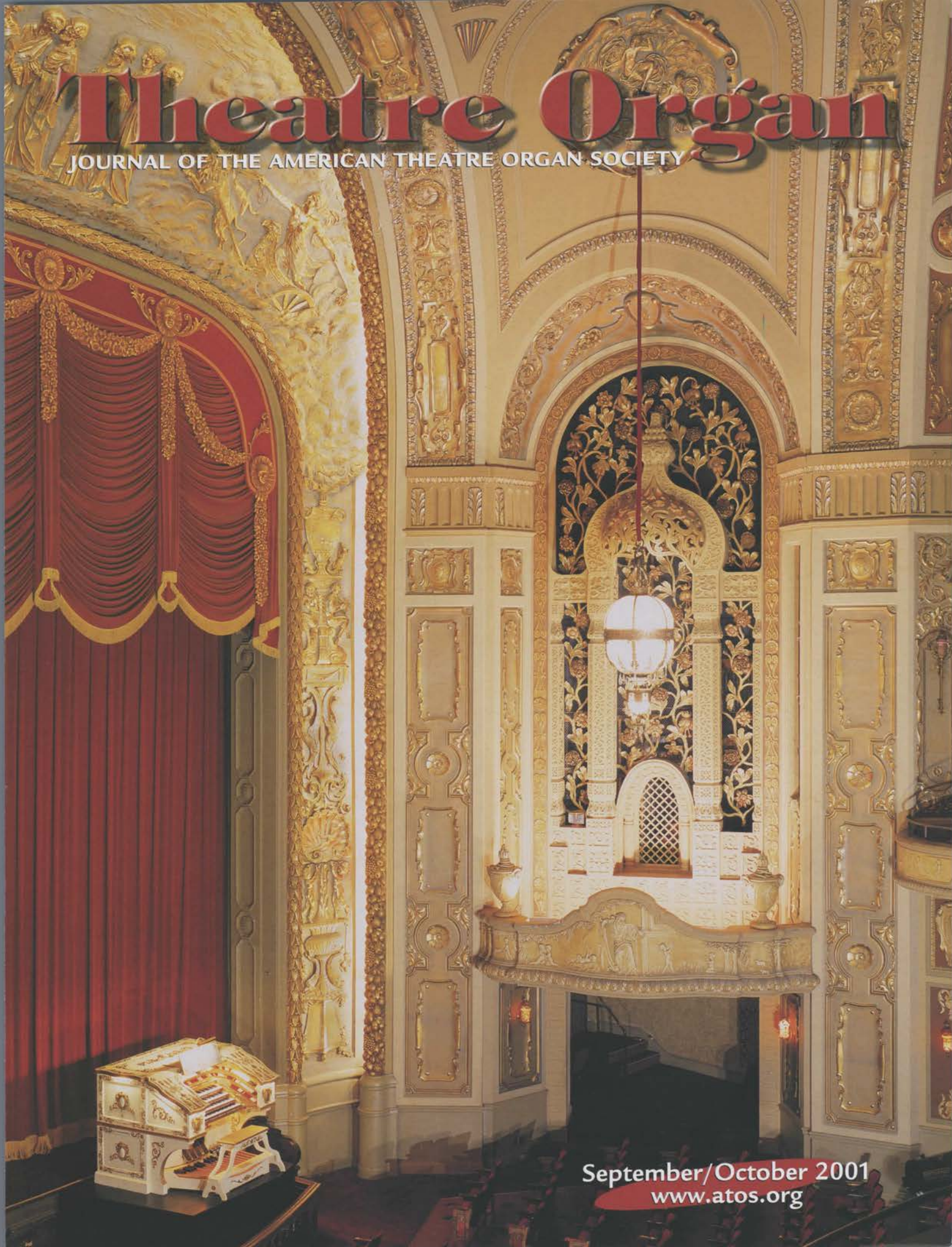


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September/October 2001
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September/October 2001 • Volume 43, Number 5

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President's Message



Holy cow, what a great convention. So many amazing, wonderful, exhilarating and exciting things happened in Indiannapolis that I don't know where to begin. I guess the coward in me wants only to talk of the fun things and forget about the business of our organization but the issues of our society have to come first. Get out your pens and paper folks I am afraid it's hate mail time. I've got some bad news. I've had to propose a dues increase... yep you've heard me right, a dues increase. I've had to recommend to the Board of Directors that we increase our annual dues by \$10.00 a year. I hated to do it and the Board reluctantly approved the increase which will take effect January 2002. The good news (if there is any) is that members may renew before the first of the year at the old rate for as many years as they would like. This is the first dues increase in five years and while there are many reasons for us to address this financial need ultimately the burden falls on the shoulders of the membership to support both new and existing programs. For ATOS to go forward on a firm financial footing I need your help by contributing an extra 83¢ a month to ensure our future. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

As for our convention, what more can I say. Convention chair, Tim Needler and his intrepid team put together a fabulous array of concerts, artists and venues which thrilled everyone. Add a terrific banquet with a four star meal, a relaxing cruise up the Ohio River for the Afterglow and it equals a picture perfect experience. Job well done! Central Indiana Chapter has hosted conventions before (and hopefully will again) and for my money they have created the standard by which all future ATOS gatherings will be compared. But more important than dues increases or convention programming are the people that we meet when we visit places like Indiannapolis or next year at our 2002 convention in San Diego. It is the friends who for most of us we only get to see once a year. I am writing this message to you as I fly back to New Jersey and I am returning home with a flood of memories only us theatre organ enthusiasts can appreciate. Whether it is meeting or greeting ATOS members or trying to exorcise a frightened bat from the lobby of the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, conventions for me are a one of a kind experience.

I guess more important than anything else that we accomplished in Indiannapolis, your Board of Directors approved a new two year position for a youth representative which will serve as a non voting member of the Board. Twenty one year old Joe McCabe from Buffalo was appointed to that position and quickly went to work by proposing a youth fellowship which will be named for George Wright. This program will pay for two young people, who have demonstrated an interest in theatre organ and have shown a financial need, to attend a convention annually. At the banquet it was announced that ATOS would match any monies contributed by members toward creating a fund for this program. Jack Moelmann worked the tables with his usual vigor and charm and raised over \$12,000 from extremely generous ATOS members! With ATOS matching funds that's over \$24,000 total. Thanks to everyone who continues to make our society a can-do organization.

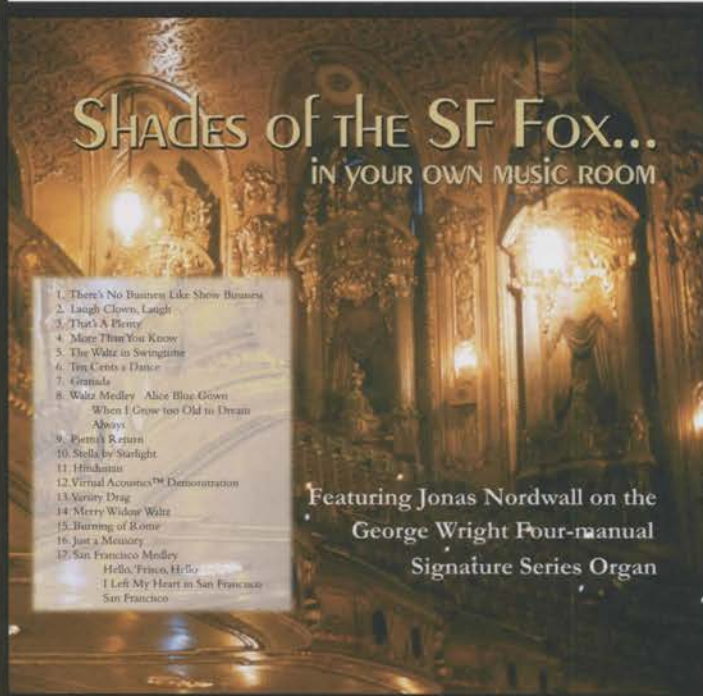
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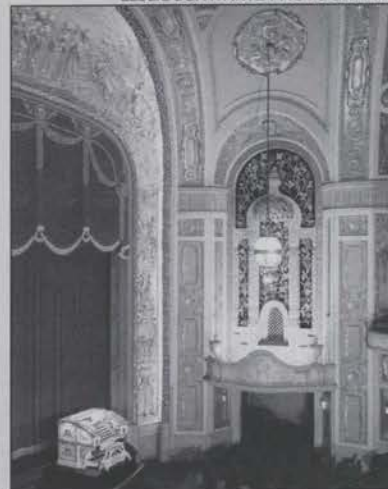
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General Information

Steven Ball Awarded National Fulbright Scholarship

Steven Ball has recently been named National Fulbright Scholarship to the Netherlands for the 2001–2002 academic year. Mr. Ball, who is currently pursuing cultural studies in France and Switzerland, received his B.M. in Organ Performance at the University of Michigan under Dr. Marilyn Mason; the first degree ever to be awarded by an academic institution anywhere for the dual study of classical organ and theatre organ. Upon completion of a diploma at the Carillon School of Amersfort and the University of Utrecht, Mr. Ball plans to resume his academic pursuits in the United States as well as his active life as a concert artist spanning the worlds of carillon, classical organ, theatre organ and silent film accompaniment in America and Europe.



The Fulbright Program was established in 1946, at the end of World War II, to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries, through the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills. Its primary source of funding is an annual appropriation made by the United States Department of State. Participating governments and host institutions also contribute financial support through direct cost sharing, as well as through tuition waivers, university housing and other benefits. Grants are made to citizens demonstrating outstanding leadership potential and serve primarily for university teaching, advanced research, graduate study and teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

Prior to leaving the United States for his studies abroad, Mr. Ball held numerous positions in the state of Michigan reflecting his strong interest in the musical and cultural traditions of the Ameri-

can Theatre during the early decades of the 20th Century. Among the more notable: Staff Organist, Michigan Theatre (Ann Arbor) and Staff Organist, Fox Theatre (Detroit). Mr. Ball has also been Assistant Carillonneur for the University of Michigan, as well as Student Curator of the Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments (Ann Arbor) in addition to many years of experience as an organist and/or music director for various churches throughout the region.

Notable among the numerous upcoming live silent film presentations and concerts for which Mr. Ball is becoming increasingly known are two scheduled performances of the immortal *Phantom of the Opera* (1925), starring Lon Chaney and Mary Philbin. The score for the film, although newly composed, is at the same time an anachronism, for it reflects by its very nature the available music and resources for the period. Past performances have been described as “electrifying.” Information on these performances at the Grand Ledge Opera House, Grand Ledge, Michigan (October 14, 2001) and at Century II Exhibition Hall, Wichita, Kansas (October 5, 2002) will be forthcoming.

Residence Installations of Theatre Pipe Organs to be Featured on Web Site

The new ATOS web site <<http://www.atos.org>> will soon include colorful pages that highlight residential theatre pipe organ installations. We are seeking color photos and up-to-date information that will appeal to our site visitors, telling about theatre pipe organs that have been given new life in home settings.

One of the primary goals of the new web site is to offer appealing photos and commentary that will attract new members to ATOS. With this goal in mind, material submitted for inclusion on the web site should differ somewhat from the highly detailed coverage in our printed journal.

Here are guidelines for submitting residential installation material for the web site:

COLOR PHOTOS (digital or film prints) should include views of the console within the room, and not just close-ups of the console. Photos taken

inside pipe chambers tend to all look much the same; so try to provide views that are unique. Photos of anything truly different about an installation will increase viewer interest, especially when placed among countless other photos on the web site. You may send as many photos as you wish, but site designer Ivan de la Garza will make the final selections based on suitability for Internet display purposes. Submit digital photos on floppy disk, zip disk, or CD. Your photos may be cropped and enhanced for the best possible display on the Internet.

A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION of the installation should contain approximately 300 to 500 words. If it is of more than routine interest, tell of the instrument's origin when known, but avoid a rank-by-rank acquisition list for hybrid installations. Provide colorful details of problems or pleasures during acquisition or installation. Naming individuals who assisted in the acquisition and installation will be of little interest to casual readers, so avoid including a list of credits. Text may be submitted on floppy disks (formatted for PC) or printed, and it will be carefully edited.

Submit your material to our web site consultant: Dale Wood, Box 10, Stewarts Point, CA 95480-0010. If you want your materials returned, be sure to include a self-addressed postage paid return envelope.

ASCAP Reporting

One of the many benefits of being an ATOS affiliated chapter is having ATOS pay the ASCAP music licensing fee for any public concert event that your chapter sponsors. ASCAP recently changed the reporting requirements. We have mailed copies of the new form to chapter officers on record in our database. If your chapter has not received notification of the new requirements, please contact Michael Fellenzer, Executive Secretary (fellenzer@atos.org) or visit www.atos.org and request a copy of the new form.

Opening of Nominations for 2002 Election of Directors

It is time to nominate candidates to fill three (3) positions for ATOS Directors for the term of 2002 through 2005. All ATOS members who have maintained continuous membership in good standing for at least the last two years are eligible for nomination and may nominate themselves or be nominated by another member in good standing, in which case, written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received before the nominee's name can be placed on the ballot.

A nominee need have no special talent or experience in pipe organ technology or musicianship; however, nominees should have a demonstrated interest in ATOS and have the time to work toward the goals and growth of the society. While there are certain benefits enjoyed by Directors, one of which is the reimbursement of certain meeting related expenses, there are also responsibilities. Along with a willingness to participate in the administrative affairs of the society, it is most important that Directors faithfully attend both Board and Committee meetings.

The ATOS Board usually meets once a year just prior to the annual convention so attendance of all Directors is necessary if the decisions and actions of the Board are to be truly responsive to the

membership. In addition, Directors chair and/or serve on one or more committees providing valuable input to the Board. The chairpersons of the committees are responsible for submitting a written report of their activities and recommendations prior to the meeting of the Board.

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

Procedure to be observed in the nomination process is as follows:

1. Each nominee shall furnish a statement, not to exceed one hundred fifty (150) words, including the name and city/state of residence, personal data, work and theatre organ experience, a short platform statement, an evening/weekend telephone number, and a photo. Statements exceeding the one hundred fifty (150) word limit will disqualify the candidate. The nominee name, city/state of residence, contact telephone number, fax number, or E-mail address are not to be included in the word count.

2. All candidates must have their statement and photo sent by Certified Return Receipt mail to the ATOS Nominating Chairperson, Dorothy Van Steenkiste, 9270 Reek Road, Allen Park, MI 48101, and must be postmarked not later than December 14, 2001.

3. We will use a separate mailing of ballots and resumés of the candidates.

While this method is costly, we hope that it will encourage you to vote for the candidates of your choice, thus demonstrating your interest in and support of ATOS and its objectives.

4. If you have questions, please contact the Nominating Committee Chairperson, Dorothy Van Steenkiste, phone (313) 383-0133, fax (313) 383-1875, or E-mail vansteenkiste@atos.org.

Counting words:

1. Name, city, and state in the heading do not count.

2. Hyphenated words count as one (1) (Vice-President, two-term...).

3. Articles and prepositions count (the organ caretaker = three (3) words, an avid lover of theatre organ = six (6) words.

4. ATOS = one (1) word, MCTOS = one (1) word. American Theatre Organ Society = four (4) words.

5. Abbreviations count as one (1) word (Asst., Mrs.).

6. Numbers count as a word [26 = one (1) word, 5 = one (1) word].

Correction

In the article on the Historic Everett Theatre in the July/August issue, some of the photograph credits are incorrect. The photo on the cover and the three console-only photos in the article were taken by Jim Arrabito. Henry Schnackenberg took the photos of Tom Hazleton, and of Andy Crow and Greg Smith. The exterior shots of the theatre are by Dennis Ryan. The author regrets the error. ♪

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Members' Forum

Dear Editor,

This morning, July 14th, Phil McKinley (President of LATOS) invited me to ride up with him to Santa Barbara for the monthly open console on their Wonder Morton. During the open console, their board held their monthly meeting, to which Phil was invited. On the way back, Phil shared with me some interesting observations.

It seems that they face many of the same problems that our chapter (LATOS) faces. Primarily, a lack of attendance to chapter functions, let alone chapter sponsored concerts. We suffer the same malady in our club. It occurred to me that we should be talking to those chapters that are successful and exchanging ideas and methods to help increase attendance.

I mentioned that Orange County (OCTOS) has NO problem what so ever in this regard and usually "sells out" their concerts. They have but one venue (Plummer Auditorium) in a very active "legitimate theatre" building as does the SBTOS club with their Arlington Theatre, also an active legit theatre and daily movie house. Why is it that one does so well while the other struggles? Both seemingly matched regarding facilities and approximate membership?

My thought . . . shouldn't this be something that ATOS needs to get involved with? After all, it would seem in their best interest to ensure the continued growth and health of the member chapters. Why not try to find out just what it is that makes one more successful than another. Obviously there will be unique situations that give one or another a boost up but still, there should be some common threads on which those who struggle can learn from those who prosper. Ways that work in which to increase membership—various methods of advertising that work better than others, perhaps even first-hand guidance from those chapters whose boards continually excel.

These are just a few quick thoughts but I think you get my feelings. ATOS has a vested interest to see ALL the chapters flourish and grow. Doesn't it make good sense to help them do just that? Perhaps a survey including comments by the various board members from each chapter would be appropriate.

Strictly voluntary on their part but made VERY clear to them that THEY can make a very real difference to the success or failure of fellow chapters. There's just something about human nature that allows people do things to REALLY help others when there might otherwise be excuses not to—i.e.: too busy, not enough time in the day, not my problem, etc. Well guess what . . . it IS your problem . . . it's all our problem. Use ATOS as a "clearing house" of sorts for the information gathered from these surveys. Either publish the results or at least make the information available to whichever chapter or member wanted it. Perhaps distill it down to a pamphlet that could be sent to each chapter with the results of the surveys indicating what works and what doesn't.

We are a dying breed. I look out at the audiences and see very few "younger" folks. It's like looking across a sea of gray and silver. God bless them all but we need to do all we can to ensure that what we already have survives. I personally feel as though ATOS should assume a leadership role in this struggle, and yes, it is a struggle for many chapters . . . not all, but enough to give me pause. I don't want to see my love for theatre organ falling on fewer and fewer ears. I play, and I play because I still enjoy it. I enjoy playing for audiences who appreciate what it is that we as organists do with these magnificent, beautiful instruments.

We better do something soon or else there might not be a need for liaisons, boards, chapters, etc.

Respectfully, Ms. Maureen Fuller
Los Angeles, California



The following is a letter to the editor written in response to Mr. Goldstine's passing:

Bob Goldstine was kind, generous—you could say he was a scholar and a gentleman without fear of contradiction. And now he is gone, at a moment only Bob Goldstine and a merciful God could have arranged. Facing blindness, heart, lung and kidney problems, Bob drove himself to the doctor's office and never came back from a two-week's stay in the hospital. Within days of the end, we talked on the phone of lunch again soon at Pokagon.

Bob's life was a study in kindness, generosity of every stripe and patient good will. I knew him for more than 65 years, since we were freshmen at the University of Michigan in 1935. He never fussed, never hurried, and was never angry. He floated through life on waves of thunderous theater organ rhapsodies and diminuendos of quiet friendship and good deeds.

Not always quiet, I admit. We used to trade the scholarly reach of the Pretzel Bell in Ann Arbor for the studious surroundings of the Keenan Hotel bar and the Berghoff Gardens in Fort Wayne and other similar retreats. We both should have been in our graves a long time ago. He never married and had no immediate family left that I know of. His life was filled with music. If he was lonely, he never spoke of it at our periodic story-telling lunches at Pokagon, where a waitress sometimes joined in the laughter.

I shall miss him. And I hope we will meet again on a leafy campus somewhere to continue the conversations begun so long ago, when we were young and Ann Arbor was a sleepy town where the Huron River flowed quietly and beautifully, and we drifted in a canoe, as did Bob with grace and success all his life.

Fred Hausman, Toledo, Ohio



Dear Mr. Bickel:

I read with interest the Giant Wurlitzer Pipe Organ recording reviews in THEATRE ORGAN, May/June 2001. I skated at Madison Gardens Roller Rink, Chicago, in the late 1930s until it closed.

There were at least four 78 rpm recordings made on the original Mighty Wurlitzer by Tempo Record Company, Hollywood, California. I have three of those recordings. They were "custom made for skating" according to the labels, by Happy Johnson, rink organist, and former theatre organist. It was a powerful instrument that Happy played from his perch high above the floor. The pipework was behind him and to one side in the center of a long seating balcony. It was shrouded and not visible.

The opening of the much larger Roller Bowl (now Oprah Winfrey's Studio) 1½ miles away was the death knell for the Gardens. It featured a Hammond Organ and Novachord installation played by well-known theatre organist Arsene Segal and a young man whose name I do not recall. They were a dynamic duo but no match for the Gardens' Wurlitzer.

Incidentally, the so-called "Gardens" was a former cable streetcar powerhouse and a gardens it was not. However, it did draw me in three nights a week with hundreds of others for "all skate," "waltz," "fox trot" and other skating sessions.

In closing I will say, "thanks for the memories!"

Donald R. Idariue, Chicago, Illinois



Dear Editor,

Many people around the world will have enjoyed the sing-along version of *The Sound of Music*, but we believe that we in Adelaide, South Australia have had a most exciting experience that has been unique to this city. The film had an initial opening season in the Festival Theatre...

It opened on Thursday July 26 amidst great excitement and hilarity, but one moment stood out like a beacon. When the bells of Salzburg Cathedral had ceased pealing and the case of the Cathedral organ appeared on the screen, the majestic tones of a large pipe organ pealed out through the theatre, the curtains to each side of the stage opened further to reveal pipe chambers lit softly in blue, the pit cover slid silently back and Richard Larritt rose to just below screen level playing the whole accompaniment to the wedding scene.

The sequence was both exciting and, to organ music lovers, profoundly moving. While Richard's impeccable performance was, we believe, the first time that such an interpolation had been attempted with this film in a public performance. He was playing a score transcribed by Paul Fitzgerald from the soundtrack and which fitted the action on the screen to the split second...

If other organ-equipped cinemas were to host *The Sound of Music* I urge them to do likewise. I am sure that Paul would cheerfully allow the use of his short score, and that those privileged to be there would have a greatly enhanced musical experience.

Yours sincerely,
Brian Pearson, Secretary, Australia
Felix ATOS Chapter

*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 are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.

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Closing Chord

ROBERT I. GOLDSTINE

Robert I. Goldstine, the Fort Wayne real estate developer who led the resurrection of the Embassy Theatre, died Wednesday, June 20, 2001. He was 85. Goldstine stepped in to assemble a band of volunteers in 1972, when the downtown movie theatre was within days of demolition. Rallying to "Save the Embassy," the resulting foundation led to the purchase and restoration of the theatre. "We just couldn't let something so beautiful be destroyed," he said in a News-Sentinel interview. The president of a development company himself, Goldstine was incensed by another developer's plan to turn the adjacent Indiana Hotel into senior citizen housing and raze the theatre for a parking lot.

Goldstine was president of the Embassy Theatre Foundation for its first seven years and a longtime member of the board. A talented organist in his own right, he was drawn by memories of the theatre's Grand Page organ into the fight to save the building at 125 W. Jefferson Boulevard.

In a 1996 interview, Goldstine recalled his thrill as a ten-year-old, when he learned about the organ in what was then the Embold Theatre that opened in 1928.

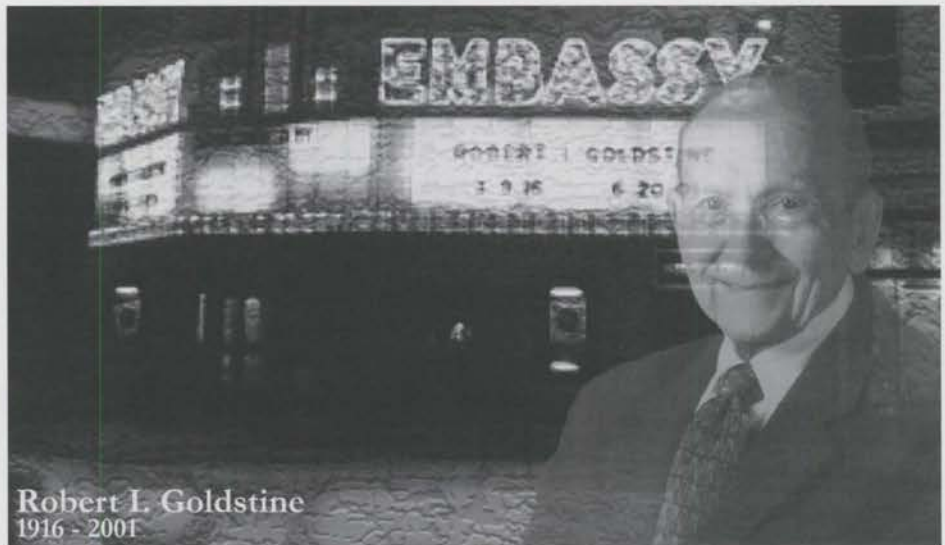
"I nearly fainted," he said. "I had never seen anything like that."

In 1996, a \$5.1 million restoration of the theatre was completed, a capstone to work begun nearly 25 years earlier.

Goldstine once considered a career as a concert organist, but it was set aside by U.S. Army service during World War II, including time in Europe. He was the retired chairman of Joe Goldstine & Son Inc., a leading real estate and development company in Fort Wayne founded in 1909. He was involved in the development of several of Fort Wayne's earlier shopping centers, including Gateway Plaza, Maplewood Plaza, Time Corners and Oakbrook Shopping Center on Bluffton Road.

He assembled the land that became the site of One Summit Square, the Civic Center parking garage and Lincoln National Corp.'s office building at 1300 S. Clinton St. But the most-lasting legacy of this modest, genteel and dedicated community volunteer—the one that always brought a special smile to his face—was the Embassy Theatre and its organ. Goldstine embodied the spirit that inspired the community-wide effort to save a beautiful piece of Fort Wayne's past for future generations to enjoy as much as he did when he was a child.

*By William Carlton and Lynne McKenna Frazier,
Fort Wayne News-Sentinel
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Robert I. Goldstine
1916 - 2001

Editor's Note: Robert Goldstine was inducted into the ATOS Hall of Fame during a concert held at the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne during the 2001 ATOS Annual Convention based in Indianapolis, Indiana, August, 2001. In addition to his support of the Embassy, Bob was a long-time member of ATOS (Central Indiana Chapter) and has been a regular and familiar face at ATOS conventions and concerts for many, many years. In 1996 a plaque to honor Goldstine was placed on the Walk of Fame in front of the Embassy Centre. Goldstine received the Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year Award in 1976. He also served on numerous local boards, including the Fort Wayne Historical Society, Fort Wayne Museum of Art, St. Francis University, People's Trust and Summit banks and the Fort Wayne Philharmonic. He was named a Sagamore of the Wabash in 1996 and inducted into the Indiana Academy.

ROBERT K. ANDRE

Robert K. Andre, 80, passed away in his native hometown of Coral Gables, Florida after a long battle with Parkinson's disease. Bob was a charter member of the South Florida ATOS Chapter, organized in 1968, and was President in 1970-71. Over his lifetime, Bob was involved in many civic organizations and at the time of his death, a retired general contractor, he held one of the oldest active licenses in Dade County. Along with his wife, Vivian, he raised a family of four.

Bob's passion for theatre organ started when, as a young boy, he would ride the Coral Gables Rapid Transit trolley to downtown Miami in order to attend the current show at the Olympia Theatre, which also included a solo spot by Stanleigh Mallotte at the Wurlitzer 260 special. In the mid-to-late '60s Bob acquired a small Möller theatre organ and installed it in his Coral Gables home. But the urge continued as he drew

plans to construct a new building in southwest Miami with an auditorium as the centerpiece and rental space on the periphery. From this emerged a mini-Olympia. Bob could build anything including the molds to cast a replica of the Olympia proscaenium. The innovations go on and on.

At this same time Bob acquired the Wurlitzer 260 from the Florida Theatre in Jacksonville. He sold the console and acquired a three-manual Kohl console, enlarging it with a fourth manual and adding ranks of pipes over the years for a total of 22.

From the mid-'70s through 1992, when hurricane Andrew did a lot of bad things in south Florida, Andre Hall was a bustling place for the chapter that sponsored some of the top organists of the time including Don Baker and Hector Olivera. Things were winding down after the hurricane in 1992, it having created some problems at the building, Bob's health notwithstanding. Eventually a decision was made to sell the instrument. It is now installed in Grace Baptist Church of Sarasota, Florida.

At a time when South Florida was the only chapter in the state, visitors and members alike came from all over to visit Andre Hall, a most generous contribution by Bob and his loving wife, Vivian, to our mutual passion of theatre organ. A fitting tribute by those of us privileged to have known Bob as a very sincere friend, we'd like to simply say thanks for the terrific memories—it is now your turn to rest.

G. W. Gerhart

JAMES FRANK LEAFFE

James Frank Leaffe, staff organist at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor from 1995 to 1998 died on May 13, 2001 following an extended illness. For three years, Jim played regularly at the Michigan Theatre's Barton pipe organ and became recognized for his brilliant overtures to feature films and his outstanding original accompaniments to silent films. Jim most recently appeared as organist for the May 7 screening of the Douglas Fairbanks classic silent film *The Black Pirate* for which he performed the original Mortimer Wilson score with the Michigan Symphonietta conducted by Gillian Anderson.

Jim was a Native American of the Seneca Nation. He spent his formative years on the Cattaraugus Reservation near Buffalo, New York. He studied at the Julliard School of Music and the Mannes College of Music in Manhattan. Jim served as a staff organist at CBS Television and did special assignments ranging from soap operas to a Carol Burnett special.

For ten years, Jim was organist at the Brooklyn Center of Long Island University where he played the former Brooklyn Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer pipe organ. He also worked in various pit orchestras on Broadway and toured twice with Ashley Miller, recording artist, composer, arranger and former organist at Radio City Music Hall.

During his years in New York, Jim served as Music Director for two Episcopal churches, St. Peter's-Chelsea and St. Mark's in the Bowery. He also played regularly for services of Integrity/New York, an Episcopal gay and lesbian ministry meeting at the Church of St. Luke in the Fields. In addition, he was organist for the renowned "Reverend Ike" for whom he played the last remaining Robert-Morton theatre pipe organ located in New York City.

Jim's mother, Rhoda, who lives on the Cattaraugus Reser-

vation and his younger brother, John, of Pittsburgh, survive him. His father preceded Jim in death.

Henry B. Aldridge

HERBERT NORMAN (1903–2001)

With the death of Herbert Norman at the age of 97 a few weeks ago we lost one of the last living participants in the golden age of the British organbuilding. Such were the changes wrought by the effects of two World Wars and the intervening period of depression that it is now very difficult for us to imagine organ building on an industrial scale as it existed until 1914. Those of us brought up in a new atmosphere of back-to-basics craft organ building may even view the organ factory with some suspicion.

The importance of Herbert Norman's early experience was brought home to me when he contributed an article to the annual *Journal of the British Institute of Organ Studies* (Volume 10, 1986), entitled "The Normans 1860–1920." He opened with a characteristically direct and challenging statement:

"There are writers who like to imply that artistic endeavor in British organ-building died in the 1880s, and that witless commercial production largely replaced the art of organbuilding; that musicians were deprived and denied musical instruments. I deny it was like that."

In the remainder of his article he described his early experiences in the Norwich factory of Norman Brothers & Beard Ltd. These were the most extensive and advanced organ workshops of their day, with space for three hundred men, a railway siding and a telephone. He went on to tell how the loss of young staff at the beginning of the war of 1914–1918 forced a merger with William Hill & Sons (whose order book had dried up but whose experienced staff were too old to be called up to the front), described the closure of the Norwich works (where 1000 new organs had been built in seventeen years), and the move into the Hill factory just to the north of Kings Cross in London. The new company (its full title was William Hill & Sons and Norman & Beard Ltd) now occupied another great building, purpose-designed by Dr. Arthur Hill, with a building room in the form of a perfect double cube, one hundred feet long, fifty feet wide and fifty feet high. In this workshop the giant five-manual for Sydney Town Hall was built, erected and played in 1888–9: a small pit in the floor showed where the famous 64' reed had stood, until this workshop was destroyed in a bombing raid during the Second World War.

Having only met Herbert Norman in his retirement, I knew him rather slightly and I am indebted to his son John Norman for the following details of his life:

Born in Norwich in 1903, he attended the City of Norwich School and saw a good deal of the Norwich works of Norman & Beard until its closure in 1916. He learned to draw at his father's knee—he later described it as 'copying the drawing as I saw it, upside down.' On leaving school he attended art school and toyed with the idea of becoming an architect. However he assisted his father one summer holiday and became hooked on organbuilding.

He joined Hill Norman & Beard in late 1920, and started as Dr Hill's tracer on the final stages of the Beverley Minster case, learning case design in general and gothic tracery in particular

from him. By 1923 he had established a proper drawing office to replace the full-size chalked pine panels previously used. After John Christie purchased Dr Hill's controlling interest and pushed the firm into cinema organs, he designed all the Christie organs, developing a standard electro-pneumatic action after ten minutes inside a Wurlitzer and slightly longer in a Votey house organ. This work culminated in the Regal, Marble Arch, the largest theatre organ in Europe. He worked alongside Philip Selfe (ex Forster & Andrews) who did all the church jobs, taking over responsibility in that area also after Philip Selfe retired in 1936 (the year his father died). The Norwich Cathedral organ, apart from Stephen Dykes-Bower's case, was solely his responsibility (including the stop-list).

