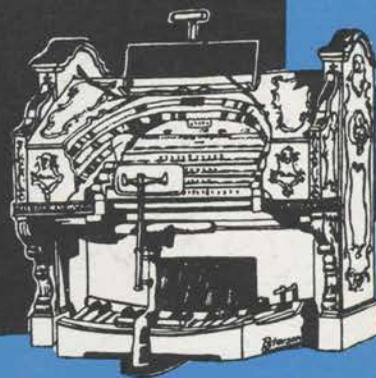


THEATRE ORGAN

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 3

JUNE 1972



*Fanny R.
Wurlitzer*

1883

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1972

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

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ATOS Advertising
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cover photo . . .

Fanny R. Wurlitzer, Chairman Emeritus of the Board of Directors of the Wurlitzer Company, who died May 6, 1972. See story on page 5.
(Photo courtesy of the Wurlitzer Company)

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president's message . . .

National Headquarters has had many requests for information about ATOS and the number of new members joining our society indicates the growing enthusiasm for the theatre pipe organ and continued growth of ATOS. This statement is backed up by reporting our membership of over 4175 members as of May 1st. With the possibility of a Postal increase and rises in printing costs along with the general increase in costs of everything, ATOS will need more money. In the immediate future we should provide adequate funds for official travel and extra help needed in our Circulation and Editorial staff and other working committees.



The big event of our Theatre Organ year is our 17th Annual Convention next month hosted by the Potomac Valley Chapter. Convention Chairman, Woody Wise, and his committee have a fun packed Convention scheduled for us. With the increase in membership, the attendance should out number past Conventions.

SEE YOU IN WASHINGTON, D.C. JULY 10-14!

VOTE FOR DIRECTORS BY JUNE 26!

ATOS
ARCHIVES / LIBRARY *Stillman H. Rice*

Stillman H. Rice, President

An Acre of Seats in a Palace of Splendor



By Bill Peterson, Number 26 in a series.

(Photo Taken by B. Andrew Corsini)

THE DENVER THEATRE – DENVER

This house seating approximately 2000 was designed by C.W. and George L. Rapp of Chicago. Although only about two thirds the size of the Seattle Paramount, this theatre has many features similar to the Seattle house, including a large mirror on each sidewall in the balcony, central dome, and almost identical proscenium arch. The Denver has a 3/15 Wurlitzer 260 Special organ.



The late organist Ray Shelley with Farny Wurlitzer. — (Bill Lamb Photo)



W. "Tiny" James, Grant Whitcomb, Mr. Wurlitzer, and Marvin Korinke at the ATOE Melody Fair in 1964.

The late Ben Hall greets Mr. Wurlitzer.

**WURLITZER
WELCOMES
A.T.O.E.
MEMBERS**



FARNY B. WURLITZER

1883 - 1972

Farny Wurlitzer passed away May 6, 1972.

Mr. Wurlitzer was born on December 7, 1883 and was the youngest son of Rudolph Wurlitzer. At that time the Wurlitzer headquarters were in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1908 the large factory in North Tonawanda, N.Y. was built. This complex was destined to become world famous as the producer of the mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ. Farny Wurlitzer was placed in charge of the North Tonawanda plant. Upon hearing a Robert Hope-Jones organ in Buffalo and learning of the financial difficulties of the Hope-Jones Company, Farny arranged to purchase the assets and thereby brought Jones into the Wurlitzer Company. Young Mr. Wurlitzer's foresight and the unique pipe organ developed by Hope-Jones were combined to give the world the most famous name in all the years of pipe organ history.

Farny Wurlitzer was in charge of the North Tonawanda plant throughout the years of pipe organ construction. His devotion to the king of instruments brought about his keen interest in the affairs of ATOS. He was a Charter Member and our National Board voted him Honorary Member for the year 1960.

In recent years, due to failing health, Mr. Wurlitzer had been under the care of Helen Taravella, who also nursed Grace Wurlitzer, Farny's wife, until her passing several years ago. Helen Taravella served the Farny Wurlitzer family for over 12 years.

Farny usually spent two or three months of each year at La Jolla, California. This year was no exception. In the latter part of April, he was visited by ATOS members Dick Simon-ton and Judd Walton, who discussed the theatre organ with him, as they had on many previous occasions.

Shortly thereafter, Nurse Taravella recognizing Mr. Wurlitzer's rapid decline, arranged for his earlier than usual return to Buffalo, New York. His passing came quietly during the early morning of May sixth. He has left us with the legacy of a sound that will never be surpassed, the mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ. □

JUNE, 1972



FARNY WURLITZER



Mr. Wurlitzer with Reginald Foort (Bill Lamb Photo)

Mr. Wurlitzer with some of the original personnel who worked on the Mighty Wurlitzers.



TO THE LADIES

by John Muri

As one reads the articles in theatre organ publications one is impressed with the fact that men dominate the field almost entirely, even though theatre-organ work in the silent-picture days was done to a great extent by women. A glance at the list of players in Lloyd Klos' column in the February, 1972 issue of THEATRE ORGAN will give some idea. A number of managers were prejudiced against women organists as soloists because they didn't think the girls looked good or dignified while kicking away at pedals; but if memory serves me right, there were about as many women holding movie-playing jobs as there were men. During the lively days in Chicago there was an organization of women theatre organists whose president was Anita DeMars, featured at the Capitol Theatre. Other Chicago names that reached the top of the prestige list were Helen Searles, Mildred Fitzpatrick, Irma Glen, Elsie May Look, Edna Sellers (who played twin-console duets with her husband Preston Sellers at the five-manual Wurlitzer in the Marbro Theatre), and that magnificent organ-jazzier, Pearl White. The list of fine players is long. Does one need to mention Ann Leaf and Helen Anderson-Crawford?

Several women were top feature players in their communities, such as Iris Vining, who played in western cities. One particularly eminent star was Dessa Byrd, who soloed at the largest and best downtown theatres of Indianapolis. As a newcomer, she was not only beautiful and charming; she was exceptionally well-trained for her work. Born in Robinson, Illinois, she went on a scholarship to the Indianapolis Conservatory of Music. There she built a solid foundation of piano musicianship, as a result of which she was engaged to play piano in the Circle Theatre orchestra of thirty-five players. Of course, the job required that she be able to play any and all kinds of orchestral music at sight. Still musically active today, she says that she has never learned to play from scripts that give only the chord-name symbols because she feels that such an approach to music is too mechanical and that

one doesn't need it if one can read music.

When she was asked to play the Circle Wurlitzer in 1921, she took a crash course in organ and was an instant success. In 1924 she was a relief organist at the Circle, a job that gave her time to play in a dinner-music women's ensemble at the Claypool Hotel, where she had the chance to meet Victor Herbert and John Philip Sousa, the latter of whom she considered "a doll." Later she became solo organist at the theatre, with Walter Flandorf, Bomer Kramer, and Herb Koch as relief organists. In 1928, when the owners of the new Indiana Theatre were deciding what organ to purchase, they sent Dessa to Chicago to look over (and select) a 3/17 Barton. The trip was nothing new, for she had occasionally taken the Monon night train to Chicago, arriving in that city at 7:30 a.m., so that she could attend Jesse Crawford's performances at the Chicago Theatre and gain some fresh ideas about picture-playing and solo work. She worked steadily at the Circle from 1921 to 1928 and at the Indiana from 1928 till 1931. She was kept on long after most organists elsewhere had been dismissed; she was at the Circle in 1939, playing spotlight solos.

In the late thirties, she had a radio program for young people on radio station WIRE. From 1938 through 1940, the program was called "Uncle Connie and Aunt Dessa", a piano-organ duo that she played with Harry Bason. Children were asked to draw pictures representing popular tunes and send them in for Connie and Dessa to guess what music the pictures represented and then play it. (This stunt would be even better on television today.)

During the ensuing years, she and her sister Virginia (now Mrs. Stephen Richtoris, also an organist) appeared in concert on every radio and television station in town. Virginia still plays professionally on Indianapolis television. Dessa fondly remembers Durward Kirby, who was then a young remote-control man monitoring her Circle radio programs, and Dick Powell, who



DESSA BYRD in 1940.

was a friend of hers until his death.

She particularly remembers one specialty solo she did, called "Animals." Slide-pictures of animals were projected on the screen as she played appropriate tunes like "Horses" and "Tiger Rag."

Although she prefers to live in retirement, she was persuaded to give a public performance on March 19, 1971 at the Indianapolis Rivoli Theatre, a house that features regular concerts on a large 3/17 Louisville Uniphone organ with 32-foot diaphones. It was a sell-out, and her former employers at station WFBM sent a basket of orchids. Her name still had the old magic draw. Today, she is a woman of wit, good nature, and unpretentiousness, who can play up a storm of technique at her two pianos and electronic organ in her beautiful home. She has made four LP recordings. To hear her play "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise" as a left-hand counter-melody to a well-paced "Nola" in the right takes one back to the days of organ showmanship.

In December, 1969, *The Indianapolis News* printed a capsule word-picture of Dessa in her element: "When the magenta light swept to stage-left at the Circle Theatre, a hush fell over the audience. It was the era of Dessa Byrd, undisputed queen of the pipe organ. There was no one to compare . . ." It is good to have her with us, one of the remaining grand ladies of the theatre organ. □

SALUTE TO SOONER STATE AND MID-AMERICA

The Cooperative Ones

SOONER STATE CHAPTER – OKLAHOMA
MID-AMERICA CHAPTER – WICHITA, KANSAS

When two chapters pool their resources in theatre organ activities, a gold mine of enthusiasm is uncovered. Ron Willfong, chairman of Sooner State, realized this in 1970. Ron and member workers planned the highly successful Southwest Regional in the spring of that year. A number of Mid-America chapter members became actively involved, including the talented Bob Foley of Wichita, their help greatly contributing to the success of the Regional.

The cooperation between the two groups in a continuing procedure, as the recent tour of the Wichita area by Sooner State members, described below, points out.

Sooner State members arrived in Wichita by chartered bus about noon on March 18th and welcomed Mid-America members aboard for a whirlwind wee-convention.

After lunch, David Dillon, Mid-America chairman, previewed the activities to come. Honored guests were Mary Jean Millen and husband Col. Sam Arder from Kansas City.

The first stop was at the home of Wayne and Aline Parker and their 109 Wurlitzer, a 2/3 instrument originally in the Strand Theatre, Salina, Kansas. The organ has Flute, Vox Humana, String and full percussions. Our next stop was at the home of Tom and Marie Cusick. This 2/7 Hinners was originally installed as a tracker organ in Mt. Carmel Academy and later updated with new primary actions and electric keys. Tom removed the organ just as the wrecking ball began demolishing the opposite end of the building.

The third home was that of Ralph and Dorothy Higgins where Bob Foley gave a hilarious travelogue of this 3/5 Robert Morton. The organ reputedly began its career in the Gaiety Burlesque House in Kansas City, Mo., then to a church in Kansas City, to a residence in Hutchison, Kansas, to Bob Foley's family residence, to a Wichita family who never installed it, then to the home of the Higgins where it is now installed almost as it was originally.

Halstead, Kansas and the studio installation of Doctors Bill Dreese and Dean Burnett was the next stop. This 3/10 Kimball from the Main Street Theatre in Kansas City, Mo. is unique in that it had six reeds and four flutes but has been enlarged to fourteen ranks. It probably exceeds any new factory installation, now that the refurbishing is completed.

Just two blocks away we heard the beautiful 2/12 Hillgreen Lane in the home of Dr. and Mrs. McDowell. This meticulously installed instrument is located in a roomy basement with the sound rising through beautifully cabined tone chutes to the living room.

"Rork's Roxy" was previewed Sunday morning in the home of Victor and Dorothy Rork. When completed, this instrument will be a 2/10 with percussions and toy counter assembled from several organs.

A 2/8 Reuter in the teaching studio of Professor Robert Town at Wichita State University was the next stop, then on to Grace Memorial Chapel on campus to see and play the 2/18 Casavant. Nearby is the Church of the Magdalen where Evelyn Dunn gave a



Sooner State and Mid-America members gather in Wichita.



Mary Jean Miller and David Dillon watch as Bob Foley tries the Grace Memorial Chapel 2/18 Casavant.



Mary Jean Miller at the 4/24 Barton/Wurlitzer as her husband Col. Sam Ader lends support.



Dr. Bill Dreese explains his method of cleaning pipes in the Dreese/Burnett Studio installation.

Bob Foley gives the hilarious travelogue of the Higgin's 3/5 Robert Morton.

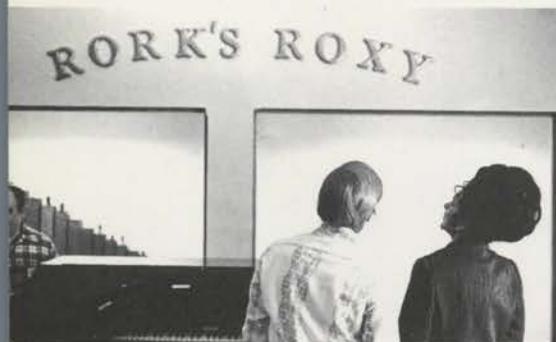




Mary Jean plays the Parker Wurlitzer as Wayne Parker and Mrs. Charles Puckette give their approval.



Robert Town of Wichita State University demonstrates his 2/8 Reuter teaching studio organ.



Ron Willfong and Evelyn Sanders admire the newly placed insignia in the organ studio of Victor and Dorothy Rork.



David Dillon puts the St. Stephen's 2/18 Reuter/Estey through its paces.

Grace Memorial Chapel on the W.S.U. Campus.



resume on all facts of the church, then Bob Town played the 3/45 Casavant. Beautiful organ, church and music!

Bob Foley and David Dillon donated a 2/18 Reuter-Estey organ to St. Stephens Episcopal Church. Estey Organ Company installed the organ in the early 1900's in the old Plymouth Congregational Church, was then rebuilt and enlarged by Reuter Organ Company in 1922. Bob and David acquired the organ in 1968, gave it to St. Stephens with church members and ATOSers doing the installing. David, organist at the church, gave a brief concert demonstrating the versatility of the organ and acoustics in the building.

The final stop of this Wee-Convention was at the studio home of Bob Foley and David Dillon with lots of food, plus music from the 4/24 Barton-Wurlitzer and twin Steinway pianos. Bob Foley gave a bang-up performance at the console and Ron Willfong presented him with a 1972 Honorary Membership in the Sooner State Chapter in appreciation for his generous gifts of time, talent and support to Sooner State over the years. Ray Elmore and Lyle Thurman, at the Steinways, joined Bob in a wild and wonderful jam session. The evening's finale was lovely music by Mary Jean Miller, formerly N.B.C. organist.

The organ is basically Barton and Wurlitzer, The console and relays from the Dallas Fair Park Auditorium were purchased by Raymond Shelley and installed at his home in 1949 with the addition of the 11 rank Wurlitzer organ from the Criterion Theatre in Oklahoma City in 1951. The building of a slave console was completed in 1963. The balance of the pipe work and chests came from 3 rank organs in the area.

The organ was moved in the winter of 1965-66 after Raymond Shelley's death and stored until it's present Special Studio could be built.

And so, the "Wee-Convention" drew to a close, with some 70 members of ATOS bidding farewell to one another. Have you had a weekend conclave with one of your sister chapters? If you haven't done so, we urge you to do so as soon as possible. It's a great way to meet some wonderful people and to enjoy the greatest instrument in the world — the pipe organ!

Dave Dillon, Chairman of Mid-America, arranged the tour with help of chapter members.

HOME INSTALLATION HIGHLIGHTS FROM SOONER STATE

One of the outstanding home organ installations in Tulsa is that of John Devine. John is the proud owner of the former Memphis, Tennessee, Loew's Palace Theatre, 3/11, 235 Wurlitzer-Opus 1324.

The organ was placed in the Palace on April 23, 1926 and used frequently until the advent of wide-screen films, then the cable was cut and the console stored in the basement to make room for the new screen.

John purchased the organ in 1964 and after many weekend trips to Memphis, had it all moved to Tulsa (we like to hear John tell of the trip he made on one weekend in particular, when he brought one lonely pipe back in his large rented vehicle.). He stored the organ for one year while overhauling it from top to bottom, complete with a refinishing of the console. Meanwhile John built a special house for the organ, trimmed in a theatre motif.

It now speaks with that glorious Wurlitzer voice we all love to hear. The Tuba and Tibia are on 15" wind, the Vox on 7" and the rest of the organ is on 10" wind.

The first chapter installation was finished in time for the 1970 Southwest Regional. A 2/4 Wurlitzer, originally installed in the First Methodist Church in Perry, Oklahoma and now speaking in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Hayden E. Weaver of Tulsa.

Next is a 3/7 Wicks, originally installed in the Parsons Theatre in Parsons, Kansas, removed in the early 50's and installed in a Catholic church in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. It was removed from the church in 1961 by Oklahoma City organ man, Roy Gimpel and in the same year ATOS'er Phil Judkins, bought the console and transformed it into an Artisan electronic organ. Following the Regional, Phil called Roy, to see if by chance he might still have any of the other parts of the organ — and would you believe, after 9 years, he still had everything with the exception of some pipe work. And so now, after years of silence and separation, it is once again whole. It has been completely restored and installed in the Judkins home, where it is always open console time.

The organ is voiced on 8" wind pressure and consists of Vox, Solo



Walls down and rubble all around the 2/11 Bennett of Walter and Edna Green.

String, Concert Flute, Tibia, Diapason, Kinura and Trumpet along with Glockenspiel. Yet to be installed is the toy counter which will complete the organ as it was originally installed.

Most treasured from a historical standpoint is the 2/11 Bennett Organ, being readied for installation in the country home of Walter and Edna Green. Reputedly the first pipe organ placed in Tulsa, the instrument was originally installed in Tulsa's First Baptist Church, with one-half of the purchase price donated by Andrew Carnegie and the other half, raised by the ladies of the church.

In the early 50's the organ was removed from the sanctuary, completely refurbished, given a new console and placed in the then newly constructed chapel. Due to the increased need for a more flexible use of the chapel in 1969, it was decided to completely gut the room and redesign it in a more functional manner eliminating the organ chambers. Thanks to the last minute thinking of the contractor, who made a call to ATOS member, George Dixon, asking if he knew anyone who wanted a pipe organ, we were able to marshal forces and save the instrument.

We arrived just in the nick of time too, as the wrecking crew had already smashed in the red tile walls around the chambers. There sat the two divisions, completely exposed and surrounded by the rubble of the walls, everything below the chests was buried in debris. It being Thursday, the contractor said he would suspend work until Monday morning - anything left after that would be junked. We worked all day Friday, part of Friday evening and all Saturday morning - carrying the last pieces out the door at 1:00 p.m. as the custodian locked

up the building for the day. In less than 48 hours we had saved it!

And so, Walter and Edna Green possess a priceless part of Tulsa's heritage.

Next to acquire an organ were fellow ATOS'ers Bill and Lois Roberts. In May of 1970, they purchased the 2/6 Kilgen, installed in the former Radio Station KFPW Studios in the ballroom of the Goldman Hotel in Ft. Smith, Arkansas in 1936.

Dorothy Gibson was organist for KFPW, playing the organ daily until the station moved to new quarters. The organ was used to entertain diners for years after and was still in playing condition when removed.

The organ is on 8" of wind, has a large set of Liberty Chimes, and a large scale Violin at 16', 8', 4', V.D.O., Flute, Tibia, Vox and Tuba. True to Kilgen quality is the more than adequate size blower for this organ. (Bill says he thinks that it's a Sherman Tank in disguise.) The big grey beauty had to ride around Tulsa in the back of an open pickup truck for 2 days until Bill could get someone with a winch to lift it out. Ahh, the joys of having your own theatre organ!

Very interesting, is the installation under way at the home of Bob and Betty Weddle. They discovered a 2/4 Robert Morton, lying sadly neglected and more than slightly moisture laden in a warehouse in Claremore, Oklahoma and just couldn't resist the urge to buy it.

Checking on it's history, Bob and Betty discovered that their purchase was originally installed in the Lyric Theatre in Booneville, Missouri. It was later removed, brought to Tulsa and installed in the Bethel Temple at which time it's three phase blower was exchanged for the single phase one on it's sister organ in the Masonic Temple. Three phase wasn't available at Bethel but, was at the Masonic Temple and since both organs were identical in all specifications as to size and wind pressure, an amicable trade was worked out. Then in the late 50's it was moved to Claremore where it's installation was prevented by the owner's death.

The Weddle's (lucky souls with that single phase blower) are restoring it and hopefully will have it playing in the summer of this year.

And last, but not least, Sooner State Chairman Ron Willfong and Christian Crusade Organist, Ray El-



John Devine's 3/11 Wurlitzer style 235 opus 1324.



Phil and Laura Judkin's 3/7 Wicks.



Bill and Lois Robert's 1936 2/6 Kilgen.

Bob and Betty Weddle's 2/4 Robert Morton.



more bought the 2/6 Barton from the Palace Theatre in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The organ is in mint condition, having been under lock and key in tightly sealed chambers. This organ has the distinction of being under the continuous ownership of the same people who purchased it up until it's sale to Ray and Ron. The organ was played by Gladys Sonneman daily for silent films and when talkies came in it was featured on noonday Radio broadcasts by a local Fayetteville station. Mrs. Sonneman is still actively engaged in playing, as organist for the First Baptist Church in Fayetteville, as well as playing on Sunday's in the dining room of the local Holiday Inn.

