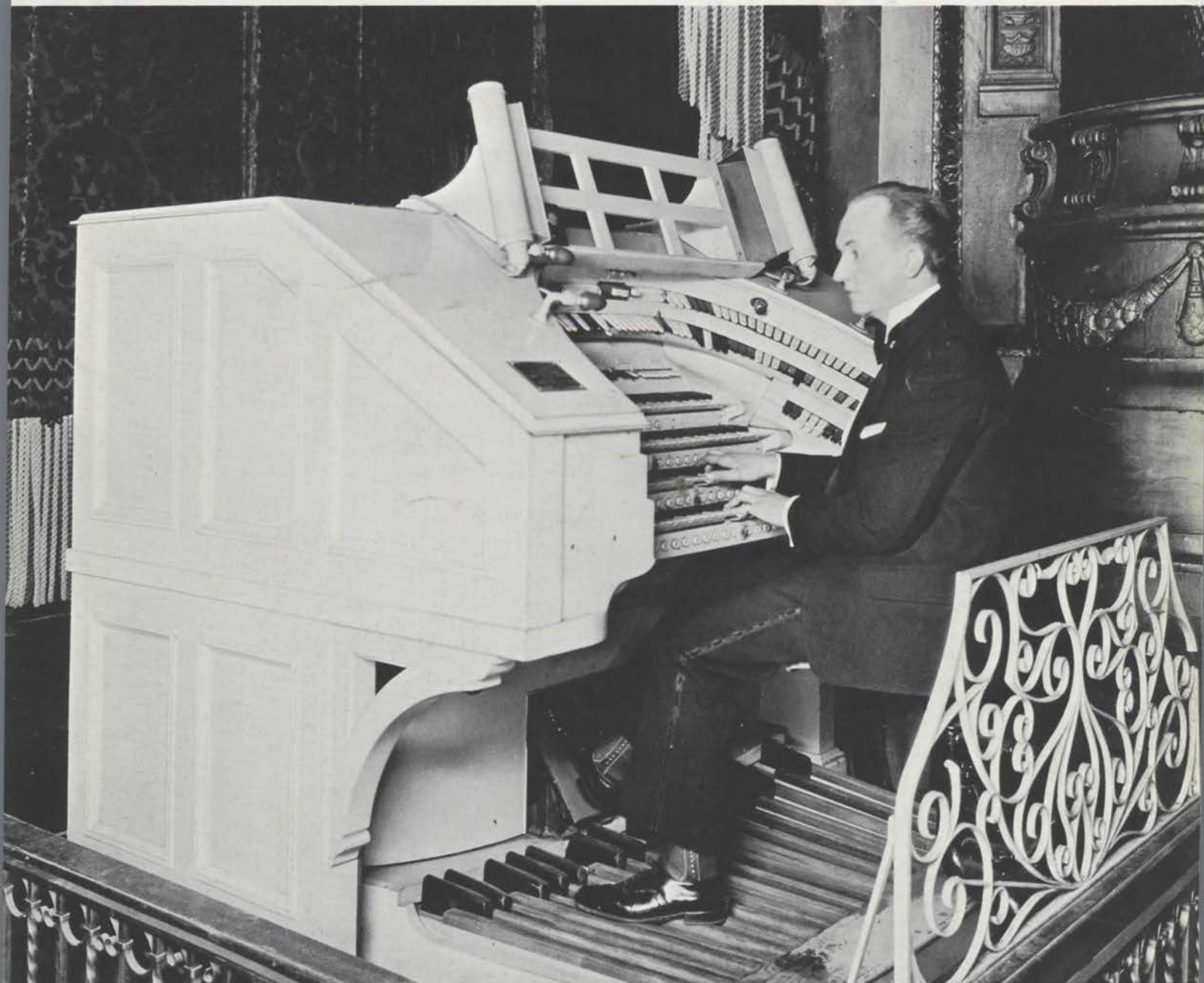


# Theatre Organ Bombarde



JOURNAL of the AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN ENTHUSIASTS

June 1968



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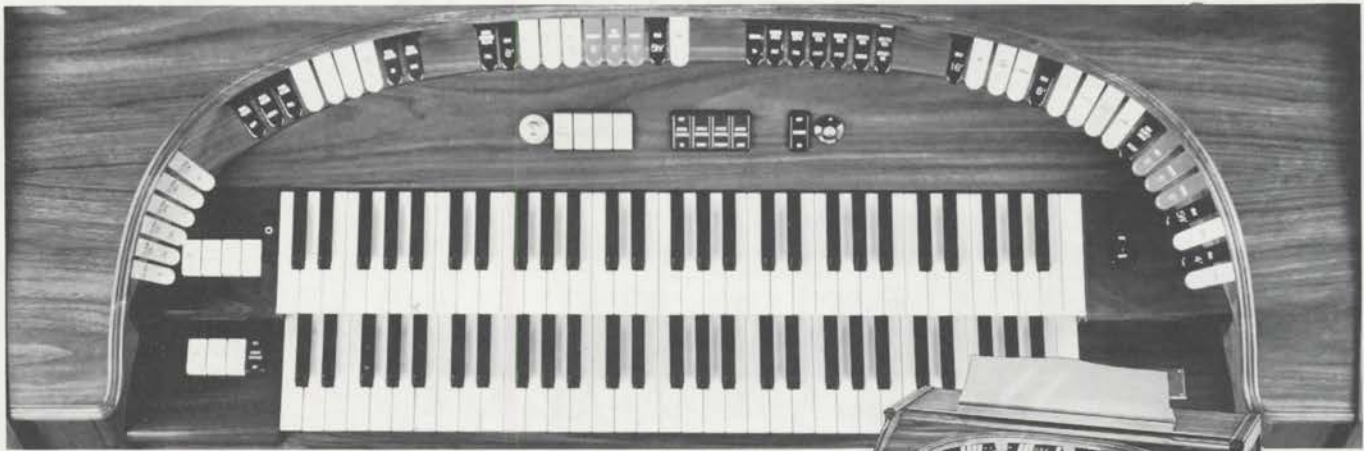
**Don Miller, Theatre Organist**

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**Convention Schedules and Information**

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## THE COVER PHOTO

DON MILLER was 30 years of age at the time our cover photo was made in January of 1927. He is here shown at the console of the 4-20 Wurlitzer in the State Theatre, Detroit. Now a spry and witty 72 years of age, Don caused a sensation at last year's National Convention in Detroit, with his opening concert on the DTOC organ. It is appropriate, therefore, on the eve of another National conclave, to feature THEATRE ORGAN's interview with ace theatre organist Don Miller, beginning on page 5 of this issue.



## VIEW FROM THE MIXING CHAMBER

I have frequently been asked just what this organization needs to be really effective—to really swing. We are getting much better cooperation all the time. However, our lines of communications need even more tightening. But one of the most important things we need is something that few seem to want to face up to.

And that is . . .

**MONEY!** No one wants to talk much about it, but the need has been and is of prime importance. If we are to have an **Orgelklub** of this type at all, it should be strong and effective, not merely a custodian of publications. Our official magazine, THEATRE ORGAN BOMBARDE is a first-quality specialty magazine printed in relatively small quantities. This costs MONEY. We have to pay the price, and it is well worth it, for the magazine is the backbone of ATOE. But it cannot solve organizational problems. More money is needed for necessary travel by National Officers at the direction of the President and the Board of Directors. The business and publication duties have expanded to the point that all departments need relief from routine but important bookkeeping duties.

**ATOE — TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL?** If the raise in dues at last year's convention had not been approved, ATOE would be in serious financial trouble. After postal rate hikes and printing raises — along with the general rise in cost of everything — we are managing to hold our own. But this does not provide adequate funds for official travel or extra help for the main, editorial and circulation offices. This organization would be much further along if the National dues had been raised to \$10 some years ago. It takes money to accomplish things, and right now they need accomplishing more than ever. If ATOE had the funds, properly supervised by the Board of Directors, this group could swing **big** in this country. Would you, for example, like to see Theatre Pipe Organs on national TV? How about in your local Civic Center, or favorite theatre? In some places striking advances have been achieved, but think of the value of a concerted National Campaign! But alas! here we are back to money again . . .

ATOE began over 13 years ago as an organization of Theatre Pipe Organ Enthusiasts — mostly people who owned them or played them. It was dedicated to preserving the tradition and furthering the understanding thereof through exchange of information. It is clearly different now: the call is there for us; but we need **more money** if we are to achieve anything beyond simply keeping up with the magazine.

SEE YOU IN L. A. JULY 13-16!

VOTE FOR DIRECTORS BY JUNE 30!



Dick Schrum, President

# Theatre Organ

Volume 10, No. 3

# and Bombarde

Volume 5, No. 3

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## AN ACRE OF SEATS IN A PALACE OF SPLENDOR

By Bill Peterson, number 10 in a series  
**PARAMOUNT THEATRE—PORTLAND, OREGON**

This theatre had its opening on March 8, 1928 and was designed by Rapp and Rapp of Chicago. Originally it was named the Portland Theatre, and was renamed the Paramount a few short years later. The capacity is 3036, now the second largest in seating capacity on the Pacific Coast (exceeded only by the Oakland Paramount.) The Seattle Paramount is smaller by only a few seats.

Opening night the Wurlitzer Publix#1-4/20 organ was played by Ralph Hamilton and the pit orchestra was led by

Liborius Hauptman. Alex Hyde led the stage band that accompanied the Publix stage show "A Merry Widow Revue." The opening film was "Feel My Pulse" starring Bebe Daniel and William Powell.

Oliver Wallace, Stanley Mallotte, and the team of Ron and Don were among those featured at the organ during the "salad days". The theatre is in excellent condition and plays only reserved seat attractions, including an occasional stage show. The organ is maintained by Dennis Hedberg and is in good condition.

# DON MILLER: THEATRE ORGANIST!

Much has been written in the pages of this magazine about the great movie palaces. More space has been devoted to the mighty voice of the cinema cathedral, the movie pipe organ.

However, the largest factor in the universal appeal of movie houses and organ music during the "Golden Era" were the artists who mastered the glittering horseshoe consoles. It was they who brought forth a new and controversial musical interpretation which still brings a spine-tingling sensation to the listener, and a tear to the eye of another generation whose memories are brought into sharp focus upon hearing the soaring tunes of a theater organ being played by a master artist.

The ace organist is the one who takes over the listener's emotions as he manipulates the stop keys, fingers the manuals, and coaxes the instrument into bringing forth the sounds available from no other source. His ability, knowledge and experience are the ingredients that have kept theatre organ alive over the last forty years, for without his services in the past, our beloved unit pipe organ would now be a forgotten mechanical contrivance of the 1920's.

Such an organist is Don Miller, now 72, who was a sensation at the ATOE 1967 Detroit meeting. Mr. Miller, now retired, "stopped the show" at the Senate Theatre playing the Orbits Wurlitzer. He was asked to be interviewed for THEATRE BOMBARDE and kindly consented. The interview was set up by Al Mason of the Motor City Chapter and conducted by Claude Sheridan of the Chapter.

Mr. Sheridan, by careful choice of questions and comments, was able to obtain much insight on a lifetime career of making people happy through organ music.

Following is the interview of Mr. Miller as taped by Mr. Sheridan.

DON MILLER (at right) addressing his audience at the close of his 1967 ATOE program. Miller's artistry was enthusiastically received by the capacity audience in the Senate Theatre, home of the Detroit Theatre Organ Club. (Below) Don at the console of the Fisher-Orbits Wurlitzer, July 1967.

—PHOTOS: Bill Lamb



**Claude:** Don is really one of the famous Theatre organists and he has lived and worked in the metropolitan area of Detroit. I have been fortunate to hear him work in the Capitol Theatre in Detroit. We thought it was just about time we got the living record on tape and the history of his accomplishments through the years. He made the Fisher organ famous. What other things have you done?

**Don:** "I have completed fifty years of playing, having literally played through life. I started at the age of 12 in Perry, Iowa, playing piano for silent movies at 50¢ a night for six nights a week. I played at other theatres during high school and, for about three years, I worked for the man who owned the opera house. He started an orchestra and made me the leader. I made enough money to buy a Model-T Ford. I took shorthand and a typewriting course in high school and capitalized on that. I taught in a private school afternoons  
(Continued on Page 6)

## DON MILLER (continued)

and played theatre at night. World War I broke out and I was overseas ten months. I came back and settled in Des Moines. They had two Kimballs and a Robert Morton in this area at that time. I started out at the Rialto playing the supper shift only, at \$80 a week for two hours work a night. Quite a change from 50¢ a night. They built the Strand, which had a three-manual Moller, and I was featured with slide solos. My main solo was *Peggy O'Neil*. I then moved over to the Des Moines Theatre which had a two-manual Kimball. They then built the Paramount. Carlos Meyer was the feature artist and I found out they were paying him more money than me. I went to A. H. Blank Theatres for a raise and was stalled off. So I took the cue, packed my baggage and started traveling. I went to the Madison Theatre in Peoria. Everyone laughs about Peoria but it was a good show town. I have pictures of people all lined up waiting to get tickets, and they had good features. I then went to Michigan for the Butterfield Circuit and played the Capitol Theatre in Kalamazoo, Michigan. They had a three-manual Barton. I then went to Saginaw and stayed there a spell with a good engagement also on a three-manual Barton. I got an offer to go into the Hollywood Beach Hotel in Miami, Florida, playing dinner music and concerts. I grabbed that up quick, and it was a marvelous engagement. The instrument was a three-manual Kimball and it had the most realistic Vox Humana I have ever heard. One time for an encore I played the song *In the Gloaming* with a two-part harmony featuring the Vox along with a soft accompaniment. It was so realistic I had everyone in tears, including myself.

"Then I got an offer to come to Detroit and I had been trying to get in. They had built the State Theatre and were using a stage band policy like the Chicago Oriental. They would have Russ Morgan or Paul Ash on stage and Fred Stret, a comediant, MC-ing and they had a pit orchestra which doubled on stage. I was put in to do community singing solos. I was supposed to knock them dead. Although completely inexperienced, I told them I was very good. I was to play four weeks and, if they liked my stuff, I was to get a contract for a year. I played two weeks and they gave me a three-year contract. I arrived in July, 1926, and was to be married in October of that year so what more could you ask for this side of heaven. And for some unknown reason, I was able to get audiences to let go and sing. It was simply marvelous the way they would sing."

**Claude:** "What kind of organ did you have in the State Theatre?"

**Don:** "A Wurlitzer four-manual, twenty-rank with piano. There was one just like it in the Capitol Theatre which was their number-one house in the circuit. Then in August of 1926, the Michigan Theatre opened which was a duplicate of the Chicago Theatre. There were a lot of theatres opening at that time—the Madison, the Adams, which were the smaller ones—but all were using organs and orchestras. After the Michigan opened, the State started to slip. They finally went into pictures, and they moved me over to the Capitol which was the pet house of the circuit—a beautiful theatre! The organ sounded marvelous. (It was bought by Bill Holliman for the Arcadia Rink.) The acoustics were outstanding at the Capitol. It was a wide house but not as deep as normal. You could sit in the back of the balcony and see the stage well. It had 3,800 seats. The organ chambers were very low and faced out toward the audience. The organ was a distinct pleasure to play. Then the 5,000-seat Fox opened. They had a 4m-36r Crawford Special Wurlitzer. After this the Fisher opened. The opening of the Fisher was played by Arthur Gutow, and then I took over. I did straight solos for awhile. Then they started using slides but not community singing.

"At the Capitol, I did community singing for awhile but they decided that wasn't classy enough for the Capitol so I went into straight solos. They didn't have the circuit stage shows operating here at this time. The acts were booked independently. The Capitol circuit operators had their own production department and the decision was they would have more like prologues. The Michigan did the same thing. At the Capitol they built stage shows around local talent. The pitmen doubled on the stage. It was then decided to have two stage shows, one built around the organ. We used a scrim and Jimmy Savage of B&K Circuit of Chicago wrote the continuity of my solos, and that was carried just on words. One was called '*Blossoms*' and this was a beautiful production. The first one was '*Cherry Blossom*.' The lights came up behind the scrim and here was a female vocalist in costume singing '*One Fine Day*' from '*Madame Butterfly*.' There was more continuity and that faded out followed by '*Apple Blossoms*.' Over on the opposite side of the stage, a boy and girl were singing '*Apple Blossom Time in Normandy*.' Then for a finale, they had '*Orange Blossoms*' and a full stage wedding. We used a girl in the chorus line, and we hired a line of chorus boys and had a

(Continued on Page 38)

## 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 1

### GREAT TALENT LINEUP FOR CONVENTIONEERS

The array of talent for the 1968 ATOE Convention, which will be held in Los Angeles on July 13 through 16, is developing into a formidable one, according to Convention Chairman Bob Carson. Already lined up for full concerts are Eddie Dunstedter, Ann Leaf, Tom Hazelton, Bill Thomson, Rosa Rio and Lyn Larsen. Now arrangements for "organ crawls" are going ahead full blast, with visits planned to famed studios and residences boasting pipe organs. Included will be the Dick Simonton residence with Gordon Kibbee at the 4-36 Wurlitzer, the Harvey Heck residence with Jim Melander playing the 4-27 Wurlitzer, Johnny Duffy at the 3-26 Carson-Kearns studio recording Wurlitzer, Helen Dell playing the 2-10 Wurlitzer at "Tubes, Inc.," Dean McNichols at the swingin' Bell Friends Church 2-9 Wurlitzer, Bill Field at the 3-19 Wurlitzer at the Iceland skating rink in Paramount, Dwight Beacham at the famed "Haven of Rest" 2-8 broadcast Wurlitzer, and Don Baker at the Robert Morton 4-34 recording organ in the Loren Whitney Glendale studio which he has recorded many times. There will be a special "crawl" to Pasadena to hear George Wright play a brief concert on his 3-30 studio organ. In addition to her concert Rosa Rio will conduct a class on theatre pipe organ playing technique.

Three builders of theatrical electronic organs will have showrooms at the Ambassador, and starting at 11 p.m. nightly the electronics will be "on parade." So far, Baldwin, Conn and Rodgers have arranged for showrooms.

The convention will close in a "blaze of glory" with Gaylord Carter cueing the famous feature-length silent movie comedy, "Safety Last," starring Harold Lloyd, at the Wiltern Theatre on the final night of the convention, the only convention event open to the general public. All other events are limited in attendance to holders of national ATOE membership cards for 1968.

—Stu Green, Hollywood



SPOTLIGHTS in many colors pick up the glitter on the overhead shutters as organist Dave Quinlan performs at the console.

It was a familiar scene for those who remembered the long-gone "615 Club" in Benecia (in the Bay Area), California. There was Dave Quinlan playing the same style 165 (extended style D) which had entertained so many fans during the years of the 615 Club, right up to the time the city condemned the 100-year-old building and the club closed.

That same instrument and organist were doing fine in a new location—Rudy's Supper Club in Vallejo, Calif.—after a too-long hiatus. It all came about while Dave was playing a plug-in at Rudy's which is operated by Bernice and Tony Arietta. The talk got around to pipes and Bernice asked Dave what had become of the organ he used to play at the 615 Club. It was in storage, and possibly available. Dave would check. Bernice had heard the Morton organ in the Carl Greer Inn over in Sacramento, and after that, no plug-in would do.

The result was a rental deal and the long-silent instrument, one of three original style 165's in the Bay Area, was secured from owner Urban Braito. It was installed by Dick Willson and Curt Wood in chambers built where the band shell used to be. The dining room is a large hall, with plenty of room for the

## Dave Quinlan and Former '615 Club' 2-6 Wurlitzer Ride Again in Bay Area Club

2-6 Wurlti to sound out in. The swell shutters were placed high, so that room would be left below for windows, in compliance with the growing "audio-visual" trend. Organ enthusiasts are becoming ever more curious about the

innards of theatre organs and a number of installations have been equipped with windows which open into well-lighted chambers, thus giving the listeners an opportunity to see what they are listening to. The console is located on a platform between the chambers and illuminated by spotlights controlled by the organist. Fanciful lighting effects playing on the pipework and percussors complete the picture.

The NorCal Chapter scheduled its March meeting at Rudy's, with Dave Quinlan doing the honors. The Arietta's have provided good promotion, billing Dave and "the Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ—for your Dining and Dancing Pleasure" in local organ publications, papers and entertainment guides.

The only change in the pipe line-up since 615 Club days is that the instrument's original style D Trumpet has been replaced with the Brass Trumpet which belongs to the Oakland Paramount 4-20 Publix No. 1 Wurlitzer, which is under the same ownership as the smaller Wurlitzer. This provides a brightness useful for both melody leads and ensemble work. The instrument is equipped with a full set of pitched percussions and a "toy counter." The organ was installed originally in the El Campinal Theatre, Antioch, Calif.

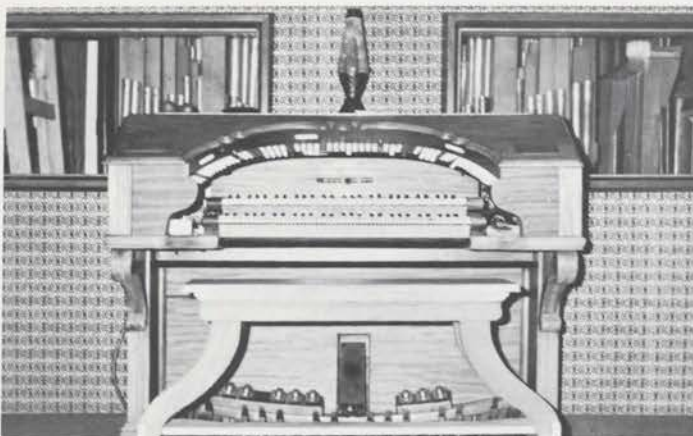
The new installation is played solo on Sundays and Tuesdays through Thursdays, and with a combo on Fridays and Saturdays.

—Dewey Cagle



GOURMET DISH—No one had the heart to cut into fan Ethel Bellinger's opening-night lucky cake . . . for a whole week!

