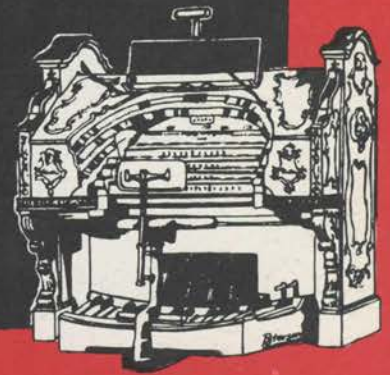


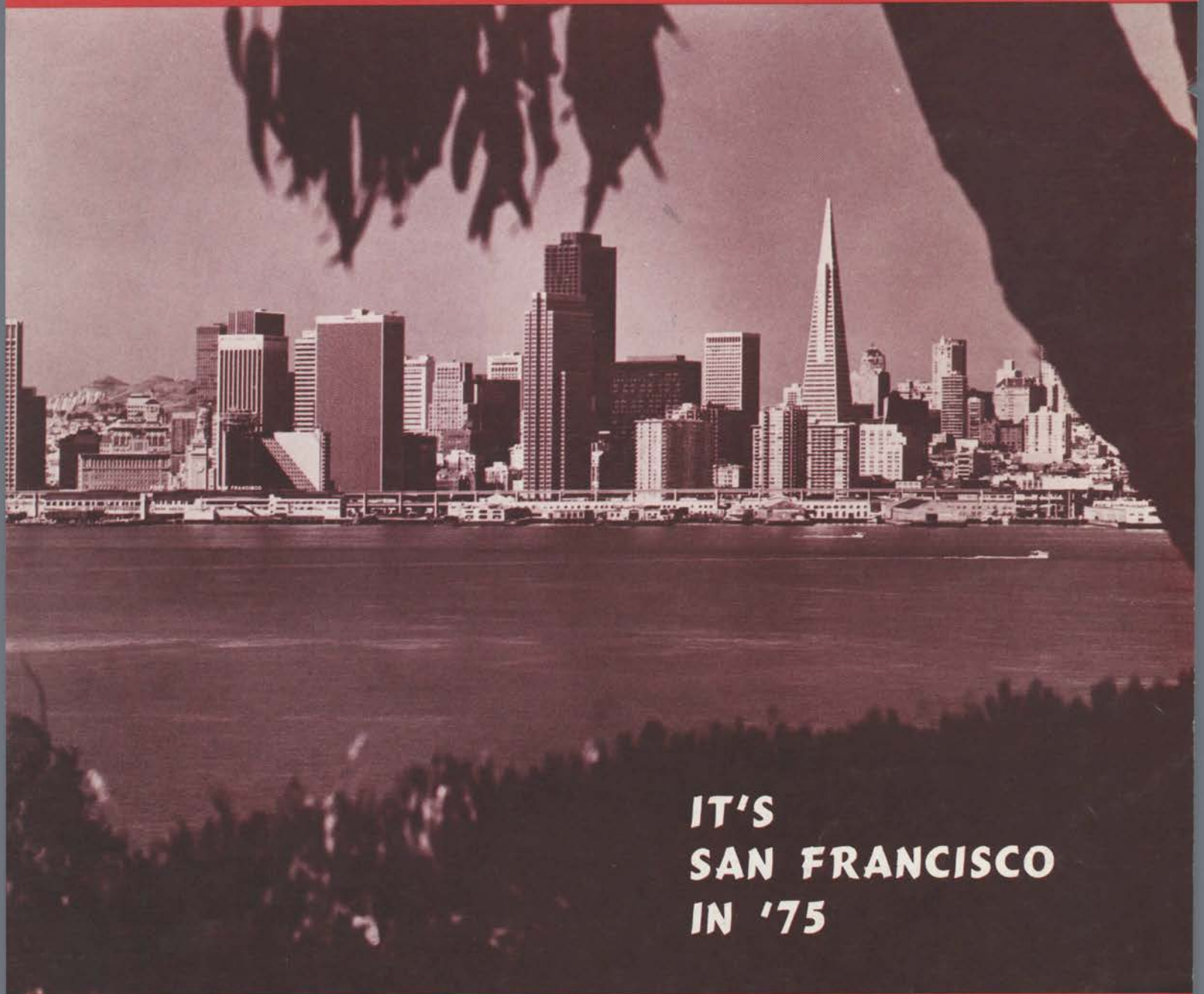
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# THEATRE ORGAN



VOLUME 16, NO. 6

DECEMBER, 1974



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**Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society**





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Compiled by Lloyd E. Klos

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## cover photo...

San Francisco's vaulting skyline is seen here from Treasure Island east of the Embarcadero. Highrises from left are the Pacific Gas & Electric, Aetna (dwarfing the Ferry Building), Wells Fargo behind Mutual Benefit, Continental Insurance, Union Bank, Hilton, Russ, Hyatt on Union Square, Security Pacific, Bank of America World Headquarters, Alcoa, Hartford, Transamerica (pyramid), Mark Hopkins and the Fairmont Tower Buildings. See page 9 for convention plans.

(S.F. Visitors Bureau photo by George Knight)

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## president's message...

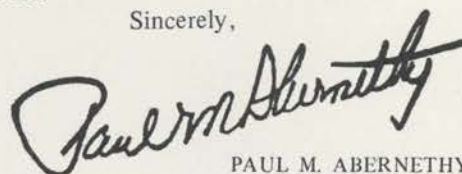
Hello from National Headquarters. Our society continues to grow with two new chapters being chartered since convention time. Our total membership now exceeds 5300.

I would like to encourage all chapter chairmen and secretaries to make sure that we receive a list of all your new officers' names, addresses and phone numbers by Jan. 1.

'75 convention plans are well under way for San Francisco. Make your plans now to meet us there.

Preliminary plans for '76 in Philadelphia are also under way. Keep up the good work and keep passing on any ideas that you have regarding theatre organ to the President's office.

Sincerely,



PAUL M. ABERNETHY



## Season's Greetings

FROM THE ENTIRE THEATRE ORGAN MAGAZINE STAFF

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# Vancouver Rescues Its Orpheum

by George S. Francis

*"Watch the eyes of a child as he enters the portals of one of our great theatres and treads the pathway to fairyland. Watch the bright lights in the eyes of the tired shopgirl who hurries noiselessly over carpets and sighs with satisfaction as she walks amid furnishing that once delighted the hearts of queens. See the toil-worn father whose dreams have never come true and look inside his heart as he finds strength and rest within the theatre."*

George Rapp

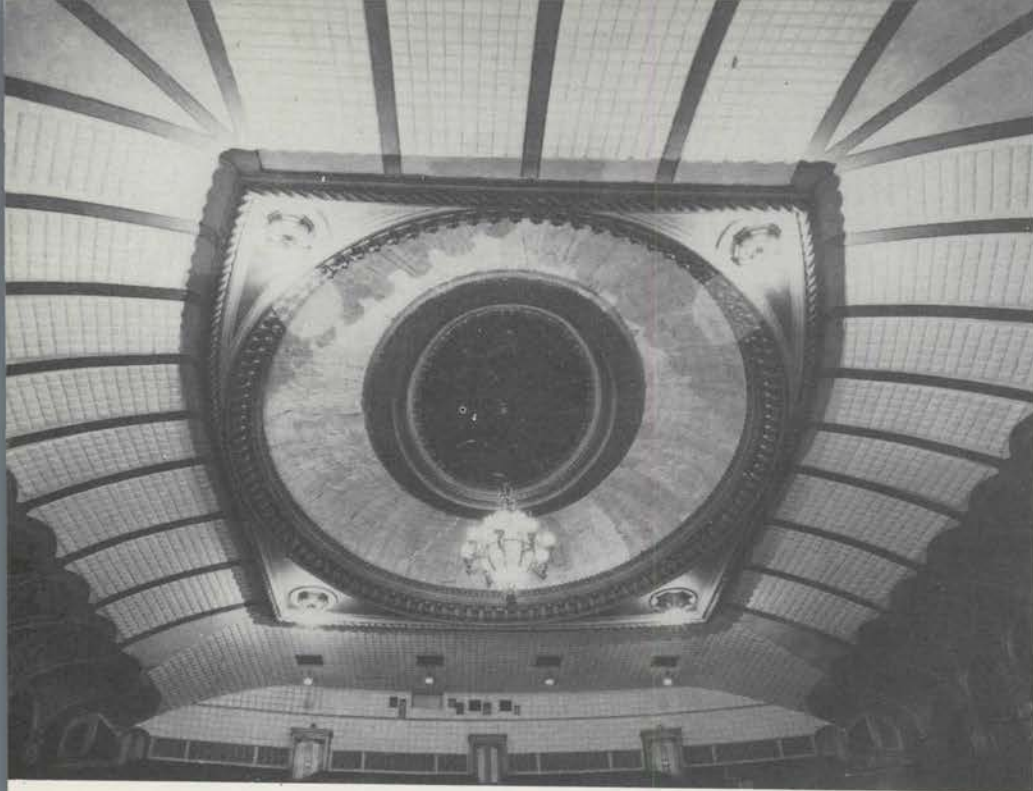
Thus did one of the USA's great theatre designers justify, the ornate movie palace of the '20s. His words sum up the general attitude toward the often rococo houses of the "golden age." They provided an escape from reality.

Forty-seven years later reality was even grimmer, but escape to the theatre was no longer in vogue, especially

Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver B.C., which hopefully has been saved through the diligent efforts of Vancouver citizens and ATOS members of the area. Note marquee billing and autos in this 1928 photo.







The 340-bulb chandelier highlights the dome of the auditorium. The stage is 50 feet wide and 34 feet deep.

if the neighborhood had deteriorated to the point it wasn't safe to walk the streets at night. That's another type of reality. One by one, the wonderful old landmarks became liabilities and, because theatres are a business they had to make way for other land uses — often simply parking lots. One of the first to go was the famous New York Roxy, a real shock to theatre buffs. The Roxy was only the starter. In the decade since actress Gloria Swanson posed for her photo midst the rubble of the Roxy, every large city in the USA and Canada has witnessed the destruction of theatre landmarks. For a time it seemed that all large houses would eventually succumb to the blows of the wrecking ball.

Then, slowly but certainly, a reaction set in. This is the story of a vaudeville/movie palace saved for posterity through the concentrated effort of local citizens.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, "The Grand old Lady of Theatre Row", the Orpheum, was about to undergo surgery, to be lobotomized into seven "pup" theatres by its owners, Famous Players. To them, there was no other way; the 2874-seat house was a financial liability. It was rebirth as a litter of "pups" or demolition.

When word got around the citizenry, things started to happen. True, they had taken the \$1,000,000 Orpheum for granted. It had been there

since its opening in 1927, although its style 240 Wurlitzer hadn't been heard by the public for 22 years. It seemed to the citizens that the Orpheum was part of Vancouver, a cultural asset which shouldn't be subject to vagaries of financial fluctuation any more than perhaps the statue of Lord Nelson in Trafalgar Square, London, or the Washington Monument in the Capitol of Canada's neighbor to the south.

When the plan to carve up the cavernous Orpheum into "pup" tents got to the Vancouver City Council, there were rumblings which got to the office of Mayor Art Phillips. Didn't the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra need a better showcase than the Queen Elizabeth theatre, with its limited seating and poor acoustics? Hadn't a study been made which indicated the city would have to spend around \$23,000,000 to build a suitable theatre complex from scratch? The answer, in both cases, was an unequivocal YES!

Meanwhile, other quarters were heard from. Theatre organ buffs, among them Stanley Haddon (retired organ maintenance man), Ken Hodgson (who has serviced the Orpheum's 3/13 Wurlitzer for some years), Bill Hale, Ted Holmes, Ivan Ackery and George Francis, some of them ATOS members, got together to see what they could do to save the Orpheum. And representatives of the symphony got word of the rescue effort and resolved to help acquire a new home for their big orchestra. But what would the cost be?

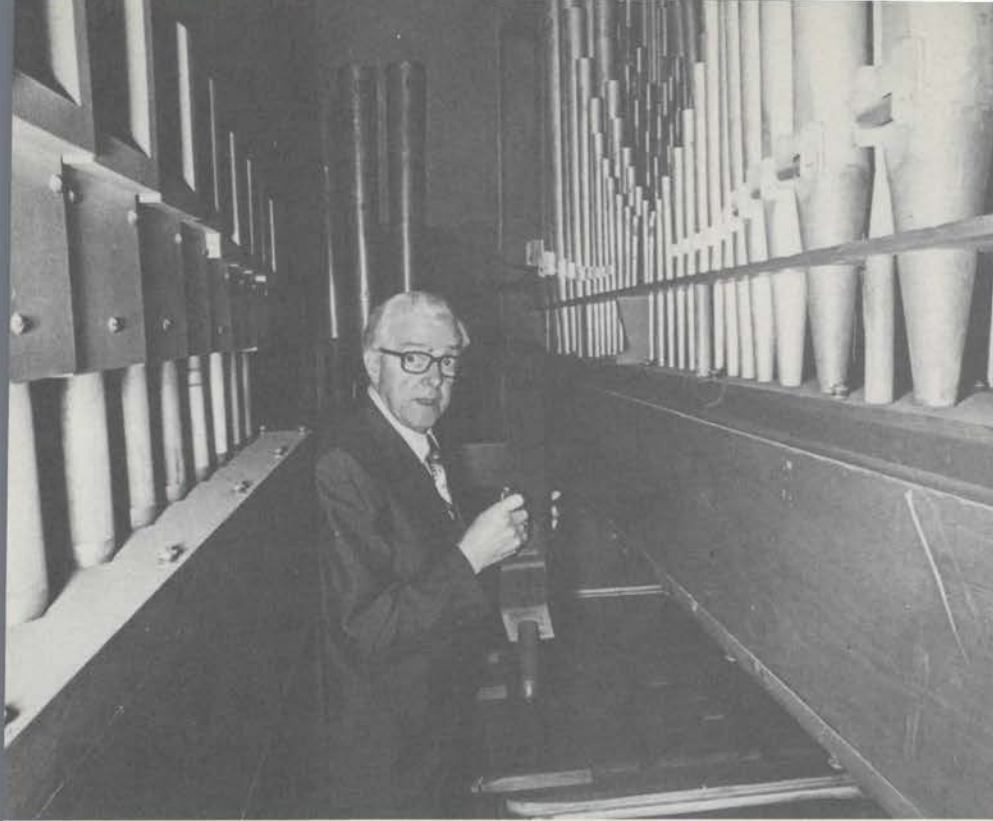
The price was high — a staggering \$5,900,000 to purchase and recondition the venerable theatre!

The enormity of the cost never fazed the disparate groups now joined in a "SAVE THE ORPHEUM" 1974 campaign. The first thing to do was to gain public support.

Side view of the Vancouver Orpheum as it appeared at the age of one year (1928). The five story building has actually nine floors, counting from the bottommost cellar.







Stanley E. Haddon helped install the Orpheum's 3/13 Wurlitzer in 1927 and maintained it until recently. Haddon was an organ maintenance man for 43 years and is now retired.

A schedule of Saturday tours of the Orpheum was set up. Citizens were invited to inspect what some of their tax money would be buying. During each of the tour days, the Wurlitzer added its theatrical voice to the occasion as the citizens were conducted through the auditorium, backstage and through the dressing rooms, offices, lobbies and mezzanine. Local enthusiasts did the playing. This went on for months because there was more than the people's tax money involved. A lottery had been initiated and citizens were being urged to buy tickets to help "Save the Orpheum" — Canada's last remaining major theatre with a pipe organ.

To the credit of Famous Players, the chain agreed to sell the theatre to Vancouver for circa \$5,000,000, instead of performing the "seven dog-house" surgery. Then the group approached the Canadian Government in Ottawa for funds.

But just what would Vancouverites get for their five million? Let's take a closer look at the Orpheum.

The present Orpheum, the third Orpheum built on the site, opened its doors on Nov. 7, 1927 with a vaudeville and movie show. The opening film was *The Wise Wife* starring Phyllis Haver, but the real attraction was the vaudeville acts which included Toto the Clown, Maria White and the Blue

ing night. Citizens already knew about the dome chandelier 10 feet high and 16 feet across with its 340 candle lamps which even now requires four workers to relamp, working all night. This in addition to three somewhat smaller chandeliers in the Main Foyer and three more above the grand stairway.

At its opening the new Orpheum was hailed as a "triumph of beauty, elegance and luxury." The style was described as 'conservative Spanish renaissance.' It was well endowed with columns, colonades, pilasters, rich hangings, tapestried walls, terrazzo floors, stone balustrades, decorative marble and gilding. The aforementioned crystal chandeliers were imported from Czechoslovakia. The auditorium tapestries had felt backing for acoustical deadening. Three large Chinese wall hangings were placed above the mezzanine stairway. On opening night no less than 12,774 light bulbs illuminated the large vertical "Orpheum" sign, the marquee and the roof sign.

The million dollar house opened under the Radio-Keith-Orpheum aegis with a staff of 75 which included organists, orchestra, stage crew, projectionists, about 22 ushers, cashiers, managers and a cleaning crew of about ten broom wielders. The featured organist was Sydney Kelland who had arrived in Vancouver six years earlier to play a Karn Warren organ at the Capitol Theatre. His appearance at the Orpheum's style 240 Wurlitzer ap-

Slickers, dancers Chaney & Fox and songstress Ethel Davis.

Retired Famous Players executive Maynard Joiner was then the Orpheum's assistant manager. He recalls that opening night was something of a nightmare because the theatre wasn't ready.

"We were letting people in one side and still laying carpet on the other," recalls Joiner.

Interest in the new theatre had been building for months before open-

Ken Hodgson gives the Orpheum Wurlitzer a workout. He has been active in the rescue project and now maintains the instrument.





parently needed the competing Capitol into importing Oliver Wallace to play the Capitol's brand new Wurlitzer style 260. But Wallace remained only a short time, then returned to his style 285 Wurlitzer in the San Francisco Paramount. Sydney Kelland, now in his eighties, recalls the events of 1927 with a smile.

The dignitaries flocked to opening ceremonies, including Mayor Louis B. Taylor — but the fate of the theatre was already sealed — a month previously Al Jolson's soundtracked Jazz Singer had been released.

After the advent of "talkies" and the demise of vaudeville, it was a slow

Sidney Kelland, who opened the Orpheum Wurlitzer, was much in demand as a theatre organist before the demise of silent pictures. Unfortunately, no photographs of Mr. Kelland at the Orpheum Wurlitzer exist.

With the coming of talking pictures, he left the theatres and was engaged as a full time organist at St. Andrews Wesley United Church for sixteen years, at the First United Church of Vancouver for four more years and at Shaughnessy United Church (Vanc.) for another seventeen years until his retirement in 1970. During these years many of his church concerts were broadcast over radio stations CFDC, CKWX and CNRV.

Now 84 years old, Mr. Kelland retains his health and vitality and still performs occasionally.

downhill journey for the Orpheum, which managed to survive the '30s with stage presentations, operettas and musical shows. But movies alone were never enough to keep the seats filled. Yet the Orpheum had its moments.

Retired Orpheum manager Ivan Ackery recalls one, the opening of *Gone With The Wind*, near the end of the '30s.

He says, "The 'Wind' premier was the first time we sold refreshments — bottled Coca-Cola — in the mezzanine. Every night of that run I wore a tux."

So much for history. Back to the present.

The appeal to the federal government bore fruit. Canada came through with two million dollars in the Spring

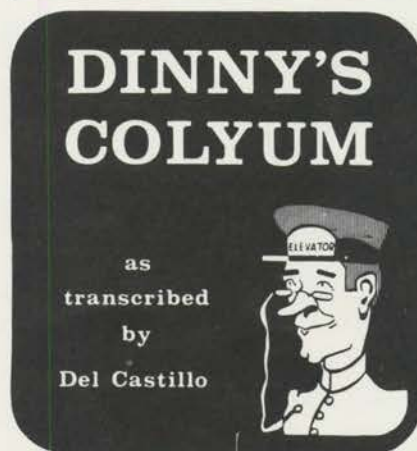
of 1974. The provincial government (British Columbia) donated \$333,000. And the lottery netted \$300,000 dollars. The City Council plans another lottery in 1975 and it is hoped that a further grant will be forthcoming from the Federal or Provincial Government.

With this much cash in the coffers, the Vancouver group has redoubled efforts to raise the difference — and chances are good because plans have been expanded. In addition to the sounds of the mighty Wurlitzer, the symphony orchestra and opera, plans are underway to include perhaps a community theatre group, ballet and youth concerts, all of which adds up to a cultural center in the Orpheum.

Of course, it's all in the future. The sale and transfer will take place in July 1975. Then the restoration/renovation will require another year.

But Vancouver is determined to see the project completed, thus setting an example for other communities with threatened theatres worth saving.

Vancouver is proving it can be done. □



I dunno where in tunket the time goes. Seems like I jest about get all the Xmas bills paid up when the ads start acomin out about get your Xmas presents early and get your Xmas cards at a discount and we start agoin through the whole danged thing all over again. Now mind you, I aint agin Xmas and I like to get presents as well as the next feller, but jest the same they's a limit to the number of hundreds of times I can hear Jingle Bells and O Come All Ye Faithful.

And they's another thing. I love California and I wouldnt live no place else if you paid me, but jest the same Xmas out here aint quite the same thing as it was in Boston where I come from. It's swell to get out and lay around in the Cal. sun with the ther-

момeter at 80 degrees, but I guess I still got enough Eastern blood in me to think they ought to be snow at Xmas time. Why, we used to get a gang together and go around and sing Xmas carols at different houses back in Boston and sometimes we'd get invited in for some punch or cookies, but that would seem kinda silly out here with people goin around in sport shirts. Seems more fittin somehow when you have to keep a muffler around your neck and blow on your fingers and stamp your feet to keep warm. Even the bells that the Salvation Army people ring to get you to put some money in the pot dont sound quite the same.

And still another thing. Seems to me when I was a kid, people really enjoyed Xmas. I aint so sure they still do anymore. You go into the big stores and they is loud speakers blarin away Xmas carols and Jingle Bells and White Xmas and Winter Wonderland and songs like that there, but the people is millin around and grabbin at bargains and everybody getting kind of mad because the prices are so high and they cant find what they want. And then you go out and start up the old bus and pretty soon some smart Alexk is blastin you with his horn or glarin at you because he wants to go faster than you do, and you wonder what in tarnation has happened to the Spirit of Xmas.

I aint much of a churchgoer but it seems to me that maybe you get a little more of the Spirit of Xmas there than any place else. The choir sings Xmas music and the organist plays Xmas music and the minister gives Xmas sermons and then they have extra services and extra music and they get a chorus together to do the Messiah and you come out feelin well maybe they is somethin more to Xmas than jest gettin presents that most everybody goes back to the store the next week to get exchanged, or else puts them in the closet sos they can give them to somebody else the next Xmas.

Well, I aint ready to give up yet. We still got the Santa Claus Parade every December, and I have to admit all the lights and decorations they look real pretty, and I even got a bang when they put up tin Xmas trees on Hollywood Bullyvard. But I guess that what I wish is that at Xmastime maybe they could be a little less takin and a little more givin. □



## ATOS 20th NATIONAL CONVENTION

Celebrate 20 years of theatre organ history next summer in San Francisco, "everybody's favorite city!" You'll hear Gordon Kibbee at Joe Chadbourne's "Myrtle," recreating the sounds of our very first national meeting; and visit the incomparable "Pizza Joynt," where a whole theatre organ tradition was born. Pizza organs of all kinds are featured, including an instrument built only this year.

But don't think we haven't any *in-theatre* organs in these parts! San Francisco's standard-bearer of the silent screen, the Avenue, and its

3-manual Wurlitzer are on the ticket; as is the 4-manual Orpheum Robert-Morton, one of the largest and most unique progeny of California's only real organ builder, and the last theatre organ on Market St. A journey inland will include Grant Union High School, where will debut its famous Wurlitzer with an all new Balcom & Vaughn replica console.

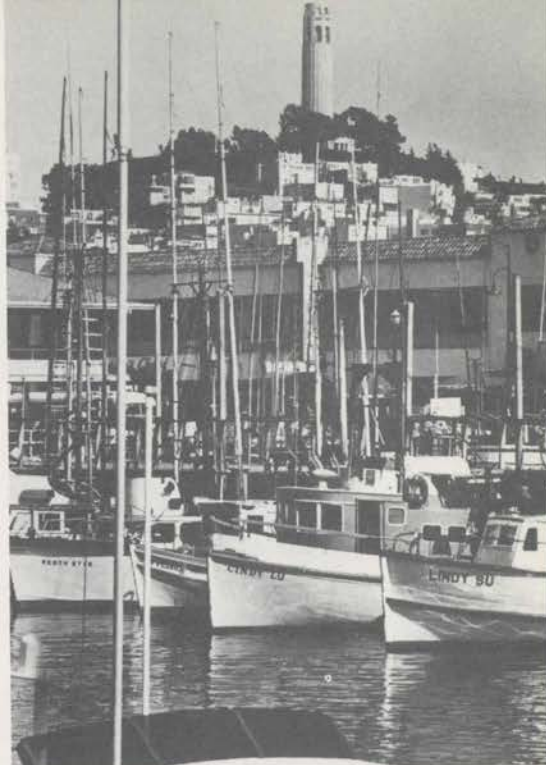
At Grace Cathedral, a special program will present the fabulous John Fenstermaker at San Francisco's most exciting organ, the 5-manual Aeolian-Skinner, personally voiced by the

An Orient-bound cargoline puts out through the Golden Gate. Seen here from the San Francisco shore, the Golden Gate Bridge stretches 1.7 miles toward Marin County. Originally the world's longest single-span suspension bridge, it rises 746 feet from high tide to towers' top.

*(Photo courtesy of San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau)*



**IT'S  
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If you like seafood and sea air, Fisherman's Wharf is the place. San Francisco crab bubbles in sidewalk cauldrons. The Pacific's bounty is dished up in dozens of view restaurants. Bay sightseeing boats put out from Pier 43½. Telegraph Hill's Coit Tower watches over this whole tantalizing bowl of cioppino. *(Photo courtesy of San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau)*

legendary G. Donald Harrison. This event alone would make a trip to San Francisco worthwhile.

But best of all — better than Morton, better than Wurlitzer, better even than a "Pizza Joynt" pizza — will be San Francisco itself: "the Paris of the West," "the city that knows how," "the cool grey city of love," to list just a few appraisals. It's a city of contrast, where last century's cable cars run but a few feet from BART, the subway of the future; it's a city for walkers, where your own two feet are your best transportation; it's a city of romance, where the streets of Chinatown still teem with the mystery of the Orient; and it's the "air conditioned city," where summer temperatures seldom rise above 65 degrees, and the fog is your constant companion; but most of all, it's a city for having fun.

And fun is what you'll have seeing San Francisco like a native, with the help of a unique guide being specially prepared for this convention. You'll find shops, restaurants and attractions unknown to the average tourist, and to many natives. So come early and stay late! Come for music, for friendship, for superlative food, for great shops, in short, for the time of your life!!

**THAT'S IN SAN FRANCISCO**

JULY 15-20, 1975







# ITINERANT PIPE ORGANS OF HAWAII

by John Jenkins

The year was 1921. The place was Van Nuys, California. Two 4/16 pipe organs were being readied in the erecting room of the Robert Morton factory before shipment to Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii.

Both organs, siblings in design, were being built for two new theatres about to open in downtown Honolulu. While the organs were almost of similar specifications, the theatres for which they were intended were operated by different owners and were of distinctively differing design.

