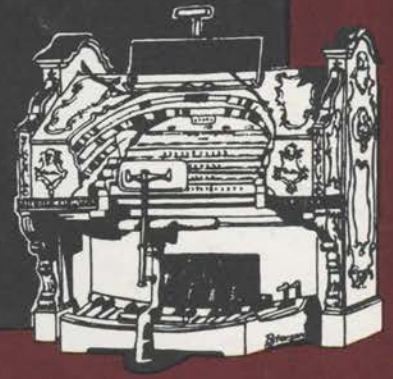


THEATRE ORGAN



VOLUME 18, NO. 6

DEC., 1976 - JAN., 1977



Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society



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THEATRE ORGAN

Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

Volume 18, No. 6

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Cover Photo

The Exhibition Hall/Century II Center/Wichita, home of the Dowager Empress, the Wurlitzer from the New York Paramount. All the music for a public dance in the hall was provided by Billy Nalle at the console of the Wurlitzer — a national first. See story beginning on page 5.

(Bill Pearce Photo)

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President's Message

ATOS hasn't changed presidents — we have just changed pictures. The one in the last issue was taken during the convention at the end of a hectic day and night of meetings and conferences. This is a more natural picture taken after I unwound to the slow and easy pace we enjoy in Iowa.

Shortly, all chapters will be receiving a form from National Headquarters requesting information regarding the chapter officers for 1977. Please fill out the form completely as soon as possible so we can have an accurate list as of February 15.

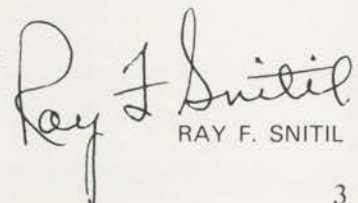
The 1977 ATOS dues of \$15.00 are now payable. Chapter members should pay their national dues direct to their chapter along with the local dues.

Non-chapter members please remit payment to P.O. Box 1314, Salinas, Cal. 93901.

We have an exciting year ahead of us — with continued increase in membership, a great convention being planned in Chicago '77, new chapters being organized, a vibrant enthusiasm that can be felt in our membership, and more and more chapters bringing the sounds of the theatre organ to more and more people — 1977 WILL BE ANOTHER GREAT YEAR!

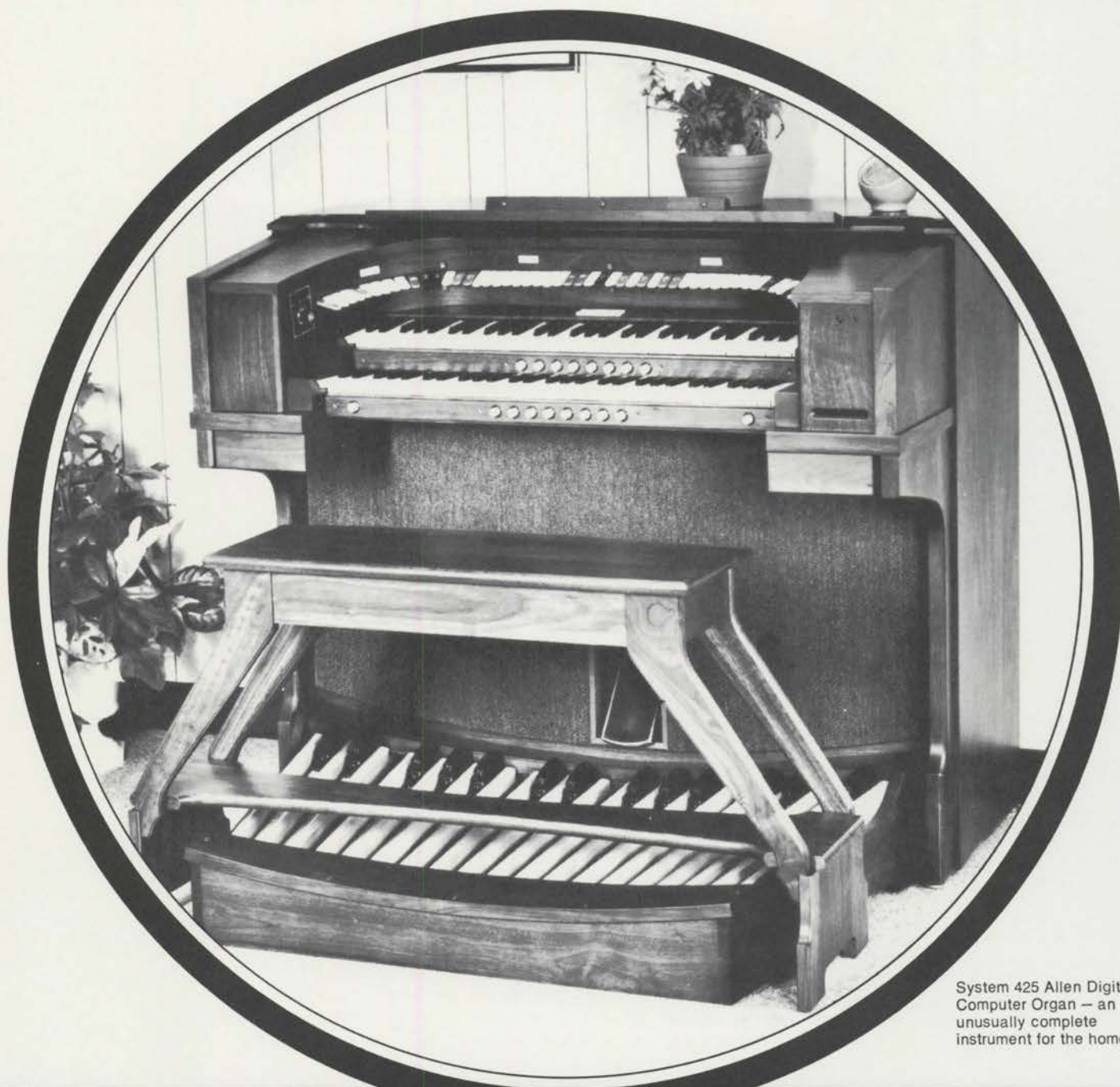
A MOST JOYFUL CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR TO ALL OF YOU from your National Officers, Board of Directors and the THEATRE ORGAN staff.

Sincerely,


RAY F. SNITIL

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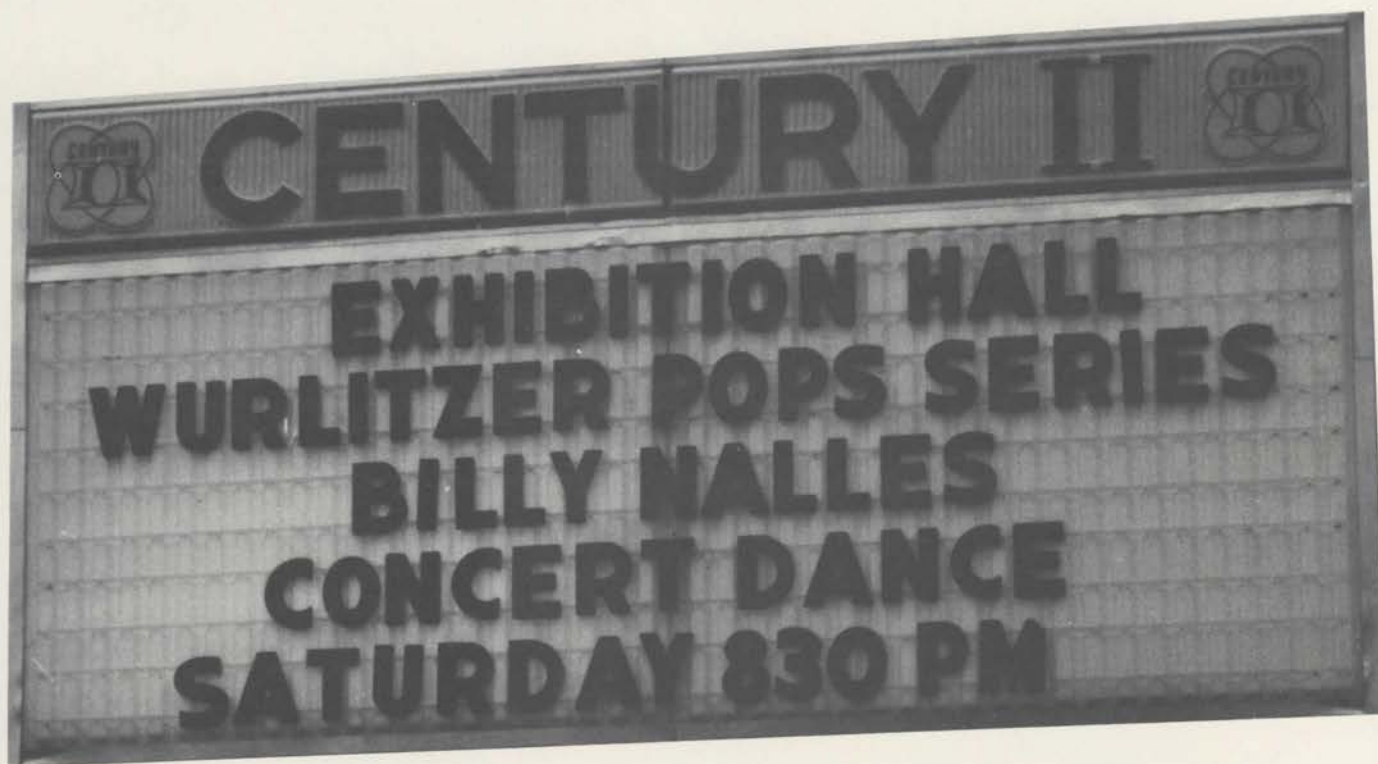
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A Theatre Organ First . . .



When Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc. first had the idea of a combination public dance and concert, it conducted an informal investigation over a year's time of the few places in this country and overseas where theatre organs have been used for dancing. Some surprises surfaced. In this country and in England, either the organs have only been used for intermission music or else as alternates to orchestras. No pattern emerged which involved a theatre organ being used *exclusively* for dancing and concert periods combined. Further investigation involved people in the communications media, the theatre and the dance and music world. All responded that the idea of having a theatre pipe organ be the solo source of both dance music and concert pre-

sentation for the projected occasion in Century II Center, Wichita, would be at least a national music first and probably an international one. Because of Billy Nalle's dance orchestra experience during his earlier career as a piano soloist, WTO's resident artist was engaged to play the concert-dance of June fifth this year on the Wurlitzer Exhibition Hall of the center. At Billy's request, plans to have a percussionist play with him were cancelled as he felt this music first should stand as proof that the theatre organ could meet all the demands entirely on its own.

Plans for promotion and use of the big hall involved Celia Cohen, public relations, James Clancy, building manager, and members of WTO. Among the latter, WTO President

Michael Coup was producer and master of ceremonies while James Sanford handled the lighting chores. Involved were a variety of lighting effects integral to the hall, plus arc spotlights and the use of a huge mirror-covered ball hanging from the high ceiling above the console. Whenever a spotlight was trained on this ball, reflections sprayed the entire hall with an atmosphere of magic, most effective during periods of dancing. The atmosphere grew increasingly exciting through the evening and near the planned ending time of 11:30 p.m. the crowd clamored loudly for more. Ultimately, the finale came with the concert nightcap at 12:45 a.m. Sunday morning. Allowing for a fifteen minute intermission, Billy had kept the



(Review by Dave Chanin, NBC news staff, New York, June 12 & 13, 1976 over the national all-news radio network)

At Century II Center, Wichita, Kansas, on June 5, a music first took place that proved to be a landmark in popular music. For the first time in this country all music for a public dance, together with occasional straight concert numbers, was supplied by a pipe organ instead of an orchestra.

The organ in this center came from the now-gone Paramount Theatre in New York and was moved to this Kansas cultural center in the early seventies. The artist was a former resident of New York now living in Wichita, Billy Nalle, well known in the concert and recording fields and also from earlier years on national television.

A big crowd plus exciting music from a famous theatre organ produced an experience like no other in my memory. Had I not seen and heard it happen with my own eyes and ears, I would not have believed that such a music source could compete with our major dance orchestras. Well, compete it did! If anything, the artist pulled off a musical miracle that surpassed what many dance orchestras could have played and proved a match for an Ellington or Basie along the way. The music had maturity, quality and excitement like I've never heard before from such an instrument and it grabbed and held the crowd for a full four hours.

If what I heard is representative of a theatre organ comeback, then there is a future for this instrument in a big way and a lot of us will have to change our ideas about what it's like and what it can do.

A delighted Billy Nalle at the new console of the 4/42 Wurlitzer in Century II Center during the concert/dance. He kept the crowd happy for a full four hours.
(Bill Pearce Photo)

crowd happy, listening and dancing for a full four hours!

The immense success of this venture-in-faith has made it inevitable that the same or similar format with Billy Nalle and the great Wurlitzer will be offered in the future. Enthusiasm for the event drew people from several other states as far away as both coasts, Canada and Mexico. Among national communications media giving news of the evening was the NBC all-news radio network. It later aired nationally a review which follows, testifying to the ability of the theatre organ to generate enthusiasm outside the organ world. □



CONSIDERATIONS FOR ORGAN CHAMBER DESIGN IN HOMES

by Lance Johnson



Since most theatre organ installations by hobbyists take place in homes, this discussion will be confined to residence installations.

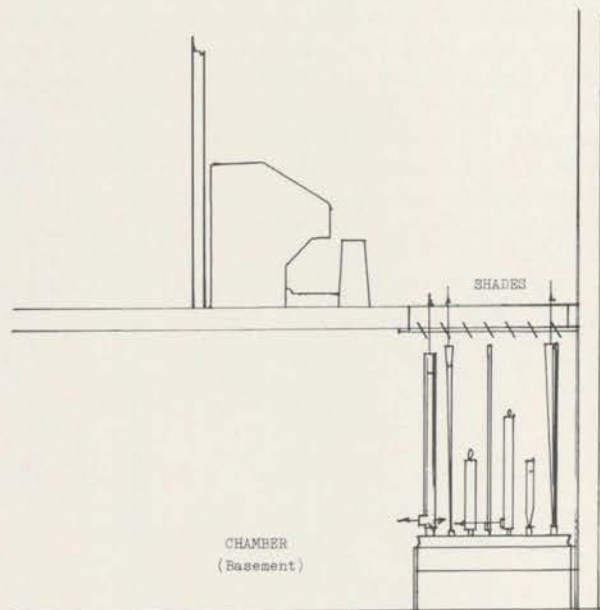
For the amateur organ builder to install a theatre organ in his home, there are many problems that face him. For one thing, he is probably not an organ builder and for that matter, may have never seen the inside of an organ until he purchased his own instrument.

Residence installations present many problems from

the outset; Where shall the organ chamber(s) be? Where shall the blower go? Can I install it without having to add on to the house? Will it sound well?

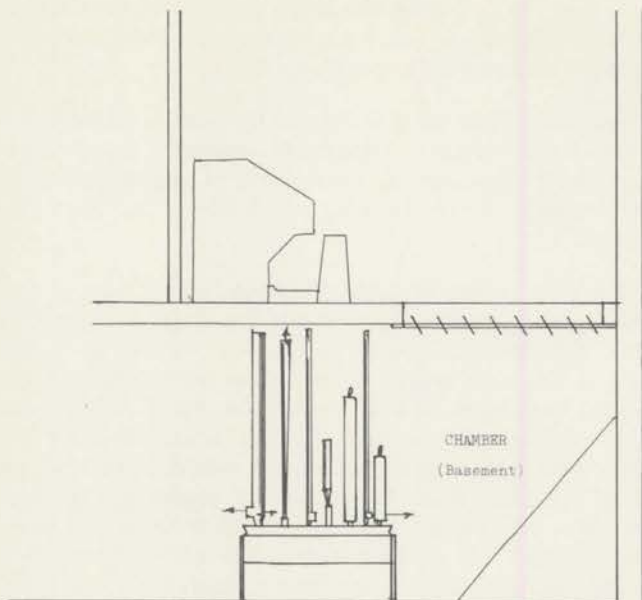
For this article we will discuss the merits of different placements of organ chambers. We will refer to the drawings which represent elevations only of organ chambers with respect to the listening room where we place the console.

Don't make the mistake of decreasing the size of the tone opening because you think the organ will be too loud. The opening should be one half to one third the area of the wall in which the shades are placed. A restricted tone opening will muffle the organ causing the highs and the brilliant reeds from sounding through. The organ will have a very unexciting sound. Don't worry about being too loud. The organ will sound half as loud anyway as your house will absorb much of the sound from your reduced size of the listening room as opposed to a theatre and with a little help from carpets, drapes etc. all which absorb tremendously. (A muffled organ will sound extremely poor on a recording.)



Elevation One

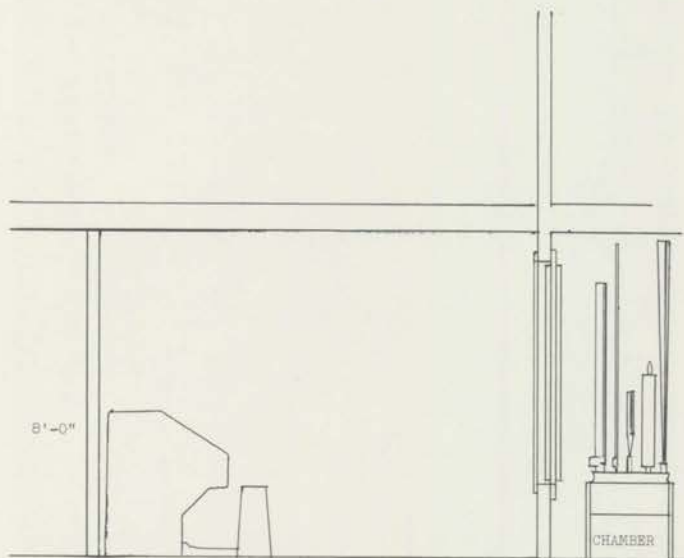
A basement installation is fine if you don't have excessive dampness or seepage. The wind chests will be about 18" off the floor with the regulators to one side. The full length reeds such as the Trumpet, Tuba Posthorn, Saxophone, etc. will have a greatly exaggerated brilliance and power because the tone is focused directly into the shades. The organ will sound reed dominated. Even with the shades closed, the reeds will be loud. When the reeds were voiced, the tone was directed to the ceiling of the voicing room so the voicer heard them through a "tone shadow," that is the tone was bent around to the voicer's ears. Had the voicer climbed up and listened at the top of the pipe, the tone would be greatly increased in power and harmonics. After the organ is placed in the theatre, the audience hears the reeds just as the voicer did, from the tone shadow effect. Much floor space is sacrificed on this type.



Elevation Two

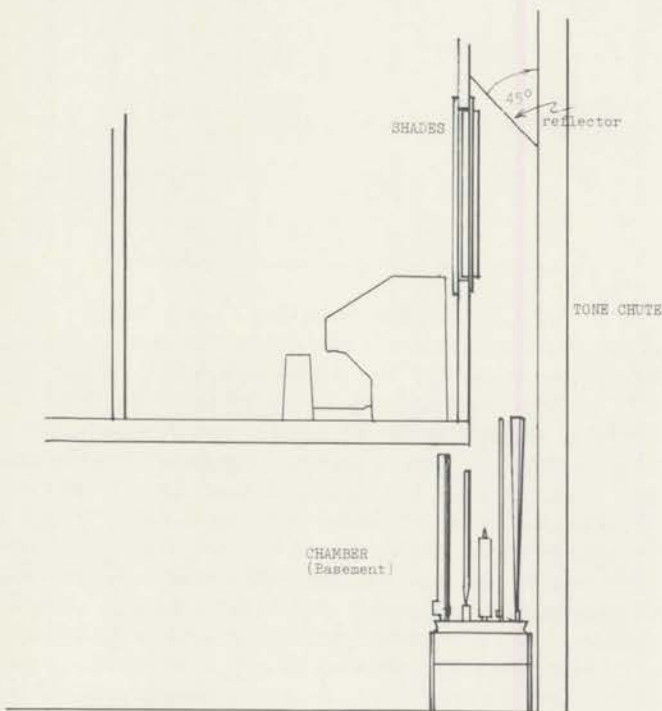
Here we see the same type of installation but the main chest has been placed away from the tone opening. The sound now will defuse and will come up in relatively the same balance as it was in the theatre. Some room has been sacrificed, that is the floor just under the tone opening. Remember if you place shades in the floor or ceiling, don't remove the joists. You will weaken your floor and if you decide to remove the organ or sell your house, you will have a problem patching it up again. To minimize the tone shadow, install a reflector of wood frame and sheetrock heavily painted with gloss enamel.

wall to enclose the new tone chute which will reduce your floor area somewhat. Move those powerful reeds and Diapason away from the chute for better balance. Again, don't make the tone opening too small.



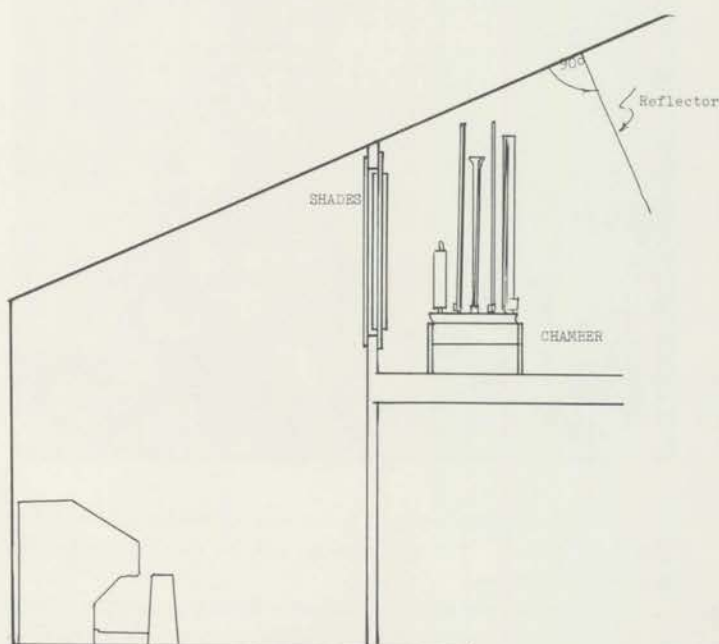
Elevation Four

This system could apply to a living room or basement placement. The organ chamber would be at the same elevation as the listening room. A higher ceiling than 8'-0" would be preferable here but this is not always possible. The tonal balance will be quite good and will give a direct line-of-sight projection to the listener. Get that console as far away as possible from the tone opening or you will need a seat belt.



Elevation Three

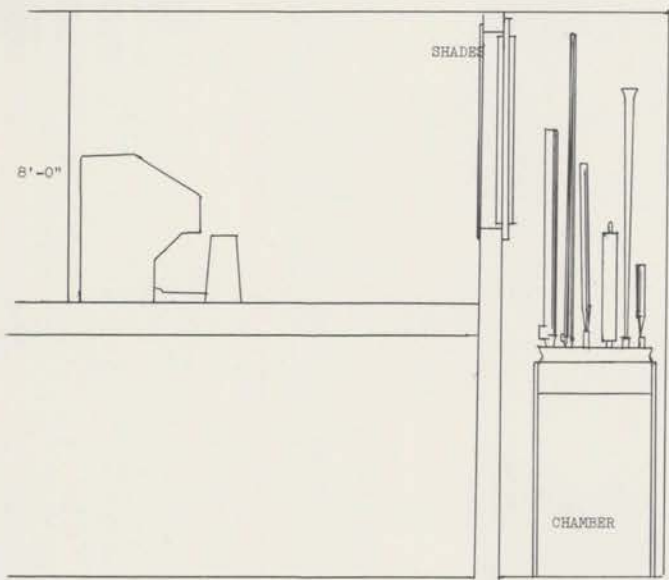
This type of installation is quite successful as you don't have to place a grille in the floor. You will have to add a



Elevation Five

The Cathedral ceiling is growing in popularity with home owners. If you can give up one bedroom, you can at least

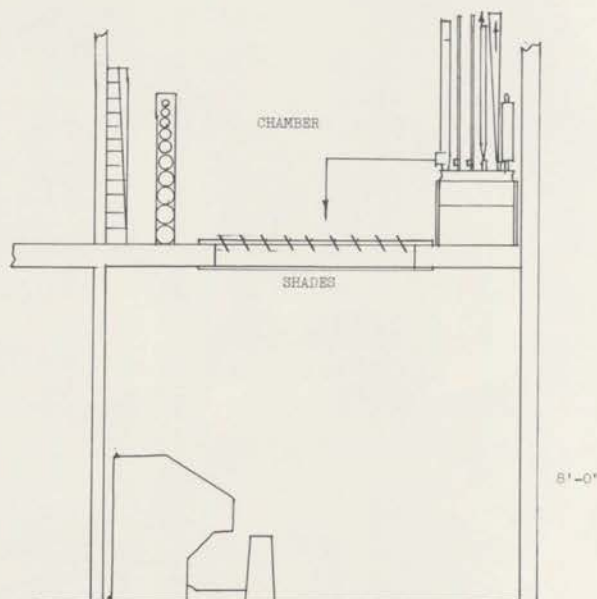
have one chamber on the second floor level. This system can deliver quite an emotional effect on the listener as it would emit the tone from a high elevation like the church or theatre. (You will have to limit your playing hours if the little ones have just been put to bed). The high ceiling living room is extremely important to a good organ sound as the volume of the room is larger than a normal eight foot ceiling height. If you can talk your wife into an area rug instead of wall to wall carpeting, and reduce the thickness of your curtains, you will have a splendid listening environment. I would give this chamber placement the highest regard for a residence pipe organ. Install a reflector to offset the effect of the reverse ceiling slope.



Elevation Six

This one is the most popular chamber placements with larger organs. In most cases, the owner has had to add on to the house which becomes expensive. This system has the added advantage of the least amount of wasted floor space in the chamber. The area below the chests can be sealed off to reduce chamber noises. The increased height of the chamber also eliminates the need for more mitering and

regulators moved to one side. The tone of the organ can build to a higher degree of resonance as it can bounce between the floor and ceiling. Again, watch for dampness,



Elevation Seven

For those who can give up that extra bedroom, the second floor installation can sound very well. Long offset pipes will probably have to be laid down. The grille in the ceiling will need a dust screen. The main chest should not stand directly over the tone opening as tone will be restricted. It is better to make the shades the passage area for the maintenance of the organ by placing planks over the shades. Then the main chest and offsets can be installed right up to the wall. In a smaller home, this placement can be very successful.

In conclusion, I hope we have covered most of the organ chamber problems that arise with residence theatre organs. If you have a particular problem with an organ chamber placement, I would be more than happy to help you out. I would need such things as full dimensions of your house, size of organ, size of each chest, regulators, console, shade frames, etc. □

Theatre Organ Used by Symphony Orchestra

by Tommy Landrum

October 11, 1976 was opening night for The Richmond Symphony Orchestra.

A capacity audience of over 3,700 crowded the Richmond Mosque as Maestro Jacques Houtmann led the symphony, playing the music of Stravinsky, Beethoven, Rachmaninoff and Richard Strauss. Phillippe Entrement was the guest soloist, majestically performing the Rachmaninoff piano concerto number 2.

Of specific interest to ATOS mem-

bers was the first performance of Richard Strauss' "Also Sprach Zarathustra" by The Richmond Symphony. The very impressive organ part was played by Dr. Ardyth Lohuis. This was one of those rare occasions where a full symphony orchestra was accompanied by a house theatre organ.

By request of Maestro Houtmann, the mosque organ was tuned to A442 by Thomas Landrum and Richard (Dick) Barlow.

The mosque organ was used once

before with The Richmond Symphony in 1971, when Dr. Ardyth Lohuis, Assistant Chairman, Department of Music at Virginia Commonwealth University, played in a performance of "Tosca," from the opera by Puccini. Edgar Schenkman, Music Director, was then conducting The Richmond Symphony.

The mosque organ is used every season from October through April for the Kiwanis Club before show time and at intermission with Lyn Lundi at the console. □

SPANNING THREE ERAS WITH



◀ Rex Koury at the console of the 4/29 Wurlitzer in Albany's Palace Theatre in 1931. At 19 he was billed as "The Youngest Professional Organist in America."
(Koury Collection)

When you see Marshal Matt Dillon ride into the setting sun on your TV screen to the accompaniment of the beautiful "Gunsmoke" theme, are you aware that the music was composed by a theatre organist whose career began in the great days of the theatre organ, progressed to the big-band era, and now is a part of the theatre organ concert circuit? That man is Rex Koury, and during a recent eastern tour, it was our extreme pleasure to spend considerable time with this most gracious musician.

His father was in British government service in the Sudan, and believing Khartoum was not the proper place to raise a youngster, the family returned to England. Rex was born in London in 1912. They emigrated to America in 1913, eventually set-

ting in Cranford, New Jersey.

Rex attended grammar and high school there, beginning his musical education at the age of eight with piano lessons. As a member of the choir in the local Episcopal church, he developed an interest in the pipe organ. Later, because of the proximity to New York City, he sang for two years at Old Trinity Church. The choir was all-male, and one of the members was Lawrence Tibbett, then on his way to prominence.

When Rex was graduated from grammar school in 1924, the class, as part of the event, attended the showing of the picture *Abraham Lincoln* in the Regent Theatre in Elizabeth, N.J. "It was the first time I had heard a pipe organ used to accompany a picture," Rex says. "It was a whole new world for me, and


so fascinated was I that I didn't watch the picture, but attentively observed the organist and listened to the music.

