

# THEATRE ORGAN

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# Bradley's Guide To Latin Rhythms



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Guide to

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Rhythms

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Richard Bradley

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Tennessee Princess in full dress.  
See story starting on page five.

Photo by Frank Lee

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# American Theatre Organ Society



I am pleased to tell you that a gift has been given to our Library from one of our favorite concert artists, Gaylord Carter. He is donating all of his "Flicker Fingers" memorabilia, which consists of tapes, recordings, airchecks of his programs, and all of his movie music. What a wealth of material to be used in the future by fortunate ATOS members. Gaylord, we love you and thank you for your generosity.

In the March/April issue of THEATRE ORGAN, there appeared an article telling of a \$1,000 challenge grant from the Fleet Foundation of San Diego. These funds need to be matched. To date, we have received only one check for this purpose. Do you want a library? Are you interested in young organists? Your responses to these questions are the only way your directors will know your wishes. We need to hear from you!

It is with mixed feelings that I write my last message to you as your president. The deadline for this issue is June 1, and at this particular time I am inundated with the tasks of any executive preparing for an important annual meeting: copying reports of all committees for thorough study by each director before they meet, trying to be sure I've left nothing undone that I ought to have done, and continually jotting down ideas and recommendations to bring to the Board. I've discovered that any president should have the patience of Job, the stamina of Samson, and 48 hours in each day. But regardless of the responsibilities, it has been a most meaningful and rewarding experience and I shall always treasure the joy and pleasure I have derived from getting to know so many wonderful ATOS members. How I wish I could be a member of each chapter.

My most sincere appreciation to the present Board of Directors and a welcome to the new additions, who I am sure will join in working toward reaching our stated goals. Also, special thanks to our editor and the many, many members who have contributed their time and talents.

I continue to ask each of you to bring in at least one new member each year, and to aid the Young Organists Awards Fund and the Archives/Library with your monetary gifts and bequests in your wills. ATOS needs YOU.

Thank you for the honor and privilege you bestowed upon me in allowing me to serve as your president. It has been a wonderful two years, a time in my life that will always be very special.

Sincerely,  
**Lois F. Segur**



# The Rebirth of a Princess

by Linda and Cecil Whitmire

We returned to Knoxville, Tennessee, in December of 1980. It was difficult to leave Birmingham's beautiful 4/20 Wurlitzer installed in the Alabama Theatre. Making it easier was the fact that we knew Knoxville had a gorgeous Balaban 2, 3/14 Wurlitzer in the Tennessee Theatre. We had kept tabs on the activities of the Tennessee and its organ ever since we originally moved from Knoxville in 1975. The stories we heard about the fate of the organ often sent chills through us. On our occasional weekends back in Knoxville, we always tried to go to the theatre and check for ourselves how things really stood. Each visit proved that conditions were becoming increasingly worse. The organ was being played on an occasional basis but little, if any, maintenance was being done on it. The organ was becoming straighter and straighter with each passing day.

On November 3, 1977, ABC South-eastern Theatres decided to drop their lease on the theatre. The horrible day came when the marquee read "CLOSED" and her fate was a big question mark. The building was owned by the C. B. Atkins family, and though they had a dear spot in their hearts for the magnificent structure, it was put on the market, quietly, when the doors closed. Her halls remained dark and silent until March 15, 1978, when the Tennessee Classics, a new company, leased the building to show classic films. The organ was again raised for occasional appearances between shows, usually on weekends. But this was a short-lived venture and the doors closed again. Then, Robert Frost took over the theatre and successfully revived the classic films, using the organ on a regular basis. Dr. Bill Snyder, a local organist, agreed to man the console and did a marvelous job under the most ad-

verse conditions. Bill enlisted the aid of Tim Johnson, a local piano technician and school teacher, to help him smooth out some of the rough spots in the organ. Once again, she was receiving very limited maintenance, but some was better than none. Later, the Atkins family resumed management of the theatre and continued showing classic films and using the organ. This was where things stood when we returned to Knoxville.

The one fact that had not changed all this time was that the theatre was still on the market. Our greatest concern was how we could muster enough support to save the organ should the theatre be sold. We contacted Bill Synder and worked out a plan to start showing the theatre management that the organ could be a viable part of the attraction. It worked, and the theatre management was delighted, as we were. Interest was once again generated in the organ and people were coming to hear it, not just to watch the movies. We began some serious maintenance to help improve the theatrical sounds, and take away some of the classic sound. This, unfortunately, was just a drop in the bucket of what was needed.

Bill, who is a professor of engineering at the University of Tennessee, was nearing his wit's end having to play every weekend, plus teaching, plus playing for his church. His wife was asking for photographs to place around the house so she would remember what he looked like! Bill and Cecil worked out an arrangement so that Bill would have some nights off and Cecil would play in his place. This worked out great, except that on Bill's nights off he would still come to the theatre to hear Cecil, and vice versa. Oh, well!

Just when things seemed to be looking good, rumors began flying

that someone was interested in buying the theatre and turning it into an office building. That really made our blood run cold! Then on July 1, 1981, the announcement came — the theatre *had* been sold, but not to the office "butcher." It was sold to Jim Dick of Dick Broadcasting Company, the owners of WIVK radio. He quickly put out the word that he intended to keep the theatre intact and operate it. He also announced that he would begin pouring restoration funds into the theatre — no mention of the organ at that time. However, we knew that he loved the instrument and our hopes began to soar.

Cecil and Bill arranged a meeting with Jim Dick to get a firsthand report on his intentions concerning the organ. Mr. Dick was very frank in explaining that he knew nothing about the mechanics of the instrument, did not know who to contact for repair work, but he did want to reassure us that the instrument would be preserved and restored whenever possible. This meeting was what actually put the wheels of restoration into motion. Cecil and Bill suggested that we put together a nonprofit organization to restore the organ and to continually maintain it for him. Mr. Dick approved wholeheartedly and suggested that our new corporation bring him a contract spelling out our intentions and what we would need in return. Thus was born the **Theatre Organ Society of Tennessee, Inc.**

At first, the only members of our society were the members of the Board of Directors, seven to be exact, and all individual ATOS members. But as Bill and Cecil, playing the organ for each movie, began telling the audiences about our organization and the planned restoration, the interest grew and eager volunteers joined our ranks. As is usual with most organiza-



Wurlitzer in state of undress prior to performance. Sign says "Please pardon the organ's appearance. It is being restored by the Theatre Organ Society of Tennessee."



Tim Johnson (left) and Bill Snyder looking over the new contact blocks before installing the top rail. (Photo by Dave Carter)

tions, a few too-eager volunteers had to be restrained. The Board of Directors drew up a workable contract with Jim Dick that allows T.O.S.T. almost total control of the organ. We agreed to supply a qualified organist for special functions that the theatre chose to book. We also agreed to restore and maintain the organ for as long as T.O.S.T. is in existence. This restoration and maintenance would be paid for by funds received from concerts and special presentations that T.O.S.T. would promote. In return for this, T.O.S.T. asked for a set theatre rental, total control of access to the organ, permission to hold monthly meetings within the theatre (free of charge and when it didn't conflict with a theatre performance), and most importantly, first refusal rights to the organ should the theatre ever be sold. Jim Dick promptly signed the contract, and added new features to it. He agreed to fund the parts for the initial restoration, since our bank account was nearly empty. When initial restoration was complete, the society would assume the bills for any future work. How could we refuse such an offer?

Having been duly chartered in the State of Tennessee, we then applied for and received tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Now we were legitimate! Officers were elected as follows: Linda Whitmire, President; Cecil Whitmire, First Vice President and Director of Concerts and Publicity; Bill Snyder, Second Vice President and Director of Restoration and Maintenance; and Tim Johnson, Secretary and Treasurer. Wallace Baumann was installed as resident historian and trustee of the library. The work crew consisted mainly of the same people, with an occasional hand

offered for a specific job or two.

Our first work session was an evaluation of the organ. We met at the theatre after the movie ended one evening, with pencils and paper in hand, to make a list of the good and the bad. It only took us about 15 minutes to realize that the bad far exceeded the good. That's when the decision was made to completely rebuild the entire console.

Having completed our evaluation, we spent the rest of the evening "cussing" and discussing how the console had come to such a state. Some of the problems were caused by well-intentioned organists and church organ technicians in the past. As happens to all instruments that remain in a closed building, the weather, humidity and simple neglect caused the worst damage. Of course, the mice did their share of altering the console by chewing holes in the pneumatics and making nests out of the twill tapes. The exterior had undergone the worst abuse. Many cuts and gouges in the wood, as well as holes drilled for various reasons (Lord knows what!), would have to be filled. Small pieces of the intricate wood carvings were missing and would have to be cut to match.

Then came the tragedy of the paint itself. The color showing on the organ had faded to a "pitiful pink," as we referred to it. It had been applied at some time during the 1968-78 era, but unfortunately the entire console had not been done. So parts of the console still showed the red paint that was applied during 1961 and parts were showing the faded pink. Quite a sight! We knew that beneath the second red layer was a layer of black, which was applied in 1956 by some misguided soul. We hoped that beneath the black would be the original Wurlitzer and no surprises. The first differences

of opinion came about concerning the original color.