The Green Brothers' Princess Theatre on Fort Street and Cohn's Hawaii Theatre on Bethel Street opened in October 1922 as show case motion picture palaces with sumptuous appointments equal to the finest on the mainland. Each had pipe chambers built in on both sides of the stage and each had facilities for stage performances and vaudeville, as well as motion pictures.

The large auditorium of the Princess Theatre, capable of seating many hundreds, was amphitheatre in design, with illuminated fountains below the organ grilles and even live models posing amidst greenery. The Hawaii with its broad auditorium was equally huge and boasted of a two-level cantilevered balcony, two lobbies and stageside boxes with wicker chairs. In Grecian architecture, it was like an opera house.

Both organ consoles were installed stage center in orchestra pits; the one in the Hawaii Theatre being on a lift, while the one in the Princess Theatre rested on the floor.

The Hawaii organ had a "slave console" but it was removed and returned to the factory.

Of great interest in both theatres

were collections of statuary, fine arts and paintings collected abroad by the owners. The Hawaii Theatre still has over the stage proscenium a large painting of Diana and her entourage consistent with the Greek theme.

Later, both theatres were acquired by Consolidated Amusement Company, a local corporation which now operates a large chain of movie theatres in the Islands.

The Hawaii Theatre remains in its original decor, somewhat faded and worn, but retains all the elegance of the great silent movie period.

Consolidated Amusement Company's new Waikiki Theatre on the local world famous Waikiki beach opened in 1936 with the new Model A Hammond plug-in which the company replaced with the pipe organ from the Hawaii Theatre. As the Waikiki was built without pipe chambers, two were added later above the "rainbow proscenium", now partially covered by a "wide screen".

A few years ago the Princess Theatre fell under the wreckers' ball, a victim of downtown urban development, but not before a determined group of pipe organ enthusiasts moved the organ three blocks away to backstage of the Hawaii Theatre. This group called itself the Hawaii Theatre Organ Club, later affiliating with the American Theatre Organ Society and is now known as Aloha Chapter.

Mention should be made that the Waikiki Hammond was moved to the Liberty Theatre where it was played regularly until Consolidated Amusement Company leased the house to an exhibitor who showed only Chinese movies. The Hammond was then moved to Aloha Chapter's club room in the Hawaii Theatre.

The Robert Morton, lying many months backstage in the Hawaii Theatre, was eventually installed in the empty chambers by William Blunk, with the understanding that Aloha Chapter would maintain it. Maintenance has been an on-going project of the chapter ever since.

A 3/10 Buehler theatre pipe organ was installed in Honolulu's Kaimuki Theatre around 1925, moved in 1954 to a church, and recently was acquired in part for installation in a private Honolulu residence.

The briefest installation was in the Kalihi Theatre, formerly known as the Star, where a 2/4 Wicks was installed about 1928 and sold in 1932 to a mainland mortuary.

This tale of itinerant Hawaii theatre organs would not be complete without a dramatic note about the 3/7 Robert Morton installed about 1925 on the "Big Island" of Hawaii in the city of Hilo's Palace Theatre, and later moved to the Hilo Theatre. The theatre and console were badly damaged by a tidal wave, but surviving were the pipe works, now installed and played from a Wurlitzer console in a private Honolulu residence.

Pipe organists in Honolulu Theatres included: Edwin Sawtelle, Don George, Alice Blue, Josephine Lude-mann, Gertrude Moffat and John DeMello. Mr. DeMello, staff organist for Consolidated Amusement Company, plays the Waikiki Theatre Robert Morton as a regular feature during intermissions at the Friday and Saturday evening performances.

The Robert Morton in the Hawaii Theatre is played almost daily at matinees for appreciative audiences by Aloha Chapter members and Mr. DeMello. It is frequently heard on Sunday mornings before show time, featuring guest artists or silent movies. The silents were most often accompanied by Honolulu's "Mr. Pipe Organ", John DeMello, who has the distinction of being actively employed as a theatre pipe organist for more than 50 years.

As a young man Mr. DeMello started out in the theatre with a piano, a Photoplayer and moved up to the big showcase pipe behemoths. Without him there would be no pipe sounds in Honolulu's theatres today.

The Hawaii Theatre Robert Morton is heard each week on Monday nights over radio station KNDI, featuring Aloha Chapter members and guests. □



# The Golden Bear Playhouse

by Carroll F. Harris

She talks again, and she is in a theatre too — it is not the original theatre and it is not a large theatre, but it is a theatre. Let's go back to late 1924 when Wurlitzer Opus 939, a 2/7 Style E, was shipped to the San Francisco Wurlitzer store. From there it was taken across San Francisco Bay to the city of San Leandro and a theatre that was known at different times as The Leandro and The Palace. This author knows nothing about the organists who played her in the theatre, and he doesn't have the date she was removed and installed in a Richmond, California church, but from November, 1968, we can tell you all about it.

Larry Weid purchased the organ in November, 1968, for installation in his Sacramento, California home. His wife Annette went along with the affair and had no illusions about regaining use of the family garage (for the reasons garages are usually built) when the Sierra Chapter purchased the organ early in 1974. The instrument was to be reinstalled in The Little Theatre of California's State Fair and Exposition. It was to be the fulfillment of a dream, the group's own organ, and above all it was to be a memorial to their late first vice chairman/treasurer, George A. Seaver.

Removal from the Weid residence and re-installation were under the direction of Harvey M. Whitney. Plans were to have the little jewel playing for the 1974 edition of California's State Fair. The daily schedule of the Fair showed: "Organ Concert, 5:30

Workmen erect framing and walls around the single 12' x 16' x 20' pipe chamber in the Golden Bear Playhouse. Wall studs are metal; walls are ½ inch sheetrock filled with spun glass insulation. So far there have been no "sympathetic vibrations" to disturb the fine sounds of Sierra Chapter's Style E Wurlitzer.

(Bob Moore Photo)





P.M. — Golden Bear Theatre — Free”, and from opening day, on August 23, through September 4, a sign had to be posted on the entrance doors: “No Program Today — Organ Still Under Construction.” Finally, on September 5, after 27 working days (and long days they were), Sierra members took to the plaza in front of the theatre carrying signs: “Free Organ Concert Today.” Long time Sacramento organist and Sierra member Emil Martin played the opening concert as well as the next day’s concert. All this time Harvey and his crew continued working. Saturday, September 7, Bob Hartzell filled the bench for the evening concert; the closing concert was played by Mary Ann Mendenhall. Fairgoers enjoyed every minute of the concert although the chapter’s organ experts were not satisfied that they had a perfect installation.

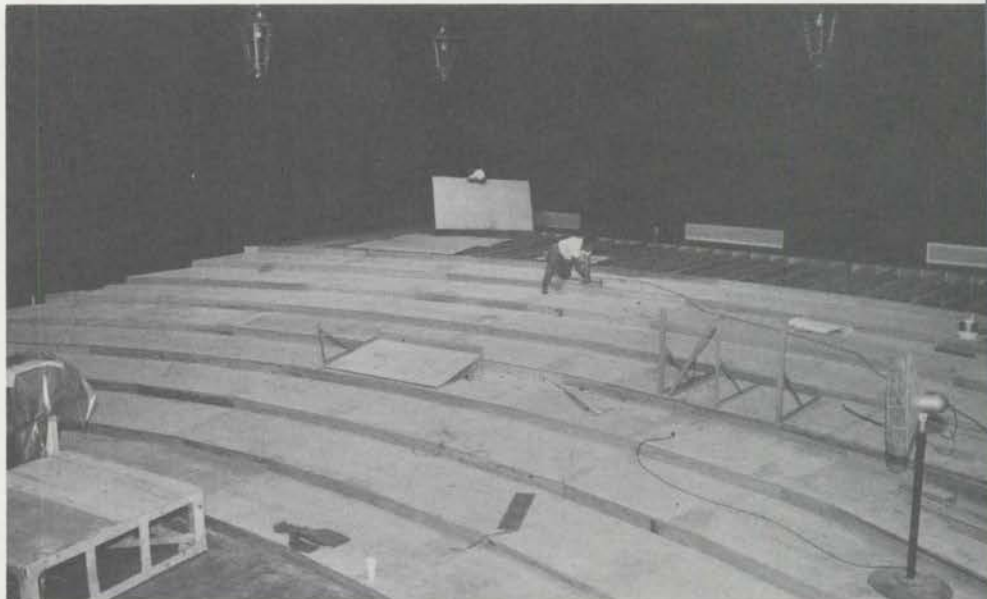
There were many casual workers, and they were not limited to the male members of the organization. There were many donors of funds who helped to make the dream possible, not to mention the State Fair officials who gave Opus 939 a perfect home.

California had moved its State Fair to a new site on the American River a number of years ago with the idea that it would become the “Disneyland of the North.” A change in political situations found it lacking funds and lacking the support of those who make State Fairs, State Fairs — the agricultural community. Finally common sense won out and the California State Fair and Exposition was given new life when it was placed under William Penn Mott’s Department of Parks and Recreation. A new manager was appointed, a man with imagination who surrounded himself with more men and women of imagination.

Larry Jenkins sparked the renovation of the nondescript so-called Little Theatre into the Golden Bear Playhouse. Dr. Paul R. Waldo of Sacramento State University did the design work. Flat seating was replaced with “raked” seating; the bandstand sized stage gave way to one designed for almost any type of production. It was “baptized” with a show ideal for the house: Vaudeville Tonight, an abbreviated version of a successful variety show done in the style of days gone by. Dr. Gerald Larson, professor of Theatrical Arts at Sacramento State University directed some 50 of his students in the performances. There

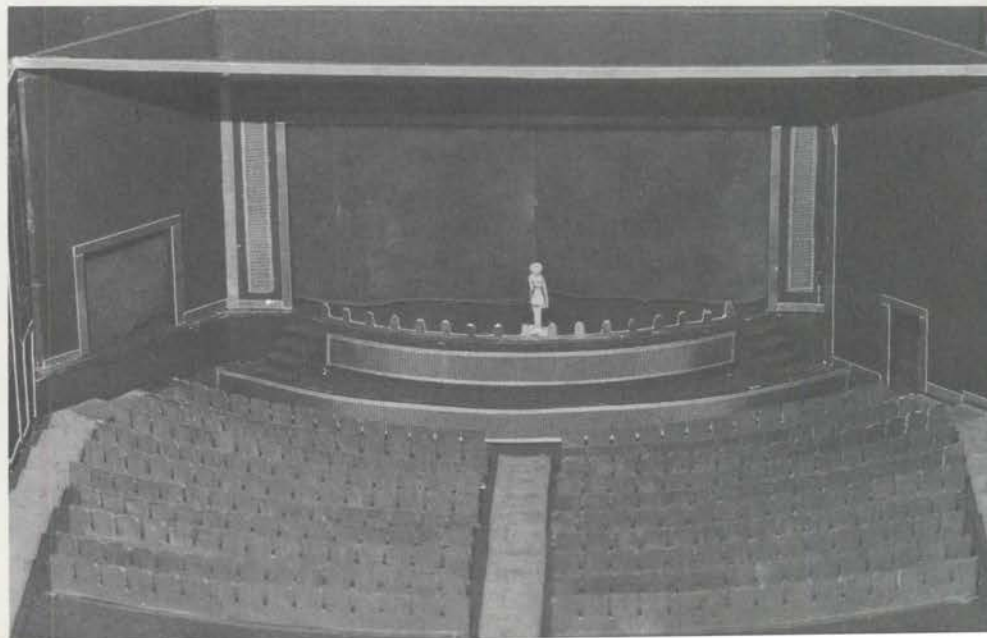


Sierra Chapter’s Emil Martin played the first public concert at the group’s 2/7 Wurlitzer, installed in the Golden Bear Playhouse, at the California State Fair on September 5, 1974. The console was refinished in antique white and gold by the previous owner, Larry Weid. (George Cline Photo)



The Golden Bear Playhouse in Sacramento as viewed from the position of the single chamber during construction. Wrapped console is at far left. An idea of the height of the theatre can be seen by comparing the light fixtures with the two workmen. (Bob Moore Photo — Sacramento Union)

Scale model of California State Fair’s Golden Bear Playhouse, designed by Dr. Paul R. Waldo of Sacramento State University, the new home of Wurlitzer Opus 939, owned by Sierra Chapter. The instrument is known as the George A. Seaver Memorial Organ to honor the chapter’s first vice chairman/treasurer who passed away early in 1973. The theatre is predominately brown, with red wall panels framed in gold and bright red seats and carpeting. (Bob Moore Photo — Sacramento Union)





was an excellent orchestra in the pit, but too many broken wires in the main cable prevented use of the theatre pipes.

The Fair is long over but Harvey Whitney and his crew continue their tuning and refinement of Opus 939 to put it in as near perfect condition as humanly possible for its formal debut. On April 20, 1975, barring unforeseen difficulties, the chapter intends to formally dedicate their instrument to the memory of George A. Seaver. He had played the instrument in Larry Weid's home, in fact a TV film presentation featured both several years ago. Plans call for a 2 P.M. presentation using the same artists who had gathered in the dining room of Sacramento's Sheraton Inn at 2 P.M. on April 16, 1972, to again play the type of music George liked. (George had passed away the previous month and had previously requested no funeral, no formal services, but indicated if his friends wished to do something it should be around a theatre pipe organ with some of his favorite artists.) Clyde Derby, Sheraton Inn house organist, W. "Tiny" James and Emil Martin were the concert artists in 1972, and Jim Hodges, Sacramento radio personality, did the introductions. All ATOS members, and theatre pipe organ music lovers in general, are invited to attend in April. A word of advice is in order — be early. Capacity of the Golden Bear Playhouse is 325 persons, for fire and safety reasons. □



Joe Brite

Colorado for the past 37 years. He passed away several days after a brutal beating during an attempted holdup of the Rialto Theatre which he managed.

He was 71 years of age. He had studied theatre organ at the Chicago Musical College. He had played in several Chicago Theatres, and at some performances had played with Milton Charles. Following his move to Alamosa in 1937, he played daily radio broadcasts on the Wurlitzer in the Rialto Theatre for 28 years. He played the organ during intermissions between movies. This was one of the few theatre organs in the nation used daily. His record for continuous per-

formance was exceeded in duration perhaps only by those in Radio City Music Hall.

He was a member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society of Denver. One of the finest home-installation concerts ever enjoyed by Chapter members was that played by Joe on Beck and Edith Maddy's Wurlitzer (formerly of the Mayan Theatre of Denver).

An article on his career, *It's Brite in the San Luis Valley*, appeared on page 13 of the April 1970 issue of THE-ATRE ORGAN.

Kenneth Tillotson

**Robert Dilworth, Mr. and Mrs.** Robert E. Dilworth's 16 year old son died suddenly on November 1, 1974. The boy had apparently been experimenting with plastic bags and accidentally suffocated.

A Memorial service was held on November 5th at the Second Baptist Church. In lieu of flowers the family suggested contributions in his name to the Rev. Malcolm MacQueen Memorial Fund of Second Baptist Church, 2800 Silverside Road, Wilmington, Del. 19810. (A perpetual scholarship fund for theological students).

Robert had spent many hours with his father working on the Dickinson Theatre Pipe Organ. The Kimball was originally installed in the Boyd Theatre, Philadelphia.

Betty J. Kouba

## Closing Chord

Ralph Trout III, staff organist for Capn's Galley Pizza Chain passed away several weeks ago following a second heart transplant. His first transplant took place in the spring of 1969. Living on borrowed time, Ralph lived an active and vigorous life. His wish was that any expression of sympathy be in the form of contributions to the Stanford University Heart Cardiovascular Foundation, Palo Alto, Calif. 94305.

Joseph L. Brite passed away September 17, 1974. A former theatre organist in Chicago during the silent film era. Joe has lived in Alamosa,

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# the ABC's of REGULATORS and their tricky valves

by Bill Exner  
Illustrated by the Author

## WHY REGULATORS?

In order for a pipe organ to sound right, the wind supply to its pipes must somehow be maintained at the correct pressure. This is accomplished by means of regulators, which reduce the relatively high "static" wind pressure supplied by the blower to the precise pressure required by the pipes.

A regulator is a sort of bellows, which is held closed when the blower is off by heavy springs and/or weights. When the blower is turned on, the regulator inflates to its normal working condition, at which point a valve (or system of valves) closes, shutting off the entry of any more air from the blower. The air pressure inside the regulator at this time is determined by the force provided by the springs and

*This article, as originally submitted, was about the several types of valves found on pipe organ regulators, their adjustment and improvement. But such a specialized technical treatise would probably be read only by organ owners suffering from valve problems, we reasoned. What's a "cone valve" to the average reader? Yet, the information was so well stated that we couldn't turn it down. Instead, we contacted the author and asked him to expand it to include a discussion of wind pressure regulators and their functions, to be followed by his words about the valves which actually do the regulating. The resulting article about these two inter-related areas of organ design are not only informative but they make interesting reading for all who are interested in the inner workings of a pipe organ. Editor (WSG)*

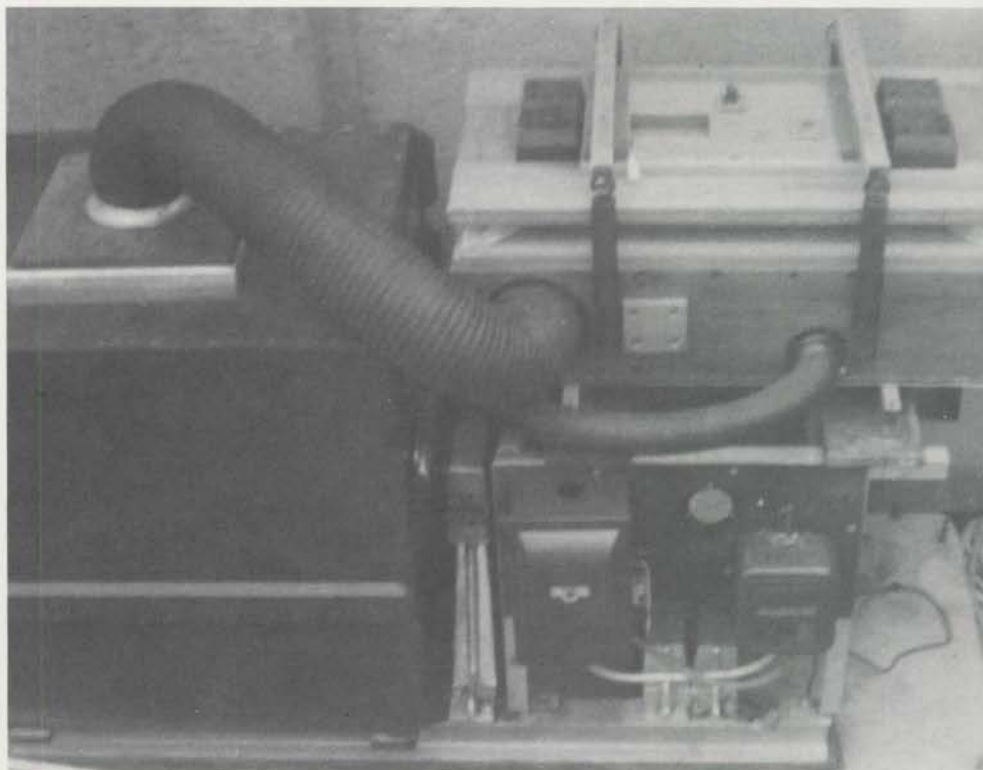


Fig. A. REGULATOR (Right), source of many problems. This small Morton regulator is being fed by a Kinetetic blower (left). Valve opening and adjust nut are on top (center). The two weights and two vertical springs are factors in the regulation process. This regulator is shown deflated (blower off).

(or) weights. As air is drawn from the regulator, it collapses slightly. This causes the valve to open and allow the entry of just enough additional air to replace that which was used, thus maintaining the regulated pressure constant.

The valve (or valves) must be designed to control very precisely the small amount of air required by a single small pipe, and also to handle the blast required for a big chord on full organ.

Having gone to all this trouble to provide rock-steady wind, the theatre organ builder now messes everything up by adding a tremulant. The tremulant is a contraption which "shakes" the regulated wind pressure by intermittently releasing puffs of air from the regulator. Thus, in a theatre organ, the regulator must be husky enough to provide steady wind under all conditions of demand, yet not so unshakeable as to prevent the tremulant from doing its job. This requirement is



met by the proper proportioning of springs-versus-weights, and by the design and adjustment of the valve system.

In the early days of theatre organs, the wise men at Wurlitzer found that the conflicting demands of steady wind versus good trem action could best be met through the use of a triple valve regulator. A cross-sectional view of a typical Wurlitzer regulator is shown in Figure 1. The photo (Fig. 2) shows the actual valve assembly from such a regulator. Referring to the sketch, wind from the blower enters the lower chamber, and passes by way of the three regulating valves to the upper chamber. As it does so, the build-up of pressure in the upper chamber forces the regulator top upward, against the downward force of the springs and weights (not shown in the sketch). When the top of the regulator reaches the position shown, the valves close (as shown), shutting off the flow of air to the upper chamber.

If a small amount of wind is drawn from the regulator, the top drops very slightly, causing the cone valve (A) to open just enough to make up the loss. If somewhat more wind is used, the top drops further until it reaches the push rod which controls the small flapper valve (B), which then opens and supplies more wind to the upper chamber. Similarly, if a really heavy demand is made on the wind supply, the regulator top drops further yet, engaging the large flapper valve (C) push rod and opening the large flapper valve until the demand is met. Not shown in either the sketch or the photo is a safety valve which protects the regulator in the event something should go wrong with the operation of the three valves.

The relative lengths of the push rods, which control the valve opening sequence, are adjustable. On Wurlitzer regulators, adjusting nuts are provided at the top of the threaded cone valve rod, and the effective lengths of the flapper valve rods are adjusted by adding or removing felt spacers at the ends of the rods. Small access panels are provided so this can be done without major disassembly of the regulator.

The adjustment of the push rods has a great deal to do with the kind of tremolo which will be produced. Like everything else about tremolos, it is far from an exact science, and depends

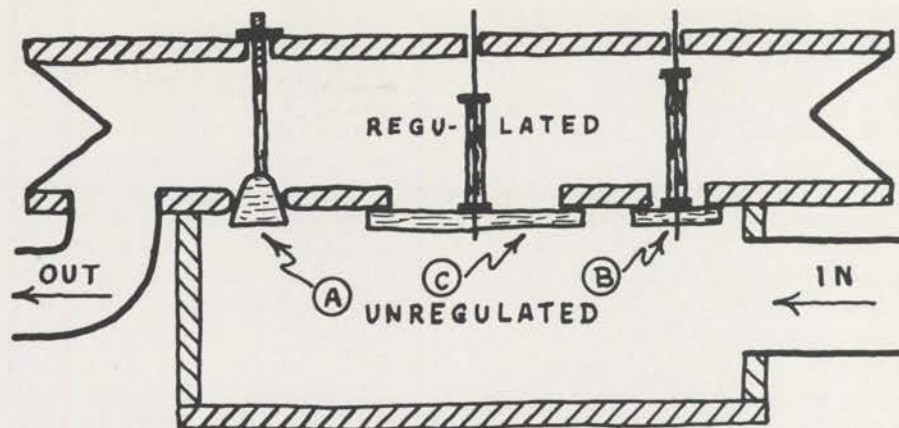


Fig. 1. WURLITZER THREE-VALVE REGULATOR. Note the small cone valve (A), small flapper valve (B) and large flapper valve (C). This cutaway view shows the regulator with all valves closed, its normal condition when the blower is running but no wind is being used.

mostly on some combination of "cut and try", experience, luck, and black magic. In general, it seems to be true that for a really sexy Tibia trem the small flapper valve (as well as the cone valve) should open on each trem cycle.

But is the triple valve the only answer for a well-regulated but trem'd wind supply? Is there any hope for an organ whose regulators have only one valve? Please continue.

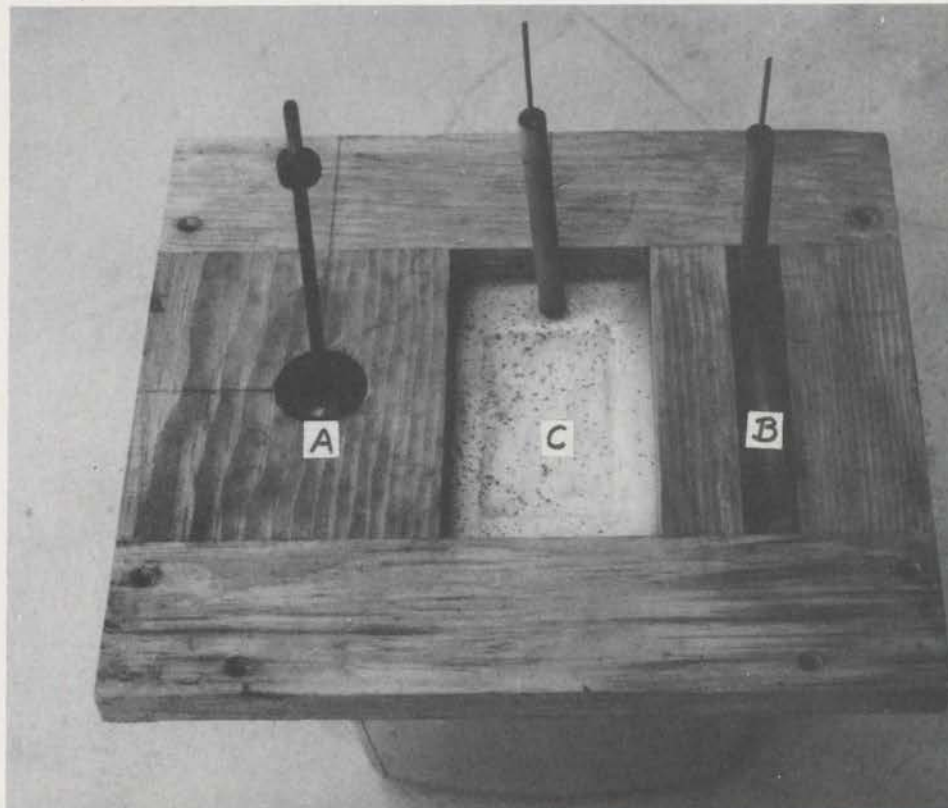
#### THE THREE-IN-ONE VALVE

In one of the later Kimball theatre organ catalogs there is a picture of the valve assembly from inside a Kimball regulator, and it looks very much like the familiar Wurlitzer triple-valve

system. The prose accompanying this picture emphasizes the superiority of three-valve regulators for theatre organs, making it abundantly clear that nobody but an idiot would try to trem a single valve regulator. On this point nobody should question Kimball's right to speak, because for many years previously they had done exactly that!

The regulators used in early Kimball theatre organs, in Weltes, and occasionally in various other makes, use a single, enormous cone valve — referred to most descriptively by organman Bill Coffman as the "churn dash valve" (Is there anybody else old enough to remember hand operated butter churns?). These regulators are

Fig. 2. TRIPLE-VALVE ASSEMBLY shown removed from a Wurlitzer regulator. Out of sight, on the under side of the assembly, are springs which hold the hinged flapper valves (B and C) normally closed.





OK for a church organ, but the problem is, if you pile enough weight on one of them to get a halfway theatrical tremolo, the regulator gets unstable and "selftrem" at random, uncontrolled.

One well known organ which is cursed with these single valve regulators is the Los Angeles Wiltern Theatre's Kimball, and being a king-size 4/37 organ it has king-size regulators. Another builder would probably have used smaller regulators and more of them, but that was not Kimball's way. The regulator which is the villain of this story is an outsize affair, 74" x 32" x 14" high, about four times the capacity of the largest standard Wurlitzer regulator. The rise of its top from collapsed position to normally open is a bit over four inches, and its "churn dash" valve is a full 10 inches in diameter. It supplies wind to the Open Diapason, Gemshorn, and Concert Flute, including their 8' offsets, as well as to five ranks of reeds.

