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# The TIBIA

JOURNAL OF THE A.T.O.E.

The Robert Morton V'Oleon

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**Nero Got An Organ**  
*And The Organ Got Nero*

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Profile No. 5

LITTLE ORGAN ANNIE

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SUMMER, 1958

Vol. II, No. 4





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# The TIBIA

JOURNAL OF THE A.T.O.E

SUMMER, 1958

VOL. II, NO. 4

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# The Editor Notes . . .

**A**ND the night shall be filled with music . . .

Throughout the ages, the most beautiful words always sought musical accompaniment. Truly a language of the universe, music adds romance, sets the mood as to tempo as well as emotion. A thousand persons listen to the same notes and hear a thousand different stories. Such is this most moving power in human listening experience. To him, who hears, there is music in the whispering pines, the babbling brooks, and the pounding surf, even in the clash of steel upon steel. If the human mind can comprehend the thought or contain the idea, it can also express it in music.

The great composers of the past and those of the present have been great improvisers. The small-town musician or country fiddler, too, were expert at this. It calls for something in addition to knowing the notes . . . it requires a certain creative effort. The composer must hear the music first in his mind. He then may record it on paper or produce it instrumentally. If he merely approximates a familiar tune, he is *playing it by ear*. If he takes a familiar melody or theme, and arranges it more or less elaborately he is producing variations on a theme or "giving his impression." Indeed, some of the arrangements become so elaborate that the themes from which they come are relegated to oblivion. Then, there is the group of performers who finds it possible to stick to the words and at the same time to avoid all the music originally supplied.

Perhaps it does not require explanation to accept the fact that the technique of Chopin is worth an effort at accurate imitation. And few of us have escaped the urge to compose, even though our efforts might not have been crowned with national recognition. And most of us will have taken our turn at entertaining a group. Many have proven quite entertaining at times when it was least of all expected . . . especially by ourselves.

The Father of the organ, Bach, surely has given all of us much for which to be thankful. These men, whom we remember so fondly, all gave to the world. They had a great gift which they shared with us. And the music they created still thrills and gladdens the heart, quickens the pulse, and lets our minds enter a thousand secret places of beauty. Nor could these men live without appreciating the joy they brought to the world. Some were so free from pride that they were scarcely aware of the high positions they occupied in the public mind. They were gracious. They understood that they were recipients of a gift they themselves had done nothing to acquire. For we may considerably affect the degree to which a talent is developed without acquiring any talent in the process. These are gifts from our God. They are loaned to us for use on this earth. How well we use them and how much happiness we bring to others is a direct measure of our own application.

The urge to entertain is latent in most of us. Usually the ratio of audience to performer is very high, but we've all been at meetings where a master of ceremonies

sat in every chair. There is a great tendency for the crowd to sing along with the stage performer at times. And on other occasions it is impossible to coax a single voice to join in. To perform for the entertainment of others requires the ability to act and warmth of character to achieve audience sympathy.

In our recent past, the great names in the theatre, in the organ world as well as on the stage, are remembered as much for the graciousness of their performances as for the excellence of their techniques. The voice of the organ, like that of the vocalist, can express as much or more than the words convey. In addition, there is that intangible link that connects the performer with those who listen and enjoy. If he really enjoys entertaining, then his audience will enjoy being entertained. These are the occasions in which mutual appreciation is demonstrated by repeated encores, curtain calls, and ovations. When the final curtain falls, everyone goes his way well satisfied. Each has taken something from the artist, incorporated it into his own and preserved it for all time.

Evaluated as a lifetime, the same score becomes a biography. Measured in lesser times, it can be a career, an episode, an event, or a moment. But each has its giving and its receiving. Each must bring joy to the performer and spectator alike. Each must unite those present in the mutual satisfaction of the entertainment. A performer who merely goes through a routine does not entertain. And the applause is equally routine.

We in A.T.O.E. are heirs to a tradition that was mostly giving. It was a sharing of talent in a common expression . . . the organist gave the music, the listener received it. Both enjoyed in proportion to his capacity to appreciate. Many great names in theatre organ history have disappeared behind the final curtain. Some have gone into the wings and may return at a later date. Some have continued right through the years to remind us of the glorious past and the wonderful present. Beauty, as expressed in music, is one of the great luxuries that our Maker gave us. Music has upheld the lofty ideals of each age, has not bowed to the baser impulses. Let none of us forget that the priceless wonders that we take for granted today are products of those who went ahead. All we know was taught to us by those who learned it first. Our ability to appreciate the wonderful organ music of yesterday and today was developed by the musicians of the past who left us this heritage. It is up to us, now, to take these precious gifts humbly, to enjoy their priceless beauty, and then to pass them on, as they were passed to us. None of us got where we are now by his own efforts alone; all of us had much help. So let us each, in his turn, do what we can to share this gift with others, to further our hobby, to please our listeners, and to bring that inner serenity that comes only from giving. In this, a thousand hands reach back toward us from all eternity, giving to us, that we might give to others. ●



# Letters, News, and Views

## NOTES FROM NEW YORK

. . . Bill Floyd was at the console when the New York Paramount Wurlitzer was heard, April 2nd, in one of its all-too-rare public appearances. The occasion was the world premier of "The Young Lions." Bill played a 45-minute program, ranging from selections from his current Cook recording, "The King of Organs," to the new pop idiom. Letters addressed to The Managing Director, Paramount Theatre, New York, *might* have a great influence in bringing back this Mightiest Wurlitzer of them all to regular use.

Visitors to the Radio City Music Hall during the famous "Glory of Easter" stage show were treated to the rare sight of both Wurlitzer consoles. Few of them realized that only one was being played; the other organist was a spare Rockette, who looked impressive sitting there, but didn't hit a note.

Tape buyers wondering who Kenneth Lane (playing The Wurlitzer in the Metropolitan Theatre, Boston, on Manhattan Tapes MRC 108) might be . . . if they haven't guessed, can relax. It is none other than Ashley Miller. His recording for Cabot records should be out soon under his own name. While we're on the subject of *noms de console*, it's probably general knowledge by now that the "Guy Melendy" on Camden 414 . . . "Pop Pipe Organ in HI-FI" is George Wright playing the Kearn Wurlitzer. Don't let the \$1.98 price tag fool you; this is no bargain-basement Wright. And still another unmasking: Alfredo Mendez, who appears on Victor's "Siesta For Pipe Organ" . . . (LPM 1444) is plain old Freddie Mendelssohn in a toreador suit, temporarily forsaking his Hammond for the Paramount Wurlitzer. *But who the heck is George Montalba?*

BEN HALL

## WHO'S RIGHT

DEAR EDITOR:

In the Summer, 1957, issue of THE TIBIA there appears an article concerning George Wright's concert in Los Angeles. He also appeared at the Grant Union High School, North Sacramento on June 2, 1957. I am certain that the audience enjoyed themselves more than George. Sacramento can get hot in the summer and Mr. Wright, being the performer, could not dress quite as casually as we could. The second issue of THE TIBIA had a biographical sketch on George. The program notes also had a brief resume of his career. There were many discrepancies, as noted below. Why did he allow them to print this?

In this issue you have two pictures of the Fox-Oakland get together of the A.T.O.E. but I believe that you have the wrong man at the console. He looks like Floyd Wright, to me, not Dave Quinlan.

In the article on "Myrtle" the specs show the blower to be 5-hp, 2200-volt, 3-phase. This seems a little high. Could it be 220-volt, 3-phase instead of 2200 volts?

### TIBIA ARTICLE

1. He took organ lessons from Mrs. Inez McNeil.
2. He played at a Chinese night club in Oakland.

### PROGRAM

1. With only piano lessons and no formal organ instruction.
2. He played at a Chinese night club in San Francisco.

3. No mention is made of his winning a contest.

3. He won a radio talent contest at the age of twelve.

ROBERT F. McDONALD  
7151 Woodrow Drive  
Oakland 11, Cal.

(You are entirely right in your questioning the voltage on Myrtle's blower. The picture you noted looks like Floyd Wright to Dave Quinlan, too. As to the other items, when we again run a feature on George Wright, we shall attempt to get his personal approval and settle the points. Ed.)

## NOTES FROM MASS.

TO THE EDITOR:

I am no longer Secretary, but will give you a little fill-in dope on current Eastern Mass., activities. Our present officers are:

- President: Donald L. Phipps, Medfield, Mass.  
Vice Pres.: Edward McCallum, Foxboro, Mass.  
Secretary: Charles LeBlanc, Waltham, Mass.  
Treasurer: Howard G. Silva, Cambridge, Mass.

The following is a list of our members who have residence organs, with a bit of information about each.

1. Leonard Alpert, Belmont, Mass.—3/13 (235) Wurlitzer from Proctor's Theater, Schenectady, New York. Organ about 50 percent installed, completion date about May 1.
2. Donald L. Phipps, Medfield, Mass.—4/20 Robert Morton from LOEW'S THEATER, Providence, Rhode Island. (1928) Currently being removed from the theater.
3. John L. Samuelson, Hingham, Mass.—2/5 Wicks (1928) from NORWOOD THEATER, Norwood, Mass. Complete and operating.
4. John Blakeley, Winchester, Mass.—2/4 Wicks/Wurlitzer. Complete and operating.
5. John Phipps, Milton, Mass.—2/7 Wurlitzer. Complete and operating.
6. Brenton E. Tyler, Jr., Waltham, Mass.—3/7 Kilgen/Wurlitzer. 75 percent complete and operating.
7. Joseph A. Muise, Waltham, Mass.—3/8 Hook & Hastings Church organ. This organ is complete, and was the residence organ of Mrs. Hastings, widow of the Company's founder.
8. Gustav Erlanson, Auburndale, Mass.—2/18 Estey Straight, from the Armenian Church, Cambridge, Mass. 50 percent installed.

In addition to the organs listed above, several members have electronic organs of various makes, so you can see our group is well represented as to make, size, and types of residence organs.

We have been holding regular monthly meetings, except through the summer months, and have been entertained at the console by William Bunch, who is certainly well-known to you on the west coast; Ralph Woodworth, Jr., who played our Spring Concert last year; and Ed Gress, TIBIA contributor and recording star. We are planning another concert to be held in April of this year, and I will send details on it as they evolve.

