

# THEATRE ORGAN

VOLUME 19, NO. 1

FEB./MARCH 1977





*"Part one-man band, part symphony orchestra, part sound effects department, the Wurlitzer... one of the most versatile instruments ever devised by man."*

—Ben M. Hall

*"The Best Remaining Seats"*

Movie palaces were the entertainment centers of the nation to an American generation. The Mighty Wurlitzer made it possible, giving theatres their personalities.

The Mighty Wurlitzer... part of every performer, part of every performance... heightened suspense, enhanced drama, set the stage for a comic pratfall. The total sound. The finest theatre organ ever built.

The Mighty Wurlitzer commanded, thrilled, made audiences live with players on the silent screen. Every mood, every situation positioned with musical themes and mechanical effects. The Mighty Wurlitzer imitated all of the instruments of the orchestra and hundreds that no orchestra could offer. It filled every demand of the photoplay.

Now, in the proud tradition of the Mighty Wurlitzer, a new standard of excellence—Wurlitzer Centura 805.

The organ for the home of every serious keyboard musician.

#### Unsurpassed Enjoyment

Music... sound... sheer enjoyment all come alive with Centura 805.

Crafted to transport you into the realm of musical excellence. Pure magic instantly; total enjoyment every time your fingers touch the inclined, overhanging keys. Thrill to the magnitude of Centura 805's musical capabilities.

Two full 61-note keyboards, 25-note pedalboard, Orbit Synthesizer. Sound and artistry unmatched in the home.

Solid state console produces four pedal voices at two pitches with or without pedal sustain. Five additional pedal voices coupled from upper keyboard. Automatic tone and versatility controls, exclusive linear accent controls, solo instrumental voice selection.

Multi-Matic® Percussion with Repeat and Attack, Percussion Presets, Toy Counter and Swingin' Rhythm™.

Strikingly authentic sound from four families of organ tone through a Multi-

Phonic system of tone generation. Exclusive sound of rotating two-speed Leslie speaker system. Built-in cassette for record and playback.

And, the fine Wurlitzer—Orbit Synthesizer. Unsurpassed magnitude in musical effects. Create sounds that may never have been heard before, produce instrumental voices and effects with unequalled authenticity.

You get all of this and more with Wurlitzer Centura 805. The organ you want if you're a serious keyboard musician.

### MIGHTY WURLITZER POSTER OFFER

#### The Memory Lingers

*Keep the Mighty Wurlitzer in front of you with five outstanding nostalgia posters featuring famous Mighty Wurlitzer installations. Recreated in finest detail.*

*The Mighty Wurlitzer poster set — an exclusive offer from Wurlitzer, is available for a limited time only. Send \$4.50 to:*

### WURLITZER

Advertising Dept.,  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115.  
Offer good in U.S. only.

# THEATRE ORGAN

Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

Volume 19, No. 1 Feb.-March 1977

ATOS National Membership is \$15.00 per calendar year, which includes a subscription to THEATRE ORGAN, the official publication of the American Theatre Organ Society. Single copies \$1.50. Make check or money order payable to ATOS, and mail to P.O. Box 1314, Salinas, California 93901.

**Editorial Address**  
THEATRE ORGAN  
P.O. Box 1314  
Salinas, California 93901  
Phone: (408) 663-3238

**Advertising Address**  
ATOS Advertising  
2231 North Burling Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60614

**Office of the President**  
Ray F. Snitil  
2849 14th Ave. S.E.  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403  
Phone: (319) 364-3464

**National Headquarters**  
ATOS  
P.O. Box 1002  
Middleburg, Virginia 22117  
Telephone: (703) 554-8321

**National Officers**  
Ray F. Snitil, President  
Erwin Young, V.P. - Treasurer  
Riedel West, Secretary

**National Board of Directors**  
W. Tiny James  
Jean Lautzenheiser  
Richard C. Simonton  
George F. Thompson  
Paul Abernethy, Past President  
Riedel West  
William Rieger  
Thomas Landrum  
Robert Van Camp

**Curator**  
Barry Simmons  
Campus Box 2213  
Elon College, North Carolina 27244

**Past Presidents**  
Richard Simonton Feb. 1955 - Oct. 1958  
Judd Walton Oct. 1958 - July 1961  
Tiny James July 1961 - July 1964  
Carl Norvell July 1964 - July 1966  
Richard Schrum July 1966 - July 1968  
Al Mason July 1968 - July 1970  
Stillman Rice July 1970 - July 1972  
Erwin A. Young July 1972 - July 1974  
Paul M. Abernethy July 1974 - July 1976

**Honorary Members**  
1959-Jesse Crawford 1968-Richard C. Simonton  
1960-Fanny Wurlitzer 1969-Judd Walton  
1961-Mel Doner 1970-Bill Lamb  
1962-Leonard MacClain 1971-George and Vi Thompson  
1963-Eddie Dunstedter 1972-Stu Green  
1964-Reginald Foort 1973-Al and Betty Mason  
1965-Dan Barton 1974-Lloyd Klos  
1966-W. "Tiny" James 1975-Joe Patten  
1967-Erwin A. Young 1976-Floyd and Doris Mumm

**EDITORIAL STAFF**  
Editor - George Thompson  
Associate Editors -  
Lloyd E. Klos, Peg Nielsen, Ray Brubacher  
Editor Emeritus - W. "Stu" Green  
Photographer - Bill Lamb  
Publisher - Betty Mason  
Editorial Assistant - Don Lockwood  
Advertising Manager - Len Clarke  
Circulation Manager - Vi Thompson

THEATRE ORGAN (title registered U.S. Patent Office) is published bi-monthly by the American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., a non-profit organization, Ray F. Snitil, President. All rights reserved. Entire contents copyrighted © American Theatre Organ Society, Inc., 1976. Office of publication is P.O. Box 2329, Livonia, Michigan 48151.

POSTMASTER: Second Class postage paid at Livonia, Michigan. IF UNDELIVERABLE, send form 3579 to ATOS Circulation Department, Box 1314, Salinas, California 93901.

## Cover Photo

The Trenton War Memorial 3/16 Moller. This cover is presented by THEATRE ORGAN as a tribute to all who have worked and are working to preserve theatre pipe organs. The Trenton project personifies the aims and traditions of ATOS.

W.T. McKissock, Jr. Photo

## In This Issue

### Features

- 5 San Diego's "Music Man" ..... Robert Whinery
- 11 Vic Hyde Discovers a Cozatt Theatre Organ ..... Lloyd E. Klos
- 15 Jean Ingelov, Silent Movie Pianist ..... Lloyd E. Klos
- 17 In Search of "New" Pipe Organs. .... Arthur M. Cox, Jr.
- 20 Jack Skelly, New York Paramount Organist ..... Lloyd E. Klos
- 27 Organist Reg. Foort Resumes 38-Year Old "Love Affair" ..... Stu Green
- 28 RTOS Sponsors Gala Weekend in Toronto ..... Lloyd E. Klos
- 31 Joliet's Wonder Theatre
- 32 1977 Convention Banquet ..... lone Tedei
- 43 What's the Score? ..... John Muri

### Technical

- 41 Questions and Answers ..... Lance Johnson

### Departments

- 24 For the Records
- 34 Vox Pops
- 40 Hollywood Cavalcade
- 42 Nuggets from the Golden Days
- 44 Letters to the Editors
- 48 Chapter Notes
- 63 Classified Ads

## President's Message

*As I read the issues of the THEATRE ORGAN, I am so amazed and pleased by the young people who are demonstrating their interest in devoting their time and talents and making a career of the theatre pipe organ. Their creativity, their use of the modern music of today and their new interpretations have given the old theatre pipe organs a new place in music artistry.*

*Many of the chapter newsletters I receive also contain accounts of the younger generations' activities in presenting programs for the chapters, participating in console time and working on restoration of pipe organs. I hope you feel as I do that if the young people continue to show so much enthusiasm, the "King of Instruments" will not fade away again. Every opportunity should be given to these budding musicians to prepare themselves to follow in the footsteps of those great veteran organists who are presently our devoted performers and artists.*

*With new members joining ATOS every day, new groups of interested enthusiasts requesting information about forming chapters, more theatre organs being restored along with continued perpetuation by the young organists, I feel that our organization will progress far above and beyond the expectations of our founders.*

*Let's continue to work together in our efforts in these directions so that there will be more artists playing more theatre pipe organs for more people to enjoy.*



Sincerely,

*Ray F. Snitil*  
RAY F. SNITIL

ATOS  
ARCHIVES / LIBRARY



## NOT YOUR TYPICAL PLUG-IN!

The three manual System 1220 Digital Computer Allen is about as far from a typical "plug-in" as one can get.

Highly sophisticated in both sound and technology, this is the organ that garnered ovations at Asilomar, and the recent ATOS Convention.

If you are fortunate enough to be able to enjoy the very best, this is the organ you've been waiting for.

Let us arrange a demonstration.

©1976

Allen Organ Company  
Macungie, PA 18062

TO-27

- Please send free literature on the Digital Computer Organ.
- \$2 enclosed (\$3.50 outside U.S.) Please send Dwight Beacham demonstration recording.
- Please contact me re a System 1220 demonstration.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# SAN DIEGO'S MUSIC MAN



by Robert Whinery

Edward G. Borgens, executive vice president of Organ Power Restaurants was fuming over a recent item in THEATRE ORGAN in which he was depicted as "playing as his health permits."

When a man can come out of active retirement at seventy-five to work twelve-hour days, he can hardly be called feeble. Ed Borgens

Ed Borgens today. Still going strong and no 'as his health permits' problems.



has been racing through life since he was twenty and shows no signs of stopping.

Ed was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, the son of George and Mary Borgens, immigrants from Germany. Music has been his love since age nine when he started piano lessons. His schoolmates in Lincoln called him "sissy" for this, so he took time out from practice to "civilize" a few of them with his fists. "Guts" is a characteristic trait which has served him well in life. Two years ago he smashed his right fingertips in a car door just before a concert. He played the concert in excruciating pain, and later lost the four fingernails. But the show went on.

His life is replete with interesting activities, enough for a full-scale biography but his memories of the roaring twenties are of special interest for it was then that he developed his talents rapidly. Ed turned out to be a rare combination of complete musician and astute businessman. Let's see how it happened.

In 1936 San Diego staged the World's Fair, mostly in Balboa Park. Central in the exhibition was the world's largest outdoor organ, a 4-manual Austin, and the promoters contacted Chicago for an organist who could play all types of music with expertise. They were referred to Ed Borgens in Lincoln, Nebraska,

During World War II, Ed gives the downbeat to start the "Poet and Peasant Overture." He's conducting an orchestra comprised of carefully auditioned Convair Aircraft Co. employees who volunteered for troop entertainment at the Port of Embarkation.

and he came to San Diego for daily performances during the next six months. Why, of all the organists in this country, was he selected? The answer is found in the twenties, when the cinema pipe organ reached its zenith.

Ed graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1923, music major, pipe organ, and for the next two years led a double life, teaching music in the Lincoln high school and playing the Lincoln theatre organ at night. The latter was so profitable that he abandoned teaching. Pipe organs were being installed in hundreds of theatres, so employment was secure with high pay for those who could provide background music for silent movies.

Great theatre organists emerged as the era of movie palaces and organ building peaked, among whom were Jesse Crawford and Eddie Dunstedter. Ed Borgens played in several Minneapolis theatres all of them just a few blocks from where Dunstedter was playing. He took every opportunity to study Eddie's technique first hand. While Crawford was a master of tonal coloring, Dunstedter's forte was counter melody, and Ed Borgens wanted detailed instruc-



Earliest available console shot of Ed while he was playing the Kimball at the Capitol Theatre, Aberdeen, South Dakota, in 1927.

tion in the art. So he went to the McPhail Conservatory in Minneapolis, where Dunstedter taught a select few, and auditioned successfully. For a year he was instructed by the master while still playing his theatre job, and emerged as an able theatre organist, proficient in all types of music.

Ed was fortunate to have completed this year of instruction when he did, for this was the time of great opportunity for organists, and he was ready when his big chance came.

In 1925 a subsidiary of the Publix corporation needed a guest organist to travel through its theatre chain. In those days orchestras were featured along with organists, and the guest organist had to work with various orchestras and on different consoles. No time to practice, the guest organist just sat down and played while sight reading.

A team of four judges was assigned to audition twenty applicants for the job. The judges were all professional musicians and included Eddie Dunstedter, so the contest promised to be rough.

The rules were simple: the candidate had five minutes to get the feel of the console, then played whatever he was told to, transposing on command, until the judges knew his

abilities and deficiencies in detail. One after another faced this firing line, and it finally came time for Ed Borgens to try.

He faced that console against four indifferent judges and nineteen competitors who all hoped he would fall on his face. But he didn't. Ed gave a short prayer, went through the mill and won the position. He remembers this as the toughest test he ever had, but winning it was much more than gratifying, because it put him in contact with the Finklestein and Rubin five-state theatre chain in the days of vaudeville, and he thus became familiar with every aspect of show business.

For the next three years he travelled as a solo organist. Sometimes he rushed in to substitute for an ailing colleague, entering the pit in the dark while the silent movie was running, mounting the organ bench quietly and softly fading in the music.

Changeovers from orchestra to organ became quite an art form. For large theatres with twenty five piece orchestras, the organist could blend in with the violins while the orchestra members dropped out one by one until the organ took over completely. This was done so skillfully that the audience scarcely noticed it.

Ed's observation of show business — booking acts and films, problems common to all theatre managers — was later to serve him directly when he became the assistant to one theatre owner and again when he operated his own place. Indirectly, a background for business was developing which would characterize the decades following the theatre organ-vaudeville era.

From 1925 through 1929, Ed opened a great number of Finklestein and Ruben/Paramount theatres as representative of the Wurlitzer and Kimball Organ Companies. First Wurlitzer trained him in organ installation, trouble shooting and repair — for very good reasons. He was scheduled to open newly installed organs over five states, each of which would require some debugging. No matter how carefully made or installed, the shakedown during the first week could expose sudden trouble, and no technician was standing by. Pipe organs, fully unified, have amazing possibilities for both performance and malfunctions.

Ed opened theatre after theatre, playing solos and doubling as organ technician. Town names read like a cross section of northern Americana — Aberdeen, Fargo, Minot, Albert Lee, St. Cloud, Duluth, Mankato, Eveleth, Virginia, Superior, Eau Claire, and Clearwater — mainly the rich iron ore belt. Most of these theatres were equipped with medium size or small Wurlitzers, but Ed recalls an especially lovely Barton in a Hibbing theatre. Its console was on an elevator. He was a very busy man during this five year period, always

Ed during his second stint at the Lincoln Theatre (1933-1936).





Ed in 1936, when he arrived in San Diego for a six month engagement — which has stretched to the present.

on the go, and enjoying it thoroughly.

In 1927, the “talkies” were considered a joke — at first. The Musician’s Union reported that the big Vitaphone discs were always “out of sync” with the picture, giving ridiculous results, and that neither orchestras nor organists had anything to fear from this passing fad.

But the “fad” period passed with the introduction of Movietone and Photophone sound-on-film about a year after Vitaphone, and suddenly musicians *were* out of work. Solo organists held on for a while for intermission concerts, but gradually they too were phased out.

Ed Borgens was one of the last to go, and when he did he took up broadcasting organ music from the York theatre in York, Nebraska for several years. His theme song, “Here Comes the Showboat,” was well known all over the midwest and was heard on the east coast at night when radio reception was better. The station’s engineer was an ambitious lad. He supercharged the transmitter power to reach southern California. The FCC wasn’t long in detecting this and pulled his license. Thus ended the year of 1931.

Oscar Johnson owned a five-theatre midwest chain in the ’30s. He knew that Ed had abilities beyond that of being an organist. In 1932 Ed became Oscar’s assistant, and gradually took charge of the five

Nebraska and Iowa theatres as general manager. Two years of this experience equipped him well for the step — his own movie house.

He operated his 1200-seat Humbolt theatre in Humbolt, Nebraska, for two years and made so much money at it in the heart of the Depression that the building owners would not renew his lease. They wanted to collect the profits. But Ed had the knowhow. This operation included variety shows and cowboy pictures, attracting patronage from a large farm area. Not just anyone would dare open his own first enterprise in the bleak, money-scarce depression. His success was no accident, considering his experience.

In 1935 he broadcast organ music over the midwest network of CBS from the Lincoln theatre, Lincoln Nebraska. He also played at the Orpheum in Omaha, some fifty-six miles distant once a week on a Wurlitzer organ.

The year of 1936 was a turning point in Ed’s life, for it was then that he left for San Diego to play the Austin organ at the World’s Fair. He refused the offer at first because he was well established as manager of the Hammond Organ Depts. for six music stores in Nebraska and Iowa. This was too good to leave for a six-month contract. Then Nebraska was bit by a blizzard that buried roads and homes in snow, and Ed couldn’t even leave the house. Business stopped.

The Fair authorities seized this opportunity to send him a telegram: “Come to the land of sunshine and orange blossoms and leave that land of ice and snow.” That did it! He accepted by answering “California

In 1926 the Fargo Theatre, Fargo, North Dakota, used Ed’s name in lights to attract customers.



A 1936 photo showing Ed playing a concert on the 53-rank outdoor Austin organ in San Diego’s Balboa Park. He has played it many times in the years since the Fair and refers to it affectionately as ‘the old walrus.’

Here I Come” by telegram, and the countdown took place over the radio. He ended his final Lincoln broadcasts with the song of the same title.

On Friday, March 13, 1936, Ed arrived in San Diego to play “that old walrus,” as he puts it, to hundreds of thousands of people. He played classics, theatrical, accompanied vaudeville on the open air Austin and was heard on world-wide broadcasts from the Fair. His versatile background was employed fully, and he frequently worked from original manuscripts for the special daily shows. Eddie Dunstedter would have been proud of his pupil.

Ed Borgens fell in love with San

Diego, and from 1937 to 1940 was the Hammond Organ salesman for Thearles Music Company in that city. He did very well, but the World War II years brought scarcities in everything, so he became personnel director of Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego. He came to the attention of the firm's president, Major Reuben H. Fleet, and was appointed to head a new Convair department of Entertainment and Recreation. He organized bands, choirs, orchestras; some for men, some for women, some mixed. They played "live" dance music from 1:00 a.m. until 6:00 a.m. for the factory "swing" shift, both for recreation and to "keep them out of trouble." The high point, however, was a world-wide OWI broadcast of the "Messiah," featuring a 300-voice chorus and orchestra organized and directed by Ed Borgens.

At the Fleet household, Ed was giving weekly organ lessons to Dorothy Fleet, the Major's wife. They had a five-year old lad named "Sandy." Thirty-five years later, the aforementioned Sandy started collecting pipe organs as a hobby, and one day he came to Ed's apartment in La Jolla to discuss possibilities of commercial enterprise. Ed promised his support, other stockholders were signed, and Organ Power Restaurants was born. The firm now operates three eateries with organ music. That's quite a story in itself. It traces Sandy Fleet's interest in organs to its source — Ed Borgens.

Following World War II, Ed decided to start his own music store right across the street from his old employer's store. George Scott of the Walker-Scott department store took Ed to lunch and told him he



Ed at the time he opened his San Diego music store (1949).

would be bankrupt in a month if he tried to compete with the established store. Scott then offered him the management of the new organ department in his department store. Ed refused, preferring to be on his own.

His new store on Broadway was stocked with four pianos (all he could get) which sold fast leaving him with empty space. It appeared that Scott had been right, but then Ed got the Baldwin dealership and within a year was moving fast. Ed eventually expanded to five stores in San Diego County. He became the

district manager for Baldwin for half of California and all of Arizona.

Once, in Phoenix, he demonstrated Baldwin Organs at a fair. A woman kept coming back to hear him every hour, so Ed decided to find out why. It was the same routine each time, he told her, but she replied that he sounded so much like an organist that used to broadcast in Nebraska years ago. He turned and played his old theme, "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise" and then

Here Ed accompanies a tumbling act, conducting one of the many bands he organized to entertain troops during World War II.





turned back to find her in tears.

"You're the one!" she said.

"Yes," he replied, "I'm Eddie Borgens of Lincoln, Nebraska." Ed says he can't play that song in concert today without someone recognizing him, even after forty years. Millions must have listened to those broadcasts.

Ed met another girl in Phoenix. Her name was Lillian, and she soon became a part of his life. Matrimony followed. That was twenty-nine years ago. The love affair continues to this day.

Ed's civic activities in San Diego are legion. He's a Mason, church president, chairman of many things past and present, and leads a more active life than most men half his age. His interest in schools is paramount, and over the years he has taught music appreciation through organ concerts, carefully explaining the mechanics of the instruments and sound effects. Many thousands of children have heard him play in their school auditoriums, and today he happily continues at Organ Power with special programs for school groups. And how those kids love a

theatre pipe organ!

When asked why he didn't play scheduled times at Organ Power, Ed replied "We have fine young organists who need to emerge. I had my era, now it's their turn." So he still plays for special occasions, church concerts, and is actively involved in music in his 75th year, as always. He has a two-manual Baldwin in his apartment.

Recently, Reginald Foort (now in his 80's) played a concert and made two records at Organ Power, Pacific Beach. It was interesting to hear those two old pros exchanging experiences during lunch. They sure had a lot to say about the roaring twenties, organs and music generally.

Ed Borgens' life has covered the whole span of the theatre organ, from its beginnings in the teens of this century, through its great days, then its obscurity up through its rediscovery in recent years. He has combined music with successful business ventures and good citizenship. It was a lucky day for San Diego when that 1936 mid-western blizzard started him whistling "California Here I Come." □



Baldwin factory rep. Dan Sheeran (right) presents Ed with the company's diamond pin award for selling the most (over 200) large Baldwins in a limited time. The one karat sparkler award was a world first for both Ed and the company (1965).

*For those who couldn't make it in 1976 . . . and those who'd like to do it again*

## **ORGAN SAFARI II TO ENGLAND IN 1977**

See and hear the wonderfully restored Comptons, Christies and Wurlitzers of England. Featured artists will include Ernest Broadbent, Douglas Reeve, Len Rawle, Robin Richmond and Robinson Cleaver.

Tour guides are all organists, active in the British organ world. The Safari is open to members and non-members and will operate on scheduled airlines.

September 30th departure from Los Angeles and New York. Price of \$995.00 includes air fare, hotels, transfers, admissions, motorcoaches and most meals PLUS plenty of time for organized and independent sightseeing throughout.

**14-day itinerary includes Liverpool, York, Manchester, Stratford, London, Southampton, Brighton and North Wales.**

For further details contact Patty Barnes  
**Simonton Travel Service**  
6900 Santa Monica Blvd.  
Los Angeles, CA 90038

*SPECIAL OPTIONAL EXTRA  
SIDE TRIP TO SCOTLAND.*

# “The Yamaha Electone Organ Festival? As far as I’m concerned, it’s the greatest thing to happen in music in years.”

— Bill Thomson, noted teacher and  
*The Organist’s* “Best Male Organist, 1974.”



“I’ve seen an incredible improvement in the standards of organ playing in the last 3 or 4 years. And I think the Yamaha Electone Organ Festival deserves most of the credit.

“Why? Well, the Festival spurs my students to greater heights by putting them in a real competitive environment. Even if they progress no further than their local competition, the different techniques and refinements that they’re exposed to are fantastic.

“If they’re good enough to make it into the regionals, then they really have to put out. And no matter how they finish, they get to hear and see different styles and forms of expression that they’d ordinarily have to wait years to learn.

“I’m proud to say that two

of my students, Myrna and Sherry Emata, won first place in the Nationals in 1972 and 1973. They had a great time, and so did I. I even accompanied Myrna to Japan as Yamaha’s guest at the International Festival.

“This year, about 40 of my students plan to enter their local competition. I’m starting to get them ready now. You should be doing the same for your students, whether they’re Juniors,

Intermediates, Professionals or Hobbyists.

“Remember, you don’t even have to be a Yamaha organ owner or a Yamaha teacher to enter your students. The Festival is open to everybody. It’s the best opportunity I know for a young organist to get the most out of his playing... and the most out of himself.”



## YAMAHA ELECTONE ORGAN FESTIVAL

Interested in entering your students? Just mail this coupon for all the information on the Festival to: Yamaha Organ Festival, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, California 90622.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**Enter your students in the Yamaha Electone Organ Festival.  
It’s their chance to play to win. And it’s your chance to showcase your teaching.**

# Vic Hyde Discovers a Cozatt Theatre Organ

by Lloyd E. Klos



The Cozatt residence where Vic Hyde discovered the organ in 1973. Console was in the log cabin at the left; pipe chambers behind it. The house served as a calliope and organ factory as well as a printing and engraving shop. *(Hyde Collection)*

There were literally scores of makes of theatre pipe organs. Some achieved world-wide fame. Others were known only in the region of their manufacture. Ever hear of the Cozatt? We didn't until one of our friends, Vic Hyde, unearthed one back in late 1973. Hyde is the famous entertainer who employs multiple trumpets and other brass instruments for his act. Those who saw him perform at the 1974 Detroit ATOS Convention remember his sensational routine.

"In my 100,000 miles of travel per year," he says, "I have asked people two questions: 'Are there any antique autos in barns around here?' and 'Do you know of any theatre pipe organs available for sale?' The results have netted me a very unique collection of 33 antique and special-interest cars, 14 of them three-wheelers (as of May 1976).

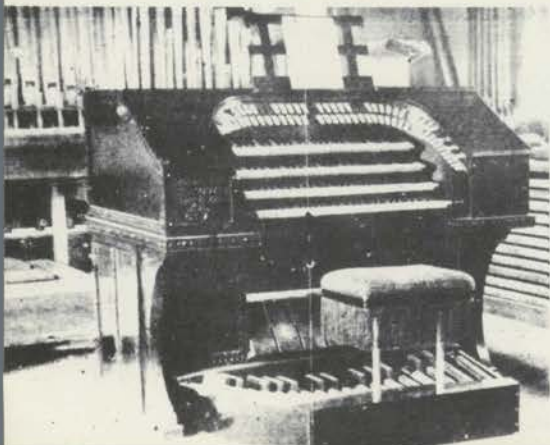
"But now, I own a genuine theatre organ. I had read of people finding them in theatres on the verge of demolition, or in auditoria or churches. But my instrument is a story in itself.

"I was in Danville, Ill., and upon asking the theatre organ question, was knocked for a loop when a man replied: 'Yes, I have one and want to get rid of it.

"So, I followed him to the back of his 65 acres, thru deep grass, thru a woods, pushing aside branches and thick growth. We came upon the remains of a big house, built in 1922 completely off the beaten path. It had been rebuilt into a three-story edifice, and it looked more like a red mill. Decaying with age, it hadn't been used since the owner passed away 15 years previously.

"We pushed against the sagging front door, and upon entering, my eye first hit on a huge fireplace, with tall organ pipes on either side.

Console of Vic Hyde's 1921 4/8 Cozatt that was originally in the Cozatt residence. (Hyde Collection)



## ATTENTION ALL CHAPTERS!

*National Headquarters has sent a form (for listing the 1977 officers) to 1976 chapter officers, to be returned to Headquarters immediately!*

*If you are a newly elected officer please check to make sure this form has been returned to National Headquarters by your chapter.*

*It is important that National Headquarters have this list immediately because it is to be published in the next issue of THEATRE ORGAN.*



stretching to the ceiling. To the right was a massive 4-manual console. The floor was strewn with debris and the furniture was ancient; definitely a gold mine for a collector!

"Going around behind the fireplace thru a door which once led to the kitchen, we came to the organ loft: pipe chests, xylophone and marimba. Stairs led to a catwalk and there were more wood and metal pipes.