This monster has always been a problem. Through the years main-

*About the Author*  
*Bill Exner might be described as one of the "stalwarts" of the Los Angeles Chapter, having served as Chapter Chairman and in numerous other chapter-related official and unofficial capacities. His engineering background is valuable in helping solve such technical problems as the one described here. Over the years Bill has been active in helping maintain and improve the instruments which are the LA Chapter's showcases — The LA Wiltern Kimball, The Elks Bldg. Robert Morton and the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium Wurlitzer.*

tenance crews have done battle with it, always reaching an unhappy compromise wherein the regulator was right on the ragged edge of self-tremming, but the resulting trem still wasn't deep enough.

Several months ago I ran out of

patience with this beast and determined to see whether there wasn't some way to civilize it. I started out by asking a half-dozen of the best old-time theatre organ experts in Southern California for advice. Their answers were all the same: "Sometimes these dogs work fairly well, but when they don't all you can do is either replace them with triple-valves, or give up trying to get a good trem." They also pointed out that these regulators work best on low differential pressure (the difference in inches between the static wind and the regulated wind). This helped explain some of the headaches at the Wiltern, because this regulator puts out 10 inches of regulated wind pressure from 18-inch static wind. So the differential is a whopping 8 inches!

At one point I was discussing my troubles with Bill Coffman and Bill Field, co-owners of the famous Old Town Music Hall and its 4/22 Wurlitzer in El Segundo, Calif. Bill Coffman generously loaned me a complete Wurlitzer triple-valve assembly (Fig. 2) to try, and Bill Field took the time to demonstrate the effect of various valve settings on the resulting trem.

My next thought was to install this Wurlitzer assembly in the Kimball regulator and, if it worked, make a duplicate of it. However, the more I studied the problem the less attractive this solution appeared. While I was trying to figure out how best to proceed, I kept studying Bill Coffman's triple valve and asking myself the question, "If I were to design a single valve to duplicate the action of this triple valve, what would it look like?" Gradually an idea began to take shape.

In order to try out my idea, I had to find someone with a lathe big enough to handle the 10-inch disc. Fortunately, Dick Schroder has a Shop Smith which will convert to just such a lathe, and together we went to work.

The resulting valve cone is shown in the accompanying sketch, compared to the original Kimball "churn dash" cone (Fig. 3). Note the following differences:

1. The taper of the cone is much shallower, meaning that as the valve first starts to open it will open much more gradually.

2. The entire cone is much thicker, meaning that the regulator top must drop farther before the valve opens fully.

Field (left) and Coffman had some answers.

(Stufoto)





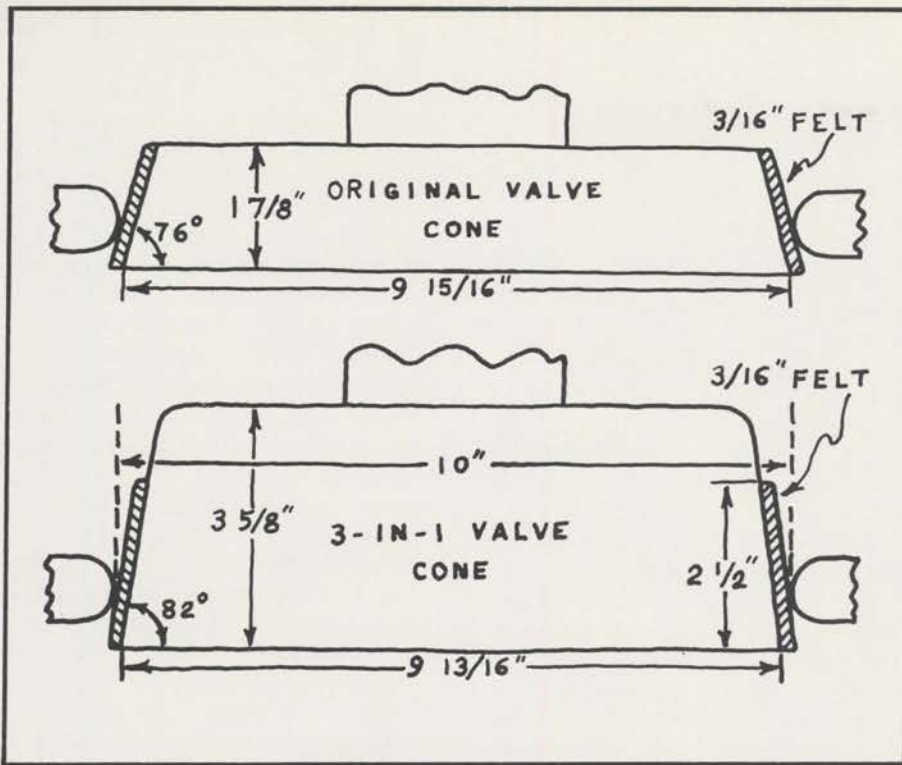
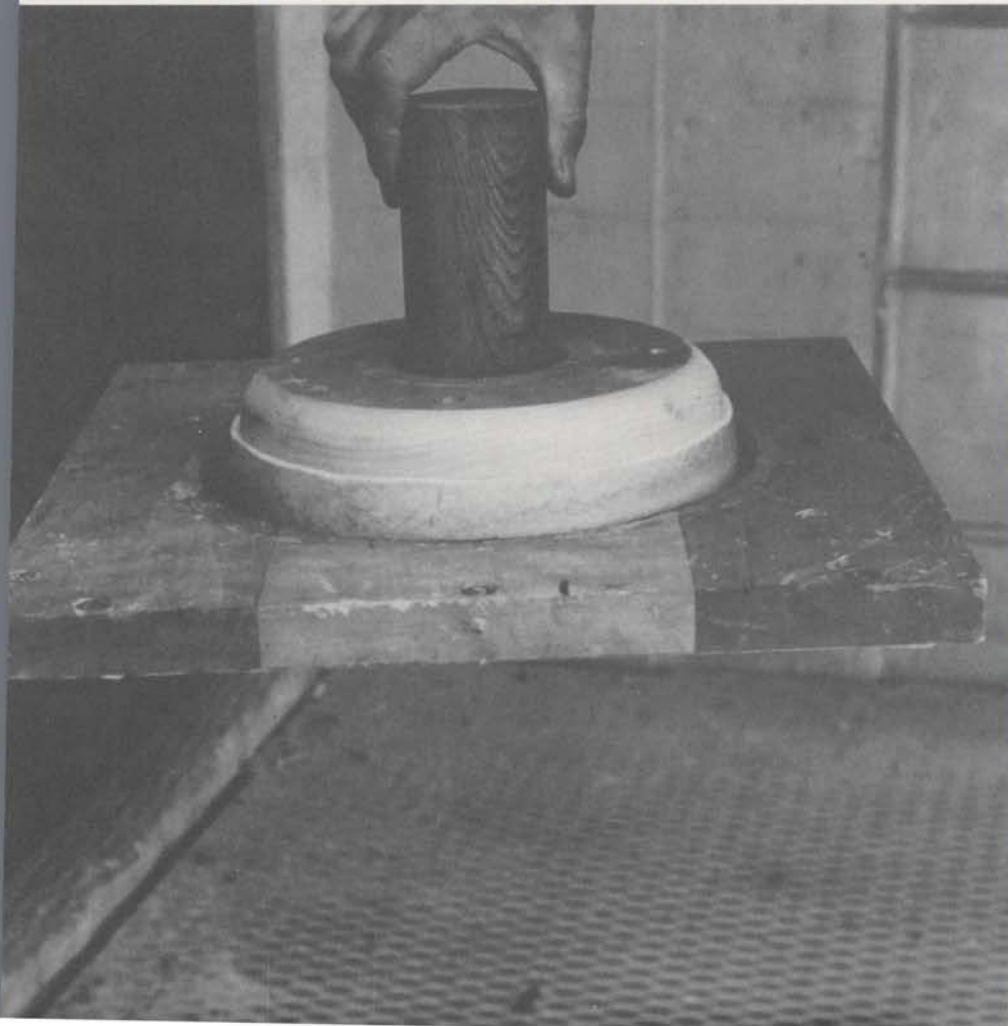


Fig. 4. THREE-IN-ONE VALVE CONE mated with the unmodified Kimball valve seat (shown removed from regulator). This improved valve cone is a direct replacement for the original one. No other modification to the regulator is required.

Fig. 3. THREE-IN-ONE VALVE CONE compared with the original Kimball "churn dash" cone. Significant differences are discussed in the text.



3. The cone is felted only part way up. This results in a fairly sharp increase in the rate of opening as the edge of the felt reaches the valve seat. The point where this occurs can quite easily be adjusted by cutting back, or adding to, the felt.

I never really expected this creation to work on the first try. All I hoped for was some sign of promise which would provide a clue as to what to try next, and I fully expected to have to experiment with the height of the felting, and quite possibly to have to change the taper. However, when Wiltern Crew Chief Leonard Worne and I installed the new valve it worked so perfectly that the only reason we pulled it out again was to measure and photograph it for the record (Fig. 4).

The following comparison of the new valve with that of the Wurlitzer triple valve will make it clear why we call this the "three-in-one" valve:

1. As the regulator top starts to drop, the three-in-one valve starts to open quite gradually, corresponding to the opening of the small cone valve of the triple valve system.

2. As the top drops further, the three-in-one valve reaches the upper edge of the felt and starts to open more rapidly, corresponding to the opening of the small flapper valve.

3. If the top should drop even further, the three-in-one valve opens fully quite suddenly, corresponding to the opening of the large flapper valve. I am certainly not naive enough to believe that this first try at a three-in-one valve is the final answer to what one should look like. However, I am impressed by the fact that it did solve this particularly difficult problem without any need for cut-and-try "optimizing".

For a smaller regulator with less "rise" this design would have to be scaled down, and, quite possibly, the taper made even shallower. If any of you feel inspired to try it, I'll be most interested in hearing about the results.

□

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# IN TREMBLING HOPE

by John Muri

Like birthdays, New Years reminds us of unaccomplished goals and of the need to get about our business. Yearly, our unsatisfied wishes have to be modified in the light of age, economics, and opportunity. Here are some old wishes, modified by time for 1975:

**1. Greater Effectiveness Through Cooperation.** Again in 1974 we had evidences of antipathy between members of various chapters. Among several causes, one stands out. It is the domination of activities by a single individual or group that makes decisions without consulting other members. Such people offend when they carry on chapter activities to aggrandize themselves and ignore the potentialities of others. When members find little or nothing to do in a society, they usually lose interest and quit. Each of us (especially officers) needs to look at himself and ask whether what he is doing in the name of the organization is always in what might be called "the public interest."

In the maintenance and re-building of theatre organs, particularly large ones, the person in charge or with the greatest influence should ask himself: Am I competent for this job? How do I react under test conditions? Do I panic when the organ develops a run or goes dead during a concert? Do I really repair ciphers or do I just pull pipes? Do I start repairing a leather-rotten water-soaked organ by first painting the console, repairing the bird-whistle, or adjusting xylophone hammers? Such mechanics need to go study and learn from experts. Organ tinkers do about as much harm as good, maybe more.

One of the surest ways to wreck a theatre organ project is to invite large numbers of people to visit the theatre for frequent playing (usually just doodling) sessions, while no serious work is done on the organ. It doesn't take much to get a theatre manager fed up with people poking all over his theatre. With their worries about suits for accidents, damage to equipment by visitors who can't keep their hands off switchboards, projectors, etc., and

thefts, it is no wonder that some managers have little patience. Speaking of theft, Tom Sheen once said that if all the organ pipes that had been stolen were suddenly to fly back to their original instruments, the sky would be dark for three weeks. A slight exaggeration, I think, but it makes a point.

Another of our shortcomings, especially with the larger instruments, is failure to have a work-schedule with assigned responsibilities. A big workload cannot be trusted to chance or to one or two persons. Sloppy emergency repairs result in feelings of insecurity in both players and maintenance crew. A single individual will probably have to coordinate work on our largest instruments, but he will need to keep in mind that while there is always room for leadership, there is small room for domination. Supervision is important for the safety of an enterprise, but it should be exercised with tact and delegated when warranted to other workers with special competence. The big question: "Am I able to lead other people effectively?" requires an honest reply.

**2. Renewal Of Courtesy, Graciousness, And Social Responsibility.** I am disgusted by noisy, unruly audiences, foul-mouthed performers, and show-people who think they are too big to receive honors from their fellow-workers. A couple of years ago, the late Hal Mohr (a veteran Hollywood cameraman) exclaimed to Lois Wilson (a veteran movie star) and me concerning an Academy/Award rejection, "That guy! Who in H does he think he is? Here's our Academy, the only bit of glamor we've got left in Hollywood, offering to honor him and he spits in our faces!" I pray that the psychological streakers who expose their crudity in public (there are at least four who have reached the top in

*Mr. Muri's opinions expressed herein are his own and do not necessarily reflect the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN Magazine.*

the movies and at least one in the theatre organ field) will cut it out in 1975. As for theatre audiences, they are long overdue for education in group manners, but there is slim hope as long as theatres keep operating restaurants, soft-drink parlors, and pin-ball arcades in their lobbies while showing inflammatory films on-screen. An organist doesn't stand much chance playing for the kinds of crowds that most theatres are attracting.

**3. Sincerity In Criticism, Tempered With Kindness.** In reviewing concerts, we ought to use superlatives like "artistry," "master of the instrument," "completely captivating," "enthusiastic reception," and "soul-stirring harmony" with care. The first two of these terms should be applied only by critics who have earned the right to make authoritative judgments. Amateur critics can easily make fools of themselves. My home-town newspaper once sent a musically ignorant reporter to review a symphony concert. When the paper printed stuff like "The orchestra has a good beat," "The Tannhauser March is a sparkling number," and "The orchestra showed good tempo," musically-knowing people howled in derision.

As for standing ovations as critical testimony, they have lost their validity through indiscriminate use. Everybody gets them; a stenographer got one when her boss praised her at a convention. I like Earl Wilson's crack that many a standing ovation has been caused by somebody jumping to his feet to beat the rest of the audience to the parking lot. Here again I pray for a return to temperance. We can afford to be generous in praise but not excessive, for when we praise everybody in the same way, sincerity (if not understanding) comes into question. Credibility is largely based on trust, and one has little trust in the judgments of someone whose reactions are automatic. Jesse Crawford used to say, "Never trust an orange." Even if you could learn to tell invariably which way an orange would squirt, you'd need to make sure that it didn't temporarily blind you.

**4. Clear Definition Of Functions.** The 1974 convention of the Theatre Historical Society met in Detroit. I noted large numbers of theatre organ followers present and their desire to have the organs played in the theatres they visited. As two organ demon-



strations were given (Royal Oak and Masonic Temple), the thought came to me that we were getting some overlap with ATOS convention functions to come a week later. The fact that next year's THS convention is to occur the same week in the same city (San Francisco) with the ATOS makes me wonder if some duplication of function might possibly be in the making. I'd like to see that clarified in 1975. Since many people are members of both fine organizations, it appears important that complementary, not duplicative, relationships be maintained.

5. **Improvement Of American Cultural Life.** The past year has given us more than enough of shocks and losses to lament. We are a humorless and entertainment-starved nation. Several important organ builders have closed up shop, with one of them going into bankruptcy. There is nothing on the scene to indicate immediate improvement. Many of the signs are negative. Our social philosophers see only serious obstacles ahead. Lewis Mumford, one of the greatest, says bluntly that we are now in a new dark age, from which it will take two or three hundred years for our descendants to emerge.

That's not so good. Well, anyway, we can be grateful for the gifts that come to us without charge year by year, dark age or bright: (1) the gift of human love and sympathy, (2) the gift of moral and ethical sense, even though it weakens occasionally, (3) the gift of memory, (4) the gift of beauty in vision and thought, (5) the gift of literacy, and (6) the gift of music, which, barring divine revelation, is as near to God's voice as we shall get on Earth. □

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**NUGGETS**  
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Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

Back in the dear old days, theatre organists took out block ads in the trade magazines as a means of expressing season's greetings to their friends and fans. Found in the Motion Picture Herald of December 26, 1931, here are some Yuletide greetings:

**EGON DOUGHERTY**, Broadcasting Sincere Greetings for the Holidays from Loew's Triboro Theatre, Astoria Long Island.

*Season's Greetings to Louis K. Sidney, Don Albert and to all my friends. JOHN GART, organist and music director of Loew's 46th Street Theatre, Brooklyn, N.Y.*

Season Greetings from Mr. and Mrs. **JESSE CRAWFORD**, Paramount Theatre, at the Crossroads of the World.

*The boy with "Miles of Smiles," REX KOURY, extends the Season's Greetings to his many radio and theatre friends. Feature Organist, RKO Proctor's in Troy, N.Y.*

**MERLE CLARK** extends to all his friends in the profession a Very Merry Christmas. Still featured organist at the Paramount Theatre in Brooklyn, N.Y.

*JOE STOVES, organist at Loew's Valencia, New York, extends Holiday Greetings to All.*

With Heartiest Greetings for a Happy Christmas. **FRED FEIBEL**, Junior Organist, Paramount Theatre, New York City.

*One hundred miles from ole Mexico - 'way down in San Antonio over station KABC comes a Merry Christmas to Everyone, Everywhere by EARL ABEL.*

Season's Greetings from **WILL GILROY**. Zoll Zein Mit Gluck. Loew's Pitkin Theatre, Brooklyn.

*From the same magazine, we found some other items relative to events occurring during that Christmas week, 43 years ago.*

**JACK WARD** at the New York Academy of Music presented as a recent organ solo an original concoction entitled "Musical Madness." The entire solo, which featured special and regular choruses of popular songs, met with approval, and the audience joined in the fun and lustily sang each number. Opening with a self-explanatory chorus to a popular tune, telling the audience the reasons for and fun derived by singing, a regular chorus of Guilty was sung by them. In Your Arms, a special tongue-twister which was not only extremely laughable, but very witty as well. One More Time, and Happy When You're Happy followed.

*Ward uses special cartoon slides and gags between songs, and also ad libs the dialogue which enhances the intimacy. Of course, the stage shows at this house are very long, but this reviewer cannot understand why this organist and his 10 minutes of real entertainment are not featured regularly. The applause at the finish certainly calls for it.*

The mannequins came to the Roxy in New York for the past week, and as a result, the place looked like a miniature of the federal treasury. Armed guards took command, as better than 100 pieces of expensive fur from establishments along Fifth Avenue were made ready for the parade of fashion which featured the Roxy stage presentation for the week. One sable, believe it or not, is said to be worth \$50,000 alone. The total figure set on the 100 wrap-around pelts was over \$1,000,000, which just isn't fair to man or beast. Expensive evening

gowns and shoes added their bit to the housewife's dream which was contained in a heavily guarded strong room during the week.

**D. KENNETH WIDENOR**, guest organist at New York's 86th Street Theatre, presented a singing novelty called "Closeups and Shapshots". Songs used were Can't Write the Words, River Stay 'Way From My Door, When the Moon Comes Over the Mountain and Faded Summer Love.

*Two tongue-twisters, a special, written about slogans on billboards, and a "challenge" chorus gave them plenty for the comedy angle. The solo was well received.*

**BOB WEST** at Philadelphia's Fox Theatre, and funster on the organ, called his number a "song marathon" and received more than usual cooperation from the audience. The songs consisted of simple melodies, including You've Brought a New Kind of Love to Me, Constantinople, Shine On, Harvest Moon, Good Night, Sweetheart and Dancing With Corns on My Toes.

**EGON DOUGHERTY** at New York's Astoria Triboro, offered a straight community sing. Though this type of work does not require all of Dougherty's ability as a musician, the audience wants nothing other than singing and in this way, he is showing himself a clever fellow in giving them what they want.

*He called the solo "Now It's Song Singing Time" and gave them the following to sing: How's Your Uncle? Can't Write the Words, River Stay 'Way From My Door, Can't Stop Me From Loving You, Without the Gal and in closing, Some of These Days.*

**EARL ABEL** at the Texas Theatre in San Antonio, recently offered as his organ solo several peppy parodies on the following late song hits: *You Call It Madness, A Cottage For Sale, and I'm Yours.* Abel displayed a sign on the console which read "Organ For Sale", and he announced that the house management was going to dispose of this mighty instrument if the patrons wouldn't sing every line of his song slides. The natives went for the gag in a big way, and did they sing? They did. Then the master of the singfest rendered *Good Night, Sweetheart, I Don't Know Why, Sweet and Lovely and Shine On, Harvest Moon.*

That should do it for this time. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector

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# WEST COAST

# ORGANFEST CLICKS

by Hal Steiner

**I**t was the best year yet for the Home Organ Festival. The annual event, held at a California state park (Asilomar) near Monterey attracted 1600 attendees, the most ever. They had access to 33 concerts, 8 workshops and 8 master classes during the 5-day session, not to mention various side events, such as 10 "on the house" champagne parties, a costume ball and a half a dozen nightly jam sessions. Thirty-five organists, many of them "name artists," performed on 12 brands of electronic instrument, sponsored by 15 exhibitors who brought in an estimated \$350,000 worth of organ equipment. Enthusiasm ran high among all concerned. The attendees gathered from 18 states and Canada (plus one Australian), the bulk coming from the Bay Area.

The exhibitor/talent lineup looked something like this:

Allen: Dwight Beacham, George Knadler, Bob Franklin, Tom Hazleton.

Baldwin: Ken Clark, Frank Stitt, Wayne Wilkinson, Eddie Osborn.

Conn: Richard Purvis, Bud Iverson, Carol Jones, Larry Ferrari, Eddie Vodicka, Dale Zeiger. Don Saucerier: synthesizer.

Concert Co: Donn Clayton

Gulbransen: Tommy Stark, Bill Langford.

Hammond: Don Lee Ellis, Don Lewis.

Lowrey: Barron Smith, Johnny Kemm.

Rodgers: Bill Thomson, Maria Kumagai, Jonas Nordwall.

Saville: Frank Cimmino, Tom Cotner.

Thomas: Byron Melcher, Bob Ralston, Dan Bellomy.



Lincolnesque Larry Wickersham conducts a class in the chapel at 9:30 A.M.

(Nakaharapic)

A full house at Festival Concert Time.

(Nakaharapic)







Bob Dove. His 'September in the Rain' was pure sunshine. (Nakaharapic)



Frank Cimmino. A long way from the New Jersey Suburban restaurant to the Festival in California. (Stufoto)

Tom Cotner presents Ann Leaf with the award for naming Saville's new entertainment theatre organ the "Renaissance." (Nakaharapic)



Wurlitzer: Gus Pearson, Ray Hanson.

Yamaha: Bob Dove, Dennis Hinman, Danny Brown, O'lyn Callahan.

About half of the organists listed were veterans of at least one previous Festival. The others were newcomers.

The Festival provides two showcases to merchandisers of electronic organs — concerts in acoustically good 1100-seat Merrill Hall and exhibit space in acoustically separated cottages on the grounds. Both pay off for exhibitors. A partial canvas of showrooms on closing day indicated that a good many organs had been sold during the week. Emphasis is on "institutional" advertising (good will) rather than immediate sales although one exhibitor claimed 10 major sales. The hoped-for effect of the 15th annual Festival is to up Holiday sales, as it has in the past.

Products shown were mainly refinements of previous models, with a minimum of surprises. Most manufacturers still seem to be carrying on last year's romance with what are loosely termed "synthesizers," mostly lineal descendants of the almost forgotten Hammond "Solovox" of the late '30s. For some reason these extra voices started out as attachments in their current reincarnation, played from an extra keyboard like the Solovox. Now there still may be an additional short manual involved, but the trend seems to be to incorporate the synthesizer into the organ circuitry and furniture.

The Festival promoters keep a close watch on audience reactions to the various innovations (aided by questionnaires) and have noted falling enthusiasm for concert time accorded instruments which are not organs — the soloing synthesizers. Therefore, Festival rules were changed and the '74 schedule allowed no concert time to non-organs, although the attachments were on display in showrooms. Despite the rule, a couple of exhibitors managed to get their separate synthesizers on the concert stage but the audience reaction was such that it's improbable they'll try it again. Festivaleers just seem to prefer complete organs. They don't mind the added voices if they're part of the organ.

There were exceptions to the synthesizer trend; Rodgers continues to improve the theatrical qualities of the voices on its horseshoe stoprails and the Conn 651 never sounded



Bill Thomson. Back from 'Down Under' with his Koala bear just in time for the Festival. (Stufoto)

Dwight Beacham did his stuff in the Allen showroom. (Stufoto)



To hear Roy Hanson's pedal technique on the Wurlitzer, one would never guess his legs were paralyzed by an accident only a few months before. (Stufoto)

Dan Bellomy (Stufoto)







The 'style 235' Saville, now the 'Renaissance.' Almost an exact copy.

better. These firms are still on the trail of the magic and engineering required to coax pipe tones from transistors, which is, after all, the real objective. Now Rodgers and Conn have been joined in this worthy quest by a late bloomer — Saville.

This firm, long a builder of custom church electronics, has thrown its hat into the entertainment organ field with a 3-manual entertainment model which reveals considerable progress in attaining instrumental voices from transistors in a relatively short period of time. His strings and reeds are very fine, with more work to be done to get the Tibia chirping with a more effective tremulant. The console is an eye catcher; it is a close copy of the Wurlitzer style 235 theatre pipe organ console. Designer Tom Cotner, making no extravagant claims, says "baby" aims toward being the electronic equivalent of a nine rank pipe organ (the 235 is an 11-ranker). Saville has already sold the prototype. Incidentally, a contest was held to name

"baby". Festival visitor Ann Leaf won the \$50.00 prize with "Renaissance."

For years it has been said that when Yamaha discovers the theatre pipe organ, things will begin to happen. While the firm's consoles remain largely unchanged, there is evidence

that Yamaha engineers have finally discovered pipe sounds. The model EX-42 is the sole evidence, so far, but it's easily the most theatrical sounding instrument the Japanese firm has exhibited. Part of its excellence as heard during the Festival may be due to organist Bob Dove's sensitive playing of a Buddy Cole arrangement of *September in the Rain*.

New models of the makes most used by professionals are more cluttered with gadgetry than ever. Where the time-tested stopkey once dominated the stoprail to control all aspects of registration, there are now sliders, dials, push buttons, tilting tablets, and rollers on both stoprail and side jamb to add confusion to a function that should be simple and standardized, although the addition of



Danny Brown "knocked 'em dead" with his humor in the best stand-up comedian style. He did a nice job at the Yamaha, too. (Stufoto)

Don Lewis. Gospel music with humor.

(Nakaharapic)







Larry Ferrari. 'Somewhere My Love' with body english.

(Nakaharapic)



Batman' Tommy Stark lights at the Gulbransen.

(Nakaharapic)

Moving the Big One. 'Just like moving a pipe organ console' beams Peter Polito (foreground) as the Festival's 'Amalgamated Organ Movers' prepare to hoist the Saville 'Renaissance' console to the stage.

(Nakaharapic)



synthesizers tends to complicate the function. One manufacturer has regressed to the point of adding Hammond-style drawbars to control voices in place of stopkeys, while Hammond is using more and more stopkeys. As one pro put it, "You gotta have a diploma in how to get around on these new models."

The Festival weather this year was sunless and somewhat drab. Rain often threatened the Monterey Peninsula, but never materialized. The denizens of the forest surrounding the park buildings turned out, as always, to startle festivaleers at night. Deer were the most common non-humans, with raccoons a close second.