After the old Hill works at York Road works was bombed in the war, he organized a war-work factory in Kilburn, where the prime activity was making mine-detector cases out of laminated plastic (the forerunner of Formica). At the end of the war they designed and made the high security cases with transparent tops for the weighing of the Aga Khan in diamonds, a job of which he was very proud. During the war he became an air-raid warden and this led to him being appointed to Hornsey Borough Council. He was Chairman of the Town Planning Committee and then Alderman and Mayor in 1955-6. He became a Governor and later Chairman of the Hornsey College of Art, also a Trustee of the Alexandra Palace. On all these bodies his pen and ink doodles were well known. He was a Rotarian from the 1950s until his death.

He was a founder Fellow and later President of the Incorporated Society of Organ Builders, President of the International Society of Organ Builders and President of the Institute of Musical Instrument Technology (whose logo of a tuning fork within a lyre he designed). Through his design and management skills he upheld and renewed the reputation of Hill, Norman & Beard after the war. He was sympathetic to the classical revival both tonally and mechanically. As a young voicer he had vied with his colleagues in the production of experimental 'Father Smith' style Stopped Flute pipes with minimal nicking. In 1936 Hill Norman & Beard built a mechanical-action house organ for Lady Susi Jeans. The stop-list was devised in collaboration with Johann Nepomuk David and the pipework was made and entirely voiced by Herman Eule. After the war Herbert Norman developed a distinctive personal style in the design of the cabinetwork of detached consoles. These were sumptuous pieces of furniture, by far the most elegant consoles of their period. Later, when the fashion for proper organ cases returned, he was proud to be able to contribute designs such as the 'Quintet' one-manual tracker and the Italianate case at St. Bener's, Paul's Wharf. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Royal College of Organists in 1980. He was also a Liveryman of the Musician's Company.

He retired from full-time work at the end of 1970, and almost completely at the end of 1973. After this he spent much time sketching local buildings and an exhibition of his work was held at Church Farm House Museum, Hendon, in 1984. Many of his drawings were given to the London Borough of Barnet after that exhibition, although the Finchley Society also has some, which they still publish as notes. Other drawings, made on holiday in Soller, Majorca, are exhibited there.

Herbert Norman was a good-looking man. His Huguenot ancestry had surfaced in a handsome face and fine black hair, somewhat reminiscent of Marcello Mastroanni, to which a pair of black-framed spectacles added a serious look. Even in recent years it was impossible to believe that he was quite as old as he claimed! I am told that he would always make a good impression with customers through his excellent manners and general good bearing, perhaps especially if they were ladies...

I will remember him as a kind and distinguished gentleman who found no difficulty at all in communicating with someone less than half his age and who had a succinct understanding of which of his many experiences would be of interest to his listener. I remember he once remarked on my handwriting (I am left-handed but still manage a kind of free italic with a fountain pen) and he told me how he had come to write with his own distinctive italic hand. His writing had become notorious in the factory for its illegibility. He was so abashed that he bought himself a good fountain pen on a trip away and practiced all the way home in the train until he had mastered the art of using it. Until the end of his life this smart, bold hand in black ink announced every letter from him, even before the recipient had opened it.

Stephen Bicknell

LINDA WHITMIRE

Dear Theatre Organ Friends,

Linda Whitmire passed away on July 26, 2001 after an extended battle with cancer. Linda and husband Cecil Whitmire were the driving force behind the saving and restoration of the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. It will be hard to fill her shoes. After the theatre had been saved you could find her there with a paint brush, hammer, or saw in her hand working to repair the grand old lady or building the new office space. She had no problem with getting in the muck with the rest of the team.

At the time of her death, Linda was Executive Director of Birmingham Landmarks, Inc. (d.b.a.) The Alabama Theatre for the Performing Arts) and was on the board of directors of the Alabama Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. Linda's support for theatre organ societies spanned over 25

years in both Birmingham, Alabama and Knoxville, Tennessee, serving as President of theatre organ groups in both cities. Linda's commitment to the Alabama Theatre was unwavering. Her demand for perfection was relentless. Her friendship was sincere. She will be greatly missed.

Buddy Boyd and Larry Donaldson



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
RIALTO SQUARE THEATRE'S

Barton Grande Theatre Organ

*T*he golden voiced Barton Grande Theatre Pipe organ, originally a 4/20 instrument, began its musical career at the opening of the Rialto Square Theatre on May 24, 1926, with house organist Leo Terry presiding over the all-gold console. The organ was originally used, as were all theatre organs, to accompany the silent films, stage

*View of rotunda chandelier with
esplanade in the background.*



Esplanade, Rialto Square Theatre

shows, special events and radio broadcasts throughout the decades.

Interestingly, as the golden age of the theatre organ passed, Kay McAbee and the Kimbar group were extremely successful promoting concerts to sell out audiences in the late '60s and early '70s. Kay's ability to fill the house to standing ovations with his famous styling is legendary. When Kay would play his famous "Tea For Two" and "Land of the Pharaohs," the house was rocking.

Time and nature, as usual, took their toll on the Barton over the years. Extensive roof and water damage in the early '60s had caused decay and chamber problems grew over the years to an overwhelming level. In 1970, the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (JATOE) was formed to provide necessary repairs to keep the Barton playable. Members of JATOE have lovingly cared for the organ since then.

In 1992, a very energetic project was initiated, when JATOE decided the organ needed major attention. A new electronic relay system, combination action and electric stop action were top priority. A state of the art Artisan computerized relay system was installed and the chamber layouts changed to optimize the acoustical properties of the pipe work. The organ also needed a new specification, and the chest work

had to be shifted in the chambers to improve the egress of sound. The entire organ, from all four chambers, was on the stage for nearly ten weeks during this process.

What a big improvement those changes made! During 1993, the ATOS Annual Convention was held in Chicago, sponsored by CATOE, and the Rialto Theatre was a featured venue. After so many new improvements, the organ was now ready for its new debut featuring Simon Gledhill at the console. Following the excitement of that convention, the organ sadly fell into disrepair, with nearly 350 dead notes! It was apparent to the JATOE President; something needed to be done to permanently restore this instrument to its original grandeur. Therefore, in 1995, Jim Stemke* decided it was time to start another major restoration project, and brought in professional organ technicians Brant Duddy, Terry Kleven, Bob Swaney, and Jim Gruber to provide guidance and direction. They also provided repairs, changes in pipe work and other improvements.

This instrument needed a major restoration and it was going to take place one way or another! Nearly everything in the chambers was marked for rebuild. Jim did almost all of the restoration work himself on the wind chests and other components, restoring them in his home shop. The club did

everything possible to help raise money and during the following years, the organ grew to 27 ranks, with countless improvements and modifications made during the on-going restoration process.

JATOE members, Doris Erbe of St. Louis, Missouri, Fred Reissner of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, Larry Henschen of Chicago, and many others, came to our aid with financial donations, along with several grants that allowed the club to purchase new pipe work and other needed components. All the chest work, regulators, tremulants, offsets, swell shades, traps and percussions in the solo chambers have been completely rebuilt. Finally, the organ was becoming a fine instrument—enjoyable to play with dramatically improved sound. While the instrument is still undergoing restoration in the main chambers, it has become known around the world because of Pipe Organ Extravaganzas, Rialtofest weekends and several recordings. The organ is used continually for weekly theatre tours that include a 30-minute



LESLIE SCHWARTZ PHOTOGRAPHY

4/27 Barton Grande Console

Rotunda, Rialto Square Theatre





LESLIE SCHWARTZ PHOTOGRAPHY

Façade of the Rialto Square Theatre



Close up view of the 4/27 Barton Grande Console

"The American Theatre Organ Society, National Registry of Significant Instruments, designates this as an organ of exceptional historic and musical merit, worthy of preservation. This four-manual, twenty-seven rank Barton organ, Rialto Square Theatre, Joliet, Illinois has been entered into the registry. This registration is given to the owner in trust as long as the organ is maintained in a manner consistent with its musical and historic significance."

While there was no Extravaganza held during the year 2000, the club and the Rialto's management decided many changes were in order. A new producer and change in programming were important issues, which are addressed in a following article in this issue. JATOE's web site: www.jatoe.org.

theatre organ program and back stage tour of the facility.

During Pipe Organ Extravaganza-4 in 1999, Tom Hazleton introduced Ms. Doris Erbe, a Director of the American Theatre Organ Society, who presented a plaque to Tom Mahalik, Interim General Manager of the Rialto Square Theatre, and to Jim Stemke, President of the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts, that reads as follows:

*Jim Stemke is a member of the ATOS Board of Directors and serves as the Chairperson of the ATOS Technical Committee. He has been actively involved in the theatre organ world for over 30 years. He is also recognized as a professional recording engineer, as well as professional organ technician, and volunteer technician on the famous Wanamaker Organ restoration project in Philadelphia. He lives in Schaumburg, Illinois.

MOST POPULAR ORGANIST

"Every year we hire Bob Ralston to play our 3/20 Wurlitzer for the opening of our concert season. Why? Of all the organists we book—and we get the best of them—Bob Ralston is still our most popular artist and draws the largest crowds. He'll appear here for PATOS on September 8, 2001, and we know he'll entertain us with a wonderful new show."

—Shirley Flowers, program chairperson, Pittsburgh Area Theatre Organ Society

BRINGS OUT THE BEST

"Bob Ralston has already played fourteen concerts on our 3/11 Barton, and we have him scheduled to appear here for Tulip Time in May 2001. He's an outstanding performer and knows how to bring out the best in any size theatre pipe organ."

—Sandie Nelson, manager,
The Pella Opera House, Pella, IA



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—Bob DeBruyne, program chairman of the organ committee for the Public Museum of Grand Rapids

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Meet the Contestants of 2001 ATOS International Young Organist Competition

The contestants in the Annual ATOS International Young Organist Competition must be between the ages of 13 and 21, as of July 1. The contestants are grouped according to their age: Junior Division, ages 13–15; Intermediate Division, ages 16–18; Senior Division, ages 19–21. The judges select a winner from each category. The winners selected are brought to the ATOS Annual Convention, where they each receive a \$300.00 cash award.

During the convention each winner must play a brief program of theatre pipe organ music. After listening to these presentations, the adjudicators determine the overall winner. The overall winner receives an additional \$300.00 cash award and is given the opportunity to present a full concert at the following ATOS Annual Convention.

It is with great pleasure that we introduce the contestants of the 17th Annual ATOS International Young Organist Competition:

JUNIOR DIVISION

DAVID MICHAEL GARRISON

David was raised in Santa Paula, California, northwest of Los Angeles. He attended elementary and junior high school in Santa Paula and is now finishing his sophomore year at St. Bonaventure High School in Ventura.



He began taking keyboard lessons and music education at age four and began formal piano lessons at age seven with Mrs. Joy Asenas of Fillmore, California, continuing for the next eight years. Additional music lessons have followed with two other piano/organ teachers.

He joined the church and school choirs when in elementary school and gradually began playing musical accompaniment for the choir on the keyboard. With the acquisition of a new church organ, he began playing the organ for some church services.

Beginning in elementary school and extending through junior high school, he has provided musical accompaniment for school plays, concerts, and other performances. Currently, he is a member of the school band.

David was introduced to members of the Santa Barbara Theatre Organ Society in 1999. He began to play the Robert-Morton organ in the Arlington Theatre during open console sessions and occasionally for opening music before movies.

David has received instruction, advice, or guidance from Lyn Larsen, David Peckham, Scott Foppiano, Edward Stout, and members of the Santa Barbara Theatre Organ Society,

who have been most gracious in their comments and suggestions. He is basically self-taught at the theatre organ.

*MATHEW LOESER

Mathew Loeser is currently 15 years old and lives in the seaside town of Victor Harbor in South Australia. He is in Year 11 and attends Victor Harbor High School. He has been playing the organ for seven years and is taught by Helen Blakebrough. Mathew began playing in public on the 4/29 Wurlitzer hybrid at the Capri Theatre at ten years of age and plays often at TOSA club nights and at the Electronic Organ Club. He won first place in the Junior Theatre Organ Section of the ROTOSA Youth Music Scholarships in 1999, after being runner-up twice in previous years.



After performing in 1998 at the National Theatre Organ Convention in Adelaide, Mathew was invited to play in 2000 at the Convention held in Sydney. In 1998 and 2000, Mathew won scholarships from the American Theatre Organ Society to further his music studies.

ELLIE McLACHLAN

Ellie McLachlan is 14 years old and in year nine at Ballarat Grammar School. She started playing the organ when she was nine years old with her present teacher, Mrs. Myrtle Cox. This year she will take her grade six practical examination and grade five theory examination. She has been performing in Royal South Street Competitions since she was ten, with great success.



Ellie is a member of the Ballarat Theatre Organ Society and plays regularly on the Compton 3/9 theatre organ at Her Majesty's Theatre. She has performed in concerts there on two separate occasions, the first at the Showcase for Royal South Street and the second for a Ballarat Theatre Organ Society Concert.

Ellie is an active member of the Ballarat Grammar Music School. She plays the double bass in Senior Strings and the Symphonic Orchestra and has filled in on the keyboard for the Symphonic Band. Last year she obtained a music bursary to support her in her organ studies. She also took part in a Music School trip to Central Australia, where she performed in a number of places including Uluru (Ayres Rock).

Under the expert guidance of Mrs. Myrtle Cox, Ellie has managed to come this far on the magnificent Compton Organ and hopes to continue it long into the future.

HEATHER NOVAK

Heather is 16 years old and a junior in the eleventh grade at Mercy High School in Farmington, Michigan. She has studied theatre organ for six years. Her teachers have been Melissa Ambrose Eidson, Susan Lewandowski and currently, Tony O'Brien. They have encouraged her to continue with her music.

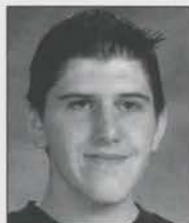


Heather is very active at the Redford Theatre, working in many areas. She enjoys bringing her friends down from school and has introduced them to the theatre organ. Just recently, her teacher, Tony O'Brien, gave her the opportunity to play some of her music during his performance at one of the Redford's movies. She found it very exciting. In 1999, Heather won the Junior Division of the ATOS Young Organist Competition. She has attended two annual conventions and is looking forward to attending the convention in Indianapolis as it is a chance for her to see all her many friends that she corresponds with from over seas and in the states. She hopes someday to be able to say she won all three divisions of the competition and be an over-all winner.

Heather plans to continue with her music studies in college and become a teacher. She is a member of the Motor City Theatre Organ Society and the American Theatre Organ Society. In school she belongs to the Tri-M (Modern Music Masters) Music Honor Society, her church choir where she occasionally plays the organ, and her Junior/Senior Chorale at Mercy High School. She loves to dance and enjoys acting. Her school offers her the opportunity to take part in plays, musicals and dances.

DAVID RHODES

David Rhodes, 16, is a second year student at Lisle Senior High School in Lisle, Illinois. He is in the concert/marching band and the jazz band. He began his musical study in 1990 with piano lessons and is continuing his study. While in grade school, he began playing songs and accompanying musical sketches on the piano. In 1992, he began playing for school chapel services and developed a real love for organ music of all kinds. In 1995, he was accepted as a student of Fr. John Palmer at the Prep School of Sacred Music at the Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. In 1998, the Downers Grove Public Television program *Stand-outs* featured David playing the organ at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. He currently plays at this church every fifth Sunday on their 25-rank Wicks pipe organ.



In 1999, David got the Theatre Organ "bug" while attending a movie at the Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove, Illinois where he heard Dennis Scott playing the 3/10 Wurlitzer during the intermission. Later, David tried his hand at the console and immediately fell in love with the instrument.

David is studying Theatre Organ with Lee Maloney and has performed at many club meetings. In 2000, he played a cameo at the rededication of the organ console at the Tivoli Theatre.

David has a brother and a sister. His other interests include carpentry and wood finishing.

INTERMEDIATE DIVISION

TROY ANDREWS

Troy Andrews is 17 years old and has been studying electronic and theatre organ for eight years with Myrtle Cox. He competes yearly in the Royal South Street Society competitions in Ballarat, competing in solo electronic and theatre organ sections as well as a duet section. Last year he received a scholarship for the highest mark in the state for his Grade Six Performance exam on the electronic organ. He is now studying for his Grade Eight Practical exam.



Troy attends Warracknabeal Secondary College where there isn't a significant music program. Despite being the only one in the class last year he completed year 12 Solo Performance Music, with excellent results. This year he is doing a math/science course and when completed he plans to study Aerospace Engineering at University.

As well as learning the electronic and theatre organ, Troy also plays the alto and baritone saxophone and has completed his Grade Five Practical exam, also with excellent results. He also enjoys playing tennis, badminton and swimming.

MELISSA BREWER

Melissa is 17 years of age and is a year 12 student of Damascus College, Ballarat, Australia. She has an extensive range of interests and talents. Some of her interests include playing a competitive, but social, game of netball, bike riding, spending most of her time with her friends, keeping up a part-time job, and being a shop-aholic, it is quite hard to keep her away from the stores when she has a dollar to spare.



Melissa has been studying both the pipe and electronic organ for eight years under the tuition of Mrs. Myrtle Cox, and has achieved many awards and been featured in many concerts and showcases. Melissa has enjoyed her musical career so far, and intends to enjoy it long into the future. She loves to perform for an audience.

Some of Melissa's past achievements include numerous placings and awards in the Royal South Street Competitions, second place in the R.O.T.O.S.A. scholarship in 1998, and this year, she gained a second place for the electronic organ, and first place in the pipe organs sections. Melissa also won the Wanda Mann Theatre Organ Scholarship in 2000.

Melissa performed in the 1999 National Convention in Malvern. Mr. John Giacchi guided her preparation for the concert. Melissa played alongside her duet partner of five years, Nicholas Cooper. This year, Melissa is performing in Adelaide on the Capri organ when she accepts her scholarship, and in Kensington, Victoria on a Baldwin Theatre II as a guest artist.

MICHAEL R. CIERSKI

Mike is 18 years old. A freshman at South Suburban College (SSC) in South Holland, Illinois, where he is majoring in music performance. Just recently, Mike was a *State Accompanist* for the state of



Indiana playing for ISSMA (Indiana State School Music Association). He also participated in ISSMA his second and third years of high school, where he received first place honors for vocal. In addition, in high school he was a drum major and assistant choir director.

Mike did his recording on the 4/27 Barton Grande (Golden Voiced) Theatre Pipe Organ at the Rialto Square Theatre, home of the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts. He is an active member of JATOE and the Rialto Square Theatre, helping out with maintenance on the organ, playing for tour groups. He encourages students from his college and youth group to attend organ functions at the Rialto.

Mike began learning how to play the piano at age ten and took organ lessons for only three and a half years under his teacher and inspiration, Mr. Gary Plantinga. His lessons continue with Mr. Bill DeYoung at SSC.

Mike had many opportunities to play the 3/17 Barton Grande at Beggars Pizza (formally Pipes & Pizza) in Lansing, during his freshman year. It was a dream come true. He has been listening to that organ for many years. The organist is his friend and mentor—Mr. Dave Wickerham.

Mike is also very active at his church, St. Victor's in Calumet City, where he is a cantor and director. He also helped plan the renovation for his church choir loft and the installation of a rebuilt pipe organ from Berghaus Organ Company, Inc.

Mike lives in Calumet City with his family and he thanks his family and friends, and especially God, for his accomplishments. Mike practices on a Conn 651 three-manual theatre organ that his dad lovingly maintains. Mike's father found out, and it was confirmed by a former Conn engineering employee, that the organ is the first engineered model 651 built in 1974. His organ consists of three-manuals, a full AGO pedal board, four Conn speaker pipe units and one rare "W" type speaker unit, and also has two model 710 Leslie speaker units. Just recently, he added a Thomas glockenspiel. Mike and his family are very proud and thankful having such a historic instrument.

*ROBERT SUDALL

Robert is 16 years old, and lives in Eldwick, near Bingley, West Yorkshire. He became interested in the theatre organ at a very early age, when he heard a fairground organ at the local village gala when he was just three years old. From the age of five he has taken formal lessons on the organ and now also studies piano.



Robert has been featured many times on local and national television, (YTV and *Blue Peter*) not to mention the local press and *The Organist Entertains*, as a result of his keen interest and achievements in the organ world.

A most significant achievement for Robert (and other organ enthusiasts) in 1997, was winning a Television Talent Competition, in which almost 700 youngsters took part. Over 70,000 viewers gave Robert an overwhelming response by voting him the clear winner, despite the fact that Robert was the only organist featured! In recognition of his winning achievement, Robert was further featured by Yorkshire

TV playing the Tower Ballroom Wurlitzer at Blackpool.

In November 1996, Robert became the youngest organist to have played the Blackpool Tower Wurlitzer for the dancing public, playing in aid of the Sue Ryder charity for 'Dance Time.' He has played for this event a number of times since.

Robert was very honored to receive a trophy awarded by the London Chapter of the ATOS in recognition of his tremendous efforts to promote the organ during 1997. He has also greatly appreciated three successive scholarships of \$500 from the ATOS in order to pursue his music studies.

In 1996, aged only 12, Robert was the winner of the British Theatre Organist of the Year competition organized by the ATOS London Chapter, competing against others seven years his senior. In 1998 he became the Junior International Theatre Organist of the Year, which resulted in him being invited to San Francisco, to play for the 'overall crown' against the American intermediate winner and senior winner from Australia. It was a tremendous experience, from both the playing point of view and the fact that he had never been abroad before!

He continues to enjoy other activities, mainly related to music in one form or another. He is an active member of his school 'swing band' at Bingley Grammar School, where he plays piano, and was 'musical director' for the village pantomime in Eldwick. He has also been appointed 'organist' at St. Wilfrid's Church, Gustead where he regularly plays each Sunday. As a result of this post, he is developing a keen interest in classical organ, such that he played Widor's Toccata for his GCSE exam and gained full marks!

Robert is presently studying 'A' level Mathematics, Music, Physics, History and General Studies, but his ambitions for the future are uncertain. Ideally he would love to study music, setting his sights on hopefully gaining a place at university, to study organ and piano, providing he can gain sponsorship.

ROBERT WETHERALL

Robert Wetherall is 18 years old and lives in Brisbane, Queensland. He learned piano for four years, but is self-taught



on the theatre organ. Robert started playing at the local church for wedding ceremonies and services around 1995, and started performing at local organ clubs a couple of years later. He now performs regularly for the organ clubs in Brisbane as well as other clubs up and down the coast.

Robert has also developed a keen interest in the mechanics of theatre pipe organs and is following very closely the restoration and re-installation of the Theatre Organ Society Queensland Division's 3/11 Christie theatre pipe organ.

Robert has now finished school and has just finished a full time traineeship in retail and hopes to concentrate more on his music and performing. He was one of four young organists from around Australia and New Zealand who were chosen to perform at the 2000 festival of Theatre Organ.

His other interests include listening to music, computers, exercising and the history and design of theatres and theatre organs.

SENIOR DIVISION

*CATHERINE DRUMMOND

Catherine is 19 years of age and in September, this year, will enroll as a fresher at the Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, which is located in the heart of London where she will read for a Master's Degree in Physics.



Catherine was winner of the Junior Division of the Young Theatre Organist Competition in 1996 and went on to win the Intermediate Division in 2000. With the benefit of ATOS scholarships, Catherine is now coached by Len Rawle who, along with Dorothy Van Steenkiste, have given her much positive support and encouragement.

She believes that while the theatre organ is an ideal medium for arranging the melodies of such music greats as George Gershwin and Cole Porter, the instrument's versatility also makes it suitable for transcriptions of well-known classical overtures and melodies from opera. Catherine also plays jazz saxophone and enjoys performing both as a solo instrumentalist and in ensemble, and is looking forward to playing in jazz groups when at the university.

Her selections were played on the London and South of England Chapter 3/17 Wurlitzer, which is located in the Woking Leisure Centre.

JUSTIN NIMMO

Justin was born in North Tonawanda, New York on May 27, 1982. He attended high school as a senior at Kenmore East High in Tonawanda. He was introduced to the Mighty Wurlitzer before he was a year old! The first instrument he heard was the 3/18 Wurlitzer at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda. He started formal organ lessons with Harriet Bair, working with an electronic organ at the age of five years. He took lessons for five years. He worked on his own for a while and then studied with Lisa Engle who helped develop his skills and taught him some jazz techniques.



His first experience of playing a theatre organ was when he was 13. He attended an open console session at the Riviera Theatre. He was then invited to practice there to become familiar with the instrument. About a year later, he was added

to the list of house organists and began playing before live shows and movies.

He then joined various theatre organ organizations in the area and was afforded the opportunity to play on their supported instruments. From the encouragement of the Buffalo Area Chapter members, he decided to enter this competition.

Justin continues to practice on the Wurlitzer as well as on an electronic organ and develop orchestrations of songs. He enjoys both pipe and electronic organs. He would like pipe organs to be a part of his career in some way.

PERIN ROBERTA SMITH

Sponsored by the Australia Felix Chapter, American Theatre Organ Society, Perin is 21 years old. Her formal music education began in 1991, when she commenced learning electronic organ, classical piano and theory of music. Perin hopes to gain her associate diploma in electronic organ performance this year. Perin's fascination with the theatre organ began in 1991, when she attended a concert at Cinema North featuring the 2/9



Blackett & Howden Christie. Since then, it has been her aspiration to learn to play this truly uniquely versatile and magnificent instrument.

Perin was awarded the William B. Warner Memorial ATOS Scholarship for the year 2000 to continue her studies at the Melba Conservatorium of Music, affiliated with Victoria University, where she is currently undertaking the third year of Bachelor of Music course, majoring in organ performance. After graduating from university, Perin would like to establish a keyboard music-teaching studio. It is also Perin's desire to perform publicly on the theatre pipe organ, and to be able to teach young people to play the wonderful theatre pipe organs that are located around her hometown of Melbourne.

Over the years, Perin has participated in various eisteddfods, including the prestigious Royal South Street Society Competitions in Ballarat, where she has been a prizewinner in the electronic organ, and theatre pipe organ sections.

Perin is a distant member of the Ballarat Theatre Organ Society, and has been regularly traveling the 140 km between Melbourne and Ballarat to develop her theatre organ skills on the Compton theatre pipe organ.

Perin's program was recorded on the 3/9 Compton theatre pipe organ in Her Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat, Victoria, Australia.

*Indicates the winner for each division.



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Meet the Judges of 2001 ATOS International Young Organist Competition

The following were judges in the 17th Annual ATOS International Young Organist Competition. Each judge received an audiotape of every contestant. The only information given to each judge was the age category of the contestant and the size of the instrument being played. These judges spent countless hours listening to the tapes and selecting the winners for each age group. We thank them for their support and invaluable service to the ATOS International Young Organist Competition.

MARIAN E. BICKEL

Although Marian was born in Hutchinson, Kansas, she spent most of her youth, through high school, growing up in Colorado. She attended Pasadena College where she received a B.A. in Music. Following graduation, she completed graduate work at California State University, Long Beach, earning her California Elementary School Teaching Credential.



Her teaching career spanned a number of years and she taught in several different school districts—Santa Ana, Tustin, Westminster, La Mesa-Spring Valley and San Diego. In addition she spent several years working for the Chula Vista City School District at the Kindergarten level.

She and her husband, Vern, have been married for 41 years. They are charter members of the San Diego ATOS Chapter. Marian and Vern have a son and daughter-in-law who live in the foothills of the Sierras. They are members of ATOS and the Sierra ATOS Chapter.

Marian's music training served her well in her public school teaching career as well as in her role as church organist/pianist, accompanist to a number of vocalists and as a piano teacher for over 40 years. She has been interested in theatre organ music for most of her adult life and has been a member of ATOS for over 25 years, having attended many ATOS Annual and Regional Conventions through the years.

Comments:

It was an honor to be asked to participate in this year's ATOS Young Organist Competition as one of the judges. After listening to so many talented young people perform on theatre pipe organs I believe that the future of ATOS, and the theatre organ movement, is in good hands. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to be a part of a program that I strongly support.

CHRIS ELLIOTT

Christian Elliott is sought after both as a concert artist and scorer of silent films. One of those rare individuals who is equally at home performing organ literature of the church or theatre, he is also one of today's prominent theatre organists.



A native of Santa Ana, California, he graduated with honors from Vanguard University of Southern California (formerly Southern California College), Costa Mesa. While still a student, he held church organ positions in several prominent Southern California churches. For nine years he was a guest artist for the summer noon organ recitals at the Crystal Cathedral where he also assisted with playing weddings and coached with Frederick Swann. Prior to his move to the Bay Area in 1988, he studied with Charles Shaffer in Los Angeles—more recently he coached with celebrated organist and composer Richard Purvis in San Francisco.

In addition to his classical and church organ training, he was privileged to be mentored by several world-renowned theatre organists; being particularly identified for his association with legendary organist Gaylord Carter, the 'dean' of silent film accompaniment. Chris worked extensively in mastering silent film accompaniment with Mr. Carter who proudly claimed Chris as his protégé. In July 1995 at Carter's gala 90th birthday celebration at Oakland's Paramount Theatre, Chris shared the stage with his mentor in a moving performance that garnered several standing ovations. Excerpts from this event were featured in the documentary *Pulling Out All the Stops: The Pipe Organ in America* seen on PBS television stations.

Christian tours frequently and his performance credits are far-ranging—mighty Wurlitzers in the grandest movie palaces; stunning accompaniments to classic silent films; lauded appearances before conventions of the American Theatre Organ Society and the American Institute of Organ Builders; plus brilliant programs on BBC Radio, at the famed Hollywood Bowl and before the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Christian has six solo recordings to his credit. Bob Shaffer of *Theatre Organ Journal*, commenting on one of Chris's recordings, said: "... the best of the best ... this recording (will be) one of the few 'classics' in the theatre organ world. It gets the highest possible recommendation."

After a distinguished tenure of eleven years as Senior Organist and Associate Minister of Worship at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, in July 1999, Christian began a new, full-time career in the corporate world. He is a Process Analyst in the Global IT Procurement organization at Agilent Technologies, and continues to perform organ engagements. He is the Principal Guest Organist at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church

and shares the organist duties at Saratoga Presbyterian Church with concert organist David Hegarty.

RUSSELL HOLMES

Although only 27 years of age, Russell Holmes, from Derbyshire in England, is a young man with an exceptional music talent who has been very much in demand on the national and international concert circuit for many years.



Initially tutored by the eminent theatre-organist Armsbee Bancroft, Russell made his first international appearance at the age of 15 when he performed at the Redford Theatre in Detroit. Since then, his

concerts have delighted audiences throughout America, in Australia, New Zealand, Holland, Germany, and all over the United Kingdom. In 1994, competing in California, he was adjudged outright winner of the ATOS International Young Theatre Organists. Indeed, Russell was the first organist ever to win all three divisions of this annual international competition.

In 1996 Russell was awarded the honor of playing the inaugural organ concert at the famed Hawaii Theatre in Honolulu, following a spectacular 22 million dollar refurbishment of the auditorium and organ. Further honors came from German Radio who contracted Russell to play two special commemorative concerts on the fine Welte organ installed in their Hamburg Studios and they were broadcast across northern Europe. Such was the demand for Russell's services in 1998 that he traveled some 50,000 miles on concert engagements performing across America and Australia. He made a debut appearance in Tasmania as well as performing concerts in Holland and Germany. In more recent times, ATOS members will have heard Russell perform at the ATOS 2000 Annual Convention in Milwaukee where he played four concerts as part of the Pre Glow event Russell has made a number of highly acclaimed recordings on Wurlitzer organs, from both the UK and Australia, as well as on the Allen electronic organ and piano. Many excerpts from these have been broadcast on BBC national radio as well as in Australia and America. He has also appeared on television playing the musical accompaniment, on a Wurlitzer organ, to a new opera staged at Stanford Hall.

When not playing abroad, Russell makes numerous appearances throughout the U.K. playing concerts not only on theatre pipe organs but also on a Yamaha HX electronic organ. In addition to this, he is also a professional cocktail-pianist and has been the resident pianist at the Best Western Midland Hotel, in the city of Derby, for the last six years. When time permits, he is also senior organist at his parish church in Derbyshire.

ATOS Competition dates: 1989 (Junior), 1990 (Intermediate), 1994 (Senior and overall)

Comments:

First of all may I take this opportunity to thank you for inviting me to be an adjudicator for this year's ATOS Young Organist Competition. It's not all that long ago since I was involved in the competition as an entrant and I am only too aware of the amount of time, hard work and perspiration which all of the entrants put into preparing and performing their entry recording. This is well illustrated by the very high standard of this year's entrants. They all did a marvelous job and

are to be congratulated! What was particularly interesting was the choice of music. Not only did we hear a good selection of timeless standards, but also these were mixed with a healthy dose of contemporary music, all of which were well arranged and demonstrated both the versatility of the artist and, of equal importance, the instrument.

It was clear from listening to the tapes that many of this year's entrants listen to music of a non-theatre organ nature. These influences were included in their playing helping to create new ideas and fresh arrangements.