"I had previous opportunities to purchase pipe organs, but these went by the boards because the bits and pieces were scattered. However, this organ, a Cozatt (never heard of the make) was intact and had been played up to 15 years previously.

"Mr. Cozatt, Sr., as I learned, was an expert in many trades such as wood engraving, lithography (the old press was still in the house), and I was told he built quite a few theatre organs, having received his training with the Hinners Organ Co. of Pekin, Ill. This particular instrument was built with his utmost ability, the components of highest-grade materials. I was informed that it would cost \$80,000 to build this organ today, and some of the materials are extinct. Every part of the instrument was hand-built by Cozatt: manuals, tabs, relays, wood flute, metal trumpet etc. The thing really shook the area with its music, I was informed.

"I was told that the two items needing replacement were the blower and blower motor which were in the basement because water flooded the area, ruining these components.

"I did not argue price, which was not too steep. I put the money into the man's hand, and told him I'd be back to dis-assemble and move the organ. I got home, thinking very hard: where, how and why! In my mind, it was a case of making sketches, diagrams and photos. Then color-code all connections, remove and re-install.

"I first bought the house and huge yard adjoining my property in Niles, Mich. On this, I planned to erect a garage-type building with double deck to house my fleet of antique cars. Thus, the garage in which they were originally stored, would serve as a room to spread out the organ components. I bought a building permit to enclose my big patio and increase its height to make my organ loft."

By December 1973, Vic had two loads of Cozatt components at home. The console had to be dismantled to get it thru a 2' 6" doorway. "My wife and I built a mini museum building for the auto collection which will hold 20 cars. She did the big work, like pushing up the 2 x 6 rafters and toting the shingles up the ladder, while I sat tacking them down.

"When I returned for the second load of parts, including 500 pipes, the van got stuck in the front yard in Danville, and I enlisted the aid of a farmer with tractor to pull me out. These trips I had to make between engagements about the country."

In March 1974, fresh from a Caribbean cruise, Vic made another trip to Danville, this time getting



Vic Hyde, working in 100-degree heat in the summer of 1973, dismantles the Cozatt in the loft in Illinois. "Lordy, what we do for a hobby!" he says. (Hyde Collection)

a load of spare parts and pieces lying about the property, some of it out of doors. He found a set of chimes lying in debris on the floor, some spare parts scattered outdoors in the yard as well as in secluded parts of the building. There were spools of wire, boxes of white and black manual keys, wooden flute pipes. "None of this is relevant to the organ I was getting, but since Cozatt was an organ builder, these were extras lying around which would have been junked."

The place had been raided during the winter, and antique book cases were stolen, their contents strewn about the floor. Vic fished thru the material and discovered some data on Cozatt which he passed along to this writer.

"Among the pile of paper debris, I found a poster, printed and engraved by Perry Cozatt, Sr., advertising a 'pipe organ concert.' The photo shows an organ, fitted inside a truck, with the side dropped, showing console and pipes. Apparently, this was a mobile unit which moved to small cities and towns to present outdoor concerts. At the bottom of the poster is room for the name of the local sponsor."

Another item Vic found was a booklet on Cozatt organs, "built by Perry Cozatt of Danville, Ill." The material which we quote should solve some of the mystery surrounding the Cozatt instruments:

#### *Classes of Organs*

"The organs which are now offered are the result of long and careful experimenting and are made to meet the requirements of the church or theatre, and from specifications which have been determined as the

result of experience and experiment to be the best suited for this purpose, and which will give the finest organ for the space allotted and the money appropriated.

#### *Pipes*

"The pipes are made of the best materials obtainable with specially adapted, improved scales, having great reserve power and a surprising richness in tone, and giving body to the full organ without any of the disagreeable results produced by forcing pipes of insufficient capacity,

while at the same time capable of the softest and sweetest effects.

#### *Action*

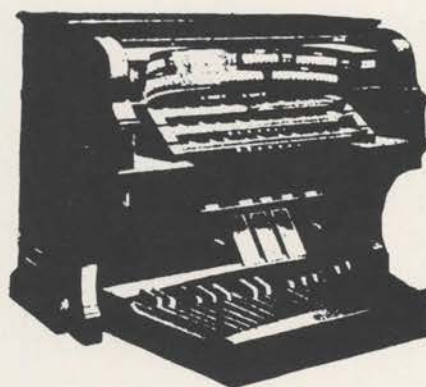
"The action is an improved electric pneumatic action with individual self-seating valves for each pipe.

"The stop action is so arranged that the wind is distributed equally throughout the entire chest with a uniform pressure on all the pallets at the base of the pipes, even when the stops are not on, making always available an ample supply of wind for every pipe when it is brought into

### We Take Pleasure In Presenting The **Cozatt Pipe Organ**

The Cozatt organ is a genuine Theater Organ, Built on years of experience in Motion Picture Theater Music. Built to overcome the monotony of the Pipe Organ. Designed to have beautiful tone-quality, Unlimited playing Possibilities, and standard construction familiar to all Organist.

The Cozatt Organ will be a musical feature in your theater that will mean more business and the Elimination of your music worry to you  
Pipe Organs from \$500.00 up.



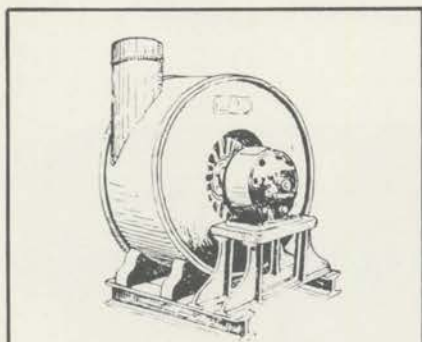
This ad appeared in a Western Motion Picture Company catalogue. The WMPC distributed theatre supplies and its catalogues were printed by the Cozatt Photoengraving and Printing Co. in Danville, Ill. (Hyde Coll.)



Lloyd Jones at the console of the Cozatt "Master Organ" in the Fine Arts Theatre in Monmouth, Ill. According to the theatre manager, Lou Ring, "Despite hot weather, there was a good-sized crowd at the theatre for the debut of the new organ." Date was not given in publicity. (Hyde Collection)

play, and preventing a robbing from one stop to supply another when it is on.

"Another distinctive feature of the action is a device by which any set of pipes can be played on any manual, making it possible to use any stop as a solo stop with all or any desired number of the remaining stops on the other manuals. By this means, the number of combinations



**Emmerson or Century Motor**

All Blowers give 6 in. wind in this type

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| 1-4 H.P. Blower complete | \$ 65.00 |
| 1-2 H.P. . . . .         | 90.00    |
| 1-3 H.P. . . . .         | 110.00   |
| 1 H.P. . . . .           | 145.00   |
| 2 H.P. . . . .           | 180.00   |

Cozatt Organ Co. Danville Ill.

When electric power was available, an electric-powered Cozatt blower was installed. (Hyde Coll.)

are double that with the same number of pipes under the old method, making the organ equal in respect to the ordinary organ.

**Bellows**

"The bellows are made with the greatest care, of the best materials, and are supplied by air from an electric blower.

**Installation**

"So simple is the construction and co-ordinated are the parts, that the organ can be put together by almost any mechanic and without the services of an expert organ builder.

**Our Special \$1,000 Pipe Organ**

**Great Manual — 73 Note Chests**

- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Octave . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Gross Flute . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Flute . . . . . 61 notes.
- Tremola #1, fast
- Tremola #2, slow

**Accompaniment Manual**

**73-Note Chests**

- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Octave . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Melodia . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Melodia . . . . . 61 notes
- 16 ft. Vox Humana . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Vox Humana . . . . . 61 notes
- Tremola #1, fast
- Tremola #2, slow

**Pedal**

- 16 ft. Bourdon . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Gross Flute . . . . . 30 notes

**Very Small Organs**

"We build small pipe organs for out-of-door use. Each is furnished with air from a blower, run with a motor, and has 37 notes. All you have to do is screw the drop cord into a light socket and play. It can be heard for blocks. This organ is intended for outdoor advertising as ballyhoo. With orchestras in halls, it gives volume and kick to the music. Price, crated at Danville, Ill., \$175.

**Consoles**

"Our consoles are finished in mahogany or ivory which are most popular at this time. We include only the latest and up-to-date ideas in our consoles: radiating and concave pedalboard, slanting manuals, stop tablets, illuminated circular consoles. All the latest.

"We build a two-manual practice organ with a complete bourdon unit and a diapason as follows:

**Great Manual — 73 Note Chests**

- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Octave . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Melodia . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Melodia . . . . . 61 notes

**Accompaniment Manual**

**73-Note Chests**

- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Octave . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Gross Flute . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Flute . . . . . 61 notes
- Tremola #2, slow

**Pedal**

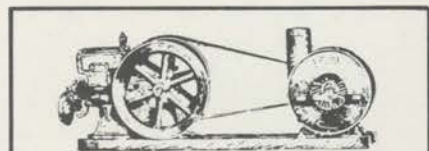
- 16 ft. Bourdon . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Gross Flute . . . . . 30 notes

"All for \$750. An organ for the home or studio. Wright (sic) for information.

**Our Special \$2,000 Two-Manual Theatre Organ**

**Great Manual — 73-Note Chests**

- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Octave . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Gross Flute . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Flute . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Violin . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Violina . . . . . 61 notes
- Chimes . . . . . 20 bars



**THE GAS ENGINE BLOWER**

In some small towns where they do not have electric current and in the country where organs are pumped by hand we build a gas engine blower

Some of these blowers have been in use for over five years with out one bit of trouble.

Price of blower and a two H.P. engine \$150.00  
F.O.B. Danville Ill.

A gasoline-powered engine was installed to run a Cozatt blower when electricity was unavailable. One wonders if there were much noise created by this type propulsion. (Hyde Collection)

**Accompaniment Manual**  
**73-Note Chests**

- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Octave . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Melodia . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Melodia . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Cello . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Violin . . . . . 61 notes
- 8 ft. Vox Humana . . . . . 61 notes
- 4 ft. Vox Humana . . . . . 61 notes
- Tremola #1, fast
- Tremola #2, slow

**Pedal**

- 16 ft. Bourdon . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Open Diapason . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Gross Flute . . . . . 30 notes
- 8 ft. Violin Cello . . . . . 30 notes

The information on the Cozatt enterprise has been obtained piecemeal. "Percy Cozatt, Jr.," says Vic Hyde, "is a very busy, high-strung individual, and it is difficult to tie him down for anecdotes and material. I spent an evening with him in his calliope factory where he was feverishly trying to get caught up on orders which were four months behind. He builds and assembles each part himself.

"But I did get bits and pieces of information. For example, Cozatt Sr., built a large pipe organ for a Monmouth, Illinois, theatre in 1928. The theatre burned to the ground in 1929, all was lost. Cozatt also built church organs, some in use today."

Up to the time of finalizing this article, Vic, with the assistance of his wife, had been collating and cleaning the parts for a possible installation in Niles. However, during a round-the-world cruise in April 1976, Vic encountered a man in Honolulu who expressed a desire to buy the Cozatt. What interested Vic was the man's ownership of a 1934 Cadillac V-16 sedan, said to be once owned by Chicago's famous citizen, Al Capone. Vic considered a trade of these items, because he is away so much that he would probably never get the organ installed.

Furthermore, the additions to his home in Niles have reached the allowable limits of zoning restriction.

Whoever acquires the Cozatt will get a unique make of theatre organ. We are thankful to Vic Hyde for sharing his experience with a rare instrument and making available the material concerning its manufacture. □

# Jean Ingelow

SILENT  
 MOVIE  
 PIANIST

by Lloyd E. Klos

When one is on the alert for material which would be of interest to THEATRE ORGAN readers, he is aided by those in the profession known as "stringers." Often, this writer has received tips for feature material in this fashion. A colleague, Tom Lockwood, on hearing about a silent movie pianist living south of Rochester, N.Y., passed the word, we contracted her, and this is her story.

Our subject, Jean Ingelow of Livonia, N.Y., never played pipe organs in theatres, but her story, involving the silent movie era, and her experiences as a pianist in theatres, is interesting, nevertheless.

She was born on March 24, 1892, and was named for a great aunt, Jean Ingelow, who was an English poetess and harpist. Inheriting her

musical talent, she began piano lessons at the age of seven, and at 16, went to Rochester to study with Carrie Holyland.

Three years later, Miss Ingelow entered the Rochester Conservatory of Music on South Fitzhugh St. At the age of 21, she entered the Dossenbach-Klingenberg-Garrison School of Music from which she was graduated in 1915 after thorough instruction in pianoforte, theory, harmony, composition, orchestration and musical history. Her teachers included Alfred Klingenberg and George B. Penny.

Miss Ingelow had played church organ when she was 16, so in 1921, she entered the Eastman School of Music and studied classical organ with Harold Gleason who was head of the organ department. She also

A 1948 picture of Jean Ingelow at the Hammond in Community Congregational Church in Livonia, N.Y. She observed her 40th year as an organist at that time. (Ingelow Collection)



attended master organ classes there with famed Joseph Bonnet, formerly of Belgium.

She began her picture-playing in Livonia's Pictureland Theatre, located in the Masonic Hall. The first movie theatre in the town was in Trescott Hall, and didn't have a name, as she remembers. "When movies came to the Prettyjohn Opera House, I don't think they had a name for that, either."

About her picture-playing, she says: "I never played organ for pictures. When I started, there were no organs used, only pianos. I began playing when I was very young, when Charlie Chaplin, Harold Lloyd and Mary Pickford were getting started. No sound, of course, just the piano."

Here are some of the films she played:

*Ben Hur* (1926) with Ramon Novarro and Francis X. Bushman; *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) 2½ hours long with Lillian Gish; *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1922); *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1923) with Lon Chaney; *Joan of Arc* (1916) with Geraldine Farrar; *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1912); *Quo Vadis* (1913); *The Spoilers* (1914) with William Farnum; *Tess of the Storm Country* (1922) with Mary Pickford; all of Rudolph Valentino's movies, and all of Douglas Fairbanks, Sr.'s movies.

Comedies included those of the Keystone Cops, Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd.

"I always tried to fit the music to the scene and people told me that they didn't know how I did it, because my music seemed to go right along with the picture. I had to improvise a lot, however.

"I shall never forget playing for the Pompeii picture. A man who was traveling with the film said to the theatre manager, 'Where did you find your pianist? She is the best I have heard with this film.' The cue sheet I used had about eight measures to be used with each change of scene. The remainder I improvised or played from memory.

"Perhaps the biggest event which happened during my years of film playing was when I was in the middle of a big picture, and an earth tremor started. The piano and the whole building tipped noticeably to the right, then back to the left, but I

recovered, played the picture to its conclusion, had a five minute interlude, then played the second show.

"Having played the original *Ben Hur*, I was surprised at the new version which appeared on television. It was certainly not like the original film. I contacted the George Eastman House in Rochester, telling them of this, and they sent me stills of the original. They also invited me to come down to the Dryden Theatre and play the original, but had to decline because of age, being 80 then."

The bulk of Jean Ingelow's musical life, however, has been that of a church organist. She has played in New York State churches in Rochester, Livonia, Avon, Lyons, Le Roy and Geneseo. She played many services as a substitute. The last time she played was for a double service in Geneseo Presbyterian Church when she was 80.

Besides church work, she has played for the Order of the Eastern Star, graduation exercises, Rotary Clubs, and other organizations. She has accompanied soloists with the Livonia High School Band, and three of the boys she accompanied are all top-notch performers today. Two studied at the Eastman School of Music. One is a trombonist who became a national champion, Dr. David Mott, today in the science department of LasCruces University, New Mexico. The second was a flutist who is now bandmaster at Wayland (N.Y.) Central School. Douglas Little. The third, self-taught

trombonist (with the help from the bandmaster at Livonia High) Lawrence Krisher has gone on to be a Doctor of Science at Washington University.

"It was a thrill not long ago for me to receive a special invitation to attend a band concert at Wayland Central School. The flute-player-turned bandmaster told the attendees that he 'had a very special guest in the audience, that this lady did all his accompaniments during his high school days, and that when he once played "Flight Of the Bumblebee," this lady was the only accompanist who was able to start and finish with him.' He asked me to stand and I was very pleased to acknowledge his salutation."

Miss Ingelow plays a Hammond Model 311 in her home. In fact, she played the first Model A-100 Hammond in Livonia, N.Y., which was in the Congregational Church there. The Lawrence Welk show is a great favorite of hers, and she says that she sometimes plays along with the numbers they play over the air. "I've said so many times, 'Thank God for Lawrence Welk and his fine musicians.'"

She says, "It is nice to know that at 83 years (1975, when this was written), I will get some recognition for my years at the piano and organ. Heaven knows, I did not get much money for all my efforts. I just played wherever I was needed."

THEATRE ORGAN is happy to recognize Miss Jean Ingelow and to wish her many years of happiness, good health and good music. □



**MUST BE POSTMARKED BY APRIL 15, 1977**

It is time to place names in nomination for the National ATOS Board of Directors for the two-year period from July, 1977 through June, 1979.

All those who wish to run in this election are asked to send a photo and short resume.

Written consent of the nominee is mandatory and must be received at National Headquarters before the nominee's name can be placed on the ballot.

**Mail to . .**

**ATOS National Headquarters  
Post Office Box 1002  
Middleburg, Virginia 22117**



TAKING TO THE HILLS...

# In Search of "New" Pipe Organs

by Arthur M. Cox, Jr.

It was a long day, but a rewarding one. The event had consumed some fourteen hours. Aboard the home-ward-bound bus could be heard the subdued tones of pipe organ music as recordists reviewed their many tapings of the day.

And what a selection of instruments and artists they had at their disposal!

For one thing, they had heard the largest pipe organ in a religious edifice in the world. They also covered a former network radio studio organ once heard from coast to coast, plus a largely "undiscovered" church/

concert/theatre organ that is still used for silent film shows!

The event: The "New Horizons" tour conducted on a crisp November Saturday by New York Chapter. Never before had the chapter conducted an event by chartered buses and — as near as can be determined — never before had any chapter visited these three remarkable instruments.

From midtown Manhattan with a second passenger pickup in northern New Jersey, the two gleaming deluxe cruisers with nearly 90 organ enthusiasts aboard, headed off into spec-

tacular mountain scenery enroute to West Point and to Cornwall-On-Hudson, New York.

Right "on the advertised" they arrived at the Washington Gate of the United States Military Academy where escorts boarded to direct the buses to the inspiring, cathedral-like Cadet Chapel, which sits on the edge of a high hill overlooking much of the Academy campus — and the Hudson River, replete with sailboats, just beyond. The view alone was worth the trip!

Inside the long and massive sanctuary they found an organ console of



World's number one church organ — with virtually a "super-horseshoe" console, the West Point Cadet Chapel instrument under the hands of Organist and Choirmaster Dr. John A. Davis, Jr. (U.S. Army Photo)



"New Horizons" tourists examine the rather unorthodox console of the NYMA theatre/concert Moller Opus 4925. The instrument evidences having been equipped originally with a player mechanism. (Craig White Photo)

complexity outranking the cockpit of any jumbo jet! Stop tabs *ten* levels deep literally surround the organist.

At the appointed hour, the master of the great instrument, Dr. John A. Davis, Jr., chapel organist and choir-master, came forth and demonstrated the instrument's vast tonal resources by playing music first from the baroque era then through the romantic era to modern times. There seemed to be chambers everywhere in the building — and there pretty nearly would have to be with a total of 18,200 pipes! While most of them, incidentally, were made by Moller, the instrument has an extensive, hand-picked selection of ranks by outstanding organ builders in Belgium, France, England, Holland and Germany.

At the conclusion of Dr. Davis' informal, light-hearted but highly informative program, he invited everyone to cluster around the console for questions, pictures, more demonstrations of the myriad of voices at his command, etc. He showed the amazed group how he has to make the organ "march" in processions by gradually shifting

the chambers he uses, initially those at the rear of the chapel, then forward with the marching choir until they reach the front of the chapel. If he didn't do this, he explained, the building is so long that either he or the choir would be out of step at the end of the music because of the time lag!

After vigorous applause for Dr. Davis, the group returned to their buses for a short hop to the Post Chapel, used by followers of the Protestant faith who reside permanently on the Academy grounds.

Inside the colonial style, red brick structure, chapter members and their guests found the one-time National Broadcasting Company studio organ of 1934. A veteran of countless nationwide radio programs, the Aeolian-Skinner instrument still has its theatre voices although a new Moller console of traditional style has replaced the one used at NBC.

Post Chapel Organist Pat Maimone, who has a concert background not only in organ but piano, harpsichord and tympani, presented a short program which covered a wide range of serious music and which not only showed the capabilities of the instrument but her outstanding skill as a concert musician. After acknowledging much applause, she confessed feeling that she couldn't do justice to the organ's theatrical elements and she called upon Louis Hurvitz, a member of the staff of the United States Military Academy Band, to do so. Picking an ever-popular romantic ballad from Broadway, he brought forth sounds known to millions of radio listeners of another era.

Again, a grouping around the console, questions, pictures and organ



Brigadier General F.J. Roberts, Superintendent of NYMA, welcomes everyone to the theatre-style organ concerts. (Craig White Photo)



Undivided attention is given Dr. Davis by New York chapter members as he explains intricacies of the huge instrument. (Craig White Photo)

talk prevailed until the tour directors reluctantly announced pending departure of the buses.

Leaving West Point, the coaches headed northward to traverse one of the most breathtaking mountain highways anywhere east of the Rockies. The road literally clings to a ledge high over the river offering a panoramic view of the lower Hudson River Valley akin to that usually offered only to helicopter passengers.

Upon arrival at the bucolic community of Cornwall-On-Hudson, the

Theatre concert artists Lou Hurvitz (left) and Lee Erwin oblige photographers at the NYMA Moller console. (Craig White Photo)



At the former NBC radio studio organ, 1934 Aeolian-Skinner theatre instrument (but now with a Moller, church-style console), West Point Post Chapel Organist Pat Maimone (seated) and bandsman-organist Lou Hurvitz. (Craig White Photo)



buses pulled up in front of the fortress-like structure of New York Military Academy, a private, preparatory school. In the Davis Memorial Chapel, which serves as both chapel and auditorium for the school, the group came upon an unusual semi-horseshoe console. NYMA's 4/30 Moller (Opus 4925) was built in 1927 to serve not only as the school's chapel organ but to accompany silent films as well. The instrument's more than 2,000 pipes are housed in four chambers, three of them located, theatre style, behind large grills on either side of the stage plus an echo chamber. The building has a balcony and a fully-equipped projection booth. When theatrical lighting is turned on and the stage is set for showing films, you wouldn't know you were in a chapel — unless you looked at the stained glass windows on either side!

The artist for the late-afternoon concert was Specialist Seven Louis B. Hurvitz of the West Point Military Band, a former student of the renowned Ashley Miller. In a fast-moving program that left no doubt in anyone's mind that Moller Opus 4925 was a theatre instrument, Lou Hurvitz contrasted the previous programs with one devoted largely to popular music, ballads and rhythm numbers. He pulled a great surprise to everyone (including those who planned the tour) when, in the midst of his musical tribute to Walt Disney, a band-playing "Mickey Mouse Club" fully costumed and over a dozen musicians strong, suddenly marched in playing with Lou the famed club theme then vanishing as

mysteriously as they appeared. Organist Lou acted almost as if the musicians were a figment of the audience's imagination. We suspect they may have been friends from the West Point Band but for the audience, the only clue was a cryptic "Special Thanks To:" credit in the printed program followed by a group of names.

After an encore and many bows, Lou's program was reluctantly ended with a call to the buses and a buffet dinner at the nearby Storm King Arms Hotel.

Then back to NYMA once again for what has become a semi-annual experience for residents throughout this part of the Hudson River Valley — an evening concert, sing-along and feature silent film presentation with Lee Erwin at the console.

This time Lee picked a Harry Langdon comedy *Tramp, Tramp, Tramp* which features a very early Joan Crawford. The film climaxes with an incredible cyclone sequence (which somehow resolves the plot but which clearly must have strained the creative ingenuity of the producer's props and special effects staff). There were times when Lee had the audience feeling that the storm was right in the auditorium with them but, as might be expected, everything came to a peaceful, happy ending.

And so did the New York Chapter's tour. With many tapes and pictures to refresh memories of the day, the group rode drowsily but contentedly homeward to New Jersey, New York and many points even more distant. □

## SCHOENSTEIN FIRM UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

A complete change in ownership and management along with plans for expanded operations has been announced by the venerable San Francisco organ building firm, Felix F. Schoenstein & Sons. With the retirement of Erwin A. Schoenstein, the last of the founder's sons still active in the business, the name was changed to Schoenstein & Co. on January 3, 1977. Lawrence L. Schoenstein, grandson of the founder and a fourth generation organbuilder, who returned to the firm following twenty years with the Aeolian-Skinner Company, will be in charge of all tonal and technical matters. Jack M. Bethards, a San Francisco businessman and management consultant, who has operated a pipe organ restoration and maintenance firm for the past fifteen years along with other business and musical interests, will take charge of financial and overall management of the Schoenstein firm. A nationwide search is underway to build a top-rate staff of technicians and builders so that the firm's factory can be fully utilized in all phases of organ work including building of new organs and restoration of fine old instruments. Tuning contract work will be continued. In preparing to take over the firm, Lawrence Schoenstein and Jack Bethards indicated that their aim is to provide "the highest quality workmanship backed up with professional management." More specific announcements about the firm's future will be made in connection with its 100th anniversary in August 1977. □

Erwin Schoenstein (left), Jack Bethards (center) and Lawrence Schoenstein (right) discuss plans for the future of the San Francisco organ building firm. The Studio organ in the Schoenstein factory which was used for broadcasts over San Francisco radio stations for many years is in the background.

(Cathie Centorbe Photo)



### 1976 INDEX - FREE

The categorized index of all 1976 articles printed in THEATRE ORGAN magazine is now available upon request.

Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

LLOYD E. KLOS  
104 Long Acre Road  
Rochester, New York 14621

When one recalls the New York Paramount Theatre, he associates it with the illustrious names of Mr. & Mrs. Jesse Crawford, Sigmund Krumgold, Fred Feibel, Don Baker and Ann Leaf who played there. One who also played both the theatre and studio Wurlitzers, though not as well known, was Jack Skelly. He was associate organist at the time Jesse Crawford was featured soloist, and Fred Feibel did his morning show. Not long ago, we persuaded him to share his life story with THEATRE ORGAN readers.

"I was born and raised in White Plains, N.Y., and at the age of eight, began the study of piano, my first teacher being a nun. I was still in school when a style 170 Wurlitzer was installed in the Strand Theatre in White Plains, and it became my ambition to play one after hearing Will Gilroy, the house organist. The difficulty was in obtaining an organ to practice on, but I studied with the organist of St. John's Church in White Plains and was fortunate enough to be able to use the organ afternoons for practice. Later, I took lessons at Wurlitzer's in New

York City to become acquainted with the theatre organ. The teacher-demonstrator? None other than Don Baker.

"My first chance to play in a theatre came when I substituted at the Rye (N.Y.) Playhouse. The management wanted me to continue on a permanent basis, but I couldn't because I still had four months to go in high school. However, they offered to hold the job, and after graduation, I became the regular organist there. The Rye Playhouse was used for previews of First National pictures. When a preview was scheduled, I

# JACK SKELLY - NEW YORK

Jack Skelly at the console of the Aeolian pipe organ in Westchester County Center, White Plains, N.Y., in 1975. The bulk of his pipe organ playing in recent years has been done on this instrument. (Alfred Porto Photo)



would spend several mornings at the First National Studios in the Bronx where the picture was run for me while I scored it. Playing for a movie was the most interesting musical work I've ever done, mainly because all types of music had to be used.

