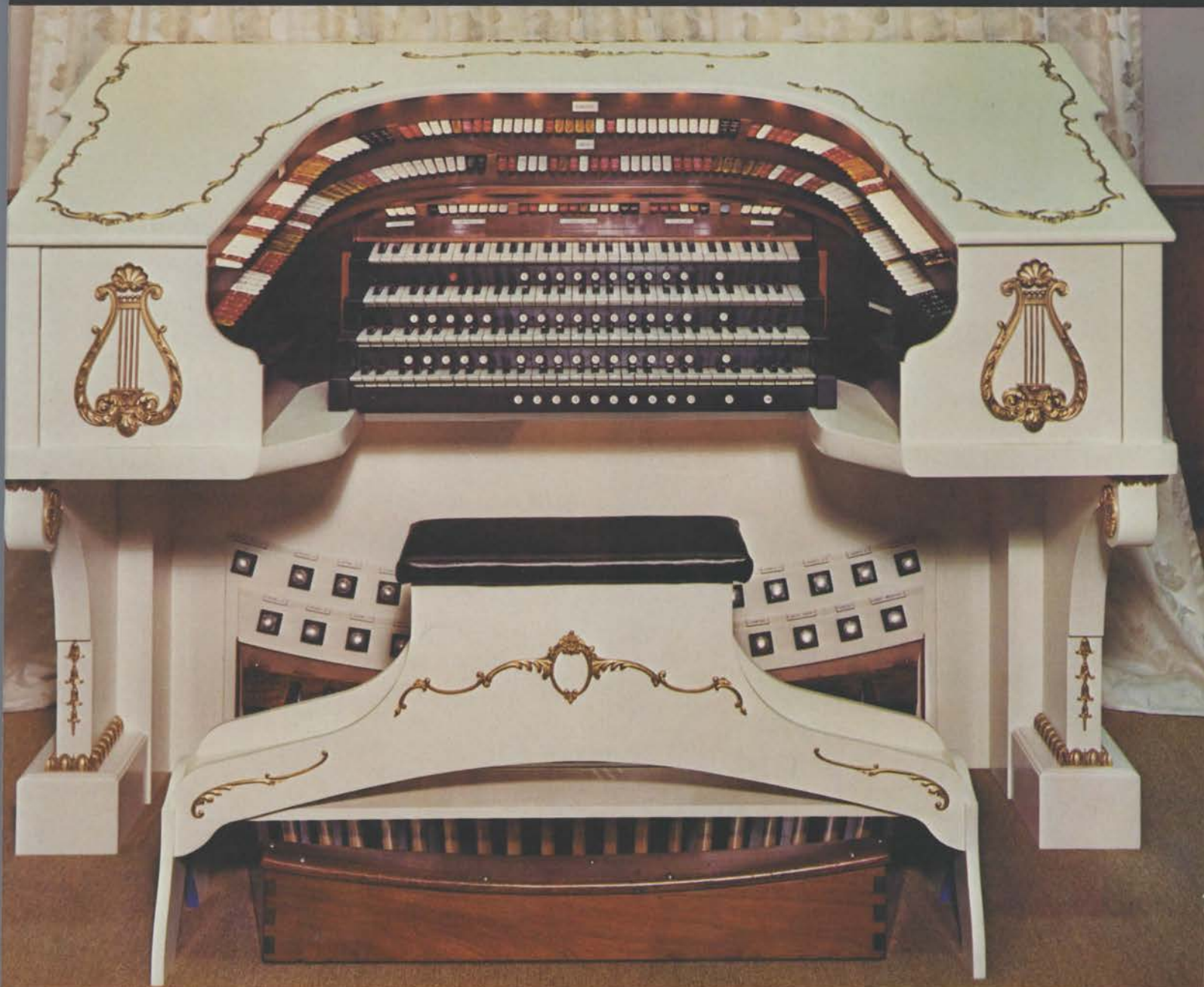
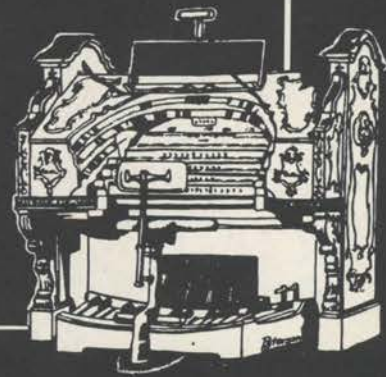


THEATRE ORGAN

October/November 1977



Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society

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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1977

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Cover Photo

This 4/24 Robert Morton will be placed in the Broome County Performing Arts Theatre, known as the Forum Theatre. See story on page 8.

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1975 — Joe Patten

1976 — Floyd and Doris Mumm

1977 — Les and Edith Rawle

President's Message

At the national convention in Chicago, two new chapters were presented with charters during the banquet festivities — Houston Area of Houston, Texas, and, the London and South of England Chapter. Within the past two months we have added three more enthusiastic groups of members who have formed chapters. Number 58 is the Bluegrass Chapter in Lexington, Ky.; number 59 is the Oklahoma City Chapter, Oklahoma City, Ok.; and the Southeast Texas Chapter in Beaumont, Tex., is number 60. These fine chapters have the nucleus of growing into very active groups of ATOS members. It is gratifying to add them to the active list of chapters that are furthering the aims and purposes of our society. The fun and sociability is the reward that is received for the hard work of restoring and maintaining theatre organs, promoting programs and holding meetings.



Our fine chapters are administered by capable officers and directors and with the assistance of those few who are the "hard core" workers, usually comprise about 25% of the chapters' membership. It would be wonderful if the other 75% would become involved and make the work load easier for the others. Just ask your chapter chairman how you can help and I am sure he would find many ways that you could enjoy your membership to a greater degree.

I enjoy reading about the activities in the chapter newsletters that I receive. (I ask those chapters who are not sending newsletters to me to do so). There are many chapters that have a variety of functions to keep high membership interest. Some visit neighboring chapters and join in their socials and meetings. Exchanging of newsletters between chapters in your area is recommended so you can enjoy each others activities. Keep up the good work.

One final thought. There are many chapters who have received their tax exempt status from the IRS under section 501(c)(3). Those who have are urged to comply with the requirements for the exemption. Many activities such as, educational programs, benefit shows, scholarships, cultural enrichment, restoration or organs are examples of activities that would satisfy the Internal Revenue Service. Nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations are being scrutinized by the IRS and chapters should examine and review their activities to make sure they will not be criticized.

Sincerely,

Ray F. Snitil
RAY F. SNITIL

A Marriage of Wine and Music

Story and Photos by Gary Konas

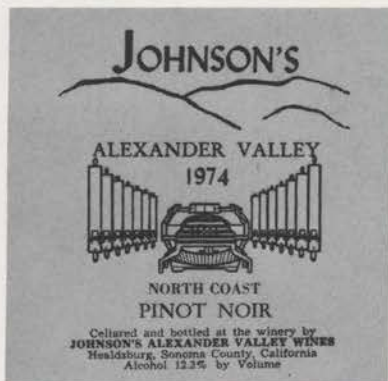
North of the San Francisco Bay area there are three areas, namely the Napa, Sonoma, and Alexander Valleys, that produce many of California's best wines. In addition to producing fine wines, Johnson's Alexander Valley Winery produces fine music, for it is the only winery with a theatre pipe organ in its tasting room.

Jay Johnson is largely responsible for this harmonious blend. He spent several years in the computer industry in San Jose and during this time he developed an interest in pipes by listening to pizza organs in the area. He would have liked to have his own organ but felt that a pipe organ would not fit well in his tract house. A few years ago Jay moved back to the Johnson family vineyard near Healdsburg and with brothers, Tom and Will, established a winery. There was then sufficient room for an organ in the old building that would become the winery facility.

The first organ obtained was a Smith, but it was in pieces and would require a lot of work before it would be playable. Meanwhile a small Marr & Colton became available. It was in storage but in good condition, so after selling the family plug-in Jay bought it. Jay's wife Gay, presently the only organist among the Johnsons, let it be known that she was anxious to have the organ in some sort of playing order soon so that she could continue her practice sessions. And there was a suitable room in one corner of the winery. Thus Jay needed to install the organ fairly quickly, but he was determined not to do a poor job. He was advised to get professional help and took this advice by calling on Bud Kurz, who has installed and maintains organs in the Bay Area. Upon first seeing the organ parts laid out on the floor Bud announced that there was a lot of work to do. However in only ten days the main chests were wound and the



organ was at least partially playable. The one-room setup was supposed to be temporary because Jay was planning to move this organ into his house. It was voiced softly and seemed ideal for a residence. But then he began to think that it would be interesting to have an organ in the winery, at least for a while. Once this was decided the main parts were "unwinded" and everything was physically lifted and moved 90° so that the organ would speak into the main part of the winery. The offsets were then added. Interestingly, the air going to each offset has to be tubed down off the main chest because each rank (except the two unified ranks) is con-



One of the memorable events of the 1975 ATOS Convention in San Francisco was the "Afterglow" excursion to the wine country. Visits to vineyards and wine tasting filled the day and to some the word "afterglow" proved quite fitting. The visit to the Johnson Winery near Healdsburg was especially interesting because of the pipe organ installed in the wine tasting room. ATOSers were curious about that organ and we have received frequent correspondence concerning it. So, we contacted "our man in the wine country," a talented young organist, named Gary Konas, who not only gathered the information and wrote the story, but also shot the photos. This is his unique report.

trolled by a vent valve. The relay controlling the unified ranks is also tubed pneumatically off the main chest. For each note there is a piece of Tygon tubing that runs from the valve on the main chest to the relay. This should make the organ slower, but it is not noticeably slow. But unorthodox, yes.

This particular seven rank Marr & Colton is an unusual blend of theatre and straight organ, reflecting its past life. It was built around 1924 (original home unknown) and spent a lot of time in a church in Woodland, Calif., a city near Sacramento. From there it went to a house in Northern California and from there to the Johnsons. It has only two unified ranks: Tibia and Diapason. The other ranks are Salicional, Melodia, Violin Diapason (on one vent chest), Vox and Trumpet (on another vent chest). The Trumpet was bought to replace an extra Diapason that had been used in the church installation. The Violin Diapason, which sounds something like a viola, has been tuned to celeste slightly in the middle octaves. There is a fairly full set of couplers to help compensate for the shortage of unified ranks. Jay and Bud have added a Toy Counter, Snare Drum, Tambourine, and Wood Block actions have been built out of a modified water-damaged Wurlitzer chrysoglott action. There is also a 29-note Moller Xylophone and a Vibraharp is on loan from Bud. The horseshoe console is in good shape and hasn't needed any restoration. The swell shutters are from a church and are designed to be open when not in use. This is fine for a church whose temperature is



The 2/7 Marr & Colton console. Percussion resonators provide a suitable background.

the same as that in the chamber, but not so good for a cool winery with a heated chamber. So, a block is flipped up to keep the shutters closed when the organ is not in use.

What are the future plans for the organ? Perhaps a move. Eventually Jay would like to have a larger organ in the winery, preferably a 3-manual Marr & Colton if one can be found. Then the original M & C could go into his home. Until then he'd like to work on getting it more unified. A ten rank Morton relay is available to unify the Trumpet and Vox, and would make possible the addition of two more ranks. An exposed classical division is tentatively planned to make classical music concerts possible. The soft-spoken Melodia will be replaced by a larger scale Flute.

Within the next few years a new winery building will be built, with a chamber, of course. Then either this expanded M & C or a three manual organ will be installed there.

Other plans involve Jay's expertise in electronics. He would like to design an interface between the organ and a small computer to have the computer "play" the organ. This would be accomplished by using computer impulses on a cassette tape made by someone playing the organ. It would then be a player organ, with cassettes taking the place of perforated rolls. This technique has been employed using reel-to-reel computer tapes by J.B. Nethercutt in his San Sylmar installation (THEATRE ORGAN, Feb. 1973), but present technology is making this system

Wine tasters examine the stock and view the organ chamber through the plate glass window (left). The offset pipes (right) are part of the 16' Diapason.

Cases of wine compete with the organ for space in the tasting room. This photo shows the relative positions of console and chamber. Note the unenclosed percussions mounted on the wall — and the stock in the foreground.



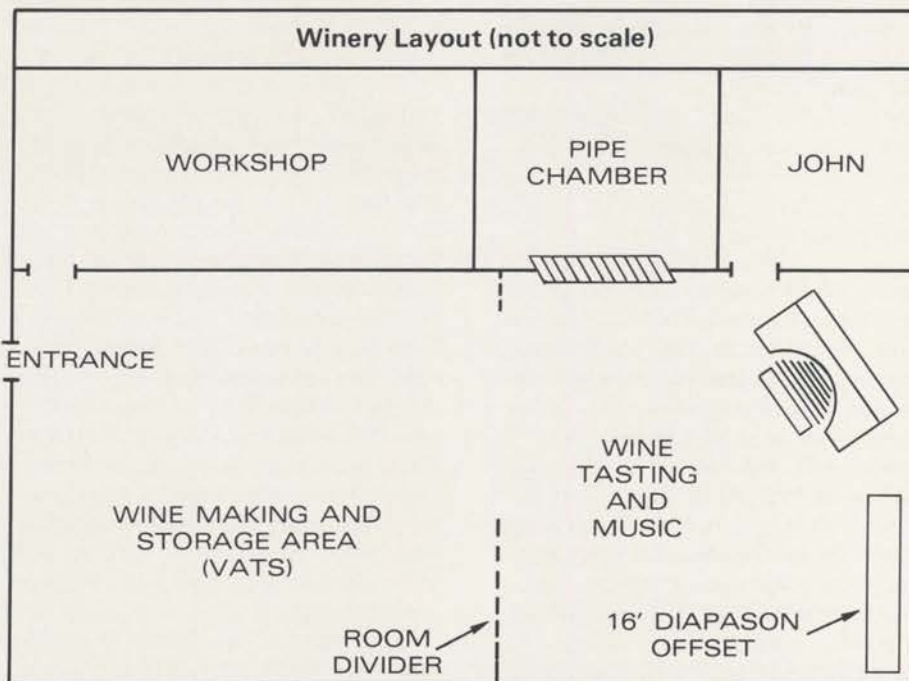
more affordable. With a collection of such cassettes, of course, visitors could be given a concert even when no organist is present. Jay is certain that he could design an interface if it weren't for the fact that the wine business is occupying all of his time at present.

The winery is still in the growth stage. Tom, who has previous experience in the industry, is the wine-maker and Jay primarily takes care of business and distribution matters. Their wives, Gay and Gail, are also very active in the family business. A third brother, Will, is chairman of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and does not actively participate in winemaking. The reputation of the winery is steadily being established by the first wines, which have won numerous awards. Hopefully, within two years ATOS members in most major cities will be able to find the wine with a drawing of a theatre organ on the label, but so far the only non-Californians with such luck are those in the Denver, Boulder, and Minneapolis-St. Paul areas.

The Johnsons are most accommodating to visitors interested in the organ. Once a month they have an open house and someone such as Bud Kurz, Tom Hazleton, Warren Lubich, or Harvey Blanchard plays for the afternoon visitors. The tasting room is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and visitors are welcome to



The outside of the Johnson Winery gives no hint of the roaring beast within.



**Stoplist, 2/7 Marr & Colton
Johnson Alexander Valley Winery**

Pedal

Open Diapason 16'
Bourdon 16'
Tibia 8'
Principal 8'
Cymbal
Wood block
Tambourine
Upbeat Cymbal
Upbeat Wood Block

Great (Lower Manual):

Tibia 8'
Melodia 8'
Violin Diapason 8'
Salicional 8'
Tibia 4'
Open Diapason 2-2/3'
Tibia 2'
Vibraharp
Cymbal
Wood Block
Tambourine
Snare Drum

Solo (Upper Manual):

Trumpet 8'
Open Diapason 8'
Tibia 8'
Vox Humana 8'
Tibia 4'
Tibia 2-2/3'
Tibia 2'
Vibraharp
Xylophone
Vibraharp Damped

Couplers:

Great to Pedal 8'
Solo to Pedal 8'
Great Unison Off
Great to Great 4'
Great to Solo 16'
Great to Solo 8'
Great to Solo 4'
Solo to Solo 16'
Solo Unison Off
Solo to Solo 4'

Tremulants:

Main
Reed

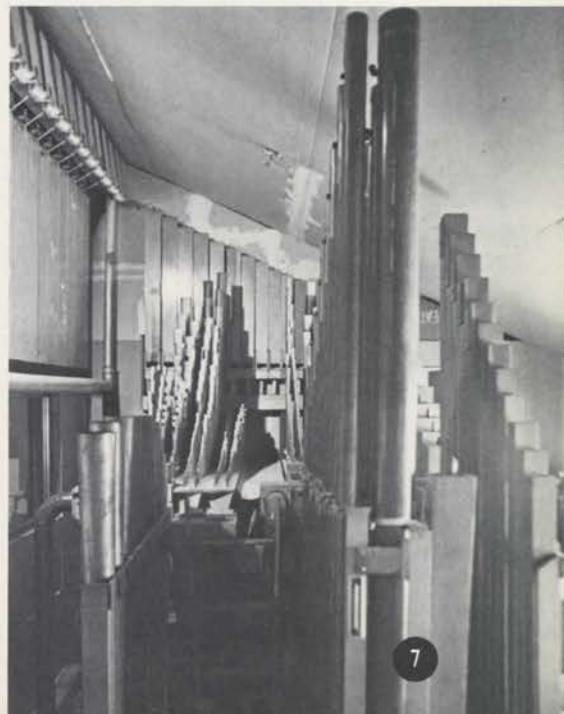
Toe Pistons:

Bird call
Cymbal roll
Pedal chime
Vibraharp damper

Combo Pistons:

3 each manual

Inside the chamber. Treble pipework is visible in front of the Tibia offset in the background. Bass offset chests mount (L to R) Trumpet, Salicional, Open Diapason, Melodia and Bourdon.





Jay and Gay Johnson, the organ-lovin' wine-makers. Their dog, seen slinking away in the shadow, refused to pose.

try out the organ. And organ enthusiasts are welcome to come over and play any time someone is home, evenings included. In addition the winery is available for private evening parties, and practice time is made available for students. The Johnsons even have an undeveloped campground on their Russian River frontage (no charge, but please reserve) for those who wish to stay a few days to fully enjoy the organ and the wine country.

Visitors to Northern California are invited to visit the Johnsons. They're located in a bucolic portion of the Alexander Valley, about fifty miles from San Francisco. The Napa Valley, with its larger nationally known wineries, is fast becoming one full parking lot on weekends, while the Alexander Valley, with around fifteen uncrowded wineries, is looking more and more attractive to those who would rather speak to a winery's owner than to a tour guide. To get on the mailing list, which gives dates of open houses, send your request to Johnson's Alexander Valley Winery, 8333 State Highway 128, Healdsburg, Calif. 95448 (phone 707-433-2319).

As the winery and organ expand we wish the Johnsons the best of luck. ATOS members can feel proud that the Johnsons have adopted the theatre organ as their trademark to be displayed on each bottle of wine they produce. □

THE CONSOLE ON THE COVER

by Harvey Roehl

This is the console of the 4/24 Robert Morton machine that is being rebuilt by a group of volunteers, to be placed in the Broome County Performing Arts Theatre known as "The Forum Theatre."

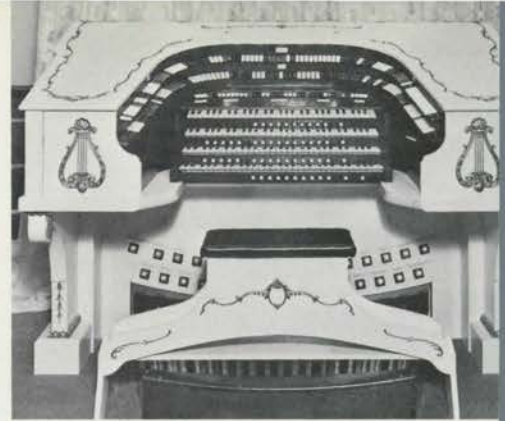
The Binghamton Savings Bank purchased the instrument as a gift to the community, and has financed everything but the labor of the restoration project, and of course many local industrial concerns have made contributions of components as well.

The organ was installed in 1922 in the America Theatre in Denver. This theatre was closed around 1930, and the organ was eventually to find its way to the Pillar of Fire Church, where it remained until 1970. It was then purchased by an organ broker in Michigan, who stored it in a chicken coop until the Bank bought it last year. Needless to say, it was pretty much a pile of junk when it arrived here!

The console was, for all practical purposes, built from scratch! George Melnyk is responsible for the technical aspects of the reconstruction and the re-engineering of the console, and Albert Emola gets credit for the artistic work including re-design of the shape of the legs, the design of the ormolu, and working with George on the refinishing. All the work was done in George's shop.

Upon completion of the work, the console was displayed in the Bank lobby for three weeks, where professional photographer Fred Snyder took this picture (at the Bank's expense) especially for the THEATRE ORGAN magazine.

The Bank plans to bring in some well-known theatre organist to play for a two-day re-dedicatory program when the organ is complete. Tickets will be free to local citizens who have only to ask for them at one of the offices of the Binghamton Savings Bank; tickets will also be given to organ enthusiasts from out-of-town



who write and ask for them.

In case you are wondering about the red piston, it has to do with a solid-state capture action engineered and built by George Melnyk. He plans also to incorporate a cassette unit which will capture all of the registrations used by the organist, such that he can crank them right back in the next time he plays the machine! □

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The Studio Years of CHAUNCEY HAINES

As told to Stu Green. Photos are from the Haines Collection.

PART II

In Part I, we traced the Haines career from childhood through the silent movie era. Then came "talkies."

By 1930, even the most optimistic observer had to admit that live music in movie theatres was a thing of the past. For three years theatres had been installing hastily-developed sound equipment and studios were already discontinuing the preparation of separate "silent versions" of films whose only plus factor was the "sound version's" singing and talking by heretofore silent stars. This they did for a time to accommodate still "unwired" houses. By 1930, sound equipment had become more reliable. Gradually, sound-on-film (movietone's "variable density" and Photophone's "variable area") systems had largely replaced Vitaphone's "sound on disc" which all too often got "out of sync" when the needle jumped a groove.

True, in 1930 there were still many theatres not yet equipped with sound, and these neighborhood houses became the refuge of organists who had so recently been starred at the big downtown houses. But their continued employment was threatened by a nefarious device called the "non-sync" machine, a two-turntable phonograph which played records through amplifiers to accompany films. Many an organist who belonged in the pit found himself stuffed into a booth near the projection room with a raft of records from which he was supposed to "cue" the film, segueing from one disc to the next by means of a "fader" knob. This was a cheap substitute for synchronized sound. It was frustrating but shortlived experience for the organist-turned-record player. By 1932 even the neighborhood theatres had been wired for synchronized sound.



Chauncey during the busiest days of his sound-film scoring career, about the time he married Willow Wray.

Chauncey enjoyed one final theatre "blast" in that year of the Olympics in Los Angeles. The prestigious Carthay Circle Theatre decided to go "all out" with a 50-piece orchestra conducted by famed Carli Elinor and Chauncey at the Wurlitzer. That was the era of gigantic stage prologues to films, with elaborate scenery and scores of dancers. The movie was an earlier version of the all-time tearjerker, *Backstreet*. Chauncey recalls that one of the featured dancers in the stage prologue was Rita Cansino. She was later known as Rita Hayworth. It was wonderful while it lasted, but the run was short. Here and there Chauncey picked up a few organ jobs before the theatres became "all talkie" ghost houses.

This is the picture Chauncey Haines faced, and it was further darkened by the depression which continued to get worse during the early '30s.

After the demise of live music in theatres, Chauncey turned to radio and musical shows. One bit of luck was an unpleasantness between *California Melodies* radio conductor Raymond Paige and his employer, Don Lee, then a wheel in west coast broadcasting. There were rumors of fisticuffs and Paige took off rather suddenly for New York where he became conductor of the Radio City Music Hall symphony orchestra.

Back in Los Angeles there was a 45-piece concert orchestra in need of a leader — and Chauncey Haines was available. He took the orchestra over to "the music station," KLAC, for several years of concert broadcasts. Later, KLAC decided to subsist on a diet of recordings. Then Chauncey heard that Sonya Henie was looking for a conductor to organize a band for her traveling ice review. Chauncey got the job and for two years it was roadshow work.



Max Steiner, one of the giants of the art of film scoring. Born and educated in Vienna, he came to the USA in the early years of this century and was soon absorbed in New York show business, orchestrating and conducting the pit orchestras for the musicals of Jerome Kern, Victor Herbert and George Gershwin. He arrived in Hollywood in 1929 and a year later he was made head of the RKO Music Department. He died in 1971 at age 83. His music is preserved and commemorated by the world-wide Max Steiner Music Society. Steiner lured Chauncey Haines out of the dance band business, back into film scoring.

“Then I organized a danceband and was perhaps on my way to becoming a ‘name band’ leader. I had organized the band around my Hammond. Then it happened.”

One day, following a performance Chauncey got a call to bring his Hammond to the Warners studio scoring stage for a recording session. After the session, the conductor approached Haines.

“Chauncey Haines — how would you like to get back to playing organ?” he asked in broad Viennese accents.

Would he ever!

The conductor was Max Steiner, staff composer at Warner Bros film studio. Steiner already had a string of top rate film scores behind him, e.g. *Bird of Paradise*, *Cimarron*, the original 1933 *King Kong* and *The Informer*. He was one of studio music chief Leo Forbstein’s fair-haired prodigies, the other being Erich Wolfgang Korngold. Both are only now being accorded the appreciation their contributions to film scoring deserve.

Steiner wanted to bolster orches-

tral climaxes with Hammond organ backing, and also sometimes needed solo-quality playing for film scenes which included an organ. There was also the then new Novachord, a versatile instrument which blended well with strings and could also sound organ-like. For example, in Frank Capra’s *Lost Horizon*, there are two scenes in which the Grand Lama (Sam Jaffe) informs Conway (Ronald Colman) that the latter will soon inherit leadership of the ancient Tibetan lamasery of Shangri-La. The accompaniment calls for something both mystical and religious. It was Dimitri Tiomkin’s music, Steiner conducting, and Chauncey Haines practically soloing on the Novachord. It’s a memorable scene and the music adds just the right support.

The personal life was somewhat hectic after Haines entered the film scoring scene. There was plenty of work in those days when movie studios were known as “dream factories” and produced as many as 450 movies a year. But it didn’t leave too much time for social relation-

ships. This was somewhat complicated by the film scoring community’s acceptance of Haines. He was invited to their parties in the evenings after a day of working with them. But the film scorers were “Haines’ people”; he had been at it longer than most of them. And there were some very attractive girls at the parties.

One gal looked very familiar.

“Didn’t you date King Kong a few years ago?” asked Chauncey. That’s how he met Fay Wray, who indeed had been Kong’s “intended” — if it hadn’t been for those darn airplanes. Fay was single, too, and several dates ensued. Then Fay made what might be called a tactical error; she took Chauncey home, and he got a look at her sister, Willow. It was practically love at first sight.

Chauncey and Willow Wray were married shortly thereafter, and the union lasted for 17 years, the longest marriage up to that time for Chauncey. Indeed, it had to be a little on the hectic side for both; they were strong-willed individuals, but Willow

Chauncey recalled that Fay (reclining) had some strange playmates. The King would be a difficult act to follow — but Chauncey was determined. (Max Steiner provided a landmark musical score for the 1933 *King Kong*.)



was there during Chauncey's era of greatest film scoring activity, and his memories of her are pleasant ones. But they finally decided to tread separate paths. Even so, the marriage had a longer "run" than those of most of Haines studio associates.

Who were Haines' associates? Besides Steiner and Korngold, there was Franz Waxman, whose score for *Rebecca* (with Eddie Dunstetter playing the dead woman's weird Novachord theme) is considered one of the all-time greats. There are many more but we are getting ahead of the story.

The first days at Warner Bros. were filled with apprehension for Chauncey. The scoring sessions were gatherings of the best musicians in the business and they often attracted a coterie of famed musicians who came to observe.

Erich Korngold brought his family to many sessions, including his father, a Viennese music critic who had escaped from Hitler's Europe. Visitors included such distinguished names as conductors Bruno Walter and Leopold Stokowsky; the wife of composer Gustav Mahler; composer Aaron Copland and violinist Jascha Heifetz, to name a few. Then there was pianist Oscar Levant.

"Oscar I could have done without!" says Haines.

It was the presence of such an array of musical talent that gave Chauncey "butterflies." He wondered whether an ex-movie organist could possibly be in league with such artists.

"I can't begin to describe the hell of nervous anxiety that was mine on the way to the studio each morning. I'd had the good fortune to be thrown in with these God-gifted musical giants. Each was a European-schooled genius — and realizing this made me feel like Daniel in the lion's den. Could I meet their strict performance standards?"

"The answer was forthcoming when Max Steiner learned I was leading a 'double life.' I was playing at Warner Bros. during the day, then I hurried off to my night time dance-band job at Long Beach.

