

THEATRE ORGAN

VOL. 19, NO. 3

JUNE - JULY 1977



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THEATRE ORGAN

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Cover Photo

The 3/10 Barton in the Redford Theatre that has motivated the Motor City Chapter to raise money in order to purchase the theatre surrounding the organ — a first for an ATOS chapter. See story on page 4.

Phil Gorden Photo

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President's Message

Another great ATOS convention is now in its final planning stages. A hard working convention committee has met regularly to make "CHICAGO 77" an experience that should not be missed by anyone. Chicago is equidistant for most members and will draw an anticipated record attendance. A variety of fine organs, great artists, beautiful theatres and other attractions that Chicago offers should please everyone.

Our annual membership meeting will be held during the convention. There will also be a meeting of the ATOS Board of Directors with chapter representatives on June 28, 1977 at 8:00 p.m. All chapters are urged to have their designated representative in attendance at this meeting. Those members who are not members of chapters are also invited to attend. The suggestions that will be made at this meeting will be the guide for the actions that the officers and board will take for the coming year.

If your April-May THEATRE ORGAN arrived extremely late or never arrived at all, there is a good reason — unfortunately we don't know what it is. After the regular mailing, magazines were shipped to the West Coast (for remailing purposes) on April 18 and arrived there exactly one month later. Members all over the country have complained about late delivery of the issue. We have contacted the U.S. Postal Service, the trucking company and our mailing service in an effort to see that it doesn't happen again.



Sincerely,

Ray F. Snitil
 RAY F. SNITIL

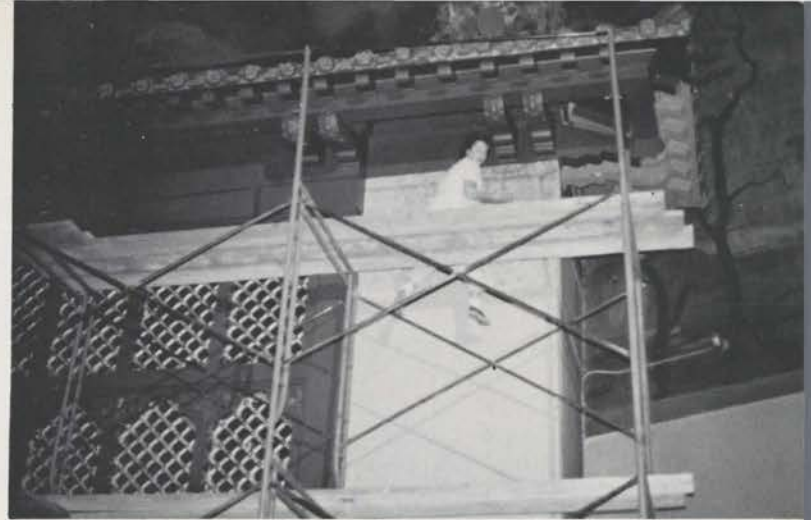
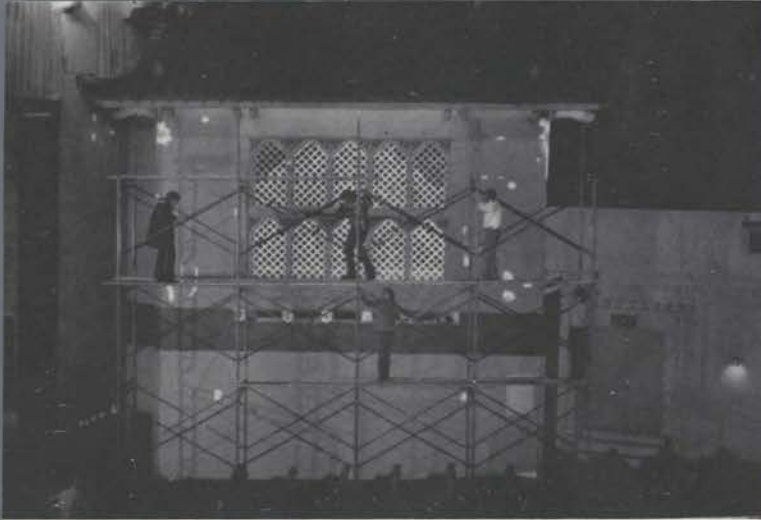
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THE REDFORD THEATRE

a "sound" investment

by Don Lockwood and Don Grimshaw





(Left:) Members erect scaffolding to repair and paint the scarred walls of the auditorium, the organ had been muffled for years under heavy drapes. (Right:) Enid Martin, in a precarious position "three flights up," uses a sponge to apply the granite block wall texture to the outside of the solo chamber. "I had never been up on scaffolding before," she says. "I didn't dare look down, but I got used to it. The blisters and splinters I acquired while sliding back and forth on the plank were a "fringe benefit." (Dave Ullin Photos)

Do you ATOS conventioners remember 1974? That was the year the Motor City Chapter hosted the bash in Detroit — and as happens every year, no host showed up for the cocktail party. However, to those of you who did attend, we hope that you remember the opening event. That was the afternoon trip to the Redford Theatre, where we heard a concert by Detroit's own John Muri, and got some lessons on how to play the horns, by Vic Hyde — live — on stage. That "Redford Theatre" is the property that Motor City Chapter has agreed to purchase.

"What," you say, "a theatre organ chapter purchase a theatre?" Well, the MCTOS by-laws say that 'this corporation is dedicated to the preservation, maintenance, and playing of theatre pipe organ in a proper setting' . . . and the ATOS by-laws adds "in their home theatres where possible." By putting these things together — the membership of Motor City Chapter voted "Yes" on the proposal to buy and operate the theatre — to save the organ.

That 3/10 Barton organ has proved to be the saving force behind a determined fund raising drive to "Buy the Redford." And before we get any further, we are asking and begging everyone for donations to get us over the top, to pay off the purchase price of \$125,000 — and in case you quit reading here — we are begging *you*. Just cash in your bonds, savings, gas guzzling cars, etc. and send the money to Motor City Theatre Organ Society, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

Although we never got around to



The Redford stage provides needed space for a variety of activities. Here, members repair a water-damaged Oboe rank. (Phil Gorden Photo)

Kenny Martin and Greg Bellamy in the Redford's fully-equipped projection booth.

(Phil Gorden Photo)



◀ A lone usher helps ready the theatre for an organ program in 1971. Three years later the Redford closed as a movie house and the Motor City Chapter took over management of the 1500-seat theatre.

(Phil Gorden Photo)

writing a THEATRE ORGAN magazine article before, we must mention that Motor City has been operating the Redford on a "handshake-lease" agreement with Community Theatres since November, 1974, (shortly after the convention) when the theatre closed. It took work, work, work, by many, many members and friends, to bring the theatre back as close as possible to its original appearance — from blueprints and photographs found in the files.

First and foremost in the work crew's mind, was to remove the heavy drapes that covered the front of the auditorium, including the chambers. While we were guests in the theatre, we rigged pulleys and ropes to open the drapes for our public shows — what joy there was in Old Redford, when we could take those drapes down. But, under those drapes, were several old paint jobs, the remains of decorative plaster work which had been broken away.

When the call went out for help, it came from all directions. The plaster work was restored with plywood and sheetmetal, and the walls were painted gray by talented members, with black and white three dimensional highlighting to resemble granite blocks. Motor City Chapter, already united for the 1974 Convention, has stayed alive and well — and working — because of the Redford Theatre.

When the offer was presented to us, purchasing the theatre had the membership somewhat divided. The main division was that the theatre



The mainstay of any theatre operation is the concession stand. The candy counter in the Redford foyer is stocked and manned by volunteers and is seldom without customers. (Lance Luce Photo)

complex has five store fronts, eight second floor offices, two parking lots, and the cares and problems related to managing the entire property.

With all our prior work and shows in mind — and two year's operation behind us — paying rent and utilities — we were just a step less than breaking even. But with a little more effort, most of us thought, we could own the Barton organ, and the property that comes with it. Honest money has been put up, and an agreement to purchase has been signed, and a percentage of the money has been assured through donations.

Motor City Chapter has really made use of its home — the Redford. It has been the scene of chapter concerts, work nights, practice time, mailing parties, board and member-

ship meetings, pot-luck dinners, and even our 10th anniversary banquet, catered on stage, featuring dancing to organ music, and a grand march — through the dressing rooms, the projection booth, the balcony, and somehow ending back on stage. It might be noted here, that the theatre is well equipped with projection equipment, spotlights, eight dressing rooms, (and the water now flows to the four stories of dressing rooms). This reconstruction of the dressing rooms is the latest triumph of our work crew.

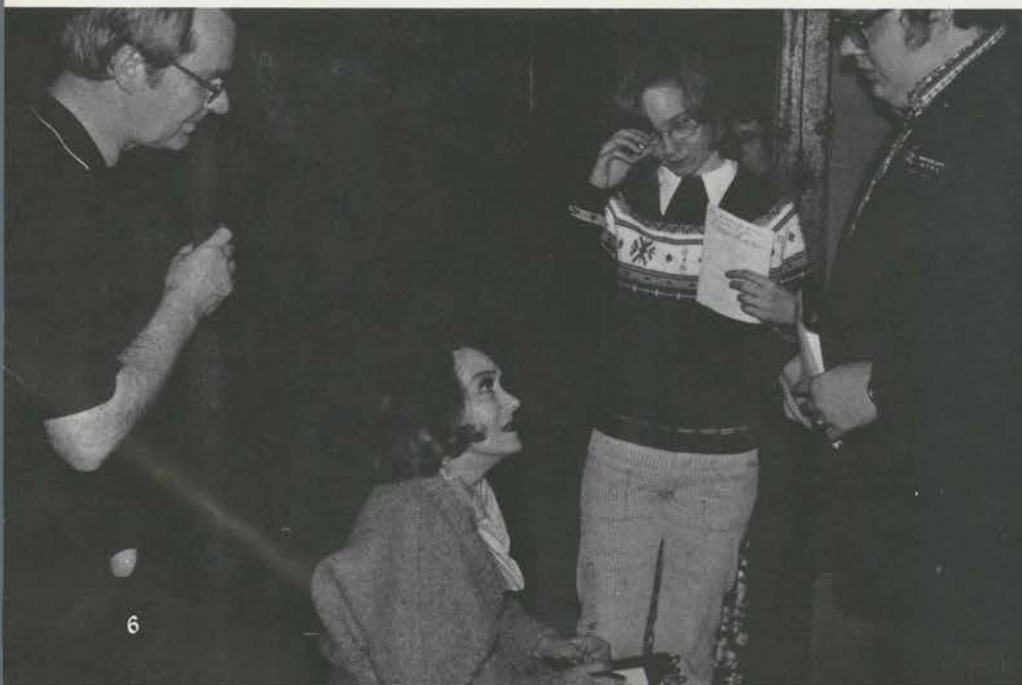
Our efforts were supported by outside rentals for such shows as Virgil Fox, Concert Ministries, the Ford Chorus, the Oakway Symphony, the International Brotherhood of Magicians, etc. A few rentals were not quite what we expected — especially when the Detroit Lawyers Guild turned out to be a Black Panther program. Nevertheless, the rent was paid, and now we enter into rentals more cautiously.

While we know a few "Save The Theatre" projects are currently in progress, we feel the "Buy The Redford" project is different. There is no wrecking ball hanging on a crane outside. The theatre is for sale, will be sold, and Motor City was the first group notified. The future of the theatre, if the chapter were not to buy it, would probably be a church or X-rated movie house, and the future of the organ, very uncertain.

Although Motor City maintains four organs which are still in their original settings, the chapter does not own an organ. Purchase of the Redford Theatre includes the Barton

Hugh Hammarstrom, Nancy Green and Greg Smith talk with Gloria Swanson on the Redford stage in 1975.

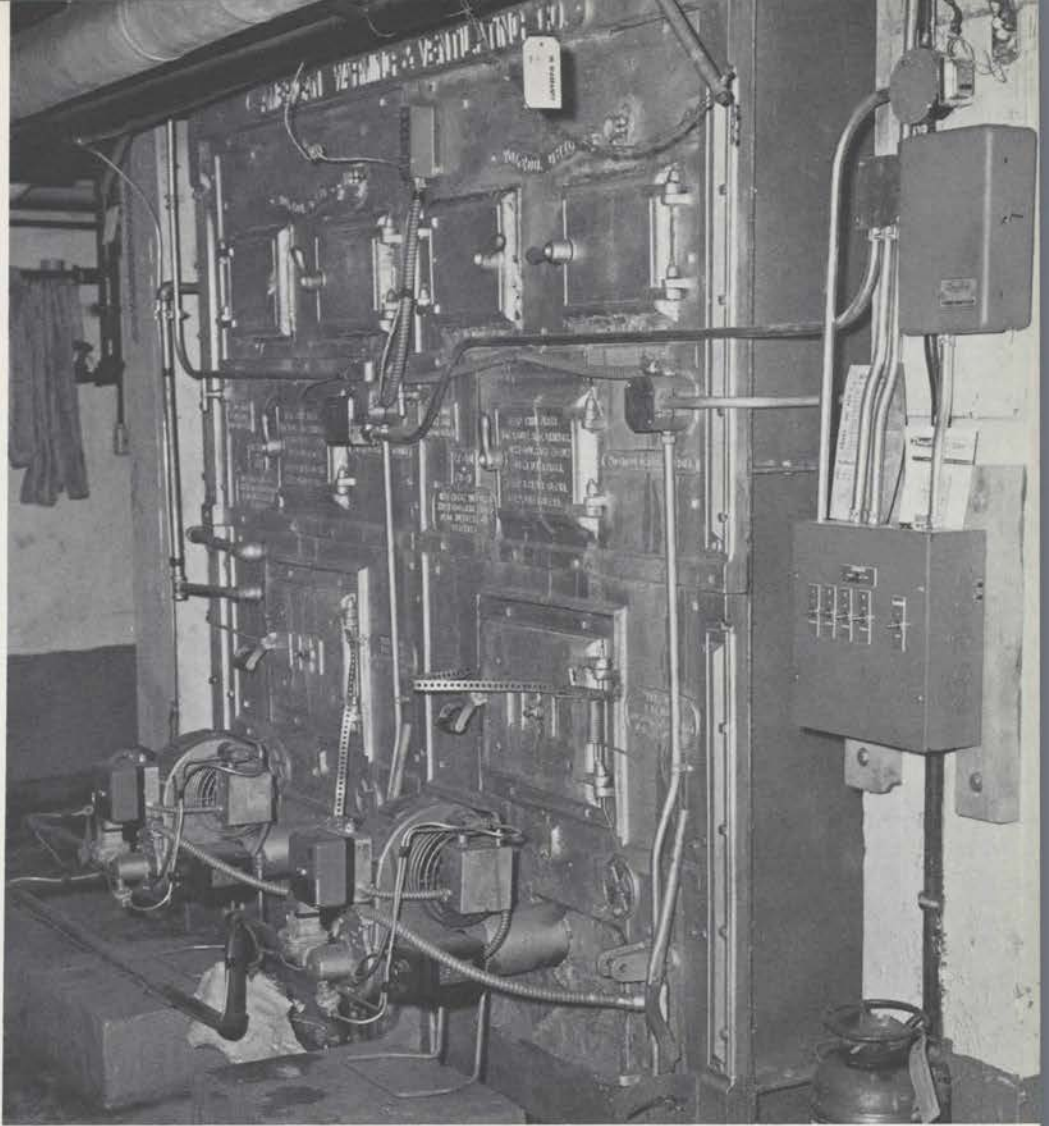
(Dave Ullin Photo)



organ, plus the continued use of the building and all the special wiring, phones, lights, and hours of work done during our rental period.

One of the first projects of our work crew, was the hoisting of the one-ton CinemaScope curved screen, with wooden frame, to the stage ceiling — as the stage had not been used for live shows since the wide screen was installed. During our banquet on stage, everyone was quite careful about sitting under that huge screen. It hasn't fallen yet, and our nimble stagehands can get it up or down in 60 seconds! It is counter-balanced on three battens with 2000 pounds of 25-pound lead weights.

After we accepted our unexpected rental of the theatre in 1974, the stage floor was completely sanded, the seats were cleaned and vacuumed, and years of gum was scraped from the floor and seats. Work was temporarily halted for our first public show — the Lee Erwin-Gloria Swanson Show, which brought about 6000 to the five performances, (two at the Royal Oak Theatre) and received extensive newspaper, radio, and television coverage. We currently have a Motor City Chorus who continue to use the theme music from the Gloria Swanson Show. A place to rehearse is another advantage of the Redford.



And you thought *your* heating bill was high! Two of the four furnaces that provide heat for the Redford Theatre, where building maintenance is as important as organ maintenance. (Phil Gorden Photo)

The first public show presented by Motor City at the Redford Theatre, in the fall of 1967, featured vintage cars and several members dressed in '20s attire. (Phil Gorden Photo)



They meet every Wednesday night, and, if you closed your eyes, you might think it was Mitch Miller, or Fred Waring.

If you look up at the Redford ceiling — which has the original clouds and a few water marks — you will now see 94 stars twinkling, thanks to brave members who crawled into the area above the ceiling with an intercom and located and relamped each "star."

The "house" phone system has now been extended from the light board to each of the eight dressing rooms, and is also connected to the booth, managers office, candy counter, and box office.

Restoration of the Barton has been in progress since 1966. Many man hours went into restoration of the chambers and the console, which in their original installation, had not been used for many years. The intricate Japanese pagodas and dragons that decorate the sides and top of the console, were restored in fiber-

glass by a member who makes and operates marionettes.

A player piano was purchased by the chapter and connected to the console after many hours of back-stage wiring, and when the piano was finally operational and moved to the pit, it was decorated to match the organ.

Other building improvements include automation of the building's archaic temperature control, adding a Genaraco high-intensity carbon arc spotlight to the projection booth, and the acquisition of old stage drapes, scenic backgrounds and light fixtures, many donated by other theatres.

In addition to the player piano in the pit, there is now a Knabe grand piano on stage, donated by the theatre owners from one of the downtown Detroit theatres — in fact it was the same theatre — the Capital, who loaned Mr. Don Miller to the Redford for opening night in 1928.

Although several multi-thousand seat movie palaces opened in Detroit in 1928, a smaller 2,000 seat Redford was the first, opening on January 27, 1928, billed as "America's most unique suburban playhouse," attending shows at the Redford was taking a trip to the Orient with a stop at Japan. The Redford might

Motor City members spent many months and used miles of wire to connect this rebuilt player piano to the organ console in 1973. It was decorated to resemble the Japanese ornamentation on the console.

(Phil Gorden Photo)



The Redford vertical bore the Kunskey name, the chain that first operated the theatre. The "New Redford" replaced an earlier store front nickelodeon.

(Manning Bros. Photo)

well have been the only theatre in the country to be patterned after a Japanese garden.

It was built by the John F. Kunskey chain and opened in the midst of Greater Redford Week — a campaign set up by the area merchants and partially financed by the Kunskey organization to usher in the new era of prosperity that the deluxe theatre would bring. (The New Redford, as it was known, replaced an earlier storefront nickelodeon located around the corner on Grand River Ave.) With approximately 2000 seats, and the finest in Kunskey-Balaban and Katz Publix stage presentation, several thousand persons per week were expected in the area.

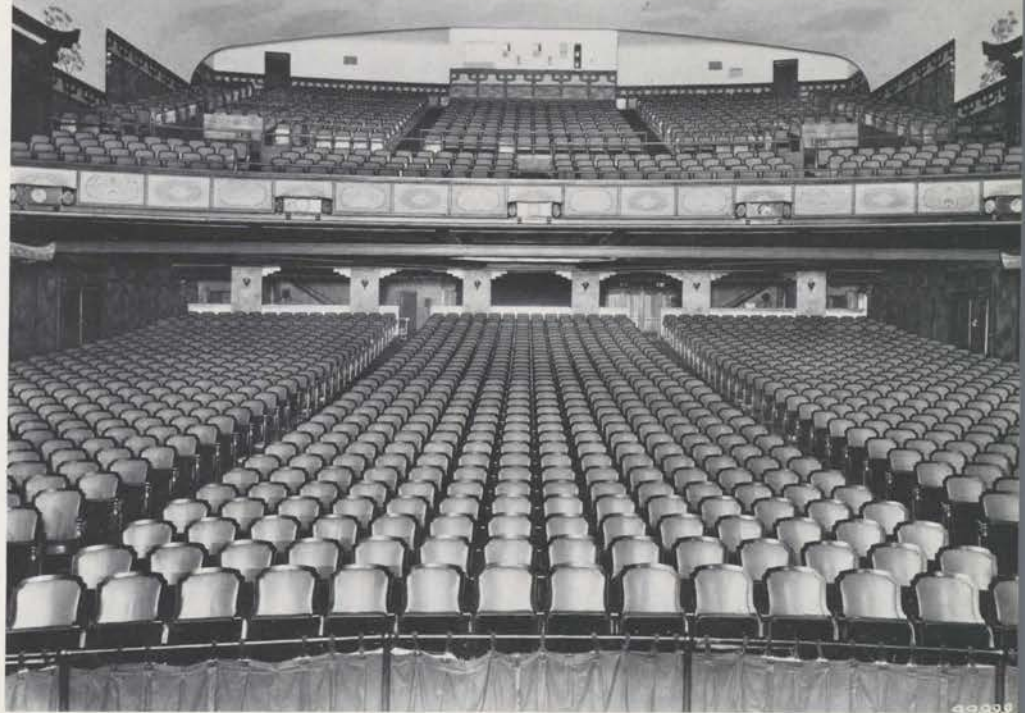


Tickets were purchased at a bronze and tile pagoda box office. The color scheme of the lobby was burnished gold with richly decorative plaster moldings. Bronze attraction boards, urns and carved chairs provided a final touch of atmosphere. Above the staircases on either side of the foyer hung huge Japanese tapestries and ornate brass light fixtures cast a golden glow across the richly carpeted floor.

Opening night audiences soon forgot the bitter cold as they entered the auditorium and found themselves in a Japanese garden with clouds floating lazily overhead and stars mysteriously blinking. Huge pagodas were situated on either side of the auditorium and on the ends of each were gardens with greenery, flowers and statuary. Japanese warriors flanked (and guarded?) the organ chambers and a mysterious mountain hovered in the background along with trees and landscape.

The evenings performance consisted of a presentation of the Barton theatre organ by Detroit's Don Miller. (Those who attended the 1967 ATOS Convention in Detroit will remember that Don Miller was the opening artist.) He accompanied a Richard Dix film, presented a newsreel and encouraged the patrons participation with one of his famous sing-alongs. The performance was presented twice that evening. Well into the middle of the second and final performance, another capacity crowd swelled outside the theatre,

The Redford as it appeared to opening night audiences in 1928. Note the Japanese detail on the grand drape and auditorium walls. (Manning Bros. Photo)



Original appearance of the auditorium when it opened. In later years, reseating created more leg room and reduced the seating capacity from about 2000 to 1500. (Manning Bros. Photo)

hoping to gain admittance.

The Redford Theatre has really always been a home for the chapter since the first public show there in the fall of 1967 when Gaylord Carter accompanied *The Mark of Zorro*. Excited by the public response for this type of entertainment, the chapter tried similar programs utilizing the pipe organs still remaining at the Punch and Judy, Royal Oak and Michigan (Ann Arbor) theatres. The audiences that attended these shows soon swelled to 20,000 each year.

Since the first public program in 1967, the chapter has presented over 50 silent film and theatre pipe organ programs to the public, of which about 30 have taken place at the Redford Theatre.

As we hope you will agree, Motor City has a golden opportunity to purchase a Golden-Voiced Barton — with a theatre attached, which we expect to become the "Performing Arts Center of Northwest Detroit," through our own programs and rentals.

Our fund-raising campaign has just begun. We started with the membership and past members, a mailing to our 5,000 friends who have supported our shows, and we are going into a 54,000-name mailing to the four local zip codes, appealing to the neighborhood to support our theatre and their community.

The concession stand in the lobby is not to be overlooked, as each night the theatre is open, we have candy, soft drinks, and popcorn to offer cared for by a loyal group of members who learned by experience. How much popcorn do we order, how much candy, what brands? This has all been worked out by our loyal staff, who learned the hard way that you do not melt butter on the heating element, you must insert a stainless container first to keep the butter from running onto the lobby floor.

Cleaning is also important, especially when we have three or four performances on a weekend and sweeping out between shows is necessary. Once again, members come to the rescue and man the brooms and trash bags. We operate with all volunteer help, and our members are working harder at the theatre than they would consider at home.

Once a month we host the Detroit Youth Film Forum for high school students, which previews a soon-to-be-released film and discussions are held after the viewing. During this, and most other outside performances, we are demonstrating our Barton organ to groups who have never before had the opportunity to hear live theatre organ music.

In addition to the mailings to raise funds, we have scheduled a full summer of fund-raising events. A giant garage sale is planned for the lobby, a five-day carnival will be held in the parking lots, and a summer series of all-time favorite films will be held every weekend during July and August, with a different nationally known artist at the organ for a pops concert.

An "orgathon" is planned for Labor Day weekend, when the organ will be played around the clock to collect pledges and possibly set a Guinness world record for theatre organ playing.

What can you do? We are so happy you asked! Donations of any amount from ATOS members and chapters are welcome. Each contribution of \$25.00 or more will be acknowledged by a lapel pin saying "I'm an angel — I helped buy the Redford," plus a ticket to a "Contributor's Concert" featuring a name artist, at the end of the fund raising drive.

Contributions of \$100.00 or more will receive a copper plaque, \$500.00 or more, a silver plaque, \$1,000 or more, a gold plaque, \$5,000 or more a specially engraved plaque and a lifetime membership in the chapter.

And for \$50,000 you will get a private concert!

Again, we repeat, please help Motor City "Buy the Redford" by sending your tax-deductible contributions to:

Motor City Theatre Organ Society
P.O. Box 40716
Redford, Michigan 48240

Chicago '77 ATOS Convention Update . . .

by Tom Tibia
with the assistance of Jim Koller

PALMER HOUSE, CHICAGO — I'm standing in the elegant lobby of this grand hotel after a brief tour by Jim Koller of the "Chicago '77" convention hospitality committee who helped show me what registrants can expect when they arrive for the big event.

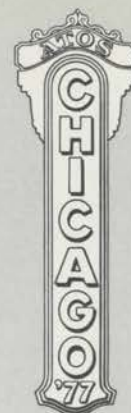
Located at State and Monroe Streets, the Palmer House is just a short cab ride from Amtrak's Union Station as well as both bus depots. Those travelling lighter than I do (three steamer trunks and a tooth brush!) could easily walk from Greyhound or Trailways which are both on Randolph St., four blocks north. If you are flying into O'Hare Field, a cab ride will cost about \$10. It makes more sense, however, to take the Continental Air Transport Bus from the lower baggage claim area. Be sure to be on their South Loop bus which comes directly here to the Palmer House for only \$3.15 one way. If you are driving one of Cousin Carter's gas guzzlers you may exit Interstate 94 at Monroe St. and proceed east two miles to the hotel on State St. Hotel parking is available in the Mid-Continent Plaza building garage directly across Wabash Ave. to the east of the hotel for about \$4.00 per day (use the Monroe St. entrance). City parking is also available, three blocks east of the hotel, at the Monroe St. lot at \$4.00 per day.

The main lobby of the hotel where I am now standing is one flight up from the street level. The Palmer House is a Hilton Hotel which accepts all major credit cards including Visa-BankAmericard, Master Charge, Carte Blanche and Diners Club. Having completed your hotel check in, you can find our registration area on the mezzanine overlooking the lobby. Just ride the escalator up and turn to your right.

Hopefully you will have pre-

registered so that Charlotte Rieger and helpers will have your registration packet and badge prepared and waiting for you. Please step down to see Art Todesco who will help you select your alternative event. You have one choice from four alternatives, two on Saturday afternoon (Home Tour "A" or WGN) and two on Sunday afternoon (Home Tour "B" or Temple Sholom). Three organs are on Home Tour "A": Faye Wheeler's 3/16 Wicks from the Oral Roberts University Auditorium, Art Todesco's 2/5 Estey (with Haskell basses), one of fourteen pipe organs originally in the Oriental Theatre building, and the 3/8 Wurlitzer-Kimball hybrid which belongs to Jack Gustafson.

Corporate Vice President Alexander Field will be on hand to host those who choose WGN, home of a 3/11 Wurlitzer/Kimball. It was heard on the *Little Orphan Annie* and *Amos and Andy* radio shows, and is one of the few left in broadcasting. It is still in weekly use for religious shows and on special occasions, such as a recent Christmas TV special when it was played by Walter Strony. On Sunday, Home Tour "B" will stop at Leon Berry's "Beast in the Basement" 2/8 Wurlitzer, at Stan and Vi Lechowicz's 4/20 Barton (originally a 4/10 and probably a 4/21 by now), and at Bob Schmidt's 2/7 hybrid with Kimball pipes and Wurlitzer console. Those choosing Temple Sholom will hear a 4/32 Wurlitzer, one of that builders few liturgical attempts. (Yes, your ears are hearing correctly.) That is the sound of two Tibias, (one a Tibia Plena) speaking into the huge octagonal stone room which is the Temple's sanctuary. Please note that due to tight scheduling and limited space you must have chosen to ride the bus in order to choose either home tour.



Car drivers cannot choose the home tour options.

Speaking of car drivers, please look at your registration material closely. You will have to follow some special instructions so that we may all stay on schedule. It would be simpler if you took the bus, and left the driving to us, or at least to Alden Stockebrand. You may remember him from 1969. He's the tall one. Alden says none of this year's buses will have square wheels.

While in the registration area, check the banquet seating chart. Ione Tedei will be happy to reserve a table for your group. "Ione, I hope you don't set the place on fire when serving the cherries jubilee!"

We will have to know not later than Saturday, June 25 if you intend to take the bus to the prelude show "Rosa by Starlight," at Rockford's Coronado Theatre on Tuesday, June 28, hosted by CATOE's sister chapter, Land of Lincoln.

To help keep all of you straight as to where you should be, and when, during the busy week to come, look for the Pocket Pal guide in your registration packet. While rooting around in the envelope you might want to glance at the souvenir brochure. Yours truly helped write it. I hope you think it ranks next to Hemingway and Thomas Wolfe.

From the registration desk you might want to go upstairs to the club floor where you will find the hospitality room and record shop. Bob Verduin promises ample stocks of artists records. Cathy Koenig and the hospitality committee will be on hand there, and throughout the convention, to answer your many questions. Just ask any of the people you see wearing turquoise-blue vests.

One of the things they can tell you is where to find the eight organ manufacturers which have been arranged for by Len Clarke and George Smith. Rodgers, Thomas, Allen and Wurlitzer will be here as will Gulbransen, Hammond, and Conn. As a special attraction, there will also be a six-rank theatre pipe organ on display, a product of Arndt-Carlson Organs.