Generally concert performances were high in quality, with the experienced pro's making the solidest impact. Sometimes they resorted to visual gags. For example Bob Ralston displayed his pet Boa Constrictor wrapped around his neck while playing a tune. Seven foot "Paganini's" behavior was exemplary; it was obvious he had a crush on Bob. However, Jonas Nordwall's mechanical monkey was reluctant to clang his windup cymbals for the audience. He had to be coaxed.

Most of the newcomers gave creditable performances, too, and will do even better when they've played at enough Festivals to learn what Festival audiences expect and appreciate most. To their credit there was very little of the flashy, body English, fanny tossing, manual whapping, palm glissing Ethel Smith-type stylings which sometimes marred earlier Festivals. Most artists realized there was no need to make playing look difficult for the benefit of today's festivaleers.

One thing that was lacking this year was humor — at least in the generous doses administered last year. However, Bud Iverson and Dick Purvis teamed up for a comedy routine with Bud voicing Dick's thoughts as the latter struggled through a purposely faulty *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*, a sketch rich in humor. The only other humor came as a surprise when Yamaha's Danny Brown turned out to be a standup comedian as well as a key pusher.

Despite an increasing number of spinoffs, this year's Home Organ Festival — the original — easily lived up to its boast — "The greatest organ show on earth!" Electronic division, of course. □



# Snippets from England

TONY BERNARD SMITH

A provincial newspaper came out with it this spring: "Organist's dark secret is out."

This lurid headline revealed publicly the fact that the legendary *Reginald Porter-Brown* (known admiringly to many as "the man with three hands") is now a registered blind person.

In fact, he has been struggling with worsening vision for 14 years and his handicap is such that he cannot read more than a few notes of music at a time and then only by looking directly at them.

"For a long time I have been having

to play mainly by touch and memory," he says.

"It is very difficult, particularly for an organist, because every organ is different and because of the size of the instrument — it takes some time to find where everything is on a four manual organ.

"What has helped me is the fact that, as a child, I played for hours and hours in the dark, extemporising and improvising."

He has suffered much from ill-health in his time but has built up a formidable second-touch technique which enable him to broadcast twice

using left hand and pedals only, his right wrist being broken!

STACCATO SNIPPETS — Going the rounds is a lengthy documentary film, *An Acre of Seats in a Garden of Dreams*, which tells the story of movies in Britain and features pedal-pushers *Douglas Reeve*, *John Stewart* and *Ena Baga* (though Ena confines herself to piano backing for silents on this occasion) . . . Over in Holland, the Passage Theatre, Schiedam, closed May 1, 1974. It will re-open as a community arts centre May 2, 1975 (all being well) with the Standaard 3/10 fully overhauled. Scheduled soloist will be *Cor Standaard*, son of the original builder . . . *Joseph Seal* has retired from his desk job with a cinema circuit. He has another LP due soon on a commercial label . . . Cameo/Poly, Regent Street, London has reverted to live theatre presentations. The Compton 2/6 stays . . . Six years after his retirement, veteran Dutch tabmerchant *Johan Jong* returned to the air waves to give a recital on the AVRO studio's Compton 4/22. He was formerly staff organist for the VARA radio company, who presented the recital but whose Standaard 3/13 was awaiting major overhaul . . . Regal, Edmonton, London celebrated 40 years with the famous Christie 4/14 well to the fore in the hands of several players. After a spell as The Sundown, the theatre has reverted to its original name. □



REGINALD PORTER-BROWN — his sight handicap has been revealed.

(J.D. Sharp Photo)

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# Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

PEOPLE... Maureen O'Hara recently served as stewardess aboard her husband's 30 year old Sunderland flying boat when it was flown from Down Under to the U.S.... Jane Withers is ending the 11 year old TV career of Josephine the Plumber... Orson Welles is making a new film about a Hollywood director (a composite of several great talents)... With the passing of Cliff Arquette (Charlie Weaver) and Walter Brennan there is room for more talent in Hollywood but they'll be hard to replace... Some TV watchers were surprised on how much Ian Carmichael reminded them of Neil Hamilton... Morton Downey lives in Wallingford, Conn.... Singer Marion Hutton (Glenn Miller band) was last reported living in the Laguna Beach, California area.



*WOMEN predominated in film making for the first 60 years of films. But not today. In 1926 women stars outnumbered men, 15 to one. Now we have Elizabeth Taylor, Julie Andrews, Katharine Hepburn, Barbara Streisand, Ann Bancroft, Faye Dunaway and a few others. In 14 new films, you'll see soon, not one has a woman as a star. It is men, men and more men. Perhaps that is one reason the old movies on TV have continued appeal. They had glamorous, beautiful, talented, exciting feminine stars.*



WHO IS WHERE?... This month we do a switch. Readers are asking the whereabouts of: Josephine Dunn, Mona Palmer, Iris Gray, Greg Blackton, Mary Dees, Dolores Moran, Wanda Hendrix, Ginny Simms, Victor Francen, Philip Reed, Elliot Reed and Dan Seymour. Any information will be shared.



*YOUNG THEATRE* entrepreneur Jack Tillmany notes: "Currently living in the San Francisco Bay area are Nancy Welford (star of *Gold Diggers of '29*), Hallam Cooley, Ann Morriss, Kerwin Matthews, Aron Kincaid, Robert Whitney, Phillis Welch and Natalie Kingston."



SELECTED SHORTS... Gene Raymond remarried... Vera Vague passed on... Norma Shearer has personal prints of her favorite films... Sale of sheet music is rising... Gloria Swanson and Barbara Stanwyck have given us over 100 years of screen happiness. Isn't it time they be given an Oscar?... Rita Lanham, the second Mrs. C. Gable, is reported living in Texas. She's 91... Robert Aldrich said: "I hate movie stars... I don't hate actors... There's a world of difference."

*ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS: Was Columbia studio really ever a power? Harry Cohn would hate you to the year 2099 for asking and point out that Columbia won 10 best Picture Oscars - more than any other studio of any kind... Jackie Coogan was 60 last October... Slapsie Maie Rosenbloom, 71, lives in a Hollywood senior citizen center.*



MORE QUESTIONS: "In the silent days were there ever cameo parts?" Oh, yes. In the 1924 film *In Hollywood* with Potash & Perlmutter, Norma and Constance Talmadge did a bit... In 1926 Paramount had a film, *Fascinating Youth*, which featured bit appearances by Clara Bow, Richard Dix, Adolphe Menjou, Lois Wilson, Percy Marmont, Chester Conklin, Thomas Meighan, Lila Lee, Lewis Milestone and Mal St. Clair. The idea is as old as films.



*REEL LIFE... In the 1953 MGM remake of Mogambo, Ava Gardner was torching for Clark Gable. In a moment of alcoholic comfort she blurted out: "You know, your big ears stick out like an elephant"... Parade magazine says Tom Mix does have a son living in London... William Wyler is off on a world trip that includes shooting dozens of rolls of super eight film for his home movies... Harold Lloyd Estate Trustees are making slow progress towards finding the right and best group to develop the famed showplace into a lasting museum.*



ALAN DWAN, 90, is probably the dean of Hollywood directors. He has a great memory, enjoys parties, is happy to meet fans and friends. Recently he told us: "There are a lot of worthy young actors around today. Telly Savalas is a great player. I think Peter Bogdonovich is the best new director. He has it." Although he has been around films since 1911, his reported age of 90 seems amiss. Probably closer to 78 or 80.



*RE-TAKES... In 1933 a Hollywood prophet wrote: "Indeed the twilight of all screen goddesses may be at hand. No more sex queens." The clouds hung heavy over his crystal ball that day... Reader LK writes: "Don't forget that Jackie Gleason, Marjorie Main, Eve Arden, Sara Allgood and Larry Parks received Oscar nominations"... Early advertising (before film was shot) said Carmel Myers would be John Gilbert's soul mate in *Flesh & the Devil*.*



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



# HAROLD JOLLES

## Veteran Theatre Organist

by  
Lloyd E. Klos

When the writer became an avowed theatre organ buff in 1959, one of the first theatre organists he met was Harold Jolles who was playing the 4/18 Marr & Colton on Sundays in Buffalo's Roosevelt Theatre. The theatre is gone, the organ is owned by an enthusiast, but Harold lives with his memories of the first great era of the theatre pipe organ.

He began studying piano at the age of ten. In those days, there were no electronics, so practice time was a bit difficult to obtain. He studied for a time with Samuel Thorstenberg in Jamestown, N.Y., and got a small amount of practice time on a 4-manual Hook & Hastings in one of the churches. He also studied in Buffalo under Irwin S. Binder at Plymouth ME Church. When he heard the great show-man-organist C. Sharpe Minor at Buffalo's Lafayette 3/15 Wurlitzer, Harold decided to become a theatre organist.

"I was in the balcony of the Lafayette when C. Sharpe Minor stationed a violinist in the pipe chamber for added effect, which the patrons thought was being done by the organist. He used slides, telling how he had blended stops to imitate a violin, and wiggled his fingers on the keys to simulate the vibrato! Once, using the Vox Humana, he imitated a quartet's singing; another time he stationed a soprano in the Solo Chamber, and he said one could make the Wurlitzer sound like the human voice.

"I never saw Minor or Henry B. Murtagh in tux or tails, but Albert Hay Malotte always wore a morning coat and striped trousers in the daytime and tails at night. Arthur Martel also favored formal dress at the Lafayette.

"Never have I heard a Wurlitzer 260 with the volume the Lafayette had! It had

no crescendo pedal, but there were two pedals, one for full organ, the other for everything, including percussion. Martel was a great exponent of lots of voice, including the 32' Diaphone which lay horizontally above the proscenium arch."

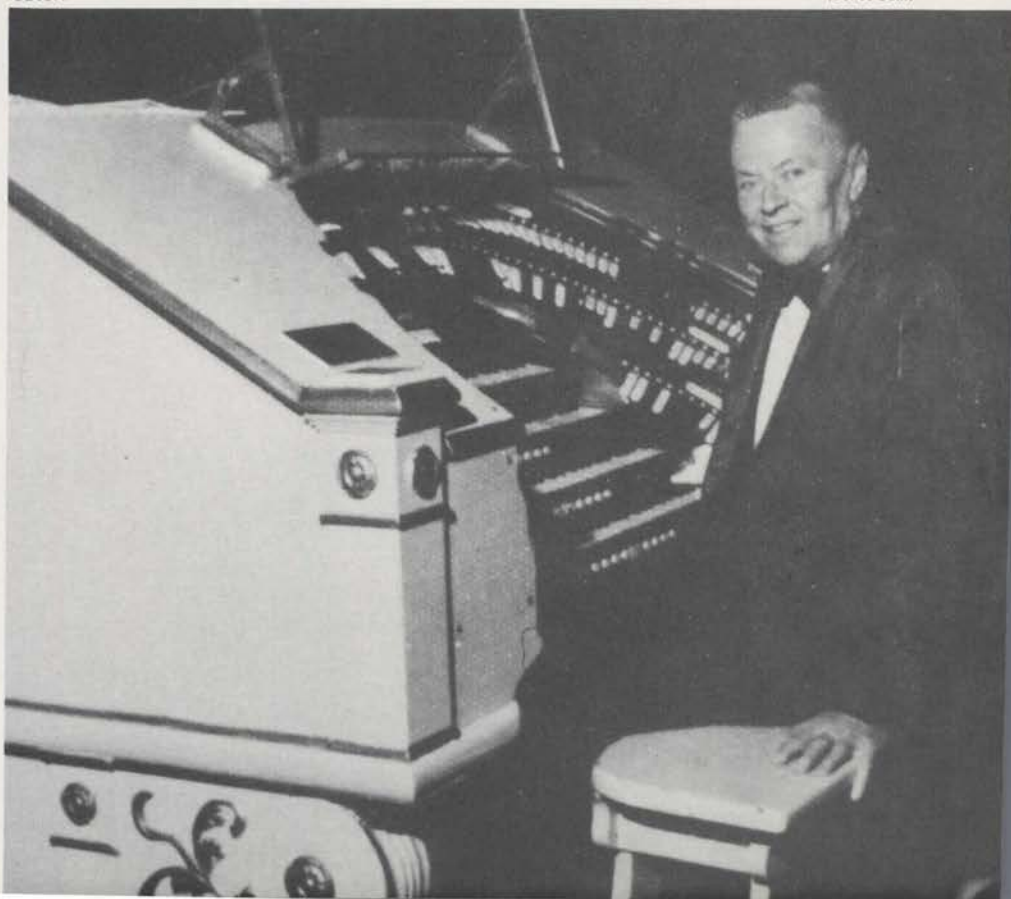
Harold had a few lessons from Hall of Famer Murtagh, and then enrolled at Rochester's Eastman School of Music in the fall of 1923. "When I arrived at the Eastman, there was no first-year class in motion picture accompaniment, so I played the *Hungarian Rhapsody #2* from memory for Jose Iturbi and was placed in the second-year class. The stu-

dents took turns at the 2-manual studio Wurlitzer, playing a portion of a picture. How I loved that! I remember particularly Pola Negri in *Passion*. In those good days, some students wouldn't take their allotted practice time on the Wurlitzer, so so fellow student Eda Roman and I would race to the studio for open practice time.

"The teachers were John F. and Robert J. Berentsen who alternated at the 4/155 Austin in the Eastman Theatre. Hammond and I became good friends, and he helped me a lot."

Among Harold's classmates were

Harold pauses at the console of the RKO Palace Wurlitzer in 1965 while concertizing in Rochester. (Jolles Coll.)

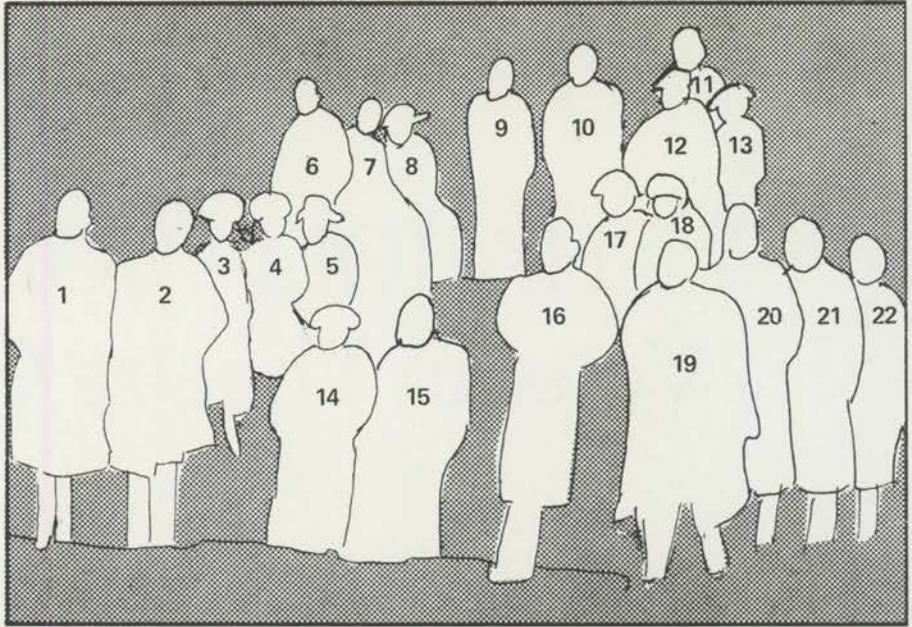




Betty Raub (later known as Rosa Rio), Eda Roman, Mildred Perris, Fred Meyers and Mrs. Gladys Brown. Harold greatly impressed Hammond, and through arrangements with George Eastman and house manager Reuben Mamoulian, he played *The White Sister* one morning. They were further impressed and Harold was given permission to play for the supper hour and the last show of the day for four months preceeding his departure from the school in 1924.

"I recall the Regent Theatre on East Avenue, around the corner from Gibbs Street, which had a 1914 3-manual Hope-Jones Wurlitzer. I played it for a couple weeks while the organist was ill. The tremulant would not work for the Tibia, and when I sought permission to get it going, the manager refused. The tremulant on the strings was really big — almost shook you off the bench!" (That organ was removed in 1973 and placed in storage by "The Filthy Fifteen" crew of RTOS).

"I could have stayed at the Eastman organ, I suppose, but I wanted to get out and try my wings on a real Hope-Jones



A group of students, teachers and friends who visited the Marr & Colton Organ Co. in Warsaw, N.Y. in 1924, pose in front of the M & C office building. They are (1) David J. Marr, M & C President; (2) John Hammond, teacher; (3) Hazel Hippwell, student; (4) Mrs. Robert J. Berentsen; (5) Mrs. John Hammond; (6) unidentified student of Harold Gleason; (7) Mr. Roberts, student; (8) Betty Raub (Rosa Rio), student; (9) Harold Harper, student; (10) Jack Colton, M & C voicer; (11) Fred McKibben, student; (12) Eda Roman, student; (13) Eda's sister; (14) Gladys E. Brown, student; (15) Robert J. Berentsen, teacher. Students: (16) Harry Bareuther, (17) Mildred Peris, (18) Wanda McCuen, (19) Edwin Paddock, (20) Fred Myers, (21) Harold Jolles, (22) Richard Wallace.

(Jolles Collection)







The Lerner Theatre in Elkhart, Ind., where Harold was organist for five years. The marquee in 1924 advertises six acts of vaudeville and Buster Keaton in *The Navigator*, "a shipload of laughs." (Jolles Coll.)

type theatre organ. As Jamestown, N.Y. was near my home, I took my first job there at the 1000-seat Winter Garden Theatre — on a tracker action instrument! It had a beautiful tone and fast action. The theatre had a fine orchestra, too.

"After a few months, the owner wanted me to play his 1700-seat Palace Theatre down on Third Street. It featured five acts of first-class vaudeville, had a 3/15 Marr & Colton and another fine orchestra. That was where I first heard Paul Whiteman's concert orchestra and *The Rhapsody in Blue* with George Gershwin at the piano.

"When I was at the Palace, Frieda Hempel, the German opera star, was giving a concert at the Winter Garden, when the theatre's cat walked onto the stage and proceeded to preen herself. Mrs. Hempel burst out laughing as an usher removed kitty. If it had happened to Fify D'Orsay, oh boy!

"A small theatre in Jamestown had a model 109 Wurlitzer. It had a Flute, which was a Stopped Diapason; String; Vox Humana; Tuba; and a piano console with a 61-note keyboard. I frequently played it and had a ball.

"One day at the Palace, I became ill as the console seemed to be moving. I went downstairs and even the floor was heaving. Jamestown was having a rare earthquake!

"It was in Jamestown that pianist Gretchen Sach came to me one day and said, 'Have some candy.' I tried it, liked it,

and ate quite a lot of it. A short time later, while accompanying the picture, I had to leave hurriedly in the middle of the film for the emergency relief station. My new nickname was Jolly Jolles — after my introduction to Ex-Lax.

"The Palace owners asked me to go to the Wurlitzer factory in N. Tonawanda in 1924, to see about getting a 260 like Buffalo's Lafayette. I did, and shortly

after returning to the Palace, was coming up the aisle when a hand shot out. It was Fanny Wurlitzer, and C. Sharpe Minor was with him. What a thrill!

"Fanny said to me, 'Boy, if you'd get one of our organs, you'd really get somewhere.' He also said that he didn't hear any strings on the Palace organ. I told him they weren't working. This led to my calling the Marr & Colton Co. in Warsaw, N.Y. and asking them to get the organ in perfect shape as Minor was to play for three days (Fee: \$300). The company put in a new blower, a new console and more ranks. Upon completion of the work, M&C got me fired for being friendly with Wurlitzer!

"John Hammond sent for me to come to New York City where I substituted for Rosa Rio at Loew's Willard for two weeks while she was on vacation. The organ was a 3/57 divided Austin, and in that big vaudeville house, it sounded great. I also subbed occasionally for Hammond on the 4/28 Marr & Colton in the Piccadilly. One afternoon, he asked me to play the picture at the Pic, saying he'd be back in time for his solo. I developed a cold sweat, wondering where he was! He did get back, sliding onto the bench just in time."

One of Harold's memories of New York was Hall of Famer Frederick Kinsley who made a number of Edison Diamond Disc recordings in the early twenties on the Hippodrome Theatre's

The Elco (formerly Lerner) Theatre as it is today. It seats about 2,000. (Jolles Collection)





Midmer-Losh. "I had four recordings by him, including *Poor Butterfly*. When playing in New York, I went to hear him but was not impressed by the organ." The M-L was replaced in 1926 by a 4/29 Wurlitzer which eventually saw service in Albany where Rex Koury became featured organist.

"I had a successful tryout at Loew's New York Roof for a regular position at Loew's 86th Street Theatre. I soon quit however, because the manager was too hard to get along with. Loew's then sent me to their new Coney Island Theatre, a 2500-seat ornate picture house with a large Moller and a 25-piece symphony orchestra. The organ had a drawknob console, but in every sense a theatre organ with a 32' Contra Bourdon and a 32' Bombard. It was a beautiful organ and I enjoyed it until the fall of 1925 when I went West."

Harold moved to Elkhart, Indiana where he played a Kimball in the Lerner Theatre for five years. With the exception of three musicians, the orchestra was the same as it was in the Palace in Jamestown. "Sylvester Stambaugh was the organist whom I succeeded at the Lerner, a 2800-seat house. He had played for Lerner a long time, first on a straight 2-manual Kimball down the street in a small vaudeville theatre. He told the owners he'd quit if they put in a 3-manual organ in the Lerner. So, what should have been a 3/11 was a 2/11 but had the big sound of Kimball. It was the finest sounding Kimball I've ever heard, and it had a piano and 32' resultant.

"When I first went to the Lerner, I was told I'd never get the audience to sing. I started with slides on 'I Scream for Ice Cream'. At first, no sound from the patrons. Then I said, 'Let's hear just the gals'. I played pretty loud, but could hear some of them. Then I asked for the men, telling them I'd play loud. I put on crescendo, and when they got going well, I stopped, leaving them singing acapella! Everyone had a good laugh, I had 'em from then on, and there was no problem.

"I used to go to Chicago once a month to take lessons from Jesse Crawford, using the same organ on which he made his first recordings (*Valencia* etc.). It gave me the opportunity to hear other organists as well. Many organists in the old days let their playing do their talking for them. Doc Bebko will say the same thing. I heard Jesse Crawford, Arthur Gutow, Milton Charles, C. Sharpe Minor, Henry B. Murtagh, Albert Hay Malotte and many more. Not a word out of them!

"I took six months out to play the 3/11



The Lerner Theatre's Kimball console. It was at this keydesk that Harold fed a pet mouse. It was the finest Kimball he had ever heard. (James Coll.)

Barton in the Orpheum Theatre in Springfield, Ill. I did not like the organ or the manager. He wanted me to play popular music through most pictures. The theatre was beautiful, almost a replica of Rochester's RKO Palace, and like the Palace, the property is now a parking lot. The organ was given to a high school, and at last report, hardly usable as its maintenance was neglected.

"While in Elkhart, a young tuner from the Kimball factory came every three months. He was a good fellow and stayed at our home. He told me that the New York Roxy Kimball had 54 ranks. Milton Paige told me the same thing years later when on a visit to Buffalo, he tried out the Roosevelt M & C.

"The Lerner Kimball had gongs, bells, auto horn, aeroplane sound, surf etc. on buttons above the top manual. I'd been using the aeroplane sound one day and it stuck! I went up to the chamber and cut the wire which was the only thing I could do. The owner told me to keep it disconnected, so I couldn't use it again.

"The relief organist at the Lerner was a woman who had studied with Stambaugh. I had a pet mouse who used to come out on the console near my right hand, and I'd keep some crumbs for him. One day, the mouse came out and jumped onto the lady's hand. She let out a shriek and made a hasty exit.

"The carpeting in the Lerner was deep

and therefore given to static electricity. The girl ushers enjoyed touching their fingers to my neck while I was at the console, just to see me jump from the shock!

"The console was on the right side of the pit. We once had a one-ring circus on the stage, complete with high-wire acts, horses, three elephants and Clyde Beatty's lions and tigers. The stage, was very large and high, and looked a great deal like the Saenger's in New Orleans. The orchestra's drummer sat next to the console. There was a chimpanzee on the stage, chained to a tricycle. He evidently didn't like drummers, because he came to the edge of the stage and showed his teeth. The drummer reciprocated. The monkey came right over the apron, tricycle and all! The drummer went one way, I another! Later at the Orpheum in Springfield, he did the same thing, even though the Barton console was on the left side of the pit.

"Another day with the circus still on the bill at the Lerner, I noticed a small monkey, chained to the door of the girls' backstage dressing room. He was blind in one eye, but cute. He'd peek in at the girls and beckon me to take a look. I asked his owner what he was up to, and I was told that the monkey wanted me to get into position so he could bite me!

"The Lerner was a beautiful theatre and apparently still is as I saw the Main Street of Elkhart on TV news awhile ago,



and two good views of the theatre (now the Elco) were shown. It looked like new, and its big facade looked much like the Rivoli in New York. It had the most beautiful mezzanine lounge I've seen. When I played there, it had a large vertical 'Lerner' sign.

"I remember the first picture I played at the Lerner was the *Lost World*. The patrons had never heard a picture really played, as Stambaugh usually employed popular music for most pictures. However, the one I really enjoyed playing was *The Phantom of the Opera*. In the scene just before the massive chandelier fell, I stopped playing, then came down with an arm on the great and pushed the crescendo pedal at the same time! Some of the women in the audience screamed!"

With the demise of the theatre organ, Harold Jolles turned to farming in 1935, running a dairy farm in Cattaraugus, N.Y. He never lost his love for the theatre organ, however. When a crew of enthusiasts, led by Harry Radloff, began restoration of the 4/18 Marr & Colton in Buffalo's Roosevelt Theatre early in 1957, the owners of the theatre, George and Morris Rosing, were persuaded to feature the organ as part of the Sunday programs at 5 and 8 P.M. Harold was chosen for the job which continued into 1962 when the theatre was closed and later razed.

As a result of this activity, Harold engaged in serious practice and began teaching. He had to sell his dairy herd and some acreage. But the greatest kick Harold got from his new endeavor was to watch the children who were growing up in an era in which the theatre organ was new experience for them. Quite often, they'd come swarming from their seats and group around the console, their eyes popping over the display of pistons, tabs, manuals and switches.


The writer fondly remembers a 2-in-1 concert at the Roosevelt, Sunday morn-

Harold performs at the 4/18 Marr and Colton in Buffalo's Roosevelt Theatre in 1962. The organ was his favorite and he labeled it "the equal of any Wurlitzer I ever heard."  
(Jolles Coll.)



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ing, January 31, 1960. This was an affair to commemorate the complete restoration of the 4/18 Marr & Colton. Harold worked the first half of the program, playing such numbers as a medley of Roaring Twenties hits, medley of Southern songs, Kreisler's *Liebesfreud*, and three original Jolles' compositions: *When Evening Shadows Fall*, *Little German Waltz* and *Japanese Polka*.

Second organist was Eddie Baker (Dr. Edward J. Bebko) and he performed a sing-along of Twenties hits, a Gershwin medley, a march medley and *Brazilian Sleighbells*. This concert, the first for the fledgling Niagara Frontier Chapter, was the affair which greatly heightened the writer's interest in the theatre organ, and also convinced him that there were fine-sounding organs other than Wurlitzers.

"I always believe it would be fun for Doc and I to do another concert sometime. During my career, I was fortunate in never having to play in a run-down theatre. I always had a good, big instrument which was kept in tune."

