

Theatre Organ Bombarde



JOURNAL of the AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN ENTHUSIASTS

APRIL, 1967



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THE COVER PHOTO

Detroit Fox Theatre's Wurlitzer 4/36 Crawford Special organ which will be featured at the National ATOE Convention in Detroit July 1, 2, 3, 4.

Photo Courtesy Manning Bros.



TAKING AN OVER-ALL VIEW OF THE NATIONAL PICTURE!!

WELCOME NEW CHAPTERS!

Two new chapters have been added to our roles, indicating the growing enthusiasm for the Theatre Pipe Organ as well as the constant growth of the A.T.O.E.

The Mid-America Chapter, Wichita Kansas, was inspired by the late Raymond Shelley and carried through by Chairman Bob Foley originating as an A.T.O.E. chapter.

The Sierra Chapter, Sacramento, California, was originally the Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of Sacramento. Chairman Lawrence Weid and his group have spear-headed the affiliation with A.T.O.E.

Let us take this opportunity to salute the chapters of A.T.O.E. The strength of the National organization is in its chapters, which are now 27 in number. Let's keep growing!

Note: There are six nominees for Board of Directors this year from which four will be elected. (BALLOTT ENCLOSED!) This is in contrast to twelve that were submitted last year. The nominating committee was abolished by the Board in New York on Feb. 4, 1967 to allow all nominees to appear on the ballott. Remember, the Board of Directors is the governing body, and is your chance to have your say.

Note: The March 15 cut-off date for dues does not mean that A.T.O.E. closes its membership after that date. It is never closed. However, we did need a date by which to gauge our budgeting and publication planning. It is requested that as many dues as possible be remitted at the first of the year. Early payment also assures you of receiving *all* of your magazines as scheduled.

SEE YOU IN DETROIT!

Dick Schrum, President

"ORGANize your fun in the Motor City in '67"

Theatre Organ

Volume 9, No. 2

and Bombarde

Volume 4, No. 2

A.T.O.E. National Membership is \$6.00 per year, which includes a subscription to *Theatre Organ Bombarde*, the official publication of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts. Make check or money order payable to A.T.O.E. and mail to P.O. Box 7404 Bitter Lake Station, Seattle, Washington 98133.

ALL MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATIONS
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* * *

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1959 — Jesse Crawford
1960 — Farny Wurlitzer
1961 — Mel Doner
1962 — Leonard MacClain
1963 — Eddie Dunstedter
1964 — Reginald Foort
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CHICAGO, ILL.

AN ACRE OF SEATS IN A PALACE OF SPLENDOR

By Bill Peterson NUMBER 3 IN A SERIES

THE NEW YORK PARAMOUNT THEATRE

The "Mother" Paramount opened on Times Square in New York City on November 19, 1926, and was designed by C.W. and George L. Rapp. The capacity of the auditorium was 3664.

This theatre was the flagship of the Paramount Publix fleet, and was the origin of the famous Publix stage shows that went out on the circuit. The theatre occupied the lower portion of the Paramount Building, a towering office building topped by a clock tower and world globe.

Jesse Crawford designed the 4 manual 36 rank Wurlitzer organ, and was featured along with his wife Helen at the twin consoles. Subsequent organists to preside at the Paramount were Reginald Foort, Don Baker, George Wright, Bill Floyd, and Bob Mack.

In the mid-thirties, the Paramount switched to a name band policy featuring Benny Goodman, the Dorseys, et al. It became the No. 1 haven of the bobbysoxers. Frank Sinatra reached the peak of his popularity with the youngsters here.

In 1966 the Paramount was stripped out of the office building to make way for more profitable ventures. The Mighty Wurlitzer is now owned by a group of Los Angeles enthusiasts, although at present it is in storage awaiting a new home.



George Thompson

Editor
of
Theatre Organ

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEES

Ballots are enclosed for your vote. Please return by May 15th. At the Board of Directors meeting in New York City on February 4, 1967 it was decided to abolish the nominating committee. This change provides that all candidates are listed on the ballot.

The following men have been nominated

- Allan Rossiter
New York Chapter
- George Missbach
Southeastern Chapter
- Paul Abernathy (Dr.)
Piedmont Chapter
- Phillip Olson (Dr.)
Los Angeles Chapter
- Erwin A. Young Jr.
Potomac Valley Chapter
- W. "Tiny" James
Northern California Chapter

Please use the ballot that is included with this issue, and mail immediately. The deadline is May 15th. A short sketch of each man that has been nominated follows.

* * * * *

Erwin A. Young Jr.
9024 Beatty Drive
Alexandria, Va.
Wife Joyce (1-Daughter)
2-6 Wurlitzer playing

Has flown with United Air Lines for 22 years, has been a Captain with United for 16 years. Is now a Lt. Col. in the Air Force Reserve, flew as fighter pilot in WW II. First Chairman of Potomac Valley Chapter. Appointed Eastern Vice Pres. in 1961. Elected National Vice Pres. in 1963. Has served as Vice Pres. since 1963 through 1967. Was acting Pres. at 1967 convention in Portland Ore.



Allen W. Rossiter born in New York City, lifetime resident of New Jersey, attended Union College, served in the U. S. Navy from 1942-1946, and for the past 21 years an electronic field engineer for the Burroughs Corporation.

In the last 4 years as secretary-treasurer of the New York Chapter he has been largely responsible for the many outstanding programs in the New York metropolitan area. Under his leadership the tremendous growth in numbers (from 14 to 267 members) and enthusiasm has in no small measure attested to his abilities and interests in the theatre organ world. A frequent contributor to Theatre Organ-Bombardier, member of National A.T.O.E. for 10 years, member of Delaware Valley for 10 years, member of the New York Chapter for 5 years, and member of Connecticut, Niagara Frontier and Potomac for several years.



Paul McBee Abernethy
Born Avondale, N. C. May 18, 1921
B.S. Wofford College, 1941
M. D. Bowman Gray, 1943

Diplomate American
Board of
Ophthalmology

1st. President of
Piedmont Chapter
A.T.O.E.

Owner of
a 2/5 Wurlitzer



George E. Missbach Mr. Missbach was born in New York City, and now lives in Atlanta, Georgia. He and Mrs. Missbach are the proud parents of four children. He is the sales manager in Atlanta for Morehouse Cowles Inc., a firm based in Los Angeles. He has long been interested in pipe organs, and has a Henry Pilcher two manual thirteen rank instrument equipped with an Aeolian Duo-Art, fully automatic, two roll player. His other hobbies include clocks and watches, fore edged books, Japanese swords, guns, and paintings.



Dr. Phillip C. Olson Dr. Philip C. Olson was a member of the original Los Angeles Chapter, ATOE, and was its second chairman. His interest in theater organ began when he was attending Poly Technic High School in Los Angeles. He studied Pipe organ all through his high school years, graduating just as talking pictures came on the scene. He turned his attention to Veterinary Medicine and graduated from Washington State College in 1940. His first love, the theater organ, was never far from his heart-he spent every day off in a theater or studio that boasted a pipe organ. Phil's devotion to ATOE is well known in Southern California; any organ concert or organ activity will find him in the cheering section.



W. "Tiny" James has had a long and illustrious career as a theater organist beginning with his grammar school days playing the 9 rank Wurlitzer organ at the Strand Theater in Alameda, California. He was staff organist at the Oakland Fox, Oakland Paramount, and San Francisco Orpheum theaters. He is a recording artist having recorded on both the San Francisco and Oakland Fox Wurlitzer pipe organs. His latest series of albums, "Farewell to the Fox", was made with Everett Nourse on the late San Francisco Fox Wurlitzer. "Tiny" is a charter member of the A.T.O.E. and has served both as National President (three times) and as Publication Director. He was made an honorary member at the 1966 National Convention in Portland, Oregon. "Tiny" lives in Alameda, California with his wife, Ida, and their two children. He is an auditor for Alameda County.



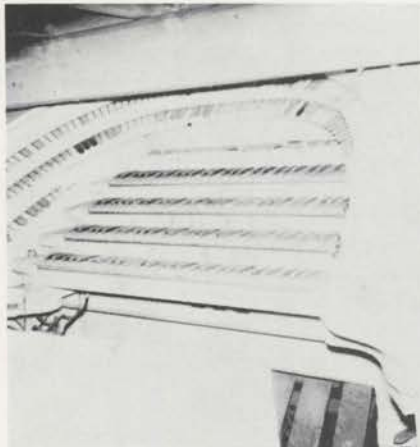
HISTORICAL PHOTOS OF THE CHICAGO THEATRE CONSOLE, Courtesy L. R. Clark.



Milton Charles when he played the Chicago theatre. Now a resident of Hollywood, California.



Author Gutow—one of the better organists—taken in the early 20's at th Chicago theatre console.



The same console as it is today. At the bottom of the pit covered by the extended stage.



The Slave or second console. Designed for and used by Helen Crawford. The console is still connected but now out of sight hidden back stage. When Mr. Siegel used this console on stage he was only permitted to play two songs—*Silent Night* for the Christmas show and—*The Rosary* on Easter Sunday.

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JOHN MITCHELL, theatre organist

by PAUL E. ENGLE

Three of the largest theaters in the Pittsburgh area supporting organs were the Loew's Penn, the Stanley and the Enright, located in the East Liberty section of Pittsburgh. The latter of these had the largest seating capacity. The Loew's Penn boasted of a Robert Morton, the Stanley

goes back to the time when he played the two manual Moller in the Manor Theatre in Squirrel Hill, a section of Pittsburgh, and then to the Stahl Theatre, now the Leona, in Homestead, Pennsylvania. Later Johnny moved to the Sheridan Square Wurlitzer and then on to the Enright in



Johnny Mitchell, at the Leona Theatre Kimball console; taken in July 1964.

of a Wurlitzer, and the Enright of a 3-13 Kimball. When all three organs were in full sway they were played by Dick Leibert, Bernie Armstrong and Johnny Mitchell, respectively. Both the Loew's Morton and the Stanley Wurlitzer were lost in the historic 1936 flood. The consoles of both organs, as well as the switches, relays and blowers were completely under water. Neither of these organs were reactivated. The Kimball was unaffected, however, for the Enright was situated well out of the flood area. This organ remained in use until 1952 under the capable artistry of Johnny Mitchell.

ATOE member, Johnny Mitchell, has a history that dates back to the early days of the theatre organ. Johnny's history

East Liberty. His stay there only lasted a short time due to a local musician's strike. However, because of a contract with Warner Brothers, he was moved to Erie where he played the Warner Wurlitzer for two years. In 1932 he returned to the Enright where he originated with the very popular Walter Framer of Strike It Rich fame, a very popular organ program for Warner Brothers called *Footlights and Stardust*. This program went on the air daily until the house went cold in 1952.

Many fond memories exist for Johnny at the Enright for it was here that Johnny met and worked with the late Dick Powell. Dick was just starting then, and

(Continued on Page 7)

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THE USE OF CONTRACTS while being officially enthusiastic

by DON HALL

The fun of working on a pipe organ in a theatre and bringing it back to life is great; however, a misunderstanding can sometimes spoil the fun and create some pretty hard feelings. In order to keep our mutual hobby as pleasurable as it should be, I am suggesting the use of some type of written agreement that outlines what work will be done and who is responsible for what and to whom. This more businesslike approach to the restoration of theatre organs was prompted by Danny Schultz, one of our Rochester, N.Y. members, who wrote to me suggesting that getting something in writing would not only be a good idea legally but also put our club on a more professional footing.

I had a chance to try this idea out when the 2m 8r Robert Morton organ in the Center Theatre in Durham, N.C. was given to nearby Campbell College. (The picture story on the removal of the organ will appear in a coming issue of *TOBB*.) The president of Campbell College called me to ask if Piedmont Chapter of ATOE would be willing to take the organ out. I said that we would if he would agree to a few terms and then went on to name them. The president allowed that they were all right and arrangements were made to get a written contract signed before removal work started. A copy of that contract follows this article.

It also seemed a good idea to protect us from ourselves, so all the members of the removal work crew signed a release which too is reproduced here. Jim Lowe, a friend of mine and a good lawyer, looked over the contracts and noted that they appear to be in order, but were obviously not drafted by a legal hand. By this I think he meant that they were in English that ordinary mortals could read and understand. Jim changed some wording around and removed rather meaningless words and sentences; I think that what remains worked well. I hope that others who might be engaged in similar projects might be able to use these ideas to come up with their own contracts to serve their own special situations.

For good measure, I have also included a contract like the one I would have written when work was started on the restoration of the Center organ, if I had been thinking along more professional lines.

Contract for the Removal
of the
Robert Morton Organ in the
Old Center Theatre
Durham, N. C.

Both of the parties whose names appear below, representing their respective organizations, agree to the following terms:

1. The Piedmont Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (to be referred to hereafter as Piedmont Chapter) will remove the organ from the Center Theatre and load it onto trucks to be supplied by Campbell College, Bules Creek, N. C. Once the organ, or any parts thereof, is on the trucks, it is the responsibility of Campbell College.
2. Campbell College is responsible to Piedmont Chapter for such costs connected with removal of the organ as rental or purchase of supplies and materials including, but not limited to: tape, rosin, packing and packing boxes and telephone calls. These costs are to be reimbursed within 30 days of billing by the Piedmont Chapter chairman.
3. Once the organ has been set up and is in playing condition, Piedmont Chapter is to be permitted free use of the organ and building in which it is housed for as long as it remains property of Campbell College. Hours of use shall be mutually convenient. Use of the organ will include concerts, chapter meetings, and rehearsal time leading to these events.
4. If the organ is not set up at Campbell College before September of 1968, it must then be put up for sale. Piedmont Chapter will, if necessary, aid in reaching parties who might be interested in the purchase of the organ. Profit from the organ's sale, after deduction of shipping, crating, advertising expenses and the like are deducted, is to be divided equally between Piedmont Chapter and Campbell College.
5. Due to the last-minute nature of this project, Piedmont Chapter is in no way responsible if the organ removal work cannot be completed.

(Name) for _____
(Organization)

(Name) for _____
(Organization)

(Witness) _____
(Date)

**Release Form and
Man-Hour Summary**

I will not hold Piedmont Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts or any of its members in any way responsible for injuries which I may sustain incidental to removing the organ from the old Center Theatre, Durham, N. C.

(Names)	(Hours Worked)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Contract for the Restoration
of the
Robert Morton Organ in the
Center Theatre, Durham, N. C.**

Both of the parties whose names appear below, representing their respective organizations, agree to the following terms:

1. The Piedmont Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (to be referred to hereafter as Piedmont Chapter) will furnish the labor necessary to restore the Robert Morton organ in the Center Theatre, Durham, N. C. to good playing condition. There shall be no charge for this service which is one of the national goals of the American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts.
2. The Center Theatre will furnish such new parts as the organ may require provided that the present parts cannot be rebuilt or substitutes cannot be found; new parts shall not cost more than \$50.00, total.
3. The restoration work will be conducted at a mutually convenient time such as during the morning hours and after the last show at night.
4. As long as the organ remains in the present theatre building, Piedmont Chapter may have use of the organ and building at no charge for free concerts and meetings at mutually convenient hours. If admission is charged to the concerts, expenses and profits will be divided equally between Piedmont Chapter and the Center Theatre.
5. If the organ is ever to be disposed of, Piedmont Chapter and its members have first option on the acquisition of it. If the organ is not wanted by the Piedmont Chapter or its members, it may then be disposed of in any way seen fit by the Center Theatre.
6. Piedmont Chapter will not hold the Center Theatre responsible for personal injuries to its members on official business in the theatre, and the Center Theatre will not hold Piedmont Chapter responsible for any accidental damage to any part of the theatre building or its equipment.
7. The organ may be used only with the knowledge and consent of the Piedmont Chapter.

(Name) for _____
(Organization)

(Name) for _____
(Organization)

(Witness) _____
(Date)

JOHN MITCHELL, continued

(Continued from Page 4)

it wasn't long until he was moved to the Stanley as MC of their stage shows and then on to Hollywood and Stardom. Johnny also had a very successful kiddie show every Saturday. This show became the springboard for many youngsters who went on to success and stardom. Johnny likes to talk about these kiddies and the good times he had with Dick Powell in this house of stars.

The Enright Theatre was torn down when it became evident that the area had changed and would no longer support a house of this size. The Kimball was sold. It is understood this organ is now in storage in Cleveland, Ohio.

Johnny, unlike many artists of the silent movie days, has not deserted his first love. The organ has been and is his life. Today, Johnny is engaged in a whirlwind of activities. Currently, he has been playing an organ in the new huge Civic Arena in McMurray, Pennsylvania, holding down a church organ position and keeping pace with a grueling teaching schedule. For seven years he held sway in a popular night spot where the young and old timers loved to go and hear his special style. His instrument was always rigged with all types of gadgets designed by Mitchell—strings, guitars, surf, percussion and many more sounds nightly echoed forth to the glee of the patrons. Johnny is also on the selling staff of Pittsburgh's largest Hammond dealer. With all of this, one would really wonder how you could get an affirmative "Yes" when you ask Johnny if he would like to go and play "The Pipes". This is how he affectionately refers to the theatre organ, "The Pipes". He will tell you there isn't anything like "The Pipes". "Most important of all," quips John, "I just want to keep my hand in so I never lose the touch."

Time permitting, Johnny will go anywhere, any time, to play a theatre organ. Last year he revisited the Erie Warner where Johnny warmed up the Wurlitzer. He played there and reacquainted himself with the theatre manager who has a wide eyed and thrilled young usher back when Johnny would rise up with the Wurlitzer under the spotlight.

Recently, in Richmond, Virginia, John thrilled to the touch of the three Wurlitzers—the Byrd, Mosque, and Loew's, and revealed to the famous hospitality of the organ enthusiasts there. He went also to see Jimmy Boyce and experienced that spine tingling sound from Jimmy's big 4-43 Wurlitzer at the Rink in Alexandria, Virginia. All in all, Johnny is one of the truly great organ enthusiasts who never could forsake the love, thrill and feel of the king of instruments. "No Siree," quotes Johnny, "There just isn't anything like 'The Pipes'."

While engaging in research relative to the Theatre Organ course which was established by the Eastman School of Music in the 1920's, Rochester ATOE member Lloyd E. Klos came across a very interesting textbook. This book, one of the few in existence, was written about 1926 by an Englishman, George Tootell, the first British Cinema Organist. Through the generous cooperation of Dr. Ruth Watanabe, Librarian of the Eastman School of Music's Sibley Music Library, Mr. Klos has been able to extract portions of the book, and thereby make them available to Theatre Organ readers. It is hoped that much of the material will be of benefit both educationally and entertainingly to ATOE members.

HOW TO PLAY THE CINEMA ORGAN

A Practical Book by a Practical Player
by GEORGE TOOTELL

Doctor of Music, University of Durham, Fellow of the Royal College of Organists, Solo organist of the Stoll Picture Theatre, London; The Palace, Accrington; The Coliseum, Glasgow; The Picture House, Douglas (Isle of Man); The West End Cinema, Birmingham; etc.

INTRODUCTION

Early Recollections. It seems but yesterday that, as a small boy, I stood gazing with awe-struck eyes upon a gorgeous individual, arrayed in a frock coat suit and top hat, and armed with a large cigar and walking stick, who stood at the top of a flight of steps leading to the entrance of a traveling show, shouting "Walk up, and see the moving pictures." In between his spasms, a wheezy mechanical organ laboriously croaked "God Save the King," this procedure being carried out until the tent was full of people. Having paid my modest penny for admission, I viewed, with wonder, films of about 400 feet in length, chiefly of "interest" subjects, which were shown in silence, the only accompaniment being the remarks and applause of the audience. After about half an hour of this, everybody was turned out, the imposing individual reappeared on the front, and you were invited to pay another penny and see it all again. It seems but yesterday, and yet this happened 23 years ago!

Incidentally, but a few short months have elapsed since I saw a cinema manager arrayed in top hat, frock coat, knitted pull-over, navy serge trousers, tan boots, and a large buttonhole, standing at the entrance to his theatre (presumably a

high-class cinema), shouting the old formula; which shows that in one feature at least, some cinemas have not advanced much in 23 years.

My next impression is of a raveling cinema show visiting the local town hall with a film called "Our Navy," which comprised pictures of our warships and naval men doing wonderful things. This film was accompanied by a pianist who played "A Life On the Ocean Wave," "Rule Britannia," "Jack's the Boy," etc., and also by effects such as the splash of water and the bang of the guns. After 20 years, effects are now reintroduced into the cinema, so once again, we are apparently back at the starting post.

I pass on a year or two, and now find a cinema established as a permanent local entertainment. Feature films have grown to greater length, and Mary Pickford has appeared in barnstorming dramas. A pianist is installed to provide a musical accompaniment, and this pianist impresses me. He is not only a good player, but is very clever in the way in which he follows the action of the picture with suitable music. I am in my teens, and though I have gained my FRCO diploma, am still busy with the study of harmony, counterpoint, and all the rest which is included in an academic training. This pianist gives me ideas as to the possibilities of music in conjunction with the photoplay, and I realize the enormous possibilities of an organ of the right type in the cinema.

Strange are the workings of fate! In November 1925, I gave demonstrations on a large Jardine cinema organ in Glasgow, and this very pianist who inspired me with my first cinema aspirations, called upon me at the theatre where I was appearing to apply to me for an appointment!

I pass on a few more years, and am now comfortably installed in a good appointment as a Church organist (my third of

such appointments) and enjoying a lucrative private practice. My eye had been constantly on the cinema; I saw from the first, the artistic possibilities to the musician, especially to the organist, and had quietly studied the whole question from every conceivable point of view and formulated my methods. I intended to be a cinema solo-organist, and when my opportunity should come, I intended to be ready for it. But I intended also to have a genuine cinema organ, and up to this time no cinema organs had appeared in Great Britain.

The First Genuine Cinema Organ. A few years later, I received my first offer, as a solo organist, of a cinema appointment through the late Mr. Easthope Martin, the well-known songwriter, and declined it because I did not consider the organ to be either suitable or adequate for solo work. I realized from the first that the cinema required a special type of instrument and that the ordinary type of church or concert organ could never succeed in the cinema. But it was not long before the opportunity for which I had waited and hoped came to me, when I was offered the position of solo organist at The Palace, Accrington. Here, the organ, constructed by Jardine & Co., was built under my supervision and embodied most of my own ideas as to what a cinema organ should be. This organ was the first genuine cinema organ built in Great Britain, and is still one of the finest examples of cinema organ in this country. The remarkable success of this organ, not only from the artistic but also the box office point of view, gave impetus to cinema organ-building in England, but unfortunately other builders did not profit by the example, with the result that a number of organs were built for cinema purposes which were never quite suited to their purpose, being purely church organs. Nevertheless, we are now seeing organs erected which are more genuinely cinema organs; if the introduction of the Wurlitzer organ into this country from America has only illustrated to British builders the necessary design for cinema purposes, it has served a valuable purpose.

In 1921, I accepted the position of solo organist at the Stoll Picture Theatre, Kingsway, London, when the large 3-manual Jardine organ was erected there. This instrument, again built under my supervision, was the largest and most perfect cinema organ which had appeared up to that time; it is still one of the largest organs to be found in a British cinema.