"The Playhouse had a model 135 Wurlitzer, but I was looking forward to playing bigger organs. When the new RKO Theatre opened in White Plains in November 1927, I became organist there, playing a style H Wurlitzer. After the first year, organ playing was limited as the talkies

---

As told to Lloyd E. Klos

---

took over. Finally, the RKO theatres dismissed the organists. I was there two years, however.

"In late 1928 or early 1929, Frederick Kinsley was made chief organist of the RKO chain. He had all the organists in the New York metropolitan area take a small ad in *Variety* for several weeks. I was at the RKO in White Plains and the only name I remember was Will Gilroy at the RKO 86th Street Theatre in New York.

"In the meantime, with my desire to play bigger organs, I studied with Egon Putz who, with Sigmund Krumgold, had opened the New York Paramount when Jesse Crawford became featured soloist in 1926.

We used the Paramount studio organ and the Rivoli Theatre's Wurlitzer for my lessons. My first opportunity to play the Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer came when I opened the show for Putz.

"While at the Paramount, I was the recipient of an autographed picture of Jesse Crawford, because of a kindness I had shown him. At the end of the orchestral overture (with organ), a cipher occurred on a low tuba note. The 10-minute newsreel went on, to be followed by Crawford's solo. With no organ technician available, Putz sent me scurrying to

orchestra for the overture, and the organ was a part of that.

"One week, Stuart Barrie appeared as soloist at the New York Paramount and gave a great performance. He played Rachmaninoff's "Prelude in C# Minor." In the last strain, with almost full organ, he played the three thematic notes throughout on the pedals. Scintillating!

"A CBS radio show *Paramount on Parade* was broadcast from the Paramount Theatre studio thrice weekly, featuring stars of the current stage show. This noon-day broadcast

was MC'd by Ted Malone (*Between the Bookends*), and opened with an organ solo by Fred Feibel. The balance of the half-hour show I played when needed for organ or piano accompaniment. I recall Fats Waller on the show one week, and besides his pianistics, he took a turn at the organ for a solo.

"My other radio work consisted of a weekly half-hour over Westchester's WFAS, using the Wurlitzer at the RKO White Plains Theatre, or the Westchester County Center organ.

"In May 1935, the Paramount

# PARAMOUNT ORGANIST

the upper right chamber. I stopped the cipher moments before the start of Jesse's solo. That was the 'kindness' to which he referred on the picture he gave me.

"Jesse Crawford was a non-pareil soloist. He was a complete showman and his well-chosen registrations, whether for ballads, novelty tunes or whatever, made for delightful listening. He was truly great and his audiences always showed their appreciation with attentiveness and applause.

"When Krumgold went to the Paramount Studios in Hollywood, Fred Feibel took his place and I had the opportunity to do more playing because Fred had a busy radio schedule. Feibel was one of the finest organists I've ever heard, with his superb technique and brilliant arrangements. His *Organ Reveille* at eight each morning was a delight to hear. I was happy and fortunate to have been associated with him.

"Part of my work consisted of playing the Rialto Theatre organ before the show opened mornings. The Brooklyn Paramount organ was added to my list of 'organs I have played' when I did a two-week stint there, substituting for the house organist. (It may have been Elsie Thompson, but I'm not sure). Don Baker was the featured soloist, and he called Feibel, asking for someone. I was elected.

"At the time, Rubinoff, the famous violinist, was conducting the

Jack Skelly at a Hammond in 1940. He entered the Army the following year for a four-year stint. (Costain Photo)





Jack at the console of the famed Paramount Studio Wurlitzer. (Skelly Collection)

went all-sound and Feibel became staff organist at CBS while I did the final two weeks at the theatre for him. After a period of no live music, Don Baker became organist there for 14 years, and the introduction of the name-band policy proved to be a sensation, which is well-remembered.

"With organ work at a low ebb in 1936, I became pianist and musical director for Jack Powell and his famous trick-drummer act. Playing many top spots, my biggest thrill was performing before President Roosevelt. The occasion was the annual dinner given by the Vice President for the President with about 35 persons in attendance, including Chief Justice Hughes and leading senators. Burns and Allen, then on radio, also entertained, and Powell's act used my piano accompaniment. It was a memorable occasion for me, playing as the President sat just a few feet away.

"Doing one week with Powell at Loew's Capitol in Washington, I naturally had to try out the organ which Art Brown played, so I used it mornings, long before the show started. At Loew's Hippodrome in Baltimore, I did the same thing, and during a week's stay at Shea's Hippodrome in Toronto, I also tested the organ mornings.

"The act did two months at the St. Regis Hotel's formal Iridium Room in New York where Emil Coleman's

orchestra played. While in New York City, Powell played many benefits between shows, giving me the chance to sit in with many name orchestras including Fred Waring's Pennsylvanians at the Waldorf-Astoria, and Vincent Lopez at Hotel Taft, among others. On a one-night date at Henry Ford's estate in Dearborn, Mich., I played during the act with Glen Gray's Casa Loma Orchestra. A party was held there by Henry Ford II with the entertainment consisting of the Casa Loma Orchestra, Jack Powell, and Hal Leroy.

"Powell played the Christmas holiday show at Radio City Music Hall and I had the opportunity to add the Music Hall organ to my list. Willie Eichler, one of the organ technicians at the Hall, knowing I had played the N.Y. Paramount and was now with Powell, recommended me to Dick Leibert, the chief organist. Dick allowed me to play the exit music at night which was my total experience with that organ. While there, I was privileged to audition on the studio Wurlitzer for Erno Rapee.

"Playland, the huge amusement park on Long Island Sound at Rye, N.Y., has had an organ since 1937. That year, it was featured during summer season with an organ recital each evening and amplified through the park's sound system. I was the soloist at these recitals. For the winter season, the organ was moved into Playland Casino where it is still used. In the meantime, different models have been installed. I played the winter season at Playland, which is owned and operated by Westchester County, and then would play the summer season elsewhere.

"In 1938, I was organist with Harry Reser's Cliquot Club Eskimos, noted radio orchestra of the thirties. His was one of the finest name orchestras to use a Hammond organ and we went on the road with a 12-piece band plus a girl vocalist. When on a one-week stand, we broadcasted nightly at 11 o'clock over an NBC coast-to-coast hookup. Reser was a great musician and an excellent arranger. That fall, he returned to

radio and had to use studio musicians.

"So it was Playland Casino again, and the following summer, I did the Jersey shore bit, playing at Avon Inn, Avon-by-the-Sea (just below Asbury Park).

"The Westchester County Center in White Plains, N.Y., has an Aeolian 4-manual pipe organ. The Center is a huge auditorium, built in 1930. I have played many events there, from the thirties to the present. The bulk of my pipe organ playing in recent years has been done there.

"An interruption came in my civilian career in 1941. In April, eight months before Pearl Harbor, I was drafted into the Army. *Good-bye, Dear, I'll be Back in a Year* turned out to be four years and four months for me. I was at Ft. Bragg, N. Carolina, the first two years, and during Carolina maneuvers in the fall of 1941, I would go into the nearest town, looking for an organ to play. About that time, organs were put into all Army chapels and I was assigned to the Chaplain of my regiment. I played church services and gave many organ recitals throughout Ft. Bragg, while also playing weekly at the Officer's Club on the main post.

"The last two years were spent at Camp Van Dorn, Miss., and my final assignment was at the Headquarters of the Fourth Service Command in Atlanta, Ga. From there, I was discharged at war's end after spending all my service time in the States.

"Upon discharge, I moved from White Plains to Rye where I still reside, and was in time to begin the season at Playland Casino. The summers were spent playing the country clubs and cocktail lounges of Westchester. In 1948, came a return to Broadway where I played at Iceland, a Swedish-American restaurant on Broadway near 52nd Street, which later became the International Cafe and where now stands a 41-story building.

"With the installation of an organ in Madison Square Garden's ice skating rink (also named Iceland), I became organist there and remained for 20 years. While there, I was also organist for Arthur Godfrey's TV ice shows for 2½ years. Godfrey and his cast used the Gar-

## CHICAGO IN '77

ATOS National Convention

den rink twice a week the year 'round and when there was an ice show, I did as many as 14 rehearsals a week. At the dress rehearsal the day of the show, the orchestra would take over with Lee Erwin at the organ.

"Readers will remember some of the Godfrey Show cast: Tony Marvin, Janette Davis, Archie Bleyer, Haleloke, the Maguire sisters, Julius LaRosa, Si Schaffer, Marion Marlowe and the Mariners. This was in the days of 'live' TV shows and it all ended suddenly when Godfrey entered the hospital for a hip operation.

"While at the Garden's skating rink, organist Gladys Goodding also played there at the main arena. When she died, everyone wondered why I didn't try out for the job downstairs. The reason was that I played eight sessions a week for 11 months a year, making my salary superior to hers. We expected to be in the new

Garden, but it was decided at the last moment not to include ice-skating. So, my 20 years at the old Garden ended.

"Gladys Goodding's name was made more well known by a conundrum which made its rounds among sports fans:

"Who plays for the Dodgers, Knicks and Rangers?"

"After everyone tried to answer with the name of an athlete, but couldn't, the correct answer was Gladys Goodding.

"I am now (1975) playing again at Playland Casino, doing my 11th season there over a stretch of more than 35 years. On a personal note, I've recently become a grandfather, when my daughter, Sharon, gave birth to a girl, Lauren.

"I became aware of THEATRE ORGAN magazine during 1975 when an organ buff, residing near



When Jack eliminated a cipher at a crucial time, the great Jesse Crawford autographed this picture.

(Nathan Photo)

Jack plays a Hammond for a chorus in a Ft. Bragg chapel in 1942. The picture was run in *Click* magazine, and his friends saw it in Hawaii and England. The magazine has long since ceased publication. (Skelly Collection)



me, gave me a lot of back issues. Noting the numerous references to the New York Paramount prompted me to contact Lloyd Klos, who asked for the opportunity to work with me to compile my biography which I was pleased to do. Just as it was a thrill to play the marvelous New York Paramount Wurlitzers, it is indeed a thrill to see the renaissance of the theatre organ. Cheers to ATOS for the promotion of this revival! □

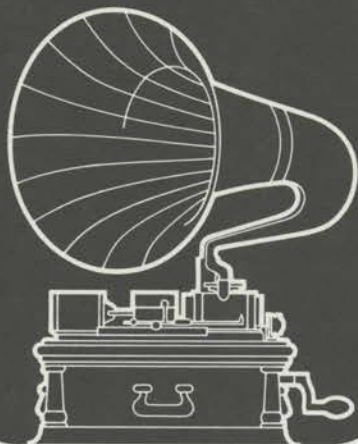
### BALOGH TO OPEN GRAND RAPIDS PIZZERY

Following a successful three-year stint at Bill Brown's Organ Stop Pizzas in Phoenix and Mesa, Arizona, Charlie Balogh will be joining Mr. Ron Walls as featured artist in his new pizza venture, "The Roaring Twenties," in Grand Rapids, Michigan, commencing March 1, 1977.

Charlie joined Bill in January of 1974 as Associate Artist and has played in both Arizona locations. He also helped in the rebuilding of the Denver Fox Wurlitzer which is now installed in Organ Stop Pizza in Mesa.

Charlie was also one of the artists at the National ATOS Convention held in Philadelphia last summer. □

## For The Records



*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.*

**ORGAN STOP PIZZA PRESENTS RON RHODE. OSP-102 (stereo). \$6.00 postpaid, from Organ Stop Pizza, 5330 North Seventh Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85014.**

Bill Brown, father of the Arizona pizzeria-with-pipes phenomenon, has a knack for selecting talented help, whether in the organ restoration field or console performance. This is a first recording for both instrument and performer, and both come through for Bill with a degree of excellence on this biscuit which others may well use as a model.

The instrument is built around the style 260 (3/15) Wurlitzer which saw service in the Denver Fox theatre. Other complementary ranks have been added to total 23 at the opening of the Mesa Organ Stop pizzeria, with a planned total of 25 ranks. Much has been written about this instrument in recent issues of this publication, so we'll not repeat. (See the Oct./Nov., issue, page 36). However, it's of interest to note that the Mesa Organ Stop Pizza Wurlitzer is equipped with both a Posthorn and

that razor-edged relative, a Serpent. The Serpent rank is copied from the set fabricated by Harvey Heck on instructions from organbuilder Lee Haggart. The original set was fashioned from a church organ Oboe with liberal amounts of sealing wax poured into redesigned shallots to practically eliminate fundamentals. This made the Serpent even more biting and incisive than the Posthorn. This set became Bill Brown's when he purchased Heck's Tarzana (Calif.) 4/27 Wurlitzer installation for his Phoenix Organ Stop.

We felt that Ron Rhode was a "comer" when we heard him in concert a couple of years ago. This recording indicates that he has developed far more rapidly than we had envisioned. With this recording Ron demonstrates a musicianship far in advance of his years. Of course, playing opposite Lyn Larsen (while waiting for the Mesa restaurant to be built), some of that fine player's musical acumen was bound to rub off on Ron, and all to the good; Lyn's pop styling teachers were the records of Jesse Crawford and George Wright. So there are occasional familiar progressions or effects, but in the main, Ron Rhode is his own stylist.

The tunelist is a critic's dream, with none of those "Lara's Theme" type repetitions, unless leaving one's heart in San Francisco, even though Crawfordesque, is becoming a bit threadbare. Otherwise, the fare is varied. The openers on both sides are marches played in full marching band style, "Strike Up the Band" and "National Emblem March," during which the monkey wraps his tail around the flagpole with gusto. Ron isn't above a little corn as he sprinkles "Tijuana Taxi" with auto horn honks, but the ethereal beauty of his ballads, especially the mutation-spiked string registration heard during "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" and Ron's own exquisite arrangement of "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" are special treats. There's much of Jesse Crawford in "My Hero" and a broad (!) allusion to burlesque "bump & grind" rather than the more usual Charleston in "Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate." Ron sticks rather closely to the Anderson notation during "Fiddle Fiddle" but the bright registration is his own.



Ron Rhode. His first record hit the spot. (Stufoto)

Ron knows exactly how much untrem'd classical playing he can get away with gracefully for a basically pop/standards collection — 4 minutes and 13 seconds of "Toccatto Festiva" by Richard Purvis. It's an impressive proof of Ron's way with a modern bravura selection written for straight organ presentation, and the Wurlitzer cooperates beautifully, with well-suited non-theatrical registration. It's an exciting piece of music built on a counterpoint pattern in the Widor manner (yes, including a booming pedal melody). A thriller. The closer is that good old upbeat 1906 George M. Cohan relic, "Popularity."

It's a deluxe foldout album with copious notes and photos, a solid plug for the pizzeria and a detailed stoplist. The cover boasts a striking color shot of Ron at the console. Recording is excellent, the pressing, too. In fact, everything about this album suggests excellence. It is highly recommended.

**LYN LARSEN AT THE DICKINSON THEATRE PIPE ORGAN. Stereo SPS-4835-20 \$7.00 postpaid from Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, c/o Robert E. Wilhelm, Jr., 2507 Limestone Rd., Wilmington, Delaware 19808.**

In recent years, the "Wurlitzer Only" society, that small, influential but unorganized group of "Wurlitzer pushers" has had, on a few occasions, been forced to admit that some other builders made excellent theatre organs. This happened once during the New York ATOS convention when the Robert Morton in





Lyn Larsen (Stulofoto)

Rev. Ike's theatre/church turned out to be a beauty, again during the 1975 convention when visitors were exposed to the Kimball (circa 3/25) in Dickinson High School, Wilmington, Delaware. People who had been claiming that they had never heard real theatrical qualities in a Kimball pipe organ were remarkably silent. All present would readily admit that this Kimball rivalled Wurlitzer's best, even though it wasn't necessarily imitative of that famous brand. We asked the organ's mentor, Bob Dilworth, whether any tonal changes had been made. He replied no, the sound was essentially what was heard in Philadelphia's Boyd theatre during the final concert there before the move to Dickinson.

Lyn Larsen made a Bicentennial Year celebration record on the organ which was reviewed in this column last year. While there, he suggested a second taping and this is the result. We feel this is a far superior presentation if only because it is free of the limitations placed on material adhering to the Bicentennial theme; after all, how many versions of "Battle Hymn of the Republic" can one absorb? The selection of tunes here has no set pattern, just tunes Lyn likes to play, and his choice is satisfying.

The miking is "big hall perspective" which favors ensemble sound but the fine acoustical environment of Dickinson auditorium also enhances the frequent solo voices.

By now, just about everyone is well acquainted with the Lyn Larsen treatment of music, so we are not going down the list with comments on each one. It suffices to say that this fine young organist maintains the high level of presentation he has earned since that first public con-

cert in the Orange theatre, Orange, Calif., playing a 2/6 Wicks restored with mostly Morton pipework. He was only 19.

The titles are: "From This Moment On", "Hard Hearted Hannah," "Jean," "Danny Boy," "Georgia On My Mind," "Tritsch-Tratsch Polka" (Strauss), an original, "Sounds of Wonder," "Musetta's Waltz," "The Parrot," "The Way We Were" and Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois."

The recording is packaged in a deluxe book album with informative notes about the instrument and Society by Bob and Mary Ann Dilworth, and notes on the music by Lyn. It's a most attractive package and don't forget that proceeds help maintain and improve the organ — if that is possible.

Incidentally, Lyn's previous Dickinson record, "America I Love You," is available from the same source.

**GEORGE BLACKMORE AT THE MAGNIFICENT MOLLER THEATRE ORGAN. In Quadrophonic/stereo. DO (Q) 1503. \$5.95 postpaid from Doric Records. Box 282, Monterey, Calif. 93940.**

This is British organist George Blackmore's second waxing for the Doric label and their second release of a record of the now famous Reginald Foort "traveling Moller." Currently installed in a very favorable acoustical environment in San Diego, it is a very proper instrument for the display of the music devoted to classical standards (side 2). It is essentially a concert organ with some theatrical qualities. Therefore, Khachaturian's "Gopak," Auber's "Masaniello Overture," Lang's "Tuba Tune" and Luigini's "Ballet Egyptian" are well registered during Blackmore's well-played renditions. Where mass organ sounds are called for, the Moller responds with verve. On Side 1, George has to work a little harder to come up with a variety of theatre organ combinations. Even so, registration often seems somewhat on the heavy side, considering that choice but mostly unused solo voices are available. "Canadian Capers" is hypoped with some tonal percussion sparkle. "Maria Elena" is done in rhythm-ballad style, with color added via



George Blackmore

the grand piano. Performance is low keyed. A Henry Mancini medley includes "Mr. Lucky" on rather thick registration. Similarly obese combinations give "Baby Elephant Walk" a middle-aged pachyderm amble. It isn't until he comes to "Days of Wine and Roses" that one becomes aware of truly theatre organ registration, much of it due to the fine Vox Humana. The same applies to "Moon River," an especially lovely rendition until the big mass of sound near the close. Rodrigo's "Guitar Concerto," long on the pop charts in Britain, is a slow and somber minor melody. Solo passages are played on a soft brass reed, strings and on the piano. In contrast, "Dancing in the Sun" is an upbeat "peanut vendor" latin-flavored pleasantry of the question and answer variety. It's spiced with Glock "question" plinks against a repeated Piccolo "answer" pattern. A charmer.

Plenty of variety in the selection of tunes here, although the balance is heavily in favor of the concert standards. Only about six of the titles will be familiar to most US ears, so we must assume that George selected his titles with an eye to the British and European market. Personally, we could have absorbed a little more Mancini at the expense of "Masaniello" and Luigini. In fairness to "Masaniello," it may have appeal to silent movie buffs. The changing tempos and dynamics suggest accompaniment of a flicker plot of the listener's own invention, and be sure to include a chase sequence. The music is waiting. If there's one purely vanilla selection on the list, it's the "Guitar Concerto," and one can only wonder why it was included.

George Blackmore is a much-respected international organist,

with film (*Charade*) and orchestral recording credits (with Mantovani's orchestra). He's been prominent in British music circles since his first BBC organcast in 1941. In fact, he's the only organist to have played the Foort 5/28 Moller (a Trompette en Chamade has been added) under three flags — British, Netherlands and USA. He is adept at playing all kinds of music and a previous record release by Doric of tapings made during his 1975 ATOS convention concert/live broadcast, played on the San Francisco Orpheum 4/22 Robert Morton, was his USA recording debut. It, too, was a mix of pops and concert. It has been widely accepted, so perhaps our concern with mixing a largely concert program with a smaller number of pop standards is unfounded. Still we have the feeling that both artist and instrument are most comfortable during the concert music portion.

Performance is first class throughout. Recording is excellent and our review pressing has an especially smooth surface. Profuse jacket notes document instrument, organist and music. Tim Crowson's color cover photo of optically distorted pipe-work is a stunner.

This album is recommended to those who prefer a program of mainly concert pieces played on concert registration, with some lighter selections included.

## GUEST REVIEWER

by Walter J. Beaupre

**DENNIS JAMES AT THE MOVIES: VOLUME 1, DJP-104 (stereo) \$6.75 postpaid, \$8.00 outside USA, from Dennis James Productions, The Ohio Theatre, 29 East State Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.**

Never let it be said that organist Dennis James is chicken! It takes courage to release a premium priced LP these days featuring "Lara's Theme," "Tara's Theme," "Honeysuckle Rose" and three ragtime tunes recently recorded on a major label by Lee Erwin (one of them an Erwin arrangement). Compound these risks with what could be the sappy-est jacket notes ever stuck on the derriere of an album, and you've got yourself what might be a quick trap door to oblivion. But stay the



Dennis James. Not chicken over "Lara."

execution, o' cynical reader, at least for the 38 minutes it takes to hear *Dennis James at the Movies*.

For one thing, the D.J. recorded performance of "Sabre Dance" is well-nigh perfect. I won't even risk calling it orchestral because, frankly, no symphony orchestra has ever recorded a more thrilling rendition of the Kachaturian classic. This is inspired theatre organ playing as we dream it should be but seldom are privileged to witness.

Blockbuster No 2 on the disc is the music from GWTW. I don't care who else has recorded "Tara's Theme"; this James boy, with considerable help from those strong reeds and massive, luscious Robert Morton strings, has built an arrangement that catches fire and glows with passion. He heaps on counter melodies to fan the flames. Key changes are luminous surprises, like changing camera angles on a fine piece of sculpture.

Dennis proves handily that still another visit to "Somewhere My Love" was warranted. This time Siberia is equipped with Crawford rolls and imaginative counter melodies which keep the ballad fresh and alive. So he takes liberties with the verse (why not?) and uses reiterating orchestra bells with restrained good taste. Counter melodies grow more and more complex as the arrangement builds. "Only a Paper Moon" is rhythmic without being "funky cute." Dennis chooses an old fashioned treatment with pleasant questions and answers among Tibias and reeds. He switches to waltz tempo briefly, then eclipses with a blaze of bells.

Irving Berlin's "What'll I Do?" cuts the massive Morton down to a few well chosen ranks with Vibraphone echoes for punctuation. Nice.

"Baby Face" we are told is one of those re-creations out of Ohio history (Henry B. Murtagh): mucho razz-amatazz, busy voices, but all well controlled. The last chorus with Charleston licks is something of an anticlimax.

When Dennis James turns on a ballad from *Mame*, "If He Walked Into My Life," you'll cheer because he sounds like vintage Buddy Cole. The emotional line promises great things. Then, for some reason, Dennis abandons his feeling for Buddy Cole and returns to George Wright. Is this such a crime, you ask? Yup! We've still got the great Wright father in our midst; we sorely miss the late, great Buddy!

In my opinion the weakest cut is the bouquet to Judy and Lena (*That's Entertainment*). After a mercifully truncated junk intro Dennis plays the verse and chorus to "Boy Next Door." The jacket notes tell us it's pure Judy Garland phrasing. Your ears will tell you its Jesse Crawford. "Trolley Song" has good drive and sound effects — not enough to spoil the song, not quite. The blues approach to "You Made Me Love You" is Crawford again, a familiar agenda item so often moved and seconded by messers Wright and Larsen. Granted, it's head-y stuff with a satisfying gut-bucket climax. Just too imitative. "Honeysuckle Rose" shows "Fats" James with a nice feel for those piano-bass-type tenth chords. Honking auto horns were added, I trust, to make us ask "Why?"

It would be a kick to say — because I know Dennis admires Lee Erwin — that his three *Sting* selections are superior to the Erwin cuts of the same tunes for Angel records. But honest candor must prevail over kicks: the Erwin cuts still stand as the definitive "Solace," "Snowball Club," and "Easy Winners." I suppose it does make some sort of patriotic or ecological sense for Dennis James to adopt "Beautiful Ohio" as his signature tune. It's right there at the beginning of side one where it can be quickly forgotten.

As a carefully built total program *Dennis James at the Movies* is good listening. The "Sabre Dance" cut alone could make this a collector's item. Record surfaces were quiet and the sound of the Ohio Morton clean and lush. □



Reunited with an old friend, Reginald Foort confides to his concert audience that his favorite Moller sounds better than ever in the current location.



Reg. sets up registration for the *William Tell Finale* during his recording session. During his concert the night before, the opening bars generated the expected 'Hi-Yo Silver' from his enthusiastic audience.

After his concert, Reg. Foort graciously signed autographs on his records or on the flyleaf of his book, *The Cinema Organ* (Vestal Press). Here he's signing for Organ Power staffer Cheryl Creel. He later gave her some pointers on memorizing long passages of music.



Reg. Foort Resumes . . .

# A 38-YEAR-OLD "LOVE AFFAIR"

Story and photos  
by Stu Green

November 8, 1976, was an historic date for organ music enthusiasts in San Diego. Actually, the eyes of organ fans everywhere were on the southern California city, because Reg. Foort had come to town for a reunion with the 5/27 Moller "traveling" organ he had brought to reality 38 years ago in Great Britain. Both Foort and the organ have moved around considerably since 1938. Foort emigrated to the USA after World War II. The organ followed him a couple of years ago, after an 18-year stint as the official British Broadcasting Corporation's studio organ and a shorter time with the VARA Dutch broadcasting system at Hilversum in the Netherlands.

The organ was purchased by San Diego businessman Preston "Sandy" Fleet a few years ago and returned to the USA. After a facelifting at the Moller factory, it was moved to San Diego and installed in an ex-bowling alley now a pizza parlor in Pacific Beach, a seaside suburb of San Diego.

The logical man to open the new pizza parlor was obviously Reg. Foort, who in 1975 spanned the continent from his Florida home to fill the engagement. Perhaps it isn't a very good idea to have an organist of Foort's stature appear in concert at an opening where the invited guests are more intent on hearing themselves talk than listening to the music. Foort's performance was impressive but largely unheard due to the continuous loud chatter. The

organ-oriented press took the audience to task for its bad manners, and, for once, a printed bawling out may have worked.

A year passed, Foort must have had some apprehensions on Nov. 8, 1976 as he sat down at the 5-manual console before an audience this time comprised of paying customers. But it was a far different atmosphere than that of a year ago. This time the crowd (circa 500) was attentive, silent and appreciative — silent except for applause and the standing ovation before Foort had played a note.

He established a fine rapport with his audience immediately. When it had become obvious they had come to listen, he declared:

"There's nothing I like better than

Organ Power Pizza No. 2 is located in a former bowling alley. The superstructure once bore a sign to entice bowlers. The building is located in the business center of Pacific Beach.



THEATRE ORGAN

an audience that will sit back and enjoy the music — and SHUT UP!" The audience agreed enthusiastically, so Reg. continued.

"I suppose you poor, misguided people think I came here to entertain you. I really came here to enjoy myself." He smiled and patted the console; the audience was welcome to share that enjoyment.

