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JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



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# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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

VOLUME 41, NUMBER 3

MAY/JUNE 1999



4/39 Wurlitzer in Wichita's Century II Complex

ATOS WEB SITE:  
<http://www.atos.org>

American Theatre Organ Society Annual Membership is \$30.00 per year (\$35.00 out-side the USA), which includes six issues of THEATRE ORGAN, the official publication of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS). Make check or money order payable to ATOS and mail to ATOS Membership Office, P.O. Box 551081, Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581. THEATRE ORGAN ISSN — 0040-5531 (title registered U.S. Patent Office) is published bi-monthly by the American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., a non-profit organization. Entire contents copyrighted, American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., 1999. Single copies of current issues are \$2.50 each (please add \$1.00 per issue sent outside the USA). Make check or money order payable to ATOS and mail to ATOS Special Services, 785 Palomino Court, San Marcos, CA 92069-2102. Office of Publication is 5 Third Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-3200. Second class postage paid in San Francisco, CA 94103-3200 and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address change to THEATRE ORGAN c/o ATOS Membership Office, P.O. Box 551081, Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581.

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# Theatre Organ

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN

MAY/JUNE 1999 • VOLUME 41, NUMBER 3

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

<http://www.atos.org>

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## President's Message



Got your passport renewed and ready? The 1999 Annual Convention in London means that most of us will need to have this document in good shape for the trip. Happily, most of us will not need the hassle of a Visa to enter the United Kingdom. One of the highlights will be the Young Organist Competition winners concert in Woking.

The 1999 Regional Convention in Wichita is documented in this issue. Please note that the 1999 Annual Membership meeting and the Awards Banquet are being held in Wichita rather than London.

The donations for the Smithsonian project are coming in but we all need to work toward putting this one over the top in the next month or so. ATOS is matching the first fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) that comes in from you, the members, and the chapters. The money collected and matched will be turned over to the Smithsonian as soon as we reach the goal of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) fifty thousand in donations

plus fifty thousand in matching funds. All donations are tax deductible and should be sent to Alden Stockebrand as soon as possible. The restoration work cannot resume until funding is available.

As previously noted, we have only three (3) candidates for the ATOS Board of Directors, Vern Bickel, Doris Erbe, and Donna Parker. As there are only three, we will not go through the work and expense of mailing/counting the ballots. These fine people have served on the Board and will continue to serve for another three (3) years.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will see the call for nomination of the ATOS officers as outlined in the By-Laws. These officers are appointed annually by the newly seated Board and serve for one (1) year.

The Endowment Fund also will benefit from your generosity. The requirements for distribution from this fund are stringent, but all who qualify can receive assistance.

I hope to see many of you in London.

*Harry Heth*



# General Information

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

As provided in the ATOS by-laws, the Officer positions in ATOS are appointed annually by the Board of Directors at the annual Board meeting, this year in Wichita as part of the Regional Convention on September 1, 1999.

Any/all candidates for these positions should submit their written resume and candidate statement to the current ATOS President, Harry Heth, not later than August 1, 1999. Copies of the submissions will be made for distribution to the Board of Directors for study prior to the Board meeting. Candidates for these positions will be expected to present themselves, at their own expense, to the Board for personal interview on the morning of September 1, 1999. Appointment will immediately follow the interview process. Successful candidates should be ready to assume the duties of the office at the end of the convention and be available to participate in the remainder of the Board meeting after appointment. Reimbursement of travel and hotel expenses will be paid by ATOS for those being appointed at that time.

## THE OFFICER POSITION STATUS AT THIS TIME IS:

**PRESIDENT:** available/vacant  
*(term of office will expire at the end of the convention).*

**VICE-PRESIDENT:** available.  
*The incumbent will continue if appointed.*

**SECRETARY:** available.  
*The incumbent will continue if appointed.*

**TREASURER:** available/vacant  
*at the request of the incumbent.*

The candidates must have had continuous ATOS membership for at least the past two (2) years. The offices of President and Vice-President are subject to a term limit of three (3) years.

*Harry Heth, ATOS President*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES

**DONNA PARKER**  
Aloha, Oregon



I consider serving on the ATOS Board of Directors an honor and privilege which has afforded me many opportunities to participate in our organization's growth. We have much work to do to continue to accomplish the goals we have set for a strong and viable future for ATOS. My membership in ATOS began in the 1960s, and it is an organization for which I hold much affection. Touring as a theatre organ artist for 30 years, teaching theatre organ to avid enthusiasts of all ages, and serving in various capacities in ATOS chapters allows me to bring valuable perspectives and ideas to the table as I serve in my Board position. It would be an honor to continue to serve ATOS.

Evenings/weekends: 503/642-7009

**DORIS ERBE**  
St. Louis, Missouri



ATOS member since 1988; elected to Board in 1996; seeking re-election. Past Board Member, Vice-President, President of St. Louis Chapter; member of several ATOS chapters. Attends ATOS National and Regional Conventions and other special events; reviewed several conventions for the ATOS Journal. Coordinated two mid-year ATOS Board Meetings. Currently

ATOS Chapter Relations Chairperson and liaison to fifteen chapters. Established two new chapters; assisted in re-establishing two other chapters. Honorary Member of Joliet Area Chapter for 1999. Committed to Smithsonian Institution theatre organ project as well as projects in other venues. Serves on Inner-City School Program Committee. Professional background of legal and labor relations work contributes to organizational/writing skills, attention to detail, and perseverance to initiate/complete projects. Plays the organ. Has a genuine love of theatre organ; fully committed to ATOS goals for preserving and showcasing theatre organ as an art form.

Anytime: 314/481-1840

**VERN BICKEL**  
San Marcos, California



Long-time ATOS members know my qualifications, know of my dedication, and know of my many years of service to our society. Members who have joined during the past few years may be interested to know that I have been a member of ATOS since 1970. Over the years I have had the privilege to serve in many positions, such as ATOS President, Curator of the ATOS Archives/Library, and manager of the ATOS Special Services Department.

As a current Board Member, I hold the position of chairperson of the ATOS Endowment Fund Board of Trustees. I remain committed to the preservation and advancement of the theatre pipe organ.

I believe that ATOS must aggressively educate the public so that more people may come to know and appreciate this wonderful music art form. I strongly support the Young Organists Competition, the scholarship programs and the goals for higher technical standards.

760/471-6194



# Member's Forum

Dear Editor,

I want to comment (add to) about the item titled "An isolated incident?" in the February 1999 issue of "International ATOS News" by Bob Grommes.

I have been an ATOS member for a number of years (I am also well under 65). I was a member of a local chapter. For a number of subsequent years, I have been a member of another relatively nearby chapter. Over the years, I have attended a great many concerts sponsored by both of these local chapters.

My experience has paralleled that of Mr. Grommes. While I have seen many of my fellow chapter members at various concerts, no one ever seems to recognize me, let alone speak. This has pretty much been true for both local chapters.

Several years ago, a friend and I attended a chapter's Saturday event to teach members more about the local organ. When we arrived at the meeting site where the instrument is housed, we were completely ignored by the small group of men who were already present. I had seen most of these men at a number of previously held concerts and would have expected at least one person to recognize me as someone he had previously seen somewhere! After continuing to be ignored for several more minutes while these folks continued to talk amongst themselves, I finally spoke up and asked if we were in the right place for the class. We were then reluctantly offered places to sit around the table where the others were already seated. If I hadn't really have wanted to learn more about the organ, I would have walked out and never returned. I understand Mr. Grommes comment about crashing an "... exclusive club".

I love the theatre organ and remain a member of a local chapter because I do want to support the cause of maintaining the theatre organ as a working instrument. However, I have resisted any calls by the chapter asking for members to

step forward to volunteer for various jobs because I don't feel these "calls" are meant for us "outsiders." If the current membership really wanted more participation by others, they would show a common welcome courtesy to the "outsiders" who attend the various concerts. As Mr. Grommes said, "... actions speak louder than words".

What will be the fate of the theatre organ if these "cliques" show no interest in "new blood" on the block?

When I was a member of one local chapter, I brought this problem up to a chapter official. His response was that I should be more aggressive when attending concerts. I wonder if he thought I should tackle some of the members?

Sincerely,

Mr. Terry T. Hay

Dear Editor,

I see in the February *International ATOS News* that the Smithsonian project is going along well. One paragraph, however, is not clear, "While the organ is to be installed, intact, after faithful restoration, a solid state control system is being offered as a gift. This will ..."

What does this statement really mean? Will the original electro-pneumatic relay be restored as well and used -- possibly having a solid state recording/play-back system operating the organ THROUGH THE ORIGINAL RELAY -- or does it mean that a solid state control system may replace the original relay?

If the former is what is intended and that is certainly not difficult -- hooray! Then, Smithsonian visitors can watch the intricate action of the relay while they listen. I certainly hope the relay will be on display as well as the organ. The theatre organ relay is amazing to watch and is, of course, the heart of the organ's controls and unification.

If on the other hand the original relay is to be dumped in favor of the solid state system, then ATOS and the Smithsonian is failing in their char-

ters to preserve and restore the artifacts in their care.

Frank E. La Fetra

San Jose, California

Dear Editor,

Regarding the ongoing debate concerning the selection of songs played by artists for theatre organ concerts, please consider my situation. If the Theatre Organ world wants my continued support over the next 30 years, theatre organists must learn to play the songs I want to hear!!!

David Lowe recently wrote stating, "... Many of our players are more comfortable with certain types of music and it would be wrong for us to try and exert undue influence such that they attempt a repertoire with which they are uncomfortable." The only influence I will try to exert is the influence of where I spend my CD and concert ticket money. Would these inflexible theatre organists prefer being unemployed or "out of demand? Would the members of the Boston Pops Orchestra be enjoying continued employment that they do had they insisted on playing only classical material???

Quality musicians will adapt, others will fade away. Just remember, what happened to pit orchestras when our beloved instrument replaced them. Remember, also, what happened to our beloved musical sounds when "talkies" came along!!!

Lowe also states that "the quality of popular music as we understand it is at an all time low right now." What?? "Mairse Dotes" and "Down By the Old Mill Stream" IS such great literature???. I prefer "Eleanor Rigby," "Come In From The Rain" and "Michelle" to the 20s melodies any day. As a student of popular music, I know how parents and classical musicians disliked intensely the 20s pops music current elderly theatre organ patrons crave today. What goes around, comes around.

Currently, I will not purchase a CD unless I can examine the entire song



list first. Phil Kelsall's CD presenting tunes from the 50s, Nigel Ogden's recording dedicated to the music of the 1970s, Bill Vlasak's "Music, Music, Music" featuring the 50s tunes and Candi Carley-Roth's "Joy" album feature the type of music that causes me to part company with my hard earned capital. I WILL NOT purchase "Tea For Two," "Fascinatin' Rhythm" and "Toccatina and Fugue in D Minor" for the umpteenth time. I don't care that it is played "more expressively" "for the first time" by "a new and promising young artist." It is simply NOT THE MUSIC I WANT TO HEAR!!

I grew up in the late 50s, 60s and early 70s, with the songs of the Beatles, Bacarach, the Platters, Nat "King" Cole, Dean Martin, Patsy Cline, Hank Williams, Sr., Henry Mancini, Marvin Hamlisch, such movies as "Valley of the Dolls" (top notch music for theatre organ), "The Long Ships," "High and the Mighty" (currently seldom played), "How the West Was Won" (this Cinerama movie is filled with theatre organ-appropriate melodies), "The Last Time I Saw Paris," etc. If the Boston Pops can transcribe this genre of music to their own format, then certainly theatre organists can also.

As for my musical interests, I will purchase the music of the 50s, 60s and later. This is the music that interests me ... and I represent the theatre organ audience for the next three decades!!! Fate of the theatre organ fifty years from now rests in the musical tastes of current teenagers, like it or not!!

Musically,  
Stan Krider

Dear Editor:

Whatever became of the much discussed renovation/reworking of the Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer? This was to see the consoles, one at a time, removed to a New Jersey work site for dismantling, cleaning/repair and eventually returned to site in Radio City Music Hall. In addition, it was said the room of relays which is/was somewhat suffocating with all the glut that filled it, would be reduced to a wall of electronic relays

to do the same thing the original relays have been doing the past 60+ years.

Now RCMH is closed for a thorough going over to bring it up-to-date with technology to make it work on into the next millennium.

Did I miss a feature on the Radio City Music Hall organ or has it been sidelined for a specific reason ... such as the reopening of Radio City Music Hall in all its magnificent splendor and the Wurlitzer roaring on?

Just curious!

Bill Casara

*(Editor's note: Since the exchange of letters to the editor several years ago, the subject has been quiet at best. Letters from Messrs. Steve Adams and Ron Bishop turned up the heat on restoration vs. rebuilding.)*

Dear Editor:

You will probably be surprised to read this note but I feel I had to write to someone your side to say how I feel.

I have been a cinema organ nut for about 40 years and have heard many artists including several from the US.

I thought I had heard everything until last Friday. I went to hear your David Peckham who is over here on tour. He was playing the largest Wurlitzer ever installed in UK, a 4/21; small by US standards, but big to us. I must say, I was totally amazed at the man's versatility. This was true not only in his fantastic playing, but in his choice of programme, which included pieces I had not heard before, along with some I knew but had never heard on the cinema organ.

I was particularly impressed by a piece written by someone I had never heard of called, I think, Robert Elton. (*Robert Elmore? Ed.*) It was a classical piece written, to my ears at least, in the style of Lefebure-Wely and was nothing short of fantastic including glissandos the full length of the pedal board, something I had never seen before. If you meet up with him, please tell him that at least one Limey thinks he is the Cat's Whiskers and please, to come back again.

Anthony Bethell  
Hatfield, Hertfordshire, UK

## PRESS RELEASE

from The Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society, Inc.

NEW CD RECORDING OF THE ACCHO  
Contact Charles Swisher: 541/746-6054  
tbgs@pond.net

The Atlantic City Convention Hall Organ Society has released a new compact disc recording of the 449-rank Midmer-Losh organ in the Atlantic City Boardwalk Convention Hall.

The recording was made in November, 1998, and includes various popular and classical selections that showcase the versatility and sonic qualities of the organ. There is a short demonstration track of the Tuba Imperial and Grand Ophicleide which operate on 100 of wind pressure. The final track is a descent from top C to low C on the pedalboard using the 32 Principal and 64 Dulzian (Diaphone). A 12-page booklet includes program notes and a complete stop list of the organ.

Proceeds from the sale of the recording will benefit the restoration of the organ. Copies may be ordered from the ACCHOS, 1009 Bay Ridge Avenue, Suite 108, Annapolis, MD 21403 for \$15 plus \$2.50 for shipping & handling in the U.S. or \$4 overseas. The ACCHOS has a website at <http://www.acchos.org> and receives email at [info@accho.org](mailto:info@accho.org)

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 3168, Salinas, CA 93912.

E-mail: [tdelaycalifornia@worldnet.att.net](mailto:tdelaycalifornia@worldnet.att.net) ■

### ATOS CONVENTIONS

1999 ANNUAL:

July 4 week, London, England

1999 REGIONAL:

Labor Day Weekend,  
Wichita, Kansas

2000 ANNUAL & REGIONAL:

Chapters invited to apply.



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# HOLIDAY

## *at The Paramount*

### REGIONAL CONVENTION, FALL 1999

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For the first time since 1964, ATOS will be sponsoring a function centered on the former New York Paramount Wurlitzer.

The Great Plains Chapter is hosting a regional convention in Wichita, Kansas, September 2-5, 1999. That is, of course, Labor Day Weekend, thus the title for the event "Holiday at the Paramount."

*By Michael C. Coup*

The most famous of all theatre organs, the New York Paramount Wurlitzer has been housed in Wichita's Century II Civic Center since 1972 and has been presented in public concerts for 27 years. The early history of this magnificent organ's move to Wichita was covered in the previous issue of this magazine.

Since the mid-80s, the organ has received the Devtronix/Uniflex relay, combination, and recording system, been recorded on 7 CDs, had 3 of 4 chambers restored, and continued in public performance four times per year. Now the Wichita Wurlitzer will be the focus of attention for theatre organ enthusiasts in a series of performances by the very best artists of this era: Lyn Larsen, Walt Strony, Jeff Weiler, Barry Baker and Clark Wilson. Jeff Weiler will accompany the silent film *Our Hospitality* (1923) starring Buster Keaton, and the other artists will present solo organ concerts. Each is intimately familiar with this organ, having performed in concert for Wichita Pops.

The Convention will also feature the former Miller Theatre Wurlitzer of 3 manuals and 19 ranks now installed

in the "Little River Studio." This outstanding studio organ will be presented by Jelani Eddington with pianist David Harris performing on the Steinway grand.

From the Grand Court in the Lord & Taylor Store (nee Wanamakers), Philadelphia, will come Peter Conte for a performance on the new Schantz organ at First United Methodist Church. Mr. Conte is an acknowledged leading player of orchestral transcriptions and will perform several for the Regional attendees.

Due to limited seating capacity, the Burnett Studio Kimball will be presented as a "PreGlow." Patti Simon, whose husband, Ed Zollman, has been working on the Burnett instrument for several years, will present the instrument for those attendees purchasing tickets to the "PreGlow" event.

One of the "Renaissance" Series Allen Digital organs will be presented by Jonas Nordwall in the theatrical setting of the Wichita Orpheum Theatre. Built in 1922 for the Orpheum circuit, this John Ebersson "atmospheric" style theatre is in the process of restoration, but is open for public events.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

This regional itself will be somewhat unique in that the main organ venue for five concerts, Century II, is directly adjacent, by enclosed walkway, to the host hotel, the new Hyatt Regency. Very little busing will be necessary, affording more time for socializing with friends when concerts are not scheduled. Bus transportation to the Little River Studio, the Orpheum Theatre, and First United Methodist Church will be provided.

To give attendees the choice of meal provisions, a meal ticket can be purchased for \$100, which will provide lunch on Saturday and Sunday as well as dinner on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The Hyatt does have a restaurant and a lobby area for coffee and light offerings, but would not be able to accommodate everyone at one time. For those with transportation, other restaurants and "fast food" are located within a mile or two. However, due to the tight concert schedule, purchase of a meal ticket is encouraged.

Our host hotel is the new Hyatt-Regency Wichita. With the usual Hyatt amenities, the hotel is connected



directly to the Century II complex with an indoor walkway with elevator service.

Labor Day weather in Kansas is almost always warm-to-hot, with 90-100 degree days and 60-70 degree nights. All concert venues are fully air-conditioned. A sweater or jacket is a good idea for those possible climatic changes.

Wichita's Mid-Continent airport is served by most airlines and car rental agencies. The hotel has a shuttle; call from the rental car area. The bus station is two blocks from Century II. For train buffs, it's not easy, but you can access Wichita by Amtrak's Southwest Chief to Newton, 30 miles north of Wichita. Westbound, the train arrives Newton about 5:30 a.m. and eastbound about 3:10 a.m. A good friend who "owes you one" or a taxi will be needed to get you into Wichita.

Convention registration will open at Noon, Thursday, September 2 in the Hyatt Convention Hospitality Room/Record Shop. For the Record Shop, send material and an inventory list to: Karen Coup, 6141 Fairfield Rd., Wichita, KS 67204, 316/838-3127.

The Allen and Rodgers Organ companies will sponsor rooms for demonstrations and special events.

## ABOUT THE ORGANS

### THE WICHITA WURLITZER

The centerpiece organ is the Wichita Wurlitzer, formerly the New York Paramount instrument made famous by Jesse Crawford beginning in 1926. When built, it was the largest organ yet built by Wurlitzer, but it soon gained the reputation of being the finest as well as the largest. In addition to the genius of the Wurlitzer organization in its design were two artists of unequalled musical sensitivity, Jesse Crawford and Dan Papp. With Crawford at the console and Papp in the chambers, excellence became definitive, superlative. The organ was blessed with shallow chambers, a vast opening of shutters and an auditorium of great height but narrow width. What was the bane of stage shows, a narrow house with a narrow proscenium, was part of a totally superior organ installation. Every-



*The 4/39 Wurlitzer, Century II, Wichita, Kansas.*

*Coup Collection*

thing about this organ was just "right." The ensemble Crawford led Papp to create is one of unequalled richness and a unique clarity. The three tibias are each distinctly different in character as well as volume as are the many ranks of strings. As one contemporary organist has said, "It is simply a magical sound."

Having heard, having experienced this organ, no one comes away unchanged.

In Century II, what was a vertical installation layout has become a horizontal one. The room is larger than the Paramount, but, at the same time, it is "harder," which gives the organ even more brilliance and clarity, perhaps, than at the theatre. No voicing has been changed or altered, so the sound is as much as possible just what the masters left. The quantity, as well as quality, of musical ensemble is almost endless. As another contemporary artist commented, "You think she's at the end of giving and she just keeps giving more. There is no other sound like it on the face of the earth."

Incidentally, both quoted artists are part of the convention! Performing on the Paramount Wichita Wurlitzer will be many of today's leading theatre

organists. In order of appearance, they are: Barry Baker, Jeff Weiler, Clark Wilson, Walt Strony, and Lyn Larsen. This convention will provide a unique opportunity for each artist to have an organ of unexcelled tonal palette to work from and to give the conventioners the opportunity to hear each artist at his very best. Stylistic uniqueness of each artist will be brilliantly reflected from the Paramount Wichita Wurlitzer's vast tonal colors and intensities.

With five artists preparing for five concerts, scheduling on the Wichita Wurlitzer will be tight, but an "Open Console" session will be planned if at all possible, since there are apt to be several attendees who would like to give this historic instrument a try.

### THE LITTLE RIVER STUDIO MILLER WURLITZER

The other theatre pipe organ scheduled to be heard by all convention attendees is the former Wichita Miller Theatre Wurlitzer now installed in the Little River Studio. Originally the organ was Opus 515, a Style 235, 3 manual, 11 rank instrument installed in 1922. The instrument is now a 3/19,



patterned after the various studio organs built by Wurlitzer. It is installed in a comfortably elegant room with a high ceiling and hard surfaces throughout to give as much "life" as possible to the sound. Chests are all at swell-shade height so there is no vale over the sound, and careful, thoughtful voicing and regulating leads to a thrilling, yet subtle, sound. The setting is that of a country home, with a view overlooking fountains and the lawn extending to the Little Arkansas River, providing a unique listening experience. The Wurlitzer will be played by Jelani Eddington, who is rapidly becoming a major performer in the theatre organ world. At the Steinway Model B grand piano will be former Wichitan David Harris. Now a resident of New York City, David will join Jelani in the presentation of a number of duets. Judging by their previous performances at the Little River Studio, this will be an exciting concert. Because room capacity is 100 people, there will be four concerts, two on each of two afternoons. Transportation for the four groups from downtown to the studio will be provided by bus.

Seminars and time for socializing or shopping will be available on Friday and Saturday afternoons for Regional guests not attending their assigned Little River Studio performance.

### THE SCHANTZ ORGAN

New just this past year is the Schantz organ at First United Methodist Church. Standing now at 74 ranks on 4 manuals, the instrument is the latest in the trend toward a return to symphonic organ structure of 75 or so years ago. Containing many orchestrally imitative voices, this new organ will be musically explored by the renowned symphonic organist Peter Richard Conte. Mr. Conte is probably best known as the regular organist at the Grand Court of Lord and Taylor in Philadelphia, which was previously the John Wanamaker Store. By some accountings the largest organ in the world, containing 465 ranks controlled from a 6 manual console, this organ is played twice daily for store customers by Mr. Conte.



*The Little River Studio 3/19 Miller Theatre Wurlitzer.*

Coup Collection

### "PREGLOW"

#### THE BURNETT STUDIO KIMBALL

Not part of the full convention, the Thursday night "PreGlow" will feature Patti Simon on the Kimball Theatre Organ formerly in the Main Street Theatre in Kansas City. This organ was originally a 3 manual, 10 rank instrument that has now been enlarged to 18 ranks. The console has been rebuilt and electrified to interface with a Uniflex relay system.

The Kimball is installed in a studio addition to the home of Dr. Dean and Jackie Burnett in Halstead, Kansas, which is about 20 miles from Wichita. A bus will provide transportation for those purchasing separate tickets to this event. Due to limited seating capacity, early PreGlow registration is encouraged. Your check will be returned to you if the performance is sold-out.