INSTALLMENT NO. 2
WILL APPEAR IN
THE NEXT ISSUE OF
THEATRE ORGAN
BOMBARDE

* * *

1967
National A. T. O. E.
Convention
JULY 1, 2, 3, 4
Detroit
Michigan



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SPECIFICATIONS

Solo (Upper Manual)

Tibia 16'
Cello 16'
Stentorphone 16'
Tuba Mirabilis 16'
Viola d'Amore 8'
Vox Humana 8'
Solo String 8'
Clarinet 8'
Tibia 8'
Oboe 8'
Diapason 8'
Brass Trumpet 8'
Violina 4'
Tibia 4'
Tromba Clarion 4'
Piccolo 2'
Fifteenth 2'
Flageolet 1'
Fife 1'

Accompaniment (Lower Manual)

Tibia 16'
Dulciana 8'
Vox Humana 8'
Tibia 8'
Orchestral Strings III
Diapason 8'
Harmonic Tuba 8'
Harmonic Flute 4'
Octave 4'
Tuba Clarion 4'

Pedal

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Tibia 16'
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PIPES-AND POPS!!

by E. R. P. CRAWFORD
Weybridge Surrey, England

FOR rather more than a year I have followed with amazement the effort of organists to kill the organ as an instrument, however much they may be under the impression that they are prolonging its life. May I be allowed to say some words which, though possibly controversial, are sincere.

Ever since I can remember I have loved the instrument unreservedly, and I am doing all I can to preserve it. Maybe all of us would do better to take a practical look at the future, rather than looking nostalgically over our shoulders at the past. These words are a plea for commonsense to prevail and introduce some sense of proportion into our view of 'things organic'. I wonder whether this is a pious hope?

Broadly speaking I would divide organs into the classes religious and entertainment. In the former are all church, cathedral, chapel and some concert instruments, characterised by draw stops on the console, non-extension, non-enclosure and so on, though there is some overlapping of course. In the entertainment category are theatre and cinema organs and home, club and pub instruments as well as many oth-

er types. These are characterised by stop tabs and 'horseshoe' consoles, unification, instrumental voicing, total enclosure etc. Electronic and electric organs fall in both categories.

In the modern world—and for goodness sake, let us look at the modern world, not the world of even ten years ago, a good pipe organ is bound to cost from 5,000 to 40,000 pounds according to size and complexity, and the equivalent electric organ much less, relatively. Let us think for a moment what this means, regarding the potential market for the pipe organ in either religious or entertainment categories. The pipe theatre organ as such, is dead and there is now no demand at all for them in cinemas. How many churches will be able to install any but the very smallest pipe organ, and how many civic communities will spend that amount of the taxpayer's money on it? I would say, not many. A minority of people now go to church and people rarely go to the Town Hall for their entertainment. What is likely to be the result?

The population of organ builders in the future, and their craftsmen, is going to

shrink. With the best will in the world we can do little to prevent this. A few will go on building organs and carrying out repair and maintenance work on existing ones. More will enter the electronic field and 'improve the breed' as many have already done, such as Compton and Wurlitzer—and some, though we hope very few, will take up other professions.

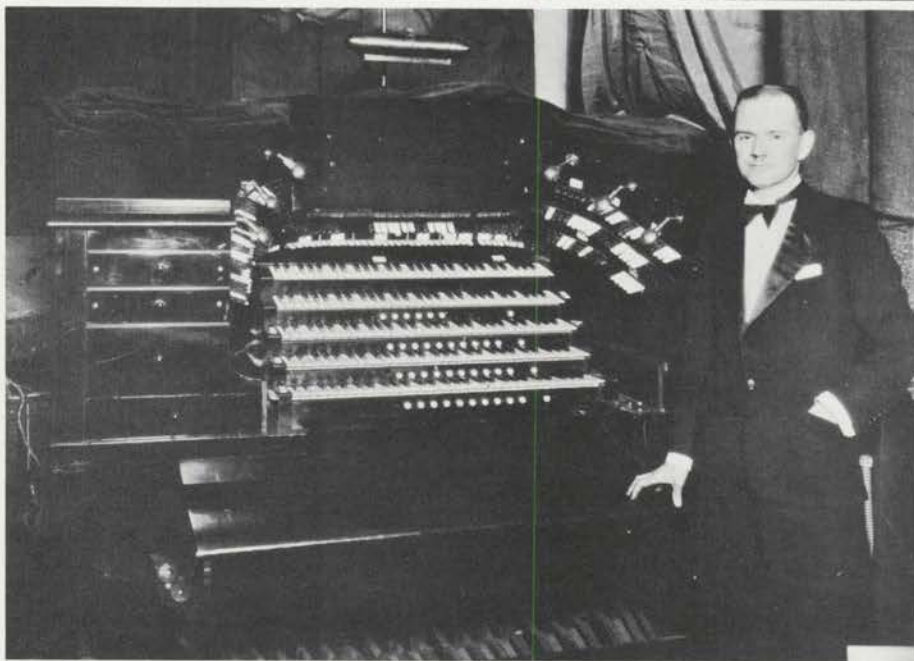
In the future therefore, there will be little demand for pipe organs, if only on grounds of first cost, and the fact has to be faced that many of them are now becoming beyond repair.

The Theatre Organ Club, Cinema Organ Society and Theatre Organ Preservation Society are doing a really splendid job of rescuing organs from the breaker's yard and the scrap heap and reviving them to play again. They renovate them not only to playing order, but to first-class order, for example at Buckingham, Ossett, Andover and Windsor. In each of these places pipe organs have been installed where none existed before FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC. More important still, they are doing all they can to interest the public in the instrument and to train future organists to play them under first-class instructors and musicians. And the public is responding, membership is constantly increasing and many concerts have almost a capacity attendance. This proves that public interest in the instrument is not only not dead, but very much alive and increasing, thanks to the efforts of the all-too-few enthusiasts.

The thought occurs to me that as in the entertainment world, so in the Church—why should not these interested in the organ do the same, led by the organist and/or the vicar? They could indeed rescue many an organ from total ruin. Some would say it is technically not possible. I would say that technically it most certainly IS possible, as these Clubs have already proved. The layman is often an engineer, cabinet maker, electrician, plumber or just enthusiast who can pick up the rudiments of restoration in a surprisingly short time. Properly led he can do a good job and, more important, without harming the instrument. In any case he has little to lose if it is otherwise destined for scrap. So often little more than thorough cleaning and re-leathering is required, and both can be dealt with it just depends on how much you really want to do it.

So far, so good, and I am sure few organists would disagree; where they do disagree, they are divided into the same categories as their instruments, but there is little or no overlapping! Unfortunately the venom directed by organists against their fellows appears to be entirely one-sided. It comes from the one place it should not come from—the church. My own experience with organist friends in both camps

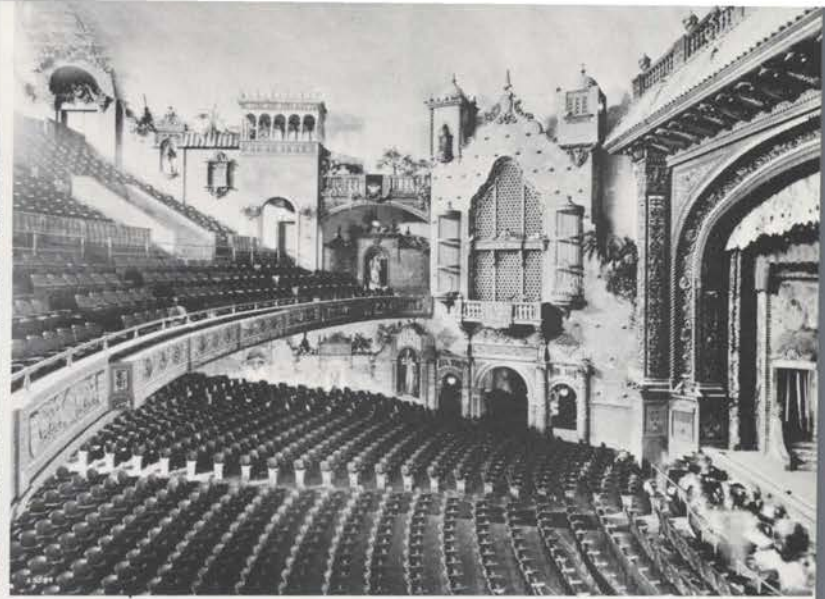
(Continued on Page 16)



Leonard H. Clark at the console of the 5 manual Robert Morton, circa 1926.

This organ at the Kinema (later renamed Criterion) on Grand Avenue at 7th, Los Angeles, was originally 3 manuals when installed about 1918, and located in two chambers on the left side in front of the proscenium. In 1921 a solo organ in a third chamber above the other two was added, all on high pressure; also a four rank echo organ in the balcony center rear and this 5 manual console.

Other organists featured here over the years were Earl Abel, Irma Falvey, Eddie Horton, Chauncey Haines, Jr., Herb Kern, Ann Leaf, etc.



AS THE CHAMPION of SILVER, William Jennings Bryan, earned a little gold by orating on the miracle of Miami saying, "This is the only city in the world where you can tell a lie at breakfast that will come true by evening," and also conducted the world's largest outdoor Bible class on Sundays, the Florida land boom had practically reached its peak on the way to becoming a milestone in the annals of Americana. Promoters were pointing the way in a niagara of ecstatic prose to the tropical paradise they were creating in the southeast corner of the USA. The Florida boom had begun to form in 1921 and by early 1925 the pace

A MOON OVER MIAMI

by G. W. GERHART

It was in 1922 that the Leach's joined forces with Famous Players-Lasky of New York to form Paramount Enterprises of Miami with the Leach's enjoying about a 51% majority. Publix wanted into Miami while other majors seemed to shy away, and in reviewing many situations around the country this seems to have been a Publix procedure wherein an interest was maintained while the "home folk" outwardly ran the place. Some years later Publix would own all of them outright anyway.

With the movie palaze craze sweeping the country it was only natural that a crowning achievement should now be realized by Harry Leach and Paramount Enterprises of Miami. Plans were begun through the New York group with Robert Hall and John Eberson collaborating in the construction and design. A one and a half million dollar OLYMPIA THEATRE; Miami's "ne plus ultra," sprang up at the height of the land boom in 1925. The ten story theatre and office building rose in downtown Miami on the site of the old AIRDROME theatre. This had been



Stanleigh Mallotte at the Olympia console during 1933.

was unbelievable. Everyone was encouraged to "come on down."

Ten years prior to all this real estate halocaust a gentleman by the name of Harry Leach arrived in Miami and in association with his father, a sister and brother, acquired half interest in the FOTOSHO operation. In time the Leach interests would assume full control of the FOTOSHO and be on their way, in the grand manner of the forthcoming boom, to becoming the movie entrepreneurs of Miami as several film operations were to be opened.



James Barnett Olympia house manager since 1952.

an open-air operation covered with wire netting, dome-shaped like a bird cage to hold up canvas that was rolled out in the event of rain. Originally the theatre was going to be named MIAMI, but the real estate leaseholder held out for something more "dignified" out of which came OLYMPIA.

The 2100 seat edifice turned out to be Miami's largest, naturally, and is a genuine Eberson atmospheric, being the first in the South to have controlled weather by Carrier. Without a doubt the OLYMPIA is truly an inspired setting in a city that is symbolic of the outdoors, of sunshine and climatic salubrity. Upon opening it set the pace for the entire South—the final word in theatre comfort, convenience and environment.

The auditorium was done according to John Eberson's finest specs. It could be described as an Andalusian Courtyard, Spanish style architecture with Italian influence. Design held a bold departure as each side was different rather than symmetrical. The left is a reproduction in min-

(Continued on next page)



Alys DeMuth Swords was associate organist at the Olympia when it opened in 1926.



John Steele, organist and G. W. Gerhart console weight.

ature of moorish Spanish style with turrets and towers while the right side topping a tier of canopy covered boxes, reflects Italian influence. The proscenium arch has been referred to as an entrance to a Transylvanian courtyard framing the "curtain of a thousand jewels." At the rear of the balcony arched French doors resemble the upper windows of a castle while directly above a huge arched pergola is hung with swinging lanterns. On the mezzanine floor the foyer promenade has a balustrated open well in the center with the usual statuary and paintings about the walls. One statue, located on the upper right side of the main auditorium is unique in that it claims title to "Goddess of Amusement" done in a sitting posture holding a tamborine and Florida orange.

Opening night arrived February 18, 1926. The golden hour was at hand. Advance tickets went to the public at \$5 per and then there was the usual horde of local and visiting dignitaries. Outside, the spired boxoffice of antique wood trim and silken hangings was sparkling along with the immense vertical corner sign (65x12) which shown ever so bright as Who's Who of the movie and theatre world arrived for one of Miami's showiest nights. Since February was and still is the height of Florida's tourist season they were ALL there enmasse including Adolph Zukor, Jesse Lasky, Flo Ziegfeld, Billie Burke, Arthur Hammerstein, Dorothy Dalton, Marcus Loew, Ben Lyon, Sam Katz, Sam Harris, E. F. Albee, Tom Meighan, Al Jolson, Johnny Hines, Philo McCullough, F. F. Proctor, John Hertz of Chicago and Mayor E. C. Romph plus Miami society in a body. Harry Marx, director of Publix physical operations, had brought Walter Lloyd of Chicago here to train the theatre staff of 40 on the floor.

As the audience was seated in this Venetian court beneath a deep blue sky with twinkling stars, a moon moving slowly

the movie palaze craze and A Moon Over Miami . . .

(Story Starts on Page Eleven)

across the firmament with drifting billows of cloud, the curtain was withdrawn from a typically picturesque stage and two trumpeters dressed in Spanish costume appeared at each side, their bugle calls formally opening the program, leading into the overture.

The overture ended, Harry Marx acting as M. C. brought on Mayor Romph who introduced dignitaries and spoke at length of Miami as the promised land. The OLYMPIA 25 piece symphony orchestra under direction of E. Manuel Baer then got under way with the *1812 Overture* during which lighting effects fitting in well with the tone harmony were used. Following this the WURLITZER Concert Pipe Organ was featured with C. Stanleigh Mallotte playing *Verses From Brook & Wave* by Longfellow set to music with fitting scenes being shown on the screen. A very special entry followed as Baroness Lavrova Royce-Garrett, coloratura soprano, literally took the house by storm after which Paul Whiteman and orchestra made this one time only appearance. Whiteman was currently appearing at nearby Coral Gables Country Club. The indefatigable news weekly went next followed by the feature movie which rounded out a very liberal opening night program. In the boxes, orchestra and balcony soft lights from hidden windows had shed their lustre on the hundreds of faces glancing eagerly indeed from stage to interior. It was heralded as the most attractive social function of the season. Miami hasn't seen anything quite like it since.

Conditions were bound to run their course and 1926 was the year the big Florida boom burst like the proverbial bagfull of water, with the coup de grace being a very famous hurricane which sent a hotel flagpole through the OLYMPIA roof and also twisted the huge \$14,000 vertical sign into a \$50 piece of junk. All was replaced and the OLYMPIA continued to operate.

A Deluxe show policy went into effect following opening night consisting of straight screen presentation with, of course, the symphony orchestra and organ and continuing in this manner until talking pictures arrived. The OLYMPIA did not subscribe to Publix stage revues at any time. In 1929 a policy of vaudeville and screen show was adopted with the organ featured in novelty spots. The organ was to be dropped in the mid-thirties as were stage shows for a while. The years sped by with Publix assuming full control of the Leach interests in all their Miami operations. Stage-screen revues re-entered during January of 1939 with the biggest names of the entertain-

ment world gracing the OLYMPIA stage. Names like Sophie Tucker and Jackie Gleason, backed by Les Rohde's stage band, were not uncommon until October 1954 when OLYMPIA vaudeville departed this earth. It was one of the last along with New York and Chicago. The house closed three months pending negotiations for coming back as a first-run film situation which it remains to this day. Since that time there have been special road-show appearances by the likes of Elvis Presley and Julius LaRosa on the stage and once in a while a fleeting appearance by the star or stars of a premiering movie.

An extra special effort to bring back live stage frolics was made for one week in December 1964 when a Latin-American revue presented itself in colorful and sprightly array. Despite this brilliant try-out along with a second-run film the independently produced stage show resulted in financial disarray and is now a loving memory in the OLYMPIA scrapbook.

Mr. Al Weiss, veteran OLYMPIA man, has always prided his organization in having booked their own vaudeville shows, never having been part of any traveling circuit arrangement. Mr. Weiss, who was house director when the theatre opened in 1926, can be given credit for the theatre being maintained in essentially the original decor. His regional position today has allowed him a voice in opposing "modernization" of the OLYMPIA auditorium. These up-dating gestures usually indicate use of huge quantities of cloth, solid coatings of flat paint or both. In 1966 the OLYMPIA still reflects the grandiose decade from whence it came. Spot facelifting has therefore been the guideline. In the early fifties the 65 foot corner sign was removed from outside the building due to a city ordinance, the old boxoffice was modernized and the current marquee is its third. Inside, some palm branches and miscellaneous shrubbery have disappeared over the years along with the moon and clouds, but stars twinkle busily in the still deep blue sky and all around re-lamping is a regular thing. There is also popcorn in paradise.

Coming on the heels of the Publix trust-bust an organization known as FLORIDA STATE THEATRES operating former Publix interests was formed on paper with the OLYMPIA continuing as the south Florida flagship. This group is a wholly owned subsidiary of American Broadcasting Companies.

The Wurlitzer Company heralded this installation as "the grand Olympia organ —the owner's choice, our pride. America's deluxe organ for deluxe theatres." Opus #1198, a 260 (3/15), was shipped from

Both Jesse Crawford and Eddie Dunstedter are supposed to have made guest appearances at the OLYMPIA. Crawford insisted that the console be hiked up during his stay in order that everyone be able to see as well as hear. Audiences on the orchestra floor are unable to see any footwork in the normal console position.



John Steele at the console, shown with Jerry Conrad organ crew member.

North Tonowanda on November 6, 1925 to Paramount Enterprises of Miami. Charles Holchek of the New York office did the installation for Wurlitzer.

Out of more than a dozen theatre organs installed around the Miami area the **Olympia** Wurlitzer was distinguished in being the largest and most deluxe in all respects. The inclusion of piano and 32' Diaphone section was special enough, but what turned out to be slightly more unique was the installation of Main and Solo chambers stacked on the left side, console on the right. These settings are when looking from orchestra to stage. The **Capitol** in Washington, D.C. was identical but in reverse order sans piano and 32's. As in many installations elsewhere, the piano and 32' section are not under expression at the **Olympia** with the piano being behind a wall, uncovered, to the left of the proscenium and next to the main chamber, the 32's in the ceiling to the proscenium right and directly above the console.

There are some who would label this installation as a partial transgression against good organ layout as "soloing" at the **Olympia** doesn't quite reach expected heights. In many cases during the design

and building of theatres there was a definite lack of coordination between various interests, mainly building designers and organ builders. Here at the **Olympia** where much room was provided the main chamber very little was allowed the solo on top. Space is lacking for sufficient tone openings since the swells, aside from being abbreviated in height, are at floor level which is to say reservoir level. This took place due to a back slanting front wall which starts about four feet above the floor and was done due to design of the outside facade, i.e., the grill, turrets, etc. So for the sake of a proper looking minaret and grill the solo organ was "botched." Aside from seven ranks of pipes the solo room also is crammed with the toy counter and relay racks.

The **Olympia's** proximity to sea level and therefore vulnerable location discouraged the builders from incorporating the usual pit and elevators for in-front-of-stage activities. Instead, the floor was slightly depressed accommodating the symphony and a console in a stationary manner. This area has long been "seated over" but the console is quite prominent in its right side position protected by can-

vas cover and railing. There is an abbreviated type sub-basement directly under the front stage where two doors allowed musicians access to the area. A small side room contains the organ blower.

The brigade of organists here started with Stanleigh Mallotte who, along with Alys DeMuth Swords as associate, opened the organ and continued for some years with spotlighted novelties and movie accompaniment. Mallotte's wife Fern also played occasionally. A typical novelty by Mallotte might have been entitled *Au Reservoir But Not Goodbye* or *Back From The Cold North* while Mrs. Swords would *Keep Smiling*. Mallotte had been around Miami for some time as a prominent musician whereas Mrs. Swords had recently arrived from New Orleans where she appeared at the Strand and before that at the Chicago Lake Shore. Auditions were held for **Olympia** second organist at another theatre which contained next thing to a straight organ. It was here that Mrs. Swords played *Nola* and won over 26 others. The person holding the audition never had heard anything quite like it on an organ! Mrs. Swords held second position at the **Olympia** for about two years when a family addition forced resignation. After this was properly cared for she continued in substitute service at various theatres around Miami as her style was and still is much in demand. Her deft ear for modern music and appreciation of life in general have left an indelible imprint on those who are fortunate enough to know her. This graduate of the American Conservatory is today busy as ever playing Hammond and piano and instructing the young folk.

Stanleigh Mallotte stayed at the **Olympia** for several years, left and came back again. Later he played elsewhere in Miami and eventually left apparently for good. Indications are that he had a stay in Birmingham for some time.

With stage and screen shows going strong in the early thirties organ song-fests or novelties were a popular item at the **Olympia**. Mallotte, Don Miller and Roy Parks were pumping the Wurlitzer at different times. During World War II years the Dr. I. Q. radio show made a few broadcasts from the **Olympia** at which time the Wurlitzer breathed anew under control of **Clark Fiers**, staff organist for WIOD radio, the NBC affiliate. Clark was no newcomer to theatre organ, this being another story by itself. Other than these bursts the only billed appearance from the thirties to this day was for Larry Leverenz, a Philadelphian, who had a nov-

(Continued on next page)



Main chamber, (lower chamber)



Solo chamber-(upper chamber). The top of the swell frame is shown on the left.

ely along with the regular stage-screen show for exactly two weeks some time during the big war, or occasionally a member of Les Rhode's stage band would manage an impromptu stint at the console.

Organ maintenance in the early years of course belonged to the Publix staff. It was several months following the *Olympia's*

opening in 1926 that **Dan Papp** was installing a Style E in Ft. Lauderdale (for Wurlitzer) that he accompanied **Tom Brown**, a Publix serviceman, to the Miami *Olympia* for some touchup tuning after which he returned to New York to assume a 40 year stay with Publix at the Times Square Paramount.

In later years the "faithful followers" have appeared on the scene to try something in the way of organ maintenance. One such invasion left the second touch action completely removed and over the years magnets have been removed from the pizzicato relay to serve as replacements in pipe chests. Console fanciers would have seen the original black turn to gold with loss of builders plates, followed by a billious white as it stands today. Generally speaking the console is most decadent and in contrast the pipework appears to have been installed today. Preservation in the loft has been remarkable.

A few years ago a concerted effort to bring about a decent sort of rehabilitation was started by organist/technician **John Steele** along with Gerry Conrad and joined occasionally by the writer and sundry other visitors from time to time. Emphasis was placed on replacing dead magnets, releathering and general cleaning, etc. The sordid details won't be gotten into here as this is usually the crux of every organ rehabilitation article ever written. Actually a goal was at hand here since the house manager Mr. **James Barnett** had sanctioned use of the organ for public performances during the 1962 holiday season.

Work progressed on the organ at a feverish pace until Mr. Barnett was advised by his superiors that arrangements could not be made for use of the organ during public performances. Naturally, interest lagged, and now except for tuning and maintenance, very little work has been done.

Occasional private concerts are held, with Dr. Steele presiding, for those of us poor souls who need to hear the wind turned on once in a while. In any event Mr. Barnett, our manager, is certainly to be lauded as protector of the *Olympia* organ. His cooperation is always tops toward those of us who have the interest of the organ at heart. He is of the rare breed who appreciates his environment as well as the boxoffice reports.

Meanwhile, the fabulous *Olympia* is now "over 40" and the Miami moon shines intriguingly tonight as that night in 1926 when a star was born on Flagler Street.

* * *

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Brass Trumpet
Kinura
Marimba
Entire toy counter

Upright piano not under expression.

32' Diaphone section not under expression.