"One afternoon Steiner wanted to hold the scoring orchestra for an overtime session. We were scoring *The Green Goddess*, with George Arliss. I explained to him about my night job and Steiner was plainly annoyed.

"To him I was moonlighting with a jazz orchestra when I should be devoting all my time and talent to film work. He said I had a good future with the studio, if I wanted it, but that I'd have no time to lead a dance band. So, I followed his advice — and never regretted it.

"That incident not only got me out of a field then being well served by Benny Goodman, the Dorseys and Artie Shaw, but provided the reassurance I needed to get rid of the 'butterflies.'

"With the leadership of Leo Forbstein, Warner Bros. had built a musical organization never before dreamed of under one studio. The scoring was a Mecca for musical greats and near greats, and I was an accepted part of it. But it had been through the danceband that I met Sonya Henie, an event which opened many doors — even that of newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, so I never regretted organizing the band. Incidentally, one of my sidemen was now famous trombonist Si Zentner.

"Oh, the films we scored. They were some of the best of Hollywoods 'golden era.' Under Steiner, I helped score *New Voyager* (Bette Davis), *Saratoga Trunk* (Bergman & Cooper), *Dark Victory* (Bette Davis), *The Big Sleep* (Bogart), *Since You Went Away* and a whole raft of Bette Davis movies — *Jezebel*, *The Letter*, *A stolen Life* and *Beyond the Forest*. We'll discuss *Gone With the Wind* later.

"Under Erich Korngold's direction, I played in the huge ensem-



Bette Davis (in costume) and Erich Korngold on the set of *Deception* (1946). Korngold started composing his scores as soon as the scripts were finished, and often watched the actual shooting of scenes. He came to Hollywood from his native Vienna in 1934 to adapt Mendelssohn's music for a Warner Bros. production of *Midsummer Night's Dream* which flopped badly. But Korngold remained to add musical zest to such Errol Flynn swashbucklers as *Captain Blood* and *The Sea Hawk*. His 13 years at Warners earned him a place among the immortals of film scoring.

bles which scored *Kings Row* (Ronald Reagan), *The Sea Wolf* (Eddie Robinson), *Of Human Bondage* (Bette Davis), *Deception* (Paul Henreid), *Anthony Adverse* (Frederich March), *Elizabeth and Essex* (Errol Flynn) and *Another Dawn* (Errol Flynn).

"And I was in the orchestras which recorded Franz Waxman's music for *Prince Valiant* (Robert Wagner), *Old Acquaintance* (Bette Davis), *Rebecca* (Lawrence Olivier), and *Sunset Boulevard* (Gloria Swanson). And that's only a partial list.

"One pleasant aspect of working at Warner's was that I liked my bosses and associates. I got along famously with both Steiner and Korngold and I found the studio mu-

Erich Korngold (top, center) conducting the Warner Bros. studio orchestra during the scoring of the Errol Flynn-Bette Davis starrer *Elizabeth and Essex* (1939). Chauncey Haines worked with Hammond and Novachord during this film's scoring.





In this informal snap, Chauncey chats with conductor-composer Max Steiner (right) in the garden which surrounds the Steiner home, in the mid-'40s. Steiner was a three-time "Oscar" winner. Chauncey was often his guest.

sical director, Leo Forbstein, to be a great human being. Not only had he built a matchless musical organization in the Warner's orchestra and its stable of arrangers and composers, but his dealings with people can be regarded as a monument to human relations. It was a wonderful but brief period which disinte-

Chauncey contemplates some music being played by Franz Waxman, another of Hollywood's great musical talents. Waxman is remembered for his haunting scores for *The Bride of Frankenstein* and *Rebecca*. Waxman was European-trained and came to the USA just in time for the era of the great musical scores in Hollywood.



grated on the death of Mr. Forbstein in the mid-'50s.

"But I was secure in my reputation as a studio musician and went on to work with other great film composers, for example Alfred Newman and Bernard Herrmann at 20th Century Fox. Words can't describe the excitement and satisfaction of hearing, and playing, those monumental orchestral scores for the first time, scores for such memorable films as *The Robe*, *The Captain From Castile*, *The Razor's Edge*, *Beyond The Ten Mile Reef* (all by Newman) and *The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*, *the Day the Earth Stood Still* and *Journey to the Center of the Earth* (by Herrmann).

"Paramount, MGM and RKO-Radio had extensive music departments, too, with scores by Victor Young, Roy Webb, John Green, Irving Talbot and Sir Anthony Collins. Even while I was still with Warners I was permitted to take outside assignments. Thus I went to Columbia Pictures to play organ Novachord for Dimitri Tiomkin's score for *Lost Horizon*. Tiomkin had "a thing" for

electronic instruments and I think I helped score most of his Hollywood productions. One of his scores rates special mention, his adaptation of diverse themes by Claude Debussy for *A Portrait of Jenny*. It's a masterpiece of piecing together vaguely related fragments into a cohesive and meaningful whole. As usual, I was there to play the novachord parts.

"Another musical director who liked the possibilities offered by electronically produced sound was Miklos Rozsa, composer of some of the greatest scores to come from the film music colony, for example *Quo Vadis*, *Ivanhoe* and *Ben Hur*, to name but a fraction. Remember the eerie theremin melodies in *Spellbound*? The theremin was played by Dr. Samuel Hoffman and won an 'Oscar' for Rozsa. He won four additional 'Oscars.'

"In the late '30s, Max Steiner was working on three films simultaneously. Since time was short, he asked several trusted associates to help with the scores. My assignment was some 'action' music for *Gone With the Wind*. What a durable score that turned out to be! And it earned Max a well deserved 'Oscar.' Yes, I was in the huge orchestra which scored GWTW.

"Another big one I worked on was *Around the World in 80 days*, composed and conducted by Victor Young, a man who had come up through the ranks from Chicago neighborhood theatres, then stage bands, radio shows and finally Hollywood. His *80 Days* orchestra often numbered 110 musicians. Victor was a man beloved by one and all. His twin weaknesses were big black cigars and Scotch whiskey — straight. He wrote many beautiful scores during his Hollywood period, but he considered *80 Days* his best. Unfortunately he didn't live to enjoy the favorable reaction; he died shortly after his scoring was finished. His long-time friend, Max Steiner, completed a score for another film which Young had started.

"My recollections of fine musicians I worked with in Hollywood would fill a book (I'm working on it) and I can't hope to cover them all here, but no listing of Hollywood's great musical directors would be complete without the inclusion of a theatre organist who, like me, sur-



Chauncey (standing) says this was the first time he heard "Laura," played by its composer, David Raksin, in the mid-'40s. Raksin has written many film scores but "Laura" remains his trademark.

MGM Musical Director Constantin Bakaleinikoff (standing) and Chauncey are amused by ornamentation in a scherzo in this 1950 photo. Bakaleinikoff's name may still be caught on TV late show credits, many for Universal Pictures.



vived the advent of the sound film. We mentioned him briefly in the first installment, but he deserves further appreciation. Our man is the prestigious theatre organist, Oliver Wallace. Jesse Crawford had forwarned me about Ollie's formidable talent in the art of accompanying silent films. Finally, in the early '20s, Ollie gravitated to Los Angeles, after triumphal engagements in northern cities on the west coast. I heard him play for the first time at the Rialto in Los Angeles. All that Crawford had told me proved to be true. His showmanship, sense of the dramatic, his amazing dexterity, his style and impeccable musical taste — these are difficult to put into explanatory words. Later, when Walt Disney set up his music department, he selected Oliver Wallace to organize and head it. What talent he brought to the Disney studio — tunesmiths such as Leigh Harline and Frank Churchill who wrote the deathless tunes and the scores for such monuments to



Concertmaster Lou Raderman, composer-conductor John Green and Chauncey Haines look over some of Haines' musical work during his MGM Studio days.

pop culture as *Snow White*, *Pinochio* and *Bambi*.

"I felt some of the old 'butterflies' when I got my first call from the Disney studio. Wallace was a perfectionist and he had a reputation for getting rough with musicians during scoring sessions. He could be a tyrant on the podium. Despite our long friendship he figuratively "fried me in oil" on occasion during rehearsals, but always in the pursuit of excellence. Then during a break he'd come over to the console, put his hand on my shoulder, and say:

'Guess I was a little tough on you, kid.'

"Then, one day it was my turn to return a blast, the day he told me that he was retiring. Here was a talent, one in a million, who could not exist sitting in the sun or playing golf. I told him so in no uncertain terms with no expletives deleted. I know there are people who are equipped and destined to stay with their work until their Maker decides otherwise, and I knew Ollie was such a man. But he had made his decision. He didn't live long in retirement.

"That experience steeled me against the idea of retirement. At 75 I'm still able to function effectively, accompany silent movies and lecture to college students. I trust my Maker to notify me when my time in this life is up.

In the next installment we experience Hollywood after the great days of the studio musical establishments when studio calls became sparse. It was during this period that Chauncey Haines established himself in a profession new to him; he became a pedagogue — "that's something like a college professor," adds Chauncey. □

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE TECHNICAL SIDE

by Lance Johnson

- 1. I have a brass Saxophone that will not stay in tune. I can tune it and it will go out just by playing it. What can be done? The wires are very difficult to move.**

Ans. Assuming that the Sax was made about fifty years ago, you may have a combination of three problems that are contributing to your unstable Sax. The wires, if they are hard to move should be polished with steel wool or No. 400 dry sandpaper so they will move smoothly in the block. You must do this so no dust will get on the tongue or shallot. Then make sure the tongue and shallot surface is shiny clean. You can use crocus cloth to polish your tongues and shallots but be careful not to alter the curve of the tongue! Thirdly, make sure that the wire rests firmly on the tongue but does not press against it with any great force. The wire must be firm but at the same time loose enough to slide easily up and down. When you tune, make sure the pipe emits a clear sound and not one that is raspy or too bright. Start at the flat pitch and tune down on the wire.

- 2. I am not an organ builder in any sense of the word, but I would like to know why after trying to get a dead note playing with a "hot" wire that all I get is a rush of air out of the magnet.**

Ans. If you're lucky, all you have is a dirty armature. Assuming that you have checked the arm-

ature, the problem then would be a ruptured secondary motor. You will have to drop the bung and remove the pneumatic and recover it.

- 3. I have heard that shallow chambers are best for theatre organs, especially in auditoriums. How is it possible to install so much gear, such as offsets, percussions, etc. in a shallow chamber?**

Ans. Shallow chambers are very possible if length can be obtained and offset chests split up if they are too long and placed on the ends of the chambers. Bass tones do not require the one-of-sight placement to the listener's ear that the pipes of the main chests need. Ideally, if you can engineer it, have a separate chamber for all tuned percussions and relay-switch stack units. The important thing to remember in shallow chamber design is to have a reflective wall right behind the manual chests so that the smaller pipes will have their tones bounced out of the chamber directly to the listener. The organ will seem to have a faster response and the tone will not sound "buried."

- 4. I have a Wurlitzer Chrysoglott in front of my shades for maximum volume but I cannot hear them even when playing moderately soft. Is there any way to get this percussion to play louder?**

Ans. The basic design of the Chrysoglott is that it is meant to play softly with very soft combinations with it. I am sorry to say that anything you do to alter the striking mechanism will destroy the character of this percussion and will make it more like orchestra bells. My only suggestion would be to use electronic amplification.

- 5. The bass drum action and tympani action on my theatre organ have developed a rattle while playing. How can this be remedied?**

Ans. Try inserting some felt between the steel hammer shank and the wood back stop. Chances are the felt on the backstop has become hard or worn out.

Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

QUIZ MASTER
And Organ Builder

LANCE JOHNSON
Box 1228
Fargo, ND 58102

- 6. We have a chronic problem with a squeaky swell pedal in our Wurlitzer. I am afraid to lubricate it for fear the swell shades will stop operating. Can you suggest a solution?**

Ans. I have tried LPS spray aerosol No. 1 with excellent results. Just point the nozzle at the friction slide right underneath the pedal. It is not necessary to pull out the pedal board because the friction slide is already exposed. If your contact points squeek, they can get the same treatment without insulating the contacts.

- 7. My Wurlitzer manual chests do not have primaries. I have some replacement magnets ready to install when coils go dead. These replacements are the older type and have smaller exhaust holes. Will they work on my chests?**

Ans. Yes, provided that the pipe hole is quite small, say less than 1/2" in diameter. If the hole is too big, the magnet will not exhaust the pneumatic. Trial and error is the only answer on this one. □

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An Interview *with Lyn Larsen*

by Steve Cohen

"Artifacts" of the '30s and '40s are evident in the plush living room setting of Lyn Larsen, internationally known organist. Mahogany cabinets, antique clocks and other memorabilia remind visitors of the heyday of organists — when the audiences in theatres across the country were treated to tunes on the mighty instrument either at intermission or during the showing of a silent movie.

Recently, during a warm and breezy afternoon in Phoenix, Az., Larsen spoke of his theatre organ experiences. The interview follows:

Q: How popular is organ music?

A: Organ music is a specialized interest. In Phoenix, people partially are made aware of it because of Organ Stop Pizza. The restaurant has been here for 4½ years.

Q: Is organ music gaining or losing popularity? Why or why not?

A: It's becoming more popular, I think, but I don't know why, really. One reason might be that a few places are exposing this kind of music to the public. I'd say there are about 25 to 30 restaurants on the West Coast which have similar-type operations like Organ Stop Pizza.

Q: What age bracket or interest group is primarily attracted to organ music?

A: It's a dose of Heinz 57. In the restaurant, the greatest percentage consists of the family. Little kids are fascinated with the organ.

Q: Is organ music more popular in one part of the country or world over another? Or more popular at a certain time of the year?

A: Geography doesn't have anything to do with the popularity. The interest can be generated if the public is exposed to the mu-



sic. As for a certain time of the year, in Phoenix the winter visitors remember the theatre organ the first time around — when the scores were being played for the first time. It's a nostalgia thing for the older people.

Q: Does a musical background run in your family?

A: No.

Q: What is your favorite organ music to play? Your least favorite?

A: My personal favorites are show tunes of the '30s and '40s, the works of Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Rodgers and Hart. I also like the new music of Barry Manilow and Eric Carmen. Their styles of music are very adaptable to the organ. Disco music also goes well on the organ. What I like least is the country and western music set to the organ. First of all, lyrics are important to country and western tunes, and you lose them in organ music. And secondly, country and western music requires a guitar (at least most people associate a guitar with country and western music), and you don't use a guitar in organ music.

Q: What has been your "best" concert?

A: I have three in mind. Last year I played the Easter sunrise Service at the Hollywood Bowl. The stadium had a seating capacity of 25,000, and the services began as the sun rose. I presented a concert before the opening of the stage presentation, *The House at Noon*, at Radio City Music Hall in New York in November, 1976. During my 1970 tour in Australia the two one-hour specials on national television were very exciting to do.

Q: Have you given any concerts before Royalty?

A: I was made an honorary citizen one night in Knoxville, Tenn., when I performed.

Q: What do you feel has been the foremost factor contributing to your success?

A: Luck, and hard work. I feel very lucky to have a comfortable house. When I first started out, I did a lot of single night concerts. They're a long haul. I re-

member the first two tours I did cost me more to travel than the money I made from them.

Q: What advice would you give to youngsters who would like to play music professionally?

A: If a youngster enjoys playing an instrument, then he or she needs to ask him or herself, 'Am I willing to devote the next 15 years to building my career before I can see any results?' A lot of people aren't willing to devote the time it takes.

Q: What kind of music do you personally feel is best suited for the organ?

A: No one type. I judge everything on a song-to-song basis. I look at anything new that comes out, and I ask myself if I can adapt the organ to it. If you change too much of a song, people aren't able to identify with the song.

Q: Do you compose organ music?

A: Yes. One of my compositions is entitled, "Stanley," a tribute to Stan Laurel of Laurel and Hardy fame.

Q: Organ music seems to add significantly to motion picture soundtracks. Have you written scores for movies?

A: Yes. Two of the silent films I've scored include the original *Phantom of the Opera* (with Lon Chaney) and *The Eagle* (with Rudolph Valentino).

Q: How did you and Organ Stop Pizza get together?

A: The man who owns the business is a personal friend of mine. Four or five years ago he conceived the idea of combining his hobby of organ collecting with the business of selling pizza. After his restaurant had opened for three or four months, he invited me to look at the business and discuss the possibilities of playing the organ while people ate their pizza. That's how it began.

Q: Cadillacs are to cars as what person or persons are to Wurlitzer organs?

A: That's a tough fill-in. Two musicians have influenced me tremendously. They are George Wright who was the featured solo organist on the Wichita Wurlitzer when it was in the Paramount Theatre in New York during the '40s and '50s,

and Ashley Miller, an organist at Radio City Music Hall in New York.

Q: Do you play the organ full-time or do you split your time among other business endeavors?

A: I play the organ full-time. Last year, in addition to working in Phoenix, I'd estimate that I played 45 one-night concerts. One of my more recent schedules had me in Livingston, N.J., on Friday; Long Island, New York, on Saturday; Boston, Massachusetts, on Sunday and Sioux City, Iowa, on Monday. I've also played at the Senate Theater in Detroit and the Fox Theatre in Atlanta.

Q: What has been your biggest concert ever, attendance-wise?

A: Aside from the Hollywood Bowl last Easter, in 1970 in Melbourne, Australia, I played to a crowd that was estimated to be between 13,000 and 14,000.

Q: What kinds of entertainers have appeared on the same bill with you?

A: Ninety-nine percent of the time I perform as a solo artist.

Q: Where is organ music going? What is its future?

A: It's hard to predict. Organ music is solid. It appeals to a special interest group, too. It wouldn't surprise me if in 10 years, the interest in theatre organs was less than it is now. But it could just as easily go in the opposite direction. □

ROBERT CARWITHEN
PLAYS CONCERT AT
OCEAN GROVE, NEW JERSEY

Robert Carwithen, Director of Music at the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown, Pennsylvania, played a concert at the Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, in August. An audience of 3,000 enjoyed a two part program played on the Hope-Jones Organ, originally installed in 1907, and extensively renovated during the early 1970's. Works of J.S. Bach, Gilbert Martin, Seth Bingham, Henri Mulet and C.M. Widor filled out the classical section. Joplin, Kriesler and Romberg highlighted the popular music, as well as a medley of show tunes. □

Frederick Kinsley

HALL OF FAMER

by Lloyd E. Klos

When Frederick Kinsley was elected to the Theatre Organists Hall of Fame in 1973, one of his daughters, Mrs. Jean Saling, was informed by ATOS member Bill Hill. She contacted the writer, evincing extreme pleasure over the honor bestowed upon her late father. When we suggested that she provide material for a feature story for THEATRE ORGAN, she was most agreeable.

Frederick Kinsley was born in New Haven, Conn., May 4, 1886 into a very musical family. His mother, a fine musician, gave him early piano training, beginning at the age of six. On his mother's side, he was related to Franz Abt. From his father's family, he also inherited a natural inclination for music.

For six years, he studied with his mother, and at the age of twelve, was appearing in concerts throughout New England as a boy prodigy. At eighteen, he was at a crossroads: whether to continue as a pianist or become an organist.

He decided on organ study, and from the start was determined to be a concert organist. He was accepted at Yale University, and in order to defray expenses, worked his way through college by playing in orchestras. He also played piano in a vaudeville pit and learned the ways of this facet of show business. His teacher at Yale was the noted Jepson.

A graduate of Yale's School of Music in the class of 1907 with a B.A., Mr. Kinsley also studied abroad. He was a Licentiate of Trinity College in London, which is the equivalent to a B.A. degree. Then came study at King's College in London where he won a competitive fellowship. There was also a course of organ study in France with the noted organist-composer Charles M. Widor.

Following this training, Mr. Kinsley's first professional work upon returning to the United States was in the dual position of organist and choir master of St. Paul's Church in New Haven, Conn. He had married vocalist Hazel Munson in 1907 in Hamden, Conn. They had two daughters, Jean and Ruth.

Then World War I came, and as a member of the 102nd Infantry, a part of the 26th Division, he saw service in France for 18 months. Upon his return, he found that his position at St. Paul's was occupied by another organist. Feeling quite upset over this (there was no G.I. Bill of Rights then), he went to New York City where the theatres beckoned. He was employed first by a Fox house, rapidly worked his way up through theatres such as the Albe-marle, Cameo, Rialto and Strand, and in 1921, became chief organist at the Hippodrome, then the world's largest theatre. This was the era when big shows there were delighting the patrons. Fred played the organ with the orchestra for the silent movies, and gave short recitals during intermissions.

The instrument was an antique Midmer-Losh and was completely buried under the stage. When Keiths took over the theatre and introduced vaudeville in 1923, Mr. Kinsley was retained because of the excellent impression his work had created. It is believed that he was the first theatre organist to introduce feature solos on a vaudeville program.

During his Hippodrome engagement, he made over 60 Edison records which were released before the theatre organ was featured by any other phonograph company.

For a brief period in 1927, he was employed at Warner's Piccadilly where he followed John Hammond

at the 4/28 Marr & Colton. That excellent organ was not used very long as Vitaphone accompaniment to the feature became the policy of the house.

Toward the end of 1927, Mr. Kinsley was back at the Hippodrome, this time playing a 4/29 Wurlitzer which had been installed in 1926. (This organ was removed in 1931 and installed in the Palace Theatre in Albany where Rex Koury was featured.) Mr. Kinsley's assistant at the Hippodrome was John C. Pfeiffer, and it was at this time that Kinsley appeared on radio, using the Welte Mignon studio instrument.

While at the Hippodrome, he also was engaged in teaching. Eddie Baker (Doc Bebko) has fond memories of Fred Kinsley. "I became aware of him when I first heard him playing the Midmer-Losh in the

Frederick Kinsley acknowledges applause at New York's Hippodrome. The console of the 4/29 Wurlitzer is shown, which would date the picture about 1927.

(Saling Coll.)



I'll See You In My Dreams

A typical Isham Jones melody
FOX TROT SONG

With Ukulele Accompaniment

Lyrics by
GUS KAHN
"Master of 'Rhythm' and
'Sweet Love Songs'"
Music by
ISHAM JONES
"Master of 'Straight from the Lute'"

"You won't be dancing
with me 'Till' then!"



me most was Kinsley's magnificent way of playing with the orchestra. Yale gave us Kinsley, and Harvard spawned Del Castillo. So you see, the Ivy League grads gave some blue blood to what was considered an 'outlaw' instrument by the purists of the day."

Mrs. Bebko remembers Fred Kinsley when she was a student at Flushing High. He was an assistant to a Mrs. McCabe, and he was very soft-spoken.

In June 1928, Fred was rewarded for his talent and devotion to his work by being named chief organist for the entire RKO circuit. In his office at 1560 Broadway, he was in charge of 50 organists throughout the country, keeping three secretaries and an assistant busy with a myriad of details.

Larry Spier, writing in the March 16, 1929 issue of *Exhibitors' Herald-World*, had this to say about our subject: "Those of you who have never met Fred Kinsley would find him to be a prince of a chap and a regular fellow at all times. He is justly deserving of his success, and I doubt whether he has a single enemy amidst his profession. More power to him!"

Mr. Kinsley at the console of the Wesley Methodist Church organ in Worcester, Mass. He played this instrument from 1946 until retiring in 1960.

(Saling Coll.)

Many theatre organists introduced and plugged new songs, and Frederick Kinsley was no exception. In 1924, he introduced "I'll See You In My Dreams" at the N.Y. Hippodrome as the cover of this sheet music indicates. (Saling Coll.)

Hippodrome. After the big Wurlitzer was installed, I came across his teaching ad which was in either the *American Organist* or *Diapason*.

"I contacted him, and as we both had playing jobs, he arranged to teach me after we were off work, I at 11 p.m. uptown, and he at midnight. That's when my lesson began, and I always remember his leaving in a hurry around 12:45 with instructions to the night superintendent to let me practice. Fred had to dash to Penn Station to catch the last train to his home at Whitestone, Long Island. I really put the organ through its paces, usually staying until 2 a.m.

"The conductor at the Hipp was Jules Lenzberg, and what impressed



With the advent of Vitaphone and the talking picture, the handwriting was on the wall as far as theatre organists were concerned. Mr. Kinsley returned to church work, becoming organist and choir director of Christ Church in Pelham Manor, N.Y., and appearing as organist in several other New York churches. He became a public school music teacher and established a band at Bayside High School. While there, he wrote the school song and established their "Night of Music." He also was on the staff at Flushing High.

Beginning in May 1939, he was featured organist on the mauve-lit tropical balcony of the Florida Building at the New York World's Fair for two years. The organ was particularly effective in the air-conditioned pavilion whose ceiling simulated a sky, complete with sun which rose at dawn and set at dusk with brilliant color. Mr. Kinsley broadcast from the building, using a carillon, which was also playable mechanically.

From 1940 to 1946, he was organist and choir director at New York's Riverside Church. In October 1946, he assumed the same position at the Wesley Methodist Church in Worcester, Mass., a tenure he was to hold until retiring in 1960.

Throughout his musical career, he taught many students in voice, piano and organ. An active member of the American Guild of Organists and the New York Society of Theatre Organists, he introduced a number of popular songs such as "I'll See You In My Dreams," and "Doodle-De-Do." He played several musical instruments, including the brasses, but the organ remained his first choice with piano a possible second. His hobby was swimming.

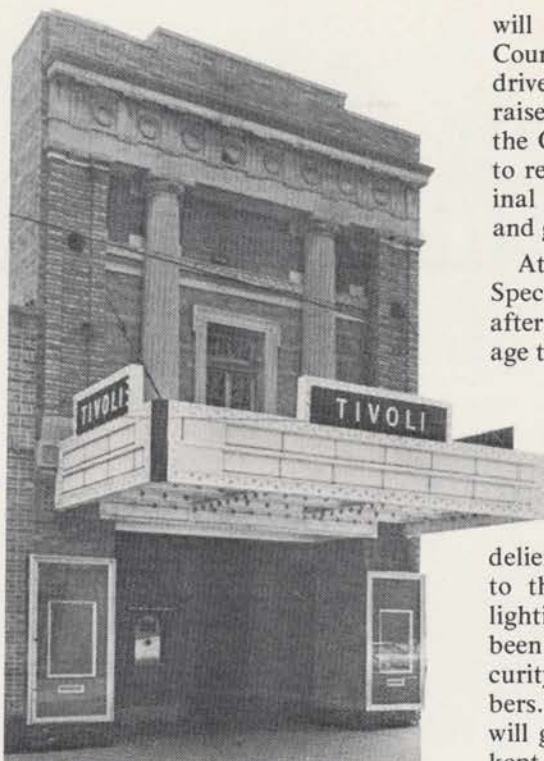
Frederick Kinsley died in 1960. His wife had passed on in 1956. □

MUSIC HALL SPECTACULAR

The New York Chapter is sponsoring a Radio City Music Hall Spectacular on Sunday, November 13 at 8:30 a.m.

This special program will be Walt Disney's "Pete's Dragon" and the guest organist, Larry Ferrari. □

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER, 1977



The Tivoli Theatre is now the Weinberg Center for the Arts. (C.K. Holter Photo)

The Weinberg Center for the Arts

● A New Name for A New Purpose

by Ray Brubacher

The Tivoli Theatre in Frederick, Maryland, scene of the 1972 ATOS National Convention, has a new name. In ceremonies conducted in May, 1977 at Frederick City Hall, theatre owner Dan Weinberg and his family presented the Tivoli Theatre to the City of Frederick to be used as a performing arts center. Mayor Ronald Young, long an enthusiastic promoter of this project, promptly announced the renaming of the Tivoli to be known as the Weinberg Center for the Arts.

The Weinberg Center for the Arts

will be administered by the Arts Council of Frederick. A fund raising drive is already well under way to raise more than \$175,000 to repair the October 1976 flood damage and to redecorate the theatre in its original 1926 state color scheme of black and gold.

At this writing, the 2/8 Model 190 Special Wurlitzer is again playing after suffering extensive flood damage to the console. The small orchestra pit is being extended some five feet, a new stage lighting control board is being designed and rewiring of all electrical fixtures is now in progress. All chandeliers in the theatre will be restored to their original appearance. New lighting and power circuits have been installed as well as a new security system for the organ chambers. The console of the Wurlitzer will go on a movable platform to be kept on stage. A portable stage extension is to be installed so that large ensembles, such as the Baltimore and National Symphony orchestras, may be accommodated.

Ray Brubacher has been appointed organist and maintenance man for the organ. He will be assisted by Douglas Miller and Paul White, both of whom put in many hours to restore the organ to its "before the flood" condition.

No date has been set for the reopening of the theatre. When the Weinberg Center for the Arts has its gala reopening, it will be an event to surpass the original 1926 presentation of the theatre to Fredericktonians. □

The Weinberg Center (Tivoli) with its classic decor of marble, brass, and crystal represents 13,000 square feet of history. (C.K. Holter Photo)



THEATRE ORGAN

HOUSTON AREA CHAPTER CHARTERED!