This year's competition had an encouraging number of entrants and each division was well represented. Following in Dorothy Van Steenkiste's shoes, (an unenviable task) Harry Heth and the competition committee can be very proud of the results which these competitions produce, knowing that because of their hard work and dedication the future of the theatre organ is safe.

Finally, if I had to give one piece of advice, it would be something that I received on a judges comment form 12 years ago, when I first entered the ATOS competition. "Learn the words!" Only then can you inject feeling, along with a better understanding of the phrasing, into a simple melody, which can move one to tears or make you shout from the highest hills.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to take part in this part of the Competition. On behalf of all of the young theatre organists across the globe, thank you ATOS for all of the opportunities that you have created through the Young Organists Competition.

KEVIN KING

As a native of the San Francisco Bay Area, Kevin King grew up surrounded by a great many theatre organs—some in theatres, many in pizza parlors. All that early exposure made a permanent impression. As a teenager, he studied with a number of notable organists throughout the area. After high school, he continued with his musical education both privately and at California State University, Hayward. At the university, he became a valued member of the musical theatre department, both on-stage and in the orchestra pit. In 1979, Kevin joined the staff of organists at the Capn's Galley, Pizza and Pipes restaurant chain.

His introduction to the true "in theatre" sound of the pipes came from the 25-rank Wurlitzer of San Francisco's famed Avenue Theatre. Soon Kevin joined the staff at the Avenue, playing the pre-movie concert spot. In 1981, Kevin became organist at Ye Olde Pizza Joint playing the 3/13 Wurlitzer, the very instrument he had grown up dreaming of performing on some day. In June of 1982, Kevin was asked to take over the position of chief organist at the Bella Roma pizza restaurant in Martinez, California. June 2001 marked the start of his 20th year performing at the Bella Roma's 3/16 Wurlitzer.

Kevin was always fascinated by the mechanics of these wonderful instruments so it was time to learn even more about them. During 1987, Kevin worked with the infamous Edward M. Stout, III as an assistant on many of his pipe organ restoration projects. Kevin has for many years maintained the Wurlitzer at the Bella Roma as their pipe organ technician as well as organist. Kevin is kept very busy as a member of the ATOS



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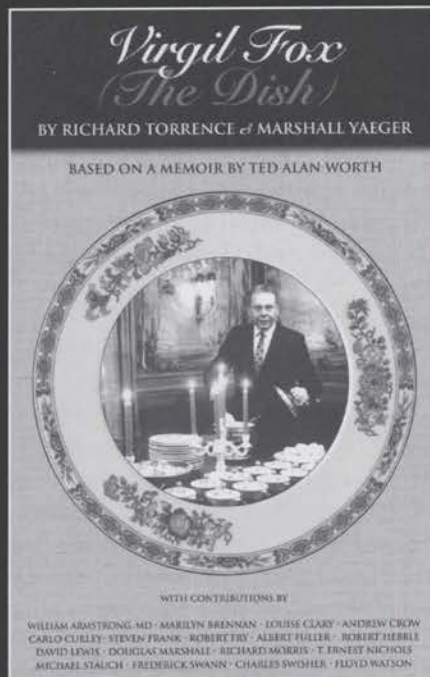


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Nor-Cal chapter crew at the Berkeley Community Theatre. He played a key role in the eight-year project of restoring and installing the chapter's 4/33 Wurlitzer. Among many responsibilities was single handedly designing and fabricating the entire winding system of this massive instrument. His work at Berkeley continues as the instrument expands to 42 ranks. Kevin is now in charge of tuning and tonal regulation as their permanent in-house technician.

Over the years, Kevin has performed concerts across the country. He has several times been guest artist at the Organ Stop Pizza in Arizona. He has presented numerous concerts for the Nor-Cal, Sierra and Sequoia Chapters of ATOS as well as a special concert for the Rocky Mountain Chapter at the historic Denver Paramount Theatre. August 1993 took Kevin to the Saenger Theatre in Pensacola, Florida to present a concert for the Gulf Coast Chapter of ATOS.

Kevin was a featured artist at the 1990 Regional ATOS convention in Fresno, California, at the 1991 Annual Convention in San Francisco, at the 1992 Regional Convention in Sacramento, the 1994 Annual Convention in Fresno, California, and the 1998 Annual Convention in San Francisco. Concert trips have taken Kevin to Pasadena, Phoenix, Chicago, and the Senate Theatre in Detroit to play some of the more notable theatre organs across the country. At the 1994 convention, Kevin became the first ever recipient of the David L. Junchen Technical Scholarship. This award, given by ATOS, is to recognize and encourage further pursuit of technical excellence in theatre pipe organ maintenance and restoration.

Another long time dream came true in 1993 when he became the owner of his own theatre pipe organ—this being the three-manual Wurlitzer installed in the Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland, California. Over a six-year restoration period, nine of the poorer quality ranks of pipes, and some percussions have been replaced with vintage Wurlitzer components and the instrument has grown to 18 ranks. Kevin re-premiered it at the 1998 ATOS Annual Convention. His CD recording *On The Lake* was recorded on his “new” old Wurlitzer at the Grand Lake Theatre. As if all this weren't enough, Kevin is now also teaching third grade elementary school near his home in Oakland, California.

Thoughts on Judging the ATOS Young Organist Competition:

It was an honor to be invited to be a judge for this year's Young Organist Competition. It was also a complete pleasure and thrill to listen to the tapes submitted by all of the creative young artists. I feel that this competition is one of the most important things ATOS has done.

I was thoroughly impressed by the level of talent, dedication, and hard work evident in the recordings. The depth of feeling and enthusiasms in the musical arrangements showed a true respect and love of the theatre organ. I wish it were possible to have each and every one of the contestants play for all of us at the convention. Unfortunately, that isn't possible.

I sincerely encourage all of the participants who may not have been selected this time around, to enter again next year. They all show a great deal of talent, and the job of selecting one over another was very difficult.

When you stop and think of how many of our present concert performers started out in this competition, you come up

with an impressive list. I feel confident that some of this year's participants will soon be heard on the concert circuit. Hearing these wonderful young organists has truly reaffirmed my confidence in the rich future of the theatre pipe organ.

I want to personally congratulate and thank all of them for participating. I had many hours of enjoyment listening to their music.

EDITH J. PENNOCK

Edith has been a member of ATOS for eighteen years. She, and her husband, Bill, have attended most of the annual and regional conventions since joining the society. Currently, she is Secretary of the Pine Tree Chapter in Old Orchard Beach, Maine.



Edith is a retired schoolteacher. She is active in many community groups including Literacy Volunteers of America and local historical and chamber music societies. She enjoys listening to music, fishing, gardening and caring for grandchildren.

MARK RENWICK

Mark Renwick became interested in the theatre organ while listening to his dad's George Wright records *in utero!* It was only a matter of time before Mark learned to play the theatre organ and became involved in the American Theatre Organ Society. Growing up in the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter, Mark enjoyed access to a number of theatre organs in public buildings and private homes.



Mark received his principal theatre organ instruction through careful listening to many different types of music, with particular fondness for American popular music from the 1890s through the 1950s, as well as opera and symphonic classical music. He is a great fan of jazz pianists Thomas “Fats” Waller and Art Tatum, as well as symphonic band conductor Frederick Fennell, concert organist Thomas Murray, and composer-conductor Les Baxter. His theatre organ style has been influenced the most by the recordings of George Wright and the “poet of the organ,” Jesse Crawford. Mark has performed several “pipe organ pops” concerts on church organs in the Jacksonville, Florida area, in addition to numerous chapter meeting programs for ATOS chapters in Florida and Georgia.

Mark and his wife, Carrie, currently reside in Jacksonville, Florida, where Mark is employed by Bank of America.

Thoughts on the competition:

I have been attending ATOS annual conventions since 1988 and have always enjoyed the Young Theatre Organist Competition programs. The competition is a splendid way for ATOS to encourage young artists and to introduce them to convention attendees. I have witnessed many talented participants, some of whom have gone on to distinguished careers as theatre organists.

This year was my first experience as a competition judge. I was impressed by the level of preparation exhibited by all of the participants. While there can be only one official winner in each age category, I congratulate all participants for their achievement thus far. Keep up the good work!

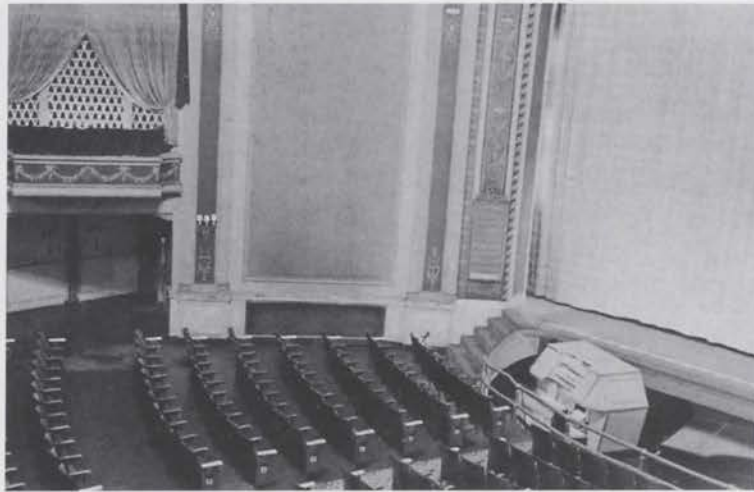
Our History—Our Heritage

Gems From THEATRE ORGAN 40 Years Ago

Editor's Note: The following article was published in THEATRE ORGAN, Volume 3, Number 3, Fall 1961. It is reported that the 3/12 Austin, Opus 1512, originally installed in the Allyn Theatre is now located in Shelton High School, Shelton, Connecticut.

The Swingin' Austin ...

HARTFORD'S "MIGHTY" THEATRE ORGAN



THE 3M 12R AUSTIN OPUS 1512, INSTALLED IN 1927 IN HARTFORD'S ALLYN THEATRE

by Allen R. Miller and
Joseph M. Tobin, Jr.

In 1927, the Allyn family of Hartford built the one-million dollar Allyn Theatre. Designed by Eugene DeRosa of New York, it was a 2,200 seat house featuring ankle-deep carpeting, plush red and gold draperies, a huge crystal chandelier weighing over a ton, and a garden in the orchestra pit containing live plants and three real fountains. There is a clear view of the 44' by 28' stage from every seat in the house, and the theatre is acoustically perfect. A person on stage speaking normally can be heard clearly anywhere in the house. There are no "dead spots".

Being friendly with the Austin family, the Allyns ordered an organ which would be built to meet the needs of the theatre. The largest theatre organ built by Austin Organs of Hartford, Connecticut, at that time, the instrument was one of about 100 built by that company, nine of which were unit organs, the others 'straight' organs. The organ, installed in two chambers high on the sides of the theatre, speaks through three tone projectors (Accompaniment, Swell, and Percussion), which focus the sound into the theatre through grilles which were disguised as loges. The theatre itself has a reverberation time of three seconds.

The left chamber, on 10" wind, contains: Open Diapason (85 pipes), extended from 2' to 16'; a large scale Gross Flute which sounds like a Tibia Plena (73 pipes); Gemshorn (73 pipes); Viole d'Amour (73 pipes) voiced so softly that it cannot be heard with the swell shades closed; Clarinet (73 pipes); Harmonic Tuba

(85 pipes). Also on this side are the non-tonal and accompaniment percussions: Harp (61 notes), Chimes, Tom-Tom, Snare Drum, Chinese Block, Tambourine, Bass Drum, Cymbal, Triangle, two Birds which automatically chirp back and forth at each other, Auto horn (old bus type), Telephone (a real telephone), and Steamboat Whistle.

The right chamber, on 12" wind, is somewhat smaller than the left chamber, and contains the Tibia Clausa (85 pipes); Viole d'Orchestre (85 pipes), extended to 16'; Celeste (61 pipes); Concert Flute (85 pipes); Vox Humana (61 pipes), Hope-Jones type enclosed in box, and Orchestral Oboe (61 pipes), with brass resonators. There is also a Deagan Xylophone holding the place of honor just behind the swell shades.

The organ is powered by a 7½ hp Spencer Orgoblo with a TWO phase motor.

To hear this instrument is definitely an experience! It is lush theatre sound at its best, very much like the sound of the Richmond Mosque organ.

It is unfortunate that all the care and precision that went into the pipework and layout of the organ was forgotten when the console was built. There was mass confusion in the stop tablets, some of the Accompaniment stops having been placed among the Great stops. In addition, the Great pistons controlled some of the Accompaniment stops. If this was not enough to anger an organist, the console shell was.

The console supplied by Austin

was a conventional church model which proved satisfactory until 1929 when Paramount took over the theatre. Paramount officials spent weeks trying to make the console look like a Wurlitzer. Finally, the present console, a grotesque "horseshoe" affair, was constructed as a shell to fit around the old console. Oddly enough, even though the console looks like a candy box from up close, some sort of optical illusion seems to make the bolster appear curved when seen from the balcony.

On the other hand, the Austin console does have its advantages. It is completely silent (no air hiss or pneumatic "bump"), and the relays, which are in the console, are almost foolproof and very easy to adjust.

It will be noted from the specifications that the Accompaniment manual operates only those pipes in the left chamber, while the Solo manual operates only the pipes in the right chamber. As is usual theatre organ practice, everything can be found on the Great manual.

Since each chamber contains two each of Flute, String, and Reed stops, there is really no need for complete unification of these manuals. In fact, this system is very appropriate for Stereo recording.

This is the only theatre organ in Hartford which never stopped playing, and it probably has one of the most colorful histories. The theatre was officially opened Sunday, April 18, 1927, as a vaudeville house. The program opened with an organ interlude by Norman Strickey, the first organist at the theatre. Mr. Strickey, of Danbury, Connecticut, had just finished a tour of Publix Deluxe Theatres throughout the United States, and for several years had been solo-

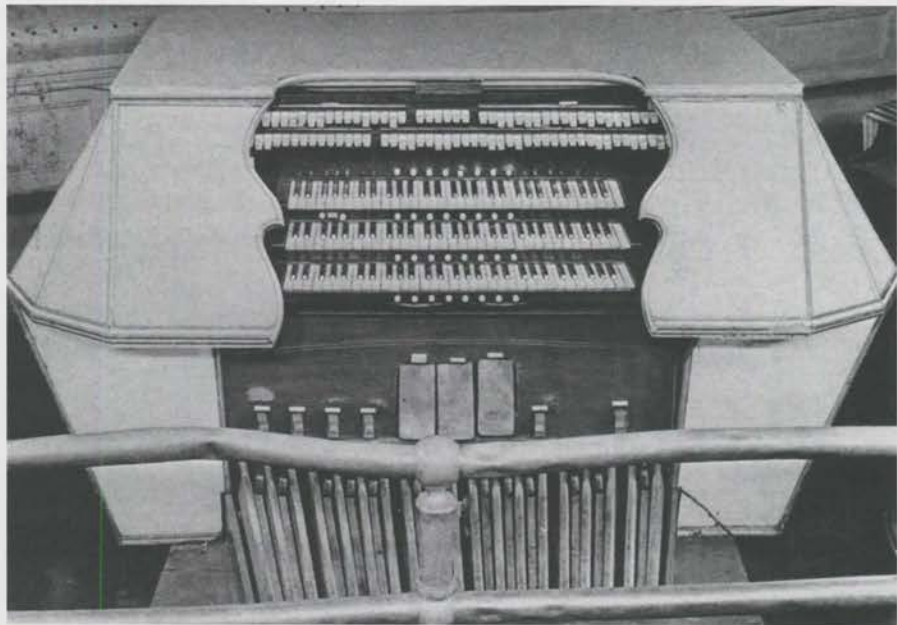
ist at the Allyn Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio.

Following the organ interlude, the orchestra under the direction of Louis Holtman played "The Star Spangled Banner". Guest speaker for the evening was none other than Dr. Lee DeForest, inventor of the vacuum tube and the Phonofilm. After due explanation, an example of the Phonofilm, the first talking picture, was shown. Vaudeville then followed the picture. This was probably one of the only theatres which showed "Talkies" before silent movies.

The theatre's policy for the next three years was "The Best in Vaudeville". At that time, the movie was only about 15 minutes long, and the organ was used to accompany the picture and for the "community sing" feature. Admission was about forty cents at that time, and included coffee, tea, and cookies, which were served on the mezzanine.

In 1929, Paramount saw the possibilities in the theatre and its patrons, and tried to buy it from the Allyn family. The Allyns would not budge. Finally, when Paramount threatened to erect a bigger and better theatre across the street, the Allyns gave in. It was at this time that several changes were made in the organ to make it as much like a Wurlitzer as possible. Larger tremolos were installed, the wind pressure was raised, and the pipes were revoiced. Along with the new management, came a new organist.

Collin Driggs, a 19-year-old just out of school, took over the position at the console. Collin studied under



Console - Allyn Theatre - Hartford, Connecticut

Lew White at the Roxy, and knew most of the tricks, such as "The Phantom Organ", with a separate console backstage, singers and a violinist hidden in the chambers. These, together with Collin's personality and showmanship, made the organ a feature. It was not long before Collin Driggs was playing the organ twice a week for WTIC radio, and it was through this medium that the organ won most of its fame.

The organ was on the climb, and survived the musician's union's death-blow which would not allow a theatre organ to be played without a full orchestra accompanying it. While the other theatres in the city abandoned their organs, the Allyn theatre struggled on, still using the organ with a small band. Then, in 1938, a flood hit Hartford, and the deluge of rain caved in the roof of the theatre

Specifications of Allyn Theatre 3m, 12r Mighty Austin Organ

PEDAL:

32 Resultant
16 Open Diapason
16 Bourdon
8 Diapason
8 Gross Flute
8 Tibia
8 Cello
8 Violer d'Orchestre
5-1/3 Viole
4 Flute
16 Tuba Profunda
8 Harmonic Tuba
8 Clarinet
8 Orchestral Oboe
Bass Drum
Kettle Drum
Cymbal

ACCOMP:

16 Gemshorn
16 Gamba
8 Gross Flute
8 Gamba
8 Viole d'Amour
4 Flute
4 Gamba
4 Viole
2-2/3 Quint
2 Superoctave
8 Tuba
8 Clarinet

4 Clarion
4 Clarinet
Tremolo
Harp
Octave Harp
Xylophone
Snare Drum Strike
Snare Drum Roll
Chinese Block
Tambourine
Tom-Tom
Birds

GREAT:

16 Contra Gamba
16 Gemshorn
16 Tibia
8 Open Diapason
8 Gross Flute
8 Gamba
8 Viole d'Amour
8 Tibia Clausa
8 Concert Flute
8 Viole D'Orchestre
8 Viole Celeste
4 Octave
4 Flute
4 Gamba
4 Violin
4 Tibia
4 Harmonic Flute

2-2/3 Quint
2 Superoctave
2 Piccolo
16 Tuba Profunda
16 Vox Humana (TC)
8 Harmonic Tuba
8 Clarinet
8 Orchestral Oboe
8 Vox Humana
4 Clarion
4 Vox Humana
Chimes f
Chimes p
Harp

SOLO:

16 Tibia Clausa
16 Bass Viol
8 Tibia
8 Concert Flute
8 Viole d'Orchestre
8 Viole Celeste
4 Tibia
4 Flute
4 Violette
4 Celestina
2-2/3 Twelfth
2 Flautino
8 Orchestral Oboe
8 Vox Humana
4 Vox Humana

Tremolo
Xylophone

EFFECTS:

Triangle
Birds
Auto
Telephone
Steamboat Whistle
Crash Cymbal

MISCELLANEOUS:

3 balanced swell shoes:
Accompaniment
Solo/Master (controlled by switch)
Crescendo
4 toe studs operating generals
1 toe stud operating Triangle
1 Sforzando pedal
8 pistons for Solo and Pedal
8 pistons for Great and Pedal
8 pistons for Accomp. and Pedal
8 generals
Cancel bar for each division
Combination action is of the "Capture" type
Austin "Universal Chests" and unit actions used throughout.

at one point just above the right chamber, dropping plaster and tons of water into the pipes. Half of the pipes were smashed, the regulator fell apart, the bottom of the chest rotted away, and the floor of the chamber became rotten. The organ was still being used occasionally, but any notes that played at all in the right chamber were most likely ciphers. An usher was trained to pull out pipes as the ciphers developed, and there were more pipes off the chest than on it.

A West Hartford dentist, Dr. David Ginsberg, played the organ on Sunday mornings before the theatre opened, but other than that, the organ's future looked pretty dim. Several persons (some of them avid ATOE members now) made attempts at re-viving the right chamber, but soon became disgusted, and left for better grounds.

Finally in October, 1959, Allen Miller discovered the organ while investigating the remaining theatre organs in Connecticut. The blower started on the first try, but the ciphers and dead notes were a sure sign that the organ needed work. Tackling the organ single-handedly for three months, Al got the left chamber in good order, but the right chamber, its air supply temporarily cut off, remained silent.

Then Al met Joe Tobin of West Hartford, and they both went at the right chamber in earnest. With help from Al's father, they removed the 200 pound regulator, and re-leathered it. With this done, a new bottom was made for the chest. The exciting moment came when the air was turned on, and the chest blew right off the floor, pipes and all. Cape Canaveral couldn't have done better! Since the floor of the chamber was rotten, the chest had to be firmly anchored to the 8" thick concrete floor underneath.

The removal of three layers of canvas which had been nailed over the swell shades brought out the original brilliance of the organ, and reports are that the organ now sounds better than ever.

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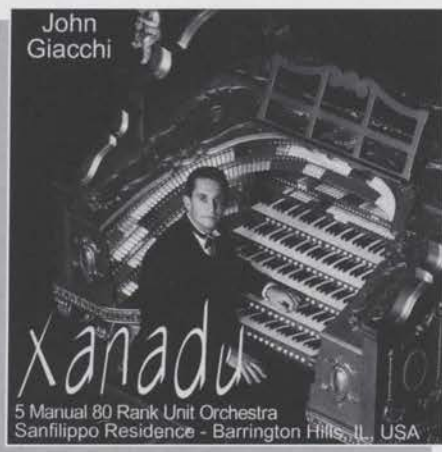
Ralph Beaudry, Associate Editor

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

XANADU

John Giacchi

In *Xanadu* did Kublai Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree



A modern-day *Xanadu* in Barrington Hills, Illinois began in 1982 with the acquisition of a copper finial from the demolished Schlitz Brewery Building in Milwaukee! It crystallized into Marian and Jasper Sanfilippo's dream to create a lavish music room and expand their 4/28 organ into a stunning 5/80 Wurlitzer—an instrument that its designer, the late David Junchen, hoped would "... be acknowledged the finest that ever was!" For the completion of what is known today as "The Victorian Palace at Place de la Musique," the finest organ pipe-work and accessories, distinctive architectural features and lavish decorations were collected from theatres whose very names conjured up exotically resplendent locations such as Alhambra, Granada, Oriental and, most provocatively, Paradise!

Indeed, the massive Wurlitzer console and the beautiful scrim covering the organ chambers are replicas of those originally installed in Chicago's now long gone Paradise Theatre. On September 25, 1994 Lyn Larsen and Tom Hazleton (both of whom were closely involved with the completion of the Sanfilippo organ following Dave Junchen's un-

timely death) played the organ's "official dedication." Since then four outstanding compact disc recordings of the organ have been released (see reviews in the Journals for November, 1994, November, 1995, July, 1996 and May, 1998.) The November, 1994 Journal also has an illustrated, detailed account of the Place de la Musique's construction and the specifications of its unprecedented Wurlitzer. The organ is played in numerous concerts, most notably for the annual Hopeful Heart "Concert for Life" benefits.

Most of the world's finest theatre organists have been presented at this "pleasure dome" of music and, in the spring of 1999, the young Australian star organist John Giacchi was featured there. Two years later, John returned to record this album—it's his fourth (see the Journal reviews for November, 1991, March, 1997 and January, 2001.) On this very generous 76-minute CD you'll hear the Sanfilippo Wurlitzer—thanks to the newest state of the art recording equipment and 24-bit technology which has only recently become available—with a clarity, presence and dynamic range that truly puts the listener into the very finest seat in The Victorian Palace!

With the title *Xanadu* one might expect to hear an exotic Oriental-type program, but that is certainly not the case here! While there are several new-to-CD titles, the majority of John's selections is mainstream theatre organ—BUT with the added sparkle of fresh arrangements and a striking variety of registrations that only this exceptional organ can provide. "Slaughter on 10th Avenue" is the sensational opening number. This generous nine minutes of Richard Rodgers' landmark music contains all the main themes. Although Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma* is usually credited with changing the direction of Broadway musicals forever, it should be noted that Rodgers and Hart's "Slaughter" in *On Your Toes* (seven years

earlier—in 1936) actually was the first time a ballet was fully integrated into a musical's plot line! Listeners are alerted to adjust their volume controls to the highest possible listening level on the opening measures of "Slaughter" or they will find some later passages virtually inaudible—such as the extreme dynamic range of this organ and this superb recording!

Although Puccini incorporated both genuine Japanese themes and hints of the "Star Spangled Banner" into his score for *Madama Butterfly*, everyone is immediately captivated by the exquisitely lovely "Un Belle Dei" aria, which is John's second selection. Strangely, on its opening night in 1904 the audience so violently disliked the opera it was withdrawn and completely revised. When it reopened three months later it was a brilliant success! Time for a change so next we hear British pianist/composer Billy Mayerl's charming "Moorish Idol" from his *Aquarium Suite*. Yes, the Moorish Idol (*Zanclus canescens*) is a tropical fish that has been described as looking "... like a swimming lollipop with a dorsal fin the height of the Empire State Building."

When the 1928 stage musical *Rosalie* (with songs by both George Gershwin and Sigmund Romberg) was filmed by M-G-M in 1937, Cole Porter wrote a completely new musical score. John's first medley, *Rosalie Remembered*, is 12½ minutes and includes three great Porter tunes you've probably never heard before! It opens with the wonderfully cheery "Who Knows?" and then has the lush waltz "Close" which, although written for Nelson Eddy to sing, is heard only as an instrumental in the film. "Rosalie" is next. Initially Porter hated this song for being "too corny" (although it became one of his most popular) since it was his seventh version of the title song and producer L.B. Mayer had rejected Porter's preferred sixth version as "too highbrow." Next is the jazzy "I've A

Strange New Rhythm in My Heart.” The medley closes with a number Porter claimed was even better than his own “Night and Day”—the sumptuous “In The Still of the Night.”

In Wagner’s dramatic “Pilgrim’s Chorus” (based on the medieval German legend of *Tannhauser* complete with magic spells, dancing nymphs, and the goddess Venus) our organist creates an extraordinary orchestral depiction of a band of Christians marching past on their way to see the Pope in Rome. Turning again to Hollywood films John’s arrangement of Kern’s “Waltz In Swing Time” is as fresh as a spring breeze while his version of the rarely heard Arthur Johnston-Sam Coslow song “Marahua-na” (yes, it’s usually spelled “Marijuana”) us filled with fiery tango touches. Of the 15 poems found in the Bible’s Book of Psalms surely “The 23rd Psalm” is the best known and Malotte’s music begins quietly then delicately builds to a majestic full organ conclusion.

Although the first Academy Awards were given out in 1927, it wasn’t until 1934 that a category for Best Song was established. The first Best Song winner comes next—it’s Con Conrad’s “The Continental” from RKO’s *The Gay Divorcee*. The film was based on 1932’s Broadway production of Cole Porter’s *Gay Divorce*. (Hollywood censors felt no divorce could be happy; but one of the people could certainly be ecstatic about it!) Curiously, that stage musical was the last of 12 in which Astaire had starred on Broadway and this film was his first starring role in Hollywood! Oddly, too, only Cole Porter’s “Night and Day” was retained for the film; Conrad and others wrote the rest of the songs. John’s hints of “Jealousy” and refreshing tricky-fingering here and there give an added sparkle to this number.

It required 29 Hollywood sound stages, had 65 separate sets, required

3,210 costume designs, employed 9,200 actors, (including 150 midjets for Munchkins) and was supposed to star 11 year old Shirley Temple. Only 1939’s film masterpiece *The Wizard of Oz* fits that description. Since it was 17-year-old Judy Garland who got the Dorothy role, filming started with Judy in a blond wig and painted doll make-up! Thankfully those scenes were reshot. This enchanting 12½ minute medley opens with a brief cyclonic introduction and features “Ding Dong the Witch is Dead,” “If I Only Had a Brain (or Heart or Nerve),” “We’re Off to See the Wizard,” “Over the Rainbow,” and a touch of “In the Merry Old Land of Oz.” Delightful—the Emerald City and Xanadu!

Rube Bloom’s “Spring Fever” is a buoyant, bouncy, beguiling novelty right out of the Roarin’ Twenties. John’s glittering *piece de resistance* is a superb transcription of Rossini’s “Overture” to the comic opera *The Barber of Seville*. Operatic overtures date from the early 1600s and originally were used merely to signal that the opera was about to begin. By Rossini’s time they musically set the mood for what was to follow and the original “Overture” to this opera was said to be based on Spanish themes. But it mysteriously disappeared after the first performance! Rossini merely substituted one he had used twice before! Since it was an instant “hit” in 1816, this most irresistibly infectious of all overtures is forever linked to this opera.

For an Encore the disc closes with Karl Hoshna’s “Cuddle Up a Little Closer, Lovey Mine.” Hoschna and his lyricist Otto Harbach wrote six musical comedies (this number comes from their 1908 show *Three Twins*) before Hoschna’s death at age 34. Harbach went on to write hundreds of wonderful lyrics for Kern, Friml, Romberg and others and lived to be almost 90! “Cuddle Up” enjoyed a well-deserved revival 35 years

later when Betty Grable sang it in her 1943-film *Coney Island*.

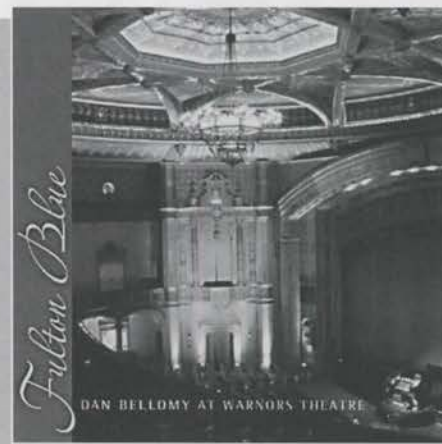
To succinctly sum it up, this dazzling sojourn in Xanadu is decorated with musical gems all along the way! John has used the organ’s massive resources and tremendous dynamic range with good taste and superb musicianship throughout. Recording engineer Robert Ridgeway, with assistance from and mastering by Jim Stemke, has completely captured every thrilling voice and note. We give it a well-deserved Must Have recommendation!

Compact disc only for \$20.00 (post-paid). Make checks payable to John Giacchi and mail c/o Don Near, 9700 Chapman Avenue, Garden Grove, CA 92641.

FULTON BLUE

Dan Bellomy

Ron Musselman, Guest Reviewer



This new album from Dan Bellomy is a landmark recording in a couple of related respects. First of all, the commanding Robert-Morton theatre pipe organ in the Warnor’s Theatre in Fresno, California was never really utilized for a quality commercial recording by a major artist all through the vinyl LP era. The only exception was a half-hearted effort by a network radio organist whose bland, outdated arrangements did nothing to capture the listener’s interest. And, at the time, some of the instrument’s pipe-work was in need of extensive adjustment by a technician with a good ear. The keener strings in particular were not unlike model airplane engines, with a harmonic train resembling coarse-grit sandpaper on steel. The record was quite unlistenable. The second thing that makes this CD significant is that, even in

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the 1980s and '90s, no digital recording of Warner's was released. Finally, in 2001, here it is! Now the entire world can hear what this fabled Robert-Morton really sounds like through the medium of the compact disc.

The 1928 Warner's Theatre sits at the north end of Fresno's downtown area and is one of the last few vintage movie palaces in the country still housing its original, essentially unaltered pipe organ. This 2,200 seat downtown show-place was nearly lost to "urban renewal" until a local businessman and Fresno booster, Frank Caglia, rescued it. The theatre has undergone a program of restoration over the years, and the Morton organ has gradually been honed by the late Richard S. Villemin, and more recently by technician/curator Tom DeLay. The organ, which can best be described as "aggressive," has also been characterized by DeLay as being "so violent that it literally shakes and vibrates itself out of tune."

The Warner's Morton is played from a well-unified four-manual console that rises up to solo level on its lift at center

stage. Judging from its appearance and the sounds that roll out of the chambers, the first time listener might guess this beast to be 25-30 ranks or more. But this full-blown solo instrument has only 14 ranks of pipes. And with the right musician at the console, the variety of sounds and dynamics it can produce is nothing short of amazing. In the arena of the theatre pipe organ, it is one of the ultimate thrill machines.

Dan Bellomy is a phenomenal musician who is among the theatre organ's first-tier artists. He has made his mark in pipe organ-based jazz, and in this category, he brings to the instrument what no one else can. His gift for quality improvisation exists at the highest level. He is one of the precious few who almost never play a piece the same way twice. Over the years, Dan's spontaneous music making in various styles has made good musical sense. He develops ideas rapidly, the whole thing flows well, and he always lands on his feet. And while he is known for his jazz creations (during which a dazzling torrent of notes can be released when the occasion calls for it),

Bellomy is certainly not confined to that genre. When his attention is turned to the soul-searching ballad, the resulting magic is equally good. A prime example is his masterful rendition of "Something Wonderful" from *The King and I*, one of the ten greatest theatre organ performances of all time.