All of the programs, which have been arranged by Doug Christensen and Russ Joseph, will last approximately one hour and fifteen minutes. There will be no intermissions. This format was used successfully on the Organ Safari to England last year

and will keep interest and enthusiasm high while eliminating "dead" time. You'll still hear more than twenty-three hours of organ music during the five-day run of the convention. Registration is heavy and space limited in many places, so please remember that recording for personal, non-commercial use is limited to hand-held battery operated equipment without extra stands or clamp-on mikes. Please note that no recording can be allowed at the George Wright concert. Camera fans please remember that flash pictures during shows are annoying to artists and listeners alike. If you really want my picture I'll pose after the show. So will the organists.

Even I get hungry, now and then, as I imagine you do, so you'll be glad to know that the hospitality committee can help you find a restaurant

***"There will be
no intermissions"***

you'll like. You will be at the hotel for all meals except for lunch on Thursday which is provided for in your registration fee. McDonald's is just up Wabash Ave. across from Marshall Field. Sorry, but I don't know where Colonel Sanders can be found, in case you like chicken like I do.

Friday night you'll be free to do as you wish. Saturday and Sunday afternoons will also be free if you don't choose an optional event. On Friday you might want to visit some of our other local favorites. CATOE's own Pearl White plays a Conn weekends at the Prime House, 4156 N. Kedzie, Chicago. Confirm that by calling 463-9732. Barbara Sellers, daughter of that other famous Chicago organ duo, Edna and the late Preston Sellers, plays an X-66 in the Garden Lounge in the Bismarck Hotel, 171 W. Randolph St.

Those interested in attending church on Sunday morning before the John Muri program at the Chicago may obtain information from the hospitality people. CATOE is trying to arrange to have mass said in the hotel.

Speaking of the Chicago Theatre,

manager Peter Miller assures me that when you walk through the doors from State St. it will be July 3, 1924, *complete* to the lobby piano player. I've seen the painters in the lobby and the electrician rebuilding the house chandeliers, so you can bet Mr. Miller will have the place shined up like a monument to Our Lady of Rapp and Rapp.

On Monday, July 4, after the George Wright program, a number of things will be available for those who aren't leaving immediately. Sally's Stage, Chicago's "musical eatery" with its 3/10 Barton, will be doing special luncheon shows. Details when you get here. If you're disappointed that our railroad afterflow was left at the station, there are some other things to do. (By the way, we could get a steam engine but Amtrak could not get us the coaches.) The Illinois Railway Museum is an hour's drive northwest of Chicago in Union, Ill., and the Chicago, South Shore, and South Bend, the only interurban running in the U.S., should still be running on July 4. Information can be obtained at hospitality central. If you're tired of organ music and trains, King Tut is visiting Chicago at the Field Museum and will be here until August 15.

It can be ten days of heaven late this month, and early next, if you arrive for the Theatre Historical Society Conclave and stay for "Chicago '77." The schedule is a busy one, but there are no all-day trips. You will be back here at the hotel between events. You will cover a lot, but you will not have to run to do so. There are many optional things to do at the hotel and throughout this big, wide, wonderful city which CATOE calls home. You may do as much or as little as you wish.

The organs have been tuned, the artists are practicing. Convention Chairman Bill Rieger and all his helpers have been working hard. CATOE Chairman Richard Sklenar's hair has turned a little grey, but even he is smiling. It's been a lot of work. All we need now is you. I'll see you in the lobby on June 28. Look for me with Elmer Fubb, G. Bandini, Effie Klotz, Bert Brouillon, Hal Steiner, and their father, Stu Green. Maybe Stu will even buy me a drink. I think there's a bar somewhere in this hotel. Welcome to Chicago! □



Publicity portrait of Gladys Goodding when she was working in theatres. (Bob Beck Coll.)

Gladys Goodding

Theatre
Organist
Turned
Stadium
Musician

by Lloyd E. Klos

Who is the most popular baseball stadium organist today? Boston Red Sox rooters will swear that ex-theatre organist John Kiley can play the national anthem as no one else. Across the country, Los Angeles Dodger stalwarts will argue that Helen Dell ranks supreme among the artists performing on manuals and pedals in baseball parks.

But for those of us who remember baseball before expansion of the major leagues, Gladys Goodding, who reigned as Dodger organist for 15 years, was the queen of her profession.

Gladys Goodding was born in 1893 in Macon, Mo., one of four children of Joseph and Mabel Riley Goodding. Both parents were musically-inclined which accounted for Gladys' inherent love of it; her mother taught her the piano. When her parents died in 1910, she and her younger brother were sent to the Masonic Home in St. Louis. Here

she was given formal organ and voice training, played in the chapel, and stayed past the usual age when children moved on. She got involved teaching the younger children and worked in a music store by playing piano and selling sheet music.

She also had time to pitch on the home's baseball team, becoming so proficient that she threw curves. Years later in an interview she said, "I could hardly believe it, but a fellow who became a professional told me I had developed a curve, so it must be true. Incidentally, it was here where I learned the hidden ball trick."

Following her days at the home, she went to Kansas City, Mo., to live with her brother Leslie, and worked in a silent movie theatre, playing piano. Here she met Robert R. Beck, who played drums in the theatre orchestra, and they were married in 1914. After living on a ranch in New Mexico for five years, they returned

to Kansas City where they were divorced.

Gladys Goodding then hit the Chautauqua circuit with Thurlow Lieurance in 1921, and took a sextette of saxophones on tour in 1922. Later in 1922, she went to New York City where she wanted, because of her clear soprano voice, to get into musical comedy or light opera. "But I was a woman with two children and needed the security of a steady job."

So, turning from the uncertainties of the stage, she became an organist on the Loew's circuit in New York, first at Loew's Columbus Circle Theatre, then at Loew's Orpheum until the advent of sound movies. The theatre experience with its rapid changes of moods and registrations, stood her in good stead for her years as a stadium organist. Next came stints at the Hofbrau at 48th Street and Broadway, and the Downtown Athletic Club.

In 1936, Gladys became organist

at Madison Square Garden, a post she was to hold until her death 27 years later. One of her duties was to sing and play the "Star Spangled Banner" before each event. She was asked how many times she had done this and she replied that she hadn't kept track, but "each performance was as inspiring to me as the first."

She had a special ability to amuse the crowds and irk the athletes and their managers by her seemingly innocent renditions at appropriate moments. For example, after a boxing match at the Garden, a loquacious manager whose fighter had lost the decision, complained in a lengthy interview from ringside. Gladys played "Good Night, Sweetheart" as background music for the episode.

Miss Goodding always had warm respect for the Garden fans. "They are wonderful, and any unpleasantness experienced there has been slight." It was her custom to arrive at the Garden an hour before an event was scheduled to get her music in order. She always played with sheet music before her. Prior to her illness in 1963, she missed only one event at the Garden, a tennis match — a truly remarkable record for 27 years of service.

Late in 1941, a Brooklyn hockey fan told her that he'd like to hear her play at Ebbets Field. Liking the idea and being a woman of action, she fired off a letter to Larry McPhail, the general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers. A few days later, she received a reply, stating that she'd be hearing from McPhail on the idea. Early in 1942, she received another letter, saying she had been accepted as Dodger organist. Her initial playing spot was in the reserved section behind the Dodger dugout. Later, she was installed in a glass-enclosed booth, high above the field, a position she was to occupy until the Dodgers moved to Los Angeles after the 1957 season. Gladys Goodding became a living legend at Ebbets Field.

The best-known story about her occurred during her first weeks there. One day when the three umpires emerged to receive the lineup cards at home plate, Gladys played "Three Blind Mice." "I knew the head umpire, Bill Stewart, who was one of the hockey referees at the Garden and I felt Bill could take it. I just had to play it!

"So I did, Bill looked at the other umpires in disbelief, and they looked at me. Bill told me later that he had waved to me and told his cohorts he knew me. They said, 'So she's a friend of yours, eh?' I later apologized to Bill and he forgave me. It was one of those things which had to be done, but it's never been done since, and I doubt if it will."

Gladys Goodding used special music as the team's organist. She wrote their theme, "Follow the Dodgers," which she played at the beginning of each game as they ran onto the field, and there was always "Take Me Out to the Ballgame." During the last two years at Ebbets Field, she employed the Mexican handclapping song "Chiapenecas," which became a part of the seventh inning stretch and during times when the team was behind and needed the fans' encouragement.

Following a Dodger victory, she'd play such songs as "What a Day This Has Been" from *Brigadoon*. When the team lost, the number would depend on the opposition: the Cardinals would get "St Louis Blues," for example. Had the 1951 playoff game, in which Bobby Thomson hit

the famous home run, enabling the Giants to enter the World Series, been played in Brooklyn, Gladys would have played a Scottish song because of the hero's ancestry.

When Brooklyn lost the World Series to the Yankees in 1952, she played "What Can I Say Dear, After I Say I'm Sorry?" Following the loss of another series, she played what she considered the saddest song, "This Nearly Was Mine" from *The King and I*.

"Mine was a wonderful relationship with the players and fans," she said. "Before games, I serenaded the players on their birthdays, playing their state songs and favorite numbers. Gil Hodges' favorite was "Laura," "O Solo Mio" was requested by Carl Furillo, "On Wisconsin" was for Andy Pafko's alma mater, the UCLA song was Jackie Robinson's choice, and "My Old Kentucky Home" appealed to Pee Wee Reese." But Gladys' versatility came to the fore when opera-loving broadcaster Vince Scully requested excerpts from *La Boheme*.

Her favorite player? It was Pee Wee Reese, who became Dodger shortstop in 1941, a year before she

Gladys Goodding was in her first year as official Dodger organist in 1942. The console was situated in the stands near first base. (Bob Beck Coll.)



joined the organization. "He's one of the nicest fellows you'd ever want to know; a gentleman on and off the field, such a grand guy with a lovely family. It was he who presented me with my diamond-sapphire 10-year ring in 1952. When they had Pee Wee Reese Day in 1955, Mr. and Mrs. Larry McPhail came up from their farm especially for the event. Pee Wee is well thought of, and not only in Kentucky."

Asked about her greatest thrill at Ebbets Field, she replied, "There have been so many that I couldn't pick out one. One day in 1956, Duke Snider came to bat, and because of poor performance lately, was given a good booning by the Flatbush Faithful. I got angry about it and hollered out the booth, 'Put it over there on Bedford Avenue, please, Duke,' and he did, changing the jeers to cheers."

Had Gladys Goodding lost a court case early in her Dodger playing days, things would have been totally different. There was a retired organist by the name of J. Reid Spencer, who lived in the neighborhood of Ebbets Field, and complained that he couldn't sleep in the afternoon because of the musical acoustics which hit his home in a peculiar way. He took his case to court, acting as his own attorney. The local court decided against him, so he took the case to the state supreme court.

"Oddly enough, while we were

waiting for the case to come to trial, he gave me some of his own music to play for him, which I did. The case was dismissed on the grounds that the complainant couldn't hear well. He had cupped his hands to his ears to listen to the judge's remarks!"

During the first 10 years as Dodger organist, Gladys missed only one game, due to a commitment to play for a Scout-o-rama at Madison Square Garden.

Though she played thousands of numbers at Ebbets Field, all heard by the Dodger fans, there was an occasion in 1951 when she unknowingly was playing the organ for herself. It happened at a night game when a thunderstorm stopped the contest. Gladys closed the window of her booth to avoid the rain, and began to play light music.

After 15 minutes and noticing no reaction from the crowd, she opened the window to find no music coming from the speakers; the electrician had turned off the PA system. She immediately called him on her intercom, power was restored, and Gladys' music was again enjoyed by all.

When not playing for sporting events, she ran amateur shows, and directed the music for a Major Bowes' amateur talent unit. She also appeared at Carnegie Hall, was chairman of a group of ladies who worked at The Lighthouse, transcribed books for the blind on her Braille

typewriter, and saw to their distribution. Her eyes were pledged to the eye bank. At Christmastime, she appeared at Stern's Department Store in New York, playing yuletide music.

During World War II, Gladys Goodding made appearances at the Stage Door Canteen, in addition to her other assignments.

Asked if baseball were her favorite sport, she replied, "I can't say it isn't my favorite, but I love hockey. It's fast and so rough! Boxing the same. When I first went to the Garden, I couldn't watch either as the violence gave me the shivers. But, I learned to watch all the contests, and now I like them all. I've studied the finer points of each sport, so I can appreciate it more."

Her work at Madison Square Garden had its perilous moments as attested by two paragraphs from the *New Yorker* of December 6, 1958: "If soccer is to become a regular feature at Madison Square Garden, Gladys Goodding will have to have more protection. Miss Goodding is the Garden's venerable singing organist. In the course of a six-game, seven-team American league bash recently, a ball off the foot of the outside right for the Newark Portuguese came bulleting out of the arena, well above the lower stands and smack at her.

"Miss Goodding ducked just in time, the ball ricocheted harmlessly off the top bank of her keys, and a few minutes later, she was retaliating spunkily with 'The Colonel Bogey March.'" It was a near thing though, and if the sphere had found its mark, the incident would have been tantamount to defilement of a national monument for Miss Goodding has likely rendered 'The Star Spangled Banner' in line of duty more often than any American. We suggest that for the next soccer night at the Garden, she be surrounded by an honor guard of Marines."

When the Dodgers left town after the 1957 season, and Ebbets Field was slated to be razed for an apartment project, Miss Goodding continued at the Garden. She loved to entertain in her Belvedere Hotel apartment which was decorated completely in Chinese. She accumulated porcelain figurines and quartz elephants as a hobby. Though she

Miss Goodding entertained at the Stage Door Canteen in New York during World War II. Here, in 1943, she plays and sings with Shirley Booth, star of *My Sister Eileen*. (Bob Beck Coll.)



loved New York, she did make several trips to the West Coast to visit family and friends. she could have retired to the St. Louis Masonic Home, but preferred to keep working and assure her independence.

She loved animals, always having a dog. She also loved riding horses, using mounts in Brooklyn. In 1958, she won the American Legion Citation for New York County.

Associated and contemporaries have warm memories of the organist. Theatre organist and Hall of Famer, Dr. C.A.J. Parmentier remembers seeing her when she came into the Hammond organ studios in New York to practice.

Dodger Chairman of the Board, Walter F. O'Malley says: "Gladys was a good friend of my wife and myself, and of course, she was absolutely tops at the keys of the Ebbets Field organ. She was familiar with every person in the Dodger organization and always came up with an appropriate rendition — sometimes teasing, sometimes pleasing, and always in good taste and key."

Arthur "Red" Patterson, Dodger vice president, was the press secretary of the old Brooklyn Dodgers and remembers the organist very well. "We practically revered Gladys Goodding. She was so quick to come up with the proper songs for various occasions and incidents on the ball field, that she became a tremendous part of the Ebbets Field scene. The "Three Blind Mice" episode, however, resulted in that number's being eliminated from her repertoire by the National League office. But, it got a tremendous hand when played the only time."

Walter "Red" Barber, who broadcast the Brooklyn Dodger games with Connie Desmond from the "catbird seat" in Ebbets Field, recalls, "when she hired at Ebbets Field, she was the first organist in a baseball park, and it caused a mild rhubarb as some of the people in nearby apartments complained of 'noise.' But all ended well and quickly. She was very, very good, was able to play a tune which matched pretty much any situation which arose, and we had many in those days in that place! Gladys was very busy, very good-natured, and she contributed much to various sporting events. She was a pioneer."

Her last public appearance was at



Her favorite Dodger of the hundreds whom she saw play in Ebbets Field was Pee Wee Reese, the shortstop. Gladys receives a ring from the team captain in 1952 symbolizing ten years as Dodger organist. (Bob Beck Coll.)

Gladys at Madison Square Garden in 1946, where she played for 27 years.

(Bob Beck Coll.)



Madison Square Garden, Saturday evening, November 16, 1963. Two days later, she died of a heart attack in her apartment.

Thus came to the end the illustrious career of Gladys Goodding, theatre organist, turned stadium musician. She was the first to play for a major league baseball team. But she will forever be remembered as the one with a most colorful personality, and a real penchant for playing appropo music at the proper moment.

Editor's Note: We thank Mrs. F. Miles Magnuson of Ashland, Kentucky, and Robert E. Beck of Davenport, Iowa, for supplying us with pictures and information about their mother. Without the material, this feature would not have been possible. □

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HURVITZ GOES A.W.O.L.

(AT WURLITZER ON LEAVE)

Never let it be said that organist Lou Hurvitz didn't make it from St. Paul to "Broadway" the hard way: music lessons from mama at eight, music throughout high school and the University of Minnesota band (Lou majored in percussion instruments), studied with Ashley Miller, and currently a percussionist with the U.S. Military Academy Band at West Point. Hurvitz is far too young to have been influenced by flick organists the first time around. A SENETOS (South Eastern New England Theatre Organ Society) buddy, John Caruthers, speculates that the turning point in Lou's musical career was exposure to the late, great Eddie Dunstedter. Whatever, he now holds membership cards in the N.Y. and Conn Valley chapters.

So how, you ask, does a talent like this — with an exclusive and binding contract with Uncle Sam — make it to Broadway? Are we talking about the same "give-my-regards-to" Broadway celebrated by George M? Sort of, if you recall that Cohen was born in Providence, R.I., where the most glamorous street in the 1890's was in fact called "Broadway" — the same Broadway where Lou Hurvitz concertized last October. To avoid conflicts of interest with our Armed Forces, SENETOS and the Columbus Theatre management arranged an invitation only "Appreciation" Concert so that buffs from all over Yankee-land could hear both Lou and the Mighty-Nice-Little 2/6 Wurlitzer.

Yup, it's a small Wurlitzer. All six ranks plus toy counter fit into one chamber. Not many artists could make it sound like a Publix in spite of the gorgeous restoration job by the SENETOS crew. Lou sure gave it the old Army try!

A talented young organist, a beautifully behaved Wurlitzer and the scrumptuous Columbus Theatre — the future looks bright for all three, especially if West Pointer Hurvitz ever gets the urge to turn in his "sword" for a posthorn and Howard seat. Good show! □



SP 7 Louis Hurvitz, member of the U.S. Military Academy Band at West Point.



Console of the 2/6 Wurlitzer.

Pipework of the Columbus Theatre Style D Wurlitzer showing the six ranks of pipes.





The Community Theatre building was designed primarily as a legitimate stage theatre for the production of plays. Seating capacity is 203. The stage is equipped with a full rigged fly gallery — built mostly from equipment recovered from the Seattle Orpheum Theatre when it was demolished in 1969. Included will be provisions for electronic stage lighting, movie projection equipment, a fully-equipped work shop and scene construction shop, extra rehearsal space and a community meeting place.

Theatre Pipe Organ to Enhance New Bremerton Community Theatre

by Lloyd E. Klos

Those of us who attended the 1971 ATOS Convention in the Seattle area remember the concert at the Bremerton Masonic Temple by Byron Melcher at the 2/8 Wurlitzer, and the exhilarating ferryboat ride back to Seattle. Noted for its U.S. Navy facilities and mothball fleet, including the famed battleship "Missouri," Bremerton, small as it may be, is still a community with a heart. It soon will have another theatre pipe organ playing.

In late 1976, a group of 16 enthusiasts, realizing their city needed a theatre organ which the public could

enjoy, pooled their funds and purchased the 2/13 hybrid from the estate of the late Dan Adamson. Mr. Adamson had collected parts from several instruments and had a substantial organ in his home's basement at the time of his death.

At the time this item went to press, the group was busily engaged in installing it in Bremerton's new Community Theatre, located at Lebo Boulevard and Juniper Street, overlooking the Washington Narrows.

The console is from the Wurlitzer, Opus 537, installed in the American Theatre in Walla Walla, Wash.,

in 1922. It has room for 55 tablets on the horseshoe and 29 on the second-touch stop rail.

There are chests for 13 ranks, of which 11 are filled as follows: Tuba, Diapason, Tibia I, Tibia II, Clarinet, Viol d'Orchestre, Viol d'Orchestre Celeste, Flute, Kinura, Vox Humana I and Vox Humana II.

The Diapason, Flute, Viol and Vox are in a chest which was installed by Robert Morton in the Liberty Theatre in Pasco, Wash., in 1921. Lew Wells, who is helping the Bremerton group install the organ, played the Morton for about a year

in the early twenties, and assisted in its removal to the Catholic church in Moxee, Wash., in 1935. The other chests are Balcom & Vaughn, Smith and Robert Morton.

The percussion department includes a Liberty Harp, a Morton Xylophone and Glockenspiel, and a Wurlitzer Xylophone, Glock and Chimes. Traps are well represented in treble and bass.

The new Community Theatre is being built by funds derived from several sources. From the EDA, has come \$152,000 in federal money. Community Theatre donors have contributed over \$50,000. The city of Bremerton will contribute \$35,000, mostly for construction costs. Additional funds will be needed to finish the interior and to buy the projection and stage equipment. A novel way to accomplish this will be by "selling" seats in the auditorium for \$200. A brass plate, bearing the donor's name and address will be affixed to the back of the chair.

The big red upholstered chairs originally came from the loge of Seattle's Music Hall Theatre, and are being completely renovated.

The organ pipes, percussions, etc., will be housed in stacked chambers. Eight ranks will be housed in the lower one, and the upper chamber will contain five ranks, plus percussions, traps and the relays. It is planned to eventually have the console on a lift in the orchestra pit.

Many ferry trips were made across Puget Sound to dismantle the organ and move it to Bremerton. The con-



Storage in Mel Retzlaff's rec room. Most of the pipes are stored here. Objects on shelves are *not* part of the organ.

sole had to be disassembled in order to remove it from its basement location. To Roger Hoffman go many thanks for donating his truck with lift for the operation. As the work progressed, a model railroad layout and 10 fish tanks had to be removed as more pipes and regulators were discovered, spotted about the basement.

Progress in the installation work is slow as volunteers work in their spare time. However, it is hoped that part of the organ will be playing by late summer, with completion scheduled by the end of the year. Chamber

work was 75 per cent completed in January. Extensive rewiring was needed in the console, relays etc.

The theatre can be used for organ concerts and club meetings when other events are not scheduled. At least two silent movies a year are planned.

The new organization, the Bremerton Pipe Organ Society, is here to stay; it is not a fly-by-night outfit. Its officers are: Mel Retzlaff, president; Bob Arnold, vice president; Ellena Retzlaff, secretary; and Marlin Mangels, treasurer.

The society is fortunate in having Lew Wells as its technical advisor. Retired, he was an employee of the noted organ-building and repair firm of Balcom & Vaughn for 10 years. He also played theatre organs in the silent movie days.

Since a number of the Bremerton group belong to the Puget Sound Chapter, a harmonious relationship between the two organizations is anticipated and some meetings of the chapter will possibly be held in Bremerton.

To the members of the Bremerton Pipe Organ Society go ATOS wishes of good luck and many years of successful operation of their new enterprise.

(The writer thanks Genny Whitting of the Puget Sound Chapter who supplied the information for this feature. □

Wurlitzer console will have all new key contacts and combination pneumatics as well as new console-to-relay cable.



Seeing pipes in an electronic organ factory is just about as strange as seeing plastic flowers in a greenhouse. But at the Rodgers Organ Company of Hillsboro, Oregon, pipes are very much a part of what you see. And pipes are helping the builder of electronic organs show amazing growth of late. The success is due to the company's recent introduction of the Rodgers Classic Series, with Pipes; a line of two and three manual classic specifications blending the wonder of electronics with the magic of pipes.

One reporter asked if Rodgers was admitting that pipes are better than electronics. "We're in the music business," says John Hoekstra, Rodgers' Chief Executive Officer. "Pipes have always been our standard of comparison for both our classic and theatre organs. Pipes were around a long time before electronics, and we're interested in preserving the rich heritage of the 'King of Instruments.' Whatever we can do to make better music, we do. With electronics, with pipes, and now with our entirely new generation of organ sound, The Classic Series, With Pipes."

Gary Kibble, Director of Marketing, puts it this way: "I got my training on pipes, but have played electronic organs all my life. I could never understand all the argument between pipes and electronics. One has helped the other. For example, refinement of Rodgers organs could only have been made possible by our having real classic and theatre pipe organs to listen to. And to learn from. On the other hand," Kibble added, "look at the improvements pipe organs have gained as a direct result of electronics. Some important contributions that come to mind immediately are solid-state organ consoles, unification switching and computer memory combination actions. Also electronic supplements, such as 32' pedal voices, have expanded the tonal capabilities of pipe organs. Who has room for pipes that stand 32 feet in the air?"

When it comes to talking about how much room pipe organs take, Kibble knows. The first successful combination of the new Rodgers series of instruments with pipes was installed in the Kibble's Portland, Oregon home. "The 32' Bourdon

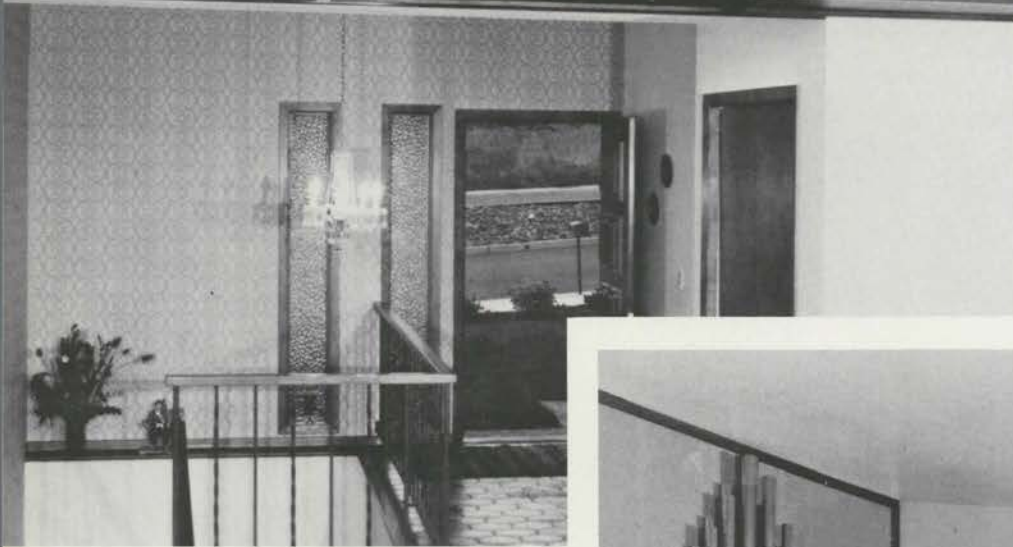
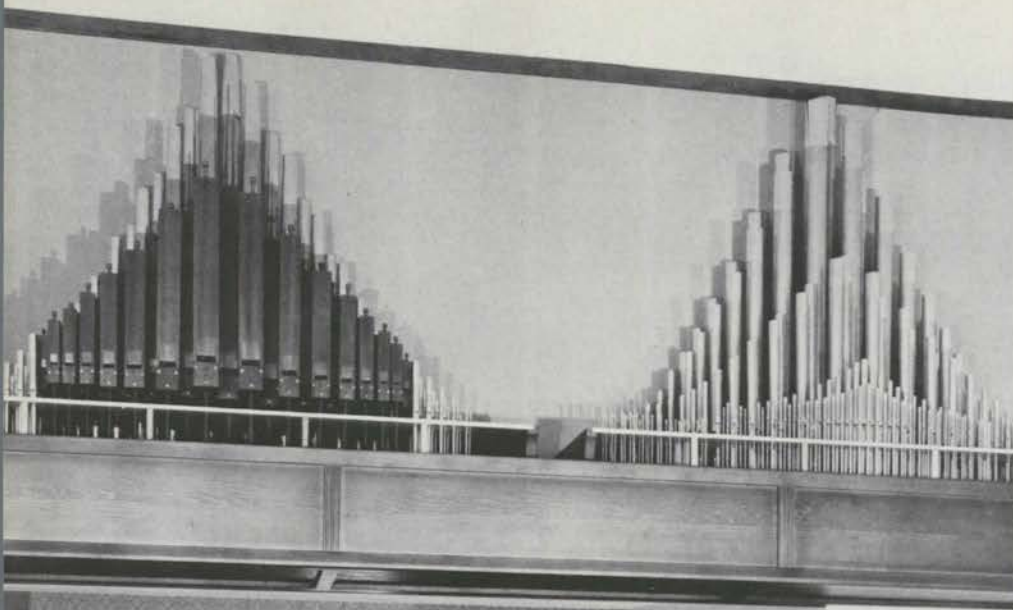
RODGERS ADDING HOMEGROWN PIPES

by James A. Walls

Pipes sprouting in an electronic organ factory! Allan Harrah was instrumental in Rodgers' first successful link-up of pipes and electronics back when Rodgers was combining pipes imported from Italy's Ruffatti Organ Co. Harrah helped design the electronic circuit which makes it possible, at the turn of a knob, to tune all electronic circuits a little sharp or a little flat to match pitches to the small pitch variations which changing weather, temperature and climate cause among pipes. Rodgers also builds the chests for their new venture with pipes. Chests are built from Honduras mahogany.

(Henry Ngan Photo)





voices are pipe powered. The Swell and Pedal Divisions are electronic, although pipe voices may be coupled to the Pedals. Great and Positiv Divisions are unenclosed. "I enjoy seeing the faces of organists who sit down to our instrument," commented the youngish Rodgers Marketing Director. "Many organists come programmed not to like it. That's easy to understand. I must admit, it must be heard and played to be believed!" said Kibble.

This whole business of pipes and electronics getting together got started in 1971 when Rodgers became the exclusive United States representative for Fratelli Ruffatti, pipe organ builders of Padua, Italy. In turn Ruffatti represented Rodgers' line of instruments in Italy.

The evolution of pipes to transistors, then to pipes and transistors together, has become a revelation — a new opening up of the market place that promises exciting results for the fast growing Oregon company. Rodgers logged slightly over one million dollars worth of orders

▲ Pipework for the Rodgers installation in the Gary Kibble home. Wooden pipes are handcrafted from solid walnut by pipemakers in the Rodgers Hillsboro plant. At present, metal pipe requirements are farmed out to reliable pipe manufacturers. Principal pipes are on low pressure, unnicked for open-toed voicing, for what is described as "optimum speech articulation." Rodgers has no plans, so far, for adopting tracker action.

▶ The console in the Gary Kibble home is equipped with computer combination action. The floating Positiv (left) is one of two pipe-powered divisions which complement the electronic voices. The console is constructed of walnut hardwood veneers. Note the non-parallel surface (ceiling) which helps avoid "standing wave" distortion.

literally moves our foundation," says Mrs. Kibble. "The neighbors leave their windows open whenever famous organists visit our home. They say they enjoy getting free concerts."

The organ in the Kibble residence was easily accommodated without tearing the house down. Celeste ranks and some color voices are completely electronic. The Great Division and floating Positiv include pipes. The combination is remarkable. Of 14 voices on the Great, 8 are pipes. Seven of the positiv's 8



for the new electronic/pipe series at a recent dealer showing in Chicago. "And that was only the beginning," commented company Sales Manager, Thod Madsen, "One dealer has already ordered his third instrument since November."