BRENTON E. TYLER  
682 Main Street  
Waltham 54, Mass.



# Chapter Activities

## New Midwest Chapter Formed In Chicago

It is with great pleasure that we announce the addition of a new A.T.O.E. chapter, being formed in the Chicago area, which will be known as Midwest Chapter, A.T.O.E.

As we go to press, the necessary details should be ironed out, and the new chapter, with the following membership, a permanent part of A.T.O.E. fellowship:

|                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| John W. Shanahan | Dwight Davis           |
| Venida Jones     | Bill Knaus             |
| John H. Spears   | Reginald Foorte        |
| Peter A. Wenk    | John Seng              |
| Fred Krause      | Wendall Kincaid        |
| Jon Habermaas    | Paul H. Davis, Jr.     |
| Jack Gustafson   | Kay McAbee             |
| Tony Tahlman     | William D. Hub         |
| R. J. Erickson   | Brother Andrew Corsini |
| Al Melgard       |                        |

We feel sure that this group will be a tremendous asset, and are most happy to welcome them into A.T.O.E. The report of the initial meeting follows.

*Judd Walton,*  
Vice-Pres. A.T.O.E.

### Midwest's First Meeting

The meeting was started on time at 10:30 a.m., on Sunday, February 23, at the PARAMOUNT THEATRE, AURORA, Illinois, with John Seng introducing himself and welcoming all organ enthusiasts along with their guests. We estimate the number assembled at between 45 and 50, which was indeed a wonderful turnout. John immediately introduced Kay McAbee as our first soloist and with that the Mighty Wurlitzer began rising from the pit. Kay played selections from "Oklahoma!" in an arrangement that left no doubts as to his ability to make a Wurlitzer really sing out.

Kay, on finishing his selection, then introduced John Seng and his portion of the program, which was a medley of selections from "Kiss Me Kate." John won the approval of all present with his distinctive style and expert musicianship. At the conclusion of this part of the program, the formation of a Midwest Chapter of the ATOE was discussed, and the various formalities involved as required by the National Organization were covered.

The aims and requirements, as stated in the first issue of THE TIBIA, were outlined by Brother Andrew Corsini, CSC, and discussion was then opened to all present. In general it was decided to limit ourselves to the minimum requirement of four meetings for the first year. Several possible meeting places were suggested and noted for future reference. We then proceeded to elect officers for a Midwest Chapter. The following officers were elected, all by unanimous vote:

|               |       |                |
|---------------|-------|----------------|
| Kay McAbee    | ..... | President      |
| John Shanahan | ..... | Vice President |
| John Seng     | ..... | Secretary      |
| Bill Hub      | ..... | Treasurer      |

Next came discussion of dues for the local chapter, mainly to cover the cost of mailing meeting notices, and so on. The fee was set at \$1.50 per person for the first year. We were all then delighted to hear Kay McAbee



L. to r.: Upper row—Kay McAbee, John Seng; lower row—William Hub, John W. Shanahan. The console is the Aurora, Illinois, Paramount Wurlitzer.

announce that the manager of the RIALTO THEATRE in Joliet, Illinois, had already invited the group to hold a meeting there. This meeting will be held sometime in May, and everyone is quite anxious to hear the 21-rank Barton which Kay has been working on for some time.

With the close of the business part of the meeting, the group assembled around the console of the 3/15 Wurlitzer for a group picture. Many of the eager enthusiasts then took a hand at trying out this Wurlitzer which is in A-1 condition.

Present at this first meeting was Miss Venida Jones, formerly staff organist at KMOX, St. Louis, for many years. It was a pleasure to have her with us and we hope that at one of the future meetings she will favor us with a solo presentation.

*Brother Andrew Corsini,*  
Acting Secretary,  
Midwest Chapter, ATOE

### NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

New officers elected for the new year are:

CHAIRMAN: BOB JACOBUS

SECRETARY: WARREN WHITE

A program committee consisting of Bob Vaughn, Bud Mathews, Tiny James, and Judd Walton, together with the Chairman and Secretary have met and planned the meetings for the coming year.

A "get-acquainted" meeting of the Chapter was held Tuesday evening, April 29, at 8:00 p.m., at the Glenview Women's Club, Oakland, California. The program featured a "record session" . . . some old, some new, some borrowed, and some "blue"!

Those members, who were lucky enough to be able to attend the George Wright Concert held in Fresno on April 28, report that it was one of his finest.

(Continued on page 15)



# ELECTRONIC ORGAN CORNER

... by Douglas Marion

This is the second in a series of articles, staff written for THE TIBIA. Eventually the full electronic organ field will be embraced, especially in the line of entertainment organs. The future of theatre-type music lies largely in this direction since pipe organs are no longer being manufactured for this purpose. Your comments are needed urgently.

THE PREVIOUS ISSUE introduced the subject and idea of an electronic organ section for The TIBIA. In following up this introduction, it was felt that the next logical step was to review the field, to give some mention of the various makes and models, and indicate the scope of the industry. A letter has gone to each of the known manufacturers, and their descriptive materials provide the specific details used in this and the following article.

## Tone Generation

Methods of producing tones are quite different, but the resultant sounds are sometimes remarkably similar at one extreme, violently different at the opposite. The reasons for this are easily understood when the technical aspects are considered, sometime in the future. But let us consider for a moment several features that make a sound, a pipe-organ sound. One of the characteristic features of any blown instrument, or bowed string, is that it takes a recognizable time to develop the tone. The note builds up at a rate and in a manner that form parts of its identity. The qualities of decay are similarly important. Extraneous sounds, like the scraping of the violin bow or the hissing of air in a pipe, add their bits . . . these are missed in poor recordings and demand the high in *high fidelity*. One could go into considerable detail and still leave untouched many items in this complex category. But let it be understood clearly that if these electronic devices are to borrow the name *Organ*, they imply that it is their intention to imitate a pipe. And we have had enough experience already to know that it may require a real skill to achieve this similarity in some instruments. Others may provide a happy imitation much more easily. Here again, skill on the part of the performer, and indulgence on the part of the listener are essential. For these reasons, some bad publicity has appeared from those manufacturers who have substituted the magic of advertising copy for quality and research in their products.

The present market includes at least one maker with models extending into four manuals, the Allen Organ Company. Among the others, there is a whole group of spinet types, with a split keyboard in one of the several patterns. Tones may be generated by purely electronic circuits, by vibrating reeds, or by spinning cams or wheels. Other methods have been used and may be in use again, but they are not in commercial production in this country, according to our information.\* Some methods attempt to synthesize the tones out of their component parts. Others separate from the master pattern a color that suits their particular purposes. This is done in the same way that light is handled . . . either colored at its source or filtered to a color from a white source.

To the listener, the manner of production of tone is of academic interest. To the manufacturer, it may be fundamental philosophy. If one is to achieve great versatility and wide scope, one of the more complicated methods may be the only choice. Hammond carried the synthetic process to its commercial extreme, and Allen has chosen the opposite approach and developed it, probably, beyond that of any other manufacturer. Details are guarded secrets of the various manufacturers, but the general principles are neither new nor unique. Aside from tone colors, there are the matters of attack, decay, chorus effect, extraneous sounds, reverberation, and servicing, just to mention a few important considerations.

Tone color production is a fascinating field. This is neither more nor less applicable to the electronic field. But, being newer, the electronic experimenter has the advantage of what has gone before, together with a much more easily rearranged medium. Many workers have become engrossed in this aspect to the exclusion of all else.

\*"The Purchaser's Guide to the Music Industries;" published by The Music Trades, Steinway Building, New York City, 1958 edition.

(Continued on page 9)



Prices on the Hammond line begin under a thousand dollars with this Chord Organ. Its three-octave manual plays single notes or chords, individual buttons control 96 different chords. Pedals sound the tonic and fifth of the chords



This is the largest electronic organ installation that has come to our attention. It was built by the Allen Organ Co. for the First Presbyterian Church at Stamford, Conn.