Right at the opening of "Fulton Blue", we are treated to a piece of Dan's on-the-spot composing, "Morton Madness." Far from being a piece of insanity, this great opener came about as a by-product. As final adjustments were being made by recording engineer William O. Schlotter, Dan was asked to play some of his loudest registrations to set recording levels. He played "the first things that came to mind." It came together as a finished work, sounding for all the world like something he had worked on and polished for hours, if not days. "Madness" starts with a big brassy tremors-off concert organ-style fanfare, then continues as a theatre organ console riser very much in the spirit of Billy Nalle's *Show Business*—but in the details, it's all Bellomy. A spectacular finish is underpinned by a

Two new CDs from Wichita's Little River Studio, featuring Jelani Eddington, David Harris and Brett Valliant!!

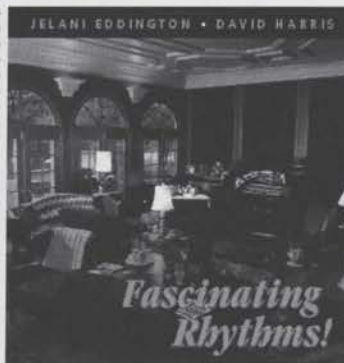
"Lyric Wurlitzer," the debut recording of organist Brett Valliant, is a return to lyric pieces for what might arguably be considered the most lyrical of instruments save the human voice. The musical selections here are all treated as marvelous musical miniatures, much in the same vein as the legendary Jesse Crawford created his gem-like creations in melody, harmony, rhythm and phrasing.



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solid hit from the potent pedal division. This is not your grandfather's theatre organ!

The program continues with "Why Should I Wake Up," a soft introspective ballad. The close is nicely executed with tuned percussion flavoring. Then DB is off and running again with Duke Ellington's "C-Jam Blues," but only the basic skeleton of the Ellington composition is utilized—this is mostly Dan's imagination at work. It features some exhilarating examples of his digital dexterity and a "slap bass" pedal line appropriate to the goings-on it supports. About halfway through, the unexpected jumps out of the chambers: "Hammondry!" He recreates perfectly the gummy, drizzly texture often heard from the electronic Hammond B-3 when it's used as a hybrid jazz instrument. Then things get into high gear with the big brass chorus followed by some more variations and a brass-injected finish.

While there is a generous helping of excitement in this CD, it is well programmed as to variety and sequencing. The listener will also enjoy plenty of gentler moments. "Once in a While" is another lovely theatre organ-style ballad that ambles along in a relaxed manner, but Bellomy manages to introduce many other ear-catching twists and turns that add interest to the arrangement. It sports a quite jazzy, but dreamy, tuba solo. Another favorite of Dan's is "What I Did for Love." There is a very imaginative, intricate bridge between verses in the last portion. He builds up to a brass-backed mezzo forte, then there is a skillful descent back down to an effective soft ending. It is enhanced with a single stop Tibia run (Morton Tibias can "coo" wonderfully). "Quiet Time" is the second of three Bellomy originals in this album. He plays a nice solo on a combination

suggesting a mild Trumpet, followed by the big Tuba. It continues with several combinations and solos that serve to paint the picture. After a medium full combination for emphasis, he drops back to a string-like texture for a transition to the orchestral coda. Also in the ballad vein is "Til there was You," thoughtfully rendered with the understated side of the Bellomy inventiveness.

A typically refreshing up-tempo "Paper Moon" fairly early on breaks into one of those wild, high-flying Dan Bellomy jazz rides. Near the end are a couple of suspenseful "Where is he going?" moments that grab the listener's ear. After that, Billy May's well-known "Brassmen's Holiday" gets Dan's treatment, including a closing roller coaster ride that is absolutely hair-raising. "Falling in Love with Love" is a jazz waltz with some big band-like passages. There is some tricky finger work and it winds up being a swinging tour de force. After the intro to George Shearing's "Lullaby of Birdland," Dan starts out sauntering gently, and then we get another shot of the Morton's big band brass. He finishes with a very life-like jazz combo sound.

The third Bellomy original in this package is also the closer. "Fulton Blue" is a hard to categorize piece that Dan improvised right on the spot. This title track gets underway with a stringy untremmed flute that calls to mind the sly musical wink and grin of a Fats Waller passage.

He then ventures into a progression of motifs that well . . . you'll just have to listen for yourself. Included are at least two more variations of Hammond B-3 sound (all pipes!), one of them untremmed with an underlying hint of a Hammond Diapason simulation. Does this guy ever have an ear for this stuff!

He then plays a transition phrase, escalating into the big band sound to bring it home. There is a skull-rattling blast of pedal and an ascending run that ushers in an out-of-the-ballpark ending. It's all capped with a mighty stinger that few other instruments of any size could hope to match.

At times, Bellomy is reminiscent of the late Bryan Rodwell, an English organist whose exciting 150 mph playing could almost leave the listener breathless. As good a musician as he was, Rodwell could only dream of doing some of the things Dan has achieved over the years. And this is well illustrated by the music in *Fulton Blue*.

Aside from being musically satisfying, this disc is technically superb. We made the first pass through it listening with headphones, and it was surprising to hear how much low-level detail Mr. Schlotter's recording revealed. There were minute extraneous noises and one could almost hear the instrument "breathe." The "Gun Shot" Morton combination pistons (as opposed to the softer "ka-thump" of Wurlitzers) at times revealed just how much machinery management takes place in Dan's arrangements. However, in subsequent listening through our surround speaker system, none of this intruded, and the piston sound was seldom noticeable. We must commend Schlotter's purist/minimalist approach to recording. He uses the latest and finest technology in a most intelligent manner, without resorting to the post-production tampering that still mars many pop recordings. In *Fulton Blue*, you will hear this famed Morton as it sounds in the theatre, right down to the correct stereo spread as heard from the center-front of the balcony. When

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

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Rialtofest



DONNA PHILLIPS PHOTOGRAPHY

HOW DOES JATOE DO IT?

By Steve LaManna*

The front of the Rialto Square Theatre

The Pipe Organ Extravaganza and Rialtofest Weekend #5 was another huge winner, not only the Main Event Saturday night, but the concerts by Warren York, Ron Rhode, Dave Wickerham and Peter Conte at the separate venues as well. A lot of people have asked us over the last few months about the Rialtofest weekend and how we are able to fill a theatre full of paying guests . . . particularly when, as a general rule, theatre organ audiences have dwindled so greatly. The weekend is the result of a combined

effort of the Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (JATOE), and the Rialto Square Theatre, and was born six years ago. The entire concept of the Pipe Organ Extravaganza was the sole brainchild of the past Executive Director of the Rialto Square Theatre, Mr. Sam Driggs. During Sam's tenure in 1996, he became very curious and interested in the sound of the organ and watched the work being performed on the Barton organ. He and his son even helped rebuild some of the chest work. He could see how hard the crew was working on the instrument, trying to keep it playing. It was obvious to Sam—the club was struggling hard, trying to raise money for this major restoration project.

One day, Sam, filled with great ideas, called a meeting, interested in discussing what assistance or help the Rialto could provide for the organ. Sam's idea was to have a "Really Big Show" featuring two organists, but soon discovered that idea has been tried numerous times. Finally, after several tries and various ideas, the concept of the Pipe Organ Extravaganza was born, featuring five organists and other forms of talent. Now we had a big show, with something for everyone! JATOE and the Rialto Square Theatre were now working together, promoting the Extravaganza.

The Rialtofest concept was geared to help raise additional funds for the organ, and help speed the restoration process. A miracle was taking place before our eyes! The Rialto's management and governing board of directors were completely behind the idea, willing to fund the Extravaganza, with a percentage of sales going directly into the instrument. Immediately, dates for the next four years, 1996 thru 1999, were written into the schedule book and the shows began. JATOE is indeed grateful to Sam Driggs for his caring and love of the Rialto's organ, and his desire to help JATOE and the organ. It is unusual, in that it is rare today, for anything to do with theatre organ to receive full support, including financial, from the theatre where it resides.

It was decided that it would be necessary to draw interest from two areas—theatre organ fans for the weekend (similar to a Regional Convention), and from the local community for the Saturday night Extravaganza. Both are important, but crowds the general size of most theatre organ events today cannot support the production level presented at an event like this.

JATOE concerned itself primarily with the management of the entire weekend for the incoming attendees. JATOE members handled logistics for the weekend. The Rialto Square Theatre, along with the producer, was responsible for the entire Saturday night event. The event would be promoted as a "Pops" style concert, which just happened to have a lot of organ music. The emphasis was on popular music, drawing a more varied attendance.

In December of 1999, I was asked to take over the helm of the departing producer. Having a background in corporate production and staging, and having a long-term love for the instruments, I thought the challenge would be exciting, and scary! Losing no time in interfacing with the theatre in terms of budgeting and promotion, I had a good grasp of the event business details and went about the work of putting the show together. Jim Stemke's loving care of the Rialto Barton Grande was assured and what was left was artists, theme, orchestra, etc. Soooooo let's go through the weekend!

I have never worked with such a great group of artists, including all my experiences in the entertainment world. Not just the obvious musical talents, but personalities as well. Someone in this organization a long time ago made the funny comment that all organists were made up of just egos and hairspray!!! Neither could have been less apparent with this group . . . everyone worked well together and played nice with the other children. I can't say enough about their performances. The artists were coming in as early as Wednesday, wanting time to practice on the Barton, as well as the Petroff Piano, and of course, the Walker Digital Organs. Any artists who were playing other venues had to schedule practice time. So, some careful "artist resource" management had to be skillfully negotiated.

It was the usual rush on Friday for the artists to fight for control of the keyboards, as each one needed time to practice on the Barton. Of course, they ALL wanted to try their hand on the Walker, and Rob Richards and Bob Walker were pleased to let them try, with great results later at the show! Jelani also needed time to practice at the piano. Even though each artist only had about 20 minutes of individual console time at the show, as I said earlier, I wanted their best pieces that would fit with the evening and not just "thrown-in" ones to fill time. The theme for the night was American Music. This gave a wide enough parameter and still provided a single voice for the selections. All of them came through.

Saturday was actually a "nervous fest," as we took a departure from what has happened for the last four years and changed the program to an all concert format, deleting the circus-style acts and other sideshow-style bits, and concentrated on the artists and the music. We rehearsed the orchestra and the artists all day and this was the first and ONLY time we would have this run-through for the show that evening. Judging from the sold-out audience response, we made exactly the right choice.

The entire show was greeted with whoops and hollers from an audience largely NOT theatre organ groupies, but local attendees looking for a good pops concert experience. The show opened with the DePaul University Wind Ensemble playing a great set of patriotic marches. JATOE President, Jim

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Stemke, welcoming the audience to the fifth year of the event, followed this.

Ron Rhode opened the keyboard part of the show with a rousing "Strike up the Band," and followed with several favorites such as "Oh By Jingo" and the "Boston Pops March." Ron is a seasoned professional and his program was excellent, despite the fact that he had just played an entire concert that morning at Mundelein. He then invited Jelani Eddington out on stage and they performed a melodic duo of the concert version of Deep Purple.

Next up was Rob Richards on the Walker theatre organ. Everyone was waiting to hear this and the sound was stunning. Rob played some beautiful pieces, opening with a rousing "Hooray for Hollywood" and a George Wright version of "Ain't We Got Fun." He finished with a beautiful medley of Disney tunes. Sadly, Rob's closer, a spectacular medley of Disney music through the years, is the one thing we CAN'T put on the double CD . . . Disney legal would probably chase us down but, trust me, it was great! So often, medleys have some throwaway tunes in them, but Rob's was carefully orchestrated showing off the full capabilities of the four-manual digital wonder.

Following Rob was Peter Conte on the classical Walker. Peter, as many of you know, is the artist in residence at the Wanamaker Organ at Lord & Taylor's in Philadelphia. He came to us through a special route . . . my childhood friend of many years, Curt Mangel, who is now with the Sanfilippo estate, is heading up the group that is restoring the full sound of the 6/469 monster at Lord & Taylor's in Philadelphia. We wanted to get Peter to play not only at the show, but also at Jasper's on the Sunday portion of the weekend as well. Peter played two wonderful pieces by Firmen Swinnon, "Song of Autumn" and "Sunshine." Swinnon was a theatre organist who was at the Rivoli Theatre in New York and later at the Dupont Estate, but I had never heard anything by him until this show. The first piece was a lovely pastoral melody but the second piece was an astounding toccata that really showed what a 3/80 digital, a copy of an Aeolian Skinner, can do...we might as well have been in a huge cathedral! The accuracy of these instruments lived up to all the talk.

After a closing presentation of "Belle of the Ball" and "That's Entertainment" by the DePaul Wind Ensemble we moved to the second half, which was opened by the Ensemble playing the beautiful tunes from "My Fair Lady."

John Giacchi was up next and played some lovely pieces beginning with "We Saw the Sea," "Blue Twilight" and finishing with the "Slaughter on 10th Avenue" on the Walker. Another house burner that

had them howling over the balconies. John charmed the audience with his dialect and it is great that US audiences are now hearing more of him. While he was in town he also recorded an album on the 5/80 at Sanfilippo's. I had several chances to hear what he was putting onto the player. By the time all of you read this, he will hopefully have sold a lot of these CD's!

Dave Wickerham was up next and had the audience enraptured with his selections, "Easter Parade," a Cole Porter and Gershwin Medley, and a beautiful "Stormy Weather" on the Walker . . . complete with Thunder and Lightning effects sampled on the digital toy counter. Dave is a local favorite and the audience has always been very responsive to his return trips to the area. His technique has just gotten better and better every time we hear him!

Jelani Eddington rounded out the program with such favorites as "The Trolley Song," "Give Me the Simple Life," "Serenata" and "Candide." He also played "So In Love" on the Petrof concert grand. Jelani is a real class act.

We closed with a round of tunes from DePaul, joined at the end by all our artists playing the "Washington Post March" and an encore of "Stars and Stripes."

All of the performers were commenting to me backstage that they have rarely heard such an audience response . . . and I have to agree with them. They were really on fire, meeting every artist with hollers, yells, whoops and loud applause of approval. I don't know if the crowd was starved for entertainment or just that this was an audience that wasn't jaded with theatre organ concerts like so many of us are. We may enjoy them, but our enthusiasm is more reserved . . . frankly, the energy was great . . . and infectious! I guess the old Broadway adage holds true . . . just book the best and get the hell out of the way!

Again, what really is important is the audience was made up of eighty percent or more NON-ATOS attendees . . . folks who just bought tickets because they wanted to hear good music. It proves that we can still have full houses of paying guests if an

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Jelani Eddington takes a skillful turn at the Petrof Concert Grand.



Ron Rhode responds to thunderous applause after he opens the theatre organ portion of the show.



Rob Richards entrances the audience with his Disney melody.



The DePaul University Wind Ensemble opens the show!

event is promoted correctly and has support from the theatre.

The rest of Rialtofest Weekend changes from year to year, depending on what venues and attractions JATOE feels will attract attendees. Our only challenge is: WHAT ARE WE GONNA' DO NEXT YEAR? Well, we have solved that. Besides a roster of incredible talent, we are including a "Live"

appearance by George Wright at The Rialtofest, including performances on the Walker Digital Organ. George will be playing selections that have NEVER been heard by the public before . . . on any record or any concert. George's selections and performance at the show will surely spark the interest and curiosity of a lot of people. We are proud to provide the



Peter Conte of Wanamaker Organ fame thrills the audience with his orchestral playing.



Dave Wickerham wowed 'em at the Rialto and the Sanfilippo 5/80 Wurlitzer.

The artists and JATOE crew that made it happen strike a quick pose minutes after the concert/s finale.

Top Row from left:
John Giacchi, Ron Rhode,
Jelani Eddington
Center Row from left:
Steve LaManna, Jim Patak,
Dave Wickerham
Bottom Row from left:
Jim Stemke, Eileen Sheridan,
Dolores Patak, Rob Richards



The entire ensemble takes a bow.

Rialtofest audience with the music of this amazing artist.

Finally, I am particularly pleased that the THEATRE ORGAN Journal has given us the opportunity to review and comment on the Pipe Organ Extravaganza and Rialtofest, and to elaborate on how we manage what we do, in hopes that others can do the same.



*Steve LaManna originally joined ATOS in 1971. He was involved with Curt Mangel in the saving, restoration and marketing of the Shea's Center for the Performing Arts and its 4/28 Wurlitzer. Becoming more active in ATOS by joining JATOE three years ago, he has been donating time to produce the Rialtofest, in conjunction with JATOE and the Rialto Square Theatre. He lives in Orlando, Florida.

An Acre of Seats in a Palace of Splendor

By Steve Levin, Associate Editor

Loew's State


New York City

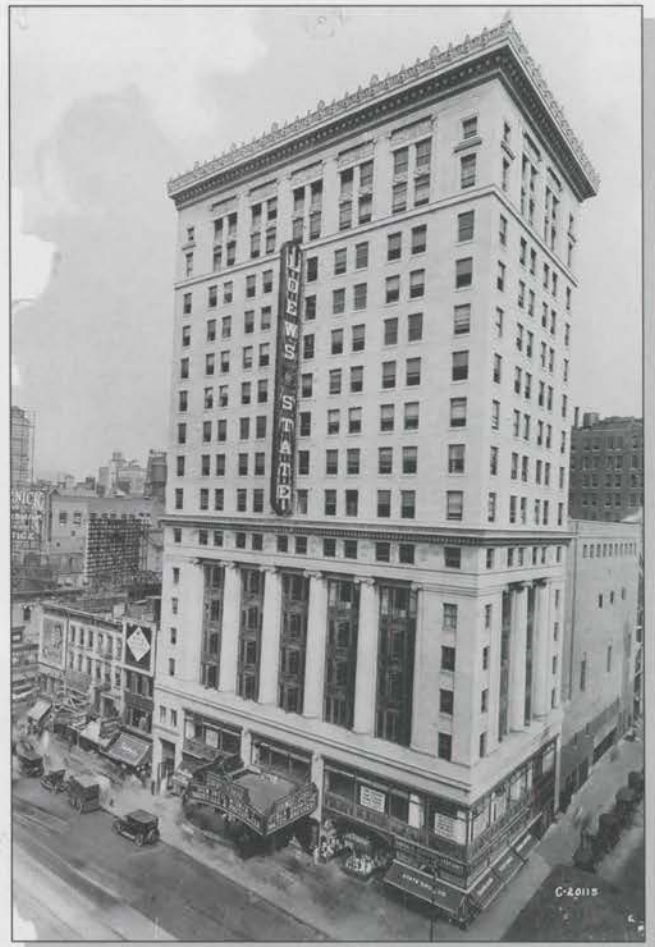
Opened: August 28, 1921 • Architect: Thomas W. Lamb • Capacity: 3316

Organ: Möller, Op. 2981 • Möller 4/41, Op. 4111 (1925)

Easily the least familiar of the big Broadway movie theatres, the State was built to be the Loew's flagship, with corporate headquarters in the building shown at right. The offices remained at 1540 Broadway for half a century, but when the mighty Capitol was acquired in 1924 during the assembly of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer the flag was symbolically transferred to the larger house. Despite this "demotion," the State remained enormously popular and profitable. Until the late 1940s it still offered traditional vaudeville on its programs, long after that format had been dropped in the other Broadway palaces.

It received a massive renovation in 1959. The proscenium and organ screens were replaced by a streamlined plaster shell and miles of drapes and the projection room was moved from the back of the house to front of the balcony, in an arrangement similar to the Roxy's. In 1968 the auditorium was twinned piggyback style. The State closed early in 1987. "1540," as the offices were familiarly known, was demolished and replaced by a modern office tower which contains a multiplex cinema.

Until very late in the game, Loew's was among the most conservative of the big circuits, in both the styling of its theatres and choice of organs. While other Broadway houses were upgrading to Wurlitzers (the Rialto and Rivoli replaced their Austins with Style 260s in 1922 and 1924 respectively) Loew's went right back to its traditional purveyor when the original organ proved too small. Even the new Möller must have sounded hopelessly out of date a year later when the 4/36 Wurlitzer in the Paramount was turned loose by Jesse Crawford. 



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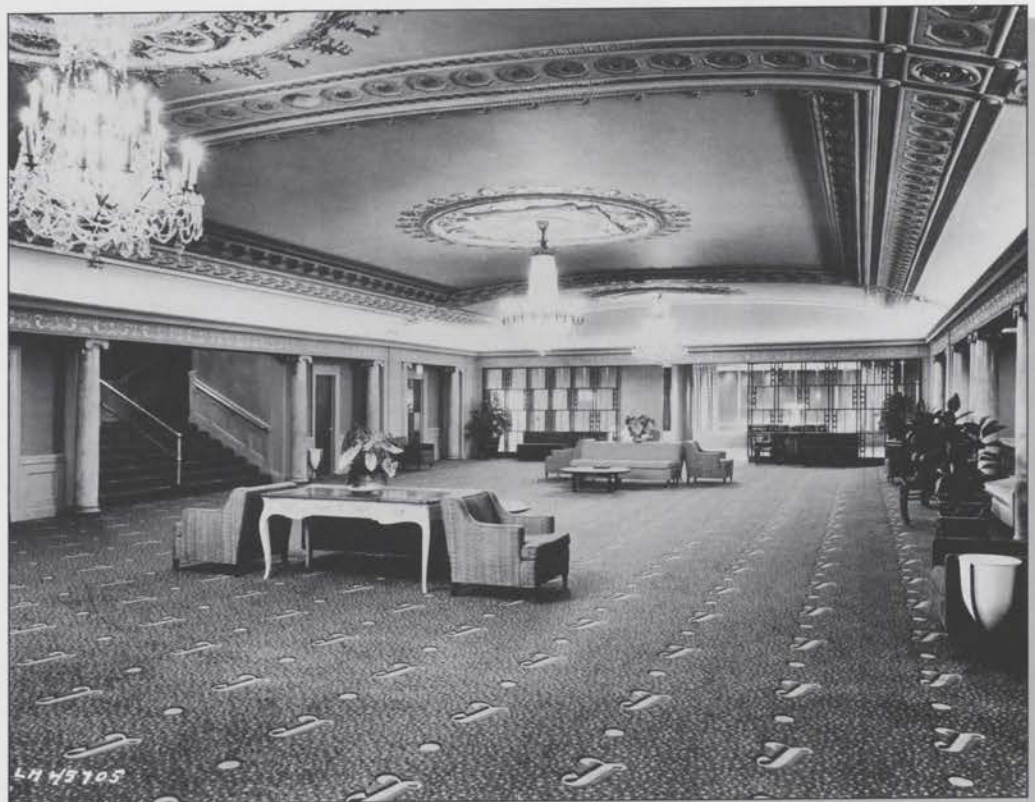
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Opposite: The new Loew Building in 1921. The far side wall of the building was often used as a huge billboard. The back of the auditorium is visible on the right.

Above: A typical Thomas Lamb product, the auditorium shared its basic form with the much larger Capitol, although the detailing was quite different.

Right: Seen in its later years the mezzanine combined old and new furnishings in reasonable harmony. Note the custom made carpet used in countless Loew's renovations. The State was particularly well endowed with crystal chandeliers, including a huge one in the auditorium dome.



Still
Coming Up

Rosa

By Tara Schroeder*

Movie mogul Marcus Lowe said, "We sell tickets to theatres, not movies." On-screen fantasies, presented in the grand luxury and fanciful architecture of lavish motion pictures palaces of the 1920s transport people from Main Street to anywhere. Today, more and more people are discovering (and re-discovering) the magic of that experience. Tampa Theatre, a



Rosa Rio at the Tampa Theatre 3/12 Wurlitzer.

1926 John Eberson atmospheric, presents silent film events several times a year featuring the Mighty 3/12 Wurlitzer Theatre Organ. Theatre organ legend Rosa Rio has been the featured organist for these special events since 1996, always making her entrance with "Everything's Coming Up Roses."

"The first time I saw Rosa perform I felt elated," says Reuben Ward, a college student who drives 131 miles from Gainesville, Florida to attend silent film presentations at Tampa Theatre. "It really felt like she was sharing something with her audience. The fact that she had played silent scores in their original time and context gave me an understanding of what timeless actually meant. Her authenticity and belief in what she was doing made me feel like I was witnessing something very important to her. I think she is just trying to make the movie better. She laughs and cries with her audience."

Mia D'Avanza, another college student who drives along with Reuben agrees. "I was in awe the first time I saw Rosa perform. If I hadn't been laughing so hard at *Our Hospitality*, I would have been crying. She is obviously concerned with being an all-around entertainer as well as an organist and she is incredibly successful at both. Her charm and skill make the silent movie experience complete."

talkies, radio, TV, and now, back to silents). "I can't believe that I've been so fortunate to have been in so many things that went out and I bounced back," she says. Her path was not without challenges. As the only skirt in the orchestra pit, she routinely challenged men who considered her to be second fiddle because of her gender. She allayed those stereotypical reactions with talent, charm and a (sometimes bawdy) sense of humor.

Although most people retire to Florida, Rosa and her husband/manager Bill Yeoman simply moved to Florida in 1993 and she continued her busy performing and teaching schedule. "The word 'retire' is not in my vocabulary," she says emphatically. Her business card reads "Organ-Piano-Voice Instruction Concerts-Films-Recordings." Finding a home large enough to fill her passion was quite the challenge. She owns a nine-foot Baldwin concert grand (once owned by famed pianist and conductor Jose Iturbi), a Rodgers theatre organ and a Hammond organ.

Tampa Theatre organist and Central Florida Theatre Organ Society member John Otterson was shocked to meet Rosa at a CFTOS meeting. Rosa quietly took her turn during open console. "She sat and played and was very good. Then I got her

name and said, "That's Rosa Rio!" He immediately invited her to Tampa Theatre and asked if she would play a silent film. "She's one of the best," he says. "Her chording and combinations are marvelous. But what I enjoy most about Rosa is her spirit. Her positive mental outlook is incredible."

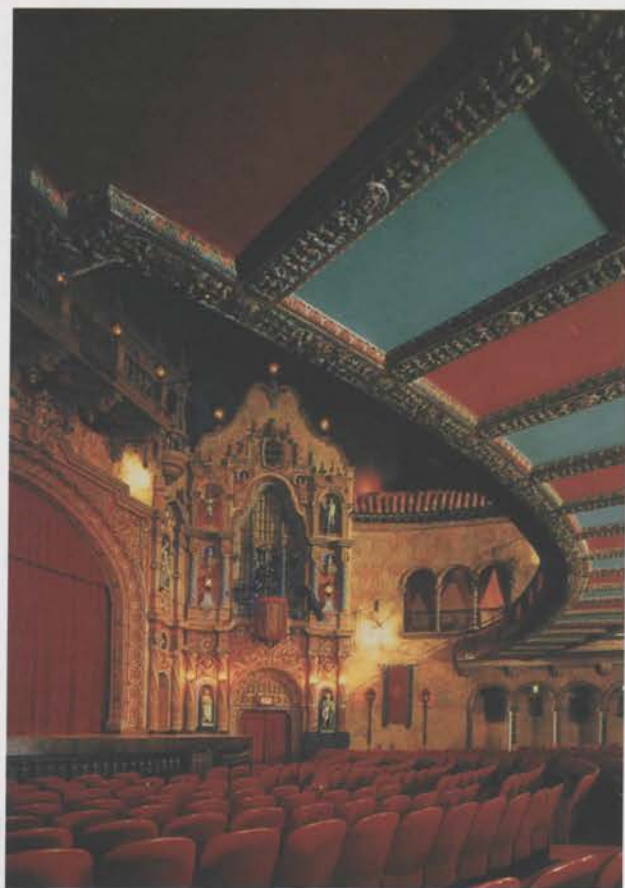
Buster Keaton's *The General* was the first of twelve silent films presented at Tampa Theatre featuring Rosa Rio at the Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Organ. That first performance drew 199 people in 1996; three years later a Buster Keaton double feature drew 1,253 people. In total, 8,639 people have attended Rosa's silent film performances, with an average attendance of 785.

She has also accompanied *College*, *Big Business*, *The Mark of Zorro*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Nosferatu*, *Son of the Sheik*, *The Thief of Baghdad*, *Our Hospitality*, and *The Cameraman*. Rosa meticulously prepares for each performance by watching the film several times and planning for cues and themes. "First I view the silent picture," she explains, "then I decide on the themes (character, love, dramatic, suspense, misterioso, hurry, aggitato, stings, or for comedy, a song in both major and minor changing tempos). When I write my cue sheet, the line-ups are for title inserts, scenes, timing, type of music, and so forth. I memorize the main themes and rely on my ability to improvise (not fake) the correct music for each scene, hence my eyes stay on the screen and not on the music rack."

Just for fun, Rosa throws in under-the-radar snippets of music, much to the audience's amusement. During a performance of *Phantom of the Opera*, the audience heard a faint melody line of the Beatles' "Yellow Submarine" as the Phantom dodged the mob by swimming under water and breathing through a straw. Rosa made an unusual entrance for *Nosferatu* (1922) this past October at Tampa Theatre. As the Wurlitzer (without Rosa) rose through a cloud of eerie red smoke, Bach's thunderous "Tocatta in D Minor" bellowed through the dark theatre. The curtains parted. Six vampire-ish pallbearers somberly carried a black coffin to center stage. Rosa, enveloped in a large blood red scarf, stepped out to uproarious squeals of laughter and hopped on the organ bench to begin the show.

Rosa's gift for music emerged at a very young age. She was playing by ear at age four, picking out melodies and chords at age six and taking formal lessons at age eight. The lessons also taught her to appreciate the value of study. "I thought I couldn't be bothered with the baby stuff when I could play the real big stuff like "Alexander's Ragtime Band." People fawned over her natural talent, but after a few years, the novelty wore off and she realized that she'd better get serious about learning and studying if she wanted to advance. "It was the most valuable lesson that I never got over. To this day, I still want to learn."

When she was about ten years old, Rosa got her first paying gig. She was filling in for a friend who played the organ at a



Tampa Theatre



Rosa Rio and close-up view of the Tampa Theatre Wurlitzer console.

neighborhood theatre in New Orleans. The job paid five cents for one hour. Since the projector and screen were in the same room, the friend advised her to play loud and fast to drown out the projector noise. The thrill lasted until her father arrived. "I felt his cold hand on the back of my neck," Rosa recalls. "I was in the midst of playing and he took me right out of there, saying that no daughter of his would do that kind of work."

Her parents encouraged her talent, but only wanted her to learn enough to play in church or at social events. Her interest in show business continued throughout her teenage years. One summer, while visiting her mother's side of the family outside of Columbus, Ohio she met an uncle on break from the vaudeville circuit. "I just went into ecstasy over his costumes," she says. "I just was in seventh heaven." The next summer she was brushed off when she asked to see the costumes in the trunks. She later learned that her mother had asked the family not to encourage her show business yearnings.

After high school, her parents acquiesced and sent her to



Rosa Rio—always a crowd pleaser.

Oberlin College to study music. She was reminded that music teachers were usually men or unmarried women, so her choice was to get married or become a spinster. Neither one appealed to the headstrong young girl, but off she went anyway to become a music teacher—until she was spellbound by the lure of a Mighty Wurlitzer.

While in Cleveland for spring break, Rosa took in the city's illustrious movie palaces. She recalls the Allen (Allen), the Ohio (Möller), the Alhambra (Wurlitzer), and the Stillman (Skinner) Theatres. "I went in and just oohed and ahed," she recalls. "I'd never seen anything like the velvet draperies, gold and glitter. I thought I was going to see a show. Instead it was an organ that I heard and a spotlight that grew larger and larger. This organ came up on a lift, which I had never seen. I was floored. My eyes and ears exploded." She was mesmerized all-day and decided right then to be a theatre organist: "I was bitten."

She ran across a magazine ad for the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, which taught "proper accompaniment to motion pictures" and immediately enrolled, though she barely had enough money. A typical day's meal was an orange for breakfast, milk for lunch and a 35-cent dinner at the YWCA. "I was down to about 90 pounds," she says, "but I was just so happy." Her money dwindled and she would have had to leave after only one semester were it not for the intervention of, the ironically named, Mr. Fait, a producer at the Eastman Theatre.

One day she wandered into the theatre just as the conductor, a German maestro, was ranting about a late pianist holding up rehearsal of a score. "He was one of those egotistical hot dishes who thought the more he ranted, the greater person he was," she says. "So people were afraid of him." She offered to fill in until the pianist arrived. Rosa's talent impressed the conductor and Mr. Fait. When Mr. Fait learned that she could not afford to stay, he hired her as a pianist for the Eastman Conser-

vatory Ballet at \$25 per week (\$15 for tuition, \$5 room, \$5 food). Rosa remains grateful to him. "I think back and marvel at how a person like that did such a wonderful thing for me. I really appreciated it."