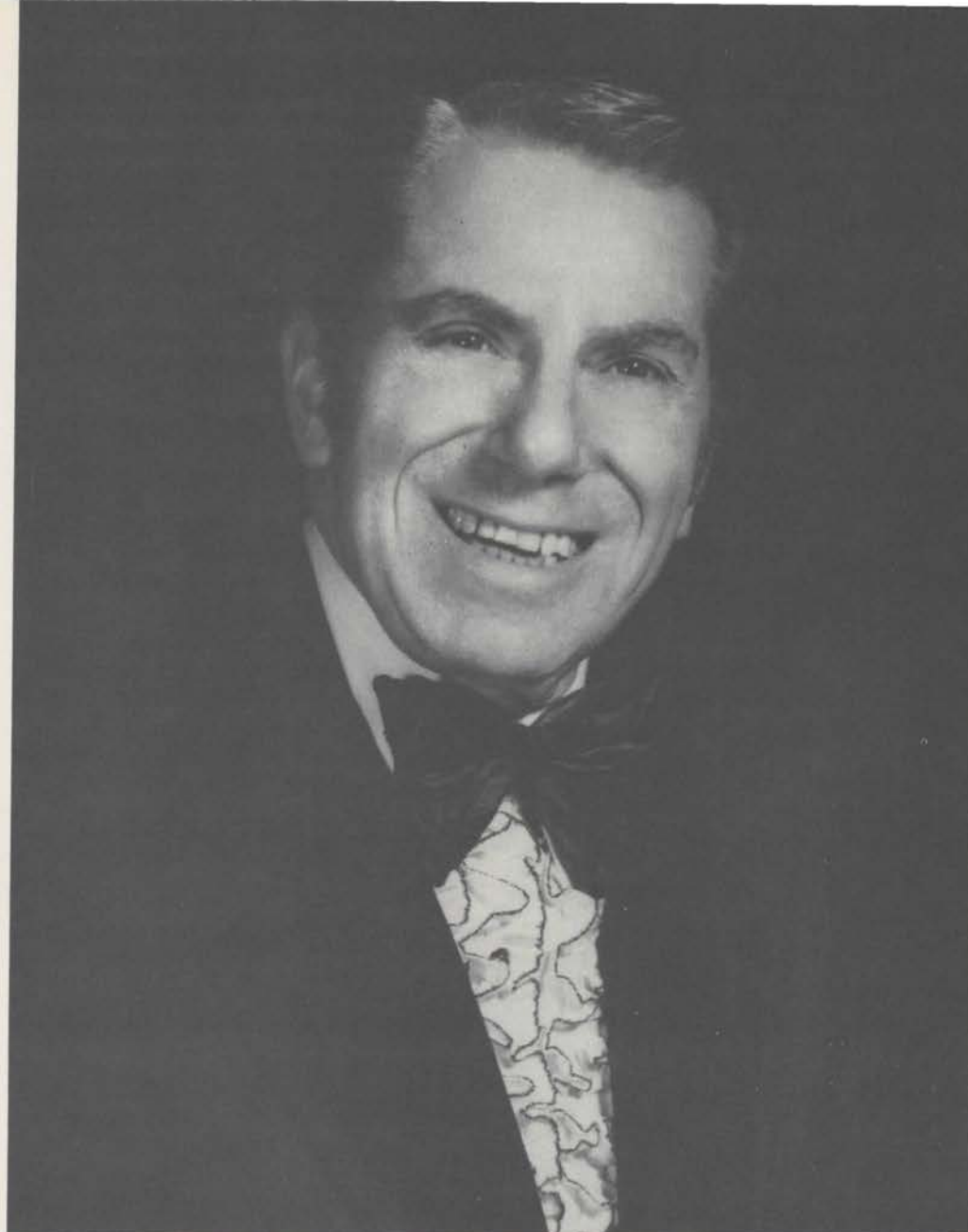
"Bill Meeder, a tall man, was working the picture, and he turned into one of the finest accompanists of films I ever heard. His rendition of Mendelssohn's 'War March of the Priests' was most inspiring, and I hummed this classic all the way home. Later, Meeder moved to New York where he did theatre and radio work.

Rex Koury had made up his mind then and there to be a theatre organist. Having had five solid years of piano instruction, he persuaded his parents to let him take organ lessons with Dr. Bauman Lowe, organist of St. Bartholomew's Church in Brooklyn. He studied on a 4-manual Mol-

REX KOURY

by Lloyd E. Klos

"The Boy With Miles of Smiles," Rex Koury today. 
(Koury Collection)



ler, playing the standard classics of Bach, Franck, etc. A meticulous instructor, Dr. Lowe would bangerrant knuckles with a pencil. "To this day, I feel deeply indebted to Dr. Lowe for his strict attention to detail.

"After studying classical organ for a year, the lure of the theatre instrument had not abated as I attended the Regent in Elizabeth at least once a week to hear Bill Meeder. I wanted to become the best theatre organist in the country. Prevailing on my parents to let me take theatre organ lessons at \$5 a week, I became a pupil of Bill Meeder at the Regent. He was one of three organists at this 2462-seat house, the others being a woman and Chester Kingsbury."

About a year later, the new 1200-seat Cranford Theatre opened. It had a 2/7 Wurlitzer, and the organist

was Charles Vanderhoven. Rex persuaded Vanderhoven to give him an audition with an eye to playing the trailers at the evening show. For no pay, Rex worked his first theatre job, seven nights a week.

Apparently, he did well, because he soon was playing the newsreel, then the comedy, and in a couple months, was playing an hour or two each evening. Still working for free, this aroused Rex' father who thought the youngster should be getting paid for the amount of work he was doing. "If you're good enough to play, you're good enough to be paid," was his Dad's advice which led him to seek another position.

He landed the organist's job in the 1200-seat Elmora Theatre in Elmora, N.J. "This was my first paying job, and at the great sum of \$30 a week,

which was big money for a kid in those days! It lasted only a few weeks because of a pretty girl's coming along, evincing an interest in the organ, then trying it out. Before I knew it, she was installed as organist. The whole episode served as the first course in my learning about women — long before women's lib."

During this period, Rex gained much experience playing in theatres, studying under Bill Meeder, substituting during vacations and illness, and all this was accomplished while carrying a full schedule in school, which included football and track. "At 16, I got my first full-fledged job, playing the 2/7 Wurlitzer in the Mayfair Theatre in Hillside, N.J. This was in early 1928 and I stayed there for about a year. The schedule was from 7 to 11 evenings, with



Rex, wearing beanie and collegiate sweater, plays a Hammond for Kay Kyser, the old professor of *Kollege of Musical Knowledge*, in 1952. (Koury Collection)

matinees on Saturday and Sunday, and I gained invaluable experience with cue sheets and scores, all the time building a music library."

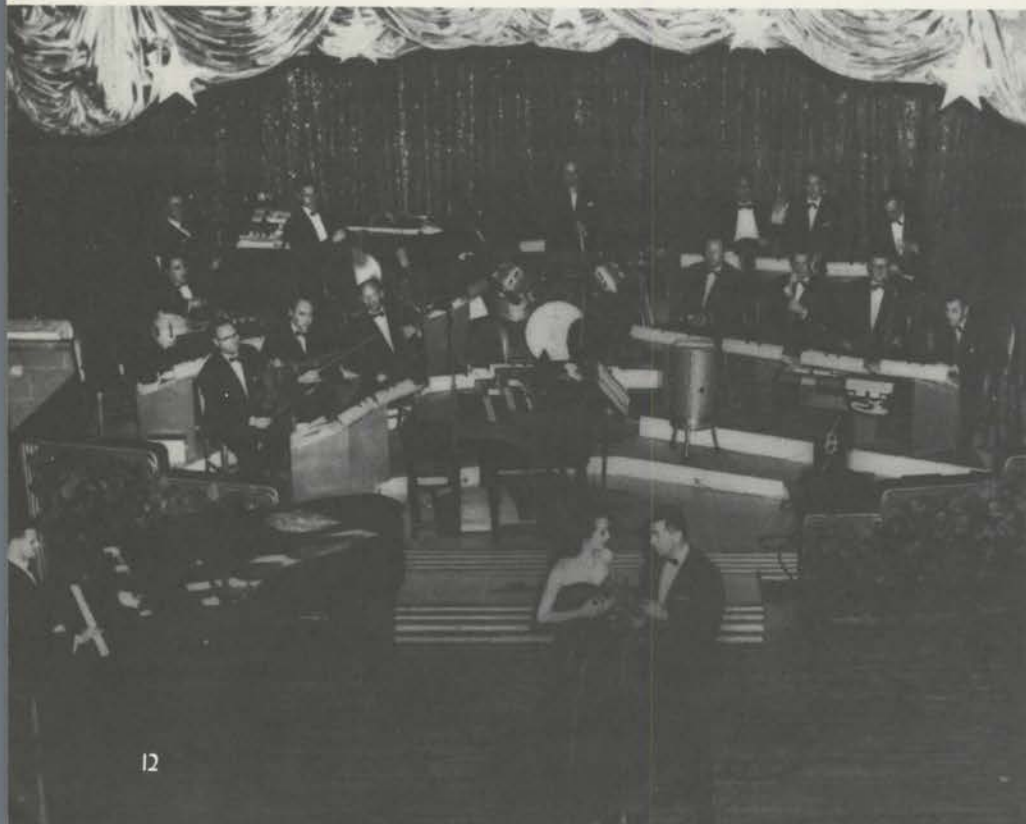
While at the Mayfair, a strange situation developed with the organ. One evening, it stopped sounding for a few seconds, then started up again. But, the blower and motor had continued to function! This was reported to the organ maintenance man who checked it out but found nothing. It happened again and again. Each time, the organ was checked out and

nothing seemed amiss.

The "period of the errant organ" continued for several weeks until the exasperated manager instructed the otherwise competent organ technician to "find it or else." For the umpteenth time, the whole thing was checked out while Rex played. And there was the cause: A ground wire from the relay to the generator had become loose through vibration. With a twist of a screwdriver, the contingency was eliminated.

"At 17, Bill Meeder thought I was

The Rex Koury Orchestra pauses while its leader introduces Broadway personality Liza Kirk to a Cocoonut Grove audience in November 1954. (Koury Collection)



ready for bigger things and called me into the Regent in Elizabeth to offer me the third organist's position. The theatre was a big-city operation with orchestra in the pit. Taking the job, I learned a great deal by working with Bill and the orchestra. Organ and band were used simultaneously to play the overtures. The job neatly fitted in with my high school schedule until I turned 18 and was graduated.

"Following the 1929 summer vacation, I had the opportunity to step up the musical ladder. The former manager of the Mayfair Theatre in Hillside, Harry Black, had been named manager of the RKO Proctor's Fourth Street Theatre in Troy, N.Y., and offered me the job as solo organist. Black was a rarity in the theatre management field; he loved the organ and thought the sun rose and set on Jesse Crawford. He was not a musician himself, but he knew how he wanted a pipe organ to sound, and would often suggest nuances and tricks to his organist."

Before accepting the job in Troy, Rex discussed it with his parents. His father objected to the idea, suggesting that since he had received a moderate athletic scholarship to Princeton, he should take advantage of it. The son proved to be quite persuasive in stating his preference to try the new position, his father then suggesting he "try it for a couple of years."

So, Rex Koury went to Troy on a one-year contract, with a one-year option with the RKO circuit. By late 1929 silent movies were just about finished as an entertainment medium, and the organs were being used as solo instruments, and to accompany sing-alongs, using slides. Charley Previn (father of the noted pianist-arranger Andre) was musical director of the RKO chain, and much impressed with Rex' vibrant youth in holding down such a responsible position. He gave him the billing of "The Youngest Professional Organist in America." He was also known as "The Boy with Miles of Smiles."

Rex played the 2/10 Wurlitzer for over two years at Proctor's Fourth Street Theatre in Troy. Here, his youth made a hit with the college crowd, and his personality made them sing their heads off. "I remember acts like Bob Hope and his broth-

er, and George Burns and Gracie Allen standing in the wings and saying ruefully, 'How do you follow this guy?'"

While at Proctor's, Rex watched the construction of the nearby 3800-seat RKO Palace. Harry Black was named manager of it, and at the end of 1931, Rex was installed as solo organist. The instrument was a 4/29 Wurlitzer, originally in the New York Hippodrome. It had not been in use there, so instead of buying a new organ in the depression times, it was moved north, re-shopped by Wurlitzer, and installed in the Palace. "This was one of the finest Wurlitzers I ever played. It had a fine Post Horn, Tibias and two Voxes which set it apart. I played it about a year and a half."

Rex continued to impress Charles Previn and his associate, Joe Gershenson, and they conceived of having him tour the RKO circuit as more or less a substitute for vacationing organists. Spending two or three weeks in each location, Rex played in the Kenmore, Madison and Keith-Albee theatres in Brooklyn; 81st Street Theatre in New York, and the RKO Palace in Rochester. All this took a few months.

"These were depression years, and costs were being trimmed from theatre operation. RKO had taken over the Roxy in Manhattan, releasing S.L. 'Roxy' Rothafel as managing director. At the same time, I went in and opened with the Fred Waring Show under chief organist Lew White. My job was to play with the symphony orchestra, taking advantage of my previous experience at the Regent in Elizabeth, N.J. Dr. Erno Rapee was director, and working under him was an invaluable experience.

"I played the Roxy for about five months, and took advantage of this study under the greatest of them all — Jesse Crawford. He was the hottest name in the organ business and absolute tops in Manhattan. Anyone who studied with him was in a very advantageous position as far as employment was concerned. Crawford had been doing his 'Poet of the Organ' program for NBC, and playing the Paramount. His spare time was occupied by recording and cutting organ player rolls.

"I studied for seven months with him, and I learned a lot. He insisted



Rex shows Bill Conrad (TV's *Cannon*) the Downbeat Magazine Award he received for best scoring of a TV series in 1954. Producer of *Gunsmoke* show, Norman MacDonnell (rt.) looks on. (Koury Collection)

on playing everything correctly, note by note. If a chord progression resulted in the melody's being tampered with, forget it! If a student could play a selection properly in one key, that wasn't enough. He had to be able to transpose into every other key, with plenty of sharps and flats thrown in. There were organists who were greater in their technical approach to the theatre organ, but in playing ballads, Jesse Crawford was in a class by himself. His wife was perhaps a greater technician, and could play the rhythmic material better, but Jesse was absolute king of the ballad."

The Rex Koury orchestra established a high degree of excellence during its Coconut Grove engagement in 1954. Here Rex receives the First Golden Coconut award. (Irving Antler Photo)



By 1933, the theatre organ business was a shadow of its former self. "Organists were being dismissed in droves, and I could see it was a matter of time before I'd be let out. In December 1932, the Radio City Music Hall had opened, eventually to change its policy from all-stage attractions to film-stage format. A call went out for organists to audition. Thinking I might have a chance, I put in a bid. When I received no consideration, it was a big disappointment, and I elected to leave the organ business."

He became interested in working as pianist and conductor in Holly-

wood studios. In 1934, he moved to San Diego because of friends there. He met the manager of the Fox Theatre, and though the organ had been dropped from the program, the manager was organ-minded, and by asking a reasonable fee, Rex was installed as organist. "I played the Robert Morton for two or three months, and have memories of an unusual instrument which was not in the best of condition. Since this was in the depression, the crowds were small. Stage shows had gone.

"When the Fox job ended, I thought it a good idea to break into the dance band business, and in the summer of 1934, put a band together for casual engagements, dances, etc. Later, I played piano and contracted the 15-piece orchestra for a fellow named Ted Mack, the same Ted Mack who was to be associated with Major Bowes and the Original Amateur Hour."

In 1935, Rex Koury moved to Los Angeles and joined the Larry Lee band as pianist in the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, spending a few months there prior to joining the Velez and Yolanda orchestra which went on tour in the leading hotels in the country; Palmer House in Chicago (2 engagements); Schroeder in Milwaukee; Muehlbach in Kansas City; Mark Hopkins in San Francisco; Coconut Grove and Beverly Wilshire in Los Angeles and the Waldorf-Astoria in New York. Band leader was George Hamilton, father of the noted actor.

"I was on the road two years, first under Hamilton, and then briefly with Red Norvo and his group at the Blackhawk Restaurant in Chicago. The latter group was a great swing aggregation, but the money was not good. After two years of travel, I wanted to settle down in the movie studios."

In the fall of 1937, he returned to Los Angeles. Early in 1938, hearing of an opening at radio station KFI, he went over and was accepted for the staff orchestra as pianist. In those days, every radio station had a live orchestra. Later that year, he became pianist in the Billy Mills Orchestra on the Fibber McGee & Molly program which had just moved out from Chicago. Thus, Rex Koury launched his radio career.

"In 1940, I went to KMPC as a leader and musical director of the

station's orchestra for about a year. It was a good group, a sort of Matty Malneck band, but trouble developed and the union pulled the band out of the station. However, an opening developed for a solo organist on NBC. I had been away from pipe organs for six years. But NBC had a nice 3-manual Wurlitzer which Paul Carson had designed for the studio, the same organ on which he played for *One Man's Family* and *I Love a Mystery*. I accepted the attractive offer in 1941, doing work on both the Red and Blue networks until 1942 when I enlisted in the Army Air Corps."

His first base was Santa Ana where there was a famous organist, Major Eddie Dunstedter, who was in command of a 65-piece band. However Rex met pianist Joe Bushkin, formerly with Tommy Dorsey, and Matt Dennis, who talked him into going with them to the Air Force Base at Douglas, Arizona as an arranger. The three built a band, and in nine months, Rex became a Master Sergeant. Not happy with what he was doing, he transferred into Special Services and Public Relations, heading that department for two years. His entire service career was spent in the Ninth Training Command at such bases as Luke Field, Victoryville Field, Montham Field, etc. He played weekly organ concerts at every field at which he was stationed, and at Douglas, conducted an 18-piece orchestra on a radio program emanating from a Douglas theatre.

"I was discharged from the service in 1946 and returned to NBC as staff organist. I also played piano on several shows such as *Mayor of the Town* with Lionel Barrymore, *Point Sublime* with Cliff Arquette (later Charley Weaver) and did several shows using pipes or the Hammond. When we used the organ to back small instrumental groups, we became famous for being able to make small aggregations sound like big ones."

When NBC was ordered by the FCC to divorce itself from the Blue Network, the American Broadcasting Co. came into being, and Rex joined it, believing that there was opportunity with a young organization. Most organ work was done on the Hammond, but he did solo work on the NBC pipes across the street. He served as musical director of

Amazing Dr. Malone, Ellery Queen and others, and remained as organist for ABC until 1952 when he was appointed by ABC to the post of musical director for the entire West Coast.

"I was thrilled when given the job. We had a very good 21-piece orchestra, and my work was orchestral and administrative. We did a show with George Jessel, and a 2-part TV spectacular, *A Tale of Two Cities*. Another show was *Cinema Time*, devoted to music written for the screen. I recall interviewing Victor Young, Jimmy McHugh, Irving Berlin, Eddie Dunstedter and Elmer Bernstein. It was a very successful series and aired coast to coast."

Rex Koury was musical director of ABC until 1958. In 1952 he was asked by CBS to compose and supervise the music to be incorporated in a new program, *Gunsmoke*, starring Bill "Cannon" Conrad and Georgia Ellis. Ever wonder what the circumstances were when the hauntingly beautiful *Gunsmoke* theme was composed?

"I promptly accepted the engagement for the *Gunsmoke* program. My procedure in writing for a show was to compose all the 'interior' music first — the bridges, background music, etc. When that was finished, I tackled the theme, knowing what to assimilate into it. Furthermore, the theme is the most difficult, simply because it must appeal to the sponsor, producer, and a myriad of others connected with the show. It is the one piece of music with which a show is instantly identified.

"I had been composing all day, doing the interior music, but still the theme remained. I went to bed tired, but knowing that the copy department must have the theme by 10 a.m. the following day. At 8:30 a.m., I awoke, dressed, and had breakfast. The deadline was racing ominously upon me! I took a pencil, a magazine, and some manuscript paper into the bathroom, and while sitting there, composed the *Gunsmoke* theme in ten minutes."

The show was very successful, running on radio for four years, and on television with different actors, close to 20 years. Norman MacDonnell, the original director, attributed its success to the actors, the script and the music — all three elements were top-flight.

In 1954, the ABC orchestra, led by Rex Koury, played the Cocoon Grove in Los Angeles for five months, attracting considerable attention. He was also director of *Polka Parade* and *Waltz Time* over KCCP and *Stars Over Hollywood* on CBS.

By 1957, problems in the scoring business arose, and Rex' salary was markedly reduced, simply because of the influx of recorded music from Europe and Mexico. Again seeing handwriting on the wall, he and KMPC newscaster Howard Flynn bought a radio station in Couer d'Alene, Idaho, and took an interest in a Spokane station. After four years of running the Idaho station, selling and advertising, speaking at dinners, announcing football games, etc. they sold out to a newspaper.

In 1963, Rex returned to NBC as musical director in California on a 5-day-a-week show *You Don't Say!* There were other shows and he remained with NBC until 1970.

"I seemed to be standing still in my career and I wanted a playing job. I had become friends with Roy and Norma Hoeppel and Bob and Alice Power in Ventura, Cal. As I had done some 'social playing' in their homes which sported electronic organs, they wondered why I didn't give public concerts. I had built an Artisan organ at home, so there was no problem getting practice time. I had heard about ATOS, but hadn't realized the scope of the concert circuit which was fast expanding.

"Bill Coffman and Bill Fields, proprietors of the Old Town Music Hall at El Segundo, Cal., suggested that as a starter, I get out a record. This I did in 1971, done on the Old Town's 4/24 Wurlitzer."

The record has resulted in many appearances for Rex as a theatre organist. In June 1971, he played for the silent movie *King of Kings* in the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco. Then came an appearance at the regional ATOS convention in Los Angeles in early 1972. When Starways Talent was organized, Rex was signed on.

In December 1972, he dedicated the 4/36 ex-New York Paramount Wurlitzer in Wichita before 3,000 excited concertgoers, and in the spring of 1973, made an eastern tour which included Binghamton, Detroit, Rochester, N. Tonawanda,

Syracuse and Gloucester installations. Another appearance was the opening concert of the 1973 ATOS convention in Portland. Since that time Rex has been kept busy with engagements and recordings.

He has very strong feelings concerning his part in the theatre organ's renaissance, and the role of the instrument in particular. "I love to perform before an audience. I could easily be classed as a 'musical ham,' but I do get a tremendous satisfaction in performing on a theatre organ. I am determined to become one of the top theatre organists on the concert circuit." (He already has! LEK).

"The magnificent sound of the pipe organ thrills me as much today as it did 45 years ago. I feel that the great rebirth of interest in the theatre pipe organ has come about because of its wonderful history and background, and certainly nostalgia plays an important part in the hearts and minds of all who remember the theatre organ's past glory. Indeed, nostalgia has its place.

"But, the theatre organ has been, is, and always will be, a magnificent musical instrument with almost unlimited possibilities. It is thrilling new audiences today, just as it thrilled theatregoers in years past, and in spite of the nostalgia so properly connected with it, it is also a

very contemporary instrument, quite capable of the modern musical treatments of the times. It can be contemporary instrument many years hence in the hands of capable performers, adapting it to music and stylings yet unheard. In other words, the theatre pipe organ is the king of all instruments deserving of the best music of any age.

"Therefore, the information media should treat the theatre organ not only as an instrument in the nostalgia revival, but as a full-fledged instrument on the concert circuit. The theatre organ is every bit a concert instrument today as a Steinway or Stradavarius."

Can any lover of the theatre organ take exception to those words of wisdom? The writer does not believe so. If experience in over 45 years, spanning three eras of musical endeavor is a criteria, Rex Koury is eminently qualified to speak lucidly. The theatre organ world is indeed blessed to have this top-rate organist, and a gentleman to "speak the gospel." □

GUNSMOKE

Smiling Rex Koury leads a portion of the ABC Staff Orchestra about 1957.

(Koury Collection)



"GUNSMOKE"

We thank Rex Koury for allowing *Theatre Organ* to reprint his music for your enjoyment.

COMPOSED AND
ARRANGED BY

REX KOURY

THEME OF CBS' POPULAR TV SERIES -

"GUNSMOKE"

MODIO

(Accomp.)

(UPPER MANUAL)

The musical score is handwritten and consists of several systems of staves. The top system includes a treble clef, a common time signature, and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The first staff is labeled '(Accomp.)' and contains a series of chords: F7maj7, Fb, G7, C7, F7maj7, Fb, and C7. The second staff is labeled '(UPPER)' and contains a melodic line with notes and rests. The third staff is labeled '(LOWER MAN.)' and contains a bass line with notes and rests. The fourth and fifth systems continue the piece with various chords and melodic lines. The sixth system ends with a double bar line and a circled 'C' symbol, indicating the end of the piece. The score is annotated with various performance instructions and chord changes.



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1.

COPYWRITE 1953

HERMAN MUSIC CO.

Handwritten musical score for Theatre Organ, consisting of six systems of music. Each system includes a piano part (treble clef) and an organ part (bass clef). The score includes various annotations and markings:

- System 1:** Chords: F6, F^{MAY.}, F6, B^b, F.
- System 2:** Chords: G^M, C7, F, F7, B^b, F.
- System 3:** Chords: G^M, G^M, C7. Marking: *Repeat To Start*.
- System 4:** Section: **CODA**. Chords: F, B^b, F, G^M.
- System 5:** Chords: C7, F^{MAY.}, F6, F, G^M.
- System 6:** Chords: C7, F, F6, F6, F. Marking: *Dim...*. Handwritten initials: *W. K.*

At the bottom of the organ part in the final system, there are markings: *2.*, *(C)*, and *(F)*.



HO 5 1124 1527 1/2 Vine St Hollywood Calif

AN OUTLINE FOR A COURSE IN THEATRE ORGAN-11

Epilogue

by John Muri

Readers of THEATRE ORGAN have probably familiarized themselves with the manner in which the ten preceding articles in this series have suggested studies and activities under the guise of personal commentary. It now seems worthwhile to show the working-outlines for these articles, in the hope that they may be of use to serious students and helpful in the preparation of more extensive written treatments of the subject should the occasion arise.

At the end of the series, a few general remarks may be in order. There are people who believe that music has nothing to do with thinking, that music is all emotion, no brains. Such folk haven't paid much attention to musical, mathematical or philosophical thinking. They speak glibly of artistry, but rarely, if ever, do they describe its nature. We shall try here for a definition by telling what an artist will not do. He will not create false or distorted musical images if he can help it. He will not deceive by using bombastic introductions for pieces of triviality to follow. He will not deceive with thunderous climaxes that deteriorate into nothing. He will not betray a composer by playing a composition at an unwarranted tempo just to show off or to hide technical incompetence.

What does the true artist do? Scriabin said that art must unite with philosophy and religion, by which he implied that the performer carries a responsibility to perform truly and greatly. Music communicates not only good moods but messages, and each artist has his own musical vocabulary, his individual preferences in key-tonality, phrasing, chord-sequence, tempo, and harmony. These add up to an unmistakable message, the sincerity of which — or lack of which — is obvious.

Those who are soloists must ever keep in mind Artur Schnabel's dictum that music always demands

more than a performer is able to give, that no performance is truly definitive, that the performer checks continuously on his playing *while he is playing*, and that "the performer does not underline anything which the composer has already made obvious. He has to take care of whatever the composer left for him to take care of." If the soloist must make recordings, he will be soon disillusioned about their authority and validity. Horowitz compares recordings to photographs: both are static, not the real thing, and one has to make a lot of them before he has something approximating the real thing. One may never get it. To close this series, we shall let Tchaikovsky have the last word: "There would be reason to go mad if it were not for music."

1. History of Theatre Organ.

Early theatre organs in the United States.
Developments by organ builders: Morton, Barton, Kimball, Wurlitzer.
Decline in the thirties.
Where the organs went.
Prestigious organists: Crawford, Murtagh, White, etc.
Organists' work-schedules before and after talkies.

2. The Nature of the Instrument.

Why the organ was built.
Dan Barton's contributions.
Weaknesses of the unit system.
Emphasis on Tibias.
Tremulant problems.
Voicing and balance.
Console design, layout, and placement.
The condition of organs in theatres today.

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

3. Function in Theatres

Criticism of theatre organs by Audsley, *et. al.*
Criticism by Barnes and Gammons.
Vulgarization, presumptive and actual.
Nature and taste.
Theatre organ uses: vaudeville, style shows, public relations events.
Extent of theatre organ use.

4. Musical Knowledge Required.

Piano technique.
Extent of technical facility.
Reading ability.
Harmony.
Rhythm.
Improvisation and composition.

5. Registration.

Balance.
Over-registration.
Use of the Tibia.
Registrational degrees of volume.
Covering up tonal defects.
Use of twelfths.
Use of traps.
Crescendo pedals.
Synthetic imitations.
Pedal registration.

6. Repertory.

Music-filing systems.
Rapee's system.
The Luz Color Guide.
Types of music required:
neutral.
romantic.
oriental.
agitated or violent.
light classic.
national airs.
popular tunes.
operatic transcriptions.
symphonic transcriptions.
piano music of Chopin, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, etc.
organ music.

7. Playing the Film.

Types of film:
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comic.
mystery.
scenery-travel.
personality.
Functions of film music:
to stimulate.
to add the sounds of life.
to tranquilize.
to serve as part of the action.
The nature of good accompaniments:
unity.
continuity.
Pacing or tempo.
Accommodation to variable projector speeds.
Responding to audience reactions.
Changes of mood.

Comedy music.
The organist's emotional involvement in the film.
The organist's capacity to sense and react.

8. The Organ Solo.

Making the solo distinctive.
Solo material:
song-plugging.
special arrangements.
presentations with staging.
community singing.
variety in presentation.
playing classical solos.
arrangement and over-arrangement.
imitating other soloists.

9. Special Effects.

History of sound-effect machines.
Validity of sound effects
as realism.
as symbolism.
Control systems at consoles:
toe-studs.
finger-buttons.
Imitating various sounds: barnyard,
Big Ben, harps, etc.
Demonstrating percussions.
Freak registrations.
Stereo effects in large theatres.

10. Concerts.

Good beginnings.
Programming:
single pieces as units.
medleys.
themes.

Kinds of people who go to concerts.
Prospects for newcomers to solo field.

Classes of soloists:
technicians, stylists.
interpreters.
Stylistic horrors to avoid.
Showmanship.
Fees.

Six rules for a good concert.
Relationships between organists.

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10. Concerts.

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Seventeenth Annual Home Organ Festival

by Hal Steiner

Something new was added to the Annual Home Organ Festival agenda this year — closed circuit television to accommodate the many registrants who couldn't squeeze into 1100-seat Merrill Hall on the grounds of Asilomar State Park (near Monterey, Calif.) where all the concerts are held. The video and audio signals were piped into the chapel, which is about 800 feet from Merrill Hall. With an ever-expanding clientele, the original electronic organ festival is suffering from growing pains, with accommodations and seating at concerts becoming scarce to those who fail to sign up well in advance.

The Festival opened its 1976 stanza with a full house. More than

1100 Festivaleers had signed up months in advance of the September 14-19 event. But Registrar Ida James didn't turn away the late comers. She had been through the registration ordeal before, and had reserved additional accommodations at the numerous motels that ring the park. At its peak, there were more than 1500 visitors on the grounds.

Asilomar (actually called the Pacific Grove Conference Grounds) is a state park located in a forest area only a few hundred feet from the Pacific ocean. It's an area relatively unspoiled by the civilization rampant outside its gates. The trees are tall, the silence golden (even with dozens of organs going full blast indoors),

the resident deer friendly and the resident raccoons hammy (they mooch food at the showrooms in pairs and quartets at night, putting on a show to keep the humans fascinated). This year the weather was balmy enough for shirtsleeves during the day and only a jacket for outside perambulation at night.

