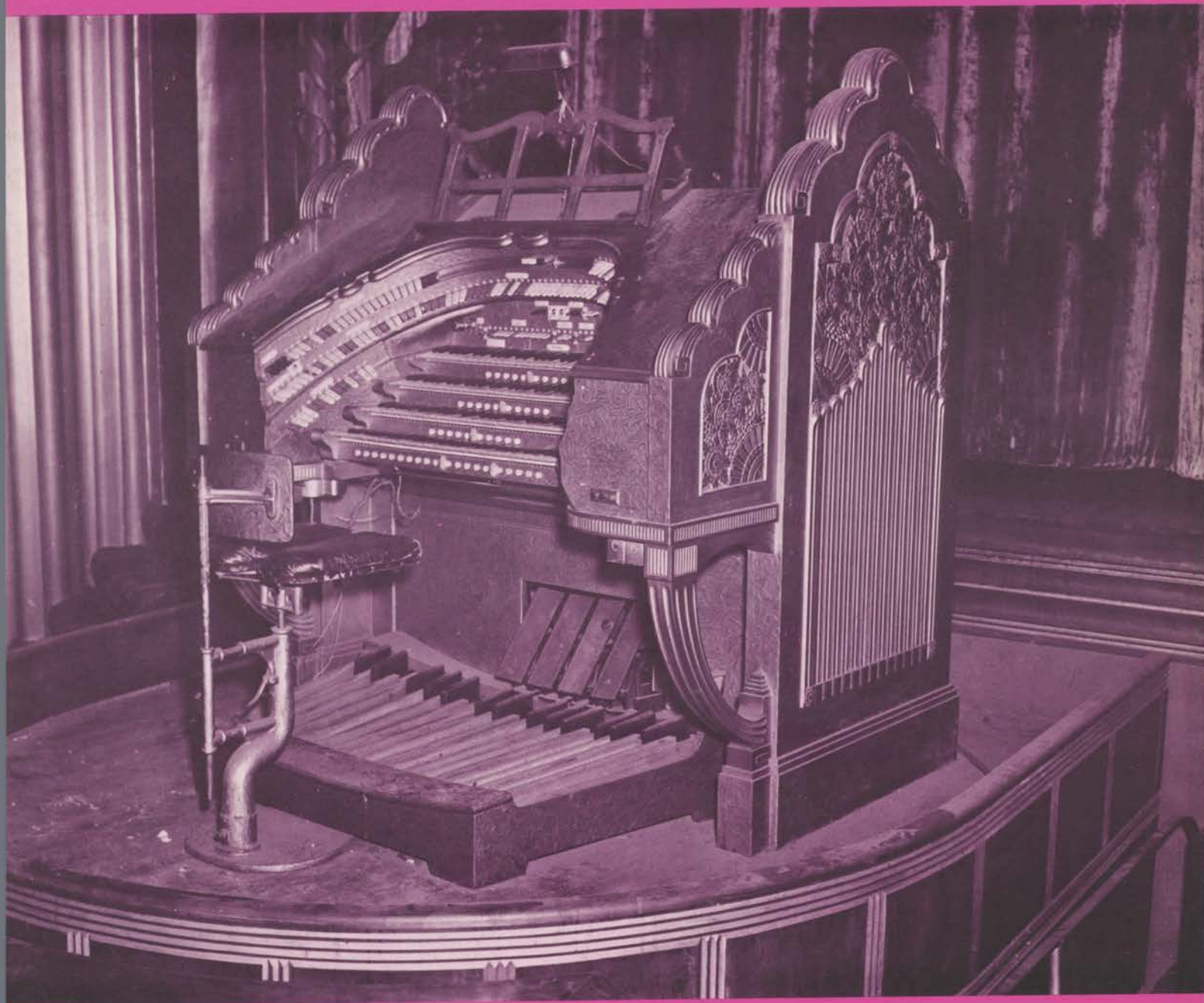
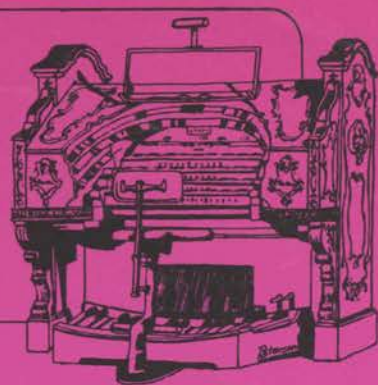


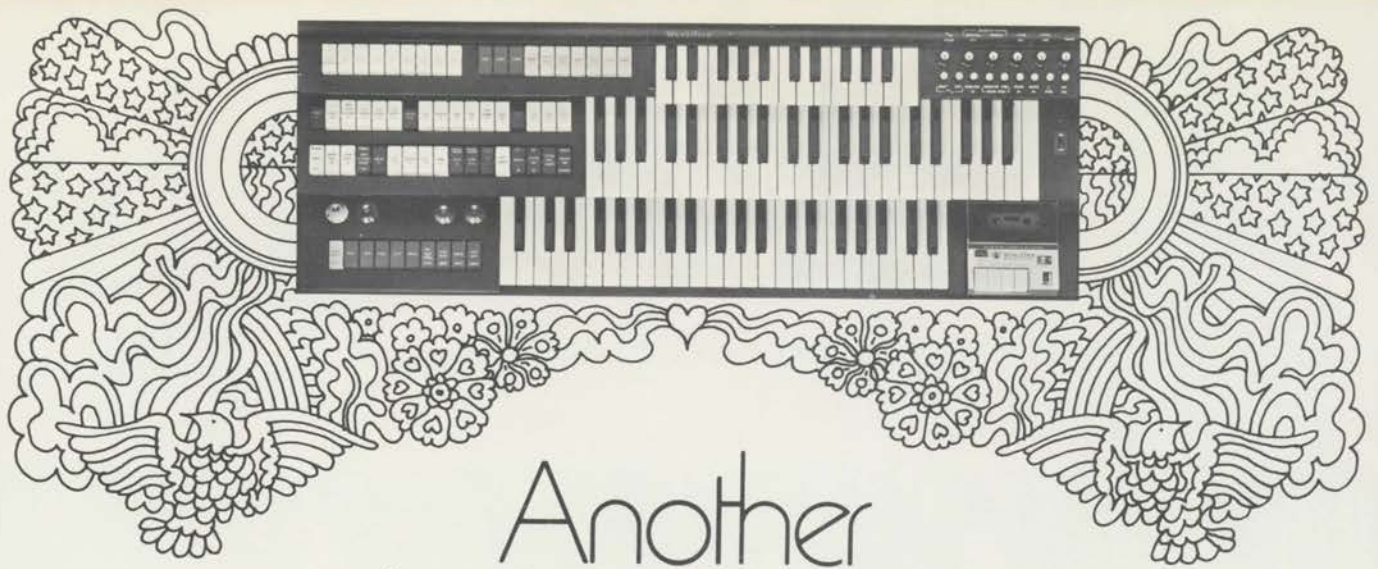
THEATRE ORGAN

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

VOLUME 13 NUMBER 3

JUNE, 1971





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THEATRE ORGAN

Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

Volume 13, No. 3

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Wurlitzer Publix #1, Opus No. 2164, originally installed in the Paramount Theatre, Oakland, California, is now playing in the Melody Inn, Los Altos, California. Story on page 18.



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It gives me great pleasure to announce that National ATOS has qualified under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is exempt from Federal Income Tax. We are now an educational organization. This will help the individual chapters to also qualify for this status and is a most important step in our future if we are to have a theatre organ museum. Does anyone wish to donate a theatre?

The annual Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Friday, July 9, 1971 at 1 p.m. Either the chapter chairman or a chapter representative should be at this meeting. Let us have every chapter represented.

Our publication, THEATRE ORGAN, is owned and operated by the members of ATOS. News of chapter activities is an important section of this magazine and if none appears, it is because none was submitted for printing. We do not have the staff to rewrite newsletters. All news and articles must be received by the tenth of the month *preceding* each issue.

Let us continue to support the Ben Hall Memorial Fund and send contributions to Box 1331, Passaic, N. J. 07055.

Theatre organ has made great strides in the past year. Let us continue to pull together and create even more respect for our form of music.

See you in Seattle.



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Stillman H. Rice

Stillman H. Rice, President

The Last in the Old Line State

The restoration of Frederick, Maryland's Tivoli Wurlitzer

Story and photos by Ray Brubacher

STANDING most impressive on Patrick Street, the main thoroughfare through Frederick, Maryland, the town of Barbara Fritchie fame, is the Tivoli Theatre, originally opened as Crandall's Theatre during Christmas week of 1926. For a town the size of Frederick, this edifice is truly an outstanding landmark because of its size and capability of providing top quality entertainment being equipped with a full stage house and a two manual eight rank Wurlitzer organ in the orchestra pit. During the years of live entertainment the theatre saw many famous acts including the renowned Bolshoi Ballet on its stage. During the last decade or so its use has been confined to motion pictures. The theatre is narrow and long with a deep balcony and seating capacity of twelve hundred.

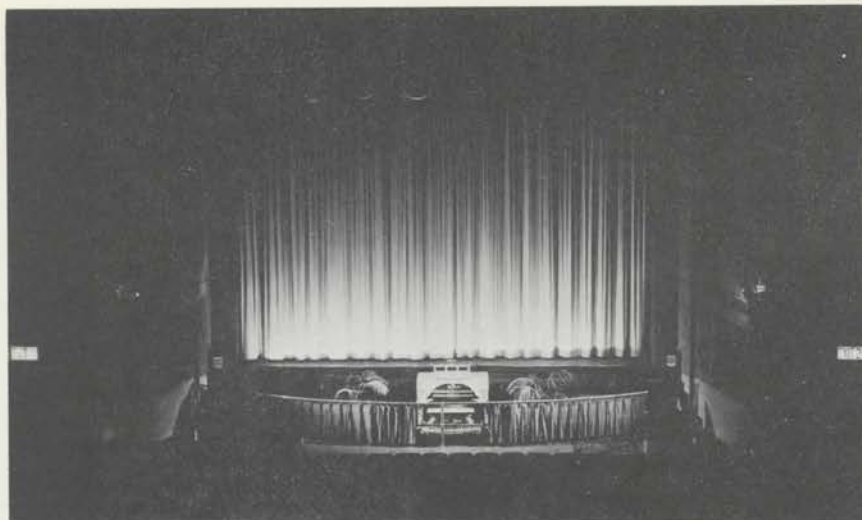
When in 1960 the Potomac Valley Chapter of ATOS was formed, one of its members, Mr. Richard F. Kline, Jr., a resident of Frederick, was instrumental in obtaining the use of the Tivoli Theatre from owner Dan Weinberg for meetings. At that time, the Wurlitzer was being occasionally brought to the public notice by Kline whose office was close to the theatre and allowed him to frequently play the organ to early afternoon theatre goers. Maintenance on the instrument was sporadic. Furthermore, the installation of the organ being in two chambers, one on each side of the stage was hampered acoustically by the fact that the swell shades opened to the screen rather than into the house proper. Through the years the chapter made use of the organ and some attempts at renovation were carried out but by the end of 1969 it was evident that if the organ was to be saved, a major restoration project was in the offing. A lack of interest in the organ prompted its owner to think seriously of its disposal and then the general cry of alarm was sounded prompted by the fact that this Wurlitzer was the last

theatre organ in any theatre in the state of Maryland.

At a spring 1970 meeting of the chapter, chairman George Johnson asked this writer to assume the responsibility for having the organ fully restored. This meant that a crew of people dedicated to the project would have to be found and that these people would have to be sincere in their intentions of regular attendance at work sessions. Contact was made with Dick Kline who cleared the project through Mr. Weinberg and an initial meeting was set up in early summer on a Saturday morning to be attended by those interested in assisting with the work. At the meeting a crew of men and boys (it can be stated that the boys became men on this job) were secured and an inspection of the organ was made. Bottom boards were lowered on all chests, the console and relay were inspected and it was decided that there could be no patchwork, everything would have to be completely releathered. I was fortunate in having in one member of my crew a person already experienced in releathering his own 2/10 Wurlitzer H model, fifteen year old Doug Miller

who undertook responsibility for every pneumatic in the organ and did a most magnificent job on this part of the project. Doug acted as kind of an informal project director seeing that projects were being guided in the right direction. All pneumatics from all chests and console were removed, all pipework was placed in storage and then a thorough cleaning of each chamber was accomplished without fear of damaging pipes. To correct the swell shade problem, the entire framework and shade mechanisms from the solo chamber was moved to the main and vice versa. Without the woodworking and carpentry experience of members Bob Lane, Julian Wild, John Doyle, Lou Spittel, Doug Greene, Lem Keller, Charlie Affelder and Stump Miller I am not so sure that the organ would be back together today.

Meanwhile, other members of the crew including Dick Myers, Dave Whitmore, Walter Weigel, our youngest member, Billy Saalbach, who at twelve, must know quite a bit about the innards of a Wurlitzer, Gordon Young, Bill and Dick Taylor who gave up valuable time considering they had brought a suitcase



Doug Miller removes console pneumatics.

of Wurlitzer pneumatics from California to re-leather for their own instrument, Dick Kline and yours truly took on tasks of cleaning pipework, re-leathering pipe stoppers, repainting the console and a hundred million other menial tasks essential to improving a sick Wurlitzer.

By October all of the parts had been put back, there were no excess components to speak of and breaths were held as the blower switch was thrown for the first time. While all of this was going on the front office too had been busy. Mr. Weinberg decided to re-open the newly restored organ with a gala one week performance of the now well shown classic film "Wings" and booked Lee Erwin as organist for the week. In this day it takes a courageous management to book in a silent film in the only movie house in town for one week.

The renovation of the organ was complete except for one thing, something which all too often goes unnoticed and overlooked by those whose concept of a restoration is to get it playing and that is the end. The one thing which makes the organ is regulation, voicing and good tuning. Dick Kline brought in Chris Feiereisen whose ear and knowledge of correcting the waywardness of reeds and flues is not to be questioned and for two days Chris worked both major and minor miracles in getting the Wurlitzer to not just speak but to sing.

Lee Erwin and the Tivoli Wurlitzer were a perfect match and his accompaniment of the film proved to be flawless. His enthusiasm for the sound of the organ was a welcome relief to all who had worked so very hard to achieve the splendid results which were heard. We were indeed fortunate in having with us Ben Hall who made the trip down to hear and later proclaim the organ one of the very finest small



Console of the 2/8 Wurlitzer in the Tivoli Theatre, Frederick, Maryland.

Wurlitzers he had ever heard but it is also a sobering thought to realize that this was one of the last Wurlitzers he would ever hear.

Since the opening, plans have been made for more film programs and it is interesting to note the support that the first film received from the teen agers. Lee played a special engagement for the local high schools in Frederick county and received such enthusiastic support from this end that more presentations with school participation are being planned. A feature story on the organ is being written for MARYLAND magazine, one of the state's official journals. The organ is now regularly maintained by crew members so that this instrument can truly remain in top condition and if it has to be last in the old line state, the state can be proud of the organ and of those who worked so hard to restore it to its present condition.

Following are the technical facts needed to complete the story of the Tivoli Wurlitzer. The organ is referred to as a model 190 with the following ranks of pipes:

Tibia Clausa	73 pipes
Bourdon Flute	97 pipes
Diaphone - Diap.	85 pipes
Violin	73 pipes
Clarinet	61 pipes
Vox Humana	61 pipes
Kinura	61 pipes
Trumpet	73 pipes

The trumpet is available at the four foot pitch on the solo second touch. There are five pistons for each manual. The accompaniment pistons control the pedal stops. There are two expression shoes and six toe pistons for effects. The console is located in a platform in the center of the orchestra pit. Paint scheme is brilliant red with yellow and black striping with large music lyres on each side of the keyboards. □



ON THE TOP—Dave Whitmore and Doug Miller.



AND ON THE STAGE—L. to r. Charlie Affelder, Dick Kline, Bill Taylor, Dick Taylor and Doug Greene.



ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE—Walter Weigel and Billy Saalbach.

THE CIRCUS IS COMING

The age-old show form still has appeal for "children of all ages" and the music now comes from an organ.

by Stu Green

It isn't often that an ex-silent film organist can find a niche for himself by applying the skills learned cueing movies to a surviving art form. But that's what Hollywood organist Harry J. Jenkins has done; he's the whole "band" for a small circus, accompanying the acts on a beat Hammond organ.

"It's quite similar to cueing silent movies, with a couple of exceptions," says Harry. "The acts are not silent — and unlike scenes captured on film they keep changing. Keeps me from getting bored just keeping up with the changes from show to show."

Time was when a circus sported a large and glamorous uniformed band. But here was Harry Jenkins, Colonel, AAF, retired, doing the entire musical accompaniment on an electric organ. How this situation evolved calls for some backtracking.

Years ago "circus day" meant a fantastic parade down main street, replete with horse-drawn wild animal wagons, platoons of clowns, gorgeous ladies astride elephants, the circus band playing from its special wagon and spotted in the parade lineup so as not to couple acoustically with the raucous steam calliope which usually closed the stately procession.

Alas, "progress" has made the parade a memory and even the largest circus has foregone the great 3-ring canvas tent in favor of the easier sport arena, convention hall or amphitheatre. And the "greatest show on earth" doesn't get around to all the one day stands at the many towns it once thrilled. A long run in New York's Madison Square Garden is more profitable — and much easier.

All of this riles the tradition-minded circus buff as well as the showman who recalls "the old days" under canvas. It



The lure of the circus has cast its spell and a youthful audience lines up to absorb the wonders under the big top. Already the popcorn-and-jungle smells have surrounded them while the sideshow barker's spiel invites them to see "Torcho — the fire eater with asbestos lungs"!



WARMUP—Just before show time organist Harry chats with fellow performers who have come to provide atmosphere for his overture. They are gal clown Polly Tate and trapeze artist Kathi Ferges.

was inevitable that the latter would see opportunity beckoning from the areas now bypassed by the big show. Therefore it is not strange that numbers of circusmen (and women) have assembled what might be called "spinoff" circuses, one-ring shows which offer a good share of the entertainment value of the big top's three rings — and in a real tent. These shows may consist of perhaps a dozen acts formerly seen in the big top or new ones hopeful of that goal. In the latter case the "one ringer" provides a training ground for circus artists.

The small circus travels in usually unglamorous trucks with trailers while performers follow in cars or light trucks towing house trailers. The location sought is one with population density, often a shopping center parking lot. And as often as he can arrange it, the circus advance man guarantees a portion of the audience by promoting sponsorship of the performance by a local

fraternal organization, chamber of commerce or other group of business or civic associates. In such cases the organization's membership becomes the show's ticket seller.

Obviously such a streamlined show can't afford the oldtime circus band. For that matter neither can Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey whose "band" now numbers three full-time musicians, a cornetist-leader (indestructible Merle Evans), a Hammond organist and a drummer. Up to 26 sidemen are picked up locally, if they are available. In a pinch the staff trio plays the entire circus accompaniment. In this case the one indispensable instrument in the group is the organ. The "greatest show on earth" has had a Hammond



Win Danielson

pipled through its PA system ever since the instrument first made its appearance. For many years this Hammond was played by the late Win Danielson,* who often carried the ball for solo stretches.

* See The BOMBARDE, December 1964



Harry joins the circus' youngest performer, Bimbo (17), for a stroll around the grounds. Veteran clown Nolley Tate is also the trainer of the show's performing dogs. He came to the USA from Holland in 1915 and has been clowning ever since.

Today's small circus may have a total payroll smaller than the number of musicians in the old time circus band. So, naturally, the budget-minded small circus operators were attracted to the one-musician aspects of the easily transported electronic organ for a versatile music source. Our story deals with one practitioner of the mini-circus music art.

Like Win Danielson, Harry Jenkins hails from the theatre organ era in New England. And he's a comparative newcomer to circus work. It all started when he was called on to replace his predecessor with the Dewayne Brothers Circus, a one-ring tent show playing west coast engagements.

We caught the show during a performance backed by an Elks Club chapter in a small California town named Saugus. There was the smell of popcorn and cotton candy in the air as we approached the main tent. On our right a sideshow was doing a brisk pre-performance business and the barker was making with the traditional spiel — "Hurry, hurry, hurry — You'll see this gorgeous girl sawed in half, right before your unbelieving eyes . . ."

Just inside the main tent we found the "music trailer" — a fenced platform containing a CV Hammond console and an array of speaker cabinets grouped around it (but no Leslie). On the bench was Harry Jenkins, sorting cards with tiny notation. Crowds of children and parents were filling the bleachers surrounding the single ring. There was excitement in the air.

Harry greeted us with a "hi, there" and waved a dogeared cornet part from the band arrangement of a "galop" at us. It was crowded with notes of brief duration.

"This is the sort of thing they throw at me just before a show to sightread" beefed Harry, as he practiced on a silent manual. He was wearing a gold-



Suzette Masley practices her slack rope ballet number between shows as Harry passes. When she isn't performing in the main ring, Suzette whiles away her time either getting sawed in half during the sideshow or selling popcorn at the refreshment stand, but in unglamorous shirt and jeans.

flecked bandsman's jacket with a built-in bow tie and a jaunty peaked cap. He looked much younger than his 60-odd years. It was almost showtime and one could feel the anticipation rising. Drifting in from the sideshow area was a portion of the barker's drone — "he crawls on his belly like a reptile . . ."

Then came the signal to start and Colonel Harry broke into the overture, a potpourri of circus memory teasers — "Billboard March," "Entry of the Gladiators," "Memphis Belle," "Comedians' Galop" plus a sprinkling of Sousa.

The Hammond thundered forth brightly through the battery of speakers on the trailer and also from massive auxiliary cabinets spaced at ground level just outside the ring. A clown walked among the shallow bleachers and encouraged the kids in the audience to clap hands in rhythm with the music. Some of the accompanying parents set aside popcorn long enough to join in, even when the beat got out of sync and superimposed a grotesque, uneven syn-

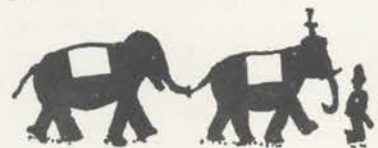


LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON — The mighty Jargo ignores his pretty trainer to lunge at Harry. Inside the monkey suit is Harry Jr. who does a King Kong act to climax the show. The lad's only complaint is that "It's mighty hot inside the heavy ape suit".

copation on the music. Came the final chord and organist Jenkins got a big hand from the happy crowd. The mood had been set and the show started.

