

Theatre Organ

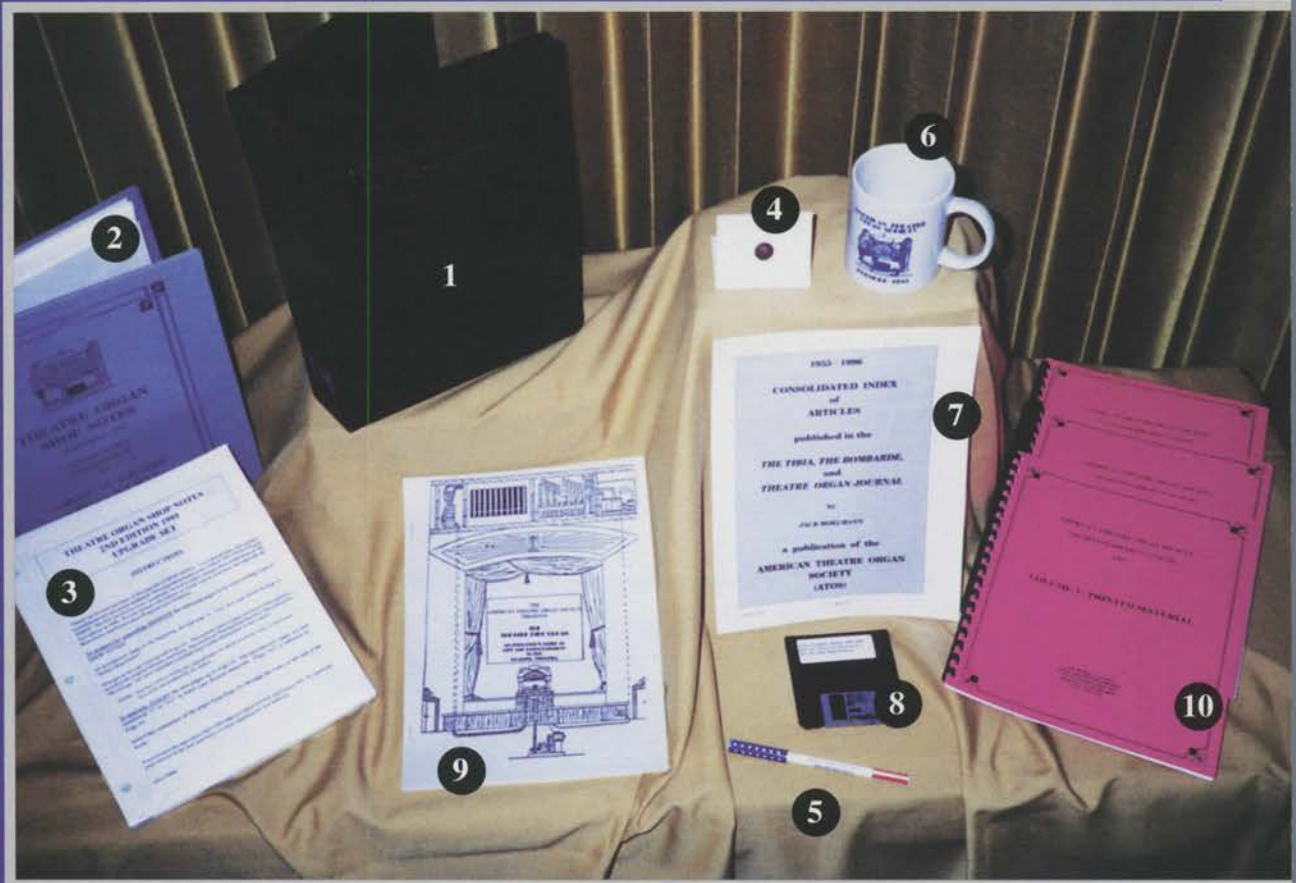
JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

March / April 1998



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"A spectacular performance by Bob Ralston at the Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet on April 28, 1996. A true master of the theatre pipe organ, he brought the audience to their feet in several standing ovations. Bob has entertained and charmed a near capacity house for two consecutive years. A tradition in the making."

Lili Zuber, pres., JATOE, April 1996

EVEN BETTER THAN EXPECTED

"We knew that Bob Ralston's programs were going to be good, since he has appeared here at Riordon Hall in Bella Vista three times previously. However, he outdid himself on May 16 & 17, 1996. He was even better than expected. Both nights were sold out, and our audiences were thrilled."

Roland Simmelink, pres., VPAA, May 1996

BOB RALSTON

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All fees are fully negotiable. You can afford Bob Ralston, and your chapter will make a handsome profit.

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The former Rockefeller Center Theatre four manual special, Fox scale console, now the main console at the NorCal Berkeley Community Theatre. Thirty-three rank Wurlitzer (prior to restoration). Come and see the restored console at the Golden Gate in '98! *Bill Schlotter photo*

Theatre Organ

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Library of Congress Catalog Number ML 1T 334 (ISSN 0040-5531) Printed in U.S.A.

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 2

MARCH/APRIL 1998

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American Theatre Organ Society Annual Membership is \$30.00 per year (\$35.00 outside the USA), which includes six issues of THEATRE ORGAN, the official publication of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS). Make check or money order payable to ATOS and mail to ATOS Membership Office, P.O. Box 551081, Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581. THEATRE ORGAN ISSN — 0040-5531 (title registered U.S. Patent Office) is published bi-monthly by the American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., a non-profit organization, Harry Heth, President. All rights reserved. Entire contents copyrighted, American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., 1998. Single copies of current issues are \$2.50 each (please add \$1.00 per issue sent outside the USA). Make check or money order payable to ATOS and mail to ATOS Special Services, 785 Palomino Court, San Marcos, CA 92069-2102. Office of Publication is 5 Third Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-3200. Second class postage paid in San Francisco, CA 94103-3200 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address change to THEATRE ORGAN c/o ATOS Membership Office, P.O. Box 551081, Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581.

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MARCH/APRIL 1998 VOLUME 40, NUMBER 2

PRESIDENT: HARRY HETH
EDITOR: THOMAS L. DeLAY
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: MICHAEL FELLENER



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President's Message



You will see, again in this issue, the announcement of the 1998 annual convention to be held in San Francisco next July. The wonderful people in the Nor-Cal Chapter always treat us as honored guests and I invite all of us in ATOS to sincerely consider supporting this chapter this summer as well as all other ATOS Chapters that go the extra mile to present wonderful events.

You have received or will soon receive your ballot for the annual ATOS Board of Directors election. Please read the information as supplied by the candidates, mark, and mail your ballot before the April 15 deadline.

This is also the time for potential candidates for the scholarship, young artist, and hobbyist competitions to start your preparation and planning for 1999. Come on, Chapters, encourage, support and present your aspiring stars of tomorrow.

The ATOS Board of Directors met last January and dealt with many issues. Probably, the most visible was the name

change of the ATOS Newsletter from *Pipes & Personalities* to *ATOS International News* as a remembrance of Tom B'Hend and his work. Another issue dealt with revisions to the Uniform Chapter Charter Agreement. We are again going through the process of re-chartering all Chapters so that everyone is operating with the same guidelines. Chapter Presidents, please review, sign, and return your Agreement in a timely manner so that we may then prepare and distribute the new Charter Certificates. The summary of the Board actions will be presented in the Annual Membership Meeting during the Convention.

Also, please notice the entry in this issue of the Journal, "ATOS OPPORTUNITIES." Please read and consider sharing your talents and time with ATOS.

Have you registered for the Convention this July? No time like the present.

Harry Heth

General Information

ATOS OPPORTUNITIES

The following positions are appointed annually by the ATOS Board of Directors. All members in good standing who feel they have both the background and the time to devote to a position are invited to send their resumé to the ATOS President by June 1st so that their interest in the position may be reviewed by the Board.

All serious applicants will be interviewed by the Board in San Francisco, just prior to the Annual Convention. The applicants will appear, at their own expense, for this process.

The positions to be reviewed in the morning of July 1, 1998, are as follows:

Convention Reviewer(s): Attend annual and regional conventions, review the convention concerts and ambiance, and arrange for photos to be made available for the Journal. This is a Journal staff position.

Executive Secretary: Maintain the membership records, process renewals and new memberships, and serve as a point of contact with the membership. This position is to be filled by an independent contractor.

Journal Advertising Manager: Solicit and manage advertisements placed in the Journal. This position receives a percentage of revenue as compensation.

Journal Editor: Solicit and receive information, articles, and photographs for the Theatre Organ Journal. Prepare the information for publication and coordinate the flow of the information through the printing and mailing. This position is to be filled by an independent contractor.

Newsletter Editor: Solicit and receive information and short articles for the ATOS International News. Prepare the information for publication and coordinate the flow of the information through the typesetting, printing, and mailing processes. This is a staff position.

The Board of Directors will appoint the following Officers on the morning of June 30, 1998, in San Francisco: *President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.* Interested candidates should be available for interview at that time.

For additional information, please contact the ATOS President, listed on page 3 of this Journal.

YOUR BEQUEST

to ATOS will help us to continue to preserve and present the theatre pipe organ and its music, as we have been doing since 1955. For information about leaving a contribution to ATOS in your will or trust, contact Vern Bickel at (760) 471-6194.



OFFICIAL NOTICE

to:

**Members of the
American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS)
FROM Jack Moelmann, ATOS Secretary
SUBJECT:**

Notice of Annual Membership Meeting

DATE: JULY 5, 1998

The Annual Meeting of the members of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) will be held in the afternoon on Sunday, July 5, 1998 at the Marriott Hotel, San Francisco, California, during the 1998 ATOS Annual Convention. The Marriott is the convention hotel.

Items on the agenda:

- Approval of the 1997 Annual Membership Meeting Minutes as printed in the Journal (Nov/Dec 1997)
- Presentation and acceptance of the Treasurer's Report
- Old Business: Report of Board Actions during the past year. Other status reports
- New Business
- Announcement of next Membership Meeting
- Adjournment

AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

Jack Moelmann, ATOS Secretary



Photos taken at the mid-year ATOS Board Meeting, January 1998.

Questions & Answers

Q&A

About the Costs of ATOS Conventions

by Tim Needler,
ATOS Convention Planning Coordinator

Q. It seems that our ATOS conventions are getting more and more expensive, both in hotel rates and in registration fees.

A. Yes, they are. Despite our heavy negotiations that result in much lower group rates than the hotel's standard advertised rates, hotel costs are going up. A recent article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* states that average hotel rates there have jumped nearly 25% in the past two years. In 1991 when we were last in San Francisco at the St. Francis Hotel, we paid \$95 per room. This year, seven years later, we are paying \$115 which is about half the advertised rate at the San Francisco Marriott but still the highest we have paid. Our 1998 ATOS rate is 21% higher than we paid in 1991 which averages out to under 3% per year, far less than the city average yearly increase. Occupancy rates in major San Francisco hotels are running at 90%, a very high figure for the hotel industry. That keeps rates there quite high.

Q. If hotel rates are high in these major cities, why do we go there for our national conventions?

A. Because, in nearly every case, that is where we find the heaviest concentration of theatre organs . . . in the major metropolitan areas.

Q. Why do we always stay at a large downtown hotel instead of staying at outlying smaller hotels with cheaper rates?

A. There are several factors that determine where we house a convention:

1. Enough rooms IN THE SAME HOTEL to house our convention. We usually reserve 400 rooms for a national convention. Most outlying hotels are not this big. People did not like being split between two hotels in Pasadena a couple of years ago. We like to keep our group together.

2. Central location to keep busing costs as reasonable as possible. Being downtown is usually the most central location to theatres with organs, and being downtown provides more availability of restaurants, shopping, night life and other attractions. By the way, busing costs keep going up, up, and up. Our per-person transportation costs in San Francisco this year are nearly double what we paid in 1991 which is the major reason our registration fee is considerably higher this year.

3. Large public areas we can use for seminars, recordings shop, displays, electronic organ showrooms, annual meetings, banquets, etc. Smaller hotels typically do not have these display areas, and our convention needs lots of space for the attractions we present.

Q. Why doesn't ATOS publicize other near-by hotels with cheaper rates?

A. First of all, the negotiated ATOS convention hotel rate is generally cheaper than anything close by in most downtown locations. Secondly, our convention gets use of the hotel's public display rooms at no cost IF we fill our agreed-upon room block, generally 400 rooms for a national convention. If we fall far short of that commitment because we promoted other area hotels, the hotel can charge us for the display space, and that can add literally thousands of dollars to our overall costs which gets reflected in a higher registration fee or in reduced income for the convention.

Q. Okay, so our registration costs keep going up. How do we compare to other similar organizations in terms of registration & hotel costs.

A. ATOS has perhaps the lowest registration fees of comparable organizations. For instance, this year's American Guild of Organists convention in Denver has a registration fee of \$265 per person PLUS \$100 added if the registrant wants bus transportation to the concerts. Their convention in Denver, Colorado, runs from Friday, June 26, to Thursday, July 2, so it is a little longer than ours. Their downtown convention hotel two-person room rate is \$123. Our rate this summer in San Francisco is \$168 for five days, and that includes transportation to concerts. (We do have an optional bus adder of \$25 since some of our members need bus transportation to everything, instead of using BART to many events as most of us will do. The BART station entrance is just outside our hotel.) Our nightly hotel rate is \$115, single or double.

Q. Would it be cheaper all-around if we made our national conventions shorter, perhaps four days instead of five?

A. In some respects, yes. We would possibly save the cost of two or three venue rentals and artists' fees and expenses, plus related busing costs, if we shortened the convention by one day. Of course, we would perhaps have to skip seeing and hearing some great artists and venues to save a little. Such savings might lower the registration fee by \$20-\$30 dollars, and a person could also save one night's hotel cost. Of course, the airfare to get to the convention would be the same regardless of how long a person stayed, and that is often a big factor of overall convention cost over which ATOS has no control. Many people, though, feel they would just as soon see everything possible if they've made the effort to go to the convention, and five days' length has proved popular to the majority of people over the years.

Q. Are conventions going to continue to get more expensive?

A. Most likely, yes. In 1999 we are going to London, England, and that will definitely be much more expensive since London is one of the most expensive cities in the world. It is also one of the most fascinating, and this will be a great opportunity to tour a foreign country and see and hear new musical treats. There will be a limit of 300 attendees, so save your money and act fast when the time comes to register.

Q. Might we consider going to shorter, regional conventions some years and skip a full five-day national convention?

A. Yes, this is under consideration due to rising overall costs and a shrinking of locales with enough theatre organs to support hosting a typical national convention. We began doing regional conventions in an effort to accommodate those members who could possibly save on transportation costs by driving to the convention, save hotel costs by fewer days in length, and have a somewhat lower registration cost due to fewer expenses. Of course, regional conventions have typically not had such things as Recordings Shops, seminars, organ demo rooms, or banquets since there just isn't time in a shortened schedule for these activities.

Q. If my chapter would like to host a national or regional convention, what do we do?

A. Ask for a copy of the ATOS Convention Planning & Policies Handbook which gives full details of what is involved and how to do it. Call Tim Needler anytime at 317-255-8056, and a copy will soon be on its way to your chapter president.



AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ORGANBUILDERS CONVENTION REPORT

The 24th annual convention of The American Institute of Organbuilders was held October 5-9 in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. Variety in programming and fellowship opportunities — alongside the essential annual business duties — brought together talent and personalities as diverse as the instruments created by the organization's membership.

Among the multiple offerings of the week was a presentation by John R. Watson, Conservator of Musical Instruments at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Watson, who is shown (above) pointing out details of a windchest, led an interesting and thought-provoking discussion of restoration.

Joel Gary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, attended the convention as recipient of the ATOS David Junchen Technical Scholarship.

Letter to Jeff Weiler, Chairman of the ATOS Education Committee, from Joel Gary:

Dear Jeff:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the David L. Junchen Scholarship Committee for awarding me the 1997 recipient of the David L. Junchen Technical Scholarship.

Attending the 1997 convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders was a very rewarding experience. I was able to hear lectures on topics such as Organbuilding in Colonial America, Conservation and Restoration, Reed Scaling, Historic Organs in Williamsburg, Aesthetics of Organ Case Design, The Alain Family Organ, Mixture Design and Acoustical Properties of Organ Pipes. There was also an interesting panel discussion on "Electronic Sounds and the Organ." In addition to these forums, there were recitals and demonstrations of the various organs of Williamsburg, Virginia.

For me, one of the most memorable experiences was hearing the organ at the College of William and Mary. This little one manual instrument is believed to have been built around 1760. It has had some minor restoration but still plays and sounds as it did over 200 years ago! I must admit that I'm not a big fan of early music, however I found this organ to be absolutely delightful.

Another great benefit of attending the AIO convention is meeting other people in the pipe organ business. Many suppliers to the trade had fascinating displays of their products. I was fortunate to be able to meet other builders and discuss different philosophies of organ design, restoration and building.

Once again I thank you, the scholarship committee and ATOS for affording me this great opportunity.

Sincerely,
Joel Gary

IMPORTANT:

See Page 16 for
"Late Breaking" Convention Hotel Information!

Member's Forum



Dear Editor:

Thought you might enjoy two recent photos of my set-up and Wurlitzer. The photographer used 8" x 10" negative film, so they are nice and sharp. Also, here is a convention photo of Chris Elliott, which would have been nice in the magazine afterglow review. I did not send these earlier, as I figured you had tons of photos to work with, judging by all the people with flash cameras.

Tim Needler and I thought three groups of eighty people each, would be plenty for the afterglow here. However, as you know, we sold out early and I am sorry for the disappointed members who wanted to hear the Wurlitzer.

You should know that the playing of the Terminal Skinner was made possible, by my request to Mr. Harley Piltingsrud, who is installing the instrument. He has been a friend for many years, and to sweeten the deal, I tuned the organ throughout at no charge to the Terminal, to make sure we had a first class sound for Chris.

Regards,
Ron Wehmeier
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Editor:

In the November/December THEATRE ORGAN, I read your most concise and vivid opinion of



Chris Elliott and Ron Wehmeier's Wurlitzer.

the 1997 Indianapolis International. However, in giving due appreciation to those of our members who were involved in the re-installation of the organs you wrote, "The Indiana Theatre Barton originally played into a big barn of a theatre." Could this infer that any theatres over 1,000 seats are barns?? Or could it be that the Journal was asserting its disappointment of several years ago when they saw the people of San Francisco unable to save the flagship of the west coast, the unforgettable San Francisco FOX when the building was destroyed in its entirety?

Most members seemed surprised at being able to walk into the Indiana Theatre building and find it still operating, with the exception of the auditorium much the same as always. Entering the grand foyer with it's marble wainscots and stairways from which you can gain access to repertoire productions or as always, you can take an elevator to the sixth floor where you will find still operating as always, the (Aragon-like) floating clouds and starlit ceiling; the Indiana Roof Ballroom.

John Mecklenburg,
Hartford City, Indiana

Editor's response:

Mr. Mecklenburg is quite right! In this wonderful day of politically correct nomenclature, rather than stating the Indiana was a "big barn," we should have stated the Indiana was "spatially endowed." How absolutely insensitive of us.

On the more serious vein, the loss of a vintage theatre is a structure not capable of replacement at any cost today. Yes, the loss of the San Francisco FOX still burns many. While the Indiana Theatre may, essentially, be intact, the loss of the unique auditorium is unforgivable. While visiting family in Southern Indiana, I would often haunt the magnificent Indiana. Even with the Cinerama screen gulping the front of the auditorium, the house was beautiful. It was one helluva barn! ... a gorgeous palace.

(Letter to Al Hermanns)
ORGAN-izing Popular Music
c/o American Theatre Organ Society
5 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103-3200
Dear Mr. Hermanns:

Having read your contributing articles for some time, it caused me to wonder if all this information has ever been compiled into useful book form. If there is consideration for such, I would encourage you to do so and further, to have it bound in some way other than hard-bound; probably spiral, for example!?

Sincerely,
Stephen Tillmon
1825 S. Stevens St., #B2
Tacoma, WA 98405-1131

The Renaissance Theatre MANSFIELD, OHIO

On April 20, 1997, Jelani Eddington left his law books at Yale University and came to entertain us; and that he did with gusto. It was his first time to meet our Kearns-Wurlitzer, but it didn't take him long to get stops and pre-sets to his liking. His program consisted of many Broadway show hits and great classics. All were played with unusual registrations. In his younger years, he was fortunate enough to listen to the best organists who came to play at the Paramount Music Palace. Now he uses their techniques he learned as a teenager.

The Gershwin medley kept everyone's toes tapping. Among his classics were "Fantasy Impromptu" and "Hungarian Rhapsody #2." These numbers amazed the audience with his flying fingers. It is good that he can find free weekends while in college to entertain in this country and abroad.

On May 18, Barry Baker made a return visit to our theatre. He gave us a fabulous pops concert. In fact, he played up a storm! His varied program paid a belated tribute to Mother's Day. That was most appropriate because his family was in the audience. Since he is now living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, they don't often get to hear him. In the medley was a very modern version of "M-O-T-H-E-R." Late in the second half he had to compete with a very loud thunderstorm and large hail falling on the metal roof over the stage. But he took it all in stride and played "Isn't It a Lovely Day to be Caught in The Rain." He even threw in a few thunder claps of his own.

Then came the climax of the afternoon. The stage director had been in contact with the weather radio and heard that a tornado was heading to our city. So with no panic we took the audience to the lower lobby. That gave Barry lots of time for chatting. When the fire department finally called, we emerged to lovely sunshine. It was too late in the day for an encore of "Stormy Weather," but it was a lovely day to hear a great artist.

Virginia White, RTOA Secretary

OOOOPPPSSS!

Our sincere apologies to Valley of the Sun Chapter and Michael Alyn for not naming Mr. Alyn appropriately as Master of Ceremonies at the recent Desert Winds '97 regional convention. Michael was the fine vocalist for Lew Williams' Group C concert. Mr. Alyn's rendition of "Old Man River" was not to soon be forgotten — unfortunately the Editor forgot Mr. Alyn's name and juxtaposed a person not affiliated with the convention.

Tom DeLay, Editor



Lew Williams at the Bill Brown Wurlitzer.



ATOS members congratulate Jonas Nordwall after his superb program at the Mesa Organ Stop Pizza.

