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Cover Photo

Console of Dick and Bill Taylor's 4/26 Wurlitzer in the Castro Theatre, San Francisco. Read about this organ in the article starting on page 5.

Rudy Frey photo

American Theatre Organ Society



As we start this new year of 1983 we contemplate our goals and hopes for the future of ATOS, and consider thoughtfully what has been accomplished in the previous year. Our membership for 1982 was higher than for 1981, and we hope it will steadily climb as we continue to publicize and consistently promote ATOS. Our committees are functioning with the help of many members throughout the country. It sometimes seems a tedious process to accomplish the tasks

we've set forth, but progress is being made in each direction, slowly but surely. Be sure to read the reports of the various committee chairmen as they appear in THEATRE ORGAN from time to time.

It is a great pleasure to tell you of the gift of \$1,000 for our Trust Fund, generously given by the Fleet Foundation of San Diego. We are sincerely grateful for this donation and you may be sure it will be used wisely.

The dates of our Annual Convention in San Francisco are July 1 through 6. Mark your calendar and plan to attend! The convention is the one place where we can truly share our love of the theatre organ. I am delighted to discover from your letters offering your ideas and suggestions that there is such a strong feeling of fellowship, friendship and enthusiasm coming from all of you, and I realize that this quite often stems from the closeness developed at conventions. This indeed was the atmosphere which surrounded us last summer in Detroit, and which continues to thrive. Truly, one of the happiest times ever. A carryover of this kind of enthusiasm is all we need to keep the true spirit of ATOS.

Lois F. Segur, President

ATOS — Bigger and Better



As one of your National Directors, I am sometimes quite overwhelmed when I think of the challenges this group has undertaken. While some of the jobs are in the interest of building a strong and enduring national organization, other programs have been initiated in a sincere effort to aid our many chapters, as well as associated groups, wherever and whenever such aid is needed or solicited.

One of these projects has been the work of the Committee for Concert Planning, which I head, in putting together a guide to more successful planning, programming and promotion of theatre organ entertainment.

Other programs involving other committees, either underway or in the planning stage, include technical help for amateur organ

technicians through publication of information as well as planned workshops, implementation of a young artist competition as an annual national event, development and housing of a comprehensive National Archives, better communications with individual chapters and members and an upgrading of the promotion and publicizing of the aims of the Society.

One of our major undertakings is a national membership drive, begun in October. As you know, our ATOS membership has shown zero growth, if not a decline, during the past several years. This, in the face of ever-increasing costs of printing, mailing, storage and other expenses, caused a considerable deficit in the ATOS treasury. Attempts to stay ahead of the game resulted in a form of "deficit spending" — borrowing on next year's expected dues and revenue to pay this year's expenses.

An increase in ATOS dues was announced at the Annual Meeting, and any further increase at this time would seem to be unreasonable and quite undesirable. The raise in dues will be a big help, but additional revenue is going to be needed to assure a strong and viable Society.

Our current "PIPE UP!" membership drive gives us all a most practical and attractive way to accomplish **three** very desirable things: help eliminate our deficit, stimulate individual chapter growth and well-being, and give each of us the pleasurable opportunity to share with others the fine music, sociability and educational interests our beloved Society offers.

I am a firm believer in the "one-to-one" principle! This means that if each member of ATOS brings just **one** new member into the fold during the coming year our membership goal could not only be achieved, but dramatically exceeded! By so doing we spread the responsibility among the many, instead of creating an insurmountable burden on the few.

Many of us have found that by bringing new people to one of our many fine theatre organ presentations, or inviting them to organ socials, or even just by showing copies of THEATRE ORGAN, recruiting new members has been easy and rewarding.

It has always been the purpose of the American Theatre Organ Society to further the use, understanding and preservation of that wonderful, exciting instrument, the theatre organ. Notice, I did not specify theatre PIPE organ. Don't forget, there are literally thousands of owners (and players) of electronic organs who should, and I'm sure would, enjoy exposure to what our Society has to offer. Another aim of ATOS is just that — to contribute to the musical education and cultural enlightenment of the public.

Every one of us has the opportunity to share in making 1983 the **greatest** ATOS year ever! I urge each of you to join with your fellow members in going all out to make our membership drive a monumental success!

Rex Koury, Membership Drive Honorary Chairman



THE CASTRO WURLITZER

A Purist's Installation

by Bill Taylor

All photos by Rudy Frey. Some prints processed by Claude Neuffer.

The story of the Wurlitzer in San Francisco's Castro Theatre begins in the early sixties with the Taylor family, Ray and Doris, and sons Bill and Dick, of San Mateo, California, attending the 1963 ATOE Convention in Bismark, North Dakota. Ray had been interested in theatre organ for years. He had belonged to the Northern California Chapter of ATOE, and both Ray and Bill had been taking lessons on the home electronic for a few years. Because of this interest, the family decided to attend the convention on their previously planned trip to the Midwest. The 1963 Convention was held at the homes of Reiny Delzer and Chuck Welch. It was at this convention on the Welch 2/9 Marr & Colton that Bill, then 11, had his first opportunity to play a theatre pipe organ. As a result, the family became dedicated organ buffs and from this time on regularly attended local ATOE meetings and national conventions. During this period Bill availed himself of all opportunities to play at open console sessions and began taking lessons from well-known San Francisco organist Larry Vanucci in 1965.

By the mid-sixties both Bill and Dick were hooked on the idea of buying a pipe organ. Encouraged by friends Norman and Lorraine Lippert who had an excellent two-manual Wurlitzer in their home, the Taylors purchased the 2/7 Style E Wurlitzer (Opus 1073) from a church in Ione, California, in 1967. The organ had

originally been installed in the State Theatre in the Central Valley town of Stockton in 1925, and had been moved to the Community Methodist Church in Ione in 1956. Although Bill and Dick were the instigators of the purchase, they were only 15 and 13 at the time, so Norm Lippert and Ray played a major role in the removal and moving of the organ 130 miles to San Mateo.

Work on restoring the organ began immediately and an arrangement was made with Ward Stoopes, owner of

the Encore Theatre in nearby Burlingame, to install the organ in the theatre. The Encore, originally the Broadway, had recently reopened after being shuttered for several years. The installation of the original seven ranks was completed in 1969, and Bill began playing the organ from time to time for weekend film intermissions. The late-model French-style three-manual Wurlitzer console from the San Francisco Golden Gate Theatre's Style 240, as well as other necessary components, were then purchased

Bill Taylor at the console.



with the intention of expanding the organ to 15 ranks. Progress was made, but before the project could be completed the theatre closed and the organ was removed in 1972.

By this time both Bill and Dick were engineering students at the University of California at Berkeley, and Ray and Doris had moved to Potomac, Maryland because of Ray's job transfer. With parents living in Maryland, Bill and Dick spent summer vacations there and had the opportunity to look for more Wurlitzer parts on the East Coast. In 1973 the 4/37 Wurlitzer from the Brooklyn Fox was being broken up for parts and 14 ranks of chests, several ranks of pipes, the huge relay, one of the Marimba-Harps, and several regulators and tremulants were acquired. In 1974 the 2/8 Style F Wurlitzer (Opus 1420) from the RKO Royal Theatre in the Bronx was purchased. A 20 hp Spencer Orgoblo which was originally one of the two blowers for the Style 285 Wurlitzer from the Fabian Theatre in Patterson, New Jersey, was also acquired in 1974. Both blowers, one being a standby, had been installed in the attic in the Fabian and therefore had no trace of the usual rust caused by basement dampness. In 1975 the four-manual Publix No. 1 console and relay (Opus 1148) from the State

(now Palms) Theatre in Detroit were purchased. The organ had been removed from the State in 1973 and was being combined with a classical organ to be installed in Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Publix console was not large enough for the new organ so it was sold to the Taylors. Other portions of the organ came from the Style F from the Oakland Fairfax Theatre and from the San Francisco Golden Gate's Style 240. In addition to these major acquisitions, numerous ranks were purchased to complete a 4/26 Wurlitzer, plus a few extras.

After graduating from college, Dick began to work for San Francisco organ man, Ed Stout, and Bill began his career with Hewlett Packard as an electronics engineer. In his spare time Dick continued the restoration of various components of the organ for eventual installation. Although Bill was still very interested in the organ and its restoration, by this time he was heavily involved in his career and was also spending much of his time with his future wife, Sandra. As a result, Dick was now doing the majority of the work on the organ. In 1977 Ray and Doris returned to the San Francisco Bay Area after Ray's retirement. Dick was looking for a place to install the organ where it would sound as it should, and several Bay Area theatres were considered.

In 1978 Dick entered into an agreement with the Castro Theatre in San

Francisco to install the 26-rank organ for use at intermissions and for special events. The Castro, designed by San Francisco architect Timothy Pflueger, opened in 1922 as one of the larger, more elaborate neighborhood theatres in the city. The Castro seats 1640 (originally over 1800) and was equipped with a 2/11 Robert-Morton. The Robert-Morton was purchased by Dave Schutt in 1961 and was later sold to Charlie Davis, who has it installed in his home in Concord, California. The theatre was built for the Nasser Brothers, who operated it until 1976 when they leased it to Surf Theatres. It had changed very little over the years, but after 54 years of operation some of the high-wear areas were in need of attention. Mel Novikoff, owner of Surf Theatres, preserved most of the original decor and restored the areas which were showing their age. In recognition of its architectural and historical significance, the Castro was awarded landmark status by the City of San Francisco in 1977. To help re-create the movie palace atmosphere, Mel installed a three-manual Conn organ in the theatre which was played nightly between the classic films which are the mainstay of the Castro programs. Foreign and selected recent domestic films are also featured in addition to an occasional silent. Installation of the Wurlitzer began in 1979. By January of 1982 Dick and his crew had completed enough of the installation

The Castro organ crew, L to R: Ed Stout, Dick Taylor, Bill Taylor, Ray Taylor, Rudy Frey and Herb Boese. Not pictured are Dick Clay and Steve Dennis.



for the organ to be played regularly for the public, and the Conn was removed.

The Castro is ideally suited to the installation of an organ because of the space available for pipework and other components, and the acoustics. The theatre has four organ chambers, two on each side of the proscenium arch. The upper chambers on each side originally contained the eleven-rank Robert-Morton. Although not unusually large for a 1640-seat theatre, the chambers are adequate for the installation of the 26 ranks of manual chests and offsets. Immediately below the pipe chambers on each side are smaller chambers which are being used to house the percussions. Some of the large, space-consuming offsets are installed on the stage. The shutter opening covers the entire front wall of each upper chamber from the manual chest rackboards to the ceilings, and the grillwork is very open. The chambers are surfaced in plaster and are well soundproofed so that the expression is very effective. The main 20 hp blower was too large to go down the stairs into the basement, so a new blower room was built at stage level. For soundproofing purposes it was built as a room within a room, with the walls and ceiling of the inner room not touching those of the outer room. As a result of the precautions taken, blower noise is almost inaudible in the theatre. An additional high-pressure 3 hp blower will be located in the basement to provide the wind for the 25"-pressure Tuba Mirabilis. The 20" diameter windline coming out of the main blower was routed to a junction box from which one 14" line was run to each side of the theatre. All new winding was used, as the original windlines had been removed. The Publix relay was installed at stage level beneath the right percussion chamber. The original Robert-Morton was not on a lift, so a new scissors lift was installed in the center of the orchestra pit. A scissors lift was chosen because of its reliability and ease of installation. It raises the console from picture level to concert position at stage level. The theatre is large enough to provide the traditional in-theatre acoustics, yet intimate enough so that solo stops and light combinations can be used effectively. The acoustics are live enough for the sounds coming from each side of the theatre to blend well, and the balance



Partial view of Main Chamber showing from front to back: Clarinet, Viol Celeste and Open Diapason, with 16' Tuba Profunda offset on right. Not visible behind the Open Diapason are the Viol d'Orchestre and Concert Flute.

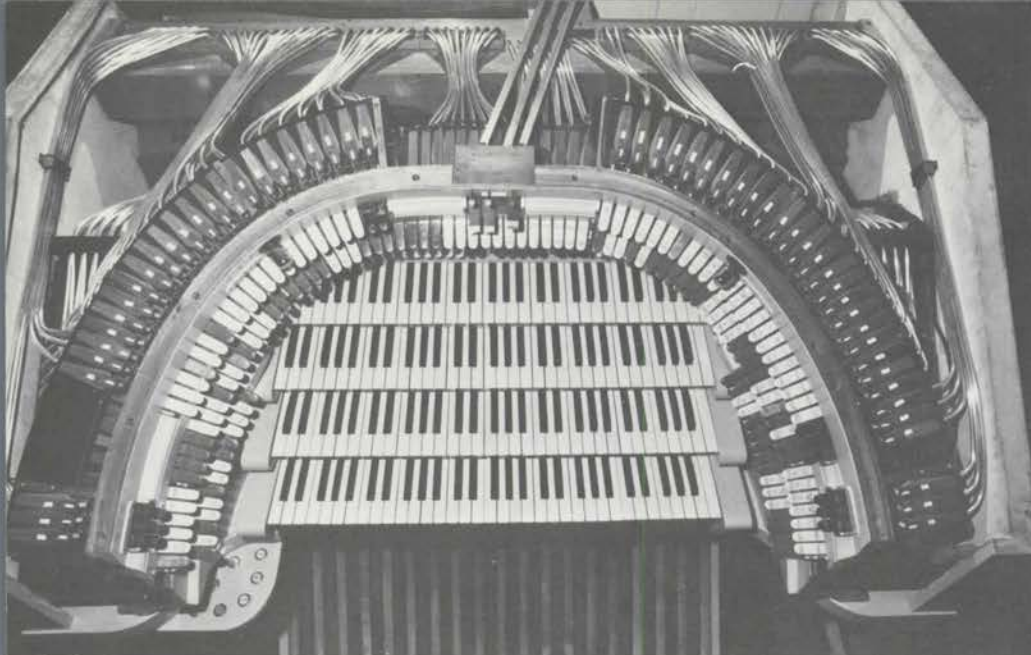
of the two sides of the organ is virtually the same in about 90% of the seats in the house.

The specification and regulation of the organ reflect many years of careful listening and study of organ installations across the country. The resulting 26-rank specification is very similar to Wurlitzer models such as the Publix No. 4 and the 285, but includes many of the minor modifications that have become commonplace in organ restorations in recent times. The significant departures from typical Wurlitzer specifications for organs of this size are the omission of the Dulciana and large-scale Diaphonic Diapason, and the addition of a Lieblich Flute and a Concert Flute

Celeste. Also, a standard-scale 10" Tibia Clausa was used in the Main chamber instead of a 15" Solo Tibia, while using a Solo Tibia in the Solo. Otherwise the organ adheres very closely to typical Wurlitzer specifications. The objective was to create a Wurlitzer sound, and additions such as Trumpets en Chamade, Calliopes, and unenclosed classical divisions which have been used in pizza installations were not included. With the exception of the English Horn, all Wurlitzer pipes and percussions were used. All of the mechanical components including chests, regulators, tremulants, shutters and relays are also Wurlitzer. While adhering to a strictly Wurlitzer policy for the mechanical

Solo Chamber showing from front to back: Vox Humana, Brass Saxophone, Gamba, Quintadena, Gamba Celeste, Horn Diapason, Brass Trumpet, Tuba Mirabilis and English Horn. Partially visible behind English Horn are the Solo Tibia Clausa, Orchestral Oboe and Kinura.





Four-manual console with top removed. Original tin tubing connects combination action boxes at rear of console to stop tab pneumatics. Note linkage for swell indicators in center and open effects drawer below left end of accompaniment manual.

components is primarily for aesthetics, the use of Wurlitzer regulators for manual chest pipework which is to be on tremulant is for musical reasons. Using very large regulators without the Wurlitzer-type three-valve system will generally create a different tremulant sound, and the desirable responsive, controlled tremulant sound will be difficult to achieve.

The chorus reeds include the English Horn, Tuba Mirabilis, Brass Trumpet, and Tuba Horn. The English Horn, the only non-Wurlitzer rank in the organ, was built for the organ by M.P. Moller in 1972. In our opinion, the English Horn, while being the loudest rank in the organ, should not obliterate the rest of the ensemble. Consequently, it is voiced on 10" wind instead of 15" or 20" which are often used in large organs.

As a result it is a very useful rank which can add fire to the ensemble while the fullness of the rest of the ensemble is not masked. The Tuba Mirabilis came from the Brooklyn Fox 4/37 and is voiced on 25" wind. It is intended to be used primarily for single note playing on accompaniment second touch or as a solo rank, rather than in the ensemble where it has a tendency to be overbearing. The Brass Trumpet in the Solo and the 15" Tuba Horn in the Main are both carefully balanced to be effective in full organ as well as for solo use.

The organ has two Diapasons, an Open in the Main and a softer, more colorful Horn Diapason in the Solo. As mentioned earlier, a large-scale Diaphonic Diapason is not included in the specification because they often overpower the ensemble and are

much less useful than the Open and Horn Diapasons. The Open is the standard Diapason found on small and medium-sized Wurlitzers. This one, which was labeled Diaphonic Diapason on the console, came from the original Style E. The Horn Diapason came from the Brooklyn Fox and is an extremely useful rank. The lack of a Horn Diapason was a serious omission from many of the medium-sized and larger Wurlitzer models, such as the 260 and Publix No. 1. The Horn Diapason provides a very useful level for accompaniment use. For many solo registrations the Concert Flute is too soft, the Open Diapason is too loud, and ranks such as the Strings, Oboe Horn, and Clarinet are too obtrusive. The Horn Diapason provides just the right level and tone character in many cases. This set is especially good because it has been regulated to have a string-like quality rather than the dull flutey sound often found in later Wurlitzer sets.

The organ has two Tibia Clausas, a 15" Solo Tibia in the Solo and a 10" standard-scale set in the Main. The Solo Tibia has been carefully regulated so that it blends properly in the ensemble. If not properly regulated, Solo Tibias can be "tubby" in the middle and "screechy" at the high end. In order to achieve the proper balance in this installation the pressure was set at 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ " and the middle and top end were closed down, while leaving the "capped metal" area alone. The tremulant was set with careful consideration of ensemble and solo use. A "rippy" or slow "syrupy" tremulant prevents a Tibia from blending properly with the rest of the organ, especially in fast playing, and also creates an unpleasant sound for solo use. The 10" set in the Main which is also from the original Style E, provides a softer, contrasting sound.

The specification includes all of the usual color reeds with the Krumet, Clarinet, and Oboe Horn in the Main, and the Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, and Brass Saxophone in the Solo. There is also a 6"-pressure Vox Humana on each side. Many of these ranks are at the heart of a good Wurlitzer sound, and their uniqueness tells a listener that he is hearing a Wurlitzer when the sets are properly regulated and used. The Brass Saxophone provides an uncommonly rich and colorful sound when used with the Tibias and

Dick Taylor adjusts a stop tab spring in the console. Note original combination action.



in medium combinations. Many saxes as originally regulated in Wurlitzer installations were too loud, and this set was no exception. It has been carefully closed down so that it is soft enough to be used with the Tibias as a "big Vox" but also loud enough to add color to the ensemble. The Orchestral Oboe is also a particularly useful rank in this installation. It has been regulated slightly on the loud side so that its contribution can be heard in fairly full combinations. The Kinura is balanced so that it can be heard in full organ without English Horn, but by no means dominate. It provides a step between the Brass Trumpet-topped ensemble and the full organ with English Horn by complementing the harmonics of the Trumpet. Of course, it is also very useful for solo combinations with the Orchestral Oboe, Krumet, and 4' Tibias. We feel that a Wurlitzer Kinura is much more useful and musical than some of the large scale "squawkers" by other builders.

The organ has six ranks of strings: a pair of Viols d'Orchestre and a pair of Violins in the Main, and a pair of Gambas in the Solo. The Vd'Os are the standard Wurlitzer sets voiced on 10" wind. The spotted metal Violins, also on 10", are from the Style E, and provide a broader sound than the Vd'Os. The Gambas are from the Echo division of St. Louis' Missouri

Front chest in Solo Chamber showing left to right: Tuba Mirabilis, English Horn, Solo Tibia Clausa, Orchestral Oboe and Kinura.



Theatre Style 285 and are voiced on 10" wind instead of the customary 15". They are virtually identical to Solo Strings in scaling, voicing, and appearance. The three contrasting pairs of strings coming from both sides of the theatre provide a full, rich string ensemble when played together.

In the soft flue department are four ranks: a Concert Flute and Celeste, a Quintadena, and a Lieblich Flute. The Concert Flutes in the Main and the Quintadena in the Solo are invaluable for accompaniment use, with the Quintadena providing color to soft accompaniment sounds. The rare Wurlitzer Lieblich Flute, a small-scale wooden stopped Flute, provides some added warmth to softer accompaniment sounds. Wurlitzer Lieblich Flutes were only found on the Fox Special 4/36's and a few church Wurlitzers. This set came from a Wurlitzer church organ in the Philadelphia area.

The organ has seven 16' extensions to provide a range of tone color and volume to suit all requirements for a balanced sound. For soft pedal there is the usual 16' Bourdon, as well as a 16' Solo String and 16' Clarinet. The latter two extensions came from the Los Angeles Paramount Style 285. The 16' String is voiced on 15" and is used as the 16' extension of the Gambas in the Solo. The Metal Diaphone, Solo Tibia, and Tuba Profunda, the latter two voiced on 15", provide the foundation for the majority of combinations. The 16' Bombarde, which is the extension of the Tuba Mirabilis in the Solo, is the usual large-scale wooden set found on large Wurlitzers. Plans include the future addition of a 16' Wood Diaphone if one can be located.

The percussions, except for the piano, are installed in the lower chambers on each side of the house. These chambers open directly into the theatre without swell shutters. The percussions can be clearly heard as they are not buried in the back of the pipe chambers, however they are not so loud as to create the effect of "percussion with organ accompaniment" as is found in most pizza installations. The Marimba-Harp, Chrysoglott, and most of the non-tonal percussions are located in the left chamber, and the Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Cathedral Chimes, Tuned Sleigh Bells, and some of the non-tonal per-



Late-model Marimba-Harp from the Brooklyn Fox, in Left Percussion Chamber.

cussions are in the right chamber. Special attention has been paid to the restoration of the percussions, especially the Marimba-Harp and Chrysoglott, to insure fast and quiet operation. Wurlitzer Marimba-Harps have a tendency to leak because of the push-rod construction, so this late-model Harp, with metal push-rods, was carefully rebushed and regulated. The power pneumatics on the Chrysoglott were recovered with cabretta leather instead of the original rubber cloth to eliminate the sound of popping pneumatics. The piano is a standard Wurlitzer upright organ piano which, like most Wurlitzer organ

Regulator in basement for 16' extensions which are located on the stage. Large horizontal 14" windline is the main supply line for the Solo Chamber.



pianos, does not have a keyboard and operates on pressure instead of vacuum.