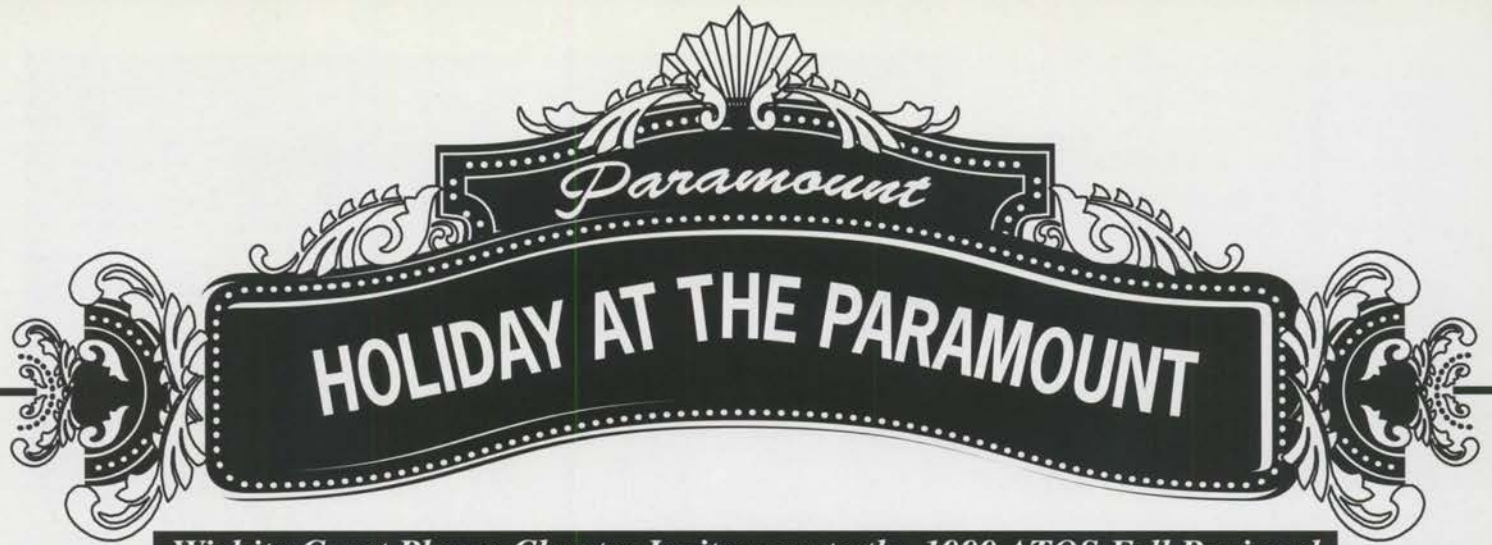
## *Spend Your Holiday in Wichita!*

**HOLIDAY AT THE PARAMOUNT** will be an exciting and unique weekend of musical performance on truly fine, historic instruments. There will be a minimum of "bus time" with a maximum of "music time" interspersed with plenty of time to visit with old friends and make new ones.

Perhaps the truly best "old friend" with which to become either acquainted or re-acquainted is Jesse Crawford's New York Paramount Wichita Wurlitzer.

**BE PREPARED FOR A MUSICAL EXPERIENCE  
THAT WILL CHANGE YOU FOREVER!**





*Paramount*  
**HOLIDAY AT THE PARAMOUNT**

*Wichita Great Planes Chapter Invites you to the 1999 ATOS Fall Regional*



*Patti Simon*



*Barry Baker*



*Jelani Eddington*



*David Harris*



*Jeff Weiler*

**THURSDAY** **SEPTEMBER 2**

8 p.m. PreGlow: Patti Simon, Burnett Residence Kimball (limit 60)

**FRIDAY** **SEPTEMBER 3**

9 a.m. Barry Baker, NYP Wichita Wurlitzer, Exhibition Hall, Century II  
 11 a.m. Lunch Break  
 2 & 4 p.m. Jelani Eddington/David Harris, Miller Wurlitzer, Little River Studio, Groups 1 & 2  
 2-5 p.m. Seminars or speakers – Groups 3 & 4  
 6:30 p.m. Buffet Dinner\*, Exhibition Hall  
 8 p.m. Jeff Weiler/Silent Movie Night, NYP Wichita Wurlitzer  
 10 p.m. Open Console, NYP Wichita Wurlitzer



*Clark Wilson*



*Walt Strony*

**SATURDAY** **SEPTEMBER 4**

9:00 a.m. ATOS General Membership Meeting  
 10:30 a.m. Clark Wilson, NYP Wichita Wurlitzer  
 11:45 a.m. Lunch\* (location tbd)  
 2 & 4 p.m. Jelani Eddington/David Harris, Little River Studio (Groups 3 & 4)  
 2-5 p.m. Seminars or speakers – Groups 1 & 2  
 6:30 p.m. ATOS Awards Banquet\*, Exhibition Hall  
 8:30 p.m. Walt Strony, NYP Wichita Wurlitzer



*Jonas Nordwall*



*Peter Conte*

**SUNDAY** **SEPTEMBER 5**

10 a.m. Jonas Nordwall, Renaissance Allen, Orpheum Theatre  
 11:45 a.m. Lunch\*, Orpheum Theatre  
 3 p.m. Peter Conte, Schantz, First United Methodist Church  
 6:30 p.m. Buffet Dinner,\* Exhibition Hall  
 8 p.m. Lyn Larsen, NYP Wichita Wurlitzer



*Lyn Larsen*

*\* Meals require purchase of a Meal Ticket. See Registration Form.*

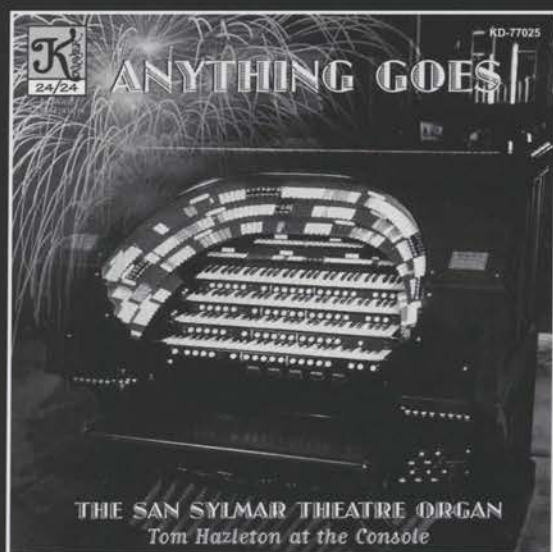
*Note: Times, artists, and activities are subject to change.*

**1999 ATOS Fall Regional September 2-5**



# TOM HAZLETON *plays* The Enlarged San Sylmar Organ

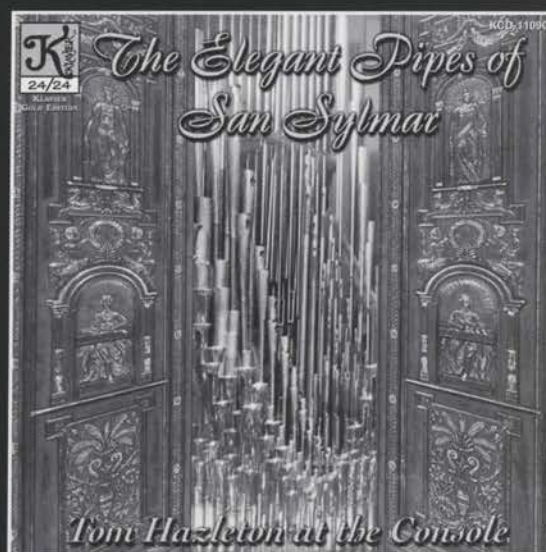
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## **The Pipes of the Mighty Wurlitzer**

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*The Stripper*, *God Bless America* and  
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# HOW TO RUIN a THEATRE ORGAN

BY DAN BARTON

The creator of the famed Barton theatre organ takes good humored pot shots at unschooled organ "experts" who attempt to improve on a tried and true product. In the light of his more than 65 years of pipe organ creativity, Dan speaks with the authority of a man who knows.

As a former theatre organ builder I am very grateful to the ATOE for what members have done in rescuing and restoring abandoned theatre organs.

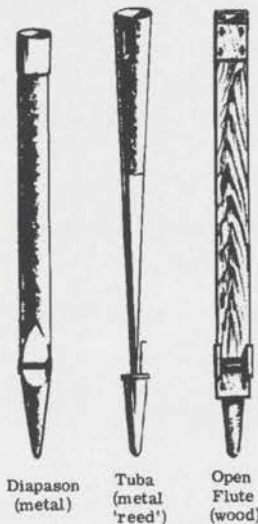
During the past few years I have become acquainted with many enthusiasts and I know the great pride they have in restoring an organ to its original condition as to the sound and tonal quality that was built into it by the original organ builder. They enable people of the 1960's to hear the big theatre sound of the 1920's. A great many theatre organs are now being used for public concerts or for entertainment in private homes.

I am an old, irascible, retired theatre organ builder who built and installed theatre organs in the mid-West. I have several "gripes." The big one is about organ pipes and to make it more understandable I would like to explain how a rank of pipes is created.

The production of organ pipes combines the experience and skill of several

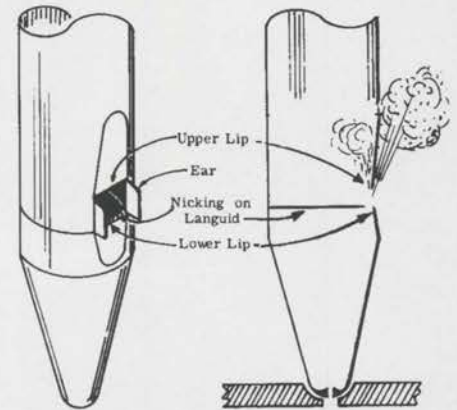
artisans, all with years of experience in the art.

First is the designer, or architect, who originates the specification to fulfill a specific purpose. The specification must provide a proper ensemble for the entire



organ and voices that combine in pleasing combinations as well as solo stops. The architect specifies the kind of pipes to be used and designates the wind pressures.

Next, the head of the pipe shop lays out the scale, or size, of the pipes. For metal flue pipes he designates the proportion of tin, lead and zinc to be used as well as the wall thickness. He also states the width and cut of the mouth. In metal reed pipes he establishes the thickness, size and mixture of the metal



Metal flue pipe

used for the barrel, the size and thickness of the reed tongue, the proper shallot size and the size and shape of the opening in the shallot to insure the correct voice. In wood pipes he determines the thickness of the walls and shape of the block and beard, which form the mouth.

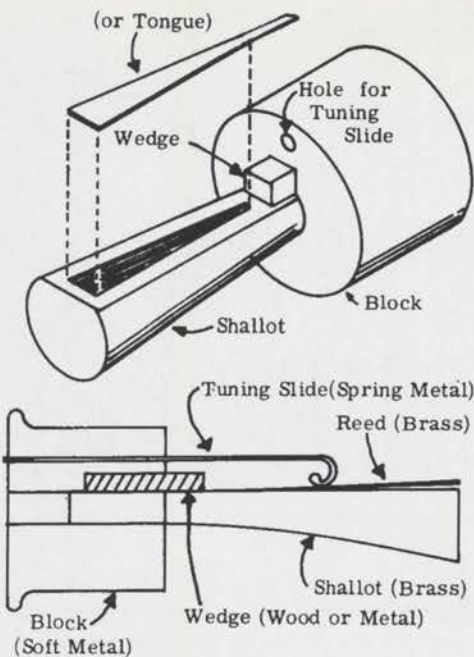
Next comes the voicer who represents about ten years work in a pipe shop before he becomes proficient in the art of pipe voicing. He makes the pipe speak and gives it the proper voice.

The final result is a rank of organ pipes that will blend properly with the ensemble in combinations, or stand out as a solo stop with its own individual tonal characteristic. Proper volume is important, but even more important is the tone quality or timbre which must be pleasing to the listener.

Just a word about the use of high wind pressure to create great volume. With the proper pipe scales and arrangement of the mouth in flue pipes, or the size of reed tongues and shallots in reed pipes, this is possible. But conversely, by changing the scale of the pipe and a change in the speaking portions, the volume can be reduced to a very moderate level, even when blown with high pressure.

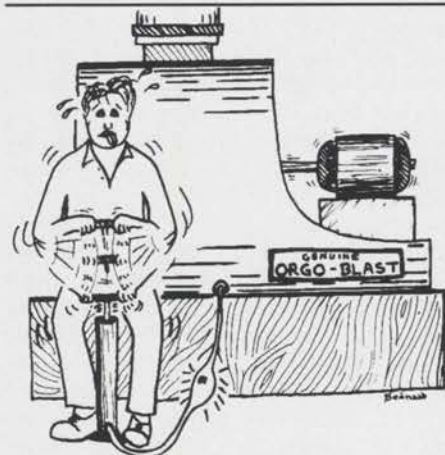
Hope-Jones built many church organs in England and the United States, many of them installed in moderate-size churches where great volume would have been a detriment instead of





### Reed pipes sound generating mechanism

an asset. There is no record of his theatre organs in England, and only a small number from the Elmira factory before Wurlitzer took over. It appears that one drawback Hope-Jones encountered in competing with English classic organ builders was the lack of a mixture. A mixture is a group of pipes consisting of 2, 3, 4 or more ranks of pipes tuned to partials of the prime tone -- 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th, etc.; many different arrangements are used by different classic builders. The mixture is actually an artificial method of reinforcing the harmonics formed in organ pipes. A mixture chest was not adaptable to unit construction, but Hope-Jones found that high pressure, especially in small scale string pipes, increased the harmonic build-up to a point where he felt no mixture was necessary. High pressure also gave the unit organ quick response to the action and prompt speech to the pipes. This was very much lacking in

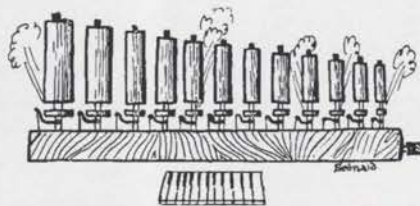


They devise ingenious methods of increasing wind pressure.

low pressure classic organs. It is my opinion that greater harmonic development and prompt speech of pipes and fast action came ahead of volume in the development of the Hope-Jones organ.

Now for the first "gripe." A few theatre organ enthusiasts have become too "enthusiastic." They appear to have acquired more knowledge and know-how as to how a theatre organ should be voiced and built than all the theatre organ builders put together. They are self-appointed organ "improvers." They do things to theatre organs that practically ruins them. They brag that they "figured it out" themselves. Many have never set foot in an organ factory or pipe shop. Only a few have worked on Barton organs, but I suspect this idea of organ "surgery" can spread to other makes and territories. I am badly bugged to know how they got that way. Is it a delusion of grandeur? Do they take a magic pill that gives them information no organ builder had? Are they rock-n-roll nuts that put noise ahead of musical sound? Do I sound somewhat shook-up?

I do not believe these fellows perform this organ surgery with any intention of ruining an organ. I think it comes from their lack of knowledge of organ building and their being carried away by their ardor for the theatre organ, an obsession that does not stop when the organ has been restored to its original condition.



It's better to get steamed up over a real calliope rather than try to make a theatre organ sound like one, says Dan.

Their infatuation gives them a drive to keep doing work on an organ. This, combined with little or no knowledge of the science of organ building and pipe production, creates the organ "improver" who does terrible things to a theatre organ.

I am thinking of a 3/17 Barton that I heard and inspected after it had been restored and it sounded as good as it did when I attended the opening over 40 years ago. I recently heard this same organ after it had been "operated" on by an organ "improver." I could not believe it was the same organ. On several of the larger ranks the wind holes in the pipe toes had been enlarged, the upper lips cut up and the pressure increased from 10 to 25 inches. On the large reeds the curves of the tongues had been

increased and the pressure raised from 10 to 25 inches. To get increased static pressure the "improver" had a second blower connected to the intake of the original blower so the wind was at an increased pressure before the original blower started to raise the pressure again. The result is described in one word -- CALLIOPE! The volume was increased by about 50% on these ranks but the musical quality was entirely gone; no smoothness or texture, the tone



The self-made organ surgeon may possess a variety of skills.

was strident, harsh, raucous and overpowering. The Posthorn sounded like an old-fashioned steam locomotive blowing its whistle coming into town on a cold winter night. When the full organ was played the ensemble was entirely out of balance. The small reeds and flue pipes will not respond to this kind of organ "surgery."

Can you imagine the Mormon Tabernacle Choir with its variety of voices, soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone and basses, with the baritones hollering at the top of their voices and all other voices on correct pitch and proper volume, or a symphony orchestra with the brass section playing twice as loud as it should? The pipes with the cut-up mouths and enlarged holes in the toes were just junk; they never could be restored to proper playing condition.

*In the concluding installment, Dan Barton will continue his campaign to discourage tampering with "the tried and true" with some extra horrible examples of organs he feels have been mutilated. He will again discuss raised pressures, cut-up flue pipe lips and over-bent reeds -- also pipe swapping between organs.*



# HOW TO RUIN a THEATRE ORGAN

BY DAN BARTON

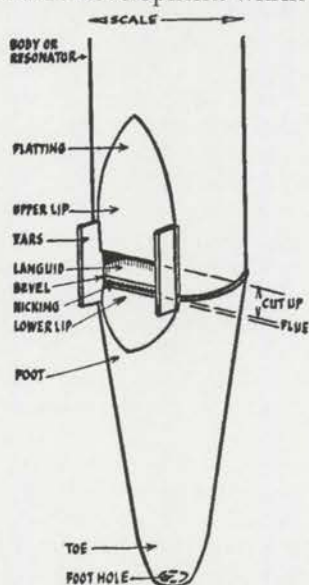
Cartoons: Seonaid

## PART TWO - CONCLUSION

In the first round, veteran organ builder Dan Barton explained the difficult-to-learn skills required of organ builders, then described some of the "surgery" performed by well-meaning but un-schooled experimenters who "always hurt the thing they love" -- the very pipe organ they have so painstakingly restored. Dan continues with some specific examples.

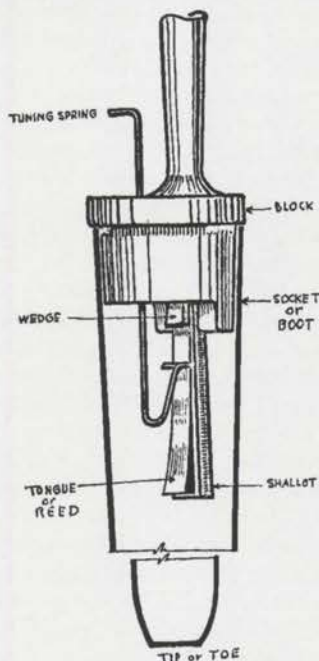
The quality or timbre of a flue pipe is obtained by the division between the languid and the upper and lower lip. When the balance of this division is changed by raising the upper lip and increasing the wind pressure, the tonal quality is permanently damaged and the pipe is ruined.

The tonal characteristic of a reed pipe is created by the vibrations of the brass tongue setting in motion sound waves in the barrel of the pipe, thus producing a harmonic development which results



Part of a Flue Pipe (from 'The Organ Today' by Norman and Norman (St. Martin's Press)).

in the pleasing tonal character of the pipe. When a reed pipe is overblown the reed "freezes" to the shallot and there is no sound. The organ "surgeon" then bends the reed to increase the distance between the reed and shallot. He then increases the pressure 10 or 12 inches which causes such a violent action of the sound waves in the barrel of the pipe



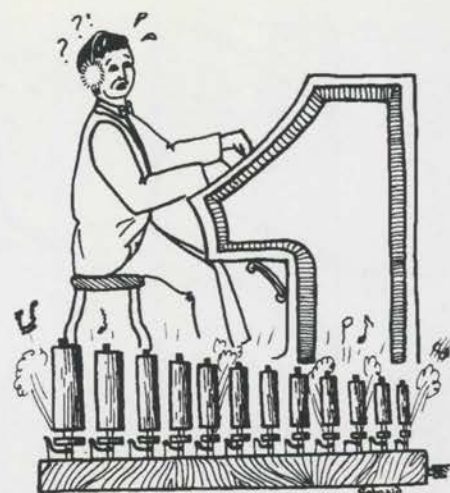
Parts of a reed pipe (from 'The Organ Today' by Norman and Norman (St. Martin's Press)).

that there is no harmonic build-up. The result is that the original tone quality is gone and the pipe sounds like a horn being blown at a New Year's Eve party. To repair the damage the bent reeds would all have to be replaced and the



Wind pressure isn't critical when applied to a New Year's party honker.

pressure returned to normal. I met the noise-at-any-cost-artist, who did this job, and he proudly told me he was an organist, had never seen an organ factory, and had heard about re-voicing and had figured how to do it all by himself. I finished my visit with him by asking



The closer the calliope to the console, the thicker the ear muffs.

him if he could turn a Diapason into a Vox Humana. He looked serious and said he was not sure, but he was willing to try.

To gain volume at a higher pressure without losing the tonal quality you must use a different rank of pipes with a larger scale, wider cut mouths, thicker metal or heavier walls on wood pipes, and for reeds, larger scale, long shallots, larger openings in the shallots, and longer and heavier tongues.

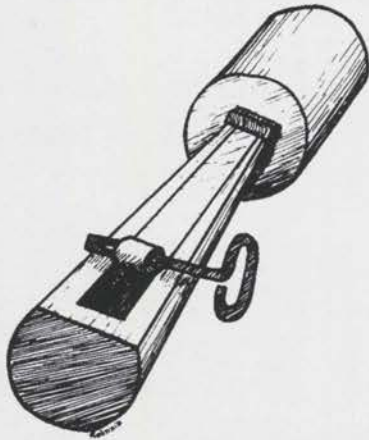
If you ever have an idea of ruining an organ by the methods just described, write to me and I will send you the name of an air calliope maker. By using Reisner's all-electric valves on the calliope and adding a switch to the relay and a tablet on the console, you can add noise without tonal quality to any organ and you will not have to ruin any valuable organ pipes. I suggest the calliope be placed right beside the organ console, as close as possible.

Here is another one. Three enthusiasts restored a 3/14 Barton and did a good job. Then for some reason beyond comprehension they decided the valves on all the big stops were too small. They bought felt and leather and made new valves about twice as large and three times as heavy. They worked long and hard installing them. The original valves were of a weight that worked fast on the pneumatics, the new ones were so heavy they slowed down the action. To get the action back to a quick response they raised the pressure. Now they were over-blowing the pipes and decided to revoice them and they ruined the pipes. Then they wrote to me. My, my was I surprised to find out I had put the wrong size valves on all those Barton organs! They should have written to me before they started.

Back in the old days a large theatre circuit, which bought Bartola pipe organs from me way back when they



had small theatres, took over the Opera House in one of their locations and we installed an early model Barton in the Opera House. The organ had a 6-rank chest, with 5 unit ranks, all on 5" wind. Five years later they built a new 2500-seat theatre and we installed our newly developed Barton unit organ, a 3/17 on 10, 15 and 25 inches of wind. Came hard times and the Opera House stood closed for many years. Then a group of enthusiasts took over the Opera House, restored the organ and had the use of it. Meanwhile the unit organ in the newer



To get just the right 'high pressure' curve, the 'improver' may adopt radical methods when dealing with reeds.

2500-seat theatre was not being used, and the enthusiasts took note that the pipe scales on the unit organ were larger than the pipes in the Opera House organ. So they got permission to take the pipes from the 2500-seater and put them in the Opera House organ. They enlarged the holes in the rack boards and switched several ranks of pipes. Are you following me? They now had 10, 15 and 25 inch pressure pipes playing on 5 inches of wind! The weak "wheeps" were piteous! Something had to be done, so they "revoiced" the pipes; in



With no weights or springs to hold it down, the Regulator shot up to its full height - and static wind capacity.

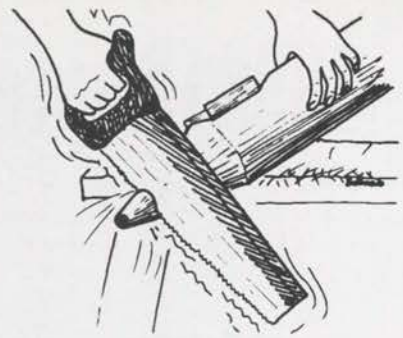
short, they ruined the high pressure pipes. The Opera House organ now plays on the original pipes, the pipes from the 2500-seat theatre are junk.

Early models of the Barton organ used a damper valve to regulate the air to the regulator. This consisted of a damper inside the air line connected to a lever with a weight at the end, which in turn was connected by a chain to the top of the regulator (later a cone valve, sometimes called poppet valve, inside the regulator was used). When the air raised the regulator the chain closed the damper valve. The usual weights and springs were used on the regulators.

A 2/7 Barton with this arrangement was located about 50 miles from our factory. During the years the organ stood idle someone, presumably kids, stole all the weights and springs off the regulators and also took the chains which controlled the damper valves. A young enthusiast bought this organ and, with his pals, put it back in shape and installed it in his home. Like many enthusiasts he was an organist, with no experience in building or installing organs, and with the weights, springs and damper chains gone, he never knew there were such things. When the blower was turned on the regulators went right to the top, stretching the leather to its fullest, and of course the wind pressure in the chests was the pressure of the blower. The musical results were far from good, something was wrong and it was quite apparent it was the wind. They decided there was too much of it. So after carefully considering the matter, they decided to reduce the wind.