Theatre Organ Society of Australia

26th National Convention

Soundsational Pipes

in **SENSATIONAL ADELAIDE**

Friday 10th to Monday 13th April 1998
Adelaide, South Australia

Featured Artists

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| ☆ Lew Williams [USA] | ☆ Chris McPhee [AUS] | ☆ John Giacchi [AUS] |
| ☆ David Johnston [AUS] | ☆ Ryan Heggie [AUS] | ☆ John Atwell [AUS] |

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- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ♪ 4/29 Capri Theatre Organ
in glass fronted chambers. | ♪ 3/15 Wurlitzer plus 4 rank
mixture. [St Peter's College] | ♪ 2/12 Wurlitzer.
[Pulteney Grammar School] |
|--|---|--|

Seven concerts, silent movie with organ, brass band, 3D slides, jam session, jazz group, dinner dance with piano & band, professionally catered meals, After-Glow tour and more.

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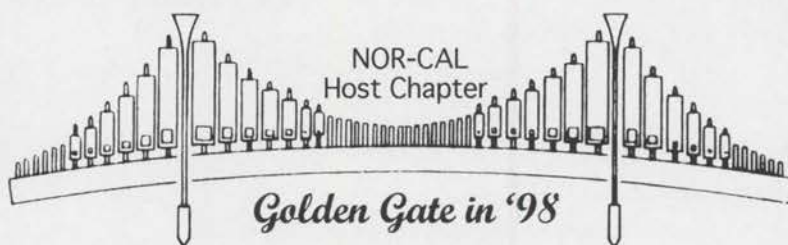


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The Golden Gate in '98

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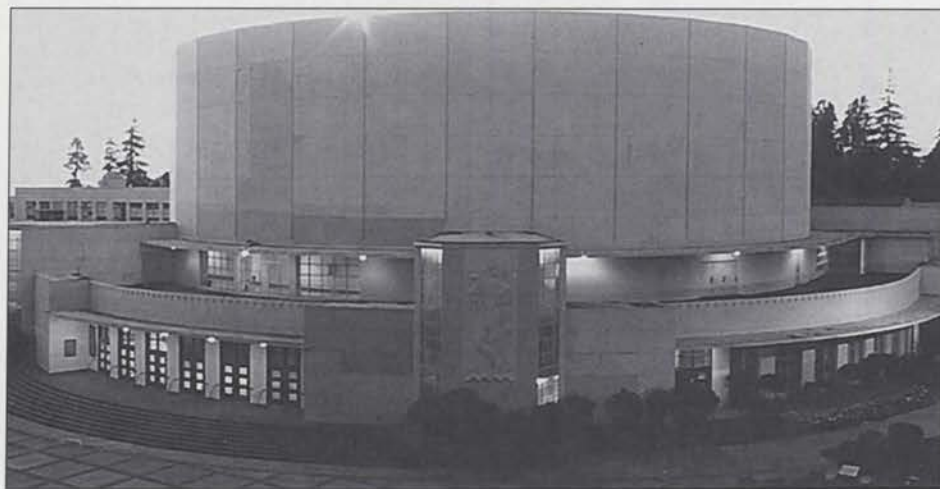
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A WURLITZER ODYSSEY OF EPIC PROPORTIONS

The Rockefeller Center Theatre Wurlitzer Console finds an appropriate home ... at last.

by Rudolph O. Frey



The 3,491 seat Berkeley Community Theatre

The story of the removal of a pipe organ from a theatre, its restoration and reinstallation in another location is synonymous with the theatre organ hobby. What makes one story different from another is the historical significance of the particular organ involved, the quality of the restoration, the appropriateness of the new location for the reinstalled organ, and the degree of acoustical success achieved.

The 3,509 seat Art Deco RKO Roxy Theatre in Rockefeller Center, New York City, opened on the southeast corner of East 49th Street and Sixth Avenue December 29, 1932. Within a year its name was changed to the Center Theatre because of a legal challenge from the original Roxy Theatre. Its thirty-four rank Wurlitzer was shipped from the factory August 2, 1932. It had three chambers under expression, and was played by means of a single Fox scale 4-manual console, finished in rosewood veneer.

It was one of four Wurlitzers in Rockefeller Center. There was a 3/14 in a 5th floor Music Hall broadcasting studio, a 3/10 seventy floors up in the Rainbow Room restaurant, on top of the RCA Building, and the only one remaining, the 4/58 in Radio City Music Hall.

Radio City Music Hall (RCMH) with 5,940 seats opened two days

before the Center Theatre on the northeast corner of East 50th Street and Sixth Avenue, on December 27, 1932. It contains the largest factory-installed Wurlitzer. This organ has fifty-eight ranks and a unique pair of fully operational Art Deco Fox scale consoles finished in ebony. The installation time for the largest Wurlitzer was not more than ninety days! The organ was shipped from the Wurlitzer factory in North Tonawanda, New York, September 28, 1932. The organ and the theatre, billed as "the show-place of the nation" continue to operate today. The theatre has survived a succession of production management changes, the most recent of which is a 25 year lease by Cablevision.

The twin Radio City Music Hall consoles and the Center Theatre console are of identical Art Deco design and size and are the only three of this size, in this style. Their veneer finishes, however, are different. All three consoles have three expression shoes, a master swell, and a crescendo shoe. RCMH has five chambers under expression, but two solo chambers and the percussion chamber are controlled by one swell shoe.

The RCMH organ and its two consoles and the Center Theatre console and organ were Wurlitzer theatre organ aberrations; they contained

straight ranks, and mixtures. The consoles had tremulant, drum, trap, and general cancel pistons. They have even more shutter coupler switches than a Fox Special Wurlitzer. Unlike other theatre consoles, their exteriors are finished like fine furniture, with rounded surfaces which fit together without visible screws. Even the music racks were uncharacteristic in appearance for a Wurlitzer. They attach to the console by invisible screws in the bottom of the rack supports, which slide into inlaid brass slots in the console top.

Samuel L. "Roxy" Rothafel had been the dominating influence in the design and operation of his namesake theatre, the 5,920 seat New York Roxy, which opened at Seventh Avenue and West 50th Street, March 11, 1926. It was the largest, most opulent theatre in the nation for five years. It had a 34 rank Kimball theatre organ, all but three ranks of which were installed under the stage.

In 1931, "Roxy" left "his" theatre to develop the two new theatres in Rockefeller Center. Not surprisingly, the W.W. Kimball Organ Co. was asked to design the four organs for Rockefeller Center. Kimball created the specifications but did not build the organs.

The 3,664 seat New York Paramount Theatre opened at West 43rd Street and Broadway, on Times Square, November 19, 1926. With 2,250 less seats than the Roxy Theatre, the Paramount boasted the largest production model Wurlitzer with four manuals, and thirty-six ranks. In 1928, four similar models, which became known as Fox Specials, were supplied to Fox theatres in Detroit, Brooklyn, St. Louis, and San Francisco. The combination of the acoustics of the smaller (relative to the Roxy) New York Paramount auditorium and the quality of the Wurlitzer organ consistently maintained by Dan Papp, resulted in an installation of unprecedented success.

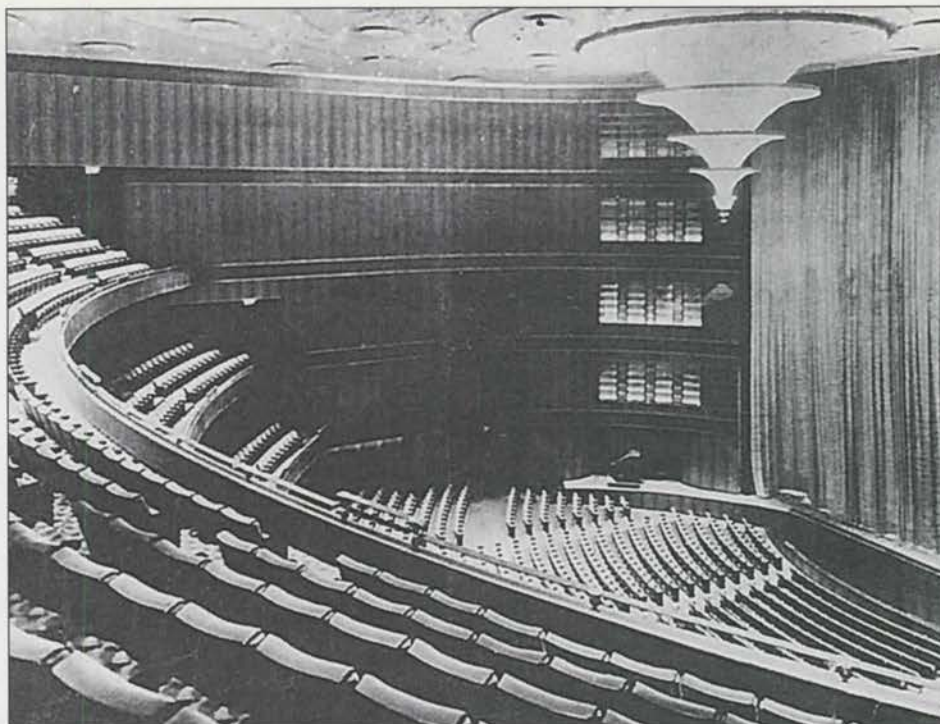
Perhaps because of this, or simply because it made good business sense, the organ contract at Rockefeller Center was put out to bid. In 1932, new theatre organ installations in the United States were nearly over. The Rockefeller Center contract for four organs was a lucrative one. The Rudolph Wurlitzer Company submitted the low bid and received the contract to build and install the organs in accordance with the Kimball specifications. This explains the two major Wurlitzer aberrations and the three unique consoles. The two Rockefeller Center theatres were the last large luxury houses and the last to be equipped with pipe organs.

"Roxy" hired organists Betty Gould and Alex Richardson in late 1932 to open the Center Theatre. Betty began broadcasting on NBC from the theatre. She had her own morning show on WMCA, where she was christened "Radio's Princess of the Console."

In 1954, the theatre was demolished to make room for a new office building. Dr. Warren Philips, of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, was the successful bidder for the organ. He installed it in the basement of his home, with the sound reaching the living room through grille work in the floor.

In 1961 the doctor sold the organ to the late James F. "Jimmy" Boyce, who had been staff organist at the American-on-Wheels roller skating arena in Alexandria, Virginia, since 1949. The rink had opened in 1948. Jimmy purchased the organ to replace a 2/7 Wurlitzer which he owned and played at the rink. The building was a full city block long and sixty-five feet high at the crest of the domed roof. The skating floor was 200 by 100 feet.

With the help of Potomac Valley Chapter members, a professional organbuilder, and a rigging company, the organ was installed on a balcony fifteen feet above the skating floor. The installation continued over a period of five years, until the organ was completed in the summer of 1966. Jimmy made the instrument available for chapter meetings. He welcomed enthusiasts to visit or play the organ, and he recorded three LP records on it. His reputation and the reputation



The 3,509 seat auditorium of the Rockefeller Center Theatre. THS photo

of the organ grew among theatre organ enthusiasts.

In 1979 the lease on the building expired and it was not renewed. The roller rink was forced to close. The building has since been torn down and replaced by new construction. At the eleventh hour, Jimmy concluded an agreement to sell the organ to William P. Brown.

Bill arrived on October 23, with a crew from Phoenix. With the crew augmented with local help and a large fork lift truck, the organ was removed, crated, and packed into two eighteen-wheel trucks by October 30. While many of the ranks of the organ are being heard and enjoyed in the restored Orpheum Theatre in Phoenix, the console has been in storage and out of public sight since 1979.

In September 1989, the console was sold again. After an exchange of paperwork by mail, on September 18, Rudy Frey representing NorCal Theatre Organ Society, and Judson H. Owens, Manager of the Berkeley Community Theatre, arrived with a 24-foot truck to carry the console on the last leg of what had become a transcontinental move. With a lot of help from Bill Brown, much perspiration of the part of all three, and the help once again of a large fork lift, the 1,500 pound console was loaded onto

the truck. First, the 190-foot long, 732 pound umbilical (main console cable) was removed. NorCal uses a Uniflex 2000 organ control system, and has rewired the entire console.

Also loaded were four ranks of pipework belonging to the Center organ: the 97 pipe, 16' Trombone; the 97 pipe, 16' Viola Diapason; the 73 pipe, 8' French Horn; the 73 pipe, 8' English Horn (CorAnglais); and the appropriate manual and offset chests for these ranks.

Another Kimball characteristic was the specification of a 73-note minimum compass for every rank. In the Rockefeller Center organs, 73-note stop switches allowed every unison stop to be played with an octave coupler without losing the top octave. The Uniflex 2000 relay has the ability to duplicate this capability of the original Center organ's mechanical relay. This would be more difficult to achieve with any other standard mechanical Wurlitzer relay.

The RCMH twin consoles both have 374 stops. The Center console had 303 stop tabs. The top stop rail on the Center console had only 55 stop tabs, disposed with 31 on the left side and 24 on the right side. The top stop rail had no stop tabs beneath the music rack, and the music rack was



The 3,491 seat auditorium of the Berkeley Community Theatre

mounted low enough to cover the top stop rail. The Toledo Paramount Publix I console presently controlling the Berkeley Wurlitzer was overhauled by the Crome Organ Company, currently of Reno, Nevada. NorCal has been very pleased with the restoration work performed. The console has operated most satisfactorily since the overhaul was completed in 1989.

Ken Crome was hired to perform the following tasks:

1. Restore the veneer of the Center Theatre console
2. Supply new ivory key coverings for the four manuals
3. Fabricate and install pneumatic actions as necessary for 359 stops
4. Install a total of 359 stops with engravings specified by NorCal
5. Move up the music rack similar to the RCMH consoles
6. Fill the top stop rail with stops

7. Correct the chamber indicators to agree with the redesignated stop tabs
8. Fabricate and install left and right pullout drawers
9. Install five additional electro pneumatically operated pistons per manual
10. Coordinate the reassembly of the console, after the rebuilding of the piston action chests and console stop pneumatics, by the NorCal organ crew
11. Supply a matching AGO standard pedal board
12. Fabricate a new Wurlitzer replica organ bench to match the rosewood veneer console

The recent full time NorCal organ crew members under crew chief Bill Schlotter are: Kevin King, winding, regulating and tuning; Mark Nagel, tuning assistant; Chris Nichols, computer programming and electrical; Fred Cordes, structural erection; Bob

Owens, Evelyn Woodworth, Irv Blanchard, Wes Cavett, and Tom Daley, pneumatic, magnet, and general rework.

During the 1991 convention in San Francisco, twenty-eight ranks of the Berkeley organ were playing. Since the convention, the crew has completed the installation of all of the thirty-three ranks originally planned. The original shutters have been replaced with custom engineered frames twice the original size.

Work has already begun on rebuilding the chests for the Center Theatre organ ranks mentioned above, but winding for these ranks won't be started before July.

The 3,491 seat Art Deco Berkeley Community Theatre was designed in the 1930s. Due to World War II, it was not completed until 1950. The theatre compares favorably with the 3,509 seat Art Deco Rockefeller Center Theatre. Both had operating orchestra

platform elevators and large theatre stages. The 100' x 55' Berkeley stage is eleven feet deeper than the stage was at the Center. The Center Theatre, however, had an elaborate system of stage elevators similar to those in Radio City Music Hall. Performers or sets could be raised to different levels by three elevators. The elevators could be locked at the same height and a round center section could revolve. The Center Theatre organ had three chambers under expression as does the organ at Berkeley.

The Rockefeller Center Theatre Fox scale console which originally controlled thirty-four ranks, is scheduled to debut controlling the thirty-three rank NorCal Berkeley Wurlitzer, at 2:30 p.m. on June 28, 1998, three days before the start of the 1998 ATOS National Convention. The event will be the last concert in the 1997-1998 public concert season with the console in the capable hands of Jonas Nordwall.

To quote Theatre Historical Society historian Steve Levin, "It will look entirely at home." ... and after nineteen years in oblivion, may we respectfully add ... at last!

The assistance, during the writing of this article, of Steve Levin and Richard Sklenar, of the Theatre Historical Society, is gratefully acknowledged.

POST SCRIPT:

The Uniflex 2000 organ control system utilized on the Berkeley organ will make it possible for the Toledo Paramount Publix I console and the Center Theatre 4-manual special console to operate simultaneously as master consoles. Both will be kept and maintained; fulfilling NorCal's dedication to the preservation of these rare and historic instruments.

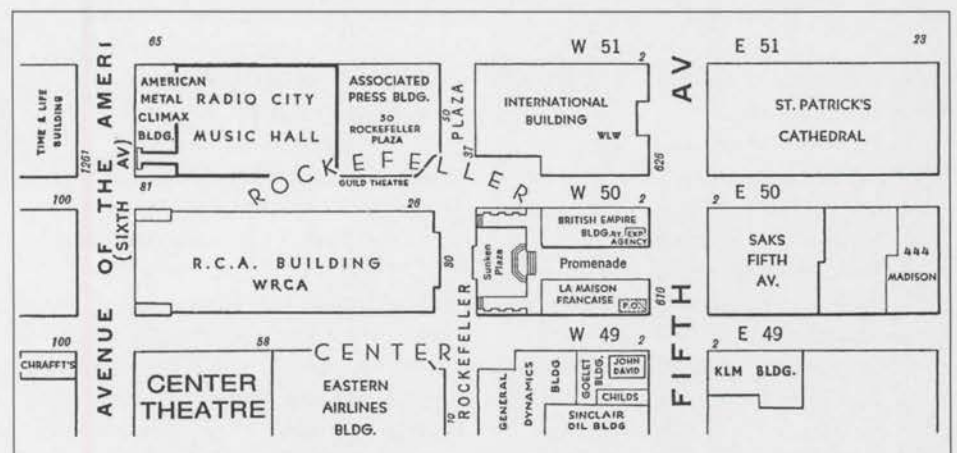
The Center console has been configured to control nine additional Wurlitzer ranks waiting installation at Berkeley. The Toledo console has only enough stop rail tabs, to control 32 of the 42 fully unified ranks to be eventually installed.



The Center and Toledo Theatre Consoles at Berkeley



Rockefeller Center Theatre, 1236 6th Avenue. Theatre Historical Society photo



Radio City Music Hall, at 1260 6th Avenue, was a block north of the Center Theatre.

CENTER THEATRE 4/34 SPECIAL WURLITZER

Rank Analysis & Comparison to Berkeley

Rockefeller Center Theatre 34 Ranks

NOR-CAL Berkeley (33 Ranks now playing)

Rockefeller Center Theatre 34 Ranks				NOR-CAL Berkeley (33 Ranks now playing)				
Rank	Rank Name	Pitch	Pipes	Wind	Rank Name	Pitch	Pipes	Wind
1.	Diaphonic Diapason	16-8-4	85	15"	Diaphonic Diapason	32-16-8	85	15"
2.	English Post Horn	16-8-4	85	15"	English Post Horn	16-8	73	15"
3.	Tuba Sonora	16-8-4	97	15"	Tuba Mirabilis	16-8-4	85	15"
4.	Trombone	16-8-4-2	97	15"	Harmonic Tuba	16-8-4	85	15"
5.	Open Diapason	8-4	73	10"	Trombone*	16-8-4-2	97	15"
6.	Horn Diapason	16-8-4-2	97	10"	Open Diapason	16-8-4	85	10"
7.	Viola Diapason	16-8-4-2	97	10"	Horn Diapason	16-8	73	10"
8.	Tibia Clausa	16-8-4-2	97	15"	Viola Diapason *	16-8-4-2	97	10"
9.	Tibia Minor	16-8-4-2	97	10"	Tibia Plena	16-8-4-2	97	15"
10.	Cello-Violone	16-8-4-2	97	10"	Tibia Clausa	16-8-4-2	97	15"
11.	Gamba	8-4	73	10"	Tibia Clausa	16-8-4-2	97	15"
12.	Oboe Horn	16-8-4	85	10"	Solo String	16-8	73	15"
13.	Clarinet	8-4	73	10"	Solo String Celeste	8	61	15"
14.	Concert Flute	8-4-2	85	10"	Gamba	16-8-4	85	15"
15.	Octave	4	73	10"	Gamba Celeste	8	61	15"
16.	Mixture - Twelfth & Fifteenth		67	10"	Oboe Horn	16-8	73	10"
17.	Brass Trumpet	8-4-2	85	10"	Clarinet	16-8	73	10"
18.	English Horn (Cor Anglais)	8-4	73	10"	Concert Flute/Bourdon	16-8-4-2	97	10"
19.	Kinura	8-4	73	10"	Brass Trumpet	8	61	10"
20.	Brass Saxophone	8-4	73	10"	Orchestral Oboe	8	61	10"
21.	French Horn	8-4	73	10"	English Horn (Cor Anglais)*	8-4	73	10"
22.	Cello Celeste	8	73	10"	Kinura	8	61	10"
23.	Violin I	8-4	73	10"	Krumet	8	61	10"
24.	Violins II	8-4	73	10"	Brass Saxophone	8	61	10"
25.	Spitz Flute Celeste	8-4-2	85	10"	French Horn*	8-4	73	10"
26.	Salicional	8-4	73	10"	Violin	8-4-2	85	10"
27.	Voix Celeste	8-4	73	10"	Violin Celeste	8-4	73	10"
28.	Muted Violin I	8-4	73	10"	Viol d'Orchestre	8-4	73	10"
29.	Muted Violin II	8-4	73	10"	Viol Celeste	8-4	73	10"
30.	Harmonic Flute	4-2	73	10"	Salicional•	8-4-2	85	10"
31.	Spitz Flute	8-4-2	85	10"	Salicional Celeste•	4-2	73	10"
32.	Vox Humana	8-4	73	6"	Quintadena	8	61	10"
33.	Vox Humana	8-4	73	6"	Quintadena Celeste	8	61	10"
34.	Dulciana	8-4-2	85	10"	Harmonic Flute	4-2	73	15"
					Concert Flute Celeste	4-2	73	10"
					Solo Vox	8	61	6"
					Vox Humana	8	61	6"
					Dulciana	8	61	10"
					Unda Maris	8	61	10"

*Actual Pipes from Center Organ •Pipes not installed yet



PLEASE READ!

VITAL UPDATE FOR THE 1998 CONVENTION

CONVENTION HOTEL ROOMS FOR ARRIVAL BEFORE JULY 1 ARE AT A PREMIUM

San Francisco is always a popular destination and convention center, and this year rooms for those arriving early are particularly tight. (Even in 1993, when we signed the contract, we were only allowed limited rooms for early arrivals.) Now, due to the large number of early registrations, the Marriott Hotel (Convention Headquarters) no longer has any rooms before July 1st, but has a limited number for those wishing to stay beyond July 5th.

Your Convention Committee has been in contact with other hotels and makes the following recommendations:

For Arrivals June 30th or before we have room blocks at the following hotels.