# Nero Got An Organ

And the Organ got Nero

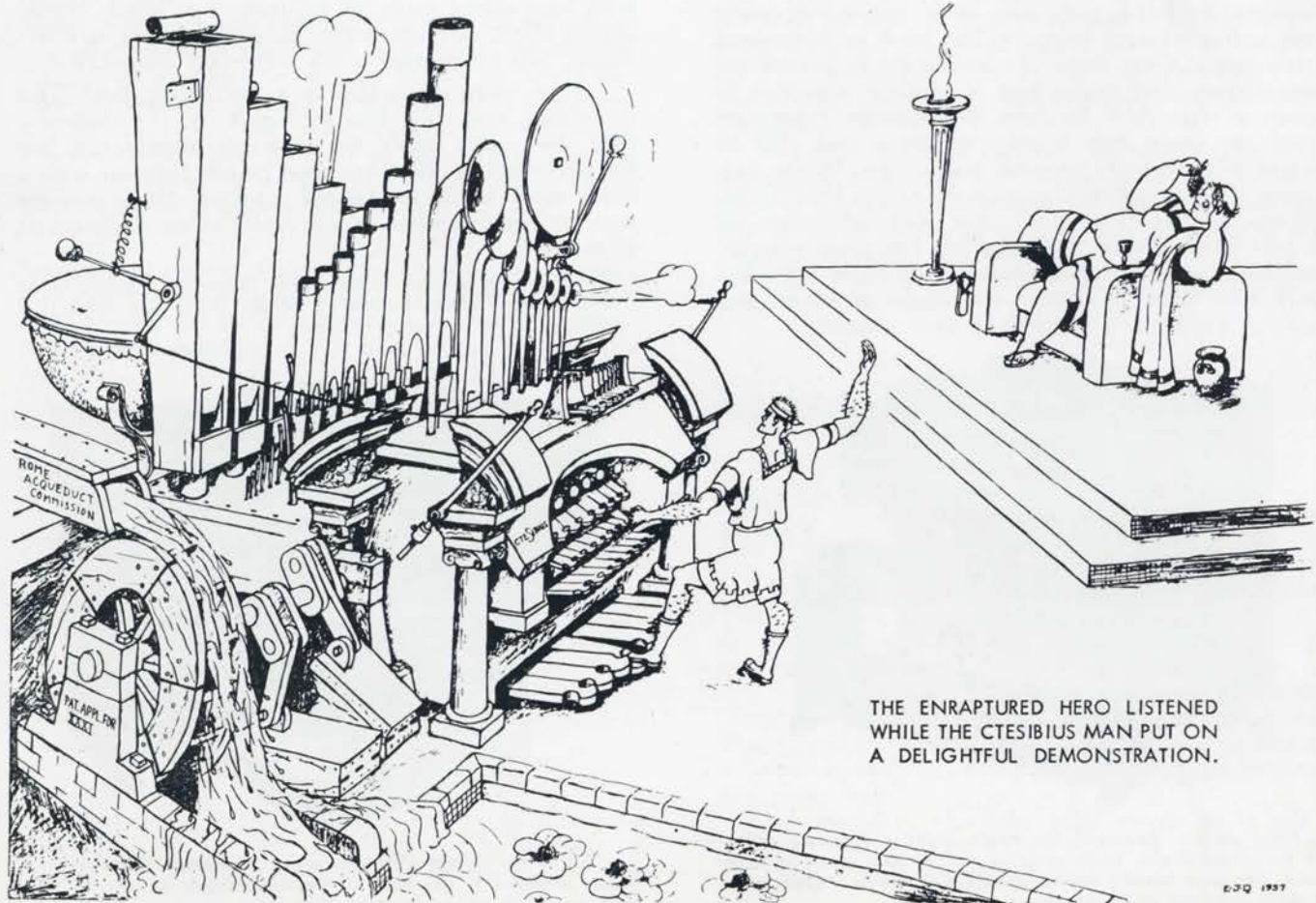
... by E. J. Quinby

**W**E who love the Organ as a natural adjunct of the theatre because of its romantic, dramatic, thrilling, spectacular, and generally entertaining properties, need not be on the defensive. We need not consider ourselves crackpots and fanatics devoted to only a temporary era in recent history when the organ enjoyed all too brief supremacy in the cinema palaces across the nation. True, this was a pleasant and most enjoyable chapter in the history of musical entertainment. But it was not the first of its kind and, God willing, it shall not be the last. If we take a proper perspective view of the available story of organ music, we find some encouraging facts. But we must back away from the record sufficiently to view it as far back as history itself was written.

Too many of us seem to accept the yarn that the organ we know today owes its existence to the Christian Church, and we adopt the stuffy opinion that diverting the organ into the theatrical or entertainment field constitutes rank corruption, even desecration. Although it is true that the organ enjoyed considerable development through its adoption by the early Christian Church, it is also true that the fundamental design principles of the pipe organ were used extensively before there

were any Christians — in fact, some of the early Christian Martyrs were evidently thrown to the lions in the Roman Circus to the lively, pagan blasts of sizable organs! Just imagine what dramatic climaxes the console artist of those days worked up in his organ arrangement for such a delightful Roman Spectacle. Those of us who have experienced thrills and chills watching Cecil B. DeMille's censored reproductions of these affairs on silent film with organ accompaniment in the rococo cinema palaces which seated an audience of only a few thousand, can well imagine what the original performances must have been like in a huge open-air arena seating half of the city's population. Other features on the same bill included chariot races, bull fights, and a few bouts between Gladiators in which mayhem was only the prelude to out-and-out murder. What an opportunity for the resourceful and imaginative organist!

Those of us who assume that organs in theatres constituted an innovation peculiar to the 20th century should bone up on history. A poet named Cornelius Severus in 22 B. C. went into raptures over an organ he heard in public entertainment, writing "... The confined air triumphant at last causes the struggling



THE ENRAPTURED HERO LISTENED WHILE THE CTESIBIUS MAN PUT ON A DELIGHTFUL DEMONSTRATION.



mass of water to move; the trumpet gives forth its long blasts and the organ so rich in its varied strains under the master's skill, with its liquid sounds makes music for the vast theatre." Regardless of who did what to which, the results must have been pleasing. Also, we should note that whoever invented that hydraulic wind-supply back before Christ, failed to get a patent on it, so it became exploited as a novelty during the 19th Century right up until the advent of the powerful electric blowers of the 20th. Wealthy tycoons of the present century adopted the fashion of equipping their luxurious homes with pipe organs, but in this they were not at all original. The hydraulic organ became popular amongst the well-heeled aristocracy of ancient Rome, and organs that were indeed elaborate for that day and age were installed in the private residences of rich Romans. They were also as popular in the Circuses as they were in the Temples of those times. It is known that an actual organ with bellows for pumping wind, and a keyboard for the convenience of the organist existed as early as the reign of the second Ptolemy Eurgets some 250 years before Christ. Heron, a Greek of Alexandria, reported this development. Do you think barber shop harmonies were an innovation of the Gay Nineties? Look back, friends. A Barber of Alexandria, named Ctesibius, who lived between 284 and 246 years before Christ, was the organ builder and performer referred to by Heron. Some three hundred years later, an agent of his organization succeeded in signing up Nero as an early theatre organ fan.

During one of Nero's concert tours through Greece, he was disturbed by the news that Gallic legionnaires had revolted and were marching on Rome, led by a character named Vindex. As though this were not enough, later dispatches carried by runners revealed that in Dalmatia other legions joined up with this expedition under an experienced general named Galba. Things were not going well at home. How could a temperamental artist like Nero concentrate on concertizing in the face of such distractions? There was only one thing to do—call off the tour and tell the various box-offices to give the people back their money, or at least give them rain checks. So Nero hustled back to Rome in his fastest chariot, disregarding all speed laws en route. But when he got back to his palace, did he call a conference of his Generals? Heck no! He found a man waiting to see him about an organ. He represented the firm of Stesibius Hydraulus, Inc., of Cincinnati, and had brought with him in several ox-carts, the latest model organ with hydraulic drive like the one they had just installed in the huge Amphitheatre at the stupendous cost of a half million gold Dinarius. It was just what Nero had always wanted in his own home.

This organ did not need to be pumped by hand, neither did it require the services of a gang of husky bellows-treaders to jump back and forth from the top of one bellows to another. Those stumble-bums could never seem to stay sober long enough for the organist to complete a recital. They collided with each other and fell off the bellows, making the wind-supply and the music annoyingly unsteady. But here at last was an organ that could be connected to an external power supply. It employed a hydraulic pump that was energized by the Roman Aqueduct System. The City Commission would just add the cost onto Nero's monthly water bill. The enraptured Nero listened while the Ctesibius man put on a delightful demonstration. "I'll take it," announced Nero, reaching for his checkbook, "how much?"

"We'll make you a special price on this here demonstration sample as is, where is, — but we gotta have

payment in Greek Dinarius, on account of we found your Roman Dinarius were only gold-plated. Take it for MMMIC."

"M-m-m, I see" said Nero. "That's mucho dinarius. However, it's a deal." Whereupon he called in a few hundred friends and ordered up a banquet with all the usual trimmings including wine, women and song, to be enjoyed to organ accompaniment. This would provide a new twist to relieve the dull monotony of entertaining at the Palace. The marble walls echoed merrymaking far into the night, and although someone thought he heard the fire engines, he couldn't be certain through the din created by the organist with all the percussions and traps. There was a sort of red glow outside, which the guests assumed to be just the dawn breaking. But Nero wasn't telling nearly all he knew. Having overdrawn his bank account, he needed the fire insurance money and, anyhow, this would be a cheap way to get those unsightly slums cleared. "Go fetch my fiddle," he commanded one of the waiters, "I think I left it out in the Chariot. This organ guy is pretty good at harmonizing, and I have an idea for a new tune which I shall call THERE'LL BE A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN TONIGHT."

Some 400 years later St. Jerome filed an enthusiastic report on a big "organ" in Jerusalem, mentioning its twelve mammoth bronze pipes. (Very likely these were the bottom octave in the bass division.) He tells us that the wind supply was contained in two elephant skins, that it was pumped by no less than fifteen blacksmiths' bellows, and could be heard clear up on top of the Mount of Olives a mile away. This makes it a close rival of Josh Stoddard's more recent steam Calliope (Greek for Sweet Voice), whose 1855 American patent claimed it would be ideal in a church steeple to call worshippers. Somehow it never achieved much popularity in that application, although it did become the accepted musical (?) instrument for circus parades, showboats, and excursion steamers. Many a youthful Calliopist survived his par-boiling experience to later devote his efforts to a cooler and more conventional organ — including this writer.

But let's get back to Nero, whom we left with his nocturnal revelers making whoopee to the noble noise of the Hydraulus. Eventually the nervous Committee on Revolutions caught his bloodshot eye. "Oh, yes," said Nero, "the revolution. How goes the battle?"

"Not so good, m'Lord," said the Chairman, "—in fact, the damned Dalmatians are even now at the Palace gates along with a lot of Galls."

"They've got a lot of Gall," quipped Nero, "just ignore them and maybe they'll go away."

But they didn't go away. Instead, they had the gall to crash the party. Nero jumped up and told the Organist to sound his middle A (440) on the Trumpet Stop so as to alert the Palace Guard, but it was too late. Seeing that the jig was up, Nero had his butler, a faithful stooge named Epaphroditus, go out in the garden and quickly dig a grave. As the party-crashers approached, Nero drew a dagger from the belt of his orchid tunic and slit his own throat, falling directly into the grave and thoughtfully saving the taxpayers the price of a formal execution and an elaborate funeral. About that time the Centurians arrived in response to several complaints from neighbors who claimed that Nero and his new-fangled dance-band were keeping everybody awake for miles around.

So, let this be a lesson to us organ fans. A box of whistles can get a man into a lot of trouble.

(With apologies to a very able historian named Dr. Alvin C. White in *The American Organist*, June, 1957)



# The Robert Morton V'Oleon

... by Judd Walton

A description of a curious stringed contraption which is of limited use but interesting nevertheless.