During the afternoon Harry supplied music to highlight a trampoline act, a troupe of educated dogs, a cowgirl with a well-trained horse, a quartet of performing chimpanzees, a clown slapstick sequence, a pretty girl performing on a swinging rope, a quartet of fuzzy trained ponies, an amazing juggler, Bimbo the teenage elephant, and an unruly gorilla named Jargo, starring clown-roustabout-elephant handler Harry Jenkins Jr. inside the monkey suit.

Throughout the performance Harry Jenkins Sr. was "right on" with the ever-changing musical demands, often taking unobtrusive cues directly from the performers. Most of the acts required fast music and the closing "chasers" were invariably speedy. We began to acquire an appreciation of the mere physical stamina required to maintain the pace.



"I figure I 'walk' about 10 miles during a performance just from the pedaling," said organist Harry as the afternoon crowd filed out of the tent and the peanut and crackerjack vendors returned from the bleachers to load up for the next performance. Harry showed no outward sign of fatigue but he was soaking wet from perspiration.

During the break between shows Harry took us around for a closeup of doings behind the scenes. We met the youthful clowns, a baby chimpanzee, a man and wife team of august clowns,



REAL MONKEY BUSINESS — A baby Chimp greets organist Harry with a smack on the kisser. The Dewayne Bros. Circus starts tour in April which will see it back in its North Hollywood headquarters late in October. Harry rarely gets home during the tour.

Bimbo the elephant, a bevy of pretty girl performers in revealing costumes and the man responsible for it all — Mr. Ted Dewayne. Mr. Dewayne is a giant of a man and he's involved in all aspects of circus work, from driving tent pegs (they now use discarded auto axles) to putting the horses and elephant through their paces in the ring. We once caught him selling tickets to the sideshow. He is always on hand to see that the show keeps moving. He is enthusiastic about Harry Jenkins' "impersonation" of a brass band and finds the electric organ a very suitable instrument for circus work.

"Harry wore out one organ and we had to buy him another not long ago," said the rough-hewn circus veteran who is also the boss.

We learned that small circuses are usually family affairs. Dad may be the business manager while mom trains dogs and daughter performs on the high wire. And we've already mentioned the multiple duties of Harry Jenkins Jr. Now he's learning "fire eating" and balancing on the high wire. Two clowns also trained the dogs and the rope ballet girl sold refreshments at her dad's popcorn stand.

Circus folks are a breed apart. While the pay may not be the greatest, there are other compensations, all intertwined with the lure of "show biz." But to mold the diverse acts into a cohesive show, music is an important catalyst. No one could be better equipped to supply the special brand of music required than a former theatre organist — and Harry Jenkins has been through the cueing routine before. In fact, more than 40 years before. □



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

*Address: P. O. Box 2329
Livonia, Michigan 48150*

Dear Editor:

Theatre Organ, Feb. '71 issue, finally arrived yesterday, late but well worth the seemingly long wait. Perhaps my absentmindedness, a definite sign of old age, re prompt payment of dues was the cause.

I don't recall ever having written T.O. magazine Editor either to praise or criticize in the many years of membership, but one particular feature in this issue deserves much praise (not that others do not also) — the Lloyd E. Klos "Uticans Are Tuned In," praising Don Robinson's WZOW-FM program "Organ Loft." Don, along with the station management, have certainly given much effort to fostering Theatre Organ in their area, and for so very many continuous years. This indeed must be a record.

Certainly there must be other areas in this very large country of ours besides Utica, and of course our own Niagara Frontier, that have similar programs and perhaps should receive the public thanks they deserve.

Special programs are only kept on the air if sufficient numbers of listeners take the time and effort to send just a little card now and then, informing the station they enjoy the programs. The managements are not mind readers, and many of them could care less about our hobby, and so must have these little 5¢ cards or letters. What a cheap price to pay for so much wonderful listening!

Other stations in the N.F. area air T.O. recorded programs — WHLD-FM Niagara Falls, N.Y., CHSC-FM St. Catharines, Ontario, on a regular weekly basis, sometimes intermixed with electronic organ, **BUT**, only one station, WBEN-FM, airs "Pipe Organ Memories" 6:30 — 7:00 PM, Monday thru Friday — a total of **2½ hours per week**, at a prime time, and reaches major numbers of listeners — parts of Ontario, all of Western N.Y., parts of Central N.Y. and Pennsylvania — a very large coverage.

Credit for this excellent program and its longevity of about 5 years, is due to Les Arries, General Manager and Edward Tucholka, FM Program Director (the latter a Honorary Member of N.F. Chapter). For the record, each day of the 3 weeks prior to each monthly concert at the Riviera Theatre, announcements are made on this program in lengthy detail as a public service, and probably, or I might say possibly, this may be the reason why almost every concert is a "Standing Room Only" event. Of course, if the artist were not of the highest calibre this SRO would not occur, but, we of the N.F. Chapter are fortunate in having the very best available.

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A card to your local newspapers, when they publicize your T.O. affairs, will be very much appreciated as has been by our Buffalo Evening News, Courier Express and Tonawanda News, just to name a few. It's such a little thing to do.

I had not meant this to be such a lengthy epistle, but I do wish to try and impress the membership — take the time to drop a card to your local stations and newspapers if they are co-operating, and if they are not, continue to write and perhaps they will.

Musically yours,
LAURA THOMAS

* * *

The Editor:

An Open Letter to all chapters and members, ATOS:

This letter should have been written two years ago, but since it is never too late to try to make amends, I want to publicly thank Lyn Larsen for the signal honor accorded me on his album GET HAPPY, Essential Record #ERS 1007. It is not every day that an artist receives a dedication from another artist, especially on a record, and this distinction has overwhelmed me to the point I find it difficult to express my appreciation and thanks without becoming maudlin.

Lyn Larsen's artistry has won international fame, and the pleasure he gives the listener, whether in concert or on record, is a result obviously of his intense love of the theatre organ. Most assuredly, he is not riding on coat-tails in playing my arrangement of the Fantasie-Impromptu, but is, rather, expressing respect for a colleague.

We have not been without our share of back-biting in the field of theatre organ, so I am more than grateful — yes, proud — to call your attention to this unique honor from Lyn. In these days of faint hopes and frequent doubts, his is an act to restore faith in the qualities of the professional musician.

Very sincerely yours,
ASHLEY MILLER

* * *

Dear George:

Re: The enclosed picture. The Chauncey Haines article and picture on page 15 caused somewhat of a stir here amongst the factualists. The picture identifies Mr. Haines at the console of the Chicago Theatre. The problem is that the Chicago Theatre always had a plain console (much like the one in your cover picture) and the main console has most always been on the left side as you face the stage (this is unusual for Chicago). Therefore, I did

some digging and found that the picture was of Mr. Haines at the Norshore. The enclosed picture proves this: you can tell from the coffer on the side of the proscenium arch, as well as the console decorations. It was one of few white-and-gold Wurlitzers we had here. This photo is a super enlargement from the Chicago Architectural Photographing Company collection of the Norshore.



The reason I am making an issue is that if we ever get the Chicago going again, someone is going to ask us why we stripped the console and moved it to the other side. In a document such as THEATRE ORGAN, I believe facts are important, and when error is made, it should be corrected.

Again, thanks for your efforts in putting forth a top notch magazine; keep up the good work. Hope to see you this summer.

Best regards,
JOSEPH DUCIBELLA

* * *

Dear Editor:

Other than leaking gas and cobras on the prowl, one of the very few things that can make me nervous is a (cough) . . . "creative" . . . printer. One such is responsible for the omission of proper professional credits on the jacket of my new PROJECT 3 record album. I hope you feel you can print this so at least some of the organ world will know the identities of those without whose many talents and great team spirit the recording would have been impossible.

The organ engineer crew consisted of Bob Walker (head), Jim Leaffe, Geoff Paterson, Mel Robinson and Clem Young. The recording engineer was the one and only Bert Whyte and the producer, Enoch Light. Thank you very much indeed for considering this request. As for the foregoing men, they are what theatre folk call TOP BANANA. Amen!

BILLY NALLE

IRVIN AND ERWIN AT ATLANTA FOX

ATOS members who attended the "Fabulous Fifteenth" Convention in New York City last summer will remember Robbie Irvin as the young organist Lee Erwin introduced during his program at the United Palace.

On Thursday night, May 6, it was Robbie's turn to introduce Lee as his guest at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta. Robbie is now the house organist at the Fox; Lee was there to play a special performance of the silent film, "Wings."

Both Robbie and Lee played a short group of organ solos, "music of the twenties" and "music of the seventies," and then the two hour and seventeen minute first Academy Award film began.

The audience loved every minute of the entire performance; so much so that the ABC management plans to schedule at least four such shows a year. The Alabama Theatre in Birmingham and the Tennessee in Knoxville will be included on future silent film schedules.

Meanwhile, Robbie Irvin can be heard in a special solo organ presentation every weekend at the Fabulous Atlanta Fox. □

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"Tell It Like It Is"

by John Muri

Once in a while I wish that those who write reviews of organ concerts and organ records would tell us more about what really happened and what's specially right and wrong about the new records. There has been quiet complaint about the mediocrity of some records, and the kindness of some concert reviews has not matched the word-of-mouth reviews one hears. It's pretty clear that occasionally a theatre organ concert unfortunately is a bomb. It's also pretty clear that a 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm record that sounds better when played at 45 rpm has something wrong with its execution. A friend recently played one for me that was a musical and emotional drag at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ but which perked up nicely at 45 rpm.

Sure, we need to be kind to each other, but we ought not to have to conceal important truths that might help an artist do better if he were informed. Write the bad news to him in a note, if you like, but don't give people all over the country a false impression. The old saying that you shouldn't say anything if you can't say anything good applies only if you aren't hurting somebody else in the process. Some of us who play programs needs a little jacking up once in a while.

Take, for instance, the soloists who have been playing the same music over and over. We have at least four players on the national concert circuit who are getting reputations for giving the same show repeatedly. One city has decided not to hire one of them again unless he changes his routine. Another one played three programs in one region and used the same music at each performance, teeing off several people who attended more than one of the concerts in the expectation of hearing varied offerings.

Then there are the players who play too loud. One of them has a reputation for having two registrations: loud and louder. It might be of interest to those fellows to learn that the hearing of women is more sensitive than that of men and that the ladies can be made painfully uncomfortable with sound-levels that men do not find particularly annoying. Anyway, big noises are impressive for a short time only, and large blocks of stops played in chord handfuls is no way to show off the beauty of an organ. Open her up when the

music is really exciting, but don't do it often. Then the noise will be thrilling to everybody.

Lots of us play wrong notes more than we like, but most of the time the errors aren't worth getting excited about. The greatest of players make mistakes in public. Some have a greater gift for accuracy than others, and they should be praised for it. However, when a soloist plays a popular tune wrong because he doesn't know the tune (and there is a fair amount of this kind of thing making the rounds) he ought to be told about it. Wrong harmonies and bad or dawdling improvisations need attention. The latter are particularly troublesome when an organist is playing for a long movie during which he has not been able to muster up musical inspiration and finds himself unable to think of anything appropriate to play. I heard one fellow play a Laurel and Hardy comedy using church-style improvisational chord-sequences over and over, with never the shade of a melody appearing to relieve the monotony. It seemed he was frozen at the console, while the screen action definitely called for lively, sparkling tunes. The trouble in that case was that there had not been any preparation for the performance. The player should have made out a cue-sheet and been ready for what we called a zippy performance in the twenties.

Bad registrations ought to get their raps too, but sometimes they result from a player's unfamiliarity with the organ. There is no forgiving of protracted use of muddy-sounding combinations, in which chords are played on sixteen-foot registers. Such elephantine noise-making should be discouraged early in life. I would rather make a mistake on the side of over-brilliance than on thickness of tone.

Maybe we ought to say something about stage appearance and deportment. Some of us are going in for flashy outfits and for clothing-changes at the half-way point. It's a good idea for more than one reason. Usually those players are extroverts, and there is a possibility that some of them may be tempted to overdo the flashiness to a point displeasing to some of the audiences. I think we ought to be sensitive to audience acceptance of far-out styles in clothing and the mannerisms that sometimes go along with them. One can

be too limp-wristed and patronizing. Among the less annoying mannerisms are the effusions of soloists who spend time telling the audience how wonderful the organ is, how wonderful we are, and how he (or she) hopes to be able to come back real soon — for a fee, of course. Especially annoying are those who let you know in one way or another that here at last the organ has found its true mate or master, thereby insulting the program committee and everyone else who has ever played the organ. Such bad manners are harder to take than the taciturn or clammy deportment of the soloist who walks on, rarely smiles, and seems to be doing a job just to get it over with.

All of us need to be on guard against talking too much when we have been engaged to play the organ. Over-long and unnecessary explanations of the histories of composers and their works belong in the classroom, not the concert stage. Explanations of how an organ works and what the different stops sound like are uncalled for in places where theatre organ concerts and shows have been given for years. In short, the concert circuit requires — and will probably demand — that players come up regularly with fresh, new material. None of us should expect to inflict our theme songs and "request favorites" upon audiences forever. □

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Readers are encouraged to submit interesting sidelights on the organ hobby (exclusive of chapter news items), material they believe will be of general interest about local organ activities and installations and the people who work at the hobby. We know "there's VOX POPS in them there chapters" and it only requires a 5c postcard to get it to VOX POPS Editor, Box 5013 Bendix Station, North Hollywood, Calif. 91605.

There's never a dull moment when Stockton (Calif.) cathedral organist Fred Tulan is on the scene. The hip wind merchant, known for way-out addenda to liturgical music, recently returned from a symphony tour in time to add his digital and pedal bit (at the huge Cathedral organ) to an interfaith ecumenical service. He arrived at the church to find it peopled by a Catholic bishop, a rabbi, several ministers, nuns and a black "Soul Music" choir. Fred left the console for a moment to aid a TV cameraman, unaware he'd left the Sforzando button (full organ) "on." Fate's fickle finger materialized in the form of an apparently religious stray cat — which jumped to the organ bench and then to the great manual, where it stretched out to rest, unmoved by the din generated by circa two octaves of full organ blasting forth. Fred froze — transfixed. The cameraman was stupefied. The cacaphony was enormous.

Then the cat saw Fred bearing down on the console and jumped to the pedals — only to wedge a paw between two pedals. The din was now thunderously low pitched, except for the cat's wails. In a moment Fred had released the cat, but the sforzando was stuck in "on" position and the organ roared with all its ranks in action throughout the service. Unable to provide quiet music for the offertory, Fred switched on the tremos and beat out "Kitten on the Keys." The TV producer shook his head and was heard to mutter, "Man, do we have a lot of editing to do on

this tape!" Who says church is dull these days?

* * *

Paul H. Forster, Central New York's top sing-along organist of the '20s and '30s, has retired again. We say "again" because it has happened before. But each time music beckoned and Paul couldn't resist. Nearly 15 years ago Paul and wife Arline moved from the rigors of Syracuse, N. Y. weather to the balmy climate of St. Petersburg, Florida, fully intending to just enjoy retirement. But the Church by the Sea needed an organist and Paul volunteered. He's been Minister of Music there ever since. Now he has announced another retirement. He just might make it this time — unless another irresistible console rears its lovely stoprail.

* * *

When word got around that he was about to retire, veteran theatre organist Don Baker was quick to react with a reminiscent paraphrase, "Reports of my leisurely ambitions have been greatly exaggerated." A musical events calendar had listed a Glendale (Calif.) appearance as Don's final concert. Not so, says Don, who actually plans to expand both his pipe and electronic organ activities in the near future.



DON BAKER — "Retire — Hell!"

— Stufoto

Jimmie Paulin, Jr., one of the stars of last year's ATOS Convention in New York, presented a concert for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society on January 19 in the Auditorium Theatre. The 600 attendees were treated to a wide range of good music, and the program was dedicated to the late Ben Hall, whose death prevented his appearance in Lilac City in December. Jimmie disclosed that he has resigned his post at the New York United Palace (ex-Loew's 175th Theatre), and plans to make the theatre organ concert circuit.



DICK ELLSASSER — Alive and well and living in southern California.

— Stufoto

The voice on the long distance phone was insistent: "... but I heard that he's completely paralyzed, mind a blank, just a vegetable, in some midwestern institution — can't play, can't even feed himself. Is it true?" The frequency of such inquiries has made them much more than a nuisance to concert organist Richard Ellsasser. "How can I line up concerts if people think I'm a basket case?" asks Dick. The tale is rooted in fact; following an auto crash nearly three years ago, it was thought that serious injuries had ended Dick's concert career. For a short time he was paralyzed. But no more. Today Dick Ellsasser is back in the pink, willing and able to turn out the finished performances of organ classics that made him famous. We reassured the very concerned man on the telephone, then made an appointment to take a current photo showing Dick at practice. "Hope this'll help get the basket off my back," quipped Ellsasser.

* * *

New ATOS member, Mrs. Mabel Maguire of Doylestown, Pa. informs us that a few months ago she tossed into the ash can some mementos of her two-year career as a theatre organist, thereby precluding any lengthy biography. However, she does remember one facet of her training at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester. "One of our class assignments was to originate our own song slides by adding lyrics to old tunes and a popular song of the day." She is tremendously proud of her nephew, Karl Cole, who has played some fine concerts for Syracuse audiences and elsewhere. She anticipates a bright career for him.

* * *

The Minneapolis Star in its variety section recently ran an excellent feature on the city's State Theatre by staffer Barbara Flanagan. Illustrated with 11 excellent photos, the story was re-

searched by ATOSer Steve Adams. On February 5 the theatre observed its 50th birthday, and a description of the opening show mentioned that Arthur Depew was at the organ. Leonard Leigh played noon organ concerts daily during opening week. Eddie Dunstedter didn't take over until the mighty Wurlitzer was installed in 1925. "If you didn't like dancers, there was William W. Nelson, conducting the State Symphony Orchestra. And Eddie Dunstedter—always Eddie. You got lots of entertainment for 50c in those days."

* * *

Richard Simonton is walking a foot off the ground since learning that he is one of the trustees of the late Harold Lloyd's estate, especially because the comedian willed funds and land for a film museum. The idea of such a museum has long been close to Simonton's heart, and with Dick among the trustees we can trust the Lloyd museum will be equipped with a theatre organ.

* * *

Those conventioners attending the Fabulous Fifteenth last summer, who passed the Brooklyn Fox enroute to festivities at the Brooklyn Paramount (L.I.U.) will be interested to know that the wreckers started destruction early this year, according to a lengthy N. Y. Times article. The marquee's final message was "Farewell to the Fox, October 31, 1928 to November 4, 1970. Bill Gage at the Mighty Wurlitzer." An office building of six stories is scheduled to replace the theatre building, part of urban renewal for an area which has been going downhill for some time. The organ is safe.

* * *

"Old Town Music Hall" in El Segundo, Calif. operated by Bills Field & Coffman, has added an imposing list of silent film events to its roster of concerts by top artists (Tom Hazleton on the May 15 weekend). Locating a reliable source of good film prints, the boys have scheduled such classics as Fritz Lang's "Metropolis," F. W. Murnau's "Sunrise" with Janet Gaynor, King Vidor's "The Big Parade" and John Barrymore starring in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." Bill Field usually does the honors at the 4/26 Wurlitzer.

* * *

In April the "Old Town Music Hall" presented a concert by youthful Carol Jones. Carol, whose star continues to rise with each concert, included selections by three members of her Monday night audience plus a classic by a composer who wasn't there. The winsome girl played a tune each by Richard Purvis, Bill Thomson and Stu Green, and



CAROL JONES — Rachmaninoff couldn't make it.

closed with a rousing "Prelude in G Minor" by Rachmaninoff. "Too bad Rachmaninoff couldn't make it," quipped Purvis, "Carol was great."

* * *

Organist Eddie Hanson, enjoying a renewed popularity since the recent release of his first recording, got a fine writeup in the Sunday VIEW magazine of the Appleton (Wisconsin) Post-Crescent. Revelations about the 72-year-old ex-Chicago theatre organist included some of his career "firsts" and candid opinions.

1. While cueing a silent movie in 1916 Eddie (16) learned composer Carrie Jacobs Bond was in the theatre and ignored what was on the screen to play everything he knew by Mrs. Bond on the upright. She complimented him on his "concert."

2. He traveled as a saxophone soloist with Sousa's Band but wasn't favorably impressed by John Philip, describing the leader as "a snob, a stuffed shirt."

3. He quit his job as a Chicago theatre organist as soon as "talkies" appeared, and resumed his long-lasting career as a radio organist just as Balaban & Katz theatres fired 28 organists.

4. He claims to be the first Chicago broadcasting organist, starting in 1923 over station WDAP (now WGN).

5. He was first to introduce the "Amos 'n Andy" radio program with "The Perfect Song," also in 1923.

6. During World War I he stood in line for "shots" at Great Lakes Naval Training Center with future stars Spencer Tracy, Pat O'Brien and Jack Benny.

7. Collects records of J. S. Bach's music, a favorite with Eddy.

8. Endured three marriages.

9. Witnessed Bing Crosby's debut with the "Rhythm Boys."

10. Considers the high point of his career the day he sat in with the Paul Whiteman orchestra for a concert playing of "Rhapsody in Blue," with Eddy performing the difficult piano part.

11. Started writing songs at 14 and has registered over 300 compositions with ASCAP in the ensuing 58 years.

12. Started a recording career at 72. His second recording, "Liquid Soul" also played on a Hammond organ, will be listed in next issue's RECORD REVIEWS.



Eddy Hanson circa 1934. At 72 he's doing fine.

The seeds for Billy Nalle's invitation to play the kick-off concert for the 1971 ATOS convention were planted back in 1967 during the Regional Convention in New York when Billy was offered a cab ride back to his hotel following a night concert. Billy didn't know then that the New York Chapter had obtained permission to play the Radio City Music Hall 4/58 Wurler after hours but he sensed some kind of conspiracy when the cab pulled up to the RCMH stage door and disgorged its passengers. Billy was spirited inside and in a few moments found himself astride a Howard seat and facing four manuals and several rows of stop keys. There was nothing to do but play and there must have been some Seattlers among the listeners to Billy's off-the-cuff concert. Apparently Billy's rising affirmative received another plus charge from his 1970 New York L.I.U. convention concert and now he's set to tackle the Seattle Paramount's 4/20 Wurler for 1971 conventioners on July 10th.