1. Ramada at Union Square, 345 Taylor Street, 415/673-2332. \$105 single or double.
2. Powell Hotel, 28 Cyril Magnin, 800/368-0700 or 415/398-3200. \$110 single or double.
3. The Richelieu Hotel, 1050 Van Ness, 800/295-7424 or 415/673-4711. \$109 single or double.

The Ramada and Powell are an easy walk or very short cab ride to the Marriott while The Richelieu needs a short cab ride. Since none of these hotels have rooms available through our convention, moving to the Marriott on July 1st will be necessary.

Make your Marriott reservation with the Hotel Form on this wrapper and your EARLY reservation by phone. Be sure to mention ATOS to get the quoted rates. All of these hotels have a small number of rooms available for those wishing to arrive in time for the Jonas Nordwall concert on June 28th.

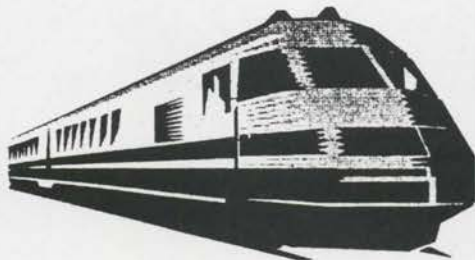
CUT OFF DATE FOR THESE EXTRA HOTELS IS MAY 15th

For Those Wishing to Stay Past July 5th – Book your Marriott rooms as soon as you can!

Going to the AfterGlow? – The busses will not return until about 11 PM, so unless you are an area resident, you will need hotel accommodations that night – the San Francisco Marriott should be able to accommodate you, but don't wait until the last minute to book this night.

AN ADDED PLUS FOR REALLY EARLY ARRIVALS!

Jonas Nordwall will be playing Nor-Cal's 4/33 Wurlitzer at the Berkeley Community Theatre in Berkeley on Sunday, June 28th at 2:30 pm. This concert, part of Nor-Cal ATOS's regular concert series, and is open to the public for a \$10 per person admission fee. The theatre is an easy two block walk from BART, making transportation from San Francisco easy. Monday and Tuesday to see San Francisco is an added attraction.



A NOTE ABOUT BART – BART - Bay Area Rapid Transit - is modern, fast, and comfortable mass transit, and an easy way to get between San Francisco and Berkeley/Oakland. Those who attended the 1991 Convention in San Francisco will remember how smoothly we used BART to move most of the convention goers back and forth between these cities. BART fares are posted at the entrances, and Senior Fares are only 25% of the normal ticket price, but Senior Fare cards (\$4 for a \$20 card) must be purchased outside of BART. Ask at your hotel where you can buy Senior Cards.



The Golden Gate in '98

The 42nd Annual Convention of the American Theatre Organ Society will be held in San Francisco July 1-5, with an afterglow on the Monterey Peninsula, July 6.

The San Francisco airport is undergoing a \$2.4 billion expansion. A new international passenger terminal is being erected which will provide gates for an additional twenty 747's and other smaller airplanes. The immensity of the project is fascinating to see. There has been no disruption of traffic to or from the airport.

The Bay Area Rapid Transit (subway) also has under construction a \$1.2 billion, seven mile extension to the San Francisco Airport. It is scheduled for completion in the year 2000. If you want to get to the convention on time, we suggest other transportation!

AIRPORT TRANSPORTATION

All transportation is available on the lower (baggage claim) level of the San Francisco airport. There are two Marriott Hotels in San Francisco, and one near the airport. Our convention hotel is the San Francisco Marriott at 55 Fourth Street. Your driver will need to know at which location you are staying.

San Francisco Airporter operates a scheduled 45 passenger bus every 15 minutes from 6:15 a.m. to midnight. The fare is \$10 per person one way, or \$18 round trip. Depending on traffic, the ride takes 25 minutes. The bus stops at several hotels including the Marriott. Telephone: 415/495-8404.

Airport Connection operates mini-vans 24 hours a day. The fare is \$25 per person with stops at other hotels, or \$45 for four people in a shared van. Telephone: 415/495-8404.

Yellow cab charges \$28 from the airport to San Francisco, for from one to five people (It would be difficult to get five people and their luggage into



The 1,530 room San Francisco Marriott Hotel - Fourth St. on left, Mission on right.

a taxi.)

There are fewer options for ground transportation from the Oakland airport. There is a shuttle bus costing \$2 that operates every 15 minutes from the airport to the Coliseum station of BART (the subway). The BART fare from the Coliseum station to the Powell Street station where the hotel is located, is \$2.75. BART operates on

this (Fremont) line every 15 minutes weekdays from 5:05 a.m. - 7:05 p.m. After 8:19 p.m. there is no direct service and a transfer is required at Lake Merritt station. Luggage handling may be difficult. For complete information, the telephone number for BART is 510/465-BART.

Bayporter Express provides an unscheduled mini-van service from

the Oakland Airport to destinations in San Francisco. The fare is \$20 for the first passenger and \$10 for each additional person in the party.

Reservations should be made in advance. Call: 415/467-1800 for reservations.

AUTO PARKING

Valet parking in the Marriott Hotel garage is \$25 a day, including in and out privileges for registered guests. There is a city owned garage diagonally across from the hotel, on the southwest corner of Fourth and Mission Streets. Known as the Fifth and Mission or Yerba Center Garage, the facility has a capacity of 2,614 cars. It is owned and operated 24 hours a day, by the city of San Francisco. The height limitation of the six story garage is 6'8". Rates start at \$1.50 per hour. The rate for 4 hours is \$7. The 24 hour rate is \$13. It does not include in and out privileges. Some garages in the city may charge based on a calendar day. In this method of charging, a new day starts every day at midnight. If you entered the garage at 5 p.m., and left at 7 a.m. the next day, you would be charged for two days. This method is not used by the 5th and Mission garage.

Please note that all rates quoted here are as of January 1998.

RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

The San Francisco recreational vehicle park on Townsend Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, has been closed to make room for a baseball stadium. The park hopes to relocate before July. For information about the park there is a toll free number: 1-800-548-2425.

There is a 24 hour attended open lot directly south of the 5th and Mission garage operated by Allright Parking. The rate is \$12 for 24 hours. The lot is bounded by Minna, Holland Ct., Howard, and 5th Streets. Vehicles not clearing the gates cannot get access to the lot. They could be charged for up to four spaces depending on how wide or long they are.

MISCELLANEOUS LOGISTICS

There is a 24 hour Versateller window in the hotel lobby near the Bell

Captain's desk. The Fourth Street Bar and Deli opposite the hotel door on the hotel auto drive-thru entrance, offers salad, soup, sandwich, and beverage service from 11 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. Carl's Junior, a very long city block away, at the intersection of Market, Fifth, and Eddie Streets is always open.

CONSOLE PREMIERE

Jonas Nordwall will premiere the Rockefeller Center Theatre Fox scale console, with the Berkeley 33 rank Wurlitzer, Sunday, June 28, at 2:30 p.m. This is the last concert of the 1997-1998 NorCal TOS regular public series.

CLASSICAL CONCERT OPTION

The option to hear the E.M. Skinner at the Palace of the Legion of Honor fine arts museum in San Francisco's Lincoln Park, is as much for viewing as listening. This classical concert is open to the public. Seating is **VERY** limited. It may be necessary to be **on your feet for an hour**. The museum has classical paintings from several national origins, but it is famous for its collection of works by the French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917). A short walk from the front door of the museum, there is a beautiful view of the Golden Gate Bridge from Lincoln Park.

The convention schedule from July 1st to the 5th leaves little spare time. If you would like to attend the public premiere concert and enjoy additional city sightseeing, you way want to consider coming early.

SIGHTSEEING

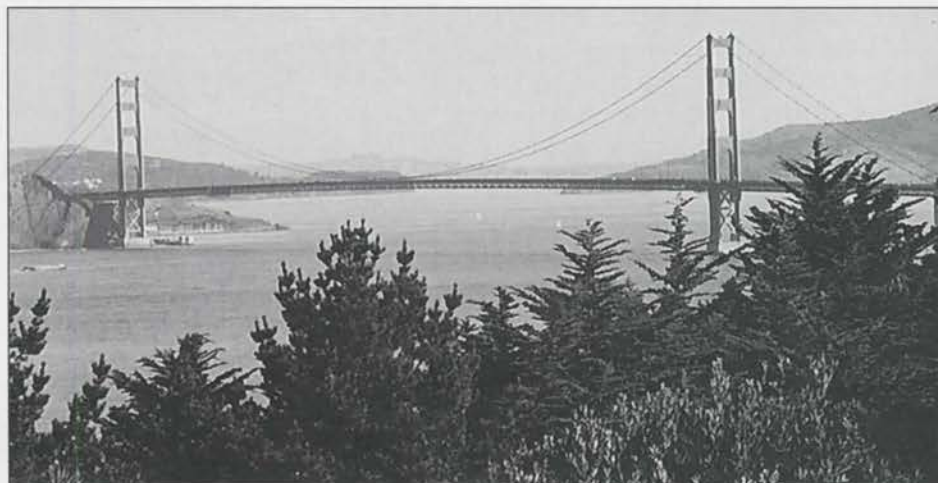
San Francisco is only 6.4 square miles, with amazing hills. Public transportation is good. You can see the significant sights in town on your own. (Gray Line Tours are available in and out of town.) The Marriott is within easy walking distance of the many major downtown department stores. The Powell, Hyde, and Mason Street Cable cars all turn around at Powell and Market Streets, one block west of the hotel.

You can travel on the cable cars to Nob Hill, Grace Cathedral, and Fisherman's Wharf, home of the Ghirardelli Chocolate Company, numerous shops and restaurants, and the Maritime Museum. The ride down the famous Hyde Street hill provides a breath-taking view of San Francisco Bay, the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz Island, and the artist colony of Sausalito.

From the Ferry Terminal at the foot of Market Street, ferry boats travel to Sausalito. They provide an excellent chance to see the famous San Francisco Skyline, the Golden Gate Bridge, and to visit Sausalito.

To the delight of rail enthusiasts and all tourists, an assortment of vintage street cars run at street level on the "F" Market Street line from the hotel to the Castro Theatre. The "K," "L," and "M" modern light rail street cars also run one level below Market Street, from the hotel to the Castro Theatre and beyond.

The Monterey Peninsula afterglow will showcase another scenic area.



Golden Gate Bridge viewed from Lincoln Park, San Francisco

The Golden Gate in '98 Featured Consoles Origins and Present Locations

ATOS PREMIERE



*Rockefeller Center 1932
Special 4-Manual
playing 33 ranks at Berkeley*



*Toledo Paramount 1928
Publix I
playing 33 ranks at Berkeley*



*Detroit Capitol 1925
Publix I playing
26 ranks at the Oakland Paramount*



*Detroit State 1925
Publix I at the Castro Theatre
playing 21 ranks*



*Grauman's Chinese Hollywood 1926
260 Special at the Stanford Theatre
playing 21 ranks*



*Palace of the Legion of Honor 1924
E. M. Skinner
Original 63 rank installation*



*Special 3-Manual
at the Grand Lake Theatre
playing 18 ranks*



Royal Society Jazz Orchestra; Don Neely, Director; Carla Normand, Soloist

Monterey Peninsula Afterglow



The afterglow July 6 will be a full day of events. Attendees may register for \$50, and drive themselves 120 miles south of San Francisco to the Monterey Peninsula, or for \$25 additional, choose the optional round trip bus transportation from San Francisco, which includes transportation to all events during the day. Tom Hazleton will present a late morning concert on the 1928 former S.F. Parkside Theatre, 2/13 Wurlitzer, in the beautiful Monterey State Theatre. Lunch may be purchased at Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf, where a selection of food including delicious seafood is available. In the afternoon, visits are included to the Monterey Bay Aquarium and the Royal Presidio Chapel, circa 1794, where Tom Hazleton will demonstrate the original 1935 Wurlitzer church organ. After dinner on your own in Monterey, the tour will continue to the city of Salinas. Dennis James will premiere the 1928, S.F. El Capitan Style 230SP Wurlitzer, installed in the Fox Theatre, by Golden State Chapter.



1998 CONVENTION SCHEDULE

1998 ATOS NATIONAL CONVENTION SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Wednesday July 1 to Sunday July 5 • Afterglow, Monday July 6, 1998

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
WED	MARRIOTT HOTEL	Membership Forum	BERKELEY COMMUNITY TH
	Registration		4/33 Wurlitzer
	9 am - 7 pm	Y.T.O.E Meeting	WALTER STRONG
THUR	GRAND LAKE THEATRE	HERBST THEATRE	OAKLAND PARAMOUNT TH
	3/18 Wurlitzer		4/26 Wurlitzer
	KEVIN KING	DWIGHT BEACHEM	DAVID PECKHAM
		4-MANUAL ALLEN ORGAN PREMIERE	
FRI	STANFORD THEATRE	BERKELEY COMMUNITY TH	OAKLAND PARAMOUNT TH
	3/21 Wurlitzer	Ryan Heggie	4/26 Wurlitzer
	CHRIS ELLIOTT	Young Organists Competition Later at the Marriott Computer Networks Allen Miller Maint. Seminar	RICHARD HILLS
SAT	CASTRO THEATRE	BERKELEY COMMUNITY TH "S. F. Fox Remembered"	MARRIOTT BALL ROOM
	4/21 Wurlitzer	4/33 Wurlitzer, Fox Film &	AWARDS NIGHT
	RON RHODE	EVERETT NOURSE	DAVID HEGARTY
		STEVE LEVIN FOX Slide lecture Cedar Rapids & London Previews	at the 4-Manual Allen Organ and the Royal Society Jazz Orchestra
SUN	STANFORD THEATRE	MARRIOTT HOTEL	BERKELEY COMMUNITY TH
	TOM HAZLETON	Annual Meeting	LEW WILLIAMS
	3/21 Wurlitzer	P O Owners & E-Tones 4/63 Museum Skinner Option	4/33 Wurlitzer
		STAFF ORGANIST	Closing Concert
MON	MONTEREY PENINSULA	MONTEREY AQUARIUM	SALINAS FOX THEATRE
	Co-sponsored by Golden State T O Society	ROYAL PRESIDIO CHAPEL	3/11 Wurlitzer
	MONTEREY STATE THEATRE	2/5 Wurlitzer - Cameo	DENNIS JAMES
	2/13 Wurlitzer	Fisherman's Wharf	Round-Trip Bus available
	TOM HAZLETON	Lunch on your own	(schedule subject to change)

Wurlitzer 2000

by John Potter



August 19, 1997 ... the first pipe is removed from the Solo Chamber.

The January/February 1997 edition of THEATRE ORGAN published an article of mine titled "The End of A Second Era," about the now world famous Wurlitzer Publix No. 1, Opus 2120, ex the Paramount/Odeon Theatre in Manchester, England, which had been resident in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, since 1977.

When the earlier article was written, negotiations regarding the removal of the organ from the Free Trade Hall were at a protract-

ed stage to say the least. The Free Trade Hall is a listed (government heritage) building in Great Britain and proposals by the City authorities to turn it into a hotel were not welcomed by the local civic preservation groups. As I write in November 1997, the future of the Hall is still in doubt as the redevelopment plans have been called in for examination by the London Government Secretary of State for Heritage. This is likely to lead to a public inquiry which can take

months if not years. We in The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust were faced with a decision on what to do with the Wurlitzer, but indications from every source connected with the redevelopment project indicated that whatever happened there would be no room for the Wurlitzer owned by the Trust.

The decision to proceed with removal was prompted by the fact that, although Manchester had expressed an interest in

retaining the organ, nothing came of propositions to install the organ elsewhere in the city. Stockport Council indicated that, if the Trust could obtain grants for the work involved in preparing chamber space, they would be pleased to offer a new home in the Ballroom/Great Hall of their Town Hall. This hall had been looked at before by the Trust when it was seeking a home for the 4/14 Gaumont, Manchester Wurlitzer. This organ ended up in Granada Studios Tour.

Work started on preparing an application to the British National Lottery for the \$112,000 grant needed to undertake the installation and this involved detailed discussions with all the Stockport officials involved, the whole Council having officially approved the installation project. In the meantime, plans were drawn to remove the Wurlitzer from the over-stage chambers in the Manchester Free Trade Hall. This is where we ran into problems! The Wurlitzer was ours, in a listed building, and we wished to remove it to another listed

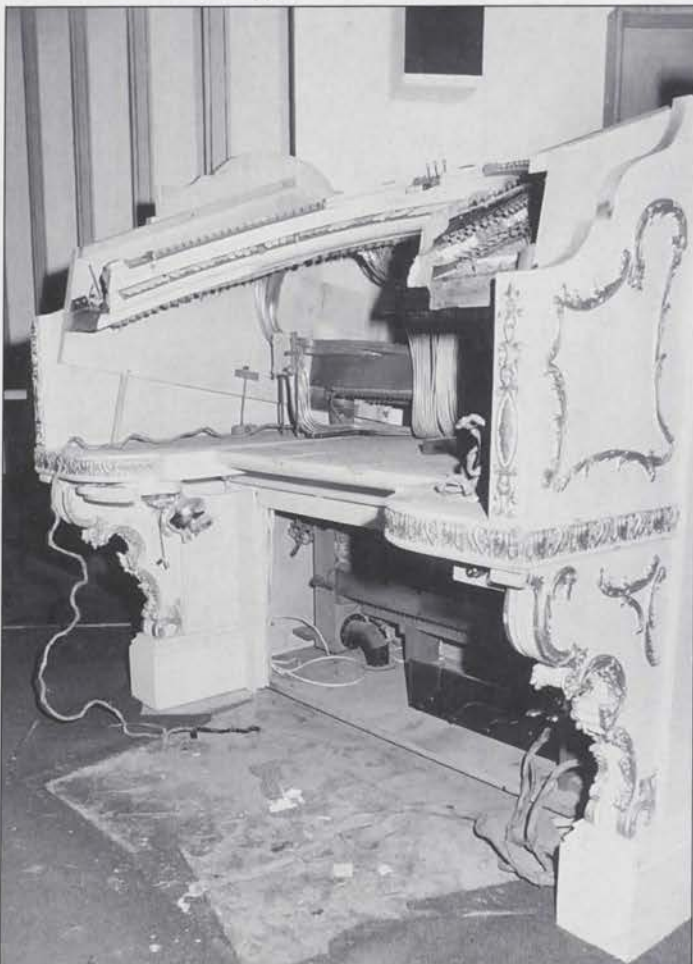
building! This meant approaches to all kinds of authorities and we experienced several tricky moments as we found ourselves being bounced like a ping-pong ball between such bodies as the Manchester Chief Executives Department, the Manchester Planning Department, the English Heritage Office, and the Government office North West. As paper documents, telephone calls and personal contacts flew amongst these bodies, we were assured we could take the organ out, then we couldn't, then we could, then we couldn't ... and so on! Occasionally we all sat round in bewildered disbelief as bureaucracy ran amok! All of this took time; now you know why the farewell concert on the Free Trade Hall Wurlitzer was given in September 1995 and why the organ remained playable in the Hall for so long after its formal closure, in August 1996.

Amazingly, as Manchester had terminated the tuning contract, the Wurlitzer continued to remain accessible and eminently playable until its

final day; the tuning remaining rock-solid for another 14 months with no further attention. This was indeed fortunate as it was necessary to demonstrate the organ to various representatives of the departments who would be involved in Stockport including the Chief Executive who confessed to being an organist! Try selling a dismantled Wurlitzer — or any other organ for that matter — to non-buffs! It looks like a heap of junk! We were thus very lucky as everyone went away impressed with the capabilities of the Wurlitzer and enthusiasm for the project.

Finally, the Trust was given permission from Cabinet level in the British Government for the Wurlitzer to be removed, although truth to tell, a lot of work had already been done in anticipation following the granting of a license to remove the organ by Manchester City Council. To many people, the removal of the "organ" consists of picking up the console and walking out with it! The facts were that the first pipe was removed on

The console dismantling starts ...



... The console in pieces, ready for removal.



19 August 1997 and parts began their descent to stage level from the chambers where they had been since 1977 when the organ was opened. The Head of the Technical Team, Eric Halsall, started the unenviable task of dismantling 20 ranks, percussions and traps, the frames, the wind trunking and blower and the huge collection of pipes that go towards the construction of a large theatre pipe organ. All parts were lowered 60 feet from the baffles above the stage down to the orchestra platform where they accumulated pending dispatch to the various locations around Britain where specialist restorers were waiting to start work.