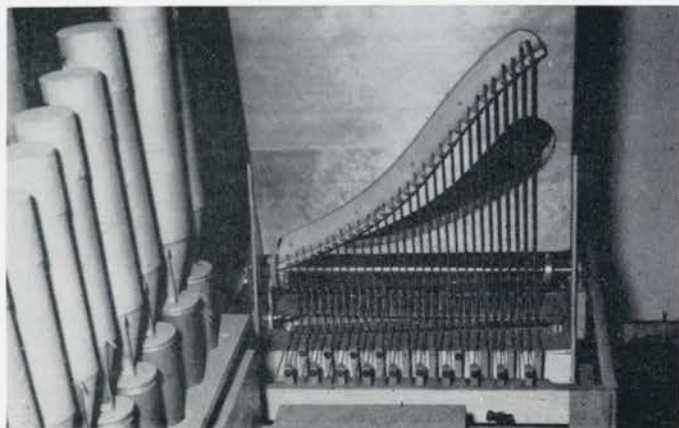
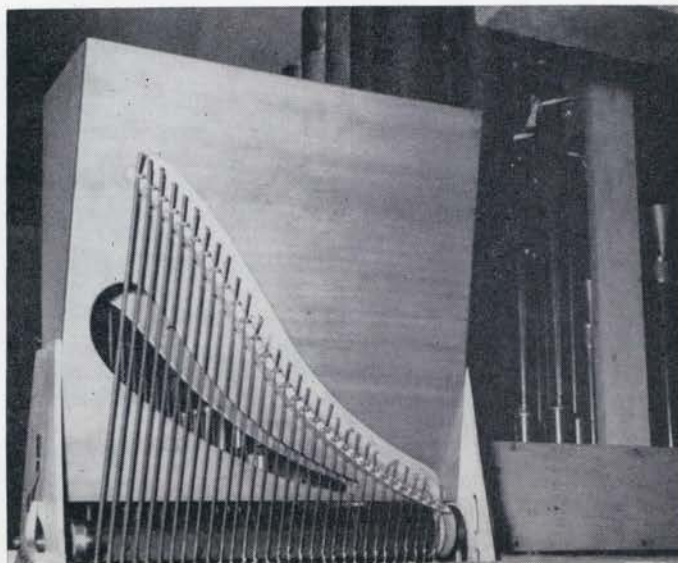
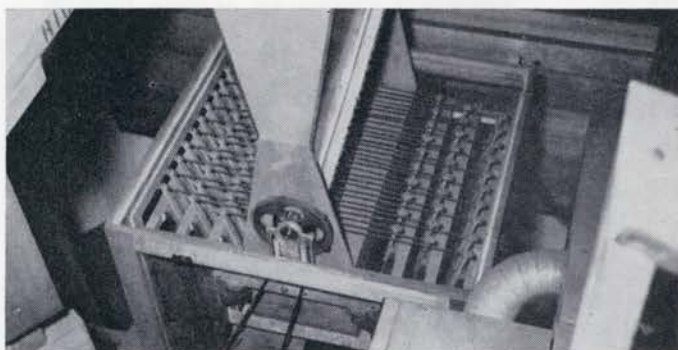
ONE OF THE little known percussion instruments installed in several of the later Robert Morton theatre organs is a curious stringed instrument called the V'Oleon. The specimen pictured is in the 11-rank Morton installed in 1928 in the ALHAMBRA GARDEN THEATRE in Sacramento, California. The instrument produces a very realistic string tone of 61 notes of 8' pipe pitch. An explanation of the principles of operation will be of interest to the theater organ enthusiast, and THE TIBIA is proud to be able to bring this special feature describing the V'Oleon, complete with photos taken by the author, to our readers.

As will be noted in the pictures, the instrument is about 36 inches tall, not including the case work underneath which houses the suction blower and motor. The strings are not taut, as in a violin or cello, but are coils of high tensile strength steel wire, strung with only a slight tension on them. For this reason the V'Oleon stays in very good tune, judging from the ALHAMBRA specimen. The resonator has strings on each side, tuned diatonically. Immediately under it is a roller, tapered from about 2 inches on the bass end to about 3 inches on the treble end. Directly under the roller, and parallel to it, is a reciprocating bar, with a felt lined notch in line with each string. Essentially that is all there is to the instrument itself, the rest simply being necessary accessories to operation.

The operation of the instrument is unique, though simple. A push rod from each string, extends at right angles to a lever attached to a pneumatic, which in turn is rubber tubed to an orifice on a standard Morton organ magnet. When a magnet is energized by depressing a key at the console, the pneumatic is collapsed, forcing the string over against the turning roller, and into one of the felted notches on the reciprocating bar, which is in constant motion whenever the instrument is being played. The roller rubs against the string, making it produce a sound or note, and the reciprocating bar moves the string back and forth over a 3/8" length of the roller at the same time. This seems to strengthen the tone produced and gives a slight tremulant effect, due to the change in motion at each end of the stroke of the bar. As many strings as there are keys depressed may sound at once, thus allowing full chords to be

played. The suction for the pneumatics is provided by a small suction blower in the bottom of the case, driven by a small 110-volt fractional horsepower electric motor. This motor is energized whenever any of the V'Oleon stops on the console are used, by providing for a third contact on the stops to operate an pneumatic off-on switch for the motor.

The V'Oleon is drawn at 8' pitch on the Pedal, 8' and 4' on the Accomp., 16' (tc), 8' and 4' on the Great, and 8' on the Solo manual. It is unified through the relay in exactly the same manner as the pipe stops. The tone in the base end of the register is very cello-like and this quality extends through the middle range, where it gradually changes to a tone not unlike that of the viola. It does not have what might be described as violin tone, and this probably stems from the fact that the strings are coiled. A plywood horn is built over the instrument to direct the tone into the theatre, but the resulting volume is not adequate to make the instrument heard distinctly except with softer combinations. Its usefulness is questionable, to be sure, but it's the dog-gonedest looking contraption in an organ chamber you can possibly imagine — with the possible exception of real angels blowing the trumpets!





# ELECTRONIC ORGAN CORNER

(CONTINUED)

## Chord Organs

The chord organs which have an organ keyboard for the treble and buttons like an accordion for the accompaniment, begin the product scale. And even these are the simple evolutionary consequences of the Solovox and other earlier inventions. Ascending the scale, one need only watch the bass pedals to keep oriented; for the more elaborate the instrument, the greater bass complement it boasts. Split keyboards give way to full two-manual consoles. As consoles get bigger, the pattern is more familiarly organ, too, and stop tablets suggest in name and arrangement what is being imitated. In the largest electronic organs, such as the Allen four-manual, there is an electrical component to perform each of the principal organ functions. The price ranges are varied and start with a few hundred dollars, may approach one hundred thousand at the present upper limit.

Especially in the medium ranges, there are features that vie for popularity and sales. Of these, the percussion effect is surely the most frequently mentioned. It is probably the most appealing to the average purchaser. Beside the reasonably good imitations of known instruments, some manufacturers provide effects that are unique and peculiar to the type of tone generators used. So much work has been done in breaking down and analyzing of characteristic tones that it is possible to duplicate virtually any known sound. The cost and practicability are the significant limiting factors. The continuous improvement in recording and reproduction of recorded sound is going hand in hand with development of electronic instruments. The makers will produce what the public is willing to buy or demand.

A word about upkeep is in order. Generally speaking, electronics are simple to service and require very little. Mechanical features have been changed as field experience has shown the need. But the basic tone generating systems have stood the tests of time and hard usage. Deterioration is negligible, stability is excellent. The usual atmospheric conditions do not alter the qualities nor the operation. Many of these instruments are portable, and all but the largest are moved as easily as any large piece of furniture. At their best they produce tones which resemble true organ tones as closely as the finest high fidelity reproductions on good equipment resemble their sources.

The average electronic organ sold is not for a pipe-organ perfectionist. It leaves a great deal to be desired. The attack is violent as compared to a pipe, the decay correspondingly short. Perfect phasing is an inherent handicap when present. But from the standpoint of procurement, an electronic organ is easy to buy, easy to install, and it can bring into a home a world of entertainment and relaxation available in no other way. When the word organ is heard, common English usage already means *electronic* to more people than it does *pipe*.

Electronic organs are to be compared to pipe organs only in the ultimate goals or perfections sought. They have not, as a group, achieved any appreciable degree of successful imitation. But they do entertain, and they can do this very well.

The very small instruments are more or less a beginner's tool, or a budget limitation. Two companies now offer complete do-it-yourself kits for home construction, and a wide variety of models is available. As

to playing, the principles of operation are learned quickly, and the adult beginner, particularly, seems to appreciate his ability to play recognizable tunes early in his practice. Free lessons, actually included in the purchase price, are common features. These help sales spectacularly. Owners of the small models quickly become familiar with them and become enthusiastic boosters. If the owner outgrows the tonal and technical limitations of the small organ, he is an excellent prospect for one of the more pretentious models. He will know what he wants and be willing to sacrifice to get it, if necessary.



Wurlitzer now offers, among its broad line, this concert model No. 4800. It is typical of the larger two manual, self-contained units.

There is a wide selection of electronic organs. Tonally similar equipment is offered in a variety of cabinets. Auxiliary equipment extends the scope and customizes the installation. So compact is the small organ's basic components that there is room for such items as a phono turntable, FM tuner, or other small units. There might even be a model with a goldfish bowl, although one doubts that the goldfish would be included!

In the next article, it is hoped to list all the current makes, identify their chief characteristics, and to indicate their fields of usefulness. We say *hope* because of the tremendous growth in this market which brings new names and products almost overnight. We shall certainly consider all the major electronic organs and organ manufacturers.



## Profile No. 5:

# Little Organ Annie

A Loving Look At Ann Leaf

... by Ben Hall

ONE NIGHT ABOUT three years ago I was having a drink with Jay Quinby ("The Hope-Jones of the Orgyphone") out at Jay's highly-unified Summit, N. J., carriage house and organ studio. We were bemoaning the scarcity of live theatre organ music on the radio. All we could tune in was an 11-rank Austin (since defunct) courageously played by Betty Sheldon (organist at Seattle's FIFTH AVENUE Theatre in happier days) from a station in Brooklyn operated by Jehovah's Witnesses — and, when the sun-spots were smiling, good old Sandy McPherson playing the megacycle-mangled five-manual Moller via short wave over the BBC. We were comparing 1955 with those Golden Days when a twist of the dial at almost any time, day or night, would bring in Eddie Dunstedter, Lew White, Milton Charles, Venida Jones, Dick Leibert, Irma Glenn, Fred Feibel, and Ann Leaf.

