kelly photo*

Performing Arts, Tifton, Georgia. John is donating the organ to the theatre as a natural thing to do toward the perpetuation of theatre organ entertainment and the education of young people and the coming generations to theatre organ music in this area. The gala premiere opening of the new performing arts center will be a three-day affair set for April 2, 3 and 4. Mark Renwick will play the opener and exit music on the Allen theatre organ. Both Mark and Carrie Renwick will perform part of the program.

Though the drive from Jacksonville to the home of John and his mother, Carolyn, in Hahira was a nearly three-hour journey for chapter members, most of us drove the distance. We and some forty-five guests from the local area gathered to hear members Mark and Carrie Renwick present a program of organ music and song from the movies and Tin Pan Alley days of the 30s and 40s. They were

*(continued...)*

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## NORTH FLORIDA cont.

magnificent. They are a delightful couple, and the audience enthusiastically took them to their hearts.

During snack time after the program, it was open console. This event turned into a lively impromptu musicale for all comers and seasons with John and Mark in turn at the console and amateur operatic-sounding singers with marvelous voices singing familiar operetta and popular music with great intrepidity — with gusto and fearlessness. The informality of the occasion combined with the fact that all present were music lovers, several being performers in the Valdosta Symphony and others having performed as soloists and in choral groups, were the ingredients for a joyful socio-musical occasion to be long remembered.

John and his mother, Carolyn, were gracious hosts and providing their home as a meeting place resplendent with unusual artifacts and paintings. The atmosphere reflected the sophisticated good taste of both interior designer John and his mother. The goodies after the concert were arranged by a first class caterer. You might say that everyone had a good time at John and Carolyn's.

In February we met at the home of Dave Walters where resides an excellent Conn 650 now driving a second Leslie 600 space generator system. (What a sound!) For the program we tried something different. Since only a few of the members could identify any of the various Jesse Crawford styles of organ playing, Erle Renwick presented an interesting quiz-type program with music and commentary on Jesse Crawford's life. Excerpts of recorded music were played with the challenge for the members to identify each as to whether or not the organist was Jesse Crawford. According to the record labels, all music was played by Jesse Crawford, but, as we know, some records labeled Jesse Crawford were recorded by other organists with playing styles totally unlike any of Jesse Crawford's styles. Needless to say, since most of us were not familiar with the various Jesse Crawford styles and sounds, many of us flunked the quiz.

Open console followed with Mark and Carrie performing briefly and member Terry Long playing some of his favorite music. Later Dave played to demonstrate his new surround-sound system produced by the combination of self-contained organ speakers and two Leslie 600 speaker systems playing simultaneously — a truly grand sound! As usual, we were made to feel warmly welcome by Dave and sister Patsy, who served delicious hit-the-spot goodies.

*Erle Renwick*

## NORTH TEXAS

Dallas-Fort Worth

214/235-8551 or 214/696-2381



February 20, we held our annual business meeting and election of officers for the coming year. Past President John Beckerich passed the ceremonial gavel to the new president, Dr. Bill Hanson, who thanked the retiring officers, John Beckerich and Irving Light for their many years of devoted service to the chapter and the many chapter accomplishments during their years of service.

Retiring president John Beckerich has been very active in improving the reliability and quality of our chapter's 3/8 Robert-Morton in the Lakewood Theatre which had suffered severe water damage in January 1989 and required an extensive rebuild to get it back to playing condition. Even after the rebuild, the main relay continued to be a problem, so John tore into it and did a complete rebuild that restored it to reliability. John has also been a leader in the plans to further improve the reliability and flexibility of the mechanism by the conversion to electronic multiplexer and relay. John has pledged to continue in this activity and to the eventual expansion of the instrument.

Program Chairman Irving Light presented organist Dr. Hanson to play the Lakewood theatre organ for the musical treat, following the business meeting. Yes! the same Bill Hanson who is our new president. Dr. Bill is not only a very active professional organist, playing for church services, weddings etc., he also frequently plays intermission music on the Lakewood theatre organ on Friday and Saturday nights as one of the chapter professional organists who volunteer to keep our instrument before the public in this manner. And, as if that was not enough, Dr. Hanson maintains a busy dental practice. Bill played a most entertaining and varied program for our pleasure. Thank you, Bill! *Irving Light*



*Dr. Bill Hanson, played for North Texas in February.*

## OHIO VALLEY

1112 Walnut Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45210



A smile and a pleasant greeting should go free with every concert or movie ticket sold. At Emery Theatre those are both guaranteed by the first person customers meet on entering the theatre.

Elmer Gundrum, a chapter member, takes tickets and knows all our regular customers, many by name. Customers have told us his cordiality makes people glad they came — even if it is pouring down rain outside. Elmer is a retired railroad man having put in over 40 years with the B&O, C&O, and CSX railroads. His ticket-taking is not limited to ATOS shows, but Elmer "works the house" whenever other groups have forgotten to bring along a "ticket taker" — which is very often! Some of our handicapped customers have learned if Elmer knows they are coming, he'll go out to the curb to help them from their cars. Believe us, that is appreciated!