When Wurlitzer installed this organ they were very proud of it, and used it in all of their advertising for their three-manual promotions. They also printed lots of official pictures of it, but unfortunately all of these pictures were in black and white. Many local pictures were taken of various artists who played the organ, but there again, they were all in black and white. The only thing we were certain of was that Wurlitzer had used contrast shading around all of the gold filigree carvings to accent the gold and make it stand out against the red. This was evident in nearly all of the pictures we studied. This even surprised our resident historian, who owns one of the original Wurlitzer promo pictures of this organ, but he had never noticed the shading that is apparent in the picture. The consensus was that the console should be "Chinese Red" because that was what everyone thought Wurlitzer liked to use. I volunteered to begin an intense search for a match of the original paint (which was found under the black paint on the backboards over the manuals). But what Wurlitzer called "Chinese Red" and what the present paint manufacturers call "Chinese Red" are worlds apart.

Having laid out a plan for the work, it was time to meet with the theatre management and schedule our work times. This is where we suffered our first heart attack. The manager wanted the organ to remain playable *at all times* for the movies. This meant that any work we would do had to be scheduled very late, after the movie ended, or during the day, before the movie started. They told us that during the coming months the theatre would close down for a period of four

weeks to install new wiring in the building. This meant that there would be *no power* inside the building during that time. At this point we would accept anything we could get.

Out of necessity, we decided that the stop tab contact blocks needed to be repaired first. Many of the wires had been so badly mangled that straightening them was impossible. Being an engineer, Bill Snyder volunteered to completely rebuild the contact blocks. They were removed, a section at a time, and Bill took them home to work on. The original silver wire was 0.020-inch in diameter. We were able to get 0.040-inch wire donated, which would be too stiff and too large to go through the wire holes in the blocks. The 0.040-inch wire was reduced to 0.020-inch diameter by hand drawing it through a wire die. Each draw reduced the diameter by 0.005-inch, so each wire had to be pulled through the die four times. The new wires were inserted in the blocks, the blocks replaced on the rail, and the wire connections resoldered. As each section was completed, another section would be removed and the process repeated. As there are 132 stop tabs on this organ, 264 soldered wire connections had to be removed and replaced. During this entire time the organ had to remain playable. Needless to say, there were occasional surprises while Bill and Cecil were using the organ.

The pneumatics were our next challenge. We received much advice as to what material to use to re-cover the pneumatics. There are those who believe that real leather and hide glue should be used, and then there are those who believe that polyton and contact cement will do just as well and is not as expensive. Because of our time factor, we opted for polyton, thinking it would be easier to work with, and quicker, too. Wrong on both counts! There *is* no quick and easy way to re-cover pneumatics, if you want to do a good job. It takes a *lot* of patience and a lot of wind (to blow and inhale on the pneumatics to check them for leaks). You haven't lived until you've spent an evening blowing and inhaling on hundreds of pneumatics and having a mouth that tastes like a musty cellar! Using a belt sander, each pneumatic was carefully cleaned of all old glue and gasket before applying the polyton. New gaskets were cut from heavy blotter paper and applied. Blotter paper

works great, but we later learned (advice from Walt Winn) that a circle of glue placed around the pneumatic hole and no blotter works just as well and is easier to take off, if need be. We used this technique later when re-installing the tremulant and second-touch pneumatics, just hours before a concert. We will freely admit that if we had to re-do any of the pneumatics and had both the time and money, we would use leather. Polyton works very well, and it smells so offensive that we're sure the mice won't go anywhere near it, but we did encounter quite a few leaks that had to be stopped. As always happens, the leaks appeared more frequently on the bottom rail, necessitating breaking down the console each time. To this day, there is still a "mouse" somewhere in the pneumatics that squeaks occasionally, and we can't find it! As both of us have also had experience using leather to re-cover pneumatics on the Alabama's Wurlitzer, we agreed that the leather is the better way to go.

Having completed the pneumatics, we plunged ahead to the task of replacing the stop tab twill tape pulls. The mice had certainly enjoyed themselves on the old ones. We had some very ingenious people working with us, so we didn't have to order new twill tapes. Bill Snyder and his crew made them for us. Anyone who has replaced twill tapes on a three-manual organ will understand that this is no small task. We were fortunate to have

a young lady volunteer who was small enough to practically climb inside the console to install the most difficult tapes to reach. Having accomplished this and replaced all the missing stop tab clips, we could then adjust each stop tab. Everything was working beautifully. Then came the word — the theatre was shutting off the power for four weeks to rewire the building.

We should have been happy to have the time, but the prospect of working completely in the dark using flashlights, in January with no heat in the building, didn't exactly appeal to us. We hurriedly replaced the wind line to the console so it could be checked while there was still power to the organ. A game plan was laid out to see what could be removed from the organ and worked on at our various homes. We agreed to order the new pedals and prepare them for installation. This meant covering the naturals with a sanding sealer, then applying three coats of acrylic so they would not wear. The job of replacing pedal contacts would have to wait until power was restored to the organ, as would installing the 1929 Ford dashboard lights on the pedal backboard to replace the hideous fluorescent fixture presently there. The front horse-shoe cover and the top board could be removed and taken home with us, as could the capitals and front jambs. The pedal backboard and the two back panels could also be removed. Bill, his engineering mind at work again, volunteered to take the How-

Linda and Cecil Whitmire stripping paint from the console.

(Photos by Dave Carter)





Larry Donaldson and Cecil Whitmire rebuilding the combination action at 2:00 a.m., to be used at a performance that day.



Linda hand-painting the horseshoe cover in the makeshift workshop/laundry room.

ard seat home and have it repaired. I volunteered to re-cover the seat itself, as the original leather was badly worn and beyond repair. Loading these pieces, plus the bench, into our hatchback car and the Howard seat base into Bill's car, we carefully covered the organ and bid her farewell for a short time.

The original Howard seat was found in a storage room at the theatre and several repairs had to be made before it could be used. No height adjustment could be made because the spring-loaded pawl which engages the rack on the shaft was broken and had to be rebuilt. The seat itself is held to the shaft by a collar, and a pin which moves in a groove in the shaft. This pin is what allows the organist to swivel around on the seat without "screwing himself right off the top." The collar also was broken and a new one had to be made. Bill enlisted the aid of two local machinists, Earl Rosenbalm and Steve Hunley, who donated their time. On an earlier occasion these same machinists repaired a beater which had broken in one of the pedal Diaphone pipes. The seat acquired a new covering of black cotton velvet with a 2" black fringe attached with brass decorative upholstery tacks. This hid the top collar and pin from the audiences and gave some character to the seat itself.

While all this night work and planning was going on, I spent my days combing the paint stores within a 30-mile radius trying to match the original paint. It was a group decision (I think!) that while the power was off would be an excellent time to refinish the console's exterior. (As this was going to be my job, I don't remember agreeing to this — never liked to paint in the dark!) After many days of

searching and testing colors, Porter Paints came up with the perfect match. It wasn't called "Chinese Red," but instead was "Cardinal Red." They were so intrigued with what we were going to do with the paint that they asked to take pictures when it was completed. (Believe it or not, a gallon of paint is *more* than enough to do the entire console!)

Having settled the problem of the basic color, next came the gold, and another difference of opinion. The console had lost its original gold through the many paintings and what everyone was used to seeing was a bright, almost brassy, gold. It was the opinion of most of our group that this was the original color. Being a very stubborn person, I refused to accept this and set about to prove them wrong. Using one of the front jambs bearing the Wurlitzer crest and gold filigree wood carving, I carefully removed the gold, a layer at a time. The newer paints applied in later years came off like syrup. The original, hardened gold finish was still intact beneath the other three layers. It was the most beautiful, deep Florentine gold that I had ever seen. In spite of the years and the layers of paint covering it, the gold glistened and I knew I was right! Proudly showing the others what I had found, they had to admit that they, too, had been fooled by the years of "brassy" gold. The only way to achieve the same gold color and effect was to mix lacquer and gold dust, a process which was carefully handled by a local craft store. This achieved the depth effect and gave the gold real dimension.

We converted our laundry room into an organ workshop and began removing the three top layers of paint from each piece of the console. The

original bottom layer was the most difficult to remove because of the hardened finish that Wurlitzer gave it. By removing all paint down to the wood, we were able to see intricate detailing that had not been visible since the 1956 painting filled it. Each piece became a new adventure. Although Wurlitzer sprayed each piece of the organ individually before assembling it in 1928, I chose to repaint it by hand. This way I could keep the red off the gold areas and thereby preserve the detail. The wood used by Wurlitzer to make this console was so beautiful that it was almost a shame to cover it with paint. But red and gold it was in 1928, and red and gold it would be again. Each piece was carefully painted and the intricate shading put around all of the gold to highlight it. Then three coats of non-yellowing acrylic was applied as insurance against damage (and future attempts to change the color). All the holes and cuts had been filled and sanded and the finished product was more than we ever anticipated.

The finished pieces were so beautiful that I couldn't wait to get to the theatre and start the remaining parts of the console. Little did I know that the parts just finished were only the icing on the cake! Because there was no power in the building (and no heat) we cheated and borrowed power from the building next door via a 250' extension cord. That gave us a work light, at least, and we could begin stripping off the paint remaining on the stationary console pieces. Bill and Tim used this time to trim and adjust wire on the contact blocks and adjust tension on the twill tapes. Cecil and I were the official "strippers." It creates quite a mess (and a lot of fumes), but the finished product is

worth all the effort. We knew that we were going to replace the carpet surrounding the console, so we were not concerned about the huge globs of paint “jelly” that fell to the base. After stripping the wood, we carefully cleaned out each section of the carvings and finished with extra-fine steel wool. Missing pieces were replaced and nicks and cuts were filled. I was ready to start putting on the red, but the temperature was far too cold to chance it. Rather than waste time waiting on the power, I began putting the first coat of gold on all the detail work. It would require a second coat after the shading was put on, so I didn’t have to worry about missing an occasional spot or two in the dim light. Cecil, being a hardware man and dealing with all sorts of equipment, fixed me up with a battery-powered miner’s lamp to wear on my head so I could direct the light where I needed it most.