*And Ann Leaf.* The mention of her name reminded me of the many midnights, years ago, when I'd violate strict parental curfew to listen for the strains of "In Time," the unforgettable theme that introduced Ann's "Nocturne" on the CBS network. With the Silvertone Midget under the covers with me, I got a fairly close-up idea of how the Paramount Studio Wurlitzer sounded on those coast-to-coast lullabies, and now in 1958 I'm pleased to report that this great organ sounds just as good as ever



Thousands of the autographed photos of Ann Leaf at the New York Paramount Studio Wurlitzer (1930) were sent to fans all over the world.

— and maybe a lot better. It's been given a splendid installation in Richard Loderhose's new studio on Long Island, and I heard Ann play it in person only a few weeks ago.

Meanwhile, back to 1955. A few days after Jay and I had been reminiscing, I got a phone call from him. "Ahoy," he said in his best nautical manner, "I just heard that Ann Leaf is in New York and she's playing at the Belmont Plaza on (and here he discreetly lowered his voice) a Hammond. Let's go hear her."

I called the Belmont Plaza right away to see what time Ann appeared and was told that she was no longer there . . . but I would find her at the Rainbow Room. My office was only a few blocks from Radio City, so next day I ducked out earlier than usual and dashed over there. The signs in the lobby advertising the Rainbow Room didn't say anything about Ann Leaf (a situation later remedied), so I thought there must be some mistake. But I took the ear-popping elevator trip up to Mr. Rockefeller's tavern in the clouds just to be sure. Somebody was there playing the Hammond, all right . . . very pretty, very tiny, and very, very good. I took a table as near the console as possible and as soon as she had stopped playing I went over (all that was missing was my autograph book) and asked if she were Ann Leaf . . . as if I didn't already know.

She was. And that's how I met her.

I hopped to the phone and called Jay who was at his apartment in town. Ann and I had decided to surprise him, so I told him nothing except to get himself up to the Rainbow Room on the double. Before you could say "Mitey Mite of the Mighty Wurlitzer," there was Jay. And it was Ann's turn to do her part in the surprise. Back at the console she was waiting for my signal, and as Jay appeared she modulated into "In Time." For a moment I thought Jay was going to jump down the five steps that led into the room. His face lit up like a crescendo indicator and he went over and hugged Ann, Hammond and all.

Later we were joined for dinner by Jay's lovely wife, Margaret, and Ann's husband, "Kleinie" Kleinert. All during dinner, in spite of her protests, the talk was mostly about Ann and her wonderful and exciting career.

"I was making music, of sorts, when I was three," Ann told us in a voice that's never lost its Nebraska freshness. "The family had bought a new piano and I was forbidden to touch it because I usually had strawberry jam all over my fingers. But one day when Mother was in the garden, I was feeling extra naughty . . . so I crawled up on the bench and proceeded to play a reasonable facsimile of "Dardanella", with *two hands yet*. Mother, who thought someone had broken into the house to play her new piano, came running inside. When she found out who it was, the family had no choice; they *had* to give me piano lessons, strawberry jam and all."

A clipping from an Omaha paper describes her public debut . . . how little Anna Leaf, age 11, knocked



'em cold playing a Mozart concerto with the Omaha Symphony. From then on, she knew what she was going to do, and she's been doing it ever since: making people happy with her music.

Soon she went to California with Esther, and six years later, Mozart concerti and strawberry jam behind her, she took her first bow as a theatre organist at Sid Grauman's MILLION DOLLAR THEATRE playing the Wurlitzer Special. Then she played the 5-manual Robert Morton in the KINEMA, (later renamed the CRITERION) and on the style 210 Wurlitzer in the Los Angeles PARAMOUNT. This was in the silent picture days when playing the organ was a full-time, neck-straining job. But Ann loved it . . . the most fun, she recalls, was playing a new picture "cold" without benefit of a prior run-through, as it unreeled above her on the silver screen. "I always managed somehow to stay one jump ahead of Mary Pickford," she laughs, "but Douglas Fairbanks was a problem."

While she was accompanying Mary and Doug in California she met Kleinie who was then musical director and violin soloist for the Publix Theatres chain. Suddenly the flickering romances on the screen of Grauman's MILLION DOLLAR seemed silly compared to the real thing, and when Kleinie left for Dallas to play an engagement at the MELBA Theatre, Ann, as she puts it, "stopped grinding out 'Hearts and Flowers' and started a little chase music of my own. I chased him clear to Dallas. And I caught him, too."

About this time, Boris Morros, one of the most flamboyant personalities in show business, summoned her to New York to audition on the Paramount Studio Wurlitzer for a projected CBS program of organ music. As it turned out, she auditioned for Jesse Crawford himself. Crawford was considerate but demanding; near the end of the audition he went over to the console and dashed off an impromptu invention — one of his deceptively smooth, brilliantly polished gems of miniaturization — and turning to Ann, said, "Play it."

For Ann, whose amazing musical mind had been punching out a mental player roll all the time the Poet of the Organ was improvising, this was not the gigantic feat it would have been for some organists. Still, she admits she had qualms as she went to the console. "Should I play it exactly as he did," she asked herself, "or should I do an improvisation on *his* improvisation in my style?" She decided to do it as Crawford had played it, and she evidently made the right choice. When



Ann Leaf at the console of the "Wonder Morton" in Loew's Kings Theatre, Brooklyn (1958) as she gives it its Saturday morning exercise.

it was through, Crawford gave a glowing report to Morros. Not long afterwards Ann got the coveted CBS job for which Morros recommended her.

\* \* \*

Soon Ann became one of the network's most popular personalities. Besides two shows of her own, "Nocturne" and "Ann Leaf At The Organ," she was a regular feature on broadcasts with Fred Allen, Frank Parker, Ted Malone, Tony Wons, and Ben Alley. Maybe you remember the Philco ads that ran in those days showing two pictures of Ann at the Wurlitzer. The first picture had her twisted almost out of recognition, like a reflection in a Coney Island fun house . . . this was the way you heard "Nocturne" on an *ordinary* radio. The second picture showed Ann straightened out and playing right . . . the way she sounded on your Philco Super Heterodyne. Another popular ad of the day was a nice full-color photo of Ann at the Kimball console (formerly Lew White's studio organ) in the old CBS studios on Seventh Avenue. In this ad, Ann told us that Maxwell House Coffee was good to the last vox. There were fan magazine features galore, miles of syndicated material about how she always worked in linen overalls at the studio, others telling her beauty secrets (secrets which most of her contemporaries wish they knew today), and there were all kinds of gag shots. A memorable one showed her looking about two feet tall beside towering Tiny Ruffner, her announcer.

One reason for Ann's tremendous popularity on the radio (besides, of course, the wonderful music she played) was the way her sunny personality came across. In my record collection one of the prize items is a transcription of a 1934 "Ann Leaf At The Organ" program. To hear her joke with the announcer, spring the song cues like a trouper, laugh in her wonderful way, is almost like having her sitting beside the superhet with you. Occasionally she would even sing, but usually

(Continued on page 13)



"It looks more like Baby Rose Marie at a 2-manual Estey parlor pumper," says Ann of this 1932 item from "Radio Round-Ups."



# DISCOGRAPHY

Continuing the extensive compilation of all organ music known to have been recorded since the advent of the lateral disc record. The Editor desires to thank Mr. Reginald Mander of Nr. Leeds, England, for data on overseas releases of American issues.

Compiled by M. H. Doner

## Rheims, Robert

FM Recording Co.

516. 110-10"-78 — The rosary (Nevin), Ave Maria (Schubert).  
With chimes & vibraharp.

Robert Rheims (Custom made)

517 6006-12"-33 — ORGAN AND CHIMES: Adeste fidelis, O come all ye faithful, Hark the herald angels sing, God rest ye merry gentlemen, From every spire on Christmas eve, The first Noel, Joy to the world, Deck the halls, The Christmas chimes are peeling, Away in a manger, I saw three ships, Silent night, O little town of Bethlehem, Good King Wenceslas, Angels we have heard on high, It came upon the midnight clear, O Christmas tree, We three kings, I heard the bells on Christmas day, O holy night.

## Richardson, Alexander D.

Victor. Wurlitzer Studio, Radio City Music Hall, N. Y.

518 Alb. P-43-10"-78

(26755-26757) — CHRISTMAS CAROLS: We three kings (Hopkins), Lo, how a rose e'er blooming (Praetorius), Rejoice, ye pure in heart (Plumptre-Messiter) Christians awake (Bryom-Wainwright), O come, o come, Emmanuel (Gounod), Gloria in excelsis Deo (Trad.); While shepherds watched their flocks (Handel), God rest ye merry gentlemen, O come all ye faithful, The holy city (Adams) The star of the east (Kennedy), The birthday of a king (Neidlinger), The star of Bethlehem (Adams).

## Rieder, Harold

519 Columbia — Wurlitzer, Tivoli Theatre, Newark, N. Jersey.

520 858-A-10"-78 — In a little Spanish town (Wayne-Lewis-Young), Mary Lou (Robinson-Wagner-Lyman).

521 894-D-10"-78 — It made me happy when it made you cry (Donadson), Trail of dreams (Swan-Klages).

522 937-D-10"-78 — What does it matter? (Berlin), Put your arms where they belong (Davis-Santly-Ackman).

523 1014-D-10"-78 — My old Kentucky home (Foster), Old Black Joe (Foster).

524 Regal (British label)

G 8895-10"-78 — Same as Col 894-D

## Roberts, Ed

Jewell

525 5721-10"-78 — Little pal (Jolson-DeSylva-Brown-Henderson), Just one more waltz with you, sweetheart (Bank-Heise-Thoms). Vocal chorus by Roy Powell.

## Sawtelle, Edwin

Robert Morton, Waikiki Theatre, Honolulu, H. I.