The second man customers meet quickly when entering the theatre is Tom Marcum. Tom usually "holds forth" behind the concession stand. Since one of Tom's duties is to insure that we have a full staff on hand for each show, he may be pinch-hitting selling tickets. Sometimes his talents may have him "at the console" of the 3/29 Wurlitzer, playing the prelude, the mini-concert at intermission, and at the end sending the audience home with a song in their hearts! *(continued...)*

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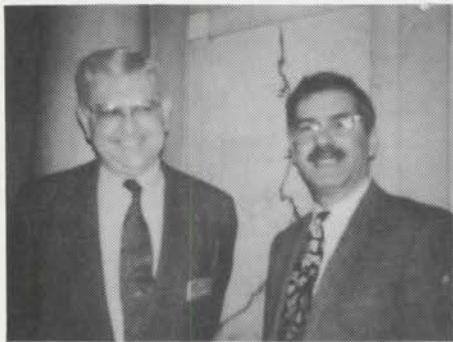
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**ROLLING PIN PRODUCTIONS**

**OHIO cont.**



Elmer Gundrum (left) and Tom Marcum at Emery Theatre.

The chapter has upgraded the sound system at Emery Theatre by a donation of a Dolby surround-sound system given by a theatre chain. This will improve sound distribution throughout the theatre. Also we are installing a new theatre public address system, something that has been badly needed.

"St. Patrick's Spring Fling" was the title of a chapter meeting held at Emery Theatre in March. This has become the most popular event of our "member meetings" held during the year. A nominally priced catered dinner was featured. These are served buffet-style on tables set up in the orchestra pit. Members fan out around this 1500-seat theatre enjoying a spring picnic — without mosquitoes or danger of rain.

Laurel & Hardy short features on our big screen were part of the fun. And the organ? Played by one and all as part of a generous period of open console.

And our regular weekend movie series? Through May 1 we will have had 26 movie shows on Fridays and Saturdays, with the Wurlitzer playing preludes, intermission mini-concerts, and "playing out" the audience at the close.

Add to that 14 dates at the theatre booked by other groups for whom we do many tasks like playing organ preludes, helping furnish "house" personnel, projectionists, stage electricians, and concession sales person. Would you agree the Ohio Valley Chapter keeps itself busy?

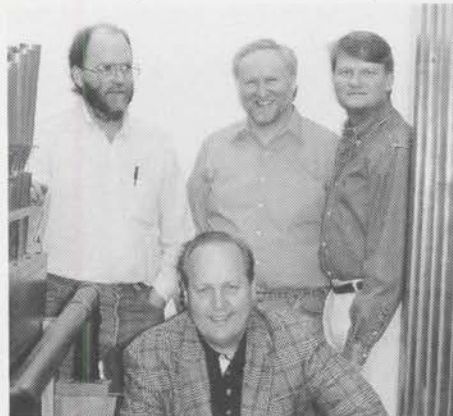
*Hubert S. Shearin*



Sierra Chapter Secretary Craig Peterson poses for a picture during his lesson at the Organ Grinder with teacher Paul Quarino. *Paul Quarino photo*



L to R: Jon Bish, Fred Bish and Maryjo Olsen at the Little Chapel of the Chimes. *Paul Quarino photo*



L to R: Bob Shafter, Terry Robson, Gary Jones. Front: John Olsen. *Paul Quarino photo*



ATOS Directors Paul Quarino, and Gary Jones with Funeral Director Al Schiavone.

**OREGON**  
Portland  
503/771-8098



Patti Simon was to have performed on February 19, at Cleveland High School; however, the weather decided to intervene — in the form of about one foot of snow. All schools in the area were closed and the concert was cancelled. Patti was in Portland, and she had been looking forward to playing the Kimball and we were anticipating a great concert. We will reschedule her for a program in the near future.

Our March meeting was held at the Sunnyside Little Chapel of the Chimes Funeral Home where a 2/5 Robert-Morton has been installed. Originally a 2/5 from Eugene's Mayflower Theatre, the organ was installed in two different

churches by Balcom and Vaughan. In one of the moves the Trumpet was exchanged for a Dulciana. The organ speaks from a second floor chamber into the large open-beamed room below. It is a nice clean installation with plenty of space for future additions. Paul Quarino played a brief concert which included a selection from *Beauty And The Beast*. Paul's fine musicianship and his good sense of humor made the event very enjoyable. After the concert, many of our members took advantage of open console, while others went on a tour of the chamber or had some refreshments provided by the Chapel. Gary Jones, from Birmingham, Alabama, was in Portland on business and was able to join us.

Many thanks to Paul Quarino for entertaining us, and to the staff of Little Chapel of the Chimes for the use of their beautiful facility. *Rick Parks*



*Gregorius/vonSchakel duo*

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*Steve Adams, Theatre Organ Journal*

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*David Shepherd, Cinema Organ Society, England*

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*Gary Jones, Theatre Organ Journal*

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*Enos Shupp, "Vox Humana", Dickinson Theatre Organ Society.*

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## ORLANDO AREA

Orlando, Florida  
407/282-0911

Our New Year started off with renewed determination to push harder than ever before to reach our dream — to make the DON BAKER MEMORIAL ORGAN a reality. President Wayne Tilschner is a dynamic force with the ability to inspire enthusiasm and to pull the members together to attain our very ambitious goal.

One of our main concerns, of course, is finding ways to acquire the funds necessary to complete the project. The total amount needed is not mammoth, but when the funds are not readily available delays are the result, as you know. Our first stride taken to make it easier to handle the day-to-day needs of running the Chapter was to raise the dues slightly. But we still need to search for money-making schemes to build our treasury. Along those lines we are making a strong push for everyone to participate in our "Buy-a-Key" effort, as outlined in the last issue.