After graduation from Eastman, Rosa moved to New York. Her full-time first job was organist at the System Theatre in Syracuse. It paid \$40 a week (7 days a week, 11:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.). Later, she auditioned for Mr. Lutz, musical director of the Loew's organization at the Amsterdam Theatre, who noticed that she picked up the organ much faster than most. She was brash and young, but confident that her talent and Eastman diploma would nail the job. He gave her a nugget of advice she would never forget. He told her to put away the diploma. He didn't care with whom she studied or from where she graduated. "I'm only interested in one thing," she recalls him saying. "Can you do the job? If so, I have a marvelous theatre for you, the Burnside Brooklyn, opening in two weeks. If you can't do the job, you're out."

At the Burnside, she played a three-manual Möller. A typical entertainment line-up at the Burnside included an orchestra overture, newsreel, cartoon, organ solo and the main feature. For restroom breaks, Rosa would signal the manager to hold the chord. The lesson she learned early on about the value of study stayed with her and she continued her music education with lessons from Joseph Schillinger, who taught a mathematical approach to music theory. His star pupils included George Gershwin, Glen Miller and Jesse Crawford, and he wasn't interested in teaching a woman. Overcoming gender obstacles was nothing new and she had no difficulty proving her worthiness to the famed teacher.

Rosa moved back to New Orleans for two years with her husband at the time, organist John Hammond. They were married just a few years. He was the house organist at the Saenger Theatre (Robert-Morton organ), and she often performed there as well. She also toured other Saenger houses in the South. The Saenger in New Orleans hosted touring presentations, which had lavish sets and costumes, performers, a famous conductor (who led each theatre's orchestra), and a big star. "That's where I met Ginger Rogers," Rosa recalls. "Very pretty young girl." Ginger was 16 at the time and got married on stage right after the show. "Her mother was livid," says Rosa, "but she couldn't do anything about it. That was her first marriage. It didn't last."

The balloon burst in 1929 with the advent of "talkies." "I cried. We all cried," she says. "This was the end of our careers." Although orchestral overtures were still performed before the movies, full orchestras were not cost effective and many musicians were laid off. Rosa was under a union contract at the Strand Theatre in New Orleans during this time and played interludes and solos before and after the sound pictures. She says that the transition was particularly difficult for the theatres. Adapting to the new sound technology was expensive and many theatres went under.

Rosa speaks fondly of her time in New Orleans, with the exception of a devastating flood in 1929. Rosa and a few others were at the Saenger that day when the Mississippi River (about 15 blocks from the theatre) swelled. They quickly lifted the organ, but were not able to rescue the instruments before the rising water filled the orchestra pit. They were stuck for two days, using curtains for bedding.

Rosa moved back to New York and soon landed a job at the Brooklyn Fox (4/26 Wurlitzer, largest Crawford Special). No woman had ever played at the Fox—it was unusual for a woman to play in any large theatre. Rosa was a good sport about putting up with gender-related shenanigans. Her initiation to the Fox happened during the first rehearsal. Naughty words were written in the margin of her music. “They thought I was going to be prissy,” she says. “When I started laughing, the orchestra broke up and they knew I was one of the boys.”

George Weigl, the conductor of the Brooklyn Fox, worked with Rosa. To fill the large pit space, empty musician spots were filled with palm trees. “That business of cutting our orchestra from 55 to 14 was something unbelievable,” said Weigl. “Each time we played a show and I stood before the orchestra, instead of having the orchestra in the palms of my hands to direct them, I had my hands in a bunch of palms. But make music we did, with Rosa’s help, and they always raved about our orchestra; but few of those critics realized that it was our organist who made us sound well by arranging to fill in what we lacked. Our musicians, however, did, and they always speak of her now with great admiration and respect.”

Rosa’s classical training was instrumental in her resounding arrangements of pop music. “She is to the organ,” said Weigl, “what Arthur Fiedler is to the orchestra.” Rudy Vallee was a big admirer of Rosa’s and often stopped by just to hear the overture.

Theatres began closing and Rosa adapted by becoming a successful vocal coach and accompanist, one of the best in New York City. She teamed up with future Broadway star of *Peter Pan*, Mary Martin, on the audition circuit. Late one night, Mary sent a car for Rosa to whisk her to the Waldorf Astoria. Mary was called to audition for Cole Porter’s new show, *Red, Hot and Blue*, which eventually launched her career. In her autobiography, *My Heart Belongs*, Mary Martin writes, “All my life I have had a thing about accompanists. If they follow, and don’t lead, if they can change keys at the drop of a hat, if they can play wonderful chords, which tickle my imagination, I am happy. I can sing for hours. Rosa had all that I wanted and more.”

Rosa missed performing and auditioned at NBC as a staff organist. Eventually, she became one of the best-known radio organists. Rosa was dubbed “Queen of the Soaps,” having provided organ accompaniment for 24 soap operas and radio dramas, sometimes dashing from one studio to another with seconds between shows. On average, she played for five to seven shows per day.

Her prolific radio career began in frustration. She was hired by NBC as a temporary replacement while they searched for a man. “I asked them if they were looking for a man or an organist,” she says. She stayed for 22 years and was the first woman hired into an orchestra of 156 men. It would be ten years before another woman was hired. Veteran broadcaster, George Ansbro, author of *I Have a Lady in the Balcony: Memoirs of a Broadcaster*, worked with Rosa. “Rosa was the busiest of all the organists during those great days,” he wrote. “We worked together on *Between the Bookends* with Ted Malone and *Thy Neighbor’s Voice* with Robert Mills. What made Rosa stand out head and shoulders above most of the others in her trade was that besides being proficient and talented, which the others were, too, she brought great warmth and a remarkable sense of

humor to whatever studio she might be working in.”

Her radio shows included *Lorenzo Jones*, *Between the Bookends*, *Myrt & Marge*, *Ethel & Albert*, *Front Page Farrell*, *When a Girl Marries*, *Cavalcade of America*, and most notably, *The Shadow*, which starred Orson Welles (and later Robert Andrews, Bill Johnston and Bret Morrison). “Orson Welles was young and new at the game,” she recalls. “He was absolutely fabulous to work with and very funny. He would do impromptu sketches during intermission and have us all in stitches.” The main theme was from the symphony *The Spinning Wheel* by Camille Saint-Saens, but the rest of the original music and improvisation was left to Rosa’s imagination. Her eerie music, an integral element of the popular drama, made spines tingle week after week. During this time she also worked with Willard Scott, Victor Borge, John Forsythe, Jimmy Durante, Tony Randall, Jack Klugman, Keven McCarthy, Roddy McDowell, Lucille Ball and many others.

“Lucky for me,” she says, “that wonderful experience in original background music for the silent films was a great advantage for the radio dramas and soap operas.” In an article in *The Hammond Times* (Dec. 68/Jan 69) Rosa describes the process. “Clock watching was just as important in radio as it is in television today. My experience as an organist in mood music for silent movies gave me the instant background needed for the radio dramas. As organist, I could produce an orchestra sound or effect with the Hammond Organ. Since my rehearsal time was always limited, the director might allow eight seconds for a certain musical bridge, only to frantically signal me from the control room during airtime to cut it to four. This made it impossible to use printed music because I had to keep my eyes on the script, director, clock and the actors all at one time.”

Rosa also had her own show, *Rosa Rio Rhythms*, which was broadcast coast to coast and to the troops overseas during World War II. Which reminds her of a story . . .

When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, Rosa was called to the NBC studio at 2 a.m. “The whole place was in pandemonium,” she recalls. For ten hours, radio waves carried news reports as they arrived over the wire and Rosa played during the newsbreaks. “During the times when we couldn’t get anything over the wire, I was supposed to play, only I had to play appropriate music.”

On Sundays during the war, Rosa performed for shell-shocked veterans at Pelham Hospital. “It was so great to play for the boys,” she says. “Music was a therapy. The two most requested songs were ‘Begin the Beguine’ and ‘Stardust.’”

The Organist Entertains

The Organist Entertains is a weekly radio program broadcast on BBC Radio 2 in the United Kingdom and worldwide via the net. British organist Nigel Ogden hosts the show. You can listen to the show every Tuesday at 2000 hours UK time at www.bbc.co.uk/radio2.



Rosa Rio at the Charles Ringling mansion 3/43 Aeolian organ.

Changing entertainment technology changed Rosa's course once more as television began to predominate. She got jobs playing for *As the World Turns*, *The Today Show* and others. But she didn't enjoy television as much and there were not as many opportunities to make money.

Rosa and Bill (married in 1948) moved to Connecticut and opened the Rosa Rio Studio teaching organ, piano and voice. The pair also broadcast their own organ music and talk show, *Mr. & Mrs. Music* from there. While in Connecticut, she also created and recorded scores for 365 silent films for the Video Yesteryears collection.

After teaching for many years, Rosa began performing

again. She gratefully credits ATOS co-founder Dick Simonton with providing the opportunity to perform at concerts and conventions.

Among the many honors bestowed upon her:

- At the request of two Secretary Generals, U Thant and Dag Hammarskjöld, Rosa had the honor of two Command Performances before the United Nations General Assembly where she performed with Johnny Carson, Duke Ellington and Marlon Brando.
- Hall of Fame member of The American Theatre Organ Society.
- Honorary Member of The Detroit Theatre Organ Society.
- Honored at the 4th Annual Friends of Old Time Radio Convention.


- Honorary member of The American Guild of Organists Chapter in Clearwater, Florida.
- Honorary member of The Central Florida Theatre Organ Society.

Today, in between gigs at Tampa Theatre, Rosa teaches and performs both locally and nationally. She has taught theatre and silent film technique at two pipe organ workshops presented by the University of Colorado—one with Lew Williams and another with Ron Rhode. The next workshop takes place in June 2002.

Tampa Theatre organist and CFTOS member Cliff Shaffer has studied with Rosa for nearly seven years and warmly credits

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her with guiding him beyond the mechanics. "She teaches the correct way, but also enables you to feel the music," he says. "She opened up the door for me. Rosa knows how to put it all together. She has the ability to zero in on improving shortcomings and enhancing natural abilities."

Performing at Tampa Theatre is truly a joy for both Rosa and her fans. "Ms. Rio should be declared a national treasure along with Tampa Theatre," e-mailed Rich Chatterton after attending *The Cameraman*.

Make no mistake, Rosa sparkles in the limelight. "I was born with a show business ego," she says. But when watching Rosa perform and interact with the audience, it is profoundly evident that her joy comes from sharing her passion for music with others. Well-deserved standing ovations are the norm for Rosa at the Tampa Theatre. But she graciously returns the accolades: "I have such gratitude for the wonderful people who have such love for the theatre organ, silent pictures and Tampa Theatre."

"Rosa has been a real find for us, and a joy to work with," says John Bell, director of Tampa Theatre. "In addition to her considerable talents at the keyboard, she has brought to Tampa Theatre a professionalism and passion for her work that is rare in today's world. I remain anxious about every detail of a silent film presentation until Rosa takes over. Then I know I can relax because it's her show, and it's time to sit back and enjoy the ride."

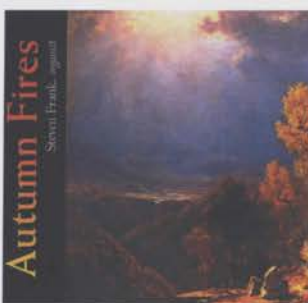
Rosa appeared at Tampa Theatre on August 26 accompanying *Sparrows*, starring Mary Pickford. "I pinch myself at having come full circle doing what I've loved most," she says. "My dream came true. I am truly blessed."

Recordings of Rosa Rio are available for purchase. Contact Bill Yeoman, 1847 Wolf Laurel Lane, Sun City Center, FL 33573.

By the way, the \$64,000 question is her age. Who cares? Or as she often quips, "Age is a number and mine's unlisted."

*Tara Schroeder is the film program manager at Tampa Theatre and one of Rosa's scores of fans.

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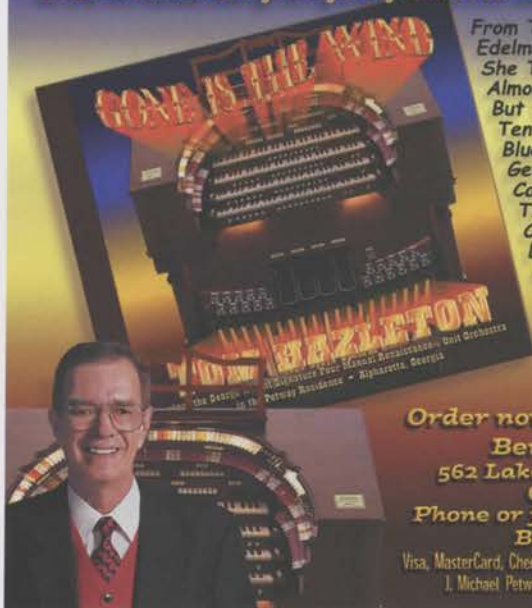
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FOR THE RECORDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

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MAID IN CHINA

Carol Williams



Although political relations between the United States and China have been somewhat rocky in recent months, it's encouraging to realize our cultural relations seem to be growing stronger all the time. Despite there not being a tradition of organ music in China, when Beijing's new Forbidden City Concert Hall was planned, provision was made for a magnificent three-manual Austin pipe organ (Opus 2779) with 53 speaking stops. Yes, the Concert Hall is actually inside the walls of the Forbidden City, adjacent to Tinamen Square and the Zhongshan Gardens! The organ's impressive case-work (on a platform 12 feet above center stage) is pictured on the album's cover and the specifications are included in the liner notes. Additional photos and details about the organ can be found in

the cover story of *The American Organist* for November 2000.

British organist Carol Williams (whose classical and “pop” albums have been reviewed in these pages—most recently her *Just Rags* CD in the September, 2000 issue,) who now resides in the United States, was the artist selected to play the organ's inaugural concerts in April 2000. The first concert presented both the organ and Beijing Symphony Orchestra while the second was a solo-organ performance. Seven of this 71 minute CD's 17 tracks were made during the live performances (we've indicated these with an asterisk after the selection title) and the balance were recorded soon thereafter. Carol's liner notes tell us “... (B)ecause there is no organ tradition in China, it was difficult to select music that would be suitable for such a historic occasion and at the same time be acceptable to audiences who had not previously savored music played on the King of Instruments.” Carol's fascinating choice of compositions runs the gamut from J. S. Bach to Jerry Herman with a surprising variety of musical styles. Some are the usual well loved “showcase standards”—but there are also a welcome number of fascinating pieces from some rarely heard 20th Century composers.

After the resonant stroke of a Chinese gong Carol's program opens with “the remorselessly buoyant” but inevitable “Tocatta” from Widor's *Fifth Symphony*. *Marco Enrico Bossi (1861–1925) wrote his challenging “Etude Symphonique”* to demonstrate an organist's pedal virtuosity and that it does! The next two selections were written by Bach in the early 1700s. First is his languorously melodic “Aria” from the *Suite in D*, which often, but somewhat erroneously, is called the “Air on the G String”—because one violinist decided he could play the whole piece on the lowest (G) string of his instrument! The other is his delightful “Fuga Sopra” (a melodious or light fugue) from the *Magnificent BWV 733*. A quite modern but completely fascinating “Tocatta” by Gavin Stevens (b. 1962) is next and then Carol plays “El Flautista Alagre” by Ramon Noble (b. 1925) which her notes quite accurately describe as “... a markedly gently (flute) composition from South America . . . that is singularly beautiful.”

Although he's better known for his

majestic orchestral works, Jean Sibelius' “Intrada” (written in 1925) is described as “. . . an ideal work (for) showing the grandeur of this Austin organ.” Indeed it does! Carol's next piece comes from a suite for wind instruments and was originally titled “Prince of Denmark's March.” Today we know it better as Jeremiah Clarke's “Trumpet Voluntary.”* Although he was world famous as a concert organist in the early 20th Century, Lynnwood Farnam wrote only this one piece for the organ. It's his quite brief but thrilling “Tocatta on O Filii et Filiae.” Lefebure-Wely (1817–1869) not only was a fine organist (serving for years at the Madeleine and then St. Sulpice churches in Paris) but an inventive composer who delighted in writing in unusually rhythmic, virtually theatrical, styles! His “Bolero de Concert” has a slow, seductive rhythm based on the Spanish dance said to have been invented by Sebastian Gerez about 1780!

Boellman's familiar, fiery “Tocatta”* from his *Suite Gothique* precedes one of the most delightfully surprising selections we've ever found on a classical organ disc. It's David Hellewell's recently composed jazzy “Land of Fire”* with its charmingly rhythmic, completely captivating melodies! In contrast is the warm, rich Richard Purvis arrangement of “Greensleeves.” Despite the fact he wrote over 200 songs, suites, operettas and symphonic poems, John Philip Sousa is best known for his 136 marches! Next is one of his best and it's one of many he wrote by request! “The Washington Post March” was composed for the awards ceremony following an essay contest sponsored by The Washington Post newspaper!

A footnote:

Although it may be stretching serendipity to its limits, in this issue are reviews of a classical CD made on the new Austin organ in Beijing, China and a new theatre organ album with the title *Xanadu*. AND, at the time those reviews were being written, the *National Geographic Magazine* (June 2001) published an article about Marco Polo's trip to China in the late 13th Century. That article points out specifically that Polo visited with Genghis Khan's grandson “. . . in Shangdu (also known as Xanadu), the sumptuous summer capital of the Mongol ruler Kublai Khan, and . . . to the new city Kublai was building—Daidu, today part of Beijing.”

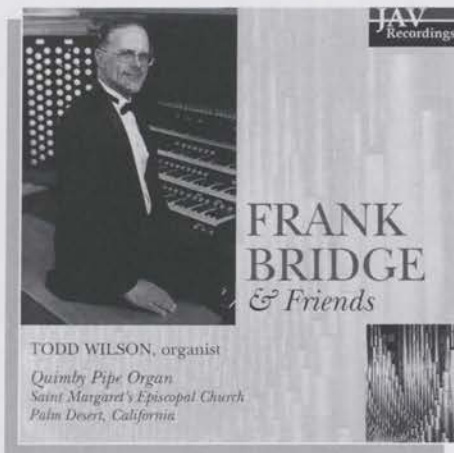
Another "American original" is next. Scott Joplin wrote, as critic Jim Svejda says, "... the subtle, infectious, endlessly inventive music ... (which), in essence, transformed the musical wallpaper of (the) turn of the century ... into a high and distinctively American art." Carol plays Joplin's "The Entertainer" and continues with an equally attractive version of Jerry Herman's ever-popular "Hello, Dolly."* From the live concert with the Beijing Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Tan Lihua, is the glorious "Finale"* the *maestoso-allegro* movements of Saint-Saen's "Third Organ Symphony."

Beijing's new concert hall is obviously a spacious, hard surfaced room in which the Austin organ comes off as warm and rich in tone and it has a remarkable clarity. Ms Williams' wide range of music in this program is completely satisfying and Alfred Buttler's recording (with assistance from Bill Greenwood and mastering by Jim Stemke) is excellent. Classical organ buffs will certainly find it to be a listening delight.

Compact disc only for \$20.00 (postpaid) from Carol Williams, P.O. Box 189, New York, NY 10101-0189.

FRANK BRIDGE & FRIENDS

Todd Wilson



Todd Wilson serves as Music Director and Organist at the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Cleveland and is Head of the Organ Department at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Also he has concertized throughout North America and Europe and has a half dozen recordings to his credit. On his newest CD Mr. Wilson is playing the recently installed Quimby organ of four

manuals and about 70 speaking stops at St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Palm Desert, California.

This organ, as the album's detailed liner notes state, was designed "... to blend general contemporary American ideas (including an unapologetic appreciation for the work of Skinner and Aeolian-Skinner) with ... other organ building traditions, particularly those of 19th- and early 20-century England ... an organ that will not only 'do church' but will do it with style ... (and) will offer an organist many color alternatives ... (and) have an essential grandeur and heroic nature ... (and) bathe an acoustically dry room with warm tone."

This organ is voiced on 5" to 25" of wind and has four 32' voices (Lieblichgedeckt, Contra Bombarde, Contra Trombone and a 32' Resultant Open Wood). It is mostly enclosed in expression boxes and boasts a number of brilliant solo reed voices along with its solid foundation stops and rich orchestral ensembles. (The organ's interesting specifications are printed in the liner notes.) While it can handle a wide variety of organ literature, it's particularly effective playing the "transitional" early 20th Century literature, which is featured on this album.

Two-thirds of this album's 75 minutes are devoted to presenting the several organ pieces written by Frank Bridge (1879-1941). Although Bridge wrote very little music for the organ (he was principally a violinist, orchestra conductor at Covent Garden, composer and teacher) the liner notes tell us "(h)is organ music, spanning as it does the years 1905 to 1939 ... reveals the shift in his style from ... romanticism to a neo-classicism reminiscent of his own contemporary, Stravinsky." Musicologist Jim Svejda describes his compositions as "... utterly distinctive: clear-headed, manly, subtle..."

Bridge's selections are arranged in chronological order beginning with his "Three Pieces" and "Organ Pieces, Book 1." Both were written in 1905. While sections of these compositions are moody, mystical, and meditative (in what might be called the English Romantic tradition) there is a silky, rich smoothness, transparent clarity and lightness that is almost "impressionistic." In 1912 Bridge wrote his "Organ Pieces,

Book 2" which, while still rich and warm, seem to have a bit more aggressiveness, as does his brief (just 2 1/2 minutes) "In Memoriam C. H. H. Parry" from 1918. Bridge's final organ composition, "Three Pieces" was written in 1939 and, while certainly not in any way dissonant (as are many "modern" organ compositions) is definitely more neo-classic with very few romantic hints.

The "Friends" section of this disc has one composition each from six composers who were students of Bridge or his teacher, Charles Villiers Stanford—or were influenced by them. First is a brilliant, rather modern sounding "Prelude in C" by Sir Edward Bairstow which is followed by Benjamin Britten's only published organ composition, a fiery "Prelude and Fugue on a Theme of Vittoria." While Britten is best known for his operas, he studied with Bridge and the liner notes tell us "It was Bridge who disciplined Britten's juvenile (he was 11) talent and drilled into him the craft, facility and technique that would serve him so well in later years."

Organist John Nicholson Ireland wrote the next selection, "Elegiac Romance" which is starkly simple at its opening, becomes plaintively melodic, and finally warmly vigorous before a quiet ending. The bright, brassy, bouncy "Tuba Tune" is by Craig Sellar Lang. Sir William Walton wrote his *Façade*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 47



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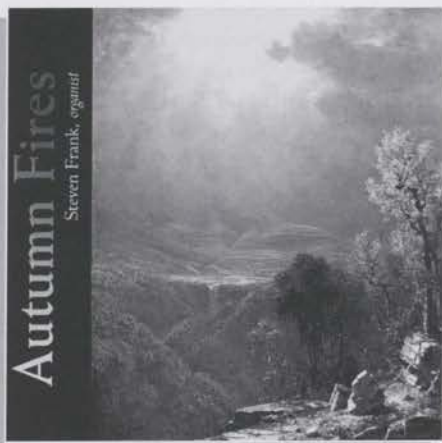
Suite in the early 1920s; it's charming "Popular Song" is followed by the album's closing composition, Percy William Whitlock's lovely, though sparse "After an Old French Air (Reflections No. 1)" which has a decidedly English folk song flavor!

The entire disc is an appealing collection from the British repertoire. Mr. Wilson gives a superb performance throughout. This organ's solo voices and ensembles have an orchestral richness along with classical brightness and solid foundations that makes it a joy to hear. Although the room does not have the usual cathedral roll-around sound, it has a warm spaciousness that makes for delightful listening. It's highly recommended for the classical organ buffs who favor the romantic/neo-classical repertoire.

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AUTUMN FIRES

Steven Frank



Yes, that is an unusual title for an organ album. Actually, it's the title of a selection heard on this unusual disc of mostly out-of-the-ordinary classical organ music. Steven Frank is a well-known New York organist who studied with the now legendary Virgil Fox (and has been a featured performer at the annual Virgil Fox Memorial Concerts) and is a graduate of the Guilman Organ School. The organ heard on this CD is

the four-manual near 100 rank Allen Renaissance R-450 instrument in St. Martin of Tours Roman Catholic Church in Amityville, New York.

As the album's liner notes tell us, "...this wonderful Allen organ... can do anything. Loud to soft, humorous to serious, soup to nuts—this organ has it all... and is very unique in its design. The entire organ can sound from any or all of three locations in the church—right transept, left transept, and rear gallery. The solo division (played from the fourth manual) can play from the same locations independently from the rest of the organ." The liner notes have the organ's complete specifications and also indicate which "... stops were redefined after the original installation by using a laptop computer and Allen Renaissance™ Dove™ voicing software."

This 69-minute disc opens with David German's grandly eloquent "Festive Trumpet Tune" and continues with a 9-minute stunning transcription of Anton Rubinstein's "Kamenoi Ostrow"—one of many piano pieces he composed which musically describe the idyllic beauty of the landscape around a country estate in Russia. From Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* Mr. Frank plays the "Humming Chorus." Pinkerton's ship has finally returned and, as Butterfly, her child and maid await his arrival at twilight, "... a melancholy hummed chorus (is) sung in slow, sweeping phrases over a plaintive melody..." A poignant prelude to the tragedy coming in the morning.

Next are five brief (each is just two minutes or less) musical settings by composer John Leavitt to a few of the poems Robert Louis Stevenson wrote for *A Child's Garden of Verse*. Each is a delightfully charming musical interpretation (the words are included in the liner notes) of "Autumn Fires," "Rain," "The Cow," "The Moon," and "Pirate Story." And those pirates are more naughty than nasty! Alex Rowley's "Pavan" is stately and slow but warm and rich while the "Incantation" from R. Spaulding Stoughton's *In India* has just a touch of Oriental mysticism. Intermezzos are usually a light entertainment between more serious material and Hermann Schroeder's "Intermezzo VI" is brief but a genuine ripsnorter!

In fascinating contrast is organist Louis Vierne's soothing and gentle

"Berceuse." Tchaikovsky is a staple for theatre organists but is rarely heard in a classical organ recital. Nevertheless Mr. Frank plays a delightfully theatrical "Arabian Dance" from *The Nutcracker*. Dvorak surely had an effortless gift of melody. His "Songs My Mother Taught Me" is certainly one of his most beautiful. Wilhelm Middleschulte's virtuoso pedal solo "Perpetual Motion" is heard in the dramatic Virgil Fox arrangement and leads into Mr. Fox's dramatic, symphonic arrangement of Bach's "Come, Sweet Death." A rarely heard *tour de force* concludes the album. It's Belgian composer Joseph Jongen's "Toccata-Finale" to the *Symphonie Concertante*. Virgil Fox was the first to record this (with the Paris Opera Orchestra on Capitol LP 8573) and Mr. Frank has wonderfully transcribed it for solo organ. It is, without doubt, one of the most powerful, hard driving pieces of music ever written. Musicologist Jim Svejda describes it as "... the rafter-rattling 'Toccata' that will shake any loose putty from the window and terrify the car."

In summary—this is not the usual classical album for it is filled with

WANTED

ASSISTANT REVIEWER FOR AUDIO, VIDEO AND BOOK REVIEWS

From time to time, Ralph Beaudry needs an assistant to help him review the large number of recordings, videos and books that are sent to him to be reviewed for the Journal. The position of Assistant Reviewer is open to all ATOS members who are interested in applying. Please send your resumé to Ralph Beaudry, 1119 N. Louise #5, Glendale, CA 91207.

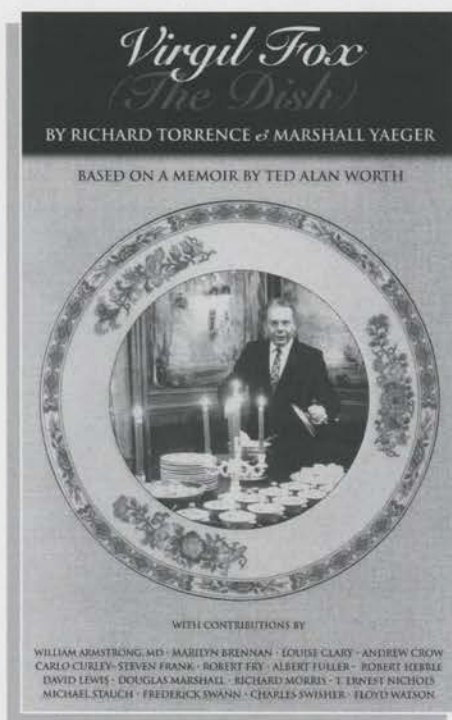
wonderful music that theatre organ devotees with only a slight acceptance of the classical literature can surely enjoy. The Allen organ and spacious church beautifully complement each other and the recording is excellent. Highly Recommended.

The CD is \$20.00 (postpaid) from Allen Organ Studios, Inc., 44 Jericho Turnpike #3, Mineola, NY 11501-2930. Charge orders on VISA, MasterCard, Discover and AmEx are accepted. You may FAX your order to (516) 741-3725 or place your order on-line at www.allenorgans-nyc.com.

BOOK REVIEW

VIRGIL FOX: THE DISH

Richard Torrance & Marshall Yaeger
Based on a memoir by Ted Alan Worth
Lew Williams, Guest Reviewer



It's probably safe to say that after meeting Virgil Fox, most everyone came away with an anecdote or two to pass along to friends. Fox, whose hairy-chested approach to classical organ playing won innumerable friends for the instrument, was once described by *New York Times* critic Harold Schonberg as "the P. T. Barnum of the organ." His more modest colleagues abhorred his show business flair and showmanship, but Fox was unfazed. "Honey, they may talk

about me, but I'm the cookie that gets the concerts," he would enthuse.

This long-awaited book is the work of several people. Concert organist Ted Alan Worth was the principal contributor, whose rough draft was edited by Richard Torrance and Marshall Yaeger, Fox's business and publicity managers. Over 400 pages in length, it's full of enough facts, tidbits and morsels to keep Fox fans between the covers for several days. Additional recollections are included from friends and co-workers, notably composer Robert Hebble, who assisted Fox at Riverside Church in New York and prepared his arrangements for publication, and theatre organist Andrew Crow, who drove the truck that carried Fox's Rodgers touring organ.

Through the narrative of Ted Alan Worth, we follow his own growth and development as a student organist in San Francisco until the first time he heard Virgil Fox in concert. The two became fast friends for the rest of their lives. The reader is soon privy to all the facets of Fox's character. His stinginess with money (charging houseguests for their refreshments), could also be offset by generosity (offering a free organ lesson here and there). His need to be noticed at all times (the famous cape, the jeweled shoes, mirrors provided when the organ console was hidden from the audience's view, window shopping in New York while wearing a turban) was the manifestation of a larger-than-life personality now common among rock stars, but never before seen in the classical organ world.

Throughout his life, Fox amassed a close circle of friends, mostly other organists and colleagues, that blended into an extended family, he was fortunate to have the astute Richard Torrance as his business manager. Torrance, who masterminded the Heavy Organ organ-and-light show in the early 1970s and helped Fox to garner top fees, was largely responsible for Fox's abundant popularity during his 17 years guiding his career.

Much about Fox is garnered from the reminiscences of his many friends. Ted Worth describes in detail the many concert tours, recording sessions, and the general good fun of being in Virgil's presence. Former pupil T. Ernest Nichols offers a fascinating discussion of Fox's playing technique. Dr. William Arm-

strong, Fox's personal physician in San Francisco, relates both his friendship with the organist and the discovery of the cancer that ultimately cost Fox his life. And Robert Hebble's poignant description of Virgil's final illness and death will surely bring tears. A comprehensive listing of the major events in Fox's life is in the Appendix. A few small errors of fact crop up here and there in Worth's text, but not enough to detract from the general flow.

The book bills itself as a "warts and all" account of Fox, "an irreverent biography." This is partially true: It is more a biography of Ted Alan Worth and a memoir of Virgil Fox from their first acquaintance. They were both openly gay men, and very comfortable with the fact at a time when such an attitude was far from the norm (Fox remarked, "Life is too short to live a lie"). The reader thus learns much about Fox's stormy relationship with domestic partner Richard Weagley, Director of Music at Riverside Church, and the infatuation with "David," whose place and influence in Fox's private affairs ultimately cost him his management with Richard Torrance in the last year of his life. Worth also details his own courtship and love affair with Reid Betten, who later became his business partner. Several other anecdotes about Fox's habits, while titillating in the short run, end up just being smarmy and do nothing to enhance the book or his memory. It is small stuff compared to other lurid showbiz biographies, but still warrants a PG-13 rating.

Fox fans will definitely want this book as a souvenir. Anyone who ever met him or heard him play will surely recognize his or her old friend in these pages. Fox's legacy was, and will remain, the many recordings he left and the memories of those who heard him play live. He was, like pianists Vladimir Horowitz or Arthur Rubinstein, the last of his kind, with a blazing Romantic temperament that said, in Fox's own words, "Honey, don't play what the compose wrote! Play what the composer meant!"

Virgil Fox: The Dish sells for \$35.00 (postpaid in the US) and can be ordered from Circles International, 20 W. 64th Street, #32P, New York, NY 10023. Orders can be faxed to (212) 496-7683 and ordered by e-mail from jrtorrence@aol.com.

