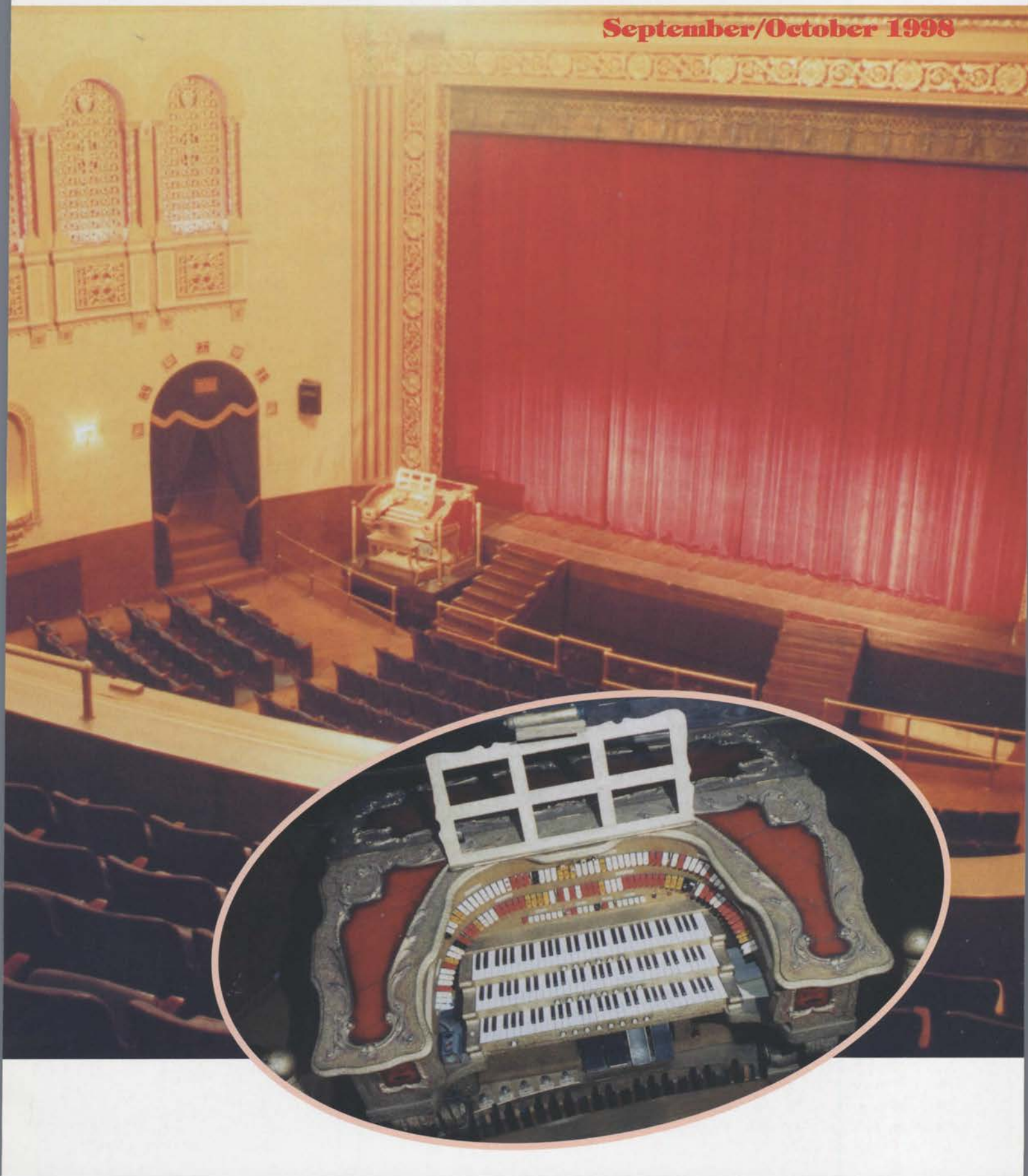


# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

September/October 1998







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# Theatre Organ

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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1998 VOLUME 40, NUMBER 5

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EDITOR: THOMAS L. DeLAY  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: MICHAEL FELLENER

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## President's Message



During the last convention in San Francisco, your ATOS Board of Directors had the honor of dealing with some interesting issues.

The Endowment Fund is alive and well. The money earned by the investments is available for worthy chapter projects. The requirements, both in presentation and technical merit, are fairly strong, but nonetheless, available when the need is well documented. The Endowment Fund also needs your consideration. Its growth is dependent upon your generosity while living and your thoughtfulness when provided for in your estate. Vern Bickel, who chairs the committee welcomes your input and inquiries.

Your ATOS Board also established a matching funds program to help with the installation of the Lowell Ayars Wurlitzer in the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. ATOS will match your donation to this project, dollar for dollar, pound for pound, mark for mark, franc for franc ... well you get the idea. Many ATOS members are employed by or have retired from corporations who also give matching grants. If you have such a program available, each dollar you give to this project will ultimately

result in three dollars toward the goal. Watch for further information on these projects in this and future issues of THEATRE ORGAN.

Onward to Cedar Rapids! The '98 Regional Convention, hosted by the Cedar Rapids Chapter starts on October 16 and runs through the 18th. The convention registration and hotel reservation forms are on the back cover of this issue.

As the next annual convention is out of the country, England to be precise, the next ATOS event in the United States will be the Regional during the 1999 Labor Day weekend. Don't miss this opportunity to visit an area that has never before hosted a convention and you will hear two original theatre organ installations. There is further information on this event in this issue.

Note to all chapters: This is the time to work with your aspiring young artists in their preparation for the next Young Artist Competition. If you need information on this, please contact Dorothy Van Steenkiste.

I hope to see many of you in Cedar Rapids.

*Harry Heth*



# General Information

## A Word from the Public Relations Committee:

### LET'S GROW YOUNGER

The best remaining theatre organs are capable of so much, at the same time the condition and standard of most of the remaining pipe organs are arguably of a higher quality than at anytime in the history of the instrument.

The musical presentations of a large number of 'touring organists' are also higher than in former times.

Young artists are actively encouraged. The best of these are showing signs of raising the profile of the organ as a means of entertainment, to even higher levels.

So what is it that is preventing ATOS from increasing membership and concert audiences?

#### BEING POSITIVE

Nothing makes me angrier than to hear comment from fellow enthusiasts that, as we move through life, we can expect the audience for the organ to vanish. Negative comments, even thoughts, of this nature will surely lead to the extinction of the organ. What is needed to increase membership is the simple everyday ingredient, *enthusiasm*. Let us kill off negative comment and take only the positive route.

Why anyone should spend time analyzing a downturn in membership numbers is a mystery to me. Let us all 'save our energy.' Energy is a valuable personal resource so let us channel it into positive and helpful actions.

#### AGE RANGE

Most of us will recognize that the majority of those who come regularly to concerts are 65 years of age and upwards. The reasons for this high age range are many and varied and we could expend a considerable amount of 'energy' giving our views on the subject.

Regardless of the age range, all we need consider is the lowest age at which most people could, with the right encouragement, be attracted to

the organ.

We all recognize each year there are those who pass on. Logically, there could be a decline in our numbers. We need to remind ourselves, that babies are still being born. Recognition of this simple fact of life should tell us that each age group is replaced annually.

If we accept that 50 is, for example, an age at which most could be made aware of the organ, then each year we can look forward to discovering a new group of 50 year olds. They are out there just waiting to be contacted. Let us tell them about the many social and musical attractions of joining our highly specialist, indeed privileged, activities.

At 50, many are likely to have an 'empty nest' and looking for a cause to support. What better than a musical one.

#### TEENAGERS

I can vouch for a large number of teenagers having been 'bowled over' with their first experience of the sound of a good organist playing music they know. I am not at all sure however that expending our promotional energy in this area brings really worthwhile returns, unless we are talking about introducing young musicians who can be encouraged to be our future organists.

As far as our audiences are concerned, it is my belief that for the foreseeable future the general direction of organ festival and organ club activity is such that they combine to encourage programs and presentations which appeal to those in middle age.

If you agree that 60 is approximately the average age that members are most aware of the organ, then perhaps we can also agree to help lower this age annually in order to secure a future for the organ as a means of entertainment.

#### PRACTICAL ADVICE

ATOS officials in the main look after policy, theatre and artist booking and keeping the books straight. These are huge tasks and it is unrea-

sonable to expect these volunteers to accept total responsibility for doubling our present numbers in the short term.

To call in a professional public relations company would be expensive and I am not at all sure that they would produce better recommendations for increasing our numbers than we could from within the skills and knowledge of our existing members.

We must have the brightest of horizons for ATOS and your board can certainly help with information and general direction. But who is it who can actually guarantee we double our membership? The answer is close at hand. The answer is YOU.

#### HOW TO

1. Only an enthusiastic attitude should prevail.

2. Believe in the fact that if you ask anyone "do you enjoy music?". They will answer "yes."

3. Ask this question of people you meet. Next, identify the music they enjoy and chances are you will be able to say, "how interesting, that is exactly the sort of 'live' music we have at our local ATOS concerts."

4. Once interest is expressed, invite them as your guest for a pre-concert coffee at home, show them a chapter newsletter, maybe play them a 2-3 minute recording - no more - of their favorite type of music as performed on the organ and then take them off to the real experience.

5. As you leave the concert venue, you will soon be able to establish whether they would like to join you again.

6. Whenever at the concert venue, greet people with a smile and a kind word. There is nothing more disconcerting than not being welcomed once one has been enrolled.

This approach has worked for me and although it may need slight variation to suite your own personality and circumstances I hope the broad principles are self evident.

If every enthusiast manages to introduce just one new member

*Continued next page*



## GENERAL INFORMATION cont.

within the next twelve months then our movement has doubled in size ... But don't wait until next month, try it this month. Give your chapter a real boost by supporting this obvious suggestion. Let us highlight at each of our meetings recruiting activity which has been successful.

Growth in our membership must become everyone's number one priority, if the 'King of instruments' is to survive.

## PROMOTION

Rather than press advertising, try to obtain the ear of your local press editor and agree to prepare a free editorial package which includes a professional looking photograph (Always include at the end of your article your venue and the next concert date). Most neighborhood newspapers are looking for human interest stories.

Other than extending invitations to as many aged 50 and upwards with whom you come into contact. Don't forget to start with your own family, chances are that many of you have children who are approaching the age at which the mellower side of music making could have strong appeal.

## And Finally ...

Remember that Word Of Mouth communication of the enjoyment you derive from hearing and or playing the organ is the most effective and efficient method of increasing attendance's/club membership.

We can only expect to get out of our hobby what we put in, so go to it. If each of us can find just one additional member, we have reached our first target, that of doubling our membership.

Although it may be a hard statement to accept, it is my belief that: as fully paid up members, it is our individual duty to assist with the growth of ATOS.

Please talk with your public relations committee ... NOT with 1001 reasons why we can't double our numbers. They will I'm sure look forward to having positive suggestions you are going to try or which you have already found have worked elsewhere.

**Meanwhile ... Let's Grow Younger Together!**

## WELCOME CENTRAL ILLINOIS CHAPTER

More good news! We are pleased to announce the formation of another ATOS chapter.

Father Gus Franklin did an outstanding job in sending out questionnaires, contacting potential members, and arranging the first meeting. As a result, everything progressed smoothly. Some people were already ATOS members and those who were not joined that day. Thus, the chapter came into being during the very first meeting.

It was great to see a number of the members from our new chapter attending the annual convention in San Francisco.

The Officers and Board Members of ATOS extend their best wishes to the Central Illinois Chapter and will, of course, be available to assist you at all times.

*Doris Erbe*

## The ATOS Endowment Fund - Part 2: HELP GUARANTEE THE FUTURE OF ATOS

You are a member of ATOS because you have a commitment to the theatre pipe organ and its music. You are an avid listener and/or a person who is interested in the technical or performing aspect of the theatre pipe organ. If these magnificent instruments are to be preserved and presented well into the next century, it will be through the efforts of people like you and me. We are the only ones who will insure the future of our society.

Every ATOS member has the opportunity to help keep the theatre pipe organ and its music alive and well by donating to the ATOS Endowment Fund. Most of us are not wealthy, so we cannot donate large sums to the Endowment Fund. However, if every ATOS member would make a commitment to donate an amount commensurate with their financial situation, the fund would grow by leaps and bounds. Please ask yourself, "How committed am I to helping insure that the theatre pipe organ continues to be heard in this country?" In future issues, you will

find further information about how you can become a part of a growing number of dedicated supporters of the theatre pipe organ and its music by making a donation to the ATOS Endowment Fund.

For information regarding the ATOS Endowment Fund, please contact Vern Bickel, 785 Palomino Court, San Marcos, CA 92069-2102, 760/471-6194.

## Four Programs Available

*Check Deadline for Programs Carefully*

### 1 YOUNG THEATRE ORGANIST COMPETITION

Junior Division 13-15 Yrs.  
Intermediate Division 16-18 Yrs.  
Senior Division 19-21 Yrs.

Tape, Entry Form & Chapter Certification Must Be Sent To:  
Jack Moelmann, P.O. Box 25165  
Scott Air Force Base, Illinois 62225  
**DEADLINE: MARCH 20, 1999**

### 2 AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

**Category "A"**  
*Students working toward college organ performance degree*

**Category "B"**  
*Organ students studying with professional theatre organ teachers*  
Application To:  
Dorothy VanSteenkiste  
**DEADLINE: APRIL 15, 1999**

### 3 HOBBYIST DIVISION OF COMPETITION

Open to all non professional organists ages 22 to 105. All entries must be played on a theatre pipe organ. Two selections of your choice.  
Entry To: Dorothy VanSteenkiste  
**DEADLINE: APRIL 15, 1999**

### 4 ATOS INNER-CITY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Chapters Apply For Assistance  
Sample Guidelines Available From:  
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Grants Awarded Upon Committee Approval

*Application Forms & Information Available From:*  
DOROTHY VAN STEENKISTE  
9270 Reeck Road  
Allen Park, Michigan 48101  
Phone 313/383-0133  
Fax 313/383-1875



# Member's Forum

Dear Editor:

What a fabulous convention — the best yet! Even the name badges were great, with everyone's hometown printed LARGE enough to see where all the folks are from! Great for starting conversations and making even more new friends.

Upcoming convention and regional sites — do PLEASE continue this feature.

Jane and Warren Tisdale  
Tucson, Arizona

Dear Editor:

I have received the May/June issue of the ATOS magazine and notice in your listings for the Pipe Piper there is an error. Please note on page 22 for the North Carolina listings:

Masonic Temple  
Scottish Rite  
426 West Market Street  
Greensboro, NC

You have listed the organ as a 2/7, this should be corrected to read: 2 manual 8 ranks with chimes.

The instrument was purchased in 1926 from the Wurlitzer Company and installed and played for the first time on December 10, 1928. Please note this is the original installation.\*

I have been Temple Organist since 1984. I started maintenance on the organ having removed all pipes, cleaned chamber, chests, washed and reracked the pipes. The chimes have been removed from the chamber and placed on the outside wall with new action. The leathers are in good condition and we have not had to replace any. The only thing that gives out are the magnets.

The instrument contains the following ranks:

16-8-4-2	Tibia
8-4	Salicional
8-4	Dulciana
8-4	Vox Humana
16-8-4	Flute
8-4	Voix Celeste
8-4	Horn Diapason
8	Oboe Horn

The Vox Humana was cleaned and regulated by Schlueter Pipe Organ Company of Lithonia, Georgia.

The Wurlitzer is used 6 to 8 times a year. If someone is in the area and would like to see the organ, they can call the Scottish Rite office at 336/275-3597. If they wish to hear the instrument, they must make an appointment in advance, as I have the keys. I travel a lot as I work for Schlueter Pipe Organ Company as their tuner, sales and installer.

Hoping that this information will be of help.

Bob Parris  
Mount Airy, North Carolina

Dear Friends:

I hope you caught/catch the Pipe Dreams program featuring Tom Hazleton! Good music is good music whether it's played on a ten stop tracker or a Mighty Wurlitzer. This is fine playing by a fine musician, on fine instruments — of both serious and fun music. Mr. Barone stated at the beginning of the program that theatre organ music is the opposite end of the same pole. I agree! Where I come from, organs of any kind are too precious, too rare to debate about whether or not they merit approval. I get excited when I hear good organ music of any genre!

Opposite of the same pole indeed. I think we need a little more balance or we might just fall! Trackers, EPs; theatre, classic, pipe, electronic — I love 'em all!

Gene Stroble  
NORFLATOS

*(Editor's Note: While this originally appeared on piporg-L, this is a letter very worthy of appearing in this space as well. Thank you to Mr. Stroble and the owners of piporg.L for reprinting the letter to the list.)*

Dear Editor:

(Attention NorCal TOS) Zounds! Y'all did it again! SO much by so few of you, for so many of us. What an incomparable program! The beautiful Golden Gate brochure, hotel diagrams, restaurant guides - so many of them - the reservation desk in the hotel, buses and BART - and last but not least, all of the various concerts; your efforts were awesome!

I regret that our stamina - or lack of it - kept us from full participation of everything offered. However, meeting and hearing Richard Hills, and renewing our acquaintance with "Mr. Fox," Everett Nourse, were worth more than the price of the registration. A simple thank you seems so inadequate, but, that's all I can come up with.

As usual,  
Frank Bindt  
Kensington, California

To Mr. Dennis Hedberg:

I love your contribution on page 40 of the July/August journal. You really took me back, and made me feel a little old.

In 1956 I came to Salt Lake City as a 19-year-old from the farm. I landed a job at a hi-fi equipment store. Stereo on tape had just been released, and our lavishly equipped demo room sported a Viking 75 tape deck, a Bell 30/30 stereo amplifier, and two huge Jensen corner speakers. We were on the leading edge. The boss came in with two new tapes for us to demonstrate stereo sound with. One was the Hi Lo's, and the other was George Wright's "The Roaring 20s."

When this farm boy heard the George Wright tape, he was very solidly impressed, asking "What under heaven is this?" My boss told me a little about theatre organ, and it was like exposing me to a highly infectious disease that is still with me, 42 years later.

I have since owned and restored a number of fine theatre organs, even learned to play them. *(continued)*



## MEMBER'S FORUM cont.

The names you mentioned, Thorens, Rek-O-Kut, Waharfdale, McIntosh, Marantz, Klipsch, Electro-Voice, Berlant Concertone, etc., became household words to me in the 50s. I was shocked to again see them in print. I guess I thought I was the only one who remembered.

Now would you believe, tube equipment is back in style. I have lived long enough to see this thing go full circle.

I was told that George Wright sounds better played through a tube amp. Even though the CD is digital, I am probably now too old to tell the difference anyway, but I am not too old to notice the great sound of the Banda CDs.

I certainly mourned the loss of Mr. Wright. But after adjusting to the idea, I realized it was a blessing that he could go while still proficient at his skill, and not have to rot in some nursing home. I personally doubt that anyone will ever fill his shoes. He was the best.

Ron McDonald  
Blanding, Utah

Dear Editor:

Thanks for the George Wright story. I knew him in the 50s. His death saddens me. The song has ended, but the melody lingers on with Mr. Wright, as with another favorite, Jesse Crawford. Mr. Wright may never be excelled.

I was surprised to find my name on page 38 of the same issue. I acquired the Rialto organ in the mid-50s, just days before the demolition of the theatre. The story is accurate, and the writer did his homework well. I could add many details if anyone is interested. I was the last person to see this organ intact, and most of it was still there. It WAS a fabulous installation. Some of the pipes from it are now in use in the 5/31 Wurlitzer located in the Organ Loft at Salt Lake City.

Ron McDonald  
Blanding, Utah

*(Editor's Note: See page 42 of this issue for the follow-up from Mr. McDonald.)*

**Note: ATOS WEBSITE:**  
<http://www.ATOS.org>

Dear Editor:

Just a word on the fabulous convention this summer by NorCal. Rudy Frey and his team did a wonderful job.

Something that I noticed, however, might stand to be included in all future convention planning. We are an organization of mostly senior citizens, and some with handicaps as well who have a difficult time in seeing and walking. Yet, at all venues, the lights were completely turned out in the auditorium during concerts, except for the little isle markers. In some states, this is illegal. The house should be dimmed so senior citizens can find their way to the restrooms.

I don't think any chapter in ATOS will ever come close to having four world class Wurlitzers. It boggles the mind!

Bob Balfour  
Union, New Jersey

*Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN. Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part. Send to: Editor, THEATRE ORGAN, P.O. Box 3929, Pinedale, California 93650.*

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# *Michigan Theatre Celebrates Twenty-Five Years of Organ Overtures*

*by Henry B. Aldridge*





It all began on an October evening in 1972 when Rupert Otto seated himself at the console of the newly restored 3/13 Barton pipe organ in Ann Arbor's Michigan Theatre and waited for the closing credits of *The Poseidon Adventure* to end. As the curtain closed over the screen and the house lights came up, Otto began to play his theme from Gordon Jenkins' *Manhattan Tower*, and for the first time in over 25 years, movie audiences heard the sounds of the Michigan Theatre's pipe organ. Most patrons that night were so surprised that they sat down and listened for the entire intermission. Some of the curious gathered around the console as it came up on the four-poster lift.

Now, twenty-five years later, audiences are no longer surprised by the organ. Rather, they have come to expect it. Rupert Otto has moved on to a comfortable retirement in Chelsea, Michigan, but his duties are now carried out by a staff of five organists who give public performances on the Barton at least six times per week. In addition to these regularly scheduled "overture" presentations, the Barton is used to provide music for silent films and is occasionally featured with the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra. During the past twenty-five years, the instrument has been played thousands of times and has been heard by more people than any other pipe organ in the area.

The Michigan Theatre's Barton was built as Opus 245 and was installed in the fall of 1927, just prior to the theatre's opening on January 4, 1928. The instrument is three ranks larger than the standard 3/10 configuration known as the "Butterfield Special" usually placed in the theatres operated by the W.S. Butterfield chain throughout Michigan. The additional ranks include a Post Horn, Solo String, and Oboe Horn. Also, the organ has a larger scale Tibia and a more powerful blower. The console is a "deluxe" model with five solo pistons, seven great pistons, and seven accompaniment pistons. With extra voices, higher wind pressures, and more console versatility, this particular Barton is exceptional. The instrument is just the right size for the auditorium and can fill it easily with sound without being

over powering. No one seems to know why the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor would receive an instrument that was different from those found in other Butterfield houses. One possibility is that the Ann Arbor, Michigan Theatre's manager Gerry Hoag, insisted on a more "deluxe" model. The other is that the Michigan in Ann Arbor is somewhat larger than most Butterfield houses; thus a larger instrument was needed.



*Michigan Theatre staff organists (L to R): Henry Aldridge, John Lauter, Newton Bates, Jim Leaffe, Father Jim Miller (not shown).*

The Barton was played for the first month following the theatre's opening by Floyd Hoffman who was a staff organist for the Barton Company. In February, 1928, he was replaced by Harold Loring. W.A. Warner took over from Loring in June, 1928, and played for the next three months. In September, 1928, Bob Howland began a two year tenure. In 1932, Paul Tomkins became house organist and remained in that post until the early 1950s. Surviving records are spotty, but they seem to indicate that the organ was used regularly until Tomkins was drafted in 1941. Following his return from active duty, Tomkins played only on special occasions until some time in the early 1950s.

Originally, the instrument was used to accompany silent films and at other times in combination with the theatre's eleven piece orchestra. Talking

films arrived at the Michigan Theatre in the summer of 1929, and the orchestra was dismissed. From then on, the organ played a solo or novelty number. No written descriptions, photographs, or recordings survive from the early years, but the organ was mentioned in newspaper advertisements on a regular basis throughout the 1930s.

In the 1960s, the instrument suffered water damage which disabled

much of the pipework in the Main or left side. This included the Diapason, Tuba, String, and String Celeste ranks. However, the rest of the organ was playable, and there exist tape recordings of late night performances by such notables as Bill Nalle, Patty Driscoll, and Quentin Maclean. During the years when it was not in active use, the organ was protected by a canvas cover and by a vigilant theatre staff. Manager Gerry Hoag liked the instrument and made sure that it was protected. He never contemplated disposing of the organ as did the managers of so many other theatres at that time.

Restoration of the Barton began in the spring of 1972 and took just over one year to complete. Members of the Motor City Chapter of ATOS provided the labor and expertise, but were supervised and coordinated by Ben Levy of Ann Arbor. Levy, a profession-

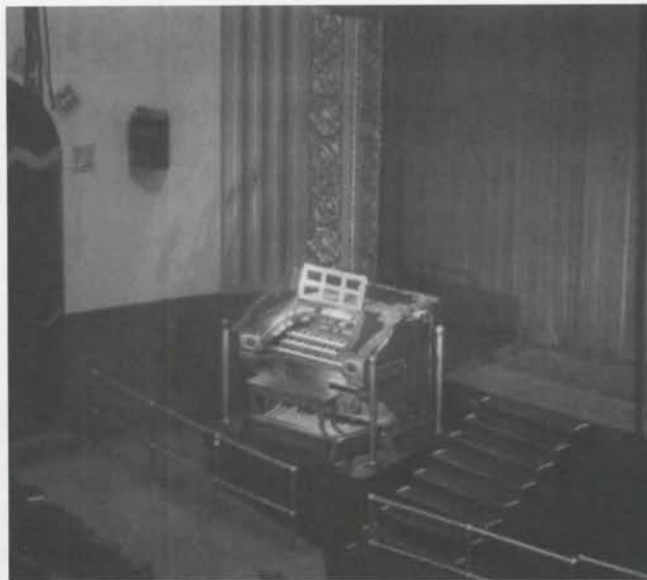


al engineer, gained experience with pipe organs by assisting with the installation of the Fisher Theatre Wurlitzer in Detroit's Senate Theatre. Levy, and a crew consisting of Dave Lau, John Minick, and Henry Aldridge plus a number of individuals from Motor City releathered the console, cleaned all pipework, and repaired water damaged chests.

By spring of 1972, the organ was sufficiently restored so that it could be played in public. Motor City sponsored a preview concert in June, 1972, by Rick Shindell of Toledo. The first formal concert was held in September, 1972, by Lyn Larsen. He brought the glittering gold and red console up to the strains of "Hail to the Victors" the famous University of Michigan fight song. The sellout crowd was enthralled by the instrument and demanded several encores of Larsen. Following the success of that concert, the theatre's manager decided to feature the organ in public performances on a regular basis. Thus in October, 1972, the movie overture tradition began.

At the same time, Motor City members living in Ann Arbor started an ambitious series of monthly open houses at the Michigan Theatre. These "Second Sunday" programs featured a concert by a local or regional organist and then an open console period during which guests could play. These Second Sundays attracted a loyal group of theatre organ fans who were later to be very important to the theatre itself. Under the direction of Barbara Cook, Ruth Rolstrom, Bo Hanley, and Jo Lau, the Second Sundays flourished until the early 1980s. They were publicized by a newsletter that proved to be an important way for sharing information about the theatre and its future. Throughout the 1970s, the organ was maintained by Ben Levy with the able assistance of Grant Cook, Bob Hanley, Dave Lau, and Howard Rolston.

In the spring of 1978, organist Rupert Otto heard a rumor that the Michigan Theatre was to be converted into a shopping mall. He informed



*Console of the Michigan Theatre, 3/13 Barton Deluxe Pipe Organ, Opus 245.*

members of Motor City and immediately the group committed itself to saving the Michigan Theatre. During the next twelve months, Motor City members successfully enlisted the help of Ann Arbor mayor Lou Belcher who established the Michigan Theatre Foundation with incorporating officers Earl Green, Henry Aldridge, John Hathaway, and Belcher himself.

The Foundation then began negotiations with the family of Angelo Poulos who constructed the Michigan Theatre in 1928 and still owned it. They entered into a 50-year lease with the W.S Butterfield Corporation in 1928, and it was the expiration of this lease and Butterfield's failure to renew it which had brought about the Poulos family's search for a new use for the Michigan Theatre building. The family had no desire to demolish the Michigan Theatre, but thinking that the building's continued use as a theatre was out of the question, they began to explore other options. Their first plan was to gut the interior of the building and convert it into retail space.

One week before the theatre closed, the non-profit Michigan Theatre Foundation successfully negotiated a long-term land contract purchase agreement with the Poulos family, and prepared to take over the theatre in August, 1979, immediately following the end of the theatre's operations as a commercial motion picture house. During the final week, Butterfield

manager Barry Miller thoughtfully scheduled *The Sound of Music* and graciously asked the staff organists to play for every show. For one grand week, the Barton was played at every performance of the film. The Michigan Theatre closed its doors as a movie house on August 4, 1979, and final organ overture honors went to Newton Bates who lowered the Barton on its four-poster lift to the strains of "Goodnight Sweetheart." Everyone concerned hoped that the theatre's closure would be brief, but no one knew for certain.

Fortunately, the theatre was dark for only six weeks! In early October, 1979, the

Michigan Theatre Foundation presented the film *Gigi*, and the Barton organ played again to a house of over six hundred people. Other movies followed, and groups were soon inquiring about renting the theatre for concerts and meetings. During that first year, volunteers, many of whom were ATOS members, staffed, cleaned, and programmed the Michigan Theatre.