★ ★ ★

*We Need You  
to help us complete our  
Tribute to  
"The Incomparable  
Don Baker!"*

★ ★ ★

By purchasing a key on one of the keyboards (\$10.00) or a pedalboard key (\$25.00) YOU will be helping to bring back one more magnificent Wurlitzer for all of us to enjoy and at the same time be actively supporting the true purpose of the ATOS — preservation of this unique American art form. Your purchase will be recognized at the dedication concert. Your name or the name of the person you want "memorialized" will appear on a large poster on the specific key you choose. This keyboard and pedalboard display will appear in the lobby outside the Lake Brantley High School Fine Arts

Center where the concert will be held. Wouldn't this be exciting to see? Please make checks payable to OATOS and send to Frank Norris, 1316 Puritan St., Deltona, FL 32724, giving the specific key and name you wish to appear on it.

In line with this inspirational push, the chapter is making a concerted effort to bring the DON BAKER project and the ATOS as a whole to the attention of the general public. Along these lines, at the AOAI Convention here in Orlando in February, our chapter's impressive display which advertised the ATOS and the coming events within our own chapter was very well received.

We are also actively engaged in a push to inspire cooperation among the Florida ATOS Chapters and the local organ clubs in an attempt to cut the cost of hiring artists to entertain at our meetings. By working together to assure the artists of several engagements that are in close proximity both in time and distance, costs could be shared by the participating organizations. This could be a mutual advantage for the artists and those engaging the artist.

Our February chapter meeting was very exciting. Mark and Carrie Renwick from the Jacksonville ATOS chapter were our performing artists. They presented a delightful program of organ and vocal music which was very much enjoyed by all, as evidenced by a standing ovation. To add to our pleasure after the concert, when presented with our check for the performance, Mark and Carrie very generously returned it to our chapter as a contribution to our DON BAKER PROJECT. We are sincerely grateful for this gift.

We were pleasantly surprised to have in our audience at this meeting, the internationally-known organist/author and teacher, Bill Irwin, and his lovely fiancee, a musician in her own right, Lorrie Burns from Toronto. As a special treat for our members and guests, Bill accepted our invitation to play a few selections. The audience showed their appreciation by a standing ovation. *Lois M. Thomson*



Ray Brubacher at the 3/26 Moller in Oakdale  
Emory United Methodist Church. Dan Swope photo

## POTOMAC VALLEY

301/652-3222 or 703/221-2936

On January 24, more than 100 people assembled at Oakdale Emory United Methodist Church at Olney, Maryland, where organist Ray Brubacher gave us a great concert on the church's 3/26 Mighty Moller pipe organ which had been built in 1986 to Ray's meticulous specifications. He produced a varied and phenomenal program of first class organ music, and the audience was thrilled by his magnificent renditions, including popular, classical and band marches. Ray's wife turned pages for him, very skillfully. In his fascinating announcements between selections, Ray explained many of the organ's features and design concepts, which enabled it to produce nearly theatrical sounds, including very deep tremulants. For many years Ray was an ATOE/ATOS director as well as an assistant editor of THEATRE ORGAN. Ray also served as Potomac Valley chapter chairman for several years in the 1960s.

February 21 was one of the snowiest days of the year in the Washington, D.C., area. Because of the near impossibility of getting to the Harris Theatre at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, our intended program of open console and historic organ slides was modified at show time! Our vice-chairman, Floyd Werle, presented an astounding program on our chapter-owned 2/8 Wurlitzer to the 15 hearty souls who arrived. The planned presentation of Dick Sullivan's historic theatre organ slides has been re-scheduled for June 13 when it is hoped there will be less snow! *Beverly Ann DeVault*

— Concerts —

# Barry Baker

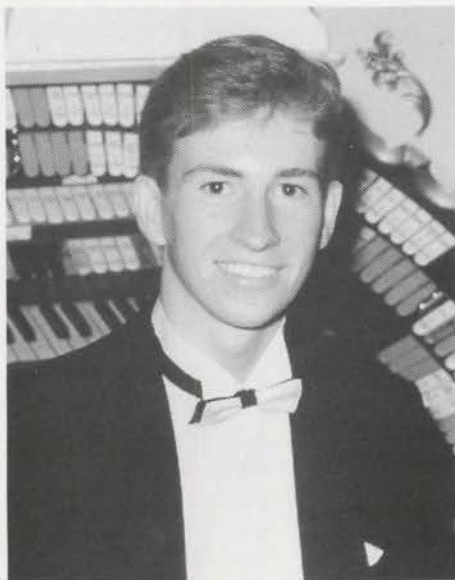
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Chris McPhee of Australia.

## PUGET SOUND

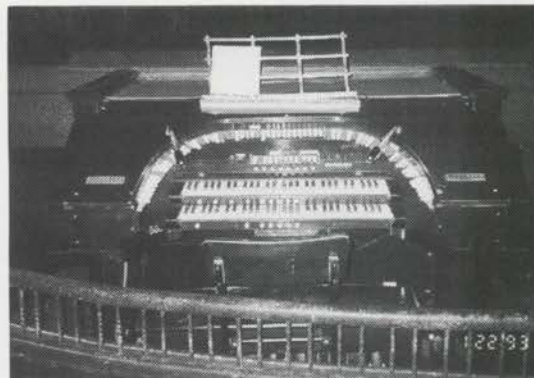
Federal Way, Washington

Our presentation of Stan Kann, noted Theatre Organist/Vacuum Cleaner Collector, at the Temple Theatre in Tacoma came on Friday evening, January 22, just two days after the Great Northwest tried on a hurricane for size, and found it fit all too well. Everything was in such disarray that too many had to miss this long-anticipated program, myself included. Those who made it found it enjoyable.