Story by William H. Tunstall
Photos by George R. Hockmeyer

May 15, 1977 was a great day in Texas for on this day Houston area theatre organ buffs met in a magnificent new pizza palace to form a new chapter for South Texans. The pizzeria, Pipe Organ Pizza, had its formal opening on April 27, 1977, when the Mighty 3/31 Wurlitzer sounded for the first time in a public place in Houston since the mid-thirties.

Mr. E.D. Wood, owner of Pipe Organ Pizza, came to Houston from Dallas to build a real pizza palace with a great organ. His dream materialized with the competent help of film-oriented decorators, who have surrounded us with graphic art representing the Golden Age of the Movies. Also hailing from the Dallas scene is Jerry Bacon, director of mu-

sic and master of the console. Jim Connors, a music major at the University of Houston, presides as assistant organist, coming from Wilmington, Delaware, where he cut his organ teeth on the Dickinson Kimball.

If this writer can be granted license to coin a word describing Pipe Organ Pizza, it would be "fantabulous," for it is truly both fantastic and fabulous. The air of fantasy is everywhere. On one sky-blue, cloud bedecked wall, float gayly colored hot-air balloons carrying such stars

Editor's Note: This article which was written and planned for the last issue of our magazine was lost for awhile but, as so often is said, better late than never.

as Laurel and Hardy, Charlie Chaplin, Shirley Temple, Mae West and the Marx Brothers, on neatly and artistically hand-painted cut-out plaques. Colored film strips along a wall over the serving counters depict Mickey Mouse characters, while each frame of a giant strip of black and white movie film bears the likeness of a famous star: — Greta Garbo, Clark Gable, William S. Hart and a host of others.

At the entrance waiting-line corridor, a life-sized cut-out of a red vested, usher-attired Charlie Chaplin greets you, while a long line of Keystone Cops on the right wall are chasing a paddy wagon filled with pizzas stolen by an escaped convict. Then there are overhead bubble machines, tight rope riders, revol-

The organ chambers are visible from the sidewalk in the Memorial City Shopping Center.





Jim Connors, assistant organist at Pipe Organ Pizza, Houston, Texas.



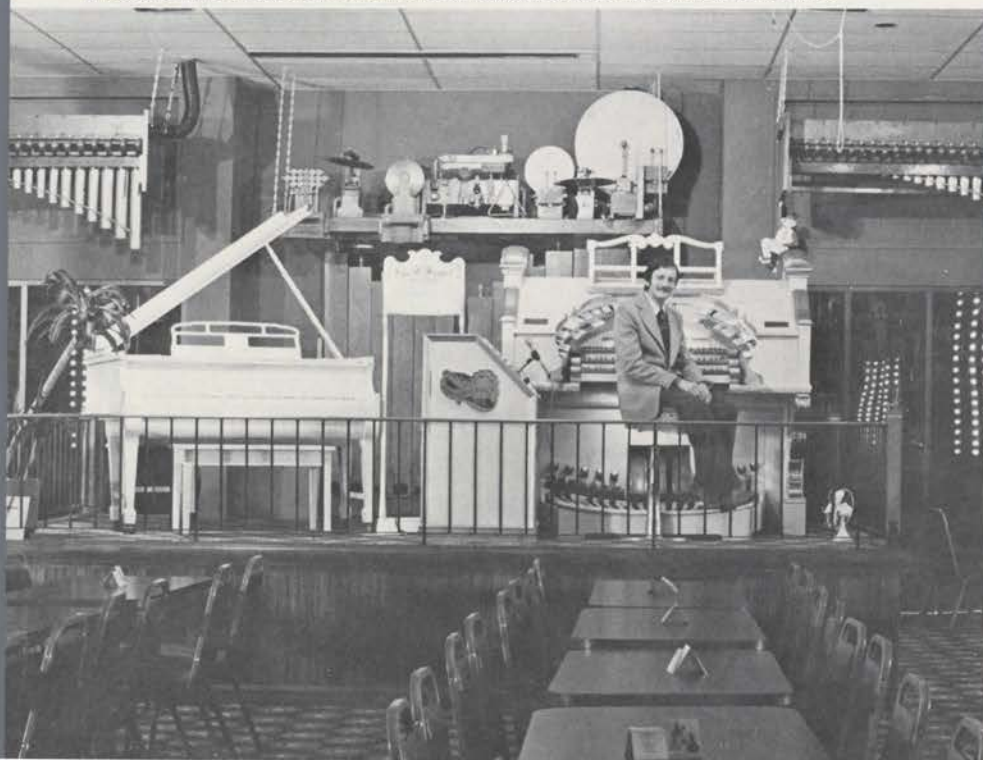
Jerry F. Bacon, senior organist and musical director at Pipe Organ Pizza, Houston.



ing crystal balls — it's all there . . . in fabled fantasy.

The magnificent gleaming gold and white French styled console and baby grand piano, are neatly perched on a fenced platform in front of the massive glass-enclosed and multi-shuttered pipe chamber. Breathtaking is the word. Suspended in front of the pipe chamber are all the traps, harps, xylophones, marimbas and glockenspiels. Of course, the train whistle and bell are there. In fact, it's all there with 31 ranks.

A patron's view of the platform which boasts, in addition to the console, a baby grand piano.



Some are rare, like the 1910 original Hope-Jones Post Horn and Trombone, not to mention the Tibia Plena, Brass Trumpet, and above all a real Gottfried French Horn.

The organ was originally a 3/13 Wurlitzer in the St. George Theatre, Staten Island, New York, in 1929. Other ranks from various sources were added here in Houston. The installation is the dedicated and masterful work of the Sandling Pipe Organ Company of Dallas. Jim Sandling can play the organ as mas-

terfully as he can install one. Work began on location January 8 and in less than four months, Sandling was able to meet the formal opening with 22 ranks playing. Now complete, the organ speaks through almost 2,000 pipes which are visible at street level, showcased across a 100-foot storefront-type structure in Memorial City Shopping Center. This is the largest theatre pipe organ in the immediate five state area.

An automated movie projector, similar to those used on airlines, throws a large clear picture onto a screen above and behind the console. The organist thus has a full view of the picture and can provide organ accompaniment to silent films. Moreover, pizza patrons are regaled nightly with live skits featuring Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck and a circus clown.

The chapter had a wonderful turnout for its first meeting, with temporary officers: William H. Tunstall, chairman, Robert E. Cormier, vice chairman, John S. Nichols, secretary, and Lewis W. Matteson, Jr., treasurer. Among those playing were Al Sacker, theatre organist from Beaumont, Texas, and Fred Gibbons, former theatre organist of Houston. Our new chapter promises to thrive in the fantabulous facility furnished by Mr. E.D. Wood. We express our sincere gratitude to him. □

WHAT GOOD ARE CRITICS?

by John Muri

Musical criticism usually leaves something to be desired. When written by incompetents, it is empty and ridiculous. When written by competent, prejudice or even jealousy enters. Sadistic streaks appear in critics who think they can get away with their habit in public. For years in Chicago I read criticisms that were little more than attempts to display erudition and to curry favor. Most contemptible are the critics who pick on younger artists just breaking into the big time or upon some established performer whose reputation they think is not too big to attack. They carefully leave the giants alone, no matter how they perform.

Audiences are critical, too, but in their own way. They don't profess great musical knowledge, but they let you know what they like. Often they applaud wildly because they think it is the right thing to do, even if they would rather not make so much noise. How often do generous audiences applaud poor work!

At its worst, criticism can be all wrong. If John Barrymore's word can be taken, the London critics were all wrong when he played Hamlet. Barrymore said he was drunk and barely able to stand throughout the entire performance. The next day's reviews were marvelous in their praise. "Every one of my drunken staggers, my exits to vomit in the wings, my reeling into a chair to recite 'To be or not to be' were hailed as brilliant artistic interpretations . . . I've kept those notices as a reminder of the foolishness of fame — and the lunacy of life in general."

A devastating adverse criticism of a symphonic work appeared in a Detroit newspaper in 1975. The critic said that he could not find "words capable of expressing the hideous depravity" of the music. He took the audience severely to task. "Instead of chasing conductor and players off

the stage with boos and hisses . . . those unfortunate ones who genuinely enjoyed the work (perhaps five or six persons) clapped with fervor, the mindless sheep (comprising about half the audience) applauded politely, while the more sensible individuals sat in bewildered silence."

It's easy to sit back and say that somebody else's playing is bad. The possibility of hitting things just right and sustaining a perfect performance for an hour and a half is almost too much to hope for. Everybody has too many bad nights. Training helps, but that is not enough. Too many things can go wrong: temperature, barometric pressure, current world or local news, the state of one's health, worries, fatigue, etc. all make their contributions. Isn't it a wonder that fine or great performances are something to shout and dance about? Perfectionist critics can aim too high; carping critics are always nuisances.

Our own ATOS critics are uncommonly generous and kind; exceptions are few. Our journal usually contains rave reviews, like the following taken from only two issues: "spectacular display of musicianship", "accomplished to perfection," "nothing short of sensational", "superb in every way", "exquisite registration", "sheer delight", "magnificent performance", "incredibly talented", "superb registrations", "resounding success", "scintillating", "true professionalism." I have never read musical criticism as exuberant as this anywhere. Much of the time our critics don't care to tell the whole truth about a performance because they have had a hand in inviting the performer to play. They do

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

not feel it proper to speak in dispraise of someone they have engaged. In the early part of this century, stern criticism of organists and composers was in order. Examine some of the 1941 issues of *The Diapason*. Prominent composers like Sowerby, Copland, etc. got severe raps. The reviews of American performances by the German organist-composer Sigfrid Karg-Elert were gentle while he was in the States, but after he returned to Germany, they were very disparaging. Nineteenth century criticism was extremely caustic. Somebody has counted two hundred put-down phrases in the literature, like "cat music", "blasphemy", "vampire", "pest", "epidemic", "brainless phrases", "executioner of art", "festival convulsions," "rancid music," "tempest in a cuspidor," and "hell noise." It was harsh criticism, but it was also lively, forthright, and unmistakable.

The extremes of critical hatefulness opposed to extremes of generous praise must warn any concert organist not to take criticism at face value. One widespread superstition of our time is that bursts of applause and standing ovations are signs of legitimate appreciation that testify to the height of the performer's artistry. He must read between the lines for the truth which may or may not be there, but he should learn early in his career to detect incompetent critics, flatterers, and laudatory gushers.

It is not wise to underestimate the extent of an audience's musical knowledge or appreciation, although there are a few communities in which a low grade of music is desired. (By "low grade" is meant loud, jazzy, rock-style with excessive dynamics.) But there are others. It isn't quite true that the untrained listener prefers junk music. Give him a chance (several revealing questionnaires have been offered audiences over the past fifty years) and he will give you some surprisingly mature musical choices. For one thing, the ordinary theatre audience-listener likes to hear a tune, a melody. He is not much interested in esoteric harmonies, in contrapuntal developments, or in fugal improvisations. Theatre organ, which appeals to all ages, is irrevocably linked to melody.

Does criticism have any good use? One critic in a 1931 issue of *The*

Golden Book (his name was Frankenstein, by the way) said that the only useful criticism is that of recordings and motion pictures, because the performances may be repeatedly studied after the criticism is read. Criticisms of concerts, etc. are time-wasting and useless because they come after the fact. I think they help build or destroy reputations; in that, they are dangerous.

Critics are everywhere; not all of them get into print. There is the Canadian organist who said in 1942, "Any fool and an organ can produce a large and imposing noise." A New Orleans church in the same year advertised for an organist, saying "Musicianship is desirable." That job couldn't have been too tough. One writer said that an organist's playing drove him to drink. That's not a bad recommendation for an organist willing to play in a saloon.

Come to think of it, our modern eateries might advertise: "Franck with your frankfurters, Bach with your beer (Bach beer?) and Puccini with your pizza" (played pizzicato, of course). The organist must be capable of including thirst.

Seriously, we have to do the best we can. To me, the one great and enlightening moment in Leonard Bernstein's "Mass" comes just after the priest has torn off his robes and sunk into despair at the degeneracy, ridicule, and criticism of his people. He feels he cannot communicate God's messages. After a moment of deep silence, a flute call and a plaintive song of praise by a child are heard. It is then that the priest (and we) rise above earthly criticism. Then we hear the transcendental voices again. The prayers and the songs were not useless. In our best playing, we hear the eternal voices. □

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Reginald Foort to Play Farewell Concert in Vancouver

On November 12 and 13, Reginald Foort will play the opening organ concerts on the Style 240 Wurlitzer Opus 1746 at the Vancouver Orpheum.

As Mr. Foort plays the first chord, two events will simultaneously occur. First, the music will herald the climax of a great career. Secondly, it will be the opening organ concert at the refurbished Vancouver Orpheum. Each event is a complete story, therefore, the combination should prove to be a top theatre organ gala for 1977.

Reginald Foort began his career cueing silent films in England. The story of his famous traveling Moller (THEATRE ORGAN, October, 1973) is a saga of imagination and skill.

Mr. Foort has received honors wherever he chose to perform, and has held some of the most coveted posts for entertainment organists. The list covers most of the important theatre organs in England, the Times Square Paramount, the Century II Wichita (present location of New York Paramount organ) and very recently he again played the "traveling" Moller which has now found its way to Spaghetti & Pizza Pavilion

in San Diego.

It seems appropriate that he began his career in England and has chosen to play his farewell in British Columbia, a portion of the British Empire half way around the world from where he started.

The Vancouver Orpheum has been renovated for the purpose of being a concert hall and home of the Vancouver Symphony. (See THEATRE ORGAN, December, 1974). The organ was saved in the process, although the stage was enlarged and covered the pit. A special canopy was built which allows the console to be raised for recitals. The instrument has been thoroughly renovated by a volunteer crew, most being ATOS members. It is reported to be in tip top shape and because of excellent acoustics it sounds far larger than its actual size.

Mr. Herbert McDonald of Vancouver has been selected to arrange for organ recitals, at least four per year, and his mission, as he sees it, is to provide for top grade talent to insure good public response and to perpetuate the theatre organ as a form of musical art.

The Foort farewell concerts are being held immediately following

one of Canada's most important holidays (Armistice Day, November 11) which will mean that Vancouver will be in holiday spirit for the weekend and anyone planning to attend should make flight and hotel arrangements early. Since the city is an important West Coast metropolis, it is well served by major airlines and most major hotel chains are represented.

Tickets for each concert will be priced at \$4.50, \$5.50 and \$6.50. Mr. Foort will play completely different programs at each concert, therefore, many will probably want tickets for both. Tickets may be obtained by mailing requests to:

Vancouver Ticket Centre Ltd.
630 Hamilton Street
Vancouver, British Columbia

Be sure to add 50 cents for mailing charges.

Producer of the Wurlitzer concerts at Vancouver's Orpheum is Herbert L. McDonald, 1070 Grove-land Road, West Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, V7S 1Z4 (Telephone (604) 922-5600), who says he welcomes presentations from organ concert artists. Publicity portrait, background, reviews and a recording should be included if possible. □

Mighty Wurlitzer Days

OCTOBER 14 IS
MIGHTY WURLITZER DAY
WHEN ALL THE ORGANS
PLAY AT TWILIGHT

Can you imagine the thrill you'll find as you listen to a special Mighty Wurlitzer concert program, knowing that every other Mighty Wurlitzer will be playing the same number simultaneously across the continent. That's exactly what's scheduled to happen on Mighty Wurlitzer Day. With the cooperation of theatre organ enthusiasts and the owners of these restored and working instruments, one of the most ambitious programs ever undertaken to build public awareness in the rich heritage of theatre organ music will be a mighty success.

Mighty Wurlitzer Day is scheduled for October 14, 1977. The number to be played is a special commemorative arrangement of one of Jesse Crawford's favorites, "When the Organ Played at Twilight." The arrangement, by John Muri, was commissioned by The Wurlitzer Company, and it's scheduled to be played at 10 p.m. in the East, 9 p.m. Central, 8 p.m. Mountain and 7 p.m. Pacific Coast time. It's hoped that theatres and restaurants that have regularly scheduled programs will interrupt their programs for this unique musical event.

The idea of having all these wonderful old pipe organs playing simultaneously came out of the Wurlitzer Advertising and Sales Promotion Department, DeKalb, Illinois. It was inspired by the hubbub of activity going on in DeKalb as restoration work is well underway on the organ billed as the Mightiest Wurlitzer of them all. When one of the advertising staff members asked what it might sound like if every Mighty Wurlitzer in the world played the same number at the same time,

the concept of Mighty Wurlitzer Day was born. The concept has now grown to be much larger. Mighty Wurlitzer Day has now become a full-blown public awareness project to build support for preserving the rich cultural heritage theatre organ music represents.

When the Wurlitzer people first recognized the gigantic scope of the project, they turned to ATOS members for help. President Ray Snitil was contacted immediately to solicit his support and suggestions for coordinating this project. At Mr. Snitil's suggestion, Judd Walton and THEATRE ORGAN editor, George Thompson, were then consulted for their assistance in finding effective ways to contact the people responsible for the Mighty Wurlitzers programs throughout the country. According to the Wurlitzer staff, the project would have become bogged down right then and there if it weren't for the immediate and enthusiastic help of these ATOS members.

Selecting an appropriate arrangement for this project meant going outside the Wurlitzer organization for help, too. John Muri, ATOS Organist of the Year, was the natural choice, and the Wurlitzer people were delighted when he accepted their commission.

It was Muri who suggested "When the Organ Played at Twilight" for the Mighty Wurlitzer Day number. His reasons were basic. The title told exactly what was going to happen. And that particular tune was a favorite of Jesse Crawford's, an artist possibly more closely associated with The Mighty Wurlitzer than anyone else.

A limited, commemorative edition of John Muri's arrangement is being

distributed by The Wurlitzer Company to participating organists. Additional copies will be published by the Hal Leonard Publishing Corporation and distributed through Wurlitzer music dealers.

An important aspect of Mighty Wurlitzer Day will be the publicity generated by this event. In coordinating the event, the Wurlitzer staff will try to contact the news media at both the national and local levels to generate as much coverage as possible. Wurlitzer hopes to collect tape recordings and news film footage of each participating Mighty Wurlitzer. The tape and film will then be edited together, if possible, into a presentation which can be used to generate new enthusiasm for theatre organ music.

The Wurlitzer Company would like to ask readers of THEATRE ORGAN for additional help and support in this project. If you or your local organization know of a Wurlitzer pipe organ that has not been contacted by Wurlitzer, they would like to know about it. Simply send the name and address of the person responsible for that instrument's program to The Wurlitzer Company, Advertising and Sales Promotion Department, DeKalb, Illinois 60115. If you can commit that instrument's participation, they would also appreciate your sending along background information on the instrument, the artist who will play the Mighty Wurlitzer Day concert and a list of newspapers, radio and TV stations in your community.

Mighty Wurlitzer Day, 1977, will become known as the day when all the organs played at twilight. It's bound to become one more memorable event that theatre organ enthusiasts helped make happen. □



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.

From San Diego, Calif. we learn that Sandy Fleet, who owns five organs we know about (four operating) has purchased another one, the 2/7 Wurlitzer (original installation) in the northern California theatre in Santa Rosa. He has moved it to San Diego where six ranks will be added. Then, with the assistance of the local ATOS chapter, it will be installed in San Diego's California Theatre, in existing chambers, for the use of the San Diego chapter. There's another one for the San Diego-Los Angeles convention coming up.

Yuma, Arizona's gift to the theatre organ cause, Ann Montgomery, already an established organist, is now a "certified calliapist" after her four-day cruise on the "Delta Queen" following the ATOS Convention. A certificate, awarded her for playing "Whispering" (on a calliope!), says that she "has demonstrated tolerable ability and technique at the keyboard, hot or cold, exhibiting re-

quired stamina and fortitude to withstand deluges of boiling water, blasts of live steam, precipitation, soot, cinders and blazing embers, and has been known to remain reasonably sober while performing without benefit of goggles and asbestos gloves." Her "diploma" was signed by the Queen's captain, Jim Lum.



A series of weekly two-hour radio programs, entitled "The Mighty Memory Mobile" has been running for several months. The program salutes a year each week, and the one for 1929 had a sequence on the late "Fats" Waller. Co-host Gary Moore remembered the time when a New York theatre installed a pipe organ, "a huge instrument they called a Mighty Wurlitzer with about 47 keyboards." Fats was invited to try it out, and he played some of his compositions such as "Ain't Misbehavin'." But after awhile, he gave up, got off the bench and said, "Can't get to jive out of a God box." But the records he left us still prove that Waller could play a pipe organ with a good amount of "jive." Jesse Crawford thought so, too. Thus came Waller's guest shots at the New York Paramount organ.



It's a long time from July 31, 1916 to June 4, 1977, but that's how long Van Nuys, (Calif.) high school has had a pipe organ. Edwin Lemare played the opening concert in 1916; Gaylord Carter played the rededication concert on the latter date. It



Gaylord Carter at the newly fabricated console.

(Stufoto)

was moved once in 1937 to a new hall, the original one having been damaged by the 1933 earthquake. The Lemare opener was strictly classical, and included Bach's "Great A Minor Fugue," Boccherini's "Minuet," Mendelssohn's "Sonata No. 6" and the organist's own "Andantino in D flat" (only because of many requests), a tune Lemare thoroughly detested because it had become a popular hit as "Moonlight and Roses." Gaylord's tunelist was more the "Hooray for Hollywood" type, including an Irving Berlin medley, some brief Bach and Bizet selections and the inevitable silent movie (*One Week*, starring Buster Keaton).

The program was well attended despite the heat in the non-air conditioned hall. How could it all happen? In previous issues we provided



Hugh Rouse (left), the man who spearheaded the drive to refurbish the vintage Morton, poses with school principal Walker Brown.

(Stufoto)

some hints, starting with an early '70s Randy Sauls concert held in the auditorium, but using an electronic.

As always, there's one person who tackles such massive problems as the reconditioning of an organ which time and neglect have silenced. In this case it was the school librarian, Mr. Hugh Rouse. He aroused the students interest, got organizations and individuals to donate funds for the building of a new console, the most urgent need.

So, June 4th was the payoff. The heat had affected the tuning slightly but otherwise the circa 10-rank straight Robert Morton must have sounded much as it had for Edwin Lemare — an orthodox instrument which is most effective accompanying, for example, Mozart's "Alleluja" as sung by high school senior Sandy Chong as her contribution to the dedication concert. No one is happier than Hugh Rouse; the repair of the organ will now make possible a course in pipe organ instruction.



Bert Buhrman at the School of the Ozarks' 3/15 Wurlitzer.

From the School of the Ozarks (Lookout Point, Mo.), ex-NBC- New York organist Bert Buhrman recalled a long ago duet with himself in Kansas City. Because the theatre organ he then broadcast was not available in the afternoon, he recorded the organ in the morning on

16" acetate blanks, then added the piano parts "live" during the afternoon broadcast. It worked fine but the competing stations turned him in to the Federal Radio Commission (pre-FCC) for "unfair competition" and that august body made him stop the one man duets.

Attitudes have changed considerably with regard to multiple recording since the '30s, so Bert is now free to videotape the piano parts when needed to embellish his concerts on the School's 3/15 Wurlitzer. He introduced the video pianist as his "twin brother" during a recent concert. He didn't fool anyone but his audience appreciated Bert's "tall Ozark yarn" as well as his music. Proceeds from Bert's concerts go into the School's scholarship fund.



Organbuilder Melvin Robinson (Don's brother) informs us that our recent wailing and teeth gnashing over the apparent approaching demise of the New York Beacon Theatre and its 4/19 Wurli was totally unnecessary. Mel reports that the Wurli is alive, well and about to undergo further restoration by himself and Phys. Ed. teacher Joe Vanore.

The theatre's new owner, Kazuko Hillyer, has refurbished the house and stages her cultural productions there and rents the house out for similar productions. Mel reports that the Wurli was used during a recent Leonard Raver concert series, at one performance teamed with Rodgers' 5-manual "Black Beauty" touring organ for a duet of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever." Mel didn't reveal which instrument carried the famous Piccolo frosting. No matter, it's good news either way.



Leo Bolbecker is obviously an Andy Kasparian fan. From his home in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, Leo writes glowingly of his recent visit to the Old St. Louis Noodle and Pizza Co. establishment in St. Louis, Mo.

"While Andy can whip up a storm for those who enjoy hearing a loud organ, he can quickly change the mood for those who prefer the lush and subtle sound of the 3-manual Barton. The pizzeria encourages waiters and waitresses to assist in the fun by getting the customers in-



Andy Kasparian

to a hand clapping and singing frenzy when the tune calls for them.

"Andy has the ability to coax from the majestic instrument all of its grandeur. His choice of beguiling registration, rhythms and inventive harmonies soothe the heart."



Dynamic Vic Hyde, the fellow who played six trumpets simultaneously during the 1974 Detroit ATOS Convention, says he has been "running my legs off with bookings. In trying to keep up with the trends in show biz, I have concocted a super money-maker. I acquired a three-wheel German Tempo truck, and made it into a cute circus parade band car by putting a 4500-watt light plant in it and adding a Cozatt calliope. Have booked it for parades, celebrations, ball games and amusement parks. I haul it from place to place in a 32-foot Wells Cargo concession trailer which can be transformed into a stage. So, I'm totally self-contained."



Though we haven't reported the activities of organist Karl Cole recently, the "handsome devil" has been busy. He had an emergency appendectomy on June 25 which precluded his attending the Chicago ATOS Convention. He has sold his interest in the Medley Restaurant in the Fort Lauderdale, Fla. area, and up to July 1, divided time between rehabilitation of his Coral Ridge home and teaching. In July, he returned to Syracuse, N.Y. for the summer and early fall, playing the New York State Fair, Hilton Inn,



Karl Cole. Back on home ground once more.

and concerts in Rochester and Toronto.

In October, Karl opens the Banyan Room of the Pompano Beach, Fla. Surf Rider. He and Dick Planer will be installing a Wurlitzer pipe organ in a Ft. Lauderdale restaurant. The eatery will have legal beverages and feature a fast-food operation. A full-time theatre organist will be employed and Karl will play occasional guest spots.



Rick Edwards (Richard Veague) at the now gone Clearwater Orpheum restaurant hybrid 3/27 Wurlitzer.

Organist Ashley Miller was prominent in the early September jazz festival at Memphis, Tenn., entitled *A Mile of Music from Beale Street*. Ashley did a "two-a-day" at the Orpheum Theatre on September 3 and 4, but he failed to inform us what kind of instrument he played. We'll wager it wasn't a Sackbutt.



ATOSer and veteran broadcaster Bob McRaney, of West Point, Mississippi, recently took on NBC's *Today Show* in behalf of the theatre organ. Bob aimed at the musical interlude behind temperature announcements for a starter.

"I would like to request that the producers utilize some of the very fine theatre organ recordings or tapes as the background," wrote Bob to NBC.



We sometimes unknowingly commit the sin of omission when covering a story. While reporting the closing of the Orpheum restaurant in Clearwater, Florida, we somehow neglected to mention that Dick Veague, who plays as Rick Edwards, was the resident organist for circa five months prior to the closing, accompanying such entertainers as song and dance man Harry Harris, magician Bob Logan and falsetto vocalist/personality Tiny Tim.

Dick says, "The Orpheum restaurant was the first of its kind on

Florida's Sun Coast. It's truly a shame it had to close. The 3/27 Wurlitzer was such a lush-sounding installation."



Maria Kumagai, Tokyo's gift to the art of theatre organ playing, made quite a splash "down under" if a front page report in the south Australian *TOSA News* is indicative. The Australian Theatre Organ Society reporter attended Maria's concert in Adelaide's Wyatt Hall which boasts a 2/12 Wurlitzer maintained by the club. Her review was rife with such phrases as "... a welcome freshness in her arrangements ... combined with orchestral sounds rarely heard on a theatre organ ... "Night and Day" and "Deep Purple" ... really brought out the goose bumps ... the sensitive and captivating style Maria possesses ... descriptions tend to verge on the poetic ... The Toccata ... a fitting climax to a wonderful evening's concert."

We'd venture to suggest the uncredited writer could have a very successful career in the public relations business.

Yet, the "you've come a long way, baby" slogan applies very appropriately to Maria Kumagai. In a very short period of time she mastered both concert and theatre organs (circa 3 years). After that she tackled the English language and today she is easy to communicate with (she spoke no English when she arrived in USA in 1969).

Recently, we asked what her next endeavor would be — perhaps romance?

In her dead serious little girl's voice she replied, "Well, there's a young man who seems interested. He calls me on the telephone — from England."

Maria, it's time for a tour in Britain!



The long dormant but complete Wurlitzer in Pasadena's Crown theatre is being heard frequently since the theatre's reopening after a face-lift completed by new owner Bruce Barkins, who is willing to present as many organ concerts as the public will support. The Wurlitzer, now sporting 14 ranks, is said to sound



It's really 'his organ.' Bill Wright protected the Pasadena Crown Wurlitzer for so long, his name is solidly identified with it.

more brilliant than ever after the removal of perhaps 40 years accumulation of dust and other residue from the area in front of the swell shutters (it's an overhead proscenium installation, although side chamber areas were provided for).