* * *

Saturday matinee goes at the South Pasadena Rialto theatre enjoyed an unscheduled half-hour Wurlitzer concert recently, but the audience never knew the organist was George Wright. About noon George needed his electric drill for an art-craft project. He drove over to the theatre in his paint-spattered work clothes to get it and found the manager pacing the floor. The projectionist had phoned in: he'd be late —

very late. George volunteered to play the organ to fill the void because an audience had already started to gather. George wasn't dressed for any sort of presentation, even if there'd been anyone available to turn on the lights, so he played with just the console lights until the tardy projectionist arrived. He thanked the sprinkling of matinee goers from the dark pit and even got a round of applause. Then the movie started.

Next day, enroute to the same art-craft project, and wearing the same work clothes, George was buttonholed by a man he vaguely recalled having seen entering the theatre on the previous day.

"Ain't you the guy who played the organ at the Rialto before the show?"

"Yes."

"Say — you sounded pretty good — almost as good as George Wright, I go to all his concerts."

George thanked the unknowing admirer.

* * *

Dick Villemin kept the secret about his orders well; rebuild the style 260 Wurlitzer into a 30-rank organ in your Porterville (Calif.) workshop for installation in a private museum of musical instruments and antique horseless carriages, to be located probably in Glendale and mum's the word. Those were the wishes of the customer, Jack Nethercutt, and it wasn't until Jack leaked the story that word got around among Southern Calif. fans. The 30-ranker is near completion but it doesn't hold much promise for enthusiasts. The word "private" was underlined.

* * *

Alden Miller has been bitten by the theatre organ bug again. We say "again" because Al has been in and out of the hobby several times over the past few years, leaving whenever his other hobby, toy trains, gets the upper hand. We are owes him a lot; back in the early '50s deeply concerned with Al's involvement with theatre organs because the hobby before the birth of ATOS and its publications Al initiated a T.O. newsletter which he circulated among the fans he knew. That many of these same fans which Al's "Cinema Theatre Organ Digest" (one of its names; he changed them frequently) reached became the founders of ATOS indicates the influence of Al's efforts in those early days when individual organ enthusiasts discovered that there were others who shared their concern for their favorite musical instrument. But after publishing his sheet for several years, Al felt the stronger pull of toy trains, willed his

publication to eventual oblivion and sold his collection of recordings (some choice Crawford), data and photos, all neatly assembled in scrapbook form. Now, ever increasing organ items received from Al's base of operations, Minneapolis, indicate that he's with us to stay. Anyone want to buy some slightly used toy trains?

* * *

Organist Mildred Alexander finally had enough: "Caint yewall evah git tard a' runnin' pictyewrs of ma laigs???" (Mildred hails from 'Nawth Car'lanah' and the brogue is her trademark). For several years nearly all items about Millie and her activities were illustrated in these pages with photos of her well-turned underpinnings racing among organ pedals. The first one came about due to her advocacy of gal organists playing pedals with shoes on — preferably in high heels, as Millie does. "Ah hayv a fayace, too, yewall. Maybe ah ain't pretty — but ah ain't ugly, y'hear?" Finally the worm has turned and he turned out to be the VOX POPS editor. So all concerned will recognize the little southern belle without referring to her ankles, here's a photo showing her face taken while she was practicing for the theatre organ concerts she's being booked for with ever increasing frequency (e.g. the Rochester Theatre Organ Society). The console controls Bill Barker's 11-rank Wurli home installation in San Diego.



MILLIE ALEXANDER — 'Legs ain't everything.'

Reader Gary Tuck calls our attention to a very bad goof in the February VOX POP which relocated not only organist Ken Wright but the entire WKY-TV station from Oklahoma City to Kansas City. Our apologies to Ken and WKY-TV for the unauthorized transplant and to the Kansas City Municipal Council which we accused of neglecting the historic 3/14 Kilgen organ in its municipal auditorium. It

seems that organ enthusiasts' ire should be directed to the Oklahoma City Council for allowing the prize Kilgen to decay. Thanks for the geography lesson, Gary.

* * *

The sharp eye of MARQUEE editor Brother Andrew Corsini caught a boo-boo among our April VOX POPS when we referred to the Buffalo N. Y. Seneca theatre as a Rapp & Rapp house when it was really designed by W. T. Spann. And Bro. Andy informs us that the photo of Chauncey Haines at a gingerbread console in the same issue should have been identified as the Chicago Norshore, not Jesse's Chicago theatre console which remains undecorated with frippery to this day. We're mortified!

* * *

In California the "Pizza Palace with Pipes" success story continues with two additions in the mill. Bill Breuer, with two such eateries already operating, is working on a third ("my last" he says) in a San Jose shopping center. It's of special interest to enthusiasts because the instrument is the 3/26 WurliMorton on which the late Buddy Cole created some unforgettable recordings. The organ was badly treated during its unfortunate journey to the east coast, with much water damage, but Bill is giving it tender loving care to make possible once again the haunting "Buddy Cole sound." It's rumored that John Seng is being considered for the job. Nearer completion is a pizza parlor in San Raphael being readied by John Wallace. It will be equipped with a 3/14 Morton and opens this month.

* * *

In Glenshaw, Pa., Bob Yates was deep in puzzlement. Above the stopkeys of the 2/7 Marr & Colton he is restoring is a second row of stopkeys offering proper combinations for 40 applications to silent movies. The tabs are engraved with such exotic nomenclature as Quietude, Jealousy, Anger, Gruesome, Happiness, Suspense, Agitation, Funeral, Riot — and three kinds of Love; Mother, Romantic and Passion. Wiring had been removed so no clue remained as to how the voices and pitches were once combined to help create the moods indicated. M & C apparently made very few of these "mood synthesizers." Only two others have come to our attention and we never saw a combination action breakdown. Any reader with this knowledge who wants to share it with Bob may write to him in care of VOX POPS.

A number of readers have asked what has become of the series of silent movie "hurries" which appeared in these pages over the past few years, but ever less frequently. We have acquired an imposing collection of suitable material but a technical problem has put at least a temporary damper on the series. The problem is in finding someone with a music typewriter to transfer the tunes from manuscript to "camera ready." A reliable music typist is the only bottleneck. Anyone with a solution is encouraged to contact Grand Staff Records, Box 343, Pacoima, Calif. 91331.

* * *

News from the Old Dominion (Virginia to you), indicates that the Potomac Valley Chapter is not resting. Woody Wise has been made acting chairman of arrangements for the 17th ATOS convention in 1972. Richmond — there is a city with a soul! Three Wurlitzers in working order — including the Byrd Theatre and the Mosque. And those fabulous instruments in Jimmy Boyce's Alexandria roller rink and in the Virginia Theatre.

* * *

Organist Doc Bebko made his perennial pilgrimage to New York City on a recent holiday and of course, made straightaway for the Music Hall, scene of his sojourn as a theatre organist. "The show was the greatest and finest of all the 36 years I've been going there," said Doc. "Stage show was overwhelming in its elegance. Organ and orchestra were used profusely. What an experience — worth the price of admission alone!"

* * *

In Pompano Beach, Florida, former silent film organist Jan Krupa felt a twinge of nostalgia when he heard mentioned the Wheeling (West Va.) Capitol theatre. Krupa had played there in 1929. Further inquiry indicated that the Capitol's Marr & Colton organ had been "rescued from a fate too horrible to mention," but information was sketchy. Considering what's happening to venerable theatres these days the "fate" isn't difficult to fathom, but Jan, who has a soft spot in his heart for "the glamorous theatre organ era" is hurting for details of that rescue. "It was a fine M & C," he recalls.

* * *

Ashley Miller took a breather from his soap opera duties (Search For Tomorrow, CBS-TV) to have a fun session at the former Brooklyn Paramount (now the Long Island University) Wurlitzer to play for the basketball game between Long Island University and St. Bonaventure University on February 10.

Virgil Fox At The Dickinson Kimball

"... a startling potpourri of sonic entertainment ..."

by Ray Brubacher

The John Dickinson High School and its large Kimball theatre organ located in Wilmington, Delaware have already been written up in the April and June 1970 issues of THEATRE ORGAN. To say that this installation now approaching twenty eight ranks is one of the finest in the country is a gross understatement, the sound, the installation and the surroundings make it a stellar attraction for all fortunate enough to be able to attend the many programs which have been and will be presented on it.

Saturday, March 27th, 1971, will, I am sure, go down in organ history as being a five star day in the lives of all who worked so very hard to make this organ what it is. The John Dickinson Theatre Organ Society had secured Virgil Fox in what I am sure must be a rare procedure; a concert of classical and semi-classical music on a theatre organ given by perhaps the greatest concert virtuoso in the world.

By 7:30 p.m. when the doors to the spacious fifteen hundred seat auditorium were opened almost a thousand ticket holders were in line waiting to gain their seats. By concert time there were only a few spaces empty on the far sides of the hall. Formally attired usherettes guided patrons to their reserved seats and this writer for one can speak for the advantages of passing the waiting time away while observing, call it girl watching if you will, these lovely efficient beauties performing their duties with enthusiasm which reflects on the spirit of the entire operation at Dickinson.

At 8:12 JDOS chairman Bob Dilworth came on stage to announce future programs and then introduced Dr. Fox who after his expected and eagerly awaited opening remarks proceeded to take the console down into the pit and arise again playing 'Hail Hail the Gang's All Here' to the delight of everyone present.

Fox is now well known for his independent views on performing the great masters and in five pieces by Bach proved conclusively that the works of the great father Bach can be played on any instrument capable of producing

beautiful sound whether it be a great baroque instrument or a great theatre pipe organ. His free usage of tremulants gave greater depth and feeling to some of the chorales and in one of the encore pieces the Symphonia in D major, the instrument sounded forth with the magnificence of a great French cathedral organ.

Works of a lighter nature included the Ives Variations on America. For this gem, Fox dug into the trap and percussion department and came up



Virgil Fox

with a startling potpourri of sonic entertainment which probably would have pleased Ives no end. Variations on 'Adeste Fidelis' were followed with five encores ending with — you guessed it — the rip roaring Perpetuum Mobile of Middelschulte, and the great Kimball never even sighed, it was WHERE THE ACTION WAS.

Any school board contemplating requests for a theatre organ in one of their schools should journey to John Dickinson High and see for themselves what can be done with proper guidance and esprit de corps'. What was, I am certain, thought of by many of the local taxpayers as a needless expenditure of public funds has proven to be a great educational venture as well as a profitable one for the school and provides a means of furthering cultural values in the area. Congratulations and best wishes to Dickinson High, the organ crew, and to the splendid Kimball pipe organ. □

Robert Morton Installed In Reynolds, Ga. Home

They call them "silent" movies now but there was nothing silent about the great, baroque palaces in which they were shown to the faithful movie-goers of the 1920's.

They were filled to their vast domed ceilings with the sound of music from giant pipe organs, and the artists who performed upon them were almost as famous as the personalities whose shadows flickered across the silver screen.

The musician "at the console of the mighty Wurlitzer—or Kimball—or Morton" was a personage of awesome power. It was he who brought tears trembling into the eyes of his audience with "Just A-Wearyin' for You" while America's Sweetheart, Mary Pickford, pantomimed her lonely vigil for her absent lover.

He brought the actual sound of the hooves of The Sheik's Arabian steed thundering down the crimson-carpeted aisle. "Reveille" sounded and a rookie Charlie Chaplin bounded from his bunk—the "telephone rang" for Wallace Reid—a donkey "brayed" at Chester Conklin or a bird "twittered" at Bessie Love—and it was all the doing of that musical magician at the organ. He was indispensable for that post-World War One national entertainment—a Night at the Movies.

And then, overnight, the motion pictures TALKED!



J. O. Mills at his Robert Morton.

For a few years more the great organs boomed on in the enormous movie houses, but the picture industry could now produce its own dialogue and its own built-in musical effects. The day of the theatre organ and the great virtuosos had passed.

But there are those who remember. Ah, yes, they remember it well.

J. O. Mills of Reynolds, Ga. is one for whom the fascination of the enormous music mechanisms has never worn off. In Reynolds, where he has been General Manager of the Flint Electric Membership Corporation for two years, he has rebuilt and installed in his home a Robert Morton Theatre Organ which he purchased out of the old Albany Theatre in Albany, Ga.

The ivory and gilt console, built of

mahogany, stands in the Mills' large lounge, but it was necessary to build an addition onto their home to house the "works"—that is to say, the 5-horse power blower motor, the pipes of metal or wood, and all the tricky things that create the special effects.

A little tricky himself, Jim Mills framed up a handsome set of fake gilt pipes—the kind people usually associate with church organs—at one end of the organ room and often, as he plays, he notes that visitors gaze intently at the pipes!

Jim was district representative for Flint EMC at Warner Robins, Ga. for 17 years before moving to Reynolds, and it was there that he first became interested in the restoration of old organs. A natural musician, he started with a small electronic instrument. Then, as his enthusiasm grew, he gathered together and assembled his first old theatre organ in 1963, working on it until it was almost finished, and sold it to another organ buff. Since then there has been the long labor of love on the Morton which had been installed in the Albany Theatre in 1926. Luckily vital parts for the organ were still available and all that was required was more time than a busy executive could spare and plenty of know-how.

The Mills' are both natives of Montgomery County, Ga., and Mildred Morris Mills shares and encourages her husband's avocation. She has a flair for decoration and has fitted out the organ room with many interesting accessories. A restored player piano and an oldtime dulcimer which Jim made, add distinctive notes.

Two daughters and four grandchildren share the Mills' enjoyment of the organ, especially when old silent movie reels are shown and Jim or a visiting organist livens them up with interpretive "licks."

The Mills' belong to ATOS, our organization that has no intention of letting this art die.

For those, and there are many, who come to see his organ, Jim Mills sits down at his three manual console and demonstrates how the instrument can faithfully demonstrate the percussions as well as other sounds of an orchestra.

The listener, particularly if he be gray-haired, finds himself remembering tunes he thought he had forgotten.

And Jim, sitting there at the beautiful organ that he has rescued from the scrap heap, lets his fingers wander through a modern song with a nostalgic theme—"Those Were the Days, My Friend . . ." □

New Talent Debuts in Potomac Valley

It is always a pleasure to see members of the younger set taking a great interest in the preservation of the theatre organ and its music. The Potomac Valley Chapter has been indeed fortunate in having several youngsters in the twelve to twenty bracket that have contributed their services to the cause. Without their interest and assistance many of our area installations would not be in as fine a condition as they now are.

At the Potomac Valley Chapter's most recent meeting held Saturday, March 20th at the Tivoli Theatre, Frederick, Maryland, on the newly restored 2/8 model 190 Wurlitzer, the guest artist was sixteen year old Lin Lunde of Richmond, Va. A junior in high school, Lin has studied piano for two years and organ for four with Eddie Weaver and substitutes for Weaver regularly at the 4/17 Wurlitzer in the Byrd Theatre in Richmond.

Lin promises to be one of the future artists in demand for theatre organ concerts. Already his technique is far advanced and his playing shows a definite style and polish with a touch of a great theatre organist, his teacher. His program was well balanced and he adapted himself readily to the resources of the Tivoli Wurlitzer. His almost immediate rapport with the instrument was largely due to the instrument being in top condition, making an unfamiliar organ respond to young hands and good solid talent. Lin's style, while not flamboyant, is nevertheless musical and he gets the point across at all times and does not venture into foreign territory with regards to attempting to play pieces too technically involved for his modest experience, a lesson many of our recitalists could take heart in. All in all, a well presented, well played program and the chapter looks forward to his return in the not too distant future.

RAY BRUBACHER

Hoosier Progress Report

About 20 minutes from Chicago's Loop is Whiting, Indiana, and in that town is a most unique theatre, the Hoosier Auditorium. It has not one, but two theatre organs under its roof, and someday they'll both be one.

Much has been written in these pages about Bob Montgomery and his ambitious project. Those who attended the ATOS convention in Chicago recall Eddie Weaver's performance on a three manual organ which spoke from the balcony. That 11-ranker (now 13) was only the Echo division of what is to be.

It is slow and painstaking work because Bob has so many irons in the fire (such as helping maintain the Chicago Stadium 6/62 Barton), but he's gradually getting the Chicago Uptown theatre 4/28 Wurlitzer in shape and installed.

In addition to weekend movies to help pay the bills, Bob has run an almost continuous concert series starring artists of the highest calibre. These include John Muri, Tony Tahlman and Don Baker. All concerts were presented on the 3/13 future Echo organ. Eddie Weaver is due for an encore performance and Bob is considering Mildred Alexander, presumably to break the solid lineup of males who have occupied the concert spotlight so far.

Bob Montgomery has had the Uptown Wurli stashed for several years and we have wondered what cooks with it. So we asked Bob for a report. His reply follows.

"There is always a busy buzzing at the new Hoosier Auditorium Theatre. If it isn't the crowd for the weekend movies or the monthly pipe organ concerts, it's the buzz of a saw or a drill working to accomplish one of the most unique theatre pipe organ installations in the world. This is one of the few times a theatre organ has been moved from one theatre back into another; the 'last of the Red Hot Mamas,' the Chicago Uptown Theatre's 4/28 Wurlitzer.



'LAST OF THE RED HOT MAMAS!' — The 4/28 Uptown Theatre console on display at center stage, an imposing sight which evokes applause from audiences who have come to hear concerts played on its future Echo division.

"The Hoosier Theatre was selected for this installation for several reasons. It was possible to purchase the building and thus make a permanent installation. The theatre is just the right size and has perfect acoustics for pipe organ. Last, but not least, it is centrally located just 5 minutes from the Chicago Skyway, 20 minutes from the Chicago Loop and near three major expressways; in Whiting, Ind. on 119th St. just off Indianapolis Blvd. Come on over for a visit. You will be welcome.

"The work on installation is well along. The big Wurli is being enclosed on the former stage in three specially-built chambers. Main chamber on the

left (about two-thirds complete), Solo (and reeds) in the center, and Foundation on the right. All percussions are being installed in the original organ chambers to the right and left of the proscenium and in duplicate — stereo!

"The Echo organ, now used for concerts regularly, is up to 13 ranks and plays from a 3-manual movable console in front of the stage. All the original Uptown organ has been retained and we've added many additional rare and beautiful theatre ranks at the price of some de-unification of the console stop-rails. The organ is now about two-thirds releathered and a good start has been made on the relay wiring, ductwork, and winding.

"GOOD SHOW, AL." Hoosier theatre manager Frank Horangodz congratulates Al Melgard at close of telecast. The 3/13 offered no problems for the veteran organist whose good fortune it has been to play the 6/62 Barton in the Chicago Stadium for over 40 years.





BRITISH ORGANIST BUILDS HOME AROUND A 'WURLI'

At 32, Len Rawle has played the organ professionally on BBC radio and British TV, for stage shows and ice extravaganzas, for dance bands, troop shows, church services, electronic organ demonstrations and pipe organ concerts. Thousands of people have enjoyed Rawle's playing of the organ via records and TV.

He and his wife spent two years designing and building their Hertfordshire, England home around the Mighty Wurlitzer organ that once serenaded audiences in London's famous Empire Theatre.

The installation is their pride and joy.

To soundproof the house, they built brick walls sixteen inches thick, plus an eleven-inch-thick concrete roof, laying over 60,000 bricks.

"You can stand one foot from the outer wall of the house and hear nothing from the twenty-ton giant," Rawle says.

To house the organ pipework and relay, a specially heated chamber, 450 square feet by 18 feet high, lies behind the console. A 15 horsepower blower housed in another anteroom furnishes the organ air supply.

A record company often uses the organ to make recordings, the BBC has utilized it for music programs and several movie companies have employed it for sound effects.

"One of our most memorable moments was during the ATOS convention held in Chicago, when the beautiful red and gold console, even though she couldn't be played, got a standing ovation — just for her stunning appearance. It's things like this that make all the work and hours invested worthwhile.

"All concerned are very grateful for

the kindness shown and opportunities given to us through public support to help us preserve this theatre pipe organ in a theatre. We have been busy with many shows to acquire the finances needed to attain that goal. With continued public support through attendance at events, we'll make it.

"We were privileged to be host to a

wonderful crew from NBC-TV for a beautiful Easter program. It was videotaped in color and broadcast on Easter Sunday morning. The show was produced by Mr. John Yoder, NBC Public Relations Manager, and played by our dear friend, Al Melgard.

"We have had good broadcast coverage through several NBC news specials which featured various artists. These were produced by Mr. Bill Warrick of NBC news.

"One of the most interesting and enjoyable programs that we have appeared on is Chicago's 'Jack Eigen Show' on NBC radio. The conversation of the guests, Jack's own comments and the enthusiasm he has for the theatre, the pipe organ and people in general, is a most stimulating experience. Our concert artists who have appeared at the Hoosier agree that being a guest on Jack Eigen's show is an occasion not soon to be forgotten.

"These are just a few of the many happenings at the Hoosier. It's quite a busy place. We all look forward to the first sounds from the Uptown organ as do so many of our friends. It has been a long but worthwhile project, but when it's whole again, representing all the glory of the mighty theatre pipe organ, the Uptown Wurlitzer will have a home for all time — and in a theatre." □



ON THE AIR! — TV camera zeroes in on Al Melgard at the currently-used 3/13 console during Easter telecast.

pizza ... beside a waterfall

The Oakland Paramount Publix #1 at the Melody Inn in Los Altos

ONE DAY, about 18 years ago, a little girl came home from school broken hearted and crying because the other kids called her a liar. During the kindergarten "sharing" time, it seems, she told of her trips to the Paramount Theatre, Oakland, attending an ATOS jam session and describing the organ. Her classmates didn't believe that there was, "any such thing" as a theatre pipe organ. Today this same little girl could prove to her erstwhile classmates that there is such.

The Paramount Wurlitzer left North Tonawanda on July 28, 1931 designated as Opus 2164. It was a standard Publix #1 in a modernistic console decor to match the Theatre (Console described in T.O. Summer 1966 Vol. VIII No. 2, page 27. For specifications of organ see Vol. XI No. 6, page 24.)