We learned with regret that our beloved member Bill Exner had died the day before. He had been in the hospital two weeks with a savage strep infection complicated by pneumonia. We had been told there was little hope for his recovery, but still we hoped. He'll be missed, not only as a good friend, but also for his many contributions to the welfare of the chapter as a technician, and also as an able member of the Board. At his request, there was no service.

On February 7 we celebrated "Australia Day" again with one of their young (barely twenty) upcoming stars, Chris McPhee. He's in the "Stites" for a month's coaching by Jonas Nordwall. The Tacoma Pizza and Pipes was opened in the morning for this special presentation and we were all quite stunned with his mastery of the instrument. He's scheduled as a featured artist at the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (TOSA) annual convention in April.

Jack and Betty Laffaw visited the Silverwood Theme Park in Idaho, where




Kimball 2/10 at Tacoma Temple.

the facsimile of their former Bellevue Pizza and Pipes is to be erected come spring. The park is done in turn of the century style and includes a museum of vintage airplanes, a steam train, and rides of all kinds, including a genuine glider flight, if you've the courage.

A sale of the Paramount Theatre to a young retired vice-president of Microsoft and her associates is in process. She sounds, at 45, enthusiastic, competent, and visionary, as just the one we'd have designed for the job if we'd had our "Druthers." An extensive restoration of the theatre is planned to cover the next two and a half years.

Saturday, March 6 saw a return to the Tacoma Temple Theatre with three performances of Charlie Chaplin's silent film, *The Gold Rush*. Andy Crow accompanied the nearly two hour show on the 2/10 Kimball. It was presented in partnership with the "Tacoma Fourth of July Commission" through the efforts of Tacoma chapter member Doug Owen.

Genny Whitting



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## QUAD CITIES

309/949-2847 or 319/284-6723

"Spring will be a little late this year" but not for our members. We are springing into action for our first show of the year on April 25 at the Capitol Theatre. Tom Hazleton will be our guest artist. We are looking forward to a very entertaining program on our great Wicks organ and an Allen organ. The Capitol Theatre has great acoustics, which will make this an enjoyable listening pleasure for everyone.

Our maintenance crew is busy getting ready to put the Wicks into concert readiness and working on our Honky Tonk piano. Both adults and children are fascinated when the Honky Tonk goes into action. Everyone's toes are tapping.

We have had some very nice social times together over the winter months with potlucks, sing-alongs, a chocolate fantasy, and just enjoying being together to visit and plan for our special year of 1993. This will be the 20th anniversary for the restoration and preservation of our grand old Wicks pipe organ. We will be dedicating our fall show on October 3 to this event. Lee Erwin played the first program for us way back then.

To finish this year's activities, we will have Bob Ralston on December 5 in a program of beautiful Christmas music. What a terrific year 1993 will be for us.

"If they could see us now" — those who worked so hard with such dedication during the restoration to this grand

Wicks organ, I know they would be smiling.

We will be working hard to bring about these shows and the beautiful music and the personal rewards make it all worth the effort.

To my fellow members of this chapter, let our audiences keep us inspired to bring to them the glorious sounds of our Wicks theatre organ. So to spring and 1993, let our year begin. *Helen Alexander*



James O'Connor at Butterworth Center.  
*Dwight Minkler photo*



Howard Adams working on the Honky Tonk piano.  
*Dwight Minkler photo*



Don Walker, Marilyn Incerto, Del Menke sing for Selma Johnson at piano at Butterworth Center.  
*Dwight Minkler photo*



Jim Riggs greeting people following concert at Fargo Theatre.



Getting ready for Jim Riggs' master class.

## RED RIVER

Fargo, North Dakota  
318/287-2671 or 701/232-6325

February 12 was the date of our third Artist Series concert, which is planned for every other year at the Fargo Theatre. This year, there was a rapt audience for Jim Riggs, who presented a terrific program, including a sing-along and short comedy, *Fluttering Hearts* starring Charlie Chase. Jim opened the show with the "Paramount" theme, then into the "El Capitan March," "On a Slow Boat to China," "Blue Moon," and some great medley varieties of familiar and some not often heard numbers. These included tunes of Duke Ellington, Walter Donaldson, Cole Porter, the Warner Brothers musicals, and from *The Band Wagon*. Among several other selections, a personal favorite for us Sidney Torch fans, "The Twelfth Street Rag" with that unique Torch style. The concert was a treat from beginning to end!

Then on Saturday, a group of us attended the Riggs' master class from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Jim provided a well-planned outline to follow, with ample room for taking notes, on many aspects of arranging, registration, and technique. He gave us many clear and helpful examples. A master class is not only beneficial for organists, but makes the non-organists more attentive listeners. *Sonia Carlson*

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Jim Ross at the Conn theatre organ.



Tom Jeffery photo

We prepare to consume vast quantities of tasty desserts.