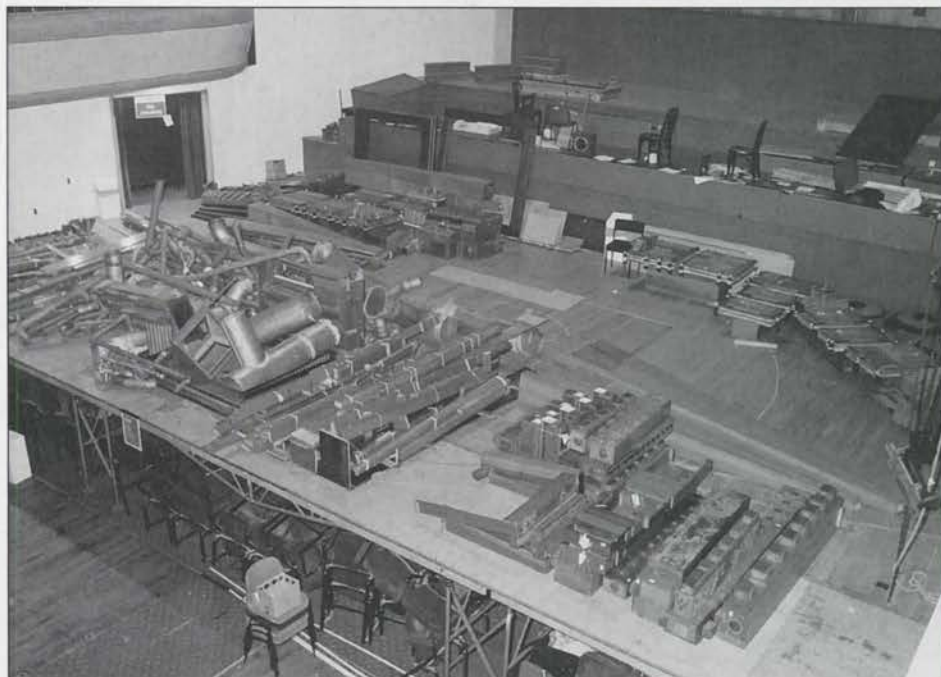
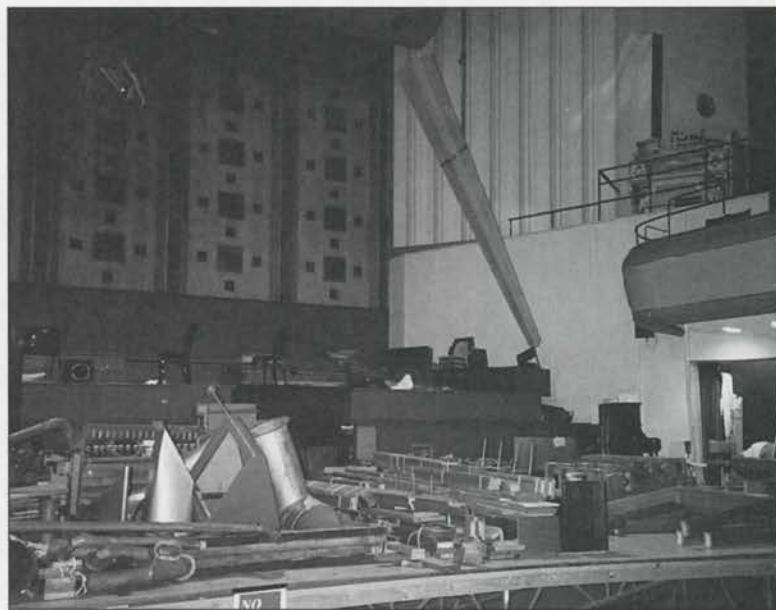
The removal was much easier than the installation from 1973 onwards. The Free Trade Hall was closed and thus, work could take place daily and all day. In the 1970s all the parts had to be craned in over the roof and dropped into the chambers space to avoid disturbing the fabric of the building and events in the Hall such as the Hallé Orchestra rehearsing! Now the organ could be taken out through the front of the chambers as had to be done in the Paramount/Odeon in 1973, and then to drop them down onto the stage. An electric hoist, fastened to the main roof girders above the auditorium ceiling with a 100' chain, allowed every heavy item to be lifted down with relative ease. The first stage of the removal was the need to get the 1400 pipes down. These, apart from the biggest, came down as they went up, via the staircase so graphically described by the late Eric Penney in his article on the installation under the heading "The Seventy Nine Steps." On one of the hottest days in 1997 the team laboured, stripped to the waist — up and down, up and down — sweating profusely with the cold drinks cabinet still in the old lounge area doing a roaring trade!

In spite of the hoist, there was still some weighty manhandling to do. The very heavy main wind chests, relays and blower, were an example. These were lifted manually into a position out on the stage baffles so they could then be connected to the hoist. Another statement worth repeating here reported by Eric Penney, has become part of the annals of the Trust; as the Wurlitzer was installed, someone was heard to remark, "By the time we've done with this, we shall be called The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Truss!" All rules regarding health and safety were followed with no one being allowed on stage as the parts came down. On one load, one of the heavy passage boards slipped out of its sling and descended speedily and vertically until it ended up spearing the stage floor standing quivering as it did so! Otherwise, all went well and by the 3rd of October, seven weeks after the work commenced, the last parts left the Free Trade Hall.

While all this was going on, the National Lottery application was under consideration. The Trust had given advance notice of this the previous December with the application actually being lodged in February 1997. A lot of planning had to be done on the basis that we

would be successful. Off the record information indicated that this would be the case although nothing in these circumstances can be taken for granted. However, the removal of an organ of this size, its complete restoration to an as-new condition cannot rest on a wait-and-see situation. We had to take some action in anticipation and if all failed, we would have to carry the consequences! The final stage was a visit to the Free Trade Hall, Stockport Town Hall and Granada Studio Tours by an independently appointed consultant to the Lottery, who in his report on which the final decision rested, said that he fully supported the project which had been planned to the highest standards with a quality of work that met professional organ building requirements. In October 1997 we heard that the application had been successful.

*The largest Diaphone comes down to the stage.
Console in the background.*

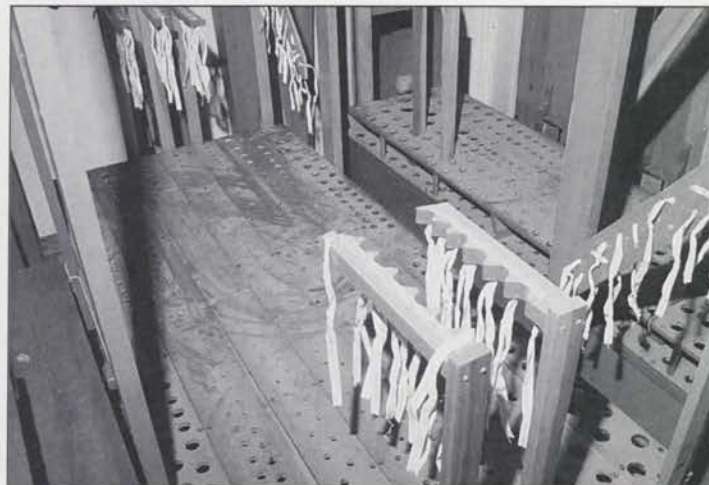


The Free Trade Hall stage almost filled with organ parts

Thus, we can now report on the new home for Opus 2120, Stockport Town Hall Ballroom. To those readers who may have visited Blackpool, this Ballroom, while smaller, has a feel of the Blackpool ballrooms about it, being built between 1904 and 1908 when it was officially opened by the then Prince Of Wales. The Town Hall itself, with a 135' tower, is an imposing 140 room Renaissance-style building. For organ enthusiasts, it is but a few yards from the Plaza Cinema which, with its Compton organ, has recently also been listed. The Ballroom, with its barrel-vaulted ceiling, is 114' x 62' x 41' high with rich carvings, ornamentation and stained glass windows, the latter all dedicated to the Earls of Chester. It has a seating capacity of 700 and is no stranger to light organ music. For many years, Eric Barlow has played for dancing several times a week using an electronic instrument. To give some idea of the many uses to which the Ballroom is put, the immediate current pro-

gramme of events includes Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius," "The Memphis Belle Swing Orchestra," "The Treorchy Male Voice Choir," and regular programmes by the Stockport Symphony Orchestra whose concerts include items that could well make use of the Wurlitzer.

The console will be on a lift just off centre in front of the stage while the chambers will be in a small disused (because of fire regulations) balcony at the rear of the Hall. The chambers will, as in the Free Trade Hall, be side by side, with the master xylophone and the piano unenclosed in front. Unfortunately, space precludes the re-use of the relays and the organ will be computerised. The Trust has no intention of disposing of the relays. These will be stored by Stockport Museum Services to keep the instrument complete. Behind the chambers is an unused rotunda. It is planned this area will become the Hope-Jones Room where an example of the original relays will be displayed as well



Later on 19 August ... the empty Main Chamber.



*Top: Organ parts on stage - Diaphones and chests.
Bottom: Blower and regulators wait to be taken away.*

as other Hope-Jones memorabilia. It must not be forgotten that Robert Hope-Jones was a Cheshireman and Stockport is in Cheshire some thirty miles from his birthplace. The Trust owns the original carved angels that decorated the organ case in St. John's Church, Birkenhead. We would like to incorporate these figurines into the as yet un-designed frontage for the new chambers. The regulators in the organ carry Birkenhead weights with "Hope-Jones" on them, and amongst more modern souvenirs, the organist-autographed swell shutter motors will be re-installed. It is intended that there will be viewing windows from the Hope-Jones Room into the chambers.

When Opus 2120 was installed in the Free Trade Hall, only the Solo chamber Main chests were re-leathered as in the theatre this chamber had been along-side the heating flue and the leather had deteriorated more than in the Main chamber. Now in 1997, 67 years after the organ was built, a total restoration is required. Early indications after inspection show that the organ's reservoirs were on their last legs and may well have burst in the very near future. Using the \$150,000 grant from the

Stockport Town Hall Ballroom -- new home for Opus 2120



*Two views of Stockport Town Hall Ballroom:
(top) looking toward the stage, and
(bottom) the back of the hall showing the
disused balcony that will become the chambers.*

*At right: The rotunda that will become the
Hope-Jones Room. Windows will be cut in the
wall to view the chambers.*



Liverpool Foundation for Sport and the Arts, every part will be restored to its original 1930s state. When the organ re-installation commences in 1998, Stockport will have a new Wurlitzer which will go on entertaining the public well into the future as it has done in Manchester since 1930.

The Trust's financial input is \$72,000 made up of money and labour. This meets the requirement of the Lottery for match-funding for their grant. This new project is exciting for all of us. We hope, because of the importance of this Wurlitzer, we shall continue to receive support from within Britain and across the world. There is a long way to go with unforeseen problems already arising. As the project progresses, by mid-1998, we hope there will be noticeable activity in the Ballroom and that by mid-1999, the Wurlitzer will once more be sounding out in its new home.

*With a few months to settle
down, by the end of 1999,
we should be in a position
to announce a series of
opening concerts
under the title
"WURLITZER 2000."*

To conclude, we in the Trust send best wishes to all buffs in the U.S.A. We hope that the Editor will allow us some space later in 1998 to report on progress with Wurlitzer Opus 2120 as it enters its third era.

Journal of American Organbuilding

Quarterly Publication of
the American Institute of
Organbuilders

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

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

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ORGAN-IZING POPULAR MUSIC

by
AL HERMANN'S

Improve Your Performance of Popular Songs

All organists and their audiences should understand and realize it requires a greater knowledge of music to play a slow, easy popular song on the organ and make it sound musical than it does to play loud, fast pieces.

In addition to technique and knowledge of harmony and registration, one other element is required to play popular music on the organ: musical imagination! Both note readers and those who play by ear should develop imagination. The best way to accomplish this is to LISTEN to all kinds of MUSICAL music. Some good ideas for parallel counter-melodies can be obtained by listening to duets performed by Country Western singers. A variety of ideas for registration, style and form can come by listening to all kinds of orchestras and dance bands.

For those musicians who play by ear, the most basic way is to reproduce songs the way you have heard them, or thought you heard them. THE

TIME VALUES OF EACH NOTE ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT AS THE PITCH! There are three standard popular songs that have so many triplet quarter notes in the melody that if you played them in 3/4 time they wouldn't sound much different. They are "Once In A While," "You and The Night and The Music" and "Time Was." I cannot recall ever hearing an ear player playing these triplet quarter notes as they are written. Instead, they substitute various combinations of eighth and quarter notes.

I realize that the above is not a serious offense. Many well known singers and jazz musicians do the same thing. But, when this is accompanied by wrong chords and dull registration, it does not do the theatre organ's reputation any good as a serious musical instrument and nobody will miss it when it is gone. Keep in mind that a good organ solo arrangement should accomplish three things: make the song sound its best, make the organ sounds its best, and make you sound your best.

Popular music should be studied and practiced with the same care as classical music.



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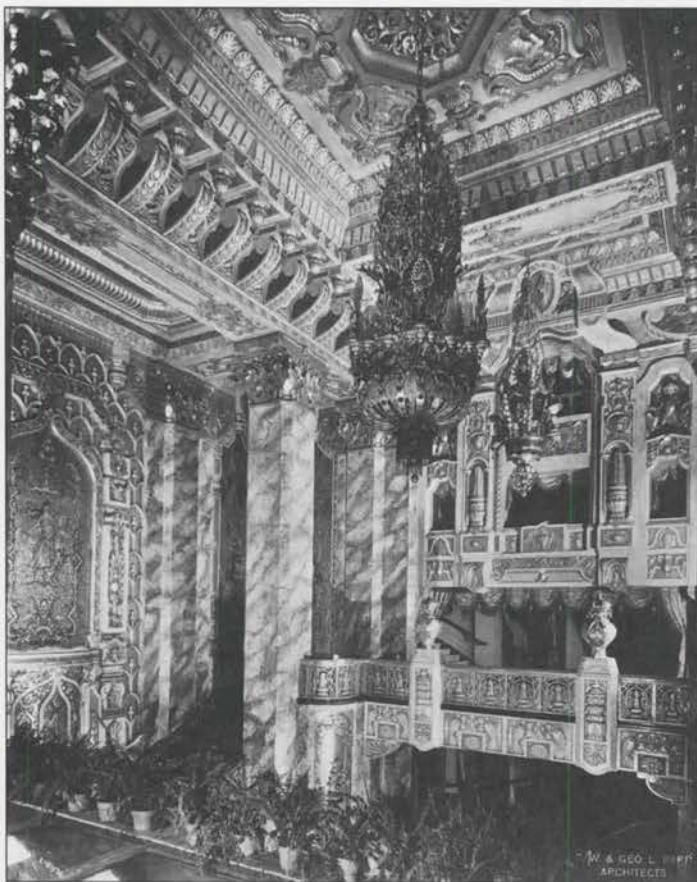
Chicago, Illinois

Opened: May 8, 1926

Architect: C.W. & George L. Rapp

Capacity: 3238

Organ: Wurlitzer 4/20, Publix-1, Opus 1262



Above: Rising through four levels the entrance hall is by far the tallest public space in the theatre. Balcony patrons could look into it from the mezzanine, a lower-balcony stair landing and the men's lounge off the mid-balcony foyer. This vista is one unavailable to the public, having been taken from an inaccessible area over the vestibule. Glass panels were worked into the vestibule ceiling to provide illumination from the window and light fixtures in the entrance hall. A few of these panels are visible at the bottom.

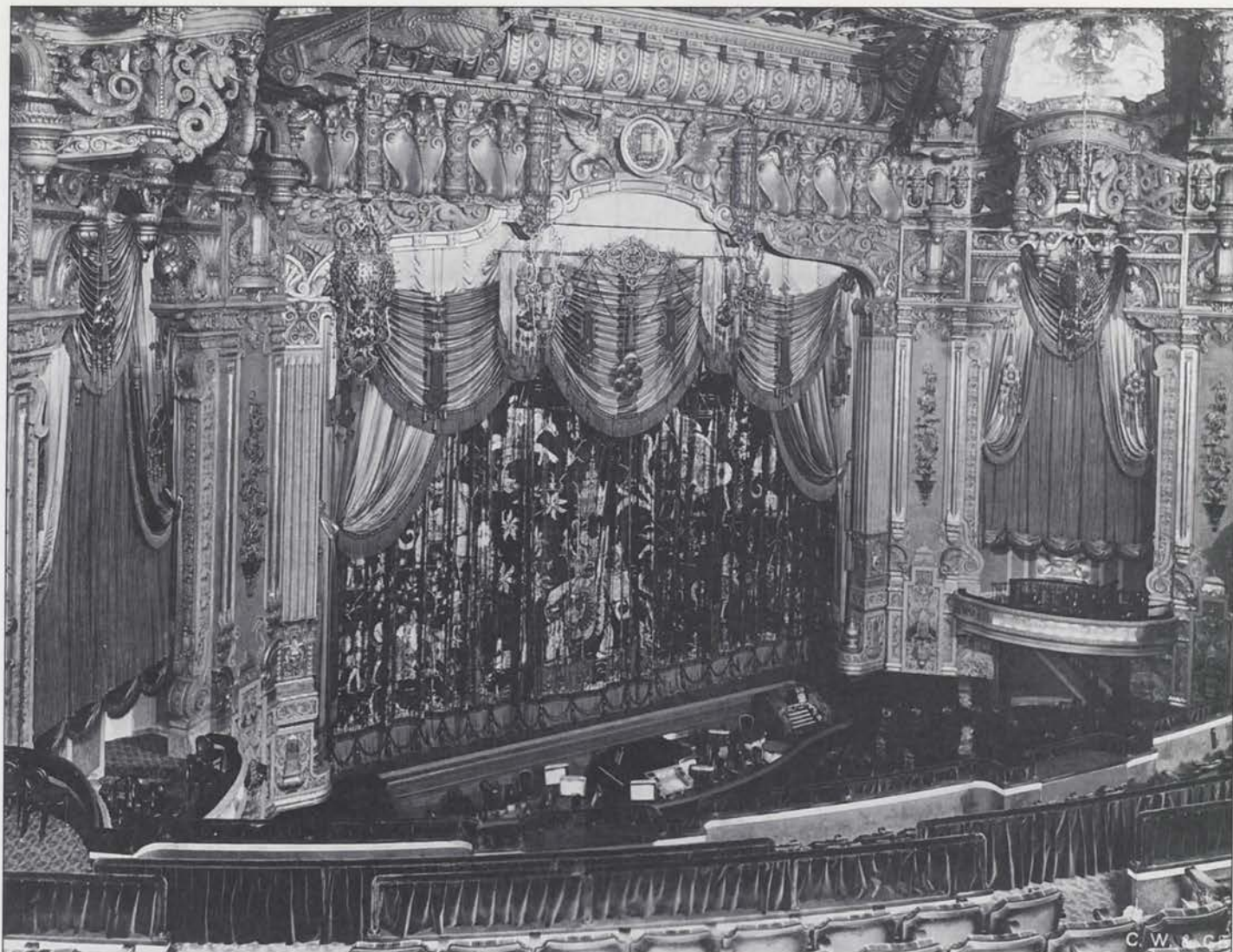
Right: The main foyer curves around the back of the auditorium and is only as deep as it needs to be. Note how the orchestra seating extends under the mezzanine, occupying space which Rapp & Rapp customarily used for an ambulatory.

Described by its designer, Arthur Frederick Adams, as an evocation of the Indian Durbar, and by Ben Hall as "nightmarish," this unique palace has been the butt of too many jokes and deserves better press than it has received to date. According to Adams, the design was cooked up by the Rapp office, and had to be sold to Balaban & Katz, who were perfectly happy with "the old French stuff" like the Chicago and Tivoli. It was the first venture into orientalia by any of the major theatre architects and, as it turned out, the only one from Rapp & Rapp. Closed since 1982, it is presently under renovation, with reopening scheduled for later this year.

Incorporated into Rapp & Rapp's New Masonic Temple Building, the Oriental occupies the site of the Iroquois Theatre, of combustible infamy. With less room to work with than they might have preferred, the architects were not able to provide the sort of grand lobby which distinguished the Tivoli, Chicago and Uptown; instead, a lofty stair hall leads directly to the various foyers. The main foyer, while quite tall and elaborately decorated, is far too small to truly be called a grand lobby.

The auditorium closely resembles, in form, the more conventional Ambassador, St. Louis, but its ornamental scheme is all its own. Every inch is encrusted with dragons, serpents, birds, dancing girls and countless other oriental





Above: Among the Oriental's features were separate elevators in the pit, for the conductor, piano, orchestra and organ console, and a front curtain made and decorated in Balaban & Katz's own scenic shops. The drapes in front of the organ chambers were removed in the 1950s and the walls and shutters given a garish paint job. This benefited the sound of the organ, but the sight of all that flapping lumber was always distracting. Note that the boxes beneath the organ are functional.

All photos: CAPA Collection, THS

elements, but, quoting Adams: "care has been taken not to deliberately copy any particular monument of the East, nor have the architects endeavored to import any Oriental architectural motifs which may be seen on temples, palaces, etc. ... instead of really copying any Oriental art, they have introduced the spirit of the gorgeous pageant which is theatrical in every detail."

The first of five Publix-1's shipped to Chicago in the first four months of 1926, the Wurlitzer was installed in the usual places, but with the addition of a percussion chamber above the Solos. Another unusual feature was having the shutters in front of the brass chest in the Solo on their own swell shoe. Premiered by Henri A. Keates, the organ was always popular with Chicago organists, who always prized a posting to the Oriental. After the theatre closed, it was donated to CATOE and put into storage. Unfortunately, many components have vanished over the years, and it no longer exists as a complete instrument.

Steve Levin

THS Annual No. 24, devoted entirely to the Oriental, is available from the Society for \$7.50, ppd.

For membership, back issue publications, photo availability, research and museum hours information, contact:

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RALPH BEAUDRY, EDITOR

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Wurlitzer Plus! — Carol Williams



It's an extraordinary, pleasant surprise to discover the Yale University Chapel organist, with an alphabet of honorary letters (ARAM, FRCO, ARCM, etc.) after her name, is also a thoroughly accomplished performer of pure theatre organ stylings. Unusual, too, is that British-born Carol began her career playing pops on a Hammond under the tutelage of the late Vic Hammett. Another well respected British theatre organist, Eric Spruce, "... introduced Carol to the majesty of the classical organ."

A few years back Carol released several cassettes made during her concert performances on several famous and unique organs in England and Holland. One of these tapes, *Theatre Live* was reviewed by Bob Shafter in the *Journal*, July, 1993. Bob wrote "... Excellent keyboard and pedal skill combined with layered arrangements, wonderful expression, judicious use of

purple chords, and good phrasing, all add up to a unique and memorable listening experience." We wholeheartedly concur.

Carol has taken excerpts from that tape and another, *Life Is Nothing Without Music*, and re-released them on this 71 minute CD. The *Wurlitzer Plus* title might give the impression an electronic keyboard (or piano) has been combined with the Wurlitzer. Not so — two of the four organs heard here are pure Wurlitzer while one, Amsterdam's Tuschinsky Theatre organ, started out as a Wurlitzer but was substantially added to by Strunk in the late 40s, and the fourth is a mint-condition Standaart.

The 3/16 Kilburn State (Top Rank) Wurlitzer, Opus 2216, maintained by our London & South of England Chapter, opens the album. This 1937 double-stacked installation (on the left side with the Solo chamber on top) has a unique specification; there are two tibias, two flutes, two diapasons, two tubas, four strings, both a Post Horn and French Trumpet, Vox and Krumet. It's piercingly bright and gutsy in the large theatre. Carol opens with two quite accurate Buddy Cole recreations — "I'll Follow My Secret Heart" and "Sassy Brass." Completing this 21 minute section are "Autumn Leaves," "Hello Dolly," "Somebody Loves You," "The Old Rugged Cross," and a thrilling "You and the Night and the Music." (It should be noted these "cuts," and those made in Holland, are from live concerts so, for good programming, since certain numbers occurred in medleys, some tunes are faded in and/or out.)

To introduce the 26 minute section played on the exquisitely mellow 3/12 Wurlitzer (Opus 2174) in the Brentford National Music Museum, Carol plays a good console-riser, "Moving South." Next is the album's only medley, 8-1/2 minutes of seven familiar tunes from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. "Marinetta," a typical up-tempo British novelty, was written by Carol's mentor, organist Eric Spruce. Completing this section are a few old favorites, "Stairway to the Stars," "Midnight in Mayfair," and "Red Sails in the Sunset," followed by an enchanting "Life Is Nothing Without Music." (A footnote about this organ:

the 1980 ATOS Convention brochure indicates this organ may have been originally installed in a Chicago residence. However, neither the Walton or Junchen Wurlitzer lists support that; both show the organ was first installed in 1932 at the Regal, Kingston-on-Thames.)