While introducing the *La Boheme* music he confided, "I love opera music but I can't stand watching an opera (with) all those singers standing around yelling at one another." Again, the audience indicated agreement. His *La Boheme* set was a thing of beauty — and no yelling vocalists.

Reg. was especially happy with the acoustical environment. Even with a large crowd, there is still plenty of liveness in the room. There have been a few changes made in the organ. The aforementioned Trompette en Chamade has been added, although there's an equally bright Trumpet in one of the chambers. Also the Pedal Division now boasts a rare octave of Tympani, which Reg. didn't use because he played no tunes which required Kettledrums this time. There were also the 6 ranks of pipes of the separate Style D Wurlitzer organ which are playable from the Moller console, but these were temporarily "out of order." That leaves the Wurlitzer Tibia which has replaced the original huge-scale Moller Tibia set of pipes.

"Frankly, I don't hear much difference" said Reg. "The Moller Tibia was made by the former Wurlitzer wooden pipe designer who, by 1937, was working for Moller. The secret is in the tremulant. Moller was never able to 'trem' a Tibia as effectively as, say, Wurlitzer."

For three days, following his concert, Reg. Foort taped many of his concert selections for Doric Records for eventual release in grooves. It was his first recording session since the sides he cut for a "Readers Digest" release (played on the now gone Kearns-Carson 3/26 Wurlitzer organ in Hollywood) in the late '60s.

In all Reg. Foort had more than 10 days in San Diego with his beloved instrument and, judging from the concert and recorded sounds, the affection between instrument and master is mutual. Both artist and instrument still "have it." □

## RTOS SPONSORS

# A GALA WEEKEND IN TORONTO

by Lloyd E. Klos

The past year was devoted to a number of safaris, tours, and trips above the usual round of organ activity. The Rochester Theater Organ Society was no exception, and on November 6 & 7, sponsored a weekend junket to Toronto for the purpose of seeing and hearing theatre organ installations in the Organ Grinder Restaurant and Casa Loma.

The affair was originally planned as a one-day venture, but wiser heads, fearing rush-rush atmosphere, moved to make it more leisurely. Though an excellent decision, it still required several weeks of meticulous planning.

General chairman of the event was RTOS Vice President Tom Lockwood, ably assisted by his wife, Marcia. Bus captains and their assistants included the writer, Ken and Elinor Evans, Ernest and June Weirick and Harold Hyland. George Lockwood served as official photographer.

Close to 100 had boarded the three Greyhound cruisers (appropriately named "Tibia" "Kinura" and "Vox Popper") on Saturday morning by departure time. Fortified by doughnuts and steaming cups of coffee, tea and cocoa enroute, the group was in happy spirits by the time the buses pulled up to the front doors of Shea's Buffalo Theatre. Curt Mangel, superintendent of the 3200-seat house,

gave a gracious speech of welcome, followed by theatre historian Dan Harter's synopsis of theatres owned by Mike Shea from before 1900 until his death.

The guests were led into the refurbished auditorium where they heard a few numbers on the 4/28 Wurlitzer by Bill Hatzenbuehler. The organ is slowly being restored, and it was evident that much remains to be done. Solo voices were nonexistent, and the entire brass and percussion sections were unplayable, due to a leaky roof which is undergoing complete repair. What was playable, however, indicated the nucleus of a very powerful organ, and with dogged determination of Messrs. Mangel, Hatzenbuehler and competent aides, the objective of a completely restored Wurlitzer will be achieved. One has only to view the immense amount of work accomplished in the theatre by Curt and the Friends of the Buffalo to agree.

Following the organlude, the visitors were separated into groups for guided tours of the theatre. Our hosts were most knowledgeable in answering questions and in describing all phases of the restored house.

The cold wind was fiercely blowing off Lake Erie when we reboarded the buses for Toronto. More hot coffee helped alleviate the chill in

*(Continued on page 30)*



As the sun rises, Trip Commander Tom Lockwood awaits his bus captains and troops in the Auditorium Theatre parking lot. (G. Lockwood Photo)



Bill Haggey entertains the guests at Casa Loma. He had the audience tapping to some very sprightly tunes. (G. Lockwood Photo)



Don Thompson performs at the Organ Grinder console. Swell shades are profusely decorated, and the sound fills the room. (G. Lockwood Photo)

The enthusiasts file into the newly refurbished Shea's Buffalo Theatre. The re-bulbed marquee sparkled overhead. (G. Lockwood Photo)



## Now Published!



from  
**LEE ERWIN'S**  
NEW  
Angel  
RECORDS  
ALBUM  
S-36092

## SALUTE TO THE SILENTS

Music for the **D.W. Griffith** film Classics  
Compositions and Arrangements for ALL ORGANS  
with the THEATRE ORGAN SOUND by  
**LEE ERWIN**

29 of the melodies Lee Erwin recorded on his Angel Records album and that he plays for the showings of "America", "The Birth of a Nation", "Intolerance", authentic compositions and original melodies to fit the mood, characters and period. Colorful effects and sounds abound.  
**\$4.50**

more **LEE ERWIN**  
**THEATRE ORGAN** folios

### SOUND OF SILENTS

Music for all organs from silent film classics such as "The Eagle", "The General", "Thief of Bagdad", "Phantom of the Opera", "Queen Kelly", "Wings", and "My Best Girl".  
**\$3.50**

### THE MIGHTY THEATRE ORGAN

The first *real* collection of original solos for the theatre organ by Don Baker, Al Bollington, Lee Erwin, Eddie Layton, Ann Leaf, Ashley Miller, Rosa Rio, Eddie Weaver, etc.  
**\$3.00**

### ROSEBUD Marches & Rags of SCOTT JOPLIN

Besides Joplin, Erwin has arranged Eubie Blake, Kerry Mills, Harry Guy, as recorded in his Angel Records album  
**\$3.50**

**M** EDWARD B. MARK'S MUSIC CORPORATION / Belwin Mills Publishing Corp. MELVILLE, N. Y. 11746  
Exclusive distributor of all printed products.

the marrow of one's bones. Arriving in Toronto, we checked in at the 33-story Sutton Place Hotel, and the group had several options: sight-seeing, shopping, or tours to Casa Loma or the Ontario Science Center.

The OSC was worth the trip itself, but due to the vastness of the complex, it is impossible to cover the myriad of exhibits, demonstrations and memorabilia in the course of a couple of hours. A minimum of a day is required. However, one can acquire much good walking exercise! Also weary feet!

Saturday evening found the travelers eating, relaxing or engaging in good fellowship in the Mayfair Room on the 33rd floor, overlooking the profusely lit Queen City.

Sunday morning was given to "sleeping in," church attendance, walking in the brisk air, or just loafing until the departure at 12:15 for the Organ Grinder Restaurant. Five long tables were reserved for us, and while the audience was eating, they were entertained by the two staff organists, Don Thompson and Colin Cousins. The 3/13 hybrid was

in fine condition, and the organists did a most creditable job. Both ran the gamut of marches, show tunes and other long-time favorites. Don did a capsule version of the "1812 Overture," which really had "the joint jumping."

The Organ Grinder Restaurant is a converted warehouse, with old artifacts, signs, pictures and other memorabilia providing color and atmosphere to the quaint interior. The organ console is on a platform at one end of the room, directly in front of the pipe chamber. The percussions and toy counter are spotted about, attached to the ceiling, so if you are not aware of this, and a bass drum booms above your head, it will cause a start, if not amusement.

The establishment is the first of several which the owners have planned. The second is in operation in Vancouver, and others are slated for St. Louis, Montreal and Ottawa.

After two hours, we left for hotel checkout, and as there was ample time while the staff at Casa Loma set up chairs for us, Tom Lockwood suggested to the cooperative bus

drivers a leisurely tour of some areas of Toronto. This offered a view of Chinatown, the boutique district known as Yorkville, the University of Toronto, many trolley cars (rare in the states) and a colorful parade which was earmarking Canadian Veterans' Day, we were told.

In time, we were at the gates of impressive Casa Loma, bathed in amber spotlights, and owned by the City of Toronto, but operated by the Kiwanis Club of West Toronto. Jim Lahay, president of the Toronto Theatre Organ Society, and his associates were on hand to make our visit a memorable one. Young organist Bill Haggey, late of Arizona, put the 4/18 Wurlitzer thru its paces for an hour. Bill hasn't been playing a long time, but he knows his way around a console, and he regaled us with some toe-tappers, from the opening "Under the Double Eagle" to "The Stars and Stripes Forever," which exhilarated the American audience.

Our weekend was drawing to a close as we left Toronto. Enroute home, we stopped at the attractive Beacon Restaurant for supper. We knew we were home when we saw a light mantle of picture-postcard material, commonly called "snow," which had encrusted on the windshields of the travelers' cars, parked overnight in the Auditorium Theatre's lot.

The first RTOS-sponsored tour was a huge success, if the many favorable comments from the participants were a barometer. Planning was the keystone for success, and Tom and Marcia Lockwood are to be heartily congratulated. The bus captains and their aides also are to be commended.

Though we were on a two-day jaunt, it gave the planners a hearty respect for those who engineer week-long ATOS conventions. One must be constantly alert to anticipate problems and knock them down before they disrupt the norm of things. Each tourist must be considered as "family" and the lines of communications kept open.

Success of the venture, however, is a two-way street. Cooperation by all participants is mandatory. People who board wrong buses, or who don't show without informing their bus captains, can wreck a schedule. Fortunately, this was held to a bare minimum in our recent venture. □

## **WE'RE NUMBER 1!**

Junchen-Collins has installed more entertainment pipe organs than any other builder! Recent pizza organ installations include:

### **MINNEAPOLIS**

Cicero's #1, #2, and #3

### **TORONTO**

The Organ Grinder

### **VANCOUVER**

The Organ Grinder

### **ST. LOUIS**

The Old St. Louis Noodle & Pizza Co.

Call us for a quotation on an entertainment pipe organ for *your* home or business.

**JUNCHEN - COLLINS ORGAN CORPORATION**  
743 McHENRY AVE. WOODSTOCK, ILL. 60098 (815) 338-7180

JOLIET'S FAMOUS

# "Wonder Theatre"

The Rialto Theatre in downtown Joliet, Illinois, was known as one of the nation's ten wonder theatres when it was built in 1926. Today it still is a "wonder theatre" and on October 7 celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a program of live stage talent and a concert on the Barton Grande Organ.

The event brought back memories to a full house attendance, and there were ushers on hand who had been there for opening day on May 24, 1926. The "Remember When" evening presented Rob Calcaterra at the Barton Grande Organ in a program of nostalgic songs. Rob is a student at the School of Music at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. His classical organ studies are with the famed Dr. Oswald Regatz. He is also a member of the Singing Hoosiers, a touring group of vocalist/dancers (under the direction of Mr. Robert Stole) who perform in all styles of music. Besides his usual playing out, teaching, arranging, composing, accompanying, vocalizing and practicing, Rob was back home to help make the 50th Anniversary program a "Remember When" time for the audience.

The event was sponsored in part by the Illinois Arts Council, Joliet Park District, Joliet Township, Caterpillar Tractor Company, First National Bank of Joliet and Andrew Barber. Organizations responsible for the event were the Will County Cultural Arts Association, Greater Joliet Council and Joliet Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts.

The 50th Anniversary had a two-fold objective — celebrating the occasion and projecting the possibilities inherent in the theatre. The theatre is now for sale with no plans for immediate destruction or plans for its future. The Will County Cultural Arts Association has initiated landmark proceedings. The theatre is a Rapp & Rapp designed theatre and one of the few remaining which could become a civic and cultural center with minor changes. It is also

located in the center of town and is part of a business and office complex.

The Rialto also features excellent acoustics, ample dressing rooms and has seats so arranged that all have equal command of the stage. The stage is 105 by 32 feet and can be increased by another 14 feet when hydraulic jacks bring the pit to stage level.

ATOS will tour the Rialto during the Chicago convention next July. □

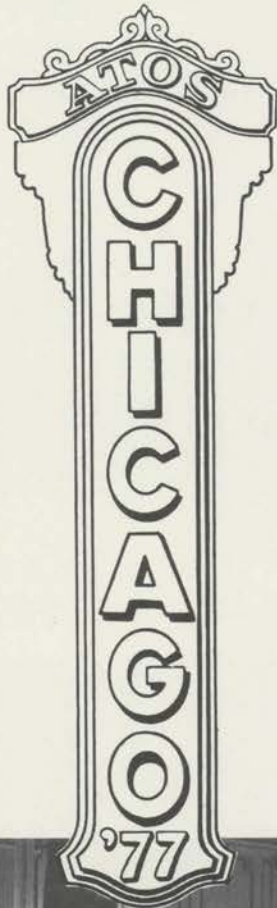


Rob Calcaterra. He played the 50th anniversary program at the Rialto in 1976. (Bill Lamb Photo)

The 2000-seat Rialto Theatre was designed by Rapp and Rapp and was first opened to the public on May 24, 1926.



# Will You Sit Here This Summer?



## Outstanding Banquet Planned

by Ione Tedei

This year's Convention Banquet, climaxing the events of a busy week, will be held Saturday evening in the sparkling, elegant Grand-State Ballroom of the headquarters hotel, Chicago's world-famous Palmer House.

Plan to spend the evening there. First the cocktail hour. Then dinner featuring the Palmer House's superb cuisine and smooth service (French style). Then following the drama of the annual awards and the roll call of chapters, the committee has arranged for a fun-packed evening in a night club setting. This will be the time for dancing, table hopping, patronizing the cash bars, visiting with old friends and making new ones.

The Banquet is the one occasion during the week that most of the conventioners are gathered together with plenty of time for relaxed socializing, and without leaving the air conditioned amenities of the hotel. You can dress for the occasion if you care to, knowing that you won't be climbing on a bus later.

A layout of the table arrangement will be on hand in the registration room so that groups wishing to sit together can mark their names on the chart to reserve the table of their choice.

With prices skyrocketing all around us, it's nice to know that the committee expects that the cost of the banquet will not exceed that of the last two years.

It's the perfect way to spend a Saturday evening in Chicago. Please do join us. □

View of the Grand-State Ballroom where the pantry is as large as a grocery store and its kitchen can serve 3,000 people at one time! Incidentally, the Palmer House is the fifth largest hotel in the world.





# FESTIVAL

# '77



- Our 18th Year -

Plan Now  
To Attend

## THE GREATEST ORGAN SHOW ON EARTH

at  
**ASILOMAR**  
Pacific Grove, Calif.

.... on the beautiful  
*Monterey Peninsula*  
*September 6 thru 10, incl.*



## Featuring . . . .

*The Following Organ Manufacturers and  
Their Top Artists and Clinicians*

Allen - Baldwin  
Conn  
Farfisa - Gulbransen  
Kawai - Kimball  
Hammond - Lowrey  
Rodgers - Thomas  
Wurlitzer - Yamaha

— also —

Leslie Speakers  
Hal Leonard Publications  
Hansen Publishing Company  
Concert Company  
The Record Shoppe  
Organist Magazine  
(Music World)

**Concerts  
by the Pros**

●  
**Socializing**

●  
**Jam Sessions**

●  
**Dancing**

**Costume Parade - Classes - Workshops**



## Register Early . . .

## Avoid Disappointment!

Director  
W. "Tiny" James

ASILOMAR — THE ORGAN EVENT OF THE YEAR  
presented by  
THE PACIFIC COUNCIL FOR ORGAN CLUBS, INC.

Assistant Directors  
Ken Skooneberg  
Jack Hale

Call or write . . . REGISTRAR, HOME ORGAN FESTIVAL  
P.O. BOX 2248, ALAMEDA, CALIFORNIA 94501, (415) 522-2962

# 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.*

In an interview published in the "News and Observer" (Raleigh, North Carolina), Lee Erwin waxed warmly for ATOS.

"Erwin credits the American Theatre Organ Society more than any other group for the current trend toward preservation.

'By saving the organs, they have often saved the theatres,' he said. But they saved more than buildings, they helped preserve an art."

The erstwhile "Moon River" radio organist was in North Carolina to play a concert at the Carolina Theatre in Greensboro.

Lee Erwin has had some farflung musical adventures in addition to the above. He went south again in December to play a concert on former ATOS prexy Paul Abernethy's home-based Robert Morton, then to the Trenton (N.J.) War Memorial for a concert on the big Moller. Back in November he sat in for an ailing

Lyn Larsen on short notice at the Embassy Theatre's Page organ in Fort Wayne, Indiana, after an early morning flight from New York. He had only four hours break in on the Page but must have done a good job if the remark of one lady in the audience is indicative:

"You may not be as 'pretty' as Lyn — but you sure play pretty."



When George Wright was working in New York City from 1944 to 1951, playing daily on Prudential's Jack Berch Show ("The shortest 15 minutes in radio.") with accordionist Charles Magnante, guitarist Tony Mottola, and announcer Eddie Dunn, he also played the New York Paramount's 4/36 Wurlitzer several times a day. According to Eddie Dunn, Wright had a great admirer in Magnante, who often bought a ticket to hear the organist play the Paramount "Queen Mother." His favorite seat was in the balcony where the "great waves of sound from those shallow chambers flowed over." Eddie is eagerly anticipating a reunion with George Wright during the appearance of his old colleague at the RTOS (Rochester, N.Y.) console on February 26.



From the Land of Lincoln chapter, LOLTOS Pres. Bob Schmoock writes about chapter involvement in making a theatre interior look better. Before a recent Rex Koury concert at the Coronado theatre in Rockford,



The forty-foot elevation provided Coronado Manager Dennis Morlan a closeup of a lovely he had often admired from afar.

Illinois, chapter members cooperated with theatre management in cleaning 1600 square feet of grimy mirrors in the Coronado's lobby. Scaffolding got access to the high spots ladders wouldn't reach. Involved were gallons of glass cleaner, a case of paper towels, many sore muscles and the enthusiasm of theatre manager Dennis Morlan who pitched in with the volunteers for sometimes dizzying acrobatics on the scaffolding. The results were most satisfying, even sparkling, according to concert attendees.



That organ safari has had some interesting sidelights — like romance. It has been revealed that Angeleno Patty Barnes, who assisted



Coronado Theatre lobby during mirror washing day.

in coordinating the safari stateside, and one of the British Northern tour guides Rod Skelding, developed an attachment for one another during the bus trips around northern England. After a few days bussing(!) they knew they had something special. Then the Safari ended and they separated. Organist Skelding, whose first recording is due for release shortly, and lovely Patty later spent a fortune on trans-Atlantic phone calls during the five months following the safari's return to the USA just to keep it alive. They just had to see one another again, so Patty planed over for Christmas in England with Rod. She's back in LA with stars in her eyes and a sparkler on her finger. Rod will come to the USA about May 1 and the wedding will follow, "... hopefully to the accompaniment of a large Wurlitzer" glows Patty. So, there, you critics who complain that "this colyum aint got no romance." To those in search of a soul mate, there's a new safari being organized for later this year.



Report on the Dick Loderhose 4/42 installation in the Bay theatre, Seal Beach, Calif.: chambers completed, regulators and chests re-leathered. The theatre continues to operate with quality films during the installation.



From Chicago comes the good news that the Montclare theatre Barton continues to "purr" on an average of three nights a week. One recent highlight was a childrens' Christmas party which drew a capacity house (1200). It was sponsored by Chicago's 36th Ward alderman, and the organist was Bill Benedict, for once wearing a different hat from that of CATOE's able publicist.



New York's Beacon Theatre, once called "Bagdad on Broadway" because of its middle east decor, has been closed. The 2657-seat house which was the site of a number of theatre organ activities when theatre historian Ben Hall was alive, had been used as a rock and blues theatre for the past 2½ years. Inability to obtain name acts and financial

difficulties forced the owners' hands. Meanwhile, fate of the Beacon's 4/19 Wurlitzer, which was a focal point during the 1970 ATOS Convention, is unknown. The organ had been maintained by Ron Smith, Roy Sharp, Joe Vanore and others.



Out in California, ATOS pioneer Dick Simonton was exultant; after years of "trying," he and the Mrs. became grandparents, reports Patty Barnes. On Dec. 13, a son was born to Richard Jr. and Christina Simonton. He'll be named Richard III, with no apologies to Bill Shakespeare. The baby made his entry at 9 pounds, one ounce, and is 20 inches tall.

The senior Simontons have four grown children, the majority having experienced marriage but this is the first grandchild, circa 4 years after the marriage of Dick Jr. and Christina. Dick Sr., wearing a proud grin, hoped this would be the first of many grandchildren.



In Pompano Beach, Florida, organist Karl Cole looked back on his first year of operating his "Medley" restaurant-with-plug-in organ music. Karl, recently back home after a concert tour ("28 concerts in 40 days!"), was grateful to the many



Celebrating his first year as a restaurateur, Karl Cole is visited by the Don Bakers.

ATOSers who came to make his undertaking a success, among them such *prominenti* as Dick Kline, Lowell Ayars, Gaylord Carter, Reginald Foort and Don Baker. Karl says, "ATOSers make good customers."



Two of the most enthusiastic ATOS members to return from the European safari were Hall of Famer Fred Feibel and his wife, Lenore. Fred lavishes hearty praise on the organizers of the venture. "It is remarkable how one meets so many new faces when on a tour," he said, "who all share a common interest, the wonderful pipe organ. It would take dozens of pages to describe in detail all the interesting organ installations we visited and the enthu-



Hall of Famer Fred Feibel inspects the organ console in Blenheim Palace, the birthplace and early residence of Sir Winston Churchill.

siasm of the British who played for us.

"Of course, Notre Dame Cathedral and the special reception and recital given by Pierre Cochereau in Paris were glorious events. We wound up in New York City afterwards, my old stamping ground. I never played at Radio City Music Hall, but I had been offered an organist post there once. I declined since it involved night work; after 13½ years of working in theatres seven nights a week, I felt I had done my share."



When the late Leonard MacClain played a concert at the Lorin Whitney studio (Glendale, Calif.) in 1960, no less than five Robert Zieglers came to hear Leonard at the 4/30 Robert Morton. All were related to Leonard's wife, Dottie, and all lived in southern California where the provocative Dottie was also raised. In late 1975 one of the five Robert Zieglers, Dottie's cousin, moved east and settled near the Pennsylvania home of Dottie and her husband, Grant Whitcomb — "Melody Hill." Robert is a frequent visitor and enjoys playing duets with Dottie and Grant on their custom Schober and two Hammonds. But a major project looms — the reassembly of Roberts 4-deck theatre organ.

"Now if I could just lure the other four Robert Zieglers to the Melody Hill area," says Dottie, "What delightful confusion that could bring to Delaware Valley!"



Organist Tiny James, absent from the concert scene since the 1972 ATOS convention (he played at the Byrd in Richmond) is back at the console, illustrating the "intermission music" which has made him well known in the Bay Area of California wherever the pipes were playable. A few years ago Tiny experienced a seige of "ticker trouble" which grounded him except for a rare impromptu concert and the chairmanship of the annual Home Organ Festival.

But on November 21, he was "back in the saddle," playing a concert for the San Diego, Calif., ATOS chapter on the 5/27 Moller located in Organ Power No. 2 in the suburb



Tiny James found the big Moller to his liking.  
(Stufoto)

of Pacific Beach. Twice the membership of the chapter filed into the pizzeria for the Sunday afternoon concert. The program ranged from Tiny's "trademarks" such as "The Object of My Affection" and "Hindustan" to the current "Watch What Happens." He did a Crawford-like "Birth of Passion" (1910) and a lively "Ivory Rag," with the Moller's brand new *Trompette en Chamade* doing a New Orleans cornet "ride." During the program, Tiny honored two departed notables, Bay Area bandleader Anson Weeks and British organist Vic Hammett, as well as non-notable Stu Green, who proclaimed from the audience that he was still living.

At the close of the concert, it was obvious that his forced exile from the console had not cost Tiny any of the moxie which his audiences so admire. San Diegans clustered around the maw of the huge Moller console to shake Tiny's hand and shoot photos. One fan, obviously a victim of too loud pizzeria staffers, was heard to say:

"Tiny brought out subtle sounds on that organ, ones I didn't know it had."



Want to buy a fully equipped 2700-seat theatre, which includes a "Giant Wurlitzer organ, excellent condition"? It can be yours for \$125,000, a truly bargain price. The film trade magazines have been running a for sale advertisement for the Malco theatre (originally RKO

Orpheum) in Memphis, Tennessee which states that the house is operating at a profit. For \$300,000 you can buy the entire building, which includes rental office space which brings in \$30,000 a year. Of course, our object in bringing the Malco to readers' attention is the hope that there's an "angel" someplace who might rescue it. It's happened many times before, but usually the rescuers are locals who organize and pass the hat for funding. The prospect of another homeless theatre organ (if there is no buyer) doesn't set well.



It's too late to save Pittsburgh's Rowland theatre; the wrecking ball already has been busy. One of the trade magazines ran a brief obituary for the house described as "by far the finest in the tri-state area." The suburban theatre, dark for a dozen years featured vaudeville, stage attractions, personal appearances of movie stars, an 11-piece all-girl pit orchestra, newsreels, comedy shorts and feature films. The most memorable organist was Harry E. Reiff who popularized songs via illustrated slides. No mention was made of the brand of organ used by the theatre, so perhaps a Pittsburgh ATOSer with a long memory can fill us in.

It's not much comfort to know that the wreckers were having a difficult time. Not an easy pushover, the Rowland could have stood for hundreds of years with its all-steel, concrete, granite and marble construction, concludes the obit.



Miami Valley chapter member Tim Rowe apparently believes in dressing for the occasion. From Springfield, Ohio, Dave Marshall describes a screening of "Mysterious Monsters" at the local State Cinema. When the film ended, eerie organ music filled the house and as the lights came up all eyes focussed on the 3/7 Wurlitzer console. Playing was the Frankenstein monster, or a very reasonable facsimile created by organist Rowe. Dave shot a photo but sadly the print wasn't contrasty enough for reproduction. But we could make out the ghastly features of the black-clad creature at the console — the facial stitching scars, the

deep-set, cruel eyes, and the high-domed forehead containing the pilfered brain of a criminal . . .

"You should see Tim when he wears makeup!" chortles Dave.



When organist Doc Bebko paid one of his periodic visits to the Radio City Music Hall in October, he questioned the assistant manager about the former chief organist, the late Dick Leibert.

"The official told me," says Doc, "That when he was 19, he was an usher at the Hall at the time of its opening in December 1932, and witnessed the audition for chief organist. The PA system kept bellowing 'Dick Leibert, Dick Leibert, come to the console!' When he completed his audition (a medley of the tunes the other 12 aspirants had played) before 'Roxy,' the famous showman said: 'You are no longer Dick Leibert. From now on, you are Mr. Richard Leibert, Chief Organist of the Music Hall.'"

Dock revealed that Ray Bohr and Johnny Detroy are the current RCMH staffers, with Cecil Benz subbing. Jimmy Paulin has left.



People who have been wondering why the 6/62 Barton in the Chicago Stadium hasn't been booming forth this winter as much as in the past, were provided the reason in a recent issue of "The Sporting News," baseball's bible. Comiskey Park organist since 1970, Nancy Faust, was appointed organist at the Stadium for Chicago Bills' Games. Instead of playing the Barton, high in the first balcony, she plays an electronic at a corner of the court downstairs, a model "more adaptable to her bouncy style." She plays everything by ear, including chromatic scales which follow foul balls down the screen in the summer.



Dr. John Landon, University of Kentucky's gift to the literary and theatre organ worlds, continues as busy as ever. With his first book on the life of Jesse Crawford selling nicely, the manuscript of the second book, dealing with the history of the theatre organ, is in the hands of the publisher. A third work on the history of social welfare is in prepara-

tion. Rev. John appears regularly at his Sunday pulpit, necessitating preparation of his weekly sermons. Weekends are spent playing the 3/7 Page in the Anderson, Ind. Paramount Theatre. Spare time? John is installing a 3/10 Wurlitzer in his home.