The objective for the rebuilding and re-specifying of the console was to restore a Wurlitzer console, not to take the shell of a Wurlitzer console and put in new stop tabs and direct electric stop actions. All of the original combination action has been retained and no new actions or pistons have been added. Other than the changes to the stoplist to provide for the additional ranks and more versatile unification, only minor changes have been made to the console. The stop tab positions are all used for the original divisions except for the three Bombarde Second Touch stop positions. The Bombarde Second Touch is no longer used, and the tab positions are used for the Solo manual couplers. On the original Publix the Accompaniment pistons did not line up with the pistons on the other three manuals because the ten Pedal pistons were located on the lower end of the Accompaniment manual. The pistons on the Accompaniment were reorga-

nized so that the ten pistons for each of the four manuals line up, with five of the Pedal pistons below the Accompaniment pistons and five above. The third contact in the Accompaniment pistons was used to fire the corresponding Pedal piston so that both would change when the Accompaniment piston is pressed, but the Pedal pistons could still operate independently. Although adding additional stopkeys and combination action to provide more unification was considered, we ultimately decided that the minor increase in versatility was not worth the price of destroying the originality of the console. We felt that it was more important to have a console mechanically original than to have every rank available at every pitch on every manual. Both the chamber indicator dots above the stop tabs and the expression indicators have been preserved, not because of their functionality, but because they improve the appearance of the console.

When the console was shipped from the Wurlitzer factory it was

painted off-white with no gold trim, and the wood of the console was not mahogany as it is on most Wurlitzer panel-style consoles. Although we wanted a mahogany finish on the console, it was not possible without re-veneering. After extensive searching, we could not locate a supply of veneer which matched the type that Wurlitzer used, although other varieties of mahogany were available. In contrast to the off-white which has often been applied to Wurlitzer consoles in recent years, most late-model Wurlitzer factory-painted consoles were almost yellow in color instead of white. With the darker color, the keyboards and stop tabs stand out better and the console doesn't look as stark. Our Style 240 console from the San Francisco Golden Gate Theatre had been painted the darker color at the factory (although it had mahogany veneer) so we matched that color for the Publix console.

The original ivory on the keyboards was in fairly good shape, but the Great and Accompaniment showed signs of wear. Keys from two

View from the balcony of the 1640-seat Castro Theatre with Wurlitzer console in concert position.



other Wurlitzer manuals with original ivory, which were in better condition, were put in the original key frames of the Accompaniment and Great. The original keys for the Bombarde and Solo were retained. The ivory on all four manuals was polished and the sharps were re-dyed with black dye.

The changes to the stoplist from the original Publix follow the pattern of many recent re-specifications. As noted above, the decision was made not to add any stopkeys to the console, and therefore the specification had to be thought out very carefully to make sure that optimum use was made of every stopkey position. Some of the obvious changes include the additions for the extra ranks, such as the English Horn, Krumet, Horn Diapason and Lieblich Flute, which were not present in the Publix No. 1 specification. Also additional unification for both Tibias was added, as well as couplers for the Solo manual. To make room for the additions, each unison string was combined with its Celeste on one set of tabs, and a master "Celestes Off" tab was added. Some of the softer stops were eliminated from the Bombarde and Solo manuals. Also the 4' Voxes and some of the percussion unification were eliminated from the Great, and the 4' Clarions were eliminated from the Bombarde. One unique feature of the stoplist is the 16' English Horn on the Great. Because the Great was specified with the assumption that the sub coupler would be used to provide the 16' sound for most fuller combinations (the 16's are intended for color combinations), there would have been no way to get a full combination with the English Horn at just 16' without coupling from another manual. As this is a very useful combination, the 16' English Horn switch is not wired to the Great relay; it is wired directly to the Great manual key contacts so that it is not affected by the Great couplers.

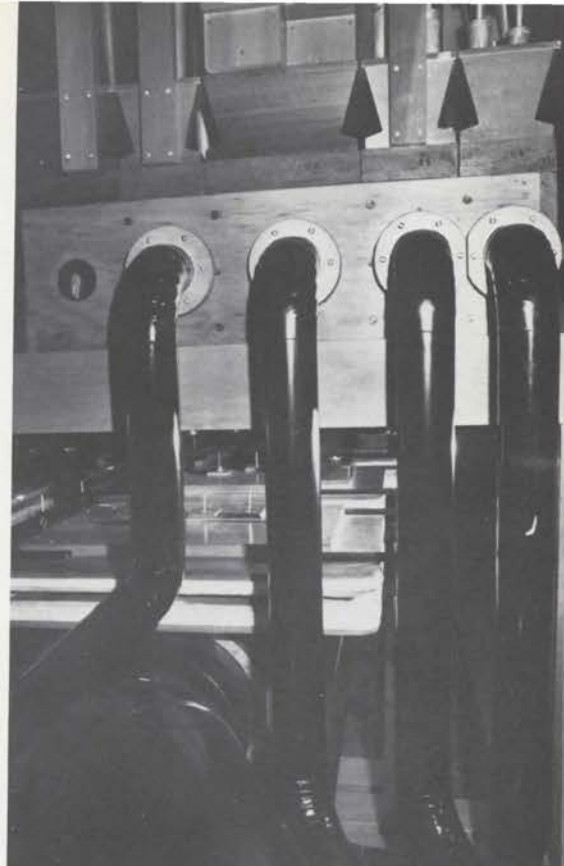
The original stopkeys were used where possible, although approximately one-fourth of the tabs were changed. The new tabs were old Wurlitzer tabs that had been carefully selected to match the shape, color, and vintage of the original tabs on the console.

The philosophy behind the restoration of the console was carried throughout the project. Every component in the organ was thoroughly

restored cosmetically, in addition to being rebuilt functionally to provide reliable operation. Restoration went beyond the usual application of a fresh coat of shellac to chests and other components. Chests were disassembled and sanded down to bare wood as required, while care was taken to retain original stampings and stencilings where possible. Chipped corners and edges were restored with inlaid pieces of wood. Shellac was sprayed on with careful attention to getting the proper color and gloss to match the original finish. The original chest legs and wind trunks were used where possible, but many had to be fabricated because the original ones would not fit in the new installation. When new racking and floor frames had to be made, the lumber was planed to match Wurlitzer dimensions rather than just using standard sizes of lumber. All pipework was cleaned with ammonia and steel wool, and then polished with pipe polish. The brass resonators and the zinc portions of the pipes were lacquered.

All of the permanent windlines, except those on movable components such as the console, were fabricated from new galvanized metal pipe with wooden flanges, and, with the exception of the main trunking running through the basement and backstage, were painted black.

Even though preserving the like-new Wurlitzer look in the installation doesn't necessarily improve the sound of the organ, it certainly doesn't detract from it. Our objective was to restore a good Wurlitzer, not just to build a good theatre organ using whatever approach was most expedi-

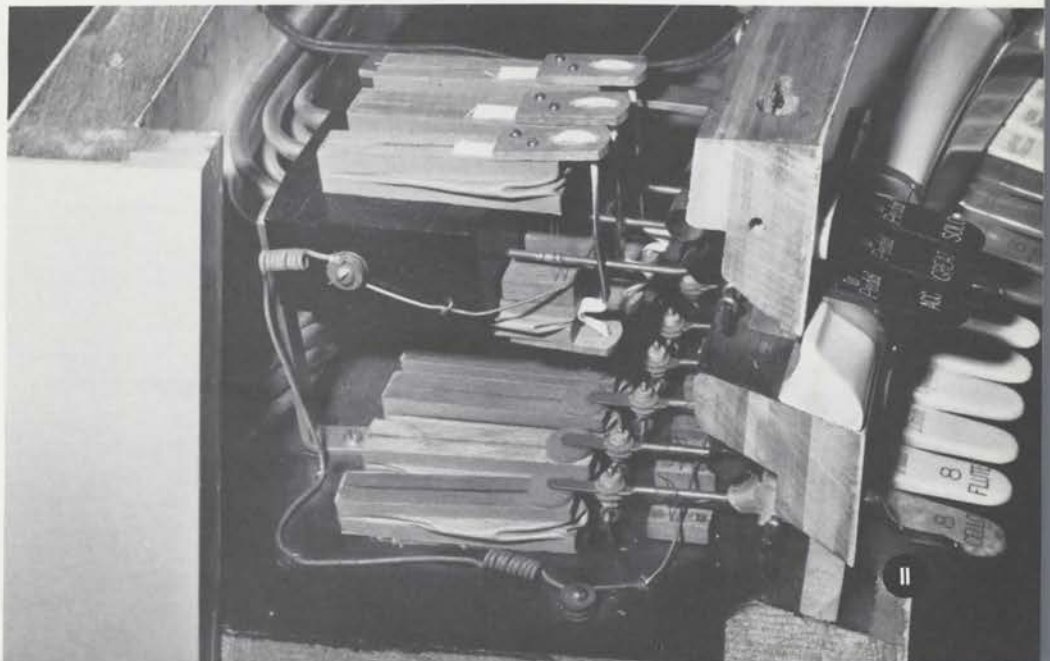


Windlines and regulators for front chest in Solo Chamber. Note excellent workmanship and the painted metal windlines with wooden flanges.

ent. Doing the work as an avocation rather than as a business allowed us to spend time and money on details which probably could not be justified in a commercial installation, where getting the job done quickly is often of primary importance.

Although Dick Taylor has done the lion's share of the restoration and installation of the organ *per se*, family members and several friends have donated their time throughout the installation phase of the project. Ray Taylor has continuously worked with Dick on the installation and has been

Close-up of combination action showing pneumatics, stop tabs, stop tab springs, twill ties and contact blocks.





View of the bottom of a tremulant, upper left, located in the tremulant room in Solo Chamber. Tremulant rooms were built in each chamber to eliminate noise.

especially helpful in the construction work which was required to install the organ in the theatre and in making cables and wiring. He also worked with Dick on the cleaning of the pipework and other components prior to installation. Ray participated in and bankrolled many of the expeditions for buying parts for the organ in the early years while Bill and Dick were still in school.

Herb Boese, a longtime family friend and ATOS member, has worked nearly every Saturday on the installation since the beginning in 1979, primarily working with Ray on the construction, wiring, pipework cleaning, and relay contact cleaning. Rudy Frey, current Nor-Cal Chapter chairman, has helped out especially in the preparations for the installation of the main windlines, cleaning relay contacts, and moving various components into place. Rudy has also spent many hours helping with the cleaning and relacquering of pipes.

Ed Stout, who was responsible for the restoration of the San Francisco Paramount Style 285 and the initial installation of the San Francisco Avenue Theatre Style 240 Wurlitzer, has served as a consultant on the project and has worked closely with Dick on the tonal finishing and regulation of the organ. Ed transformed the Horn Diapason from a soft, colorless rank to the excellent set it is today. He and Dick regulated the Orchestral Oboe and in the process recurved a significant number of the reeds to eliminate buzzy notes and to make

each note take the tremulant in the same way. Perhaps Ed's most significant contribution to the success of the project has been in helping Bill and Dick develop their collective ears, over the past 15 years, to know what a Wurlitzer should sound like, and for teaching Dick several of the techniques and skills necessary for obtaining that sound.

Although Bill was actively involved in the restoration and first installation of the then much smaller organ in the Encore Theatre in the late sixties and early seventies, his involvement with the installation in the Castro has been minimal. As mentioned earlier, he devotes the majority of his time to his wife and newly-born daughter, Jennifer, as well as to his career. Also living 60 miles away in San Jose makes frequent trips to the theatre inconvenient. His primary involvement has been in defining the specification of the organ and consulting on the regu-

— CHAMBER ANALYSIS —

Main (left) Chamber

| | |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Concert Flute - 10" | 16-2 |
| Viol d'Orchestre - 10" | 8-2 |
| Open Diapason - 10" | 16-4 |
| Viol Celeste - 10" | 8-4 |
| Clarinet - 10" | 16-8 |
| Oboe Horn - 10" | 8 |
| Krumet - 10" | 8 |
| Concert Flute Celeste - 10" | 8-4 |
| Vox Humana - 6" | 8 |
| Tibia Clausa - 10" | 8-2 |
| Violin - 10" | 8-4 |
| Violin Celeste - 10" | 8-4 |
| Lieblich Flute - 10" | 8-4 |
| Tuba Horn - 15" | 16-8 |

Solo (right) Chamber

| | |
|-------------------------|------|
| Kinura - 10" | 8 |
| Orchestra Oboe - 10" | 8 |
| Solo Tibia Clausa - 15" | 16-2 |
| English Horn - 10" | 8 |
| Tuba Mirabilis - 25" | 16-8 |
| Brass Trumpet - 10" | 8 |
| Horn Diapason - 10" | 8-4 |
| Gamba Celeste - 10" | 8-4 |
| Quintadena - 10" | 8 |
| Gamba - 10" | 16-4 |
| (16' octave - 15") | |
| Brass Saxophone - 10" | 8 |
| Vox Humana - 6" | 8 |

Left Percussion Chamber

Marimba-Harp
Chrysoglott
Most non-tonal percussions

Right Percussion Chamber

Xylophone
Glockenspiel
Tuned Sleigh Bells
Cathedral Chimes
Some non-tonal percussions

Orchestra Pit

Upright Piano

lation, as he is the organist in the family. Although he doesn't play the organ regularly for the public, he goes to the theatre about twice a month to practice and to demonstrate the organ for visitors.

Prior to his move to Chicago in 1981, Steve Dennis had helped on a variety of projects during the installation. Unfortunately, he was transferred just at the time the organ began to play. He documented various phases of the installation with videotapes of the crew at work. Another longtime family friend, Dick Clay, has provided assistance especially with moving pipes and chests into the chambers. He has also served as semi-official recording engineer for concerts and the visiting artists who come by to try out the organ. Dick was similarly involved in the earlier installation in the Encore Theatre.

The staff of Surf Theatres, including Matt Fance, Louann Rank, Allen Sawyer, Carole Grandy, Del Harvey, and David Maclay, has been most cooperative.

As of this writing (November 1982), 16 ranks of the organ are installed and the other 10 ranks and some of the percussions and 16' extensions are in the process of being installed. All of the components to complete the installation are on hand, and much of the restoration work on them has been completed. Because the organ is designed as a 26-rank instrument, and this article will serve as a lasting description of the Castro organ, the article describes it as it will be when the installation is completed. Work on the installation continues, and currently 18 to 20 ranks plus the majority of the percussions are scheduled to be playing by the 1983 ATOS Convention.

The organ has been played nightly by staff organists Elbert La Chelle and Dave Hegarty since January of 1982. Several silent films have also been featured with Tom Hazleton or Bob Vaughn at the console. Jim Roseveare played a "sneak preview" of the organ in October of 1981, and in May of 1982 Walter Strony was featured at the first ATOS meeting at the Castro. The public performances featuring the organ have been well received, and the future of the Castro Wurlitzer looks bright. Tom Hazleton and Walter Strony are scheduled to be featured at the Castro for the convention. □

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†† **Eddie Dunstedter**
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Blue Tango

Rex Koury
Here's That Rainy Day

Ann Leaf
Inspiration

Richard Leibert**
Come Dance With Me

Lance Luce
Summertime

Ashley Miller
The Song Is You

Rosa Rio
Forgotten Melody

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* Reginald Foort's arrangement
Recorded by Lee Erwin

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BOB HESS

Much-Traveled Theatre Organist

by Lloyd E. Klos

Through the years, a number of ATOS members have unofficially served as "stringers" for the writer, researching material, conducting interviews, etc. In early 1977, Marvin and Jean Lautzenheiser were hosts to former theatre organist Bob Hess who was vacationing in the Virginia area. After a session on the Lautzenheiser home installation, they persuaded Bob to put a resume of his career onto a cassette tape, and the following, interspersed with material from faded newspaper clippings, is the edited result.

JL Bob, we're primarily interested in what happened in the "good old days." First of all, when were you born?

BH I was born in 1903.

JL How did you get interested in theatre organ?

BH I had my own high school dance band in which I played piano. I wanted to be a doctor, so I went to college, playing piano in a large dance orchestra, on my way through. The schedule was three nights a week, getting home at three in the morning and then arising for a 7:45 class. This was at Michigan State University in Lansing, with its bitter winters. It was more than the human body could take and I became so ill with sinus trouble that I had to be operated on twice. It left me very weak, which precluded my going back to school. This, I believe, was in 1924.

It so happened that the father of the drummer in our orchestra was the director and violinist of the pit orchestra in the State Theatre in Pontiac, Michigan, a picture-and-vaudeville house. Directly across the street from the State was the large Oakland

Theatre which played all the "A" pictures, and they had a tremendous 3/11 Barton. In those days, the organist played the entire picture. A cue sheet was sent with the picture and each organist had a music library. Scores were arranged to play the pictures.

My drummer friend told his father of my misfortune and the latter asked that I come and see him. He introduced me to Walter Rolls, the manager of the Oakland, who asked that I play the organ for him.

I said, "I don't know anything about playing the organ; I play a dance band piano." He said that it was a sort of dare. So I sat down and the minute I did, it felt good to me;

unusual but wonderful. It was as if an entirely different world opened for me. This was in the morning before the show opened, and I fiddled around with it. The more I fiddled, the better I liked it. After a half hour or so, the manager came down, tapped me on the shoulder and said, "That's enough. Come on back." He asked me when I could go to work.

JL That was a fast audition!

BH It was! I answered that I wasn't equipped to do this. He thought I was, and I told him, "In that case, I'm ready to go to work right now."

JL Same day?

BH Same day. Of course, in those days they were short of organists. Many lacked something, and to this

Bob Hess brings back the good old days at the Lautzenheiser console.

(Hess collection)



day, I don't know what that "something" was. It was a spark, or talent or something else.

Each theatre organization sent scouts out and they'd rob each other of good organists. One day, I received a phone call from Detroit, asking me to come for an audition at the old Capitol Theatre which was later renamed the Paramount. It had a large 4-manual Wurlitzer and Don Miller was the organist. If ever there were a fine organist, Don Miller certainly was it! He was also the one who discovered me.

He had bought an Oakland automobile which was made in Pontiac and had gone to take delivery of it from the assembly line. While he had two hours to kill, he visited theatres to scout organists as customary. If he found someone with possibilities, he'd report back to his employers in Detroit who invited the organist for an audition. Which is what happened to me while in Pontiac.

He asked 12 other organists to play this and that, and as it was getting late, I had to get back to my job in Pontiac. I tapped Don on the shoulder and told him I had to get back. He told me, "that's been taken care of; I've saved you for last for a particular reason." The rest of the organists left after leaving their names and addresses for future contact.

He then told me to "get up there and play the organ as I heard you in the Oakland Theatre when I was waiting for my new car. You have a certain peculiar ballad rhythm style which I like and never heard before. I can't play it myself, but am going to learn how by listening to you. I can tell you now that before this audition started, you were already picked. We want you to work for our company."

I told him I couldn't right away, that I had to go back to Pontiac. "No, you don't have to go back except to the hotel and get your clothes, etc." So, I joined the new company and started playing at the Adams Theatre, a house which showed long-run pictures. I remember distinctly playing a part of the 1927 picture *Wings*. Much of it was in sound, but some of it was silent which was accompanied by the organ for many weeks. We played *The Singing Fool* and *Sonny Boy* with Al Jolson for four months.

By now, Vitaphone was in, but they kept a number of organists, including myself. We sat around until the bell rang, informing us that something

was wrong in the booth. We'd go down and play the organ until the trouble was corrected.

JL That was the Adams Theatre. What was the make of organ?

BH I don't remember the make. It had a three-manual console. (Editor's note: Our information tells us that it was a Hilgreen-Lane.)

JL How long were you at the Adams?

BH It was fairly long, as I played one of the Jolson pictures for four months in very cold weather. But people lined up around the block to see the picture.

JL Do you remember the admission price?

BH It was about 65 cents or so. Nothing like today's prices, but we played to packed houses. I was called one evening after the dinner hour to report at the new Fisher Theatre, which had a big Wurlitzer. I said, "What about my job?" They replied, "We don't know, but you're supposed to 'blow the Fisher organ out.'" The factory technicians were still there, getting the kinks out of the brand new organ before the opening the following Friday evening. This went on day and night; they tuned and voiced, and I played it. I believe it was on a Wednesday that they called me to the back of the theatre where there was a group of well-dressed men. They shook their heads in agreement that I would be the organist to open the Fisher Theatre.

However, I turned it down cold right there because I was young and inexperienced and I just knew I was not ready. However, I did give the Fisher organ its initial workout.

They sent me to the Michigan Theatre, a big downtown house in Detroit, as assistant to Arthur Gutow, a fine organist. This was a deluxe theatre with a big pit orchestra, big stage shows (not vaudeville, but real fine stage shows), and first-run pictures. We came up on the elevator in afternoon or evening clothes and played the finest overtures the masters ever wrote.

JL It must have been a thrill.

BH It was; it was a different world. That went on for quite some time until I tore up my knee playing baseball. Each theatre had a team, and that's the way we got our exercise. I had to go to New Orleans for an operation by the famous Dr. Finner, chief of orthopedic surgery at Tulane University. It was a real serious operation, because it meant that I'd either be

stiff-legged or normal. The operation was successful, but I didn't walk or play for a year. I went to my father's home in Beaumont, Texas, to recuperate.

The city had a very fine theatre, the 1900-seat Jefferson, with a nice organ. As soon as I was able to get about again, I was offered the job at the Jefferson. We used to broadcast from the theatre after the last show, and employed three or four ushers to answer telephone requests. They'd mark the numbers of slips of paper which were handed up to me. In those days, for some reason or other, we'd always carry a library in our mind, and it seems we could remember anything and everything which had ever been written. That was a lot of hard work, but also fun. I was next sent in 1930 to Houston's Metropolitan Theatre which was a much more elaborate house."

* * *

A column in the local press heralded the arrival of the "blond and curly-headed youngster who will be featured in the stage show program with his organologues." He had played

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the overtures for several days and was worked into the spotlight-solo portion with song medlies. Noted organist Harold Ramsay had a stint at the Metropolitan and helped Bob arrange a kiddie organ club which met every Saturday morning.

* * *

BH I was there for some time, doing much of what I had done in Beaumont, plus spotlight solos and accompanying the bouncing ball for sing-alongs. As the silents were gone, the organist was a featured attraction. He had to put on a 12- to 14-minute concert, either accompanying the bouncing ball or showing his expertise with solos. I also sat in with the stage band, playing piano, on occasion.

After the Texas stint, I was sent to Atlanta's Paramount Theatre where I played for a while, followed by a tenure of five years at the Capitol Theatre in that city. Then I was sent to places such as Newport News to open a new theatre, amid the gold and glitter.

JL Did you open or play the organ in the Newport News Paramount?

BH That was the theatre in which I opened a Barton.

(Editor's Note: This is the organ which was re-installed in the Virginia Theatre in Alexandria, and is now in storage.)

BH I'll tell you something which happened at Newport News. I was up to stage level, playing a solo when the air hose fell off. Here I was, stuck in the air and couldn't get down using the elevator! I had to climb down as best I could. Never will forget that one! Then they sent me over to Charlottesville, Virginia, to open a new Paramount Theatre there. This was in 1932 and the organ was a Wurlitzer.

JL Were you hired by the Paramount people?

BH At this time, yes. When I got word to go to Newport News, or Nashville or wherever, to open a new theatre, there was never any question; I just went. They put me up in a hotel for three weeks beforehand while the publicity appeared in the papers. It was interesting and altogether a new world to live in. In 1934, I played the Olympia Theatre in Miami.

JL I want to go back a bit and ask a couple questions. You said you were in Atlanta. Did you know Bob Van Camp?