The blower was a 2-stage Orgoblo. They took the blower apart and removed some of the impeller blades from the fans. After a few experiments and the removal of more impeller blades, they had it. The regulators did not go to the top, but the organ action did not work, either! A lot of pipes did not speak, and those that did sounded like sick ducks. They had reduced the blower pressure to about 2 inches. Maybe this enthusiast did not know much about organs, but he was smart enough to drive to Oshkosh to see me and he was soon straightened out.

One problem for enthusiasts, who install organs in their homes, is that of too much volume. An organ on 10 and 15 inch wind that sounded fine in a 2000 seat theatre can be too powerful in a home. A good tight chamber, reducing the size of the swell opening and the use of drapes over the opening, solves this problem and still retains all the tonal quality of a theatre organ. I am acquainted with an enthusiast who handled it differently. He owned a 10-rank, 3 manual Barton, voiced on 10, 15 and 25 inch

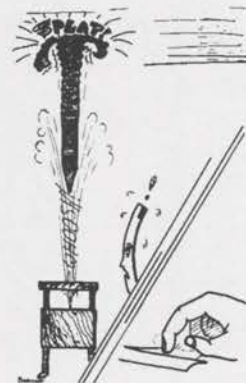


The 'improver' who can't be bothered with reaming out the pipe's toe in order to admit more air, will find the saw most effective - and devilishly permanent.

pressure. The stops were Flute, Tibia, Tuba, Diapason, VDO, VDO Celeste, Clarinet, Vox, Oboe Horn and Kinura. His plan was to change the loud theatre ranks for softer church organ ranks, using used church organ stops of various pressures. He changed the Tuba to a Viol Cello, the Diapason to a Gamba, the Tibia from 8 foot "C" up to a Harmonic Flute, the Oboe Horn to a Dulciana and the Kinura to a Salicional. The pressures on the church pipes varied from 3-1/3 to 7 inches. I have heard the organ. He did not ruin a theatre organ. He just turned a theatre organ into a church organ.

Let me repeat a word about "revoicing." To my knowledge as an organ builder I know that an organ stop that has the proper scale and mouth and correct metal content, or thickness of walls in wood stops, and in reed pipes the proper shallots and reed tongues, and properly voiced to have the correct volume and tone quality, that it is impossible to open the toe hole, cut up the mouth or bend the reeds and play the stop at increased pressure without losing the tone quality or timbre of the pipe. To me there is no such thing as "revoicing;" it is mutilation.

Much of the troubles encountered by organ enthusiasts could be avoided by consulting a competent organ maintenance man. All, but one, and he is the fellow who cuts up the mouths or pipes, enlarges toe holes, bends reeds and raises pressure 10 or 15 inches. He is way out man -- he knows! Dan Barton



Lightweight pipework has been known to assume astral ambitions when exposed to greatly increased wind pressure.



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# The Once Proud Pipe Organ!



*The 3/17 Wurlitzer console in the Mosque Auditorium, Richmond, Virginia. Ray Brubacher photo*

## Recalling the Glory Days of the Theatre Organ Capital of the United States: RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

*by Ray Brubacher*

The title for this narrative comes from a Bell Telephone System advertisement which appeared in magazines such as *The Saturday Evening Post* in the fall of 1954.

The full page ad titled "The Once Proud Pipe Organ that Played Again" showed a young telephone company engineer by the name of Harold L. Warner, Jr. seated at the console of the 3 manual 17 rank Wurlitzer style 260 Special in the Mosque Auditorium in Richmond, Virginia.



Warner, with the help of Tommy Landrum, had recently restored the instrument to full playing condition. His bill to the City of Richmond was \$32.50 for parts. He was cited by various civic organizations for his voluntary efforts at getting the long silent instrument playable.

Over at 2908 West Cary Street, the 4 manual 17 rank Wurlitzer "special" was being made playable by organ builder Hugh Burdick of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Westminster Records had engaged Radio City

organ recording since the late "Fats" Waller's 78 rpm discs made in England on a Compton in the E.M.I. Studios in London in the thirties.

Downtown at 6th and Grace, Eddie Weaver was still holding court at Loew's on the 3 manual 13 rank Wurlitzer while running the show at the fashionable tea room in Miller & Rhodes department store. Weaver was to remain at Loew's until circa 1961 when Loew's New York office discovered, to their horror, that they still had a theatre organist on their payroll.

Mosque" were released in the 12 inch format. Instead of showing the magnificent expanse of the Mosque stage and proscenium, Cook chose to decorate this jacket with a photograph of the proscenium arch of the Titania Palace Theatre in Berlin, Germany. Perhaps this was due to the Titania Palace's successive elliptical arches being made entirely of dummy organ pipes.

On the evening of April 3, 1959, Richmond was deluged with a torrential rainstorm. However, it did not



Harold L. Warner, Jr. at the 4/17 Wurlitzer, Byrd Theatre, Richmond, Virginia. December 1, 1957.



The late Tommy Landrum (standing at right) and Dick Barlow give the Byrd Wurlitzer console regular Saturday maintenance. Ray Brubacher photos

Music Hall organist Dick Leibert to do a series of recordings on a theatre organ. Leibert remembered the Byrd instrument and "Leibert Takes Richmond" became the premier theatre organ recording by the classical Westminster label. It was followed by a series of Leibert offerings; "Leibert Takes a Holiday," "Leibert Takes Broadway" and "A Merry Wurlitzer Christmas."

The legendary Ann Leaf came to Richmond to make two discs for Westminster on the Byrd Wurlitzer "Ann Leaf at the Mighty Wurlitzer" and, "The Very Thought of You." The rarest Westminster disc made on the Byrd organ was "Solid Jackson." Graham Jackson, noted African-American entertainer, was the first black organist to produce a theatre

In the meantime, Harold Warner's efforts at the Mosque did not go unnoticed by Emory Cook, one of the true pioneers of high fidelity recording. Cook engaged Reginald Foort of BBC fame and the former owner of the famous traveling Möller, to make a series of recordings on the Mosque Wurlitzer. The author has, in his collection, several ten inch discs, some of which bear the name of "Michael Cheshire" a fictitious name for Foort. One disc shows a photo of the Radio City Music Hall console on the jacket cover. Another disc entitled "Percussion and Pedal" has a brochure enclosed with the record showing a full photo of the above console instead of the Mosque console. Two later discs entitled "Waltz and Ballet" and "Intermission at the

prevent an audience of over 2,000 people gathered in the Mosque auditorium to hear Reginald Foort, live in concert. Foort played his famous thunderstorm composition "Nightmare in the Mosque." The author has never, to this day, heard a thunder effect like that produced from the Mosque's 16' Wood Diaphones and 16' Ophicleides. The cavernous acoustics of the auditorium carried the effect to perfection.

#### SUNDAY MORNINGS AT THE BYRD THEATRE

It was always a rare treat to travel to Richmond for an informal Sunday morning play-off at the Byrd. By 9:00 a.m., the regulars had all assembled by the console. Harold Warner would bring the organ up out of the pit and then graciously turn it over to "visit-





*Christmas 1959 at the Byrd Theatre. Staff and friends. Harold L. Warner, Jr. is kneeling at the left of the console. Theatre manager Robert Coulter is standing at far right.*

ing firemen." We were all guests of our gracious host, Mr. Robert Coulter, manager of the theatre. Coulter had looked after the organ in the years when it fell silent so that when Leibert took Richmond, he found an instrument under lock and key and fully intact, a sort of King Tut's tomb awaiting rediscovery.

Then there was Mrs. Cline! Ethel G. Cline was a senior citizen who would not be called a senior citizen. Her local newspaper column "As E.G. Cs It" appeared in the *Henrico Herald* for years and always promoted the Byrd organ, and "Mr. Warner" as she called him. Mrs. Cline was the Byrd's self-installed organ critic and never failed to have us all doubled over with her often "un-southern belle" comments on who played too soft, too loud and too long!

After the morning session, we would refuel at the New York Deli, two doors down from the theatre. Then it was over to the Mosque, if the theatre was dark, for more Wurlitzer merriment.

Jimmy Boyce was always a favorite performer at the Mosque console. Many ATOS members remember his 2/7 Wurlitzer which he installed in Alexandria, Virginia's American On Wheels Roller Rink. It was later fol-

lowed by the 4/34 Wurlitzer from the Center Theatre, New York City. I can still see Harold Warner almost dancing up and down one of the aisles clapping his hands in rhythm to Boyce's spectacular arrangement of "Opus One." Only Warner could have experienced the personal thrill of hearing "his" instrument sound forth in all its uninhibited glory.

Tragedy was to strike in 1961 with the sudden and untimely death of Harold Warner. He was at work in the relay room at the Mosque when he was stricken with a fatal heart attack and was found there.

**ENTER TOMMY LANDRUM,  
DICK BARLOW, NICK PITT,  
AND FRED BERGER**

Tommy Landrum who worked with Harold Warner in the telephone company was keenly interested in the welfare of all three Richmond Wurlitzers. Dick Barlow, a local jeweler and watch inspector for the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad owned a store a few doors down from the Byrd Theatre. These two gentlemen picked up the torch and began an every Saturday ritual of scrupulous maintenance for the Mosque and Byrd Wurlitzers which was to last until the mid-80s.

Other local guardian angels of the Mighty Wurlitzer, are Nick Pitt and Fred Berger. I use the present tense because at this writing Nick and Fred are still maintaining the ex-Loew's, now Carpenter Center Wurlitzer. Both of these gentlemen headed the reinstallation of the organ. By assuming the caretaker role in the early 60s, Landrum and Barlow were free to concentrate most of their efforts on the uptown instruments.

Landrum and Barlow were to give unselfishly of their time until a local group of organ buffs gained access to the Byrd and Mosque. Tonal alterations to the Byrd such as the removal of the French Trumpet for a Post Horn as well as other sonic modifications, were to eventually frustrate the maintenance efforts by these two gentlemen. They ceased operations, bringing to a close, twenty-four years of considerate and first class care to keep these two instruments one hundred percent operational, and one hundred percent original. I recall being in the audience on May 15, 1986 when Eddie Weaver gave his last formal concert on the Byrd organ. I sat with Mrs. Weaver and we both were puzzled as to why these changes had been made. Her comment to me, and I can quote it to this day was, "It doesn't sound like



the Byrd organ anymore."

When he was given his "pink slip" by Loew's, Eddie at first welcomed it as a respite from his daily duties. However, those of us who are fortunate to count Eddie Weaver among our friends knew well that with his energy and reputation, this would not last long. When the Byrd Theatre management offered him the post as organist, his wonderful and long suffering wife Marion threatened to get a gun and shoot him if he didn't get out of the house and take the job.

Again, your author recalls the many pleasant journeys to Richmond to hear Eddie at the Byrd. The ritual was always to meet Tommy Landrum at the Mosque in the late afternoon, have a go on the Wurlitzer, and adjourn for dinner. Then, it was over to the Byrd for Eddie Weaver's 7:30 p.m. program. We would then be invited to the Weaver residence to partake of spirited refreshment, name that tune on the Hammond A100, good story telling et al. Then it was back across town to the Byrd for the 9:30 program.

#### AFTERNOONS WITH EDDIE WEAVER

In the mid-60s came the wonderful Sunday afternoon concerts with Eddie Weaver at the Mosque. Weaver's rep-

utation as organist at Loew's from 1937 to 1961 as well as organist for Miller and Rhodes until the store closed its doors in the early 90s, had earned him an almost fanatical following.

The newly formed Richmond Organ Enthusiasts Club sponsored these concerts. Again, it was an incredible sight to see more than 3,000 people in their seats by the time Eddie came on stage. His long time associate at Loew's, Jack Woodson, often played the role of Eddie's fictional brother Charlie Weaver of Dennis Day television show fame. When the two of them got going with their comedy routines, it was a sight to see and hear. (*Editor Notes: Recall Eddie at the 1972 convention?*) At one point in the program, Eddie would do the usual "trip through the organ" demonstrating its most unusual Vox Humana stop which sounded remarkably like a human voice - because it was. A vocalist stationed in the chamber blended so beautifully with the stop and the effect stopped you dead in your tracks.

Another special effect designed by Tommy Landrum and Dick Barlow was the "phantom manual" which could be connected to the great manual relay of either organ. Eddie's extremely talented musician daughter

Jodie, would do the honors hidden from view, playing the organ while Eddie did a hilarious Jack Benny violin act on stage carrying on an animated conversation with the vacant console. In fact, Eddie was a very decent violinist. When the afternoon was over, Eddie and his "crew" had made your life a little better than it was when you came in.

Local recording engineers Carrol Bolling and Bob Carson were always on hand with top quality equipment to capture these programs on tape. An LP made on the TIBIA label exists to give us an idea of how wonderful these concerts were. Bolling and Carson continued to record Eddie Weaver at the Byrd and Mosque to the end of his active career.

#### THE LOEW'S WURLITZER GOES NORTH, THEN SOUTHWEST, THEN HOME AGAIN

Reginald Foort may have owned and toured with the famous "traveling Möller," however, Richmond had its own traveling Wurlitzer. In 1976, Loew's pulled out of the theatre business in Richmond. The author was, and still is staff organist for the American Film Institute Theatre in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. At that time, there were no plans to keep the Loew's Theatre intact. Upon my recommendation, A.F.I. made a request for the Wurlitzer for future installation at the Kennedy Center. The organ was donated. Ten Saturdays were spent with a devoted work crew dismantling and packing the organ for shipment. It was moved to the Kennedy Center and placed in storage pending rebuilding and installation in the space that is now occupied by the Terrace Theatre.

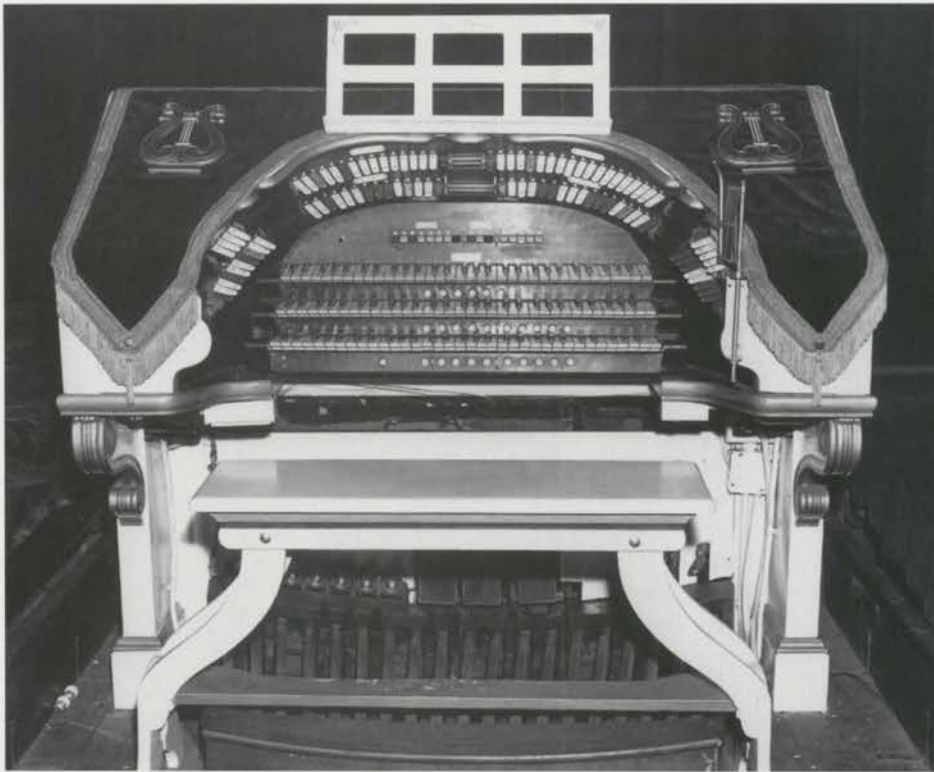
Management changes and Kennedy Center politics conspired against the installation of the organ. A.F.I. sold it to a Fort Worth, Texas, resident. The instrument was removed from the Kennedy Center by Roy Davis, owner of Roy Davis Pipe Organs, in McMinnville, Tennessee, and placed in storage in one of his warehouses.

The now defunct Loew's Richmond was to become the Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts. Attempts were made to install another organ,



Eddie Weaver in a formal portrait at the 3/17 Wurlitzer, Mosque Auditorium, Richmond, Virginia. Ray Brubacher photo





*The 3/13 Loew's Richmond Wurlitzer console as it appeared before its removal from the theatre in 1975.*

however, it was decided that the 3/13 Wurlitzer should be purchased and



*The 4/17 Wurlitzer console, Byrd Theatre, Richmond, Virginia.*

*Ray Brubacher photos*

brought back to Richmond and reinstalled in its original home.

Again, Nick Pitt and Fred Berger were to head a crew of volunteers who reinstalled the organ. On Sunday, April 5, 1992, a completely sold out standing room only audience greeted Eddie Weaver as he once again brought the newly restored white and gold console out of the pit to play a memorable rededication concert. His old friend and long time radio announcer, Harvey Hudson, was master of ceremonies. The fact that Eddie was now in his mid-eighties and legally blind, did not prevent him from playing a program which had everyone on their feet cheering and applauding time after time. Only Eddie Weaver could have filled the house. No other organist, however well known he or she might be, could have done it.

#### THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS - FEBRUARY, 1999

I will preface this section with an event which occurred some twenty-five years ago when the Mosque Auditorium was air conditioned. Unknown to Tommy Landrum and Dick Barlow, the company doing the installation of the duct work, removed the entire windline running from the blower room, the Main Chamber, to the Solo Chamber on the other side of the stage. They didn't know what it was for and did not ask questions. One can only imagine the dust storm over the proscenium when the blower was turned on for the organ's routine maintenance. New wind line was promptly installed, however, our Mosque organ maintenance team had a very difficult time convincing the air conditioning people that this windline had to be soldered and absolutely air tight.

After Landrum and Barlow ceased efforts to keep the Mosque Wurlitzer in top playing condition, the organ began to rapidly deteriorate due to lack of adequate maintenance, and finally, no maintenance. The coup d' grace was the again recent accidental removal of the windline going from the Main to the Solo Chamber. At this writing, it has not been replaced. Therefore, the once proud pipe organ that played again is now dead in the





*Byrd Theatre, Richmond, Virginia, ca. 1972. Ray Brubacher photo*

water.

According to Byrd Theatre administrative manager Karen Labrador and night manager Matthew Hume, the Byrd organ is currently being played every Saturday evening by Bob Gullede who also gives the organ care and maintenance. The Carpenter Center Wurlitzer was last used in 1998 for a college commencement and later a silent film program. The Carpenter Center now stands between two of Richmond's abandoned landmarks, Miller and Rhodes and Thalhimer's Department Stores. No longer can people come downtown to shop in these once fashionable and elegant emporiums.

Eddie Weaver is now 91 and is a resident of the Gaton Terrace Assisted Living complex in north Richmond. He is among the very last survivors of a breed who can still reminisce about the days when theatre organists were stars in their own right. Stars who brought laughter, a tear or two, and

memories through the magic of the theatre pipe organ. My wife and I along with Dick and Betty Barlow visited Eddie on February 27 of this year. Although almost totally blind, Eddie still had us rolling with laughter as he recalled a few of the more unusual and sometimes totally zany incidents in his life, one such being the time he was playing a radio broadcast sponsored by a local funeral home. His closing number was "Hey Look Me Over!"

Tommy Landrum past ATOS President, was to pass from this earth, still in his prime, a victim of cancer. Dick Barlow, who owns a 3/13 Wurlitzer, currently has more work in the jewelry repair business than he can handle. To him I extend my sincere appreciation for acting as my proof reader and making corrections and suggestions where necessary.

\*\*\*

*EDITOR'S NOTE:*

*Ray Brubacher is staff organist for the*

*American Film Institute Theatre, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C., and Oakdale Emory United Methodist Church, Olney, Maryland. He also serves as crew member on the SS. John W. Brown, a fully restored and steaming World War II Liberty ship. He is the Brown's chapel organist and photo archivist. Ray was a contributing writer to THEATRE ORGAN in the late 60s and early 70s. Ray recorded the original 2/8 Wurlitzer Style 190SP in the Tivoli (Weinberg Center) Theatre, Frederick, Maryland. For the 1972 ATOS Convention, Ray performed a superb concert of orchestral transcriptions on the 3/40 Möller (1954) in the George Washington National Masonic Temple, Alexandria, Virginia. Welcome back to these pages, Ray!*



# “An Acre of Seats in a Palace of Splendor”

## Loew's Valencia

Jamaica (Queens), New York  
Opened: January 12, 1929  
Architect: John Eberson  
Capacity: 3554  
Organ: Robert-Morton 4/23

The Valencia was first of the five Loew's "Wonder Theatres" to open its doors; later came the Paradise, Bronx; Kings, Brooklyn; Jersey, Jersey City (all September) and 175th Street, Manhattan (February 1930). The country's three most prominent theatre architects were involved in this huge project: Eberson designed the Valencia and Paradise, Rapp & Rapp the Kings and Jersey, and Lamb the 175th Street.

Eberson's atmospheric theatres almost invariably drew their inspiration from Spain or Italy, and his two New York houses are no exception: the Paradise is Italian and the Valencia Spanish. The Valencia is the more restrained, but not by much: when speaking of Eberson, "restraint" is a relative term. With unornamented ceilings, his theatres were allegedly less costly to build than conventional houses, but it would appear that at least some of the money saved was plowed back into the remaining ornamental work.

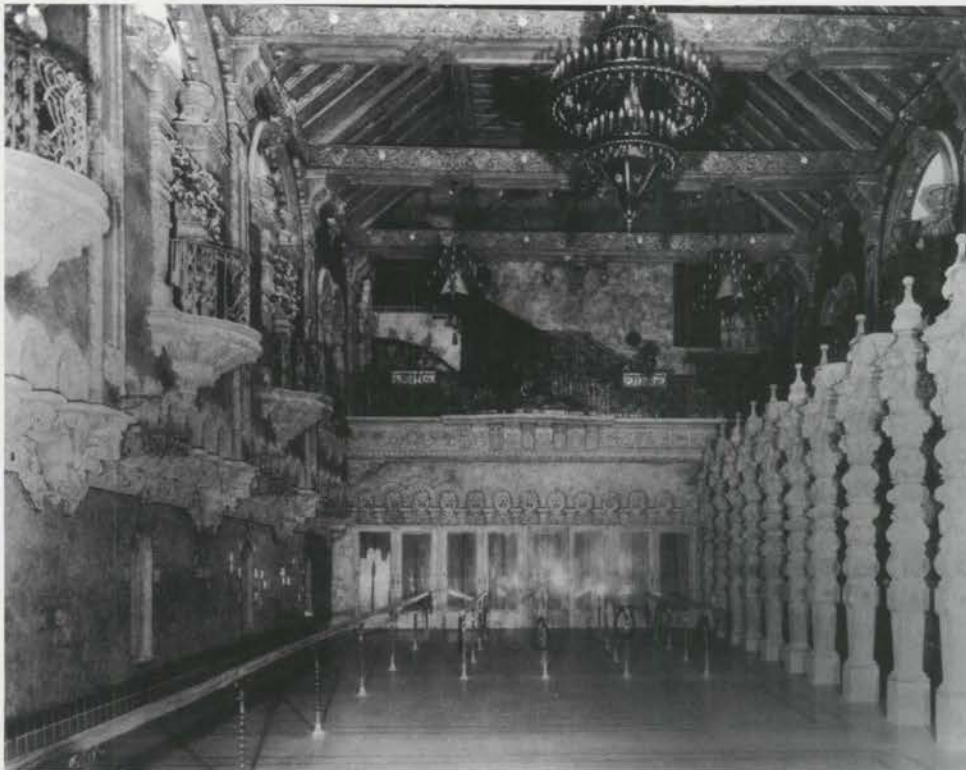
The largest theatre in the Borough of Queens, the Valencia was so popular that Loew's later increased its capacity, as they did at the Paradise and 175th Street, by extending the seating over the orchestra pit, entombing the console. Loew's retained control of the Valencia until 1977, when the company donated the theatre to a Pentecostal church. The walls have been repainted in gaudy colors, and a huge chandelier hangs from the "sky," but the theatre is essentially intact, unlike the Paradise, which suffered the indignity of being quadruplexed.

The so called "Wonder Mortons" (Wonder Organ was a Kilgen designation) were essentially larger versions of the four 4/20s built for Loew's houses in St. Louis, Missouri; Columbus, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Providence, Rhode Island. Of the five, the Valencia's is probably the one most familiar to theatre organ buffs, through recordings made when it was installed in Peter Schaeble's home studio in Rosedale, New York. It remained there for many years after Schaeble's untimely death, but was recently purchased by Jasper Sanfilippo.