The somewhat hush-hush reopening of the Solano Beach (Calif.) theatre as a "soup and salad" restaurant with organ music has some interesting sidelights. The organ is a 4/21 Robert Morton, originally in the Midland theatre, Kansas City, where Bill Wright used to play it. Bill is now the manager of the Eastland theatre in West Covina, Calif. where he plays intermissions on a Conn electronic, model 645. The Solano Beach theatre (actually Sandy Fleet's "Organ Power No. 3") opened without fanfare in late October '76 with Gaylord Carter at the keyboards. Then a young (23) man from St. Louis took over, Jack Jenkins, a southern Illinois University grad. Jack has been playing during the supper hour, then cueing a silent film, almost nightly, since the opening. The soup and salad menu is an experimental one, offered on the assumption that perhaps everyone may not prefer pizza. Solano Beach is a few miles north of San Diego.



Jack Jensen at the Solano Theatre 4/21 Robert Morton. (Stufoto)



The Solano Theatre offers a menu of salad, soup and silent movies, all with organ accompaniment. Sometimes even 'talkies. (Stufoto)



Bill Wright in 1928 at the Robert Morton pipe organ in Loew's Theatre, Kansas City.



Bill, forty years later at the Conn Deluxe theatre organ in W. Covina.



From Detroit, Greg Bellamy writes that most of his recent spare time (between 2:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.) has been invested in working on

restoration of the 4/36 Wurlitzer and the 3/12 lobby Moller in the 5042-seat Fox Theatre in preparation for the Dec. 5 concert for Father Jim Miller. Greg, a member of a group called "Friends of the Fox," says:

"This will be the first time since John Muri's 1971 concert that the instrument will be heard complete. We have re-leathered and refinished the console and recovered several of the important 25" wind pressure ranks. More work to get the organ in reliable shape is planned — to bring this, the mightiest (4/36) Wurlitzer left in its original location, back to the public eye." And ear, we might add.

Canada's Clealan Blakely upon seeing Lloyd Klos at a concert, said, "I have a bone to pick with you. The date of the opening of the Brooklyn Paramount is 1928 not 1938, as stated on Rosa Rio's record jacket. I visited that house in 1929 when attending school." Klos, who wrote the jacket notes, checked with the man in charge, Bill Yeoman, who verified that the error was made by the typesetter. "Don't believe I've ever written notes for one of those things without an error creeping in," says Klos. "Printers and writers aren't very compatible anyway."

The former 400-seat Indianapolis Civic Theatre is safe due to a couple of the type of "angels" the theatre and organ world needs so badly. In 1974, Central Indiana Chapter members Phil and Betty Hedback purchased the Civic and started renovating — new heating, air conditioning, carpeting, plumbing, wiring — the works, including installation of a 2/10 Page theatre organ. The house was renamed the Hedbeck Community theatre, and leased to a 21-year-old civic theatrical organization, Footlite Musicals. Since the organ has been perking, CIC has sponsored concerts by John Muri, the James family and Walt Strony.

On Dec. 10 last, the Hedbacks gave the citizens of Indianapolis a Christmas present — the now mint condition Hedback Theatre. Actually, the theatre was given to Footlite Musicals, who will be responsible for the house's future.

Asked why they donated the theatre, which is the fulcrum of a much larger civic center plan, the Hedbacks replied that they wanted to give Indianapolis something permanent in appreciation of the years of business success they have enjoyed in the community.

Watch the Hedbacks; they have just started. What an honor for ATOS that they are members!

Manager Margaret Sabo writes from Philly that Andy Kasparian has been selected to hold down the staff position at the Canadian "Organ Grinder's" new pizzeria in St. Louis. The new "Organ Grinder's" opener will be St. Louis' long time favorite, Stan Kann, then Andy will take over as resident organist. The organ, according to Don Thompson, is a "Dave Junchen Special," meaning it has been assembled from compatible parts of several organs, same as the firm's Toronto operation.



Andy Kasparian. A new pizzeria post looms.

Andy hasn't been idle since his exposure at the 1976 ATOS convention, having played concerts at the No. Tonawanda Riviera Theatre, the Auditorium in Rochester in addition to holding down his plug-in job four nights a week at a New Jersey watering place.

The St. Louis "Organ Grinder" was set to open late in January '77.

In "The Marx Bros Scrapbook" (Darien House), Groucho reveals that his brothers Chico and Harpo were silent film accompanists —

briefly. During an interview with Marxabilia compiler Richard Anobile, Groucho said:

"(Chico) was working in a small nickelodeon... he stayed there about a month playing piano as background for silent movies. When he quit he got Harpo the job, but Harpo could play only one song. He only lasted a month. After all, if there are cowboys and Indians shooting at each other you can't play 'Love Me and the World is Mine.' So Harpo was fired. (But) remember, the people paid only a nickel to get in. What could they expect?"

Utica, N.Y.'s conductor of the "Organ Loft" radio program, Don Robinson, reports that he's well into the 15th consecutive year of broadcasting. The show is eagerly awaited each week by organ buffs in the Rome-Utica-Little Falls environs. Don pleases all followers of the pipe organ by devoting roughly half the program to the classical organ and the remainder to the theatre organ. There are occasional changes of format when Don uses taped interviews with some of the leading artists. Besides serving General Electric as an engineer, Don is also an organist at a Utica church, and in his spare time, helps maintain the 3/13 Wurlitzer in Proctor's High School in that city. His brother, Melvin, is kept busy traveling about the country, servicing organ installations.

In a few months, the Jacques Cattell Press and R.R. Bowker Co. will publish a new reference book: "Complete Guide to the Halls of Fame in the United States and Canada." To date, there are over 600 of these institutions, and they range in size from the "Count Dracula Society Horror Hall of Fame" which has four members to those with a hundred or more. The "ATOS Theatre Organists Hall of Fame" will be included in the publication, as committee chairman Lloyd Klos has dispatched information on the founding of our Hall, its selection procedure, committee members, and list of entrants with year of selection and a thumbnail sketch of each. According to the Cattell Press, the ATOS Hall is larger than average, and is the only one whose mem-

bers are restricted to the greats who played a specific musical instrument.



From New York we learn that the grand opening of the late Ben Hall's "Little Mother" 2/6 Wurlitzer in the Carnegie Hall Cinema has been advanced to March 17 (Saint Patrick's day) due to numerous installation delays. There are plans to add three more ranks, but there is no news regarding the piano apparently lost while the organ was stored out west.



For a number of years, the status of the First Universalist Church in Rochester, N.Y. was in doubt. This is the edifice wherein is housed the Hope-Jones Opus 2, installed in 1908, and fears were expressed awhile back as to its fate. Now, the dark clouds have been dispelled. The church has been declared a historic landmark, and an ambitious program has been inaugurated to completely restore and renovate the historic pipe organ. A committee has been formed to raise funds, and an "angel" has come forth to pledge two dollars for every dollar raised, up to \$10,000. This is indeed a worthwhile effort as there are very few organs left which were built in the Hope-Jones' factory in Elmira, N.Y.



Billy Nalle reports from Wichita that Carl Packer, a member of Wichita Theatre Organ Inc., has purchased a 2/9 Wurlitzer that former Dallas resident Jim Sanford had stashed near his Texas home. The



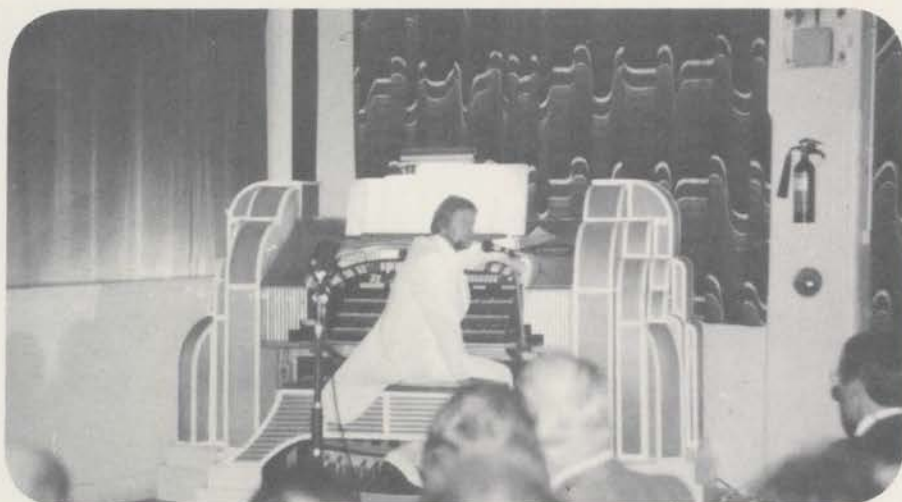
Billy Nalle (Bill Pearce Photo)

instrument will have been transported to Wichita by now. Billy says that the organ will be installed in a new home Packer will build.

Incidentally, Billy waxes most enthusiastic about the tapings he made on the RTOS 4/22 Wurlitzer in Rochester N.Y. The music will be released as a disc by Advent Records shortly. Billy feels it's his best work to date.



Don Thompson, back from an extensive English concert tour, reports from Toronto that he sat in for Hector Olivera in Syracuse when the latter was grounded by a foot injury. The Empire State Theatre and Musical Instrument Museum gave Don only 24 hours notice for the Dec. 14 concert, so Don's large



Don Thompson on tour. Shown at the console of the Marston Green Compton in Britain

memorized repertoire came in handy. Don was glad to see veteran Syracuse organist Luella Wickham in the audience in the N.Y. State Fairgrounds auditorium. The organ is the 3/11 Wurlitzer from the levelled Keith's theatre.

Don adds that he is set for a February classical concert at St. Paul's church in Toronto, playing an immense Casavant. While his program will feature works by Bach and Gigout, he'll include a couple of lighter items such as William Walton's "Crown Imperial" march and Billy Nalle's contrapuntal treatment of "All the Things You Are" dubbed "Alles Was Du Bist."



Harvey Heck. He's playing a 'Furioso.' (Stulfo)

In Agoura, Calif., veteran organ enthusiast Harvey Heck read the newspaper from Santa Ana and did an Edgar Kennedy "slow burn." The article purported to be an account of the restoration and installation of the Wurlitzer organ in the Pipe Organ Pizza pasta parlor in Santa Ana. Apparently some local nepotism/patriotism overcame the Santa Ana sheet's reporter because locals were credited with all the work Harvey had done on the former Paul Pease residence organ to get it in shape for pizzeria service.

To set the record straight, Harvey Heck wants it known that he overhauled, nursed, polished, cleaned, releathered and supervised installation of now tip-top Wurli in the Pipe Organ Pizza.

Incidentally, the chief organist is Tom Shean, and he is doing fine. □



# Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

WHO IS WHERE . . . Rudy Vallee, more gracious than ever to fans, gets mail at 7430 Pyramid Place, Los Angeles 90046 . . . Darla Hood (Granson), the real darling of *Our Gang*, gets fan mail at 12156 Bix St., North Hollywood 91607 . . . Kay Kyser, who learned the joy of giving a long time ago, may be contacted through the First Church of Christ Scientist, 107 Falmouth St., Boston, Mass. 02015 . . . Gene Autry still gets fan mail at 3171 Brookdale Road, North Hollywood 91604 or at KTLA Television, Hollywood 90028 . . . A reader says "Ann Harding, enjoys hearing from friends and receives mail at 4747 North Sepulveda Blvd., Sherman Oaks, Calif. 91403.

★ ★ ★

WE GET LETTERS . . . "Madge Evans was a child star. I played for one of her films (Goldwyn) in 1920 when she was around 11 or 12. I was a theatre musician then." — Col. Harry J. Jenkins . . . "Valentino wanted very much the role of Ben Hur . . . but fate figured otherwise." — Cliff Ericksen . . . "Jeffery Lynn was selling insurance last time I saw him in Los Angeles. He seemed happy and did not miss his film work." — Neil Harvey.

★ ★ ★

THE REAL NEWS . . . Twelve-year-old Tatum O'Neal, actress daughter of Ryan O'Neal, was named in the 1976 top ten of box office appeal by theatre owners. She is the first child star to make the list in 30 years. Not one adult actress was in the top ten . . . Sometime in 1977 expect to see a western movie called *Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch*. It will be a modern day western with a novel twist. It will have scenes from hundreds of old western films starring such greats as Tom Mix, Tim McCoy, Ken Maynard, Gene Autry, John Wayne, Hoot Gibson, Buck Jones and some 38 others. Sounds like a great idea.

★ ★ ★

MOVIE fans have great memories. One reader noted this dialogue from a recent showing of the deMille epic of 1932 the *Sign of the Cross* with Claudette Colbert and Frederic March. Included were such modern lines as: ". . . You said you loved me . . . I tried . . . Don't be stupid . . . What else is there? . . . That's the truth . . . I don't know . . . Well, why not? . . . I doubt that . . . Something of the sort . . . Listen to me . . . How can you do this? . . . This is stronger than both of us . . ."

THE FRONT PAGE as a remake of the 1931 epic is pretty poor porridge . . . Roscoe Fatty Arbuckle had 14 brothers and sisters . . . Press agents really turned on the words for the 1931 *Cimarron*. One ad line said: ". . . and an assemblage of superlative artists." Hardly any of that kind around any more . . . More than 300 actors auditioned for the Cary Grant role in the new Mae West picture almost completed.

★ ★ ★

QUESTIONS: "Did Jack Benny ever have any singer other than Dennis Day?" Yep. First came Donald Novis, Kenny Baker and Dennis Day. Larry Douglas filled in while Day was in the military service . . . Hopalong Cassidy had eight sidekicks (at least of record) including: Rand Brooks, Brad King, Jay Kirby, Jimmy Roger, Andy Clyde, Russell Hayden, Jimmy Ellison and George "Gabby" Hayes . . . I thought everyone knew that Montie Montana was born Owen Harlan Mickel in 1910 . . . Westmore in Hollywood means make-up genius. The six boys came from a family of 19. The boys had 18 wives and sired 14 children. The Westmore make-up dynasty continues. Only Frank is alive. Sons and daughters are carrying on.

★ ★ ★

SHORT SHORTS . . . Roy Rogers says his current film is his 88th since 1938 . . . Average age of guests at the Motion Picture Country House is 81 . . . Actress Estelle Winwood is going strong at 93 but she did not start her film career until she was 71 . . . A literal word-by-word translation of the Bible using the rare language spoken by Jesus Christ is underway in Hollywood and Europe. It will require 30 years to complete. First episode of *Genesis* has been shown in Hollywood . . . Fans report some luck in having the Screen Actors Guild, 7750 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood 90046, in forwarding letters to members who are VERY POPULAR right now.

★ ★ ★

THE END . . . Frankie Darro died in late December 1976 . . . Unverified addresses: Dorothy Jordan, 1360 Monaco Drive., Pacific Palisades, Calif. 90272. Margaret Lindsay, 1307 N. Weatherly Dr., Beverly Hills 90211.

★ ★ ★

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



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

by Lance Johnson

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 3/8 Kimball theatre organ with a tremulant problem. I want the Tibia to "throb" like Wurlitzer but cannot get near the result desired. I have a large trem with the gate completely open but the Tibia just doesn't have it. Any ideas?**

Answer: You have raised a complicated problem. Knowing the small Kimball organs you probably have too large a scale Tibia for what you want. Kimballs and Bartons were notorious for large Tibias even in small instruments. Their voicers left such a high cut-up in the mouth that the harmonic development or "quint tone" was completely eliminated. The quint tone is what you hear besides the fundamental tone when you listen to just one Tibia pipe. If you listen carefully, you will hear a tone one octave and a fifth above the note you play on a Wurlitzer Tibia. Wurlitzer voiced the basses very dull and devoid of quint tone and lowered

the cut-ups in the trebles to make the pipes brighter higher up the register. This quint tone is what makes the famous throbbing Tibia what it is. Dull pipes with little or no harmonic development are extremely difficult to tremulate.

If you cannot get a smaller scaled Wurlitzer Tibia, I would suggest two remedies; first, change the wind line to the tremulant to 4" diameter. Your tremulant will get much noisier so you may have to muffle it more or remove it from the chamber entirely. Another way would be to wind the tremulant directly to one end of the Tibia chest if it isn't already winded in this manner.

Having built a Wurlitzer Tibia, I voiced it in the manner of the 1920's Stopped Diapason from the church organ. With the quint tone present and increasing in the trebles, I was able to copy the Wurlitzer throb with perfect results.

2. **I have a Wurlitzer theatre organ with six regulators. Every one has a loose cone valve stem that wiggles when the tremulants are on. Are those supposed to be tight in the regulator top?**

Answer: No. The stem which is nothing more than a bolt with two nuts on top are meant to be loose so they will help the cone valve to center itself quickly.

3. **After having my blower (Spencer) motor overhauled with new bearings and re-assembling the blower, I find that it will only produce 8" wind instead of 13". It runs in the right direction and the motor turns up to full rpms. What could have I done wrong?**

Answer: Did you check carefully the spacing between the impellers and dividers? On most blowers, the space should be one half inch. Less than this amount will reduce the output pressure significantly.

4. **I am having trouble with my Wurlitzer switch stack. I get dead**

**notes from contact wires on the switch bars bending sideways so it will not spring out when the stop is turned off. What causes this?**

Answer: The contacter fatigues from age and is losing some of its spring tension. As the switch slams up against the buss bar, the switch contact wire may not always spring back exactly square with the bar. Having lost some strength, the wire bends sideways and jams in the bar slot. The only solution I could think of would be to reduce the travel of the switch bar slightly. The spring contacts then will not have to move as far and any sideways play will be less significant.

5. **I have a big re-leathering job to do on my console combinations. What do you think of using zephyr skin membrane?**

Answer: I can't get excited about using membrane leather which has only a 20-30 year life. It may be fast acting, but so is perflex. Most hobbyists have had disastrous results trying to glue zephyr skin. I have used mostly pneumatic leather on blow pneumatics. I have heard from other builders that plastic substitutes don't wear as well on blow pneumatics such as the type found on stop tablet combination actions.

6. **What kind of alloy is "Hoyt metal" and how do you repair it?**

Answer: Hoyt metal is tin coated lead, hence the shiny appearance. Repairing tears in tuning slots can be done with an ordinary Unger style soldering iron. Tin the tip well and use plenty of solder paste. Just tap the pipe metal with the soldering iron until the pipe metal begins to melt. Then flow heavy amounts of wire solder. (the type with built in flux) around the tip but keep the tip only close to the pipe but not touching it anymore than necessary. If you apply too much heat to the pipe metal, you will see the pipe disappear before your eyes! File off any rough edges where you have applied solder. □

**NUGGETS**  
from the  
**GOLDEN**  
**DAYS**



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

It's Valentine's month again, and time for Jason and I to salute all the hard-working gals in the ATOS. The first two items were found in the July Melody and December 1927 Jacobs magazines respectively.

*MARGARET GRAY* is the only woman organist in Vancouver, B.C. She plays with a 15-piece orchestra during most of the pictures, but because of her unusual ability to play dramatics, she plays that part of the feature alone. This is more or less of a compliment, as orchestras usually play the portions of the picture which enable them to bring out the most striking effects.

Miss Gray seems particularly adapted to picture work. She has accompanied pictures since the day of the piano, and has arranged and played cue music for repertoire companies. She is thoroughly experienced in all phases of show business, has played with a stock company, done several turns in vaudeville, and directed musical comedy and light opera.

It is difficult to get Miss Gray to talk about herself. She was full of praise for the conductor and members of the orchestra, as well as organists in her home town. She spent six years studying piano in Berlin, Germany; then studied organ with Prof. Laurence of Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. Upon coming west, she continued her organ study with Mr. Thwaites in Santa Barbara, Cal., who, by the way, was formerly organist at St. Paul's in Leeds, England.

At the Southern California University, she studied with Prof. Skeele,

and at Vancouver, B.C., with Dr. Vinen of St. Andrews Church. Miss Gray claims that her work with Sidney Kelland, organist at the Capitol Theatre in Vancouver, has proven most beneficial to her. One can see readily the extent of Miss Gray's musical education.

Her instrument is of Canadian build, and is one of the straight type. It hasn't the features which the modern theatre organs possess, but the average auditor certainly can't notice the difference when Miss Gray is at the console. The tone is rich and beautiful, and the action is splendid.

Miss Gray will become guest organist at the Capitol in Vancouver for three months, beginning June 14, during the absence of Mr. Kelland. The offer of this post came as a pleasant surprise and a compliment, as Mr. Kelland is considered one of Canada's finest organists. Miss Gray felt duly honored in being made his substitute. The Capitol boasts one of the finest organs there is. It is perfectly installed, is complete in every detail, and has a marvelous tone. It will, no doubt, be an inspiration to Miss Gray.

Besides her regular organ work, accompanying pictures and giving concerts, she will broadcast a special concert each Sunday over CFYU. You radio fans better tune in each Sunday between six and seven P.M., as the concerts will be a real treat.

One of the competent organists and pleasing personalities on the Loew circuit is Miss HENRIETTA KAMERN of the Rio Theatre in New York. Miss Kamern has been on the circuit for over 7 years and has been at the Rio most of the time, with the exception of a brief stay at the 116th Street Theatre.

When Miss Kamern first came to the Rio, an old Hall organ was in use which has since been replaced by a splendid three-manual Moller, one of the finest organs in the circuit. Miss Kamern's mother is the talented director of the orchestra at the Burland Theatre of the same circuit.

Miss Kamern has recently been doing some remarkably successful broadcasting on her fine instrument, through station WHN, the official Loew broadcasting station. Her recitals are usually given Sunday evenings and have met with great favor. Her first program included the

popular "Rhapsody in Blue" and other popular hits.

We are sure the success which she deserves and which has already come to her in part, will be Miss Kamern's in even greater measure in the future.

June 13, 1928 (Local Press) EVA LANGLEY at the 4/26 Wurlitzer in Boston's Metropolitan Theatre, is playing incidental organ music to the feature picture "Hold 'Em, Yale," starring Rod LaRocque. The presentation is being heard on WBET, the 1040-kilowatt station in Medford, Mass.

Nov. 1928 (Syracuse Daily Orange). W. STUART GREEN has been appointed assistant to organist RUBY MANN at the Harvard Theatre, a neighborhood house in Syracuse, N.Y., which continues a silent film policy.

Feb. 1929 (Syracuse Daily Orange) GLADYS BEARDSLEY has been succeeded by organist W. STUART GREEN at the Syracuse, N.Y. Regent Theatre, now a "talkie" house.

May 1934 (Local Press) ANN LEAF is heard daily at 2 p.m. over CBS from New York, while ELSIE THOMPSON also broadcasts evenings over WOR in Newark.

**GOLD DUST:** There were plenty of lady organists in those days as the following memory-twitching bits will prove: 1/27 DESSA BYRD, Indianapolis' Circle; MILDRED FITZPATRICK, Chicago's Piccadilly . . . 5/27 ELEANOR HALEY in the State Theatre & JOSEPHINE PAROFF at Loew's in New York; FLORENCE BLUM & CATHERINE JOHNSON, Prospect in Flushing, Long Island . . . 12/27 HENRIETTA KAMERN, Loew's Rio in New York; Miss MARX at Forest Park's Robert Morton in New York . . . 10/28 MYNA McNEILL, Ellen in Boleman, Mont.; FOSTINE FOX, Lyons (Kan.) Theatre. Thanks to Joe Duci Bella who sent us some names from a 1928 Stagehands Ball Program.

Just as they did in the glamour days of the theatre organ, the gals of today are doing a superb job in the renaissance of the instrument. A tip of the Old Prospector's hat to all of them!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

# WHAT'S THE SCORE?

by John Muri

The other day a friend told me that he was tired of theatre-organ shows offering films, and that on more than one occasion he had seen people walking out before the end of the presentation of an old silent. He didn't say whether the walkouts were caused by the films or the organists, but he did say that silent films would have to be mighty good before he would sit through one of them.

It might be well to pay some attention to the future of the silent-film business. For over fifteen years a few of us have been offering silents with organ shows to the general public. Each year a couple of fledgling organists make film-accompanying debuts, but the nostalgia movement doesn't show signs of growth, much less of durability or permanence. We have given *Phantom of the Opera* and a few other films a long run. Such films may be revived years from now, but we have to face the fact that there is not a great deal of attractive silent product to offer, barring sudden discoveries or releases of concealed treasures. The likelihood of finding new silent material is remote, since old film has been (and still is) decomposing beyond retrieval. Almost all of the Pathe company's films were destroyed by fire. Chemical firms have been buying old film for the silver in the emulsions. Our only hope is the release of MGM, Paramount, and Warner silents, but don't hold your breath waiting for them.

If we are going to keep seats filled, particularly seats that will be emptied by the desertion or death of our nostalgia customers, we'll have to corral a younger audience. John Barry, who wrote the score for *Goldfinger*, believes that current sound-film audiences are over ninety per cent young and that the kids have strong leanings toward modern pop music. Can we learn to play their kind of music! I think we'll have to.

If the theatre organ can't make the sounds the kids like, we'll have to add them electronically. Imagine magnificent pipes supplemented by the electronic goodies that are being invented faster than you can report them. If you don't like the electronics, you can occasionally turn them off and sneak in a seductive tibia-vox interlude.

One thing will have to improve: our film-scoring. Theatre organists have used (and still are using) musical patterns that have been standard for two hundred years, clichés that no Hollywood scorer would use for a modern film. For example, there is the rapid "chase" staccato figure of the minor tonic chord alternating with the minor sub-dominant. Organists caught in simplistic figure-traps like this ought to work their way through some of Scriabin's tritone studies. There they will find really useful excitement and originality.

Here we get into an argument. While film producers have often depended upon musical scores to carry or even save their weak pictures, they have not had much confidence in variety or innovation in scoring. Dore Schary, the late MGM executive, believed that all picture music had to be cliché to be effective, like always playing "Anchors Aweigh" for the beginning of Navy pictures. Even today most producers feel that original, subtle, or clever music hurts a film.

While there are many differences in scoring techniques for sound and silent movies, there are similarities in philosophy and technique. Philosophically speaking, most modern

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

composers believe that scores are to be heard, consciously attended to, and not subconsciously suppressed. Elmer Bernstein (*The Man with the Golden Arm*) and Lawrence Rosenthal (*The Miracle Worker*) want no part of the kind of scoring that can't be noticed, of background noise. Particularly, Bernstein is impatient with the unobtrusive, the delicate, the small, or the innocuous. Alex North (*Cleopatra*, *Viva Zapata*) has the idea of the "dramatic visual instinct" with which he plays with the scene or against it, the former reinforcing the depicted mood and action, and the latter reflecting the real meaning of a scene when something in it is obscure or duplicitous.

Today's movie scorers have gotten away from the big orchestra sound; they are emphasizing small groups and individual, different, and interesting voices like harpsichords, zithers, etc. They have discovered that the results are just as good as if they had used a symphony orchestra. We can learn from them. You do not need a big wall of organ tone all through the picture. Use solo voices and small combinations, saving the heavier combinations for the big scenes. This applies particularly when we play films on small instruments. Whenever possible, contrasting styles should be used.

Most scorers detest the practice of writing an attractive pop tune for a love-theme, with the intention of making it a top-forty hit providing extra profits for the producers, but the practice is widespread. Organ scores should serve a dramatic function; if you want to sell a new tune, that's another function and you've created something that is a non-score. Richard R. Bennett (*Murder on the Orient Express*) thinks love-theme pop writing is a moronic approach to film music. Dimitri Tiomkin has written beautiful themes for years, but the new styles of composers like North, Bennett, Schifrin, Raksin, etc. are giving new answers to the question: what is our music supposed to do to the audience? Every organist has another question to answer for himself: shall we continue to create Mickey Mouse scores (David O. Selznick created the term) in which every cue on the screen is given its auditory reproduction, or shall we make our scores in something approaching symphonic

form?