The theatre finally finished their re-wiring and power was restored to the building. It took six weeks, not four. Down to the theatre I tramped, with paint in one hand and brushes in the other, ready to start the red. That’s when the theatre manager informed me that they were getting ready to start refinishing the stage floor. There sat the console — open, with all the “innards” exposed — and they were going to create massive clouds of dust! Hurriedly, Bill and Cecil covered the console and sealed it as best they could. Actually, there is no way to protect from the clouds of dust created by power sanders, especially when they come within ten inches of the console. No matter how well you seal the instrument, dust manages to creep into nooks and crannies you didn’t know existed. Dust also managed to settle down to the next floor

where the blower is located, so that when we finally wanded the organ we acquired dust in some of the newly-covered pneumatics. Needless to say, they had to be re-done.

Finally, the worst of the theatre carpentry work was completed and the console could be finished. Using a compressor and an air brush made the shading on the larger pieces go much faster. The final coat of gold was put on and the finishing three coats of acrylic. To ensure a smooth coat of acrylic, the pieces were rubbed down with a wet sander block between coats. This works much better than using steel wool, which will cut the finish; a wet sander won’t.

We began re-assembling the console and replacing the chrome stop tab dividers. New plastic keys had been ordered to replace the badly worn and chipped ivory ones, but disagreement with the historians prevented these from being changed. If historians were also organists, they would be far more receptive to having smooth keys on which to play, not keys that cannot be properly aligned or will cut your fingers if you attempt a glissando. Maybe someday this will be resolved and the new keys can be added to this otherwise beautiful instrument.

Finally, we stood back to admire our months of hard, but rewarding, work. She looked absolutely breathtaking! Never, in any of our lifetimes had we seen this instrument look as beautiful. But she still had a peculiar look about her. She seemed to have a definite list to the left. We knew that when this organ was installed the theatre owners wanted additional room in the orchestra pit. They therefore moved the organ over on the lift approximately 12” and cut off the floor of the lift to within 6” of the right side



Linda Whitmire and the “Princess” spending one of many hours together in the dark.

of the organ. The orchestra rail was then built against that. If you attempt to mount the organ from the right side, you have to “tip-toe” down the orchestra rail to reach the front. Through the years, this shifting of the organ had caused a very obvious tilt to the left. This would never do! Our beautiful lady could not sit “all-a-kilter.”

Again calling on our resident engineer, Bill came up with all the necessary tools to jack up the lift and level it. The lift was raised just high enough in the pit so that Bill and Tim could get under it with a hydraulic jack and shims. Cecil stayed topside with the level and I gave words of encouragement. This was not as easy a task as we thought it would be. When the lift registered level at the working position, it changed when it reached the top. Back down would go the console and Bill would add more shims; up would come the console and it still wasn’t level. This went on for quite some time before we finally hit the perfect shim and the console rose perfectly level. We were so proud — and hot, and dirty and ready to call it a night.

The console at her worst, half-way through the restoration.



Console before restoration, showing the obvious tilt to the left.



We all gathered around the orchestra rail and watched as Bill pushed the down button to put our beautiful lady to bed for the night. As she lowered herself gracefully into the pit and reached mid-level, we watched in horror as the lift jerked and rocked and the sickening sound of metal scrunching floated up from the pit. We were helpless to do anything but watch as the lift finally screeched to a halt just below mid-level. Our hearts in our throats, we raced down to the next floor, to the entrance to the pit. It seems that over the years, as the lift tilted more and more, the limiter switch had been moved from its original position on the wall to keep the lift operating. As the lift, once again level instead of askew, came down the pit wall it caught the limiter switch box and ripped it completely off the wall, snapping all the cables. Naturally, the

organ died where she sat. Relieved that it wasn't nearly as disastrous as the sound indicated, we made arrangements for the theatre electricians to replace the box (in the proper place) and the lift once again rose perfectly level.

The new pedals were installed to replace the badly worn ones and new contact blocks were ordered to be installed at a later date. Cecil mounted the new pedal lights on the backboard and our lady was cosmetically complete.

With the restoration of the console itself complete, except for the combination action, it was time to turn our attention to the chambers. We called on the expertise of Larry Donaldson, from the Alabama Chapter of ATOS and a super pipe organ technician, to help us tune our lady. He immediately discovered that the Diapasons were

over-blowing and the Tibias would not tune properly. By chance, we had found a card laying in the bottom of the console, very dirty and faded, but it showed the factory recommended wind pressure for the Tibias. Checking the Tibia pressure, we found that it had been dropped to 12 inches instead of the recommended 15 inches. Correcting these two problems made a tremendous difference in the sound.

Tim Johnson set to work rebuilding the engine for the vibraphone effect on the Chrysoglott, which had not worked since the late '60s. He had to spend so much time up in the chambers during this project that we began jokingly referring to Tim as "up in the chambers with Chrystall." This tag somehow stuck, and we still refer to the Chrysoglott as our lady, Chrystal Glott, living in the main chamber. Tim also attempted to re-install the

### TENNESSEE WURLITZER STOP LIST

#### PEDAL

Tuba Profunda 16'  
Diaphone 16'  
Tibia Clausa 16'  
Bourdon 16'  
Tuba 8'  
Octave 8'  
Tibia Clausa 8'  
Clarinet 8'  
Salicional 8'  
Cello 8'  
Flute 8'  
Flute 4'  
Bass Drum  
Kettle Drum  
Snare Drum  
Crash Cymbal  
Cymbal  
Great to Pedal  
Solo to Pedal

#### SECOND TOUCH

Diaphone 16'  
1st & 2nd Touch Traps Switch  
3 Adj. Combination Toe Pistons

#### ACCOMPANIMENT

Clarinet (TC) 16'  
Contra Viol (TC) 16'  
Bourdon 16'  
Vox Humana (TC) 16'  
Tuba 8'  
Diaphonic Diapason 8'  
Tibia Clausa 8'  
Clarinet 8'  
Salicional 8'  
Viol d'Orchestre 8'  
Viol Celeste 8'  
Oboe Horn 8'  
Quintadena 8'  
Flute 8'  
Vox Humana 8'  
Piccolo 4'  
Viol 4'

Octave Celeste 4'  
Flute 4'  
Vox Humana 4'  
Twelfth 2-2/3'  
Piccolo 2'  
Marimba (re-it)  
Harp  
Chrysoglott  
Snare Drum  
Tambourine  
Sleigh Bells  
Chinese Block  
Tom Tom  
Accompaniment Octave  
Solo to Accompaniment

#### SECOND TOUCH

Trumpet 8'  
Tuba 8'  
Tibia Clausa 8'  
Xylophone  
Triangle  
Solo to Accompaniment  
10 Adj. Combination Pistons

#### GREAT

Tuba Profunda 16'  
Diaphone 16'  
Tibia Clausa 16'  
Clarinet (TC) 16'  
Contra Viol (TC) 16'  
Bourdon 16'  
Vox Humana (TC) 16'  
TRUMPET 8'  
TUBA 8'  
TRUMPET 8'  
DIAPHONIC DIAPASON 8'  
TIBIA CLAUSA 8'  
ORCHESTRAL OBOE 8'  
KINURA 8'  
CLARINET 8'  
SALICIONAL 8'  
VIOL D'ORCHESTRE 8'

VIOL CELESTE 8'  
QUINTADENA 8'  
FLUTE 8'  
VOX HUMANA 8'  
Clarion 4'  
Octave 4'  
Piccolo 4'  
Viol 4'  
Viol Celeste 4'  
Salicet 4'  
Flute 4'  
Twelfth (Tibia) 2-2/3'  
Twelfth 2-2/3'  
Piccolo (Tibia) 2'  
Fifteenth 2'  
Piccolo 2'  
Tierce 1-3/5'  
Marimba (re-it)  
Harp  
Bells  
Xylophone  
Glockenspiel  
Chrysoglott  
Cathedral Chimes  
Great Sub-Octave  
Great Octave  
Solo to Great  
SECOND TOUCH  
Tuba Profunda 16'  
Tibia Clausa 8'  
Solo to Great  
10 Adj. Combination Pistons  
SOLO  
Tuba Profunda 16'  
Tibia Clausa 16'  
Trumpet 8'  
Tuba 8'  
Diaphonic Diapason 8'  
Tibia Clausa 8'  
Orchestral Oboe 8'  
Kinura 8'  
Clarinet 8'

Salicional 8'  
Oboe Horn 8'  
Quintadena 8'  
Clarion 4'  
Piccolo 4'  
Twelfth (Tibia) 2-2/3'  
Piccolo (Tibia) 2'  
Xylophone  
Glockenspiel  
Bells (replaced w/octave coupler)  
Cathedral Chimes  
(replaced w/sub-octave coupler)  
6 Adj. Combination Pistons  
GENERAL  
Crescendo Pedal  
Two Expression Pedals  
Main Tremulant  
Solo Tremulant  
Vox Humana Tremulant  
Tibia Clausa Tremulant  
Diaphone-Tuba Tremulant  
Chrysoglott Dampers off-on  
Chrysoglott Vibraphone off-on  
One Double Touch  
Sforzando Pedal - Piano Pedal  
First Touch - Full Stop (wind)  
Second Touch - Everything  
One Double Touch  
Sforzando Pedal - Piano Pedal  
First Touch - Snare Drum  
Second Touch - Bass Drum & Cymbal  
Surf  
Horse Hoofs  
Bird I  
Fire Gong  
Auto Horn  
Boat Whistle  
Door Bell  
Bird II  
Police Whistle  
Acme Siren



T.O.S.T. Historian Wallace Baumann checking a re-finished jamb against old pink finish still on the organ. (Photo by Dave Carter)

Bird II, which was found on the floor of the solo chamber, and which no one remembers ever hearing. But there was a relay and console problem which Larry Donaldson helped us track down and correct. Bird II sings again!