There was an occasion when the practical humor of Roosevelt organ boss Harry Radloff and his assistant, Heino Olandt, caused Harold Jolles no small measure of frustration. The boys decided upon a practical joke, and proceeded to wire in a bigger number of stops and effects to Harold's favorite combination he used to open his Sunday programs. On the appointed day, as the audience started to fill the auditorium, Harold's

hands came down on the manuals for the first note and everything but the kitchen sink sounded off! The boys were seated directly in front of the console, and Harold turned around, glared at them and uttered some unprintable oath! The boys innocently smiled back!

In generalizing on the past, Harold Jolles offers some timely comment. "Read John Muri's articles on playing a motion picture in the 1974 issues of THEATRE ORGAN. The young should follow his advice and I am in complete agreement with what he says. A good theatre organist made his score a work of art and many people used to go to the theatre to: (1) Hear the organ, and (2) see the picture. Bob Berentsen and John Hammond at Rochester's Eastman were a rare pair. Their scoring of a picture was very smooth. Rosa Rio and I learned much from them. You had to be good in those days to stay five years in one spot. Look how long Don Baker was at the New York Paramount — 14 years! Of course, some organists had the wanderlust and traveled extensively.

"My favorite pipe organ? The 4/18 Marr & Colton in Buffalo's Roosevelt was the equal of any Wurlitzer I ever heard, and Tom Grierson said the same thing when he played it in 1961. Kimball built a wonderful organ and I never heard a bad one. I also have fond memories of the Eastman Austin.

"I can't begin to describe how most of us organists loved our jobs. In those days, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays were the big days and theatres were filled to standing room. The rest of the week was good. Imagine seeing five acts of first-class vaudeville, a good picture, a scenic, a comedy, newsreel, coming events and an organ solo — all for 65 cents!

"A good solo organist owed a lot to the operators in the projection booth. I never had to push a button to change slides, the operators handling the whole routine. Once I did a presentation entitled 'Chinese Temple Garden.' It was a film whose scenes were in Chinese and faded into English. As the mood changed, so did the color wheel, and it made a very nice solo without slides."

Since the closing of the Roosevelt, Harold has operated his farm and played an occasional concert. He has performed twice for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, and for the Niagara Frontier Chapter of ATOS of which he is an Honored Member. "Yes, I would really like to do it all over again, and I hope in that far off place, there will be music and a beautiful pipe organ to play."



# THE WURLITZER THAT WOULD NOT DIE

## PART TWO

by Bill Rieger

The only thing good about the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer console was its name. At the outset, we thought the console was only a box of keys and tabs, and we could refurbish it in short order. We couldn't have been more wrong. With the theatre opening at 9 A.M. *every day*, and closing at midnight or later, it became apparent that the console would have to come out of the pit. Everyone agreed that the wiring was worse than a case of spaghetti. And what alarmed us even more, was that the organ was completely unplayable; partly because of many, many cut wires, and that weeks would have to be spent ringing out the various sections. So, after disconnecting hundreds of wires, some associated with tablets, "suitable bass" and combination action, we removed the assemblies as follows: top, fall boards, pedal board and pedals, upper left and right panels of console, five bolsters, plus the second touch rail, three combination action chests, traps, relays, expression pedal relay and

piano pedals.

With everything out of key desk, four of us picked it up and set it on stage leaving a mountain of scrambled cable wires. If I could ever use that "magic wand" it would be to straighten out and remove all unused wiring. With all parts of the console on stage, our work was cut out for us for some time to come — though we didn't know it then.

Val Escobar and Frank Pokorny concentrated on the console refinishing. We use the term "refinish" for I have lost track of the number of coats and rubbing operations. It seems as if we were all stripping paint off of one assembly or another, and for a while the 15 pieces of console woodwork looked worse and worse. But, as it is darkest before the dawn, the magic combination of the Harvey Williams portable sprayer in the hands of Val and Frank turned the tide — soon everything was bright ivory. One look at the manual, and Terry Kleven offered to rebush all of the manual keys. It was decided not to recover the keys and lose the last touch of Jesse Crawford. So George Smith and the rest of us cleaned and polished keys for

another spell. The cooperation among the club enthusiasts is remarkable; no one could buy that kind of dedication.

The tab contact blocks, too, became quite a production. First, member Tad Doose built a wire cutting forming tool for all the contact wires. With new 26 gauge silver wires installed, the contact blocks looked almost like new. Val spent weeks at the console installing new pedal contact wires and blocks. Frank spent an almost equal amount of time straightening or replacing manual contact wires and blocks.

Tablet pneumatics were recovered assembly line fashion with some of us removing the old leather and several, including George Smith and Russ Joseph, releathering. We did not know of perflex at the start, so some are done in brown leather, some in polyken, but most in the newly accepted polymethane material, better known as perflex. A special glue is required, and is a little more difficult to handle, and requires heat to cure, but the result is a super flexible pneumatic rather impervious to moisture.

The three large combination chests which house the magnets, and primaries for each tablet pneumatic (over 450 of them in this organ) were all disassembled, cleaned and rebuilt where necessary; each chest was tested electrically with air before reassembling into the console.

New upstop and downstop tablet felts were installed. This seemed like a straight forward operation, but unthinkingly, we used a soft, thick felt, resulting in a reduced tablet movement. We adjusted the contacts to compensate for this, but, to our dismay, the contacts settled out of adjustment, because the felt compressed. If there is a lesson from this experience, it is to use a firm woven felt instead of the softer pressed felt for stop tablets.

Frank, Val, George and Russ cleaned and straightened and replaced many manual contact blocks. Cleaning and straightening every contact wire in the organ ran to almost 3000 wires and contacts. The fellows still have

their sanity, and we are still friends!!!

After replacing all contact blocks, each contact wire was tweezed, aligned and formed by the timeless patience of Val Escobar. Val has some special watchmaker glasses which enlarge the tiny contact wires to look like a garden fence. It is important to be sure all contacts are positive. Those of you who have worked on multibolster Wurlitzer consoles are aware of the careful and patient approach this requires.

The main and upper bolsters, (after being refinished, and with new contact wire and connecting cables) were secured by mounting screws. Adjustment of each bolster was made by the mounting screws to insure proper tablet tension and contact action. After all bolster pneumatics and three combination chests were reinstated into console, and wired to proper tablets, pistons and console terminal panel, the air was temporarily connected to the console and all tablet functions were checked by energizing each magnet with a 12 volt battery. Final adjustments of all tablet and piston contacts were carefully made.

No one missed the coffee break. Along about 10:30 P.M. of each Tuesday work session, member Carl Tompke served the tired crew cake and coffee (specially blended by Val). Longtime stage hand Frank Carson usually joined us and tales and stories flowed freely.

Returning the console to its left platform in the orchestra pit was easier said than done. The console was removed in sections, but now was to be returned carefully, fully assembled. Thanks to CATOE Chairman Russ Joseph, who secured the loan of two store fixture jacks, we inched the console down from the stage to the pit on Easter morning, 1973, at 6:30 A.M. During the course of the operation, we received full cooperation from the theatre — the booth men turned on the big spotlight, and for a minute, we were all star performers. Congenial stage hand, Frank Carson, assisted us with more lights and delayed the opening of the theatre that Sunday morning by more than 20 minutes.

The traps relay was missing some



The finished front boards are ready for assembly (Val and George).

(Bill Lamb Photo)

A serious moment as bolsters are lowered to position (Bill, Val, George, and Frank). (Bill Lamb Photo)



Console top in refinishing department (one of the old scenery rooms on 4th floor).

(Bill Lamb Photo)



magnet parts, and it was decided to transistorize it, which reduced its size and eliminated the operational relay noise in the console.

With the console safely in the pit, we quickly pushed it onto its lift, and made a tent over the console of black velour, so we could continue work on the console during theatre hours, and begin the huge job of wiring. Carpet was carefully fitted around the console.

Under the black tent, the manual contact strips were given their final inspection and fitted under each of the four manuals. Contact spacings were adjusted to operate during the middle 1/3 of key travel. The first touch contact spacings on the accompaniment manual were set at 1/4 key travel and second contact key springs at 3/4 key travel. It was only through the inexhaustible patience of Val Escobar that these adjustments could be made. Adjustment of the pedal contact strip was somewhat easier because of the greater key travel.

With the manual and pedal contacts in place, George, Russ and the writer

spent hours on the telephone (between the console and relay room). We played each key and pedal to check out the operation of the relay, using the very limited vocabulary of "ok," "next" and "dead." The correction for the dead terminals was usually a better solder connection at the relay room junction board. In the few cases of open magnets, they were repaired by resoldering a corroded connection at the center tap or the start or finish lead wire connections. Next, all tablets were checked out by checking operation of their respective stack switches in the relay room. After correcting several reversals, poor solder connections and dead magnets, we found several switches had been cut out years ago; so our agenda now includes re-wiring these into the organ as time permits.

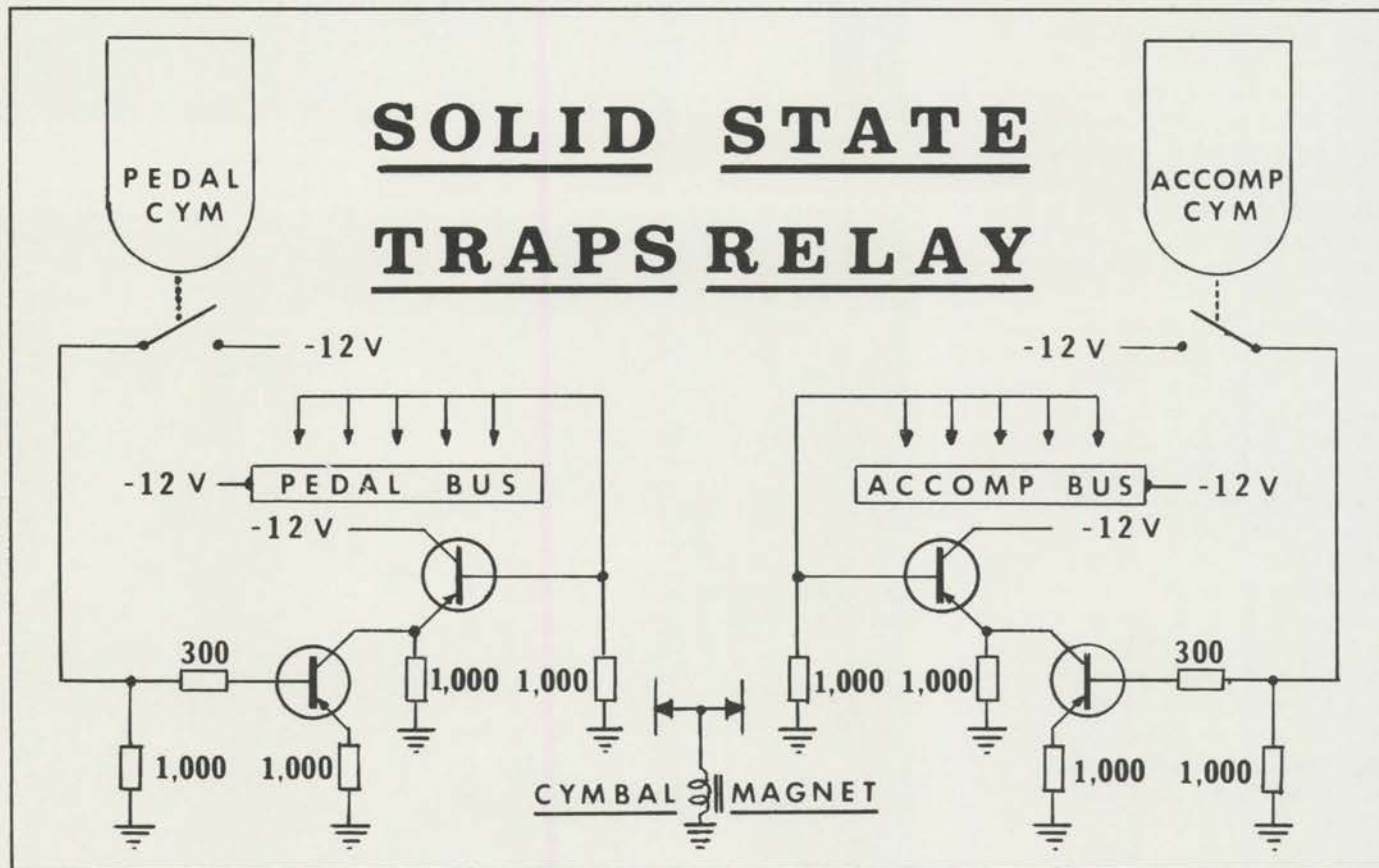
A large part of the expense and wiring in a console involves the combination action. In the Chicago Theatre console, there are more than 230 tablets, and in order for the combination system to function, each tablet must have an "off" pouch, primary and magnet, and an "on" pouch,

primary and magnet. As you may know, the "on" and "off" pouches are located above, and below, each tablet, and activate each tablet to an "on" or "off" position.

The more than 450 primary pneumatics and magnets are located in the three large combination action chests mounted between the cheeks of the console. For each magnet, a control wire is required (more than 450 of them in all) which runs downstairs to the setter board room in the basement. Each of these wires is energized at the setter board to check out the on/off combination action for every tablet. We will go into the details of the setter board and combination action in greater detail in a later issue.

The relay room is the brains of the outfit, so extra care was taken not to damage any of the thousands of aged wired connections. As all of the operations depend on voltage (12 V DC) from the generator in the blower room, it was found that the reliability was vastly improved by cleaning all supply terminals. The next installment will cover "what we mean by cleaning up a chamber." □

A typical schematic showing parts required to control the cymbal.



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# ONE MAN SAVES ORGAN

by Christopher Thorn

**N**ineteen sixty-eight was the year citizens of Erie, Pennsylvania witnessed the demolition of their theatre heritage — namely the destruction of Shea's Theatre, Erie's former showplace of vaudeville evenings, silent movies and full stage theatre productions under the direction of scores of road company producers.

It was also dubbed the year of the "rescue" because a maintenance man from Erie's Gannon College — ATOS member Robert (Joe) Luckey — directed 80 college fraternity boys in a 12 day evacuation of the Shea's most valuable possession — a 24 rank, three-manual pipe organ made by one of the city's organ manufacturers — the Tellers Pipe Organ Company.

The Shea's, and Tellers, constitute significant landmarks in Erie's history. The Shea's roots stretched back almost three-quarters of a century, and Tellers was the offspring of three organ craftsmen who originally worked for A.B. Felgemaker, an Erie pipe organ master of 100 years ago.

During its festive 64 years, Shea's Theatre changed management — and names — three times. Opened in 1904 as the Majestic, it was the brainstorm of Erieite Frederick B. Downing, an entrepreneur and theatre lover who often frequented New York's own Majestic playhouse. It was Downing who contacted the Majestic's architects, McEffatrick and Sons, to build a facsimile of the Majestic in downtown Erie to establish a permanent residence for big time theatre in the lakeside town.

Opening night at the Erie Majestic was the gala affair of the town. From that evening on, dozens of theatre stars such as Grace George ("Pretty Peggy"), Edwin Holt ("The Cardinal") and James H. Hackett ("The Crown

Prince") trekked across the Majestic's unusually huge stage. The theatre became a household word and the center for live in-person entertainment in the tri-state area of Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio.

The most prominent stars at the Majestic were William Faversham in "The Faun" and Ethel Barrymore in "The Witness for the Defense." "Ben Hur" proved to be the theatre's most spectacular production when a treadmill was set up for horses and chariots in the great chariot race. The Majestic had one of its more historical moments when it hosted the Erie Cham-

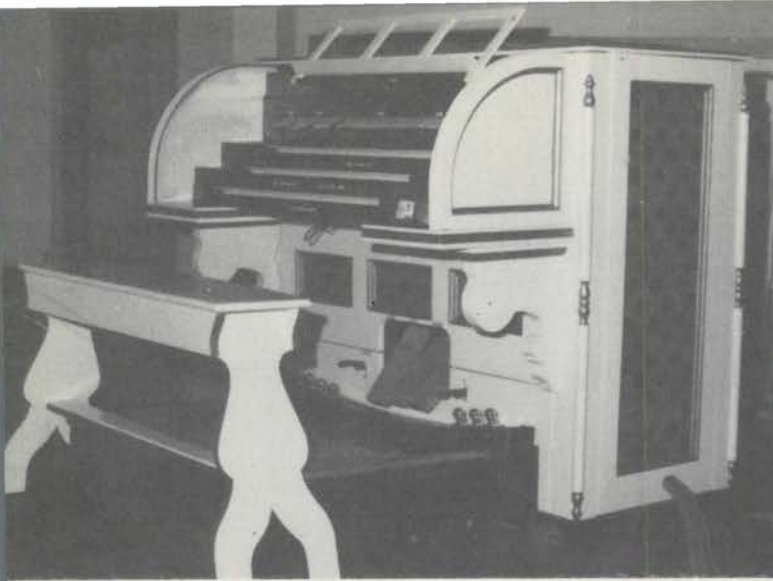
ber of Commerce and honored guest, President William H. Taft. The Majestic was also used for high school graduation ceremonies. During the festivities of the class of 1909, a man named Seth Steiner talked about "wireless telegraphy" and gave the first public demonstration of it.

During the 1910's, the Majestic divorced its original owners and became the Perry. Around 1920, its new managers decided to enhance the atmosphere of its rich green and white interior, velour curtains, gold trimmings and green ingrained leather seats; they contacted the Tellers Organ

Shea's Theatre, Erie, before demolition in 1968.







The refinished Tellers console.



Joe bought a true horseshoe console, a two manual Marr and Colton, (seen here refinished) for the final installation of the Tellers.  
(C. Thorn Photo)

Company about the installation of an organ.

The Tellers Company was a church pipe organ company, but apparently the Perry owners were somewhat confused about the technical and characteristic differences between church organs and theatre organs. Tellers installed a straight, 24 rank, three-manual organ, and it was not until 1930 that the organ received its theatrical qualities through the addition of the percussion section.

When N.A. Shea, a theatre chain owner, bought the Perry in 1931 and crowned it Shea's, the theatre quickly resumed its place as showcase of theatrical entertainment and continued to produce the only legitimate theatre in Erie until the 1950's. The Tellers organ was only used, however, off and on for a period of five years during the 1930's. Its organists were the showy "C. Sharpe Minor" (Charles Sharpe Minor) and Percy Le Seuer, owner of a local music conservatory. The organ was soon forgotten and collected dust for the next 35 odd years. The Stanley-Warner Corp. purchased the aging building in 1962 and converted it to a movie house until its demolition in 1968.

#### The Organ Companies

The Tellers Pipe Organ Co. originated from a rich heritage in pipe organ manufacturing in Erie, once the fertile ground for four organ companies which earned the city the nickname of "pipe organ capital of the world" at the turn of the 20th century.

In 1906, the company was founded by two brothers, Henry and Ignatius Tellers, and William Sommerhof, three craftsmen from Erie's A.B. Felgemaker

Pipe Organ Co., the city's pioneer industry in the trade, founded in 1872.

Felgemaker originally moved his entire works from nearby Buffalo, New York to Erie, and established a prosperous business in church pipe organs and portable pipe organs. He was credited with the invention of the portable while still a youth. In Erie, he was the contemporary of Frederick Burdette, a substantial manufacturer of reed "cottage" organs and Anton Gottfried, another Erie church organ manufacturer, recognized in music circles as the leading artist in reed and pipe work, and inventor of pipes resembling tones of orchestral instruments.

The Tellers Brothers — Sommerhof venture became the Tellers-Sommerhof Pipe Organ Co. and received its biggest impetus in 1918 when Felgemaker closed his factory. The infant company began fulfilling incomplete Felgemaker contracts and later became Tellers-Kent through a change of management.

Tellers made over 1,000 pipe organs

Joe gets the last strains of music from the Tellers before its dismantling in Shea's, 1968.



(20 for theatres) until its closing in 1972 when the company's heir, Herman J. Tellers, retired and sold to Lawrence Phelps and Associates. Phelps and the Durst Organ Supply Co., Inc. are the remaining pipe organ companies in Erie today, although Herman Tellers still runs an organ service company.

Many Erie churches have Tellers, but the company has instruments from coast to coast. Tellers built a pipe organ of 3000 pipes for the East Carolina State Teachers College in Greenville, N.C., and specially installed an organ in the Philadelphia Museum of Fine Arts for the 100th anniversary of the American Guild Organists in 1966. The company's most impressive and highly esteemed instrument is a three-manual, 80 rank organ in Orlando, Florida.

#### The Rescue

When ATOS member Joe Luckey pulled the Tellers organ from the Shea's theatre it was found in deplorable condition from years of idleness. The 1500 pipes were dust bins littered with aged popcorn, mice droppings and spider webs. With the aid of students from Erie's Gannon College, the organ's evacuation split it into four huge dusty piles located in the attics and basements of various college buildings around the campus. At that time, Joe decided to rebuild the Tellers and donate it to Gannon.

This first venture of Joe's into the world of theatre organ cost him only \$300 for the entire Tellers, although in the next five years he invested \$4,000 into the instrument.

The reason for the organ's varied locations around campus was so Joe could quietly procede on the organ's



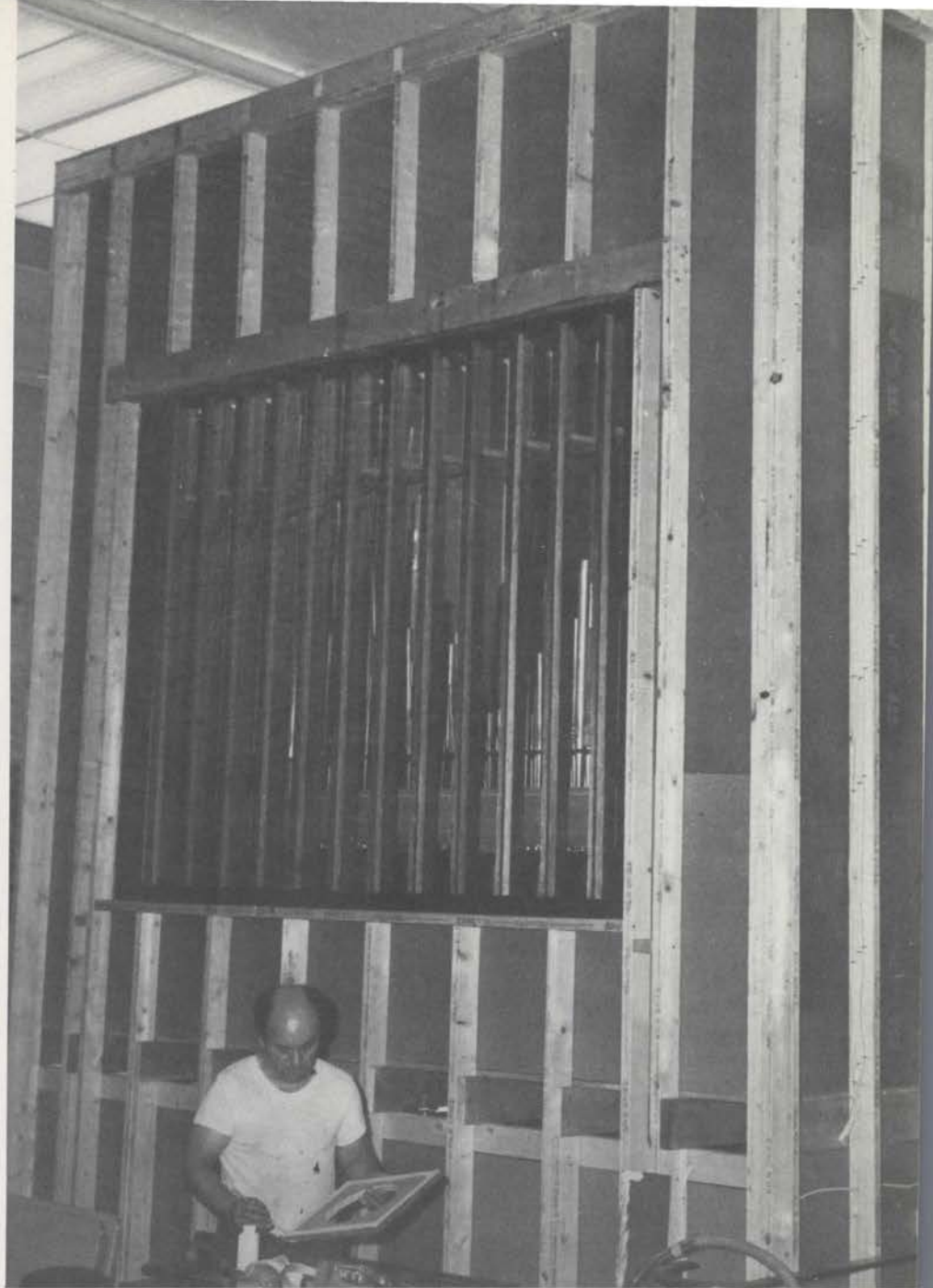
rejuvenation to the point where he could *then* divulge his work to the college. During the snowy winter of 1969, a half-year later, he secretly began cleaning the organ's xylophone, drums, chimes and marimba harp.

Later, while Gannon students rocked on the upper floors of the college's Student Union, Joe labored away in the basement for months on end cleaning 50 years of Shea's dust out of the organ's pipes. With 12 foot troughs thoughtfully loaned to him by a roof installer, Joe circulated soapy water through the different pipes with an old vacuum cleaner and ancient refrigerator evaporator pump. After one and one-half years of cleaning in his spare time he began rebuilding the Kinetic blower which produced six and one-half inches of static pressure.

Permission for Joe to set up the Tellers temporarily until a permanent site was selected came soon after ("you can't hide an organ *too* long," Joe said), and Joe chose a large classroom on the first floor of Gannon's military ROTC building. The classroom was nicknamed the "sleeping parlor" because students frequently dozed off there due to poor ventilation. The college gladly relinquished the room to the Tellers.

Over the next three and one-half years, Joe averaged four hours an evening rebuilding the Tellers in the building. He restructured the room by dividing it into two separate pipe chambers and left a work area in the center. The original Shea's swell shades were installed and a separate chamber to squelch blower noise was built. Joe had completely stripped the console in the meantime and had refinished it in white, red and gold trim. The console sat on a platform on coasters in the

"Ham and Organ". Joe plays the first notes on the Tellers in the ROTC building after long years of hard work.



Joe puts some of the finishing touches on the accompaniment chamber. Both chambers will be covered with wood paneling. Dimensions: Width — 12 feet, Depth — 10 feet, Height — 16 feet. Each chamber is divided into two levels — the lower level contains the more noisy components of the chamber, the switchstacks and relays. Each chamber has a built-in lighting system, and the relays and switchstacks are on coasters so that they may be moved around easily. Colored lights will be placed around the top of each chamber. (C. Thom Photo)

hallway, and was connected to the pipe chambers by a 75 foot main cable enabling the console to be wheeled out into a larger area for use. With the donation of wire from the local phone company, Joe somehow managed to rewire the chests while Herman Tellers, last owner of the company, rewired the console and had the reeds voiced after 30 years of idleness.

One day, in an unpretentious but anxious ceremony, Joe eagerly hooked up nine of the 24 ranks in a test run

and heard the Tellers for the first time since he dismantled it several years earlier. Describing the moment as one "big rush of blood to the head," Joe expedited his plans for an official dedication of the Tellers to Gannon College.

Concert tickets were printed for 300 persons and Joe purchased red, white and blue bunting for decoration. It was to be a festive affair, such as at Radio City Music Hall where the organ is rolled out from behind curtains, but



the floor caved in one week before the event when the blower shaft began slipping. This began a short period of the "doldrums" for Joe, who after suffering colossal disappointment and months of exhaustive labor, almost threw his hat in the ring.