BH Oh, yes. He still plays the "Mighty Mo" at the Fox, which is a

tremendous organ. However, you must understand that I've always been a Wurlitzer man in my preference. I played the Fox, but not officially. The other organs had long gone, but the Moller has been saved. While in Atlanta, I had a 15-minute morning program, six days a week, over WGST, the show being sponsored by Rogers Grocery Stores.

JL Moving to Newport News, do you know who played the Barton after you left? Was it a lady by the name of Gladys Lyle?

BH I remember my successor was a tall, skinny boy.

JL You traveled often about this time. Was it mostly for opening theatres?

BH Well, for quite some time that was true. I made a slight error before. After the Capitol in Atlanta, I was sent to Durham, North Carolina to the Center Theatre, which had a three-manual Robert-Morton. This was for North Carolina Theatres Co., but there were divisions of Paramount all over the country.

* * *

From clippings provided by Bob Hess: The Center Theatre in Durham was opened on December 16, 1938, with the pledge of "supreme and varied entertainment" for the public. The house was the first theatre to introduce "The Center Hour" which included the popular "Quotation of the Day."

The Center was also the first theatre in the Carolinas to introduce the pipe organ as a regular feature. The first organist was Ted Crawford who had a six-month tenure. During the summer of 1939, the organ was idle, but starting in October, Bob Hess was installed at the console.

According to a write-up in the *Durham Herald-Sun*, Bob thought up many of his parodies for his sing-alongs while in the morning shower. "He makes up his theatre programs through written requests, which he says, are surprisingly many and overwhelmingly for songs written in the old style."

"Theatre patrons don't want new songs, unless they are unusually popular, like the current 'South of the Border,'" says Bob. "Folks are surprisingly timid about singing. I don't have much trouble getting young people to join in a song, but middle-aged people who need to forget their troubles, won't sing."

"I played eight years in Atlanta.

Often, I played to packed houses, but I seldom got a peep out of them. Certainly, Durham is different, and the older folks did join the fun and sing.

"The canned music which came in with sound pictures has accustomed people to sit inertly in movies, just watching the flicks. They don't participate as they used to.

"Bob emphasized that he cannot sing well. He has never joined in any community sing programs because he does not think much of his voice. He is a modest gentleman, who does not consider himself a great organist, but admits an organist must be good to survive the inroads the sound movies have made in the profession. Thousands of theatre organists have gone into other professions.

"Perhaps I, too, would now be selling bonds or insurance except that the business world shows people in my profession such an unfriendly face and makes such uncomplimentary remarks about our intelligence that as long as I can stay in the theatre business, I will. The pay is good.

He takes a good deal of trouble rehearsing his weekly program. His chief difficulty is in the matter of pitching songs so they can be sung by the audience. He sings each song himself and if he can sing it with complicated variations, most anyone can.

"I don't want any applause from the audience. All I want them to do is sing. That's thanks enough."

During his Durham stint, he also broadcast over WDNC, five days a week.

* * *

BH Durham is the center of Duke University and the boys had a habit of making it pretty tough for an organist. However, in my college days, I belonged to Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, which was considered about the best, and when they found out I was one of the boys, they let me alone.

I wrote a song for Duke University which was published in their song book, entitled "Song of the Chapel Chimes." The story was that the president of Duke used to walk on campus in the evening with his little son, and while amidst the pine trees, the chimes would ring, making the scene very beautiful and serene. I had heard the chimes often, something clicked in my mind, so I decided to write a song about the chimes. I talked with J. Foster Barnes who was the director of music, and he had the Glee Club re-

cord this with the organ background. Then, we presented it in the theatre. It was quite a presentation, and they even used it on their spring tours.

JL When you were traveling, were you married?

BH I was married when I went to Charlottesville. There, I featured my wife, who was a very, very attractive girl. I had given her some organ lessons in Atlanta. She played piano also, and we worked up some piano-organ numbers.

When I returned to Duke in 1939, I decided I had enough. They wanted me to go to New York to play but I said no, because I did not like big cities. New York always scared me. I saw the handwriting on the wall as far as the theatre organ went. The theatre company, however, induced me to go into the management end, and in due course, I was sent to New Orleans to the E. B. Richards theatres which were also a part of Paramount-Public. I became district manager until the war came and I enlisted in the finance branch of the Air Corps.

They wanted me back in the theatre business after the war, but I decided upon something else. I got a degree in Chamber of Commerce administration and stayed in that field for some time. Later, I went into real estate from which I retired some years ago.

JL Your theatre organ career was from 1924 through 1939. There was a lot of traveling in that period.

BH Yes, and I failed to mention a stint in Nashville. Dallas was along

the way. I had a lot of Saturday morning kiddie clubs. In fact, I originated the Young America Club in Durham. It was a howling success and a lot of fun.

So, after I gave up music, I didn't touch pipes or electronics for about 30 years. Always wanted an organ in my home. I finally had a chance to buy a Hammond B-3 in 1965. It's a fine instrument with a Leslie speaker.

But getting to play the computerized pipe organ in your home here was a real thrill, indeed. I had heard indirectly in a Fort Lauderdale music store about this instrument, and that the welcome mat is out to any ex-theatre organists who might drop by. So, by way of friends up here, here I am.

I've had a long-standing dream that I could have a home large enough to house one of the organs I played in the old days, such as the one in the Michigan Theatre in Detroit. Also, a nine-foot Steinway concert grand in a loft by itself, played through the organ console.

JL When the article about you appears in THEATRE ORGAN Magazine, there will be people all over the country who will say, "I remember him."

BH Well, I don't know that. I never had a name or reputation like Jesse Crawford, although I knew him very well. I knew C. Sharpe Minor, Arthur Gutow, Don Miller and well, I can't remember all of them. Joe Pasternak who became a great producer in Hollywood, was a very fine friend of

mine, back in Detroit. He was a pianist then, a very brilliant musician. He was in the Paramount Music Library at headquarters before becoming a producer to turn out beautiful pictures.

JL Any other amusing things which happened to you besides getting stuck on the lift?

BH Oh, there were a number of interesting moments when ciphers cropped up. What could you do? It was embarrassing! You'd have to wait until the show was over at midnight when you did your rehearsing and practicing, sometimes until five in the morning. Then, you'd go to your hotel and fall asleep, to awaken in time for the first show at 1:45 p.m. It was an entirely different world, but interesting and I'm glad I lived through it.

JL It was unusual because your illness led you into this and were it not for that, just think, we'd have a world without Bob Hess to open theatres.

BH I wasn't one of the well-known organists, but I had a circle of fans. I wish I knew where some of them are, and I wish the theatre organ would come back as it was.

JL It can't come back as it was in the first great era, but we have many young people getting interested in it as potential artists on the circuit. Our instrument here is often used to entertain the very young. Last Monday, we had 25 who were four and five years of age, sitting here, open-mouthed, and listening intently to the organ. They had never heard such a thing before.

BH If I could be a young man again and have the funds to do it, I would rebuild an instrument, and truck it all over the country to play for people in little towns and remote villages where they couldn't conceive of anything like this. I'd give anything to do that. I'm searching right now for an answer for the rest of my life. That's what I'd like to do. I'd have to do a lot of "woodshedding" to bring my playing skills up to par.

It would be great for Bob Hess to realize his ambition as explained above. However, in November 1977, thanks to DTOS member, Richard Weber, he realized a great thrill and honor to play the 4/34 Wurlitzer in the Senate Theatre, the same organ he had played in the Fisher Theatre five decades ago. "I was most pleased that I could still play that organ after 50 years. I hope to return." □

In November 1977, Bob Hess played the DTOS's 4/34 Wurlitzer, fifty years after he had played it in Detroit's Fisher Theatre. (Hess collection)



SPECIAL TOOLING FOR WURLITZER RESTORATION AND MAINTENANCE

By E. S. "Tote" Pratt, Jr., Director of Organ Restoration and Development, OVC-ATOS

Drawings by Arthur Kessler, Organ Crew Member

Experienced organ buffs undoubtedly have developed tooling to facilitate the restoration of theatre organs, particularly in chapters with diversified know-how in their organ crews, such as is the case at the OVC-ATOS Emery Theatre. But what of the individuals who, by good fortune, acquire or are called upon to work on a theatre organ in less than acceptable condition, even needing rebuilding or basic general maintenance?

On the Ohio Valley Chapter ATOS Wurlitzer (originally a 260 Special 3/19, Opus 1680, now a 3/26 with piano) a complete rebuild was accomplished, which included adding a Wurlitzer five-rank chest, a one-rank chest, a style H Special 3/11 Wurlitzer relay, two switch stacks and two new tremis. The project involved releathering approximately 5000 pneumatics.

Described in this article and pictured herein with construction details are some fixtures and tooling we designed and built for the project, which we hope will give some ideas to other

buffs in our great hobby. These tools have made our restoration task much easier, and they have been very useful in ongoing maintenance. The illustrations show the tool details and how they are used in practice.

Pneumatic Remover (Plate I)

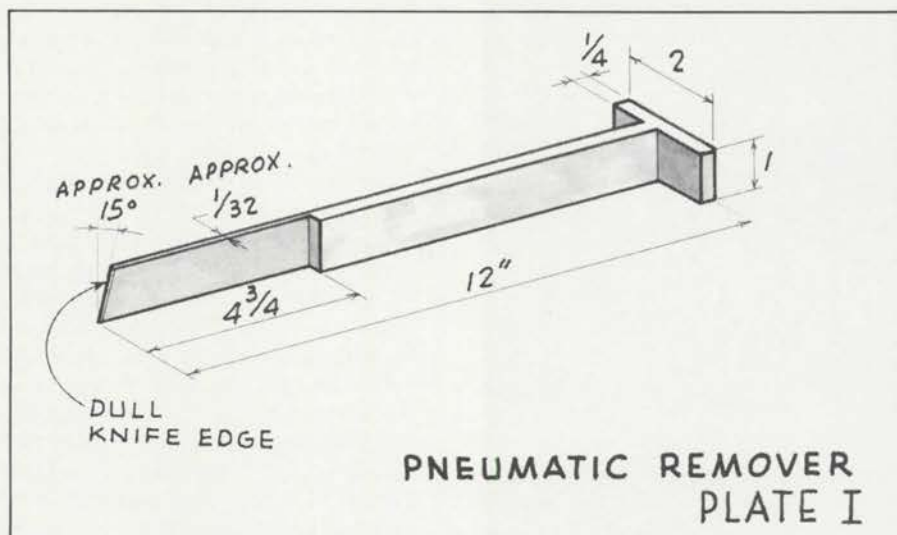
The first hurdle facing one is to remove old pneumatics for releathering easily, quickly and without damage to pneumatic or chest. We designed and built this removal tool. It is made of stainless steel bar stock milled down to $1/32$ " thickness at one end and bias cut with a slightly sharp edge. The handle at the other end is of the same stock welded on so the tool can be driven with the palm of the hand. The tool is inserted between the pneumatic and the chest, and *must* be kept flat against the chest to prevent gouging of chest or pneumatic. By angling the tool, more than one pneumatic can be removed at a time, rotating the tool 180° to cut the other side of the pneumatic seal gaskets. This applies to both primary and secondary pneu-

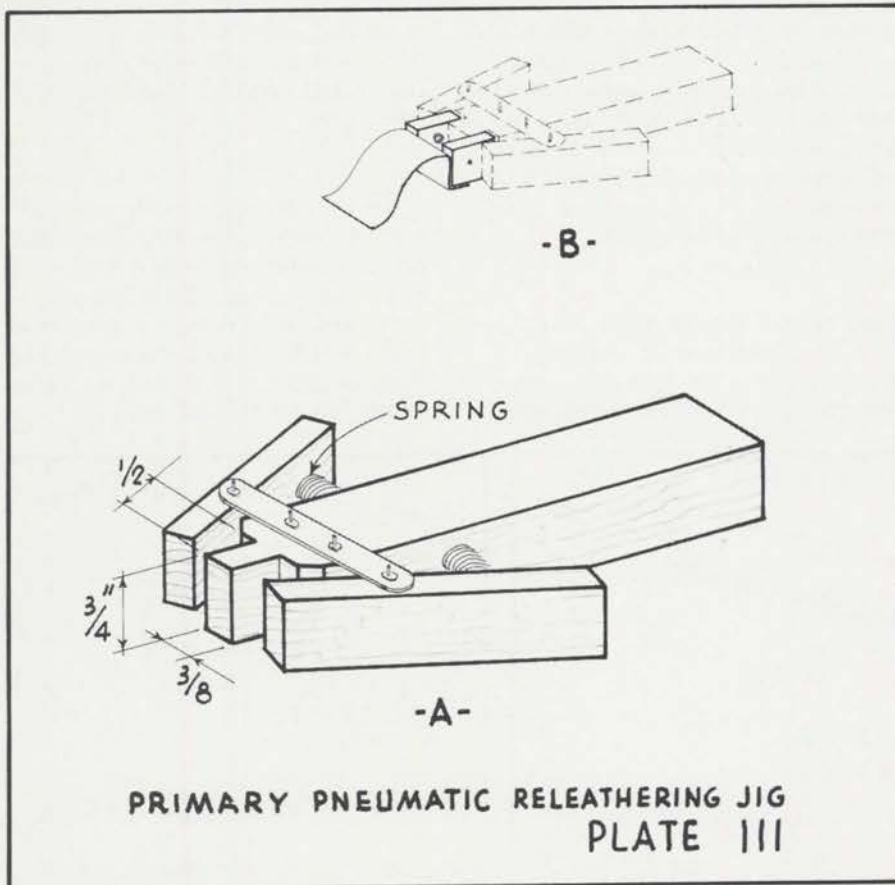
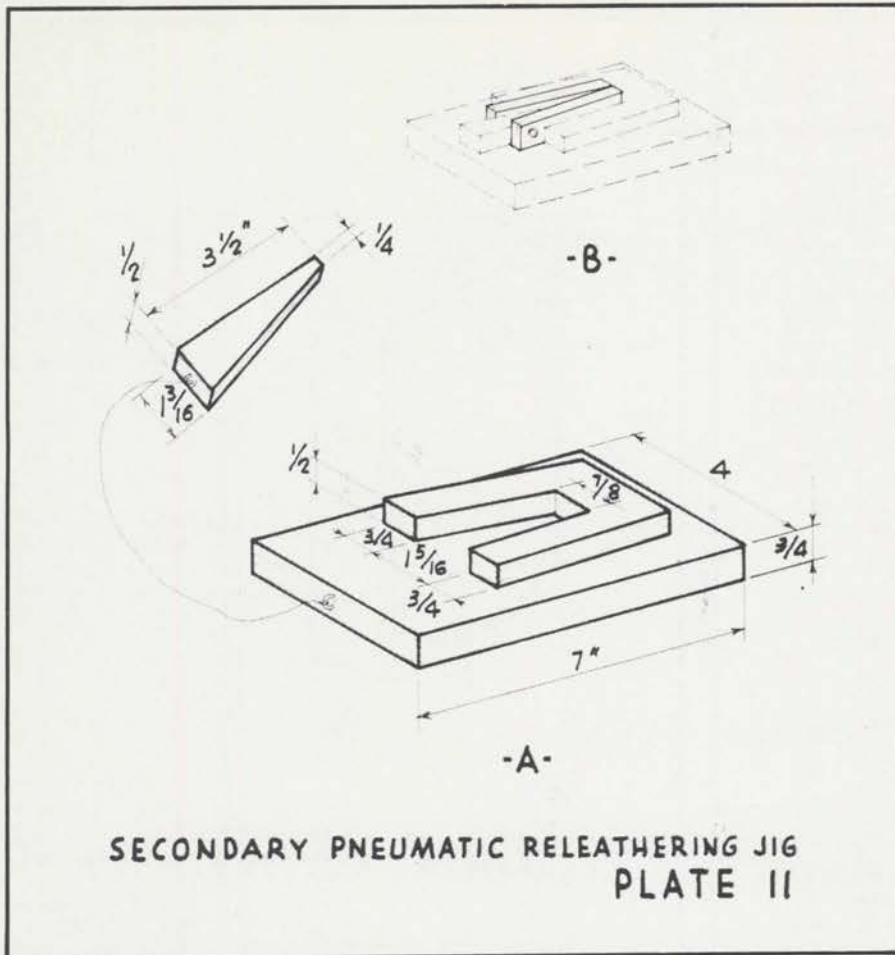
matics. If the gasket is not damaged, reuse it by matching breaks and gluing carefully, or preferably replace with a new packing leather gasket (and spacer, using punch cut-out from the new gasket).

Secondary Pneumatic Releathering Jig (Plate II)

This special jig (we have four for Wurlitzer pneumatics) makes releathering easy. By using four jigs an assembly line can be set up. A thoroughly cleaned and sanded pneumatic blank unit with tab removed is placed in the "V" slot and the aluminum wedge driven in to hold it at the right maximum opening size.

A word on releathering technique: Leather (thin tan) is cut in a rectangular strip slightly wider than the maximum opening when in the jig. The length varies with the size of the pneumatic being covered. The cut skin should be long enough to go around the pneumatic and lap at least $1/4$ " on the back. With the rough side of the leather against the pneumatic, lay the strip on top of the pneumatic blank extending halfway down the back at the hinge end, then down as far as the wedge in front (excess length will be glued later). Spread glue (we use white furniture glue) on the edges of the bare pneumatic. Wipe away all but a thin coating; excess glue will ooze out onto the part of the leather which must be flexible, and when hardened can damage the skin and cause leaks. Place leather at the back (hinge end) of the pneumatic first, pressing to assure good contact, then continue leathering on the long side of the pneumatic, being sure that the corner is snugly sealed firm, and then finally go around the movable end the same way. Glue only half of the front. Wait about five minutes,





remove pneumatic carefully and lay on the table, leather side down. Do not move the pneumatic itself yet; keep it at full open position. A second pneumatic can be started in the jig while this is happening, and so with four jigs a continuous flow of pneumatics can be available for the final operation.

Now, with the pneumatic in maximum open position continue gluing the leather around the rest of the front, along the other long side and up the back, overlapping the starting point by 1/4". Glue tightly, then trim excess leather with sharp scissors. All that is left to do is to put the spoon tab back on the pneumatic, glue on a packing leather gasket and spacer, and the pneumatic is finished! If the tab felt pad is worn or missing, replace with *woven* felt to resist wear from the spoon during operation. Check for leaks when dry. Form leather at the movable end into a double "V" inside fold.

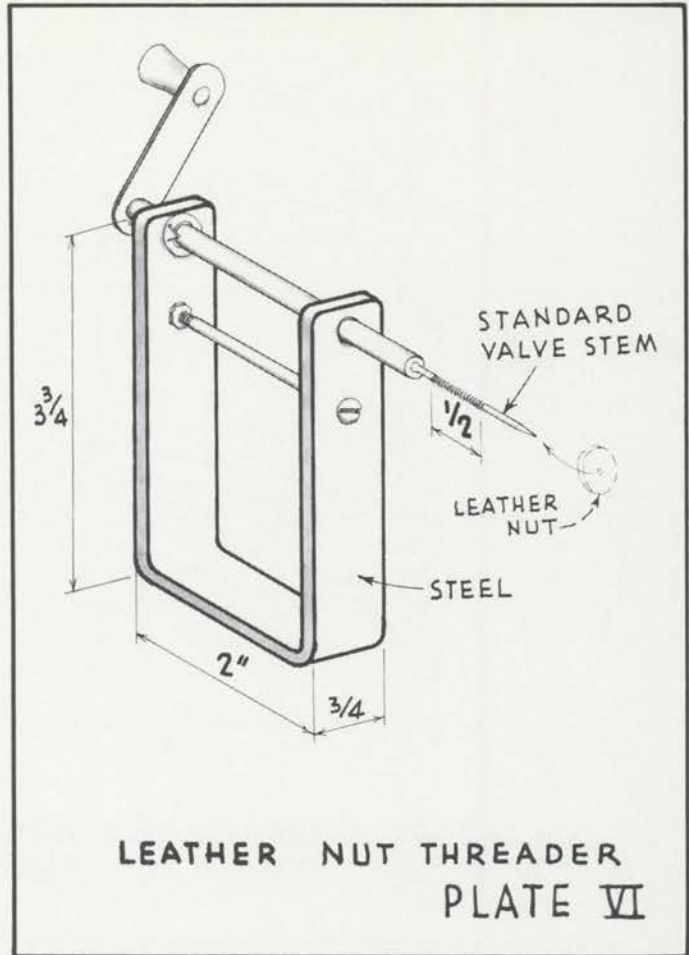
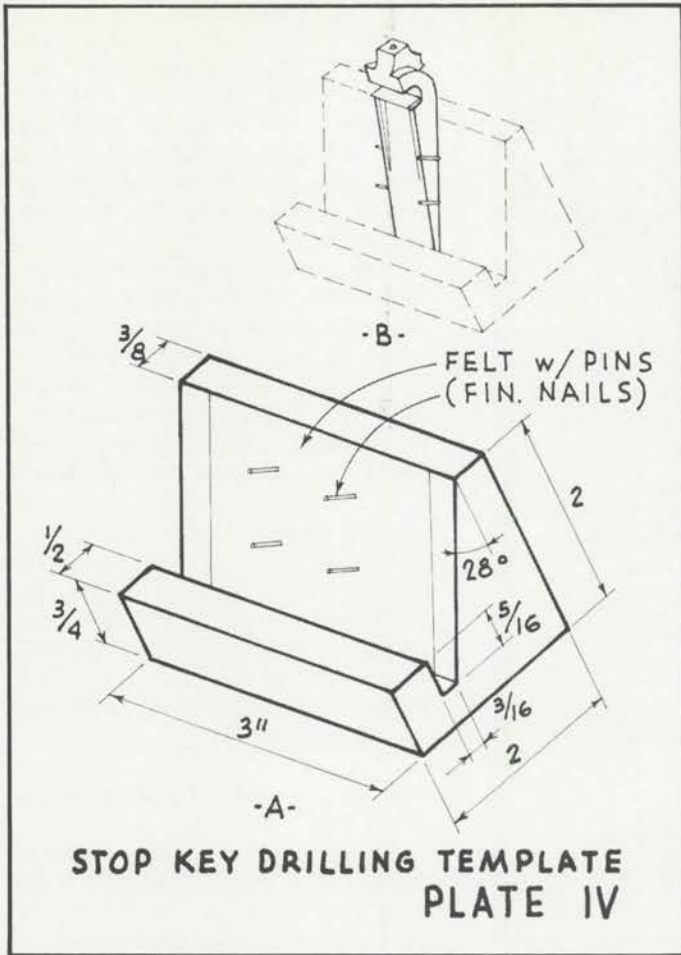
Primary Pneumatic Releathering Jig (Plate III)

The operation is basically the same as the above, except that these pneumatics, of course, are not hinged, so the seam has to be on one long side of the pneumatic.

Place cleaned blocks in the clamp jig. In any given application (i.e., chest, relay, console, etc.) all are the same size. Start halfway up on the long side and glue the sides of the pneumatic which are exposed. Wait five minutes, remove from jig and complete the other sides, except for the 1/4" overlap. Before gluing the seam, let the pneumatic dry for ten minutes or so, then carefully put a thin layer of glue on the leather overlap. Stretch (open) the pneumatic gently to pull seam together to seal it. Press the seam together. Wipe off all glue squeezed out. Hold it in the stretched position for one minute. Check for leaks when dry.