Chapter News

ATTENTION ALL CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS: The deadline for receiving Chapter News items for the January/February issue is November 5, 2001. If possible, send all text via e-mail. **Be sure to include the name, telephone number and e-mail address of your chapter president, as well as the name of the principal city of operation for your chapter.** You are reminded that it is the ATOS Board of Directors' Policy that your article not include a list of titles of the music played at programs, or a list of the menu items served at chapter functions. Because there is so much variation in the quality of electronic photos, it is requested that all photos be sent to the editor via the postal service. Thank you for your cooperation.

THURMAN ROBERTSON



Rick McGee played concert on Alabama Theatre 4/25 Wurlitzer on May 13, 2001 for Alabama Chapter Meeting.

ALABAMA

Dan Liles, President, 205/669-9322

Birmingham, Alabama. The Alabama Chapter met at the Alabama Theatre on May 14 at 2 p.m. Rick McGee from Atlanta was our guest artist. He gave a concert featuring quiet melodies to stirring march music on the theatre's 4/25 Jessie Crawford Publix 1 Wurlitzer. Attendance included chapter members and guests. Rick is an old friend to the Alabama Chapter and has played several concerts for us over the years.

On June 17, the chapter presented Danny Brooke, also from Atlanta, in concert. Danny is former President of the Atlanta Chapter. When not playing church or theatre organ, Danny manages a hospital computer software program. Danny was playing the organ at age 10 and at 12 years was playing the organ at his church. His selections reflected his love for church as well as theatre organ.

Danny's wife, Lori, is quite a musician also. She sang a delightful solo and played a medley of Irish tunes on an instrument called a 'Tin Whistle' accompanied by the organ.

THURMAN ROBERTSON



Danny and Lori Brooke played organ and piano and tonet duets with 4/25 Wurlitzer on June 17, 2001 for Alabama Chapter Meeting.

The Saturday organ crew, directed by Larry Donaldson, continues work in an effort to have our organ in great shape for the Tom Hazleton concert on September 16, 2001.

Virginia Robertson

AUSTRALIA FELIX

Graham Ward, President
INT + 618 8387 1554

Adelaide, South Australia. Eric Wicks, our founding President, died recently. I have known him for many years—ever since the first days of the Victorian Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia. Eric and I shared a profound admiration for the outstanding musicianship of the doyen of Australian Theatre organists, Horace Weber, who opened the Style 260 Wurlitzer organ in the Capitol Theatre in Melbourne in 1924, after playing smaller instruments in that city and previously in Adelaide. The cinema—the only one of its kind in

the world, and in the opinion of some architectural critics, the finest—and its organ became bywords throughout Australia. Horace, who had been appointed assistant organist at Adelaide's St. Peter's Cathedral when he was just 12 years if age, was still able to make magnificent music in his mid eighties. His pedal skills were legendary and he frequently carried the melody line with his feet while he supplied the ornamentation with both hands. More than anyone else, Eric befriended and supported a lonely old man in his final years—fostering a revival in interest in theatre organ music and in Horace's talents as well.

Eric couldn't stand second rate playing. He rightly believed that one poor performance could do enormous damage to the perception of the theatre organ as a serious musical instrument, and he became a trenchant but always respected critic. It gave him great pleasure in his last involvement in a theatre organ event to be part of the Easter convention of TOSA in Brisbane, even though he was quite ill. The fine sound of the relatively small Christie was part of this, but Nola, his partner of very many years, told me that his chief joy had been that he was able to express his unreserved admiration of the musicianship of Richard Hills directly to Richard himself. Praise from such a man was praise indeed, for many found him acerbic and his participation in meetings could be painful for the other members. These traits, however, sprang from his lifelong love affair with the theatre organ and his determination that it deserved only the best. During my Presidency of the Australian Felix Chapter, he was unfailingly supportive. I am very far from the only person who will miss him.

Members, particularly those of Norcal, will be sorry to learn that Edward (Ted) Lloyd of Adelaide is very ill with mesothelioma, contracted when he inhaled asbestos fibers in the course of his employment. Ted has also had a lifelong love of the theatre organ, and he played an active part in the years of self-sacrifice and hard work which gave his home city its two fine TOSA organs—the 2/12 Wurlitzer in Wyatt Hall and the 4/29 in the Capri theatre. When I visited him at home recently, he was openly weeping at the beauty of the string ranks

of the Capri instrument to which he was listening. We wish him well.

Brian Pearson

BUFFALO AREA

Greg Nellist, President, 716/798-1928

Buffalo, New York. The Buffalo Area Chapter provided a variety of theatre organ activities in May that catered to both the young and young at heart. First, our program for school children was held on May 17. Organist Len Rawle from the United Kingdom gave a fascinating demonstration of the Shea's Performing Arts Center 4/28 Wurlitzer to



The next generation of theatre organ enthusiasts.

over 2000 students from the Buffalo Public Schools. A short silent movie called *The Boat* was also shown during the hour-long program to demonstrate how theatre organs were originally used. The students were very attentive during the program and seemed awe struck by the sights and sounds surrounding them. For many in attendance, this was their first encounter with a theatre organ, but judging from their reactions, it won't be their last.

Our next event was held on Sunday, May 20 at Shea's where we continued our regular concert series. Len Rawle worked his magic at the Wurlitzer and provided a thoroughly enjoyable concert for all in attendance. This will surely be a concert long remembered.

On Monday, May 21, Len Rawle presented a theatre organ registration class at Shea's. Members were treated to an insightful discussion on various subjects from theatre organ construction and operation to stop selection and playing techniques. After a brief question and answer period, members were treated to an afternoon of open console at the Wurlitzer. The organ sounded magnificent and worked flawlessly for the entire week of events.

Many of our members traveled to

nearby Lockport, New York Monday evening to hear our 18-year-old member Justin Nimmo play his debut theatre organ concert. Justin presided at the Lockport Theatre Organ Society's 2/8 Wurlitzer. The program included songs both new and old plus a short silent film. Justin is not only a very talented young artist, but he also helps to maintain the Lockport organ. We look forward to hearing Justin again.

Many thanks go out to all of the people and organizations that made these events so successful. The Buffalo Area Chapter is working hard in cooperation with other local clubs to provide more exciting activities and concerts for the summer and fall of 2001. Please check our web site www.theatreorgans.com/bac-atos for the latest schedule of events. We invite everyone to come out and enjoy the variety of theatre organ events that Western New York has to offer!

Andrew W. Wos

CENTRAL FLORIDA

Bill Shrive, President, 727/546-0564

Tampa, Florida. In May our chapter invited the public to our meeting and open house at the Tampa Theatre. After a short meeting our own Rosa Rio and Cliff Shaffer, one of the pre-show organists at the Tampa Theatre, presented a piano-organ program. It was a wonderful concert, which featured Rosa Rio at the Mason and Hamlin concert grand and Cliff Shaffer at the Tampa Theatre's 3/12 Wurlitzer. The two played beautiful arrangements separately on the piano and organ plus several piano-organ duets. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the program. After the concert our President, Bill Shrive, announced that Rosa Rio was made an honorary member of the chapter in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the chapter and the Tampa Theatre. We are pleased that the meeting was a great success and that several people joined the chapter. Also a large donation was made to the ongoing restoration and upkeep of the Tampa Theatre Wurlitzer.

Work is moving right along on the Pinellas Park Wurlitzer. The four-rank main chest should be installed within the next month and the five-rank chest is almost ready. We now can see the light at the end of the tunnel and hopefully



Rosa Rio happily responds after being informed by CFTOS president Bill Shrive that she has been made an honorary member of the chapter.

ELOISE OTTERSON



Cliff Shaffer on the Tampa Theatre's 3/12 Wurlitzer and Rosa Rio at the Mason and Hamlin concert grand entertain at the chapter's meeting and open house in May.

we will hear some music soon.

In June we held a combined meeting with the Manasota Chapter at Grace Baptist Church in Sarasota. Our artist was Steve Brittain, member and also a pre-show organist at the Tampa Theatre. Steve presented a beautiful program on the Manasota Chapter's 4/32 Wurlitzer. What a treat to see and hear this magnificent instrument.

Sandy Hobbis

CENTRAL INDIANA

Thomas A. Nichols, President, 317/844-3712, thomasnichols@prodigy.net

Indianapolis, Indiana. The Central Indiana Chapter has continued its flurry of activity throughout May and June. Unlike the past few months, we were able to fit in a membership meeting during both months. Our normal meeting date is the second Sunday, but in May, that falls on Mother's day. The theatre organ may be a big part of our members' world, but mom still takes priority. The



Tim Needler at the Paramount Page console.

May meeting was therefore on the third Sunday and was held at the Paramount Theatre in Anderson. ATOS 2001 Convention Chairperson, Tim Needler, has had a full hat rack over the past months planning for a little event-taking place in August, but placed the planning cap back on the hook in favor of headgear as meeting artist. No one in the audience would have known it was Tim's first time at the gleaming gold console of the 3/12 Page, since its restoration and re-installation in 1996, had he not shared this fact. The members in attendance, along with a large number of guests, were entertained with selections from Cole Porter and Hoagy Carmichael to name only a couple.

During open console many kept the chambers of the Page singing. One notable soul was Mark Herman, a member from Fort Wayne. Thirteen-year-old Mark hopped on the bench and filled the house with his wonderful arrangements! Also during open console, a few people from the neighboring ballroom facility, who were attending a big-band dance, were lured in by sounds of the theatre pipe organ for a look at who and what were creating such marvelous music.

Returning to the normal second Sunday meeting date, we convened at the Warren Performing Arts Center in June. After the business meeting, which of course was focused on the little event Mr. Needler's hat rack was so busy with, Scott Smith of Lansing, Michigan put the 3/18 Barton to the test. A true Barton man, Scott expertly showed off the diversity and range of music this instrument can produce. Many of the musical selections reflected his study with the late Father Jim Miller, who would definitely be pleased with Scott's performance. His arrangements showcased a jazzy style that was a real treat for those in attendance.

June 23 was a special Saturday for Indiana theatre organ enthusiasts. This day marked the 20th anniversary concert for local favorite, Ken Double, at the Long Center in Lafayette. Yes, for the twentieth straight June, Ken brought the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer up from the pit to entertain a large audience of loyal fans. With the special significance of this concert, a matinee show was added to accommodate the huge interest. During the second half, the Long Center All-Stars Big Band took the stage. This group of remarkably talented musicians first wowed the audience on their own, then, showing their range of abilities, accompanied the man of the evening as he returned to the bench of the Wurlitzer.

Much work has taken place during May and June in efforts to continue improvements to the instruments maintained by the Central Indiana Chapter. Without the volunteer efforts of many members, including Carlton Smith, Barb Johnson, Bill Luecht, Mike Rolfe, Ron English, Phil Underwood, Jason Young, Todd Saul, Michael Fellenzer, Tim Needler, Keith Mikesell, Cy McNutt, Josi Beeler, Virginia Beck, Kevin Ruschhaupt, John Ennis, Ken Double, and Tom Nichols, these projects and many other 'somebody has to do it' tasks wouldn't be accomplished, and our chapter wouldn't run like a well-oiled machine!

Finally, we want to extend a Hoosier welcome to all of our new members. There are so many that we would run out of room trying to list them all here.

Shawn Chase

CENTRAL MINNESOTA OTTER TAIL

Richard Baker, President
218/736-3006, rbaksr@ptel.com

Fergus Falls, Minnesota. The Center For The Arts audience will again have the opportunity of having Dan Aune performing on the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre organ. Dan dazzled those in attendance last year with his artistry. Working toward a Master's Degree in organ performance at Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, Dan is an Underwood, Minnesota native, a



Dan Aune

graduate of Hillcrest Academy in Fergus Falls and also Concordia College in Moorehead, Minnesota. The first part of the evening's performance will consist of classical and semi-classical selections, while the second half will be music written by Irving Berlin.

In June, eight members of Ottertail Chapter traveled to Fargo, North Dakota to attend a concert by Tom Hazleton at the Fargo Theatre. We all truly enjoyed the wonderful playing by this accomplished organist.

Brown Bag Lunch concerts at the theatre are scheduled for July 27 and August 24. August 10 and 11 will be Silent Movie Nights at the center with Lance Johnson playing for these events.

The July meeting of the chapter will again be held at the lake home of Myron Dahle in Battle Lake. This fun and informal afternoon is our third annual potluck picnic at the Dahle home.

On October 9, the center will be featuring concert and recording artist Don Thompson on the Mighty Wurlitzer. Mr. Thompson will also be conducting a workshop for area organists.

Berta Baker

CENTRAL OHIO

John Adams, President, 740/474-3362

Columbus, Ohio. The month of June saw COTOS members on a road trip to Northeast Ohio. We were privileged to visit two fine residence installations and had the opportunity to listen to and play both of these organs.

The first stop was Baltic, Ohio, home of Dorothy Steiner's 3/16 mostly Wurlitzer organ. The original nucleus of this instrument was Opus 1684, a Style B, originally installed in the Parmele Theatre, Plattsburgh, Nebraska. It has since undergone many upgrades and additions, including a three-manual console, a 10-hp blower, many additional ranks, and an upright piano.

Dorothy started the afternoon with a short program, then, turned the console over to her visitors. There were several players, and the selections included solo organ, organ and piano duets, and finally a trio of two organs and piano, with Dorothy playing her Conn electronic.

From there we traveled a few miles north to Sugar creek, Ohio, where Opus 1297 now lives, generously sharing its home with Gary and Mary Davies, new

COTOS members. It is a Style CH, first installed in St. Patrick's Church, Bellefontaine, Ohio. The original Dulciana was replaced with a Vox Humana, and a Toy Counter and percussions were added—all Wurlitzer. It has also been augmented with a Barton Glockenspiel and Robert-Morton Xylophone. The two-manual console has given way to a three-manual Wurlitzer console, which also controls the player piano beside it. Gary warmed us up with a few selections, and again the members took over for the rest of the afternoon.

Although playing quite well, the Davies' organ is a work in progress, with Gary preparing another three rank chest. This will allow him to add a Clarinet, Kinura, and Trumpet. Future plans are in place for an Orchestral Oboe, VDO, and Celeste, at which point he feels it will be complete—at least until another tempting rank surfaces.

Back at home in Columbus, we have begun a new maintenance program for our chapter organ, Wurlitzer Opus 1407, a Style 260SP. Originally installed in the Keith Theatre (now the Palace Theatre) in downtown Columbus, it was removed in the early 1970s. Several years later chapter members moved it to the Hottenroth Center for the Performing Arts at Thomas Worthington High School, Worthington, Ohio. It has been playing in this northern suburb of Columbus since then. We will begin the program with a general cleaning of the chambers and access walkways. From there we plan to identify and fix problems with dead or poorly speaking pipes and, finally,

address some possible winding issues in a few of the ranks. All of this is an interim solution while we accumulate funds for a complete restoration and addition of a computerized relay.

Preliminary plans are in place for a silent movie presentation in September on the COTOS Wurlitzer by Tom Hamilton. Pictures of Opus 1407, and the Steiner and Davies installations can be seen on our web site at <http://www.theatreorgans.com/cotos/>.

John Burns

CHICAGO AREA

John Peters, President, 847/470-0743

Chicago, Illinois. On Saturday, May 19, CATOE held a business meeting in the beautifully renovated George Cardinal Mundelein Auditorium on the St. Mary of the Lake University campus. The election results were: President—John Peters, Secretary—Joseph Russo and Director—Hal Pritchard. Ron Reseigh, resident organist of the Organ Piper Music Palace near Milwaukee presented an excellent program on the 4/19 Howell-Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ.

On Sunday, June 2, Dennis Scott performed on CATOE's 3/10 Wurlitzer. The program was dedicated to the late John Muri, who spent much of his silent movie career at this organ when it was installed in the Indiana Theatre in East Chicago.

At a Board of Directors meeting held June 29 at the Gateway Theatre, it was announced that a preservation group had been formed to save and renovate the Hinsdale Theatre. The group wishes to retain the Jim Glass 3/28 Kimball while reducing the theatre to 499 seats on the main floor and a smaller screen on a yet-to-be built balcony. Small boutiques would flank the entrance.

After the July 4 parade in Hinsdale,

Don Springer played the organ for the preservation group and interested spectators.

Hal Pritchard

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Jon Sibley, President, 860/345-2518

Thomaston, Connecticut. Connecticut Valley celebrated the fortieth anniversary of its founding with a gala birthday party at Thomaston Opera House on Sunday, February 24. Chapter founder, Allen Miller, gave the celebration concert. His keyboard stylings, combined with a display of vintage posters, colorful balloons and delicious birthday cake, made for an afternoon of fun and nostalgia. Allen has devoted countless hours to the Thomaston organ and it was heartwarming to see him enjoying the fruits of his labors.

Long time CVTOS member, Wade Bray (now a resident of Michigan), particularly enjoyed the open console part of the program. Wade appeared in the highly successful Pipe Organ Jamboree held several years ago. He was warmly welcomed by old friends and his playing made it seem like we were having two concerts in one afternoon!

During the very brief business meeting, Mary Jane Bates received the traditional plaque honoring her two years as chapter president. The afternoon ended with a birthday dinner held in the banquet room of a Thomaston restaurant. Balloons and sparkling table decorations made the event special.

On Sunday March 11, Walt Strony gave a concert at Thomaston. Our New England weather cooperated (for a change!) and the concertgoers were rewarded with an excellent concert by one of today's top theatre organists.

Clark Wilson was the featured artist at Thomaston on Sunday June 3. Rainy

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Walt Strony at the Thomaston Opera House Marr & Colton.

weather did not discourage theatre organ enthusiasts from attending this fine concert. Clark's program included selections to please all ages. Connecticut Valley feels fortunate to have had two of our finest artists appear at Thomaston this year to date.

Mary Jane Bates

DAIRYLAND

Gary Hanson, President, 414/529-1177

Racine/Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Our annual Ice Cream Social was once again held at the Menomonee Falls home of Jim and Dorothy Petersen on Sunday, May 20. The guest artist was Ron Reseigh, who is the featured organist at the Organ Piper Restaurant. He delighted us with many of our favorites but received the most applause when he played an original composition that he hopes to have published soon.

A unique event happened during this social! Two people who are very active in DTOS became engaged! Scott Bilot, who maintains the organ at the Avalon Theatre, and Rebecca Layton met two years ago at the Ice Cream Social at the Petersen's and have been dating ever since. Scott thought it would be appropriate to also become engaged at the

same event. Who knows, maybe at next year's Ice Cream Social they'll get married!

The June social was held Sunday the 24th at Lake Geneva at the home of Fred Gollnick. Fred has a 2/15 Barton and the guest artist was Jerry Rosenberg, who plays an informal recital at Fred's once a month—year 'round. A two-story addition was built on the home just for the organ, complete with a small balcony.

On Sunday, July 1, a special concert was held at the Racine Theatre Guild where they have a seven-rank Wurlitzer. It was titled, "A Musical Tribute to the Fourth" and featured DTOS member Bill Campbell as the organist. Bill has played concerts in New York and Illinois and also was Chairman of the 2000 Annual ATOS Convention. The concert also was dedicated to the memory of the late John Muri, who died in April at the age of 94. John played the first concert for DTOS at the Capitol Theatre in Racine in 1969 when this same organ was installed there. He also played it again for the dedication when it was installed at the Racine Theatre Guild. Bill's program included some of John Muri's trademark music as well as patriotic selections.

Sandy Knuth

EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Hank Lysaght, President, 781/235-9009

Wellesley, Massachusetts. On May 6 member Ed Wawrzynowicz played a mini-concert on our Wurlitzer in Richard Knight Auditorium on the Babson College campus. He played a nice mix of Broadway show tunes, Latin selections, popular music and a medley of waltzes. Ed has a relaxed style of playing and made for "easy listnin'."

Colored flyers are given out at concerts. We now have both a folding and a tabbing machine to assist in their preparation. We have received considerable favorable comments on our colored handouts and posters produced for the first time in connection with our last concert by Phil Kelsall in April.

(Note: Secretary, Carolyn Wilcox, gave the writer, in his absence, certain details about our May social for this brief report.)

Stanley C. Garniss

GARDEN STATE

Dr. Catherine Martin, President, 201/256-5480

Trenton, New Jersey. The month of May has been a very interesting time for our chapter. For five years we have sponsored special educational events, which involve grammar school children. A very important goal of ATOS is the education of our general public. In 1995 GSTOS President Cathy Martin and husband Bob Martin invited to their home the superintendent and two school principals of the Little Falls School System. The educators were introduced to our unique American Art Form, that is, the musical world of Theatre Pipe Organ. The history of the American Theatre Organ Society and our Garden State Chapter was included. Discussion revolved around ways to introduce the school children to Theatre Organ, including music education, age and grade of the children, and travel to the Martin's home. A satisfying agreement was reached. Each year, all third grade students will be accompanied by their teachers and will walk a short distance to the Martin's home. This program has been very successful for five years.

Friday June 1, a bright sunny day, had 80 happy eight year-old students walking

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School children of the 3rd grade Little Falls School actively listening to organist and teacher Ralph Ringstad.



Four students following Ralph's directions played "Mary Had a Little Lamb."



Ralph Ringstad helping one of the 80 Little Falls students play and enjoy the 3/24 Griffith Beach pipe organ in Bob and Cathy Martin's home.



Ashley Miller at the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the home of Everett and Cathie Oliver. View from the balcony.

to Bob and Cathy's home. Climbing stairs they entered a large music room (35' x 55'), which contains the white and gold 3/24 Griffith Beach theatre pipe organ. They briefly toured the chambers then settled themselves on the floor in

front of the big console. Professional organist Ralph Ringstad greeted all and began a skillful demonstration explaining the sound of pipes. A clever sound aid was blowing across the top of plastic soda bottles. Time flew with Ralph play-

ing the organ and answering the surprising amount of questions by the children. A charming quintet of boys and girls managed to blow into pipes (coached by Ralph) and we recognized "Mary had a Little Lamb." Ralph then accompanied a silent film *Barney Oldfield's Race for Life* using all the train sounds. The School Principal Barbara Brown thanked the Martins and Ralph for a wonderful music lesson with lots of fun.

Brielle, New Jersey is a quiet landscaped town located close to the Atlantic Ocean and our famous shoreline. Everett and Cathie Oliver have a large home there and it contains an impressive 3/11 Wurlitzer, which he had installed in 1995. The organ had originally been installed in 1920 in the Granada Theatre, a movie palace in Cleveland.

Everett Oliver enjoys the Wurlitzer and generously shares it with our chapter. The first concert held in April '97 featured well-known organist Tom Hazleton who performed a concert on Saturday and Sunday.

Our Garden State members were treated to a delightful concert in '98 given by one of our top organists Jelani Eddington. Robert Carver a Band Director with the Brielle School System, was a guest at this concert and was fascinated with the organ. Speaking to Everett, Mr. Carver asked permission to bring his eighth grade band students to hear and enjoy the sounds of the organ. The

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answer was an enthusiastic yes. The Oliver's were delighted to have the students visit and Mr. Carver has arranged to bring a new class to their home for the last two years. Jinny Vanore and Ralph Ringstad have been the organists.

May 10, 2001 was the third visit of new students from Mr. Carver's, band music class. Everett and Cathie greeted all the bussed seventh grade students. As they entered they heard the organ playing Disney's music "Be Our Guest" from Beauty and the Beast. Organist Jinny Vanore was introduced. She gave a brief history of the 3/11 Wurlitzer organ and demonstrated several musical selections that featured various ranks of pipes. Joe Vanore escorted the students down to the pipe chambers. Pointing out special ranks, he would communicate by radio to Jinny who would demonstrate the sound of that rank. The group enjoyed a short portion of the silent film *Teddy at the Throttle*. The remainder of the hour was filled with the students all climbing on the bench and enjoying the sounds they produced on the organ. Everett and Cathie Oliver were sent a large Thank You card filled with all the students' signatures.

Show time at the Park— Martin Boehling in Concert

By John Becica

Martin Boehling lived up to his reputation as an accomplished Theatre Organist and Showman as Garden State

members and guests enjoyed his thoroughly entertaining concert at the Park Performing Arts Center in Union City, New Jersey on May 20. The Park is known far and wide for its long running Passion Play. The 3/20 Möller Orchestral Pipe Organ (installed in 1931) was in fine form for the occasion due to the efforts of Martin Boehling, Crew Chief, and George Fenn, Park Resident Organist.

Peppering his comments between songs with interesting anecdotes, Martin put the Möller through its paces, treating us to a variety of music styles, including old standards, Latin music and classical, among others. We even heard the newly installed auto horn with his rendition of "My Merry Oldsmobile." Those of us in the audience who play theatre organ were especially appreciative of the video camera setup that projected Martin's hands at the console on a screen set up at center stage.

At intermission, Martin was kind enough to greet us and sign copies of his CD, *Trenton Warm Memories*. This recording was done on the Trenton War Memorial Möller before that venue was closed for renovations.

Following the concert, we were able to squeeze in enough time for two new members, Paul Citti and Charlotte Stacey, to try their hands at a mini open console. Neither had ever visited the Park before, so this was a special treat for them.

Those who attended this event cer-

tainly spent an enjoyable afternoon. Thanks are due Paul Jacyk, assisted by Fran Monte and Carole Rustako for their efforts in producing an outstanding concert on a uniquely melodious instrument.

Our May Newsletter gave in advance in capital letters "Ashley Miller Master Class" to be held June 16, 2001. There would also be an open console. This would be a wonderful opportunity for our playing members to meet Ashley Miller. He will speak and answer questions on registration and playing techniques for theatre pipe and electronic organs.

Ashley's musical experiences include: a graduate of the famous Julliard school of music, and a performing organist for seven years at Radio City Music Hall. His concerts in Europe and Australia were outstanding. For a time Ashley accompanied the famous TV soap opera *Search for Tomorrow*. He was inducted into ATOS Hall of Fame, and is known as "the organist" by other professional organists.

Saturday June 16 at 1:30 p.m., more than 30 interested members arrived at the home of Everett and Cathie Oliver situated in Brielle, New Jersey. A striking 3/11 Wurlitzer is placed in a large library/music room with a "U" shaped balcony on the second floor. Early bird members took advantage of open console before Vice President Paul Jacyk introduced Ashley. All seemed excited and eager and Ashley answered many

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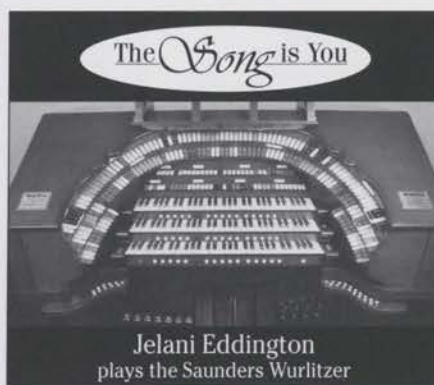


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questions about registration. Demonstrations and emphasis on tonal harmony had members taking notes. Many gathered around the console watching Ashley's talented fingers perform special runs, glissandos and super endings for special musical selections. The remainder of the afternoon was open console with members using sheet music and profiting by Ashley's suggestions and help. The afternoon ended with an exhilarating performance by Ashley.

Many thanks were given to Everett and Cathie Oliver for their generosity and sharing their home and organ.

Jinny Vanore

HUDSON-MOHAWK

Frank Hackert, President, 518/355-4523

Schenectady, New York. The last general meeting of the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter for the 2000-01 season was held on May 21 on the stage of Proctor's Theatre, Schenectady, New York. The theatre is home to *Goldie*, a magnificent 3/18 Wurlitzer. David Lester organized a fine closing event, which featured mini concerts on *Goldie* by chapter members—notably Bob and Dottie Frederick. The 2001-02 officers were also recognized. They continue to serve from the 2000-01 season and are: Chair: Frank Hackert; Vice-Chair: Lucy DelGrosso; Secretary: Maude Dunlap and Treasurer: Fred Haupt. Open console followed.

From September through June, the Hudson-Mohawk Chapter and Proctor's



Jinny Vanore

Theatre present a series of free monthly noontime concerts featuring talented chapter organists and *Goldie*. The May event was especially exciting since it featured New Jersey artist Jinny Vanore with special appearance by her granddaughter Jessica Piercy on clarinet. About 30 guests in a group organized by the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter attended the concert, on the 22nd. The excursion to Schenectady was led by EMCATOS President Hank Lysaght and trip coordinator Everett Hartmann and consisted of members of EMCATOS, CONVAL and SENETOS. Jinny delivered her usual excellent performance highlighted by duets with Jessica. Following the public concert, the guests remained for a program prepared for their enjoyment by Hudson-Mohawk Chapter members. The program began with a welcome and opening remarks from Hudson-Mohawk Chair Frank Hackert. Ned Spain then gave a brief but highly enjoyable and informative demon-



Group 2 includes those who played at the open console session on May 22 plus Hudson-Mohawk Chair Frank Hackert. From left: John Cook, Gordon Creamer; Len Beyersdorfer; Alan Goodnow; Don Phipps; Hank Lysaght and Frank Hackert. Bob Legon played but is not pictured.

stration of *Goldie*. Finally, Avery Tuntingley accompanied a very entertaining silent movie and played some closing numbers. Open console for the visitors followed the formal program, as well as theatre and chamber tours. Those participating in the open console were: John Cook; Gordon Creamer; Len Beyersdorfer; Alan Goodnow; Don Phipps; Hank Lysaght; and Bob Legon. All played superbly. The afternoon ended at a local buffet restaurant where HM-ATOS members and visitors continued to get acquainted. All enjoyed a wonderful afternoon. Special thanks to Hudson-Mohawk Chapter member Dick Calderwood for assisting in the planning and implementation of the event.

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A Crawford Chapter tradition is the suitably decorated birthday cake.

JESSE CRAWFORD

Steve Plaggemeyer, President
406/248-3171, plaggemeyer@home.com

Billings, Montana. We celebrated Jesse Crawford's 105th birthday in Billings, Montana on Sunday, December 3, 2000. Crawford was born in Woodland, California December 3, 1895 and began his career as a theatre organist in Billings February 24, 1913 at the Gem Theatre. Last year's officers were re-elected at the Annual Corporate meeting. Nelson "Kay" Cahill played the Gulbrandsen electronic organ as we sang "Happy Birthday" followed by champagne and cake. A videotape of the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company, San Francisco Granada Theatre organ plus "The Movie Palaces" with Gene Kelly and Gaylord Carter was shown.

The addendum for *The Poet* winter 2000 was the radio script of program #10 of the Jesse Crawford Organ Concert



Nelson Cahill (Kay Kayhill) played "Happy Birthday" on Gulbrandsen organ for Jesse Crawford's 105th.

broadcast November 27, 1949 over WMCA. Crawford's broadcast originated from the Steinway Hammond Organ Department at Steinway Hall, 109 West 57th Street, New York City.

One of Crawford's pupils suggested giving the beginners course of Hammond Organ lessons as a Christmas present. The course of 12 lessons cost only \$40.00. Steinway rented the Hammond Spinet organ for less than a dollar a day—\$25.00 a month. "Santa" Crawford's program included "White Christmas." His "Yestertunes"—the request songs from other days—were: "If I Had You," "Deep Purple," "It Must Be True" and "Chloe."

Jesse took telephone calls at Circle 6-1100 for a half-hour after the one-hour broadcast. There are 13 organ concert radio scripts in the archives. Program #11 will be published this year.

Congratulations to Dr. Ed Mullins on being elected to the ATOS Board of Directors for a three-year term. Ed got his ATOS personalized Montana auto license plates for 2000.

Steve Plaggemeyer

LA CROSSE SCENIC BLUFFS

Michael Hengelsberg, President,
Lacrosseorgans@aol.com

La Crosse, Wisconsin. First, I would like to say hello from La Crosse, Wisconsin. We will be becoming a Theatre Organ Destination in the near future! As most of you know, the La Crosse Scenic Bluffs Chapter was officially organized in February of this year, and we have been busy getting not only the organizational activities of forming a chapter taken care of, but also purchasing an organ and returning it to its ORIGINAL home. On April 20 of this year, we took possession of Wurlitzer Opus 539 and moved it to our workshop in La Crosse.

Wurlitzer Opus 539 started life in 1922 as a Style 135a Special instrument and was originally installed in the Temple Theatre, Viroqua, Wisconsin. It fell silent in the early 30s, but remained in the theatre until 1938. In that year, it was moved to the Coon Valley Lutheran Church to serve that congregation until the late 80s. There were some tonal changes made to the organ... added Diapason and Dulciana deleted xylophone and toy counter... but the instrument

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3/16	9/21	3/15	9/20
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5/18	11/16	5/17	11/15
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remained substantially unaltered until 1992.

Unfortunately, the Temple Theatre in Viroqua did not fare as well. It followed the pattern we have all seen so many times in the life of a theatre. It remained a first run movie house until 1985, then became a second run "cheapie" movie house until 1990. The owners were losing money throughout, and let the theatre turn into a veritable dump, finally going out of business in 1991. The City of Viroqua was considering tearing the theatre down and making a parking lot out of it. Have no fear, this has a happy continuing!

A group of concerned citizens purchased the theatre from the city for the amount of back taxes (sound familiar?) and formed the Associate to Restore the Temple Theatre (ARTT) with designs on bringing the theatre back as a performing arts center. At this writing contracts are being let for this restoration, and they plan on having it open for business in May of 2002. Upon hearing that the theatre would be restored and would remain in Viroqua, the Coon Valley Lutheran Church approached ARTT and offered their Wurlitzer organ back to the theatre (for a price, of course) and ARTT purchased the organ. They then moved it back into the original chambers (in pieces) and the console into the lobby of the theatre. Fast-forward ten years...