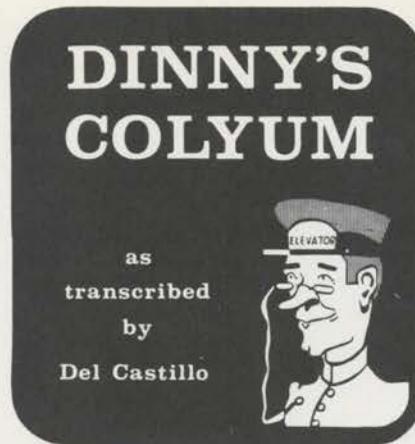
The organ is on 10' of wind and has Xylophone, Chimes, Chrysoglott and Toy-Counter in addition to Tibia, Trumpet, Flute, String, Vox and Diapason.

Fun for all in 1971 was the beginning of a series of seminars on just what a theatre organ really is and how it works. What started out to be an informal get-together on the subject, has blossomed into an event which nearly all of the members participate in.

Under the patient guidance of Phil Judkins and with the assistance of Bill Roberts, the seminars have turned into one of the most interesting and looked forward to activities of our chapter.

Exciting too, was our spring concert, featuring Wichita organist, Bob Foley in concert and accompanying a silent film for us at the Christian Crusade 3/10 Robert Morton.

Biggest thrill for we Sooners in '71 was the appearance of EDDIE HORTON at the WONDER MORTON. Eddie is the gentleman who made such a fantastic hit at the Crusade Jam Session during the Southwest Regional. He played a beautiful concert and accompanied Charlie Chaplin in *The Gold Rush*. With the audience asking for more! More! More!, Eddie closed the show with reminiscences of his early days in show business, which had the people on the edges of their seats wanting to know more about this man who has personally known Sigmund Romberg, Fritz Kreisler and many, many more. Friday evening, November 19, 1971 was certainly our RED LETTER DAY, as we listened to one of the last living theatre organ greats in live performance! □



You notice the way the Travel ads always blossom out with a lot of stuff about Festivals and things like that there? Well, that's the way with Organ Conventions this time of year. First we had the big bash out in Los Angeles where the ATOS got a lot of people out to open the San Gabriel Auditorium with a lot of star organ players like Gaylord Carter and Lyn Larsen and Bill Thomson. And then they was one in Noo York State around the place where the big Wurlitzers was made, with some concerts at the Riviera Theayter in Tonawanda, and some others at the Hollywood Theayter in Gowanda, hey, there's a combination. And then the Perfessional Organ Clubs they had a Convention down at Long Beach, where all the perfessional organ players from Los Angeles and San Francisco and Long Beach and San Diego and Orange County all got together and had concerts and chewed over their problems.

And then we got comin up the big Nashional Convention of the American Theayter Organ Society in July in Washington, D.C., run by the Potomack Valley Chapter of the ATOS. That's a-go-in to be some whing-ding and I wisht I could be there, but it's too fur away to fit in with some other plans I had to make. They got some of them big four-keyboard Wurlitzers around with guys like Eddie Weaver and Lee Erwin and Don Thompson and Tiny James and Dick Smith and a lot of other fine organ players to show them off. Not forgettin the gals like Rosa Rio and that little teen-age doll around Los Angeles name of Donna Parker who is loaded with talent and was just made the offshial organ player for the L.A. Dodgers.

And then they got a Wurlitzer run by a computer invented by a guy name of Marvin Lautzenheiser that

he calls the Gen-e-eye, like the magic guy that comes out of the bottle. Heck, I knowed a lot of organ players that played the organ when it come out of a bottle. Anyways, instead of Gen-e-eye, only he spells it Genii, I wisht he had named it the Lautzenheiser-wurlitzer. But I guess maybe thats too long a name like that Welch town where the name takes up the whole side of the station.

And besides I worry about these organs that can be played without any organ player. Maybe I worry too much. But you notice how the elektronick organs they keep addin gimmicks so you dont scarcely have to play anything your own self? Things like the Automack Cords, and the Glissandos and the Arpedgios and the Tape Cassetts and the Rithm Masters and all like that there? Go-in to put the organ teachers out of business, that's what theyre a-go-in to do.

Of course Im only kiddin about this Genii, which is a Rube Goldberg to end all Rube Goldbergs, if you know what I mean. Still and all I dunno. The blurb about it says that it will never replace the live organist, but it would take eighty fingers to match it. So maybe I should ought to worry at that. Or I would if I was a organ teacher. As near as I can figger it's like one of these here computers where you feed all the music into it and it comes out here as the old song goes. The blurb says it can do eighty things at once, so that is why it says it can do the work of eight organ players, each of them with ten fingers. Pervided they aint all thumbs, like some organ players I heard.

Well, all I can say is you better go see it. I wisht I could. Sounds like quite a party. □

SUMMER FUN



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WASHINGTON, D. C.

Things are "Looking Up" at the Centre

by Stu Green

Steve Adams, a former student at the University of Minnesota, made the trip to Milwaukee willingly; the project was right up his alley. He had been requested by the Theatre Historical Society to gather data on two Milwaukee theatres.

Steve Adams called upon two of his friends to accompany him, Norman Gullixson, 22, a student at the University of Minnesota, and Paul Wesley, 29, who has been playing theatre pipe organs for almost ten years. At the Centre they were cordially greeted by manager Jack Ringe and assistant manager Steve Kaniewski. It was while they were being escorted through the downtown Centre theatre that Steve saw it — a dust-covered and forlorn looking console hulking in the orchestra pit. Later, Gullixson and Wesley confirmed that it was an historic moment — love at first sight. From

that moment on the die was cast; Steve just had to do something about restoring some dignity to that poor beat old organ. His first step was to enlist the help of Gullixson and Wesley. He got no resistance from either. That was in March 1971.

Yet, it wouldn't be easy; the Centre theatre is in Milwaukee while the prospective restorers lived in Minneapolis — a long commute. Besides the former Warner-operated theatre had a long record of neglect-induced decay. For example, the trio learned later that water had been leaking into one of the organ chambers for 15 years with no effort to stop it.

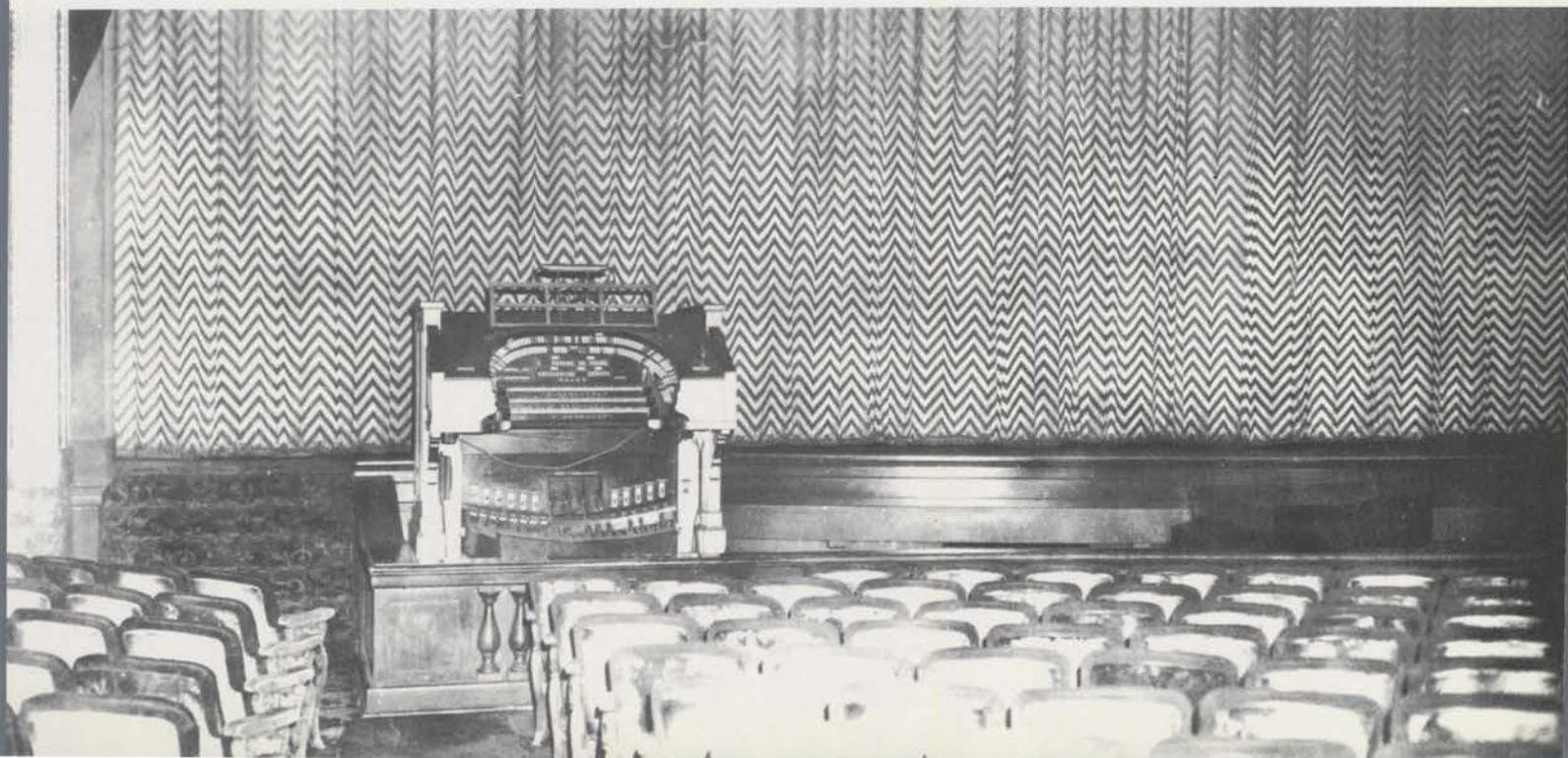
The trio decided to try to get the organ in good enough shape for a recording by Paul Wesley, a long-time pipe aficionado. The commuting was murder but they managed in several trips to get the many dead notes

playing, dead chests rewinded, tuned the instrument and deadened the sound of dripping water in the right chamber by letting it fall on felt padding. They had one week to accomplish the repair before the recording date.

In the course of their investigation they uncovered some facts about the house. It was the last Rapp & Rapp house built and it opened in November 1931 as the Warner theatre with many movie stars present, even one of the Warner brothers. The same information source, 1931 newspapers, offered a tale about the organ in the theatre.

The Centre's Kimball organ (a 28-ranker), the largest still installed in a theatre west of Detroit and East of Oregon, is said to be a portion of the organ originally built for New York City's Radio City Music Hall. Kimball in Chicago was given the contract by Samuel Rothaphel (better known as

1954 photo of the raised console.





A pooped Steve Adams looks forward to a few hours sleep in a nearby hotel after an all-night session of organ-fixing at the Centre.



Organist Paul Wesley helped greatly in getting the Kimball ready to record.

“Roxy”) when he was designing the Music Hall in 1929. However, the big crash in November and the subsequent depression in the '30s slowed the construction of both the Centre and the Music Hall. Kimball, in deep financial trouble, was forced to turn over its contract to the Wurlitzer Co. The partially completed Kimball organ was sold to two theatres under construction. Thus, the Centre became the home of one-half of the original Radio City Music Hall Kimball organ.

It's a good story, and it just might be true because it's known that Roxy's original intention was to install a Kim-

Right chamber lower level pipework. French Horn (fat conical bells), Echo Horn (spotted metal, center) and Open Diapason (with black bands), 8' String offset in background.



ball in RCMH and that the resulting Wurlitzer was built to a Kimball specification.

There were many faults to contend with in the neglected organ, action was sluggish. Worse yet, agents of the infamous “Midnight Organ Supply” had lifted several ranks of pipes. The moonlighters were known, however, and all parts have since been returned.

Of the 250 swell shutters, only 100 operated and most of these hissed due to air leaks. At least the console elevator worked.

Came time for the all night recording session and there was still no combination working, and worse yet, the Tibia was still mute. The trio decided to go ahead with the recording anyway,

A sea of strings. All nine ranks of strings are celested, alternating sharp and flat.

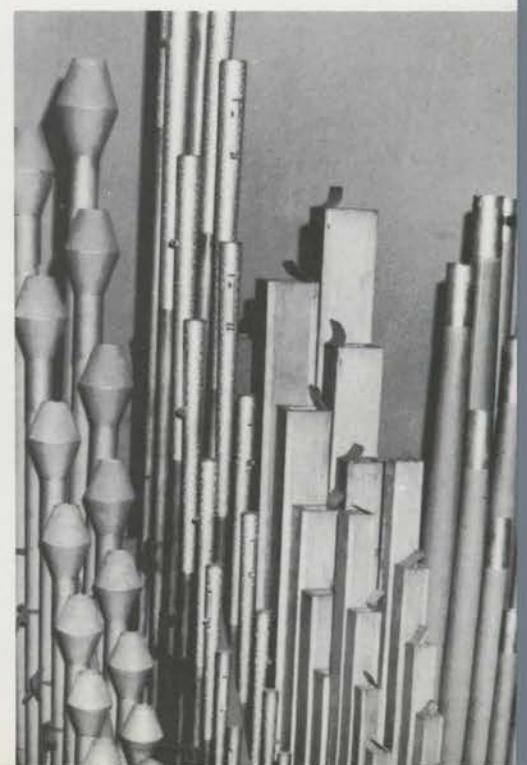


and the result is something of a tribute to the musicianship of Paul Wesley for using what he had available and covering up most of the difficulties encountered.

After the recording was made, things started to change for the better. The new owners, the Marcus Corporation, took note of the record. The organ fell in with their plans for the theatre.

Then things happened in quick succession. The Marcus Corporation proved to be a progressive corporation with intentions of making the Centre an attractive place to see a show. The Corporation found Steve a job. The objective was to help maintain the house. It was remarkably complete, despite the years of neglect. All the wall

Upper level right chamber pipework. L to R, Saxophone, Orch. Oboe, Concert Flute, Waldhorn, Clarinet, Swell shutters are at left.





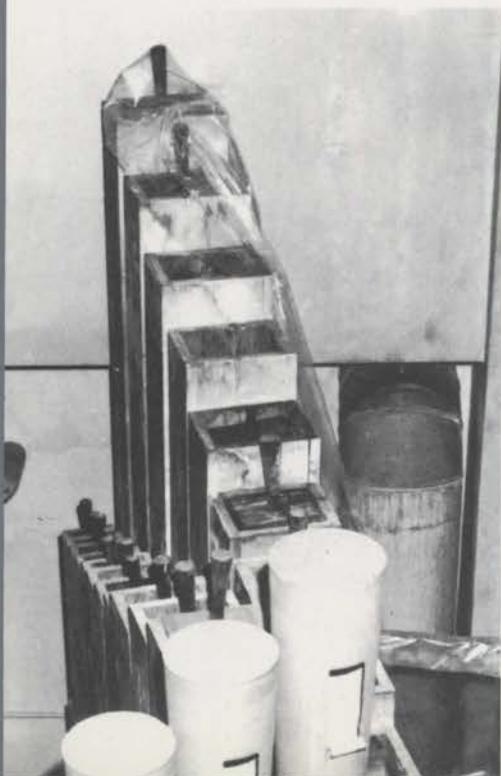
The 15 volt, 22 ampere generator runs from the driveshaft of 15 hp 440 volt 3 phase Woods motor. The Orgoblo (right) generates 10 and 15 inch pressures. Blower room is off the right chamber.

artwork and most of the lobby furniture etc. were still intact. So, besides working on the organ. Steve has been replacing hundreds of long dead light bulbs and getting the house's electrical systems back in full operation.

In mid-'71 he moved to Milwaukee to end the commuting, now that he had a permanent job. And Paul Wesley is considered house organist. Between them, the organ is coming along nicely.

As soon as Steve got settled in Milwaukee he began to think about ATOS. He had been Vice Chairman of the ATOS chapter in Minneapolis, and had to give it up when he moved.

Sheets of plastic were used to protect the 16' Tibia from further water damage. The metal pipes are rare 16' French Horns.



Damage to ceiling and wall of right chamber caused by years of water seepage from a leaky roof. Luckily, no irreparable damage resulted.

As soon as Steve, Paul and a newcomer named Larry Crawford, had enough restoration work done to make the 3/28 presentable, they contacted the Dairyland chapter of ATOS and showed some of the members what they had accomplished and told of what they hope to accomplish. Members of the chapter have been helpful and in return they now have access to the organ, says Steve.

Steve Adams grew up in the Bay Area of California and became interested in theatres during the "Save the Fox" campaign in San Francisco when the efforts of a valiant little group tried vainly to get the city to take over the historic house for a badly needed municipal auditorium.

Reflects Adams, "There is something about the old theatres and the

magic that they were built for that is attractive to us. They knew what entertainment was in those days – the '20s – but the depression cut it off from this generation. It's really too bad. Entertainment in the '20s was a safe and legal form of escape."

And Paul Wesley, who hails from Montague, California, has gained new recognition as a theatre organist. He broke in on pipes at the Sacramento Carl Greer Inn 4/17 Morton several years ago and has played electronics and piano engagements for the past ten years. The Centre is his first theatre job and regular opportunity to play pipes. He often plays before the movie and during intermissions, plus special events staged in the theatre.

Things are looking up for pipe organ music at the Milwaukee Centre theatre.

□



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The Eddie Horton Story

by Lloyd E. Klos

Eddie Horton, theatre organist, known throughout Australia and New Zealand, as well as in this country, comes from the Nebraska corn country, having been born in Grand Island on April 7, 1893.

He started eight years of piano lessons in 1901. In 1908, he opened the first picture show in Grand Island, providing the piano accompaniment for the silents. A year later, he played his first organ music for a picture, using a parlor pumper for *The Passion Play*.

Eddie then toured the state with small shows until 1911. "I went to Denver, and in walking up 18th Street to Laramie St., heard a player piano in front of a nickel theatre. Asking if they had a piano inside (they did), I shut off the player, and went to audition for the manager. His name was Jack Becker, an operatic baritone, who came from the Whitney Opera House in Detroit.

"I played, he sang, and he gave me a job for \$25 a week. A month later, I went up Curtis Street to the Iris Theatre.* The owner bought me a nine-foot Decker piano which I played in the lobby, dressed in an Eaton boy outfit."

In 1912, Eddie Horton left Denver for Cripple Creek, Colorado, to play theatres there. In 1913, he went to Omaha to play a Seeburg orchestrion, and was billed as "The Seventh Wonder of the World," at the Princess Theatre on Douglas Street.

In 1914, it was on to the Starland Theatre in St. Paul, Minn. In 1915, it was the Princess Theatre in Des Moines, and in 1916, he returned to Omaha to

*Editor's Note:

There were two theatres in Denver with similar names. The oldest house was built in 1889 as the CURTIS. Several different names were applied to it over the years. In 1911 it was known as the "IRIS". A larger house called "ISIS" was built in 1913. This theatre had a large 4/28 Wurlitzer, installed in 1915.



Eddie Horton at the Allen three-manual organ in Albuquerque Civic Auditorium on April 21, 1970. "The biggest day in my life", says he. — (Horton collection)

play the Kimball in the Sun Theatre on Farnam St.

In May 1917, he left Omaha in a Scripps-Booth roadster for California. A faded clipping from the Omaha *Sunday Bee* announces the start of the trip. "Mr. Horton has become quite famous with the speed stunts he has pulled off with his Scripps-Booth eight, and it will be recalled that a couple months ago, he made a trip from Fremont to Omaha (38 miles) in one hour and 10 minutes, through six inches of snow and mud." Fast cars always had an appeal for Eddie Horton.

On the way to California, he stopped off in Denver, and played at the Iris Theatre, subbing for the vacationing Henry B. Murtagh. Associate organist was Henri Keates, later to gain his fame in Chicago's Oriental Theatre.

Eddie arrived in California, and played the Miller Theatre in Los Angeles, sharing his duties with Carlo Elinor. Then came work on the big Austin in Clune's Auditorium. Next, he opened the 5-manual Robert Morton in the Kinema Theatre at Seventh and Grand, playing until April 19, 1918.

He went to Camp Curry in Yosemite National Park as pianist, and program director until September. He then journeyed to San Francisco to play the Wurlitzer at the Strand Theatre, and later, the California Theatre on Market Street, also having a Wurlitzer.

While in California, Eddie made the first player rolls for silent pictures for photoplayers. He also drew the specifications of over 100 Robert Morton organs while in San Francisco.

Then came Los Angeles again in 1922, to play the Kinema (now Criterion) Morton. During Eddie's tenure at the Criterion, Victor Herbert, the famous composer-conductor, had a two-week engagement. He was very impressed with the instrument, and expressed the hope that "it will be one of the features of the programs, for an organ so remarkably equipped is bound to be enjoyed by the patrons."

The Criterion was operated in direct competition to Grauman's Million Dollar, and although Jesse Crawford was solo organist at the latter house, "Horton At the Morton" was emblazoned on billboards about the city.

In August 1924, Eddie Horton sailed for Australia where he began a 10-year stay "down under". He opened the Prince Edward Theatre, "The Showplace of Australia", in Sydney on November 22, 1924. He also played a command performance for the Duke and Duchess of England in 1924 at Sydney Town Hall.