Tom Jeffery photo

## RIVER CITY

Omaha, Nebraska

712/328-8725 or 402/453-7769



Our January 16th meeting was hosted by Tom Wolfe in his attractive home, which boasts a three-manual Conn theatre organ. We were greeted by an inviting fire in the hearth on a very cold winter night. Harold Kenney chaired a short business meeting, standing in for president Greg Johnson, bringing up up-to-date on the status of the chapter's organ and our organ studio at Durand's Sky Ranch Airport. Bob Markworth has agreed to serve as crew chief on the organ's restoration. Jim Ross, a 17-year-old chapter member from Underwood, Iowa, was the evening's guest artist, offering a musical potpourri with show tunes from Broadway and from the silver screen, a lovely prelude, "Still Wie Die Nacht," a toe-tapping rendition of "Honey" in the style of Reginald Dixon, and "Elite Syn-copations," a Scott Joplin rag. Jim closed

his program with Nat King Cole's "Unforgettable" and several hymns, including "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." We adjourned for open console and for delectable desserts and coffee.

River City Chapter has had a long-standing invitation to visit Jack Moelmann's home and organ installation in the St. Louis, Missouri, area. Thanks to detailed planning and a great deal of leg-work by our Tour Director, Harold Kenney, and by our host, Jack Moelmann, a group of 14 chapter members drove down to St. Louis on the weekend of February 13-15, checking-in at a motel near Jack's home. The festivities opened with a Saturday night dinner at Jack's home, where we were joined by a contingent of 14 or 15 members from the St. Louis chapter. A word about Jack's organ installation: a Rodgers three-manual Model 340 Custom electronic has been augmented with seven ranks of pipes, percussions, a toy counter, novelty effects, digital synthesizers, MIDI control, a multitude of speaker cabinets, etc. The technical specification covers 11 printed

pages. And it does have a fantastic sound!

Our Sunday events included a tour of the legendary St. Louis Fox Theatre where we got to hear the lobby organ (but not the main auditorium organ because of a booking at the theatre); following lunch we visited Dennis and Mary Lou Ammann's house to hear and play their splendid theatre organ installation. On Saturday night we again enjoyed dinner at Jack Moelmann's and were joined by a group from the St. Louis Chapter.

On Monday, we were scheduled to visit the Wicks Organ Company and also return to the Fox Theatre, but a forecast of inclement weather conditions dictated, instead, an early return to Omaha. We are very grateful to Jack Moelmann and to the St. Louis Chapter members for their outstanding hospitality, with special thanks to Doris Erbe, the St. Louis Chapter's president, the Ammanns, and to Dottie Jenkins who presented us with 40 photographs that documented the highlights of our visit to St. Louis.

Tom Jeffery and Harold Kenney

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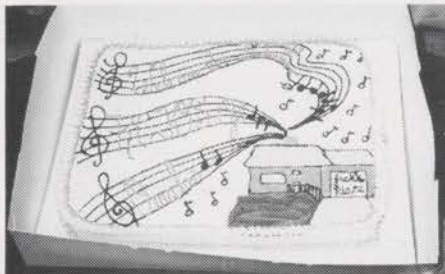
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A few of the guests at Jack Moelmann's home. L to R: Fred Jenkins, George Reim, Greg Johnson, Harold Kenney, Tom Wolf, Mary Kenney, Fred Zdan, Dick Zdan. *Dot Jenkins photo*



Welcome cake for River City visitors.



Hard working kitchen crew taking a well-deserved break. L to R: Joyce Markworth, Fern Zdan, Alice Bauer. *Dot Jenkins photo*

## ST. LOUIS

Missouri  
314/481-1840

We hosted a visit by the River City Theatre Organ Society (RCTOS) from Omaha to Jack Moelmann's home in O'Fallon, Illinois, February 13-15. Jack arranged for a tour of the Fabulous Fox Theatre. Fred Jenkins entertained on our lobby Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ and narrated a history of the Fabulous Fox Theatre and our Wurlitzer. Dinner at Jack's was most enjoyable. Lindy Drescher and her daughter, Lyn Mayer, whipped up a delicious beautifully decorated cake as her special way of welcoming the Omaha visitors. They also visited



One happy fella — Bob Ellison at the Hammond Commodore 300. *Dot Jenkins photo*

the home of Dennis and Mary Lou Ammann to hear his 2/12 Barton-Wurlitzer. As usual, those who were first-time guests at Jack's had lots of fun poking into each nook and cranny to examine the marvelous musical equipment. Jack's musicality exhibited the versatility of his Rodgers throughout his program which included a tribute to America. A tour of the Wicks Organ Company at Highland, Illinois, had been arranged and Marlin Mackley, curator of the Fox's 4/36 Wurlitzer, had arranged for the Omaha Chapter to hear the Mighty Wurlitzer. However, Mother Nature did not cooperate and, because of our impending snowstorms, our visitors left for home early on February 15. But that's o.k. — it provides the incentive for another visit. We enjoyed having them. If your chapter would like to visit St. Louis, we'd love to have you!

In February we enjoyed the hospitality of Marlene and Joe Harned in their beautiful home. Joe arranged for his good friend, Bob Ellison, a very accomplished St. Louis organist, to entertain us on Joe's Hammond Commodore 300. Bob and his artistry are well known to many SLTOS members and he was responsible for our good turnout! His repertoire included an interesting variety of jazz numbers, as well as other beautiful selections, such as "Black Orpheus," "Tenderly," "Sweet Georgia Brown," and "Josephine." Marlene prepared delicious refreshments and, as usual, we wasted no time in making them disappear! Several of our members also enjoyed open console time. *Doris Erbe*



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put on a  
great concert.