But is it easy to overcome some of the apparent incompatibilities of pipes and transistors? Company Tonal Director, Allan Van Zoeren, replies emphatically, yes! "Quite frankly, before joining Rodgers, I wouldn't touch an electronic organ with a ten foot pole! I thought they all belonged in nightclubs. Pipes and only pipes are what I would associate myself with." Said Van Zoeren.

Then came Carnegie Hall. Rodgers approached Van Zoeren, a noted voicer of some of America's most prestigious pipe organs, to see if he would voice their five-manual organ for New York's famous Carnegie Hall. Van Zoeren accepted, but now admits he took the voicing job in deference to Carnegie Hall. "I wanted the organ they installed to be the finest possible," Van Zoeren stated. "I was startled that electronics could be so convincing. I accepted the position as Tonal Director for Rodgers, moved from New York to Oregon, and am happier than I've been in my whole life."

Immediately upon Van Zoeren's arrival in Oregon, he began working out design ideas with Allen Harrah, Manager of Rodgers' Custom Division. Harrah had been instrumental in earlier successes combining Rodgers electronics with Ruffatti pipes, and worked closely with Rodgers engineers to provide a console control that could instantly tune the electronics to match the pipes (a major consideration that had not been addressed in earlier attempts to combine electronics with pipes by other organ builders).

Having a tonal director who thoroughly understands pipe organs, and engineers who know electronics, this combination has taken off like a duck to water. "WE realize that we're all trying to create an artistic entity that makes beautiful music," says Van Zoeren. And making beautiful music is not a bad thing for any organ company to be doing.

The preceding story was written for THEATRE ORGAN by James A. Walls who does promotional writing

for the Rodgers Organ Co. While Rodgers' pipe effort is currently applied only to classic models, considering the company's leading position in the electronic theatre organ field, we ask: can the swell box with a wind-powered Tibia and Vox to supplement electronic theatre organs be far behind? An inside source says the possibility is being considered. □



Allan Van Zoeren, Rodgers' Tonal Director, "adjusted" to electronic sound sources after helping with Rodgers' Carnegie Hall installation. To date, the firm has no plans for an all-pipe organ.

(Henry Ngan Photo)

This veteran pipemaker works on a wooden flute pipe in Rodgers 67,000 square-foot Hillsboro facility, working according to Aeolian-Skinner pipe scales which Rodgers purchased from the defunct Boston builder in 1974. We'll wager this man could turn out a mean Tibia Clausa.

(Henry Ngan Photo)



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.

While 1977 conventioners are in Chicago and have an idle evening, they might drop over to the Bismarck Hotel, about three or four blocks from the Palmer House, and listen to the refreshing organ music of Barbara Sellers, daughter of Preston and Edna Sellers, two of Chicago's well-known theatre organists of the big era. Barbara has been gaining a steady following at the Bismarck thru her musicianship and sparkling personality.



Sandy Fleet informs us of further changes in the Reginald Foort Moller in the renamed "Spaghetti and Pizza Pavilion" (formerly "Organ Power Pizza No. 2"). It will be recalled that the Pacific Beach installation was enlarged by the addition of an unenclosed Trompette en Chamade, 12 tuned pedal Kettledrums and a six-rank (style D) Wurlitzer located in a separate rear chamber which was playable from either the Moller console or its own 2-decker. Also, the



Sandy Fleet salaams organbuilders Gene Ginder and Wendell Shoberg for the hard work of the Foort Moller. (FOTO i Photo)

reportedly tubby No. 1 Moller Tibia was replaced by a Wurlitzer rank. That was the scene when Doric recorded Foort (the record has since been released). Since then, some important additional changes have been made to make the sound more theatrical, says Fleet.

The Stentor Principal (Diapason) has been removed and replaced by the smaller scale No. 2 Diapason, and a third still smaller scale accompaniment Diapason has been supplied by Moller to fill the No. 2 chest. In addition, Sandy has replaced all tremulants with more theatrical ones built by Moller.

The Style D Wurlitzer chamber has been eliminated (to accommodate the enlarged kitchen) and the pipework moved to the Moller's solo chamber. The Wurlitzer now operates from the Moller's blower.

Also, to meet complaints that staff organists played too loud for the dinner hour visitors, the upper and lower sets of swell shutters have been put on separate circuits so that the lower set can be switched to remain closed while the staffers play. But all swell shutters are operative for concerts. The San Diego ATOS chapter re-opened the house with a concert played by Maria Kumagai on April 25.

Sandy scotches a rumor that he has resigned from the eatery chain's board of directors. "The fact is," says Sandy, "I have increased my stock holdings from 32 percent to

80 percent. I have full confidence in the future of the project."

The interior of the Pacific Beach establishment has changed considerably. Gone are the benches and picnic tables, replaced by dining tables. Self service is also gone; waiters now serve the spaghetti. Next project is the re-opening of the Solano restaurant with a new menu and Rex Koury at the 4/20 Robert Morton for an opener.



From Pasadena, Calif., Bill Reeves reveals a long memory:

"I wonder how many readers will recall Glendale, Calif., in the early '20s? Two organists who played there at the time later became famous. One was Frank Lanterman who accompanied silent movies with astonishing sound effects on the TD & L theatre Wurlitzer. He later became a California assemblyman. Still active, he has a pipe organ in his La Canada home.

"The other was the late Paul Carson, who played at Howe's independent theatre on something like a big church organ which sounded lovely. He even accompanied the vaudeville acts on the organ. My father, City Manager of Glendale then, received a weekly free pass, which I, a teenager, used without fail. I sat in the front row, not to be nearer the show but to take in the artistry of Paul Carson, who also

played at the Presbyterian church on Sundays. Carson later went on to national fame with his around midnight *Bridge to Dreamland* broadcasts."

Thanks for the recollections, Bill. Carson's broadcasts are still remembered and many are still available by mail on Alma records, 18108 Parthenia, Northridge, Calif. 91324.



Back in 1937, a congregation in Salinas, Calif. needed an organ for their church. It was depression time and it was suggested they look around for an unused theatre organ, until they could afford something more appropriate. They latched onto the style 200 Wurlitzer (opus 1887) in the San Francisco Parkside (Taraval) theatre and installed the "stopgap" instrument in their church. The organist was Peggy Godsey Ponting, whose mastery of the instrument endeared her to the congregation. She never hesitated to use the trem'd Tibia and Vox if it would enhance the music. Over the years, church members became fond of their theatre organ. When times were better they built a new sanctuary, and instead of buying an orthodox organ, they moved the "stopgap" Wurlitzer into it. That was in 1950. Over the past three years, Cal. State Fresno student Tom Delay and members of the congregation have added seven couplers and put the organ in top condition, with Dick Villemin re-regulating the reeds and putting on the finishing touches.

But Mrs. Ponting who has been the church's organist for the entire 38 years, decided to retire recently, and her absence is being keenly felt.

"Her retirement has left a considerable void," said one congregation member. Theatre organ buffs owe Mrs. Ponting a debt of gratitude. Actually, it was her musical taste and skills which sold the church members on the theatre organ.



Young organist Lew Williams, back from studies in Europe, is now pursuing a master's degree in organ at Southern Methodist U. and living in Dallas. In March, Lew was confronted with a challenge; he had never accompanied a silent movie, yet he was invited to accompany two



Lew Williams. He discovered that silent movies can be rewarding. (Stufoto)

silent feature films during a movie festival in Dallas. The films were *Show People* and *The Crowd*, the latter being considered a classic by film buffs. The stinger was that the director of both films was present, King Vidor, best remembered for his *Big Parade*.

Says, Lew "I was a little worried, but I was able to see the films beforehand, so at least I knew what action was coming up. It went rather well and Mr. Vidor was very kind. I really enjoyed the experience, especially talking to the college age members of the audience who had never experienced a silent film situation."

The *Dallas Times-Herald* reiterated Lew's reactions, and went further: "... for many in the audience it was the first silent movie they had ever seen — and organist Lew Williams received a standing ovation for his masterful manipulation of mood."



In Los Angeles, Helen Dell was informed that she was to accompany Frank Sinatra on her trusty Conn 651 on the night he was set to sing the National Anthem before a baseball game at Dodgers Stadium. Helen admits she "quaked" a little. We've all heard stories about Sinatra's demands on fellow artists; he's a perfectionist. She needn't have worried. On the night of the game "old blue eyes" showed up in the press box (where the organ is located) and he and Helen had an informal rehearsal. Frank immediately put Helen at ease and she says she now fully understands why he is considered such a charmer. Alas, we have no photo of the two artists be-

cause Frank sang out front under the spotlight while Helen accompanied him from the pressbox.



For the past year, ATOSer Donald Craig Jr., has been playing a Wurlitzer electronic organ between shows at the 475-seat Cinema I in Cincinnati, thanks to the progressive management of Julian Mitford who gained a respect for the TO in his native England.

Don Craig observes, "The modern cinema structures of steel and concrete have a minimum of space (for an organ), are without stages, and have only the barest of decorative enhancement. The automated facilities, as well as the atmosphere, would seem to preclude the romantic environment of the old movie palace. And there are several generations of young persons that have never experienced live organ music in a theatre setting. I was pleasantly surprised to learn the predominantly young audiences thoroughly enjoy the live theatre organ experience and request many songs far removed



Don Craig. His electronic sits in for the real thing so that theatre audiences won't forget.

from the present generation. Over 15,000 persons have been entertained since June, 1976, and their continuing enthusiasm keeps the arrangement going."



George Wright is beaming these days. We cornered him shortly before his May 13 concert at the San



George Wright — "no sale."

Gabriel Civic Auditorium (3/16 Wurlti) and he told us how happy he is to be playing the Chicago Theatre Wurlti on July 4 which will be a CATOE affair taking the place of the customary afterglow. Why was he so moved?

"It's because of my acknowledged admiration for Jesse Crawford. The Chicago theatre organ was one of his favorites. From a sentimental standpoint it's one of the greatest thrills of my career," stated George.

He expects to have a record ready for release by convention time.

"It will consist of selections taped 'live' during my first concert on the San Gabriel Wurlitzer, on one side, and unreleased material played on the late, lamented Rialto theatre 2/10 Wurlitzer on the other. The title may sound a bit corny, but it fits — 'Wright On'," added George.

Any unfounded rumors to dispel? Only one, the persistent tale that George has sold his 3/16 Wurlitzer (or any organ parts) to Lyn Larsen for his home installation.

"I haven't even sold a regulator spring to Lyn," declared George.

George is still looking for a proper acoustical setting for the 3/16 Wurlitzer given him by an anonymous donor, preferably in the Hollywood area.



The New York ATOS Chapter has had some successful Sunday morning concerts at the Radio City Music Hall in recent months. On March 12, Dennis and Heidi James did the honors, Dennis at the 4/58 Wurlitzer, and Heidi on a grand piano which rose on the orchestra lift. In the words of Doc Bebko, "Lots of Gershwin and much variety



Heidi. Some guys would sacrifice their wind supply for her. (Bob Hill Photo)

and they really brought down the house. But, something occurred which never happened in my memory of over 40 years of Music Hall attendance. During "Rhapsody In Blue," the final number, a blatant reed developed a cipher. Dennis capably played over it, but when Heidi's solo parts beckoned, Dennis turned off the blowers, split seconds before and turned them on when his turn came again. This happened three times. If that isn't chivalry, then I've never witnessed it!"



For years our *For The Records* column has been trying to determine why British organists lard their discs so heavily with tunes from the USA's *Tin Pan Alley*. Veteran British organist Reginald Liversidge sent the first reply the column ever had to the query:

"I think it goes back to Jesse Crawford, his early 78s brought us an entirely new concept of producing sweet sounds by means of organ pipes through his then new style of playing — of course with the tremendous help of an Englishman, Hope-Jones! Then the 'talkies' arrived — 'all talking, all-singing, all-

dancing.' But — they were (at first) all American films with American hit songs — *The Broadway Melody* (1929), *Hollywood Revue*, *Movietone Follies*, *Syncopation* (1930). It was during this period that the cinema (sorry, theatre) organ really arrived over here, mostly Wurlitzers . . . These are (memories) of those early days, and are probably the reason we ancient Britons who are still around still play and record many American tunes."

We hope this is the first of many replies to our "mystery." Reg. Liversidge offers a solution in the case of console veterans, but there's still the case of the British organist in his early '20s who dotes on Kern, Berlin, Gershwin, Rodgers Mancini and Bacharach. We'll get to the bottom of this if only . . .



With the publication of *Pipes in a Mobile Home* (THEATRE ORGAN, April-May '77), we thought we had found the ultimate in compact pipe organs. But organist Bill Langford, who is the "regular" at Ye Olde Pizza Joynte in San Lorenzo, Calif., found traces of a smaller, and much older organ on wheels. Bill called our attention to an item which appeared in a recent issue of *Old Cars* magazine describing a 1936 Packard 12 which finished in 4th place in a race for vintage autos held at Ontario, Calif., late in 1976. The Packard revved up to 95 mph. The article



Bill Langford. He 'one upped' the VOX POPper in reverse. (Stufoto)

continued: (the limousine) "was once owned by jukebox king J. Seeburg. Under the hood is an instrument panel controlling the mechanism for the 14-key, air-operated organ. The bellows is in the trunk."

Well, anyway the little wheezer wasn't in a mobile home. So there, Bill Langford!



Mrs. Marvin Cook, enthusiast from Flint, Mich., informs us that the 3/11 Barton, once housed in that city's Capitol Theatre, has been removed, due to the theatre's closing. The instrument has been donated to the Flint Institute of Music, and was dismantled and moved by the Flint Capitol Theatre Organ Club with generous outside help. The club is now installing the Barton and hopes to have it playing by early fall.



Wichita Theatre Organ Inc. has announced concerts for the next eleven months: Reginald Foort on October 8, 1977, then to 1978 with Lee Erwin on March 11 and Billy Nalle on May 27. All three are familiar with the famous 4/37 Wurlitzer, Nalle via his circa 1958 "Swingin' Pipe Organ" record and recent Wichita concerts, Foort because of his engagement at the N.Y. Paramount in 1935 and Lee Erwin due to his 1976 performance at Wichita in the instrument's current home, The Century II Civic Center.



A voluminous contributor to this department is Lloyd Klos. It now appears that Lloyd is talented with more than the ability to use words effectively. He has just been accepted as an associate member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) on the strength of his baseball pep song, "Let's Go, Dodgers," which was introduced at Dodgers' Stadium by Helen Dell.



Early 1977 seemed to be a rather depressing time for the theatre organ movement as several installations were closed, others were threatened with the wrecking ball, and the Kirk of Dunedin, Fla. suf-

ferred a bad fire. Therefore, it is refreshing to learn that what is lost in some places will be made up in other areas. For example, theatre owners Edward H. Bebko (the son of renowned Doc Bebko) and Alan W. Erenstoft have acquired the attractive 1500-seat Palace Theatre in Lockport, N.Y. At a dedication program on March 19, it was announced that the Palace will become a 7-day operation, a 2/10 Moller will be installed (a 2-manual Marr & Colton keydesk is already perched on the console elevator), and periodic vaudeville, country-western, rock and organ programs will be forthcoming. The theatre had a 2/10 Wurlitzer when it was opened in 1925.



Remember them? (Stufoto)

Where are they now? We found them attending one of Bill Thomson's organ seminars (he calls them "Love Ins") near Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and they agreed to pose for this photo. Both have enjoyed very successful careers as theatre and radio organists in the east. Both have prominently chronicled in this publication over the years. Both live in California. He's retired. She remains active in church work and is planning a new recording (she has released several in the past). Can you identify them? If you say they are Irma Glen and Milton Charles you win the Spitzflute's cuspidor.



In this business of playable theatre organs, the philosophy of "win one,

lose one" seems to exert itself often. For example, on Long Island, according to enthusiast Dennis M. Leight, the Beacon Theatre in Port Washington has been "tripled." That action rendered the 3/11 Austin therein unusable. However, the good news is that Leight and Thomas Sarkauskis have been busy since last May restoring the 2/6 Midmer-Losh in the Westbury (L.I.) Theatre. The instrument is playable, but much remains to be done. Volunteers are needed to speed the final work, says Leight. Plans are to use the organ for weekend intermissions.



One of the focal points of the 1972 Convention was the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria which housed a 3/11 Barton. According to Rosa Rio, her concert there on March 26 was cancelled as the organ was being removed prior to the wrecking ball's reduction of the theatre. Even though memories remain of the extensive heat which caused the organ to go out of tune in 1972, we can recollect the concerts which were played by Rosa, Don Thompson and Jean Lautzenheiser. Rosa adds that the future of the Baronet Theatre in Bethesda, Md. is on thin ice, too, and plans are being made for what may be "final" concerts on the 2/8 Wurlitzer there.



Organist Jack Skelly, whose memory is longer than an ostrich's neck, recalls when the New York Paramount Theatre employed three organ technicians: the famed Dan Papp and his assistants, Fred Helmers and Ralph Hitchin. "It seems anytime I was on at the house, it was either Ralph or Fred on duty. There was always a stand-by technician when the studio organ was on the air. One of them was always around mornings. Helmers was quite a jovial fellow. In the later years of the theatre, they may not have had three men, but Dan Papp was there to the end."



The 1976-77 concert season of the Rochester Theater Organ Society has been fraught with extremely bad weather. As an example, the

elements waited two weeks before venting their snowy wrath on March 18 when Rex Koury did the honors at the Auditorium Theatre Wurlitzer. The 850 who braved the elements were bountifully rewarded by one of the top programs of the season. Rex, a hard worker at the console, played accompaniments to two comedy shorts and filled the remainder of his well-balanced program with classical, semi-classical and popular renditions. His easy-going microphone presence was a decided asset on both the Eddie Meath TV show that morning, and at the concert. The attendees can be assured that the famed "Gunsmoke" composer will be back in Kodakville in a reasonable time.



Don Baker. Another one night stand.

(Bill Lamb Photo)

The Orpheum Restaurant in Clearwater, Fla., which opened last August, has closed its doors, possibly forever. Housing a 3/27 Wurlitzer, the place had a memorable opening night, complete with tornado which shattered a large window, soaked drapes and ruined the electrical system, cancelling the evening's second show. It was a blow from which the eatery never recovered. Don Baker had been the organist-in-residence.



It is the war year 1916. The young British seaman, high up in the foretop of the HMS Temeraire, can hardly believe his eyes. Before him is a panorama of war's destruction



Reginald Foort. His new record album includes an appropriately titled medley — 'An Old Sailor's Tale.' (Stufoto)

as British and German battleships wham away at one another, their 12" guns ablaze and the air rent with thunderous salvos. It is an encounter later to be known as the battle of Jutland. Our seaman gulps as a nearby British ship takes a direct hit, explodes, breaks in two and sinks. He clutches his telephone to the control room and shouts the direction of the incoming gunfire. His responsibility is a critical one; he is supplying the British gunners below with vital range correction information, and he admits, in retrospect, that he was "a bit scared." But the the British won the battle and never again would the German "High Seas Fleet" seek an open encounter with the British Fleet. The Germans were simply out-manuevered by the British. Our seaman was later discharged as a full Lieutenant, R.N.V.R., by a grateful country. Now he could get back to his chosen career, music. It would be a magnificent career. His name — Reginald Foort.

Just as she was so overwhelmingly popular in the great days of the theatre organ, and for twenty years afterward as a member of radio's *The Happy Gang*, Toronto's Kathleen Stokes can still get a standing ovation from audiences today. On March 22, the pert lady with bright brown eyes and a sweet smile, observed her 83rd birthday at the Casa Loma and a concert by Rex Koury. The audience soon discovered

Kay. On hand were Bobby Gimby, who served on the Happy Gangshow, and veteran organist Horace Lapp. Kay posed for pictures, seated at the Casa Loma organ which she played at Shea's Hippodrome Theatre years ago. She said that she still practices an hour a day on her electronic at home, and someday she may master "The World Is Waiting For the Sunrise," which was her theme.

A few years ago we ran a Vox Pop about a concert played by Randy Sauls in the high school auditorium at Van Nuys, Calif. Randy's playing was done on a Rodgers electronic but during the course of the evening the veteran silent film organist took note of the covered console of the run-down Robert Morton in the pit and mentioned that it would be proper to get the historic organ back in playing shape.

Apparently, his recommendation took root. In a recent issue of the *Valley News*, columnist Mendenhall told of the efforts of school librarian Hugh Rouse to raise funds for the repair of the organ. He appealed to the alumni, businesses, organizations and students. The community kicked in with \$1905. The school faculty and staff came up with \$1064. Two recent graduating classes totalled \$1000. the repair job, which includes replacement of the console, still



Randy Sauls during the 1972 concert when he put in a plug for a silent Robert Morton. (Stufoto)

needs another \$400 and the student body is raising it.

Repairs and rebuilding are being done by Bill Coffman and Bill Field, of Old Town Music Hall fame.

The 2-deck Morton was donated to the school by the California Organ Co. (then only a few blocks away) in 1916 and has played an important part in community affairs over the years. It fell into disuse when neglect diminished its effectiveness.

Mendenhall concludes, "... no one — but no one — wanted to see the organ pulled out." Chalk one up for our side!

Billy Nalle spent a couple recent weeks in Florida concertizing and was interviewed by Mary Shenk, music critic of the *St. Petersburg Times*, prior to his concert at Manatee Junior College on the 3-manual McManis organ. He explained his ideas on improvisation: "It gives you more freedom to follow your mood, to be creative. It's just more enjoyable." His ability to do this is partially a musical gift, plus the result of intensive training and experience. Nothing would please Billy more than to do a concert in the Tampa Theatre, recently reopened, if a pipe organ is available. He studied with former house organist Eddie Ford years ago and got his first theatre experience before audiences in that acoustically excellent house.

In Westwood, New Jersey there is a devoted group of Garden State chapterites who have been restoring the 2/8 Wurlitzer, Opus 1914, in the Pascack Theatre since November 1972. Sunday mornings finds the little band putting a lot of effort into the project. Among the tasks is literally glueing together a rank of Tibia pipes which they found in a Yonkers, N.Y. theatre, since razed. They were heavily damaged by water, and opened up like "overdone flowers." About 500 pieces were put into cardboard boxes and brought to Westwood. Real jigsaw pipework!

To show the wide disparity of occupations of the crew, two are airline pilots: Bob Quinn and Dick Orr; two are teachers: Joe Vanore and Roy Frenzke; a computer operator, Russ Fewell; and two electronics experts, Ed Unis and Warren Brown. A

couple others have helped out on the 1928 instrument from time to time. Although the Garden State Chapter has but 150 members, it has four restoration and maintenance crews. The other three are in Rahway, Trenton and West New York.



Former ATOS national prexy Dick Schrum is in his seventh year playing a Hammond B-3 at Seattle's Plaid Piper watering hole — that, plus frequent excursions to play the pipes at Pizza and Pipes (3 years) and the more recent Bellevue location. But what intrigues Dick most are his Saturday night Jazz Sessions, wherein Dick and 4 or 5 instrumentalists gather (usually where there is a pipe organ) and regale listeners and dancers with big band, dixieland, soft rock, modern jazz and bossa nova. The usual ensemble consists of Trumpet, Sax, Trombone, Drums and Organ, plus frequent guest instrumentalists.

Dick says, "The musicians are outstanding. The local ATOS chapter loves us because we use pipes. And the musicians are really digging the pipes. We have a whale of a time."

As Saturday night is usually a busy night for instrumentalists, Dick's clan can meet infrequently, so they sometimes get together on a Monday night at the Plaid Piper and jam around the Hammond.



Another theatre in western New York had a "grand opening" recently. After its leasing to two young men from Cattaraugus, N.Y., the new operators of the Hollywood Theatre in Gowanda had an observance on April 1. In a refurbished house with baskets of flowers on the stage and red footlights on the curtain, organist Harold Jolles played a half-hour organlude on the 2/6 Wurlitzer before the feature film. At the end of his stint, there were cries of "More, Harold, More!" Plans call

for the use of the organ often. Its maintenance is in the capable hands of Andy Jarosik.



The organization which has been making a supreme effort to save Buffalo's last remaining motion picture palace, "Friends of the Buffalo," have been dealt a series of severe blows by the winter of 76-77. Beginning in November, snowstorms continuously caused corporal's guard audiences or cancellations at the big theatre in a schedule which had promised a galaxy of entertainment. A ballet production, the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society, a production of *The Barber of Seville* and a Hungarian music and dance group were among those who felt the weight of an unbelievably tough winter which saw over 200 inches of snow pile up in Erie County. About \$50,000 was lost to The Friends due to pre-paid advertising, refunds etc. On top of this was

The Combo: (Top) Gene Allison (drums), Dick Schrum (organ); (Bottom) Pete Carrabba (trumpet), Wayne Torkleson (trombone), Wayne Simon (reeds). Guest drummer (right) is 'Hogan's Hero' Bob Crane. Photo was made during session at Seattle's 'Pizza and Pipes'. The organ is a 3/16 Wurlitzer. (Belston Photo)



\$10,000 damage from broken water pipes and a torn roof above the stage. Budget cuts from governmental sources haven't helped, either. As of the middle of March, things didn't look bright for the future of Shea's Buffalo Theatre.



Lowell Ayars. He hit the concert jackpot. (Stufoto)

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

Music Review

by Walter J. Beaupre, Ph.D.

Al Hermanns, ORGAN-IZING LEFT HAND COUNTER-MELODIES, The Big 3 Music Corporation (available in music stores or Al Hermanns Music Studio, 1120 Union St., Reading, PA 19604, price \$3.50).

Al Hermanns, whose *Organizing Open Harmony* was reviewed in this column recently (Dec.-Jan. 76-77), has published two more "Organ-izing" books. One of them is of rather general interest to any student of pop organ playing who may be having problems apportioning beats where they belong. The second, *Left Hand Counter-Melodies*, is of special interest to the would be theatre organist. In my opinion Al Hermanns has tackled a major problem with his usual directness, skill and efficiency. Teacher/organist Al breaks counter melody into six strategies and then proceeds to demonstrate how each strategy works. Nothing that he suggests violates good, sound theory of counterpoint. Particularly perceptive, I thought, was his advice about using a major seventh "for a counter-melody whenever the melody is the second, third, or fifth tone of the scale." There is nothing "square" about Al Hermanns methodology.

This book, like others in the series,

contains special arrangements of pop tunes which illustrate what Al has been saying. Two are certainly adequate; three are really fine. "Release Me" works very nicely as a demonstration of double counter melodies. "I'm Thru With Love" is a delight to play and sounds more tricky than it is. "When I Grow Too Old To Dream" — once you get beyond the overblown intro — is loaded with integrity. The way Al winds up a tune leaves something to be desired, but perhaps he'll deal with snappy endings in a future publication.

Hermanns, the realist, doesn't avoid asking us to do "sitting up" exercises in his books, but again I found these exercises sensible, pleasant to play and immediately applicable. Keeping counter-melody and rhythm independent variables is the important technical hurdle.

The more of these excellent Al Hermanns "how to" books I see, the more I become convinced that the teaching of pop organ has improved tremendously since we were kids. As for the teaching of theatre style playing, it has surely reached the millenium! □

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See page 10



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With Bob Van Camp and Arthur Fiedler . . .

Moller and Symphony make beautiful music together

by John Clark McCall, Jr.

The theatre organ's role with symphony orchestras is not necessarily a new phenomenon. Jesse Crawford recorded with RCA's Victor Orchestra, many cinema organs like the New York Roxy Kimball and Radio City's Wurlitzers have been heard in ensemble with house orchestras, and more recently, the Wichita Century II and Richmond Mosque organs have been featured in symphonic programs. But it is safe to say there is no precedent for what took place at the Atlanta Fox on March 8, 1977. Not only did house organist Bob Van Camp debut the Moller organ with the nationally acclaimed Atlanta Symphony, he did it under the baton of one of America's greatest virtuoso conductors, Arthur Fiedler.

A benefit for the Fox (which raised over \$30,000 towards the theatre's loan debt), the concert was a complete sell-out with over 1,200 ticket requests turned down. Arthur Fiedler, impresario of the Boston Pops, brought to his guest appearance the verve and "youth" (Fiedler is 83) that have marked his artistry for over four decades.

After a brilliant performance of selections from George Gershwin's *Girl Crazy* in the second half of the program, the Fox organ console was elevated to picture level, Fiedler acknowledged Van Camp, and together the Moller and Atlanta Symphony led the audience — 4,000 strong — in a "Patriotic Sing-Along." Selections included "America," "America the Beautiful," "Yankee Doodle," "This Land is Your Land," "You're a Grand Old Flag," and for a grand finale, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

The organist and organ were in complete accord with the orchestra. This Moller is so superbly voiced, and Van Camp's artistry was so exacting, that it sounded as if the orchestra was suddenly extended a city block in length on either side. The full, rich sound came from everywhere, which only spurred the aud-

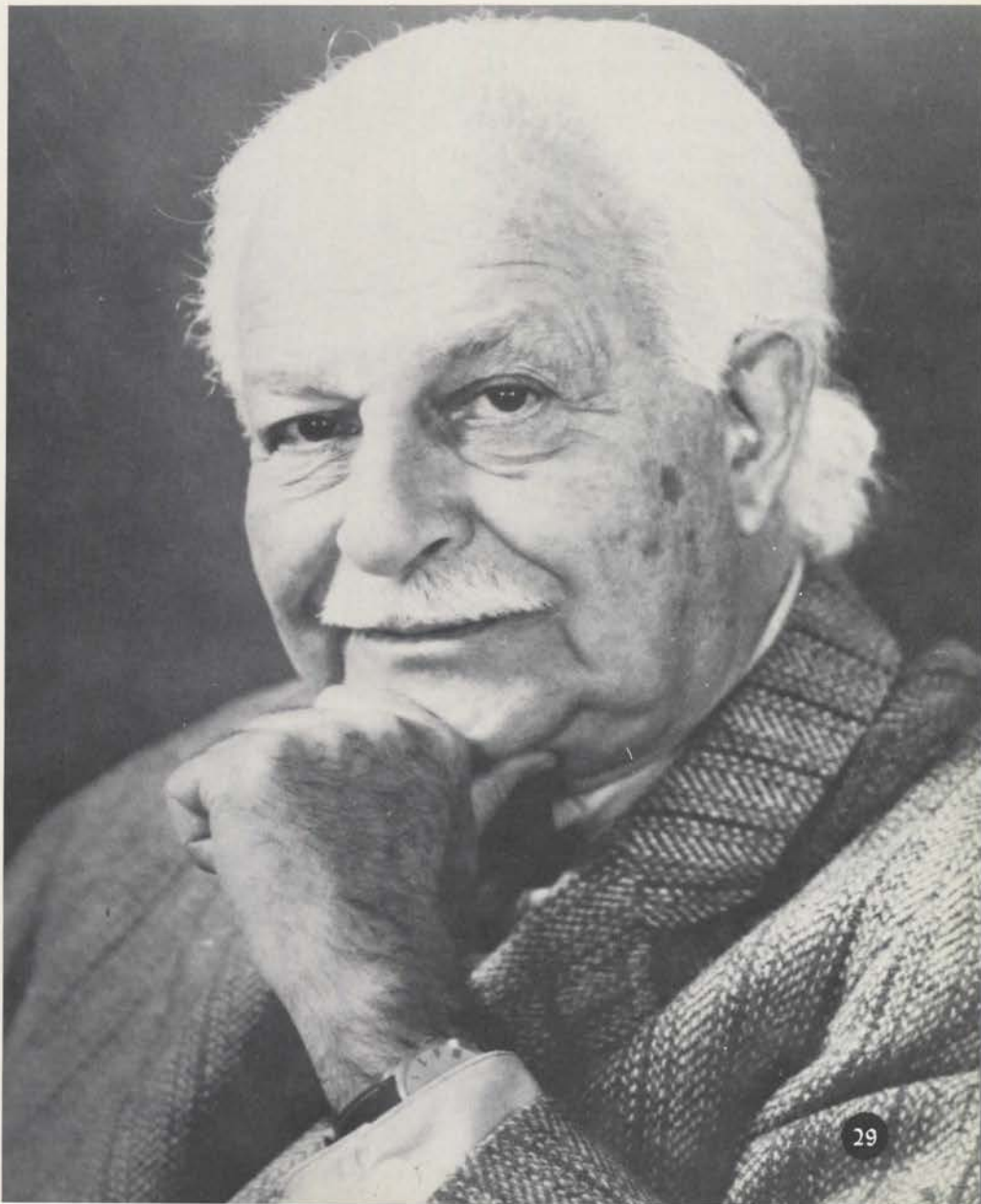
ience to greater participation (Fiedler conducted the orchestra with baton and the audience with his other hand).