Console Stop Tab Drilling Fixture (Plate IV)

When adding new stop keys supplied by Hesco (Hagerstown, Maryland) from Wurlitzer templates, the fulcrum end is not drilled for the stop key arm when delivered. To facilitate drilling at the correct angle for the arm, we made a fixture to hold the stop key in the proper position while drilling in a drill press.



Magnet Tool (Plate V)

To aid in adjusting lead-base magnet caps we designed a three-way tool consisting of a dag wrench, a tube screw adjust driver and a small-diameter rod to push up on the armature to check for dirt, or general magnet armature operation. This is a small unit which can be used in such close quarters as console stop tab combination primaries and relay switch stacks. The overall dimensions can vary to fit particular clearance conditions (ours is 2-1/2" long).

Leather Nut Pre-threader (Plate VI)

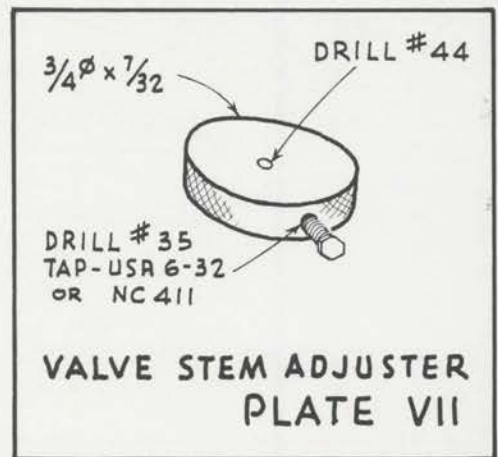
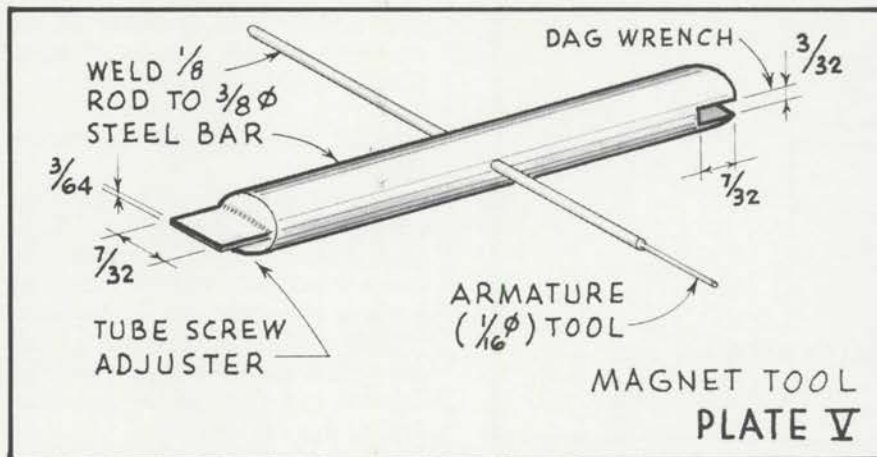
This tool starts a thread in a leather nut, making it easier to thread the nut onto the valve stem. Most useful on switch stacks and console primary boxes where access is difficult. The threaded end of the tool is a valve stem soldered to the spindle.

metal disc with a set screw to grip the stem, which can then be turned by thumb and finger to adjust the valve movement.

Valve Stem Adjuster (Plate VII)

As it is sometimes difficult to get a pin vise on a valve stem because of tight quarters, we have made a knurled

These tools and ideas have made our task easier and it is hoped that others can benefit from their use. If more information is needed, please don't hesitate to contact the writer at OVC-ATOS, Emery Theatre, 1112 Walnut Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45210, or call 513/861-2869. □



Konsole Kapets

by Shirley Hannum Keiter



CONCERT ETIQUETTE

Every performing artist has a responsibility to the audience to give them a good time, preferably in good musical taste, and each concert-goer has a responsibility to show respect to the artist and to each other. Here are some guidelines:

1. Be responsive and supportive. Applaud and cheer if you really like something; be polite and kind if you don't.

2. If the artist announces "Prelude and Fugue," or any title that indicates

two or more sections, please applaud only at the end of the entire piece. Applauding in the middle is like leaving the dinner table before dessert. The artist, by his/her "console presence" will let you know when it's time.

3. Avoid at all costs taking flash pictures during the program. Besides disturbing others in the auditorium, it really shows a lack of respect for the artist. It is sometimes difficult enough seeing music (if used), tabs (especially reeds in a red spotlight) and pistons,

without added shadows. The flash — especially the electronic variety — also is in very stark contrast to the darkness of the auditorium. Besides, as the average distance at which a flash is effective is around twenty feet, the extra-special picture the photographer had hoped for will come out no better than if he'd not used it at all, unless he's in the first several rows.

4. Please do nothing to disturb your fellow listeners — flipping cassettes noisily (if taping is permitted), singing or humming along if it hasn't been requested, rustling papers, etc.

5. The artist is doing all he/she can to usher the audience to a really good time. That is the artist's number one priority. So *do* enjoy yourself! Being overly critical of artist or instrument can destroy an otherwise enjoyable experience.

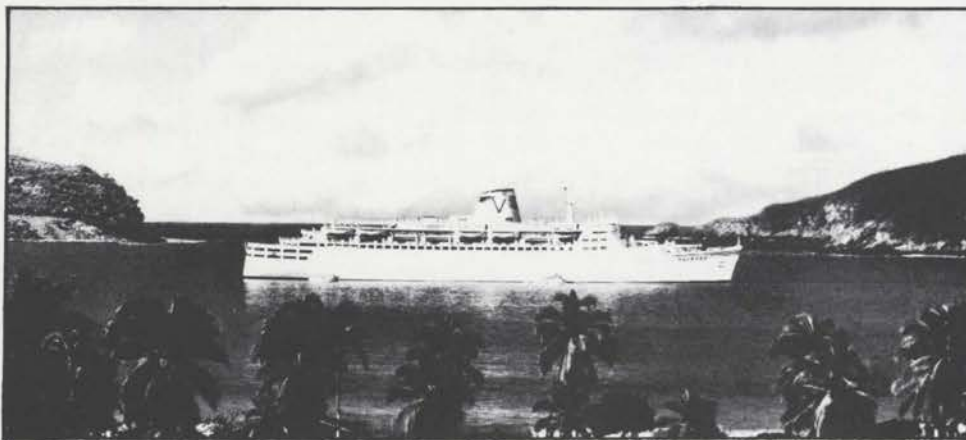
With a little respect, we can all have a great time.

If any reader has an idea for subject matter for this column, please write to "Konsole Kapets," c/o THEATRE ORGAN, 3448 Cowper Court, Palo Alto, California 94306. We'd love to hear from you! □

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News from the
Unaffiliated
Groups

Lloyd E. Klos

RTOS



Dedicated to preserving the sound of the "King of Instruments"

Rochester Theater Organ Society (RTOS) — Rochester, New York
716/ 266-8251

Dr. John W. Landon, author of the definitive work on the life of Jesse Crawford, has prepared a series of fascinating slide shows which he has shown in England and the United States. In September he visited Rochester for a two-day appearance at the Eisenhart Auditorium.

His first presentation was "The Theatre Organ in Radio," and not only was John's pleasing narration in evidence between segments of slides, but recorded music and vocals were interspersed. The singing voice of Milton Charles sounded almost like Fred Astaire's. Another segment had Ann Leaf exchanging light banter with her announcer. From a collection of over 10,000 recordings and transcriptions, the listeners were treated to some rare material, all meticulously transferred to tape and timed with the precision of an expert technician.

The second half of the program was a re-enactment of a show once heard on KDKA, Pittsburgh. At the Eisenhart's 3/8 Wurlitzer, John played the role of organist Aneurin Bodycombe; Lauren Peckham, who provided the spring-mounted micro-

phone and allied equipment, was "engineer," Jess Littlefield, amid vintage trappings at home, "listened in" on a cathedral-style table radio and the writer served as announcer.

"The Life of Jesse Crawford" was the subject of the second show, and never fails to thrill the Crawford devotees. It featured many photos of the poet, his family, the theatre organs he played, interspersed with the music which every organist tried to copy but none succeeded. "The Forgotten Melody," "I Love to Hear You Singing," and the rousing "Maine Stein Song" which Mr. and Mrs. Crawford performed in duet, were the most stirring renditions. That the subject was thoroughly researched was proved by the myriad of dates and anecdotes which John Landon provided.

Following a question-answer period, John played a few numbers on the Eisenhart organ. If you are given the opportunity to witness a Landon performance, don't miss it! There's nothing comparable to it anywhere, and it will enrich immensely your knowledge of the theatre pipe organ and its performers.

LLOYDE E. KLOS

Empire State

theatre and musical instrument museum

(ESTMIM) — Syracuse, New York
315/492-0465

After being played at two State Fairs, our Syracuse-built W. J. Staub 2/9 tracker organ will have a new home in the Korean Presbyterian Church. The church is replacing its electronic, and we believed the tracker would get more frequent use there, where it was originally installed in 1902. Carl Shea supervised its removal from the Fairgrounds by a church men's group.

We opened our fall concert season on September 18 with Tom Gnaster, appearing here for the first time. He is a fine musician-showman, his program being enjoyed by all. Two evenings before, Tom played before KTOS in Kingston, Ontario, so Carl Shea, our program chairman, drove him into Syracuse to assure his appearance, public transportation between the two localities not being the greatest.

On October 16 Robin Richmond from France, and one of the real old-timers, made his third appearance at

our 3/11 Wurlitzer. He always gives us a great show, spiced with good music, devilish English humor and fine playing. He is noted for his medleys, sometimes seven or eight numbers at a time, selections not heard too often. His sing-along was a dandy!

Tom Anderson, serving as host for these artists, did his usual fine job.

CHARLIE RICH



(NFTOS) — Buffalo, New York
716/834-2712

We were pleased to present Frank Olsen in concert at the Riviera Theatre on December 8. Frank, who is well-known to the Riviera audience, entertained with an interesting variety of moods, countries and eras on the Mighty Wurlitzer pipe organ. He also accompanied a silent movie and a sing-along. There were some surprises, too, as he was joined in duets by Roy Simon on the grand piano. They play beautifully together.

Frank Olsen now lives in Port Colborne, Ontario, Canada, where he teaches organ. He holds many degrees in music and has cut several records. This past summer he spent considerable time on concert tour in England, Scotland and Holland where he was well received.

Future concerts at the Riviera will be Robert Wolf on January 19 and Stan Kann on February 16.

BETTY BOWMAN □

Closing Chord

Organist **Phillip DeSano**, 74, whose professional name was Phil Reed, died recently in Fort Myers, Florida. He had become ill the day of his death.

DeSano's introduction to show business occurred sixty years ago. During his career he played at the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre, and accompanied silent films and vaude-

ville. He also worked at Roseland and the Brooklyn Ice Palace.

At Mineola, New York, he played at the ice rink, and in Elmont, the Wal-Cliffe rink. Providing music for National Ice Skating competitions in Madison Square Garden, he also made recordings of skating music which were played in rinks throughout the country.

He is survived by his wife, three sons, a daughter, and eleven grandchildren. Burial was at the Mausoleum of the Fort Myers Memorial Gardens.



Edward F. Chapman at the console of the New York Paramount Wurlitzer in September 1964.

Edward F. "Ted" Chapman, 1982 chairman of the Central Florida Chapter, died suddenly on October 23, 1982. He was 65 years old. Stricken by an aneurism, he passed away at a hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida. He and his wife, Janet, had moved to St. Petersburg from North Branch, New Jersey in 1978. Burial was in St. Petersburg. In addition to his wife, other survivors include two daughters and a sister. A graduate of Drexel College in Philadelphia, he was by profession an accountant.

Ted had a lifelong love affair with the theatre organ. He was fortunate to have been born at a time when such organs could still be heard in their natural habitat — the theatre, both in the silent and sound days. He joined ATOS (then ATOE) in the early '60s and was an active member of the Delaware Valley and New York Chapters. He worked on various organs, such as the one in the Bound Brook, New Jersey, theatre, and had many fond memories of seeing and hearing instruments in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and the New York City area. His favorite organ was, of course, the New York Paramount, and he attended the closing performance by

Don Baker. He had pleasant memories of the ATOS meetings at the Radio City Music Hall, with meetings starting at 8:00 a.m. because the RCMH opened to the public early during its hey-day. Like many organ enthusiasts, he was also a lifelong model railroader.

Since moving to Florida, Ted was an enthusiastic supporter of the project to install a 3/12 Wurlitzer in the Tampa Theatre. He worked at least once a week in re-leathering, rewiring and whatever else was necessary in getting this instrument ready. He looked forward each time to working with fellow crew members and the kind of friendship that can only exist in a cramped and dusty organ chamber. Those who knew and worked with Ted Chapman found him to be always thoughtful, helpful and quietly competent. He listened to others and was judged a very good friend (and chairman) by those closest to him. He was a "gentle man" in the best sense of the word. He will be missed.

* * *

Theatre organ enthusiasts all over the world were saddened to learn that veteran ATOS leader, **Allen W. Rossiter**, 60, died on November 16, 1982, after a long illness. Rossiter, a former National Vice President of ATOS and a National Director for many years, was widely known for his continual efforts on behalf of the theatre organ movement in the northeastern U.S., particularly in the formation and development of the New York Theatre Organ Society, chartered chapter of ATOS for the greater metropolitan New York area, including suburban counties in New York State and northern New Jersey.

Until his health began to fail, Rossiter had spent practically all his waking hours on theatre organ activities (although he did occasionally slip away to play the baroque classics on a recorder with a local New Jersey quartet). He had been interested in music and electronics since his early ham radio days in Boonton, New Jersey, where his family moved a few months after Allen was born in New York City. Those interests culminated in his building what was thought to be the first Schober electronic theatre organ ever assembled in a hobbyist's home. It was characteristic of Rossiter's devotion to the business affairs of the New York Theatre Organ Society that the Schober console in his tiny apartment living room was piled so high with Society paper-



Allen Rossiter.

work that nobody could get near the instrument to play it for about twenty years.

Rossiter was particularly proud of his continuing role as financial supervisor of the New York Theatre Organ Society's popular series of Sunday morning concert meetings at Radio City Music Hall. He loved greeting the yawning, half-asleep crowds as they came in the golden doors at 8:00 a.m. and to settle accounts with the Music Hall box-office treasurer. But as shy as he was about most public appearances, he was always pleased when Claud Beckham called him out from behind the massive gold contour curtain to announce the morning's attendance figures from the great Music Hall stage.

Of all his theatre organ activities, which included attending every national ATOS convention as well as many regional mini-conventions and festivals, Rossiter attached most importance to his key role in financial planning and administration for the 1970 Fabulous Fifteenth ATOS Convention, an extravaganza that ran day and night for nine days with a budget that exceeded \$30,000!

Allen Rossiter attended Union College in Schenectady, New York, briefly before he was called into worldwide service with the U.S. Navy as a radio technician for the duration of World War II. After the war he joined the technical service staff of the Burroughs Corporation for computer diagnostics and service. He retired from Burroughs about a year before his death. He is survived by his mother, Mrs. Isabel Rossiter, and his sister, Mrs. Edith Boon, to whom theatre organ buffs everywhere extend their profound sympathy. His efforts and his friendship will be sorely missed.

CLAUD BECKHAM □

NUGGETS from the GOLDEN DAYS

Prospected
by Lloyd E. Klos



The bulk of these nuggets is about the lady organists, our annual salute to all the hard-working gals of the ATOS. References were *Local Press (LP)*, *American Organist (AO)*, *Around the Town (ATT)*, *Metronome (Met.)*, *Exhibitor's Herald World (EHW)*, and *Variety (V)*.

February 14, 1921 (LP) Loew's State in Indianapolis opened today with RUTH NOLLER at the 3-manual Moller. (Later organists were L. EARL GORDON, LESTER HUFF and JUSTINE RAIRDON.)

September 2, 1922 (LP) When Indianapolis' Cadle Theatre opened today, Mrs. WILLIAM E. DUTHIE was at the 3-manual Smith-Geneva console. (Later, MYRON E. RODEBAUGH played it.)

July 1923 (AO) Mrs. GERTRUDE BAILY, organist at Chicago's Michigan Theatre, is an assistant to Frank Van Dusen at the American Conservatory's theatre organ school. Formerly a member of the Bradley Conservatory faculty, she is an experienced organist with a large repertoire of classics, and her musicianship has been tried and proved in church and theatre.

July 1923 (AO) HELEN SEARLES (WESTBROOK), a native of Southbridge, Massachusetts, a student of and assistant to Frank Van Dusen of the American Conservatory, began music study at 11 with her mother who was an organist. Her first engagement was at Norwood Park Methodist Church in Chicago at 14. Later, turning attention to the theatre, she has held positions in several Chicago houses and worked up to an enviable reputation as a theatre organist. She plays from memory, both classics and jazz, using both for picture work when the scene requires, and with a certain pep and style which are irresistible.

May 29, 1926 (LP) DESSA BYRD was at the Wurlitzer when the 986-seat Uptown Theatre in Indianapolis opened today. (Later, VIVIAN ARBAUGH played it.)

December 26, 1927 (LP) The 1200-seat Walker Theatre in Indianapolis opened today. MARY SINGLETON was at the 2/8 Barton console.

May 6, 1928 (LP) JUANITA BROWN and WEST MASTERS were the opening organists at the 3/9 Marr & Colton in Indianapolis' Fountain Square Theatre. The house seats 1428. According to publicity, "A divided pipe organ of the very latest type and design has been provided, and is so placed that the source of sound is entirely concealed. Arrangements have been made and proper facilities have been provided for broadcasting recitals."

December 1928 (ATT) A very able organist in Schenectady, New York, is WILLIAM A. MABLY. Mably is being featured at the new Proctor's Theatre, and broadcasts over WGY. He is recognized as one of the first to broadcast over the Marconi station in Toronto. ELSIE ADDISON MABLY is featured with her husband in organ novelties which have been successful. Previous to this engagement, Mably had been at the Colonial Theatre in Detroit and with

the Schine enterprises for two years. He also opened the Century Theatre in Buffalo, New York. Carl Landau directs the Proctor's Theatre orchestra.

May 1929 (Met.) By Chicago organist, RUTH GORMAN FARLEY. "Whoopie Time" has hit Chicago with a bang! It was started a couple months ago at the Uptown Theatre and the idea has been so successful that it is to be introduced at the Tivoli and Paradise. Whoopie shows consist of everyone in the show doing what he thinks he can do, not having the courage to do it elsewhere. I hear that at one performance, organist EDDIE HOUSE ran across the stage in his BVD's. Now I know B & K's reason for not wanting girl soloists!

Whoopie Nights have held one benefit for organists. It has given a permanent home for HENRI A. KEATES at the Paradise, EDDIE HOUSE at the Uptown, and CHAUNCEY HAINES at the Tivoli.

May 1929 (Met.) By Chicago organist, RUTH GORMAN FARLEY. LEONARD SALVO is visiting Chicago. He is the organist at the Gateway Theatre in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and is considered very Bohemian. To me, he is the whole of Greenwich Village. He and his charming little wife, Della, have an ungainly habit of dropping in on me anywhere from three to six a.m., my lullaby time. Len reports himself a great favorite at the Gateway.

April 26, 1930 (EHW) KATHERINE KADERLY at Brooklyn's Loew's Metropolitan Theatre, offered an organ specialty of community singing songs, which she played very well and the audience sang very well. The numbers included "I'm Following You," "I Love You So," "Singing In the Rain," "Congratulations" and "The Stein Song." Miss Kaderly's efforts always get the good reception they deserve.

Circa 1930 (V) New in the music department at Los Angeles' Boulevard Theatre is IRIS WILKENS, featured organist. This is Iris Vining, who was at the Granada in San Francisco for three years. She recently married Don Wilkens, band leader, changing her professional name to her husband's. Mrs. Wilkens is a crackerjack organist and a valuable acquisition at the Boulevard. They are featuring her.

Circa 1930 (V) JESSE CRAWFORD is using "A Military Concert" in his own style. The list of stirring march tunes gives him full scope for those smashing organ effects and is a capital idea for his finish with MRS. CRAWFORD's playing from the second console. This is a magnificent climax to a stirring moment of music. With two players combined, the full crash of the big New York Paramount organ is tremendous in these military numbers.

May 23, 1931 (MPH) ADA RIVERS at Loew's State in New Orleans, plays the role of interlocutor this week in her solo "Minstrel Follies," with the audience singing a chorus, after urging of "Alexander's Ragtime Band." This is followed by famous minstrel sings, with Bert Williams' "I Ain't Got Nobody" taking the biggest hand. A whistling chorus of "Swanee River" is next with Miss Rivers making the audience whistle, and using her wood block to suggest a tap dance which is supposed to accompany it. The close gets off in great style with "Dinah." Applause was prolonged; one of Miss Rivers' best solos.

See you in April. So long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

Questions and Answers on the Technical Side

by Lance Johnson



Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

QUIZMASTER
and Organbuilder
LANCE JOHNSON
Box 1228
Fargo, North Dakota 58102

Q. In your symposium on theatre organ tremulants last summer you mentioned that your wind gauge was far more accurate and responsive than gauges available from other sources. Could you please mention again where to obtain this instrument and the cost?

A. The Magnehelic gauge can be ordered from Tracker Tool Supply, 799 West Water Street, Taunton, Massachusetts 02780. The cost is \$40.00. This gauge is precision-built, and comes with a case and tubing. I have checked it against a water gauge and find it absolutely accurate.

Q. Our chapter maintains a large four-manual theatre organ installed in a theatre, and we often hold concerts, etc. The problem is that our maintenance crew can't make up their minds whether to keep the organ in good tune or go after dead notes. Can you break the deadlock?

A. I wish all the questions were this easy. It is far more important to keep the instrument in tune than to worry about dead notes. Certainly there must be a way to schedule your maintenance activities to accomplish both. There is no excuse for presenting an out-of-tune organ, whether it be for

concerts or movie crowds. Much discredit can come to the theatre organ by forcing people to listen to an out-of-tune instrument. You can always play around the stops that contain too many dead notes.

Q. We have a Style E, seven-rank Wurlitzer which is being prepared for installation in our home. What would you recommend as the optimum size for the pipe chambers? I don't want crowded chambers, yet I also don't want wasted space. I also plan to add a 16' reed. How about minimum ceiling height?

A. You have not told me whether you are adding on to your home or making organ chambers out of existing space. It would be far more helpful to me if you would send your house plans drawn to scale, with your ideas sketched in. Then I can recommend the proper space to be allocated for the organ. □

About Theatre Organ Competition

by Eleanor D. Weaver, *Chairman,
Young Organist's Award Committee*



Eleanor D. Weaver.

Chapters that have never held competitions may wonder how to go about starting one. Many decisions have to be made at the outset. My best advice, based on seven years as chairman of the successful competition program of the Connecticut Valley Chapter, is that the first step is to establish a special committee to plan and administer a competition. For the job to be done properly (at least properly as we saw it) will require the thinking and actual assistance of several people.

Among the basic decisions which must be made at the outset are: The age and any other qualifications of entrants; the music to be played; access to the competition organ; date and place of competition; number of judges and their qualifications; method of judging; number and amount of prizes; time, date and place of prize awards.