The Festival, now in its 17th year, is staged by an amiable volunteer group of organ enthusiasts, mostly from the Bay Area of California. The chairman, organist Tiny James, has gathered a crew of circa 40 experts in the varied fields required to stage a successful 5-day festival. Preparations for the next year's show begin less than a month after the

close of the last one.

This year, twelve electronic organ makers displayed their wares, both in concert and in the less formal atmosphere of the showrooms. In fact, the showrooms were a major attraction, with visiting organists (not on the concert agenda) often putting on impromptu concerts which equalled, or surpassed, what was going on in the concert hall, artists of the stature of visitor Ann Leaf, for example.

The 1976 roster of organists (the manufacturers call them "product specialists") ran to over 30 names. All demonstration organists are supplied by the manufacturers; the Festival authorities do no picking. Whereas in former years the Festival enjoyed the artistry of such "names" as Don Baker, Gaylord Carter, Richard Purvis, Tiny James, Richard Ellsasser, Helen Dell, Johnny Duffy, Al Bollington and Mildred Alexander, only six of this year's 30 would be classed as well-established "theatre" names: Barron Smith, Bill Thomson, Larry Vannucci, Byron Melcher, Tom Hazleton and, yup, Millie Alexander. We could add Carol Jones to that list; she has played at previous Festivals and her star is rising. The rest of the 30 were mostly talented fledglings, and a few didn't merit the word "talented." No matter, the audience seemed to enjoy the work of those presented in concert and in the showrooms where things were often "jumping" until the wee hours. The Festival audience is not a critical group. Many have come for a vacation, to enjoy the woodland setting, the exceptionally fine food served in the park dining hall and the camaraderie of fellow enthusiasts they see but once a year. If the concert fails to please, the visitor can steal away and go wading in the nearby ocean — up to his armpits if the surf is coming in.

Only a handful of the organs heard in concert would be classified as theatre-type electronics, whether or not the console is a horseshoe design. The majority heard were the "entertainment" type hypoed with sales-clinching gadgetry of small interest to theatre organ buffs. So, we'll discuss only those with solid theatrical features. The two most theatrical organs are still the Rodgers and the Conn, with Allen (after years of marking time) fast catching up with



Spotlight on Lee Lees, one of the busiest gals on the Festival staff. She stages several shows besides selecting the late night Jam Session players. 'I only manage to *look* busy,' she insists.



Bud Iverson has been doing right by the Conn organ since the Festival's pre-'71 Hoberg's days. His strung-together tunes with political inferences in their titles caused a sensation.



Dan Bellomy is representative of the young organists who played their initial Festival concerts in 1976. Dan, formerly staff organist at the Ft. Worth Casa Manana theatre-in-the-round Wurlitzer pipe organ, now works as a 'product specialist' for Kawai, which specializes in jazz organs.

Barron Smith has been promoting Lowrey organs ever since the firm marketed attachments which were played from piano keys. He's a former member of the Fred Waring orchestra. His Ferde Grofé "Painted Desert" reflects his orchestral talents.



its controversial computer circuitry proving a shortcut to many theatrical voices. While Conn has succumbed some to the siren call to gimmickry, Rodgers still puts tonal improvement at the top of the list. Both produce fine sounding instruments. Conn has introduced what we feel to be the best new model since the discontinued 645, a two-manual job called the "Martinique," with good reeds (new sharp Trumpet and Kinura) plus a switch which turns back the clock to make the whole instrument sound like a model A Hammond, just for fun. But it has only a 25-note pedalboard. It's too soon to evaluate the new Allen; there is still much research and development to be done — such as a realistic Vox Humana — although their new Tibia is the best we've heard on an Allen. It's encouraging to note Allen has broken away from the "flute organ" concept.

It should be mentioned that Thomas is producing better theatrical voices, even in the spinet models. Things will be even better when they add random tremming. While other brands heard had some theatrical features, all too often the tonal status has remained constant for the past several years while the builders sought ways of making the instruments more mechanically attractive to mainly non-musicians, such as the organ on which the player need only to one-finger a melody line and the organ does all the rest — harmonization, rhythm, accompaniment, bass and a simple arrangement. That's the very end. Well, not quite. Some builders have picked up the out-of-patent "drawbar" regression.

Of course, rising production costs were in evidence, with top-of-the-line theatre models selling for \$40,000 and up. That kind of money will also buy pipes.

A pleasant innovation was the introduction of closed circuit TV. Those who viewed and heard the concert programs in the chapel were treated to excellent sound and a nearly theatre-size screen. This audience had another advantage; the camera often zoomed in for close-ups, so the viewer could study keyboard techniques while listening. A poll indicated overwhelming acceptance of the TV relay.

As always the accent was on fun. The opening night show starred

talented pianist Frank Denke at the 88, a well-done pantomime comedy routine by a group of Elks Lodge members, and a sing-along played by Tiny James and led by vivacious Jeane Noble. Then there were the usual impromptu gags played on the organists. For example, while Bill Thomson was taking his bows after his concert, a flop-hatted hillbilly edged up behind him and, pointing a 12-gage shotgun, drawled. "Son, you're gonna marry my daughter." Poor Bill just stood there, stupified. Next, the strains of the wedding march and the spotlight picked up the bridal procession edging slowly down the aisle. "Bride" Fran Linhart looked lovely in her fly netting veil. So did the "bridesmaids," among them Millie Alexander and Bill Worrall. The retinue included a "baby". When the bride arrived on stage, "Rev." Champ Champagne appeared to tie the knot, but part way through the ceremony there was a "power failure" and when the lights came on, the "groom" had disappeared. It was comedy sequence dreamed up by Yamaha's Bob Dove (who also played the irate pappy) and sprung cold on Bill Thomson — who managed to retain his wits.

The Festival's daily "Poop Sheet" made much of such shenanigans and kept the running gags moving.

In addition to organ manufacturers, several music publishers displayed their wares, as did *The Organist Magazine*. There was a dress shop as well as a record shop. There was plenty to do in the scheduled "free time" and for those with no imagination, the Poop Sheet had suggestions: "... write home for money, mend your socks, take a tramp in the woods, gals (if he'll go).

Tiny James wows the gals in a Festival Showroom.




Festival 'full house' in Merrill Hall. Those who experienced the programs in the chapel via closed circuit TV avoided the crowding.

stay sober until 5:00 p.m. (free cocktail time), smooch, snooze, walk to town for another 6-pack, cash your unemployment check, blow soap bubbles, offer a raccoon some Feenamint, phone Jimmie Carter for a bag of peanuts . . . "

As always, the 17th Festival ac-

complished its objectives. Visitors could size up new products while enjoying a woodland vacation atmosphere and lots of organ music. Organs were sold, free champagne and soft drinks flowed daily, dancing lasted well into the pre-dawn hours and the raccoons made a killing. □



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"His program had humor and was always musical. He has brought theatre 'pops' organ back to a nation which had forgotten it."
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The Mightiest Wurlitzer of All!

by Norton Sneadcroft, active member of P.P.T.O.S.*, as told to Heidi James

Ever since I was a squawling, screaming toddler I wanted a theatre organ of my own. My earliest recollection is breaking loose from mother in the Squaw Valley Rialto and diving into the pit as the immortal (people thought he'd *never* kick the can!) Llew Phelps rode the mighty organ down into the inky depths below. I am told it was weeks before they could pry off all the popcorn and chewing gum, but the experience marked me for life (I never *have* been able to dislodge a particularly annoying piece of Good-N-Plenty from the inside of my right ear — a misfortune, as it distorts my hearing somewhat). At any rate, from that day on I have always had a burning desire to own my very own Wurli.

My first chance came about ten years ago. On a tip from a fellow ATOSer, I finally tracked down a magnificent 3/12 Wurlitzer in Grand Weasel, Alaska and bought it for a song. I was able to persuade a lumber ship to give me passage up as far as Anchorage and from there I traveled by dog sled to the Palace Theatre in Grand Weasel. Unfortunately by the time I arrived to remove the organ, winter had set in and I was forced to burn the console to keep warm (Grand Weasel turned out to be a ghost town). Thinking myself lucky to have at least the pipes, I was loading some of the 32' diaphones onto the sled, when I was suddenly attacked by a herd of angry musk oxen. What the oxen didn't trample, the moose in rut did the next evening at sunset. With a heavy heart I set back for Podunk.

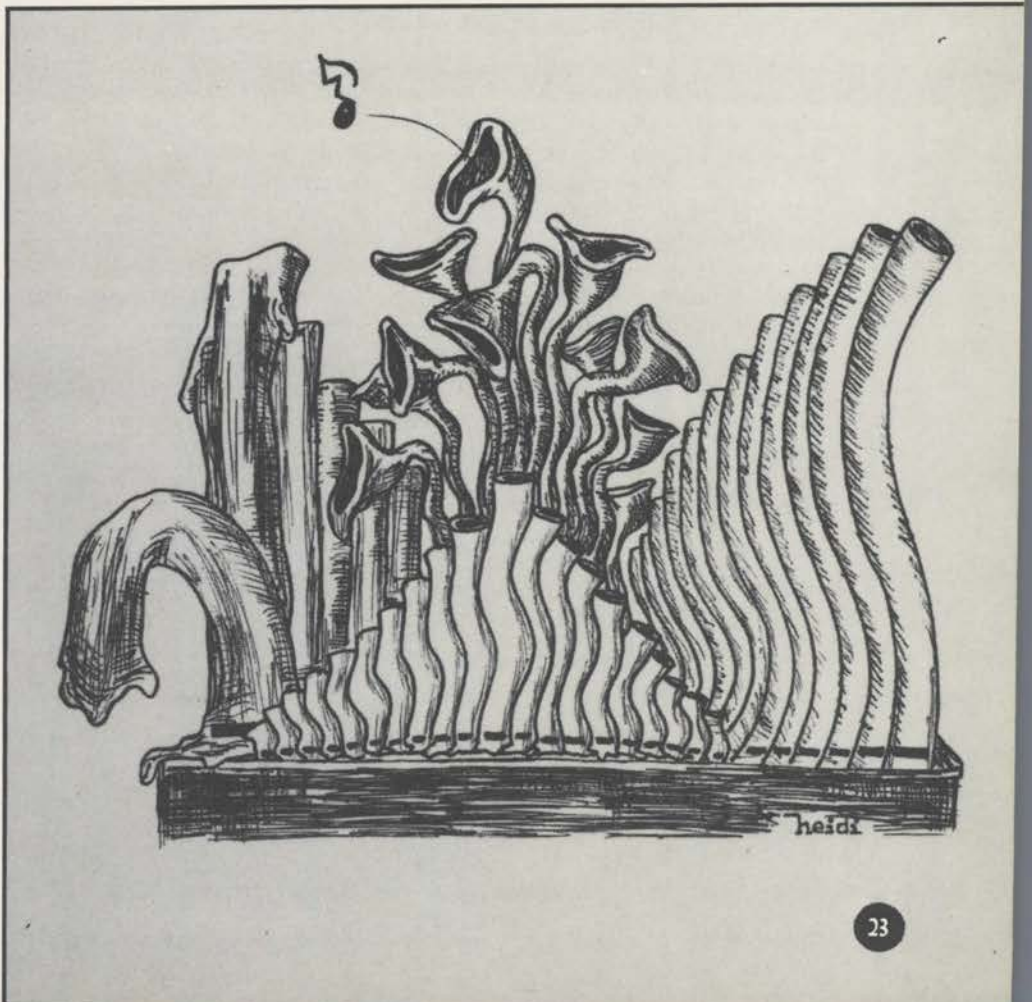
My next chance at an organ came a few years later when I was vacationing in Boll Weevil, Alabama. The local theatre there, the Foxy, had a fire the year before and was willing to give me the pipes from the organ for a mere pittance. Unfortunately

the conflagration had fused the pipes into a single unit, but they still played (a sight somewhat akin, forgive the unpardonable simile, to a gigantic harmonica). So now I had my pipes at last, but how to move them back to Podunk? I brought in shipping people for estimates, but no one would touch the job, claiming that moving a 12-ton harmonica (imagine!) was beyond their means (and, as it turned out after hearing their price quotes, beyond mine as well!). The only company that would touch the pipes was Acme Construction Corp., who did it primarily to get their name in the Guinness Book of Records. They used a fleet of fourteen cranes to haul the organ cross-country, but refused to cross the Mississippi with

it, and stranded my ungainly instrument and me at the little river town of Catgut.

I don't know what I would have done then had not the United States Army been carrying out maneuvers that week with a whole convoy of armored tanks. Fortunately for me the man in charge of one of the divisions was Lt. Col. Wyman Hope-Jones, who, as I'm sure you've already guessed, happens to be a distant relative of our beloved Robert H.-J. Lt. Col. Hope-Jones was more than happy to transport my fused pipes as far as the outskirts of Podunk in a sentimental tribute to his departed third-cousin (twice removed). I want to say right here and now that the Colonel is a truly warm and gracious man without

"... Unfortunately the conflagration had fused the pipes into a single unit, but they still played ..."



*Pacific Podunk
Theatre Organ Society

peer and if any of you reading this ever meet him, treat him as a full fellow ATOSer. I know I myself will always be in his debt.

As I said, the Colonel left my pipes on the outskirts of Podunk, which necessitated my moving and building a new house around them (I certainly had no way to bring them in!). My wife, Martha Lou, was not too keen on this, having just redecorated our old house, but I must say she eventually seemed to adapt well, considering.

My main concern, of course, was building the chambers. Due to the layout of the pipes, only one chamber was possible. In trying to overcome the problem of having the sound emanating from just one area, I lit upon the bright idea of building the chamber in the shape of a vast circular arena, so that sound would bounce off in all directions. Swell shades, of course, were impractical, and so I dispensed with them. Due to the piece of Good-N-Plenty in my ear I find it hard to distinguish the subtle variations in sound swell shades create, anyway.

While Martha Lou was finishing the roofing on our new house, I made a trip to New York to secure enough wiring and tubing to install the organ. I was able to buy an entire warehouse of garden hosing, which I thought I might be able to adapt. The hose company had gone bankrupt and I obtained its product very cheaply from one of the creditors. The wiring proved a little harder, but I was finally able to get it in wholesale quantities from a hairpin company which promised to cover the whole length of continuous wire with rubber, not just the tips. In addition they would let me have it in silver, gray, chestnut, black, and blonde. The wire was a little stiff, but perfectly manageable with a pair of pliers. I purchased sufficient quantity of leather from a motorcycle shop in the Bronx. I think the price I had to pay was a bit high, but considering the good bargains in hosing and wiring I had gotten, I paid it gladly.

Back in Podunk I found a note scrawled on the front door from Martha Lou stating that she had left me. I, of course, was surprised and a little dismayed, as she had all the potential of being a great solderer, but I held no rancor. I wish her luck

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HEAR YE!

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wherever she has ended up.

But to get back to the organ . . . I had all the parts to make my pipes playable, but I had no console as yet to hook up. This proved to be a real snag. I was finally about to resort to my workshop with a truckload of orange crates, when I heard of a large calliope that I could easily adapt. It had entertained the prisoners at San Quentin for many years, but during the last riot had been rendered inoperable due to pilfering of its pipes. The keydesk itself, however, was still in good condition, and I immediately started in on enlarging it to accommodate five manuals. In honor of its penal origins I whimsically fashioned the pistons in the shape of miniature pistols and the general cancel into a tiny electric chair. Contrary to what Martha Lou always used to maintain, I really do have a sense of humor.

Wiring the console proved to be such an enormous task that I finally quit my job with the Mesquite Mosquito Spray Company and devoted myself to the organ full-time. I neglected to mention that I had been able to obtain my blower from the

Podunk Power Plant when they switched over to atomic energy. I am proud to say I must have the most powerful organ blower in America, indeed the world. On good days I could get the wind pressure all the way up to 920 inches.

On July 23, 1972, at 2:48 a.m. I played my organ for the first time. It was a real thrill, as any ATOSer who has gone through the long months and years of tedious searching, hauling, wiring, releathering, etc., knows for himself. It was more than a real thrill, it was truly the greatest blast ever heard by modern man since the end of World War II. The police arrived shortly afterwards (rather amazingly soon, I might add), and immediately arrested me for breaking the peace ("shattering" is the term I believe one insolent officer used). As I write these words, however, I am eligible for parole and just as soon as I get out I intend to rush back to Podunk and finish playing the "Stars and Stripes Forever" on my Mighty, Monstrous Wurlitzer! □

WURLITZER SHIPPING LIST

The first supplement to the Wurlitzer Revised Shipping List has been mailed to all who have placed an order, according to Judd Walton. Of the total run of about 495 original books, approximately 450 have been delivered to theatre organ enthusiasts. Just under 200 supplements have been ordered and mailed.

Orders received for the supplement by Judd after September 15, 1976, will be forwarded to Doric Records who have taken over the distribution of the supplement at the \$3 figure. The few remaining Wurlitzer Revised Installation List books to be sold by Doric will include the supplement, the total price being \$25.

Judd states it was originally planned to have his secretary process the orders after he retired on October 1, 1976, but it was deemed advisable to forward all orders to Doric. In this way, should a question arise regarding delivery, etc., they will be capable of providing answers.

Interest in the Wurlitzer theatre organs continues unabated, with new information trickling in, not every day, but at least every week or so. □

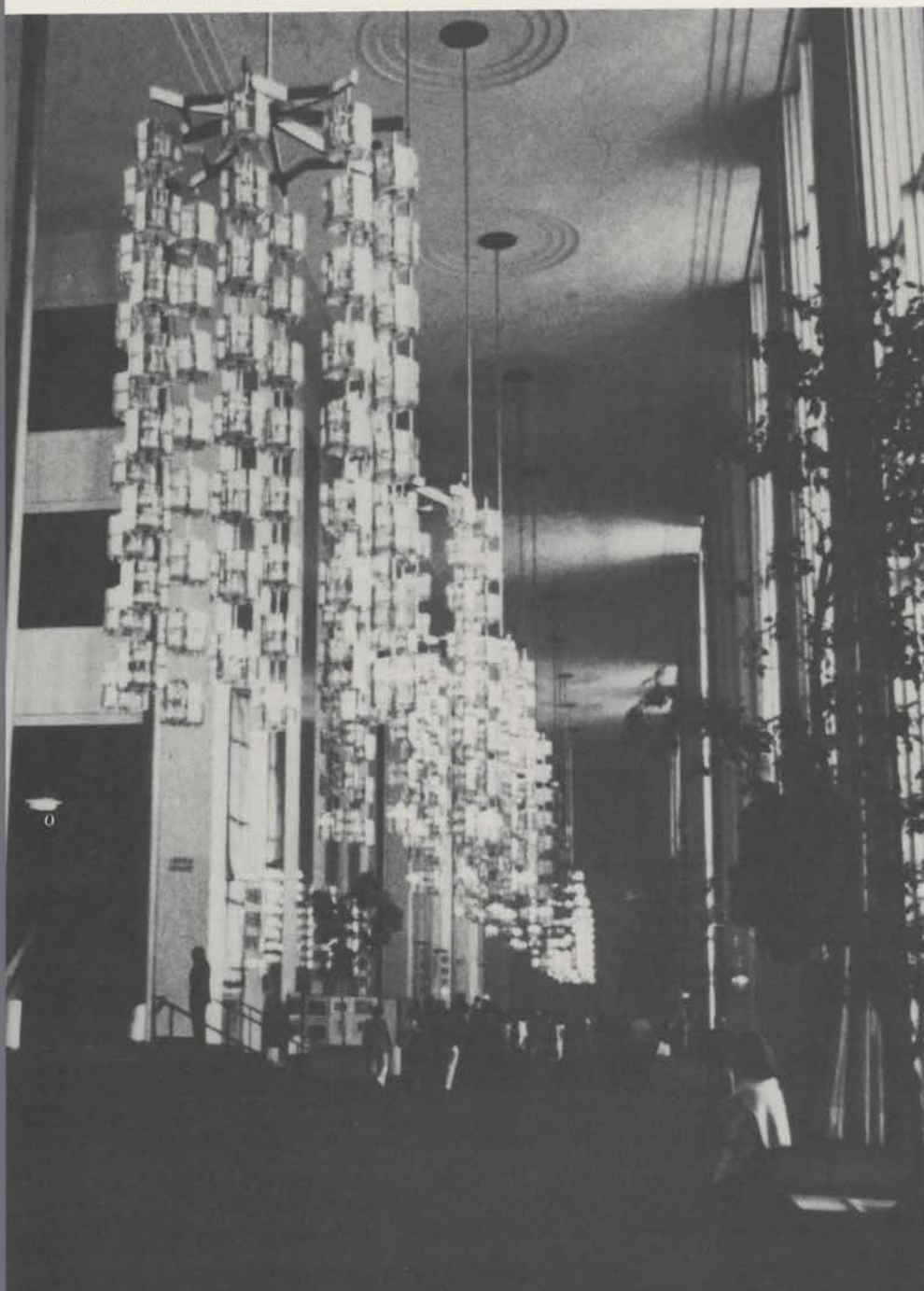
At Kennedy Center with

Ray Brubacher

Silent Films and Theatre Organ

by John T. Tyner

On the way to a silent film presentation in the American Film Institute theatre, people pass through the impressive grand foyer of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.



One of the highlights of a visit to the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C. is attending a silent film with theatre organ accompaniment at the American Film Institute theatre there.

The A.F.I., a nonprofit organization, was created for the study and preservation of America's film heritage. Integral to its operations is the Kennedy Center theatre, a veritable showcase referred to by many as "America's number one movie house." Each year, more than 600 films from the United States and other nations are shown. In addition, many important premieres have been presented there.

Silent films play a major role in theatre presentations. To further enhance the accuracy of their presentations, the theatre required suitable musical accompaniment from a theatre organ. The organ had to be capable of recreating virtually any mood from heavy classic to heavy comic.

Ray Brubacher, organist for the American Film Institute since 1972, chose the Conn Model 651 3-manual theatre organ as an instrument that would more than meet the requirements. Like the theatre pipe organ, the 651 provides the necessary honking reeds, whispering Vox, singing strings and sobbing Tibias. Its system of individual tone generation for each pitch makes it highly suitable for the classical renditions often a part of silent film scores.

In addition to its four console speakers, the organ's output is fed to a combination of eight Conn tone cabinets which are mounted directly



The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is home of the American Film Institute theatre.

behind the movie screen.

Brubacher demonstrates the organ to the general public at frequent intervals in a series of concert and silent film programs. When he isn't performing at the A.F.I. theatre, he is senior staff artist and teacher for Keyboard Centers of Washington. Active in many theatre organ activities, Brubacher also has recorded extensively for television silent film broadcasts. He has accompanied more than 400 silent film presentations ranging from the great Ameri-

can silents to major productions filmed in Russia between 1916-1930.

In addition to his theatre organ work, he is organist for Ager Road United Methodist Church, Hyattsville, Maryland, where he performs on a Conn custom instrument.

Brubacher is a member of the American Guild of Organists and the American Theatre Organ Society. Active in theatre organ restoration projects in the Washington area, he also serves as associate editor of THEATRE ORGAN. □

At the console of the Conn Theatre Organ, Ray Brubacher, American Film Institute organist brings musical life to such silent films as *The Thief of Bagdad*, *My Best Girl*, and *Orphans of the Storm*.



VOX POPS



Conducted by Stu Green

Readers are encouraged to submit interesting sidelights on the organ hobby (exclusive of chapter news items) material they believe will be of general interest about local organ activities and installations and the people who work at the hobby. We know "there's VOX POPS in them there chapters" and it only requires a 9c postcard to get it to VOX POPS Editor, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. If the contributor can afford a 13c stamp, why not include a black and white photo which need not be returned.

Those who assume that the electronic organ era started with the Hammond Model A in 1935, never heard of the "Telharmonium" which was patented in 1897 — 38 years before the first Hammond was sold. Wilfred Hosteland, writing in *Cinema Organ*, after some probing research, comes up with this description of the Telharmonium: "It weighed over 200 tons and consumed 135 kilowatts of electric power (for its) 145 rotating generators, each of them as large as a man, and connected to a 2-manual console equipped with overtone registers."

The inventor was a young Ohio lawyer named Thaddeus Cahill. He and his brothers set up shop in a building they renamed "Telharmonium Hall" on New York's Broadway. There they staged organ concerts with the entire audience listening by means of telephone receivers. Alas, the invention of the audio amplifier and loudspeaker were still in the future. Seeking ways of cap-

italizing on their ponderous music plant, they tried piping the music to subscribers by telephone line. Enrico Caruso was a charter subscriber, and Mark Twain, who had a talent for backing shaky projects (e.g. the Hope-Jones Organ Co.), provided financial assistance. However, regular phone users complained about organ music drowning out their conversations, including financier J.P. Morgan who owned a raft of phone company stock. The phoned organ programs ended abruptly. The writer recalls discussing the Telharmonium with harp developer Melville Clark in the '30s. Clark had heard the monster instrument and said it was tonally very similar to the then new Model A Hammond.

One of the first electronic organs marketed was the "Choracello," invented by Fred C. Lowrey, father of the Lowrey organ, in 1918.



Dick Clay, Chairman of the ATOS "NorCalChap," reports that the organ which was the focal point of the '75 ATOS Convention in San Francisco is in danger of losing its home. The console of the Orpheum's 4/22 Robert Morton has been disconnected and moved backstage to make more room in the orchestra pit during a general renovation. The present occupants seem to have no interest in nor regard for the organ, despite a flurry of civic interest in preserving Market Street's last organ in its original home. For example, the chapter sponsored what may be the Orpheum's final organ concert on August 28, when 1300 fans crowded the house to hear a concert by Tom

Hazleton. The concert was given lots of promotion via KCBS radio, with interviews and straight plugs. The MC was famed organ fixer Ed Stout, whose ebullience charmed the audience. Of the concert Chairman Clay states: "If it was a 'last time ever' concert, then Tom Hazleton's artistry and sensitive selection of music proved a fitting denouement."

As we went to press, the organ was put up for sale. Price not stated.



Member Bill Exner sent in a clipping from the *Seattle Times* which includes some illumination by long time Wurlitzer man, Louis Rosa, now Director of Technical Training for the firm at North Tonawanda:

(In 1926) "we made three hundred and three organs, ranging in price from \$10,000 to \$100,000. It was our best year for organs. But we're out of the pipe organ business. Talking pictures just about killed our business."



Hurricane "Belle" visited the Connecticut area in August and vented her wrath to the tune of \$5 million. The property known as "The Cave by a Waterfall," owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Yeoman (she's Rosa Rio) did not escape damage. Bill reports five trees were blown down on the property, and lights were out for several days.



British organist Dudley Savage had been broadcasting his *As Prescribed* request program for the ill and shut-in over the South and West BBC services for over 20 years when

in 1968 the programmers decided to close down the organcasts. The furore was loud and immediate. Eventually, more than 40,000 petition signers told the BBC that they wanted no interference with Savage's Sunday morning transmissions played on the 3/8 Compton in the ABC Royal Theatre in Plymouth. The upshot was that the program was moved to transmitters which could be heard all over Britain. There's a moral there, someplace.



From Fort Myers, Florida, Jane Keller reports that Dick Leibert's funeral service included music sung by a choir (piano accompaniment) and a tape recording of Dick's organ version of "Onward Christian Soldiers." Dick was organist for his church. A temporary replacement has been asked to take over until more permanent arrangements can be made.



Several years ago, organist Tommy Stark acquired a circa 3/15 Wurlitzer, to be installed in the former theatre where he and Jim Hansen set up their music store in Lemon Grove, Calif. Time marched on, the store did well selling plug-ins, both Tommy and Jim were up to here in continuing playing engagements (both are also staffers at San Diego's Organ Power pizzerias), so the Wurlitzer remained stashed. But just before Halloween this year we received a flyer announcing a *Phantom of the Opera* showing on October 31. Tommy had written on the margin, "Come on over. We've got the Wurlitzer perking," which will be good

Tom Hazleton at the Orpheum Robert Morton. Perhaps the final concert.



'Batman' Tommy Stark gets set for his *Phantom of the Opera* Halloween stint.

(Nakaharapic)



news for those planning the ATOS convention for 1979. Lose one (the SF Orpheum), win one!



Ex-theatre organist Harold Jolles does a great deal of "thinking and rocking" these days in his Cattaraugus, N.Y. home, "and I don't mean rock music, either," he says. Listening to the Madrid Symphony one evening on his stereo system. "I could close my eyes and I was in the loges of Rochester's Eastman Theatre. The Eastman School's motion picture organ class sat there to hear Victor Wagner conduct the theatre's symphony orchestra which numbered about 100 men. When playing the feature picture it was reduced to 65. Most people don't know that the long-gone 4/155 Austin organ was built and voiced to be heard from behind the drapes, curtains and orchestra backdrop.

"You have no idea how beautiful that organ sounded! I used to play the last show of the day on it when it was played by the two masters, Robert Berentsen and John Hammond. But when, at the 1964 ATOS Convention, they removed all the drapes, so the horizontal shutters could be seen backstage, the organ sounded horrible!



Lloyd Klos believes he has finally located the console of the Kohl organ which once was installed in Rochester's Monroe Theatre. According to N.Y. ATOS Chapterite George Basch, the console, formerly of three manuals when in the theatre, has been rebuilt into a 4-manual keydesk and it now controls pipework once in the Florida Theatre in Jacksonville, the entire instrument in Miami's Andre Hall. Klos knew that after the Kohl was removed from the Monroe, it was re-installed in a Connecticut church, and a few years ago, was sold to a Florida enthusiast for a home installation. Kohl organs were built in Rochester and installed in neighborhood theatres there. Arthur Kohl the builder, is still living.

When Shay Torrent was hobbled by injuries from an auto accident back in April, he was unable to fulfill his organist duties at Anaheim Stadium for the California Angels'



Helen Dell. Look for her on *Phyllis* and also playing the Paramount, Calif., ice rink Wurlitzer during a coming *Barnaby Jones* episode.

baseball games. Into the breach for a couple weeks stepped the Dodgers' Helen Dell. In August, Helen donned her "other" baseball cap again when Torrent was engaged for playing at a horse show. Which was OK for the



Dainty Miss because she doesn't like horses. We wonder if she likes camels better. In 1966, while on a round-the-world trip, Helen rode a camel in the shadow of Egypt's pyramids. A picture of her dromedarian activities will accompany her biography when it appears in THEATRE ORGAN. Incidentally, look for Helen on TV in upcoming *Phyllis* and *Barnaby Jones* stanzas.