PHOTOS: Bob Churchill  
and Dewey Cagle



CUTE CONSOLE—The little 2-6 Wurlitzer console, topped by eye-level windows which encourage the curious to peek at the music-makers within.



COMBO NIGHT—Dave (center) approves Harold Tally's sax improvisation, while Al Nifitaly beats the skins.

# THE HERSHEY'S COMMUNITY THEATRE

by Lloyd E. Klos

When Milton S. Hershey returned to the Pennsylvania area of his birth in 1903, he laid the foundation of the largest chocolate and cocoa manufacturing firm on earth. From the two small buildings he built then, the Hershey Chocolate Corporation has expanded to 26 separate buildings with two million feet of floor space and several thousand employees. Hershey, Pennsylvania, is a mecca for tourists, and approximately 700,000 of them visit the city each year to tour the factories which turn out chocolate bars and kisses by the millions.

Stand at any intersection and your nostrils will tell you what is made here. The traffic officers wear chocolate-colored uniforms, and the street lights are shaped like Hershey kisses. However, Hershey is more than just an assemblage of buildings for candy manufacturing. It is a model community, a summer playground, and the golf capital of Pennsylvania.

At the intersection of Chocolate and Cocoa Avenues stands a six-story building, constructed by Mr. Hershey during the depression for culture, recreation and entertainment. It houses the 2,000-seat Community Theatre, the 650-seat Little Theatre, game rooms, indoor pool, gymnasium and library. Movies, dramas, concerts, ballets, Broadway musicals and legitimate theatre are presented here.

The Hershey Community Building cost about two and a half million dollars, and the theatre turned out to be its crowning glory. Everything in it is of the best, cost not being allowed to stand in the way of the selection of any of its furnishings or appointments.

When Mr. Hershey laid plans for the Community Theatre, he knew just what kind of organ he wanted, as he was given the idea by the organ in the Westchester Community Center at White Plains, N. Y. It was a 4-95 Aeolian, installed in 1930. One of its features, the Ancillary Fanfare Organ, was copied exactly for the Hershey instrument.

Mr. Hershey appointed Mr. Charles F. Ziegler, manager of the Hershey Estates, to select and purchase an organ suitable to its surroundings. Both were agreed that a unit organ would be entirely out of the question. A concert organ of "dignity and power" was installed.

Mr. Ziegler called in Dr. Harry A. Sykes to work up the specifications and select the builder. The present 4-80 Aeolian-Skinner organ is the result of their efforts.



INTERIOR of 2,000-seat Hershey Community Theatre, showing Aeolian-Skinner 4-80 console. Swell and Choir divisions are in the chambers to the left, others to the right.

The console is mounted on an elevator to the left of the orchestra platform. Swell and Choir divisions are to the player's left, with Choir under the Swell. The tone of the Choir Organ, therefore, is close to the organist. All other divisions are on the other side. There are no proscenium boxes, the organ chambers occupying this space.

The two walls from which the organ speaks are reasonably parallel. There is some little flare, widening toward the audience, but the tone of the two sides congeals remarkably in the ensemble. The audience can sense the source of the solo stops, but this is rather an advantage. They enjoy locating the more colorful voices.

Dr. Harry A. Sykes, who gave the dedicatory recital in September of 1933, had this to say about the Fanfare Organ: "The single feature which is perhaps the most valuable is the Floating Fanfare Division. Each manual stop-control division has a fanfare draw-knob, making it a simple matter to bring these glorious reeds in with whichever division seems desirable. The fanfare 'sub' and 'super' couplers come along with this arrangement, if they happen to be on at the time. To be able to have the solo Tuba on its own manual, contrasted with the flary fanfare reeds played from another manual, at the same time, having ready the brilliant swell and solid great, is a most satisfactory tonal experience.

"As would be expected, the solo stops are of the quality we have for so long associated with the Skinner Co. They are characteristic and of great beauty."

According to Mr. Lawrence C. Burris, manager of the Hershey Community Theatre, "Many renowned organists have presented concerts on the organ, including Jesse Crawford, Dick Leibert, Lew White and Virgil Fox, to name a few. Over the years, a number of regular organists have been employed, including J. Atlee Young, now retired; Carl Henke; and our present organist, Fred Sullivan.

"Our theatre is not limited to showing of motion pictures, but is more widely known in Central Pennsylvania for the presentation of outstanding stage attractions, such as "Hello, Dolly," starring Ginger Rogers. When legitimate attractions are not available, we show pictures Monday through Saturday; two evening performances weekdays, three on Saturday. An organ program of five to ten minutes duration is presented between showings, depending upon the running time of the picture.

"Every Sunday morning, the organ is used in conjunction with the worship service of the Milton Hershey School, and during the year it is utilized during high school and college commencements, choral presentations, and the like."

In August 1962, the theatre was a feature of the first Eastern Regional Meeting of the ATOE. Featured organists were house organist Carl Henke, and Leonard MacClain, who entertained with silent film accompaniment of two comedies.

Visitors to Hershey, Pennsylvania, will find much to interest them, and to ATOE members in particular, here is a fine theatre with a big organ.



# AND ITS ORGAN

HERSHEY COMMUNITY THEATRE

**Aeolian - Skinner Organ**

80 Ranks — Four Manuals and Pedals

Compass of Manuals — 61 Keys

Compass of Pedals — 32 Keys

## GREAT ORGAN

1. Diapason 16' 73 Pipes
2. First Diapason 8' 73 Pipes
3. Second Diapason 8' 73 Pipes
4. Third Diapason 8' 73 Pipes
5. Harmonic Flute 8' 73 Pipes
6. Clarabella 8' 73 Pipes
7. Gemshorn 8' 73 Pipes
8. Octave 4' 73 Pipes
9. Wald Flute 4' 73 Pipes
10. Twelfth 2 2/3' 61 Pipes
11. Fifteenth 2' 61 Pipes
12. Mixture V Hks 305 Pipes
13. Ophicleide 16' 73 Pipes
14. Tromba 8' 73 Pipes
15. Clarion 4' 73 Pipes
16. Harp 8' } 61 Tones
17. Celesta 4' } 61 Tones
18. Chimes 8' 25 Tones
19. Tremolo

## SWELL ORGAN

20. Bourdon 16' 73 Pipes
21. Open Diapason 8' 73 Pipes
22. Gedeckt 8' 73 Pipes
23. Spitz Flute 8' 73 Pipes
24. Flute Celeste 8' 73 Pipes
25. Salacionale 8' 73 Pipes
26. Vox Celeste 8' 73 Pipes
27. Viole Celeste 8' 73 Pipes
28. Viole D'Orchestre 8' 73 Pipes
- 28 1/2. Octave 4' 73 Pipes
29. Harmonic Flute 4' 73 Pipes
30. Piccolo 2' 61 Pipes
31. Mixture (Diapason) IV Rks 244 Pipes
32. Mixture (Dolce Cornet) III Rks 183 Pipes
33. Posaune 16' 73 Pipes
34. French Trumpet 8' 73 Pipes
35. Cornopean 8' 73 Pipes
36. Oboe 8' 73 Pipes
37. Vox Humana 8' 73 Pipes
38. Clarion 4' 73 Pipes
39. Harp 8' } 61 Notes
40. Celesta 4' } (from #16)
41. Chimes 8' 25 Notes (From #18)
42. Tremolo

## CHOIR ORGAN

43. Contra Gemshorn 16' 73 Pipes
44. Diapason 8' 73 Pipes
45. Concert Flute 8' 73 Pipes
46. Gemshorn 8' 12 Pipes
47. Gamba 8' 73 Pipes
- 47 1/2. Gamba Celeste 8' 73 Pipes
48. Dulciana 8' 73 Pipes
49. Unda Maris 8' 73 Pipes
50. Flute D'Amour 4' 73 Pipes
51. Nazard 2 2/3' 12 Pipes
52. Piccolo 2' 61 Notes
53. Tierce 1 3/5' 61 Notes
54. Septieme 1 1/7' 61 Notes
55. Mixture V Rks 73 Notes
56. Clarinet 8' 73 Pipes
57. Musette 8' 73 Pipes
58. Orchestral Oboe 8' 73 Pipes
59. Harp 8' } 61 Notes
60. Celesta 4' } (from #16)
61. Chimes 8' 25 Notes (From #18)
62. Tremolo

## SOLO ORGAN

63. English Horn 8' 73 Pipes
64. Flute (Orchestral) 8' 73 Pipes
65. Cello 8' 73 Pipes
66. Cello Celeste 8' 73 Pipes
67. French Horn 8' 73 Pipes
68. Tuba 8' 73 Pipes
69. Harp 8' } 61 Notes
70. Celesta 4' } (from #16)
71. Chimes 8' 25 Notes (From #18)
72. Tremolo

## FANFARE ORGAN (Floating)

- Playable on all manuals and pedals. Entire division on high pressure wind.
73. Contra Post Horn 16' 73 Pipes
  74. Harmonic Trumpet 8' 73 Pipes
  75. Trumpet Militaire (Brass) 8' 73 Pipes
  76. English Post Horn 8' 12 Pipes (Ext. #73)
  77. Clarion 4' 73 Pipes
  78. Tremolo

## PEDAL ORGAN

79. Resultant 32' 32 Notes
80. Diapason 16' 32 Pipes
- 80 1/2. Second Diapason 16' 32 Notes (From #1)
81. Bourdon 16' 32 Pipes
82. Violone 16' 32 Pipes
83. Lieblich Gedeckt 16' 32 Notes (From #20)
84. Contre Gemshorn 16' 32 Notes (From #43)
85. Octave 8' 12 Pipes (Ext. #80)
86. Flute 8' 12 Pipes (Ext. #81)
87. Gemshorn 8' 32 Pipes (Ext. #43)
88. Gedeckt 8' 32 Notes (From #20)
89. Super Octave 4' 12 Pipes
90. Flute 4' 12 Pipes (Ext. #81)
91. Bombarde 32' 12 Pipes
92. Trombone 16' 32 Pipes
93. Tromba 8' 12 Pipes
94. Posaune 16' 32 Notes (From #35)
95. Clarion 4' 12 Pipes
96. Chimes 8' 25 Notes (From #18)

## COUPLERS

97. Great to Pedal 8
98. Great to Pedal 4
99. Swell to Pedal 8
100. Swell to Pedal 4
101. Choir to Pedal 8
102. Choir to Pedal 4
103. Solo to Pedal 8
104. Solo to Pedal 4
105. Fanfare to Pedal 8
106. Fanfare to Pedal 4
107. Great 16
108. Great Unison Off
109. Great 4
110. Swell 16
111. Swell Unison Off
112. Swell 4
113. Choir 16
114. Choir Unison Off
115. Choir 4
116. Solo 16
117. Solo Unison Off
118. Solo
119. Swell to Great 16
120. Swell to Great 8

121. Swell to Great 4
122. Choir to Great 16
123. Choir to Great 8
124. Choir to Great 4
125. Swell to Choir 16
126. Swell to Choir 8
127. Swell to Choir 4
128. Solo to Great 16
129. Solo to Great 8
130. Solo to Great 4
131. Solo to Choir 16
132. Solo to Choir 8
133. Solo to Choir 4
134. Solo to Swell 8
135. Fanfare to Great 16
136. Fanfare to Great 8
137. Fanfare to Great 4
138. Fanfare to Swell 16
139. Fanfare to Swell 8
140. Fanfare to Swell 4
141. Fanfare to Choir 16
142. Fanfare to Choir 8
143. Fanfare to Choir 4
144. Fanfare to Solo 16
145. Fanfare to Solo 8
146. Fanfare to Solo 4

## COMBINATION PISTONS

- Adjustable at the console and visibly affects the registers. Double touch pistons marked \* affect pedal combination of same number on second touch. Pedal and General Pistons duplicated by pedal plungers (except 0).
- 147-153. Great 1\*-2\*-3\*-4\*-5\*-6\*-7\*-0\*
  - 154-160. Swell 1\*-2\*-3\*-4\*-5\*-6\*-7\*-0\*
  - 161-167. Choir 1\*-2\*-3\*-4\*-5\*-6\*-7\*-0\*
  - 168-174. Solo 1\*-2\*-3\*-4\*-5\*-6\*-7\*-0\*
  - 175-178. Fanfare 1\*-2\*-3\*-4\*-0\*
  - 179-185. Pedal 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-0
  - 186-193. General 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-0
  194. All off
  195. Combination set piston, with keylock

## ACCESSORIES

196. Crescendo Pedal
197. Crescendo Pedal Indicator Pointer with 6 stopping places
198. Sforzando Piston Reversible
199. Sforzando Plunger Reversible
200. Sforzando Indicator Light
201. Great to Pedal Piston Reversible
202. Great to Pedal Plunger Reversible
203. Swell to Pedal Piston Reversible
204. Swell to Pedal Plunger Reversible
205. Choir to Pedal Piston Reversible
206. Choir to Pedal Plunger Reversible
207. Solo to Pedal Piston Reversible
208. Solo to Pedal Plunger Reversible
209. Great Expression Pedal
210. Swell Expression Pedal
211. Choir Expression Pedal
212. Solo Expression Pedal
213. Fanfare Expression floating to expression pedals by piston
214. All Swells to Swell Expression Pedal
215. All Swells to Swell Piston Reversible
216. All Swell to Swell Indicator Light
217. Harp and Celesta in P and F
218. Harp and Celesta with and without dampers
219. Chimes with and without dampers



CARL HENKE at Hershey Community Theatre console.

## Alexandria, Va. Theatre Plans To Install 3-10 Barton

Mr. Woodrow W. Wise Jr., assistant manager of the Alexandria Amusement Corporation and chairman of the Potomac Valley Chapter, A. T. O. E., has announced the purchase of the three-manual, ten-rank Barton organ from the Paramount Theatre, Newport News, Virginia.

The organ is to be installed in the company's sumptuous Virginia Theatre, located at 601 First Street in Alexandria. The golden waterfall console will be on a platform which will move in and out of an alcove on the left side of the stage similar to that of the Radio City Music Hall console operation. The theatre has been recently redecorated in an ultra plush golden colonial motif, and special provisions for chambers on each side of the stage have been provided. All necessary chamber construction will be complete within the next two weeks, and work is now in progress on the construction of the console platform. Several seats have been removed for this purpose. The bass range of the instrument will be extended with two ranks of unmitered 16-foot voices, a Tuba Mirabilis, and a Grossflute taken from the Moller organ formerly in the Palace Theatre, Washington, D. C.

In charge of installing this fine instrument will be Paul G. White, a member of the Potomac Valley Chapter. The organ will be played nightly for intermissions as well as for special motion picture events to be presented, and the instrument is expected to be in use by October of this year.

—Ray Brubacher,  
Associate Editor,  
Theatre Organ



STORY: Dr. Walter Beaupre • PHOTOS: Erv Heinz

What started out to be a repeat of the formula which proved fabulously successful last year (see *Theatre Organ—Bombardier*, Summer 1967) suddenly turned into a mushroom-cloud-type blast never to be forgotten by theatre organ fans in Omaha, Nebraska. The original formula was sufficiently fool-proof:

- 1 University of Omaha mellowed by the success of its T.O. concert last year.
  - 1 Organist Bill McCoy whose name is magic in the Midlands.
  - 1 Wurlitzer 235 Special honed to functional perfection by A.T.O.E. members.
  - 1 Orpheum theatre with its original 1927 decor and superb acoustics.
  - 1 Two-reel silent film comedy.
  - 1 Budget which guaranteed all expenses regardless of floods, earthquakes, blizzards or tornadoes.
  - 1 Thoroughly seasoned and dedicated population of "pipes" smokers.
- Tampering with a formula like that is, to put it mildly, pushing one's luck. But push they did—and thereby hangs the tale.

The Student Concerts and Lectures Committee of the University of Omaha, sparked by veteran Bob Miller, began making plans for another *Midnight Slapsticks* last December. Would the Wurlitzer be ready by April? Yes, in spite of the fact that the percussions were getting a complete overhaul and the wind chests in the Solo chamber needed work, all would be ready. Would Thomas Organs release their musical director Bill McCoy? Yes, Thomas would combine Bill's visit with a promotional venture of their own. Some red tape, of course, but no real ciphers.

Plans rolled like tibia glissandos until the Committee faced the problem of an appropriate silent movie. None of the available two-reel comedies satisfied the Committee. Dr. Beaupre then suggested that they look at some feature-length films with the idea of running an excerpt. And on one fateful night they stumbled upon two Cecil B. DeMille features starring Leatrice Joy. By the end of "Made for Love" the students were thoroughly hooked on Leatrice.

"Leatrice Joy really swings! Don't we have another movie with *her* in it?" The bleary-eyed Committee waited patiently while "Eve's Leaves" was threaded into the projector. By the time Leatrice Joy had shanghied William Boyd onto her father's ship the entire group was roaring its approval.

"That's it! Let's run the whole picture!"

"Seventy-three minutes? What are you trying to do to Bill McCoy, ruin him?"

The Committee decided to show only the first twenty-six minutes of "Eve's Leaves" and Dr. Beaupre began the laborious task of preparing a detailed cue sheet for Bill—who would only see the film once before he played it!

The plot thickens. The more times Beaupre ran the print of "Eve's Leaves" the more fascinated he became with Eve (played by Leatrice Joy). What ever happened to this superb actress? Was she still living? And if so, where? Keith Smith of Modern Sound Pictures, who owns the rights to many of Miss Joy's pictures, said he thought he had her address somewhere. Leatrice had once bought an 8 millimeter print from him.

"Keith," said Beaupre, "if you can find that address, I might be tempted to do something I've never done before, write a fan letter to a movie star."

To make a long story short, Dr. Beaupre wrote the letter telling Mrs. Leatrice Joy Gilbert that her film would be shown. He hinted rather broadly that the University would love to have her attend the performance, but would be satisfied with a letter or wire which might be read to the fans from the stage of the Orpheum.

To make the story even shorter, Mrs. Gilbert called from Connecticut to say that she would *love* to come to Omaha.

The plot gets frantic. The students were ecstatic. What a break! Of course, we'll have to run the entire film. But what about organist Bill McCoy? Would he consent to such a horrendous assignment, especially after Gaylord Carter had scored such a triumph at the Orpheum only five months ago. Would Bill think it was professional suicide?

There was a prolonged silence at the L.A. end of the telephones when Bill was told the "good news." Please, Bill . . . ?

"If you'll have the cue sheets ready . . . and if you really think I could pull it off, I guess I'll have to. It wouldn't be fair to . . . what did you say her name was?" With that, operation *Midnight Slapstick* slammed into high gear. Newspaper columnist Robert McMorris and film critic Denman Kountze were let in on the surprise. Both men went all out to help give Leatrice Joy and Bill McCoy the "star" treatment. A local night club "The Roaring Twenties" offered its white Rolls Royce and a chauffeur. The University reserved the V.I.P. suite at the Blackstone. Dave Letts of United Airlines (who went to school with Leatrice Joy's daughter) cleared the runways for a royal welcome. Students came to the airport with signs. All three TV stations had promised to send their camera-men to film Leatrice Joy's arrival. Then . . . it happened. The terrible news of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King and reports of riots.

Fortunately, the momentum had been too great. In spite of the fact that thousands of Omahans stayed in their homes behind locked doors during the crisis, fifteen hundred to two thousand loyal fans braved the downtown streets at the midnight hour to hear Bill McCoy play the mighty pipes and to cheer Leatrice Joy, both on the screen and in person. It was a blazing two hours of nostalgia, happiness, and good will during a week-end of darkness, fear and confusion.



LEATRICE JOY AUTOGRAPHS her picture of "Eve" which now has the place of honor at the 20's, an Omaha night club. Dr. Walter Beaupre watches.



BILL AND LEATRICE arrive at the Orpheum in a white Rolls Royce at 11:45 p.m. On the right is chauffeur Buddy Dundee—a P.R. man by day.

## BILL and LEATRICE

The lobby of the Orpheum was jammed at 11:45 when Leatrice Joy and Bill McCoy arrived at the theatre in their white Rolls Royce. The movie crowd leaving the last show of "Planet of the Apes" stared at the beautiful matronly woman in the white jeweled gown, silver slippers, gorgeous orchid corsage—who was eating popcorn with reckless and delightful abandon. Leatrice was having a ball and the theatre organ buffs loved every minute of it. Special arrangements had been made with the management so that Bill McCoy's dad, confined to a wheel chair, could be settled comfortably before the mad rush for seats. Papa McCoy had never heard his son play pipes.

At the stroke of 12 the houselights dimmed, Ed Workman, president of the O. U. Student Union, introduced the organist "unanimously drafted as king of nostalgia," and Bill pressed the lift button. From his opener "Keep Your Sunnyside Up" it was obvious that we were to hear a different Bill McCoy. His registration for the tune was full, rich and gutsy—but no screaming piccolos. His tempos were restless and driving, not hurried or frantic. "Mame" featured a swing chorus punctuated with cymbal bursts. The fans in the Orpheum trenches were gassed.

Next Bill threw caution to the winds and dragged out the battered score of "West Side Story." "Tonight" came on fresh and new as a gorgeously restrained beguine featuring the tibias, chrysolott, and sprinklings of castanets. The tibias were joined by masses of strings for a "Maria" duet. "I Feel Pretty" got the Boston Pops treatment as a rousing waltz with triple-tongued trumpet riffs alternating with a hurdy gurdy sound. Bill was taking full advantage of the improved responses of the tremolo systems. The medley closed with a quiet reprise of "Tonight."

Throughout the concert Bill McCoy constantly changed tempos and registrations. It was as though he had decided to throw away the books and search for new sounds and new musical ideas. As soon as he found one he let it go and looked for another. After the concert Bill seemed dissatisfied with his performance, but his fans and critics of long standing were ecstatic in their praise. Said one organ teacher, "I thought I had Bill all figured out,—but he showed me a whole new facet of his genius. Fantastic!"