526 No. 19-26-10"-78 — Makalapua (Noble), Lovely Hula hands (Anderson), Beautiful Kahana (King), Blue Lei (Beamer), Ke Kali Nei Au (Bright), To you sweetheart (Owens), Aloa Oe (Liliuokalani), Kuu Ipo Pua Rose (Almeida).

527 No. 59-66-10"-78 — Song of the islands (King), Trade winds (Friend), Waipio (Allen), Blue Hawaii (Robin) Ua like no a like (Everett), Malihini melody (Sawtelle). The old plantation (Nape), You're the one rose (McIntyre-Lyon).

528 No. 90-97-10"-78 — Deep purple (DeRose), All the things you are (Kern), Smoke gets in your eyes (Kern), Always (Berlin), Stardust (Carmichael), Sweet dreams, sweetheart (Kerno), Till the end of time (Kay-Massman), Night and day (Porter).

529 No. 98-105-10"-78 — The lost chord (Sullivan), The rosary (Nevin), Ave Maria (Schubert), Palm branches (Faure), Ave Maria (Bach-Gounod) The Lord's prayer (Malotte), Largo (Handel), The old rugged cross (Bennard).

## Schell, Henry

Dorris Place (Studio), L.A., Cal. (Link-Wurlitzer)

530 Crystal 10"-78-234 — El Choclo (Villodo). Other side orchestra.

## Sellers, Preston

American Radio Warblers

Wurlitzer-Kimball, W.G.N. Studio, Chicago, Ill.

531 PC 506-10"-78 — Barcarolle (Offenbach), Love's greeting (Elgar).

532 2327-10"-78 — Silent night (Grubert), Christmas medley.

533 2327-10"-78 — Silent night (Grubert), Christmas medley. spring (Strauss).

534 5029-10"-78 — Dancing doll (Poldini), My heart at thy sweet voice (Saint-Saens).

## Siegel, Arsene

Replica. Wurlitzer, Oriental Theatre, Chicago, Ill.

535 513-12"-33-55 — MATINEE: My treasure (Becucci), Let a smile be your umbrella (Kahal et al), In a little Spanish town (Wayne), I'm always chasing rainbows (Tierney-Chopin), Moon (Romberg), Softly, as in the morning sunrise (Romberg), My blue heaven (Donaldson), Saber dance, (Khachaturian), Ramona (Wayne), Ukelele lady (Kahn-Whiting), Viennese bons bons (Strauss), Me and my shadow (Jolson-Dreyer), Dinah (AKST).

Wurlitzer, W. Huck Studio, Des Plaines, Ill.

536 519-12"-33-58 — ORGAN JEWELS: March and procession of Bacchus (Delibes), Lucky charm, Cumana (Spina-Hillman-Allen), Clare de lune (Debussy), Wine, women and song (Strauss), The syncopated clock (Anderson), La cumparsita (Matos), Dance macabre (Saint-Saens), Nutcracker suite-sel. (Tchaikowski).

Silver, Eric (See under Carson, Paul and Cole, Buddy).

## Slack, Peter P.

Alma. NBC Hollywood, California (Wurlitzer)

537 1245-12"-33-58 — Make me a blessing, He is mine, Lead thou gently home father, Art thou weary, I surrender all, I know that my redeemer liveth, Still, still with thee, Majestic sweetness, Come ye disconsolate, My task, I walked today where Jesus walked.

## Stone, Ralph

Perfect

538 10"-78-11660 — Body and soul (Green), Sweet Kentucky Sue (Kalsey-Nohr). Vocal chorus.

## Tahlman, Tony

Replica. Loyola University, Chicago, Ill. (Wurlitzer)

539 7"-42-45 — Stock car blues, Heat race.

## Thompson, Bill

Wurlitzer. Bud Wittenberg's residence, Beverly Hills, Cal.

Pacifica

540 P-2001-12"-33-56 — A QUIET EVENING WITH THE MIGHTY WURLITZER: In the still of the night (Porter), Easy to love (Porter), Tell me that you love me tonight (Bixio), I'll remember April (Raye-DePaul-Johnson), We'll be together again (Fisher-Lane); Flamingo (Grouga-Anderson), Autumn leaves (Mercer-Preuert-Kogma), Dancing on the ceiling (Rodgers-Hart), Falling in love with love (Rodgers-Hart), All the things you are (Kern-Hammerstein).

541 P-2003-12"-33-57 — BILL THOMPSON PLAYS RODGERS AND HAMMERSTEIN: ("King and I")—Shall we dance, Whistle a happy tune, Hello young lovers, March of the Siamese children, Getting to know you, Finale: ("Oklahoma")—People will say we're in love, The surry with the fringe on top, ("State Fair")—It might as well be spring, It's a grand night for singing, ("Carousel")—If I loved you, June is bursting out all over, ("South Pacific")—Bali H'ai, Some enchanted evening, There is nothing like a dame.



## ANN LEAF

the vocals were taken care of by gentlemen like Frank Parker or Ben Alley.

During her long run on CBS, Ann made a number of guest appearances around the country. One of these was at the METROPOLITAN Theatre in Boston where a new 24-rank Wurlitzer had replaced the theatre's original Skinner. This is the same organ that Ed Gress, that indefatigable enthusiast, has recently so beautifully restored. Another of Ann's personal appearances was to inaugurate the new Wurlitzer in station WHEC in Rochester, New York (where Denver's Dick Hull was then the "boy wonder" staff organist). While in Rochester she played a special broadcast for Good Gulf Gas on the Wurlitzer in the RKO Theatre. And according to newspaper clippings, her visit was a social, as well as musical triumph. During a sojourn in California she broadcast from the Wurlitzer in the CARTHAY CIRCLE Theatre, though she did not appear in the theatre during show time. One of her unique regular programs was called "Three Consoles" and it featured Ann at the New York Paramount, Eddie Dunstedter (and sometimes Venida Jones) on the Kilgen in KMOX, St. Louis, and Milton Charles on the WENR Wurlitzer in Chicago; quite a feat of remote control in those days.

From 1929, when she first went on the air for CBS until the late 30's, Ann's pipe organ music could be heard on the air almost every day. But many people don't know that Ann Leaf is still heard daily on CBS. All you have to do is tune in "Nora Drake" or "Road To Happiness" and you'll hear her setting the mood for Nora's tribulations or smoothing things out when the going gets rough on the "Road."

But fortunately you don't have to get soap in your ears just to hear Ann play nowadays. Her two Westminster records, made last summer on the BYRD Theatre Wurlitzer in Richmond (ah, there's a town with a soul—three first-rate Wurlitzers still going strong) have a favorite place in most record collections. Ann admits being partial to the second album, "The Very Thought of You," because it is, she feels, more the sort of thing she enjoys doing . . . lighthearted and with a beat. However, the first album, "Ann Leaf At The Mighty Wurlitzer," contains a full helping of her delicious theme song, "In Time," together with some wonderfully lush ballad arrangements. Some of Ann's own compositions appear on both records. The lilting "Happy Island" is the sort of tune that gets in your head and stays there . . . and the same goes for her rollicking "Rio Coco." Not yet recorded are Leaf originals like "Aristocrat at the Automat," "Mirage on the Desert," "The Ivy League Rock," and (this is Jay Quinby's favorite) "Tugboat on a Toot."

One of the happiest features of my friendship with Ann has been the opportunity to go with her to Loew's KINGS Theatre in Brooklyn where she gives the superb 26-rank Robert Morton a Saturday morning workout. This theatre is a wonderful setting for organ music, a cross between Saint Peters in Rome and Madame Pompadour's boudoir, and the organ, one of the Five Wonder Mortons installed in Loew's deluxe theatres around New York in the late 20's, has a personality all its own . . . and strings that would make Mantovani's mouth water. Early arrivals at Saturday matinees are sometimes lucky enough to catch a bit of Ann's music before CinemaScope time, and many of them are astounded to know that there's an organ in the theatre. The reaction of others is even more curious: "Gee, listen to that lady play that great big piano!" is one comment I overheard not long ago. But the real stopper was "Man . . . dig that crazy Hammond!"

Hammond diggers would enjoy a visit to Ann's apartment in Manhattan's sprawling London Terrace. Here the Hammond has a sunny spot by the window overlooking the courtyard, beside it is the Mason & Hamlin piano and one or the other is being played constantly . . . sometimes both. A collection of fine water-colors hangs on the cocoa-colored walls, and there is a general air of hominess in the whole apartment that is rare in New York. One end of the living room is given over to Kleinie's rapidly growing display of ceramics—wonderfully original groups in bright glazes, single heads, fantastic objects. Peter Kleinert, age 13, is a creative youngster whose enthusiasms have taken over most of the remaining spare corners in the apartment. A few months ago his bedroom had so much model railroad gear in it that sleeping space was at a premium: now it's astronomy. Peter has a huge telescope twice as big as he is, and with the cooperation of some friendly penthouse-dwelling neighbors on the floor above, has made the roof of London Terrace into a sort of East Coast Mount Palomar.

To say that Ann keeps busy is a vast understatement. Between sessions at CBS, practicing, composing, feeding her hungry menfolk, (and recently painting furniture), she loves to go to Philharmonic concerts, the theatre, and the opera. Her real passion, though, is the theatre organ, and to hear that green and gold monster out in Brooklyn come to life under her touch is an unforgettable thrill.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if some midnight, not too far away, you could turn on your radio and hear "In Time" . . . again?

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# The Organ In The Metropolitan Theatre, Boston, Mass.

... by G. Edgar Gress

**W**HEN it was built in 1926, the 4500-seat METROPOLITAN THEATRE was the showplace of Boston. It is still Boston's largest theater. Aside from the usual motion picture programs, it is used occasionally for stage shows and special events. A visit by the New York Metropolitan Opera Company was scheduled for April of this year.

The auditorium is rather long, narrow, and quite high, with a minimum of sound-absorbing draperies and carpeting. The reverberation time runs around two seconds.

A four-manual Ernest M. Skinner organ was originally installed in a big loft on the right side of the theatre. Its 36 voices were duplexed to add flexibility. The great and swell formed one division, the solo and choir the other. The organ contained such luxuries as pedal 32' Bombarde, a full-sized grand piano, a physarmonica, a musette, and a set of sostenuto attachments.