Bob Vaughn, who usually does his thing scoring silent movies at the 3/15 Wurlitzer in the San Francisco Avenue theatre, took time off in September to attend a national movie buffs' convention. This year the "Cinephiles" met in New York. The HQ was the Sheraton, across the street from the Little Carnegie where Lee Erwin hopes to have the much-travelled 2/5 "Little Mother" Wurlitzer going soon. Bob was scheduled to play two Harold Lloyd features "on whatever is available now" at the little cinema. He was also set to play some silent film accompaniments at the Museum of Modern Art, and even at the Sheraton (using a piano). Bob was looking forward to "three and one half days of old movies — 'til they dribble out of the eyeballs. But that's my thing!"



"Straight" organists are coming to realize that the theatre pipe organ is not the ogre it was once classed in its first great era. The Buffalo, N.Y. Chapter, AGO had a theatre organ party awhile back in the Riviera Theatre in No. Tonawanda. Organists Frank Olsen and Harvey Elsaesser performed solos, a sing-along and accompaniment to a Laurel and Hardy silent film.



Help! Another organ is in danger, the former WKY 4/14 Kilgen now reposing uneasily in Oklahoma City's civic auditorium. The instrument has been there since 1951, mostly mute and always neglected, reports Ken Wright who broadcast on it for 15 years from WKY's radio studio. The city bought it for \$1,000. Ken adds that the local "symphony types" look down their noses at the

Kilgen and would like to see it replaced with a classic job. But Ainslee Cox, conductor of the Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra, is one of the Kilgen's champions. In the July 11 issue of the *Sunday Oklahoman*, Cox stated that there are many pieces of music requiring an organ which he can't now schedule. The trouble seems to be in the city's budget struggles, also in damage to the organ when the hall was remodeled in 1967. It could come to a repair bill of \$7500. Ken Wright and a small band of enthusiasts are actively seeking ways of raising the money. Suggestions are solicited. Drop Ken a note c/o Conn Organ Co., 1200 Linwood, Oklahoma City, Okla. 73106.

In Mesa, Arizona, Organ Stop organist Ron Rhode may be on his way to becoming a screen star. The pizzeria was used as a setting for a scene in *The Glass Cage*, starring Aldo Ray and Virginia Mayo. While the actors were emoting, Ron played the movie's theme, "Lifetimes," on the 3/25 Wurlitzer, and the camera dollied in for a console closeup. "Just like a screen test" said Ron, who added that the organ will be heard on the soundtrack album.

George Downes Jr., reports from Canton, Ohio, that the 1900-seat Palace Theatre has been closed since February, and the restored 3/9 Kilgen has been idle. The house, a typical John Ebersson atmospheric of Moorish Courtyard design, was opened in November 1927 with Banks Kennedy at the console. The house changed hands a few years later, was idle for a period, reopening in the late thirties, and running continuously until this year. The Kilgen was rehabilitated in 1969 by Stephen Brown, pipe voicer for the Schantz Organ Co. of Orville, Ohio. Mr. Downes, who works near the theatre, says there have been no plans announced as to the building's fate.

Veteran organist Jack Skelly is skeptical regarding the wage supposedly paid to Jesse Crawford, \$2500 a week at the N.Y. Paramount, as reported in the August issue. A more realistic figure," Jack says, "is

the amount mentioned by the music contractor at that time: \$900. But, who knows for sure? Crawford once had a day off to play at the Charles Schwab (Bethlehem Steel executive) mansion, for which he received \$1,000 according to *Variety*.

"Local 802 (New York City) has no record of Hall of Famer Stuart Barrie. Evidently, he was just in as a transfer member. I know that he opened the Beacon Theatre on upper Broadway.

"The New York Paramount will have had its golden anniversary this November. As I pass by, which I often do, I'll say 'Happy Anniversary.' Main floor is used by the New York Bank of Savings."



Mike Hawking

Mike Hawking wants it known that he's playing a plug-in Wednesday through Sunday in the lounge of the Golden Autumn restaurant, Bellwood, Illinois. Drop in, while passing through, for a request number.

A Hollywood pre-recorded program called *Top Forty* was broadcast thruout the country on AM and FM stations on September 5, bringing to light a new 45 rpm record which is fast rising on the pop musical charts. It is a light treatment of the First Movement of Beethoven's 5th Symphony entitled "A Fifth of Beethoven," with "California Strut" on the flip side. The re-arranger is Walter Murphy Jr. of Yonkers, N.Y., a former student of Rosa Rio.

Walter began his music lessons with Rosa at age 4½ and continued

with her until 17. He is now 24 and writing jingles for commercials and working as a studio musician, proving that a musical career can be rewarding.

The Rochester Theatre Organ Society opened its 13th season on September 15, when Dick Smith presided at the 4/22 Wurlitzer in the Auditorium Theatre. Wisely abandoning his noted slam-bang style, Smith presented a concert which seemed to please the discerning Rochester audience. He did perform some pyrotechnical numbers, bouncing noticeably on the bench, particularly in the second half, but the 1153 concertgoers seated in the muggy auditorium, didn't seem to mind.

RTOS program chairman, Ken Vernon, after a season of predominately first-appearance artists, has lined up engagements of very popular returnees, including Billy Nalle, Ashley Miller, Rosa Rio, Rex Koury, Ron Rhode and England's Len Rawle. It should be one of RTOS' finest seasons, and may well set a new attendance record, given some good breaks by the weather.

The Radio City Music Hall operation has been granted a reprieve of one year, thanks to the common-sense attitude of four unions representing musicians, stage hand wardrobe attendants and the famed Rockettes. With yearly attendance steadily dropping from a high of six million a year to one million, the employees saw the handwriting on the wall. Clearly, it was "make concessions or no work." The musicians agreed to a 10% pay cut, and concessions and adjustments were made by the others. The use of the Wurlitzer organ continues, according to Doc Bebko, who saw John DeTroy at the console on September 4. "I heard him play out the house (as I did 35 years ago), for the final show. He played well and made that sound come over."

From time to time in these pages, we have heard of the activities of Don Robinson, theatre organ enthusiast in Utica, N.Y. He has engaged

in several restoration projects in his area thru the years, and for 15 years has produced the show *The Organ Loft* on local radio, spinning records and giving news of happenings in the pipe organ world. News recently arrived which told us that he has been elected Dean of the Central New York Chapter of the AGO. Congratulations, Don. His pipe organ activity runs in the family as his brother Melvin is a noted authority on organ renovation and maintenance in the New York area.



Lowell Ayars, the Singing Organist, reports he had a great time playing a concert for the PATOS on September 21 at the South Hills Theatre. "I found the audience the quietest and most attentive I have ever experienced. They don't even cough while the performer is playing. It is a warm, out-going group and very nice to work with, especially with combinations, lighting and special effects. The theatre is just about the cleanest in which I've been in at least 30 years. It is plain, but immaculately kept: the brass is polished, the stage floor shines, and the light bulbs aren't even dusty. In this day and age, wow!"



Ann Montgomery, Yuma, Arizona's contribution to ATOS, recently returned from a 33-day trip which took her via Hawaii to the South Seas, Australia, New Zealand, Pago Pago, and other exotic spots, aboard the SS Mariposa. While en-route, Ann, who is an accomplished hula artist, was employed as choreographer for presentations of *South Pacific* and *Oklahoma*. The Baldwin electronic was handled by Don Andersen, who knows many of the organists on the ATOS circuit, especially Lyn Larsen. Being an amateur organist helped in that venture, she says.



"Caveman" Roy Davis is at it again. We reported his pipe weekend last year which ranged through two time zones in Tennessee. This year the safari departed from Chattanooga on Nov. 13, after a 9:00 a.m. savoring of Henry McKinney's 2/6 residence Wurlitzer. Next stop was the 3/14 Wurli in Chattanooga's



downtown Tivoli theatre with Bill Barger at the console. After lunch the procession headed for Cookeville and Chuck LaLone's 2/8 residence Barton. Then on to McMinnville and the Cumberland Caverns for an underground "Caveman" Thanksgiving dinner by candlelight and with organ music (at only \$3.00 a plate!), followed by a free guided tour of the Caverns. Then over to Roy Davis' pad on the Cavern grounds for music on his 2/9 residence Wurlitzer. At about 11:00 p.m. there was a tour of Roy's pipe organ and parts warehouse in nearby McMinnville. All of this between 9:00 a.m. and about midnight on a Saturday!



Genny Whitting reports that restoration work is progressing on the former New York Academy of Music 3/15 Wurlitzer which is to be installed shortly in a Bellevue, Washington pizza parlor. Jack and Betty Laffaw have enlisted a crew of restorers including Bill Carson (chests and pipes), Mary Carson (all chest pneumatics), Jack's sons, Don Myers, and Genny Whitting. Ground-breaking was scheduled for the end of September, with the organ being installed after Christmas. If anyone has any early history of this

instrument, send it along to Genny Whitting, 1223 NE 108th St., Seattle, Wash. 98125.

Genny further reports that Steve's Gay 90's Restaurant in South Tacoma was sold to some Nevada interests and the format changed. Whether the 3/10 Wurlitzer is still used is not known. Finally, a 2/8 Kimball, formerly in the Coliseum Theatre in Juneau, Alaska is now being restored at Balcom and Vaughan in Seattle for reinstallation in the Capitol Building in Juneau. This will be the first capitol building in the United States to have a theatre organ.



The Hall of Fame honor to Dessa Byrd came at the right time, as her sister, Virginia informs us. Since March 21, Dessa has been recuperating from a broken hip, and it is hoped that she will have returned home in October. Labeled "the Grand Dame of the Central Indiana ATOS Chapter and prime mover in the revival of theatre organ activity in the Indianapolis area," in an *Indianapolis Star* article, Dessa was the city's premier theatre organist, playing the Circle and Indiana theatres. ATOS members who would like to cheer her up with cards and



Dessa was deeply touched by her Hall of Fame selection. This was her reply to her congratulators.

letters, can send them to her in care of her sister, Mrs. Stephen B. Rechoris, 5693 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46220.



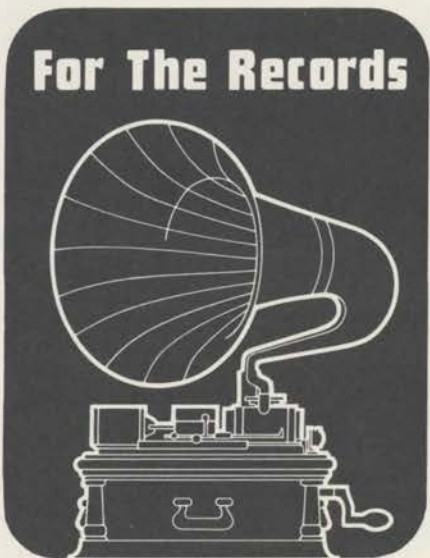
THEATRE ORGAN Magazine has learned that the Wurlitzer Co. has completed plans for obtaining a vintage Mighty Wurlitzer.

The famed company has purchased a school complex whose rooms will be renovated into offices. The school has a large three story building, formerly a chapel, which will become the auditorium and it will reportedly house the largest Mighty Wurlitzer in existence anywhere in the world.

Three Wurlitzer pipe organs have been purchased, which will be amassed into a colossal 65 rank

totally unified theatre pipe organ. These enormous resources will be controlled by no less than a 5 manual console. A Wurlitzer four manual console is being revised to accommodate the extra manual and additional stop keys.

The Wurlitzer Co. is to be commended for joining ATOS in preserving the tradition and art form of theatre organ. □



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.

DON SIMMONS PLAYS THE ORGAN GRINDER WURLITZER PIPE ORGAN, stereo, \$7.95 post-paid from Don Simmons Recordings, 1610 S.E. Glenwood Street, Portland, Oregon 97202.

Don Simmons has been a happy fixture in Portland circles for as long as most fans can remember. Part of his enduring popularity is due to 20 years playing the unenclosed Wurlitzer hanging from the rafters of the Oaks Park roller rink. He has released several previous records but we feel this to be his best grooved effort to date, partly because Don's playing (and tunelists) improve with time and partly because of the finely

honed instrument in Portland's Organ Grinder pizzeria.

Admittedly, rink organists are a breed apart. The steady, trap-happy rhythm and brassy, unexpressive registration which is so attractive while skating doesn't always add up to good listening on records. Have no qualms; where Don Simmons has operating swell pedals available, he knows how to use them. And his registration is not a continuous "thump-boom" Posthorn solo. In fact, there is little of Don's "rink personality" (if there is one) heard in these grooves. It's Don in concert, and his varied styles hold interest through the contrasting arrangements.

The organ is a big factor. If we may speak with restraint, it's a beauty, a labor of love of organ technician Dennis Hedberg (who also supervised the recording). The organ seems to provide each organist with the registration he desires. The combinations heard on this disc contrast sharply with those used by Jonas Nordwall for a previous release. Don leans toward the generously spiced (with mutations) high frequency emphasis combos — Twelfth, Tierce, Fifteenth, Piccolo, plus Tibia Quint to embellish the 8' voices. If the highs seem over-harsh they may be diminished with the auditioners playback frequency controls.

Don uses "automatic rhythm" and programmed end-phrase breaks on a couple of numbers, which is both a blessing and a curse, depending on one's viewpoint. We could do very well without those repetitious drum patterns but we must admit they fit the mod tunes well. We understand a Rodgers rhythm circuit triggers the real traps.

The tunelist is a delight from the variety viewpoint: "Mama Don't Want No Music Played Around Here," "Thou Swell," "Winchester Cathedral," "Night Train," "Love Will Keep Us Together," "You," "Pass Me By," "Ol' Man River," "I'm Biding My Time," "A Foggy Day," "Watch What Happens," and "That's All."

"Mama" is given a percussion-pocked, brassy treatment in strict tempo with lots of snare drum in the accompaniment throughout its I-IV-V pattern. "Thou Swell," is pure theatre organ, with some brassy/xylophone/glock punctuation, all in

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6050	6179	6050	6179
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Don Simmons at the Organ Grinder console. Those with long memories will recognize it from a series of long ago John Kiley records when it was part of the Boston Metropolitan/Music Hall Wurlitzer. The console was shown in full color on the Kiley jackets.

tempo, and with '30s riff patterns. "Cathedral" introduces the auto-rhythm and end break effects. Lots of percussers here but Don doesn't neglect variety in the harmonic patterns. Posthorn brass marks "Night Train." Auto-rhythm dominates "Together," which is quite in character with the rum-te-tum pattern of the mod tune. "You" is theatre intermission music, with good use made of pizzicato effects. The cheerful 6/8 time of "Pass Me By" provides a brassy closer to Side 1.

Don avoids the obvious during a most engaging ballad styling of "Ol' Man River." He takes great but pardonable liberties with the melody

line to avoid repeating the same old thing. There's a brief brassy sequence, then a "Paramount-Publix" ending which would have sounded out as full organ had it not been compressed somewhere along the line before becoming a modulated groove. "Bidin' My Time" still conjures memories of Jimmy Savvo as one of Broadway's *Three Men on a Horse* with all the tune's original charm and sans embellishment other than variety in registration. "Foggy Day" follows the same pattern, but relies on registration heard in previous grooves. The same might be said of "Watch What Happens," although there's a pleasant break via a brass reed solo for a few measures. Don's closer is a pleasing "That's All."

The jacket is a masterwork; it includes a stoplist (38 ranks at the time of recording. Jonas Nordwall informs us it's now 40 ranks), and voice analysis by chambers. The instrument started as the 3/13 Wurlitzer in the Portland Egyptian theatre, and has been growing for several years under the tasteful cultivation of many-faceted Dennis Hedberg. The front of the jacket is decorated with a color photo of Don Simmons at the now 4-manual console. We last saw that console pictured on the long ago John Kiley records made

when it controlled the 4/26 Wurlitzer in Boston's Metropolitan/Music Hall theatre.

It should also be pointed out that although Don has been playing the Organ Grinder organ for pizza chompers for the past three years, there is nothing on this record which would tend to mark his efforts as those of the typical pizza organist. Don has style and class.

FEELING: STU BOYER, playing the 4/20 composite Wurlitzer in the Arden (Calif.) Pizza and Pipes. Stereo. \$6.00 postpaid from Arttus Records, 3005 Eastern Ave., No. 21, Sacramento, Calif. 95812.

The organ heard here has an interesting history. It's a composite of two Wurlitzers, one originally in the Madison (Wis.) Strand theatre, the other in the Chicago Tiffin theatre. In the mid-'50s they were joined as a single 4/20 by the late Bill Huck for his Replica studio near Chicago, where a number of record releases were cut, among them Byron Melcher's "Gorilla in the Garden." The Replica studio was acoustically "dead" (Huck seemed to like it that way), and the records played on the organ never did well commercially. Huck eventually closed down the Replica operation and sold the organ to Dr. Ray Lawson who installed it in his Montreal home where it remained for many years. Since circa 1972 the instrument has been heard in the Arden Pizza and Pipes, Sacramento Calif. Thus we have another chapter in our continuing saga entitled "Pipe Organs Sure Do Travel."

This is Stu Boyer's second album; the first, "Timeless Treasures," was played on the Carl Greer Inn Robert Morton. We dusted off the first record for a comparison and it left no doubt that Stu's capabilities have improved in the five years between. If there is an overriding characteristic, it is probably that Stu loves jingly percussions. And his music is literal; he makes bold statements and doesn't leave much to the imagination (real auto horns, train sounds etc.). This is sometimes an advantage, such as his opening fanfare from "Also Sprach Zarathustra" which he plays delightfully straight,

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without the clumsy rhythmic follow-up so many organists feel compelled to improvise. "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" features real auto horns. One of Stu's most artistically played numbers is "The Morning After," with fine phrasing and nuance. We could make the same statement about "They Call the Wind Mariah" but the (literal) wind effects are somewhat distracting. Another sensitively played tune is "If," and the background tonal percussions add depth and substance to medium-full registration. Stu puts a calliope intro on "It's a Small, Small World," then makes with the Glock, Orch. Bells, Xylophone, a few baggiped measures, Sleigh Bells, Drums — the works.

Of course, no one would dare play "Chattanooga Choo Choo" without the steam locomotive accompaniment in a pizzeria and Stu's arrangement is a douzle, with train bells, Orchestra Bells, Glock and Train Whistles. The organ's piano is heard briefly during a puzzling "Prelude in C-Sharp Minor" (Rachmaninoff) intro to the *Godfather* music, and then the melody line is often carried on the Chimes. It's novel for a few measures but it's right back to the Bells and Glock for a lively "Sweet Gypsy Rose." When Stu isn't using the Clackers during "Granada," the listener gets a brief opportunity to hear what the organ sounds like, before he brings on the battery of Bells again. Sorry to report he also resorts to several schmear glissandos. But "Day by Day" (from *Godspell*) is clear of tintinnabulation, with only the clackers punctuating. It's one of Stu's better tunes. The closer is a medley of Bicentennial tunes: "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," "Dixie" (played on all the Bells), "Battle Hymn of the Republic" (more bells), "America the Beautiful" and a snatch of the national anthem.

This record is probably a reflection of what sells in many pizza parlors where being there is half the fun. But for strictly "listening music" there isn't enough registration variety to sustain our interest. Stu's technique is clean and he plays accurately, but he seems to be hooked on bells. Which is okay if one can digest long percussion passages. Our chief complaint is that we still don't know much about the organ's registration



Stu Boyer

capabilities after hearing the record.

The jacket has photos made during recording, a brief history of the composite instrument, but not much about the organist. Recording is adequate, although the piano pickup leaves much to be desired (or it may be the piano itself).

This one is for the uncritical fan who likes the emphasis on percussion.

EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSA. Rosa Rio playing the LIU 4/26 Wurlitzer. HMR855, Stereo. \$6.50 postpaid from HMR Productions, 574 West Court, Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076.



Rosa Rio.

(Dick Harold Photo)

Rosa Rio! The name has an attractive ring to it, and small wonder. Rosa has been with us from the silent era through the radio and TV "soap opera" '30s, '40s and '50s, was pianist for such stars as Mary Martin, then came a career playing concerts and teaching. If you recall such oldies as radio's *Lorenzo Jones*, *The Shadow*, *When a Girl Marries*, the homespun poetry of Ted Malone on *Between the Bookends* or the baritone voice of NBC's *Gospel Singer*, chances are the organ accompaniments were played by Rosa Rio. In recent years, she has been heard during ATOS conventions or on an ambitious, continuing round of concerts under the management of husband Bill Yeoman. Few similar careers have covered such a time span while enjoying continued popularity.

This album is another in the catalog of HMR, a relatively new label which specializes in theatre organ releases. This current biscuit won't hurt their rising prestige one whit.

The now and then applause indicates some, if not all, of the music was recorded during a concert Rosa played on the one-time Brooklyn Paramount 4/26 Wurlitzer which is still in its original setting although the auditorium is now Long Island University's basketball court. Thus the big hall acoustic environment is apparent.

The following titles are listed on the labels: "Everything's Coming Up Roses" (very brief with announcement by Bill Yeoman), "Miracles of Miracles," "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life?," "Love For Sale," "Forgotten Melody," "Bicycles of Belsize," "Birth of the Blues," "Before the Parade Passes By," "Georgia," "Sweet Gypsy Rose," "Body and Soul," "Pomp and Circumstance No. 4" (Elgar), and "A Wonderful Day Like Today" (with Rosa's spoken and sung sign-off). It's an attractive and varied program as listed, but the list doesn't name all the tunes played. Spliced in as ornamentation are bits and pieces of the following: Grieg's "A Minor Piano Concerto," "The Seine," "Rhapsody in Blue," "I Love a Parade" and "'76 Trombones."

Playing is generally straightforward, with few surprises in the arrangements although Rosa provides

some jazz variations during such tunes as "Love For Sale." "Forgotten Melody" is, of course, the rarely recorded Jesse Crawford radio theme, and don't look for any "Land of Hope and Glory" in Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance;" Rosa plays the bright No. 4 march rather than the played-to-death No. 1. (Elgar wrote five P&C coronation marches).

There is plenty of tempo variety, with marches, blues, a concert waltz, fox trots (remember?) and just easy "intermission music." If there is a reservation, it has to do with the big hall miking emphasizes the volume changes caused by use of the swell pedals; sometimes the volume differences between open shutters and closed shutters may seem like too much. Yet it's much like hearing the organ in the auditorium, although the ear may then tend toward some automatic "compression." But that's a small matter.

Rosa seems to prefer full combinations, and her favorite solo reed has got to be the Posthorn. "Body and Soul" features a gorgeous massed string chorus, the less pungent solo voices and color reeds are heard occasionally. The snarly Posthorn is perhaps used too often, and in full chords through much of "Pomp and Circumstance."

Jacket notes by Lloyd E. Klos provide considerable Rosa Rio history. Record surfaces are very smooth. Here's a variety program played in solid theatre organ style by a veteran who knows her craft thoroughly.

TIME AFTER TIME WITH CARL WEISS. VLT-74011. \$4.00 postpaid from Tonawanda Recordings, 32 New York Avenue, Massapequa, N.Y. 11758.

The organ is a Wurlitzer style 235 (3/11) installed in the home of Walter Hilsenbeck. It came from Loew's 167th Street Theatre in the Bronx. The organist Carl Weiss, has played engagements at New York's RKO Madison theatre (at 15) and later at Leow's Jersey, Pitkin and Kings Theatres.

For all the promising ingredients, we have rarely heard a recording with so much wrong with it. From what we could make out, Carl Weiss played the selections very well,



Carl Weiss

although he seemed to use heavy registration continually. Yet, that may be an impression caused by the recording process.

Carl's selections are "San Francisco," "You Look Like Someone," "Alone Again Naturally," "When Sunny Gets Blue," "Sway," "Tie a Yellow Ribbon," "Time After Time," "Candy Man," "Serenata," "Trolley Song," "Kiss Me Goodbye" and "Boo Hoo," adding up to plenty of variety so far as titles are concerned.

Trouble is, the selections are not heard clearly because of a curious distortion in the grooves. We made a strong effort to determine what had gone wrong, and finally enlisted the aid of our man with the extremely sensitive ears, Rod Yarbrough. What we had figured out to be an out-of-tune organ turned out to be electronic gimmickry between taping and pressing which added so much reverb that the over-all sound seems to "swim." It was determined that the organ is a honey, as recorded earlier on a test tape. Yet Carl's selections are marred by audio peaks, distortion and what sometimes seems to be a "swayback" frequency response. The result is a package which can do nothing for the organist. The distributor is aware of these flaws, and has reduced the price to our readers. As a curio and example of how not to make an organ record, it couldn't be improved on.

ROBIN RICHMOND PRESENTS: FROM A SEAT IN THE STALLS. Acorn (stereo) CF 265. Available from Mr. Tom Herd, 8 Ashwood Court, Frenchwood, Preston PR1 4PS, Lancashire, England. Post-paid price is \$5.50 by seaimail, \$8.50 by airmail. Make out checks on US banks to Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust.

This is a further effort of the English Lancastrian group to save two Wurlitzer organs from closed British theatres; profits from record sales are turned back into the organ fund. One of the organs is the 4/14 in the Gaumont Manchester theatre. It is heard on this recording played by Robin Richmond who is celebrating 50 years as an organist.

We have previously reviewed a number of LTOT albums played on this Wurlitzer and each time we have found instrument, miking and acoustical considerations to be top rate. This excellence is carried to the record surface (extremely smooth and noise-free) and the informative jacket notes.

For some time we have been asking why it is that British organists seem to prefer recording US-originated tunes. Robin Richmond is no exception. His tunelist for Side 1 includes "The Red Red Robin" (Signature), "Please," "Dream," "Aint She Sweet" (quickstep), "That Old Feeling," "Great Day," "Ooh That Kiss," "Hindustan," "You are My Lucky Star," and "Beyond the Blue Horizon." The last five are also played in that uniquely British "Quickstep" style. However, roughly half of Side 1 is devoted to eight selections from European and British Musical Comedies, and a charming group of tunes they are. We won't list the names as they most likely will not ring many bells on this side of the pond — which may be one of the reasons British musicians prefer US titles.

Likewise, Side 2 offers a generous serving of English show tunes as well as US tunes. Without differentiating, the titles are: "After You've Gone," "The Clouds Will Soon Roll By" (both quicksteps), "Can't We Talk it Over," "Robin's Nest," "Nightingale," "Yesterdays" (Kern), selections from the show *Remember Guy Mitchell* (3 titles), and a medley of signature tunes of nine unnamed



Robin Richmond.

(John D. Sharp Photo)

British organists.

Richmond's style might be described as "easy listening." It's a lighthearted, happy aura he creates, never moody nor somber. He jingles along mostly in a razz-ma-tazz tempo, with lots of nice old-fashioned riffs, breaks and melody variations. "Please," "Dream" and "That Old Feeling" are well done as ballads. There may be too much "quickstep" playing for some tastes. That's the cramming of many titles into the shortest time possible. At least it's lively. We have heard this same organ recorded with more registration variety, but Robin makes up for it with enthusiasm. Playing is generally accurate, except for a few minor fluffs. Robin apparently didn't do much arranging; he just played the music and played it pretty. The organ, at the time of recording, was hindered by a tremulant so choppy it generated a "Leslie" effect — for the Strings and Posthorn!

This one is not for the critical organ buff; for him it may lack sufficient variety. But those who like to browse among nostalgic tunes from entertainment's heyday, here's a palatable mish-mash of US and British tunes played in happy tempos.

THE PLUG-IN CORNER

AS THE CROW FLIES. Andy Crow playing a special Rodgers model 33E electronic theatre organ. \$6.50 postpaid from O. Neil Grover, 5567 Crawford Drive, Columbus, Ohio, 43229.

This is a very special recording. We are forever belaboring the electronic organ builders to emulate pipe sounds more closely instead of dissipating their efforts in develop-



Andy Crow.

(Stufoto)

ing sales promotion sound-warping gimmicks. Of course Rodgers has always largely followed the tone-before-gadgets course; the firm is responsible for some impressive organs, both theatre and classical. Their progress since the research done to develop the Bob Power "Style 260" theatre organ is most encouraging in the design of the production model 340. Yet the organ heard on this record is an older Rodgers which predates the model 340 circuitry. But, on this recording, it's one of the best Rodgers ever. Of course it's not a plain model 33E. The speakers used, according to Tom Hamilton, are those that normally connect to the Rodgers "Black Beauty," the touring classical organ played in concert by Ted Worth and Virgil Fox. We don't know whether any tonal changes were made. The recording also has the acoustical enhancement of the Ohio theatre in Columbus. The result is a truly amazingly "pipelike" sound, to use a suspiciously overworked adjective.

Of course, much of the credit must go to organist Andy Crow, who knows how to arrange for and play the Rodgers for best results. He must also be part magician because this older model just doesn't have what pipe purists love to call "that electronic sound." The Tibia, not one of Rodgers' most imitative voices, sounds almost as good as that on the original Gulbransen "Rialto." The strings don't have that steely glitter so common to electronic strings, and the bright brass is emphatic without being strident. The ensemble sound is very pleasing, so is the piano stop.

Andy's arrangements take full advantage of the facilities. Most are his own, but in admiration of George Wright he includes "Jalousie" patterned after George's recorded arrangement. The tonal and registration similarities are worth noting.

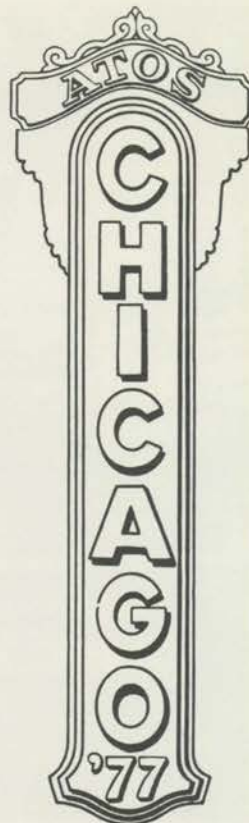
Other selections are "Swanee," "Bill," "Here's That Rainy Day," "Alley Cat," "By the Time I Get to Phoenix," "The Girl From Ipanema" and "Birth of the Blues."

Recording is good from the miking viewpoint. However, our review pressing had intermittent rough patterns on several of the outer cuts. Jacket notes tell about Andy Crow, who is best known nationally as one-half the Worth-Crow Duo which concertizes for Rodgers. □

THE 1977 CONVENTION

The Palmer House, convention headquarters in 1977.