By May, 1980, the success of the Michigan Theatre seemed assured, and the Michigan Theatre Foundation hired a full-time manager to take over operations of the building. He brought together a staff, and gradually freed chapter members from their obligations as janitors, popcorn sellers, and film bookers. As the Michigan Theatre ventured into live programs, some ATOS members feared that there would be fewer opportunities for the Barton to be heard. However, this proved to not be the case due to a sufficient number of films continued to be booked to keep the Barton before the public. The only casualty of the Michigan Theatre's new role as a community performing arts center was the "Second Sunday" monthly theatre organ open house. The theatre interior became so busy with rehearsals, set construction, cleaning, and maintenance that the once vacant Sunday mornings became fully scheduled. With the end of Second Sunday open houses, the role played by the chapter at the Michigan Theatre gradually declined. Today, organ related activi-

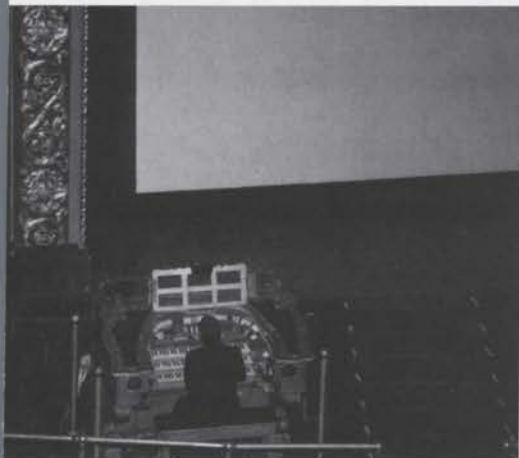


ties are supervised exclusively by the Michigan Theatre Foundation.

Silent movies have been a staple at the Michigan Theatre since the Barton was restored. They were featured during ATOS concerts by Lyn Larsen, Gaylord Carter, Lee Erwin, Dennis James, and Karl Cole in the 1970s. In the 1980s, the Michigan Theatre Foundation scheduled silent film presentations featuring Carl Daehler's Ann Arbor Chamber Orchestra with Dennis James at the organ. More recently, the theatre has inaugurated a Sounds of Silents series featuring both organ and orchestral accompani-



Henry Aldridge welcomes audience at the 25th Anniversary Open House.



The Barton and the Big Screen. John Lauter plays for the 25th Anniversary audience. At right: Henry Aldridge and John Lauter answer questions about the Barton during the 25th Anniversary Open House.



John Lauter at the console of the Michigan Theatre Barton.

At right: John Lauter talks about the Barton to the 25th Anniversary audience. It was a grand evening!



ments. Dr. Gillian Anderson has conducted original scores to several famous silent features including D.W. Griffith's *Intolerance*, *Way Down East*, and *Orphans of the Storm*. The University of Michigan's Program in Film and Video Studies also regularly

schedules silent films and these utilize the Barton organ for accompaniments. Recent titles include *Salome*, *The Crowd*, *Broken Blossoms*, and *The Mother and The Law*. Organists John Lauter and Jim Leaffe perform their own original scores on these occa-

sions. Some of the other silent films that have played the Michigan are: *Phantom of The Opera*, *The Birth of a Nation*, *La Boheme*, *Don Juan*, *Robin Hood*, *Sherlock, Jr.*, *Thief of Baghdad*, *Nosferatu*, and *Metropolis*.

In addition to silent films, the Barton is occasionally used with the Ann Arbor Symphony when a organ part is called for in an orchestral score. In 1995, the instrument provided a dramatic pedal point and chords during a performance of Respighi's tone poem *The Pines of Rome*. During the 1996 season, it was used during the opening section of Richard Strauss' *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. The symphony's conductor Dr. Samuel Wong, likes the organ and hopes to use it frequently. At the moment, there are not plans to use it as a solo instrument with orchestra, but the organ's loyal supporters can always hope!

In 1956, the Michigan Theatre was modernized when the W.S. Butterfield corporation decided to remove mirrors, chandeliers, sconces, and decorative moldings. The resulting stripped-down surfaces were painted a dull gray. In 1986, the theatre was partially restored in a \$1.2 million endeavor that returned the grand foyer and most of the main auditorium to their original gilded appearance of 1928. In 1998, the balance of the theatre will be

restored, and this will include the balcony, outer lobby and facade. In addition, a small screening room and more restroom facilities will be constructed on property immediately adjacent to the north side of the theatre.

The Michigan Theatre Foundation



considers the Barton organ to be an integral part of the historical theatre and has therefore decided to retain the instrument's original combination action, relay, and four-poster lift. The Foundation is committed to keep the organ as original and historically accurate as possible. Also, the Foundation wants to insure that the instrument will continue to be a center piece of the theatre. By keeping the console firmly attached to the cable and windline conduit, it hopes to guarantee that the instrument will never be moved from the theatre's orchestra pit and relegated to a dark corner of the stage.

The extraordinary success of the Michigan Theatre's Barton organ can be traced primarily to the excellent relationship which has always existed between the "organ people" and theatre management. When the Motor City Chapter of ATOS initiated the restoration project in 1970, it had the complete support of the Michigan Theatre's long-time manager Gerry Hoag. The theatre provided funds for supplies needed to restore the organ, and Motor City always respected the fact that the instrument was the property of the theatre. It was this recognition that led members of Motor City to support regularly scheduled public performances rather than limiting the instrument's use to private club functions.

In addition, many of the people who worked on the organ became active in other aspects of the theatre's operation after it was purchased by the non-profit foundation in 1979. In fact, it was a nucleus of theatre organ devotees who established the foundation and actually operated the theatre for more than a year until a professional staff could be hired. Ben Levy, who supervised all maintenance on the organ until his death in 1995, was active on several of the foundation's committees as were David Lau, Grant Cook, and Newton Bates. As a result, the professional staff have come to know the individuals who work on the organ and consider them to be invaluable assets to the Michigan Theatre.

Another explanation for the success of the Michigan Theatre's Barton is the high standard of performance quality

expected of the organists. There are now five staff organists, and these include three professionals John Lauter, Jim Leaffe, and Father Jim Miller. Newton Bates and Henry Aldridge are volunteers with many years of training and experience. Over the years, the theatre has moved toward the employment of paid organists and away from a dependence on volunteers. As a result, the quality of the playing is outstanding. Many of the public overtures are of concert quality.

The same professionalism also applies to maintaining the organ. Following Ben Levy's death, the theatre hired Scott Smith of Lansing, Michigan, to take care of the Barton. Scott is also a distinguished concert artist and an experienced staff organist himself. He understands that the Barton must be in excellent playing condition at all times and makes frequent trips to Ann Arbor to insure that everything will be perfect when the organ is played. This reliance on paid, professional staff guarantees that the Barton is ready at all times.

What this all adds up to is that the Michigan Theatre has become one of the best places in the country to hear theatre organ music of high quality. In the month of September, 1997, for example, the organ was played 22 times for film overtures and was used to accompany four silent feature-length films. During the previous years it was played over 300 items in public. This number included 15 silent films, several weddings, private parties, and concerts.

The Barton organ is very popular with movie going audiences who expect to hear it regularly. They always applaud enthusiastically at the end of each performance. The theatre regularly receives telephone calls from patrons who want to know when the organ will be played. A common remark that staff members hear from patrons as they enter the theatre's lobby is "Wow, they're playing the organ." Visitors often express their disappointment when the organ is not played.

Over the years, the Michigan Theatre has become the most active theatrical venue in Ann Arbor. Over 150,000 people attend events in a

given year, and these include films, concerts, plays, parties, weddings, lectures, and business meetings. The Michigan Theatre is home to the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, the Ann Arbor Civic Ballet, and the Ann Arbor Blues and Jazz Festival. In addition the University of Michigan Musical Society, and the Ann Arbor Civic Theatre hold events in the Michigan.

At the core of the Michigan Theatre's programming are motion pictures. The theatre's screen is lit almost every day with a wide variety of classic, foreign, independent, experimental, and revival films. The Michigan has become one of the most successful art cinemas in the United States. Some of the theatre's most recent successes have been *The Crying Game*, *The Piano*, *Hamlet*, *Shall We Dance*, and *The Full Monty*. People come from over 100 miles away to see the theatre's outstanding schedule of films. Through it all, the Barton pipe organ continues to be the Michigan Theatre's central attraction, a beloved showpiece, and community treasure. Long may she remain!

*Henry Aldridge is a Professor in the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at Eastern Michigan University and is current president of the Michigan Theatre Foundation.*



*Two of the Barton's 15" w.p. ranks; Solo String (3-3/8" diameter @ cc) and Gottfried English Posthorn. Bass end of Oboe Horn can be seen right. (Solo Chamber) Scott Smith photo*



# The Michigan Theatre 3/13 Barton

## Left (Main) Chamber

Flute	16', 8', 4', 2-2/3', 2', 1-3/5'
Diapason	8', 4'
Tuba	16', 8', 4'
Viole d'Orchestre	8', 4', 2'
Viole Celeste	8', 4'
Clarinet	8'

## Right (Solo) Chamber

Post Horn	8'
Solo String	8'
Tibia Clausa	16', 8', 4'
Vox Humana	8', 4'
Orchestral Oboe	8'
Oboe Horn	8'
Kinura	8'

**Tuned Percussions:** Cathedral Chimes, Marimba Harp, Orchestra Bells, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, and Chrysoglott. **Untuned Percussions:** Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Kettle Drum, Cymbal, Tom-tom, Castanets, Tambourine, and Chinese Block. **Special Effects:** Auto Horn, Fire Gong, Boat Whistle, Bird Whistle, and Thunder.

\*While factory-equipped with a Gottfried English Post Horn, all console tabs for this stop read "Trumpet."

The following specification is derived from the above resources:

### PEDAL ORGAN (13 stops)

Pedal Resultant	32
Tibia Clausa	16
Bourdon	16
Tuba	16
Diaphone	8
Flute	8
Tibia Clausa	8
Tuba	8
Cello	8
Flute	4

Snare Drum	
Accomp. to Pedal	8
Trumpet*	8

### ACCOMPANIMENT (28 stops)

Vox Humana (TC)	16
Clarinet (TC)	16
Contra Viole (TC)	16
Diaphonic Diapason	8
Clarabel Flute	8
Tibia Clausa	8
Oboe Horn	8
Vox Humana	8
Clarinet	8
Tuba	8
Kinura	8
Viol d'Orchestre	8
Viole Celeste	8

Solo String	8
Accomp. to Accomp.	4
Orchestral Flute	4
Tibia Clausa	4
Violin	4
Viole Celeste	4
Twelfth	2-2/3
Flautino	2
Marimba Harp	8
Chrysoglott	8
Tambourine, Castanets	
Chinese Wood Block, Tom Tom	
Cymbal	

### GREAT ORGAN (40 stops)

Trumpet*	16
Tibia Clausa	16
Tuba	16
Diaphonic Diapason (TC)	16
Oboe Horn (TC)	16
Vox Humana (TC)	16
Clarinet (TC)	16
Viol d'Orchestre (TC)	16
Diapason	8
Concert Flute	8
Tibia Clausa	8
Oboe Horn	8
Vox Humana	8
Clarinet	8
Orchestral Oboe	8
Tuba	8

Kinura	8
Trumpet*	8
Viole d'Orchestre	8
Viole Celeste	8
Solo String	8
Solo to Great	4
Principal	4
Flute	4
Tibia Clausa	4
Vox Humana	4
Clarion	4
Violin	4
Viole Celeste	4
Fifteenth	2
Tibia Twelfth	2-2/3
Nazard	2-2/3
Piccolo	2
Tibia	2
Tierce	1-3/5
Marimba Harp	8
Chrysoglott	8
Xylophone	8
Cathedral Chimes	8
Glockenspiel	4
Orchestra Bells	4
Great to Great	16
Great to Great	4

### SOLO ORGAN (19 stops)

Tibia Clausa	16
Vox Humana (TC)	16

Tuba	16
Diaphonic Diapason	8
Tibia Clausa	8
Oboe Horn	8
Vox Humana	8
Orchestral Oboe	8
Tuba	8
Kinura	8
Trumpet*	8
Solo String	8
Viol d'Orchestre	8
Tibia Clausa	4
Cornet	4
Xylophone	8
Cathedral Chimes	8
Glockenspiel	4
Orchestra Bells	4

### TOE STUDS

Fire Gong, Siren, Steamboat Whistle, Auto Horn, Bird Song, Sforzando	
--	--

### TREMULANTS

Main, Solo, Tibia, Vox

### SHADE CONTROLS

Division I (Left), Division II (Right), Master, Crescendo

### SECOND TOUCH

#### Great:

Tuba	16
Tibia Clausa	8
Accompaniment:	
Tibia Clausa	8
Tuba	8
Chimes	8
Glockenspiel	4
Triangle	
Solo to Accompaniment	8

#### Pedal:

Tuba	16
Diaphone	8

Bass Drum, Cymbal, Snare Drum, Kettle Drum, Thunder

### INDICATOR LIGHTS

Power, Crescendo, Sforzando

Below left: Concert Flute, Viole d'Orchestre, Viole Celeste and Clarinet (Dennison). Photo depicts Barton method of "stair-stepping" their chromatic chests, with Open Diapason and Gottfried Tuba overhead. All ranks in Main Chamber play on 10" w.p. Center: Dennison Oboe Horn and Orchestral Oboe (full length), left and center respectively. Gottfried Kinura on right (goosebill shallots). All three sets play on 10" w.p. (Solo Chamber). Right: Dennison Vox Humana (6" w.p.), left and large-scale Tibia Clausa (15" w.p.) right. (Solo Chamber). Scott Smith photos





# WIND ON THE PRAIRIE

## ARTISTS & VENUES

### FRIDAY

October 16, 1998 7:30 p.m. David Peckham, Paramount Theatre

### SATURDAY

October 17, 1998 9:30 a.m. Ron Rhode, Iowa Theatre  
 2:00 p.m. Clark Wilson, Coe College  
 7:30 p.m. Dennis James Silent Film: *That Certain Thing*  
 Paramount Theatre  
 10:00 p.m. Jam Session (possible), Paramount Theatre

### SUNDAY

October 18, 1998 9:30 a.m. Walt Strony, Iowa Theatre  
 2:00 p.m. Barry Baker, Paramount Theatre (open to public)  
 7:30 p.m. John Seng, Iowa Theatre

Please take notice of some important information for those traveling to the *Wind on The Prairie*: Cedar Rapids Chapter Notes, page 61.



David Peckham

Left to Right:  
 Ron Rhode  
 Clark Wilson  
 Dennis James



Left to Right:  
 Walt Strony  
 Barry Baker  
 John Seng



## THE RENAISSANCE THEATRE

MANSFIELD, OHIO

by Virginia White, RTOA Secretary

It was a perfect day in May when a bright yellow station wagon arrived at the Renaissance Theatre. In came a bubbling wisp of delight. Her name is Candi Carley-Roth, along with her son Gabriel and husband Mark.

For the next two days, our Hollywood-Kearns Wurlitzer pro-

duced musical tones that we hadn't heard before. Her visual impairment has given her a sixth sense of hearing and she is able to use so many ranks to bring out what she hears.

It didn't take her long to set up her registrations. By late afternoon, we had to insist that she stop because we all had to get to Worthington, Ohio, to the COTOS evening concert with Bob Ralston.

Back to Mansfield on Saturday for our evening program. Sorry that the audience wasn't great, but not one soul went away disappointed. She

rode the lift up playing "The Perfect Song" which has been the theme song for this organ when used by Gaylord Carter when he played for the Amos and Andy radio show.

The evening went on with a smorgasbord of songs: Pops, Country, Beatles and Bach and lots of requests. She even surprised us by saying it was a reunion with her old friend, because she had played this organ when it was in the Bob Carson home in the 1970s.

The evening came to a rousing close with an encore of "New York, New York."

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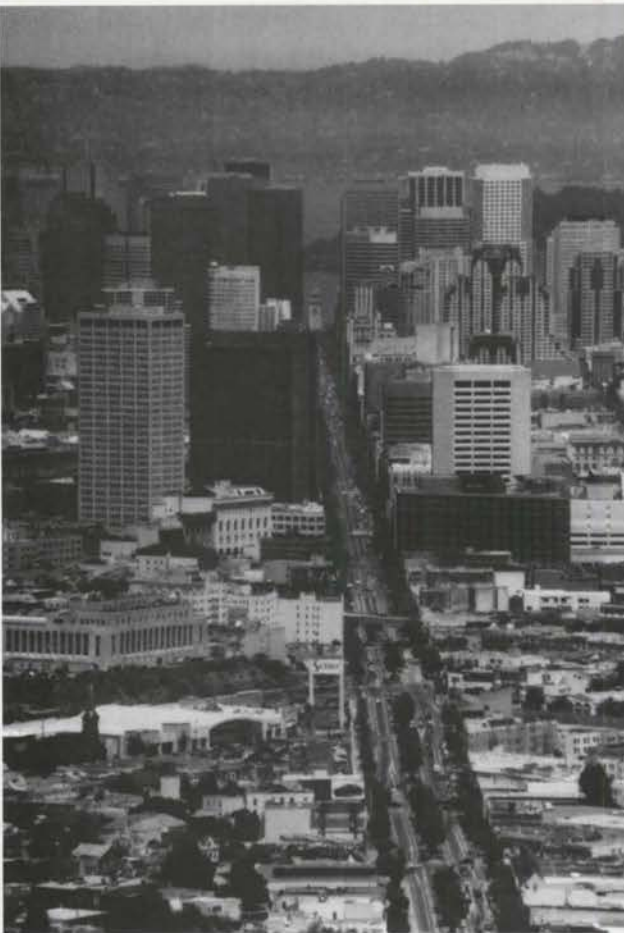
**BANDA** is dedicated to the continuing project of releasing material recorded by George Wright



# 1998 ATOS CONVENTION

## Reflections

by Ron Musselman



*SAN FRANCISCO ...  
on a clear day, or shrouded in fog,  
was a fantastic site for the  
43rd annual ATOS  
Convention!*

*Above: The Fox  
Theatre stood to the  
left of center where  
the dark building,  
Fox Plaza, now  
stands.*

*Ken Double,  
Convention Emcee*

*RM photos*



### Wednesday, July 1

As hundreds of ATOS members from around the world arrived in the City by the Bay, there was a feeling in the air that this 43rd annual convention would be one to remember. The record shop was busy from the moment it opened. By mid-afternoon, the yellow ATOS name badges could be seen throughout the huge 1,530-room San Francisco Marriott as conventioners roamed its vast public spaces and renewed acquaintances. In the coming week, they would be treated to an array of finely-honed pipe organs in gorgeous venues, played by first-rate console artists, not to mention the most eclectic assemblage of architecture to be found in any city of the world, and sights like the tops of 40-story skyscrapers disappearing into the morning fog. With a busy three concert-a-day schedule, this convention left little free time between events, but the attendees were able to enjoy a generous amount of music. Also, there were several seminars and meetings to catch, as well as the display rooms for the Allen and Rodgers organ companies.



Wednesday Evening, July 1



Walt Strony opened the convention at the Berkeley Community Theatre

RM photos

A chartered Bay Area Rapid Transit train whisked all of us across the bay to Berkeley for Walt Strony's opening concert



on the 4/33 NorCal Wurlitzer installed in the 3,500 seat Berkeley Community Theatre. Always a great instrument, this large Wurlitzer now plays with marked improvement in volume and clarity beyond row ten. Walt's concert provided a strong kick-off, and was up to his usual high standards. His playing of Aaron Copeland's "Rodeo," generated several positive comments heard afterwards: even beyond the well-known xylophone passages and accents, it was very faithful to the original orchestration, and an excellent adaptation to the pipe organ. While most of us thought we would never again want to hear the hopelessly-overplayed love theme from *Titanic*, Walt included it in his program and breathed new life into it. A very atmospheric untremmed intro set the stage for a great interpretation of this now-familiar tune, one of the best offerings of the evening. He also featured some medleys, including one of the songs from *On the Town*, masterfully played with a lot of contrasts and ear-catching registrations.

## Thursday, July 2

The first bus left at 8:00 a.m. for Oakland's Grand Lake Theatre to hear Bay Area favorite, Kevin King play his



Kevin King at his 3/18 Wurlitzer in the Oakland Grand Lake Theatre. RM photos

own instrument installed in the elegant neighborhood house. It is a 3/18 beauty which Kevin has purified to all-Wurlitzer status. It has plenty of presence without being overbearing, and the organ spreads across the front of the theatre in a nice, broad panorama of sound. If one had to describe Kevin's program in just two words, they would be "lighthearted" and "jazzy," and it was a pleasing underpinning of jazz that ran through much of his presentation. Highlights of this concert that come to mind; his Rodgers and Hart medley, a deftly-rendered "Sugar Blues," "I'm Beginning to See the Light" with its great jazz combo sound and horn solo, and the trumpet-clarinet interplay in "Mean to Me." Kevin was a good choice for this early spot. Kevin's friendly, easy going manner connected with the audience, as did his sense of humor: a police-involved shooting on the Bay Bridge blocked traffic and delayed the first concert. Kevin jok-



ingly-apologized for the resulting inconvenience. He said: "The shooting was scheduled for tomorrow."

The afternoon concert at the Herbst Theatre in San Francisco featured Dwight Beacham premiering the George Wright signature Allen organ. This remarkable 4/33 digital instrument benefited from George's input and includes samples from his studio organ. Dwight played an excellent program, much of it with George-inspired arrangements, including "I Know That You Know," an energetic "Sugar in the Morning," and many classic "Wright-isms" in a spirited rendition of "South." Dwight, a superb console artist, has been absent from the scene for far too long.

The incomparable George Wright, who passed away in May of this year, was the giant of the theatre organ world. The loss of this musical genius was duly noted: George's beautiful recording of Crawford's "Forgotten Melody" had been put into a form



Lyn Larsen and Dwight Beacham at the 4/33 George Wright Signature Allen. BD photo

At right: Outside the Herbst Theatre. RM photo





that the new Allen could "read." The Herbst audience could now experience George playing it "live." A choked-up Dwight introduced a tribute to George Wright in sound and pictures. He stepped off the stage, and a touching moment followed as the organ came under George's command. A series of slides was shown of George on a screen above the console. It began with a picture of George at age 16, and continued in chronological order with shots of him at various consoles, including the great San Francisco Fox Wurlitzer. It was simple, yet absolutely magnificent, and many in the room were visibly moved. Dwight returned after this and introduced the surprise of the convention, Lyn Larsen. Lyn played a most appropriate tribute to George Wright, opening with George's trademark "Dizzy Fingers," and continuing with several other pieces associated with George's lengthy career. All were played in George's distinctive style.

That evening, the crowd took BART over to the Oakland Paramount to hear David Peckham play its large 4-manual Wurlitzer. Mr. Peckham caused quite a stir in 1996 when he burst on the national scene with a brilliant concert at the ATOS convention. His appearance this year at the Art Deco Paramount was another polished, well planned program exhibiting meticulous console manipulation. The audience was treated to a mix including Gershwin, novelty tunes and an early soft ballad by Ellington. David played "Love Potion #9," a 1959 pop hit by the Coasters, which contrasted with a hair-raising tremolo toccata, an exciting piece that established his classical credentials. Rocker Freddie Mercury's "Bohemian Rhapsody" was so well adapted to the theatre organ by David that it sounded as though it had been written for this medium. It exhibited many dynamic levels and moods with a light classical feel. His closer, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," was an adventure in strong visual images generated by sound. It was extremely well played, as evidenced by the exceptional absence of audience noises during soft passages and pauses. The result was a much-deserved standing ovation.



David Peckham played the Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer. RM photos

### Friday, July 3

By this time, some of the conventioners were beginning to show some wear and tear, but aided by fortification from the excellent coffee bar in the hotel lobby, they started boarding the busses before 7:30 a.m. to head south to Palo Alto for Chris Elliott's program. The San Francisco skyline was shrouded in drifting fog, but by the time we reached the Stanford Theatre, we were bathed in spring-like sunshine. Once inside, the audience enjoyed the beautifully-restored 1,200 seat house, visually dominated by the unique, towering organ grilles flanking the proscenium. Before his silent film presentation, Chris played some solos on the aggressive mid-size Wurlitzer, including two pieces from the "London Suite" (making use of the organ's excellent strings in a most orchestral manner), a novelty tune, and some Offenbach selections. The featured movie was Harold Lloyd's classic comedy, *Grandma's Boy*. The presentation was a beautiful, crisp print with excellent contrast and corner-to-corner sharpness. Chris did a superb job of accompaniment: a lot of variety in registration, several solos, and everything keyed to what was on the screen. Rather than relying heavily on sound effects, Chris molds his music around the visuals, and the technique is always supportive, but never distracting. In one remarkable scene where the leading lady woos Harold Lloyd with a vocal, Chris did a brilliant assist with registration and phrasing, and you could literally hear her singing to him. It was a very entertaining film, but even more important, the attendees were shown how the subtle, skillful addition of music can enhance the impact of these classic silents.

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Chris Elliott greets well-wishers at the Stanford Theatre in Palo Alto. RM photos



Chris Elliott at the Stanford Theatre's Wurlitzer. BD photo





Ryan Heggie at Berkeley Community Theatre. RM photo

Friday afternoon, we were back to the Berkeley Community Theatre to hear Ryan Heggie and the young artists competition. The 18-year-old Mr. Heggie turned in a solid, musically sound performance. In the competition, diminutive 14-year-old Robert Sudall was dwarfed by the big Berkeley console, but he got around it with apparent ease and extracted good tonal variety from it. 20-year-old Heath Wooster played an excellent set, starting with a brassy, buoyant opener, "On a Wonderful Day Like Today," and closing with a *Showboat* medley and the requisite "Old Man River" big finish. Competition winner Ron Reseigh rose out of the chute with a strong, confident, rhythmic "Everything's Coming Up Roses." His set, which saw him in command with good coordination, duly impressed the judges. All of the young artists played well with a competency that reached beyond their young ages. They deserve all of the support and encouragement they can get: In the coming century, they are the future of the theatre organ.

The Friday evening concert at the Oakland Paramount was one of the stunners of the convention. Young Richard Hills played a full-length concert that displayed a range of material and command of the instrument one would expect of a seasoned veteran, not a teenager. At the age of 17, his playing fully reflects the maturity and sensibilities of an adult. The overall sound of this concert was a nicely-blended mix of characteristic American theatre organ registration and some English touches. Among his offerings: a set of English radio themes, Gershwin's "How Long Has



Left to Right: Robert Sudall, Heath Wooster, and Ron Reseigh at the Berkeley Community Theatre. BD photos



Richard Hills after his stunning Oakland Paramount program. RM photo

This Been Going On?," with a subtle, inventive intro and several contrasting solos. There were pieces associated with the legendary English organist, Sydney Torch. One really outstanding feature of this concert was a collection of folk songs from the British Isles. In this segment, we heard some quaint and haunting arrangements, and as was the case with the entire evening, Richard made good use of the Paramount Wurlitzer's many resources, including the often-overlooked softer textures. Much of this medley had a most-enjoyable Irish/Scottish flavor. Richard Hills' command of the theatre organ and grasp of musical expression in general set this crowd on its collective ear. He was rewarded with not just one, but two standing ovations, both involving a considerable amount of cheering, and even yelling(!).

#### Saturday, July 4

The morning concert featured a still-youthful Ron Rhode (now in his 25th year as a concert artist) at the finely finished and aggressive Castro Theatre Wurlitzer. When it comes to



Ron Rhode at the Castro Theatre. BD photo



the appealing presentation of vintage pre-30s music, he is pretty much without peer, especially with some of the old happy-go-lucky pieces like his opener, "Lucky Day." His delightful use of the cheerful color reed/flue combinations were present in various arrangements. There was plenty of variety in his program; the lighter material, a beautiful Crawford-style arrangement, a country western tune, "Downtown" (pop from the 60s), music from *The Flower Drum Song*, and a nicely-arranged *Titanic* medley. In one of the only musical acknowledgments of the date, Ron played "Stars and Stripes Forever" and "This is My



Country," rendered with appropriate patriotic fervor and a big-ensemble climax few instruments could duplicate.

Ron Rhode is a true gentleman, and his character is evident in both his playing and stage presence. That the audience loved his concert was quite obvious from the warm, lengthy applause that followed almost every number, and a standing ovation. He responded with one of his signature "good time" numbers, "Paddlin' Madeline Home."

A fringe benefit of this outing was the ambiance of San Francisco's most elaborate neighborhood theatre with its nicely-detailed gold organ grilles and surrounding hues of rich browns (described by one wag as "well-worn saddle leather"). Afterwards, as the crowd waited to board the buses back to the hotel, several of the more flamboyant locals "entertained" them, and it was amusing to see the raised eyebrows of the more conservative attendees.



Everett Nourse at Berkeley Community Theatre. *BD photo*

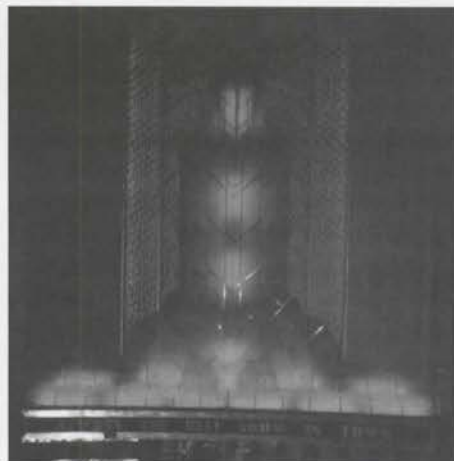
Saturday afternoon, it was back to Berkeley for a special program, "Remembering the San Francisco Fox." The featured organist was 87-year-old Everett Nourse, the last organist at the Fox, a post he held until the theatre closed in 1963. This man can handle a large 4-manual Wurlitzer with ease, and he played "entry music" as the crowd drifted in. The program continued with theatre historian Steve Levin's extensive slide show, featuring dozens of views of the grandest movie palace ever constructed. As always, Steve's comments were very well organized, sometimes



Fox Plaza, site of the 4700-seat Fox Theatre and its 4/36 Wurlitzer and 3/12 Möller. Rest in Peace Fox Theatre 1929-1963. *RM photos*



humorous, and very informative. The accompanying visuals covered lobbies, lounges, the stupendous auditorium, and several other areas, along with heartbreaking demolition views. A film of the Fox was shown, and when a portion of it showing Everett at the big Wurlitzer console over 30 years ago appeared on the screen, the original film sound was muted, and Everett accompanied the film "live" on the Berkeley Wurlitzer. The film audio was cut again at the end, and Everett accompanied himself playing "San Francisco." He concluded with a very fitting "I'll Be Seeing You." Mr. Nourse received a special award: He was placed into the ATOS Theatre Organ Hall of Fame, resulting in explosive applause and a standing ovation. It was a powerful conclusion to a wonderful remembrance of San Francisco's irreplaceable missing venue.