For about a year, Eddie played New Zealand houses, then he returned in 1925 to Sydney for five years at the Prince Edward. Faded clips refer to him as "The Wizard of the Wurlitzer". He literally became a musical institution in Australia's largest city.

Early in 1928, Eddie had an engagement in Auckland, New Zealand. Though he played a Wurlitzer, a daily paper once referred to the instrument as a "Mangelwurlitzer." When he wasn't



Eddie Horton plays the Isis Theatre Wurlitzer in Denver in 1917. — (Horton collection)

at the console, Eddie could be seen early mornings or evenings in his "Hot Devil", a rakish automobile with a blue-striped hood and big electric bell.

After his years at the Prince Edward, Eddie Horton went on tour of some of the major cities in Australia. He had a lengthy engagement at the 3-manual Christie in Roxy's Spanish Theatre in Parramatta, New South Wales in 1931. While here, Australian Prime Minister Scull, accompanied by members of the Australian Parliament, made a special journey from Canberra to give Eddie a special award for his entertainment proclivities.

By this time, Eddie still a lover of sporty automobiles, had a sweet-looking Buick roadster. The engine was chromium-plated. Reports said it "has a remarkable turn of speed, over 80 MPH easily accomplished. Everyone knows when the car is approaching by the musical notes which issue from trumpets at the front of the car." One evening, Eddie was visiting his mother-in-law, when a miserable bouncer removed the trumpet assembly and made off. The horn was insured,

and it wasn't long before a new musical contraption was adorning the front of the sporty Buick.

Eddie's next engagement was six months at the State Theatre back in Sydney. Then, on to the Ambassadors Theatre in Perth in 1932, then the Regent Theatre in Adelaide and the Regent in Melbourne.

Mr. Horton returned to San Francisco in 1933. As the depression was in full force, jobs were scarce. He took a position with Ringling Brothers' Circus, and later was public relations and radio director for the Al G. Barnes Circus.

In September 1934, he began a stint at the Fox Miller Theatre in Wichita, Kansas. While here, he broadcast from station KHF, presenting a 30-minute program each Thursday morning. Requests were played, the requesters sending their choices to the theatre. He remained at the Miller until April 1935, when he returned to San Francisco to head advance work for the circus.

With work in theatres for organists in 1935 practically non-existent, Eddie

bought a Model A Hammond, and played night clubs for several years. In 1947, he came to Albuquerque, New Mexico as a guest of his former partner, John D. Garvin, manager of the Alvarado House. He brought his Hammond along, and stayed three years, playing in the dining room. He liked the beauty of the New Mexico area so well that he purchased property and made his home there.

Eddie has become a leading personality in Albuquerque. He was at the Golden T Lounge for five years, and had tenures in other establishments. He has been affiliated with station KOAT-TV, and had his own show, playing requests.

In 1969, he opened the new Holiday Inn Motel, and in 1970, the East Holiday Inn.

However, Eddie admits that his biggest day came on April 21, 1970 — "Eddie Horton Day", proclaimed by the mayor of Albuquerque. Over 1,100 persons turned out that evening at Civic Auditorium to hear a program by the honored guest, consisting of eleven numbers, a sing-along, and his accompaniment of *The Gold Rush* with Charlie Chaplin, all played on the 3-manual Allen electronic.

"I am now semi-retired, and have amassed several items of income," he says. "So I fish, travel, and enjoy the blessings which have been bestowed on me and my lovely wife of 35 years. She was an aerialist with the circus.

"A cheerful 'hello' to any old timers of my era. Would surely enjoy hearing from them. My address is 408 Penn S.E. in Albuquerque, and my phone number is (505) 255-0688." □

PRE-CONVENTION CONCERT

Of added interest to anyone traveling to the ATOS National Convention in Washington, D.C. is a concert planned at John Dickinson High School in Wilmington, Delaware.

Organist Glenn Hough and pianist John Reading will present a concert of semi-classical and popular music using the 3/28 Kimball theatre pipe organ and a nine foot grand piano on Saturday, July 8 at 8:00 P.M. The program is sponsored by the John Dickinson High School Organ Society and tickets are \$2.00 reserved and \$1.50 for general admission.

AWARD WINNERS...



Eleanor Weaver of Connecticut Valley Chapter presents awards to the winners of the 1972 Annual Scholarship Contest. From left to right: Albert Rohe, Kathy Roberg (2nd place), Janet Hassel (1st place), John Hadburay (3rd place), Linda Lovallo, Gerry Bilak and Sandy Barnes.

One of the most prolific recording organists on the British scene is *Joseph Seal*, who has some 14 LPs to his credit, with more in the pipe-line.

Yet he has not played in public for 20 years. Not, in fact, since 1951 when he took up an executive job with a big cinema chain.

However, apart from recording, he has also managed to give some 300 radio broadcasts since his departure from public gaze. The question arises – if he is too busy for public appearances, how does he manage to keep his playing up to the mark?

“I was fortunate,” he told me. “I had to practise a lot when I was young and have a reasonably reliable technique. My training was classical. You know, Chopin etudes and the big Bach works. Most of the things I record now are a bit less demanding.”

In fact, he started playing piano when he was five and hard work secured him a seat on the church organ bench by the time he was 12. In his early teens he held three different church appointments in his native country and began to build himself a name as a recitalist.

Then came the golden years and he entered the theatre field with a job at the Regal, Altrincham, near Manchester. An interesting sidelight is that he followed *Norman Cocker* who doubled his theatre job with that of Assistant Organist at Manchester Cathedral, thus proving to the musical snobs that this was possible. *Cocker's* Tuba Tune, classically styled, is a big favorite with today's recitalists over here.

Anyway, *Joe Seal* (as he is more familiarly known) moved on to Carlisle where he started his radio career. After three years, he transferred to the newly-built Ritz, Belfast, staying 15 years and giving more than 1,000 BBC airings to the organ.

Then came the move to a desk job and, sadly, the gradual phasing out of organists in theatres. *Joe Seal*, stuck at head office, has endured some unkind comment from those not in the know who feel he could have done more both for the organists and to save the many instruments which have been sold.



JOSEPH SEAL at Kingston-Upon-Thames.

How unjust this might be was demonstrated to me when the final batch of pedal-pushers got their notice a few months back. It was one of them who paid tribute publicly to *Mr. Seal's* valiant efforts to equate contemporary demand and reality with an understandable desire to keep the organ flag flying.

He certainly does this himself in his broadcasts and recordings. He did about a dozen singles and some EPs but it is the big batch of LPs which merit attention.

In latter years he has used exclusively the Wurlitzer 3/12 in the ABC (formerly Regal) Kingston-upon-Thames. This fine medium sized instrument was opened in 1932 by Reginald Foort and it was he who first recorded it.

It is one of those installations which sounds well on disc. The two chambers are above the stage, with most of the effects in the solo together with English Horn, Harmonic Tuba, French Trumpet, Tibia Clausa, Saxophone and Kinura. The main chamber accommodates Diaphonic Diapason (which can really lend weight to a disc), Violin, Violin Celeste, Oboe Horn, Concert Flute and Vox Humana. A nice compact combination which *Joe Seal* uses with great skill and taste.

A final anecdote. His signature tune is the hunting song “D’ye ken John Peel?” and it was assumed by many that this was another way of saying “D’ye ken *Joe Seal*?” Not so, he

explained recently. “I made my first broadcast from Carlisle,” he said. “They told me I had to have signature tune, so I took this song which belongs to this area of England.”

Ah well, another good story down the drain.

STACCATO SNIPPETS – *Harry Klompe*, resident at the City, Amsterdam, has plans for bring back sing-alongs to the house. With the late *Cor Steyn*, they were a pre-war favorite . . . ; Generally speaking, English parsons have to be convinced that putting theatre organs in churches is a good thing. The Rev. John Harwood, a Bradford nonconformist, has been convinced in advance. He has offered his church to any preservation group wanting to keep a theatre instrument singing . . . *Henry Croudson*, who gained a pre-war fame via radio and records, died in December. His most important appointment was at the Gaumont, Haymarket, London . . . Apart from the strife which hits the headlines, Northern Ireland has also lost its last theatre organ. The floods last Fall wrecked the four-manual Compton of the ABC, Belfast, beyond repair . . . One encouraging note – of late, there have been so many theatre organ recitals to list each month, editors of the hobby newsletters have been heard to grumble about the encroachment on editorial space. For British buffs, there's getting to be a whole lot of goodies to choose from each weekend. □

BE CONVENTIONAL.

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BILL UHLER and his Marr and Colton

by Lloyd E. Klos

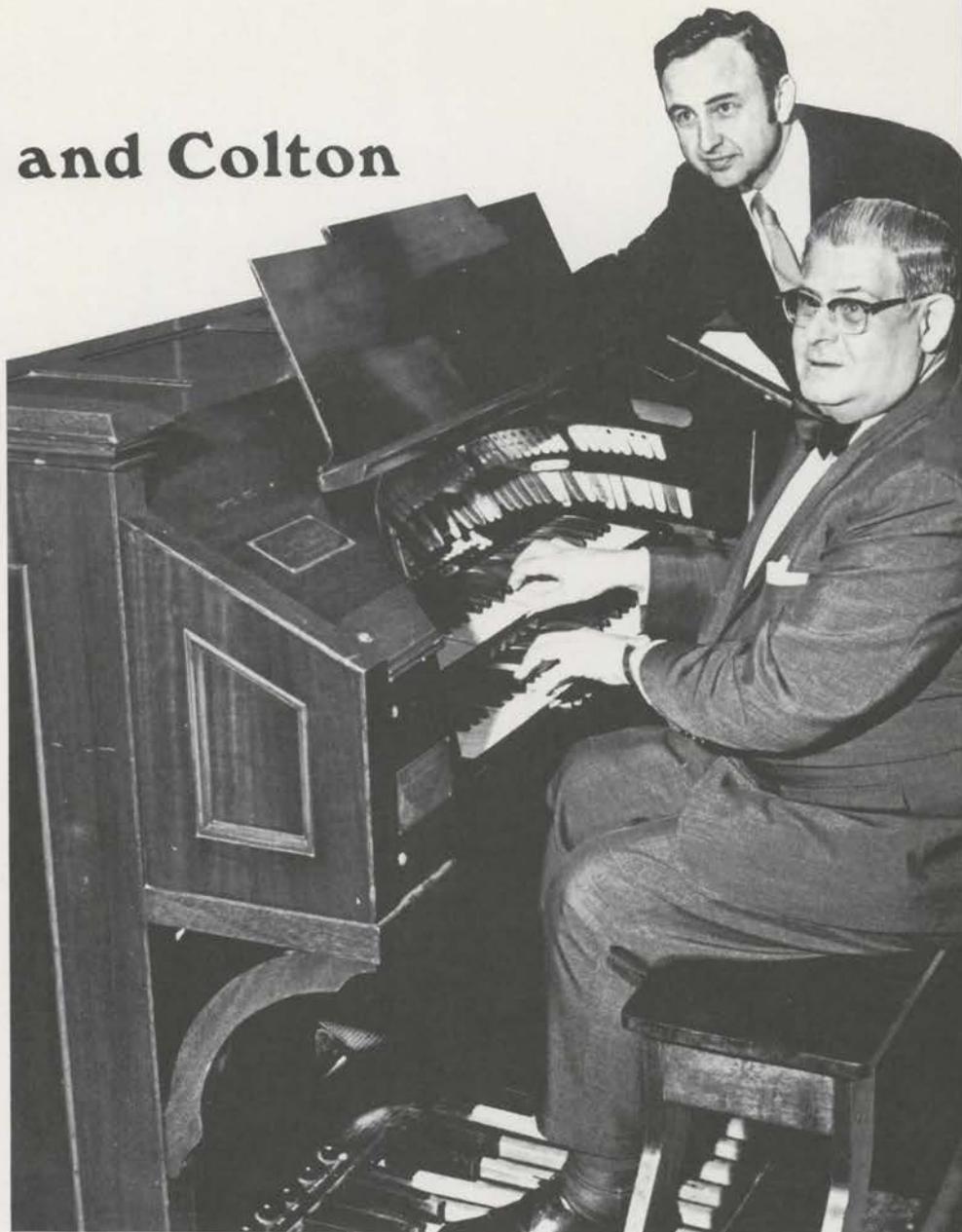
Add the name of R. William Uhler, master photographer of Mt. Gretna, Pa., to the growing list of ATOS members who take their pleasure big by installing theatre pipe organs in their homes. Mr. Uhler has playing a 2-manual Marr & Colton, and it is believed to be one of four in existence having a Symphonic Registrar, a feature of some late-model M&C instruments.

Bill Uhler tells us that this instrument is the second theatre organ he has purchased. He first bought a 2/4 Kilgen which was in the Seltzer Theatre in Palmyra, Pa. The theatre had been closed a number of years, and the console was badly damaged, dry-rot having set in. Pipes, located in one chamber, were in fairly good condition. some Percussions were missing, but chests were OK.

"I also became interested in the Marr & Colton in the Academy Theatre in Lebanon," he says. "During 1965 and 1966, the owners allowed me to go into the theatre in the morning and play the organ. It was about 70% playable, but it sounded just great to me.

"The organ was installed in two chambers. The main chamber at the left housed the pedal Bourdon, Tibia, Diapason, Kinura, Xylophone, Orchestra bells, all the traps and noise-makers and the switch stack. The solo chamber on the right contained the Tuba, Viol d' orchestre, Vox Humana and Harp. None of the pistons was operable and upon investigation, I discovered that the air to the console had been disconnected. Upon hooking in the air, I found that I played an air-conditioned console with a cool breeze (more like a gale) blowing through the pneumatics! Needless to say, I unhooked the air again — fast!

"Upon inquiry, the owners indicated that the organ could not be sold due to some tie-up in the lease. Late in 1966, however, they told me that I could make an offer for the organ, which I did and which was accepted.



Seated at the console is Ed Weimer, last man to play the Academy Theatre organ for an audience. Owner Uhler gets a few tips on playing from the artist. — (Lebanon Daily News Photo)

Before purchasing it, I had discussed the possibility of using the instrument as part of the theatre program, but due to costs of re-leathering and new cable, management was not interested. A few months after I removed the organ, the theatre was sold.

"I started removal of the 600 pipes and the chests on January 16, 1967, almost 40 years to the day it was installed. An original tag from the Marr & Colton Co., which was tied to a cable on the switch stack, lists the date as 1/27/27. I disassembled the organ, and with the help of the assistant manager of the theatre, brought everything to my home in my station wagon with the exception of the switch and

the console which professional movers handled.

"When I had acquired the Kilgen, I began construction of a room to house the pipes. This was finished about the time I purchased the M&C. The chamber is 12' x 18' x 10' high and speaks into our family room which is 14' x 35' by 10' high. The swell shades are from the Kilgen installation.

"Every spare moment I had in 1967 was spent assembling, erecting, cleaning and re-cabling until on November 22, 1967, I had enough done to turn on the blower. A nightmare of sound emerged with innumerable ciphers etc. The chimes sounded great, however, even though I had connected them in reverse.

As one played an ascending scale, their notes descended!

"Not knowing where to proceed from there, I called in a professional organ builder and made arrangements with him to re-leather the two main three-rank chests while I would work on the offsets etc. It seemed like forever until the organ was again ready to speak, finally, in 1969. It sounded not like it did in the theatre, but it didn't sound like a calliope either, for which I was grateful. Four technicians from the organ builder's firm, along with friends, relatives, wife and children were involved at various stages of rehabilitation.

"In May 1970, I invited the student AGO affiliate from Lebanon Valley College to a silent movie and concert by Ed Weimer, who was last house organist at the Academy Theatre."

Ed Weimer, also a pipe-organ-owning ATOS member, lives in Harrisburg, Pa. He started his musical career at the age of six by studying piano, and became a theatre organist. Console artist at the Academy, Jackson and Capitol theatres in Lebanon, he played the silents until the advent of sound around 1930.

"Then, the organ was used only for a few short silent subjects and for music prior to the movie, and for the 9 PM break," Weimer says. "This was during the depression and organists

Partial view of pipe chamber showing Tibia, Diapason and Kinura ranks in left foreground, Tuba chest right foreground. String offset to rear with chimes, orchestra bells and xylophone.



Marr & Colton Symphonic Registrator Console.

were offered jobs taking tickets, ushering and doing odd jobs around the theatre." He became a projectionist at the Jackson.

With vaudeville still in some local theatres, Weimer played the overture with the pit orchestra. With the end of vaudeville, he'd play the organ before movies and at breaks, even though he was no longer on the payroll. Weimer's biggest thrill was to play on the final program of the New York Paramount Theatre in September 1964, before the Queen Mother of all Wur-litzers was removed. He is still active, playing for clubs and special events, and has a theatre pipe organ, a piano and two electronic organs at home. The AMP Corp. in Harrisburg is his employer.

Bill Uhler continues: "My daughter Wendy is an organ major at the college and she and I had reservations about how the AGO group would accept the concert. However, Ed Weimer (without the aid of a musical score) at the Marr & Colton, and Harold Lloyd, the Keystone Cops and a portion of "Phantom of the Opera" on the screen, were so well received that the event, which had been scheduled to last 1½ hours, continued for more than three! This group asked to have another performance, and it was rewarded by a similar event in May 1971 which was covered by the *Lebanon Daily News*, complete with pictures. Ed Weimer played for "Trail of the Octopus"; a Keystone comedy "Love, Loot and Crash", and a sing-along.

Following the 1970 event, not satisfied with the way the Harp, traps and Chimes sounded forth, Bill shut down the organ during the summer of

1970. He re-arranged the pipe chamber, and also replaced much of the flexible tubing with galvanized piping. With the tubing, the tremulants did not operate consistently. The Harp was placed immediately behind the shutters, and the traps and Chimes mounted on the side wall of the chamber, close to the shutters. The Kinura was placed farthest from the shutters since it is the loudest and most raucous voice in the organ.

The Symphonic Registrator is not hooked up because the cable was cut in the console. Bill has arbitrarily hooked up a few of the stops, particularly "pathetic" ("because I play that way"), but he has no way of knowing how M&C originally had them wired in. Among the SR stops are "gruesome", "chase", "storm", "fire", "riot", "sorrow", "love" and "hate", which allowed the player to capture the mood demanded by the screen.

If anyone has any knowledge about the mixture of voices which spoke into any of the registrator stops, Mr. Uhler would be grateful for the information.

He expects to add the Kilgen voices to the M&C, but just barely has enough room in the chamber.

"Although I never heard this organ accompany silent movies in the theatre, I do remember hearing it used for solo spots and special programs in

Mr. Uhler tunes pipes in his home installation. The largest pipe is 9½ feet tall; the smallest is only five inches high. — (*Lebanon Daily News Photo*)





Academy Theatre (Academy of Music), Lebanon, Pa. 2/13/67. Last day console was in theatre. (R. William Uhler Photo)

the 1930's. The theatre paid \$20,000 for the organ. It is estimated that an exact duplicate would cost \$80,000 today. I believe I started getting the organ bug when I was going to photography school in New York City in 1942-43. I went to the Paramount Theatre as often as I could to hear the tremendous sound of that great Wurlitzer.

"I started playing a Hammond chord organ and progressed via a Wurlitzer, an Allen, and now have a Rodgers in addition to the M&C. I am happy at having been able to save and restore the last organ in a Lebanon theatre,

the others being long gone. Last but not least, I cannot give enough thanks and credit to my family for all their help, and particularly to my wife, Ruth, who really didn't believe it was too strange to add another room to the house just to keep pipes in." □

Marr & Colton

Tibia Clausa	16' - 2'
Harmonic Tuba	8' - 4'
Open Diapason	8' - 4'
Vox Humana	8'
Kinura	8' (a wild sound)
Viol d' orch.	8' - 4'

plus, Chimes, Xylophone, Orchestra Bells, Harp, Bass Drum, Snare Drum, Cymbal, Tom-Tom, Triangle, Castanets, Tambourine, Chinese Block, Surf, Bird Whistle, Sleighbells, Doorbell, — and everything works.

Kilgen

Tibia Clausa	16' - 4'
Flute	8' - 2'
Viol d' orch.	8' - 4'
Vox Humana	8' - 4'

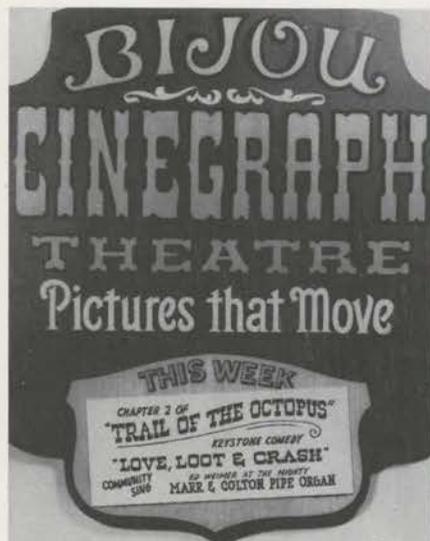
plus Orchestra Bells. This organ had a toy counter, but it had been vandalized before I purchased it. This organ had been installed in the Seltzer Theatre in Palmyra, Pa. in 1927.

I have an original Marr & Colton shipping tag which was attached to the relay board dated 1-27-27. (of the M&C, that is.)