## SIERRA

Sacramento, California  
916/961-9367 or 916/967-9732

We had a surprisingly good turnout for Joe Smith's concert (considering the weather) on February 7 at the Fair Oaks Clubhouse. Joe played in the English style, that is, no announcements between selections. He played selections both old and new, and a variety program that the audience loved. It was good not to have all the chit chat that so many artists feel is important when what the audience really wants is to hear the music. Joe dedicated his entire program to Mac Wurtzbaugh who was in the hospital following a serious automobile accident.

Thanks to all who made this such a successful program. *Bud Taylor*

## SOONER STATE

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

Our January meeting was held at Tulsa's German American Society Building, with music centered around their 2/12 Geneva pipe organ. This is the instrument that members of our chapter donated many hours last fall to its refurbishment, and this was our chance to hear it. Phil Judkins opened the program by telling us about the organ: it is an "original," installed in this building by Geneva in 1928, at the height of the theatre organ movement. Although it doesn't have a Tibia, it is "Theatre-Type," with a Clara-bella, Orchestral Oboe and Strings. It had been maintained continuously until about two years ago.

Phil then demonstrated its various voices by playing several selections for us. Next on the bench was Don Kimes, followed by Sam Collier, both of whom showed us more of what the organ could do. Seven people drew numbers for open console.

This meeting was also our annual business meeting, and this was the year to hold election of officers.

At a meeting of our new board of directors held ten days later, our new president, Don Kimes, outlined some exciting directions planned for our chapter. First project on the list is to move forward with the modifications on our chapter-owned Robert-Morton. We also plan to help John McConnel with his installation in Okmulgee of the 4/14 Robert-Morton formerly housed in Central Assembly of God Church.

February found us gathered at Tulsa Technology Center for one last program around our *beast* before it would be shut down for a while. The program was nicely played by Sam Collier, Carolyn Craft and Phil Judkins, filling in at the last minute for Katy Dennis, who was ill. We especially enjoyed Carolyn's playing of "Jealousie," which she had adapted from an old accordion arrangement. Eight people played at open console.

Lee Smith, our immediate past-president, was presented with a handsome plaque and a generous check for his many years of outstanding service to our chapter. The plaque will go on the console, and the check will go toward the purchase of a solid-state relay, of the



Joyce Hatchett enjoys open console at the 3/10 Robert-Morton. *Dan Kimes photo*



"Show and Tell Time" — visitors view the south chamber of Sooner State chapter's 3/10 Robert-Morton. Notice the two little kids. *Dan Kimes photo*

Lee-and-Dorothy-Smith mostly-Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ being installed in their home.

The day after our February meeting, our chapter-owned Robert-Morton console was removed from Tulsa Technology Center and transported to J.A. Swartz's shop so the modifications could begin. The stop-rail design is being enlarged to take advantage of the new stop-action (solenoid switches) magnets. Pedalboard contacts will be replaced, and new casters will be installed on the console dolly. While the console is being worked on, the additions to the chambers will be finished: the "new" three-rank chest is ready to be wired in, with its added ranks of pipes, and some components are to be re-arranged. We're going to have a fantastic instrument! *Dorothy Smith*



Console of Sooner State chapter's 3/10 Robert-Morton in Tulsa Technology Center's Broken Arrow campus. *Dan Kimes photo*

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## SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY

South Vineland, New Jersey

Our February meeting was held at Charlie and Mary Hoffner's residence. Elections were held and open console and social hour were the order of business on this crisp, sunny Sunday in February.

Coming chapter events: March 14 - trip to Pheonixville to hear Simon Gledhill at the Colonial Theatre; April 25 - concert on the newly installed Conn 650 at the home of Joe and Theresa Rementer. Lee DeMets at the console.

Broadway Theatre Kimball restoration update: All pipework installed in left chamber and ciphers repaired. Work started to releather relay and "glock" pneumatics. Pipework removed from right chamber and cleaning of chambers, chests and pipework started. Found water damage to Pedal Contra Bass chest and one pipe, all salvageable and repairs underway.

Joe Rementer

## TOLEDO AREA

Toledo, Ohio  
419/385-4724

It anyone can, Stan Kann — draw a crowd, that is. The program committee has selected the former organist of the St. Louis Fox to headline our spring show, May 2. Five other nationally-recognized artists were considered, but Stan was selected for his broad-base appeal and



America's zaniest organist, Stan Kann.

ability to entertain the audience, not just with music, but with his clever antics and ribald humor. "After the success of Bob Ralston last fall, it was imperative to engage someone who is *more* than just an organist," noted president, Kevin Oberle. "We were looking for a real entertainer, and Stan was our logical choice." The show, entitled *The Funny Man — Stan Kann*, will feature some of Stan's antique vacuum cleaner collection, including two models made eons ago right here in Toledo — the TUEC (Toledo United Electric Company) and the Airway. Kann's national exposure on NBC's *Tonight Show with Johnny Carson* and other well-publicized media appearances was a major factor in the committee's decision. A champagne afterglow reception is planned for all members, associates, and guests to give those select individuals an opportunity to meet Stan one-on-one.

Thinking way ahead, the program committee has selected Bob Ralston for

our fall concert scheduled for October 9 & 10. After Bob's two sell-outs last year, a return engagement was logical. The local public broadcasting stations, which were so supportive last year, have agreed to air spots and co-sponsor his return.