This was the last Publix #1 organ

delivered in the United States and the last large Wurlitzer delivered to the West Coast.

It is doubtful that any theatre ever held a Grand Opening at a more inappropriate time as the country was suffering from the worst economic depression of all time.

The 3500 seat Paramount was opened with a deluxe presentation policy, needless to say, under these circumstances, it was open only a few months.

As the economic situation improved the theatre re-opened with a straight picture policy. The organ was used only on special occasions.

As the years rolled by, a leaky roof caused considerable water damage to the main chamber, warping chests, and ruining the piano.

Repairs were made by local organ enthusiasts who had playing privileges on the organ. Since no theatre funds were available the repairs were not as complete as could be desired, but at least the organ was in playing condition and intact except for the piano.

Some concerts were given on the organ in the early 1950's. Radio commercials played by June Melendy were recorded and ATOS Northern California Chapter held meetings at the theatre on several occasions. Tiny James served as house organist during this period and was called upon to play New Years' Midnite Shows, Sneak Previews, and other special programs.

One commercial recording featuring the artistry of Korla Pandit was made on this instrument in the late 1950's.



Bill Watts at waterfall console of Opus #2164. His career at theatre organ consoles pre-dates #2164 by several years.
— Robert H. Churchill photo



Audience at Melody Inn enjoys the "schmaltz" music of Bill Watts and pizzas, A wonderful combination.
— Robert H. Churchill photo



'ORGAN CHAMBERS UNDER GLASS.' Shutters are set high to enhance sound egress.
— Robert H. Churchill photo



Pipework from ex-Oakland Paramount Wurlitzer now at Melody Inn in Los Altos.



Tuners are better looking these days or is this a publicity shot.

The Paramount management disposed of the organ in 1960, the buyer planned to install it in a club. With this in mind it was rebuilt and placed in storage. The club plan fell through. The instrument remained in storage until 1968 at which time it was purchased by Edward Restivo.

The Melody Inn, Los Altos, Calif., was designed with the organ installation a primary consideration. Installation began in May 1969. Installation time for an organ this size is normally six months. It was installed in three months by Bill and Jan Hunter, Steve Restivo and Roy Dawson.

Except for minor changes the instrument is laid out exactly as it was installed in the Paramount. A magnificent instrument to begin with, great care has been taken to retain its glory in the Melody Inn.

Chambers and decor were executed to capture the magic of a bygone era and achieve the most tonally balanced and grandiose installation of the theatre pipe organ possible. The only tonal change in the organ has been the addition of an English Post Horn.

The organ is finally being allowed to do what it was built for—entertainment of the public. Steve Restivo of the Melody Inn is a long time organ en-

thusiast who has taken on the task of making this mighty Wurlitzer available for public enjoyment.

His policy of good music under the capable fingers of veteran movie organist Bill Watts, coupled with a complete pizza house menu, and pleasing decor makes the Melody Inn a "must" for any organ buff.

The setting is different but the mighty Paramount Wurlitzer lives on at the Melody Inn.

The doubters who think there is "no such thing" are in for a delightful surprise. □

Kay McAbee Plays Toledo Farewell

Farewell theatre organ concerts usually turn into sentimental sob-sessions which put everybody in a blue mood. But the Farewell Concert played by Kay McAbee at the 3/11 Marr & Colton in Toledo's State Theatre was not like that at all.

Kay's music has a magnetic quality that draws the audience away from other thoughts and envelops them in whatever mood he wishes to create. His audience simply forgot that it was a farewell show.

Kay had added many new tunes to his repertoire such as "By the Time I Get to Phoenix" and "Those Were the Days," but audiences still prefer to hear his older arrangements. "Dizzy Fingers" and "Land of the Pharaohs" are among them. As he announced each tune peo-

ple nodded approval, knowing that they would hear one of his now famous arrangements. They applauded as he played the "whirl-wind" second chorus of "Tea for Two" with the "Stranger in Paradise" counter melody.

After the concert was over many people swarmed around the console to have Kay autograph his new album "The Fun Sounds of Kay McAbee," and to talk to him about theatre organs and organists. He was greeted as if he were a returning native.

Kay's playing was spectacular; so was the organ. It sounded more like a 20 rank organ. But now, the organ must be removed from the theatre for a number of reasons.

Richard Shindell, who owns and maintains the organ, wants to find a better home for it — one where it can be heard publicly, to help keep the tradition of theatre organs alive in Toledo.

He's got the right idea. □

"Little Mother" Concert Boosts Hall Fund

The New York Chapter featured a concert on the beloved "Little Mother," style 150 Wurlitzer 2/5, at the home of the late Ben M. Hall, March 14.

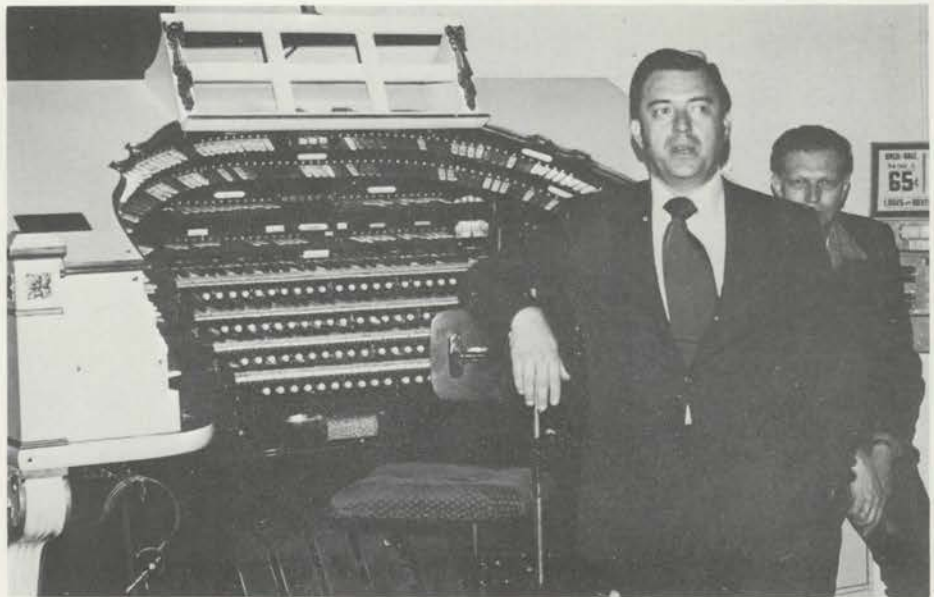
About 125 people attended the open console event which netted \$446 for the Ben Hall Memorial Fund which is devoted to the preservation of his Wurlitzer and vast collection of memorabilia.

Highlighted at the console were Lee Erwin and Jeff Barker, who gave reminiscent performances to a mostly standing audience.

The Wurlitzer was disassembled and placed in storage during the following week. □



ASHLEY TACKLES THE BIG BEAST—21 of its 42 ranks comprise Jesse Crawford's former Paramount studio broadcast organ.



PRE-PROGRAM POOP—Dick Loderhose provides some info on his instrument. Watching is Hank Holzberger who owns the 3/21 Wonder Morton from Loew's Fairmont in the Bronx.

Dick Loderhose Hosts Hall Fund Concert

by Elmer Fubb

ATOSer Richard C. Loderhose shared the shock of Ben Hall's murder with enthusiasts everywhere. When the purchase of Ben's treasures by ATOS became a possibility, Dick saw a chance to help the committee raise the money needed to make the purchase.

With a 4/42 Wurlitzer in his especially built Jamaica (New York) music room, the answer seemed simple.

"I'll have a concert" exclaimed Dick, "and charge admission."

Then he remembered his 40' x 26' music room could seat only about 80 comfortably — on rented folding chairs.

"I'll have two concerts — maybe three — or even four. And I'll ask for donations."

Dick's offer was accepted by the New York chapter members on the committee and Dick wondered how Ashley Miller would react to the idea of playing the same concert perhaps four times in an afternoon. Ashley swallowed hard and said okay. Then the date was set for April 18, and Dick started making arrangements for an added attraction.

"Wonder if I can get Joshua Sparrow to bring his band organ over for intermission?" thought Dick.

April 18 was a bright spring day and when guests arrived for the first session set for 1:00 p.m. there was Mr. Spar-

row's "Troubador" piping cheerful tunes from the far corner of the Loderhose backlot.

ATOSers were handling the gate, extracting a \$2.00 ticket from each attendee. When the seats were full Dick welcomed the crowd and turned the show over to Ashley Miller. Ashley played a program of mainly pops and standards on the 4/42, and he was visibly shaken when he spoke about Ben Hall.

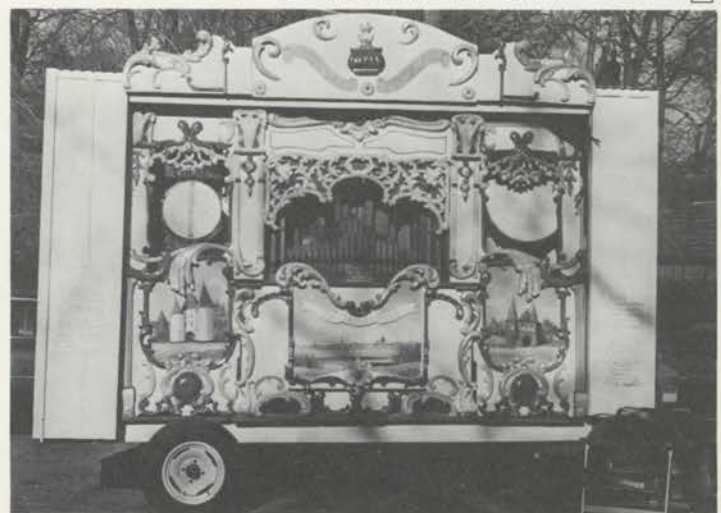
"Ashley Miller did a nice job" said Dick, "but then he always does. I was proud of the Wurlitzer — not one cipher."

At the close of the first concert, the group exited to band organ music and passed the waiting 2:30 p.m. group. Ashley played his concert four times in all and Dick estimates that nearly 300 heard the concert. "There were a few deadheads but most who got in were paying customers," says Dick.

He was impressed by the Connecticut Valley Chapter's excursion from New Haven. In this group were ATOS national president, Stillman Rice and Mrs. Rice.

"It was a good show and the bread it generated put a smile on chairman Lee Erwin's face," said Dick. □

INTERMISSION MUSIC—The 'Troubador' provided between-shows entertainment on the "south 40" of the Loderhose acre.



Big event of 1971 for the British organ fans is the return of the old maestro himself — *Reginald Foort*. It should all be over by the time you read these words but at the time of writing we are on the eve of all the high jinks.

Another English institution, the Royal Albert Hall, is celebrating its centenary and it's there that Reg heads the bill with the famous *Marcel Dupre* and other big names in the concert field.

But the famous 4/14 Wurlitzer of the Granada, Tooting (lovely place name for the home of a gutsy little box of pipes) sees him teamed with almost anybody who is anybody in the theatre field.

Brighton (with its unique Dome dual-purpose instrument), Southampton, Manchester (now almost the capital of T.O. land) and various other big cities feature live recitals and Reg has a broadcasting schedule so tight it reminds us what all the fuss is about.

The reason his name is the tops for so many is quite simple. Despite his early successes at the New Gallery, London, and the Regal, Marble Arch, he became truly famous when he was appointed the first resident theatre organist for the BBC. And, as anybody can tell you, way back in those days before TV, the BBC were providing a radio service which was heard by everybody, everywhere.

And it was then, with *Reg Dixon* bashing away merrily at the Tower, Blackpool, and the Messers. Porter-Brown, New, Stone, and others being plugged on theatre marquees hither and yon that the legend grew that you needed something more than musical ability to be a cinema organist (we used to call them that in those days). You must, in short, arrange for your parents to have christened you *Reginald*.

All of which is by way of explanation of the fuss caused by the return to his homeland of Florida's illustrious immigrant.

* * *

Scotland's many peculiarities (apart from being part of the British Isles without ever really seeming to belong) include the kilt as an item of dress for men.

Among the pedal-pushing wearers of what seems to us normal Englishmen little better than a skirt held together by a diaper pin have been *Gerald Shaw* and *Bobby Pagan*.

Gerald, of course, is now the last surviving full-time British theatre organ-

ist, delighting audiences daily at London's Odeon, Leicester-square on the 5/16 Compton we call the "Duchess."

Having abandoned the Highlands and joined the sophisticated Sassenachs, he has also abandoned the kilt for public performances.

Bobby, though, had been known to don his native costume occasionally until last year.

Then at a concert at the Regal, Edmonton, whose fine Christie 4/15 was made famous on discs by *Sidney Torch*, he said that his kilt was making its last appearance.

"It is too old, and its owner is too broke to renew it," he said jokingly.

A pity we shall be losing this touch of colour. Still, Bobby himself will still be around and he's quite a character.

As a lad he was apprenticed at Doncaster Locomotive Works, the North Tonawanda of the railway world. He still gives lectures about steam trains and the like but he's been a pro organist since 1926 and was still employed by one theatre circuit until September, 1970, giving him one of the longest runs in the business.

He was resident at Edmonton after *Sidney Torch* and recalls that he was able to combine this job with his train-spotting hobby. "There was many a mad dash to Wood Green Station in my two-door Standard Nine to watch the Silver Jubilee (a crack express) belting north from King's Cross on its four-hour one stop run to Newcastle."

Alas, the steam-trains are all gone and so, now, are all the organists in kilts.



Bobby Pagan at the Regal, Edmonton, Christie. The kilt has made its last appearance.

* * *

Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht is a pleasant village in South Holland — near to Rotterdam. And Tarwestraat is a nice street of middleclass Dutch homes.



John Slingerland at the console of his 3/5 residence organ. After ten years, he's still not finished it.

The one on the end of the block is something special, though. You might not credit it, but there's a five (soon to be six) rank theatre organ in the roof.

John Slingerland, one of the dedicated band of Dutch buffs who keep interest alive in the Low Countries, has built it all himself and, in his hands, it sounds just dandy.

Three of the ranks came out of the old Capitol theatre, Rotterdam, and two from a church and there's a new tibia rank awaiting installation.

John told me he had so far been 10 or 15 years on the job of building the organ.

"When I was a little boy I heard the organ at the Passage Theatre, Schiedam, and I thought I must have such a thing," he said.

There has only been one bit of faking. The pedal is electronic, since 32' pipes just would not go in the tiny loft.

Even the console, standing in an incredibly small (about nine feet by 11 feet) bedroom, is home made and the stop tabs are currently labelled with marker tape. In time, they will be engraved. Swell shutters are in the ceiling and the sound, surprisingly, is not overpowering.

I asked John whether the neighbours did not complain on occasion. A charming smile and a shrug of the shoulders. "They have six children," he said. "They make so much noise they do not hear it."

STACCATO SNIPPETS — Veteran accompanist of silent films *Florence de Jong* recently played a truly top date — at Buckingham Palace, home of the British Royal Family. Queen Elizabeth, though, has no Wurlitzer installed so the long-time resident of the New Gallery had to make do with a piano as

(Continued on page 30)

THE BIOGRAPHY OF FRANCIS J. CRONIN

by J. Paul Chavanne

"Unique," "unusual," "one of a kind" are words that describe not only Francis Joseph Cronin as man and musician, but also many of the instruments he played and many of the positions he held.

This master of the console was born in Cambridge, Mass. on July 22, 1894. He began piano study at the age of eight, was playing the organ at fourteen, and teaching music at seventeen.

Cronin attended Rindge Technical School in Cambridge, but it was evident that music was to be his consuming passion. The major influence in Cronin's musical development came from a blind church organist named Francis O'Brien.

For a time, Cronin served as a church organist at St. John the Evangelist's in Swampscott, Mass. Then the world of the theatre beckoned, and young Frank found his first job as organist for silent films at the Kimball of Boston's Globe Theatre, (now known as the Center). In the same neighborhood, he also had engagements at the Wurlitzer of the Washington St. Olympia, (Pilgrim); and at the Austin of the Park, (State). For a time he also played the Moller of the Central Sq. Theatre in his native Cambridge.

In December of 1922, Cronin began his last and most memorable theatrical engagement when he opened the new Capitol Theatre in the Allston district of Boston. Although several miles from the downtown area, the Capitol was anything but an ordinary neighborhood movie house. This large and attractive theatre was the pride of the Gordon chain. It originally operated on a reserved seat policy and attracted a loyal audience from a forty mile radius.

At matinee performances, Cronin cued the films without assistance at his self-designed 4/35 Skinner advertised as the largest theatre organ in New England. At night he alternated with a pit orchestra conducted by Hy Fine. When Fine moved on to become eventually New England Regional Musical Director for Publix, Henry Kalis took over as Capitol conductor.

Fine states: "I learned more from Frank Cronin than from any other person in the music business." Fine also recalls that Cronin's blind teacher,

Mr. O'Brien, was a regular Capitol patron, and that at the end of a performance, he invariably made his way down to the orchestra pit to tell Cronin and Fine how much he had "enjoyed the film." What he meant, of course, was that he had been impressed by their musical accompaniment.



Francis J. Cronin

Cronin was certainly a featured organist at the Capitol. His name appeared in all advertising matter and in lobby displays. Yet, Henry Kalis and Capitol pianist Walter Jacobson both report that Cronin was ill at ease in a spotlight. He hated to play spotlight solos, although he had more genuine talent than many of his contemporaries who thought they belonged in the spotlight.

Theodore N. Marier, the noted organist and choral director, tells of visiting the Capitol as a youth and of paying more attention to Cronin than to the action on the screen. Marier too was impressed by Cronin's modest and retiring nature.

Cronin actually enjoyed playing in the dark. He usually cued films without turning on even a console light. He relied on his memory and his improvisational skill to provide suitable accompaniment.

The Cronin personality tended to be shy, introverted, and reserved. Getting to know him was not easy, but beneath his outer shell was a lovable person.

Those who play the game of occupational type casting would probably

never have thought "musician" as they looked at Cronin. His round face, piercing eyes, medium height, and stocky frame would more likely have suggested "lawyer," "banker," or "executive."

To describe the Cronin musical style in words is difficult. It was based on sincere musicianship, and completely devoid of phony razzle-dazzle. He was neither a typical theatre organist nor a typical concert organist. He fell somewhere between the two. Although he had much admiration for Jesse Crawford, Cronin refused to become another of the countless Crawford imitators. No one before or since has ever sounded exactly like "Francis J." Long before the expression entered the language, Cronin was "doing his own thing," and his own thing was beautiful.

The glissando was not a typical part of the Cronin idiom. His pop style usually consisted of a single note melody against an accompaniment that sometimes verged on the pianistic. Yet this does not mean that he sounded like a fugitive from a roller rink. He produced exquisite music.

His registration was clean, original, and tasteful; his technic incredible. He made occasional use of chimes and chrysoglott, but was not addicted to the toy counter. He was a pipe organist playing pipes.

Cronin thought orchestrally as he brought in the various ranks of his instrument. In fact, he had an unfulfilled ambition to conduct a symphony orchestra. His orchestral orientation served him well during his years at the Capitol. Kalis remembers how well Cronin's organ augmented the orchestra during overtures. Fine said it was remarkable to hear the way in which Cronin's perfect pitch enabled him to take over so smoothly from the orchestra while playing for films.

The facet of the Cronin talent most often mentioned by those who knew him was his gift for improvisation. Also memorable was the rich Cronin sense of humor which colored so much of what he played.

The first Mrs. Francis J. Cronin, (Rose Kelly), died after a few years of marriage, leaving him with one daughter, Edith.

A regular Capitol patron was a young church organist named Catherine Curtin. Impressed with Cronin's artistry, she finally found the courage to introduce herself to him, and to ask him if he would accept her as a pupil. Cronin's elaborate system of defenses proved ineffective when confronted with Miss Curtin's charm. Although he had little enthusiasm for teaching, he agreed to

give the lady lessons on the Capitol instrument every Saturday morning. Lessons began in 1923. Four years later, teacher and pupil became man and wife.

The marriage was happy and fruitful. Frank and Catherine had five children: Catherine, Francis Jr., George, Patricia, and Rosemary. Edith, who barely remembered her own mother, was now part of a closely-knit family.

When the Capitol management decided to discontinue live music, Kalis reports that the patrons circulated a petition begging that orchestra and organist be retained. However, it was to no avail. The orchestra was first to go. Kalis eventually became conductor at Boston's Metropolitan. Then Cronin finished his nine year Capitol engagement around Labor Day of 1931.

When it became known that Cronin was at liberty, Boston radio station WNAC immediately signed him as studio organist. The more one thinks of it, the more it seems that radio was the perfect medium for Cronin. He was now liberated from the glare of the spotlight and the gaze of the public.

Another fringe benefit of radio work was that Cronin, whose only vice consisted of smoking long, black cigars, could now puff while he played. This was sometimes rough on announcers who had to do programs with Cronin amid billowing clouds of smoke.

Cronin's audience, although unseen, was now bigger than ever. Organ programs which originated at WNAC were regularly heard regionally over the Yankee Network and often nationally over the Mutual Network.

Linus Travers, former Vice President of the Yankee Network states that member stations of that web were free to carry or reject shows which originated at WNAC. It was a tribute to Cronin's greatness that all affiliated stations were happy to carry his programs.

The instrument at WNAC had been installed about a year before Cronin's advent. (Cronin, incidentally, had played as guest organist the night the instrument was inaugurated.) It was a Wurliizer made up of parts of two organs that had once stood in the Empire and Windsor Theatres in Brooklyn, N. Y. Cronin added both pipes and accessories before taking over his duties. This instrument is now in the Town Hall Auditorium in Stoneham, Mass., and is substantially as Cronin left it. Wurli stock models went to three manuals at eleven ranks. In Stoneham, we find fourteen ranks on two manuals. The ten general pistons and seven couplers on the Stoneham instrument show evidence of the Cronin touch. In all,

it was a highly special Wurli for a highly special organist.

The method of broadcasting organ music at WNAC was also out of the ordinary. The console was isolated in a soundproof room of its own, and the organist could hear his instrument only through a monitor speaker. This supposedly improved the quality of transmission since the organist heard exactly what was going out over the air.