Fountain of Light in the Oakland Paramount Theatre. *RM photo*

Ray Taylor greeted conventioners as they entered the Castro Theatre. *RM photo*



Heath Wooster and Ryan Heggie at Berkeley Community Theatre. *BD photo*



Bill Schlotter at the Paramount. *RM photo*



Ken Double and Robert Sudall back stage at the Berkeley. *RVS photo*





*The Paramount lobby. RM photo*



*Paramount Theatre auditorium. RM photo*



*Grand Lake Theatre. RM photos*



*Leaving the Herbst Theatre. RM photo*

*Below: The Castro Theatre. RM photo*



*Ray Taylor, Ron Rhode and Dick Taylor at the Castro Theatre Wurlitzer. RM photo*

*At left: Stanford Theatre. RM photo*



Saturday night found all of the nearly 900 ATOS people convening in the vast hotel ballroom for the awards presentation, and an evening of music, dancing and fellowship. After the awards ceremony, hosted by ATOS President Harry Heth, the crowd was entertained by the excellent jazz band sounds of the Royal Society Jazz Orchestra. The band's female vocalist captured that "wide-eyed innocent" sound of bygone eras. Lyn Larsen played solos at the George Wright signature Allen and accompanied the band on a couple of numbers. Several couples utilized the dance floor. Among them, Ray and Doris Taylor were seen "cutting a rug" (actually parquet). The event went past midnight, at which point, about 50 die-hards were still milling about, and the George Wright signature organ was still sounding forth.



David Heggerty at the Allen.



Current and former Young Theatre Organ contestants (L to R): Richard Hills, Richard Openshaw, Robert Sudall, Ryan Heggie, Susan Lewandowski, Heath Wooster, Dorothy Van Steenkiste, Chairman of Competition, and Ron Reseigh. RVS photo



Gail and Rudy Frey, Chairman of the Convention. RVS photo







L to R: Robert Sudall, Outgoing Board Member Allen Miller, and Heath Wooster receiving their awards from President Harry Heth. RM photos



Robert Sudall and Jack Moelmann. RM photo

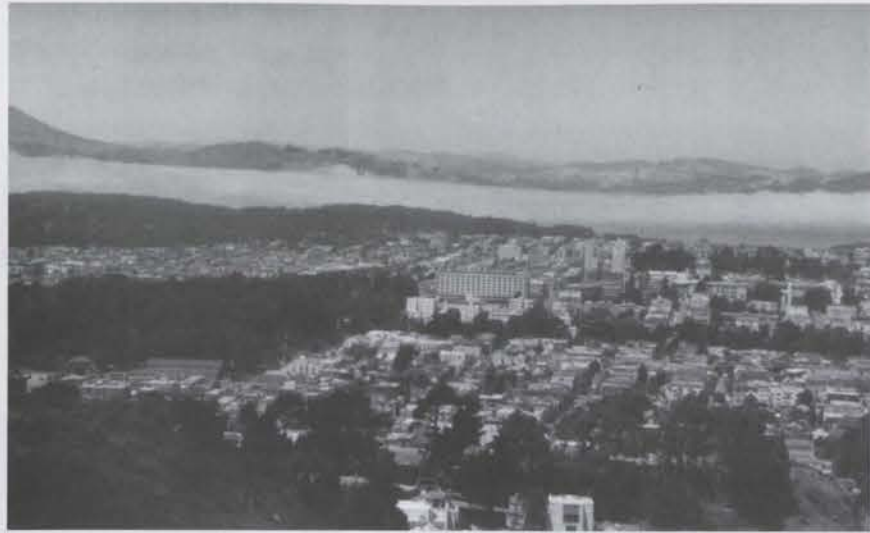


L to R: Father Gus Franklin gets Chapter Charter for Central Illinois Chapter from Doris Erbe, Outgoing Board Member Nelson Page is thanked by President Harry Heth, and Ron Reseigh takes his scholarship from Harry Heth. RM photos





In and Around San Francisco ...



ATOS Board and Staff RM photo



1998 ATOS Board Meeting. RVS photo



Back stage work crew at the Berkeley (L to R): Chris Nichols, Lew Williams, Mark Nagel, Kevin King, Bill Schlotter. RVS photo



The Record Shop RM photos



Ron Reseigh, John Nelson, Jack Dorr in the Allen Room. RVS photo



Tom & Mimi Hazleton BD photo



Lance Luce, Rob Richards, Rolph Wolf, Hector Olivera in the Rodgers Room. RVS photo



Chris Nichols works with Robert Sudall. RM photo



Ron Musselman at work. KM photo



Early morning bus ride



Wake up call. RM photo



Bob Heideman, Al Seft, Chuck Hasstrom at Berkeley Community Theatre. RM photo



John Ledwon, Nelson Page RM photo



At the Castro Theatre. At left: Berkeley Community Theatre. RM photos



Berkeley Community Theatre RM photo



Loading the buses at the Marriott. RM photo



Tom DeLay, Karen Musselman, Jane DeLay, John Ledwon, Brant Duddy



RM photo



Paramount Theatre. RM photo



Ron Musselman, Tom DeLay, John Ledwon, Jane DeLay KM photo





Tom Hazleton at the Stanford Theatre.

BD photo

Once again it was down to the Stanford Theatre in Palo Alto to hear the irrepressible and always entertaining Tom Hazleton. From the moment he came up out of the pit playing a jazz-infused "The Lady is a Tramp," the audience knew it was going to be another winner from one of the theatre organ's established masters. Throughout his concert, there was the proper balance of loud-to-soft, variety in mood and registrations, fine solos, and tasteful accents we have come to expect from a Hazleton performance. Some cases in point are "Pizzicato Polka," with untremmed strings, classical-sounding flutes and antiphonal dialogue between the two tibias. One of the highlights was a Gershwin medley, superbly played right down to the segues, some of which had cleverly-integrated bits of other songs. There was a very classical sounding tremolo-off intro that turned into "Button Up Your Overcoat," while the classical filigree continued under the melody. It was a skillful and clever integration of two worlds. Another well-known Tom remarked: "Only Hazleton could get away with that." He played one of those precious Richard Purvis pieces with a special ethereal beauty (and written specifically for Mr. Hazleton), and "The Lost Chord," a soaring, majestic performance. Tom also did an unusual "I've Got You Under My Skin" with some shades of Buddy Cole, nimble-fin-

gered jazz runs, and very accurate "Hammondry." He closed with a stirringly-arranged and played "America/God Bless America." His reward for a very strong and musically satisfying concert was a standing ovation, but due to time restrictions, there was no encore. He truly "left 'em wanting more."

Sunday afternoon at the Legion of Honor was the convention's non-theatre organ presentation. This fine art museum sits atop a grassy hill that affords spectacular views of the Golden Gate Bridge and downtown San Francisco. Most of the museum's 1924 E.M. Skinner organ is installed around a central cloth-faced dome through which the organ speaks. There is a large panel which can be opened so the organ can be heard in the spacious outdoor entry court. The sound is somewhat buried with few highs, but very lush and beautiful. David Hegarty played an enjoyable program, and while some comments were heard that his playing was "too laid back," it would seem that Mr. Hegarty was making intelligent use of this unusual installation. In Grieg's "The Last Spring," he showcased some gorgeous strings, and a French Horn of unearthly beauty. The sound seemed to float gently from above and permeate the lengthy gallery spaces. The convention was all the better for having included this unique experience. Before David's performance, there was ample time for attendees to roam the art galleries and take in the many large-scale paintings that adorn the walls.

Sunday evening's closing concert brought us back to the Berkeley Community Theatre for an interesting performance by Lew Williams. Musically, he was just as good as his predecessors, but in the area of humor, Lew took the cake, largely through the use of accents and sound effects. After a lighthearted riser, a novelty piece and a couple of ballads, he played a big band/combo-flavored "Stompin' at The Savoy." Local atmospheric flavor was cleverly generated in "Lost in a Fog," which utilized the Wurlitzer's surf machine, fog horn effect, and ship's bell. Lew also featured classical fare, including a superbly played Widor piece, involving manual hop-



Lew Williams closed the convention at Berkeley Community Theatre. BD photo

ping and some impressive dexterity. In contrast, he also did a "sleaze medley," including "The Stripper" (played under a red spotlight). After an interesting and varied assortment of material including a Beatle's medley and some songs of French origin, Lew brought the evening to a close with what can only be described as a virtuoso performance, "Fugue on the 94th Psalm." It began sounding somber and somewhat mysterious, and built to a thrilling, hair-raising climax. For his encore, instead of a big, bombastic send-off, Lew instead closed with a soft, sentimental "We'll Meet Again."

## MONTEREY-SALINAS AFTERGLOW

Monday, July 6

The bleary-eyed conventioners who climbed aboard the 6:30 a.m. buses for the two hour ride down to Monterey were in for a grand finale capping off what had already been a most memorable week. Some gradually woke up, others slept, and many used the time to visit. When the buses finally pulled into this picture-postcard perfect seaside paradise, the passengers stepped off and walked to the downtown State Theatre. Once inside this 1926 Spanish castle fantasy, Dennis James played his opener, "Hooray For Hollywood," followed by a Gershwin medley of some less-frequently heard songs. Then Dennis gave the audience some interesting





Leaving early for the Afterglow and unloading in downtown Monterey. RM photos



Walt Strony at the 2/5 Wurlitzer church organ in the 1794 San Carlos Cathedral, Monterey, California. RM photos



State Theatre in Monterey, California.



A thorn between two roses: Jeanne Robinson, Tom DeLay, Jane DeLay. RM photo



Dennis James at the Monterey State 2/13 Wurlitzer. RM photos

background on the making of the two Buster Keaton silents he was about to accompany, *The Navigator* (1924), and *The Boat* (1921). Dennis did his usual flawless job of following the action on the screen and his sound effects were delivered right on the mark. As the second comedy neared its end, he



Lobby, State Theatre; Below: San Carlos Cathedral in Monterey. RM photos



brought it home with a big finish, then walked off to applause. But after "The End," the screen lit up again with another reel ... and Dennis had "left the room." The reels had been incorrectly labeled, and one ran out of order ... after the end title! The audience started talking and laughing, and after one voice on 50" wind yelled out "Dennis!! ... You're not finished!" Mr. James came back out to the console to complete the reel! (As if he did not know ...) He played a great finish, unflustered by it all. It turned out just

as well, and the crowd was on his side.

After lunch on their own at a variety of downtown and Fisherman's Wharf eateries, the next event took place in the 200-year-old San Carlos Cathedral on the edge of downtown Monterey. Walt Strony played a cameo on its Wurlitzer, which, at only five ranks, was the smallest featured at the convention. But its small size presented no handicap under the capable hands of Mr. Strony, who extracted an amazing array of sounds and dynamic





Tom Hazleton at the 4-manual Allen in the Fox Theatre, Salinas, California. Below and to the right: The auditorium and lobby of the Fox Theatre.

RM photos



terracing from a mere five sets of pipes. In just 25 minutes, he gave us a great sampling of music: a strong "big organ" opener, Purvis' "Capriccio on the Notes of the Cuckoo," a sacred medley, and a military march. It was brilliant programming, and Walt's performance widened the eyes of several jaded, seasoned listeners.

Part of this busy day was a trip to the enlarged Monterey Aquarium, a wonderful complex of marine life displays. After taking in its many visual delights then catching a quick dinner at one of the many nearby Cannery Row restaurants, it was time to hop on the bus for the final evening performance at the Salinas Fox.

Several people made note of the distinctive illuminated "Fox" vertical sign, one of two still in place on the West Coast. Once the crowd was seated in the "Skouras-ized" re-do of the 1921 vaudeville house, it was time for the second appearance of Tom

Hazleton, this time at the George Wright signature Allen. While any reference to George had been conspicuously absent from his earlier Stanford Theatre concert, he would soon remedy that. This evening would conclude with a most poignant gesture. Tom opened with a recreation of George's "Granada," followed by another G.W. arrangement, "Ain't We Got Fun." The concert featured some classical offerings, and additional pieces associated with George, including "Caravan" and an achingly-faithful rendition of "Secret Love." As Tom's concert and this wonderful week drew to a close, he literally deflected the spotlight away from himself in a tribute that was both touching and stunning. He began by saying that this last song, "Just a Memory," had been recorded by George on the great San Francisco Fox Wurlitzer, "A magnificent organ" he had "heard George play, including some rehearsals" and stated: "It was truly a spiritual experience." Tom continued: "George is no longer with us ... He is just a memory ... and this is dedicated to his great artistry, and what he has done for all of us. In fact, as the song is playing, just sit there and think about all the wonderful times we've all had togeth-

er ..." Tom sat down at the console and everything we heard was pure George Wright, including one of his favorite sounds, a style D trumpet. Shortly after the intro, Tom stood up and faced the audience, but the organ continued to play (Tom had recorded this tribute earlier that day.) Thinking it was a stunt at first, there was scattered laughter. But as Hazleton walked away from the console, headed up the center aisle and out of the theatre, what was happening became clear to all. As the song finished, one could almost see George Wright seated at the empty bench. The last note of "Just a Memory" faded away, and after a moment of silence, there was strong, sustained applause. The console remained empty and of course, there was no encore.

### Some Final Thoughts

The "Golden Gate in '98" was a convention that will be hard to top. It was the most well attended national in recent years, and offered the finest musicians, each with his own individual style. Our wonderful host, the NorCal TOS, is to be commended for the excellent, thorough planning and the resulting glitch-free execution of this complex series of events. When it's all said and done, the 1998 convention will have to go down as one of the greatest events in ATOS history.

#### Photo Credits:

RM.....Ron Musselman  
 BD.....Barbara Davis  
 RVS.....Ray Van Steenkiste  
 KM .....Karen Musselman



## HONORARY MEMBERS

### Jasper & Marian SanFilippo

This year, ATOS honors two people as Honorary Members of the Year. She plays the piano, and he has a true appreciation for music.

In high school, Jasper was first exposed to percussion instruments when he worked for the JC Degan Company. This began a life long love affair with musical instruments.

In the early 1980s, Jasper and Marian took a family vacation to Southern California to visit Disneyland and Knotts Berry Farm. They saw mechanical musical instruments and a pipe organ during their travels. They were also introduced to David Junchen.

With David's guidance, they acquired the Riviera Theatre Wurlitzer (Omaha) from Bill Brown. They constructed a music room with mechanical musical instruments and a pipe organ and enjoyed sharing it with others. As gratifying and fun as this was, they always wanted to build a larger music room, so they collected parts for years. They had parts built if they were unattainable, and they had everything meticulously rebuilt. During this project, David Junchen passed away. He left copious notes, however, and the project continued. David was able to see the console and ground breaking for the new music room, but he never saw the actual building.

Our Honorary Members had a desire to complete the music room project. This was of the magnitude that no one else had ever attempted before, and it was due totally to their love of the instruments and music, and the desire to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. After David's passing, Robert Ridgeway was hired. With a dedicated team, the project was completed, and Robert continues to serve as the curator today.

Through the many charity benefits the Sanfilippo's are involved with, theatre organ has been exposed to many more people than if it were just open to theatre organ lovers. Hopeful Heart, Lyn Larsen, and four other charitable organizations have raised over 1.25 million dollars in the past four years.

### ORGANIST OF THE YEAR Clark Wilson

The ATOS Organist of the Year for 1998 began his musical training at the age of nine in his native Ohio. While growing up, he accompanied numerous stage musicals and was organist at several churches.

After several years with the Schantz Organ Company as a reed voicer and tonal finisher, his professional theatre organ career began with his appointment as the featured organist at Pipe Organ Pizza in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In the following years, he was on the playing staff at Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis, Indiana, and at Pipes and Pizza in Lansing, Illinois. He is currently associated



Lyn Larsen accepted the award for Honorary Members Jasper and Marian Sanfilippo. Center: Clark Wilson, Organist of the Year. At right: Everett Nourse, 1998 Hall of Fame winner. RM photos

with the new Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona, where he is on the organ staff as well as having assisted with the planning and installation of that magnificent instrument.

His recording credits include five albums. He has given all-transcription recitals for the AGO, played for the Organ Historical Society Convention, and performed at numerous national and regional ATOS conventions, as well as giving a series of highly-lauded workshops for young people's Pipe Organ Encounters.

He has concertized in the United States, Canada, Australia, and England, and has done extensive silent film accompaniment, including at the Chautauqua Institute in New York. In addition, he is featured organist for the Summer Movie Series at the famed Ohio Theatre in Columbus, Ohio.

Along with a busy concert schedule, he heads up his own pipe organ business and is heavily in demand as a tonal consultant and finisher of both theatre and classical pipe organs. He has been given the singular honor of being brought to England for theatre organ tonal finishing.

In 1993, he received the Award for Technical Excellence from ATOS. This marks the first time a person has been awarded both the Technical award and the Organist of the Year award. It is quite appropriate, since his time is now almost equally divided between concert and technical work. He serves as vice president and technical director to the Kimball Theatre Organ Society which has restored and installed a 38 rank Kimball organ in Milwaukee's Oriental Landmark Theatre. He has been professionally involved with 65 other theatre organ installations throughout North America and England.

### HALL OF FAME Everett Nourse

Our inductee into the ATOS Hall of Fame for 1998 was born in Chico, California, on June 8, 1911. He resided in Oakland, California, until 1938, and during that time began his life long association with music.

He studied piano from the age of seven until he was twelve. He attended Oakland High School and at 17 began to play the church organ. A year later he began to play theatre organ at the Diamond Theatre in

Oakland on Saturday afternoons. He continued his formal education at the University of California, Berkeley, where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1933. In 1936, he married Louise Dunmire. They moved to Vacaville, California, where he has lived ever since.

In 1944, he began to commute to San Francisco when he was hired as the organist for the San Francisco Fox Theatre, following George Wright who had left for New York. He hosted his own Saturday night show, "Fox Saturday Night Jamboree" which continued until 1949. He recorded three albums of the Fox organ under the Fantasy label, and later recorded four albums on the same organ under the Doric label.

In April of 1947, more joy entered his life when daughter, Jeanne, was born. In 1956, he played for the Republican National Convention, which nominated Dwight D. Eisenhower. There were also many special organ performances at the Fox until the theatre's untimely closing in 1963.

During the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, he played several casual theatre organ engagements at venues including the San Francisco Warfield, San Francisco El Capitan, San Francisco Orpheum, Oakland Paramount, and Oakland Grand Lake Theatres. He also performed concerts in Sacramento, California, and Portland, Oregon.

In 1961, at 50 years of age, he received his Masters Degree from the University of California at Davis. His permanent vocation has been with the University of California as Cooperative Extension Advisor in Solano County, and he retired in 1979.

In 1992, his wife, Louise, passed away after a long illness. 1994 saw him playing for a TV production for KQED in San Francisco, where he was prominently featured at the Oakland Paramount organ. That same year with encouragement from Bill Schlotter, he began an association with the Berkeley Community Theatre, where he has enjoyed playing several concerts on this great organ.

As if all of this were not enough, he has served as organist at Trinity Baptist Church for the past 28 years and has been actively involved in Rotary for nearly 40 years, where he has assisted with local clubs and district conventions.



# THE 14TH ANNUAL NATIONAL YOUNG THEATRE ORGANIST COMPETITION

by Dorothy Van Steenkiste

## *THEATRE ORGAN IS ALIVE AND IN GOOD HANDS!*

Young adults are practicing long hours and performing for their chapters; technicians are working hard to keep the instruments in wonderful condition; and ATOS members from all over the world are supporting the continuation of the theatre organ tradition. The future of theatre organ is in good hands!

The cameo performances of our Junior, Intermediate and Senior winners of the 1998 competition, together with the concert of Ryan Heggie, the over-all winner of 1997, were marvelous and the audience loved them. All four performances were outstanding.

The overall-all winner this year was Ron Reeseigh in the intermediate division. He was sponsored by the Motor City Theatre Organ Chapter.

Ken Double, as emcee, introduced Ryan Heggie, the performing artist at the Berkeley Community Theatre on their 4/33 Wurlitzer. Following Ryan's excellent concert, Ken Double introduced the three winners of the 1998 Competition: Junior, Robert Sudall; Intermediate, Ron Reeseigh; and Senior, Heath Wooster. The audience was thrilled with their performances. The organ was in excellent condition thanks to William Schlotter, Kevin King and the entire crew at the theatre. These young adults were treated royally during practice time.

We would like to thank Rudy Frey and his committee members for arranging transportation for our contestants to Berkeley Community Theatre so that they could practice.

The following judges determined the over-all winner of the competition at the Berkeley Community Theatre concert: John Apple, Richard Leichtamer, Nelson Page, Rob Richards, and Lew Williams.

Rules and regulations for the 1999 competition will be sent out in August. Be sure and encourage your young organists to enter the competition; contact your teachers, schools, and music studios.



## **RON RESEIGH**

*Over-All Winner and Winner of the Intermediate Division Sponsored by Motor City Theatre Organ Society*

Ron Reeseigh is 16-years-old and has been playing the theatre organ seriously for almost four years. His interest in the theatre organ started when he heard his father Gary Reeseigh and Charlie Balogh play the 3/30 Wurlitzer at the Roaring 20s Pizza in Grand Rapids. By the age of three, he became interested in the Wurlitzer's pipes and percussions. By the age of ten he was tinkering on a Lowrey organ they had in their home and was also playing the piano. In 1993, they acquired a Rodgers Trio. From that day on he started practicing every day. At the age of fifteen, he started playing overtures and intermissions at the Redford Theatre's 3/10 Barton in Detroit. He also had the privilege of playing the 4/34 Wurlitzer at the Senate Theatre many times and the biggest thrill for him was being able to play the Wurlitzer at the Fox Theatre in Detroit.

In 1997, he competed in the Motor City Theatre Organ Society's Young Theatre Organist Competition and placed first in the Hobbyist Division. In the same year, he was one of the recipients to receive the ATOS \$500 scholarship. Since receiving the schol-

arship he has been studying with Tony O'Brien and has attended a private workshop with Lyn Larsen.

His favorite organists are his father Gary, George Wright, Lyn Larsen, and Virgil Fox. Ron is involved in many of the musical courses at East Kentwood High School. He is a percussionist in the Symphonic Band and Symphonic Orchestra, and section leader of his drum line in the marching band. He is currently working toward being a member of the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony.

In his spare time, he likes to hang out with friends, listen to theatre and classical organ and jazz. He enjoys playing at the Redford and also the Van Andel Museum, which happens to have the Wurlitzer theatre organ he grew up with in the pizza parlor.

His recording was made on the 3/30 Wurlitzer in the Van Andel Public Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## **HEATH WOOSTER**

*Winner of the Senior Division Sponsored by Australia Felix Chapter*



Heath is 20-years-old. He started studying organ eleven years ago with his teacher, Mr. Adam Stobbs. Heath has achieved mostly honors in 21 organ exams with the Australian Guild of Music. He graduated in April 1996 with two diplomas; Proficiency and Diploma of Professional



Performance, and in 1998 he graduated with an Associate Diploma gaining distinction. Twice he was presented with the AGMS international award for music excellence. currently, he is studying for his Licentiate Diploma and corresponding theory exam.

Theatre organ was first experienced by Heath in 1990, which sparked a desire to learn and explore the instrument. In 1993 and 1998, he was selected to perform in the Youth Concerts of the National Theatre Organ Convention held in Adelaide (South Australia). Heath was an artist in the TOSA Convention 1995 and will perform in the 1999 convention, both held in his home city Melbourne.

Heath has been the recipient of six consecutive ATOS Scholarships 1993-1998. In 1994, he won the Young Theatre Organist Competition, Intermediate Division, and played in the ATOS Convention in Fresno and was given many opportunities to play various theatre organs in California.

Since age ten, Heath has been entering the Grand National Eisteddfod of Australia and has won many awards, including the Yamaha Electone Festival Victorian and was also the Musical Director and sole accompanist for *Man of LaMancha*. He has won Youth Music Scholarships awarded by the Rotary Club of South Australia and performed at the Capri Theatre Adelaide. He has also performed in New Zealand.

Currently, Heath is studying Business Management and Marketing at Swinburne University Melbourne. His photography continues to win numerous prizes throughout Australia. His recording was made on the 4/29 Hybrid at the Capri Theatre.

## ROBERT SUDALL

*Winner of the Junior Division  
Sponsored by London, South of England  
Chapter*

Robert is 14-years-old. Robert was thrilled in 1997 when he was awarded a scholarship from ATOS. It was an exciting week, as he had just been voted the winner of a television talent competition.

Since the age of five, he has studied with various teachers and was fortunate to have lessons from David Lowe, John Norris and currently with



Mike Woodhead. He has to travel a great distance to take lessons. He has graduated from a Grade 3 to a Grade 7 in organ exams. Robert has also studied piano and finds that it is quite useful in playing the various organ styles.

Robert's playing direction is also developing as he is a member of a swing band at Bingley Grammar School. He plays the piano as part of a group of about twenty students. This is a whole new way of playing for him, being part of a band rather than playing solo. It introduces him to different styles which he uses on the theatre organ. He recently took his first exam in theory. This has inspired him to begin composing.

Robert plays the organ and piano at school. The students enjoy listening to him. When he won the talent competition with Yorkshire Television almost 70,000 viewers phoned in to vote. He suspects that many youngsters saw a theatre organ for the first time.

He is keeping an open mind about his future. He would like to play the organ full-time, but he feels he has to be realistic and consider another career and perform on the organ in his spare time. He hopes if he can convince young people, in his own small way, to take an interest in the theatre organ, that it would become popular again; and he may just be able to play it full-time. It would be great to have a career that he would thoroughly enjoy.

His recording was made on a 3/8 Wurlitzer organ in the New Ritz Ballroom Brighouse, W. Yorks.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU ALL!

## Entries in the Young Theatre Organist Competition

### SEAN HENDERSON

*Entry in the Senior Division  
Sponsored by San Diego Chapter*



Sean Henderson is currently 19-year-old and has just completed his sophomore year at Arizona State University, majoring in

Organ Performance. He has been a past winner of the American Theatre Organ Society's Young Theatre Organ Competition at both the Junior and Intermediate levels (1992 and 1995, respectively).

In addition to his University studies, he has two current positions of employment. He is the organist at Congregational Church of the Valley, in Scottsdale, Arizona, and teaches music at the Phoenix Yamaha Music School.

Some highlights in Sean's musical life, would definitely be his performance with Walter Strony at the Spreckles Pavillion Organ at Balboa Park, San Diego in 1995. He was the youngest organist to ever perform there in its eighty years of existence.

Recently, Sean received his green card due to the fact that he was classified as an "Alien of Extraordinary Ability" by the United States Immigration Department — a goal that has taken a couple of years to implement.

In addition to playing the classical, theatre, and electronic organs, Sean enjoys a variety of different activities. He enjoys cooking, decorating his apartment, and in general, spending quality time with good friends. One of his favorites, inevitably, is just sitting down with his eyes closed — listening to an appreciating music of all kinds.

Sean gives his most sincere gratitude toward the American Theatre Organ Society for offering young organists such fantastic opportunities such as this one. He believes that the future of theatre organ is very bright, and offers his most vehement wishes to all young organists out there regarding the advancement of this



highly artistic field.

His recording was made on a 3/24 mostly Wurlitzer owned by Chuck and Kay Lyall in California.

## JEFFREY ANDREWS

*Entry in the Senior Division  
Sponsored by the Australia/Felix Chapter*



Jeffrey is 19-years-old and is a tertiary student in Melbourne, Victoria, where he is studying a combined maths and music program. He began learning the electronic organ with Myrtle Cox nine years ago and has since had the chance to play the Compton theatre organ in Ballarat. He has played a number of concerts over the past few years, including the Yamaha Festival, Ararat, the South Street Eisteddfods in Ballarat and the 1998 TOSA convention in Adelaide, South Australia.

Jeffrey's interests include music, badminton and tennis. He also plays the saxophone and is part of a number of bands, including a rock band and a stage band. As a member of the Sebaclear stage band, he toured and attended the International Music Festival in Hawaii in 1996.

His recording was made on the 4/29 Wurlitzer theatre organ in the Capri Theatre, Adelaide, South Australia.

## MATTHEW BASON

*Entry in the Intermediate Division  
Sponsored by London, South of England Chapter*



Matthew is 17-years-old and is from Northampton, England. He has been playing organ for approximately five years, and playing theatre organ for two years. He has studied piano for approximately nine years, but has not had lessons on the theatre organ. He claims to be a self-taught organist.

Matthew playing various theatre organs in England, entered the ATOS London Chapter Young Theatre Organist of the Year competition in

1997 and 1997, winning third place on both occasions.

He enjoys listening and playing music of all types, going to the cinema, and recently started running a choir at a local primary school with 7- to 11-year-old children.

His recording was made on a 3/7 Compton theatre organ at Compton Lodge, Sapcote Leicester UK.