CARTER'S BEACON THEATRE CONCERT REVIEWED IN "BILLBOARD"

Of interest to all ATOE Chapters, particularly those that have working arrangements with theatre managements for use of organs still in theatres, is a full two column review of Gaylord Carter's recent New York concert at the Beacon Theatre. The excellent writing appeared in *Billboard Magazine*, the trade journal of motion picture exhibitors. Written by Jim Watters, the article tells of the 2000 persons that attended, and told of the weeks of work that the New York Chapter of ATOE had spent on the restoration of the Wurlitzer organ. Mention in the article was also made of MC Ben M. Hall's opening comments that traced the history of the Beacon Theatre, and a complete review of the excellent program which followed.

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PIPES AND POPS, continued from page ten

has proved this to be true. Many and varied are the sneers I have heard directed against the 'Vox Humana', 'Bells and Drums' 'Sinking to the Infernal Regions', 'Fruit Jellies', and so on. Never once have I heard this kind of sneering directed by a theatre organist against his church counterpart. Is there a moral somewhere? And do the sneers really bear inspection?

Whether we like it or not does not alter the fact that Hope-Jones revolutionised the church organ as much as the theatre. Electric and electro-pneumatic action, tab stops, double-touch, orchestral voicing, total enclosure are all largely due to him, but were devised mainly for the theatre. Yet such appears to be the hatred of organists for one of the greatest benefactors the organ has ever known, that one is almost led to believe it is a crime to install a horseshoe console in a church. And one is treated to the farcical sight of seeing the country's leading organists playing one of the country's leading and most recently-installed instruments with someone standing beside him, not to turn the pages, but to draw the top stops which are out of his reach! To cap it, I am told that the mechanism of the draw stop costs about 1 more per stop than the tab—on an instrument which is already falling by the wayside on account of first cost. To what heights can the folly of prejudice reach?

We read too, that every effort MUST be made to voice the modern instrument exactly as the baroque or romantic organs of the past. Yet this is not the past. Beau-

tiful these organs were, and are, but life advances and no two of the old instruments were the same—why try to achieve the impossible. If we do this, we can only judge an instrument by how much it is like another one, not on its own merits. What a disappointing comparison. By this yardstick we should be designing organs with hand blowing, crude design and no swell boxes—even the gas engine would be suspect! One asks oneself, which way is progress?

One of the main attractions of the organ is that no two instruments are exactly the same. To say that any particular composer wrote for one particular organ is obviously rubbish. No two organs he knew himself sounded the same. Beauty the old instruments had and modern ones have, but if we ever succeed in copying the old instruments exactly, we shall achieve nothing but mass-production and will kill the instrument on those grounds alone. Frankly it depresses me to read of a new instrument being hailed as a good copy of one built around the turn of the century. Fortunately the nature of the beast is such that it cannot exactly copy its predecessor.

The great composers were progressive men—which was a measure of their greatness—Bach was obviously a do-it-yourself type as well! Each of them realised that the organ, and its music, cannot stand still, cannot rely on its past glory. Each of them wrote for the modern day and modern life as he knew it, and each was successful through appealing to a MODERN audience—the audience of his day. Whatever the motives stated in print, each composer wrote for the pleasure of hearing his work performed—in other words, for the same reasons as artists through the ages to the present day. In a religious age, when much of the work was commissioned for the church, it would be politic to write it for the 'Glory of God'. But the Almighty would still have to put up with what pleased the composer's ear most—such is the nature of things.

So we have to accept—and why should we not—that the great composers wrote modern music for the modern age. They wrote music which they intended to be popular with the public they aimed it at, and they hoped it would bring in the cash as well. This may state it rather baldly but it is a fact if we are honest enough to admit it. I am sure the composers would do so, as most people of such stature in the arts are also very human people—they have to be, to be sensitive to their public.

In his own way each of the great composers was an innovator or inventor, and I feel sure that Bach and the rest would have accepted the innovations of Hope-Jones and turned them to excellent account to further their own efforts. To what standards might the organ not have de-

veloped with the genius of a Hope-Jones allied to that of a Bach? I make no apology for mentioning both men in the same breath. Both advanced the organ immeasurably in his way, and both were forward-looking. But unfortunately nobody of the stature of a Bach was in evidence to encourage Hope-Jones and he had to turn to the entertainment world. The wheel went full circle and in spite of every kind of discouragement, Hope-Jones improved ALL kinds of organs. Yet we still try to stifle progress.

Turning to the electric organ, whether or not we like it is largely immaterial at the present time. The fact remains that it is an exciting instrument which is here to stay—and it will prolong the life of the organ indefinitely. It is in fact helping greatly to re-create the popularity of the instrument in all its many forms.

This instrument is still in its infancy, but those of us who can look back and remember the gruesome noises made by pre-war models can realise just how far the thing has progressed in a very short time. We have newspaper arguments as to whether or not so-and-so can tell in every case which is playing, pipes or electric. Whatever the answer may be, the problem proves one thing conclusively—the electric organ has progressed so much that some people cannot be sure all the time that it is not pipes, and find it hard to differentiate under some conditions. Give it another few years and even people with a really experienced ear will find it difficult—or impossible to tell the difference.

In the future, therefore, the electric organ is going to replace pipes. More important it will sound exactly like pipes. Manufacturers like Compton, Wurlitzer and Baldwin are well on the way to this already. So before long the electric model will be capable of replacing pipes completely in most locations, and of performing any kind of works, classical or otherwise. Would Bach and the rest have ignored such an instrument, which has all the makings of a musical adventure—worse still, would they have tried to 'knock' it? Of course they would not. They would have been quick to realize its potentialities and to use them for their own ends—just as organists ought to be doing now, and some indeed, are.

But in general, what do we find? Letters to the Press decrying it because—well, because it IS NOT a pipe organ. Letters proclaiming 'OF COURSE I can tell the difference'. And the Royal College of Organists, to the best of my knowledge, (though I am open to correction and hope I am wrong), ignoring its existence altogether—(Hope-Jones was not exactly encouraged).

I would say that the latter body should by now be taking the electric organ to its heart, working with it, using it, shouting it

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from the house tops. If the instrument can 'deliver the goods', what difference whether it is driven by electricity, air, steam or nuclear energy? And make no mistake, the electric organ will be capable of delivering the goods in no uncertain manner, alongside its piped forbear, before long.

As for declining audiences at recitals, the attitude of many organists appears to be 'the public ought to like us'. WHY, for goodness sake? If we turn out an indifferent performance, or give music above the heads of the man in the street, why should we expect him to come back for more. If we expect that, we are insulting his intelligence. Conversely, how many church organists would go to more than one concert at which nothing but 'beat' music was played?—the same argument is valid.

If we want the public to listen to the organ we must do several things. We must make the public welcome; *really* welcome, not just tolerated, we must give the best possible performance and we must play what the public wants to hear. After all, nobody will waste time listening to what he does not want to hear, though the truth of this has not apparently struck some of us. Only if we do this will the man in the street educate himself to higher standards of musical listening. Yet organ recitals do not always provide the fare he needs.

Put yourself in the place of someone walking into a strange church to hear a recital. You walk into a large and solemn building, dimly lit and austere, where you are completely ignored. You may, or may not find a leaflet giving the programme—a succession of titles and numbers interspersed with exhortations more suitable to a funeral than enjoyment. They may be titles to a beautiful piece of music, but they look pretty cold unadorned in print. Unless you know the composer and are a lover of music already, this would almost put you off before the show begins. You start to feel part of the congregation and forget all about enjoying yourself.

The performer may, or may not appear in person. He then disappears from the face of the earth and the music begins when you aren't quite ready for it. It may or may not be above your head, according to the performer and the individual, but at the conclusion, well, you just walk out! The organist has disappeared, the console is invisible (even in our post-war churches this applies), and you might as well have been listening to a tape recording. You cannot help having a vague feeling of having been somewhat let down. Unless you are a great lover of such music or a very keen churchgoer, you won't go to the next one!

The size of audiences tends to bear this out. I submit that a church organ recital

can be made a most enjoyable event, just as easily as one in a cinema, with no disrespect to the object of the building. Perhaps the description of a similar recital, or concert in a cinema will prove this.

At a Theatre Organ Club or Cinema Organ Society concert, the thing is always well attended and many people have travelled many miles to be present. They are often held at inconvenient times—like over lunch time on Sunday, due to house (theatre) opening times, yet the people still come along. So you go along with a bar of chocolate instead of lunch. You go in and have a look around the building and can, if you wish, view the console in the pit.

Just before the show starts, the M.C. appears and you sit anywhere you like. The M.C. then welcomes you and explains any points of interest in the building, the programme and so on, ending by introducing the organist, who then starts to play and crises into view. He remains in full view all the time he is playing. At the conclusion of his first piece or signature tune, he faces his audience and greets them and introduces the next piece, with any necessary explanations—and proceeds to give of his best.

Now not all the organists are top-notch players yet, though the majority of them are, but they have one thing in common—they 'hold' their audience the whole way through. They demonstrate the organ and play music the audience likes and can understand—anything from Bach or Elgar to Dusty Springfield and the Beatles, and careful arrangement of the programme ensures that there is something to suit most peoples' taste, whether classical or popular. In other words, the organist takes trouble to make the listeners enjoy themselves, not just to show off his own virtuosity. Do people like being treated as adults in this way, or do they prefer the more usual attitude in church recitals of being 'talked down' to? The attendances give the answer. And which of the two types of performance will attract the listeners? Yet the cinema performance is no less and no more religious than the church one.

The choice of music will vary according to the location, but is there any valid reason why tuneful light music should not be performed in church? Please do not imagine that I think the Beattles music need be performed at every church recital, but there is plenty of tuneful, catchy classical music. An entire recital of classical music by the lesser-known masters is all very well if your audience is composed of musical people, but in most instances this is unlikely to be the case.

Why should not the public be treated to contact with the organist—if he is worth hearing, he is worth seeing as well. In the

T.O.C. concerts the console lights are left on at the end of the show, to encourage the public to look at it and be interested in it. An organist who shuts the console and disappears home before his public has got out of its seat has only done half a performance. He loses nothing by personal contact and he gains much, as theatre managers were quick to realize. They put the organist on a lift and spotlighted him, but not for fun!

Again I hope nobody will take this out of context. I do NOT advocate using spotlights at church recitals, though it might not be a bad thing at that! And by all means let us have the great works played, but give people something to hum on the way home as well. The object of the thing is to make people enjoy hearing the music—in other words, to give them a good time, and there is nothing irreligious in that. If you do not do so, they won't come again and they will probably stay in bed on Sunday morning as well.

Finally, what about each of us doing a little more to further the cause of the organ, whether classical or entertainment, pipe or electric. For it is not an instrument we should keep to ourselves. I have an electric organ, and am an extremely bad player, kind though some of my friends are in their comments. But I can and do ask those friends who can play, to do so for the benefit of others—people like to be asked to come along and hear someone play if he is reasonably good. Sometimes the player is a church organist, sometimes a theatre one. Sometimes we can have a 'jam' session and everyone can have a go.

I have noticed that people who are subjected to this 'softening up' process suddenly become aware of the organ as an instrument, where they did not even think about it before. Why?—because it is fun as well. And music *should* be fun, unless it is specially composed for a solemn occasion. So instead of bemoaning vanished instruments and vanishing audiences, what about doing something ourselves to bring them back again! They will come back and I am sure that we are on the verge of a great revival of interest in the organ. It seems as if, once again, the entertainment people are setting the pace; and jolly good luck to them! It cannot be just coincidence that the Swingle Singers rendering of Bach became a best seller for modern youth. Let the rest of us do our bit, too.

**NATIONAL ATOE
CONVENTION
DETROIT
JULY 1, 2, 3, 4**

LATE MODEL THEATRE ORGAN DISCOVERED IN HOLLAND



by MR. T. A. TIEMERSMA

Mr. Tiemersma is regularly featured on the 4'14 Wurlitzer at the Tuschinski Theatre.

A late model theatre pipe organ was recently discovered in Leeuwarden, Holland. This organ was constructed in 1952 by the famous Dutch organ builders, Messrs. C.A. Standaart & Company of Schiedam. As far as is known, this is the very last cinema pipe organ erected in Holland. At first, this organ was installed in a dancing/nightclub in the city of Leeuwarden, but since its installation in 1953, the organ was used very little and in 1957 the organ was completely silent because the owner bought an electronic organ which he thought was more suitable for the club.

The pipe organ was then forgotten. Fortunately Mr. T.A. Tiemersma succeeded in purchasing this jewel in early 1966. In April the organ was removed from the nightclub and installed in his home.

The entire organ is housed in one chamber with the console in the living room, and, rest assured . . . it is singing happily!

Mr. Tiemersma is now looking for another, larger, detached home, for he intends to add 2 additional ranks to his organ, viz. a clarinet and a gemhorn.

Though a church organist himself, Mr. Tiemersma is also very keen on cinema-organ (and playing). He has an exten-

sive collection of theatre organ records (also featuring American cinema organists Bill Floyd, George Wright, etc.) as well as practically all records made by Reginald Dixon on the Wurlitzer organ in the Ballroom/Blackpool.

Before the war, there were about 30 cinema-organs operating, all over the country (particularly in the Western and Southern part of Holland), but after World War II, only 6 organs were left. The other 24 organs were dismantled and replaced by electronic installations or sold to local organ builders.

The actual position of "live" organs is as follows:

- 1) AMSTERDAM, Tuschinski, 4/14 Wurlitzer
- 2) AMSTERDAM, City Theatre, 4/17 Standaart
- 3) AVRO Broadcasting, HILVERSUM, 4/22 Compton
- 4) VARA Broadcasting, HILVERSUM, 3/13 Standaart
- 5) NRU Broadcasting, HILVERSUM, 5/27 Moller (ex BBC organ)

These six organs are in perfect condition and are regularly tuned (mostly every week).

Radio Hilversum is regularly presenting theatre-organ programs (2-4 times a week) from different organs, but most of them are broadcasted from NRU Broadcasting Organ at Hilversum. Some names of famous Dutch theatre organists are: Pierra Palla (AVRO), Johan Jong (VARA), Rene de Rooy (Tuschinski-Amsterdam), Jan Mekkes (Tuschinski-Amsterdam). The city organ has no resident organist available for the moment, but the organ is featured every evening by Rene de Rooy and Mr. Harry Klompe.

SPECIFICATION "STANDAART" CINEMA-ORGAN built in 1952 by Standaart Organ Works Ltd., Schiedam, Holland.

GREAT	Piano 2 2/3'	Castanets	PEDAL	St. Trumpet 8'
Concert Flute 16'	Glockenspiel	Sleighbells	Subbass 16'	FOOT PISTONS
Tibia Clausa 16' TC	Xylophone	Chinese Blocks	Jazztrumpet	Steamboat Whistle
Vox Humana 16' TC	Accordeon	Xylophone	Trombone 16'	Railway Engine
Tibia Clausa 8'	Celesta	Celesta	Trumpet 8'	Snare Drum (tap)
Diapason 8'	Octavecoupler 4'	Piano 8'	Octavebass 8'	Crockery Smash
Strings 8'	Chimes	SOLO	Flute 8'	Triangle
Violine 4'	ACC.	Concert fl. 16'	Strings 8'	Klaxon
Jazztrumpet 8'	Bourdon 16'	Flute 8'	Choralbass 4'	Thunder/Surf/Rain
Flute 8'	Flute 8'	Tibia Clausa 8'	PEDAL EFFECTS	General Crescendo
Stopped Trumpet 4'	Vox Humana 8'	Violine 8'	Bassdrum/Kettle Drum	Tremulants ON/OFF
Vox Humana 8'	Tibia Clausa 8'	Jazztrumpet 8'	Cymbals	
Flute 4'	Diapason 8'	St. Trumpet 4'	SECOND TOUCH PEDAL	
Tibia Minor 4'	Strings 8'	Vox Humana 8'	Piano 16'	
Octave 4'	Salicional 4'	Tibia Clausa 4'	Piano 8'	+ (1 balanced swell pedal
Quint Tibia 2 2/3'	Jazztrumpet	Tibia Quint 2 2/3'	TREMULANTS	+ (1 balanced G.C. pedal
Flute 2 2/3'	Kinura 8'	Flute 2 2/3'	Vox Humana	
Piccolo 2'	Octave 4'	Piccolo 2'	Tibia	THE ORGAN IS HOUSED IN
Forestflute 2'	Flute 4'	Tierce 1 3/5'	General	ONE CHAMBER
Tierce 1 3/5'	Piccolo 2'	Glockenspiel	SECOND TOUCH ACC.	
Septieme 1 1/7'	Snare Drum	Cathedral Chimes	Tibia 8'	
Piano 8'	Tom Tom	Piano 8'	Crash Cymbals	
Piano 4'	Tambourine	Septieme 1 1/7'		

LETTERS

Letters to the Editor concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are encouraged. Send them to the editor concerned, Box 7404, Bitter Lake Station, Seattle, Washington, 98133. Unless it's stated clearly on the letter "not for publication," the editors feel free to reproduce it, in whole or part.

AN ECHO OF OUR TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Dear Stu:

The "Carter Caper" at the New York Beacon theatre (Feb. 1967 TO/BB) provided my first opportunity to see a silent film accompanied by a theatre pipe organ. What a difference! It was also the first time I'd heard Gaylord "have a go" at films and it must be said he gave a memorable performance. The evening was exotic with Gloria Swanson present and looking like a million. When the lights went up at intermission I found myself surrounded by a covey of AGO "greater lights" which proved they also knew where to sit! Searle Wright's great laugh could be heard above any others. The organ crew pulled a miracle in accomplishing what they did on the 4-19 Wurlitzer in the actual working time they had. Hardly can I say how much I admire Gaylord and all who had a hand in producing this 12th ATOE Anniversary



The Roosevelt Park console is in a sunken cubicle, 75 ft. from the chamber building.

show, an evening like none I've known since coming to New York.

*Billy Nalle
New York*

Words of praise coming from concert and recording organist Nalle carry considerable weight (he's hip!). He sums up the feelings of many correspondents who took the trouble to write about the excellence of the Anniversary weekend.

* * *

FOTO FOLLOWUP ON A BIG WIND

Mr. Editor:

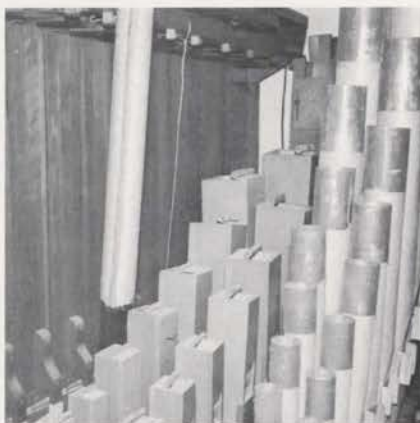
In a recent issue you replied in detail to my inquiry about the very high-pressure 4-17 Wurlitzer theatre organ in the Southern California Roosevelt Park cemetery ("LETTERS"; Dec. 1966). Some photographs were mentioned in your reply but none appeared. If they were omitted by mistake I'll risk being considered somewhat persistent by requesting that they be published in a later issue. I find organs designed for the use of high wind pressure fascinating. The pipe scaling must be immense for 50 inches!

H.J. Canby, Gadsden, Alabama

The photos, which were supplied by Jim Lewis, weren't left out by mistake; we ran out of space. Here they are. The captions are self explanatory.



Two views taken in chambers of Wurlitzer 4/17 at Roosevelt Park Cemetery Gardena, Calif.



Classified Ads

FOR SALE Books: Whitworth's *Cinema and Theatre Organs* \$15.00. *Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra* \$3.95. *Wurlitzer Unit Organs* \$4.50. *Wurlitzer Theatre Organ Fact Book*, \$2.00. *Audsley's Art of Organ Building*, two volumes, \$15.00. Postpaid. **Organ Literature Foundation**, Nashua, New Hampshire 03060.

FOR SALE Modern Harmony for Organ. Free brochure. 17410 Gilmore St., Van Nuys, Calif. 91406.

FOR SALE Theatre Organ Tapes—Send for list. **H.J. Jenkins**, Box 343, Pacoima, Calif. 91331.

FOR SALE Dorsett Electronics Theatre Organ, three manuals, chimes, all-transistor, with one Dorsett tone-cabinet and one Leslie tone-cabinet, two years old, walnut finish. \$2500.00 **Mrs. Andy Hickman**, 1018 N.W. 35th, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73118. Telephone (405) 528-5454.

WANTED Three manual Wurlitzer horseshoe console with double stop bolster in any condition. Either complete or top half only. Mainly interested in top half for rebuilding. **Robert Koch**, 2158 N. French Road, Getzville, New York 14068.

FOR SALE 2 manual 11 rank Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ with complete percussions including piano and toy-counter. Installed and playing, console and piano in matching black and gold rococo style. Excellent condition, \$6000. **R.S. Mowry**, 166 Garland Way, Los Altos, California 94022. (415)-948-5925.

FOR SALE 2 manual 7 rank Wurlitzer Theatre Organ with Chimes. 2HP single-phase blower. \$2500. **Judd Walton**, 227 Texas St., Vallejo, Calif. 8-4:30 PM (415)-TH 3-9600; 5-6 PM (707)-642-0636.

FOR SALE Allen Custom 3 manual Theatre Deluxe Electronic organ, complete with full traps and tuned percussion, 5 general presets and toe studs, 5 speaker cabinets with 200 watts of audio power. All solid state electronics. Less than 2 years old with 3 year warranty left. Price \$10,000. **E.C. Field**, Sherwood Farms, Charlottesville, Va. 22901

WANTED Wurlitzer "electronic sideman" or similar unit, plus Mass Row chimes. **W.S. Grau**, 109 N. Elm St., Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070

FOR SALE Wurlitzer pipework—8' Clarinet (61 pipes) \$125, 8' VDO (85 pipes) \$75, 8' Viol Cel. (73 pipes) \$75, 8' T.C. Salicional (61 pipes) \$90, 16' Tuba Horn (73 pipes) \$250, inc. 16' octave chest, also Kimball 8' Vox (61 pipes) \$65, Kimball 8' Clarinet (73 pipes) \$100, Morton 16' Flute (97 pipes) \$175, inc. 16' octave chest, 8' French Horn (73 pipes) \$300, and Morton 20 note Chime with action \$125. **Dennis Hedberg** 746 S.W. Evans St. Portland, Ore. 97219.

FOR SALE 4 rank Pipe Organ and Horseshoe console, not completely set up. A.M. only. Appt. requested. **SHANNON**, 10524 Tantau Ave., Cupertino, Calif. 95014.



Be sure you mail all Chapter News to:
A.T.O.E.-P.O. Box 7404, Bitter Lake Station, Seattle, Wn. 98133

SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER

Those members who attended the January meeting of the Southeastern Chapter of ATOE are truly grateful to our chairman, Jack Trimmier, and his fine family for a marvelous time with much fun and entertainment following a fairly brief business meeting was "cocktail time" and dinner. Everyone had a feast of Kentucky fried chicken. After dinner was over, a good old jam session commenced. All of this, so far would have made a great evening, however, a silent film entitled *You're Darn Tootin'* with Laurel and Hardy was presented and accompanied by Mac Watson. The movie was followed by a sing-along, led by another member and organist Ned Marshall.

ST. LOUIS CHAPTER

The 4/18 Kimball from the former St. Louis Theatre, has been given to the St. Louis Chapter.

The St. Louis Symphony has purchased the building as a symphony hall, and have donated the instrument to the ATOE group. The relay, console, and lift, and some other material from this organ along with another organ that was purchased by the Chapter will be used for the club project in the Kirkwood, Missouri Auditorium now under construction by the city of Kirkwood.

A detailed story will be featured in a future issue of Theatre Organ Bombarde, on this project.

CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER

New member Charles Tumey has cheerfully accepted the important job of setting up monthly chapter meeting places. All chapter members are expected to offer their suggestions, also to help him learn what organ is where and previous meeting place.