Almost 6000 Theatre Organs

In a copyrighted article which appeared in the January 2, 1972 issue of *Los Angeles Times*, former Robert Morton Organ Co. factory manager Paul Carlsted, now 80, looked back on his career with the Van Nuys, Calif. firm. Interviewed by *Times* staffer Pat Bryant, Carlsted revealed:

1. Robert Morton was the world's largest manufacturer of theatre organs. The company built "nearly 6,000" for theatres.
2. The Morton factory was the first industry in Van Nuys, Calif. It moved in 1912 to six blocks of land at the corner of Van Nuys Blvd. and Oxnard Street donated by real estate developers in a campaign to attract industry. It was the only industry in town for several years.
3. Morton manufactured the pipes for its organs, both metal and wood, in its factory (unlike some who bought pipework from specialists e.g. Gottfried).
4. It was brought out that the largest Morton in a southern California theatre was the 5/33 in the Los Angeles Criterion theatre. It cost \$40,000.
5. Although he built organs most of his life, Carlsted never learned to play one. The closest he came to making music on pipes was when he operated the 2-pipe "cuckoo" he installed on his Ford in the '20s.
6. He met his wife, Ruth, 57 years ago while she was on a guided tour of the Robert Morton factory. Carlsted was the guide. Marriage overtook Paul and Ruth four months later.
7. Hours and wages? He started as a draftsman at two dollars a day for a ten hour day, six days a week. At twenty cents an hour, Carlsted couldn't afford lunch in a restaurant so he bicycled home to eat.
8. The Morton Co. ceased operation in 1934.
9. When Morton folded, Carlsted went to college to obtain teaching credentials, then taught drafting and woodworking at Van Nuys High School for the next 25 years.
10. Now retired, Carlsted's favorite topic remains organs. □



Poster displayed at Lebanon Valley College for presentation on 5/3/71.



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information, if applicable, and if possible a black and white photo which need not be returned.

WHO IS RAY BRUBACHER – AND WHAT'S HE DOING WITH THOSE PIPES? Ray Brubacher playing the 2/8 Wurlitzer in the Tivoli Theatre, Frederick, Md. No. CR-0074 (stereo). Available at \$4.89 postpaid from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262.

The question posed has an easy answer for ATOSers because Ray has been a pillar of this publication, an associate editor and frequent contributor, for many years. A much in demand concert artist in his home area (the eastern states), this recording should do much to earn Ray fans far from the Potomac Valley Chapter diggins. Ray's approach to theatre pipes (he's equally adept on the big church Diapasons) is tasteful, usually orchestral, marked with variety, and, with the exception of "More" and the Beatles' "Yesterday", the selection of tunes is offbeat.

One might wonder why an artist of Ray's ability would limit his musical expression to the facilities of a relatively small instrument. Hearing the instrument provides answer enough; it's a little gem on which much tender loving care has been obviously languished by its restorers. The Tibia/Vox

combinations are exquisite, the Kinura crackly, the Trumpet mellow; a credit to restorers (especially young Doug Miller) who had the rough material and knew how to extract the best from it. The little Wurlitzer does very well on the ballads but seems to strain a little during the sweeping climaxes of the *Gone With the Wind* score and parts of the Viennese medley.

Ray opens with a lampoon of concertizers who ride their consoles skyward with everything on and played lickety-split — Julius Wechter's "Brazilia"; 1.56 minutes of drums, bells, clackers and usually frantic full organ, untrem'd a sure-fire eye-opener.

Then the artistry starts. The Tibia and Vox carry a well phrased "Yesterday", with interesting backing from a silvery Concert Flute for the ballad chorus. This is followed by a String/Reed chorus with heavy rhythm accents then a return to balladry for the bridge and closing. "More" is a tune which offers an organist with imagination many possibilities and Ray seems to have fathomed most of them in his treatment which ranges from percussion-flecked rhythm to a soaring improvisation indicative of Ray's absorption with theatrical music. Next the organist exhumes an oldie, "Here Comes the Sun", and gives it a 1928 theatre organist treatment, but with much finesse and no effort to make it sound dated. The Viennese medley includes "Two Hearts in Three Quarter Time" and a portion of Kreisler's "Liebesfreud." The medley is beautifully mounted with a soaring intro, and Ray does a masterful job playing the more difficult of the two, the Kreisler tune. "Two Hearts" is slightly faulted with melodic digressions and a brief "schmear."

Although it's only 1:14 minutes in length, Richard Rodgers "Maine" says a lot. It's played in a spirited manner and the conversation between Kinura and Trumpet is earthy. Stage show music is represented by "I Have Dreamed" and "Getting to Know You" from *The King and I*, the first as a romantic ballad, the second on a highly quinted flute combination, complete with the dance step breaks.

Film music is beautifully represented by 10:38 minutes of themes from *Gone With the Wind*. A pity that it's composer couldn't have lived to hear Ray's treatment of selections from this great score. Max Steiner, who died earlier this year, was dissatisfied

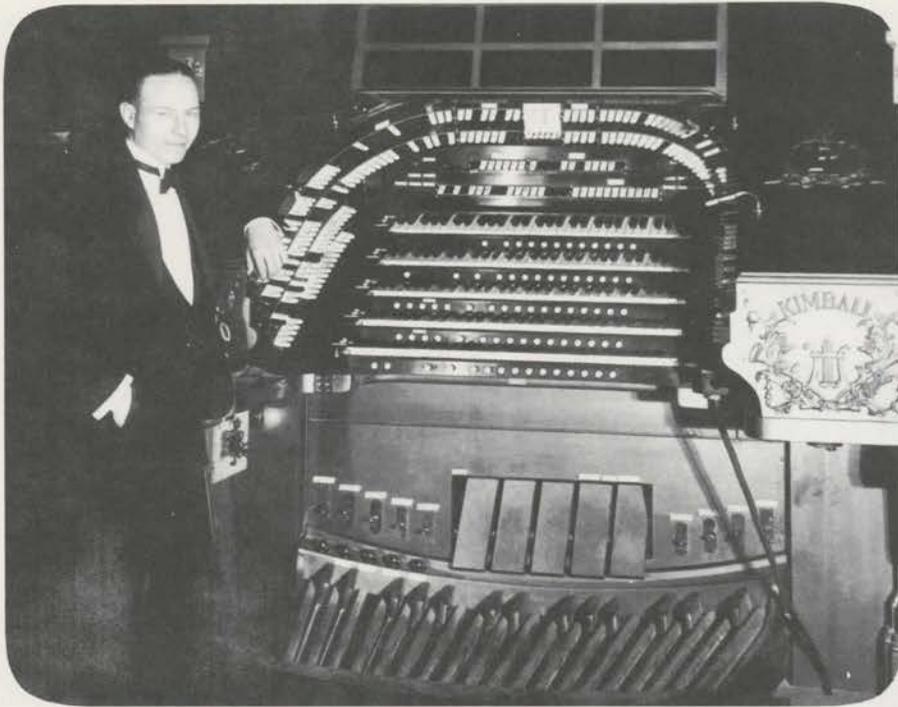
with every orchestral record of GWTW music except the one conducted by Muir Mathieson in England. He once told this reviewer of his hope of conducting a new version of the music, taking advantage of the improved recording techniques developed since the soundtrack was recorded in the late '30s. He never did but it isn't stretching things to suggest that Steiner would approve Ray's treatment of this selection of themes because the organist has captured the spirit of the music, even during modulations and improvisations between themes, although he avoids any hint of civil war music. Of course "Tara" is there as are several less familiar secondary themes. GWTW alone would make the disc worth owning. All the other goodies included add to the value.

Of Special Interest . . .

ORGAN FAVORITES FROM WAY BACK WHEN, C.A.J. Parmentier at the 4/21 Wurlitzer in the N.Y. Paramount Theatre Building. Monaural; available from C.A.J. Parmentier, 35-60 Seventy-Sixth Street, Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11372. \$5.50 postpaid.

Why Dr. Parmentier never recorded commercially has remained a long unanswered question. We recall hearing his broadcasts. His style was different; it had a lilt and light-hearted impudence which suited the pops of the day perfectly, a style which set him apart. There was no mistaking C.A.J. for any of the other CBS staffers.

So, finally, here it is; an LP release in which the masters were made in 1933, privately, during rehearsals, practice sessions, and after the daily radio stint. The original cuts were made on aluminum platters and not intended for commercial production, therefore some surface noise and distortion is apparent as these aluminum discs were no doubt replayed many times. It must be remembered that in playing back an aluminum recording it was necessary to use a carefully sharpened bamboo stylus, the grooves being exceedingly vulnerable. The listener should also bear in mind that we are listening to recordings made 39 years ago, and at best, the equipment used was very primitive by today's standards. The frequency range is understandably narrower than today's fidelity.



Roxy Theatre, New York City — C.A.J. Parmentier in March 1927.

Yet, these imperfections are largely lost in the sweep and freshness of the Parmentier style. He plays effortlessly through 18 pops and standards to provide a nostalgic sampling of the treats a 1933 radio listener might expect daily. There is sometimes abrupt cutting into and out of selections but we understand Dr. Parmentier's editing was governed by the quality of the cuts and whether or not parts had been damaged beyond repair. Obviously, part of a good arrangement is better than none of it.

So, forget "hi-fi" and "stereo" for a half hour and enjoy one of the finest theatre style studio organs played in its natural habitat by one of broadcastings finest organ practitioners (not forgetting C.A.J.'s theatre experience; he played at both the Music Hall and the Roxy, and was on the opening staffs of both houses).

The 4/21 Wurlitzer sounds gorgeous, despite the limited frequency range. Some of C.A.J.'s registration may sound familiar, but keep in mind there were other console giants setting and resetting the Wurlitzer combination buttons in those days.

Selections (a few truncated) are: "Laugh, You Son of a Gun," "Russian Lullabye," "Juba Dance," "Would You Like to Take a Walk?," "Le Secret," "Roses of Picardy," "Wedding of the Painted Doll," "I Wanna Be Loved," "Goin to Heaven on a Mule,"

"Flapperettee," "Polka (Dirgo)," "Nola," "La Rosita," "Gigue (Godard)," "Flight of the Bumble Bee," "Poor Butterfly," "Clavelitos," and "Waitin' at the Gate for Katy."

Each tune has much interest value due to the Parmentier treatment. The pops stylings range from ballads to rhythm, with an occasional touch of corn. The novelties, standards and light classics are played mostly straight, but with novel registration.

This is a collector's item guaranteed to conjure up nostalgia for the old timer and show the younger enthusiast what he missed. What a time that was — and C.A.J. can prove it!

The jacket notes are adequate, including an excellent photo of Dr. Parmentier at the 5 manual Kimball, Roxy Theatre, taken in 1927.

STAN KANN IN ST. LOUIS playing the Fox Theatre 4/36 Wurlitzer. MAS 2018 (stereo). Available at \$5.50 post-paid from Malar Productions, Box 3014, Glendale, Calif. 91201.

In order to fully appreciate the scope of Stan Kann's musicianship it is necessary to isolate the man from his music; the force of his personality, his ready wit, his story-telling talent, his mimickry and pantomime — these are

"turned on" all the time. Thus Stan's musical excellence may tend to be overshadowed, and that makes a recording a very effective method of separating the alter ego from the musician. No distractions.

The result is that the musician comes out much more distinctly than a live concert permits. On the record Stan is always master of the huge beast which he has played daily for many years.

The instrument is one of five designed, the first being the New York Paramount, others were for Fox luxury houses, four 36 rankers and one 37. It is not a "Crawford Special" as Malar's nutty jacket note writer misinforms us (the term is properly applied to the 4/20 Publix Wurlitzers for which JC prepared the stoplist). Only two of these 4/36's remain in their original theatres: the Detroit Fox has been recorded (as were the New York and San Francisco Fox installations before being removed) but this is a "first" for the St. Louis 4/36. And it's a good one.

If we have a complaint it's a technical one; the miking is on the intimate side and one rarely gets the feeling of spaciousness or the true size of the instrument as one does from the Tiny James and George Wright recordings of the San Francisco Fox 4/36 or the Ray Shelley, Reg Foort and Ed Gress recordings made on the Detroit Fox 4/36. Of course this is a minor beef which affects only the marches and novelties calling for a big organ sound; the ballads come through beautifully.



Stan Kann clowns for Malar's talent scout Helen Dell. — (Stufoto)

"It's Today" is a typical fast-paced console pusher-upper with an engaging melody line, interesting glock and post-horn punctuation and a fine Paramount-Publix closing fanfare. "Yesterday" is well phrased and provided with subtle registration. It also has some luscious "Gordon Kibbee" 9th chord harmony. The brass tops full combinations during "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang." The out-of-tune bar room piano is heard during "Deed I Do," which is taken in an easy swinging tempo on full combinations. "Sunrise, Sunset" is given a subtle ballad treatment with a touch of dialogue between color and solo reeds. Something is missing from Stan's version of Eric Coates' venerable "Knightsbridge March," perhaps too many shortcuts or omissions, or maybe the pickup didn't capture it in all its usually thrilling bigness. It seemed more effective when Stan played it in concert at the Los Angeles Wiltern recently.

But he's back solid with his brief but tasty version of "Mame." "If I Had You" is to us, one of the best efforts on the disc, a ballad with fine registration and phrasing. Get the wail of that solitary trumpet which appears late in the tune! "Galloping Comedians" is one of those repetitive novelties which is best heard as a fast run through; Stan doesn't waste much time on it, possibly because there's lush rhythm ballad coming up — "The Glory of Love." Lots of invention and variety in this treatment. "All the Things You are" is a perfect selection for Stan's way with ballads; softer combinations with some Glock icing and a luscious Tibia and Vox denouement. The closer is a full scale march, "Before the Parade Passes By." It features all the big brass and parade percussers, although the traps were nearly buried. No matter; the Kann "Karisma" brings it all home with good effect.

We must note a certain lack of variety in registration which may be linked to the miking complaint mentioned earlier. This may also account for the absence of differences in dynamic level between normally loud and softer combinations. The dynamic level is mostly constant.

The problems of miking a large organ in a huge theatre are many and complex and they have been overcome sufficiently to make this a thoroughly enjoyable recording. Stan sees to that despite technical headaches.



IRMA GLEN

— THE PLUG-IN CORNER —

MUSIC, ECOLOGY AND YOU. Irma Glen speaking and playing on an Allen Theatre model. Available by mail \$5.95 (add 5% sales tax in California) post-paid from Numinus Recordings, 1119 San Pasqual Valley Rd., Escondido, Calif. 92025.

This one is for the Irma Glen fans. Like the previous Glen disc reviewed in these columns it's a sermon with incidental music. The big plus for theatre organ fans is the beauty of the improvisation behind the voice. The Allen theatre organ's celested strings are especially effective in carrying the often exquisite passages. This time Miss Glen is on an ecology kick and her sermon is delivered in the vernacular of the day. It's nebulously religious and there's no bible pounding. Such titles as "Ecology's Song," "Soul Soaring," "Every Day is Earth Day" and "Song of the Sea" (all Glen originals) provide some key to the content.

LET ME TELL YOU 'BOUT MY SECOND BEST FRIEND. Byron Melcher playing a Thomas Organ. CR-E088 (stereo). Available at \$4.89 post-paid from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262.

This one was apparently released to prove pipe organist Melcher could also do interesting things with one of his employer's instruments. Although he never indicates a serious moment during these takes, he succeeds admirably. For example there's "Blue Skies" played as a Hebrew folk dance (on a very flutey transistor), "Sonny Boy" on weeping Tibias, a "mod" "Nearness of You" featuring the syn-

thesized accordion, "Under Paris Skies" overwhelmed throughout by that overbearing automatic rhythm, a lowdown "Frankie and Johnny" (dirty playing is a Melcher specialty), a Mancini-like "Mr. Lucky" (which actually had Buddy Cole at the Hammond) and a pleasant "Deep Purple" with Melcherized variations. Plus enough more to total 12 tunes which make the most of the instrument's facilities. Oh yes, Byron's "first best friend" is not pipes but his wife, Margie. □



BOOK REVIEW

by Lloyd E. Klos

"Organ Voicing and Tuning: A Guide to Amateurs" 39 pages Vestal Press, 3533 Stratford Drive, Vestal, N.Y. 13850 \$2.00 postpaid.

There have been many owners of pipe organs who have probably wished that there were a reputable book of advice on the subjects of organ voicing and tuning.

Now there is available the very text they have been seeking. A reprint of an 1881 booklet which was published by J. Church & Co. has been put on the market by Harvey Roehl's Vestal Press.

As explained in its preface, "this little work was written by a practical organ maker, especially as a guide to amateurs, and to supply information needed by organists."

There are seven chapters: organ construction in brief; tools for voicing and tuning; pipe materials, pressure and pitch; voicing of metal pipes; voicing of flute work; pedal stops; description of and tuning of reed stops.

There are several illustrations including one of a wind pressure gauge with instructions on how to make one.

The booklet is of handy size so it will easily fit into a pocket. Though published thirty years before the advent of the theatre organ, the basic instruction on voicing and tuning should be of assistance to those requiring it for maintenance of their unit orchestras.



DICK SMITH



DOUG BAILEY



ROSA RIO



"TINY" JAMES



JOHN STEELE



DON THOMPSON

Thirteen Organists to be Featured at Convention

Time is running out, but you can still register at the door for the 17th annual ATOS convention July 10-14 in Washington, D.C.

Phone in your room reservations (but hurry, space is limited) at the Twin Bridges Marriott Hotel, 202-628-4200; they will quote rates; or check the April issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

Registration at the door is \$19.00; air conditioned bus transportation to all events is \$11.00; the Wednesday, July 12, banquet is \$12.50 each, with John Seng at the Yamaha.

You'll see and hear five in-theatre installations from Frederick, Maryland to Richmond, Virginia, played by Lee Erwin, Rosa Rio, Eddie Weaver, Ray Bohr, Tiny James, Jimmy Boyce, Ray Brubacher, Dick Smith, and others.

There are seminars with Lloyd Klos on promoting the pipe organ and Marvin Lautzenheiser on his computer-operated Wurlitzer that does the work of eight organists all at one time.

Host for the five day event is the Potomac Chapter of ATOS, and the days will be packed with home tours, special events and yet ample time to see the sights of the Nation's Capital.

The focus will be on the Virginia Theatre 3/11 Barton, Mosque 3/17 Wurlitzer, Byrd 4/17 Wurlitzer, Loew's 3/13 Wurlitzer and Tivoli 2/8 Wurlitzer. Each instrument is in regular use in an area bursting with theatre organ activity, with probably the nation's greatest concentration of home instruments.

Festivities begin with a pre-con-

vention concert Sunday, July 9 at 5:30 p.m. at the Alexandria Arena featuring Ed Welsh, and end Friday, July 14 at 8 p.m. with Eddie Weaver at the Mosque in Richmond. (This will be followed by a two-day convention of the Theatre Historical Society, an event well worth attending if your interest extends beyond the organ itself, as it does for so many ATOS members.)

There is considerable interest among radio, TV and newspaper people about this event. Already planned is extensive radio coverage, filmed television features and newspaper articles. WXLN in Rockville, which has its own 2/11 Moller theatre organ, will serve as communications central for ATOS conventioners, as well as the location for a live on-air jam session with all comers welcome.

Two years in the planning by convention chairman Woody Wise and Marvin Lautzenheiser, this convention will show the nation that the Potomac Valley Chapter area is a front runner in the theatre organ revival.

Recent reports showing that the Washington area is now one of the safest cities in the nation comes at an important time for the promoters of the 17th annual convention. This Spring saw the Nation's Capital return once again as a mecca for tourism. The city is beautiful to behold at all seasons of the year.

The welcome mat is out. You couldn't pick a better place for a vacation. Or a convention. □

DOUG BAILEY

Friday, July 14: 11:30 A.M.
Loew's, Richmond

Doug Bailey will be playing for the convention the first pipe organ he ever heard: Loew's Richmond.

Now a television and motion picture producer, he still plays a daily show on his 2/11 Moller from his studio over a new nostalgia-formatted radio station, WXLN.

RAY BOHR

Monday, July 10: 8:00 P.M.
Alexandria Arena

Ray Bohr will feel right at home at Jimmy Boyce's 4/34 Wurlitzer, once in Radio City Music Hall's sister theatre, the now-gone Center. Ray has been at the Music Hall for twenty-five years.

JIMMY BOYCE

Monday, July 10: 4:15 P.M.
Alexandria Arena

Jimmy Boyce plays his 4/34 Wurlitzer nightly at the Alexandria Arena and the Grande Barton at the Virginia Theatre.

On Sundays he is the organist at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Springfield, Virginia. During the rest of the week he teaches students from seven to seventy.

RAY BRUBACHER

Thursday, July 13: 3:30 P.M.
Masonic Temple

Ray Brubacher has been a member



ED WELSH



RAY BRUBACHER



JEAN LAUTZENHEISER



EDDIE WEAVER



LEE ERWIN



RAY BOHR

of ATOS since 1956 and is an associate editor for THEATRE ORGAN. Ray can be heard on radio each Sunday morning on station WXLN A.M. 950 when he broadcasts a half hour program of theatre pipe organ music. His new record for Concert Recording was made at the Tivoli Theatre, site of one of the programs for this summer's convention. He is organist for the Church of SS. Paul and Augustine in Washington, D.C.