## MELISSA BREWER

*Entry in the Junior Division  
Sponsored by the Australia/Felix Chapter*



Melissa is 14-years-old. She has been studying organ from her teacher, Mrs. Myrtle Cox, for five years and is a student in year 9 at Damascus College in the provincial city of Ballarat in the Australian State of Victoria.

Melissa has played in Ballarat's prestigious arts festival, the Royal South Street Competitions, for the past four years. In 1997, she placed third in the Open Pipe Organ Category, second in the Under 18 Theatre Pipe Organ, and third in the Under 16 Classical Electronic Sections. She is currently studying for grade 5 practical and grade 3 theory examinations.

Her sporting interests include netball, athletics and swimming.

Her entry was recorded on the 3/9 Compton organ in Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat, where she practices each Friday morning before school.

## VERONICA A. DILLON

*Entry in the Senior Division  
Sponsored by Kiwi Chapter, New Zealand*



Veronica is 19-years-old and lives in Auckland, New Zealand. She was home schooled under an American system called A.C.E. (Accelerated Christian Education). Veronica has always loved music so when her parents took her to the Hollywood Cinema in 1995 to hear Phil Kelsall play the Mighty Wurlitzer she fell in love with it instantly.

In 1996, Veronica had her first

music lesson with English organist Chris Powell at the Baycourt Theatre in Tauranga. When Chris Powell went back to England, Veronica was on her own again as there was no one in New Zealand that taught theatre organ at concert level. Jelani Eddington arrived in New Zealand for three months work. To quote Jelani, "He was thrilled to hear of a young person in New Zealand dedicated enough as to wish to further their talents on the theatre organ." An intense schedule of lessons began, during which time Jelani prepared her to play in public and brought her music up to standard to enter this year's competition. Of course, three months was not nearly enough time to get Veronica ready for the competition, so she continued her lessons with Jelani through cassette tapes, faxes, E-mails, and the telephone, which was rather difficult at times, but it worked!

Apart from her music, Veronica runs a small business with her father.

Veronica's recording was made on the 3/17 Wurlitzer at the Orion Centre in Sydney, Australia. Her desire in the future is to be a concert theatre organist and share her love of the theatre pipe organ throughout the world.

## CATHERINE DRUMMOND

*Entry in the Intermediate Division  
Sponsored by London, South of England*



Catherine is 16-years-old and is attending Leicester Grammar School. She is currently studying with Paul Kimer. Her studies include two subjects at GCSE level and pianoforte and saxophone.

Since winning the Junior Division of the ATOS Young Theatre Organist Competition in 1996, she has been more determined not only to play well, but to become fully competent in theatre organ techniques such as styling, and to have the ability to understand the mechanics of how the theatre organ works. With an ATOS scholarship, she was able to continue her studies. These lessons have enabled her to learn theatre organ stylings. In the past, she learned them by listening to the great American and



British organists, and by attending concerts and observing the many ways in which theatre organists use the facilities on the instrument to present a wide range performance.

Catherine believes she still has a lot to learn and also believes there is very little music that cannot be played on the theatre organ and in a concert performance.

Her recording was made on a 3/7 Compton theatre organ at Compton Lodge Sapcote Leics.

## SUSAN LEWANDOWSKI

*Entry in the Senior Division  
Sponsored by the Wolverine Chapter*



Susan Lewandowski is 19 and a student at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, Michigan. She has completed

her second year of pursuing a degree in Music and Organ Performance. Susan began studying organ at the age of ten with Melissa Ambrose Eidson. Her interest in the theatre organ began when her parents introduced her to theatre organ music at the Pied Piper Pizza Peddler restaurant in Michigan

Susan has participated in the Young Theatre Organist Competitions, sponsored by the Motor City Chapter, and was the ATOS Junior Division winner in 1993 and the Intermediate Division winner in 1996. She has performed for the Detroit Theatre Organ Society, the Wolverine Chapter and the Motor City Theatre Organ Society. She has also been the recipient of several ATOS scholarships.

She is currently studying theatre organ with Melissa Ambrose Eidson. At the university, she studies classical organ with Dr. Pamela Ruitter-Feenstra and piano with Professor Joseph Gurt; and is also a member of the university choir.

In the future, she would like to teach theatre organ, particularly to younger students, to encourage interest in theatre organs.



*These young people have a great deal of talent and they are encouraged to continue their study of the theatre organ.*

## RICHARD MARSHALL

*Entry in the Intermediate Division  
Sponsored by London, South of England*



Richard Marshall is 18-years-old. He is currently completing his final year at college in the hope of gaining a place at Cardiff University to study for a degree in music.

He began piano lessons at the age of four and classical organ lessons at the age of twelve. Teachers have included the sub-organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London and currently he is studying with the organist of Guilford Cathedral, Surrey.

Richard was introduced to theatre organ during a family holiday in Norfolk and a visit to the Thursford collection to hear Robert Wolf at the 3/19 (ex-Odeon Leeds) Wurlitzer. He is currently involved with the St. Alban's Musical Museum, which houses two cinema organs as well as other mechanical exhibits (3c/6 Rutt and 3/10 Wurlitzer). In particular, the museum has played a large part in encouraging and guiding his performance by allowing him regular access to their two theatre pipe organs for practice and public performances. In 1998, he has been able to play concerts around the British Isles and for various organ clubs and societies.

His recording was done on a Wurlitzer 3/10 at St. Alban's Musical Museum, St. Alban's, Hestfordshire.

## SIMON PATTISON

*Entry in the Intermediate Division  
Sponsored by London,  
South of England Chapter*



Simon is 16-years-old and has been playing an electronic organ for about nine years. He first became interested in theatre organ

at the age of six when his granddad played an old LP of Reg Dixon at the Tower Ballroom Wurlitzer organ at Blackpool. Since then, he has wanted to play the theatre organ.

Simon found out that there was a Compton/Christie theatre organ at Ossett Town Hall, just a two minute walk away from where he lives. He went to his first concert there to see Phil Kelsall. He joined the theatre organ club and then learned about many other organs.

After getting a chance to play the Compton/Christie at Ossett this past year, he was hooked for life. Simon started taking lessons from David Redfern. He entered the ATOS, London Young Theatre Organist Competition in 1997. After winning this competition, he has been asked to play in various concerts.

Since he has to drive so far to take lessons, it is very expensive. Simon received a scholarship this year that will help defray the cost.

His recording was made on a 3/12 Wurlitzer located at Howden-Le-Wear.

## FILM PROGRAMS!

We have been providing 16mm silent film programs to Theatre Organ Society chapters for over 35 years. We offer over 400 silent features and several thousand silent shorts in all genres: Comedies! Dramas! Westerns! Animation! Documentaries!

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# FINAL RESULTS OF THE HOBBYIST DIVISION

## FIRST PLACE

**TOM C. MUSGRAVE**

*England*



Tom was thrilled to hear he had won first place in the competition. He was presented with his plaque by our President, Harry Heth, at the awards night party in San Francisco. Tom is a retired physics teacher and a member of ATOS since 1971. He studied piano at an early age. At the age of 17, he became organist at his local Methodist Church, a position he still holds after 53 years.

Tom is chairman of the Northeast Theatre Organ Association at Howden-le-Wear, Co. Durham, England, where, at The New Victoria Centre, a converted Methodist Chapel, there is preserved a 3/12 Wurlitzer with grand piano. Here, young people are encouraged to play this instrument. He attended his first ATOS convention in 1993. Tom is a member of the London/South of England Chapter. In 1996, Tom took third place in the Hobbyist Competition.

## SECOND PLACE

**JOHN C. BECICA**

*Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey*



John started piano lessons at an early age with his mother. He then took six years of classical instruction under Juilliard graduate Florence Takayama Iwamoto before switching to improvisational popular piano with teacher Phil Ellis.

Regular expeditions to the Christmas show at Radio City Music Hall in Manhattan fostered his love of the Mighty Wurlitzer sound. In 1963, his family purchased a new Rodgers Trio three manual theatre organ. From then on, his interest was strictly theatre organ. During his high school and college years, he studied under Frank Cimmino and Jim Boyer.

After 33 years of playing a Rodgers electronic for fun and relaxation, he was introduced to pipes about two years ago at open console of the Garden State Theatre Organ Society. He believes that GSTOS is one of the best kept secrets in North Jersey, and is volunteering his marketing background to help rectify that situation and spread the word.

His recording was done on the 3/23 Griffith Beach residence organ of Cathy and Bob Martin in Little Falls, New Jersey.

## THIRD PLACE

**PAUL WILLIAM FORTE**

*Australia Felix Chapter*



Paul Forte is 23-years-old and has been learning to play the organ for more than ten years. His teacher is Mrs. Myrtle Cox of the Galaxy School of Music in Ballarat, Victoria.

In 1996, Paul won an ATOS Scholarship and continued with his studies. He feels that the theatre organ of today is gaining a wider interest, acknowledgment, appreciation and use from people. Paul hopes to continue theatre organ lessons with the ambition of becoming a professional entertainer. He has performed at TOSA events during the past few years and enjoys playing for an audience.

Paul was presented his plaque by the Treasurer of the Ballarat Theatre Organ Society, Mr. Keith Hodges.

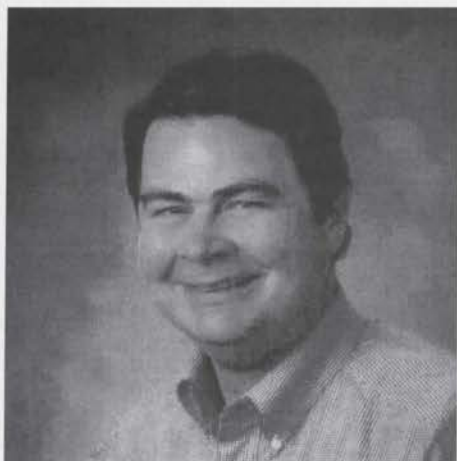
There will be a Hobbyist Competition in 1999. Encourage your members to enter. Rules and regulations will be sent out in August. Next year the judges will again be Scott Foppiano and Steve Schlesing.

Members of the committee are Brian Carmody, Melissa Ambrose Eidson, John Ledwon, Jack Moelmann, Steve Schlesing, Donald Walker, and Bob Wilhelm. Dorothy Van Steenkiste, Chairman.

Tapes were submitted from this year's three winners with two of their favorite selections. The tapes were numbered and sent to the adjudicators. The adjudicators were Scott Foppiano and Steve Schlesing. We would like to sincerely thank them for taking the time to review the tapes and offer their written comments to the contestants. Also, a final copy of the numerical valuation of each contestant is sent to each adjudicator and all committee members.



# YOUNG THEATRE ORGANIST COMPETITION ADJUDICATORS



*David Barnett*

This was the fourteenth year of adjudicating the performances of young theatre organists. We had twelve entries. The convention in San Francisco, California, featured the three winners of the competition in cameos at the Berkeley Community Theatre's 4/33 Wurlitzer organ. Their performances thrilled the audience and standing ovations were received by all.

Our adjudicators are very pleased to be a part of this competition and feel it is a very important program of ATOS. It takes a lot of time to review the tapes of all the contestants and write comments on them. The comments really help the students with future competition. Written comments of all the adjudicators are sent to all the contestants. Also, a final copy of the numerical valuation of each contestant is sent to each adjudicator and all committee members.

I would like to thank Jack Moelmann for duplicating the 72 tapes, and sending them to the judges.

*Thanks to all the adjudicators  
for their help, support  
and comments.*



*Gary Hanson*



*Dwight Beacham*



*Lyn Larsen*

**Goals of Our Organization:**  
Preserving the tradition of the theatre organ and furthering the understanding of this instrument and its music through the exchange of information.

**Committee Members:**

Brian Carmody, Melissa Ambrose Eidson, John Ledwon, Jack Moelmann, Steve Schlesing, Donald Walker, and Bob Wilhelm  
*Dorothy Van Steenkiste, 1998  
Competition Chairman*



*Joel Gary*



*Richard Rogers*



# 1998 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING of the AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY (ATOS)

*(Held during the San Francisco Annual Convention)  
San Francisco Marriott Hotel Ballroom  
San Francisco, California  
July 5, 1998, 1:00 P.M.*

The Annual Meeting of the ATOS Membership was called to order by President Harry Heth. He noted that the Meeting would be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, and that Joy Stephens would serve as the Parliamentarian. A quorum was present (50 or more Members) to conduct the business given in the notice of the Meeting.

The Officers and Board of Directors were introduced (not necessarily in this order): Harry Heth, President; Bob Maney, Vice President; Jack Moelmann, Secretary; and Alden Stockebrand, Treasurer. Board Members: Vern Bickel, Ed Burnett, Brant Duddy, Doris Erbe, John Ledwon, Shirley Obert, Donna Parker, Connie Purkey, and Dorothy Van Steenkiste.

Staff members introduced: Michael Fellenzer, Executive Secretary; Tom DeLay, Journal Editor; and Joy Stephens, Parliamentarian.

The outgoing Board Members were also recognized: Allen Miller, Nelson Page, and Jeff Weiler.

Motion to approve the minutes of the last Annual Membership Meeting (1997) as published in the Nov./Dec. 1997 issue of the Theatre Organ Journal:

Motion by Ed Mullins, and Second by Jeff MacKenzie - Unanimous.

## Treasurer's Report - Alden Stockebrand:

As of the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 1998:

Income: \$257,044  
Expenses: \$242,347  
Net: \$14,696  
Assets: \$653,030  
Endowment Fund: \$159,546

Motion to approve the Treasurer's report: Deke Warner, Second by Frank LaFetra - Unanimous.

The current ATOS Membership was reported to be 5,267.

Secretary Jack Moelmann provided a report on the actions taken by the Board of Directors during the past year. The Board of Directors met twice during the last year, the first being January 17-18 in St. Louis, Missouri, and again during the San Francisco, California, Convention in July 1998. The following actions were taken during the St. Louis Meeting in January 1998:

The following actions were approved concerning the ATOS Newsletter called "Pipes and Personalities."

a. Change the name back to "ATOS International NEWS" effective with the Feb 1998 issue.

b. Harry Heth would serve as the Interim Editor.

c. Marion Flint would be requested to be the Calendar Editor which would not be a Staff position.

d. The Newsletter would continue to be published every other month (even months) as before.

ATOS needs to consider the Americans with Disabilities Act. Legal advice is needed to determine responsibilities under the law. Up to \$1,000 was approved to obtain expert legal assistance.

Convention Agreement: The paragraph which states: "Failure to render an accurate accounting shall be grounds for suspension or revocation of a Chapter's Charter, and all individuals who are responsible for such failure shall be jointly and severally liable to ATOS for the cost of any legal and accounting fees incurred by ATOS in attempting to obtain an accurate accounting as well as any discovered deficiency" was deleted.

The paragraph preceding which states: "The Chapter shall render to ATOS a full and accurate accounting of the books of account of the convention not more than 120 days after the close of the convention..." shall remain as written. The above changes will be made in the Convention Planning Handbook as well as in other documents, as necessary.

Endowment Fund - Bylaw change: Section 6.2c currently states: "The Board of Directors shall appoint an Endowment Fund Committee. This committee shall consist of two ATOS Board members and three members in good standing." The first sentence was changed to read: "The Board of Directors shall appoint an American Theatre Organ Society Endowment Fund Board of Trustees." The second sentence was changed to read: "The Board of Trustees shall consist of the ATOS Treasurer, two Board Members, and two other ATOS Members in good standing." Add the word "annually" after the sentence which reads: "The Board of Directors shall appoint..." It now reads: "The Board of Directors shall appoint an American Theatre Organ Society Endowment Fund Board of Trustees annually."

Inner-City Youth Program: It was suggested that this program include all schools. It was then decided to keep the Inner-City Youth Program as is but establish a "Schools Program" which would be the responsibility of the Education Committee having a budget of \$1,000 per year with a maximum of \$250 per Chapter per year.

Public Relations: It was suggested we contact other organizations to obtain and exchange mailing lists to send out membership information. In addition we could exchange advertising space in other magazines/journals as a means of obtaining members and promoting ATOS.

Journal: Explanations were provided as to delays in getting the Journal out on time. A contributing factor was the delay in getting information through the mail and/or fax. It was decided that the Editor should be provided a computer system (hardware and software) up to a cost of \$3,000 with Tom DeLay having the first option to purchase the system at some future time at market value should another Editor be appointed.

It was noted that there wasn't anything in the Bylaws concerned with the dissolution of the Corporation. The following Bylaw change was approved:

Delete the last eight (8) lines of Article 1, Section 1.4d which reads: "Such purposes for which this Society is organized are exclusively charitable and educational within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

"Notwithstanding any other provision of

the Articles of these Bylaws, the Society shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), or by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 107(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law)."

Add a new section 1.5:

## Section 1.5 LIMITATIONS.

a. No substantial part of the activities of this Corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and this Corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statement in connection with) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

b. The property, assets, profits and net income are dedicated irrevocably to the purposes set forth in Section 1.4 above. No part of the profits or net earnings of this Corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any of its Directors, trustees, Officers, members, employees, or to the benefit of any private individual.

c. Upon the winding up and dissolution of this Corporation, after paying or adequately providing for the payment of the debts, obligations and liabilities of the Corporation, the remaining assets of this Corporation shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes and which has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law.

A change was approved as an amendment to the current ATOS Articles of Incorporation dealing with the dissolution of the Corporation.

Bylaw changes concerning the Annual Membership Meeting and Meeting Quorum:

Section 3.1 ANNUAL MEETING. Add: "In the absence of a quorum, see Section 3.5a, motions from the floor will be accepted by the Board of Directors for action at their next meeting. The Board of Directors will report the action taken on each motion to the Members at, or before, the next Annual Meeting. Any motions which cannot be resolved by the Board of Directors will appear in the notice of the next Annual Meeting for resolution at that time."

Section 3.5 QUORUM, sub-paragraph a: Number Required was clarified to read (at the July 1998 Board of Directors' Meeting): "The presence in person of at least 50 members entitled to vote at any membership meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business set forth in the required notice of the meeting. If one-third or more of the voting members of the Society attend the meeting, a motion from the floor not set forth in the required notice of the meeting may be acted upon."

The Parliamentarian would serve only at the Annual Membership Meeting, and that it would no longer be a Staff position.

The Theatre Organ Editor is to be made an Independent Contractor at the rate of \$1,000 per issue of the Journal effective with the March/April 1998 issue. This action will supersede previous Agreements.

Uniform Chapter Charter Agreement: A "draft" of the newly revised Uniform Chapter



Charter Agreement was approved with paragraph 13 of the draft being deleted and replaced by: "ATOS reserves the right to modify this Agreement when legal requirements mandate such change."

The "Curtis Organ Restoration Society", University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, was discussed. There was a request for advertising, and it was suggested that free advertising space be given in the Journal.

**Audit:** An audit of the ATOS accounts would be initiated with the cost approval authority given to the Executive Committee.

The following items were approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting prior to the Annual Convention in San Francisco, California, in July 1998:

The Board welcomed newly elected Members: Ed Burnett, Shirley Obert, and Connie Purkey.

The Officers appointed for the year 1998-1999 are:

President: Harry Heth  
Vice President: Bob Maney  
Secretary: Jack Moelmann  
Treasurer: Alden Stockebrand

In addition to the four Officers, Vern Bickel and Donna Parker were appointed to the Executive Committee for the next year.

Nelson Page was appointed as the Chairman of the Nominating Committee.

Fern Siemens was appointed as the Teller for the 1999 Board of Directors' Election.

Jeff Weiler was empowered to investigate the costs and procedures for the publication of a Volume IV to David Junchen's *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ* detailing the work of the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company.

Approval was given to produce a brochure concerning the ATOS Endowment Fund for inclusion with membership cards.

The ATOS Endowment Fund Board of Trustees was appointed for the following year:

Vern Bickel, Chairman  
Alden Stockebrand, Financial Secretary  
Ed Burnett, Board Member  
Richard Kline, Member  
Nelson Page,

Member and Recording Secretary

Grants approved from the Endowment Fund for 1998 were:

\$2,500 to the Motor City Chapter for the piano for the Barton Theatre Pipe Organ in the Redford Theatre, Detroit, Michigan.

\$3,500 to the Southwest Michigan Chapter for the restoration of the Barton Theatre Pipe Organ in the State Theatre in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

\$1,000 was set aside for a documentary film "Sound of the Silents." The funds will be granted when sufficient funding from other sources has been obtained.

A "Volunteer Technician Award" was established to be implemented in 1999 when criteria for the award have been developed.

Jerrell Kautz, of Houston, Texas, is to be given an Award of Special Merit for his work on the computer Internet in furthering the awareness of Theatre Organ.

The Theatre Organ Journal Editor is to be provided a computer scanner and the necessary software up to \$1,000 for the processing of Journal photographs.

The Index of Theatre Organ Journal Articles will be placed on the ATOS Web Page after the 1997 update.

In addition to the Executive and Nominating Committees, these additional Committees were established (or continued

from the previous year): AGO Liaison, Archives, Awards and Recognition, Bylaws Review, Chapter Relations, Convention Planning, Education, Endowment Fund, Inner-City Youth Program, Membership, Organist Competitions, Organ Scholarships, Publications Review, Restoration and Preservation, Special Services, Technical, Towe Vehicle Foundation Museum, Smithsonian Institution Organ Project, and the Special Interest Groups: Electronic Organ Owners (ETONES), Pipe Organ Owners, Computer Networks, and Young Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (YTOE).

A follow-up audit of the ATOS financial records will be accomplished early in 1999.

A Regional Convention for 1999 to be held in Wichita, Kansas, was approved. The Convention will be held over the Labor Day weekend as being the only weekend available for various venues.

Michael Fellenzer was appointed as an Independent Contractor serving as the Journal Advertising Manager. A new Contract for this function was prepared and approved.

Michael Fellenzer's Contract for the Executive Secretary function was approved for the next year with a Contract price increase to \$1,750 per month.

Ron Musselman was appointed as the Convention Reviewer with expenses reimbursed consistent with those of the Board of Directors, Officers, and Staff.

ATOS is allocating \$50,000 from the Investment Fund for the installation of the Lowell Ayars Wurlitzer Organ in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., on a dollar-for-dollar matching fund basis. Brant Duddy will be the Chairman of the project and Nelson Page will serve as the Co-Chairman.

A new Chapter has been formed and was accepted. It is the Central Illinois Chapter centered around the Springfield, Illinois, area.

The Parliamentarian, who serves during the Annual Membership Meeting, will be offered two nights of lodging reimbursement for serving in that capacity.

The ATOS President will be sent to the 1999 Annual Convention in London, England, with transportation and hotel expenses being reimbursed.

The next ATOS Board of Directors' Meeting will be held in New Jersey during the period of June 4-7, 1999.

The next Annual Membership Meeting will be held during the 1999 Regional Convention in Wichita.

The budget for the next year was approved.

A report on the Smithsonian Institution Organ Project was given by John Ledwon. This is a continuation of the project started a couple of years ago. Money has been allocated by ATOS, \$50,000, on a matching fund basis. The project was explained as being the installation of the Lowell Ayars Wurlitzer Theatre Organ in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC. Donations will be required to achieve a goal of around \$100,000 to complete the project. Nelson Page followed with more information and solicited donations to the project to be matched by ATOS. Several people either donated or pledged to donate money during the meeting.

Tim Needler, the Convention Planning Coordinator, gave a report on upcoming conventions. The next Convention will be the Regional Convention in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in the fall of 1998. It was noted that the 1999 Annual Convention in London was the last

one formally planned; however, Tampa, Florida, could be a location for the Annual Convention in the year 2000. A Regional Convention has been approved for Wichita, Kansas, in 1999. There are no other conventions pending, and Chapters were encouraged to consider hosting such an event.

Because of difficulty in taking notes during the presentation of the 1999 Annual Convention in London due to insufficient light, Jeff MacKenzie was asked to review some of the convention details.

A report was provided by Jack Moelmann on the status of rechartering ATOS Chapters. Uniform Chapter Charter Agreements were sent to the 75 Chapters during the first week of April 1998. As of this date, 51 Chapters had returned signed Agreements; 3 Chapters indicated that they couldn't continue being a Chapter and were placed on the inactive list; 21 Chapters had not had not replied, had not provided the forms fully signed as required, or couldn't locate or didn't receive the April mailing and a re-send was necessary. Agreements were to be returned by June 1st and, if not received by June 30th, the Chapters would be placed on the "inactive" list unless received in the next few days following this meeting. Chapters who had not responded included: Alabama, Alamo, Arkansas-Headquarters Pine Bluff, Australia Felix, Beehive, Egyptian, Golden State, Kingston, Kiwi, Land O' Lakes, Land of Lincoln, Nevada Desert Lights, Oregon, Orlando Area, Piedmont, Pikes Peak, Rocky Mountain, Santa Barbara, Sequoia, Virginia, and Wolverine.

A Charter Member, Bill Lamb, has offered his vast collection of photographs to the Archives which will be valuable for future reference and use.

Frank LaFetra announced the Convention statistics. These included the following: 853 net Convention registrations; 877 overall Convention registrations with 24 cancellations; there were 29 new ATOS members gained through the Convention registration process; 645 used the BART system for transportation while 208 chose to use the bus option; 464 attended the Legion of Honor presentation; 483 were on the Afterglow; 65 Chapters were represented.

There was applause for this great Convention hosted by the Northern California Chapter (NOR-CAL).

#### New Business:

It was suggested that Ben Hall's book "The Last Remaining Seats" be available as a reprint and available in the Record Shop for new people coming into the organization.

It was also suggested that the video "Pulling Out the Stops" also be made available in the Record Shop or at least make information available as to how it can be obtained.

There was a question about the "Legion of Honor" event at the Convention, availability of tours, etc. Information was provided by Rudy Frey, Convention Chairman.

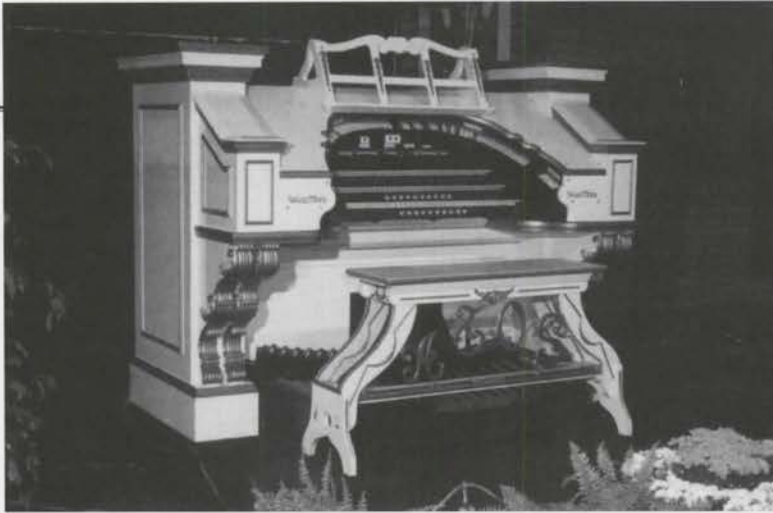
The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM by a motion from Bob Balfour and seconded by Jeff MacKenzie - Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,  
JACK MOELMANN, Secretary



# The "Convention With a Difference" in 1999

## THE UK's WOKING WURLITZER



*Clockwise from top: The Woking Wurlitzer with a bench made by one of the chapter members, Mr. Bill Watts; One of the technical team at the back of the console rearranging the original master cable which is still in use; The Solo Chamber pipework; Les Rawle, the leader of the technical team, tuning up for a concert.*

*John Sharp photos*



The UK's latest Wurlitzer transplant was installed in the Granada Welling in South East London and opened on 22 November 1937. It was Opus 2220. The specification was drawn up by the team of organists led by Harry Farmer and moved ahead of traditional thinking that small organs should only sound sweet.

The intention was to design an organ not just for accompaniment but to provide intermission entertainment. There were six of these exciting organs, all with the same specification installed in theatres in the London area. Many people considered these organs as standing head and shoulders above all other organs installed in neighbourhood theatres. All have been removed from the theatres and reinstalled in other venues (the only one still in a theatre is at Harrow now unusable due to closure). The original design was to have been a 10 rank organ incorporating an Orchestral Oboe and a Krumet, but finally, a 3 manual 8 rank organ was the instrument ordered. The ranks are English

Horn, Tuba, Diapason, Tibia Clausa, Saxophone, Gamba, Gamba Celeste, and Flute, together with percussion and special effects.

About ten years ago, the theatre was closed and the organ became the property of the London and South of England Chapter and was removed by the technical team under the leadership of Les Rawle. Initially, it was stored in members' homes, but later put into store as the new venue was hard to find. Eventually, a new home was found at Woking in a sports hall where it has been reinstalled in three chambers and extra ranks have been added to enhance the sound. The new ranks are Trumpet, Tibia, Orchestral Oboe, Oboe Horn, Flute Celeste, Viole d'Orchestre, Viole Celesta, and Vox Humana now making it a 16-rank installation. The entire organ has been re-leathered and re-furbished by the technical team to 'as new.' Further developments will include a modified console and possibly a solid state relay. The modifications to the console are necessary to allow full use of the

additional pipework.

The Woking pipe chambers are at floor level (not as in the original home high up in two chambers behind ornate grilles)... so glass windows have been installed and the chambers lit to allow the public to see the works.

The Wurlitzer attracts more people into the hall (now renamed Wurlitzer Hall) than any other activity, thus the future of the organ is assured with regular dances and concerts. The introduction of the organ to Woking has found a new enthusiastic team who are making sure that the presentation of all events are a success. The Young Organist of the Year Competition has been based at Woking for the past three years and has proved to be a most popular event with young musicians and the public.