Since that moment two years ago, the organ has been completely rebuilt. The straight chests were converted to unit chests for more versatility. At the start of summer 1974, permission was granted to install the Tellers permanently on the second floor of Gannon's former library in "The Commons", a cultural room dedicated to the arts. With the desire to have a genuine theatre organ, Joe retired the original three-manual Tellers, and bought a two-manual Marr and Colton horseshoe console, once painted fire-engine red and from a theatre in Wyandotte, Michigan.

The two-manual standard unified Marr and Colton console has six tremolos, five presets on each manual, main and solo swell shoes and a crescendo pedal. Nine of the 24 original Tellers ranks are split up into two separate pipe chambers, each 12 feet wide, 10 feet wide and 16 feet tall. Within the chambers the pipes are elevated on a floor four feet above the ground to leave a section underneath for the noisier switchstacks and relays. Each chamber is insulated with fiberglass and has masonite walls. The swell openings are each six by eight feet and employ the original Shea's shades, each with 12 shutters.

The main chamber contains the Salicional, VDO, Celeste and Flute. The solo chamber has the Tibia, Clarinet, Diapason, Vox Humana and Tuba. Joe plans to add the Cornopian, Gamba, Gamba Celeste, Open Diapason and Oboe Horn at a later date. Wind at five and six inches is supplied by Bobco blowers.

Joe's five year relationship with the Shea's Theatre organ will come officially into function early this winter. His one man persistence over the years vis-à-vis the Tellers, will bring pleasure to Gannon College students (an organ club is already in the offing) and to Erie citizens wanting a renaissance in theatre organ. Joe envisions his organ being used for background music for campus mass, weddings, parties, silent movies and for concerts by theatre organ musicians on circuit tour. The Gannon College officials are overwhelmingly pleased. After all, it is rare

of a man, even a maintenance man, to devote his time, energy and meager salary to an organ — and then give it away. Joe's generosity is based on the saying he mutters daily, "Even the little guy can do his share." □



*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.*

**ROSEBUD**, Lee Erwin playing the "Fox-Capitol Wurlitzer Pipe Organ." Angel No. S-36075 (also on cartridge and cassette tape). Available at music stores.

Ever since Burt Bacharach won an Academy Award with the most achronistically inept movie score we've

ever heard (modern jazz to background "Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid" — in the 1870's!), this reviewer has been suspicious of the whole "Oscar" nonsense, particularly when the excellent and descriptive Elmer Bernstein score for "True Grit" was largely ignored at that time. The Academy did it again this year by awarding arranger Marvin Hamlisch an "Oscar" for cueing "The Sting" with someone else's music. Yet we can be thankful to Hamlisch for rediscovering the talents of Scott Joplin, whose musical contributions to Musical Americana go far beyond the "rag".

Because the demand set by the popular film emphasizes "ragtime," the more mature works of Joplin (a ballet and two operas) must wait until the reborn "rag" craze subsides; for the moment the rags lead the popularity parade. Yet producer Patti Laursen has avoided a parade of rags, realizing their limited range and construction could produce an undesired monotony. So only six of the ten tracks are Joplin tunes, and these are not all rags. Lee has wisely drawn from the empathetic works of Kerry Mills, Eubie Blake and Harry Guy for variety and contrast. Joplin's tunes are *Rosebud* (a two-step), a group of *Original Rags*, *Solace* (a Mexican serenade), *Chrysanthemum* (an intermezzo), *Stop-Time Rag* and *Eugenia* (a slow march). Sandwiched between these gems are Mills' march, *Whistling Rufus*, Eubie Blake's *Chevy Chase*, Guy's *Echoes From the Snowball Club* and the familiar sounding *At a Georgia Camp Meeting*, a delightful two-step by Kerry Mills which sounds as though it should have been one of Stephen Foster's upbeat tunes.

Lee Erwin's performance of the tunes is most expressive. He avoids any



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hint of the "mechanical reproduction" style so often evident when ragtime is heard, and is generous with applications of expression. His choice of combinations does much to enhance the old tunes, which have both nostalgic and contemporary values. Miss Laursen advises us that *Rosebud* is developing into the more popular of the two platters Lee cut on Dick Kline's 4/28 composite Wurlitzer (the Washington DC Fox Capitol plus the Greenburg (Pa.) Manos theatre organs, and then some) at the same time he recorded *Sound of Silents* reviewed in the August issue. If one must make a choice, we prefer *Sound of Silents*, mainly because the film music contained is more our cup of julep than is ragtime; yet we must admit that Lee has done a masterful job of adapting piano-oriented ragtime stylings to the theatre organ.

Recording, as might be expected of quality-conscious Angel, is excellent and our review pressing has an extremely quiet surface. Jacket notes reveal much information about the composers and re-iterate Lee's bio. Good show, Angel!



Lee Erwin at Dick Kline's 4/28. 'Lee in rags.'  
(Angel Photo)



Jonas Nordwall.

(Nakaharapic)

**JONAS IN AUSTRALIA.** Jonas Nordwall playing the 4/21 Wurlitzer in Moorabbin Town Hall, Moorabbin, Victoria. Released by Gamba Records, No. JN-103 (stereo) Available at \$6.00 postpaid (add \$1.50 foreign) from Bill Peterson, 4993 S.E. 30th Ave. Apt. 98, Portland, Oregon 97202.

Jonas Nordwall is a fast-rising young organist, known to enthusiasts through his previous recordings, concerts, west coast Home Organ Festival appearances (for Rodgers) and stints at the Portland "Organ Grinder pizzeria." During a 15-concert 1974 Australian concert tour, Jonas somehow found time to record this album.

The instrument was moved from its original installation in the Melbourne State theatre to its permanent home in nearby Moorabbin Town Hall by the Theatre Organ Society of Australia in 1969, and, if this recording is exemplary, the group has done a remarkably good job. In its new home the 4/21 sounds massive in full ensemble and delicate in low-volume closeup perspective. The hall appears to have considerable natural reverb (unless echo was added later).

Jonas opens with an up-tempo *Music, Music, Music* which includes some beautifully executed fingered glissandos; continues with a somber and lovely *The Way We Were*, then to the tune of the hour, Joplin's *The Entertainer*. Next it's a somewhat simply played *In My Solitude* with a lively *Cracklin Rose* to close side I.

Side II opens with Dinicu's fast, furious and Roumanian *Hora Staccato* (sic) then goes into a *Jesus Christ Superstar* medley of four selections.

We've heard *Superstar* damned as sacrilege and praised as a worshipful masterpiece since it first appeared on US stages a few years ago. There's no denying the music is interesting even when divorced from its context, and some of Jonas' most enticing orchestration is reserved for the medley. *Herod's Song* gives the villain a burlesque comic's musical portrait. The arrangement and registration of *I Don't Know How To Love Him* are especially lovely. *Everything's All Right* and *Superstar* round out the selection.

Jonas' performances are topnotch throughout. The organ sounds good as recorded. Surface hiss is audible and there are a few more surface pops during soft passages than we've come to expect. There is one other "pressing" problem; on side I the inside cut comes extremely close to the record center. This so compresses the modulation that needle tracking (and distortion) may become a problem. In the case of our review pressing, there was a tendency for the stylus to jump grooves until we weighted the pickup head with a penny. Distortion remained minimum. Higher compliance pickups may not encounter this problem. All of this affects perhaps two minutes of one selection (*Cracklin' Rose*), so our complaint is a small one. In all, it's a well-done recording, with the playing quality being somewhat ahead of technical considerations.

**OPENING NIGHT,** Frank Rossi playing the Barton 3/10 plus in the Royal Oak (Michigan) theatre. No. MVX-1015 (stereo). Available postpaid at \$5.99 (add sales tax where applicable) from Multivox Productions, Box 2060, Fort Dearborn, Michigan 48123.

Although Frank Rossi is a new name on the national horizon, he is well known in his home area (Detroit) as a teacher and concert artist. He got interested in theatre organ by one of those lucky twists of fate; as a boy he mowed famed Don Miller's lawn and heard the maestro practicing. This album is dedicated to the memory of Don Miller.

The instrument is a 3/10 with some ranks added during the restoration by Motor City Chapter members. 1974 ATOS conventioners heard it played





Frank Rossi. Good first try.

by Rex Koury to accompany College.

Frank opens his program with an energetic and individual styling of Walter Donaldson's *You*, then changes to a reflective mood for an understated *Haunted Heart* with especially lovely strings featured. He takes a novel approach to Gershwin's *S'Wonderful*, too. After an intriguing and offbeat intro he plays the first chorus in ballad style, then the rhythmic chorus with a somewhat raucous Kinura dominating the registration. Side I closes with a Deep South medley full of the magnolias and moonlight which might cause a Millie Alexander to wave her confederate flag. Frank revitalizes such ancient chestnuts as *My Old Kentucky Home*, *Carry Me Back to Old Virginia* and *Beautiful Dreamer* with sometimes overlong but lovely harmonic treatments (get that pedal line during *Dreamer*). For some unexplained reason, this set is prefaced with an unrelated intro which is very reminiscent of Debussy's *Girl With the Flaxen Hair* (which probably accounts for our thought of Millie Alexander). Show tunes are represented by Cole Porter's *From This Moment On* and Richard Rodgers' *Blue Room*, played with imagination but no key changes. A best forgotten Irving Berlin tune entitled *Araby* (with frequency-pitch problems) is linked with *Blue Skies* which comes off better, then to a novel setting for *Dancing Tambourine* which brings in most of the pitched percussors. The closer is a slambang *Ritual Fire Dance*. For this one Frank plays all the notes but he doesn't seem to be as much at home in this idiom as he is while weaving tone clusters of rich harmony around ballad melodies. This recording indicates that Frank Rossi is a young man to watch; his initial recording reveals much promise, especially in arranging skills.

The organ sounds best when Frank is playing on solo, medium or light combinations. There is a certain harshness apparent during heavy registration which is not the fault of the recorders. We noticed it also "in person" during the convention show, a middle range roughness which an experienced voicer could make right.

The recording is well miked, but in dubbing some tracks came through in the grooves stronger than others. There is also a decided surface hiss on the review pressing throughout. These are not major faults and the opportunity to hear the fresh and different Rossi approach to the instrument minimizes them even more.

**50 SONGS OF RALPH CARMICHAEL**, played by Fred Bock on the Whitney Studio 4/34 Wurlitzer Morton. Two-record stereo set R3191 available from Heart-Warming Records, 1625 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn. 37202 (Box 2307, Vancouver, B.C. for Canadians). \$5.98 postpaid (2-record set).

It's been some time since we've received a recording played on Lorin Whitney's Glendale, Calif., studio organ, an instrument recorded by such greats as Don Baker, Ann Leaf, George Wright, Eddie Dunstetter, Jesse Crawford and Buddy Cole (in ensemble), to name a few.

Composer Ralph Carmichael has been a Hollywood studio pop arranger-conductor for many years,



Fred Bock. Holy but understandable.

having worked with many of the top recording stars, among them Nat "King" Cole, a cooperation which produced some of Cole's best sellers. There's another side to Ralph Carmichael; he's a deeply religious man. It comes quite naturally; he's the son and grandson of men of the cloth. During his lifetime he has composed scores of hymns, many of them touched by the pop music which is his profession.

Organist Fred Bock has collected and arranged fifty of Carmichael's hymns for mainly theatre organ style presentation. Although Bock is a church organist, there's nothing missing from his pop touch. Those who enjoy the Brad Braley-Irma Glen-Lorin Whitney-Paul Mickelson style of playing sacred music with theatre organ registration and phrasing will enjoy the playing of Fred Bock; his variety of registration is a joy. Because the tunes are totally unfamiliar (unless one is a Carmichael addict), there is little in the music or its presentation to identify it as sacred music. So, listeners who can't stand hymn tunes played pop style, or who don't like hymns period, can listen to this two-record set simply as theatre organ music. The selections are uncomplicated (although Fred's harmony is often complex) and Fred makes full use of the 4/34's array of voices. To get all 50 tunes on four sides, Fred had to keep selections short. His editing has been done with taste; he gives the most time to the most interesting tunes. Those who think this type of thing may add up to Dullsville underestimate the quality of Carmichael's compositions and Bock's talent for making them interesting. While some may prefer to think of them as silent film cues (which many of them could be), for listeners who like hymns, here are 50 new and different ones. The words for every tune are printed on the jacket.

Fred Bock is fairly new to the theatre organ scene but he's been associated with music all his life. More than 300 of his compositions have been published, and, like Ralph Carmichael, he arranges music for records, TV and movies. He's also president of Gentry Publications and holds offices with ASCAP and the Choral Conductors' Guild. We look forward to reviewing his first pop organ record, which hasn't been miked yet.

Recording of the Carmichael tunes is first rate. And the price is right.



## CHRISTMAS RECORD

**I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS**, Bill Langford playing the 3/13 mostly-Wurlitzer in Ye Olde Pizza Joynt, San Lorenzo, Calif. No. DO 1407, stereo. Available at \$5.95 post-paid from Doric Records, Box 282, Monterey, Calif. 93940.

This collection of nineteen Christmas tunes arrived too late for a complete review, but a single hearing makes nothing but good impressions. Bill Langford has been the staffer at the grand daddy of all pizzerias for many years and he knows his instrument cold. His musicianship is first rate. He also rates an "A" for the imagination demonstrated in the treatments of the yule tunes. Most amazing of all is the miking of an instrument with its percussions spread all over the walls and ceiling, some pipework, too. Recorder Frank Killinger has somehow made a rather tight and compact installation come through in big hall perspective. As for the selection of tunes, all the old chestnuts are there, both the popular standards and the traditional ones. However, it's not so much the material as it is Bill Langford's arrangements. He extracts a lot of variety from a well-balanced 3/13.



C.A.J. Parmentier, Ray Bohr and Leroy Lewis discuss the Salute to Ray Bohr held at the Radio City Music Hall November 10, celebrating Ray's 27th anniversary at the Music Hall. Ray is a Charter Member of ATOS.  
(Victor Parmentier Photo)

### — THE PLUG-IN CORNER —

**FROM THE TOP**, Don Lee Ellis playing the Hammond Concorde. Stereo DLP-1504. Available at \$5.50 postpaid from Don Lee Productions, Box EH, Garden Grove, Calif. 92642.

Those who attended the 1968 ATOS convention will recall the young man who entertained at the then new Hammond X66 during the banquet held in Cocoanut Grove of the Los Angeles Ambassador hotel. Don had the "git up and go" to face that mob of pipe lovers with a mere Hammond, and he acquitted himself well. We've learned much about Don Lee since then, particularly that he is always ready to expand his musical horizons. Perhaps that explains why he sought and got a pipe concert, playing for the LA chapter of ATOS on the 4/37 Kimball in the Wiltern theatre early this year. It was well received, as was his concert at the 1974 Home Organ Festival.

Here, Don Lee is right at home, entertaining on a Hammond. Because he is also a talented vocalist, one side of this disc is devoted to vocal solos with the organist accompanying himself for *Help Me Make it Through the Night*, *For the Good Times*, *Sunny*,



Don Lee Ellis

*Playground in My Mind* and *Misty*.

The other side is purely instrumental and Don Lee quickly establishes himself as able in the jazz variations dept. He makes effective use of the Concorde's battery of re-iterators without letting them dominate. Phrasing is good and he uses most all of the registration possibilities on the instrument, including realistic tonal percussion effects. Most of the time he is a very sensitive player but occasionally he lets things slip into those 1940's "Ethel Smith syndrome" effects for momentary "flash," which we predict Don Lee will outgrow.

Instrumental tunes are *Cabaret*, *Yellow Days* (with automatic rhythm), *Long Ago and Far Away*, a *Satin Doll* with intriguing melodic variations, a haunting *Stella by Starlight* and a sometimes Boogie-Woogie *St. Louis Blues* with ear-catching "rides." The pedal line has interesting patterns throughout the side. Good pop entertainment values. □





# LETTERS

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

Address: P.O. Box 1314  
Salinas, Calif. 93901

Dear George:

Today I received the very fine August, 1974, THEATRE ORGAN magazine. Any organization would be proud to have such a professionally executed journal. The fact that it is done with largely volunteer labor makes it even more remarkable.

The attractive listing of "Hall of Fame" organists on page 43 advertises a shameful condition within the ATOS. Admittedly it is very difficult to list qualities that the "Organist of the Year" or "Hall of Fame" organists should have. However the name of an exceptionally well-known theatre organist is conspicuous by its absence from the roster.

This man's name is George Wright. Can anyone explain why another year should pass without ATOS officially recognizing his extraordinary role in the development of the theatre organ?

Your truly,  
David G. Schutt

Dear Sir:

I found the comments of your record reviewer on Lee Erwin's "Sound of Silents" disc performed on the Dick Kline 4/28 Wurlitzer quite interesting and it shows he obviously listened to the recording in considerable depth.

The discussion of the "soundtrack" for Wings, however, does prompt me to toss in my two-cents worth in defense of the Erwin score for this fine film. Wings was the first organ-accompanied silent film that I ever saw, back in 1971 when the Tivoli Theatre Wurlitzer in Frederick, Mary-

land was restored. Therefore, I had no previous films with which to compare. Was not the role of the theatre organist in the golden days to provide suitable music to set the mood of the film? The idea of including a couple of old "chestnuts" as your reviewer suggests, is admirable, but to me the musical ideas of a man who has become thoroughly inmeshed with the film is a far more admirable way to put across the emotions of the story, and to be sure, this film contained much emotion! It was difficult, near the end, to suppress the lump in one's throat, a lump which was genuinely formed through the compositional genius of Lee Erwin.

I saw the film twice in one week and each time it impressed me the same way and without a note-by-note repetition of the score. Except for brief passages in film scores, I believe most of the old "chestnuts" should be reserved for a late-night sing-along or concert in a theatre. The movies are something completely different.

May Lee Erwin continue to create and I sincerely hope that more recordings like this one will soon become available.

Sincerely,  
John H. Shaum, Jr.

Dear Sir:

Before John S. Carroll collects too much flak for his lese majeste about Crawford, let me add cautiously that he may be right. A decade ago I was boasting of a 78 by Crawford, and when played before and after modern theatre organ selections the Crawford was indeed a dud. We must consider recording techniques, of course.

In 1934 as a teen, I fought parental disdain and bought a phonograph. A store had dumped its record business, turning over its pop and Red Seals to another and leaving on the shelves a lot of Victor blacks. These I could buy for 20 cents, later a dime. I got several Crawfords, as well as a couple Archer Gibsons on the Schwab instrument. I remember fondly *Valencia*, *Road to Mandalay*, *Amapola*, et al by Crawford.

Now what of White, Feibel, Dunstedter, et al? Well, Buffalo was peculiarly a Victor market. In the 1920's all the 75 cent records my parents bought were Victor, never a Columbia or Brunswick. The proximity of the Wurlitzer works may have influenced

buyers. Truth is, in Western New York, Crawford had a near monopoly in then-popular TO discs.

I heard Crawford just before WWII as I sat in the front row of Shea's Buffalo. He was indeed a showman. The Shea operation knew how to promote a showman. In memory, he was indeed a master. On shellac, his memory fades with Bohr, Foort, Wright, and many another.

These disputes can go on forever. My English correspondent was surprised at what US engineering could do with Dixon. I am content to let the legend of Crawford sleep and to buy others today.

But now Fats Waller! It is most unfortunate that the man who is known only as a pianist never got much of a hearing as to his organ records.

I have heard a mediocre musician with a beatup skating rink-and-saloon Hammond play "like Crawford." A mugging musician can fool an audience, until that audience gets home with the tapes; and then, without the personality, the sound is that of a beatup toy Hammond. Music making is not a science, but an art.

Wm. C. Kessel  
99 Center St.  
Hamburg, N.Y. 14075

Dear Sir:

The Toledo Chapter is extremely proud to be a close neighbor of Detroit Motor City and wish to add our sincere thanks for the wonderful time we all had at this greatest of all conventions.

We are so sorry to hear that our good friend Al Mason is not able to receive our thanks. He helped us save our chapter in one of our critical times and we will miss his advice. Watch over us Al.

Thanks again each and everyone at Motor City for inviting us into your homes and letting us hear the great artists on the proud theatre organs and the after hour pleasures of the rising stars on the electronics. The audience on the boat ride was treated to another fantastic climax of hearing continuous entertainment on the Rodgers. Each performer had something special to offer and was appreciated by all. The Notable Nineteenth is still Glowing in our hearts.

Sincerely yours,  
Helen Sherman  
Secretary of Toledo Chapter



# A ROBERT MORTON PLAYS AGAIN

Editor's Note: We are indebted to Mr. William J. Sangeleer for information on a theatre and its pipe organ; the Loew's State Theatre in Providence, R. I., and its 4/20 Robert Morton.



The theatre was a deluxe 3800-seat house which boasted the finest of everything to please the moviegoer of the day. At 10 A.M. on Saturday, October 6, 1928, the theatre opened, showing the Metro Movietone picture *Excess Baggage* with Josephine Dunn and Ricardo Cortez, followed by several short feature, cartoons and newsreels. First-day attendance was 14,000 with the first ticket going to a 14-year-old boy, Robert E. Reilly. But the one item which really made the show a total success was the 4-manual, 20-rank Robert Morton organ. This instrument has had a very interesting history.

After the sound motion picture had limited the organ's use to presentations, it was used on a regular basis, nevertheless. However, the great hurricane of 1938 succeeded in filling the theatre, as well as most of the city of Providence, with four to twelve feet of seawater. This damaged the console and blower, but both were refurbished and returned to service later that year. However, the organ was used only occasionally.

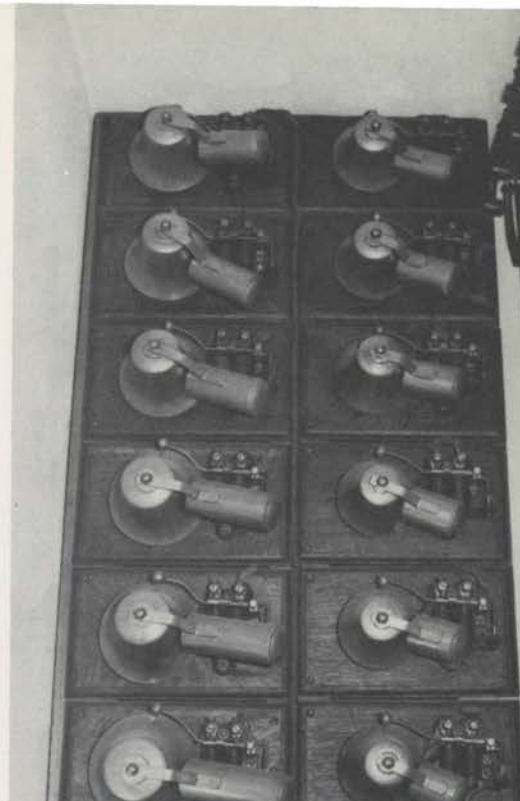
In 1955, another hurricane almost sealed the fate of this noble instrument. Because the electricity was knocked out, the console elevator remained in the down position as the entire orchestra pit filled with seawater, submerging it and the blowers again. This time, however, the theatre decided to leave the organ to its fate and made no effort to repair it. The years passed and finally on February 9, 1963, the organ was obtained by Mr. Pat Fucci of Waltham, Mass.

Mr. Fucci has faced many problems, both technical and otherwise. First, a key desk had to be located and after much searching, a 3-manual Wurlitzer burned out console shell was

obtained from a Philadelphia theatre. Sectioning and expanding followed in order to allow the console to accept the four new manuals and the original 216 Robert Morton stopkeys. Next came the rebuilding and releathering of pipe chests and reservoirs, some rewiring, a lot of cleaning, and some testing and repair. Replacing the original 25 HP, 5800 CFM blower is an arrangement using one 10 hp motor with blower and one 7½ hp motor with separate blower to assure the necessary wind pressures. At the present time, some of the percussions and the 16' extensions of three ranks must still be added before the organ is fully operational.

Also added to the original instrument is a piano which will be playable at the organ console. Another addition is a set of Moller electric Swiss bells. These were rescued from the organ of the University Theatre in Cambridge, Mass., before it was dismantled for parts. These bells are believed to be the only set known.

The nearly completed instrument reposes in the basement of Mr. Fucci's sprawling ranch house. All pipework is located to the rear of the console which is located in the center of the



Moller electric Swiss bells. Robert Morton chimes are on the extreme right.

(Sangeleer Photo)

basement. An area capable of seating 125 persons is to the front of the console. On occasion, people have been standing on the lawn, trying to see the organist while listening to the beautiful music which comes forth from the mighty Morton.

In Mr. Sangeleer's words, "Even in its unfinished condition, this organ is one of the finest examples of the theatre unit organ, built by the Robert Morton Company. It is also a tribute to the skill and ambition of the man who rescued and restored it, Mr. Pat Fucci." □

Mr. Pat Fucci at the console he built.

(Sangeleer Photo)







# BOOK REVIEW

THE RTOS STORY  
by F.G. Hibbard

A book published to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Rochester Theatre Organ Society. Available from RTOS, 1732 Hudson Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14617. Size: 11"x11", 32 pages, price \$3.50 postpaid.

On occasion of the tenth anniversary of RTOS a book has been published which traces the history of this independent, dynamic group and divulges their future plans, some of which have already been implemented.

The book contains 24 pages of text, carefully selected photos, diagrams, plus dramatic semi-transparent inserts which trace the history of the group as well as their famous project, the 4/22 Wurlitzer opus 1951. The history of the organ in the RKO Palace, Rochester, to the Auditorium Theatre is fully documented, both in text and photos.

Much of the work producing the brochure was done by students and graduates of the Rochester Institute of Technology, School of Printing, College of Graphic Arts and Photography.

The finished product indicates that RIT turns out excellent artists and craftsmen. The color reproduction is among the best ever encountered.

The entire document is very well laid out in every respect. It is divided into six categories; History, Entertainment, Educational, Technical, Administration, and Future. Each subject is fully covered. The only thing found missing from the effort is a stolist of the organ.

The 1100 members of RTOS (A high percentage are ATOS members) can be proud of the success of their group as shown in this book. They can also take pride in the knowledge that Wurlitzer Opus 1951 is one of the few theatre pipe organs available that is considered to be in "concert condition".

All theatre organ enthusiasts should consider purchase of the RTOS Story as a handsome addition to their library. □



# CHAPTER NOTES

## ALABAMA

Charlie Cox was back in Alabama once again for a special program for the chapter members during the September meeting. Charlie began his musical career in Huntsville, Alabama and continued his studies while in service at the Air Force Band School in Washington. From there he was with Special Services of the Air Force in the Far East. After discharge from the Air Force, he came to Birmingham in 1955 and served as organist for the Alabama Theatre for 14 years. He is now part owner and manager of Keyboards, Inc. in Orlando, Florida.

He was a delight to Birmingham audiences, being known for his showmanship as well as his organistic abilities, and he has certainly lost none of it. He played a well rounded program and we were impressed with his tasteful use of the percussions, bringing to our minds what the theatre organ was



Larry Donaldson heads the Alabama work crew.

originally meant to do — replace an orchestra.

The October program was open console with the following taking turns: Connie Ann Parson, Riedel West, Larry Rodrigues, Dan Liles, Alleen Cole, Gloria Ferguson, Sandra



Only part of the Alabama Chapter work crew.





Charlie Cox at the Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer.



Thomas Hatter is the official photographer for the Alabama Chapter.

Cavnar, Evelyn Jones, Travis Cavnar, Ray Straits, Ralph Ferguson, Norville Hall and Jay Mitchell.

It has been fun during the last two years to watch the progress of each one at the console.