LEE ERWIN

*Friday, July 14: 3:00 P.M.
Mosque, Richmond*

Lee Erwin is one of the few theatre organists today who is making a career out of the King of Instruments. He is in constant demand as a concert organist, recording artist and spokesman for the renaissance of the pipe organ.

"TINY" JAMES

*Friday, July 14: 9:30 A.M.
Byrd Theatre, Richmond*

"Tiny" James, a native of Alameda, Calif., has been an ardent organ enthusiast as long as he can remember. His orchestral and band experience in schools proved to be invaluable in registration and arranging.

"Tiny", a charter member of ATOS, participated in the first organizational meeting in Los Angeles in 1955 and has served three times as National President. A true theatre organist.

LLOYD E. KLOS

Seminar - "Promoting Our Cause"

When he was appointed Associate Editor of THEATRE ORGAN magazine in Detroit in 1967, Lloyd Klos was told that he wouldn't have to do any more writing for the magazine than he was doing then . . . Since then, his "Nuggets From the Golden

Days" has become a regular feature. He has compiled occasional book reviews and from five to eleven feature stories a year for THEATRE ORGAN, plus innumerable items for Stu Green's "Vox Pops" column.

JEAN LAUTZENHEISER

*Monday, July 10: 2:45 P.M.
Virginia Theatre*

Jean Lautzenheiser played Saturday afternoon skating sessions for ten years. She frequently stages full length variety shows at the Virginia Theatre, and has a career as teacher of electronics and pipes. (She has a 3/13 Wurlitzer in her home studio.)

Jean Lautzenheiser is the chairman of the convention host chapter, Potomac Valley.

ROSA RIO

*Thursday, July 13: 8:00 P.M.
Virginia Theatre*

The legendary Rosa Rio is one of the well known organists of the radio era.

Today she is active in concerts, recordings, arranging, composing and teaching at her two studios in Connecticut.

One of her many celebrated concerts was a command performance before the United Nations General Assembly.

DICK SMITH

*Monday, July 10: 1:00 P.M.
Virginia Theatre*

Dick Smith studied at Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore. He was also house organist at the Stanton Theatre 3/31 Kimball.

He has toured the nation for an electronic organ company, and played various successful night club engagements. He is currently at the Mill Race Tavern in Baltimore, playing his own custom-made electronic.

JOHN STEELE

*Tuesday, July 11: 5:30, 6:45, 8:00 P.M.
Dick Kline Studio*

The Wurlitzer John Steele will be playing for this year's convention happens to be the first one he ever heard. It was at the now-gone Loew's Capital in Washington, D.C.

He has a 3/8 Wurlitzer at his Miami, Florida home.

DON THOMPSON

*Thursday, July 13: 1:00 P.M.
Virginia Theatre*

Don Thompson was born in northern England and began teaching himself to play the organ in his neighborhood church at 17. While at Cambridge University he played his first theatre organ.

He came to the U.S. in 1968 and is now resident organist at the Capn's Galley, near San Francisco.

EDDIE WEAVER

*Friday, July 14: 8:00 P.M.
Mosque, Richmond*

Eddie Weaver stands as one of the truly unique personalities in the theatre organ scene as he is one of a small group of organists still playing on a daily basis in a theatre. The Byrd Theatre in Richmond, Virginia, is the scene for a program at this convention. Eddie is also organist at Miller & Rhoads Tea Room, a position he has held for thirty years.

ED WELSH

*Sunday, July 9: 5:30 P.M.
Alexandria Arena*

Pre-convention concert duties go to Ed Welsh. Although he studied classical organ at East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C. theatre organ is his first love.

While still in college he acquired his first pipe organ (a 3/11 Wurlitzer) and now owns a big 4/28, located in his Alexandria, Va., home.

NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN
DAYS



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

This time, Jason and I have found some nuggets in the Middle Atlantic States area. References were American Organist (AO), Diapason (D), Jacobs (J), Melody (M) and Metronome (Met.) magazines.

March 1925 (Met.) C. SHARPE MINOR has a 2-week engagement at New York's Rialto Theatre, featuring "The Organ" and "Little Old New York".

June 1925 (M) VERMOND KNAUSS, organist in the Pergola Theatre in Allentown, Pa., has founded the V. Knauss Studio of Theatre Organ Playing.

Oct. 1925 (Met.) A new catalogue "The Theatre Organist", containing a classified list of suitable compositions for the organ, has been published by J. Fischer & Bro. of New York. FRANK STEWART ADAMS, Rialto and Rivoli theatre organist, has been in charge of this compilation.

Nov. 1925 (Met.) Many of the better class organists, such as J. ARTHUR GEIS of New York's Rialto; WALTER KLOTZ of Atlantic City; WALTER SIMON, Philadelphia; EDWARD BENEDICT, Chicago, and KARL BONAWITZ of the Stanley Theatre in Philadelphia, are very enthusiastic about the art melody slides and organ novelties out out by the Standard Slide Co. of New York.

Nov. 1925 (Met.) J. ARTHUR (High C) GEIS, featured at New York's Rialto Theatre, and tallest organist in the country, played his own composition recently, entitled "Lamentations of the Long and Lean", taken from his life. OLIVER STRUNK and C. HERBERT MAC AHAN alternated

at the organ during regular performances. (Later 4' 11" ANN LEAF shared the organ bench with Geis, which must have resembled a Mut & Jeff act).

Nov. 1925 (Met.) FIRMAN SWINNEN, Rivoli Theatre organist in New York, has prepared a series of original compositions for the proper musical presentation of motion picture entertainment. In five books, it includes dramatic andantes, agitados, themes, misteriosos and hurries. Each theme is on a separate sheet to facilitate marking.

Jan. 1926 (Met.) At the Stanton Theatre in Philadelphia, the feature film "Don Q", starring Douglas Fairbanks, was shown. Organ selections were played by Messrs. CRISP and TEMPLETON.

July 1926 (Met.) The Warner Bros. Theatre at Broadway and 50th, is the New York Times Square theatres to add organ novelty slides to its programs; 20 to 30 slides being used for each presentation. The Rivoli and Rialto theatres have used slides for over a year, with HENRY B. MURTAGH using them at the Rivoli. He introduced them in Los Angeles in 1921.

Aug. 1926 (M) DICK LEIBERT has been in New York, doing clever work as guest organist. His orchestra had an engagement during the summer in the south, but Dick stayed in the north.

Nov. 1926 (J) A large Austin organ at the Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia is nearly completed. Daily recitals by prominent organists are given from 12 to 1 PM.

Nov. 1926 (J) FRED NEWMANN, organist at Philadelphia's Colony Theatre, always pleases the audience with his novelties. His playing of the feature picture is also a delight.

Dec. 1926 (AO) New organs in Brooklyn theatres include a 2-manual Wurlitzer in the Cumberland, and a 3-manual instrument in the Fox Savoy.

Jan. 1927 (D) BUDD SHEDAKER, Jr. opened the Marr & Colton in the Palace Theatre in Berlin, N.J. on Thanksgiving Day.

Feb. 1927 (J) MILTON DAVIS opened the new Tivoli Theatre in Frederick, Maryland, playing the Wurlitzer.

Oct. 1927 (J) The New York Hippodrome recently installed a 4-manual Wurlitzer. FREDERICK KINSLEY, the organist, is a real artist as his many Edison records and clever accompani-

mental work testify. JOHN C. PFEIFFER, recording secretary of the N.Y. Society of Theatre Organists, is associate organists.

April 1928 (J) RAUL TOLEDO GALVAO (also known as Paul Brass) is playing the 2-manual Kilgen in Brooklyn's Momart Theatre. (When fellow organist, EDDIE BAKER, visited Brazil in the thirties, he endeavored to locate Galvao in his home city, Rio de Janeiro, but was unsuccessful. Can anyone shed light on this fellow?)

March 1930 (D) The Hope-Jones organ in the Ocean Grove, N.J. Auditorium, installed in 1908, is to be reconstructed. The original pressures of 50, 25 and 10 inches will be retained by installation of rotary fan blowers of latest design.

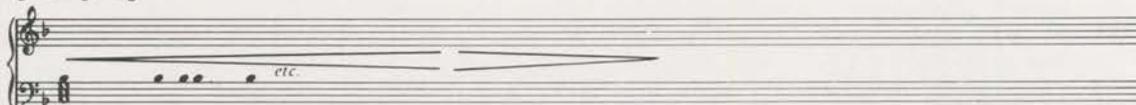
GOLD DUST: 1/25 WILLIAM H. MEEDER at the Griffith-Beach organ in the Elizabeth, N.J. Regent; WILLIAM KLAISS & ROLLO MAITLAND, Philadelphia's Stanley; WARREN YATES, Newark's Branford . . . 3/25 JOHN PRIEST at the 4-manual Skinner in N.Y.'s Moss Colony . . . 4/25 HARRY COREY, Mt. Prospect Theatre, Newark; EDWARD NAPIER, N.Y.'s new Atlantic and PERCY J. STARNES, N.Y.'s Mark Strand . . . 6/25 HARRY A. CRISP & WILLIAM HANSON, Philadelphia's Stanton; HERBERT FOSTER SPRAGUE, N.Y.'s Central . . . 7/25 CARL BONAWITZ, Atlantic City Boardwalk's Stanley; JOHN HAMMOND & HERBERT HENDERSON, N.Y.'s Piccadilly . . . 9/25 FREDERICK B. SMITH at N.Y. Strand's Austin . . . 1/26 RUTH BARRETT, N.Y.'s Colony . . . 2/26 KENNETH A. HALLETT & LOUIS JACOBSON, Fox, WILLIAM E.B. MURPHY, Belmont and LEONARD MAC CLAIN, Leader, all in Philadelphia . . . 3/26 RICHARD M. STOCKTON at the 3-manual Moller in Lancaster, Pa. Grand Theatre; HARRY R. CASSELBERRY, Fox, Philadelphia . . . 4/26 ARNOLD C. SCHAMMEL, Lynbrook (L.I.) Theatre's Kimball . . . 6/26 J. MILLER SMITH, Newark's Mosque; LLOYD G. DEL CASTILLO, N.Y.'s Rialto . . . 7/26 R. WILSON ROSS opened Philadelphia Rivoli's Marr & Colton; ROLLO F. MAITLAND, Arcadia and D. HARRY MC POYLE, Aldine in Wilmington, Del . . .

That should do it until next time. So long sourdoughs!

LLOYD & JASON

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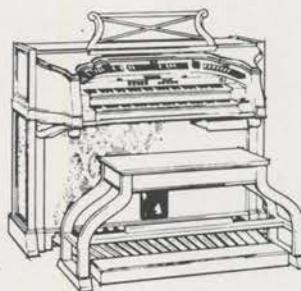
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Readers are encouraged to submit interesting sidelights on the organ hobby (exclusive of chapter news items) material they believe will be of general interest about local organ activities and installations and the people who work at the hobby. We know "there's VOX POPS in them there chapters" and it only requires a 6¢ postcard to get it to VOX POPS Editor, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. If the contributor can afford an 8¢ stamp, why not include a black and white photo which need not be returned.

Conducted by Stu Green

Johnny Duffy took the medic's analysis sitting down. It seemed more like a death sentence to the TV and recording organist: the reason he could not coordinate his left hand and foot was because x-ray's revealed a tumor on his brain — and tests revealed the tumor was malignant. Unless immediate surgery was undertaken Johnny would soon become a senseless vegetable, then die. But even surgery could assure him only a 50-50 chance of



JOHNNY DUFFY

survival. Johnny was understandably scared, but he decided on surgery in the hope of turning up the plus side of the 50-50 coin. His hopes weren't bolstered when he was visited by the surgeon: "He was just a kid — not even 30 yet. And this kid was going to poke around inside my skull!"

But the "kid" knew his stuff; he removed the tumor and left Johnny breathing. For a few days Johnny's left side was numb and unresponsive, but that has since cleared up and he's feeling great. He's not out of the woods yet; tests are being made to track down any remaining evidence of malignancy but meanwhile Johnny is happy about his victory over the man in black. "It's great just to be alive! There's nothing much worse than a brain tumor and I've survived it's removal. The rest has just got to be easier."

Music Trades Magazine in its February issue carried an article by John McLaren, vice president of Yamaha Keyboard Div. in which he stated that 1972 should be a good year for the organ industry. "Basically, the organ market is still selling nostalgia to the over-40's and up who have fond memories of the theatre organ, skating rink organ and the like. The organ industry has not done nearly enough, it seems, to cultivate a broad-based taste for organ music among younger generations. This needs to be done soon. The theatre organ buffs won't last forever."

Wonder if he realizes how many young people are ATOS members or how many young artists are already on the theatre organ concert circuit? Perhaps ATOS must do a better job of selling itself — its concerts, activities and conventions, to the general public. At least it's encouraging to learn that Yamaha has discovered the theatre pipe organ. For years we've been predicting wonders when they did so.

A recent addition to the ATOS membership is Vic Hyde, a professional entertainer, billed as the "International Music Phenomenon." In his early years he was a church organist, then worked up a novelty vaudeville act in which he played 2, 3, or 4 trumpets simultaneously. His 43-year career included a tour with Olsen & Johnson, appearing in 67 cities during which "I fell in

love with the theatre organ." His act played the New York Paramount where he "got to know and enjoy Don Baker;" the Detroit Fox; the State-Lake, Chicago and Oriental theatres in Chicago; the Orpheum in Los Angeles; the Palaces in New York and Cleveland; and the Temple in Rochester. He remembers Jesse Crawford when the poet took over a dance band intact, added two white Hammonds for Mrs. Crawford and himself, and went on tour.

Vic says: "I should have joined ATOS 13 years ago; and as a new member, hope to be of some good to ATOS. I love to be put to work to make a club hum with enjoyment." He didn't identify the lucky chapter.

Accidents will happen to organists in proportion to those in other professions, it seems. California's Helen Dell had a painful accident to one of her fingers awhile back. And Gaylord Carter cut his thumb while using it as a beer can opener. Latest casualty is organist Doc Bebko. While in New York he was running across a street, jumped over a puddle, slipped and broke a foot bone. Doc ended up with a cast to his knee plus a Reece boot. His wife, Stella has been waiting on him a lot, "Which is wonderful," he says.

The name of Ann Leaf is a famous one in the theatre organ world. But how many know that she has a talented sister whose activities ran along the same lines years ago? On March 27-29, Esther Leaf Du Boff of Omaha, Nebraska played the accompaniment to Cecil B. DeMille's 1927 classic *King of Kings* at Omaha's Military Theatre. "It's been 40 years since I accompanied a silent film", she said, "But the audience is seeing the picture as it was then and hearing the original themes plus some of my own musical scoring, exactly as I played it years ago." Part of the proceeds went into a fund to maintain the 2/4 Wurlitzer, which is the task of the 30-member Cornhusker Theatre Organ Society.

Harry Jenkins had to make a choice. The veteran circus accompanist could remain at the Circus Museum in Sarasota, Florida, where he'd been playing two and three shows a day



COLONEL HARRY — The circus museum was confining. — (Lamb fotocomposite)

all winter, or go back "on the road" come spring with a choice of travelling circuses. The former AAF colonel weighed the factors carefully then decided he had been tied down to one spot long enough. The lure of the travelling show beckoned so "Colonel Harry" rejoined the DeWayne Brothers circus, touring the Northwest USA and southern Canada at the moment (see the June 1971 issue of THEATRE ORGAN, "The Circus is Coming!"). While playing for Museum performances he was visited by retired Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey bandmaster Merle Evans who was so impressed by the Hammond accompaniment of the circus acts that he sought Harry out to express his approval. The veteran theatre organist informs us that there are more circus organ jobs open than there are qualified musicians to fill them. As Harry once described the job, "It's like cueing silent movies but the film changes a little with each performance."



In Gaylordsville, Conn. youthful Peter Piliero, with an eye for historical perspective, did some digging in the files of the Danbury News-Times. He was rewarded with the discovery of a full page write up on the opening on Sept. 6, 1928 of the Danbury Palace with prominence given to the 3/10 Marr & Colton organ, The organist,

Norman Stuckey, invited the public to send in requests for opening night. Peter adds that the pipes, chests and relays are now the basic organ in the Opera House, Thomaston, Conn., but with a Kimball console, as chronicled in the Dec. '71 THEATRE ORGAN.



Dean McNichols — With a VW and the freeway, who needs an Orgoblo? — (Photo by Bruce)

When So. Calif. organist Dean McNichols had to take some pipes to Lee Haggart's pipe shop for doctoring he found his "sun roof" Volkswagen a useful vehicle for the 40 mile journey. He encountered only one difficulty; the "singing" of the pipes at freeway speeds became irksome, especially the growl of the 8' Bass C Diapason. So Dean stopped and covered the toe

holes with masking tape to shut them up.



Reports from Scotty's Castle in Death Valley, Calif. indicate that the Rex Koury concert sponsored by the U.S. Park Service on April 29 drew a record 100 to the isolated spot, with a good representation from ATOS chapters, especially the Sierra group. The 3/15 Welte (with Wurlitzer piano) was put in good shape by Fred Beeks. The district ranger, Wayne Schulz, impressed by the interest focussed on the organ, has expressed interest in a series of concerts to follow the Koury Opus. Rex's audience demanded "Rhapsody in Blue" and the patriotic medley which were such hits for him during the Great Western Regional Convention in Los Angeles a couple of months earlier. For the "Rhapsody" Rex was glad to have the piano working well.

Fred Beeks, who boasts a fine home installation in Reno, has been contracted by the Park Service to rebuild, restore, tune and maintain the instrument. It's one of the best-remembered impressions of Scotty's Castle and hasn't enjoyed regular maintenance since Lloyd Davey retired a few years ago.



When Helen Dell arrived at the LA Wiltern theatre for her winter concert she made for the dressing room she had used during previous concerts. But this time the room was filled from top to bottom with that stuff few theatres can exist without — cartons of popcorn. Stage manager Larry Jackson saved the day by inviting Helen to make her costume changes in his office, while he valiantly stood guard outside.



The 3/16 Wurlitzer installed by LA Chapter in the San Gabriel, Calif. Mission auditorium is attracting much local attention, so much that the city fathers have seen fit to schedule four summer concerts to be played by Lyn Larsen and with definite themes: "In the Good Old Summer Time" on June 24, "Hooray for Hollywood" on July 15, "Summer of '72" on August 19 and "The Roaring '20's" on Sept. 16. All fall on Saturday evenings at 8:30 PM. The series was launched with a press conference presided over by



Her Honor, Mayor Kennedy and Lyn: a busy summer. — (Stufoto)

San Gabriel's gal mayor and with promotion masterminded by Al White who is remembered for his standout promotion of the first George Wright sellout concert at the San Francisco Fox a few years ago. Lyn plans to include guest stars (vocalists and musicians), sing-alongs, and film clips from movie classics. Season tickets will sell for \$9.00 and \$12.00. For further info drop a card to Entertainment Concepts, Box 69630, Los Angeles, Calif. 90069.

"Guess I won't be able to 'retire' this summer" replied Larsen, who usually stores up steam for his always heavy fall concert schedule during the "dog days."

Another southern Californian with plenty to do this summer is pretty Donna Parker, the 16-year-old whose photo has appeared in this column often enough to rate a growl from the "Old Prospector" to the effect that we're turning into a girlie mag (old whiskers prefers burros!) Chances are that Donna will be photographed even more often now that she's been appointed official organist for all Los Angeles Dodger's home games. She has already gotten good coverage in the daily sports pages, including a photo taken at the Conn model 650 she'll be playing at the stadium. She's already been warned about bugging the umpires with "Three Blind Mice."

Arnold Bremler, who started his playing career by spelling the Foto-player he was paid to operate in a Bay Area nickelodeon, has long been a contributor to this column. Now re-

tired from running his Porterville, Calif. men's shop, he keeps abreast of organ doings locally, and in a town occupied by organbuilder Dick Villemin, they can be many. His latest squib is that Villemin has the Wurlitzer from the Oakland, Calif. Grand Lake theatre in his shop and is putting it in shape for a radiologist named Dr. Bell. With that cliffhanger, Arnold signed off to let the plot thicken.



Tom Hazleton — (Ehatpic)

A bow to CATOE's Bill Benedict for the very professional promotion announcing the Chicago club's public concerts. Well conceived flyers and press releases informed the public of Tony Tahlman's accompaniment of Chaplin's City Lights and Modern Times during March, Gaylord Carter's May 4th bout with the Coronado Barton Organ and Tom Hazleton's May 8 session at John Seng's 4/23 pride and joy installed in the seminary at Mundelein, Illinois. Chapter concert promoters can learn much from Bill Benedict's efforts. Perhaps a large self addressed stamped (8¢) envelope sent to Bill at Box 2103, Oak Park, Illinois 60302 might fetch a spare copy.

Mildred Alexander was selected to play the major concert heard during the second annual conference of California Council of Professional Organists Clubs held in Long Beach, Calif. May 21-24 at the Edgewater Hotel. Participation was limited to AFM members, according to advance publicity.

Geoff. Patterson reports that last Christmas season proved to be a bit much for Ashley Miller. In addition to his weekday duties at CBS churning out soulful fillers for Search for Tomorrow, he also played ten evenings in two weeks, including Christmas, and New Years nights, at Madison Square Garden for a series of college basketball games, sometimes two and three games a night. As if that weren't enough, his position as musical director of the Society for Ethical Culture called for full concerts each week during the holidays, all of which had to be carefully rehearsed.