While all this activity was going on, the rest of us were "chasing" dead notes and doing general maintenance. No matter how hard we tried, very little could be done to make our makeshift Trumpets sound good. Our original Brass Trumpets had been removed some time in the 1950's and a set of makeshift pipes put in their place. We made a commitment to ourselves that these Trumpets would have to go and Brass Trumpets put back in, just as soon as possible. But, that would take money and we didn't have any, yet.

We thought the organ was now in good enough shape to put on a grand re-debut of the instrument, and show all the restoration work that had been done to the theatre at the same time. We contacted Walt Winn and asked him to play a "Meet the Mighty Wurlitzer" concert for us. Walt preferred to see the instrument before committing himself to this performance. We certainly couldn't blame him for that — he had never seen the organ and had heard the same stories about it that we had heard in the past. Walt, Don Weiss and Rick McGee came up from Atlanta to inspect the instrument. We found that even though we had completed most of the major work, and the organ was certainly playable, there were some little details that needed attention to make it even better. Walt was instantly intrigued with the organ and had great fun fiddling with it, both mechanically and musically. He sent Don and Rick into the chambers to make some minor changes, and he made notes as to

what he suggested be done. He did suggest that we not delay in rebuilding the combination action, because it worked sporadically. We invited Larry Donaldson back to spend the weekend with us, and promptly put him to work ramrodding the rebuilding of the combination action. Cecil and Bill had a *marvelous* time trying to play the organ while this work was being done! Walt also suggested that we add an octave and sub-octave coupler action, plus a unison off for the Solo manual. Don Weiss built this and installed it on his next trip to town. We knew that this instrument was a Style Balaban 2, which were all 13-rank organs, but we were not quite sure where the fourteenth rank was added. Walt told us that the difference was the addition of the 8' Oboe Horn. Having heard the instrument and getting "itchy" fingers to do more work on it, Walt agreed wholeheartedly to do the concert, scheduled for April 4, 1982.

The weekend of the concert, Walt and Don, as well as Larry, descended on us with their tool boxes and their "new additions" to the console. The Bells and Cathedral Chimes on the Solo manual were replaced with the new octave and sub-octave couplers. They set about checking and correcting wind pressures, adjusting the tremas, and fine tuning. As a surprise for Knoxville, Walt had brought the Brass Trumpets owned by Dick Weber at the Showboat in Marietta and installed them in place of our pitiful Trumpets for this concert. He wanted Knoxville to hear what they had lost and should get back again. The Brass Trumpets sounded as though they had been made for our organ, and we tried our best to get Walt to forget to take them back with him. An eleventh-hour problem found Don replacing crushed lead lines to the tremas and second-touch pneumatics with poly tubing (something that we intend to do with all the lines eventually). The concert was set for 2:00 p.m., and at 5:00 a.m. we closed our tool boxes and headed for home to rest before show time.

For all the many years that we have been associated with theatre organists, we had always heard that there is a certain "mysticism" about this instrument. We had never understood what they meant, until this concert on April 4. It has to be the rare combination of the organ itself, the placement

of the chambers, the shape of the auditorium and the perfect organist at the keyboards that creates a massive sound never heard on any other 14-rank Wurlitzer. We heard that magnificent sound at this concert. What better way to re-introduce the citizens of Knoxville to our "Tennessee Princess" than to have them experience this rare combination. The pride we felt, when Walt hit his first note and our beautiful lady rose into the spotlight, was matched only by the memories we share of the fun we had restoring her to her original grandeur.

The only planned additions to this instrument will be the replacement of the Brass Trumpets, one additional rank of Strings and a possible Post Horn rank. We feel that any further additions would only hurt the organ, rather than help it.

Since that initial concert, the "Princess" has been a very busy lady. During the 1982 World's Fair, she was used regularly for the stage play *Drumwright*, which was performed at the Tennessee Theatre. The Knoxville Chamber Orchestra has used her for many of their featured organists. The "Miss Knoxville" pageant was held at the Tennessee and the organ used instead of an orchestra, as well as for the 1983 Dance Festival. T.O.S.T. proudly presented Tom Helms playing the *Phantom of the Opera* in November 1982, and she is currently being used for each movie. She even has the distinction of being used for a wedding at the Tennessee this Spring. Thank heavens, Bill suppressed the urge to play the "Wedding March" with the bells on!

Though we are now back in Birmingham, we maintain our membership in and support of T.O.S.T. The "Tennessee Princess" holds a very dear spot in our hearts, and we will do everything in our power to see that she and T.O.S.T. continue to thrive. We are proud to have been a part of their birth and the organ's re-birth.

The one peculiarity that this organ claims would be that no matter how hard you try to push the down button, she will not allow herself to retire without the "Tennessee Waltz" being played. A fitting lullaby for a grand and proud lady.

See THEATRE ORGAN October/November 1978 for an article on the Tennessee Theatre. □

## *A Human Dynamo*

# “THE WORLD’S OLDEST ORGANIST”

by Tom B'hend

Lloyd Gould del Castillo, which has been shortened in recent years simply to “Del Castillo,” is about as close to being a human dynamo as it is possible to find. Describing himself as being the world’s oldest organist, now at age ninety, he undoubtedly can claim that title because he is certainly one of the world’s busiest organists.

As an example of his continuous performance industry, he was asked to play a brief recital for the Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society on March 27 at San Gabriel Auditorium preceding a general membership meeting. He accepted, and during his program was congratulated on his coming birthday, April 2, 1983. There was a proclamation from Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley. The Society presented him a plaque attesting to his artistry, and a warm-hearted note from fellow organist George Wright.

The biggest surprise was Del’s program. Long noted for his originality in presenting concerts, whatever he does always has a new twist to make each show different. Redundancy to Del is as bad as copying the work or ideas that someone else has produced.

For LATOS members he presented an informal mini-concert comprised solely of his own compositions. While it is no secret that Del had written music, some of which has been published, it was an entertaining revelation to hear him play his own works for almost an hour. Most members were unaware of the prolific output of this artist. Del later admitted that he has been writing musical compositions since he attended high school.

Most appealing were his salon-type selections — light, bright and airy — the kind of music generally played by theatre organists during intermissions. This sort of musical selection engenders in the listener a “theatre feeling” because it seems to blend well with being in a theatre, creating a sensation of well-being, a happy frame of mind, etc. One of this type, “Cuckoo Clock,” was announced and Del said he was unable to locate the music but would play the piece from the old 78 rpm Red Seal record he placed on the music rack. The platter was a recording of the number by Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Del was introduced to the famed conductor while he was a student at Harvard. Fiedler and the orchestra played two of his selections — one an overture, the other the aforementioned salon piece — in one of his concerts and used them with other compositions by Del in later programs. On another occasion Del was invited to conduct the Boston Pops at a special “Harvard Night” show, and he played his own “Harvard Fantasia” which he wrote for the event. The show was produced in Boston’s Symphony Hall.

Much of Del’s life was spent in Boston, where he was born in 1893. He began his musical career on the piano. His mother, who was a teacher, started him out. Later she would become his assistant, but that’s getting ahead of the story. Curiously, the name Del Castillo, which suggests Spanish descent, was actually Cuban. Del’s

grandfather emigrated from the Caribbean nation to the United States, and his father, who was a doctor, was born in New Hampshire.

Before he reached high school age, Del was not particularly inclined to follow a musical career. However, he became leader of the high school glee club and played drums in the band. It was while attending this institution that he wrote his first music, a march. By the time he completed his high school work he had set his goal in life, a career in music. It was his major upon entering Harvard.

For two years he was conductor of the Harvard Orchestra and wrote music for the Pi Eta Club shows produced at the university. One of his classmates was Leverett G. Saltonstall, whose name became a household word in politics, much as Del’s became known by having it spelled out on theatre marquees. There were others in Del’s class who were to become famous statesmen — James B. Conant, later a Harvard president, Tudor Gardiner, a Maine Governor, and Saltonstall who was Massachusetts Governor and U.S. Senator.

His first job upon graduating from Harvard in 1914 was writing the music for a Masonic biblical pageant, “Chosen King.” In order to qualify for the commission, he became a Mason. He toured with the production until its run ended and then he decided to become a theatre organist. He had studied classical organ at Harvard under Raymond Robinson. Motion picture theatres were just starting to install pipe organs. Del figured he

could accompany silents.

He first applied for the position of organist at the Fenway Theatre, a mid-town house in Boston that was nearing completion. Two others who had applied before him were given the posts as first and second organists. He then went to downtown Boston and landed a job at the Park Theatre.