This creative restlessness was most apparent in "Pops Go the Classics." Everyone has heard "Tonight We Love," "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows," "Melody in F," and "Til the End of Time" a drillion times, but not the way Bill played them on April 5, 1968. Tschai-kowsky came on sans piano but with a glorious oboe solo; then masses of strings urged on by a light 4-4 beat. Chopin was endowed with a fleeting tuba solo. Rubenstein's "Melody" was played in every key but F, with harmonic progressions that would have made old Anton green with envy. The Chopin "war horse" featured tibia and tuba dialogues with strings, but there were pauses while we listened to the delicate chrysolott. To climax the piece he brought in the full theatre organ tremmed to the ultimate, then suddenly let the tune die away as an untremmed church organ.

The hand microphone Bill had been using to announce his selections began to generate percussions of its own. McCoy chuckled, put the mike away, and

returned to the business at hand . . . "Around the World In Waltz Time." The medley might better have been called "Around the World in 80 Key Changes" because by this time there was no holding the Master. He romped through "Oi Marie!" Gave "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" the mellow romantic treatment with chimes. Played with the phenomenal Orpheum acoustics all through "Emperor Waltz" alternating jolts of massed sound with dramatic pauses. Turned "East Side West Side" into a concerto for full organ and hurdy gurdy. Introduced "Lady of Spain" as a rubato waltz shimmering with tremmed tibias and strings. Took us "Out to the Ball Game" along with a full brass band. Then closed with a Strauss-y underplayed treatment of "80 Days." Bravos! Stompings! Whistles! The audience knew where it had been and loved it.

Then Bill went Latin. His "Miami Beach Rhumba" was a request dedicated to fans of his electronic salad days at a local night spot. I braced myself for the usual frantic finale of "Temptation" only to be surprised and delighted when Bill let the tune lapse into a funky swing ballad. "Yours" was again mellow and restless. "Adios" proved to be a handsome *tour de force* of fancy counterpoint with some wild foot work. His finale for the set "Jalousie" was mercifully understated with single solo voices, a fast and furious last chorus—which metamorphosed into a delicate and lovely quiet tango. "Jalousie" hasn't had it so good since Kathryn Grayson.

(Continued on Next Page)



BILL MCCOY preferred a church bench to the Howard seat—which wobbled!

## BILL MCCOY—LEATRICE JOY

(Continued from Page 11)

Bill wound up his formal concert with tributes to the great radio shows: Amos 'N Andy, Road of Life, the Tommy Dorsey and Glen Miller bands, and the Mickey Mouse Club (TV, I believe).

But the evening had just begun. After tributes to the A.T.O.E. crew (George Rice, Stan Gross, Murray George, Milton Thorley, Bob Miller and others), the Committee, Bill's mother and dad, and theatre manager Don Shane, the projectionist opened the golden curtain for "Eve's Leaves" starring Leatrice Joy and William Boyd. It should be said in passing that the film made in 1926 was a sophisticated comedy about a girl who had been raised as a boy aboard her father's schooner. Of course Eve (Leatrice Joy) is curious about love and romance and gets some wild, second hand advice from the ship's cook. While on shore leave with her father Eve discovers Bill (played by William Boyd) and proceeds to win him in unorthodox ways.

Bill McCoy's strategy was to support the action of the film with music which would heighten the drama and add to the gaiety. He avoided the usual "Winter's Tale" and "William Tell Overture" and used more modern music. Gershwin's "Love Walked In" became Eve's theme; Jerome Kern's "Bill" served the manly William Boyd; "Limehouse Blues" kept the villain Chang Fang at bay. Other melodies judiciously employed were "Chinatown," "Slow Boat to China," "Love Is A Many Splendored Thing," "O Mine Papa," "Love and Marriage," "Volga Boatman," Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue in D. Minor," "You've Got a Lot to Like in a Winston!" "Hold That Tiger!" and countless little invented melodies and transitions dreamed up by Bill McCoy. Bill injected some mighty sly musical gags but never at the expense of the plot. As Leatrice Joy remarked later, "That wonderful man had spotted every dry episode in the film and generously pumped life into it until Bill Boyd and I had some better scenes. I'll never forget him for that!"

During intermission Leatrice Joy was brought to the stage and given a 10 minute standing ovation. She told some delightful stories about herself, Bill Boyd and Mr. DeMille. Then she was officially made an Admiral in the Nebraska Navy by order of Governor Norbert Tieman. The fans went wild. The woman on the screen and the woman on stage were equally wonderful.



SHOW STOPPER—Walter Beaupre, Leatrice Joy and Ed Workman try to stop the overwhelming 10-minute ovation.

And where was the *other* star of the evening during all this? Bill was down in the organ pit pumping out music like they do at the Academy Awards so that a silent movie queen could re-live an hour of adulation and triumph. In the excitement no one noticed this magnanimous gesture until Leatrice stopped at the console and threw her arms around Bill. It was one of those high, holy moments in show business none of us will ever forget.

Bill McCoy played the remaining half of the movie brilliantly, but by the time Leatrice Joy and William Boyd were clutched in their last happy embrace it was 2:15 a.m. Bill declined to play any encores because he knew the theatre management was having fits by this time. Ironically, the fans refused to leave the theatre. They crowded around Bill and Leatrice for autographs, and hundreds waited in the lobby to cheer the stars as they sped away in the Rolls.

Rumor has it that Bill stopped the car a block from the theatre and came back to join a hundred of his fans in a blast that lasted until 6 a.m.

They're still cheering the gala event in Omaha. However the Sudent Concerts and Lectures Committee at the University is in a blue funk. "How in the name of Hollywood can we ever top THIS one?" A good question. But give those college kids a year to work on it and they may have an answer. I'm willing to wager that part of the answer will be a talented young organist whose name begins with B.

## George Wright 'Hams It Up' At RTOS Reunion

During intermission, this reviewer witnessed a reunion of George Wright and one of his former co-workers in New York, Eddie Dunn. They were on the Jack Birch radio show for Prudential for seven and one-half years after World War II. It was their first meeting in over 10 years. And what did George give Eddie as a souvenir of the occasion? A ham sandwich! Yes, a genuine ham sandwich, in memory of an oft-repeated remark Eddie used to make in the old radio days. When Eddie would come into the studio each day, he'd exclaim, "Gee, I'd give eight dollars for a ham sandwich!" One day George decided to take up the offer and brought in a sandwich. But Eddie didn't cooperate immediately and the sandwich languished in the organ bench for a couple of days. When he did come through with the quote, George gave the slightly over-ripe sandwich to his colleague, then demanded and *got* the \$8.00! The much fresher Rochester sandwich is going to be framed, said happy Eddie Dunn.

—Lloyd E. Klos

## 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 2

BADGES FOR ALL CONVENTIONEERS—Those planning to attend the ATOE convention are urged to register as early as possible in order that registration kits can be prepared in advance for as many visitors as possible. In fact, the first 300 registrants will be rewarded by a special performance not available to later registrants, a limited attendance concert played on the Universal Studio music scoring stage Robert Morton organ by Paul Beaver (we can have the studio only a short time because it's in almost continual use). Those registering for others should include the name, city and chapter name for each person attending so that badges can be prepared for all attendees.



The Rochester Theatre Organ Society

PROUDLY PRESENTS

# GEORGE WRIGHT



AUDITORIUM THEATRE

875 Main Street East, Rochester, New York

SATURDAY, MAY 11, 1968  
8:00 P.M.



## ★ CONCERT CIRCUIT ★

A lover of Gershwin also, George played the hauntingly beautiful *Bess, You Is My Woman Now*, from *Porgy and Bess*. Using the mandolin attachment on the pit piano and orchestra bells, he did *My Funny Valentine*.

The next number brought down the house — *Frankie and Johnny* in real jazzy style with more than a hint of *L'Amour*. This was followed by *Over the Rainbow*, tastefully done.

In reply to a request from Canada's "Mr. Theatre Organ Enthusiast," H. Clealan Blakely, George wound up the first portion of the program with a "Xerox copy" of a Crawford rendition of *I Love To Hear You Singing*. (Carbon paper is obsolete here in Rochester; the Xerox company is well established.) This piece is a liting number with a nice swing to it, as recorded by Jesse in the 20's. Then — intermission.



Riding up on his behemoth for part II, George did the well-received *Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey?* As a special request from Eddie Dunn, George did the familiar *Whistler and His Dog* in the style of Lew White, who recorded it for Brunswick on the Roxy Theatre rotunda Kimball in the 20s. Next came *Can't Take My Eyes Off You*, MacDowell's *To A Water Lily*, and a Crawford arrangement of *Tip-Toe Through the Tulips*, which George said would sound "more like a herd of elephants tramping through them." George's ready wit was much in evidence throughout the two-hour program.

Several years ago, George recorded a humorous *Ain't We Got Fun* on his studio organ for the Solo label. This was another "Xerox copy" of *Fun*, which brought snickers from his responsive audience. *Going Out of My Head* was next, and he explained that the tremulants-off part was for his old friend, David Craighead, now head of the organ department of Rochester's Eastman School of Music. The next one was *Spring Fever*, which he had performed some years ago at the Hollywood Bowl on an electronic placed on an elevator which soared 40 feet above the stage — a terrifying experience because there were no handrails to grasp. Then *Hard-Hearted Hannab*, with sensuous overtones.

In closing, George was most generous in expressing his approval of the organ ("Maybe we can do a disc on it for Dot"), and the audience ("Maybe I'll be asked back again.") He took the console down, playing a powerful *You'll Never Walk Alone*, and when the audience got to its feet in a thunderous ovation, George returned for one encore, *Good Night, Sweetheart*.

It was a most enjoyable evening, without gimmicks, without pointless chatter; just honest-to-goodness excellent musicianship. He indicated to this reviewer that he would be playing for the annual ATOE Convention in Los Angeles on his own studio instrument. A treat is certainly in store for conventioners.

### A BOMBARDE Concert Review . . . .

. . . . by Lloyd E. Klos

Take a 4-21 Wurlitzer in mint condition. Add an organist, a King of his calling. Sprinkle in a liberal amount of publicity and season it with a pinch of promotion. Then, throw in 2,574 of the King's avid subjects and stir well. Follow these directions, and you have a recipe for a theatre organ concert which the Rochester Theatre Organ Society sponsored at the Auditorium Theatre on May 11, when George Wright provided the "Wright Touch" for a capacity crowd. Indeed, his willing subjects came from such disparate locations as Kansas City, Canada and Maine. From Connecticut, a busload of 50 "Con-ValChaps" pulled up to the door. Almost every Eastern ATOE chapter was represented. The famous builder of theatre organs from Binghamton, N. Y., Edwin Link, was among the notables.

Riding his white steed up into the spotlight, George began the program with *There's No Business Like Show Business*, which he recorded on the San Francisco Fox years ago. Space limitations preclude mention of the innumerable changes of registration George made in each selection. That he knew his way around the console, there was no doubt. He had arrived in the city in the wee hours of the morning, and as if to trade-mark his status as a perfectionist, went straight to the theatre to work on combinations and to practice. He was escorted there "via South Plymouth Avenue," one of the poorer sections of the Flower City, a fact he touched on several times during the program. That he had only two hours sleep in the previous 24, was of no consequence.

Next came a Spanish number, *Caminito*, in which the tibias were featured. The organ was in superb condition with no ciphers or other problems, due to the work of Danny Schultz and crew, and George observed this by playing Danny's request for *Mississippi Mud*, using the reeds and posthorn at their jazzy best. Since Rochester was observing "Lilac Week" in its renowned Highland Park, the next number was appropriately *Jeannine, I Dream of Lilac Time*, on the tibias and harp.

The master now took us to the Near East to enjoy the mysterious-sounding *Caravan*, complete with bird calls on an oasis. *Cecelia* was next, with glock solo. Then, in tribute to Irving Berlin, whose 80th birthday was recently observed on another entertainment medium, came a medley of well-known songs: *Cheek to Cheek*, *Say It Isn't So*, *Isn't This a Lovely Day?*, all done in quietly voiced registration, and followed by a rousing, hell-for-leather *Minnesota Ragtime Band*.

## ★ Concert Circuit ★

### D. Beacham Debut Concert At Wiltern

LOS ANGELES, May 12. — Anyone who has heard Dwight Beacham play, even on an electronic, is conscious of the young man's great potential. He has a way of arousing musical excitement; there's magic beckoning in the sounds he produces. But that knowledge is shared only by those who have heard him—and this was his first public concert, anywhere.

About 250 hardy souls braved the sunny May Sunday morning of Southern California to laze in the comfortable chairs of the Wiltern Theatre for a concert sponsored by the Los Angeles Chapter of ATOE. Between chops on a huge stogie (unlighted, of course), Program Chairman Neal Kissel looked happy; considering that it was the first concert of an unknown artist, he was satisfied with the turnout.

At the appointed hour, the big organ sound poured down from the chambers and Mr. Beacham brought the console up to its zenith, playing a fast oldie entitled *High Society*, a real kicker. When the applause subsided he welcomed the audience to "my very first concert," then went into his second tune, *Hands Across the Table*.

Dwight's concert consisted of nineteen selections, most of them classed as "nostalgia" as well as standards. The range was wide, with Sousa's seldom-heard *The Thunderer* at one extreme and an un-earthly "skeleton dance" called *Ghost-Safari* (written by a friend) at the other. He avoided the commonplace and too-often-heard standards. Even his "Crawford" was in the "less familiar" category, e.g., *Rainbow on the River*, *Little Girl Blue* and *Siboney*, all played with registration and phrasing very reminiscent of the late maestro.

His rhythm tunes developed a solid beat, but emphasis was always on the subtle, never the slam-bang. These included *Honey Bun*, *The Girlfriend* and the welcome return of an almost forgotten Bix Beiderbeck jazz classic called simply *San*.

One of Beacham's strong points was his mastery of registration on a console on which it isn't easy—if only for the sheer size of the double (in some places triple) stoprail horseshoe. His changes

of registration, much of it done manually, provided continually changing orchestral colors to enhance the music. Who does he sound like—so far as style goes? He has a style of his own. Of course, he can "do a Crawford" and some of his arrangements showed a leaning toward the distinctive registration of the late Buddy Cole—for example, the fat, untremulated Diapason tone clusters with searing Serpent punctuation heard during *They Say It's Wonderful* and *He's My Guy*, both tunes also being graced with the rhythmic tricks and between-phrase "doodads" which mark the Cole charisma. But that's conscious imitation; for the most part he was pure Beacham.



DWIGHT BEACHAM at his home pipe organ. He created musical excitement—from Sousa to a 'skeleton dance.'

In the MC'ing department, Dwight at first had a little trouble with the "butterflies" which always flutter around bright lights. But as soon as he learned that his audience "out there" was with him, he even tried a little humor; his delivery was funnier than the material. His comic tune titles, however, earned him some laughs, chiefly *Get Off the Stove*, *Grandma*, *You're Too Old to Ride the Range!* and *They Called Her "Hinges" Because She Was Something to a-Door*. He blamed the humor effort on his wife's urging.

Even in the novelty department, Dwight's choice of tunes was unusual. Instead of the usual *Nola* or *Dizzy Fingers* he performed a bright little finger buster by organist Emil Velasco (remember?—the New York Roxy), entitled *Krazy Kat*.

The humor occasionally expressed in Dwight's music was probably more effective than his Joe Miller material. For example, during a Hollywood-style rendition of *On a Little Street in Singapore*, an argument started in the accompani-

ment between the Chinese Gong and the Triangle, plus a few chirps from the Bird effect. It was a draw. But he really hit the Spike Jones trail during *Once In Love With Amy*, whom he described as "a rambunctious type of girl." To make certain no one missed the point he sprinkled "Amy" with an assortment of thuds, bumps, auto honks, sirens—and, again—the bird! As always, that style of musical mayhem indicated a wide appeal. Dwight did it with a sly charm which had it sailing somewhat above the "pure corn" classification.

But his way with ballads more than atoned for any liberties he may have taken with someone's favorite tunes. In deference to the place he earns his bread (the Wurlitzer plug-in exhibit at Disneyland), Dwight played a soaring arrangement of *Some Day My Prints Will Come* ("the Kodak song") which featured a sexy, full-throated Tibia/Vox melody combination, and a particularly lovely *Speak Low* which soloed the seldom-soloed Kimball Clarinet rank. The Beacham closing was a low-keyed one, a reading of the dramatic ballad, *The Thrill Is Gone*. It was a beautifully scored heart-wrencher with a slow fade applied to everything—volume, spotlight and tempo—during the final bars. The last notes trailed off on dying Vox and Strings as the big white console and its talented player sank back into the pit.

Outside, Programmer Neal Kissel finally lighted the big stogie and gulped a lungful. After listening to the comments of the departing concert-goers he knew he had featured a "comer"—one the organ-oriented public would be hearing from again—and soon.

—Peg Nielsen, Hollywood

Dwight Beacham is an unassuming young man whose easy charm tends to obscure his deadly serious love affair with the theatre organ. Rescued from the purely classical bag by a college teacher of classical organ who turned out to be something of a renegade (he admitted to having once played theatre organ professionally in Fresno), Dwight had been preparing for his concert of May 12th since he was fourteen years of age. At that age he was first exposed to theatre organ, the 11-rank style-235 Wurlitzer in the Pasadena Crown theatre, then being played by organist-theatre manager Billy Wright. Wright gave the lad a chance to explore the possibilities of theatre organ tonalities, and after that no other instrument would do. Dwight was no dilettante even at fourteen; he already had seven years of piano and organ studies behind him, some with veteran theatre organist Lloyd del Castillo.

## Rosa Rio and Radio Era

### Nostalgia A Hit in Rochester

by Lloyd E. Klos

ROCHESTER, N. Y.—In 1933, R-KO Pictures produced a memorable movie musical, *Flying Down To Rio*. On April 20, 1968, about 300 members of the Rochester Theatre Organ Society "Flew Down to Rio"—Rosa Rio, who appeared at the Auditorium Theatre Wurlitzer in "A Musical Menu." It was an interesting evening of good music and nostalgia.



ROSA RIO — Conventioneers also will have a chance to sample her organ magic—both in concert and in a seminar in organ techniques which she will conduct.

Rosa rode the console up, playing her theme, *With a Song in My Heart*, very colorfully dressed in platinum-hued hair-piece, bright red blouse with black fringe, black stretch pants and silver slippers. A former student at Rochester's Eastman School of Music, she played a program which ran the gamut from classics to popular. She began with Gounod's *Soldiers' Chorus* from *Faust*, with tremulants off and featuring the tuba horn and post horn.

Almost every organist passing through town has to play *Misty*, it seems, but this time it was interwoven with the E major theme from the *Rhapsody in Blue*. Tuba, strings and tibias were the dominant voices.

*What's New, Pussy Cat?* came next, and Rosa cleverly worked in Anderson's *Waltzing Cat*. *Londonderry Air* (not "Londondairy" as the artist corrected the printed program) featured full organ. There were no deviations from the printed program, and the next five numbers were from famous Broadway shows: *Love For Sale*, which used the pit piano and trumpet solo, followed by a smear

glissando; *All The Things You Are*, with harp; *A Foggy Day in London Town*, with chimes and tuba horn solo; *The Girl That I Marry*, with orchestral bells and tibias; and *It Ain't Necessarily So*, which was cleverly done with honky-tonk piano.

At this point, Rosa's husband and personal representative, Bill Yeoman, came onto the stage. Rochester-born, he mentioned that he was a "hometown boy whose wife made good." He delved into the past, mentioning the radio shows for which his wife had played the background music, and she joined in with the themes: "The Shadow" with Orson Welles, "Myrt and Marge" with Staats Cotsworth and Richard Widmark, "Lorenzo Jones" with Art Carney and Carl Swenson, "When A Girl Marries," "The Gospel Singer" with Edward MacHugh, "Between the Bookends" with Ted Malone, "My True Story" with Tony Randall and Ross Martin, "The Mystery Chef" (who never let his identity be known), and "Ethel and Albert." Then as a lead-in to her next number, Bill brought out a stuffed tiger, propped it upon the console, while Rosa played *Hold That Tiger!*, a real jazzy arrangement with reeds, heavy pedal and post-horn.

Gautier's *Le Secret* featured the quiet, delicate stops. Finishing out the first half of the program, Rosa played *The Bells of St. Mary's*, with the inevitable chime solo, tuba horn and two-footed pedaling, to a stirring climax, tremulants off.

Following the intermission, selections from *Sound of Music* were done tastefully, with *My Favorite Things*, featuring a glock solo, and then *Sound of Music*, a number of great majesty.

*Spanish Eyes* came next, and here again the artist cleverly interwove *Green Eyes* in good rhythm. A classical number, Karg-Elert's *Chorale VIII*, done with tremos off, was followed by *Without A Song*, with emphasis on strings. *You're An Old Smoothie* was counterpointed as Bach might have played it, tremos off. *Spring Is Here*, with strings and a tuba background, developed rank by rank to a crescendo ending which really shook the place.

Final number on the program was *The St. Louis Blues*, which again showed off the honky-tonk piano, then built in volume to thunderous ending.

## ★ Concert Circuit ★

### Dick Smith at Philly Tower

Promptly at 10 a.m., Sunday, May 19, 1968, the orchestra elevator brought MC-organist Bob Lent into view for a brief introduction, then the strains of "This Could Be the Start of Something Big" were heard throughout the Tower Theatre in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. As the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer (style 260) rose slowly from out of the pit, it was Dick Smith at the manuals and pedals.

Off to a wonderful start, Dick asked if Dottie MacClain, was in the audience. Yes, Dottie was present. Dick proceeded to play the beautiful song "Where You Are Concerned" written by the late "Melody Mac" and dedicated to his wife, Dottie.

Dick continued to play in his charming manner with selections such as *Begin the Beguine*, *Tenderly*, *Stairway to the Stars*, *One Alone*, *Non Dimenticar*, *Diane*, *Riff Song*, *Love is Blue*, *Granada*, *Gypsy Love Song*, *Charleston* and the *Pink Broom Polks*, written by Dick. After these selections, a short intermission followed.

During intermission, I interviewed some of the patrons. Some of the comments noted were: "Never heard anyone like him", "Wish he would stay in this part of the Country", "He has a way of getting to you", "There is no end to this young man", "He has twenty fingers on each hand and four feet", "It makes you want to run home and practice for four hours a day", "We need this boy around here more often".