Ashley spent a week in January recovering in the relaxing sun and sand of the Caribbean. On his return, Ashley plunged right back into the fray, and has reported a few Saturdays when he has been at the Garden console from one in the afternoon until eleven at night, only having to arise the next morning for a classical concert and service at Ethical Culture. The only rests he gets these days are the ones between the verses.

Peggy Wood, remembered for many famous roles from the first *Bittersweet* in London to such as the Mother Superior in the film version of *The Sound of Music*, also was the celebrated Marta Hansen, the family mama of the decade-long television series, *I Remember Mama*. She decided to celebrate her 80th birthday recently with a beautiful party at Manhattan's Cosmopolitan Club. She invited all the cast and production talent from the former show for a grand reunion. The theatre organ world was represented by Billy Nalle for Billy had played all the original music for the celebrated show from its beginning. It was an evening for memories and one to remember in its own right!

Jim Lahay, secretary of the Toronto Theatre Organ Club, says that the 4/15 Wurlitzer installation work is progressing in the third floor chamber at the Casa Loma. The city removed the plaster in the chamber openings, and shutters are being installed. A crew of nine has been working in an area with no ventilation, which forebodes a rough situation when the summer heat arrives. The boys are determined, however, and hope to finish the job by the end of the year. If not

then, certainly in the spring of 1973. The instrument came from Shea's Toronto theatre originally.



Eddie Weaver — The usual standing ovation.

A total of 1350 enjoyed Eddie Weaver's third concert at Rochester's Auditorium Theatre on April 21. A great favorite in Kodakville, Eddie had a program which encompassed the entire theatre organ spectrum. He played music from the classics (e.g. Poet & Peasant Overture) to the most recent pops (e.g. Archie Bunker theme). He also accompanied a sing-along, and a short silent, *Three Chimps Go To School*. The usual standing ovation was his reward.

The RTOS' new ushering setup under Ernest Weirich was inaugurated which provides a more professional approach to this phase of the operation. A more accurate head count is another benefit of the new procedure. Family RTOS membership now totals 790,

April 30 was a great day for organist Eddie Hanson; at 72 he had two recent records to his credit and a third in process. The theatre organ renaissance had discovered him and soon his fellow townsmen realized they had a celebrity in their midst. Local recognition came first from the ranks of Waupaca, Wisconsin's senior citizens, many of whom remembered Eddy's long career at Chicago consoles, dating from the early '20s. So, the 1972 Waupaca's "Senior Citizens' Day" honored Eddy by presenting him in concert at the Senior Citizens' Center.

The declaration stated "Waupaca citizens have a right to be proud of this Senior Citizen, and we feel privileged to present him in his 'Honors Concert'." Among the sponsors were the Mayor, City Council, Chamber of Commerce, Lions, Odd Fellows, Youth Center and a dozen other booster clubs. The resulting warmth was bound to hasten Eddy's recovery from recent surgery.

Porter Heaps, another name remembered from Chicago radio days, played his demo concert on the Saville organ moved into the Porterville (Calif.) Memorial Hall, then went to visit the pipe installation he'd heard so much about, the home of the Paul Moore's, located in the middle of an orange grove near town. Mrs. Moore (Marguerite) is the organ buff, he learned, and when he was ushered into the living room there were many organ buffs already waiting among the three consoles. It was a reception for Porter. He learned that Marguerite had installed the pipe organ in three years herself, after re-leathering it. The setup includes a 2-manual and 3-manual console, plus a plug-in organ for a "spare." "What a ball of energy" exclaimed Heaps, "She's in the retirement age bracket — but she doesn't know it."

Organist Bud Taylor came east to do his summer stint at the Surf City (New Jersey) Hotel Wurlitzer with a sense of well being based on the knowledge that back in California it had required three men to fill his boots as editor/writer/publisher of the *Los Angeles Pro Organist's Club* publication, OFF THE KEYBOARDS.



While playing the Surf City Wurlitzer, Bud couldn't help wonder how the triumvirate was making out — especially because one of them was none other than that illiterate ex-Bostonian whose "Elevator Shaft" column spindles these pages — Dinny Timmins!

From Portland, Oregon, Bill Peterson and Dennis Hedberg decided to try again, after the theatre they had counted on a home for the ex-Oriental theatre 3/13 Wurlitzer failed. Perhaps a restaurant next time.



Jim Melander at the 2/7. — (Stufoto)

When Jim Melander plays one of his infrequent concerts, those who savor gorgeous arrangements are drawn to the performance like ants to honey. So it was on April 11 at the Friends Church in Bell, Calif. Melander prefers to play concerts on small instruments and the very theatrical 2/7 Wurlitzer was ideal for the subtle, understated arrangements of pops and standards whose lushness is often achieved through great economy of registration. Jim, apparently unaware of his prowess as a concert draw, is content to teach organ. Luckily, many of Jim's students come very close to his very individual style.

Perhaps a few of the 2300 (a 4-year record) who attended the Keith Chapman concert at the Rochester Auditorium theatre remembered the long ago concert by the local Philharmonic during which feathers were released from the proscenium to simulate snow during the booming Tchaikowsky

"1812 Overture" finale. Chapman, who has played the Wanamaker store organ in Philly for six years, enlisted RTOS technicians to repeat the illusion, and then some. During the climactic moments of the old warhorse shotguns were fired into empty oil drums to simulate cannon, the shootin' irons being manned by two organists and a photographer. But the device rigged to release the feathery "snow" failed to trigger. Later, organ maintenance chief Doug Crocker came up with a leaky alibi: "Chapman's rendition of 'The Hot Canary' played before '1812' must have melted the snow!" How's that again?



From Sunnyvale, Calif. Jan Feller calls our attention to the Spring Conference of the American Federation of Information Processing Societies, representing some 20,000 computer professionals, held on May 16-18 in the Atlantic City Convention Hall, home of the world's largest pipe organ. A feature of the meet was a concert scheduled on the truly mighty Midmer-Losh played by 22-year-old Barbara Williams. After three days of perforated tape, spinning reels and digital philosophy galore, Barbara's direct digital audible excursions were no doubt welcome.



Randy smelled an organ in the wings, either pipes or transistors. — (Stufoto)

When Randy Sauls played his April 18 concert in Van Nuys (Calif.) High School auditorium he played it on a Rodgers model 340, the Hillsboro

firms finest transistor theatre model (actually the one stolen just prior to the 1971 Home Organ Festival, and later recovered intact, a loan from Rodgers dealer Phil Wickstrom). Yet Randy's mind was also on pipes; either a refurbishing of the ancient Murray-Harris straight organ in the hall, or its replacement with a donated theatre pipe organ a la the ATOS San Gabriel Mission Wurlitzer installation. Night School Principal Glenn Gardiner made a brief allusion to the idea while introducing Randy (who teaches classes there) and Randy barely mentioned the plan. Yet, when the well satisfied audience filed out into the night, quite a few dollars in donations were left behind to help make the hope become a reality.



Frank Lyboldt, who once played theatres in Long Island, Virginia and upstate New York, reports he recently had a great time at John Beck's 2/7 Wurlitzer in Dallas. Frank says that the organ has been juiced up with the addition of a Posthorn and an improved Tibia. Living now in Norfolk, Va., Frank is considering preparation of a biography for THEATRE ORGAN. He is also looking forward to attending the ATOS convention in July, and hearing Dick Kline's 4/28 Wurlitzer. "Dick and I have been friends for years," he says.



Clealan Blakely tells us that the console of the 5/111 Casavant in Toronto's Royal York Hotel Concert Hall has been disconnected and placed in storage. The hotel is involved in a \$2 million renovation program and the organ is in the way, so it is scheduled for removal. It was tentatively set to move it to Provost, Utah, but the deal fell through. Casavant, anyone?



The past few months have been noteworthy in the life of 21-year-old organist Dennis James. He has gone on tour with the Singing Hoosiers, a song-and-dance group from Indiana University. He has appeared in several concerts in the east. His new record was released by the Rochester Theatre Organ Society and is selling well. The day after his spectacular success at firing a shotgun during Keith Chapman's rendition of the "1812 Over-



Dennis James shows master classes how not to pose fingers for a digital romp among the ivories. — (Rochester Times-Union Photo)

ture" in Rochester, Dennis presided over a 4-hour master class of theatre organ instruction in the Auditorium Theatre. About 100 attended the session in which the styles of several organists were illustrated and analyzed. The class was a part of the RTOS educational program for those who want to learn as well as listen.



Bert Buhman and his colleagues at the School of the Ozarks in Pt. Lookout, Mo. were most happy with the lead feature in a recent THEATRE ORGAN concerning installation of their Wurlitzer. Other things have been happening for Bert and the box of whistles. In February, he recorded a series of sounds which will be used for background in Silver Dollar City's new attraction "Fire in the Hole", an enclosed ride and atmospheric attraction to open this summer. Then, for five successive Sundays in July, starting at 2:30 PM, Bert and the organ will be featured in "Music for a Sunday Afternoon." Contributing their musical talents will be singers Jean Parnell, Jean Fry and John Mizell; pianists Mary Bradley and Luis Rojas, and the Beacon Hill Theatre Chorus. A couple of silent films will be added during the series. Sounds like a good attraction for those enroute to and from the ATOS convention who must pass the area in July.

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Dennis James Scores Again

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA JOINS PIPE ORGAN FOR SILENT MOVIE

So much of the past has been lost . . . It was indeed a miracle that one of the film accompaniment techniques of the silent era was recently rescued and given a new chance to live. Dennis James, one of the most talented of the young organists, saw an excerpt from the now lost original orchestral score of the 1919 D.W. Griffith film *Broken Blossoms* in Ben Hall's *The Best Remaining Seats*. Seeing that music impressed Dennis in such a way that he was motivated to contact Mary Bowles, National ATOS Secretary-Treasurer who found a copy of the original piano score in the Ben Hall collection. Paul Killiam of New York City offered to lend a new 16 mm print, color toned to capture the essence of the original release. With these tools the monumental task of translating the piano part into full orchestral score for symphony and organ began, and the marvelous result is now a matter of history. On Saturday March 25th, nearly 2,000 persons gathered in the auditorium of the Indiana University to hear Dennis James and the 55 piece Bloomington Symphony Orchestra accompanying *Broken Blossoms* with live orchestra, for the first time since the sound era began.

The film and the music seemed to captivate the audience, but few were really aware just how great an accomplishment they were experiencing.

Many problems arose for Dennis and symphony conductor Geoffrey Simon as they expanded the piano score into a fully orchestrated symphony and organ work. Hundreds of man hours of labor were involved in the orchestration, transcription and copying of parts for the thirteen major themes in the 187 page open score. A further effort was necessary when the two realized that some of the original music would not be received properly by a contemporary audience, meaning that new music, still in keeping with the rest of the work, had to be written.

To those of us who had not experienced the silent films in the twenties, the opportunity of hearing organ

and orchestral accompaniment seems even more intriguing. Throughout the score there is a musical dialogue between organ and orchestra, the orchestra providing the basic thematic background while the organ acts primarily as the transitional element between themes. As a solo instrument alternating with the orchestra, the organ would often start in one key and end in another since the organist was often required to fill the space between themes, compensating for orchestral passages that ran "over" or "under" the timing required, as dictated by the action on the screen.

In order for the members of the orchestra, who could not see the screen, to be aware of what was happening in the film, each theme was given a number, and a person seated in the middle of the orchestra pit held up numbered cards indicating the theme number and therefore the mood of the next scene. Prior to the performance, Dennis was unaware that movie theatre orchestras during the period of silent films were informed of the "theme to follow" with numbered lights in much the same manner as the numbered cards used at Bloomington. Dennis was prepared to take over should the orchestra get into trouble. With a preplanned wide sweep

of the conductor's left hand — a signal to the orchestra to stop at once, the organ would take over with no apparent loss of musical accompaniment. At this performance, the need never arose, certainly a credit to both the conductor and the organist for their advanced preparation. It is difficult for the layman to comprehend that the entire film and score was coordinated to the fraction of a second.

So that more people will have a chance to hear organ and orchestral accompaniment for *Broken Blossoms*, Dennis has donated the complete score to the national ATOS library. Any chapter with a community orchestra can make the presentation with only a few rehearsals. A tape of the Bloomington program is available and Dennis suggests that interested chapters secure the tape and a print for a screening to see just how the orchestra and organ compliment the film.

The response to *Broken Blossoms* was so great that Dennis plans to repeat his efforts and score other twenties films for orchestra and organ and they too will be made available for performance, so that audiences of the present can experience and appreciate the same variety of entertainment that charmed movie goers during the Golden Age of the Movie Palace. □

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SERGEANT HAROLD WOLFE

Where's Wolfe and Ward?

ATOS MEMBER RECALLS HAPPY MEMORIES
OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

by Carroll F. Harris

The coming convention in Washington, D.C. brings back memories of days long gone by. With those memories comes the wondering of what happened to some of the people I knew when I was Yeoman, U.S. Naval Reserve assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.

Many an enjoyable hour was spent watching the stage shows at the Earle Theatre and listening to the organ. I think the organist was Johnny Slab — maybe I don't have that name correct and if it isn't there are many who will be able to correct me. Many hours were spent at the Capitol Theatre listening to Sam Jack Kauffman and his orchestra with Art Brown and later Milt Slosser at the organ. I was there when Gene Ford was manager and they introduced his lovely tune "Rain." There were more hours of fun doing other things in Washington and they are vivid in my memory, but the picture printed above is the reason for this story.

I was on my way home from a matinee at the Capitol when I passed by a restaurant/cocktail lounge and heard some interesting sounds emitted by an early model Hammond organ in the hands of one Larry Hendricks. The organ had two Hammond Solovox units incorporated into it like a third

manual. They could be played straight or through the Leslie speakers. Present were two U.S. Army Air Force Sergeants: Staff Sergeant M.E. Ward and Sgt. Harold E. Wolfe. The three of us became close friends while we were in Washington. Wolfe and I corresponded for a while and when I last heard from him he was in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Then I lost track of him.

After I left Washington, D.C. this picture was received. On the back was the inscription: "Taken March 30th, 1945, Tivoli Theatre, Washington, D.C. To my friend, Carroll Harris whose love for organ music indirectly made the picture possible. I am sincerely, Wolfe."

The first and last time I heard the Washington, D.C. TIVOLI organ really played was on Christmas Day 1944 when Wolfe invited a group of us who had to spend our holiday away from our families to come to the theatre early in the morning. He had worked on the instrument and to my young and inexperienced ears it was in excellent condition. Then I left Washington for the west coast. We corresponded intermittently. He told me he played the instrument for intermissions and then the war was over. The last I heard from him was from 416 Hamilton Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania.

In 1965 I read an article in THEATRE ORGAN about George Merriken and his Silver Springs Music Hall, and the TIVOLI Wurlitzer. I wrote to George and received a very nice reply, along with pictures of his installation. I was careless and lost the pictures and then started looking for the above photograph and tried to do some backtracking to find Ward and Wolfe without success. The death of Sierra Chapter organist George A. Seaver rekindled the musings of what happened to Wolfe and Ward.

This sounds like a "sob sister story." It isn't. It is a partial story of a theatre organ which had fallen into disuse, and then enjoyed a brief revival during World War II only to fall into silence once more. In 1958 it was purchased by George Merriken and installed in his Music Hall to be enjoyed by many. It is my wish to hear it again one of these days soon — I'd like to hear it and all the other fine instruments you will be enjoying next month. I can't though, but I know many of you will and I just wonder if Sgts. Ward and Wolfe will be among the group. □

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LETTERS

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 Sir:

Just in case nobody else writes in, I'd like to loudly applaud John Muri for his article on "The Blending of Traditions".

With a title like that, and no photo or drawing to catch my interest, I left that article unread for a few days. When I did read it, I was sure I had never agreed more fully with what John had to say. What the theatre organ needs are more musicians who will take their playing seriously enough to learn the right notes and play them with accuracy and feeling. The number of organists I hear playing "It Goes Something Like This, but Who Cares as Long as it Sounds Like Lara's Theme?" simply because they have taken up organ playing for a fast buck and "... for enjoyment, not 'culture'" makes me wonder if the theatre organ will repeat history and be beaten into oblivion by uninspired organists. We can't blame the "talkies" this time!

Al Miller

Dear Mr. Thompson:

It is with the deepest sense of appreciation that we of the West Penn Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society extend to you and your organization our sincerest thanks for the overwhelming coverage which you allotted us in the April 1972 issue of the THEATRE ORGAN magazine.

We are planning an eventful year and many of the activities will be of interest to ATOS. Our official Volume 1 of our chapter newsletter will be

released in May. We will keep in touch and "keep the presses rolling."

There is one clarification that we would like to make. Your reference to the non-existence of organs in the Pittsburgh area theatre is in error. In the interest of fact, W.P.T.O.S. should like to point out that to the best of knowledge there are two theatre organs housed in Pittsburgh area theatres:

Manos Theatre
Indiana, Penna.
Robert Morton 2/8

South Hills Theatre
Dormont, Penna.
Wurlitzer 2/6

It would be kind of you to insert a memo in the THEATRE ORGAN magazine on the organs mentioned above so that their existence can be brought to the attention of ATOS members who may have no knowledge of the organs.

Sincerely,
Bob Mitchell

Program Director - W.P.T.O.S.

Dear Sir:

For the first time in all readings of THEATRE ORGAN, I really felt a cheer coming from way down. It was after reading John Muri's "The Blending of Traditions", in the February, 1972 edition.

The frank, knowledgeable manner in which Mr. Muri presents his material to the readers is as refreshingly honest as this reader has found in a long time.

As a devotee of the organ, but not technically or historically knowing, it is wonderful to have such memorabilia to read. And as a teacher, it is also very satisfying to have a good critical analysis of the music used in programs.

In some of the local publications there seems to be a tendency lately to fear the realistic view, fearing perhaps, that members may not be able to tolerate an honestly objective view. So the readers are given a saccharine dissertation of an organ or performer. This can be devastating to a rather new follower of organ - although musically informed in other ways. The review does not follow the true being of the program, and this can lead to disbelief in the writer as well as the organization itself.

After having met Mr. Muri, and sampling his frank, and really honest approach to the monarch of the the-

atre he is making his subject, it is grand to have the same approach in the written word.

There seems to be a truly objective approach in Mr. Muri's writing, as in his speaking. With a fearless approach, gained only by one experienced, and yet not afraid of learning more, Mr. Muri is really educating we lesser members of the grand art of ORGAN ... in how to learn.

And again I say ... HURRAH!

Mary Martin
CATOE member

Closing Chord

GEORGE A. SEAVER

Mr. George A. Seaver, Vice Chairman-Treasurer of the Sierra Chapter passed away suddenly on Friday, March 24, 1972. He was working for the Pine Grove Telephone Company as engineer at the time of his death. He was born August 26, 1914 in Massachusetts. He became a professional musician at an early age and was an organist for the Publix Theatres. Besides his wife Charlotte and son Mark in Sutter Creek, California he is survived by a daughter Deborah Sponable of Sacramento, California and a brother John in New York.

This letter written by Sierra Chapter



Mr. George A. Seaver, Vice Chairman-Treasurer, Sierra Chapter, at the 4/16 Robert Morton in the dining room of the Carl Greer Inn, Sacramento, California. - (E.S. Naschke Photo)

Chairman Bob Longfield to the chapter's members tells the main story;

"George Seaver died suddenly of a heart attack, Friday, March 24th at 8:30 P.M. He was 57 years old. At his request, there was no funeral or service. His body was cremated.

"George was a friend, organist, and Vice Chairman-Treasurer, to all of us and was one of the first members of Sierra Chapter when it was organized as T.O.E.S. (Theatre Organ Enthusiasts of Sacramento.) He had held the position of Vice Chairman-Treasurer since T.O.E.S. became Sierra Chapter, ATOS. He was probably the first person that each new member became acquainted with, because he was our organist and because of his warm smile and genuine friendliness.

"To call George an organ enthusiast would be an understatement. He was an organ *fanatic* and would play anything from an electronic spinet to a large theatre pipe organ with equal enthusiasm, and he could cover the range from Bach to rock. George was our only member who played theatre organ well enough for concert or movie and without him our past series of silent movies would have been all but impossible, for he played them all with the excellent showmanship and training he had acquired during the days he played theatre organ for "Publix" in Boston.

"George took all matters as seriously as he did organ playing, and as Vice Chairman-Treasurer he spent long hours working on Taxes, Insurance and Banking Accounts for Sierra Chapter. Strangely enough, just two weeks ago, at our last meeting, George has jokingly written "Let George Do It" on his name tag, and truer words were never written for he not only accepted all club jobs assigned to him but volunteered for more. He was particularly anxious that Sierra Chapter have its own organ, and though he did not live to see that project a reality, perhaps in the not too distant future we *will* have a "George Seaver Memorial Organ."