Strange as it may seem, Cronin's most fondly remembered program was one that went on at 6:30 a.m. It was called "Sunrise Melodies," and Cronin announced it himself in his slow and dignified manner. The opening theme was a rousing pop tune called "Here Comes the Sun." After a few introductory words, Cronin then played a hymn, and was thoroughly ecumenical in his choice of sacred tunes. Overtures, operatic selections, popular classics, Broadway scores, novelties, and pop tunes rounded out the show which originally lasted an hour. He also gave frequent time checks, and once said in self-disparagement that people listened to him only to get the correct time.

"The Noontday Musicales," "The Yankee House Party," and many other programs also featured Cronin as soloist. It would be sadly remiss, however, not to mention Cronin the accompanist. Few musicians are equally proficient as both soloists and accompanists, and Cronin was part of this select company. He gave sensitive accompaniment to violinist Bobby Norris, saxophonist Andrew Jacobson, baritone Walter Kidder, and vocal teams such as Alice O'Leary and Adrian O'Brien or Ruth Owens and George Wheeler. Cronin's work with the large choral group known as the Metropolitan Singers was also admirable.

The late Hugh Wilcox, a pupil and close associate of Cronin's, cited Frank's work with coloratura soprano Clothilde Zappala as something truly impressive. Those coloratura arias were difficult enough to accompany even in their original keys. But there were times when Miss Zappala required that they be transposed into tonalities which would have made most accompanists turn in their union cards. To Cronin, such transpositions were a welcome challenge.

Announcer Nelson Churchill recalled a time when the Cronin facility in transposition was used to put down a less talented soprano:

"We had a mixed quartet that sang hymns in the morning. The soprano was a nervous, talkative little girl who thought she knew all the answers. One morning, we had rehearsed the show they were about to do and were wait-

ing to go on. She said: 'I spent five dollars last night to go and hear — —, (some prominent soprano), and it was terrible! What a waste of money! She reached for a Bb and she missed it just like that! Any woman who calls herself a soprano ought to be able to sing a high Bb!' Then they went on the air, singing some old revival song. She reached for the top one and muffed it completely. With blood in her eye, after the show was over, she came in to Frank yelling: 'You transposed that! That's not the key we rehearsed it in!' He grinned and said: 'After all, it was only an A!'"

Cronin's improvisational talent was properly displayed at WNAC. Often, the "Noontday Musicales" consisted of fifteen minutes of extemporaneous improvisation. It was also typically Croninian to end a show like the Owens-Wheeler "Spotlight Revue" with a montage which quoted strains of every tune sung or played on the program. Much as a symphonic composer achieves his recapitulation, Cronin interwove those tunes into a blazing climax.

WNAC once presented many dramatic programs. Here, Cronin drew on his silent film experience to improvise mood music and bridges.

In the fall of 1968, the brilliant Al Bollington performed at Stoneham Town Hall on the WNAC Wurli. When Bollington presented his tour de force of playing while wearing his airman's boots, some of us recalled that Cronin, out of sheer necessity, had once done something similar on that very organ. On a snowy winter's morning, Frank burst into the console room seconds before "Sunrise Melodies" time, and was forced to tear into "Here Comes the Sun" while wearing hat, overcoat, and galoshes.

Around 1940, John Shepard III, the owner of WNAC, became interested in Maj. Edwin H. Anderson's revolutionary means of broadcasting called Frequency Modulation. After Armstrong set up an FM transmitter for WNAC, Cronin became one of the first artists anywhere to be heard on FM. Not only was Armstrong greatly impressed by Cronin's work, but he was also convinced that the pipe organ, with its wide dynamic range and infinite variety of tone colors, was the perfect instrument to demonstrate the superiority of FM.

Although the 2/14 Wurli served WNAC well for ten years, Armstrong, Cronin, and Shepard now began thinking of an instrument with greater resources. Finally, Cronin was given the go-ahead to design a new organ for WNAC to be built by Aeolian-Skinner.

In June of 1941, Cronin proudly inaugurated his 4/36 Aeolian-Skinner. It was divided into three chambers and housed in a specially built studio three stories high. The studio had both live and dead ends and was designed with FM in mind. The organ contained 2626 pipes and 100 miles of wiring. It was the largest organ ever designed for radio use. Like Cronin himself, the instrument defied classification.

One searched in vain for a draw knob labelled "Tibia." A gedeckt rank of 97 pipes unified at 16-8-4-2 was the nearest thing to a tibia that could be found. In addition, the organ included two diapasons, ten flutes, eight strings, four brass reeds, seven color reeds, three independent mutations, and a physharmonica of 61 reeds.

Most of the instrument was on six inch wind pressure, and some on ten. There was a complete toy counter, and percussion which included a Deagan Vibra-Harp and a large Chinese gong. There were eight pistons on each manual, eight toe studs, twelve general pistons, and 31 couplers.

One morning in October of 1946, Cronin complained of chest pains upon arising. Mrs. Cronin begged him to send in a substitute, but after a few minutes, Cronin said he felt better and drove off. Frank's early morning trip from Newton Center to Boston was usually performed in helter-skelter fashion. Since he generally travelled beyond urban speed limits, Cronin had learned where to keep an eye out for police. The town of Brookline, for example, always seemed to be especially well patrolled. That day, Frank passed through Brookline, the chest pains returned with greater intensity. He looked for a policeman, but now that he wanted one, none was around. Somehow, he managed to continue driving until he was directly in front of the Kenmore Sq. studios of WNAC. There, he found a policeman who drove him to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Brighton. His condition was diagnosed as a heart seizure.

Cronin's doctors allowed him to resume his console duties two months later. However, he was never to drive an automobile again. Mrs. Cronin and the older son, Francis Jr., provided transportation.

In November of 1948, a second heart attack came while Cronin was at home. Once again he was rushed to St. Elizabeth's Hospital. This time, all efforts to save him failed. The unforgettable Francis J. Cronin passed from this life November 14, 1948. His Requiem was sung at the Sacred Heart Church in Newton, and the organist was ATOS member Leo G. Brehm.

The tragic coincidence was that the death of this great radio organist came at just about the same time as the disappearance of most live radio music. In December of 1948, this writer asked Gus Fischer, the late Secretary of the Boston Musicians' Association, if anyone had been signed to succeed Cronin as organist at WNAC. The sad reply was that no one had been signed and that no one would be. Cronin's passing provided WNAC with the ideal pretext for the termination of organ music.

The WNAC Aeolian - Skinner, (#1025), saw little use until 1955 when it was relocated without changes in Christ Episcopal Church, Needham, Mass. Even the percussion remained in the instrument. (Shades of Robert Hope-Jones at Birkenhead!)

It was indeed gratifying to discover how many busy and important people were only too glad to take time out from their activities to reminisce about Cronin and to tell how much they loved and admired him.

POSTSCRIPT

Erle Renwick, Chairman of the Eastern Mass. Chapter, was the catalyst whose inquiry about Cronin in the chapter newsletter of June, 1969 set your reporter going on his labor of love.

Although Cronin seems to have made no commercial recordings, his widow has in her possession air check recordings of his programs. From these, Erle Renwick and Clayton Stone made excellent tapes.

The Cronin euphoria reached its peak Monday, October 13, 1969 with an evening of special tribute held at Christ Episcopal Church in Needham. Gathered there were Mrs. Cronin, all the Cronin children, Frank's two brothers, former WNAC announcer Nelson Churchill and Mrs. Churchill, Charles French who had served as engineer at WNAC, chapter members and guests. The playing of the tapes brought us to an agonizing moment of truth. Would Francis J. Cronin now turn out to be an idol of our younger days whose pedestal would crumble as we listened to him through more mature ears? On the contrary, we became convinced more than ever that the man was a genius. We noticed in his playing qualities that had previously eluded us. For instance, we discovered that Frank transposed to unusual keys not only to accommodate others, but also to impart a special sonority to his solo work. Especially impressive were two improvisations called "The Cathedral" and "Tone Poem." The first of these was mood

music for a program Frank had done with B. A. Rolfe in which Rolfe described a visit to Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. The second was a spectacular free style outpouring which featured a little Wagnerian motif which Frank used to play to let his beloved Catherine know he was thinking of her.

Following the taped concert, Richard Roberts, the organist of Christ Church, gave us a demonstration of the instrument. After this, the console was thrown open to all comers.

With characteristic modesty, Cronin never bothered to set any of his musical ideas on paper. Mrs. Cronin has recently succeeded in making available copies of both the "Cathedral" and the "Tone Poem." Interested parties should contact:

Mrs. Francis J. Cronin
124 Pilgrim Road
Braintree, Mass. 02184.

A kindly fate allowed us to hear and play the second WNAC instrument almost as Cronin had left it. We found one rank already changed and the tremulants slowed down to make the instrument more churchly. At this writing, other alterations have been made.

What of the 4/35 E. M. Skinner which Cronin designed for the Allston Capitol? After the demolition of the Capitol, the organ was acquired by Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. where it lay in storage for years. Despite original good intentions, it became evident that the anticipated installation at Brandeis would never take place. It was fitting that EMCATOS member J. Arthur Goggin should come to the rescue of this instrument in distress. Art studied organ with Cronin and has remained close to the Cronin family. The happy announcement recently came that Art had obtained the Capitol organ for St. Mary's Church in West Quincy, Mass. where he is organist.

Unlike his counterpart at Christ Church in Needham, Art proposes to keep this fine orchestral organ in its original state.

Mrs. Cronin, a deeply religious person, feels that Frank is still with her in spirit. We of the Eastern Mass. Chapter can say the same. To us it seems as if he has never gone away, as if tomorrow morning we could once again awaken to the Sunrise Melodies of "your organist and announcer, Francis J. Cronin." □

The Organ Literature Foundation has just issued a new addenda list - #66 It is available free of charge to any readers of *Theatre Organ*. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Organ Literature Foundation, Braintree, Mass. 02184.

Woman's Place In the Theatre

by Avelyn Kerr
Milwaukee Organist

The following item appeared in Jacobs Magazine, March 1928, and was submitted by Lloyd E. Klos:

Every day, some girl or woman musician comes to me with the serious question: "Tell me, Miss Kerr, how can I get a theatre position in Milwaukee? The managers simply will not hire a woman musician." The situation is fast getting to be a critical one — not only in Milwaukee, but throughout the country. Not long ago, I took this matter up with the Musicians' Union, but it did not go over so very big. I was told that, although the Union did not intend to show partiality to the men musicians, if a theatre manager objected to a woman player, the Union could do nothing. Maybe not, but I would like to see conditions reversed, and the theatres refuse to hire any musicians except women, then see how quickly the Union would act!

The standard of organ work is exceptionally low in Milwaukee, due to the fact that so few of the theatre owners know anything at all about music, and care less. The positions seem to be given to the lowest men bidders, whether or not they ever saw a pipe organ before. I know of a case in which a man was hired as a relief player where I happened to hold the first position. He came into the pit to relieve me, and the first thing which he said was, "Show me what to do with this thing!" I pushed a couple of the set-up pistons, and tried to explain which ones he could use without doing any material damage. He deliberately parked both feet right across the pedalboard and then said: "Ye Gods! What's that?" I answered: "It's the little birdies calling me home." He probably would be still standing there if someone hadn't thought to pull the switch.

I have noticed of late a lot of newcomers working in on relief jobs — pretty boys (you know what I mean) with rosy cheeks and permanent waves and, Oh heavens, girls, papa spank! And that gives me a bright idea; perhaps I should have put that word "bright" in quotation marks. Usually when I get a bright idea, I also get a headache. But anyway, I believe I have solved the problem of the girl organist. In this day of bobbed-haired women and effeminate men, what is to hinder

some of our really talented girl organists from borrowing one of brother's suits, even if said brother does have to stay in bed? Or, better yet, rent a tuxedo, then hie herself hither to some amusement company and put in her little old application for an organ job? I'll bet my stopped diapason, tremolo and all, that they will win the concrete egg crate!

Here's another "bright" idea of mine. There are a lot of good, high-grade orchestra men at present out of work in Milwaukee; men who have studied music all their lives and are artists in their profession; men who have been cast aside for the younger jazz musicians — you know the kind of orchestras I mean; each man for himself. Now, so long as these men cannot find work at their own profession, why not turn martyrs to the cause, and instead of putting records and rolls on music boxes or other mechanical players, hire out as ushers or doormen in the theatres — you know that is said to be the first step towards becoming a manager. Thus, our next generation of managers will be able to appreciate music and the standard of theatre music in Milwaukee consequently will be raised. Great men have died for a lesser cause than this. I tell you that we musicians must stick together (bring the soap box, please). How can it be expected that all these schools will continue to operate or the music profession live and advance, if there are no positions for our students? Already, I have added a Special Course on "How to Operate Victrolas and Player Organs." Positions guaranteed. Six people were killed in the first rush.

But to quit the kidding and come down to cold, solid facts: "There is a movement afoot in Milwaukee to grapple with this problem of the woman musician, and I am happy to state that I have been instrumental in forming a women's club for such a purpose. In unity, there always is strength, and when this club unites with the Federation of Women's Clubs and they send their ultimatum to the theatre managers to "remove the ban from women musicians or we stop our patronage," something is going to happen. Women make

up 75% of the theatre audiences today, and when they decide that it is about time to call a halt on the kind of hands the theatrical firms are dealing out to women, we shall win.

The club is not intended for any Bolshevik propaganda, but simply to promote the welfare of the woman musician and raise the standard of music in the theatre. This subject has interested me for a long time, because I myself experienced some of the effects of the local situation, but fortunately was able to rise above it. Organizing women isn't the easiest thing on earth, either, as for instance: I tried to better conditions here by organizing a few girl trios and orchestras, thinking that with radio and newspaper connections, I easily could get work for them. I found one partly organized girls' orchestra with some pretty good talent, but with little experience and less showmanship. However, it was good material with which to work and a rehearsal was called.

On the very next morning, one of the members came to me and insisted that she should be made the leader, as it was her orchestra. At noon, another one put in her appearance, saying that she had a girls' orchestra of her own which was all ready to work, but that she must be the leader of it. By night, every girl in the orchestra had been to me with a different proposition from each, so I gave it up as a bad job. Everyone continually asks why it is that I am so interested in the orchestra musician. The answer is simple; that without a knowledge of orchestral instrumentation, it is impossible to master the pipe organ; but when one has passed a certain stage of instruction on that instrument, then the study and knowledge of orchestra work will provide the greatest advanced training there is. I have heard a so-called organist play "Asleep in the Deep" on the piccolo stop, and flatter himself that he was putting it over. The longer one is in educational work, the more it is realized what a lot there is to learn.

I have interviewed not a few managers regarding this woman question. One of them told me (hold your breath) that he didn't think women were strong enough to pump an organ! Another said that women always were arousing agitation among the men employees, and still another claimed that the men musicians were so rough, he did not like to have women associated with them. There was any amount of such flimsy reasons given by these managers for not engaging women musicians, but there wasn't a logical reason expressed

(Continued on page 27)

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BIG, BOLD & BILLY. Billy Nalle playing the New York L.I.U. 4/26 Wurlitzer, Project 3 total sound stereo, No. PR5 053SD, available at record dealers. To be released soon on 4 channel stereo tape and standard 2-channel stereo tape.

This platter is the result of that experimental tape made during Billy Nalle's dress rehearsal for his 1970 ATOS convention concert played on the Long Island University Wurlitzer. The idea was to see how pipes would come through on a new 4-channel stereo recording system. Both Billy and the system proved to be so fabulous that the selections are being released both on the multi-channel tape system and standard stereo disc. This review refers to the disc version.

Billy Nalle's first recording, his 1957 RCA jazz album played on the Times Square Paramount 4/36 Wurli, was both a pioneer effort and outstanding. Nalle recordings since have been infrequent but each has had more interest value than its predecessor. Yet Billy will have a rough time topping this one. With its release Billy makes a successful bid to join the sparsely-populated ranks of great pop pipe organists. It's understatement to describe it as a gasser.

The concept of this disc, as Billy apparently saw it, differs markedly from that of the great bulk of organ records released by the majors in recent years: the content and style of most are dictated by the need for wide public acceptance—sales. With sales departments and PR men having the last word the content of too many organ discs was

distilled down to the least common denominator of public taste. Not so this disc; Billy dreamed up the program to appeal to hip organ fans—ATOS conventioners. So he loaded it with tunes and styles designed to catch the ears of the cognoscenti; tunes he enjoys playing and played the way he feels them. The result is one of the most remarkable recordings (even without the 4-channel effects) to be released in recent years, to this reviewer's way of thinking. In fact it's difficult to classify because there is nothing to compare it with—but we'll try.

As Nalle fans know so well, Billy's technique at the console is flawless, so we'll discuss arrangements. Again there are such a variety we'd have to stretch this space a few pages. Arrangements are tailored to project the tune. Again, Billy's taste is impeccable. He is obviously having the most fun when he's doing what used to be called a "ride," or variation, on a rhythm tune, and this, in turn shows off Billy's mighty creative ability. Sometimes his insidious and complex rhythm "riffs" have the shock effects of similar moments in Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. A few moments later, he's up to his elbows in a bucket of schmaltz to the delight of purely theatre organ aficionados. The music presented, however, is not simply theatre organ music but a sampling of what might have developed if the instrument's lifeline hadn't been pinched off by "talkies" 40 years ago. In a sense, Billy Nalle is carrying on one ambition of the late Buddy Cole whose record producers always insisted on a strong melody line and no tampering with it. Buddy longed to cut at least one set of tunes during which he could digress from the tried and true "sure seller" format and delve into unexplored areas of popular music where melodies could be warped to accommodate complex harmonic and rhythmic developments. On many of his new disc selections Billy does just that, taking unprecedented liberties with familiar tunes (e.g. *Lullabye of Broadway*, *"Fascinatin' Rhythm"* and *"Can't Take My Eyes Off of You"*).

Improvisation plays a strong role in all the tunes but nowhere more brilliantly than in *"When Johnny Comes Marching Home"* which is our favorite of the eleven selections. Billy gives it a thorough exposure in just about every style it can be fitted into, a much more comprehensive treatment than Morton Gould's. To keep interest in high gear Billy's "fills" (between phrase licks) during rhythm tunes especially are never repeated. It's a new frill each time. His opener is that well-worn con-

sole elevator *"That's Entertainment"* which gets a nearly "normal" rendition until that highly embellished final chorus. Another fine old warhorse, *"Jalousie,"* gets a new coat of brass-hued paint and some growly pedal figures. There's a glowering foreboding of impending doom in *"Somewhere"* (from *"West Side Story"*), the most dramatic moments on the record. A close second in that area is *"Bess You Is My Woman"* which benefits from fresh harmonic treatment and an interesting pedal part. *"Who"* sounds just as current as when Billy first recorded the arrangement in 1957. Another Nalle repeat is *"The Man Who Got Away,"* a study in building slowly and with ever mounting intensity toward a musical peak. Sheer brilliance!

The jacket is a folder with photos of Billy and well-written notes which deal with each selection. High in the congratulatory lineup are the members of New York Chapter of ATOS who nursed the venerable Wurli into producing such great sounds, especially the lush Solo voices. It's a fine recording organ and the natural acoustics of the gym help. This one is a "must."

* * *

THE RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL ORGAN, Ashley Miller at the 4/58 Wurlitzer, Columbia CL 945 (simulated stereo although not so indicated on jacket), special limited reissue available at \$5.50 postpaid from Milco Music Co., 66 Demarest Avenue, Closter, New Jersey 07642.

Just wondering how a soundtrack could improve so much just lying in Columbia's vaults for 15 years makes this reviewer ask himself whether his music appreciation capability hasn't grown in that period. It's the same set of grooves which we praised for their excellence the first time around. But it's ever so much better in 1971! This set of selections was recorded when Ashley Miller was one of the resident organists at RCMH, before the instrument fell into such a poor mechanical condition that only full combinations could be used and the importation of a trio of experts from California (Messrs. Kibbee, Pope and Simonton) was required to get it back into top shape. Therefore, Mr. Miller was able to use solo stops and the Tuba, Musette and other reeds are heard to good effect. The engineer paid attention to recording the smaller combinations and delicate reeds as well as the "mighty organ" sounds. Stereo simulation is effective. One side is devoted to pop standards such as *"The Continental"*, *"Once in*

Love with Amy", *"My Darling*", *"Serenade"* (Student Prince), *"The Piccolino"*, *"Yesterdays"* and *"Stranger in Paradise."* All of these are provided with lush settings, sometimes with conventional harmony, sometimes with more of the exotic. All the way through the selections are ear pleasers.

Side 2 consists entirely of light classics of the "encore" variety such as Fibich's *"Poeme"* (remember it as *"Moonlight Madonna"*), *"Flight of the Bumblebee,"* and Dvorak's *"Slavonic Dance No. 10"*. On rehearing these tracks, one is impressed by how much they have influenced the younger generation of organists. For example, we need wonder no longer where organist Lyn Larsen got his energetic conception of Edward German's *"Satyr Dance,"* nor where he got the godawful idea of inserting *"I'm Always Chasing Rainbows"* into Chopin's *"Fantasy Impromptu"* (a "sacrilege" we've bugged Lyn about for years). It seems Ashley Miller is the original instigator, and if both he and Lyn think the mixture is in good taste we are outnumbered and will beef no more.

In the next THEATRE ORGAN, we'll review another Ashley Miller Columbia stereo reissue, *"The Famous Radio City Music Hall Organ"* (CS 8230) which is just as attractive as the disc discussed above. Prospective purchasers can save a dollar by ordering both for \$10.00 postpaid. These two collectors items are worth that and much more.

* * *

A DATE WITH DON, Don Thompson playing the Page-Welte-Wurlitzer in the Joe Koons Motorcycle Shop, Long Beach, Calif. In stereo, No. CR-CR011. Available only by mail from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262. \$4.50 postpaid.



PRE-HIRSUTE VERSION — Don Thompson looks like this beneath the current scruffy facial adornment.

— Stufoto

A factor in favor of a Don Thompson concert or recording is Don's enormous repertoire and his skill in selecting from it ear-catching material which is usually off the well worn path. This talent is represented here by *"Butterflies in the Rain"*, *"Boat Ride Around Manhattan"* and *"Phantom Brigade."* True he also includes such warmovers as *"Night and Day"*, *"Body and Soul"* and *"What Kind of Fool am I?"* but the novelty tunes between remove any onus. Arrangements are novel throughout and the organ records exceptionally well (remember its installed among acres of cycles and motorbikes). Joe Koons has assembled a well-balanced instrument from a heterogenous collection of parts and pipework. A piano not quite in tune with pipework is noticeable on some tunes but not bothersome.