*The "Convention with a Difference" in 1999 will feature this fine addition to the UK concert scene. Two concerts with featured artist and Young Organists have been scheduled.*



# Journal of American Organbuilding

Quarterly Publication of  
the American Institute of  
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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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# AMERICAN MASTER 4/30 ORGAN

RIALTO THEATRE • BUTTE, MONTANA • 1917-1964

A FOLLOW-UP STORY *by Ron McDonald*

*A story about the American Master Organ Company and their largest organ, is found on page 36 of the July/August 1998 THEATRE ORGAN.*

*My story picks up where that story ends. The following account will be more cohesive if the July/August story is read first.*

In the early 1960s, I saved two smaller theatre organs from ruin, but in 1964, I found myself confronted with a more difficult challenge. I discovered the Butte, Montana, Rialto Theatre organ just days prior to the scheduled demolition of the entire building. The electricity was already disconnected from the building; exploring a large building with a flashlight is somewhat difficult.

I was amazed to find the organ almost complete. Only 16 of the 30 ranks of pipes were missing, and the bars from the tuned percussion. The 4 manual console was in storage.

The manager of the estate made a number of attempts to find someone who would be interested in saving the organ. The only interest he was able to stir up was the fellow who took the 16 ranks of pipes, but did not return for

anything more. The owners were troubled by this, and so they were delighted when I arrived.

I was able to acquire the organ from the owner, who also gave me the name of the person who had the missing pipes. My dream was to save the entire organ. This was also the desire of the owner.

The race against time began. With the help of a partner, I began removing the most choice items first. We built crates, and packed pipes individually in newspaper. We eventually filled a large van and took it to Salt Lake City. This was load #1.

I recruited two more friends and returned to Butte. We worked long days, and late into the nights, disassembling, packing and loading by the light of flashlights. We pushed ourselves to the limit, but time and resources were running out.

The demolition contractor wanted us out of there, because he was liable in case we caused a fire. Some local citizens were protesting the removal of the organ from Montana. The police objected when we began lowering large pipes from the second story window to the busy street below. We

seemed to be overwhelmed by obstacles. We were young, working class guys with limited resources. Our employers were irritated at us, not to mention our wives!

We also encountered the same thing Mr. Paragallo dealt with 47 years before: the union. We were not members of the union. We certainly had no time or money to hire union labor. Fortunately some cash in the right hands bought us a little time.

We finished our second load, but the ugly truth was now evident, we were not going to save the entire organ. The time for demolition was at hand, and we were far from done.

We filled a large U-Haul truck to the ceiling and even shared cab space with organ parts. However, the trip back to Salt Lake City was with heavy hearts. This was load #2, and we knew there would not be a load #3. We would not be able to save the larger parts. Our time was spent and our welcome was worn out. Our resources were depleted.

I had bad dreams of the big ball crushing those 32 foot pipes, chests, grand piano, etc. It still haunts me. I did not follow up to see how it all

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happened because I didn't want to hear it. I wish I would learn that some wealthy person intervened and saved it at the last minute.

It was heart-breaking to look at the receipt for this magnificent 4/30 organ, and know it was mine, but I couldn't save all of it. Now, 34 years later I am looking at the same receipt. Life has its adversity.

Here are a few facts I observed about this instrument:

The chests, magnets, shutters, tremolo units, reservoirs and relay, looked like Wurlitzer, but the Wurlitzer name was not seen anywhere. I was puzzled to see the Hope-Jones signature in two places on this organ. I knew he died three years prior to this 1917 installation.

There was a grand piano on stage right. It had been built for the organ, and never did have a keyboard. It appeared to be in good condition. Still wired to the relay.

The tuned percussion section had its own chamber. The trap section was impressive and had its own chamber as well. The brass kettle drums were not in a chamber.

Unenclosed were five ranks of Diapason and Principal pipes, some large scale, some small scale. Their chest was mounted on a brick wall. The vacuum problems reported by installer Peragallo, were evidently remedied by a second blower dedicated to vacuum.

The 32 ft. Diaphone pipes were very large scale; I walked inside the

low C pipe with my flashlight for a distance before I realized I was inside an organ pipe. The wood they were constructed from was absolutely beautiful. I can believe the story that these pipes had to be reduced in power to prevent damage to the building.

The echo organ was located at the rear of the theatre, and was ducted a short distance by a properly curved duct the size of the shutter opening, to a grille in the rear wall of the balcony. The echo organ was not buried. As a matter of fact, the entire organ was anything but buried.

In my opinion, this organ was an attempt to out-do Wurlitzer. Nothing was small or economy, and the installation was magnificent. Perhaps it was this massive effort that brought about the demise of the company.

After considering how live the building was, the size of the organ, relative to the size of the theatre, it is my opinion that this instrument had to sound very impressive. It appeared that the building had been built for the organ instead of the other way around.

I met several old-timers who told stories of famous organists who played there. Several people actually shed a few tears of sadness as they watched us dismantle the organ. One gentleman became very emotional and began trying to prevent us from taking it. Even though the instrument had been silent for 34 years, the local people were very sensitive about its

removal. This instrument had definitely captured the hearts of the local people between 1917 and 1930.

It was probably not only the largest theatre organ in Montana, but also the largest theatre organ for an area much larger than Montana. It deeply hurt me that I was unable to save the entire instrument. I nearly broke myself trying to preserve the instrument, but it was just not possible. I shared ownership of the salvage with my helpers, and so the various parts went several different directions.

I donated the 16' Bourdon and the 16' Ophicleide to the Organ Loft in Salt Lake City, where they are still in use today. Other parts have been used in several organ projects. The console is in storage in Fresno, California. The theatre is gone; I wish I had photographs.

It was a magnificent organ, an outstanding installation, a true credit to the American Master Organ Company, and to Mr. John Paragallo. They gave their best, and the Butte people reaped the reward.

I commend Mr. Dave Schutt for his accurate and in-depth account in the July/August 1998 THEATRE ORGAN journal.

*(Editor's Note: While Mr. McDonald prepared this for THEATRE ORGAN, the original threads were generated through a posting to piporg-L. Thank you to piporg-L for this story, and Mr. McDonald for allowing permission to use it.)*

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NOVEMBER 14

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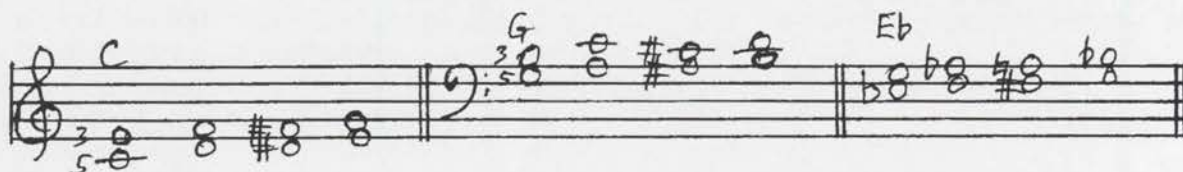
One of the easiest ways to make your performance of popular songs sound better is by the use of SUBSTITUTE CHORDS. It just happens that one of the most useful Fill-In devices for long melody notes also provides a series of chord changes when the melody moves certain ways. The first step is to learn to play this Fill on all the frequently used major and 7th chords. (Don't waste time practicing it on C#, F# and B chords.) As you practice this Fill, study, analyze and listen to it. It should always sound the same. It will seem to sound different when used in different songs.



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The next step is to find a few songs in which the melody moves down the scale from the root to the 5th of a major chord or from the 3rd to the 7th of a 7th chord. There can be other possibilities.

### "CHARMAINE"



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This is what we mean by "keep the left hand moving." Doesn't this sound better than holding or repeating the same chord? Examine all the songs you have and apply the same procedure wherever it makes the music sound better.

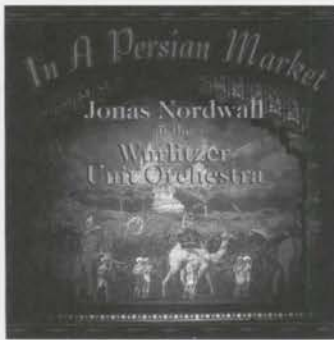


# For The RECORDS

RALPH BEAUDRY, EDITOR

Compact discs, cassettes, videos, and books to be reviewed should be sent to Ralph Beaudry, 1119 N. Louise #5, Glendale, CA 91207. Please be aware items must be received three months prior to the issue date in which the review will appear. Information telephone: 818/243-8741

## IN A PERSIAN MARKET Jonas Nordwall



Jonas Nordwall burst onto the theatre organ scene at the 1966 ATOS Convention in Portland. The *Journal* review said "... a new star emerged ... we'll be hearing much more — and soon." Although his convention concert was not at the (now demolished) Oriental Theatre, his first recording was; it's that theatre's fanciful asbestos curtain which graces this album's cover. Shortly after his 1970 recording, that organ was removed and became the nucleus of the (also now gone) fabulous Organ Grinder instrument at which Jonas presided for over ten years.

Being one of the few organists completely at ease playing both classical and popular selections, Jonas has become a master of the art of orchestral playing

and creating orchestral transcriptions. His numerous ATOS Convention appearances and his all to few recordings (just a dozen solo albums in 25 years) are evidence of that. The album's six pages of liner notes contain a special tribute to Hope Jones' original concept of his organ as a Unit Orchestra and points out that the Berkeley instrument "... epitomizes the Unit Orchestra concept."

This is the third recording of the now 4/33 Berkeley organ and all the 33 ranks are Wurlitzer. There are eight tracks on this 72-minute disc and, although almost every selection has been heard in concerts and on recordings over the years — not one of them has been heard before in the full sonic splendor found here. In addition to the superb arrangements, immaculate artistry and majestic instrument, recording engineer Dick Clay has used new, state-of-the-art Microtech Gefall M-296 microphones. Two of these omni-directional mikes, hung 20' above the floor, capture a previously unobtainable clarity throughout the entire audio range — and no bass boost is necessary.

Jonas opens with the 11-

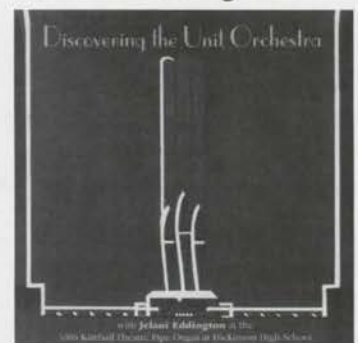
minute "Overture" to *Orpheus in the Underworld*. Familiar? Yes. But the combination of artist, organ and recording makes it unlike any ever recorded before. With the incredible dynamic range of instrument and microphones, one moment the organ purrs like a kitten and in the next ROARS like a lion. It's an excellent introduction to what follows; so adjust the volume accordingly. The album's title comes from the next selection, in an arrangement specifically written for a Wurlitzer organ by British organist Frank Matthew. (In Ray Bingham's article about Albert Ketelby - *COS Journal*, Summer 1995 - is the statement, "An examination of the stops used seems to indicate that the registration was based on a 2/8 Wurlitzer, similar to a Model F.") Obviously, Jonas has adjusted his registration to the Berkeley organ, but the arrangement gives this familiar composition a sparkling freshness.

The next title is unfamiliar. It's "Non Nobis, Dominum" by Scottish composer Patrick Doyle. This quiet, mystical piece was composed for the 1989 film *Henry V*. Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre" is another incredibly vivid tone painting. In this, and several other titles on the album, you may think you detect a MIDI generated human voice; rest assured, it is an organ voice for there is not a synthesizer or any overdubbing on this album. In his 18-minute medley from *Carousel*, Jonas presents four melodies; each is remarkably similar to the original orchestral score. These are the "Carousel Waltz," "If I

Loved You," "June is Busting Out All Over," and "You'll Never Walk Alone" plus a reprise and magnificent coda. For Massenet's "Meditation" from *Thaïs*, Jonas uses seemingly simple registrations to complement the beauty of this enchanting melody. The "Dance Boheme" from *Carmen*, climaxes in a firestorm of flaming flutes and reeds. Sibilus' magnificent tone poem "Finlandia" concludes this remarkable disc in a finale that will surely leave a listener breathless from its beauty and power.

This album is a theatre organ recording landmark! While the program content at first glance might not appeal to everyone's musical taste or concept of a theatre organ concert, this unparalleled combination of artist, organ and recording richly deserves a **Must Have** rating. Compact disc only at \$20.00 postpaid from NorCal Theatre Organ Society, P.O. Box 27238, Oakland, CA 94602-0438.

## DISCOVERING THE UNIT ORCHESTRA Jelani Eddington



This year, theatre organ enthusiasts have been blessed with an almost simultaneous release of two recordings that confirm the



fact a theatre organ is truly a Unit Orchestra. Jelani's fourth recording contrasts with, and is complementary to, Jonas Nordwall's CD. It's also worth noting there are interesting similarities and subtle differences between the 33 rank (100%) Wurlitzer organ and the Dickinson High School's 66 rank Kimball (with 49 of those ranks actually made by Kimball.) Kimball theatre organs, well known for their marvelous strings and reeds, never had a Great manual; it's always labeled *Orchestral!* When Kimball advertised their Los Angeles Forum (later Wiltern) theatre organ, it was as "The Largest Unit Orchestra in the World" (which it was until New York's Radio City Music Hall opened with a 4/58 Wurlitzer, built to Kimball specifications.)

Jelani, still in his early 20s, already has established himself as one of the very finest orchestral organists. This 72-minute album, however, presents a somewhat wider variety of musical selections, thus showcasing additional aspects of the versatility of a Unit Orchestra. Once again, listeners are cautioned that Jelani's opening selection, "Trolley Song," begins with the approaching trolley being hardly audible in the distance. In this number, and throughout the program, Jelani's impeccable technique, fascinating counter melodies, tasteful syncopation, varying registrations and stunning arrangements contribute to a completely enjoyable journey in the listeners' discovery of the Unit Orchestra.

Jelani continues with Irving Berlin's surprisingly jazzy "Steppin' Out with My Baby" in a big band arrangement featuring

untremmed brass. The lush registration for "Here's That Rainy Day" is a tone poem of gloomy skies. But following it, is a faithful recreation of Sidney Torch's chipper "A Cuckoo in the Nest;" alas, without the tuned birds. Vincent Youmans is remembered in a 12-minute medley of five of his all-time favorites. In his short 12 year musical career (1921-33) he wrote fewer than 100 tunes — but what grand melodies. Jelani plays "Great Day," "Orchids in the Moonlight," "More Than You Know," "Tea For Two" and Youman's first tune (written as a march when he was a 19-year-old playing in the band at Great Lakes Naval Station — and he revived it ten years later for the musical *Hit The Deck*), "Hallelujah!"

In "Belle of the Ball," Jelani and the Kimball waltz beautifully. Arthur Schwartz' haunting ballad "You and the Night and the Music," appeared in Broadway's 1934 musical "Revenge with Music" (but had originally been written as a waltz titled "Tonight".) Harry Warren's "Remember Me?" has a breezy, relaxed orchestration. For many listeners Jelani's 20-minute "Symphonic Suite: from *Porgy and Bess* will undoubtedly be the album's piece de resistance. Gershwin took eleven months to write the score and then spent nine months working out the arrangements (often using a Hammond organ to try out the orchestral sounds.) Jelani's version is truly a masterpiece of orchestral playing, making this a most appropriate commemoration of Gershwin's 100th birthday.

A lush, serene "Through the Eyes of Love" (from the

1978 film *Ice Castles*) precedes the final selection on our musical discovery of the Unit Orchestra; from Pnochelli's 1876 opera *La Goiconda*, the ballet suite "Dance of the Hours." With the combination of Jelani's orchestral arrangements and registrations, and the magnificence of the Dickinson Kimball, plus the recording talents of Bill Greenwood and Dick Clay, this album is certainly worthy of a **Must Have** recommendation. An excellent 12 page booklet, with detailed information about the artist, organ and musical selections, is included. The CD is \$20.00 and the cassette is \$14.00 (both postpaid — overseas add \$4.00 to either price) from DTOS Recordings, %Bob Noel, 110 Edjil Drive, Newark, DE 19713-2347.

## ON THE LAKE Kevin King



If you attended the 1983 ATOS Convention you'll surely remember the inaugural concert of the new (second) Grand Lake Theatre's organ. It was the late David Kelsey with his fantastic band Pure Trash. You'll also remember Kelsey's remark that the lady's head medallion over the proscenium was "Erma on the ceiling with cracked rouge." Despite having a barely playable organ, whose two chambers had just been tuned, but not to

each other, the concert was a smashing success with a baton-twirling organist finale! Two years later, Jim Riggs made his first recording, *Real Rhythm!* on that, by then, properly tuned, 3/13 organ.

Here is the first release of what can quite accurately be called the third Grand-Lake organ for it's now been completely rebuilt and expanded into a 3/18 organ which is 99 and 44/100% pure Wurlitzer. (It previously had only 4-1/2 Wurlitzer ranks - see the complete story in the January 1998 Journal.) *On the Lake* is the long-awaited almost first recording of Kevin King. "Almost" his first for some years back a limited-edition cassette of Kevin playing the Bella Roma organ (in Martinez where he has been staff organist for over 15 years) was released.

In his years at the Bella Roma, Kevin has developed a playing style unlike any other organist. It features a clarity in the melody line (sometimes daringly played in the baritone and even bass range,) some fresh, flashy fills, tasteful blue notes in both the melody and harmony, a delicious syncopation, and innovative counter-melodies, all wrapped up in a sunny sound that might best be described as a healthy helping of the legendary Larry Vannucci (*Yes!!-Ed*) seasoned with a dash of David Reese. Kevin's joyous approach to the music is also reflected in his writing style so what follows are his own liner notes describing the 18 tracks on this 71-1/2 minute CD.

"Get Happy!" Here's a great Harold Arlen number to start things off and set the mood for the hour. Next, a piece unfamiliar to



most. "What Was Your Name?" written by yours truly, is included by permission of the composer. "Mean to Me" begins on a forlorn, dejected note and grows into a big helping of 'I'll show you.' "More Than You Know" has long been a special piece to me. The emotional verse and flowing line have made it popular with many recording artists. "Marahuana" (original sheet music spelling) is an interesting piece from the film *Murder at the Vanities*. It's a bit haunting, a bit fiery. Empty the ashtrays and strap on the castanets, just don't inhale. One of the funniest films ever is *Some Like It Hot*. Although not written as a musical, songs by Marilyn Monroe and great background tunes make for a fun ride. After a mini-overture, the featured pieces are "Stairway to the Stars," "I Wanna Be Loved by You," "I'm Through with Love" and "Sugar Blues." Who could forget Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon stumbling along in their size 14 pumps? "Cry Me a River" is a rich torch song with a chew-em-up, spit-em-out attitude. "How Come You Do Me Like You Do Do Do?" provides a bit of red light runway music (I do love to play songs with an underlying hint of bump and grind!)"

"By the title you may think "There Ain't No Sweet Man Worth the Salt of My Tears" is a weepy torch song. Well, think again — no love lost here! Such magic is the music of Duke Ellington. "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" offers a small sample. Now it's time to dim the torchier for a dreamy version of "She's Funny That Way." I could do a whole album of

the wonderful music of Harold Arlen. Here is a second helping, with "It's Only a Paper Moon." Pour yourself to a mint julep and settle back for some *Southern Comfort* with three selections, "Do You Know What it Means to Miss New Orleans," "When It's Sleepy Time Down South" and the theme from the Jackie Gleason Show by way of Miami Beach, "Melancholy Serenade." Most people recognize "Powerhouse" from many of the fun Warner Brothers cartoons. It paints a picture of big, menacing machinery run amuck. As a contrast, "Pavanne" by Morton Gould turns the machinery back down a notch or two. It suggests more of a delicate clockwork. Too bad my accordion is in the shop. It would have added to the polka flavor of "Hot Pretzels." The rich construction of "Here's That Rainy Day" makes it a pleasure to play. Such beautifully written music never grows old. We wrap things up with "I'm Beginning to See the Light" — "some jazzy fun to bid you farewell."

There it is in Kevin's own words - it's a **Must Have** album for everyone who enjoys old favorites, along with a few new goodies, all wrapped up in toe-tapping, joy-filled arrangements. CD only for \$20.00 postpaid from Kevin King, 3106 Sheffield Ave., Oakland, CA 94602.

## THE LOST RADIO BROADCASTS

Keith Chapman

Enos Shupp, Guest Reviewer

Reprinted from *The Stentor* with permission of the Friends of the Wanamaker Organ



In the field of organ recordings, the "Lost Radio Broadcasts" are distinctly different in several ways. I believe they are the only recordings to have spoken introductions for each selection before it is played. Considering that these CDs are from tapings taken off the air, the quality of sound is amazing, and generally satisfactory, resulting from painstaking work in producing and editing. What's more, these recordings were made when the entire 458 ranks were playing, as well as the couplers, etc., and what a difference from what has been heard in the past ten years.

Here we have the full panoply of color, breadth, power, and all the distinctive solo voices. Of course, with all the ranks playing, the softer effects are just endless. It is probably this variety of quieter registrations that are the most beguiling.

These discs present four programs of about a half-hour each (two per disc), taken from radio broadcasts made during the early 1970s. The list of selections ... shows the range of music played by Chapman. Yes, a good deal of it is from the Romantic era, and that is what this organ portrays with matchless ability.

As Keith Chapman points out in his commentary, the opening Bach selections are not historically correct, but are in much the

same vein as the Stokowski and Ormandy orchestral transcriptions. They are certainly enjoyable in their own right, and may well be preferred to the strident, sizzling sound of some "authentic" instruments. Indeed, this organ provides a Pedal Divide, which allows the opportunity to have four parts voiced, eliminating the omissions necessary on an instrument without such a novel device. A part is taken by each hand, while the left foot plays the bass notes in the bottom octave of the Pedal Clavier, and the right foot plays a fourth voice in the upper octaves of the Pedal, to which only manual stops are coupled through Pedal Divide. This is heard in the superlative playing of Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring."

Beyond question is the rich sound available for the Karg-Elert pieces. The Robert Hebble arrangements are just plain gorgeous, with the "Londonderry Air" truly memorable. The power and majesty of the full registrations in the Alain, Vierne, and other large-scale works are unmistakably characteristic of this magnificent instrument. Chapman performed on this instrument for twenty-three years, knowing every registration possibility intimately.

Throughout these two discs, we hear many examples of his interpretive artistry. The selections from the French repertoire are Chapman and this organ at their best. The "Finale" from the Vierne First Organ Symphony could hardly have a better performance than we have here. This organ can deliver French Romantic music such as most can only dream of.



The first three broadcasts actually intermingle numbers from a half-dozen or so programs, so as to present the very best pieces preserved from the broadcast series. There was precedent for doing this: Keith Chapman himself often spliced together various numbers that had previously been broadcast, to create hybrid programs that had both new and repeat material. The fourth broadcast is presented intact. It is a charming program of Christmas music with contrasting variety.

The four Bach selections have registrations that are perfectly in keeping with the period of music presented, and sound beautiful. Having studied with Richard Purvis, the celebrated organist-composer of San Francisco's Grace Cathedral, Chapman offers a performance of the famous arrangement of "Greensleeves" that bathes one in the aura and mystery of Christmas. The Daquin "Noel" variations are another example of the organ fitting the music to a "T."

Yet another remarkable thing about these recordings is the presence of the sound — nothing sounds like it is coming from a block away or loses its identity. At the same time, the reverberation of the Grand Court is there, giving a wonderful patina to the sound. This resonance is heard on the release of a chord at any dynamic level. Listening to all four programs is not ear-fatiguing, in fact, it is balm to the ear. This set is highly recommended to anyone who likes beautiful organ sound, enjoyable music, and of course, to those who admire this grand instrument.

The history of radio

broadcasts from the Wanamaker Store and its own radio station (WOO) is detailed in the accompanying 24-page booklet. This store was in the forefront of the emerging art form of radio broadcasting, some 50 years before these particular recordings were made. The information about the broadcasts is fascinating reading. A number of pages about the Wanamaker Organ will provide new information to most readers. Also included is a remembrance of Keith Chapman that captures his vibrant personality.

There are no written notes on the music; all of that is provided by the spoken introductions, which are separately tracked to enable one to eliminate them when desired by pre-programming one's CD player. In many instances, Chapman also provides some enlightening commentary on the registrations and stops used.

*(Review Editor's Note: "The set is available for a \$25.00 donation (plus \$5.00 postage - total \$30.00) from The Friends of the Wanamaker Organ, 224 Lee Circle, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-3726. Also, for an additional donation of \$6.00 (plus \$1.50 postage - total \$7.50) you can obtain the 32-page well-illustrated "Official Guide to the Wanamaker Organ" reviewed in the Journal, March 1997.)*

## SEASON'S GREETINGS Nigel Ogden & Choir

Although this album may not be 100% theatre organ, Nigel and the 4/14 Wurlitzer at Manchester's Granada Studios Tour take a leading role in making



this release a joyous holiday treat. Along with the organ and baritone soloist Adrian Blakeley "... the Altrincham Choral Society (of 100 voices under the direction of Steven Roberts) are the perfect musical hosts, bringing a selection of melodies that reflect many aspects of Christmas past and present."

The organ, Opus 2189, was originally installed in the Gaumont Theatre and was relocated to its present home in 1991. This 70-minute CD features a few old favorites, both sacred and secular, but its special appeal comes from the festive seasonal tunes we've never heard before along with refreshingly different arrangements of so many of the traditional favorites. The program begins with an up tempo organ medley of "Season's Greetings," "Frosty the Snowman," and "Christmas Roses." Midway through the disc the organ solos again with a cheery pairing of "Swingin' Sleighride" and "Snowcoach." Hairston's "Mary's Boy Child" is the organ's sole "traditional" solo, which this Wurlitzer handles beautifully. The full choir has a 5-1/2 minute "pop" medley featuring "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "Winter Wonderland," "Let It Snow (etc.)," "White Christmas," and "Jingle Bells."

Mr. Blakeley's selections, with Nigel's superb organ

accompaniment, are Mel Torme's "The Christmas Song," "A Winter's Dream" (rather like a holiday listing of "My Favorite Things,") and "O Holy Night." The choir joins Blakeley in a glorious a cappella arrangement of "The Three Kings." John Rutter and Sir David Willcocks have written some of the outstanding arrangements used by The Altrincham Choir (which is accompanied by either Ogden at the organ or by Lydia Bryan on piano, and sometimes by both.) Rutter is also the composer of this album's enchanting, rhythmic "Shepherd's Pipe Carol." The "San Day Carol," "I Saw Three Ships," and that traditional favorite, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" are heard here in Rutter arrangements.

Willcocks, who like Rutter, is a contemporary arranger, has provided the choir's lovely versions of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," the 16th Century hymn "Unto Us a Child is Born," "Once in Royal David's City" (without doubt one of the most beautiful carols ever written,) and "O Come All Ye Faithful." Many listeners will recognize the words of "O Little Town of Bethlehem" but not the melody for it is the Ralph Vaughn Williams version based on the original English traditional melody. Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" dates from 1741 and it's as beautifully performed here as it was then. However, "Sir Christemas" is a modern composition with some unusual chords and "Bethlehem" may be a complete surprise for it was composed by Schonberg and Boubilil who are better known for their smash-hit



musicals *Les Miserables* and *Miss Saigon!*

The choir, with only piano accompaniment, sing another recent carol - organist Nigel Ogden's slightly syncopated "Born for Us on Christmas Day." "Jingle Bells," in a robust version, again by Willcocks, closes the disc. All in all a completely captivating, well balanced program of seasonal favorites old and new which becomes even more enjoyable on repeated hearings. Thanks to organist Allen Mills for his valuable assistance in preparing this review of an album we highly recommend. *Season's Greetings* is available in CD only for \$19.00 postpaid (US\$ checks are OK) from The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust, 21 New Hall Road, Jericho, BURY, Lancs BL9 7TQ, UK.

## JOYCE'S CHRISTMAS FAVORITES

Joyce Ackerman

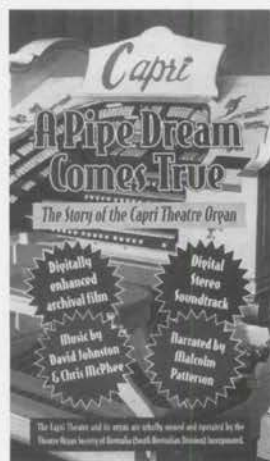


For her fourth release Joyce has selected 17 of her favorite Christmas melodies. About half come from the "pop" field; the other half being much-loved religious tunes. This 40-minute cassette again features Joyce's Conn 643 organ. Opening with "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," the other seasonal favorites are "Winter

Wonderland," "White Christmas," "Toyland," "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," "The Christmas Song," and "Jingle Bells." From the religious repertoire are "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "What Child is This?" "We Three Kings of Orient Are," "Away in the Manger," "Silent Night," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "O Come All Ye Faithful," and "O Holy Night." Included also are "The Skaters Waltz" and "Let There Be Peace on Earth," both quite appropriate to the season. With the tremors and reverb being used throughout, and apparently, a percussive stop to accent the melody line, it is again an unobtrusive album well suited for family gatherings around the Christmas tree. Cassette only for \$12.45 (postpaid) from Music Unlimited, Inc., P.O. Box 60, 612 Maple St., Hot Sulphur Springs, CO 80451. (charge orders to Mastercard, VISA and AmEx can be phoned to 1-800/525-6923.)