DICK SMITH at the Tower Wurlitzer: an organist with two fulfilled dreams!

(Continued on Next Page)

## ★ Concert Circuit ★

(Continued from Page 15)

After intermission, Dick returned with the Paramount News Theme, Seventy Six Trombones, The Girl from Ipanema, Going Out of my Head, Thoroughly Modern Millie, Strolling Through the Park One Day, How You Gonna to Keep Them Down on the Farm, Hold That Tiger, Ain't She Sweet and Saber Dance, to complete his program.

A few minutes later, Dick made another appearance, but this time to shake hands (as he put it) with "all the wonderful people" that made his concert a success. Many people told Dick how much they enjoyed him and hoped he would be back soon. Some of the patrons said they had traveled between two and four hundred miles to attend.

I later interviewed Dick and he replied: "God bless each and every one—It brought a mighty big size lump in my throat when I found how wonderful I was accepted in the great Tower theatre. I use to dream how wonderful it would be to experience the great joy of performing in a theatre like the Tower or places like Radio City Music Hall. Now, both of my dreams have been fulfilled. It all still remains to seem like a dream!"

The concert was sponsored by the Tower Theatre Organ Crew. Staff organist Bob Lent was master of ceremonies.

—Sylvia E. Godwin



**BOB LENT**—man behind the scenes! Much credit for the present good condition of the Tower Wurlitzer must go to Bob, who MC'd the Dick Smith concert. Bob is regular intermission organist at the Tower, also the technician who restored and maintains the organ. He travels nearly 40 miles between home and theatre, and that's almost daily!

## Richard Ellsasser Captivates Lafayette

ONE OF ATOE'S most distinguished members rarely gets coverage in these pages because his is the classical field of organ music. Yet we receive numerous requests asking "What is Dick Ellsasser up to?" To find out for the benefit of BOMBARDE readers, our man in Lafayette, La., 16-year-old Lew Williams, attended Dick's concert there.

On April 1st, concert organist Richard Ellsasser presented a recital of light music and classics at Lafayette's Angelle Hall Theatre, located on the campus of the University of Southwestern Louisiana. The brand of organ Mr. Ellsasser played cannot be disclosed because of contract commitments. No pictures were allowed.

At promptly 8:20 p.m., the maestro appeared and the program began. Mr. Ellsasser was in fine MCing form and introduced each number with a twist of subtle humor. The program was further heightened by somewhat dazzling lighting effects. Mr. Ellsasser's first selection was Bach's "Fugue in G." Written when Bach was about sixteen, it suggests his joy and spirit. Pachelbal's "Chaconne in D Minor" came next, starting out ominously on deep pedal notes and gradually building in manual activity and power.

Next, for a change of pace, came Dacquain's "Le Coucou", an intricate, flitting work which had a two note "cuckoo" sounding at intervals.

Handel's "First Concerto in G, Opus 4, Introduction and Air with Variations" was next. This expressive work started out on a tremmed flute and string celestes, then went to soft flutes and a reed solo, often colored with the celeste interspersings. A full organ interlude ended this number.

The first half of the concert was climaxed by Widor's "Fifth Symphony in F", including the very famous "Toccata," of which Mr. Ellsasser remarked, "We don't know why people like the Toccata so much, unless they like to see organists kill themselves!" The beginning of the first movement was played on full combinations and very fast, followed by intricate passages on flutes, then sharp reeds, with a very prominent pedal. In contrast, the second movement was quiet, featuring the solo voices. Then, the great Toccata, starting out very staccato on a combination not unlike a harpsichord, over which towered a very robust pedal melody. Gradually the sound swelled to fill the big auditorium. After this, organist and audience, breathless, were ready for an intermission.

The second half of the program started with Elmore's "Rhumba for the Feet", with its intricate pedal introduction, followed by a rather humorous passage which brought snickers from the audience.



Next, Karg Elert's "Soul Of The Lake," one of the most expressive numbers in the recital. It pictures a lake before, during, and after a storm. A 32' pedal and celested of deeply contrasting and brassy, cascading chord clusters depict the storm, which quickly subsides and two cuckoos echo assurances from neighboring trees.

After this "picture in music" it was time for a bit of fun. Charles Ives' "Variations on America" started exuberantly then went into an "inspirational" sequence with reedy noodling. After this came a very dissonant interval played in two mutually unsympathetic keys at once! Then a very comical chorus that reminded us a little of a slightly tipsy gentleman (laughter from the audience), then to a minor key and a very heavy beat. Finally back to those two battling keys again to finish up. A gasser!

Ellsasser's own "Choral Improvisation on Greensleeves" followed. This was very ethereal, featuring a chromatic progression throughout in the left hand while the right carried the melody.

Then for a stunning finale, Mr. Ellsasser played his "Concert Study in D Minor". Based on a work by Pietro Yon, late organist at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, it has approximately 3,000 pedal notes to be played in three minutes! The manual work is relatively simple, but the pedal notes give the impression of a train traveling at great speed. During this selection, Mr. Ellsasser's patent leather shoes were a dark blur.

At the conclusion, the audience broke into a spontaneous burst of applause. Once again, but in a popular vein, the Ellsasser artistry was displayed in "Trumpet Tune." After this, the audience still would not let him leave, so Ellsasser played the familiar "Brassmen's Holiday" which was taken at a fast clip, showing off the brass section of the organ. Then it was over. Many lingered afterward to talk to the artist and get autographs. It was very enjoyable. Mr. Ellsasser, please come back soon.

—Lew Williams



A BOMBARDE First-Person Account from 'Down Under' . . .

Lyn Larsen — 'My Australian Adventure'

# I SUPPOSE I EXPERIENCED

## something of the explorer's fear of the unknown as I

stood there with the telegram in my hand—the message affirming my engagement at the Dendy Theatre in Melbourne, Australia. It was right after Christmas, 1967, and I had just returned to Hollywood after a rewarding but exhausting tour which introduced me to wonderful audiences and fine pipe organs in Salt Lake City, Chicago, Detroit and Rochester, N. Y. I needed a rest; but this was a challenge—a chance to explore a world half a planet away. I had read a lot about theatre organ activity in Australia and here was my chance to investigate it first-hand.

I boarded a huge Pan-Am airliner on January 5 after being practically shoved aboard by my hard-working and faithful secretary, Nora Peters. At the last moment I almost decided I didn't want to go, but Nora wasn't going to see all that preparation go down the drain. So I spent the next 20 hours in an aircraft seat. We sat down briefly in Honolulu, American Samoa, Auckland—and then Sydney. I decided to return to terra firma at Sydney, and continue on the next day. So I rested in a hotel room until the next morning and boarded another plane for Melbourne.

When the plane landed at Essendon (Melbourne) Airport, I was glad that I had changed into my trademark—the white tie and tails I always wear when playing concerts, because there was a real "Hollywood" welcome awaiting me. As I descended the steps from the plane, photographers were busily snapping photos. I looked over my shoulder to see if some notable was behind me, but I was alone. They were shooting pictures of me!

I couldn't have been much more uncomfortable with a summer overcoat thrown over my shoulders because the temperature on landing was a steaming 95 degrees!

And, in addition to the photographers and reporters, there were dozens of organ enthusiasts waiting to greet me—more than a hundred, all counted. I felt like some big movie star with all that attention and that's exactly how the



(Mr. Larsen, recently returned from a three-month engagement playing theatre organ for Melbourne audiences, granted the BOMBARDE this exclusive account of his journey to a land where the theatre organ is an accepted part of theatre programs.)

crowd regarded me. So, I decided to drift with the tide. I held an impromptu press conference right at the airport, and the next day the entertainment columns of the Melbourne papers were loaded with the story of my arrival. Right then I started a collection of clippings.

I was soon to learn that there is a vast difference regarding the presentation of theatre organ music between the United States and Australia. The attitude of Australians toward their theatres is much different than here. For example, an Australian wouldn't think of throwing popcorn containers or soft drink cups on the floor of a theatre. For one thing, such items aren't available there. And an Australian has too much respect for his theatre to use it for a waste container. When he goes out for an evening, he isn't the least time-conscious. He's out to have a good time and he does just one thing—in this case, attend the cinema. That's where another difference comes in. Time was when consoles in the USA were spotlighted for solo presentations. Those remaining are used solely for intermission music, rarely in solo. But not so "Down Under." The organ is a definite part of the show; each night I had

a half-hour concert period to fill. Because it was a first run "road show" presentation house, I didn't have to change my program too often but the extracurricular promotional activities kept me jumping. Someone was forever setting me up for a TV or radio show, usually the agency which handled my publicity, the Jenny Ham Agency of Melbourne.

Before I arrived I was told that *Oklahoma* would be the film which would be presented during most of my two-month stint at the Dendy. However, that film had played Melbourne in "normal width" screen and the wide-screen version, although equipped with a brand-new stereo music track, didn't draw the expected crowds and I was soon playing a brand-new concert opposite *Zorba the Greek*, which played for several weeks.

The instrument proved to be a fine Wurlitzer of 15 ranks which the Victorian Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia had installed in the Dendy. A Compton Harmonic Tuba had been added for some extra "zing" and also a second Glockenspiel and a single-tap Xylophone, the last two outside the swell shutters.

At first I had trouble with the tuners, who were in the habit of tuning only the eight-foot pipework—just the pipes on the manual chests while ignoring the bass and high treble offsets. After the first tuning job I tried a few pedal notes and found them to be out of tune with the ranks just tuned. I finally got them to tune everything—and also to adjust the tremos to a slower, deeper beat instead of the fast chatter I noted at first.

Where did I aim my performances? Mostly in the direction of young audiences—not the organ buffs, necessarily, although they showed up in force, too. I brought back a packet of mail from kids who appreciated the music I played. They were forever coming down front to ask for autographs—including one pretty young miss who wanted my autograph inscribed on her bare arm. I managed, somehow, and later received a letter of thanks from her. She said she hadn't washed her arm since I signed it!

One very attractive feature at the Dendy Theatre was the management-employee relationship. To the manager of the Dendy, Robert Ward, Jr., I was like a member of his family. He couldn't

(Continued on Next Page)

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do enough for me. My elaborate dressing room was always fragrant with fresh flowers, and there was a bowl of fresh fruit on the table daily. There was a TV set and a well-stocked refrigerator. I could have lived there and enjoyed it. When I left, the Wards presented me with a fine suit of clothes — and an invitation to return. I never before met a theatre manager like Bob Ward. And his family was in every way as attractive.

In fact, all of the people I met were friendly to North Americans, although they had complaints about the more brash type of night club entertainer whose stock in trade is "slam humor." Humorists who make their points by running someone else down don't go over Down Under.

But it was the concentrated attention I rated while performing that amazed me most. The audiences listened in respectful silence for a full half-hour of organ music. Each had paid his \$1.20 admission and he was happy to get his money's worth. Many times I couldn't help comparing the attitudes there with those back home. In Australia I played a half-hour concert nightly for 64 days without a single day off! That's in addition to special shows, purely organ concerts and silent movie shows I did within my engagement. In the USA, an organist does well if he can sell two or three concerts a year in one locality.

One pleasant aspect of the engagement was the vigor with which the organ was advertised. As long as I was on the program, newspaper advertising listed me, sometimes with a photo. And there were many special newspaper stories, such as when I'd play a silent movie. We'd "ham it up" for the photographers and the resulting newspaper publicity would help fill the theatre. Even officialdom is enthusiastic. For example, the Lord Mayor of Brighton attended my opening.

Theatre organ buffs are as well organized in Australia as in the USA. The "ATOE" there is "TOSA" — Theatrical Organ Society of Australia, and it's national in scope with most activity concentrated in Melbourne and Sydney. In fact, all three purely organ concerts played at the Dendy were sponsored by the Victorian Division of TOSA. The Dendy Wurlitzer actually belongs to TOSA. Members moved it from its original home in the Capitol Theatre in 1963. They are just as enthusiastic toward the old giants as we are here in the USA. Incidentally, the organ has a name — "Eliza."

Silent movies? They have a large following in Australia. I had a lot of fun

accompanying the old Lon Chaney chiller, *Phantom of the Opera*. It was so well attended (for a midnight performance on Sunday) that over 500 people had to be turned away.

Yes, there were personal appearances and special stage shows. I was always being called on for TV panel shows, and Dean Mitchell arranged for a weekend show at Hobart, Tasmania. They flew a Baldwin theatre model over with me, just for the show.

Perhaps my biggest thrill was in having a whole variety show named for me. Near Melbourne there's an outdoor concert hall similar to our Hollywood Bowl. It's called "The Myer Music Bowl." That's where they staged the "Lyn Larsen Variety Show." It was all "live," with a 15-piece stage band, a 120-voice Italian (descent) chorus, a gorgeous "thrush" named Suzi Miller, and I played that same Baldwin model HT-2 I took to Tasmania. We had a ball rehearsing, and 40 little girls from the Italian chorus were intent on getting my autograph. Judging from my stiff fingers next day, most of them did. It's a wonderful experience to participate in a live show which the audience appreciates. Pianist Tony Fenelon and I played some well-received pop duets and the nine-man Dixieland band really hit the spot with the audience. So did the Helen Driessen Trio, one of Australia's finest folk-song groups — somewhat on the Peter, Paul and Mary pattern. That was really a high point in my summer adventure — yes, summer; Australia is on the other side of the equator, making December, January and February hot weather months.

Another "high" was in hearing my own arrangements being "played back" by other artists and musical groups — artists who had attended my shows and, using their sharp musical ears, had picked up some of the devices which were in my arrangements. It's satisfying to know that part of one's "bag of tricks" is considered valuable enough to become part of the local musical language.

Frankly, I didn't do much traveling. There just wasn't time, with my average 14-hour day. But I managed a brief trip to Sydney to play three concerts.

When the Dendy weekly program booklet advertised "Gala Farewell Concert — Lyn Larsen at the Wurlitzer," I suddenly realized that my great adventure was coming to an end — even though I had already extended my stay at the request of Mr. Ward. It was a wonderful concert. Again pianist Tony Fenelon and I played organ-piano duets and the Helen Driessen Trio sang. Present was that "final show" atmosphere and considerable pangs at the thought of parting.

But it was real enough and one bright morning I found myself aboard the S.S. *Canberra* bound for the USA. I was in deep gloom for awhile but then I busied myself by occasionally playing "cocktail piano" in the ship's "filling station," and the three weeks it took the *Canberra* to reach the coast of California gave me time to both recover and reflect.

Would I do it again? Would I travel that far to play for audiences who support nightly theatre organ spotlight concerts?

Does a hippie take to beads?

## 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 3

**TRANSPORTATION LOGISTICS**—One of the rougher problems faced by the convention planners is the bussing of conventioners to all events. All transportation to and from events will be by bus (starting and ending at the Ambassador Hotel). The registration fee each visitor pays also covers bus fares for the whole four days of visits, programs and concerts. As many as 40 busses will be involved at one time, each with a capacity of fifty persons. Therefore, units of 50 make up the "chessmen" with which transportation chairman Bill Exner makes his plans. It would be simple if all halls, homes and theatres on the agenda would accommodate 1,000 visitors at a time — but they don't. The range is from 50 (the average "crawl" home visit) to over 3,000 (Wiltern Theatre). The Loren Whitney Studio holds about 250 comfortably while the George Wright Studio may "sardine" 200 (he's never tried it). The Elks Temple can seat about 700 comfortably. The Rialto and Wiltern theatres present no problems. But the homes along the crawl route can take about 50 in a batch, a transportation balancing act which just might whiten Bill Exner's brushcut by convention time.

Why busses? Because each conventioner will travel about 400 miles between locations during the four days, so widely separated are the places with pipe organs. Therefore, all other transportation was ruled out. Parking facilities are not available for private autos at the many locations, so conventioners arriving in their own vehicles will do best to park them in a lot at or near the Ambassador. So don't miss the bus.

# 1968 ATOE ♦ CONVENTION CALENDAR

## CONVENTION INFORMATION

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** Conventioneers are to make reservations with the hotel or motel of their choice. The Ambassador will be the ATOE headquarters, and rates have been reduced for ATOEers to include a week before and a week following the convention.

Ambassador Hotel  
3400 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles, Calif. 90005  
Phone: (213) DU 7-7011

LA Airport-Ambassador Hotel  
Limousine service available)

### Ambassador Convention Rates

Singles: \$13.00, \$14.00, \$15.00

Doubles and Twins (per person):  
\$8.00, \$9.00, \$10.00

**COSTS:** Registration fee is \$12.50 and includes bus transportation to and from all events, admission to movie studio tour, all concerts and crawls, silent movie presentation, seminars and workshops, plus souvenir brochure.

The banquet fee is \$7.50 which includes not only an excellent meal served in the world famous Coconut Grove but also professional entertainment.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Bus transportation will be provided to all scheduled events. Busses will depart on schedule. Because private transportation cannot be accommodated at theatres, private homes, studios and auditoriums, to miss a bus is to miss an event.

**RECORDING:** ATOE's contracts with artists and theatres specifically forbid all recording of performances, so please leave those tape recorders at home. ATOE's "tape patrol" will be on the prowl continually.

**SMOKING:** Please note that smoking is prohibited in auditoriums, theatres, studios and in many homes (during crawls).

**CAMERA'S:** Flashbulbs may not be fired during performances. Please indicate your appreciation of the artists through your cooperation.

Address all communications to:

ATOE CONVENTION 1968  
6900 SANTA MONICA BLVD.  
HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA  
90038

FRIDAY, JULY 12  
PM  
7:00 to 10:00 AMBASSADOR HOTEL — REGISTRATION

SATURDAY, JULY 13  
AM  
9:00 (thru 10 PM) AMBASSADOR HOTEL — REGISTRATION  
9:30 National Board of Directors—Meeting—Ambassador Hotel

PM  
1:00 to 5:00 ELKS Lodge "Get Acquainted Party"  
Invited jam session on the 4-61 Robert Morton organ  
1:00 to 5:00 SPECIAL EVENT — George Wright at his Studio Organ.  
George will play a half-hour program for groups of approximately 150 ATOEers at a time, until all who want to have heard him  
Special busses will leave at intervals as announced, shutting conventioneers to and from the three events listed  
7:00 to 11:00 ELKS LODGE  
1) American premiere of a NEW Theatre Organ movie\*  
2) Concert: Rosa Rio playing the 4-61 Morton\*  
11:00 to 12:30 AMBASSADOR HOTEL — Open house with the finest in electronic organs (Conn, Baldwin, Rodgers)

\*Because of seating limitations, each of these events will be presented twice

SUNDAY, JULY 14  
AM  
9:30 to 11:30 WILTERN THEATRE —  
Concert: Ann Leaf at the 4-37 Kimball organ  
PM  
1:00 to 5:00 ORGAN CRAWLS, Los Angeles Style. Sign up for the tour of your choice during registration  
6:30 to 7:30 No-host Cocktail Party and Reception, Ambassador Hotel  
7:30 to 10:30 AMBASSADOR HOTEL — ANNUAL BANQUET in the World Famous Coconut Grove — Entertainment galore!  
11:00 to 12:30 AMBASSADOR HOTEL — Exhibitors Open House with the electronic organs

MONDAY, JULY 15  
AM  
9:30 to 11:30 WILTERN THEATRE —  
Concert: Eddie Dunstedter at the 4-37 Kimball  
PM  
1:00 to 5:00 MOVIE STUDIO TOUR — Famed Universal City  
SPECIAL EXTRA (for those holding tickets only): a visit to Universal's sound scoring stage to hear Paul Beaver play the 2-12 Robert Morton studio organ. Due to limited capacity and tight scheduling, attendance to this "event within an event" will be limited to the first 300 who register  
8:30 to 11:00 RIALTO THEATRE (Pasadena) —  
Concert: Bill Thomson at the 2-10 Wurlitzer  
11:00 to 12:30 AMBASSADOR HOTEL — Exhibitors Open House with the electronic organs

TUESDAY, JULY 16  
AM  
9:30 to 11:30 WILTERN THEATRE —  
Concert: Lyn Larsen at the 4-37 Kimball  
PM  
1:30 to 4:00 ELKS LODGE — Seminars and Workshops: Theatre Organ Playing Techniques, Technical Session on Voicing and Regulating Organs  
Concert: Tom Hazleton at the 4-61 Robert Morton (Due to limited seating, each of the above events will be presented twice)  
8:30 to 11:00 WILTERN THEATRE — Silent movie comedy, "Safety Last," starring Harold Lloyd, with Gaylord Carter at the organ  
— THE END —

THE BIGGEST YET!

GEORGE WRIGHT  
at his studio organ

JAM SESSION  
on 4-61 Morton Organ

BUSSES, BUSSES  
EVERYWHERE!

MAKE  
RESERVATIONS  
EARLY!