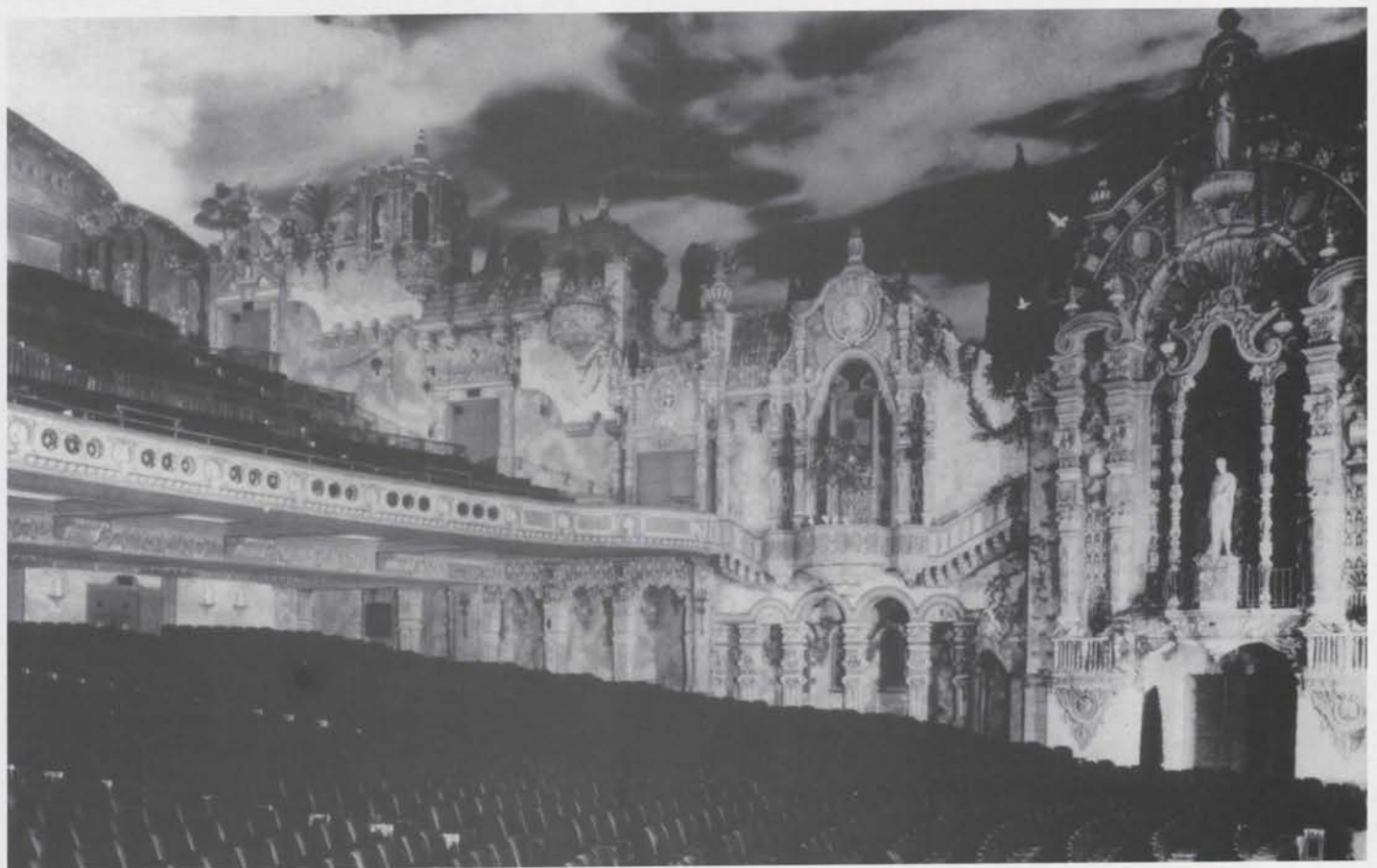
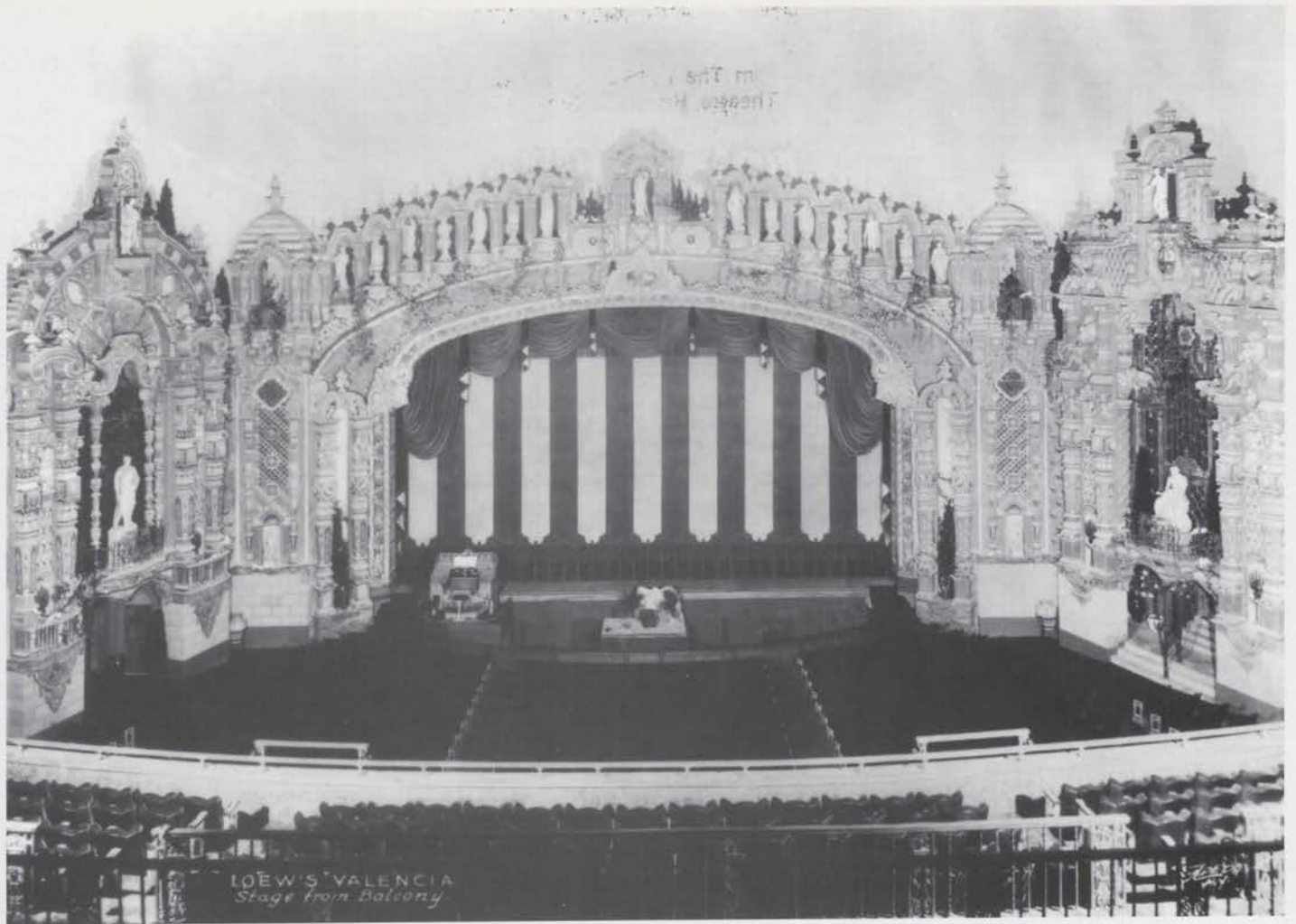
*Steve Levin*

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**All photographs: THS Loew's Collection**



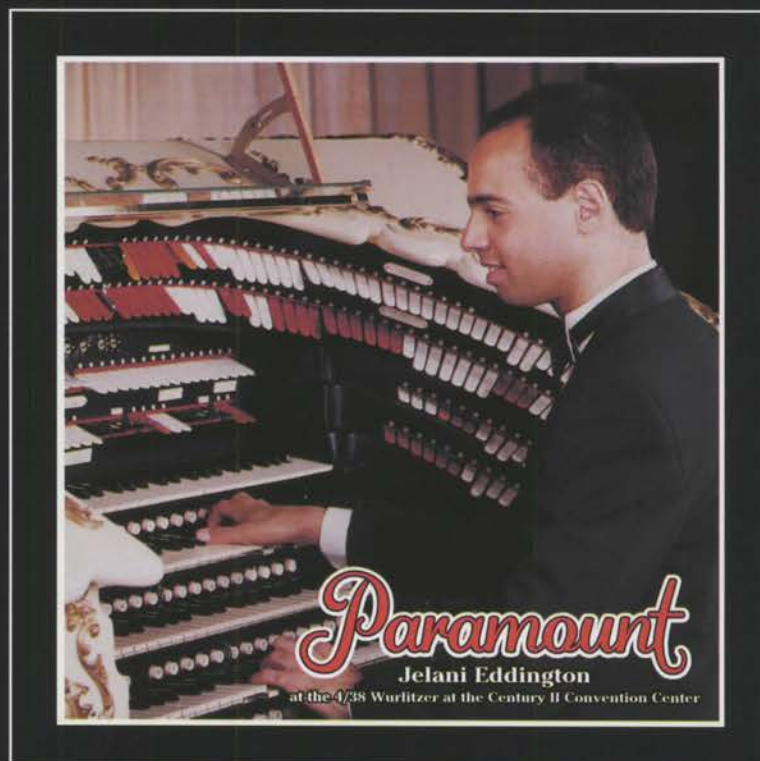






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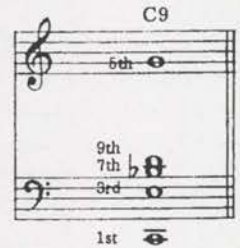
Learn to find all these chords and practice moving them upward and downward by half tones and whole tones -- slowly.

Practice 9th chords in groups of four or five at a time. Learn to find each one quickly, and then move upward or downward.

Ninth chords, when played this way, have a sound which is unlike other chords. Learn to recognize this sound so you will hear if you are not playing it correctly. Use whichever 9th chord the melody is the 5th of.

Play a few of your favorite songs and wherever three or more notes move up or down the scale or chromatically, substitute whichever 9th chord the melody is the 5th of. A D melody will always be accompanied by a G9, etc. because D is the 5th of G.

Right Hand = 5th (melody)  
Left Hand = 3rd, 7th and 9th  
Pedal = Root



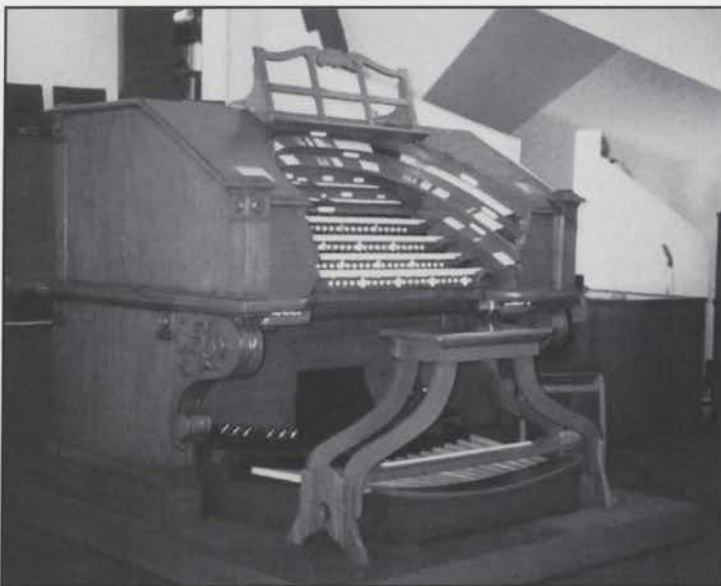
Left Hand

Pedal

Bb9 A9 Ab9 G9 Cb9 F9 E9 Eb9 D9 Db9 C9 B9

Bb9 B9 Bb9 A9 Ab9 G9 Ab9 G9 Cb9 F9 D9 Eb9 D9 Db9 C9

*In the next issue of THEATRE ORGAN, I'll present a few examples in well known songs.*



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# The Sounds of Silent Movies

by Robert Gates

## MORE SILENT FILMS FROM PARAMOUNT ORGANIST, GAYLORD CARTER

Continuing the reviews of the Paramount groups, here are two films dramatizing American history directed by James Cruze. Both explore the cruelty and adventure of the nineteenth century, but it should be noted that both have happy endings.

### OLD IRONSIDES

(1926, reissued in 1928)

with Charles Farrell and Esther Ralston

This rousing tale of the sea starts in 1798 at the meeting of the Fifth Congress in Philadelphia. The subject of debate is the tribute demanded by pirates of the Barbary States of Tripolitania from ships passing to and from the Mediterranean Sea. Pacifists argue for the expenditure, but the firebrands soon control the meeting with the watchword - "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute!" That this "watchword" had first been pronounced two years earlier and in saltier language was apparently not a concern of this screenplay.

It is now 1803. A lanky farm boy, (Farrell), sees a poster offering "spoils of victory" and other enticements to men who would sign on the *USS Constitution* for exciting naval action. He goes to Salem, Massachusetts, where he meets two under-scrupled tars, a master gunner "on leave" from the *Constitution* (George Bancroft, later to star in *The Docks of New York*) and the bos'n from the bark *Esther* (Wallace Beery). He and the gunner are soon shanghaied onto the *Esther* where he encounters the film's ingénue, Esther, played by the stunning Esther Ralston.

After a sea journey involving some romance, fetching displays of actress Ralston in a headwind, humorous conflicts between crew members and a sea so rough that even the speech card rocks, the *Esther* is becalmed near



Tripoli and boarded by pirates. All are captured; the crew is placed in irons and Esther is taken back on the ship so that she and the bark can become presents for the Sultan. Meanwhile, our three adventurers and the ship's cook (played masterfully by the pugilist George Godfrey) overpower their guards and escape on a small, conveniently-placed boat. In the open sea, a memorable film moment occurs when the full-rigged *Constitution* is seen coming over the horizon to the rescue.

With the battle for Tripoli about to begin, the *Constitution* is stripped down to "battle canvas" and her deck is sanded so the men will not slip on the blood that will be shed. Shore batteries fire, damaging her masts, and various ships are sent to intercept and board her. There is much energetic hand-to-hand combat as enemy crews and US Marines fight on decks. A beheading (which loses conviction if viewed in slow motion) is also shown. Not all of the peril was imaginary - a badly-placed stunt explosion killed one man and injured several others, and Farrell suffered permanent hearing loss as a result.

Gary Cooper and Richard Arlen are extras somewhere on board (this reviewer did not find them) and Boris Karloff plays a Saracen guard who protects Esther Ralston. Star Charles Farrell had a long movie career, then

moved to television where he was the bachelor father of "My Little Margie" until 1955. In 1933, he and Ralph Bellamy bought a few desert acres in Palm Springs where they built a racquet club. The club was soon expanded and the resort became famous. Credited as "Mr. Palm Springs," Farrell sold out in 1959 for a seven-figure sum.

This film contains a splendid performance by Carter. We are even given a chance to sing during the meeting of the Congress, when the music for "Hail Columbia" is flashed on the screen and the organ follows (with a few altered notes) lustily. Although composer Hugo Reisenfeld, who received an Academy Award nomination for *Make a Wish* (1937), wrote a score for this film, Carter's compositions serve it very well.

This well-photographed movie (with some of the battles in an early wide-screen process called Magna-Scope) is nicely preserved. Significant lapses are not seen, and the detailing is good throughout.

In Brief: Three cheers for the red, white and blue!

From Movies Unlimited, 3015 Darnell Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19154; 800-4MO-VIES; \$29.99.

### THE COVERED WAGON

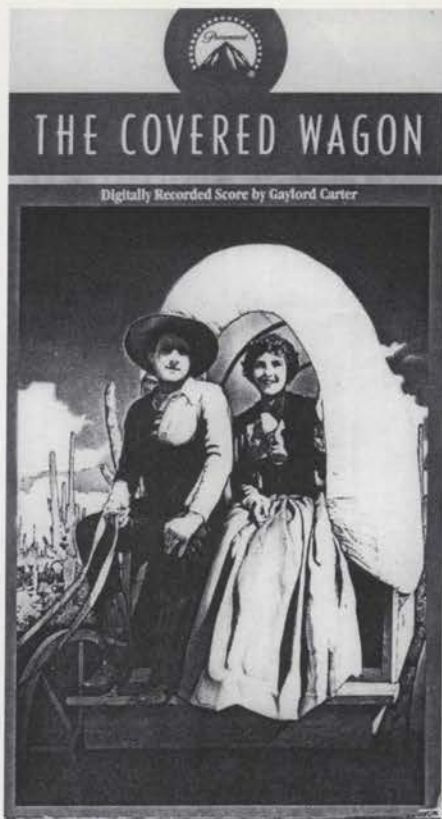
(1923)

with J. Warren Kerrigan and Lois Wilson

In May, 1848, two large wagon trains joined at Kansas City for the 2000-mile journey to Oregon. A fierce rivalry soon developed between two men of the combined train, our hero from the Liberty train, Will Banion (J. Warren Kerrigan) and the malicious Sam Woodhull (Alan Hale) from the other caravan. Although Woodhull was engaged to Molly Wingate (Lois Wilson), the daughter of the leader of the joint expedition, she and Banion became increasingly involved. As the trip progressed and hardships intensified, the mutual hatred increased until the two men battled in a vicious "free" fight in which the winner was to gouge out the eyes of the loser or maim him in some other way. Of course good Will licked bad Sam, but, mercifully, did not administer the coup de grace.

This fight and the subsequent crossing of the Platte River are two of the most enthralling sequences of the





screenplay. Twelve miles was the average for a long day in this arduous pilgrimage, and many pioneers turned back fearing what lay ahead.

Period details abound here, from a tripod frying pan (for use over an open fire) to a buffalo hunt where a real "buffler" is slain. We are shown how Conestoga wagons are caulked and fitted with chained logs to float across a river. A bovine skull is found with a message from Brigham Young, and as the train continues beyond the Platte, the news of gold strikes in "Californy" causes some of the wagons to leave the Oregon caravan.

Surprisingly, considering that the film was made in 1923, all of the cast filled their roles in an understated way, convincingly portraying the sticism needed for the journey. Kerrigan's Banion is nicely self-contained but leaps into action when needed. The amoral Sam reminds one of the force of character in some of Rod Steiger's performances. But the star of the picture, according to a contemporary account in *Variety*, was Ernest Torrence. Lincolnesque in appearance, he played Banion's wily sidekick with an engaging combination of humor and malice.

Of all the actors seen here, Lois Wilson had the longest career. Beginning in 1915, she had roles in 141 movies followed by four television

series in the early fifties. *Hollywood* (1980), made when she was 84, featured her in an on-camera interview. In contrast, J. Warren Kerrigan, known as the "Gibson Man" because he was considered handsome, made his first screen appearance in 1912 and retired in 1924. He was as popular as ever and only 45.

Carter's accompaniment is flawless throughout. Synchronization is as close as one could hope, and there are no breaks in the audio. The Sargent/Stark Wurlitzer is beautifully recorded. The music is not as moving as that in *Wings*, for example, but is

always appropriate.

The picture quality is excellent save for a few brief shots where an interior print had to be used, and one scene where some obvious gaps could not be bridged. 3000 extras were involved, 1000 of whom were native Americans, and the lines of covered wagons (some of which were authentic Conestogas) and draft animals stretched to the horizon.

In Brief: An exciting view of history that pulls no punches.

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Octave 4'	Vox Humana 8'	Divisionals:
Piccolo 4'	Octave 4'	Great
Viol Celeste II 4'	Piccolo 4'	pp p mf f ff 1 2 3 4 5
Tibia Twelfth 2-2/3'	Viol Celeste II 4'	Solo 1 2 3 4 5
Tibia Piccolo 2'	Flute 4'	Accompaniment/Pedal
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	English Horn 8'	Dixie
<b>Pedal</b>	Trumpet 8'	Waltz
Diaphone 32'	Tuba Horn 8'	Bossa Nova
Tuba Profunda 16'	Tibia Clausa 8'	Latin 1
Diaphone 16'	Orchestral Oboe 8'	Latin 2
Contra Violon Celeste II 16'	Krumet 8'	March
Bourdon 16'	Saxophone 8'	2nd Pattern
Tuba Horn 8'	Piccolo 4'	
Tibia Clausa 8'	Tibia Twelfth 2-2/3'	Rhythm start/stop
Clarinet 8'	Tibia Piccolo 2'	Rhythm break
Cellos II 8'	Solo Suboctave 16'	Sync/Start
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## By Request WALT STRONY



Let's not get confused. Last issue we reviewed Charlie Balogh's *By Request* album - this time we have Walt Strony's 68 minute CD of, as Walt says in his liner notes, "... many often-requested songs. Having made 20 recordings now and just approaching middle age, I hope to include the rest of your requests in my next 20 albums." Adding to the excitement of a new Strony disc, once again (this is the third time in a row!) Walt is introducing a new Wurlitzer. This time, it's the extraordinary 4/40 organ in the Vince and Pat Aveni residence.

The album's excellent eight pages of liner notes have the history, specs and photos of the organ so we'll cut to the tune list. While a first glance at the 18 tracks might be less than exciting, we can assure the reader that this album is a com-

pletely satisfying concert experience. Walt opens with a sizzling selection he introduced in his Berkeley program for the 1992 Sacramento Regional; it used to be associated with Ethel Smith, but that doesn't apply anymore. "Tico-Tico" now "belongs" to Walt.

Next is a richly orchestrated nine minute arrangement of selections from *Fiddler on The Roof*. In the order played, they are: the title tune, "Matchmaker, Matchmaker," "If I Were a Rich Man," "Sunrise, Sunset," and "To Life." Walt begins "Autumn Leaves" by playing its lush, romantic verse (a magnificent melody by itself!) before painting a musical picture of leaves being swirled about by the chill fall breezes; it's refreshingly different. Of course, everyone knows Julia Ward Howe's words to "Battle Hymn of the Republic" (the melody is shown as "Traditional," though some attribute it to William Steff.) Walt's arrangement starts as a gentle march and builds and builds into a stirring heart pounding full organ climax complete with Trompette Alfredo.

Surely, one of Walt's most frequent requests is for the enticing ballad "Come Back to Sorrento." A

bit of a jig introduces the pretty verse and melody of "My Wild Irish Rose." Perhaps Walt's most joyous selection is his *Salute to New York*. Three tunes are listed, but see if you catch the added ones; Kander's oft-played "New York, New York" is quite different from what we usually hear. Walt goes Big Band on "Sentimental Journey" and adds some MIDI supplied Hammond-type riffs for good measure. Charming little solo voices are heard in "O Solo Mio." For the classic buffs there's the *Masterpiece Theatre* theme from Mouret's "Rondeau."

One of Hollywood's busiest composers, James Horner, had been an Academy Award nominee five times before finally winning an Oscar for *Titanic's* soporific "My Heart Will Go On." Walt's incredible performance of everyone's favorite march, Sousa's "Stars and Strips Forever," must be heard to be believed. Closing the album is an exquisite, haunting "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ra," the Irish lullaby, followed by the "Notre Dame Victory March" and the Ohio State fight song, "Across the Field."

When you add Walt's colorful registrations to his inspired arrangements, and then add the immaculately voiced and regulated organ, the results are theatre organ music as it was meant to be. The recording and mastering by Jim Stempke of Digital Sonics has captured it all to perfection. Hats off to everyone involved! Compact disc only for \$20.00 (Postpaid) from Walter Strony, P.O. Box 3532, Carefree, AZ 85377.

## Paramount JELANI EDDINGTON



Somehow, during his intensive study for a Juris Doctor degree from Yale Law School (which he will receive about the time you read this review,) Jelani has recorded his 5th album since winning the ATOS Young Organist Competition in 1988 at the tender age of 13. Fortunately for us, as his liner notes tell us, "Jelani plans to combine a career as a practicing attorney with his career in the theatre organ." Three of his earlier albums were first recordings of the organs he played. On this one it's the "Dowager Empress" or "Queen Mother of Wurlitzers," the former New York Paramount organ which is now celebrating its 28th year in Wichita's Century II Exhibition Hall.