June 11 is the date when TATOS will "Rally by the River" — Friday night beer bash on the city's downtown riverfront when young and old (mostly young) gather to celebrate TGIF, dance to live rock bands, and "down a few." Only a handful of philanthropic and civic organizations is selected each year by lottery to sponsor a "rally." TATOS was chosen last year on its first attempt, but an error in the drawing process put us on the alternate list which assured us a position for 1993. CitiFest, the coordinating organization, advised us that Friday, June 11, was awarded to TATOS.

The profit potential is tremendous, considering the monies are made in a four hour period. On a good rally evening — assuming good warm weather and no rain, a great band, and thirsty crowds — a sponsoring organization can expect to be very busy. Rally-goers pack Promenade Park, part of the city's SeaGate riverfront development, where dock space is at a premium as they even arrive by boat to celebrate the end of the work week.

Paul Wasserman is still looking for a few good ranks — pipes and chests. He hopes to expand the TATOS Marr & Colton by adding some pipes with pizzazz

(continued...)



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TOLEDO cont.



Left: One of TATOS's newest board members, Dick Leichtamer, takes his turn during open console. Right: Entertaining the troops at open console, Paul Wasserman at the Marr & Colton.



They're NEVER too young! Emily Densel, 22 months, takes her cue from her parents, Tom and Karen, and enjoys Larry Evert's home Wurlitzer installation.

— a Post Horn, Trumpet, or any other rank with brilliance. Paul just completed a total re-build of the orchestra bells and the xylophone just in time for Stan Kann's concert.

A former Toledoan, now living in Paradise, California, Bill Whitney, has asked the club for permission to use the Marr & Colton when he returns to Toledo on the occasion of his 50th class reunion. Bill is organizing a class concert and buffet dinner on June 6, at the Ohio Theatre, performing for his old classmates on the TATOS instrument. The club was delighted to give its approval — a great opportunity to showcase our instrument. Bill is a member of ATOS and is closest to the Sierra Chapter — 110 miles from Paradise.

Tom Densel, who heads our organ crew, is putting the finishing touches on his home installation in Delphos, Ohio. The console of the 1927 Wurlitzer is about 95% restored and is now sitting in his living room. According to Tom, his daughter, Emily, now 22 months, is "very excited about the organ, the pipes, and especially the bells." Everyone at TATOS is looking forward to hearing this great new installation when it's completed.

Finally, a large contingent of Toledoans traveled to Detroit on March 6, to see the British wonder, Simon Gledhill, in concert at the Senate's 4/34 Wurlitzer. The young artist certainly lived up to his reputation and he brought the audience to its feet — several times — and demonstrated every facet of this magnificent instrument. The event was co-sponsored by the Detroit and Macomb Theatre Organ Societies. Bravo, Simon! *Bill Coine*

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Charlie Balogh at Bill Brown's home installation. MLV photo

## VALLEY OF THE SUN

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'Twas weeks before Christmas, / And over at Bill Brown's / The organ accompnied a / Man in a nightgown!

Well — sort of! As part of Charlie Balogh's December 6 program for VOTS, David Lindsay appeared in a red and white striped nightshirt to read the Fred Waring arrangement of "Twas the Night Before Christmas." It was one of those times when "ya had ta be there!" Charlie's program was almost entirely Christmas music, which really put us in the holiday mood. He played old standards and familiar carols. Of special interest to many was the Mannheim Steamroller arrangement of "Silent Night." During the refreshment time after the program, it was nice to visit with Charlie, his wife, and his parents who were visiting from out of town.

Our January 17 meeting at First Christian Church brought us a treat from Melbourne, Australia. Sean Henderson, junior winner of the 1992 Young Theatre Organist Competition, was in the Valley to study with Walt Strony and Lyn Larsen. Sean's program included some ballads, showtunes, classical pieces, and some music from "Down Under." While in the Valley, Sean also made a cameo appearance at a Walt Strony concert in Sun City West. Sean and his mom stayed

with VOTS member Judy Shortt during their visit.

February 14 found us back at First Christian Church for a Valentine's Day Cabaret. The afternoon featured a potluck meal and music by Johnny Harris (Hey! Isn't he supposed to play in September?). Johnny played background music while we enjoyed the food and friendship. We learned the Schultz's have been married for fifty-two years and the Barnetts were newlyweds at two years (Evelyn said SHE proposed to George!). In keeping with the holiday, Harris played "My Funny Valentine," "Does Your Heart Beat For Me?," "You Gotta Have Heart," and even a little of "Achey Breaky Heart." Madeline LiVolsi

### CORRECTION! CORRECTION!

Our March chapter newsletter, the Valley of the Sun Stop Rail, recently printed some information about Ron Rhode's new recording, "Steppin' On the Ivories." I'm not sure who receives our newsletter at THEATRE ORGAN or the *International News*, but we need to make a correction. With apologies to Ron Rhode and any problems we may be causing him, the information about the price SHOULD read:

The CD is \$18.00 (\$20.00 outside the United States). The cassette is \$12.00 (\$14.00 outside the United States).

## WESTERN RESERVE

Cleveland, Ohio  
216/521-7269 or 216/941-0572

We began 1993 with a musical gathering January 17 at Chairman Nancy Mae Iden's home, which features an electronic Wurlitzer organ and a piano. With no formal concert or artist, the afternoon became a relaxed "jam session" with various keyboard artists as well as Dick Shepherd on trumpet, and Mary Krejci and Tillie Powers boisterously joining in on vocals.