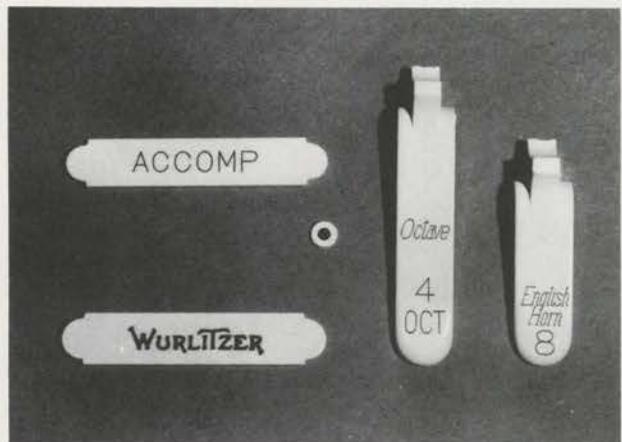
"His sudden passing came as a great shock to all of us, but especially to those of us who were close personal friends of George and Charlotte (Charlie). It's a worn out phrase, but it does tell the whole story — we'll miss him very much. Our deepest sympathy is extended to Charlie, daughter Debbie Sponable and son Mark.

THELMA BOOMHOWER

The ranks of Detroit's Theatre Organists has again been thinned. Mrs. Thelma Boomhower passed away on March 21, 1972 after an extended illness. Mrs. Boomhower was the widow of Clarence Dudley Boomhower, prominent organist in many of Detroit's downtown movie houses during the 1920's and 1930's. During this same period, Mrs. Boomhower was solo organist in many of Detroit's neighbor-

hood movie houses, including the Great Lakes, Annex, Birmingham, Royal Oak and 6 Mile-Uptown. She was also the solo organist on the opening night of the Senate Theatre, now the home of the Detroit Theater Organ Club. Following the demise of live organ music in the theatres, she became a music teacher in the Detroit Public School system until her retirement in 1964. She also served as Minister of Music for the Embury United Methodist Church for many years. □

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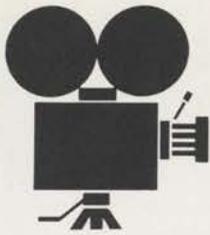
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Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

WHERE ARE THEY? – Portland, Oregon fans used to contact film player Jack Beutel at 1455 SW Barrow Lane, Portland, 97208 . . . Signe Hasso still lives in Los Angeles and has a new film out soon . . . Dancer Hal LeRoy (yes, the lanky tap dancer of the early sound films) made an appearance last month in Las Vegas. Fans often contact him through the Lambs Club, NYCity . . . A Midwest cinema hobbyist says he believes Lili Damita lives in Fort Dodge, Iowa . . . Eleanor Boardman is reported living in the Santa Barbara area . . . Harry Langdon, Jr., 37, son of the famed silent film funny man, is a much-in-demand Hollywood still photographer.

THE MICHIGAN theatre, Detroit's glittering rococo movie palace and monument of the great movie years, has become a night club.

CLOSEUPS – Rudolph Valentino's custom made 1923 Avions Voisin was auctioned last month . . . Tom Brown appears in the ABC-TV show *General Hospital* . . . Variety says Corinne Griffith put \$10,000. into the George Wallace political pot . . . Alice Terry is feeling fine . . . Bessie Love appears in *Sunday Bloody Sunday* . . . Claire Windsor proudly showed her great-grand children to friends at a recent Hollywood happening.

CHARLIE Chaplin's *Walk of Fame* star is located at 6751 Hollywood Boulevard. Nearby are the stars of Ilka Chase, Ken Maynard, Al Jolson, Richard Barthelmess, Richard Arlen and Frank Albertson.

OLIVIA de Havilland shafts TV this way: "It is slave labor."

WHEN Paramount produced "The American Venus" (1926) they selected Esther Ralston to play the goddess of love and beauty in the film about the Miss America pageant which included Miss America – Faye Lanphier. It was an excellent casting choice. The tall, talented and stately blonde projected charm, beauty and glamour. She was an ideal actress for the scores of films Paramount turned out that were light, frothy, daring and escapist comedy melodrama.

EVER since we started this paragraph parade we've hoped to find ER and have an interview. We did. We got her telephone number by calling information and in seconds there she was with her vibrant, modulated, pleasing voice. She sounded great.

"NO, I have not finished it yet . . . but I am working on it," was her answer to our question about her life story. "The problem is that I've not had enough scandal in my life and the lack of it makes for slow going. My daughter Mary lives nearby, my son Ted is due home from the Asian war and daughter Judy is a recording-and-singing personality in Connecticut."

ER SAID: "I am a lighting consultant. I am qualified to wire, install and advise in the use of home chandeliers. The idea is not new. For years I have been doing home decorating and always was interested in it – even when I was still active in films . . . I love it . . . Oh, yes. Friends may write me at Week's Road, Queensbury, New York 12801. I enjoy hearing from fans and the young people, too."

NEXT MONTH we'll have more of the ER interview and some of her favorite role choices. Meanwhile, she'd love to hear from you.

GAYLORD CARTER, using the 4/36 Simonton Grande Wurlitzer, is adding special musical scores to some Mary Pickford silent classics.

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

Wurlitzer List

As a result of the article appearing in the last issue, orders for nearly 100 copies of the Wurlitzer List were received by April 25, 1972. From this, it would appear that the minimum requirement will be received within the next few weeks.

Judd Walton reports that the project is now undergoing the final IBM keypunching, hopefully to be completed in 30 to 35 days. There will follow the final proofreading, last minute updating, and final checkout before the actual printing and assembly is undertaken. He is waiting for three more specifications to complete this phase of the publication, one in New York, one in Miami and one in Ellinwood, Kansas.

You are again urged to let Judd know of your intent to purchase a copy of the list. Send no money – just a card to him at the California Farm Bureau Federation, 2855 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705.



Final keypunching of the Wurlitzer list is being completed in the California Farm Bureau Federation's Data Processing Department. The first IBM Computer run will follow immediately. Shown checking the list are from left, Burt Hurch, computer operator; Kathy Fard, programmer and tab operator; Don Baillie, Data Processing supervisor; and Carol Gilman, keypunch operator.



CHAPTER NOTES

ALOHA

Aloha from Hawaii! The now-second-newest chapter (congratulations to West Penn Chapter!) has been keeping busy the last couple months.

On Sunday morning, March 19th we presented our second concert of the year at the Hawaii Theatre, featuring guest organist Elbert La Chelle at the 4/16 Robert Morton.

Elbert has played theatre organ accompaniment for vaudeville as well as elaborate stage productions and silent films. In addition, he's played at theatres along the Pacific coast and was staff organist for CBS and several radio stations in the West. The Aloha Chapter was fortunate indeed to have him as guest organist.

Following the concert, the chapter hosted members, guests and friends at a reception in our Chapter Room, backstage at the theatre. It's always a pleasant time to meet new friends and explain the chapter's activities. We often have one or two organ-buffs visiting from the mainland.



Aloha Chapter guest organist Elbert La Chelle at the console of the Hawaii Theatre's 4/16 Robert Morton.

On March 26th, over 50 chapter members and their guests met socially once again in the Penthouse party room of Aloha chapter members John and Grace Jenkins' apartment building. (They're chapter treasurer and secretary). The event was a farewell potluck dinner and party for organist Elbert La Chelle and Aloha chap George Krecji. Guests were treated to a beautiful view of the city of Honolulu at sunset and live organ serenades (*electronic*, unfortunately!).

On April 16th the chapter held a long business meeting, followed by chapter member Dan Engelhard, giving a very informative talk on the composition and construction of pipes, chests and offset chests. Those who were able to stay found it very interesting, and Dan has been asked to continue "class" in the future.

On Tuesday, May 30th the Aloha Chapter and Consolidated Amusement Co., owners of the Waikiki and Hawaii Theatres, will present "flicker fingers", Gaylord Carter, in concert at the Hawaii Theatre, accompanying "The Winning of Barbara Worth", with Gary Cooper.

This event also coincides with Consolidated Amusement's debut of an "Encore" Theatre exclusively featuring motion pictures from the silent days and the 'Golden Age' of Hollywood.

The chapter is certainly behind this effort and any publicity gained for the theatre organ in the midst of this "nostalgia" can only be beneficial to the chapter and the ATOS.

And remember, when you're in Honolulu be sure to say hello. If you can let us know in advance when you'll be here, we'll arrange to "organ"-ize your visit. Our chapter host, John DeMello, may be reached at 1264 Kalaniiki, St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96821, telephone (808) 373-3076, or through the Consolidated Amusement Co.

Aloha!

LOWELL ANGELL

BEEHIVE

On Sunday, March 19, Beehive Chapter members were treated to a very special performance at the Arcade Theatre, in Salt Lake City. It was a Charlie Chaplin movie entitled *The Rink*, accompanied by Mike Ohman. After the movie members were invited to play the organ.

This was fun for the members, but one member, the host, was the most delighted of all, Calvin Christensen, owner and installer of the organ. That day was his birthday and also his public musical debut. He hastened to add that he had been taking lessons for only two weeks.

Cal bought the theatre in July of 1971 from his father, Mr. James Christensen, now retired who had owned and operated the theatre for forty years. Cal and Mrs. Christensen had recarpeted, painted and redecorated the theatre.

July was a big month for the Christensens. Through Bob Castle of Denver they bought a 2/7 Wurlitzer style E that had been in storage since it had been removed from one of the Famous Players Theaters in Pueblo, Colorado.

The percussions and Bass pipes are behind the screen on the left side, the pipes behind the screen on the right. The console is in front of the screen, making it easy to play for the organists because of good balance and contrast.

The organ had its grand debut in Salt Lake on Friday, February 25, 1971, when Gaylord Carter accompanied the silent movie great *The Mark of Zorro*. His sing-alongs and his great personality plus his musical talent delighted the audience.

Mrs. Christensen said that many old-timers while buying tickets for *The Mark of Zorro* said that it would be good to hear an organ in the Arcade again.

Thanks again to Cal and Mrs. Christensen for bringing back to life another pipe organ and sharing it with ATOS members and many grateful Salt Lakers.

MAXINE V. RUSSELL

CENTRAL INDIANA

On March 12th over eighty members attended our monthly get-together at the home of Mrs. Ada Fisher in Indianapolis. At the business meeting plans

were discussed for the special concert to be presented on May 12th featuring Johnny Kemm on the Lowery electronic organ in a benefit performance to raise funds for the installation of a theatre pipe organ in the auditorium of Manual High School in Indianapolis. Prior to the concert, Mr. Kemm and local ATOS officials will be interviewed on a popular local TV talk show to explain the purposes of our organization and to discuss specifically the Manual High School project. Following the business meeting guests were entertained by Tim Needler and Jimmy Boyer playing Mrs. Fisher's 3-manual Conn electronic complete with external pipe speakers and a newly-installed theatre Glockenspiel. Open console time followed with many members trying the instrument into the wee hours of the evening.

The April meeting was hosted by Chairman Tom Hawkins in his home in Greenfield, Indiana. Our special guest for this meeting, Gay Crandall, entertained the membership on Tom's Conn 642 with her own delightful organ artistry so much enjoyed on a regular basis by patrons of the San Francisco supper club in Anderson, Indiana.

Future events scheduled include our annual May visit to the Kokomo, Indiana, home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank May in which is installed a 4-manual Wicks-Barton theatre pipe organ of 18 ranks and still growing! For the summer months we are hopeful of returning to the Embassy Theatre in Ft. Wayne to hear the artistry of Mr. Buddy Nolan on the 4/15 Page accompanied by the piano stylings of Mr. Dyan Pfeffenberger on the Embassy's concert grand. This duo positively sparkled during our October visit last year as they presented show tunes and Strauss waltzes in their special concert for our membership.

RUTH HAWKINS

CHICAGO AREA

Long before anyone ever had any inkling of the possibility of the tremendous tribute that ultimately would be accorded to Charlie Chaplin, Chairman Bill Rieger brought up the idea of having CATOE present shows featuring Chaplin's *Modern Times* and *City Lights* with organ accompaniment. CATOE member Andy Antoncyck manages the Carnegie Theatre in downtown Chicago and they just happened to be in the midst of a "Chaplin

Festival" and besides that the theatre had an organ regularly used for intermission music and sing-alongs. And so it was decided that these films would be presented by CATOE as "silent" films in private showings with organ background. With the organist following the original score with some hopefully effective deviations, the audiences literally "flipped."

I must humbly admit to having been the organist for these shows. I have always wanted to do film work. My real debut was Laurel & Hardy's *Liberty* in a Downers Grove Concert. Later came a Chaplin reel for the Niagara Frontier. Preparation for the CATOE presentations of *Modern Times* and *City Lights* was an in-depth education in film accompaniment. Since Charlie Chaplin had composed his own scores for both films it was in many cases a choice between his ideas and ours. The more you listened to his concepts, the less you thought of your own bright ideas.

TONY TAHLMAN

It was a bright Saturday morning March 11, when our genial Secretary Doug Christensen, stepped up to the microphone to present his introduction of our second Chaplin program at the Carnegie Theatre, starring Tony Tahlman. From the first moment, a mood of warmth and friendliness was set for the entire program.

This presentation was a rare opportunity for CATOE: first, to be able to present the show in a relatively new theatre with one of Chaplin's most famous silents — *City Lights* in excellent quality 35mm print and second to have the complete cooperation of the theatre and its new Conn Theatre Organ and most of all to hear one of CATOE's most dynamic and talented organists, Mr. Tony Tahlman. He spent weeks of concentrated effort perfecting the musical score for the film as well as selecting the tunes most appropriate to his concert and sing-along. And although the organ had a plurality of sound effects. Tony installed his own chimes, bells, whistles, auto horn, siren, etc., which he dispensed with the accuracy of a well-timed computer. While *City Lights* is basically sweet, tender, and emotional story, it has its comedy sequences, and Tony's musical score matched every situation.

The first half of the program was

replete with show tunes and old favorites, climaxed with a sing-along, with which he coaxed the audience into top singing form. His comments from the console put the organ buffs into a rollicking mood so they belted out the songs like professionals. It has been said that CATOE has the best sing-alongs and Tony sure proved it. With a few more comments from Doug, the "City Lights" were turned on for all of us, marking a new year of CATOE history.

Many organists today rely on technical values, speed, velocity and shocking harmonies. Paul Swiderski relies only on music that he enjoys playing. In turn his audiences enjoy listening and a true musical experience is consummated. Paul made his CATOE debut at the Lyons Township High School Social where he coaxed the resident 3/21 Moller into an effective performance on March 25. Paul is currently the assistant organist at the Elm Rink and plays every Thursday night.

A busload of members were augmented by several carloads venturing forth in a spring trip to the wilds of Indianapolis on April 22. Lee Erwin at the console of the Rivoli Uniphone, a midnight theatre party and a visit to Frank May's restoration of the Chicago "WLS" pipe organ at Breezy Lane in Kokomo, Ind. made the trip very interesting.

On Saturday April 29 members congregated to hear "Yngve" a tracker pipe organ that Jack Olander and the Keyboard Ensemble class of Maine Township High School had modified and rebuilt. As an added treat Samuel Nygren of Sweden gave a lecture demonstration of the tracker organ and had with him his personal exhibition of Swedish organ art.

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, the teen men of CATOE banded together into a group and called themselves the "Motley Crew." Members of the crew hail from all over Chicagoland and have since involved themselves with theatre organ tuning, construction, cleaning, and most of all, playing.

One of their specialties is out-of-town organ crawls. Numerous weekends have been spent working at the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Ill. Two weekend tours to Milwaukee were arranged by Fred Hermes, Chairman of the Dairyland Chapter of ATOS. They also traveled to Stevens

Point, Wisconsin to hear Jim Benz-miller at St. Stanislaus Church. A visit to the Joliet area was very interesting and a late spring trip to Detroit, Michigan is being planned.

We hear constantly about the generation gap. This group of dedicated young teen-men working together, learning T/O techniques, instruments, and the thousand and one other details involved, have eliminated this gap as far as "Motley Crew" Chief Jack Smith is concerned, by keeping busy. Jack extends many thanks to the parents for their trust.

BILL RIEGER

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Our eleventh birthday was celebrated on February 12, 1972 with a meeting at the Waterbury Hammond Organ Studio. Program Chairman, Charles Putney surprised us with a pre-meeting concert demonstration of the Arp Synthesizer by a representative of the Tonus Company.

It appears that the electronic organ manufacturers have jumped to the synthesizer as a new toy, with the Wurlitzer in orbit, and others using self-contained add-on synthesizers. For those who wonder what a synthesizer, is, it is an electronic organ capable of playing only one note at a time, with controls for producing different tone qualities, attacks and other elements of sound waves, rather than stops as such. The Arp was interesting, producing many instrumental effects from a unit not much larger than its keyboard. One of the outstanding inventions in this instrument is "second touch." Now there is a really new idea! Press the key harder, and you get a different effect. What will they think of next?

We then departed to the State Theatre to hear Everett Bassett at the 2/10 style 205 Wurlitzer, opus 2016. This instrument was donated to the chapter a couple years ago in the RKO "giveaway", but the owners of the building contested ownership, RKO's lease ran out, and the organ remains in its home, where it should be.

Everett has kept the organ in repair since 1945, and knows it well. The console has been moved from stage right to the center of the orchestra pit, and a section of "pit fence" in the center was made removeable for use of the organ.



Everett Bassett in concert, State Theatre, Waterbury.

Ev has a musical and very listenable style, and delights in producing tunes that all of us but he has forgotten. How many readers recall "The Song is in My Heart," "The Lady's In Love With You," "Guilty," "Home," and "I'm Through With Love"?

It suddenly struck me, while listening to the Wurlitzer, that here is Grandfather Synthesizer, capable of playing many notes all at once, with myriad effects and tonal variety, orchestral effects and gadgets like "second touch?" It struck me how some of the sounds seemed so real, especially the Clarinet, Flute, Glockenspiel, Chimes, Drums and traps, and golly-gee, a Tuba.

The chapter presented its second official concert at the Thomaston Opera House with an excellent program by Bill Dalton. The name was familiar, but few of us had ever heard Bill play.

Now living in Connecticut and teaching in the Hartford area, Bill Dalton studied at Ohio State, and under such teachers as Bert E. Williams, Henry Foan of Westminster Abbey, London, and Pietro Yon of the Vatican, Rome. Starting as a pianist at age twelve, he was engaged to play organ solos at Loew's Ohio Theatre in Columbus, Loew's Richmond, the Byrd Theatre, Richmond; the Birmingham Paramount, and Radio City Music Hall. His radio and TV work includes

Paul Whiteman's NBC Show.

Bill is one of the original theatre organists who hasn't forgotten how the melody goes, and what chord goes with it. In spite of his long association with drawbars, he tackles registration orchestrally as well as any composer would orchestrate a score. In utter defiance of his age, he gets around the console nimbly and easily.

Bill selected a program which could have spelled disaster for some artists, as it contained no less than six classic orchestral compositions. This is where Bill had us spellbound. His registration constantly evoked illusions of an orchestra located in the chambers with some startling instrumental passages "Fantasy on the Opera 'Carmen'," "Overture to Orpheus in Hades," and Tchaikovsky's "Slavnic March" which brought the audience to its feet in unison at the last chord.

Perhaps the most interesting arrangement was "Broadway After Dark" which contained several familiar Broadway themes in a musically pictorial tour of the big city. Bill's most realistic musical effect of bustling traffic with startlingly convincing taxi horns was



Bill Dalton . . . Thomaston Opera House.

undoubtedly the surprise of the evening.

Here is a real musician who simply plays a delightful concert without flashy gimmicks. Bill Dalton.

It came as a complete surprise when a letter from our hard-working member, John Starr was read, offering his Crystal Palace theatre organ and silent movie museum to the Connecticut Valley Theatre Organ Society, Inc. The Crystal Palace in Goshen, Conn. has been John's "baby" for many months. The arched-ceilinged auditorium which houses the Allyn Theatre chandeliers, an ever growing Wurlitzer, and other memorabilia is slated for opening late this year.

Lawyers for both parties are setting up details under which John Starr will retain life use of the facility, while the Connecticut Chapter will acquire the museum as its home.

We believe this is another first for the chapter, and one which holds much promise for the future. We are grateful that John Starr has been so generous, and will announce further details as they develop.

AL MILLER

LOS ANGELES

Southern California organ activities continued at a brisk pace after the busy month of February with its Great Western Regional Convention. On March 19th Helen Dell presented a very fine concert in the continuing Sunday morning series sponsored by the Los Angeles Chapter at the Wiltern Theatre. She played a varied program with something for everyone including "The Song of Herod", "I Love to Hear You Singing", "It's Impossible", "Dambusters March", and "Pastoral" (Richard Purvis). And the outstanding music of the entire concert was Helen's playing of the wonderful tunes from *Oklahoma* — all of them. The Kimball organ has never sounded better, with the rain damage repaired by Leonard Worne and his crew of miracle workers.

On April 11th the chapter held its Spring business meeting at the Elks Building in Los Angeles. Councilman Walter McCarthy of the City of San Gabriel presented Certificates of Merit on behalf of the City Council to eight members of the ATOS crew who worked for over 3 years to install the 3/16 Wurlitzer in the Civic Auditorium. Those receiving the awards were Neal

Kissel, project coordinator, his assistant, Bruce Skovmand, Frank Sherwood (who was largely responsible for installation of the organ lift), Harold Donze, John Hoffman, Chester Myers, Robert Brower, and Frank Sele. The principal item of ATOS business transacted at the meeting was the approval by the membership of an addition to the chapter by-laws concerning the disposition of chapter assets in the event of dissolution of the chapter. This provision in the by-laws was required by the Internal Revenue Service as a part of the recent granting of tax-free status to ATOS. During the Jam Session which followed, several members tried out the big Robert Morton Theatre Organ including Bob Meeker, Deke Warner, Fernand Martel, and Adele Thiele. Rose Diamond was eyeing the console when your reporter left so I suspect she may have played a bit too.