Fanny Wurlitzer, head of North Tonawanda's organ production from the days of Hope-Jones 'til the mid-30s said "The Paramount organ was our masterpiece." It was the first of five 4/36 Fox Specials. Often mislabeled the "Crawford Special" (although Crawford did request it have three Tibias and four Vox Humanas,) historian Ben Hall wrote it could more accurately be called a "Dan Papp Special" for Papp



(who attended to the organ's upkeep for 36 years) and Crawford worked together for more than a year to give it, by voicing and regulation, a special quality the other four never quite achieved.

The June and August 1984 issues of the Journal have an exceptionally fascinating group of stories (written by organists and organ technicians) about Papp, Crawford and the Paramount organ's unique tonal characteristics. In his article, Mike Coup (a founder and head of W.T.O. Inc.) wrote "Primarily, the differences (between this and other Wurlitzers) are in the voicing, both as to quality and level of different ranks within the total, and even from one register to another within a rank ... no other theatre organ gives such subtle possibilities in the ensemble." This recording was made with the new Microtech Gefall M-296 microphones which have captured the entire splendid Paramount sound as it's not been heard before. This fabulous sound will be enjoyed by all who attend this year's ATOS Wichita Regional Convention in September.

On this 68-minute album, Jelani seems to have specifically tailored his program to, on one selection or another, feature each of the organ's solo voices and ensembles. "This Could Be the Start of Something Big" is the appropriate console-raiser. The composer, Steve Allen, is surely a 20th Century Renaissance Man for, besides having written hundreds of tunes, he was the first host of *The Tonight Show* (1956-57), played the title role in the 1956 film *The Benny Goodman Story*, and has just published his 52nd

book! Jelani next beautifully recreates George Wright's "Veradero" from the *Chicago* CD (not the super-sonic tempo Wright took on his earlier Hi-Fi #711 LP.) Room acoustics aside, if you A-B the *Chicago* CD and this Paramount CD the organs sound amazingly similar - you don't suppose Crawford and Papp ...?? From Rodgers and Hart's stage and film musical *Jumbo* Jelani plays a lush "My Romance" and continues with a charming, rarely played Gershwin novelty, "Walking the Dog."

Everyone knows Jesse Crawford opened the New York Paramount Wurlitzer in 1926 and was chief organist there for the next six years. Legend has it that after one of his solo performances, French composer Maurice Ravel acclaimed him to be "The Poet of the Organ." Crawford made dozens of recordings of the Paramount organ - BUT it was the 4/21 upstairs studio organ. He never recorded the 4/36 in the theatre! Jelani salutes Crawford with excellent recreations of his arrangements for "I Love to Hear You Singing," "Confessin'" and "Forgotten Melody." These versions are so lush and real you can almost hear Jesse humming along.

Just for the fun of it, we did an A-B comparison of Jelani's version of "Tico-Tico" with Ethel Smith's original. We were pleasantly surprised to find that although he doesn't attempt the Hammond sound, it's a finger-busting Wurlitzer duplicate of hers. Next, welcome back an old favorite too long missing from theatre organ discs, it's Jelani's lush arrangement of "Tenderly" featuring some of this organ's richest voices

and ensembles. Somewhat more sprightly is Tchaikovsky's "Waltz of the Flowers." Jelani's masterful 20-minute *West Side Story* medley comes directly from the original orchestrations and is both heart-breaking and breath-taking.

The album closes with an imaginative, almost melancholy "Russian Lullaby" and, based on Ashley Miller's marvelous arrangement, Chopin's "Fantaisie-Impromptu." Concluding his liner notes Jelani writes "... I have endeavored to select the music that is best suited to this Wurlitzer ... and demonstrates its seemingly infinite power and versatility." He has succeeded; for Jelani's selections and musicianship, added to the magnificent voices of the "Dowager Empress" Wurlitzer captured in Dick Clay's stunning close-up recording, fully merit a YOU MUST HAVE IT rating! Compact disc at \$20.00 and cassette at \$14.00 (both postpaid - add \$3.00 for overseas) from RJE Productions, P.O. Box 200064, New Haven, CT 06520-0064.

## At The Odeon DONALD MACKENZIE



This album's title is most appropriate for this year's ATOS Convention in London will feature Donald in concert on the 5c/17 Compton at the Odeon in Leicester Square. Donald is

another of the U.K.'s growing group of astounding young organists. In 1991, he was the Senior Winner in the ATOS Young Organist Competition. In 1993, he became only the fourth "resident organist" at "The Duchess" organ since it was installed in 1937. Also in that year, his recording *Watford Pride* received a five star rating in the Journal, Nov. 1993. Reviewer Bob Shafter wrote "A splendid energetic performance ... I'm sure we'll be hearing more good things from him." Indeed we have.

This new 68-minute CD, released as a part of the theatre's 60th anniversary celebration, is an enjoyable concert program from beginning to end. First, however, a few words about this unique, quite majestic organ. It's one of the few five manual theatre organs ever built and is the only one in Europe. Years ago, Concert Records in the US released two LPs made on this organ; first was Gerald Shaw's *Fanfare* (Journal, Dec. 1967) and later Don Thompson's *Best of Two Worlds* (Aug. 1976). It's one of the few under-the-stage installations and has the Solo Chamber on the left side. In addition, the console has its original, immense illuminated "surround."

Soundwise the organ has several unusual voices. In an article Gerald Shaw wrote about the organ (*Console Magazine*, Dec. 1968) he states "(The) Krumet is a very piercing reed ... it bites through even full organ ... and it (has) an enormous reed which goes all the way down to 16' and is called Posaune. It is as powerful as the Tuba in the other chamber." For many years it had a Wurlitzer



Tibia but that rank has been replaced with a Compton. Although it has (or had) one of the best Melotones of any Compton, apparently that electronic voice is no longer used since it's not listed in the album's excellent liner notes. More information about the art-moderne 2,000 seat theatre and its organ, including a stop-list, can be found in the *Journal*, Winter 1964.

Right from the opening notes of Donald's console-raiser, "Around the Corner at the Odeon," you'll know this album is definitely different. While there's some music you've never heard before (along with some oldies and goodies) overall it's an upbeat, cheerful program with a scattering of ballads and some medleys in which each of the tunes is given a full arrangement rather than just being patched together. Most impressive is the organ itself. It's recorded close-up and has a fiery, gutsy quality that fairly shouts "I'm NOT a Wurlitzer!" With 37 tunes on the album's 18 tracks, we will skip listing the medley titles (which are shown in the liner notes.) An exception is the 10-

minute *Me and My Girl Selections* which are not shown. In the order played these are: the title tune, "Leaning on a Lamppost," "Love Makes the World Go Round," "Once You Lose Your Heart," "The Sun Has Got His Hat On," and "The Lambeth Walk."

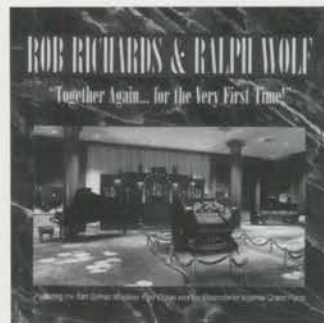
Donald's other medleys are: *007 Movie Hits* (three themes from James Bond films, which, towards its conclusion, has a brass combination so biting, it could skin rabbits,) *The Scottish Connection* (six tunes with but a smidgen of bagpipes,) *Memories of the Alhambra* (six tunes from the music hall days of the Alhambra Theatre which was torn down and replaced by the present Odeon,) and the closing group of four cheerful melodies called *Film Parade of 1937*. Donald's ballads include a lush "Under the Linden Tree," a warm and sweet "I've Never Been in Love Before," Webber's romantic "All I Ask of You" (without even a shadow of The Phantom) Romberg's "When I Grow Too Old to Dream" (which sounds like the early 1900s, but was written for a film, *The Night Is Young*, in 1935,) and a

somewhat bizarre rendition of "Send in The Clowns."

"Dancing on the Ceiling," "Whistling Mose" (when was the last time you heard this novelty?) a slightly Latin "The Lady Seeks Romance," "Ballet of the Bells," "Hello Dolly," "Cabaret," Kalman's "Play Gypsy," and "Song of Home" complete the tune list. MacKenzie is certainly one of the best of today's young artists and has superb control over one of the most unusual, fascinating theatre organs ever built. We highly recommend this album for those who would like to experience something different from the usual "stateside" theatre organ experience. This CD can be ordered from the Organ Historical Society, P.O. Box 26811, Richmond, VA 23261 - order item #STE-3060 for \$17.98 plus \$2.50 (per order for shipping - Virginia residents add 4-1/2% tax and they can accept VISA and Master-card charges.)

## Together Again ... For The Very First Time

ROB RICHARDS  
WITH RALPH WOLF



A grand piano and pipe organ go together as deliciously as a scoop of vanilla ice cream on a slice of hot apple pie! So it's surprising to find that hardly a half dozen recordings of piano/organ duets have ever been released. Recently we've reviewed the Jim Roseveare/Peter Mintun duo (*Journal*, Nov. 1998) and the Stan Kann/Ralph Wolf disc of Cole Porter music (*Journal*, Nov. 1996.) For the past two years, organist Rob Richards, during his West Coast concerts, has invited pianist Ralph Wolf to join him in a few duets; most notably during the 1997 ATOS Phoenix

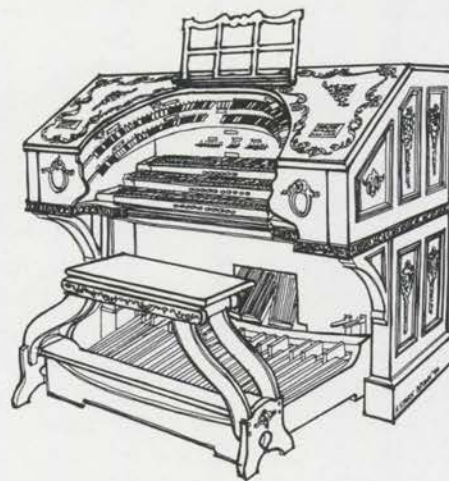
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Regional. These acclaimed appearances have led to this album, and it's appropriate title *Together Again ... for the very first time (on a recording.)*

Rob, a well established international organist, and Ralph Wolf, now in his sixth decade as pianist, accompanist and musical director for star vocalists, combine their formidable talents for one of the most delightfully different programs to come out recently. Rob is at the console of the 4/73 Wurlitzer and Ralph is seated at the 97 note Bösendorfer Imperial Grande Piano at San Sylmar's fantastic Nethercutt Collection. To describe their fascinating tune list, we will quote, in the next two paragraphs, a few remarks from the album's liner notes.

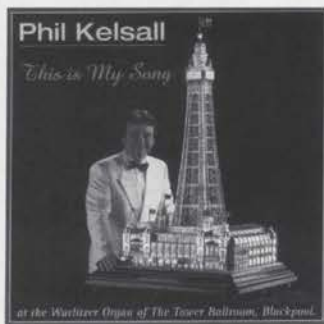
"Park Avenue Fantasy" is a perfect opener ... its melodic centerpiece is, of course, "Stairway to the Stars," the unofficial theme song of the Nethercutt Collection. "Finesse" is a piano novelty ... (from) the 1920s ... charming to be sure, and Ralph gives us a playful rendition with Rob underscoring at the Wurlitzer ... "Maytime in Vienna" by Peter DeRose is a lovely excursion in waltz time ... "All the Things You Are" is one of Jerome Kern's loveliest melodies (and) Ralph's piano verse is sublime. "At the Moving Picture Ball" is vintage 1920s camp ... "Time and Time Again" is an exquisite Ralph Wolf original.

"Laura" starts with a big wash of organ sound ... then Ralph and Rob take turns with the melody. "Misty" is Ralph's solo piano interpretation of the Errol Garner classic ... (An organ solo) "Send in the Clowns" is ... Rob's exploration of the

string division and its myriad celestes ... "Manhattan Serenade" is the duo's finale ... (with) the main theme from the radio show 'Easy Aces' ... the world's largest orchestrion (the Hupfel Excelsion-Pan) plays us out with "Oh, Mo'Nah," a rollicking finish to our musical visit to San Sylmar ..."

Unlike some of the recent San Sylmar recordings, this time the organ is recorded with an appropriate studio sound so as to be in balance with the piano. Most of the selections are given a concerto-like treatment with the organ providing the orchestral background. This 53-1/2 minute CD is guaranteed to be an extraordinary delight for all who relish their organ music topped with tasty piano flavorings. Compact disc only for \$20.00 (postpaid) from Rainbeaux Productions, 9663 Santa Monica Blvd., #246, Beverly Hills, CA 90210.

## This Is My Song PHIL KELSALL



Now in his 24th year at the console of Blackpool's Tower Ballroom 3/14 Wurlitzer, Phil releases a new album annually. Sometimes it's all strict-tempo dance medleys; others are made up primarily of full concert arrangements. His latest, is an exceptional 69-minute concert program with an

unusually wide range of music. A few will be very familiar. Some you'll surely remember but rarely hear played today. The compositions you've never heard before are all completely captivating.

Phil opens the program with his own version of Reg Dixon's arrangement of "Cherokee" which displays almost all the hallmarks of what is known as the "Blackpool Style." The crystal clear melody line with accurate harmonies, a steady, gentle, yet rock-solid pedal beat, delicate, rhythmic left-hand accompaniment, combinations of tuned percussions with organ voices, occasional second touch melody lines with dazzling right hand embellishments, and innovative, ever changing tone colors.

With 30 tunes on the album's 17 tracks, obviously there are some medleys. The most outstanding of these being the three devoted to eleven songs made famous by Nat King Cole, Matt Monro, and Andy Williams. Here's just a sampling of the tunes; see if you remember which artist made each one a big hit - "Born Free," "Dance Ballerina Dance," "L.O.V.E.," "Softly As I Leave You," "Music to Watch Girls By," and "Can't Help Falling in Love." Also, there is a jazz waltz combo of "Bluesette" and "The Mood I'm In," a hymn medley of "Deep Harmony," "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" (sung at Princess Diana's funeral,) and what started out as a Shaker tune but has become "Lord of the Dance."

Notable, too, is Phil's super-swinging group of "Yes My Darling Daughter," "A Hot Time in the Old

Town Tonight" and "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing.)" Phil includes the Spanish folk tune "Romanza," an elegant waltz, "Don't Be Cross," and "Highland Cathedral" which was written for bagpipes but translates beautifully to organ pipes. Other delights are "The Robin's Return," "Autumn Leaves," Lehar's charming "Frasquita Serenade," and Farnon's "Peanut Polka."

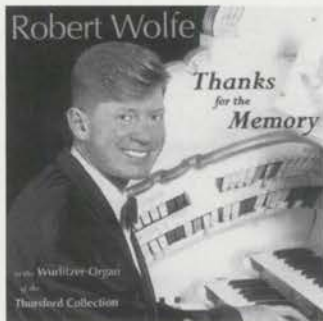
The remaining three selections deserve special attention. "March of the Cobblers" (from the recent British film *Brassed Off*) was written by Bob Barratt, who is the producer of this recording (and most of the Tower recordings since 1962!) The kicky "Kelsall Kapers" was written by musician Peter Vince just for Phil; and Vince is the album's recording engineer. Lastly, although he's generally acclaimed to be the greatest film comedian of all time, you might not realize that Charlie Chaplin wrote, and usually conducted, all the music for his sound films starting with *City Lights* in 1931. "This is My Song," Phil's title tune, was written by Chaplin for his last film (1966) *The Countess from Hong Kong*.

Phil's excellent liner notes on each piece of music, the marvelous Ballroom acoustics and superb recording complete this wonderfully different, thoroughly enjoyable concert. Compact disc is \$21.00 and cassette is \$13.00 (plus \$3.00 per order postage) from Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, MA 02184-5918.



## Thanks For The Memory

ROBERT WOLFE



This time we've got it right - it IS Robert Wolfe playing the 3/19 Wurlitzer in Norfolk, England's, popular Thursford Collection where he's been the resident organist for more than 19 years. Robert will be performing here during this year's ATOS London Convention. Both artist and organ are noted for playing music in the "Blackpool Style." With five ranks more than the Tower Ballroom, the Thursford instrument has a fuller, richer sound albeit without the distinct, spacious sound heard in Blackpool.

The album's title implies it's a "retrospective" collection of music, but that's not quite true. Some of the 32 tunes on this 67-minute album are just that; but we're most impressed with the number of recent, in fact, current selections Robert has chosen. Indeed, most of the 13 tracks are medleys, but this is not a strict-tempo dance disc nor is it once through and on to the next item. Given full blown concert treatments are the Spanish march, "El Abanico," a fully orchestral and quite emotional "Going Home" (from Dvorak's *New World Symphony*), the ballad "No Matter What" (from Andrew Lloyd Webber's 1998 musical *Whistle Down the Wind*), "The Robin's

Return" (originally a piano novelty, here it's an energetic, very springy young robin,) and the current hit ballad, *Titanic's* dirge-like "My Heart Will Go On."

Turning to medleys, Robert offers a tribute to Frank Sinatra with dreamy versions of "Fly Me to the Moon," "Strangers in the Night" and "All the Way," and a gently swinging waltz medley of that old favorite "Domino" and the theme music of a British TV series, "Tales of the Unexpected" (which isn't the least bit spooky!) Eight great Cole Porter tunes including "It's All Right With Me," "I Get a Kick Out of You," "So in Love," and "Night and Day" are divided into two medleys.

Some Beatles tunes have finally become theatre organ standards. Wolfe has two medleys of Lennon-McCartney titles including (among others) "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "Penny Lane," "Yesterday," "All My Loving" and a delightfully enthusiastic "Help." Two additional medleys of soft-swingers like "I'll Never Smile Again," "Love and Marriage," "High Hopes" and that tune Brazil has an awful lot of, "The Coffee Song," complete the album.

It's beautifully recorded, has a well rounded selection of titles and, as usual, Robert Wolfe gives a crisp, clean, accurate, thoroughly enjoyable performance. It is good listening and an interesting variation on the "original" Blackpool sound. Compact disc at \$21.00 and cassette at \$13.00 (plus \$3.00 per order for postage) from Organ Literature Foundation, 45 Norfolk Road, Braintree, MA 02184-5918.

## Nigel Ogden at 1000



One of the UK's most popular organists, (and he's playing at this year's ATOS London Convention,) Nigel Ogden has been a broadcasting organist since 1971. He's now in his 20th year as the host of the BBC's weekly one hour *The Organist Entertains* program. His actual 1,000th broadcast took place on March 3 last year. As part of that celebration, Nigel made a video at Blackpool's Tower Ballroom 3/14 Wurlitzer (Journal July 1998) and presented a special concert at the Tower. This 70-minute CD is a major portion of that live event. Since the organ apparently was recorded close up you wouldn't know it was a live program except for the enthusiastic applause.

As Nigel tells us in his liner notes "... that afternoon was very much a recreation of the type of programming Reg (Dixon) used to play - marches, show tunes, ballads, light classics, in fact the usual 'something for everyone' mixture." That it is and, with one exception, all of the 59 selections on the album are played in medleys. It's a winning, bright, cheerful program and, if you've not heard a typical Blackpool album before, this one is an excellent introduction to the cleanly played melodies, zippy

arrangements, and wide variety of registrations that come from just 14 ranks playing into the spacious Tower Ballroom.

On *Parade*, Nigel's rousing opener, features seven "quickstep" marches, beginning with Eric Coates' "Calling All Workers" and ending with Coates' more famous march, "Dambusters." Next it's music from *Stage and Screen* starting with the title tune from a Lionel Bart (he wrote *Oliver*) British musical "Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'be" - which was kind of a Soho version of *Guys and Dolls*. You'll surely recognize each of the other eleven tunes without looking at the liner notes. In *Three Rhythmic Contrasts* each piece is played separately beginning with one of the most amazing organ selections we've run across. It's "Bedtime for Drums" with untremmed brass, lots of tuned percussions and unbelievable snare drum riffs. The lovely waltz "Toast of The Town" is next and then comes a flame-roasted version of Robert Farnon's descriptive "Peanut Polka."

*A Trip Around the World* has six tunes including the all too rarely heard "Isle of Capri" and "Lady of Spain." In *Re-Creating the Magic* Nigel accurately recreates three original Dixon arrangements and then salutes the UK's well loved Gracie Fields (a music hall and film star of the 30s who was often referred to as the British Will Rogers) with six of her best known songs. *At Your Request* begins with the Tower organ in an amazing, but brief, Bach "Tocatta in D Minor" before segueing into "Charmaine," "The Lady is a Tramp," and five other all-



time pop favorites. *From the Classics* has five well known excerpts ranging from the "Sabre Dance" to the conclusion of Widor's *Fifth Symphony* "Toccata."

Next to closing is Nigel's (based on Dixon's) arrangement of what used to be a standard item at every major organ concert earlier this century; *A Storm at Sea*. The music goes from pleasant nautical tunes like "A Life on the Ocean Wave" and "Anchors Aweigh" to the shattering crashes of thunder and waves (Nigel uses Mendelssohn's "Fingal's Cave" for the rafter-shaking storm) and calm returns with the hymns "Eternal Father" and "Crimond." For his closing number Nigel plays "Tiger Rag" at a speedy tempo he could be arrested for, then segues into his signature tune "From This Moment On" as the console descends. This album is a delight from start to finish and is highly recommended. Compact disc only for \$20.00 (postpaid) from Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust, 21 New Hall Road, Jericho, BURY, Lancs., BL9 7TQ, UK.

## The Auditorium Organ

Atlantic City Convention Hall -- The World's Largest Pipe Organ

Carlo Curley, Guest Reviewer



I dare venture that if the ACCH instrument could be heard in its entirety, it would transform the thinking of an entire generation of organ folk in a heart-beat. Only one of the eight chambers is operational at present. The new CD so lovingly prepared by its devoted core of admirers provides a salutary lesson for us all. This isn't a wash of contemporary unison dirty-dishwater-dark tone. Nor are the powerful batteries of heavily-winded reeds offensive or out-of-place in the slightest - everything included in the vast specification, even those most hirsute of power-house stops, has a

part to play in choruses. It is immediately obvious that this is a complete and well-thought-out concert instrument of the highest importance that does considerably more than genuflect daintily to the organ's classical past. It makes its statement with extraordinary conviction, style and elegance.

Senator Richards, driven by an enviable zealotry, was well known as a devoted scholar of the organ and its repertoire. But it may come as a surprise to many that 130 of the 449 ranks are devoted to mixture-work. There are 135 independent eight-foot stops, countless independent mutations, no fewer than twenty-nine 2-rank String Celestes (for lovers of that knee-clutching Atlantic wash of tone), and yes, ten 32' stops and the obligatory 64' reed (yawn!). (Why does a dog wash like that? Because it can...).

A tour through this job is an eye-opener as the pipe-work is some of the most beautiful imaginable. With such talented contributors as Henry Vincent Willis, Roscoe Evans and Anton Gottfried, not to mention the highly-qualified Midmer-Losh staff, could the

result be anything other than glorious?

The brief was disarmingly simple. Provide an instrument that could satisfy 41,000 souls singing the National Anthem with gusto, while being fully capable of playing all the organ literature as well as being suitable for transcription, improvisation and light performance. Easy!

I was fortunate to know and study with Robert Elmore, who recorded the unfortunately-titled album 'Bach on the Biggest' on this instrument (Gosh! If I had made this album, it could have been called 'Bach on the Biggest... BY the Biggest'). While I knew him in the early seventies I will never forget his comments about this mega-organ. He, of course, knew it well when all was operational. He said it could "move men's souls as no other organ anywhere". He was a quiet, reflective gentleman not given to over-statement in the slightest, who was an immensely talented performer of the highest caliber.

Last autumn when the new demonstration ACCH-CD was made, J.-L. Coignet (of City of Paris and

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Casavant fame) visited and toured through the instrument. (His comprehensive article about this organ appears in April's *ISO Journal* ... doubtless to be torn to ribbons later in *Choir and Organ*). When we spoke several weeks ago he was enthralled ("over the moon") by what he had heard and enthused as I've never heard him about any organ. Phrases like: "Unbelievable ... quite an adventure for an organ-builder to see such a monument to our art first-hand ... one can hardly imagine the effect when all is restored and working perfectly ..."

I wish to recommend this recording to all as it provides a clear cut snap-shot of the nobility and clear, singing tone which most organists would never suspect could issue from the chamber(s). Among the most impressive tracks is the simple hymn "Abide With Me" (Eventide), played by a man who just happened to gain entrance to the hall during the sessions, visiting the city for a convention in another venue. With flight-deck assistants aplenty, he played the verses of this hymn and to hear the instrument's inimitable crescendo is to experience life in this business afresh. The Head Porter here at the Abbey of the Mauve Thought was forced to rush sweating from the room to refresh his beer-glass after the last great chord died away, swearing that it was the most thrilling sound he had ever heard.

