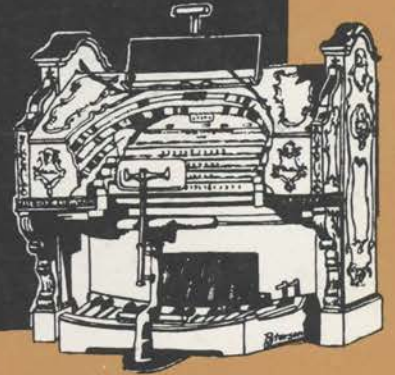


THEATRE ORGAN

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 5

OCTOBER, 1972



JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

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THEATRE ORGAN

Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

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Editorial Address:

THEATRE ORGAN
P.O. Box 1314,
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Advertising Address

ATOS Advertising
2231 North Burling Street
Chicago, Illinois 60614

ATOS National Headquarters

ATOS
P.O. Box 1002
Middleburg, Virginia 22117
Phone (703) 554-8321

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cover photo...

Genii's console, the 3/13 235 Special Wurlitzer with Brass Trumpet, was installed in the Canal Street Theatre in New York in 1927, and was moved to the Triboro Theatre in Queens, New York in 1931. Marvin Lautzenheiser discovered it in 1962 and now houses it in a huge studio adjacent to his home in Springfield, Virginia. See story on page 5. (Photo by Richard Neidich.)

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president's message...

As we begin a new administration in the history of ATOS certainly the first order of business is a sincere expression of gratitude to the former officers who have carried the torch for the society for the past year. I can assure them that the flame is bright and the future of ATOS is brighter because of their efforts.

The first change from your new administration is an attempt to establish a permanent address for the membership files, which up to now have been moved with each president. The Circulation-Editorial office for THEATRE ORGAN and the membership office for ATOS will be under the same roof at P.O. Box 1314, Salinas, California 93901 with Vi Thompson directing circulation and memberships and George Thompson remaining editor. All material for the magazine, (except advertising) new memberships and renewals should be sent to this address — thus eliminating one step which had previously resulted in delays in activating memberships and mailing of THEATRE ORGAN. Advertising copy should be mailed to Len Clark, 2231 N. Burling St., Chicago, Illinois 60614.

All other correspondence should be sent to ATOS National Headquarters, P.O. Box 1002, Middleburg, Virginia 22117. A separate ATOS telephone has been installed at the Middleburg address and will be answered only when I am there to talk with you. This removes the need of a person to person call and direct dialing will assure the same result. The number is Area code 703, 554-8321.

While my name may not be a household word in ATOS, I hope that the coming year will change that and find me renewing old friendships while meeting many members who are new to me. We have some of the finest people in the world in this organization and I look ahead with enthusiasm to the opportunity to work with them during the coming year.

ATOS
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Erwin A. Young, Jr.

an acre of seats in a palace of splendor!



(Photo courtesy the Helgeson collection)

Number 27 in a series – By Bill Peterson

THE ST. LOUIS THEATRE – St. Louis, Missouri

This 4000 seat house was designed by C.W. and George L. Rapp, and opened in 1925. The organ was a 4-manual Kimball. The theatre has been completely refurbished and is now named Powell Symphony Hall, the home of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

"GENII"

by Marvin Lautzenheiser

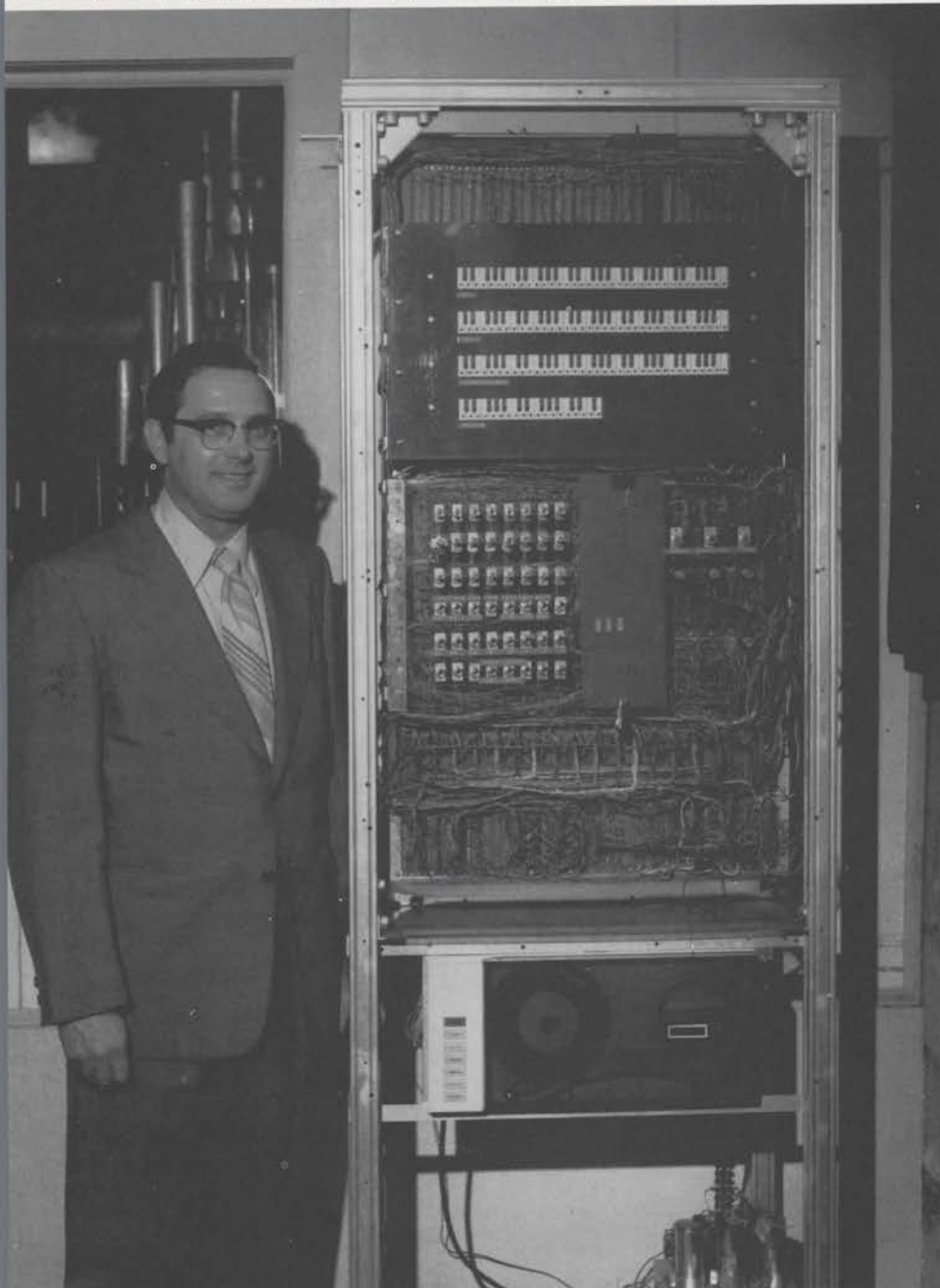
Introduction

Today computers are used to do all kinds of things from controlling flights to the moon to keeping records of our charge accounts. It is only natural, then, to try to develop a computer system to play a theatre pipe organ. The GENII System does just that. The music played by GENII is generated

from the score itself without copying, mechanically or electronically, an actual performance by a musician. Its capabilities include the playing of any notes on three keyboards and pedal-board, changing stop tabs, controlling the swell shades, and operating the untuned percussion and traps. Up to 40 of these things may be operated

simultaneously, giving, in effect, an organist with more than eight hands. It is with more than passing interest that we note that the computers involved in the GENII System are digital. In this system the meaning of the term "unit orchestra" on the Wur-litzer can come close to realization. Inasmuch as GENII is already playing music of an advanced level, the question now is "How well can a computer be taught to play the organ?" The remainder of this article will describe the GENII System.

Marvin Lautzenheiser with his "Genii." — (Photo by Richard Neidich.)



Development

The design of GENII began in 1966 with actual construction started in 1968. A multitude of concepts were analyzed and discarded before the

The most unusual feature of this summer's convention was GENII, the theatre-organ-playing computer built by Marvin Lautzenheiser. The precision clearing and setting up of the stop tabs invariably triggered an appreciative ripple while the flashing red lights on the keyboard display kept all eyes occupied. Marvin and his GENII received a standing ovation. So many ATOS'ers requested copies of the technical GENII Seminar that it was withheld from the initial convention coverage in order to present the paper in its entirety.

Editor

current design was adopted. Much of the electronics could be described as "Early American" with many of the parts salvaged from scrapped electronic gear. The MUSICTRAN language has been through three major overall designs leading to a rather generalized, flexible language which combines reasonable ease of use with a thorough control of the resulting music. The MARVEL computer program which

translates the data from punched cards to data on a digital tape has undergone continual modification for over two years.

With all the above work in the past, the task of generating good music via a computer-organist is apparently just beginning. An unbelievably large amount of experimentation has already been mapped out to determine, if possible, some of the mathematical aspects of "good" music.

Items yet to be done include a systematic study of the effects of note timing, overlap, and separation. A special processor is under construction to capture in computer-usable format digital data representing the performance of artists. From this, perhaps a few of the secrets of music may be deduced. Other explorations include the application of orchestra score to the organ via GENII to try to exploit some of the extensive electronic/mechanical skills now available. Of particular interest is the use of GENII to capture, edit, and replay music for making albums. With this capability, an artist may play into GENII, use the GENII computer programs to edit the playing, and replay the music for making the master audio tapes.

GENII Description

The GENII System is made up of six major components:

1. a language (MUSICTRAN) for translating score to data;
2. a computer program (MARVEL) which along with
3. an IBM 370/145 reformats the data;
4. a digital tape reader for reading reformatted data;
5. a controller (GENII) for interpreting reformatted data;
6. a 3/13 Wurlitzer pipe organ for making the music.

A brief description of each of these components follows.

I Musictran

MUSICTRAN is a language developed for the translation of music score into mathematical data for processing by a computer. It deals with seven categories of information:

1. Musical parts (melody, bass, rhythm, etc.)
2. Measures

3. Notes
4. Percussion, toys, and traps
5. Volume
6. Registration (stop tablets)
7. Orchestration (the combinations of all the above items).

Data translated via MUSICTRAN is punched into standard computer cards for processing by the MARVEL program. The translation from music score to punched card data involves the following decisions and operations:

1. Parts

A part is defined by its function such as melody, bass, etc., and is identified by a digit in the range one to nine. During orchestration the part number is used to specify the method of playing the part; that is, the keyboards, octaves, and styles to be used for the part.

2. Measures

A measure generally carries its normal music definition. However, natural measures are often broken into two sections to allow for orchestration changes at more convenient points, such as at the ends of phrases. Measures are identified by a 3-digit number and their sizes are given in computer counts. A normal music beat is defined as 64 computer counts. Thus, a measure in 4/4 time may have a length of 256 counts. Of course, a measure may be of any length required to accommodate the notes and styling to be played in that measure.

Each measure carries with it two metronome settings: the speed as of the beginning of the measure and the speed as of the end of the measure. These are used during data translation to give a smooth decrease or increase in speed throughout the measure. If beginning and ending speeds are the same, of course, no speed changes are recorded within the measure. Occasionally a normal measure will be subdivided into two or more computer measures to allow for several changes of pace within it.

3. Notes

Notes are translated to data by spelling out for each: the measure number to which it belongs, its starting time in the measure, the duration, the relative octave in which it is written, and the name of the note. Starting

times and durations are specified in computer counts; thus a quarter note's length could be coded in the range of 56 to 72 with the expected value of 64; its starting time could be any value from one to an upper bound which permits the note to be completed within the measure. Octaves are numbered from one to five (six in the case of top C) and specify the relative octave on the keyboard to be used. The names of the notes are their normal letter designations with 'x' used to denote sharps. Flats are not used as such; the corresponding sharps are substituted.

4. Percussion, Toys, and Traps

The special effects as bass drum, triangle, etc., are translated in the same manner as notes with a 3-character name substituted for the note, octave and name. These are thought of as having their own keyboard and are given a special part designation. Thus the specification of a percussion includes the measure identifier, the part identifier, the starting count, duration, and the effect's name.

5. Volume

The volumes of the two chambers are independently controlled and may be changed at any instant. The range of volumes from completely closed to fully open is designated by a number from zero to nine. The larger the number, the more open the given chamber will be. Only changes in volume need be specified, the GENII System maintains a given swell shade setting until a change occurs. Again, the volume controls are thought of as having their own keyboard and are given a special part designation. To specify a volume setting the user specifies the volume identifier along with the measure number, count within measure at which the change is to occur, the chamber abbreviation and the new setting number in the range zero to nine.

6. Stops

The stops are controlled by GENII by trapping the tablet on the console into the "on" or "off" position. To do this, a very short duration pulse is sent to the appropriate setter action magnet. The specification of the change of a stop includes a special part name; the measure identifier; the count within the measure when the change is to

occur; whether the stop is to turn on or off; the keyboard designation (Pedals, Accompaniment, Great, or Solo) and the stop name abbreviation. Unlike a setter action, only stop tabs that are to move need be energized; thus, very few are actuated for normal changes. The trapping of the stop tablets allows an easy, visual identification of those stops in use at any moment and also permits GENII to ignore the stops when no changes are being made. Manual couplers are not actuated by GENII, and they are never used in conjunction with GENII since GENII can provide any and all coupling desired.

7. Orchestration

The orchestration is the most sensitive area of translation in that it really is the point at which the union of music parts and instrument is made. A great flexibility with respect to couplers, attack, speed, etc. is available here to bring out musical variation without modifying the basic data.

The orchestration may be changed between any two measures. It does the following:

- a. assigns parts to keyboards
- b. assigns parts to octaves
- c. assigns transpositions of parts
- d. assigns attacks to individual parts
- e. assigns overall metronome adjustments
- f. defines number of computer counts per beat
- g. specifies coupling (a given part may be played on each of several keyboards at several octave levels if so desired)
- h. specifies pizzicato touch where desired

II Marvel

The MARVEL computer program is a set of over 1300 instructions which tells an IBM 370 how to translate the MUSICTRAN data cards into information on a digital tape. It does the following:

1. reads cards
2. computes switch numbers for each operation
3. applies couplers as specified in the orchestration cards
4. transposes parts as specified

5. applies parameters for touch (degree of legato, staccato, etc.)
6. calculates start and stop times for all operations
7. sorts data in order of increasing time
8. writes switch numbers and control data on tape in time sequence (A large amount of redundancy is introduced at this point to help insure accurate reproduction of the music.)
9. prints cards for reference
10. prints computed data (optional)

III IBM 370

The MUSICTRAN data is processed at a commercial computer center via the MARVEL program on an IBM 370 using approximately 100,000 bytes of core. The digital tapes are written at a density of 800 bytes (numbers) per inch. Processing time is approximately 20 cards per second. A typical composition may include 500 - 1000 cards taking 25 - 50 seconds to process.

IV Digital Tape Reader

The tapes are read at the Lautzenheiser studio via a PEC digital tape reader. The read rate is 12½ inches per second transferring up to 10,000 pieces of data per second to the GENII processor. A typical composition may run three minutes, use about 200 feet of tape and contain up to two million pieces of data.

V Genii

The GENII processor is a hand built electronic processor which accepts data from a digital tape transport, processes that data, and controls the pipe organ operation. The processor is made up of 152 printed circuit boards containing over 50 integrated circuits, 3000 diodes, 2000 transistors, 5000 resistors, 600 capacitors and a mile of wire. In addition, the cables connecting GENII to the pipe organ contain four miles of wire. The display panel contains over 250 light-emitting diodes. GENII has the following major elements:

1. tape read buffers
2. data checking circuits
3. data decoders
4. organ function memory circuits (512)

5. organ circuit switches (512, electronic)
6. display panel
7. test control circuits

Switching functions are controlled to such a timing accuracy as to become transparent to the music being created. Any operation may be started at the precise moment desired and may be held for any duration. The timing of any one note or operation is completely independent of the timings of the operations of other notes. Up to 40 notes and/or functions may occur simultaneously.

VI Wurlitzer Pipe Organ

The pipe organ controlled by GENII is a 3 manual 13 rank Wurlitzer which is installed in the Lautzenheiser studio in Springfield, Virginia. This organ was originally installed in the Canal Street Theatre in New York City in 1927. In 1931 it was moved to the Loew's Triborough Theatre in Queens, New York City. So far as is known it was last played there in the early 1940's. The Lautzenheisers purchased the organ in 1962 and have been playing it regularly since 1964.

GENII controls the following organ circuits:

1. 215 keys (3 - 61-note keyboards plus the 32-note pedal board)
2. 30 swell shades (2 sets, each having 9 steps)
3. 16 untuned percussions and sound effects
4. 90 stop tabs (using 180 circuits to trap the stop tablets into "on" or "off" positions)

This is a total of 429 functions; GENII has room to allow for nearly unlimited expansion in the number of circuits controlled.

Summary

The feasibility of a computer playing an organ has now been demonstrated. Unlike player pianos of the past, GENII has not less, but more, mechanical skill than a human artist. At this point, we have not endowed the computer with any true musical creativity. We have given the musician a new tool that permits him to release his creativity from the slavery of his physical capabilities. Perhaps GENII can be thought of as a new musical instrument, one that responds to digital data instead of digital manipulation of its keyboards. □



John DeMello

Hawaii's Own Theatre Organist

By Alice Blue and Stu Green

For fifty years John DeMello has been playing in Island theatres — come 'talkies', television, typhoons and wrecking balls.

From time to time one hears of an organist who refused to give up the theatre console come "talkies" and has managed to play more or less continuously in a theatre down to the present. Usually it's a somewhat nebulous and humorous reference to some small town where the natives are so backward they haven't heard about talking pictures. It's good for a smile but there is truth in the legend; there are such men.

Of course we know that a trio of

stalwarts, led by Dick Leibert, have played at the Radio City Music Hall in New York since its 1932 opening; and that Stan Kann presides at the St. Louis Fox, where organ music has been an intermission feature of the programs over the years.

But how about small towns? There's Ed Pegram up in Bozeman, Montana, doing a regular stint on the Ellen Theatre's 2/7 Wurlitzer and Billy Wright still going strong on a theatre Conn at the pipeless Eastland Theatre

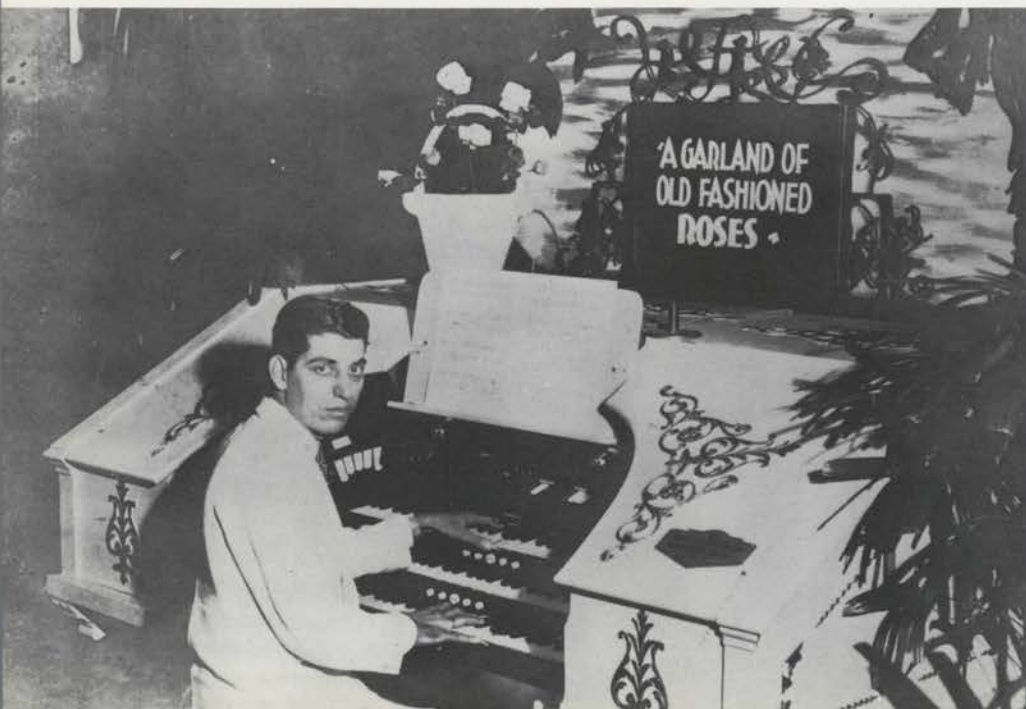
in West Covina, Calif. And Joe Bright has been playing at the Rialto in Alamosa, Colorado, since 1937 on a 2/7 Wurlitzer. There may be a few similar anachronisms, but not many.