ORGAN "CRAWLS"

JULY 13-16

CONCERTS

ANN LEAF  
Wiltern

DON BAKER  
Whitney Studio  
Morton

VISITS TO STUDIO  
& HOME INSTALLATIONS

IS  
CONVENTION

EDDIE DUNSTEDTER  
Wiltern

GORDON KIBBEE  
Simonton Grande  
Wurlitzer

TIME

ROSA RIO  
Elks Temple

BILL THOMSON  
Rialto

JOHNNY DUFFY  
Carson Studio  
Wurlitzer

BILL FIELD  
ICELAND RINK  
(PARAMOUNT)

IN  
LOS ANGELES

LYN LARSEN  
Wiltern

TOM HAZLETON  
Elks Temple

GAYLORD CARTER  
SILENT MOVIE PRESENTATION  
HAROLD LLOYD IN  
"SAFETY LAST"  
WILTERN

HELEN DELL  
"Tubes Inc. Wurli"

JIM MELANDER  
Harvey Heck's  
Wurlitzer

PLAYING TECHNIQUE SEMINAR

BANQUET AT THE  
WORLD FAMOUS  
COCOANUT GROVE

EXHIBITORS'  
"OPEN HOUSE"  
AT THE AMBASSADOR  
BALDWIN  
CONN  
RODGERS

DEAN  
McNICHOLS  
Bell Friends  
Church Wurli

DWIGHT  
BEACHAM  
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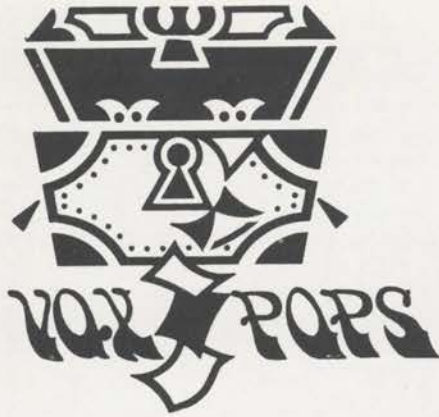


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## SHORT SHOTS FROM EVERYWHERE

Larry Ferrari, who is scheduled to play his second concert on the 4-34 Wurlitzer for the Detroit Theatre Organ Club on June 22, is one of those rare organists-with-a-fan-club. Larry, who is familiar to FM radio TV audiences in the Tri-State area (Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware) and through his commercial recordings, is the subject of a "Larry Ferrari Fan Club" biographical brochure



Larry Ferrari

which traces his career from the time he first listened to a "tractor-action" organ as a small boy up to his present spot in the "linelight," all of which points to the youth of his fans. But if Larry's fan-flamed biography is lacking in literary style, it gets its point across; Mr. Ferrari is a most active organist as he travels around the Tri-State beat to such engagements as supplying electronic organ music for the ice hockey games in the Philadelphia Sports Arena and practicing for a new record album to be played on a Gulbranson "Premiere." That's in addition to his regular radio and telecasts. And although it isn't in his biography, we are glad to add that Larry is also a member of ATOE.

*One of Ferrari's fans is ex-silent movie organist Esther Higgins, a gal who delights in recreating the old days by hauling a plug-in to an organ club meeting along with a projector and some reels of vintage silents, and staging a "this is the way it was" show, complete with "sing-along." She encourages audiences to bring old straw hats, gaudy garters and other paraphernalia of "way back when" to add color to her act. Although she*

*sometimes "subs" at the Sports Arena when Mr. Ferrari is out of town, the silent movie thing is her special love. She recently performed for the 200-member Oaklyn (New Jersey) Community Organ Club and left them wanting more. We'll wager they'll get it.*



Esther Higgins

*The Oaklyn group is a livewire outfit. One of its recent recitalists was Dennis James, the lad who did such a fine job at the 4-34 DTOC Wurlitzer during the 1967 ATOE convention in Detroit. Dennis gets around, too. In addition to his church duties, he's been playing the pipe organ during intermissions at the Lanesdowne Theatre on Saturday nights.*

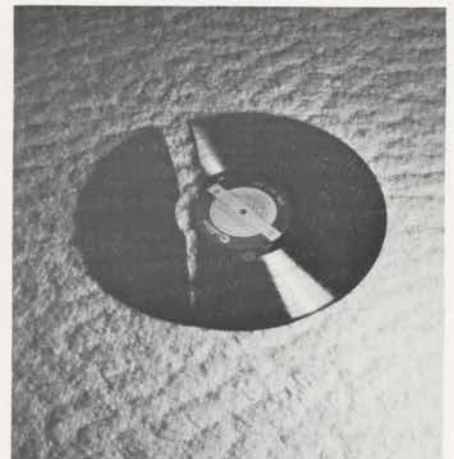
**Bill Bunch, Prexy of the Seattle pipe organ firm, Balcom and Vaughan, slipped into Los Angeles in mid-May to take measurements from Frank Lanterman's erstwhile San Francisco Fox 4-36 Wurlitzer console. Bunch has been hired to build a new console for the currently "headless" New York Paramount 4-36 Wurlitzer which is being installed in the Wichita Civic Auditorium by the Wichita Theatre Organ group. The Lanterman console is in the same "Crawford Special" class as the N.Y. Paramount (five were built) and Los Angeles is closer to Seattle than Detroit or St. Louis. Still no progress toward incarceration of the culprits who burned the historic Paramount console on Feb. 25th.**

In Utica, New York, the management of FM radio station WUFM was proud of its "Organ Loft" program as the radio show started its seventh year. The broadcast has been conducted from its beginning by ATOEer Don Robinson, who programs classical as well as theatre organ music.

**GEORGE'S 'SECRET WAR'.** Want to hear some movie scoring by George Wright? In the "Secret War of Harry Frigg," a Nazi officer warns his victims that soon the conquered land will "resound with the music of Bach!" This is followed by a blast of Bach played on a straight organ, for emphasis. It's the organ in the Hollywood Methodist church played by George Wright, a job he did for Universal's music director, Joseph Gershenson, strictly by stopwatch, without having seen the film sequence beforehand or viewing it at the time of recording. Speaking of George, he asked us to emphasize that he's playing his own 3-30 studio organ for conventioners, not the Pasadena Rialto Wurlitzer. A widely circulated rumor that he would play the Rialto Wurli is groundless.

*Word has been received from St. Louis of the serious injury of John Ferguson, long a leader in St. Louis chapter affairs. John was struck by a vehicle operated by a bit-run driver and suffered a fractured rib and pelvis. As soon as he could be moved, John was flown home to his folks in Louisiana for the long recuperation.*

In Lafayette, Louisiana, youthful organ fan Lew Williams waited a long time for that Crawford LP—the ancient Camden with the reproductions of many of Jesse's finest RCA Victor 78 rpm platters made originally in the '20s. But when he finally located a pressing, it arrived in two pieces (through the U.S. mail). Broken-hearted, Lew laid it out on the dining room carpet and shot a Polaroid as a remembrance of a mournful day. Here it is, looking like a bifurcated flying saucer nesting on a sea of nimbus clouds.



Ungroovy Gap!

## VOX POPS, contd.

*Then there was the organ-oriented tippler, whose musical preferences were so firmly rooted to the "golden era" of theatre organs, that he would drink only Crawford's Scotch!*

**GOOF CORRECTION DEPT.:** In a recent issue we moved the Oakland Paramount 4-20 Wurlitzer about 50 miles from its actual storage place by stating that it was stashed near the Oakland city dump. Shoulda said the Benecia city dump. And our stock is probably a bit low in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, after we referred to organist Merle Bailey as Merle "Dewey" in an April VOX POP. And in the VOX POP about Doug Erdman's bullet-riddled Tibia, the printer left out a few words which had shots coming from "down in the parapets" instead of "down in the valley, below the parapets." Our old friends, Mickey, Goofy and Donald, are furious for our having moved Disneyland from Anaheim to Santa Ana. And up in Seattle, Eddie Zollman, Jr., caught us in a classic goof (Feb. FOR THE RECORDS) in which we added a Pedal Diaphone to a well known studio organ. Yes, Eddie, George Wright did play those passages in the "Sounds of Love" on the 16' Double Solo String, as you corrected us. Our printer kindly "corrected" "orchestrian" to read "orchestration" in April's FOR THE RECORDS. And we really hit bottom when we omitted all mention of the one gal in the crew of "the Guys Who Fixed the Organ" (Feb.) Carolyn Kissel, Neal's bride. Some days it doesn't pay to get out of bed.

Give New York organist Billy Nalle much credit for the liberal attitude of the AGO's new magazine, "MUSIC," toward the theatre instrument. Billy keeps the fire lighted under MUSIC staffers with hints and suggestions concerning TO items of interest which also serve the AGO interest. Evidence of effectiveness is MUSIC's April issue with our own Dennis Hedberg's article, "Rebuilding the Mighty Wurlitzer." Dennis should know how; he's rebuilt three big ones that we know about.

When Doc Bebko made his annual pilgrimage from his home in Olean to New York and Radio City Music Hall (where he once titillated the 4-58), he was surprised to find not Jack Ward, Ray Bohr nor Dick Leibert at the mighty Wurlitzer, but a stranger. He inquired and was told the organist's name was "Mr. Detroy." Dick Leibert cleared up the mystery: "Mr. Detroy subbed for

Jack Ward, who took Ray Bohr's place after Ray broke three ribs in a fall and needed time to heal." (No, Ray didn't take a dive from a raised console!) But Dick Leibert, who recently returned to the 4-58 after a tour through Michigan, South Dakota, Iowa and Missouri, had this to add: "For my birthday, my family pooled resources and presented me with a shiny, red Honda. Maybe soon I'll need someone to substitute for me!"

*Speaking of the RCMH behemoth, Organ fixer Henry Pope arrived in New York in mid-May to complete a project he, Dick Simonton and Gordon Kibbee started nearly three years ago; a complete overhaul of the big Wurlitzer after it had started to "breathe hard." The job is now nearly finished, with a complete re-leathering of the instrument by Warren Westervelt just ended. Pope will remain for about six weeks to do some regulating. Then the big "beast" should behave and sound like new.*

## 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 4

**FLASH! 'OLD FIDDLEFOOT' SIGNED!**—Yes, kiddies, the inimitable Martha Lake will make an appearance at the convention, in spite of all that could be done to prevent it. Chairman Bob Carson reluctantly announced that the "blowsy Brunnehilde of the bulgy Bourdon" will confront conventioners during the banquet entertainment, and would probably haul along the stop with which she first stupefied victims during the ATOE convention at Portland in 1965—the unexplainable "Abyssinian Stringed Oboe," an instrument with half a mind of its own, but one which can't seem to decide matters of pitch (it wobbles) or intonation (it scrapes worse than Jack Benny's violin). With her mad love affair with author Ben Hall a shambles, Martha will undoubtedly loose her passion on conventioners with some real torchy ballads. All that can be predicted is that it will be awesome.

But back to Doc Bebko, who was known as Eddy Baker back when. His report on the RCMH Easter show is significant: "The movie was putrid, the stage show very smart and entertaining," which indicates that conditions haven't really changed since the days of "Dinny Timmins" (Dec. 1967 TO-B, p. 7).

Neither has the creator of "Dinny Timmins"—organist Lloyd del Castillo. As a result of BOMBARDE columnist Lloyd Klos' "exhumation" of one of Dinny's 40-year-old columns, the entire Timmins thing has been pulled out of mothballs and del Castillo, who now lives in Los Angeles, is again putting Dinny's often weirdly expressed observations on human foibles down on paper for publication in the LA (Pro) Organists Breakfast Club monthly, OFF THE KEYBOARDS.

Mention of del Castillo brings to mind a warning we must make about a book just published by the former New England solo organist. The book, with a preface by Gaylord Carter, is entitled "An Alphabetic Primer of Organ Stops"—but the title is most misleading. Actually it's a humorous parody of an organ stop dictionary, with outrageous tangents, puns galore, and vaguely related corn. Sample definition: BOMBARDE—a slam at Shakespeare (Bum Bard). Another: VIOL—a glass container, despicable, a French villager, calf meat, a fiddle...down to and including "the Bull Fiddle, or Dog House."

*We wouldn't be surprised to find del Castillo following a Spritzflute around with a cuspidor. What's wrong with all this good clean fun? Nothing, for those with enough organ background to know when he's kidding, which is usually. But for the novice who is just learning, he could sure assimilate a raft of misinformation. If the reader feels he can't live without a copy—well, keep an eye on the CLASSIFIED column of this mag.*

Organ expert Fred Meunier has a priceless memory of the 1913 opening of the famed Paris Theatre in Denver, one of the Hope-Jones early "big ones." Meunier, who still lives in Denver, was working on the installation, assisting the famed James H. Nuttall, Hope-Jones chief voicer. But just before the opening, Robert Hope-Jones in person showed up to check every detail of the installation. He was lionized locally and so great was the prestige of the organ builder that on opening night when a spotlight focussed on organist Frank R. White, and the organ thrilled audiences for the first time, the curtains parted and a second "spot" settled on Robert Hope-Jones sitting in a huge wicker chair, his mop of white hair resplendent in the glare of the light. Both builder and organist were warmly applauded, recalls Fred. And admission was only five cents!

In Sydney, Australia, organist Noreen Hennessy, only recently returned from a cruise which took her to the East Coast of the USA, had a problem; on short notice she had to play before an audience on half of a long unused 4-21 Wurlitzer. The problem was that she didn't know which stops were usable until she tried them out—as the console started up on its elevator. It happened when the Greater Union Theatre decided, almost overnight, to stage a "Hollywood Premiere" for a movie entitled "How to Save a Marriage and Ruin Your Life."



Noreen Hennessy

The big searchlights were raking the sky outside while the Theatre Organ Society of Australia was having a concert inside between 6 and 7 p.m. There had been a valiant effort to touch up the long unused instrument by organman Peter Rowe, but time had run out, so poor Noreen had to find out what would work and what wouldn't as she played for the sympathetic TOSA members. Later, when the premiere crowd came in, Noreen had the organ "down pat" and the big audience which filed in to see Stella Stevens in person, favored Noreen with huge waves of applause, reports John Clancy from Sydney.

*Gene Featherston, writing about the fine artists who have appeared for the Central Indiana Chapter (at Tom Ferree's Louisville "Uniphone" organ in the Rivoli Theatre, Indianapolis), is hopeful that joint ATOE-AGO meetings will tend to get AGOers interested in TO. Along this line of thought, the Chapter, which has sponsored concerts by such greats as Reg. Foort, John Muri and Kay McAbee, purposely starts joint concerts with perhaps a few Bach numbers, which come off well on the Uniphone. "Perhaps we'll win some of them over," hopes Gene.*

**Organist Dean McNichols, announcing a future concert at the Friends Church in Bell, Calif., to be played by Ann Leaf, phrased it neatly: "Besides being an organist, Ann is a musician."**

Droll organist Al Bollington, whose latest record release, "Organ Magic," is played on a Wurlitzer plug-in for Concert Recording, became alarmed when he noted some digital sluggishness in his right hand which was affecting the fast passages. Says Al, "I thought I had a

touch of arthritis—until I did some backtracking. I finally concluded that I'd only sprained a couple of tendons—while opening a can of beer."

**Continued Friday night broadcasts, featuring John Schrader, gave radio listeners hope that the famed Louisville WHAS Kilgen was about to be revived. Late night "tuner-inners" of the '30s and '40s recall Herbie Koch's broadcasts with the same reverence they attach to the memory of WLW's "Moon River." The instrument has been heard intermittently since Koch's retirement. But hopes were dashed when it was learned that the famed theatre-style studio organ had been dismantled when the WHAS studios were moved. The Schrader broadcasts were tapes (enough for 26 weeks) made before the organ was removed. But there is still a glimmer that the glorious voice of Louisville will be heard again. Program Director George Walsh told the BOMBARDE that WHAS owner, Barry Bingham, has donated the Kilgen to Jefferson County, Kentucky, for installation in its convention center, "where it should continue to be a valuable asset to the Louisville community."**

*The Southern Illinois University Library (Edwardsville, Illinois) received a priceless gift from the brother of late St. Louis film cuer Ralph Booker who scored silent movies from many a St. Louis theatre pit. The gift consisted of all Booker's sheet music, scores and arrangements dating from the early days of silent films to the advent of "talkies."*

**ATOE member, Bob Nye, owner of a piano and organ store in Reading, Pennsylvania, reports that part of the ex-Buffalo Paramount Theatre 3-11 Wurlitzer which he purchased in November 1961, is playing in a special auditorium he built at his business location. This organ was originally opened on May 30, 1927 by Alex F. Taylor. Theatre was closed in early 1965, and most of it demolished a few months later.**

While we're in Pennsylvania, "our man in Pittsburgh," Rey Galbraith, has some nostalgia. Time was when the late Bert Shoff broadcast a residence-style Wurlitzer from the then Wurlitzer Building at 719 Liberty Avenue. Bert was one of the early exponents of the "swing" style of playing, which was introduced to the Pittsburgh area by "Wild Oscar" (Lloyd Hill).

For a residence, the instrument is a monster—146 ranks of mostly "straight" pipework in seven divisions. Three blowers supply the air pressure which powers the ranks with from 8 to 30 inches of wind. The battery of percussions includes a nine-foot concert grand piano. The pedal division boasts five 32-footers. It's located in the grand ballroom of the former Pierre duPont estate near Wilmington, Delaware. Normally the Wednesday night concert features what the handout describes as "a distinguished recitalist of the classical concert field"—in short, a church organist. But the concert of April 30th would be different. Scheduled was Billy Nalle, and his program was announced as improvisations, using various popular themes as source material. If anyone heard any 32-foot rumblings in the Wilmington area during that evening, we'd like to know about it. With those ingredients, anything could happen.

**Purely by a fluke we learned that Don Baker's birthday is on February 29, so he can celebrate every fourth year. "I'm just past 15," admits Don.**

A lot came to light when evangelist Oral Roberts put the 18-rank theatre organ in one of his Tulsa broadcast rooms up for sale. Back in 1958, the information came in bits and pieces that Oral Roberts was having a theatre organ built new by Wicks. Actual information was at a premium because, due to its church clientele, Wicks didn't want it known that it was building a theatre organ. So we never were able to get a story. With the organ recently advertised for sale, everything falls into place; Wicks retains the ability to fabricate theatre organs and the cost is moderate—\$40,000 for 18 ranks. But Roberts asked only \$10,000 for the ten-year-old instrument, and we can't help but wonder why he wants to be rid of it.

*ATOE Veep, Dick Kline of Frederick, Maryland, reports considerable theatre organ activity in the Washington, D. C., area. As of May 15, he has 22 of the 28 ranks of his own Wurlitzer in operation, and will have all four manuals in operation shortly. Trolley buffs will be interested to know that Dick gets his 3-phase electric power from the abandoned Hagerstown & Frederick interurban which ran behind his farm.*

*Meanwhile, Woody Wise has removed a 3-10 Barton from a Newport News, Virginia, theatre, and will install it in the Virginia Theatre, one block from Jim Boyce's Skating Rink in Alexandria*  
(Continued on Next Page)



wherein is the ex-NY Center Theatre 4-34 Wurlitzer. Looks like the beginnings of a potential area for an ATOE convention.

A new book which will be of interest to those interested in the history of radio broadcasting is *Radio's Golden Age*, by Frank Buxton and Bill Owen. This excellent book contains references to all programs which were beamed nationwide, from the "A&P Gypsies" to the "Ziegfeld Follies of the Air." The entire casts, directors, producers, musical directors, writers, in fact, all personnel connected with the shows are listed. The organists for about 35 shows are listed, among them Rosa Rio (12 times), Dick Leibert, John Gart, Lew White, Ann Leaf, Paul Carson, Charles Paul and Skitch Henderson. Over 100 pictures are in a special section. Good nostalgia of a memorable era.



ORGANIST ANN LEAF went home to Omaha, Nebraska, in October, 1967, for visits with her many friends there and with her sister, Esther, also an organist. Naturally, word got around, and soon a group of buffs had enticed her to the Orpheum Theatre for an informal session at the 3-13 Wurlitzer restored by George Rice and his associates (see the April 1967 issue for "The Pipes Are Playing Again in Omaha").

Ann played an after-midnight session for more than 80 enchanted fans, then did a repeat Sunday a.m. performance at the 2,850-seat house for those who missed the first concert. Ann was well pleased with the instrument, and the Omaha fans were most happy with Ann's concerts. It was all part of a vacation trip Ann made with hubby Russ Butler.

More happy fans will hear Ann Leaf in concert at the 1968 ATOE National Convention in Los Angeles on July 14 at the Wiltern's 4-37 Kimball organ.

# THE RENAISSANCE OF THE THEATRE ORGAN

by Billy Nalle

(The following article by organist Billy Nalle is reprinted in its entirety from the November 1967 issue of MUSIC/THE A.G.O. MAGAZINE by permission of the publisher.—Ed.)

The Theatre Organ is in renaissance and not only so in theatres. Several hundred homes, auditoria, schools and colleges have installed theatre pipe organs during the past fifteen years. Two new situations represent the increasing activity. This fall a theatre pipe organ will be opened in the Empire State Theatre and the Musical Instruments Museum, Syracuse, N. Y. In the fall of 1968 the first theatre pipe organ to be installed in a United States cultural center will be inaugurated. This will take place in the Roberson Center for the Arts and Sciences, Binghamton, N. Y.

The first golden era of the theatre organ was brought to an end much more by the depression of the 30's than by the advent of sound films in the 20's. Even in the organ world many who should have known better pronounced lavish conversational requiems. The return today of a great instrument in new situations and on new terms brings to mind the words of Mark Twain, "Reports of my death greatly have been exaggerated."

## Love Required

Until about 1950 a few theatre and home installations plus a small, hard core of enthusiasts, constituted the whole picture. Then two things happened which were destined to produce the impossible. The recording companies discovered the range, brilliance and excitement of the theatre organ and it was "love required." The instrument provided sounds which could utilize and promote their new high-fidelity recordings. In the rush to titillate record buyers, there was a flow of albums running from the finest to those provoking nausea. Not long before this was the appearance on the scene of a handful of organists who were developing fresh ideas and styling. Among my colleagues whose recordings helped greatly to spark the field are George Wright, Johnny Seng and the late Buddy Cole of this country and Bryan Rodwell of England. Also the church organ field provided an outstanding contributor as

player and teacher in the person of Searle Wright.

The nationally organized American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts has regional chapters coast to coast and there are excellent independent groups such as the Rochester, N. Y., Theatre Organ Society and the Detroit Theatre Organ Club. In England there are two major groups, the Theatre Organ Club and the Cinema Organ Society. Even Australia now has the large and musically industrious Theatre Organ Society. These organizations have contagious enthusiasm for everything from buying organ parts to sponsoring public concerts.