Board member Doris Stokes has resigned from the Executive Board due to the press of long working hours, and an ir-

CASH BALANCE JANUARY 1, 1966

\$ 5,704.58

Receipts:

1965 dues	\$ 13.00	
1966 dues	15,382.26	
1967 dues	1,730.25	\$17,125.51
Back issues sold		235.50
Advertising income		2,441.20
Postage received from members		5.85
Sale of rosters		3.00
Bank charges paid by members		7.15
Overpayments on dues		87.00
Northern Calif. Chapter-repayment on loan		500.00
Travel refund		52.65
Potomac Valley Chapter-loan payment		213.36
Sale of office equipment		100.00
		<u>20,771.22</u>
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$26,475.80

Disbursements:

Office supplies	\$ 967.27
Postage	1,652.15
Telephone	1,475.56
Travel	1,874.07
Theatre Organ Bombarde and Circulation operating expenses	1,030.54
Office operating expenses	1,200.00
Publication - THEATRE ORGAN BOMBARDE	15,249.60
Advertising expense	419.99
Entertainment	83.89
Shipping	36.91
Equipment	460.22
Misc. (refunds, bank chgs. etc.)	245.68
1966 Annual Convention - Oregon Chapter	677.00
Loan to Potomac Valley - East. Regional	500.00
	<u>\$25,872.88</u>
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	

Cash Balance December 31, 1966

\$ 602.92

regular teaching schedule. The remainder of the 2 year term will be filled by Neal Parkinson, as selected by the rest of the board.

In April a chapter-sponsored show is being planned for Rivoli, no regular meeting set for April. Betty Roch has consented to continue as chairman of chapter sponsored shows at the Rivoli. Cooperation in all preparations for these events is to all members advantage.

Member Tom Ferree is sponsoring a show at the Rivoli to earn money which is what it takes to put more pipes in the Solo chamber, including more relay racks. The first addition will likely be a Posthorn rank. Tom was over 8 months installing the uniphone in the Rivoli and appreciates efforts and long and odd hours put in by

many members on this installation.

CHICAGO CHAPTER

CATOE's 1966 Christmas party was held on the evening of December 9, 1966. Heavy snowfall cut heavily into the movie show attendance at the Montclare Theatre. Quite a few ATOE'ers seated themselves shortly after midnight to witness a different Christmastime performance. A respectful minute of silence in memory of Arsene Siegal, preceded the evenings festivities. Reginald Foort then sight read an Arsene Siegal composition before beginning his own concert on the Montclare Barton. A Laurel and Hardy silent film with accompaniment by Mr. Foort and a Sing-A-Long slide program were included in the evenings festivities.

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CATOE's Officers for 1967 are:

Chairman	Fred Kruse
Vice Chairman	Roland Frase
Secretary	Geannie Nachtwey
Treasurer	Tom Yannitell
Board Members	Tony Tahlman Bill Rieger Brian Durack

A John Muri concert at the 5 rank Wurlitzer in the Capital Theatre in Racine, Wisconsin was held recently. John Muri outdid himself on the small organ. The original 5 rank unit was augmented by a metal diaphone for the show and further additions to the organ are anticipated.

The CATOE also announces that the Patio Theatre pipe organ, a 3 m. 17 r. Barton, is now in playing condition.

Tony Tahlman

RED RIVER CHAPTER

On Sunday, January 15, the Red River Chapter held its first meeting of the new year at the studios of Hammond Music Company in Fargo. On hand to demonstrate the Rodgers electronic theatre organ was the vice-chairman of the chapter and Rodgers representative, Ralph Kratzer. He opened the program in a vacant store with a medley from *The Sound of Music*. (The vacant store is used for demonstration purposes to give the Rodgers a more reverberant sound.) His demonstration was most enjoyable as the members and guests asked for many encores. Along with the gold and white theatre console was the three manual church organ which was used for one number to demonstrate the Bach Prelude and Fugue in D Minor. The concert was made even more interesting as Ralph spoke briefly between numbers as he explained what registration was to be used. Following the concert a short business meeting was held. Lance Johnson reported that there had been very little interest shown by neighboring chapters in holding a regional convention in Fargo-Moorhead and Bismarck. A few chapters remarked that they could not see any reason for traveling such distances for only three organs. It was unanimously decided that more effect would be made to establish closer relations with the sister chapter, Land'O Lakes in Minneapolis and that at least one joint meeting would be arranged annually. Ralph Kratzer reported that there is now a remote possibility that the Wurlitzer in the Fargo Theatre may be made available to the chapter. As the last order of business it was announced that the Red River Chapter had grown 100% in membership in 12 months. The next meeting is still pending for a joint A.T.O.E. and AGO meeting.

THE PINE TREE CHAPTER

The Pine Tree Chapter of the ATOE recently enjoyed a concert by Sandy Grant. It was the fourth concert on the Wurlit-

zer organ in the State Theatre. The organ has been restored to gleaming finish and faultless sound by members of the chapter.

The concert was a solo effort by Grant. He is a veteran of local theatre pits, both movie and vaudeville. It too was an all request program, that ranged from the Sousa march, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, which opened the program to old favorites like *The Lost Chord*, *The Old Refrain* and as a bow to the Beatles, *Yesterday*. Selections from three of the most popular musical show of the past decade were included: *The Music Man*, *My Fair Lady* and the *Sound of Music*. Many of the numbers were particularly appropriate to silent films, *Indian Love Call*, *Serenade*, and *Melody of Love*.

The silent film was "Help Wanted" starring Charles Puffy with Elsie Tarron. Song slides with the audience joining in, had the audience singing several well known favorites, *Smiles*, *When Irish Eyes are Smiling*, and *Peggy O'Neil* among them.

Adelbert Jakeman, a member of the Pine Tree Chapter was master of ceremonies.

VALLEY OF THE SUN CHAPTER

Following the regular meeting of the Valley of the Sun Chapter on Sunday morning, February 26, 1967, Karl Warner, immediate past chairman took his place at the 3/13 Meisel-Sullivan/Wurlitzer for his first formal program for the organization. He first explained some of the history of theater organ music including "Riser" numbers, then came up from the pit to the strains of *You Do Something to Me*. He mentioned among the many style developers of the era, Ann Leaf, Don Baker, Eddie Dunstedter, and of course the great Jesse Crawford, followed by the playing of Eddie Dunstedter's theme song *Open Your Eyes*. After commenting that among the theater organist's many duties was the playing for Sing-Alongs, he played a typical Sing-Along number, *Bye Bye Blues*. Karl also explained the different type organ voices as he proceeded through his program. Calling attention to the fact that many vocalists of the day influenced theater organ music, he played the theme song of Helen Morgan, *Why Was I Born*, which he followed by a Fanny Brice number *If You Want the Rainbows, You Must Have the Rain*. Next was a number made popular by Ruth Etting, who now lives in Las Vegas, *It All Depends on You*. Another Helen Morgan number *Can't Help Loving That Man of Mine* and another Ruth Etting number *I'd Rather Be Blue*. *Thinking of You Than Happy With Somebody Else* led to a final Fanny Brice number *Cooking Breakfast for the Man I*

Love which Karl said did not convey the full effect without the words. The final numbers were *Moonlight on the River*, *Birdseye View of My Old Kentucky Home* and *Stars Are the Windows of Heaven* all Jesse Crawford numbers. Karl then explained that for a number to use while descending into the pit, which he chose to call a "sinker" some highly dramatic number was usually played; however, he had chosen to do something in a lighter vein and went down into the pit to *Toot-Toot-Tootsie, Goodbye*.

Nadine Benton, Secretary

Publications Editor:

The club asked me to send you the following information for publication in some available spot.

"The Valley of the Sun Chapter meets the 4th Sunday of each month at 10 A.M. at the Paramount Theater, Phoenix, Arizona. Visitors to the area are welcomed to attend these meetings. If they desire additional information they may call the following:

964-7820 Howard Rowe
275-8432 Karl Warner

NIAGARA FRONTIER CHAPTER

Niagara Frontier Chapter is pleased to announce officers elected for the year 1967. Re-elected as President was Herbert Schmit, Mildred Jerge as Vice President (President in charge of vice, as She prefers), and Joseph Thomas as Treasurer. Elected as Secretary was Fred Kucera. Directors elected were Harold Hontz, Robert Flierl, Alfred Jerge, Thomas Leithner, Bernard Venus, and Stewart Duncan.

December 18, 1966 found the chapter having a concert at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda, a suburb of Buffalo, a noon 'till show-time affair which allowed members to stay and see the movie if they so desired. Featured artists were John Egerton, who has played many theatre organs in England, and now residing in Canada and doing work on an electronic at a Toronto club. Allan Ross was the other artist, who is popular in the Rochester area. Both artists did a terrific job on the 3 manual, 11 rank Wurlitzer installed there.

A home installation day planned for Sunday, January 29, 1967, features these installations for other members to visit; Herb Schmit, with his 2-7 Link with percussions, Joe Thomas, with his 3-6 Marr & Colton Theatre pipe organ, John Spalding's 3-10 Marr & Colton theatre pipe organ, with player, Bob Sieben with a marvelous sounding 2-3 Sieben special, and Earl Gilbert, who owns a Wurlitzer

(Continued on next page)

Chapter News, continued

Organette, with not one but two players attached. Mr. Gilbert is also proud to announce he purchased a 2-6 WurliTzer theatre organ from the Utica Theatre in Utica New York. The organ being a late model 165 (divided) and has the extended tibias. It is complete and in excellent condition. He intends to make it a 2 chamber installation when he builds the new home for it in the spring.

Negotiations are now in progress to resume work on the Loew's Buffalo WurliTzer organ. Mr. Sidell, owner of the building, is very enthusiastic, and hopes for an early contract is in order.

Future plans include a concert at Skatehaven Roller Rink in February. Skatehaven sports the 3-15 WurliTzer removed from the Seneca theatre in Buffalo. Featured artist will be Harvey El-seasser, who made local fame as a Church organist and played many concerts for this chapter.

Work is progressing nicely on the Havens Organ installed in Klauder hall, St. John the Baptist Church. The organ is owned by the chapter, and is used by the club for concerts, and, by the parish for recreational purposes, that is, for dances, parties, and other social affairs. On Saturday, January 21, the Neuman Guild at the parish held a Monte Carlo night and used the organ for background music. Secretary Fred Kucera, and Past president John Spalding attended this affair and enjoyed themselves by both forms of entertainment. A concert is being planned at Klauder hall for either March or April of this year.

Respectfully Submitted

Norman F. Cheddarvox

Prospective member NFCATOE.

P.S. Mr. Cheddarvox is interested in the Niagara Frontier Chapter, and is rather shy with other people. He insists on having his name printed the way it is below his signature, and secretly told me he has a crush on Martha Lake and Effie Klotz. . . . Hope word doesn't get around . . .

Fred Kucera, Secretary

SIERRA CHAPTER HISTORY

In November 1964, at the Carl Greer Inn, a group of twelve theatre pipe organ enthusiasts met at the invitation of Bob Longfield and Clyde Derby. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of founding a club, in the area, for this instrument. The idea was enthusiastically received and a recruitment of members was begun as well as formulation of organizational plans for implementation of such an organization. A governing board was appointed, with Bob Longfield as president, notices inserted in local papers

and radio stations and members started to join. Although the organization Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of Sacramento (TOES) was an independent unit not affiliated with ATOE, the actual founders were ATOE members and the goal was ATOE affiliation in the form of a chapter. The decision to eventually join ATOE was in order to support a National unifying organization. The organization has over 100 members and has made caravan trips to the California theatre in Santa Rosa (Wurli 2/7), Joe Chadbourne's Barn to hear *Myrtle* (Wurli 2/9), home installations, and regular meetings at the Carl

Greer Inn (Morton 4/16), Grant Union High School (Wurli 4/21) and the River Mansion (Morton 3/11). Among the membership are eight home installations that are either in being or process of installation. In October 1965, *Phantom of the Opera* was presented at Grant Union with George Seaver at the console, to over 800 people. *Lilac Time* will be similarly presented in April 1967. Future plans include trips to "The Piazza Joint" in Hayward, with a tentative varied itinerary at later dates. All of the latter to be under our new banner of "The Sierra Chapter ATOE."



Console at Grant Union High School. Sierra Chapter Officers March 5, 1967. Names reading from treble end of console: E. Stu Nascske, H. A. Sommer, Larry Wied, Don Zeller, R. E. Anderson, Dick O'Neel, Cathy Zeller, Bob Longfield. George Seaver seated at console (white shirt and tie).

Photo by Art Sherman



Group Photo of Mid-America Chapter

Left side of console, left to right: Victor Rork, R. W. Frensley, Pete Leendertse, Tom Cusick, Sylvia Williams, Dorothy Higgins, Kathryn Moore, Bob Foley. Right side of console, left to right: Betty Frensley, David Dillon, Dorothy Rork, Cina Leendertse.



Motor City Chapter *INC.*

Hosts

THE 9TH ANNUAL MEETING and CONVENTION

Program (TENTATIVE)

MASTER OF CEREMONIES — BEN M. HALL

Friday JUNE 30

7-10 p.m.
7:00 p.m.

Registration at Pick-Fort Shelby Hotel
Meeting - National Board of Directors, Pick-Fort Shelby Hotel

Saturday JULY 1

9-5 p.m.
1-3 p.m.

Registration at Pick-Fort Shelby Hotel
Senate Theater (Home of Detroit Theater Organ Club)
Artist: DON MILLER

3:00 p.m.
7:30 p.m.

Chapter Representatives
Senate Theater - Artist: MARK KOLDYS

Sunday JULY 2

8:00 a.m.
9:30 a.m.
1:30 p.m.
3:30 p.m.
6:00 p.m.
11:00 p.m.

Fox Theater - Artist: JOHN MURI
Fox Theater - Chapter Representatives
Senate Theater - Artist: LEONARD MAC CLAIN
Senate Theater - Artist: BILL BUSWELL
ATOE Banquet - Ballroom of Cobo Hall
Fort Street Presbyterian Church - Artist: HARRY BUNNELL

Monday JULY 3

9:00 a.m.
10:30 a.m.
1:30 p.m.
2:30 p.m.
3:30 p.m.
4:30 p.m.
7:30 p.m.

Redford Theater-Artist LOWELL AYARS
Redford Theater - Chapter Representatives
Arcadia Skating Rink - Artist: VIRG HOWARD
Arcadia Skating Rink - Artist: LOWELL AYARS
Arcadia Skating Rink - Chapter Representatives
Arcadia Skating Rink - Artist: BILL HOLLEMAN
Senate Theater - Artist: ASHLEY MILLER

Tuesday JULY 4

8:00 a.m.
9:30 a.m.
1:00 p.m.
3:00 p.m.

Fox Theater-Artist: KAY McABEE
Fox Theater-Chapter Representatives
Senate Theater-Artist: ALLEN MILLS
Senate Theater-Artist: DON BAKER



FUN in the SUN !



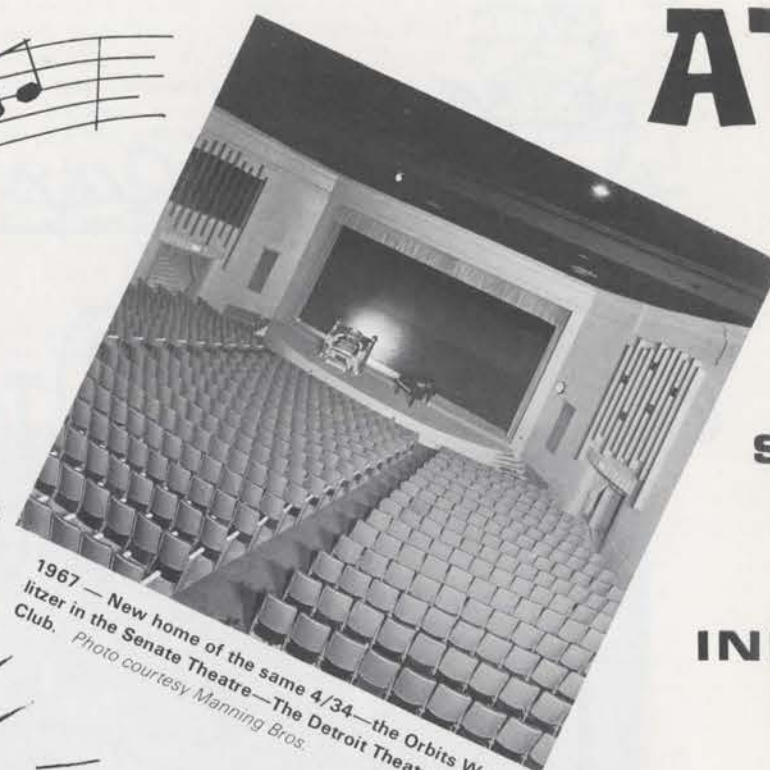
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Page**

A list of home installations available will be published at Convention time.

Attractions OF THE DETROIT AREA



1928 — Fisher Theatre 4/34 Wurlitzer on left of orchestra pit. Photo courtesy Manning Bros.



1967 — New home of the same 4/34—the Orbits Wurlitzer in the Senate Theatre—The Detroit Theatre Organ Club. Photo courtesy Manning Bros.

SHOPPING CENTERS

INDUSTRIAL TOURS



CULTURAL CENTER

- DETROIT HISTORICAL MUSEUM—5401 WOODWARD AT KIRBY
- DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS —5200 WOODWARD
- CRANBROOK INSTITUTIONS
ART GALLERIES, SCIENCE INSTITUTE
- HENRY FORD MUSEUM
GREENFIELD VILLAGE



... WELCOME

SHRINE OF THE LITTLE FLOWER, Royal Oak, Mich.
Modern in design and landscaping, it was built and is served by Father Coughlin, the famed radio priest of other years.

MARINER'S CHURCH (On the Civic Center)
The oldest stone church building in Detroit. Founded in 1842, built in 1848. As part of the civic center plan, it was moved 800 ft. to its present location in 1955.



Don Miller, honorary member of Motor City Chapter. Organist at the Fisher Theatre for many years. Now semi-retired. Photo courtesy Racz Studio



A 4/57 romantic, concert organ that has undergone many changes since 1876.

PLAN NOW TO "ORGANize" YOUR FUN IN THE MOTOR CITY IN '67
THE 1967 NATIONAL ATOE CONVENTION, DETROIT, MICHIGAN

JULY 1-2-3-4

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PRE-CONVENTION REGISTRATION—Register early by mail and save time. Your convention packet will be held for your arrival. Don't waste time by standing in line to register. Send enclosed registration card to Mrs. Holley Prim, 20285 Westbrook, Detroit, Michigan 48219.



CONVENTION SOUVENIR

Not only will you want one of these ash trays — but two — since they are made in such a way that they can hook together by means of a replica of a Wurli stop tab, to become candy or nut dishes. If you think you might like one or two (made up in various colors) make your wants known on your registration card.



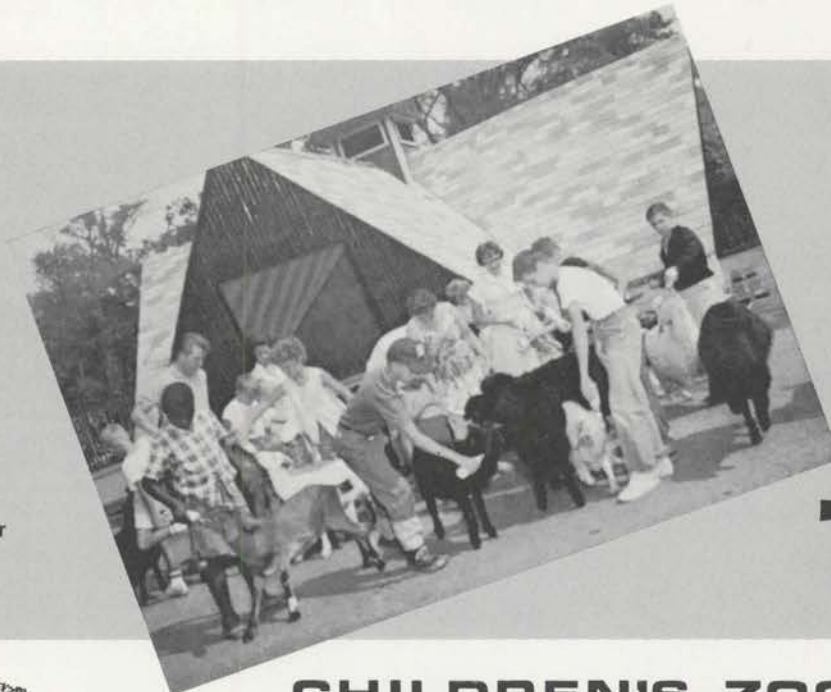
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A pleasant 3-hour sightseeing trip down the Detroit River to the Canadian island amusement park, Bob-Lo.

Hospitable Canadians say "Hi Neighbor, come on over"

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The annual Detroit-Windsor International Freedom Festival, June 25 - July 4th celebrates the independence of both the United States and Canada. Fireworks above the Detroit river light up Detroit's skyline and new Civic Center.

- Thursday, June 29 9 p.m. J. L. Hudson GIANT FIREWORKS DISPLAY
- Friday, June 30 Afternoon ARTISTS STREET FAIR
- Evening ADVENTURE IN GREEK TOWN (Street dancing)
- Saturday, July 1 10 a.m. DOMINION DAY PARADE in Windsor
- Sunday, July 2 Afternoon Spirit of Detroit WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BOAT RACE
- Tuesday, July 4 Noon "LET FREEDOM RING" at Greenfield Village

W. "Stu." GREEN

Editor of Bombarde



LYN LARSEN'S FIRST CONCERT "ON HIS OWN" WELL ATTENDED

by BERT BROUILLON

Pasadena, Jan. 31 — If the ability to pull a goodly number of organfans to the out-of-the-way Rialto theatre on a week night is any indication of stature, Lyn Larsen's star has risen considerably since his concert last year for the LA ATOE chapter at the Wiltern. This time Lyn was strictly on his own, with no organization behind him other than a little knot of friends and well wishers — his first venture into the hurly-burly of commercial concerts. He came off better than good.

There was no official head count because the ticket man's hand counter broke down before even half the crowd had filtered into the house. Never trusting official attendance records anyway, we made our own row-by-row count just before intermission and counted a few over 600, among them some of the top hobbyists in the LA area, including a good ATOE turnout.

Lyn's big opener was *Swanee*, played in musical comedy overture style with lots of speed, volume and that skillful injection of personality which spells "Lyn Larsen." After a big hand, Lyn greeted his audience and mentioned that it was nice to see his fans at night for a change (his previous concerts at the Fresno Wilson and LA Wiltern were on Sunday mornings). His second tune on the 2-10 Wurlitzer (style 216) was that very special arrangement of *Dream* which he plays with many clues in the music as to what the subconscious mind of the dreamer is cogitating—obviously the slow peel of a burlesque stripper (and we thought he was such a nice young man!)

For a lesson in ancient history Lyn produced a Pleistocene Brunswick 78 rpm platter of *Me, Too*. He read the entire label very carefully and thanked "Ernie Goldman and his Hotel McElvin orchestra" for the inspiration. The next few minutes were invested in a recreation of a '20s jazz band beating out *Me, Too*. It was cornball but wonderful nostalgia, an area in which Lyn Larsen is expert. The next one followed well, *Sonny Boy*, played to the hilt for tear-jerking schmaltz and memories of Al Jolson's grief when his movie son, little Davy Lee, did a "little



Eva" in *The Singing Fool*.

But Lyn Larsen is by no means limited to recreations of the past. His treatment of Paul Beaver's hauntingly lovely *Our Song* was as modern as tomorrow. Later, during intermission, we encountered Beaver in the lobby, guzzling a "Rialto Zombie" (faintly colored crushed ice) and he stated that Lyn played *Our Song* better than its composer. A generous compliment.