Asked how he applied his classical training to silent photoplays, Del said, "I just did it off the top of my head." His success at the Park was sufficient after three months to make him rather cocky and he returned to the Fenway to listen to the two who had been hired in his stead. Leaving the theatre, he told the manager, "I could play your organ better than both of them!" Thereupon the manager fired both organists and hired Del. "My bold-face claim put me on the Fenway bench and I had to play all shows, from about noon to 11 p.m. daily, for two weeks. Finally I got a second organist. My dad encouraged my mother to become a theatre organist, and she was hired as second console artist at the Fenway."

In 1918 the Fenway became part of the Publix circuit. And the same year Uncle Sam pointed his finger at Del and got him. He joined the Army at Camp Devons, Massachusetts. Being a musician, he went to the camp band leader and applied for assignment. "What instruments do you play?" queried the head man. "What instruments do you need?" shot back Del. Naming several, Del stopped him when Baritone Horn was mentioned. "I knew nothing about playing such a horn, but a trip to Boston for several lessons took care of that. What I didn't learn was the fact fumigation of the mouthpiece is essential. I came down with a lip infection and had to settle for playing cymbals," he recalled.

Shortly afterwards, Del became band leader and received a "17" sergeant rating — "the kind that didn't know how to soldier." This was in April 1918. The following July Congress commissioned all band leaders second lieutenants. One week before going overseas, Del had "Looie Bars."

First foreign stop was Winchester, England, for training, Then his unit shipped off to the south of France and arrived there two weeks before the Armistice was signed. Del soon returned to the States and the organ bench at the Fenway Theatre.



Lloyd del Castillo and his Ninetieth Birthday cake, following his mini-concert at San Gabriel.

(Zimfoto)

Theatre organists might have tired playing for all's-well-that-ends-well pictures, but their own love lives brought the domestic way of life into full perspective — which is another way of saying Del got married in 1919 to Phyliss Woolley. The couple started raising a family and this brought about a problem with Paramount Publix several years later. The company asked Del to move to London to open one of the new chain houses. He refused because of his family and went back downtown again, this time to Loew's State.

During his theatre career, Del was a frequent contributor to *Diapason* and *The American Organist*, as well as to *Exhibitor's Herald*, *Motion Picture News* and other trade journals. His writing quite naturally added to his stature in the entertainment field. Eventually, Publix asked him to return to the fold and sent him to Buffalo to open Mike Shea's lavish new playhouse.

In 1924 Del invented the character of Dinny Timmins, an illiterate elevator operator who became a regular

contributor to the Jacobs music magazines published in Boston. After Del's move to Los Angeles in 1943, they were discovered by Lloyd Klos, who ran a column of Dinny's he had come across without knowing the author. Del read it and confessed to Lloyd that he was the author, and from then on Dinny's Colyum has been a regular feature of THEATRE ORGAN.

Recalling his stay at Shea's, Del said that in the second week following the theatre's opening, Mike Shea came down to the console one day and remarked, "When that organ opens up, it moves the orchestra right out into the alley!" "It was an exceptionally fine instrument with a beautiful tone," Del noted.

On another occasion during his tenure there he became a prisoner in one of the chambers. "The orchestra usually joined the organ in the final minutes of the picture and then took over playing for the stage show. One particular attraction called for eight bars to be played by the organist to open the stage presentation. I was

winding up the feature when a cipher developed. The orchestra then came in for the final scenes and I figured I would have time to go up and pull the pipe, then return to the console and play the eight bars. I made it up to the chamber in double quick time, pulled the pipe and turned around to go out. The theatre, being brand new, like the organ, still had a few problems. The door to this chamber was one of them. It became stuck hard and fast, and I couldn't get out. I didn't make it back to the pit and I heard the pianist play the eight bars. I was 'chambered' until I wrote a note, impaled it on my pen knife which I dropped out through the shutters, hoping it wouldn't kill a patron. The note and knife were found and handed to an usher and I was released from my prison after about half an hour."

Nine months later Del was transferred to Publix's Big Apple showcase, the Rialto Theatre on Broadway, where he stayed approximately six months. From there Publix sent him back to Boston as solo organist at their cavernous Metropolitan Theatre. Del's name was a lighted feature on the theatre's marquee. It was to be his final theatre position.

No, he didn't tire of playing pipes. He wasn't fired, either. And he didn't have an accident. But he did have one of his original ideas again. He would help other aspiring organists learn how to fit music to the pictures. Accordingly, he resigned his position at the Met, went back downtown again and rented space in Loew's State Theatre Building. Into the space he moved two two-manual Estey pipe organs and eventually a three-manual from the same builder, and opened the Del Castillo Theatre Organ School of Boston. Business boomed! Then it bombed!

An advertisement appearing in the December 1927 issue of *Diapason* declared the school "is pleased to announce that at the end of only eight months' operation it is obliged to add to its equipment a three-manual organ to accommodate the increasing enrollment. This instrument will be installed with the other modern and completely equipped Estey unit theatre-type organs in January, when Mr. Earl Weidner will become associate instructor. It is hoped these increased facilities for practice and study will eliminate the present waiting list, and permit instant enroll-

ment . . ."

With a sigh bordering on wistfulness, Del remarked that for over a year the school was a tremendous success. Then Al Jolson came out in "The Jazz Singer" and ruined not only the organ school but also several thousand organists who would soon be out of work. "It was a great idea to open the school, except I didn't know it was the end of silents," he recalled ruefully.

However, always an originator of a new idea, Del turned near-disaster into triumph. He returned the two-manual jobs to Estey and sold his three-manual along with himself to budding radio station WEEI in Boston. The station bought the organ and hired Del as staff organist. Subsequently, Columbia Broadcasting System acquired the station as its Boston outlet and Del stepped up as first production manager. He finally was named program director. Retaining this position until 1943, Del decided to move to California and made arrangements to move to Hollywood and CBS' station there, KNX.

Arriving in Hollywood and assigned to KNX, he ran into union opposition. A rule was on the books that would not permit him to play for six months. It was a stumbling block that caused him to trip over to Melrose Avenue and put his writing knowledge to work. He landed a job as a script writer with RKO Studios for six months; just long enough to keep busy until the union restriction faded away. At the expiration of the work rule, he started his job at KNX as organist, conductor and production staff member.

His KNX position lasted two years until Del decided to become a free lance artist and conduct small orchestras on radio. During this period he also became musical director of the Laguna Art Festival and had an 18-piece orchestra under his baton.

He appeared in a great many shows aired over all networks. In his free lance capacity he could hire his own musicians, provided his orchestra numbered seven men or less. This factor made his orchestras less expensive. For musical aggregations numbering more than seven, a contractor was required to hire musicians at a much higher cost.

Del finally bowed out of radio in 1958 when he took a sabbatical leave and, with his family, toured Europe

for a year.

Upon returning to Hollywood he became Chief of the Organ Department of the Sherman School of Music. In the ensuing years, Del has continued teaching and carried on his concert work, playing throughout the United States. He is also active in silent film programs and his accompaniment technique is on par with other leading exponents of this type of presentation. Del also served several years as Editor of *Off the Keyboards*, official publication for the Professional Organists' Breakfast Club of Los Angeles. During this time he has contributed to THEATRE ORGAN and other publications.

He has record albums to his credit recorded on the Wiltern Theatre 4/37 Kimball prior to its removal, the 4/61 Robert-Morton in the former Elks Temple in Los Angeles, Joe Koons' Motorcycle Shop Wurlitzer/Welte and the San Diego Fox Theatre 4/32 Robert-Morton.

Del was awarded Honorary Member status for 1982 at the Detroit Convention. His name is already inscribed in the ATOS Hall of Fame.

But to return to Del and his mini-concert at San Gabriel March 27. The appearance of this artist was to honor his birthday. As he finished playing and started to take the console down, LATOS official Peter Crotty came on stage holding a small cake which was expressly designed for the organist, with one candle for each decade. Del pushed the UP button, took the cake and disappeared back into the pit.

When he was sought out for interviewing and photographing after lowering the console, Del had disappeared, along with the cake, and couldn't be found. Later, he was contacted by telephone and asked his formula for longevity, or how to care for a human dynamo. His recipe: "One drink before dinner and moderation in all things!"

The "one drink" part of his statement rings true, but that part about moderation, especially for a 90-year-youngster who still maintains an active daily schedule that would put many younger men to shame, seems like it doesn't apply to him.

Oh yes, and that note to Del from George Wright, which reflects the sentiments of all organ buffs, reads: "Congratulations on your Ninetieth Birthday — here's to a hundred at least!" □



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# Requiem for a Barton

by Lorena McKee

Now that two of Dallas' pizza parlors have closed their doors, it is a sad plight for theatre organ aficionados of the North Texas area who have, with loyal regularity, beaten a path to these establishments to enjoy the lush sounds of the king of instruments. In one of these fine installations a Wurlitzer remains silent behind locked doors, and with the demise of the Dallas Landmark Pizza and Pipes in late March, the 3/10 Barton is once again silent and homeless. It was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre in Waterloo, Iowa, in 1927, where it remained until 1960 when Mark Kenning, a well-known professional organist and teacher in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, bought it and installed it in his home in Richardson, a Dallas suburb. As all pipes were originally mitered at the factory to fit under a 13-foot ceiling, it was

ideal for home installation, and it soon was a beautiful and worthy complement to the 9-foot ebony Bosendorfer concert grand piano settled nearby. Mark and Nola Kenning often held ATOS meetings in their home, sharing the Barton's thrilling tones with local ATOS members and visitors from other chapters from across America and Canada, as well as countless artists passing through "Big D."