If your chapter operates on a budget, costs must be estimated to cover prize money and administrative ex-

penses for written and telephone communication, and then the necessary appropriation must be obtained.

Next, you must prepare an information and rules sheet, complete with entry blank, and distribute these to organ teachers, who are generally your best source for entrants, and to chapter members who know promising young organists. After entries are received, a practice schedule for the competition organ must be established for each contestant. Judges have to be decided upon and asked to participate. A rating sheet for use by the judges must be prepared and ready by the competition date, as well as a schedule established for order of appearance of the candidates.

Like any such endeavor, all these things will involve considerable effort, planning and execution. But, speaking again as an individual who lived with this for seven years, my contact with the students who participated was, generally speaking, one of the most rewarding experiences of my

life. They were almost uniformly very intelligent, thoroughly nice, and highly motivated — young people with whom it was a pleasure to work. Other members of my committee shared this feeling very strongly. It was personally very rewarding.

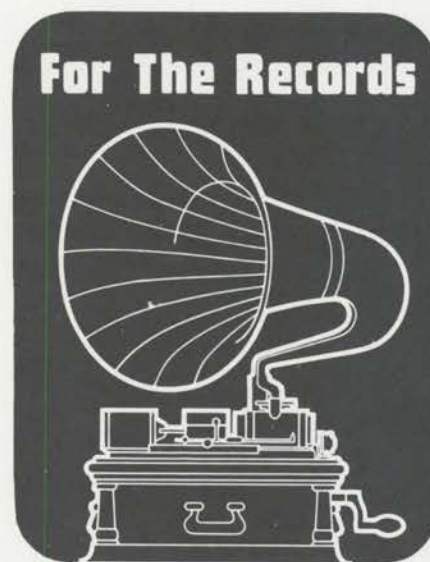
Speaking of rewarding, let me emphasize the need for offering significant prizes, probably money, as a means of motivating the young organists to devote the necessary amount of time out of their busy schedules. In Connecticut we awarded trophies to winners, and gave each contestant a framed photograph of himself or herself seated at the organ console, but it was the monetary prize that lured them. I do not say this in any demeaning sense; these youngsters have lots of needs which can only be met in monetary terms, and if they are to give up a great deal of their time and energy, there must be some chance of their profiting by it. However, they also liked the attention they received. We always arranged to get a photograph in their local newspapers of their receiving the award, they were asked to play a concert at a chapter meeting, and parents bragged to all their friends. For at least a brief time, they were stars. And now, with establishment of a national award, entering them into the national competition holds out the added allure of possibly becoming a national winner.

Realistically, it would be very difficult for a chapter which has never sponsored a competition to get it all together for 1983; however, it is none too early to begin working toward one for 1984. In all honesty, to do it and do it well will require that much time.

Please address any questions you may have to me: Mrs. Eleanor D. Weaver, 664 Litchfield Turnpike, Bethany, Connecticut 06525. I shall

be happy to give you the benefit of whatever advice or help I can offer.

See *London and South of England Chapter Notes*, page 40. □



Manufacturers, distributors or individuals sponsoring or merchandising theatre pipe organ records are encouraged to send pressings to the Record Reviewer, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Be sure to include purchasing information (post-paid price, ordering address,) if applicable, and a black and white photo of the artist which need not be returned.

GEORGE WRIGHT: PARAMOUNT ORGAN PREMIER. Banda (stereo) No. KM 10468. \$10.00 postpaid from Banda Records, Box 392, Oxnard, California 93032.

It's a red letter day for the organ hobby when there is news of an organ going into a theatre, rather than being

removed. Such is the case of the threatened Oakland, California, Paramount. Its future was assured when it became the Paramount Theatre of the Performing Arts, the home of the Oakland Symphony Orchestra. With an increasingly catholic acceptance of a much wider range of music than in the past, the management of the Paramount, then under the leadership of Jack Bethards, noted the organ chambers left empty when the original Wurlitzer Publix No. 1 was removed years ago. There were suggestions that a classical organ would be more proper, but such an instrument would not be in keeping with the theatre atmosphere which the symphony people wanted to preserve. Then came the donation of a generous supply of vital organ components from J. B. Nethercutt, creator of the San Sylmar museum which houses a huge theatre organ. Much later Sandy Fleet donated an additional supply of Wurlitzer organ parts. Still, progress was very slow. And that became a touchy matter. We recall that several years ago a former THEATRE ORGAN columnist was soundly reprimanded by a Nor-Cal Chapter chairman for even mentioning the languishment in his column. Then, as the '70s faded, there was a spurt of activity and the organ took form. The album jacket notes mention that it is larger in number of ranks than the original installation, which would probably place it in the middle 20's rankwise (the information is not given on the jacket). The organ sounds large and full in the live acoustics of the refurbished 3000-seat house, as heard on this recording. Although it's an assembled organ, made from parts of several organs, the assemblers have managed to produce a balanced recording instrument from the tonal

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viewpoint, a long and tedious procedure involving the matching of ranks for volume and tone quality. Both technical knowhow and musical sensitivity are in evidence.

November 7, 1981, was selected for the premiere, with George Wright at the console. This recording was taped during that concert. Making a recording during a concert is always risky. The artist must get it right the first time because there can be no second takes. George comes through splendidly on that count. The unknown factor is audience noise. There is the inevitable applause to swamp the final chord of each selection, but it's the noise a few people in the audience make during the music that is distracting — mainly coughing. Even this can be minimized by judicious miking. Yet there was no special microphone placement to meet organ pickup requirements; the microphones used were in position to tape the symphony orchestra. This practice works well for large organ combinations but when George cuts down to soft strings or Vox alone, there is no microphone close to the sound source to bring it in. So the gain on the distant microphones must be brought up to catch the reduced volume. This tends also to bring in the coughs. Actually the volume of coughs is very low, never loud enough to mar the music. Yet the extraneous noise is there, and the coughers rarely bark on the beat.

George opens with the Paramount News fanfare followed by a chorus of "Paramount on Parade." Then, directly into an energetic "I Got Rhythm." Of the seventeen selections heard (some in medleys) about half have been grooved previously by George. The first title on his trip down memory lane is his exquisite treatment of "The Boy Next Door," an arrangement not recorded on pipes since his very first HI-FI label platter circa 26 years ago, the LP which started George's rise to national recognition. It's a very welcome repeat.

After a Straussian introduction, "Dancing in the Dark" takes off on color reeds, then a waltz interlude. The overall arrangement is best described as "commanding," although there are delicate moments. The Vox Humana denouement is a beauty. "Norwegian Wood" is a strange tune which seems to be asking a question. Very musical cricket chirps color the woodland scene. Note the bass figures



George Wright.

against bells at one point. "Some Harry Warren Songs" includes "42nd Street," "Shuffle Off to Buffalo," "Shadow Waltz" (on Vox, Chimes and coughs) and "Lullabye of Broadway" (all titles unlisted, but familiar). These tunes are a reprise from George's previous Banda platter, *42nd Street and Other Goodies*. The show tunes continue with an electric "Flying Down to Rio" with aircraft sounds, clackers, some Samba treatment and an interpolation of "Orchids in the Moonlight." Really Posthorny!

"Little Sir Echo" (called "The Voice of the Organ" here) starts on full, mellow combinations plus a brief Brass Trumpet solo. The second chorus is heard as a wordless song voiced by soprano Luana DeVol. Several who were present at the concert report it was a striking effect, visually and musically. On the record, the solo comes through as an off-mike voice which doesn't do much for the music. The Tibia does it better.

Old favorite "Creole Love Song" is bluesy in styling and tempo. It features a striking, well-quoted "mixture" briefly.

The closer is entitled "Hats Off to Irving Berlin," and includes "We Joined the Navy to See the World," "Change Partners," "Let Yourself Go," "Let's Face the Music and Dance" plus a hint of "Cheek to Cheek." No titles are listed. It's a fitting salute to the USA's grand old man of pop music (Berlin is in his 90's) and George's arrangements do the selections full justice. In fact, we

can extend that last comment to all the selections on the record; we can detect no weak spots in the Wright playing technique despite the fact that all cuts are "take ones."

The review pressing had a few rough areas, but not many. Ron Muselman's portion of the jacket notes tell the story of the Paramount's new organ in an interesting style devoid of "geewhiz" aspects, and George Wright's portion adds further pertinent info. Rarely does a jacket include notes of a negative nature; normally they are highly positive. In this case, this jacket departs from the norm. It includes a review-commentary by a retired newspaper reporter, one with little knowledge of nor interest in organs. The lady looks down her cultured nose at the audience members seen in the lobby, describes Oakland in terms of some Gertrude Stein bafflegab, and describes the earlier Paramount organ as a "foolish delight." But she has a redeeming feature; she approves of George and his music, even to the point of mentioning the comment of a fan that Wright "could make good music on a Kazoo." So much for George's organ technique! We hope only that the photo which shows George at the console, glowering over his shoulder, is aimed at this uninformed observer.

No matter, the music is fine, George Wright here upholds the enviable reputation he has earned over the years in whatever area of music he has engaged. Recommended.

UNCLE MILT'S PIPE ORGAN PIZZA CO. Wendy Kieffer and Rob York playing the theatre organ. No. UM101 (stereo). \$7.50 postpaid from Uncle Milt's Pipe Organ Pizza Co., 2410 NE Grand Boulevard, Vancouver, Washington 98661.

This album was obviously produced to sell over-the-console to enthusiastic pizza chomper; although the jacket boasts six photos and a history of the organ and pizzeria there is no information as to where it is located. It took a little sleuthing to obtain the address above.

Here we have a fairly typical pizzeria recording designed as a souvenir for visitors, and containing tunes played in the styles the pasta partakers prefer. Don't expect theatre organ music as such. Although the playing is done on a theatre organ, it's



Wendy Kieffer.

“pizza music” nearly throughout (there is one exception). So, much use is made of unenclosed tonal and fixed-pitch percussions. We are not demeaning the style, just warning purists. In fact, it’s a very fine sounding instrument and both players perform very well within the parameters of the style.

The original instrument was a 3/13 Wurlitzer from Seattle’s Orpheum Theatre. But for pizza parlor use, owner Milt Kieffer added components from four other theatre organs but doesn’t state the total number of current ranks in the jacket notes. It’s sufficient to note that the instrument fills the hall (formerly a church!) quite adequately, although miking is in closeup perspective.

Each organist fills a side of the disc. Wendy Kieffer, whose previous playing assignments included an Alaskan gig, studied with Jonas Nordwall and Don Simmons, the latter famous for his jazz stylings. She opens with some space music guaranteed to knock the socks off the unprepared listener. There is a small inaccuracy in the opening fanfare of “2001 Space Odyssey” but nothing the pizza customers will notice. Then *Star Wars* music which includes a rollicking rendition of the Cantina music heard in the movie as the camera moves among some strange and eerie denizens of the space saloon. It conjures repeat visions of those multi-limbed, piano-faced critters. The March tune comes off well, too. Happy bombast!

“Serenade in Blue” is well phrased and registered. There’s a pleasing brass solo followed by a rich color reed combination. The Pedal Cymbal marks the second bridge.

Shades of Kermit, it’s Muppet time! The TV series fans will love “The Muppet Theme” which Wendy plays with the verve and variety of the ten-man British orchestra (remember “Zoot,” the bald saxophonist?) which scored those memorable episodes. Good fun!

“Birth of the Blues” opens with a lowdown, sultry solo Clarinet intro. Then a big and broad conception of the timeless standard with ear-catching variations and key changes. Lots of brassy punctuation and Pedal Cymbal.

“Behind Closed Doors” is a question and answer tune with a very rinky-tink piano doing much of the questioning. Nice color reed registration.

“Ease on Down the Road” is a spirited rhythm tune which offers solo reeds, Glockenspiel and other percussions, including the Pedal Cymbal. Driving tempo with brassy punctuation.

Next, an original, co-authored by Wendy. “Just to Myself” is first heard in ballad form on mellow reeds, then the rhythm section takes over for a bluesy, rhythm denouement. It’s a forceful closer for Wendy, who proves here that her ability on pizza pipes has a value beyond being the boss’s daughter.

Side 2 belongs to Rob York, a well-schooled young man whose classical education in no way inhibits his organ jazz. Rob opens with that most requested of pizza tunes, “Chattanooga Choo Choo,” complete with train whistle, bell and much huffing and puffing. It’s interesting to note that most requests for this tune come from people who have never experienced a steam-propelled train. Rob’s recreation of the sounds of a long-gone day hit on target. He even includes a hint of “Take the A Train.”

We mentioned one exception to pizza stylings. It’s a purely theatre organ ballad rendition of “The Rainbow Connection” from *The Muppet Movie*. It is delightfully phrased and played with sensitivity and subtlety on the most appropriate registration. A goodie for the TO fans.

Back to the pizza atmosphere for a selection of themes from the movie *Fame*, a story about youngsters trying to break into show biz. There’s some balladry, some dance music and some rock styling, always energetic and a bit epicene in spots.



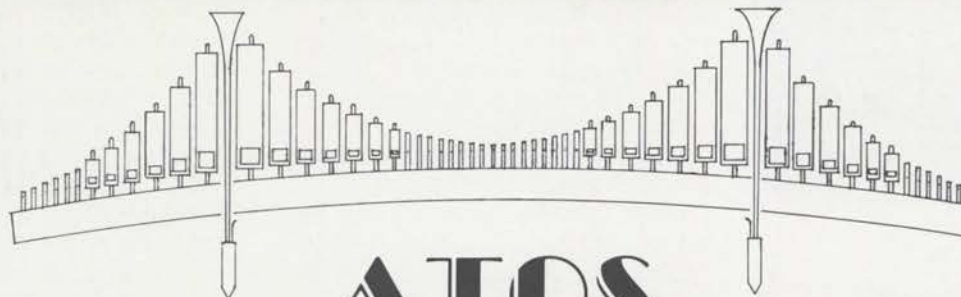
Rob York.

“Pink Panther” is one of those timeless tunes kept alive through the many Pink Panther movies which are re-issued regularly thanks to the matchless comedy of the late Peter Sellers’ bumbling “Inspector Clouseau.” This Henry Mancini theme shows up in most of them and it’s as fresh as when first released. Rob plays it for comedy with sometimes garish registration which fits the mood of the tune to perfection.

Rob’s closer is Fats Waller’s “Aint Misbehavin’.” It gets the works in the treatment department, from slow drag to highly ornamented “rides,” often with a touch of Fats coming through.

The recording engineers have captured the essence of the instrument. The review pressing had a slight warp, also some noisy spots (mostly pops) but never enough to damage the music. There are photos of both organists, the costumed pink panther greeter and the marquee of the pizzeria which is a huge representation of a three-deck horseshoe console with suggested pipework above it. Jacket notes deal with history of the organ and pizzeria, and the remarkable organ enthusiast whose effort culminated in the establishment, “Uncle Milt” Kieffer. Organbuilder Dennis Hedberg produced the album.

As we stated, this is pizzeria music, but well done in its genre. We suspect that both artists are capable also of theatre organ stylings (Rob proves it here) and we’d love to hear them in concert or on a record playing theatrically. Until then we’ll order another pizza and soft drink and enjoy the fruits of Uncle Miltie’s efforts. For him it’s a dream materialized. □



ATOS

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July 1 - 5

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A wonder-filled blend of prominently-known artists from the nation and local area will be performing at six in-theatre installations, from the intimate neighborhood houses to the large downtown palaces of the cities. Four of these installations have never been heard before by convention goers.

ARTISTS

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Tom Hazelton | Jim Riggs |
| Lyn Larsen | Jim Roseveare |
| Warren Lubich | Walt Strony |
| Jonas Nordwall | Bill Thomson |
| Donna Parker | Bob Vaughn |
| Dave Quinlan | Larry Vannucci |
| Dave Reese | |

THEATRES

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Castro
Cinema 21 (Marina)
Empress
Grand Lake
Paramount

Convention Headquarters will be the resplendent
Sheraton Palace Hotel

Encore - July 6th

ARTISTS

Rex Koury
Emil Martin

INSTALLATIONS

Fair Oaks Clubhouse
Arden Pizza & Pipes

Artists and instruments subject to change without prior notice.

PIPES &

Personalities

Seminar For Sports Stadium Organists

In July, tentatively at All-Star Baseball Game time, Rochester's Eastman School of Music will hold the first-ever seminar for sports stadium organists. The school's director, Robert Freeman, is an avid baseball fan, which probably accounts for the revolutionary venture. Those already signed up include Nancy Faust of Chicago's White Sox and Vince Lascheid of Pittsburgh's Pirates. Some sessions will be held at Red Wing Silver Stadium, others at the Eastman School.

Wibbels Is Head Organist Of Pipe Organ Place

In early July, Mark and Ed Huffman of the Pipe Organ Place in Elkhart, Indiana, named Tom Wibbels as their Head Organist and Music Director. Since his appointment Tom and a technical crew have been busy reworking the 3/10 Barton organ in the restaurant.

The organ was first installed in 1929 at the Orpheum Theatre in

Green Bay, Wisconsin. In 1940 it was purchased by the Zion Lutheran Church in Monroe, Michigan. At the church the Kinura and theatrical percussions were removed and a Dulciana rank was added. In 1971, two Fort Wayne, Indiana, men bought the organ and it sat in storage until 1975 when the Village Inn Pizza Parlor purchased the Barton. Unfortunately, a month after opening, a car crashed into the restaurant and destroyed the pneumatic relay. The old system was then replaced by a solid-state system. In May of 1980 the organ was sold to the Huffmans for the Pipe Organ Place. They plan to enlarge the Barton to 24 ranks.

In addition to Wibbels' duties at the restaurant, he has been travelling and playing on the theatre organ circuit.

Don Thompson Retires From Toronto Organ Grinder

After seven years of playing five hours a night, five nights a week at Toronto's Organ Grinder restaurant, Don Thompson retired at the end of November and left for a lengthy period of sailing in the Caribbean. He plans to return to Toronto in the spring and by then will probably be itching to get back to work.

Not only has organist-researcher-writer, Dr. John Landon moved back to his Lexington, Kentucky, home, but he has also been reinstated as house organist at the Anderson (Indiana) Paramount. For a number of

weeks, management had discontinued organludes as part of its Saturday night programs. It was feared that the house might even go into the X-rated business. The ownership, however, had second thoughts and is continuing a family-oriented policy. Dr. Landon, the "Prince of the Page," has been playing the 3/7 instrument for 28 years. Incidentally, John has acquired a 3/7 Page from a theatre in Fremont, Ohio. It is identical to the one in the Anderson Paramount, and will replace the hybrid Wurlitzer which he has had for a number of years.

* * *

For 17 years the 3/8 Kimball in the Lansdowne (Pennsylvania) Theatre had been played weekly and for special concerts. According to Bill Greenwood, it hasn't been played for some time, because of water damage. The future of the theatre is dim. Bill has purchased and removed the organ, and says he has a good chance to install it in another theatre where it will again be heard by the public.

An American First — Enthusiasts Resist Temptation To Form Organization

For some months several members of the Organ Historical Society had thought of forming a Northern California-based chapter, but several O.H.S. old hands counseled going slowly — not making it official until real interest was proved. So, as the first issue of their newsletter puts it, a non-organization of friends mutually concerned with the preservation and appreciation of historic pipe organs (both classical and theatre) was formed.

There are no dues, no officers, no membership cards and no bylaws. Modest funds for printing and mailing the newsletter were donated by several non-patrons just for the fun of it. The anonymous non-president stated: "Let us try, first of all, to gain some pleasure from working together to promote preservation of treasures from the past. After all, there are only two reasons to get together: (1) enjoy sharing each other's knowledge; and (2) magnify our power to influence recognition and preservation of endangered instruments. Without lots of goodwill and good fun we will

L to R: Ed Huffman, Tom Wibbels, Mark Huffman.



never do much of anything."

The name of the non-organization is The Central Pacific Organ Preservationists, and the address is 3101 Twentieth Street, San Francisco, California 94110. Their phone is 415/647-5132. *Swell to Great* is the title of the newsletter to be published occasionally.

* * *

Ever hear of a theatre pipe organ whose sound came into the auditorium through a grille beneath the pedals? There was such an instrument, according to Doc Bebko who played it. It was a three-manual Wurlitzer-Morton in the studios of WWRL in Woodside, Long Island. "It was utterly fantastic to actually feel the vibrations as it was played. A fellow named Sampson from the Robert-Morton Co. installed it about 1935. He also worked on the five 'Wonder Mortons' in Loew's theatres in the New York-New Jersey area."

* * *

The status of the Shea's Buffalo Theatre and its 4/28 Wurlitzer has been hanging on lean times of late. High operating costs, including a \$20,000 heating bill, winter storm effects, etc., have helped produce a pessimistic outlook. We're told that things may be easing toward the optimistic side. Buffalo spokesmen say that the organ will definitely be playing in January 1983. A total of \$140,000 has been spent on the Wurlitzer's refurbishing, mostly tax money.

* * *

Those who will be visiting the New England area and desire a little organ music should check in at the Hammond Castle Museum in Gloucester, Massachusetts, to hear the 4/144 hybrid. Once-a-month silent films are shown on Friday evenings. According to ex-Boston Paramount organist Bob Legon, there are some Hope-Jones voices, such as Tibias and Tuba Sonora, with portions of the pedal semi-expressive. Choir, Great, Swell, Solo and floating reed chorus are expressive.

A portion of the admission charge goes toward organ repair and restoration. A combination of salt air and long usage have made releathering necessary. "The beautiful organ sounds blend in with the mystery and massiveness of the castle, large cliffs,

crashing surf, and chirping sea birds. It has all the characteristics of a genuine movie palace, yet in a Gothic setting."

On the way to the Hammond Castle stop at the Ocean State Performing Arts Center in Providence, Rhode Island. The former Loew's Providence Theatre on Weybosset Street is being likened to the New York Paramount by some. With crowds of over 2800, there is still good reverberation. The 5/21 ex-Marbro Chicago console is kept in the up position in the event of another hurricane. Several times hurricanes have struck the area in the past 45 years. The city also has a hurricane

barrier as protection against the tides of Narragansett Bay.

Unique Greeting for Robin Richmond

Robin Richmond, one of the finest British theatre organists and creator of the famed BBC radio series "The Organist Entertains," and his wife, Renee, landed at J.F.K. Airport in September to begin a series of concerts in the United States. The first concert was scheduled at the Trenton War Memorial, where he was to play the 3/16 Moller.

Pushing their way through Customs and the milling masses, Robin

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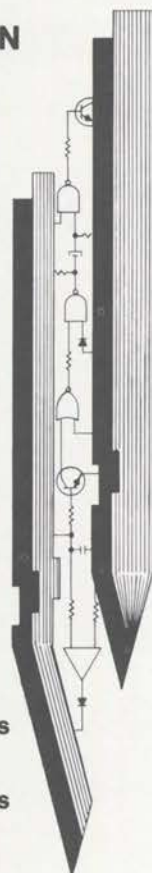
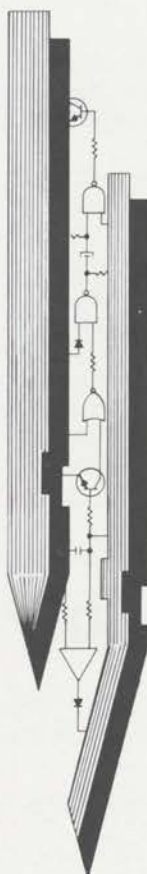
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Robin Richmond at the 7/455 Midmer-Losh, Atlantic City Convention Hall, New Jersey.