Next, Lyn read off the label on the flip side of *Me, Too*, also played by Ernie Goldman's Orchestra. It was *It's a Wonderful World, After All* and Lyn proceeded to transport his audience backward in time with a 1920's treatment which made subtle use of effects and clichés usually considered corny.

After giving a plug for his current recording, *An Evening at Home With The Mighty Wurlitzer*, he played a tune from it entitled *I Could Be Happy With You*, a real show stopper. Then he had a long distance conversation with "Auntie Agnes Day" (his "cover girl" on the record)

with Auntie "transmitting" by crystal ball and coming through the theatre horns with crisp sibilance. Auntie seemed somewhat detached as though she couldn't hear the lines Lyn was feeding her and Lyn really broke up at the admonition to "stick to the script!"

After "deconjuring" Auntie, Lyn went into a dramatic version of *Be My Love* with the Tuba holding down the melody against String accompaniment. Then Intermission with its usual lobbyful of orangab, expensive soft drinks and clouds of tobacco smoke. The audience represented something of a "Who's Who" in the LA area organ hobby and probably the proudest doll was Lyn's attractive mother who was accepting compliments for her son by the score.

Lyn's post-intermission curtain raiser was an oldie, *Song of the Wanderer*, after which he talked a little about "tributes" stating that "everyone knows the father of our country was Jesse Crawford—but I'm going to be different—this is a tribute to George Wright." For *The Lady is a Tramp*, Lyn drew liberally from the GW bag of tricks, including those stupendous "rides" on the melody, accents and off-beat harmony.

Lyn concluded his Wright tribute with a line which drew a laugh, ". . . and everyone thought I couldn't play like him!" The humor, of course, was that Lyn learned much of his theatre organ stylings from listening to Wright platters, and it took him some time to break away and establish his own style, so engrossed was he in the obvious musical excellence of Wright.

But Lyn is no longer dependent on the stylings of others, which was proved in his presentation of *Sunny Side Up*, *La Rosita* and *The Way You Look Tonight*.

Lyn is always generous in introducing tunes of merit by little known composers and a delicious moment was evolved when he played *Helen* by his friend, Paul Estes. It's an involved tune with many key changes but a really stunning composition. Mr. Estes beamed from the front row. Lyn then played *Broken Rosary* and *I've Got a Feelin' I'm Falling*, both of which were reminiscent of Jesse Crawford's old 78s of them, and then went into his feature tune which was all Larsen, *Bess You is My Woman* from the opera *Porgy and Bess*.

Summing up, young Larsen further consolidated his bid for top billing both through his finely polished and extremely musical stylings and also by his handling of MC chores. His announcements were informative and never too wordy; he stuck to the subject and got his point across, no more. In brief, Lyn Larsen has become an entertainer as well as a fine organist. He could have encored with *Everything's Coming Up Roses*. Perhaps next time.



John Nelson, probably Conn's youngest Factory representative, at the 3-8 "Waterfall" Wurlitzer console. "Woodshedding" on the 3-decker would pay off in the near future when the 3-manual Conn electronic theatre model is released.

Kansas City, for most people, has always been a city of surprises. First of all, the city is not in Kansas, but Missouri. This is the city either remembered for having an airport with runways so short that many planes have been known to dive over the Kansas City dike into the

CONN MAN PLAYS PIPES FOR KANSAS CITY HEARTS

by ALLEN WHITE

(Al White, former Northern California Chairman, was recently moved to Kansas City by his firm. Here's proof that it didn't take him long to get into the organ groove there.)

Missouri River—or as the place where everything's up to date.

Another pleasant surprise is the number of excellent theatre organ installations, among them the Plaza Theatre Wurlitzer. The organ is a three manual, 8-ranker which was removed about five years ago and re-installed in the Russell Stover Memorial Auditorium, a part of the University of Missouri's Conservatory of Music. The organ maintenance is an ATOE Chapter project, one of which the Chapter can be justly proud. The organ speaks from two chambers located at the rear of the stage area.

That was the scene where John Nelson presented a theatre organ treat which the town has not seen or heard for years, a special ATOE concert on the former Kansas City Plaza Theatre Wurlitzer on Dec.

10 last. It was sponsored by the Heart of America Chapter.

John Nelson has become well known in the Midwest in his capacity as a factory representative for the Conn Organ Corporation. His Kansas City concert was made up of requests from Conn concerts he has given as well as the introduction of many interesting numbers especially arranged for this program.

He opened the concert with much fanfare, announcing "So This Is Hollywood" and then modulated into an exciting version of *I Feel A Song Coming On*. He followed this up with *Moon River* and an excellently executed *Take Five*. At this point he made some remarks comparing the theatre pipe instrument he was playing with some unnamed plug-ins. The capacity audience, made up of many pipe organ purists, delighted at his clever handling of what is a perennial problem for many electronics pushers.

Included in the program was a great sounding *Roller Coaster Ride*, not the *Roller Coaster* which George Wright recorded but an adaptation from a turn-of-the-century piano number. It is an effective theatre organ number and John made it a delight. Also on the program was the jazzy Tijuana Brass number, *Jingo Jango*.

To many attending this affair, it was their first live exposure to a theatre pipe organ. John provided for them a most interesting and entertaining tour of the stops on the organ. This is one area that can be a bit tedious to those who have sat through such a "tour" previously. John's approach was unusual and yet based on simplicity. His vehicle for this was *Long, Long ago* with his left hand fingers frozen into a monumental "Pointer System Lock." He followed this up with George Wright's arrangement of *Quiet Village*, birds and all. John Nelson is among the few concert organists who take the time to give arrangement credits, even to including the publisher of the arrangement.



Heart of America Chapter members and guests listen as John Nelson puts 2-chamber organ through its paces. Chapter members keep the Wurli in top condition.

Credit must go to the local Heart of America Chapter of ATOE for this most excellent presentation. Not only did they get the organ into very fine shape, but they also staged and presented John Nelson in a most effective and polished manner; the sound of a theatre pipe organ performed on by a most entertaining artist.



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The re-created seat comes in two models. Model #1-P, recommended for most pipe organs, has an adjustable seat height of from 26 1/4 to 32 1/4". Model #1-E, recommended for most electronic organs, has seat adjustment of from 23 1/4 to 29 1/4" high.

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Out of the golden era of the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre organ, comes this authentic re-creation of the famous Howard Seat. Famous for design fidelity, the Manual Arts Furniture Company has remained true to the original design and function of this unique seat. Produced specially for theatre organ enthusiasts, as well as for the professional organist, the seat has many features that allow the organist easy access to the horseshoe style console of the theatre organ. The seat is counterbalanced for maximum stability while the base plate fits under the pedal box to securely anchor the seat in place. The upholstered seat is split to provide unobstructed mobility for the organist's legs, and it swivels a full 360° for complete freedom of movement. Further information about this authentic re-creation from the golden era of the theatre organ can be obtained from . . .

"LITTLE MORT" TAKES A BOW

by CAROLE ANGLE

It was a cool, clear morning in February 1965, when a pickup truck with a trailer and a sedan traveled east over Donner Pass in the Sierra Nevada mountains. To the casual observer there was nothing unusual, but well wrapped in the back of the pickup, was a brand new transistor electronic organ, and a very special organ indeed! It was a Schober "kit organ," assembled and destined for the Methodist Church in Lovelock, Nevada. The labor for assembling the Schober was then to be traded for a Robert Morton theatre pipe organ.

This all began a year before, when USAF Major H.A. Sommer and his family were returning from a Colorado vacation. As usual he was practicing his hobby of nosing into the whereabouts of various theatre pipe organs while enroute (the family thought he was probing for "historical artifacts"). Noting the large theatre in Lovelock while passing through, a stop was immediately declared necessary. After



Loading at Lovelock. The blower rests on the pickup truck while the console shimmers in the sunlight after being "sprung" from church. (For a closeup of the blower see the October issue, p. 15.)

talking to the local barber, electrician, lawyer, county judge and sheriff, it was established that, yes, some time back there had been an organ in the theatre and that it was presently being used in the Methodist Church, also that the church would like to replace it with something less demanding and tempermental. Time did not permit contacting officials on that trip so arrangements were made by correspondence for a meeting with the church organ committee. The condition of the organ was ascertained at the meeting as "rough but restorable" by Dave Schutt and the Major. However, all the percussive goodies, except the unplayable xylophone, were gone. The church committee, upon hearing about the trouble-free Schober electronic, agreed that they would purchase

the kits and that, in payment for the assembling, the Major would have the privilege of removing and owning the Morton.

The Morton, a model 49B "Fotoplayer," was installed in the Lovelock theatre in the original configuration. The player and effects were removed upon installation in the church. The xylophone was disconnected permanently shortly after the church installation due to a short which caused it to sound during a funeral. It had been installed in the theatre in August 1925 and retired to the church in 1942. The name of the theatre organist could not be recalled by any of the locals. However, it's possible that he left town quite suddenly. During refurbishing of the pedalboard a 22 caliber cartridge (expended) and the bow from an old-fashioned pair of eyeglasses were discovered and, as neither object seemed to belong to the



Major Sommer replied to the BOMBARDE's request for a family photo with the above, stating he didn't have a family picture but perhaps this snapshot of his "loading crew" would suffice. It's so typical of hired organ movers, we couldn't resist running it.

church, it is anyone's guess as to what happened to the original organist. There were still some wild times in the West around 1925!

1925! That was a good year for the Robert Morton Company. Although beset by internal strife and the continual threat of financial disaster, the firm had more orders than it could fill. Business had never been better. Let's examine its "epitome of pit organs" more closely.



The Morton 49 console is one of the most graceful of small pipe organ control centers once the upright piano-style cabinet that house the roll player is removed.

The "Morton 49" is one of the finest sounding small instruments ever to grace a small movie house. It is actually a link between organ and Fotoplayer but has a distinct advantage in being a Fotoplayer rather than a conventional 4-rank Morton organ. Why? Because this 3-rank Fotoplayer was equipped with a Tibia while the 4-rank Morton came with a Concert Flute as did most of the other brands of 4-ranker.

And what a Tibia! It's of medium scale, unleathered, and usually made of sugar pine. The tone is just as sweet and sexy as that of any Tibia. The 4' String (49 pipes, start at Tenor C) is a "fat" one, not unlike a String Diapason. The 49-pipe Vox, while very small in scale, offers that very necessary reed support to the Tibia, which has a range from one octave below the end of the manual to two octaves above. The Tibia is unified 16-8-4-2 on the upper manual but has no mutations. The Tibia appears at 16-8-4 on the pedals while the String and Vox appear only at 4' because they lack the 8' bass octaves.

(Continued on next page)

A 30-bar, small scale xylophone and a single C chime were the original pitched percussion complement.

The Morton 49 was designed for installation in an orchestra pit. Therefore, the silhouette was low to keep below stage level. The detached console was usually placed between two oak swell boxes circa 5' in height. The 16' octave of Tibia pipes was attached horizontally to the back of the Tibia swell box, unenclosed. The Vox, String and most of the generous supply of "toy counter" effects were crammed into one swell box while the great range of the Tibia filled the other. A 3-rank organ with pipework divided into two "chambers" is indeed a rarity; This series of Mortons may be the only models so divided. The finish of console and swell boxes was natural oak, well sanded and varnished. The front of each swell box was decorated with an artistic grillework which concealed the small but adequate swell shutters. It was equipped for automatic operation from rolls and had double tracker bars so an operator cueing a film could find the right spot on one roll while another was playing—thus assuring continuous music. It was quite a lot of organ as originally conceived and installed and is still tonally far superior to most brands in the pit organ class.

As has been mentioned, the instrument was hardly in what might be called "mint condition" on that morning in February 1965 when the little caravan of vehicles retraced its path Westward over the Donner Pass with the Morton safely aboard, bound for the Sommer home in North Highlands, California.

Since then the instrument has been restored slowly to original condition utilizing the 2-chamber, separate console configuration it was obtained in. The console was refinished from its original oak to antique white and gold. Dave Schutt contributed a Glockenspiel and a chime action; Carol Harris, an octave of Chimes, and Clyde Derby, the complete actions for a Wurli toy counter. The Glock was completely rebuilt and four missing bars made and added: The chime action was cut down for the octave of chimes and the toy counter rebuilt with the necessary effects installed. These latter items, of course, had the usual "orange shellac" motif.

After moving into a new home, which was selected with the organ installation in mind, the conversion of the garage into a music room began in earnest. A 220-volt line was laid underground to the blower pad, main garage door sealed, ceiling reinforced, light fixtures wired, floor tile installed, wall and ceiling insulation stapled in, sheetrock attached to the ceiling and a wood grain sheetrock nailed to the walls. Then came painting and cleanup, and the organ installation started.

The pipes are enclosed in two original 3-1/2 by 5-1/2 foot oak swell boxes mounted

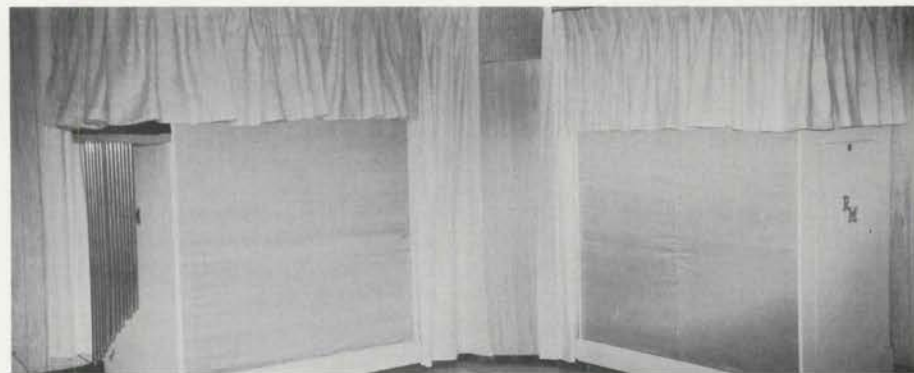


Draperies pulled back to show the traps and sound effects installed unenclosed above the Vox-String box.

on casters. One contains the pipes of the Strings and Voxes, Glock and Xylo, with the toy counter mounted on top, unenclosed. The other swell box contains the Tibias with the bass drum, maracas, tom-tom and chimes mounted on top. The pedal pipes are free-standing between the two



The original 49-note String and Vox ranks and the original Xylophone (right). The added Glockenspiel is at upper right.



This is the view over one's shoulder from the console. Draperies conceal the toy counter effects installed above the Tibia swell box (left) and the Vox-String swell box (right). The Tibia-Bourbon octave is unenclosed between the two boxes, straight ahead.

swell boxes. Both boxes have swell shades mounted on the front side. The pressure and vacuum wind lines enter the room through a vent hole in the side of the room, a total span of eight feet from regulator to chests. The vacuum line "tees" into each chamber and also to the console. The swell shades, xylophone and the integral relays within the console operate on vacuum—as did the original roll player mechanism common to all Fotoplayer. One and one-half inch plastic water pipe is used for the vacuum line. Two toe stud rails were built and installed for additional effects and artificial echo was added. The echo effect is made possible through the use of a Schober transistor "Reverbatape" unit. There is a microphone in each chamber feeding into a mixer, the Reverbatape unit, an amplifier and, finally, a speaker enclosed in a baffle. The Reverbatape has a console selection knob of 1 through 9 positions which control the

amount of reverb. The setting depends upon music tempo. A very realistic auditorium effect is achieved. A replica of a Howard seat was made of pipe fittings welded together and covered with fiber glass. The cushion is made of royal blue velvet over sponge rubber and has a gold fringe edge.

The console is located in an alcove off the main room and is surrounded by royal blue velvet drapes. Overhead and to the rear are twin spotlights and a revolving color light for those who desire to play in "living color."

The Major is indebted to a number of Sacramento area organ enthusiasts for their help. Dave Schutt, in addition to aiding in the original negotiations, helped in moving, gave advice, parts, help in modifications and tuned it twice, which is one reason why it sounds so good. Norm Rassmussen and his son, Bill, helped with the moving and stood by for any assist-

"Little Mort," continued



"Doghouse out back" houses the blower, regulator and trem. (Retouched slightly for clarity.)

ance they could render. Ray Anderson built a new harness for the Glock, got it adjusted and did 90% of the wiring besides other things. And from afar, E.A. Bassett, Waterbury, Conn., furnished wiring diagrams and guidance from his very similiar installation.

There was very little static from the dis-taff side on this installation. The Major, retired from the USAF (after 25 years of it) last fall and, noting that "togetherness" is one of the pitfalls of retirement, suggested that the "better half" get a job. That, she did. Then, *he* did. The reward when they come home now from a hard day at the office is that both play and enjoy "little Mort"—who hasn't had it so good since before "talkies" shut him off.



AND BABY MAKES THREE! Mary and her Major enjoy their little Morton, a fine example of the famous "Model 49."

"LITTLE MORT" STOP LIST

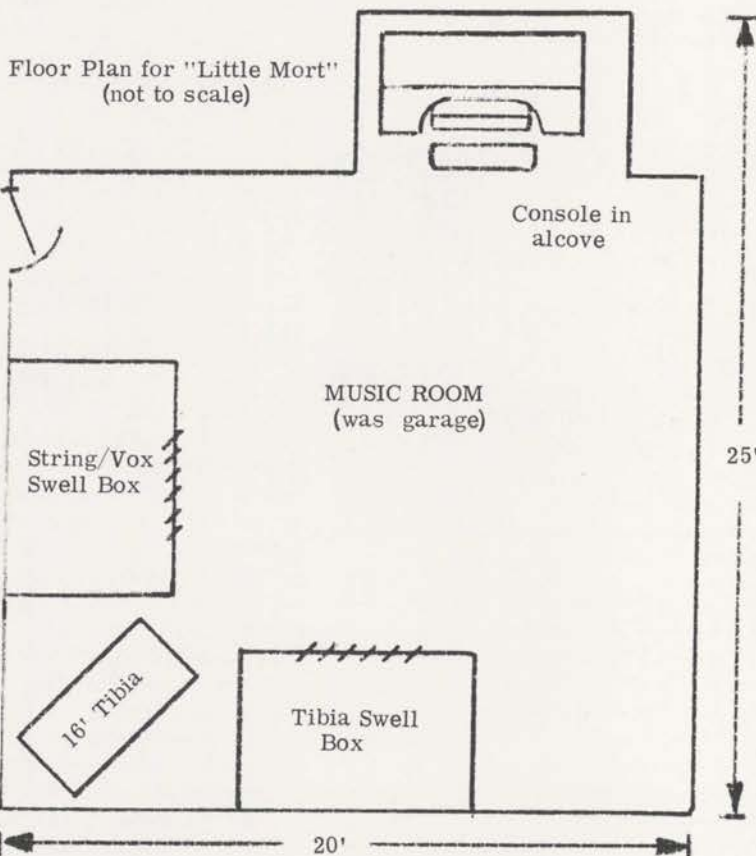
Robert Morton Pipe Organ (theatre pit type), Style 49B, Serial #1005009 3-ranks.

Presently installed in residence of H.A. Sommer, N. Highlands, Calif.

Blower: Kinetic, #L-852, Type 8 HVM, 600 CFM @ 10 lbs. Wind pressure 50 CFM @ 30 in. Vacuum

Direct Current supplied by Selenium rectifier.

PEDAL		Chinese Block	Chimes
Tibia	16'	Tambourine	Orch. Bells (re-it)
Bass Flute (Tibia)	8'	Castanets	Tremulant: Tibia, Vox,
String	4'	Bird Chirp	String (1)
Flute (Tibia)	4'	Maracas	Expression: Balanced
Bass Drum		Horse Clops	pedals:
Kettle Drum		Triangle	Left-Tibia
Snare Drum Tap		Tom-Tom	Right-Vox/String
Snare Drum Roll		SOLO	Crescendo
Tom-Tom		Contra Flute (Tibia)	Auditorium acoustic effect:
Cymbal		String (Middle C)	Schober Reverbatape
		Vox Humana (Middle C)	
ACCOMPANIMENT		Tibia	TOE STUDS (12)
Contra Flute (Tibia)	16'	Violin (Tenor C)	Door Bell
Tibia	8'	Vox Humana (Tenor C)	Machine Gun
Violin (Tenor C)	8'	Orch. Flute (Tibia)	Siren
Vox Humana (Tenor C)	8'	Violina	Boat Whistle
Violina	4'	Vox Humana	Fire Gong
Flute (Tibia)	4'	Piccolo (Tibia)	Klaxon Horn
Sleigh Bells		Xylophone	Six remaining reserved for
Cymbal		Glockenspiel	future effects installation



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SAN FRANCISCO'S AVENUE THEATRE PRESENTS TOP ORGANIST "ROUNDUP"

by ELMER FUBB

Seven Stars Perform at Wurlitzer for Sunday Afternoon 'Kickoff' Concert

San Francisco, Feb. 12—The Avenue theatre here is something very special. For one thing it's the culmination of a dream—a dream which coincides with the longings of organ hobbyists everywhere: a place where silent film master-works may be enjoyed to the accompaniment of a fine theatre pipe organ.

Fruition of the dream stemmed from the joint effort of two unlikely partners, hardheaded businessman (lithography) Vernon Gregory and volatile Edward Stout, whose expert touch in the more sensitive areas of pipe organ mechanics is well established.

If this pair seems ill-matched to bring about the miracle of a showplace from the '20s, it should be remembered that they share an uncommon enthusiasm for the organ, the theatre and the silent film—enough to stake fortune and futures in the recreation of a page from the past.

This concert was by way of introduction to Bay Area enthusiasts that the Avenue theatre is already a going concern with a program of weekend silent films to be



The console was originally in the State Lake theatre, Chicago.

seen, a fine fifteen rank Wurlitzer to be heard and an auditorium available for organ club meetings during non-movie periods. Therefore, we'll skip the background on how the project was conceived and grew (that's another story) and deal with the events of Feb. 12th.

Although the original plan was to present just four top organists in concert, it had to be abandoned when nearly twice that number stepped forward. It then became the "Cavalcade of Organ Greats", as Tabs 'n Drawbars dubbed it. It should be made clear that all artists donated their services to give the project a well-deserved send-off.

Shortly after the appointed hour (2:30

PM), house manager Jim Murray stepped to the microphone on the stage and introduced the MC of the day, handsome Gene Pofert, who lost no time ushering in the first of seven top-rank organists to be heard.

Tom Hazelton had a distinct advantage in that he is the house organist with more hours at the 3-manual console than any of those to follow. As Tom plunged into *The Girl from Ipanema*, the big curtain opened to reveal the screen, back of which could be seen the swell shutters opening and closing and the vague outlines of pipe-work played upon by work lights in the stage-based chambers. The lush Wurlitzer sound blended with Tom's easy-going style during *Bidin' My Time*, a George Shearing arrangement of the Gershwin tune. Tom's MCing is a pleasure to witness; his boyish friendliness complements his immense competence at the organ. "We're going to play the hell out of this organ today" stated Tom and his final contribution of the afternoon bore out his threat. One must be in love to fully feel the impact of *Liebeshodt* (literally "love death") from Wagner's opera, *Tristan and Isolde*. In it the composer represents in music the lyric passion which the lovers never enjoyed in life; they sense its magic only as life is slipping away—the slowly rising emotions carried in the Strings, the ebb and flow of the developing theme and finally the mighty pulse of the impassioned finale.

The afternoon was still young and Tom Hazleton had already created a musical moment that would be remembered.

Always popular Everett Nourse, with years of staffing at the late lamented Fox 4-36 Wurlitzer to recommend him, got off to a good start with a bouncy *Who?* and followed with a subtle ballad treatment of *When Did You Leave Heaven?*; *Anniversary Song* was played as a fast waltz with a Tuba lead and descending chromatic embellishment. Everett closed with a

weirdo version of *Limehouse Blues* which made something of an oriental mystery of the "story of old Chinatown." Everett enjoyed an enthusiastic round of applause, a not uncommon occurrence during the afternoon and mention of which we'll dispense with at this point as needless repetition.