The Fox audience was left crying for more — and it was obvious that "more" meant more Moller as well. But the program moved on to its finish — complete with several orchestral encores and standing ovations.

Fiedler's open mind in music — marked by his appearances with Ella Fitzgerald, Chet Atkins, Al Hirt,

and the Carpenters — made the Fox organ's participation a natural and an event that materialized at the conductor's suggestion. In all honesty, it was hard to discern the sound emanating from the organ in contrast to its real orchestral counterpart. This is another testament to the superior qualities of the installation and the console artist. Events such as this make "Saving the Fox" a priority for not only organ enthusiasts, but for devotees of music everywhere. □

Arthur Fiedler



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DAYS



Prospected by Lloyd E. Klos

For the third time, Chicago will host the ATOS Convention next month. As a salute, Jason and I have found nuggets from that city and the surrounding area. References were American Organist (AO), Diapason (D), Exhibitor's Herald (EH), Metro-nome (Met.), Motion Picture Herald (MPH) and Local Press (LP).

Apr. 1916 (D) *The Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. is building a monster unit orchestra for Chicago, and on March 3, there were shown by the American Steel & Wire Co., films taken at the Wurlitzer factory in N. Tonawanda, N.Y. of the organ to be installed in the new Covent Garden Theatre on N. Clark St. near Diversey Blvd. These films were taken by the Essanay Co. and show the tremendous interior works of the instrument, with its masses of electric wires, and the great 4-manual console. The organist displays how one of these great orchestral units is handled.*

The Wurlitzer Co. has just opened a new pipe organ demonstration room at 615 S. Wabash Ave. in Chicago with Mr. JOHN HOWARD in charge. Mr. Howard is a fine organist and proposes to give demonstration recitals every day from 12 to 12:30. The room is handsomely fitted as a facsimile of a moving picture room.

May 1916 (D) The organ in the new Regent Theatre on S. Halsted near 68th St. in Chicago was dedicated by EMMET ROBERT GADERE on April 28. Mr. Gaderer played overture to "Tancredi" by Rossini; aria from "Mignon"; "The Rosary" by Ethelbert Nevin; prelude to third act and "Pilgrim's Chorus"

from "Tannhauser" by Wagner; and "The Chocolate Soldier" by Oscar Strauss.

Oct. 1926 (J) *In introducing to our readers the solo organist of Ascher Brothers' Terminal Theatre, staff organist of radio stations WGN and WLIB, Chicago's AMBROSE LARSEN, we have told you only half. Ambrose has been for years the official demonstrator of the Rudolph Wurlitzer Co.'s Chicago branch, which is quite an honor. Many an instrument would never have seen the light of day had Larsen continued as a professional pianist, for all he has to do is to put on the sobbing tibia on a ballad or do one of the many effects he has originated when, presto! The factory remains 90 days behind with its orders.*

The secret of Larsen's success is in his comic complex, for, like most really fat men, he is always laughing or telling some funny anecdote. Such hilarity is contagious and reflects itself in his music. He is one of the best jazz men in the business, although his marches are equally well played, being marked by a severity in regularity of tempo and brass band-like orchestration.

A group of the "professionals" was gathered around Larsen the other day, discussing musical fits or cynchronism. Finally, Ambrose turned to the crowd with the question, "What would you fellows play if you were to see on the screen a head floating down a river? Nothing else — just the head." One suggested "Floating Along Rag." Another "By the River," and there were two or three who seemed to hit near the idea. Larsen let out a big grin, and said, "No, you're all wet! I'd play 'I Ain't Got Nobody.' During the riot which ensued, one would be convinced of the humor of Ambrose Larsen.

Jan. 1927 (J) RALPH MASON HIX replaced JOHNNY DEVINE at the Biograph Theatre in Chicago when the latter left for his new job at the Mid-West Theatre.

Feb. 1927 (Met.) HENRY B. MURTAGH gave an organ concert on Sunday, January 16 at Balaban & Katz' Chicago Theatre. Hazel Eden, soprano and Mildred Waldman, pianist, also participated.

Feb. 12, 1927 (LP) HERBERT FITCH at the 4-manual Wurlitzer,

and Walter Blaufuss conducts the orchestra as Chicago's Sheridan Theatre opens.

Jan. 7, 1928 (EH) DON ISHAM, "The Flying Organist," is featured at Marks Brothers' Embassy Theatre in Chicago. He was formerly with Jensen Von Herberg, John Hamrick and other west coast circuits.

Jan. 7, 1928 (EH) RAMON BERRY is featured organist at the Alamo Theatre in Chicago. Photoplays and solos are his specialties.

June 1928 (LP) FRANCIS KROMAR is solo organist and PAUL ESTERLY is assistant organist at Chicago's Diversey Theatre.

Oct. 1928 (AO) ETWELL HANSEN is alternating as solo organist in Chicago's Tivoli and Uptown theatres.

Jan. 17, 1931 (MPH) *Ill less than a week with pneumonia, AL CARNEY, well known radio organist of Chicago, died in the Columbus Hospital there at the age of 33. Funeral services were held at St. Patrick's Church in Dubuque, the home of Carney's parents, who survive him.*

GOLD DUST: 11/27 RALPH H. BRINGHAM at Coronado's Barton in Rockford, Ill... 2/28 ARSENE SEIGAL broadcasting over WEBH from Chicago's Uptown... 4/28 BENNIE KREUGER, Uptown; HAROLD COBB, United Artists; LAWRENCE T. MANNING, Lexington in Chicago; FRED ROSLYN, Strand in Robinson, Ill... Joe Duci Bella provides us with names of organists playing Chicago houses in 1928: L. EARL ABEL, Congress; M. AXELROD, McVickers; GEORGE BAXTER, Harper; FRED BECK, Roosevelt; M. BERKENSTADT, Norshore; ALBERT F. BROWN, Granada & Marbro; FRED V. BROWN, Pantheon; J. CASSIDY, State-Lake; MILTON CHARLES, Oriental; DON GORDON, Lawndale; JOHNNY DEVINE, Patio; EDWARD EIGENSCHENK, Roosevelt; PAUL ESTERLY, Diversey; EARL ESTES, Tower; EDDIE FITCH, Sheridan; DEAN FOSSLER, Chicago; R. GEHRING, McVickers; CHAUNCEY HAINES, Norshore.

That should do it until we see you all in Chicago. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

FRED FEIBEL

*"To every man there opens
A high way and a low,
And every man decides
The way that he shall go."*

The lord has blessed each of us with certain special talents. Wisely, he has also given each of us a choice as to what to do with our talents. Some clutch them greedily to themselves, seeking only personal benefit. Others, aspire to develop and use their talents, but are caught in the stream of daily life, drifting back and forth — sometimes gaining, sometimes losing. Many expand their gifts to the fullest, enriching their own lives and those around them. A few great men dedicate their entire lives to developing, using, and sharing their talents, giving unselfishly of themselves and their gifts to all they meet. Such a man is Fred Feibel, this year's (1977) recipient of the "Golden Deeds Award" — a citation given by the Vero Beach Exchange Club.

Let me introduce you to Mr. Feibel, theatre organist, arranger and composer. Fred has been a resident of Vero Beach since 1962. His many accomplishments would fill a book. (See THEATRE ORGAN magazine October 1971, Vol. XIII #5.)

Fred has performed for the people of Vero Beach in over twenty concerts. The entire proceeds of his concerts have been donated to various religious, civic, and educational organizations in this community.

Many people are aware of Fred's wonderful talent, ready smile and charming sense of humor, but few have witnessed his patience and understanding as he works quietly from week to week with the young and with adults. A humble man who can always be depended upon, he has spent countless hours rehearsing with others so that their talents might be shown to best advantage. As a young boy said, while a member of a church handbell choir Fred

directed, "I could never let that man down."

An all-around musician, Fred has written innumerable organ compositions and arrangements. He has had over 100 pieces published. In his concerts in Vero Beach, he arranges much of the music for himself and for other artists, spending months and months in preparation. Fred would be the first to say that his local concerts would not be the successes they always are, were it not for the many local artists, musical groups and others who also donate their time and talents. Supporting him always and managing the many, many details and arrangements is Fred's lovely wife, Lenore.

Fred was Music Director for eleven years at the First Presbyterian Church in Vero Beach. He worked tirelessly with the adult and youth choirs, the handbell choir and guest artists, while faithfully carrying out his many duties as church organist. A number of outstanding special music programs were presented over the years.

Fred was elected to the Hall of Fame of the American Theatre Organ Society and performs all over the country at branches of that society. He is on the music staff at the Indian River Community College. He teaches organ and piano. He is a member of The Friends of the Vero Beach Community Theatre. He is on the Angel Advisory Board. Fred is a member of ASCAP (composer and arranger).

Fred has donated much time and talent to many local religious music programs at various churches.

The hours of pleasure he has brought local audiences in the unselfish giving of his time and talent would alone qualify him for an award, but his philanthropy with the proceeds from the concerts has so greatly

encouraged and aided the arts here in Vero Beach.

Through his concerts, the Riverside Theatre received a grand piano, an upright piano and stage curtains. A cash contribution of \$3650 was also made. Among other things, this provided new speakers and reconditioning of the beautiful organ for the theatre.

The Vero Beach Community Center was gifted with a piano and stage curtains.

The First Presbyterian Church received a piano, choir robes and handbells.

The American Association of University Women was given \$1200 for scholarships.

A project dear to the Feibel's hearts is the "Feibel Scholarship Trust Fund" at the Indian River Community College, which provides perpetual financial assistance for the tuition of worthy music students. Over \$7500 in concert proceeds have been donated to this fund.

No great artist can realize his ambitions and rise to the top of his field without the help and understanding of the woman he loves. Standing by him in all he does, is Fred's wonderful wife, Lenore. "Mrs. Feibel is my manager," he will say with a smile. While Fred is entertaining, Lenore ably handles the many business details. They are blessed with a daughter, Janet Hoffman. Her husband, Oliver, is presently studying to be a minister, and they, too, have a daughter.

How to explain the vast variety of this man's career? . . . FROM PARLOR TO PARAMOUNT . . . TO CHURCH . . . TO CONCERT . . . TO PHILANTHROPY!! Perhaps Fred's own words say it precisely, "IT'S A GRADUAL PERFECTION OF A GOD-GIVEN TALENT." □



Hollywood Cavalcade

Directed by Lyle W. Nash

WHO IS WHERE . . . Laura La Plante should still be living at 75600 Debby Lane, Indian Wells, Calif. . . An Eastern reader says he believes Rosa Ponselle lives at Villa Pace, Stevenson, Maryland. . . Geisele McKenzie, 15824 Woodvale Road, Encino, Calif. 91436. . . Unless she has moved, Florence Vidor lives at 350 Bellino Dr., Pacific Palisades, Calif. 90272.

★ ★ ★ ★

"IT is slapstick at its most choreographic, swift and inventive, beautiful to watch." That is a 1977 review of the 1917 Buster Keaton-Fatty Arbuckle comedy *The Bellboy*. If this 60 year old film comes your way see it. It is also a natural for great theatre organ artists who made the silents come alive.

★ ★ ★ ★

"WAS Norma Shearer really a great actress?" Time seems to have said yes. Her films on the late show still appeal, she won an Oscar competing against Greta Garbo, Gloria Swanson, Ruth Chatterton and Nancy Carroll in 1929-30 and she was a great box office draw. I saw a recent example of her powerful appeal at a private screening of Marie Antoinette (now 39 years old) before an audience of young people (17 to 26). As Marie said goodbye to her children the sobs and tears made the small theatre awash with emotion. I, too, brushed back the tears as Marie turned towards the guillotine. If I never knew what breaking your heart meant, I did then. The adults also were in tears. The critics were only luke warm to the film but the fans rather loved it. I'd say Shearer was as great as they came in her time.

★ ★ ★ ★

SHORT SHORTS . . . Donna Reed, reports a fan from Seattle, lives there but is not retired from films. Is ready for a good part any time . . . Helen Jerome Eddy's film career which began at least in 1916 has a new address: 1428 S. Marengo Ave., Alhambra, Calif., 91803 . . . Try reaching Elsa Lanchester at 1825 N. Curson Ave., Los Angeles, 90046.

★ ★ ★ ★

"MANY ISSUES back you had a clever paragraph on the titles of films in the early days — 1912-1918. Could you recall it for some of us who were not around?" Be happy to. Maybe you mean the bit about such titles as The Curse of Eve, Traffic in Souls, Sin Takes a Holiday, Half Shot at Sunrise and the Romance of Cocaine. Plenty catchy. To me the tops in movie titles was Sight-Seeing Through Whiskey.

REAL NEWS . . . As might be expected, the Walt Disney Archives are the most complete and in depth of any film studio. Of course, the Disney empire is the only studio to be under the control and direction of one man (now his family indirectly) for its lifetime. Among the lore for research is nearly all of the 1,000 Disney films and most of the original 1928 drawings for the first Mickey Mouse cartoon. If a special shot of Walt is needed, there are over 7,500 shots to select from. Unlike other film studios who hoarded their old movies and would not let the public see them, Disney for decades offered copies of many of his pictures to the public and his film became ever more popular. Meanwhile, other studio classics turned into dust and we all lost many happy memories.

★ ★ ★ ★

WHEN the first Dracula came out eons ago Carol Borland played the Dutchess of Dracula. She popped into the news recently but as a professor of psychology at a California college . . . Maxine Elliott, who played on the NY stage with Mary Pickford (they both were children), is making films again. She now lives in San Gabriel, Calif. . . For 30 years C.B. DeMille had a mad on for most of Southern California as a prevue location. He said people were too smart-alecky and did not appreciate his sin, sand, and Bible spectacles. He preferred the midwest to test his films. He hated Pasadena, Calif. as the home of the idle rich and felt folks had taste only in their mouth.

★ ★ ★ ★

MORE ADDRESSES . . . Jean Stapleton, 1547 Club View Drive, Los Angeles, 90024 . . . Barbara Hale, 14155 Magnolia Blvd., Sherman Oaks, Calif., 91423 . . . Contact John Wayne c/o Batjack Productions, Inc., 9570 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212 . . . Uncertain and unchecked: Jimmy Fidler (he of the radio fame of long ago from Hollywood) 111 N. Valley St., Burbank, Calif.

★ ★ ★ ★

NETWORK is a superb movie. You will like it. You will burn with shame at some of the dialogue which is authentic beyond all imagination. Acting and technical aspects are super. Best film I've seen in years.

★ ★ ★ ★

POST Office box 113 Pasadena, Calif., 91102, is where to send any bits and pieces you might want to share. □



The proscenium and organ grills show the Spanish influence. A well-kept theatre, a rarity these days.

On the eve of April 29, the Mt. Baker Theatre in Bellingham, Washington, celebrated its 50th anniversary. Since only silent movies had been shown during the early years of the theatre, a program similar to its opening in 1927, was planned, beginning with a medley of organ solos played by Gunnar Anderson followed by sing-along slides of old pop tunes.

A quartette of singers appeared on stage and entertained with tunes from the past movies and Broadway musicals. The classical guitarist, Tom Patterson, played solos ranging from old classics to exhilarating and tempestuous Spanish music. The program came to a close with a rousing performance by the Barber-

50TH ANNIVERSARY

MT. BAKER THEATRE

The spacious lobby of the Mt. Baker Theatre at the time of the 1927 opening.



shop Chorus of Bellingham.

The story of the Mt. Baker Theatre began in 1927. William Fox had become a leading figure in theatre history and doubled the size of his movie empire by purchasing a large share of West Coast Theatres. Most large cities were monopolized by the Orpheum and Pantages Circuit, so West Coast Theatre chain decided to build an elegant movie house in a smaller city and Bellingham was chosen. This theatre would contain 2,000 seats and have Spanish architecture and old world styling throughout its interior.

The 1927 opening was a spectacular event. Ushers in tuxedos assisted local patrons and dignitaries as they entered the theatre through a lobby filled with flowers. Programs which included two pages of entertainment were given to each person. An orchestra in the pit accompanied each vaudeville act. Last, but not least, the theatre had installed a fine pipe organ and this was played during the showing of the silent movie feature.

The organ, a 2/10 Wurlitzer, Style 215, Opus 1558, was mounted on an elevator. Joy Brown and Gunnar Anderson were the original organists.

After a successful career in Hollywood as recording organist for Universal Motion Picture Studios and resident organist for the Beverly Hills Hotel in Beverly Hills, Gunnar Anderson returned to the northwest and is again organist for the Mt. Baker Theatre. From time to time he gives special Sunday afternoon concerts and has been featured on the same organ for the Puget Sound Chapter. He maintains an 80-foot music studio containing two organs and two grand pianos. He excels in both classical and popular music so his programs contain much versatility and diversified styling.

Anderson is heard weekly over KPUG radio station with his organ music emanating from the Mt. Baker Theatre. In former years, he was staff organist for KVI in Tacoma, Washington, and broadcasted daily on a large Robert Morton organ in the Music Box Theatre. He began playing in theatres at the age of 14 and later became a scholarship student at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

The Mt. Baker Theatre is probably the only theatre on the Pacific coast which is using live organ music dur-

ing intermissions between movie features.

After all these years, this organ is still in use due to the efforts of organ technicians Dick Warburton, Buck Strickland and Jeffrey Fox. □

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

by Lance Johnson

1. I would like to know the difference, if any, in scale and tonality between the Wurlitzer 16' Tuba Profunda and the Wurlitzer 16' Ophicleide and their extensions, the Harmonic Tuba and the Tuba Horn.

Ans. The smaller Wurlitzers used the Tuba Horn which was medium to small scaled and softer than

most tubas. The Ophicleide which was the pedal 16' extension was only slightly louder than a 16' Diaphone. It was voiced quite smooth, mellow and soft. The style 185 (7 rk.) and the style 200 used the Tuba Horn as the only chorus reed instead of the style D Trumpet. We then skip all the way up to the twenty-rank Publix No. 1 where the Tuba Horn is larger scaled and on 15 inches of wind. It is now quite a bit louder and placed in the main chamber. The Harmonic Tuba was a slightly louder rank than the ten inch Tuba Horn on small organs but was even duller in voicing due to the fact that more pipes were harmonic (double length). They were found on larger two-manual organs from ten ranks up to 13 ranks and on small three-manual organs. Tuba scales varied on various sizes of organs.

2. Is there any difference between the Wurlitzer 16' Bass and the Wurlitzer 16' Diaphone? Between the Wurlitzer Diaphonic Diapason, the Open Diapason and Horn Diapason?

Ans. The 16' Bass stop was actually another name for the 16' Diaphone. The Diaphonic Diapason meant that the upper lips on the flues were leathered and the 12 or 18 bass notes were beater generated pipes. The Open Diapason may or may not have leather upper lips and would not have a beater generated bass extension. The Horn Diapason was slightly smaller scaled and brighter.

3. I have been using 2-mil perflex for several years instead of leather on my toy counter and it doesn't hold up as well as leather. Should I try 3-mil? What is your opinion of perflex?

Ans. Perflex was never meant to be used on high pressure systems. It stretches a great deal and will loosen on blow pneumatics. Try either the heaviest grade pouch leather or poly-lon.

4. I recently examined a Wicks-Morton organ in a Denver church. I know that Wicks built organs

Gunnar Anderson at the Mt. Baker console. He played this organ on opening night in 1927 and is again playing the same organ in the same location in 1977.



for Morton. When was this and what were the similarities or differences? The organ looks like a Wicks console, but has Morton relays in it. The chests look like Wicks on top, but there appears to be a Morton style electro-pneumatic action on the bottom.

Ans. I don't know the exact dates that Wicks built Morton organs. If the organ you examined has any electro-pneumatic gear, then Morton made it. If there is any direct-electric action, then this was produced by Wicks. Morton built their own electro-pneumatic system and they were not interchangeable with other systems because Morton made their own magnets, too. The organ in question was likely built by Wicks with Morton supplying those magnets.

5. **What is the best way to strip the insulation from double cotton covered organ wire such as Wurliitzer without nicking the wire and causing it to break at a later date?**

Ans. I use a small needle nose pliers. Just grab the wire and pull gently with only a slight amount of squeezing. It will take practice but the cotton should break loose at the nibs and slide off without nicking the wire. Use the type of pliers that have no teeth.

6. **Can you tell me where to get a schematic wiring diagram for the preset pistons and combination action for a 2/8 Robert-Morton? The cables are wrapped in friction tape and I hesitate to disturb them. The four white pistons, when pushed, cancel, then when released, put down whatever stops are preset in the drawers. The red cancel button is not connected to anything. I'd like to connect the red cancel button.**

Ans. You have raised a very complicated question. In order to find out where the wiring is all going, I would suggest building yourself a simple bell ringer for testing continuity. You will need a small 6 volt ac transformer, a door bell and some #22 bell wire. Connect the primary side of the transformer to a 110 v. source and connect the secondary to the doorbell. To switch the bell, use two

Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

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Fargo, ND 58102

long lengths of the #22 wire and place an alligator clip on both ends. When the two wires touch, the bell should ring. All parts can be obtained from electrical stores and if you have a question on wiring it together just ask the clerk.

It would seem from your questions that the piston buttons may have defective contacts. One contact should be connected in common with the other buttons in order to start the "feed" circuit. The other contact should go to the primary magnet on the piston relay assembly. I'm afraid you're out of luck with that red cancel button. Robert-Morton had this annoying habit of providing red cancel buttons and forgetting to provide a relay for it. You will need to purchase some all electric relays with enough contacts to handle all your stops.

7. **The tone bars and attached resonators of a 49-note Chrysoglott (Deagan) have been stored in an attic where it gets about 100 degrees in the summer. I just discovered that every tubular resonator has a long longitudinal crack. This does not buzz and doesn't appear to effect the tone quality in any way. Could this be expansion due to heat or would it be some other cause? The handbooks on physics show the expansion coefficients if brass and steel (tuning plug) to be almost the same.**

Ans. I can't see the heat having any effect on those resonators. Tubular chimes have been known to crack from aging or being dropped. It sounds like a very hard brass was used and they simply cracked from old age.

8. **Can you tell me where to get a pair of large plates with male and female connectors for large cables to handle roughly 700 to 750 wires?**

Ans. Contact Graybar Electric Company, Inc. 1022 West 8th St. Cincinnati, Ohio 45214. (513) 621-0600. Ask for their catalog on Amphenol Telephone Products Catalog ATD-1.

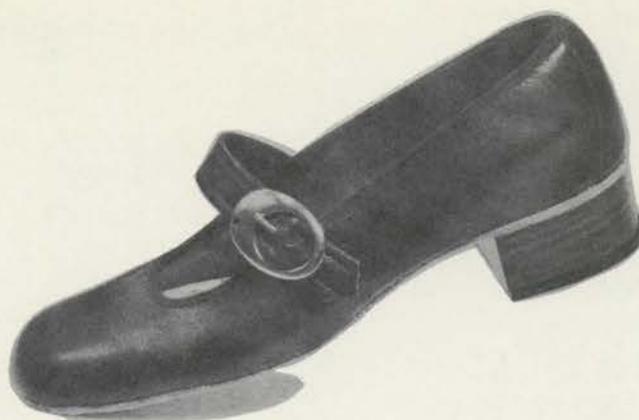
9. **I have an old Kimball church organ built around 1885 in which the 16' Gedeckt speaks very slowly. Increasing the wind overblows the pipes. There seems to be no consistency in wind gap dimensions leading me to think that some of the blocks have swollen or shrunk altering the wind way. What do you suggest?**

Ans. Your problem suggests massive warpage. Chances are the church got very dry in the winter and humid in the summer. Wood joinery and glueing techniques were a far cry in those days compared to what is built by the organ industry today. The joinery techniques that were used were mainly the European style of pipe making since many of these firms imported pipe makers. You might try asking Durst at Erie, PA, if they will take the pipes and re-voice them. They would do this on a time and material basis of course. Also, check your pipes for loose stoppers, cracked bodies, leaking mouth caps, etc. □



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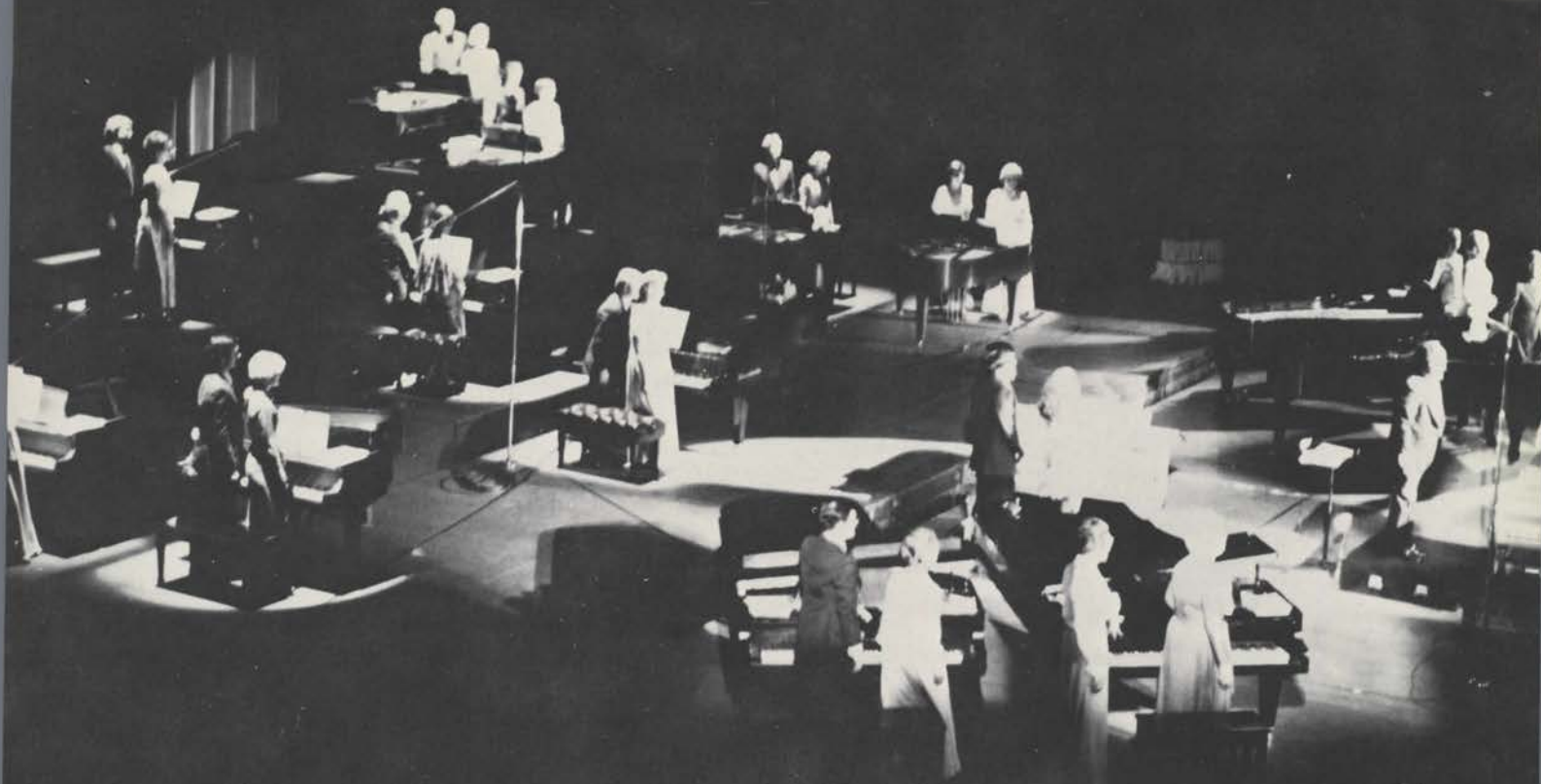
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heresy in atlanta

by James K. Jobson

Preserving a theatre organ for posterity is no small undertaking, regardless of how you look at it. But preserving an entire theatre that houses a monstrous 4/42 Moller is quite another thing. Atlanta Chapter decided long ago it would rather have the "Mighty Mo" right where it is than remove it to another location. That decision has led to efforts in all directions to raise money — lots of money. \$1.8 million, in fact. Just as politics has strange bedfellows, our dilemma has bred the oddity of all time — a *Piano* concert sponsored by an organ society!

There are few times in the lives of most of us when unusual elements fall into place at a given time to produce some beneficial circumstance. In our case, Atlanta Chapter has a member, John Clark McCall, Jr., who is employed in the Music Department of Georgia State University where one of the professors, Dr. Cary

Lewis, is a former student of world-renowned pianist Eugene List. List has long been known for his phenomenal keyboard artistry, and his teaching is reflected in Lewis' amazing technique.

It was a chance encounter between John McCall and Cary Lewis that brought up the subject of two so-called "monster concerts" Mr. List had put together in the past. One at Eastman School of Music drawing from the talent of staff and students, and the other at Radio City Music Hall in March, 1973 under somewhat the same conditions with the addition of E. Power Biggs at the Wurlitzer. In the first case, the concert was published by Columbia Records in SQ-Quad (No. MQ-31726). In the

second, the concert was produced by Columbia but no recording has thus far resulted.

In their casual conversation, McCall and Lewis pondered on whether a similar concert would be mounted in Atlanta, and if so, how? Upon reflection, they realized all the elements existed here to produce such a concert, but for the unknown factor of underwriting costs of advertising, artists' fees, union contracts, etc. After all, a state university has no reasonable basis on which to produce such a concert except as it will enhance the education of its students.