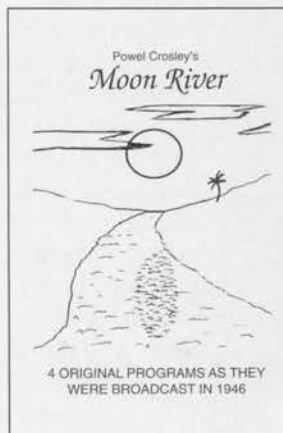
Crossing the North Sea to the Tuschinski Theatre, this under-the-stage 4/10 Wurlitzer/Strunk comes on like gangbusters in Carol's opening tune, "Brazil." Opus 0714, a 2/5, Style 160 (no tibia,) was installed in 1923. Rebuilt and enlarged by Strunk in the 40s, listen for the tibia in the hymn "Were You There." The other titles in the 9 minute section are "The One I Love" and "Unforgettable."

Moving on to the 3/10 Standaart at the 550 seat Passage Theatre, one detects a hint of Wurlitzer in its voicing but it's all Standaart — complete "with its Krumet and Kinura plus an utterly delightful tibia ..." Carol's selections in this 12-1/2 minute closing section are "Fools Rush In," Ashley Miller's sensuous arrangement of "Bess, You Is My Woman Now," an aggressively bluesy "Basin Street Blues," and a waltzing "Tulips of Amsterdam."

Carol credits several of her selections to well known arrangers Dave Coleman, William McMains and Bill Irwin although most are, of course, her own. On the recent video "Pullin Out All the Stops" Carol is the last artist seen and heard as the credits roll. We highly recommend this CD for, as Shafter wrote, "Carol Williams is an extraordinary musician. I don't think you'll be disappointed." CD only for \$16.00 (postpaid) from Carol Williams, 242 Prospect St., #7, New Haven, CT 06511.

Moon River -- Original Broadcasts

Unlike "WKRP in Cincinnati," in the 1930s and 40s WLW was known as "The Nation's Station" for, with 500,000 watts of power, it could be heard



throughout most of North America. At the suggestion of owner Powell Crosley, Jr., *Moon River* became the station's nightly sign-off program in October, 1930.

The program's format varied little over its near 20 year run; Fritz Kreisler's "Caprice Venois" was the opening and closing theme, there was continuous lulling organ music, a melodious-voiced announcer read soothing poetry, and honey-voiced singers sang several relaxing tunes. Although the artists were anonymous, it is well known that Lee Erwin was the principal organist from 1933 until his departure for New York in 1944. In the early 30s, even "Fats" Waller occasionally was the *Moon River* organist. (The ATOS Ohio Valley Chapter released Erwin's *Moon River Revisited* LP in 1979 and Dick Hyman's *Cincinnati Fats* album in 1981 — both recorded on the Emery Theatre Wurlitzer. The latter album contains a fascinating insert, by Joan Strader, which has provided us with some information about the WLW *Moon River* broadcasts and organs.)

Yes, organs, for WLW had three Wurlitzers! The original WLW studios on Arlington Street had two: Opus 1001, installed as a 3/17 in 1925, and Opus 1606, a 2/5 from the Oxford Theatre, bought in 1931. When the station moved to its new studios on 9th they "inherited" Opus 0681, a 2-manual Special, from an earlier radio station at that location. Although 1001 was the usual *Moon River* organ, 1606, and probably 0681, were heard on occasion. Thus several organs rightly claim the *Moon River* title. Opus 0681 became a 3/18 when it was installed by Larry Weid in Sacramento, California's, Big Top Pizza where it played from 1975 until 1981 and was sold later to Bob McGillvray. Opus 1606 went to Ron Wehmeier in 1973 and was broken up for parts. Opus 1001, minus its console, was installed in Stan Todd's Hamilton, Ohio, Shady Nook Restaurant in 1968, enlarged to a 4/30, and is playing there today. (Judd Walton's *Wurlitzer List* also shows parts of Opus 0759 went into, probably, WLW's 1001 when it was enlarged to 20 ranks.)

This one hour *Moon River* cassette, issued by the Central Ohio ATOS

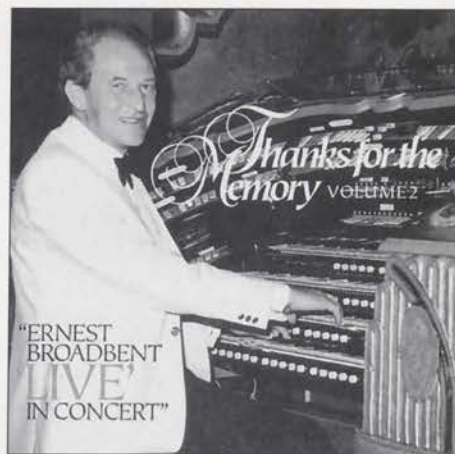
Chapter as a fund-raiser for their 3/16 Wurlitzer, contains four complete 15-minute broadcasts from 1946. By this time the program, which had been sustaining (un-sponsored) throughout most of its run, was sponsored by Southern Cross mattresses. While the names of the organist, soloists and announcer for these particular broadcasts are not known, Peter Grant probably is the announcer.

These four broadcasts have the same format; each begins with the organ theme music while vocalists hum and the announcer reads the *Moon River Poem* (a written copy is included with the cassette.) Each program has three poems by such noted writers as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Lord Byron, Christopher Marlowe, Robert Burns, and James Russell Lowell interspersed with vocal selections like "Something Sentimental," "September Song," "Fools Rush In," "Day By Day," and "I Fall in Love Too Easily." The organ has only a brief solo spot, near each broadcast's end, playing such melodies as "Sleep, Sleep, Sleep," "Beautiful Dreamer," or "Meet Me Tonight in Dreamland" which segues into a straight-faced, but tasteful, commercial concluding with the memorable line, "A-h-h-h-h, when you feel a yawn coming on, think of Southern Cross."

These recordings, taken from original acetate studio masters, barely show their age except for a "pop" here and there. It's nostalgia *par excellence* — a real theatre organ treasure! Purchasing this album helps our Central Ohio Chapter maintain and improve their Wurlitzer (Opus 1407, a Style 260 from the RKO Palace Theatre in Columbus) now playing in the Worthington High School Auditorium. Cassette only for \$12.00 (postpaid) from COTOS, % Stan Krider, 9321 Muirkirk Dr., Dublin, OH 43017-9413.

Thanks For The Memory - Ernest Broadbent

When "Mr. Blackpool," the legendary Reginald Dixon, retired in 1970 after 40 years playing the Tower Ballroom's unique 3/15 Wurlitzer, there was only one suitable replacement, Ernest Broadbent. As



Broadbent's 1994 obituary noted, "He realized the need to uphold some of the Dixon tradition, but he also knew he could only give his best by playing in his own style, which he did, and the transition was a success."

Born in 1910, Broadbent was a thoroughly trained pianist who was performing in cinema orchestras by the age of 16. His transition to the organ came easily and by 1938 he was solo organist at the Regent, Brighton, along with playing Hammond organ in the nearby ballroom and giving frequent concerts on the famous Hill Norman and Beard organ in the Brighton Dome. Following wartime service, Broadbent joined the Tower Company playing both piano and organ in the Pavilion and Grand Theatres as well as at the Opera House and Empress Ballroom.

His tenure at the prestigious Tower Wurlitzer was all too short as circulation problems in his legs caused him to retire just seven years later. After medical treatment he was able to continue a limited concert schedule and made a notable U.S. tour in 1981. Sadly his leg problems returned and he played his final organ concert in 1986. Only one of his numerous LP albums was reviewed in the *Journal*, (June, 1974) in which the late Stu Green commented that his playing was "... smooth, knowledgeable and effortless ... his tempos, registrations and arrangements are impeccable."

This 70 minute release (the second in the *Thanks for the Memory* series) is made up of never-before released portions of three live concerts. The first 47 minutes is from Broadbent's concert at the Tower Ballroom in September, 1974. As this recording was made using the radio broadcasting micro-

phones, hung directly in front of the over-the-proscenium chambers, some of the usual room sound is missing; but this singular organ is clean and unmistakable. Broadbent opens with his signature tune, "For You" and follows this with his own crisp version of "Blaze Away" and a lush "Ah, Sweet Mystery o Life."

With the exception of a delightfully restrained "Dance in the Old Fashioned Way," the balance of his Tower selections are in medleys: some melodies from the operetta *White Horse Inn*, a brief, up-tempo *Smile* group, six of Gershwin's best (including a shortened arrangement of "Rhapsody in Blue,") and a near 26 minute variety of tunes such as "Wedding of the Painted Doll," "Sweet Georgia Brown," Lennon and McCartney's "All My Loving," "Autumn Leaves," "The Last Waltz" and the title number from *Cabaret*.

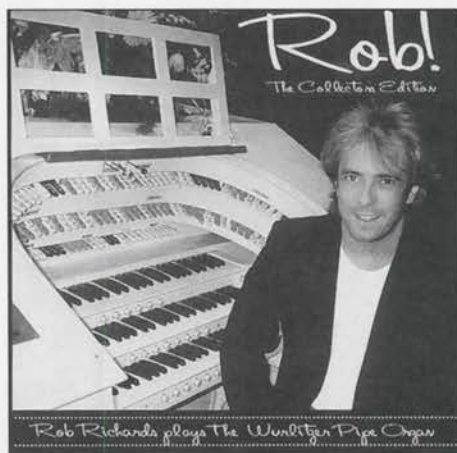
The 10-1/2 minute second section of this album was recorded at Detroit's Senate Theatre during Broadbent's 1981 tour. Included is a dazzling piano medley of Chopin's "Fantasy Impromptu" (the chasing rainbows part,) and "Waltz #7," along with a bit of Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concert in B Flat Minor" (the "Tonight We Love" theme.) The Senate Wurlitzer is heard only on Myddleton's "Phantom Brigade" (not the "Regiment" melody.)

Concluding the album is an 11-1/2 minute medley played on the 3c/8 Wurlitzer in the Pier Ballroom, Redcar. Its Opus 2186, originally installed at the Granada, Bedford in 1934. It's one of six Granada 1 Styles built, the top manual having only tuned percussions plus unison couplers from the Accompaniment and Solo manuals.) The tune titles seem completely unrelated ("Blue Skies," "Yellow Bird," "Greensleeves" and "Gold and Silver Waltz") until one realizes each of the nine titles has a color in it.

Once again, thanks are due Alan Ashton for compiling this beautifully recorded tribute to one of England's best — and certainly most loved — organists. It's a slightly different approach to the very popular Blackpool Sound and is recommended. Compact disc at \$20.00 and cassette as \$12.00 plus \$3.00 per order

postage from Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Rd., Braintree, MA 02184-5918.

Rob! — Rob Richards



Normally when a theatre organ album is sold out that's it. But, in a happy break with tradition, Rob Richards has just re-released his one hour "Rob" recording (reviewed in the Journal, November 1994) made on the original Mesa Organ Stop's 4/46 Wurlitzer (since moved and greatly enlarged.)

Because it was so well recorded digitally, there is no change of any kind from the first release except for the liner notes. Now the album's title is "Rob! The Collector's Edition" for the liner notes feature over a dozen photos of Rob throughout his career beginning 1978 at the Fargo Theatre (North Dakota). Our rating of the album in 1994 was "It's an amazingly varied musical menu which we highly recommend." (The album's front cover photo is not Mesa's original 3-manual console but rather Los Angeles' Wilshire-Ebell Barton where Rob recently concertized.) So, if you missed this album earlier, it's in CD format only for \$20.00 (postpaid) from Rainbeaux Productions, 11856-D Moorpark St., Studio City, CA 91604.

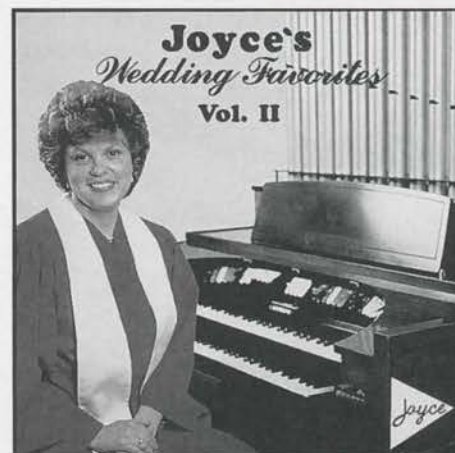
Joyce's Wedding Favorites — Joyce Ackerman

Recently one of our newest ATOS members released a two-volume set of CD recordings designed specifically to provide all the traditional and appropriate and musical selections a bride

and groom might like to use for their wedding. And, each album contains a form for "personalizing" the album as a musical keepsake.

The organ heard here is Joyce's own Conn 643 (installed in a special studio at her home.) The Conn 643 is roughly the equivalent of a 2/10 pipe organ and, with its Conn Speaker Pipes and Model 700 Leslie, proves to be a reasonable substitute. Although this model has the usual electronic "goodies," Joyce, quite appropriately, confines her registrations to suitable church-like voices (albeit with the tremos and reverb on.)

The selections on each album are in the proper sequence for a wedding service. Thus they can be used independently of the other or selections from each could be combined (if you have the proper equipment.) On Volume I there are 20 minutes of "Preludes," then the Processional, 15 minutes of selections to be used during the service and, finally, a Recessional. The first volume has a few of the more "popular" titles — "Because," "Love Story," "Melody of Love," "My Own True Love," "Always," "Oh Promise Me," and



"Sunrise, Sunset" while Volume II contains Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," Liszt's "Liebestraum," Rubinstein's "Romance," Debussy's "Clair de Lune," "Greensleeves" and Pachelbel's "Canon in D."

Wagner's "Bridal Chorus" from *Lohengrin* is presented in both a long (just over three minutes) and short (just under two minutes) version on the first volume while the second had both Purcell's and Clarke's "Trumpet Voluntary" for the Processional. During the wedding ceremony there are "We've Only Just Begun," "I Love You Truly," Schubert's "Ave Maria,"

and Malotte's "The Lord's Prayer" on Vol. I and "Evergreen," "O Perfect Love," Gounod's "Ave Maria," and Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" on the second. For the Recessional the first album has Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" while the second has a medley of "Trumpet Tunes" by both Clarke and Purcell plus Handel's "Hornpipe."

While neither of these 40 minute CDs is designed for casual listening, the registrations, arrangements, and tempos are not intrusive but do provide a subtle, flowing background of

melodies. Those who might want to sample other CDs suitable for weddings are referred to Lyn Larsen's *Here Comes the Bride* (Journal, August 1987) and John Ledwon's *Sounds of Love* (Journal, November 1995).

Each of Joyce's wedding CDs can be purchased separately for \$23.45 or the set is \$41.45 (both postpaid) from Music Unlimited, Inc., P.O. Box 60, 612 Maple St., Hot Sulphur Springs, CO 80451. Mastercard, VISA, and American Express charges are accepted and you can place your order toll free by calling 1-800-525-6923.

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Serenade For A Wealthy Widow - Selections From "Rose Marie" - Night Ride
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans - How Insensitive - She's Funny That Way
Selections from "Hit The Deck" - If I Could Be With You - Jupiter from the Planets - Meditation
O'l Man River - Underneath The Stars - Samba Maxixe - Buffoon - I'm A Dreamer - Ritual Fire Dance
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Renée Richmond

Renée Richmond, wife of Cinema Organ Society President Robin Richmond, passed away on December 31. Renée, a native of France, was a familiar figure at theatre organ events, accompanying Robin on his travels. Theatre organ enthusiasts are saddened by the loss of a lady C.O.S. members had been getting to know following Robin's election as President. Renée's death happened while the couple were on a Christmas holiday in Worthing, Sussex, and the funeral was held at Worthing Crematorium at noon on Friday, January 9, 1998.

Father Gerard Kerr 1924-1997

by Dr. Edward J. Mullins

Reverend Father Gerard A. Kerr, age 73, died in England, Sunday, December 14, 1997. Father Kerr was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland November 7, 1924. He heard the Compton organ, as a child, in the Ritz cinema, Belfast.

He came to England at the age of sixteen as a trainee telephone engineer, living in Harrow from 1941 to 1945. He heard the 3/8 Wurlitzer at the Granada Cinema, Harrow and like the sound of it. He joined the Royal Navy in July 1945, at the age of twenty, and spent two years in the Navy serving in Malta, Port Said, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and Singapore.

It had been at the back of his mind all of his life to become a Roman Catholic priest, but coming from a large family they had limited financial resources. A priest friend, who was formerly a coal miner, on hearing this told him it was never too late. In January 1948, he began his studies for the priesthood at twenty-three.

A classmate who was a FRCO organist used to play the seminary organ at Saint Edmund's College, Ware, Hertfordshire where his love of

organ music grew. He was ordained Priest May 26, 1956, at Brentwood Cathedral, Essex. Father Kerr was curate at four of the parishes in the Essex Diocese.

Saint John Vianney Church, 1, Stoneleigh Road, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex opened Christmas 1966. Father Kerr had his first appointment as Parish Priest there in July 1967. He was looking for a good pipe organ and read an advertisement in a newspaper that the Compton organ in the ABC Ritz Cinema in Nuneaton, in the Midlands, was up for sale. Father Kerr, the late George Harrison, a parishoner, Mervyn Bocking, organist at Saint Anthony's, Forest Gate and another parishioner went to the cine-



Father Gerard A. Kerr at console of 3/9 Compton, Saint Mary Mother of God Church, Hornchurch.

Dr. Edward Mullins photo

ma. Bocking played the organ. They liked the sound of it and purchased the instrument on the spot for 550 Pounds Sterling.

Father Kerr, who didn't play a note of music, was only interested in purchasing a good pipe organ for a bargain price, and was somewhat astonished at the interest it aroused. He was unaware not only of the Cinema Organ Society but also other organ societies. The organ, though in general

good condition, needed a lot of attention.

In August 1968, the late Dennis Hunt, a Baptist, had a telephone call from one of the installers asking for advice which he gave over the phone that solved the problems in a few days. Mr. Hunt was active in the theatre organ world and had a small pipe organ in his home in Harrow, Middlesex. He visited the church the following week and was pleased to see the high quality of workmanship going into the job.

Father Kerr and Church Council member George Harrison welcomed Dennis Hunt's assistance. Together they mapped out a plan of repair that was typed and posted up in the chamber. By the middle of April 1969, they had the pipework and action near perfection. Father Kerr gave the Cinema Organ Society permission to hold a recital in the church on Sunday, April 27, 1969, featuring Mervyn Bocking and Andrew Fenner.

The recital was a huge success. Mervyn Bocking played the opening portion of classical organ pieces followed by Andre Fenner playing classical pieces as well as those of a lighter vein. It seemed impossible that so much wonderful, thrilling music could come from only six ranks of pipes and a somewhat "dodgy"

Melotone.

Father Kerr discovered ATOS by accident. In 1970, while on a holiday in New York City, he was walking from the East Side air terminal back to Times Square. As he walked past the Commodore Hotel he saw a sign "Welcome A.T.O.E." He walked in to the hotel and was made to feel very welcome when they discovered that he had installed a theatre organ in his church. He met Mr. and Mrs. Les

Rawle, Stan Whittington and Jack Ferguson. He joined the convention for two days and enjoyed every minute of it.

In November 1972 Father Kerr was transferred to Saint Mary's Church, 213 Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex. It had a small chamber tracker organ of unknown make and age which had been in a private house forty years before. It had beautiful pipe work, but you couldn't hear it on 2-1/2 inches wind pressure. The action was beyond repair. Father Kerr decided the church needed a stronger organ and with his previous experience of a cinema organ, decided to knock out two interior stained glass windows and build a proper chamber inside the church.

Inquiries revealed that the Compton 3/9, No. A105 of the Granada (Rialto) Leytonstone was available. The Rialto, Leytonstone had the first unit organ to be installed in the county of Essex and was also the only theatre in which the Bernstein Brothers installed a Compton.

On January 20, 1973 Father Kerr, Dennis Hunt and COS member George Welling, one time organist of the theatre, visited the Rialto. Even though the organ apparently had not had any attention or tuning for some time, it worked very well. Father Kerr fell in love with it and decided that, subject to technical decisions on renovation, this was the one. It was officially opened on Sunday, August 1, 1976 by Andrew Fenner, tonally exactly as it was in the theatre, in the presence of His Lordship Patrick J. Casey, Bishop of Brentwood and Mr. and Mrs. B.J.S. Turner, Mayor and Mayoress of Havering during the ATOS 1976 Safari.

Considerable help on the installation came from the two church organists, Ron Stern and John Hayes, and choirmaster Brian Rodgers. Father Kerr was transferred to Saint Anne Line Church, South Woodford October 4, 1983. Unfortunately the new Parish Priest at Saint Mary's was not as keen on pipe organs. He purchased an electronic and the Compton

now is seldom used.

Father Kerr had a slight cerebral vascular accident while at Saint Anne Line. After several more small strokes, he slowed down and retired two years ago to East Ham. Last year due to very poor health he went into hospital for some time. In early October 1997 he was admitted to Saint Francis Nursing Home in Braintree, Essex. Father Kerr passed away Sunday, December 14, 1997 after a long struggle. A Funeral Mass was celebrated by the Bishop at Saint Augustine's Church, Barkingside, Essex, where Father Kerr served as a curate, Thursday, December 18. All his family were there, as well as his devoted housekeeper Miss Mai Fitzgerald. Clergy and organ enthusiast friends were also in attendance. A memorial concert is planned for the bank holiday after Easter at Saint John Vianny Church. The Melotone unit has been refurbished by Richard Cole Acoustically, the organ is considered one of the best cinema organ installations in England.

A world-traveler, Father Kerr was a colorful man who delighted in telling funny stories at which he would laugh as heartily as his listeners. He was a Charter Member, Honorary Chaplain and loyal supporter of the Jesse Crawford Theatre Organ Society. He opened his churches for concerts of ATOS as well as the Cinema Organ Society. He will be sorely missed. May he rest in peace.

Gordon Krist ... *A Touch of Musical Genius*

Gordon Krist, 59, died of natural causes January 7, 1998, in Lansing, Michigan. His musical and personal life was one cut short by tragedy.

Gordon D. Krist was born November 9, 1938 in Avon, Ohio, and spent his formative years in numerous locations throughout Ohio and Michigan. When Gordon was a very small boy, he would tap out rhythms on an old-fashioned pump sewing

machine. Taking the hint, his parents bought a piano and started Gordon on his way to becoming a musical artist. From his start at the sewing machine, Gordon progressed to the organ and a combo in California. Later, he returned to his native Michigan and eventually to Minneapolis and again back to Michigan, where he spent the remaining years of his life in obscurity.