Frank Olsen at the Odeon Leicester Square five-manual "Duchess" Compton organ. (John D. Sharp photo)

could only hope that the Garden State members would be able to find them. Suddenly his eyes lit up, followed by an enormous smile as he saw Michael Cipolletti and Joe Vanore standing there each holding up a large Tibia pipe.

Greetings were exchanged and travelling bags stowed away. The traffic was wall-to-wall and realizing that their train schedule could never be met, Joe suggested a side trip to the Beacon Theatre at 74th and Broadway where he is a crew member maintaining the 4/19 Wurlitzer. Robin delighted in playing the beautiful "Princess." Then he and Renee caught the next train to Trenton.

Robin had made one major request. He expressed the desire to play the world's largest pipe organ, the 7/455 Midmer-Losh in the Atlantic City Convention Hall. Bill Smith, crew chief of the Trenton War Memorial organ, made arrangements. The day after a most successful concert, Robin played the 7/455 monster and the 4/55 Kimball in the Grand Ballroom. The remainder of the day was spent touring the "Playboy" Casino and other attractions on the famous boardwalk of Atlantic City.

GINNY VANORE

* * *

Bill Floyd, busy as a bee, reports on two things in which he's interested. First is an updating on Richmond's Virginia Center for the Performing Arts (ex-Loew's). "There was much gloom and doom about the loss of sky in this atmospheric house. We are fortunate that the theatre has been saved with a \$6 million budget for renovation. When the lighting is retracted, the sky is intact; one can hardly distinguish the outlines. The retractable

light bay runs the entire width of the auditorium and is a marvel of engineering, as are the retractable speakers far above the proscenium. The computers which will control the pre-sets are installed backstage, making the system one of the most up-to-date in the theatre field.

"The organ lift is under construction, the orchestra lift is in. There will be a basement banquet-cafeteria as well as studios. The painters are in, and it is apparent that this will be a most flexible and functional theatre. The new swell shades are ready for installation and twelve regulators have been re-covered."

Between phases of work as described, Bill has concertized. The weekend of October 2 found him at Penn State Prison, playing a concert in the chapel. "The inmates were wonderful — and very appreciative. One said 'it's worth coming to prison, just to know these wonderful people,' meaning the superintendent and warden. The whole weekend was one Marge and I will never forget, and I'm

doing much thinking about prison situations. I firmly believe that music and the arts can contribute much in the way of true therapy."

* * *

Frank Olsen, Dean of Canadian cinema organists, spent the summer at his residence in Glasgow, Scotland. He had a whirlwind concert tour during September when he played organ concerts in Blackpool, Odeon Leicester Square, Bolton, Gosport (South Coast) and Louth. Olsen also played a concert at the Wurlitzer in East Kilbride, Scotland, on October 3 before returning to his home in Port Colborne, Ontario.

Organists Invited To Play In England

In a recent letter we were told that Turner's Musical Merry-Go-Round in Northampton (about 75 miles northwest of London) is extending an invitation to American artists to play the 3/19 Wurlitzer installed in the restaurant.

ATOS 1983 San Francisco National Convention

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 Antioch, California 94509

The organ was originally in the Paramount, Newcastle upon Tyne. After removal from the theatre it was installed in the Kitchen Brothers auto showrooms at Diss, Norfolk, where it was recorded by Frank Olsen. It was completely overhauled prior to its installation at Turner's.

Any American professional organist who plans to be in England after April, and would like an engagement for a mid-week or weekend concert at Turner's is invited to write at once to Alan A. Ashton, 58 Lever House Lane, Leyland, Preston PR5/2XN, Lancashire, England. The letter should include a breakdown of the organist's fee and expenses.

Junchen Writing Project Expands

Early this year Dave Junchen began writing a book on "The Care and Feeding of Theatre Organs," to be published by Vestal Press. He planned to include some interesting previously unpublished historical material in the primarily technical book. After a little digging he came up with more historical material than could be included in the planned book. So, Junchen has broadened his writing project to include a two-volume work, "The Encyclopedia of American Theatre Organs."

The encyclopedia is to contain an historical sketch and opus list for each of the builders of organs for theatres — some 100 builders and a total of about 6800 organs in theatres. Of great help in making the opus lists complete was the cooperation of the makers of Spencer and Kinetic blowers, who allowed complete access to their files.

A major source of material was the archives of the Wurlitzer company. There he found a treasure trove — hundreds of rare photographs, many never before published; 1100 pages of correspondence between Robert Hope-Jones and Farney Wurlitzer; original drawings of organ parts, chamber layouts, pipe scales, and much more. He was allowed to break open locked ledger books, the keys for which had been lost for decades.

Junchen expects to have Volume I of the work ready by the time of the '83 convention. Volume II will be available about six months later, and the "Care and Feeding" book will follow soon thereafter.



Dave Junchen looks over some old Wurlitzer ledger books.

John Ledwon Plays for West Coast RCHM Christmas Show

A West Coast duplicate of the famous Radio City Music Hall "Christmas Spectacular" was presented during the holiday season in the huge (5800 seats) Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

ATOS Director John Ledwon was chosen to play the 4/73 Moller organ during the run of the show (59 performances). The organ was used alone before and after each show, and with the 35-piece orchestra during the overture and Nativity scene. John says that, although the organ is not unified, the overall sound is magnificent and quite theatrical, but the organ is extremely difficult to play because of the great distances between the console and the chambers located on both sides of one of the largest stages in the country.

Before and after each show crowds gathered around the console to examine it and ask questions about the instrument.

Mighty-Disney Deal Off

Ever since the rumor that the "mightiest Wurlitzer" might be sold by the mother company, ATOSers have been concerned about the future of the instrument assembled by the Wurlitzer Organ Company in a specially-built studio in De Kalb, Illinois, to exemplify the firm's historical best. Changing economic conditions have apparently forced a change of plan, which means that the 65-rank assembled pipe organ is endangered.

The rumor started that the Walt Disney organization might be inter-

ested in the representative instrument for installation in one of the Disney Epcot Center exhibits in Orlando, Florida, the new complex which deals with the future as well as with the past.

Several ATOSers attempted to promote the idea by sending prospectuses and copies of THEATRE ORGAN which dealt with the assembly of the instrument, along with offers to help in any way possible. These overtures resulted in requests for further information by the Disney Company, and the interested ATOSers held their collective breath.

Alas, to no avail. In a memo dated December 2, 1982, John Thompson, who handles talent selection as well as PR for Disney, stated "Unfortunately, the Disney Company is not able to acquire the Mightiest Wurlitzer." End of dream.

John Ledwon at the 4/73 Moller in the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium.





Organ console is backstage at the Granada Slough, and was projected by CCTV for members in the theatre. Byron Jones at the console and Dave Ross behind the camera.



Compere Norman Barfield chatting with Byron Jones prior to the concert at the Granada Slough.

London Chapter Uses Closed Circuit TV For Concert

Sunday, October 24 saw a unique experiment taking place when the London and South of England Chapter presented Byron Jones in concert on the 3/8 Wurlitzer at the Granada Cinema, Slough. It might seem that neither the word unique nor experiment would apply to such a venture, until one realizes that the console of this very fine organ is completely hidden behind the screen of the tripled cinema and it has not been heard in public for eleven years.

With the enthusiastic cooperation of the Granada management and particularly of the manager of the theatre, Mr. Simpson, and his staff, a system of closed circuit TV was installed, enabling the large audience in the cinema to see Byron's features and fingers at the console while reveling in the sounds of the instrument lovingly brought to tuneful excellence by Les and Len Rawle and their dedicated band of helpers.

Doubts about the feasibility of presenting a concert in such conditions were very soon resolved as the cinema resounded to the sounds of the mighty Wurlitzer once more. Byron says he found it strange at first playing to the beady eye of a TV camera, but soon settled to producing music which was enthusiastically acclaimed by the audience. The twin monitors of the closed circuit TV expertly operated by Dave Ross showed the console remarkably clearly, more clearly in fact than would normally be the case

watching a concert on stage from circle seats. There is no doubt that this idea has tremendous potential even with concerts under more usual conditions.

At the end of the concert the audience gave vociferous assent to the suggestion that another such event be

staged soon. The ATOS Chapter can be justifiably proud of its faith in putting on this concert. Thanks are due to Byron, to Granada, to Dave Ross and to all those who worked so hard to see that this beautiful instrument can be heard again in public.

NORMAN BARFIELD □

ATOS Committee Reports

YOUNG ORGANIST'S AWARD COMMITTEE REPORT

We are glad to report that the Young Organist's Award Committee is alive and working, and hopes to have a young organist to present at a future convention.

Committee members include: Walter Beaupre of Kingston, Rhode Island; Art Cox of Maplewood, New Jersey; Erle Renwick of Sudbury, Massachusetts; and Roy Sharp of Florham Park, New Jersey. National Director Allen Miller is also serving on the committee as liaison with the National Board. It would have been nice to have representation from a broader geographical area, but the ability to get interaction between committee members, to meet together and bounce ideas off each other and arrive at decisions which represent pooled judgment — this seemed to outweigh any advantages in having different geograph-

ical areas represented; a stance with which both Allen Miller and President Lois Segur concurred.

The committee has already come up with two major decisions: First, that a "young" organist for purposes of our competition is one who is not over 21 at the time of first appearance as winner at a national convention; second, that the way a chapter chooses a candidate is entirely up to the chapter. The only requirement for entry in the national competition is that a tape recording containing the specified music played by an organist within the age limitation and certified by the chapter to be a true and accurate recording be submitted by the specified date. Provision is also being made for submission of entries by ATOS members who do not belong to chapters, or who wish to sponsor a candidate independent of any chapter.

The committee is obtaining input from three full-time professional artists who are National directors, namely Lowell Ayars, Rex Koury and Ashley Miller. By the next issue, we expect to publish full details, and will also mail them as soon as available to Chapter Chairmen.

To assist chapters that might like to start planning for a chapter competition, see the article in this issue entitled "About Theatre Organ Competitions," which I hope will be of help to those chapters that have never staged one. Anyone requesting further information on this, or on any facet of our planning, is invited to write to me at 664 Litchfield Turnpike, Bethany, Connecticut 06525.

We hope that chapters and individual members will back this effort to bring young organists to know and love the mighty theatre pipe organ as we do, and to give deserving young organists a national forum in which to be heard.

Eleanor D. Weaver, *Chairman* □



Letters to the Editors

Letters concerning all aspects of the theatre organ hobby are welcome. Unless clearly marked "not for publication" letters may be published in whole or in part.

Address:
Editor, THEATRE ORGAN
3448 Cowper Court
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Opinions expressed in this column are those of the correspondents, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or the policies of ATOS or THEATRE ORGAN magazine.

Dear Editor:

This is a slightly belated expression of thanks directed to the Detroit gang for a most enjoyable convention last July. I was very impressed by the extreme friendliness of the Detroit hosts and appreciated very much how well organized the event was.

Having been involved with convention planning, I can well appreciate what you went through! I have not attended an ATOS national convention for 17 years, but am looking forward to future conventions as you really got me hooked on these things!

I also want to thank all of the organbuilders who attended my seminar and for the support you gave it with your many questions. Maybe next time more time can be allocated for such an event.

Sincerely,
Lance E. Johnson

Dear Lloyd:

I want to tell you directly how much I enjoyed your articles on Dolph Goebel and Bill Gage in recent issues of THEATRE ORGAN. Both were good friends of mine.

Because he lived not too far from me, Bill was a frequent visitor for many years. In addition to the pleasure he derived from playing a theatre organ, he also enjoyed long, analyti-

cal discussions on subjects such as styles of organists, those who could do better on a Wurlitzer than on a Robert-Morton, those who'd play chords and progressions on certain organs as opposed to others, how registration differs in the type of

music or size of hall and audience.

We'd play records and tapes, sometimes taking sequences from several records and transferring them to one tape which we'd put away for a month or two. Then, we'd play the tape for ourselves and guests, trying to name the artist and the organ. I miss Bill, and your articles on him and Dolph are a couple of nice things which were done about two fine individuals who passed among the many of us who love the theatre organ.

I noticed in your Nuggets column in the Jan./Feb. 1982 issue the name of Oscar Roed. I knew him since the forties, but have lost track of him and so has Mary Goebel. Anyone know of his whereabouts?

I am looking forward to meeting other theatre organists via your articles, and I wish you success.

Sincerely,
Stanley Warzala
Wayne, New Jersey □



CHAPTER NOTES

Edited by Grace E. McGinnis

BEEHIVE Salt Lake City

801/467-5700 or 801/486-9098

Beehive Chapter members and guests met at the Valley Organ and Piano Company on November 12. Chairman Clarence E. Briggs presided and the annual business meeting and election of officers and directors for 1983 was accomplished.

Harry Weirauch, Co-Chairman of the Capitol Theatre Restoration project, reported on the status of the organ, noting that completion is now a matter of weeks away with tuning, voicing and final checkout remaining. By the time these activities are concluded, in excess of 5000 man-hours of dedicated labor will have been expended.

Valley Organ hosts, ATOSers Nita Waldron and Scott Gillespie, proved

to be excellent hosts with Nita preparing refreshments, and Scott starting us out with four numbers on their fea-



Past Chairman Clare Briggs, 1983 Vice Chairman Gene Breinholt and 1983 Chairman Lowell Boberg at the Valley Organ Center. (Harry Weirauch photo)

ATOS

28th
ANNUAL CONVENTION
JULY 1-5, 1983

San Francisco

tured Hammond Elegante Organ. Open console was then in order on the several models of Hammond organs on display.

On December 3 Beehive Chapter members were guests at the installation banquet of the Organ Club of Salt Lake City, held at the Number One Restaurant in West Valley City. Following the banquet, new club members were installed and guests were introduced. The climax of the evening was a beautiful organ concert by club member Leni Rolfson, one of Salt Lake's outstanding jazz organists, playing on a Hammond organ furnished by the Valley Organ and Piano Company.

LOWELL J. BOBERG

CENTRAL FLORIDA THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



Tampa

813/384-1854 or 813/863-2264

In October a good attendance of about fifty members and guests were present at our meeting at J. Burns Pizza & Pipes. After the business meeting, members had the opportunity to play this fine Wurlitzer during open console. Among those who played

was Charlie Stanford, who is also staff organist at J. Burns. Afterwards, members stayed for the entertainment and the pizza.

Our November meeting was held at the Clipper Cove Yacht Club in Clearwater. Progress is being made on the Tampa Theatre Wurlitzer installation with the console and relay still remaining to be hooked up. Once again open console was enjoyed at M.C. and Velma Burnham's Conn theatre organ at their residence. Our membership is continuing to grow. We have eight new members, all of whom we wish to welcome.

Finally, with deep regret, we mention the passing of our chairman, Edward "Ted" Chapman. He took an active part in the Tampa Theatre organ installation and will be greatly missed. Vice-Chairman Everett Bassett will take over until a new election.

SANDRA SHOOK



A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS

Let us know what's happening in YOUR chapter. Our goal is to make this section as interesting and useful as possible for all of our readers. Here is how YOU can help:

DO remember you have an international audience;
pay attention to deadlines—we have to meet them, too;
check the spelling of artists' names;
tell us about theatre organs in your area, public and private;
tell us about theatre restorations in your area;
tell us about your community involvement, new artists, scholarships, promotional programs involving your chapter;
tell us about coming events and how visitors to your area may obtain tickets;
tell us who is playing what organs and where;
include photos whenever possible; and
send your chapter bulletins to the editor—they are very helpful.

DON'T include the program each of your artists plays—mention, perhaps, an outstanding arrangement;
include news that is only of interest to your local chapter, or gossip, menus or other trivia.

SEND news, photos and chapter bulletins to:
Editor, THEATRE ORGAN
3448 Cowper Court, Palo Alto, CA 94306

All copy for Chapter Notes is to be typewritten, double-spaced, on 8½ x 11 white paper, with 1½" margins all around. Photos should be black and white for best reproduction. Type each photo caption on a separate sheet and attach to the photo.

DEADLINES

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Dec. 1 for Jan./Feb. | June 1 for July/Aug. |
| Feb. 1 for Mar./Apr. | Aug. 1 for Sept./Oct. |
| Apr. 1 for May/June | Oct. 1 for Nov./Dec. |



CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER

Indianapolis

317/283-3410 or 317/786-2160

In lieu of a September meeting, the group took a bus tour to central Ohio. The bus left Indianapolis on September 18 at 6:30 a.m. The first stop was the Marion, Ohio, Palace Theatre, now a 1434-seat performing arts theatre which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1978 and now appears on the National Register of Historic Places. Here several members played the organ in open console.

The group moved along to Columbus and the beautiful Ohio Theatre. Dennis James, resident organist and friend of Central Indiana Chapter, was our most gracious host. The Saturday night movie was *A Tale of Two Cities*, starring Ronald Coleman, preceded by a half hour of beautiful classical music by Dennis James. The Ohio Theatre was a former Loew's movie palace which opened in March, 1928. It is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

On Sunday a concert was given by G. Dene Bernard, one of the finest organists in Columbus, at the First Con-

gregational Church. The church has two organs, a Kimball and a 3/73 Von Beckerath. Mr. Bernard, after his concert, told us a great deal about the organs, especially the tracker instrument.

The group then attended a concert at the Broad Street Methodist Church given by Thomas Murray, American concert organist and assistant professor in the School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University. Following the concert, the group attended a reception given by the church. Then on home late Sunday. All agreed that it was a good tour.

On October 10 our group met in the auditorium at Manual High School. After the business meeting, everyone settled down to hear the "pipes" at Manual. Mr. Carl Wright, teacher at Manual and organ enthusiast, said that it was exactly ten years ago that the Louisville Uniphone organ was brought into Manual to be installed. Our organist for the day, Mr. Carlton Smith, presented a delightful program.

On October 29, Bill Vlasak, organist at Paramount Music Palace, presented a concert at Manual for the Indianapolis Fire Buffs and Fire Department Museum, Inc. After his concert selections he accompanied the silent movie *The Phantom of the Opera*.

The setting for the November meeting was the Pipe Dream Restaurant in Kokomo, where Dr. Jack Elleman and his wife, Carrie, were host and hostess. In 1980, when the S.S. Kresge Company sold their store on the square in Kokomo, Dr. Elleman purchased the building, and the realization of his "pipe dream" began. Besides the restaurant, there are several unique craft shops located in the arcade. There is a video game room in the basement along with a meeting room where we met. The pizza parlor is equipped with a large stage in the front where the twelve-rank 1913 Wurlitzer sits in all its glory. Dr. Elleman has fondly named his organ "Second-Hand Rose," and after his

performance and a program presented by house organist Bill Tandy, several members performed on open console. The program was not strictly for members as the pizza parlor continued to serve the public. This meeting was truly enjoyed by all who attended.

MARY LOU HARRELL



**Chicago Area Theatre
Organ Enthusiasts**
312/470-0743 or 312/627-3245

Chicago Theatre Gambit, November 10: notice of hearings for landmark status of the Chicago Theatre posted. November 12, Plitt Theatres apply to city for demolition permit. City refuses, citing incomplete paperwork by Cleveland Wrecking Company. CATOE has taken part in all hearings to date on the plight of the Chicago Theatre. At the first hearing, November 18, organ builder Bill Hansen testified to the organ's integral part of the building, design, early use and resurrection by CATOE in 1967. Chicago Theatre organist Bob Chaney played a tape of the first known electrically recorded (microphone) commercial record, which just happened to be Jesse Crawford at the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer. He also provided proof of national radio hook-up from the Chicago Theatre with copies of radio transcriptions. A show-stopper from George Wright's latest direct-to-disc recording at the Chicago Theatre ended his testimony. Vice-Chairman Bob Boin presented CATOE's plea that the theatre organ be considered part and parcel with the Chicago Theatre in landmark designation. The more than three hours of testimony for the theatre included statements from Mayor Byrne and Josie Balaban Coture. Plitt Theatres' lawyers did not cross examine, but merely waited their turn to present their point which, paraphrased, reads: We do not care about nostalgia, architecture, history, pipe organs or theatre; let's talk money. For those of you who would help us save the Chicago Theatre and its Mighty Wurlitzer, please write to Ira Bach, Landmarks Commission, 320 North Clark Street, Room 800, Chicago, Illinois 60610. To be continued.

January 9 found CATOE and its offspring together again at the Joliet Rialto. CATOE, Land of Lincoln, Dairyland and Joliet chapters heard piano and organ duets by Bob Chaney and Bob Coslett of Walnut Creek, California. Theatre tours were conducted, open console lasted for hours and refreshments were served in the rotunda under the chandelier known as "The Duchess." And a good time was had by all.

CHRISTOPHER CARLO



**CONNECTICUT VALLEY
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, INC.**



Thomaston
203/378-9192 or 203/583-8334

Our October meeting was held at the Thomaston Opera House so invited friends from neighboring chapters could join us at the organ, socialize, and hear our chapter member David Senak present a program. After our early afternoon business session, the hall was available for open console until the dinner hour.

Came 7:30 and it was time for David to play. He was introduced by Program Chairman Bob Bailey, then promptly began making the pipes speak in well-arranged sequence; the result being an hour or so of very good music, especially remarkable considering his years. Joined by an area choral group, David demonstrated capability in accompaniment in addition to his solo talents. Altogether, our singers and organist made us mighty glad we had come.

NEW FIRST CLASS AND AIRMAIL RATES FOR THEATRE ORGAN

Effective January 1, 1983, special mail rates for THEATRE ORGAN will be as follows:

FIRST CLASS —
U.S. and Canada\$12.00 per year

AIRMAIL —
Great Britain & Europe\$15.00 per year
Australia, New Zealand,
South Africa\$20.00 per year

NOTE: These are the correct rates. The rates shown on non-chapter member's statements are wrong because of a printing error.

THEATRE ORGAN
CLASSIFIED ADS
GET RESULTS!
TRY ONE

On October 22, 23 and 24, Lyn Larsen once again held forth at the Thomaston Opera House. We have had Lyn here toward the end of each year with some regularity. This year Lyn had with him Jack Bethards from California. Jack assembled ten very capable musicians from the Al Gentile Orchestras group, a Connecticut organization, to augment the pipe organ in some most entertaining arrangements of familiar music from the Golden Days of radio. Jack has collected, over the years, some 175,000 original arrangements used by such performers as Anson Weeks, Ray Noble, Nathaniel Shilkret and others. It was from these arrangements that the program for our concert was compiled.

Lyn started the evening with his familiar arrangement of "That's Entertainment," soon coming to a medley of Duke Ellington creations. A fine arrangement of the "War March of the Priests" concluded the first part of the evening's bill. Then it was time for Jack Bethards and company to augment the program. This was done with much gusto as organ and orchestra put us, figuratively speaking, "on the air" with a group of 1946 tunes. Lyn finished the evening with some additional popular tunes and an outstanding rendition of Puccini's "Un bel di," to leave us in a fine state for enchanted slumber. The brass, drums, piano and bass instruments so capably directed by Jack Bethards in concert with the fine Marr & Colton pipe organ provided an interesting and very entertaining evening. Many favorable comments were heard from the audience.