Usually the best way to continue a theatre playing career after "talkies" was to take over a remaining job, one not yet made obsolete by automation. Anything to be in the theatre.

An organist aspiring to such ambitions could try ushering, taking tickets, running projectors or tackling management. Many a truncated organ career was transformed to an assistant managership. But the modulation from music to daily account sheets was an abrupt one, and only a few such recruits survived. The career changer had to be strongly motivated, deeply in love with his instrument, to survive very long. To keep it up for 40 years is some measure of the devotion involved.

Such a man is John DeMello; he is rounding out 50 years of playing organ in Island theatres. It started in 1922 when Honolulu's brand new Princess and Hawaii theatres opened. Both were equipped with medium-size Robert Mortons. Mainland organist Ed Sawtelle was a sensation at the Princess 4/17 Morton, and the life agreed

John dressed up the New Palace console for his 1932 Christmas Show.



Uncredited photos are from John DeMello's scrapbook.

with him; he remained for many years.

That same year another organist launched his career, but without fanfare. In a small house equipped with a tiny Fotoplayer, a personable Island lad interspersed his developing musical efforts with music played from rolls. Soft spoken John DeMello was anxious to learn all he could about playing for silent movies so he began studying. In a few years he was ready for the big time — then came sound. John made his decision; he would not permit this automation to drive him from his beloved music. He became involved in theatre management.

To dig into the DeMello biography, we recruited organist Alice Blue whose career paralleled John's while both played Hawaiian pipes in the mid-30's. Alice returned to the Islands a few years ago to play a Hammond X66 in the lounge of a posh suburban restaurant near Honolulu, the Pearl City Tavern, and found John DeMello still playing theatre pipes, and with a spare organ in storage which we'll get to later. Here's Alice Blue's story.

John DeMello must be one of the very few remaining theatre organists who has played organs in theatres during show time when the house was open from silent days to the present time non-stop.

Relatively unknown elsewhere, Johnny has been known and loved in Hawaii since his first job in 1922 when he was 18 at the Empire Theatre in Honolulu where, of course, he played for the silents. A small self-contained Fotoplayer was his instrument at first. Later, the house "went for broke" and installed a big Fotoplayer with huge sound cabinets on either side of the console.

In 1928 Johnny opened the \$15,000 Wicks 2-manual pipe organ at the Star Theatre in Kalihi, Honolulu, installed by Ware and McCreary. He had been studying pipes with Edwin Sawtelle who had opened the Princess Theatre Robert Morton in 1922.

According to a 1928 Honolulu newspaper the Wick's Pipe Organ Company of Highland, Ill., "represents the very latest ideas in theatre organ construction. It operates on direct electric action principle, making it one of the fastest-speaking organs made. The instrument is placed in two specially constructed swell chambers that are sound proof except for the tone openings, which are controlled by



Alice Blue's Island career ran parallel to John's in the '30s. It was through her life-long friendship with him that we are able to present his story. This 1968 photo shows Alice tickling the 88's for mainland ATOSers. (Friensehner Photo)

electric swell shutters." It had 3 swell shoes.

What became of this Wicks? We believe it was sold to an Oakland Mortuary.

In 1929 Johnny was transferred to the Kaimuki Playhouse, Honolulu, where he was featured on the 10-rank "Dukes Mixture" recently sold to and installed in the Methodist Church in Kailua. At the Playhouse (now the Kaimuki Theatre) Johnny produced novelty organ numbers, often adding vocalists. Among these was Gerald Blackshear. According to old theatre

Alice Blue describes this 3/10 in the Kaimuki Playhouse as a 'Dukes Mixture,' John, shown here in 1930, won great popularity with his personalized requests.



ads programming included music by such composers as Victor Herbert, Stephen Foster, Ethelbert Nevin, Sousa's Marches and Irving Berlin pops.

In 1931-32 the Theatre was advertising that the organist would play audience requests received by mail. Johnny's mail was tremendous, with requests such as, "Love Letters in the Sand", "Moonlight Becomes You", "It Happened in Monterey", "Hello Beautiful", "You Darling", "Guilty", and others. Many a young man impressed his girl by arranging with Johnny to play "our song" during the performance they attended.

In May, 1932, Johnny was transferred to the New Palace Theatre in Hilo, replacing Alice Blue who was shifted to the Hawaii Theatre in Honolulu.

Johnny remained at the console of the 7-rank Robert Morton at the New Palace for 8 years, producing solos and sizable stage shows, sing-alongs and Saturday morning "Mickey Mouse shows", which grew to tremendous popularity. Ice cream was served to hundreds of kids in the lobby!

In 1940 the Morton was removed from the Palace and installed in the beautiful new Hilo Theatre which opened with Johnny at the console. He added a real vibraharp and people are still talking of the beautiful sounds of pipes and vibes.

On April Fool's Day of 1960 the "tatsumi" that roared through Hilo's business section, taking lives and

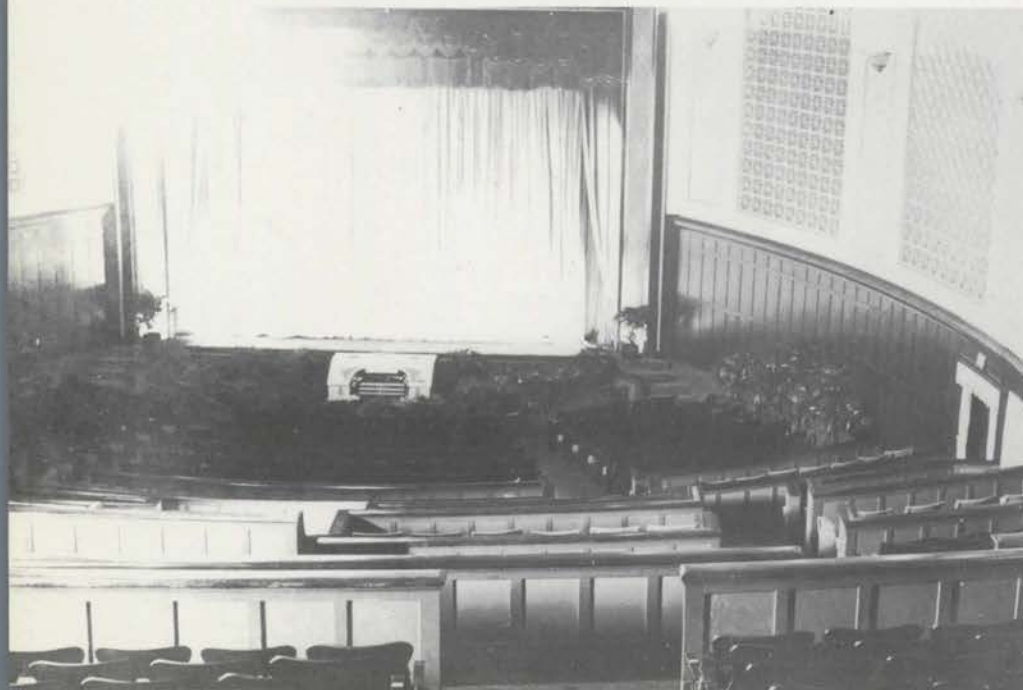


John poses at the heavily draped Waikiki theatre console in 1958.



This 1946 photo shows Johnny with his Vibraharp, playing the 3/7 Morton in the Hilo theatre. It was moved to the new theatre from the Palace for the Hilo's opening in 1940.

The New Palace theatre in Hilo as it appeared in March, 1933. John played the 3/7 Robert Morton for 8 years.



causing great destruction, washed the Morton's console out of the theatre, adding it to the rubbish and muck in the street. The pipes remained intact and were later bought by Roger Angell and installed in his Manoa, Honolulu, home with a new console from the mainland. Thereby hangs another story.

Johnny was transferred to the Liberty Theatre in Honolulu as house manager and organist where he carried on at an old model Hammond, with the vibraharp which had been removed from the Hilo theatre before the tidal wave. "It sounded like a funeral parlor," recalls John.

Then Johnny was moved to the beautiful Waikiki Theatre as assistant manager and organist where he remains as featured organist at the console of the 4/17 Robert Morton which had been moved from the Hawaii Theatre in 1938. Johnny is semi-retired now but on Fridays and Saturdays he gives out with special solos arranged to suit the mood of the feature picture. The audience, much of it tourists, is definitely and agreeably surprised to hear the big sound of pipes again in a movie house.

Johnny's predilection for draping the gold and white console in bright satin and glittering colored lights often bugs the buffs but they love him anyhow and as Johnny says, "How would the audience know the console is there if they can't see it? They'd think they were hearing the usual canned music." Incidentally, he's not related to orchestra leader Jack DeMello.

John DeMello's name should be in lights on the marquee but despite his rarity as a real theatre organist — not just an organist who plays theatre organs — he goes more or less unsung and being of a gentle, modest nature he doesn't seem to mind. He is quite content with a rather dim spotlight and a momentary screen credit along with a small display card in the theatre entrance area. Johnny never was a "show off," else you would have heard of him through the years. He is an islander, born a long time ago on Kauai and happy to live the rest of his life in Hawaii with Olga, the pretty girl he married during his Hilo years. They own a lovely home in Honolulu where Johnny's gardening hobby has created a fragrant jungle of tropical plants on a hillside overlooking the blue Pacific. With the cooperation of Consolidated

Amusement Company, John DeMello has kept alive Honolulu's unusual saga of the theatre organ.

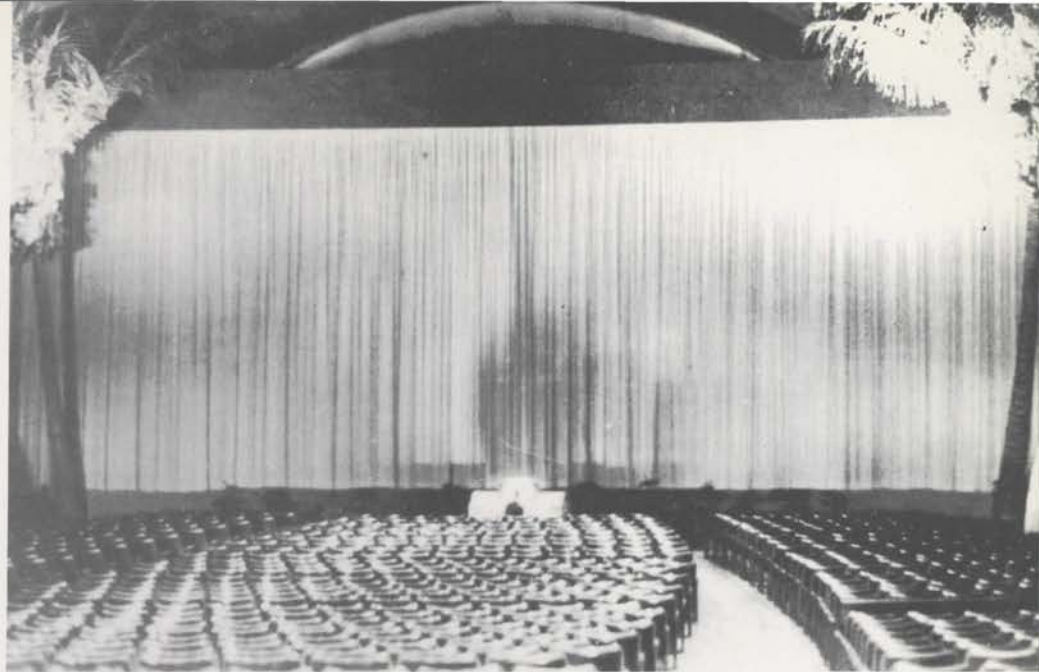
That's where Alice Blue's account ends. It was written some time before her departure from Hawaii for residence in Tonga. Meanwhile John DeMello became involved in events which led to the installation and restoration of a second Robert Morton in a Hawaiian theatre. Recall that in 1922 both the Princess and Hawaii theatres opened with Mortons.

The Waikiki Theatre opened in 1936 with John DeMello playing a Hammond. To improve the music, the Morton organ was moved in 1938 from the Hawaii Theatre to the Waikiki. The near twin Morton remained in the Princess Theatre until the steel ball arrived to bludgeon it to a parking lot in the mid '60s. Fortunately, the Morton was saved. It was stashed on the stage of the Hawaii Theatre, and there the parts remained. The Hawaii still had chambers intact from the previous installation but no effort was made to set up the Princess organ in the Hawaii. Years passed; there were rumors of a contract to get the project moving, but nothing happened.

Early in 1970, Alice Blue decided on some independent action. She approached Consolidated Theatres management and suggested that perhaps mainland help was in order. She found Consolidated's John Traut and Bob Weeks sympathetic. She was authorized to seek an organ expert from the mainland who would get the installation started in exchange for a roundtrip ticket to Honolulu.

In Portland, long time organ technician Bill Blunk was approached just as he was about to go on vacation. Instead he went with his son, Ken, to Hawaii and in 10 days of March 1970, with some local help, they had wrestled much of the heavy parts into the chambers and generally made a solid start toward getting the Morton in the Hawaii playing, a story which hasn't been chronicled previously. John DeMello's help during this time was invaluable. Bill and Ken would have remained longer to continue the work they started but Bill strained his back from the heavy work, so he and Ken returned to Portland and a week in traction for Bill. That was his vacation.

The start made by the Blunks and John broke the period of neglect and soon ATOS help was forthcoming. The instrument has been playing since the



Interior of the Waikiki Theatre in Honolulu. Organs in Hawaii are forever moving. This Morton was originally in the Hawaii Theatre. It's John's favorite.

summer of 1971, a credit to the Aloha chapter members, Alice Blue, and Bill and Ken Blunk.

Naturally, the man to put the newly installed Morton through its paces had to be the man who had never deserted the concept of an organ playing in a theatre — John DeMello. The honorary membership bestowed on him by the Aloha chapter is well deserved.

John DeMello has no intention of quitting the console although his management activities have been "semi retired". He is always available for

intermissions at one of the organ-equipped theatres and sometimes during "big draw" films the organ interlude must be cut so there will be an audience turnover during the break. Too many prefer to stay for the organ music.

Fifty years is a long time to devote to a profession which became an avocation, but John DeMello wouldn't change a thing if he could do it again.

"Well, perhaps I'd change one thing if I could do it again," corrects John, "I might hope talkies wouldn't be invented the next time around." □

John DeMello today. He still caresses the Waikiki Morton manuals regularly, and he is delighted in the wave of enthusiasm which culminated in the establishment of the Aloha Chapter of ATOS. — (Aloha Chapter Photo)



JESSE CRAWFORD—An Appreciation

by John Muri

The influence of Jesse Crawford has diminished but little in the decade since his death on April 28, 1962. Pronounce his name *Jessie* as many people did and still do, or *Jess*, as people who knew him and worked with him did — that name, if nothing else, has remained a somewhat awe-inspiring symbol of something not completely understood by those who never saw him or heard him play. Two contemporary organists have tried to reproduce his playing by copying the registrations, tempos, and arrangements of some of his recordings, but none has been able to assume the smoothness of style, the deceptive simplicity that covers a real complexity and apply them in new, original work. Next to Crawford's, most of the playing of his imitators thumps along like a square wheel, even though the imitations are good.

How could such relatively tame-sounding music ever become so popular? At the Chicago Theatre, Crawford was consistently a big box-office draw. Organists flocked to listen. The first afternoon show (with Crawford soloing at about 1:30) was notable for its daily row of organists sitting before the console. Many a time did I sit there myself, although I usually preferred the third row in the balcony for better sight and sound. It was fun to see the organists bending over and craning their necks to see Crawford work. I did my own share of it, and it became a real problem to decide where to sit when the second console was added for Mrs. Crawford. Jesse had a way of switching back and forth between consoles when playing for pictures, and you never knew whether you would be lucky enough to be close to him. Since the theatre is extremely wide, you might as well have been a city block away if you had picked the wrong console to watch. When he played for a feature picture, you generally heard ravishing solo stops putting out catchy melody — never too loud, and usually quite subdued. I never heard him make the organ distract attention from the film. It was all the more effective later when he cut loose on his solo.

The nature of the music business made Crawford's job a natural success. Music publishers courted him to feature

their new songs, for they knew the value of getting ten thousand people a day to hear their new tunes. The Lyon and Healy music store often had a window display of the new song Crawford was currently featuring, and they sold lots of copies during the run. To get your song featured at the Chicago Theatre was a big step toward success in the Chicago music market. There were plenty of new tunes from which to select — more than enough good ones — so Crawford didn't have trouble finding material.

Once in a while he went classical, but it wasn't often. Most of his classical work was adequate, but not particularly well done. He schmaltzed up the "Meditation" from *Thais* on occasion, and he put together an easy version of the then-new "Rhapsody in Blue." Audiences would sit still for Tchaikowsky's "March Slav" because the organ sound was big and the electricians would change the colors of the house-lighting to match the music: blue for peaceful, red for violent, and full-up golden-white for a big sunburst finish. It was a light-show in the early twenties, demonstrating again that the modern psychedelics and strobes are nothing new. They weren't even new in 1924. The whole theatre was equipped with multi-colored cove dome lights wired in multi-circuits, so that one could always use the lights or the revolving or sliding pillars when things got a bit dull. Crawford always put some classical material in his Sunday noon one-hour organ concerts, but he didn't have to play those very often, since other organists from the B and K Theatre circuit were engaged to perform. Many jealous organists often accused him of not being able to read music and of being a musical faker, but their carping was never documented and their sniping didn't hurt him a bit.

He must have hated the community-singing movement. There is no use trying to play with style when accompanying four thousand untrained voices singing songs like "Sweet Adeline" or "Singing in the Rain." In 1926, Henri A. Keates did little other than accompany singing at the Oriental Theatre (around the corner from the

Chicago), and the practice was spreading to all the theatres that could feature an organist — except the Chicago. When Crawford returned for a week's run after he had opened the New York Paramount, he played a straight solo, made for listening. I was sitting in the balcony at a matinee, when a number of people tried to sing along with the organ. Crawford stopped playing, turned around on his Howard seat and said, "I will not finish the solo unless the hoodlums in the balcony stop the singing." He got a good hand of applause for that, and he was able to finish the solo. He could get away with it, but not the rest of us. We played for community singing — and how I hated the low standard of work it demanded — till we all got chased out of the theatres. I'm sure Crawford would have agreed that song-leading is expendable but that showmanship involving art and serious preparation is always rare and a better commodity.

I met him but once. It was in 1925 at his office backstage on the third floor of the Chicago Theatre. It was large enough to contain a large roll-top desk with telephone, a long settee, chairs, a piano, and dressing facilities. He was very business-like and reserved with me, but not aloof. I had gotten to know Arthur Gutow (second organist at the Chicago) fairly well and often visited the theatre mornings before it opened to sit in on Gutow's practice sessions, after which we went out for breakfast. Crawford was obliging, but he did not encourage familiarity or further contact. He was too busy a man for small talk. He would help you if he could (as he did me when I was trying to locate E.R. Howard, inventor of the organ seat), but that would be the end of it. At the console he rarely and sparingly smiled at his audiences, but that was acceptable in the "carriage trade" house that the Chicago was. Unprepossessing in appearance (I never saw him in anything other than a dark suit) and unpretentious at the console, he was a model of dignity and poise. He never played the clown. I wonder if show business today would have a place for such a performer with such a manner. That it seems not to have one is but one more sounding of the depth of our cultural degradation. As Mark Antony said of Caesar, we have to say of Jesse Crawford: "When comes such another?" □



Entrance to "Bar" at the El Panama Hotel in Panama City.

The story of Wurlitzer opus 2043 is a long one. Not in terms of words, but in miles. While this instrument may not have traveled as many kilometers as the famous BBC Moller with Reginald Foort, it is one of the two Wurlitzers to have been sent to the Republic of Panama.