As our second year as a chapter draws to a close, it seems appropriate to devote some space to those who have made it possible to have an organ to enjoy. First, the work crew. Larry Donaldson has faithfully and conscientiously headed up the crew. He is a young Birmingham man now living in Copperhill, Tenn., and has to drive many miles for the once a month work sessions. No one knows how many other times he spends almost all night working on special problems. He has been assisted by Joan and Lee Aured,

Frank Barksdale, Mildred Baucom, Connie and Connie Ann Boyd, Sandra and Travis Cavnar, Don and Alleen Cole, Betty Crowe, Ellis Dunnavant, Charles Durham, Billy Evans, Beatrice and Ola Fee, Norville, Hall, Jim Harris, Paul Houston, Evelyn and Frank Jones, Danny Kiel, Dan Liles, Jay Mitchell, Cecil Prescott, Bruce Rockett, Joyce and Ray Straits, Oran Truss, and Riedel West.

In addition to all the people who

have put in time on the organ, we would also like to mention Jim Ferguson who has printed our programs each month, giving the added touch of professionalism to the programs.

Last, but certainly not least, is Thomas Hatter. Mr. Hatter has furnished all the pictures for Chapter Notes.

With our membership of approximately only 50 families, it is easy to see that most of them are *working* members. Can anything other than a bright future be predicted for the Alabama Chapter?

ALLEEN COLE

## ALOHA

Honolulu, Hawaii — Theatre organ restoration expert Merle Bobzien is setting a record. Starting last August he removed windlines, cables, relays, chests and the console of the 4/16 Robert Morton pipe organ in Honolulu's Hawaii Theatre for repair and renewal. The organ is expected to be playing again in November.

Assisting him was a small nucleus of Aloha Chapter members who made the acquaintance of rubber cloth, polyon, PVC-E glue and preformed Perflex pouches. Especially adept at re-leathering with the new man-made materials were the girls who found the glue somewhat deadily on finger nails and manicures.

Merle belongs to the new school of



Workers at Hawaii Theatre project. (Left to right) Scott Bosch, Jim Chandler, John De Mello and work chief Merle Bobzien.



organ maintenance men who no longer have faith in the durability of animal products and hope to eliminate leather and glue with plastic and casein base glue. On the mainland such animal products have suffered severe deterioration as the result of polluted atmosphere.

Hawaii is fortunate that it has clean air and the old red Morton leather showed only the ravages of 52 years of hard use, not the decay of chemically laden air. More heartbreaking was discovery of termite damage in wind trunks, relay stacks and regulators.

Hawaii has two kinds of these pests, "dry wood" termites and "ground" termites. The former swarm twice a year on a warm still night, mate, lose their wings and find their way into wood nests. The ground variety devotes its life to eating underground utility cables, roots and wood foundations.

The 52 year old Hawaii Theatre is a haven for "dry wood" termites and its owner, Consolidated Amusement Company, has waged an almost losing battle against them. Tenting and gassing of the pipe chambers was done since liquid exterminators would injure organ parts. Earlier maintenance crews had used Paris Green (arsenic) in the console and chests.

Since the console and chamber are above ground level, ground termites are no problem.

Merle Bobzien of Burbank, California, is on the staff of Dick Stoney, who heads maintenance of the Los Angeles Elks huge Robert Morton. Merle felt at home with Hawaii's Morton components as the factory had achieved standardization and consistency.

Since the theatre opens at 9:30 A.M. and runs until after midnight, Merle had the console moved back stage where he could work on it without disturbing audiences. Aloha Chapter's club room in the theatre has been converted to a workshop where parts, materials and supplies are spread about.

The chapter is fortunate to be able to employ Merle on this partial restoration project. His professional techniques and skills are very evident in the completed work.

Of great help was chapter member Richard Harger of Pipe Organs Hawaii (Harger and Schoenstein) who furnished parts, supplies and machinery to facilitate Merle's work. Not to be



Policeman on duty gives an assist to Scott Bosch.



Al and Claire Watson re-working console parts.



Al Van Der Woerd concentrates on Robert Morton pneumatics.



Merle Bobzien is not daunted by the dismantled Robert Morton console.

forgotten is Frank Sherwood of both Aloha and Los Angeles Chapters who found and recommended Merle at the recent Detroit ATOS convention.

JOHN JENKINS

## BEEHIVE

Pipes and Pizza, located at 4400 South State Street in Salt Lake City, was the setting for a delightful chapter meeting on October 13. The hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Christensen, were most helpful and accommodating. After a short meeting members were invited to play the Wurlitzer. The organ, setting and decor has really made Pipes and Pizza a favorite place for the young and old of Salt Lake.

Silent movies are run giving many people who are unfamiliar with this type of entertainment a chance to enjoy them.

Mr. Christensen has purchased another pipe organ and will probably install it in another building in the Provo area. He has sold the Arcade Theatre and is installing the pipe organ from that theatre in his home. He and his wife are truly theatre organ enthusiasts and the chapter members wish to thank them for their many hours of time and expense they have put forth to bring this type of entertainment to the people of Salt Lake.

During the months of September and October the theatre fans were treated to the delightful music of Lyn Larsen, David Reese and Frank Stitt, all ATOS members in their areas. Lyn performs on a pipe organ in Phoenix, David in Martinez, Calif., and Mr. Stitt in the Bay Area. These members played dinner concerts, David and Frank played for dance parties also at the Organ Loft.

MAXINE V. RUSSELL

## CEDAR RAPIDS

Our Fall season opened on September 15 at the Cedar Rapids Paramount with Walter Stronjy. As CRATOS Chairman Ray Snitil described the program, "the sound of violins, oboes, clarinets and other instruments were heard tuning up." Some sharp raps by the conductor on his podium (really the wood block) brought the unit 'orchestra's' attention together to play the rousing opener *Cabaret*. Other highlights of Walt's program were *My Hero*, *Stormy Weather* and *My Vision* which was composed by his former teacher,



Chicago Stadium organist, Al Melgard. This was Walt's second appearance for our group, the last two years ago. In that time he has grown up – literally and musically. Stronjy will be remembered as the student of Melgard's who shared the program at the Chicago Stadium during the 1969 ATOS Convention.

Guests for the morning concert included Len Clarke, advertising manager of THEATRE ORGAN magazine, Greg Filardo, director of Dairyland Chapter in Milwaukee, Richard Sklenar, editor of VOX CATOE and the artist's parents.

In the afternoon Chairman Ray Snilil held a business meeting and reported on the Detroit ATOS Convention. Slides of the organs, theatres and artists were shown. Incidentally, we are proud to report that Chariman Snilil headed a delegation of 21 members of CRATOS chapter in attendance at the Convention.

Thursday, October 3, marked the fourth Silent Movie Nite at the Capitol Theatre, Davenport, Iowa. Not only was a capacity crowd happy but so was Rex Koury, the performing artist. He opened the program with *On A Wonderful Day Like Today* as the three-manual Wicks organ rose from the orchestra pit on its recently installed Barton lift. Rex then proceeded to play virtually every style of music from *Ain't She Sweet* to *Aquarius*. Literally pulling out all the stops, he demonstrated the organ's versatility as he constantly switched registrations. The first half of the program concluded with a sing-along.

Koury opened the second part of the show with the Buster Keaton film "College." During the movie, Rex demonstrated his great talent accompanying the silent action: molding the music to the scene, adding distinctive bits of humor, doing what is known as close cueing. "That's an attempt as much as possible to catch every bash or sound and reproduce it on the organ, being particularly true in slapstick things," according to Rex.

Koury capped the evening by playing his most famous composition, the theme from "Gunsmoke." This was Rex Koury's second appearance for CRATOS having played for us at the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Paramount on November 8, 1973.

Sometime before the Koury show, Treasurer Bob Beck's wife, Carolyn, wrote to Martin Wick, president of



Organist Rex Koury poses with Martin Wick, president of Wicks Organ Co. The console is a 3 manual Wicks Theatre Organ, Capitol Theatre, Davenport, Iowa. (Bill Lamb Photo)

Wicks Organ Co., whose father John was the builder of the organ installed at the Capitol in 1928, inviting him to be a guest at the Koury concert. Mr. Wick, his wife Barbara, and his vice-president George Gibbons, all of Highland, Ill. flew to Davenport on Thursday so that they could attend the evening concert. Looking around the Capitol, Wick said, "It's such a nice thing to see an old theatre kept up like this. And what I like to see is people taking a neglected old theatre pipe organ and putting it back in good condition." Wick displayed expert knowledge of the intricate interior workings of organs but one of his observations is humorous. "You know, each pipe is like a person. It has toes, feet, an upper lip, a lower lip and a body. But it's much easier to get along with. It doesn't talk back."

BYRON F. OLSEN

## CENTRAL INDIANA

A long awaited event became a reality on Sunday, September 8, when the CIC-ATOS had its first meeting at Manual High School in Indianapolis. After many months and many hours of hard work and patient endeavor under the direction of Carl Wright, the 2 manual, 10 rank Louisville Uniphone, installed in the school's auditorium, was finally ready for performance.

Carl, who is the manager of Manual High School's Auditorium, told the nearly 100 members and guests some of the interesting things about the history of the organ and had several excellent displays ready for the mem-

bership to view. The organ was originally installed in the Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky.

Highlighting the afternoon's activities was the dramatic presentation of a three manual Kilgen theatre console, recently acquired for the installation and made possible through the generosity of Honorary CIC-ATOS member, C.S. Ober of Indianapolis.

Carl Wright introduced the honored guests present, including Dr. Karl Kalp, superintendent of the Indianapolis Public School System, and Mrs. Kalp; Mr. Wayne Kincaid, assistant superintendent, and Mrs. Kincaid; and Mrs. Frederick Jones of Louisville, Kentucky, who was the organist at the Crescent Hill Baptist Church for 30 years when the Louisville Uniphone was located in that church. The organ is to be known as the Crescent Hill-Manual Organ.

A brief formal program was given by Larry MacPherson, Mary Drake and Ruth Kirkpatrick, CIC-ATOS members, followed by an afternoon of open console, and a chance for members to view the displays and tour the chambers.

*Autumn Leaves* might well have been the theme song for our October meeting. Approximately 40 members journeyed to Vincennes, Indiana on a beautifully warm and bright fall day. The awesome beauty of southern Indiana and the ensuing program made it a special day for remembering.

The meeting was held in the auditorium on the campus of Vincennes University. Members of the Consollar Organ Club of Evansville, Indiana joined CIC-ATOS for a most interest-



ing afternoon of organ music. The fall and early winter activities involving CIC-ATOS were announced by Tim Needler, president, and it looks like a very busy and interesting schedule coming up. Our "pipe-organing" calendar is already so full of extra-curricular activities that we may just possibly have to "squeeze" to get regularly scheduled things in too. That's almost becoming the rule – but it's fun isn't it!

Earlier reporting of Indiana related activities indicated that the Embassy Foundation had been formed to obtain and restore for civic use, the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Bob Goldstein, one of the original members of the Embassy Foundation, was on hand to bring the latest word on the Embassy situation. This group now has an option to buy this property and is going all out to obtain the necessary financing. The Embassy houses a 4/12 Page which is in excellent condition and will ultimately serve many uses in civic, community and concert endeavors. The theatre has a seating capacity of 2,800 and will be a real asset to organ enthusiasts and the public in general.

An announcement was made that Dennis James would be appearing in concert in November at the First Christian Church in Columbus, Indiana. This is an 80 rank, 4 manual Aeolian Skinner installed in the Columbus church in 1944. This will be an all sacred concert. Dennis is an accomplished organist in both classical and theatre stylings.

A welcome was given by CIC-ATOS President, Tim Needler, to the Evansville group. Milton Hammers, president of Evansville's Consollears, spoke briefly but chose to dispense with official business until another time.

Professor Richard Ertel, chairman of Vincennes University's Music Department was introduced. After a few words of welcome, he presented a delightful program on the 3 manual, 12 rank Wurlitzer theatre organ in the university's auditorium. Appropriately he started his program with *Hi Neighbor* and played a very interesting program to fully "show off" this beautiful instrument, using current selections and a medley of selections from the 30's and 40's which he titled "Salute to Tommy (Dorsey)." Professor Ertel's commentary on the organ was most interesting. It originally

was located in Birmingham, Michigan and interestingly, Bob Goldstein (Fort Wayne) had played it when it was in a private home in Michigan.

Open console time followed and all afternoon was filled with excellent organ renditions to the delight of everyone. Two things are always apparent when ATOS members get together – good organ music and plenty of good food. With both Evansville and CIC-ATOS bringing refreshments, this was an extra good meeting! We were delighted to meet the Evansville group and thank them for sharing not only their afternoon with us but also their refreshments. Hope we can do it again sometime.

RUTH D. WARD

### CENTRAL OHIO

National ATOS has granted our petition to host a Regional Convention November 7, 8 and 9 of 1975, featuring the Robert Morton at the Ohio Theatre. Details of events will be furnished as plans are developed. Reserve these dates and plan to be with us.

Our annual meeting and election of officers was held in September at Van's Music Store hosted by Fritz Saenger, owner, and featuring the Rodgers organ. Always an enjoyed treat, the Rodgers was put through its paces by many of our talented members. The annual meeting was lively with the promise of an eventful year to come in all areas of activity promoted by ATOS. Pipe dreams show promise of becoming reality with the leadership of our re-elected president, Frank Babbitt.

With thanks to Mrs. Paul Noblitt we now have an excellent nucleus for our chapter library which, with unanimous zeal has been titled the Paul Noblitt Memorial Library. We received Paul's collection of tapes, pictures and mementos – tapes being available to chapter members for copy for personal use only.

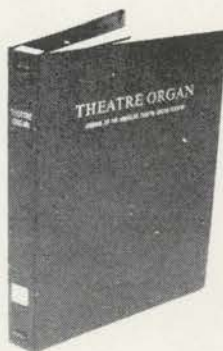
Our chapter's Palace Wurlitzer now has seven ranks playing wired to one manual.

Clarke & Greene counties in Ohio have been released from our area to permit formation of a Dayton/Springfield Chapter. We wish them every success and offer our assistance.

Ed Smith is currently adding electric relay preset action to the Ohio Morton to permit silent stop changing. A computer controlled capture system is being designed and should be in operation soon.

October found us in the rolling hills area of Somerset, Ohio, for the annual pot luck dinner meeting at the home of Ralph and Leona Charles with their Morton pipes. Kenny Winland was featured as opening concert artist followed by Lois Hays and then open console starting with Chris Phillips. It was the first time at this console for 12 year old Chris and he handled it admirably. With percussions and some pipe work exposed the organ is readily heard. In command of the soft stops was Marie Peer. We heard the beginning of a new Charles Prior, Jr. Charles has begun organ studies with Lowell Enoch, renowned artist and teacher in this area, and a previously recognized talent is budding anew with a young member. Gene Deeker of Marion, Ohio, a church organist for 28 years,

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came, saw, joined, played and conquered our appreciation of another talented member. Two long standing members we neither see or hear enough of were with us, both playing, — Lucy Shoemaker and Fred Lewis, Jr.

IRENE BLEGEN

## CHICAGO AREA

When CATOE presents Walt Strojny in his public concert debut at the Wurlitzer in the Pickwick Theatre, Park Ridge, on Dec. 12, it will conclude another active year in Chicago, "Theatre Organ Capitol of the World."

This past fall saw many CATOE events. On Sept. 8 another banquet was held at the ornate Baker Hotel, St. Charles, home of a twin console 3/10 Geneva. Les Hickory provided music for cocktails on the terrace and in the Trophy Room for dinner. Bill Benedict provided a magic lantern show of theatres and organs from throughout the country plus a sing-along, the music for which was recorded on the Montclare Theatre's Barton. A surprise arranged by Chairman Russ Joseph was the playing of the tape of Walt Strojny at the "Save the Fox" program in Atlanta. Special guests were Dr. and Mrs. William Barnes and Brother Andrew Corsini of the Theatre Historical Society.



Jim Roseveare reliving the thirties from the console of the 3/11 Wurlitzer at Downers Grove High School  
(Bill Lamb Photo)

San Francisco's Jim Roseveare was at Downers Grove North High School on Sept. 21 for a concert of his special Jesse Crawford recreations. Jim's program is unique and appeals to Crawford fans though some of the selections were not very familiar. Sharing the bill with Jim was "When So

Few Actually Play." This film made movie stars of the many CATOE members who were responsible for removing, rebuilding and reinstalling the 3/10 Wurlitzer in the high school. John Grune and Dennis Minear provided musical scoring.



Bob Coe at the modern console of the Arcada Theatre's 3/16 Geneva. A stop tab controls bells in niches which swing to and fro in the Mission style theatre.  
(Carl Anderson Photo)

Two nights of vaudeville on Oct. 18 and 19 featured Neil Foster and Jay Marshall on stage. Foster is a master illusionist and did wonders with lighted cigarettes and ordinary playing cards. Member Marshall had a pleasant line of patter, did some tricks, and made his "Lefty" talk. M.C. Doug Christensen was kept busy tying all the acts together with words while Bob Coe kept them together with music. Coe, also a member of CATOE, is a veteran of the heyday having played in Minnesota and Wisconsin theatres. Besides a sing-along with Bob's own

paradies, he accompanied "Haunted Spooks."

The most exciting event of the fall season was a "A Wonderful Wurlitzer Weekend" bus trip to CRATOS land. Cedar Rapids Area Chapter Chairman Ray Snitil hosted a bus load of CATOEs who visited seven organs. Starting with the Wicks at the Davenport Capitol Theatre, the group also visited at the home of Howard and Norma Adams to play their 3/10 Barton formerly in the Tower Theatre, Milwaukee. Jim and Bob Adams were also on hand to demonstrate the air calliope and Wurlitzer band organ. From there it was on to Muscatine, Iowa, and the Musser Museum, an old restored residence with an Estey organ with roll player and a rare glass bar harp. Then it was to the hilltop home of Dr. and Mrs. John Klein which overlooks the Mississippi River. Their 3/14 Wurlitzer is a jewel. Dr. Klein was especially gracious to have us visit as he had undergone open heart-surgery a month before. Sunday in Cedar Rapids found the group at the Iowa Theatre to see and hear the 3/14 Barton, then on to the Paramount Theatre to hear the voice of Rock Island's Channel 4 TV, Paul Adams (of the Aledo, Ill. Adamses). Paul presented a great program on the 3/11 Wurlitzer. Then it was on to the Howard Burton home for a chance to play his 2/7 Wurlitzer before the bus left for home.

It has been an active year for CATOE, filled with concert programs and monthly socials. We expect to continue next year providing more and varied events for our 275 members



The Wurlitzer band organ of the Aledo (Ill.) Adams Family was a center of attention during the CATOE fall bus trip to CRATOS-land  
(Jim Taggart Photo)



including a spring program at the Chicago Theatre.

RICHARD J. SKLENAR

### CONN VALLEY

September was highlighted in Connecticut by the appearance of Eddie Weaver at the Thomaston Opera House the nights of the 20th and 21st at the console of the Marr and Colton to play the first of the Rice Memorial Fund concerts. Being one of the country's foremost theatre organists, and especially well remembered in the New Haven area where he played at the Paramount for a number of years, Eddie was most warmly received at Thomaston and he helped the Fund off to a very good start.

On October 12 we had our first Fall meeting in Manchester at the home of Irving and Anita Twomey, where there are many marvelous music machines, all in working order, plus two grand pianos and a two-manual Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ which, with its console-controlled Ampico Grand Piano, sounds great. We have had most enjoyable meetings there before and this one was another such. Console was open the middle portion of the afternoon. The business session, which included the nomination of officers and committee chairmen for 1975, took place before dinner hour; after dinner we returned for the concert portion of the day's program.

Our evening's guest artist was K Lareau who has appeared publicly in southern New England. She gave us a nice program of new and old popular tunes including a few from the motion pictures of the 1920's. Also included was a sampler of Scott Joplin. In addition to K, the concert hour program included a presentation by Phil Stock at the console accompanying his wife who played the violin. This was out of the ordinary for us and most

delightful. Phil also led a bit of community singing with enthusiastic response from the forty-seven members and twenty-seven guests present. Many thanks to our hosts, the Twomeys, the artists, K Lareau and Mr. and Mrs. Phil Stock, and the chapter officers and committees.

### GARDEN STATE

The May meeting was a first meeting of Garden State Chapter in the Pascack Theatre, Westwood, N.J. The 2/6, soon to be an 8 rank Wurlitzer again, was played and enjoyed by the Sunday morning members who munched donuts, sipped coffee and explored the theatre and pipe chambers. The crew members Warren Brown, Roy Frenski, Dick Orr, Bob Quinn, Rick Seigle, Ed Unis and Joe Vanore deserve a great deal of credit in restoring the solo chamber which had been water damaged and pilfered over the years.

There is a special thrill and feeling of pride to be able to add another restored Wurlitzer in a theatre to the chapter's list, thus enabling a brand new group of theatre-goers to hear and experience the great sounds of theatre organ.

In June, Garden State Chapter members were invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mc Kissock to enjoy the large versatile pipe organ that Bill recently installed. This magnificent organ contains seven ranks of reeds, ten ranks of beautiful strings, two Tibias as well as five sets of tuned percussions and many non-tuned ones. Now add a four manual Aeolian Skinner draw knob console, plus a total of 32 ranks and you have "Heaven, I'm In Heaven!" This organ is so beautifully modulated it's a delight to hear. Bill and his charming wife Mary Ann were on hand to help the sixty or so

members who came and played or listened. Outside the rains and wind; inside beautiful music by Patti Germain who manipulated this monster console like the "pro" she is. Using the versatility of this organ, her program varied from classics, pop, *Rhapsody in Blue* using the piano stops and of course ending with the greatest swinging march band going.

In answer to all who did not wish the "organized" fun to stop for the summer, Chairman Irving Light, who heads up the Program committee, planned a Family Picnic in July. It was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Drake where umbrella tables clustered around their charming home and beautiful gardens. Each family brought their own picnic basket. Joe Vanore, a Physical Education teacher, supplied equipment for all sorts of sports activities, mostly enjoyed by the children. The H-100 Hammond inside never cooled with several young talented organists supplying background music. The remainder of the afternoon was spent in the large bicycle shop of the Mahns family where a nine rank pipe organ is installed. Art Tower, who accompanied many silent movies when he was young, gave a



Walter and Bob Mahns (far right) host Garden State at their Bicycle Shop.

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mini sampling of how it was done. House Organist Bob Mahns demonstrated the organ using all the sounds. His capable and very easy to listen to stylings were enjoyed. Who knows an organ better than the fellow who puts all the extra hours of loving care into it. Open console followed.

Can you imagine the chagrin on Don Plenkens face when he turned around after playing several numbers to find the large room empty? All of the members had disappeared upstairs as Mr. Walter Mahns was giving the group a tour thru his unique collection of antique bicycles, many dating back to the turn of the century. The children especially were delighted with these unusual bikes, secretly hoping they could hop up on one. The five seater from Holland caught everyone's eye. Coffee and family desserts were shared. Thus ended a pleasant day at the shore area of Wall Township and Eatontown.

JINNY VANORE

#### LAND O' LAKES

October 12 and 13 proved to be a memorable weekend for forty members of the Land O' Lakes Chapter.

Leaving Minneapolis at 8:00 A.M. on Saturday, we travelled by chartered bus to the homes of Fran and Chuck

Welch and Ruby and Reiny Delzer in Bismarck, North Dakota. These two couples have fabulous homes directly across the street from one another each containing a fine theatre pipe organ in mint condition. The Welchs and Delzers are outstanding hosts and hostesses who unselfishly turned their homes over to us for the weekend.

The Welchs 2/9 Marr and Colton is a gem with beautiful voicing, and the music room into which it speaks is very large allowing the sound to develop in a thrilling manner; solo stops as well as ensemble.

The Delzers have the 4/21 Wurlitzer which they moved directly from the Minnesota Theatre in Minneapolis to their home. This organ is also fortunate in being able to speak into a very large room and the result - "The Mighty Wurlitzer" in all its glory. Both of these music rooms have a great amount of comfortable seating for large audiences to relax and really enjoy the performances.

Semiformal programs were presented at each location by several artists including, from the Twin Cities, Clyde Olson, Karl Eilers and Alan Gerber; from Bismarck, Irene Peters; from Fargo, Lance Johnson and from Aberdeen, Bob Letherer who also accompanied two silent films. Both organs were available at all times so

that when the main action was taking place at one location there were some who slipped across the street to try their skill sans audience.

We boarded our bus at 4:00 P.M. on Sunday for the return trip. One redeeming phase of the long trip out and back was our own Don Taft who is a professional organist and accordionist. Don brought his squeeze box along and his great ability to entertain as well as produce delightful music shortened our otherwise long trip immeasurably.

We arrived back in Minneapolis at midnight a tired but happy group.

CLARENCE A. MUNSON

#### LOS ANGELES

Tom Sheen returned to the Wiltern Kimball in September for a concert of old favorites, including *Another Opening, Another Show, The Sting*, a Duke Ellington Medley, and *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*. Tom's very listenable music is featured at the Pizza and Pipes in Seattle (3/16 Wurlitzer).

Our San Diego trip was a rousing success. Casual dress was the rule. It looked like a Hawaiian holiday. The theatre organ enthusiasts in San Diego have received a charter from ATOS National for their own chapter, taking



LAND OF LINCOLN CHAPTER

*Happy Holidays*

FLOYD AND DORIS MUMM

Designers and Typesetters of "THEATRE ORGAN"

*Season's Greetings  
and a Merry Christmas  
to your group from ours...*



Toledo Chapter ATOS

**SEASON'S GREETINGS**

from  
the

**WESTERN  
RESERVE**

(all members of W.R.T.O.S., Inc.)







LA Chapter members put on the feedbag in San Diego. They wished the new San Diego ATOS Chapter well. (Zimmerman Photo)

over our former southern-most territory. We wish the new San Diego Chapter well.

Lee Erwin visited us in October and was right at home on the Wiltern 4/37 Kimball. He brought the console up with *But Not For Me*, and after a subdued interpretation of *Always* played some of the lesser known Scott Joplin works, including *Original Rag* and *The Rosebud March*. He continued with *Diane*, *Cabaret*, and a group of Gay 90's selections. He promised to bring Gloria Swanson back with him for the next concert, as

he has done in the East, for a personal appearance and showing of the Swanson picture "Queen Kelly." Lee's new albums of organ music were rapidly sold out in the lobby.

Remaining concerts at the Wiltern for this year include Lyn Larsen on Nov. 17, Bill Million on Dec. 15, and Helen Dell on Jan. 19. A unique "Senior Organists" concert is being held at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium 3/15 Wurlitzer on Dec. 2, and will feature Gaylord Carter, Arlo Hults, Ann Leaf, and others. Arlo played this same organ when it was

originally installed in the RKO Albee Theatre in Brooklyn.

Joe Koons motorcycle shop in Long Beach, the home of the famous Wurlitzer/Welte, is the gathering place for our members on Saturday nights for the now-famous jam sessions. Many of you know of Joe's recent illnesses, which have required extensive and expensive hospital treatment. Some of Joe's friends got together to present a benefit concert for Joe, to help pay his many medical bills. This was held on Nov. 3 at the giant 4-manual 61-rank Robert Morton Pipe Organ that the chapter maintains at the Elks Club here in Los Angeles. Although not an official chapter function, almost all of our 650 plus members were represented. The concert featured the most fabulous array of talent. Featured organists were (alphabetically): Candi Carley, Gaylord Carter, Del Castillo, Helen Dell, Don Lee Ellis, Romona Gerhard, Maria Kumagai, Lyle Knight, Jack Moelmann, and Gerald Nagano, with Bill Worrall as Master of Ceremonies.