If the ACCH Committee's recent Press releases seem over the top, remember that this band of devoted souls are working with all their good force to "move mountains." In this sound-bitten age, they are

spot-on to highlight the points which will appeal to the public who will fund this behemoth's revival. I cannot begin to fathom how many organists' cash contributions motivated by their love for the 'Mounted (or Dis-Mounted) Cornet' would be required to restore this job to its former unsurpassed glory. It calls for a ground-swell of affection from music-lovers not bound to any particular school of thought.

Emerson Richards, could have perhaps gleaned solace from the words of Lord Thorneycroft, who wrote in 'The Sunday Telegraph' on 11 February, 1979: "Some men go through life absolutely miserable because, despite the most enormous achievements, they just didn't do one thing - like the architect who didn't build St. Paul's. I didn't quite build St. Paul's, but I stood on more mountain tops than possibly I deserved." Richards certainly "stood on ... mountain tops," leaving us an incredible, stunning legacy that, if left 'hanging in rags' to rot in situ would constitute the most flagrant and unconscionable violation of an international and highly-artistic monument known in this precious field for centuries. Only a simplistic, philistine nincompoop would term this glorious instrument "not worth saving."

(As this instrument was built all at once as a single entity, I wonder, were it located in Britain, would it qualify for Lottery funding? I can hear the objections even as I write these words!)

Heed the call, folks. This dear organ needs to be restored ... and soon.

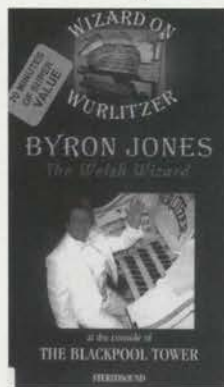
Proceeds from the sale of the recording will benefit

the restoration of the organ. Copies may be ordered from the ACCHOS, 1009 Bay Ridge Avenue, Suite 108, Annapolis, MD 21403 for \$15 plus \$2.50 for shipping & handling in the U.S. or \$4 overseas.

The ACCHOS has a website at <http://www.acchos.org> and receives email at [info@accho.org](mailto:info@accho.org)

## VIDEO REVIEWS

### Wizard On Wurlitzer BYRON JONES



Byron Jones, long known to his numerous British fans as "The Welsh Wizard" of the organs (both electronic and pipe) was a featured artist for both the ATOS 1976 "London Safari" and 25th ATOS Convention in 1980. This year's London Convention will also feature him playing his "Traveling Wersi" during the dinner cruise. In reviewing one of his earlier albums (*Rhapsody for Two*, Journal Nov. 1986) Bob Shafter wrote that he is "... as outstanding a ballad organist as you might want to hear."

This is Byron's second video and his first on pipes. The pipes are those of the 3/14 Wurlitzer in Blackpool's magnificent Tower Ballroom. Following a few seaside scenes, Byron brings the console up with a bright, cheery version of

"The World is Waiting for The Sunrise." What follows is a near 70-minute concert just for the video viewers who get a close-up look as Byron plays a nicely balanced program of 42 selections of all kinds.

Throughout this colorful program there is just enough camera movement and change of angles (along with inserted views of the ballroom) to keep one thoroughly fascinated. Of course, many of the tunes appear in medleys; the longest being eight minutes of Sigmund Romberg's best loved compositions.

Most of Byron's medleys are up-tempo run-throughs of quite familiar titles such as "Somebody Stole My Gal," "Bye, Bye Blues," and "Put Another Nickel In" (perhaps better known as Music, Music, Music.) Near the video's end, "I Do Like to Be Beside the Seaside" is combined with "Hello, Whose Your Lady Friend?" and "All the Nice Girls Love a Sailor." Given full, beautifully lush arrangements are the ballads "Under the Linden Tree," Berlin's "Always," the Welsh love song, "Myfanwy," Ketelbey's "Sanctuary of the Heart," and Leroy Anderson's "Forgotten Dreams."

Midway through the video, Byron plays a Blackpool standard, "Fascination," which usually signals the change over from one organist to another. Byron gives a new twist to this change over.

Throughout the video, Byron introduces most of his selections with a brief comment; those he doesn't mention can be found in the complete tune list on the box. Byron's warm personality comes across beautifully. It's easy to understand his popularity throughout the British Isles. Since it's the Blackpool organ, he

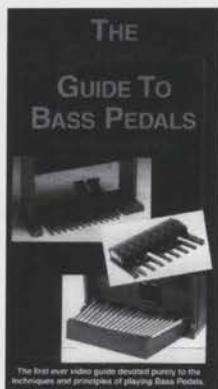


does use a bit of that instrument's familiar combinations here and there, but he favors the full organ registrations which are more appropriate for his selections.

Some of his other titles are "Under the Double Eagle," "St. Louis Blues," "How Great Thou Art," "Avalon," "When You're Smiling," and "The Best of Times" - surely something for just about everybody. This video is available in the NTSC (American) format for £14 sterling. Please use either a sterling bank draft or post office order in sterling. (We understand there is a CD of just the music available for £11 sterling.) Both prices include the packing and postage. Order from Byron Jones, 523 Filton Ave., Filton, Bristol, BS7 0QF, UK.

## Guide To Bass Pedals

PAUL ROBERTS



This is organist Paul Roberts' third volume in his "Essential Guide" video series; the first two volumes were reviewed in the March 1999 Journal. In this 47-minute video, Paul explains how to play the pedals whether you have an organ with just one octave of pedals, an octave and a half pedalboard (which is what his demonstration organ has) or a full radiating, concave pedalboard of 30 or 32

notes. The material he covers can be used by both those who can read the bass clef and those who use just the "fakebook" chord notations.

Paul first emphasizes the importance of being properly seated at the organ with your feet hovering comfortably above the pedals. He stresses not to delay learning to play the pedals, never-ever looking down at the pedals to see what you are playing, doing all your practicing in strict tempo, and doing your pedal exercises for short, but frequent, periods of time. Since all pedalboards are basically the same (being laid out exactly like the manuals starting from the left on low "C") he moves rapidly into practicing scales in the pedals and soon adds left-hand chords and then right-hand melody notes.

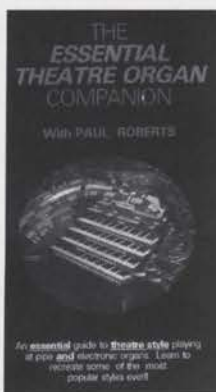
Paul gives the student numerous tips that will quickly make their practice sessions more interesting and their playing more enjoyable. After showing the "secret" of how to find the pedal notes without looking, he moves on to playing detached pedal notes at 8' pitch in a simple waltz rhythm. Then it's on to playing other pedal-chord rhythms, alternating 4ths or 5ths, and then a variety of "walking" bass lines. While he suggests you should initially practice the individual parts (pedal, left hand and right hand) separately, you'll soon be putting them together with ease and even advance to filling gaps in the melody line with interesting pedal "fills."

He ends this video with a brief discussion of developing your heel and toe ability. This video will be of tremendous value to anyone who has been afraid of trying to play the pedals. Paul's tips and demonstrations will be helpful to those

who would like to improve their pedal technique. The video is \$30.00 (postpaid) from Cardinal Productions, P.O. Box 22035, Beechwood, OH 44122.

## The Theatre Organ Companion

PAUL ROBERTS



This is the fourth and final volume in Paul Roberts' "Essential Guide to Organ Playing" video series. It rounds out the material on organ techniques. It adds some useful "advanced" organ playing techniques such as Blackpool style and Crawford "rolls" along with suggesting ways to develop your introductions and endings. It also explains the "geography" of large theatre pipe organ consoles. Throughout most of this video, Paul is shown at the console of the Christie 3/15 organ in Sandford Park (which was seen in his first "concert" video *A Summer Place*, reviewed in the July 1998 Journal.)

Paul reprises a bit of heel and toe techniques on its typical concave, radiating pedalboard, identifies the keyboards by name (Accompaniment, Great, and Solo,) explains the use of the pre-set pistons and toe studs, and demonstrates the use of second touch. He mentions that this particular console has been altered

with added electronic controls, but neglects to tell the viewers where to locate the stoptabs for each manual. While he correctly states most organs have color coded stop tabs, this Christie (as well as consoles of several other makers) is somewhat unique and does not completely follow the more usual Wurlitzer pattern of white for flutes, strings, and percussions, yellow for celestes, red for reeds and black for couplers.

His explanation of registers (16', 8', etc.) and use of tremulants, tonal and non-tonal percussions, and couplers is excellent. With simple melodies like "Nobody's Sweetheart Now" and "Five Foot Two" Paul shows how easily one can add a touch of "Blackpool" style by playing the melody on second touch leaving the right hand free to improvise or how, by doing a bit of manual hopping, you can add some "flash" to your playing.

Paul fully demonstrates Open Harmony and Jesse Crawford's famous chromatic rolls in such a way that the viewer can easily learn how to perform them properly. He also has several suggestions about adding beautiful introductions and endings to your music. In a rather brief final section, he moves to a typical electronic organ (with its four, rather than five, octave keyboards) and shows how to adapt most of the techniques he's demonstrated to the short keyboard. This 45-minute video closes with Paul playing one complete selection from each of his three "concert" videos so you can see him performing the many techniques he has explained in this series. Each video is sold separately. See price and ordering details in the review above.



# Closing Chord

## IN MEMORIAM

Arlene Rosenboom

Tom Shoot

(adopted son of George Wright)

Virginia Maxine Carley

## PETE POLITO

The theatre organ has suffered a great loss with the passing of Pete Polito. Everyone knew Pete and I don't know of anyone who has done more to promote the theatre organ.

He has not missed a convention in years. His house was a warehouse of records and tapes; and it did not end there. He was on the crew at the Rahway Theatre, and also a great help in lighting the spark that helped save the theatre from the wreckers ball.

Pete was at his happiest with the many bus rides he organized to the local concerts. His annual bus rides to the Radio City Music Hall was a must in this area. There were occasions when a concert was put on hold just to wait for "Pete's Jersey Bus."

He was also active in the Home Organ Festival, until recently, held at Asilomar Pacific Grove, California. He was a familiar sight on the stage crew for HOF.

I know that his many friends send their deepest sympathies to Camilla, his wife of many years. Future conventions and theatre organ events won't be the same without his smiling face.

*Robert E. Reilly*

## RUTH COLLIER



Ruth Collier was "always there!" She was ready to serve our chapter in her quiet ways: helping with refreshments, assisting with the coordination of menus when we had dinners, being

an active member of the telephone committee and most of all, supporting

her husband Sam in everything he did! News of her unexpected death on January 17, 1999, was a shock to us all.

Born in Leachville, Arkansas, December 25, 1916, Ruth moved to Tulsa with her family when she was a child. She graduated from Tulsa's Central High School. Ruth liked to sing, and especially enjoyed church-related singing conventions.

She and Sam were married in the spring of 1947. They lived in Tulsa for nearly all of their 51 plus year marriage. Thirteen years were also spent in Pittsburg, Kansas, where Sam was employed. He retired in 1984, and from that time on they were a solid team for Sooner State Chapter.

Ruth was Sam's greatest fan; whatever he did was "great." He played music for her, for her pleasure, and she was first in whatever he was thinking. Her great enjoyment was in raising their three children, and in taking care of their two grand-daughters.

Funeral services were held in Tulsa on February 29, 1999, with Sooner State members Paul and Carolyn Craft providing the music, and her son-in-law David Markham giving a beautiful eulogy. We shall miss her gentle nature, sweet spirit and quiet service to our chapter.

*Dorothy Smith*

## JOHN POTTER

John has always had a keen interest in the theatre organ, even when at school with Keith Phillipson and sat at his desk playing a four manual set of text books. Later he would work endlessly arranging recitals by such well known organists as William Hardwick at Manchester Town Hall and St. Ann's Church. His interest in theatre organs formed a lasting bond with the Theatre Organ Club of which he was a member for 40 years.

In 1961, he met up with the organ building fraternity and according to Harold Davies of Jardines Organ Builders had this "mad idea" of saving the Odeon Wurlitzer and forming The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust. This was brought about by the possibility that the Odeon would be split into a multicinema and the organ was not a part of future plans. It was John's charming manner that persuaded everyone from the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester down, that this was a worthy cause.

Who could have thought that this crazy idea, this vision, would turn

into one of the world's top and most respected theatre organ restoration and preservation groups. John's work on recordings, first on LP's (remember those?) and later on cassettes and CDs that made the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust a world class producer and now to holding the record for the most recordings produced by such an organisation. His friends only wish that John could have heard the Odeon Wurlitzer in its new location at Stockport Town Hall, but above all we know that John's vision will go on, if only by the enthusiasm he created in others. He lived respected and his death is regretted.

*Don Hyde, Chairman,  
The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust*

John was one of the founding members of the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust in 1968. Since I first heard him delivering his Secretary 92s Report at the second annual general meeting, in my eyes, he personally has been the LTOT. Without disrespect to the other committee members who have all had the Trust at heart, I am sure they will confirm that John was the chief driving force from day one almost until his recent untimely death on the 21st April 1999 after losing his hard fought battle with cancer.

He had very high standards and often said at committee meetings, particularly when discussing how much we could afford for particular projects, that we should think big and all our work should be to the highest standard. This was to apply to everything we did from notepaper and publications to concerts and organ restoration. He worked tirelessly to spread the name and work of the LTOT worldwide and in his various capacities he produced a prodigious mountain of correspondence, articles and recordings which he managed to get published or reviewed in all types of magazines throughout the world.

When he realised his days were numbered, he took to his newly acquired computer and poured out still more articles which helped take his mind off his health problems. He continued with these right to the end. It is sad that he did not live another few months; long enough to enable him to attain his dream which was to hear our 4/20 Publix No.1 Wurlitzer singing out in its new home in Stockport Town Hall.

Saving this organ when the Odeon



Cinema was to be twinned, was the very reason for forming the LTOT in the first instance. He did manage one visit just before Christmas and was able to slowly travel round the chambers, the lift room and the blower room and see progress thus far. This gave him a major boost as it is far better to see something rather than read about it. His name will live on inside that organ, where it appears on one of the bumper motors along with those autographed by famous organists, many of whom are also no longer with us. John was a leading figure in the theatre organ world with friends in all countries where theatre organs exist and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him, particularly by his colleagues in the LTOT

Eric Halsall,  
Head of LTOT Technical Team

It is with an enormous sense of sadness that I write these few words about someone who has not only been a great personal friend for 30 years, but was also such an invaluable asset to the theatre organ world. John had so many fine qualities, not the least of which was the ability to live life to the fullest. His naturally cheerful disposition made him great company at all times and his terrific sense of humour and love of funny stories (both repeatable and otherwise) are legendary. In addition, the great strength of character and breadth of vision which helped to make John the highly successful businessman that he was during his professional career have also characterised the way in which he enjoyed the hobby which, at various times over the years, almost became a second full time job!

It would be fascinating to know just how many voluntary hours John devoted to actively promoting one of the great loves of his life, the theatre organ. For many years the LTOT has enjoyed a well-deserved reputation for being one of the most 'professional' amateur theatre organ groups in the country and, without question much of the credit for this must go to John, one of the trust's founder-members. Whether he was producing concerts, compiling recordings, writing articles or generally promoting the work of the Trust, everything had to be of the highest quality and the fact that this was always achieved is due to the painstaking thoroughness with which he undertook each and every aspect of

the job in hand.

From a purely personal angle, it is perfectly possible that my career may well have developed very differently had it not been for the tremendous support and encouragement I received from John at the start of the '70s'. Along with Peter Jebson and Michael Thompson, I was one of the Trust's first batch of young organists. Thanks to John and his friendship with my predecessor Robin Richmond, we all achieved our national broadcasting debut in May 1972 in a joint LTOT/BBC concert called 'The Young Organists Entertain' which was presented at the Gaumont, Manchester. Since those early days, John has continued to do so much to provide opportunities for young players to gain experience at the consoles of the various instruments owned by the Trust. There are so many happy memories: all those wonderful Sunday morning concerts at the Odeon and Gaumont, as an enthusiastic teenager, the thrill of being able to meet so many great theatre organ stars, the years I spent on the committee and, along with John, Keith Phillipson and other colleagues, planning the theatre organ sections of the various Manchester International Organ Festivals. Some great social occasions included John's hilarious fiftieth birthday party in Knutsford when, amongst other things, I was required to 'sing' my signature tune whilst blowing over the top of an empty dandelion and burdock bottle; the production, by John, of my very first solo LP at the then newly-installed Free Trade Hall Wurlitzer and the list goes on. When I think of all of John's activities on behalf of the theatre organ cause over the years, one word keeps appearing in my mind and that is *motivation*. If something needed doing, John launched into action and did it, not resting until that particular task had been completed to the very best of his ability. It is so difficult to believe he is no longer with us; what a privilege it has been to know him and how much he will be missed.

Thank you, John, for all you did for me and for so many other aspiring young organists. You gave so much and you will never be forgotten.

Nigel Ogden, Vice President of LTOT,  
Compare of BBC's  
"The Organist Entertains"

## JOSEPH T. MCFARLAND

LATOS lost one its outstanding faithful supporters April 13th. LATOS Chapter President, Joseph T. McFarland passed away at Seventh-Day Adventist Hospital in Glendale after a brief illness. He was serving his second term as Chapter President and had been a prominent member of LATOS for many years, having served on the Board of Directors and as Membership Director for a number of years.

Joe was an exceptional human being, always cheerful and pleasant. He was a tireless worker in support of our mission to preserve and maintain these beautiful instruments. He was retired from teaching school and for a number of years, volunteered his time one day a week to serve as Docent at the Science Museum in Exposition Park in Los Angeles.

Joe will be greatly missed by many of us with whom he was personally acquainted and by many others who knew they could count on him for prompt and efficient handling of Chapter business. The world of the theatre organ has lost a true friend, a gentle human being and one of humankind's most admirable examples. *Char Hopwood, Secretary LATOS*

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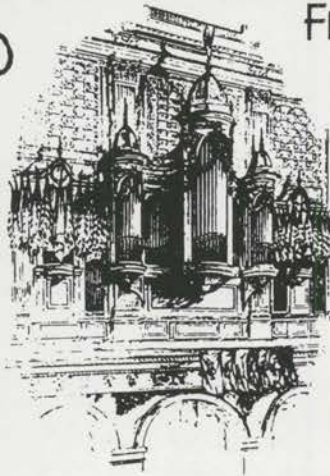
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# CHAPTER NEWS

MAY/JUNE 1999

## ALABAMA

Cecil Whitmire: 205/252-2862

**Pelham, Alabama.** The Alabama Chapter of ATOS met on Sunday afternoon, February 21 at the beautifully restored Alabama Theatre. This meeting marked the chapter's 26th birthday celebration. The program was open console, which has become a birthday tradition.

Fred Dove, Chapter Vice-President, introduced our program. Kevin Cartwright of Greenville, Alabama began the program with the popular "Toccata in D Minor" by Bach. This was followed by an Alice Jordan arrangement, "It is Well With My Soul." Kevin is our youngest member. He is a sixteen-year-old student of Harold Rohlig at Hunningdon College in Montgomery, Alabama. Kevin is not only a budding performer, he has also installed a 3 rank (soon to be 5 rank) pipe organ in his home.

Our next performer was Stewart Thompson, one of our house organists. Stewart's selections were rousing versions of "Mansion Over the Hilltop" and "Alley Cat." Tommy Ford, from Roswell, Georgia then played "I'll Be With You in Apple Blossom Time" and "Fly Me to the Moon." Fred Dove's selections were "I Love to Hear You Singing" and "The Teddy Bear's Picnic."

Long time member Dan Liles, then came to the console. Before playing two numbers from *Gypsy*, Dan gave us an interesting account of his many volunteer jobs at the Alabama Theatre. Cecil Whitmire, house organist and Chapter President, gave a beautiful rendition of "Take My Hand Precious Lord" and "You'll Never Walk Alone." As he played, Cecil featured some of the new additions to the organ.

The Alabama Theatre Organ is a Wurlitzer Publix I Opus 1787. It has four

manuals and 21 ranks. The organ was installed in 1927 and is one of the few theatre organs in the country still in its original location.

The most recent addition to the organ is a 73 note, 16 foot Trombone. The Trombone has been installed and rough voiced. It is in a manual chest with its own wind system and tremulant. The wind pressure is 12 inches. The pipes were originally installed in Birmingham's Loew's Temple 1924 Möller organ. *Virginia Robertson*

## CENTRAL FLORIDA

Peter Shrive:

**Tampa, Florida.** The new year began with our monthly meeting at the beautiful home of Russell and Dee Lambert. Dee bought Russ a Lowery Majestic theatre organ for Christmas and our chapter was eager to see and hear it. It was demonstrated by a representative of the Fletcher Music Company. Our members eagerly made use of the open console part of the program.

The work on our Wurlitzer at Pinellas Park is moving along. Our crew has been installing reservoirs and wind lines. There is now a light at the end of this tunnel! It has been slow because of the holidays. Pinellas Park is looking forward to the time when the organ is up and playing. School field trips are being scheduled for next school year. We hope to expose a whole younger generation to the wonders of theatre organ this way. Our organists are planning programs to stimulate an interest with the school children.

In February, we met at the home of Bill and Joan Griffis. Our own nationally known and loved, Al Hermanns, played his usual wonderful program. Al, as always the teacher, was ready to help one and all to play the Griffis' Wurlitzer spinet. We are very fortunate to have him in our

chapter. He is still teaching and playing at eighty!

Another nationally known member, Rosa Rio, again played to a full house at the Tampa Theatre in February. She accompanied the silent movie *The Sheik*. No one could ever play it better; congratulations, Rosa! *Peg Mayer*

## CENTRAL INDIANA

Carlton Smith: 317/638-4918

**Indianapolis, Indiana.** Manual High School, Indianapolis, was the setting for our February 14 concert by Barry Baker. Barry is a native of Fort Thomas, Kentucky, and a former CIC-ATOS member. Currently, he is one of the house organists at the Organ Pipe Music Palace in the Milwaukee area and also at a recently-opened restaurant in the Cincinnati area.

In keeping with the Valentines' Day theme, the concert consisted of many old and new romantic ballads. A classical transcription, the entire first movement of the Mozart Symphony #40 in G minor, was an exciting addition to this program. Despite dreary February weather, a fairly sizable crowd was on hand for this concert.

Sunday, March 14, chapter members traveled to the Long Center for the Performing Arts, Lafayette, for our regular monthly meeting. During the business meeting, discussion was held concerning upgrade work on the organs at the Hedback Theatre and at Warren Central High School. Following the business portion of the meeting, our artist of the day, Warren York, was introduced. He hardly needs introduction, as he is a very valuable contributor to our chapter! An assortment of numbers, mostly up-tempo, included tributes to St. Patrick's Day and Easter. Warren's programs are always enjoyed by all. *Louise Eddington*

## CUMBERLAND VALLEY

Robert Eyer, Jr.: 717/264-7886: eyerr@cvn.net

**Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.** Cumberland Valley has received its second grant in less than a year, this time from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, for the purchase and installation of a Xylophone and Chimes for the chapter's Möller in the Capitol Theatre in Chambersburg. The grant is administered by the Chambersburg Area Council for the Arts, which earlier last year provided a grant for a rank of Wurlitzer Clarinet pipes.

The chapter's organ crew has been working diligently to continue the restoration and expansion of the Möller. Crew chief Mark Cooley recently built five



Austin Organs, Inc. has announced the appointment of Kimberlee J. Austin to the office of the President.

Also appointed was Bruce Q. Buchanan as Vice-President and Tonal Director.

Donald B. Austin, retired President, continues as active in the firm and will remain as Chairman of the Board.



## CUMBERLAND VALLEY cont.

brand-new Möller-style tremulants, which will be used for the Tuba, Tibia, Main I ranks, Main II ranks, and Vox Humana. Also, five more ranks of pipes are about to be installed in the Main Chamber, and additional console wiring by John McBride to accommodate these additions is underway.

Bob Maney

## DAIRYLAND

Corey Olsen: 414/646-8647

**Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin.** We began the new year with a social on Sunday, January 10, at the rectory of Father Tom Lijewski of St. John Nepomuk Catholic Church in Racine. The instrument is a Custom Allen Classic. Father Tom entertained us by playing a few of his favorites. We then proceeded to the church, where they have a 3-manual Wangerin pipe organ, where he continued his "recital." During open console, several members took advantage of playing the church organ. Next it was back to the rectory for more open console and refreshments.

Our Valentine's Day social was celebrated on February 14 at the home of Bob and Gene Leutner of Racine with 35 in attendance. Bob treated us to music appropriate to the day on his Rodgers Custom organ with MIDI. We played several name games that involved romance and music, with many prizes given out.