The installation is, in a word, classic. The organ started out in 1928 as a 3/27 in the Stanley-Warner Theatre at Atlantic City, New Jersey, where it enjoyed the place of honor as one of the two largest three manual theatre pipe organs (both are twenty-seven ranks) made in North Tonawanda. Its twin is still believed to be in its original place of residency, the Stanley-Warner Theatre in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

The console is a custom design by Wurlitzer. The three manual key-desk is mounted in a four manual shell, therefore the back board is higher than normal allowing for two rows of stopkeys to be mounted on it. The console is very impressive with an array of 251 stop tablets, and recently had new keyboards and a pedal clavier installed. The second touch is inoperative.

Moving to the percussions, one interesting, noticeable fact is the absence of tuned sleigh bells. It is doubtful if it ever had any since the gang switches do not reflect any trace of them. It is uncertain if these were eliminated from the original specifica-

El Bombarde

THE MIGHTY WURLITZER OF PANAMA

By Douglas M. Powers

tions. Another unusual item is that this organ has two marimbas and two xylophones, which play as if they were one marimba and one xylophone. The additional pair came out of a Wurlitzer in New Rochelle, New York.

There are many assorted facets of interest about the Panama Wurlitzer. Between 1962 and the present, there have been nine steady organists. They are in order of appearance: Leroy Lewis, Lyn Larsen, Bill Kaufmann, Pepe (Bolivia) Bustamente, Leroy Lewis (again), Tom Wayne, Ismael De La Rose, Emilia Arrevelo, Bernie Kirk-

wood and most recently, John Fisher.

The Oboe Horn was re-voiced to simulate a trumpet in order to provide a better balance between the two chambers. There are ten tremulants, five in each chamber and a total of 1,826 pipes. The console, as previously mentioned, has 251 stop tablets and also boasts three highly unusual trick couplers: Great to Solo fourth, fifth, and sixth! These were installed for Leroy Lewis' own arrangement of "Ebb Tide" and even though still operable, they are seldom used. The relay room is in the basement. The

General view of the Panama installation. The overhead grille is the tone chute. Pipework can be seen through windows.



organ has three pizzicato relays and the combination action was completely overhauled recently and boasts such goodies as an all-electric relay mechanism and an eight stage electric relay crescendo action which is much more reliably dealt with at the console. The blower is a 20 horsepower Spencer with a static wind pressure rated at 25 inches. One thing is for certain — this organ will never be starved for air! The man in charge of the organ's upkeep, Bernie Kirkwood, has had this duty for five years and has done an outstanding job.

Going back to around 1960, John Doyle, Leroy Lewis, Ted Campbell and Jack Weiss took part in removing the organ from the 3,000 seat theatre and John personally flew most of the instrument down to Panama in his own DC-4. While transporting the organ into the Republic of Panama, a



Leroy Lewis at the 3/27 Wurlitzer he helped place in Panama.
(Photo: Courtesy Rev. George D. Mac Neal)

EL PANAMA WURLITZER

Ranks — 27

Solo Chamber — 14 Ranks

Listed from rear to front of chamber

Brass Trumpet
Tibia Clausa
Solo String Celeste
Solo String
English Post Horn
Kinura
Brass Saxophone
Krumet
Vox Humana
Clarinet
Quintadena Celeste (missing)
Open Diapason
Quintadena
Orchestral Oboe

Main Chamber — 13 Ranks

Listed from rear to front of chamber

Tuba Horn
Diaphonic Diapason
Tibia Clausa
Muted Viol Celeste
Flute Celeste
Muted Viol
Flute
Vox Humana
Oboe Horn
Viol Celeste
Violin d'Orchestra
Voix Celeste
Salicional

funny, yet nearly disastrous thing happened. The customs inspectors were more than just stumped when they got a look at the pipes. Since there is no custom law governing the entry of pipe organs, per se, the inspectors somehow had to fit the organ into their list of acceptables and non-acceptables. Panamanians are notorious for doing things the hard way — at least this writer thinks so — and in classifying the organ, one of these shrewd officials decided it was not a pipe organ at all, for this was far too simple! It was, of all things, a collection of rockets and rocket launchers and these pseudo-spies were attempting to smuggle them into the country!

After things cooled down and the instrument was parked in its various hiding places throughout the El

Panama Hotel, a major undertaking was ahead of them — rebuilding and installing.

Some two years later, the organ was ready for its debut. In July, 1962, the El Panama Wurlitzer spoke for the first time to an awed and delighted crowd, and to this day, continues to allure thousands of persons from all over the world, reigning as one of Panama's tourist highlights. It also continues to provide a welcome atmosphere for more frequent visitors.

As one enters the El Bombarde, the bar area, he is immediately attracted by red spotlights focused on the beautiful three manual console done in ivory and gold with walnut finishing around and inside the horseshoe, the craftsmanship clearly evident. Then the onlooker is struck by another

Main chamber of this unusual Wurlitzer organ.



magnificent view ... twenty seven ranks of choice Wurlitzer pipework and ornamented percussions of all types. To the left is the solo chamber with its bright brasswork and dominating diaphones, to the right is the main chamber, and the center reveals a room full of percussions. Each chamber is separated from the viewer by large glass windows. Some of the pipes are finished with metallic paint, and the hammers of the xylophone, glockenspiel, marimba and piano, are painted fluorescent colors which, under



The author seated at the Powers' home installation, a 4/14 Wurlitzer/Moeller.

black light, produce quite a dazzling effect.

The magical sounds from this work of art sweep down from the shutters into a small area in the ceiling and then flow into the bar area. The 16' Bourdon and 8' Flute offsets are hidden, lying on their backs in the ceiling area, and produce quite a startling effect when played - standing waves and all!

Indeed, hearing this instrument is an even more exciting experience than seeing it. And here is where I must end, for no one can relate the true sounds of a theatre organ in words. Why not go down to Panama and take in this marvelous installation and find out how it really sounds for yourself. The address is: El Panama Hotel, Via Espanoa 111, phone: 23-1660. By the way, there is more in Panama than a Wurlitzer but that's not the point of this story. The point is that there is a Wurlitzer very much alive and well in Panama!

OCTOBER, 1972

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THEATRE ORGAN

15

VOX POPS



Conducted by Stu Green

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.

Eddie Dunstedter was deeply touched early in August by his unexpected 75th birthday present from the Senate of the California Legislature. No one could deny he had earned the accolade represented by the Resolution prepared by the Rules Committee of that August body: "WHEREAS, Mr. Edward J. Dunstedter has earned the



EDDIE DUNSTEDTER - (Stufoto)

name over the years of 'Mr. Pipe Organ' there follows a page of highlights covering Eddie's music-rich career, and closes with, "RESOLVED by the Senate Rules Committee, that the Members commend Edward J. Dunstedter for the enjoyment he has brought to millions over the years." The very official document bears the Great Seal of California and is signed by Committee Chairman James R. Mills and two legislators from Eddie's home area, Lou Cusanovich and Frank Lanterman.

Interviewed in his Reseda, Calif. trailer park home Eddie observed that he had been promoted to "Official Minnesotan" long ago, and "now I'm an official Californian too, recognized by the state's highest body of lawmakers. It's a most pleasant experience."

Another pleasant experience for Eddie during August was the celebration of 55 years of matrimony to wife Viva, whose project these days is maintaining Eddie's health, following his recovery from a heart attack two years ago. Asked how he felt about living with one woman for so long, Eddie grumbled, in characteristic Dunstedter style, "I think I'll keep her."



In Erie, Pennsylvania, the publication of Gannon College, the Gannon Knight, took cognizance of a gift to the college by a member of its staff, a maintenance man with the descriptive name of Joe Luckey. A theatre organ buff since childhood, Joe kept a careful eye on the 3-manual organ in the local Shea's Theatre. Biding his time he waited until the theatre wanted to sell the well-preserved instrument, then put in his bid - \$300.00. It was accepted. Joe couldn't conceal his intended gift as a surprise; he needed a lot of space to store it, so he presented it to Gannon College. It was gratefully accepted. After 3½ years of rebuilding Joe has been installing the organ in a college building over the summer. It's set to be "premed" just about now. The Gannon Knight describes ATOSer Joe Luckey as "Gannon's most popular maintenance man." We think we know why.



"The Big Show of 1936" which played the San Francisco Orpheum for two weeks in August got mixed reviews concerning the vaudeville.

There was Jackie Coogan as a stand-up comic, Cass Daley and Beatrice Kay as song belters, the Ink Spots (still "honeychiling", Virginia O'Brien with her straight-on deadpan vocalizing, unclad Sally Rand and her famous fans, Allan Jones as MC and vocalist (yes, the "Donkey Serenade") and durable Vince Barnett in a plastered airline pilot skit.

The Chronicle's show biz reporter, Paine Knickerbocker, described it as "spirited and good humored" but lacking in comedy. The same sheet's columnist Herb Caen was less kind, stating whimsically that "... the show wasn't very good, because it wasn't half bad," whatever that means. But he was appreciative of the "Mighty Morton theatre organ" as played by Tiny James despite sometimes suggestive terms:

"Tiny James took his place at the mighty Morton organ, with its keyboards like the controls of a 747, and every freak and queen in the place screamed in ecstasy. What an organ! His hands caressed it, drawing one old song after another from its murky depths, a true master, his left foot snaking back and forth on the bass pedals. Mr. James is called 'Tiny' because he's so huge. Got the picture?"

Yes, NorCalChap ATOSers were deeply involved in readying the 4-manual Morton for the show.



An item from the Delaware Valley Chapter's newsletter, "The Lift," illustrates another milestone in the continuing relaxation between advocates of straight and theatre organs. The "Lift" announces on October 29 concert sponsored jointly by the ATOS chapter and the Southeastern Chapter



Shirley Hannum. Mediator in a no longer fashionable war.

of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), champions of the orthodox organ. It will be a theatre organ concert held at the Lansdowne theatre in Lansdowne, near Philly, and played on the 3/9 Kimball by youthful Shirley Hannum, house organist at the Lansdowne for six years and a student of the late, great Leonard MacClain. Her program will be purely theatre organ music with no emphasis on the untremulated Diapason because of the untrem'd guests. Shirley will also accompany a silent comedy, "Teddy at the Throttle."

Such difference-burying events are increasing in frequency and its good to see the hatchet going underground everywhere. It wasn't always thus; in the '20s, theatre and straight organ addicts were continually at one another's throats, fanned by national organ publications. The rancor generated died slowly.

So thanks, Shirley, the AGO chapter and the Delaware Valleyites, for your forward step for organophiles.

Our favorite circus organist, Colonel Harry Jenkins, recovering from an intestinal ailment in an Anchorage, Alaska, USAF Base Hospital, hated to relinquish his place at the plug-in which accompanies the DeWayne Bros. circus for even one show but he developed "a bellyache decidedly unlike the green apples kind" and it took surgery to unscramble his knotted tummy. He'll be back on the job by mid-September, cueing dog acts, high wire, trapeze artists, elephants, horse acts, clowns and monkeys. Son Harry Jr. (a former "gorilla" in the DeWayne one-ringer) will join dad to help with the heavy chores of wrestling speakers and console during set-up and striking operations. Colonel Harry's big top adventures were chronicled in "The Circus is Coming," June 1971 issue of this mag.

Central New Yorkers will have an opportunity to sample the enduring charisma of George Wright's individual stylings on Nov. 4, when George plays one of his infrequent concerts on the Rochester Auditorium theatre's 4/22 Wurlitzer. The booking was announced by the Rochester Theatre Organ Society's talent director, Gary Haines. George hasn't been heard much on pipes since his '71/'72 winter concert series was cancelled by the fire which



George Wright. Rochester bound. — (Stufoto)

burned out the solo chamber of the Pasadena Rialto theatre's now gone 2/10 Wurlitzer a few days before the series was scheduled to start.

But there's always the 1973 ATOS Convention in Portland for the rest of us. George is tentatively set for a convention concert.

The tuning tool that organ builder Dan Papp used for over 30 years on the famous New York Paramount theatre and studio Wurlitzers will be duplicated and made available to organ buffs if there is enough interest, according to ATOSer Jack Bethards. The knife-like tool was given to Ben Hall by Dan Papp during the installation of Ben's "Little Mother" Wurlitzer and, in turn, given to Bethards who found it ideal for tuning jobs with just the right length and shape for every hard-to-reach reed or flue. Bethards requests that anyone interested in having the 18-inch steel tool for \$8.00 postpaid should drop him a card at 472 Tehama Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94103. Send no money now because Jack must first determine whether interest is widespread enough to warrant production. If the interest is there, Jack intends to donate all profits from sales to the ATOS projects fund in memory of Dan Papp.

One of the pleasant aspects of an ATOS convention is the resulting communication among members who are normally geographically separated. For example, we have learned of the hospitality of our secretary, Mary Bowles. She met Joe Brite and Jimmy Cantu, respectively organist and manager of the Rialto theatre in Alamosa, Colorado, and after the convention invited them to the Bowles home in Lost Lake, New Jersey for a listen to her rapidly expanding library of historical interview of tapes with T.O. prominenti. Joe, who has been playing the 2/7 Wurlitzer at the Rialto since 1937, was especially impressed with a biographical interview Mary made with Milton Charles, who now lives in Southern, Calif. Such incidents, multiplied many times over, add much sparkle to our annual meeting; the theme being "Getting to Know You".

In California there's a Wurlitzer in a motorcycle shop. Clear across the country in Eatonville, New Jersey, there's a two-manual Robert Morton gracing Ed Mahn's bicycle shop. That's variety with a continental spread!

The Associated Press in June put on its nationwide wire a lengthy piece on the 3/22 Wurlitzer in Joe Koons' Motorcycle Shop in Long Beach, California. Joe can expect an increase of interested folks to drop in on Saturday evenings (no admission) to hear the monster. Also distributed to member newspapers was a picture showing a happy Joe at the console, surrounded by motor bikes.

The School of the Ozarks at Pt. Lookout, Mo. incorporated the feature about its theatre pipe organ, which ran in the February 1972 THEATRE ORGAN, in its brochure advertising its "Music For a Sunday Afternoon" programs during July. Organist Bert Buhrman was featured at the Wurlitzer in all five programs which often crammed 1200 in the 100-seat hall. He says that the staff virtually wore itself out doing publicity work for spots on nine radio stations, commercial-type spots on two TV stations, and interviews on a third. Bert and his colleagues benefited from effective promotion and publicity which are so essential to the theatre organ cause.



Debbie Lynn launches her musical career with a smile and confidence.

Speaking of George's Rialto theatre concerts, one was memorable for one of his capers. He always maintained two-way communication with his audiences. He'd ask someone he knew to be in the audience how long it had been since he'd heard the tune being played. The answer would usually come back in embarrassed tones. But occasionally George would pick a winner from the audience purely by chance. At one concert he saw a pretty little girl a few rows back and invited her to come to the console and play a solo. What results he expected aren't known, but the child marched to the console, seated herself and with much self assurance played as good a rendition of "Alley Cat" as the basic material allowed. Not one clinker sounded forth; she played with remarkable authority. It all came off so well that many in the audience thought it was a prepared act, but it wasn't. No one was more surprised than George Wright.

Now, less than two years later, Debbie Lynn, now pushing 13, has launched her own playing career with a concert played on a theatrical plug-in at the home of her grandparents in Riverside, Calif. Before an audience of 75 invited guests, Debbie played a variety concert with the confidence of an old pro, ranging from standards ("Old Black Magic") to current pops ("Love Story" theme) to such esoteric

and difficult works as "Fanfare" by Richard Purvis. Her encore was dedicated to her inspiration, George Wright. "Alley Cat", naturally.



Bad news from Toronto. Correspondents Dave Vuckson and John Holywell report that the 2000 seat Odeon-Carlton theatre there will be torn down next summer to make way for a high rise building. The 3/19 Hillgreen-Lane theatre organ is for sale (it is in the most recently built category - 1948). Organist Colin Corbett, who has played it regularly for years, is shocked by the development. Dave reports that the 4/28 Warren organ in the Imperial theatre is to be given by Famous Players to the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto to be installed in the Coliseum building, when the Imperial becomes six small houses soon. That leaves Toronto without an organ in a theatre. Of course there's Shea's Wurlitzer safe in the Casa Loma.

Enthusiasts must now go forth from Toronto to forage for organs to repair. Two have been located, long neglected in Hamilton, Ontario, theatres, the Capitol and Palace. A group headed by Paul Locke is working on one of them, reports Dave.



In New York, solid Wurlitzer exponent Dick Loderhose, with circa 42 ranks of Wurlitzer in his Jamaican Estates home (21 of them Crawford-nurtured), wondered what could be good about a Robert Morton organ. For years he had heard much favorable comment about the brand, but after all - Wurlitzer! Was there any other make?! Yet, so many knowledgeable organ veterans praised Mortons.

After hearing a particularly lush Morton during the 1970 convention in New York, he began to have second thoughts and when Dick Loderhose has second thoughts they build and build.

The curiosity culminated in the purchase in August of the 3/19 Morton originally installed in 1929 in Lowe's Fairmont theatre. Curiously, Dick had removed and sold the organ five years ago to several customers, mostly to fellow enthusiast Henry Holzberger. But, with Dick's new determination, like magic, all the parts were re-assembled and the adhesive magnate bought himself a Morton.

Evaluating the qualities of the Morton and comparing it with a Wurlitzer are still in the future, however. Dick has no room in his studio and plans to move West are still gathering. So the new acquisition was moved "temporarily" to Dick's glue warehouse, beside six other stored organs.

"I'm in a sticky business" says Mr. Loderhose.



During her well-attended 3-evening August garden concerts at a home in Pasadena, Calif. organist Mildred Alexander confessed she had taken drastic action to squelch any remaining supplies of a record which has returned to haunt her many times. Her "Thoroughly Fabulous Millie" platter, she insists, should never have been released, mainly because the left side of the pipe organ used was not in tune with the right side. She was horrified at the clash of dissonance during the playback but was assured that one side of the stereo track could be de-emphasized to decrease the fault. So, the record got into release but the flaw was still quite audible. It resulted in some quite negative reviews and has continued to haunt her wherever she meets discriminating organ fans.

Tiring of "the Albatross around my neck," Millie decided on drastic action. She rounded up all possible

remaining pressings of the offending disc. Then she took one out of its jacket and dropped it in a neighbors swimming pool; it sank. Armed with this knowledge she accepted an invitation for a cruise in the Pacific off San Diego. Her friends aboard the launch saw her lugging several heavy boxes. When the boat was well out to sea, Millie was seen scaling black discs over the waves. "Got six bounces out of some," reported Millie.

Thus ends the sad saga of the "Thoroughly Fabulous Millie" platter — except for one thing; her disposal of her stock now makes the platter a collector's item. Wonder if bootleg pressings will appear?

In Los Angeles, Ken and Jenice Rosen proved that patience and thorough canvassing of one's home area can still pay off. Ken, a solid pipe enthusiast, has attended concerts since he was in knepants, always longing to own his own instrument. Now married and on his own, Ken Rosen determined to leave no stone in his home area unturned in his search for an organ within his price range and geographical area. Luckily Ken married a girl who shares his enthusiasm. It took a long time but finally the Rosens struck pay dirt only a few miles from their Northridge home. A North Hollywood church would part with its style D (divided) special (7 rank) Wurlitzer. Minus clackers, traps and sound effects, it was otherwise intact and well preserved although the original Orchestral Oboe is now a Dulciana. Ken learned

that the Wurlitzer had been moved from the Hollywood "Pig'n Whistle" restaurant directly to the church by organ man Pat Sullivan years ago. It will be some time before Ken and Jenice hear their Wurlitzer voice but the pride of owning a pipe organ showed clearly when they posed for a console photo.



Norm Bolton plays a few chords for Times-Union reporter Barbara O'Reilly before turning off the blower and fleeing before the rising Genesee River.

(Rochester Times-Union Photo)

The floods which followed Hurricane "Agnes" through the eastern seaboard during June, posed quite a threat for theatre organ owners when the water rose ominously close. In Chili, N.Y. near Rochester, N.Y. Norm Bolton had to evacuate his residence near the raging Genesee River. Inside remained a 2/6 Kohl organ which once played in Rochester's Empress Theatre. The water affected the blower, but the remainder of the instrument escaped unscathed. Norm employed fans to dry out the blower mechanism. It was reported in the daily press that AT&T used hair driers to dry wet cables, so if any ATOS owner of a pipe organ experiences similar difficulty in the future, this is a system which works for the pros.