So far, the ATOS *Stars of Tomorrow* show, concerts by Bob Ralston and Bill Wright, and a film series by Gaylord Carter have been booked.

But more than to anyone else, the resurgence of the Crown as a major southern Calif. showplace is a matter of great pride and interest to organist Bill Wright. It was Bill who fought off the prospective buyers and "parts merchants" while he was assistant manager at the Crown in the '50s and early '60s, during which he played nightly intermissions on the Wurlitzer. Now retired from theatre management, Bill Wright is now free to devote full time to music — and he will.

Another item we goofed on was our dour account of the misfortunes of Shea's Buffalo Theatre in Buffalo, N.Y. over the past winter. True, there were some rental cancellations due to inclement weather (cold and snow, that is) but the Friends of the Buffalo inform us that our hanging

a crepe on the theatre's door is indeed premature. In fact they tell us, things are looking up, even to the extent that the Buffalo's friends may be ready to found an ATOS chapter around the 4/28 Wurlitzer they have been trying so hard to get back in top shape. More recent theatre rentals have made up some of the earlier losses, which is good news.

Jim Lahay, past prexy of the Toronto TOS, informs us that we omitted the name of Dick Smith when listing organists who have played the Castle Wurlitzer in concert recently. He added that Dick was quite upset because his name was not included. It wasn't Jim's fault but our oversight. Jim says that they had to run three Dick Smith concerts instead of the normal two to meet ticket sales.

Jim adds, "When an artist works as hard as Dick does to please a crowd, I feel he should get recognition for his work."

Are we copesthetic now, Dick?

From Tampa, Florida, Ewell Stanford describes the 3/25 organ assembled by the Lakeland firm of Klug and Schumacker for the J.

Burns Pizza Shoppe in Tampa. Pipes and parts from the New York Roxy Kimball and from the Apollo Theatre in Rochester, New York, are controlled by an expanded version of the Apollo console. solid state switching was fabricated by Suffax (England), says Stanford. The instrument was under construction for more than a year.

Don Baker is the chief organist and he is assisted by Tom Hoehn and Ewell Stanford Jr., a local music store owner. It's a "visual" installation, with glass windows permitting a view of the two chambers. The swell shutters are above the windows.

Stanford believes this to be the only pizza organ now operating in Florida.

From Whiteville, North Carolina, Marion Martin reports that he has formed a partnership with Douglas Spivey, resulting in the formation of the Spivey Organ Co. They deal with many rebuilds. One is a rare Pilcher, one of many donated to churches many years ago by steel magnate Andrew Carnegie. Silent for more than 15 years, the 17-rank Pilcher has been rebuilt and installed in a Wilmington church. Martin describes it as a "beautiful orchestral instrument." Hm, we've never run an in-depth story about Pilcher organs . . . Mr. Martin!

Many years ago we published items from Dave Teeter concerning the circa 20-rank Marr and Colton in the Elmira Theatre, Elmira, N.Y. Now word reaches us that the Elmira Theatre is no more; it has become the Samuel L. Clemens Performing Arts Center. A flood destroyed the console and damaged the elevator and blowers in 1972. Lauren Peckham, Dave Teeter and Monty Spencer are once more in the vanguard of the organ repair crew, and now some of their offspring are helping. So far they have repaired the blowers and console elevator. And they have secured a 4-manual Wurlitzer console. The pipework remains as before, M & C, but they plan to add a Post Horn and a Wurlitzer Trumpet, totalling 22 ranks. Meanwhile, the entire theatre is getting a facelift

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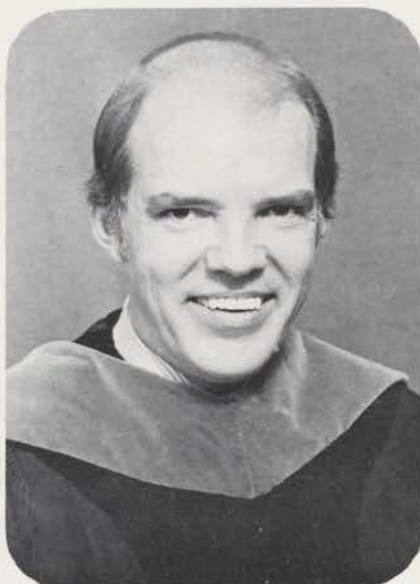
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for the Center's grand opening on October 22. Peckham says they'll have the organ perking for the big event. Another one saved!



John Landon gets around. If he looks different it's because the hirsute chin adornment is gone.

By now, everyone knows about the energetic activities of Dr. John Landon. His illustrated lectures, installation of a pipe organ in his home, record-collecting, record releases,

writing and organist activities are all well known. On June 10, he opened his home in Lexington, Kentucky, to a band of theatre organ enthusiasts in forming a chapter of ATOS. The resulting meeting was responsible for the organizing of the Blue Grass Chapter. Though the group is in its infancy, Dr. Landon believes "it will grow rapidly as people become aware of our existence, aims and purposes."



Don Thompson reports that the pizza business with organ accompaniment is bigger than ever at Toronto's Organ Grinder. Don seems to be slowly getting rich because he owns a piece of the action and his employer tells him he's got to be the world's highest paid organist. The Organ Grinder (not part of the Portland firm with that name) continues to attract organist visitors, says Don. Recent ones have been Carlo Curley, Walter Strony, Dennis and Heidi, Bob Van Camp, Karl Cole, Roy Bingham (from Britain), Warren Lubich and Syracuse's "sweetheart of the organ," Luella Wickham, who knocked off a few tunes on the pizza organ to show Don how it was done before he was born.



Don Thompson points out the wonders of unenclosed percussions to a bevy of young pizza chompers.



John Spalding's 'Marr & Colton workbench.'

John R. Spalding, who lives near Coudersport, Penna., has a genuine organ artifact — a Marr and Colton workbench. It was to be a console for an organ to go into David Marr's home in Warsaw, N.Y., but the M&C factory failed and was closed before it could be finished. Marr took it home anyway. It never had manuals or a horseshoe, so it remained just an empty shell. But it

did have a roll player designed to use piano rolls, from which it obtained the input to play two manuals, pedals and operate the swell shutters. John has what he believes to be the only player ever attached to a Marr & Colton wired into the 3/9 M&C (with a Wurlitzer custom console) in his home and reports that it is quite satisfactory.

Meanwhile the M&C "bench" has become a valuable addition to his home workshop.



From Lafayette, Calif., Bob McDonald reports that the 3/17 Wurlitzer, which once sounded forth in Keith's Theatre, Cincinnati, Ohio, is now entertaining pizza chompers in Bella Roma II pizzeria in Concord, Calif., an adjunct to Bella Roma I in Martinez, Calif., which 1975 ATOS conventioners heard played by Dave Reese. In fact, Dave has moved over to the new location, Wednesday through Sunday, while Buddy Kurz holds down the Howard seat on Mondays and Tuesdays.

The installation is a two chamber



Dave Reese

(Stufoto)

affair with a foot high ceiling. Re-lays are solid state.

There is a plan to add 10 ranks of Casavant classical pipework, says Bob.



Joseph Fernandez submits a clipping from *National Review* in which critic William Rickenbacker describes a concert held in St. Paul's cathedral in Pittsburgh, the instrument being the famed Beckerath organ. The artist; Hector Olivera. Rickenbacker seems very interested in Hector's concert attire (he arrived in bluejeans and changed to an all white costume). The critic hurries through his comments on the classical program, he can hardly wait to get to the piece-de-resistance, an improvisation on a submitted melody. The critic absorbs the improvisation with gusto — 10 minutes of variations on the Alka-Seltzer jingle, "Plop, Plop, Fizz, Fizz," which apparently left Rickenbacker in throbbing ecstasy. Hector sure knows how to "wow 'em." He also plays music well. □

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Publisher's Note:

Our apologies to our editor, George Thompson, for omitting his name from the caption above the picture of the Board of Directors in the last issue. Because of illness, George was unable to attend the meeting in Chicago.

WURLITZER

OPUS 1245

by Ralph O. and Louise F. Majors

CHAPTER I

The first one of the 303 Wurlitzer pipe organs delivered in 1926, the company's peak year, was Opus 1245, a Robert Hope-Jones 2/8 Style E Special with a white, trimmed-in-gold console, installed in Keith's Colonial Theatre, 5th and Ludlow Streets, Dayton, Ohio.*

The Colonial wasn't a new theatre, although by 1926 it was comparable to other flamboyant Movie Palaces across the country, as most of the lavishly decorated silent movie picture theatres were called during the Roaring Twenties. It first opened in 1912 as a playhouse, with live musical comedies, drama, and a ten to twelve piece orchestra.

Long-time residents of Dayton remember the tragic flood in March, 1913, when water rose 14 feet high at 5th and Ludlow Streets, well above the street lamps. The disaster caused the Colonial to be closed for remodeling and repairs, until 1915. A short time after the theatre reopened, it was leased by the B.F. Keith Vaudeville Circuit, an arrangement that lasted until the Spring of 1921.

One of the "old timers," Mr. M. T. Peaso, remembers paying 11 cents on Sunday evenings for an unreserved balcony seat at the Colonial to watch Harry Houdini's magic acts, sometimes three and four times, to see Marion Davis, and other popular stars of stage and screen appearing in person. The balcony seated 1,000 people. He claims, "It was a great old show house!"

In the Spring of 1921, the Colonial

was sold to Charles Gross, owner of another theatre, and it was closed until the Fall. It reopened as the Liberty Theatre and programs included five acts of Shubert vaudeville and a motion picture. It is believed Mr. Gross lost money at the Liberty Theatre for the next two years; but for whatever the reason, he sold the theatre in 1924 to the Keith interests. B.F. Keith had merged with the Orpheum Vaudeville Circuit and Radio Pictures to become R.K.O. It was enlarged, renamed Keith's Colonial, and became a motion picture theatre.

The first public announcement of the Colonial's magnificent theatre pipe organ installation appeared in both the *Dayton Daily News* and *Dayton Journal*, Sunday, January 31,

1926. Both newspapers ran a full page feature story. Headlines in the *Journal* read: "NEW \$20,000 ORGAN AT COLONIAL IS TO BE PLAYED FOR FIRST TIME TODAY." Pictures three columns wide were captioned a *View of the Colonial and Magnificent Organ installed at Colonial Theatre.*

The pipe organ's first presentation was made with the showing of *The Reckless Lady*, starring Ben Lyon, Belle Bennett, and Lois Moran. When shown a copy of the full page story from the *Dayton Journal*, last year (1976), Ben Lyon laughed heartily. *The Reckless Lady* wasn't a big hit, as I remember." But it brought back memories of his early acting and exciting flying experiences.

The story as it appeared in the

B.F. Keith's Colonial Theatre, Dayton, Ohio.

(Newsphoto)



*Statistics are from the Wurlitzer List by Judd Walton, with the author's permission.

Dayton Journal read: "The new \$20,000 Wurlitzer Hope-Jones unit organ which will be introduced to local theatregoers for the first time today in connection with the showing of Sir Phillip Gibbs' *The Reckless Lady*, the feature picture for the week, presents the highest and most advanced type of organ construction.

"It is entirely electric in action and is played under a high wind pressure, the response is instantaneous and all the orchestra effects can be operated and controlled by the one organist. This is particularly necessary to the proper presentation of a motion picture with its varying sequences and its multitude of themes and scenes. Modern motion pictures have a continuity which must be adhered to both in production and presentation. The leaders of the motion picture industry realized years ago the importance of music for the proper showing of a picture and makers of organs began their work of perfecting an instrument that would do just this thing.

"The organ installed this week in the Colonial Theatre is so constructed and perfected that it is able to instantaneously change its entire makeup and force to suit corresponding change of theme on the screen. The various combinations on the organ are so arranged and tuned that they produce the effect desired, no matter how difficult this may seem.

"In illustration, theatregoers will note that often in the showing of such scenes, as the interior of a church, the music played by the theatre organ to all outward appearance issues forth from the church itself. Other scenes are appropriately taken care of, the same thing being noted in the showing of cabaret and jazz palace sequences.

"In order to have this quality a vast number of stops, as they are called and musical combinations are necessary. Running over the keyboard of the console on the Colonial's organ one notes the following stops: Diapason, Bourdon, Trumpet, Tibia, Flute, Cello, Viol., Vox Humanna, Violin, Concert Flute, Dulcianna, Piccolo, Flute, Harp, Tenor and Snare Drums, Sleigh Bells, Tierce effect, Cathedral Chimes, Xylophone, Glockenspiel bells, Kettledrums, Orchestral Triangle and others of equal importance.

"The wonderful instrument, costing \$20,000 has the range volume and all the individual features of the finest of symphony orchestras. Every effect possible in an orchestra can be duplicated by the Wurlitzer organ. The result of their study by Keith's experts and investigation convinced them that there was but one instrument worthy to be placed in such a responsible position.

"Both the new Keith theatres in Cleveland and Buffalo, two of the finest theatres in the World, have installed Wurlitzer unit organs. Wurlitzer is the largest manufacturer of church and theatre organs in the world. Even now the most palatial homes in America are equipped with Wurlitzer organs. Thousands of churches all over the country use Wurlitzer organs, and almost every theatre would use no other organ."

Mr. Millard M. Blaettner, Keith's Colonial Theatre manager for many years, was pictured with the organ console in the *Dayton Daily News*. His wife Hazel Blaettner was organist. It is believed she was, or had been, a church organist and had the Dulciana added. It is known that four or five different organists relieved Mrs. Blaettner at the console, but to date, it is not known who they were.

Shortly after talkies replaced the silent films in the late '20s, the console of Opus 1245 was taken out of the Colonial's orchestra pit and stored. Eventually it was purchased by Mr. Robert Oberlander of Bethesda, Maryland.

In 1964 the Colonial Theatre was sold to the St. John's Lutheran Church and was razed in 1965 to clear the site for a new church edifice.

Mr. Oberlander stored the organ until he sold it to Mrs. Bonnie J. Carrette in Palm Springs, California. She was both unfortunate and unsuccessful in her efforts to get the instrument restored and installed in her Palm Springs home. Eventually she gave it to the Palm Springs Salvation Army. However, before it was discarded, she gave usable parts to first one and then another. And so ends the history of the Keith's Colonial Theatre, Dayton, Ohio. And what of Opus 1245? Well, it was believed to have been junked, and was so recorded by Mr. Walton in his Wurlitzer Listings and Supplements through January 1976.

CHAPTER II

Never in any of my wildest dreams did I ever expect to get to play a theatre pipe organ. They'd fascinated me as a youngster. I remember the theatre organists were my heroes and heroines and when my sister and I returned home, after the Saturday matinee, I'd try to play all the music I'd heard at the show on our piano.

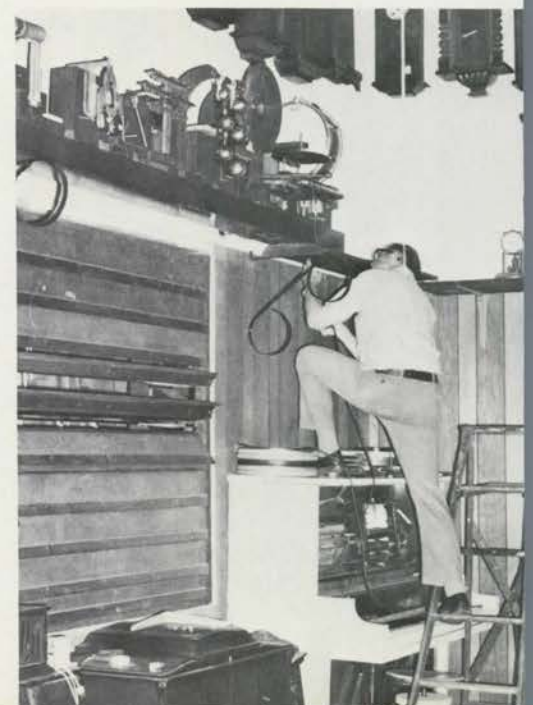
In April 1973, Ralph and I were visiting Jack Nethercutt at San Sylmar. Since the building was still under construction at the time, the pipe organ was not completely installed, but playable, and I was invited to play it. What a tremendous thrill! The resonance of the pipes was so vibrant and exciting in the huge, unfurnished music room area, it was as though I'd been hypnotized. For days that's all I talked about.

Then, a short time later, Ralph decided to make an offer on an old pipe organ in a warehouse in North Hollywood. He had no information as to the kind, size, condition or history of the instrument. For what he had bid, he felt he couldn't be hurt financially. A month or so passed and we had heard nothing about the organ. After talking to Bill Coffman and Bill Fields at Old Town Music Hall, El Segundo, Ralph decided to raise his bid slightly for his final offer.

Several months passed and we had almost forgotten about the pipe organ. In February, 1974, Ralph received a telephone call, was told his bid for the pipe organ was accepted

Ralph installs the toy counter.

(Louise F. Majors Photo)





Louise at the console of Opus 1245

(Ralph O. Majors Photo)



Ralph unpacks the first truck load of "parts."

(Louise F. Majors Photo)

and the first truck load of parts would be delivered at noon the next day.

As it turned out, it wasn't misrepresented. We received four truck loads of "parts," bits and pieces, just about everything seemed to be disassembled, loose, hanging, warped, broken or twisted. When we began taking inventory, we learned how many parts were missing. It was at this time we found the date, 1-9-26 and Dayton, Ohio, written in the main chest, and were able to identify

Opus 1245.

At this time we joined ATOS. Experienced and knowledgeable organ technicians we met were invited to see our *treasure*. We were advised to sell what could be salvaged, junk the rest and start over. One or two were honest in expressing their opinions and said they didn't think anything we had was worth fooling with. With no pipe organ experience, it didn't seem likely we could ever restore it.

However, there were several who

didn't believe the task hopeless. With their encouragement, advice and assistance, Opus 1245 was restored, installed and playing in two-and-a-half years. Dean McNichols, Robert (Bob) Pittenger, and Paul Birk were like members of the family. Numerous others assisted. We're also grateful to those who sold us back the parts they had received from Mrs. Carrette.

Opus 1245 again has an identity, a home, and is being enjoyed and shared again. □



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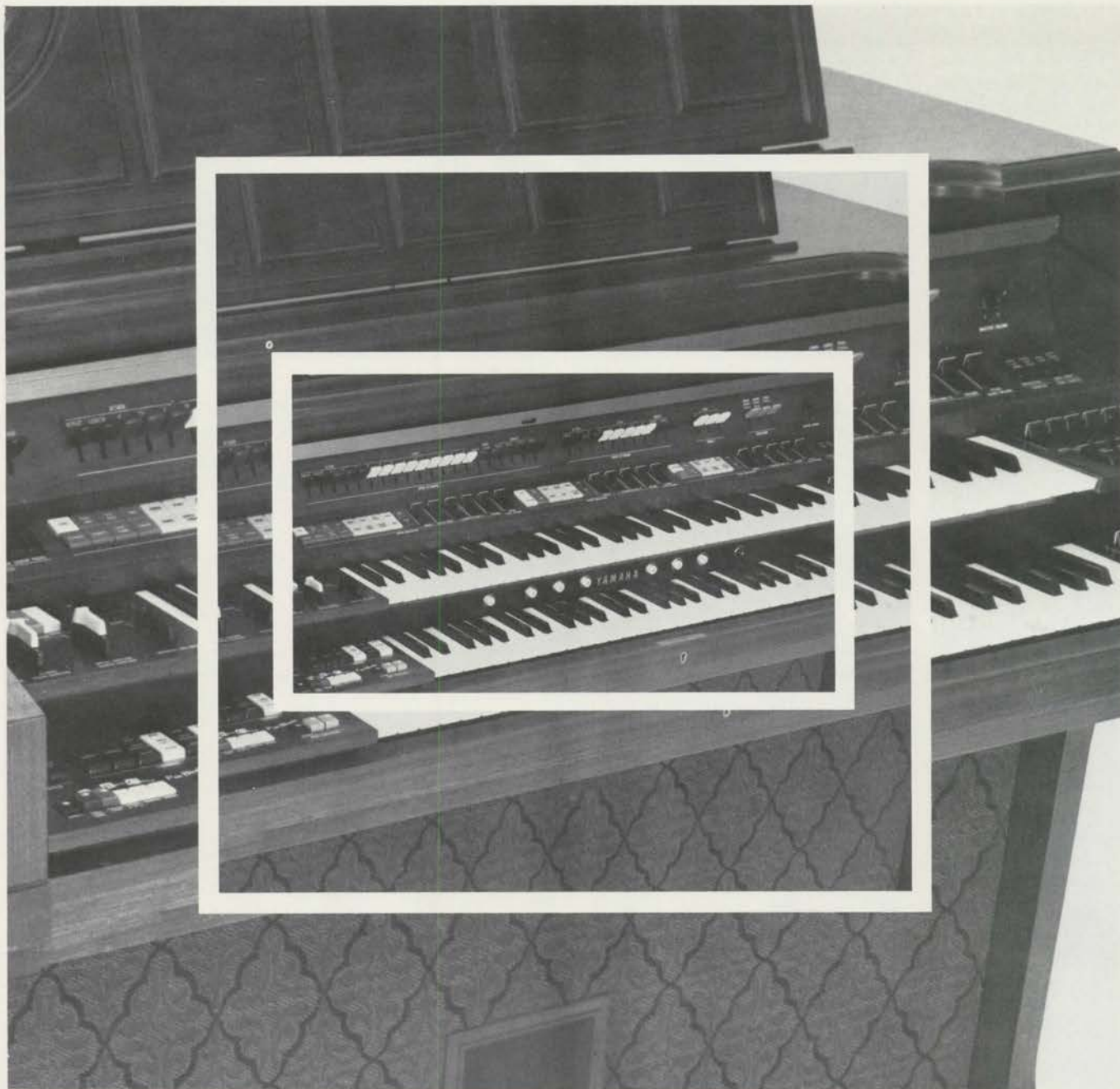
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For The Records



THE EMBASSY GRANDE PIPE ORGAN, played by four members of the Embassy group. Cascade No. PT-6664 (stereo). \$7.00 postpaid from Embassy Theatre Foundation Inc., Box 1266, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

We have heard and read much about the 4/15 Page organ in the Fort Wayne Embassy Theatre over the years. First there were the periodic late night concerts by Buddy Nolan which continued for years. Then, the Embassy was threatened by demolition, and this time the story has a happy ending, one which is becoming encouragingly more frequent since the incomparable San Francisco Fox was battered into a pile of rubble. This time the "good guys" won. They are members of an organization which evolved a plan to raise the \$250,000 which bought the exquisite Embassy for use as a civic auditorium. But additional operating cash is needed for such necessities as a new roof.

So, four musically talented members of the group volunteered to put on a show on a record, as a continuing plan to raise funds. Their annual report states that only 3 cents per income dollar is spent on fund raising activities, a most efficient setup. So much for background.

This disc is especially interesting because the Page organ, one of only three known to be still in use according to the jacket notes, remains exactly as the long defunct Lima, Ohio builder installed it in 1928 when the theatre opened.

There have been previous record

releases played on the Embassy Page, but this one features the best miking of the instrument to date, as comparisons will indicate. The pressing surface is smooth and pop-free. Now to the organists.

We have no idea whether they are professionals; if not their playing comes very close to it. The jacket does not list their names, so we'll do so: Bob Goldstine (who spearheaded the entire Embassy project), Robert Ort, Bill Zabel and Dyne Pfeffenberger. We can't tie their names to the tunes, but the styles illustrated offer a wide variety. There are 19 selections, some contained in a medley, and there are lots of surprises and no dull moments.

There is a nice balance between rhythm tunes and ballads. The former category would include "That's Entertainment," "Wake Up and Live," "Wilkommen," "Cabaret," "S'wonderful," "Who," "Button Up Your Overcoat," "I Love to Hear You Singing," and "You Do Something to Me." The ballads would include "Jeannine," "Home," "Memories of You," "You Couldn't Please Me More," "Feelings," "Here's, That Rainy Day," "Watch What Happens," "It Only Takes a Moment," "Ay Ay Ay" and "How Long Has This Been Going On?"



One of the organists has a penchant for upbeat old showtune stylings. Thus we have some vintage tunes such as "S'wonderful," "Who," "Button Up Your Overcoat" and "You Do Something to Me," all presented with the harmonic and rickety rhythmic adornment of their popular days. One player is very adept with portamentos, so "Home" and "Rainy Day" are loaded with them. "I Love to Hear You Singing" is played lickety-split and is

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vaguely reminiscent of the famous version. Some of the organists display skills in weaving counter melody "rides" against the main theme, such as in "Who." "How Long" features a scintillating array of massed strings, one of the record's highlights. If the reader wonders how 19 tunes can be crowded onto one platter, some tunes (e.g. "Jeannine" and "Ay Ay Ay") are one-chorus arrangements but sound complete. One tune, "S'wonderful," is marred by an ugly schmear glissando, luckily near the close.

Playing ranges from good to better. There are a few pedal bobbles and spots where harmonies do not resolve smoothly, but in the main the playing comes off well and illustrates plus entertainment value.

The organ has got to be a beauty, if this record is representative. It is in top shape as recorded and seems to have an endless variety of striking combinations. Most readers will be unfamiliar with the sound of the Page organ; this recording provides an opportunity to experience the sound of a fine instrument.

The jacket includes some info about theatre and organ. It's a worthwhile package and purchases help build up funds to safeguard theatre and instrument.

THE MANY MOODS OF THE 'MIGHTY MO', played on the Atlanta Fox 4/42 Moller theatre organ by Bob Van Camp, Dolton McAlpin, Ronald Rice, Linda Kent and Lyn Larsen. \$6.50 postpaid from Atlanta Chapter, ATOS, Box 76404, Atlanta Ga. 30328.

Here's another opportunity to hear some fine artists and know that the fee paid for the record will help "Save the Fox." The campaign by Atlanta Landmarks to keep the



Ronald Rice

wrecking ball away from the Atlanta Fox has been well documented in these pages. The campaign is in its last stages of fund-raising and the need for money is still great. Where the group in Fort Wayne had to raise hundreds of thousands, the Fox project goes into the millions because the Fox building is a much larger proposition. Yet the Atlantans are winning in their battle of civic pride against human greed.

The music is derived mainly from tapes recorded during concerts, although only one cut indicates the presence of an audience.

The "cast" for this project is similar to that for the Fort Wayne recording, with two differences, (1) the lesser known players are reinforced by "name" artists, and (2) all of the organists are revealed in the jacket notes.

Bob Van Camp, the long time master of the big Moller offers the opener, "That's Entertainment," then "Fly Me to the Moon" and later a rarely heard reading of tunes from David Rose's score for the 1943 Broadway show, *Winged Victory*,

composed while Rose was an army sergeant. The "Winged Victory March" is a thriller in Van Camp's hands.

For several years we have followed the rising career of young Dolton McAlpin. His offerings here are "Shenandoah" and "Swing Low Sweet Chariot," both low-keyed renditions played on the Moller's soft voices, with excellent phrasing and expression, but in a mode more churchly than theatrical despite the good use made of the Tibias.

Ronald Rice is an organist with a fine classical background, but here he lets his hair down to play a couple of pretty, classical nothings which fit into the TO program much better than a display of Bachian contrapuntal capability. His first offering, which he describes as "a lush, lyrical romantic piece of slush" is "Romanza" by Richard Purvis. It's subtle music, faintly reminiscent of "Out of Nowhere," registered mostly in the baritone ranges of such color reeds as the Clarinet. Mr. Rice has a leaning toward understatement which carries over to Robert Elmore's "Donkey Dance," a whimsical parallel to Grofe's "On the Trail" in places. Again Rice registers on the Reeds and Strings.

Lyn Larsen is much in evidence with three selections, the first being "Ol' Man River" wherein Lyn "lifts dat barge and totes dat bale" with the dramatic finesse so characteristic of his very popular stylings. Later on Lyn offers 1 minute and 12 seconds of "A Fine Romance." Short but good. Lyn also plays the closer, "Dixie" and "Georgia," this time with a demonstrative audience applauding and clapping in tempo, but no rebel yells. "Georgia" has a



Dolton McAlpin

little trouble getting established, due to Lyn's sophisticated harmonies, but it all ends well.

We've saved what we felt was the best surprise for last. For some time we've been hearing good things about youthful Linda Kent, who never touched a pipe organ until 1972 (she was busy competing in Yamaha contests). The version of Tchaikowsky's "Waltz of the Flowers" heard here was recorded by Miss Kent after only four hours to become familiar with the behemoth Moller. We can only echo the jacket notes — "Her performance was nothing short of phenomenal." The sweep of this beautiful waltz has rarely been brought out with such gracefulness and orchestral awareness. Again the jacket notes — "... the instrument with Linda Kent as conductor — (is) proof that the Fox organ (in) capable hands — is almost limitless in scope." Amen.

Jacket notes by John McCall and Bob Van Camp supply much insight as to the music and the musicians.