In 1974 the Barton was leased to the Landmark Pizza and Pipes, the first such of its kind in the Metroplex area, and it was played continuously until Landmark closed its doors to make room for a video game parlor anxiously waiting to move in. This urgency caused Mark to be notified that removal of the organ must be started immediately. Mark, a staunch member of the North Texas Chapter al-

most from its beginning, called Dick Cooper and Fred Garrett who head up the chapter's rebuild committee, and they showed up early the morning of March 23 to commence the "heart-break" job that had to be accomplished without delay.

Before the toolboxes were unloaded, Mark slipped up on the bench, played and recorded a farewell concert bringing forth magical music showing off the Diapason, Flute, Tibia, Oboe, Vox, Clarinet, Kinura, Tuba, Viol d'Orchestre and Viol Celeste, making sure to bring out the percussion stops, Chrysoglott, Chimes, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Snare and Bass Drum, Cymbal, Kettle Drum and Thunder, and spicing the last tunes with the use of the toy counter Tambourine, Castanets, Chinese Block, Tom-Tom, Auto Horn, Steamboat Whistle, Bird Call, Siren and Fire Gong! When the last tones of mellow voices fell away, Mark turned to his audience of two and said, "I love this organ" — after that rousing concert it certainly was evident — and then reluctantly turned off the blower and dismantling began.

Many famous organists have performed on the Barton while at the Landmark, among them Don Baker. In the early days of the Landmark, many ATOS meetings were held on Sunday afternoons when open console was offered and many NTC members were treated to a rare chance to play a theatre organ. At that time there was no other public theatre organ installed in Dallas, so it was an immense boost locally to reviving theatre organ enthusiasm. The removal of the organ that had briefly given many hours of listening pleasure for many patrons, now, once again, leaves the Dallas-Fort Worth area bereft of public theatre organ music.

As of April 20, the last of the Barton's components were neatly packed, boxed and crated ready to be loaded on a huge truck which would transport the quieted instrument to its storage space in Richardson. It so happens that Mark already has a 4/19 Robert-Morton (originally in the Ritz Theatre in Tulsa) installed in his Richardson home, but he still has a great affection for the Barton and hopes that it will soon find a home similar to his Robert-Morton. North Texas Chapter hopes it will soon grace some public place in Dallas where all can enjoy its thrilling sound again. □

Mark Kenning at the 3/10 Barton.



# Meet Mildred Alexander - Via Video Tape

The announcement that Mildred Alexander's methods of learning to play the organ are now available on video tape comes as no surprise to those who have observed her remarkable career, which is divided among teaching, philosophy, writing, composing and concert engagements. It is one of the most fascinating success stories, and one which validates the musical scene in the USA in recent years. Millie has been in the vanguard of American musicality since her earliest days, and she couldn't have been more than three years old when she first picked up finger exercises she heard her older sister playing, and plunked them out with great accuracy on the family piano. That was in Durham, North Carolina, Millie's home town.

This writer's first encounter with the Alexander magic came about by happenstance. He had just returned from living for many years in Europe, and wanted to catch up on the current American scene. As his port of entry was New York, what better cross section than the Radio City Music Hall?

He caught the last showing of a forgettable movie, and then it happened. The little curtain which then masked the organ console opened and the theatre was flooded with organ music for exiting patrons. The organist was a girl and she was pedalling with spiked heels! I edged down to the wide orchestra pit and simply gaped; no theatre in the USA had featured an organ "march out" for many years. I soon caught the attention of the chief usher, an elderly man whose attention at that time was focused on clearing the auditorium of stragglers, sleepers,

drunks and organ fans.

"Sir, we're closing now."

"But I just returned from overseas, and I haven't heard music like this since before the war."

The chief usher was not unsympathetic. "You're not the first one to linger. In fact there's someone down here nearly every night — with their ears wide open."

"Who is the organist? I didn't know the Hall presented gal organists."

"They don't. She's the first one."

"Her name?"

"I dunno — Mildred something. She's new here. Been playing about a week — and she'll keep it up all night."

I looked at that lovely mop of auburn hair and the spiked heels as my ears soaked up the music. The gal undulated slightly as she played. I never saw her face. She was unaware of a worshiper across the expanse of the orchestra pit. The usher glanced at his

A student follows Millie's instruction, via video tape.



watch. Sadly, I left, but with the lift only good organ sounds can generate.

That was my first sampling of the Alexander styling and it made a permanent impression, yet I didn't learn the full name of the organist until ten years later. But we are getting ahead of our story, so back to Mildred, the child, in Durham, North Carolina, a town remembered largely for that daring (for that time) billboard picturing a very complete bull and plugging Bull Durham "pipe terbacky." The trademark caused a furor among '20s bluenoses. No matter, tobacco country survived, and one happy by-product was Mildred.

At the age of 12 she made her piano concert debut before an admiring audience of Durham parents. During the same year she discovered another musical wonder — an organ in a church. This little wheezer had to be her dream instrument, so she switched her studies to classical organ. Before long she was an accomplished church organist, capable of belting out hymns, spirituals and a few pieces of classical organ literature.

She began to feel that she had learned all she could in the old home town — but not quite.

On the radio and on records she was hearing a quite different type of organ music. Broadcasts by names such as Jesse Crawford, Eddie Dunderstedter and Ann Leaf were brought to Durham by network radio. The music they played from studios far from Durham was very different from what young Mildred had been taught

was proper. So were the instruments they played. When Mildred tried some of their tunes on her church organ, the results were far from satisfying.

She asked her teacher about the great difference, and was told in scornful tones that those people played on those god-awful theatre organs, and that their music was an abomination.

She lost no time in tracking down one of those "abominations." It was during the '30s when many theatres sold their unused organs to churches. One was located in the recreation hall of a Durham church, a sweet little two-manual Wurlitzer graduated *cum laude* from a movie house which no longer needed it since the installation of "Photo-phone" — "talkies," that is.

It wasn't long before Mildred was broadcasting the Wurlitzer over WDNC, CBS radio outlet in Durham. She was hired sight unseen, through an audition record. She didn't dare approach the manager in person because she knew he would not hire a child!

She graduated from high school at 15 and was immediately hired by the station as musical director. On learning that Duke University had a pop organ course, she enrolled, but also continued her classical studies. Why was the opportunity to learn to play the organ so rare? Mildred vowed that one day she would do something about it.

Then the "big time" called and Mildred moved to New York. Long before that historic move she had discovered the pioneer electric organ, the Hammond. It would change her life. In New York, she scored, arranged, conducted, played and was musical director for many network TV shows.

Then Mildred's artistry came to the attention of the Hammond Organ Company and an association started which would benefit both artist and manufacturer over a period of many years. The Hammond is still her favorite electric organ, although it has changed considerably over the years, discarding Laurens Hammond's original tone wheel generating system for solid-state oscillators.

The electric, and later the electronic, organ made the instrument available for home use. And the initial price was right — \$1,250.00. Many people bought them but were unable

to get adequate instruction. Mildred was well aware of this; on her numerous Hammond demo concerts she was approached many times by people asking for instruction. She examined the teaching material then available. Most was warned-over courses by pianists and pipe organists, and much of it was over the heads and abilities of home organ purchasers, or simply inadequate. Mildred recalled the difficulty she had in her early years obtaining organ instruction, not to mention the narrow range of that instruction when available.

Why not a practical course which would instruct beginners, intermediates and advanced students and at the same time maintain a high interest level? A course based on her experience, with easy-to-understand instruction books plus a network of teaching studios staffed by instructors well-versed in the Alexander accumulation of music styling started to take shape in her mind. The course would eliminate most of the rigid and tedious formalities connected in times past with organ instruction. Instead, her courses would follow an informal approach. Emphasis was put on the ease of playing organ, be it a parlor spinet or a four-manual giant.

Mildred had always kept notes concerning her observations, impressions, shortcuts, musical values and talent quotients of interested parties. She outlined her courses to fill several short volumes, designed to accommodate the students' levels of accomplishment. Then to find a publisher who could be convinced of the value of her approach. There were then on the market a number of hastily assembled, simplistic books on how to play the organ, but they rarely went much beyond a rudimentary version of "Long, Long Ago" and similar easy ones. Mildred was determined that her courses would not be self-limiting just to show fast progress. After many disappointments she located the right publisher, Charles Hansen Publications, Inc.

One of Mildred Alexander's most notable traits is her ability to establish rapport with an audience immediately. She soon has each individual feeling as though she is addressing him personally — and she is. Two of the reasons she has been able to establish arrangements with nearly six hundred music studios across the country to

"Omigawd, it's the President!" cries an excited Millie as she rallies the troops to greet a presidential look-alike during a Home Organ Festival concert. The lady obliged with a majestic "Hail to the Chief."

(Stardust Photo Service)





Millie with Leroy Davidson. She recorded her "Sweetest Sounds" album in his studio. Leroy is a former Alexander Method student who now teaches by the Method in southern California. (Stardust Photo Service)

use her *Mildred Alexander Method of Organ Mastery* are the common sense applied to her approach to learning and the personal magnetism she projects from the podium or stage. That latter quality is an immeasurable asset. To say that she charms members of both sexes in her classes and audiences is putting it mildly. After a couple of learning sessions with Millie many are so mesmerized by her engaging personality that they trade in their spinet organs for larger models. A number of merchants will testify that "trading up" is especially noticeable after a visit by Millie.

On the personal side, life hasn't been too kind to Millie. The constant travel was one hurdle. Three marriages — one ended in death, one in divorce, and one in separation. One ex-husband, a well-known TV game show MC, insists he's always been a bachelor, although Millie just might show you their marriage certificate when the wind blows just right and the moon is full.