## What About the Future?

The theatre organ world now is at the crossroads. Of course there always should be available the best of the older music and the older styles of playing it. This must be true for any instrument; there is no argument there. However, what about the future? Those who are experimenting with new ideas in theatre organ construction, both pipe and electronic, and those who are playing the instruments via present-day musical language as yet are a minority. For all the versatility and tonal color of the theatre organ, if it is to build on its new popularity and make a serious contribution to the future, new players must include temporary musical vocabulary in their listening and playing. After all, we are well into the second half of the Twentieth Century. The language of popular music has grown so much in variety and sophistication in barely 35 years that no excuse remains for permitting other instrumental musicians to have a corner on the market of fresh thinking. A fossilized attitude carefully nurtured by the organist hardly is a fit companion to so marvelous an instrument. It is an anachronism today to burn vigil lights before the Howard swivel seat once used by the justly celebrated Jesse Crawford.

## Mature Musicianship

The best organists I know make time  
(Continued on Page 27)

## 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 5

**\$12.50 FOR REGISTRATION? MURDER!**—Not really, because never before has the initial registration fee bought so much. Included is bus transportation to all events, and considering the distances between organ installations, that amounts to a bus tour of Southern California thrown in. The fee also includes admission to the ATOE special Universal City film studio tour, the Thomas Organ Factory tour, seminars and workshops, all concerts and crawls, the silent movie presentation—plus a souvenir booklet.



BILLY NALLE is a busy professional organist (shown here at his annual pre-Christmas concert series for the Connecticut Bank and Trust Co., Hartford, on a specially voiced Allen theatre model) who also finds time to promote theatre organ in other ways, viz., the accompanying article.

(Continued from Page 26)

for exposing themselves to a comprehensive musical diet and to all the arts, both ancient and modern. The mature musicianship which results shows in the music they make. They have something to say and their contributions put us all in their debt. The demands of the finest popular music in performance are the equal today of those in any other category of music. Successful performance requires the theatre organist to subject himself to the same musical standards as any other musician. Happily for the growing theatre organ field there are players who are growing musically along with it.

The future offers an increasing challenge, a great opportunity and an equally great adventure that no alert theatre organist will ignore. Here's a toast to the *second* golden era.

A BOMBARDE Profile . . .

## EDDIE DUNSTEDTER GETS AROUND

Since his return to his Southern California home from his stanza at the Carl Greer Inn (covered elsewhere in this issue), Eddie Dunstedter has been especially active. We caught him just as he returned from a two-night concert engagement at Lou DuMoulin's Granada Organ Loft in Seattle. He reported that the big Wurlitzer (reportedly a 4-34) is impressive but that he had to do a lot of touch-up work to get it in shape for some of his specialties. (Eddie got his technical training as an apprentice at Kilgen in St. Louis.) While in Seattle he got together with ATOE President Dick Schrum for a sampling of the Paramount's Wurlli (Publix) and a whirlwind go at a few of the twenty home installations in the area.

As soon as he and Vee got back to Los Angeles, he was asked to play for the ATOE convention. He accepted, then decided that he'd better find out what the local roster of convention organs would sound like. That was one of the reasons he showed at the Jim Roseveare concert on March 24th; the other reason, he explained, was "because Jim came to hear me at the Greer Inn." It was Eddie's first visit to an LA Chapter concert and he created quite a stir among the concert-goers, and he got a "mighty hand" when Program Chairman Neal Kissel introduced him and the spotlight found him sitting in the second row. After the Roseveare concert he waited until the crowd left and then returned to the auditorium to examine the console of the Kimball 4-37. Although the blower was spinning, Eddie declined to play. "This is Jim Roseveare's day," he explained. Neal and Dick Stoney answered Eddie's questions about the Kimball and Eddie stated that Roseveare had made it sound good.

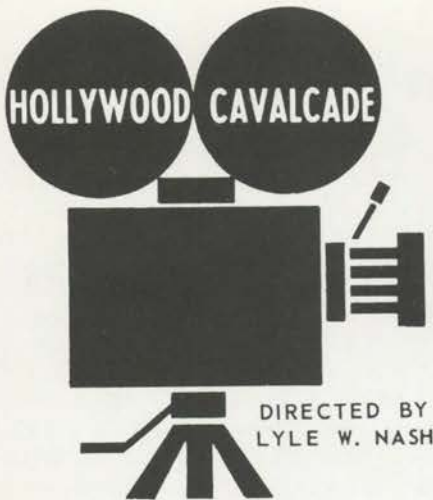
After some lunch at "Sandy's" (where the concert-goers congregate to discuss the Sunday morning concerts over a plate of flapjacks), Eddie expressed a desire to examine the Elks Temple Morton. Word got around the beanery that "Eddie's gonna check out the Elks organ" and after a few hurried arrangements between Neal Kissel and Virgil Purdue, Virgil motored Eddie to the Temple, which isn't far from Sandy's and the Wiltern.

About a dozen eager Dunstedter fans were there, waiting for Eddie, and they weren't disappointed. Eddie sat down at the huge console and just noodled, but his noodling was gorgeous! During the hour that he invested in checking out the various ranks, he interspersed his noodling with several of his trademark arrangements, including *On the Trail*, *The Pilgrims' Chorus*, a generous portion of the *Tristan and Isolde* love music, and his famous arrangement of that venerable swampjuice ballad, *Chloe* (during which the Bombarde editor nearly went into shock). But there was more to come. Eddie was coaxed into playing the lobby organ, which consists of a two-deck console that controls the Echo division of the big Morton, but pours the music through a separate set of swell shutters into the high-ceilinged lobby and grand staircase. It's a sweet-sounding instrument and Eddie found it effective for light classics, such as transcriptions of the short piano pieces of Debussy. Another hour passed as Eddie enriched his little group of admirers with the musical subtleties which makes "the Dunstedter sound" quite unlike anything else in music. Then it was over and the listeners departed, walking well above ground. Asked what he was going to do next, Eddie replied, "I'm going home and practice on my Thomas."

—Peg Nielsen



GETTING AROUND—Eddie Dunstedter (reading from left to right) examines—but doesn't touch!—the Wiltern Kimball console ("What's on second touch? I've got to have second touch on the accompaniment!"); Eddie next tries out the deep pedal bass on the Elks Temple Morton ("I'll bet Dick Purvis likes this one!"); Eddie captivates Newshen Peg Nielsen with his improvisation on the Elks Temple lobby organ; and (far right) at the Seattle Paramount Wurlitzer during a recent visit to Northwest.



## A BOMBARDE Profile



### COLLEGE STUDENT BY DAY -- TH. ORGANIST BY NIGHT!

The little 6-rank Morton in the Baton Rouge Paramount has occupied much space in these columns ever since organ technician Ronald May rescued it from oblivion and put it back in first class shape. His story was covered in an article entitled "It Was Doomed to Silence"

Jr. . . Mrs. Albert Smith, widow of one of the Vitagraph founders, retains a lively interest in films.

**CHOICE READING**—"One Reel a Week," by Fred J. Balshofer and Arthur C. Miller, is 50 years of happy experiences in films. Miller is one of the master photographers of the movies (3 Oscars) while Balshofer was a producer, promoter, director, dreamer and man of vision. A gem for fans of the silent era.

**BETTY BRONSON** says: "During our visit to Mexico City I met our old friend, Lawrence Gray. He lives in the mile-high city and looks as charming as when we were making Are Parents People? back in 1925."

**THERE'S** no word as yet about the release of that 1967 film, *The Silent Treatment*, a modern film made in the fashion of a silent production.

**EXTENSIVE** use of mood music on movie sets was a technique of D. W. Griffith and other pioneer film greats. It worked wonders from 1910 to 1928. Now a wise writer-producer is reviving the custom, claiming "It will result in more depth in a performance." Great ideas never die.

**FILM historians** contend and frequently prove that every so-called "new" photographic trick was used from 1890 to 1930 by film makers and then forgotten. Such tricks as the flip-over, sharp cuts, split screen, triple-printing, camera crane shots, camera following subject through a crowd were all used by producers and experimental film makers long before TV came along.

**SEE you all at the national ATOE convention in Los Angeles come July.**

**CONTRIBUTIONS** and correspondence to this feature may be addressed to P. O. Box 113, Pasadena, Calif. 91102.

## The JEKYLL/Hyde Existence of DOLTON MC ALPIN

(October 1966 issue). On reading the article, West Coast organist-teacher Randy Sauls did a double take; that proscenium arch looked familiar. Sure enough, Randy had put in plenty of apprenticeship time on the same little Morton back in the early '30s. Randy's acquaintance with the organ was covered in "How a Wayward Young Genius Crashed the Sound Barrier Into Utter Oblivion" (April 1967 issue).

So here's an organ fully restored and ready to be played. Is it getting a workout before theatre audiences? It most certainly is.

Unlike many restoration jobs which stagnate after the instrument is back in shape, the entire idea behind the restoration of the Paramount organ was to enable the theatre to present organ music to audiences. (Continued on Page 29)

## 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 6

**"SPECIAL ACTION" PLANNED FOR MOVIE STUDIO TOUR**—Although details can't be revealed at this time, conventioners taking in the Universal City film studio tour will be treated to "something extra" which the regular run of tourists don't get. Normally visitors are subjected to such spectacles as stunt men staging a shoot-out on the Western street set, complete with tumbles from high places, lots of noise, and "blood" by Heinz. Or perhaps a couple of vintage cars loaded with "gangsters" lurch through a city street set while the "hoods" playfully spray one another with tommyguns. Or Bonnie and Clyde may stick up the village bank. The visitor never knows quite what to expect and it's difficult to imagine what could be added to increase the spectacle offered—but something is being cooked up and the advance rumors indicate that more than just one star of films and TV will be on hand to entertain ATOE'rs.

**CARMEL MYERS** knew that Rudolph Valentino had "charisma" and helped him in his early film efforts. She gave Rudy his second movie role, in *A Society Sensation*, made in 1918. It still plays at silent film temples. The woman who had been tagged as a sultry siren recalled a few years ago a men's lotion that Valentino favored. Its magic scent haunted her long after he was in his cinema Valhalla. She researched the scent and now spends much of her time promoting these toilet products. Her charm, beauty and career in films make her an ever-welcome saleswoman. She's ever available to talk with fans and friends about her career spanning two decades. Would she appear today (and she looks vibrant)? "Say the word . . . and give me the right part," she smiles. "This business keeps me busy but . . ." Her husband, Al, is on the alert for a good part for Carmel.

**DOWN MEMORY LANE**—Was there ever a more pathetic or haughty Irish maid than Una O'Connor? . . . Sara Allgood was the perfect rooming-house mother type. Virtue oozed from her every nerve. . . Charles Lane has played more crafty, feisty, rugged lawyers than any character actor in the business.

**RAMON Novarro** put the finishing touches to his biography while enjoying a long sea cruise.

**REEL STUFF**—Lillian Gish has quite a number of preserved prints of her half-century of film making. . . The silent film collection (100-plus prints) of John Griggs has been sold to the Yale University collection. . . Illness has prevented Vilma Banky from going to New York to appear at a screening of the 1925 *The Eagle* for Valentino fans. . . Buddy Rogers and Richard Arlen attended a benefit screening of their starrer, *Wings*, in Southern California. They were nearly mobbed by fans with long memories. . . Several hundred (vastly more than for a great silent star) fans and friends attended the last rites for Charles Chaplin,

The organist is a Political Science senior at Louisiana State University—Dolton McAlpin, a young man who has successfully combined his text books with sheet music. Dolton has been playing week-end intermissions at the Paramount for nearly two years and his interest shows no signs of slackening. But then, music comes naturally to Dolton. He started picking out tunes on a piano at the age of 4. By the time he reached 8, he transferred his affection to the organ, a decision further solidified when he heard the Robert Morton organ in the Century Theatre, Jackson, Miss., being played during intermissions. It was only natural that he should gravitate toward Baton Rouge when college loomed—especially after he learned that an organ was being readied there for theatre presentations.

Restoration of the Paramount organ didn't just happen. It was a long, hard struggle plus lots of stubborn persistence on the part of Donald May. But the fact that the current Paramount manager, Tom Mitchell, is a dedicated ATOer augurs well for the continuation of organ music in the house. Baton Rouge isn't exactly a "T.O. oasis." Within a 250 mile radius there are no less than seven playable organs in theatres. But the Paramount is the only house making use of its treasure.

What kind of music does Dolton play during week-end evening intermissions? He seems to attract a young audience



HELEN DELL, pert Los Angeles Chapter organist, had a 'hard act to precede' when she played an introductory concert last December 10 at the Chapter's annual election meeting held at the Elks Temple in Los Angeles. This was the occasion of George Wright's surprise appearance and concert for the Chapter.

At this year's National Convention, however, she will star in her own right. During the visitation organ, crawls Helen will be heard at the 2-10 Wurlitzer at Tubes, Inc.

many being sophisticated college students, so he offers current pop tunes. He feels that the organ is more popular with the college kids than with older folks. However, a previous organist, Bob Courtney (who also helped with the restoration) did very well with programs of pops from the '20s—for the "older folks." But Dolton is college-oriented and who could resist the flattery of being recognized on campus as "the Paramount organist" and being asked to play request tunes for the week-end while walking between classes? Be that as it may the enthusiasm of week-end patrons is unmistakable. They appear to be "hooked" on live pipes.

And although the youthful organist admits he must "grind" to maintain his average at the university while playing a different role at the theatre, he's contemplating a broadcast series from the Paramount. He has already cut a recording on the Morton which is being released by Concert Recording to "Organ of the Month Club" members.

McAlpin is deeply impressed by the thoroughness of May's restoration job. "He's done a terrific job of rebuilding the organ. There's not an air leak to be heard, anywhere—and that claim can't be made for many organs!"

During the past year May added an octave of 16-foot Diaphone pipes to the Pedal Division of the Morton in order to overcome a deficiency in the bass (it's a somewhat "dead" house, from the acoustical viewpoint). And May has added what he calls "Trap Transfer" switches, a method of juggling Pedal and Accompaniment division traps between first and second touch on Pedal and lower manual—an idea he got while listening to a similar effect on a George Wright recording—thus increasing the little instrument's versatility. He has also added more combination pistons to increase the instrument's "quick change" capability.

"Everything is working well, and the organ is tuned and ready to go—and visiting ATOers are welcome to give it a try," states the young man who is doing a lot of practicing, as much as time permits. But he doesn't plan a career as a professional organist. When he graduates he'll enter law school.

Meanwhile, he's having a wonderful time playing at the Paramount. And next fall—who knows? LSU has a fine law school.

—Peg Nielsen



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.

**THOROUGHLY MODERN MORTON**, Dolton McAlpin at the Robert Morton organ in the Baton Rouge Paramount theatre. Concert Recording CR-0027, stereo only, available only by mail from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262. Also available in 4-track 7 1/2 ips stereo tape at \$7.50.

The instrument has been well documented in these pages. The sounds brought forth by the youthful organist are as much a credit to the organ's restorer, Donald May, and the fine tonal balance built into small Mortons, as to McAlpin's artful use of the facilities.

*Up, Up and Away.* The most striking realization on hearing this tune is that it's coming from only 6 ranks; it's a truly big organ sound in the 1200 seat house. "Up, Up" is rhythmic and loaded with enthusiasm.

*I May Be Wrong.* Much emphasis on the word "modern" is apparent in the jacket notes, because McAlpin plays for a college crowd. It's nice to know the coming generation approves of a nice old-fashioned theatre organ styling of a vintage tune. It's played at an even pace with lots of combo changes.

*I Got Plenty of Nuttin'* Brassy afterbeats mark many changes in the bright melody combinations in a version in keeping with Gershwin's intent. McAlpin seems to be feeling his way through the first couple of minutes of this marathon reading of *Quiet Village* (no wonder; the conflicting rhythms in the tune are rough), but a greater degree of smoothness is achieved as the 6 minutes and 16 seconds of jangle mad-

ness develops. Lots of birds, sensuous rhythms, and effective registration. *Blue Moon* in a rumpy-tum, upbeat, slam-bangeroo (cha cha cha). A highly individual interpretation.

*Tea For Two* also gets the "cha cha" treatment, with traps and percussers a flyin' in a lively playing replete with some unexplained "thuds" from the big drum.

*A Taste of Honey* at first sounds like it had been recorded in a room full of ringing telephones but later shifts its fast tempo to the little Morton's staccato brass. Lively!

*Young Love Medley* spotlights such ancient love-ditties as a languorous "Love is the Sweetest Thing" (music box effects, then sweet strings), a beguine tempo "The Moon is Low" (ah, shades of Joan Crawford!) with bells galore, and a stringreed-spiced "Spring is Here" in rhythm-ballad tempo with a too-heavy pedal marking the beat.

*Goldfinger* is the only poor choice of selection of the platter. It is probably played better than most of us have ever heard it, but it remains second rate music and memories of that overexploited and over-orchestrated sound track recording with the bellowing dame are slow to fade.

*Michelle* finds McAlpin very much at home with this "slow fox" version of the tuneful "battlefield." Pedal cymbal marks the tempo and how the organist coaxes so many voice changes from so few ranks remains a secret in his favor. Oops, the ending is left "hanging."

*On a Clear Day* is Dolton McAlpin at his finest. The little Morton, capable of so much variety, seems to soar under his deft touch, and the "view" below is colorful.

*Our Day Will Come* is another fine job of adapting an "oldie" instrument to recent music, although the "bumps" are straight out of Minsky, 1934.

For some reason, organists are attracted to the *Green Dolphin Street* movie theme; it has been recorded many times, but, so far as we know, this is its first recorded version as a beguine, a tempo seemingly quite attractive to McAlpin. The result is also very attractive to the listener.

**SUMMARY:** If this record represents the kind of "modern" music demanded by Louisiana State University students, this reviewer should either feel 30 years younger (and go protest something) or congratulate student Dolton Alpin for schooling his youthful audiences in the tenets of good taste, perhaps both. Either way, its plus listening—even for modern old codgers.

PS: The "title" tune (inferred) doesn't materialize.

**IT'S WONDERFUL, Ron Curtis playing the Compton Organ in the Davenport Cinema, Stockport, England. Concert Recording label CR-0026, stereo only, \$4.50, ordering procedure same as for the previous listing.**

Another little organ (7 ranks) and it's as much a gem as the one on the platter reviewed above. Although subject to a misleading subtitle which links it with "the Golden Era of the Silent Cinema" (only 5 of the 15 tunes were written before 1930) the recording is a delightful surprise. Both instrument and artist are excellent. The organ pipe complement differs from the usual American 7-rank installation in that a Krumet replaces the usual Vox, a String Celeste replaces the usual Clarinet, and a 16-8-4 Tromba replaces the tame but lovely "Style D" Trumpet. The Tromba (especially when used with the Krumet) makes a brass section with a "bite" somewhere between a Brass Trumpet and a Posthorn. All of which fits with the Curtis 1940 "swing band" style of jazz; it provides a sharp "riff" instrument for emphasis and punctuation effects. While rhythmic jazz stylings make up a goodly part of the Curtis program, his approach to ballads is tender and sweet.

The opening trio of tunes are "S Wonderful," "Love is" (with a bridge which smacks of "Dream") and "A Fine Romance," all in the big band era jazz style, with perhaps just a little too much repetition of the brassy syncopated "(rest) da, (rest) da" device, but otherwise interesting toe-tappers.

The Compton people seem to have solved the dilemma of the small organ designer, if this instrument is typical. The problem was to provide, in a limited number of voices, both solo instruments and a good ensemble sound. This little job has both, at least in the able hands of Ron Curtis. The Diapason provides body without sounding "churchie" and the Flute mutations add color. The two ranks of strings (on one stopkey) are properly "celested" and the Tibia is round and mellifluous (although the trem could be a little slower). In all, it's a fine-sounding instrument.

The vintage ballad, "Garden in the Rain" is given the sweet treatment with an effective string and raindrop (Glock plink) intro and a Tibia ballad chorus, then a beat accents the bridge, as fine a rendition as we've heard since organist Maurice Cook cued in the John McCormack platter to provide a vocal refrain for his "Organogue" in the '30's. "They Say it's Wonderful" is in the same

ballad mood. "Button Up Your Overcoat" is '20's theatre organ, with Curtis mixing rhythm and ballad styles within a tune. "Toujours L'Amour," however, is purely ballad, for which Curtis should have consulted the notes for the sake of accuracy. "There's a Blue Ridge Round My Heart" is a rhythm-fun tune in old-time style, an interesting interpolation of an early '30's dance orchestra.

The same applies to "Tangerine," which sports some "ride" style variations on Glock with cymbal accents and a Trumpet impersonated by the Tromba. "Sleepytime Gal" is straight from the '20s, especially in the between-phrase comments. "Song of the Tree," fails between ballad and rhythm treatment but the remaining tunes, "Sylvia," "Love's Serenade," "Tammy" and "The Party's Over" are purely listening music with deft phrasing and skilled use of the Compton's facilities.

Informative jacket notes are by Britain's dean of the theatre organ hobby, Ralph Bartlett.

**SUMMARY:** Pure delight.

**JACKIE HELYER AT THE (4-22) CONACHER PIPE ORGAN, ODEON THEATRE (we think), NOTTINGHAM, ENGLAND, Concert Recording No. CR-0025, stereo, same purchasing procedure as previous listings.**

This one is something of an enigma. Just having reviewed two small organ records, we looked forward to a return to the "big organ" sound. But, alas, we must admit that there is more registration variety in evidence of the 6 and 7 rankers discussed in the previous reviews, for all the 22 ranks of this Conacher. The same goes for the playing. Jack Helyer, a veteran of the cinema organ, plays pleasingly but does some untidy digital work during undifficult passages. Conversely, he comes through difficult passages with ease. This disc is either badly recorded or the Conacher 4-22 is more "straight" than theatre organ. There is little variety in registration throughout. The program undertaken is an ambitious one, consisting mostly of potpourris. However, the jacket notes omit some of the most interesting titles, such of the Lehar "Gold & Silver Waltz" from the waltz medley. The march medley list omits the Elgar "Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1" (not the familiar one, but a far superior work from Elgar's suite of five).

A 13 minute and 40 second operatic medley finds Jackie tackling familiar themes from "Lohengrin", "Aida", "Mignon", "Sampson and Delilah", "Faust", "Butterfly", "Pagliacci" and others with usually good results but with enough "clinkers" to take the edge from "com-

plete satisfaction." Helyer's best tunes are his own "Brush Off" and that ancient novelty-with-dissonance, "Orient Express."