While most of Gordon's professional playing was on electronic organs, he did occasionally perform on theatre organs. With little preparation, he was among the first to concertize on the former Fisher Theatre 4/34 Wurlitzer in the Iris Theatre for the newly-formed Detroit Theatre Organ Club in 1963, at the gentle insistence of then-program chairman Bob Heinzen. Bob remembers "Gordo's" humor, patience, perfectionism, and zest for life. Later he would play three more concerts after the club moved over to Detroit's Senate Theatre. After moving to Minneapolis for an extended gig there at the "Ranch House," he performed impromptu for the Land O'Lakes Chapter of the then-ATOE. Gordon appeared as a guest of the chapter at that meeting in March, 1969, and was asked to play after the scheduled concert. Mike Klein, the featured organist, was making his "big debut" that day, and remembers that Gordon's cameo appearance upstaged him.

While in Minneapolis in 1969, Gordon suffered a crippling stroke at the age of 31, leaving him paralyzed on his left side for the rest of his life. This came as a result of a lemon-sized aneurysm in his brain that eventually burst. Later, adding insult to injury, Gordon fell, hitting his head sharply on a table. The resulting bone fragments caused additional problems, including epileptic-like seizures, a situation that was finally reversed after several surgeries. Blind in one eye since birth, Gordon never gave up the hope of eventually returning to full function, gaining sight in both eyes and the resumption of his professional career.

Three recordings of Gordon's

"JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT"



Gordon
Krist
plays the
Wurlitzer
Pipe
Organ

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music were released: "The Unusual Sounds of Gordon Krist" utilizing his Conn Serenade, Hammond, Celeste, piano and drummer (12" LP, 1964); "Gordon Krist at the Ranch House" with Hammond (12" LP, 1968); and "Just For The Fun Of It," (7" LP, 1969) produced by Land O'Lakes Chapter from tapes made during a live performance on a 2/5 Wurlitzer installed in a residence owned by Don Peterson. The latter recording was produced by the chapter in order to assist Gordon financially following the stroke.

Gordon was known throughout Michigan for his teaching, both group and individual. The irony of this was that Gordon was unable to read a single note of music. Father Jim Miller remembers Gordon's flawless performance of the "Tocatta from the Fifth Symphony" by Charles Marie Widor, all the time keeping in mind that he learned it only by watching and listening to another organist who could read. For a brief time in my teens, I was among those students whom Gordon inspired. Gordon's real musical forte was a natural gift for improvisation, a skill which he attempted to bring out of all of us.

Organist John Seng and Gordon shared a mutual professional respect for one another. When asked for a musical and performance evaluation of Gordon, Seng replied, "Extraordinary. Gordon Krist was one

of the most talented and creative organists I've ever heard. He was a pure original." No less original were Gordon's ideas for the perfect nightclub organ. Working for the Lansing Conn organ franchise, Gordon became acquainted with some of the Conn engineers in the early 1960s. At least one of them helped Gordon to flesh out his ideas using Gordon's own Conn Serenade. In the early Conn organs, each note on each manual had its own oscillator, instead of the borrowing that came later. Gordon had the

engineer split the manuals onto separate amplifiers and Celeste tune them against each other. By coupling them back together, one got an undulating effect that later became known in the industry as the "multi-rank" effect. Channels were also split onto other amplifiers, so that sounds could have separate points of origin. His ideal setup was typically placing the console on a riser in the center of the restaurant, with speakers in all four corners. The effect of celested flutes playing through Leslie speakers just had to be heard to be appreciated! The organ is still extant, although a latter-day electronics technician told me that the console was a frightening nightmare of stacked amplifiers, spider web wiring and a swell pedal with a network of clock gears attached in order to operate the additional amplifiers. Gordon would frequently augment this set-up with his Hammond, Celeste, piano and drummer.

Gordon's father was an Assembly of God minister, and as a result, Gordon was influenced musically in his youth by hymns and lots of Bach. Gordon was also very fond of orchestral music, both classical and popular, from which he derived many of his ideas. Listening to scab tapes of parties at which Gordon was always the guest of honor, one could become easily amazed at his ability to improvise on any pop tune in the style of Bach,

frequently backed up by a drummer. His technique was really quite stunning, and one got a sense of it even in later years in watching and listening to him play impossible runs and arpeggios with his right hand, unaffected by the stroke. He had a keen ear for tasteful and creative registration. While Gordon pretended not to like the theatre organ for what he perceived as a general lack of creativity, he was quick to point out his respect of the stylings of Ashley Miller, John Seng, and Buddy Cole.

Gordon is survived by two older brothers and one sister. *Scott Smith*

The author would like to acknowledge the assistance of the following people in assembling this tribute: Ed Corey, Bob Heinzen, Mike Klein, Terry Kleven, Rev. David Krist, Father Jim Miller, Don Peterson, Russell Rowan, M.D., John Seng, Naomi Krist Tomko, and John Zetterstrom.

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AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY CHAPTER NEWS

MARCH / APRIL 1998

ALAMO

George Webster: 210/656-4711

San Antonio, Texas. Christmas in San Antonio just would not be the same if Walt Strony would not appear with his eight tiny reindeer and George Webster's Allen Theatre III Plus. On December 18, he played to a packed house at the Army Residence Community Auditorium in Northeast San Antonio. Walt enthralled the audience with his colorful registrations while playing Christmas favorites both classical, popular, and sacred. Outstanding was his treatment of "O Holy Night" and "Waltz of The Flowers."



Walt Strony played for Alamo Chapter in December.

As an unexpected added bonus, Walt accompanied the classic silent movie *One Week* starring Buster Keaton. Walt also played a request medley. Can you imagine putting "Old Man River" together with "White Christmas"?

It was a beautiful Christmas party evening and was much appreciated by the Alamo Chapter as well as many, many friends and guests. Walt, very definitely, turned on the Christmas spirit in San Antonio. We also appreciated the hospitality extended by your hosts Vera and George Webster. *Harry L. Jordon*

CENTRAL FLORIDA

Bill Shrive: 813/535-3677

Tampa, Florida. Our November meeting was held at the home of John Yeager. John has newly installed a Roland AT-90. We were most anxious to hear the many voices. Vince Mirandi did not disappoint us. Vince was once a participant in a



Major General (Ret.) George Webster handled the emcee duties at the Army Residence Community Auditorium for Walt Strony's Christmas concert.



David Braun at the Tampa Wurlitzer.

J. Mayer photo

Young Organist Program sponsored by ATOS. He has since graduated from Colorado State University with a MusB degree. He is organist at The John Calvin Presbyterian Church in Orlando. His future shall include a restaurant with a pipe organ somewhere in Orlando vicinity. Vince played a varied program that ably demonstrated his ability as well as the AT-90's capability; a wonderful afternoon.

December found us in the wonderful Tampa Theatre with the great 3/12 Wurlitzer. It was in fine form for an unforgettable meeting. Despite the heavy rain, we had a large turnout. The program started at 2:00 p.m., with David Braun at the console. Dave is a professional organ

builder, installer and a voicing and tuning specialist. Currently he is supervising the restoration and installation of our 2/9 Wurlitzer in Pinellas Park Auditorium. At the organ, Dave took us on a trip to New York and on to California with appropriate melodies. During the intermission, CFTOS held a short business meeting. When the organ came up again, Santa (Dave Braun) was playing music that more than put us all in a jolly holiday mood. Our own Al Hermanns opened the open console part of the day and was followed by members concluding with the one and only Rosa Rio. *Peg Mayer*

CENTRAL INDIANA

Tim Needler: 317/255-8056

Indianapolis, Indiana. The weather in Central Indiana has cooled off now, but the theatre organ music has been HOT! Since October, we have heard six artists on four magnificent instruments. It has been quite a treat. Our chapter meeting for October was held at the renovated Paramount Theatre in Anderson, Indiana. One of our own members, Cletus Goens, presented a wonderful program on the theatre's original 3/12 Page. Then, on October 19, Manual High School with its 3/26 Wurlitzer was the venue for an exciting program with Lew Williams at the console. His styling and registration captivated the audience.

November brought us three more concerts. First, on November 9, Ken Double along with a big band lead by Bill Kisinger from Lafayette, Indiana, played a concert on the 3/18 Barton at the Warren Performing Arts Center in Indianapolis. Ken has performed many times with this band at Long Center for the Performing Arts in Lafayette, and this effort on the Barton was just as spectacular. The second concert of the month featured Barry Baker on the Page at the Paramount Theatre in Anderson. The final presentation in November was a fabulous performance by Jelani Eddington on the Wurlitzer at Long Center in Lafayette.

The final concert of the year found us back at Warren Performing Arts Center with Bill Tandy of Kokomo, Indiana, at the console. Bill, as many of you might remember, played at the banquet during the 1997 National Convention. Bill is a wonderful entertainer, and as always, the audience thoroughly enjoyed his program on the Barton. *Mike Rolfe*

Our Christmas meeting, December 14, was with Martin Ellis in the Carl Wright Auditorium located at Emmerich Manual High School. Martin gave a delightful mini-concert of Christmas music. January found the chapter at the Hedback Theatre with Warren York. He included a sing-along with some lantern slides which he brought from the Virginia Theatre, Champaign, Illinois. On February 8, Ron Rhode from Phoenix, Arizona, was the artist for the third concert of the 1997-1998 season. Ron did a very entertaining program. The concert took the place of the February monthly meeting. *John W. Ennis*

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Gordon Lewis: 203/929-4822

Huntington, Connecticut. We began our 1997-98 concert season by presenting a Silent Film Festival at Shelton High School featuring Chad Weirick at the 3/13 Austin and the films *Do Detectives Think*, starring Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, and *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, starring Buster Keaton. The films were provided by the Sons of the Desert, a national fraternal organization dedicated to the memory and the persons and films of Laurel and Hardy.

Chad, who plays regularly for the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter, gave an excellent performance both as a solo performer and as film accompanist.

It was a fun evening for all who attended and we hope to present a similar concert in the near future.

English organist Paul Roberts was the featured artist at our International Christmas Concert at Thomaston Opera House on November 30. Paul's program featured traditional holiday songs of the United Kingdom and the United States. His unique playing style combined the familiar with some tunes known only to those who have traveled to the British Isles. It seems there is always someone in the audience who knows those songs! His program also included several piano numbers. The audience loved his playing, his wry sense of humor and his sparkling holiday sport jacket. He, in turn, loved the 3/13 Marr & Colton which was apparent in the fine quality of his music.

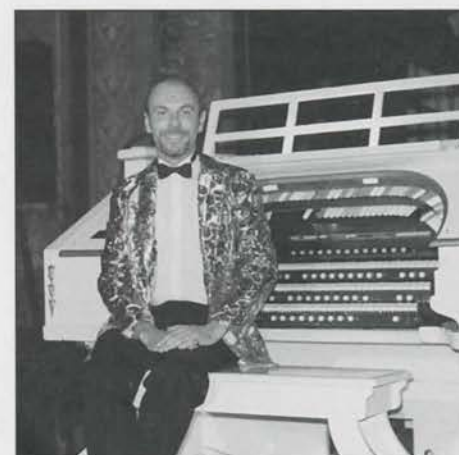
The annual Christmas party at the Angevine Tree Farm in Warren, Connecticut, wrapped up our year. After enjoying good food and fellowship we were treated to the talents of Jelani

Eddington. The 3/10 Robert-Morton came to life and glowed under Jelani's touch. The Angevine's studio doubles as their Christmas tree shop and the nostalgic decor and excellent music really put everyone into the holiday spirit. *Jane Bates*



Chad Weirick at the Shelton 3/13 Austin.

Below: Paul Roberts at the Thomaston 3/15 Marr & Colton.



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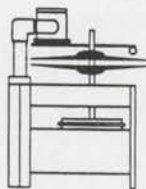
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CUMBERLAND VALLEY

Robert Eyer, Jr.: 717/264-7886

Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. On Veterans Day, nearly thirty chapter members and friends gathered at Chambersburg's Capital Theatre for an afternoon of music from the chapter's Mighty Möller. Recently enhanced by the addition of four new ranks, the organ's sound was strikingly different and quite wonderful. The chapter's organ crew has spent thousands of hours over the years to get the organ to this stage. Thanks to crew chief Mark Cooley, Dean Faulk, John McBride, Gil Singer, and any other volunteers.

Bob Eyer, Jr., demonstrated the new Tibia, tuba, and two strings, showing how their combination with other pipe voices has created many more opportunities for tonal variety. Bob then conducted a seminar on some secrets of playing the theatre organ, including use of the sostenuto, second touch, and pizzicato. He then presented a mini-concert that included patriotic music in honor of the holiday as well as a taste of music for the upcoming Christmas holidays. Open console followed with Sam Groh, Carl Kepner, Clair Reffner, and Jack Umholtz.

Bob Maney

DAIRYLAND

Corey E. Olsen: 414/646-8647

Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We got into the Christmas spirit on December 14, with a social at the lovely home of Glenn Peiffer of Racine, which was decorated for the holiday season. The organ is a new Allen 212 MDS theatre organ with a MIDI Sequencer plus an internal MIDI, adding 60 additional voices! Our artist for the afternoon was Dave Wickerham, who

is staff organist at the Organ Piper Music Palace. He played all Christmas music, both secular and sacred. Included was the most gorgeous version of "Carol of the Bells" I have ever heard, using the many different bell sounds available on the organ. This organ can also imitate the sounds of a Zimblestern, which was demonstrated in the carol, "O Come Little Children." We ended the day with a sing-along of carols. Our host provided the refreshments, plus all sixty of us in attendance received a Christmas gift from him.

We kicked off the New Year with a social on Sunday, January 4, 1998, at the Racine Theatre Guild Playhouse in Racine. One of our members, Bill Campbell, was the artist for the afternoon. He gave us the chance to hear the 2/7 Wurlitzer, which had been damaged by water three years ago, and had just recently been restored by Rick Johnson. Bill played seasonal music and some show tunes. He ended with a delightful arrangement of "Route 66" music, beginning with the theme from the television program, and continuing with "Chicago, Chicago," and playing a song appropriate to each state as we "traveled" our way to California via Route 66, ending with "California, Here I Come." A social hour and open console followed.

Sandy Knuth

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Donald Phipps: 508/990-1214

New Bedford, Massachusetts. Our chapter members and friends on November 16 were treated to a fine, varied program by Juan Cardona, Jr., President of CVTOS. Richard Knight Auditorium, Babson College, has hosted many a fine musician on our Wurlitzer and Juan con-

tinued this high standard with complete command of the resources of our 4/18.

From his lively opener, "Who" to his Spanish-flavored "El Relicario," Mr. Cardona gave us a splendid concert of twelve numbers including an operatic selection. For his rapid interplay between manuals, for his double pedaling and for his careful registrations Juan received much deserved applause in a long standing ovation. After an encore the audience repeated this show of appreciation — an unusual occurrence. Juan's folks were in the assembly and to witness the warm reception our organist received was an experience not easily forgotten.

November 22 and 29 EMCATOS presented "A Fall Spectacular" featuring "The Four Plaids" from the show, Forever Plaid, Ms. Jan Peters, a very talented Boston songstress, and Chad Weirick as Musical Director and Organist. The console riser was, "Waiting for the Robert E. Lee" followed by an organ theme from the off-Broadway show, *Ragtime*, with much effective use of the Kawai upright piano. "The Plaids" vocalized wonderful contemporary four-part harmony of several standards and also performed a skit in song of a portion of an old Ed Sullivan program.

Ms. Peters, a hit in our last year's show, dedicated "I Belong Here" to EMCATOS President, Donald Phipps, who introduced the song to her and also sang upbeat Broadway show songs. A comical silent, *The Boat* with Buster Keaton, was accompanied by Chad, who also played the curtain closer.

Our annual Christmas party on December 7 had a catered dinner for around fifty members and friends. Seasonal music was played by John Cook

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on the organ, then Marjorie Norris had a session on the piano. President Phipps played the Wurlitzer as he and Polly Duff sang a duet to the delight of all. Bob Legon followed on the console bench with three selections, then John Phipps "had a go." It was a happy, relaxing time.

Scott Foppiano entertained those present on December 13 in a manner that only can be described as "brilliant." This concert was presented by the Westfield Center, The Boston Chapter of the AGO and EMCATOS. The Discovery program is a part of Boston Festival Organ, a series of organ events being presented in the greater Boston area from October 17 to December 31 in connection with the interactive exhibition "Festival Organ, King of Instrument" at the Boston Public Library.

Scott's program of fifteen numbers had "It's DeLovely" as a great opener and he organized his performance into 'Opening Selections,' 'Organ Concerts of the Past Era,' 'The Organ in the Roaring Twenties,' 'The Organ in the Post-War Years,' 'The Pipes of Christmas' and 'The Organ as the King of Instruments.' These categories embraced a wonderful variety — semi-classical, Broadway show music, Christmas, a couple of numbers made famous by Jesse Crawford on old 78s — something for everybody.

This accomplished musician received a long standing applause and we were treated to John Phillip Sousa's "Liberty Bell March" as his encore. Mr. Foppiano is equally as proficient at a theatre organ as he is at a church or concert instrument with no music and no organ too difficult nor too complicated for this gifted gentleman. It would be difficult to find a better choice to show off the King of Instruments!

Thanks to Carolyn Wilcox and Eugene Dolloff for certain facts in my absence for the Spectacular and Christmas party.

Stanley C. Garniss

HUDSON-MOHAWK

Frank Hackert: 518/355-4523

Schenectady, New York. Holiday time in the Capital District of upstate New York brought many opportunities for genre-related seasonal entertainment to members of the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter. Our November meeting held on the 24th of the month at Proctor's Theatre in Schenectady, was highlighted by a silent movie with a Christmas theme; Laurel and Hardy's *Big Business*. The film was scored by member Carl Hackert playing "Goldie," Proctor's Wurlitzer pipe organ. It's always a delight to see a vintage silent the way it was meant to be enjoyed; with theatre organ accompaniment. Open console and refreshments followed the movie.



David Lester performing at an open console session on December 23. Member Donna Whelan listens.



Christmas concert artists: (L to R) William Hubert, Ned Spain and Carl Hackert.

Carl was featured playing the 1869 Bardavon Opera House's 2/11 Wurlitzer in a wonderful "Olde Fashioned Christmas" sponsored by the New York Chapter of ATOS is Poughkeepsie on December 20. In addition to lots of seasonal organ music the sold out concert featured singers, dancers, bell ringers, and appearances by Carl's wife and daughter, Cathy and Elizabeth, as well as Santa Claus. Congratulations to NYATOS for providing a wonderful afternoon's entertainment.

The free noon-time organ concerts sponsored by the Hudson-Mohawk

Chapter and Proctor's Theatre continue to be very popular. The November 25 performance by member David Lester was excellent and well appreciated by the audience. The chapter also continues to offer half-hour organ preludes prior to selected movie showings at Proctor's Theatre. Gene Zilka schedules these programs.

The chapter's December meeting was a holiday gift to every member who plays the organ in that it consisted entirely of an extended open console session giving all present the opportunity to play "Goldie" or listen to several hours of seasonal

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favorites. Refreshments were available during the evening.

Our December noon-time concert was a special event held on Christmas Eve at Proctor's Theatre. Carl Hackert, Ned Spain and William Hubert concertized on organ, piano and harpsichord ably assisted by guest performers Cathy Hackert on cello and Elizabeth Hackert, vocalist. The large holiday crowd of over 300 enthusiastically received the performances. *Norene Grose*



Jerry Nagano spent ten years on the bench of the 3/13 Wurlitzer at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt, Hayward, California. Mary Ann Henningsen holds plaque. Ed Mullins photo

JESSE CRAWFORD

Steve Plaggemeyer: 406/248-3171

Billings, Montana. In September, the Jesse Crawford Archives acquired a four-track reel-to-reel tape recorded at the Simonton Wurlitzer: "Jesse Crawford Golden Opera Favorites," from the estate of Bill Lewis, late of Denver and Las Vegas. Bill passed away February 14, 1997. We didn't have a tape player. In October we received a letter from Mrs. Eleanor Doner, widow of Dr. Melvin H. Doner of Winona, Minnesota. Dr. Doner was one of the founders of ATOE and editor of the TIBLA journal for many years. He died in November 1977. Mrs. Doner offered a Sony tape recorder and fifteen reel-to-reel tapes of Jesse Crawford organ recordings from Mel's collection. These were a valuable addition to the archives and included three tapes Crawford made sixty years ago at the 4/21 Wurlitzer in the New York Paramount studio for Muzak/AMP transcriptions. We sincerely thank Mrs. Doner for her kindness and thoughtfulness.

The Annual Corporate Meeting and Jesse Crawford's 102nd birthday celebration was held in Billings, Montana, Sunday, December 7, 1997. Crawford was born December 2, 1895 in Woodland, California. 1997 officers were re-elected. A letter from Charter Member Dr. John W. Landon was read. In part it reads: "I wanted to send greetings to those who will be meeting with you ... I believe Jesse Crawford was the greatest theatre organist of all.



Member Carsten Henningsen says a few words during Jerry Nagano's last night at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt. Members Ray and Doris Taylor can be seen to his left. Daughter Mary Ann to his right holds plaque. Carsten originated the concept of a pipe organ in a pizzeria. Ed Mullins photo



Jerry Nagano admires plaque presented to him by Mary Ann Henningsen. Plaque reads: "To Jerry Nagano - Thanks for Ten Wonderful Years - Ye Olde Pizza Joynt - January 24, 1998" Ed Mullins photo

He was an original. He copied no one. His work reflected advanced personal creativity. Many have copied him since, but he charted his own course — a new course in terms of theatre organ. I celebrate Jesse Crawford's birthday by selecting one of his Victor 78 rpm recordings and playing it and enjoying it while I reflect upon his life. I select a different recording which Crawford made — there are many to choose from ... Dr. Landon is author of "Jesse Crawford Poet of the Organ: Wizard of the Mighty Wurlitzer," the definitive biography of Crawford. He hopes to join us in the future for one of our birthday celebrations.

We toasted Crawford's 102nd birthday with champagne furnished by Nelson "Kay" Cahill and consumed a delicious chocolate cake suitably decorated. In keeping with the celebration we played some archive tapes of Jesse's 78 rpm recordings.

CHRIS ELLIOTT

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JESSE CRAWFORD cont.