The lady is on good terms with the children which resulted from her marriages. She adores her daughter and eldest son, who is a doctor. But her favorite has got to be her younger son, Milo, the only one of her children to become a professional musician. Milo is an orchestral percussionist who, on occasion, plays drums to accent his mother's organ music during concerts. They're a team!

So the dream of teaching thousands to play the organ has come true for Millie, but not without certain travails. Because of the warmth inherent in her personal appearances, either as

teacher or concert player, her schedule calls for frequent travel to anywhere in the USA and sometimes outside. It's a red letter day for a local studio to be able to present Mildred Alexander in person, and the local teachers who use her *Mildred Alexander Method* are glad to have her appear. After all, she is a star and a glamorous one — also the author of the lessons they have been struggling with. One of her favorite devices is to connect with one of the "extravaganzas," "adventures" or "festivals" staged by the electronic organ societies for a usually three-day music jamboree. Some of these associations are national in scope and hold several widely-separated weekend sessions a year, often in some elegant metropolitan hotel. Such is the Amateur Organists Association International, the brainchild of perennial AOAI officers, Crane Bodine and Ernest Sampson, who cut his editorial teeth on the long ago *Hammond Times*. The two are dedicated organophiles. "Ernie" Sampson is the editor of the association's bi-monthly *Hurdy Gurdy*, which is eagerly devoured by the large membership, especially coverage of the most recent "extravaganza" combination learning and socializing session. These events provide a perfect setting for the Alexander talents. In fact, Millie has been one of the star attractions since the AOAI started the various "extravaganzas," "minishows" and week-long sea cruises during which enrollees are transported on an organ-equipped "love boat" to romantic landings in the West Indies. If there is a constant star

of these often very commercial events, it's Millie. She provides the human touch.

Millie's instruction in person is so much in demand that she often arranges for some classes to be held after the "extravaganza," holding the dedicated students in her spell usually for a one-extra-day cram session. She calls such extensions "happenings" but they are actually well-planned, intensive learning sessions, attended mostly by advanced students of the *Method*, or those who simply want to bask longer in the Alexander charisma. She also runs teacher qualification exams during these extra days. Not all who try pass the tests; Millie can be an exacting taskmaster where the quality of teaching is involved.

The constant travel to and from concerts and teaching sessions precludes much home life. Home life? When Millie gets to her home in Oceanside, California, does she relax? Nope. She writes a chapter for a new teaching manual, answers correspondence, and then it's time for another of her frequent newsletters which go out almost monthly to the many teachers who live by her teaching methods. "Just Between Us" is the title, and it's self-explanatory; in a chatty style she tells about her adventures on the concert circuit, gives some playing pointers (illustrated with notation), offers notation for an organ arrangement by one of her method teachers or students (the writer once offered his ear-caught notation for the *Mary Hartman* TV soaper, and she ran it).

Generosity is an Alexander failing, or strength, if you prefer. For example, when she started publishing her teaching manuals, she made them available to both teachers and students instead of selling them through teachers. Thus she had to forego any

Mildred Alexander originated the concept of high heel pedalling when the Music Director at the Radio City Music Hall insisted. Her pioneer effort has since been imitated by several other gal organists — but Millie did it first! (Stardust Photo Service)





A wistful Mildred Alexander muses beneath the chandelier in her San Diego Studio complex.  
(Stardust Photo Service)

profits other than royalties from the publisher. It has cost her plenty. Even so, she has been plagued by plagiarists who have issued books and arrangements lifted from her copyrighted work. Does she take them to court? Not necessarily; she usually grins and bears it; she is most interested in advancing the art of organ playing.

But the "lifting" of material does not stop with simple piracy. She charges each teacher who teaches by her method a small annual license fee. Actually, she has no way of insuring payment; her books are sold on the open market. So she sometimes sees a sign in a music studio window stating that "This Studio Teaches by the Mildred Alexander Method," which may be the first the author knew about it. She tolerates such freeloaders although she could have tied up the loose ends through an exclusive distribution arrangement. It's all for the advancement of playing know-how, and where, she reasons, could better instruction be found? She recently moved her publishing effort to the Bradley Publishing Company. Typically, Richard Bradley is a Millie protege.

The frequent travel has been tiring,

of course, but Mildred finds that even billeting away from home can be almost as dangerous to her health as her constant cigarette smoking. On one Canadian concert stop near the end of 1969, she checked into a convenient motel and went to bed. She was awakened by the smell of smoke. The structure was on fire! Millie donned her slippers and staggered out into the hall only to find the stairwell ablaze. She was aware that the smoke was lulling her so she went back to the room and tried to open the balcony window; it opened to three inches, blocked by a limiter! She was very near oblivion when firemen broke the window, wrapped Millie in a blanket and took her down the outside stairway. She recovered quickly in the cold air, just in time to watch the motel burn to the ground. Part of the fuel; her clothes, music, records, handbag and suitcases. Her garments for the next few hours (until she could wire for funds) were her flannel nightshirt and a blanket. A magazine news item was headlined "Millie Nearly Fried!" But she played her concert!

Air travel has also threatened her on occasion. One time she gave an assistant her plane ticket so he could sub for her in a distant city. The airliner was involved in a minor crash. No one hurt, but Millie couldn't help wondering if there was a message in all the negative happenings.

Yet, she keeps up her sunny demeanor. One thing she employs as a trademark is her southern origin, emphasized by frequent playings of "Dixie" and her "magnolias and mint julep" speech patterns. On one occasion she was introduced to the late Randy Sauls, a long-ago silent film accompanist, who was also the author of a course in organ technique. Randy was born in Mississippi, which is far south of Millie's North Carolina. The intro went something like this.

Millie: Ahm Millie Alexandah. Wheyah yew fum?

Randy: Ahm fum Mis'sip, Millie. Wheyah yew fum?

Millie: Ahm fum Nawth Car'lah-na, Rayendy.

Randy: Dayamn yang-kee!

Both "rebs" had kept their speech and southern beginnings well honed and after that encounter both broke into laughter at the lengths they had gone to prove it — especially since they were meeting on yankee territory.

Millie's fans are always after her to make recordings. Unfortunately, the lady has a hangup when it comes to grooving; she insists that she can turn out a satisfactory LP only if it is played in the presence of an audience. Thus, her two most notable recordings were made during a concert at the Los Angeles Wiltern Theatre, where she temporarily abandoned the familiar drawbars for the stopkeys of the Wiltern's 4/37 Kimball pipe organ. The records were good sellers but a later try proved a technical disaster. The taping was done during a morning concert during which bright sunlight had warmed up the pipe chamber on one side of the theatre but not the other side when the weather turned cloudy. Because heat raises the pitch of organ pipes, the sunlight left the pitch higher in that chamber than on the side with merely house temperature. The results didn't sound so bad to the concert audience, but the pitiless microphone made a point of showing up the pitch difference. Somehow the record got into mail circulation and was a cause of embarrassment to Millie until she disposed of remaining stacks in a novel way. One of the organ magazines tells us that she loaded cartons of grooved vinyl onto a friend's boat and got herself piloted out into the Pacific Ocean off San Diego, then had herself a great time scaling the records across the whitecaps, until all had sunk into the briny. That's Millie!

More recently she cut a fine record on a Hammond X66 in Leroy Davidson's West Covina studio (he's also one of her protegés), and to remain true to form she filled the studio with invited guests to help raise the adrenalin. It worked! *The Sweetest Sounds* is one of her most popular releases.

There is so much more to say about Mildred Alexander. She's a colorful woman. With the completion of six hours of video teaching cassettes, now anyone interested in learning to play the organ can study with Mildred Alexander practically "in person." You can come under the spell of this magnetic personality and at the same time learn to play. So we won't write any further about her. It's better that you meet her on your home screen. You, too, may fall under her spell. And who knows? She just might make an organist of you!

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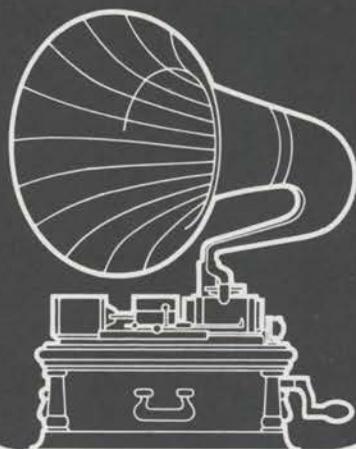
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## For The Records



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

**DEAN HERRICK: THANKS FOR THE MEMORY.** Played on the Herrick studio 3/17 Wurlitzer organ in Parktown, Johannesburg. Two-record set No. MFPD 1. \$11.00 postpaid by international money order made out to Dr. A. J. Hovis, 60 Cotswold Drive, Saxonwold, Johannesburg, 2196 Transvaal, South Africa.

He was playing the 5-deck Wurlitzer in the Chicago Marbro Theatre at 17. He was the first organist to risk a hotel engagement playing the brand new and unproved Hammond organ at Chicago's Bismark Hotel in 1935. Then he demonstrated the Hammond at Radio City Music Hall. One of his notable acquaintances was the late pipe organ expert Lee Haggart, who was then supervising Hammond installations. Times were tough for pipe people in 1935.