As the music director of the La Crosse Coulee Chordsmen Barbershop Chorus, our founder and current President, Michael Hengelsberg, went to the Temple Theatre to offer the chorus' services in a fundraising concert at and for the Temple Theatre. While he was at the theatre, he noticed an organ console in the lobby that looked like an eighth grader with his teeth knocked out from a

fight. Upon talking with the ARTT folks, he came to find out that it was the original organ from the theatre, and that they were planning on restoring it sometime in the future. They stated further that they did not know when, because they had so many other financial obligations that the organ took a "back seat."

This set the wheels turning in Michael's head. "What if I could get a group together to buy the organ from ARTT (making it available for grant funds) and lease it back to the Theatre?" The rest, as they say, was history! The organ is now in our chapter's workshop in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and is being completely restored.

Related to this, our chapter has started a "Sponsor-a-Key" program for this organ. We are memorializing loved ones and raising money for the organ at the same time. Every Manual Key, Stop Key, Pedal, Piston and Toe Piston is available and we will enter the donor's (or honoree's) name in every concert program and listing we produce. Sponsors will also have access to special "chamber tours" (supervised, of course) and an opportunity to play the Temple Theatre Wurlitzer during one of our "open console" sessions. As an added bonus, we are offering a one-year membership to our chapter for each donor.

Would you consider sponsoring a key? Sponsorships start at only \$75, slightly more for the "Middle C's". If you are interested, please send you check to La Crosse Scenic Bluffs Chapter, ATOS, c/o Michael Hengelsberg, President, 1616 Jackson Street, La Crosse, WI 54601. Please indicate your street address, phone number, and e-mail address, so I may contact you for information on the honoree for the key sponsored.

I appreciate all the help I have gotten from the multitude of new friends I have

made through this "Theatre Organ Thing." We here in La Crosse are excited to be able to bring an art form back to the area that has been absent for over 60 years! Look for further updates in coming issues of THEATRE ORGAN or visit us on the web at www.angelfire.com/music3/scenicbluffssatos.

Michael Hengelsberg

LOS ANGELES

Phil McKinley, President
805/488-8093, pmckinley@earthlink.net

Los Angeles, California. Saturday afternoon, April 7, LATOS honored Avery Johnson with a gala event for his donation of funds to make possible the purchase of the four-manual console for the J. Ross Reed Memorial 23-rank Wurlitzer located in Sexson Auditorium on the campus of Pasadena City College. This event was "FREE" with donations requested for the "Gaylord Carter Memorial Fund" to be used for installation of the Peter Crotty 2/10 Wurlitzer organ in South Pasadena High School. Nearly 300 people attended and several thousand dollars were raised. The three-manual console from Sexson Auditorium will be used at South Pasadena High School.

A number of artists responded to the request to participate in the event and a number of "donors" helped defray the expenses of the event. The afternoon started with pre-show entertainment provided by Tom Handforth with his calliope on the plaza east of the building where Sexson Auditorium is located. Several people took a turn at the calliope including ten-year-old Ruby Fradkin who is an accomplished ragtime musician. Avery opened the musical portion of the show playing a medley of pop tunes on "his" console followed by LATOS President Phil McKinley presenting the



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"plaque" to be affixed to the console declaring it the "Avery Johnson Console." LATOS member, Freddie Brabson, followed Avery on the bench. Maureen Fuller stepped in at the last minute to fill the spot reserved for Tom Sheen who had volunteered his services but was unable to play due to illness. Bob Salisbury, house organist at the Avalon Theater in the Catalina Island Casino, closed the first half. The second half opened with Bob Ralston at the console playing the familiar Lawrence Welk "champagne" music including the "bubbles" provided by Bob's wife, Fioje. Ruby Fradkin, the young lady that entertained earlier on the calliope, and who frequently plays for a ragtime club at a Holiday Inn in the valley, was the second "surprise" artist of the afternoon and delighted the audience with a series of "ragtime" piano solos. Former ATOS board member, Shirley Obert, with her good friend and LATOS member Dr. William Teaford at the piano, provided the afternoon finale. They are well known for their medleys of Broadway shows presented at the monthly musicales in Mr. Teaford's Palos Verdes home where Gaylord Carter was a frequent guest of honor for his birthday. Thanks to all the donors and artists for their participation and to Jim Dawson for emceeing and to Pat Buckley and Lana Pian for hosting the reception following the performance where many people enjoyed chatting with Avery and some of the artists.

Wayne Flottman

MOTOR CITY

David Ambory, President, 810/792-4899

Detroit, Michigan. Our organization is involved in a gigantic campaign to raise money in order to complete the installation of new seats. We received an

R. VAN STEENKISTE



"Somewhere In Time" Program — Redford Theatre, hosts, from left, Tom Wilson, Alison Harris.

Arts, Cultural, and Quality of Life Grant from the State of Michigan State Budget Office in the amount of \$150,000. The total cost of the project is well over \$350,000. Our friends may purchase a seat for \$250.00 and their name will be put on the seat. We have also applied for a grant in order to do the loge and balcony. We have a lot of work ahead of us. Work is scheduled for the end of December and the month of January.

In the meantime, programs continue. Our movie series continues with our organists playing overtures and intermissions. This series included: Tony O'Brien, Jennifer M. Candeia, Scott Popiano, Gus Borman, Dave Calendine, John Lauter, Lance Luce, Don Haller, Sharron Patterson and Gil Francis.

Following a very successful "Spring Swing I" in 2000, on Saturday, May 5, we featured "Spring Swing II." It was an exciting evening with Paul King and The Rhythm Society Orchestra, the Magic of Jon Ross, The Satin Dolls, and the Garland Dancers under the direction of Jon Ross and Sue Gar Choreographers. Featured on our Barton theatre organ was Tony O'Brien. We are very fortunate to have the Detroit Area Art Deco Society and Station CKWW, Detroit's Station

R. VAN STEENKISTE



"Somewhere In Time" Program — Redford Theatre, from left, Victoria Lane, Tom Wilson, Master of Ceremonies, Theresa Smith, David Smith, Peggy Grimshaw, Donald Lockwood, Emcee, Nancy Pennington.

for Standards, Swing, and Big Bands Too! to sponsor our program.

On Friday, June 29 we featured a newly re-mastered print of the film *Somewhere In Time*. We had guests from Chicago, Ohio and Indiana. The *Somewhere In Time* fan club attended the performances dressed in their beautiful vintage dresses and suits of the 1912 era. It was two beautiful evenings and a matinee with very responsive audiences joining in with laughter and clapping that is wonderful to hear during a performance. Our emcee was Don Lockwood and our Master Of Ceremonies was Tom Wilson. Tom is the producer of the *Somewhere In Time* radio program here in Michigan on which he features our organists. There were several guests present that had a part in producing the film. Jo Addie, President of the fan club, was introduced from the stage and told about making the film. She also had memorabilia in the lobby that she sold to enthusiastic patrons.

We are looking forward to our concert on July 20 featuring Tom Hazleton



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We are continuing our slide presentations before every program on the history of Detroit in conjunction with the tri-centennial celebration in 2001 for Detroit "300."

On Saturday, October 13, Jack Moelmann will appear in concert and accompany the 1926 Silent Film, *The Rink*, starring Charlie Chaplin. There will be a sing-along and a final "Tribute To America." The title of the program is "Those Were The Days."

On Saturday, December 8, we will have "The Dynamic Duo"—Jelani Edgington, Organist and David Harris, Concert Pianist. This is our way of wishing all of our patrons a "Wonderful Holiday"—this Christmas special is just for them.

We would like to invite all our fellow ATOS members to visit our theatre. We would love to have you share and enjoy our programs and see what we are doing. For further information be sure to visit the website of MCTOS and the Redford Theatre at <http://theatreorgans.com/mi/redford> or call (313) 537-2560.

Dorothy Van Steenkiste



Organist Clark Wilson poses with one of his young fans, Julie Vanderlee, at the console of the Brooklyn Paramount/Long Island University 4/26 Wurlitzer following his April 29th concert.

NEW YORK

David Kopp, Chairman, 973/305-1255

New York, New York. The New York Chapter welcomed organist Clark Wilson in concert at the console of the Long Island University/Brooklyn Paramount 4/26 Mighty Wurlitzer on Sunday, April 29. Calling upon his sensitivity and versatility, Clark brought forth both the organ's individual and collective voices, playing in orchestral and classical styles in addition to presenting a wide selection of theatre organ music. And, the audience loved it! Being just a few miles from the heart of Broadway, Clark appropriately included many favorite show tunes from the Broadway stage. Thanks to piggy-backed publicity with a *New York Times* feature story on movie palaces, a large number of "first-

timers" attended the concert, and we were gratified that they were able to hear this marvelous instrument played so superbly. A note of thanks to NYTOS Vice-Chairman, Chris Broadwell, for all his production assistance and, as always, to Warren Laliberte and crew for seeing to it that the LIU Wurlitzer was in top tune and concert ready.

Elsewhere around the New York Chapter, June 15 marked the final in this year's series of classic films at the Bardavon Theatre in Poughkeepsie. Organist Juan Cardona, Jr. and the NYTOS 2/9 Wurlitzer have become popular features before and after the film presentations, with audiences arriving especially early to enjoy the pre-film organ music. Meanwhile at the Middletown Paramount, each weekend in June a different local dancing school presented its annual dance recital, providing an opportunity for thousands of young children, parents, grandparents and others to enjoy the music of Rolf Krohn at the NYTOS 3/11 Mighty Wurlitzer before each dance performance. And, our crew of organists continue to play in the house each Saturday evening on our 2/11 Wurlitzer at the Lafayette Theatre in Suffern. On the bad news side, the Beacon Theatre management recently informed us that the chapter will not be able to use the Beacon's 4/19 Wurlitzer because of insurance problems, in spite of providing our own policy. NYTOS officers are looking further into this matter.

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Donald Peterson, President
972/517-2562, dpete1@jcpenny.com

Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas. While work continues on refurbishing our water damaged Robert-Morton console from the Lakewood Theatre, we are holding our bi-monthly meetings in alternate venues. Our program chairman, Don Reasons, was able to secure a particularly well-suited location for our June meeting. The location was the fellowship hall of Dallas' First Presbyterian Church in downtown Dallas. The hall is equipped with a three-manual Rodgers electronic "theatre" organ that has ties to our chapter, having previously belonged to former North Texas member, John Friedel. John was a long time member, and a former chapter president. When John and his wife decided to retire and move from Dallas, John donated his Rodgers to his church "home" for placement in the fellowship hall where he knew that it would be well utilized.

Don Reasons chose another North Texas member, Danny Ray, who has a similar Rodgers organ in his residence, to



Danny Ray played for North Texas June meeting on Rodgers 33E organ in the fellowship hall of Dallas' First Presbyterian Church.

play our program. He billed the program, with deference to the venue, Saints and Sinners. As North Texas publicist, Jeanette Crumpler noted: The "Saints" went marching into First Presbyterian on Sunday June 24 but a few "Sinners" sneaked in too. Danny chose his program to begin and end with "Saintly" selections and sandwiched a goodly number of "Sinners" in between. Half the fun of the afternoon was in the titles of his beautifully played selections in both categories. To end on the "Saintly" note, Danny teamed up with his Pastor, Rev. Julie Adkins, on the piano, in an inspiring rendition of the Bach/Gounod, "Ave Maria." This was followed with

another duet arrangement, with Don Reasons on the piano. The performances were all beautifully performed and elicited several standing ovations. Danny Ray is not only an inventive and accomplished organist but is also a distinguished composer and arranger. His work with the Dallas Turtle Creek Chorale is exemplary.

Work continues on the refurbishing of the Robert-Morton console from the Lakewood Theatre. This work is going on in a rented workshop space where the



The refurbishing of the Robert Morton console is in final stages in chapter work shop.

crewmembers and volunteers are working diligently to get the organ back together and playing again. When the Lakewood Theatre chose to show the movie *Pearl Harbor* during May and June on a seven day a week basis, our access to the theatre was hampered since we needed several days to remove the damaged lift and replace it with the new hydraulic lift. This work has been let to a contractor because of the need for special handling and equipment. Now that the movie run is over we expect to schedule the necessary free time with the theatre and finish up the reinstallation of the console and get the organ checked out and playing again. Oh happy day!

Irving Light

OHIO VALLEY

Joseph L. Hollmann, President
513/522-1800, jhollmann@fuse.net

Cincinnati, Ohio. The rebuild efforts continue on our Chapter Wurlitzer. Each Saturday, the organ crew meets for the needed tasks of re-leathering, chest rebuilding and other items. The organ, upon completion of the rebuild, will be installed in the theatre located on the campus of The College of Mount Saint Joseph, located in a suburb of Cincinnati. The organ is a RKO Albee Style 260 Special, one of the very few remain-

ing of many such models built. While this organ has been increased in rank size over the years, it is now necessary and desired to return it to its 1927 original Wurlitzer specifications. The available chamber space in the theatre will be enlarged to accommodate 22 Wurlitzer ranks. The organ will be returned to its 19 original ranks, with 3 additional ranks to enhance the demands of a modern concert theatre organ. The completion of the project and installation is scheduled for mid 2004. The chapter is in the process of acquiring funding for the project. We are grateful for the many donations received to date.

Joe Hollmann

ORLANDO AREA

Warren Thomas, President
904/761-0592

Orlando, Florida. Our March meeting was a most pleasant trip to Sarasota in a brand new motor coach for more than 50 members and friends. We were the guests of the Manasota Chapter and their remarkable Wurlitzer, where our own John Steele held forth at the console in a pre-dedication concert. This is probably one of the finest installations of a chapter organ we have ever seen. Besides all the regular theatre organ goodies at one's command, it has such churchy touches (being located in a Baptist Church sanctuary) as Diapason mutations that ordinarily one would find only on an organ designed for church literature. This is truly an instrument with which the members of the Manasota Chapter, as well as the congregation of Grace Baptist Church, can be justly proud.

April found us back at Lake Brantley High School where the guest artist at the chapter 3/17 Wurlitzer was Shawn Muir. Shawn, who does not see, is probably familiar with every piece of music ever written! At least it seemed that way as no one has stumped him yet. He presented an almost two-hour program, alternating between the organ and the school's nine-foot Baldwin grand. Shawn has entertained all around the central Florida area and the board has decided to make him an honorary member, along with his mother, who usually accompanies him away from home.

In May there was a scheduling conflict at the high school, so our Vice-President, Susan Cole, welcomed the

chapter to her lovely Mount Dora home. This was an “everybody bring a dish of something” type of thing and we were alphabetically assigned certain categories of items to bring so we wouldn’t end up with 11 dishes of potato salad and no coleslaw. It was a huge success with the “prez” Warren Thomas presiding over the charcoal grill on the patio next to the pool. There was a wealth of talent in that living room that Sunday afternoon. The first part of the informal program was our hostess, Susan, and her good friend and chapter member, Doris Ferrar, known as “The Sophisticated Ladies” on the Gulbrandsen theatre organ and a newer digital electronic organ. Open console followed, with most electing to play the Gulbrandsen.

The June meeting was to be the last one until September, what with the convention coming up and family vacations being planned. As there was no guest artist scheduled this month, it was suggested that each chapter officer and board member favor us with two or three selections. This turned out to be great fun and we may do it again when we get stuck without a guest artist. See you in Indianapolis.

Jack Doyle

POTOMAC VALLEY

Michael Hartley, Chairman
301/868-7030

Fairfax, Virginia. Saturday, 5 May 2001 saw the “re-birth” of the Potomac Valley Theatre Organ Society when over 100 eager spectators delighted to a screening of the 1921 version of *The Three Musketeers* starring Douglas Fairbanks at the Harris Theater on the campus of George Mason University. Returning to the console of the chapter’s 2/9 Wurlitzer was veteran organist Ray Brubacher. Ray’s deft skill and insightful interpretation of the action on screen rightfully earned him a standing ovation from a most enthusiastic audience. As this was the first event hosted by the chapter in over a year, everyone was extremely pleased by the outcome and many folks made their desire for more

events very clear as they exited the theater.

On Sunday, 3 June a members’ only chapter meeting was held at the Harris Theater. It was a fun jam session that lasted nearly three hours, with several new members playing a theatre organ for the first time. It is always a pleasure to welcome new enthusiasts to our hobby. Interested folks are, after all, the lifeblood of our organization.

In July, our extremely gifted artist and technician, George Mather, will begin work to expand the Harris Theater Wurlitzer by incorporating recently acquired Style D Trumpet and Saxophone ranks as well as several ranks and the three-manual console of the chapter’s Kimball theatre organ. Unfortunately, the Kimball has suffered from a lack of personnel to take care of it over the years. Now it will serve to enlarge and enhance the installation at the Harris Theater and pave the way for an annual performance series.

Chapter Vice-Chairman, Joe Graif, experienced a wonderful diversion while on a recent trip to south Florida. Joe was the guest of Bob and Paul Milhous at their private museum that includes (among an incredible automobile and mechanical musical instrument collection) the now famous 4/80 (equivalent) Walker digital theatre organ. Joe spent some 90 minutes at the console and was left with a single impression—WOW! The museum is also home to the former Rudolph Wurlitzer home installation—3 manuals and 29 ranks of real pipe organ in addition to the 80 digital ranks—all in the same building! Joe extends his grateful thanks to Bob and Paul for their warm hospitality.

In September, the chapter will continue its “comeback” with another silent film presentation. *Exit Smiling* starring Beatrice Lilly will be the feature and once again Ray Brubacher will be at the console. This time Ray will be assisted by one of his students in a pre-movie concert. We all look forward to another great evening.

Joseph N. Graif

Right: Fargo Theatre Marquee Red River Chapter.



Below: Tom Hazelton at the Fargo Theater.



RED RIVER

Faye Crume, President
71161.2632@compuserve.com

Fargo, North Dakota. This year, the Fargo Theatre celebrates its 75th anniversary, having opened March 15, 1926. It has been in operation almost continually, only closing during major cleanings and renovations.

The American Guild of Organists held its Region VI Convention in Fargo, June 18-21, hosted by the Red River Valley AGO Chapter, drawing from a ten state region of the upper Midwest. Among the classical events was a wonderful evening of theatre organ music with Tom Hazleton at the Fargo Theatre Wurlitzer. The Red River Chapter ATOS took part in the sponsorship of that program.

The final event of the convention was a spectacular performance on the 3/45 Holtkamp at Trinity Lutheran Church, Moorhead, Minnesota by Olivier Latry. He is one of three organists at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

All concerts were open to the public and very well attended.

Sonia Carlson

CONTINUED ON PAGE 68

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FASCINATING ARTICLES AND FEATURES ARE BEING ADDED REGULARLY.

The Sounds of Silent Movies

By Robert Gates, Associate Editor

“THE ART OF BUSTER KEATON” ORGANIST, GAYLORD CARTER

This is a delightful group of silent films starring Buster Keaton. All four cassettes described contain one feature and two shorts, but the only movies reviewed are those with Carter's accompaniment. He plays a Wurlitzer which, although unidentified, sounds just like the Sargent/Stark organ. Carter gives us marvelous performances in all of these films, with the right-on registrations and music choices and the smooth transitions from scene to scene for which he is renowned.

Keaton's abilities as a comic actor are widely appreciated, but less celebrated are his skills as director and writer. The composition of his shots is always carefully calibrated so that a complete comic sequence or acrobatic tumble would be photographed from one camera position, eliminating cutting and unnecessary close-ups. He wrote many of his scripts and co-authored some of them with Eddie Cline, an actor whom he met in the 'teens.

Joseph Frank (Buster) Keaton, born in 1895, made his first public appearance when only six weeks old, carried onstage on a tray by his vaudevilian father Joseph. This was, perhaps, the beginning of “The Three Keatons”. When Buster (nicknamed by Harry Houdini) was five he joined his dancer parents in various cameos, one of which showed how to discipline an unruly child. He was swatted with brooms, tossed at scenery and even into the audience. It was in this Keith Circuit arena that he learned his acrobatic skills and stoicism under adversity. He was quoted later as saying that he developed his deadpan expression to deal with the pain resulting from being thrown about in the act.

Because of a 1917 chance meeting with Roscoe (Fatty) Arbuckle, he was given a role in Arbuckle's *The Butcher Boy*, and stayed on with him to make fifteen more two-reelers. After infantry service in France, he made his first feature-length film,

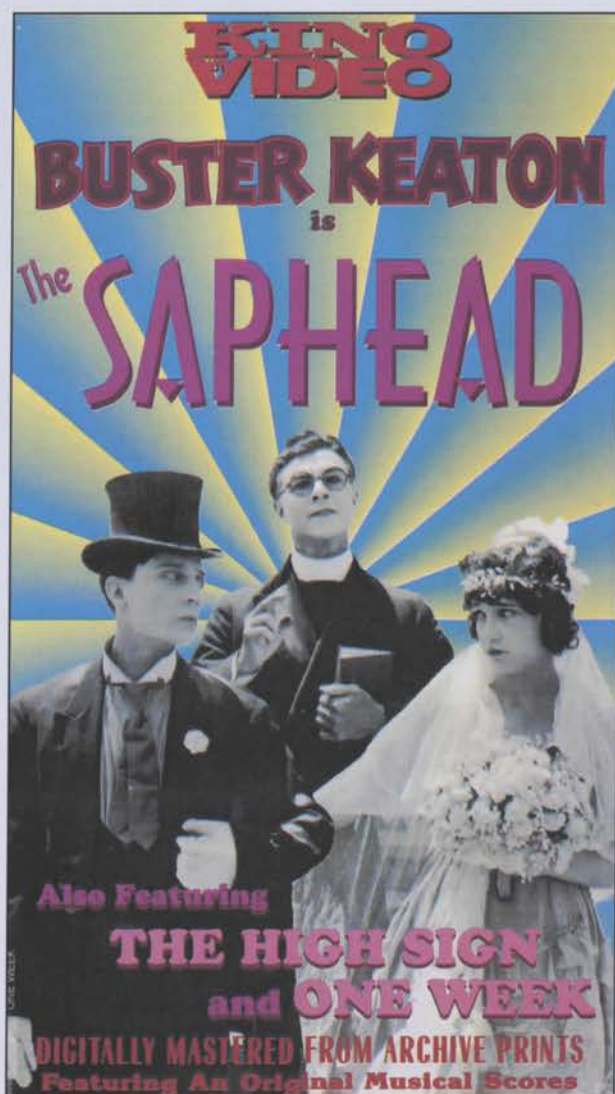
The Saphead, (1920), and then started an alliance with Paramount's “Comique Studio” with Joseph Schenck as his producer. Here he wrote, directed, and starred in his most renowned silents. After *The General* (1927), which he felt was his best effort, Schenck sold his contract to MGM, where he gradually lost artistic control and started to make mediocre movies.

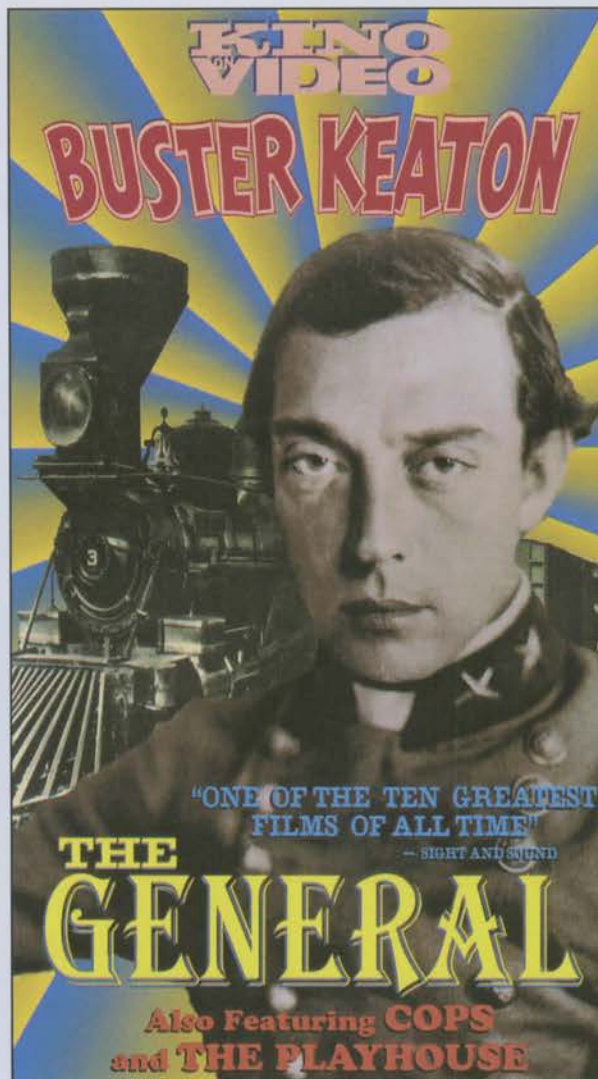
Buster Keaton's first wife was Natalie Talmadge, an actress whose career was dwarfed by that of her siblings Norma and Constance. She appeared in one of his films, *Our Hospitality* (1923), and is credited with only four others. Their marriage began to crumble in the late 20's and they were divorced in 1930. Natalie took their two sons with her and refused to give Buster access to them. He had already started to drink, and although he completed a few films in the “talkie” era, his career seemed ended.

Alcohol played a major role in the lives of the Keatons. Father Joe's love for the Demon Rum lead him to disband the “Three Keatons” in 1916. Natalie, according to one report, was a confirmed alcoholic most

of her life and Buster's problem became so severe that he had to enter a mental institution in 1935.

But in 1937, Buster began to rebound. MGM hired him back as a “gag man”. He started live appearances in Paris ten years later with his third wife, Eleanor, and in 1952 James Mason, who owned Keaton's former mansion, found a trove of





his old films in a closet (one of which was *The Boat*, below). Raymond Rohauer became involved and as a result many of these marvelous old movies were made available to us all. In 1959 Buster received a special Oscar for his life-long work in comedy. He died in 1966 at age 70.

ONE WEEK, 1921; with Keaton and Sybil Sealy (in the collection titled *The Saphead*)

After a slapstick introduction rivaling any "Keystone Kops" sequence, Buster's newly married character and wife are given a "Portable House" and a lot to build it on by a secretly jealous rival. But the rival, ah ha, sneakily changes the numbers on the crates so the dwelling will not assemble as intended. A few days pass, and what emerges is truly a monster piece, with a wrong-way roof and second-story doors opening outside. An upright piano arrives, giving Buster the task of getting it inside while inflicting the most possible damage. It is soon discovered that the house has been placed on the wrong lot and must be moved over railroad tracks to its proper location. What happens next is the comic windup of this two-reeler, complete with interchanges of the absurd and the logical in ways that only Keaton could concoct.

Two scenes in this short film presage *Steamboat Bill, Jr.*, a wall falling on Buster and a windstorm, possibly a tornado,

which sends the house and occupants spinning madly.

Also included are *The Saphead*, mentioned above, with music by Robert Israel, and the two-reel *The High Sign*.

In Brief: One of his best shorts.

From Kino International Corp., 333 W 39th St., New York, NY 10018; (800) 562-3330; www.kino.com; \$29.95 postpaid.

THE BOAT, 1921, with Keaton and Sybil Sealy (in the collection titled *The Navigator*)

Where else would Buster choose to build a large boat than a basement garage? And how much havoc could result when it is towed out of the house? What happens when the boat is "launched"? High adventure on the low seas awaits the viewer of this saga of marine ineptitude, as a family excursion is turned into a comic nightmare.

Ingenuous scenes grace this two-reeler, including one where a heavy storm causes the boat to make several 360-degree rotations. Buster clammers from the cabin floor to wall to ceiling and back down the other wall as the boat continues to revolve on its axis. Could Fred Astaire have been aware of this when he did his boat and hotel room "turns" in *Royal Wedding* (1951)?

Picture quality is generally fine, except at the beginning where age has taken its toll.

Also included are *The Navigator* and *The Love Nest*.

In Brief: Good Keaton throughout.
From Kino International Corp., 333 W 39th St., New York,
NY 10018; (800) 562-3330; www.kino.com; \$29.95 postpaid.

COPS, 1922, with Keaton and Virginia Fox (in the collection titled *The General*)

According to the jacket notes, *Cops* is considered the “quintessential chase film”. The opening scene shows Buster peering through prison-like iron bars, but they really form the gate to a rich girl’s house. She, with nose in the air, tells him that she will not marry him until he becomes a “big businessman”. Off he goes to seek his fortune.

Through a snarl of events that defy any prose account, Buster is found with smoking anarchist’s bomb beside him, driving a wagon loaded with furniture in the middle of a parade of policemen. Needless to say, the chase is on, with hundreds of baton-carrying cops streaming down sidewalks and streets after him. A headstone appears at the end of the film, but this column will not say why.

Fine picture quality, and super accompaniment by Carter, with some of the best synchronization he has ever pulled off.

The General, (1926), accompanied by Robert Israel, was reputedly Keaton’s favorite silent film. There are good reasons for his choice. *The Playhouse* is the third feature in this cassette. Keaton plays all the male roles in this film, alone and in ensembles.

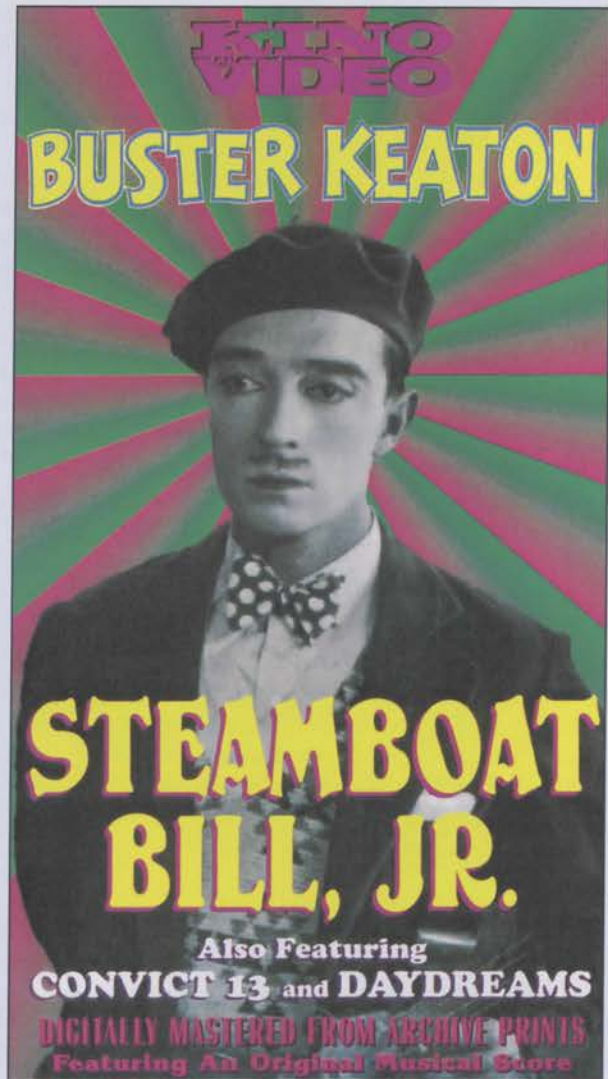
In Brief: Never a dull moment.

From Kino International Corp., 333 W 39th St., New York, NY 10018; (800) 562-3330; www.kino.com; \$29.95 postpaid.

STEAMBOAT BILL, JR., 1928; with Keaton, Ernest Torrence and Marion Byron

One of Buster’s last silents, this feature-length movie is a joy to watch, combining elements from earlier films and new ideas as well. The livelihood of husky riverboat captain, Bill Canfield (played perfectly by Torrence¹), is threatened when a new

¹Another of Torrence’s fine performances is in *The Covered Wagon*, reviewed in the “Theatre Organ” for May/June 1999.



“floating palace” appears on the scene. At the same time, Keaton checks in as William Canfield, Jr., whom Canfield Sr. has not seen for many years. There is a wonderful scene at the train station where father and son try to identify one another. When, by process of elimination, Canfield Sr. realizes that the effete, diminutive, ukulele-carrying, mustached figure is his son, the reaction shots are priceless. The father’s first act is to



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drag his son by the wrist, as one would lead a three-year-old, to the barber (Joe Keaton) to have the offending "barnacle" on his upper lip removed.

The daughter (Marian Byron) of the captain of the rival ship arrives in her new Packard roadster. Looking all of thirteen (she was actually seventeen), she provides the necessary love interest and brings the warring boat-owners into deeper conflict.

As in so many of his movies, Buster first shows his calamitous ineptitude, tripping acrobatically over any object he encounters. During a lesson in steamsmanship, he accidentally backs his father's boat into the "palace", and just for good measure does it once again. But as the screenplay progresses, Buster's inventiveness becomes apparent as he fights hurricane and flood and eventually becomes the hero of his own life.

One of his best-known (and most dangerous) sequences appears in the riotous ending set in a hurricane. Keaton is standing amid the storm, when the house front behind him pulls away and crashes down on top of him. Luckily, he is just so positioned that he passes through an upper-story window and is unhurt. A complete house frame was used for this sequence, not the skeletal affair seen in *One Week*. It was reported that half the stage crew walked off during the stunt because they did not want to watch Buster be killed.