(Photo Courtesy of the Palmer House)



by Almer N. Brostrom
photos by Bill Lamb

Hard at work are we. That is, the '77 Convention Committee. What to show, where to go, is the decision we are having to make. Organs galore, from suburbs to shore — Lake Michigan.

It will be fun and enlightening, nostalgic, too. Here is where the theatre organ was nurtured. And Jesse Crawford did it. The organ he used is sounding forth and will be played in the famous Chicago Theatre, flagship of the old Balaban and Katz, ABC, and now the Plitt Theatre Organization. The theatre is in excellent shape, thanks to an interested and dedicated management.

The organs in our area are of several breeds and sizes in theatres, schools, rinks and temples — TV station, too — all of which are in good shape. Specifications on the instruments will be given at convention time and it is planned to take in the best of the lot in a leisurely manner — no racing.

Accommodations will be right in downtown Chicago at the famous Palmer House which has beautiful

DEC. 1976 - JAN. 1977



rooms and convention facilities. And we are assured of very decent rates. Many of our city's attractions are within walking distance of the hotel — really, only a few blocks.

Since some of the organs are in the suburbs, we will have special buses for transportation, naturally. All plans are for a full but leisurely program. There will be time for sight-seeing and shopping on your own

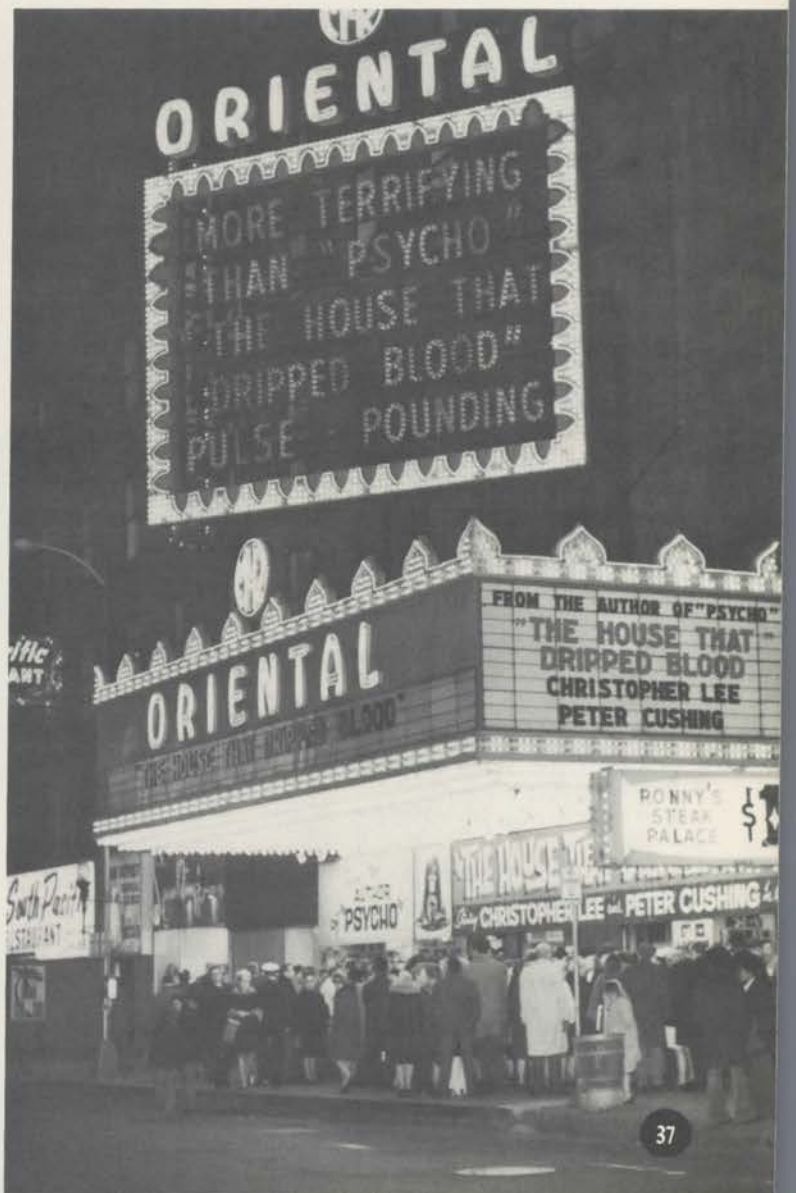
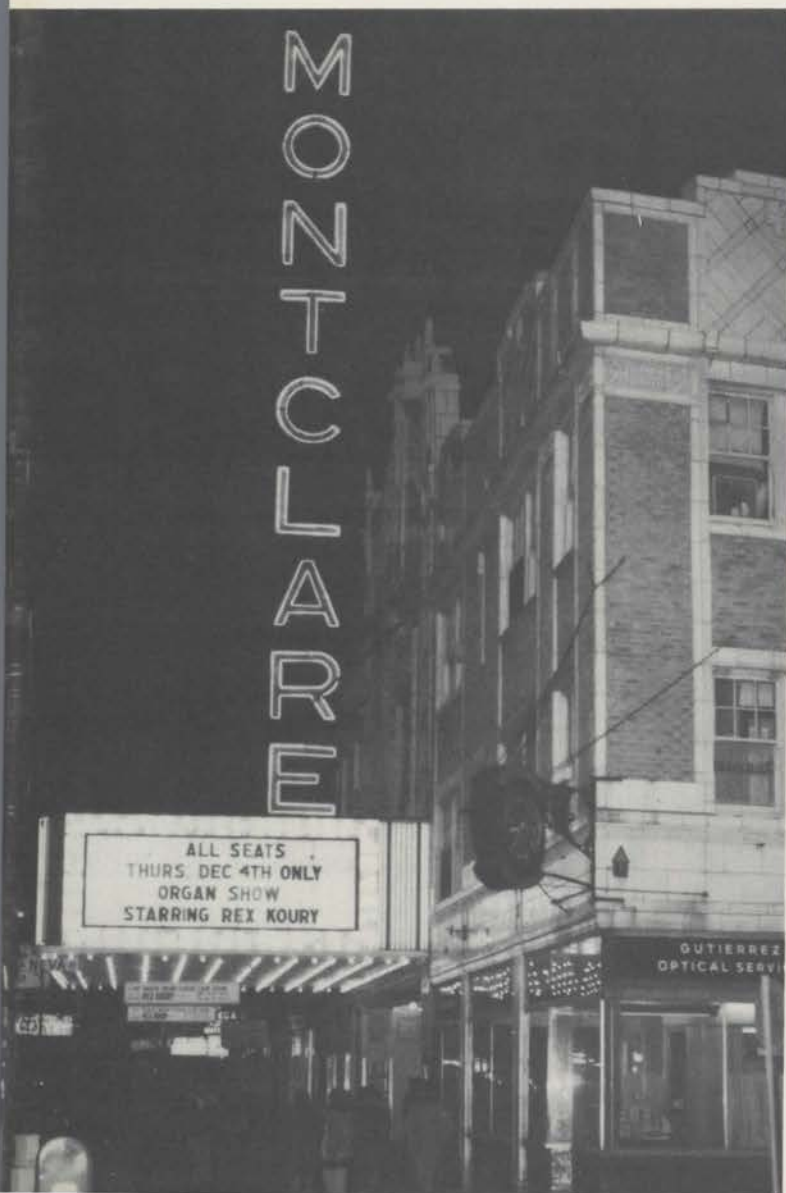
and seminars will be held in the hotel on subjects of general and special interest to all.

The weather will be ideal and interiors will be air conditioned to perfection, if necessary. Also, the Afterglow will be an interesting event, worthy of your participation.

Try to get here a week before, so you can attend the Theatre Historical Society Convention. This group will

visit many theatres and places of interest which the ATOS Convention can not possibly cover. The combination of the two affairs will give you an excellent opportunity to view the majority of existing cinema houses while they are still around. Really, this is a rare opportunity, so avail yourself of these marvelous treats.

June 28 through July 3, 1977 for ATOS Convention. □



AMERICAN EXPEDITION TO BRITAIN REELS IN SOME PRECIOUS TAPE

Transcribed by Stu Green from Frank Killinger's diary.

It isn't often that a US record company goes to England for the purpose of conducting organ recording sessions, but according to Frank Killinger, prexy of Doric Records, Britain is a top spot for talent, "and the organs are excellent." So Frank set it up for June and July.

It wouldn't be the first British miking expedition for Killinger. He was there in 1969, and again in 1972 to make arrangements for his Doric release of the historic Sidney Torch records in the USA (for the first time). It was on that trip that he recorded what was intended to be a personal memento by Vic Hammett. That session was recently released as a memorial album to the late Vic Hammett.

Frank phoned ahead to George Blackmore.

"Want to tape some records, George?"

"But I just did one for you on the Reg. Foort Moller in San Diego!"

Frank informed George that the Moller record was selling well and that he needed a followup. So George "hired a hall" — the Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn, and its 4/16 Wurlitzer. When Frank arrived, things were in an uproar. The regular tuner had had a tiff with the theatre manager and the organ hadn't been tuned. But Blackmore and the manager put in a hurry call to Les

and Len Rawles, who were "up to here" with arrangements for the ATOS convention "invasion" which would transpire all too soon. But the Rawles somehow found the time to tune the organ and recording started on the morning of June 20 about 11:00 a.m.

Frank had selected the Kilburn organ carefully, after consulting with Wurlitzer expert Judd Walton, who

stated that it was a good one. It was, and is, Frank found. It was also in fine mechanical shape, having been gone over for the touring James family shortly before.

Frank learned the hard way that Bingo is still big in Britain, and getting bigger.

"Y'know, we've got to be out of the theatre by 4:00 p.m.," said George, "The Bingo game starts at 4:30."

"Oh the things that can foul one up when he tries to record!" wailed Frank.

The technical setup was supplied by "Studio Mobile" which consists of recording engineer John Bales and his recording van parked outside. Because the auditorium has a "good bounce," Frank decided to use three microphones rather than the more usual five.

Of course, old pro Blackmore was ready with a slew of arrangements — "Whistler's Mother-in-law," "Organ Grinder's Swing," "Manhattan Serenade," "Frenesi," "Sabre Dance," "Harlem," "Misty" and enough more for two groove releases. It was during the Cole Porter medley that Frank noticed some "holes in the music, during which George seemed to be wrapping harmony around no discernible melody. Later he asked George about it.

"What became of the tune back there?"

Group photo around the Gaumont State Theatre, Kilburn. L to R: Len Rawle (organist, tuner), George Blackmore, Frank Killinger (Doric Records), John Peters (Amberlee Records), John Bales (recording engineer) and Les Rawle (tuner).
(John D. Sharp Photo)



"Oh, I just left some spots to dub in piano later."

"But there's no piano here."

"I'll add the piano dubs at Bale's studio," explained George.

The material was recorded in two 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. sessions.

Next was the Regal Theatre, Edmonton, in London's outskirts with its 4/14 Christie. The organist was Doreen Chadwick.

The Regal Edmonton had some memories for Frank. It was there that his friend Vic Hammett's career skyrocketed when Vic was able to follow the volatile Sidney Torch in Torch's very individual jazz style. And it was there, too, that a memorial concert had been held for Hammett recently.

Frank thought about these events as he was speeding between Liverpool and Silver street stations on the "underground," the quickest way to arrive at the Regal. When he arrived, engineer John Peters was ready. They agreed on a two-microphone setup, each hung about 14 feet in front of the chambers. A man Frank knew only as "Derek" had tuned the organ and Doreen was ready to go, and go she did.

Despite a few mechanical console difficulties with sticking stopkeys, Frank knew he had chosen a good instrument. It had a fine sound. So did Doreen.

The Regal is also a "Bingo house," so the recording session was set for 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to accommodate the Bingo players at 1:30 p.m. Because tuning had consumed over 3 of the 4 hours of the first day session, Frank was worried about getting all Doreen's music on tapes. He needn't have been concerned, because in the last 55 minutes of the session, Doreen played nine titles, perfect in one take each.

Frank was pleasantly amazed. Next day she did nearly as well, with only three second takes necessary. She also recorded enough for two albums, including "That's a Plenty," "Red Pepper Rag," "La Cumparsita," "Under the Double Eagle," "Never-the-less," "Punch & Judy Polka," and "Musetta's Song."

Next stop was London's famous Odeon, Leicester Square, with its 5/17 Compton organ. It's an under-stage installation and it has an early Melotone, an electronic set of extra voices peculiar to Comptons. Organ



Doreen Chadwick at the Christie organ, Regal Theatre, Edmonton, London. Doreen amazed Frank Killinger by recording nine faultless first takes in 55 minutes. (John D. Sharp Photo)

technician Joe Carrington had the instrument in good shape for the two all-night sessions starting on July 22. Frank isn't quite clear as to who did the taping, probably due to the unusual hours.

"I think Jack Isaacs was the engineer. Anyways, he made good coffee to keep us awake all night."

The organist for this session was a young man Frank says is "on the way up." He's David Hamilton, recently appointed Director of Marketing for Europe by Conn.

Where the first two auditoriums had some "bounce," the Odeon, designed for sound film presentation, proved to be completely "dead" acoustically.

"We placed two mikes at the front of the balcony and the resulting recording sounded as though the mikes were up against the swell shutters," complained Frank, "We'll have to pump some reverb into this one."

Frank was intrigued by the Melotone.

"It will blatt at you if it isn't used correctly. It has a variable pitch stop, sorta like a slide whistle. We included it in a couple of tunes for humor."

This time the recording room was so far from the console, they used closed circuit TV to communicate.

David Hamilton's tunelist was an ambitious one with plenty of variety.

His program included "March of the Movies," "Kashmiri Song," "In a Persian Market," "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life," "Down By the Riverside," "People," "Mame," "Leicester Square Looks Around," "There'll Always Be An England," "Gaumont News March" and "Paramount on Parade."

David wasn't quite sure of the last tune and needed the notation. Frank started some "bird dogging" worthy of Holmes and Watson. He contacted Robin Richmond who conducts the BBC's *The Organist Entertains* broadcasts. Robin took Frank into a room filled with filing cabinets and they located a card for Leon Berry's cut of "Paramount on Parade." The card listed the publisher as Chappell. But a call to Chappell referred them to Famous Music. Sure enough, Famous had a lead sheet, and violating all their own "warnings," they made a Xerox copy for David.

Back at the hotel, Frank heard a babel of strange accents in the lobby — Americans! He was surrounded by the ATOS convention "Safari" group, over 200 strong. Frank's happy but fatiguing ordeal was over. He could relax as he watched the conventioners boarding buses at 9:00 a.m. to visit the places he had just come from. With his precious tapes under his arm, he headed for the airport. □

**NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN
DAYS**



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

This being the Christmas season, Jason and I have located some choice items relative to big-name organists and famous theatres in which they performed. References are Jacobs (J), Metronome (Met.), Variety (V) magazines and local press (LP).

May 1924 (LP) *Chicago* quickly gave its approval to the *Chicago Theatre's* mighty twin organ when it was presented for the first time. One-hour recitals were scheduled every other Sunday noon, alternating with the symphony and opera concerts.

Enthusiastic audiences filled the theatre for these performances, and their applause is echoed in the comments of the critics. Programs arrayed from classic to popular concerts.

Karleton Hackett in the Evening Post: "This twin organ has a most intriguing influence on the audience. MR & MRS JESSE CRAWFORD maintain the ensemble with precision; excerpts from "Aida" were cleverly adjusted to bring out a surprising number of themes."

Maurice Rosenfield in the Daily News: "The effect of two organs working simultaneously, and in a way, still independently, is a heightening of the possibilities of tonal coloring... achieved novel results... tone shadings ingenious and of beauty... The Bach was cleanly played, and in the right spirit. The renditions of the D Minor Prelude and Fugue, Dvorak's "Humoresque" and the "Light Cavalry Overture" were musical and the tone shadings were ingenuous and of beauty."

Nov. 20, 1926 (NY Times) Today at 10:45 a.m., it opens and the surging

thousands of Broadwayites catch their breaths in amazement! Watch the crowds pour in on opening day! Watch the faces! Listen to the explanations. You will be among them, then or very soon, because the pleasure is so great, the surprises so many. Everywhere there is a dazzle of color and luxury.

As you pass through the Grand Hall, you see in the great dome of the ceiling, a veritable sky of beauty, shining with golden sunlight, radiating with a deep blue. What a delightful place! Even to wait becomes a pleasure. Music whiles away the minutes. What an impression the theatre makes upon you as you enter! The perfect sweep of its beauty around and above, the beam of color, the ivory, rose-red and turquoise blue.

What use are words? See it for yourself as soon as possible. This is the place where all New York will meet for jolliest entertainment and luxury: THE PARAMOUNT THEATRE at Times Square and 43rd Street. Popular prices: 10:45 to 1 PM, weekdays and Saturdays, 40¢; 1 PM to 6 PM, 65¢; after 6 PM, 75¢.

Jan. 1927 (J) HENRY B. MURTAGH recently assumed the duties of solo organist at the *Chicago Theatre*, replacing JESSE CRAWFORD, who has left for New York City.

Feb. 1927 (Met.) During a week in January, LLOYD G. DEL CASTILLO's organ solo at Boston's Metropolitan Theatre was "Crazy Quilt Overture," which isn't quite as crazy as it might seem, for it embodies snatches of all the current overtures.

May 1927 (Met.) "Ankles Preferred" is enjoying a second big week at New York's Roxy Theatre. On the first day at 10:30 AM, a double row of patrons reached half way down the block to 7th Ave., and by noon, the crowds were so great that police reserves were summoned to stay till the late afternoon. The doors had to be closed at one time. By the end of the day, 24,746 paid \$17,943.20, the greatest in the Roxy's short history.

Nov. 27, 1927 (LP) PAUL H. FORSTER opens the Worth Theatre's 3-manual Wurlitzer in Ft. Worth, Texas.

Dec. 1927 (LP) DR. MELCHIORRE MAURO-COTTONE,

CARL MCKINLEY and H.C. FROMMEL alternate at the Capitol's Estey in New York City.

March 1928 (V) Following the scheme successfully inaugurated on the coast several years ago, STUART BARRIE has put across the first of a series of weekly Sunday organ concerts at the Ambassador Theatre in St. Louis. The idea is a new one to St. Louis, and from the reception the initial concert received, will be popular.

Barrie prefaces each number with a short description of the piece with an anecdote about its composition. These talks are brief and interesting. Numbers are all classical or semi-classical.

Apr. 1928 (J) EDDIE DUNSTEDTER has a new record on the market, a Brunswick release. The numbers are "Pride of Minneapolis" and "My Blue Heaven," done on the organ in the State Theatre in Minneapolis.

July 7, 1928 (LP) WBZ, the 900-kilowatt station in Boston, picked up LEW WHITE's 9 PM organ recital. Selections included "Natoma," "Old Hundred," "Minuet," "Deep River," "Spirit of 76," "Pan Americana," "Blue Danube," "Tiger Rag," "Just Like a Melody Out of the Sky" and "Rhapsody in Blue."

May 1929 (Syracuse Daily Orange) House Organist, W. STUART GREEN has added "organlogues" to his schedule at the second-run Syracuse, N.Y. Regent on weekends, the first being a song novelty, built around the current hit "Laugh Clown, Laugh!"

GOLD DUST: 1/27 LEO TERRY opens Piccadilly Theatre Kilgen in Chicago; WALTER WILD and FREDERICK SMITH at Brooklyn's Mark Strand... 5/27 MARGARET FRENCH at Loew's 83rd, New York; RAMON BERRY, Chicago's Alamo... 8/27 DEAN FOSSLER, Chicago Theatre... 2/28 EMIL VELAZCO opened New York's Colony Theatre... 4/28 HENRY FRANCIS PARKS, Chicago's United Artists Theatre; MARSH MC CURDY on Loew's circuit in New York...

With grateful appreciation for the support given us through the years, we extend season's greetings to all our friends. See you in February!

Jason & The Old Prospector ☐



Joe Luckey presents the crew that made it possible: Left to Right; John Mitchell, Joe McCallion, Bob Mitchell, Hugh Shields, Joe Lane, and Mr. and Mrs. Al Edwards.



Mr. R. "Joe" Luckey

JOE LUCKEY'S GIFT TO MUSIC

October 16, 1976 was a special night for theatre organ in Erie, Pennsylvania, when local and visiting enthusiasts were treated to the first public theatre organ concert in many years. The "new" musical voice was that of the 2/10 Tellers pipe organ which was built in Erie 56 years ago for the then Perry Theatre, later known as Shea's. The organ's new musical "home" was the Commons of Erie's Gannon College, cultural and academic home of 3,600 students. The artist for the evening was Rev. William E. Biebel, an Erie native, former student at Gannon, and present Assistant Headmaster

at Cathedral Preparatory School. The concert was his first chance to perform for a local audience; one of the programs that have enjoyed success with several ATOS Eastern chapters in recent years. The little man with the big heart that made it all possible was there, Mr. Robert "Joe" Luckey. The first part of the evening approached memories of the *This Is Your Life* series of early television.

Joe, maintenance engineer at Gannon College for the past 26 years, purchased the organ for \$300 in 1968. Just what he was buying, he hardly knew, for the organ had not

been heard in public or in private for almost 40 years! With the help of a small army of college students and fraternity members, the organ was dismantled and moved to four separate locations on Gannon's nearby campus in downtown Erie.

For months the work of cleaning, repairing and restoring went on. After an unsuccessful temporary installation in 1971, a permanent home was offered by the college in 1974. The Commons is a large room, formerly used by the college Library, and offers a superior acoustical setting for organ, with the final result that the organ now reduced from 24

Rev. William E. Biebel talks between numbers. The enthusiastic crowd numbered nearly 700.





Formal presentation of the organ by Joe Luckey to Msgr. Wilfrid Nash, President of Gannon College.

ranks to 10 sounds better and more theatrical in quality than it ever did in the theatre. The ranks disposed of were, in most cases, duplicate ranks of existing tone quality. The original "straight" console of three manuals was replaced with a very efficient two manual Marr & Colton one, taken from an earlier Wyandotte, Michigan installation.

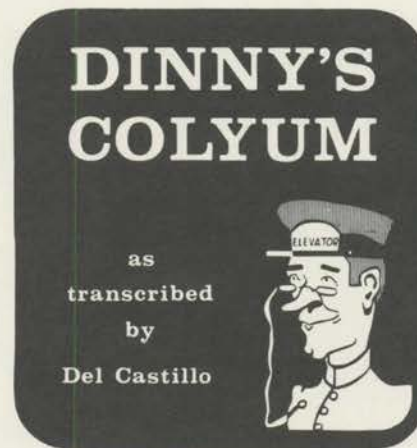
At performance time the crowd was still growing, and with it the great spirit of enthusiasm. The quantity of souvenir programs soon ran out as the crowd reached almost 700 persons. After countless, tire-some hours, and after considerable personal expense, Joe presented his gift to the college which has been his "home" these many years. Although Joe is not the kind to make "speeches," he did admirably well; the audience responded to his presentation and the comments of the college president, Msgr. Wilfred Nash, with a standing ovation. Others who made the organ possible were introduced, notably, John Mitchell, chief advisor and technician on the project, and Randall Wagner who assisted in regulation, to name just a few.

With the formalities over, the time was ripe for music. Fr. Biebel broke almost fifty years of silence for this organ with a song that said it all for everyone there that evening: Vincent Youman's "Great Day." The program which followed included many show tunes. The audience loved it all and responded with great enthusiasm. On the sing-along, they almost outsang the organ. The Laurel and Hardy silent film *Two Tars* and a series of vocal selections by Mary Ann Kania, popular Erie vocalist and college staff member, completed the evening.

Everyone involved in the project and the participants in the program were encouraged by the response to

repeat this type of program again, soon. The following day, Fr. Biebel played another concert featuring selections especially chosen for the audience of Senior Citizens who had been invited from the numerous downtown apartment complexes. He will also be presenting a pair of holiday concerts in December and a Spring program.

The city of Erie, Gannon College and theatre enthusiasts everywhere owe a debt of gratitude to Joe Luckey for the only theatre organ in a public location for a radius of almost a hundred miles, as well as for preserving a bit of Erie's local history, both theatrical and of organbuilding for future generations. □



Last month I got a little huffy because somebody critesised the way I rite and spel. I guess maybe I got a little grutch about criticks anyways because it always seems to me they got to say somethin bad just to prove they is criticks. It dont seem to me I ever read a revue when even if the critick liked it he had to throw a crack somewheres about the intonation wasnt perfeck or the attack was a little ragged or the tempo it wasnt strick enough or it was too strick, and it makes me kinda sore because it looks like somethin the critick thinks he had to throw in just to show he was onto his job.

Maybe I take it too serious but if a artist is real good why dont they

CHICAGO IN '77
ATOS National Convention

just say so and let it go at that. So who's perfeck? I aint mentionin no names, but right here in Los Angeles we got some imported criticks from New York who seem to think anywheres in this country except New York you are in the sticks as they say so what can you expeck. Well I tell you one thing you can expeck, we never had the govamint tell us to drop dead. Oh well, I take that back. Im gettin too critickal myself, and that dont really have anythin to do with what I was talkin about.

They's one thing I will stick up for the criticks on, tho. Somebody is always sayin about a critick that they is just a bunch of dissapointed musicians who wasnt succesful their-selves so it is just a bunch of sour grapes. Now I dont think that has anythin to do with it. Just because a guy cant do something hissself is no reason why he cant critesise some other feller who he thinks is doin it rong. That would certainly have put a crimp in the election if the candidates couldnt of critesised each other. Or nobody else could critesise them. Of course that is all over now and they is all friends again. What I really started to say was that a feller can be a good critick without bein a good performer hissself. And I have to admit that a perfessional critick has put in a full time job of seein all the plays over and over or hearin all the records over and over or readin a whole passel of books so he really has a rite to his opinions more than the rest of us geezers who dont make a business of seein and hearin and readin everything but just do it when we feel like it.

I see where a feller named Engel has even rote a book called *The Criticks*. This guy is a New York music director and has he got it in for a couple of the New York newspaper criticks. He is peeved because he says the criticks is so powerful that they can make a play fail if they say it aint no good. He seems to think that a critick he should only say nice things. Well, I guess I have to be on the critick's side on that one. If a play or a book or a record or a concert is lousy why I would just rather I knew about it before I spent my bread on it. Things is bad enough all over without buyin somethin you find you wasted your bread on afterwards. □

In Frederick, Maryland

DISASTER STRIKES AGAIN!

by Ray Brubacher

ATOS members who attended the 1972 national convention will remember the afternoon concert at the Tivoli Theatre in historic Frederick, Maryland. They will also recall the heroic efforts made to have the organ playable, when, 24 hours before the scheduled program, the blower motor caught fire due to latent damage from flooding by Hurricane Agnes. Dan Weinberg, owner of the Tivoli Theatre, saw to it that the motor was completely rewound overnight. The motor was back in the blower by 10 a.m. the morning of the concert.

Late on the night of October 8,

1976 the rains again came to Frederick. As the result of a storm making its way up from southwestern Virginia, water quickly began to rise in a small stream called Carroll Creek, which flows through the heart of the business district. By 9 a.m. Saturday, the water level on Patrick Street in front of the Tivoli was six feet over the curb. However, at the stage end of the theatre which slopes down toward the creek, the water was by now three feet over the stage. The console of the 2/8 Wurlitzer 190 special floated out of the orchestra pit and came to rest on its



back on the stage. The blower was again drowned. Fortunately all pipe-work and the relay were well above the water level and are safe.

The search is now on for a replacement console. When the Tivoli Theatre again opens its doors to the public, Maryland's last remaining original theatre organ installation will again sound forth. □

Tivoli Theatre orchestra pit after the floodwaters subsided. Console and pedal-board floated onto the stage.



The ravaged console. The search for a replacement is now in progress.





Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

THE REAL NEWS . . . MGM & Twentieth Century Fox have okayed the use of some 300 of their vintage films for reproduction on the new disc (like an LP recording) process. MCA-Universal with its Disco-Vision has Paramount and Universal backlogs plus other collections ready to go when the new breakthrough rolls . . . Bette Davis will be honored by the American Film Institute with its life achievement award in 1977 . . . "An industry rooted in greed, played against a backdrop of suspicion and mistrust . . . is the present chaotic, confused and confounded state of our industry." So says loud and clear Marvin Goldman newly elected president of the National Association of Theatre Owners.

★ ★ ★

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS: See page 73 of the June 1930 Photoplay for the story of the Watson brothers family in films . . . Victor McLaglen once owned a beautiful estate in La Canada, Calif. (about 14 miles northwest of L.A.) . . . (Mrs.) Sheila McLaglen Horder was last reported living in Mercer Island, Wash. That's his daughter . . . Tom Brown once told interviewers he did play kid parts in silent films as early as 1918 and had a featured part in a 1924 movie.

★ ★ ★

WHO IS WHERE . . . Bandleader Ray Noble calls Santa Barbara, Calif., his home but have no confirmed address . . . Louis Hayward calls Palm Springs, Calif., home . . . Last authentic address on stuntman Frankie Van was 3717 N. Cahuenga, North Hollywood, Calif. . . A real young film buff says that Rob Reiner may be contacted at 12247 Hesby St., North Hollywood, Calif. . . Alan Hale's restaurant at 826 N. La Cienega, Los Angeles, Calif., is where some fans manage to contact him.

★ ★ ★

"MARION Davies was one of the most delightfully accomplished comediennes in the whole history of the screen. She would have been a star even if Hearst had never happened. She was also a delightful and very considerable person. The proof is in this book (her recent book she taped before she died) and I commend it to you." — Orson Welles.

★ ★ ★

OPERATED by the Screen Smart Set is the Cinema Glamour Shop, 127 N. La Brea, Los Angeles, Calif., which is a thrift shop which sells used clothing from the great stars and players. Often designer outfits are sold for a fraction of their cost.

★ ★ ★

IN CASE YOU CARED . . . War. Bros. once had 25 players on suspension at one time. Jack L. was a tough slave master . . . according to many who toiled at the Burbank lot . . . In California legal reference books is an act named the deHavilland Act . . . named for the actress who took Warner's to court and won freedom from long term contracts . . . Another legal act is named the Coogan Act named for Jackie and used to save the money of under aged players until they are 21 . . . So far 33 Howard Hughes wills (?????) have been filed in Las Vegas courts . . . Walt Disney was never very fond of cats.

★ ★ ★

SELECTED SHORTS . . . Outstanding film author and historian Rudy Behlmer estimates that there have been 200 plus films produced on the subject of the movies since 1908 . . . Historian and serial expert Robert Malcomson notes that: " . . . Charles Buck Jones, who died a hero's death in a night club fire in Boston in 1942, made one of his last film appearances in a serial chapter titled *Devouring Flames*." . . . Olivia de Havilland blistered MGM and NBC in their TV showing of *Gone With the Wind*. She refused to introduce the film (for a handsome fee) and had plenty to say on how the commercials and intermission was handled.