On Sunday morning April 16th the place to be was at the Wiltern Theatre where Scott Gillespie presented another fine concert. Scott is well known as one of the organists at Larry Bray's "Organ Loft" in Salt Lake City. The outstanding selections on his program were the Mormon hymn "Come, Come, Ye Saints" and the rarely heard but always enjoyed music from the "Mikado" by Sir Arthur Sullivan. To round out a day of Theatre Organ there was a jam session at the Elks Building in the afternoon.

Two events of interest to Theatre Organ buffs in the area were the Open House on April 6th and the *Flicker Fingers* show on April 15th, both featuring the ATOS installed Wurlitzer at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium. The Open House was sponsored by the City of San Gabriel to show off the features of the auditorium to the citizens of San Gabriel and to the general public. Tours of the building were conducted and stage equipment and the extensive stage lighting facilities were demonstrated. Neal Kissel and his crew provided theatre pipe organ displays in the lobby which attracted much attention from the more than 1500 persons attending during the day, Jonas Nordwall played concerts on the Mighty Wurlitzer at 3, 6, and 9 PM. The *Flicker Fingers* presentation with Gaylord Carter at the console was a huge success with only a few empty seats in the 1500-seat auditorium. The program consisted

of two Harold Lloyd short comedies, a group of Cole Porter tunes, a community sing, and then the feature film, Buster Keaton in *The Navigator*. And to top off the evening, Gaylord presented the last film that Buster Keaton made, a film featuring a trip across Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific on the Canadian National Railroad. Buster rode a railroad "speeder" all the way, with very entertaining results, especially when he turned the speeder into a duck blind to help him get a better shot at some geese. Gaylord provided the organ accompaniment for the trip. It was a delightful evening of Theatre Pipe Organ entertainment.

SAM DICKERSON

MOTOR CITY

The Redford Theatre was once again filled to capacity on Tuesday, March 21, when the Motor City Chapter presented Dennis James at the newly rejuvenated 3/10 Barton. The audience reaction on hearing this youthful performer for the first time, was overwhelming.

After a delightful mini-concert, a good old-fashioned sing-along, complete with vintage hand-painted song slides, the faces of Laurel and Hardy appeared on the screen.

Dennis explained before the start of the feature film, the 1927 mystery, *The Cat and the Canary*, that his accompaniment would be almost spontaneous, for due to the nature of the plot, regular reoccurring themes were not well suited to this film. The result was a fine film score, which seemed to draw us into the action, with brilliantly executed musical climaxes, coming one after another. Dennis was very much at home at the Redford Barton and we look forward to having him back again.

The following evening, Dennis conducted a Theatre Organ Master Class at DTOC, sponsored jointly by the Detroit Theater Organ Club and the Motor City Theatre Organ Society. In the style of an organists workshop, each participant performed two selections which Dennis critiqued. The Blower, the chapter newsletter, published a suggested list of theatre organ theory courses in publication, in addition to recommended collections of theatre organ arrangements and solos.

We highly recommend to any chapter considering booking Dennis James

for a public program that they also ask him about scheduling a Theatre organ Master Class for the benefit of chapter organists.

An American Legion Hall in Royal Oak was alive with activity as nearly 100 chapter members, not discouraged by the dreary rainy weather outside, turned out for our fourth annual banquet on April 16. Many tried their hand at the three-manual Conn theatre organ, loaned for the day by member Frances Morehead.

A highly successful Round-Robin organ crawl to hear and play theatre pipe organ installations in the homes of three chapter members was held on Sunday, in April. Gathering at the Royal Oak Theatre at 10:30 a.m., over 100 members listened to or played the 3/10 Barton and toured the chambers before splitting into three groups.

Floyd Bunt had just finished putting the finishing touches on the reinstallation of the 3/8 Page in his new home. After being in storage for several years, it was a treat to hear this nicely balanced instrument, with its glittering silver and gold keydesk, sounding once again.

The gold and white French style console of Mert Harris' 3/11 Wurlitzer is situated at one end of his spacious living room, enough distant from his two pipe chambers, housed in the former garage, to permit a pleasing sound that is not over-powering to the listener. Two separate sets of swell shades help to regulate the volume.

Roger Mumbrue's 3/19 "mostly"

Marr and Colton shares space in his large roomy basement with an assortment of coin operated amusement machines. The action of the upright piano, playable from the console, is visible through the glass paneled front.

Work on the 3/13 Barton in the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor is progressing so well that a sneak preview for chapter members is planned for June 11th.

DON LOCKWOOD

NEW YORK

While readers of this magazine have been following the exploits of some of the better known "senior" organists who have been traveling the nation with silent film and organ shows, it is refreshing to see the emergence of a new talent, especially one of the "now" generation.

Young Dennis James has been touring the country for just a few years with these silent film and organ shows, and on Wednesday, April 5, he added another milestone to his rapidly ascending star as he held an audience spellbound at Rahway, N.J., accompanying *The General*, starring Buster Keaton. The amazing thing was, Dennis had only seen the film once before, and had never accompanied it. Those who were in attendance are still marveling at the fantastic job he did, rivaling, if not surpassing similar endeavors by others of longer standing fame in this department. A further credit to his artistry was his ability to keep the audience enthralled with his lightning

quick registration, which was done to perfection on probably the smallest instrument he has yet performed on publicly, the 2/7 Biggest Little Wurlitzer at the Rahway Theatre.

BOB BALFOUR

NIAGARA FRONTIER

On March 14 youthful Dennis James displayed his ever-increasing talents and mastery at the console of the Riviera's 3/12 Wurlitzer.

He presented a well-chosen program that included some favorite standards and many popular tunes of the Twenties, Thirties, and Forties. At this concert, Dennis initiated our newly-added pit drums.

A special feature of this crowd-pleasing show was Dennis' rendition of "String of Pearls", during which time the stage drapes parted to reveal Alex Rene and his Big Band Sound — a 15-piece band that plays the sounds of the Forties. As the drapes opened, they picked up where the organ faded, and the group performed some of the more famous dance band selections.

The audience was well pleased with this exciting evening of organ and dance band music. (Musical entertainment such as this is almost a thing of the past.)

Don Thompson made his second Riviera appearance to a warm and receptive audience on April 19. There was a standing-room-only crowd that evening; in fact, some patrons had to be turned away.

Don's instant rapport with his attentive listeners drew him closer to their hearts. His excellent program held a host of wonderful compositions done in the rhythmic Thompson style.

The second half of Don's concert opened with "The Riviera," a selection from *The Boyfriend*. Also comprising the second half of the show were some of 1920's and 1930's most popular hits: Busby Berkeley production numbers, a rag, and a novelty tune or two. He lowered the console with the "immortal" Mickey Mouse march.

SHIRLEY COLE

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

A real treat was hearing for the first time on pipe organ Father David Shaw. We had heard the Father on electronics on several occasions and knew he had a style which would come over big on the real thing. Shaw opened with a nice number and then told the chap-

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ter members that "to dispel any pre-conceived notions due to my clerical grab" he proceeded to put "The Stripper" through its usual bumps and grinds in a rousing interpretation. That did it! Most of the rest of his program were familiar pop tunes done in a swinging up-tempo style. The Avenue Theatre's 3/14 Wurlitzer was in good hands. Thank you Father Shaw!



Father Shaw at the Avenue Wurlitzer. (Lubich Photo)

Our next meeting took us back to two old friends — the 2/6 divided Robert Morton in the Cinema-21 — and our regular chapter artist, Larry Vannucci. Larry had not prepared a program as such, but just played them as he was inspired. After a few introductory remarks, Larry spoke not a word for the next two hours. But his music spoke for him — and it was one of Larry's best concerts yet! He knows this instrument inside and out "like the back of his hand." He has given it loving care for about 25 years, with hardly a week going by without at least one session on the little gem. When Vannucci is good, he is very, very good. And — this was one of those times.

Next it was a meeting at a new location — the Bella Roma Pizza in Martinez with David "Fats" Reese playing the 3/14 Wurlitzer/Robert



Larry Vannucci at the Cinema-21 Robert Morton. — (Lubich Photo)

Morton. Recently moving to the Bay Area from Salt Lake City, Reese has had a lot of pipe experience at the Bray Organ Loft. The Wurlitzer console came from the Sacramento (Calif.) Majestic Theatre, the balance of this Wurlitzer became the heart of the famed Granada, Tooting, London installation in England. David's program included both "oldies, but good-ies" and contemporary selections, all of which were well arranged to show off the organ and its special effects. The organ boasts a wide variety of percussions, a real steam locomotive whistle (run on air), thunder and lightning effects, and a special feature of a three speed tibia tremulant ac-



David Reese at the Bella Roma Wurlimorton (Lubich Photo)

tivated from the console tabs. (Now, there fellows, is the way to settle those arguments!) Thanks, Dave, for a very enjoyable afternoon!

Our appreciation, as always, to the managements of the establishments where we hold our meetings and to the technicians who keep the instruments going. We in Northern California are very, very lucky to have so many fine theatre organs in excellent playing condition.

WARREN LUBICH and DEWEY CAGLE

NORTH TEXAS

Our Christmas meeting in late 71 was a great one, held at the E.M. Johnson home in North Dallas. The whole family are organ buffs, with Dad doing the planning detail, Mom handling administrative detail and subsistence, Son serving as Chief Technician and Daughter as Chief Organist. Their installation of a 3/11 Wurlitzer, acquired from a church (yes, it's a *theatre* organ) in Corpus Christi, is really something. There were over 40 members and guests in attendance, yet plenty of conversation and listening space, without one interfering with the other. Even with Christmas decorations in the room, it was very neat and spacious.

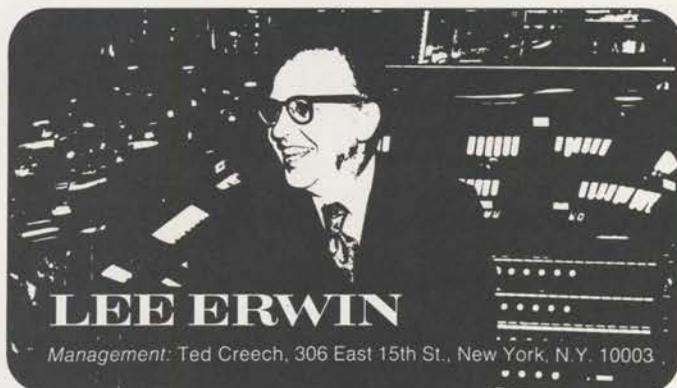
Various members took turns at the console with everything from Christmas carols to "Alley Cat". One outstanding performer was Lew Williams, an 18 year old Organ Major from Texas Christian University. Lew is at home with any phrase of organ playing, a great talent, from whom we'll all be hearing more. He's good on theatre organ "oldies", pops, or Bach.

The March meeting of the chapter was at the Dallas home of Gordon L. Wright, where he has installed a 2/7 Wurlitzer acquired from the Orpheum Theatre in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Needless to say, this was another interesting



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session for the chapter, and Gordon's baby-grand player piano and the Rodgers plug-in in the music room also attracted their share of attention. Several of our more proficient chapter members serenaded us throughout the afternoon, and all were highly complimentary of the job Gordon has done with his installation. All speaking is done by the original pipes. No synthesized electronics. Only the switching is electronic. A beautiful job, technically and aesthetically, Gordon. Chapter Chairman John Beck's slide tour of the L.A. regional was also a meeting highlight.

There is one more chapter meeting this Spring, then a summer activity slump, as there is in almost everything during the 100 degree days, and then we'll be back with all stops out for a very promising 72-73 winter season. Meanwhile everybody will be working on their pet organ projects and rarities to go come the Fall.

JORMAN (JOE) KOSKI

PINETREE

This letter is to announce to all that the Pinetree Chapter is still alive and well. Although we haven't had much to report until now, here is an installment on the Wurlitzer obtained in New Rochelle, N.Y.

Three years ago, through the efforts

of Mr. Walter Froelich, we obtained a 3/13 Wurlitzer for the residents of Old Orchard Beach, Maine. Much of the instrument was installed under the supervision of Dr. Dwight Leighton of Yarmouth. Having been previously committed to the monumental one-man task of rebuilding the fifty-four rank organ at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Dr. Leighton had to temporarily drop the Old Orchard job for approximately two years. For most of the members, working on pipe organs of any kind was a new experience; therefore, we felt rather inadequate to handle the job on our own. Now, because I work a rotating shift, Dr. Leighton and I work as many Wednesdays as possible and quite frequently Saturdays as well. Dr. Herbert Hopkins of Old Orchard has spent many hours in refinishing the console and he's doing a beautiful job.

We will see to it that "Theatre Organ" readers get the full story and the plans for the organ in a future issue.

RON DRUMMOND



Earl Sharits and Ronnie Pedley share a mutual love of the theatre organ. Eleven-year-old Ronnie, our gifted youngest member, will make a brief appearance at the convention.

POTOMAC VALLEY

Sunday, March 28 found an unusually well-attended chapter meeting, a special occasion, to dedicate former Chapter Chairman George Johnson's 2/5 Wurlitzer installed in the basement of his home in Alexandria, Virginia. Guest artist was long-time member and former Colorado theatre organist, Earl Sharits (stage name Earle Sherdelle) who gave two informal and entertaining mini-concerts. Earl's offering of old and new tunes and the congeniality his personality bred, prompted the response of over a dozen volunteers during the open console period, the latter being representative of our membership ranging from our top professional to gifted young students and reticent but able amateurs. Members

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Barry and Dorothy Washington meantime served refreshments upstairs to those waiting their turn to see and hear Earl play.

George and Olean Johnson's instrument was removed from a church in Arlington, Virginia its original location being the Richmond Playhouse theatre in Alexandria. The Wurlitzer shares basement honors with George's narrow gauge (ON₃) model railroad. The organ installation was a Father-Son-Grandson effort, his father P.K. Johnson also being a member and pipe organ owner, and son David being an able organ student.

The April meeting of the Potomac Valley Chapter featured former Chapter Chairman Ray Brubacher giving a program on the Lem Keller Special at the Keller residence near Frederick, Maryland. Lem began building his instrument in 1956. It is now a 4/17 with five sets of tuned percussions. The pipework is Moller, Wurlitzer, and Reuter; the harp is Link, and the console entirely electrically operated with Reisner components. The vibrato units, most of the chests, part of the relay, and the unique capture system which can be set at the keyboard were built by Lem Keller. About eighty members turned out to hear Ray Brubacher, who is well known for his many talents: church organist and



RAY BRUBACHER

organ teacher, Associate Editor of THEATRE ORGAN magazine, WXLN radio personality, movie and still photographer deluxe, organ and player piano restorer, recording artist, and, believe it or not, calliope player. The latter has something to do with Ray's love of steam powered machines. He has been tempted to go AWOL from an organ concert engagement when he has heard the siren call of a steam locomotive whistle.

The Johnson and Keller home installations and the Masonic Temple organ, as well as organist Ray Brubacher

will be among the important features at the July 10-14 Convention - "IN TUNE FOR YOU IN '72".

LUCIEN B. PHINNEY

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Sunday April 16, 1972 had been planned as "D" day for the last concert on the 3/15 Wurlitzer at the Denver Theatre as on the morrow "demolition" was to begin. The interior remodeling of the auditorium was to start. Several artists from the Denver area had been contacted and a program was set up for six organists to perform. As the time drew near the management of the theatre found it necessary because of construction difficulties, to cancel the use of the theatre. Bob Castle who plays and maintains the 4/20 Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer directly across the street from the Denver Theatre, very graciously invited the chapter to meet in that theatre.

The concert by the six artists was cancelled also but quite a number of chapter members tried their hand at the console. Among them were: Bob Castle, of course, Bill Johnston, chapter chairman, Bob Young, chapter publicity and several members from Colorado Springs, Colorado.

The group from Colorado Springs

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are at the present finishing the restoration of the organ in the Chief Theatre. Those from the Chief restoration crew who demonstrated their keyboard ability were: Rick Mathews (King Pin) and his assistants Rod Gates, David Church and Mrs. Wynn Wood. This group is about to form a branch of the Rocky Mountain Chapter as they are in the chapters chartered area although about 75 miles away.

Our chapter is awaiting the opening of Dick and Ruth Lewis' recently completed home organ installation of a 3/7 Marr & Colton. The organ is to be played by Bob Arndt of Des Moines, Iowa in the near future.

BETTY ROWE

SIERRA

Sierra Chapter of the ATOS had planned to present another silent picture in Sacramento's Grant Union High School auditorium on Sunday, April 16 at 2:00 P.M. George A. Seaver was going to preside at the Kilgen console as he had many times before. The picture was to be John Barrymore in the Robert Louis Stevenson story of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The event was not to be, nor was a program for the students of Grant Union High School set for April 14th, as you have noted, or will note, by The Closing Chord.



At the Carl Greer Inn: Jim Hodges, M.C. — Tiny James — Clyde Derby — Emil Martin, (Photo by Clint Savage)

George Seaver had no funeral, no memorial service. He wanted it that way. He had expressed the wish that his friends gather around a pipe organ and play theatre music. George Seaver's wish was granted; just the way he and his family wanted it. The location was the dining room of the Carl Greer Inn, thanks to Inn Manager Wayne Thorson; the organ was the former Seattle Music Hall 4/16 Robert Morton; the artist were friends Clyde Derby, Carl Greer Staff Organist; "Tiny" James, Norcal chapter member; and Emil Martin, Program Director of McClatchy Broadcasting Company and sometimes Greer Inn organist. The artists were introduced by Jim Hodges, Manager of FM Radio Station KHIQ and the man who had introduced George Seaver

to silent movie audiences many times. It was Jim who broke the news of Mr. Seaver's death to the listeners to KHIQ's Friday night theatre pipe organ music program by way of explanation for the sudden disappearance of the Seaver and Grant Union organ backgrounded silent movie announcements.

BOB LONGFIELD

SOONER STATE

Great excitement was in the air as chapter members prepared to visit the Coleman Theatre in Miami, Oklahoma on the weekend of April 22 and 23. The Coleman celebrated the anniversary of it's opening over 40 years ago this month, with a gala film and organ intermission presentation, just as in the days when the theatre opened.

Featured at the console of the Coleman 3/7 Style 160 Special Wurlitzer was Mrs. Charles Puckette, it's mentor, curator and protector, and also an avid member of ATOS. Thanks to her determination and the help of loyal ATOS friends, Oklahoma's only remaining "In House" theatre pipe organ continues to play.

Coming up soon is an organ crawl to nearby Muskogee, Oklahoma by chapter members. The chapter will have a Jam Session on the 3/7 Robert Morton installed in the now completed, Muskogee Civic Center, at the

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Finishing out the chapter's planned activities is an upcoming silent movie, slide show, mini-concert program by Wichita Theatre Organist, Bob Foley. This program is tentatively scheduled to be presented on the 2/4 Robert Morton, located in the Tulsa Masonic Temple, as a joint ATOS Masonic Temple project.

SOUTH FLORIDA

February 27th found us making the short trip up the Gold Coast to the residence of Ray Wulff in Boca Raton. Our own Reggie Foort had allowed time from his busy schedule



Reginald Foort at Ray Wulff's homemade console in Boca Raton.

to come and do a program during the afternoon on Ray's 3/9 Skinner residence installation, the console of which has been built from scratch by Ray himself. Needless to say, this was a superb match, the organ and Reggie Foort, with Reggie remarking this was one of the finest home installations he'd ever played. Those in attendance were indeed enthralled by the master musician. Reggie did quite a bit of story telling relating to the giant Moller traveling organ he'd had back in England during the "golden days". With photographs to bolster the many events in Reggie's life we were really able to share at length his fabulous career. Bouquets to Reggie for his magnificent presentation in the very intimate setting of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Wulff, to whom we are most indebted for their gracious hospitality.

March 19th our chapter was guest of chapter member David Thurman at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Miami where the 4/52 Aeolian/Skinner was brought forth in the grand manner. Mr. Thurman was featured during the afternoon in what he called "organ

capers" by Skinner. Oddly enough he kept his promise that this organ could be made to sound theatrical (?). After an open console session, a tour was made behind the swell shades for those in attendance to discover the source of this great sound. A great departure from our usual flair, this meeting proved to be unusually successful. Our sincerest thanks to Dave Thurman for his efforts on our behalf this day.

South Florida Chapter is pleased to announce that the chapter has been offered the complete cooperation in revamping of the former Olympia Theatre Wurlitzer in downtown Miami in conjunction with the Miami Philharmonic Society. Prior to being approached by our chapter the Philharmonic Society had not made any attempt to include the organ in its refurbishing project, currently underway. After recognizing that the ATOS was a nationally organized group of



Vice-chairman Ray Wulff, Reginald Foort, Jane Harvey and Chairman Steve Fitzgerald at the Wulff residence.

responsibility the green light was given South Florida Chapter for refurbishing the "sick" organ. The auditorium is now being completely refinished to its original Ebersson Atmospheric condition under a million dollar grant, with the Philharmonic anticipating a mid-October opening.

G. W. GERHART

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