Sean Henderson at First Christian Church. MLV photo

February 21 found us gathered at the home of new members Vito & Maggie Falcone in Willoughby for another afternoon jam session, this time with three electronic organs and a piano at the artists' disposal. Members Bob Jackson, George Krejci, and hostess Maggie Falcone weren't a bit bashful, and provided delightful impromptu entertainment for their audience.

The highlight of a bitter winter was our presentation of Cleveland's own George Krejci in concert at the Grays' Armory 3/16 Wurlitzer on February 27. A veteran of the concert world and an expert at milking beautiful tones from our chapter instrument, George's performance was a true crowd-pleaser. Highlighted by a Laurel & Hardy short and an old-fashioned sing-along, his concert included favorites "Chattanooga Choo-Choo," "I'll Be Seeing You," and a *Mary Poppins* medley. As an extra treat, members of the Cleveland Grays Color Guard in full parade dress greeted patrons at the Armory doors for pre-concert guided tours of the facility.

For a March social, we took advantage of the efforts of our sister society DTOS by traveling and gathering informally for a March 6 concert at the Detroit Senate Theatre by British prodigy Simon Gledhill. The wonderful concert and delightful camaraderie made the journey well worth the effort and involvement. Our salutations to DTOS! Jim Shepherd



### GIVES NEW LIFE TO THE CLUB

Bob Ralston's splendid performance at the Temple Theater not only made over 1000 folks very happy, but he also revitalized an ATOS chapter that many of us had long ago given up for dead.

Dolton W. McAlpin, MCATOS, March 1992

### GETS BETTER EVERY TIME

There are many artists on the theatre organ circuit, most of whom are very good; however, Bob Ralston falls into a select group of great ones, who progressively improves every time you hear him.

Fran Verri in "Pipes of PATOS" May 1992

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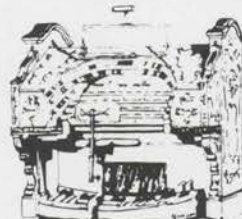
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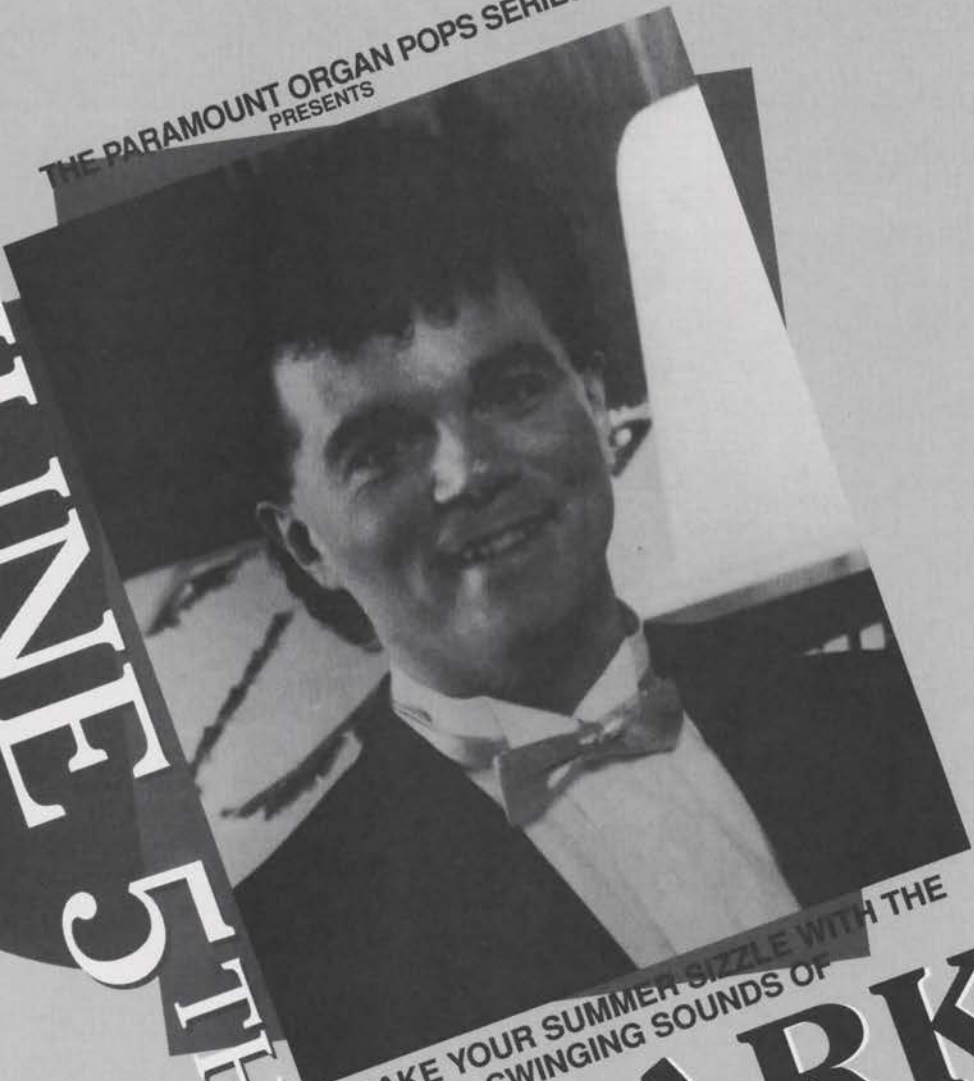
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