★ ★ ★

CAN YOU HELP? Name the movie Charlie Chaplin produced and filmed twice but refused to release. Probably starred Edna Purviance right after she made a hit in *A Woman of Paris*.

★ ★ ★

"It seems agreeably ironical that Rin-Tin-Tin, the most successful animal in motion pictures, and the mainstay of Warners' financial structure, was the most disagreeable dog who ever lived." So says author Charles Higham in his book *WAR. BROS.* The first film canine hero was literally and actually a SOB, says the writer, and actually bit cameraman Charles Van Enger. Some other words used to describe the hound that thrilled millions in the 20s were: vicious, ill tempered, dangerous and monster. Other WB old timers have told me personally that the dog was less than friendly and working with him was no joy.

★ ★ ★

MOVIES made expressly for TV are shot fast (10-20 days) and usually show it. Critics claim old time film directors dawdled along. Not so. W.S. Van Dyke turned out the *Thin Man* in 18 days and shot the classic *Manhattan Melodrama* in 24 days

★ ★ ★

COMMUNICATIONS FOR HC may be sent to P.O. Box 113, Pasadena, Calif. 91102.

An Ear Witness Account

Eddie Weaver

- 1925

L.C. Larry Merrifield

L.C. (Larry) Merrifield is a member of ATOS and was a relief operator at the Family Theatre in Batavia in 1925.

The saga of Eddie Weaver spins on. I wonder if Eddie ever knew how it actually started, when he came to Batavia, N.Y., in 1925 to play a concert on a Sunday afternoon as an audition for the job in a new theatre. The La Fayette was about to open and needed an organist to play the 2/9 Chas. Viner & Son organ. The organ was separated into two chambers, on each side of the 45 x 30 foot stage, and the console was on the left side of the predominately rose and gold 1200-seat auditorium.

All this came about because one man refused to give another two passes.

The leading theatre at that time in Batavia was the New Family, which opened in 1923 with one Dusty Rhodes, "the World's Worst Organist" at the console of a Style "E" special Wurlitzer. Dusty was of the popular music, little sheet music on the rack, type. Across the street from

View of long-gone Chas. Viner & Sons 2/9 theatre organ played by Eddie Weaver in 1925.

(Starr Copy Photo)



the theatre a clothing merchant displayed an 18" x 36" window card, receiving the usual two passes per change of display. The merchant felt that his excellent location was worthy of more passes for the show card. The Family Theatre manager refused to increase the free ducats and withdrew the window card from the store thereby stopping all passes. The merchant thereupon went down the same street and proceeded to erect the La Fayette Theatre.

"Mr. Edward J. Weaver, a recent graduate of the Eastman School of Music and presently the assistant organist at the famed Eastman Theatre in Rochester, N.Y., has been engaged to handle the 'Grand Viner Theatre Organ,'" so said the manager, James Kelly in the July 8, 1925 edition of the local daily newspaper. "Mr. Weaver is a young man of remarkable musical talent and won the approbation of the management in a concert played in the theatre Sunday afternoon. Mr. Weaver has relinquished his position with the Eastman Theatre and will arrive in the city this afternoon (Wed., July 8) to assume his new duties here," Mr. Kelly continued.

The La Fayette Theatre on Jackson Street in Batavia opened Thursday, July 9, 1925 with the playing of the National Anthem by a scared 17-year-old organist in a tuxedo. I'm sure that most of Eddie's present students can play that number smoother than Edward J. did that night.

So, for the lack of two pieces of "paper," young Edward J. Weaver started on his long and glorious journey to ATOS' Organist of the Year 1976.

I know this is the way it was . . . I was there.

The organ, a 2/9, was built by Chas. Viner & Son of Buffalo, N.Y. "Builders of Fine Organs for Two Generations." Installed in two chambers it contained:

1. Open Diapason
2. Tibia Clausa
3. Stopped Flute
4. Viol D'Orchestra
5. Viol Celeste
6. Tuba
7. Orch. Oboe
8. Clarinet

9. Vox Humana
- Harp
- Chimes
- Xylophone
- Glockenspiel & Bells
- Toy Counter & usual drums

The theatre is long gone. The organ was actually hauled to the city dump in the fifties when the house was converted into a skating rink, then later into a cheap, junky discount store. The console sat in the back ally for sometime until it was also junked.

The picture was taken many years after Eddie had left Batavia. □



the letters to the editors

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:

George Thompson
Editor
P.O. Box 1314
Salinas, Calif. 93901

Dear Mr. Thompson:

In correspondence with Mr. Erwin Young, Jr., our national Vice-President and Treasurer, I have suggested that a complete financial statement be published each year in THE-ATRE ORGAN.

Such a statement should disclose details of expenditures made throughout the year so that all members can see where the money goes and understand better just why national dues have to be raised 50% from \$10 to \$15.

I think it is only right and fair that details of expenditures be made known to all of us through the publication of a detailed financial statement each year in THEATRE ORGAN.

We have a fine organization of which I am quite proud. It is a growing organization, now numbering some 6200 members according to Mr. Young. Thus, we are no longer a small insignificant financial entity, and I feel a more detailed accounting of expenditures is in order.

Is there any reason, therefore, why such a financial disclosure should not be made in these pages to all membership? I can think of none, and I urge that this be done promptly. If there is an objection to this, please let us all know what it might be.

Sincerely,
Timothy S. Needler

Editors Note: This request is the first ever obtained asking for such information, and there is no objection to printing it. An expression from members would be helpful since a full report as presented to the National Board and Chapter Representatives at Philadelphia in July, 1976 will take up to 5 pages of our Journal and we would appreciate knowing what features should be deleted to make room for this report. If you feel a detailed financial report is in order, please advise and arrangements will be made for this information. Members are solicited to express their views on this matter.

Dear Editor:

In answer to John Clark's request for George Wright arrangements, I believe He can find them in the Belwin Music Co. catalog.

I know "Quiet Village" and "While We Were Young" were available through them and his "España Cani" with the descending chromatic patterns at the end was published.

I can warn you though, George has his own way of playing the arrangements and I've yet to hear any copyist do everything he did with the same understanding of content and interpretation.

When you duplicate his arrangements, do it as an honor to George and not just because you can imitate his style.

When I do simulate (not imitate) George Wright it is always in tribute to his unique style. It is the same approach he used toward the late Jesse Crawford.

Just remember, when you do find George's arrangements, play them the "Wright Way."

Musically yours,
Robert Robert Legon

Gentlemen:

I am a blind organist about to start a pipe organ project. I have placed ads for a large three or four manual horseshoe console. I am also looking for several large blowers. I have also written to Devtronix and Newport for information regarding the building of new consoles for pipe organ use. If you have any other information regarding the whereabouts of any such animal, or of any other builders of horseshoe consoles, I would sincerely appreciate it. An article was read to me from your magazine regarding the computerizing of a setter action. If you have any information as to where I might get information on this, or the availability of such a unit, I would also appreciate it very much. I am also looking for information on electronic keying and switching to replace the old relay system. I also understand that there are new regulators and tremolos available. A close friend visited the theatre organ convention and told me about the new things that are becoming available. I would sincerely appreciate any information regarding these items. I have just joined the ATOS so I hope to be receiving your magazine. If there is any cost for catalogues, postage or for information, please let me know.

Thank you for any consideration.

Sincerely yours,
Carlo Annibale
45 Elmview Place
Buffalo, N.Y. 14207

Dear Mr. Thompson:

As Chairman of CVTOS's Scholarship and Music Education Committee, I was shocked by the statement in the August VOX POP that some grumblers do not think that scholarship competitions are in ATOS' best interest, especially among the young. The Scholarship Committee (and the chapter members who appropriate the money

for it) feel very strongly to the contrary: That it is *very* much in ATOS's interest, *especially* among the young.

The entire point of Connecticut Valley's competition is to encourage organ teachers and young organ students to learn about theatre organs and theatre stylings and techniques. We have tied into the competition an education program which we feel has done an outstanding job in bringing the whole field of theatre organ style to the attention of organ teachers throughout our chapter area, and giving them specific examples of theatre organ techniques which they can pass along to students. The enthusiasm of the students, and their teachers, during the preparation period is truly inspiring.

Most of all, we actually bring many organ students in the elementary and secondary school ages to hear and to play a theatre pipe organ. Almost without exception, participating students have expressed lasting gratitude for this outstanding opportunity which they never would have otherwise had. When we are all gone, our generation who remember these marvelous instruments in the theatres, who is going to preserve the organs and the style of playing that made them truly a unique art form unless young people get exposure to them by just such means as this?

We feel that our Scholarship and Music Education Program is the most forward-looking movement within all of ATOS, a way to get young people interested in both the instruments and the music that made them famous. The program involves a great deal of time, thought, and hard work by committee members; but we feel amply rewarded when we see the look of pure enchantment pervading those students' young faces when they first hear that glorious sound of theatre pipes.

Another correction on the VOX POP item: There was a total of six winners, and four honorable mentions in the two categories. Of these, three winners and one honorable mention were students of Rosa Rio. ATOS-ers Joy Zublena of Torrington and Ralph Yale of Southington each had on winner; and Joy Zublena and Bill Dalton each had one honorable mention.

When time permits, I plan to sub-

mit an article to THEATRE ORGAN describing the complete Scholarship and Music Education Program of the Connecticut Valley Chapter to provide whatever stimulus or information might be helpful to other chapters. Our committee sincerely believes that it would be extremely beneficial to ATOS for every chapter to attempt some kind of similar program, and that we should eventually work toward a national competition with much larger scholarship awards to the winners to assist them in continuing their theatre organ studies. Unless we educate young organ students to become familiar with these instruments and to learn to play them well, ATOS could be well on the road to extinction.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Eleanor D. Weaver, Chairman
Scholarship and Music
Education Committee
Connecticut Valley Chapter, ATOS

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Reading the Aug.-Sept. issue, I stumbled across the article "Organ Flue Pipes" by Richard Weisenberger. Being a professional flue voicer, naturally I read the article thoroughly.

My main criticism with the article is the fact that it contains too many useless mathematical equations to confuse the reader. I know of no organbuilder who would use these, even occasionally. I would suggest that anyone who wants some practical information on flue pipes read chapter 39 and chapters 33 through 37 in George Audsley's *The Art of Organ Building*.

Organbuilding in general, (with flue voicing and pipe making in particular) is primarily an art which is supplemented by the use of science and technology. Mr. Weisenberger approaches the organ flue pipe from a strictly technological standpoint. By doing so I think he is misleading the reader.

I compliment THEATRE ORGAN magazine for its increasing number of articles of a technical nature. However, I do wish that these be written by people with practical experience to back up their knowledge.

Sincerely,
Richard Swanson



On board British Airways 'Trident Three,' flying from Vienna, Austria, to London after attending International Magic Congress, (l to r) Jay Marshall (Chicago), Sidney Mayer (Evanston, Ill.), Michael Candy (England).

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Thompson,

I am sending herewith a photo which might be of interest as being off the beaten (organic) track. It was taken on board a British Airways 'Trident Three' flying from Vienna, Austria, to London on the 12th July last. The photo shows three ATOSers who are also 'magic-nuts', Jay Marshall of Chicago (a well-known name in the magic world), Sidney Mayer of Evanston, Ill., and yours truly. We had been attending an international Magic Congress in Vienna. (Jay subsequently attended the Philadelphia Convention, incidentally.)

Yours sincerely,
Michael Candy

Dear Mr. Klos:

Please forgive my delay in writing our grateful thanks for the wonderful award which was given my sister, Dessa Byrd (Rappaport) at the convention of the American Theatre Organ Society, July 18.

Dessa broke her right hip, March 21 and after a couple months in the hospital, has been in the Americana Health Care Center in Indianapolis since June. Her general health is not too good, and because of her failing eyesight, writing a note of thanks was out of the question.

This award was so wonderful for Dessa to receive at this time. After the Indianapolis Star's music writer Corbin Patrick's article, Dessa received flowers, cards, and letters of

congratulations from so many well-wishers that her niece made a thank-you card to send to all. By October, I hope to move Dessa back to her home.

Please thank all the Hall of Fame committee members who were responsible for giving Dessa this honor.

Sincerely,
Virginia Byrd Rechoris

Sir:

A few issues ago, you mentioned Bob Ralston as the organist for Lawrence Welk's orchestra, the darling of the Geritol set. Quite a slight!

On closer examination, you will find Ralston to be an extremely gifted musician, equally at home at piano or organ. He plays a wide variety of music with great finesse . . . and showmanship.

Next point in error. You listed the organ at the Minneapolis Auditorium and Convention Center as 71 ranks, I believe. Actually this Kimball organ with two consoles has 141 ranks. It is the largest organ in the state.

Respectfully,
Tom D. Crocker

Dear Mr. Klos:

Words cannot express my appreciation of the article I found in the August issue of THEATRE ORGAN when it arrived yesterday. Thanks is such a small word to express my boundless gratitude.

Following my article is the latest

association of Don Baker which means you can't get much closer to the best, even in print. I have the greatest regard for Don.

I didn't make the Portland scene in 1973, to my great sorrow, nor the Detroit action a year later, where I did quite a bit of playing, and was again tied up this year. But if the man upstairs lets me stick around, I'm already planning to be in Chicago next summer.

All these pizza spots have developed an itch to get back into the main picture again, so one of these days, there might be a sequel to my story: "From Pipes to Electronics, and Full Circle, Back to Pipes."

Sincerely,
Johnny Mack
Box 176
New Burnside, Ill. 62967

Dear Sir:

When we really knew the Safari was being planned by you folks, it gave us the opportunity to put into action the thoughts Al and Betty Mason had in 1972. Many of our friends knew this so we had a 'ready-made' committee. It was very much a combined affair, each person very much dedicated to the cause. We knew the itinerary was a busy one but we thought it better to be tired from doing too much than being bored with too little action. The theatre managers were very helpful and everyone got into the swing of what was required of them.

Some of our people were able to travel from London to Birmingham to pick you up. The men folk thought they could have a nap in the coaches to fortify themselves for the forthcoming late nights but the ladies had other thoughts — sorting out folders in readiness for the days to come. We were happy to meet old friends and make new, all with one thought in mind — to enjoy an organ crawl.

We were pleased to start the Safari with a short trip to Royal Albert Hall. It is such a busy music center that it is hard to plan less than a year or two ahead. Perhaps we can plan right now for a visit and concert there in 1978. Safari No. 2??

May we now take this opportunity of thanking you all for the contribution you made to the preservation fund. We care a lot about the organs we have in England and try to give

help in the best possible way thus enabling the preservation of these instruments that give us so much pleasure. You can be sure the Committee will add to the amount given by the Safarians and allocate to those organs in most need for the future generation to enjoy.

With many best wishes to you all.

Les and Edith Rawle
Southern Safari Committee

Dear Sir,

On behalf of my Committee I would publicly like to thank all those members of the ATOS Safari who contributed so generously towards the collection they made on our behalf at the end of their stay in the North. The substantial sum of money will, as requested, go towards the restoration of certain parts of the Publix I reinstallation in Manchester Free Trade Hall. This 4/20 Wurlitzer (Opus 2120) should be playing again in part within six months, and it will carry a plaque commemorating the contribution made by the members of the ATOS Safari 1976.

In due course I will advise you of the work carried out with the ATOS donation, and once again convey our sincere thanks to our new found friends in America.

I received my Safari copy of THEATRE ORGAN and noted the photographs of the resonators from Hope-Jones Opus 1 at St. John's, Birkenhead. As we were responsible

for "saving" this organ and indeed had some donations from America towards the operation, I think it only fair to explain the situation. By the time the rescue operation was tied up the instrument had been well and truly vandalized, with pipes missing, broken or thrown all over the church. In addition, the organ had been so much altered over the years with additions etc. that it was at first difficult to tell just how much was original Hope-Jones. Therefore, as we were working against the clock, only complete ranks that could be identified were salvaged, with a few original chests. Parts of the organ already restored, including a pipe from Diaphone Opus 1, were displayed at the "Welcome Dinner."

Unfortunately, I have to close this letter on a sad note. Safari members will recall Enid Powell singing for them at the "Welcome to the North" dinner, as she has done at many organ concerts in England over the last few years, as well as appearing on two of the Trust's L.P.s. We were all deeply shocked to learn that Enid died in the hospital as a result of an operation only 14 days after the Safari left. The Safari members were, in fact, the last people to hear her sing in public. She, too raised a lot of money for the Trust and we shall be holding a memorial concert in her memory.

Yours sincerely,
John B. Potter
Hon. Secretary □

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PIPE ORGAN QUIZ



Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

QUIZ MASTER
And Organ Builder

LANCE JOHNSON
Box 1228
Fargo, ND 58102

1. I have a great deal of trouble trying to tune the small pipes on the theatre organ. Even with the electronic tuner, I can't get them to sound right. Any suggestions?

Ans. Theatre organs and other high pressure instruments tend to have large scaled pipes with heavy nicks. This decreases it's brilliance as this type of brilliance is not the desired effect in theatre organs. Since the pipes are voiced on the dull side, the pitch signal is very fuzzy without harmonics to re-inforce the true pitch. If the pipework is old, it is even more difficult as the pipes have been handled many times. You will have two problems with tuning those tiny pipes; First, you must bring the out-of-tune pipe as close as possible to pitch by listening to others around it. Let's say you are tuning an F pipe. Listen to E below it and then F#. Then play F and listen to determine if F lies between the E and the F# on your tuning pitch. If it does, than at least you have solved half the problem. The next problem is to tune it without beats with the tuning pitch. It is important that the tuning pitch is one octave below the pipe you are tuning for the clearest possible signal.

Try moving your ear away from the louder of the two notes. If your out of tune note is soft, try to move your ear right over the pipe to equalize the intensity of the two signals. If you cannot perceive a beat, chances are the pipe is damaged and should be re-voiced.

2. How can you get those blower impellers off the shafts while dismantling a blower?

Ans. Take a propane torch and heat the hub of the fan but keep the heat from the shaft. Then, clamp the end of the shaft with a vice-grip plyers and have your buddy hold the shaft rigid. After the hub has been heated, it will begin to expand to make the hole larger. Naturally, the shaft will get some heat too, but the hub will get most of it. Then grasp the impellor with both hands and twist it back and forth and at the same time pulling it outwards. Once it has loosened up, file off the teeth marks from the shaft. Then stroke the file all around

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the shaft gently to take out burrs from the set screws and apply light coat of oil.

3. What causes the finish on old organ console to crackle? Can it be fixed?

Ans. The finishes used were very hard and became harder with age. Some firms used varnish and others used lacquer. Both types seem to crackle after 30 to 40 years. The wood under the finish expands and contracts with the changes in seasons' humidity and the finish remains constant. The only solution is to remove all the finish to the bare wood and start over.

4. I have used an electronic tuner to tune my two chamber theatre organ but I can never find the organ at the same pitch level each time. I am tired of constantly re-tuning my organ to the electronic tuner pitch level because I am changing all the pipes each time. Is there an easier way?

Ans. If you have two chambers, make sure the temperature is always the same in each chamber at all times. This may not be easy. If you are able to achieve this, you can greatly simplify your tuning problems by establishing a "tuning rank" in each chamber. Assuming you cannot set a temperament by ear, select some reliable ranks, one in each chamber and tune them perfectly to your tuning device. You will have to do this quickly before the temperature changes from chamber to chamber. Make sure that the octaves of these tuning ranks are also in tune. Go up and down the keys by playing three notes (octaves) at a time until all octaves are in tune. You would start with the C's, that is low C, tenor C and middle C and go right up the chromatic scale to the top of the keys. Some suggested tuning ranks are the Diapason, large scale strings such as Solo String, Gamba, Salicional, also Tuba, Trumpets, etc. Make sure that these ranks are stable and stay in tune reasonably well or your tuning ranks will cause you endless trouble. After you have found

the tuning stops and have them well in tune, then tune the rest of the chamber off these ranks. You will have to go back and check your tuning stop after tuning two new ranks to make sure IT is staying in tune. Treat your tuning ranks as SPECIAL ranks and spare no pains to keep them in tune! Now let's assume you are having some organists over to play your organ and find that several notes are out of tune. Procedure: Check the tuning ranks. Touch them up as needed. Make sure their octaves are right

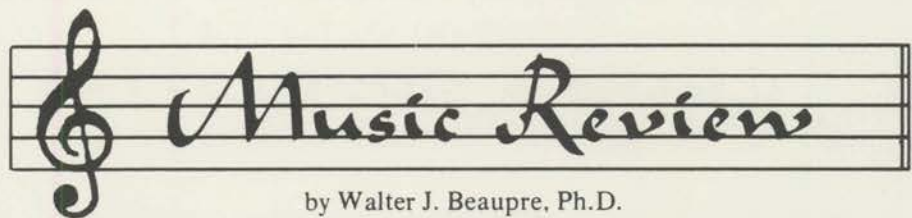
on. Then spot the out of tune notes in the organ and write them down. You find that the second to the lowest Tibia G is out. Write down ② G. The circled number 2 means the second octave on the keyboard and the note is G. After you have compiled your list of sour notes, ask your wife to play just those notes for you after you have flipped on the tuning stop and are ready to depart for the chamber. Have her shout to you which note she will play so you can find it faster. (Hook up an intercom if you can't hear her)

Here is a list from a typical touch-up tuning job:

Stop	Note	Tuning Stop
8' Vox	④ c#	Oct. 4 (Diapason)
8' Tuba	① D	Oct. 4
4' Piccolo	⑤ g#	Dia. 8
16' Bourdon	① d#	Dia. 8

Notice that the tuning stop is always one octave away from the out-of-tune note. Waste no time with tuning but get the job done

in the shortest time and get out of the chamber before the temperature changes from your presence and opening and closing the door. □



by Walter J. Beaupre, Ph.D.

Al Hermanns, ORGAN-IZING OPEN HARMONY, The Big 3 Music Corp., 1976 (also available from Hermanns' Organ Studio, 1120 Union St., Reading, PA 19604, Price \$3.50).

Between concerts during the ATOS Organ Safari last summer I inquired about published British compositions or arrangements for theatre organ. If any do in fact exist, I wasn't lucky enough to find them. But it was fun — if a bit ironic — to come home to "acres of diamonds" waiting in the mailbox. Al Hermanns, a long time ATOS member and organist/teacher in Pennsylvania, has published some seven instructional books *Organ-izing Popular Music* as well as a generous covey of pop standards arranged as organ solos. Not having seen most of

Mr. Hermanns' publications, I should neither comment nor speculate. I have, however, examined his latest which he says "is the first of a series of detailed instructions expanding the various arranging techniques . . ."

Is *Organ-izing Open Harmony*, as a front cover description claims, "a guide to interesting and professional sounding performances"? Much depends upon how "interesting" and "professional sounding" the home organist expects to become. In my opinion Al Hermanns achieves a practical compromise somewhere between those too easy arrangements lacking in individuality and those complex arrangements of our sophisticated virtuosi which most of us admire — but can't play well. *Open Harmony* should appeal to the Theatre Organ readers who are still

trying to capture the Crawford sound on their own instruments.

Hermanns spends the entire 32 pages explaining and demonstrating the judicious application of 3-part open harmony (Tibia/Vox style) and the portamento slides commonly called "Crawford rolls." His advice is solid, clearly stated and very much to the point. Here's an example. "Open Harmony" he says "sounds best on slow songs where all, or most, of the melody notes are basic chord tones." Al also states (and I can't recall seeing this in any other instruction book on the subject) "Whenever the melody gets too low (E above middle C), change to close harmony or it will sound too thick and muddy."

His keyboard practice exercises for legato touch are carefully selected to instruct without becoming an endless, tedious bore. Mark that a definite plus! The fingering exercises for portamento offer what this reviewer considers a new way of getting over the intervening notes. At first I wondered if Al's suggestion to make one finger do the work of two chromatic notes in the longer rolls wasn't a compromise to the "lazy" home "duffer"; but after a few tries using his fingering I could see that the "easy way" was no less effective than the "hard way" recommended in other instruction books. Hermanns obviously been teaching a long time and knows what he is about.

The four complete arrangements included in *Open Harmony* are well chosen. They are surprisingly easy to play, and Hermanns' registration advice is realistic and carefully adapted to the limitations of various plug-ins. "Pennies From Heaven" uses open harmony in the four bar intro and adds portamento spices during measures 9-16 and 25-32. It works as a nice, neat solo. "When the Organ Played at Twilight" is a waltz arranged in a 30's style more reminiscent of the smooth orchestrations of Wayne King or Abe Lyman. Again, portamento is sparingly used along with simple (and usually effective) counter melodies during sustained melody notes.

Perhaps the least satisfying arrangement in the book is "Release Me," a Nashville type song of the 50's. The open harmony gets too

busy and doesn't really add much interest to the angular ditty.

Except for some pedantic "fills" (perhaps this is explained in some other Hermanns' publication) Al shows the home organist some dramatic Tibia — bells contrasts in "More Than You Know." Open harmony is used where one would expect to hear it — if one has taken the book seriously. Codes are not the strongest virtues of these arrangements; don't be disappointed by the routine endings.

The final musical demonstrations in *Organ-izing Open Harmony* are portions of tunes (sometimes just an intro) where the organist is encouraged to insert these popular theatre stylings for variety and color. Here, I suspect, teacher Hermanns is trying to tell us something very important: get out there, my organist friend, and create your own unique versions of songs you like to play!

Let's be candid. Other instructional books have been reviewed in this column that also introduce open harmony and portamento techniques, books which were excellent for different reasons. Al Hermanns' *Organ-izing* may be just what *some* home organists need to tempt them to try the joys of "Crawfordizing" a tune on their own. If Al succeeds where others have failed, then certainly his new book is worth far more than the modest price. □

Closing Chord

Fred T. E. Rassman of Deal Park, N.J. a longtime representative and salesman for Austin, Reuter and other organ companies, died on May 17. He supervised the installation in 1922 of what was billed "the largest theatre organ in the world," the 4/155 Austin in the Eastman Theatre in Rochester, N.Y.

Richard W. "Dick" Leibert, who was a resident theatre organist for more consecutive years than anyone in history, 40 of them at the Radio City Music Hall, died on October 22 in a Fort Myers, Florida Hospital. He had been in poor health for about a year.



Richard Leibert

Born in Bethlehem, Pa., his first appearance as an organist was in a church at age seven. At 15, his family moved to Washington, D.C., where Dick sold newspaper advertising. This job enabled him to meet the organist in the Palace Theatre, and before long, he was the relief man until his friend's death when Dick became house organist.

He studied at Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore for three years, and after that was on the Leow's circuit, playing theatres in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, and for two years, the Brooklyn Paramount. He had a style all his own.

In the fall of 1932, Mr. Leibert auditioned for the post of chief organist at the soon-to-be-opened Radio City Music Hall, and won over 12 applicants. He usually played evening shows, while his associates filled in the remainder of the schedule. His radio credits in the late thirties were impressive, and he turned out many recordings, beginning with a sizeable number of 78 rpm's.

Also a composer, he wrote a number of catchy tunes including "Radio City Music Hall March," "In a Little Clock Shop," "Come Dance With Me," and "Virginia Hoedown." His schedule at the Music Hall allowed him to concertize, and he appeared with a number of leading symphony orchestras throughout the country.

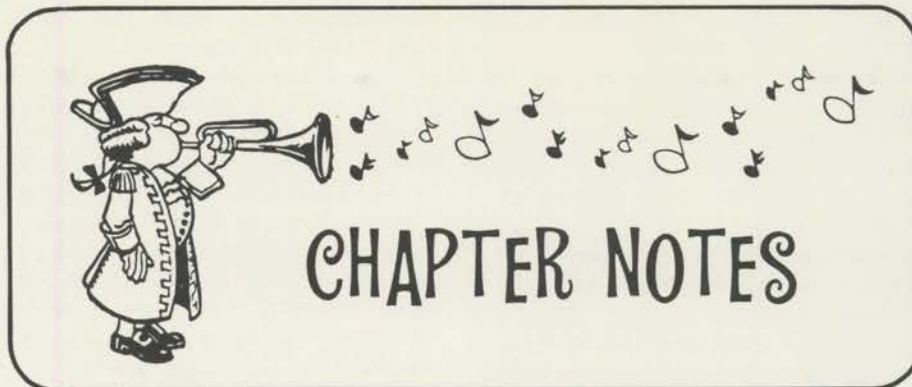
He also played for some theatre organ clubs and, in 1970, played an unprecedented "milkman's matinee" for a Music Hall session of the ATOS Convention. He became a member of the Theatre Organists Hall of Fame in 1974.

Prior to his retirement a few years ago, he lived in Wilton, Conn. Since then, he lived in Cape Coral, Fla. He is survived by his wife, three daughters and two sons.

William O. (Bill) McMains was born February 19, 1927 and died suddenly Saturday, August 28, 1976 at his home in Arlington, Virginia. His parents were Oscar and Vernice Moore McMains. He received his elementary and high school education in the Oskaloosa Schools, graduated from Central College at Pella, Iowa with a B.A. Degree and attended Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. In recent years he maintained homes in both Oskaloosa, Iowa and Arlington, Virginia. He was united in marriage October 11, 1975 to Susan C. Andrus. Surviving with his wife Susan and his Parents-In-Law Commander and Mrs. Harold R. Andrus of College Park, Maryland, several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Bill was internationally known as an organist and composer of organ instruction and teaching material. He took great pleasure in his teaching and his students, some of whom were well known personalities, including the late President Harry S. Truman. He was an active partner in several publishing businesses including Writers' Equity Ltd, of Arlington, VA., and Paramount Music Service and Harmony Cottage both of Oskaloosa, Iowa. He was a member of the American Society of Composers and Publishers. His professional career also included five National Political Conventions, both Democratic and Republican, at which he served as official organist. He was a student of political history and a collection of his campaign songs and slogans are now at the Truman Presidential Library in Independence, Missouri.

Mr. McMains was probably best known to theatre organ students through his excellent Vintage Theatre Organ Series which contained both first rate instructional material and arrangements. □



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Copy for Feb. — March Issue must be in by January 1

ALABAMA

The Alabama Chapter ushered in a busy fall season with Norville Hall at the console of the 4/20 Wurlitzer. His "Musical Salute, USA," narrated by Lee Thomas introduced two fine professional instrumen-

talists from Montgomery, Cecelia Fortson and Dr. Cecil Prescott.