Those interested in pursuing this subject must get a copy of Irving Bazelon's *Knowing the Score* (Van Nostrand-Reinhold Company, \$12.50) in which several of the ideas expressed above are discussed. Mr. Bazelon, like Bernard Hermann (*Psycho*) feels that film music is often part of the current ear pollution. He does not seem to care for the romantic style of composing (e.g. Tiomkin), but he enjoys innovative sounds and effects, with subtle relationships between scene and music, and more complicated forms. Despite his prejudices, his book should inspire those who want to improve their movie-playing.

It is fun listening to newcomers try their darndest to copy old-fashioned theatre organ style, whatever they think that was. In the early twenties we had the relatively new works of Ravel, Debussy, Grieg, and Rachmaninoff to draw upon. Such composers gave us interesting harmonies for new pop tunes and accompaniments. Since then there hasn't been much worth copying or adapting. This may be the prejudice of age, but we had all better remember that everybody has to move along with the times one way or another or get left. Steadily increasing audiences will prove that a correct formula is operating; shrinking ones warn us that something is not right, that what we are doing is obsolete, poorly done, or improperly promoted.

Our scoring and presentation need constant evaluation. One watchword in show business is *novelty*. We can't go on doing the same things forever. Although good music can help bad films, it takes a lot of bad music to hurt a good film. Good films inspire an organist to do his best, because their scenes are long enough for sustained musical development. With such films, scores can become worthy of permanent recording, but few scores reach that point. Those of us who have no opportunity to produce classic scores, particularly those of us whose work can be labeled no higher than mediocre, may take heart from Jerry Goldsmith (*Planet of the Apes*) who said that "No music has ever saved a bad picture, but a lot of good pictures have saved a lot of bad music." Thanks to the powers that be, good pictures have saved a lot of bad organists. □



## 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 Sirs:

Recently, the NBC-TV Network presented its "50th Anniversary Party" purporting to present radio and TV broadcasting for the past fifty years — but not a mention of theatre organ or organists.

How could they fail to give credit to the people who not only presented daily concerts for several years, but also played background for practically all of the "soap operas?" These organists deserved at least a few minutes of recognition on the program.

I hope, as I did, that many organists and organ enthusiasts wrote a letter of protest to NBC. Such an oversight is unexcusable. It seems to be a common practice in presenting the "old days of radio" to disregard the contributions of the theatre organists.

Sincerely,  
Robert V. Longfield

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I am happy to respond to member Needler's request for financial statements to be published in THEATRE ORGAN. Personally, I would regret the inclusion of any more than a

small summary capsule — surely not the five pages required for the full rendition given to the National Board and Chapter Representatives annually.

We have elected a Board whose responsibilities include being our watchdog on fiscal matters, and I believe we should let them fulfill that role without heckling from the membership. There is today an increasing trend to carry "consumerism" too far, and it may come to the time when able candidates will be unwilling to serve on positions of leadership for fear of the harrassment which accompanies the office.

Although a Certified Public Accountant myself, I have no desire to receive detailed financial statements because I am quite happy with the bargain I receive for my \$15. It is a wonder to me that we can publish such a splendid magazine to a limited circulation for such a low cost, and when you add the cost of other administrative services necessary for an organization like ours, we surely get our money's worth. Let's get on with the enjoyment of the music.

Sincerely,  
John M. Gogle

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I am writing in response to your request for comment from members on the letter from Mr. Timothy Needler which appears in the Dec. 76-Jan. 77 issue of THEATRE ORGAN. I believe Mr. Needler's comments are well taken and I support the disclosure of financial information in the Society's journal. It is consistent with good accounting and business practices that any organization, regardless of size or tax status, prepare a detailed financial statement at least annually. This, of course, is a minimum requirement of

### EDITOR'S NOTE

A financial statement of National ATOS funds will be printed in the April-May issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

the Internal Revenue Service. There should be, and I take it from your editorial comments is, *no objection* to the publishing of such information for the clarification and understanding of all of the Society's membership. It is an act in keeping with openness and candor which exemplifies our entire organization.

I do agree, however, that a five-page report would present problems of space in the magazine. May I suggest that a summary report be prepared and published each year consisting of no more than one page. A complete, detailed report could be kept for those requesting the information and a copy sent to each chapter. In this way, the space in our journal could be kept at a minimum and the full report would be available to those members who have an interest and so request.

I have immense pride in our organization and I feel the THEATRE ORGAN publication to be the finest of its kind. In *no* way should the request for more complete financial information be construed to indicate dissatisfaction or suspicion of any kind. It is no more information than should be available to the membership in keeping with good business practice. Thank you for your attention and concern.

Musically,  
Donald I. Craig Jr.

Dear George:

Here's a question for your columns.

Who played the Wurlitzer in the old Liberty Theatre on 1st Avenue during World War II when it was a sailor's dance hall? There were booths along the sides for dancers, and tables in the bare tile floor in the former foyer for those who just wanted to listen to the organ. It was good! (Orchestra styling).

Sincerely,  
Mildred M. Raines

Dear Editor:

I'm sorry to say that minor health problems have stopped me sending you any Snippets From England for quite a while, but I've been admiring your efforts from afar and I wonder whether you'll let me make a couple of comments arising from the August-September '76 issue.

Your record reviewer has some nice things to say about Don Thompson's *The Best of Two Worlds* LP and remarks that one item, recorded on the 5/17 Compton of London's Leicester Square Odeon, "features a pleasant solo passage on the Compton's rarely heard Melotone 'Tibias'."

That's fair enough as descriptive writing, but it doesn't do justice to the Melotone unit. This particular Compton has a perfectly good Tibia (a Wurlitzer one transplanted to it many moons ago) and what the Melotone offers is something extra. In addition to Vibraphone at two pitches on the solo manual, the units own stop tabs read: Schalmey 16, Melotone 8, 4, 2 2/3 and 2, Tierce 1 3/5, Krumhorn 8, Cor Anglais 8 and Musette 8, plus Chimes and Carillon, Octave and Sub-Octave, etc.

The thing to remember is that most Comptons were installed in British cinemas in the 30's, after the advent of talkies. With no import duty, they were cheaper than Wurlitzers and their basic job was to provide sing-alongs. Many were only six-rankers and the addition of a Melotone unit gave a bit of much-needed lushness to an ensemble which (as your reviewer notes) can sometimes sound a little coarse.

That's explanation. Where I take issue with him is in his parting shot. He notes the jacket features a photo of Don "seated at the console of the Compton which is hemmed in by a huge plastic 'surround', a vulgarism which thankfully never caught on in the USA."

Come, come sir! It's glass, not plastic — poly-vinyl-'ow's-yer-father wasn't around in 1937. Anyway, opinions differ about "jelly-moulds" even on this side of the water. As a musician I have often wished the money had been spent on an extra rank of pipes, but I can well remember my first experience of theatre organ, which was seeing Reg. Foort riding the Conacher of the Regal, Margate, aloft with all the lights aglow and changing inside that glass surround. This was showmanship pure and simple; Virgil Fox's light show 40 years ahead of its time. Like I said, these were interlude attractions, not organs for cueing the silents, and that rosy glow surrounding the console truly complemented

the blazing sound of a good signature tune. I caught an organ concert on one of the surviving jelly-mould installations only last Sunday, and believe me, the magic was still there.

Anyway, keep up the good work, and best wishes to my many American friends.

Sincerely,  
Tony Bernard Smith  
Rayleigh, Essex, England

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I was quite impressed with your October/November issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

The one article and photograph that interested me the most was the picture taken down in Luray Caverns. It might interest you to know the console, solenoids that strike the Stalactite and the roll player were manufactured by Klann, Inc. approximately 25 to 30 years ago.

I have been down into the Caverns on numerous occasions and was surprised to see how well the console is holding up in the damp climate of the Caverns.

I have been very pleased with the quality of the editorials, photographs, and the entire magazine as a whole.

Thanks again for a job well done!

Yours very truly,  
Clarence Roggmann  
General Sales Mgr.  
Klann, Inc.

ANNUAL CONCLAVE  
**CHICAGO**  
JUNE 24-27, 1977

**Movie  
Palace  
City**

**Bismark  
Hotel**  
RATES: \$18.00-\$22.00

THEATRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
A.L. PETERSON  
4216 N. Kedvale • Chicago, Ill. 60641

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I wish to answer publicly Mr. Swanson's letter which appeared in your column of the Dec.-Jan. issue of THEATRE ORGAN.

Mr. Swanson criticized my article about "Organ Flue Pipes" (Aug.-Sept. issue), claiming that it was too technical, contained too many useless formulas which would confuse the reader and would never be used by an organ builder.

My article was not intended for the casual reader. It was directed toward those interested in the future of the pipe organ, and to give suggestions as to how that future might be assured.

Anyone with a scientific background will find the given formulas relatively simple, being problems of basic algebra, which could be computed quite easily on any scientific pocket calculator.

With the use of high quality test equipment these formulas have been proven correct in over two years of extensive research on flue pipes, built over a wide range of scales and pitches. My article also lists any exceptions to the rules of the formulas.

Mr. Swanson suggests reading George Audsley's *The Art of Organ Building* to obtain practical information on flue pipes.

In the period of Dr. Audsley's writings (1905-1925), technology had not advanced so that objective sound measurements could be obtained. Therefore, he dealt in vague, subjective generalities, and he borrowed examples from various organ builders of that period, instead of stating unbiased proven facts. He left unanswered such questions as: What degree of cause will produce a given degree of effect? Why? How? Under what conditions?

My article answers these questions and, in my opinion, these answers would be a definite advantage to the organ builder. Through the use of the formulas given in my article, the builder could predetermine for each organ the most suitable pipe scales, mouth cuts, pressures, number of ranks, etc. for any installation, ranging from such extremes as one intended for a private home, to one for use in the Superdome. He could compute precisely the pressure best suited for a certain scale of pipe

(with any given mouth cut), and its relative contribution to the overall sound. He could maintain with greater accuracy the tonality throughout a rank. Also, he could use this technology to experiment and possibly discover new solo stops, producing tonalities of pipes never before explored — leading to a new generation of pipe organs.

I agree with Mr. Swanson's claim that pipe organ building is primarily an art, not a science. But I fear that, unless greater emphasis is placed on the technical aspects of organ building, it might become a dead art — a great loss to all.

No major new material has been written on the subject of pipe building in the past 50 years, and nothing at all has been written of a technical or scientific nature. In the meantime through the use of technology, the electronic organs have progressed and improved to the point that they are in serious competition with pipe organs. Electronic organs are replacing pipe organs in churches and in concert halls. Citing a few examples: the 5-manual Rodgers installed in Carnegie Hall and the 3-manual Baldwin installed in Cincinnati's Music Hall, both replacing deteriorated pipe organs. Also the Mormon's decree that all remaining pipe organs in their churches, rather than being refurbished, will be replaced with electronic organs.

Technology — used in the manufacture of electronic organs has led to their present popularity and has been the cause of decline of interest in pipe organs. Therefore builders of pipe organs must not let their art remain static. They must have the courage to change with an ever-changing world and to take advantage of all technical aids available to them in order to improve their instrument and bring about its rebirth.

If Hope-Jones had not persisted in his ideas and innovations, and had not had the courage to overcome the ridicule and criticism of organ builders of his day, the beautiful theatre organ with its Tibias, Diaphones, and higher operating pressures might not ever have developed.

For those who fear that technology would erase the distinctive character of the builder, let me assure them that each organ would reflect the builder's individuality and personality through his choice and selection

of stops, pitches, scales, pressures, and the design of the swell chambers.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Weisenberger

Dear Editor:

I'm several issues and about 20 months late in commenting on an article which appeared on page 11 in the February, 1975 THEATRE ORGAN. Defending the restaurant installations, this fine article concluded as follows:

"That this traditional association should preclude other usage is unrealistic, for except in those rare instances where an in-theatre organ is still a regularly employed instrument of policy, the unit orchestra is realizing its entertainment potential best in the setting of a restaurant; and through this exposure is acquainting an ever-expanding audience with the musical marvel of a half-century ago.

We are proud here of having been the birthplace of this phenomenon, and we are even prouder to be able to show you both the quantity and quality of our numerous installations come July, etc."

Here some of our California friends have revealed their endeavors in reporting a successful result from 15 years of their untiring efforts in collecting up theatre pipe-organs from around the country, mostly the mid-west, and taking them to California. How smoothly they (the Californians) carted away, in semi-trailers, some fine Wurlitzers from Indianapolis theatres. I suspect these admirers of the theatre pipe-organ were acting in our negligence, which was not unlike their negligence in letting one of the greatest palaces of all — the San Francisco Fox, get away from them. Realizing too late the wonderful sound they had lost at the Fox, these courageous Californians still merit credit where it is due. They sought to get this sound back by scattering theatre pipe-organs all over the state in Pizza restaurants. Captivating the mighty Wurlitzer — yes, but too much so, for these installations, regardless of how elaborate or large the pipe-organ might be, can re-create only a semblance of the sound which we could hear in the great theatres like

the palatial S.F. Fox. Why? Because like many others, the Californians failed to heed the late Ben Hall's advice: "As we are saving the great theatre pipe-organs, let us strive to save the magnificent theatres in which they were meant to be."

If Ben Hall were here today, he would probably say "Like seeing the prima donna disrobed by the villain in the middle of the aria, so does the theatre pipe organ lose its mystifying effectiveness with its workings (intricate craftsmanship notwithstanding) sitting around on shelves surrounding the restaurant installation." But alas, California, hang-in-there! far better to have them out there playing, than dying at the bottom of a pit in some darkened theatre. Take good care of them, for we may need to come and get them back. Hopefully, we will respond to Ben Hall's advice and turn the tables when we have captured and renovated the remaining and recreated some of the other great theatres. Then once again, with the future cinema back in a palace, we will see only the golden consoles with their

Announcing . . .

## NEW ROSTER

A new membership roster is now being prepared. If you do **NOT** wish to have your name included, write to National Headquarters indicating your desire not to be listed.

Write: ATOS  
National Headquarters  
Post Office Box 1002  
Middleburg, Virginia 22117

DEADLINE — MARCH 15, 1977

commanding artists making the auditorium walls in all their marble and rocco terra-cotta splendor, come to life as they bring music to thousands, all of this, as the spot lights bathe in blushing hews, the towering grille work which conceals not only the very shutters but all of that which brings forth the inspiring crescendos of the mighty Wurlitzer. Could the chapter news in your latest THE-

ATRE ORGAN, Oct.-Nov. issue reflect the beginning of the turning of the tables? News from the Magnolia Chapter — restoration of the New Orleans Saenger Theatre. The Western Reserve Chapter — a theatre pipe-organ going back into a downtown Cleveland theatre. The Wolverine Chapter — Wurlitzer renovation underway at the Detroit Fox and hopefully, a program to capture the Atlanta, Ga. Fox.

More beautiful than the song of a thousand canaries or a cathedral choir, the mighty theatre pipe-organ brings us music from it's own cathedral (from which it should never be removed) THE THEATRE.

John Mecklenburg

To the Editor:

Permit me, if you will, as a relative newcomer to the world of theatre organ, to add my "two cents worth" to the popular debate between what I'll call the traditionalists versus the modernists, as to the role of theatre organ music.

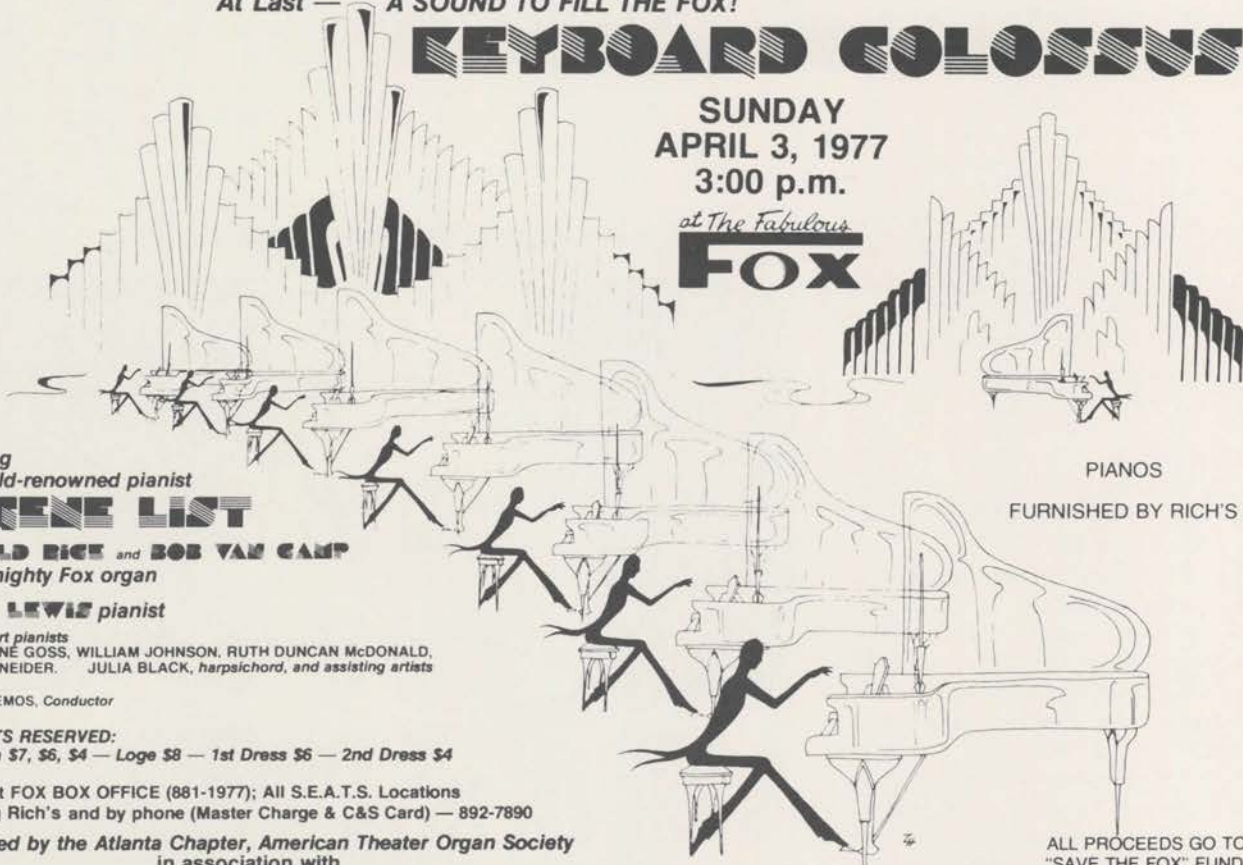
Recently, I attended one of the regularly scheduled monthly con-

At Last — A SOUND TO FILL THE FOX!

# KEYBOARD GOLOSSUS

SUNDAY  
APRIL 3, 1977  
3:00 p.m.

at The Fabulous  
**FOX**



featuring  
the world-renowned pianist

**EUGENE LIST**

**RONALD RICE** and **BOB VAN CAMP**  
at the mighty Fox organ

**GARY LEWIS** pianist

and concert pianists  
BETTY ANNE GOSS, WILLIAM JOHNSON, RUTH DUNCAN McDONALD,  
JOHN SCHNEIDER, JULIA BLACK, harpsichord, and assisting artists

JOHN N. DEMOS, Conductor

ALL SEATS RESERVED:  
Orchestra \$7, \$6, \$4 — Loge \$8 — 1st Dress \$6 — 2nd Dress \$4

Tickets at FOX BOX OFFICE (881-1977); All S.E.A.T.S. Locations  
including Rich's and by phone (Master Charge & C&S Card) — 892-7890

Presented by the Atlanta Chapter, American Theater Organ Society  
in association with  
THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC, GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

PIANOS

FURNISHED BY RICH'S

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO  
"SAVE THE FOX" FUND,  
ATLANTA CHAPTER, A.T.O.S.

certs sponsored by our local society. The artist was a well-known supper club and concert performer who I would estimate to be in his mid-thirties. However, when the evening had ended, I was wondering if instead he was a well-preserved sixty!

Why? Simply because this gentleman's repertoire virtually excluded anything written within the past twenty years. One could almost conclude that he felt it would be a desecration to the noble instrument to "defile" it with so-called "pop" music.

This is, to me, regrettable. Too many theatre organists today insist on pretending this is still the 1920's. It is one thing to revere the majestic achievements and standards of integrity bequeathed by legendary greats such as Jesse Crawford (the first name which invariably springs to mind) but am I guilty of sacrilege when I submit the view that too many of today's theatre-type performers are wallowing in the glories of the past? Surely, we must awaken to the unique versatility of this instrument, which to me is an open invitation, nay — a plea! — to interpret as only a theatre organ can — the sensitive, expressive and sometimes powerful ballads and other musical modes which have become popular in recent times. Just as Crawford was regarded as a trailblazer in his day, so should enterprising organists consider themselves today (Take heart Jim Leaffe, John Seng, and others!). Just as surely the way to win new converts, i.e. younger people, to theatre organ (and it strikes me they are badly needed) is not to forever dwell on the "good ol' days."

To reiterate the sentiments of a reader who, in a letter to the editor after last years' John Seng ATOS "mod" concert, quoted from the late Ben Hall. "We aren't in the nostalgia business any longer."

The Roxy and the Paramount are gone; Jesse Crawford is no longer with us; silent movies (Mel Brooks notwithstanding) are a curiosity of the past. Alone, the theatre pipe organ has survived, for it is bound not by time, nor by tradition, but only by the regrettable limitations imposed upon it by some of its inflexible, unimaginative masters.

Sincerely,  
J.B. Sherk  
Toronto, Canada ☐



### Let us know what's happening in YOUR Chapter!

Send Photos and News to:

GEORGE THOMPSON  
P.O. BOX 1314  
SALINAS, CALIFORNIA 93901

Deadline for all material is the FIRST of the month PRECEDING Publication.

*Copy for April — May issue must be in by March 1*

### BEEHIVE

While the members of the chapter enjoyed breakfast at their November meeting, they enjoyed the "live" music of Jesse Crawford. This was accomplished through the magic of an organ player attached to the Wurlitzer in the Organ Loft in Salt Lake City. Lawrence Bray, owner and builder, had been working for some time on this player, built in

the early 1900's. During the meeting that followed, members discussed at great length what could be done to recruit younger members into the group; then once recruited, what needed to be done to keep their interest. The progress of "saving the Capitol Theatre organ" became a very important issue. With the closing of the meeting, members were invited to play the Wurlitzer.

With the passing of a bond election a year ago to develop the Capitol Theatre in Salt Lake City into a performing arts center for the City and County of Salt Lake, there was some concern about the fate of the 2/10 Wurlitzer organ that was installed there in 1927. Since this is one of very few remaining original theatre installations left in the U.S., the chapter was very concerned as to the role it would play in the renovation and use of the theatre as a performing arts theatre by the Utah Symphony, Ballet West and various



County jail trustees move Capitol Theatre console out through the lobby.

(Vern Malstrom Photo)





Beehive chapter officers at Pipes & Pizza meeting. (L to R) Chairman Clarence Briggs, Sec./Treas. Maxine Russell, Vice-Chairman Vern Malstrom, Past Chairman Harry Weirauch. (Vern Malstrom Photo)

other performing groups. Close touch was kept by Chapter Chairman Harry Weirauch and the architect who was in charge of the renovation. Assurance was given that the organ was to be left in the theatre and the chapter offered to aid in the renovation of the console and chests during the work being done on the theatre. It would, of course, be necessary to remove the console and cable during the partial demolition of the stage and the subsequent rebuilding. This was accomplished in December by Harry Weirauch and members Eugene Breinholt and Wayne Russell who disconnected the main cable and fished it from the loft in the attic down through many almost inaccessible places, to the orchestra pit floor. The actual moving and storage of the console and cable was accomplished with the help of six trustee inmates of the Salt Lake County Jail. It will be stored in a room in the County Complex where the chapter can do the work of renovating the console.

On December 12, the election of officers meeting, combined with a Christmas party, was held at the Pipes and Pizza in Salt Lake City. Members were given a report on the removal and storage of the console from the Capitol Theatre. Committees were set up to work on the by-laws of the chapter and a publicity chairman was appointed. New officers of the Beehive chapter for 1977 are: Clarence Briggs, chairman; Vern Malstrom, vice chairman; and Maxine Russell, secretary/treasurer.

MAXINE RUSSELL

## CENTRAL INDIANA

We are proud to report another public concert presented on Nov. 5 and 6 at the Hedback Community Theatre. John Muri performed on the 2/10 Page theatre pipe organ to a near sell-out crowd.

John is one of the few honest-to-goodness oldtime theatre organists who never quit performing even after the golden era of theatre organ concerts began to tarnish with the advent of "the talkies." For more than fifty years now, he has been thrilling audiences nationwide with his outstanding talents.

In addition to his heavy concert schedule, he has found time to record several theatre organ discs, his latest being a superb capturing of the magnificent sounds of the huge Detroit Fox Wurlitzer. Just released, this record is being acclaimed in theatre organ circles as "one of the greatest ones." His record album was on sale during intermission, and was sold out by Saturday night.

The audience enjoyed the charm and sharp wit as he presented to our community his warm and wonderful musical abilities in "A Night of Comedy."

The chapter wishes to thank Phil and Betty Hedback for allowing us to present this concert and also extend our gratitude to Footlight Musicals for their support.

Our November meeting was held at Bill Lay's Music Store with an attendance of 75 members.

The slate of new officers for the coming year was announced by the nominating committee chairman,

Ruth Kirkpatrick.

Gene Gladson announced the availability of his new book on Indianapolis theatres at a price of \$6.95. Anyone wishing to obtain a copy please contact him at P.O. Box 20344, Indpls., In. 46220.

This meeting featured two of our own members, Eric Van Cleave and Mary Drake. Eric is one of our younger members, 14 years old, and performed on the 651 Conn theatre organ.

Bill Lay's Music Store now has an extra added attraction of completely refurbishing pianos — inside and out. The finished product is the work of beautiful craftsmanship.

Our gratitude is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Bill Lay for affording us the opportunity to hear and play the 651 Conn.

There was abundant time for open console and delicious refreshments were served.

The December meeting was held at Northwest Plaza office building thanks to Mr. Charlie Owens, one of our members. This being our Christmas party, it was very well attended.

It was announced that Manual High School will have an organ concert on Jan. 22, 1977 presented by Lee Erwin. A silent film, *The General*, with Buster Keaton, will be shown.

The slate of new officers was announced and we received a few words of wisdom from our new chairman, Carroll Copeland.

Our program was presented by Chuck Owens who is currently the organist at Market Square Arena. Chuck performed at the Lowery Organ, furnished through the courtesy of Wilking Music Company, and did a beautiful job.

Open console followed and a beautiful array of Christmas goodies, were served.

Ten of our members once again furnished organ music for the Children's Zoo from December 10 to December 19. It certainly was a beautiful sight with brilliantly lit trees.

This has become an annual event for CIC-ATOS and we want to thank all who played at the zoo, especially during this all too busy time of year. The organ was furnished through the courtesy of Wilking Music Company.

MARY E. DRAKE

## CENTRAL OHIO

COTOS plans are to start 1977 with our first meeting at Worthington High School, home of our RKO Palace Wurlitzer. Work and spending for the installation proceed rapidly. Worthy of mention is the financial assistance we are receiving from our members. The contributions from our younger members are most heartwarming as we recognize their funds are not abundant and are earned from long hours of work.