ATOS conventioners are still talking about the remarkable artistry displayed by Dr. C.A.J. Parmentier. Equally at home on pipes or electronics, he showed his audiences what an old

master sounds like. Dr. & Mrs. Parmentier recently moved to Jackson Heights, N.Y.

Organist Esther Higgins, one of our faithful New Jersey reporters, advises that the October 1972 issue of "Good Old Days" magazine is scheduled to run an article about theatre organs in the "golden era" compiled by journalist Harry Wilkenson of Marblehead, Mass. It deals with such greats as Ann Leaf, Lew White, Jesse Crawford and Roy Frazier who played at Boston's Keith Memorial theatre way back when, with photos of each. If interested parties can't locate a copy on their news stands, drop a line to Tower Press, Box 248 Sealbrook, New Hampshire 02874. Unfortunately, usually reliable reporter Higgins omitted a bit of important information — the price.

One of the busiest young organists in the San Francisco area is Warren Lubich. This talented lad ranges the West Coast playing concerts, staff jobs and stints at pizza parlors. He has a recent 2-night concert at the Seattle Granada Organ Loft to his credit and just finished a 10-month engagement playing the 3/13 Robert Morton in the Marin "Pizza Pub". At present he's playing only one pipe job, a Friday night concert preceding the silent movie presentation at the Avenue theatre 3/14 Wurlitzer in San Francisco. Sandwiched in are numerous high-level offices in the Bay Area organ clubs, not to mention scattered plug-in demo concerts.

Wonder what he does in his spare time?



WARREN LUBICH



Ken, Jenice and their Wurlti.

Don Robinson, ATOS stalwart in Utica, N.Y., and mentor of "The Organ Loft" radio program, regrets having missed the July convention, but he enlisted the aid of Lloyd Klos, via tape recorder, to get a resume of the big show, which was aired for the program's listeners. This is the second year Don has enlisted Lloyd's help.

This year, Rochester's radio station WHAM is observing 50 years on the air. As part of that observance, a 2½-hour chronological program was aired on July 24. A segment was devoted to Rochester's best-remembered theatre organist, Tom Grierson, who was heard announcing and playing a classical number at the Wurlitzer in the RKO Palace in the early Thirties. The organ in the twenties and thirties possessed a sound unlike any Wurlitzer — soft and ballady. Since its ownership by RTOS and installation in the Auditorium Theatre, its voices were juiced up until it sounds a true Wurlitzer.

In Hollywood, Lloyd Del Castillo is still walking around Seventh Heaven after being informed of his being named to the Theatre Organists' Hall of Fame. "I'm very grateful and appreciative of this honor," he says. Del informs us that a new recording of his, done on the Joe Koons' Long Beach cycleshop Wurlitzer, for Concert Recording, is scheduled for fall.

It might cause a double take but there among the classical music events advertised in the Fine Arts Concert Series brochure was the unmistakable photo of a theatre organ horseshoe, and seated before it was South Eastern College faculty member J. Marion Martin, presenting "A return to the Palace," complete with a vocal group, a sing-along, and two silent comedies. Read on and discover that Mr. Martin was once house organist at Duke University's Quadrangle theatre, and that this is a return engagement "by special demand" for the past president of the North Carolina Chapter of ATOS. Nice to learn that the phrase "liberal arts" has finally taken on real meaning, another step toward cultural acceptance of the theatre organ. □



**"SCORPIO" SCENES FILMED
AT
ALEXANDRIA ARENA**

Alexandria (Virginia) arena, home of Jimmy Boyce's Mighty 4/34 Wurlitzer, was recently the location for filming of scenes for the movie "Scorpio" starring Burt Lancaster and directed by Michael Winner. Jimmy put theatre organ front and center as he played two special numbers entitled "The Spectators" and "Roller Rink" written by Jerry Fielding for the Wurlitzer pipe organ. Several skating scenes were filmed with many extras and featuring Jimmy at his fantastic Wurlitzer providing the music. The entire Wurlitzer pipe work was floodlighted permitting excellent shots to thrill all theatre organ buffs. At one of the breaks in the work Jimmy had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Lancaster and showing him the huge instrument. Jimmy Boyce has been staff organist at the Arena since 1950 and he installed this pipe organ during 1961 and 1962.

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PLAN AHEAD... FOR THE 1973 CONVENTION

Factory photo of the 4/20 "Publix" Wurlitzer in the Paramount. ▶

Photo courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society.



Portland, Oregon will be the host city for the 1973 National Convention of the American Theatre Organ Society. Dates for the conclave to be headquartered at the Sheraton Motor Inn, are July 25th. through July 28th. On Sunday July 29th, a special "wind-down" trip will be offered to one of the Pacific Northwest's great scenic attractions. The Oregon Chapter is already busy on plans to make this a bigger event than the 1966 Convention which they also hosted.

Convention organs will include the 4/18 Wurlitzer at the Oaks Park, the 4/49 Wurlitzer at the Howard Vollum home (formerly S.F. Paramount), the 3/13 Wurlitzer in the Scottish Rite Temple, the 3/24 Kimball in Benson High School, the former Oriental Theatre Wurlitzer now enlarged to 34 ranks, and currently being installed in a Pizza restaurant, and the 4/20 Wurlitzer in the Portland Paramount Theatre.

The accompanying photos show the exterior of the Paramount, plus a factory photo of the console. The Paramount was designed by Rapp and seats 3036. The organ is a "Publix" model, but a Post Horn will be added for the convention. Two concerts will be scheduled for the Paramount. Arrangements for artists has begun, with George Wright, Lyn Larsen, Jonas Nordwall, and Don Simmons already in the lineup. As plans are firmed up, further information will appear in THEATRE ORGAN Magazine. □

Introducing...

Sidney Torch

Our December issue will contain an interview with Sidney Torch, English organist. To many, his name may not have any significance. However, to the dyed-in-the-wool buff of long standing, the name "Sidney Torch" brings memories of some of the finest 78 rpm recordings ever produced in Britain. It is understandable that only a relatively few in America will know Mr. Torch since his records were imported in limited supply during the 1930's and he has not been involved with the theatre organ for nearly 35 years. Torch's greatness has not been completely forgotten, as the forthcoming interview will show.

ATOS member Judd Walton relates how this all came about:

It was on one of those Saturday afternoons when I should have been home doing chores an event occurred that introduced me to a new horizon of theatre organ music. The scene was a large Salvation Army store in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where I had for hours been searching through thousands of used 78 rpm records for organ selections. I met a young man, Joseph Dietz, who told me of several wonderfully different English records he had recently acquired. Little did I realize that this was to be my introduction to the wonderful world of Sidney Torch, Dudley Beavan, Horace Finch, Reginald Dixon, and other now famous Britishers who have a theatre organ style all their own. The first selection we played I will never forget — Torch's 12 inch 78 rpm Columbia recording of "Gypsy Princess" selections. It was fantastically unbelievable — so different — so precise — so satisfying — it was everything I had dreamed of in rhythmic style organ music!

My introduction to English theatre organ records began a search for any and all British releases. Through the years a large library of these, on

records and tape has been acquired. At small gatherings of theatre organ enthusiasts these were played and re-played many times (this was before ATOS). All of them were great, but one artist stood out from all the others — Sidney Torch. Through the years I was able to acquire nearly all Torch releases, but the source of supply had dried up and no more were available. It was obvious that somehow these fine English Columbia (EMI label) Torch records should be re-released.

Thus, about twenty years ago I contacted EMI in London, to see if it would be possible to find the original masters. Sadly I learned that almost all of them had been melted down for the war effort. But — they did have brand new unplayed 78's in their library files which could be made available for reproducing. Negotiations were begun but my correspondent in England became unavailable and the plan ended in failure.

A few years later it was my good fortune to meet Mr. Frank Killinger, a record and RECORDING enthusiast. Naturally I introduced him to Sidney Torch with session after session of listening, copying, and playing back these exquisite records.

At about this time, Frank decided to issue an organ recording under his new label, Doric (Tiny James recording of the Fox Oakland Wurlitzer, entitled, "Intermission Time" — just recently re-released in stereo). I urged Frank to re-issue the Torch records in synthesized stereo, and he finally agreed that it would be a great project — that these records should again be made available to the now over 4,000 theatre organ enthusiasts. Thus, negotiations started once again with EMI, this time through their Marketing Manager, Mr. Derek Allen.

During one of his regularly scheduled business trips to the States, he came to San Francisco where Frank



Sidney Torch — musician, arranger, artist. (Parlophone Co. Ltd.) — (Courtesy — Frank Killinger, Sidney Torch collection.)

and I met with him and completed the business arrangements for the release of the Torch originals to Doric Records. I explained to Derek on his next trip that I planned to come to England, accompanied by my wife, Verle, and my oldest daughter Jan. Shortly after arriving in London he invited the three of us to dinner. Little did I realize that I was to acquire a new son-in-law as a result of that invitation! Derek and Jan were married in London on July 17th, 1972, where they now reside.

One of the main objectives in going to England was to meet Torch. Over the years reports had been received that this would be difficult, if not impossible. Several contacts were made without success, and as my visit neared an end, it began to appear that the meeting would not be possible. On arriving at my Hotel in London from a trip to Scotland, however, a note was waiting for me with the message, "Please call Mr. Torch". The following Tuesday we met for lunch at Verrey's in Regent Street for two hours of delightful conversation. I was accompanied by Frank Killinger who was in London for the summer.

Mr. Torch was very gracious, hospitable and kind and proved to be as I had expected, a very warm, generous and considerate person. Above all he

was forthright in his opinions and is truly an individual musically. The meeting was the highlight of the entire trip — without exception.

He gave us his approval of the reissue on Doric label, and offered his help in any way possible. At a later meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Killinger, he provided many pictures from his personal collection for our use.

The Sidney Torch Columbia record re-issue on Doric label will soon be available (see ad on page 15). It was given the final degree of perfection by the meeting with Mr. Torch and his warm reception to the project.

There is no question as to the genius of his music. The following comments from some of our finest artists here in the States is testimony worthy of review!

Larry Vannucci, San Anselmo, California, stated, "Sidney Torch is an artist of unsurpassed precision and accuracy. Most organists cannot perform with both hands nearly as well as Torch can with his left hand alone! It is all done in such good taste — he was years ahead of his time!"

Jim Roseveare, San Francisco, California, comments, "Torch impresses me with his superb technique combined with good imagination. Rhythmically he seems so very much a part of the instrument. His arrangements, while typically English, are as inspiring today as they were in the 30's — even more so, having stood so well the test of time!"

Tiny James, Alameda, California, noted, "His orchestral background is so beautifully evident in his excellent renditions. Many of today's organists find themselves emulating his style almost without realizing it as it was so very modern. His present orchestral work is further evidence of his great musicianship. It must be remembered that when his Columbia records were made, there was no stopping and splicing of tape — they were done straight through — amazing!"

Billy Nalle, New York City, New York, observed, "He is one of only two players of major rank of that first theatre organ era, the other being Buddy Cole, who seemed aware that musical language in every way was turning the corner into a new day. He had vision to see that pop music was changing and reflected that in his own thinking which was imaginative and fresh — he did not retrogress to the use of other organists' style as a crutch. His playing is forward looking, has great anticipation, with no looking backward . . . original and fresh!"

The entire interview with Mr. Torch was recorded. It has been transcribed and will appear in the December issue of THEATRE ORGAN. His background, recording experiences, views and opinions are thoroughly explored. After nearly 35 years of silence, Mr. Torch tells his observations of the contemporary theatre organ scene.

Watch for this exclusive highlight in December. □

ATOS FLOWER

Fanny Wurlitzer Rose

At the annual Board of Directors meeting in July, the motion was passed to declare the Fanny Wurlitzer Rose as the official flower of ATOS.

The motion was brought to the attention of the meeting by Dick Simonton who advised that this plant had been developed by TY-TEX Nurseries of Texas.

Upon contacting Mr. Charles Cadey of the nursery firm, we were told how this flower came into being.

Mr. Cadey stated: "The rose was named for Mr. Fanny Wurlitzer in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of Music during the past sixty-three years."

Because of his high regard for Mr. Wurlitzer, Mr. John Bilotta, a representative of Wurlitzer Organization in Neward, N.Y., asked us to name a rose for Mr. Wurlitzer. After meeting Mr. Wurlitzer and learning of his love for roses, this came about.

It took seven years to bring this seedling to its present status, and is a cross between Poinsetta and Charlotte Armstrong.

A haunting old rose fragrance is just one of the charming attributes of this new hybrid tea which has proved to be just as happy in the North as in the South.

The rose is ideal for a cut flower. The bud is a rosey red which opens slowly and gracefully into a magnificent 4" flower that shades from a rich red into a lighter color of Charlotte Armstrong when fully opened. This is a very prolific variety, its continuous bloom is in classic hybrid tea form.

While plants may be expected to average 3 to 4 feet in the North, warmer climates may look for growth of 5 to 6 feet. Each bush is covered with luxuriant glossy foliage which has a strong inbred resistance to diseases.

Price — one bush is \$3.75, plus \$1.00 packing and handling charge; three bushes for \$9.90, plus \$1.00 packing and handling. These are two years old, field fresh plants, ready to plant in your garden.

For further information or order, contact: Charles R. Cadey TY-Tex Rose Nurseries, P.O. Box 532, Tyler, Texas 75701. Mr. Cadey will be happy to furnish a color picture of this beautiful rose upon request. □

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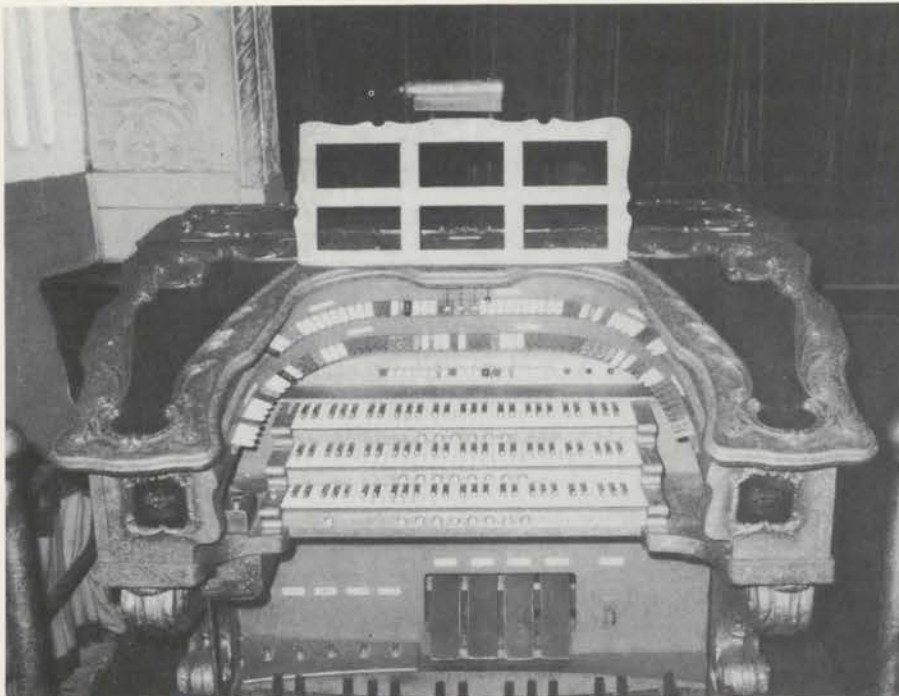
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3/13 Barton in the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, refurbished by the Motor City Chapter.

Ann Arbor, Michigan is one of the most movie-conscious cities in America. The University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor, offers a variety of courses in film history and cinematography, ranging from mass lectures attracting hundreds of undergraduates, to small seminars for the professional. Although the Speech Department is the official home for courses in motion pictures; the English, Art, Advertising, and Education departments offer them also. In addition, enterprising students have formed half a dozen cinema groups which offer full schedules of classic films at low prices throughout the year, and each year young filmmakers from around the world show their latest productions at the Ann Arbor Film Festival held every spring. Indeed, Ann Arbor is "where it's at" as far as film is concerned, unless you happen to be lucky enough to live in New York City.

RESTORING THE BARTON

AT ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

by Henry B. Aldridge*

Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor, Michigan in August 1972.



The University's enthusiasm for the motion picture is matched by that of the community's. There are four downtown movie theatres and several others in the suburbs. During a typical week, it is possible to see a Chaplin revival, sit in on an Orson Welles festival, hear a lecture on the British documentary, or see the latest Hollywood release.

Dominating the Ann Arbor movie scene is the stately old Michigan Theatre on Liberty Street, just one block from the University campus. Amidst all the current uproar over modern films, the Michigan stands as a lovely reminder of another age of movie madness — the 1920's. Although partly remodelled a few years ago, the Michigan still bears evidence of stage shows, big bands, sing-alongs, and theatre organs. Kept in top condition as a first run house by manager Gerald

*Assistant Professor of Speech and Dramatic Arts, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan.

Hoag, the Michigan boasts a two story lobby, complete with double curving staircase, a balcony, incandescent and arc spotlights, full atmospheric projection facilities for starlit ceilings and moving clouds, song slide printers and projectors, an orchestra pit, a rehearsal hall, dressing rooms, elaborate stage machinery, and three grand pianos.

The main attraction at the Michigan however, is the recently restored three manual, thirteen rank Barton pipe organ. Located in the left corner of the orchestra pit, the dazzling gold and red console still rises on a separate lift to six feet above the orchestra floor just as it did on opening night in January, 1928.

Although the Barton was never used to accompany silent films, it did command a separate billing for many years and was featured in solo performance as well as providing a rich accompaniment for sing-alongs. Mr. Hoag, who came to the Michigan as its first manager and has remained there ever since, remembers that the sing-alongs were popular with the college students. On many occasions, he led the audience in performances of popular songs with updated lyrics. The students seemed to take special delight in hearing Mr. Hoag's satirical comments on current happenings at the University. One of Mr. Hoag's instantaneous hits was his tribute to the tearing down of West Hall which stood next to Ann Arbor's First Congregational Church. To the tune of "Thundering Big Men from the North," Mr. Hoag's lyrics wound up with "Betsy Barbour needed a new lawn . . . The next day West Hall was gone."

Although the regular staff organists were dismissed in the 1930's, the Barton was used on special occasions until the 1960's when it made its last public appearance during intermissions for the film *Gone With the Wind*. Even though the organ had suffered extensive water damage which had rendered most of its main chamber (including Flutes, Diapasons, and Tubas) virtually useless, the instrument still sounded remarkably good when the the Motor City Chapter of ATOS began its restoration project in October of 1971.

The first task that the team faced was complete renovation of the two organ chambers. They had to be cleaned and made safe from future water damage and falling plaster. The crew

began work by removing all pipes and installing false ceilings in both chambers. At the same time, the chambers were painted white, chests and wooden supports cleaned and varnished, and pipes which had been cast aside over ten years ago as water damaged beyond repair were completely rebuilt. While the organ was shut down during November, December, and January, console pneumatics were releathered and relay connections resoldered.

In February, most of the pipe-work was back in place, and the crew began the tedious search for air leaks. A large one was discovered in the wind line just below the blower which is seventy feet up over the proscenium arch. When this was repaired, the nine ranks which had been playing prior to the beginning of the restoration project sounded better than ever.

In March and April, the crew restored the Diapasons, Tubas, and Clarinets to working condition and replaced console pneumatics. In the meantime, the console exterior was cleaned and new paint applied. A sneak preview concert for chapter members and the public was held June 11, 1972, the Barton premiering with Richard Shindell of Toledo, Ohio at the console. Over two hundred people attended and gave Rick and the organ a warm reception.

During the weeks following the preview, the crew returned the rebuilt flute chest to the main chamber and completed its rewiring. Second touch springs were replaced in the console and plans were made for the organ's official public debut in September. In August, the Barton was demonstrated for Dr. Frank Beaver's film history class and was the subject of a thirty minute documentary prepared by WUOM, the University of Michigan's FM station in Ann Arbor. It was also heard on National Public Radio's 90 minute daily newscast during the annual ATOS convention in July.

When students returned to Ann Arbor at the beginning of September, finishing touches were being placed on the Barton in preparation for the inaugural concert on Wednesday evening September 20 at which Lyn Larsen will present a concert and accompany the Rudolph Valentino film *Son of the Sheik*. In addition to readying the organ for this concert, the Motor City crew also restored the understage musicians' room and had

the orchestra pit recarpeted.