Because the cuts were made from various tapes miked during rehears-



Bob Van Camp

(Stufoto)



Linda Kent



Lyn Larsen

(Stufoto)

als or concerts, the technical aspects of James Jobson's recordings (mike placement etc) vary, yet the recordings always manage to capture the essence of the Moller. And there is some variation in volume from cut to cut, although we'd rather believe it's because some organists play louder than others. But these are minor complaints which in no way impair enjoyment of the recording (except by nitpickers). Surfaces are exceptionally smooth.

Here are five very different approaches to an instrument with many resources. The work of each is fascinating.

A PARAMOUNT PERFORMANCE with Henry Croudson playing the 4/20 Wurlitzer in the Manchester Paramount. Acorn CF-270 (Mono). \$8.50 postpaid by airmail from Tom E.K. Herd, 8 Ashworth Court, Frenchwood, Preston, PRI-4PS, Lancashire, England. Make out checks on US banks to Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust.

The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust has "gone vintage" with this release. Until now their output has been played by both veteran and emerging organists on the two Wurlitzers they own, all recent mikings. This one provides a welcome change in the pattern, and will afford many USA denizens an opportunity to hear for the first time a fine theatre organist playing at the peak of his career. Meet Henry Croudson playing the Manchester Paramount theatre 4/20 Wurlitzer between 1936 and 1938. Of course, the cuts are dubs from 78 rpm records, but the quality of the original pressings must have been exceptional. The copying has been done expertly and one must listen closely to determine that the miking was done so long ago. One giveaway is the closeup perspective and complete absence of reverb of any kind, a characteristic of organ records in the "dead studio" era.

Most of the selections are showcased in medleys, thus we have groupings of familiar tunes from such remembered films as *The Great Ziegfeld* (Berlin), *Swingtime* (Kern), *On the Avenue* (Berlin), *Rosalie* (Porter), *Careless Rapture* (Novello), *Pennies From Heaven* (Johnson) and

The Vagabond King (Rudolf Friml). There is also a Hit Medley of mainly British tunes (including "Lambeth Walk," remember?) and a medley of four selections from Tchaikowsky's *Nutcracker Suite* ending with the lilting "Waltz of Flowers." Other waltzes are "Charmaine," "Diane" and "Marcheta." Another grouping is three British "Songs at Eventide" — "Evensong," "In the Shadows" and "I Love the Moon." Individual offerings include two by Duke Ellington, "Caravan" and "In My Solitude." There is also a fine reading of Louis Alter's rarely heard "Manhattan Serenade," part of which was the "Easy Aces" radio theme. Within the medleys are many old favorites such as "You" (with a vocal by Sam Costa), "The Way You Look Tonight," "Only a Rose," "Song of the Vagabonds," "Somebody," "So Do I" and "One Two Button My Shoe." There's plenty of material here with appeal to US ears.

On hearing this recording, one can't help but wonder why Henry Croudson remained cloistered in Manchester. His expertise could have taken him to London, but the greater part of his playing career was in Manchester and all of his 21 Regal Zonophone 78's were waxed there. The records would have sold well in the USA during those years, but were not imported. But for this monophonic LP compilation of Croudson's best, most of us would never have experienced the work of an artist who compares most favorably with the best the USA had to offer. It is sometimes difficult to believe the playing is circa 40 years old. Arrangements and tempos hold interest at all times. There is not as much registration variety as in current styles but that's no handicap to Croudson; he comes through by sheer technical and arranging brilliance. His playing is not reminiscent of other famous British organists then at their Zenith, but it's obvious that he had listened to Sydney Torch when he plays in free rhythm.

The jacket has an interesting cover comprised of British theatre advertisements of the period and two photos of the organist. In addition there's an 8-page leaflet with Henry Croudson biography and discography, even a floor plan of the Manchester Paramount. It's a pity that

this album couldn't have been released during Croudson's lifetime (he died in 1971 at 73). It's a well deserved tribute to a fine theatre organist.

OMNIBUS, Jonas Nordwall playing the organ in the Organ Grinder Restaurant, Portland, Oregon. Omnibus No. JN 105 (stereo). \$7.00 postpaid from Dennis Hedberg, 1303 S.W. 16th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201.

The Organ Grinder's mostly Wurlitzer has swollen to 41 ranks and is now played from the 4-deck console which once controlled many fewer ranks in the old "Met" Theatre in Boston. As many readers will recall, the pizzery organ started out as a 3/13 Wurlitzer in Portland's Oriental Theatre, and grew and grew to its present size through the wizardry of Dennis Hedberg in its present location, with much help from the late Bill Peterson and Jonas Nordwall.



Jonas Nordwall, Wild!

(Ngan Photo)

This group of selections deals with extremes, both in the choice of selections and the treatments, some of which are simply wild.

The first selection, described as "modern jazz-rock style," is entitled "Organ Grinder Boogie." It's simply the wildest old fashioned boogie-woogie ever grooved. Its extreme tempo conjures visions of jitter-buggers doing their 1945 thing in a speeded up film strip. The sharpest, most penetrating Post Horn we've yet heard on records provides the punctuation. We liked this tune when we first heard it 34 years ago

played by the Tommy Dorsey swing-band. All the Dorsey arrangement's goodies are there, sometimes in grotesque relief.

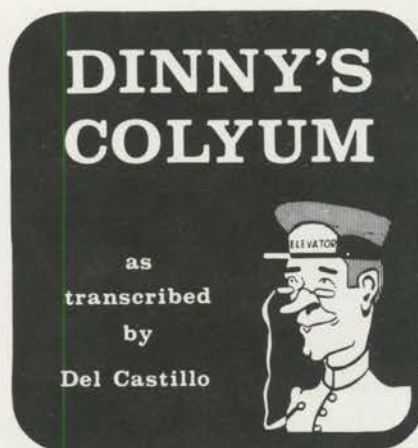
In sharp contrast there are three rather short ballads, Barbra Streisand's "Evergreen," delicately registered, and with interesting counter melodies; "Fernando" and "When I Need You," the latter registered solely on the organs three Flutes (Concert, Harmonic and Lieblich) with light percussion accompaniment. "Blue Skies" is given a light Crawford treatment. "Ruby" is mainly a bright Trumpet solo with "boom-trap" rhythmic piano accompaniment. For the Latin music buffs there are the rhythms of Ernesto Lecuona's "Gitanarias," not as well known as his "Malaguena" but just as "Espangol." Jonas has some fun doing hurdy-gurdy tricks with "12th Street Rag" and "Pineapple Rag," both of which are attacked with vigor and lots of registration changes, many involving the percussions, lots of Posthorny riffs (against that bright Glockenspiel, once more), and with absorbing melodic variations.

Again, in complete contrast is a bow to classical organ music, a composition of Flemish composer Flor Peeters. We doubt that the endlessly wandering melody line of "Aria" will sustain much interest immediately following that rocket-like "12th Street Rag."

Again, we've left the piece-de-resistance for last. It's a puzzling, absorbing, impossible-to-classify bit of fluff which covers one-third of the grooves on side 2. Named "Pinball Wizard," it might better be dubbed "The Kitchen Sink." There's a little of everything in it, all presented with great gusto. It, too, has a wandering melody line which makes little difference because the setting is the area of interest. There are thunderous claps of bass, Cymbal crashes, Tympani rolls and fanfares galore. It's a little reminiscent of the nervously active music Erich Korngold composed in the '40s for use under the titles of Errol Flynn adventure movies. Today they use about the same vigorous orchestration for *Star Wars* type movies. There's even a rock interlude. It could be classed as descriptive music, but the listener will have to decide what the picture is.

The organ sounds excellent in all combinations. It has about the nastiest Post Horn yet, and the way Jonas uses it sometimes conjures a view of tearing thin sheets of metal. The miking is good throughout. As for the review pressing, we encountered a spot half way through "Blue Skies" where very heavy bass modulation may tend to cause very light pickups to jump. While we do not advocate maintaining a monotonously constant modulation level, we encountered a very wide volume range between cuts. For example, if the volume is set at a comfortable level for "12th Street Rag," the next three tunes are almost inaudible in places, unless the volume is raised. Otherwise okay.

Dennis Hedberg's jacket notes add spice to the program. Here's variety with a capital "V" and Jonas Nordwall can chalk up another winner. □



I gotta give a salute to Mr. John Muri on acct. the ATOS made him the Organist Of The Yr. at the Convenshun this summer, and espeshully on acct. they aint so many of that generashun of organ players left. We got Rosa Rio and Don Baker in to play, and I spose maybe we should count Mr. Lowell Ayars and Mr. George Wright but I aint so sure about them they look pretty young to me. And then Mr. Tiny James who aint tiny at all who is on the Nashunal Bored and still looks pretty good. But then you start lookin through the list of organ players on the Hall Of Fame and it gets depressin to see how they aint many of them left. I started to count the ones who aint here no more and I got so discouritch I quit.

O well Time Marches On like they use to say on the newsreel and I spose we got to give the young fellers credick for pickin up and carryin on when the old guys aint got the gumpshun to keep on playin. Its a good thing we got records so as we can still hear Mr. Jesse Crawford and Henry Murtagh and Eddie Dunstedter and Dick Leibert and like that there. And of course the kids they are makin records like crazy so you can put them in with your collekshun and some of them is pretty good and some of them aint so good but you take the bad with the good as you might say and I certainly aint goin to claim that the old ones was all first class neither. If you like to lissen to organ playin it is kinda interestin to kind of pull it apart as you might say and see how they make there playin sound good. The first thing I notice is that the playin is a lot fancier now than it use to be. You take Mr. Jesse Crawford for instance and he played the tunes pretty much the way they was rote. Of course he practically invented the glissando and by golly I spelled that rite, I think, but mostly he played strate.

But now you take some of the noo batch of organ players like Mr. Jimmy Smith or Miss Shirley Scott and that is a different story. I aint sayin they aint good, they can grab a fistful of notes so fast a feller can get out of breath jest tryin to keep up with them. But I kind of like to hear a tune that makes a little sense and sometimes I cant even make out what the peace is they are playin. And then they is some of the young players and they fancy a tune up so that I aint sure jest what they are drivin at. First off they have to have a fancy intro as they say. Then when they get down to brass tax as you might say they have to show off that they can play the peace in a lot of different keys. Its like you was goin somewheres and you have to change cars every few blocks. And then they have a competishun to show off how much they can play the peddles. I got to hand it to a player like Mr. Hector Olivera and when he starts to play the Flite Of The Bumble Bee he sure makes a simpony out of it but I kind of wonder where that little bumble bee went to. He's more like those grate big insex that are bigger than you are that you look at in those horror movies.

Of course I am kiddin because I think that Mr. Olivera is a terriffick organ player. And besides the feller that I first off heard play the Flite Of The Bumble Bee on the peddles was a long time ago a concert organ player name of Richard Ellsasser. So I guess maybe it aint fair to criticse the noo batch of players when some of the old timers did the same thing. I guess thats what they call ad libbin which means you fiddle around on a tune instead of the way it was rit. And then you bang it around and step on it and tear it out of shape and add a tail to it and put on a lot of spangles and you got what you call a arrangement.

But jest the same it is kind of nice to hear a player like Mr. Ayers or Mr. Muri or Mr. Baker sit down and you recernise what the peace is rite away. And I notice they do pretty good too. Like Mr. Ayars who has been selected to play at ate (8) Organ Convenshuns. So I guess they is a lot of people like me that likes to hear a tune played strate. And if that makes me a square why thats OK with me. □

IN RED WING, MINNESOTA IT IS A KILGEN

Our August issue carried a story from Red Wing, Minnesota and throughout the article the name of the instrument was of a non-existant make.

Every authority who has attempted to catalogue all makes of theatre organs ran for the reference books to find out about this "new" name. After a fruitless search, many then took to the typewriter for a letter to the editor.

Everyone, except THEATRE ORGAN, is cörrrect. There is no Kinder organ anywhere except on pages 44 and 45 of our August issue.

The story was submitted by Mr. Stuart Goulding who was with Lee Erwin when his concert was played on the Kilgen organ in the Sheldon Auditorium, Red Wing, earlier this year. Unfortunately, Mr. Goulding's hearing and knowledge of organ manufacturers is apparently faulty and our eyesight seems to be less than good.

In any case, we offer our humble apologies to the good people of Red Wing, to Land of Lake Chapter

members, and to a lovely little 2/8 Kilgen Theatre Organ. Since the afore mentioned chapter had already supplied the correct identification, all we can say is "How about a be kinder to the editor day?" □

Editor's Note: 'Kinder' means children (small) in German.



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 Lloyd:

This is to give you and the committee who worked with you, my gratitude and thanks for the honor they have given me. The award at the convention banquet was the culmination of a 53-year career, during which I was never without some kind of employment on theatre organ. Looking back on it, I find that a remarkable fact. Furthermore, I don't seem to be slowing up. I have bookings coming in through next winter. Time and nature have been good to me.

In the face of such good fortune, I am saddened by the reverses which some of our best organists suffered over the past 45 years. A few ended in poverty and mental depression. How I wished I could have helped them in those days! Such memories make me feel all the more favored

and fortunate today.

I can't conceive of any greater recognition and prestige than that which I received at the banquet. Wherever or whatever it may be, it will not exceed that which I got from you that Saturday night at the Palmer House. It was my ultimate great moment.

Best regards from,
John Muri
Jeddo, Michigan

Dear Lloyd:

We were so happy to see the article on Bob's mother, Gladys Goodding in the June issue of THEATRE ORGAN, and we thank you. You must have done some additional prospecting to get so much more into the article than what we sent you. The article on Gladys, and the pictures were really good.

Thank you sincerely,
Bob & Carolyn Beck
Davenport, Iowa

Dear Editor:

Since returning from the ATOS Convention in Chicago, my head still swims from the wonderful experience of the best convention ever. I would like to make a few comments about the ill fated concert at Joliet. Never in my musical life have I ever seen an artist confronted with more problems beyond his control. Only a Don Baker — a person of the greatest talent, artistry, musicianship, and the highest degree of professionalism could have gone through what he did with the grace and charm that could have come only through long years of meeting with any situation possible. Yet he overcame it all and gave us a most professional performance, typical of the Baker manner. Every member of the audience appreciated only too well the problems that were being thrust upon him, and the way he met them — like the real trooper he is. Any one else would have stopped the show when the lights went out and said "To heck with it." But not Don Baker — and the audience loved him for it. Imagine trying to play a show with a totally dark theatre, no console lights, no pistons, and half the stops not working. I don't know what he was trying to tell the audience in his selection of an encore, but I can tell you that there were not many dry eyes in that theatre at the conclusion of "My

God and I." Thank you Don Baker for the most beautiful job done by any artist at the convention.

May the Good Lord bless him for the many, many hours of musical pleasure he has brought to so many Americans.

J. Marion Martin
Whiteville, N.C.

Dear Editor:

The Rialto was sparkling. The work crew under the leadership of Bob Verduin had done all they could in the chambers. Wind pressure was good. President Milt George and his wife Nancy were giving the console a final rub down. The first Lady of the instrument, Frances Wood, cordially welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Don Baker at the stage door. Genial Leon Maloney, club treasurer, was busily selling tickets from the booth to the general public. Jim Challendar, electrical expert, was spot-checking some wire connectors while his wife and daughter and Scotty Striker greeted the conventioners in the main lobby as the buses pulled in from Chicago. Bob Erickson, Norm Martin, Lloyd Pegues, and Rob Calcaterra coordinated and looked over the various operations and quickly spotted and corrected any problem area. Joe Jachimczak was liaison man and his artist wife Helen made the colorful work on the entrance poster.

We were all ready for our shining hour. Then it happened! One of the heaviest deluges to hit this area in a long time, broke loose. A severe electrical storm accompanied the torrential rain. The house lights and the spots went dark. With every flash of lightning another bulb exploded in one of the chandeliers, sending a display of sparks to the marble floor of the foyer. I went down to glance into the lift-room, only to be sent scurrying away from the fireworks on the control panel. And at the keyboard, artist Don Baker continued playing with the assistance of flashlights held by the JATOE crew.

The storm passed. One by one the relays brought various circuits back to life and the show went on. Our guest artist truly performed under some most unusual circumstances, but together with the golden voiced Barton, he came through with flying colors.

Willard E. Brier
Joliet, Illinois

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HEAR YE!



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Other members please send National Dues direct to . . .

ATOS
P.O. Box 1314
Salinas, California 93902

First Class mailing of THEATRE ORGAN is \$6.50 extra. Total - \$21.50.

Dear Sir:

I would like to respond to the letter by David Monet which appeared in the April/May issue. While I am basically in agreement with most of his opinions, I must take issue with his first statement. I would agree that anyone who is genuinely interested in the *scientific* understanding of the production and perception of musical sounds will find Benade's book, *Fundamentals of Musical Acoustics*, useful. I would have to disagree with the statement that "his book is accessible to most readers in both style and content." While Benade's book is an excellent volume for people with some degree of scientific expertise, it is not for the casual reader. Furthermore, organ buffs will be disappointed with this tome because there is almost nothing in the entire volume about the pipe organ, and only a very brief description of organ flue pipes. I would like to suggest a publication which, I believe, is accessible to the general public and which will be particularly useful to organ aficionados. The book is titled *Music, Speech, and High Fidelity* by Strong & Plitnik

published by BYU Press, Provo, Utah. This volume, which is written for the person with little or no scientific expertise, covers musical acoustics in addition to speech acoustics and high fidelity systems. Furthermore, there is an entire section of the book devoted just to the pipe organ! I hope this information will be of use to those who are interested in learning more of the science of musical instruments, the pipe organ in particular.

Sincerely yours,
Edward Terry

Dear Mr. Klos:

Your letter informing me of my induction into the Theatre Organists Hall of Fame by the American Theatre Organ Society was indeed a very happy event in my life.

I am very happily surprised and deeply grateful to be among the names of such great artists as Jesse Crawford, and C.A.J. Parmentier, to name just a few.

I express my gratitude to you, the Board of Directors, Officers and members of the ATOS for this great honor. THANK YOU!

Most sincerely,
John Gart
Winter Haven, Florida

Dear Lloyd:

I am writing this for Mother; she has a little difficulty penning lengthy notes because of her arthritis.

We thank you so much for the kindness and consideration you extended us before and during the convention. Mother was very touched by the events, especially during the banquet when she was inducted into the Theatre Organists Hall of Fame. She thoroughly enjoyed seeing old friends and meeting new ones. Without doubt, the whole event was the highlight of 1977 for her. Between yours and Russ Joseph's considerations, they meant a lot. I was thrilled beyond words, too.

Our kindest regards to you, Lloyd, have a good year, and again, our many thanks to you.

Barbara Sellers,
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Sir,

I wonder how many of the members of the American Theatre Organ Society know about the wonderful job Dick Penberthy and Doric records are doing.

Being a recording engineer and a Theatre Organist, I know the value of good recordings, and Doric puts out the very finest. When one listens to one of their records, the quality is so fine, that it is like listening to the master tape. My hat is off to Dick Penberthy and Doric records.

With the great job they are doing, it would be for the good of The American Theatre Organ Society and all it's members to get behind Doric and help get these records before the public that still loves the sound of the great Theatre Organ.

After my first time listening to Paul Quarino and Tiny James, all I can say is that their recordings on the 4/22 Robert Morton, at the Orpheum Theatre is the best I have ever had the honor to hear. Second to none.

I hope that all members that really love Pipe Organ, will buy and hear for themselves.

I remain,

Well Organ-ized
Max E. Schloss

Dear Editor:

A most cordial welcome to a Canadian newcomer; J.B. Sherk of Toronto, who wrote a Letter-to-the-Editor, published in the Feb/March THEATRE ORGAN. In trying to help this writer who, I think has mixed emotions about hearing too many old songs at the relatively few ATOS meetings and concerts attended so far, may I offer the following:

J.B., you found the seed of the weed. You may be right about theatre organists playing too many oldies. To be sure, we ATOS people prefer a diversified repertoire, some of which get concert billing such as "Theatre Organ concert including everything from Bach to Bop." However, to play some of the popular tunes you need not command the King-of-instruments in a marble palace. In order to produce a one or two note excruciating sound with an African beat, you need only a highly amplified all-electronic device also referred to as an organ and/or synthesizer.

You may be right again, about what you call our "inflexible unimaginative masters" and our featured professionals are trying to correct this and would probably ask you — what's wrong with — "I Write The Songs," "The Love Theme,"

THEATRE ORGAN WANT ADS GET RESULTS

See Page 65 for Details

"Feelings," McCartney's "My Love" or John Denver's "Rocky Mt. High" or George Wright playing "Saber-Dance," Sonny Gibson playing "Satin Doll" or Olivera playing "Tiger Rag." To go beyond these popular tunes an organist is forced into a staccato which is better suited to the psychedelic lights and Disco area and played on the highly amplified all-electronic devices. In time, you should find that just the echo of a chord played on a real theatre pipe organ, in the right location, is better to hear than any of the actual sounds heard on any of these all-electronic devices.

But alas! stay with us, J.B., because as we lose the grand old movie palaces for which they were built — the theatre pipe organ is coming to you by way of the Pizza parlor. In these places, you can hear everyone from the professional to the pieman himself, play the King-of-instruments. Whatever, at least you are hearing a real theatre pipe organ. As you attend more in-theatre concerts you should accumulate theatre organ albums like "John Muri, at the Detroit Fox" and any and all of George Wright and Don Baker and a fabulous, relatively newcomer, (probably younger than you) Hector Olivera's (recorded in-theatre) albums. After you do this, I'll bet you will find yourself interrupting some of the "Bop" from the Pizza restaurant theatre organ with your requests of selections you have heard at the concerts and on your albums. Only then will you realize you have chosen the tunes which made the late Ben Hall remark, "part One Man Band, part Symphony Orchestra and part Sound Effects dept., the Wurlitzer, one of the most versatile instruments ever devised by man." After these experiences you may have a different appreciation for the mighty theatre pipe organ and it's continuing *raison d'être*.

I'm sure I speak for all ATOS in being glad to have you join us in our founding endeavor — save any and

all theatre pipe organs and today, more than ever — try to save the remaining great theatres they were built for. Also, present and future endeavors — save as many in-theatre organs as possible to be regularly employed as an instrument of policy and in cases where the mighty Wurlitzer has lost it's theatre, re-locate the King-of-instruments in other public places. Some of these re-locations can be in areas to accompany combos and orchestral presentations or to be featured in solo for dancing, like the Wurlitzers playing today in Chicago's Aragon Ballroom or Wichita's Century II. Last but not least, we need much more exposure on T.V. Welcome to ATOS.

John Mecklenburg
CIC-ATOS

George Thompson.

After going through Judd Walton's Wurlitzer Shipment Manual, I must provide new information on a Style 235 Wurlitzer that is apparently listed as broken up and sold for parts. My dad owns the 235 SP Op 1725 that was installed in the Loews Granada Theatre, Cleveland. We removed the instrument in August of 1968 and have since built a home around it. It is now in the final stages of installation and hope to breathe new life into the Wurlitzer in the very near future.

We have changed the specs. some and added the facilities for 4 additional ranks, but we don't have the ranks as of this time. We have added an Ampico Model 'B' Upright Piano since the original specs. omitted the piano. We have also increased the coupler compliment from the original 4 to 13 and added an additional tremulant to the main chamber division.

Much care and planning has gone into rebuilding, rewiring and installing this instrument. It is installed in 2 side-by-side chambers, speaking into the living room. The chambers are 12 X 15 X 25 for the Solo division and 12 X 15 X 22 for the Main division, so the instrument is carefully laid out for ease of service.

I hope this letter will answer any questions that anyone who knew of this Wurlitzer and its existence in the Cleveland area might have wondered since its removal.

Sincerely,
Jim Hunt

NUGGETS
from the
GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



This time, we include some of the organists who broadcast in the good old days. References were *American Organist* (AO), *Diapason* (D) and *Motion Picture Herald* (MPH) magazines, and *Local Press* (LP).

May 1916 (D) Announcement is made that the large Wurlitzer unit orchestra installed in Chicago's Covent Garden Theatre will be opened on June 8. This is expected to be the greatest of all the unit orchestras and one of the most remarkable organs in the world. Highly skilled artists will play it and it will give a Chicago theatre the attention which several houses in New York and other cities have enjoyed.

Feb. 27, 1927 (LP) Theatre advertising proclaimed: "The best organ music in Rochester by Rochester's best organist, **Tom Grierson**," is at the Riviera Theatre, while the Family Theatre was advertising organist **Harry G. Sullivan**, "Rochester's most popular organist on the tremendous new orchestral organ now being installed."

Apr. 1927 (LP) **John Mc Cartney** and **Kenneth Laughlin** were alternating organists at Passion Week services in the Grand Theatre in Centralia, Wash., April 11-16.

Feb. 1928 (AO) **Arthur Hayes** is playing the 4-manual Robert Morton in Loew's Midland Theatre Kansas City, Mo.

Mar. 1928 (AO) Midnite shows are quite popular in New York City. People along Broadway don't retire before 7 a.m., so midnite shows have been running for some time at the Paramount, Colony and Loew's New York theatres. (Times surely have changed in that area, what with muggers, street walkers and assorted characters which cause many people to stay home, thereby hurting the theatre trade.)

Mar. 1928 (AO) **Frederick C. Feringer** is broadcasting over KFOA, Seattle on the 3/28 Aeolian in Rhodes' Store.

Mar. 17, 1928 (LP) **Henry B. Murtagh** opens Loew's Ohio Theatre in Columbus. **Bill Dalton** becomes house organist on May 6.

June 12, 1928 (LP) Over WBET in Medford, Mass. at 9:15 p.m. was broadcast a show from the Metropolitan Theatre in Boston. The Met grand orchestra was under the direction of **Arthur Geissler**; organ solo by **Arthur Martel** at the 4/26 Wurlitzer. The Publix presentation was *Hobohemia* with Gene Rodemich and the Met stage band.

June 13, 1928 (LP) **Eddie Dunham** at the Elks Hotel organ and **Lloyd Del Castillo** at the Del Castillo organ school, broadcast jointly over the 650-kilowatt station in Boston, WNAC at 8:30 p.m.

June 19, 1928 (LP) **Henry E. Murtagh** broadcast over WBET from the Metropolitan Theatre in Boston at 8:15

p.m. **Gene Rodemich** and his Publix Pals were in the stage review *Main St. to Broadway*.

June 27, 1928 (LP) At 10:01 a.m. from the Houghton & Dutton studio, **Wilbur Burleigh** played organ selections for Anne Bradford's half-hour show over WEEI, Boston.

July 1928 (AO) **Harry Quinn Mills** is broadcasting over KFWB, Los Angeles, using the 4-manual Marr & Colton in Warner Brothers' Hollywood Theatre.

Oct. 1928 (AO) Warner Bros. have bought the Stanley Theatre chain. Deal involves about \$250 million.

Jan. 1929 (LP) Smiling **Sammy Williams** when playing at Chicago's Regal Theatre, is assisted by his singing organ club members, a group which boasts a membership of 7,000 and still growing.

Feb. 1929 (Roxy News) How many of you remember when Roxy and His Gang broadcast every Sunday from two to three, and Monday from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.? The following stations were on the NBC hookup for these programs: WSB, Atlanta; WBAL, Baltimore; WBZA, Boston; WBT, Charlotte, N. Car.; KYW, Chicago; WJR, Detroit; WHO, Des Moines; WZM, Nashville; WJZ, New York; WOW, Omaha; KDKA, Pittsburgh; WHAM, Rochester; WBZ, Springfield, Mass.; KWK, St. Louis; and WRC, Washington, D.C.

June 1929 (Syracuse Daily Orange) The Syracuse Regent Theatre management has loaned house organist **W. Stuart Green** to the Brighton Theatre to accompany a backlog of silent films booked by the recently wired house.

Jan. 17, 1931 (MPH) **Betty Lee Taylor** is not only doing well at the console at RKO Proctor's in Schenectady, N.Y., but is also making a good name for herself over the air.

Jan. 17, 1931 (MPH) Besides **Jesse Crawford**, the New York Paramount features **Ann Leaf** and **Fred Feibel** over the air. They're making names for themselves, too.

1934 (LP) Looking down the radio listings in several newspapers, we find the following organists were playing 43 years ago: **Dick Hull** over WHEC, and **Tom Grierson**, WHAM in Rochester; **Lew White** on WJZ, New York, with the Radio City Symphony and Chorus appearing four hours later over the same station; **Dion Kennedy**, WJZ, New York; **Elsie Thompson**, WOR, Newark; **Ann Leaf** over CBS network using the N.Y. Paramount Studio Wurlitzer; **Stokes Lott**, WOR, Newark; **Dr. C.A.J. Parmentier**, WABC, N.Y.

Gold Dust: 10/28 **Ted Coons** at the Roosevelt, Gary, Ind.; **Fred Little**, Legion Theatre, Marshalltown, Iowa; **Kenneth Cutler**, Riviera in Waterloo, Iowa; **Russell Warren**, Lorraine in Hoopetown, Ill.; **Warren Johnson**, Parthenon in Hammond, Ind.; **Albert Meur**, Taylorsville, (Ill.) Theatre; **Harry J. Lee**, State in Rhinelander, Wis.; **James Swingen**, Gaiety in Ottawa, Ill.; **Edward Eigenschenk**, Roosevelt, and **Harold Cobb**, United Artists in Chicago; **Kenneth T. Wright**, Lloyd's in Menominee, Mich. . . . 2/29 **Dr. C.A.J. Parmentier** is chief organist, with **Deszo Von D'Antalfy** and **George Epstein** assistants at New York's Roxy.