Organists came and went, but few were really happy with the cathedral tones of the big Skinner. In 1930, Arthur Martel succeeded in having something done about it. (*In certain quarters it is rumored that his real reason was that he wanted a gilded console which Skinner had refused to build!*) The organ was sold to the H. J. Heinz Company of Pittsburgh where it was used to form the nucleus of the well-known instrument in their auditorium.

The side walls of the theatre were remodeled internally to provide four new chambers, one above the other on either side. A separate blower room and a relay room were on the right. The largest Wurlitzer organ in New England was installed in these chambers . . . a four-manual with 26 ranks! This was the identical twin of the one in the Brooklyn PARAMOUNT THEATRE.

Martel was as pleased as could be. For, in addition to a lavishly decorated main console on a turn-table elevator at the left side of the pit, there was an equally lavish duplicate console on the right . . . an ideal arrangement for the Crawfords when they were in town.

But tragedy overtook this fine organ and it was used for only a few years before being dropped from the program. The entire orchestra pit was floored over to accommodate a special traveling bandwagon. The second console was removed and was last seen before the war in a warehouse in Cambridge. This state of affairs lasted until about ten years ago. It is doubtful if the organ was ever turned on during a period of fifteen years.

When the orchestra pit was uncovered in about 1948 or 1949, a local organist, Stanley Cahoon, got it going sufficiently to play it on a few special occasions as intermission music in the 3D picture, "House Of Wax." But again the management lost interest in Cahoon and the organ. John Kiley, another Boston organist, managed to record it for a small local company.

Learning something of this past history when I moved to Boston in 1957, I decided to inquire more deeply. By reputation, this was an extremely difficult organ to see, and the current rumors had it that the management took some degree of pleasure in getting rid



Ed Gress at the 4/26 Wurlitzer, Metropolitan Theatre, Boston

of organ enthusiasts. Even the sound itself carried discouragingly poor memories. The basic stoplist, however, was very attractive. The organ was said to be in good condition.

## A Good Deal

Max Naylor, manager of the METROPOLITAN THEATRE had been approached before. He had estimates from several professional organ builders. The cost of restoring this instrument had been estimated to range into thousands of dollars. Perhaps that is why it had remained as it was. But when confronted with an offer that included all the labor and an agreement to keep it in good condition in exchange for the right to use it, an old showman like Max knew he had a bargain and accepted it. The theatre was to provide the cost of materials. This arrangement was completed without so much as a peep at the organ!

The following weekend provided opportunity for inspection of the Mighty Wurlitzer. Everything was where it was supposed to be, and in beautiful condition. The chest leather could have been put there yesterday . . . not a sign of zephyr skin in sight. There were two places that needed leather, however — in the combination piston relay located in a hot dry basement room, and on the hammer pneumatics of the chrysoglott. The organ was riddled with dead notes . . .



almost one in ten of the magnets was dead! Dead magnets were everywhere; there were 75 in the console alone. And getting 300 good Wurlitzer magnets in this day and age was no small chore.

Tonally, this instrument sounded something less than exciting. It reminded one of two small organs playing in the far distance. When this sort of thing was encountered in England, it was assumed that it was the result of design. But here in Boston . . . well, there had to be another explanation. Evidence now seemed to indicate that there was more to getting the real Wurlitzer tone than just setting the pressures and tuning the pipes. Several of the old-time Wurlitzer men said that one must not be afraid to handle Wurlitzer pipes in a much more radical way than in the usual straight organ. Accordingly, with the help of Howard Silva and Steve Misir, and armed with a sharp bung-hole reamer, the job was begun. The solo Tibia was first and the difference was unbelievable. It proved that given a thorough regulation, the organ would sound beautiful.

It turned out to be a simple matter of four or five nights a week for some six months to get everything in playing condition. After the mechanical troubles were licked, the tonal quality was studied and improved.

#### Changes In Ranks

The changes are detailed in the accompanying specifications. But a word or two on the results may

not be out of order. Today, to us, the organ resembles more the tonal qualities of the New York PARAMOUNT, and the acoustics of the two theatres are rather similar, also. Both have in common the desirable feature that it is not necessary to use big masses of stops to fill the building. Everything can be heard clearly. The general effect is one of lushness. Even with the tremulants off nothing seems harsh or forced. Great care was taken with the regulation of each single stop, to keep the organ as well balanced as possible.

The original brass trumpet was replaced with a Moller theatre organ French trumpet. The tuba horn is even more useful than before in the orchestral chamber where there are other excellent voices with which to combine it.

The great part of the work has been completed. There will be routine maintenance, to be sure but the joy of having this organ to play should more than offset any such task. Not too many organists have the continuing opportunity to sit down at an organ of this size and tonal excellence. Several organists plan to use this organ for recordings. Preliminary tests prove it is excellent for the purpose.

Thankful acknowledgement must be given to Max Naylor for his interest in this project, and to Steve Misir and Howard Silva, without whose patient help, the job could not have been completed.

*(Specifications on page 16)*

## Delaware Valley Chapter Saves Organ

**A**LLENTOWN, Pennsylvania is like many another city in this great country. Among the community betterment projects is a Civic Little Theatre. This group, more fortunate or enterprising than some, found itself the owner of a theatre organ when it purchased the NINETEENTH STREET THEATER building. However, not everyone in the Little Theatre group realized just what a wonderful instrument had fallen to the organization.

In looking over the building, it seemed desirable to extend the stage over the orchestra pit and it was here that the old console got in the way. So it was decided to get rid of the obstacle . . . just like that. But A.T.O.E. has an especially sympathetic ear when it comes to old theatre organs. One of these dearly beloved creatures can call for help on the salicional with shutters closed and be heard across the traffic roar.

Thus it was that three members of the Delaware Valley Chapter of A.T.O.E. came to know of the danger of this organ's position and set out to rescue it. First, there was the item of changing the minds of the governing board of the Civic Little Theatre. Good talking, repeated often enough, convinced the skeptics that it was a mistake to forget the organ. But the console had to be moved! It was exactly where the stage had to be extended. After all, the building was purchased for the production of stage plays. Moving an organ console and reconnecting the cable was not the kind of a job an organization takes on eagerly. The Rev. George D. MacNeal, Mel Freund, and his son Frank undertook this job and completed it. Like most enthusiasts, these three people had the usual daytime chores to complete before they could devote any time to their hobby. This meant, in the case of this particular project, that the work had to be done between midnight and dawn, roughly, one night each week.

But of such is the labor of love. The console now rests on a pedestal along one wall instead of in the pit. And in the days to come, when members of the Dela-

ware Valley Chapter recount with pride that "we moved the NINETEENTH STREET THEATER organ," it is barely possible that George, Mel, and Frank will smile knowingly at each other and just listen to the tale of how it was done.



L. to R.: Mel Freund, Frank Freund, and the Rev. George D. MacNeal, all members of the Delaware Valley Chapter.



# Specifications

## 26-Rank Wurlitzer Special 4m. — Op. 2101 — Built 1930

### (As Originally Built)

**Main Chamber** — 10" — wind & tremulant (left side, bottom)  
 Flute 16' 97  
 Viol d'Orchestre 8' 85  
 Viol Celeste 8' 73  
 Dulciana 8' 61  
 Tuba Horn 16' 85—15" w & t  
 Clarinet 8' 61  
 Vox Humana 8' 61—6" w & t  
 Chrysoglott & Vibraphone  
 Bird Call

**Foundation Chamber**—15"—w & t (left side, top)  
 Tibia Clausa 8' 85—15" w & t  
 Diaphonic Diapason 16' 73  
 Gamba 16' 85  
 Gamba Celeste 8' 73

**Solo Chamber**—(right side, bottom)  
 Tibia Clausa 16' 97—15" w & t  
 Open Diapason 8' 61—10" w & t  
 Tuba Mirabilis 16' 85—15" w & t  
 English Horn 16' 73—15" w & t  
 Vox Humana 8' 61—6" w & t  
 All percussions and traps not listed elsewhere

**Orchestral Chamber**—10" — wind, two reservoirs & tremulants (right side, top)  
 Horn Diapason 16' 73  
 Quintadena 8' 61  
 Trumpet 8' 61  
 Saxophone 8' 61  
 Oboe Horn 8' 61  
 String No. 1 8' 61  
 String No. 2 8' 61  
 Orchestral Oboe 8' 61  
 Krumet 8' 61  
 Kinura 8' 61  
 Piano and Mandolin (upright)  
 Master Xylophone  
 Marimba and Harp

### PEDAL

Bombarde 16'  
 Tuba Profunda 16'  
 Double English Horn 16'  
 Diaphone 16'  
 Bass 16'  
 Tibia Clausa (S) 16'  
 Violone 16'  
 Bourdon 16'  
 Tuba Mirabilis 8'  
 Tuba Horn 8'  
 English Horn 8'  
 Octave 8'  
 Horn Diapason 8'  
 Tibia Clausa (S) 8'  
 Clarinet 8'  
 Saxophone 8'  
 Solo Strings II 8'  
 Gamba 8'  
 Cello II 8'  
 Flute 8'  
 Flute 4'  
 Piano 16'  
 Bass Drum  
 Kettle Drum  
 Snare Drum  
 Crash Cymbal  
 Cymbal  
 Accomp. 8'  
 Great 8'  
 Solo 8'  
**PIZZICATO**  
 Bombarde 16'  
**SWITCH**  
 Traps 1st or 2nd T.