## VIDEO REVIEWS

### A PIPE DREAM COMES TRUE



As the title implies, this video documents one of the

theatre organ world's greatest success stories. It tells of the determined efforts of a dedicated group of organ buffs in Adelaide (the South Australia Chapter of TOSA) and how their hybrid instrument became one of the world's premiere concert instruments. The organ includes Wurlitzer 2/7 Opus 0748, a 1923 installation from Brisbane's Winter Garden Theatre. 1940 saw it relocated to Sydney's Plaza Theatre and then, in 1958, it moved again to organist Penn Hughes' home where ranks from Wurlitzer and other builders were added along with the slave console of Opus 1987 (a Style 270, 4/21 Wurlitzer in Melbourne's State Theatre.)

Mike Pfitzner bought the now 4/16 organ in 1968 and moved it cross-country to his home in Darwin. Though installed there, it was never playable. In 1974, the Adelaide TOSA(SA) group, wanting an organ of their own, bought it and again moved it cross-country into storage while they searched for its next home. Fortunately, the recently closed Capri Theatre in Goodwood (a suburb) was available. They bought the Capri, and on December 16, 1978, it was reopened with the classic film *Gone With the Wind*.

By combining archival still photographs, movie film, video tape, a concise narrative, an organ underscoring, and four solo organ selections, this stunning 55-minute video tells the story of the organ's travels and travails in a very entertaining style. The video opens with Chris McPhee (the 1993 overall winner in the ATOS Young Organist Competition) turning on the blower and inserting his registration disc into the

computer. We follow him under the stage to the console which he brings up to stage level playing Jerome Kern's "Ka-Lu-A" (a delightful novelty number from 1921's *Good Morning Dearie*.)

Part One of the Capri story covers the organ's history from 1960 to March 1983. Included are brief views of moving and rebuilding the organ and its console, constructing the organ chambers, and installing the organ — right up to the day before its inaugural concert. During "intermission," there is an amusing commercial for peanuts and Chris plays his lush arrangement of Kern's "Make Believe."

Part Two has scenes of the "reluctant bride" organ's debut on April 2, 1983, followed by the many activities that have taken place between 1983 and 1998. These include building the organ lift (completed in 1986,) the recordings made on the organ, how the organ has been used with other types of entertainment, the theatre's interior and exterior, renovations, the group's club nights and young organists programs, and the finishing touches given the organ by Ed Zollman and Walt Strony. The "completed" (at least for now) organ was introduced at Walt Strony's concert on December 3, 1995, exactly 21 years to the day the organ first arrived in Adelaide. Chris closes the video with an upbeat arrangement of "At the Codfish Ball" and lowers the console with a march, "Signal From Mars."

While this is not a detailed technical "nuts and bolts" story of how to rebuild and install an organ, it does show the sweat and



tears, and ultimately the pride and satisfaction that comes with success. Malcolm Patterson's narration has the right touch of humor and, like the photography and editing, is totally professional and always entertaining. David Johnson's background music is right on the mark; he's a real "pro" in film accompaniment. This video is Very Highly Recommended; it will inspire the individual or an organ club! There are lots of pointers showing what can be accomplished with enthusiasm and dedication. It's also an enjoyable layman's introduction to theatre organs. The video is available in the PAL format - which means it must be converted to NTSC for use in America. (Check your telephone yellow pages under "video" for that service.) The postpaid price is AUS \$39.95 (get an International Money Order from your bank) and send your order to Pipe Dream Video, P.O. Box 307, Goodwood 5034, South Australia.

## SOLENT SPECTACULAR!



### Paul Roberts

Fodor's '98 Great Britain travel guide states

Southampton is "not a particularly noteworthy place." Say what? Not only does Southampton have England's finest natural deep-water harbor (this waterway, separating the mainland from the Isle of Wight, is called The Solent) but it was from this port our Pilgrim Fathers embarked for the New World in 1620. Their Guildhall houses a rare dual-purpose, dual-console organ. It's the largest Compton ever built, Opus A269, with 4,000 pipes in over-the-proscenium chambers. For the 1980 ATOS Convention (and the 1976 ATOS Safari), this notable organ was played by the late Reginald Porter-Brown. According to Buckingham's *Compton List* (Journal, July 1996) the horseshoe theatre console controls 31 ranks (as well as the tuned and untuned percussions and the Melotone) while the unusual push-on, push-off illuminated draw-knob classic console controls all 51 ranks.

On this 50-minute video, Paul Roberts plays most of his selections on the theatre console. At the opening we hear Paul playing his signature tune, "I Want to Be Happy," while we see exterior views of the massive Guildhall with its distinctive clock tower and the artist's arrival by limousine. During Paul's first selection, "Star" (which is the title tune from 20th Century Fox's movie bio of Gertrude Lawrence) there are some harbor scenes of a cabin cruiser and what is probably the QE2. During "Anchors Aweigh" there are black and white shots of the ship Cardonia and the docking of an unidentified passenger liner. "Londonderry Air" receives an appropriately lush arrange-

ment while "Love Is Just Around the Corner," "I Only Have Eyes for You," "Lazy Bones," "Music, Music, Music," and "Whispering" are up-tempo. The camera catches all the keyboard action from several viewpoints. As a tribute to Porter-Brown, Paul plays a choo-choo version of his signature tune "Oh, Mr. Porter" as we watch a steam train leaving a station.

Paul's *Nautical Fantasy* is next. Not played as a continuous medley (there is a fade out between the tunes), apparently it's needed for registration changes as we never see Paul using any of the combination pistons. *The Fantasy* has "Drunken Sailor," "Life on the Ocean Waves," "Blow the Man Down" (with a glimpse of a wind-surfer loosing self and sail into the drink,) "Portsmouth" (has several views of the magnificent stern of the sailing ship *Victory* on which, in 1805, Admiral Horatio Nelson won the Battle of Trafalgar but also lost his life) "Eternal Father" (has aerial views of Southampton's docks, warehouses, and railroad yards,) and "Sailing" (with harbor views of one sailboat underway and many more moored to their buoys.) "Keep Your Sunny Side Up" is accompanied by some views of the docks at low tide and a photograph of organist Richard Smithers who was also associated with the Guildhall organ. Gershwin's "Someone to Watch Over Me" is enhanced with a look at the *Calshot Spit Lightship* tied up to a dock, several organ chamber photos and views of the auditorium's ceiling. Next Paul moves to the classical con-

sole for a 9-minute group of melodies: a lovely "Pastoral" by Haynes, "O God Our Help in Ages Past" (which has views of what may be part of an ancient Roman wall and the Pilgrim's statue in Mayflower Park.) During the "Tocatta for a Feast Day" we see a sprinkling of fireworks and for "While Shepherd Watch Their Flocks" there are views of shopping mall Christmas decorations. The video ends as Paul repeats his signature tune and we watch him depart in the limousine.

The title of the selection appears at the beginning of each tune, but the lack of titles for *The Solent* scenes detracts from the viewer's enjoyment unless he is completely familiar with the area. While Paul isn't as flashy as some "Blackpool Style" performers, this is a nicely varied program and, of far great importance, his registrations feature all this Compton's unique voices at one time or another; it is a delightful listen! The video is in the American NTSC format for \$30.00 postpaid from Cardinal Productions, P.O. Box 22035, Beachwood, OH 44122.

Note:

ATOS WEBSITE

<http://www.ATOS.org>



# The Sounds of Silent Movies

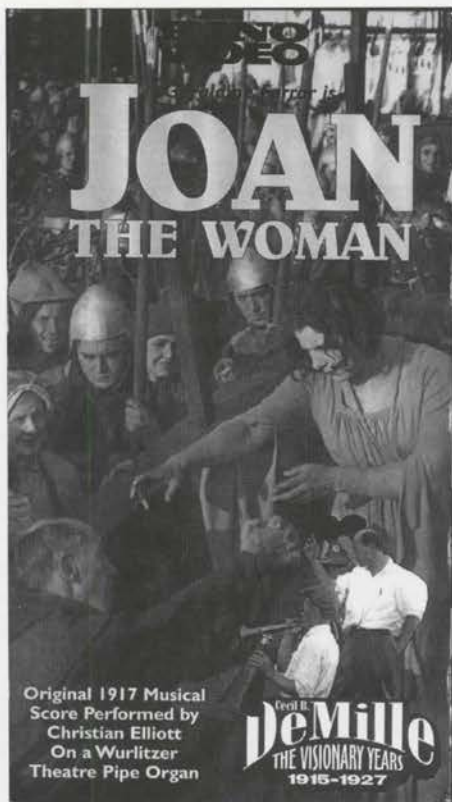
by Robert Gates

While silent film videos made with pipe organ backgrounds are being withdrawn from the market one by one, it is heartening to see that some of today's organists are producing new ones. Films have been issued featuring Andy Crow and Chris Elliott. A performance by Dennis James may also reach the market. This column applauds these musicians, for each enhances our heritage in his own way.

## Joan The Woman (1917) with Geraldine Farrar Organist, Chris Elliott

In *Joan the Woman*, Chris Elliott gives us an immaculate reading of the 1916 music composed for the film and the mighty sounds of a good-sized Wurlitzer recorded with modern equipment. The music is taken from a complete copy of the "piano conductor's score" written by William Furst. Elliott has followed it literally, except for some improvisation required when Joan is burned at the stake, where the score and the indicated orchestral instrumentation did not transcribe readily to the organ. Furst's pleasing composition mirrors the mood of the film with classical and romantic strains; some of the themes are familiar, some original. Elliott's many changes of registration and tremolo settings provide a bouquet of tone colors that remains fresh throughout this long (138-minute) film.

The organ is the 3/23 J. Ross Reed Wurlitzer, installed in the Sexton auditorium, Pasadena, California. It speaks with the clarity and minimal reverberation typical of an auditorium installation, but does not sound harsh. The playback is usually excellent, but there are some short periods of distortion, especially near the end, where the (electronic) 32-ft. Bombarde apparently overloaded some link in the audio chain.



The film, an early Cecil B. DeMille epic, follows the historic Joan of Arc's triumphs and betrayal with variable fidelity. It starts in her early womanhood at the time her "voices" and visions tell her that she must save France from the English. Because of two miracles she performs, she is appointed by Charles VII to command the French forces. She wins the campaign at Orleans and is celebrated as a heroine, but jealous enemies vow that she will be put to death and scheme against her. She was burned alive in 1431, when she was only nineteen years old.

DeMille brings a love interest to her story (thus *Joan the Woman*) by having her encounter Eric Trent (Wallace Reid), a handsome Burgundian, when he commands a raid on her village. He is wounded, she nurses him to health, they part but meet frequently during the film, usually as military opponents. Their second-last encounter, in which he desperately tries to save her from immolation, has tragic consequences for Joan. A prologue and epilogue set in World War I provide a dramatic form for this exciting screenplay.

The Maid is played by the remarkable Geraldine Farrar, noted even more for her lyric soprano than for her

silent acting. She made fourteen films in five years, beginning with *Carmen* in 1915 (what a pity not to hear her in this). Typically, she would arrive in Hollywood in May, stay until October when it was again time for her concert "tournees." Although she labeled them as tours in her autobiography\*, they were more than that; she made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1906 and, 500 performances later, retired in 1922.

DeMille demanded that all battle scenes be as realistic as possible, resulting in many an injury. In one segment showing the fight for Orleans, several men were to tumble off a forty-foot battlement. In the first takes, however, they only jumped, concerned about the consequences of uncontrolled descent. But the next day, learning that this exciting sequence might be deleted, 25 volunteered for the stunt, offering to go without pay if they were not convincing in the fall. As can be seen, their acrobatics were all that one could wish.

The "soldiers" were not the only ones to suffer during the takes. According to a press release of the time, Joan's armor weighed 100 pounds, and she was required to stand knee-deep in a moat hours on end for repeated takes. She was petrified of horses, especially the bad-tempered mount she had to ride (he once ran away with her aboard), but ride she did, except in some distant shots where a double was used.

The review copy was unsteady during a five-minute period and there was one sprocket-skip, all of which could have been corrected during the translation to video tape. But the picture quality is extraordinary for such an early film, with only a few tiny continuity jumps to suggest the deletion of a frame or two.

In brief: Terrific Elliott and DeMille!

From CPE Productions, P.O. Box 756, Santa Clara, CA 95052 or Kino International Corp., 333 W. 39th St., New York, NY 10018. 800/562-3330.

\*Farrar, Geraldine, *The Autobiography of Geraldine Farrar*; Such Sweet Compulsion, The Greystone Press, New York, 1938.



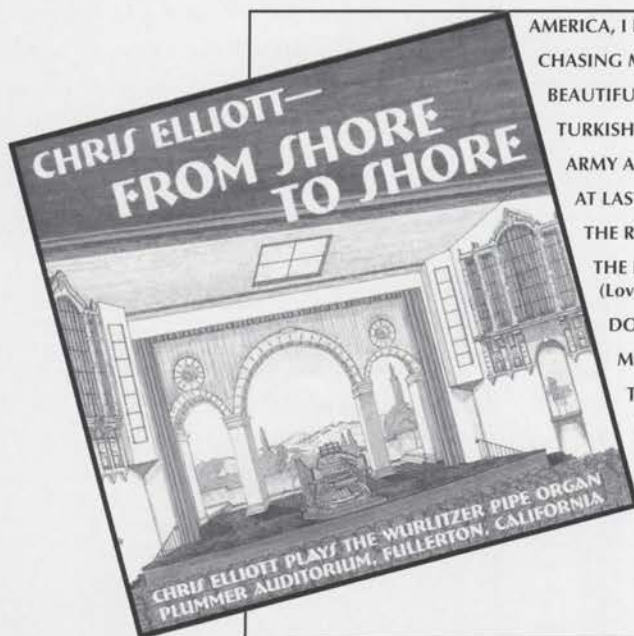


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## 5TH AVENUE

Seattle, Washington

Opened: September 24, 1926

Architect: Robert C. Reamer

Capacity: 2420 (Now 2130)

Organ: Wurlitzer 4/17, Style 260 SP,  
Opus 1388

Grauman's may have its fame, in addition to all those hand and foot prints, but for the real emperor of Chinese theatres, one has to look two states north. The 5th Avenue was the city's first large movie palace since the Coliseum (1916) and held the title of largest until the arrival of the Seattle (Paramount) eighteen months later. Exceptionally well-preserved throughout its life, the house was carefully renovated in 1980 as a performing arts center.

The theatre sits, almost anonymously, behind the eight-story Skinner Building, with no more expression of its presence on the facade than any other business. At street level, however, the entrance announces itself with a riot of colorfully painted Chinese motifs, a scheme which continues unabated throughout the interior. Architect Reamer opted for a Chinese interior to reflect Seattle's growing importance as "The Gateway to the Orient," and worked closely with orientalist Gustav F. Liljestrom to insure its authenticity. Liljestrom, chief designer for S. & G Gump of San Francisco, was also responsible for importing many of the furnishings. The actual decoration was carried out by Powers Studios.

The 5th Avenue opened with the usual mix of screen and stage fare, the latter provided by Fanchon & Marco. In August 1928, the stage shows were moved to the Seattle and the 5th

Avenue went to a screen-only policy, but the orchestra was retained. It survived as a movie house until 1978. A year later a group of forty-three area businesses created a non-profit corporation to renovate and operate the theatre. It has been back in business since July 3, 1980.

The organ was identical to that in the Broadway, Portland (Opus 1380), another house in the same circuit. The two extra ranks were a Dulciana and that inevitable Northwest set, a Krumet; the 32' Diaphone was omitted. Harry Reed was the first organist, but the premiere was given by Oliver Wallace, always a Seattle favorite. In 1969 the organ was sold to Bill Breuer for his new pizza palace in Redwood City, California. Enlarged to 23 ranks, it is still playing there.

*Steve Levin*

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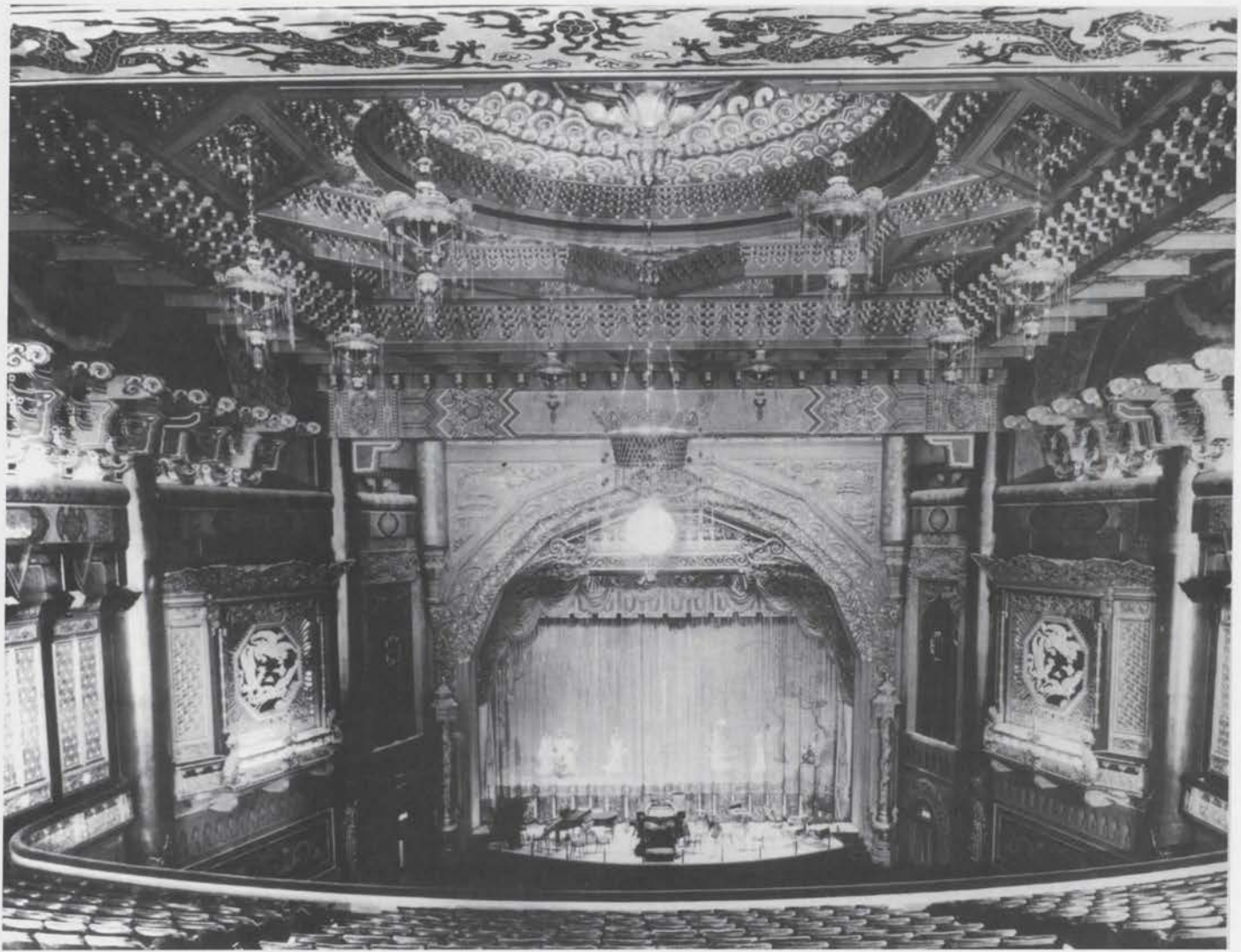
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*Opposite: This is what patrons saw as they entered. The auditorium is at the left; balcony traffic crosses a pair of bridges to reach the seats. Save for a solid-colored carpet, the view is the same today.*

*Above: Hardly an inch of the auditorium is unadorned. The organ spoke through the projecting "Ho-ho bird" grilles, not the smaller openings next to the arch. Both the console and orchestra elevated.*

*Right: By 1926 Wurlitzer was able to produce specially decorated consoles, but this one was a standard paneled job. The gold stencil work, applied at the theatre, has survived.*

*Photos: Theatre - Terry Helgesen Collection, THS; Console - William Bunch Collection.*





# Closing Chord

## GEORGE F. THOMPSON



Longtime THEATRE ORGAN editor, Charter and Honorary Member George F. Thompson passed away July 9, 1998. George served as editor of this Journal from 1961 to 1982. George also served from time to time as an ATOS board member. George and his late wife Vi were selected as ATOS Honorary Members during the 1971 Seattle Convention.

George was an avid theatre organ and rail/steam engine fan. Following a stint in the World War II Navy, George and Vi opened the Greenfield Theatre, Greenfield, California. With the encroachment of television, they closed the operation in 1957. George served for many years after as the manager of the piano and organ department of Gadsby's Music in Salinas, California. George retired from this position in the early 1980s.

George was born 82 years ago in Fresno, California. His father worked for the Santa Fe railroad. At an early age, George developed an interest in railroads. This writer and George were known to travel dozens of miles along Highway 101 in Central California in hot pursuit of a passing steam engine — usually Southern Pacific 4449!

George worked as a theatre "gopher" in San Jose as a kid. The the-

atre "bug" bit him early as well. He recalled in remarkable detail the American, Liberty, and California Theatres in downtown San Jose. The [then] bigger city called and he went to work in San Francisco as a projectionist in many of the downtown theatres. George was full of wonderful theatre stories.

George recalled working in the San Francisco Golden Gate Theatre while the Marx Brothers were appearing on stage. The afternoon matinee was about to begin and nowhere to be found were the Marx Brothers, excepting Groucho. George said it was astounding to watch Groucho go out on stage and improvise an act around his missing brothers. When the other brothers finally made an appearance, Groucho was more than ready to take them on. What one would give to have seen this! There were a million more such stories. One favorite centered upon his first visit to the big San Francisco Fox. George was asked to focus the projector, upon which George exclaimed to the chief operator "... where's the damn screen? ..." The chief directed him to a pair of opera glasses to view a postage stamp-size screen over 100 feet away.

George and his late wife Vi were gracious hosts to an army of ATOS veterans passing through the Salinas area. Their house was open at almost any hour - with a bit of notice. However, one visiting fireman tested their hospitality. On an Easter Sunday morning, a couple arrived at the front door to "play George's Wurlitzer." The couple became very angry that George would not turn on the instrument for them - it was not even installed. It never seemed to occur to these odd-balls that George and Vi might want to "sleep-in" on Easter Sunday morning.

George was the proud owner of Wurlitzer Opus 1900, a Style 165 from San Francisco's Amazon Theatre of 1928. George, son Ron, "Tiny" James, and Carl Hansen removed the organ from its transplanted installation in a

Watsonville, California, Methodist Church. A feature in THEATRE ORGAN on George and his Wurlitzer appeared in the Summer 1966 (Vol. VIII, No. 2) issue. George fostered the interest and membership in a host of area organ enthusiasts including Bert Atwood, Bert Robinson, Bob Sanders, and this writer to name-drop a few. Visits to George and Vi were always great.

As the years moved along, he lost a great many of his close friends in the theatre organ world. Al Mason, Erwin "Cap" Young, W. "Tiny" James, W. Stu Green and by now dozens of other had passed away. George could not bear to listen to the wonderful little Wurlitzer he had in his home. It was sold to Bert Robinson and left in the home with hopes George might play it or have it played from time to time. Such was not the case. Prior to the 1990 Fresno Regional Convention, Paul Quarino stopped by and played the stuffing out of the 2/8 instrument. It was the first time in years that it was played. So it remained with the organ, until it was removed in January of this year, following Vi's passing.

The loss of both Vi and George present a gap in this writer's life which will never be filled. However, there are gobs of happy memories and great stories to try and fill this void. As has been said before in various Closing Chords, George and Vi were part of the ATOE/ATOS machine that kept this organization running from its inception to the early 1980s. They were both part of that seemingly tireless band who volunteered their time to serve this organization — often to some degree of abuse by those not aware that they WERE the editorial staff and circulation department. The resources of the National Geographic Society they were not, but you would NEVER have known it.

Good-by my friends, you have been wonderful folks to know and cannot be replaced.

ATOS is the poorer without you both.

*Tom DeLay*



## ROBIN RICHMOND



*Robin Richmond and Don Thompson, Cambridge, 1954.*

Robin Richmond passed away in July from complications due to emphysema. Robin was best known in recent years for his genial work as compere (NC) of the BBC program *The Organist Entertains* and for his production of various organ spectacles at the Royal Albert Hall and similar venues. However, older organ fans remember him, with Reginald Dixon, as one of the two most popular organists in Britain. Robin was born in London in 1912 and educated at the famous and tiny Westminster School. In later years when the BBC decided to dispense with the practice of having their own announcer introduce the organ programs, organists were auditioned for their speaking voices. Many who came from regional working class backgrounds had accents which were deemed by the snobs in charge at the time, as being unsuitable for broadcasting. Robin, with his public school accent, was a natural and was eventually invited to emcee many other non-organ programs on the BBC, such as the popular "Housewives' Choice" daily record program.

Robin's first theatre organ appearance in public was the Plaza, Picadilly. But it was at The Astoria, Streatham, in South London, where he was first engaged as a permanent member of the staff as assistant to Al Bollington. This was followed by positions as solo organist at various other suburban London theatres, culminating in a move to the West End and a job at the Paramount, Tottenham Court Road. In the meantime, Robin had bought the

first two Hammond organs ever imported into England and was responsible for popularizing this instrument and make the name known to the general public. It is as a Hammond player that he achieved a whole new level of fame in London, playing in several swank nightclubs as well as at the theatre. When TV was introduced, Robin was also seen regularly at the Hammond on many programs.

In later years, his career had a resurgence with the popularity of "The Organist Entertains" and he did several tours giving concerts in North America. He and Reginald Dixon are the two organists credited with maintaining the interest of the general public in the theatre organ in England long after the US audiences had moved on to other things.

His beloved wife Renee died in December. After that Robin seemed to lose interest in life and Renee's passing perhaps accelerated his own decline.

On a personal note, I met Robin in 1954 when he was appearing at the New Theatre, Cambridge, in vaudeville, with the Hammond. I was at that time a student at the university. However he befriended me and we remained close friends until his death. When he was playing at the Celebrity Restaurant in London in the fifties, he used to arrange for me to get in free of charge (as a starving student I could ill afford such a luxurious and elegant place) and kept me supplied with drinks so that I could spend the evening listening to him play. Robin had huge hands and could easily span an octave and a half, which enable him to produce some amazing chords. On one occasion I remarked on how much I had enjoyed his version of "Song of The Dawn" especially the chords, and wondered what they all were. Next day by mail I received a beautiful hand-written arrangement which he had done for me. I wonder how many famous organists would do that for a fan?

In later years, he and Renee came to stay with me in Toronto and in San Francisco. I arranged several concert tours for him. Our last meeting was in May of this year when we had a pub

lunch together near his home. It was obvious at the time that he had not long to go. He had to be helped across the street and after sitting down could not talk for about ten minutes. He was very frail, and when I asked him what he was doing with his life, his reply was "just waiting."

He had many wonderful stories to tell of his life in show business and kept me amused even on that last occasion, once he had gotten his breath back.

I will always be grateful to Robin Richmond for his kindness and encouragement when I was a young fan and for his assistance in furthering my career by featuring me on "The Organist Entertains" whenever he could. His style, and that of Reginald Dixon, were often denigrated by the "purists" as being banal and "all four-in-a-bar" but the two of them kept the organ alive in England. Robin will be sorely missed by many people apart from myself. *Don Thompson*

## PRESTON JOEL KAUFMANN

Twenty years ago I began working with Preston Kaufmann and Tom B'hend. At that time, John Ledwon and I were planning the 1979 American Theatre Organ Society's 24th Annual Convention. Preston and Tom designed and produced all the convention advertising and the strikingly beautiful and colorful convention souvenir brochure. Preston was also completing his first book; the story of the San Francisco Fox Theatre. Published in 1980, its 373 pages described in fascinating words, drawings and photographs, the theater's design and construction, its 34 years of operation, and its unfortunate, indeed, wanton destruction in 1963.

Since late in 1972, the team of Tom and Preston had been assembling what today is probably the world's largest and most complete collection of photographs, documents, blue prints, memorabilia, and articles about both theatres and theatre organs; this is, of course, The B'hend and Kaufmann Archives.

When I became President of the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society in 1980, I enlisted Preston's help to



design and produce our monthly concert flyers. Over the following nine years, Preston created almost every one of the LATOS flyers and brochures. In 1984, Preston served also as our Concert Producer. Because of his years of bookkeeping for *The Console Magazine* and *Showcase Publications*, he was named LATOS Treasurer for 1987. Again, for the 1987 ATOS Los Angeles Convention, Tom and Preston designed and produced the advertising and souvenir brochure. In that same year, Preston produced the Theatre Historical Society's publication, "Skouras-ized for Showman-ship." The first two volumes of David Junchen's *Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ* were designed and typeset by Preston. Volume 1, with 432 pages, was published in 1985 and was followed by Volume 2, with 518 pages, in 1990.

Tom B'hend and Preston Kaufmann were undoubtedly two of the most controversial personalities in both the theatre and theatre organ worlds. They called things exactly the way they saw them and let the chips fall where they may. Working with either one of them was always somewhat of a challenge. Some of our frequently frustrating feuds and fights were frenzied furors. (Sorry about that but Tom taught me the joys of alliteration.) Both Tom and Preston were often misunderstood by those whose own motives and actions were questionable. Both could be stubborn, hard headed, even belligerent in their pursuit of truth and what they perceived as being the best way to promote and preserve both theatres and their organs. Unfortunately, both theatres and organs seem to attract far too many people whose only goal is self promotion. My respect for both Preston and Tom continued to grow over the years as I came to fully appreciate their complete dedication to doing what they felt in their hearts was right and best for theatre and theatre organ preservation and promotion. They would never consider settling for anything that was second best in quality. Dave Junchen wrote in his *Encyclopedia's* acknowledgment, "Preston J. Kaufmann is responsible for the excellent layout and graphic design of these volumes. He constant-

ly monitored every step of the publishing process to ensure books of the highest possible quality. When the author would say, 'Oh, that's good enough,' Preston would counter, 'No, it's not. We're going to do it right.'"