Also included are *Convict 13* and *Daydreams*.


In Brief: Keaton at his very best.

From Kino International, address above.



This is the last of this sequence of silent-movie reviews—the videotape cupboard is bare and the Muse has taken flight. Somewhere, perhaps, is an undiscovered group that is marketing fine organaccompanied films in VCR format, but years of snooping have not located it. Well, this is not quite true. There are films out there that may be worthy, but they have proven inaccessible to this column, offered by associations with so little regard for the con-

sumer that their products could not be recommended. And, of course, many silent movies are accompanied by Hammond "organs", but because this column eschews all "pipeless" instruments, these films have not been reviewed.

Sadly, no new productions have been announced this year and it has become increasingly difficult to obtain the movies reviewed in this column. They are, little by little, being withdrawn from the market. Sadder still, is that quantities of wonderful pipe organ enhanced 35-mm prints must sit quietly in storage, available only for lease to selected organizations. And there they will continue to languish, until consumer demand effects their conversion to video. In essence, the baton is passed to ATOS members—create a stronger market for these performances or be content to have them vanish one by one. 



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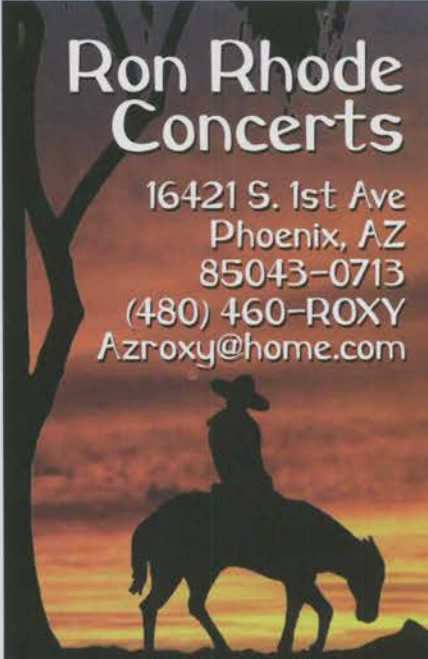
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CHAPTER NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 62

RIVER CITY

Greg Johnson, President, 402/753-2486

Omaha, Nebraska. Our May 20 chapter meeting was held in the Barton organ studio at Durand's Sky Ranch Airport. Since the instrument had been down for maintenance, no guest artist was scheduled for this date. In spite of a heavy rainstorm and nuisance street construction (many street closings and lane restrictions all over Omaha) 15 hardy souls managed to attend the meeting. The business meeting centered on chapter finances and various fund-raising techniques. We also discussed the upcoming election of officers and issued a call for nominations. During open console George Rice, Maurine Durand and Bill Durand put the organ through its paces.

The weekend of June 16 and 17 was a stellar one for our chapter. Not only did Bob and Joyce Markworth celebrate their tenth wedding anniversary, but they also hosted the formal dedication of their 3/24 Kimball theatre pipe organ for an "invitation only" audience of nearly 100 guests, including River City Chapter members, many friends and family members on Saturday. Since many of the guests weren't organ buffs, Bob Markworth presented a short history of the theatre pipe organ, its use with silent films, the end of the era, and its renaissance. Bob then introduced his guest artist, Jack Moelmann, "founding father" of our River City Chapter and current Secretary of ATOS. Jack and his faithful dog, Chelsea, had journeyed from their home in O'Fallon, Illinois for this special occasion. For newcomers to theatre organ music Jack demonstrated many of the "gadgets" found on this Kimball installation, ranging from sirens to duck calls, by neatly tucking them into the tunes. The concert included a medley of Broadway show tunes. For a change of pace Jack offered two classical numbers. The latter composition required the help of a page-turner, and Jack enlisted Holly Edwards, a 13-year-old piano student from Louisville, Colorado, for the job. This collaboration worked very well, but Holly was Jack's target for some good-natured ribbing in the process. Jack continued with a medley of old favorite tunes by American composer Steven

Collins Foster. Then, after a sing-along complete with lantern slides (and a bouncing ball supplied by Bob Markworth with a laser pointer), Jack warned the audience that his silent movie would be "only slightly longer than the epic, *Gone With The Wind*." Actually, Moelmann screened a short excerpt from Hal Roach's 1927 comedy, *The Battle of the Century*. This film segment with Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy involved a gigantic cream pie fight, guaranteed fun for all of Jack's audience, but especially so for those enjoying silent movies with organ accompaniment for the first time. Jack ended the concert with his traditional *Tribute to America*, combining color film and patriotic tunes. While Jack Moelmann jokingly states that his concert ending is chosen to get a standing ovation, I guarantee that he'd get a standing ovation without it!

On the following day, Sunday, June 17, Moelmann was with us for our regular chapter meeting, held again in Markworth's organ studio. Chapter President, Greg Johnson, chaired a short business meeting. Then Jack Moelmann played a completely different organ program, not a duplication of his Saturday concert. In addition, we were treated with duets pairing Jack Moelmann, Jeanne Mehuron and Greg Johnson. During open console George Rice and Shirley Shainholtz played the 3/24 Kimball. This was a memorable weekend for River City Chapter.

Tom Jeffery

SIERRA

Tom Norvell, Chairman, 916/947-0673

Sacramento, California. Tom Sheen, from Southern California, started Sierra Chapter's year 2001 with a fine concert on our 3/13 George Seaver Memorial Wurlitzer. Tom's great reputation had obviously preceded him, since we had more than 100 in attendance, including many of Tom's long time friends and former students. As you may know, Tom is nearly blind. But you would not have known it from his great performance. A fully sighted player would have had to work hard to stay up with Tom. There were rumors that the marimba was almost smoking when Tom finished.

Our February meeting was a joint concert with the Boni (electronic) Organ Club. The artist was Donna Parker, from Portland, Oregon, who per-

Jack Moelmann, "founding father" of our River City Chapter, performed the dedication concert for Markworth's 3/24 Kimball.



TOM JEFFERY



TOM JEFFERY

Joyce and Bob Markworth celebrated both their tenth wedding anniversary and the formal dedication of their 3/24 Kimball Theatre Organ on the same weekend.

formed on both our George Seaver Memorial Wurlitzer and the new Allen C-19, a two-manual electronic instrument. Donna's selections ranged widely from the *Muppet Movie* theme to a classical fanfare. Some of us were disappointed that she did not play her excellent rendition of "Powerhouse" to help out California's energy crisis. However, she did play a hoedown selection appropriate to the many chickens that roam freely through the park around the Fair Oaks Club House where our Wurlitzer is installed. The audience was thoroughly pleased by Donna's concert.

In March, Chris Elliott from the San Francisco Bay Area delighted a large audience at the Towe Auto Museum when he accompanied *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* featuring Buster Keaton. This film is special to us Sacramento-ites since much of it was shot on the river in the Sacramento area. Chris' instrument was the ATOS 3/16 Wurlitzer. Throughout the evening, I think he demonstrated to us every available musical sound to our great pleasure. Great job Chris! We're looking forward to having you back again soon.

Sierra Chapter members are also presenting a series of Sunday afternoon public concerts on the ATOS Wurlitzer to introduce the theatre organ to many members of the public.

Pete McCluer

SOONER STATE

Joyce Hatchett, President, 918/743-1854

Tulsa, Oklahoma. Although we can't meet at Tulsa Technology Center because of the repairs taking place in their auditorium this summer, we are still participating in lots of organ activities.

On May 8 we were invited to join the American Guild of Organists at Tulsa's First Methodist Church for a "Pops Concert" program on their 4/115 Aeolian/Shants/Doverspike "composite" pipe organ, appropriately titled "Never On Sunday!" The 11 musicians were all church organists, but the music they played would never have been heard "on Sunday!" To add to our delight, three of our chapter members were included as performers: Joyce Hatchett, who also plays for her Baptist church; Carolyn Craft, who plays for the Evangelistic Temple in Tulsa; and Phil Judkins, who is the curator of the pipe organ at First Methodist Church. The "pops" music they all played on that dignified church organ was truly remarkable, and included some comedy numbers, Carolyn's Latin number that needs her husband Paul to provide the rhythm on a Tambourine, and a couple of one-bench duets. Our only regret was that since the organ console can not be moved to the center of the chancel, we couldn't watch all those talented organist very well as they played. But the "listening" was fabulous!

Then on the 26th of May, we journeyed up the Will Rogers Turnpike for

an all-day session on the 3/10 Wurlitzer in the Coleman Beautiful Theatre in Miami, Oklahoma. We've done this a number of times before, and we always have a marvelous time! We were fewer in number this time, probably because it was the Memorial Day weekend, but that gave everyone who wanted to play more time to do so. Ted Hager, of Rogers, Arkansas was the early bird who got things started about 10:30 a.m. Bonnie Duncan, then Vernon Jackson and Joyce Hatchett followed him. There was a brief pause while theatre manager Jerold Graham was conducting a tour for some visitors. We enjoyed hearing that part of his talk, especially the part about the chandelier!

The music continued with Sam Collier on the bench, then Karl Kinney, his wife Helen Kinney, Vivian Williams and Dorothy Smith. We also heard Gene Joslin, who had driven that day from Parsons, Kansas just to tour the Coleman. When he heard organ music and discovered that we were a theatre organ organization he joined our chapter on the spot! We also heard music from Barbara Purtell.

During another tour group pause, Jerold Graham turned on the MIDI playback and we heard Lyn Larsen playing that organ as only Lyn can play it! You could almost picture him bouncing all over the bench! Then as an added treat Jerold himself played for us, a "Ditty" that he had made up himself. We'll make a theatre organist out of him yet!



Sooner State's Vivian Williams playing the 3/10 Wurlitzer in the Coleman Theatre Beautiful in Miami, Oklahoma.



Sooner State's Vernon Jackson at the Wurlitzer in the Coleman theatre Beautiful in Miami, Oklahoma.

The afternoon continued with second-time performances from some of those who had played earlier, and we finished up about 4 p.m. It was truly a fun day, and we thank Jerold Graham and the Coleman Theatre for making it possible.

Work is progressing on the additions to Tulsa's Central High School Kilgen,



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as well as our Chapter-owned Robert-Morton. We'll have a report on them next time.

Dorothy Smith

SOUTHERN JERSEY

Joseph Rementer, President
856/694-1471

Franklinville, New Jersey. On May 20, around 300 people attended the Broadway Theatre, Pitman, New Jersey, for their 75th anniversary of continuous operation by showing *Gone With The Wind*, an all-time favorite. Barry Leshar of SJTOS opened the celebration by serenading the audience on the Grande 3/8 Kimball console for one hour, playing

ALEX FELL



Barry Leshar of SJTOS playing the Grande 3/8 Kimball console at the Broadway Theatre, Pitman, New Jersey.

popular songs. As Barry's final number, he played the theme song of *Gone With the Wind* after which the movie began. The Kimball, after being completely rebuilt, was heard by the public at this performance for the first time in 26 years. The Broadway Theatre is the only theatre in the state of New Jersey and southern Pennsylvania that has the original organ.

Mary Brook

TOLEDO AREA

Nelda M. Reno, President
419/478-5959, momreno@aol.com

Toledo, Ohio. TATOS held their third annual "Introduction to Theatre Pipe Organ" workshop on April 5, 2001 and it was a great success. Each year it gets better—so any of you chapters that have not had the satisfaction of making these young children amazed of our past—try it!

We opened the workshop with president, Nelda Reno, welcoming everyone to the Historic Ohio Theatre and giving the history of how our Marr & Colton

Bill Yaney,
house
organist,
historic
Ohio
Theatre.



came to be installed in this theatre. Bill Yaney, house organist, (picture #1) was introduced and demonstrated all the toys and sounds on the organ. He then went into the audience and talked to the kids about the overall history of Theatre Organs. Why so many theatres had them—for the silent movies to take place of orchestras. He then accompanied two short Mickey Mouse silent films to the children's delight.

Dick Leichtamer was next at the console for several sing-a-longs. While Dick was at the console Bill Frisk ran the slides of our organ chambers and Dick would demonstrate the sounds each rank of pipes made. After the slides we demonstrated actual pipes on stage and invited students to come up and blow into them (pictures #2 and #3). We also invited students who could play piano or keyboard to come to the organ and actually play it (picture #4).

Another sing-a-long to finish the program (they really got into "Take Me Out to the Ball Game"), which was followed by a big finish organ number with Bill Yaney at the console. The program lasts approximately 1½ hours. We received some good suggestions from teachers for next year, which we will implement.

Some of the teachers and 40 plus students sent thank-you notes. One teacher wrote: "The children certainly enjoyed the soundless cartoons. My two girls that were allowed to play the organ will cer-

tainly have a wonderful memory. They couldn't wait to tell their moms. Thank you for sharing your enthusiasm for this great theatre and organ." One student wrote: "Thank you for letting us come to the Historic Ohio Theatre. My favorite thing was to watch the silent Mickey Mouse movie and someone playing the organ to the movie. Something I really liked was the sing-a-longs. Once and again I would like to thank you for allowing East Side Central fifth grade to come!"

These were just a couple notes but they were all very positive. These notes from students and teachers tell us there is an interest in this type of program for the schools. We will continue to do them and hopefully improve them each year.

Nelda M. Reno

VALLEY OF THE SUN

John Bittner, President, 480/802-9709

Phoenix, Arizona. May proved to be a very interesting and enjoyable General Membership Meeting at Arnie and Eloise Dale's home in Mesa, Arizona. These very gracious hosts invited the chapter members to their beautiful home that opens up into a huge music room designed especially for their Barton 3/10 theatre organ, which was originally in the Paramount Theatre in Waterloo, Iowa. The installation has been a 13-year project under the direct guidance of Arnie and friends, and the instrument is flawless!



Arnie and Eloise at their Barton 3/10.



3/10 Barton, Dale residence, Mesa, Arizona.

Lew Williams was the guest artist, and after his performance (which filled the room with wonderful sounds), he turned on the bench and said to Arnie and Eloise, "Congratulations, Arnie, now, you have a used organ!" Lew was one of the featured artists in Los Angeles this past January. Open console followed, and we enjoyed tunes by Bill Irwin and Don Story. Bill has promised to do a technical clinic for the chapter sometime in the near future.

Our June General Meeting was held at the remodeled Orpheum Theatre in downtown Phoenix on the 3/29 Wurlitzer that has been installed over the past few years. It is a terrific instrument, and the chapter is hoping to be able to soon produce a CD to document this excellent sound. The guest artist for the day was Don Story of Tucson. Don is a theatre organist and is the keyboard part of a Tucson and Green Valley dance band. Don is well known for playing old tunes that most of us have to stop and think about to remember their titles, and he is always well received and takes time to tell us about the tunes and their history. For being a "cop," Don sure plays with the best of them!

We here in Arizona are very proud to have theatre organists, Lyn Larsen, Ron Rhode, Lew Williams, and Charlie Balogh all living in our area? And on top of that, they are all members of the chapter!

Dale E. Caplin

WESTERN RESERVE

James Stanton, President
440/232-4377, JLSTAN222@core.com

Cleveland, Ohio. Much has happened since our last report. Most notably, WRTOS is back into the groove of sponsoring concerts on the club Wurlitzer located at Gray's Armory in Cleveland. This is after a long absence due to a major redecoration of the Armory coupled with some untimely water damage



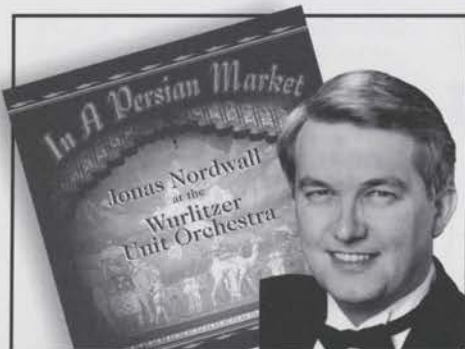
Paul Roberts at Gray's Armory concert, Cleveland, Ohio.

from a roof leak. Thanks to the organ crew for repairing the damage, installation of a fluid deflector in case of future mishaps and getting everything back into working order and perfect tune.

The acoustics in the Gray's Armory are most unique and worth mentioning. With suspended chambers and little to absorb the sound except the people in the audience, the music rolls around in a most thrilling ballroom fashion. On April 21 we presented Paul Roberts of the UK to a practically sell out crowd. As usual, Paul dazzled the audience with his artistry, finger work, varied registrations and those amazing waterfall moves that have become his signature. Thanks to Concert Director Carolyn Carson and her crew for making the evening a huge success.

The club has been active every month

CONTINUED ON PAGE 74



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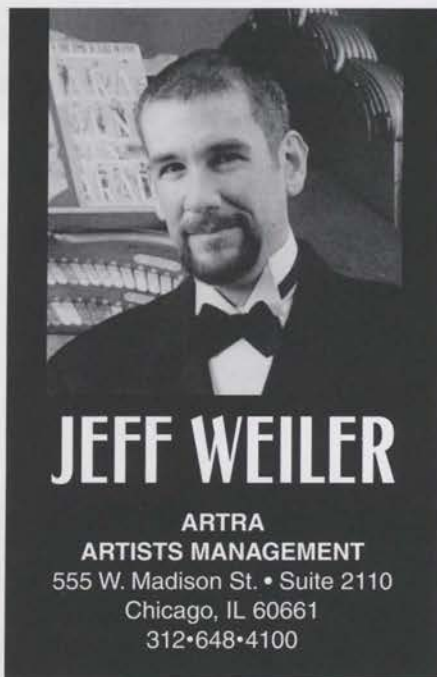
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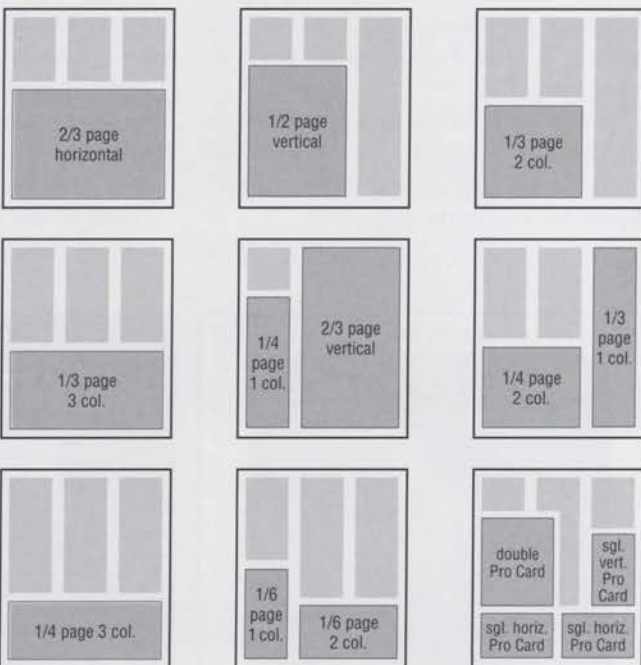
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CHAPTER NEWS
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71

with social events. Social directors Harold Wright and George Cooper continue to arrange varied locales for us. We visited the State Theatre in Sandusky, Ohio with George Cooper as our featured artist. Vince and Pat Aveni graciously hosted our Christmas Party in their new home in Gates Mills. About 130 members and friends were thrilled to hear the relocated and enlarged 4/60 Wurlitzer. January found us at Graves Studio with Maggie Falcone as our featured artist. Then it was off to the Lorain Palace Theatre and its wonderful 3/10 Wurlitzer in February. In March, we used our own Wurlitzer at Gray's Armory. Club member Jim Cutler was our featured artist. The day after our Paul Roberts concert we convened at the Akron Civic Theatre and its magnificent 3/19 Wurlitzer. Is it ever in good shape and featured artist George Cooper put it through its paces! Our thanks to the Akron Civic Organ Guild for hosting us. Last but certainly not least, in May we socialized at the home of Vito & Maggie Falcone. President Jim Stanton and hostess Maggie Falcone were our featured artists.

We have a full schedule of events planned for the next six months and hope to squeeze in one more concert before the end of the year.

Don Frerichs

R. VAN STEENKISTE



From left: Lucille Morton, Pianist, and Delores Malhoit, Organist.

WOLVERINE

Edward Brockhahn, President
248/544-2793

Detroit, Michigan. Our chapter held a meeting at the home of Joe Kehborn in Belleville on May 27. We welcomed back members Bob and Pat Burk who had spent the winter in Florida. The featured musicians for the afternoon were Lucille Morton at Joe's Wurlitzer grand piano, and Delores Malhoit at Joe's three-manual Allen Organ. Gus Borman, Gil Francis, Joe Kehborn and Ed Brockhahn played during open console time. We then adjourned to the Red Apple for dinner.

Our next meeting was held on June 24 at the home of Dave Brewer in Dearborn. Dave presented a concert on his hybrid theatre organ. Following, several members played: Ed Brockhahn, Bob Burk, Mike Przybylski, and Herb Head.

On August 26 the club has been invited to the home of Dave Voydanoff at Pearl Beach for a picnic. Dave has a

R. VAN STEENKISTE



Officers from left: Eddie Teevin, Treasurer; Charles Baas, Secretary; Jim Teevin, Vice-President; Ed Brockhahn, President.

two-manual, 28-rank Wurlitzer that all the members will have a chance to play. All will have a day full of fun.

Dorothy Van Steenkiste

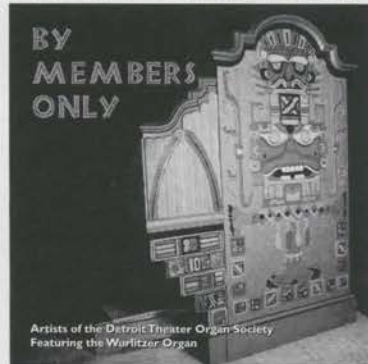
YUMA

Barbara Mignery, President
520/342-5367

Yuma, Arizona. Our Yuma Theatre Organ Society had a great fall and winter season of 2000 and 2001. We have concerts from November up to and including April. Our winter visitors make up our attendance in these months and we are thankful for their support. In November of 2000 we had W.C. Field from El Segundo, California who gave us a program of some old tunes, a sing-along and also accompanied a Buster Keaton silent film. Everyone enjoyed his performance.

In December we were honored to have Walter Strony, from his busy schedule in Las Vegas, Nevada. Walter dedi-

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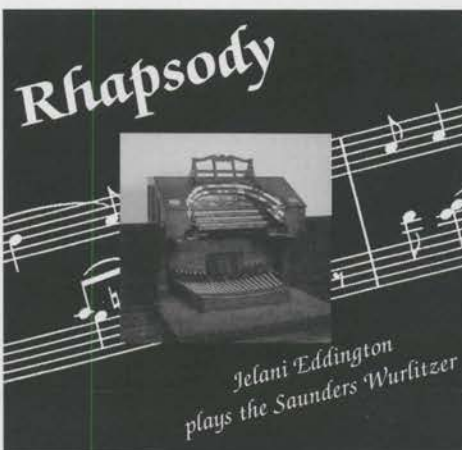


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W.C. Field



Bob Stewart

cated our Allen 317 in February of 1998 and is always willing to return to give us another concert. This time he gave us a great concert of Christmas music. He also played some music by Gershwin and played many requests for his encore. Our crowd always loves to hear his renditions of music.

Patti Simon and Dick Kroeckel graced our stage in January. We were able to rent a grand piano and they both gave us a grand concert. We had the largest attendance we have ever had for our concerts in the theatre. They each played solo numbers as well as several duets. The program also included a sing-a-long. Our crowd would like to see them return to Yuma.

In February we had Ron Rhode make a return visit to us and he gave us another wonderful program, which included a number of old songs from the early 1900s. It's amazing what these artists can do without using any music. Our audience thought his performance was fantastic.

Our month of March brought us our dear friend, Lew Williams, from the Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa, Arizona. In January our club rented a bus and took a trip to the Organ Stop Restaurant. We had 55 people that filled the bus and had a great bus driver and everyone really enjoyed the day. Lew gave us a wonderful concert of music, which included music from the Glen Miller era.



Patti Simon and Dick Kroeckel




Lew Williams

We have a local artist in our club that is always willing to give us a program so for our last program of the season we had Bob Stewart, who says he plays nothing but old songs and does a really nice job, has a pretty good voice, too, and always renders a couple songs with his own verses. The audience enjoys his humor. Bob used to play in the Bay area for many years. He put on a nice program for us. This brought us to the end of our season for concerts and we are looking forward to the fall of 2001 and the spring of 2002.

Our club had a luncheon at the end of our season at the home of Barbara Mignery and John Kelso, with 33 people present. We enjoyed barbecued ribs, chicken and all the trimmings—all furnished by the club. Then all enjoyed music played by members on the Allen 4600 console to finish off a lovely day.

The city still has plans to work in the theatre but it is uncertain when this will happen. If any of you happen to go through Yuma please feel free to stop and call us. We feel we have accomplished so much since the beginning of our club. We don't have a pipe organ but sure enjoy what we have and look forward to a new season.

Barbara J. Mignery 

Simon Gledhill

Plays the 3/18 Barton

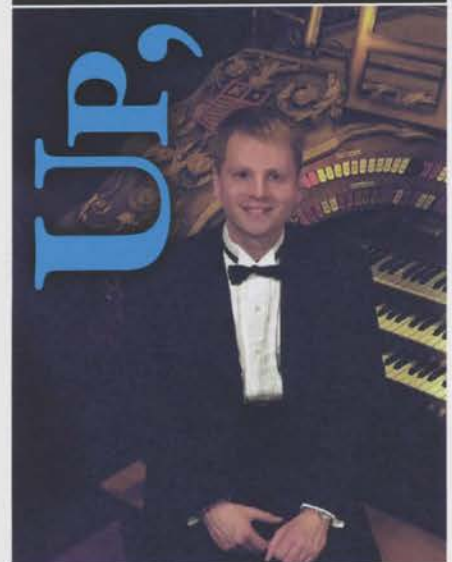
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The ATOS Marketplace

On the mailing cover of each issue of *THEATRE ORGAN* is printed an ATOS MARKETPLACE ORDER FORM. Many of the items listed make excellent gifts for the theatre organ enthusiast. From time to time members have requested more information about the products offered for sale through the ATOS MARKETPLACE, so here is a brief description of each item available.

BACK ISSUES OF *THEATRE ORGAN*—\$3.00 each

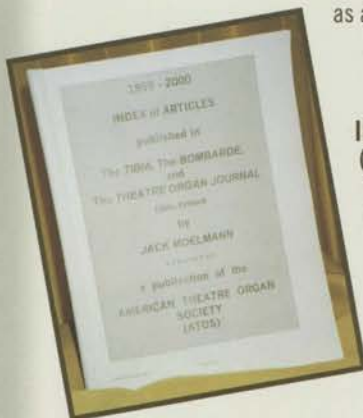
The back issues of *THEATRE ORGAN* contain invaluable information about the history of the theatre pipe organ and the people who have contributed so much to the preservation and presentation of these magnificent instruments. The articles that have appeared in the Journal provide us the necessary information to help us to more fully understand and appreciate the history of ATOS. The text and photographs give us an overall perspective of the tremendous contributions that ATOS and its members have made in promoting the theatre pipe organ as a musical art form during the past 46 years.



THEATRE ORGAN BINDER—\$14.00 each

The high-quality, heavy-duty, custom-made binders that are offered for sale allow members to file their issues of *THEATRE ORGAN* in a convenient and eye-appealing binder. These binders are black with gold imprint and are impressive in any library.

There is a small pocket on each which may be used to insert the year or years of the Journals inside. The binders hold six to nine issues of *THEATRE ORGAN*.



INDEX OF ATOS PUBLICATIONS (1955-2000)—\$5.00 each

This publication is a must for anyone interested in the history of the theatre pipe organ—the manufacturers, the organists, the technicians, the venues, etc. The index is available either in a printed form or as a Word document on computer disk.



WURLITZER FACTORY VIDEO—\$24.00 each

The Wurlitzer Factory Video is a rare black and white silent film documentary from the early 1920s showing the Rudolph Wurlitzer Manufacturing Company in Tonawanda, New York. A musical score is provided by Ray Brubacher on the 2/10 Wurlitzer, formerly in the Loew's Colonial Theatre in Reading, Pennsylvania. This video contains a special added attraction guaranteed to

please every theatre organ enthusiast. This video is available in VHS format for the U.S. market and in PAL format for the overseas market.

ATOS BALLPOINT PEN—\$1.00 each

The ATOS Ballpoint Pens are white with red and white stripes at one end and a cap with white stars on a blue background at the other end. The words "American Theatre Organ Society since 1955. Dedicated to the preservation of the theatre pipe organ." are imprinted on the pen in black.



ATOS LAPEL PIN—\$3.00 each

The ATOS Lapel Pins are a bronze-colored tie-tack type pin, about the size of a dime. They show a theatre organ console in the center with the words "American Theatre Organ Society" around the outside. The letters "ATOS" are shown across the console.



EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO TEACHING THE HISTORY OF THE THEATRE PIPE ORGAN—\$8.00 each

This publication was developed to help educators teach the history of the theatre pipe organ. It is designed to be used with students in the upper elementary school grades through junior high school age. It approaches the subject of the history of the theatre pipe organ by focusing on the history of the 1920s. Students study the important social issues and events, style and fashion, prominent personalities, dance, music, silent films, and two uniquely American creations that embody the very essence of life in the Roaring Twenties—the movie palace and the theatre pipe organ.

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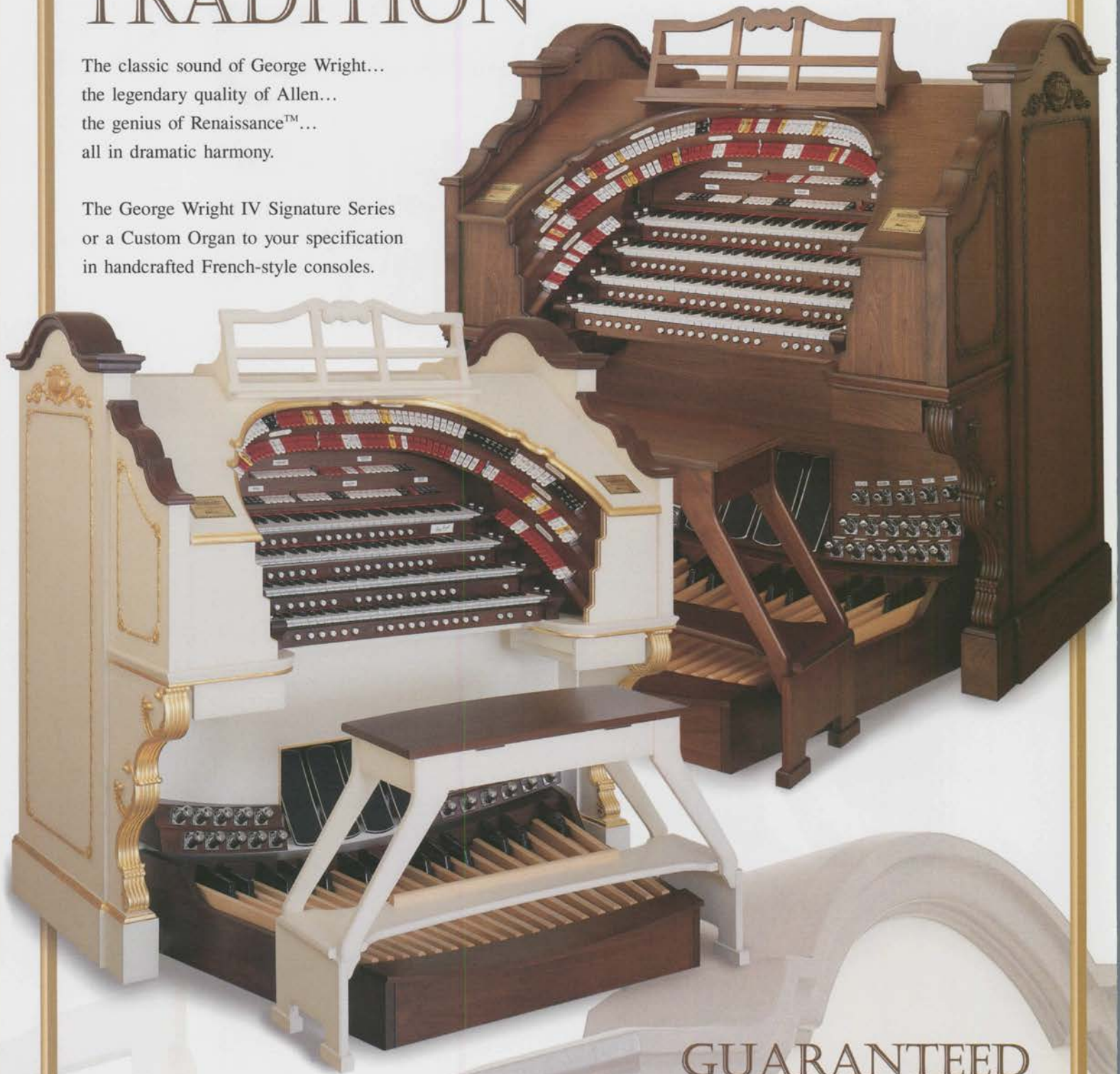
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