### ACCOMPANIMENT Great (cont.)

Tuba Mirabilis 8'  
 Tuba Horn 8'  
 English Horn 8'  
 Diaphonic Diapason 8'  
 Horn Diapason 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Clarinet 8'  
 Saxophone 8'  
 Solo String 1 8'  
 Solo String 2 8'  
 Gamba 8'  
 Gamba Celeste 8'  
 Viol d'Orchestre 8'  
 Viol Celeste 8'  
 Krumet 8'  
 Oboe Horn 8'  
 Quintadena 8'  
 Concert Flute 8'  
 Vox Humana 8'  
 Vox Humana 8'  
 Dulciana 8'  
 Gambette 4'  
 Gambette Celeste 4'  
 Viol 4'  
 Octave Celeste 4'  
 Piccolo 4'  
 Piccolo 4'  
 Flute 4'  
 Vox Humana 4'  
 Vox Humana 4'  
 Twelfth 2 2/3'  
 Piccolo 2'  
 Piano 8'  
 Mandolin  
 Marimba  
 Harp  
 Chrysoglott  
 Vibraphone  
 Chrys. Dampers  
 Snare Drum  
 Tambourine  
 Castanets  
 Chinese Block  
 Tom Tom  
 Sand Block  
 Accomp. 4'  
 Solo 8'  
**2nd TOUCH**  
 Tuba Mirabilis 8'  
 Tuba Horn 8'  
 Diaphonic Diapason 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Saxophone 8'  
 Solo Strings II 8'  
 Piccolos II 4'  
 Xylophone  
 Glockenspiel  
 Cathedral Chimes  
 Triangle  
 Great 4'  
 Solo 8'  
**PIZZICATO**  
 Solo 8'

### GREAT

Bombarde 16'  
 Tuba Profunda 16'  
 Diaphone 16'  
 Bass 16'  
 Tibia Clausa TC 16'  
 Tibia Clausa 16'  
 Clarinet TC 16'  
 Saxophone TC 16'  
 Solo Strings II TC 16'  
 Violone 16'  
 Vox Humana TC 16'

Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Solo 8'

### PIZZICATO

### BOMBARDE

Bombarde 16'  
 Tuba Profunda 16'  
 Double English Horn 16'  
 Diaphone 16'  
 Tibia Clausa TC 16'  
 Tibia Clausa 16'  
 Tuba Mirabilis 8'  
 Trumpet 8'  
 English Horn 8'  
 Diaphonic Diapason 8'  
 Tuba Horn 8'  
 Open Diapason 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Orchestral Oboe 8'  
 Kinura 8'  
 Clarinet 8'  
 Saxophone 8'  
 Solo String 1 8'  
 Solo String 2 8'  
 Gamba 8'  
 Gamba Celeste 8'  
 Viol d'Orchestre 8'  
 Viol Celeste 8'  
 Krumet 8'  
 Flute 8'  
 Vox Humana 8'  
 Vox Humana 8'  
 Piccolo 4'  
 Piccolo 4'  
 Gambette 4'  
 Gambette Celeste 4'  
 Viol 4'  
 Octave Celeste 4'  
 Flute 4'  
 Vox Humana 4'  
 Vox Humana 4'  
 Tibia 12th 2 2/3'  
 Tibia 12th 2 2/3'  
 Twelfth 2 2/3'  
 Tibia Piccolo 2'  
 Tibia Piccolo 2'  
 Fifteenth 2'  
 Piccolo 2'  
 Tierce 1 3/5'  
 Piano 16'  
 Piano 8'  
 Piano 4'  
 Marimba  
 Harp  
 Bells reit.  
 Sleigh Bells  
 Master Xylophone  
 Xylophone  
 Glockenspiel  
 Chrysoglott  
 Cathedral Chimes  
 Great 16'  
 Solo 16'  
 Solo 8'  
**2nd TOUCH**  
 Bombarde 16'  
 Tuba Profunda 16'  
 Double English Horn 16'  
 Tuba Horn 8'  
 Tibia Clausa (F) 8'

### SOLO

Bombarde 16'  
 Tibia Clausa TC 16'  
 Tibia Clausa 16'  
 Saxophone TC 16'  
 Violone 16'  
 Trumpet 8'  
 Tuba Mirabilis 8'  
 Tuba Horn 8'  
 English Horn 8'  
 Diaphonic Diapason 8'  
 Open Diapason 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Tibia Clausa 8'  
 Orchestral Oboe 8'  
 Kinura 8'  
 Clarinet 8'  
 Saxophone 8'

Solo String 1 8'  
 Solo String 2 8'  
 Gamba 8'  
 Gamba Celeste 8'  
 Krumet 8'

Oboe Horn 8'  
 Quintadena 8'  
 Vox Humana 8'  
 Vox Humana 8'  
 Dulciana 8'  
 Piccolo 4'  
 Piccolo 4'  
 Gambette 4'  
 Gambette Celeste 4'  
 Tibia Piccolo 2'  
 Tibia Piccolo 2'  
 Piano 8'  
 Marimba  
 Master Xylophone  
 Glockenspiel  
 Bells reit.  
 Chrysoglott  
 Cathedral Chimes  
**TREMULANTS**  
 Main  
 Tuba  
 Vox Humana  
 Orchestral  
 Solo  
 Tibia Clausa  
 Tuba Mir. and Eng. Horn  
 Vox Humana  
 Foundation  
 Tibia Clausa

### EFFECTS

Swivel Panel  
 Auto Horn  
 Fire Gong  
 Boat Whistle  
 Horse Trot  
 Bird Call (M)  
 Bird Call (S)  
 Surf (switch)  
**Acc. Key Check**  
 Telephone Bell  
**Toe Pedals**  
 Thunder  
 Thunder  
**SWELL SHOES**  
 Orchestral  
 Solo  
 Foundation  
 Main  
 General (and Piano)  
 (above with indicators  
 and coupler switches)  
 (Piano sostenuto button on  
 General)  
 Crescendo (adjustable)  
**PISTONS**  
 10 per division, with  
 masters on 2nd touch of Grt.

Solo to Great 8' coupler changed to Great 4' coupler  
 Bombarde Snare Drum changed to Cymbal.  
 Pedal Pizzicato 16' Bombarde to be changed to Synthetic Bombarde 32'.  
 As now reset, pressures are as follows:  
 Main 11½". Main French Trumpet 16". Main Vox 9½".  
 Foundation 17½". Foundation Tibia 16½".  
 Solo Tibia 20". Solo Diapason 13½". Solo Vox 11". Tuba & E. H. 17½"  
 Orchestral (both chests) 13"  
 All percussions on blower pressure.  
 Solo Tibia increased four notes in scale. Foundation Tibia increased two notes.  
 Moller French Trumpet put on former Tuba Horn chest from 8' up, and Tuba  
 Horn pipes transferred to Orchestral replacing original Trumpet. Solo String No. 2  
 tuned as a celeste rank.  
 Entire organ voiced and reregulated as necessary to accommodate pressure  
 changes.



# TEST RESULTS



## model 301 GARRARD *World's Finest* transcription turntable

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**RESULTS:** Garrard Model 301 tested even better than most professional disc recording turntables...sets a new standard for transcription machines!

Read Mr. LeBel's report below

**3 Stock machines selected at random!**

Gentlemen: We have tested the three Garrard Model 301 Turntables which the undersigned selected at random from sealed unopened cartons in your warehouse stock. These three bore the following serial numbers: 867, 937, 3019. We used a standard Model WB-301 mounting base without modification, a Leak tone arm fitted with their LP cartridge, and a complete Leak preamplifier and power amplifier, model TL/10.

Pickup and amplifier system conformed in response to the RIAA-new AES-new NARTB curve within  $\pm 1$  db.

Standards referred to below are sections of the latest edition, National Association of Radio & Television Broadcasters Recording and Reproducing Standards. Our conclusions are as follows:

**Turntable easily adjusted to exact speed!**

Measurements were made in accordance with NARTB specification 1.05.01, using a stroboscope disc. In every case, speed could be adjusted to be in compliance with section 1.05, i.e. within 0.3%. In fact, it could easily be adjusted to be exactly correct.

**WOW less than NARTB specifications!**

Measurements were made at  $33\frac{1}{3}$  rpm in accordance with NARTB specification 1.11, which calls for not over 0.20% deviation. These values substantially agreed with those given on Garrard's individual test sheets which are included with each motor.

| Garrard Serial No. | %   |
|--------------------|-----|
| 867                | .17 |
| 937                | .13 |
| 3019               | .12 |

**Rumble less than most professional recording turntables!**

Measurements were made in accordance with sections 1.12 and 1.12.01, using a 10 to 250 cps band pass filter, and a VU meter for indication. Attenuation was the specified 12 db per octave above 500 cps and 6 db per octave below 10 cps. Speed was  $33\frac{1}{3}$  rpm.

**Signal to Rumble Ratio Using Reference Velocity of 7 cm/sec at 500 cps**

This reference velocity corresponds to the NARTB value of 1.4 cm/sec at 100 cps.

**Rumble: checked by official NARTB standard method (—35 db. min.) —52 db.!**

| Garrard Serial No. | DB |
|--------------------|----|
| 867                | 52 |
| 937                | 49 |
| 3019               | 49 |

The results shown are all better than the 35 db broadcast reproducing turntable minimum set by NARTB section 1.12. In fact they are better than most professional disc recording turntables.

**Signal to Rumble Ratio Using Reference Velocity of 20 cm/sec at 500 cps**

**Rumble: checked by Manufacturer A's methods —61 db.!**

| Garrard Serial No. | DB |
|--------------------|----|
| 867                | 61 |
| 937                | 58 |
| 3019               | 58 |

We include this second table to facilitate comparison because some turntable manufacturers have used their own non-standard reference velocity of 20 cm/sec, at an unstated frequency. If this 20 cm/sec were taken at 100 cps instead, we would add an additional 23.1 db to the figures just above. This would then show serial number 867 to be 84.1 db.

**Rumble: checked by Manufacturer B's methods —84.1 db.!**

It will be seen from the above that no rumble figures are meaningful unless related to the reference velocity and the reference frequency. Furthermore, as stated in NARTB specification 1.12.01, results depend on the equalizer and pickup characteristics, as well as on the turntable itself. Thus, it is further necessary to indicate, as we have done, the components used in making the test. For example, a preamplifier with extremely poor low frequency response would appear to wipe out all rumble and lead to the erroneous conclusion that the turntable is better than it actually is. One other factor to consider is the method by which the turntable is mounted when the test is made. That is why our tests were made on an ordinary mounting base available to the consumer.

**Of greatest importance! Always consider these vital factors to evaluate any manufacturer's claim.**

Very truly yours,

*C. J. LeBel*

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