Board member Bill Campbell formally made a presentation at the February DTOS board meeting, for us to host the ATOS National Convention in the summer of 2000. The Board voted to postpone action until complete details and a budget could be submitted. For the March meeting, the budget was submitted along with all the other details that go into hosting an annual convention. The Board voted to apply to ATOS for permission to host the annual convention in the year 2000 in Milwaukee. Bill Campbell, who has spent many hours on the project, will be the Convention Committee Chairman, and other committees are now being formed. If our proposal is accepted by ATOS, our club looks forward to being very busy until the summer of 2000!

Sandy Knuth

## EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Hank Lysaght: 781/235-9009

**New Bedford, Massachusetts.** January 16, Richard Knight Auditorium, Babson College, Wellesley Hills, EMCATOS had Don Kinnier as our guest organist for the first time. Between his fine playing, amusing console gestures and humor, he presented an outstanding performance. Don has two LPs to his credit and is well known in the eastern Pennsylvania area for his silent movie and vaudeville accompaniment, especially as resident organist at the Capitol Theatre's Wurlitzer in York.

Don opened with "The Old Berks March" followed by an amusing mimic of a beginner playing "Long, Long Ago" with all the hesitations and mistakes. Almost every organist has a production number in his/her repertoire and Mr. Kinnier's was an elaborate, "Barney Google" with trem on/off, double pedaling, use of the KAWAI upright piano, etc. Included in his program were a few hymns with a very authentic church organ sound, a lively polka, songs requested from the audience, a sing-along with his colored song slides, parody on the original words and expert accompaniment to the silent comedy, *One Week*, starring Buster Keaton.

For our annual meeting on January 17, President Donald Phipps, presented his "badge of office," a wooden pipe stopper, to incoming President, Hank Lysaght. Don has served admirably for seven consecutive years. These were momentous times for our chapter. There is much to show for these years such as a new four manual console, five additional ranks of pipes, the KAWAI upright piano. Don was presented with a handsome plaque in appreciation as well as a generous gift certificate for him to purchase something he wants. Two more members were awarded life memberships for their considerable contributions to the chapter, Marjorie Bell and Robert Herterich. In addition to our new president, Robert Evans was elected to the office of Vice-President with no change in the secretary or treasurer. Then John Cook assumed the console bench and gave a mini-concert of great tunes.

February 7, many invited guests of both the Wellesley and Needham Historical Societies were welcomed to a joint meeting by our new president. John

Cook then demonstrated several of the pipe ranks as well as traps and percussions. A very interesting, nostalgic slide show was presented by Don Phipps and Dick Linder. This showed the former home of our Wurlitzer, Loew's State Theatre, Boston; the organ removal, before and during the sad demolition, temporary organ storage, rebuilding, the original three manual console and then, the new four manual, original switch stacks and relays and the new more versatile solid state system.

Tim Smith, with considerable credentials in both musical training and church organ playing, then performed for his first time on a unit orchestra. He did a commendable job on a light classical piece and a Sousa march. John Cook followed with a medley, before playing a sing-along with song slides and finally, a patriotic selection. Chamber tours were conducted for what was quite a revelation to some. Much socializing provided a most pleasant gathering.

Our first public silent movie for this year was screened February 13 with member Chad Weirick accompanying the fine romantic comedy, roaring twenties flapper classic, *It*, starring Clara Bow. Chad arranged the music to the action like an "old pro," but preceded this with some console pyrotechnics and later, some chase music as of old. Mr. Weirick played a medley of five tunes with "IT" in their titles. The first to identify all titles received a red heart-shaped box of chocolates. He also gave a similar box to the couple longest married as well as to a couple most recently taking the vow. This was a nice touch with St. Valentine's Day following.

With the large audience showing their appreciation of the evening's screening and Chad's console expertise with much shouting and clapping an appropriate closer was a beautiful, "IT had to be You."

Stanley C. Garniss

## GARDEN STATE

Cathy Martin: 973/256-5480

**Trenton, New Jersey.** Garden State Chapter began the new year with a meeting, mini-concert, technical demonstration and open console on Sunday, January 17. It was held at the Park Theatre Performing Arts Center in Union City, New Jersey, famous for the longest running Passion

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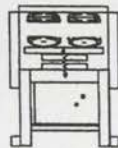
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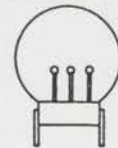
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Play in the country. Our special interest at the Park is a 3/20 Möller orchestral organ. Our crew chief Martin Boehling and George Fenn, our liaison member to the Park have been restoring this organ. Many of the ranks are now speaking and it's a great sound. Martin played a short enjoyable concert showing the results of the many hours spent by the crew on the organ.



George Fenn giving a well prepared technical presentation at our meeting in the Park Theatre. Jimmy Vanore photo

A special technical demonstration on winding Morton magnets was given by George Fenn. Crew members of our four restoration venues found the presentation interesting. Many thanks were given to Father Ashe, Director of the Arts Center.

After five long years of waiting, the Trenton War Memorial was opened. Our chapter met there on February 7, and had a walking tour through the completely renovated building. In the past, the building was well used and worn. Now it has been restored to its former beauty with a new state-of-the-art sound system, dressing rooms and a special room to house the blower for the organ. Our big disappointment was knowing the Möller pipe organ still required attention and will not come on-line until this fall. Long time members recalled fond memories of our first inaugural concert in 1976 with Ashley Miller and his arrangement of a special Fanfare for the 3/16 Möller, Symphony Orchestra and Chorus was magnificent. It was a wonderful welcome to our Möller theatre organ which has been used every year since then in a five concert season. We have been very fortunate to have all of our well known professionals entertain us, especially George Wright and Virgil Fox.

After thoroughly exploring this huge building we acted upon a special invitation from Bruce and Jean Zaccagino. We

completed our Sunday afternoon by traveling to Northlandz in Flemington, New Jersey, for social, pot luck supper and open console. Bruce Williams Zaccagino is the owner and creator of Northlandz, an attractive large building which contains the world's largest collection of model trains. It also contains an Art Gallery, and a charming doll museum. Of special interest is the 5/39 theatre pipe organ situated on center stage, in a large auditorium. The beautiful console is the star attraction to all who make the tour of the three story building. They pass close to the stage and are able to hear the organ music played by professionals all through the building, or they can sit in the auditorium and listen to the organ, then continue on. Many thanks went to our hosts Bruce and Jean for their hospitality. We are very lucky to have Bruce share the time and space to us in this very popular business venture. ATOS members are urged to visit Northlandz when in the New Jersey area. It's really a treat.

Jinny Vanore



David Lester discusses chords.



Bob Raymond at the 5/39 Northlandz console. L to R: Michael Cipolletti, Roland Kurek, Fran Monte, Mel Robinson, Michael O'Brien. Jimmy Vanore photo

#### HUDSON MOHAWK

Frank Hackert: 581/355-4523

Schenectady, New York. The Hudson-Mohawk Chapter's winter meetings, held in January and February 1999, focused on the technical as well as the technique. On January 25, Harold Russell, the club's organ maintenance committee chair, presented a program at Proctor's Theatre, Schenectady, New York. The theatre is home of "Goldie" the 3/18 mighty

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## HUDSON-MOHAWK cont.

Wurlitzer pipe organ. Harold offered technical insight into the mysteries of "Goldie's" mechanism and the manner in which the instrument works. A brief description of the organ's operation was followed by a very informative question and answer session. Harold also described potential enhancements proposed for "Goldie" including the addition of MIDI capability and new combination action as well as conversion to electronic action system. Open console and refreshments followed.

February 22, also at Proctor's Theatre, David Lester hosted an evening of instruction in how to chord a melody. He explained how to use chords to give a different flavor to a familiar melody and involved the audience by asking pertinent questions and including them in the answering process. A great deal of useful information was presented by David to a rapt and thoroughly entertained audience of club members and guests. The meeting concluded with refreshments and open console. Planned upcoming meeting topics include a talk on the history of Proctor's Theatre; a spring musical program at the home of member John Van Laak and reminiscences of "Goldie's" installation in Proctor's Theatre in 1984. Events out of the Schenectady area include an open console session on June 12 at the home of Ted and Betty Wood in Salem, New York, and the

chapter's popular annual picnic on June 19 at the Cobleskill home of Mina and Ed Lungen. Thanks to Hudson-Mohawk Chapter members for their generosity with their talents and their hospitality.

The monthly free noon-time organ concerts sponsored by the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter and Proctor's Theatre continue to be popular community events. Gene Zilka provided a wonderful program on January 12 and William Hubert delighted his audience on February 9. Next up will be Carl Hackert and Avery Tunningley who will perform on March 9 on organ and piano.

The big concert news in the upstate New York region this spring is the return to Proctor's Theatre of Dennis James in concert on Sunday, May 23 at 3:00 p.m. This special anniversary concert commemorates the installation of "Goldie" in the theatre 15 years ago. Mr. James is the artist who performed the opening concert on May 12, 1984. The concert is sure to be a real crowd pleaser and will feature, among many musical pleasures, a silent movie; a Dennis James specialty. The general admission tickets are available at the theatre box office at \$12 plus handling at 518/346-6204. Children 12 and under are free. The concert is sponsored by the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter as a fund raiser for organ enhancements. A reception will follow in the theatre's Guild Room.

Norene Grose



Harold Russell at a real "open console."

## JESSE CRAWFORD

Steve Plaggemeyer: 406/248-3171

**Billings, Montana.** The radio script for the Jesse Crawford Organ Concert Program number 8, November 13, 1949, was the addendum for the Winter 1998 issue of our journal, THE POET. Crawford played the Hammond organ in world-famous Steinway Hall and was broadcast over station WMCA. Crawford's script, penciled in his handwriting, reads: "Roses of Picardy" - you know, Mike (announcer), everybody has their favorite "Rose" song. There's "The Rose in the Bud," "Rose Marie," "Rose of Tralee," "Roses in the Rain" and "Roses of the South," to mention just a few of them. But mine is "Roses of Picardy."

Crawford recorded "Roses of Picardy" February 24, 1926, Victor 20110-B, at the Wurlitzer Building in Chicago. Jesse invited listeners who had questions about his organ classes: "Just call Circle 6-1100. I'll be here, waiting to talk to you."

Several chapter members participated in the "Wurlitzer Weekend" sponsored by the Los Angeles and Orange County Theatre Organ Societies. They were Ralph Beaudry, Charlie Malone, Jim Melander, Dr. Ed Mullins from Billings, Montana, and Mr. and Mrs. Mark Renwick all the way from Jacksonville, Florida. A bonus was a tour of the San Sylmar Museum.

The venue Sunday, January 17, 1999, was at the Bay Theatre, Seal Beach, California. This was originally Wurlitzer Opus #1960, the four-manual, 21-rank Wurlitzer built in 1928 for Jesse Crawford and installed in the Paramount Theatre's studio in New York City. This is one of the most famous Wurlitzer organs heard through the 1920s and 1930s. Via radio broadcasts and recordings, this organ featured not only Jesse Crawford, but also many other legendary organists.

Richard Loderhose purchased the instrument in the early 1960s, added several ranks and installed it in his Long Island home. Much later, Loderhose purchased the Bay Theatre and installed the organ on the stage. The console is to the left of the stage and comes out of the wall ala Radio City Music Hall. Expanded to 42 ranks with a computer relay and playback; it was featured at the 1987 and 1996 national ATOS conventions.

Barry Baker was the featured artist. His program demonstrated the resources of the instrument. He played a note-perfect Jesse Crawford arrangement of "Birth of Passion" utilizing the original twenty-one ranks. Crawford recorded "Birth of Passion" on this very organ on March 27, 1933 - Victor recording #24758-B.

Many "weekenders" attended the Mid-day Organ Recital January 19, 1999 at the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles. Chapter member Robert MacDonald played the five-manual, 346-rank Great organ. His recital included Edwin H. Lemare's transcription of the "Carmen Suite" by Georges Bizet.

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Jesse Crawford Chapter member Robert MacDonald at console of 5/346 Great organ at the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles during Mid-day Organ Recital, January 19, 1999. Ed Mullins photo

Below: Wurlitzer Weekenders (L to R): Charlie Malone, Jim Melander, Carrie and Mark Renwick, Ed Mullins and Ralph Beaudry with organist Barry Baker and 4/42 Wurlitzer owner Dick Loderhose at Bay Theatre, Seal Beach, California. January 17, 1999. Luis Morales photo



MacDonald is organist and choir director at First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth, Texas. A native of Massachusetts, he is a graduate of Boston University and the New England Conservatory of Music. Previous church appointments include The Riverside Church of New York city (associate organist/choir director), the Interchurch Center, New York (Director of music and organist) and the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Newark, New Jersey. Bob was also staff organist at Radio City Music Hall in New York before moving to Texas in 1989. Ed Mullins

## LOS ANGELES

Donn Linton: 213/254-6985

Los Angeles, California. Southern California Wurlitzer Weekend is now history. It was apparent before the end of the Sunday afternoon blockbuster at Plummer Auditorium with Lyn



Walt Strony at San Gabriel. M. LiVolsi photo

Larsen and Jonas Nordwall, that there would have to be an encore. So fans, mark your calendar now for the January 22-23 weekend because we're going to do it again!

The weekend opened Saturday morning with LATOS member, Ken Rosen at the console of the downtown Los Angeles Orpheum Theatre 3/14 original installation Wurlitzer. Ken gave a detailed explanation of his technique to re-creating the styles and sounds of the early theatre organists. He also accompanied a wild silent movie, *Two Cuckoos* starring many of the comedians that usually worked singularly rather than together.

Over one hundred people took advantage of the Saturday afternoon tour of the Nethercutt Collection at Sylmar, offered as an additional event at no extra cost. Our thanks go to Gordon Belt and the staff at the museum for reserving the afternoon for our group.

Saturday night, Walt Strony had to suffer the only glitch of the entire weekend. After he was announced nothing happened. He couldn't get the console up. After a couple of seconds, from the pit, a voice cries out, "You didn't turn the blower on!" With that

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LOS ANGELES cont.

problem corrected, Walt presented a superb concert laced with the typical Strony humor. Walt dedicated a medley including the theme from "Candid Camera" and some polka music to Bob and Hilda Pasalich who are our loyal videologists. Walt says "Bob has videotaped every concert since Jesse Crawford was born". He then played several numbers from his newly released CD.

Barry Baker was the Sunday morning artist. Anyone who skipped this concert because of the early hour and the long drive to Seal Beach, really missed a great, talented young artist. Dick Loderhouse told stories of his involvement in the music scene in New York with some the artists and organs of the early days before introducing Barry. The little Bay Theatre was packed to the rafters. There were many people from the community that came to hear this young virtuoso play the expanded New York Paramount Wurlitzer studio organ with its four manuals and present 44 ranks.

When you have one great organ and one great organist the only thing left, is to have two great organs and two great organists! That is just what we had for the finale Sunday afternoon at Plummer Auditorium in Fullerton. The Orange County Theatre Organ Society featured Jonas Nordwall and Lyn Larsen, two of our finest artists, jockeying between the 4/35 rebuilt Wurlitzer and the top notch George Wright Signature Allen 4 manual electronic. The two artists where obviously having great fun switching from one organ to the other, when they introduced "Casita En Chihuahua" (the Cactus Polka) inspired by the Taco Bell dog. The audience of nearly 900 enjoyed the program as much as the artists. Thanks to the Orange County Theatre Organ Society for their cooperation as co-sponsor of the weekend.

LATOS is always pleased to have visitors from out of town. LATOS is sponsoring a trip to Catalina Island for the 70th anniversary of the opening of Avalon's Casino Theatre on May 22. Bob Salisbury will accompany the *Thief of Baghdad* on the Page Theatre Organ. The following Saturday night Jack Moelmann will play at San Gabriel Civic Auditorium (see the LATOS advertisement in this issue for details.)

Wayne Flottman



Wayne Flottman talking to Madeline LiVolsi and Avis Schmill. Below: Lyn Larsen talking to Avery Johnson. Keith Baldwin photos



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Charles Pierson: 941/924-0674

**Sarasota, Florida.** Our Crome replica 4-manual Wurlitzer console has been delivered and finished to blend with the interior of Grace Baptist Church. Internal wiring is being performed by Vernon Blanch and Bob Chute. Others, under the direction of Norman Arnold are transporting chests and regulators from the shop to the chambers in the church.

The February meeting was at the Walker's residence where Vince Messing and Dave Henderson played the Conn 646. The March meeting was at Beneva Christian Church, where a member of the congregation has installed a Wicks pipe organ that formerly was installed in Kentucky. Bob Alexander was on the bench. April found members and guests

meeting at Kings Gate in Nokomis where Ketch Morrel's Allen was played by young Ronny Gicka. The May meeting will be at Chan Campbell's where the Allen theatre organ will be featured.

This spring, Rosa Rio played on the Empire Theatre Organ at Pinellas Park Municipal Building. Tom Hazleton played the Allen George Wright III Organ at the Sarasota Opera House. The snowbirds as well as the permanent residents have a great many organ opportunities on the Sun Coast, with more to come!

Carl Walker

## NEW YORK

David Kopp: 973/305-1255

**New York, New York.** On Saturday, February 27, the New York Chapter sponsored a full day of open console/organ

crawl for members and friends on two of the chapter's own Mighty Wurlitzers. Members gathered in the morning at the Lafayette Theatre in Suffern to take turns playing the 2/11 Ben Hall Memorial Wurlitzer. There was ample time to play and socialize with friends over coffee and other refreshments. The Lafayette is one of the last remaining single screen movie houses in the New York area, and the Wurlitzer is featured every Friday and Saturday evening before the 8:00 p.m. show.

From the Lafayette, the activities moved north to Middletown for open console at the Middletown Paramount on the chapter's 3/11 Wurlitzer. This was our first chance to try out our beautiful newly restored and installed French Style console with its new electronic relay. The console,

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## NEW YORK cont.

originally from Shea's Bailey Theatre in Buffalo, New York, was played for many years by organist Leon Berry at the Hub Skating Rink in the Chicago area. Although the new combination action is not yet operational and some minor debugging was still needed in the relay, the organ performed well and was exciting to play and hear. Until just a few days before our event, there were doubts that it would be playable at all. But, thanks to the hard work of crew members Bob Welch, Lowell Sanders, Tom Stehle and Jack Stone, the Mighty Wurlitzer was up and running again with a big organ sound that rumbles through the 1,200 seat performing arts theatre. A highlight of the afternoon was a demo mini-concert by organist Dave Kopp. Dave designed the new stop specification for the instrument, and finally had a chance to try out many of the new combinations of voices that are now available in the organ. Members and guests enjoyed playing open console and catching up with old and new friends. *Tom Stehle*



John Becica lends a helping hand to Bill Caputi during open console at the Middletown Paramount 3/11 Wurlitzer.

## NOR-CAL

Fred Cordes:

**Oakland, California.** Our February 21 chapter concert was played by Jerry Nagano at the beautifully restored Stanford Theatre in Palo Alto. The 3/20 Wurlitzer, tuned and maintained by Edward M. Stout III and Dick Taylor, never sounded better. Jerry's program was quite different from what pleased the patrons of Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward all those years. It was clear that Jerry thoroughly enjoyed playing for us things that weren't common pizza parlor fare. His program included medleys from Broadway and favorites from a couple of decades prior to his birth, which pleased his audience very much.

Dennis James played a short concert for NorCal and the public at Berkeley Community Theatre, March 14, on the chapter's 4/33 Wurlitzer before accompanying the Marion Davies silent film *Show People*. His program was taken from pop music of the 1928 era when the film was made. The film print was gorgeous, unearthed from the MGM archives. Famous film stars besides Miss Davies appeared in the picture, some of them playing themselves. The film score has long been lost. Dennis played 20 minutes of Carl Davis' score from the 1960s revival with the rest selected by Dennis from suitable music of the era. His concert and film accompaniment were enjoyed by all.

*Evelyn Woodworth*

## NORTH FLORIDA

Gene Stroble: 904/879-6579

**Jacksonville, Florida.** Thanks to Elmer Osteen and his church, the Calvin Presbyterian Church on Barnes Road, we have a very chapter-friendly agreement allowing us to meet at the church as "our home." On November 21, we met for the first time in "our home." This meeting was beset with high absenteeism, with several

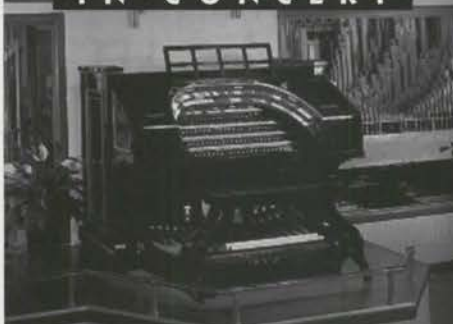
members attending Atlanta chapter's meeting. Rosemary Sikes' duties for the US Postal Service taking precedence over chapter activities, and our president being home with the virus. Remaining spirits were undampened. Gene Stroble trailed his Allen Theatre Organ (without the "two chamber" speaker system) some 50 miles from his home in Hilliard, Florida, to the church. Bill LeVey brought in two large speaker cabinets, and, after the nominating committee report, Gene played a delightful program. Refreshments were enjoyed after the musical program.

On December 19, the chapter celebrated "Christmas at Home - 1998" in the chapter's new home with our newly elected President, Elmer Osteen. Newly-elected Vice President, Gene Stroble played an enjoyable program entitled "Christmas Music Classic: Christmas Music Past and Christmas Music Contemporary." He once again played his Allen organ which he brought from home. After the keyboard music wonderful Gene gave us a real treat with his rich tenor voice, accompanied by himself recorded at the organ singing "The Night Before Christmas," followed by "Sweet Little Jesus Boy." His interpretations of both songs demonstrated great reservoirs of wit, gusto and tenderness. The program was topped off with delicious refreshments.

January 16, 1999, a half hour was set aside preceding the regular meeting for a board meeting. The program that followed was an interesting presentation of shared recordings of music performed on an electronic theatre organ, the Mormon Tabernacle, the Atlanta Fox, and elsewhere. Open console music by organists playing the chapter Gulbransen was interspersed with excerpts from various recordings as refreshments were enjoyed.

At the February meeting, Gene Stroble at the console of the Gulbransen Premiere Theatre Organ played (bravely) an all

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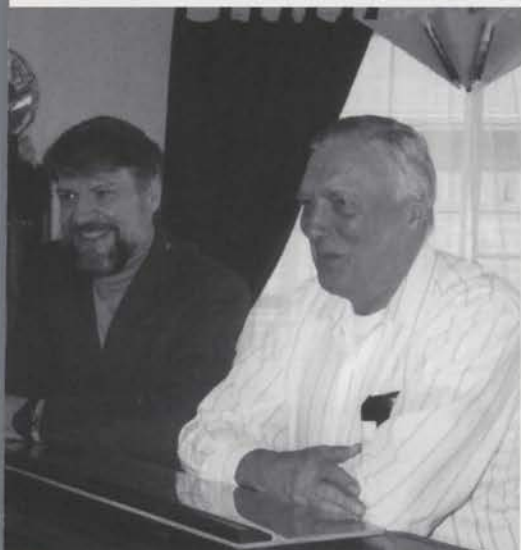
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request program. Because of his youthfulness, Gene actually did not know a couple of songs called out by oldsters in the audience. He simply had not heard them before. Though several stops were intermittent, old/young pro that he is, Gene had no difficulty camouflaging problems at the console. The marvelous acoustics of the building distributed sound to the point of no identifiable source. Refreshments were served for everyone's enjoyment.

*Erle Renwick*



*Mr. Wyn Wade (left) who played for North Texas in February. and President elect, Don Peterson.*

## NORTH TEXAS

Donald Peterson: 972/517-2562

Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. Work on completing rebuild of our Chapter organ in the Lakewood Theatre has, unfortunately, slowed to a crawl since the November 29 concert. This is perhaps due to a let down

after the concerted push in the months preceding, the distraction of the holidays and press of other commitments. However, work has resumed on the refurbishment of the organ. The major items to complete are: prepare the electronic capture action and MIDI interface, correct erratic keying signals that are causing problems with the new electronic relay and completing work on chest problems. Completion of these is necessary to have the organ in shape for a concert by a major artist. It is hoped that most of this work will be completed before our next chapter meeting in April which we plan to hold in the Lakewood on our refurbished chapter Robert-Morton.

The organ will be used by the theatre during March to provide incidental music during a two week film festival commemorating the 75th anniversary of Columbia Pictures. This festival will showcase Columbia films included in the American Film Institute's list of the 100 greatest films. The festival has been well advertised and is expected to draw capacity audiences to the Lakewood. We expect good exposure for our Chapter Robert Morton as well. Bill Flynt has been engaged by the theatre to play the organ for this series.

Our annual February business meeting was held in the residence of Rick and Luann Matthews. Significant business was the election of officers and approval of proposed by-law improvements. Following the business, host Rick Matthews presented organist Wyn Wade to entertain us on the Matthews' Conn 652 theatre organ.