Norville's uniquely written program wove his song titles into a description of everyone's dream trip across our 50 states. He had a special surprise for us in that his travel music was his own composition "I Love You." The whole trip ended at the Lincoln Memorial as Lee Thomas gave new meaning to a very inspiring reading of the "Gettysburg Address." What can you use for an encore? Well, if you are Norville Hall, you send Cecelia Fortson and Dr. Prescott high into the theatre and bring it all to a glorious conclusion with the playing of the "Star Spangled Banner" complete with trumpet fanfare from the balcony.

In October, Joanne and Hal Radue chairmanned a public concert with

Cecelia Fortson, Norville Hall and Dr. Cecil Prescott in a September "Musical Salute, USA"



Hector Olivera. For all who have put a concert together, it's no news that it takes planning, hard work and a wary eye on the sage advice in "Murphy's Law." All were involved in selling tickets and were kept fired up by weekly calls from the area ticket chairman; Beatrice Fee, Evelyn Jones, Frank Wampol, Mrs. Carl Farris and Riedel West. Untold hours were put in at the theatre by workcrew members Chuck Hancock, Larry Donaldson, Howard Best and Frank Jones. Oh, if you've forgotten your "whole note scales," just sit at the console and help Larry tune for several hours — it all comes back. To Barnard Franklin who kept in touch with our artist and Jim Ferguson who printed leaflets and beautiful posters for us, thanks.

Our busy October 16 weekend didn't end with the Saturday evening concert, as we invited our out of town ATOS members and those who came in from Georgia, Tennessee, Mississippi and Florida to join us Sunday morning at the well-tuned Alabama Wurlitzer for open console. All seemed to enjoy the opportunity to play and talk about Hector! As our Chairman Lee Aured said — "gee, I'm tired!" and weren't we all — but what a great time we had!

JOAN AURED

CENTRAL INDIANA

The September meeting was held at Manual High School with an attendance of 99 members. Virginia Rechoris demonstrated the 3/12 Louisville Uniphone Pipe Organ and we were honored with the presence of Virginia's sister Dessa Byrd.

An extra added treat at Manual High School was Larry McPherson playing the calliope on stage. This calliope was made in 1923, is owned by Jim Flanigan and operates on

1 lb air pressure.

A nominating committee was appointed to choose a slate of new officers for the coming year.

Between the September and October meeting we took a tour of 4 pipe organ installations in the Ohio area. The 3/7 Wurlitzer at the State Theatre in Springfield, Ohio, 4/19 Robert Morton at the home of Ralph & Leona Charles, in Somerset, then on to Columbus at the Ohio Theatre to hear and play the Mighty Morton. We were grateful to Dennis James for being able to be with us since he had a previous engagement the night before. Sunday afternoon we left Columbus for the lovely home of Mr. & Mrs. Donald Reighard in Dayton, Ohio and had the opportunity to play their 3/12 Kimball home installation. It was indeed a fun filled weekend and once again we would like to thank all our Ohio friends for their most gracious hospitality.

Sunday, October 10, we traveled to Vincennes University on a gorgeous fall day to hear Dick Ertel on the 3/14 Wurlitzer Pipe Organ. Dick demonstrated the reed and drums to a tune from *Ben Hur*, then did "Send In The Clowns," and many other selections.

Open console followed and all who played thoroughly enjoyed this instrument. We had 74 in attendance.

I would like to extend my sincere apologies to Harry Koenig for the misspelling of his name in the write up for the June meeting held at Frank May's in Kokomo, Indiana.

MARY E. DRAKE

CENTRAL OHIO

Our August trip to Fred Rieger's "barn" in Dayton proved to be a highlight of this years activities. Young Chris Phillips presented the

concert with his usual skill, at the 42 rank Moller plus Estey player pipe organ. Members who were viewing, for the first time, the 52 x 80 room containing the console and the 20 x 40 foot chambers, were highly complimentary to Fred and Kay Rieger for the magnificent setting and installation.

Our September meeting at Ralph and Leona Charles featured a pot luck dinner, annual meeting and election of officers. Kenny Winland presented a much too short opening concert, although our members appreciated the extra time for open console and gladly took advantage of it.

The Charles' Robert Morton now has an extended length to the horse-shoe console to accommodate the recently added harmonic flute.

An interesting part of this meeting occurred when Ralph invited us out across the lawn to his workshop. With rapidly increasing prices Ralph has designed and built equipment to make his own magnets — including the magnet bender, which he demonstrated for us.

Work on the chapter's Wurlitzer installation at Worthington High School is now accelerating. With the moving of the console to the auditorium stage area, the console has been pretty well dismantled and work proceeds toward rewiring and rebuilding.

It has become necessary for us, especially in view of inflation, to solicit aid from our membership for installation materials or tax deductible financial assistance. We estimate the need for \$2500 to provide a good installation. Once the installation is completed and we are in a position to raise money through concerts we expect to be able to maintain the organ and build a fund toward purchase of a Post Horn.



Results of our appeal at this early date are encouraging. We have one magnificent offer for tonal finishing, highly prized free opening concert, promotional help, etc. It can't be said too often — what great people we have in ATOS.

IRENE BLEGEN

CONN VALLEY

The invitations read "Open House Buffet, Sunday, August 29, 1976, 4 to 8 PM inaugurating the Custom Three-Manual Allen Digital Computer Theatre Organ" at Melody Hill, the home of past national ATOS President Stillman and Claire Rice in North Haven, Connecticut; and it was a gala affair. Those of us privileged to be on the guest list of the Rices' host of friends in ATOS and the Wurlitzer Organ Club of New Haven (of which Stillman was a founder) were treated to an evening of congenial company, a delicious buffet, and some great organ music.

Stillman's special guest was artist Dwight Beacham (accompanied by his lovely wife and daughter) who was on hand to put the fabulous new organ through its paces. This instrument has been in some mighty distinguished company — it was first played by George Wright in a concert at the Bushnell Memorial Auditorium in Hartford (for the benefit of the Rice Memorial Fund) last December prior to its installation at Melody Hill.

The "after-dinner cordial" was not a liqueur but something much more stimulating — a concert by Dwight Beacham at the Allen console. Since the living room could not accommodate all the guests, the outside speakers made it possible to enjoy the concert on the patio as well as indoors.

After this musical treat, the



Dwight Beacham at the Allen Console, Melody Hill.

evening was far from over. (Stillman announced that the 4 to 8 on the invitations meant 8 AM — not PM). Following a coffee and cake break, Rosa Rio, at our host's special request, took command of the console, much to the delight of the other guests.

The dream musicale was not yet complete — Rosa was followed at the console by Tom Gnaster, who was such a hit in his spring concert at the Thomaston Opera House. Tom has decided to become a "nutmegger" and is now making his home in Connecticut. With professional artists of the caliber of Rosa Rio, Bill Dalton, Joy Zublena and Al Miller, and now Tom Gnaster among us, "our cup runneth over." Tom plans to teach, and, we hope give more concerts in our area.

It's wonderful to see Stillman feeling so well and entertaining again in his inimitable manner. He's one of the most beloved ConValChaps

and personifies the real spirit of the American Theatre Organ Society.

"This was a lovely way to spend an evening" — an evening with Karl Cole at the Thomaston Opera House. This young man's charm, wit and genuine warmth established an instant rapport with his audience — a rapport that became friendship and affection before the evening came to an end. Karl's talent at the console was immediately apparent as he opened his program with a lively "Everything's Coming Up Roses," and the audience responded enthusiastically. Nothing enhances the pleasure of an audience more than the feeling that the artist is really enjoying performing and is having just as good a time as they.

It was especially fitting that Karl Cole should be the artist for this Rice Memorial Concert. Stillman Rice played a large part in starting this young artist on the road to attaining his dream to play "theatre organ,"



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

NEW YORK
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

merry
christmas

ALABAMA CHAPTER



and Karl and Mildred Rice were warm friends and always (in his own words) "had a lot to laugh about." As a special tribute to Mildred, he played the lovely "Eidelweiss" which, he said, reflected the loveliness of Mildred Rice.

It was obvious that Karl Cole is an organist that does his homework and thoroughly familiarizes himself with his instrument before a concert. He was delighted with the innovations available on our Thomaston Marr and Colton such as sustenuto

be shared by the majority of those present. Responding to a standing ovation *after* his encore, he had to play for an additional half hour concluding with "Show Me The Way To Go Home" with the audience joining in before he could leave the bench.

It's not nice to fool Mother Nature! — and she obviously suspected us ConValChaps of skulduggery as she unleashed a bit of her fury for our meeting on October 9 in Thomaston. The winds blew and the rains came, and I'm afraid, some of our

our way around fallen branches in the roads (and since we were not listening to our car radio, oblivious to the tornado warnings) and made our way slowly but surely to Thomaston. When we reached Bristol and found the power out, we thought that Mother Nature had dealt us the final insult and had visions of no organ (and no coffee) at the Opera House. However, she had evidently decided to forgive and forget when she heard the heavenly strains of our Marr and Colton, and all was in order when we reached Thomaston — it had even stopped raining and showed signs of clearing. These bad vibrations had even extended to Providence where Dr. Alan Goodnow, leader of SENETOS (and scheduled to be one of the artists for the afternoon concert), was delayed by three dental emergencies, and never arrived at the Opera House until we were breaking for supper.

Tim Bjarby of Eastern Mass. Chapter, whose dry humor is always a compliment to his musical talent, entertained us with some of his original and often amusing arrangements of the old and the new standards.

Our own Al Miller was next on the program, and he never played better. Opening with the rousing "Rudetsky March," he followed with a couple of great old timers. Thanks to the new Post Horn, he made my day by playing the lovely "Trumpeter's Lullaby" by Leroy Anderson. Completing his program with the beautiful "What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life? (question) and (answer) "Doin' The Raccoon," sent us merrily on our way to dinner.

After a brief business meeting conducted by Chairman Don McCormack, Program Chairman Paul Plainer took over and introduced second place scholarship winner Jim



Karl Cole at Thomaston Opera House

and second touch (thanks to our great organ crew), and had great fun employing them.

Karl Cole's verbal byplay and mugging for the C.V.T.O.S. shutter bugs during the concert were a great source of amusement to all. I, for one, count this evening as one of the most memorable at the Opera House, and this feeling seemed to

guests whom we had invited from Eastern Mass. Chapter and Southeastern New England Theatre Organ Society were discouraged from making the trip in such miserable weather.

Being incurable optimists, and determined to flout these forces in nature, we set out from Massachusetts in the deluge and picked


SEASON'S GREETINGS
& BEST WISHES IN '77



CRATOS

FROM THE NUMBER 2 CHAPTER

HOLIDAY
GREETINGS



Theatre Organ Society of Delaware Valley Inc.
HOSTS — NATIONAL CONVENTION A.T.O.S. '76

Arsenault who started the evening's festivities displaying the talent that was so evident in competition. We're fortunate to have these youthful musicians waiting in the wings, receiving so much encouragement and inspiration from their teachers.

The surprise "piece de resistance" for the evening followed in the talented person of Tom Gnaster. We're always in for some really fine music whenever Tom takes command of the console, and his witty and informal manner make his audience really feel included.

Since our Rhode Island friends had not been represented at the console in the afternoon as scheduled, the program chairman invited Dr. Alan Goodnow to come up and do the honors for SENETOS. Although somewhat dismayed at having to follow a pro like Tom when, as he said, "My bag is teeth," he responded with his easy style that we enjoyed so much when he was our guest artist at the Twomeys'.

For the finale of the evening's program, Bob Legon of Eastern Mass., and no stranger to Thomaston, was invited to take a turn on the bench. Bob paid sincere tribute to our Marr & Colton and the added Post Horn which has so enhanced this great instrument. "The art of building theatre organs is not dead," stated Bob, "when such a fine example as the newly added Post Horn (designed especially by Al Miller) is still being made. The ghost of Robert Hope Jones must surely be here in the Opera House." We don't like to blow our own horn (post, of course) too much, so it's always gratifying when others show appreciation for the outstanding efforts of our most able organ crew.

Bob has just completed installing the 3/5 Kilgen organ from the Em-

bassy Theatre in Waltham in the Lakeview Congregational Church and invited us to come to Lakeview to hear it. Perhaps we can make that a field trip some time next year.

JUNE L. GAREN

On Saturday evening, October 23, Ashley Miller played the second of a pair of concerts for the benefit of the Friends of the Thomaston Opera House. The return to Thomaston of this master of the console was most welcome. With him came the Miller arrangements of orchestral music for theatre pipe organ. Altogether, the result was a concert rich in melody, well chosen for variety, and altogether satisfying.

During intermission the Friends of the Thomaston Opera House told us of the plans for full restoration of the house and gave us a breakdown of the allocation of funds required. The Friends have organized a fund drive for \$500,000. A six page pamphlet, *Why The Friends of the Thomaston Opera House Seek to Raise \$500,000*, is available from Friends of the Thomaston Opera House, 52 Main St., Thomaston, Ct. 06787.

A concert by Ashley Miller is always a special event in organ music. With his characteristic graciousness, he expressed his pleasure in being honored as the artist chosen for this important benefit concert. We, who had the pleasure of hearing this concert, attested to the wisdom of the choice.

W.F.P.

DAIRYLAND

Dairyland has been a very busy chapter this year. Our first concert was held at the Avalon Theater, in April, in Milwaukee. The featured artist was Lyn Larsen, who was brought back by popular request. As can be expected with Lyn, he

again did a fantastic job. He was successful in mixing some familiar material, like "Nevertheless," with some new, like "Midnight in Mayfair," and "Lovers Belong to Sorrento."

Presently, DTOS is engaged in installing a 2/5 Wurlitzer, which came out of a recently raised theatre in Racine, into the Racine Theater Guild's new building in that city. Work is progressing well with the installation due to be finished before the end of fall.

Opening of our '76-77 season took place at the home of Mr. Fred Hermes, with John Muri as the guest artist. This was a tri-chapter social, along with CATOE and LOLTOS, that, thanks to the beautiful weather, was a smashing success.

Two hundred ATOSers and guests sandwiched into the Hermes Paradise (lost) Theatre amongst a Wurlitzer Organ, tons of cast plaster statuary from an abandoned theatre, a freaky Brenograph, 150 too few seats with no airconditioning except a fan hopefully venting smoke from burning carbons.

Settled into this steaming debris with only one can of Right Guard in the house, all desire for creature comforts departed as the house lights dimmed, the grande drape parted, and up on the lift rose John Muri, master showman and musician. Obviously at the peak of his career, he played a special setting of his "Victory At Sea" and several delights from his exciting new album on the Detroit Fox Wurlitzer, which sold dozens of copies at intermission.

The program, in keeping with a historical Bicentennial theme featured Buster Keaton in *The General* (a tight reduction called *Roaring Rails* with all the slow stuff left out). Centered in the Civil War era it was certain whose side Keaton was on,

SEASONS GREETINGS from Ann Leaf



Season's Greetings

TO ALL OUR ATOS FRIENDS

Jason and the Old Prospector.



but not for John Muri — it was anyone's guess, as the music was exciting for both North and South. Anything but a spectator sport, we were right in the hot seat of a sweaty old locomotive cab, smoke in the face, the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" coming and going midst choo-choos and boom-booms of cannon! Perhaps conditions in the theatre added to this effect. No wonder John Muri — oft called 'Prelate of the Pipes,' is in constant demand for theatre organ shows!

Following the movie was a short sing-along of all four verses of "America, The Beautiful" with historic colored scenic slides from the 20's. Then fading into a briskly waving flag on the Brenograph, John swung into what has become his hallmark, "The Stars and Stripes Forever" as demanded from countless balconies across America. Following this display of vibrant musicianship, John dismissed us in encore with "Bless This House" . . .

Truly, this program was one of John Muri's finest.

From the Hermes' residence, we formed a caravan, headed toward Milwaukee to hear Walt Strony at Pipe Organ Pizza. Again we overflowed, and this time formed a line into the street, waiting in line to try some of the excellent pizza and submarine sandwiches.

Walt, besides being a good organist, is a very flashy dresser. All in all, the afternoon was enjoyable, and the food and Walt's playing brought it to a delicious end.

On November 2, we will have held our second concert of the year. This time the artist will have been Hector Olivera. Again, it will have been at the Avalon in Milwaukee. Hopefully, we will have a full house, the first in the clubs history at that theatre.

Meanwhile, Bill Campbell can be seen and heard at the Avalon Theatre 3/10 Wurlitzer, very frequently, before the show, Friday and Saturday nights.

WILLIAM CAMPBELL
AND FRED HERMES

EASTERN MASS.

Despite the absence of regular meetings, EMCATOS members and friends did not starve for lack of live organ music during the summer months! Our Club greatly enjoyed the playing and humor of nationally-known Lloyd Del Castillo on our own Babson College Wurlitzer during the evening of July 24. We had a double treat as he presided at the Stoneham Town Hall Wurlitzer the following afternoon, July 25, making for a most interesting comparison of several selections played on two different organs. Being the Bicentennial, Del thoughtfully included a patriotic group in each informal program.

While introducing our artist at Babson, Chairman Arthur Goggin made special mention of an old organist friend of Del's in the audience, Miss Doris Tirrell from Brockton, who graciously acknowledged the applause as Del vigorously shook her hand. Both were regular broadcasting organists from Boston in the late 20's and 30's when our artist was also featured organist at the big 4/26 Metropolitan Theatre, Boston Wurlitzer, for a period. Also present who was another well-known broadcaster in the 30's from Boston, on piano, was talented George Wright Briggs for a nostalgic evening. Distinguished organist and choirmaster, George Faxon, from Trinity Church, Boston, was another in the audience.

To sum up, both concerts revealed why this veteran organist, Lloyd Del Castillo, is still so popular in his

delightful real old theatre organ stylings. His mental sharpness, manual and pedal dexterity coupled with his easy style belie his 80 odd years. Come back with us again soon, Del!

For the third consecutive year, member Tim Bjareby and his mother, Kaarina, very kindly invited club members and families to their Ipswich home for Sunday afternoon, August 8, weather permitting. The latter proved marginal, at best, yet despite the heavy showers which preceded Hurricane "Belle," over 20 were present to greatly enjoy Tim's 2/8 Robert Morton pipe organ whose origin was a theatre in Worcester, Mass. His installation is certainly among the better home organs and Tim knows how to exploit every nuance from it. Several playing members and guests also kept the wind blowing through the pipes displaying individual and interesting styles as all enjoyed home-made refreshments.

Because more were not present, Kaarina and Tim decided to invite the club for the following Sunday, July 15, to a repeat performance. Most returned together with new faces for more "fun on the R.M.," resplendent with its newly-refinished console shell and bench in off-white and gold embellishments ably done by member, Lawrence Peavey. With good music and ample refreshments, another memorable afternoon was enjoyed to the full as the Bjareby's thankful guests.

On September 25 at Babson, our first Fall meeting was opened by Vice-Chairman Emory Sprenkle announcing that our "old-pro" Al Winslow would play the Wurlitzer before the business meeting. Al's extemporizing had all intently listening as his theatre organ stylings evolved into a group of numbers with "baby" in their titles. After a

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

FROM CATOE

*The New Year Brings Your
Chance To Visit With Us.*

*See You In June At "Chicago '77"
The 22nd National ATOS Convention*



SEASON'S GREETINGS

from

WESTERN
RESERVE

"HOST OF THE SUPER 77
REGIONAL CONVENTION"
Cleveland, Ohio



much appreciated applause the blower was turned off and Chairman Goggin took over for a long business meeting. This included lively discussions of new requirements of the Organ Key Committee, chaired by "Pat" Fucci, for members to have playing access to the club organ. Other topics concerned officers for the coming year and the Fall concerts by Don Baker on November 13 and 14 at Babson and Stoneham. Craig Johnson agreed to be Program Committee Chairman for the event with Al Winslow to serve with him. The usual open console followed with many taking advantage of the live pipes.

Again on October 23, Vice Chairman Sprenkle opened our regular meeting announcing that the artist of the evening, Tim Bjareby, would play before the business portion. As we have come to expect, Tim did not disappoint as he used "out-of-the-rut" registrations for such selections as "Blue Tango," "In the Mood," "Jeepers Creepers," ending with a timely encore, "Peanut Vendor." These brought a good response from all present.

The principal business besides the coming Fall concerts was election of officers for 1977 as submitted by the Nominating Committee. The complete slate was elected as follows: D. "Pete" Hoagland, chairman; F. Craig Johnson, vice-chairman; Mrs. Rosalie Fucci, secretary; R. "Dick" Metzger, treasurer; board of directors, F. Garrett Shanklin, Patsey Fucci and Paul Callahan; alternates, Merle Boyd and Stuart Hinchcliffe. Several members and guests then enjoyed open console and home-made refreshments in between the usual knots of conversation to complete the evening.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

GARDEN STATE

When Garden State members were notified that they would have the entire 1976 convention at their War Memorial Building for a full day starting at 10:00 a.m. through 10:00 p.m. several meetings were held and committees were formed. The main projects were to serve hot and cold liquid refreshments during the day, man a chapter room with visual reports on all the on-going organ projects, and provide a kit of nearby points of interest in case some conventioners would like to visit and explore historical Trenton. Virginia and Aaron Messing headed up this committee and produced a good, compact kit (no small job). Jay Taylor and Chairman Bill McKissock headed up the refreshment committee, a constantly manned project for the 12 hours that required time and physical energy.

July 20 turned out to be a beautiful sunny day, and while the birds were just starting to awake, 40 dedicated members of GSTOS from all over the state headed for Trenton and were on hand to welcome the over 500 people who attended. Everyone carried out the various duties and the day flew by. Schedules were well arranged and the workers were able to hear parts of all the organ concerts, especially the final Ashley Miller program after dinner when all the chores were completed.

It was a very satisfying day for the chapter members as they met people from all over the country and shared their common love — beautiful theatre organ music.

Our summer meeting took place Sunday, August 22 at the Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque, N.J., a showplace for a large 3 manual Wurlitzer. A special open-console time had been arranged from 1 to 4:00 p.m. by house organist and Vice-

Chairman Frank Cimmino before the regular dinner hour started. It was a relaxed, congenial summertime meeting and most of the attending members had a chance to play this fine Wurlitzer. Members who desired to, remained after the meeting and enjoyed the music and food.

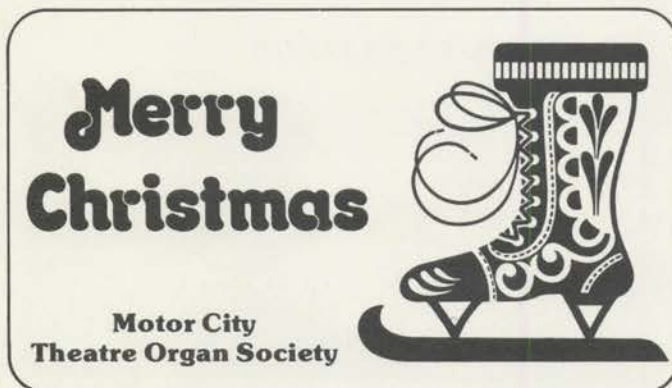
The first meeting of the fall was held at the home of Joe and Jinny Vanore on September 19 with about 45 members attending. One of the main purposes of the meeting was to discuss plans for starting a student competition on theatre organ pipes and awarding cash gifts to the winners. All of our members feel that the children are our future ATOS members and should have an opportunity to hear, play and get to love theatre organs as much as we do.

A lively, four hour meeting, with an intermission of coffee and goodies, produced a lot of excellent ideas and suggestions. Committees were appointed and hopefully the spring will bring our first competition. Chairman Bill McKissock had a full agenda and the business meeting ended with a great deal accomplished. The members who did not have other obligations remained and played the 3 rank Estey minuet with Ampico piano and wall-to-wall toy counter.

JINNY VANORE

GULF COAST

Our recent absences from "Chapter Notes" are not indicative of a lack of zeal in Gulf Coast, but only of a lack of organization on the part of this reporter, who cannot seem to keep a handle on deadlines. On the contrary, we are humming with activity, constrained (aren't we all?) only by the availability of time and funds. Towards alleviating the latter, we are now engaged in incorporation





During a Gulf Coast business meeting, Tom Helms demonstrates the effect of "piano stops" during discussion of a soon-to-be-acquired piano action.

proceedings as a first step to non-profit status. But how do you acquire more hours in the day?

Our last two meetings are noteworthy for two different reasons. In September, the most daring and brave (or foolhardy?) of our group weathered violent thunderstorms and tornado warnings to gather at the lovely home of Marge McNair for a meeting short on business and long on entertainment. The feature attraction was Marge's new Conn 651 ably manned by member Albert Martin. You name it, Albert played it — no, performed it, much to the delight of a captivated crowd. The plug-in really got a workout; so did the audience, in coming up with requests!

October brought us back to the Saenger Theatre after a prolonged absence while basic rehab of building and electrical systems was underway. During the same period, we accomplished a significant amount of work on "Lola," our Robert Morton, and were anxious to hear the results in

concert. Doing the honors was Tom Helms, at "home" with us after a tour at Toronto's Organ Grinder. As soon as Tom began to play, we realized all over again why he was so sorely missed. His professionalism in styling and keyboard dexterity is obvious from the first measure, and it was a treat to hear his arrangements of Gershwin, Elgar, Strauss and others, not the least of which were two real foot-stompers, "Stars And Stripes Forever" and "Chattanooga Choo Choo"! The Morton sounded proud of her two newly added regulators and tremos, and the sound was richly enhanced by Tom's choice registrations.

Following the program, a noteworthy business meeting was conducted. The notable feature was its length and profundity! But much was accomplished in the way of planning for the future, both short and long-ranged. Included in our soon-to-be-accomplished objectives is a keying action for the baby grand in the theatre, to couple it to the organ

console. By way of demonstration of the "piano stops," Tom, at the piano, and this scribe, at the Morton, attempted an unrehearsed duo (Ferrante and Teicher, eat your hearts out!) of Joplin's "Original Rags." At least the effect was accomplished!

Open console followed refreshments, and we were pleased to hear from Walter Smith and Bob Sidebottom, both staunch chapter workers. At this writing, news is that Walter is moving to the big city of New York, which will be our loss.

Besides the Saenger Morton, chapter members are involved in the rebuild of two local Wurlitzers, in a church and synagogue, respectively. On the horizon is another instrument soon to be installed in an area high school. Gulf Coast is busy.

CURT GOLDHILL

JOLIET AREA

On the evening of October 7, some 2,000 fans with memories of the "Good Ol' Days" poured into the palatial Rialto Theatre in Joliet to commemorate its 50th anniversary.

This building of mirror, marble and gold leaf embellishments was designed by architects Rapp and Rapp. The auditorium was one of the first in the country to boast of perfect acoustics and air conditioning. The original lobby is a full block long, copying many of the features of the Hall of Mirrors of the Palais Versailles in France. The crystal chandelier in the marbelized rotunda measures 20 feet from top to bottom, weighs about 2½ tons and cost \$300,000.

Those present could not realize the countless hours put in by the organ crew, Dave Krall, Jim Challenger and JATOE members, as the beautiful white and gold 4/21 Barton

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



Toledo Chapter ATOS

Seasons Greetings

from

Down Under

North Queensland Chapter,
Australia

Grande pipe organ rose out of the pit.

Charming Rob Calcaterra, organist, was too young to recall the old days, but he recognized those who played the gigantic keyboard of the Barton in days past. He played Joseph Lyon's old theme song, "Honey," and "Indian Summer" for Mrs. Frances Wood Irving, who was in the audience. Other favorite tunes from the depression years and war-time were "My Buddy," "A Four-Leaf Clover," and "Fascination." The audience fell in love with Rob's renditions and all joined in a hearty sing-along as the lyrics flashed on the screen.



Versatile Rob Calcaterra at the 4/21 Barton for the 50th anniversary of Joliet's Rialto Theatre.

Everyone laughed with former Jolietan Ralph Sherman who "came home" to be master of ceremonies, and they applauded with gusto to a rousing version of a 1920's routine "Suite Jelly Roll," presented by the Joliet Ballet Society dancers. Peggy Cunningham Fay, a former singer with Frankie Carle, sang oldies,

while Jan and Judy Schaeffer brought folk music to light. Gospel singer Juliet King closed the program with "God Bless America."

A reception followed in the Chandelier Room in the Rialto Square Building where a huge birthday cake and bicentennial candles set the scene. Among the old friends reminiscing were the original owners of the theatre, the Ruben brothers. A job well done went to Dorothy Mavrich, promoter of the evening, and president of the Will County Cultural Arts Association who co-sponsored the gala event with Greater Joliet Council and Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts.

Will County Cultural Arts Association is seeking a landmark designation for the Rialto Theatre. Anyone interested in supporting this cause by purchasing bumper stickers or donating time or money may contact Miss Dorothy Mavrich, 1300 West Acres, Joliet, Illinois, 60435, Phone 1 (815) 725-6940.

JAN AND MARGE CHALLENGER

LAND OF LINCOLN

There is a farm near Poplar Grove, Illinois, so hidden by the surrounding trees, that it probably isn't noticed by the stranger passing by. But what a wealth of musical instruments is sheltered here! It is the home of Robert Tuttle, a member of the chapter. A former two car garage has been converted into a museum containing everything from a Swiss music box dating from the 1850's to a John Brown two manual tracker pipe organ. Nearby in the granary is Bob's Mini-Theatre with a two manual Page Organ.

On May 22, the Tuttle's were hosts to the Boone County Bicentennial Committee. More than 300 people toured the farm and enjoyed the



Bob Ralston at the Barton organ, Coronado Theatre - Rockford, Ill.

Tuttle Collection. Bob Coe gave a mini-concert on the Mighty Page, which was followed by his accompaniment to the silent movie, *Liberty*, a Laurel and Hardy film.

Also in this setting on May 21, the LOLTOS had their annual picnic and election of officers. While gathered on the lawn we were treated to a concert by three of our members, Lyle Nali on the accordin, Bill Weeks on the bass, and Bob Schmooch on the violin. Many of us present didn't know about these hidden talents in our group. The following officers were elected for the coming year: Robert Schmooch, chairman; Robert Weirick, vice-chairman; Donald Rublee, secretary; Roger Buck, treasurer; and board members; Ed Borowiec, Robert Tuttle, Gene Wolfe, John Van-Leeuwen, and Orrill Dunn as immediate past chairman. Bob Coe remains as technical advisor.

It is hard to believe that Chad Weirick, who had his fifteenth birthday in August, can perform in so many ways and with such perfection. He did a cameo performance at the



seasons

greetings

from

NOR-CAL ATOS

**HOLIDAY
GREETINGS**

members of
J.A.T.O.E.

and the
Rialto
Theatre
Joliet, Ill.