Charter Member Reverend Father Gerard A. Kerr, age 73, passed away in England, December 14, 1997. His sister Elma wrote from Toronto: "I know you will be sorry to hear this news ... However we must be glad for Gerard's sake as his life has been very difficult these past few months because of his very poor state of health and we could not wish for him to continue in that state."

Charter Member Martin A. Lilley visited him in October at St. Francis Nursing Home in Braintree, Essex with Father Kerr's loyal housekeeper Miss Mei Fitzgerald.

Father Kerr was a lot of fun. Anyone who was ever regaled with his delightful funny stories will agree. He was Honorary Chaplain of the chapter as well as a loyal supporter. He installed two cinema organs in his churches. On Easter bank holiday, April 13, a memorial concert will be given on the 3/6 Compton plus Melotone that Father Gerry loved so well, at Saint John Vianney Church, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex. May his soul rest in peace.

The radio script for the Jesse Crawford Organ Concert Program number 7, November 6, 1949 was the addendum for the Winter 1997 issue of our journal THE POET. Two of Jesse's organ pupils appeared on the program. The radio announcer called him "Professor Crawford" when he introduced Dvorak's "Largo" from the New World Symphony. He was first billed as Professor Charles Crawford when he first played the Gem Theatre in Billings, Montana, in February 1913. Jesse took telephone calls from listeners after the show. Those were the days!

Members Carsten and Joyce

Henningsen said farewell to organist Jerry Nagano Saturday, January 24, at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward, California. Jerry presided at the console of the 3/13 Wurlitzer for ten years. Chapter members Bert Robinson, Doris and Ray Taylor, Jack O'Neill, Alexis and Ron Downer, Martin Lilley and Ed Mullins were on hand to help give Jerry a send off. Nagano has been working full-time for NASA at Ames Research Center at Moffett Field for the last few years. He will occasionally play at the Stanford Theatre, Palo Alto as well as Ye Olde Pizza Joynt.

Mary Ann Henningsen presented a plaque inscribed: "To Jerry Nagano — Thanks for ten wonderful years," with rousing applause. This was followed by a cake-cutting ceremony. The Henningsens are celebrating their fortieth year in the pizza business in 1998. The new organists on the bench are Bob Coffin, Steve Eldefonso, and Jim Riggs. As always, the pizza was delicious. *Ed Mullins*

LAND O'LAKES

Roger R. Dalziel: 715/262-5086

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota. Whether our unusually mild winter weather in the Upper Midwest is the result of the phenomenon known as "El Niño," or due to some other cause, we're grateful to have had more than a month of mild (mid-twenties) temperatures, as well as very little snowfall. It was a Brown Christmas locally, and the only complaints were from snowplowing services and dyed-in-the-wool snowmobile enthusiasts. The rest of us were glad to leave our shovels in the garage, especially when reading of the disasters occurring in other usually moderate areas.

December 21 was the day for LO'LITOS members and their friends to assemble at the organ chapel/home of President Roger Dalziel and Treasurer Mike Erie. They hosted a sumptuous Christmas Party, as well as a comprehensive organ concert played by Mike on the 3/21 hybrid instrument which fills a major portion of the ground level. Both the menu and the music received enthusiastic accolades from the assembled party-goers.

On January 10 Tom Hazleton was the first artist to perform in 1998 on the 3/16 Wurlitzer at the Phipps Center in nearby Hudson, Wisconsin. (He appeared in place of the scheduled performer Jim Riggs). Tom will return to St. Paul on February 1 to play the 3/21 Wurlitzer at the Fitzgerald (formerly the World) Theatre. His program will be "The Original Synthesizer Sound-Tools And Their Creative Application," co-hosted by Michael Barone, of Minnesota Public Radio's "Pipedreams" program.

Members Bob Scholer and Roger Dalziel have made improvements to the LO'LITOS 3/12 hybrid organ, located in the Metropolitan Community Church in Minneapolis. A new computer now controls the combination action, and all but three of the 160-plus stops are now fully functional. While they were at it, they also fixed the pedal Tibia equalizer, as well as a blown valve in the Bourdon windchest. Thanks to Bob and Roger for their continuing hard work. *John Webster*

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Northolt members night at Wurlitzer Lodge, in November heard Alan Skirrow at the console of Les Rawles Wurlitzer. It

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was Alan's first visit to Northolt. A wonderful evening was spent at the Woking Leisure Centre for our Christmas Concert, with Len Rawle and friends at the console of the Wurlitzer. Graham Turner, one of our chapter members played percussion. We also had five members of the Epworth Choir. Richard Cole acted as Compere for the evening, and he read a lovely poem entitled "The Little Tin Soldier." Len played a selection of carols for the audience to join in amongst his Christmas programme.

Les Rawle held his Christmas concert at his home "Wurlitzer Lodge," once again a choir from a local church came to sing carols for us, conducted by Peter Godwen. At the end, Peter played the Wurlitzer for the younger members of the choir to dance to. William Davies was in concert on the 21 December for the 60th Anniversary of the "State," Kilburn. We were very happy to have Larry Adler as our guest, he played his own composition "Genevieve." Larry was at the inaugural concert at the State.

Gwen Light

LOS ANGELES

Stephen Ross: 818/507-0775

Los Angeles, California. Wow! What a theatre organ buff's dream! Five of the world's top organists, two great Wurlitzers, and three of the best electronic organs in two November concerts only a week apart, both in the Los Angeles area!

On November 8, Tom Hazleton, Lyn Larsen, and Carlo Curly were all on stage at San Gabriel Civic Auditorium with two Allen electronics and the LATOS-maintained 3/16 Wurlitzer. Such bench hopping! San Gabriel Civic Auditorium was bursting with fantastic music! Thanks to Henry Hunt for providing the Allen organs and the three great artists.

Then, the following Saturday night at Pasadena City College, Jonas Nordvall and Donna Parker put the LATOS-owned 3/23 Wurlitzer and the Rogers 360 through the paces. Donna informed the audience that she would handle all the fast stuff and leave the ballads to Jonas. The high-jinks of figuring out who was sitting



Jonas Nordvall and Donna Parker.
Below: Clark Wilson. Wayne Flottman photos



on which bench and what number they were playing kept the audience entertained and the music was terrific. Thanks to Robert Tall and Rogers Organ Company for the use of the Rogers organ and the services of two more of the organ worlds' greats. A special discount was given to LATOS members for advance purchase of tickets for both events.

Last but certainly not least, on November 23, our fine neighbors down in Orange County brought Walt Strony to town for a great concert on the 4/35 Wurlitzer in the Fullerton High School Plummer Auditorium.

Thanksgiving weekend found many of the LATOS and OCTOS members among the 400 or so that traveled to Phoenix for the wonderful windy "Desert Winds"

Regional Convention; and wonderful it was! Valley of the Sun is to be congratulated for a truly enjoyable weekend with great organs and great organists.

Dick Loderhouse hosted the LATOS annual holiday party at his Bay Theatre in Seal Beach on December 6. This is the home of the Paramount Studio Wurlitzer from the Paramount Theatre in New York which originally had 21 ranks but has now grown to 44 ranks. Dick gave us a little background on the organ and how he came to own it, providing a great many anecdotes surrounding the organ and the musicians and others associated with it. Of course, Jesse Crawford was the major organist who jealously guarded the instrument. After demonstrating the organ, Dick invited those present to play in open console, while others partook of holiday refreshments brought by the members. Thanks Dick, for an absolutely wonderful and entertaining afternoon in one of the prettiest little theatres in our region.

Clark Wilson was the artist at the chapter-owned and maintained 3/23 Wurlitzer at Pasadena City College in early January. His program consisted of many show tunes from the forties and fifties. Most notable were popular tunes by Burton Lane, Harold Arlan and Cole Porter. *Procession and Entrance of Bacchus* brought the show to an end.

Wayne Flottman



Gordon Belt, Vice President and program director at San Sylmar and Bill Shaw (not pictured), manager of San Gabriel Civic Auditorium received LATOS lifetime memberships from Steven Ross at the holiday party at Bay Theatre in Seal Beach.

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MOTOR CITY

Thomas Hurst: 248/477-6660

Detroit, Michigan. Members Tom Hurst and Don Lockwood were re-elected to the board, and Bob Duerr was newly-elected, at the annual membership meeting on November 2. Tom Hurst was elected President and David Martin Vice-President at the board meeting the following night.

The musical genius of Lyn Larsen was again heard at our Redford Theatre 3/10 Barton, as he performed for our Christmas program, "The Joy of Christmas," on December 13. It was great to have Lyn back with his thoughtful, seemingly effortless stylings interspersed with appropriate remarks. Adding to the festive program of Christmas fare was vocalist Laurie Meeker who delighted the audience with a number of selections that included seasonal favorites. The audience marveled at the miniature G-gauge railroad layout set up by David and Donald Martin in our orchestra pit with two trains running continuously through tunnels and over bridges in a wintertime setting.



Ron Reseigh performed at the Redford's 3/10 Barton during Motor City's Christmas party. Ray Van Steenkiste photo

Our chapter Christmas party was held at the Redford Theatre on December 14 with a potluck dinner organized by Michael Ambory and Penny Francis. Ron Reseigh entertained at the Barton organ and we enjoyed an orchestrated slide



Vocalist Laurie Meeker and Lyn Larsen, holding Marissa Walther, daughter of Will and Michele Walther, at Motor City's Christmas concert. Ray Van Steenkiste photo

show entitled "Christmas in Michigan." Having enjoyed David and Donald Martin's miniature railroad layout in the pit, as a finale, we were treated to a live steam G-gauge railroad layout on stage. Among the invited guests was the Lakeshore Garden Railroad Club.

Ron Rhode will be featured in "Broadway Through the Years" on March 28 at the Redford Theatre. Lance Luce and Tony O'Brien will appear in concert at the Barton organ as well as at two Rodgers organs, courtesy of Hammell Music in Livonia, at the Redford on May 9.

For more information write: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219. Phone: 313/537-2560 or visit our Internet site at: <http://theatreorgans.com/mi/redford>.

Don Lockwood

NEW YORK

John Vanderlee: 914/266-8177

New York, New York. On Sunday, December 7, the New York Chapter presented organist Dave Kopp in concert at the Long Island University/Brooklyn Paramount 4/26 Mighty Wurlitzer. Joining Dave on the program for a guest cameo performance was New York Yankees organist, Eddie Layton. The concert was a memorial tribute to Bob Walker, who served for thirty years as curator of the



New York Chapter Chairman and "Christmas Spectacular" Director John Vanderlee (right) congratulate organist Carl Hackert following the elaborate holiday production at the Bardavon Theatre in Poughkeepsie, New York.

organ, with all proceeds going to fund a music scholarship at the university in Bob's memory. Construction work in the former Brooklyn Paramount Theatre, now Long Island University's athletic center, had prevented us from scheduling public concerts at LIU for over a year, and it was truly exciting to hear the big Wurlitzer in concert again ... and an excellent concert it was. Dave rode the console up to a rousing rendition of "It's Today" from *Mame*, and drew upon the same Jerry Herman score for the second half opener as well, the very timely, "We Need a Little Christmas." Other highlights included such favorite standards as "When I Fall in Love," a wonderful, snappy arrangement of "Sleigh Ride," and an excellent orchestral rendering of Henry Mancini's score from the film *Victor Victoria*. Eddie Layton played three of Bob Walker's favorites, "Spanish Eyes," "New York, New York," and "Over the Rainbow." With several humorous anecdotes and stories, Dave and Eddie shared their fond memories of Bob, before Dave closed the program with a beautiful medley of Gershwin tunes. Dave responded to the call for an encore with a warm and lush rendition of "White Christmas." Thanks to the efforts of LIU crew chief Warren Laliberte, along with Margaret

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Organists Eddie Layton and Dave Kopp at the Long Island University Brooklyn Paramount where they played a December concert for the New York Chapter in tribute to Bob Walker.

Plows, Tom Stehle and Bob Welch, the Mighty Wurlitzer was in fine tune and performed flawlessly.

Our activities moved north to Poughkeepsie December 20, with the New York Chapter's fourth annual production of "An Old Fashioned Christmas Spectacular" at the Bardavon 1869 Opera House, this year to a sold-out house of over 900. This colorful review of traditional holiday music, song, dance and pageantry featured organist Carl Hackert at our own 2/9 Mighty Wurlitzer, along with a cast of more than one hundred talented performers. Directed by NYTOS Chairman John Vanderlee, the show featured the theatre organ in every role for which it was originally intended — as a solo instrument, as accompaniment for a silent film, leading an audience sing-along, serving as the orchestral foundation for other instrumental performers, and as accompaniment for singer and dancers on stage. From accompanying the antics of Laurel and Hardy in *Big Business*, to the dramatization of Franz Gruber's "Silent Night" story and a live nativity scene on stage, Carl demonstrated his own talent and the tremendous versatility of the Mighty Wurlitzer throughout the two and a half hour production. Thanks to the tireless efforts of John Vanderlee, along with

both organ and production help from Bob Strang, and assistance from Bob Welch, Lowell Sanders, Don Hoger, and Ed Wroblewski, among others, the elaborate production operated smoothly and was a great success. Thanks also to Stuart Ballinger and Tom Stehle, the Wurlitzer was in fine tune.

Tom Stehle

NOR-CAL

William O. Schlotter: 510/482-3183

San Francisco, California. Everett Nourse, the last house organist for the San Francisco Fox Theatre, played for NorCal's annual chapter meeting at Berkeley Community Theatre, on December 7. His program was delightful, drawing on a cross section of musical sources and periods. We greatly enjoyed the skill with which he effortlessly executed his velvet-smooth runs on the keyboards. His registrations drew some lovely sounds that are often overlooked, and recreated some of the registration combinations many of us remember from his years at the Fox, which was demolished in the early 1960s. We were rewarded with two encores as well. The annual business meeting followed the concert, and some of the members gathered for dinner afterward at Spender's Restaurant, near Berkeley's waterfront.

The manuals for the chapter Wurlitzer's second console are being restored in recycled ivory, while the console is being refinished. It is expected to be reassembled and installed in the theatre in time for the 1998 convention. The alternate console is larger than the unit presently in use, and will accommodate the additional nine ranks we expect to add later this year. We will be able to use the two interchangeably. The organ crew is busily moving ranks of pipes in the chambers to make space for the additional ranks.

The remaining concerts for the 1997-98 Public Concert Series will be played on February 15 by Stan Kann, who will probably bring some of his vacuum cleaners as well. Dennis James will accompany two Buster Keaton silent films on April 26, and Jonas Nordwall will play on June 28, just

three days before the start of the 1998 Convention in San Francisco. We'd love to have you with us for any or all of these fine concerts. Consider arriving a few days early for the convention to hear Jonas. There are also a lot of other things to do while you are here. We're looking forward to seeing you!

Evelyn Woodworth

NORTH TEXAS

Irving Light: 214/931-0305

Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. In December, we returned to the residence of Gordon and Evelyn Wright for our annual Christmas party, always a highlight of our year. We always look forward to the festivities and the wonderful sounds of this fine instrument. It always attracts many of our members to contribute during the open console, further extending the musical enjoyment. Program chairman, Don Reasons, invited three of our chapter members to each play a part of the planned program, thereby giving more of our organists a chance to solo on this fine instrument for our group.

Helen Thomas led off the afternoon, playing selections in her very pleasing styling. Helen has entertained for many years in a variety of venues, playing her Hammond B3. Early in her musical education, Helen studied on a Robert-Morton theatre organ and is always glad to have the chance to show her talent on theatre pipes.

Glen Swope followed Helen at the Wurlitzer playing several of our favorites. Glen is well known to the Dallas organ world, having played the large Wurlitzer in the Richardson, Texas Pizza and Pipes restaurant for many years, where he had a large following.

The finale for the planned program was presented by Don Reasons at the console (and his secret guest). After playing a short program of holiday music, Don paused to introduce his featured guest, saxophonist, Winston Stone. Mr. Stone, who has splendid education and performance credits, specializes in playing reed instruments, notably, clarinet and saxophone. He has been principal clarinetist and soloist with

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Don Reasons provided the orchestral accompaniment for saxophonist Winston Stone at the console of the 3/18 Wurlitzer in the Wright residence, North Texas Christmas party.

many symphony orchestras and has performed with a host of well known musicians. Don Reasons, who has accompanied Mr. Stone on the piano, invited him to play for our Christmas party, to be accompanied by Don on the big Wurlitzer. Though they had been unable to rehearse together in this venue, it was certainly far from apparent to this audience. With Mr. Stone playing the soprano sax, we were treated to a generous program of seasonal selections played by these very talented musicians. Winston's interpretations were jazz oriented, very inventive and most entertaining. The Wurlitzer's orchestral qualities were perfectly paired with the soloist under the capable ministrations of our Don Reasons. Winston lives and works in the Dallas area and we trust that we will have the opportunity to hear him again and often in the future. The open console that followed, continued to entertain us for the rest of the afternoon.

In November, we held our annual business meeting in the home of Ruth and Irving Light. After the business meeting, the consoles (two Hammonds and a Steinway grand piano) were given a good



Bob Acker played the Wright residence 3/18 Wurlitzer during open console at the North Texas Christmas party. President Don Peterson looks on.

workout by a number of soloists, some duets, and even a trio, who contributed to the very enjoyable open console musical afternoon. We may be thwarted in our plans to hold our February meeting in the Lakewood Theatre (home of our 3/8 Robert-Morton) as we just heard that water had again leaked into the chambers and doused a couple of pipe chests. Though the damage is slight compared to previous deluges in recent years, chapter officers are very disheartened at the feasibility of continuing to keep our organ in this venue. We continue to seek alternatives.

Irving Light

OHIO VALLEY

Jan Peek: 606/331-0962

Cincinnati, Ohio. The Emery Theatre presented its 5th annual Christmas Spectacular on December 14. The festive evening started with Jim Barton, one of Emery's staff of organists, performing traditional Christmas selections on the Mighty Wurlitzer while inviting the patrons to sing along with a couple of songs. Jim also doubled as the evening's emcee and presented the first live stage act, The Tina Marie School of Dance. Always a favorite, the dancers, ranging in age from four years old to young adult, put on a holiday show complete with creative and beautiful costumes. Jim then

announced the next act, The McAuley High School Vocal Ensemble, featuring 12 young ladies adorned in festive attire. The ensemble was accompanied by pianist Milt Goedee and presented a beautiful and well performed program. The group is from an all girls' school in nearby College Hill and is under the direction of Mary Jo Chavez, Musical Director. The audience showed their appreciation by giving a rousing applause to both groups of performers. Following a brief intermission, a movie, *The Bishop's Wife*, starring Cary Grant, was shown. After the movie, patrons were invited onto the stage to view the organ chambers while the Mighty Wurlitzer was played. This is customary after movies at the Emery.

The chapter Christmas party was on December 15. Dinner was prepared by President Jan Peek and Board Member Joe Hollmann and served on the stage while Tom Marcum played Christmas selections on the piano for dinner music. Afterwards, Christmas programs were performed on the Mighty Wurlitzer by Joe Hollmann, Bruce Hendricks, Tom Marcum, Gary Smith and Kevin Cain. Open console followed immediately after.

The fall movie series was completed in late November. Except for the Christmas Spectacular, the theatre is closed for the month of December, giving our theatre volunteers a much needed holiday break. This allows more time to schedule repairs for the organ. Our dedicated organ crew has been busy tending to all the items that are required to keep the Emery Theatre Mighty Wurlitzer in top-notch condition.

Joe Hollmann

ORANGE COUNTY

Don Near: 714/539-8944

Fullerton, California. Last fall we enjoyed a very successful concert with Stan Kann at the Wurlitzer accompanied by Ralph Wolf at the grand piano. These two combined comedy and musical talent to produce an entertaining and satisfying afternoon. We eagerly await their return later this year.

In November, Walt Strony returned to

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another well received performance. Walter is truly a consummate professional, a point driven home by the fact he had lost his Mother only days before the concert. We appreciate his involvement with the Plummer organ.

Our annual meeting and Christmas party was well attended, featuring Tom Sheen in a mini-concert followed by many organists enjoying open console. Cathy Macbride, a charming vocalist, added lyrics to the orchestral sounds of the Wurlitzer. Member Leon Rue was recognized for his continuing work at the music sales table. This is an unglamorous job that benefits our chapter and visiting artists as well as the concert audience. Good work, Leon!

Our first concert of 1998 featured the talented Rob Richards with his mixture of traditional and contemporary music. Rob's own computer driven MIDI music blended skillfully with the pipes. Rob is at the forefront of organists who believe the art must evolve and grow and encompass current musical science and technology in order to attract a new and wider audience. We at Orange County Chapter endorse this view and with Bob Trousdale at the helm, continue to develop the Plummer Wurlitzer toward an ideal blend of old and new.

We are proud to be a recording site for theatre organ music. Chris Elliott has recently finished a new CD and several others, including Walter Strony, have expressed interest in making recordings. We continue to sell our first CD, "Plumber's Pipes," recorded by Sean Henderson.

As we celebrated our second year as an ATOS chapter and our organization as Orange County Theatre Organ Society, our membership passed the century mark.

While Bob Trousdale is the moving force behind the Plummer Wurlitzer, our chairman, Don Near is most responsible for the "people side" of our success. Many have contributed to our achievements. Chairman Don and Secretary Bob deserve a special tip of the hat.

Bob Ralston is schedule to play at Plummer this spring. Bob is familiar to many in the area as host of "Gee Dad, It's a Wurlitzer" radio broadcast each Sunday evening. He is a talented musician who brings variety and fun to the concert stage.

Jim Merry

ORLANDO AREA

Wayne Tilschner: 407/331-4271

Orlando, Florida. December was full of excitement for our chapter. We held our monthly meeting on the 21st and were delighted to have our newest member, theatre organist Brian Bogdanowitz in attendance. Brian recently played a very successful theatre organ concert at the Cocoa Beach, Florida, Fine Arts Center. Brian used his 3-manual Allen theatre organ for the concert presentation. While at our meeting, Brian sat down at our Wurlitzer and gave a fantastic 20-minute performance, which included a Christmas medley, Broadway show tunes and ballads. Everyone was impressed with his artistic playing ability and phenomenal showmanship. Presently, he is working with Alan Gershwin, son of Ira Gershwin, to preserve and play Ira's great music on the mighty theatre pipe organs. We're very proud to have Brian as one of our members.

We were also privileged to have organist Paul Rupp at our meeting. Paul, a member of AGO, is the Associate Church Organist for Sanlando United Methodist, and was recently introduced to the theatre

pipe organ. For the past few weeks, Paul had been practicing on our Wurlitzer in preparation for a community Christmas Eve service to be conducted in the Lake Brantley High School Auditorium.