Next on the bill-of-fare was ex-ATOE Prexy Tiny James, recording and concert artist, whose big round moving style is dearly reminiscent of the sound so often heard in theatres during the "golden era." Tiny milked the Tibia during *Does Your Heart Beat for Me?* (with Chrysoglott punctuation), then bounced into *Your*



SHADES OF PIZZERY. Bill Langford does a Harp arpeggio while giving the pedals a rest. The feet in the foreground are real. Photo by Bob Churchill

Heart Belongs to Somebody Else. Tiny's closer was *Baby Where Can You Be?* with a baritone Tuba lead and sizzle-String harmony.

Bill Langford is famed for serving up pretty music as an accompaniment to the Consumption of pizza in that Hayward dough dispensary known as the "Pizza Joynt." Bill is well schooled in the use of pipes (he plays a 3-12 mostly Wurlitzer nightly) and he also shows considerable talent in the wit department. Sample: "I don't know why I'm so shaky—oops!—that's a bad word?" (For the benefit of the unknowing, "Shakey's" is the name of a competing pizzeria.) Bill's opener was a slow, emotion-packed ballad entitled *I'd Give a Million Tomorrows for Just One Yesterday* in tempo rubato, and followed it with an upbeat *Brazil*. As a novelty he compared Jerome Kern's *Yesterdays* (from *Roberta*) with the Beatles more recent *Yesterday* and discovered that they were closely related. So far Bill had avoided playing in what he calls "pizza style" but he broke down and gave out with a vo-do-deo-dough version of *Some of These Days* in a tempo to pace the munching maws of the pasta pilgrims who frequent Henningsen's hearth.

Larry Vannucci opened with a grotesque *Winchester Cathedral* which alternated be-

tween the croaking "bee in a bottle" range of the Kinura and the "whistling" range of the Tibia. It was a triumph of arranging and registration over lack of material, and the audience loved it. But the real Vannucci art shone brightly throughout *The Shadow of Your Smile*



"THE VANOOCHI!" Larry Vannucci waits for the crowd to simmer down after his grotesque 'Wind-chester Cathedral'.

and the theme from the film, *A Man and a Woman*. When Larry announced *As Long as She Needs Me* with that "gone" look on his craggy visage, no one present could possibly doubt who he was playing it for; Claire was sitting directly behind the console, radiant as always.

Larry's "feature selection" was a finely registered *Blusette* which made good use of the organ's Brass Trumpet, Tibia, Clarinet, Kinura and Chrysoglott Harp.

The next artist was straight out of silent movies—wonderful Alice Blue. Alice is more than a personality, she's a character, and a top-flight entertainer. She made frequent comments about what she was up to over the PA system and generally made light of her efforts. However,



Facing a phalanx of soles, Alice Blue turns on the charm while introducing her next tune.

as a measure of her abilities, she selected Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Hymn To The Sun* for her initial selection, and did it proud. Next came a "Blues Hodgepodge" as she called it, a potpourri featuring bits and pieces of many tunes, most of them dealing with the continual war she wages against the Russian River which she in-

sists has evil designs on her Guerneville home, dog ("Faux Pas"), Volkswagen and herself—such damp items as *River Stay Away From My Door*. At one point she took off on what sounded like a silent movie chase. And leave it to the old showman to save a gasp for the very end; as she took her bow she stepped off the organ platform into thin air—and very nearly took a dive into the nether regions of the pit. A huge gasp went up from the listeners but Alice reappeared in the spotlight and indicated that nothing more than her dignity had suffered. With a happy wave she was gone, one of the most beloved and most interesting of the old-timers.

Alice Blue is hard to follow at any time and with the drama of her near "dive" still fluttering in the audience, she was doubly difficult to follow. It takes talent like that of Emory Stevenson to cope with such a situation and it just happened that Emory was scheduled next, the final act in an afternoon of wonderful musical adventures. Meanwhile the show had run far beyond the estimated time and six PM was looming. So, Emory cut it short with an able version of *Manhattan*, *Put Your Dreams Away*, and a Crawford-like *She's Funny That Way*. His encore was a delicious *It Happened in Monterey*. There the show ended.

Gene Pofelr, who had performed ably as the MC, bid the audience goodbye and invited all to return as soon as possible. Actually, there had been no "hard-sell" during the entire afternoon. Several times Messrs. Gregory and Stout had stepped to the stage to provide some history of the



THIS IS MY GOOD SIDE! Ed Stout and Vern Gregory clown for the multitudes. The Avenue is their dream come true.

project and to make themselves known to the audience. Stout gave a brief talk on organ "bird whistles" and demonstrated some special ones which will become a part of the organ, notably the raucous "Albatross call." Gregory turned out to be a comedian, mugging for the photographer who kept shooting Vern's "bad side," much to the Gregorian discomfolt.

In all it was an afternoon that won't soon be forgotten in Bay Area organ circles. Where else could you be served free intermission coffee by a couple of dolls like organists Lee Lees and June Melendy?

* * * * *

For the benefit of those contemplating a visit to San Francisco, the Avenue theatre is located at 2650 San Bruno Street (take the Silver Avenue turn-off from Route 101).

BOB RALSTON POPULAR ON PIPES

by G. BANDINI

California music lovers were recently treated to four days of delightful theatre pipe organ music at the Carl Greer Inn in Sacramento, played by Bob Ralston of the Lawrence Welk organization. Although featured on a "plug in" on the Welk show as well as during personal appearances, he did a creditable performance on pipes. This was appreciated, particularly, by those familiar with the complex Morton multiple stop key, 4-manual configuration. Ralston worked up pleasing combinations and was well in control of the 4-16 Morton. During certain numbers, obviously Welk type arrangements, "champagne" bubbles floated out of the organ. Welk's borrowed bubble machine, with a control on the console, produced the effect. Although he is a very accomplished pianist and organist, he demonstrated showmanship versatility through conversational patter and a form of gymnastics. The gymnastics consisted of laying on his back, crossing his arms with his head un-

der the console and playing *12th Street Rag* on the Accompaniment manual!



HOWDY, FOLKS — I'M BOB RALSTON. —Encompassed by the giant maw of the Morton, and surrounded by eaters, Bob announces requests. (Photo by Bob Churchill).

"TOES" BECOME "SIERRA CHAPTER" IN A BLAZE OF GLORY

HEAR DUNSTEDTER,
JAMES and NOURSE

by H. A. SOMMER

Any meeting of organ enthusiasts that is fortunate enough to have an Honorary ATOE Organist present is bound to be rewarded with lingering memories, but then to have two such personages present, is almost beyond description.

AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING of the Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of Sacramento (TOES) at the Carl Greer Inn, both Tiny James and Eddie Dunstedter were in attendance. Eddie was in town for one of several week-end stints on the 4/16 Morton and Tiny was the featured concert artist for the event. Don and Cathy Zeller had just finished tuning the beast when Tiny and John Gallagher arrived and immediately started setting combinations. While they were doing so, and later when Tiny practiced, Eddie kibitzed and supervised the operation, all in good fun. After Tiny had practiced, Eddie played several selections and seemed to be pleased with the instrument, although between cigar smoke, crashing dishes and ice clinking in glasses, I thought I heard a comment which sounded like, "the combinations aren't loused up too badly". The concert was attended by more than 125, some coming over 100 miles. Eddie was introduced and then stepped aside while Tiny, the featured organist, was presented. Tiny was at his best and played the full range of the theatre organ spectrum. His technique was flawless, the selections delightful and the members exuberant over the fine renditions. Although the club was highly appreciative of Tiny's concert, the high point was when Eddie complimented him afterwards. George Seavers played a few selections after the business meeting and several new members signed up.

A highly successful concert sponsored by the brand new Sierra Chapter ATOE (formerly TOES), was held at Grant Union High School on March 5, 1967. Everett Nourse was the guest organist and presented a two hour concert that will be remembered for some time. Playing the Wurli 4-22 to an audience of 400, he offered some of the most meticulous and flawless renditions of music, from the theatre organ spectrum, that has been pre-



THE OLD MAESTRO APPROVES — Eddie Dunstedter (left) introduces the TOES concert artist, Tiny James.

sented in this area. The organ was in top condition, thanks to the efforts of Bob Baese, many commenting that it never sounded better. Everett's imaginative technique captivated the audience and he was treated to enthusiastic applause at the intermission, before and after the encore. An interesting note on Everett is that this was the first time he ever played the instrument although he had attended George Wright's dedication concert in 1939. The audience was divided between Sacramento enthusiasts and those from the Bay Area. After the concert a short business meeting of the members was held, the highlight being the announcement of the National ATOE organization acceptance of TOES as the Sierra Chapter of ATOE. Members then took turns at the organ. Many of the enthusiasts later journeyed to the Carl Greer Inn for din-



Everett Nourse at the Wurli 4-22. After 27 years he was pleased to make its acquaintance.

ner and to hear Eddie Dunstedter at the Morton 4-16.



From Mich., Carl Elliott writes glumly that when "urban renewal" cut a path through Grand Rapids, it wiped out five theatres, three of them operating and two with operating organs. An attempt to secure the Regent 3-7 Robert Morton for installation in the civic auditorium fell by the wayside for lack of support and went to a private party in Lansing. Which leaves only the Majestic with an organ which, Carl writes, is used occasionally. In Cedar Rapids, Iowa, it's a more pleasant story. Howard A. Burton, long a stalwart in the organ hobby, continues pushing pipe organ music with Saturday morning open sessions at the Paramount with its lone 3-11 Wurlitzer, and uncovering new talent. One recent discovery is Richard Neighbor (16) with whom Burton shared a pre-Christmas concert at the theatre. Burton, who has a 2-9 Geneva installed in his home basement studio, was a student of the Knauss School of Theatre Organ Playing in Allentown, Penna., in the late '20s. Wonder if there are other Knauss students among our readers? There's a story there . . . Seeing the list of long gone NBC radio "soap operas" which Rosa Rio supplied Hammond themes and incidental music for in these pages brought a tinge of nostalgia to Ann Leaf who was playing for CBS (New York) during the same top broadcasting years. Among Ann's "soapers" were *Ma Perkins*, *Pretty Kitty Kelly* and *Front Page Farrell*. She also backgrounded a pair of well remembered evening shows, *Easy Aces* and *Mr. Keen*, *Tracer of Lost Persons* which were supplied a few bars theme music, respectively, of *Manhattan Serenade* and *Someday I'll Find You*. . . . Bill Coffman, the organist with a quite long stretch at the Panama Hilton Bombarde Room 3-27 Wurlitzer behind

VOX POP, continued

him will have to go some to beat a previous record—13 years playing a Hammond at the Sirrocco Club in Wilmington, Calif. Already homesick, he has no such intention. . . . In Holywood, organist Paul Mickelson bought Ray Bonner's 6-rank Morton to install in his home because the much larger former NBC studio organ which Paul has had stashed for many years is too large. But he isn't thinking of parting with the instrument veteran radio listeners associate with *One Man's Family* and *I Love a Mystery*. Paul, whose forte is recording religious music with theatre organ registration, still hopes to find a willing hall to put it in. . . .

Our spies in the great NorthWest report that it's true about ATOE Prez. Dick Schrum. Everyone suspected that he was hoarding a pipe organ somewhere but it took some super-sleuthing to find it stashed in the loft of the Tacoma Roller Bowl, a 3-10 Morton which played originally (understage) in the Portland Orpheum theatre prior to its rink job. Our shamus had been tailing Dick for some time and finally the Prez led him to the cache, which had to be moved because the rink was being renovated prior to a big roller skating regional competition. Our footpad got so inquisitive that Dick put him to work helping carry out the main chests and regulators. In the course of the blood, sweat and tears involved in any organ moving session our "Fosdick" learned that Schrum plans a 13-rank installation for which he has acquired a rare Wurlitzer Tibia Plena and the Kimball Trumpet and Posthorn from the late, lamented Stanton theatre in Baltimore, plus the full Orpheum Morton. But we haven't been able to learn where the installation will be and probably won't until our 007 is sprung from the plaster cast in which he was incarcerated after the main chest conked him.

Speaking of the president, he's been seen on Seattle TV recently, playing a Rodgers plug-in. Wonder what the sponsor thinks when it comes time for a commercial and Dick plumps for ATOE instead of transistors?

Ever wonder what got Carl Greer so hepped on theatre organs that he built his Sacramento beanery around one? Carl advises that he learned to love organ music when he used to take his girl, Jay, to the Chicago Marbro to hear the 5-manual Wurlitzer which Byron Carlson is now installing in his Minneapolis home. Now, with a 4-16 Morton in his own restaurant, it would seem that Carl and Jay (long Mr. and Mrs.) could have a diet of organ music with meals nightly by just eating at the family inn. But it isn't that easy; the Greers live in Los Angeles where dining to pipe organ music has been in eclipse since Clifton's Cafeteria

sold its 2-8 Moller to Jim Gaines. Its a drive of several hours to reach the state Capital and Carl's very special Inn.

What do professional organ people do on their days off? A group which gathered in San Francisco, consisting of Ed Stout, Richard Purvis, Buzz Lindhardt, Don Micholetti and Lyn Larsen, drove to Sacramento on March 5th to mainline some Eddie Dunstedter at the Greer Inn. It figures.

Anyone remember "Wild Oscar," that zany of the console whose musical antics at consoles across the land left echoes of laughter as his monument? We've been trying to nail down some solid info on Oscar as the basis for a future article but his memory is most evasive. Outside of being listed in the Motion Picture Herald we're sure of only one showplace where he was seen in person, an unnamed Akron theatre. There really was a "Wild Oscar" wasn't there?

. . . Bob Baese, the man who did so much to restore the Grant Union High School Wurlti to sound the way George Wright designed it many years ago, has a 2-7 Wurlitzer in his Sacramento, Calif., home. . . . Speaking of 2-7s, there's a fine example in the California theatre, Santa Rosa, Calif. On a recent Saturday morning a bunch of ATOEs gathered to hear some impromptu playing by several fine organists (after the formal program), including Larry Vannucci at the organ and a "pit orchestra" consisting of Banjo and Piano, with veteran silent movie organist Alice Blue supplying the obligatos on the latter. . . . From the Management of the newly rebuilt Minneapolis Auditorium, we learn that plans to import Eddie Dunstedter for a rededication concert had to be dropped because the huge twin-console Kimball won't be ready in time for the formal opening. However, manager Atwood Olson writes, "I hope at some convenient future date to have Eddie return to Minneapolis and allow a free night for the Organ Club to be present." The Organ Company is readying the Kimball.

Chicago Chapterites can be proud of their restoration job on the 3-10 Wurlti in the Indiana theatre in East Chicago if letters we've received praising the fall concert played there by John Muri are a fair indicator. For Muri it was something of a return; he played the instrument before it was retired by "talkies" more than 39 years ago. Organist Muri sure gets around. On Feb. 11 he put on a fine silent movie era spectacle for Indianapolis, playing Tom Ferree's 3-10 Uniphone at the Rivoli.

January 24th was a great day for students at the Utah School for the Blind. On that day they heard a dual dedication concert, classics played by Wayne Deveaux and pops played by Leland Lay. The occasion was the preeming of a new Thomas organ which materialized chief-

ly through the efforts of a Salt Lake City journalist named Dan Valentine who campaigned for it via his Tribune column, "Nothing Serious." The good citizens responded and provided an early "Valentine day" for the sightless students of all ages. As stated many times previously, we meet the nicest people through the organ hobby. . . .

We sure learned a lot about the various makes of Brass Trumpet ranks by displaying a smattering of ignorance. Having never experienced another brand, we mistakenly assumed that Wurlitzer was the sole maker—in print. No so, writes Kenneth H. Knepper from Tulsa, Oklahoma, who states that large Barton organs were equipped not only with Brass Trumpets but also Brass Saxophones which Barton purchased from Gottfried. The famed pipe maker made all but the brass bells which were purchased from a band instrument manufacturer, says Ken. He adds that Moller also had a Brass Trumpet of a scale somewhat smaller than Wurlitzers (he has part of a Moller set and would like some measurements from someone who has a complete one so he can make the missing pipes). Now we are wondering—how about Kimball, Marr & Colton, Robert Morton, Wicks and others? Any more brass?

Although their articles had often appeared in print on adjacent pages of *The Hammond Times*, former theatre organists Randy Sauls and Mildred Alexander had never met. When it finally happened this spring, the two tried to "out-South" one another via their respective draws:

Millie:

Cun'l Rayandy—whar yew-all from?

Randy:

Ahm fum Miz-sip — way daown Saouth. Whar yewall from, honey chile?

Millie:

Ahm from Saouth Car'linuh, a teenie-weenie bit Nawth of yewall.

Randy:

Dayamn Yang-kee!

In Thousand Oaks, Calif, organist Jack Loren had almost enough parts gathered to go about assembling a long-planned theatre organ, about 8 ranks played from a style D Wurlti console he has acquired. Jack built a 10 ranker into his Berkeley, Calif., home while he was still in high school in the mid-30s, so he knows the ropes.

Ann Leaf's sister, Esther, who used to sit in for Ann during vacations from CBS "Nocturne" broadcasts, is still very much involved with organs back home in Omaha. Esther now plays in church on an electronic.

. . . Despite the deep snowdrifts more than 800 attended the grand opening con-

(Continued on next page)

VOX POP, continued

concert on Feb. 25 to hear the former Palace 4-21 Wurlitzer in the new home provided by the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, the Auditorium theatre. But none of those who didn't hear the Eddie Weaver bash was newshen Rita Becker. She was really "snowed."

The Chicago (CATOE) cats sure offer a lot for only \$1.50 (kids 50 cents!). On April 6 CATOE staged a show at the Patio theatre with Hal Pearl (remember him at the Aragon Ballroom?) at the 3-17 Barton which was restored mainly by Bill Reiger. In addition to the concert there was a silent feature film, barbershop quartet, two-reel comedy and a sing-along—and 12 bits was the most one could pay to get in. In contrast, there's a feeling in some areas that the upward creeping cost of concert admissions—two, three and even four dollars—may be dampening enthusiasm.

The Aragon Ballroom? It's now a go-go joint called "The Cheetah." We understand the most of the Wurli which Hal Pearl once recorded for Replica is gathering dust there.

That livewire Theatre Organ Productions crew (Pat Chambers, Mark Noller and Dick Sklenar) which has been staging a theatre organ type of program in the Chicago area but with a plug-in in lieu of pipes, will soon have a pipe organ to add authenticity to their efforts. The group has arranged to refurbish the 2-11 Kimball in the Parthenon theatre, Hammond, Indiana (near Chi) and in-theatre presentations are planned for fall. They have the full backing of Parthenon owner William Kleige and house manager Edna Peterson. Our most recent mention of the Parthenon was at the house John Muri played in during the '30s in our February article about Milt Herth.

Niagara Frontier's program chairman Bob Sieben informs us that the Chapter's own 2-6 Wurli in Klauder Hall sounded great at the Dean Robinson concert on March 10, its second airing for Chapter members.

Ever hear of a Steere and Turner brand of organ? We didn't until one turned up in an ancient Wisconsin theatre. Installed in 1891, the instrument was recently given a



WAIKIKI MORTON — The hands belong to John DeMello.

much-needed overhaul by Lawrence Richardson. It will be the subject of a future article.

Notice anything strange about the 4-18 Wurlitzer (it says) pictured on page 2 of the Feb. '67 TO/BB? Reader Eric Reeve did. The photo shows the interior of the Seattle 5th Avenue theatre and the text says the house is equipped with a 4-18. But the eagle-eyed Minot (No. Dakota) "fuzz" counted only the three manuals showing and, cop that he is, wants to know who stole the fourth keyboard?

From Indianapolis, Tom Ferree writes that he's in the market for a set of 32' Diaphones and some solo reeds to add to his 3-10 "Giant Uniphone" organ in the Rivoli theatre. Tom chides us for stating that the Rivli's chambers once housed a Barton when the long-gone organ was actually a 2-6 Robert Morton. For shame!

From Montreal, Dr. Ray Lawson advises that he has his home-based Wurlitzer in top shape for the benefit of visitors in town for the World Fair. He adds that fellow Montreal enthusiast Rosiare Houle's Moller installation "is in fine shape and it sounds really good." In not-too-distant Plattsburgh, N. Y., Dick Weber's double Wurlitzer in the Strand was the main attraction at a Feb. 15 variety show. Billed as a "Musical Valentine," the presentation included variety acts, the Plattsburgh Male Chorus and "Canada's Hit Recording Artist," Leo Duplessis in *Pipe Organ Black Magic*—all for \$1.50! Proceeds went toward the purchase of band uniforms for local school kids.

Dr. Art Sherman (Sacramento, Calif.) recently spent his vacation in Hawaii and managed to play both Princess and Waikiki theatre Mortons in Honolulu, thanks to manager John DeMello who does so much to keep pipes alive in our 50th state. (Photo: Waikiki Morton).

The independent Detroit TOC continues with a parade of top talent playing its Senate theatre Wurlitzer month after month. The March concert, held on the 18th, starred talented Patti Germain, who is remembered for her performance at the Richmond Regional ATOE meet in 1966. Patti followed Ashley Miller who played DTOC's Feb. 25th program at the Senate. All of which can only whet the musical appetite of the Detroit-bound ATOE conventioneer come July.

WELCOME

to the two newest chapters
MID AMERICA CHAPTER
based in Wichita, Kansas

and

SIERRA CHAPTER
based in Sacramento, Calif.

DISC SQUEALS

To avoid possible disappointment, Ann Leaf wants it known that Vol. II of her *Concert at the Los Angeles Theatre* is available in monaural only. However, "That Aint the Way I Heard It" (Robert Morton) and *Spectacular Organ* (Wurlimorton) may be bought by mail from Ann at \$4.35 mono and \$5.35 stereo, post-paid. Write to 1138 Hacienda Place, Los Angeles, Calif., 90069. With the San Francisco Fox 4-36 gone and Fantasy records running low on the tunes they recorded just before it was moved, Everett Nourse and Tiny James have been looking for an organ suitable for the continuation of their very successful *Farewell to the Fox* series. They may have found it in the 4-22 mostly Wurlitzer in Grant Union High School in Sacramento. If it jells, they'll need a new title; perhaps something very general, such as *Salute to Grant*, maybe?

The major recording companies insist that organ records are too slow in sales for them to bother with. Not so, says prexy Bill Johnson, the guiding talent behind the Organ of the Month Club. Not only has he had to move to larger quarters to meet nation-wide business demands but has also started to have his records pressed in Australia (stereo) and in England (monaural only) for local distribution. Wonder if Bill would mind having our Bombarde review copies sent over from England?

•The monkey wrapped his tail around the flagpole all right, as the old parody goes, but not to the "Washington Post" March as we credited Don French on his current Organ of the Month release. It should have been called out as "The National Emblem" March, and the monkey shown with his foot in his mouth. So impressed was Johnny Seng with the sounds and music which Billy Nalle produced on Johnny's Mundelein Seminary 4-23 recording organ during a brief visit early this year, that Seng invited the New Yorker (by adoption) to make his next recording at the one time Chicago theatre console which controls his hand-picked ranks, on the spot. Which is a switch because, as we understand it, Johnny intended to use it solely for his own recordings. But the artistry of the transplanted Floridian must have gotten through to him and he made the generous gesture. He'll never regret it.

* * * * *

"A common attraction to the incomparable majesty of the theatre organ" inspired them.

Based on an article written for the Omaha World-Herald by staffer Fred Thomas; Photos by Pat Hall and Stanley Gross.