If we have any reservations concerning the performances, it's in Don's tendency to pick up speed (especially during rhythmic selections), an occasional lack of attention to detail (e.g. the bridge of *"Body and Soul"*) and now and then altering melody lines, perhaps unconsciously. None of these items mar the finish deeply and they are outweighed by Don's enthusiasm, musical drive and arranging ability. Other tunes are a rousing *"Fine and Dandy,"* *"Temptation Rag,"* a six-tune collection of Ethel Merman starrers and a sometimes frenetic *"That's A-Plenty."*

Jacket notes provide interesting material on the artist, the organ, the music, and a photo of well-beavered Don.

* * *

SOUNDS FROM OLD TOWN MUSIC HALL, Bill Coffman at the 4/26 Wurlitzer. NCR 12-964, stereo. Available by mail from Old Town Music Hall, 140 Richmond St., El Segundo, Calif. 90245 at \$5.25 postpaid.

Regular readers are familiar with the history of this project dating from the time the instrument was installed in a woodcarver shop. Bill Coffman and Bill Field have done a masterful job of enlarging their basic style 235 Wurlitzer to justify the rare style 285 Wurlitzer console (from the gone L.A. Paramount). It's now a 4/26, with nicely integrated additions. This first recording shows it off to good advantage. All of the tonal percussions, traps and toy-counter are unenclosed and dominate the stage when used during such tunes as *"You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me,"* *"You too — You, too,"* *"Spanish Eyes"* and *"Small World"* (which rides on percussions alone). Other tunes have no percussions at all but feature

the smooth, liquid style of Bill Coffman, who sometimes adds an aura of Jesse Crawford lilt and phrasing without doing a direct imitation. There are 18 titles on the biscuit, some dating from the '20's and generally covering much of the musical ground to the present, which is represented by the now over-familiar *"Raindrops"* but with a novel difference; Bill mixes in the oldie *"Rain"* for a simultaneous playing, an interesting trick which comes off well. Many of the tunes are presented in medley form, especially music from the '30's such as *"Learn to Croon,"* *"Please"* *"Does Your Heart Beat For Me?,"* *"So Tired"* and *"Somebody Else is Taking My Place."* These offer some of the greatest entertainment value on the record. Bill plays them at an easy clip, never strives for effect and phrases them nicely. In fact the relaxed style is part of the charm of Bill's playing here. The music is extremely listenable. The organ is rich in reeds and the pipework is well balanced. The choice of music is novel, with one exception — the circa 132nd grooving of *"Somewhere My Love."* Other tunes are *"Back in Your Own Backyard"* (Our favorite), *"You're Nobody" etc.* *"Tulips from Amsterdam,"* *"You Can't Be True"* and *"Wonderful Wonderful Copenhagen."* Recording is good and jacket notes provide some info on the *"Old Town"* effort and the artist. The jacket features a fine color photo of the style 285 console before the very visible percussions, traps and Diaphone pipes. It's a good show.

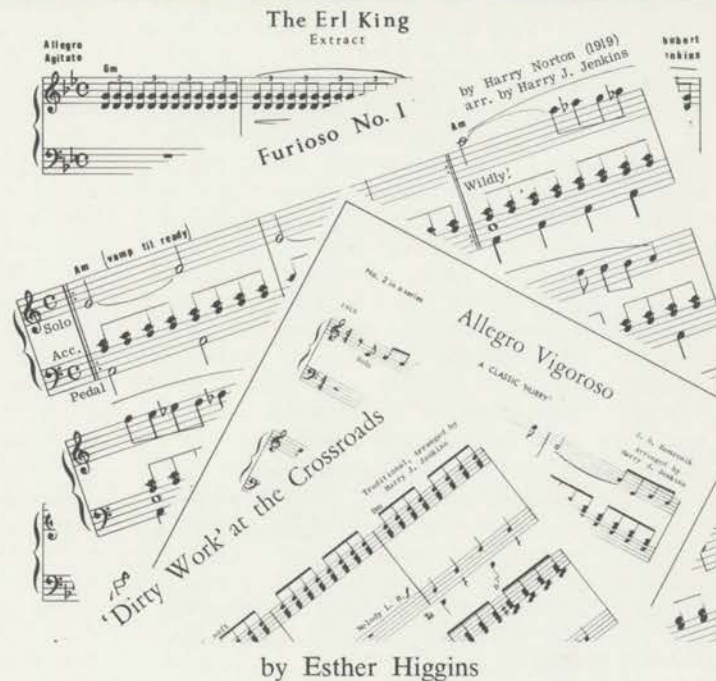
WOMAN'S PLACE

(Continued from page 25)

by any one of them; in fact, each one admitted that usually women made more thorough musicians than the men. Of course, there are some women who use the profession merely as a means of getting into the bright lights, though the percentage is very small; the majority of them are deeply in earnest about adopting the profession as a means of livelihood.

As for the appearance of a woman when playing an organ, I don't know of a prettier or more engaging picture than a well-dressed woman doing an organ solo in spotlight, and the managers (who are supposed to be showmen) seem to be slipping up on an attraction. Women organists should start a matrimonial campaign with these managers and then see who's the boss. Dear readers, don't you think that this matter is worth arguing? Please let me hear from other musicians on the subject.

Save That Silent Sound!



by Esther Higgins

Across this wide country there are countless pieces of old theatre music, yellow and crumbling in trunks and boxes stored in dark corners of attics, garages, second-hand stores and forgotten places. Others have been scattered to the four winds.

Much has been written about the magnificent old theatre organs and about the crews of men and women who dream, work and are dedicated to the restoration of these golden voiced instruments. But little if anything has been done to save the music of the silents. This was brought to my attention by our National Secretary, Mary Bowles. Never to hesitate following an idea, Mary contacted our National President, Stillman Rice, who expressed great interest in the idea of collecting and preserving the sounds of the silents. He stated that to the best of his knowledge no organized attempt had been made to compile a list of the old authentic theatre music composed for the accompaniment of silent films. So a COMMITTEE TO SAVE THAT SILENT SOUND! has been formed: Chairman — Mary Bowles; Members — Lowell Ayars, Gaylord Carter, Alice Davies, Lee Erwin, Esther Higgins, Dennis James, Lloyd Klos, John Muri and Dorothy Whitcomb.

What we are endeavoring to do is to index and collect a comprehensive

sampling of the music written for the silents. This could be put in a volume and placed where organists and organ buffs could have access to this music. Otherwise it will be lost in the shuffle. This music and its composers should have permanent recognition in a permanent home. Perhaps other organists will find their own favorite numbers and help us with this collection.

On the spur of the moment, I started looking around in the many boxes in our attic and found hundreds of numbers written for the silents. Some long forgotten and others were melodies written indelibly on my mind. The longer I worked on these boxes of music, the more I realized what a tremendous job I had undertaken — like counting the leaves on a tree. Where did it all start? Who wrote this stupendous form of music? Just a few phrases and you will recognize that sound. Let's skip over "The Burning of Rome," "William Tell Overture," "Poet and Peasant" and "Hearts and Flowers" played on the tinny pianos of the early nickelodeons. Now we are playing real theatre organ music. How did it all come about? All that we early theatre organists had to play was popular sheet music, piano standards, organ voluntaries and overture bits. Even Beethoven was played. I remember the opening C minor chords of the "Pathetique"

for the opening to a drama. All this we converted to the organ. When not using this material, we improvised.

Then when the big theatres put orchestras in the pit, the conductors wrote incidental music for the scenes they were unable to interpret from their orchestral repertoire. Would you believe that in scoring "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" shown at the Capitol Theatre in New York in 1921, Erno Rapee went to the music of Schonberg, Debussy, Stravinsky, Prokofieff and Richard Strauss for the thematic material? Who can forget those big symphony orchestras and the sound of the brass and tympani? When this music was printed, we organists bought the piano parts and followed the violin solo as best we could. These numbers were adaptable as the organ could imitate all orchestral instruments and percussions.

I have gone through boxes and boxes of galops, agitados, misteriosos, hurries, dramatic tensions, chases, battle music, Indian war dances until I can see the Indians right before my eyes. Many times, little boys on the front row would yell with glee, "There's going to be a fight!" His friend would ask, "How do you know?" The answer came back with authority, "I can tell by the music!"

(Continued on page 29)

Carol And The Beast



Nothing pleases Stentor, the evil, gap-toothed plaster god who rules the Mayan landscape on the side of the Detroit Theater Organ Club console, more than the sight of an artist approaching his kingdom for the first time. Reveling in the thought that the artist may not know that among Wurlitzer consoles this one stands unique in its arrangement of stop tablets, Stentor gleefully awaits his confusion and dismay.

Rather than being grouped solely by pitch, the 280 tablets are arranged first into groups by chambers, and then by pitch within groups. Thus, the perspiring organist must accustom himself to finding (or not finding, if he's in too much of a hurry) stops of all pitches scattered throughout the tabs for every manual. This has caused more than one visitor to bow slightly in Stentor's di-

rection and set up the registration for his entire program on the combination pistons. While there are fifty of these, plus some added special ones, this approach can lead to a certain lack of flexibility. Comments by artists concerning the console layout, while hardly worthy of an X-rating, have occasionally been impolite and derogatory in their references to the antecedents of the unknown designer who did them in.

One who was not cowed by this arrangement, however, was lovely Carol Jones, who played for the Club in March. On arriving to rehearse, her immediate reaction was, "I like it!" It makes it easy to get the stereo effects I want. I think all consoles should be arranged like this!"

While it is not unknown for the feminine gender to be undaunted by what makes strong men weep, this constitutes a direct challenge to those much more experienced artists who have voiced objections, however slight. It may well be that this is the wave of the future speaking, and you'd better fall in line. All right, men? Come to think of it, what's so great about the Egyptian hieroglyphics purporting to reveal, on other consoles, the location of the ranks the tablets control? You can hardly see them, much less decipher them.

As for Stentor, one look at Carol and he rolled over on his back with all four paws in the air and waited to be patted on the tummy, just like everybody else at the DTOC. □

Buddy Nolan Honored For Long Service

Fort Wayne organist Buddy Nolan was presented a plaque honoring his 24 years at the Embassy Theatre there in a special intermission ceremony February 27. The honor came during Buddy's regular organ spot between features.

Fred Thacker, divisional manager for Cinecon Theatres (a New York-based chain which bought out former owners, Alliance Theatres) presented the plaque and told the audience of several hundred that the theatre staff was pleased to honor Nolan for his years at the large 4/15 Page console.

Nolan came to Fort Wayne in 1947. He soon landed a spot at the Embassy as feature organist. When Alliance bought the house several years later, they demanded Nolan's full time at the console. "It was five shows a day, seven days a week," Nolan remembers.

In 1952 Nolan moved to California, but returned annually for several weeks to keep up maintenance and play the instrument. In 1962 Buddy returned to Fort Wayne and began intermissions at the theatre regularly.

For the past several years, Nolan has done weekend intermissions as well as popular "Theatre Organ at Midnight" shows on the Page. □

(Continued from page 28)

Some of the composers who wrote this music for the silents were: William Axt, composer of "The Crusaders' March"; and Erno Rapee who wrote "The March of the Iron Horse." These two men collaborated on many incidental pieces, one noteworthy number was "Indian Orgy." Hugo Reisenfeld wrote "The Covered Wagon March" and James Bradford composed "The Marching Song of the Foreign Legion" for "Beau Geste." I particularly remember some of the musical themes used in "The Four Horsemen"—the cute French theme, "Chichi" by Hauenschild, "In the Ruins" used in the bombed-out cellar scenes by Leo Kempinski and "Julio of the Argentino," a new tango that introduced Rudolf Valentino to the world. Names of composers I most frequently came across are: Axt and Rapee, Mendoza, Savino, Langey, Borch, Baron, Bergee, Luz, Sanders, Norton, Valez, Huerter, Simon, Pasternach, Friml and Minot. Then special mention should be made of J. S. Zamecnik of the Fox Publishing Co.

Literally hundreds of numbers were composed by him. When he was not composing, he was arranging for Jessie Deppen, Felix Arndt and other Fox writers.

Many of David Wark Griffith's films had their own scores that followed the film and came with the reels. He was the first to bring original scores to the silents as well as include the name of the man who was responsible for the musical score in the list of film credits. One such original score was for "Broken Blossoms" composed by Gottschalk. The late Ben Hall had a copy of this score in his fabulous collection. Dennis James was very fortunate to have secured a British recording of the original musical score written by Chaplin himself for his World War I comedy, "Shoulder Arms." Chaplin wrote music for many of his pictures as can be observed in "The Countess of Hong Kong." I have not included the many composers who helped us through many episodes, such as Herbert, Cadman, Nevin, McDowell, Kreistler, Greig and Tschaiakowsky, etc.

Lee Erwin has done a fine job in writing original scores to the recently revived films. The music is beautiful and refreshing in new sounds and patterns. The rich harmonies and new themes add so much to the films. The writing of the love theme, "My Best Girl" came across so well that, on the first hearing it was already established as the romantic theme. This movie music, both new and old will be welcomed especially by the new generation of organists that are showing such interest in the silents.

Well, this is our first step in the project of making a permanent collection of the silent movie music and giving recognition to the composers. Far from being finished, we are just at the beginning of the job. In the words of Steve Allen, "This could be the start of something big!" What can our readers add to make this project a reality?

Mrs. Mary A. Bowles, Chairman
Rt. 2, Hopewell Rd.
Lost Lake, Marlton, N. J. 08053
Phone: 609 - 983-1535

□

RUMMAGING THE RITZ

by John Clark McCall, Jr.

It is highly probable that all ATOS members have experienced a "personal curiosity" about certain theatres and the exciting possibility that some still possess the mighty instrument we have sought to preserve. Occasionally, such is the project for satisfying a worrisome curiosity. This was the case in a small exodus I took over the Holidays . . . to an extent, at least.

A certain air about the Spanish-Moorish architecture of the RITZ Theatre in Valdosta, Georgia had intrigued me for years but I always admired only its facade, never taking the time to explore further.

When I finally decided to look into the case on a cold and windy day in December 1970, I had lost all but a fragmented mental picture of the house. The scene for my return found the RITZ still standing, its front completely unchanged from the opening day in the late twenties. Even the sign that spelled out "R-I-T-Z" was intact and of the wonderful movie palace variety. It was early and the theatre was yet to open for the cleaning crew I was counting on to gain admittance into the theatre by. In those waiting hours, I took a hasty (it was **very** cold) survey of the exterior of the building. When I proceeded to the side, the sight of a fly loft and stage doors brought much promise of a long buried installation to mind.

As I entered the auditorium, being a theatre buff, I was a little saddened. The nineteen fifties had evidently taken their toll. Southern pseudo-ante-bellum gates down each side of the house walls, and an extravaganza of acoustical cloth over what I hoped were the organ grilles met my eye. But I was relieved by the expanses of plaster work and gold-leaf, griffons, and a bas-relief where a huge chandelier must have hung some years before; a gaping ceiling hole marked the spot. I could immediately see that the orchestra pit was no more, but the graceful curved outline was visible between the joints of cement to cement. Lights back-stage exposed the curtain travellers through the small perforations in the screen as

The
Valdosta
Ritz



I found my first floor dressing rooms, but no promise of a console. Several old and draped audio horns had given a brief illusion and there was a vintage Cable piano pushed to one side of the back walls.

As I mounted the second floor of dressing rooms I spotted a small door on which was scribbled, "CAUTION: Do Not Enter." The padlock was merely hanging on the latch and without the least bit of hesitation, I entered! The room on the other side was totally in darkness. My hand explored the stuccoed wall until I located a switch. With the aid of a ceiling light, I found myself to be in the middle of a myriad of unfolded popcorn boxes, old seats, and posters . . . the new tenants where clearly pipes once stood. The decorative grilles were intact behind the drapery and a long wooden fixture remained where the expression shutters were once installed. Surely, I was disappointed but at the same time happy to know that in Valdosta, Georgia, a Morton, Wurlitzer, or some other make organ once played in the house.

A call to the manager's wife proved my assumption to be correct. Mrs. Allan Richardson said that the RITZ did have an organ at one time but that a former manager, Mr. Martin (I did not ascertain whether he was of the Martin family company which currently manages the house), had disposed of the instrument some time back. She did not know its whereabouts.

Perhaps some of the members of our club could furnish hints or pertinent history on this "case" and if not, start a new tracer of his own doing. He could be pleasantly surprised as I in a historical realm or possibly within the limits of an exciting "pipe dream" come true. □

SNIPPETS

(Continued from page 21)

she cued the flicker . . . The Standaard 2/7 out of the Passage Theatre, The Hague, Holland will not now go to a public hall but has been sold privately and will be installed as a residence job . . . The 3/8 Wurlitzer of the Granada, Woolwich, London — a famous broadcasting instrument — is due for removal . . . Also on the move is the Compton 3/13 of the Astoria, Finsbury Park, which is going to a civic centre at Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire (formerly noted only for ducks). This organ has one distinguishing feature — an astoundingly ugly console. "It is," says Richard Pawlyn, who has been commissioned to do the rebuild, "the lousiest looking one I have ever seen." . . . The Compton 3/10 (and Melotone) formerly in the Tower Theatre, West Bromwich, was re-opened in Marston Green Hospital, Birmingham, in April. It is the second of three instruments saved by the Cinema Organ Society to be playable. Fittingly, Society president *Hubert Selby* was opening recitalist . . . One theatre circuit in Britain has stopped maintaining its remaining organs. All bar two, that is. One is used regularly for recording work and the other is aired weekly by the BBC who pay for the maintenance, anyway. This seems a mite shortsighted. Or have the circuit management gotten wise to the fact that volunteers would do the job for free, if asked? Seriously, though, this bit of cheese-paring is ill-timed in view of the growing strength of the theatre organ movement in this country. □

Synthetics in Pipe Organs

by Allen R. Miller

For many years, it has been the dream of organbuilders to find synthetic materials to replace animal skins long used for pneumatics. It is possible for a well constructed pipe organ to last upwards of fifty years with regular maintenance, and centuries with periodic replacement of perishable parts.

The most perishable material in a pipe organ is pneumatic leather, typically the flesh part of lambskin. While this skin, or leather, is very thin (.005" to .030") and flexible, it begins to deteriorate the moment the animal dies.

Tanning processes treat the leather to reduce its decomposition, but in time, even under ideal conditions, the leather loses its strength to the point where it breaks.

Pneumatic skins used to last 40 years or more, but in recent years, that life has reduced to 10 years or less in polluted areas. This change is due to two factors.

First, the level of atmospheric pollutants has increased to the point where sulfur fumes eventually form dilute sulfuric acid in the air, which works on everything around us. Sulfuric acid rots leather very quickly.

Second, the tanning process has changed, and leather today is not as resistant to polluted atmospheres.

While many past synthetics were found to have limitations, modern chemistry held the promise of an eventual solution. Austin Organs, Inc. began to research synthetics eleven years ago, and by 1964 had found some materials which were flexible enough, and would withstand extremes of temperature, corrosive chemicals and solvents. The one problem was that these materials were hard to glue, if not downright impossible.

About the same time, very thin, tough films of Polyurethane were being developed for the Army, for dropping food and "water bags" into the jungle from a moving aircraft. These films were

tough enough to withstand the blows of striking tree limbs and rough terrain.

After considerable research and experimentation, Austin decided this material was superior to leather in all ways, although it would require new manufacturing and application techniques.

The material, called Perflex, is a very thin (.002"), yet strong and absolutely airtight material. It is more flexible than the thinnest leather available, and will withstand millions of cycles of folding and flexing without showing signs of wear. Perflex will stretch over 200% before breaking and can be stretched 150% without any permanent change in shape. Tensile strength is over 5,000 P.S.I. The properties of Perflex show no change in a temperature range of -100 degrees F. to +200 degrees F.

Except for discoloration in certain cases, strong concentrations of chemicals found in polluted air, even in the presence of heat, do not affect Perflex. In similar tests, leather rots within minutes.

Continued exposure to direct sunlight (ultra-violet rays) will weaken Perflex (50% after 6 months, typically).

Samples of Perflex were placed outdoors, out of direct sunlight, but exposed to weathering, in Ohio, Arizona, and Florida, and the material showed no significant change after a year.

Ideal for use on square and hinged folding pneumatics and pouches up to 4" span on pressures up to 20" wind, and even higher pressured on smaller pneumatics, Perflex will actually increase the speed and efficiency of a pneumatic system. Its properties make it equally desirable for use in low and high pressure organs and player or reproducing piano actions.

Perflex requires some different techniques in application, but is basically similar in use to leather or rubberized cloth.

Wurlitzer combination pneumatics, for instance, rely upon the cushion of

leather when they collapse. When Perflex is used, a 1/6" thick piece of felt should be used as a bumper to keep the two wood pieces from "clapping."

This new material requires a special adhesive, PVC-E, manufactured by National Casein of New Jersey, P. O. Box 151, Riverton, N. J. 08077, and is also available from National Casein plants in Chicago, Illinois, and Tyler, Texas; or from warehouses in Atlanta, Georgia; Portland, Oregon; Los Angeles, California; and High Point, North Carolina.

PVC-E is a Casein glue derived as a by-product of milk. Casein glues have been used in furniture production and plywood laminating since they were introduced for constructing the wood fuselages of WW I aircraft. The PVC-E formulation was developed for permanently bonding embossed wood-grain vinyl covering to plywood paneling and cabinets.

Tests performed on Perflex, rubber cloth and leather to wood bonds comparing PVC-E to hot hide glue unconditionally show PVC-E bonds to be from 4 to 11 times stronger than those obtained with hot glue. Perflex to wood or to Perflex bonds are stronger than the materials themselves.

Working With Perflex-E and PVC-E

Perflex-E requires certain techniques which are different than those used with leather. To begin with, Perflex is so thin and flexible it is initially a bit more difficult to handle than stiffer coverings.



Perflex is very thin, flexible and semi-transparent.

Perflex is best cut with a paper cutter or sharp scissors. When doing several pneumatics of the same size, fold the material into several layers and trim the edges with a paper cutter. This will

result in a packet or pad of proper size pieces which will be slightly stuck together at the edges and can be peeled off as needed.