As our members entered the high school facility, Paul got onto the console and played a number of traditional Christmas carols. Our membership was delighted with Paul's talent and enthusiasm. Within a matter of a few weeks, he had a good handle on registering the organ. Paul is so delighted with the Wurlitzer's sound and versatility, that he is also becoming an OATOS member. He wants to continue learning about and playing the Mighty Wurlitzer.

The Christmas Eve service was our first local presentation of our Wurlitzer. AT 8:30 p.m., Paul Rupp began playing a 15-minute pre-concert while the 600 member audience was being seated. At the conclusion of the pre-concert, Sr. Pastor Dr. Warren Langer, Jr. came out and thanked OATOS for their hard work and cooperation. The church and Lake Brantley High School were proud to have the organ in use for this very special evening.

As the Christmas Eve service began, our OATOS tech crew were sweating, hoping and praying, that nothing would go wrong. For the next two hours, the organ played flawlessly. No ciphers, no dead notes, no relay crashes. Everything worked beautifully, particularly, since Paul played most of the evening without turning on the trem. It's amazing what prayer and a lot of hard work can accomplish.

Toward the end of the service, the ushers passed out 600 candles to the audience. The auditorium lights were turned off, and the spotlight was turned on our Wurlitzer and the church choir. Goose bumps were running up and down our spines as the



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Mighty Wurlitzer accompanied the congregation with "O Holy Night," "Joy To The World" and other traditional carols. Seeing the organ spotlighted, with the audience standing and singing with candles held high was the best present our chapter could have gotten for Christmas.

After the service was completed, our technical crew congratulated each other for a job well done. The organist, choir director and pastor came up and personally thanked our chapter for all of the wonderful work that we did to get the organ in playing condition.

Afterwards, our crew was busy answering the scores of questions that people had about the organ. I can say without hesitation that the Mighty Wurlitzer was a big hit with our community. Now, our job is to make certain it stays that way.

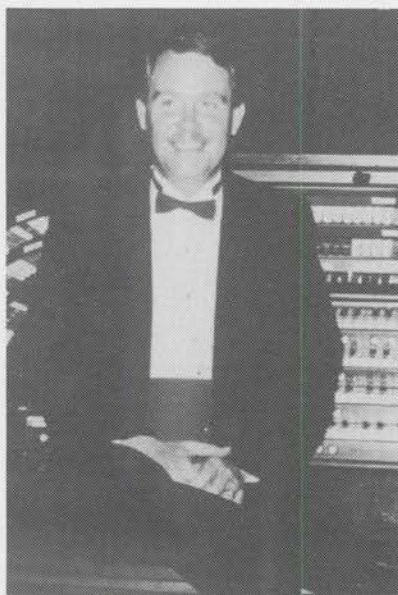
Remember, we hold our monthly meetings on the third Sunday of each month. If you're in the Orlando area, please feel free to drop by and visit. *Wayne Tilschmer*

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RIVER CITY

Gregory Johnson: 402/624-5655

Omaha, Nebraska. For our November 23 meeting we returned to Durand's Sky Ranch Studio and the chapter's Barton theatre organ. A short business meeting was chaired by our Vice-President, Lynn Lee. Bill Durand reported on improvements recently made to the studio's heating system, and Paul Kanka discussed continuing work on the chapter's Barton organ. Our guest artist for the afternoon was member Donna Baller. Donna has an extensive musical repertoire, and her program included many selections ranging from the 1920s through the 1970s. Her rendition of Romberg's "Softly As The Morning Sunrise" featured lush registrations, and her "Canadian Sunset" used orchestra bells. Interspersed with the melodies, Donna discussed her formal musical training in piano and organ. She allowed that her first time as substitute organist at the Methodist Church in Seward, Nebraska, was "memorable." It took a half-bottle of Pepto Bismol, just to get her up on the organ bench, but she managed to get through the service with flying colors!

Bob and Joyce Markworth hosted their traditional Christmas chili con carne feed and potluck for the chapter on December 6. During a short business meeting Bob



Donna Baller's program at the chapter's Barton theatre organ included tunes from the 1920s through the 1970s. Tom Jeffery photo.

reported on Wurlitzer organ installation progress at the Rose Theatre. Since Markworth's Kimball theatre organ is in the throes of installation, we didn't have a guest artist, but we had tours of the pipe chambers. In its prior home installation, the 3/16 Kimball spoke from one 13' wide x 40' long chamber. The organ's new home has two all-concrete chambers, each 24' wide x 18' deep x 12' high. The chambers speak into a 43' wide x 30' deep x 11' high room, and also into a 15' x 20' balcony area. The organ will be approximately 24 ranks (from its previous 16 ranks in the old house) and will include a Trivo Posthorn, Orchestral Oboe, and Sax. Wind will be supplied by three Spencer blowers: two 5 h.p. and one 3 h.p. (300 CFM @ 30 in.). The relay will be electronic (Rickman). There will be six 16' stops: Kimball Wood Diaphone, String, Tuba, Tibia, Bourdon and Metal Diaphone. The console is another story — Bob has been advised that the original 3-manual Kimball console will not have enough space for the 24 ranks, 11 percussions, traps and trash and bang — unless major modifications are made to the console. So, Bob may be looking for a large console. Bob's primary workers on the organ installation crew have been Paul Kanka, Steve Barker, Tom Wolfe, and Harold Kenney. Bob hopes to have the winding completed by spring and the organ playable for a test shake down by the end of summer.

Tom Jeffery and Bob Markworth

ST. LOUIS

Jim Ryan: 314/892-0754

St. Louis, Missouri. Our November annual business meeting found us at the Lincoln Theatre in Belleville, Illinois. The business meeting discussed our year's accomplishments and the election results. The available board seats were filled by David Schoenborn and incumbent board member, Dennis Ammann. A special

thanks to Richard and Betty Wright and their daughter Sandra, and husband, David Schoenborn, for giving us the complete afternoon of open console for our membership. The Wright's and Schoenborn's have given SLTOS and the entire St. Louis area a great gift in the return of quality theatre pipe organ programs and weekly organ interludes this past year.

The December holiday Christmas party was held at the home of Jim and Dee Ryan. Great food, fellowship, and theatre organ music filled the Ryan home for the afternoon and evening; the perfect way to top off a wonderful year. *Dennis Ammann*

SIERRA

Craig Peterson: 916/682-9699

Sacramento, California. Under the direction of Dave Moreno, Sierra Chapter members have refurbished the Wurlitzer at Sacramento's Grant Union High School which was originally designed by George Wright and installed by Fred Wood. This work was supported by the high school and its alumni. Chapter member and Grant Union alumnus Joyce Clifford presented a wonderful concert on this instrument under the auspices of the Grant Union Alumni Association in October. Joyce's program ranged from the classics to well known American ballads. Several of her arrangements were those of Mr. Wright.

In November, David Kelsey presented a concert on the ATOS 3/16 Wurlitzer at the Towe Ford Museum to a combined audience of Sierra Chapter and Boni Organ Club (electronic, Sacramento) members. Dave was delivered to the console in a beautiful red 1938 Buick. The rainy night

could not dampen Dave's free spirit as he entertained us with marches, ballads, show and movie tunes, and audience requests interspersed with his special humor. We look forward to Dave's return.

December was the traditional Christmas party and elections with the chapter's 3/13 Wurlitzer in Fair Oaks. Bill Gardner entertained us as we gathered, and then Dave Rietz, Chapter Vice-Chairman, serenaded us during our potluck lunch. Many members played during the open console which closed the afternoon. You can find our 1998 officers listed on the Sierra Chapter web page (<http://www2.rietz.com/reitz/sierra/>) which was designed by Dave Rietz.

Dick Bailey from San Jose was our January artist on the chapter Wurlitzer. Dick is on the staff at Angelino's restaurant in San Jose where he plays its Wurlitzer several night a week. He also entertains many of the Bay Area electronic organ clubs. Dick also had to slog his way to Sacramento on a very rainy day to give us a very solid and enjoyable concert of standards, marches and polkas.

Our February concert will be by Richard Cencibaugh on the Grant Union High School Wurlitzer. On March 14 we will join the NorCal and Sequoia Chapters in the "March Morton Madness" for two concerts by Barry Baker on the same day: at Bob Hartzell's in Lodi and at the Kautz Winery in Murphys. Ron Rhode will accompany *One Week* with Buster Keaton, and also *Double Whoopee* with Laurel and Hardy at the Towe Auto Museum on April 17. On May 15, Dennis James will accompany *Tumbleweeds* with William S. Hart, also at the Towe Auto Museum. June will be dark so we can rest up for the ATOS Convention in San Francisco sponsored by

NorCal Chapter (July 1-5 & 6), and also for the Sierra Chapter picnic at the McCluer's on July 12.

As reported previously, the Towe Museum's organization and future are solid, and the ATOS Wurlitzer continues to have a good home where many people hear it every day. About 120 different vehicle exhibits (cars, trucks, bicycles, motorcycles, race cars and other cars) are now available to the museum. The museum's name has been changed to "Towe Auto Museum" to reflect the wider range of automobiles now on display. *Pete McCluer*

SOONER STATE

Sam Collier: 918/834-6255

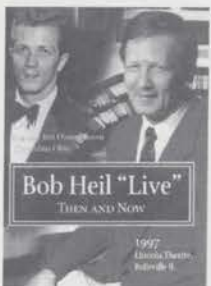
Tulsa, Oklahoma. Our November meeting at Tulsa Technology Center's Broken Arrow Campus featured another delightful mini-concert on our 3/13 Robert-Morton played by Jeff White. His program included a goodly number of familiar, as well as unfamiliar, selections. Most fun was his Walt Disney Medley, and you wouldn't believe how he played "It's a Small World!" He also included Grieg's "The Last Spring," which skidded into "Chattanooga Choo Choo" before we knew it, complete with noisy locomotive thundering up the manuals and a screaming train whistle.

Nine people played at open console. Bonnie Duncan sang "Bless This House," accompanied by Joyce Hatchett, and Paul Craft sang "Down From His Glory," accompanied by his wife, Carolyn.

Our December meeting was our annual Christmas party, held in the home of Phil and Laura Judkins. Music was open console, centered around their 3/11 mostly-Wicks pipe organ. We lost track of the

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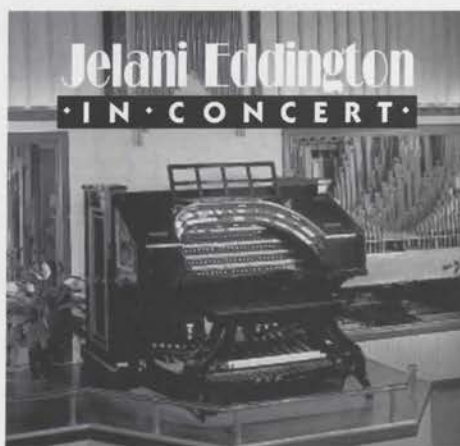
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number of people who played, but surely everybody who wanted to, had a turn! We sang some Christmas songs, with Carolyn Craft accompanying on the organ. Sam Collier tried to find a "Bagpipes" registration, and with John Hickman's help we heard "Amazing Grace." There were also some piano and organ duets.

The most fun however, was our now-traditional hilarious rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Paul Craft valiantly tried to keep things together. Each gift was assigned to a given person, and as the song progressed, the assignee was supposed to sing out, in the right key and in the correct rhythm! Let's just say that we do have some creative musicians in our group.

We are also pleased to report that Wayne Barrinton played our chapter Robert-Morton at Tulsa Technology Center, for the Law Enforcement graduation ceremony, held early in December. Some interested people toured the chambers, as well.

Work is still progressing on the refurbishing of the instrument. *Dorothy Smith*

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Donald Reazor: 602/877-0635

Phoenix, Arizona. Although our chapter has been absent from these pages for a few issues, we have still been very busy in the Valley of the Sun.

Members of the American Guild of Organists joined us for our September 21 business meeting at the Orpheum Theatre. A short history of the theatre and the organ was followed by a tour of the theatre. A cable problem sent Tom Fizzell up to the Main chamber to play some of the pipes manually, but we actually heard the organ speak! The AGO folks provided a reception after the meeting.

October 5, we were at the home of Ken and Nancy Resech. Don Story came from Tucson to provide a program on his Yamaha keyboard and the Resech's Conn. Don likes to play obscure music by obscure composers and has fun doing it! Does anyone else know "I'd Sing You a Thousand Love Songs?"

October 18 brought the night we had all been waiting for — the first public concert played on our Wurlitzer at the Orpheum. As Lyn Larsen played to an almost full house. We were happy to see that there really is an audience for theatre organ in our valley. In his program, Lyn included a medley from *Sunny Side Up*, a film that opened the same year as the Orpheum Theatre — 1929.



Walter Strony at Arizona Organ Associates. *Madeline LiVolsi photo*

This "grand" opening was followed closely by another great event at the theatre, the screening of the silent film, *Phantom of The Opera* on October 30. Organ accompaniment was provided on the Wurlitzer by Rob Richards. Rob even played a musical interlude while the film reels were being changed, so there was no intermission.

John Crum hosted us at Arizona Organ Associates on November 9. Walter Strony provided the program on an Allen MDS-312 theatre organ. Walter may have been thinking of our upcoming regional convention as he played "Puttin' On The Ritz."

About four hundred of our closest friends joined us at the Ritz-Carlton November 28-30 for our Desert Winds Regional Convention. We were fortunate to have sunny, chamber of commerce weather the entire weekend. It also helped that several of our fine convention artists reside right here in the valley. Due to space limitations, about half of the convention attendees had a fun-filled evening at David Lindsay's Yesterdays restaurant on Sunday. Some who were unable to go to Yesterdays discovered that the Organ Stop staff had arranged for Donna Parker and Jonas Nordwall to fill in for Charlie Balogh at the pizza parlor that night. After the convention was over, several of our visitors were seen at Organ Stop listening to Charlie on Monday night. We hope that all who attended had a good time (and remember — you don't have to wait for another convention to come back!).

Lyn Larsen's Christmas Pops Concert at the Orpheum Theatre on December 14 also featured singer Rob Butler. The pro-

gram was mostly sounds of the season, but Lyn and Rob also dedicated "The Impossible Dream" to Bill Brown. Lyn told the audience of how it had been Bill's dream for twenty years to see an organ in the theatre. Bill believed in the project so much that he even put out a large amount of his own money to get things started.

The chapter looks forward to a busy 1998 with several concerts and chapter meetings lined up. Work is on-going on the Orpheum Wurlitzer. *Madeline LiVolsi*



Lyn Larsen played the dedication and Christmas concerts at the Orpheum.

Madeline LeVolsi photo

WESTERN RESERVE

Janice Kast: 215/531-4214

e-mail: wrtorgan@aol.com

Cleveland, Ohio. Our final business meeting of 1997 was held November 16 at downtown Cleveland's Grays' Armory. There was no scheduled artist, so following the election of 1998 officers we shared open console time at the 3/15 Wurlitzer.

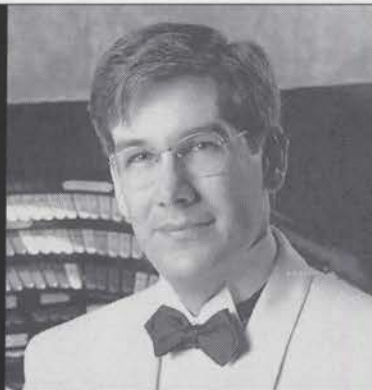
December 6, we held our Christmas party at the beautiful home of chapter members Pat and Vince Aveni, aka the "Musical Museum of Yesteryear." The evening was filled with melodies from the Avenis' collection of automated musical instruments, including music boxes, orchestrions, calliopes, and band organs. "Pre-performed" Christmas and popular music was played via computer relay on the ever-growing (but currently 4/40+) Wurlitzer by several famous organists. After some open console time, we were surprised by the appearance of renowned artist Walt Strony, and this was no computer-stored facsimile! The gracious organist performed a medley of Christmas tunes and other audience requests. He concluded with a demonstration of the organ and its new Ken Crome-built console's features.

Closing 1997, WRTOS presented British cinema organist Paul Roberts in a concert at the Grays' Armory 3/15 Wurlitzer on December 13. From his flashing entrance, to his dazzling encore, he kept the audience enraptured with both his versatile artistry and English wit. Musical selections included "Mr. Sandman," "Ain't She Sweet," songs from children's movies, and several seasonal Christmas medleys, climaxing with a standing ovation his encore "Dizzy Fingers." *Jim Shepherd*

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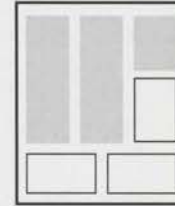
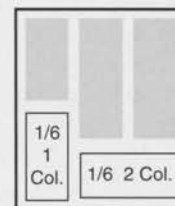
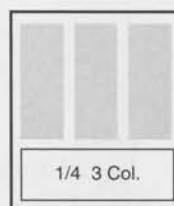
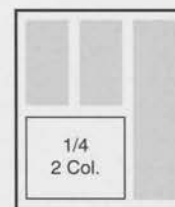
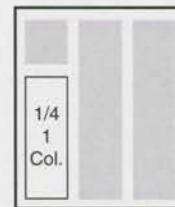
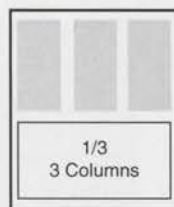
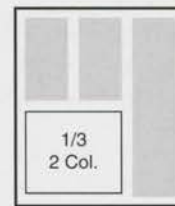
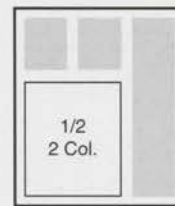
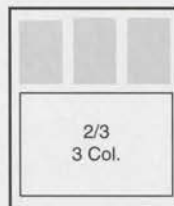
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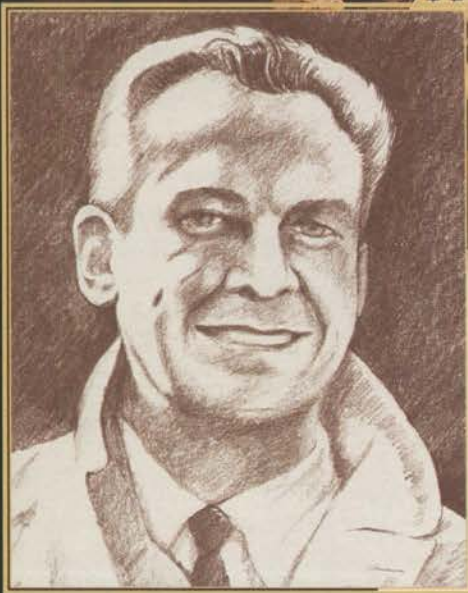
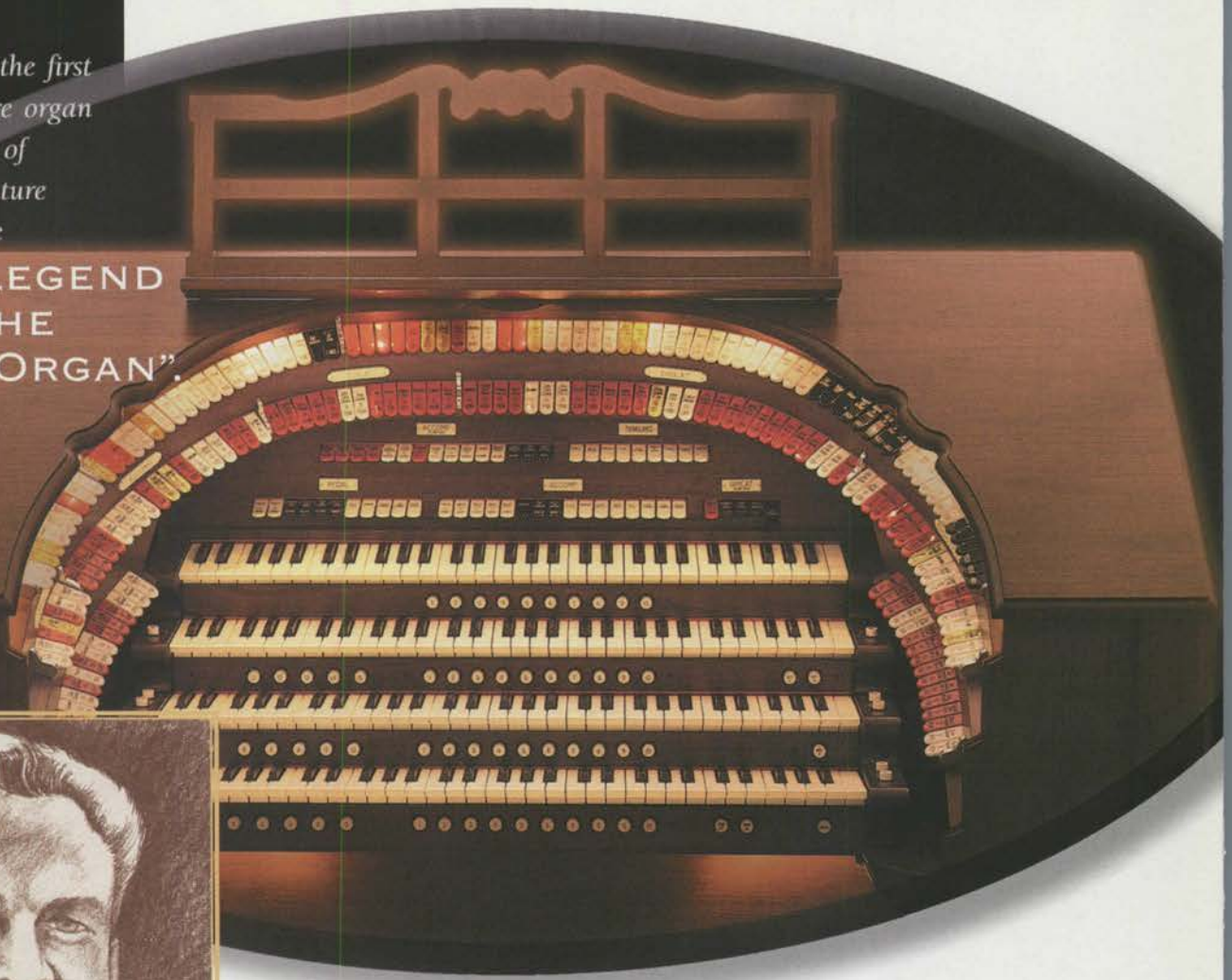
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