Jacket notes are confusing, never quite stating the exact location of the 4-22 Conacher (perhaps due to changes in name of the theatre).

We refuse to believe this disc is representative of the playing of a musician of Jackie Helyer's repute, and we are reserving judgment as to the Conacher's theatrical qualities until a more comprehensive disc is available.

SUMMARY: only if you are curious.

#### ALSO OF INTEREST

**ORGAN MAGIC, Al Bollington** playing Wurlitzer model 4520 Electronic Theatre Organ, Concert Recording No. EO-E029, stereo, same purchasing procedure as previous listings.

Al Bollington's exploits have been recorded many times in these pages, and in reviewing them we can conclude that Al's career is colorful; never a dull moment. This is a first for Concert Recording, Pres. Bill Johnson's first purely electronic organ record. In all honesty, the result reads and sounds like an exploitation record for the latest effort of present day Wurlitzer to regain its place in the rush toward electronic simulation of its former glory personified by the theatre pipe organ. The jacket notes say that the model 4520 is modelled after the style 210 (9 rank) theatre pipe organ. The tunes are all old standards or recent pops and how close modern Wurlitzer has come toward electronic repro-

duction of the Chryso-glott, Trumpet, Tenor Sax, Piano, Tibia, Clarinet, Strings, and Vox Humana—we'll leave to the judgment of the listener. Al's musical acumen is evident throughout; although the model 4520 has no bird effect, that doesn't stop Al. He produces some "Birds" manually and they are very effective throughout "Quiet Village."

Among the tunes are: Third Man Theme (Zither), Nola (Piano and Sax), Twilight Time (Tibias), "I Left My Heart etc" (Strings), Java (Brass Horn), Lara's Theme (Russian Mandolins), Blue Hawaii (Surf), Spanish Flea (Bongos), and Al's own Hoedown (Fiddles, Banjos).

**MUSIC BOXES & AUTOMATIC PIANOS, Stereo (no number), available from Hathaway and Bowers, 11854 East Florence Ave., Santa Fe Springs, Calif. \$4.95 postpaid.**

The musicality of the 20 3/4" and 27" Reginas and the "Large Capital" and "Small Capital" music boxes spans a half century in continued ability to charm the listener. These largest of disc-principle, comb-style music boxes produce clear bell tones that display none of the "corny" characteristics of the somewhat later "orchestrations" which were sometimes overbalanced with traps. "El Capitan" march on a Regina is a most pleasant journey into a yesterday which is still musically satisfying.

The reverse side features a variety of player pianos, mostly with added pipe-work and percussors, and one with a remarkably realistic "Clarinet." For the collectors of irresistible old sounds.

## DISC SOUEALS

We regret to announce that **Martha Lake** has cut a recording. The greatest of secrecy prevails concerning the title, content and other data, but there is little doubt that it will feature the infamous "Abyssinian Stringed Oboe" which the "blowsy bunny of the butterball set" carries around in a locked mail sack for security reasons after the U.S. Patent Office refused a patent as a musical instrument on the grounds that mating a zither and a kazoo should be applied for under "plumbing." . . . **Lyn Larsen's** new Malar disc is entitled "Lyn Larsen—Coast to Coast, 1967" and is played in part on two of the organs encountered during his USA tour last year. Four of the tunes are played on the San Francisco Avenue theatre 3-13 Wurlitzer, three on the Salt Lake City "Organ Loft" 5-31 Wurlitzer and five on his old standby, the Bob Carson 3-26 Wurlitzer in Hollywood. Among the tunes, "Spin a Little Web of Dreams," "When You're Away," "If He Walked in My Life" and "Song of the Wanderer." . . . Those madcaps of automatic music, **Hathaway and Bowers**, (Coin-operated Orchestrons, band organs, Reginas and roll-operated pianos) created quite a stir when their hard-sell 4"x6" pitch appeared recently in the Wall Street Journal. They had 28 "Automatic Jazz Orchestras" for sale, an instrument described as an "automatic jazz band with pipe organ, accordion, drums, cymbals, wood block and other instruments" which operates from rolls. Described as "moneymaking—attention getting—fantastic" the updated hurdy-gurdies are deemed proper for "restaurants, cafes, bowling alleys, laundromats, shopping centers and motels,"—all for less than \$5,000! Just in case history seems to be repeating itself, the next issue of this mag will review a recording whose grooves are filled from one end to the other with nothing but "automatic jazz orchestra" music . . . Remember **Paul Carson's** "Bridge to Dreamland" broadcasts? And later the series of "Bridge" recordings? More than 40 of Carson's LP and stereo recordings are available from Alma Records, 18108 Parthenia Street, Northridge, Calif. Write for a free brochure, with pipe organ discs underlined (a few are plug-ins).

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## NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

This time, Jason and I salute Los Angeles, host to the 13th annual ATOE Convention, with choice nuggets and dust from the Southern California lode. References were: *American Organist* (AO), *The Diapason* (D) and newspapers (N).

Mar. 1928 (D). *Classical organist Roland Diggle reports from L.A.:* "I recently heard some splendid organ-playing at the Million Dollar Theatre by a young organist, Gaylord Carter. The picture was 'The Last Command,' a great picture in itself, but made 100 per cent more effective by Mr. Carter's work. Keep your eye on this chap!"

Feb. 1922 (AO). HENRY B. MURTAGH of Grauman's Theatre, L.A., frequently uses a popular song with lantern slides for his solo. On one occasion, he used a violinist in one number and a tenor in another. An expert in comedy, his imitations of a cat-dog fight, rooster crows, etc., without use of traps, show what can be done with contrasting and unreasonable combinations.

Mar. 1922 (D). The Kimball Company was commissioned to build a 4-39 organ for the Forum Theatre, L.A., which is to be patterned after the Pantheon in Rome. Part of the organ, including the foundation and reed stops, will open to the roof through special swell shutters, so on special days the organ may be heard out-of-doors.

Feb. 1923 (AO). *The Society of Theatre Organists of Long Beach had several of their number perform at the December meeting in the Liberty Theatre. They included Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harry Monroe, Beryl Murry, A. O. T. Stenious, Mary Ruth Ingram, Mildred Smith, Howard Dunlap, L. L. Skeels and Frank Anderson.*

Mar. 1923 (AO). George Walsh, Claude Reimer, Roy L. Medcalfe, Frederick Burr Scholl, Herbert Burland and Henry B. Murtagh were all featured in L.A. newspaper advertising of their respective theatres.

March 1923 (D). CHARLIE CHAPLIN has installed a Robert Morton organ in the music room of his Beverly Hills home. He is not dependent on mechanical devices to play the instrument as he plays piano, organ and violin creditably for an amateur.

Sept. 1923 (D). *The Rudolph Wurlitzer Company will build a West Coast headquarters building at 814 S. Broadway, L.A., to be devoted to the musical trade. The 13-story structure will house an auditorium, and will be completed in a year.*

Mar. 1925 (N). Billed as the "World's Mightiest Pipe Organ," its components required 11 large box-cars to travel from Wurlitzer's No. Tonawanda, N. Y., factory to Roosevelt Memorial Park in L.A. Cost is \$150,000; largest pipe is 64' long and weighs over half a ton; smallest is 3/4 of an inch and weighs half an ounce; 300 miles of wiring are used.

Mar. 1925 (D). The Robert Morton Organ Co., a reorganization of the old Photoplayer Co., has been incorporated in California with factories at West Berkeley and Van Nuys. Capitalization is \$500,000. President is L. H. Brownstone.

Nov. 1925 (AO). According to new rules submitted to theatre managers for approval, L.A. organists will not be required to play vaudeville acts. This will be enthusiastically received by both organists and performers.

Apr. 1927 (D). ALBERT HAY MALLOTTE has resigned as organist at the Metropolitan Theatre in L.A. to open a school for theatre organists in the Wurlitzer Building. He has installed a 2-manual Wurlitzer.

Feb. 1928 (D). *Blessed Sacrament Church in Hollywood has purchased a 4-manual Casavant organ. One of the largest churches in California, many leading movie stars are members. Dolores Del Rio started the organ fund, and Jackie Coogan, Ben Turpin and Mrs. Harry Langdon, among others, have pledged gifts. A tower, 250 feet high, will be equipped with a carillon later, it is hoped.*

GOLD DUST. We engage in a little name-dropping of L.A. area organists: 1922 in L.A.: Virginia C. Cox at the

Robert Morton in the Superba; Herbert W. Burland, Rialto; Arthur Clinton, Symphony; Ralph Waldo Emerson and Pearl Halbritter, Palace; Irma Falve and Bartley Sims at the Robert Morton, Kinema; Albert Lewis, Mission; Claude Riemer, Loew's State; G. Lord and Leonard Clark, California. In Long Beach, Robert Christensen, Loew's State; while Newton Yates opened the California. . .

1924 in L.A.: Fred Scholl, Hollywood; Julius K. Johnson, Forum; and Herbert Kern, Criterion. At Long Beach, Frank Anderson, Liberty; and Chauncey Haines, Egyptian. At Pasadena, Roy L. Medcalfe, Raymond; and in Glendale, Frank Lanterman and Charles O'Haver at the T. D. & L. . .

1925 in L.A.: George Walsh, Hill Street Theatre; Helen Dufresne, Melrose; Price Dunlavy and John E. Hill, Hollywood; Arch B. Fritz, Carmel; May H. Kelly and Thomas Callies, De Luxe; Katherine Flynn, Florence; Arthur Shaw broadcasting three daily concerts from the Melody Lane Cafe; Robert Christensen, California; Chauncey Haines at the 4-manual Kimball in the Forum; Claude Riemer and Harry Mills broadcasting on the KNX studio Wurlitzer; Reine Becker, Ravenna; Herbert Kern, Boulevard; Harold Ramsbottom and Donald Baker, Rivoli. In Pasadena: Frank Lanterman opened the Washington, while Adrian Richardson is house organist; Ella Miller, Bards; James Means, Fair Oaks; Edwin Penny, Warner's; Marie Rambo, Rob Mor; Edward C. Hopkins, Rivoli. In Hollywood: Julius K. Johnson, Egyptian; Price Dunlavy, Hollywood; and Arch Fritz, Carmel. At Long Beach: Frank Anderson, Egyptian; and Mary Ruth Ingraham, Hoyt's. In Beverly Hills, Johnnie Hill, Beverly. In San Diego, Paul Maiss, Superba; and at Ocean Park, Duke Wilson at the Rosemary.

1926 in L.A.: Henri C. Le Bel at the Wurlitzer in the Figueroa; Herbert Kerns, West Coast Boulevard; Leonard Clark, Criterion; Bud Young, Mesath; Fred Scholl, Carthay Circle; Marie Rambo Green, Belmont; Helen Dufresne, Hill Street; Betty Silberman, Pantages; Ann Leaf at both Metropolitan and Million Dollar Theatres. Raymond Codder at the Cabrillo Wurlitzer in San Diego.

Just as it is today a center of the theatre organ hobby, Los Angeles was a true beehive of TO activity in the Golden Days—a fitting location for an ATOE convention!

Following our next trip to the gold fields, Jason and I will be back at the assay office in August. So long, pardners!

—Lloyd and Jason.



## CHICAGO AREA

Saturday afternoon, April 20, CATOE members and guests gathered at the auditorium of St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Ill. More than 150 people braved a threatened storm and were greeted by Bob Mueller, who made a few announcements and then introduced Organist John Seng.

John greeted the guests and mentioned that those who hadn't heard the organ before and were adversely affected by loud sounds should move back a little. Right he was! John's opener was *From This Moment On*, and from that moment on he held everyone's undivided attention. John, who rarely plays theatre pipe organ concerts, is undoubtedly one of the most articulate of concert organists. As he chauffeured the wind through the pipes of his own "modern" theatre organ, it was obvious that the combination of organist and organ was unbeatable. The Wurlie was, as expected, in top shape and sounded terrific from Trumpets to Celeste Flutes. With brief comments between numbers, John played *When You Wish Upon a Star*, *Dance of the Comedians*, *Satin Doll*, and selections from *Porgy and Bess*. The audience, which filled about one-quarter of the auditorium's capacity, expressed its sincere enthusiasm.



JOHN SENG talks to his audience between numbers at the CATOE April Social which featured John and his Mundelein "modern" theatre organ.



KAY McABEE is introduced to turn-away crowd of 900 by CATOE Chairman Bob Mueller at the chapter's May concert in the Arcada Theatre, St. Charles, Illinois.

On May 4th the CATOE presented Kay McAbee at the Arcada Theatre in St. Charles, Ill. The theatre has recently received a \$100,000 remodeling, and the Geneva pipe organ was rehabilitated by members of the chapter. (This instrument was an attraction at the 1965 ATOE National Convention.)

Kay McAbee did an outstanding job of putting the organ through its paces. His arrangements of tunes, old and new, kept the attention of the capacity audience throughout the evening. The affair was highly successful. Nine hundred people filled the theatre and nearly 200 were turned away.

This success was due to five weeks of hard work by members of CATOE who converted an almost unplayable organ to a mint condition gem. Among those who helped in this accomplishment were Sam Holte, Terry Kleven, Bob Mueller, Bill Barry, Bill Rieger, Tom Watson, Gary Rickert, and Tony Tahlman. Also Tad Doose, Joe Duci Bella, Fred Kruse, Anne Barry, Bill Benedict, Paul Lewis, Fern Coleman, and Geannie Nachtwey may be thanked for their combined efforts in making this another successful program.

## KAW VALLEY

Kaw Valley Chapter, Lawrence, Kansas, met Sunday, May 19, at 1:15 p.m., with the Rev. R. Eugene Connely for a covered dish dinner. Twenty-one persons enjoyed a great variety of delectable foods.

Following the dinner, the chairman, Luther Cortelyou, conducted a short business meeting; then introduced his guests, Ron Willfong, who is chairman of the new Tulsa chapter, and Ray Elmore, a professional organist also from Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Ray entertained superbly at Rev. Gene's Conn electronic organ, filling the parsonage with wonderful sounds.

Six of the chapter members, including the chairman, who is also a professional organist, played both classical and pop tunes.

Everyone agreed that the afternoon had been a most pleasant one.

## LAND O'LAKES

With permission from theatre owner Jim Frazer, our April meeting was held in Red Wing, Minn., starting at the Auditorium Theatre. The organ is a 2-M, 8-R Kilgen with an impressive stop list including a 32' Resultant and Kinura, and a Toy Counter.

The theater, spotless and beautiful, was opened in 1904. It was later gutted by fire, after which the interior was redesigned and rebuilt in 1918. The new design improved the stage facilities. It is now used both for a movie house and for stage productions, a fact which gave George Hardenbergh and Harry Jorgenson some work to do before our meeting began. At the last stage performance the pedal board was removed to make room for an orchestra, probably hastily replaced, and some adjustments were necessary.

(Continued on Next Page)



## CHAPTER NEWS, contd.

Perhaps it is an atmosphere created by the environment, but there are times when the organists outdo themselves. This was one of those days. Clyde Olson was at his best. Claude Newman was brought back several times. Jim Lyons entertained us with his delightful style. Don Taft, arriving late, gave a humorous account of getting lost, gravel roads, etc., took his turn and included his original composition with lyrics of *All Eyes Are On The North Stars* (Minnesota hockey team) which Don composed for the team.

Much of the success of this meeting was due to the theatre manager, Mr. Million. His knowledge of the history of the theatre in addition to the above, included the story of the theatre at one time being taken over and run by the City. The case, claiming interference with free enterprise, was taken to the Supreme Court and won. It is believed to be the only theatre with this particular history.

Our special treat was a Red Wing resident — vivacious Rose Morley — professional organist, teacher of piano and organ and former chapter member. Rose played the Auditorium Theatre up to 1930. She played a much too short concert for us, including a request for the number, *Red Wing*. We were invited to the Enz Antique Home to see a Kimball tracker, and then to St. Joseph's Catholic Church where Rose is organist. The organ here is a Kilgen, recently completely rebuilt. It has a tremolo on the Swell.

One more note about Rose Morley. On April 25, for an important town event, her day included playing the Auditorium Theatre organ from 2 to 3:30 p.m., again from 7 to 7:30 and later at a hotel reception. And — this written with her permission — Rose is over 80!

### Racine Visitation

Master of many trades, Chairman Don Peterson, pro M.C., expert at conducting a business meeting (it's said and it's done) and a genius at program arranging, reached inspirational heights when he and his dad, Harold Peterson, planned our May 4-5 meeting.

Leaving Minnesota by chartered bus, armed with box lunches, we talked and ate our way to Racine, Wis. After checking into our motel we were met by Fred Hermes, his lovely daughter, Jan, and his remarkable son, Fred, Jr. We went to a steak house for a delicious steak and then, with the Hermes navigating, off to spend the evening with Fred's five-manual, now-thirty-rank Wurlitzer. (For information about the installation refer to

the Summer, 1965, issue of THEATRE ORGAN). Since then, two more ranks have been added — a Skinner French Trumpet and a French Horn. Other changes mainly involve relocating for better balance.

Through the efforts of Harold Peterson and much to Fred's delight, arriving with us was Frank Rogers, who is a projectionist and a past-master operator of the Brenograph Effects Machine. Frank won world acclaim for his skill in designing effects and his use of the machine. Since Fred has the Brenograph from the old Minnesota Theatre, he wanted some tips on using it. Frank Rogers said, "I'll tell you all I know but I haven't yet learned all it will do." Frank, now 77, is retiring from the theatre business this year. He says he isn't going to risk having another theatre closed under him.

After a brief description of the installation, Fred Hermes turned on the Wurlitzer and opened with a spine-tingling *Nothing Like A Dame*. After his concert he turned the organ over to his son, 18-year-old Fred, Jr., who said he had spent five hours tuning the organ and therefore would play something soft, opening with *Laura*. His concert highlight for most of us was *Granada*. His knowledge of the organ is indeed impressive, and it was a relief to our musicians when he announced he would stand by as pilot navigator.



DON PETERSON, Chapter Chairman, at the Hermes 5-30 Wurlitzer. Says Don: "I played for ten minutes and THEN went to the manuals!"

Don Peterson was the first of our group to follow. He is one of the fortunate ones and occasionally has an opportunity to play this organ. Our very accomplished Elaine Franklin included *Orpheus in Hades*, to our delight. Claude Newman, Ed Borowiec, Clyde Olson (who needed no navigator), John Zetterstrom and Don Christopher were among those who played. To our surprise and delight, the huge chandelier (also from the Minnesota Theatre) was lowered to eye level. With reluctance we left.

An unexpected highlight of our trip was our bus driver, a real pro in his field and just a thoroughly nice person. Mark Knutson experienced pipe organs for the first time. Beginning his education into higher learning with a five-manual Wurlitzer, he wasn't the same young man at the end of the trip as at the beginning. Summing up the feelings of all of us, member Jules Ween suggested putting the check for the trip in one hand and an application for membership in ATOE in the other.

**Sunday morning found us at the Capitol Theatre in Racine overworking the 2-M, 5-3 Special-B Wurlitzer. Here, too, we were treated to projected effects — particularly effective on the large movie screen. The fastest stop changes on the organ were made when one member left the bench and the next one took it.**

At the Capitol we met John Hill of the Century Pipe Organ Company in Elmhurst, Ill., and organ technician Pete Charnon, who gave us some of the background of the theatre and organ. Pete told us the theatre was opened at the end of 1926 and the organ used until the end of the 30's. Only mice had the use of the console until Pete took over in 1965 to rebuild the organ. The restoration was celebrated with a concert by John Muri on Dec. 4, 1966. The organ was used all that winter and played on Saturday nights. Fred Hermes sometimes stops in to play during intermissions. It took six months to rebuild the organ. Because of a leaky roof the trumpet chest was rebuilt twice. Much remodeling is currently going on in the Capitol: the roof has been repaired and the chest will be rebuilt for the third and, hopefully, last time. It is estimated that the use of the organ increased attendance by 25 per cent.

We adjourned to the delightful Spinning Wheel Restaurant but, wouldn't you know, the service was slow. We skipped dessert to rush back to Fred Hermes' home and an afternoon concert by Kay McAbee! He began his concert with *Land of the Pharaohs*; two selections from *Calamity Jane* — *Secret Love* and *Deadwood Stage*, *Spring Is Here* and *Hungarian Rhapsody* and it was intermission time. Throughout the concert the Brenograph was really "turned on." Imagine the beautiful white and gold console bathed in brilliant green and a huge white star encompassing Kay McAbee with the star points extending onto the console! At another time, so rightly placed, a star hovered above him. Unfortunately there was some laughter during the concert but what can you do when airplanes and dirigibles start flying over the console? With constantly chang-

ing colors and shadow effects and Kay McAbee's music from one of the mightiest of the Mighty Wurlitzers, you can understand our reference to our inspired chairman.

As if all this wasn't enough, at intermission time of Mr. McAbee's concert, we watched a Charlie Chaplin silent—*The Count*, accompanied by the person best qualified—Fred Hermes. The hissing steam sound he produced to accompany Chaplin as he pressed a pair of trousers and proceeded to burn a hole in them was so true we almost smelled burned wool.

Mr. McAbee returned to play selections from *Sound of Music*, *Stranger in Paradise*, *Tea For Two*, and for an encore, *Rhapsody in Blue*. For Mr. McAbee including us in his busy schedule and for so magnificent a concert; for Mr. Hermes sharing his Wurlitzer and all the added attractions—we can find no words of appreciation emphatic enough.

— Irene Blegen,  
Secretary

## LOS ANGELES

Chapter activities are continuing at both the Wiltern Theatre (4/37 Kimball) and at the Elks Building (4/61 Robert Morton). Although the Wiltern is now under the control of another motion picture theatre management corporation, a cooperative arrangement assures continued use of the organ by L.A. ATOE. Both organs are being maintained and improved. Recent concerts have included Jim Roseveare at the Wiltern on March 24, Pomping Vila at the Elks on April 28, and young Dwight Beacham at the Wiltern on May 12. Dwight plays a 12-rank Wurlitzer at home for an avocation, and demonstrates Wurlitzer Electronics as a vocation.