At this point, the executive committee of Atlanta Chapter was briefed on the possibility and asked if the chapter might present the concert at the Fox Theatre as a benefit. Those in that discussion were only vaguely aware of the magnitude of the venture. No one can know its enormity without having experienced

Above: John Demos, conductor, acknowledges the enthusiastic audience response to a rousing performance of Von Weber's overture to *Oberon* by the Colossus Company. (Tammy Ford Photo)

it. So, in all our naked innocence we agreed to mount the project provided the Music Department would supply the personnel and provided Mr. List could be placed under contract as the headline attraction. They would, and he could! Many phone calls, including some overseas where Mr. List was touring, brought agreement on a date the theatre would be available and which would be suitable to the performers — April 3, 1977. That gave us only 105 days to assemble the program, prepare additional music arrangements, recruit personnel, scrounge 12 grand pianos (in addition to the 3 at the Fox), design and produce advertising, decorate show windows at the theatre and arrange for media coverage. With an \$8 top on ticket prices, about 1200 patrons were needed to break even. We had drawn almost twice that number for organ concerts, so there was little worry about ticket sales. We counted heavily on the population of piano students and teachers. And after all, with 60 performers on stage, their family tickets would insure against loss!

And so this is how it came to pass the Atlanta Chapter sponsored a *piano* concert. But it was not *totally* a pianoforte extravaganza. In the program at Radio City, E. Power Biggs had played some organ solos. Our program would integrate theatre organ into some piano selections. Ronald Rice, who teaches organ at GSU had previously played the Fox Moller and it was love on the first note. Bob Van Camp would participate, and agreed to arrange a couple of Scott Joplin numbers for organ/piano performance. Rice arranged a Paisiello concerto for harpsichord, with the orchestral parts transcribed for theatre organ. The finale was "Stars and Stripes Forever" arranged by Rice for organ based on Morton Gould's version for pianos. In addition, Rice included a classic organ solo and teamed with Bob Van Camp to present P.D.Q. Bach's "Toot Suite" to give the audience a taste of the versatility of a theatre organ.

When the program was finally worked out, only one number duplicated the recorded Monster Concert — the Shultz-Evler/Chasins arrangements of Johann Strauss' "Blue Danube." Louis Moreau Gottschalk,

the granddaddy of all piano monster concerts in the 1850's, was well represented with "Printemps d'amour," "The Siege of Zaragosa," "The Banana Tree" and his arrangements of Von Weber's overture to *Oberon*. One of the most charming pieces on the bill was Victor Savant's reconstruction of the "Siege of Zaragosa." This performance was a premiere in America from fragments discovered in Europe, the final movement having been completed only two days prior to public performance! Mr. Savant flew from Cincinnati to participate in the program.

The logistics of such a program are incredible. Various music arrangements require a variety of players. For example, one selection may use one pianist at each of 10 pianos; another may be scored for 20 pianists at 10 pianos. Arrangements also had to be conformed to the physical layout on the stage to prevent an imbalance in sound. John McCall, producer and Cary Lewis, musical director, worked out these details well in advance of on-location rehearsal at the Fox.

Between Tuesday and Saturday mornings prior to the Sunday performance, Rich's Department Store delivered 12 grand pianos, including the two new Bosendorfer concert grands, one of which was a \$36,000 Imperial. The remainder were Stein-

way concert grands and Kimballs, augmented by the house pianos, two Baldwins and a Steinway concert grand. Rich's not only loaned the pianos, but provided transportation both ways and tuning, all at no cost. Theirs is the only Bosendorfer Imperial in the western hemisphere available for concert rental!

Rehearsals began at 10 a.m. Tuesday and were interrupted by other shows in the theatre until Saturday when another session from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. completed rehearsals of performance, staging and lighting. Touch-up tuning and final rehearsal was scheduled for noon Sunday until the house opened at 2 p.m. Performance began at 3 p.m.

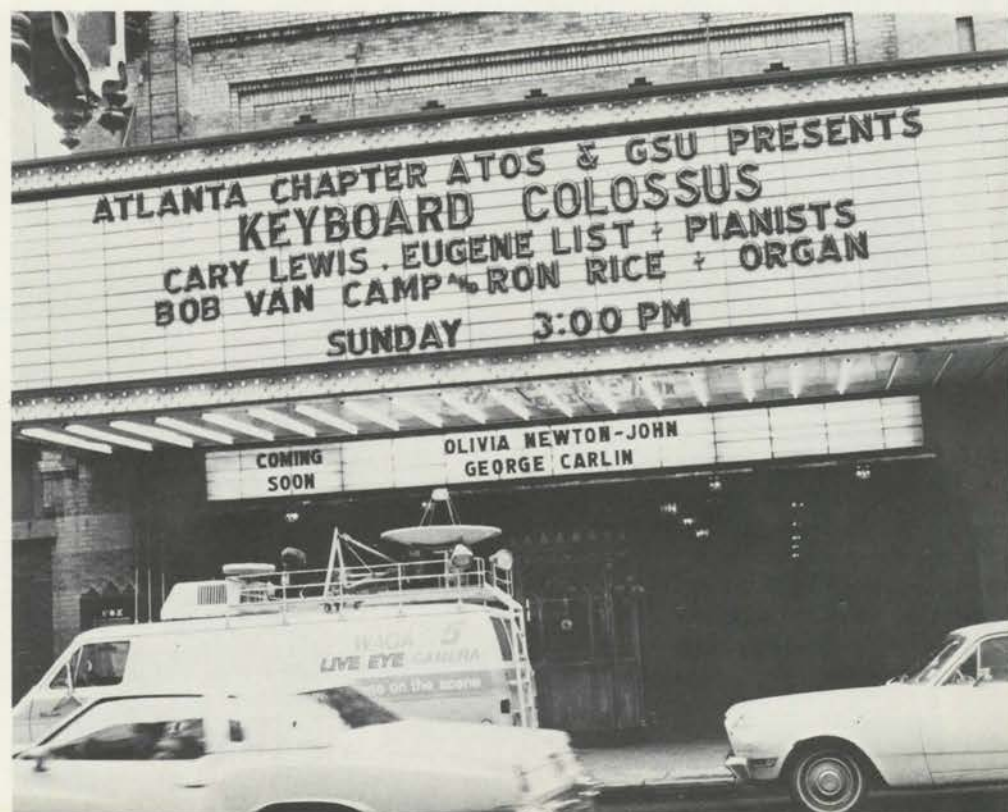
Performing personnel included 30 pianists, one harpsichordist and one organist from GSU faculty and alumni, plus Mr. List, Bob Van Camp and conductor John Demos. In addition, 26 GSU students were used in the two Scott Joplin numbers assisted by Bob Van Camp.

All the performers from GSU donated their services. Union members were paid scale, but unanimously endorsed their checks to the Fox Benefit Fund. Mr. List generously performed at a substantially reduced fee.

A most unusual aspect of this affair was the smoothness with which rehearsals and presentation took

House Organist Bob Van Camp is convinced the Keyboard Colossus was the most fantastic and elaborate entertainment ever staged at the Fabulous Fox, April 3, 1977. TV coverage was by Channel 5's "Live Eye."

(GA. State Univ. Photo)



place. It is almost unheard of to assemble 60 musicians and maintain harmony among the personalities. But there are no "prima donnas" in the GSU Music Department. It was complete cooperation and subordination of personal ego throughout to produce some of the most fruitful rehearsals and polished performances one could imagine. This was due in great measure to the skill in John Demos, conductor *par excellence*, who in real life is assistant professor of music and conductor of the GSU Band. There was some nervous anticipation of Mr. List's arrival only two days prior to the performance. Perhaps he might have different musical ideas. But no. He is the most charming and unassuming of all star performers — almost to the point of condescension. He was "one of the family" from the moment he arrived.

The result of all this organization and effort? Well, John McCall is now known as John *Gottschalk* McCall! Atlanta has discovered it has in Cary Lewis a solo pianist second to none, with particular facility in the technically demanding Gottschalk literature. John Demos is now a conductor to be reckoned in the top echelon. The GSU Music Department was given a showcase in the city it serves to display faculty, students and a high degree of scholarship. Atlanta Chapter had a ball. We worked like h---, but in that our group thrives. And no one enjoyed the dramatic staging of 15 pianos, harpsichord and organ on an 80 x 38 foot stage with five lifts any more than chapter members.

And how did the performance go? We do not have a qualified critical opinion since Atlanta newspapers' music critic was performing! The audience was obviously entranced. When that huge Moller console rises from the depths, bathed in a solo spot, Atlanta audiences sit quietly and pay attention, for they know pure musical ecstasy will be theirs. But the most dramatic moment came with the second selection, the overture to *Oberon*. The house was dark. The orchestra lift came into view with five concert grands and the conductor, individually spotlighted, as the music developed, the state curtain parted to reveal two additional pianos in front of a scrim lighted with red, white and blue



Eugene List, world-renowned concert artist who records for Columbia, Vanguard and Turnabout. List is known for organizing "monster concerts" of which the Keyboard Colossus is by far the largest and most elaborate.

spots. Further musical development was followed by raising the scrim to reveal four more individually spot lighted concert grands. Later in the selection the final three grands were lighted on the rear lift, revealing the entire complement of instruments and performers. The audience appeared too overcome to respond within the selection as the scene unfolded, but burst into thunderous applause at the finale. It was a respectful and highly appreciative audience of about 3,000 patrons who simply could not restrain themselves when, in the development of Gottschalk's "Banjo," the strains of "Dixie" could be detected.

The concert performance was professionally taped for delayed broadcast on WABE-FM stereo on April 30, 1977 at 9 p.m. A highlight disc recording can be made available to ATOS members provided demand is sufficient to defray expenses plus union recording payments. You may make your wishes known (no money yet, please) by writing to the chapter at P.O. Box 76404, Atlanta, GA 30328. While this is a "live" concert recording, the performance is unique.

Oh, yes! The box office. On a rainy, dreary day with dire predictions from the Weather Office, ticket sales filled over 3/4 of the house, with

a net of some \$8,000 after expenses toward saving the "Mighty Mo."

Closing Chord

E. Power Biggs, world-renowned concert organist, died March 10. He was 70.

Born in Westcliff, England, he received his education in Hurstpierpont College and the Royal Academy of Music. Coming to the United



E. Power Biggs

States in 1930, his debut was at New York's Wanamaker Auditorium in 1932.

Though primarily a concert organist on "straight" instruments, he was not unfriendly to the theatre instrument. He wrote the jacket notes for Ray Shelly's memorable recording on the Detroit Fox Wurlitzer in 1961, and within the last few years, made appearances at Radio City Music Hall.

His last public appearances were in two concerts at the 1976 AGO Convention in Boston.

Harry Everett Rodgers, Boston area theatre organist, passed away early in 1977 in Florida. He was 87.

His colleagues included Francis Cronin, Roy Frazee and Arthur Martel, and he was featured at such houses as the Scollay and Washington Street Olympia in Boston; the Central Square in Cambridge, and the Uphams Corner Strand in Dorchester. He also performed opening night presentations at Boston's Keith Memorial and Paramount theatres.

His radio credits were obtained over WNAC, WHDH and WLAW. In latter years, he performed many times on the ex-WNAC Wurlitzer, which was installed at Babson College in Stoneham, Mass.

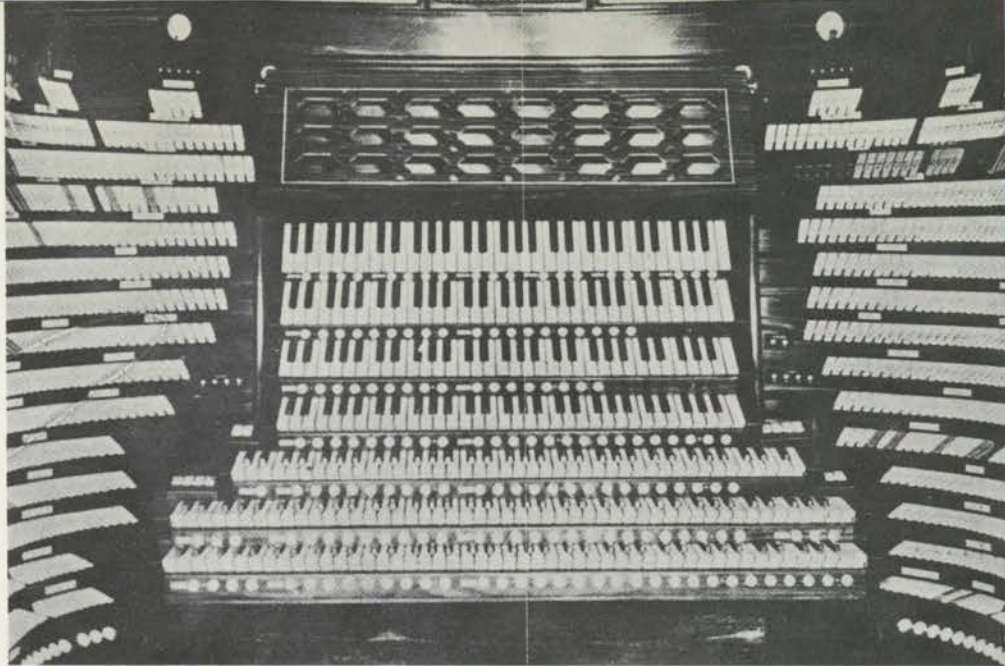
Richard H.M. Kullberg, New England theatre organist, died March 11. He was 65.

Mr. Kullberg was born in Providence, R.I. His advanced education was at Northeastern University in Boston and the Berklee School of Music. His early theatre organ training included a period with Jesse Crawford, and he also studied with Emil Velazco.

He performed in much of the Rhode Island area, including Loew's State in Providence, and a small theatre in Lansdale. He also performed in New York's Roxy Theatre.

When in London during World War II, he played several theatre organs including the Trocadero. Returning to the states, he was appointed staff organist for Loew's Theatres. In more recent years, he was a teacher of organ.

Mr. Kullberg is survived by his wife Inez, two sons, two grandchildren, a brother and three sisters. □



Console of the 7/455 Midmer-Losh.

Citizens Group to Restore Convention Hall Organ

by Charles Librizzi

In Atlantic City, an attempt to restore Convention Hall's pipe organ believed to be the world's largest, was launched yesterday by Atlantic City Renaissance, a citizens group.

Curt Haessner, of Sweetwater, who has been studying the organ design for the past year, estimated it would take \$300,000 to bring the instrument back to full working order. Currently, only a portion of the organ can still be played. It was built in 1929 by Midmer-Losh Inc., Merrick, Long Island, N.Y. for \$500,000.

Haessner said an additional \$300,000 is needed to seal the hall's seven-acre domed roof to prevent moisture from further damaging the 33,112 pipes divided into 455 ranks placed high up in the auditorium.

Howard K. Persina, hall manager, said there are no municipal funds available for the restoration, but the city has a federal grant application pending for repairing the roof.

John A. Petale, member of the citizens group, said it has arranged with Haessner, 41, chief organist at the 60,000-member Church of St. Joseph

of the Palisades, West New York, Hudson County, to record an album of musical selections on the organ as a fund raiser.

"There are seven chambers which are not playing and we are only using a fifth of the instrument but what is working is about equal to what is heard in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York," Haessner said.

Petale said the album, expected to contain songs connected with the resort such as the Miss America Pageant theme and "On the Boardwalk in Atlantic City," is being produced by Rip Griffith of Milmay.

Griffith, head of his own recording company called Alphasound, said the pressing will be done in Nashville.

Singers Becky Bobbins, Ray Armstrong and Sonya Ruby, all from the resort area, also will be heard on the album.

Mrs. Emerson L. Richards, wife of the late senator from Atlantic City and the man who designed the organ, expressed her appreciation at the effort being made to restore the instrument.

"At one time they wanted to scrap it and put an electronic one in its place," she said. "The senator would have turned over in his grave." □

Reprinted through the courtesy of *The Evening and Sunday Bulletin* of Philadelphia.

MORE PROBLEMS

by John Muri

Last year in the *New Yorker* somebody said that if you were serious about serious things, people would dislike you. You're supposed to be serious only about unimportant things. Oh, yeah? Then how are we ever going to get action on our perennial gripes? Take one problem that some of our members are having. Since they have pipe organs installed in their homes they never know when someone will be pounding on the door asking to come in and try the organ, without calling earlier to find out if the owners are busy. One fellow informs me that people come in without notice, plop themselves down at the organ and blare away for two hours. They don't care whether he wants to read, see TV, go out to the movies, or go to bed.

It is the same lack of consideration that prompts people to rush up to an organist before he has had a chance to leave the console for his intermission. They follow him to his dressing room and remain until it's time to return to the auditorium. Some groups brush off these conversation-ists by using a flying guard to escort the organist to his dressing room and stationing interference at his door. It ought always to be a standing rule: no visitors backstage. While we're on the subject, we must mention that a few of the newer organ auditoriums have no backstage dressing rooms. Some of the new-comer entrepreneurs (as well as some of the old-timers) are asking the organist to walk through the audience, out the lobby, and upstairs to a makeshift rest-room, with only cold water. That ought not to be!

Another problem is the bustling about of personnel before a show, back and forth in the auditorium, on and off the stage, with last minute pounding and yelling to the balcony and hasty re-arranging, done sometimes with a display of either desperation or considerable importance. A

quiet auditorium when an audience enters creates an aura of expectancy; arrangements made while the audience enters suggest confusion and uncertainty.

A related problem is the master of ceremonies who gets microphone-happy and talks too much. He helps wreck the aura by giving substantial commercial pitches about the society putting on the show and about the next concert, sounding something like this: "Folks, tonight's show is going to be great, but wait until you hear our artist next month!" That's a dandy morale builder for the soloist of the evening.

A real killer is the local organist who marches down to the console at the end before the soloist has left the auditorium, sits down, and starts doing his thing. In an instant he has destroyed any effect the soloist has created. Every group putting on concerts should make sure that the organ is turned off the instant the concert is over. It might be a good idea to pull the fuses.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: programming is a problem. If you're a soloist and have put together a good arrangement, work up something else like it as a substitute, because sure as shooting somebody is going to steal it and use it on his own programs. Very likely he will over-use it, so you'll have to write it off for keeps. One joke circulating among us is: "If you stop stealing my George Wright arrangements, I'll stop stealing your Buddy Cole arrangements."

I think soloists ought to respect each others' repertoires. They should not use pieces that they know someone else is using as a specialty, par-

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

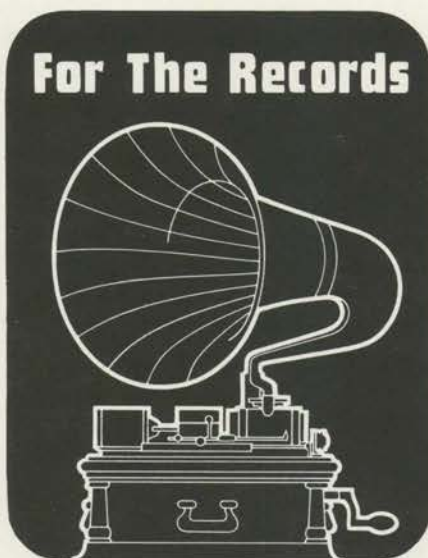
ticularly a medley, a novelty, or an arrangement. One might play a given composition, like "Quiet Village"; Wright's recording has had a long run now, but one should still avoid being a copy-cat and use one's own registration, tempos, dynamics, and interpretations. It's time also that we play "I Love to Hear You Singing" in a version other than Crawford's.

The same goes for the Jig Fugue and the Prelude and Fugue in D minor, too. We've been having a rush or a rash of Bach lately, and I wonder if somebody isn't selling us a bad bill of goods. Bach is decidedly NOT theatre organ. It never was; organists playing that material would have been fired in a hurry. Bach at our concerts is a new phenomenon — an old composer sold in a new format dressed up in rhinestones. The Bach influence has been strictly AGO for many years. In the forties, *The Diapason* printed an annual list in March of the performance-frequency of organ music. A typical entry appeared in the 1948 issue. There were 2328 Bach performances contrasted with 434 of Handel, 319 of Franck, and 312 of Vierne. It is the same story in all the other years. There is a Bach cult, if not an obsession. Study the files over the years and see how often Virgil Fox has played "Come Sweet Death," "Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring" and the D minor pieces. You have to see it to believe it. It comes down to this: you can get away with playing the same stuff for forty years if you become part of a cult. Theatre organ buffs don't make up a cult yet. They haven't yet established a canon of repertory.

How do we develop it? I don't know. One of our staunch followers tells me that he sits down at the organ at home, looks around for a chord, and when he finds a good one holds on to it for a while. In 1943 a young lady went up to an organist in a saloon and asked him to play the theme of "Dad's Old-Fashioned Root Beer." Recently I heard an organ arrangement of the Mickey Mouse Club song. Of such stuff is our tradition made.

But we must not be too serious. After all, we must remember what the man said in *The New Yorker*. So let us quote from *The Diapason*, which in 1940 reported the manager

of a Kansas City (Mo.) chicken-house (population 10,000) saying that not only do chickens like pipe organ music, but that the music improves their egg-laying capacity. In 1938 we read (again *The Diapason*) about the installation of a small electric organ in a fine new home. A visitor asked the lady of the house whether she played; she said she didn't. The guest then asked if it was the children who were learning. She answered in the negative, but then she added, "But the Fuller Brush man comes in and plays quite often." Oh yes, Oscar, our tradition is growing by leaps and bounds. □



JUST PLAYIN' JANE. Jane McKee Johnson at the 3/17 Wurlitzer in Tacoma's (Wash.) "Pizza & Pipes." Angulus (stereo) No. WR-5144 \$5.95 postpaid from McKee Organ & Piano Center, 5915 6th Ave., Tacoma, Wash. 98406.

The USA's Pacific Northwest has always been an inspiring source of theatre organists — Oliver Wallace, Jesse Crawford, Don Simmons, Jonas Nordwall, "Ron and Don," and Dick Schrum, names which come immediately to mind, belong in a list which could go for pages. While many, in the past, sought their fortunes far away, others did their playing at home, as did Jane McKee Johnson, our "Playin' Jane." On hearing this recording, her initial disc release, we can't help asking — where has Jane McKee been all these years?

The instrument, too, has had a long career. Originally installed in the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Paramount in 1930 as either a style 235 or 240 (11 or 12 ranks), it came to Tacoma via Dallas. Along the way somewhere, it was enlarged to 17 ranks, the added pipes most likely being solo and color reeds. Whatever the changes were, the instrument, as recorded, exhibits none of the blatancy of the usual pizzery organ. Or perhaps its the organist who knows how to make it speak with warmth and tenderness, as she does during "Yellow Days." This selection alone is worth the price of the record. On some tunes she plays "pizza style" with all the noisemakers in evidence, but mainly she presents concert arrangements of the varied selections. Her one tango is pure "Valentino," the polka potpourri ("Whoop de Doo") is solid corn, and her marching band ("Under the Double Eagle") might be led by a guy named Sousa. Each tune is treated individually and delightfully, with much registration and mood variety. What we believe to be 2nd touch leakthroughs result in

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

what seem to be unplanned "emphasis effects" which may have some shock effects but in no way mar the music. Jane's playing is always neat and accurate.

We are informed that most of the excellence of the Tacoma installation is due to the combined skills of Terry Hochmuth and Bill Carson, who set the organ up in a building especially designed to show it off to best advantage. They have succeeded admirably.

The other selections are "It Had to Be You," "Fiddle Faddle," "Feelings," "The Nearness of You," "Music Makes Me," "Ecstasy Tango," "It's Impossible," "Don't Blame Me" (a beauty), "June is Bustin'



Jane McKee Johnson at the 3/17 Tacoma Wurlitzer. She plays the Sunday-Monday stint at "Pizza & Pipes."

Out" and "If I Loved You."

Jane's playing defies classification, Sometimes it's easy listening, then majestic, then super sentimental, then lilting. It's pizza music only when she wills it, and that's rarely. It's a fine variety show played on a most attractive instrument.

WALTER STRONY PLAYS THE CHICAGO THEATRE WURLITZER. Stereo. \$6.75 postpaid from Walter Strony, 1570 No. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53202.

Much of the excellence carried in these grooves must be credited to the CATOE crew which undertook the rehabilitation of the 4/29. This feat has been chronicled over the past two years in this publication, but lest we forget, let's toss in a few names — Dick Sklenar, Bill Rieger, John Peters, Bill Hansen, Joe Duci Bella, Scott Smith, Don Matson and many others, including theatre manager Peter Miller.

With such well-deserved credits out of the way, we can turn attention to organ and organist. The restorers have done their work well; the sound is in turn, mellow and sharp. There's always the presence of Jesse Crawford in the over-all sound, and with good reason, because Jesse first hit the big time playing it, and did some honing of his own to adapt the instrument to his style of playing.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time the instrument has been commercially recorded since the Marsh, '78s played by Crawford were released in the mid '20s. To Crawford, they were an experiment, and they convinced him that the "big hall" sound was not for him. Thereafter, his records were miked in the closeup perspective of studios. His reasoning was probably correct for the time, considering the limitations of a craft which had just converted to electrical recording, after 25 years of playing music into acoustical horns, a system that compromised both the organ's frequency range and tonal finesse. But we are digressing, although history is fascinating.

Our point is that if Crawford had then had a recording engineer with the equipment and skills of Robert Schulein, who recorded the Strony

album, the whole Crawford legacy of recorded music might be vastly different (e.i. records made on the N.Y. Paramount Theatre 4/36 instead of the 4/21 studio Wurlitzer). Schulein always maintains a good balance but it is when Strony pits a brass chorus against tinkly percussions that Schulein's skill is miking a large organ, without losing musical perspective, really shines. Recording is first rate throughout.

We have left Mr. Strony until last, on purpose. We first encountered his musicianship when he was 10 or 11, during a Chicago-based ATOS convention. He looked like a tiny dot seated at the enormous expanse of stopkeys and manuals which comprise the Chicago Stadium 6/61 Barton console. His music was uncomplicated but cleanly played with no showy diversions. This would be a lad to watch. Later we exchanged considerable correspondence; Walter had the boyish dream of building a tracker action theatre organ. Fortunately, this ambition was lost in the process of growing up, and the Al Melgard pupil concentrated on sharpening his musical acumen. Now Walter Strony has come of age, and he has fulfilled our musical hopes. There is ample proof in these grooves.

He opens with a lively salute to ATOS' 1977 convention city with an upbeat "Chicago" and "Chicago Is." In the former he employs some interesting "how'll he get out of the harmonic cul-de-sac?" suspense harmony. But get out, he does — and gracefully.

"Send in the Clowns" is a mournful, repetitious ballad which points



Walter Strony (Stufoto)

up the "Pagliacci" aspects of clowning. Walt makes the most of sparse material by following the ballad treatment with a brief bolero segment.

If you like Crawford's "Confessin'" and "Where the Shy Little Violets Grow," you'll like "You Don't Have to Tell Me." There are marked similarities in treatment as well as material. Walt wraps it up nicely.

Of course, "I Love to Hear You Singing" is the familiar Crawford arrangement, but with somewhat stouter instrumentation (or is the Chicago theatre organ just naturally big sounding?) Jesse would approve of the Strony rendition.

"The Man I Love" has some delicious moments. A somewhat distant brass melody line is fondled by what must be the loveliest of Tibias. The subtle beauty is broken briefly for a bravura treatment of the verse.

Like Lyn Larsen, Walt Strony has discovered the old Viennese operetta music of Oscar Straus. It's a relatively vanilla treatment of schmaltz, but pretty — "My Hero."

The first cuts on both sides open with a tremendous cymbal crash which sounds manmade (rather than "organ made"). "Cabaret" recovers quickly for an upbeat chorus before a rather subdued and introspective chorus played on mixing reeds. Then the slambang closing, a fit ending for a potboiler.

"Waters of the Perkiomen" was once used by several radio organists as a broadcast theme, and was recorded by Crawford. It has a graceful, meditational quality which takes some doing to make it come off. Walt does.

Walt's treatment of "Broadway Rhythm" is, in turn, emphatic and subtle, but the power of the great organ is always evident.

The Strony treatment of "Forgotten Melody" brings out the ballad beauty of a finely balanced instrument. The "JC Theme" is played with sensitivity and sensual registration (those gorgeous celested Strings!).

The closer is a bravura treatment of "Tonight" from *The West Side Story*. First a bolero beat against a Tibia/mixing reeds melody line which builds to an untrem'd full passage, wherein Walt prolongs a climactic moment with a heavily reg-

istered downward chromatic passage. A gimmick, but it works. The final moments include fistfuls of vaguely related but dramatic, ear-catching chords for a "Paramount Publix" ending.

To Walt Strony's credit, there is hardly a bobble during the performance. It's one helluva headstart as a first try. Highly recommended.

GAYLORD CARTER: 'FLICKER FINGERS' MAS-2027 (stereo). \$6.00 postpaid from Malar Productions, Box 3104, Glendale, Calif. 91201.

Besides being a fine collection of silent movie cues, this release is an answer to those who figured Malar Records, one of the most faithful sources of theatre organ music, would fold after the death a couple of years ago of its founder, and guiding light, Bob Carson. Malar is very much alive, with Bob's widow, Helen Dell at the helm. If releases are spaced more widely it's because Helen has other interests, such as concert appearances, TV stints and

playing for the LA Dodgers home games. She assures us Malar is here to stay, and that a coming release will be the long anticipated Eddie Dunstetter record.

Gaylord Carter! His name is as closely associated with silent film scoring as his descriptive slogan "Flickerfingers." Gaylord has recorded movie music before, one of theme songs on the Simonton Grande Wurlitzer years ago, and more recently "50 Years of Chasing," also a Malar release. These last two offer actual musical cues (rather than tamer concert versions), themes Carter has used in his film shows, exactly as they were heard. This disc offers no less than 17 selections and they illustrate a variety of moods, as some of the titles indicate: "Monster Music" (a ghastly horror theme), "Hurry," "Comedy Clowns" (Keystone Kops music), "Dance of the Huns," "Weird theme" (ghost-to-ghost stuff), "Oriental love Song," "Rube Theme," "Birth of Passion," "Just an Old Love Song," Finale from *Kings of Kings*, "Fanfare" and "Hail America" — a generous sup-



Gaylord Carter at the San Gabriel 3/16 console.


(Stufoto)

ply of cues for the home "syncher," or just music to whomp up imaginary scenes to. In addition, Gaylord throws in some soulful portions of Bizet's *Carmen* score, and as usual takes the opportunity to "plug my own tunes," represented here by "South Dakota Waltz" and "Melody in E-flat." For that matter most of the dramatic cues are also Carter originals. One of the most entertaining items is Gaylord's improvisation on "Jingle Bells."

With a couple of exceptions, subtlety is not a factor here; it's all solid "Gebrauchsmusik" played as one might have heard it during a silent film in the '20s. But there can be no denying it's entertaining. For years, organists avoided recording cue music, preferring to play recognizable titles and "concert versions." Carter was probably the first to take a chance with cue music, and it paid off. And Hollywood followed; it was 25 years after the release of *Gone With The Wind* that an album consisting of cues dubbed from the soundtrack was released, although four or five of the "symphonic synthesis" genre preceded it. That rather makes Mr. Carter a trailblazer in more ways than one. But helping rekindle interest in the silent film when few others were doing it will remain his greatest contribution. And the cues offered here are the tools of his trade.