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

Jason & The Old Prospector



Story and photos by Pat Bradley

Another grand old Wurlitzer theatre organ has been rescued from the horrors of storage and put to use at the new Bella Roma Restaurant in Concord, California. The 3/13 Wurlitzer 235 Special was originally installed in Keith's Theatre in Cincinnati, Ohio, in January of 1928, where it served with dignity until the theatre closed in the early 1960's.

The organ sat collecting dust until Mr. Jim Webster and Mr. Webb Bond happened by the theatre to reminisce and spotted the dust and soot covered organ still standing there, they purchased it for a very small amount. The organ was then moved to a private home where it was put into storage until purchased

in July 1975 by the Bella Roma's owner, Frank Ciaramitaro, who saw an ad for the organ in THEATRE ORGAN Magazine.

Frank asked David Reese and Ken Simmons, organists at the Bella Roma I in Martinez, California, to fly to Cincinnati to look at the organ. After the inspection, David and Ken stayed to supervise the readying of the organ and all its components for the long trip to California.

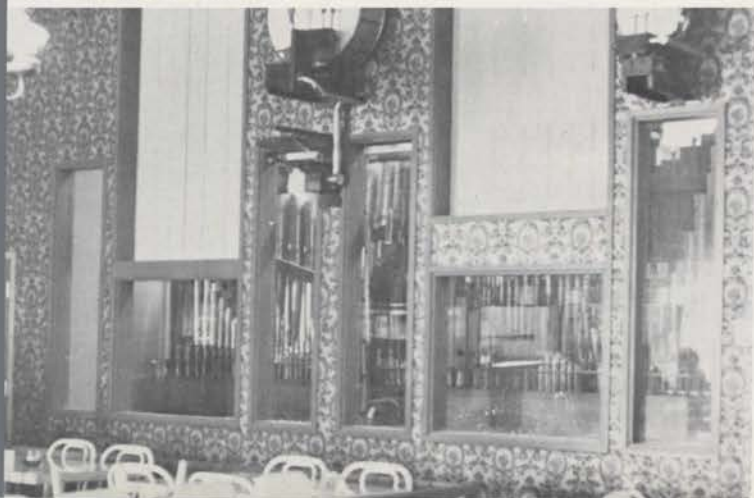
Complete restoration and modernization of the Wurlitzer was undertaken by Buddy Kurz in September 1976 and completed in time for the grand opening of the Bella Roma II June 15, 1977.

The Wurlitzer (now a 3/19) boasts

all solid-state electronic relays, and, on completion, will also have a computer combination action. The excellent acoustics at the Bella Roma are not just a fortunate accident. The building was constructed specifically to house this organ so that it would produce the high-quality sounds insisted upon by artist David Reese. Installation technician Buddy has worked on every pipe organ in the Bay Area and feels that this is his finest installation to date; a perfect union of old Wurlitzer quality with all the modern accoutrements.

The console now has 205 stop tabs as well as modified chests and over 1,785 pipes are housed in two chambers. In addition to the regular toy

One of the two chambers.



Notice the lack of picnic benches . . . very comfortable seating for a pizzeria.





David Reese, left . . . Buddy Kurz, right . . . both working to get perfect sound.



The 3/19 Wurlitzer at the Bella Roma Restaurant.

counter, there is also a railroad steam engine whistle, and, as far as David and Buddy know, this is the only installation with high-hat cymbals. There is not the usual "tweety-bird," but to delight the children (and grown-ups as well) there will be a chorus line of dancing puppets that will dance to the rhythm of the music.

The organ has now been restored to the exacting specifications of artist David Reese and technician Buddy Kurz and the joint effort pleases the 200 to 400 music-lovers who come to hear the results nightly.

David Reese has been playing the organ professionally since the age of 14 when he was hired to play at a prominent restaurant in Salt Lake City, his home town. At the age of 19 he was musical director of a popular stage show touring Canada for two years. His next job was working as the organist at the Bella Roma in Martinez for Mr. Ciaramitaro. After six very successful years in Martinez, Frank branched out to build the second Bella Roma in nearby Concord, where David continues to delight the audience.

The Bella Roma I in Martinez, California, is proud to have Buddy Kurz as organist five nights a week.

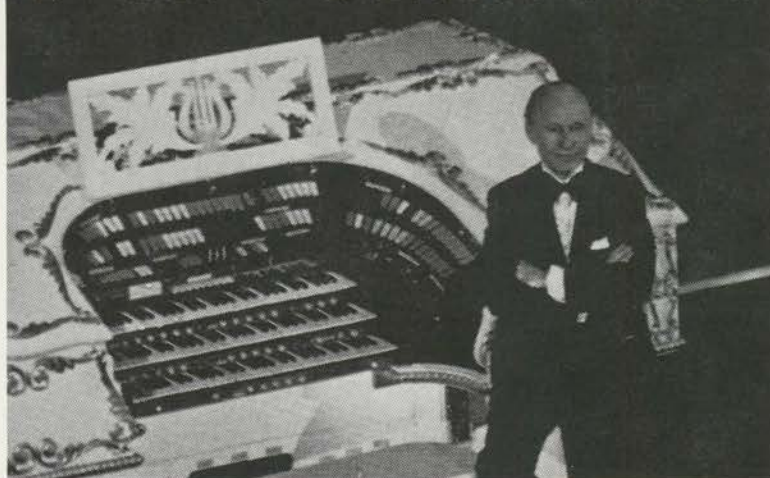
Should you be fortunate enough to be in Martinez or Concord, Calif., do make it a point to stop in and hear these two young men at work. Their enthusiasm for the Grand Old Wurlitzers is catching!!! □

SUPER '77

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FRI., SAT., SUN. — NOV. 25, 26, 27,
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See Page 33 for Details

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Closing Chord

Theatre organist **James Barnard**, known professionally as Barney Barnard, passed away on May 27 of this year. Born about 1900, and mostly self-taught, he began his career at fifteen playing piano in a nickelodeon, followed by a stint in vaudeville as accompanist for Evvy Hayes. He toured the country for Orpheum, Pantages, and Ackerman and Harris.

Barney started on pipe organ at Seattle's Colonial about 1920, then the Rialto at Medford, Oregon, and Liberty at Enumclaw, Washington; then back to Seattle and the Pantages, beginning as assistant to Henri Le Bel. Other towns where he played were Aberdeen and Hoquiam, and finally the Garrick Theatre in Winnipeg, Canada in 1928-29.

After this, he spent a period at Station WCTN in Minneapolis as pianist, but returned to Seattle and pipe organ at the Roller Rink, and later at the Seattle Ice Arena. He played many club dates for local organ clubs after retiring.



William R. Dalton

William R. Dalton, for over 50 years a theatre organist, died at his home in Hartford, Conn., August 11 as the result of a terminal illness.

A native of Richmond, Va., he started playing in theatres at the age of 12. Much of his activity was centered in Columbus, Ohio where he played the Majestic and James theatres, and beginning in 1928, a five-year stint at the Ohio. Other theatres he played included the Byrd and Loew's in Richmond, and the Para-

mount in Birmingham, Ala.

He toured the Sheraton Hotel circuit, and broadcast over stations in cities where Sheraton hotels were located: Columbus, Boston, Detroit, Springfield, Mass., and Rochester, N.Y.

A graduate of Ohio State University, he studied organ under several teachers including Pietro Yon, official organist of the Vatican. He performed for several organ clubs in recent years.



Walter Mahns, Jr.

Walter Mahns Jr., owner of the famous Mahns' Bicycle Shop, died on July 13, 1977. Back in 1967, Walter read an advertisement offering a Robert Morton theatre organ for sale. In no time, it was purchased. Because the console was too large for his home, it was put into the bicycle shop. With the help of his son Robert, the organ was installed and has been the center of theatre organ music for the public. Sunday concerts were offered and bicycle customers were intrigued with the pipes. It was a special place where "you can buy a bicycle or have one repaired and enjoy a live organ recital at the same time." In October 1969, THEATRE ORGAN published a story with pictures of the bicycle shop.

In September 1972, Walter became a charter member of the Garden State Chapter when it was formed. Through the years he has been a very active and loyal supporter of the chapter. Many happy memories of the summer-fun picnics and open console at the bicycle shop will remain with us. Our condolences are extended to his wife Mary and to his son Robert who will carry on the tradition of theatre organ midst the bicycles.

Jinny Vanore



Lyle W. Nash, conductor of this magazine's HOLLYWOOD CAVALCADE column for many years, died on August 20, of a massive coronary attack. Born in Starkweather, North Dakota, in 1913, he moved to Pasadena, Calif., in 1936. He remained in Pasadena for the rest of his life, except for eight years in Europe as a Field Director for the American Red Cross during and following World War II.

In Pasadena he established himself as a newspaper reporter and public relations consultant and expediter. During his first year in Pasadena he became a member of the Tournament of Roses committee, sponsors of the annual Rose Parade on New Years Day. Later he became a Director of the local public library, Public Service Director for radio station KRLA and Field Representative for a Pasadena city councilman. Always a solid theatre organ buff, Lyle was instrumental in smoothing the way for the planned installation of the LA Chapter's Marr & Colton organ in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

"I love this town," he once declared to the writer. Lyle was well connected in the inner circles of film-dom and the Hollywood aristocracy, as his CAVALCADE columns indicated. His hobby was books; he loved to read.

He had been ill for the past three years, and suffered from angina pain much of the time. Because his columns were delivered by mail, no one on the THEATRE ORGAN staff was aware of the seriousness of his illness until he missed a deadline about one year ago.

Lyle Nash leaves his wife of 28 years, Francie, and a son, Herbert. His HOLLYWOOD CAVALCADE readers and this magazine's staff will miss him.

Stu Green □

WURLITZER STYLE 165X*

A RARE BREED?

by H. Clealan Blakely

The American ingenuity of a suburban Buffalo, New York, enthusiast has resulted in the very unusual yet successful installation of a small Wurlitzer in the home of Earl G. Gilbert of Getzville, New York.

The Style 165X is a 2/6 organ, with divided chambers. The X in the style number denotes it was divided. The main chamber contains a Bourdon-Concert Flute, Diaphone-Diapason, Salicional, Chrysoglott, re-lays and switch stack. The solo contains a Vox Humana, Tibia Clausa, Trumpet, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Bass Drum, Snare Drum, Cymbal, Chinese Gong, Auto Horn, Chinese Block, Bird Whistle, Fire Gong, Tambourine, Surf Machine, Castanets, Door Bell, Tom-tom, Sleigh Bells, Triangle, and Cathedral Chimes.

Wurlitzer built only 19 of the Style 165, most of which were not divided. The 165 was an improved model of the Style D. In this late model the Tibias were extended up to 2'. Then it was unified at 16, 8, 4, 22/3 and 2' making available the Crawford Tibia sound. The Flute also is there with the same unification. The divided organ is also standard with 3 tremulants. The first of these organs was shipped in May, 1928, and the last one in December, 1929.

Mr. Gilbert's Wurlitzer is Opus

Earl Gilbert in his studio. The solid shutters at each end of the room form large tone openings that surround the listener with sound.



1966, which was shipped 10/11/28 to the Gaiety Theatre, Utica, N.Y. While in the theatre it was played by Elizabeth Bergner and Paul Loomis, who still resides in the Utica area. The organ was actually used only five months in the theatre. Mr. Gilbert bought it, and with his patient wife Stella, and friends, removed it in January, 1966. The theatre, slated to be demolished, was then known as the Utica Theatre.

Mr. Gilbert examined nine different available pipe organs over a six year period, and concluded that this one would be an ideal size for a home installation. It was one complete organ of all small scaling. He designed and built a special house for this particular organ, choosing hard surfaced shallow chambers. His forced hot air heating system keeps both chambers, as well as the rest of the house, at an even temperature, and no difficulty has arisen in keeping the instrument in tune. He started the house in the Spring of 1967, and moved in the following October. The organ was installed and the blower started on Decoration Day weekend in 1969. He had no leaks in the wind ducting and still has none. The same ducting from the theatre installation was used.

The console is located midway between the two chambers, which have all the original frames and shades from the theatre (28 shutters). The music room is 12' x 20' with an 8' ceiling. With the solidness of the shutters for large tone openings forming each end of the studio, a natural reverberation is achieved. Mr. Gilbert is a Wurlitzer purist and a perfectionist, and carried out the installation exactly as it was in the theatre to the last detail, using the

*Editors Note: the Wurlitzer style D and its successor the style 165 were probably Wurlitzer's most commonly installed theatre organ. However, very few were divided which makes the 165X quite rare.

original framing, bracing, wind trunking, and cable.

The blower operated on two phase current in the theatre. By splitting single phase with the help of capacitors, it is still operating on the exact current for that motor. Washing machine solenoids remotely operate the original manually operated starting switch.

What makes this installation unique is the addition of a Wurlitzer Theatre Organette, Style W. He secured the organette from the Little Hippodrome in Buffalo in January, 1963. The organette is a roll player which was a mechanical orchestra of three or four pieces, a combination of piano and 98 pipes.

With the continuous help of his wife, these two instruments have been electrically combined to improve the original performance of each, but each will still perform as it originally did in its theatre.

While rebuilding the organette, he installed a player piano roll box in place of one of the duplex players to greatly enlarge the compass of the instrument. It plays automatically on the duplex side, and plays programmed player piano rolls automatically on the other side. Mini tabs and other controls are incor-

The needed tabs are on the theatre organ in order to have the piano from the Organette (center background). This will be under pedal expression when completed. Eventually, the photoplayer will be wired as a player for the whole organ and it will then make its own registration changes.



porated so that it will play the organ on two manuals plus the pedal on either roll if desired. It has bass and treble hammer lifters, and both are often actuated to produce organ solo. While simulating an orchestra soft pedal, sustain pedal, mandolin, solo volume, hammer lifters, turning pipes on and off and tremulant on and off, are used to their full advantage. The theatre rolls play 30 to 40 minutes each. Bass drum has been borrowed from the organ for use automatically on marches if desired. Vacuum magnets were installed in the organette so that piano 16' pedal, 16-8-4 accompaniment with pedals expression plus mandolin is available when played on the organ. When mandolin is desired from the console, solo volume is actuated, which makes it very effective.

These Organettes were sold to small theatres, and designed for automatic operation; they would play one roll while the other was re-winding, or the accompaniment music could be changed from love scenes to westerns by push button. These stop tabs indicated Piano, Manual,

Coupler, Tremolo, Bourdon, Flute, Quintadena, and Mandolin. Mr. Gilbert has a large collection of both types of rolls. He, unlike many organ technicians, can play very well himself. I asked about his musical background, and he told me that while living with his parents in Dansville, N.Y., he had three years of piano training, starting at age 12. His teacher was Miss Mertie C. Stoner. At high school he studied the rudiments of musical theory. The next school year he studied piano under Leo F. DeSola — all instrumental music teacher, a graduate of the Eastman School of Music. After graduation, Mr. DeSola, a native Cuban, gave him free after hour instruction at the school, at which time he was taught to play piano without the notes by applying his background of musical theory. In 1940 he came to Buffalo, and later got a job as organist at the Main Roller Rink in downtown Buffalo, on a Hammond organ. He also played Hammond in the Genesee Roller Rink in Buffalo.

For any organ buff considering a pipe organ in his home, I would sug-

gest that you try to see this very effective Wurlitzer installation. It is the only complete Style 165 outside of California; it is the only Style 165X that exists any place with no ranks added. Mr. Gilbert's address is 2289 Hopkins Road, Getzville, New York 14068. His phone number is (716) 689-8683. You will find the organ in excellent condition, with a remarkable "in-theatre" sound. It is heard in true stereo, and being a divided organ, the organist may choose his combination, then balance what he's got with the shutters. It is a fine example of saving two theatre instruments, that future generations may see and hear what they were. You will be surprised at the inventive genius of Earl Gilbert in the many things he has been able to accomplish with this installation.

Many prominent organists have had pleasure in playing this organ; the Gilberts have private concerts. Often persons attending are so surprised to find out how little they really knew about these theatre organs, and many are thrilled when taken back to those days, to see and hear one again. □

World's Farewell Appearance!

Reginald Foort



PLAYS THE ORPHEUM'S MIGHTY WURLITZER VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

THE ORPHEUM, restored to glittering grandeur, the Mighty Wurlitzer, ready after months of renovation (thanks to ATOS volunteers) will scintillate in harmony together again, when the inimitable Reginald Foort plays a two-performance concert in Vancouver, British Columbia, Saturday and Sunday, November 12 and 13, 1977 — 50 years and four days from the night the organ was first heard. Your last chance to hear the acknowledged monarch of the cinema organ, this will be Mr. Foort's world's farewell appearance in gala concert! Only 5500 seats are available for his two *different* programs and are selling fast. Write or phone as detailed below.

Friday, November 11, Armistice Day, is a traditional Canadian holiday. Plan your visit to beautiful Vancouver in time to participate in the annual 11 a.m. Cenotaph Ceremony on Victory Square — then be among the audience, next night at 8:30 p.m., to relive all those beloved wartime tunes in sing-along which Mr. Foort is including in that evening's program. Make ticket, transportation and hotel reservations NOW and join thousands of devotees for this memorable first-time, last-time, one-time, never-again event!

(Four gala Wurlitzer concerts are planned for 1978 — mid-February, mid-April, mid-September and mid-December. Watch THEATRE ORGAN for details!)

November 12 and 13, 1977
Two Different Programs

TICKETS:

\$6.50 — \$5.50 — \$4.50. Write or phone Vancouver Ticket Centre, 630 Hamilton St., Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6B 2R3; (604) 683-3255. BankAmerica or Visa credit cards accepted, or send post office money order in Canadian funds. Add 25 cents per ticket for handling and mailing. Do Not Delay!



CHAPTER NOTES



CHAPTER NOTES OMITTED FROM AUGUST-SEPTEMBER ISSUE

A lost envelope, containing a few Chapter Notes and other articles, showed up on September 8. They are printed here with apologies to those who expected to see them in the last issue.

ALABAMA

Our May meeting happened to be on Mother's Day this year, and what a special day we had! Our guest organist was Tom Helms from Pensacola, Florida. Extra thanks are due Tom for a beautiful job since he practically came straight from the hospital in Pensacola having had major surgery shortly before the program date. In the true tradition of "the show must go on," Tom was able to make it and played a tremendous program. He is a very talented young man. His pleasant chatter from the console added to the program as well. Tom is a very articulate musician and demands a lot of himself, as artists often do. He was self-taught until 1972 when he was awarded scholarships to the University of Alabama where he studied organ. He is quite well known in the organ field from the Florida area to

Canada where he did a stint at Toronto's famous Organ Grinder. His original silent movie scores have become very popular in his concerts. Tom was instrumental in "Saving the Saenger" Theatre in Pensacola and the restoration of the Robert Morton organ there. He is not only the house organist, but also organist and music director for St. Michael's Church, one of the largest Catholic churches in the Pensacola area. Besides his demanding playing schedule, Tom services pipe organs all over the Southeast. Again, thank you, Tom, for your "extra" effort to get here to play for us. It was appreciated.

Although our membership voted not to have regular meetings in June and August because of vacationing members, we did have a training session at our June meeting, which was very helpful and informative to a lot of us who did not know just

how to operate our beautiful Wur-litzer at the Alabama Theatre. So many of us just go and enjoy listening to others play, but never take advantage of the opportunity to play it. We decided one of the reasons for this might be that most of us are quite "in awe" of our lovely old lady and don't know just what to do with it. Norville Hall, as always, very graciously agreed to help us out by instructing us on raising and lowering the lift, how to set up registrations, how to turn the organ on and off, etc. . . . the sort of thing that those who play a lot take for granted. It was a very good meeting, and we wish to express our thanks to Norville for again coming to our rescue with just what we needed at the time. We hope to do this again in the future.

Thought you might be interested, too, in some "outside" activity by some of our members. Mr. and Mrs. Don Cole, from Northport, Alabama, were quite instrumental in starting this chapter here in Birmingham. Alleen and Don have always remained so active in our chapter activities, even though they have to drive about 50 miles to the meetings which are at nine o'clock on Sunday mornings. Alleen and Don have recently purchased a 2/6 Robert Morton which was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre (1928) in Monroe, Louisiana. It was donated to Jefferson Junior High School in 1970. I'll only tell you enough about that one to "whet your appetite" because I'm sure Alleen will be writing a lot more about it as they go along with rebuilding and installing it in their home. They plan to put it back together as near the original installation as space will permit in their home. They have already had to start raising ceilings!

The Coles already had a 2/8 Moller installed in their home. They spent two years building the organ and installing it. They recently took it apart and moved it to their church, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Coker, Alabama, and spent six months rebuilding it there. On Sunday, May 22, 1977, the organ was dedicated to the church in memory of Alleen's mother, Mrs. Alma E. Mixon, who passed away last year, and Alleen did the dedication program. Alleen is former organist of the church, and now serves as director of music there as well as teach-



Tom Helms, guest artist for the May meeting, with Chairman Lee Aured (left) and Program Chairman Jo Ann Radue at the Alabama Theatre. (Thomas L. Hatter Photo)

ing piano at Westwood School in Coker, and piano and organ in her home. She is a member of Tuscaloosa Music Teachers Association, Piano Teachers Forum, the Alabama and Mississippi chapters of ATOS and has served in various offices in each organization.

As you can see, the Coles are very busy people, and we are just very proud to have them as members of our chapter. They really are an asset to us when it comes to working on the organ, or performing, or any other task you might ask them to do.



Without Larry Donaldson and Chuck Hancock, the major members of the work crew, and others who work on the organ, we couldn't have our meetings. (Thomas L. Hatter Photo)

They are always very eager and willing to help, and we do appreciate them very much . . . as members and as friends.

We're looking forward to another good program in July when Cecil Whitmire, former organist for the Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville, will be playing for us.

JO ANN RADUE

NIAGARA FRONTIER

Our annual banquet was held April 23 at Chicks restaurant, Angola, N.Y. As usual, it was a great success, thanks to our banquet committee: Doris Guest, Carol Piazza, Roy Simon and Leah Wright.

With organ and piano at our disposal, the night was filled with music. Many fine musicians took their turn at the keyboard, including Greg Gurtner, Chet MacRae, Will Marshall, Bill and Barbara Milligan, Roy Simon and Irv Toner.

Mr. and Mrs. John Spaulding, now living in Coudersport, Pa., also attended the dinner. John, a former chapter chairman, spoke briefly of the early days when they were organizing the chapter.

After the restaurant closed the party moved on to the nearby home of Doris and Elwyn Guest where the music continued until the wee hours

of the morning.

After the long pleasant night at our banquet many of our members were up early the next morning to greet some 40 members of the Western Reserve Chapter from Cleveland, Ohio.

The day started at the Riviera at 9 a.m. with Winifrea Armistead, Bill Mulligan, Rou Simon and Irv Toner putting the organ through its paces, followed by open console until show time at 2 p.m.

One of the guests, Bill Taber, made everyone sit up and take notice when his turn came at the console. After 2 p.m. the group moved to the organ in the church across the street from the theatre and then on to the Buffalo Theatre.

On March 23, genial Rex Koury was back at the Riviera with his fine music. Ron Rhode made his second appearance at the Riviera on April 20 for another pleasant evening.

On May 18 Len Rawle, from England, played his first concert at the Riviera. Len explained that he can play without music but in England you must have a rack full of music or they think you are not a musician!

On June 15, George Blackmore, another organist from England, played his first public concert at the Riviera console. As an extra treat, Mrs. Blackmore sang several numbers and was well received by the crowd. George is no stranger to the Riviera organ having stopped over here last year on his way to the convention.

Another first appearance at the Riviera on July 20, was made by Kay McAbee and in August we heard Don Thompson, another fine English organist now living in Toronto, Canada. I should mention that Don is another one of those crowd pleasers who has made many appearances at the Riviera. I understand that Don is soon about to make a recording on our Riviera organ.

This must be the year for English organists at the Riviera. Don will be the third this year and in December Frank Olsen, who is also living in Canada, will be our fourth.

I might add that Organ Restoration Chairman Bill Milligan and his crew now have the 32-foot pedal stop working. What a "belly shaker." Every day the Riviera organ gets bigger and better and is now 19 ranks.

STEVE CROWLEY

OREGON

In May, we heard veteran staff organist Don Simmons play the 4/18 Wurlitzer at the Oaks Park Rink. This instrument was originally in the Broadway Theatre in Portland and in 1956 was moved to the Oaks Park. The pipes are suspended on a platform above the center of the rink and speak out in all directions. The console is located behind glass at the side of the skating area. It may well be the only organ where the console is enclosed and the pipes are not!

Don is well known for his recordings here and at the Organ Grinder Restaurant. He is a master of rhythm and registration and it is amazing how much expression he can achieve by adding and subtracting stops, unaided by swell shutters.

Don explained and demonstrated the difference in playing for various skating styles. Although his tempo is always precise, he uses a metronome for skating. This is adjusted to standardized speeds for inter-rink skating.

Don's program consisted of some 14 numbers, each a master production. It included a romping "The Blues," a very lush "Waltz of the Maxims," "Kamenoi Ostrow" — rink style and a slow tempo "I Write the Songs." While this organ can be heard nightly from the bleachers on the side, it is a real treat to get out on the floor, under and around it, where its real power and brilliance can be appreciated without skate noise.

Thanks to Don Simmons and the



Don Simmons at the Oaks Park Rink, Portland.
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)



Dennis and Heidi James at the Benson High School Kimball, Portland.
(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

Oaks Rink for a most unusual and enjoyable afternoon.

In June, we had the honor of hearing Dennis James at the Benson High 3/18 Kimball and his lovely wife Heidi at the grand piano. This unusual duo has justly gained national fame by their many concerts and recordings. Each of their arrangements are truly artistic masterpieces. The piano and organ parts never compete or duplicate, but always compliment. They are always in exact time, which is quite an accomplishment considering the reverberation delay in the Benson auditorium.

Some numbers, such as "Moonlight Sonata" featured Heidi in an exquisite piano solo. Some of Dennis' organ solos were well augmented by appropriate and beautiful slides. Their judicious program included a dynamic "Dizzy Fingers," a Crawford style "High Hat," "It's a Raggy Waltz" with a remarkable pedal string bass effect, and closed with "Rhapsody in Blue."

Thanks to Dennis and Heidi James.

BUD ABEL

POTOMAC VALLEY

Our April meeting was "something special," as vividly chronicled here by Earl Sharits:

April 30, via charter bus, 44 chapter members journeyed to Greensboro, N.C., for a weekend of music with our neighboring Piedmont Chapter. Natalie Neviasher, Bill Alexander, Marion Renn and Chairman Al Baldino provided snacks, soft drinks and fun games en route to the Hilton Inn, Greensboro.

Thence, to the Carolina Theatre by 3 p.m. for our first concert. This 2/6 Robert Morton, the only remaining in-theatre organ between Richmond and Atlanta, now has a big, lush sound due to high unrestricted chambers opening into an acoustically live auditorium seating over 1,100. The Carolina recently has been designated a performing arts center for the City of Greensboro.

As expected, MC Mac Abernethy kept events rolling at a fast pace. Jane Sparks, PVC and Piedmont active member, opened the afternoon with medleys of American songs old and new. Jane played for us about two years ago at the Byrd Theatre, Richmond, with Eddie Weaver, and it was a real treat to hear her again. Chet Retaski then entertained us with unusual rhythmic arrangements of tuneful standards including a number of our favorite Gershwin songs. Both Chet and Jane deserved our enthusiastic applause for well-prepared programs.

After dinner, we attended a public show featuring Larry Keesler at the Carolina organ, Buster Keaton in *Balloonatics* and Harold Lloyd in *Haunted Spooks*. Larry's modern interpretations, including seldom-heard effective use of divided organ chambers, began with music dedicated to the ladies, sophisticated or otherwise. Between films, one of Larry's talented choir members sang two Barbra Streisand ballads. In all, it was a great show.

Sunday morning at 10 a.m. we were back in the Carolina Theatre to enjoy the big-theatre and radio broadcast organ sounds of Bill Floyd from Richmond. You wondered how so much music came out of six ranks! Bill's concert was varied and concluded with Laurel & Hardy in *Love and Hisses*. There was no doubt that Bill had been a working theatre organist for many years.

But there was more — on to Burlington, N.C., and Dr. Paul Abernethy's 2/8 Robert Morton home installation of the former Greensboro National Theatre organ, now with piano and pipe chests you can walk under! Baffled swell shutters spread sound evenly throughout the listening room. Cameos were played by Earl Sharits, Lee Prater, Rollie Miller and Edith Evelyn of PVC. Then Dr. Abernethy proved his talent with

"Dancing Tambourine" and "If I Were a Rich Man." We thank Paul for his hospitality in sharing this fine instrument with us.