Perflex may be made up in convenient packets by cutting several layers in paper cutter.

Since Perflex is transparent, it is preferable to glue the excess over onto the top and bottom of folding pneumatics rather than trimming to gain a maximum of bond area. However, the excess may be trimmed in the usual manner.

PVC-E adhesive is water-based and looks like marshmallow fluff. It has a mild odor which is pleasant and harmless. Pot life is long if stirred occasionally. The skin which forms on the top should be stirred in, or removed if necessary. To thin, stir or add fresh glue, not water.

PVC-E spreads and works like medium consistency hot glue with a fast setup at room temperature. Assembly time can be lengthened by chilling the glue or shortened by warming. If the wood is warm, the glue will set up very fast.

Application can be by brush or small paint roller. It is best to roll the Perflex on to avoid trapping air bubbles. Slight finger pressure or rubbing to squeeze out air bubbles is all that is needed to set the material. The Perflex can be moved or slid as necessary until the glue sets up.

The secret of the permanent PVC-E bond is in the curing or drying process. PVC-E is a thermo-setting glue. Before the glue dries (while it is still white), the action is "baked" at 120 to 150 degrees F. for about 15 minutes (until dry). After cooling, the glue is unaffected by further changes in temperature or humidity.



Application of Perflex is similar to leather or rubber cloth. Note glue container has plastic top with hole for brush to reduce formation of skin on top of glue.

The process is not critical. A heat lamp placed a few feet away, a 100 watt light bulb 4" to 6" away, a warm radiator, or ideally, a warming oven will supply sufficient heat.

It is advisable to work on six actions at a time, only partially covering them in two or three stages so that the glue doesn't begin to dry before the heat is applied.

Remember that the glue dries fast on a warm surface, and allow the baked actions to cool before applying glue.

Perflex is lapped over and glued to itself in the usual manner, although this sealed joint will take longer to dry.

Round Pouch type pneumatics present a special problem. Since Perflex may not be permanently stretched or worked like leather, only pouches with a total motion of about $\frac{1}{8}$ the pouch diameter may be formed by hand during application. Pouches may be thermoformed, however, and either made up in advance using a mold, or easily molded in place.

To mold pouches, the entire pouch board may be covered with PVC-E, using a paint roller. The Perflex is then applied flat in one piece. (If pouches are on close spacing, the time saved outweighs the material wasted.) A rubber roller such as a photographic squeegee will quickly roll out the air bubbles.

After curing the glue, the pouches are formed by heating the Perflex to about 300-400 degrees F. At the forming temperature, the Perflex becomes water-clear and glossy. A simple forming tool made by suspending a round disc of the pouch valve diameter the

proper distance below the surface of the pouch board will form a perfect pouch and hold it until the Perflex is cooled.

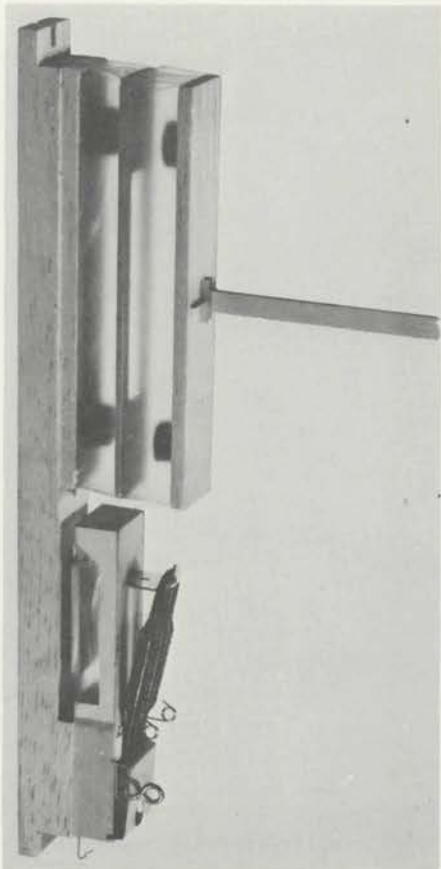


Using a heat gun to form pouches. Simple device is used to achieve uniform depth of pouches.

An ideal and portable source of heat is an old blower type hair drier or an industrial heat gun. As long as the form is cooler than the melting point of Perflex (about 400 degrees F.) the Perflex will not stick to the form.

Procedures given here are general, and may have to be varied to fit various specific types of actions.

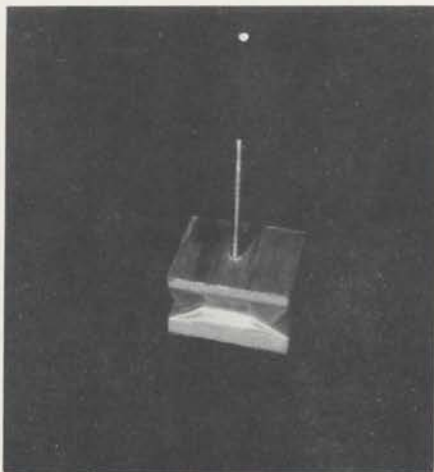
Perflex has been used exclusively by Austin Organs, Inc. since January 1970, and Aeolian-Skinner has recently adopted it as superior to Poly-Nylon materials.



Austin Universal chest pneumatic covered in Perflex.

In the theatre organ world, Perflex has been used in New York City, in the ex Rainbow Room Wurlitzer console, and in some parts of Ben Hall's "Little Mother." It is being used in the 4/26 Old Town Music Hall in El Segundo, California; Bill Brown's 5/35 Wurlitzer in Phoenix, and several other private installations.

The 3/15 Wurlitzer in Windham Regional Technical School in Willimantic, Conn., and The Central Ohio Theatre Organ Society, ATOS 3/16 Wurlitzer have been recovered entirely with Perflex.

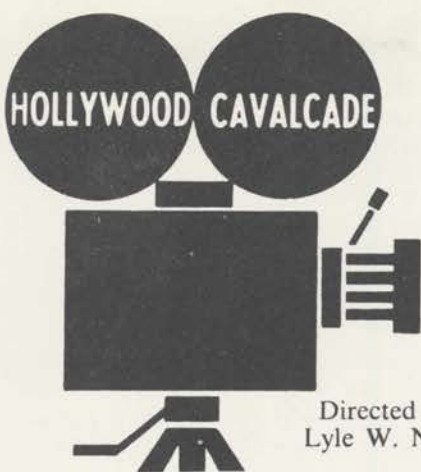


Wurlitzer type primary done in Perflex.

I have recently seen and heard a large Knabe-Ampico reproducing piano done in Perflex, and the expression, speed of action, and repetition was the finest I have encountered in these instruments.

Cycle-life tests are being run on Perflex applied to actions which operate under full load on 12" wind at seven cycles per second (about Tremolo rate). The test actions have passed 40 million operations without signs of wear or fatigue. During this test, several action springs have worn out (metal fatigue) as have many sets of silver contact wires which actuated the magnets. None of these components have been known to wear to this extent even in organs 60 years old.

Perflex holds promise for a new lease on life for the instruments we work so hard to save, and can be purchased by the yard from Austin Organs, Inc., P.O. Box 365, Hartford, Conn. 06101. PVC-E is sold by the quart or gallon and is available only through National Casein.



Directed by
Lyle W. Nash

NOSTALGIA, that happy method of living in the past (when it was cheaper) is sweeping the nation. ATOS members can take much credit for giving the biggest push to this vogue. Because the theatrical pipe organ artistry of hundreds of men and women never died, silent films are enjoying an extensive renaissance. And 98% of this film revival has been generated by ATOS activity. For nearly 20 years ATOS fans have known that happiness can be found wherever a theatre pipe organ plays. Now the nation is learning this fact.

SILENT FILM STAR Aileen Pringle still receives fan mail at her New York City address — 300 E. 57th St. She remembers her fans with autographs, sometimes a picture and a note of thanks. That's the trademark of a gracious lady.

"SHOW PEOPLE" is a 1928 MGM silent film starring Marion Davies and William Haines. Gaylord Carter played a happy score for this film when the Richard Simonton family hosted a group for a recent screening. Contrary to what unlearned critics contended, Davies was a good comic. The picture played well and would be a laugh riot for the ATOS convention in Seattle.

IN 1934 RKO Pathe proclaimed Pola Negri "the world's greatest living actress."

REEL SHORTS—Betty Bronson has a mother role in "Evel Knievel" due soon with George Hamilton . . . Ronald Colman's daughter, Juliet, 25, is writing her father's biography . . . Lon Chaney, Jr., now 65, is battling cancer while writing his autobiography . . . Virtually no cinema world people turned out for the last rites of Edmund Lowe

. . . Paso Robles, California has lured Colleen Moore into building a new home there . . . Director King Vidor has a ranch up that-a-way.

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD Darryl F. Zanuck was rejected by film director Frank Lloyd when casting the 1916 production of "Oliver Twist." Zanuck remembered Lloyd. Two decades later Zanuck hired Lloyd to create some of the 20th Century-Fox classics.

MOST gracious young film fellow we've met in some time was John Barrymore, Jr. "Yes," he said, "I'd be happy to do more work now that my personal problems are less rugged. Oh, yes. My mother would be happy to hear from fans and friends." Young John looked thin, gaunt and tired even under his long hair and beard. He reminded me of his father when he played in "Svengali" for Warner Bros. in 1931. He has the most expressive eyes of any player I've met in years.

DOLORES COSTELLO (the mother of John Barrymore, Jr.) may be reached at 1030 DeLuz Road, Fallbrook, California 92028.

CLOSEUPS — When Lillian Gish was honored with a long overdue Oscar this spring the entire audience of 3,500 rose and thundered its approval. She was the most gracious personality at the Oscar event . . . I hope the Academy does the same thing next year for Gloria Swanson . . . The 1926 Pathe feature "The Bells," with Lionel Barrymore, is still circulating in silent film circles and pleasing viewers . . . A famed Hollywood columnist says Errol Flynn's conduct during his heyday sounds like that of a Boy Scout compared with the crude vulgarities displayed by film men of today . . . In 1931 theatre owners hotly declared: ". . . color films chase people away from the box office . . . they'll never catch on."

MUSICAL stars of the early sound era, Bernice Claire and Alexander Gray are reported living in the San Diego area. Can any reader share information about them?

CONTRIBUTIONS, comments and questions are welcomed to P. O. Box 113, Pasadena, California 91102.

NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

With Seattle's being the host to ATOS's 13th annual convention, Jason and I salute that city with items from its halcyon days. References were Diapason (D), Jacobs (J), and Melody (M) magazines.

Aug. 1925 (D) The Bennett Organ Co. of Rock Island, Ill., is building a 3-manual organ for the State Theatre.

Dec. 1925 (M) *The Heilig Theatre* is installing a 2-manual Kimball to replace a small Robert Morton.

Dec. 1925 (M) Seattle's old Hippodrome is being replaced by a new 3,000-seat theatre, financially supported by Cecil B. DeMille and other film notables. A large organ will be installed.

Mar. 1926 (M) *Warner Brothers' Egyptian Theatre* opened on Christmas Day. The 1500-seat house has a large Robert Morton.

Mar. 1926 (M) ERNEST RUSSELL, OLIVER WALLACE, ROBERT BURNS and BERNARD BURNS are playing at the Liberty Theatre.

Apr. 1926 (M) LAURA VAN WINKLE is playing the 2/16 Robert Morton in Seattle's Pantages Theatre.

May 1926 (M) OLIVER WALLACE, organist at the Liberty Theatre, is a real comedian. Each Sunday noon, he gives a song contest and concert, and his antics keep the audience in an uproar.

May 1926 (M) WILLIAM DAVIS opened the new Kimball in the Woodland Theatre.

May 1926 (M) WALTER G. REYNOLDS, organist in the Columbia Theatre, is head of the organ department of Howe College of Music.

Nov. 1926 (J) HENRI LE BEL spent 3 weeks at the Egyptian where he staged the most elaborate presentations ever seen in a Seattle theatre. His success can be judged by the long lines which awaited each performance.

Nov. 1926 (J) JAMES D. BARNARD opened the new Royal Theatre, staging presentations and songologues.

Nov. 1926 (J) ERNEST RUSSELL is now organist at the Liberty Theatre and is featured in concert as well as in accompanying the prologues. DONOVAN MOORE and RENALDO BAGGOTT are his associates.

Nov. 1926 (J) PAUL COWAN is teaching, and also doing a lot of broadcasting over Seattle stations.

Nov. 1926 (J) PAUL ENGELL, formerly of Seattle, and later an organist in Centralia, is now teaching piano.

Nov. 1926 (J) The Embassy Theatre in Seattle opened its doors on September 17. The 2-manual Kimball is beautiful. Organists are HAROLD WINDUS and LEW WELLS, Jr. MARCEL BIENNE plays during rest periods and WEST BROWN the three days off.

Nov. 1926 (J) *The Fifth Avenue Theatre* opened on September 24 with OLIVER WALLACE as guest organist.

Jan. 1927 (J) EVID OLIVER and CATHERINE CERINI are presiding over the Wurlitzer in the Montlake Theatre, Seattle's newest suburban house.

Sep. 1927 (J) WILLIAM DAVIS is playing his marvelous Kimball at the Arabian Theatre.

Sep. 1927 (J) MELVIN T. OGDEN and BETTY SHIFTON are sharing organists' duties at the Fifth Avenue Theatre.

Sep. 1927 (J) "SANDY" BALCOM is installing a \$27,000 Kimball in the new Orpheum Theatre.

Sep. 1927 (J) MARK DOLLIVER, LEW WELLS and MARCEL BIENNE are alternating at the Embassy Theatre's Kimball.

Dec. 1927 (J) *Theatre organists in Seattle have organized a club similar to those of New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco. JACK O'DALE is president; HARRY REED, vice president; HARRY COLWELL, secretary; MARK DOLLIVER, treasurer; and ERNEST RUSSELL, Sergeant-at-arms. Various theatres will be used for meetings, the first at the Paramount and the next at the Embassy.*

Dec. 1927 (J) BARNEY BARNES is swinging among the Fifth Avenue, Liberty and United Artists theatres.

Mar. 1928 (J) EDDIE CLIFFORD is accompanying pictures and playing concerts at the Embassy Theatre.

GOLD DUST: Seattle organists were a real busy group as the following

prove: 7/25 HENRY LE BEL at the Pantages . . . 12/25 EDDIE CLIFFORD, Blue Mouse; RANALDO BAGGOTT, Neptune . . . 3/26 FRANK LEON & WARREN WRIGHT, Coliseum; REX PARROTT at the Leatherby-Smith in the Madrona Gardens Theatre; HARRY COLWELL, Blue Mouse . . . 4/26 KATHERINE BEAZLEY, Grey Goose; BERTHOLD LINDGREN & FLORENCE HARRIS, Strand; MARCEL BIENNE, Ridgemont; MARY RANDALL, Capitol . . . 5/26 WILHELM COHN, Palace Hippodrome; REX PARROTT recently closed the Mission Theatre; HAROLD KNOX, Paramount; EDNA HARKENS on vacation from the Colonial; ADELIN KIRKMANN at the Roycraft Robert Morton . . . 7/26 MARY RANDALL at Capitol's Kimball . . . 8/26 WILLIAM DAVIS, Hamrick's Egyptian . . . 11/26 "BUS" McCLELLAN, Egyptian; LUCILLE BOSSERT, Ridgemont . . . 1/27 HAROLD WINDUS, Pantages; MARK DOLLIVER, Embassy; ETHEL DUNN relief organist at Wintergarden; ARTHUR BIGGS, Woodland; DONOVAN MOORE, Neptune . . . 3/27 LAURA VAN WINKLE (now Mrs. Frank Hefferman) at Pantages; JACK O'DALE at Wintergarden Wurli; ERNEST RUSSELL at United Artists (ex-Liberty) Wurli.; HARRY REED, formerly at Fifth Ave., now at Egyptian; RENALDO BAGGOTT, assoc. organist at Fifth Ave.; SAM WINELAND left Coliseum for Liberty in Portland, Ore.; ROBERT V. (Bobby) HARRINGTON opened the RM in the new Olympic; GRANT BROWN at new Venetian; GRACE TAYLOR BROWN, Society; EDNA HARKINS, Gray Goose; WEST BROWN, Paramount; LUCILLE BOSSERT, Ridgemont; WILLIAM DAVIS, Arabian; "BUS" McCLELLAN left the Egyptian for Aberdeen, Wash. . . . 9/27 EDNA HARKINS, Gray Goose; WALTER REYNOLDS at the United Artists, and teaching theatre organ; JACK O'DALE, Wintergarden; EDNA WARD at the Madison's Robert Morton; "BUS" McCLELLAN, Blue Mouse; WEST BROWN, Columbia; J. D. BARNARD at Paramount's Kimball . . . 12/27 HAROLD WINDUS opened the Orpheum's Wurli.; MARK DOLLIVER, Pantages; EDDIE CLIFFORD both organist and MC at the Embassy's Kimball; LEW WELLS, Cheerio's Kimball; ARLINGTON LAITY, Liberty; REGGIE WATTS, Lakeside; EVED OLIVER, Uptown.

That should do it until we see you all in Seattle. So long, sourdoughs!

LLOYD & JASON

Closing Chord

EDITH STEELE

She was a tiny woman, barely over 5 feet tall with a sparsely filled out frame. She started playing piano at five in her native Modena, Illinois and at 16 started cueing "flickers" in a Joliet



EDITH STEELE and her Mini-Morton.

— Stufoto

nickelodeon on piano. When the house installed an organ Edith Ducker was ready; she had been practicing in a local church for weeks. Moving to Aurora she played piano in the Strand theatre pit orchestra until she heard the nearby Fox needed an organist. She accompanied silent movies at the Aurora Fox for five years then in 1917 moved to San Diego, Calif. on the strength of a rumor that there was an opening for a pianist-organist at the Pantages. There was, and Edith got the job. Her career as a musician slowed down in the early '20's for a time to allow for marriage and motherhood, but it picked up again when the huge San Diego Fox opened with its 4/31 Robert Morgan organ. Shortly after the opening Edith applied for the job of film accompanist and started a 7-year engagement which survived the advent of sound until 1932. After that Edith organized and played in dance music combos, a calling she pursued until she was 68, giving up only when there was no longer a market for dance bands. The ferocious drive and enthusiasm which had sustained Edith Steele through several musical careers and widowhood was applied toward making a home for her son, Marshal. She reluctantly assumed that the spotlight had passed her by. Then something wonderful happened; Edith Steele was discovered by theatre organ enthusiasts. At an age when too many silent music veterans are consigned to limbo, Edith Steele again found her star rising. Journalists came to interview and photo-

graph her. Her morale was boosted considerably when her 1932 console photo appeared on the October 1968 THEATRE ORGAN-BOMBARDE cover. From frequent visits to Bill Barker's Wurlitzer equipped home, Edith got a hankering to own her own pipes. Her son Marshal made her wish come true with the installation of a 3-rank Robert Morton in her San Diego home, where it joined her Novachord and two grand pianos, one a roll player (Marshall's hobby). The Steele home became a mecca and gathering place for local and visiting organ fans, among them members of a group of seven who were restoring the long silent Morton in the Fox. When the San Diego Theatre Organ Group got the Fox organ in playing shape, the first organist invited to play a concert was the Fox's last regular staff organist — Edith Steele. She was then 80.

Edith was lionized by the Group, invited to their public concerts, consulted regarding music and artists. She could be seen at organ events, both private and public, surrounded by her adoring fans. Edith loved every moment of her new career as a very important theatre organ personality.

Advancing age never dulled her lust for life, her ability to play, her keen mind nor her happy sense of humor. No one was more delighted than Edith when Marshall found the right girl and married last year, even though it meant living alone for Edith. "I was afraid I was going to be stuck with an old-maid son," quipped Edith, whose health remained good despite a mild heart condition.

But early this year the machinery started to wear out. A usually minor operation was indicated. Edith agreed, cheerfully. The operation was successful but pneumonia developed. After five days in a coma Edith Steele died peacefully at 83 on April 20, leaving her legend to inspire and encourage all who love the theatre organ as she did.

STU GREEN

JANE HERMES

Jane Hermes, wife of Fred Hermes, died at her home May 8th, after a long illness at age forty-five. She was a church organist and piano teacher for over twenty-five years. Born in Lake Mills, Wisconsin, she was a Racine resident twenty years and a member of Calvary Evangelical Free Church where funeral services were held May 12.

Surviving are her husband; one daughter, Jan; one son, Fred and other relatives.



All news must be received at Box 2329, Livonia, Michigan 48150, by the 10th of the month preceding publication.

CENTRAL INDIANA

The Central Indiana Chapter was recently referred to as "A Swinging Group", and on April 22nd they really got into the swing of things when they held the first of a series of seminars on pipe organ installations.

One of the highlights of the evening was John Landon's showing of films, which were made back in the early 1930's, with Ann Leaf, Jesse Crawford, and Don Baker, all playing the Wurlitzer Pipe Organ in the Paramount Theatre in New York City.

Dave Roch one of the Chapter's members who has installed a pipe organ in his own home, lectured the group about the many different parts and their functions within the pipe organ. To help Mr. Roch with some of his illustrations, Ed Morris was on hand with slides showing one of the member's organs now being installed. These slides were very helpful to those attending this opening session to have a better understanding about what was being discussed.

The CIC-ATOS is planning more of these seminars, and they hope to be able to conduct some of them where there are installations in progress.

RUTH A. HAWKINS

CHICAGO AREA

Several CATOE members rode a chartered bus and many more drove to Rockford, Illinois, on March 27, to hear the 4/14 (and growing) Barton in the Coronado Theatre. Ted Hager, a former student of the theatre's first organist, presented the program. The organ has been silent for many years so this was a big event for many members.

George Smafield, CATOE member who lives in Rockford, is head of the restoration crew. The organ needs



LITTLE DID HE KNOW
—Gaylord Carter during rehearsal at the Firebird console of the 4/20 Wurlitzer in Chicago's Oriental Theatre. The lift, in 'down' position, stayed that way for the first ten minutes of his March 28 CATOE concert.