In scheduling the organ's use, members of the Motor City Chapter have been cognisant of Ann Arbor residents interest in film. They plan to work closely with student film groups and University professors in promoting events at the theatre and in choosing films to be shown. Already Jay Cassidy of the Cinema Guild has expressed an interest in the Chapter's work and in the use of the organ to accompany silent films, since many Ann Arbor film enthusiasts are currently watching these films without any musical accompaniment.

The Michigan Theatre's Barton organ will never be without an interested and aware audience. For film historians, the ATOS concerts will be a rare opportunity to see silent films in their proper setting, and for the younger generation, they will be a first encounter with an unusual and exciting musical instrument. For ATOS, the restored Barton organ will become an important link between the old-time theatre organ music lovers, young filmmakers, and cinema teachers who will appreciate the organ for its major historical purpose as a necessary adjunct to the presentation of great film classics. □

Ben Levy, Motor City member, adjusts second touch springs on the 3/13 Barton.



NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN
DAYS



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

This time, Jason and I have found some nuggets from the New England area. References were Diapason (D), Jacobs (J), Melody (M), and Metronome (Met.) magazines.

May 1925 (M) LEWIS E. BRAY is organist at Boston's Shawmut Theatre, playing a 3-manual Estey.

Nov. 1925 (D) ALEXANDER D. RICHARDSON is playing the 3/15 Wurlitzer in the Keith-Albee Theatre in Boston.

Nov. 1925 (Met.) The new eight-million-dollar Metropolitan Theatre in Boston was recently opened and presented a spectacle of magnificence seldom equalled in a theatre. It seats 5,000, its Grand Lounge accommodates 2,000, and it was packed to the doors for the premiere, turning away more thousands. The Wurlitzer organ, built and installed at a cost of \$100,000, has 3,100 pipes and is said to be the first organ ever constructed in which the voices of the French horn and tuba appear.

Sep. 1926 (Met.) C. SHARPE MINOR, playing the novelty, "The Musical Bombshell", is the outstanding headliner at the Roger Sherman Theatre's Wurlitzer in New Haven, Conn. He has a well-earned reputation as "King of the Entertainers", fully living up to everything said to him in advance notices. EDGAR FORD is house organist.

Oct. 1926 (D) DONALD MURRAY, 17, organist in a Taunton, Mass. theatre, is supposed to be the youngest motion picture organist in New England. From all accounts, he is very gifted.

Nov. 1926 (J) LLOYD G. DEL CASTILLO is organist at Boston's Metropolitan Theatre, playing in a

Blue spotlight of ghastly and unbecoming hue.

Apr. 1927 (D) The Forest Theatre Organ School, conducted by AURELE J. FOREST in Providence, R.I., has ordered a new organ from the Frazee Organ Co. of Everett, Mass.

May 1927 (Met.) HAROLD RAMSAY has been guest organist recently at Boston's Metropolitan Theatre, featuring his arrangement of Gershwin's "Rhapsody In Blue."

June 1927 (Met.) At Boston's Metropolitan Theatre, the screen feature was "Running Wild" with W.C. Fields and Mary Brian. An entirely different organ novelty was offered in "Orchestra vs Organ" in which ARTHUR MARTEL at the console, vied with Joseph Klein, director of the Metropolitan Grand Orchestra.

Dec. 1928 (D) Fifteen Boston Theatres no longer employ organists. Since the "talking movie" arrived, people are wondering whether the noble pipe instrument will be supplanted by a mechanical contrivance. Who knows?

Aug. 1929 (D) LLOYD G. DEL CASTILLO has severed his connections with WNAC in Boston, to become staff organist of WEEI. He will do daily broadcasts with a combination of orchestra and soloists, using a 2-manual Frazee unit orchestra in the Houghton & Dutton Studio. His school will continue, in spite of the dampening effect of sound movies. In a year or two, he feels, theatre competition will bring back the theatre organist to a more secure position.

Nov. 1929 (D) The new million-dollar Egyptian Theatre in Brighton, Mass. opened with LLOYD G. DEL CASTILLO opening the 2/9 Wurlitzer.

GOLD DUST: Theatre organists were very numerous throughout New England, especially in small cities and towns, as the following indicates: 7/25 EARL WEIDENOR, Boston's Strand . . . 12/25 JAMES F. THOMAS at Providence, R.I. Albee's 2/10 Wurlitzer special . . . 1/26 LEWIS E. BRAY, Boston's Shawmut . . . 2/26 ARTHUR MARTEL & EVA LANGLEY at Boston's Metropolitan . . . 3/26 CONVERSE E. NICKERSON at the Wurlitzer in the Olympic, Portsmouth, N.H. . . . 4/26 MYRON C. BALLOU at the 3-manual Moller in Providence's Strand; ALLEN SCHOFIELD at the 2-manual Robert Morton in Norwalk, Conn. Regent; ROLAND C. WHEELER at the 2/4 Wurlitzer in Bangor (Me.)

Opera House . . . 7/26 AURELE FOREST, Providence Strand . . . 8/26 LLOYD G. DEL CASTILLO, Boston's Metropolitan . . . 12/26 HARRY J. JENKINS at 4-manual Estey in Holyoke, Mass. Victory Theatre . . . 1/27 EVA LANGLEY, assoc. organist at Boston's Metropolitan . . . 2/27 JOHN PROSSEE, Loew's New London (Conn.) Theatre . . . 5/28 URQUHART CHINN, State in Nashua, N.H.; J.E. NAYLOR, Bijou in Woonsocket, R.I.; J.S. SHERWIN, Upton in Providence; Massachusetts organists playing in May 1928 included A.E. ELLIS, Franklin Park in Dorchester; ERNEST H. JOHNSON at the Capitol's 3-manual Special Wurlitzer in Worcester; A.T. KING in the Quincy; GLADSTONE KINGKADE at Quincy's Strand; CHRISTOPHER LAWLER, Marbelhead's Warwick; E.J. LORD, Milford's State; C.L. MARTIN at the 2/5 Wurlitzer in Belmont's Strand; ROLAND POMERAT in Holyoke's Strand; ARTHUR RICHARDS, Springfield's Bijou; H.E. RUSHTON at the 2/6 Wurlitzer in Attleboro's Bates; FRED SHAW at the 2/5 Wurlitzer in Greenfield's Lawler; CARL L. SMITH Taunton's Casino; JOHN SPINELLI, Revere's Crescent Gardens; CHARLES H. TRIPP, New Bedford's new theatre, playing a 2/4 Wurlitzer, and HARRY A. VAN STEENBURG, Lynn's Olympia . . . 12/28 EARL WEIDENOR at the 3/15 Wurlitzer in the new \$5 million Keith Memorial, Boston . . . 1/29 FRANCIS J. CRONIN at the 4-manual Skinner in the Alliston, Mass. Capitol; ROY L. FRAZEE, Granada in Malvern, Mass.; Boston's SALLIE FRISE, Lancaster; CHESTER BRIGHAM, Metropolitan and MAC B. SEAVER, Beacon.

When returning from New England, we stopped in New York City and found a little Gold Dust there: 2/25 JOHN PRIEST, Colony; JOHN HAMMOND, Piccadilly . . . 3/25 C. SHARPE MINOR at the Rivoli and a month later at the Rialto . . . 6/25 HAROLD RAMSBOTTOM & FRANK STEWART ADAMS, Rivoli . . . 2/26 ARTHUR "HIGH C" GEIS, ALEXANDER D. RICHARDSON, OLIVER STRUNK & C. HERBERT MACAHAN, Rialto . . . 4/26 GEORGE CROOK & WALTER LITT at Brooklyn's Mark Strand

This should do it until our Christmas special. So long, sourdoughs!

LLOYD & JASON



ORGAN AT MIDNIGHT

by Bob Ort

At midnight Saturday, June 3rd, Buddy Nolan treated theatre organ fans to the tenth organ program in his series known as THEATRE ORGAN AT MIDNIGHT. Again the setting was the Embassy Theatre in downtown

Fort Wayne, Indiana, with its 4/15 Page pipe organ. Nolan once more enlisted the assistance of pianist Dyne Pfeffenberger to make this concert one of the best yet.

Unfortunately, the theatre's air con-

ditioning plant decided to stop functioning that day and the temperature both outside and inside the building soared quite high with the humidity producing a most uncomfortable atmosphere in the auditorium. The Embassy Page and grand piano however, never sounded better, so the audience didn't seem to mind.

A few hours earlier the Page stopped running and simply refused to start, but with technicians Bob Nickerson, Bill Zabel and Ellsworth Smith administering first-aid, the Page started breathing again.

The fact that the Indiana Hotel, in which the Embassy Theatre is housed, is now vacant and up for sale, gave Nolan an opportunity to let the Page sing forth without fear of complaints from hotel guests having their sleep disturbed by Tubas and Posthorns.

Nolan's programs often have surprises of some kind for the audience in the form of vocalists, characters, strolling on and off stage and vaudeville types doing their thing.

Buddy Nolan at the 4/15 Page in Fort Wayne, Indiana.



In every Nolan program, production effects enhance the musical performance with lighting, staging and props. Large flowers brightened the console and a white picket fence with gigantic colorful flowers was set inside the orchestra lift creating a garden-like effect.

The program opened with a caricature of Nolan at the console of an organ projected on the Embassy screen while an unseen announcer made some opening remarks with a statement that before the concert could get underway, the audience would first get a glimpse into A DAY IN THE LIFE OF FORT WAYNE'S OLDEST THEATRE ORGANIST. Thus began a series of color slides showing candid views of Nolan asleep, yawning, sipping his morning coffee, showering, getting into his sports roadster, experiencing mechanical difficulties, driving in the rain with his convertible top down and his umbrella up, entering the stage door and getting ready in his dressing room downstairs in the theatre. All these slides had accompaniment in the silent movie tradition provided by Dyne Pfeffenberger seated at a vintage upright piano on stage, with "Silver Threads Among the Gold"

with other appropriate selections used for the various slides. The final slide was a recent one of Nolan at the Page console, and signalled the first sounds from the 4/15 Page. As the lift brought organ and organist up from the pit, Nolan played a rousing chorus of "Cabaret" while two song slides introduced the lyrics for the audience.

Nolan then welcomed the audience and talked about organ music in the 30's commenting that the late Banks Kennedy had presided at the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the now razed Paramount Theatre a few blocks away. This gave him an opportunity to play an original tune written by Kennedy entitled "I Can't Help Being Jealous", an ideal ballad for a theatre organ. (The Paramount's Wurlitzer left town for Texas in the early 60's and now is being re-installed at The Twenties Restaurant and Lounge in Denver, Colorado.)

Nolan delivered an outstanding program musically as well as visually. For numbers that featured Dyne Pfeffenberger at the grand piano, the orchestra lift was raised to the same elevation as the console. During one piano-organ duet, the curtains parted, revealing a

large, revolving, multi-mirrored sphere which picked up the spotlight beam and sprinkled it throughout the Embassy auditorium.

The entire program was carefully planned to include all forms of music — classic, popular, gospel, and musical comedy. Showmanship was an ever present consideration. The finale produced more of the showman's imagination when Buddy announced that his final organ number would be "Battle Hymn of the Republic". Again the stage curtains opened, displaying a large American flag at center stage with a white spot overhead and alternating red and blue spots spilling from the gray curtain backdrop. As the Page swelled to full voice for the final words, "His truth is marching on", three flash powder charges (one on either side and one behind the flag) were set off making for a highly patriotic closing for a very well-paced musical program.

Buddy Nolan's fans hope that this will not be the last concert for the Embassy Page. She sings much too well to be forced into retirement, but her fate is uncertain at present, as is the fate of the Embassy itself. □

Helen Dell

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ANOTHER "FIRST" FOR BILLY NALLE!

Theatre Organ in Cathedral

by Ray Brubacher

Another "first" in theatre organ history was established on Sunday afternoon 23 July 1972. The setting was most unusual and impressive . . . the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, seat of the Episcopal diocese of the city of New York and also the largest gothic cathedral in the western world. The dimensions of this edifice are mind teasing to say the least, the ceiling of which is over fourteen stories from the stone floor and the main aisle of which is over six hundred and twenty five feet in length.

Many readers know of the massive AEolian-Skinner pipe organ with its state trumpet rank on fifty inches pressure under the great rose window. However, on this afternoon he would be hearing Billy Nalle performing on a Rodgers 340 theatre three manual instrument which had been placed in the great crossing of the cathedral. Some twenty two speaker systems had been placed in the vicinity.

Feelings of curiosity and speculation were running high among the fifteen hundred or so persons who had gathered at the crossing by 3:30 to hear first a short concert played on the Skinner. At 4 P.M. the movingly beautiful service of evensong was sung by the

cathedral men and boys choir and immediately at the end of the service, the dean of the cathedral introduced the featured artist.

To this writer the most singularly interesting problem at hand was how well Billy Nalle and the Rodgers would cope with the spectacular problem of reverberation present. When empty the echo time is almost nine seconds and even with the crowd that had assembled, reverb time counted out to over five. We had just heard how this echo period had not hindered but had enhanced the pipe organ and now it would be placed under a severe test with theatre organ.

The artist in the spotlight had chosen his program most carefully, giving serious attention to tempo regulation and phrasing to permit the accoustical conditions present to support rather than destroy the musical content. Due to questionable speaker placement however, much of this preparation and attention to fine details was simply in vain. It is a great pity that some of the speaker systems did not directly project into the seating area of the audience instead of being placed facing the ceiling causing the expression pedals to be constantly full open.

It is the opinion of the writer that Billy made one of the most serious efforts that has ever been made by anyone in the profession to give the theatre organ its more than rightful place as a serious musical instrument capable of sustaining itself without the benefit of a silver screen, Laurel and Hardy or D.W. Griffith. It is evident in his playing that this feeling of independence for the theatre organ is one which must be promoted by our organization just as the classic organ is promoted by the American Guild of Organists. That the administration at the cathedral officially recognized the instrument we love so dearly should be an incentive for us to promote it more and more in this respect. I sincerely hope that if such an event occurs again at this great house of worship, more careful consideration can be given to the installation of the instrument so that its capabilities may be more fully realized with a superb and dedicated talent such as is found in Billy Nalle at the console. Although, I must confess that "Clang, clang, clang, goes the Trolley" with five seconds of reverberation behind it is a most impressive get up and go sound in anyone's book. □

Billy greets the Cathedral audience.
(Photo by Ray Brubacher)



Billy Nalle at the Rodgers 340 in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.
(Photo by Thom Laughman.)



Snippets from England

TONY BERNARD SMITH

Bad News — Good News jokes (and Good News — Bad News ones) have been all the rage in Britain lately. So let's start off with some bad news, which is certainly no joke so far as local organ buffs are concerned.

The ABC cinema circuit, owned by the EMI conglomerate, announced a vast rebuilding and re-organisation programme early this year. As a result, almost all their remaining organs are being removed from the theatres.

Even the famous Wurlitzer 3/12 of the ABC (formerly Regal). Kingston-upon-Thames, which was broadcast and recorded by *Reginald Foort* in the early years and by *Joseph Seal* right up to now, is to go. It will move to a well-known musical museum at Brentford, near London.

Some of the standard 3/6 Comptons which that company installed in large numbers for sing-alongs during the 30s have been bought by organ builder *Gerald Carrington*. In fact, he now has quite a stock of this make of music machines in all sizes and is currently advertising them in the musical press for sale as complete installations.

Fate of all the organs is not yet known, but it is sad to see the end of an era. ABC were the most organ-minded of the circuits in later years and kept a few players on their staff until a year or so ago. Now many of their theatres will be twinned or tripled — or leased for other uses.

Now for the good news. One of the few ABC organs not in danger for the moment is the Compton 3/8 plus Melotone at Plymouth, from which *Dudley Savage* airs the granddaddy of all radio's console capers. *As Prescribed*, a request show for the sick, begins its 25th year of broadcasting this summer.

Since we are counting our blessings, let me just mention in passing a veritable cornucopia of pipes platters enlivening the British recording scene. And the preservation bit goes from strength to strength.



There's been a fair bit of organ activity in Holland these past few months. Checking it out on an all-too brief trip the other day, I gleaned the following items:

Harry Klompe quit the residency of the famous City Theatre, Amsterdam, early this year. His successor at



Back to pipes after many years — Guus Jansen at the Tuschinski, Amsterdam.

the 4/17 Strunk will be one *Mijnheer van Hoorthuysen*, pupil of the late, great *Pierre Palla*. Harry, by the way, is still teaching plug-ins in the Dutch capital.

Also in that beautiful burg I was glad to note the Dutch Organ Federation is thriving. The group embraces both theatre and church instruments and players and has been arranging informal concerts. I caught one at the Tuschinski Theatre, where a big attraction was the first grapple with pipes for many years of *Guus Jansen*.

After an impressive display on the lovely Wurlitzer/Strunk 4/11, he told me: "I was resident at the nearby Rembrandt Theatre for eight years — that was destroyed in the war — and now I mostly teach." He might have added that he is also a respected composer. One of his works had been featured in a British theatre organ broadcast only a few days previously.

Also playing that day was *Rene de Rooy*, one of the two residents at the Tuschinski (the other is *Jan Mekkes*, now active again after a bout of illness). The North Holland organist *Taco Tiemersma* contributed a set and we also heard the Federation chairman, *Dr. L.H. van Oijen*.

During an intermission, *Dr. van Oijen* told me that the little Vlier 3/5 of the Capitol, Amsterdam (which I had written off a couple of years ago) is to be restored and will be available to the

Two manuals and just four ranks — Jan Slingerland at the Colosseum, Rotterdam.



Federation. The theatre has been bought by the municipality and it's probably no coincidence at all that one influential alderman happens to be an organist.

Down in bustling Rotterdam, I was able to fulfil a small ambition and visit the Standaard 2/4 in the Colosseum Theatre.

Alas, it was not in the best of voices. But in its day, this mighty marvel has charmed many patrons and it has been played by most of the Lowlands' top names in its time. Let me be honest and admit that, on this occasion, my host, *Jan Slingerland*, was able to get better noises out of the little box of whistles than I could.

Jan's own project right now (apart from moving house and taking his own three-manual five ranker with him) is the restoration of the Standaard 3/10 in the Passage, Schiedam. This house, also became municipally owned, is to be an arts centre but funds have been set aside for a virtual rebuild of the organ.

Also due for restoration, they tell me, is the Standaard 3/13 in the VARA radio studios, in Hilversum. This will give Holland's Radio City three working theatre organs (others are the Moller 5/27 formerly toured by *Reginald Foort* in England and now owned by the NRU, and the AVRO studio Compton 4/22 which is about to re-open after an overhaul). One good thing about the VARA news is that it is possible an approved roster of performers may be allowed regular practice facilities.

Anyway, that's the Dutch organ scene. Quite an optimistic one – and here's a point to ponder. The aforementioned Tuschinski movie palace was 50 years old last year. In Dutch law, that makes it an historic building which must be preserved. If anybody wanted to knock it down, they would have to replace it with an identical one. To me, that sounds like a good law.



Any day now, the last of the Standaarts will be moving into its new home.

The firm of Standaard were to Holland what Comptons were to England (and Wurlitzer Stateside). Between the wars they put many fine instruments into Dutch theatres and even exported a few to Britain.

Their last unit organ, however, was put into a night club in Leeuwarden in Friesland – which is to Holland what Scotland is to England, a fiercely independent province with its own language and traditions. This was as recently as the 50s.

Anyway, a few years ago there was a change of ownership at the club and it was decided to repalce the Standaard with an electronic.

Hotfoot to the rescue came ATOS member *Taco Tiemersma*, who regularly broadcasts another Standaard in the city's Pneil Hall. That one had been saved out of the Odeon, Schiedam by his father before him.

When I paid him a visit earlier this year, he showed me the plans for rebuilding his home so that the last of the Standaarts might be housed and playable again.

Summer saw the building of the pipe chambers – and a nice new kitchen for *Mevrouw Tiemersma*, so that everybody was happy. And now that they have dried out properly, the Amsterdam firm of Fonteyn and Gaal (who took over the Standaard business) are moving in to get things singing again.

The Dutch, as you may know, have a heart-warming habit of not drawing the blinds on their living rooms at night. For some months those who passed the *Tiemersma* house at number 9, Raadhuisstraat, Leeuwarden have got used to the sight of an immaculate three-decker console all waiting to be wired up to its pipes. It won't be long now.