After Sunday dinner at Morrison's Cafeteria in Durham, we arrived home about 9 p.m. a bit tired but happy with memories of how much ATOS means to all theatre organ enthusiasts everywhere.

The May 14 meeting of the chapter was held at the KB Baronet Theatre in Bethesda, Maryland, the home of a 1927 2/8 Wurlitzer from the Maine Theatre, Portland. Our host for the meeting and program of entertainment was Pipe Organ Concerts (the owner of the instrument), for the past year an active producer and promoter of professional theatre organ concerts and organ accompanied silent film shows in the metro area.

Following a short business meeting, during which Chairman Al Baldino announced a memorial fund in the name of Cliff Long, our host treated us to video tape playbacks of highlights of Rosa Rio, Ray Brubacher and Hector Olivera as they appeared on television shows taped at the Baronet theatre while performing for Pipe Organ Concerts.

Our first artist was Doug Bailey, who charmed us with selections from his repertoire of "music to relax by." Doug is directly involved in the history of the pipe organ at the Baronet. He chose for us, appropriately, songs which were a part of his daily one-man radio show, 1949 through 1953, broadcast by radio remote from the same theatre (then known as the Heiser).

Doug recalled that during shows an unusual multi-facilities set-up was available to him while seated at the remote radio control position. A record turntable was in back of the seat. He faced a 2/4 Marr and Colton console and the remote radio controls. A piano was at his right, enabling him to play simultaneously, organ with the left hand and piano with the right hand!

Earl Sharits, a long-time member of the Baronet Wurlitzer re-build crew and its "tonal consultant," shared with us a sampling of unusual arrangements and interpretations of lesser known oldies which were part of a "beer bottle box" of nostalgic memorabilia stored in the attic of his home.



Earl Sharits and Doug Bailey shared the 2/8 Wurlitzer, for the May meeting at the Baronet Theatre.

The program was rounded out with open console in which Phil Pensyl, Russell Spear, Eddie Diamond, Jack Boyer and Tod Strickland participated. Guided tours of the Baronet organ chambers followed, for the Wurlitzer will soon be dismantled. At the time of this writing, destruction of the theatre is imminent, to make way for a Metro-rail (subway) station.

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

PUGET SOUND

On Sunday, May 22, the chapter teamed up with the Haller Lake Improvement Club, where the chapter organ resides, for a popcorn, punch and movie afternoon. Following a half hour of organ music by board member Ken Gallwey, the movie program began with two short silent film comedies provided and accompanied by Don Myers. This was followed by an early talkie, *Way Out West*, featuring the incomparable team of Laurel and Hardy, also from the extensive Myers' film library.

An impromptu get-together was arranged for June 12 at Greenwood Pizza and Pipes for the regular five to ten p.m. playing session, when it was learned we were to have Jimmy Paulin in our midst for two months. Jimmy has a large, bombastic style which delights the pizza audience, but his musicianship is of a quality to appeal to the more discerning listener as well. Incredibly, the voice of the "Entertainer" was not heard in the land that evening.

GENNY WHITTING

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

First off — a retraction. Our sincere apologies to several gentlemen, including Fred Munier and Norman Lane of Denver. In a back issue of THEATRE ORGAN we said that the organ in the Aladdin Theatre had been sanctified when a church was using the theatre. Later, after receiving some phone calls, we find that the organ was sanctified after the church had moved out. Fred Munier was servicing the 3/17 Wicks at the time the church was using it. Fred and Norman, we are sorry.

We wish to extend our congratulations to the new Pikes Peak Area Chapter down in Colorado Springs. Welcome to the chambers. As we know some of the folks there, we know they will be a credit to ATOS.

Last month several of us met with Don Hout in Arvada, Colorado. He has a 3-manual Artisan in his home. Great sounds and installation. A couple of weeks later, on a sunny Saturday morning, we met at Trinity United Methodist Church for a concert by Dr. James Bratton of Denver University. Norman Lane had a slide show of old, old organs in Colorado. Then we walked through the 4-manual Roosevelt, and even looked down into the 32' pedal pipes from the second story.

The writer made a trip with his family to Salt Lake City, Utah, and was invited to the home of Clarence E. Briggs, chairman. He has a Rodgers Trio with two Leslies. Clarence took us to the home of Darlene Walker who has a Rodgers 33E with some real toys. thanks to Beehive Chapter for their hospitality and great organ spirit. They have three Rodgers Trios and three pipe organs in various homes of their members, but time ran out and we had to leave. We also visited the Mormon Tabernacle and heard the great organ and choir. Some experience.

At this writing we are planning to meet at the home of Dr. Dorothy Brookens where Bill Johnston, Ron Graham and Frank Bandy will share the concert on her Digital Computer Allen.

At Fred Riser's, we have installed another 3-rank chest, the xylophone and chimes. We have a goal to meet — winded and playing in another two months.

FRANK R. GANDY

SIERRA

We may even patent it! Sierra Chapter has discovered how to make it rain.

Spring brought out our gypsy spirit and a trip to Shingletown, the home of John and Aurora Leininger. We've been suffering one of the worst droughts in history but the morning of Sunday, May 1, forty-three members boarded a bus in a pouring rain. We were so happy to have the rain that it enhanced rather than spoiled the trip. A three-and-a-half hour ride — the last half-hour through lovely forest of pine and redwood — brought us to "Leininger's Landing" a beautiful home set among the lush pines and foliage of the California foothills.

Entering the front door, the first object to attract attention was the console of the 3/14 Wurlitzer sitting beside a long wall of sliding glass doors. Beyond the doors was a large stone patio and beyond the patio a velvety green lawn stretched to the shore of the privately owned lake. The large living room with its big fireplace and balcony leading to the bedrooms, was finished in stone and natural wood and beautifully furnished. Beneath the bedrooms, behind a four-foot "mixing" area, the chambers extended almost the length of the room. There was a large open kitchen at one end of the living room and beyond that a family room. It was an organ enthusiasts dream house.

We had an hour to meet our gracious hosts, relax and get acquainted with other guests. At two o'clock Everett Nourse was introduced and began a program on this beautifully installed instrument. Everett knew how to get the full potential from this organ as he had played it when it was in its original home, the Oakland Fox Theatre. Everett played numbers popular when he was featured organist at the San Francisco Fox. Listening to the beautiful music and watching the view of the windows change from rain to sunshine to rain and finally a light fog, everyone agreed that there couldn't be a more perfect setting for an organ concert. During the second half of the program, Everett played "Pennies From Heaven" and it started to hail, but didn't last long.

When the program ended at four-

fifteen, we reluctantly said good-bye and boarded our bus for the drive to Redding where we stopped for dinner before the return trip to Sacramento. A thank you to the Leingers for sharing their lovely home, to Everett for the beautiful organ music and to Program Chairman Dale Mendenhall for a great day.

On the go again, chapter caravanners warmed up their jalopies and traveled to El Dorado County and the home of Milon and Connie Thorley for our May meeting. For the third time in several years, this reporter had to miss a Sierra activity, but from glowing reports everyone had a great time. The Thorley's have a 2/5 Wicks "in the bedroom" and a steam train and it was a toss-up as to which garnered the most attention. A delicious potluck picnic took care of the eating problem.

This was our second meeting within a month in the wooded California foothills and we'll be doing it again with our annual picnic at Pine Grove in August.

A big thanks to the Thorleys and our social chairwoman, Cindy Carleton.

Sierra and Nor-Cal chapters held a combo in June at our Golden Bear Seaver Memorial organ. The turnout was rather disappointing — about sixty — but this frequently happens in California when the weather is just too nice for even T.O. fans to stay indoors. Sierra Chairman Art Phelen welcomed those present and explained that "our baby" had come through her recent operation very well, and with a new blower, fresh tuneup, and some minor problems taken care of, she was again in good voice. To prove it he opened the program with several very listenable numbers. Joe Gustin, who is no stranger in Paradise (that's California not Kismet) was then introduced and in turn presented one of his students, David Jones. With Joe at the console, David leading the singing and Carroll Harris at the projector, we had a good sing-along, followed by several solo numbers on the organ by Joe. After raffling our waffles, (that's a drawing for L.P.'s) Nor-Cal took over with Warren White at the console. Its always a pleasure to hear Warren and his somewhat off-beat arrangement of the oldie "Strange Interlude" was

great. Even though our Golden Bear Wurlitzer "ain't awfully big," another Warren (Lublich) made it sound as great as his recent record played on the Avenue Theatre organ as he played a complete medley from *Annie Get Your Gun*. Dave Schutt and Jim Wagner, who stopped in enroute from Seattle to San Jose, arrived a bit late but that didn't stop Dave from playing several very enjoyable numbers including a good old '30s number "I Believe In Miracles." Jim, one of our younger organists, played three numbers, and David Jones, who had earlier led the song-fest, surprised us by moving to the console to prove that he could play as well as sing.

More thanks to the many members who worked to get the organ in such good shape; Art Phelen, Rod Daggert, John Carleton, Hal Wilmunder, Chuck Shumate, Dale Mendenhall, Ray Anderson, Harvey Whitney, and Clarence Kemper. They are dedicated members.

KEYZANPEDALS



ALABAMA

July was another exciting meeting for the chapter. We were really "ready" for some beautiful sounds from our Mighty Wurlitzer, since we didn't have a formal meeting in June... and beautiful sounds we did get!

It's always nice to have new members join our chapter, but it's even nicer when they are performers. Two of the newest additions to our membership are Cecil Whitmire and his lovely wife, Linda, who *both* play. The Whitmires come to us from Knoxville, Tennessee, by way of Georgia. Cecil is the former house organist for the Tennessee Theatre in Knoxville where he played the 3/13 Wurlitzer from 1957 to 1961 and again from 1969 until 1975 when they moved to Georgia. Cecil and a church organist friend had discovered and rescued this Wurlitzer from the basement of the Tennessee Theatre under 13 years of "dust, popcorn, chocolate and Coke." After



Cecil Whitmire at the console of the Alabama Theatre's mighty Wurlitzer.

(Robert Linthout Photo)

many weeks of late-night work sessions (sound familiar to any of you out there?), the organ was again playable. The theatre manager heard Cecil playing the organ and asked him to play for a benefit, which led to a five-year period when he played on a regular basis for movie intermissions. Due to heavy work schedules and other interests, Cecil did not play that organ again until 1969, when it was made a regular part of the program on weekends.

In addition to the Tennessee Wurlitzer, Cecil has also played the Atlanta Fox Moller and the Ohio Theatre Robert Morton, as well as endless hours of dinner music and dance music at various country clubs, some "boogie" music at the Rodeway Inn and Travelodge lounges in Knoxville — all on plug-ins.

Cecil gave us a really super program which was enjoyed by a larger than usual summer crowd at our July meeting. His program ranged from show tunes to old to new to Country and Western and a sing-along. As he says, "Of all the experiences that I have enjoyed during my organ years . . . the greatest thrill of all is to ride a Wurlitzer up into a spotlight in a theatre filled with several hundred people . . . and play for them." Well, we didn't have several hundred people, but I think he still got a big thrill out of it . . . and all of us who heard him liked what we

heard.

We feel that both Whitmires are tremendous assets to our chapter, and once again want to thank Cecil for giving us another memorable Sunday morning at the Alabama Theatre! Hope he will do it again for us soon.

On a not-so-happy note, I'm very sorry to report that Lillian Truss, our "First Lady of the Alabama Wurlitzer," suffered a massive stroke earlier this summer and is now recuperating at her son's home, Dr. Orrian Truss, another valued member of our chapter. Our best and most sincere wishes go out to Lillian and her family. She has always been such a willing, capable and gracious helper and performer in our chapter. Her presence at the meetings is sorely missed, as well as her performances at the console. Lillian gave the first public performance on our Alabama Wurlitzer on the grand opening day of the theatre — December 26, 1927, and was the theatre's first picture organist. We love you and miss you, Lillian!

JO ANN RADUE

ALOHA

With a slow first half of the year, our activities are beginning to accelerate, promising a busy time in the next few months.

The going-away party for Concert Chairman Dan Engelhard at the

Amelco Building was a huge success. Everyone had a great time and the organ was seldom quiet. The Baldwin Cinema II loaned to us by Bill Sanders of Baldwin's Piano and Organ Company got a constant workout. Our activity committee deserves our gratitude for a well planned activity.

The chapter will miss Dan from his participation as concert chairman, past chairman, and his input to the board all these years. Primarily through Dan's efforts we are today a chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. Dan was one of the charter members of the Hawaii Theatre Organ Club, now the Aloha Chapter, ATOS. We will miss his encyclopedic knowledge of pipe organs . . . who built them, where they are located and who is playing them.

Our secretary, Paul Walley, has tendered his resignation to the chapter board. During his term as secretary he pursued club business conscientiously and his term of service is greatly appreciated by the board and chapter.

Sunday, August 28, Jack Hazel brought his projector and showed some comedies in the club room and later in the auditorium where Frank Loney and Betty De Rosa accompanied them on the Robert Morton.

BETTY De ROSA

CENTRAL INDIANA

CIC-ATOS is fortunate in having at least six theatre pipe organ installations that are considered "special interest" locations for meetings at least once a year. Manual High School in Indianapolis is one of them. The Manual organ, a 3/14 Louisville/Kilgen pipe organ continues to grow bigger and better, thanks to the untiring and dedicated efforts of Carl Wright, stage manager at Manual High School and Larry McPherson. Carl and Larry hosted the May meeting.

We have watched the Manual organ "grow like Topsy," until now it is one of the finest instruments in the Midwest, serving the school and the community.

What started out as a dream in the life of Carl Wright has turned into a magnificent theatre pipe organ installation, deserving of a quick resumé of the rewards of dedication

and hard work to achieve that dream.

The Manual organ began as a 2/7 Louisville Uniphone, straight console, and was played for the first time at Manual High School's annual alumni meeting in May of 1974. John Muri was guest organist, performing superbly on the yet incomplete instrument. On Sunday, September 8, 1974, CIC-ATOS held its first meeting at Manual. Three more ranks had been added and at this meeting a 3-manual Kilgen horseshoe console was presented by CIC-ATOS Honorary Member C.W. Ober of Indianapolis. Two years and four months later the Manual High School organ, now a 3/14 Louisville/Kilgen was formally dedicated, on January 22, 1977. Lee Irwin played the dedicatory concert to a near capacity crowd on a bitter cold and snowy night. A story with a heart-warming climax, but not the end by any means! The latest addition is a piano hook-up to the console and somewhere between May of 1974 and January of 1977, a lift was installed to add to the elegance of any occasion as the organ rises majestically from the orchestra pit.

A most interesting program was presented by Bea Butler, organ teacher and promoter for Hammond organs. She did several groups of show tunes and to everyone's delight repeated her "Chicken and Turkey" number, a novelty number incorporating some "on stage" pantomime by one of her charming young students. Bea is one of our members. A lovely and entertaining performance, Bea.

The hospitality of Frank and Frances May, combined with one of the most magnificent organs in the Midwest, makes the annual meeting at the May home a highlight in any ATOS year. The June meeting in Kokomo numbered 73 members and guests.

Frank, who had open-heart surgery last September, is progressing beautifully and in his days of recuperation made a number of major changes and additions to his already fabulous 4/19 Barton. He has added a piano which he plans eventually to connect to his modern control system, using computer-type circuitry to replace the mechanical-pneumatic system. It will then be controlled

THEATRE ORGAN WANT ADS GET RESULTS

See Page 65 for Details

electronically. (See the May-June 1975 issue of THEATRE ORGAN).

Ken Double, who has many musical accomplishments to his credit, did a masterful job in presenting a delightful program. A very talented and captivating personality, Ken was recently named sports director for WLFI-TV in Lafayette, Indiana. Ken's contributions to ATOS have been much appreciated and in the field of his chosen profession, we wish him much success in his new position.

A hearty thanks to the Mays for opening up their lovely home to such a large crowd.

RUTH D. WARD

CENTRAL OHIO

July, for COTOS, resembled brilliant fireworks the entire month. We started off with Jimmy Boyce playing the "Mighty Mo" at the Pipe Organ Ristorante. He was excellent with registration. Using his own composition entitled "Charlie's Walk" added to the fun of the Chaplin silent *The Rink*. We hope Jimmy returns soon.

Our annual picnic took place at the residence of Ginny and Ed Lawrence. As a tip to other chapters, Secretary Tom Thornton came up with a winner for the picnic food. Instead of "If your name begins A to G, bring . . . etc.," his instructions were, "If your name begins A to Z bring your favorite and we will see what happens." What happened was no duplicates and everything fabulous.

Ed's Conn 651, with capture system and all of the added features, put concert artist Betsy Richard through her paces and she did the same to the Conn. Betsy prepared a program of seldom heard music. As always, her talent provides an excellent program.

Once in a while we watch a member's effort to accomplish organ technique and are overjoyed when he is suddenly off and running. This happened with 15 year-old Dean Wagner. Taking a turn at open console

he brought people from all directions to find out who was playing and hushed all conversation. Compliments to Dean were deservedly forthcoming.

The fireworks continued with the arrival of Hector Olivera at the Pipe Organ Ristorante. It was a sell-out and then some. With Hector playing what can one write that hasn't been written before and write it better for emphasis? You see people shaking their heads in disbelief that one person can do all that he is doing. He compares to the grand finale of fireworks displays.

Back to one event for August but what a meeting. Hosted by Dr. John Polsley and his wife Betty at their beautiful home in Urbana, Ohio, we met some of their friends who just happened to be outstanding organists. Performing the opening concert at the Baldwin organ was Gwen Tomar who is also John's organ teacher. Gwen, some years ago, had also been Secretary Tom Thornton's music teacher when he lived in Dayton. Thoroughly acquainted with the features of the Baldwin, Gwen performed a varied program. Her daughter Vicki also took a turn at the console. Both gave very fine performances.

Another guest was professional musician Bob Schetter. With a lilting style his program was quite different and interesting. Some of his selections taxed the brain trying to identify them.

The final guest artist was 16 year-old Kevin Sowers. Kevin's ability at the keyboard was immediately appreciated. Again, styling was noticeably unique. It seems we over-use the statement that here is a talent to watch but we tell it like it is.

Telling it like it is, member Tom Hobson, during open console, outdid himself with his easy listening style. For the first time we heard from Tom Thornton and wonder why he has been reluctant to play.

IRENE BLEGEN

CONNECTICUT VALLEY

Our August meeting at the spacious residence of Stillman and Claire Rice in North Haven, Ct., included, as usual, open console in the afternoon, business at 7:30 and organ music from 8:15 on.

At 7:30 promptly Chairman Norman Ray called the business session

to order so that by 8:15 he was able to turn the floor over to Program Chairman Paul Plainer. For this occasion Paul had scheduled an excellent program featuring, first, two of our recent scholarship contestants.

The first of the youthful players was Tom Harveston, age 12, who gave a very nice program of three numbers.

Following Tom was Flory Muller, age 14. Flory played three selections, again, nicely done.

Kept well under wraps until the appropriate time, the "mystery guest artist" appeared on cue and turned out to be our own Mike Foley whom we hear all too seldom. Mike has been very dedicated for many months directing installation and tuning of a great 4-manual Wurlitzer pipe organ at the Windham Technical School in Willimantic, Ct.

Mike had a generous program of ten or twelve numbers ready for us and fed the appropriate combination cards into Stillman's Allen computer organ. When all cards had been digested by the computer Mike started his program. He played three numbers, announced his fourth selection, tweaked a few stop tabs and came down upon the manuals with fingers, but no notes; instead, all the console lights went out and terrible screeching sounds emanated from the speakers. Unfortunately, it was all over for the Allen and for Mike for this evening. The Allen could not be persuaded to go on. We were mighty sorry to be cut short with such an enjoyable program, but we did hear the youngsters and a nice sample of Mike's playing. Our thanks go to Stillman and Claire for a fine day.

On August 28 we had an interesting field trip to the Garden Theatre with a 3/9 Marr and Colton in

Greenfield, Ma., in the morning, and to Don and Lois Reed's residence in Longmeadow, Ma., in the afternoon to see, hear and play their just christened 2/6 Marr and Colton.

We have some good concerts scheduled for the Thomaston Opera House:

October 14, 15 and 16, Lyn Larsen and Tony Fenelon; December 2 and 3, Lowell Ayars; March 31 and April 1 and 2, George Wright. For tickets or information, phone (203) 888-9696 or write Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Ct. 06483.

WALLACE F. POWERS

EASTERN MASS.

Kaarina and Tim Bjareby again were our genial hosts, Sunday, August 14, at their Ipswich, Mass., home. This summer field trip has become an annual event much anticipated with the usual informal good fellowship, a fine 2/8 Robert Morton theatre pipe organ and home made food! These are the ingredients for a hard combination to beat. Among the more than 40 present were guests from Pine Tree Chapter and SENETOS (Southeastern New England Theatre Organ Society).

Playing got under way with Bob Legon on the bench, who has both opened and closed these Bjareby meetings in a sort of tradition. Bob never comes unprepared and he can be counted upon for some of the latest numbers well arranged. Host, Tim Bjareby, then put his pride and joy R.M. to the test with his intricate arrangements utilizing most of the pipes, traps and percussions during his program. Most playing members and guests had one or more interludes at the handsome white and gold console as they extracted varying pleasant sound combinations —

seemingly almost inexhaustible.

Before the blower switch was finally in the "off" position and the last of the guests were reluctantly on their way, daytime had turned to darkness, such was the enjoyment of the visit. The pipes had again cast their euphoric spell over all those present!

STANLEY GARNISS

GARDEN STATE

"Summertime and The Playing is Easy."

Open console, picnic, meeting and a mini-concert were all combined in a great June meeting at the home of Chairman Bill and Marianne Mc Kiscock, Morrisville, Pa. The weather was perfect and many members turned out with picnic baskets and music under their arms. The Mc Kiscocks have a large 4/37 pipe organ with everything on it including a large, beautiful gong that Bill brought home from one of his trips to the Far East. The treat of the day was an outstanding mini-concert by guest artist Jim Leaffe, a young and talented organist who is extremely proud of his American Indian heritage. Jim is house organist at Long Island University and has a most successful recording *Blue Heron* under his Indian name James Good Leaf. It was a most enjoyable day and members chalked up another great chapter meeting.

The old adage of winning one losing one was certainly true for the August meeting. Instead of beautiful sunshine, the rains came and the day was warm and humid. But this did not discourage a goodly number of interested members who used the two hours of open console time to good advantage playing the Pasack Theatre 2/8 Wurlitzer in Westwood. At 2 p.m., all travelled to Joe and

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Jinny Vanore's home in close-by Ridgewood for the remainder of the afternoon. Despite the rainy day, everyone worked extremely well on a large bulk mailing and enjoyed music from the Vanore's Ampico Reproducing Chickering piano. Organ selections were also played by members on the 2/3 Estey with a wall to wall toy counter.

When work was finished all relaxed and Jimmy Vanore accompanied a Laurel and Hardy silent film at the organ and piano.

LONDON AND SOUTH OF ENGLAND

Highlight of the two months since our first report has been the surprise and warmly applauded nomination of our well-known members Edith and Les Rawle as Honorary Members of the ATOS — conferred at the banquet during the Chicago Convention.

Not only is this signal honour richly deserved but it also gives great satisfaction and enhancement of association to the newly-formed London and South of England Chapter — the fiftieth in the worldwide ATOS family.

Altogether eighteen British members trekked to Chicago, and the chapter has since taken great delight in hearing of their most memorable experiences in the windy city.

Several members are avid record collectors and get virtually all new stateside issues as soon as they are published.

A well-known British organ enthusiast duo, members John and Noreen Foskett, provide a unique selection on their sales stall which they mount at most major organ concerts in the London area. With well over a hundred titles available, many of them of

US origin, they have also been instrumental in the production of around 25 LPs, notably in conjunction with member John Peters in the superb 'Amberlee' Series — which also operates an interchange arrangement with Doric. John Foskett's most recent record production venture has been of David Hamilton playing the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium Wurlitzer for the British 'Deroy' label — which is also now available in the U.S.A.

Member Len Rawle also operates his own record label — 'Tonawanda' — and his most recent production is aptly titled 'Pizza and Parlour.' One side was recorded at the Capn's Galley, Redwood City, Wurlitzer while the other was done on Len's own magnificent 4/26 home Wurlitzer — formerly in MGM's famous 'Empire' cinema in London's Leicester Square, and played and recorded by Jesse Crawford during his British tour of 1933.

Father Les and son Len Rawle are both avid Wurlitzer devotees with magnificent home installations which were visited during the 1976 ATOS Safari. Doubtless they will again be featured during the commercially sponsored 'Mini Safari' for an American party of 50 in October.

Our second concert presentation by member Stan Whittington at the delightful vintage Compton in St. Mary's Catholic Church at Hornchurch in Essex was a great success. More dates are now being planned, hopefully with visiting American console stars.

A chapter coach party attended the re-opening of the 4/21 'Queen' Wurlitzer, formerly in the Paramount Odeon in Manchester, now beautifully installed in the Free Trade Hall (home of the world renowned Halle Orchestra) in this

famous northern city. This most commendable venture has been achieved by our good friends of the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust (LTOT) in just four years since the 1931 vintage Publix 1 style instrument was removed from the theatre.

Meanwhile, other chapter activities are going ahead with vigour — notably including a monthly club night at Wurlitzer Lodge, home of Edith and Les Rawle, and the circulation of a newsletter to the now 60 plus members.

NORMAN BARFIELD

LOS ANGELES

One way of getting the public interested in a project or hobby is via the newspapers. So, when an organ-curious Los Angeles Times feature writer contacted LA Chapter Chair-



John Ledwon stands like Lohengrin before his fortress while his 'castle' broods above. No dragons, but it does house a roaring beast. John's hobby was revealed in a full page picture story in the *LA Times*.

ashley miller
a.a.g.o.

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man John Ledwon, the scribe was invited to visit John's Wurlitzer-equipped home in Agoura, Calif. The reporter brought along his brownie and the result was a full page spread about John and the pipe hobby in the Feature section of a recent issue. Of the several large photos which appeared, the one shown here had the most eye appeal: John standing at the foot of his hill with his "castle" dominating the hill top.

How to encourage young talent? One way is to provide budding organists with a showcase. Of course, all who want to play may not be up to audience-pulling standards, so there must be eliminations to reduce the number of showcase size. Yet the planners of the chapter's *Stars of Tomorrow* project didn't want to put the youngsters through the "gladiatorial combat" (as one judge put it) of open competition, as some electronic builders do. Afterall, we are pursuing a hobby, not the bucks. Project Chairman Deke Warner, assisted by Debbie Lynn, evolved a plan which would cause the least embarrassment to the inevitable losers; the entire competition was conducted by tape recording. The volunteer judges (Ann Leaf, Del Castillo, Stu Green, Bill Johnson and Bill Tom-

son) never saw the 16 contestants, nor knew their names; the 16 were identified only by number on the tape. Thus, six were chosen. Their concert at the Crown Theatre in Pasadena on August 28 was attended by an enthusiastic audience of ATOSers who enjoyed the sextette's handling of the 3/14 Wurlitzer. On the same evening a reception was held for them at John Ledwon's residence. Five were able to make it, and they repeated parts of their programs for the invited guests. The six winners were Daryl Rosso (17), John Fleury (19), Meredith Price (17), Jeff Roberson (17), Jeanette Acosta (14) and Joe Tripoli (16). We were able to photograph the five who attended the reception but our congratulations go to all six of LA's *Stars of Tomorrow*.

ELMER FUBB

MOTOR CITY

Enough chapter members headed for Chicago '77 in late June and early July for Motor City to claim the second highest attendance as a chapter at this year's national convention. The overall attendance broke the previous record, set in Detroit in 1974, by about 50 people.

In place of the regular Second

Sunday program at the Michigan Theatre, Ann Arbor area members attended a picnic at the home of Grant and Barb Cook on July 10.

Our annual chapter potluck picnic, in July, was held again this year at Hasler Lake, as the guests of Ron and Dee Werner, members of the Metropolitan Club that owns and maintains the several-acre site. A Rodgers organ, courtesy of Musical Heritage in Royal Oak, was heard all afternoon long in the pavillion overlooking the lake as members took their turn at the console. The picnic followed an open console session at the 3/16 Barton at the Royal Oak Theatre; our Fourth Sunday offering for July.

Our Second Sunday artist at the 3/13 Barton at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in August was Jim Boutell.

Nearly 500 members and friends enjoyed our successful fourth annual private charter moonlight cruise on the Detroit River on the 75-year-old excursion steamer Columbia on August 11. Those who weren't roaming the many decks of the 2500-passenger steamer, were on the dance deck enjoying the music supplied by members John Fischer, Henry Aldridge, Gladys Nancarrow, Ken

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Saliba and Scott Smith at the Rodgers organ, graciously loaned by Musical Heritage.

As part of our fund raising efforts to purchase the Redford Theatre, we scheduled eight weekend programs during the summer featuring the classic films of Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, James Cagney and Bette Davis. Chapter artists who performed at the Redford's 3/10 Barton before, after each program and during intermission were Ken Saliba, Scott Smith, Lance Luce, Wilma Steslick and Amy Reimer.