No need to go into matters of tempo and registration for this one. The old pro knows what he's doing. Besides, who knows his originals as well as he does?

The organ is the 3/16 Wurlitzer which the Los Angeles chapter installed and maintains in the San



GEORGE WRIGHT

In Concert

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Tabs and Drawbars

For concert information and availability contact:
J. NELSON MANAGEMENT
 900 Andersen Drive, San Rafael, California 94901
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Gabriel (Calif.) Civic Auditorium. It meets all of Gaylord's considerable demands.

Dick Stoney's miking is tops and our preview copy has a pleasingly smooth and noiseless surface. As for the jacket notes, they are rather sparse. We could have absorbed lot's more info about the tunes, the circumstances of their composition, films they have been applied to and similar color. But that's about the only fault we can find with this entertaining record production. Recommended.

THE HOLLYWOOD YEARS, ROBIN RICHMOND AT THE THEATRE ORGAN. DJM label No. DJM 22050 (stereo). \$6.00 postpaid (surface mail) from Robin Richmond, 16 Bathurst Mews, London W2 25B, England. Checks on US banks okay.

For some time we've been asking why British organists include so many US-originated tunes on their records (and we are starting to get some answers). Now, here's one who has gone the whole route and plays nothing but US tunes in these grooves. Robin Richmond, well-known for his BBC *The Organist Entertains* radio shows in Britain, enjoyed doing a mini-concert tour in the eastern USA in 1976, and plans a return this year. This album should help land some engagements.

The organ is a 3/19 Wurlitzer transplanted from the Paramount Odeon, Newcastle, to the Kitchen Brothers auto showroom at Diss, Norfolk. The spaciousness of the showroom insures a live acoustical setting. The instrument has a large, lush sound and the tremos seem to be beating about right for US ears (we said he went the whole route!).

We reviewed a Robin Richmond record a few issues back, one made for another label, about which we couldn't work up much enthusiasm. Please don't be influenced by that review with reference to this recording; there's a great difference. The two records don't sound as though they were played by the same organist.

Richmond explains, "I had more preparation time for this record." It shows.

The tunes are hoary film classics



Robin Richmond (John D. Sharp Photo)

from Hollywood's better days: "As Time Goes By" (*Casablanca*), "It Can't Be Wrong" (*Now Voyager*), "Sunnyside Up" (*Sunnyside Up*), "Over the Rainbow" (*Wizard of Oz*), "Lullaby of Broadway" (*Gold Diggers of 1935*), "Yankee Doodle Dandy" (*Yankee Doodle Dandy*), "Waltzing in the Clouds" (*Spring Parade*), "Cheek to Cheek" (*Top Hat*), "I'll String Along With You" (*My Dream is Yours*), "Song of the Dawn" (*King of Jazz*), "On the Good Ship Lollipop" (*You're My Everything*), "Long Ago and Far Away" (*Cover Girl*), "I'll Get By" (*A Guy Named Joe*), "By a Waterfall" (*Footlight Parade*).

Richmond's ballads are nicely phrased and registered, and we are glad they outnumber the rhythm tunes because Robin plays some of the latter in the typical British "quick-step" style. The "thump-thump" left hand and strict tempo don't allow for much variety. "Yankee Doodle Dandy" and "Cheek to Cheek" get this treatment but "Lollipop" is provided an interesting setting despite the rhythm emphasis.

The selections, as presented, are real memory floggers. Who could forget girlish Janet Gaynor and young Charles Farrell in that very early (1929) "talkie," *Sunnyside Up*? Or the haunting theme from *Now Voyager*? (which may not actually be classed as a US-originated tune; composer Max Steiner once told the writer that he "brought it along" when he emigrated from Vienna). Then there's youthful Ruby Keeler and Dick Powell disporting "Be-

side a Waterfall," little Shirley up to here in lollipops, and Dooley Wilson ("Sam") ignoring Bogart's order never to play "As Time Goes By" in his Casablanca dive. But we're intruding on your memories and impressions!

We especially enjoyed Richmond's non-rhythmic, and harmony-rich, "I'll Get By" and his "Waterfall" is worthy of the orchestration played by Leo Forbstein and the big Warner Bros. Vitaphone orchestra on the '30s movie soundtrack.

There is considerable variety in Richmond's arrangements, and he knows his registration. Recording is good. The jacket is studded with photos of many of the film stars involved with the music and John Gain's prolific jacket notes fill in the details. The only things we found wrong were some out-of-tune reeds which surface briefly, notably in "I'll String Along." Otherwise, it's an attractive production.

PLUG-IN CORNER

ORGAN DREAMS OF MARIA KUMAGAI. Played on the Rodgers model 340 electronic theatre organ. Stereo, No. SR 1003. \$6.00 postpaid from Sunrise Records, Box 559 Camarillo, Calif. 93010.

This is Miss Kumagai's third release. By now, fans are aware that her passion for the theatre organ, which developed while listening to records from the USA, caused her to



Maria Kumagai

leave her native Tokyo for Southern California, in order to study theatre organ, an instrument which never caught on in Japan. Intense application, and teachers Bill Thomson and Richard Purvis, brought her to concert readiness within 5 years.

The selections on this disc are a curious mix of fine old concert chestnuts (which predominate) and pop standards. Works by Georges Bizet (*Carmen* selections) and Tchaikowsky ("Nutcracker Suite") occupy most of these grooves, with Rachmaninoff's "Prelude in C-Sharp Minor" rounding out the classical side. The "Nutcracker Suite" is preceded on Side 2 by two pop-standards, Joe Reyne's "Petite Waltz" and David Rose's "Our Waltz," an arrangement which will not please the classical purists. We must admit that past experience has taught us that mixing pops and classics on records rarely has the desired effect — sales.

But bypassing this minor objection, the performances are excellent. Maria's musicianship causes the listener to become so entranced with the music, that any critical feelings he may harbor about electronics are lost. Anyway, it's Rodgers finest theatre instrument, and that's saying plenty.

The girl has taste and imagination, plus a way of handling classics which gives them an intriguing freshness. □

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Kirk of Dunedin Suffers

FIRE DAMAGE

Terry Charles, the driving force behind the largely Wurlitzer installation in Clearwater's (Fla.) Kirk of Dunedin provides some details about the fire which damaged church and organ on the morning of March 6, 1977.

"Someone gained entrance to the Kirk's Artist's Room and set several fires. A lady in one of the neighboring condominiums couldn't sleep and, looking out her window, noted billows of black smoke mixed with the dense fog above the Kirk. She called the Fire Dept. and they got there in 8 minutes. New developments in fire fighting, which use almost no water, saved most of the organ. Thick, black smoke left deposits of 'suet' on every horizontal surface. Damage to the organ was caused by this soot, smoke and steam generated by the fire. Fire did not touch the organ except for the piano, but all internal parts of the console were totalled. All new parts have been ordered to restore it — to the tune of \$10,000. The percussion pneumatics high in the facade of the Kirk were ruined, of course, and Bells, Chrysoglotts, Chimes etc. have been sent to Deagan for restoration. Every pipe has been carefully removed and wrapped, except the large wooden Diaphones. Fifteen chests, nine tremulants and thirteen regulators have been sent to the (Dave) Junchen-Collins workshop at Woodstock, Illinois for restoration. It's amazing, the damage just smoke can do.

"The second console, a two-manual in the balcony, is a total loss and will not be replaced. While Dave Junchen is working on the chests, I, and several local volunteers, will re-install the organ, rebuild the console, rewire it, and reduct wind-



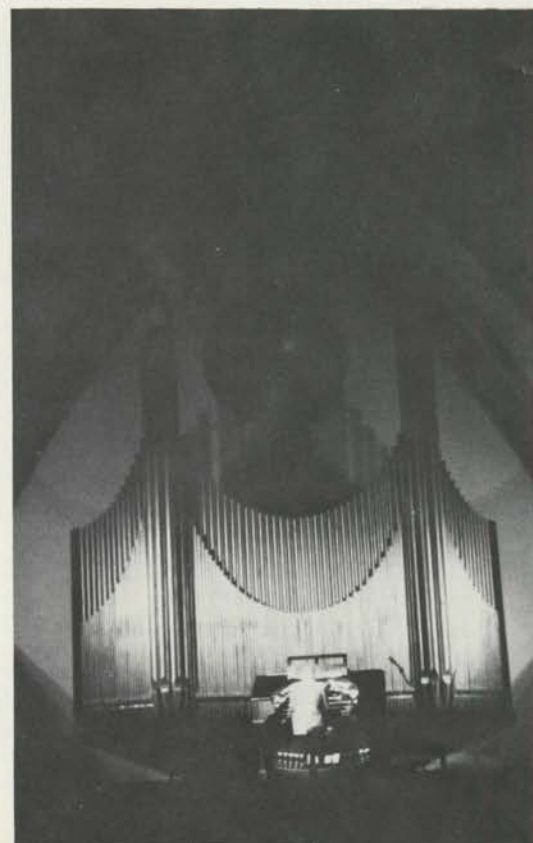
Terry Charles

lines. We hope to have it playing by August, then a formal rededication in October."

The Kirk organ project was started in 1964. Terry Charles has played 60 concerts on the one-time 3/11 Wurlitzer which has grown to beyond 20 ranks. In the interim, many famous theatre organists have been heard in concert (plus orthodox organist Virgil Fox).

At this writing, the arsonist(s) had not been apprehended nor could any reason for the fire setting be determined. □

Photo made during Billy Nalle's 1975 concert at the Kirk of Dunedin. Percussions mounted in the high arches suffered from smoke and steam damage, but the 4/21 Wurlitzer's pipework remained intact, although dirtied by layers of deposits caused by the smoke.



Cinniminson Project Nearly Complete

by Grant Whitcomb

Members of ATOS who have supported and exhibited interest in the reinstallation of the James O. Carter Memorial Organ in the Richard Serfling Memorial Auditorium of Cinniminson High School, Cinniminson, New Jersey, will be gratified to learn that this project is now nearing completion.* In fact the organ, which is 75 per cent installed as of this writing, will be ready for dedication on November 5, 1977. On that date Delaware Valley's "Mr. Music" — Larry Ferrari — will play a special concert. This is most appropriate, since it was Larry Ferrari who donated this Wurlitzer theatre organ to the Cinniminson High School in the name of his long-time friend — the late Jim Carter.

This will be only the start of a most elite evening, since the dedicatory concert will be followed by a reception at the Starlight Room at the Cherry Hill Inn and a dinner in the Grand Ballroom. Those who attended the 1976 ATOS Convention at this location will recall these beautiful surroundings. Tickets to this event (at \$50) should produce a group of distinguished participants as well as provide some needed funds for the further activities of the Cinniminson Arts Council.

The history of the development of the Carter Wurlitzer began many years ago when Jim Carter first secured the console and two basic ranks of pipes left from a 1926 style 235 Wurlitzer originally housed in the Royal Theatre, Bloomfield, New Jersey. Over the years Jim accumulated other ranks — mostly Wurlitzer — to match a majority of the 235 specifications in terms of both pipes and scale. Having secured and installed these in his home prior to

*See *THEATRE ORGAN* - Oct/Nov. 1975, Vol. 17, No. 5.

1970, Jim then began to expand the instrument with the addition of a Post Horn, French Horn and Violin (Kimball), plus a Gottfried Tibia Plena.

As presently constituted the instrument is a 3/15 Wurlitzer with all Wurlitzer pipework except for those ranks noted above. At the Cinniminson High School two specially constructed triangular chambers adjacent to the side of the auditorium stage now contain the following:

Flute	97
Open Diapason	85
Tuba	73
Viol D'Orchestra	73
String Celeste	73
Clarinet	61
Vox Humana	61
Tibia Clausa	73
Tibia Plena	73
Trumpet	61
Post Horn	61
Saxophone	61
English Horn	61
French Horn	61
Solo String	61
Plus Chrysoglott, Marimba (and Harp), Xylophone, Glockenspiel (and Orch. Bells), Piano and Toy Counter.	

(There are provision for two additional ranks)

The primary elements involved in the relocation and reinstallation of a theatre pipe organ are money and manpower. Even with the donation of services by a dedicated organ crew, the Cinniminson Arts Council has thus far expended \$45,000.00 toward this project. Of this, \$15,000.00 was involved in removal, storage, removal from storage, refurbishment, tools, equipment, rentals, etc. This alone accounts for a majority of the funds raised to date, and an additional \$30,000.00 was borrowed to cover the costs of construction of the chambers.

Although the instrument had been removed from the Carter residence many months ago, it had to be stored until the chambers could be constructed during the summer of 1976. Although numerous individuals have donated time and labor to this project since its inception, the principle

"Here's how . . ."



"How do we get up there . . . ?"





J.P. Callahan exerts pressure.



Bob Dietz adjusting toy counter.

workers on the actual installation are: J.P. Callahan, Mike Carrell, John Chase, Oscar Danielson, Bob Dietz, Frank Heil, Steve Heil, Wilbur (Woody) Flowers, and Marvin Phillips.

While the installation of the Carter Wurlitzer is a matter of prime interest at this time, activities are by no means confined to this single function. As the name implies, The Cinniminson Arts Council is dedicated to the presentation of *all* the performing arts. A special series of "Spotlight Presentations" has already featured a 16-day marathon of music presenting some 80 orchestral and vocal groups of all ages. A total of 650 individuals participated in these musical presentations.

The next "Spotlight" will be on the Dance, which will probably involve twice as many participants. Future Spotlights which are already in the planning stage will feature the Dramatic Arts, followed by a Fine Arts presentation with working artists exhibiting both completed works in many categories as well as works in progress. This broad-based approach not only has great appeal to the total community, but also has secured the sincere support of the

school board and related community leadership. The Cinniminson Arts Council is deeply appreciative of the support and encouragement provided by such individuals as Dr. Richard B. Holzman, Warren Martin, Bob Dietz (of the organ crew) and Howard Lorenz, to mention just a few.

As the time approaches when this long-silent King of Instruments will once more be heard in its new setting, many members of ATOS can take pride in having helped to preserve another Wurlitzer. □



Oscar Danielson and Woody Flowers examine pipes.



Woody Flowers and Oscar Danielson.



Pipes laid out on stage.

Instrumental and choral programs are promoted by the Cinniminson Arts Council.





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 Editor Thompson:

My thanks to you, Treasurer Erwin Young, and other members of the Board for printing in the April-May issue of THEATRE ORGAN the financial statements for the years 1973 through 1976 and the proposed budget for 1977 as I had requested in an earlier letter published in the Dec.-Jan. issue.

I feel this information will be useful to each interested individual member to ascertain just why the dues increase was necessary, and it is simply good business practice to let the members see where their dues money is spent. Let's continue to publish annual figures in the April-May issue each year so that all of us may be better informed. I appreciate the many letters of support my proposal received and thank everyone who took the time to write. Their involvement and concern can only make ATOS an even better organization.

Sincerely,
Timothy S. Needler

Dear Editor:

Delighted to read in THEATRE ORGAN, February-March 1977 issue, of the proposed side trip to

Scotland in the '77 Organ Safari to England.

I make my own trip over there every year, most of my time being spent in my native Scotland. I would like to remind you of the listing printed in your February, 1973, issue. Most of these organs are still around but the playing condition of the largest, the Hilsdon in the Playhouse in Edinburgh, is in doubt. The theatre is operated by a radio station, Forth Radio, and they run live pop shows.

The two Compton organs in Aberdeen are in perfect playing condition. The 3/10 in Powis School is the organ played by George Blackmore when he was resident organist of the Astoria Cinema. The organ was rescued by the school kids of Powis and built into the school auditorium under the direction of Bob Leys, musical director of the Academy. Bob is also house organist at the Capitol Theatre in Aberdeen. Though the organ lift was covered by an extended stage to house the Scottish Orchestra, an opening was left "a la Long Island University" to permit the organ to rise to stage height.

I sincerely trust these two organs will be visited. This is a lovely city and a gateway to the Highlands and Balmoral Castle. Bob will be delighted to open the organs to all ATOS members and guests.

The Capitol Theatre is family owned and has a fine restaurant. They are the kind of people who will say at any time, "You want to see our organ? I'll get the keys and be right down." That is unless, of course, this is during normal movie presentation.

Wurlitzers do survive in Scotland by way of home installations. A 2/10

from the New Victoria Cinema in Edinburgh is active in the home of a textile manufacturer, Mr. Tom Lockhart, in the city of Kircaldy, Fifeshire (not far from the nations capitol, Edinburgh). It came from the Embassy Theatre in Baltimore, by the way.

The Christie in Bangour is now 3/14. The console is on the stage (rollabout).

I do hope ATOS visits Scotland. Its absence of theatre organs will be offset by its fabulous scenery. Pity you could not make the trip for the Edinburgh Festival and Tatto.

Sincerely,
James C. Donald

Following names and addresses of people to contact in Scotland. There is a "breakaway" group in Kilbride.

Bob Leys
2 Colthill Cress
Milltimber, Aberdeen
Scotland, AB1 DEF

House organist — Capitol Theatre;
Musical Director — Powis Academy

Mr. A.T. Wilson
8 Pinegrove
Ldybank, Fife
Scotland

Kilbride Organ Group
Mr. Gordon Lucas
West Cottage
Duntarvie, Winchburgh
West Lothian, Scotland

Scottish Cinema Organ Society;
Former House Organist — Playhouse, Edinburgh.

P.S. Paris, France — Until 1975 the 2/10 Wurlitzer in the Paramount was still in the theatre. Console missing. Organ installed over proscenium arch. Difficult to remove but is up for grabs.

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I derived a great deal of pleasure from the excellent photograph of the Moller organ console in the Trenton War Memorial which appears on the cover of THEATRE ORGAN for February/March 1977. Your staff who selected that picture for publication, and W.T. McKissock, Jr., the photographer who captured the instrument in such a striking presentation are to be commended.

Of great significance to me, and I hope to other readers of THEATRE ORGAN, is that the photograph and

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the reality of the organ in the Trenton War Memorial would not have been possible without the concern and efforts of Bill McKissock and his associates.

Of course, this is not the only instance where affirmative and constructive action has rescued a fine instrument from oblivion. Fortunately, there have been other transfers and restorations, but not enough. However, the photograph and the story behind it are an excellent representation of similar successes in restoring and preserving theatre pipe organs, and as the notation to the Cover Photo indicates, a tribute to those who have worked and are working.

Very truly yours,
Stanley Warzala

Dear George:

The following was told to me, Secretary of Rocky Mountain Chapter, at an organ party we had on March 6, 1977 by one of our members who just returned from New Zealand — *Margaret Ann Foy* — *November in New Zealand*:

I attended a dinner-dance and concert at the Station Hotel in Auckland, New Zealand. It was given by the Organ Society of New Zealand which was originally an electronic group, but many members have joined the Kiwi ATOS group. I had such a delightful evening as they are such a warm, friendly group of people.

In Chrichchurch, in the South Island, we went to dinner at the Town Hall Restaurant and had music on an electronic organ by Richard Hare. I have one of his records which I shall treasure always. Back in Auckland on the night before I returned home, the Kiwis gathered at the home of Norman Dawe, the original organizer of the Kiwi ATOS group. As this was a farewell party, many of the members expressed desires of making long range plans to attend the National Convention of 1979 in Southern California. There are only two pipe organs in the North Island, but with such an interested, vital, working group of people, there just might be more one day.

They are avid readers of the THEATRE ORGAN magazine over there. They just about memorize the whole thing word for word. If

anyone from the States visits New Zealand, you must look up the Kiwi ATOS club in Auckland. They will show you a wonderful time and you will remember them for many years.

Sincerely yours,
Frank R. Gandy, Secy.
Rocky Mountain Chapter

Dear Sir:

In your February/March issue on page 9, I am incorrectly billed to appear for the American Organ Safari in England in October.

I will, in fact, be giving organ concerts in the Los Angeles area at that time and I have never ever been invited to participate in the British Safari.

I would appreciate a correction in your next issue as I have already had letters from my confused American hosts.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Robin Richmond

Editor's Note:

Mr. Richmond's name appeared in the copy of a paid advertisement. It was not an error of the editorial staff.

Dear George,

I read with interest the letter from J.B. Sherk, also of Toronto, in the Feb/March issue in which he complained that organists do not make any attempt to cater to young people.

This is a matter which has concerned me for some time. Do we include almost no pops in our programs because we know there will be almost no young people in the audience — or are there almost no young people in the audience because they know they will not hear any of their own music? Or is it maybe because we make no effort to attract them to the concert in the first place. I submit that the latter is the case.

Having played for most of the last decade in pizza parlors, primarily to young people, I think I have some answers and I'm sure my colleagues in the pizza business will agree with me. I would say that a good eighty per cent of my pizza parlor audience in Toronto is between the ages of 15 and 30, presumably the ages when pop music is the prime interest. Therefore you would expect eighty

per cent of the requests to be for pop music. Not so!! I have learned over the years what to expect from my audiences, they are fairly predictable. The older crowd, say fifties up, can be relied upon to ask for the same stuff all the time — "Hawaiian Wedding Song," "Ebb Tide," "Dr. Zhivago," "Alley Cat" and so on. Oddly enough, theatre pipe organ fans who, one would think, would be more demanding, also generally ask for these same few numbers.

But what do the young crowd ask for? Some pop for sure. One of my biggest requests is for the song "Color My World" by the rock group Chicago. But this is a lovely ballad, with a classical piano style accompaniment. Apart from this I receive maybe one request a night for an Elton John song or something similar, so generally it can be said that they don't want to hear rock played on the theatre organ. (It sounds silly anyway, I've tired it).

So what do they want? Surprisingly enough, an overwhelming number of their requests are for classical music. Toccata and Fugue is the most frequently requested piece, closely followed by also "Sprach Zarathustra (2001)," "1812 Overture," "William Tell Overture" and similar virtuoso pieces. True, they also ask for "Beer Barrel Polka" a lot, because they like to see all the clackers going, but that is an exception. They also like show tunes, even ones from way back when. I ask frequently why they ask for the tunes they do and always receive the same reply — "we get enough rock on our record players at home and on the radio all the time, we want something different when we come here."

So I feel we should not underestimate their musical interests. They do like good music, and have little time for the bland pap that is often churned out in organ bars. So maybe we organists should attempt to draw young people to our concerts by playing better quality music. Virgil Fox seems to do OK, with his advertising emphasis on "heavy" organ, and his audiences are comprised almost exclusively of young people.

Organists thinking of taking this approach however, should beware of the chapter reviewer. One refused to review my concert for your ex-

cellent magazine because, he said, it had too much classical content and he didn't understand it. In actual fact, only 16% of the program was classical, and virtuoso exciting pieces at that, so his comment to me would seem to indicate not a failure to understand, but a closed mind. After all, what's to understand in a dramatic toccata which uses all the resources of the organ? The kids understand it all right, but they would just laugh if I tried to play acid rock on the organ. So I think these are some of the answers. Maybe other organists would care to comment.

Yours sincerely,
Don Thompson, Toronto.

Dear Mr. Thompson:

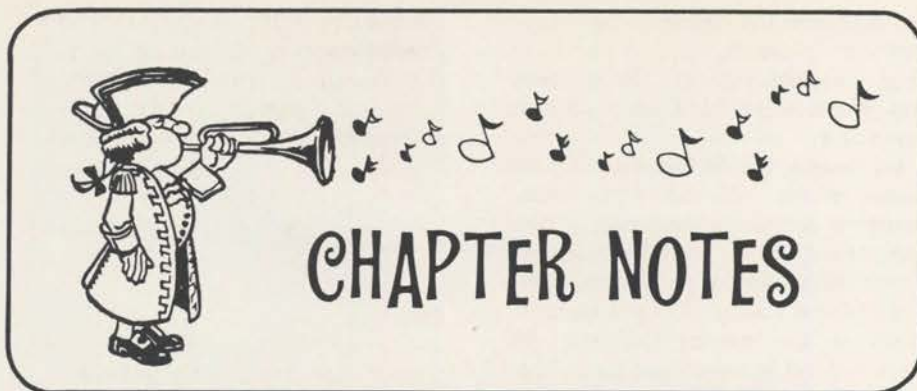
The King Records, Inc. catalog of recorded masters was recently purchased by Gusto Records, Inc. Among the many valued masters in the King catalog are some twenty cuts by George Wright. Recorded at the New York Paramount Theatre on the Mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ, selections include:

- "Love For Sale"
- "Jeanine"
- "Makin' Whoope"
- "Easter Parade"
- "Take Me Out To The Ball Game"
- "Tenderly"
- "Times Square Boogie"
- "Stella By Starlight"
- "Stardust"
- "Body and Soul"
- "Night and Day"
- "Beguine The Beguine"
- "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes"
- "Always"
- "España Cani"
- "Brazil"
- "Birth Of The Blues"
- "Honky Tonk Train Blues"
- "Falling In Love"
- "Blue Moon"

Due to the historical significance of these early George Wright selections, do you think there would be active interest from your readership in purchasing these recordings if they were made available on album and/or 8 track tape?

We would appreciate your opinion as to the interest and feasibility of re-issuing the aforementioned George Wright "collector" edition.

Cordially,
Jim Wilson



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 Aug.-Sept. issue must be in by July 1.

ALABAMA

We have another newcomer to announce this month. The wife of Chuck Hancock, who is head of our work crew here in Birmingham, presented him with their first child. Congratulations to the Hancocks. We're raising a whole new generation of ATOSers!

Our March and April meetings brought us some super entertainment. Both performers are members of our chapter — so we feel very fortunate to have such capable and willing artists right in our midst.

At our March meeting, Jack Moelmann journeyed over from Ocean Springs, Mississippi, and entertained us with a marvelously varied concert. We had a larger-than-usual crowd and all were quite pleased and enthused by Jack's performance. He is a Major in the Air Force at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, and is quite well known throughout that state. He has played, at one time or another, at most of the large hotels along the gulf Coast, performs at numerous charitable community activities, has given benefit concerts in his home on his own special Hammond which he customized himself and has given concerts on the Temple Theatre pipe organ in Meridian,

Mississippi. As you can well imagine, Jack is a busy fellow and much in demand and we're especially proud to have him as a member of our chapter, and very grateful to him for playing a concert for us.

Jack is certainly no newcomer in the pipe organ field having been assistant organist at the age of 12 at Grace Episcopal Church, Chicago, Illinois (which is his hometown) on a 4/98 Casavant. He toured Europe in 1960 and performed at such places as Westminster Abbey in London and the Pantheon in Rome. He also became only the second military person to perform in concert on the magnificent 3/99 Moller in the Chapel of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. For a year and a half he presided nightly at the 2/9 Wurlitzer in Shakey's Pizza Parlor at Anaheim, California. It was on this particular organ that he cut his latest record album, "Jack Moelmann at the Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ." A hobby of Jack's is collecting old silent films, and he



Major Jack Moelmann from Ocean Springs, Mississippi. (Thomas L. Hatter Photo)

brought one for our viewing enjoyment.

On Saturday night before the meeting we had a jam session and party at the Aureds'. This, too, was a most enjoyable evening. Al Neissen came as Jack's guest and added much to the entertainment of the evening. Al plays at a club in the French Quarter in New Orleans. The two of them teamed up on piano and organ in the Aureds' rec room. All in all — I think everyone had a fun weekend — and we heard a lot of great theatre organ music! Again, a very special thanks to a wonderful talent, and a very nice man . . . Jack Moelmann!

Our May meeting was equally as exciting when we presented Mark Landers, from Birmingham, and he did a super job for us. Mark is only 19 years old, so his list of accomplishments is especially impressive for such a tender age.

His musical interests are not restricted entirely to the organ, although now this is his first love. "Way back" when Mark was still in high school he played French Horn and piano. He received "Best Musician Award" from High School in 1975, five Solo and Ensemble Awards, was in All-State Band two years, and the Mid-South Honor Band one year.

Already studying piano, it seems only natural that Mark's interests would expand to the organ which he started studying in 1970. Only four years later, in 1974, Mark entered the Yamaha Electone Festival. That year he won the local and regional competition, and placed third in nationals in Houston, Texas. In 1975, he again won the local competition, and received a "Distinguished Performance Award" at the regionals. In 1976, for the third year in a row, Mark was the local and regional winner, placing second this time in the nationals in Chicago, Illinois.

Mark is now a sophomore at Samford University, Birmingham, majoring in Business Administration, while still actively pursuing his musical talents on the organ. He's getting a lot of good performing experience playing weekends at Green Valley Country Club, in Hoover, a Birmingham suburb, as well as doing other special programs for the Alabama Theatre from time to time.



Mark Landers at the April meeting.

(Thomas L. Hatter Photo)

This young man is just getting started in theatre organ, and what a wonderful start he has made! He certainly can hold his own. He presented a terrific show with plenty of variety ranging, as Mark puts it, "from the sublime to the ridiculous." He did some beautiful ballads with the theatre styling that we all love so much, some Broadway show tunes, a few arrangements with contemporary jazz overtones, and even a couple of gospel tunes — all of which added up to a very enjoyable program.

All we can say is, keep your eye on this young man! We believe he's going places. Thanks, Mark, for a job well done! It was a wonderful program!

JO ANN RADUE

CATOE

"Chicago '77" is almost here, and all effort is being directed toward making it a memorable event for everyone. We are indeed looking forward to welcoming you to the Theatre Organ Capital of the World!

CATOE's own Wurlitzer, the 3/10 from the Indiana Theatre is in the final stages of installation at Maine Township North High School, in the beautiful theatre which was built to house a theatre organ. It will have its premiere performance during the convention.

The March social was held at Chicago's newest "musical eatery," Sally's Stage, where CATOE member Bill Hansen installed a 3/10 Barton theatre organ from the Retlaw (that's the owner's name, Walter spelled backwards) Theatre in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Restaurant owners Joe and Mike Bortz have invited ATOS conventioners to stop in on the 4th of July, following the convention. Scott Smith of Lansing, Michigan, presided at the console for the social, and gave a very entertaining and enjoyable program. March concluded with a public show featuring Ron Bogda at the Patio Theatre's 3/17 Barton. Ron is used to a somewhat larger instrument, as he's the organist at the Chicago Stadium's giant 6-manual Barton. We'll hear him there during the convention.

CATOE celebrated its fifteenth birthday on April 24 (just a few months late) at WGN's television studio 3, which houses a 3/11 Wurlitzer, modified by Kimball. A member born the same year as CATOE, Greg Mackintosh, gave us a fine program on the organ. It's very rewarding seeing young talent developing, so that we know these instruments we love will be played by future generations. A special surprise feature of the social was the presentation of the First (and maybe only) Annual Kangaroo Award to member Marie



CATOE Chairman Richard Sklenar presents member Marie Pond with kangaroo award "Pouch" and "Pouch Celeste."