STACCATO SNIPPETS – Fears that the famous Granada, Tooting, might be steel-ballad were temporarily dispelled early spring when a provisional preservation order was placed on it. So the picture palace and its Mighty Wurlitzer are well on the way to being listed as being of historical interest . . . Currently stored in the Playhouse, Edinburgh is the Christie 2/9 from the ABC (ex-Lonsdale), Carlisle. It will be the Cinema Organ Society's Scottish organ and probably go into a hospital recreation hall . . . Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust, whose aims include preservation of the Wurlitzers in Manchester's Odeon and Gaumont theatres, have found a new "best-seller". They have arranged guided tours through the organ chambers for members, with a spell at the console for players. This is "once only" but regular Saturday morning sessions are being arranged for promising young talent . . . Last new organ to be installed in a British theatre before the renaissance, the Marshall Sykes 3/15 in the Cecil, Hull (opened in 1955) has now got its own local preservation group . . . The North Lincolnshire preservation boys have now bought a Compton 2/5 to restore, and transplant. It was in a Grimsby theatre . . . Two "golden age" performers died recently – *Henry Croudson* and *Joseph Flitcroft* . . . First theatre organ recital to be officially sponsored as part of an Arts Festival in England – *Andrew Fenner's* at Clayhall, Ilford, as part of the Festivals of London. □

Taco Tiemersma at the console of the last of the Standaarts.



Nostalgic Memories

by Charles Wright

I have been a member of ATOS for several years and also an enthusiastic reader of "Theatre Organ" and the predecessor magazines for a somewhat longer period. Some of the most interesting articles which I have read are those covering the restoration and installation of theatre organs in members' homes. These ambitious projects naturally require a vast amount of time, effort and money, not to mention the knowledge and necessary know-how.

The thought occurred to me, how does one first acquire the ambition and perseverance so necessary to develop this extensive and complicated pastime and hobby. No one can possibly give the answer but I am going to attempt to put down on paper the story of how I first became interested in the theatre organ about 45 years ago. From that early date I have maintained a constant interest in the organ. For a time I acted as the Montreal service man for a Canadian builder of church organs, an activity I will admit to following, more for the opportunity it gave me to play the various organs than for the remuneration derived therefrom. During the late 1930's I took a trip to England principally to visit the cinemas and to examine their Christies, Comptons, Conachers, etc. As a tribute to the Wurlitzer organs I found time while over there to cross the Mersey from Liverpool to visit Birkenhead, where Robert Hope-Jones carried out his original development work on the unit-organ principle.

However, to get back to my story, a



CHARLES WRIGHT

few months ago I had just finished reading an article in "Theatre Organ Bombarde," and my thoughts went back to those early days when I first became interested in the theatre organ. I decided then to put into words a few nostalgic memories.

"The year is 1926-1927, and radio receiving sets are still in the experimental stage, and I had spent quite a busy night 'hooking-up' a simple and somewhat primitive 'One Tube Set.' I had a pair of Brandes earphones attached to the output end of the contraption. The time is about 11:30 p.m. and I have my set tuned to the old CHYC radio station in Montreal. But instead of hearing one of the local dance bands, usually on the air at this time of night, I hear music that is different, and to me, far more satisfying. I am receiving a program of organ music broadcast direct from the Capitol Theatre located in downtown Montreal."

This was the first time that I had had

the pleasure of listening to a theatre pipe organ, previous to that time I believed pipe organs to be large instruments installed in churches and other large auditoriums, and used only for sacred and serious types of music.

The organist playing at the Capitol Theatre that evening was the late Mr. Norton H. Payne, affectionately known as "Buddy Payne" to the theatre patrons of this city.

The late evening mid-week broadcasts continued to be aired from the Capitol for a few weeks and then like many other good things, they came to an end. However I had received an inspiration and my favorite instrument was to be the theatre organ. That was over 44 years ago, today I am still of the same mind.

My next ambition was to visit the Capitol Theatre and to see and hear Mr. Payne playing this wonderful organ. Despite the passing of time I can still recall my impressions of the

first visit to the Capitol and of seeing the organist seated high at the elevated console accompanying the silent pictures on the screen. I made many similar visits to this theatre, as often as my limited finances would allow, not perhaps to see the organ but rather to have an opportunity of hearing the organ.

The organ installed in the Capitol Theatre was regarded by many Montrealers to be the most beautiful toned theatre organ in the city. It was built in Canada by the Warren Organ Company, equipped with a four-manual horseshoe console, mounted on a hydraulic lift in the center of the orchestra pit. An interesting feature of this installation was the group of colorful display pipes, about 20 in number mounted high on the south wall of the theatre to the left of the proscenium arch.

Alas, came 1929 and talking pictures were being installed in our principal movie houses, the Capitol being one of the downtown "big-four" was quick to take advantage of the new invention, though not the first in Montreal to install talking pictures. After the arrival of the sound pictures the Capitol organ continued to be used for a short time, principally for short interludes, also a few bars would be played on the organ to "finish-off" the Paramount News Reel, and sometimes to join the pictures. It was always a thrill to hear Mr. Payne blend the organ into the end of the news-reels, perfectly in registration, pitch and tempo to play the last line of the signature tune used by Paramount at the time to end the news-reels.

Around the year 1930 the Capitol organ became silent, and on subsequent visits to the theatre we failed to hear the once familiar sounds of the throbbing Tibias, or the distant whisper of the soft Vox Humana. For several months afterwards I believe the Capitol organ received regular servicing, perhaps in the event that "talkies" were only a passing fad, in which case the showing of silent movies along with the organ accompaniment could have been quickly resumed. Unfortunately, this was not to be.

With the closing of the Capitol organ, Mr. Payne became the feature soloist at the Palace Theatre on St. Catherine, a block east of the Capitol. The Palace was operated by the same chain as the Capitol, and was equipped with a two-manual Warren organ. Though a smaller organ than that of the Capitol it was also a beautifully toned instrument, and we greatly appreciated listening to Mr. Payne playing

his all too brief interlude between the pictures. The console was located on the stage at the left corner, with the organist facing the audience. From what I can remember, it was not a horseshoe console, and the only effects I ever heard were the chimes. It was possibly a modified church organ, as I believe the Warren Co. were principally engaged in building church organs while they were in existence.

I have always considered it to be regrettable that when I was legally old enough (at the time one had to be 16 years old to attend the movies in Montreal) and financially able to visit the theatres, it was also about the time that the organ was no longer considered to be a box-office attraction by the managers, and in most of our theatres so equipped, ceased to be heard. However, I had already discovered my favorite type of musical instrument and so, with our "available resources" rapidly diminishing, I did endeavor to find the location of all other Montreal theatres equipped with pipe organs and to arrange visits to the theatres before the early morning shows, started to at least see their organs. Some of the theatre managers were cooperative, some were not. However, I was successful at a few theatres. I was also lucky, as they were still connected, intact and playable.

Following my initial acquaintance with the two Warrens mentioned earlier I was soon to learn that the "Mighty Wurlitzer" was regarded as being the most popular theatre organ throughout the world. From the results of my local survey I was fortunate to learn that at that time we had four (4) Wurlitzer installations in Montreal theatres, the locations being as follows:

St. Denis Theatre3-manual
Imperial Theatre3-manual
Papineau Theatre2-manual
Midway Theatre2-manual

All the above installations carried the famous Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra nameplate. The larger two at the St. Denis and at the Imperial Theatres, were equipped with two 3 manual consoles, the top keyboard being of 37 notes only. It will be interesting to mention here that the Imperial organ was perhaps a unique installation as a very good photograph of the console appears in the Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra catalog, reprinted by the Vestal Press together with a letter of recommendation on the merits of the organ. Due to a friendship which I developed with one of the organists who played at the Imperial I was fortunate to have assisted with some repair work on this organ. I recall that it was an excep-

tionally well finished organ inside. I was told that Mr. Hope-Jones was present in the theatre during the final installation. Being a very conscientious man, every pipe and other component had to be adjusted to his particular satisfaction, regardless of the time required to do so, and the fact that a deadline had to be met for the grand opening of the new Montreal showplace back in 1913. The Imperial contained about 10 or 12 ranks and was installed in two chambers above the arch on either side. The catalog photo mentioned shows the console on the stage, at a later date it must have been moved to the left side of the orchestra pit, as it was in the latter location when I had experience with it in 1931.

A few blocks further east in Montreal we have the St. Denis Theatre which had the largest Wurlitzer theatre installation in the city. It was a larger version of that in the Imperial, also a "Special," it contained additional ranks and one feature that I well remember, it included a "thunder stop." The St. Denis is a large theatre with a wide stage and well suited for the large organ.

The two remaining Wurlitzers, at the Papineau, also the Midway, were equipped with piano style consoles, 88 keys on the Accompaniment and 61 on the Solo manual, similar in appearance to those used with the smaller Photoplayers except that they included a 32 note pedal board and also a back rest on the bench. No doubt these consoles may have been practical for motion picture work, even though in appearance they lacked glamor. The Papineau installation contained 6 ranks: 2 flutes, 2 strings and 2 reeds. It was a Model 160, installed in 1920. The pipes and effects were contained in a chamber to the left of the proscenium arch, and the console contained a piano action from which was also derived a "mandolin effect."

The Midway organ was about similar in size pipewise, but it was a "pit" installation, almost the entire orchestra pit formed a panelled chamber. The sloping top surface being fitted with large swell shutters which continually opened and closed following the movement of the swell pedal. I remember the light beam from the projection box reflecting on the moving shutters produced an unusual effect to one seated halfway down the theatre. After visiting many other theatres I have failed to find any other with the organ installed quite like that of the old Midway. This was a long and narrow theatre building with a balcony shaped something like a hairpin, the balcony being only two seats wide at the ends near the

screen. The organ, though far from the largest in Montreal, did however appear to be the loudest to an enthusiast sitting in the front row of the balcony, almost directly above the pipes. Fortunately, it was usually possible to find these seats vacant, for while it was almost impossible to see the picture comfortably from this location, it was on the other hand, a most excellent vantage point to look down on the organist and to hear the pipes in all their glory. I would assume this organ contained the usual percussions but all I ever remember hearing was the Glockenspiel and the Drums.

So far I have given a brief description of the two Warrens and the four Wurlitzers that we had in Montreal. The seventh and final theatre installation in the city was a three-manual located in Loew's Theatre. This was a Moller instrument. Unfortunately, I did not visit this movie and vaudeville house during the time that the organ was used and I have not been very successful in gathering much information concerning the installation. Apparently it was mainly a straight organ with a few unified ranks and having a very conservative style of console. It may have been a modified church organ, the only effects anyone ever remembers hearing being the Cathedral Chimes.

The seven installation described above were the only theatre organs to be used in Montreal theatres, though it is possible that a few other theatres in Montreal and vicinity did at one time or another have photoplayer installations. Friends have told me that they remember hearing organ music in the smaller theatres that certainly did not have any "permanent" organ installation, therefore a photoplayer could well have provided the organ music that was heard. I regret to say that none of the Montreal theatre organs have been preserved, on the contrary, all have been removed from the theatres, some were sold for scrap during the war period, some were dismantled for possible re-use of parts, and I believe a couple have been re-installed in other locations outside of the city. This completes the highlights of my memories of the seven local theatre organs, which until the arrival of sound pictures provided thousands of Montreal theatre patrons with satisfying accompaniment music for the screen presentations.

Perhaps I may depart from the unit organ for a moment to tell of another organ well known to many through the medium of radio. This was the three-manual Aeolian-Skinner located in "Tudor Hall," a concert hall in the Ogilvy Department Store in Montreal.

It was a concert organ of about 20 ranks. The console being similar to a church organ style, it was equipped with tilting tablets located on 45 degree jambs, it included harp and chimes and also an automatic player mechanism. Situated directly below the Tudor Hall, was the "Adam Dining Room." A grille in the dining room ceiling allowed the organ to be heard by the dining room patrons. The organ was installed about the year 1929 and plenty of publicity was given to the "opening." For a year or so regular recitals were offered every afternoon, sometimes with piano accompaniment. Also radio broadcasts of a classical and semi-classical nature were a regular part of the store's activities. The organist who opened the Tudor Hall organ and continued to play for several years was the late Doctor Herbert Saunders, F.R.C.O. Eventually the organ broadcasts and the recitals in the store were heard less frequently and then a change of policy took place in the Hall. Sponsored broadcasts were made from the Tudor Hall organ once or twice a week.

The presentations consisting of light romantic music and popular music of the day, and played by organists who formerly had been our regular Montreal theatre organists. I naturally enjoyed and appreciated these broadcasts, and while the Aeolian-Skinner was a straight organ and of course lacked a "toy-counter," under the skillful hands of our popular organists it sounded very good, and quite a contrast to the rather more serious music played by Doctor Saunders. Being acquainted with most of the performers, I attended many broadcasts, often sitting on the end of the bench at the console, which I can add was a most enviable privilege to have in those days. The organ was removed from the store and re-installed in a local church during the 1950's.

Before I conclude this article I would like to refer briefly to still another interesting organ installation. This was a three-manual Wurlitzer. However, it was not installed in a local theatre, this one was installed in a large private residence located on the summit of the mountain in the Montreal suburb of Westmount, which I might add is really the Beverly Hills section of Montreal. In this fairyland setting, around the year 1933 was installed a beautiful modern Wurlitzer of about 12 ranks complete with all the customary theatre organ percussions. The console, located in the large living room, was of light wood finish and was designed on modern lines. The chambers were located behind a large grilled section of the wall forming one entire side of the

entrance foyer, a beautiful winding staircase at the end of the grille led to the upper floor of this elaborate residence. The organ was specially built for the residence and was a modern installation throughout.

A series of evening broadcasts was made from this location during the mid thirties, the series known as "The Winchester Organ of Romance" and sponsored by the makers of Winchester Cigarettes, a male vocalist was featured on the broadcast. I am sure that many local radio listeners enjoyed these nightly programs, as did the writer. The presentations consisted mainly of request numbers sent in by the listeners. The exact location of the organ was never given during the broadcasts, this was kept a secret. Being a confirmed organ fan and fortunate in having many organist friends at the time, it was no problem for me to learn of the "secret location." I then wrote to the owner explaining my sincere interest in the Wurlitzer organ and previous experiences. By return mail I was favored with a kind invitation to visit his home and to play the organ, and to be sure and bring some friends. I will say that the evening turned out to be a most enjoyable and entertaining event. My friends played mostly church music, while I tried to do my best with the popular numbers of the day, making generous use of the glockenspiel, xylophone, drums and all the other percussion effects. Being a brand new installation, it was truly a joy to play. It responded perfectly to all types of music, with superb tonal quality, and everything worked which is more than I can say for some of the theatre organs I have tried. I seem to have a faint recollection that an earlier series was broadcast from this organ, and that it was called "The Phantom Organ." I am sorry to say that the organ was removed from the residence many years ago, and I have no knowledge of its present location.

In conclusion I am sure it is fair to say that perhaps the greatest thrill and satisfaction which an organ fan and enthusiast can experience is that which is received when he has the opportunity to play a Wurlitzer or other theatre style organ for the first time. I had that experience many years ago and can still appreciate the enjoyment received. I had previously tried out many church organs, but to play a favorite number on a theatre style organ for the first time using the many varied tonal effects and percussions is a thrill. Yes, thrills and satisfaction that this pastime and hobby can alone offer to an enthusiast. □

How to Entertain 500 Friends!

An elaborate system of Bus scheduling enabled over 500 conventioners to enjoy the home tour wanderings through the beautiful Virginia and Maryland countryside.



An operating scale model railroad and a Wurlitzer Style B Special pipe organ share space in George Johnson's basement in Alexandria, Virginia. A program of good, solid theatre organ music was presented by Charlie Affelder of the Potomac Valley Chapter. Another group was treated to music played by Minneapolis organist Clyde Olson. The railroad gave an unplanned but very popular co-star performance along with the neat and compact organ installation.



Rockville, Maryland residents on Castaway Drive were surprised to see bus-loads of happy people entering Bob and Marge Lane's home. At the console of the white 2/5 Robert Morton was Potomac Valley Chapter member Earl Sharits, one-time Colorado theatre organist and "Mr. Congeniality" himself. How in the world Bob and his lovely wife found time to prepare their home and organ along with the huge task of handling Convention Registration is beyond comprehension. Marjorie is also the devoted Secretary of the Potomac Valley Chapter and this was the premiere for the installation.



George Merriken featured Dick Smith at the console of his 3/22 Wurlitzer at his picturesque Wurlitzer Music Hall. George operated his spectacular multi-color stage and house lights display. Due to limited space each bus-load split into two groups taking turns listening to Dick or viewing an oldtime movie and a film on the theatre organ with Joe Evalt as projectionist. George outdid himself to see that each visitor had a good time.



Those who visited Walter "Stump" Miller's beautiful 2/10 Wurlitzer had a surprise performance by Hector Olivera who had received an ovation for his thrilling concert at the Tivoli. Ray Brubacher did the honors for the two afternoon tours. This is one of Ray's favorite instruments as was evidenced by the manner in which he made it sound like a much larger organ. Stump's collection of antique clocks was something to behold. An ice water dispenser set up by the Millers and son Doug, really hit the spot on that hot day.



Two buses visited the Warren Thomas 3/8 Robert Morton in Washington Grove, Maryland. It was an open console for both buses and several of the conventioners made the Wonder Morton speak up. George Thompson, billed as the world's worst organist, made one of his rare performances much to the delight of all. This was the first public showing for Warren's installation and it was a real treat.



The Doug Bailey studio, in Rockville has been used as both a film sound stage and radio studio for several area stations, and houses Doug's 2/11 Moller (console from the Shoreham Hotel and pipe work from the Loew's Palace, Washington, D.C.). Due to limited space, a closed circuit video system was used, with montiors set up in various offices and visitors were able to alternate between the "live" performance and the TV viewing rooms. This installation has an entrance through the pipe chamber, giving visitors a unique opportunity to view the "inside" of a pipe organ from close range. Doug Bailey played several selections then turned the instrument over for open console.



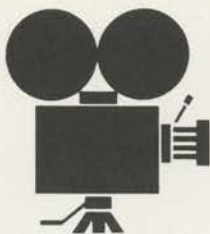
At Lem Keller's residence the artist was Frank Lybolt, well-known former New York theatre organist, and now Dean of the Norfolk chapter of the AGO. Frank played an excellent program of old standards effectively blending the piano with the lush, well-balanced sounds of the 4/17 "Keller Special". The adaptation of the large organ's sound in this studio is a credit to master craftsman, Lem Keller.



Most popular of home installations was the 3/14 Wurlitzer in the Lautzenheiser studio in Springfield, Virginia. Featured at the console was Jean, the "Sweetheart of the Virginia Theatre", in an enthusiastically received program. Jean's "Goodnight, My Someone" was followed immediately by a rousing "76 Trombones" performed by GENII, the computer developed by Marvin Lautzenheiser for the sole purpose of performing on a theatre pipe organ. (See story on page 5). GENII was also the subject of a seminar presented by Marvin on Tuesday and which was repeated by popular request. Potomac Valley Chairman Jean, Convention Co-Chairman Marvin, and the Lautzenheiser studio, which served as convention planning headquarters, have concluded a busy year.

(Photo by Richard Neidich)

The tour found a four manual Wurlitzer in a temporary installation in the Alexandria, Virginia apartment of Ed Welsh. The instrument incorporates a new electronic device replacing the usual relays and switch stack and requires only two wires to connect the console to the chambers. Questions about the new relay system abounded as visions of simplified installations were instilled in the visitors. (No photo available)



Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

MAIN TITLE — Greta Nissen may be living very quietly in the Newport, R.I. says a tracer of lost film folk . . . Lionel Sander is living in Rome . . . Hillary Brooke was recently reported as living at 40 Via Casitas, San Luis Rey Downs, Calif. . . A reader verifies that Lili Damita lives at 714 15th Ave. North, Fort Dodge, Iowa, 50501 . . . Lois Moran used to get fan mail at Box 1088, Seonna, Arizona, 86336 . . . Former child actor Russell Francis Griffin may live at 4855 - 66th St., Defense Heights, Maryland.

MILLIONS of Americans are hearing the magnificent 4/42 Moeller in the Fox Theatre in Atlanta thanks to nationwide advertising of Eastern Airlines.

YOUTHFUL Dennis James, who was a student with Leonard MacClain, held the Los Angeles ATOS chapter members spellbound with his artistry at the 3/16 Wurlitzer in the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium. The event was the August in-door picnic. James expects to locate in Arizona where he'll be the master of a pipe organ for a pizza parlor operation.