Orrill Dunn (left), past chairman of LOLTOS, with Bob Coe, Chad Weirick, and Robert Schmooch, chairman of LOLTOS at the 4/26 unit organ, Whitewater, Wisconsin.

ATOS Convention '76 in Philadelphia, served as official organist for Miss Nationwide Talent competition at Bolingbrook in Old Chicago, and also served as official organist for the National Miss Teen Queen 1976 U.S.A. Pageant. He is fast gaining recognition for his own original program, *Magic Moments in Music*.

How about a rodeo to demonstrate the technique of the silent movies? Chad was asked to play for a rodeo September 13 and 14 at the Dane County Coliseum in Madison, Wisconsin. His ease of performance on the Hammond prompted the audience to respond to the hoofbeats of the horses or the fall of a cowboy or an animal with much applause.

In direct contrast, Chad gave a concert under the direction of Bob Coe at the Congregational Church in Whitewater, Wisconsin, where approximately 200 people attended. This concert was given on the 4/26 unit organ which contains pipe ranks of both church and theatre organs. Chad's variety of numbers proved the versatility of the organ. The first part of the concert was on the class-

ical side, concluding with the "Lord's Prayer" by Malotte. When Chad moved to the piano and Bob Coe took over at the organ we were the audience to a real treat as they played together the "Warsaw Concerto." The team work was terrific! Lightning and thunder, mixed with gentle rain, seemed to fill the room when Chad played a medley of weather tunes. We of LOLTOS are indeed fortunate to have a boy like Chad among our group. There are great things in store for this very talented young man and we can say we saw the beginning of a successful career.

FRANK ELLIS

We opened our 1976-77 season with Bob Ralston at the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Illinois, Thursday, October 21, 1976 with wall to wall people. Three chartered buses from area towns helped to swell the crowd that filled the theatre to hear the popular organist of the Lawrence Welk Orchestra. Bob confirmed that this was his first sing-along on any program and he enjoyed it so much he included a second set of songs in

the second half of the program. In addition to playing the 4/17 Barton, he also included some melodies on the grand piano.

After the performance members and their friends gathered on the stage for the afterglow which included refreshments and an opportunity to meet the artist.

The next program scheduled at the Coronado Theatre will be a Gala Christmas program featuring Rex Koury at the organ and the Winnebago High School Choral Society.

Our November social was held at the Coronado with our featured artist being Jill Eisenreich who is a senior music major at Whitewater College, in Whitewater, Wisconsin. The program was arranged by Bob Coe, our technical advisor, who installed, over a period of years, the 4/30 organ at the Congregational Church in Whitewater with a little help from his friends. Both Bob and Jill share the console at the church during her years at the college.

Dennis Morlan, the district manager of the Keresotes Theatres, attended a recent board meeting of our chapter. Together we are formulating plans for a super-gala program to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Theatre in October, 1977.

ORRILL DUNN

LOS ANGELES

On an unusual (for Southern California) rainy Friday evening (Sept. 24) LA Chapterites and their guests were treated to an entertaining evening with organist/television-comic/antique vacuum cleaner collector Stan Kann. His concert was notable for the use of colorful registration applied to Duke Ellington selections, "In a Persian Market," Schubert's "March Militaire" and Von Suppe's "Poet and Peasant

Christmas Greetings

LAND OF LINCOLN CHAPTER

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**The Only Pizza Parlor
In The North East**

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Don Thompson

WITH BILL HAGEY & COLIN COUSINS

Overture." The chapter's San Gabriel 3/16 Wurlitzer was in fine shape and responded very effectively to the demands of Mr. Kann, who appeared in a suit stitched entirely from old vacuum cleaner bags. As always, humor was in the forefront and Stan was in top form. Three non-ATOS concerts played on our San Gabriel Civic Auditorium instrument during October are worthy of mention; within a period of eight days there were concerts played by Lyn Larsen, Gaylord Carter and George Wright. All drew representative audiences but George attracted the largest number — over 1200. He hasn't been heard on theatre pipes in southern California since the fire which permanently silenced the South Pasadena Rialto 2/10 Wurlitzer several years ago. Those who attended pass on the word that George is as compelling as ever in both his music and MCing. He filled the house at \$4.50 a ducat, which is indicative of his drawing power even in these hard times.

The next ATOS concert will star Maria Kumagai and is scheduled for October 29th. It will be the third LA Chapter appearance for Maria, the Japanese girl who came to the USA to learn to play the theatre organ, and managed to achieve concert status in less than five years.

Work is still continuing on the rebuilding of the Wiltern theatre Kimball console, as it has for the past year. More volunteers are needed for this project.

ELMER FUBB

MIAMI VALLEY (OHIO)

October 10 marked the annual business meeting of our little Chapter. Re-election of Bob Cowley as chairman and Dennis Werkmeister as vice-chairman was followed by

election of a strong slate of other dedicated officers and directors who promise to take a watchful eye over the purse-strings, etc.

Site of the meeting was Fred and Kay Rieger's *Barn* near Waynesville. This fascinating structure will someday command a feature article in THEATRE ORGAN. Constructed to house Fred's collection of player rolls for a pipe organ, it seemed fitting that a 3/42 organ be installed which contains Estey and other manufacturers' handiwork. A number of theatre voices and effects have been incorporated, including piano, and the two chambers consume most of the two-story hike which you take to the observation tower on the roof's crest. The main room which houses the console is 80' x 52', ample for dance floor, catered dinners, and all sorts of other ATOS commotion. The main floor also contains a superbly equipped recording studio, projection room, living quarters, etc. When silent pictures are being screened, closed circuit television keeps the organist cued into the action since the screen is not in view.

The lower floor contains office, drafting room, elegantly equipped machine shop, carpenter shop, and adequate garage space to house Fred's collection of antique automobiles, primarily Chrysler airflow models from the 30's. We feel particularly fortunate to have the Riegers as friends and to enjoy their hospitality from time to time.

JOHN M. GOGLE

MOTOR CITY

Our guest artists for our monthly concert at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor were Bob Cowley, Miami Valley Chapter Chairman, in September, and Warren Colby, a former theatre organist, in October. At the

Royal Oak Theatre, John Fischer, chapter vice-chairman, played in September and Bill Coale entertained in October.

Karl Cole was a real hit with Redford audiences when he kicked off our fall concert series in September. The Laurel and Hardy film *Your Darn Tootin'* and a sing-along rounded out Karl's two-night program at the Barton.

Members were guests of DTOC member Lawrie Mallet at the Detroit Theater Organ Club for a program by John Muri on September 19. John's program at the 4/34 Wurlitzer consisted entirely of music written by the famed Detroit composer Richard Whiting.

Dennis and Heidi James returned to the Motor City for their two-night presentation of their American Music Panorama show (requested by several members who had seen this program at Dickinson High School during the '76 convention) at the Royal Oak Theatre in October.

A Wurlitzer reed organ has been donated to the Albert T. Mason Memorial Fund by the Universalist Unitarian Church of Farmington. Once minor repairs have been completed, the organ will be offered, on loan, to a deserving music student who would not otherwise be able to afford a practice instrument.

DON LOCKWOOD

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Our September board meeting was held at the home of Thelma and Gordon Gillette. I always marvel at the sound of their home installation — the best I have ever heard.

On September 15 Andy Kasparian made his second appearance at the Riviera Theatre and played to nearly a full house. Andy's continuous changing of the tabs proves



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that he must have done his homework on the big band era as he made the organ sound great and the crowd happy. They are looking forward to his next concert.

We usually only have one concert a month but on September 29, we had the opportunity to have Karl Cole back after a absence of two years. He played his first theatre organ concert on 24 hours notice when Leon Berry suddenly became ill the night before he was to play at the Riviera. Karl became an instant hit and one of the crowds favorites.

Everytime we hear Karl, we wonder if he could ever top that first concert. Well he did! This time it seems that over the years he has gathered a lot more polish. On several numbers he explained what voices he was setting up and which voices he would be using on the second touch and when he would bring them in. The crowd seemed quite interested in his explanation, as a large part of the audience are non-players or players of plug-ins. He must have done something right for the crowd stayed on and he played encore after encore for nearly one hour.

From time to time as part of our educational program, the Niagara Chapter has given young deserving artists the opportunity to play their first paid theatre organ concert. We have been careful in selecting these candidates and the chapter is very proud that several of these young artists who got their first break at the Riviera are now nationally known and are regulars on the organ circuit.

It is always interesting to hear an organist for the first time. Robin Richmond played the Riviera on October 20 on his first visit to the U.S.A. Robin is another one of those fine English organists, though his

style is quite different from most English organists that have been heard. Perhaps he was influenced by the "Yanks" that were stationed in England during the war. Robin played lots of bouncy foot tapping, lively tunes, carefully mixing the voices to make for easy, enjoyable listening.

Robin is celebrating his 50th anniversary as an organist, 45th anniversary in show business and 40th anniversary of his first broadcast. He played nine years at the Paramount, Tottenham Court, and many night clubs and grills in his long career.

We must also give credit to Roy Simon who played one of the finest accompaniments to a silent movie that we have ever heard. Roy played the movie while Robin was having his cup of tea.

The 50th anniversary of our Rivera Theatre Organ will be December 30, 1976.

Coming attractions at the Riviera:

Nov. 23. Hector

Dec. 15. our own Frank Olsen

Jan. 19. first appearance of
Colin Cousins

Feb. 16. who else but Dick Smith

I never realized how many people read the Chapter Notes until I started receiving comments — some good, some bad. It seems that I have been using the words "one of my favorite organists" quite often, and now they want to know who my favorite really is. I have decided to tell all in the next issue of T.O. Chapter Notes.

STEVE CROWLEY

NORTH TEXAS

The major event in the chapter activities this Fall was the Hector Olivera Concert at the Organ World concert hall in Garland, Texas on

October 23, and what an event it was! Co-sponsored by the North Texas Chapter and the staff of Organ World, it was a real Saturday night event, attended by theatre organ enthusiasts from a good 350 mile radius around the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. We arrived about 45 minutes late amid an SRO crowd as Hector was finishing up his initial presentations and it didn't take long to recognize we had a real talent at the console. Everything from then on out emphasized that fact. For



Chapter members Margaret Flannery and Larry Hasselbring smile for the camera with Hector Olivera. (Kaski Photo)

our money, Hector is right up there with the best of them.

A little item that helped everyone better recognize Hector's great talent was a closed circuit television setup with the monitor receiver sitting on top of the console and the pickup camera focused on Hector's hands on the manuals and frequently on his feet as they danced on the pedals. The circuit was provided by friends of the Organ World staff, and did much to give everyone in the audience an opportunity to watch as well as listen to Hector's fine presentations. It wasn't hard to recognize as soon as we heard a few numbers that Hector had considerable train-



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ing in Classical Organ. Yet the way he very smoothly and almost imperceptibly moved from classical into jazz, ragtime, pops, and even rock, told his listeners in no uncertain



Hector and his audience. Note the TV monitor.
(Koski Photo)

terms that here was a real top-notch organist and musician.

In the audience were several organ students working on their Masters and higher degrees at SMU or TCU and just watching them while Hector was playing told one a lot about the real talent at the console. As Hector moved smoothly from a classical introduction into a Scott Joplin number or a theatre organ version of the Boston Pops on "Fiddle-Fiddle," these students nudged each other, grinned and nodded, and were the first on their feet in giving Hector a standing ovation at the break time, after his finale' and after each of his encores. It takes a good, trained organist to recognize the real ability and outstanding technique at the console. The way his peers reacted to Hector's musicianship spoke eloquently of his ability.

The man is truly an excellent, smooth, and hard-working organist and an outstanding entertainer as well. He makes it all look so easy. Thanks, Hector!

Since the Hector Olivera concert

took the place of the chapter's October meeting, there was no business session. However, a nominating committee was appointed to have some recommendations ready for the December meeting. We changed our C & B to create the office of chairman-elect, who would be "in training" for the year before he actually took office. The committee will come up with a recommended slate for officers elect, 1st vice chairman, 2nd vice chairman, and secretary. Jim Peterson who was the first one elected to the chairman-elect position last year, automatically takes over as chairman at the first 1977 meeting. Good luck, Jim.

JOE KOSKI



Dick Schrum, past president, ATOS, at the console of the Benson High School Kimball.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)

OREGON

Our September meeting was held at Benson High School auditorium using the 3/23 Kimball. The featured artist was ATOS Past President Dick Schrum who is a very popular north-

Bud Abel at the Ingram's 2/8 Wurlitzer. Bud is a Charter Member of ATOS and was active in the formation of the organization in 1954-55.

(Claude Neuffer Photo)



west organist currently appearing at the Pipes and Pizza in Seattle, Washington. Dick played an exceptionally fine and varied program. After the program Dick introduced his lovely wife and family, and the console was open to anyone brave enough to play after this top professional.

At this meeting we had the honor of having the nationally famous organist Glenn Shelley, now retired, as a guest. For many years Glenn played silents in Portland's largest theatres and in many others throughout the northwest and later attained nationwide recognition via radio network.

The Benson High Kimball was originally installed in a theatre in Longview, Washington, and later moved to the present location in Portland. Some dozen ranks have been added between the two chambers. Their stop tabs are located on the back rail as floating divisions which can be coupled to different manuals at different pitches. There are six 16' pedal extensions and a fine brass section. The acoustics of the auditorium are big and live, pro-



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BUD ABEL

October 17 found the chapter at the home of Don and Arlene Ingram for a monthly concert. Bud Abel did the honors for us this day. He is a charter member of the ATOS, and hails from the San Francisco-Oakland Bay area. He played every notable theatre organ in that area, before they were all moved to other locations.

The chapter is blessed with wonderful young talent, but it is a joy to see an "old timer" do his bit.

Bud's concert covered the span of many music years. While his home instrument is a 650 Conn, (the most impressive this writer has ever heard or played) he is certainly at home on the pipes.

The Ingram's 2/8 Wurlitzer, restored by Bob Burke, is a really fine sound. Bud Abel very generously donated the normal organists fee to the chapter.

After the concert the regular open console prevailed. Another two hours passed as Gerry Gregorious, Steve Bray, Matt Neill, Tim Callierate and Organ Grinder organist Jack Coxon entertained the group.

DON INGRAM

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Our newly appointed "PR" (Public-Relations) man got off to a late start this time. This article was intended for the Oct.-Nov. issue, but with the deadline date only 27 days behind — well. On Saturday, August 28, we had a real "Organ-Picnic" at the home of Jack and Nancy Walden



ABOVE: Lake and mountain view at Jack and Nancy Walden's Organ Picnic. LEFT: Fun-loving Ray Young at the 2/10 Kimball at the Walden's home. BELOW: Kevin Cain at the Rodgers Trio, at Bill and Priscilla Arthur's home.



in Loveland, Colo. They have a 2/10 Kimball theatre organ in their home formerly installed in the Teatro De Lago in Chicago. The gent with the beard and winning smile is Ray Young who played in the Three Coins Restaurant in Louisville, Colo. and also Nicky's in Estes Park, Colo. There were 60 in attendance and Ray thrilled us all with his masterful playing.

On Sunday, September 26, 30 attended a concert in the home of Bill and Priscilla Arthur that houses a



3 manual Rodgers Trio. Kevin Cain of the Knight-Campbell Music Co., a chapter member, was the artist performing many good old and new songs for us. Mary Humphrey was to share the bench with Kevin but took ill and could not make it. Open console was held after the concert.

In the next issue we will have some happy news concerning the work on

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FRANK R. GANDY

SAN DIEGO

August 30 found us watching that favorite silent film *Don Q, Son of Zorro*, and listening to the famous Gaylord Carter perform memorable music as he accompanied the film on the 5/28 Moller at Organ Power #2 in Pacific Beach. Gaylord's ability to match sound and sight always satisfies and enriches the pleasure of the audience. It's no wonder he's called "Mr. Flicker Fingers."

On September 20, we were especially proud to present Gerald Nagano in concert. He is a member of the L.A. Chapter and also joined the S.D. Chapter last February. It was a first for us to present one of our active members, a talented young man with obvious enthusiasm and enjoyment. Audience rapport was instantaneous and continued throughout the evening. He loved the "Mighty Mo" and was daring and adventurous with his registrations. It was exciting to share with his proud parents this first ATOS concert. Keep your eye on this 19 year old — he's on his way. Our thanks to Chris Gorsuch who was host to Gerald the weekend of the concert.

A most enjoyable and different evening on October 17 with Stan Kann at the console playing his delightful arrangements of many of our favorite tunes, and sharing with us his collection of antique vacuum cleaners. After intermission, we watched the silent film *The Cat and The Canary* to his excellent organ accompaniment. Stan is a man of many talents which were greatly appreciated by all his listeners.

An exciting event for everyone was



Gerald Nagano

(Ed Minder Photo)

the opening of the new Solana Beach "Theatre-Restaurant" (Organ Power #3). A totally new concept — the first of its kind anywhere. A cozy intimate atmosphere where you can enjoy soup and salad, and listen to the sweet tones of the 4/20 Robert Morton. After a delightful dinner you can stay for the movie. A newcomer to our area, Jack Jenkins from Granite City, Ill., is the organist at this beautiful console which was originally in the Midland Theatre in Kansas City. (More about this installation in a future issue).

Our October 31 business meeting was held at Organ Power #1 in Kearney Mesa, where we held open console on the 3/12 Wurlitzer and listened to Ray Krebs present a most interesting educational program "All about the Theatre Pipe Organ." October was an anniversary month for us, as it was just one year ago that our 42 members were brave enough to start a program of monthly concerts. What a year it has been! Eleven concerts and a membership

growth from 42 to 137. A special toast to all members; to the Board — Vern Bickel, Ray Krebs, Jan White, and Marge Greer; and to Organ Power for allowing us to present the artists on the magnificent "Mighty Mo." Without this, our year could not have been so eventful.

LOIS SEGUR

SOUTHEASTERN

Now an annual tradition with the chapter, the Oktoberfest at the home of Lois Russell provided a chance for a purely social gathering of the club on Sunday, October 3.

The chapter's greatest October "happening" was just that... "A Halloween Happening at the Fabulous Atlanta Fox," Thursday evening, October 28 with Dennis James at the console of the 4/42 Moller. Organized and promoted by individuals from the Southeastern Chapter to benefit the Fox, Dennis' appearance featured a superb accompaniment for the silent film war-horse, *The Phantom of the Opera* with Lon Chaney, Sr. The showing of this silent film marked the first appearance of an organist other than veteran Lee Erwin at a Fox public film show. Though Dennis' approach to film accompaniment is somewhat different than Lee's, it is on the same scale of quality. An outstanding feature of the James score was the use of Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor" for the *beginning* of the film, not for the more familiar scenes of the Phantom at *his* organ. The Phantom's first console stint was interpreted by James and the mighty Moller as that of a quiet — almost offertory-like — reverie; and the Phantom's second, and more animated program at the console was none other than César Franck's "Pièce Heroïque." The use of this



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standard work for organ was most appropriate and exquisitely registered and played, as was the whole of James' concert. James' second selection was Camille Saint-Saëns' "Danse Macabre, Op. 40." Here, in very appropriate Halloween tonal dress, the Moller's percussion battery was most believable — down to the rattling of the skeletons' bones.

Dennis James has built a reputation around his showmanship. Not to let the Fox audience down, he arrived in, you guessed it, a coffin — borne by appropriately attired pallbearers trudging through a fog of dry ice. With the Fox's audience as well as the Fox itself in almost full Halloween garb, the evening was a refreshing and most entertaining night for nearly 2,500 Atlantans.

JOHN CLARK MCCALL, JR.

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

On Sunday, October 4, 1976 the start of our new year was hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Owens and Janice. At this time our chairman, Helen Staininger, told of the trip to the Convention in Philadelphia and illustrated her talk with snap shots. Roy Olson Organ Co. furnished the new Conn two manual Caribe model with Conn tone cabinet and Conn pipe speakers for our enjoyment.

Two of Art Crowells younger and newest pupils started the program. Craig Wishnies played a classic and a well done "Clarinet Polka" and Brenda Crawford played "Journey into Melody" by Robert Farnon and "Fanfare" by Jacques Lemmens — very good performances. Ray and Pat Chase performed as did Al Begany, our transferee from the Delaware Valley Chapter.

Following intermission, Lois Seamands accompanied her guest, Helen Neff, who sang "Pale Moon"

and "Climb Every Mountain" from the *Sound of Music*.

"A Lovely Way To Spend An Evening" was Estelle Weiss' way to describe our evening followed by "Fascination" and her popular number of "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes." Open console followed.

On Sunday, October 10, a number of us journeyed to Phoenix to hear George Wright play at the Organ Stop Pizzeria where owner Bill Brown had removed the benches and replaced them with 'opera seats' for the guests. George was well received by a full house after being introduced by Lyn Larson who also was Alec, the "Aelectrician," handling the lights in a very professional manner.

During intermission, this reporter had the pleasure of learning of the re-activation of the Valley of the Sun Theatre Organ Club in the Phoenix area. Southern Arizona Chapter welcomes you back. Thank you, secretary, Ruth Carlson, for the above good news.

BOB HIGH

SOUTH FLORIDA

Our October membership meeting and concert was held at Andre Hall with Karl Cole playing the 260 Wurlitzer. The organ was fine for rehearsal and the many weeks preceding the concert but decided to show it's age during Karl's performance. Even though Karl was forced to stop during one selection, he played brilliantly and was determined not to let the organ get the best of him. Karl has been packing 'em in at his Medley restaurant in Pompano and we were most grateful for his giving us his day off. His refreshing style and choice of selections made an enjoyable evening for both members and guests.

The restoration project of the 260

at Gusman Hall (formerly Olympia Theatre) is nearing completion and we are ready to move the console back into the theatre after 4 years of work. In process is the working out of an agreement with the City of Miami regarding the use of the hall.

If any readers are having trouble with Wurlitzer tremis, we have found the solution in an old THEATRE ORGAN magazine, (April, 1973 Vol. 15 #2, "Positive Control of Wurlitzer Tremis"). It's a conversion that takes about 7 hours and \$12 and after years of frustration we have tried this and it works. The trem can even be placed beside the chest.

ART VENEZIA

TOLEDO

The year 1976 produced more than the usual amount of growth, doubling our membership since January. A proposal was offered to purchase from the City of Toledo, the Marr and Colton organs from the razed Rivoli and Palace theatres. They are now stored in a badly leaking fire station. The city temporarily repaired the roof of the station but informed us of their intention to have the delapidated structure razed as soon as the organs can be moved. The city has recently purchased the Willard Hotel complex surrounding the Valentine Theatre that dates back to 1895. It originally housed a 3/30 Moller organ that was removed back in the forties when a modernization program produced the unique chinese modern interior which presently exists. We are cooperating with the Arts Commission of Greater Toledo in the hopes of turning this fine old theatre into a performing arts center with an organ once again the focal point of the house.

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Last June we presented our first theatre-style organ concert starring Virg Howard at beautifully engineered (by Virg's Staff) twin Conn organ consoles, banked on each side of the stage of Whitmer High School Auditorium by a unique Leslie and Conn speaker arrangement. The sparkling artistry of Virg Howard enchanted the audience of over 400 which included 75 orphans from St. Anthony Villa & Miami childrens homes. Our MC, Dale Turner, also introduced the Toledo Chapter "Summer Sounds" of S.P.E.B.S.-Q.S.A. that heightened the evenings enjoyment. Then the Laurel and Hardy silent movie *Liberty* was delightfully accompanied by Virg Howard.

This fall the chapter is negotiating with Fr. George Rinkowski and Fr. James Southard to provide a theatre organ to please the future audience's of their newly acquired Ohio Theatre on Lagrange St. Now known as St. Hedwig's Community Center, this neighborhood theatre, which seats 1200, will provide our chapter with a home and the thrill of installing and servicing our own theatre organ,

not only for our benefit, but for the whole community. To this end we have recently purchased a badly vandalized 3/8 Bartola Organ from the defunct Sepia Corporation which tried to preserve the World Theatre on Dorr St., but failed.

We look forward with promise to 1977 and may we soon be among the many chapters around our area to have great organ concerts.

WILLIAM W. COTTLE

VALLEY OF THE SUN

Our September meeting was hosted by Gary Rutherford, our program chairman, at Epworth Methodist Church in Phoenix. Gary was the featured organist for the evening and also gave a delightful demonstration on the church's Conn organ.

The annual meeting of the Valley of the Sun Chapter was held at Ruth Carlson's home. The election of officers for 1977 was held. The new officers, who will be taking office in January are: Jack Sheak, chairman; Ken Resech, vice chairman; Ruth Carlson, secretary; Jim Perry, treasurer; Bill Carr, program chairman.

The October 9 meeting of our chapter was held at First Southern Baptist Church of Phoenix and was hosted by Steve Schlesing. Steve

Schlesing and Debbie McCoy opened our meeting with a beautiful piano-organ duet of "Autumn Leaves." The business meeting included a long awaited announcement that the reorganized "Valley of the Sun Chapter" was officially incorporated in accordance with Arizona law. After approximately seven months of hard work by the chapter's officers, this was cause for rejoicing! Following the business meeting, Steve Schlesing played his original medley of children's spiritual songs. This was a great hit on the church's 2/7 Wicks. Open console followed.

Some of our chapter members were pleased to attend the George Wright concert at Organ Stop on Sunday, October 10.

Now that the groundwork for our chapter has been laid, we feel that great things are in store for ATOS in the Valley of the Sun.

JANICE PERRY

WESTERN RESERVE

April showers are synonymous with May flowers — and in W.R. T.O.S. with a great attendance for our program presented at Saint Procop Church by David Knipper, one of our much involved young men. The church itself is extraordinarily beautiful with exquisite stained glass

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windows, and the acoustics within are excellent to hear the warm tones of the "pre-war" 2/25 Holtkamp organ housed in the church. Among David's selections were some well-known hymns, all played with imagination and inspiration. The world of organ building and organ music has brought great satisfaction to David who became an ardent member of our group after Ray Bohr's "Broadway" performance here in Cleveland a year ago. One of David's goals is to acquire an apprenticeship with an organ builder and to continue his musical studies, presently at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Thank you, David, for sharing your time with us. And thank you, George and Evelyn Krejci, for the hospitality you extended to us after the program. George Krejci, Jr. is our program director who's been very busy this year planning an unusual array of programs.

Our May meeting at the Grays Armory featured Harry Hershey conducting the Euclid Central Stage Band. Jan and Howard Kast were our hosts in honor of their son David who plays a "cool" Baritone Sax with this talented group. A tribute to David's special abilities was a recent invitation to play in the "All Ohio State Fair Band." Scott Rus-

sell, Dave Knipper and Gordon Hegfield are also to be thanked for their special bonus performance of classical and pop selections on our "favorite" Wurlitzer

By the way, Gordon was featured in a current issue of *Organist Magazine* and we also congratulate him for his playing appearance at the Electronic convention in Clearwater, Florida.

This may be the space age, but right here on earth there wasn't any left in Cleveland's Music Hall the evening of May 19. An unbelievable throng of wall-to-wall people came to participate in the rededication of the Cleveland Municipal Organ. W.R.T.O.S. was proud to be recognized as a major factor in urging the Kulas Foundation to present Cleveland (in 1971), with a \$25,000 grant for the organ's prime restoration by chief rebuildler and restorer, Joseph Nagel. When the instrument, built by E.M. Skinner, was inaugurated in 1922 by the late, famed Cleveland organist Edwin Arthur Kraft, it was billed as "the largest and finest in the world." It is magnificent (with its new console built by Klan, Inc.). It is a 5/150 with a total of 10,042 pipes. Our carefully selected resident artist, Michael Murray, has devoted himself success-

fully to the creative exploration of the variety of possibilities of musicianship inherent in a Skinner installation. Mr. Murray was a pupil of the illustrious Marcel Dupre. Mr. Murray has concertized extensively throughout Europe and coast to coast in the U.S.A. In 1975 he was named vice president of a new Dupre society in Paris. We cordially thank in particular Dick Geysler, Claude Hawks and Chuck Powers, who initiated this constructive endeavor in behalf of W.R.T.O.S. and the city of Cleveland... and more importantly in behalf of the "art" and "heart" of organ music and history.

An original and entertaining June program was presented by member, Bill Taber, who is an excellent organist and teacher. Bill focused his talents on conducting a seminar on theatre organ playing technique and highlighted his presentation with several delightful pieces which he played at the Lamplighter 1928 3/11 Kimball, formerly in the Varitey Theatre in Cleveland. Among his selections were emulations of Jesse Crawford in interesting versions of "Sundown" and "Dream a Little Dream of Me." Speaking of dreams, we've proved that we can make them come true!

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Don Jenks at Roger Mumbroe's 3/19 Marr & Colton residence organ.



John Muri at the D.T.O.C. Wurlitzer console.

(E. Corey Photo)

WOLVERINE

On September 19, Chairman Lawrie Mallet sponsored a private party at the Detroit Theater Organ Club starring none other than John Muri. John's program was centered entirely around the works of Detroit's own Richard Whiting. All selections were presented chronologically, in order to show how Whiting's skills as a composer changed and improved over the years, starting with "It's Tulip Time in Holland," which he traded for a Steinway piano. The piece, incidentally, sold over a half-million copies. John's program was enhanced, as it always is, by the interesting and often unknown tidbits of information about the music itself. The known and unknown alike of Whiting's compositions were capably performed on the 4/34 Wurlitzer — everything

from "Bimini Bay" and "Edie Was A Lady" to "Hooray For Hollywood." As an aside, it was nice to hear some of the solo voices of almost infinite variety which this instrument contains, as well as the bravura.

Roger and Sue Mumbroe allowed us into their beautiful Bloomfield Hills home for our October 17 meeting. This time it was Don Jenks at the console of the hybrid 3/19 Marr & Colton. Coincidentally, Don also centered his program around the works of a great composer — Richard Rodgers. The program was begun with a nicely understated "My Romance," and continued in a logical time sequence. As well as doing several works from Rodgers' Broadway shows, Don surprised us with an organ transcription of the Robert

Russell Bennett scenario of *Victory at Sea*.

Roger has spent several years building up an instrument of considered choice parts in his home, which was built around the organ, and has come up with an outstanding organ.

On October 29, Dennis James presented a special Halloween program at the 3/11 Barton in the Michigan Theatre in Lansing, Michigan. The midnight showing was the silent film classic *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Our thanks again to all who made the socials at the D.T.O.C. and the Mumbroe residence a success. Our thanks, too, to the Michigan Theatre staff, particularly retiring Manager Warren Wardwell for making the Dennis James show a reality.

SCOTT SMITH □

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