(Jim Taggart Photo)

Pond. Now what do kangaroos have to do with theatre pipe organs? They both have pouches, of course! While a kangaroo's pouch will usually last a lifetime, the hundreds of leather pneumatic pouches in a pipe organ eventually wear out and have to be recovered. Marie earned her award by single-handedly releathering over 1400 pouches from the Maine North and Oriental Theatre organs. The award consisted of a kangaroo hand puppet, appropriately named "Pouch." Inside Pouch's pouch was "Pouch Celeste."

May 15 will bring CATOE's final event prior to the convention, a social and election of officers at Downers Grove North High School.

JIM TAGGART

CENTRAL OHIO

Chapter members met at the home of Irene and Jim Blegen in March. Our concert artist at the Conn 651 was Mark Williams. Mark did an exceptionally fine job with a well planned variety of selections. Kenny Winland and Neil Shivers gave us organ and piano duets, Dennis James took a turn, and for those who stayed later, treated us to some great musical listening.

One of our finest chapter meetings was held in April in the auditorium of the Worthington High School. The program was presented by Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Riley. Mr. Riley is a staff member of 1st Community Church. Laden with five large cameras, recording equipment and transformer, Mr. and Mrs. Riley have made eight trips throughout Europe photographing churches and church pipe organs and garnering information about them. Much of the photographic work is credited to Mrs. Riley's artistry with her cameras. The result of their effort is a highly professional film. The tapes of organ music are exactly as heard while recording.

The film is titled "An Organ Sampler" with pen and ink lettering done in the style of sampler stitching done by Mrs. Riley. With narration by Mr. Riley, we viewed many films of breathtaking beauty and some console cases were the original — works of great beauty — with newer organs added. From the introduction to the end with the majestic organ

music heard, we were an enraptured audience. We are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Riley for sharing this with us and most certainly will avail ourselves of their offer to return with their sound/film of Spanish churches.

IRENE BLEGEN

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

"... and along came Bill": On Saturday, March 19, at the Thomaston Opera House we were treated to the artistry of that "grand old gentleman" of the console, our own beloved Bill Dalton. It was a genuine love affair between the audience and this truly "gentle man" whose music spans over a half century of "Theatre organ entertainment."

This, his third appearance at the Opera House, was perhaps the most memorable as the audience showed its affection and appreciation with not just one standing ovation but three, to which Bill graciously responded with four separate encores; and even then his fans were reluctant to let him leave the console.

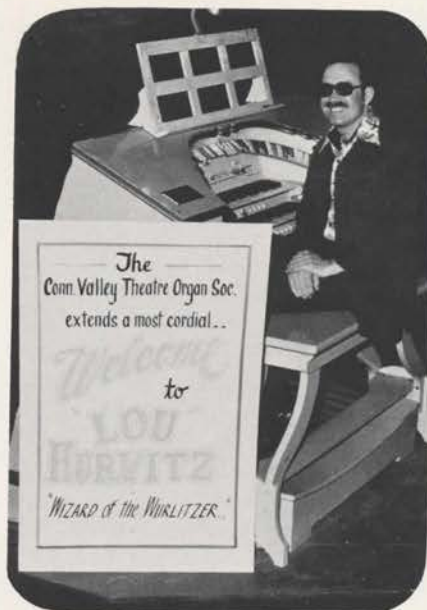
The evening's program ranged from light classics to pops — something guaranteed to please all tastes, beginning with a wonderful Gershwin medley which included the hauntingly beautiful "Someone to Watch Over Me," "Swanee" and the lively "Strike Up the Band." Then a turn to the classics with excerpts from famous waltzes by Chopin, Brahms and Strauss's great "Tales From the Vienna Woods." It was a wonderful, musical evening.

JUNE L. GAREN

Our April meeting took place in two very desirable locations — the Center Theatre in Waterbury and the Roberg residence in Plymouth. Both feature excellent pipe organs maintained by our membership.

The day began with mid-afternoon open console at the Center Theatre. Some unusually good talent occupied the console and the ideal surroundings of the theatre made for most enjoyable listening.

At the close of open console Chairman Norm Ray again conducted a business session on schedule so that we could hear the featured artist of the day as programmed. Good going, Norm.



Lou Hurvitz at the Center Theatre in Waterbury.

(P. Miller Photo)

For the April meeting Program Chairman Paul Plainer was able to bring us an outstanding artist who had to travel some distance to accommodate us. Lou Hurvitz came from West Point, N.Y., to play a scheduled hour's concert which he did with a minimum of talk and a maximum of music in both quantity and quality. At the finish of his well arranged renditions of a nice sampling of music from theatre, concert, and other sources, audience response was such that Lou was obliged to squeeze in an encore before we had to vacate the theatre prior to the evening motion picture presentation. Thanks to Paul Plainer and Lou Hurvitz for such a fine program.

Our day continued at the Roberg residence in Plymouth where informal organ playing and friendly socializing were carried on in the traditional hospitality of Gen Roberg.

W.P.

EASTERN MASS.

Chairman "Pete" Hoagland announced at our March meeting that Erle Renwick would be committee chairman to evaluate the original goals for our Wurlitzer, to ascertain accomplishments to date and what must be done for full realization.

Bob Legon invited our members to Connecticut Valley Chapter's sponsored field trip on May 15, visiting the 3/9 Kilgen theatre organ in Lakeview Congregational Church,

Waltham, and nearby member Pat Fucci's resident 4/19 Robert Morton.

Our dual spring concerts by Hector Olivera on May 21 at Babson and May 22 at Stoneham Town Hall were then discussed. Vice President and Concert Chairman Craig Johnson reminded those present that this year the chapter (Charter Number One) celebrates its 20th anniversary. Carl Getz was appointed to produce an appropriate booklet for the spring concerts.

Craig appointed a committee chaired by Pat Fucci with Stu Hinchliffe and Bob Legon assisting, to contact various potential organists and present details to the members for selection. Pat and Rosalie Fucci invited the chapter for another field trip to their residence in June. This is always a fun outing with plenty of good food, fellowship and Robert Morton.

With business over, Craig announced that the evening's theme was "Spring is Here" and, appropriately, had this title on a Cook label LP played by Bill Floyd on the N.Y. Paramount Wurlitzer utilizing Babson's newly installed speaker system. Live music followed with a potpourri of playing members at our console — Cheryl Linder, Dick Metzger, Al Winslow, Tim Bjareby, Julie Feltman with Bob Legon concluding. As each name was read, the audience's applause seemed equal. Each was asked to draw a slip from a box with only one paper being marked. Bob was the prize winner — a large poster of a beautiful four-manual Wurlitzer "waterfall" console.

In April, after Secretary Rosalie Fucci and Treasurer Dick Metzger's reports were heard, it was revealed that the Wurlitzer Orchestral Oboe on loan from Art Goggin had now been purchased. After disposition of certain spring concert details, Craig announced the names of 12 organists being considered for our fall concerts. These were reduced to six by a showing of hands.

Discussion has been going on with the Stoneham Town Hall Organ Committee concerning the chapter's restoration and maintenance of the fine Wurlitzer. Before voting, Bob Legon reminded all not to forget that Stoneham had been EMCATOS' unofficial "home for over 17 years. The membership quickly agreed

with the Board's recommendation to proceed.

Erle Renwick, previously appointed chapter organ committee chairman, named those assisting him as Arthur Goggin, Garrett Shanklin, Elbert Drazy and Ed Stanley. The various schools of thought about restoration, possible enlargement, etc. must be fully considered before presenting their finding to the full membership — always a most controversial subject!

With no further business, Craig pushed the "on" switch at the console and presented his guest organist, Phil Bordeleau, from Bedford, N.H., only 16, but with eight years of piano lessons and an organ pupil of Ken Wilson's since last summer. Phil should have a great future as his lush handling of "Stairway to the Stars," and other selections indicated he has that elusive touch.

Another pleasant surprise was the presentation of a former theatre organist, Mrs. Norma Durgin, who played as Norma Knapp at the Strand, Newburyport, Mass., Wurlitzer. Despite her long absence from a Wurlitzer, her "know-how" showed itself immediately as John Phipps assisted her with registration on the unfamiliar console.

The popular open console portion of the evening followed with many "subscribers" to the sign-up sheet, led off by John Phipps and continuing until after midnight, despite Daylight Saving Time with the lost hour going into effect. What matters time in the presence of live theatre pipes singing forth!

STANLEY C. GARNISS

GARDEN STATE

On Sunday, February 13, a grand open console and meeting was held at the Trenton War Memorial. Members lined up for a chance at the 3/14 Moller — a pure delight to play. A party atmosphere prevailed. Tables were set up on the large stage and members brought box lunches. Coffee and desserts rounded out the menu. While members played, others were taken on tours through the beautiful building.

A mini-concert was given by Bill Vlasak, a young and talented organist from Ohio, who has been a featured organist at the Ohio Theatre and is now one of the select staff at



Bill Vlasak after his mini-concert at the Trenton 3/14 Moller.

the Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix and Mesa, Arizona. Bill's music was delightful and the hour flew by quickly. It is especially enjoyable to hear a young, talented up and coming organist play. His concert made the day! Garden State extended an invitation to the Delaware Valley Chapter to hear the concert and join in the open console time. And quite a few Delaware members came.

Garden State has recently had some great publicity in newspapers and has been the source of many new members. On Sunday, January 16, the Asbury Park Press ran a fine article on theatre organs and showed pictured of the Mahns Bicycle Shop's Robert Morton theatre organ. A very accurate, comprehensive description of ATOS and its purposes, plus many interesting tidbits on theatre organ were given. Bob and Walter Mahns, who are charter members of our chapter, love theatre organ and have founded a wonderful nucleus of interested people in their area. Frequently Sunday afternoon concerts are given at their bicycle shop and they have been responsible for quite a few new members joining ATOS.

In March the Bergen Evening Record, which covers all of Bergen County, published a full-page article and pictures of the Pascack Theatre Wurlitzer and its hard working crew.

This article created a lot of interest and Garden State received more new members. It is amazing what a little publicity can do!

Intermission organ music on Wurlitzers is being played by GSTOS members every Saturday night at the Rahway Theatre in Rahway and at the Pascack Theatre in Westwood, N.J. The audiences have been most enthusiastic. Posters in the lobby of the theatres and a trailer on the screen help identify our chapter.

Open console was held March 20 at the Montvale Roller Skating Rink, which has a 2/8 Robert Morton. Playing members climbed to a glass enclosed booth which is built high over the skater's heads, and took their turn playing the theatre pipe organ. Unfortunately, the day was a wet one and it discouraged some members from attending. Those who did come had several chances to "do their thing." House organist Al De Luca played a mini-concert for our enjoyment.

GSTOS now has four restoration projects going on in theatres and extra work crews are being encouraged to join. The theatres are the Rahway, Casa Italiana in Newark, Pascack, and St. Joseph's Chapel in West New York.

JINNY VANORE

The Casa Italiana, formerly the Stanley Theatre, had its annual Carnival March 5 attended by over 300, with a musical program, and dining in the beautiful atmospheric theatre. It was especially decorated for this event by Walter Froehlich, general manager and organ crew chief. He and his crew are also installing the 4/33 Wurlitzer from the Fabian Theatre, of Paterson, which will make it the largest organ in a theatre in this area, exclusive of Radio City Music Hall.

The organ was integrated into the affair, with solos, marches and accompaniments for the singers, and added a dimension to the proceedings that only an organ can. The *Italian Tribune* of Newark had extensive coverage with pictures of the pageant and organ.

As house organist, who plays intermissions weekly, it gave Bill Gage a chance to show what a wonderful sound a Wurlitzer can make when involved in affairs of this kind. Many were impressed and thrilled.



Tony Tahlman at the Cicero 3/15 Barton Organ.

(Gene Bryant Photo)

LAND O'LAKES

Land O'Lakers have had a busy three months of the new year. Our first meeting at Cicero's Pizza Restaurant was a huge success. One hundred sixty-five members and their guests attended; weather conditions co-operating to make our attendance almost "standing room only." Our board chairman, Alan Gerber, opened the meeting by introducing the newly elected board members. A resume of chapter statistics was also given:

91 Memberships; 149 Members; and \$1324.00 in the treasury.

From the ooh's and aah's from the members, we took it to mean — thanks to our jovial, hard-working treasurer, Marge, for a job well done.

Tony Tallman was our guest artist at the Cicero meeting, but before he started his concert, a very thorough, printed story of #3 Cicero's beginning; Terry Kleven's involvement in the installation; a short personal review of Tony and complete specifications of the Barton organ was passed out to each member. Thanks to Tony, who had the forethought to put this information together. It most certainly helped us to understand how much knowledge it takes to install and operate these huge, magnificent instruments.

By suggested compliance to the five-minute limit during open console, we were privileged to hear fifteen of our members play the Cicero organ.

February gave us a surprising and

impromptu meeting. Expect the unexpected and you'll have a good time; so we found out on Tuesday evening, February 8. Our treasurer got a hurried call from Bill Sweasy of Red Wing, Minn., inviting the board to preview the dedication of their refurbished Kilgen organ in the Red Wing Auditorium Theatre. As many members as possible were contacted by phone and forty responded. Walking into the foyer of the theatre, with the traditional popcorn machine and candy counter, made one feel we were back in the 20's — a perfect setting for what followed. Two flights of stairs to the balcony, where they had a section roped off for our delegation, we had a perfect view of the orchestra pit with the beautiful white and gold Kilgen console, against the white walls of the freshly repainted old theatre and the red velvet stage curtain. Mr. Hawley Foote, who M.C.'d the performance, introduced Rose Morley, of Red Wing, who originally accompanied the silent films at this same theatre. Lights dimmed and a spotlight on the organ revealed our master of the evening, Lee Erwin. Mr. Erwin's concert included the nostalgic golden oldies, and popular stage show tunes, the Buster Keaton silent, *The Haunted House*, and sing-along slides from the past, with some interesting new words. It was an evening of enjoyment.

On February 20, at Gethsemane Episcopal Church in Minneapolis, an unexpected large turnout heard



Lyle Hagert at the Ruffatti pipe organ.

Lyle Hagert at the Ruffatti Pipe Organ. Mr. Hagert is a well-known concert church organist, having performed all over the country, and we were privileged to hear his inspiring classical concert. He explained the organ and pipe installation in detail, as well as each selection he performed.

On March 20, members were cordially greeted at the home of March and Dee Dalquist, in Edina. Though the weather was threatening cold and more snow, there was warmth inside the beautiful and spacious home. Our congenial chairman opened the meeting by introducing our artist, Paul Wesley Bowen. His concert was well received and his manner of adding little quips about each selection made the audience feel relaxed as we enjoyed the lush sounds coming from the Wurlitzer pipe organ. Mr. Bowen is a young, accomplished concert organist, who came to our city from the West

Coast. We feel fortunate in having him among us, where we eagerly await each concert he gives.

LOS ANGELES

On March 13, Jonas Nordwall played a concert for the chapter on the San Gabriel 3/16 Wurlitzer. This young man seems to grow musically with each concert, which is probably the way he plans it. He brought the gleaming white console up to a bouncing "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans" then changed moods completely for a haunting "The Way We Were." Other memorable selections were "Valse Bleue," a medley from *Carousel*, "Muskrat Ramble," "Don't Worry 'bout Me," Overture from *Tommy* and a rousing closer, the overture from *Orpheus in the Underworld*. Jonas' MCing was just right, and he was always in complete control of the instrument. He employs no gimmicks; he just produces very satisfying music in theatre organ style. His audience was with him all the way.

Wiltern theatre maintenance crew chief Ross Farmer announced that the 4/37 Kimball will be back in action for the George Blackmore concert on June 18. The organ has been out of service for over a year while the console was renovated and the stopkeys rearranged in the standard pattern.

The chapter's "rent an organ" project continues, now under the direction of Ross Tigert. You pay your money and find yourself sitting in a sea of stopkeys over 4 manuals, the Elks Bldg 4/61 Robert Morton.

This service is open to all chapter members and the price is right.

The chapter's Marr & Colton project in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium is moving along satisfactorily. Bids for chamber and elevator construction are being collected by the Project Committee which is headed by Cliff Schwander. The bids will be submitted to the Pasadena Center for budgeting. We are dealing with a municipality, and that can make progress seem slow. But the establishment of a home for our Marr & Colton will be worth the total effort.

Although we are writing before the event, we trust our May 21-22 Organ Crawl will come off as planned. We'll travel Amtrak (by private RR car if the reservations warrant it) from Los Angeles to San Diego for visits to five theatre pipe organ installations (including the Reginald Foort 5/28 Moller), a Harbor Cruise in San Diego Bay and a space adventure in the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theatre. We'll return by Amtrak the next day. Look for a report in this column next issue.

The chapter's general business meeting was held on March 28 at the Pipe 'n Pizza in the San Fernando Valley. The once 2/10 Wurlitzer has been re-installed for better "hearability" and some ranks of pipes have been added (we didn't find out how many). Once the business was concluded, our talented members entertained at the console while the rest of us chomped pizza. The presence of an organ always seems to move the business sessions along at a delightful pace.

The chapter's "Mothers' Day" concert (May 8) will introduce us to



Paul Bowen at the 3/7 Wurlitzer.



Jonas Nordwall (Nakahara Photo)



Dan Semer (Stufoto)



Lance Luce, Motor City member, won in the Youth II category at the Yamaha regional contest in Wisconsin. Now it's on to the finals in Los Angeles. (Larry Luce Photo)

youthful Dan Semer, a pupil of Bill Thomson and Richard Purvis. Dan has been getting enthusiastic reviews so we decided to find out what he can do with the San Gabriel Wurlitzer.

While it won't be a chapter event, members are looking forward to George Wright's second concert on the San Gabriel Wurlitzer set for May 13.

BOB POWER & STU GREEN

MOTOR CITY

Our lively Second Sunday program at the Michigan Theatre 3/13 Barton in March featured long-time chapter member Don Jenks. He treated the large audience to many popular favorites and spring songs. No Second Sunday was scheduled in April because of Easter Sunday.

Ray Ebey appeared at the 3/16 Barton for our Fourth Sunday event at the Royal Oak Theatre in March. Ray has been a teacher, church organist and dance band leader in the Pontiac area.

The artist for our April Fourth Sunday program at the Royal Oak was new member Carl Creager. Carl is a professional supper club organist in the Detroit area. Open console is also a part of these Second and Fourth Sunday events.

Lee Erwin appeared at the Redford Theatre for our three-night D. W. Griffith Film Festival in March. The films were *Way Down East*, *Orphans of the Storm* and *Sally of*

the Sawdust. With a different film each night, Lee came up with three superb film scores to delight our combined audience of 2000. Our own Motor City Chorus introduced Thursday and Friday evening's film fare with the appropriate "Don't You Wish You'd Been Around."

A committee has been created to manage fund-raising activities and develop new programs necessary to complete the purchase of the Redford Theatre properties. Contributors of \$25, or more, will receive a "I'm An Angel — I Helped Buy the Redford Theatre" pin. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to: Motor

City Theatre Organ Society, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

Motor City again invites ATOS members who will be in town on Thursday, August 11, to attend our Fourth Annual Bob-Lo Moonlight Cruise on the Detroit River on board the 75-year-old excursion steamer *Columbia*. There will be dancing to an electronic organ on the dance deck and a cash bar on the third deck.

Tickets for the private-charter moonlight are \$4.00. For tickets and information write: Motor City Moonlight, P.O. Box 671, Dearborn, Michigan 48121.

DON LOCKWOOD

NEW YORK

It's a fairly safe assumption that no musician in the history of theatre organ concerts (and possibly any kind of organ, or even the piano) ever made an entrance quite like it!

True, she confined her manifold talents to the piano while her equally talented husband presided over the four-manual console for a charming, sparkling program of duets and solos.

But, while Dennis James' entrance was merely a traditional walk-to-the-console from "prompt" side of the giant Radio City Music Hall stage, Heidi James rode in on the back of a white swan. Actually, she drove on from well upstage in a sweeping



Heidi's entrance at Radio City Music Hall.

curve toward the orchestra lift. Dressed in a white, floor-length gown that matched the color of the swan's back, she handled the motor-driven fairy-tale stage piece with great aplomb. After pausing to acknowledge applause from the slightly-amazed audience, she made her way to the grand piano on the orchestra lift and, within seconds, 88 notes of Steinway and 56 ranks of Wurlitzer were romping together through "Popularity" — their NYTOS concert opener in mid-March.

The audience, numbering well over 500, had assembled virtually at the crack of dawn in the then all but deserted streets of Sunday morning Manhattan. Yes, they queued up in the traditional sidewalk line outside the 50th St. entrance well before the doors were opened. They had come by train, by chartered bus and by cars which bore license plates not only from New York and New Jersey, but also Connecticut, Pennsylvania and other surrounding states.

Never before had theatre organ fans heard the huge Music Hall Wurlitzer in a duet concert, although Dennis and Heidi's concerts are house-fillers at the Ohio Center for the Performing Arts in Columbus (nee Loew's Ohio Theatre with the original 4/20 Robert Morton a prime focal point of interest).

Dennis and Heidi are not only extremely talented musicians — perfectly attuned to one another, they possess an exceptional sense of "showbusiness." Their programs move like clockwork treating the audience to a kaleidoscope of musical interests with each number prefaced by interesting background on the composer, anecdotes about how the composition was inspired, or possibly what happened when the work was first played in concert. If Dennis and Heidi could bestow academic credit upon their audiences after a season of their concerts, music appreciation courses elsewhere would never be the same. They simply charm their audiences into learning both by their musicianship and close personal rapport with their listeners.

Because the NYTOS program preceded another busy day for the Music Hall, which was presenting its renowned *Glory of Easter* pageant and a colorful review called *Top Hats and Tales*, it wasn't possible to



Dennis and Heidi after their program at Radio City Music Hall.

position the concert grand close to the organ console. In that vast theatre, Dennis and Heidi were playing virtually a "small city block" apart. But this somewhat awkward physical arrangement daunted the duo not one wit. Their duets were as precise in tempo as if they were being played on one instrument.

During their intermission, NYTOS Secretary-Treasurer Allen Rossiter appeared on stage to present an honorary membership in both ATOS and New York chapter to John Henry Jackson, vice president and producer of the Radio City Music Hall. And the audience was treated to a demonstration of some of the mechanical marvels of the great stage by the chapter's MC for the morning, Claud Beckham.

One indication of how Dennis and Heidi left their mark in Manhattan can be gleaned from the actions of the lighting crew of the Music Hall itself. They responded impromptu to the spirit of each of Dennis and Heidi's numbers by appropriate color-mood lighting of the great house itself.

It was a feast for the eyes, but first and foremost, it was a feast for the ears. Dennis and Heidi have brought

a bright new "team" concept to the concert world and it is welcome again — any time — in the Big Apple!

ARTHUR M. COX, JR.

NIAGARA

Colin Cousins, one of Canada's most prominent theatre organists, opened the 1977 season at the Riviera Theatre, North Tonawanda, N.Y. on January 19.

Colin was making his debut here, but is well-known in southern Ontario and western New York for his concerts in other centres and for being a staff organist at the Organ Grinder, Toronto.

Although inclement weather of 50 mph winds and temperatures far below zero prevented a capacity crowd, Colin entertained a good house with rousing marches, favorite ballads, selections from light opera, and several light classical numbers.

With the accent on formality, and to the obvious pleasure of the audience, Colin wore full-dress tails with cape, cane, and silk hat. Rather than rising with the console from the orchestra pit, he chose to enter from the audience-level. He was accompanied in his entrance by lovely Diane MacRae, who appeared in a full-length burgundy evening gown. The reaction was electric, and the audience was undoubtedly thrilled by the sight of such a charming young couple.

Following the tremendous ovation Colin received, many people advanced to the console to extend their thanks and congratulations, and to have the artist autograph the jacket of his new record, "Presenting Colin Cousins at the Theatre Organ."

CHERYL PAYNE

On March 23, Rex Koury made his third appearance at the Riviera. He was the house guest of Lynn and Charles Yeager.

Channel 2, one of the local TV stations, decided to put the story of the Riviera Theatre organ on the air. This was a new experience for the TV crew. They spent nearly an hour looking the organ over after they realized it was not a Hammond, then, proceeded to tape Rex at the console which they later put on the air on two separate occasions.

This kind of publicity is good for the theatre organ, good for our concerts, good for our chapter and we thank Sheila Murphy of WGR-TV for arranging this program.

The week of April 17 will be a busy one for our chapter. On April 20, Ron Rhode will play his second concert at the Riviera; April 23 our annual banquet will be held at Chicks Restaurant, Angola, N.Y., and April 24, open house at the Riviera Theatre, where a bus load of members from the Western Reserve Chapter will be our guests.

May 14 will find Len Rawle from England making his first appearance at the Riviera and on June 15 another organist from England, George Blackmore will play his first public concert at the Riviera.

This is not the first time that George has played the Riviera organ having played for chapter members only last year while a guest of Laura and Joe Thomas.

At this time I would like to thank the members who have taken the time to write our chapter secretary and various other officers pointing out what our chapter is doing wrong. How easy it is to find fault when you are standing on the side lines. If only they had taken a few minutes more and told us what to do to correct these faults!

I realize that there is no way that you can please everyone but keep on trying. So please keep sending in your criticism along with your suggestions on how to improve our concerts.

STEPHEN T. CROWLEY

NOR-CAL

Hospitality was extended to the NOR-CAL members who visited the home installations in Vallejo, Cali-

fornia, for our February meeting. The Judd Walton's beautifully voiced Wurlitzer had past chairman Warren Lubich on the bench with his melodic favorite selections. At Norm Lippert's Wurlitzer, Bill Taylor was featured. Norm recently installed sub and super couplers and these were well demonstrated. Tours of the installations and open console followed each concert. Our thanks are extended to our hosts and artists for a most enjoyable day of music and enjoyment.

Ron Rhode took a breather from the Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix, Arizona, and made his Bay Area debut for the chapter on April 3. By courtesy of Bill Brewer, his Redwood City Cap'n's Galley was closed to allow the public concert. The 4/24 Wurlitzer and Ron Rhode made beautiful music together. Many heard Ron for the first time, but judging from his record sales, his music will be enjoyed over and over.

Two of our members, Bob Baese and David Schutt, spent countless hours assembling data on the Bay Area pipe installations. There are 14 locations where music is played regularly, plus three that are temporarily inactive. Artists, performing schedules and locations are detailed. This publication would be a great aid for any of you who are planning a trip to the San Francisco Bay area. A copy is free, if you send a large size, self-addressed and 13¢ stamped envelope to Bob Baese, 10385 Mann Drive, Monte Vista, California 95014.

Another in-theatre organ has been removed but not lost from the area. The San Francisco Orpheum 4/22 Robert Morton has been saved and is scheduled for installation in the new auditorium at Oakland's Piedmont High School. Hopefully, details

can be arranged so our chapter will have frequent access to this fine Wonder Morton.

OREGON

Due to the untimely death of our chairman, Bill Peterson, there was no meeting in January. Our February event featured Andy Crow playing the Bob Rickett 3/18 Wurlitzer. This remarkable instrument was pictured on the cover and described in the Summer, 1963 THEATRE ORGAN, and sounds better than ever. Originally installed in the Castle Theatre in Vancouver, Washington, as a 3/10, it was moved to the Rickett's Portland home in 1954. Over the years it has been enlarged to 18 ranks, with modern Tibia mutations. Large bedrooms upstairs have been converted to organ chambers which speak down into the living room through grills in the ceiling. The volume is never overwhelming, and each voice is clear and distinct.



Andy Crow played the Bob Rickett 3/18 Wurlitzer in February.

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DEALER INQUIRIES INVITED



Andy Crow's home is in Olympia, Wash., and he is a leading Northwest organist. He is nationally known through his tours for Rodgers and his recording "As the Crow Flies." He is featured twice weekly at the Pipes and Pizza in Tacoma. Andy is a master of delicate and tasteful registration who makes many lightning-quick uses of combination pistons. His program was very enjoyable.

It was so good to hear Andy again. He was one of the first organists to play the Organ Grinder Wurlitzer when it opened in 1973. Thanks again to Bob and Nadine Rickett for a wonderful afternoon.



Dean Lemire at the 3/24 Kimball in Benson High School.

In April we returned to Benson High to hear a rising young Portland organist, Dean Lemire, at the 3/24 Kimball. Dean is very busy as relief organist at the Oaks Rink 4/18 Wurlitzer, a salesman and demonstrator for the Day Music Co.,

and organist for the Portland Trail Blazers.

As previously described, the Kimball's added ranks appear as floating divisions with their tabs and couplers located on the back rail. This is a tremendous increase in the resources of the organ but makes the console quite a challenge to a stranger. However, on short notice, Dean played an excellent program with unusual introductions and complex accompaniments. He makes very effective use of mass string and voxes for soft passages. Thanks to Dean Lemire for a fine program.

Our chapter is grateful to Mike DeSart who has been substituting as chairman since the death of Bill Peterson.

BUD ABEL

PIKES PEAK

The evening of November 22, 1976 was a red-letter day for the newly-chartered chapter. That evening, in conjunction with the Colorado Springs Chapter of the AGO, we presented Ron Rhode of the Mesa, Arizona, Organ Stop Pizza in concert at the Margery Reed Auditorium 3/9 Wurlitzer. This event drew ATOSers and AGOers both locally and from surrounding cities, as well as the general public. Ron presented a highly varied program designed to provide "something for everyone."

The director of music at one of Colorado Spring's largest churches was overheard to comment that the organ was "in perfect tune," and indeed, our little Wurlitzer did perform admirably under Ron's very capable and experienced direction. Only one cipher presented itself, and this was quickly squelched by the "cipher crew" who were standing by hoping they would not be needed.

During the second half of the program, Ron accompanied the Laurel and Hardy film *Brats* which had the audience first snickering, then audibly chuckling, and by the conclusion of the film, guffawing. Following the film, as a special surprise, Ron introduced Miss Ruth Etting. Well known in the late 1920's and 30's as a popular singer, Miss Etting is now a resident of Colorado Springs. Unknown to anyone Ron had arranged for Miss Etting to be present in the audience. After the introduction, Ron played a medley of songs made popular by Miss Etting, and then presented her with a dozen long-stemmed red roses.

Then, after his closing number and an encore, Ron and Miss Etting were guests at a reception, the organ chambers were opened for inspection by interested parties and the audience departed with that satisfied feeling we all get after having just experienced a wonderful evening of superb entertainment.

Thanks, Ron for a spectacular evening. We hope to have you back soon to "Play it again."

The Pikes Peak Area Chapter was chartered to cover the Southern half of the State of Colorado, including the major cities of Colorado Springs and Pueblo. The nucleus for the chapter was formed in 1972 as the Pikes Peak Area Branch, Rocky Mountain Chapter, ATOS. As interest and participation grew, it became apparent that a separate chapter, more conveniently located to its membership, was needed. The Pikes Peak Area Chapter (Branch) has for several years published its own newsletter, planned its own activities, and in general, served the interests of organ enthusiasts in Southern Colorado.