BUSTER KEATON'S long lost (1923) "Three Ages" has been found in Japan. A preservation print for the U.S. is being made.

QUESTION: "In 1929 Photoplay magazine had a contest for a new name for the talkies. What name was picked?" A. Such questions you dig up. Well, the name selected was 'Phonoplay' and it never caught on for a second. But among the other 16,000 weirdos suggested were: speakeasy, sayshow, smotion picture, squealies, chatties, gabbies and toneappeal.

WATCH for a rare showing of a sparkling new Technicolor print of the 1926 "Black Pirate" starring Douglas Fairbanks.

AN ENCHANTING literary experience is the best way to describe the new book on Hollywood by Francis Marion. "Off With Their Heads," (Macmillan, \$8.95, 356 pages) is what FM remembers about movie making between 1914 and 1972. Included in her writing credits for screenplays are those of Camille, Riffraff, Dinner at Eight, Emma, The Champ, Min & Bill Big House, Anna Christie and Stella Dallas.

BY THE time this appears in print Neil and Elsa Hamilton will have celebrated 50 years of treasured married life. Without permission of anyone, I'd like to speak for the millions of fans who enjoyed Hamilton's work over the years: "Continued happiness to you both."

READER asks: "Have you located Ralph Graves yet?" No. Can any TO reader give a hand?

MEMO TO HELEN HAYES: "Not long ago you asked on a national TV show whatever happened to actor John Wengraf? Well, John is alive, well and happy but lonesome for you and his old Broadway friends. Write John at 122 West Arrellaga St., Santa Barbara, California, 93101."

*for your sake . . .
for our sake . . .
for their sake . . .
and for Pete's sake . . .*

PATRONISE OUR ADVERTISERS

JOHN WAYNE, America's favorite he-man film hero, will be Grand Marshal of the 1973 Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena. Parade theme will be "Movie Memories." Surveys indicate 100 million people watch the Parade on TV all round the world.

COMMENTS, contributions, questions and your views are welcomed to P.O. Box 113, Pasadena, California, 91102.

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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.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR MARY? Ed Welch playing the Lautzenheiser residence 3/11 Wurlitzer in Springfield, Va., Mark Custom Records No. MC 1802, (stereo) \$5.50 postpaid from Jean's Organ Studio, 7216 Neuman St., Springfield, Va. 22150.

This is an interesting disc from a number of viewpoints. The organist informs us it was recorded in a hurry during a single miking session as a substitute for another disc which wouldn't be released in time for the 1972 ATOS Convention. As a hurry job it has many faults but also enough flashes of good solid playing to make one wonder what Ed Welch would produce under ideal conditions.

The instrument sounds big and full for a residence installation and we assume some artificial liveness has been added during dubbing. However, according to Mr. Welch, a number of ranks were substituted just for recording, so we are not certain the resulting sound fairly represents the Lautzenheiser organ. Even so, the result is a good and satisfying sound, although a few ranks are out of tune during some numbers, apparently the result of the aforementioned hurry.

The organist is obviously an ex-

cellent copyist and while listening to the record the listener may do some double takes — "now where have I heard that device or fill before?" It's obvious that Ed has listened well to Crawford, Wright and the records of many other organists with distinctive styles. However, the borrowed devices are not overdone; they are just there to tickle or bug the seasoned listener.

"What Are You Waiting for Mary?" is an admitted recreation of the Crawford classic with good sensitivity to the maestro's phrasing, tempo and style, but with some surprising melody inaccuracies. Attractive registration is more Welch than J.C.

"It Happened in Monterey" features an engrossing celested string chorus and some well-performed "ooh-hoo's" on a fast-trem'd Tibia.

"Toot-Toot-Tootsie" is played in upbeat "vo-do-deo-doh" '20s style with lots of percussion to brighten the borrowed styling.

We've had many versions of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" since organists discovered it. The Welch version presents a number of interesting musical tricks with it but suffers from being overlong (9 min. 30 sec.). About after five minutes of stating the well-known theme the variations start and interest picks up. Your playback had better have a good bass response because its within that compass that most of Ed's embellishments lie.

The opener for side II is a brief but pleasant 3/4 time "Cruising Down the River" with strong Wright overtones. Ed Welch has an engaging ballad style and he's at his best during Romberg's "Serenade". It is played with great sensitivity, mainly on String and Tibia combinations (later on a full combination) which amplify its good phrasing.

"Carioca" is lively and rife with the organ's clackers and pitched percussors, paying due homage to the spirit of the Rogers-Astaire era.

"When I Fall in Love" is afforded tender registration for a most appealing ballad treatment.

"Begin the Beguine", a big, bold brass-flecked dance tune is done in solid theatre organ style, a satisfying closer. Sensitive ears note some out-of-tune ranks.

The recording technique is top-notch throughout, and the bass may rattle your woofers. Our review pressing was a little "off center" which may



ED WELCH

generate enough "wow" to annoy well-tuned ears. We assume it was just the one pressing (our usual luck). Be it known that a flawed pressing is returnable for a replacement. This is a "four track" stereo record, but playable also with two track equipment and monaural. There are no jacket notes about Ed Welch so we don't know much about him other than he was heard during the 1972 ATOS Convention.

In summary, it's a good first try for Mr. Welch, who shows much promise, but we'd like to hear him under less pressing conditions.

A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY, Tom Gnaster playing the 3/16 Wicks organ in the Wheeler studio. Custom Fidelity (stereo) No. CFS-2954. \$5.50 postpaid from Tom Gnaster, 347 West Hickory Heights, Illinois 60411.

The instrument is the famous "Oral Roberts" studio organ, built by Wicks in the late '50s under conditions of great secrecy (Wicks feared straight organ prospects might be negatively influenced by the news that they were building one of those awful unified theatrical organs again). This second release played on the instrument, now relocated in the Lockport, Illinois studio of Robert Wheeler, indicates that Wicks, after a lapse of perhaps 30 years, still has the skills to produce an attractive theatre instrument with a personality all its own. It has an especially bright high register, a mellow Tibia, a snarly Posthorn, and effective tonal percussions.

Tom Gnaster is well known in the

Chicago area where he teaches, plays in church and concertizes in theatres (e.g. the Avalon, Milwaukee and the Rivoli in Indianapolis). While the T.O. is his first choice, he was educated as a concert pianist.

The piano's loss is organom's gain; Mr. Gnaster has an intriguing way with a theatre organ, an especially clean playing technique, and natural good taste in working out his arrangements (all played here are his own).

"Carioca" is a typical console-upper, taken at a snappy clip but never hurried until the final chorus. It demonstrates the Wicks Tibia chorus effectively during a brief passage which leaves one wanting more. The xylophone and clackers get some exercise also during the swirls and flourishes of this graceful dance tune. Registration may be a bit on the too bright side for some.



TOM GNASTER

Soft Mutations, Tibia, Strings and Vox are heard during the subtle ballad handling of "In My Own Little Corner". This later picks up rhythm and fuller registration.

Big organ sound in steady rhythm first marks "On the S.S. Bernard Cohn" and later settles into a chorus of xylophone plinks sustained by a String. But its back to big sound for a bang-up closing.

Venerable "Poinciana" starts on Strings but for the refrain the registration features a full Tibia chorus briefly, then some solo reeds.

Side I closes with that ancient potboiler many of us once had for a piano lesson - "Dance Macabre". It's program music (it tells a story) which deals with the same ghostly subject matter "Night on Bald Mountain" covered

so effectively in Disney's *Fantasia*. The classical challenge brings out much of the "churchiness" inherent in the Wicks organ and the result may seem a little bombastic to some auditioners. Even so, it is first class playing throughout and we can fault only the Gnaster rendition of the stylized cock crow which heralds the dawn. Composer Saint Saens made it incisively distinct; Tom plays it pretty. Otherwise, excellent.

"A Young Man's Fancy" revives a once universally popular tune from a long ago musical of WWI vintage, a delightful melody which Tom gives the full treatment with a light touch and plenty of nostalgia for those who remember.

The sweet and soft ballad voices carry the sentimental melody of "Jean"; with an exceptionally lovely String chorus in evidence as well as those haunting Tibias.

The sweeping ballad possibilities inherent in "This Nearly Was Mine" are taken advantage of fully by Tom, who makes good use here of the expression pedals. "I Come From the Town of Mira" gets similar treatment.

The closer is "Andalucia", which is sometimes more of "The Breeze and I" genre. The bolero sequence comes off well on ranks which often sound very "straight" as perhaps they should for this selection.

The artist provides interesting but uncomplicated arrangements throughout. We'll be hearing from him again. The tune list avoids the overplayed. Recording is adequate. Some listeners may find the extra bright treble registers of the Wicks a bit too much. An adjustment in playback tone controls will help. Interesting jacket notes about artist and instrument are by organist Kay McAbee, who recorded this instrument for Concert Recording release some time ago. It's an interesting entry by a newcomer to the pipe recording field.

LEONARD MACCLAIN PLAYS BALTIMORE'S FABULOUS STANTON THEATRE ORGAN. Ralbar OLP-6302 (monaural). \$5.50 postpaid from Mobile Music Mart, Box 195, Abington, Pennsylvania, 19001.

This is not a reissue, rather it's a closeout of remaining stocks of a recording never before reviewed in these columns. With both artist and

organ now gone, this recording is the more precious.

Only the most recent T.O. addicts wouldn't know of Leonard MacClain, one of the true giants of the theatre organ. Listening to his artistry in retrospect can only inspire listeners; everything he did at the console was just so right, a complete master of his instrument.

The recording was made early in the '60s decade, just after ATOS Potomac Valley Chapter members completed the task of rousing the long-sleeping giant. The 3/31 Kimball provides a fine example of the Kimball T.O. sound - most effective in large ensemble combinations and with a pronounced emphasis on Strings. Some fine solo stops are heard, notably a sharp trumpet in the verse of "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise" and



LEONARD MACCLAIN

an untrem'd Tuba in "I Wonder Who's Kissing her Now".

The style used by Mr. MacClain here is mainly that associated with "intermission music" of the '30s and '40s, but far more subtle in its nuances than most. MacClain was a master of "suspense harmony" where he seemed to hit the wrong chord initially and then resolved to a more ear-pleasing one before the next phrase started.

Other selections are "Maryland, My Maryland"; "You're a Grand Old Flag", "Mary", "Wait 'til the Sun Shines Nellie", "Just a Little Love, a Little Kiss", "You Made me Love You", "Marcheta", "Poor Butterfly", "For Me and My Gal", "Smiles", "Your

Eyes Have Told Me So" and "All By Myself."

Although Leonard MacClain is gone, he has left a legacy of fine recorded music and a generous portion of his fine musicianship lives on in his pupils, such as Shirley Hannum and Dennis James. As ATOSers know, the organ came to an ignoble end; it was sold and broken up for parts in the mid-'60s by an "organ broker." But on this record all things are as they were during a brighter day with artist and instrument in top form. An elaborate "open up" jacket provides much information about artist and instrument. Highly recommended.

FIREWORKS, Don Thompson playing the 4/18 Wurlitzer in the Redwood City (Calif.) "Cap'n's Galley." CR-0120 (stereo). \$4.89 from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262.

Reviewing this record was a most extraordinary undertaking. It is a collection of mostly well-known orchestral concert pieces, which sent us scurrying to our supply of Sir Thomas Beecham, Leonard Bernstein, Eugene Ormandy, Sir Malcom Sargent, Leopold Stokowski, Wilhelm Furtwangler and Dimitri Mitropoulis records for comparisons.

If there is one fault that persists through much of the music presented here it's excessive speed. Strauss' "Thunder and Lighting Polka" (actually a "gallop") was often used by organists playing silent newsreel horse race footage. The bangtails could never keep up with this version. The great speed precludes sufficient attention to detail, yet it comes out quite well. Wagner doesn't fare as well during Don's ambitious "Prelude to Act III to Lohengrin". The speed is there, so is a ponderous bass during the soft passages. The melody is partially obscured by the repeated triplet accompaniment during the baritone melody sequence, a registration fault.

7:03 minutes of "Orpheus in the Underworld" while Don raises his own Hades with tempos — well the familiar waltz tune comes off well, and registration is mostly good throughout.

Don delves into a Slavic mood for a wack at Monti's "Czardas", a sequence of fast passages followed by slow passages ad infinitum. The slow areas are well played except of an over-

powering pedal, but the fast parts are away and over the hill with great dispatch.

Don Thompson's programs always contain a generous portion of the unusual, in this case an ambitious undertaking, the "March" from the utopian film of the late '30s, *Things To Come*. It's a job for a full symphony orchestra but doesn't fare badly as an organ solo. Don gives it some rough treatment in spots (he emphasizes one of the inner rhythmic voices to the extent it upstages the melody) and his tempo is at odds with the London Philharmonic Orchestra's version which was conducted by the composer, Sir Arthur Bliss. For all that, it's a lot better than another rehash of "Lara's Theme."

Wagner's music is often difficult to reduce to the capabilities of two hands and two feet. Andrew Fenner managed it in a recent recording but even he didn't attempt the difficult "Ride of the Valkyries." I've heard Don play it better than he does on this record but at best one can manage only the outside voices and skip the complex weaving of inner colors inherent in the orchestration. Don's version is flashy but incomplete. And the Valkyries seem intent on driving their horses to win a heat at Hollywood Park.

His "Finlandia" is much better suited to the organ and it comes off well.

The closer is the lackluster Waltz from *Masquerade*. Even a bright talent such as Don's can't do much with its one idea. The only poor choice in an otherwise novel program.

The organ has been well recorded, and does its part effectively in several roles better suited to a straight organ. Voluminous jacket notes were most probably written by Don, who writes very well.

— THE PLUG-IN CORNER —
LARRY VANNUCCI PLAYS MUSIC FOR TEENAGERS OF ALL AGES on Bob Power's Rodgers "Style 260 Special" Angelus WR 5000 (stereo). \$5.50 postpaid from Vanclaire Records, 30 Mountain View Rd. Fairfax, Calif. 94930.

Those who may have been disappointed in the sound quality heard on a previous release of this most elaborate of all electronic theatre organs will be happy to hear an entirely different

instrument this time. Bob Power, wanting to take advantage of the wide range of tonal adjustments Rodgers built into the instrument, called in the logical doctor, Lee Haggart. Lee knows both pipe organs and electronics, having worked on one or the other for most of his life. Lee and Harvey Heck worked on the instrument for one day, voicing and detuning (yes, detuning). Next, loudspeakers were angled to better disperse the sound. Then Bob made a tape of all the C's and G's of identically labelled ranks on the Bob Carson 3/26 studio Wurlitzer. Armed with this information he adjusted each note of each electronic "rank" for quality and volume, using the recorded C's and G's for reference. The result is an entirely different sounding organ, much truer to the pipe ideal.

The record does much to under-



'The Vanooch' — (Stufoto)

score the improvement; it includes three selections recorded before the changes, so a comparison may be made.

Larry Vannucci is a pipe organist of many talents. He can play "fancy" or "earthy". Well known on the west coast through concerts, Home Organ Festival appearances and club dates, Larry played pipes in San Francisco's Wurlitzer-equipped "Lost Weekend" bar for 10 years and recorded a memorable disc on that city's Golden Gate theatre 3/12 Wurlitzer 12 years ago. Strongly inspired by Crawford and Wright, Larry sometimes uses their stylings. But he has a jazz style all his own.

The platter contains a variety of arrangements to carry its mainly 1932-1948 complement of tunes. "Want to Get a Girl" is a tribute to Crawford.

"Tangerine" and "Green Eyes" reflect their World War II vintage with 4-to-the-bar pedal, while ballad treatment of "I Can't Get Started" and "These Foolish Things" sound as though Larry is playing three-handed; a sharp reed melody accompanied by the unbroken shimmer of strings while the Harp marks the accompaniment rhythm. Actually its a very effective use of second touch; Larry's left hand holds down the string-rich chords while a little more pressure brings in the Harp beat. Note that gorgeous Lyn Larcenous modulation leading into the final chorus of "Things". There is nice ballad work during "Little Darling" and "They Didn't Believe Me." "Can Can at the Circus" is a "kitchen sink" for all the tunes Larry had left over, from Offenbach to "Billboard March."

Smooth "rolls" are heard during "It Had To Be You." Larry's "Third Man Theme" uses the "Mandolin" as a Zither. Two tunes recorded before the "metamorphosis" are "Who's Sorry Now" and "Basin Street Blues" ("Can Can" is the third). They show how the organ used to sound. Larry reserved this sound for the raunchier tunes where some raspy brass would help rather than hinder the effect he wanted.

All tunes are carefully orchestrated for the various voices of the organ, before or after. The Vannucci artistry is well showcased and the quality of sound recorded requires no apology for its being electronic. We consider it a milestone.

CHRISTMAS RECORDINGS

Organ records make fine presents. The time to order is now. Here are some possibilities.

JOHN STEELE PLAYS THE BRIGHT SOUNDS OF CHRISTMAS on a 4/28 Wurlitzer. Fourteen pop and traditional Yule tunes. \$5.50 postpaid from Kinura Records, Box 236, Miami Springs, Florida 33166.



JOHN STEELE - (Stufoto)

I FEEL CHRISTMAS, Helen Dell playing 12 Christmas pops and standards (on carols) on the Bob Carson 3/26 Studio Wurlitzer, \$5.50 postpaid from Malar Records, Box 3104, Glendale, Calif. 91201.

JOY TO THE WORLD, Lyn Larsen playing up-to-date versions of Christmas standards and carols on the Bob Carson Wurlitzer. \$5.50 postpaid from Essential Records, Box 3544, Glendale Calif. 91201.

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JOY TO THE WORLD, Ena Baga playing a 3/9 Compton and a Hammond B3; offbeat seasonal standards plus carols. \$4.89 postpaid from Concert Recording, Box 531, Lynwood, Calif. 90262. □

Closing Chord

Johnny Duffy, westcoast organist with a long career in radio, TV and recording, died on August 5th, after a valiant six-month battle with cancer-generated brain tumors.



JOHNNY DUFFY - (Stufoto)

Duffy was born of Scotch-Irish parents in Motherwell, Scotland on June 26, 1927. His family emigrated to the USA when Johnny was six and settled in Pittsburgh, Pa. The youth took to music at an early age and was soon organizing local dance groups. He also discovered the electric organ and did some club work in the Pittsburgh area. Then he joined Art Kassel's orchestra on tour as pianist.

He settled in Hollywood with his family in the late '40s and joined ABC-Hollywood as radio and TV musical director for 15 years, then moved over to NBC for another 4 years. Shows he scored include *The Frank Lovejoy Show*, *Lassie*, *Michael Shayne*, *Richard Diamond* and the *Buddy Clark Show*. Later he did club work, with engagements at such posh spots as the Chicago Blackhawk and the Beverly Wilshire hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. He also played long engagements in the San Fernando Valley (California)

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Chase House, Skytrails and Red Barn, on Hammonds and Gulbransen "Rialtos" (his favorite plug-in).

During this period he found time to make some fine recordings on the then Joe Kearns 3/26 Studio Wurlitzer, notably "Excursions in Hi-Fi" and "Love Moods" for Liberty Records. He also recorded the gone Columbia Square Wurlitzer ("Autumn Leaves") and made several plug-in records, among them "The Look of Love" on an Allen. Curiously, a record he thoroughly disliked, "Giant" on the Sunset label, remains his best seller, perhaps because of its youth orientation.

After six children, Johnny's marriage went on the rocks, and he "batched it" until he met Ruth about eight years ago. Ruth became his wife in 1966.

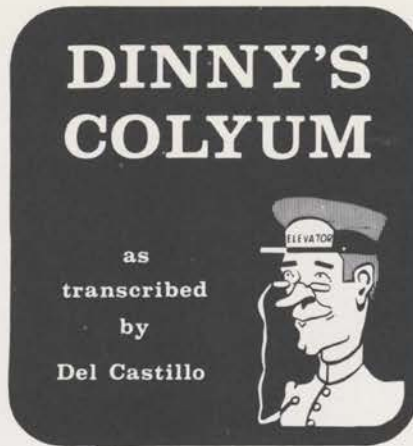
Four years ago Johnny quit smoking after being a "3-pack-a-day" man for many years. On February 29 of this year, a surgeon removed a malignant tumor from Johnny's brain successfully, but continued tests toward locating the cause of the malignancy. It was traced to a lung and on April 11 a nicotine-sodden cancerous lung was removed. That was expected to stop the generation of tumors and Johnny was anxious to get back to work. But then he went blind — until a second brain tumor was removed on June 15.