On March 19 and 20 Charlie Balogh will play for us at the Thomaston Opera House. For tickets and information contact Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Connecticut 06483. Telephone 203/888-9696.

W. F. POWERS

DAIRYLAND Milwaukee

414/463-2365 or 414/771-8522

Fred Hermes opened his home and "Basement Theatre" to DTOS members and invited guests for his annual Halloween program in October. Fred himself accompanied the full-length version of *The Phantom of the Opera* on his five-manual Wurlitzer. A standing-room-only crowd enjoyed the classic film and special effects on the Brenograph, not to mention the Halloween treats after the program.



Jerry Nagano at the Avalon Theatre.

(Pat Jameson photo)

Many thanks to Fred and Veryl for the enjoyable evening.

Jerry Nagano made his midwest debut on November 14 on the Avalon Theatre Wurlitzer. Jerry delighted the crowd with a very diverse program and the Buster Keaton film *One Week*. The organ has recently been expanded and is now a 3/12.

After the concert there was a reception for Jerry at the Riverside Theatre. There were refreshments and theatre tours as well as open console on the Riverside's 3/13 Wurlitzer. When Jerry got up to take his turn, he was treated to a full display of the theatre's lighting and scenic effects.

CARRIE NELSON



Babson College, Wellesley
617/244-4136 or 617/754-1508

The principal order of business at our October Babson meeting was acceptance of the Nominating Committee's slate of 1983 chapter officers. Our afternoon's artist, member Dr. Jonathan Kleefield, always makes our Wurlitzer speak with authority. His opening few bars of Bach's "Toccatina in D" modulated into "Who," and then a fine contrasting variety of marches, movie themes and old fa-

vorites followed. The audience response required Jon to extend his concert with a double encore, Anderson's "Sandpaper Ballet" and Faure's "Pelleas et Melisande." During open console, Dr. Jon was also among the several attracted to our Wurlitzer, such is its magnetism.

EMCATOS' twin concerts by Dennis James, October 23 and 24, were among the best we ever presented. This opinion was heard many times during both intermissions and upon conclusion of each. Mr. James is only 32, yet he has captured the feel of the "Golden Era" of the theatre organ like a veteran. His polished, thoroughly prepared programs were truly works of art.

Before dimming the house lights, recorded music of that era was heard as the focus of attention was our shiny black console bedecked with a large basket of fall flowers. Over the P.A. system then came an announcement, "From the Ohio Theatre in Columbus, Ohio — Dennis James!" Lights out, the screen pictured Dennis seated at a console, then leaving, strolling over the house porch to a Model A Ford. After climbing into the rumble-seat with background barbershop quartet singing, he headed for the Ohio Theatre. Entering through the lobby doors of the gleaming theatre, he ambled down the aisle to the white and gold console, dressed in white suit and straw hat. Dennis, in person, then came down the aisle spotlighted in similar dress as mounting applause greeted him. As beautiful colored views of the Ohio were screened, Dennis began his program with the appropriate "Beautiful Ohio." Amid loud approbation he turned with a "WELCOME TO BABSON DREAM THEATRE" greeting and stated that his program would be an introduction to the 1920's use of the organ in movie houses. Wonderful music of Berlin, Kern, H.N. Brown and others was played with great accuracy and feeling, utilizing the organ's resources to the hilt. Lightning-fast registration changes, second-touch use, pistons, toe studs, all carefully enhanced his program. Dick Johnson and crew added much to the mood changes with lighting effects. Community sing-along time with Dennis' vintage and humorous slides was a great hit. For the Halloween season, the best Laurel and Hardy comedy we have seen in years, *Habeas Corpus*, was screened with truly expert accompaniment.

After intermission, Dennis paid tribute to one of the greatest theatre organists, the late Reginald Foort, with Foort's arrangement of the "Poet and Peasant Overture," which served to introduce a musical trip around the world. His audiences were "up" in all ways as they applauded this most talented organist, so Dennis reciprocated with two tunes from Kern's *Roberta*. Dennis James gave us two most memorable concerts showing his thoroughness in attention to detail, musicianship, knowledge of his instrument, programming and showmanship. We all left with a warm glow and Dennis won many friends for himself and for theatre pipe organ. Isn't that what it's all about?

STANLEY C. GARNISS



GARDEN STATE
THEATRE
ORGAN
SOCIETY, INC.

New Jersey
609/888-0909 or 201/891-1588

On September 26, the Garden State Chapter proudly presented Robin Richmond, one of Britain's few remaining "original" theatre organists. Prior to the concert, Mr. Richmond was greeted at the airport by Program Chairman Michael Cipolletti and member Joe Vanore. Unsure as to how Mr. Richmond would be able to recognize them, they secured the assistance of a couple of Tibia pipes and carried them into the airport. The result was instant recognition.

Mr. Richmond has performed for U.S. audiences during three previous tours. He is one of the few singing theatre organists who publicly do so. His concert stylings were thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance. This writer particularly enjoyed the Edvard Grieg selections so rarely heard in performance on theatre pipe organs.

October 22, the Trenton War Memorial was the scene for the installation of new officers, the annual banquet, and a superb concert by Ralph Ringstad who has delighted audiences at the U.S. Military Academy's Moller and the sorely missed Suburban Restaurant's Wurlitzer. Chairman Jack Moelmann addressed the members and outlined the goals of the ad-

ministration for the coming year. He presented Ginny Vanore with a brass trumpet for ten years of dedicated service as editor of the chapter newsletter, *Pedals and Pipes*.

Meanwhile, quick progress is being made as work crews have been formed at the former Broadway Theatre in North Bergen and at the Asbury Park Convention Hall. More details of the progress at these installations will be presented in future chapter notes.

ED BAYKOWSKI

GULF COAST Pensacola 904/433-4683

Chairman Tom Helms is through with his studies and is now back at the helm of our chapter.

B.D. Rhea, M.D., is still bee-busy on his construction of the reproduction of the Wonder Morton. He is up to the stage of putting in the electric switches on the stop tabs. Sure looks good!

If you think building a console is simple, please stop and consider. Now, you would think to build a pipe organ you would start with pipes. Right? Wrong! One of our starting goals was the purchase of a blower. Sound simple? No way! To begin with, the blower was in Abilene, Texas, in the basement of a small college. We heard of the availability of the blower, and the size and price suited us. This necessitated a trip to Abilene, garnering workers from the local unemployment bureau to help, renting a U-Haul and pulling the whole thing back to Pensacola behind the car. Some job! Then, to add to all this, heat of 117°. Well, we got home with the blower, and the workers at the Saenger Theatre helped off-load the thing into the basement of the theatre where it will blow. You would think that after dismantling and pulling the whole thing all those miles, the rest would be simple. Forget that. In the Law of Murphy, nothing is simple. Sometimes he runs over into ATOS work, too. Murphy, I mean. After the almost thousand-mile odyssey, the blower sat three inches from its connecting point with no way to connect it to the shaft. To the rescue came Tom's father with a portable lifting mechanism which lifted the behemoth motor the necessary three inches, and now it is home! Twenty-five horsepower motors are heavy — in case you need to get one this week.

Our next meeting will see the election of officers for the coming year. Hopefully, our organ might be playable by that time. The whole town is interested, and our chairman is working closely with the theatre officials on the many phases of its installation. Oh! to see it come from the pit in sound! Dream on, fellow members.

DOROTHY STANDLEY



AMERICAN THEATRE
ORGAN SOCIETY
Land O' Lakes Chapter

St. Paul
715/262-5086 or 612/771-1771

Our chapter has never been so busy — one concert after another! Once again we had the privilege of hearing the magnificent 3/13 Robert-Morton pipe organ at the Powderhorn Park Baptist Church in Minneapolis when Paul-Wesley Bowen played for us on August 29.

Labor Day weekend found about twenty LOLTOS members attending another of Bobby Schmidt's famous music festivals at his Indian Hills Resort in Wisconsin. The guest artist was none other than Lyn Larsen headlining the programs for three evenings. We enjoyed his charm and easy rapport with his audience in such close, intimate surroundings, and we feel that we really got to know him. Others participating in the programs: Dr. Kerry Grippe from the University of Iowa thrilled us with his artistry at the grand piano; Arma Neff, 93 years young, received a standing ovation for her violin solos accompanied by Lyn Larsen at the organ; Sylvia Hartman, a multi-talented young lady from Minneapolis, played her beautiful harp and sang several numbers accompanied by Lyn at the organ. Sylvia also plays piano and organ. We all felt fortunate, indeed, to hear such beautiful music in such surroundings.

On September 10 Lyn Larsen appeared in concert at the World Theatre in downtown St. Paul. Bobby Schmidt again brought his Rodgers 340 from the resort and Lyn, of course, was much at home at the organ after playing the previous weekend for the festival.

About fifty LOLTOS members traveled in separate cars on October 10 to Spring Valley where Mike Erie, our own vice-chairman, played a delightful concert of familiar tunes on

the 2/8 Wurlitzer situated in the loft of the enchanting barn owned by Dr. Roland and Marilyn Matson.

On October 22 Rob Calcaterra, organist at Radio City Music Hall, played at the World Theatre on the Rodgers 340, courtesy of Bobby Schmidt. Arma Neff, in a cameo appearance, played her violin accompanied by Rob at the organ. There was a silent movie and a sing-along which made a thoroughly enjoyable concert.

Cedarhurst, a beautiful historic mansion in Cottage Grove which is the home of "Goldie," the giant Wurlitzer, was the scene of our annual election meeting on November 19, preceded by a dinner and followed by a concert by Harvey Gustafson, well-known Twin Cities organist.

Another concert at the World Theatre, held on November 26, featured Paul-Wesley Bowen at the Rodgers and five wonderfully talented singers in a program of tunes from Broadway shows, a truly delightful musical treat. The guest singers were Dr.

Michael Livingston, Eleanor Call, Madalyn Traun, Laura Nichols and Cheryl Wittala.

VERNA MAE WILSON

LONDON & SOUTH OF ENGLAND 8956-32369 or 1-788-8791

Our fifth "Young Theatre Organist of the Year" Competition, held this year at the Granada Harrow in northwest London and featuring the sparkling 3/8 Wurlitzer of 1937 vintage, was an outstanding success, drawing a record 12 entrants from various parts of the country.

With ages ranging from 12 to 16, the lineup had an equal mix of boys and girls and an exceptionally fine cross-section of theatre organ favorites in the two free choices allocated to each competitor. These were complemented by one set piece, "Charleston."

Before a very appreciative audi-

ence, the competition adjudicators were Dr. Joanna Frazer with both classical and theatre organ appreciation; Frank Fowler who heads the renowned Hill, Norman and Beard organ company which earlier built the brilliant Christie theatre organs; and good friend and chapter member Dennis James, who was in London for a major silent film festival at the Dominion Theatre in London's Tottenham Court Road. As usual, Len Rawle acted as chairman.

After a truly first-rate playing program, we enjoyed an exciting 20-minute interlude played by last year's winner, exceptionally talented Rodney Pooley, while the adjudicators retired to finish their assessments. The winner was stylish 15-year-old John Barlow of Gomersal, West Yorkshire. In second place was 14-year-old Helen Kaye of nearby Berry Brow. Both John and Helen have been greatly encouraged by John Whitely of the '3Js' Leisure Centre at



Rodney Pooley, 1981 winner, hands over the chain of office to 1982 winner, John Barlow. London Chapter chairman looks on. (John Sharp photo)



Young Organist of the Year competitors, with winners seated on the bench, L to R: 3rd place, Jeffrey Solman, 16; 1st place, John Barlow, 15; 2nd place, Helen Kaye, 14. (John Sharp photo)



Marquee of theatre where Young Organist of the Year Competition was held on November 21, 1982. (John Sharp photo)



"ATOS 82" proudly displayed in front of organ grilles for competition. Note also special bench with "ATOS." (John Sharp photo)



Reginald Porter Brown, who passed away August 12, 1982. A favorite organist on all our safaris, was most often described as "the organist with four hands." He was a brilliant musician who will be greatly missed at Southampton Guild Hall. USA visitors rated him the "tops."
(John Sharp photo)



Fifteen-year-old Jennifer Candea made her debut at the Barton organ in Ann Arbor's Michigan Theatre in October.
(Bo Hanley photo)

Gomersal, which houses the 3/10 Compton formerly in the Gaumont Cinema, Doncaster, and proving the importance of regular access to such an installation. In third place was 16-year-old Geoffrey Solman from Sidcup in Kent in his third competition, and now playing regular "live" interludes each Friday night at the recently restored 3/6 Compton in the State Cinema, Grays in southeast Essex.

John Barlow collected £50 cash, as well as the now prestigious silver inscribed "Chain of Office." With a second prize of £25, third prize of £15 and all other competitors receiving £5 each, all twelve received LP records from Amberlee Records, Joanna Frazer, Frank Fowler, and Dennis James, together with other handsome supportive gifts.

As usual, good chapter friend Audrey Williams of South Wales brought along three fine young pupils to compete, together with a wagon load of fervent supporters.

Encouraging various similar competitions in other parts of the UK, and now, we are happy to see, in the USA, our "YOY" is a well-established feature of our annual calendar. Moreover, with around 40 young organists grouped around our chapter and the enthusiastic support of their families and friends, we are pleased to be laying a firm foundation for the continuation of our chosen pleasure. Several of them are now employed in the organ business and are also booking im-

pressive concert engagements.

Sadly, 1982 ended on a somber note with the passing of the uniquely talented veteran organist Reginald Porter Brown (conventioners will remember his scintillating performances at Southampton Guildhall in 1976 and 1980). However, we take comfort that his special talents have been captured on numerous LP records, including some from his tour of Australia a few years back, and a reproduction of his only 78 disc which he cut at the Regal Walton-on-Thames Compton around 1943, just issued in a new compilation.

NORMAN BARFIELD

Motor
City
Theatre
Organ
Society, Inc.



Detroit
313/537-1133

Twenty chapter organists played during our two-day garage sale at the Redford Theatre the first weekend in October. Proceeds from the very successful event will go toward the purchase of the theatre.

The eighteenth birthday of Motor City Chapter was celebrated October

15 at the Redford Theatre. Members viewed numerous photographs, publicity posters and other memorabilia from the early years of the chapter on display in the lobby. Following introductory remarks by Marge Muethel, Don Lockwood spoke from the stage and, to the accompaniment of Lou Behm at the organ, recounted several remembrances from the early years of the chapter which was formed at the home of Al and Betty Mason on October 15, 1964. The birthday celebration was co-chaired by Marge Muethel and Virginia Duerr.

Gaylord Carter's program at the Redford Theatre on October 16 marked his twelfth silent film presentation for our chapter. Gaylord, who this year celebrates his sixtieth year in show business, accompanied *The General* with dramatically appropriate film scoring.

On October 30, two busloads of chapter members journeyed to Kalamazoo to attend a benefit concert by Father Jim Miller at the State Theatre, where local enthusiasts are seeking support to save the atmospheric movie house and its Barton theatre pipe organ.

Our annual membership meeting was held at the Redford Theatre on November 7 and featured a catered dinner in the lobby. Gerald Muethel was heard at the Barton during the social hour; Lou Behm played dinner music, and Mike Kwitt was featured at the organ following the meal.

We presented young Tony O'Brien

in his musical debut at the Royal Oak Theatre on November 12. Magician Jeff Hobson and member Nancy Candeia, as a clown-mime, also appeared and were accompanied by Tony at the organ.

In a surprise presentation following intermission, Don Lockwood awarded a plaque to Mert Harris in appreciation of his loving maintenance and restoration of the Royal Oak Barton over the past 14 years. A plaque was also awarded to Marion Cook, who could not be present, in recognition of her efforts to preserve the Royal Oak Barton organ by purchasing the instrument and then donating it to our chapter, thus assuring the future of the organ in the theatre.

The artist for our September Second Sunday program at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor was Barry Rindhage from Saginaw. In October, fifteen-year-old Jennifer Candeia appeared in her first program at the Michigan's 3/13 Barton. Norm Keating, who has played in night club dance bands, was our Fourth Sunday organist at the Royal Oak Theatre in September. Appearing at the Royal Oak's 3/16 Barton in October was Don Jenks. An open console session attracted members and local residents to the Punch and Judy Theatre on October 3, and provided an opportunity for many to try their hands at the 2/6 Wurlitzer.

Upcoming programs include Dennis James accompanying *Broken Blossoms* at the Redford Theatre on March 5. Eddie Weaver will be accompanying *Haunted Spooks* at the Royal Oak Theatre on April 9, and Lee Erwin will play accompaniment for *The Thief of Bagdad* at the Redford Theatre on May 20, 21. For more information write: Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219, or phone (313) 537-1133.

DON LOCKWOOD



Magician Jeff Hobson, clown-mime Nancy Candeia and organist Tony O'Brien after Tony's program at the Royal Oak Theatre in November.

(Ray Van Steenkiste photo)

NEW YORK New York

201/573-9567 or 201/473-0559

In 1928, *Present Arms* opened on Broadway, and the Brooklyn Paramount made its debut on Flatbush Avenue. There remains one gem from each: "You Took Advantage of Me" from the first, and the glorious-sounding 4/26 Wurlitzer from the lat-

ter. Fifty-four years later, both were alive and well when Rex Koury united them in a Richard Rogers medley during his October 10 concert.

Every composer's melody seems to be vibrantly alive when Mr. Koury performs it, and this Wurlitzer has seldom sounded better. Throughout his program he displayed a great knowledge of orchestration in imaginative registrations which never once gave a sameness of sound to the organ. He has an effective technique for making great use of counter-melodies without lessening the rhythmic force he is employing. These elements, combined with a keen, sensitive musicianship, made listening to a very orchestral "Rhapsody in Blue" and selections from *Annie* and *Music Man* most enjoyable.

A lighter side of Rex Koury was evidenced when he presented a silent movie without the movie and with very definite un-silent sound. He made the Wurlitzer tell the story, as he did when he led us back to the Golden Days of radio by way of montaging many famous themes of that era. This concert was proof positive that the American Theatre Organ Society was right on target when they made Rex Koury their Organist of the Year.

MARLIN SWING



*Nor-Cal
Theatre
Organ
Society*

San Francisco Bay Area
415/589-6683 or 415/524-7452

Larry Vannucci played for Nor-Cal on October 17 at the Empress Theatre in Vallejo. Member Bill Elliott is the owner of the theatre and its Style D, 2/6 Wurlitzer Opus 952. The organ



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Larry Vannucci at the Empress Theatre Wurlitzer, Vallejo, California.

(Rudy Frey photo)



Facade of the Empress Theatre, Vallejo, California.

(Ed Mullins photo)

was originally installed in the Gaiety Theatre in Santa Maria, California. It was removed in 1965 and installed in the home of Claire Shipley who was later married to Larry Vannucci, so Larry was quite familiar with the instrument and was able to bring the most beautiful sounds from it.

The organ passed through two other home installations before William G. Elliott acquired it for his little gem of a theatre. The Empress was originally built in 1911 as a vaudeville house and was known as the Crest and as the Senator. It operated through the silent film and depression eras. It was redecorated in the forties in the beautiful Fox West Coast style, also known as the "Skouras plumes and swags style." The house was closed between 1965 and 1980. The Elliott family of Vallejo purchased the house in 1980 and completely restored it at great expense. An organ had never been installed in the house, so chambers were built behind the screen upstairs from the console. The pipes are

under expression and the percussions are to the right side of the pipe chamber and are exposed. Future plans include enlarging the instrument to eleven ranks.

Vannucci mentioned the small size of the organ, but said he was "gonna attempt it anyway," when he played Khachaturian's "Sabre Dance," proving himself the master of this instrument. It was a most enjoyable concert for all who attended. Following the concert, Chairman Rudy Frey presented the slide show that was seen at the Detroit convention promoting the 1983 ATOS Convention which will be hosted by Nor-Cal.

November 21 our concert artist was nineteen-year-old Miss Pauline Dixon

of Hayes, Middlesex, England. Although not related to famed British organist Reginald Dixon whose name is a household word in England, Pauline Dixon is a rising young star. She was the winner of the first Young Theatre Organist of the Year competition sponsored by the London and South of England Chapter in 1978. When she played the 4/23 Wurlitzer at the Capn's Galley Pizza & Pipes in Redwood City, she showed us why she was selected.

Before opening with "Everything's Coming Up Roses," Pauline thanked pizzeria owner Bob Paterson for all the kindness he showed her during her visit. This is Pauline's fifth trip to the United States. She is a great devotee of the late Buddy Cole, and her recent visit to his grave in Forest Lawn was an emotional experience. She also visited Cole's organ which is now installed in Campbell, California. Her program was highlighted with several Cole arrangements of which her "Autumn in New York" was note

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perfect. She is developing a nice style of her own as well, which was evidenced in the variety of her numbers.

Mrs. Audrey Dixon said that her daughter practices from five to seven hours every day. Pauline regrets that there aren't very many theatre organs available for practice in England. We know the feeling, Pauline! We hope your dream of having your very own pipe organ comes true.

It was delightful to have such a lovely young lady play for us, which is a first for Nor-Cal, and we look forward to hearing more from her.

ED MULLINS



Pauline Dixon at the Capn's Galley Wurlitzer, Redwood City, California.

(Rudy Frey photo)



**NORTH
TEXAS
CHAPTER**

**Dallas-Fort Worth
214/256-2743 or 214/233-7108**

The recent activities of North Texas Chapter were designed to further the goals of ATOS as expressed at the Detroit convention: to encourage talented young organists in their playing theatre organ and to build membership and participation in ATOS. August 15 the chapter members met in the lovely home of FX and Barbara Coronado for the first meeting following the convention. Program Chairman Ted Thompson introduced a very talented young organist, Miss Luz Oralla. Luz, a senior this year at Ursuline Academy, is an outstanding student of Mr. Charles Evans.

Miss Oralla exhibited an unusual degree of composure as well as exceptional musical accomplishment, par-

ticularly for someone of her youth. Announcing each of her selections, she revealed her professionalism and her natural warm personality. Her program, which began with a spirited "Bumble Boogie," included a Don Baker arrangement of "Limehouse Blues" and, in a more contemporary vein, a medley from *Annie* and the beautiful theme from *Ice Castles*. Her appealing music showed a depth of feeling and a warm regard for harmony as well as a telling influence from her teacher. We hope that our grateful applause and sincere standing ovation will provide encouragement to this talented young woman in her musical career. We hope to hear her again.

Chairman Bob McGillivray began planning our chapter's membership expansion while still at the Detroit convention. He called a caucus of the NTC officers and members in support of his plan to invite Father Jim Miller to play an October concert in Dallas. He got enthusiastic support and the invitation was given. It was expected that the presentation of Fr. Miller in a public concert would be

both enjoyable and the desired stimulus to expand our membership. It turned out well in all respects.

Planning for the Fr. Miller concert began in earnest as soon as we returned from Detroit. The choice of instrument was simple as we have only one theatre organ in an auditorium of sufficient size to support a public concert; the 2/15 Wicks in the Scottish Rite Temple in downtown Dallas. Arrangements were quickly made for joint sponsorship of this event, and proceeds will support organ maintenance activities of both organizations.

The Scottish Rite Temple in Dallas is an imposing edifice of classic architecture, richly appointed with marble and bronze and recently refurbished to its 1920's splendor. The auditorium, when new, had a much larger pipe organ installed; however, in the forties when it became popular to do so, an electronic organ was purchased. The pipe organ fell into disrepair and was removed. Pipe chamber space was used for storage, so when the building was restored a smaller organ was chosen to replace the origi-

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Luz Oralla, young organist who played August 15 concert for North Texas Chapter.