Our October meeting was hosted by Rosemary and Bob Hamilton of Zanesville. As usual, the organ was put in first class condition for our meeting, thanks to Bob and his son-in-law, Don Reighard of Dayton. For our playing members, Bob gave an introduction to his Robert Morton followed by an opening concert by Don Reighard — followed by an enthusiastic response from members.

November provided our first visit to "Cellar Cinema," a mini-theatre in the home of Frank and Thelma Babbitt. The theatre is complete with well-equipped projection booth and the original theatre seats that Frank purchased from the Ohio Theatre. The program opened with a sound film welcome from Frank, followed by a sound film interview by Thelma interviewing Gaylord Carter at his home (with view) in California. In addition to a few short subject films, the highlight of this program was Frank's sound film of our 1975 Regional Convention at the Ohio Theatre complete with interviews of some of our guest artists. This meeting was a fine change of pace from our usual format and thoroughly enjoyed by the membership.

Our annual Christmas party at the Ohio Theatre again gave our members the fabulous opportunity to play and hear the Ohio Morton through the generosity of Tom Hamilton and Carlos Parker. Refreshments for the party were arranged by another generous person, Ruth Shaw, who volunteered to be refreshment chairman for 1977, a vital part of all ATOS meetings. The opening concert was performed by Lois Hays, a local professional organist. Lois was modestly equally thrilled to have been selected as we were to hear her well prepared concert.

So ends 1976 with 1977 antici-

pated as the year COTOS joins the ranks of chapters who have realized the dream "to preserve the tradition of the Theatre Organ and to further the understanding of the instrument and its music."

IRENE BLEGEN

## CONN VALLEY

Don Baker has been to Thomaston! It happened on November 19 and 20 when Don played two concerts on the Opera House 3-manual Marr & Colton pipe organ. The concerts provided vivid evidence of why he was featured organist for so many years in New York City's premier movie palaces. You have to see and hear it to believe it; recordings alone cannot convey the ease and versatility with which this artist creates the enchanting musical arrangements we heard.

This writer heard the November 20 concert which was almost entirely different from the previous evening's program. Don is to be complimented for providing us in advance with a printed program, something too few of our current organists do. The evening included the music of motion pictures, musical comedy and operetta, mostly from the latter decades of movie palace full feature operation, which included stage attractions with pit orchestra and featured organist at the console.

After the scheduled program, Don played three encores. The choice of selections allowed Don to play lovely soft passages using delightful combinations of stops and then to come full organ with the likes of "Seventy-Six Trombones." The evening was a fitting finale to our 1976 concerts. We could not have done better.

Our concert committee deserves high marks indeed for their work this past year.

W. F. POWERS

## EASTERN MASS.

Don Baker, that magic name among the relatively few still active from the theatre organ era, delighted hundreds of members and guests at our two fall public concerts. These were held Saturday evening, November 13 at Babson College, Wellesley and Sunday afternoon at Stoneham Town Hall. Both Wurlitzers were "up" for his technical demands,

which were numerous, as he exploited each instrument.

F. Craig Johnson, program chairman, made the two introductions before Don launched into his two programs, both different, yet similar in his thoroughly musicianly approach. Don's Latin numbers have always been superb and his Babson opener "Cumana" was no exception. After a demonstration of the various individual voices of the organ, including the traps and percussions, and how they can be combined for the "big sound," he melded into the theme from *Exodus*. The program was over all too soon, but a standing ovation brought us a sensitively played Kreisler favorite, "The Old Refrain," as an encore.

The Stoneham concert had sunshine pouring in on the console and our artist announced his thankfulness for it that rather cold afternoon. Don again explained and demonstrated the resources of this instrument, adding one stop at a time leading up to an impressive full organ.

One of the most interesting aspects of this concert was Don's variations on "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" showing how adaptable it is to a waltz, tango, minuet and a march tempo. He learned this tune at two years of age on piano.

The program ended with another standing ovation and the resulting beautiful and untremed "All Through the Night" and a lively version of "Cheek to Cheek." Don Baker satisfied all with his variety of numbers, frequent tonal changes and meticulous execution — 73 years young and still as wonderful as in his N.Y. Paramount days!

Our chapter was invited by member Royal Schwieger for an open console field trip at the Stoneham 2/14 Wurlitzer on Friday evening, November 19. For the few who took advantage, it was an unusual opportunity to play and listen to this fine organ, just after its concert tune-up in an empty auditorium.

November 27, Saturday evening at Babson, about 100 members and guests assembled for our regular meeting. Playing members Bob Legon and Tim Bjareby entertained at our 3/13 Wurlitzer with a variety of selections prior to chairman Goggin and other officials' arrival. Once under way, both Secretary Rosalie Fucci's report and that of

Treasurer Gerry Parson's were read together with Concert Chairman Craig Johnson's comments on Don Baker's satisfactory twin appearances. Our top concert ticket salesman, Patsey Fucci, was called upon to give his "formula" for successful selling. Some ingredients are: belief in what you are selling; stress music which is universally accepted as opposed to selling an organ concert as such; be supplied with adequate change (even for a \$100 bill, which he was once presented!); suggestion of purchase even if unable to attend and give tickets to friends, Golden Agers or young people; division of prospects into two lists, spring and fall, and emphasis on one or the other (except those who attend both yearly). Pat's salesmanship certainly works, at least for him, as he turned in the proceeds for 248 tickets, one of his lighter returns!

It was announced that Hector Olivera had been engaged for a third time with EMCATOS next spring with concerts on May 21 and 22 at our Babson/Stoneham venues for our Club's 20th anniversary. With business adjourned, Bob Wambolt led off open console time and after many had their interesting mini-concerts, involving a wide variety of ages, talents and musical backgrounds, the final artist was chairman Goggin, playing in fine form.

Our December meeting at Babson was advanced to December 18 and a happy mood prevailed. Prior to the business portion, new former West Coast member, Jonathan Klee-field, MD., led off at the console followed by our "old pro" Al Winslow, and Bob Legon completing this group with his always listenable interpretations.

Chairman Goggin got the business started with the usual report readings and reminded us that the organ bonds should begin to be paid off in 1977. Our new slate of officers for next year were introduced to the membership. A totally surprised Arthur Goggin was then presented by incoming Chairman "Pete" Hoagland with a fine plaque on which was mounted a gavel and appropriately inscribed brass plate. This was a token from the club in appreciation for his two year's chairmanship and unstinting time and work on our organ installation. After giving thanks,

he announced that Bob Legon was to be our artist for the January 22 meeting. Bob then invited the membership to four concerts at the Lakeview Congregational Church, Waltham, where he and a few others are getting the 3/9 Kilgen theatre organ (ex-Embassy Theatre, Waltham) restored and installed. Business was then over and many availed themselves of the opportunity to play our organ. It was a joyful evening with much warmth inside as opposed to the clear, cold air and snowy ground outside — most appropriate for the season and finale for 1976.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

## LAND O'LAKES

Our bus trip to Chicago, in November, was a tremendous undertaking for our Terry Kleven (who used to live there). Tremendous also best describes our rating of the experience. About 54 Land O'Lakers participated. One of the best features of these bus trips is the opportunity to visit with old and new friends.

Our first event Friday evening was a superb prime rib dinner at the Matterhorn Restaurant, followed by a unique presentation by Frank Pellico and his trio. Frank plays a Hammond X-66, with several long cabinets around the large room, giving it a massive sound.

Early Saturday morning we visited the Pickwick Theatre, which has an interesting 3/11 Wurlitzer with a very nice big-theatre sound. We thank Tom Cotner for so ably showing us what the organ could do. Fred Kruse and his crew are to be commended for their excellent restoration and maintenance of the organ. Richard Sklenar, chairman of CATOE, was there to greet us, and our thanks go to him and the CATOE directors for arranging this event.

Our next visit was to a magnificent theatre, the Rialto, in nearby Joliet. It is almost beyond belief that a theatre of this size, with a gigantic, gorgeous round lobby, would have been built in a town with a present population of 80,000. It is even more unusual that it is still standing, and is even being improved. The 4/21 console is the prettiest we've seen, and the sound gets out very well. Dave Krall of JATOE deserves our sincere thanks for not only arranging

the visit and the enjoyable presentation on the organ by Rob Calcaterra, but he and his co-workers were even thoughtful enough to provide life-saving coffee and doughnuts when we *really* needed them!

Next on the tour was the superb 3/22 "All-American" organ in the Hinsdale Theatre, Hinsdale, Ill. (a suburb of Chicago). The name probably means the star performers from each team (make of organ) were used in this organ. This organ does everything magnificently; it not only speaks out with authority, somewhat like the Mundelein organ (featured in two ATOS conventions), but it has a full sound, plus gorgeous Tibias, and a 32 ft. Bombarde for good measure. Another rare and unexpected treat was hearing Dave Junchen in what might be called his concert debut. It seems to be very rare that an organ builder can play for the enjoyment of others. Dave goes far beyond that, and many of us feel that he ranks with the top few artists on the concert scene. We can only hope that Dave Junchen concerts will become a regular thing.

Around midnight, Kay McAbee graciously complied with our request and played a fine program on the Hinsdale organ, even though he was very tired from a long, hard day. It had been much too long since we had heard Kay, and his many devoted fans in Land O'Lakes greatly enjoyed hearing him again, especially on this wonderful organ. Congratulations to Jim Glass, builder of the organ, for such a fine instrument; you will be hearing a lot about this installation.

Saturday evening we were treated to a bus tour of downtown Chicago, and LSD (Lake Shore Drive), guided and narrated by Terry Kleven, whom we thank for such a fine job of arranging this whole weekend, overcoming many obstacles. Our destination was the famous Aragon Ballroom on Chicago's north side, where many famous bands held (swing-and-) sway during the big band era. We could see evidence of rock and roll now, along with the good news that a Mexican-American group is in charge and is preserving and improving this important place under somewhat adverse conditions. This group is a natural for the Aragon, whose interior resembles a Spanish courtyard. Our host, Stan Zimmer-



Kay McAbee (shown at the Patio Theatre Barton) whose concert at Hinsdale greatly pleased his many LO'L fans. (Claude Newman Photo)



Dave Junchen at the console of the superb 3/22 "All-American" organ in the Hinsdale Theatre. His concert wowed the Land O'Lakers. (Claude Newman Photo)

man, is manager and organist, and we appreciated his witty history of the place, and his delightful demonstration of the organ.

Sunday morning, bright (surely you jest!) and early we headed for the Hub (now named Axle) Roller Rink. It was a real change of pace in sounds, although it was surprising how theatrical the organ could sound. Of course the organ is plenty loud, at 20 to 25 inches of wind. Fred Arnish, a teacher, engineer, organist (and maybe more) has done miraculous things in rebuilding the organ, and can explain them very interestingly. We enjoyed this event very much. Once more, we are indebted to very thoughtful hosts for providing that staff-of-life, coffee and doughnuts.

Our last visit was to Downer's Grove High School Auditorium, which houses CATOE's chapter organ, a very nice 3/10 Wurlitzer in a live acoustical setting. Our soloist was again Tom Cotner, with a completely different program which sounded just fine on this organ. Our

thanks to Tom, and to Doug Christensen and Bill Barry for their valuable contributions to making this event a success.

Paul Lagergren played a fine October concert on Byron Carlson's 5/21 Wurlitzer. A great talent, such as Paul's, when applied to an excellent pipe organ, namely Byron's, just has to result in a delightful afternoon of music. Highlights were Paul's *South Pacific* medley, and "Confessions of Love" by a young European winner of the Yamaha Organ Contest. The bonus of Byron's fine playing, and the lovely organ-piano duets with his wife Lillian, made it a superb musical experience. We are most grateful to all three.

JOHN ZETTERSTROM

### LAND OF LINCOLN

Everything was progressing smoothly for our first public Christmas concert. Rex Koury had sent some special arrangements for choir and organ and he arrived in plenty of time to practice with the sixty-

voice choir of the Winnebago High School. Dixie Leden, director, and Rex had gone over the program with the group and Rex was winding up his own rehearsal.

It was three hours till show time and then it happened. Our faithful 49-year-old 4/17 Barton decided it had worked hard enough and refused to go on. Hurriedly Orrill Dunn and Rex Koury rushed to the electronic organ dealer in the same block with the theatre, only to find the door was already locked. A few hard raps on the door and one of the salesmen appeared and let them in. The owner had gone home for the day, but they reached him by phone and he told his salesman to show them the location of their dollies, Leslie speakers, etc., to give them the key to the front door and they could take whatever organ and equipment they needed if the pipe organ could not be used.

Back at the theatre a crew consisting of Gene Wolfe, Duane Austin, Bob Coe and Bob Weirick, were already up in the lofts at work trying to discover why our Barton refused



THE 22ND ANNUAL  
ATOS NATIONAL  
CONVENTION  
JUNE 28 TO JULY 4



Wurlitzer Reproductions

DEMO RECORD and BROCHURE \$1.00



## ORGAN KITS KEYBOARDS

THE ULTIMATE IN DESIGN  
AND SOUND

Dept. F  
5872 Amapola Dr.  
San Jose, CA 95129



Rex Koury at the Coronado Theatre Barton organ.

## LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles chapter has enjoyed a spell of being "girl happy" recently, with concerts by two charm-ers. The first was played on the chapter's 3/16 San Gabriel Auditorium Wurlitzer by Maria Kumagai on October 29. She offered a varied program, including a few cuts from the album she is currently preparing. There has been a big improvement in Maria's command of the English language during her emceeing. It will be recalled that she came to the USA only six years ago and felt that learning to play the organ took precedence over mastering English. This was her third concert for the chapter.



Maria Kumagai. Music came before language.

to play. One of our regular crew members, Bob Tuttle, had completely restored the theatre's Schumann Grand in time for the show was busily engaged in last minute tuning or he would have been up in the lofts along with the others.

The chests were leaking air so badly it was down to less than 1/2 its normal pressure. By tightening every screw on all the chests, and completely reworking one of them they managed to get the pressure back to near normal within a half hour of show time.

The audience was unaware of the frenzied efforts and the show went on — on time — and one of our best programs went off without further incident. After an encore, Rex Koury personally thanked the crew that performed the miracle. (We found out later an employee of the theatre had inadvertently drained the air conditioner which was used to supply humidity to the theatre in the winter and the chests had dried out allowing the air to escape. All has now been restored to normalcy.)

It was a happy group that assembled on the stage for the "Afterglow" as members and friends of LOLTOS enjoyed the refreshments and had a chance to meet Rex Koury. It was a cold night and the Wassail prepared by Vera Walling was especially welcome. Her committee, consisting of Jerry Adams and Mark Fuhrer, had charge of the refreshments and decorations. Their decorated Christmas tree and life-size Santa Claus added to the festive occasion.

Our Barton came through again, thanks to the dedicated crew — but I secretly think "our old girl" — the Barton — discovered we might have used a "plug-in" and decided to give her all.

Our sincere thanks must go to Rex Koury who would have performed the show on a "plug-in" or a leaky Barton, or even a piano. In the true tradition of the theatre he assured us that the show would go on. It was a wonderful show by a truly great performer.

ORRILL DUNN



58 The Esplanade • Toronto  
(416) 368-1726

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

STARRING:

**Don Thompson**

WITH BILL HAGEY & COLIN COUSINS



INSTALLATION  
REBUILDING  
and SERVICE

Thomas H. Ferree

HEASTON PIPE ORGAN COMPANY

RR 2 • BOX 85A • BROWNSBURG, INDIANA 46112  
1 (317) 635-7300



Carol Jones. Besides looking pretty, she plays pretty. (Bob Hill photo)

The other feminine gender concert was played on Nov. 21 by Carol Jones, a lovely from nearby Covina who now plays an almost continuous string of concerts for the Conn Organ Co. across the land and sometimes overseas to England and France. Carol also played the San Gabriel Wurlitzer as that's the only auditorium organ we have available until we can complete the stopkey re-arrangement on the Wiltern theatre Kimball, a project now over one year in the works. Or comes the time when we can get the Hollywood Warner theatre 4-deck Marr and Colton installed in the Pasadena Municipal Auditorium. That takes lots of volunteers — and time.

Carol presented a well-received concert of pops and standards, and her arrangement of "Melancholy Baby" left retiring chapter chairman Bob Hill an incoherent hulk. He loved every minute of Carol's music — or just looking at her.

Our January 16 concert will star Bill Thomson at San Gabriel, and it's Ramona Gerhard on Feb. 20.

Next time we meet, there'll be a whole new roster of chapter officers — perhaps including a literate chapter notes writer.

EFFIE KLOTZ

## MIAMI VALLEY (OHIO)

In mid-November, those of us in Southwestern Ohio celebrated "Lee Erwin Week." Lee started the week in the Bob Ralston audience at the Ohio Theatre in Columbus, moved on to two performances at Stan Todd's Shady Nook restaurant, appeared on Bob Braun's syndicated TV talk show, joined the private party of Dennis Werkmeister to give an inspired Thursday evening to friends and guests at the 2/17 Wurlitzer, and then Friday night brought the silent screen alive in Springfield, Ohio. This event, celebrating the start of the 50th anniversary year of the State Theatre, included the mayor giving recognition to Mike Chackeres (owner of the theatre chain) for his contribution to the community, and then Lee Erwin splendidly re-created the mood of opening night with concert, sing-along, and accompaniment of a Buster Keaton epic. The mighty 3/7 Wurlitzer stood up and pranced under Lee's direction. Cheers to Bob Cowley and Dave Marshall, et. al. for their promotional efforts.

December 11, we were again the guests of Dennis Werkmeister, for the annual Christmas celebration. We had a fine mixture of fellowship, munching, sipping, playing and listening, and once again proved that organ fans can have a fine time without an elaborate structured program.

JOHN M. GOGLE

## MOTOR CITY

The sights and sounds of the ATOS Organ Safari to England, Wales and France were presented by Dave Lau in a synchronized slide and tape show for our Second Sunday event at the Michigan Theatre



Herb Head at the now 2/6 Wurlitzer in the Punch and Judy. (Majone Allen Photo)

in Ann Arbor in November.

The December program in Ann Arbor was a Christmas Open House, "Home for the Holiday," at the Michigan Theatre. Regular intermission organists Henry Aldridge, Bud Bates and Rupert Otto were joined at the console of the Barton by Jackie Aldridge, Mitzi Mullinex, Scott Smith and Gregg Yassick in a program of popular Christmas music.

Scott Smith was the artist for our Fourth Sunday program in November at the Royal Oak Theatre.

Our Annual General Membership Meeting was held in November at the Redford Theatre. Among the topics of discussion was a proposal from the owners of the Redford that we purchase the theatre which we have been managing for the past two years. The membership voted to allow the board to continue negotiations. Following the business meeting, a pot-luck supper, coordinated by Virginia Duerr and Marge Muethel, was served in the Redford lobby. After dinner the sound of the 3/10 Barton resounded throughout the auditorium as several members each took their turn at open console.

Hector Olivera returned to an en-



ALEXANDRIA ARENA  
4/34 WURLITZER

# Jimmy Boyce

**Recording Artist  
Available for  
Theatre Organ Concerts**

4921 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22311  
Telephone (703) 931-4840

# RON RHODE

KARL WARNER MANAGEMENT  
6842 EAST VIRGINIA AVENUE  
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA 85257  
AREA CODE 602 - 946 - 6892

FEATURED AT ORGAN STOP PIZZA  
2250 W SOUTHERN • MESA, ARIZ

**CONCERTS**  
theatre pipe organ



Larry Gleason, accompanist; Betty Mason, director; and Marge Harris, choral member who presented Betty with a bouquet from the entire chorus. (Majorie Allen Photo)

thusiastic audience at the Michigan Theatre on November 18 in Ann Arbor. The film was *The Blacksmith*, starring Buster Keaton. As expected, Hector's program at the Barton pipe organ enthralled the audience. The identical program was repeated the following night to a capacity house at the Redford Theatre in Detroit.

Christmas at the Punch & Judy Theatre in Grosse Pointe seems to have become a tradition with our chapter. This year being no exception, members gathered at the Punch on Saturday morning, December 11, to hear Herb Head at "Little Sister" (so dubbed by the late Ben Hall); except that now it is a 2/6 Wurlitzer, thanks to the addition of a new Diapason rank, installed by Chuck Heffer, Herb Head and Mert Harris. The newly refurbished Motor City choral group also made its debut, directed by Betty Mason, with Larry Gleason accompanying at the organ. Refreshments and decorations were the contribution of Betty Heffer and her many fine volunteer assistants.

Officers for 1977 are: Ron Werner, chairman; Larry Gleason, vice chairman; Enid Martin, secretary and Holly Prim, treasurer.

DON LOCKWOOD

### NIAGARA FRONTIER

November 23 found Hector Olivera back for his second appearance at the Riviera. In spite of an early winter storm, a large crowd began arriving early, each to select their favorite seat, not only for their listening pleasure, but also to feast their eyes on his magnificent foot work.

On Wednesday, December 29, 1926, the day before the Riviera Theatre opened for the first time, Rudolph Wurlitzer Mfg. Co. had a full page ad in the Tonawanda paper. Part of the copy read as follows. "The Wurlitzer Organ, like all Wurlitzer musical instruments, is the best that skill and money can produce. Come to the new Riviera Theatre. Hear the effects of a full theatre orchestra produced by two hands on

this great keyboard. You, too, will be thrilled."

Well, Frank Olsen sure plays it like the Wurlitzer Company intended it should be played and we are thrilled. It has become a tradition that Frank play our December Christmas concert. It is a shame he has confined his recital and concert playing to a radius of 300 miles from Buffalo. I feel that the rest of ATOS is being cheated by not having had an opportunity to hear this outstanding artist.

Frank is the only one that has a recording made on the original 11-rank Riviera organ and the expanded 16 ranks. He also made several recordings in England before coming to Canada eight years ago.

In January, we are proud to give another young professional organist an opportunity to play his first paid public theatre organ concert, Colin Cousins. For many months now, he has been second organist at the Organ Grinder in Toronto, sharing the bench with Don Thompson.

The one and only Dick Smith, without question the all time crowd puller, will be back at the Riviera on February 16.

In the last issue of THEATRE ORGAN I said, I would tell who my favorite organist is. I intended this to cover only theatre concert organists. I have eliminated classical organ recitals and a couple of theatre organists who spent too much time playing heavy classics in concerts. A couple of other organists were also eliminated for playing full organ for the entire concert, with never a change of the tabs, and chamber shutters wide open. After these eliminations it was very easy to pick my favorite organist, it is the one I am listening to at the moment . . .

STEVE CROWLEY

## THE SUBURBIAN

RESTAURANT and COCKTAIL LOUNGE

3/17 WURLITZER  
Theatre Pipe Organ

Belvedere Ave.  
Wanaque, New Jersey 07465  
(201) 835-3903

FRANK CIMMINO  
Organist

## WALTER STRONY

"... a show stealer" THEATRE ORGAN

FALL/WINTER CONCERT DATES AVAILABLE

1570 N. PROSPECT, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 52303, (414) 278-0611



Russ Chilson at Benson High School. (Claude V. Neuffer Photo)



Jonas Nordwall and daughter Jenny. (Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

## OREGON

For our November meeting, we were the guests of Mr. & Mrs. Milt Keiffer near Vancouver, Washington. Thanks to a very accurate and detailed map, and directions provided by Chairman Gerry Gregorius, we found their beautiful home in the pines.

The trip was well worthwhile because we heard Jonas Nordwall play a very fine and generous program. Jonas is on the staff at the Organ Grinder Restaurant and is organist and choir director at the First Methodist Church. He is nationally known through his recordings, including one made in Australia. It is hard to believe how much this competent artist can do with two manuals and nine ranks!

This Wurlitzer organ was originally installed with seven ranks in the Roxy Theatre in Irvington, N.J., and later transferred to the Catholic

Church in Union City, N.J. It was located there by Dennis Hedberg and purchased by Milt Keiffer who moved it to its present location. An Oboe and a Clarinet have been added, making it an ideal size for a home. Couplers have also been added and the mutation pitches are now from the Tibia rank. Thanks again to Jonas Nordwall and the Keiffers for a wonderful afternoon.

Our annual Christmas pot luck was held at the Benson High cafeteria on Sunday, December 12, with lots of good food and fine company. These dinners provide an opportunity to visit and make new friends and that is not easy to do at a regular concert.

Following the dinner we went upstairs to the auditorium where the new officers for 1977 were named. Bill Peterson is to be chairman.

Our artist for the day was the talented young Russ Chilson. Russ

was pipe organist at the Imperial Rink and is now on the staff at the Organ Grinder. His program included Christmas songs and an excellent variety of new and older popular music. Of particular interest was his skillful use of answering voices between the two chambers of the big Kimball.

BUD ABEL

## POTOMAC VALLEY

Our October chapter meeting was held on a dreary, rainy afternoon. But that was on the outside! The warmth and friendliness of the Wagner's home in Glen Arm, Md., made up for the bad weather. We let the outside elements take their course and sat back and enjoyed the afternoon listening to the great sound of their 2/8 Wurlitzer with the expert playing of John Terwilliger at the console. About 120 chapter members enjoyed listening to John playing

*"A James family show*

*is an adventure in showmanship."*



**DENNIS & HEIDI  
JAMES**

DENNIS JAMES PRODUCTIONS

The Ohio Theatre  
29 East State Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

(614) 464-0889

**ARNOLD**  
ORGAN SUPPLY COMPANY  
1018 LORENZ DRIVE • ANKENY, IOWA 50021

Organ Parts and Accessories

"Multi/Scann" Multiplex Relays  
Micro/Computer Combination Actions  
Consoles • Chests • Wurlitzer Parts  
Peterson Chromatic Tuners • Engraving  
Custom Built Parts

**New Catalog Now in the Making**

*"Quality Through Pride in Workmanship"*



a number of sets of favorite and familiar music. There was something for everyone in his selections. An added attraction was the introduction of John's wife, Wanda, singing "Wanting You."

The 1977 officers elected at the October meeting are: Al Baldino, chairman; Bud Pedley, vice chairman; Dick Haight, secretary; Marion Long, treasurer.

As usual, Jimmy Boyce performed on his own 4/34 Wurlitzer as only Jimmy can. Keeping in mind that his Wurlitzer is unenclosed, he succeeds in manipulating the stops on the console to accomplish the necessary color and variety needed in theatre organ styling. The Alexandria Roller Rink Wurlitzer was in tip-top shape for our meeting thanks to Jimmy and his work crew. About 170 chapter members and their guests enjoyed the concert of standards and Broadway tunes. Jimmy also played his own composition, "On Broadway."

On December 11, Santa Claus visited the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria to see if the members of the chapter were good boys and girls. Santa (Bill Alexander) passed out gifts in the form of door prizes to the lucky winners and promised everyone that he would be good to them this Christmas. About 120 members and their guests attended our first in-theatre Christmas party. The musical program was done by most of the 1976 monthly meeting performers. Frank Lybolt came up from Norfolk to be with us and began the evening's entertainment. Edith Evelyn, Susan Pedley and Mike Brit followed at the Barton console. A sing-along of traditional Christmas music, with slides provided by the writer, was accompanied by Frank Lybolt. John Terwilliger and his wife Wanda completed the first half of the program. The buffet

dinner was just great thanks to Larry Goodwin and his dinner committee. The second half of the entertainment was begun by our very own Potomac Valley Chapter Chorale. They sang homemade lyrics about the Kimball restoration project to old familiar tunes accompanied by John Terwilliger. Steve Anderson, a junior at Jefferson High School, gave us a demonstration in magic to the delight of the audience. Doug Bailey was next at the console of the Barton. Doug told us he, by chance, performed on a theatre organ recently in Anchorage, Alaska at a Pizza Parlor. Ron Pedley played some Christmas selections followed by one of our chapter masters on the console, Earl Sharits. Everyone had a grand time at our Christmas Party and all will want to do it again in December of 1977!