A VOICE from the innards of the darkened theatre called out from great distance, "Try the Chinese Gong." A great "Pooooiinnngg!!!" filled the theatre and it must have rattled Tom Harvey's ear drums because he was standing beside the huge brass disc when it let loose. But before its sustained tinnabulation had died away Harvey was back asking for more, "Now give me a trumpet fanfare!"

Two octaves of Brass Trumpet bells vibrated with the blast of a fanfare with enough majesty to serve as the introduction to an Errol Flynn movie. Down at the console, George Rice smiles, "What sturdy ear drums Tom has." And still Tom kept asking for more.

"Bass Drum . . . Horses Hooves . . . Auto Horn . . . Sleigh Bells . . . now, slug the chimes." And George did. Each effect came through loud and clear from the chamber four floors above. That part of the job was finished.

Tom Harvey descended the ladder, the only access to the chamber, and joined Dr. Walter Beaupre on the balcony. Finding their way by flashlight in the darkened house they inched toward the center of the balcony where a couple of visitors had been observing the proceedings. The two men sat down by the visitors and called out, "Play for us, George!" And



CONSOLE UP — The 13-rank Wurlitzer floods the 2850-seat house with music at a perfect volume level, so no additions are anticipated. It's the last of 20 large theatre organs which once entertained Omahans.

George obliged with a medley of vintage oldies, *Linger Awhile*, *Shanty Town*, *on Harvest Moon* and *War March of the Priests*, to which he added a jazzy ending.

"Sometimes we get so carried away with the music we don't get much work done" said Tom Harvey, his ears still ringing with the echoes of crash cymbals and bleating trumpets.

These Omahans, prowling around in the darkened Orpheum theatre, are deeply in-

THE PIPES ARE PLAYING AGAIN IN OMAHA

involved in a labor of love which has already absorbed more than 1800 hours of their time and an undetermined amount of money. They have restored the Orpheum's long-neglected organ, the last of the great Wurlitzers in a city which once boasted twenty large theatre organs plus a number of smaller ones in the 36 houses in operation there forty years ago. This is the last playing instrument and that didn't come about easily.

The small group of thus far unorganized enthusiasts centers around George Rice, a bio-chemist by day and organ loft prowler by night. Walter Beaupre is a professor at the University of Omaha while Tom Harvey teaches instrumental music in the public schools.

Another "regular" is Don Olson, a sanitary engineer. Curtis Cox, a computer programmer at the University of Omaha, rounds out the unlikely crew which is joined together by love for the theatre organ.

It started several years ago when George Rice first moved to Omaha. Long a theatre organ devotee, he looked around for an instrument to play and was appalled at what he found. Organs were rare and those remaining were in poor shape. The 2850-seat Orpheum's Wurlitzer seemed like the most promising. It's a style 235 special with 13 ranks of pipes, including a prized Brass Trumpet. It's a 3-chamber installation with upper and

(Continued on next page)

SQUAWKERS. Tom Harvey is assigned the trying task of tuning the Kinura pipes, which seem a little self-conscious in the presence of the Majestic Brass Trumpet on the next rack.



THE PIPES ARE PLAYING AGAIN IN OMAHA, continued

GEORGE PLAYS FOR HIS CREW—While George plays pretty ditties, his fascinated crewmen look on. These men (plus some not shown) have invested 1800 hours among them during the past four years in bringing the style 235 Special Wurlitzer back to top playing condition.



Left to right, they are Donald E. Olson, Dr. Walter Beaupre, Thomas Harvey and Curtis Cox.

lower Solo chambers on the left side of the Proscenium and a Main on the right side. The upper Solo chamber contains the Kinura, Trumpet and Oboe; the lower Solo houses the Tibia Clausa and Tuba. Starting alone, George soon started to attract helpers. One was Stanley Gross



TINKLERS! George Rice adjusts a Glockenspiel hammer. Above are the Tuned Sleighbells.

who did a beautiful job of rebuilding the console. Many layers of paint were removed and the surfaces finished in a gleaming polished mahogany. But refinishing was only a small part of the job—releathering, refelting, all stop key contacts replaced, all pedalboard contacts replaced plus a number of contacts on the manuals. And the combination action was rewired.

Missing parts were borrowed from other organs, ones beyond repair. The group found theatre owners sympathetic to the project of having at least one good playing theatre instrument in Omaha. They donated parts.

The amount of work was "somewhat staggering," as Curtis Cox puts it. With more than 1,065 pipes to check, work which couldn't be accomplished in the chambers had to be lowered in a bucket and later hauled back up again to be re-installed. The four stories which separate console and chamber caused many an aching muscle as the pipes, traps and pneumatics made the round trip. And paint, leather and felt (all supplied by the group) had to be moved up, too. But patience won out. The group became used to working during odd hours when the house wasn't in use, the often all-night sessions playing havoc with day-time work schedules.



NO IMPEDIMENT—What appear to be heavy drapes over the stacked Solo chambers are actually "fish net thin" curtains, just heavy enough to conceal the swell shutters. Similar concealment is provided for one-chamber Main at the other end of the balcony.

Then, when success seemed within grasp—disaster! An organ's worst enemy, next to fire, is water. There was a flood backstage and while wiring suffered (cutting off all power to the chambers),

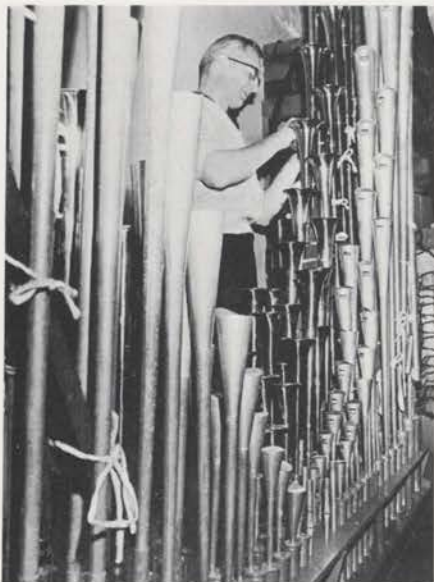


HE STARTED YOUNG—By the time he was 13, David Rice knew about such organ paraphernalia as bottom boards, pneumatics and magnets, having caught the "bug" from his dad. Here he inspects the Orpheum Tuba pipes.

the organ console was spared. The damage has since been repaired.

Within the past year, great strides have been made toward "polishing" the treasure. The chambers have been cleaned and painted. All pipes have been cleaned. The console lift has been rewired and on the console proper, the second touch action has been adjusted, toe studs connected and push buttons tied in. So now that everything works "all we have to do is to use it," says Rice.

The group, which is considering the formation of an ATOE chapter, has noted the efforts of ATOE to make the theatre organ come alive throughout the country. They would like to try a silent movie show, with a "singalong" session played by a famous organist whom they would "import." That's for the future. Meanwhile, the group is happy to sit around the console and call out requests to George Rice, who seems to know all the tunes asked for. But if things should get dull, there's a 3-19 Kimball in storage which might fit the denuded chambers of the Omaha theatre down the street. Now—let's see! . . .



READY FOR A BLAST!—The prize Brass Trumpet gets a check by George Rice. The rank in the foreground is the Oboe.



CHILEAN TO PANAMA HILTON

Panama City After shopping extensively (including in the USA), Charles Aron, General Manager of the El Panama Hilton Hotel, announced on March 17 that Bill Coffman's successor at the 3-27 Wurlitzer in the "El Bombarde" room will be Pepe Bustamante of Santiago, Chile.



The BOMBARDE reviews organ recordings for official ATOE publications. Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send copies (Monaural, if possible) to the BOMBARDE, Box 5013, Bendix Station, N. Hollywood, Calif. 91605. Be sure to include purchasing information, if applicable.

Frank Olsen at the Hilsdon Theatre pipe organ, Picture House, Paisley, Scotland, Concert Recording CR-0011; regular release of the Organ of the Month Club, \$4.50 postpaid ("Stereoflex" only). Also available on 7½ ips tape at \$7.50. Order from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif.

This 3-10 instrument, survivor of two unit theatre organs made by Hilsdon, is an original installation which opened with the Picture House in 1930. It was used until 1954 and has been maintained ever since. The tone is somewhat strident, lacking the lushness usually associated with theatre instruments, but the originality and ingenuity of the artist more than offsets any reservations we may have regarding the seeming emphasis on higher-middle frequencies.

Mr. Olsen offers 16 selections, most with novel arrangements. There's a lot going on during *Moon River* in the accompaniment while an intriguing combination carries the melody, solo style. *Dream* gets lots of assist from the Marimba-Xylophone which accents the accompaniment while the second chorus offers a "whistling" counter theme.

The first chorus of *Autumn Leaves* features a mellow reed solo combination plus the "4-to-the-bar" pedal beat which Olsen favors for rhythm tunes. *Solitude* makes good use of the Tuba Clarion both as a melody carrier and as a vehicle for melodic variations. The intro to *Edelweiss* is "big cathedral" while the reedy Vox gets a workout later. The rarely heard *Wedding Processional* by Richard Rodgers gets dignified treatment by this often churchy instrument but its just as much at home playing *When You Wore a Tulip*.

Never on Sunday gets a lively playing with a conversation between strings and

brass. There are several additional less familiar tunes, plus the Olsen treatment of the old Scotch tune which he has re-labelled *Tripping Through the Rye*—which it does in jazz tempo. All are a delight from the arrangement viewpoint. The instrument is different; well worth adding to the collection.

The jacket offers notes on the instrument and artist as well as photos of both.

* * * * *

101 Plus Strings - T. Mortier (Antwerp), 101 Key Dance Organ (played mechanically). Available on "Stereoflex" disc only. Concert Recording CR-0012. Released by Organ of the Month Club. Purchasing information same as for previous record reviewed.

Here is a recording which reproduces faithfully the music of the biggest hurdy-gurdy we've ever seen (18½ feet tall, 26 feet wide, and presumably loaded with pipes and traps). Now reposing in an English museum, it once supplied dance music at European fairs and carnivals.

A mechanical organ is comparable to a computer in that it may be programmed via perforated tape to obtain the desired result. The program offered here ranges from Strauss to sambas; the waltzes it performs well but it seems rather uncomfortable when the tape specifies "boogie." Yet, it all comes through (mostly in one key) and sustains enough interest to fill both sides of this LP without becoming tedious. If there's one sound which stands out, it's a set of stopped pipes which produce a "whooping" effect, something of a burlesque of the Tibia sound. It's overblown and "chop-trem'd," yet it adds a certain contrast when played against a mass of unrefined pipework ("strings" and open "flutes" plus a lot of percussions which are never too loud).

Among the selections (18, in all!) are *Jezebel*, *Papa loves Mabo*, *Perez Prado's Patricia*, *Botch-a-Me*, *Persian Market*, *Skater's Waltz*, a samba medley, a swing medley and others. This one is for a special audience and is a gem of its kind. Not for all organ enthusiasts but for those who enjoy the old-fashioned "corn" associated with long ago country fairs. There's nostalgia here—and whoever gets the brassing gets a free ride!

* * * * *

First Annual Christmas and Pop Concert, Jim Orcutt at the 3-10 Robert Morton theatre organ in the Cathedral of the Christian Crusade, Tulsa, Oklahoma. On one 7½ ips stereo tape, \$5.00 postpaid from Jim Orcutt, Box 145, Coweta, Oklahoma, 44429.

This is the first recording made on the recently installed Morton theatre organ in the Tulsa church (Lorin Whitney was instrumental in the project). It was made during a public concert played by the

(Continued on Page 40)

FOR THE RECORDS (Starts on page 39)

staff organist, Jim Orcutt, on December 17 last. It's the first recording, too, of Jim Orcutt's playing we've heard, an or-



Jim Orcutt

ganist whose name is something of a legend in the Southwest. After hearing the tape we can appreciate the legend. Mr. Orcutt maintains a high level of interest throughout the entire program, which ranges from show tunes to a Hawaiian medley, from a patriotic group to a "roaring '20s" set, plus some Christmas tunes.

It should be kept in mind that these tunes were all recorded in one "take," a procedure which is a test of the mettle of any organist, especially with an audience present. Mr. Orcutt's approach is theatrical although he kicks off the tremas and "makes like church" for a few tunes, mainly the Christmas music.

His program is an ambitious one. His two show tune medleys are selections from *Sound of Music* and *My Fair Lady*. His "roaring '20s" group includes *Charleston*, *So Beats My Heart for You*, *Laugh Clown Laugh* (these two with beautifully performed "rolls" on the Tibia), *I Wanna Be Loved by You*, and *Toot Toot Tootsie*. The Christmas tunes are the expected ones, but performed with lots of imagination and variety of registration. Also heard are *Chicago* (jazzy), *You Are Too Beautiful* and *Granada*.

The organ sounds big and full. The acoustics are "big hall" but not at any loss of intimacy. The Tibia trem needs some adjustment to get it out of the stopped flute class—but that was the reason for the concert and for the sale of tapes—to start an organ fund for further refinement and, perhaps, some additions.

Jim Orcutt impresses most favorably in this first recording of the Tusla church theatre Morton. Of course, as in all "one take" recordings there are a few rough spots but these are infrequent and are

THE PAUL FORSTER STORY

by HIS FRIEND W. S. ("Stu") GREEN

In the first installment we learned about the showmanship of Paul H. Forster in the Central New York state area where he became "King of the Singalong" in the mid-'20s. How did he reach this prominence? In this installment we'll trace some history of his early years, then continue the story of the great years, how "Vitaphone" spurred him to ever greater efforts—the whole story, right to the present.

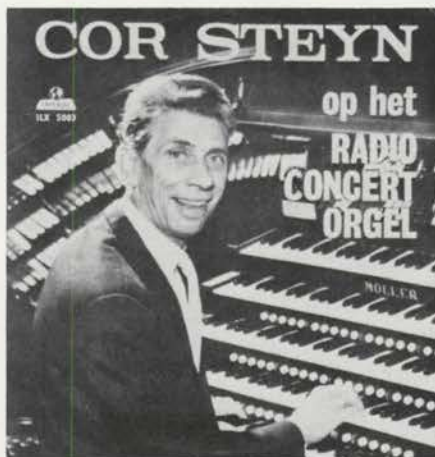
CONCLUDING INSTALLMENT

For The Record,

more than offset by Jim's over-all artistry, and especially those smooth fingered glissandos. The audience present is very quiet except to show appreciation through applause (plus an occasional cough). A copy of the program handed to attendees is included. Here's \$5.00 well invested in tape (stereo unless specified half track. No disc is available).

* * * * *

(Cor Steyn at the Radio Concert Organ). Imperial ILX-5003 (mono), available by import from Duyvene & Remmers, N. V.,



Damrak 25, Amsterdam, Holland. Write for purchasing information.

This record marks another chapter in the long history of the 5-28 Moller which Reg Foort once moved around Great Britain in a train of lorries. During World War II it became the BBC studio organ (replacing one bombed out). It was purchased by the government-controlled Netherland Radio Corporation in 1963 and moved into temporary quarters in Holland, where this recording was made. The record marks the final chapter for Dutch organist Cor Steyn; he died shortly after it was released.

The disc was evidently produced with the export trade in mind. One entire side is devoted to medleys from the American musicals, *Porgy and Bess* and *Annie Get Your Gun*. The sound of the Moller has changed considerably since its British days. In its present installation the organ

(Continued on Page 45)

Paul H. Forster was born in Utica, New York, in 1892 and started taking piano lessons at 8. At 15 he was engaged as pianist at the Theatorium in Utica, a genuine 5 cent admission "nickelodeon" which showed two reels of movies and offered an illustrated song, usually sung by the manager. One year later he was lured away to the local Hippodrome where he not only played piano for movies but also conducted the small pit band for four acts of vaudeville. He first hit the "big time" when he was engaged by the Utica State theatre to play piano for vaudeville and also for movies using a large and very "straight" organ built in the local Barnes and Buhl factory. It was his first encounter with the instrument which was to dominate his life. But he was not happy with the sound of the miscast church organ and he soon discovered something better for movies—a short organ manual attached to a piano which gave forth pleasant sounds appropriate to the theatrical atmosphere. This embryo theatre organ had been added to the piano in the Utica Majestic theatre and the nameplate on it read "Marr and Colton"—another name soon to loom large on the Forster horizon.

His first meeting with a Wurlitzer was at the Avon theatre in Utica where he was engaged to play feature films on a two manual instrument. It was during this period in the early '20s that an organist named C. Sharpe Minor was rumored to be "knocking them dead" with organ novelties using illustrated song slides at the Lafayette theatre in Buffalo. And there seemed to be some fellow named Jesse Crawford doing likewise at the Chicago theatre in the "windy city."

About this time the recently founded Marr and Colton firm of Warsaw, New York (both men being refugees from the Hope-Jones Elmira factory failure) had installed a 10 rank theatre instrument in the Palace theatre in Jamestown, New York. They needed a good man to open it and that man was found pumping musical life into "flickers" at the Utica Avon. The Jamestown sojourn gave Forster an opportunity to become familiar with the uses of song slides and to gauge their possibilities, which proved to be considerable.

Forster remained at the Palace for sev-

THIS PHOTO HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE PAUL FORSTER TRADE MARK



Paul Forster at the console of the New York Piccadilly theatre 4-28 Marr & Colton which was later moved to the Hollywood Warner's theatre. The console now lies entombed beneath a 10-inch layer of concrete.

eral months learning, as he says, "to put it over." Then the Marr and Colton factory needed an organist to open a two manual installation at the Liberty theatre at Carnegie, a suburb of Pittsburgh. They sent Forster for "just two weeks". He remained at the Liberty for over a year. By now he had become solidly established

as a master of song slides and the Warsaw firm's ace demonstrator. Then the real "big time" beckoned. Here's how Forster tells it:

"In September, 1924, David Marr sent me to the Piccadilly theatre on Broadway, New York, to play the wonderful 28 rank, four manual Marr & Colton just in-

stalled there. I played novelties, recitals and for movies. It was a great experience playing along with the large theatre orchestra conducted by none other than Vincent Lopez with B. A. Rolph (later radio's *Hit Parade* conductor) on first trumpet. Those were the great days of Broad-

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THE PAUL FORSTER STORY, continued

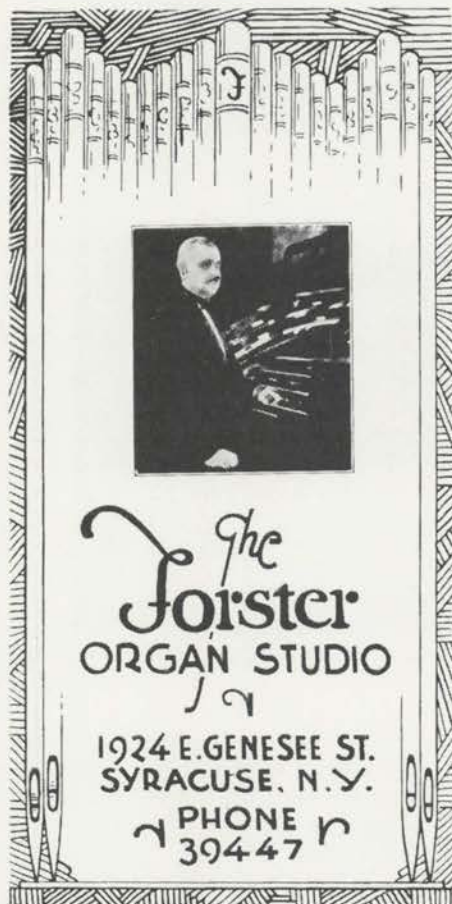
way and I am most happy to have been in on them."

But Forster's Broadway days were numbered by the arrival of two men from Syracuse in upstate New York, a pair of theatre owners named Abe Harrison and Morris Fitzer. They had just completed the installation of a ten rank, three manual Marr and Colton in their Empire theatre and they had come to the big town in search of a knockout organist to introduce the theatre organ rage which was sweeping New York City to upstate movie fans. Once they heard Forster at the Piccadilly, no one else would do. Forster liked life in the big city but the boys from Syracuse made an offer he just couldn't refuse. Reluctantly, he boarded a train for Syracuse. Perhaps it wouldn't be so bad. After all, he was a small town boy—and Syracuse wasn't far from Utica. That was his introduction to Syracuse. He would live there for most of the next 31 years.

Forster was entering the apex of his career as a theatre organist in 1927. He was nationally known and he received lucrative offers from theatres all over the USA. He finally received one from Ft. Worth, Texas, that was too juicy to let pass, so he resigned his console at the Empire, sold the family's belongings and



FORSTER AT HOME — The Potted palms, draped piano, variegated wall design and vase of live flowers provided color in the room (35 feet long) which housed the 2-manual, double stop rail Marr & Colton console. Pipework spoke into the far end of the room. This was the scene of years of Forster broadcasts. In the late '30s it was sold and was later broken up for parts, but here—in 1928—the little organ is in its prime.



The cover of Forster's Organ Studio Brochure

took off for Ft. Worth. His Syracuse fans were desolate. So was the management of the Empire Theatre which had depended on his drawing power to bolster a series of films ranging from so-so to poor. Actually the Empire never recovered the loss of Paul Forster. The theatre made a valiant gesture by importing no less than Sandy McPherson all the way from triumphs in Great Britain. But Forster was a most iddificult organist to follow and although Sandy played wonderfully (even pedalled with both feet), he just wasn't the type of showman that the Forster image had established; he didn't remain long at the Empire console. After that, the Empire started downhill.

Hardly had McPherson left when rumors started flying that Paul Forster and his family had returned to Syracuse. Within a few days it was announced by the management of the Eckel theatre that Forster had been engaged as featured organist at that theatre. It was explained that Paul and family just couldn't get used to Ft. Worth and suffered such homesickness for Syracuse that the increase in green stuff couldn't compensate, so back they came. Except for a 2-month engagement to open the 4-manual, 20-rank Wurlitzer at the new Loew's State in 1928, Forster remained at the Eckel until 1935. The Forsters bought a home, a stately old two story structure of red brick which had been built a good 100

years earlier by the early Syracuse aristocracy which settled on Genesee Street.

Then Paul realized the dream of a lifetime—to have his own organ. It was a Marr and Colton, naturally, a lovely, small scale unit organ with pipework fitted into the two bedrooms Mrs. Forster relinquished to the inevitable. The swell shutters opened into a long living room at the far end of which was the two manual console. The ranks were Tibia, Concert Flute, String, Diapason, Vox Humana and —yup—Kinura. It was personally voiced by David Marr. The sound was typically Marr and Colton, but on a small and quite refined scale, except for the Kinura, which was a dilly. The organ was unified to the hilt and had all traps, percussions and effects. Even though the sound film had, by that time, reared its tinny voice, Paul Forster felt secure in adding a teaching role to his career as top organist.

This is how the writer met Paul Forster. The organist had opened his school with typical Forsterian fanfare and the students flocked to him. He was riding the zenith of his popularity at the time and the future seemed secure. But if those who were attracted to the showman expected Paul Forster to carry his professional act into personal relationships, they were disappointed. The off-stage Forster proved to be a quiet man with natural wisdom and an insight into human nature,

a philosopher. And indeed, philosophy has been a lifetime pursuit with him. Even so, there was something pixie-ish about him. He had an ageless appearance. His prematurely silvered hair made him, at first sight, appear older than he was, but his cherubic face and darting eyes soon corrected the misconception. He was ready with the quip and a well developed sense of humor kept his students alert. He was a man of quick movements. His eyes flashed. His face was rarely still—the moon face with the impudent little moustache. His hands and feet were restless and that quality showed to advantage when he mounted the organ bench.