Mr. Wade hails from the Indiana where his musical career has included the post of associate organist at the Tweedy Brown Musical Showplace in Mishawaka. His program was chosen from the golden era of the theatre organ and included a wide range of selections. He was able to evoke beautiful theatre organ sounds from the

Conn 652 with his well executed registrations and masterly playing. His performance was a joy to this discriminating group of theatre organ enthusiasts. We hope that Rick can entice Wyn Wade to return and play for us again but this time on our Robert-Morton in the Lakewood.

The exploratory activity regarding the placement of a NTC organ in the Dallas Inwood theatre has been continuing. At a recent meeting with the agents of the Inwood, they expressed an interest in signing an agreement similar to the document we now have with the Lakewood Theatre. At this meeting, we presented a general proposal including placement of the chambers, blower and console in the theatre. We were commended on the amount and quality of our preparation for the presentation. They will now make an assessment of the costs of preparing the theatre for our proposed organ installation. If the costs and requirements are acceptable, they will get back to us in a few weeks to prepare for an agreement for the installation and mutual use of our organ in the Inwood.

If all goes as hoped, we could have two chapter organs in Dallas theatres for the promotion of our ATOS goals before the start of the millennium. *Irving Light*

## ORANGE COUNTY

Don Near: 714/539-8944

Fullerton, California. We held our annual Christmas party/meeting/open console on the Plummer stage on December 5. Our membership continued to grow; from 80 last year to 92 this year. Supporting friends increased from 35 to 56. Sixteen members took a turn at the console.

Good progress has been made on a slave console for the organ which will permit its use at times where the main console cannot be used because of its size. One plan is to use it together with a live orchestra which occupies the lift/pit during local

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**ORANGE COUNTY cont.**

civic light opera musical productions. It will consist of a 25 note pedalboard, two 61 note keyboards (actually two KORG synthesizers), a music rack with 24 control pistons and a suitable metal rack to mount and support the components which can be knocked down easily for convenient storage. We are excited about the potential to expand the uses for the Wurlitzer and increase audience exposure.

In January, we sponsored the first joint Wurlitzer Weekend organized in partnership with the Los Angeles Chapter. This event included four concerts at as many venues. Our chapter focused on the finale held at Plummer Auditorium. This was a spectacular duo concert featuring Jonas Nordwall and Lyn Larsen combining their formidable talents on both the Wurlitzer pipe organ and the new George Wright Signature organ by the Allen Organ Company. The excellent set up work done with the two organs resulted in a balanced sound. Some eight hundred enthusiastic music lovers cheered one of the most exciting concerts we have held.

*Jim Merry and Bob Trousdale*



*Lyn Larsen with Scott (Don Near's grandson). Keith Baldwin photo*



*Jonas Nordwall, Henry Hunt and Lyn Larsen with the Plummer Wurlitzer (left), and the George Wright Allen on the right. M. LiVolsi photo*

**PIEDMONT**

Ernest Boyd, Jr.:

**Lumberton, Maryland.** September 29, 1998, chapter members Allen Lloyd, his son Jonathan, and Terry Jordan presented an evening of gospel music in the historic Carolina Civic Center (formerly the Carolina Theatre) in downtown Lumberton. The theatre was built in 1928. The organ (not original to the theatre) is also from a 1928 2/8 Robert-Morton. Member Mac Abernethy installed computer control on the instrument which enables combination pistons and record/playback of performances. Buddy Boyd recorded the concert on direct digital equipment and made several CD copies of the program.

November 30, 1998, Allen, Jonathan and Terry returned for the theatre's annual Christmas Concert, featuring sing-alongs, organ/piano duets of seasonal sounds, and Jonathan with wonderful perfor-

mances of classical holiday music. With the addition of the computer action, the organ is now used more frequently during the year. The city of Lumberton is to be applauded for maintaining the theatre in splendid condition. *Ernie Skinner*



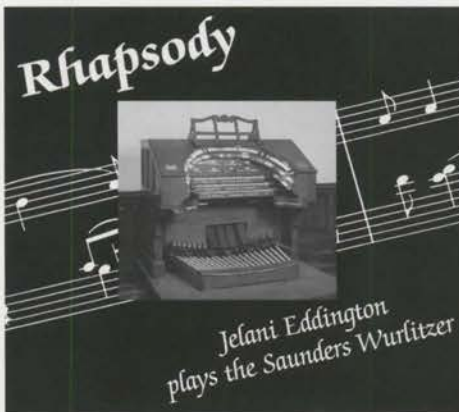
*Allen Lloyd, Jonathan Lloyd, and Terry Jordan.*

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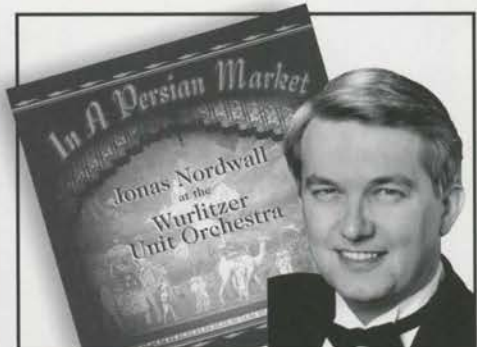
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Tom Hazleton at the Harris Theatre Wurlitzer.

## POTOMAC VALLEY

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

**Clinton, Maryland.** "It's A Grand Night For Singing" was the opening number of our February 6-7 program at George Mason University's Harris Theatre; and "grand" it turned out to be, in several respects. The Sunday matinee was essentially sold out; a first for our annual concert series featuring the chapter-owned 2/9 Wurlitzer. The decision to add the Saturday evening performance was warranted because it also had a large audience. This was a joint project with the Fairfax Choral Society, and had been in the planning stages for almost a year. Through the efforts of Dr. Douglas Mears, the FCS Artistic Director, Tom Hazleton was engaged to be the guest organist and accompanist for the event. Markus Compton, an excellent pianist associated with the chorus, also accompanied the singers on the theatre's Steinway concert grand. "Love Notes" was the theme for the program in deference to Valentine's Day the following week. The stage was decorated with hearts and balloons, and mood lighting by our crew heightened the musical experience. The adult chorus nearly filled the stage. Its eighty volunteers are all qualified singers, and its professional conducting and management make it one of the finest singing groups in the area. Their

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The Fairfax Choral Society and Tom Hazleton.

a cappella rendition of "Love Walked In" in the first half was an absolute delight.

The Choral Society also includes a Children's Chorus. The youngsters not only had a major part in the concert, but returned to the auditorium to join the adult choir during the finale. Tom played solo for nearly half of the program. From his opening, "Lover," to the end of the concert, we heard Tom at his finest. He coaxed more lush sounds from those nine ranks than would seem to be possible. His music ranged from a willowy, "Once I Had A Secret Love," to a brassy, "This Can't Be Love." For most of the audience, this was a new sound and new experience. They obviously enjoyed it thoroughly. Our guest emcee was Dan Gawthrop, a classical composer, arranger, organist, and local radio personality. His commentary on the history and characteristics of the theatre organ was right on the mark. He and Tom included a brief "tour of the organ" when the stage was being reset in the second half.

Tom's final solo was a fascinating arrangement of "Tea For Two," ending with a posthorn melody in the pedal and accompaniment a la "Widor's Toccata." The grand finale, "God Bless America" with both adult and children's choruses, full organ, piano, and audience singing along, was a thrilling experience which will long be remembered.

We participated in the local "A Call To Arts" telethon February 28. This annual event promotes the arts and raises money for several arts organizations in our area. Program announcements have been made

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for our next concert at the Harris Theatre. Lou Hurvitz, former chapter member and the first organist to play our Wurlitzer in a public program, will return to the bench Sunday, June 13, 1999 at 3:00 p.m. for a pops concert and a short silent film comedy.

Donald Faehn

### ATTENTION NEW MEMBERS:

For a copy of the ATOS by-laws or information on the ATOS Preservation and Restoration guidelines, please visit our website at [www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org) or contact our Executive Secretary, Michael Fellenzer at P.O. Box 551081, Indianapolis, IN 46205-5581, 317/251-6441, Fax 317/251-6443 or [fellenzer@atos.org](mailto:fellenzer@atos.org).

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Tedde Gibson

**PUGET SOUND**

Marilyn Schrum:

**Seattle, Washington.** Young Tedde Gibson was the featured artist for a Valentine's Day party and concert at Haller Lake Improvement Club, presenting a wide variety of music on the chapter's 3/8 theatre pipe organ. Additionally, he brought with him a fine vocalist from his church who joined him in several numbers, much to the surprise and pleasure of those who attended. Members all enjoyed this fun social afternoon, and have high praise for Tedde's musicianship. He demonstrated an excellent grasp of registration, and used very imaginative harmonies. Well, done, Tedde!

Ellen Sullivan, once again, provided outstanding theme decorations. Refreshments were provided by the chapter. The weather was sunny and delightful, a pleasant but brief bright spot in Seattle's record-breaking rainy winter.

Tedde plays at Tacoma Pizza & Pipes, is organist for his church, and is studying organ at the University of Washington.

*Jo Ann Evans*

**RIVER CITY**

Gregory A. Johnson: 402/264-5655

**Omaha, Nebraska.** January weather in Omaha is unpredictable and "iffy" at best. Rather than scheduling a guest artist for our January 17 meeting, our program chairman, Lynn Lee, dedicated the day to abundant open console time for all. While



With barely time for one quick run through before presenting "Dough and Dynamite," Greg Johnson demonstrated his talent for cueing silent pictures. *Tom Jeffery photo*

we were enjoying these cameo performances on the chapter's Barton theatre organ, we had plenty of time to visit with old friends, over snacks and a cup of coffee.

For our February meeting we again met in our organ studio at Durand's Sky Ranch Airport. Our president, Greg Johnson, conducted a short business meeting, which included an update on the Wurlitzer organ installation at Omaha's Rose Theatre. Although the original Wurlitzer organ and console (which opened the theatre as the Riviera in March 1927) had been removed years ago, workers doing a bit of "urban archeology" at the Rose discovered the Riviera's slave console. Curiously, the slave appears to be a re-manufactured Kimball church console! With the assistance of our able projectionist, Paul Kanka, Greg Johnson was our guest artist for the day, cueing a 25-minute 1914 Keystone Film Company comedy, *Dough and Dynamite*. In this slapstick film, Charlie Chaplin was cast as a bumbling, clumsy restaurant waiter and baker. In your "minds eye" just imagine what could possibly go wrong with Charlie Chaplin: large restaurant serving trays, low-cut dresses, 100-lb. bags of flour, mountains of sticky bread dough, and union revenge (dynamite sticks stuffed into an industrial-strength brick oven) - well, you get the picture! We gave Greg Johnson a standing ovation for his distinguished performance.



Bob Markworth's "new" Kimball console, beautifully restored and waiting for its manuals, stop tabs, pedal clavier, and thumb pistons. *Tom Jeffery photo*

After open console, we adjourned to a new, area restaurant for a "wives day off" meal.

Bob Markworth (and his faithful crew) continue to make steady progress on Bob's home Kimball theatre organ installation. The Main Chamber will contain 12-ranks, has all of the chests and wind lines installed, and most of the pipes are in place on their chests. The Solo Chamber will also contain 12-ranks, and all of the chests are in place, with regulator winding underway. Bob is working on stop tab specifications for the new console; hopefully, this will be resolved soon so that installation of the stop actions can begin. The console will contain approximately 280 tabs, with MIDI access. The organ and console will be controlled by a Rickman relay system. Each of the two side-by-side pipe chambers are 24 ft. square and are below ground level. With the exception of the walls where the swell shades are installed, chamber walls, ceilings and floors are of all-concrete construction.

*Tom Jeffery*

**SAN DIEGO**

John Dapolito:

**San Diego, California.** On March 21, many of our members were present to welcome the delivery of our 4 manual Wurlitzer console that had been completed by Ken Crome. We were thrilled to view the fine craftsmanship of Ken and his co-

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San Diego Chapter console.

workers as the like-new console rolled into the sanctuary of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Spring Valley. The cherry wood finish is a good match for the woodwork in the sanctuary. On April 5, Tim Rickman, a Wilcox representative, will connect the console to the relay in the chamber. All chamber installation is complete. Final stages of tonal regulation will then be undertaken by Chris Gorsuch. Chris has been appointed to play our premiere concert. The date will be scheduled after final regulation of all components has been completed. We are grateful to Greg Breed, crew chief of the project, and Jackie Porter who coordinated the workers, contractors and financial aspects of the project. I wish to acknowledge others members who donated many hours to the project; Bill Ball, Cindy Breed, Peter Crotty, Doyle and Edith Current, John Dapolito, Bill and La Vonne Davis, Bill DiRocco, Lee Edgar, Joe Forand, Charles Gauss, Ken Hanson, Don Huckle, Bill Nagy, Lou Parsley, Russ Peck, Charlie Porter, Margaret Robinson, Shelly Shelton, Bill Starkey. Contractors were Ken Crome, Chris Gorsuch, Norm Hook, Tim Rickman, Wendell Shoberg, John Van Rhyn.

The console will control 22 ranks plus the usual tuned percussions and toy counter. Preparations have been made to add a mussete and possibly a second Vox Humana. Also planned are electronic extensions of the 16 ft. octaves of several reeds and 16 ft. strings. and three 32 ft.

stops. The Wilcox combination action will have virtually unlimited levels of memory. A full complement of MIDI voices will now be available.

Paul Roberts was again well received by about 50 members in concert on April 4 at the home of Bob Brooks. He played Bob's new 3 manual Allen theatre organ in Bob's recently remodeled music room. Surely, on his next tour of this area, Paul Roberts will play our chapter Wurlitzer!

John Dapolito

## SOONER STATE

Joyce Hatchett:

**Tulsa, Oklahoma.** Sooner State Chapter started off the New Year with their annual business meeting, held again at the Broken Arrow campus of Tulsa Technology Center. After the presentation of the treasurer's report by Lee Lomas, Paul Craft presided at voting of the election of officers to serve our chapter for the next two year term.

Bonnie Duncan played a mini-concert on our 3/13 Robert-Morton. She took us on a delightful trip down memory lane with her program of popular standards.

Six people played at open console, including our ten-year-old prodigy, Kenneth Pierce. Kenneth and his family have now joined our chapter, and we're certainly looking forward to hearing more from this talented and enthusiastic young man!

February found us once again at Tulsa Technology Center, this time with Sam Collier on the bench of our Robert-Morton. Before he began, he turned to tell us "Everything I play is old," and then preceded to take us down his version of memory lane. We particularly enjoyed "My Secret Love" and his arrangement of "Stardust."

We are excited about the possibility of having a meeting this summer at the Orpheum Theatre in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. John McConnel gave us an update on the progress with the Robert-Morton he has been installing in the theatre since 1993. They hope to have 20 ranks playing by July, and plan to have an opening session for our chapter.

There's even a little more progress to report on the Dorothy and Lee Smith home installation. The wiring to the pedalboard is complete, and work on wiring the chamber components of the electronic

relay is about half done.

We have had to say "Good-bye" to another long-time member of our chapter. Ruth Collier, Sam's wife, died unexpectedly on January 17, 1999. We extend our condolences to Sam and her family.

We have added Ruth's name to the Memorial Trumpet Fund for our chapter Robert-Morton.

Dorothy Smith



The Cinaminson High School 3/16 Wurlitzer.

## SOUTHERN JERSEY

Joseph Rementer: 609/694-1471

**Franklinville, New Jersey.** On November 12, 1998 Rialtofest #3 in Joliet, Illinois was the destination of 21 members of SJTOS. Our members accompanied the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society (72 in all) on their uniquely planned bus trip. SJTOS President Joe Rementer and his wife, Theresa were our bus captains, keeping the snacks flowing, and keeping us in the right direction despite the late hour. Some of the unforgettable sites were the fabulous Sanfilippo home, Joliet's architecturally interesting train station, the magnificent Rialto Theatre, Mundelein Seminary, Paul Van Der Molen's home installation, and the Beggar's Pizza Restaurant. Naturally, interacting with all our friends over great food and the fine artistry of Tom Hazleton, Walter Strony, Lew Williams, Kay McAbee, Jelani Eddington, John Terwilliger, and Dave Wickerham has kept us remembering all these exhilarating experiences long past our trip.

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## SOUTHERN JERSEY cont.

On November 21, 1998, we ventured to Levittown, Pennsylvania, to Dot and Jim Shean's residence to experience their 3/17 Wurlitzer/hybrid. Open console and jam sessions were thoroughly enjoyed by 30 members. Candi Carley-Roth serenaded us during a delicious buffet dinner and Candi was great. Once again, Dot and Jim were warm and gracious. We were thankful for such a memorable day.

Our fifth annual Christmas covered dish and open console event was held on December 13, 1998 at the home of Joe and Theresa Rementer. A seemingly never ending roster of organ enthusiasts volunteered to play, keeping the Christmas spirit moving majestically. After dinner, music from Judy Knight, her husband Bob, and Ernie Wurth gave our celebration a Victorian Christmas setting full of heartfelt wishes and blessings.

During the Christmas festivities, Woody Flowers, one of the original restorers of the 3/16 Cinaminson High School Wurlitzer, presented Joe Rementer and Harry Bellangy a check for \$1,000.00. SJTOS has been engaged to up date and refurbish the Cinaminson High School Wurlitzer.

Mary Brook

## VALLEY OF THE SUN

Donald Reazor: 602/877-0635

**Phoenix, Arizona.** On January 10, the Orpheum Theatre group held a special "members only" event to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the theatre. Valley of the Sun chapter member Virg Howard presented a program on the Wurlitzer. The program was slated to start at 3:00 p.m., but many people arrived at 2:30. Virg entertained them by playing requests, answering questions and demonstrating the excellent work of our chapter in installing and maintaining the instrument. He also demonstrated many of the special effects and the computer playback system. Later in the afternoon, some of the couples were up on stage dancing to the organ music. Refreshments were served by the "Friends of the Orpheum."

Our chapter presented Ron Rhode in a concert of "Broadway Melodies" on February 21. All of the songs in the program had their origin in a Broadway show. Beginning with the turn-of-the-century George M. Cohan and Victor Herbert, Ron took us decade by decade through a hundred years of music. He also accompanied vocalist Jenny Lee on some selections, mostly from the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Surely everyone's favorite Broadway composer was represented that day. Don closed his program with a medley from *Hello Dolly*. This was the show that the restored Orpheum Theatre reopened with two years ago.

Madeline LiVolsi

## WESTERN RESERVE

Janice Kast: 216/531-4214

**Cleveland, Ohio.** Western Reserve Chapter presented Tom Hazleton to a



L to R: Woody Flowers, Harry Bellangy and Joe Rementer.

warmly receptive crowd in concert on Saturday, Dec. 12, at the restored downtown Cleveland Grays Armory. This was Tom's first appearance at our 3/15 Wurlitzer since a 1990 winter storm virtually canceled his show for all but about 50 attendees. Tom's stunning performance was well worth the wait from his opening "Winter Wonderland" and seasonal medley through the sing-along and Charlie Chaplin silent film and on to the encore "Where Do I Go From Here?"

On Saturday, December 5, chapter members Pat & Vince Aveni hosted our Christmas social at their home, a.k.a. the Musical Museum of Yesteryear. Meeting new friends, renewing old acquaintances and devouring Keyboard Cake was just

the beginning. The evening was filled with melodies from the Avenis' collection of automated musical instruments including music boxes, orchestrions, calliopes, and band organs. Of course, there was ample open console time on their 4/40 Wurlitzer pipe organ!

Our January 17 gathering was held at the Lorain Palace Theatre where chapter members Fred and Carolyn Carson greeted us with refreshments and chapter member George Cooper (complete with derby hat and red vest) treated us to a concert and sing-along from this original installation 3/10 Wurlitzer. Also of interest was a display of the theatre's vintage projection equipment.

Jim Shepherd

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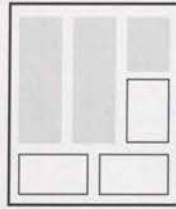
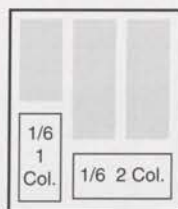
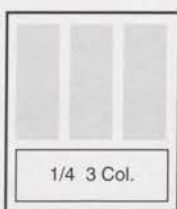
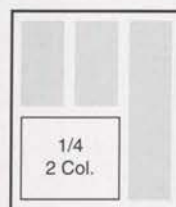
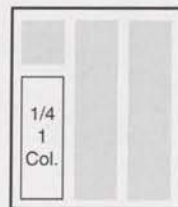
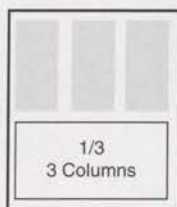
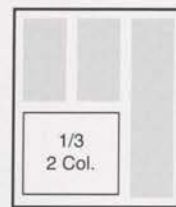
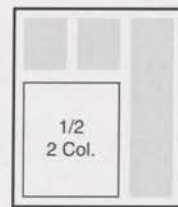
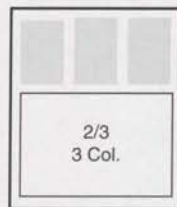
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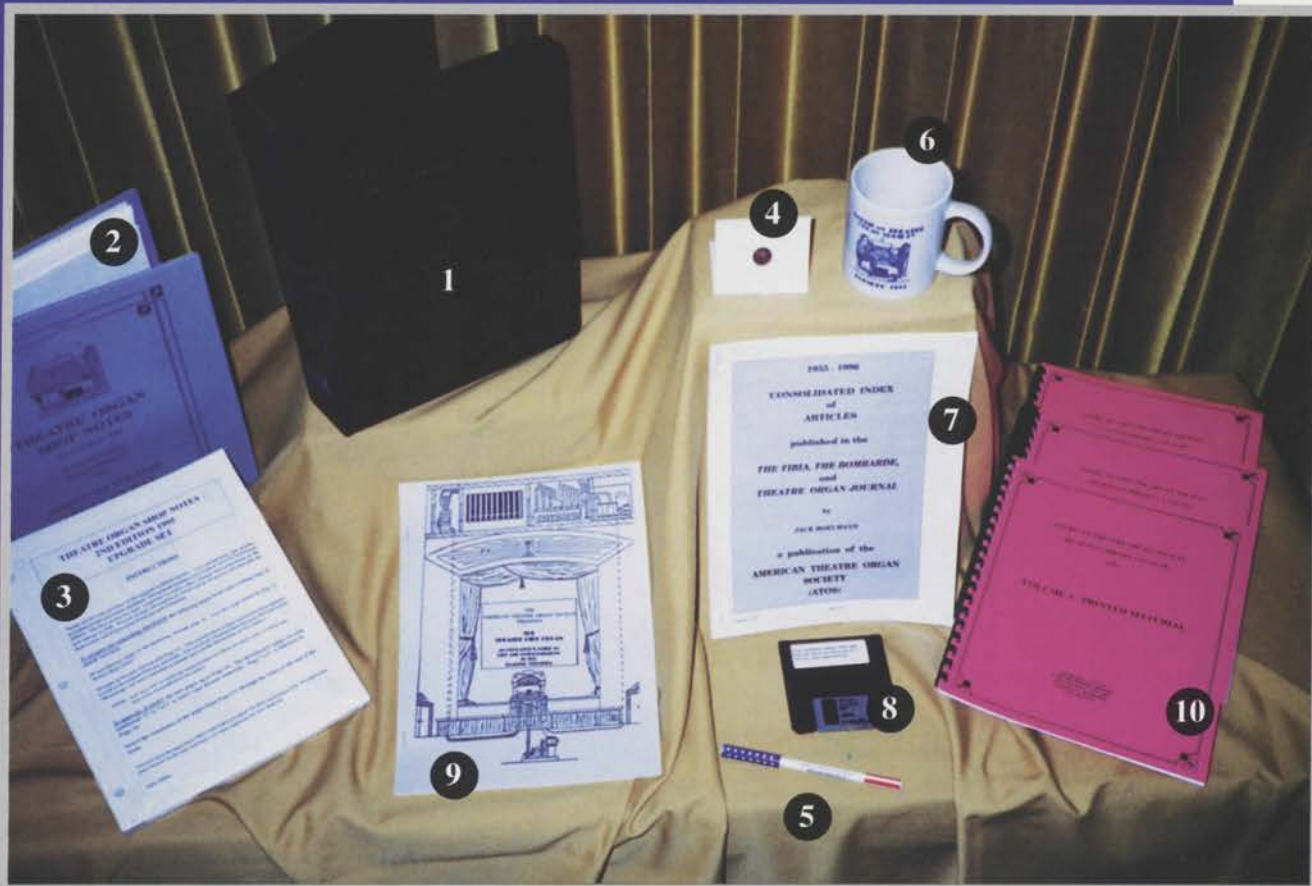
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