AL BALDINO

### PUGET SOUND

The last quarter of the year was enhanced for chapter members by the ever-popular home tour, then a concert-silent movie program featuring Gaylord Carter, closely followed by the annual Christmas party.

A home tour October 17 combined the best of the new and the nostalgic. After lunch at the Holiday Inn east of Lake Washington, we proceeded further east to Issaquah (Iss-uh-cwaw) and the home of Lloyd and Pearl Nelson and a new 3M Custom 340 model Rodgers organ with full theatre and liturgical sound. Designed by Jonas Nordwall and Dennis Hedburg, it features authentic Chimes, Glockenspiel, Piano, and an especially beautiful Tibia. A short concert by Dick Schrum was followed by open console.

From there we proceeded south to Kent and the home of Jack and



Dick Schrum, Thelma Barclay and friend, Gaylord Carter.

Marilou Becvar and the 2/9 Wurlitzer which came from the Seattle Blue Mouse Theatre. The basement installation has 3 chambers, the third housing the large-scale percussions, except for the Chrysoglott, which is mounted outside. Program Chairman Thelma Barclay presented a short concert, followed by open console.

The November 28 meeting was to have featured Helen Dell, but a stint in the hospital prevented her coming. Gaylord Carter roared to the rescue, bringing four silent comedies which he accompanied in his usual zesty style. The locale was Big Bob's Pipe Dream in the old Burien Theatre which is ideally situated with its screen, projection booth and 4/42 Wurlitzer. The program was further enhanced by a plentitude of Italian pastas and suitable beverages.

The Christmas party followed on December 5. Annabel Browning and Nell Hill organized the food and punch at Haller Lake Clubhouse, and Dick Schrum's informal combo played for listening and dancing.

GENNY WHITTING

## Cap'n's Galleys - Pizza & Pipes

WURLITZER THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

3581 Homestead Road  
at (Lawrence Expressway)  
Santa Clara, Calif., Phone 248-5680

821 Winslow Street  
(Downtown - Off Broadway)  
Redwood City, Calif., Phone 365-6543

146 Serramonte Center  
Daly City, Calif. 994 2525

1690 S. Bascom at Hamilton  
(Hamilton Plaza Shopping Center)  
Campbell, Calif., Phone 371-5000

100 North 85th  
(near Greenwood)  
Seattle, Wash. Phone 782-0360

'featuring America's finest Theatre organists'

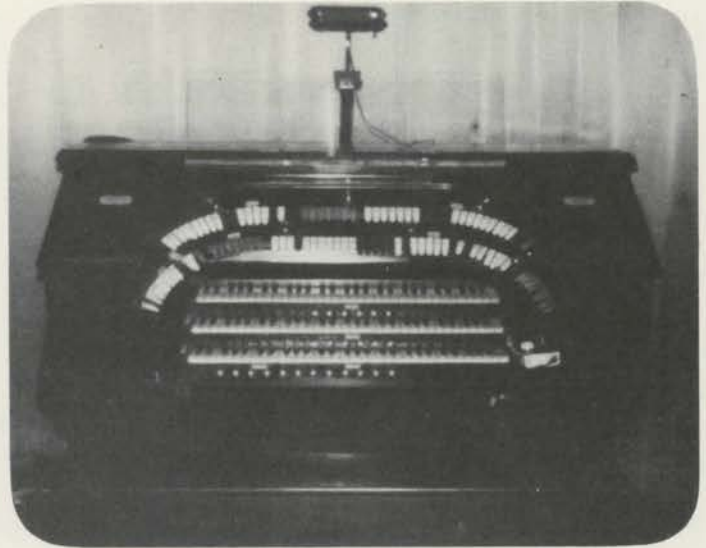
## WALT MOLT MANAGEMENT

364 AVENUE F  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15221  
(412) 823-3163





Aladdin Theatre work crew. (L to R) Jack Walden, Frank Gandy, Don Wick, Ron Graham, Bill Johnston and Ron Patterson.



Aladdin Theatre — Denver, Colo. The 3/14 Wicks is being played and renovated at the same time.



Marquee advertises ATOS Concert/Overture at the Aladdin Theatre, Denver, Colo.

### ROCKY MOUNTAIN

In 1973, work started on the restoration of the 3/14 Wicks in the Aladdin Theatre in Denver, Colo. It is the only theatre left in Denver that has a playable organ still in better than fair condition. Many things had to be replaced, repaired, moved and the worst part — a church held services in the theatre for a period of time and proceeded to sanctify the organ. Wires were cut, tremis disconnected, etc., etc. It took a great deal of time to undo what was done so that more than flutes, strings and diapasons were able to speak.

The Alladin Theatre celebrated its fiftieth anniversary on October 28. Ms. JoAnn Hallett, manager of the theatre, arranged for several special events, some of which included organ interludes played by members of the chapter.

The Denver Newspapers and *Box Office Magazine* took notice of the Aladdin's anniversary with considerable space devoted to the history of



*Magical Moments in Music*

**Chad Weirick**

CONCERTS

- Theatre • Classical • Silent Film
- Contemporary • Sing Alongs

420 Sunrise Lane • Rockford, Illinois 61107  
Phone (815) 398-1788

Member: Land Of Lincoln Theatre Organ Society

**PIPE  
ORGAN  
PIZZA**

Home of the Moller  
Theatre Pipe Organ

**WALTER STRONY AT THE ORGAN**

620 W. Oklahoma Ave. • Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53215

the theatre. *Box Office* credits Viola Lee as the organist who opened the theatre fifty years ago.

### SAN DIEGO

On October 29, Gaylord Carter christened the 4/20 Robert Morton at the new Solana Beach "Theatre-Restaurant" (Organ Power #3) with a performance of *The Phantom of the Opera*. What a thrill to watch this beauty come out of the pit, have the curtains part to reveal the pipes and listen to those luscious sweet tones. Jack Jenkins from Illinois is the talented young organist who is pleasing the public at this beautiful console which was originally in the Midland Theatre in Kansas City. Congratulations, Organ Power, on another fantastic installation.

Our November concert featured "Tiny" James at the 5/28 Moller at Organ Power #2. His clean and precise theatre styling completely captivated a most receptive audience. His love of the organ and relaxed style of playing makes for one of



Sandy Fleet accepts Honorary Membership plaque from Vern Bickel.

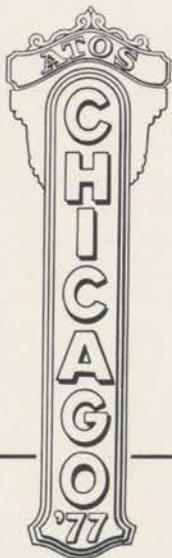
(Ed Minder Photo)

those especially pleasurable evenings. It's no wonder that ATOS has shown such growth through the years when we have musicians of this calibre as charter members. Do keep us on your list for a future appearance, "Tiny."

Besides these activities, we were privileged to hear Reginald Foort in concert on the Foort-Moller organ, November 8. How fortunate for the public to again hear this great man perform at his beloved Moller.

Our business meeting in December at the new Solana Beach Theatre was a very special event. Chairman Vern Bickel gave a complete annual report of our 1976 accomplishments. To name a few: we sponsored 11 concerts (distributing 44,000 flyers to promote them); we were approved by Federal, State and the U.S. Postal Service as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization; and we initiated an educational-cultural program for the students of San Diego County by mailing 500 letters to educators in-

viting them to bring their students for "A Trip Through The Organ." Our purpose is to familiarize students with the music, sound effects, installation and history of the theatre pipe organ, and to create an awareness and appreciation of this instrument. Organ Power is most graciously cooperating in this venture. We now have 146 members. As the founder of our chapter and in recognition of his invaluable assistance to the chapter, Sandy Fleet was made an Honorary Life Member. Election of officers followed and our new board members are: Lois Segur, chairman; Vern Bickel, vice chairman; Marge Greer, secretary; Ruby Sinclair, treasurer. As these new officers were installed, Vern presented them with "Pipes" (real ones) that he had restored and polished so beautifully. On each pipe is the name of the office held and each year they will be passed to succeeding officers. To his 1976 board, Vern presented very special plaques with



ATOS 22ND ANNUAL CONVENTION  
JUNE 28 TO JULY 4

**PLAN  
NOW**



*Concert Tours*

**Karl Cole**

P.O. Box 6  
Pompano Beach, Florida 33061  
(305) 943-1040

**ashley miller**  
a.a.g.o.

— THEATRE ORGAN CONCERTS —

Bill Perrotta — Personal Representative  
160 West 73rd Street • New York, N.Y. 10023 • (212) 877-6700



New officers — Jerry Sullivan, Vern Bickel, Ruby Sinclair, Lois Segur, Marge Greer, Ronnie Santalo, and Bob Brooks. (Ed Minder Photo)

pipes and brass nameplates. Beautifully made, they must have taken hours of his time, and I know will be cherished by each recipient. No wonder such a close feeling of friendliness exists in our chapter. Thank you Vern, from all of us.

Bob Lewis gave us a fast "tour of the organ." Earl McCandless played some especially beautiful music, and Sandy Fleet told many interesting facts about how the 4/20 Robert Morton was originally taken out of the Midland Theatre and then announced open console. What a way to end the year! We all went home knowing in our hearts that we would continue to work hard towards a successful and rewarding 1977.

LOIS SEGUR

### SOUTHEASTERN

The November meeting of the chapter was held at the new Gulbransen dealer in Atlanta, The Organ Stop. Through the courtesy of owner Howard Dennis, members were able to inspect and play the full line of Gulbransen electronic instruments. The show stealer was, of course, Walt Winn and Bob Van

Camp (a "spy" from Allen Organ) performing stints at the console of the company's new "Rialto II" theatre organ.

December's meeting stands as a highlight in this chapters history as Bob Van Camp took the Atlanta Fox Moller up for the first formally scheduled concert with general ticket



Bob Van Camp (Bill Lamb Photo)

sales featuring this most gifted veteran theatre organist. A date for the heavily-booked theatre became apparent in late November, giving less than two weeks for promotional work by theatre management and some of the chapter's most dedicated members including James Jobson, James and Mary Thrower, and Joe Patten. In spite of the limited time framework, Bob received a generous amount of air time, especially from his professional alma mater, WSB Radio and Television, and on Sunday, December 5, at 3 p.m., "Christmas at the Fox with Bob Van Camp" broke all Fox records for a scheduled organ concert, according to house manager Ted Stevens. It was reported that over 1,200 tickets were sold within an hour of the performance at the box office in the theatre arcade. The chapter cleared nearly \$5,000 — all of which will go to the burgeoning "Save the Fox" fund set up by the chapter.

To an audience of well over 2,000, Bob extended his usual polished style, both in his commentary and in his music, choosing to categorize his Christmas repertoire, including snow songs, the "commercial Christmas" tunes, and the organist's Christmas gifts to special members of the audience. After a brief intermission, he launched probably the most successful sing-along at the Fox since opening days, prompting the audience to not only applaud the organist, but itself as well.

After a tremendous round of applause and a standing ovation by the audience at the end of the program, Bob Van Camp encored with a capsule version of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" — complete with some expertly done solo piano passages using the Moller's companion "phantom grand." Bob,



### JAMES PAULIN JR.

FIRST BLACK STAFF ORGANIST  
RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL

Organ Concerts • Organ Lectures  
Organ Lessons

**For Information Contact:**

East Coast: Freddie Ramirez, 214 Riverside Dr., Apt. 104, N.Y., N.Y. 10025. (212) 663-3163  
West Coast: Dave Schutt, 22 South Keeble St., San Jose, Calif. 95126, (408) 279-2828

### LEE ERWIN



ANGEL RECORDS  
CADENCE PUBLICATIONS  
E. B. MARKS MUSIC

306 East 15th St.  
New York City, 10003  
(212) 777-5643

a living legend to Atlantans, and certainly the high priest of the Mighty Fox Moller, was touched by the warm sea of faces, and in his usual subtle and quiet style, he saw this as payment enough for the donation of his time and talent for this, one of the most successful Fox Theatre benefits yet.

JOHN CLARK McCALL, JR.

## SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Our last meeting of the year was held on Sunday, December 5 at the Eldorado Town Homes Club Room in Tucson. Results of our election of officers: Mrs. Helen Staininger, chairman; Bea Kotasek, vice chairman; Helen Bowers, secretary; and Lois Seamands, treasurer.

The program was chaired by Lois Seamands and started with a rousing sing-along with Christmas Carols led by Roy Ives after which our artists for the day performed. Grace Hamilton, Pearl Anne Lane, Helen Bowers and Allen Guirl displayed their talent.

A few of our members journeyed to Mesa Arizona for the Valley of the Sun Christmas party and open console on December 11, 1976, followed by Lyn Larsen's fourth annual Christmas concert held in Phoenix the following day. A good time was had by both groups.

Our new year starts with our February meeting.

BOB HIGH

## SOUTH FLORIDA

The chapter was thrilled at the December concert by Hector Olivera. The crowd of approximately 200 enjoyed Bob and Vivian Andre's 260 Wurlitzer and their hall including the newly painted "sky" (Andre

Hall is being styled similarly to the original Olympia Theatre in Miami). The stars in the "sky" twinkled as "clouds" drifted across the "moon." Hector provided an evening of entertainment, both with his wit and his playing. For many, it was their first concert by a premier artist and folks were standing around in amazement at the end of the first half of the program (and for quite some time after the final encore). Hector played the Wurlitzer for all it was worth and for more than most of us felt it could do — including some Bach! The whole evening is one that South Florida Theatre organ fans will not forget. Hector, too, seemed pleased with his efforts and expressed that he found the Andre Wurlitzer quite to his liking.

Special thanks go to those who worked to put the instrument in tip-top shape including Art Venecia, Ralph Anderson, Jim Burke and many others.

The year 1976 was a good one for the South Florida Theatre Organ Society. We became a corporation in the State of Florida, and final preparations are under way towards putting the console for the Olympia 260 Wurlitzer back in Gusman Hall (formerly the Olympia).

JOE LOEWY

## VALLEY OF THE SUN

The November meeting was held at Don Olds Piano and Organ in Phoenix. Bill Carr gave a talk on organ registration that inspired us all to try some new combinations and ideas.

Guest organist for the evening was Mr. Chris Gorsuch from San Diego. We all enjoyed his performance on the Gulbranson Rialto theatre organ. We hope to have Chris come back to give a concert for our chap-

ter. Thanks to Don Olds Piano and Organ, there were plenty of consoles to play for open console.

We were so fortunate to be able to use the Organ Stop Pizza #2, Mesa, Arizona, for our first Annual VOTS-ATOS Christmas Party in December. The salad was delicious, the pizza was superb and the music was greater still. Al Davis and Bill Blasik entertained the guests on the 3/23 Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. Dr. Greg Bailey gave us some facts and information on the organ.

Members of the chapter and the guest chapter from Tucson lined up to take advantage of open console on the Wurlitzer. We hope to get together again soon with the Southern Arizona Chapter.

Our chapter has begun a new service to its members. Since dropping monthly business meetings, in favor of monthly board meetings with quarterly chapter business meetings, we have started publishing a monthly newsletter for all members. We hope this will be a big step in expediting business and communication in our chapter.

JANICE PERRY

## WOLVERINE

On November 28, we gathered at the Royal Oak Theatre, to hear Scott Smith perform at the 3/16 Barton organ. We were treated to a beautifully arranged program with the emphasis on the Big Band Era, opening with "Who Cares," featuring a solid left hand melody with sparkling arpeggios in the right. Ballads displayed Scott's deftness in the art of registration and to paint musical pictures, complimenting the composers work in "Midnight Sun," "Who Can I Turn To," "When Sunny Gets Blue," "Send In The Clowns" and "Breaking Up Is



**organ power**

San Diego • California

### STAFF ORGANISTS

Cheryl Creel                      Wayne Seppala  
Chris Gorsuch                    Tommy Stark

#1 Kearney Villa Rd., 3/12 Wurlitzer, (Highway 163 and Clairmont Mesa Blvd.)

#2 Pacific Beach, 5/28 Moller, 1165 Garnet Ave.

#3 Solana Beach, 4/20 Robert Morton, 113 S. Acacia St.



Hear him at the  
**Suburbian Restaurant**

**Frank Cimmino**  
THEATRE ORGAN CONCERTS

80 Lions Head Dr. W.  
Wayne, New Jersey 07470  
(201) 696-3421

Belvedere Ave.  
Wanaque, New Jersey 07465  
(201) 835-3903



Wolverine's 1977 officers — Barry Rindhage vice-chairman/treasurer; Richard Swanson, secretary; and Scott Smith, chairman. (George Gejhart Photo)



Left — Warren O. Wardwell, Lansing, East Lansing City Manager for Butterfield Theatres, retiring after 45 years of service. Right — Walter Reukucki is the new manager. (Ed Corey Photo)

Hard to Do." These songs allowed Scott to show his talent for jazz improvised progressions.

The Big Band Sound is one of his forte's. "Tuxedo Junction," "One For The Road," and "Don't Be That Way" made one remember that great era.

The Barton organ, the artist, and the program all rate excellent in this guest reviewers opinion.

FR. JIM MILLER

After a fantastic performance by Fr. James Miller at the Detroit Fox

4/36 Wurlitzer, on December 5, the chapter met at the Voydanoff-Rank residence for the annual Christmas potluck dinner and business meeting. The excellent 3/6 Wurlitzer installed therein was played by a number of organists for several hours. All home installations should sound this good.

A vote was taken and approved to raise the dues for the upcoming year — an unfortunate but necessary move. A new slate of officers was elected for 1977: Rick Swanson, secretary; Barry Rindhage, vice

chairman/treasurer; and Scott Smith, chairman.

Outgoing Chairman Lawrie Mallett and Vice Chairman Edward Corey are to be greatly commended for their hard and unceasing efforts in the last three years for literally taking the Wolverine chapter from near extinction to the great organization that it is today.

Our thanks to David Voydanoff and Glen Rank for once again opening the doors of the famed "Wurlitzer House" to the Wolverines.

SCOTT SMITH □

Maria Kumagai

Theatre and Classic Concerts

P.O. Box 559

• Camarillo, California 93010

**PLAY-RITE  
MUSIC ROLLS INC.**

P. O. BOX 1025 TURLOCK, CA. 95380

The most complete selection of  
REGULAR and LONG-PLAY MUSIC ROLLS FOR  
AMPICO A and B DUO-ART WELTE  
systems

WURLITZER BAND ORGANS

88 NOTE

A, G and O ROLLS

DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED



LANDMARK PIZZA & PIPES

Featuring

The Mighty Barton Theatre Pipe Organ  
played daily at lunch except Mondays  
and nightly from 6:00 pm

Piping Hot Pizza and other delicious foods

Jerry Bacon  
— Musical Director  
Danny Ray  
— Associate Organist

OPENING SOON IN HOUSTON

6522 East N.W. Highway at Abrams Dallas Texas 692-7027

# CLASSIFIED ADS

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

## FOR SALE

3/13 Mostly Wurlitzer, \$25,000 firm. Photo of console and specifications upon request. Box 6, Pompano Beach, Florida 33061.

Allen Digital Computer Organ "The Music Scene." AGO console, external Gyro tone cabinet, solid state stereo amplification. Bells, percussions on both manuals; couplers, twelve key transposer, separate tremulants plus vibrato. 250 computer cards. Recently new. N.H. Phone (603) 883-0919.

3/8 Kilgen with full toy counter, percussion, horseshoe console. \$12,000. Needs some repair but can be seen and played. In home near Dallas, Texas. Photo and specifications \$2.00. Write I.D. Thompson, 203 Glendale Ave., Seagoville, Texas 75159 or call (214) 287-2013.

4 Manual — 20 Rank Wurlitzer pipe organ built in 1931. This instrument is known as a Publix No. 1 — Opus 2164. Originally it was installed in the Paramount Theatre in Oakland, California and is one of the last built of only 20 of its kind. This model organ was designed by Jesse Crawford and built to his specifications including the beautiful gold ornate water-fall console with art deco carvings. Contrary to any rumors this organ is complete, in perfect condition and is in its entirety as it was when in the Paramount Theatre. This instrument can be seen in operation. Firm price \$70,000. For more details, write to: Edward Restivo, 1983 San Luis Avenue, Mountain View, California 94043. Phone: (415) 967-3647.

2/9 Smith theatre pipe organ, appraised \$9500. 50% installed. \$7000. for immediate sale. Harold Shannon, 10524 Tantau Ave., Cupertino, California.

Moller components: automatic player Artiste good condition \$750, Gothic case work oak with display pipes 6 x 20 x 13 feet high good condition \$550, Harp needs leather, otherwise good condition \$900, two tremas \$25. Bill Kohut (312) 639-4700 evenings.

4/26 Wurlitzer original 3 chamber 1926 factory installation unchanged, good condition and now playing. Std. console w/combons, suitable bass, dbl. tch. Ranks incl. 32' Bdn. and 9 16's. Chrys. and Chimes only percuss. Available immediately for buyer removal. Will not divide. Minimum bid \$40,000. Serious inquiries contact Delaware Organ Company, Inc., 252 Fillmore Avenue, Tonawanda, New York. (716) 692-7791.

## FOR SALE

Robert Morton organ. 4-manual, 22-rank. Presently installed in the Orpheum Theatre, San Francisco, California. Good playing condition. Asking price is \$40,000. Contact James T. Johnson, (415) 362-1940.

3/15 Wurlitzer in excellent condition, set up and playing. Brass Trumpet and Sax. Write Jim Webster, 80 Cobbles Dr., Penfield, N.Y. 14526 or phone (716) 586-5340.

Chests, regulators, S.S. switching, combination actions, etc. in kit form. Write for free Organ Specialities Catalog, Klug and Schumacher, 2714 Industrial Park Drive, Lakeland, Florida 33801. Phone (813) 683-6046.

3/18 Wurlitzer. Entire organ, including percussions, rebuilt and recovered (Perflex) in 1976. Ivory waterfall console totally rebuilt. 204 stops. 20 couplers. 45 pistons. 5 expression pedals. Solid-state capture combination action and new Reisner stop action. Two Spencer blowers and three rectifiers. New solid-state relay is easily expandable. All usual traps and percussions plus double xylophones and double chimes. Upright piano. May be seen and played. Can be easily removed and re-installed. Would make a terrific pizza parlor organ. Price \$65,000. Contact Glenn Mason, 2925 Pine Cone Circle, Clearwater, Florida 33520. Phone (813) 536-5538.

Pipes and parts sale. Church and theatre. San Francisco. Feb. 19 & 20. Huge combined inventory clearance of four well known organ companies. Lowest prices. All must go. Cash and carry. SSAE for details and partial list. Liquidator, 472 Tehama Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, (415) 362-4997.

Wurlitzer 2/10 unrestored less Tibia & Vox pipes & sleigh bells \$7000. Extra relay \$375, stacks both \$175, 5r chest \$375, offset chests \$50-100, xyl. \$200, percuss. parts also, 2 sets 7ft shades \$100 each, Kinetic blower 5hp 1400 cfm at 10" \$200. A. Albee, Watch Hill Road, Peekskill, N.Y. 10566, (914) 739-1737.

Moving, must sell excess equipment. 3M horseshoe console — rebuilt; 3 hp Spencer blower, 110/220V 1Ph; about 10 ranks of chestwork; relays; some pipework, more. First \$2000.00, or best offer takes all. Buyer to remove. Wilson, (609) 877-0492.

3/10 Barton completely rebuilt. \$18,500. Gary Montgomery (313) 646-8847. 100 Linda Lane, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48013.

## FOR SALE

Rodgers Custom 340 for sale. Three manuals. Three sound cabinets. External glockenspiel, tape recorder, reverbatape, everything. Superb instrument. Like new. Rusalem, 101 Ridgewood Avenue, Glen Ridge, New Jersey 07028. (201) 429-8717.

2 Louisville theatre pipe organs — completely rebuilt, guaranteed 5 yrs, and installed in mid-west area. Pipes mitred for 8' ceiling: 2/4 — Tibia, Violin, Vox, French Horn, Chimes, and some toys. Console white with gold trim. Now set up and playing at our show room. \$6000. 2/5 — Tibia, Violin, Vox, Tuba, Diapason, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, toys and drums. \$8500. Heaston Pipe Organ Co., R.R. 2, Box 85-FA, Brownsburg, Indiana 46112. (317) 635-7300.

## RECORDS

New. "Yours Musically" featuring Winifrea at the 3/16 Wurlitzer, Riviera Theatre, North Tonawanda. Side 1. "Dambusters March," "Somewhere a Voice is Calling," "Lady of Spain," "Cockney Capers," "Choristers Waltz," "La Scherzosa," "Song from Moulin Rouge," "Czardas"; Side 2. "Funiculi," "Danny Boy," "La Paloma," "Crackerjack," "Tammy," "España," "Sanctuary of the Heart." \$6.50 ppd. Ontario residents add 7% tax. From Winifrea, 4003 Ellesmere Road, West Hill, Ontario M1C 1J3. Canadian agent for Deroy Sound and Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust records. Brochures on request.

Watson Holmes, Opera House, Blackpool, Vol. 10 Deroy Series, plays "Dream," "Dizzy Fingers," "Midnight Tango," etc. on last Wurlitzer sent to England 1939. \$5.50 postpaid (Mass. residents add 28¢ tax), exclusive U.S. distributor, Stanley C. Garniss, 35 Union Street, North Easton, Mass. 02356.

Rosa Rio latest recording "Everything's Coming Up Rosa." Recorded on the famous 4/26 Brooklyn pipe organ HMR 855 stereo \$6.50 postpaid from HMR Productions, Inc., 574 West Court Street, Scotch Plains, New Jersey 07076.

Ashley Miller's latest recording "Entertainment Per Se!" clearly demonstrates his wide ranging abilities from theatre to the classics. Recorded on the 42 rank concert pipe organ featured during the 1976 ATOS National Convention home tour. \$6.50 postpaid from: W.T. McKissock, 3 Ridge Road, Morrisville, Penna. 19067.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Published theatre style arrangements plus traditional favorites and special instruction folio. Free list and sample. Al Bollington Box 49, Woodland Hills, California 91364.

# Listen to how we back up the Rodgers name.



**The Rodgers name.** It says everything you need to know about theatre organs.

**Rodgers engineering.** Our electronics continue to set the contemporary standard for the most authentic theatre organ sound, evoking the grandest traditions of the era.

**Rodgers research.** And more and more, our technology enables us to incorporate as standard features the most distinctive theatre organ sounds usually only available on costly custom installations. Like The Post Horn, now standard on The Trio by Rodgers.

**Rodgers craftsmanship.** Each instrument is carefully hand assembled at our plant in Hillsboro, Oregon. Our craftsmen, skilled artisans in their own right, work with the

finest grades of wood—mahogany, oak, pecan, rosewood, walnut—to fashion distinctive consoles and benches.

**Rodgers design.** All of our instruments—The Trio, The Marquee, The Olympic, and The Century—reflect the kind of vision and imagination which enabled us to create such acclaimed custom installations as The William Sadowski Custom Organ and the Robert Power Custom Organ. Impressive. Inspirational. Individual.

**The Rodgers sound.** Rodgers is the consistent choice of people who know what they're listening to. Listen for yourself.

You'll hear everything you need to know about theatre organs when you look for our name. **Rodgers.**



RODGERS ORGAN COMPANY • HILLSBORO, OREGON 97123

Please send me complete information on owning a Rodgers organ.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to Rodgers Organ Company, Hillsboro, Oregon 97123.

TO