More recently, we argued loud and long over plans for the publication of the Wurlitzer volume of the *Encyclopedia*. I, like many others, wanted the book to be as David Junchen wrote it; not as Preston proposed to rewrite and expand it with pages and pages of added material which he found in his studies of all the Wurlitzer Company's documents. The book was published late in 1995; a year and a half after Tom's untimely death. When I received my copy of the 448 page Volume 3 I told Preston that, as the reviewer for THEATRE ORGAN, I would read it and write the review as if I knew nothing of the controversy (which is on-going even today) that surrounds it. I did just that and the review stated "This book is highly recommended as a notable addition to the Encyclopedia." Tom and Preston told me in one of our pre-publication arguments, "If the whole Wurlitzer story isn't told now, it never will be." They were correct. Once again, I salute them for their determination to do what they believed was right.

Preston has left us the remarkable legacy of two outstanding books that bear his name as author. In addition to all of Preston's behind the scenes contributions to *The Console*, *The ATOS International News*, and *The Los Angeles Newsreel*. Also, when he served as the LATOS Treasurer, Preston designed a new accounting system which is still used today with only a few minor modifications to fit the accountant's computer system. Today's LATOS log is the same one Preston adapted from his 1987 Convention design.

Preston's last publication was the beautiful LATOS brochure celebrating the 25th anniversary of San Gabriel's Wurlitzer organ in 1997. He had only 30 days to produce it and he came in on time and on budget. Despite the sometimes frustrating fights, I truly enjoyed working with Preston for I learned he, like Tom B'hend, was motivated only by the desire to do what was best and what was right.

He's been my friend for 20 years and I miss him. Rest in peace, dear friend.

Ralph O. Beaudry

## DAVID KELSEY

by Mike Salinas

David Kelsey, one of the best known and talented musicians and nightclub entertainers in the Bay Area, died suddenly at his San Francisco home on Monday, June 15, of heart failure.

Kelsey, by far the most popular and celebrated organist and pianist ever to work the San Francisco club circuit, entertained audiences in the Bay Area, Hawaii, Canada, Palm Springs, and Los Angeles for over 30 years.

Kelsey's unexpected death shocked his countless fans in San Francisco. Born in Miranda, California 58 years ago, Kelsey lived in San Francisco since his youth. He is survived by his mother, Ruth Kelsey, a brother, Kent Kelsey and a sister, Genie Rowland, of Holbrook, Arizona.

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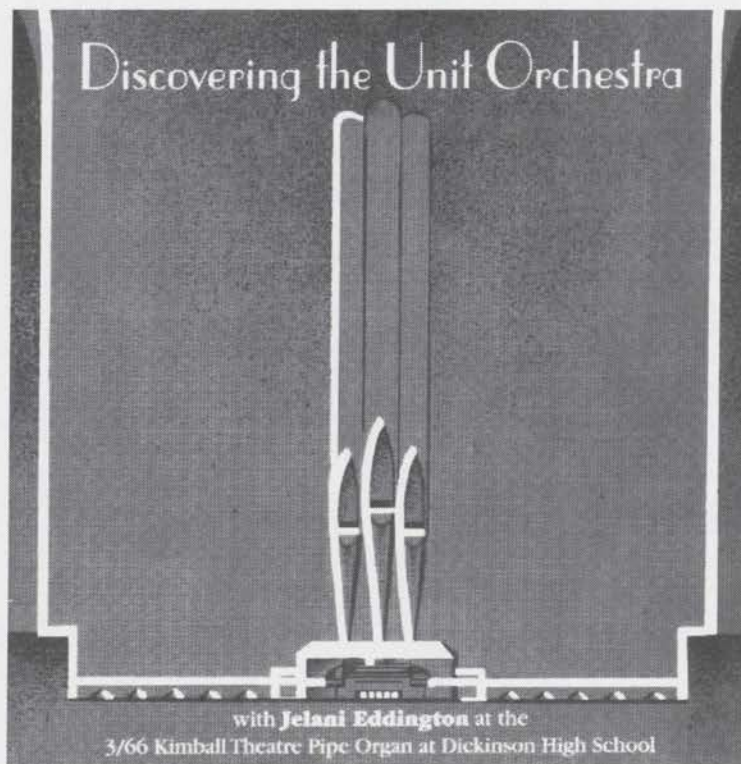
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# AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY CHAPTER NEWS

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1998

## ATTENTION CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS:

For those able to transmit via e-mail, chapter notes can now be sent in via the editor's e-mail address: [tdelaycalifornia@worldnet.att.net](mailto:tdelaycalifornia@worldnet.att.net). We highly suggest this method be used.

Many requests have been issued regarding chapter notes deadlines. These deadlines are as follows:

January 10.....March/April Issue  
 March 10.....May/June Issue  
 May 10.....July/August Issue  
 July 10.....September/October Issue  
 September 10.....November/December Issue  
 November 10.....January/February Issue  
 Please post these dates in a handy spot as they hold firm from year to year.

Repeated requests have been made by many of our faithful chapter writers for "rules and regulations" regarding chapter notes for publication in THEATRE ORGAN.

1. Please limit chapter notes to two (2) pages, double-spaced and typewritten.

2. Please limit chapter photographs to no more than two (2) photos per chapter notes entry per magazine. Please do not submit photos of animals, items/subjects not pertinent to the theatre organ, or long-distance or out-of-focus photos. If a photo is over/under exposed it likely will not be published.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the number of photos supplied for chapter notes, whether used or not, these photos cannot be returned unless specified in advance with a supplied self addressed, stamped envelope. It is strongly suggested that, if a prized or otherwise rare photo is to be included to make a laser print. The laser print is fully capable of reproduction and the correspondent keeps the original photo.

3. Do not list food or refreshment items. The mere mention of refreshments having been served is more than enough. In reality, for Journal chapter notes, food and refreshments need not be mentioned. This is a good realm for the chapter newsletter.

4. Similarly, please list no more than two (2) song titles per artist. As many artists prepare a program which they take from venue to venue, it is unfair to the artist to list song titles which might then appear in many varied chapter notes. Further, if it is desired to have two (2) song titles listed, please place the title in "Quotations." Films and similar names should be underlined as this will indicate *italics*.

5. The preferred spelling is THEATRE not theater.

6. Please do not include matters of chapter elections or other internal chapter structural activities. Again, these matters are best served by the local chapter newsletter.

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## CEDAR RAPIDS

William H. Peck: 319/393-4645

**Cedar Rapids, Iowa.** The "Iowa Organ Weekend Adventure," October 16-18, 1998, is being hosted by the Cedar Rapids Chapter. If you are planning to fly, Cedar Rapids is served by Northwest, United, TWA, Delta, US Air, and American Eagle Airlines. The hotel will provide free transportation from the airport, about eight miles, use the phone in the airport lobby. The bus terminal, Greyhound and Trailways, is four blocks from the hotel, but the hotel will send transportation if called. Sorry, train buffs, there is no passenger rail service into Cedar Rapids. The hotel, Crowne Plaza, 350 1st Ave., NE, Cedar Rapids, provides parking for registered guests at \$4.00 per day (24 hours).

The Cedar Rapids Chapter will have a record shop during the convention. Anyone who is interested in having their CD's on sale during the regional can send the material to Iowa Organ Weekend Adventure Record Shop, %Ray Frischkorn, 3702 Antelope Court NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402. 319/364-6300. Convention registration will be open at noon on Friday, October 16, in the lobby of the convention hotel. For the lineup of instruments, venues, and artists, see the July/August issue of the THEATRE ORGAN. The convention registration and the hotel reservation forms are on the back cover of the same issue. *George K. Baldwin*

## CUMBERLAND VALLEY

Robert Eyer, Jr.: 717/264-7886

**Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.** The Capitol Theatre in Chambersburg, home of the chapter's Möller, continues to encourage community interest and enjoyment of the instrument. The management and staff have been most supportive of chapter activities in the theatre, the latest example of which was another TGIF organ event

over a Friday lunch hour in early July. Bob Eyer, Jr. entertained an appreciative audience with a variety of musical favorites.

The following week, the Penn State campus in State College presented organist Don Kinnier accompanying two silent "Eastern Westerns" as part of the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts. Though Mr. Kinnier had no theatre organ to play, his electronic organ and synthesizer nevertheless were well suited to the venue, and the audience clearly enjoyed his playing. The Betzwood Film Archive pictures shown were the first (1904) and last (1919) Westerns shot in Pennsylvania: Luvinie's *Great Train Robbery*, and Louis Bennison (the "Smilin' Cowboy") in *Sandy Burke of the U-Bar-U*, respectively. *Bob Maney*

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

David Braun: 941/957-4266

**Tampa, Florida.** Our May meeting held at the Tampa Theatre was opened by our president, Dave Braun, at 2:00 p.m. Dave thanked John Bell, the manager of the grand old Tampa, for making this date possible for us. Richard Gleason and Bob Hill were publicly thanked for their dedication and expertise that has kept this great Wurlitzer 3/12 playing every day before the movie. Many, many people have been introduced to this wonderful instrument because of ATOS and the faithful Central Florida Chapter. The Tampa Theatre is always ready to help promote ATOS, our chapter and this magnificent organ. It had been discovered that only a few members were taking advantage of open console so it was decided to make a point of asking each and every member to come and play something at this meeting. Dave Braun and Bob Baker each played some lively music and then the fun began. Dave and Bob were more than helpful showing and explaining the "mysteries" of playing in the Tampa Theatre. We had beginners and experts all enjoying the the-

atre organ and its beautiful voices. How could anyone not enjoy a turn playing a Wurlitzer in such surroundings?

June found us at the Pinellis Park Auditorium where our 2/9 Wurlitzer is being installed. We are waiting for the city of Pinellis Park to correct some problems that make it impossible to complete this project. It was announced at this meeting, Pinellis Park is ready to start renovations on the building that shall make our installation more professional and easier to maintain. We are anxiously looking forward to this. Now we are thinking ahead. Mr. Mike Kinerk, an ATOS Convention planning consultant and a chapter member, spoke to us about hosting a regional or national convention. There has never been either in Florida. He was most helpful in explaining all the intricacies of such a project. Our board of directors and the members have the summer to investigate this huge undertaking. More news later!

Our busy member, Dick Leis, was invited last month to the Manasota Chapter's meeting to show and demonstrate his collection of barrel organs. As usual, it was well received. We are very proud to have Dick as a member. *Peg Mayer*

## DELAWARE VALLEY

Harry Linn, Jr.: 610/566-1764

**Pottstown, Pennsylvania.** On March 1, TOSDV was invited to attend a joint meeting with fellow ATOS members of neighboring chapters at the Capitol Theatre in York, Pennsylvania. Susquehanna Valley Chapter hosted the meeting and featured representatives from Cumberland Valley Chapter and the independent Free State Club as well as TOSDV.

After welcoming comments by Susquehanna Valley hosts, we were introduced to the artist for the day, TOSDV member, Wayne Zimmerman. Wayne entertained us for the next 1-1/2 hours on the 3/17 mostly Wurlitzer theatre pipe

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## DELAWARE VALLEY cont.

organ. His musical choices concentrated on composers who had birthdays in February and March. The concert was enjoyable and the environment of the Capitol Theatre most pleasant. Open console and refreshments followed the concert. Some of the TOSDV members tried their hand at the console and found the organ quite enjoyable to play, as Wayne had promised. Our thanks and appreciation to the Susquehanna Valley Chapter for the invitation!



Delaware Valley 1998 officers (L to R): Al Derr, Treasurer; Harry Linn, Jr., President; Norman Rosander, Vice-President & Program Chairman; Tom Keiser, Secretary (not present). Tom Rotunno photo

We met at the home of Dottie and Jim Shean in Levittown, Pennsylvania, for our May meeting. We had a nice crowd of about 30 people in attendance, in spite of poor weather. Several members took turns entertaining the group. The highlight of the day was Candi Carly-Roth who played a wide range of musical favorites in many different styles. As most of us are aware, Candi is partial to country-western stylings and practically owns this genre among the professional organists in our area. We were treated to songs with a fine country accent and we can all say that we would like to hear more of her playing at future club events.

For some who might have missed the last visit or two to Dottie and Jim's house, they have upgraded the organ to a three-manual console. This Wurlitzer console, updated with solid-state electronics, replaces the old two-manual console which had replaced the original console. These changes were needed because of the

addition of new ranks and accessories to the organ. It is a fine home installation and one in which the Shean's can take much pride. At the end of the day, we were all delighted to have been invited to share such a delightful afternoon of good music, good food and good fellowship. Thanks Dottie and Jim.

We sadly report that Muriel Page, wife of TOSDV and Northlandz organ crew member Melvin C. Page, passed away on March 31. We offer condolences to Mel and his family. Dick Metzger



Candy Carly-Roth at Shean's 3 manual Wurlitzer console. Jim Shean photo

## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Donald L. Phipps: 508/990-1214

**New Bedford, Massachusetts.** Our final social before fall was at Babson College, May 3, with the Wurlitzer first; pleasure before business for a change. "Home-grown" member talent demonstrated various interpretations of familiar tunes and all were most listenable. Bill Forbush began with "Moonlight and Roses" for his mini-concert, followed by Stu Hinchliffe with a train whistle as his natural opening, being a retired railroad employee. Bruce Netten played next, followed by Garrett Shanklin, Gordon Creamer, President Don Phipps, Treasurer Dave Ossinger, and Carol Moeller. Carol is the daughter of the late Lewis Bray, a well-known Boston area theatre organist.

Mr. Phipps then presented a grateful Jim Cook with another \$500 check to assist in his son John's scholarship expenses.

John has "blossomed" with his classical training to add to his theatre organ expertise.

The usual June meeting for EMCATOS did not take place due to the lack of availability of the Richard Knight Auditorium. This summer, our organ crew will have a much-deserved vacation with only some wiring work and routine maintenance required. Stanley C. Garniss

## GARDEN STATE

Cathy Martin: 973/256-5480

**Trenton, New Jersey.** Headlines in our chapter newsletter *Pedals and Pipes* announced a special benefit concert on Sunday May 17, with Frank Cimmino as guest artist. Once again, President Cathy and her husband Bob Martin generously offered their large music room with the 3/24 Griffith-Beach theatre pipe organ for the concert. Flyers were sent to members and friends reminding them that, due to limited space, reservations were required.

Frank Cimmino is a well-known organist who played in our area during the seventies and eighties. He was house organist at the Suburban Restaurant on its 3/17 Wurlitzer, and during those years, many theatre pipe organ devotees traveled to Wanaque, New Jersey, to dine, dance and enjoy Frank's music. It was a sad time for many of our members when the restaurant and its great Wurlitzer burned.

In the late 80s, Frank moved to Florida. His return to New Jersey for a concert was welcomed by all. Over 100 people attended the concert. Frank has a special theatre organ style that pleases. His humorous quips and nostalgia made the afternoon a memorable one for all of us. We thank all who contributed to our organ fund-raiser. A special big thank you, Frank Cimmino and Bob and Cathy Martin.

A business meeting and open console was held May 24, at the home of Everett and Cathy Oliver in Brielle, New Jersey. They have a large music and library room which contains a beautiful 3/11 Wurlitzer Style 235 that attracts many members and organists. Vice President Bob Miloche conducted a brief business meeting. He introduced Bob Balfour who had obtained three rare copies of Ben Hall's book "The Best Remaining Seats." Bob asked the members to examine the books and an auction followed with the proceeds donated.

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Frank Cimmino at Bob Martin's 3/24 Griffith Beach. *Jinny Vanore photo*

Martin's 3/24 Griffith-Beach pipe organ. Students sat on the floor and gazed in amazement at the white and gold console with the pipes behind the glass shutters.

GSTOS's well known organist Ralph Ringstad, skillfully held their attention demonstrating and explaining the various sounds of pipes and toy counter. He accompanied a short silent movie filled with steam engine sounds, whistles and antique cars. Students asked many questions and interest was high. They sang and some played the organ. All enjoyed hearing Superintendent Dr. Bender play them a song. We hope they will remember and maintain an interest in the organ. Further plans include having this group return a few years from now.

Many thanks go to the Martins who love having the children visit their home. Most of all, thank you Ralph Ringstad, for a marvelous program. *Jinny Vanore*

99. An extensive open console session and refreshments put the bloom on the evening.

A rainy June 13 saw stalwart chapter members traveling to the wooded scenic home of Betty and Ted Wood in Salem, New York, for the annual picnic finale to the 1997-98 season of club activities. The Wood's are the proud owners of a superb 3/20 Wurlitzer which gave members many hours of pleasure during the afternoon's open console session. Thanks to Betty and Ted for being charming, welcoming hosts.

The free noon-time concert series at Proctor's Theatre finished on two high notes as personified by artists Jinny Vanore and Robert Frederick on May 19 and June 9. The concert series resumes in the fall, on September 29, with Carl Hackert.

The first annual memorial concert hon-



Everett Oliver at his 3/11 Wurlitzer.

ed to our Loew's Wonder Morton fund. Bob promised to find more books for those who were interested. Following the meeting, open console was enjoyed, particularly the mini-concert by owner Everett Oliver. Members circulated throughout the home and enjoyed the coffee and desserts in the friendly atmosphere of the kitchen and dining room with Cathy Oliver graciously assisting Jack Decker, our hospitality chairman. Special thanks to Everett and Cathy who opened their home and made the day memorable

May 20, over 100 third graders from the Little Falls School System walked to the home of Bob and Cathy Martin, to hear the



Organist Ned Spain entertained at the Wood's Wurlitzer.

## HUDSON-MOHAWK

Frank Hackert: 518/355-4523

**Schenectady, New York.** The Hudson-Mohawk Chapter's May meeting was held on the stage of Proctor's Theatre, Schenectady, New York. Our guests were members of the Schenectady Rose Society, liaisoned by dual member Cathy Hackert. The program consisted of three rose-themed mini-concerts featuring members Ned Spain, David Lester and Ken Albert who journeyed from his home in Canada for the occasion. At this event, the final formal meeting of the 1997-98 season, our officers were elected to continue for 1998-

oring deceased chapter member, Dr. Edward Farmer, was scheduled for May 31 at the Christ Episcopal Church in Cooperstown, New York, with artist Dan Foster, organist and music director of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Albany, New York. However, nature, in the persona of an unusual day of tornadoes, heavy winds, and wild electrical storms, prevented the concert from taking place. It will be rescheduled for later in the summer. Dr. Farmer was a much loved Hudson-Mohawk chapter member, pilot and an exceptional artist.

Future fall events will include the chapter's annual banquet on the stage of

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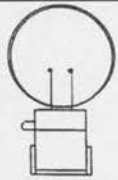
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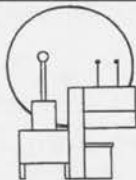
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## HUDSON-MOHAWK cont.

Proctor's Theatre on September 28. Of special note is the return of Allen Mills to Proctor's Theatre for a concert on October 18. Allen, a native son and much renowned organist, will perform on Goldie, the theatre's fabulous 3/18 Wurlitzer. Tickets are \$19.50 and are available at the theatre's box office, 518/346-6204.

Norene Grose

## JOLIET

Jim Stemke: 847/534-1343

**Joliet, Illinois.** Since the last chapter news, JATOE completed its East Coast Get-Away on the last weekend of April. On Saturday, the Wanamaker organ was a pleasure to hear with some of our members climbing into the chambers to see the inner workings. Saturday evening, Lew Williams provided a great program at Dickinson High School. Sunday started off with the Southern New Jersey Chapter meeting with us for brunch at the Sunnybrook Ballroom. One of our members, Warren York, did a great job for us when he took the console. That afternoon, we heard Elizabeth Melcher just knock our socks off with her classical performance at Longwood Gardens. We thank the Dickinson Theatre organ society for providing open console for us and also setting up the Sunday evening meal. Both groups enjoyed each others company while dining on stage at the Dickinson High School. Monday morning we visited the Allen Organ Company factory with Tom Hazleton as our surprise artist. Tom always does a great job. The last stop before parting for home was the Trivo Company where most of us were very interested in the making of reed pipes. This was a great trip.

May 3, we held our last social for the summer, with Tony Brandolino playing for us. Tony is the former Director of Programming at the Rialto Theatre. He is an accomplished musician and did a fine job for us. The Rialto Barton is undergoing a change this summer with the addition of three more ranks of strings. The total compliment will be 27 ranks for this great organ.

Mark your calendars for two exciting events coming up this fall: September 13, we are having a "Texas-BBQ" with Dan Bellomy as our artist for the day. There

will also be open console time for those attending; November 14, will be the "Pipe Organ Extravaganza III. Artists for that evening will be Lew Williams, Kay McAbee, Jelani Eddington, Walt Strony, and Larry Dalton on the Steinway with the Rialto Symphony Orchestra. There will be other surprises for those attending.

In conjunction with the Extravaganza, JATOE is planning the "Rialtofest Weekend," with proposed events as follows: Friday, November 13, Jelani Eddington and Tom Hazleton at the Sanfilippo Victorian Mansion. Dinner in the Carousel Room and then on to Mundelien for a Lew Williams concert at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary. On Saturday morning, November 14, a concert at the Gateway Theatre with the artist tba. Catered dinner at the Union Station in Joliet and then the POE III at the Rialto Theatre. Sunday, a continental breakfast at the hotel and back to the Rialto for Kay McAbee and Walt Strony. Sunday afternoon, we will travel to Beggars Pizza with Dave Wickerham as our artist.

For information call: Jim Patak, 708/562-8538.

Jim Patak

## LAND O'LAKES

Roger R. Dalziel: 715/262-5086

**Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota.** The last organ superstar to appear at the Phipps Center for The Arts, located in nearby Hudson, Wisconsin, and concluding the 1998 "Organ Series," was Charlie Balogh. Although not a member of the artist group previously announced, we were gratified to have him appear as replacement for another performer who was unable, at the last minute, to make the trip. Charlie's artistry was greeted with a highly enthusiastic response by the audience. His love of jazz, and the music of the 30s and 40s, was clearly evident in his selection of program. We hope that he will be back for a future season.

No definite plans for the restoration of the 10,000-pipe Mighty Kimball organ, now in storage for ten years at the Minneapolis Convention Center, have been circulated. It is still hoped that the supervisory team of Michael Barone, Dr. Edward Berryman and Philip Brunelle may soon be able to get the restoration project back on track. Even though the ini-

tial plan was to place the instrument in organ chambers located in one of the three "domes" of the Center, it is now believed that a more conventional placement of the theatre organ in the planned 4,200-seat theatre would make it easier to schedule future organ performances without having to involve all three "domes" of the present structure, which are acoustically connected.

The management of the Phipps Center has recently announced the artists selected for appearance, during the 1998-99 "Organ Series" on the 3/16 Wurlitzer. Slated to appear are: Stan Kann, Jelani Eddington, Father James Miller, British entertainer Paul Roberts, and Jeff Weiler, with the latter being scheduled to wind up the series with a Silent Film Comedy Festival. Local organ enthusiasts consider themselves highly fortunate to have a pipe organ facility such as the Phipps Center within a half-hour's driving distance. *John Webster*



Ron Rhode at Sexson Auditorium. Zimfoto

## LOS ANGELES

Joseph McFarland: 213/256-1469

**Los Angeles, California.** The weekend of June 20 was a busy one for that popular organist-turned-school-teacher from Phoenix, Ron Rhode. Due to some unforeseen concert rescheduling, Ron found himself with two concerts on the same weekend — Saturday evening in Pasadena, and Sunday afternoon in Ft. Wayne, Indiana! In Pasadena on Saturday evening on the Ross Reed 3/23 Wurlitzer, Ron presented an outstanding program of music from the

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movies and Broadway shows dating from the 1920s into the 1940s. He also took time to explain some of the workings of the theatre pipe organ and demonstrate the different ranks for a group of Glendale Community College music appreciation students and other first timers. At the conclusion, he was whisked to Los Angeles International Airport for a "red eye" flight to Ft. Wayne for his Sunday afternoon appearance.

What a super convention Golden Gate 98 in San Francisco was! With terrific organs, well planned and coordinated transportation, friendly hosts, and a selection of artists that would be hard to beat, it was awesome. NorCal is to be congratulated. The afterglow on the beautiful Monterey Peninsula, co-sponsored by the Golden State Theatre Organ Society was a very nice finale.

The LATOS Board of Directors has authorized an immediate \$1,500 contribution in response to the ATOS \$50,000 challenge grant to install the Lowell Ayar's organ in the Smithsonian in Washington, DC. This is a very important and significant project which will publicize theatre organ to millions of people in the years to come.

Rob Richards will bring his show to San Gabriel Civic Auditorium on Saturday evening November 7. We are always delighted when visitors from other chapters can join us!

Finally, LATOS and the Orange County Theatre Organ Society are busy finalizing plans for the "Southern California Wurlitzer Weekend" on Saturday and Sunday, January 16 and 17. Four theatre pipe organs, plus Allen's new 4-manual 33-rank George Wright Signature Organ will be featured. To receive additional information, send name, address, and phone number to "Southern California Wurlitzer Weekend," 2721 West 182nd Street, Torrance, CA 90504-5228, or e-mail: wflottman@aol.com.

## LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Gwen Light: 01932 565819

It was a pleasure to listen to Paul Kirner again play the Wurlitzer at the State Kilburn. His choice of music was enjoyed by everyone. Len Rawle was at the console of Les Rawle's Wurlitzer at Northolt on

Member's Night. Len's selections were some of the tunes he is thinking about including on his next recording.

Members spent a very pleasant morning listening to Don Thompson at the State Kilburn. Don's programme included a selection of tunes of "London" and a lovely arrangement of "Ebb Tide."

May 30, Nicholas Martin was our guest organist at the Woking Leisure Centre. Our numbers were swelled by members of Nicholas's Fan Club. A very pleasant evening was enjoyed by the audience.

June 14, members and friends heard Dr. Arnold Loxam at the console of the Kilburn Wurlitzer. Arnold's selections included tunes of state and screen of yesterday, "Snow White," and some from Noel Coward shows. For an encore, Arnold played "The Woodchoppers Ball" and "Tiger Rag." It was a very enjoyable morning.

Chapter Night at Northolt in June found Len Rawle at the console of the Wurlitzer. Len's choice of music was very pleasant. David Redfern will be the guest at The Barry Memorial Hall (South Wales) Christie on 12 July  
*Gwen Light*

## MANASOTA

Charles Pierson: 941-924-0674

**Sarasota, Florida.** The September meeting was in the former Charles Ringling mansion on the campus of The University of South Florida/New College in Sarasota. There, many enjoyed the dulcet tones of the 3/43 Aeolian residence organ, restored by chapter members.

The October meeting will be at the King's Gate club house, where Dr. Ketch Morrell will host the chapter and allow us to enjoy his Allen MDSIII theatre organ. We shared the program with many Park residents.

Restoration work on our Wurlitzer is slowly and steadily progressing. One of the two blowers is in place, as are the wind lines to the chambers. All chests have been completely re-leathered. Wiring of bottom boards are nearing completion. We are anxiously awaiting delivery of the new four manual replica console, as well as chamber layout drawings. When these products are received, many hands will be very busy.  
*Carl Walker*

## MOTOR CITY

Thomas Hurst: 248/477-6660



*Tony O'Brien and Lance Luce after their three-organ program at the Redford Theatre.*

*Bo Hanley photo*



*Donald Martin designed this logo for the Redford Theatre's 70th Anniversary Gala.*

**Detroit, Michigan.** Having experienced a good audience response to a recent program featuring two of our local organists, Lance Luce and Tony O'Brien, we decided to do it again. On May 9, we presented Lance and Tony at the Redford Theatre augmenting the Redford's 70-year-old Barton with a Rodgers classical and theatre organ, both instruments courtesy of Hammell Music. The result was more exciting than we could have envisioned. Tony did solo spots at the classical Rodgers and Lance did the same at the Rodgers theatre organ, each playing the Barton as well as duets on two of the three organs, and the audience went wild. For the surprise finale, Lane and Tony were joined by Steve Schlesing at the Barton for



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## MOTOR CITY cont.

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Organists who played overture and intermission music for our spring and summer bi-weekly classic film series at the Redford Theatre included: Newton Bates, Gus Borman, Jim Boutell, Dave Calendine, Brian Carmody, Gil Francis, John Lauter, Evelyn Markey, Tony O'Brien, Sharron Patterson, Ron Reseigh, and Wilma Taylor Steslick.

The Redford Theatre will be the focus of a 70th Anniversary Gala on Saturday, October 24. The Hotel Savarine Society Orchestra will recapture the music of 1928 with authentic instrumentation, musical arrangements and dress. Organist John Lauter will perform at the 3/10 Barton and Tony O'Brien will accompany Buster Keaton's *Our Hospitality*.

Lee Erwin will accompany the silent film *The Merry Widow* at the Redford Theatre on October 3. Our Christmas concert will feature organist Steve Schlesing, pianist Pierre Fracalanza, and percussionist Dan Maslanka at the Redford on December 12.

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

David Kopp: 973/305-1255

**New York, New York.** May 13 was Alumni Homecoming at New York Military Academy in Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York. Although not an NYMA alumnus, theatre organist Lou Hurvitz was very much at home when he returned to the console of the Academy's 4/33 Mighty Möller to perform for the New York Chapter that Sunday evening. Lou's series of theatre organ concerts at NYMA were a popular musical "happening" in the Cornwall area some years ago when he was a Cornwall resident and a member of the band at neighboring West Point, and it was great to hear him again in concert.