If there is one thing we recall about the mechanics of Paul Forster's technique, it is the fact that he played all pops in octaves, filling the harmony in between. It came natural to him, and the wrist motion involved was something to behold. His right wrist flashed faster than the eye could follow during tunes such as *Dancing Tamborine*. In contrast, his wife Arline, was a quiet woman albeit a charmer and one well equipped to handle the volatile musician she had married. Paul's students got to know the Forsters because his teaching was done in his organ-equipped parlor. His sons, Bob and Paul,



Peg Kimball, a brainy and talented musician, played the Empire Marr & Colton for silent films after Forster left. Now living in Boca Raton, Florida, she is remembered in the Syracuse area for "singalongs" at Loew's State 4-20 Wurlitzer during World War II.

were in and out continuously and family life went on around the student. It was a pleasant experience.

When Paul opened at the Schine-Eckel theatre a new personality came into his

life in the form of one Gus Lampe, the theatre manager. Gus saw himself as a radio personality and to provide an outlet for his talent he signed up for three half hour broadcasts each week on station WSYR to plug the Eckel theatre. Paul Forster was billed as the attraction and he did manage to play a few tunes during each broadcast (done from his residence), but the greater part of the half hours were taken up by Gus' talking. The fact that a major part of the mail re-



Another contemporary of Forster was Herbert Henderson, a British organist, at great Piccadilly console. He came to Syracuse to open the Regent's 3-12 Marr & Colton in 1927 but didn't stay long. His repertoire and style were "over the head" of the Regent's shirt sleeve clientele.

quested Gus to pipe down so Paul's pipes could be heard never phased the marathon talker in the least. His spring remained wound up for several years of "Paul and Gus". Incidentally Gus Lampe is still very much in show biz as a talent impresario for Los Angeles and Las Vegas hotels, and a very successful one.

There were other popular organists in Syracuse in those days—Carleton James, Peg Kimball, Therese LaJuett (now Johnson), Ernie Mills, Gladys Beardsley, Lew Baker, Bart Wright, Thelma McNeill (Curren)—to name a few. The four last named worked "opposite" Forster, meaning they alternated with him during the 12, or more, hour silent picture day. All four went on to become featured, or solo organists in their own rights. Not one of them tried to imitate the Forster style. Bart Wright, who replaced "opener" Herbert Henderson at the city's largest Marr and Colton at the Regent, had a big, broad "Viennese" style. Gladys Beardsley, a holdover from blood and thunder nickelodeon piano days, played the organ exactly as she had the piano, her pedalling restricted to a drone brass

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PAUL H. FORSTER

Feature Theatre Organist

Announces the Opening
of
MODERN ORGAN STUDIOS

at
1924 East Genesee Street
SYRACUSE, N. Y.

There has long been the need of a studio of this sort in Central New York, indicated by the lack of trained theatre organists to fill the numerous positions created by the astonishingly rapid growth of picture theatres, and the present featured exploitation of their high salaried organists.

The demand for schooled theatre organists, trained for the multiple duties of the theatre has far exceeded the supply.

It is to help remedy this situation, and augment the ranks of trained photoplay organ applicants, that this studio is instituted.

Arrangements can be made whereby the student may use the studio organ for practice. Plans are being made for the installation of an additional organ for practice purposes.

Students will be instructed in—

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The organs used are of the latest design, built especially for the FORSTER ORGAN STUDIO from special "movie" specifications with the most important traps and devices.

MARR AND COLTON STUDIO ORGAN installed.

Individual and class instruction.

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Summer Classes. Rates on request.

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The goodies available in a Forster instruction course were just too tempting for the budding theatre organist to resist—including the author, who showed up for a lesson as often as he could scrape together the necessary \$5.00.



Therese LaJuett (now Johnson) played the style E Wurlitzer at the main-drag Temple theatre in Syracuse until it became the Paramount and the organ was plastered over. She also played opposite Ernie Mills on the Strand Theatre style 240. Therese was a frequent visitor to the Forster home in the old days and values their friendship highly. She is frequently heard playing an electronic at events in the Syracuse area.

E flat. Chic Thelma McNeil was a many-faceted musician who later went to radio where she met and married announcer-producer Jack Curren. Lew Baker had a long career as a theatre organist in Syracuse, playing well into the '30s at Loew's State, the last theatre to present organ features—with one notable exception. We'll explain that presently.

The one time we heard Paul Forster go too "far out" was during a memorial broadcast for Ernie Mills, the handsome and brilliant organist at the Strand whose bright career came to a tragic end in the crash of a small aircraft.

Ernie had been popular among his fellow organists. They used to hold what would later be referred to as "jam sessions" at Forster's home after hours. Paul liked the personable young man with the slicked-back hair and horn-rimmed glasses and he was heartbroken when Mills died of his injuries after lingering a few days to give hope that he might recover. The film playing at the Strand the week Ernie died was *Submarine* with Jack Holt and Ralph Graves. Its theme song was an innocuous little tune called *Pals* which became a sort of theme for Strand broadcasts as long as live music

was presented there. The memorial was broadcast, appropriately, from the Strand following the late show shortly after Ernie's death. Many of Ernie's organist friends were present as well as members of the Strand's all-girl orchestra. Each took his turn at the style 240 (3-12) Wur-

litzer organ or the piano to pay his last respects to the departed friend. The girls made with a sweet playing of *Pals* on strings, another played *My Buddy*. Therese LaJuett, Ernie's co-worker and deeply shaken by his death, gave an amazing simulation of Ernie's style playing his broadcast theme, *Until Tomorrow*. But Paul Forster was the natural piece-de-resistance and when he crawled up on *Oh How I Miss You Dear Old Pal of Mine* he literally "pulled out all the stops." Forster undoubtedly felt the loss strongly but his rendition of that all but forgotten tear jerker bordered on the bathos—the only time we ever heard him resort to "schmaltz."

Sound movies were well established by 1932; so was the depression. By then even the most optimistic organ enthusiast had to admit the change would be permanent. There would be no more silent movies for organists to cue, except for revivals. The depression hurried the metamorphosis by causing hard-pressed theatres to fire organists they might have kept on duty for novelties. One by one the Syracuse houses silenced their organs. The first to go was the Temple theatre. When it was remodeled as the Paramount, the little 7 ranker's chamber openings had been bricked up and the console stored backstage. Others followed. The Marr and Colton console which had figured in so many Forster "organlogues" at the Empire was removed from its elevator and shoved unceremoniously to the narrow left end of the orchestra pit, its pedals up-ended to squeeze it into the inadequate space. The big Marr and Colton in the Regent was junked when the theatre was remodeled about 1935. Forster left the Eckel in 1935. The organ was partly destroyed by fire in the late '30s and the remainder junked. Syracuse theatres were organless.

Then one day, walking by a small



In 1928 the author was just getting into the act. "Talkies" had already invaded the downtown theatres but the Regent would be silent for another year, and its 3-12 Marr & Colton sounded wonderful. Bart Wright was the Regent's solo organist.



In the 1940s Mr. Forster became active in church music once more (he had always played for Sunday services at a Syracuse church during the silent movie era). Here he is seen at the Zion Lutheran church Hammond circa 1950.

neighborhood house not far from the Forster home, we heard unmistakable organ sounds. We knew the Harvard theatre well, having "broken in" on the tiny Wurlitzer style B (4 ranks) years earlier. Our curiosity aroused by these old familiar sounds in a new organless era, we investigated. Inside were Paul Forster and David Marr. They were trying to get the miserable little instrument in good enough shape for use after the console had been inundated by several summer floods. Paul had sold the manager of the 350 seat house on the idea of organologues to bolster his sagging business. It worked, too, for a time. Paul filled the house the first night. Forster fans flocked to the small house from all over town and kept coming.

It was at the Harvard theatre (now Wescot) in Syracuse that we heard Forster on pipes for the last time. Several other name organists "took to the suburbs" where their skills and popularity held sway briefly, but it couldn't last. If a large first-run house in mid-town couldn't afford live organ music, it was even less feasible that a 350 seater in the suburbs could do well enough for what the establishment of "talkies" had caused to become a luxury.

But fate stepped in before the axe could fall; Paul Forster suffered a fall in his home and while his broken leg was on the mend he had plenty of time for rumination on the big picture, which he faced for the first time in all its unpleasant reality. Organs in theatres were finished, so

far as making a living was concerned. Paul considers the two months spent mending as one of the most crucial in his life—and the accident a lucky one. Long before the leg had healed Paul had a new plan. He had always been interested in insurance; why not use this time of necessary inactivity to start something new? So he studied general insurance and shortly after he threw away his crutch he passed the New York State insurance examination. He opened his own agency and thereafter never had any economic worries. That doesn't mean he gave up music. He still played on radio, TV and in church as often as possible.

During the winter of 1956, while shoveling some 150 inches of snow from his Syracuse property, Paul decided that he'd had enough of Northern winters. He'd heard about the easy living in Florida and although he'd never been there he went indoors and broached the idea to wife Arline. She thought it a great idea. With sons Bob and Paul grown up and



PAUL FORSTER TODAY. The active organist lives in St. Petersburg with his wife—but not in retirement. He's Minister of Music at a local church. In 1966 he made a brief return to the theatre console to play for the closing show at the Keith theatre in Syracuse, New York, his first theatrical appearance there since the early 1940s.

married, there was nothing to hold them in Syracuse. The Forsters sold their belongings and moved to the St. Petersburg area with the idea of retiring. They bought a house and settled down.

Then Paul heard about a church which needed an organist to play services and train three choirs. As might be expected, Paul H. Forster is back in the saddle, up to his ears in music as organist and Minister of Music at the Church by the Sea near St. Petersburg. He just can't help making music.

For the photos which illustrate the Paul Forster story we are indebted to Lloyd Klos, Bill Lamb and organists Luella Wickham, Therese Johnson, Peg Kimball and Paul Forster.

FOR THE RECORDS, cont.

sounds much less theatrical than when Reg. Foort thundered out with *Finlandia* for the RCA Victor label in the late '30s. The reeds are still excellent but the Tibias are trem'd like straight organ flutes. Thus, what we like to call "lushness" is lacking. And the registration used on pops and show tunes is often church-like.

However, the performance is tops. Cor Steyn was a hip musician with lots of inventiveness. He handles such tunes as *Moonglow* and *Jalousie* in fine style and *Caprice Viennoise* brings out the Moller's big battery of brass in review. *Uno per Tute* is 1930s swingband jazz which sounds vaguely familiar. The side closes with a generous medley from *Gypsy* played with lots of imagination and variety in registration. Although it isn't listed with the tunes, Steyn opens and closes the record with a lilting *California Here I Come*, possibly his radio theme. A history of the organ is provided on the jacket notes—if you read Dutch.

* * * * *

ONES WE MISSED the first time around...

Pipe Organ Encores, Robert Brereton at the New York Paramount 4-36 Wurlitzer, Camden CAL-591 (Mono) \$1.98; also released in stereo at \$2.98.

When this platter was first released several years ago it was given very limited distribution. As an avid record bin explorer, this reviewer was unable to locate a copy to review on the West Coast. As the New York Paramount organ sinks ever deeper into memory, each track it recorded becomes more precious. Recently the effort to locate a pressing was redoubled. The quest led to the door of the organist who was able to provide a review



Robert Brereton has just completed his third year playing an electronic in a Santa Monica, California cocktail lounge. He's a solid pipe enthusiast and is often seen at La Chapter ATOE concerts.

copy. Pressings won't be easy to locate but it's well worth the effort, the only

(Continued on Page 46)

"It scared the hell out of them!!"

AN OLD CALIFORNIA LEGEND

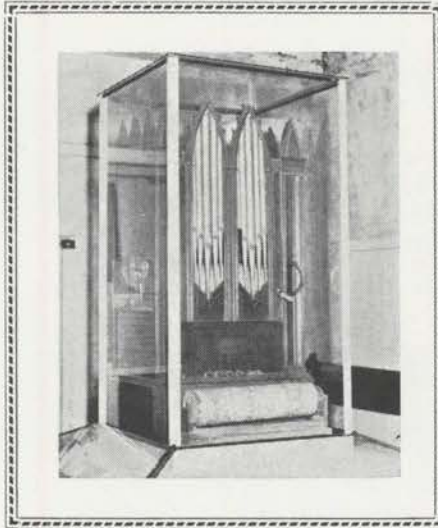
by HARRY JENKINS

"It scared the Hell out of them!" is probably the way Fr. Francisco de Lasuen described the incident later. On a sultry California summer afternoon in 1798 the Franciscan monk learned that renegades were on the way to raid his Mission San Juan Bautista. How could he discourage them? He thought a moment. Perhaps a loud noise. But how to create it? Then he recalled the huge barrel organ given to him by a friendly sea captain six years earlier. The large, spiked wooden rolls weren't programmed for church music so

the instrument hadn't been played much. But the priest recalled that its big Diapason was so loud that it had frightened the mission Indians. Knowing that the raiders would include a number of Indians, Fr. Lasuen opened the windows, and none

"raiders" as they scurried for cover. The priest waited until the horsemen stopped for a brief council of war. Then he let them have it. He pumped the bellows furiously and snapped the cylinder release. A blast of nondescript music filled the quiet afternoon (some of the pins on the rolls had come loose and had been driven back into the wood wherever there was an open space; this resulted in some "variations"). The raiders were stupefied. Nothing like this had ever before assailed their ears. It was unearthly. Besides, it was doing something to the horses. Two bolted, their riders unable to stop them. Another started to buck and threw his rider. There was a great whinnying and neighing from all the horses which provided a somewhat psychedelic obligato to the already dissonant roar of the barrel organ thundering from the windows.

Suddenly a great desire to be somewhere else descended upon the thwarted raiders and they spurred their mounts in any direction which led away from the mission. When the dust had settled and the wail of the hurdy-gurdy had ceased, the perspiring priest went to the mission chapel and knelt in prayer. His words aren't recorded but they probably went something like, "... I thank thee, Lord, for the loud noise thou hast sent me. It really scared the Hell out of thy enemies!"



THE LOUD ONE — Father Lasuen's barrel Organ might not be just the thing for church but its raucous sound once saved the entire mission.

too soon. The sound of horses' hooves loomed and the mission Indians cried

For The Record, continued

(Continued from Page 45)

record of popular classics played on the memorable Wurlitzer.

A large portion of side one is devoted to Bizet's lively *Carmen* suite. They are the familiar Overture, Habanera, Toreador song and Gypsy dance, well played in theatre organ style and registration (only once throughout these classical and semi-classical selections does Brereton try for a "straight, organ" sound and that's for *Trumpet Voluntary*)

With the exception of Chopin's *Polonaise Militaire* (written for the piano) all of the selections are transcriptions of orchestral works, one of the best examples being von Suppe's *Poet and Peasant Overture* which gathers some new sparkle under Brereton's expert touch.

Actually the organ is Brereton's second instrument, the first being the piano. As a pianist he is well known in longhair circles, having played with such distinguished orchestras as the San Francisco symphony under Pierre Monteaux. Yet there is no hint of the pianist in such offerings as Elgar's majestic *Pomp and Circumstance No. 1*. The big finale is Khachaturian's wild *Sabre Dance*.

There's plenty of showmanship in all the selections and the "dowager Empress" has been well recorded. If there is any valid criticism of the result it may be that the Posthorn is used too frequently as a solo reed. But the miracle is that Brereton could handle the complex facilities represented by the console at all; He's been blind since birth.

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Nostalgia in a Follow-up . . .

"HOW A WAYWARD YOUNG GENIUS CRASHED THE SOUND BARRIER INTO UTTER OBLIVION"

An Impudent Autobiographical Sketch

by RANDY SAULS

If you ever felt upon entering a strange room that you've been there before you can understand how it was to open last October's issue of *Theatre Organ - Bombarde*, the one with that nice young man, Billy Nalle at the Atlanta Fox console, on the cover. The "jolt" was the picture on page 5, showing a very familiar proscenium arch behind a white-washed Robert Morton console. I had stared at that same arch many hours while playing the same organ! Here was a warm story about an old friend!



This photo of Donald May and a console restored from the ravages of 13 years weathering in an alley, stirred some almost forgotten memories in its player of the silent movie era.

The title of that interesting and well-written article, *It's Doomed to Silence*, is the story of my silent movie career! It was my adolescent good fortune to select as a profession the dubious art of accompanying silent movies on the pipe organ for future livelihood. The innate sense of timing which has prevailed all through a lifetime triggered me into this just about the time Al Jolson (may he rest in pieces) set up a graceless series of yowls for his southern "mammy" when everyone knew he'd seldom ventured South of the Mason and Dixon line.

The first paragraph of that article, though, really rang a bell when the name *Roy Gimbel* was mentioned. Roy was the tuner of the Robert Mortons in the Saenger chain of theatres which covered all of Louisiana and Mississippi with houses in Texas, Mobile, Alabama and

Pensacola, Florida. The Columbia theatre in Baton Rouge, with the same Robert Morton now before me in the photo, managed to have a tuning twice during my stay of nearly two years and it was from Roy that I first learned what the term *celeste* in pipe organ terminology meant. This seven ranker (if I remember correctly) was the first I ever heard in the agonizing throes of being tuned. Holding keys for Roy was an education to an eighteen-year-old who had visions of one day replacing Jesse Crawford at the New York Paramount.

How could it have happened that a musically ill-equipped student of Louisiana State University came to perform on the instrument which was the subject of such an interesting article? In deference to the admirable young fellows who rescued that tired console from the unseemly fate of languishing in a weather-worn alley we hope you'll harbor a bit of curiosity.

After two years at Mississippi A & M College (now Mississippi State) in Starkville, Mississippi, where the local First Presbyterian Church was kind enough to offer practice time on their four rank Moller, and where doubling at the local cinema on an off-brand *Photoplayer* (one rank of wheezy, hoarse "Tibias," a score of temperamental traps and an out-of-tune piano) was responsible for a rather poor academic showing, my migration to Louisiana State University was understandable. The town of Baton Rouge had two theatres with pipe organs. The Louisiana theatre, a small "B" picture house, was down Third Street just a short country block from the imposing Columbia theatre (now the Paramount). It was neither guts nor courage but sheer stupidity that prompted my asking the manager of the lesser house for a job! When an audition was granted their little six rank Robert Morton seemed larger than Wanamaker's behemoth in Philadelphia! The manager, however, had already been briefed (by the young hopeful—who else?) that everybody up in Mississippi said he sounded "just like Jesse Crawford." It's only a gentlemanly gesture to the two ladies who were already playing at the Columbia and Louisiana theatres to add that back in Mississippi I had worn out several sets of Jesse Crawford "Orthophonic" Victor records just listening—

and even though it was a poor imitation, the listener could at least tell what was being attempted! Luckily, I was hired—although without pay!

When my big opening night came it was noteworthy. I was permitted to play after the lady organist got off for the night, around 10 p.m. My first "trick of showmanship" was to play the *Stars and Stripes Forever* when the cowboys were chasing the bandits. The tone deaf (or I'd never have had the job) manager mistook the patriotic applause of the audience for recognition of genius—so I was promoted. Pay started.

Yes, the Louisiana was still doing "silents" but the "big house" down the street had already begun to talk. Whenever one of the two lady organists wanted a day off it was my thrill to play the silent newsreels and *Felix the Cat* cartoons at the Columbia. The other organists had warned me, though, that the "big organ" would "get away" from me if I wasn't careful. You see, it was divided into two chambers, one on each side of the theatre with two swell shoes plus crescendo pedal! To elaborate on the motherly kindness of the two regular organists, Janet Milroy and Josephine Byrd, would make a sentimental "thing" of my formal initiation into theatre organ playing. However, both saw the handwriting on the wall even if I didn't, and silently faded away into the sunset as their salaries were lowered while that ignorant clown from Mississippi stayed on as long as they let him! They paid enough to complete my current term in college, though! Those Crawford glissandos educated me! I was a one-man ATOE long before the club was organized!

Then there was my visit to the Saenger theatre in New Orleans where that huge Robert Morton was played regularly by John Hammond, an excellent musician and teacher of many of the organists in the smaller houses of the Saenger chain. An interview with him was most encouraging. Any real theatre organ enthusiast will understand my remembering to this day his exact pronouncement:

"Many of us hope that the talking pictures are just a fad. If the musicians return to the orchestra pits and the organists to their consoles, contact me

(Continued Next Page)

and I'll make the finest organist in the United States out of you. But if these talkies are here to stay, all I can say is that it's nice to have made your acquaintance."

He was most generous in his comment and I've often wondered if he'd be disappointed in how I've followed through!

It became evident back in Baton Rouge that Lee DeForest* had lowered the boom and there wasn't much point in becoming "the greatest." The Louisiana theatre began using the "Non-Sync," records played on a double turntable. Following a cue sheet, you could fade from one theme into another and brain-wash the poor public into accepting recorded music in place of the sad little Robert Morton so noble in its silence, enduring with all dignity its inescapable fate. The Columbia theatre, though, still had silent newsreels and *Felix the Cat*. The "toy-counter," a term unheard in those days, was on hand to follow noisily the pratfalls on the screen. Huey Long was just beginning his penchant for publicity and whenever he appeared in the newsreels, that clever young organist would always burst forth into the *Toreador Song* from *Carmen*. Although this saucy comment sailed over the heads of the "early settlers," there were enough sophisticated college kids who had heard some opera who "got it" and knew I was chiding the senator (only a state senator at that time—he hadn't yet even become Louisiana's most famous governor) for "throwing the bull."

Subsequent experience as presentation soloist before theatre audiences throughout the south taught me the need for a "big splash" at the finish of the act. Whatever was required, whether an American flag or the ear-splitting crash of a huge finale chord to whack the listener, you had to do something to make him realize he's glad that you've finished. My "splash" is the accompanying photograph at the console of the Columbia theatre Robert Morton recently-revived console. Taken in 1929 by Ewing, Studios of Baton Rouge, it still carries a stamp on the back: *Should the picture discolor within five years return it with the negative and we will replace it free of charge.* But, it's still perfect.

The last thirty-eight years have not been in vain then, if you can see the humor in this priceless tintype. With those sparkling teeth (and I still have all of 'em), that wild Spanish shawl which I snatched from my sister's evening wardrobe and those fancy English formal trousers, you can't help wondering if they still have the same old curtain alongside

*Inventor of the vacuum tube which made "talkies" possible.



Randy Sauls at the Baton Rouge Paramount (then Columbia) theatre Robert Morton console in 1928. The little console suffered degradation for many years and

then made an almost miraculous comeback, thanks to ATOers Bob Courtney and Don May. Randy has done much better than his former mount.

the antique gold proscenium. That pompous old curtain closed on producer George Wince's road shows of *Rio Rita*, *The Vagabond King*, *The Desert Song*, and *The Student Prince*, never forgetting the memorable *Blackouts of 1929*.

Fond recollections of this sort should



Randy Sauls today. Looking back, he doesn't have a very high opinion of his silent era artistry. But he's doing all right now, playing concerts for Hammond in the Hollywood area. He's currently playing a model H-100.

end on a happy, humorous tone but this isn't simple when it actually brings pity and sadness for the current crop of mop-haired, tight-trousered, bathless youngsters who will never know the good old "Show Business" as it once was. Phyllis Diller, who has such a mountain of talent for timeliness, was once heard to ask, "If this is September whatever happened to July and August?" Phyllis actually got into show business after that spangled curtain had closed forever! So, perhaps there's still hope for the rest of us.

Editor's Note: In view of Randy Sauls' self-deprecatory talents it should be stated that the facts do not bear him out. The "ignorant clown from Mississippi," as he describes himself, in the interim has become well-known as a raconteur, author, performer (organ, that is), lecturer, wit and publisher of the "Thinking Organist" series of instructor's publications. His "Introduction to Modern Harmony" (1961) is already in its third printing. His frequent articles published by "The Hammond Times" indicate that either Randy has learned a lot in the past 30 years or he never was as musically pusillanimous as he claims. But no matter; his remembrances of the "good old days" could be improved only if told in the gentle "Suth'n" accents of his Mississippi beginnings.

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