Our "Buy the Redford" project has already raised the down payment on the theatre, which is due by the first of November. Your tax-deductible contribution is still welcome, and needed. Write to: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, P.O. Box 40716, Redford, Michigan 48240.

DON LOCKWOOD

NIAGARA FRONTIER

In July, Kay McAbee made his second appearance at the Riviera and gave his usual fine performance.

Walter Strony played his first concert for the Riviera crowd in August. The crowd took to him like a duck takes to water. A fine young entertainer — I am sure he will be asked to play a return engagement.

Carol Jones will make her first appearance for the chapter in October.

In the hey-day of vaudeville, everyone wanted to play the Palace. With the revival of the theatre organ, it seems everyone wants to play the Riviera.

When the Riviera opened in 1926, Fred Meyers, with five years experience, was the first organist. He had studied at Eastman, played for a while in Philadelphia, then moved to the Piccadilly and Cameo theatres

in Rochester before coming to North Tonawanda.

The Riviera organ, close to the Wurlitzer factory, was built with loving care uniquely designed so it could be used by Wurlitzer to demonstrate to prospective buyers, of theatre, church or concert organs.

I often wonder how many organists have ever played this fine organ. Not counting those who have played at our many open console and jam sessions, I have made a list of 63 artists that I can recall playing concerts for the chapter. One has played eleven concerts, two or three have played seven or eight times and ever so many have played two, three or more concerts. Quite an impressive list of fine organists who are making the concert circuit. I recognize several names of young artists who have made the big time, getting their first break at the Riviera.

STEVE CROWLEY

NORTH TEXAS


Since the April meeting of the chapter was held on May 1, and the



Larry Hasselbring at the Landmark Barton.
(Joe Koski Photo)

copy for our June edition Chapter Notes apparently traveled by Pony Express, it did not arrive in time to be included. So we'll give you a brief resume' of the meeting's happenings. Chairman Jim Peterson presided in his usual effective manner in the Organ World studio at Garland, Texas. Jim outlined his plans for the coming sessions and made some shrewd observations about the chapter's needs. Principle items included the need for more frequent meetings plus the generation of greater incentives for the group by establishing some goals and then getting everyone to participate in the achievement. Grace Johnson discussed some of the plans and problems involved in participation by the chapter in the Dallas Performing Arts program, explaining that the new phases of the program were still in planning stages. The Majestic Theatre, where the chapter was in hopes of installing a theatre organ, had been turned over to the Park and Recreation Department of the City after donation of the property to the City, and the program was not yet far enough along to warrant immediate participation. However, as soon as the good word is received, the chapter will take necessary action.


With all the "common fodder" he gathered from the April meeting, Chairman Jim proceeded to do some heavy planning on the chapter's future, and it really looks great. A couple of weeks prior to our August meeting, Jim called several key members by phone and arranged a sort of "ad hoc Board of Directors" meeting. Much discussion and a lot of good ideas ensued. Jim compiled these into a real attention-getting newsletter which went out with the August meeting notices. The newsletter outlined very effectively the basic needs and items of discussion



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for the chapter, and urged all members to be there to join in the fun. Result? We had a double quorum present at the August meeting at Landmark Pipes and Pizza, and we are headed down the right road, with things moving right along.

Those of us who showed up at Landmark on Sunday, August 21, were treated to a fine program by Larry Hasselbring at the console of the Barton which the new owners of Landmark have been refurbishing into a real fine instrument. Larry played a lot of goodies, both old and new.

At 2:30, after the Sunday dinner, Chairman Jim called the business meeting to order, with some minor handicaps. A Pizza restaurant, open for business, is not the best place in the world to hold a chapter business meeting, the meeting was actually one of the best and most productive as far as chapter activity is concerned that we have attended.

Much was accomplished toward future planning, but in summary, main points included — 1. A more compatible meeting schedule. The most approved plan providing once a month meetings, with perhaps none during the hot summer months. In other words, an active September to June activities program. 2. A Management Committee, to insure continuity of chapter administration and guidance toward our goals. The committee would be composed of the officers plus a group of two or three "directors" elected for 1, 2 or 3 year terms so that only one would be elected each year. thus leaving people in the Chapter Guidance group who would be familiar with previous years' plans. 3. A permanent "home base" where meetings could be held, without having to depend on the generosity of others,



(L to R) North Texas Chairman Jim Peterson, organist for the day Danny Ray and Program Chairman Lew Williams. (Joe Koski Photo)

or invasion of public buildings or homes where organs are installed just for chapter business sessions.

These, then, were some of the items discussed and some action taken by appointing "ad hoc" committees to research some of the many angles involved in the complete picture. Jim's handling of the Chair and the generation of all these ideas and plans is breathing new life into the group.

After the business session we were treated to an especially fine theatre organ program played by Danny Ray, chapter member and regular organist at the Landmark.

In his opening remarks Danny said he was going to play a "non-Pizza" program, strictly theatre organ music. This he did with such fine numbers as "Laura" and others. However, Danny couldn't resist some fun with the Pizza Parlor theme. He introduced a "special" medley which he stated began as "the terrible three," and advanced through the various Pizza Parlor requests and favorites until it became "The Obscene Fifteen," a lampoon of the pizza parlor theatre organ, all in fun of course, but what a great job Danny

did with it. Danny was called back for two encores, each call from a standing ovation. The theatre organ certainly is a great instrument, especially when played by such talent.

After Danny's superb performance, nobody really wanted to try open console but after a while a few got up enough nerve to try it until the official Landmark Pipes and Pizza evening session began. It was a truly enjoyable theatre organ afternoon.

JOE KOSKI

OKLAHOMA CITY

After a preliminary meeting with several members, we called our first official meeting for the evening of July 18, at the Civic Center Music Hall.

First officers of the chapter are: Paul N. Haggard, chairman; Wendell A. Vandever, vice chairman; and Ed Thrower, secretary-treasurer.

We are very fortunate to have as one of our new members, Lou Ann Rice, chief organist at the Showplace Restaurant of Oklahoma City, where she presides over a 3/11 Wurlitzer. She also plays piano and sings with her husband's society orchestra The Floyd "RED" Rice orchestra. She gave us an impromptu concert which was thrilling to hear. When she found out we didn't have a Toy Counter, she presented the chapter with a check for \$45.00 to start a fund. Our newly elected secretary-treasurer added \$100.00, and another check from the writer got the fund off to a good start. And we hadn't even thought about it.

Another fine professional organist, Benjamin Bailey, entertained us and, with his guest, came all the way from Altus, Oklahoma, to join our chapter.



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Paul Quarino at the Organ Grinder, Portland.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

OREGON

On July 23, we had the rare treat of hearing staff organist Paul Quarino play a special program for our chapter at the Organ Grinder 4/41 Wurlitzer. The nucleus of this mighty instrument came from Portland's Oriental Theatre as a 3/13 with Post Horn. It has been expanded to the extent that the original three manual console became entirely inadequate, and was replaced with a large four manual console from Boston's Metropolitan Theatre. Features include two Brass Trumpets, six Vox Humanas, three 32s, three Tibias and a Harmonic Flute. The traps are outside the chambers and are pneumatically operated as usual. However they can be keyed electronically by an automatic rhythm device developed by the Rodgers Organ Com-

pany.

Paul Quarino is a master musician who came to us from the bay area in California. A native of Minneapolis, Paul included in his program "Open Your Eyes," radio theme of fellow Minnesotan Eddie Dunstedter. Also included were numbers featuring a style D Trumpet, piano sustain and a pizzicato Post Horn. His rendition of "The Way We Were" was truly exquisite, using many of the soft voices seldom heard when the organ is played in public. Paul displayed excellent pedal technique in his closing number: "Three Blind Mice" — Bach style!

The program also had a full 20 minute Laurel and Hardy silent comedy with their theme song and expertly cued sound effects.

Thanks to Paul Quarino and the

Organ Grinder management for this unique experience.

On August 21, we had our annual picnic at the Alpenrose Dairy Park, followed by an organ concert in the Opera House. This was played on the 1917 4/51 Skinner by John Green, a talented young man from the Rodgers Organ Co. John explained how the preset pistons operated the draw knobs but not the couplers. Because couplers are so necessary in a concert instrument, he was kept very busy setting them by hand along with the pistons and stops.



John Green at the Alpenrose Opera House Skinner after the picnic.

(Claude V. Neuffer Photo)

John's excellent program included not only Bach, but also "In a Monastery Garden," "Meditation" from *Thais*, and a very ethereal "Fountain of Reverie." It is interesting to visit the other world of organ music and to examine the instrument from which the theatre organ evolved as a separate art.

Thanks to John Green for his music.

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PIKES PEAK AREA

The chapter had a busy and industrious summer. Work on the 3/8 Wurlitzer from the Chief Theatre was completed and three programs were presented by chapter members. On June 19, we hosted the Rocky Mountain Chapter for a mini-concert presented by our members, followed by open console. It was an enjoyable afternoon with over 60 in attendance. The following Sunday, June 26, we presented our "big" concert, for the city council of Colorado Springs, representing the city which is owner of the organ, and invited guests. A concert by four of our members was given along with a slide presentation of the removal and restoration of the organ, including a prospectus of its final installation in the City Auditorium of Colorado Springs. On August 6 a farewell concert was played, before removal of the organ to the City Auditorium, for the Sisters of Mt. St. Francis, who graciously made available to us their 350-seat auditorium for the past three years of restoration work.

Our temporary home at Mt. St. Francis was obtained in 1974 when it was decided more room was needed to restore the organ than the city provided. Originally, the St. Francis complex was the Modern Woodmen of America Tuberculosis Sanitarium. Built at the turn of the century the complex included a school building with an auditorium. The Sisters obtained the property in 1954 for use as a training center for novices and a retirement center for the older members of the order. The school building has been unused for the most part since and the Sisters were more than happy for us to use the building. The convent's location five miles from Colorado Springs in the foothills of the mountains makes it a



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The chapter was proud to have four members in attendance for the wonderful convention sponsored by CATOE: Mr. and Mrs. Neil Hein, John Grunow, and the writer.

It is reported from Alamosa, in Southern Colorado, that the famous organ of the Rialto Theatre has been sold to a party in Phoenix. This 2/7 Wurlitzer was made famous by the late Joe Brite, who played it from the late twenties until his death in 1974. It gained the reputation of being the longest continuously played theatre organ in the United States next to the Radio City in New York. The chapter was sorry that nothing could be done to keep the organ but, due to distances and pending projects, we were unable to secure an agreement on the organ and consequently lost the last in-theatre original installation in Southern Colorado. Mr. Brite, who managed the theatre, was murdered by a juvenile for the nights

receipts in 1974. Just two weeks prior to his death the writer spent an afternoon with Mr. Brite who was a very kind person and was a wealth of information on theatre organs in the West. An organ crawl had been planned for a Saturday morning playing session. Unfortunately, the bad news came the day before our planned trip. Incidentally, the person who committed the crime was released because he was a juvenile.

We hope to have the Chief organ completed in the early spring and welcome any skiers to the Colorado mountains to stop and visit.

SCOTT CHRISTIANSEN

POTOMAC VALLEY

Bob Stratton was the guest artist for the June meeting held at the Christ United Methodist Church in Arlington, Virginia. The organ, 3/34 Wicks, was originally installed in the church by Stratton in 1971 and has been maintained by him. In addition to the 34 ranks there is a 49-note harp. The Wick's console has draw knobs for pipes and stop keys for the couplers. The organ is divided; Great and Swell on the left, Choir and Pedal on the right, providing a rich, full sound in an acoustically compatible auditorium.

In addition to having played church organ for 45 years, Bob, after formal education in organ, worked for Eastman School of Music and theatre chains until sound movies came in. During high school years he installed pipe organs for Henry Pilcher's Sons, of Louisville, KY. He also helped install an echo organ in the National Theatre at Greensboro, which is the instrument Dr. Abernethy now has, minus the echo organ.

In 1966 Bob retired from the Federal Communications Commission. Since then, as a full-time vocation

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(an avocation that got out of hand and became a vocation) he custom builds one and two manual harpsichords. He is now working on Opus 43. The latest in this labor of love, is a 9-foot, 4-rank string choir, two manual instrument.

Bob Stratton's program on the Wicks consisted of an outstanding group of light classics, with a generous sampling of seldom heard selections played in the composers original arrangement.

The July meeting of the chapter was held in the spacious quarters of Gordon Keller's Music Store in Alexandria, VA. Eighty persons were in attendance.

Chairman Al Baldino quickly disposed of the scheduled business portion of the meeting, that of membership approval of the proposed name change and amendments to our Articles of Incorporation. All proposals were carried by the members.

Double featured entertainment was the keynote from that point on. Our twice gifted guest artist, Todd Strickland, theatre organist/magician, lived up to the promise of the credits of his long and active career.

Todd prefaced and interspersed the musical part of his program with surprises pulled from a baffling "bag of tricks." Our chairman, Al Baldino, who is also an amateur magician, shared the stage with Mr. Strickland as our guest crumpled a white scarf between his own hands and lo and behold, there appeared a white dove seemingly from within the folds of the scarf. The audience participated on stage in other effective illusions.

In concert, our guest promised "nothing new." Todd opened with toe-tapping melodies of popular and light classics, followed by show tunes and overtures harking back to the

days of the early silents. The audience then joined hands to the tune of the sing-along, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

HAROLD R. RICHMAN

RED RIVER

The ATOS '77 Convention is over but our delegate, Sonia Carlson, has not quit raving about this phenomenon in the toddlin' town. With wonderful memories and seventy slides, Sonia has high praise for this once in a lifetime event.

She gives high marks to all those responsible for making it happen, and notes there were few errors and lots of hits during a week of euphoria. Dampened organ chambers and a lost bus were a small price to pay for the thrill of a lifetime.

Pipe organ enthusiasts have the best of all possible worlds; a happy blending of past, present, future. A flood of memories surged among those who remember grandeur of movie houses, with the Chicago reigning as the apex of Midwest entertainment. The younger generation shares the cultural contribution made by majestic pipes and consoles gracing theatres, churches, eateries and auditoriums. Who can forget, Sonia recalls, meeting such wonderful people at the convention. She found the Chicago skyline very impressive; one of the most beautiful in the country enhanced by The John Hancock Center.

From Big Mac attacks to fine dining at Biggs, there was something for everyone in the gourmet department. Chicago maintains its reputation, says Sonia, for distinctive cuisine and ethnic food. Highlight for her was the banquet in the Grand State Ballroom. Parting is such sweet sorrow as Sonia vows to see you next year in Atlanta.

Red River had surprise visitors in Bismarck and Fargo when Dennis and Heidi James visited Reiny Delzer in Bismarck and on to Fargo where Dennis played the Fargo Theatre Wurlitzer. Weldon King of Springfield, Missouri, surprised us in July, stopping only long enough to play our Wurlitzer. "Fine instrument," remarked Weldon as he lovingly caressed the console. He is a freelance photographer just having returned from a long assignment in Africa.

Red River's "Incomparable Hildegarde" Usselman Kraus is featured in the summer issue of *North Dakota Horizons* magazine. In a letter to the editor, Hildegard says, "This is a tremendous thrill for me at this point in my life. I am very proud of this." Retired from active playing after forty years thrilling radio, television and theatre audiences, Hildegard basks in the sunshine of an adoring public and a host of friends.

The new management of Bud's Rink, Moorhead, Minnesota is excited about opening this fall with a restored 3/7 Barton, formerly the studio organ from WDAY. The Johnson Organ Company, Fargo, is in charge of restoration for this fine instrument that was originally 2½ ranks. The Barton was installed at Bud's in 1963, used for a few years then lay dormant for several years. The organ will be played by Alice Harden, a member of our chapter.

LARRY U. KINDLE

SAN DIEGO

The highlight of the summer was the National Convention in Chicago where our members who were fortunate enough to attend, constantly took notes on how to run a successful convention. Congratulations, CA-



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TOE, on a job well done. Enthusiasm and anticipation for entertaining all you wonderful ATOS members in 1979 is uppermost in our minds at this point.

Our chapter took a vacation from presenting concerts during July and August, but utilized the time to good advantage and we will have heard BBC's Robin Richmond perform for us on the 'Mighty Mo' at the 'Pavilion' in Pacific Beach in September.

August 4 and 5 were exciting evenings as we listened to guest artist Rex Koury's magical music as he played the 4/20 Robert Morton for the grand opening of the newly refurbished Spaghetti and Pizza Plantation (Organ Power) in Solana Beach. The theatre seats have been removed to make for more comfortable seating at tables and the southern air of hospitality creates a perfect setting for the lush tones of the organ. Earl McCandless and Ty Woodward are the newest additions to the staff of excellent organists.

August found 73 of our members and guests enjoying our annual potluck picnic at the home of Jan White, a most gracious hostess. Food-fun-swimming — and music, music created the perfect atmosphere for all the talented members who performed on the Conn 651 and the two Steinway grand pianos. A short business meeting and the convention report was followed by the exciting announcement that member 'Sandy' Fleet is donating a 2/7 Wurlitzer to our chapter. It is a small wonder that the sound of the music heard that evening was of such special quality, for it was really the only way we could all express our joy and happiness at hearing this news. The organ came from the California Theatre in Santa Rosa, Ca. and at this writing nego-

Coming . . .

ATLANTA '78

tiations are under way to install it in the California Theatre in San Diego. This theatre originally housed a 2/10 Wurlitzer and the chambers seem to be waiting with open arms for the installation of our VERY OWN organ. What a way to celebrate our chapter's third year. Our deepest and most sincere appreciation goes to Sandy for a gift that in the years to come will bring pleasure to thousands of listeners.

Even though we proclaimed vacation time, we are busier than ever with the many exciting details involved in the forth-coming installation of our Wurlitzer.

LOIS SEGUR

SOONER STATE

There's lots going on in Oklahoma these days! First of all, Tulsa's Sooner State Chapter extends an official and hearty welcome to the newly-formed Oklahoma City Chapter. With headquarters in that other city, Chairman Paul Haggard announces that their activities will center around the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the Showplace Restaurant, and the 4/16 Kilgen in their Civic Center auditorium. The Kilgen, rescued from radio station WKY in Oklahoma City, was rebuilt and installed by Paul (an organ man for 50 years) and Reuter Organ Company of Lawrence, Kansas.

We're looking forward to many shared activities between our two chapters, the first of which is a scheduled trip in September to hear Hector Olivera perform the Kilgen's inaugural concert in its new home.

Speaking of big Kilgens — the

Central High School 4/47 Kilgen is coming along nicely. We're working with Rex Teague, music director of the Tulsa Public Schools, to arrange some meetings around the instrument.

This organ was originally installed in 1928 (at a cost of \$40,000) in Old Central in downtown Tulsa. It was completely paid for by donations of Central students during the ensuing years — by graduating class gifts, bake sales, other donations, — and was completely paid for by about the year 1934. During recent years it became apparent that the student body had completely outgrown the old building, and a new site was selected away from the downtown area. The first classes moved into the new building at the beginning of the 1976-77 school year.

The pipe organ might have been forgotten but for the loud cry put up by members of our chapter, Chairman (and Central alumnus) Phil Judkins in particular. As a result, it was decided to not only move the organ to the new school, but to commission architect Joe Coleman to design the new auditorium completely around the organ! This he did, beautifully — in consultation with pipe organ professionals. Restoring and installing is being done by Bill Moore of Pipe Organ Service of Oklahoma City.

The cost of rebuilding and re-installing the organ will amount to about \$45,000, and is being paid for through a donation fund and other money-raising activities sponsored by Central alumni. They auctioned off artifacts from the old school to sentimental Tulsans, and they've passed the hat at class reunions. We're very grateful that there has been enough civic support around Tulsa, and enough support from the more than 45,000 Central alumni,

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to save the big Kilgen and allow it to continue to be heard.

At our regular August meeting at American Christian College, we welcomed new member Chad Weirick. We also met his parents, Bob and Muriel Weirick, who had driven Chad down from Rockford, Illinois, to help him enroll at Oral Roberts University as a freshman music major. Young professional Chad picked ORU because he liked the school — and because of the 4/21 Wurlitzer! He can hardly wait to play it, and we can hardly wait to hear him! Meantime he "made do" at the American Christian College 3/10 Robert Morton, and later on Phil Judkins' 3/7 Wicks. He also treated us to some original-piano-roll music on Phil's (out-of-tune, Phil said) piano. Land of Lincoln Chapter's loss is certainly our gain, even if it only lasts while he's a college student.

DOROTHY SMITH

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

On Sunday June 5, 1977 at 4:00 p.m., the second chapter to be inaugurated in the South Texas area came into being: THE SOUTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER OF ATOS. Headquarters are in the or-

nate surroundings of the historic 2000-seat Jefferson Theatre with its famous Robert Morton pipe organ, the only theatre pipe organ playing in its original installation in its 50th year and still going strong, in the state of Texas. There were 32 members and their guests to attend the organizational meeting and to hear Al Sacker, organist at the Jefferson for 28 years, explain the purpose and challenge of an ATOS chapter in the Southeast Texas area, and to present the program of organ music. After the program, open console was enjoyed by the members.

On June 26, several members of the Houston Area Chapter journeyed to the Jefferson Theatre where the giant CinemaScope screen was lowered to present a comedy starring Buster Keaton and accompanied on the organ by Al Sacker. The members expressed great pleasure at the beauty and opulence of the beautiful theatre with its striking lighting effects. We anticipate a fine relationship with our neighbor chapter in this area of Texas.

On July 3, the second organizational meeting of the Southeast Texas Chapter of ATOS convened at the Jefferson Theatre, our headquarters, for another fine gathering of prospective members. After the

Coming . . .

ATLANTA '78

business meeting, refreshments were served and open console was enjoyed by the members while plans were being formulated for future thinking concerning our activities.

On August 7, the third and final organizational meeting of the chapter was held at the beautiful Jefferson Theatre. More than a hundred members and guests attended the meeting to see two Laurel and Hardy silent comedies and *The Son Of The Sheik* starring Rudolph Valentino and Vilma Banky, and accompanied on the Robert Morton by Al Sacker. The business meeting was held first and our honored member Mrs. Ruby Holleman Monroe spoke and showed memorabilia when she was organist of the Jefferson Theatre in the early thirties, and also of her days at other theatre organs in Beaumont during the twenties. A reception was held on the stage of the theatre. Then everyone went back into the auditorium to view the silent films on the smaller of the two screens. Open console was enjoyed by several members after the program.

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Large Reed Church Organ. Massive, ornate, solid oak, 10 ft. high. American made, mid-late 1800's, Mason & Risch, New York — Worcester. Original matching organist bench seat. Pump pedal operated, 16 stops, 2 knee controls. Excellent playing condition, beautiful honey oak finish. Owner moving, must sell — Asking \$3500 — After 6:00 call (213) 663-3582.

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Mostly complete, original 2/12 Wurlitzer, V.G. condition, all or parts. Mike Foley, 7 Volpi Rd., Bolton, Conn. 06040.

Set of 18-note Deagan chimes. \$500.00. Write: Joe Repasky, 4660 South Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio 44512.

1927 — 2/7 Wicks Theatre Pipe Organ. Extra parts included, \$4500. Contact J.L. Wood, 3446 NW 65, Seattle, Wash. 98117. Phone: (206) 783-3344.

Rare Wurlitzer tuned Sleigh Bells, complete excellent condition; Wurlitzer Glock-Bells, Xylohone, Chimes. Complete Toy Counter. Serious inquiries and offers, SASE c/o Box 100, THEATRE ORGAN magazine, 2231 North Burling, Chicago, Illinois 60614.

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Collector's Item! Antique Wurlitzer Military Band Organ. Built in early 1900s, two ranks of pipes, 6 pedal trombones, \$7,000. Contact June Bower, 777 No. First St., Suite 525, San Jose, CA 95112. Phone: (408) 287-8343.

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2/9 Theatre romantic organ with many percussions and toys. Horseshoe console. Manufactured by Charles A. Viner. First \$4,000 takes it. For information call — Theodore C. Wood, RD 2 Salem, N.Y. 12865. Phone: (518) 854-3189.

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RECORDS

Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer recording "Highly recommended" — June review. *Walter Strony Plays the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer* \$6.75 postpaid. Walter Strony, 5209C S. 13th St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53221.

Rosa Rio latest recording *Everything's Coming Up Rosa* recorded on the famous 4/26 Brooklyn pipe organ HMR 855 stereo \$6.50 postpaid from Rosa Rio, 130 Mill Street, Huntington, Conn. 06484.

Doreen Chadwick, Gaumont Theatre, Manchester, England, Vol. 46 Deroy Series. Famous 4/14 Wurlitzer, slow Tibia tremulant and tierce pitches, snappy response perfectly suited Chadwick style eleven selections including "Latin Lady," "Joy Samba," "Military Shuffle." \$5.50 postpaid exclusive U.S. Distributor, Stanley C. Garniss, 35 Union Street, North Easton, Mass. 02356.

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George Wright Collectors — New demonstration album's recovered from record warehouse — HiFi series *George Wright Encores at the Mighty Wurlitzer Pipe Organ*, also *My Fair Lady* albums (sealed). Send \$5.50 each postpaid to ATOS member Art Lopez, 6656 Cleomore Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. 91307, or call (213) 347-1991.

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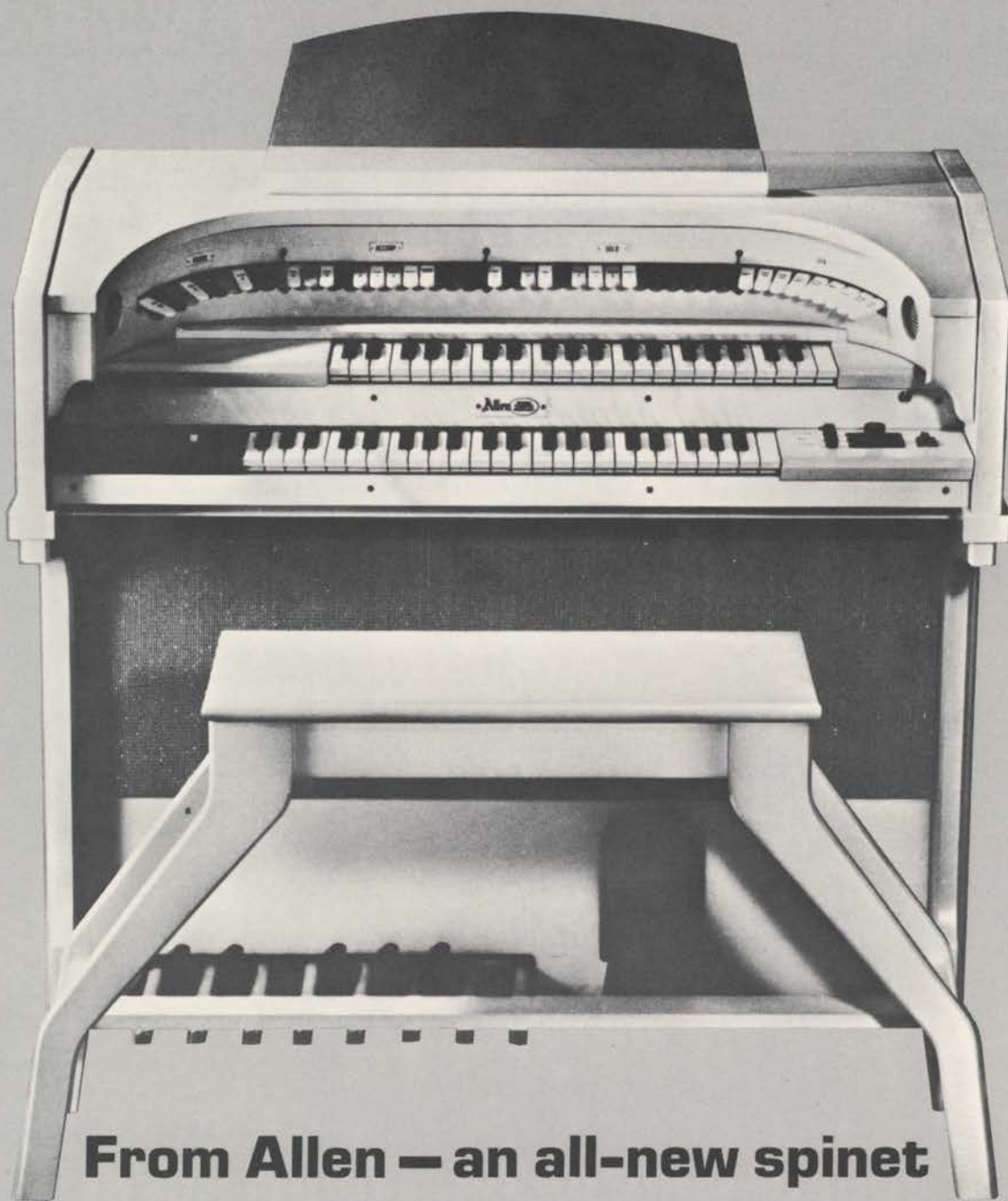
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