The quarterly General Membership Business Meeting was held on April 19, with a number of members offering suggestions for chapter operation and activities. The jam sessions at the Elks 4/61 Robert Morton are proving popular, with attendance climbing. A new brochure describing ATOE and the Los Angeles Chapter for prospective members will soon be off the presses. Plans for the National ATOE Convention in July are being finalized, with a large number of chapter members volunteering to serve on the many committees.

— Philip Ray Bonner

**MOVING? Yes, ATOE is on the move—both regionally and nationally! But when YOU move, please don't forget to notify the National office, or the Circulation Dept., Box 1314, Salinas, California 98901.**

## MOTOR CITY

"We did it before and we have done it again" seems to be an appropriate theme for the Motor City Chapter of ATOE. The October concert at the Redford Theatre featuring Gaylord Carter at the console and Douglas Fairbanks Sr. on the screen in "The Mark of Zorro" proved to be such a tremendous success that it was decided to continue to bring to Detroit these marvelous old silent films and have equally marvelous organists accompany them as was done in the 20's.

The program which was presented this March 10th featured Bill Buswell at the console of a two manual, five rank (plus toy counter and percussions) Wurlitzer. The locale was changed to the Punch and Judy Theatre. This theatre was a marvelous setting for the feature film, "The Covered Wagon," because it is done in an elegant early American decor. One could almost envision the sedate aristocracy of the original colonies viewing the hardships of their more venturesome constituents. To further enhance this illusion, some of the younger, ambitious young ladies of the chapter made some authentic "Granny" dresses which even included matching sunbonnets and wore them while passing out the programs.

Preceding the featured film a real fun comedy, "The Finishing Touch" with Laurel and Hardy, was presented. Even the youngest member of the audience needed no explanation of the slapstick antics of this "any duo. Mr. Buswell's accompaniment enhanced the misadven-

tures of the pair. His effect of a split pair of pants drew hysterical laughter from all viewers.

While reels were being changed a delightful sing-a-long with authentic slides showed that there is still hope for the younger generation. Many parents were surprised when their sub-teen and early teen-age offspring merrily joined into the spirit of the occasion and lustily sang out with *Daisy* and *I Want a Girl*.

"The Covered Wagon" was the first real "epic" western and started a chain of westerns for which John Wayne should be most grateful. The authenticity of our production even included an unexpected wait between screen credits and the first scenes of the movie. Mr. Buswell aptly filled in the silence as all true theatre organists must be able to do. The film was done in a semi-documentary style, but still was only slightly removed from the basic hero-heroine-villain plot. Only the reality of the hardships endured by the early settlers boosted it a notch above the basic melodrama. When the hero, portrayed by J. Warren Kerrigan, was introduced in the film he drew a roar of laughter from our modern, sophisticated audiences. The slick hair-do and overdone make-up seemed a bit too much by current standards which depict the hero as being rough and unkempt.

Bill Buswell's accompaniment blended in the moods and scene changes admirably. He played some pieces from the original score such as "Westward Ho the Wagons" and "Oh, Susanna." The rest of

(Continued on Next Page)



**MOTOR CITY MAGIC**—Patsy Vaublow (left), granny-dressed "program-giver-outer" beams as she welcomes arriving guests. Organist Bill Buswell beams at audience (upper right) from Punch and Judy theatre's 2-5 Wurlitzer. Also beaming (lower right) at "sold-out" concert are Mr. Kreuger, Punch and Judy manager; Al Mason, Motor City Chapter Chairman; and Fred Pollerito, manager of theatre chain which includes the Punch and Judy in Grosse Pointe, the Redford and the Royal Oak theatres in Detroit.

## CHAPTER NEWS, contd.

the selections were of his own choosing. In a tremendous storm scene he aptly put the "surf" to use, sending chills up the spine. Bill most ably accomplished the goal which all good theatre organists aspire to—that of blending the music to the film so adroitly that they were thought of as one entity rather than having the music either overshadow the movie or make it drag.

The long hours of work by the many Motor City Chapter members to restore this instrument to its original potential culminated in this production. After all this was what inspired the creation of theatre organs—to have one instrument to accompany silent movies.

So "Westward Ho" Motor City Chapter. Let us restore yet another marvel in the history of what is uniquely America's own early mode of entertainment, mood music.

—Betty Bryden

## NEW YORK

The house lights dimmed and the words "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Rahway Theatre," filled the auditorium. It was a few minutes past 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 20th, and M. C. Ben Hall had just launched New York Chapter's first concert of the 1968 season, "An Evening with Lowell Ayars at the Mighty Wurlitzer," at the Rahway Theatre in Rahway, New Jersey.

Lowell Ayars is certainly no stranger to ATOEers, having been a featured artist at several national conventions as well as having played numerous concerts for many chapters in the Northeast. Lowell certainly was no stranger to the 2m/7r Wurlitzer (Style E-X, opus 1923) he met for the first time that afternoon in the pit. He took one look at it and said "Gee, I feel right at home." (Lowell has a 2m/7r Wurlitzer in his living room in Bridgeton, New Jersey.)

After a welcome by author, lecturer and historian Ben Hall, also no stranger in ATOE circles, Lowell demonstrated some of the toy counter he would use later in the evening to cue silent films. Just as he hit the toe stud marked "bird call" another louder bird answered, an electrifying effect produced by Ben Hall with a hand held model on stage—a very appropriate opening for the first day of spring. After the nightingales had finished their mating calls, Lowell announced his opening selections from "Annie Get Your Gun."

For the next 40 minutes the nearly 500 in attendance were whisked away to that magic never-never land as Lowell poured forth nostalgic standards of the 20s, 30s and 40s by Romberg, Friml and

Rodgers, to name just a few. Then just as Lowell began introducing a number, the P. A. set started to talk back to him. It seems a bad accident had occurred outside the theatre, and the P. A. system was picking up police calls from patrol cars right outside. Lowell quipped, "I don't know where they are, but I sure wish they'd come and get me."

The audience was then treated to the next surprise of the evening—Lowell was going to sing! As the strains of "Always as I Close My Eyes to Sleep" by Eric Kose filled the auditorium, a rich baritone voice joined the mighty Wurlitzer, and the audience knew that this was truly an artist extraordinaire. The response was overwhelming, necessitating an encore, "Song of Songs" by Moya, all of which prompted Ben Hall to gasp as he stepped to the mike, "I don't know how he can do it—play, sing, turn pages; why I can't even..."

Next on the agenda was a short film comedy by Ben Turpin, "The Night of the Show," with which Lowell put the Rahway Wurlitzer through its paces, or in Ben Hall's words, "Doing the job for which it was originally intended."

After a short intermission, the second part of the evening began as Ben Hall and 7-year-old Chris Beckham, son of Mr. and Mrs. Claude Beckham, last year's New York Chapter chairman, sang a duet which brought many back a long way. Detroit Conventioneers will recall last year when Ben did this number solo, with Lowell at the organ, in the Arcadia Rink, singing "Little Orphan Annie."

After a few more numbers by Lowell, it was the audience's turn to get in the act with a sing-a-long, complete with song and cartoon slides. After exercising their tonsils, the folks then settled back for the silent feature of the evening, a Charlie Chase comedy, "Quick Like a Fox." Once again the Wurlitzer roared and chided, replete with all its effects in the able hands of Mr. Ayars, to round out a most successful and enjoyable evening.

This concert marked the pinnacle of five years of a devoted labor of love by chapter members Wendell Rotter, Mike Hughes and Bob Balfour to restore this instrument and present it in concert. Enthusiasm has run so high among those in attendance, as well as the owners and manager of the theatre, that another program is already in the planning stages for the fall.

## OREGON

The fabulous Oriental Theatre was the setting for our March meeting—a St. Patrick's Day concert by Tom Hazelton of San Francisco. Tom brought a fresh style to the 3-13 Wurlitzer.

The console rose to the gay tune "Up, Up and Away" followed by "Jumping Bean," "Night and Day" and a sparkling "Georgy Girl." There were medleys from "Guys and Dolls," "Porgy and Bess" and a lovely interpretation of "Love Is a Many Splendored Thing." Tom played two currently popular tunes by the Beatles: "When I'm 64" and a churchy version of "Yesterday." On the oldie side was a Jesse Crawford-styled "So Beats My Heart for You." The concert ended with "That's All," using a wide range of rich organ sounds.

This was a joint meeting of the Oregon and Puget Sound Chapters. The presence of a good crowd from up north certainly helped bring a concert of this caliber to our membership.

The Oriental Theatre was obtained through the efforts of Oregon Chapter Director Dennis Hedberg. Through Dennis we were able to slip this concert between an opera and a symphony on the busy Oriental schedule.

The format of the Oregon Chapter is to have about six meetings a year with something thrown in here and there, such as a get-together at one of the home installations, or a joint meeting with another chapter.

—Gordon Potter,  
Secretary-Treasurer

## POTOMAC VALLEY

On Sunday afternoon, February 11th the Chapter met at Doug Bailey's Montgomery County studios in Rockville, Maryland. Doug demonstrated the very neat installation of his 2m/9r Moller Theatre organ and was followed by many chapter members who wanted to try their hand at it. The meeting was an open house affair and well over 100 members attended. Many thanks to Mrs. Bailey for handling the refreshments.

On Friday evening, March 15th the chapter met at the Alexandria Arena in Alexandria. Over 125 members heard Jimmy Boyce perform at his giant 4m/34r Wurlitzer. Jim played selections from his latest recording "Showtime" and other popular tunes. This was one of Jimmy's finest concerts, and if you missed it, you missed a good one. Many thanks to Tom Brown, manager of the Alexandria Arena, for making our meetings there possible.

## PUGET SOUND

On February 25th the chapter met to discuss the negotiations under way for the purchase and installation of a chapter-owned organ—the purchase to be made by the issuance of bonds to members, the installation to be placed in a local church which has offered their fellowship hall for this purpose. Following

the business meeting, a tour of Seattle's pipe organ lore was initiated. Starting at 10:30 a.m., the members assembled at the B & V Pipe Organ Shop. Bill Bunch and his "Sunday morning crew" composed of Ken Mayberry, Don Myers and Frank Hutchins divided the members into four groups for a guided tour with a demonstration of various "church voices" and then proceeded cautiously into the area of pipe voicing—just far enough to let everyone know that this is one area of the hobby which should be entered very cautiously, if not left entirely alone!

Following lunch at the Seattle Center they proceeded to Rainier Valley to hear demonstrated and played one of the fine B & V pipe organs in the Seattle area. Gene Nye and Bill Bunch shared the console in this beautiful church. Appreciation should be conveyed to these artists for a most enjoyable concert and a wish that it be done again sometime.

On Sunday, March 3 a small work party placed a Gottfried English Post Horn, loaned by Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs, Inc., in the tuba mirabilis chest in the main chamber of the Seattle Paramount Wurlitzer. What snap and fire this set adds!!

#### Korla Pandit

"Magic Carpet" Day with Puget Sounders began at the Paramount Theatre Sunday morning, April 21, with KORLA PANDIT at the magnificent white and gold Publix #1 4-20 Wurlitzer. Some 200 members and friends in the Puget Sound area, from Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, B.C., were whisked on a musical tour with Korla's fine program—modern, boogie-woogie, march, and of course his exotic numbers of the mystic east, taking every advantage of the full organ sound (including a new post horn recently loaned to the Puget Sound ATOE by Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs, Inc. of Seattle and installed by Don Myers, Dan Adamson, National Prez. Dick Schrum and Chairman Russ Evans).

After the theatre concert the "Magic Carpet" took us on tours of seven pipe organ home installations in the Seattle area—north and south. Virginia Lawrence's beautiful blonde 3/8 Robert Morton; Dan Adamson's 2/7 Wurlitzer—plus guppies, plus a huge system H-O scale railroad (what to look at first?!); Harold and Ann Shawver's 3/9 Kimball (with all percussion except marimba) housed in their charming rustic "by the sea" (Puget Sound) home in Edmonds, Washington. South Seattle was well represented with Val and Lee Bauscher's hilltop home housing their 3/11 Wurlitzer (Opus 1709) formerly at the World Theatre in Omaha; Bill and Mary Carson's beautifully voiced 3/11 Wur-

litzer; Harold and Ann Musolf's spacious location at Harold's Industrial Electric Motors Service Center for a good look and listen to their 3/11 Wurlitzer, originally at United Artist Theatre in Portland, Ore. Last but not least—Woody & Lou Presko's meticulously restored, snappy 2/6 Wurlitzer.



KORLA PANDIT acknowledges audience appreciation from the Seattle Paramount's 4-20 Wurlitzer during April Puget Sound Chapter concert.

Korla graciously tried to cover all home installations, but had to forego this for a dinner engagement.

Our magic carpet is safely back in storage to wait, not too long, we hope, for another concert on our big white and gold pride and joy and another such visitation day so well planned and executed by our "fearless leader", Chairman Russ Evans.

—Mildred Lawrence

#### ST. LOUIS

St. Louis Chapter began the new year with some new officers and board members and a new resolution to make the chapter more interesting and active. The first meeting was held January 21. Program Chairmen Bernard Nordmann and Dale Zieger prepared a program with a taped demonstration of basic Theatre Organ voices. Programs for meetings are now prepared several months in advance.

February 16th the St. Louis Chapter inaugurated a series of organ concerts with silent movies by presenting Dale Zieger in a program entitled "Thoroughly Modern Organ." Dale provided a completely professional accompaniment to the Charlie Chaplin movie, *The Gold Rush*. A full house thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

At the February meeting two nights later, three new members joined as a result of the above program. John Crowley, another recent new member, provided a sound movie from the early 30's, showing Jesse Crawford, Don Baker, and Ann Leaf.

The March meeting was a special event. The chapter met at the Fox Theatre at midnight Friday, March 22nd. Leading off the program was Stan Kann, staff organist at the Fox, and TV personality, playing some light classics and popular music in the Best T. O. tradition. Then Dale Zieger, Stan's associate organist, played. Following this "formal" program, other members and guests took turns at the Crawford Special while others went on a tour of the chambers. Several new members joined ATOE on the spot.

St. Louis Chapter, ATOE, has undertaken the purchase and installation of a theatre pipe organ in the Kirkwood Community Center. The console will be installed on a lift at stage center. The organ pipes, percussions, and the piano, all playable from the console, will be installed behind the grilles above the stage.

—Don Ullrich,  
Chairman.

#### SIERRA

The Sierra Chapter presented its fourth public movie show in Grant Union High School, Sacramento, Calif., on April 19th, with George Seaver at the 4-22 Kilgen-Wurlitzer accompanying the silent flick, "Thief of Bagdad," starring Douglas Fairbanks Sr. Much help was given by radio, TV and newspapers, and our public service announcements did much to attract the audience of 700 which attended. The organ was in fine shape, and Mr. Seaver played it for nearly three hours without a rest. The program included a "sing-along" with slides and a wild Laurel and Hardy comedy, as well as the 1924 Fairbanks epic fantasy. Writing in the Sacramento Union next day, reporter Charles Slater wrote with much enthusiasm, "They just don't make films like that anymore. It was one of the kickiest assignments I've ever been fortunate enough to receive. The delight of the audience was something to behold; they roared with laughter and applauded."

—Elmer Fubb

#### WESTERN RESERVE

The chapter wishes to say thank you to George Lukas for letting them have their February meeting at his Parma Heights Hammond Organ Studio and also to Gerry Gregorius for his fine renditions on the X-66. Comment heard most often that day: "It has a great piano stop." There were approximately 53 people in attendance. Special thanks also to Duey Arey for arranging the meeting.

(Continued on Next Page)

## CHAPTER NEWS, contd.

It is reported that Loew's Theatre (now the Civic Theatre) in Akron, Ohio, had its organ console buried for the performances of "Hello Dolly" March 15 and 16. A temporary runway was built out over the orchestra pit and the organ console for this show only.

The Western Reserve Chapter Sheet also reported that the Tower Theatre (Upper Darby, Penna.) Wurlitzer was still being heard. The Wurlitzer in this theatre was the one the late, great organist Leonard "Melody Mac" MacClain made famous through his series of recordings. Bob Lent is now being featured at this organ. He has been playing for up to a full hour before showtime—complete with colored changing lighting effects plus the atmospheric stars all a-twinkle in the blue sky above. The theatre itself is just beautiful, having been completely redecorated. The management, Messrs. Jones and Zimmerman, plan to have full-scale stage shows and vaudeville, with the organ, as part of the show policy this year. Bob Lent, who is 18 years old, plays the Wurlitzer, also serves as first organ technician, electrical engineer and color combiner for solo presentations. Jan Carroll is second organ technician and in charge of console elevator, and is lighting technician. Bob Beck serves as lighting effect technician. Manager Jones is an enthusiastic backer of the theatre organ concept as part of today's programs at the Tower. Not only did the three-man crew restore the organ to full playing condition, they also put the twinkle back in the ceiling stars and

relamped all the cove, channel and niche lighting. If you get a chance, this is one to see and hear.

It's too bad March decided to be such a lion on the evening of their March meeting at Flo and John Hobbs'. There were many too chicken to try, but the 18 brave ones who made the meeting, the good time had was worth it all. Denny Richards showed and narrated his slides. The evening ended with everyone gathered around the Hammond dreaming of the Morton. Many thanks to Flo and John for being such gracious hosts, and the rest that didn't make it are hoping there will be a next time soon so they can try again.

Marion and George Rogers were hosts to the Lake County Chapter of American Guild of Organists on March 25th. It is understood the Page put out a good performance—both with and without tremulants—and may have improved the opinions of a few A.G.O. members regarding theatre organs. Marion feels that the apparent success of the meeting would lead everyone to believe they might like to invite A.G.O. members to the meetings or those with installations might like to invite them to have a meeting on them . . . possibly some new members???!?

The Western Reserve Relay, April issue, carried several interesting letters that were reprinted from the "Diapason Magazine" in regard to "pipe pirates" and "scrap dealers" who have been busy in various parts of the country desecrating good pipe organs for selfish reasons. PADLOCK THOSE CHAMBERS!!!

## DON MILLER

(Continued from Page 6)

singer sing 'O Promise Me.' The pit orchestra and organ came in for a smash finale. It was breathtaking. I don't believe, to my knowledge, there was any other theatre doing a production like this. I would love to see spectacles like this presented to an audience of today. The public is ready for things of this nature, but the present-day managements just can't seem to see it yet.

"Siegel, Gutow and myself were all working for the circuit before they sold out to B&K. They would "guest" us around. Gutow would go to the Fisher, I would go to the Michigan, and Siegel would go to the Capitol. And it was that way for a year or so. We were featured in all three of the houses. After B&K took over, the policies changed. Gutow left first, Siegel left second, and I was the last one to go. I went to the 'neighborhoods.' Darned if I was going to shovel! So I went to the Riviera and its Robert Morton. From there I went into the Great Lakes and played a two-week engagement at the Redford Theatre, whose Barton organ has now been restored through the efforts of the Motor City Chapter of ATOE. I also played a two-week engagement at the Royal Oaks which also had a Barton. I played two short engagements at the Punch and Judy Theatre, 600-seat house, at Grosse Point. Edsel Ford and his family were regular visitors at the Punch and Judy. I met the Ford family and found them to be very wonderful people. I did slide solos at this theatre. Sometimes on Saturday night I would run in community singing just for a change. That theatre is still in beautiful condition and its future is apparently quite secure. The 2m-5r Wurlitzer with percussion has now been restored by the ATOE organization and is active. (See Motor City Chapter news in this issue.)

"In the winter season of 1931, I went to the Olympia Theatre in Miami, Florida, which was like a vacation with pay. I played split weeks with slides, some community singing one half of the week and straight solos the balance of the week. They also had a stage show. It was a very pleasant engagement. They booked me twice. Then I returned to Detroit and the Michigan Theatre. I was there for six months. There was a change at the Michigan Theatre and I decided to try Chicago. Upon fulfilling the required six-month residency, I played several nightclubs and obtained a guest engagement at the Southtown and also at the State Lake. I had an offer to come back to Detroit at the Fisher and I grabbed it so quick it wasn't funny.

(To Be Continued Next Issue)

### A.T.O.E. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 1967

	Receipts	Disbursements	Balance
CASH BALANCE JANUARY 1, 1967			\$ 602.92
<b>RECEIPTS:</b>			
Dues	\$20,722.28		
Back issues	413.50		
Advertising	2,398.20		
Organ Manufacturer's Subscription	176.00		
Advances refunded	1,017.73		
Convention 1967	705.58		
Miscellaneous sources	125.10		
<b>DISBURSEMENTS:</b>			
Office Supplies		\$ 1,400.98	
Postage		1,169.56	
Telephone		995.01	
Office operating expenses		2,300.00	
Theatre Organ Bombarde and circulation operating expenses		1,275.12	
Theatre Organ Bombarde—printing		13,323.14	
Travel (\$391.09 of this refunded)		2,337.32	
Advertising expenses		232.99	
National Convention — 1967		701.50	
National Insurance — 1st year		134.00	
Leonard MacClain Memorial Fund		50.00	
Entertainment		70.53	
Misc. (bank adj., post office box rentals, etc.)		141.02	
Dues refunds and chapter dues		454.30	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$25,558.39</b>	<b>\$24,585.47</b>	
Net increase in cash			972.92
Cash balance end of period December 31, 1967			\$ 1,575.84
<b>Outstanding 1967 bills as of 12-31-67</b>			
Dec. 1967 Theatre Organ Bombarde		2,916.60	
Mailing Service — Oct. issue		57.75	
Mailing Service — Dec. issue		46.45	

# 1968 A.T.O.E. CONVENTION VIGNETTES • 7

## BEN HALL TO 'MC' CONVENTION

Ben Hall, author, editor, theatre buff, pipe organ owner and unbridled T.O. enthusiast since the year "1," has agreed to be master of ceremonies for the 1968 ATOE Convention, according to the convention chairman, Robert S. Carson. It will be Ben's third consecutive year of introducing the artists.



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