The three operations took their toll. Johnny's weight was way down but he was still full of fight. By telephone he told the writer that he had no intention of "taking off and leaving Ruthie. These are my happiest years."

But he put his affairs in order just the same. He told his wife that if the worst came he wanted to be cremated and his ashes scattered over the ocean. The worst came; a third brain tumor developed and the hardy constitution that had survived so much was too weak to undergo more surgery. Before he lapsed in unconsciousness, he warned his wife away: "I don't want you to see me like this."

Johnny was still stalling death. He managed somehow to survive in his hospital bed for three weeks of coma before the end came on August 5th. There was no funeral service.

On the next day a bi-motor plane winged out over the Pacific and all that remained of a unique musicianship and a truly wonderful person was consigned to the sea. □



I guess maybe one of the reasons I hang on to the coat tails of these here organ players and organ clubs is that I always wanted to learn to play the organ my own self. So I got some of these here organ method books but they all seem to sort of shoot off in different directions and they wind up be gettin me all mixed up. Like they start usin letters for the rite hand and then they give the fingers to use and when they say put your thum on C which is to the left of the two black keys then they give you the fingers to use and you go One, One, Two, Three, Three, Four, Five, go up one more for Five, come down again for Five, Three. Well, OK, I reckernize the toon, so I think well maybe it'll be easy to learn to play.

But then the next time they give me the fingers but dont give me the letters so I put my fingers where they was before with my thum on where it says middle C is, but it dont come out rite on account the book didnt say I should of moved my hand up and down. So pretty soon I get on to how I have to find where the letters is on the lines and spaces, and I can belt out Home Sweet Home OK except the

second part where I have to move my hand up to a noo place. And then when I get the toon down it still dont sound rite because the notes they all run together sort of. So the next thing I find out they is different kinds of notes that has different lengths like the ones with the holes in them is to hold on longer, and the ones with the line acrost the top is quicker, and the ones with the dot after them is longer except that if the dot is on the top then they is quicker. I ask you!

So by now I have to find out how to use the left hand and then I am really in trouble. One book says all you have to do is put your index finger on the letter it says for the chord and then the thum and the little pinkie will fall on the right place. Which is all rite except that I have to keep jumpin my hand up and down and pretty soon they is a cord that dont sound rite on account it should have had some of the black notes that nobody told me about. So then I try another book and it has a big chart with about 500 cords on it that I have to try to memorize and they all have the letter for the cord on the bottom note and I aint much better off than I was before on account my hand is jumpin up and down like one of these here Mexican jumpin beens.

So by now I am gettin kind of desparate on account every book seems to tell me something different and so I go to another book that says I have to learn all the different keys and the scales and then the cord will be 1, 3 and 5 of the scales for a Majer cord, and lower the 3rd for a Miner cord, and raise the 5th for a Oggmented cord, and lower the 7th for a 7th cord, and lower the 3rd and the 5th and the 7th for a Diminishing Cord, and I think what in tunket am I a-gettin



Larry's dramatic style is captured in tunes such as:

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"Third Man Theme"
"These Foolish Things"
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of Camarillo, California

into. So I throw that away and I try another book and it says to count up and down on all the keys includin the black ones and for a Majer cord all I have to do is count 4 and 3, and for a 7th cord count up 3 more, and by now I am a-gettin so punchy I couldnt even count the number of toes on my foot without comin out different every time.

But then somebody tells me they is books where every piece has little pictures that shows you where the fingers go for the different cords and so I try that and durned if it dont work pretty good. So I been tryin that and I come to the conclusion that now I am a organ player. And the only trouble is that the only pieces I can play is the ones in the books that has these little pictures for the cords, so how enybody ever learns to play the organ with three sets of lines for the two hands and the feet and no pictures is beyond me. □



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 1314
Salinas, Calif. 93901*

Dear Friends:

Noticed in the August issue that someone was looking for music used in the original *Phantom of the Opera*. The main theme was Victor Herbert's "Karma Overture" — particularly for the flight through the sewers of Paris. The love theme used was "My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice", from *Samson And Delilah*, —neutral scenes in the opera house used the "Faust Waltzes".

Since I was too young to ride the subways alone (honest!), I induced my mother to take me to the B.S. Moss

Broadway Theatre to see *Phantom*. I believe that this was the first run showing.

This was not the present Broadway theatre (also B.S. Moss) which was originally called the Colony — but a big old vaude-film theatre I believe between 40-41st Streets. I understand this was the theatre which opened with the first stage version of *Ben Hur*, — had horses racing on treadmills, etc.

I could never understand why there were (I believe three) remakes of *Phantom* since none surpassed the original.

Elsewhere, I have read a couple of times that the Brooklyn Paramount was the second largest theatre in N.Y. Huge as it was (4,500 seats), this was never true.

The three largest theatres in N.Y., all had the same capacity 6,200 seats, they were the Hippodrome, Roxy, and Music Hall. The Capitol which opened in 1919, had 5,000.

The present second largest theatre in N.Y., is the Academy of Music on 14th Street.

Another picture with interesting music was *Beau Geste*.

Regards,
Oscar Roed
Highland Park, N.J.

To whom it may concern:

For as long as I can remember, you continually refer to electronic organs as "plug ins". It seems to me that a pipe organ must have its blower plugged in to an electrical source or we would not know the instrument as we do today.

I have a very fine Rodgers Organ (33-E) custom installed in a "pipe" chamber above my living room ceiling. I find it quite as satisfying to play and listen to as many pipe organs that I have played over the years, and far superior to most of them, especially in home installations. Concerning my Rodgers organ, a minimum of 30 hours were put into it in voicing, etc. which is more than plugging a cord into an outlet.

Could you please find another term for "plug in"? I find the term obnoxious and hope you will take my suggestion in good faith as that is the way it is meant. Also, I am sure that the Rodgers Company as well as other electronic organ manufacturers who advertise in your magazine deserve better credit for their ads than having

their instruments referred to in this fashion.

I am sure that if it were not for the interest and contributions of the electronic manufacturers, the interest in the theatre pipe organ would not be what it is, and most of the famous old instruments would still be rotting in their pits.

Most Sincerely,
Steven A. Malotte
Littlerock, California

OOPS...

Some of our sharp-eyed readers discovered some errors in the August issue. We apologize for not being correct, but hope we can set the record straight.

At the bottom right of page 29 our photo caption had Eddie Weaver congratulating the wrong person. The correct name of the young man in the photo is LYN LUNDE. The photo is reprinted here with the proper caption.

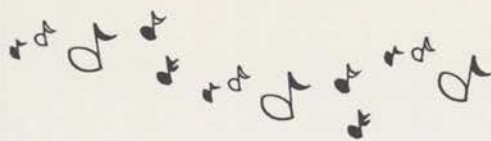


Eddie Weaver congratulates his student, Lyn Lunde, after Lyn's cameo appearance at the Mosque. He is currently staff organist at Loew's Richmond.

We gave credit to the wrong person as being staff organist at the Virginia Theatre, Alexandria. The actual organists at the Virginia are JIMMY BOYCE and JEAN LAUTZENHEISER.

In listing Cameo performers we neglected to mention the name of DR. C.A.J. PARMENTIER, who gave a masterful performance.

We are sincerely sorry for these errors and omissions, and thank those who brought them to our attention. □



CHAPTER NOTES

ALOHA

Because it is a favorite vacation-land, Hawaii is visited by countless numbers of people each year. Fortunately for the Aloha Chapter, many of these visitors are theatre organists or enthusiasts, and somehow establish contact with Aloha Chapter members while in the Islands. While visitors are always welcome, August was a special month because both Fred Feibel and Don Baker were here.

Don Baker was in town for a Conn organ concert, sponsored by the local dealer. Fred Feibel and his wife arrived on vacation, and, by prior arrangement, played at the Waikiki Theatre for an informal chapter gathering. This was, curiously enough, his first experience at a Robert Morton. As he explains, there had simply never been any Mortons where he happened to be — before this. But he was nonetheless pleased with what he heard.

The Feibels were also guests at the apartment of Chapter Secretary and Treasurer, Grace and John Jenkins, where they met several more members and chatted about everyone's favorite subject.

Regrettably, Mr. Baker's schedule did not permit him enough time for any social events or other performances, but he is welcome back any time. So are all of you.

ROGER G. ANGELL

CATOE

On Wednesday Aug. 16, Chicagoland organist Leon Berry was scheduled to present a program at the Riviera Theatre at North Tonawanda, N.Y. However Leon suffered a mild stroke on the preceding Monday evening. He had spent the afternoon practicing at the Riviera and was back at the Piazza residence when it happened. Later in the week Randy brought Leon back home to Park

Ridge in his Dodge van and at present Leon is at home and recovering very quickly. It's no fun bearing this kind of news but we know Leon Berry has fans all over the country that would be concerned for his welfare. Leon's latest record has just been released and it sounds terrific. It's called "Leon and the Lion" and was recorded on the



LEON BERRY

"Beast In The Basement" Wurlitzer which is now in a much larger setting. A crescendo pedal was added recently and the unique pizzicato Post Horn effect brings back memories of the Hub. While many small Wurlitzer's had no couplers, Leon's Beast includes sub, super and manual to pedal couplers.

The auction of the remains of the Senate organ is now history. CATOE originally acquired the organ at a cost of \$2,510.00. Last year the building in which it was being worked on burned to the ground and all that was left was the console, the blower, the piano and some miscellaneous parts which were stored elsewhere. On August 19 these items were auctioned off for a total of \$3,258.00 which will go into a special

organ fund for the purchase of another organ.

One of the nicest sounding Wurlitzers in existence today got a real workout by its master on Sunday, Aug. 20 when John Muri presented a full ninety minute program at CATOE's August social. The scene was East Chicago's "Indiana" theatre where John had spent several years as staff organist. John himself expressed astonishment at finding the 3/10 not only still there but also re-finished, re-furbished and in excellent condition. John tailored his presentation to his theatre organ enthusiast audience, opening with "The Thunderer March". John then played selections from *The Rothschilds*, three songs in E-flat and finished the first part of his program with "Sunset on the Trail" from Grofe's *Grand Canyon Suite*. Next we were treated to an engrossing slide presentation on theatre organ playing, from film work to organ solos. As examples of cue sheets and sheet music were projected on the screen John would illustrate by playing the music. Then came seven songs by Bacharach, the "William Tell Overture" and selections from *Applause*. This was a special kind of program that any theatre organ fan anywhere would consider "priceless".

In spite of the remote location and hot weather a large group of CATOE members and guests showed up. In spite of the lack of air-conditioning the audience was spellbound and the organ sounded terrific. Fred Kruse and the crew have done a first class restoration job with the Hope Jones Unit Orchestra. A cameo performance by



JOHN MURI

Chicago organist Hannah Jacobs preceeded open console time that included many interesting numbers by CATOE members and their guests.



AL MELGARD

On Thursday August 24 CATOE members gathered together for a business meeting. A lively discussion of by-laws resulted in some interesting suggestions such as having terms of office start in summer. A formal motion for CATOE to endorse Stadium Organist Al Melgard as a candidate for the ATOS Hall of Fame was passed unanimously.

TONY TAHLMAN

DELAWARE VALLEY

Although the summer was quiet chapter-wise, the heat did not preclude visits by out-of-towners. National Secretary-Treasurer and DVTOS member Mary Bowles, for example, was delighted to entertain Dr. C.A.J. Parmentier for 12 days in August by giving him the grand tour of the cream

of local installations, both in auditoriums and homes, and expressed her enthusiasm in getting to know such a fine gentleman.

The yearly joint open-console bash with New York Chaps will be held at the Surf City Hotel in Surf City, Long Beach Island, N.J., and, as always, will be a success. The 3/15 Wurlitzer, installed with windows exposing its meticulous pipework and black light shining on fluorescently painted percussions, will chirp to the music of all kinds of artists while chapterites enjoy the excellent restaurant and bar facilities and renew old friendships.

Later in the month, several members will enjoy a diversified benefit program for the Leukemia Research Foundation by Syracuse's Karl Cole on September 25. Karl will take the Conn 650 through its paces and afford his audience in the Doylestown (Pa.) high school the product of his rich background of training and experience. We hope to hear more from charismatic Karl in this area soon.

Chapter plans for October have included a visit to the 4-manual, 58-rank Kimball in the ballroom of the convention hall in Atlantic City, N.J., where several organists had the thrill of their lives with an instrument this size, and a jointly sponsored concert by this reporter on October 29. The concert program includes theatrical music and accompaniment to Max Sennett's comedy, *Teddy at the Throttle*, held on Lansdowne Theatre's 3/9 Kimball. Usually, when DVATOS sponsors a joint meeting, it's with an electronic club or a nearby chapter, like New York. But in this case, the other half is the Southeastern Chapter of the AGO. We're looking forward to good times with our liturgical friends.

And, included in Lyn Larsen's eastern tour is John Dickinson High School (Wilmington, Del.) on October 21 for a program that will probably be

the highlight of JDHS's new season.

Plans for November are being firmed up for a fund-raising event by Larry Ferrari; a Christmas spectacular in mid-December is being worked out (complete with theatre pipes, adult choir, and children's handbell choir); and we're hoping to hold our next membership business meeting in January at the Lansdowne Theatre.

Since the function of ATOS is "to preserve the tradition of the theatre organ and to further the understanding of the instrument and its music," our chapter believes in accomplishing this by keeping busy through activity in a friendly way in a mutual interest.

SHIRLEY HANNUM

LOS ANGELES

The San Gabriel Summer Organ Fiesta was the big event of the summer season for the Los Angeles Chapter. More than 280 members and guests assembled on Sunday, August 27th at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium for an afternoon of organ music. Program Chairman Bob Carson introduced the artists which included Paul Woodard,



DENNIS JAMES - (Stufoto)



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Frank Woode, Carol Jones, Dennis James, Ken Kukuk, Donna Parker, and Bob Mitchell. A buffet picnic luncheon was served on the spacious stage during the afternoon.



CAROL JONES - (Stufoto)

Los Angeles Chapter ATOS member Helen Dell has recently become the organist for the Los Angeles

Dodgers Baseball team, replacing Donna Parker who has retired after several months as Dodger organist.

SAM DICKERSON

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Lowell Ayars, back by popular demand, returned to the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda on July 19. His varied renditions of standards, novelty tunes, and an overture, on the 3/12 Wurlitzer were enthusiastically received. Mr. Ayars' vocalizing was an unusual and welcome treat. Lowell accompanied a sing-along and silent flick.

On Sunday, August 6, about 50 to 60 members enjoyed themselves at the Chapter's annual picnic, which was held this year at the country estate of Mr. and Mrs. Elwyn Guest in Angola, N.Y. There was food and drink enough for all, as well as fun and games and lots of good music from the Guests' Allen organ and grand piano.

Chicagoland's Leon Berry was scheduled to perform at the Riviera on August 16. Unfortunately, the famed organist suddenly suffered a stroke in Buffalo two days before the concert and is now reported in good condition in his home in Park Ridge, Illinois.

Karl Cole (remember him from the convention?) graciously accepted a last-minute offer to fill in for Mr.

Berry for that evening. His concert was so well received that the SRO crowd didn't want to let him go. His youthful talent and personality made him a hit. (By the way, Mr. Cole is not related to this reporter.)

The Niagara Frontier Chapter sends its best wishes to Leon for a speedy recovery.

SHIRLEY COLE

POTOMAC VALLEY

The officers and members of the Potomac Valley Chapter wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to all who helped make the 1972 National ATOS Convention a success. To our outgoing President and Mrs. Stillman Rice for their loving guidance, to the advertising and editorial staff of the THEATRE ORGAN magazine for their beautiful and sensitive coverage, the artists for their cooperation and great concerts, all Chapter chairmen for their interest and moral support, and, finally, all 725 of you wonderful conventioners who brought your happy selves and made our dreams come true, a sincere THANK YOU.

JEAN LAUTZENHEISER

SIERRA

On a pleasant afternoon it's an hour's drive from Sacramento. One winds from curve to curve and undulates over hills and through valleys,

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finally entering Pine Grove, a small town nestled among the pine trees of the Sierra foothills. A short climb up a hill and you are at the beautiful adobe residence of Jim and Janice Welch and eighteen year old Jim, Jr. Sixty members and friends of Sierra Chapter gathered there in mid-August for our annual picnic.

The Welch's have a Harris 2/22 classical organ which is installed in a large studio-workshop building just down the path from the house. The two chambers — one being open, the other shuttered — are located in the middle of the large building and you can walk completely around them. The console stands on a raised platform and the 16 foot pedal pipes are placed horizontally in the large second-story portion of the building.

Everyone brought their own lunch and about 2:30 the lovely shaded lawn with pool and waterfall looked like family day at the old town park. Coffee, ice cream, and a beautiful big cake trimmed with a music clef were provided by our hosts. There was much wandering from table to table as everyone caught up on the latest T.O. gossip and news, while those lucky enough to have organs of their own, discussed technical problems.

The picnic remains packed away, everyone strolled down to the studio where Jim, Jr. opened the "show"

with a classical number and a couple of pops. Jim is studying classical but can also play pops, "but my teacher doesn't know it". Two or three of the members took over for a few minutes and then the big event of the day as none other than Rex Koury seated himself at the console. Not to be stymied by a straight organ, Rex took off on two classical numbers and then went into Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue" seemingly undaunted by the fact that he was wearing "sneakers". If there are those who doubt that a classical organ can sound like a T.O. they should have heard the last half of Rex's program. Despite low pressure and very little trem, that old Harris really cried "Wurlibarmorton!" as Rex played several pops.

Back at the house, Rex seated himself at the Hammond and brought forth more lovely music. Meanwhile, some members strolled down to the barn to see some of the chests, pipes, toy counters (2), percussions, etc. that the Welch's are collecting for a future T.O. By 8:00 o'clock everyone was on their way home after a very pleasant summer's afternoon. Sierra Chapter can't help but be proud of our newest members, Rex, Mary and son Brian Koury.

Much, much thanks to our hosts the Welches for a fun afternoon at their lovely home; and thanks also to

members Ray Anderson and Dale Mendenhall for helping to have the organ in top shape. BOB LONGFIELD

The Sierra Chapter is lucky to have as a member Mr. Emil Martin who has been a household musical term in Sacramento and wherever the Sacramento-based McClatchy Broadcasting System had, or has, stations. Some of us who are a little older remember the days when McClatchy's Sacramento Station, KFBK had a pipe organ (2/10 Robert-Morton) which had come from the Capitol Theatre in Sacramento in



Mr. Martin is pictured at the console of the 4/16 (former Carl Greer Inn) ROBERT-MORTON during his part in the program which was played as a tribute to late Sierra Chapter organist and Vice Chairman George Seaver. In the background on the right, is 10 year old member Beverly Diane Harris who attended her first ATOS convention at the age of five in Detroit.



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1923. In 1934 it was moved to the KFBK studios. In 1954 McClatchy built new studios in their new newspaper plant at 21st and Q Streets in Sacramento. There was no place provided for the pipe organ and Emil was heard weekly on a Hammond. The program was distributed to other stations in the chain (except KMJ, Fresno which was broadcasting Arthur Mantor from the Warner Brothers Theatre).

Mr. Martin was one of three organists who helped dedicate the 4/21 WurliKilgen in the auditorium of Grant Union High School in the Del Paso Heights section of what is now the City of Sacramento. (The school is part of the Grant Joint Union High School District, not the Sacramento City Unified School District as was noted by the jacket notes on a recently released recording of the organ.)

On November 12, at 2:00 P.M., Mr. Martin will return to the Grant console to build the mood for Sierra Chapter's presentation of W.C. Fields in Mack Sennett's *Tillie's Punctured Romance* and Will Rogers, with other stars of the late 1920's, in a satire of *Big Moments from Little Pictures*.

Mr. Martin has played for Sierra Chapter concerts at the Greer — now the Sheraton Inn — several times. He was the featured artist for Sierra Chapter's 1971 outing in Reno where Eva and Fred Beeks have a Wurlitzer. He has just celebrated his 35th year with McClatchy Broadcasting Company where he is Program Director. Mr. Martin is active in Sacramento's Eaglet Theatre where he has performed numerous times, but not on a pipe organ. He is equally at home on his first love, the theatre pipes, or the electronic substitutes. □

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