(Irving Light photo)

nal. This organ, built in 1925 for an Illinois theatre, was later used in a church. When the church decided to trade it in to Wicks for a larger organ, it was brought back to the Wicks factory. There the instrument, built by the father of the current Mr. Wicks, was prepared for its new home. This work included expansion to fifteen ranks from its original eight.

Our choice of Fr. Jim Miller for our October 8 concert could not have been better. His love, contagious fun and laughter and his exciting music completely charmed his audience of ATOS and Scottish Rite members and friends. During intermission and following the concert, the lobby ATOS desk was kept busy recording names for concert notices, providing ATOS information and applications, and receiving unsolicited praise of Father Jim and his music. A number of people said they had "never heard that organ sound so good," and asked to be notified of future concerts. We expect to gain many new chapter members as a result of this concert.

While many people contributed to the success of this effort, Chairman Bob McGillivray gave special thanks to Lorena McKee who handled most of the arrangements, including advertising and ticket sales. Special credit also goes to Fred Garrett and Dick Cooper who provided transportation for Fr. Miller, as well as assured that the Wicks behaved properly for the concert. We now proudly count Fr. Miller in our NTC membership. Saying that he found us Texans to be warm and friendly and dedicated ATOSers, he wanted to be one of us. He wrote his check for 1983 dues and received his membership card in NTCATOS. We love you, Father Jim.

Finding a proper and permanent home for our chapter's 4/22 Robert-Morton Wonder organ continues to be a prime concern and activity of NTC officers and members. Much searching has not yet resulted in success. Existing facilities in this area have not proved adequate for this instrument. We are now pinning our



Lorena McKee joins Fr. Miller on stage to accept gratitude of members for her work.

(Irving Light photo)

hopes on receptive interest from developers of several structures now being planned. In the meantime, work continues on refurbishing the instrument, looking forward to that wonderful day when it assumes its destiny as the center of theatre organ presentations for the North Texas area.

IRVING LIGHT



Cincinnati

513/221-3387 or 513/471-2965

The October 22 concert by Bob Ralston at Cincinnati's Emery Theatre, sponsored by Ohio Valley Chapter, was a success. Ralston played to a fairly full house. His varied program included a couple of numbers on an on-stage piano and was well performed, although perhaps a bit too talky. It was, however, quite obviously enjoyed by everyone, judging from the applause.

Ralston arrived in Cincinnati a few days before his performance to get acquainted with the organ. OVC's 3/26 Wurlitzer, rescued from the now extinct RKO Albee Theatre and completely rebuilt in the Emery Theatre, has been maintained and enlarged from its original 19 ranks by a very capable organ crew headed by "Tote" Pratt.

Ralston highly praised the organ to the audience during his concert. OVC members Ken Aultz and Rich Kersting keep the organ in tune. Ralston himself, and Pratt spent some of the last available hours touching up the tun-



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ing of a few pipes the day of the concert, a chore requiring Pratt to climb about in the pipe chambers, aggravating his leg condition, putting him in bed and forcing him to miss the concert. Too bad, for it was a good concert, and the organ sounded really super! Ralston seemed to use every key on the organ and every item on the toy counter.

One small thing that detracted somewhat from its being a really first-class presentation was the absence of a printed program of any kind. This writer feels that, even without a listing of selections scheduled to be heard, a program giving information about the organ, the theatre, the society and the all-important various credits is very desirable. Apparently the public felt so, too, considering the great number of requests for a program.

The Ohio Valley Chapter, in a 100% volunteer operation, presents double-feature classic films nearly every Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening at the Emery Theatre unless preempted by other events scheduled by the owner, the University of Cincinnati. A chapter member organist, from a staff of about a dozen willing to perform, plays for half an hour while the movie patrons arrive as well as during an intermission between features. Admission for the entire evening is only \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for children under twelve, a bargain by any measure these days. The hard-working volunteers of OVC-ATOS are proud to be constantly exposing the public to theatre pipe organ and its wonderful music in this way.

Other recent OVC activities have included a Big Band concert with Bill Walters' band on stage following a showing of *Orchestra Wives*, which featured the Glenn Miller band. Gene Wilson provided the organ music beforehand. Our membership meeting

was held at Rieger's Barn, where we heard a 3/41 Moller/Estey classic organ with built-in player action which was rather neat. Some of us visited Mickey and John Gogle's home afterwards to see, hear and play their three-manual Kimball. A chapter dinner meeting at the Fireside Ristorante was followed by a concert by member Rodney Barbour on the Schantz at College Hill Presbyterian Church.

GORDON CORNELL

OREGON Portland

503/244-2141 or 503/253-6874

When the organist scheduled for our November 6 meeting at Benson High School was unable to appear, it was necessary to quickly find a competent replacement. Our thanks to board member Paul Quarino, whose perseverance and ingenuity enabled him to engage famous organist Bill Langford. Bill had just moved back



Bill Langford seemed to enjoy himself as much as the Oregon Chapter enjoyed him, at the November concert at the Benson High School Kimball organ in Portland. (Claude Neuffer photo)

to the California Bay area from Indiana but Paul did not have his new address or phone number. However, after much time and expensive telephone sleuthing he finally reached Bill and got him to play this concert.

Bill Langford has an extensive background in radio, TV, recording, and as a touring artist for Hammond and Gulbransen. He was for 18 years at Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in Hayward, California, the first pizza organ in the world. Although he had played a great many pipe organs over the years, this was his first time at a Kimball. His great satisfaction with this fine instrument was evidenced in his inspired playing throughout the concert.

Bill's generous program included an elaborate and sensitive arrangement of "Autumn Leaves" and a clever music lesson skit with the piano and Clarinet. His artistic use of the Kimball's gorgeous Strings, Tibias and Vox was enhanced by the superb acoustics of this auditorium.

Thanks to Bill Langford for a wonderful concert and to Benson High for the use of the organ. Our chapter is also grateful to our maintenance crew and especially to Paul Quarino for bringing this super musician to us.

BUD ABEL

PUGET SOUND Seattle


206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669

October was home tours for Puget Sound, beginning at Bert and Georgia Lobberegt's home in Issaquah. Don Myers played a fine program on the Lobberegt instrument. This was followed by open console. The Lobberegts have a very interesting home with the organ pipes installed horizontally above a burlap ceiling in the living room. Many of us enjoyed a tour of their museum which houses many old



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Dick Schrum at Calvary Temple, Seattle.

(Christine Pride photo)

player pianos and musical machines, as well as an antique car collection.

We then traveled to Pearl Nelson's, where Pearl played her magnificent Rodgers organ for us. I especially enjoyed her version of "Tea for Two."

After dinner at a restaurant in Kent, we continued to the home of our chairman, Jack Becvar, where Dianne Whipple gave us a fine program on the Wurlitzer there. We also enjoyed Jack's demonstration of the player piano and organ using player-piano rolls.

In November we were fortunate to have Ron Rhode in concert at Seattle's Paramount Theatre. His performance showed excellent training as he played a variety of classical and popular music. Of special note was his rendition of a medley of songs from *The King and I*. Extra thanks to Don Myers, Mike Wallace, Genni Whitting, Jack Becvar, Bob White and Brian Ingoldsby for their work on the 20-rank Wurlitzer at the Paramount. It sounds great!

In December we will have our usual Christmas party using our own organ at the Haller Lake Community Club. Best wishes for a Happy New Year to all.

CHRISTINE PRIDE



Davenport

309/793-1451 or 319/359-5620

A chapter meeting was held at the Butterworth Center in Moline, Illinois, on August 27. There were twelve members at the social who enjoyed the beautiful furnishings of a turn-of-the-century home. The home has three grand pianos and a 3/16 Stanke pipe organ which is also playable by a Moller roll-player mechanism.

Mark Spangler was our guest artist. He played several popular tunes and demonstrated the roll-player, after which he was joined by Martin Leon at the grand piano. This was a great surprise for all members, and all had a good time listening. Such hidden talent is sometimes found by accident.

Labor Day weekend proved to be

quite exciting for the quad cities. The Cinephiles held their national convention at the Blackhawk Hotel in Davenport, Iowa. Three days of continuous movies and silent films of famous actors and actresses were shown. The hotel was equipped with an Allen theatre organ and a piano, each in separate rooms with films going in both rooms at the same time.

The highlight of the convention was at the Capitol Theatre on Saturday afternoon. All gathered to watch *Poor Little Rich Girl* and *My Best Girl*, starring Mary Pickford, accompanied by Bob Vaughn on the organ. Bob is from San Francisco and normally plays weekly at the Avenue Theatre. The organ, a 3/12 Wicks, was in fine tune, and Bob played a great accompaniment to the films. The crowd of close to 1,000 gave Bob a standing ovation.

BOB ADAMS

RED RIVER

Fargo

218/287-2671 or 218/236-9217

Silent movie night at the Fargo Theatre, November 4, was a total success with a completely full house and a wonderful show. A very cold evening did not deter the crowd, and we had to turn people away for lack of seats. Lance Johnson began the program on the 3/9 Wurlitzer with an especially interesting jungle number, "Quiet Village," while exotic bird calls were heard through the house sound system. We made use of the stage for a special presentation of 1920's costumes belonging to Marg Scott of Fargo. From formal evening dress to lingerie, nine models paraded to organ music and commentary. Two of the models also sang, the real highlight being "My Heart Belongs to Daddy," by a model in flapper dress. The Keystone Cops were not far away

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and "raided" the place when the last model appeared in lingerie. Following intermission we saw the delightful comedy *It*, with Clara Bow, scored by Lance. A new feature this time was a reception desk in the lobby for persons interested in membership and our concert mailing list to sign up.

A children's film series of Saturday matinees has been very well attended this fall, and the kids have really enjoyed the organ prologues. Meanwhile, we are working downstairs in the dressing room area on our music library.

Again this year, we will provide free noon-hour Christmas organ concerts at the theatre beginning December 13.

For our 1983 project, we voted to make a record on the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Fargo Theatre with selections by several of our members.

SONIA CARLSON

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver

303/343-3930 or 303/233-4716

This has been a good year for us. We have had some wonderful concerts and entertainment. Our present group of officers and committee people have again done a great job.

Our meeting was held in the storage/work room where #3 and #4 crews are working on our club's 2/6 Wurlitzer brought up from Alamosa, Colorado. The woodwork is done, the combination action air lines have been un-smashed, and re-leathering is just about completed. The pedal board looks like it had just come from the factory. Of course, it is still all apart while the finishing touches are put on. The pipes, we understand, are in perfect condition as this was the first move for them since being installed in the Alamosa Theatre. No

one has stomped around in the chamber where they were, so they should be in brand new shape except for some dust that will be removed later on. The organ is being readied for installation out in Littleton, Colorado, in a newly acquired building for the performing arts. Our "mouthpiece" (lawyer, to you genteel folk) is working out the details of the paperwork, and the crew is working with the construction people on building the chamber and storage of the console on a dolly platform. As soon as the installation starts we will have photographs and more information on it.

The Aladdin Theatre 3/12 Wicks suffered a great accident on November 6. Now that it is a live musical stage theatre, a great many changes and additions are being made backstage and throughout the building. On November 6 an electrician, needing more power cables for the stage lighting, ran two heavy cables from the old projection booth down through a ventilator tunnel under the house to backstage, where he drilled a three-inch hole in the stage floor, which is six or eight inches of concrete under the wooden floor and — you guessed it — chopped off 380 wires going to the relays in both chambers. The dirty deed was not discovered until, as usual, every work morning we turn on the organ to check things, and we really found one. It will take some time to ring out the break because the cable only had two color-coded wires — black and tan. Good luck to our crew!

In October we guided tours, a total of about 130 people, through the Denver Paramount Theatre. They all received the grand inspection tour and a demonstration of the Mighty Wurlitzer. On October 16 we had Bob Ralston at the Paramount in concert. A great night, indeed. The other console was played by our own Roy Han-

son, a featured organist at the Denver Organ Grinder restaurant. We even had on stage one of those giant Bosendorfer Imperial grand pianos which Bob Ralston played for us. Ladies were up dancing on the stage with Bob while Roy played, and, needless to say, a grand time was had by all. Pikes Peak Chapter was responsible for this concert. Thanks, guys! It was a grand evening.

In September we had Ray Young entertain us at the Paramount, a fine program of oldies that we had almost forgotten about. Then on Halloween the Paramount hosted a party with Jeff Weiler from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, playing the old silent *Phantom of the Opera*. Jeff scored the movie himself and it was just like the old days. Wonderful performance with plenty of partying afterward.

We understand that sometime in April we will be having Hector Olivera in concert at our Denver Paramount Theatre, so if any of you travelers are out this way, come see us and hear Hector.

FRANK R. GANDY

ST. LOUIS

Missouri

314/863-2318 or 314/742-2385

Here are some details on the St. Louis Fox Theatre which has undergone a \$2 million renovation since being purchased by St. Louis redeveloper Leon Strauss and Associates in 1981. The Fox is the keystone of the plan to rejuvenate the Grand Avenue entertainment district, which includes Powell Symphony Hall, the Beau Arts Center and the Lynn Theatre, an old vaudeville house.

Leon Strauss' wife, Mary, an art historian, supervised the task of refurbishing the theatre. She directed an army of electricians, plumbers and other craftsmen. 7300 yards of new

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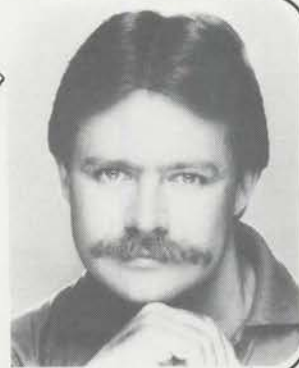
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carpeting duplicating the original were installed. 4000 yards of fabric were used to reupholster the 4503 seats which were removed from the auditorium, refinished and replaced.

Mary hired chapter member Marlin Mackley to repair the 4/36 Wurlitzer, which had suffered from neglect and damage. Hometown organist/comedian Stan Kann returned to the Fox last September to inaugurate the renovated theatre. He played the organ before each performance of the Broadway musical, *Barnum*, and provided the accompaniment for two silent film classics, *The Eagle*, starring Rudolph Valentino and Lon Chaney's *Phantom of the Opera*. Stan was Fox house organist from 1952 to 1974.

A variety of big-name Las Vegas-style entertainment has been scheduled to play the Fox. The theatre is also the winter home of the St. Louis Municipal Opera which presents top Broadway shows.

ROY FECHTER

SIERRA Sacramento

916/726-5132 or 916/332-2837

On November 7, Sierra Chapter in co-sponsorship with J. Nelson Organ Co., presented Candi Carley at the Allen 456 and the now 2/11 Wurlitzer

installed in the Fair Oaks Community Club House. After having blower problems that would fill a book, the Wurlitzer was finally brought on line by a very determined Hal Wilmunder the Friday morning before the Sunday concert.

Being blind and having a limited amount of practice time on an instrument she had never played should have handicapped Miss Carley. This young lady was not handicapped! Came Sunday afternoon with a near overflow crowd of over 400, and both consoles on stage with tabs brailled, Candi Carley cut loose into a concert filled with a vibrant, rhythmic gusto that must be heard to be appreciated. All told and heard, it was a wonderful, rousing, inspirational afternoon.

Sierra member Gary Konas played a very fine concert on the Grant High School 4/22 Wurlitzer as the final event in the school's October 24 Fiftieth Anniversary celebration. Over half of the 600 in attendance were alumni who had not heard the organ since their "Grant days" and who were enthusiastic about Gary's playing groups of selections from each decade of the school's history.

This Wurlitzer is nice to play from its near-new (1975) console; however, the years of little maintenance and no major work on the pipes and chests are taking their toll on the sound. As

is typical in this era of funding shortages, the school district has neither money for renovation or maintenance nor faculty who can play it. The school principal, however, was inspired by Gary's performance and, with some ATOS expertise and assistance, the situation with the Grant High Wurlitzer may improve.

RANDY WARWICK

SOONER STATE Tulsa

918/742-8693 or 918/437-2146

October found members of Sooner State Chapter at Bill Roberts' Piano Store in Tulsa for a pep-rally meeting for the Rob Calcaterra concert on October 23. At that time we were given name tags and posters, and encouraged to talk up the concert wherever we could.

The big day arrived! Rob had the afternoon to get acquainted with the two organs in Christ Chapel on the Oral Roberts University campus, then had all of thirty minutes to sleep after a hectic flight from Minneapolis before dazzling us with his performance.

The installation at ORU is unique, a 4/21 Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ operating by a multiplex system rather than a conventional cable, and

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a more than 100-rank classical tracker organ built by the Phelps Organ Company. The classical organ has its own console, and is also playable from the Wurlitzer console.

Rob's music reflected his classical training, as evidenced by the precision with which he played. His theatre organ style was all his own, and his selections ranged from "Mairzy Doats" to a beautiful "What I Did for Love," from *Chorus Line*. Two classical selections on the tracker were tremendous! His show-stopper, however, was Widor's "Toccatina" from his Symphony No. 5 played on both organs from the Wurlitzer console, something that, to Rob's knowledge, had never been done before. That particular piece of music can only be described as breathtakingly stupendous, and on those two organs, played by Rob Calcaterra, it was absolutely magnificent!

Many people contributed to the success of this concert: the staff of the Fine Arts Music department at ORU; organ technician Walt Gaber, also from ORU; Phil Judkins and Hervey Barbour, who assisted with transportation and were on hand at Rob's rehearsal; Harlan Judkins, Phil's brother from Tennessee, who was our Emcee; John Barhydt and Harry Rassmussen who arranged publicity; and Jerry Lysinger, who donated the printing of our programs. And, of course, the entire concert would not have been possible without all the people who contributed the funds for Rob's fee. Because it is university policy not to charge admission to events in Christ Chapel, this was the way we decided to cover the costs, and the concert was presented to Tulsans at no charge to them.

This concert owes its success to one other person, Chairman Lee Smith. From its beginning as an "impossible dream" to the standing ovation at its

end, Lee contributed more than anyone can know, perseverance in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles, time, ideas, arrangements, compromises, countless telephone calls, enthusiasm — you name it! There aren't enough words to describe his behind-the-scenes activities, the trips to ORU for conferences with music department officials, trips to nearly all the Tulsa music stores to distribute posters, and Herculean efforts to get publicity. He gave time for a talk on tape with Ed Dumit of KWGS, to be presented as a radio interview, and he persuaded Marty Pittman of the *Tulsa Advisor* to run Rob's picture with a story. He spent hours making arrangements with ORU. Two days before the concert the program master copy was ready, but still not printed. Lee persuaded his friend, Jerry Lysinger, to donate the copies we needed! Lee, we salute you!

Our November meeting was held at Central Assembly of God Church. We had twelve new people present, a direct result of our "interest" coupon attached to the Rob Calcaterra concert program, and we gained seven new family memberships to Sooner State Chapter. The program was open console on the 4/14 Robert-Morton formerly housed in Tulsa's Downtown Rialto Theatre. Several of our new members surprised us with their considerable talent, and we're looking forward to hearing more from them.

DOROTHY SMITH

**WESTERN RESERVE
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Many WRTOS members attended the Gaylord Carter concert October 9 at the Akron Civic Theatre. After an interesting program including a med-

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ley of silent movie "chase" music, the artist accompanied Harold Lloyd's classic *Safety Last*. This exceptionally funny film showcased Gaylord's impressive talent at using the theatre organ for its original purpose.

Western Reserve Chapter was proud to present Bill Tabor in concert at our 3/13 Wurlitzer on October 30. Bill, a chapter member, opened with "Barcelona," followed by a *Wizard of Oz* medley. After many other favorites, he closed the first half with an enjoyable sing-along. After intermission Bill accompanied Buster Keaton's *Cops* to the delight of the audience. He then honored WBBG, a local Big Band radio station, with a 1940's medley. His finale was an inspiring "How Great Thou Art."

Many WRTOS members attended the business meeting held at the Lorraine Palace Theatre. The meeting was preceded by member Paul Kamas at the Wurlitzer console. Paul's program started off with a nostalgic "Forgotten Melody" and concluded with a rousing version of "Under The Double Eagle."

Our November meeting and election of officers was held at the Cleveland Grays' Armory, and was followed by open console. November 28 saw the decoration of Grays' Armory with two eighteen-foot trees in preparation for our annual Christmas party. After the decorating, the workers rewarded themselves with a potluck dinner accompanied by some open console artistry.

Preparations are now underway for two upcoming concerts: February 26, Cleveland Grays will present Jonas Nordwall at the 3/13 Wurlit-



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zer, and Western Reserve Chapter will present Larry Ferrari at the Wurlitzer on April 30. Tickets are available from Cleveland Grays for Jonas Nordwall, or WRTOS, Inc., for Larry Ferrari, 1234 Bolivar Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44115. They are \$4.50 for general admission and \$5.00 for reserved balcony.

JIM SHEPHERD



WOLVERINE CHAPTER

of the American Theatre Organ Society

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A fine crowd of Wolverine Chapter members and others gathered on October 17 at the Pied Piper Pizza Peddler to hear Lance Luce and Karl Cole perform on the Mighty Wurlitzer. It is always a pleasure to listen to such talent. As it was Karl's last day as staff organist at the Pied Piper, many went there to hear him for that final time and to give him a good send-off to his new position as head organist at the new Springdale Music Palace in Springdale, Ohio (near Cincinnati). We all wish Karl the best of success there. We understand that Ken Saliba will now be playing at Pied Piper along with Lance.

On November 17, a small, but very appreciative, audience of our chapter



Rick Moore at Theater Organ Pizza & Pipes in Pontiac.

members gathered to hear Rick Moore play the Barton pipe organ at Theater Organ Pizza & Pipes in Pontiac. Rick is relatively new to this musical staff, having come there from his recent position as staff organist at the Lansing (Okemos) Roaring 20's Pizza restaurant. Rick has also played at Pasquale's Pipe Organ Pizza in Indianapolis.

Before Theater Organ Pizza & Pipes opened for business that day, Rick played a short program just for our group, and his musical selections

were tastefully chosen for their appeal to theatre organ buffs. Rick's playing is very pleasant, and we thank him for providing us with such an enjoyable listening experience.

We thank the owners of both of these pizza restaurants, Henry Hunt and Ken Saliba of Pied Piper Pizza Peddler and Gary Montgomery and H.C. Scott of Theater Organ Pizza & Pipes, for so kindly allowing us to have chapter meetings in their restaurants. Their support is much appreciated. **MAX AND CAROL BROWN** □

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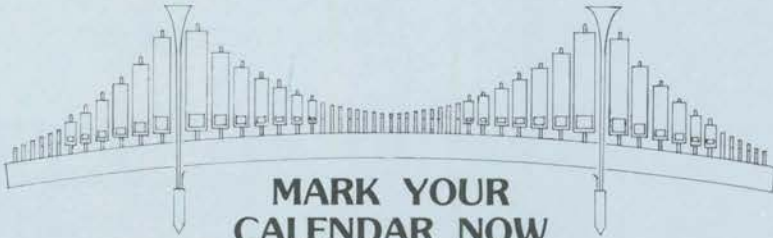
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