The chapter has two Wurlitzer organs in Colorado Springs under its

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Ron Rhode and Ruth Etting at Reed Auditorium in Colorado Springs.

pervue for maintenance. The first, a 3/9 Style 'E' Special, was originally in the Isis Theatre in Boulder, Colorado. About 1948 it was removed and later installed in the Margery Reed Auditorium. The organ is in near perfect playing condition and is the main concert instrument for the chapter.

Our second Wurlitzer, a 3/8 Style 'F' Special was removed from the late Chief Theatre in Colorado Springs, (formerly the Burns Opera House), by chapter members in early 1973. This organ was donated to the City of Colorado Springs when the 1800-seat Chief was demolished to generate more parking facilities in the downtown area. In 1975, the Colorado Springs City Council appropriated funds for the complete restoration of the organ. This provision of funds allowed the chapter to begin a two-year effort of rebuilding which has resulted in an instrument which is now playable at a

temporary work location. Reinstallation in its permanent location in the City Auditorium is expected to be completed in late fall of 1977 with a dedication concert following shortly thereafter. Built in 1905, the City Auditorium has portable seating on the main floor and arena-type seating in the surrounding pseudo-balcony. The proscenium arch was designed with ample organ chambers and, with the auditorium's acoustics, it should provide an excellent setting for performances on the Wurlitzer.

The chapter also has an interest in the 4/55 Austin installed in Pueblo's, Memorial Hall in 1919, and which has generally been unused and unmaintained since that date. This fascinating church-concert-theatre-type instrument has three expressed chambers around the proscenium arch as well as an unenclosed Great organ, and an eight-rank Antiphonal organ in the rear of

the auditorium. The instrument is complete with some traps, percussions, and two 32-foot pedal stops, and a 64-foot resultant pedal stop. The City of Pueblo permits the chapter to play the organ in exchange for whatever maintenance the chapter can provide. After some considerable work in restoring the organ, the chapter hopes that concerts can be given on it, and that the City of Pueblo will further utilize this valuable instrument.

The chapter would be pleased to show visitors to the region any or all of the above organs. Contact should be made through our mailing address: P.O. Box 7002, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80933.

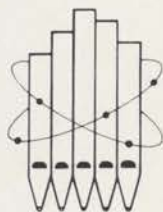
The Pikes Peak Area Chapter #56 is proud to be a full-fledged member of ATOS, and hopes that our futures may be ORGAN-ized.

Our 1977 chapter officers are: Robert V. Boyer, chairman; John Grunow, vice-chairman; and David Weesner, secretary-treasurer.

POTOMAC VALLEY

The February meeting was held in the relatively new Maryland University Adult Education Building Theatre, Maryland University, College Park, Maryland.

For the past two years our chapter has had four volunteer work crews, widely separated geographically, overhauling and rehabilitating various sections of a 3/10 Kimball. A home for the half-completed project, for which we held option to purchase, had not yet been confirmed. In his first announcement, Chairman Al Baldino told us that the Adult Education Center of Maryland University had, prior to the meeting, assured our group that the center was more than willing for us to complete the restoration and permanent-



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ly install the Kimball in their impressive 750-seat theatre. Additionally, he reported, the center offered to build in, at no cost to our chapter, necessary modifications to the stage area to provide two large chamber spaces for the Kimball. The theatre auditorium has motion picture projection facilities and excellent acoustics and lighting; an adjacent banquet room, restaurant and coffee shop. As a bonus, acres of free off-street parking spaces are available, as well as a drive-in loading area to backstage and similar access for an elevator to lower level storage rooms below the stage. Literally, the place seemed to have been made to order for us.

Our chairman introduced us to the then current owner of the Kimball, the president of the Washington Educational Television Association (WETA). Chairman Baldino presented a check to WETA for the complete inventory of organ parts, transferring ownership to the Potomac Valley Chapter.

Mr. Doug Bailey, chairman of the Kimball restoration committee, gave us a capsule background story of the 3/10 Kimball instrument. For example, we learned that the organ was originally installed and used from 1926 through 1940 at the Earle (Warner) motion picture/vaudeville theatre in Washington, D.C. Ida Mae Clark was featured as a part of its opening program. The organ operated on direct current, with electrical power taken from the street car lines.

Chairman Baldino then expressed his appreciation to the four hard-working committee crew managers and staffs for their progress on the Kimball. Those cited included: Ed Stricker, console; Dick Haight, pipes; Frank Harris, chests, and George Johnson, relay team. Each



The Kimball movers — March 12, 1977.

(Harold R. Richman Photo)

crew leader, in turn, identified by name all persons working under his guidance. George Johnson was elected foreman for the installation and coordination of the Kimball installation at the Adult Education Center.

A dispiriting note, is the announcement that our chapter is losing another in-theatre meeting place, and as a consequence, its Grand Barton installation. The Virginia Theatre in Alexandria, Virginia, will be demolished in early April. A farewell concert at the Virginia, scheduled for March 26, starring the popular Rosa Rio had to be cancelled.

To round out the February meeting, several of our members provided a nostalgic group of organ related films. Ethel Thom projected a Dick Liebert sing-along (1931), Doug Bailey showed an entertaining documentary on the MGM studios and its personalities and George Merriken presented a film which chronicled

the destruction of the Oriental Theatre.

On March 12, 1977, with the acquisition of a new home for our ongoing 3/10 Kimball a reality, many dedicated persons were on hand to pitch in and transfer, piecemeal, part and parcel, the remaining Kimball package from its "Water Works" storage place near Potomac, Maryland, to the University College Adult Education Center in College Park, Maryland. Imagine, for example, guiding a seemingly endless trail of heavy and bulky items such as a 16-foot Tuba and other large-scale wooden Diaphones, numerous pipe crates, resonators and wind chests, down three-and-a-half flights of stairwell — which included six narrow, abrupt turns — to a huge tractor trailer-moving van waiting below. Some parts were passed down the stairwell relay fashion, from person to person, landing by landing. This, for a full four hours. Then unloading, the same, long day.



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The work team included: William L. Alexander, Shirley Anderson, Harold Andrus, Doug Bailey, Donald D. Faehn, Lawrence M. Goodwin, Jr., Frank Harris, Jr., Allen L. Hartman, Henry L. Hynson, George Johnson, Donald Johnston, Ken Joseph, Marion Long, Susan McMains, Leland J. Prater, Howard Reagan, John Sneedon, and C. Edwin Stricker. Unknown, thoughtful persons at appropriate times provided coffee and doughnuts on the job. The proceedings at the Kimball storage place were also recorded on Super 8 sound film by this reporter.

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

PUGET SOUND

Our year started in February with a concert by Greg Smith at Seattle Pizza and Pipes. Greg is one of the staff organists at both the Seattle and the new Bellevue Pizza and Pipes. Some of you will surely remember his first ATOS appearance (ATOE at the time) as part of the skit that was featured at the convention banquet at Portland in 1966. He was 14 years old at the time, and his mentor was the fabulous Martha Lake, who made her national debut on the same occasion.

After abandoning the organ for several years for more important growing-up chores, Greg has resumed his earlier interest, and hopes to make playing his profession. He has had pipes in his home since 1960 — first a 2/5 Wurlitzer, followed by a 3/8 Leatherby-Smith. He presented a very polished performance made more notable by his cool poise.

Following the concert, an invitation was extended to visit the Balcom and Vaughan warehouse, where restoration of a 2/8 Kimball organ from the Juneau Coliseum Theatre had just been completed. The organ had



Greg Smith at Seattle's Pizza and Pipes' 3/17 Wurlitzer.
(George Belston Photo)

been completely set up for testing, before shipping back to Juneau. Many members stopped by after open console at Pizza and Pipes to try it out.

In April we enjoyed the 3/17 Wurlitzer from the Academy of Music in New York, completely refurbished and installed in the newest of the Pizza and Pipes chain, located in Bellevue across Lake Washington from Seattle. This beautiful new restaurant is the product of much patient planning and negotiation on the part of owners Jack and Betty Laffaw (Bill Breuer's sister) and Bill Carson and his amiable crew of organ restorers.

Dick Schrum, also a Pizza and Pipes staff organist, presented a delightful concert, which he shared with other staff organists: Donn Clayton, Greg Smith and Patti Simon. Open console followed.

Our chapter has a prestigious new member: the Alaska State Library. The library building, a new glass and concrete structure eleven stories high, is the setting for the recently restored 2/8 Kimball referred to earlier. The organ is located on the eighth floor level in an indoor courtyard which is surrounded by tiers of offices and library rooms up to the sky-lighted eleventh floor. The sound is stupendous, judging from the earliest tapes brought back by Don Myers.

GENNY WHITTING

RED RIVER

We began the new year with more huff 'n puff than bang. On January 9, with temperature of thirty below zero, several of us brrrraved the weather to caravan two hundred miles from Fargo to Bismarck for a warmup with Reiny Delzer's Mighty 4/21 Wurlitzer. "You have to be crazy to do this," chattered one member as we made a pit stop. We thawed quickly at Delzer's with a delightful few hours. Several of us played the former pride of the Minnesota Theatre. We frosted our musical cake with a visit across the street at the home of Charles Welch whose Marr & Colton once graced the stage of the Bismarck Theatre.

Our February meeting was held in the Fargo Theatre, a labor of love for us now going into the fourth year. We've nearly restored the fifty-one year old Wurlitzer that was dormant for a quarter-century. Chairman Dave Knudtson reported on the fifty in a series of Silent Movie Nights to be held May 12 featuring a classic Keaton film. Lance Johnson and Lloyd Collins will complete the one-night stand with sing-along and trip through the organ.



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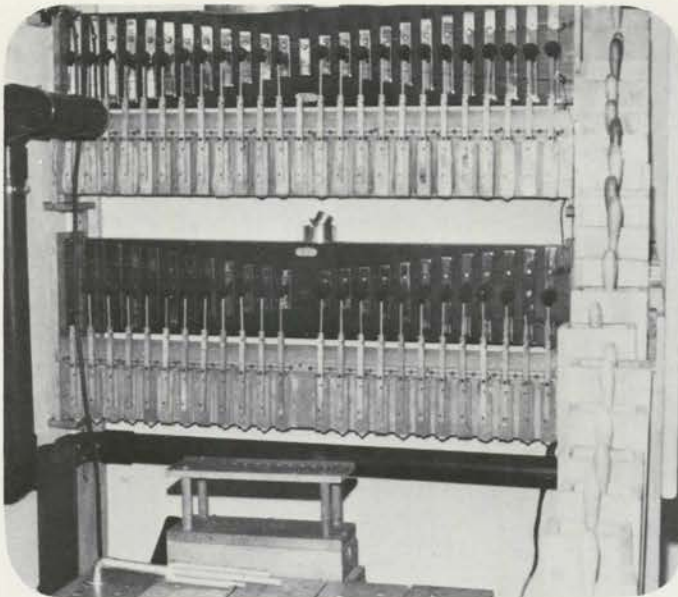
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Bill's Harp with Tibias on the right. Note the Train Whistle on the pipe chest.



Bill Arthur with Marr & Colton.

Sonia Carlson clickety-clacked to Milwaukee in February to hear Walter Strony play the 4/20 Moller at Pipe Organ Pizza. Sonia heartily agrees that "music hath charm to soothe the savage beast," especially the talented Strony who, says Sonia, "is a master of double pedaling."

March reversed its traditional role coming in like a lamb and staying. Dr. George Schulte hosted us for an evening of organ music and a special treat of rare film featuring Jesse Crawford, Don Baker, and Ann Leaf at the Paramount Theatre Wurlitzer.

We are now in our fourth year of organ intermission music at the Fargo Theatre. Audience response has been most gratifying from young patrons who have a deep appreciation for organ music. The award-winning film *Rocky* had an extended run at the Fargo Theatre with chapter members presiding at the Mighty Wurlitzer several nights each week.

LARRY KINDLE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Chapter Treasurer Bill Arthur heard of a theatre organ for sale; his Rodgers 3/whatever just wasn't enough. Wife Pricilla rolled a wary eye at old Bill, but he went ahead anyway. Results are that he owns a 2/5 Marr & Colton painted "Bedroom White" trimmed with gold. It originally came from the World Theatre in McCook, Nebraska. Then it went to a Presbyterian church in Sydney, Neb., and finally ended up in storage in Boulder, Colo. in 1969. After negotiations were completed in October of 1976, he had it brought down and started installation.

It came like a kit — all apart. Parts were scattered all over. Bill remade the keydesk, refinished the console, made new ductwork and placed the 3-phase Spencer 3 hp blower in an outdoor enclosure. His

Be an angel . . .

HELP BUY THE REDFORD

See page 10

wife calls it the "outhouse." It has a Kohler harp, a Liebich glock and a nice toy counter complete with a 3-note train whistle. Bill hopes to add a fire truck bell later. (Neighbors beware!). Bill has a very compact setup in his walk-through chamber and hopes to have it playing sometime this summer, when visits and tours will be in order.

Our congratulations to member Stinson Jones, now recovered from surgery and back at home for wife Betty to nurse back to active organ health.

FRANK R. GANDY

SAN DIEGO

On January 17 we presented Korla Pandit in concert on the 5/29 Fort-Moller organ at Organ Power Restaurant in Pacific Beach. 'Standing Room Only' and extensive applause from our largest attendance ever proved that his listeners definitely enjoyed his delightful and unusual arrangements.

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February 21 we were flattered to have Rex Koury introduce an original composition for our concert. His "Balboa Park Suite" brought a standing ovation. The fact that Rex has played for five of the last six national conventions is indicative of his talent. Wendell Shoberg and Gene Ginder had the Moller tuned to perfection. What a joy to hear it played by one of the top organists.

Jim Hansen and Tommy Stark hosted our February business meeting at Southland Music where we laughed heartily as Tommy accom-



Korla Pandit at Organ Power # 1, San Diego.
(Ed Minder Photo)

panied Charlie Chaplin in *The Rink* and appreciatively applauded Jim as he performed an unpublished "Adagio" by Richard Elsasser.

Due to extensive renovating and expansion of the Pacific Beach restaurant our March concert was held at Kearney Mesa on the 3/12 Wurlitzer presenting that master musician Del Castillo. The charm, warmth and wit that emanates from this man is marvelous to behold. His concert included all our favorites,



Rex Koury at the 5/29 Foort Moller. (Ed Minder Photo)

and his accompaniment of the *Son of the Sheik* starring Rudolph Valentino proved again that he is a true veteran of the silent film era.

In April we were pleased to participate in the Grand Opening of the new Spaghetti and Pizza Pavilion (formerly Organ Power #2) when we presented Maria Kumagai in a special dinner-concert. Her artistry seems almost unbelievable, as she



Del Castillo at the 3/12 Wurlitzer at Kearney Mesa.
(Ed Minder Photo)

completely holds her audience captured with her nimble fingers, tone color and sensitivity to the composers' desires. An over-capacity crowd gave her a standing ovation long before intermission. The previous day she played a dedication concert on a 2/26 Blackinton pipe organ for the San Carlos United Methodist Church. She pleases both classical and theatre groups. Her Australian tour during June should be most successful.

The music was matched by the intriguing new Pavillion-in-the-Park decor of the restaurant. The 'table and chair' atmosphere includes a library, wine cellar, Captain Nemo's Room and gazebo.

See you at the convention —

LOIS SEGUR

SIERRA

It is interesting to compare, both musically and from a standpoint of personality, the young people who are coming up in the theatre organ world today. For our February and March concerts, we presented Jim Riggs and Don Croom, our two youngest professionals. Jim is nineteen years old, short, bland and a bubbling personality. Don is twenty-three, very tall, dark, and has a somewhat reserved personality. Both are very friendly guys and each in his own style a fine organist.

Jim played at the Big Top Pizza in February and it was his first public concert. Surprisingly for such a young person, Jim is strictly a ballad boy, and his program consisted of fine old numbers from the great theatre days of the '20s, '30s and early '40s. He knows just how to play them, with good choice of stops and subtle use of percussions. Each number was introduced with comments

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about its originality and those who made it famous. Jim said he learned Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'" as a child, from the family player-piano, and urged parents with musical youngsters to "get the kids a player-piano." Jim also said that improvisation was his idea of musical fun. Before the program, he had asked member Sue Lang to write down a few bars of a tune composed on the spot. When the "sealed envelope" was given to him, Jim without hesitation turned the few notes into a lovely ballad.

Don played our March meeting at Arden Pizza and Pipes. He has been playing around the Sacramento area for two or three years, mainly as relief organist at Arden. In early March he opened the new Fresno Pizza and Pipes in that city and will be house organist. He was very excited about the new Bob Breuer establishment and said they had had capacity business since they opened. Don played a varied program including a bouncy, jazzy "Who's In The Strawberry Patch With Sally" — proof that some of today's top tunes make great theatre organ music.

It's certainly nice to have people like Dale Mendenhall around. During a cypher he headed for the chambers, but it blew itself out before he got there. This brings one to wonder who caught the cyphers during the days when organs were in the theatres. I remember hearing in-theatre organs for many years, but can't recall having heard a cypher.

Both maintenance crews deserve thanks for their excellent care of these organs. Dale Mendenhall and Ray Anderson keep the Arden organ singing, and Don Wallin, house organist, and Scott Bosch see that Big Top's "Moon River" organ does likewise.

April saw us back at our own Seaver Memorial organ in the Golden Bear Theatre at Cal-Expo. After more than a year, it was good to have member Jeff Barker playing for us again. Jeff now lives in the San Francisco Bay area and plays for the Bill Breuer pizzarias chain. His excellent variety of music is always enthusiastically anticipated by his many friends and fellow members. He is probably best known for his ragtime and Sidney Torch presentations, but he can, and will, play everything from the classics to the latest pop tunes. Jeff is not only a fine organist but he also has a very keen sense of show business and adds much to his concerts with between number comments.

The program was dedicated to Clyde Derby, well known local organist and co-founder of Sierra Chapter. During intermission, Clyde and his lovely wife Kathy were introduced to those present. We were very happy to have Clyde with us as he has been in ill health for some time.

When Jeff again took over the console he announced a request for "Alley Katt" and had just started the second chorus when another organ was heard. The curtain went up to reveal "Ali Katt at the Mighty Purlitzer" followed by several other assorted marionette characters presenting their acts. The closing act was two skeletons, one playing a beat-up classical console. At the end of the act, when the skeletons fell apart, so did the console. The taped organ music had been prepared by Jeff and the puppets were those of Bob Longfield and his partner Mike Herd.

Our thanks to Jeff, who donated his pay to the Seaver Organ Fund. We want very much to add to this

popular organ and we badly need a larger console and additional ranks of pipes. We would much appreciate any donations, especially from Californians, since this organ is seen by thousands of people during the run of the California State Fair and at other concerts during the year.

KEYZANPEDALS

SOUTHERN ARIZONA

On Sunday, March 27, a very special program was held for our members and guests featuring Miss Karen Clauss, soloist, with accompaniment by honorary member Lon Hanagan at the console of the Conn 650 organ. The program consisted of selected solos by Miss Clauss having both a popular as well as humorous theme. The concert, also featuring numbers on the Conn, was held at Lois and Larry Seamands' home and drew about 70 members and guests.

An outstanding soprano, Miss Clauss is a native of Kingman, Arizona. She is a graduate of the University of Arizona and has also studied in Rome, Los Angeles and New York. She has appeared in operatic performances, such as *Madame Butterfly*, and at the Brooklyn Academy. While filling an engagement with the Tucson Symphony on March 25 and 26, Karen stayed over for an extra visit with her parents and for a special performance for us.

Mr. Hanagan is also a resident of New York City where he has a studio teaching organ.

A donation was accepted for our theatre organ fund. The possibilities of a theatre organ for Tucson are better now since the response from the new owner-managers of the fifty-year-old Temple of Music and Art, which is an established house of 929 seats including the balcony.

On Sunday, April 3, our second

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regular meeting of our year was held at Lois and Larry Seamands. Following the business session came a program followed by open console and refreshments.

BOB HIGH

TOLEDO

The chapter started the first quarter of 1977 in our new home by signing an agreement with "The Society of the Preservation of Polish American Traditions Inc.," to install and restore a vintage theatre pipe organ in the Ohio Theatre, now known as "St. Hedwig's Cultural Center," the present owner of this fine neighborhood theatre, which seats 1257 persons, on Lagrange St. Toledo, Ohio. A 2/8 Wurlitzer organ was once housed in this theatre, built in 1921.

Our first meeting held at the theatre graced on stage a Conn Trinidad electronic organ which was graciously furnished by Howard's Pianos and Organs of Toledo. Virg Howard is a member and staunch supporter of our chapter. Harold E. Johnson opened the program with nostalgic memories of a past era, which was followed by a short meeting, organ and song renditions by Donald and Joyce Gwinner and open console. Upon leaving the theatre, a glimpse of the worse winter in Toledo in one hundred years greeted all. Due to the energy crises we canceled our February meeting but work continued in moving chapter owned organ parts to the theatre.

Our March meeting opened in the theatre with the writer doing the honors. The membership then proceeded en mass from the theatre to St. Hedwig's Church for an organ concert by Daniel Dietzer and a tour of the church by member Rev. James C. Southard after which we adjourn-



The Ohio Theatre where the Toledo Chapter hopes to install a pipe organ.

ed to the parish house for meeting and good fellowship.

Our April meeting included sound films *Hollywood Dream Factory* and *Music In The Wind*. It was also the month of our participation in A & P Donations Day with moderate success. We hope, with the Toledo memberships approval, to purchase a suitable viable organ for the theatre or perhaps maybe some members of the national organization would advise us of an instrument available for tax deduction purposes, purchase or combination of both.

WILLIAM W. COTTLE

VALLEY OF THE SUN

On February 26 we were proud to present Ron Rhode in concert at the Phoenix College Auditorium. The majority of the concert was given on a beautiful Allen digital organ. Ron surprised everyone by playing "Tip-Toe Through the Tulips" on the partially renovated Phoenix College Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. During intermission VOTS-ATOS chairman

Jack Sheak presented an honorary membership to Ron Rhode who accepted most graciously. Another surprise was Ron Rhode's brother, Chuck, singing "If I Ruled the World" with Ron accompanying. The whole concert was considered by all to be a huge success.

On March 13 our chapter held a quarterly business meeting at the 7th St. Organ Stop Pizza. Bill Carr, program chairman, discussed plans for the Los Angeles Organ Crawl, slated for April 29 - May 1. The group travelling to Los Angeles will be staying at the Alexandria Hotel and taking in several exciting organ installations in the Los Angeles area. Some of the stops will be at Dick Simonton's to see his 4/36 Wurlitzer and 3/61 Skinner, the Wiltern Theatre 4/37 Kimball and the Pasadena Crown Theatre 3/11 Wurlitzer. After the business meeting, many of our members took advantage of an exciting open console on the Organ Stop's Wurlitzer. What a thrill! Thanks to Bill Brown for letting us hold our meeting at Organ Stop.

Several of our members attended the Ron Rhode concert on March 20 at the Mesa Organ Stop. Ron's performance was outstanding and the Wurlitzer was in great shape for the concert. Ron included quite a broad range of tunes in the program. The audience loved it all and showed it with *three* standing ovations!

On April 20 our regular monthly meeting was held at the Phoenix College Auditorium. The main item of business was the finalization of plans and reservations for the Los Angeles Organ Crawl. VOTS-ATOS is anxiously awaiting June 3 when the Phoenix College Auditorium will open its doors for our next concert — Dennis and Heidi James!

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WOLVERINE

Our March meeting was held at the Berkley home of Mr. and Mrs. Doug Gammage, where there is a 3/10 Page installed. Doug, being one of the "old timers" of the theatre organ craze, has spent much time regulating, voicing, and adding to his instrument, and it shows. Some of the more notable additions include a Vibraphone, Krumet and English Post Horn, the latter being fabricated from a Skinner Oboe. Several of our members took advantage of the nice weather, by attending, and the excellent instrument, by performing. Our thanks to the Gammages for letting us invade their home.

The Temple Theatre Organ Club in conjunction with the Wolverine Chapter were proud to present Donna Parker in her Midwest premiere theatre organ concert, which was performed at the 3/11 Barton in the Temple Theatre in Saginaw on April 17. Donna presented a varied program with a sampling of virtually everything from classics to pops to (yes even) hoedown music. Donna, who will be one of the featured organists at the Roaring Twenties Pizza Parlor in Grand Rapids, recently overcame some problems encountered in a severe auto accident,

however, none were evident in her playing. Thanks much to Donna for an excellent concert.

Boy-is-our-face-red Dept.: For the last several months, we have been having a monthly concert series known as "First Saturday" at the Michigan Theatre in Lansing at the 3/11 Barton installed therein. We are embarrassed to admit that we



Mr. & Mrs. Bob MacNeur (Donna Parker) in the lobby of the Temple Theatre, Saginaw, Michigan. (Ed Corey Photo)



Doug Gammage — one of the old timers of the theatre organ craze. (Ed Corey Photo)

have neglected not only to mention the series, but also the names of those who have performed for us. So, to catch up, our sincere thanks to the following people: Fr. James Miller (October — our kickoff concert), John Lauter (November), Scott Smith (December), Barry Rindhage and Burt Castle (January), Greg Yassick (February), Don Jenks (March), Lawrie Mallett (April) and Lance Luce (May).

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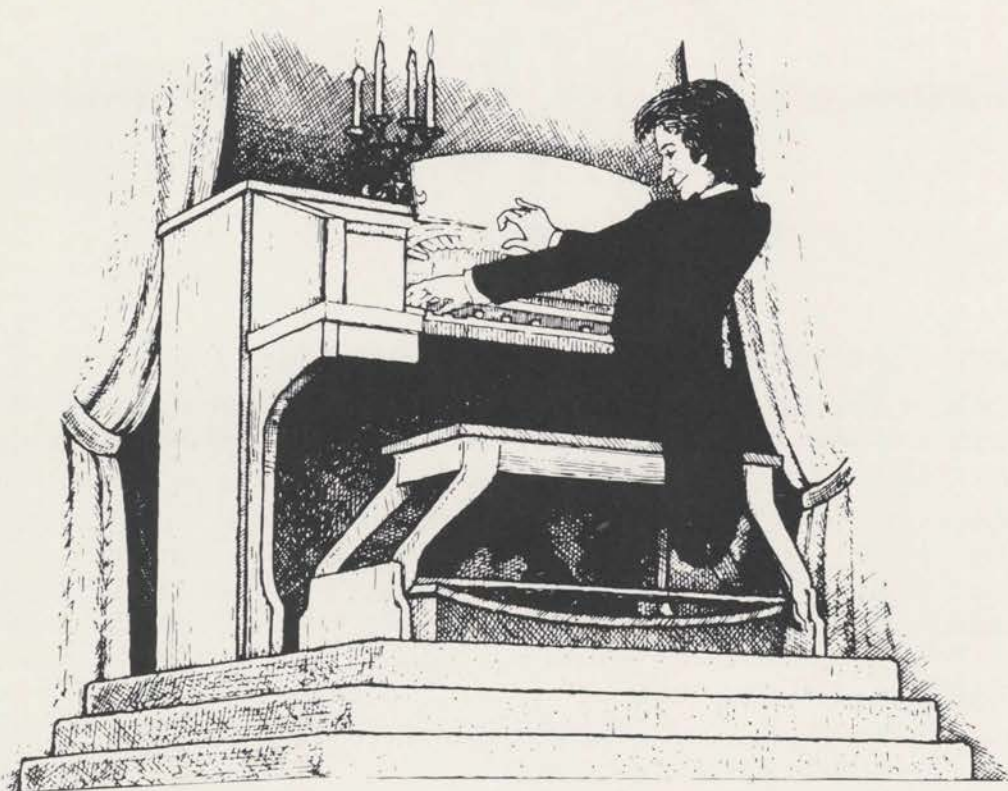
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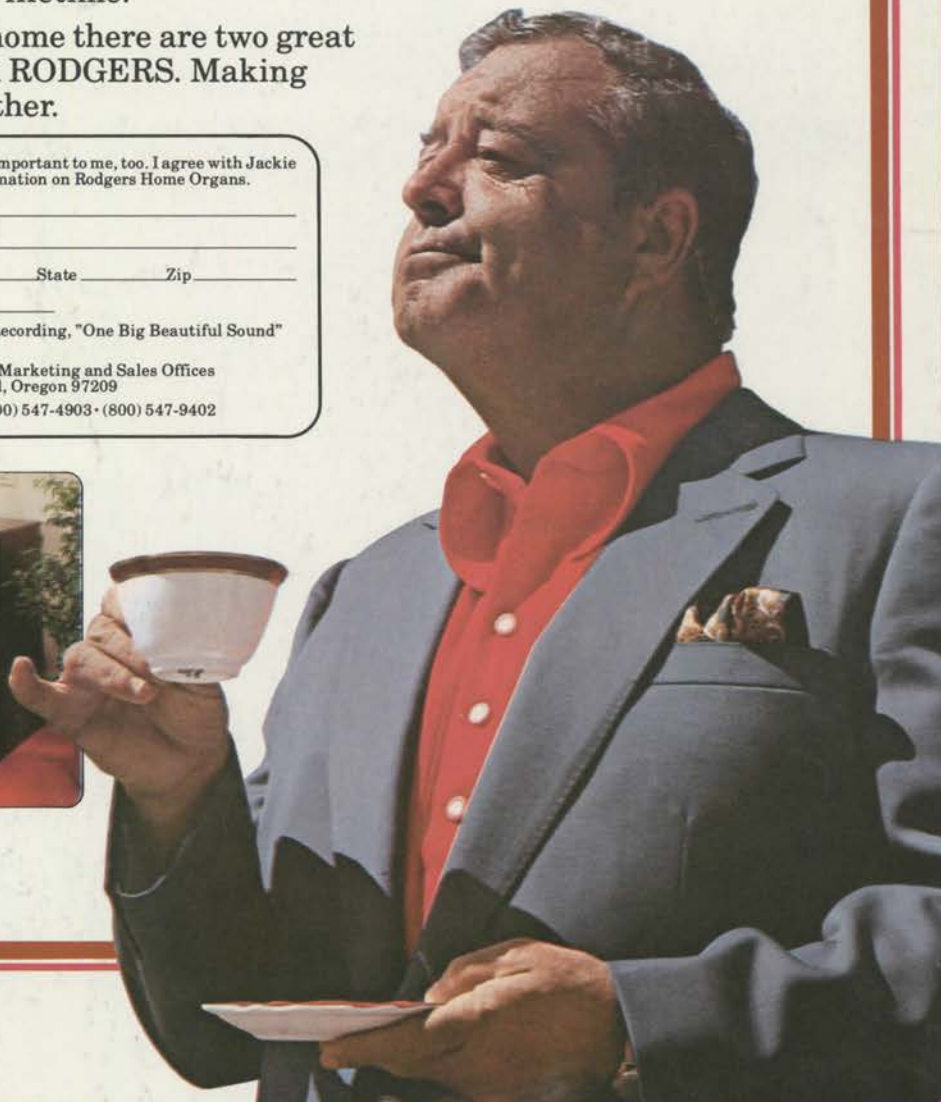
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