— Bill Lamb photo

"The Perfect Song" brought thunderous applause from the audience when the console finally came into view.

more work and more pipes to replace the ones taken by "Midnight Organ Supply" a few years ago, but the crew has already done a lot of work to put the organ back in good shape. CATOE hopes to have a public concert there in the near future.

"The Harold Lloyd Festival," our March concert, was held at the Oriental Theatre on March 30, just a few days after the death of the famous comedian. At that moment of the 4/20 Wurlitzer, appropriately enough, was Gaylord Carter, who had been a longtime friend of Lloyd.

The evening began rather dramatically. As Gaylord started playing his opener, "The Perfect Song," he hit the "up" button on the lift but nothing happened. Undaunted, he pushed the button again and played a second chorus . . . Still nothing!

The audience, seemingly puzzled and disappointed because they were not allowed the privilege of viewing the artist, applauded politely as he finished. At that moment CATOE board member Bill Benedict rushed on stage and said, "We've got a problem . . . the lift." The audience applauded and laughed now that the mystery was over. As he explained that the lift had worked fine that afternoon, Gaylord raced through the "catacombs" in the basement and out onto the stage. He chatted with the now-jovial audience and assured them that the "swarm of workmen" in the pit would have the lift going shortly. Then he decided to go back to the console and "get on with the show."

As he finished his medley called "The Age of Aquarius," the lift started up. As if on cue, he started playing "The



Perfect Song" and as he came up with the Firebird console, seemingly calm and collected, the audience applauded thunderously.

The rest of his selections included such widely varied things as "The Chase," "Theme from Love Story," and Lehar's "Gold and Silver Waltz." After the sing-along he exclaimed that it was the best one he ever played. That famous Chicago Singing Audience was at it again.

The highlight of the evening, though, was Carter's scoring of the two Harold Lloyd films, "Sailor Made Man" and "Never Weaken." Each note of his accompaniment displayed his great talent for comic timing and his familiarity with the film and its stars. It's no wonder that Lloyd, one of the greatest masters of comic timing, thought so highly of Gaylord.

On this night the organ and organist were in rare form. Maybe it was Carter's way of paying tribute to Harold Lloyd. Maybe it was due to the fact that Carter is a true showman who

would not be unnerved by a jammed lift. Maybe it's because Bill Rieger and his crew spent many nights in the chambers making the organ sound better than it has in recent years.

Whatever the reason, the "Harold Lloyd Festival" provided an evening's entertainment which Lloyd fans and Carter fans are not likely to forget.

For our April 18 Social, three organists, Andy Antoneczyk, Jim Gruber, and Ted Day shared the spotlight at Chicago's Lincoln Village Theatre. The organ, a Baldwin electronic, has been used on weekends during intermissions and, reportedly, is very popular with patrons, but while it sounds good, the particular model being used simply does not fill the theatre adequately.

Despite this fact, the management seems very encouraged. They have planned an organ concert with Gaylord Carter and they have considered building chambers to someday house a pipe organ. The theatre is a new neighborhood house.

In many ways it's flattering that the work CATOE has done is being recognized and that other groups have been sparked into action by our contagious enthusiasm.

DAIRYLAND

The Dairyland Theatre Organ Society was hosted on March 28 on the five manual Wurlitzer at Racine, Wisconsin. The artist was Paul Wesley, member of the Land O'Lakes Chapter, and current organist at the Holiday Inn Central's Rome Room in Minneapolis. His program consisted of extremely varied contrasts ranging from the light classics to 'Hair', during which he used the organ to its greatest degree of flexibility. He was one of the very few organists to use all four expression pedals on an individual basis.

Following the concert was a chapter business meeting at which theatre organ concerts in the Milwaukee area theatres were discussed. A June visit to hear the Barton in Madison, with the afternoon with Jim Benzmilller on the Moeller Fantastique, in Stevens Point, and our next social on the first new Theatre Pipe Organ (Wicks) in forty years designed by Judd Walton and installed in the residence of member Harvey Kuhlman, Menomonee Falls, Wis was disclosed to the members.

New officers and directors were elected for the coming year with Organist, David Olson, being elected from the floor as a director.

FRED HERMES

DELAWARE VALLEY

The TOSDV held an organ "crawl" Sunday, March 28th, meeting at four local homes which have theatre organs — Jim Carter, Cinnaminson, N. J.; Lowell Ayars, Bridgeton, N.J.; Charles Hoffner, Vineland, N. J. and Robert Figlio, Elmer, N. J. The club members were divided into four groups alphabetically, and each group stayed one half hour at a home and then moved on to the next. It worked very well, with the members who cared to, having a chance to try playing the different installations. The tour lasted from 1:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m., and then several ATOS members met at 7:00 p.m. at Tall Pines Restaurant in Wenonah, N. J. for a delicious smorgasbord dinner. It was a very successful meeting and very well attended at all four homes. It gave the members a great opportunity to hear these four beautiful installations.

The installations are as follows: Jim Carter — 3/19 Wurlitzer, Lowell Ayars — 2/8 Wurlitzer, Charles Hoffner — 3/19 Marr-Colton, and Robert Figlio — 2/3 Kilgen (Cabinet) and a Fr. Smith Tracker (circa 1681).

RUTH McALONAN

EASTERN MASS.

The long job of restoring and installing our Wurli Style 235 Special continues with no loss of enthusiasm. This 3/13 organ which once stood in Loew's State, Boston has a new home at the Knight Auditorium of Babson College in Wellesley, Mass.

Knight is built in concert hall style with a rear balcony and side balconies, and its acoustical properties are excellent. The architect provided two catty-cornered chambers which open on to the stage. As originally set up, these chambers could have accommodated an instrument of about six ranks. The presently enlarged chambers will hold the thirteen ranks and percussion of our organ plus five selected ranks to be added.

Two new shutter openings have been made on to each side balcony, and all four openings are now covered with beige fiber glass drapes.

There will be one expression shoe for each chamber plus a third shoe for a possible future chamber. Toggles will allow the solo shoe to become the master swell.

The original 25-contact crescendo pedal has been replaced by a 75-contact Wurli crescendo obtained from a scrapped console. All wooden slider parts have been supplanted by replica parts made from phenol-mica material which is immune to the dampness which plagues most Wurli slider crescendos.



Exterior of Knight Auditorium, Babson College.
— Arthur Fraits photo

The crescendo will be adjustable through the use of a programmer panel.

Blowers, relays, switch stacks, and setter boards will be under the stage. Each chamber will have its own five horsepower three-phase blower which will feed straight up to the chamber.

The complete releathering has been done, chests are in place on their supports, and swell shades are installed.

Chambers are fully accessible through full-sized doors which open from stair landings.

The once battered panelled console now gleams in a hand-rubbed "grand piano" ebony lacquer finish. The natural finish has been retained on the wood surfaces within the horseshoe. Tabs for the five additional ranks have been installed and all gaps in the double bolster have been filled. Additional pneumatics, setter boards, and combination action have been made. The original lead tubing has given way to flexible Tygon. Specially manufactured Wurli-style switches are included in the brand new electrical system of the console.

Major parts such as the stop rails, the second touch board, swell shoes, crescendo, pedal board, and toe studs are now separable for servicing due to a plug-in jack system.

All manual keys have been recovered with genuine ivory and ebony. All sharps and most naturals have been replaced on the pedal board. The console will be placed on a custom-made roll-around elevator dolly.

We hope that the original 13 ranks will be installed in time for a dedicatory concert in the fall of 1971.

J. PAUL CHAVANNE

LOS ANGELES

During the month of March the Los Angeles Chapter completed the rebuilding of the Wiltern Theatre Kimball's 25 horsepower blower, marking the culmination of four years of discussion and planning. A new set of impeller fans was purchased, and the motor was rebuilt to operate at its originally in-

tended speed. That big old motor is a real monster, and it took some pretty remarkable amateur rigging efforts to get it off the blower and up the basement stairs. How come the need for new fans? And why change the motor speed? For the answers to these questions watch for the full saga of the Wiltern blower in a future issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

In last month's Chapter News we mentioned the almost-serious water damage to the big Kimball caused by (a) a sprinkler system broken by the February 9 earthquake, and (b) a leak in the roof over the solo chamber. That leak was quickly repaired, but since then a new leak in the opposite side of the roof over the main chamber allowed substantial damage to the relay. Theatre organs sure do attract water! Thanks to the never-say-die efforts of the maintenance crew the organ was playing again in time for the next scheduled concert, and permanent repairs will have been completed before this goes to press.

Following the lamented passing of screen star Harold Lloyd, the Los Angeles Chapter volunteered to take over the maintenance of the organ located in the former Lloyd home. This offer has been accepted by the Harold Lloyd Trust Foundation. The organ is a 2/33 Aeolian with automatic player. When first inspected the organ was unplayable due to bad blower bearings, but these have been replaced and Chairman Neal Kissel reports that the organ is basically in good condition and a fine sounding instrument.

On April 29 the Chapter's regular Spring business meeting was held at the Elks Building Auditorium. Since there was little in the way of business to be discussed, plans were made to follow a brief formal meeting with a social hour and open console jam session on the big 4/58 Robert Morton. The turn-out of approximately 90 was disappointing, but otherwise the evening was a big success. In addition to the jam session and socializing, Bruce Skovmand showed his color slides of the magnificent Harold Lloyd home and estate to a most appreciative audience, and refreshments were provided through the efforts of Vice-Chairman (and unofficial party chairman) Chick Lander.

On Sunday morning, May 2, the Chapter presented Greg Rister, one of Southern California's most talented young organists, in concert at the Wiltern's 4/37 Kimball. Despite his youth, Greg was no stranger to the Wiltern, having made his concert debut there in 1967 at the age of 14. He played an excellent and thoroughly professional concert, with material ranging from

Bach to the Beatles, interspersed with a tasteful choice of "pops" selections, and featuring several of his own transcriptions of orchestral works.

BILL EXNER

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Miss Mildred Alexander graced the 3/11 Riviera Wurltzer on March 17. Her receptive, full-house audience was treated to such selections as "Valencia," "Jeanine, I Dream of Lilac Time," and a medley of St. Paddy's Day tunes. At the end of the program, Miss Alexander was presented with a bouquet of red roses.

Don Thompson conquered the Riviera and its capacity crowd on April 20 when he made a complete success of his concert. His repertoire included a musical tour of the world, which contained some Arabic selections, and "Poet and Peasant Overture." Don accompanied his very first silent movie with great skill. His was a superb performance.

On May 5, over 50 people gathered at the Riviera for a membership jam session. This event inaugurated our 16' diaphones (wooden). So now we have a mighty 12 ranks!! Some of those who played that night were Frank Olsen, Roy Simon, and Eileen Poole.

Randy Piazza, Chapter Chairman and Program Chairman, has announced that the Riviera's monthly organ concerts are booked until the end of 1971; and some artists are already arranged for 1972.

SHIRLEY COLE

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

1970 was closed out with two fine meetings! JIM ROSEVEARE came out of retirement to do his first public concert in years (well a FEW years anyway, Jim is only 28). With the tremulants adjusted to Jim's taste, the



Jim Roseveare whose rendition of tunes in the Crawford style always pleases listeners.
— Portland ATOS photo

Wurltzer in the Encore Theatre (Burlingame) sang as never before. The first half of the Roseveare caper was played in a "swing band" style—but jazzy! After an intermission, Jim came back and gave us what we had really been waiting for, what he does to perfection—his Jesse Crawford re-creations.

December saw us all at Rudy's Supper Club in Vallejo for our annual trek to hear DAVE QUINLAN, who incidently played at the very first Chapter concert meeting (in 1957). The tin trumpet in the Wurltzer had been replaced with a "starchier" Robert-Morton trumpet (a little Post Horn). Dave played everyone's favorite tune in that danceable style which brings overflow crowds to Rudy's on weekends. His "Sweet Georgia Brown" was the greatest jazz this side of New Orleans. And, as usual, someone insisted, and Dave played it as only he can: "Los Altos Train."



Dave Quinlan at the 2 manual console, original equipment at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt, Hayward, Calif. Console is now property of ATOS member Warren Blankenship, Pacific Grove, Calif.

— Charles Ruiz photo

The new year saw a new group of officers take over the Chapter. Etta Nevins as Treasurer and Lorraine Cagle as Secretary took over the duties which had been so ably performed by Marian Schmidt. Warren Lubich as Vice Chairman and Dewey Cagle as Chairman gave former Chairman Bob Schmalz relief from a job-well-done. Our sincere thanks to Marian and Bob for their devotion to the Chapter.

February saw us back at the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco to hear Ray Frazier in his first pipe appearance in several years. Ray is such a busy teacher and composer that it took some coaxing to get this former New York Roxy organist back on the theatre pipe organ route. It was well worth the effort, for he played something for everyone in his smooth style. Especially enjoyable were the radio themes, which Ray recalled from his days on

network radio in New York and San Francisco.



Roy Frazier at Grant Union High School Kilgen console.

— Rice photo

The March meeting was held at Ken Pruitt's and Steve Restivo's attractive Melody Inn in Los Altos (about thirty miles from San Francisco).

The artist, Bill Watts, was introduced by program chairman Warren Lubich. Mr. Watts is an accomplished artist who began playing pipe organs in theatres about 1920. When he was only ten, he accompanied comedies and newsreels at the Victoria Theatre in Los Angeles while the regular organist was taking his 9 p.m. break. He was later the feature artist in other Los Angeles theatres such as the Empire, Stan, Rampart, Hollway, and Garden. In 1930 he closed the last silent movie house in Los Angeles, the California Theatre at 8th and Main Streets. Bill gave a really fine program of popular and semi-classics. His accompaniment to an early Mack Sennett comedy truly made the film come alive with its arch-villain, valiant hero, helpless heroine, racing automobile, and a steam locomotive which was powered to devilish speeds on a mad mission to decapitate the young lovely tied to the tracks. As Steve Restivo says, "Bill Watts is great!"

We are looking forward to hearing Everett Nourse at the Chadbourne Wurltzer (yes, that's "Myrtle" of the first ATOE National Convention). Sierra Chapter will be there with us this time. Everett Nourse was staff organist of the famous S.F. Fox 4/36 Wurltzer.

So — we wish to thank the Taylor boys, Bill and Dick, for the fine work they have done on their own Wurltzer in the Encore and to Ward Stoopes, the theatre manager. Another thanks to Claire Elgin and Ken Eaton at the Avenue Theatre, and their able crew. To Bea and Tony Arietta at Rudy's Supper Club, we always appreciate the warm welcome, and a special appreciation to Bud Kurz for the fine work on

the organ. And thanks so much to Steve Restivo and young Greg Pringle and all the others at the Melody Inn. Our Chapter is fortunate to have such as you in our area, keeping those organs playing for us to enjoy.

During the last few months our members have enjoyed the Monday night concerts at the Cap'n's Galley in Redwood City, where Bill Breuer has presented Tom Hazleton, Lyn Larsen (in photo below), Jonas Nordwall and Bill Thompson on the 4/18 Wurlitzer. Many of us heard Korla Pandit at the Melody Inn one of the three days he held forth on the 4/20. Another rare treat was the Johnny Seng appearance at the Avenue Theatre under Clair Elgin's sponsorship. Things are happening in Northern California!



—Terry Fenninger photo

Recently opened to the public is a 2/4 (soon to become 2/6) Robert-Morton in Waltz Pizza Parlor in Tracy (75 miles east of SF) with Dave Peters at the console. This is one sweet installation, thanks to Bill Oliver (who formerly owned the little gem). Walt Nagel, the owner, has plans to enlarge the building as the organ grows. (Isn't that a cute name: Waltz instead of Walt's!) The little organ came out of the Neptune Theatre in Alameda, California.

And—another one to look forward to—the 3/11 Robert-Morton now being installed in a restaurant in San Rafael by Dino Santizos. This one came out of the Fox Theatre in Burlingame, California.

DEWEY CAGLE AND BILL REED

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Described as the first of its kinds, a concert for classical pipe organ and electronic theatre organ was presented by the Denver, Colorado, Chapter, American Guild of Organists, on April 30, 1971, at Phipps Auditorium in Denver.

Charles Eve of Denver played the classical portion of the program, the popular portion being played by Billy Nalle of New York. Following inter-

mission, two selections were played in which each artist improvised in his musical idiom, upon the same melody. The final selection was a joint improvisation. The players received a standing ovation from the capacity audience.

This experimental concert proved to be both a stunning musical accomplishment and the most successful Denver organ concert in many seasons.

DOROTHY RETALLACK

OREGON

Harold Lloyd and Gaylord Carter! The perfect combination to dedicate the restored Benson High School Kimball Organ on Sunday, March 28 in Portland, the culmination of months of work by the local chapter of ATOS and Benson High School Dads' Club. It had been many a long year since the Benson auditorium had echoed with the roar of a fully operative theatre organ played by an artist who knew how to wring every last tremolo out of it!

Gaylord opened the program with a concert which included old silent movie favorites such as "The Chase", then a sing-a-long got us all in the mood for the two feature films "Sailor Made Man" and "Never Weaken" with Harold Lloyd. The program was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and we are looking forward to our next concert and jam on this fine instrument.

RACHEL ZENK

PUGET SOUND

The chapter met Sunday, March 28th at the Homestead Restaurant. After an exceptionally fine feast we moved to the Granada Organ Loft Club, West Seattle, for a joint meeting with Granada members.

Dick Schrum, ATOS convention chairman gave the two groups the low-down on the up and coming "Sweet Sixteen convention." Granada's Prez Fred DeWitt said a few words concerning the Granada Theatre and its organ.

Everyone was invited to try their hand at the 4/31 Wurlitzer. Special surprise guest was Korla Pandit who played twice during the fun-fest. Korla will be a featured artist at the convention this July.

A pancake breakfast (open to the public) at Haller Lake Improvement Club was held Sunday, April 18th. Organ music was provided by our pros and semi-pros. One out of town'er pro was heard though, Jonas Nordwall, from Portland. Jonas had just given an excellent concert the night before, on the fine 3/9 Marr and Colton, in the LaVelle McLaughlin residence.

EDDIE ZOLLMAN, JR.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads are carried at 20 cents per word, per insertion. No charge for first ten words for members.

WANTED—Glockenspiel and large scale xylophone to install on a 4/78 Schantz. Loud tone. Contact **Dennis James**, 605 S. Fess, #10, Bloomington, Indiana 47401.

WANTED—All Wurlitzer: Oboe horn, brass trumpet, brass sax, post horn, and top 3 octaves of standard large scale tibia. **Mike Foley**, Box 66, Buckland Station, Manchester, Connecticut, 06040. 203-646-4666.

WANTED—Wurlitzer Pipes 10" Tibia, Tibia 2' Trebles, Style D Trumpet Trebles. **Jack Bethards**, 472 Tehama, San Francisco, Calif. 94103 (415) 362-4997. Call early A.M.

FOR SALE—Hammond Novachord, complete, with service manual. Not operating. Make offer. **R. L. Oberholtzer**, 2729 Garfield Ave., Camden, N.J. 08105. Phone 609-963-3798.

FOR SALE—Wurlitzer Theatre Organ, 6 ranks, pipe work like brand new. Bells and Chimes, new pouches. New leather on reservoirs. Two new keyboards. Complete organ in excellent condition. \$2500. **Tom Walton**, 1015 Uster St., Mobile, Ala., 36608, Phone: 205-342-9463.

FOR SALE—Wurlitzer 2M7R style E. **Robert Castle**, 12350 E. 48th Ave., Denver, Colorado, 80239.

FOR SALE—3 manual 9 rank Barton Theatre Pipe Organ with complete percussion; 2 toy counters, 2 xylophones, glockenspiel, crastaglott, bass drum unit, chimes. 4 rebuilt regulators. 3 phase 5 hp blower with new 5 hp motor. 70% restored. \$5,600 or best offer. **Robert Roppolo** 2930 Laporte, Melrose Park, Ill. 60164.

FOR SALE—Allen Organ, Theatre Delux Model, French Walnut finish, 4 speaker cabinets. Selling due to death of owner. Contact **R. C. Schrader**, 807 Pennbrook Ave., Lansdale, Pa., 19446.

FOR SALE—Theatre Organ Rodgers 33-E. Perfect condition. Save \$4,400. Write **R. G. Otto**, 618 Eberwhite Blvd., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48103.

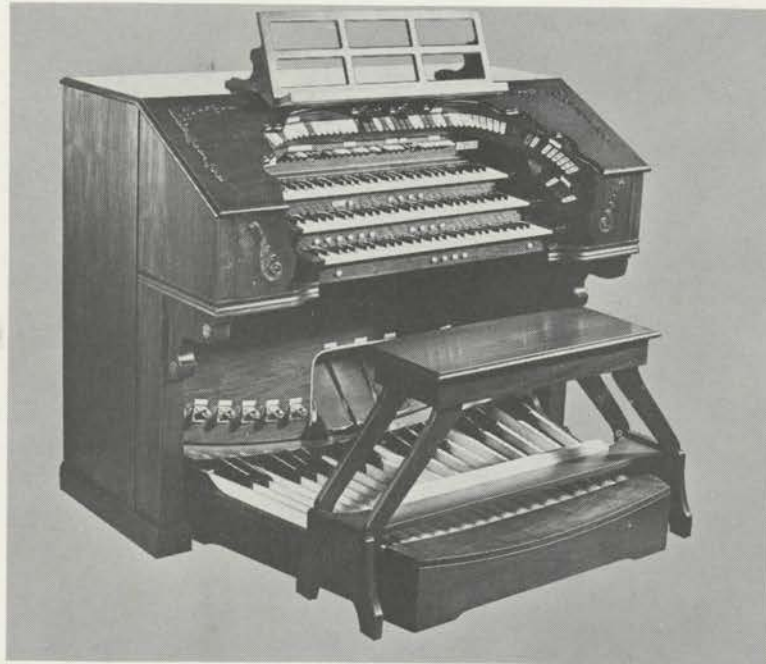
FOR SALE—Wurlitzer Vox \$150, Flute/bour. \$150 plus offsets \$80.00. Also misc. parts (console, tremos, regulators, photo-player parts, etc.) **Jack Bethards**, 472 Tehama, San Francisco, Calif. 94103 (415) 362-4997. Call early A.M.

FOR SALE—Wicks' ORGAN BUILDING FOR AMATEURS. 287 Pages. \$10.00 postpaid. **Organ Literature Foundation**, Braintree, Mass. 02184.

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