Lou's opener, "With A Song In My Heart," which segued into the old novelty tune, "Dog-faced Soldier," has become his concert theme. A beautiful rendering of "I'm Falling in Love With Someone" featured the Möller's lush ensemble of strings and voxes. Still an Army Bandsman at heart, Lou included outstanding arrangements of two sprightly marches. A rhythmic "New York, New York," played in tribute to Frank Sinatra as well as to NYMA alumnus Donald Trump who had been on campus earlier in the day to receive an Alumnus of Distinction Award from the Academy, brought enthusiastic applause from the audience. Lou also demonstrated his versatility as a theatre organist by playing an excellent accompaniment to the Laurel and Hardy silent comedy, *Two Tars*. Thanks to the efforts of

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Organist Lou Hurvitz played a May concert for the New York Chapter on the New York Military Academy's 4/33 Möller in Cornwall-on-Hudson

Bob Welch and Tom Stehle, the Möller was in fine tune.

Elsewhere around the chapter, our 2/9 Wurlitzer at the Bardavon Theatre in Poughkeepsie has been getting a real workout with a wide range of programs. This spring it has provided accompaniment to a stage production of *The Threepenny Opera*, has introduced the



Michael Dell and Mark Renwick (right) played for North Florida. Diane MacDonald photo

screening of classic films, provided music for children's shows, historic theatre tours, and a downtown street fair, to mention just a few events. It was even used with a classical chamber orchestra concert (only the flute stop — no tremos, of course!). Organists Martin Boehling, Larry Hazard, and Juan Cardona, Jr., and crew members Bob Strang, John Vanderlee and Stuart Ballinger have been busy keep up with all this activity. Meanwhile, down the road in Suffern, New York, our 2/11 Ben Hall

Memorial Wurlitzer, continues to delight audiences before the Friday and Saturday night feature films at the Lafayette Theatre with organists Dave Kopp, Martin Boehling, Bernie Anderson and Keith Gramlich taking turns at the console.

Tom Stehle

## NORTH FLORIDA

Dave Walters: 904/781-2613

**Jacksonville, Florida.** In May, members and friends of the chapter and invited guests of John McCall and Michael Kelly converged on their residence in Ponte Vedra Beach. An afternoon of extraordinarily fine organ music was impeccably performed on John's Allen MDS-317 EX by classical organist Michael Dell, in his electrifying concert style, and theatre organist Mark Renwick, in his finely arranged theatre style, played "back-to-back." Boredom, at this concert, had no chance at all.

In June, we met at the home of Erle and Marge Renwick to pay tribute to a beloved fallen comrade, Jim Lawson, who passed away May 14, after a 50-year love affair with the theatre organ. From a special biographical treatise on Jim's life, Erle Renwick told about Jim Lawson as he hunted down every theatre pipe organ that existed in areas of his considerable travel, beginning in Atlanta as a young pharmacist where he got "hooked" on the Fox Möller.

Jim played his last concert for us on his Gulbransen Paragon at the regular chapter meeting March 21, which was held in his Palatka home. Fortunately, his program was recorded, enabling us to hear once again his theme "Twilight Time," played by himself for several measures until organist Gene Stroble picked up the tune playing along with Jim's recording for several more measures, finishing the theme, soloing, as Jim would have played it, had he been here. (A rarity indeed, the organ

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## NORTH FLORIDA cont.

and the recording were in perfect pitch with each other.)

As the formal portion of the tribute drew to a close, the special biographical treatise on Jim's life was handed to Marie Stevens, a long time supportive friend of the family, particularly during the final years. The tribute was followed by Gene Stroble's program of requests and selections of his choice. All were familiar tunes played in a joyful upbeat style. Then followed open console time and refreshments along with catch-up conversations about Jim. *Erle Renwick*

## NOR-CAL

William O. Schlotter, Jr.: 510/482-3183

**Oakland, California.** Dennis James played an excellent program for Nor-Cal on April 26 at Berkeley Theatre in Berkeley, with a short concert of music from Broadway and an assortment of delightful numbers from other sources before expertly accompanying two Buster Keaton silent films. From 1921, came *The Paleface*, in which a group of unscrupulous petroleum executives duped the Native American tribe into selling their land for one silver dollar. Learning of the swindle, they vowed to kill the first white man they saw. How Keaton escaped being burned at the stake and lived to become a sort of Junior Chief, was Keaton at his finest. The second film, *The Cameraman*, was Keaton's first MGM film and his last full length film. It was made in 1928, and released as a silent. Dennis put much thought into the accompaniment music, using songs of the era rather than bits of music, and it was greatly enjoyed.

Our May 16 concert was played by Warren Lubich at the Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland. Warren was chairman of Nor-Cal from 1971 to 1976, when the chapter was much smaller and had few volunteers

to do the work. His delightful program was drawn from many sources, covered a wide time span, and were of many tempos. Some were well known, while others have been heard seldom. Kevin King has put a great deal of time, labor and love into the upgrading of the organ, now a 3/18 Wurlitzer, and it sounded great.

Jonas Nordwall played the last public concert in our 1997-98 series at Berkeley Community Theatre on June 28. His wonderful program was made up primarily of orchestral transcriptions, which he does so well. Some were from his new CD which was recorded on our Wurlitzer, and went on sale that day. There was music from Broadway, as well as jazz. Jonas played some pieces with very simple registration, while others gave us the sounds of a large orchestra. We were happy to see early convention attendees in the audience.

Nor-Cal Chapter members may have worked hard on putting together this year's National Convention, but we enjoyed the results as much as anybody. We also enjoyed the company of over 800 other ATOS members and we hope all had as much fun as we did.

The 1998-99 public concert schedule is expected to have its first concert in November, 1998. *Evelyn Woodworth*

## NORTH TEXAS

Donald Peterson: 972/517-2562

**Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas.** We have finally reached signed agreement with the operator of the Lakewood Theatre and are now assured a continued home for our chapter Robert-Morton organ for the foreseeable future. Following this momentous step, we have pledged to bring the Robert-Morton up to concert condition for our joint use of the organ. We propose to have all planned repair and upgrade done in advance of the 60th anniversary celebra-

tion of the Lakewood Theatre in October 1998. The chapter and the theatre management enthusiastically look forward to this new start in the Lakewood and all it portends. Greater exposure of the organ is expected, including concerts, silent film accompaniment and many other events where the organ will be used. Chapter use of the organ for meetings, member practice and concerts is assured and will allow us to greatly expand our activities in the Lakewood.

The next three months will be very busy for the chapter as we carry out the many upgrades that are planned. We will pull all of the pipes and chests out of the chamber to allow repairs and rebuilds and to put a roof over the chambers that will prevent any future inundations such as those we have experienced in the past and that have caused so much damage to the chests and the Great relay. We will also split the single chamber in two, moving those ranks that need to be relocated. The console will be removed from the theatre to a workshop where it will be rebuilt. We have purchased an Artisan electronic relay and electric stop tabs that will replace the pneumatic action and the relays. This includes multiplexing between the console and the chambers and a MIDI interface. This console work, including refinishing the shell, will get rid of the most troublesome components and, with the rebuild of the chests, give us a much more reliable and available instrument.

Adding to the exciting prospects for the Lakewood Theatre and the chapter's 3/8 Robert-Morton is the recent news from one of our members, AJ Roquevert that the company he is part of has recently purchased the Inwood Theatre in Dallas and wants to work with our chapter to put a theatre pipe organ into the Inwood for our joint use, similar to our agreement with the Lakewood Theatre. The Inwood is a well maintained 1940s theatre, in a recent-

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ly upgraded major shopping center. It has been successfully operated, recently showing art and classic films as well as some current releases. Several years ago, the balcony was twinned but the main auditorium of about 460 seats is intact and that is where the proposed organ would be installed. This company also owns the Oriental Theatre in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where a theatre organ resides that is used and maintained by the local ATOS chapter. A suitable organ is available in Dallas for donation to the chapter for this installation and makes this even more exciting.

We held our June chapter meeting in the beautiful meeting hall of the Forum Retirement Residence in Dallas, where a recently donated 2+ synthesizer manual Wurlitzer electronic organ resides. The 1970s vintage Wurlitzer electronic sounded great in the hands of two of our professional members, Glen Swope and Don Reasons. In addition to 45 North Texas members and friends, a like number of Forum residents enjoyed the musical programs of these two talented musicians. We have been invited to come back again whenever we like. Hopefully, soon (after the Lakewood project is completed), we will be hearing the glorious sounds of our Robert-Morton at future chapter meetings. North Texas is deeply grateful to Vice-President Don Reasons (program chairman) and to the many chapter organists who have continued to give us great musical programs while we have had to do without our "pipes." *Irving Light*

## OHIO VALLEY

Jan Peek: 606/331-0962

**Cincinnati, Ohio.** Sunday, June 28, saw a social at the lovely home of charter member Mrs. Joan Strader. The home is located in historic Clifton and is the residence for the 3/15 Wurlitzer that was ori-

ginally installed in the Palace Theatre in Cincinnati. Jack Strader, Joan's late husband, along with Joan, possessed a great love for theatre organs and when this instrument became available, they purchased it, and installed it in their home in 1960. Jack was a self-taught organist and was one of the organists at the Emery Theatre in downtown Cincinnati. Gaylord Carter and many well known notables have performed on this residence organ in years past. What makes this organ special is that the Wurlitzer family owned the Palace Theatre and this organ received special detail because it was the Wurlitzer Company's "show piece." When the Strader's acquired it, the organ was expanded to 18 ranks.

After a brief introduction, Joan presented organist Jack Doll to bring the Wurlitzer to life. Always the master entertainer, Jack played requests from those in attendance. At the end of Jack's program, a luncheon was served, and open console started. There were many members from the Ohio Valley Chapter and other who tried their hand at this superb installation. There was non-stop music all afternoon. What a pleasant way to spend a late June Sunday. Our appreciation and thanks go to Joan Strader for being such a gracious hostess and for providing us with a nice afternoon.

The Ohio Valley Chapter has lost a true friend and member in the passing of Jim Teague. Jim was a long time member and served on the board of directors at Emery Theatre. He was our theatre manager and could always be found perched on his stool to the left of the concession stand, greeting the patrons as they entered the theatre. Whenever there was a performance at Emery, Jim was present, helping in any capacity that was needed. He is deeply missed.

The organ crew has summer rebuilding projects in progress. The bass drum has

been getting weak due to poor action. It was removed, refurbished, and is now "sounding" with authority. The Chrysoglott is now receiving attention with a rebuild, including needed hammers. Spot tuning is done as needed, with a full tuning performed before any performance. All this effort by the organ crew is greatly appreciated and makes the Emery Wurlitzer enjoyable to play!

*Joseph L. Hollmann*

## POTOMAC VALLEY

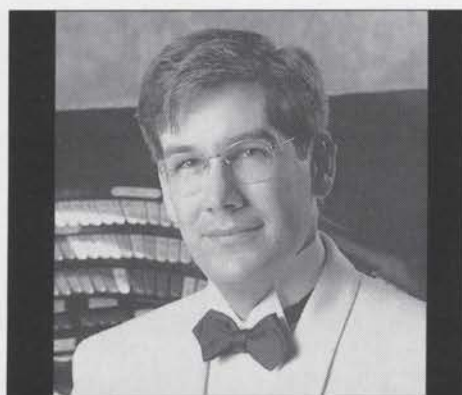
Col. Michael W. Hartley: 301/868-7030

**Clinton, Maryland.** Our first social meeting of the year was held June 28, at the home of Frank and Elaine Stoner in Bethesda, Maryland. The Stoner residence was easy to locate with Frank's restored Ford Model "A" coupe parked prominently in the driveway. Inside, the Allen ADC 4600 with MIDI extenders was warmed up and ready to go. Joe Graif took the honors as lead-off member-artist of the day. Joe is a new member of the chapter, and with his professional playing ability and warm personality, we're sure to hear a lot from him in the future. Bob Lachin and Mike Hartley rounded out the formal part of the program. Refreshments were provided by our gracious hosts.

We are proud to announce that arrangements have just been finalized for a joint program with the Fairfax Choral Society and Tom Hazleton, guest organist/accompanist at the chapter's Wurlitzer. It will be presented Sunday, February 7, 1999 at the Harris Theatre, George Mason University, In Fairfax, Virginia.

The chapter's Internet web page (<http://pvtos.org>) is proving to be a good vehicle for communicating our goals and interesting people in membership and attendance at our public events.

*Don Faehn*



# JEFF WEILER

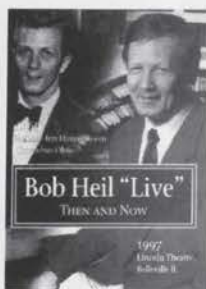
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Joe Graif, Bob Lachin, Frank Stoner, and Mike Hartley entertained Potomac Valley members at the Stoner's social in June

## PUGET SOUND

Robert Zat:

**Seattle, Washington.** The first ever Puget Sound Chapter event at Olympia's Washington Center for The Performing Arts took place July 11. Australia's John Atwell performed an outstanding concert for an appreciative audience. From Franz Lehár to Rogers and Hart, from Oliver Wallace to Gershwin, from Cole Porter to Tchaikowsky, John's choice of music provided something for every taste.

The instrument, originally owned by Andy Crow, was meticulously installed by Andy and Les Lehne over the past several years. The three-manual console acquired to operate the organ was placed in the capable hands of Ed Zollman and Patti Simon-Zollman for rebuilding, including 200 new stops, keys and electronic equipment to accommodate a Uniflex 2000 computer system. The instrument has been

showcased in a silent film series each year for the past several years with accompaniment by Andy Crow. This was its first exposure as a concert instrument.

Following the afternoon concert, folks reconvened some 20 miles away in the small town of Yelm. Here, in the parish hall of St. Colombian Catholic Church Andy Crow and Les Lehne have just installed a 3/10 Robert-Morton for Father Terence Wager. It was properly "baptized" by Andy, John Atwell, Patti Simon, and the Senior Division winner of the 1998 ATOS Young Organist's Competition, Australia's Heath Wooster. The church Altar Society provided a wonderful buffet supper for the 155 folks who attended. It was a terrific ending for a wonderful theatre organ day!

*Jo An Evans*

## RIVER CITY

Gregory Johnson: 402/624-5655

**Omaha, Nebraska.** Our May 17 meeting was held at Durand's Sky Ranch Studio, with Lynn Lee conducting a short business meeting. Harold Kenney discussed the upcoming election of officers to be held at the June 21 meeting. Then Lynn introduced our guest artist for the day, our own, inimitable, Jeanne Mehuron. As always, Jeanne presented an excellent program — she does it so well and makes it look so easy! Her offerings included songs from *The Sound of Music*, a musical tribute to Frank Sinatra, a Big Band medley, and a medley of Strauss waltzes. Jeanne ended her concert by playing a sing-along. After open console, the group adjourned to the Village Inn Restaurant for a "wives day off" meal.

A tour to Lincoln, Nebraska (about 60 miles southwest of Omaha), was scheduled for our June 21 meeting. Our first stop in Lincoln was at the Gerald Oehring & Associates Studio. Our host, Jerry Oehring, a dealer for Wicks and Rodgers Organs in several midwest states, welcomed us. Greg Johnson chaired the meeting, and our slate of chapter officers was unanimously elected. Oehring's comfortable organ studio was designed about one year ago and showcases several Rodgers classic organs. At the console of a Rodgers model 950 three-manual draw-knob console, Chapter President, Greg Johnson, played several selections, including "Londonderry Air" and "Getting to Know You." Then Jerry Oehring, at the console played the organ score for Camille Saint-Saëns' "Symphony No. 3 in C Minor" (known as the "Organ Symphony", with orchestral accompaniment provided through the wonders of MIDI. Our next stop was at the First Plymouth Congregational Church where a new 110-rank Schoenstein & Co. pipe organ is

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being installed. The organ, which boasts a beautiful four-manual draw-knob console, is still in the installation phase, with dedicatory concerts scheduled for early October. Our host was First-Plymouth's Music and Fine Arts Director, Jack Levick, who graciously welcomed us to First-Plymouth and discussed earlier organ installations in their 1929 building. The church also boasts a new two-manual, 15-rank Schoenstein organ in the gallery. This antiphonal organ is also playable from the Main console in the chancel. Jack Levick demonstrated the resources of the gallery organ and then opened the console to our members. We are very grateful to Jerry Oehring, Jack Levick and to First-Plymouth Church for this hospitality.

Installation work on both the Rose Theatre's Wurlitzer and Bob Markworth's Kimball has been progressing nicely, with RCTOS chapter members providing assistance where possible.

*Tom Jeffery & Harold Kenney*



*First-Plymouth's new Schoenstein chancel organ still is "a work in progress." Music and Fine Arts Director, Jack Levick, discussed the organ's vast resources. Tom Jeffery photo*

## SAN DIEGO

John Dapolito: 619/463-9115

**San Diego, California.** Our second concert in the rebuilt sanctuary of Trinity Presbyterian Church was performed by southern California Dana Loyal on June 14. He very aptly played familiar tunes and, in both the first and second half, played a medley of ten tunes with a challenge for the audience to "name that tune" and in the second half to name the singer who made the song famous.

Our 3 manual Allen organ was used, pending completion of our 4/22 Wurlitzer pipe organ. The Allen will also be used for our July membership meeting.

We continue to make good progress on the organ. All tuned percussions, traps, and chests have been installed, wired, winded and all tremulants are winded. Soon to follow, will be the wiring of the chamber portion of the relay. Ken Crome is in charge of all aspects of the console. This



*Gerald Oehring, at the console of the Rodgers Model 950 organ, treated us to Saint-Saëns, "Organ Symphony." Tom Jeffery photo*

*In Concert on the Tahoma 3/28 Wurlitzer*

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## SAN DIEGO cont.

is scheduled to be delivered to us in September.

As completion approaches, enthusiasm increases. We have decided to schedule our premiere concert only after everything is completely regulated, and it is concert ready. If the console is ready as scheduled, this will probably be early 1999.

John Dapolito

## ST. LOUIS

Jim Ryan: 314/892-0754

**St. Louis, Missouri.** May 3 found a number of SLTOS members back in Belleville, Illinois, at the beautiful Lincoln Theatre for a very special afternoon and evening program. The event was two showings of the Buster Keaton comedy *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, with Dennis Ammann at the console providing his own score for this delightful movie. Denny does more feature length film accompaniment than anyone in the St. Louis area. He also does, *Phantom of The Opera*, *The General*, *Wings*, *The Mark of Zorro*, and is currently scoring *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, for two showings at the Lincoln Theatre on the last Sunday before Halloween. Tickets are available for "Hunchback" by calling Denny at 618/654-7855. Bob Heil, was featured in a pre-movie concert at each show. His orchestral and theatre stylings are exciting to experience and it is always a treat to hear him perform. Sara Ammann, daughter of Dennis and Mary Lou Ammann, and her friend, Matthew Hoffmann, performed up-beat river boat songs and some of the songs from *Showboat* before the movie. Sara and Matt did a sensational job and added a tremendous treat for the audiences. Our thanks also to Richard and Betty Wright, owners of the Lincoln for presenting theatre organ programs for the general public to enjoy, and to David and Sandy Schoenborn for producing the show.

June SLTOS meeting was held in the backyard of SLTOS Treasurer, Wallace Dittrich, and his mother Elsa. They live on the bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River and have a breathtaking view. It was our annual summer BBQ. Wallace and Elsa always go above and beyond the call of duty to make sure everyone has a great time and as always great food. Member Jerry Roberts, local Hammond organ deal-

er provided us with a new Hammond organ and Leslie speaker for us to use. Thanks, Wallace, Elsa, and Jerry and everyone who helped. It was fantastic.

Dee Ryan

## SIERRA

Craig Peterson: 916/682-9699

**Sacramento, California.** May 15, Dennis James accompanied *Tumbleweeds*, starring William S. Hart, on the ATOS 3/16 Wurlitzer at the Towe Auto Museum. Dennis's performance was exceptional. He showed us that the accompanist can use light registrations through most of the film with great effectiveness. This saved the big registrations for the 7-minute chase scene at the end of the film. Unfortunately, the length of the film limited Dennis' solo performance to brief portions of *Hooray For Hollywood* at the beginning and end of the film. We look forward to having him back soon.

June was a dark month. Then, many Sierra Chapter members attended the 1998 ATOS Convention in San Francisco. As we have learned to expect, the instruments were beautifully prepared and voiced, as were the artists. It was the usual great Nor-Cal hosted event.

In mid-July, about 50 Sierra members and friends journeyed to our home in Mt. Aukum for the chapter's annual picnic. We pot-lucked on the deck at the house while several members serenaded us on the Allen Theatre III. Then, we went down to the barn for open console on the 2/11 Wurlitzer. We were "blessed" with one of Sacramento's July heat waves, so, a "hot time" was had by all in the barn as several chapter members entertained us.

On August 9, Don Wallin' will play for us on the chapter 3/13 Wurlitzer at the Fair Oaks Clubhouse. September 11 will again be at the Towe Auto Museum where Chris Elliott will accompany *Ella Cinders*. Our October program, will feature Paul Quarino at the Towe Auto Museum for his traditional Halloween films. Our Christmas party will be on December 6 at the Fair Oaks Clubhouse. If you are in the area, please join us for these events.

Pete McCluer

## SOONER STATE

Sam Collier: 918/834-6255

**Tulsa, Oklahoma.** Wayne Barrington demonstrated his knowledge of what's inside our 3/13 Robert-Morton for our May meeting, held at the Broken Arrow campus of Tulsa Technology Center. He gave us a "tour" of all the different voices in the organ, telling us which sounds came from which chamber, and playing music that let us hear each voice in turn.

Before he began, we were treated to a videotape of a *From The Heartland* program which had aired recently on KJRH Television. The tape featured the Orpheum Theatre in Okmulgee, owned and operated by our John McConnel, and included shots of the Robert-Morton that John is installing. There was a very good view of the console!

Wayne opened his program by appearing on stage, with the lights dimmed, dressed as the "Phantom." His first number was "Music of The Night." He played a number of popular standards, two selections in tribute to Frank Sinatra, and included the beautiful "My Heart Will Go ON" from the movie *Titanic*. He also showed us some registration combinations "that work," explained about the pistons and second touch, and reminded us to be sure and hit general cancel when we were through playing!

Our June meeting featured Joyce Hatchett at the console of our Robert-Morton. She began her mini-concert very appropriately with "June is Bustin' Out All Over," and since Patti Page was in town for a concert the following night, Joyce included a couple of Patti's signature songs. The most fun, however, was when she announced that since it was June she wanted to play some wedding music, but she'd need a bride and groom to make things authentic. There was one couple present who would be celebrating their fiftieth the next week; Dorothy (your writer) and Lee Smith. Our president, Sam Collier, was celebrating his birthday, so we sang "happy birthday" to him. Refreshments included two beautiful decorated cakes for the honorees.

The horseshoe stop rail on the Dorothy and Lee Smith home installation is now completely wired, with wiring into the electronic board in the back of the console next on the schedule. Dorothy Smith

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## VALLEY OF THE SUN

Donald Reasor: 602/877-0635



Bob Ralston and Karen Yarmat at the Orpheum. Madeline LiVolsi photo

**Phoenix, Arizona.** We began 1998 with a January chapter meeting at the Orpheum Theatre in downtown Phoenix. Chapter members were encouraged to sign up for open console at the Wurlitzer. A dozen brave souls participated in a very entertaining afternoon. These folks need to share their talents with us more often!

With the console rising to "Lulu's Back in Town" and "Don't Bring Lulu," there was no doubt as to the organist at the Orpheum on February 1. Lew Williams' varied program included music for springtime, Chinese New Year, Big Band music lovers, and Rosie.

Our February chapter meeting was held at the Beatitudes Campus of Care, where our crew chief Tom Fizzell is installing a 2/6 Hall organ in their Life Center. Videos of a Wurlitzer factory tour and old-time theatre organists were shown.

March found us "Reminiscing with Bob Ralston" at the Orpheum. We had performances at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. to suit the needs of our patrons. The program featured Bob at the Wurlitzer and at the grand piano, and included lyric soprano Karen Yarmat in several numbers. Karen's medley of gypsy songs was especially enjoyable, as were Bob's theme from the "Warsaw Concerto" and "Rhapsody in Blue."

The chapter meeting at Organ Stop Pizza in April actually featured more spaghetti and organ music than actual organ club business. Ron Rhode provided the music to munch by that day. We heard Ron in a more formal setting at the Orpheum on May 9. Ron played silent movie accompaniment to Harold Lloyd's *Haunted Spooks* and Buster Keaton's *Cops*. His program also included a tribute to Mother's Day, music from the Titanic era, and selections from *No, No, Nanette*.

Chapter members once again had the opportunity to participate in open console at the Orpheum Wurlitzer at our June meeting. In addition to the familiar locals, we enjoyed the talents of Michigan's Steve Schlesing, who happened to be in the Valley that week visiting his parents.

We are enthusiastic about future Orpheum concerts, which will spotlight Lyn Larsen and Tony Fenelon, Rob Richards, Walt Strony, and Carlie Balogh.

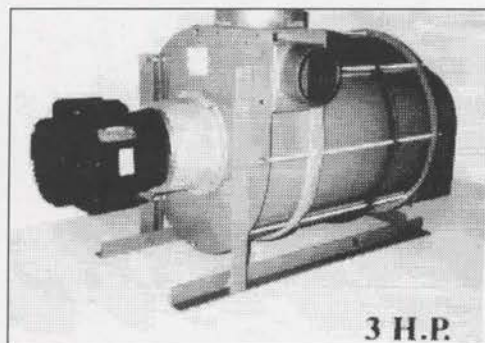
Madeline LiVolsi



Ron Rhode and Master of Ceremonies, Michael Alyn. Madeline LiVolsi photo

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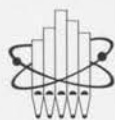
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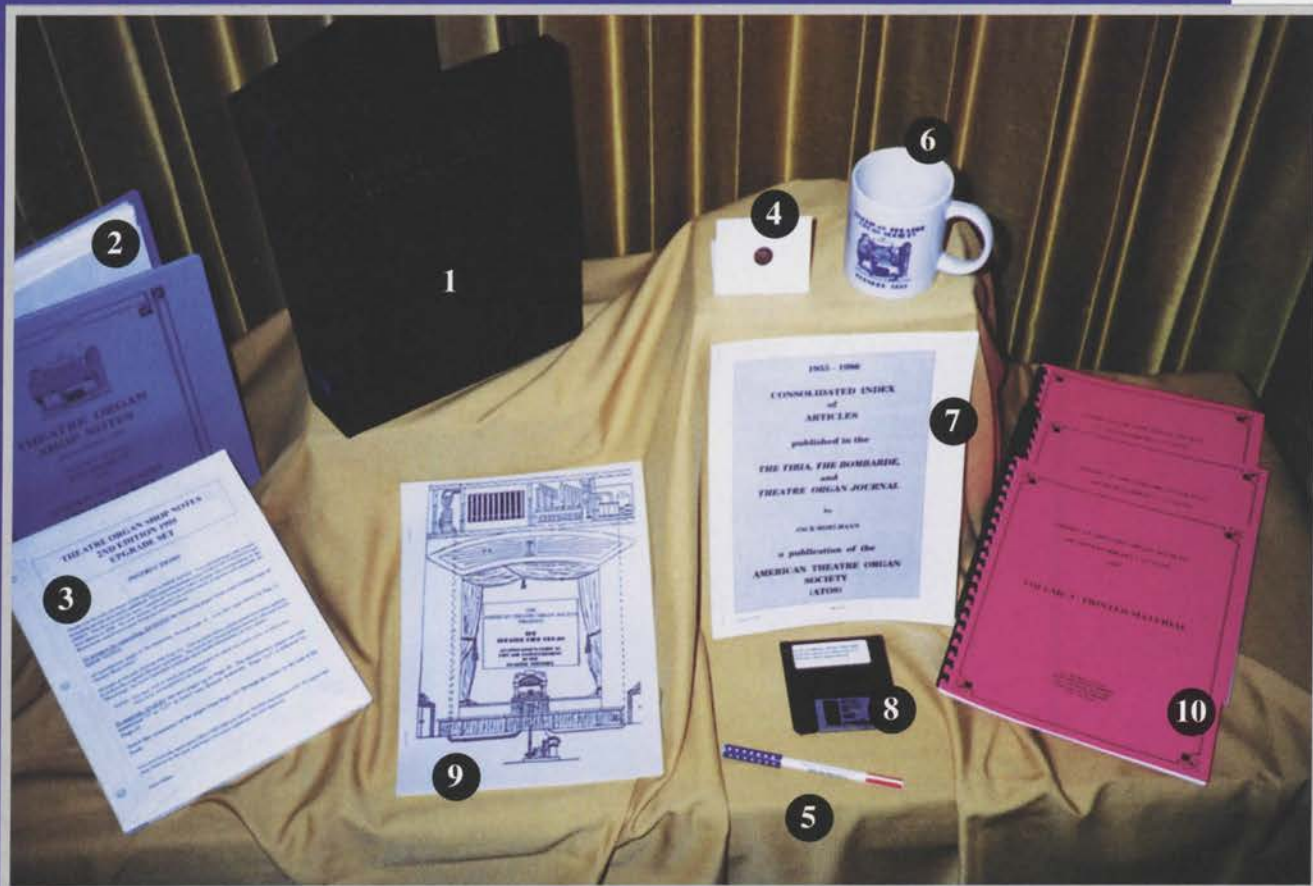


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