MALIN DOLLINGER

#### MOTOR CITY

Our Second Sunday open house at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor on September 8 featured member Mar-



*We Hope Y'all Have  
An Extra Nice  
Holiday Season*

**NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER**

*Season's  
Greetings*

from  
All The Members Of  
**WEST PENN**



**Season's  
Greetings**

the  
Lautzenheisers  
Marvin  
Jean  
GENII

AFTER 5 YEARS . . .

**Merry Christmas**

**GEORGE & CAROLINE ALLEN**

4/28 Publix # 1 "Crawford Special" Wurlitzer  
Aeolian Duo-Art and Hardman Pianos  
Delaware Valley Chapter • Haddonfield, N.J.





(Top) Dee Werner, Linda Luce, (bottom) Doloris Frank, Ron Werner and Alice Troyan lent a nautical atmosphere to "Yankee Clipper" at the Redford. (Marjorie Allen Photo)

Marjorie Allen's slide show of 1974 Convention Highlights. Her narration was accompanied by Bud Bates at the Michigan's 3/13 Barton. Non-ATOS visitors enjoyed the show, and, as well, the open console session that followed.

September 16-17 brought Lyn Larsen back to town for a two-night engagement at the Redford Theatre. The film was the 1927 Cecil B. DeMille classic "Yankee Clipper" star-

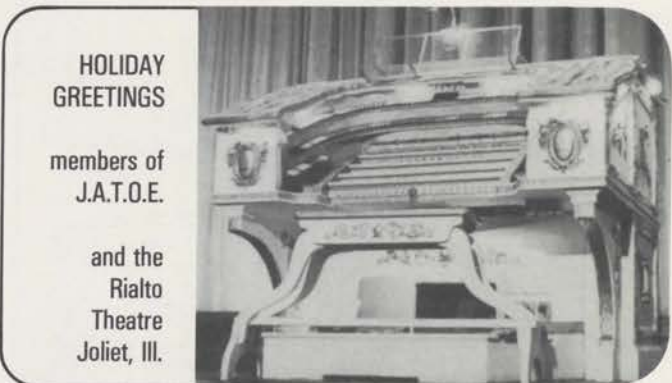
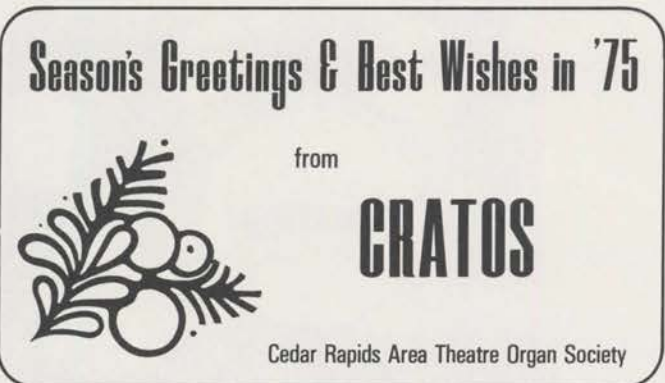
ring William Boyd. A near-capacity audience (total - 2275) enjoyed Lyn's appropriate accompaniment to the silent sea epic, the sing-along and his concert at the Redford's 3/10 Barton. Several members dressed as sailors, and one as a pirate, passed out printed programs to add to the nautical theme.

A most unique offer was made to our chapter this fall by Community Theatres, owners of the Redford Theatre. Scheduled to be closed, because

of lagging box office receipts, Community proposed that we assume the management of the Redford Theatre. Owing to the excellent relationship we have established over a period of years with Community, the theatre chain was firm in their belief that Motor City would be the best possible tenant for the building.

The Motor City Board of Directors met with representatives of Community Theatres on September 19 and the pros and cons of such an undertaking were discussed. Our board reacted favorably to the offer and presented it to the membership at a special meeting at the Royal Oak Theatre on October 13. The undertaking was unanimously approved by the members and possible uses to which the theatre could be put were discussed.

The Redford Project is a unique opportunity never before offered to an ATOS chapter and will involve the talents of a great many of our members. The theatre will not continue to operate as a neighborhood movie house under Motor City management, but will be open on a periodic basis for public presentations of silent film and organ programs. Practice time on the Barton organ will be made available to members and organ teachers will be able to offer lessons on "real pipes" to their students. The facility will also be







The Redford, new home of the Motor City Chapter.

(Dan Lockwood Photo)

available to community and civic groups who require the use of a large auditorium.

The Redford Project will be financially self-supporting and the chapter's general funds will not be obligated. Important, too, is the fact that although the Redford will become the new home of MCTOS, activities at the Royal Oak, Punch & Judy and Michigan (Ann Arbor) theatres will not be affected.

Following the October 13 special meeting at the Royal Oak Theatre, members split into three groups for a Round-Robin visit to the home installations of Chuck Harris, Mert Harris

and Bill Hays.

After hosting a very successful Noteable Nineteenth this past summer, Motor City is once more enthusiastically involved in an educational project, this time, to preserve the theatre pipe organ in its natural setting, the theatre.

DON LOCKWOOD

### NIAGARA FRONTIER

As we near the holiday season and years' end, I would like to review my first full year as press secretary for the chapter.

We have had 14 public concerts

plus receptions for each artist the night before at the Thomas studio, 12 board meetings, and 12 Silent News-reel work sessions. All members are always welcome at the above mentioned activities. There are always two or three fine organists who attend these events and they always end up in jam sessions. Add this to our annual banquet and picnic, there is plenty to write about and I am willing to admit a few omissions.

Possibly through the works of gremlins, the following was omitted from our August chapter notes. On June 19, Ray Brubacher played his first concert at the Riviera. This writer had to pass up the concert, but had the pleasure of meeting the artist at the pre-concert reception for him on June 18 at the Thomas studio.

Either through absent-mindedness or just plain old age, I have no other excuse for not reporting one of our outstanding events of the year. On July 28, we arrived at the home of Dolores and Neal McDonalds about 2 P.M. for the chapter's annual picnic. We stayed well past midnight so how could I forget? There were yard games and a swimming pool for the outdoor crowd. The piano was moved onto the patio and music was the rule until dark, at which time the piano went back inside to be joined by the organ

happy  
holidays

from  
NIAGARA  
FRONTIER CHAPTER  
and  
RIVIERA THEATRE



Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year

from all of us in  
"THE ACTION CHAPTER"

POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER



SEASON'S  
GREETINGS

from  
MARTIN M. WICK  
President, Wicks Organ Company



Greetings

from  
GEORGE  
and  
VI





for some fine duets. Many fine musicians took turns for ten hours of solid music — just too many names to mention. Luella Wickham of Syracuse made the trip and Mr. and Mrs. William Klinger of the Dairyland chapter were sightseeing at Niagara and also attended. What a crowd, what a picnic, and many thanks to our fine host and hostess — the McDonalds.

In October, we had two concerts. Harvey Elsaesser, who had made many appearances at the Riviera, along with the big band sound of Cliff Car put on quite a show on October 2. Bill Langford made his first appearance at the Riviera on October 16 and we liked what we heard.

On November 3, Dennis James and the Singing Hoosiers were scheduled at the Riviera and November 20 should find Luella Wickham back after an absence of several years. If you want to hear theatre organ music like it really was, never pass up a chance to hear Luella.

It has been a tradition that Frank Olson play our December concert. Frank is an organist's organist. He takes a back seat to no one, equally at home playing a recital in a cathedral or playing theatre organ music to standing room only crowds in a theatre. He always remembers who he is playing for and knows what the crowd likes.

Our chapter members wish you all a Merry Christmas and our best wishes for the New Year.

STEVE CROWLEY

### NOR CAL

Nor Cal Chapter is still alive and well in the beautiful San Francisco Bay Area. Our chapter report has been missing from THEATRE ORGAN for some time due to the untimely passing of Dewey Cagle who for years had written our report. Though our chapter, and ATOS'ers throughout the country, will miss Dewey, we continue in our activities so that his work will not have gone for naught. Dewey was working towards the fulfillment of a long-held dream at the time of his passing — he was chairman of the 1975 ATOS National Convention Committee. Judd Walton has taken Dewey's place, and the entire chapter is determined to make the 1975 convention the best ever, in Dewey's memory.

Our 1974 activities began in March with an open console meeting at the Capn's Galley Pizza in Santa Clara. Among the many who entertained that afternoon was Ralph Trout III. This was to be the last time that this talented musician would play for a chapter function (see Closing Chords).

In April the chapter met at the Corpus Christi Church in Oakland, home of a beautiful style D Wurlitzer owned by the Pratt family. Gordon Pratt opened the afternoon with a brief but expertly executed concert, and was followed by a number of other ATOS'ers. May was the month of a special Nor Cal function — a joint effort of the chapter with the Avenue Photoplay Society brought Dennis and Heidi James to the Avenue Theatre. These young musicians gave a truly outstanding performance. The combination of Dennis at the Wurlitzer and Heidi at the Yamaha Grand was highly praised by all those in attendance. Dennis' playing for the film "Lilac Time" was smooth, effortless and precise, and truly belied his youth.

June brought us to the magnificent music studio in the home of Bob Chaney in Lafayette. The studio contains a marvelous array of memorabilia of the early 1900's which surround the 3 manual Wurlitzer console from George Wright's studio. The pipework comes from several different Wurlitzers. The featured artist for the afternoon was chapter chairman, Warren Lubich. Hearing his playing reaffirmed our belief that some of the finest theatre organists in the country surely must reside in the "Bay Area." Following the formal concert the Wurlit-



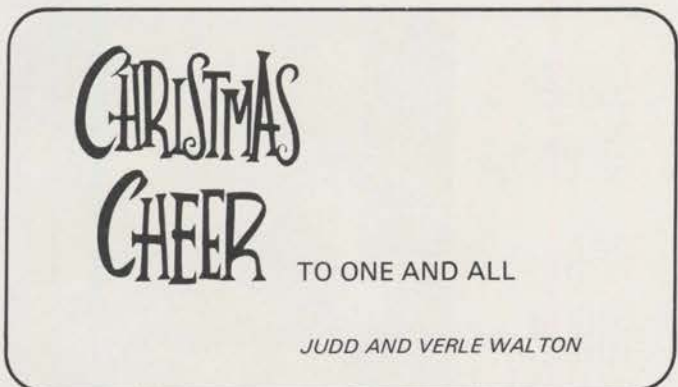
Christmas  
Greetings

CENTRAL OHIO THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



Season's  
Greetings

NOR-CAL CHAPTER  
HOSTS FOR  
1975 A.T.O.S. CONVENTION



CHRISTMAS  
CHEER

TO ONE AND ALL

JUDD AND VERLE WALTON



Season's  
Greetings

Garden State  
Theatre Organ  
Society, Inc.

GARDEN STATE THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY INC.  
A. T. O. S.





Chapter Chairman Warren Lubich with Dennis and Heidi James in front of a World War I ambulance that brought a contingent of "Theatre Organ Lovers" to the James' concert.

zer console was opened to all, as was the Conn electronic which Bob had provided for the afternoon. The Chaney organs, swimming pool and garden facilities were enjoyed by all.

Following the summer break we met in September for an open console session at one of the newer Bay Area pizza shops — the Thundermug in San Jose. Though the installation of its Wurlitzer was not yet completed, it was apparent that the Thundermug was destined to be a fine addition to

the pizza circuit. That's all for now, but don't forget San Francisco in '75!

#### NORTH TEXAS

The chapter has been "movin' on" despite Chairman Earl MacDonald's temporary confinement to the hospital for surgery on a finger he got tangled in a power saw. Mac's hand is coming along fine, and he should be able to play a full chord with it any time now. Meanwhile, the October meeting, which Mac had to miss due to the

surgery, went off fine under Lorena McKee's able guidance. A few matters of business, quickly transacted at 10 A.M. of a Sunday morning in the front rows of the Dallas Fine Arts Theatre, and we were off to a great cameo concert with Jerry Bacon as both artist and technician. Jerry has expanded this organ to a 27 rank "Bacon Special", with more additions as time goes on. Jerry played a program of pops from the theatre organ heydays and today. Before his concert, Jerry gave us an informative talk on the organ itself, including the trials and tribulations encountered in its acquisition and installation. Then, to further demonstrate the instrument's versatility, Lew Williams presented a classical concert terminating in a Bach Fugue. Lew's talents and the organ's capabilities provided a fine classical cameo.

Open console was then declared, with Pat Kohl, Mark Munzell, Jr. and several others demonstrating their talents. The theatre's opening for its regular Sunday presentations forced us to adjourn. Jerry has the organ in fine shape and is playing regular pre-movie, intermission and other concerts at the theatre. Thanks to you and the theatre management for having us over, Jerry.

By the time this appears in print, there will be several other organ

**Season's Greetings**

TO  
ALL  
OUR  
ATOS  
FRIENDS

*Jason and  
The Old Prospector*

**Land O'Lakes Chapter**

Extends  
**Holiday Greetings**  
From  
**MINNESOTA**

A  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO THE THEATRE ORGAN  
WORLD AND FRIENDS  
from  
NEW YORK  
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

**Season's  
Greetings**

**BOB  
MACK**



happenings behind us in the area. Jim Peterson advises us that the new Landmark Pipes and Pizza will be open Nov. 15. Owner Dino Santrizos has arranged for Lew Williams to play the Jim Peterson-installed 3/11 Barton two nights a week. Another Fort Worth organist, Mary Miller, will play five evenings per week. Thus, any time the chapter members want to go hear some real theatre organ music, there'll be a real organist with lots of talent playing. With the Piano, Marimba, and Sleigh Bells that Jim has added to the original, there should be lots of beautiful music out of that Barton. Thanks, Dino for bringing the Pipes and Pizza to Dallas, and for your many courtesies to the North Texas Chapter of ATOS.

Incidentally, Jim Peterson has himself acquired an 11-rank Wurlitzer for installation in his own home. There's a guy that loves his work. After spending 12 to 20 hours a day, 7 days a week getting various commercial and church pipe organs operational, he wants to put one into his own home. In fact, he's buying a bigger house just to accommodate the organ. Let us know when you're ready, Jim, and there are plenty of chapter members ready to help. The organ Jim has originated in a theatre in New Haven, Connecticut, has been in a residence in

Lawrence, Kansas, since 1950 and now will come to Fort Worth, Texas as soon as Jim can find an opportunity to go pick it up.

Along the same lines, the Mark Munzells, senior and junior, have begun modification of their home to accommodate the recently - acquired Wurlitzer for their residence. Mark Jr., a teenager, displays much organ talent, having played several concerts and cameos for the chapter demonstrating his capabilities. Mark Sr. is a craftsman and electronics specialist, teaching Mark Jr. to follow in his footsteps, so they really make a good father and son team.

The next chapter meeting, scheduled for Fort Worth's Casa Manana at 2:30 P.M. on Nov. 17, will also be history when this appears. Several chapter organists will give cameos and we're inviting guests from various other organ groups to attend. We're getting toward the 40 - member mark and hope to exceed that pretty soon.

There is considerable theatre organ activity currently. Last we heard, former Chapter Chairman John Beck's instrument was nearing completion. There are also several other theatre organs either in warehouse, or in process of installation. Wonder how Gordon Wright's Capri theatre organ is fairing. Last we heard, Gordon was

building a new home to accommodate it.

The chapter Christmas Party is scheduled to be held at the Landmark Pipes and Pizza about the time this comes out in the magazine. Contact Lorena McKee, Earl MacDonald or any other chapter member for details.

This column would certainly be remiss if it did not mention the fine chapter news letter put out through the efforts of Jerry Bacon, editor and George Stucker, printer and publisher. "THE KERULAPHONE" (what, you never heard of THAT stop?) was a great success in its' first edition, and we are all looking forward to the next issue. The gang had nothing but favorable comment any time THE KERULAPHONE was mentioned. We'll have more info for you on chapter happenings in the next issue. Meanwhile, the chapter is very much alive and moving.

JOE KOSKI

## OREGON

The chapter's September meeting was held on the 29th at the residence of Bob and Laura Burke. The artist for the day was "Rob" York, age 19. This was Rob's first concert on pipes. He was the scholarship winner of the Portland Monday Musical Society theatre organ contest. He played our

**Jimmy  
Boyce**



Season's Greetings To All!

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Dennis Hedberg, chapter chairman, at the Ingram's 2/8 Wurlitzer. (Clyde V. Neuffer Photo)



"Rob" York at the Burkes' 3/12 Wurlitzer. (Claude V. Neuffer Photo)



Ray Brubacher at the Kline Residence Wurlitzer. (M. Hurley Photo)

concert on the Bob Burke 3/12 Wurlitzer. "Rob" did fine for his first "pipes" concert and we predict this young man will go a long way.

The October 19 chapter meeting was in the form of an open house at the home of Don and Arlene Ingram. There was no actual concert, just open organ and buffet table with liquid refreshment. Gerry Gregorius led off the music with a mini-concert, followed by Dennis Hedberg, chapter chairman, Dean LeMire, Ron Johnson and Don Ingram. Several other mem-

bers tried out the Ingram 2/8 Wurlitzer including Reba Payne, Terry Robson, Connie Hodges, Bert Hedderly and Duffy. A fun time was had by all.

DON INGRAM

#### POTOMAC VALLEY

Once again our September meeting was held at the Richard Kline residence. Although the weather was uncooperative (it poured!) almost 200 members turned out. Who would willingly miss a combination of Ray Brubacher and the Kline Wurlitzer?

Ray turned in one of the finest performances the chapter has yet to hear. It was evident that this is a concert Ray wanted to do and wanted to do well. And so he did. A little extra treat for our newer members was a "sound tour" through the Kline Wurlitzer. This allowed all to more fully appreciate the tonal capabilities of the instrument. Needless to say the sound of the Kline instrument is what every organ fan dreams of.

Concertwise our next occasion was held in October at the Lautzenheiser

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residence. We had been promised a double treat of Jean at the organ and GENII (Marvin's computer) at the circuits — but they even threw in a little extra (which is typical Lautzenheiser hospitality). There was a duet featuring Jean at the piano and her



Marvin Lautzenheiser and GENII — still another love. (M. Hurley Photo)



Jean and Granddaughter — two more of Marvin's loves. (M. Hurley Photo)

granddaughter at the organ! The Lautzenheisers have just completed a new recording with Jean and GENII, *Two Loves Have I* which is now available.

Technically speaking, we have had an informative session on "do it yourself" chest construction by veteran Lem Keller, whose Keller Special Organ is a fine installation full of Lem's innovative ideas. Another session

slated for November brings forth knowledgeable Bob Oberlander discussing pipes, voicing and tonal design.

We're looking forward to two more concerts before this active year ends. The first will bring us Hector Olivera and in December, Jimmy Boyce. This will make a grand total of 13 concert meetings this year for the chapter.

In addition, our chapter has enjoyed the benefit of 11 educational sessions besides producing and adopting a new set of by-laws. Our natural enthusiasm has caused us to grow to over 300 members!

Potomac Valley Chapter members wish all of you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

ROY WAGNER

## PUGET SOUND

The Puget Sound Chapter held a home tour afternoon on Sunday, September 15. Installations visited and heard were those of Tom Endresen (a 3 manual Robert Morton from San Francisco's Empire Theatre), Bill and Mary Carson (3/17 Wurlitzer) and the Jack Becvar's 2 manual Wurlitzer from Seattle's late Blue Mouse Theatre. Each installation featured a local organist, followed by open console sessions for chapter members. A general chapter business meeting preceded the

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February 10, 11 — Casa Loma Castle, Toronto, Canada  
March 8 — Roberson Center, Binghamton, New York  
March 15 — Ohio Theatre, Columbus, Ohio

Additional Dates still available.

CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS FOR DETAILS



afternoon, held at the Haller Lake Clubhouse, home of the chapter's 3/8 Wurlitzer-Marr & Colton.

Featured artist for the October meeting was Gunnar Anderson, performing at the 2/10 Wurlitzer in the Mount Baker Theatre in Bellingham on Sunday, October 20. Preceding the concert was the final business meeting of the year, where election of 1975 officers was held. A great many of our Canadian members were present and gave further information of the program to restore the Wurlitzer in the Vancouver Orpheum Theatre, currently being used as a performing arts center.

Gunnar's concert was well attended by both ATOS members as well as a large number of the public from the Bellingham area. His program consisted of several light classics which put the tonal resources of the Wurlitzer to excellent use. Gunnar certainly used the organ as it was meant to be used, utilizing the various orchestral voices as they would be used in an orchestra. He was extremely active in music in the past, being organist for the Beverly Hills Hotel, Fox Movietone Studios, Universal Studios, as well as making many recordings of spiritual music for use aboard navy vessels in addition to playing frequent organ concerts in the

California area. He now lives in Bellingham and plays weekly organ concerts over a local radio station, utilizing both the Mt. Baker Wurlitzer and the Conn electronic organ in his beautiful studio. ATOS members were invited to his studio after the concert to see, hear and play the organ as well as view his enviable collection of antiques.

Two more theatre organs have left the area recently, the 2/8 Wurlitzer in the Ridge Rink (to a residence in Bremerton) and the large 3 manual Kimball in the Seattle Pacific College to a buyer in Portland. The chapter is looking forward to the opening of another Pizza and Pipes restaurant, this one to be located in Tacoma. The organ chosen is the Balaban 3 (with additions) originally installed in the Ft. Wayne, Indiana Paramount Theatre. It is currently undergoing rebuilding and restoration for installation. Chapter members Dick and Margaret Daubert are the owners of this fine organ.

TERRY L. HOCHMUTH

#### SOUTHERN ARIZONA


"Presenting Miss Donna Parker" was the high point of Southern Arizona's activity for this year; not a

regular meeting, but a little special activity put on by Donna while on a pre-college trip prior to her entry into Cal Poly, Pomona Campus. Donna and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard A. Parker, were on their way to Roswell, New Mexico for a special performance for the Board of Directors of the New Mexico Military Institute, and stopped in Tucson on September 8.

The Los Angeles Chapter shares the honor with Southern Arizona Chapter of Donna's membership, and after several years of waiting, her fellow members here were treated to what




Donna Parker played the Seamands' Conn for Southern Arizona members.



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those in L.A. get to hear quite often. How those reeds sang! Seamands' 650 Conn and pipe speakers got a real workout. During her trip Donna also played Bill Brown's Wurlitzer in the Phoenix "Organ Stop Pizza Parlor." This young lady does get around!!

The Detroit Convention was attended by the Crosby's, by one of our honorary members, Lon Hanagan of New York City, and Phoenix, Arizona, by the High's, by Ann Montgomery whose home base is Yuma, Arizona, and by our international member, David Pitts of New Castle, NSW, Australia. David performed at the Cameos, and at the Seamands, Lois and Larry, of Tucson.

This reporter believes that we have a first — an international member. ATOS-National went international this last July while we gained our member in May. Does any other chapter have a similar member?

Our third regular meeting of the year was held on the 6th of October at the home of Dorothy and Walter Stadler. Over 50 attended. The business included a discussion on locations for a tentative theatre pipe organ site, and a committee was formed by our chairman, Estelle Binder, which included Arthur Crowell, Bea and Rudy Kotasek, Anna and Ray Rodig, and Dorothy and Walter Stadler. The pro-

gram that followed featured selections by Bob High, Lois Seamands, Kathy Stadler, and Janice Owens and then ended a piano-organ duet performed by Janice on piano and Kathy on her new Conn 650 playing the "Theme from the Apartment". A buffet and open console followed.

Our final meeting of the year will be held on December 1, a Sunday, at the home of the Robert Owens with a program on Janice's new Conn 651. I will mention our first meeting to be held in 1975, the first Sunday in February, should any of you "Snowbirds" be in Tucson that day and might want to attend. Contact either our chairman, Estelle Binder, (nee Weiss), Helen Bowers (Mrs. Morris Bowers), Arthur Crowell, Ralph Cloos, Kenneth Fields, Bob High or Rudy Kotasek for directions to that meeting. It is requested that notice of a week or so be given, if possible, so that the menu for the buffet may be planned.

BOB HIGH

#### SOUTH FLORIDA

What was almost as good as going to the Notable Nineteenth in Detroit? An evening reviewing the sounds of the Convention, courtesy of Ralph

Anderson and his fabulous tape recorder plus the records which some of our members brought back. It was fun to watch the "open-mouthed" disbelief of those who were unfamiliar with the artistry of Hector, Dennis and Heidi, and others. That was just the start of the evening. All present enjoyed Ralph's Rodgers Trio deluxe with its knotty-pine console. The surprise of the evening was provided by John Scot when he sat down and set us back on our ears with his arrangements of *Maple Leaf Rag* and a medley from "Jesus Christ, Superstar." Other enjoyable moments were provided by the duo of Art Venecia and Betty Lee Taylor at the piano and console, respectively. John Scot and Walter Walker made another duo later on in the evening. At the end of the evening, Bob and Vivian André invited us to come over and check the progress on their Wurlitzer installation. Some of our fledgling members had their very first organ crawl that night, in addition to sitting down in front of all those "teeth." John Scot provided us with several more hours of listening pleasure. One fifteen A.M. found us reluctantly putting the lush sounds to

**ATOS CONVENTION**  
July, 1975 - San Francisco

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bed and leaving André Hall to the echoes.

Our second post-summer treat was provided by Hal Stanton through the courtesy of Overbrook Pianos and Organs. Allen introduced "The Music Scene," their new computer theatre organ. Hal and Stan Hyer demonstrated its many capabilities and then invited the members to give it a try. The afternoon came to an end with John Scot on the "The Music Scene" and Dennis Allred at the console of the Allen 601 which had been "re-programmed" in theatre style. It was a great afternoon which was followed up by what is hoped to be the start of a great tradition: finishing the day at André Hall. (Would you believe, even roller skating to pipe organ music by some of our members?!) Thanks, Vivian and Bob, for your generosity to the South Florida members.

BOBBIE LITZINGER

## WOLVERINE

Sunday, September 15, found the members of the Wolverine Chapter at the Troy home of Mert and Rita Harris. Their 3/11 Wurlitzer was in fine form for an all afternoon open console session for all attending. The organ was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre in Glen Falls, New York, and has the distinction of being one of the last Wurlitzers ever built for installation in this country. The installation is quite obviously a work of Mert's — his other love being the 3/13 Barton in the Royal Oak Theatre.

The meeting was somewhat of a milestone, as, not only did we persuade Lucille Mitchell to get up and



A surprised Lucille Mitchell at the console of the Mert Harris residence 3/11 Wurlitzer. (L.G. Mallett Photo)



Sue Mumbroe watches as husband Roger presides at the console of his 3/19 Marr and Colton. (L.G. Mallett Photo)

play in her beautiful style, but we were even able to sneak in and snap a shot of her.

Our October 20 meeting found us at the Bloomfield Hills residence of Roger and Sue Mumbroe, to see, hear and play one of Detroit's finest home installations. Roger has constructed a

3/19 Marr & Colton over the past several years. He has had literally dozens of ranks through his chamber, selecting just the right ones to represent each tonal family. As well as the Marr & Colton parts, there are several Barton, Morton, and even some Gottfried parts in the organ. The huge chamber from which the organ speaks acts somewhat as a mixing area, so as to prevent the harsh, raucous sound so often common in large home installations.

Some of Wolverine's polished professionals were in rare form at the Mumbroe console, such as Rodney Davis, who left most of us with our chins on the floor watching some of his tremendous digital feats. Bravo, Rodney!

It is indeed a rare treat to hear Roger Mumbroe play his own organ, however, Chairman Lawrie Mallett persuaded Roger to play a few selections, and very nicely, we might add. We thank the Harrises and the Mumbroes for providing us with their homes, their organs and their gracious hospitality.

SCOTT S. SMITH

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