Dean Herrick was born in Dixon, Illinois, where he was the boyhood friend of a youth with a strong desire to become a radio announcer — Ronald Reagan. Like most musically gifted people, he started playing very early and was attracted to the theatre organ

in the twilight of its show business reign. But with theatres dropping organ music and the electronic organ replacing pipes on records and in radio, Dean Herrick made a decision which would change his life; he would go some place where pipes were still in vogue. He selected the Republic of South Africa, a country which boasted seven Wurlitzers and one Möller. There just had to be something there for young Dean Herrick. Indeed there was. Arriving in 1936, by 1937 he had started broadcasting via SABC radio, a Sunday program which established a longevity record — 40 years!

The Herrick approach to the theatre organ was new and different to Johannesburgers. The instrument had been chiefly an accompaniment for silent films but Herrick soon established himself as a personality, entertainer and showman when he presided at the console of the Metro Theatre's Wurlitzer, and later at the 20th Century Theatre. He involved the organ in the popular stage presentations and was instrumental in locating and developing new talent.

When the Metro Theatre discontinued stage presentations, Dean Herrick bought the Wurlitzer and had it installed in his Parktown home where he continued his Sunday broadcasts. There seems to be some question as to the original size of the organ; it is referred to both as a 3/13 and a 3/15,

but no matter. In his home studio, Herrick built it up to a 3/17, and that's the organ heard here. Full of years and honors, Dean Herrick died in 1981, South Africa's most beloved theatre organist.

The selections appear to be a representative grouping of tunes which Dean Herrick found attractive. His broadcast theme was "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You," then "Thanks for the Memory," "On a Clear Day," "Lady of Spain," "September in the Rain" (erroneously listed as "September Song"), a memory of WWI — "Keep the Home Fires Burning," "Summertime" (*Porgy & Bess*), "Blue Skies," "All the Things You Are," "When I Look in Your Eyes," "When Day is Done," "Some Enchanted Evening," "High Noon," "Alfie," two recollections of WWII — "A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square" and "Bless 'em All," "Granada" (the sole concert piece), "Misty," "The Way We Were," "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "Over the Rainbow," "The Sound of Music," and "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You" (reprise).

There are no surprises in the selections so far as special arrangements are concerned. Herrick plays most of the tunes as though reading from the sheet music, with the standard harmony and counter melodies intact. He plays cleanly and with good phrasing, although he doesn't use the swell



Dean Herrick at the console of his ex-Johannesburg Metro 3/17 Wurlitzer. He broadcast its music for many years from his Parktown studio.

pedals much; most of the tunes are played at the same level.

He leans toward full registration with changes every few measures. His favorite solo voice is a very good Trumpet or sharp Tuba, which he uses in both the baritone and high treble ranges. He also makes good use of Tibia and Vox. There is an especially good acoustical mix between the flues and reeds. Apparently Dean Herrick was not too keen on percussions, although his instrument surely had the standard layout. He very tastefully employs the Chrysoglott Harp and an occasional chime, but sparingly. Many of the pop and standard selections are played in an attractive "slow fox" tempo. And he does very well with such ballads as "When Day is Done." Dean includes one hymn, "I'll Walk Beside You," played both on church-like voices then on Tibia/Vox registration.

Recording is very good, in close-up (studio) perspective. The pressings are flawless. The well-conceived double jacket opens to photos of Dean Herrick made at various times in his career, from the handsome youth at the Marbro console to the still handsome oldster. Here's a record showing an approach to the organ in another part of the world, yet it's so much like ours. The two-record set was sponsored by Dean Herrick's widow. The price is right and don't be thrown by the necessary international money order.

**WURLITZER MAGIC: DON THOMPSON PLAYS YOUR REQUESTS on the 3/12 Wurlitzer organ in Toronto's Organ Grinder Restaurant. Available only in cassette form. \$7.50 postpaid from Pipe Organ Presentations, 3678 Arcadian Way, Castro Valley, California 94546.**

This may be a last chance to hear Don Thompson at the Toronto Organ Grinder Wurlitzer (we believe organ-builder Dave Junchen can take credit for the good organ sound). Don has resigned and moved to Northern California where he is currently playing at the granddaddy of all organ-equipped pizzerias — Carsten Henningsen's Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in San Lorenzo.

Don Thompson is so well known to organ aficionados through his concerts and many records that no biographical notes are required here. This recording was originally released



Don Thompson. Back in California.

as a disc. Don informs us that the 2000-record batch was quickly sold out, but to accommodate those who have been unable to obtain the disc he is ready to take orders for cassettes.

This program consists of selections often requested in the Toronto Organ Grinder during his seven years there. Let's examine the requests.

"Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines" is typical "kiddie's night" pizzery music, a concerto for organ and auto horn, all at a fast tempo with plenty of noisemakers. *The Sound of Music* medley includes six favorites from the venerable pot boiler. There's some provocative harmony in the title tune. "My Favorite Things" is spiced with Glockenspiel plinks and other percussions. "Edelweiss" is charmingly played on lush registration, while "The Lonely Goatherd" may be classed as "Austrian hillbilly," a fast waltz in the Lederhosen/Volksmusik vein. And Don milks it. "Climb Every Mountain" is majestic. "Sleighride" (a troika from *Lt. Kije*) rivals Delius' "Winter Night" for lively horseplay. "National Emblem" (Sousa) gets the full brass band treatment (it's the one where "the monkey wraps his tail around the flagpole"). "Tico-Tico" somehow caught the public fancy when Ethel Smith wiggled through it in a '40s Esther Williams MGM musical, playing a Hammond. Actually, the speedy tune is best adapted to the B-3 Hammond, but Don does a far better registration job without losing the fast tempo. "Homecoming" features the somewhat choppy piano, but Don's treatment is on the tender side. Fans of New Orleans Dixieland

will appreciate especially Don's second chorus of "When the Saints Go Marching In" with its Satchmo-like jazz trumpet rides.

The pitched percussions get a workout during "Music Box Dancer," a bit of 18th century-style musical fluff. "If" is perhaps the most appealing ballad on the cassette. It is well phrased and registered. Don and the music achieve a delightful oneness of expression. The organ's fine Tibia and Vox help.

"The Midnight Flyer" is a good example of the non-Sousa descriptive marches popular in the early years of this century. This one depicts a steam-powered train speeding along the gleaming rails at night with the clickety-clack of the metallic wheels bridging the rail linkages with even cadence, the glow from the open firebox door reflecting fiery streamers on the trail of smoke above the cars, its chime whistle moaning that mournful call so dear to the hearts of the legion of organ fans who are also train buffs. Don lets the tempo and drive of the music through meadows, woodlands and jagged "rock cuts" tell the story without sound effects, leaving it to the hearer's imagination. It's a goody.

"The Rainbow Connection" is a most engaging ballad from *The Muppet Movie*. Don resists the temptation to Kinura solo a frog voice (Hi, Kermit!) in favor of playing it pretty. "Teddy Bears' Picnic" is good natured cartoon music with a perennial appeal to small children and organists (from the earliest days of organ recording). Don's rendition is rhythmic but smooth. Don's closer is a sweet "Hawaiian Wedding Song" with implied sandy beaches, swaying palms, mai-tais and colorful costumes. It's a gentle and appropriate ending for one of Don Thompson's better recording efforts.

Recording is good.

## THEATRE ORGAN

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# SACRED GOWS AND FOXES

by Billy Nalle

On any day in our lives it is easy to encounter speculations, assumptions and even statements germinated by wishful thinking presenting themselves with straight faces as facts. The more romantic they are, the more quickly they spread and the more likely they are to be believed; don't ask my why! The theatre organ field, like any other, has its full share of fiction trying to cuddle up in our minds as fact. As it is said, "Truth is stranger than fiction." It also is far more interesting. Often misinformation is not harmful, but neither is it history.

One of the most famous fictions which died hard only fairly recently, would have had us believe that the Wurlitzer organ of four manuals and thirty-six ranks was the "Crawford" Special. It took both Crawford himself and Fanny Wurlitzer stating repeatedly through the years that such was not so before that venerable story finally went to the cemetery. The only Wurlitzer that could be called a "Crawford Special," as an *unofficial* title, was the 4/20 Publix model for which Crawford had prepared the specification. However, he was so much constricted by the budget allotted this model, that it hardly represented what he felt was adequate.

Since the "Crawford" Special misnomer for the 4/36 finally has been given a merciful death, sure enough, there has begun to appear another slice from the fiction cake to take its place. This now calls it the "Fox" Special. That four of the five built went into Fox theatres apparently is regarded by some as sufficient basis for canonizing this new "handle." You wonder if this may be more to

add luster to the Fox theatres involved than it is to compliment the particular Wurlitzer. Certainly, if there is any need to give this organ model any title other than what Wurlitzer itself did (Wurlitzer 4/36 Special), then there is an unofficial one which satisfies both logic and justice: *Paramount Special*. After all, the 36-ranker was built first for the flagship of the international Paramount chain of theatres, the Paramount that sat on Times Square, New York. As Fanny Wurlitzer *himself* said more than once, when the 36-rank model was built, there was no intention at the time to build another. That was the reason this model never was given a Wurlitzer style number. To Wurlitzer, the word Special was enough and meant exactly what the dictionary says it means. To qualify it with manual and rank quantity was sufficient. Fanny added that, when William Fox wanted an extra large model for the four largest theatres in his new chain, Wurlitzer decided to duplicate the 36-rank model instead of building on a new "spec," because of the immense success of the first one. Those four went into the Fox theatres in Brooklyn (37 ranks, with the addition of an *Unda Maris* rank), Detroit, St. Louis and San Francisco (36 ranks in these last three). Fanny made it clear that this was not regarded by the company as a series, which later history was to confirm. So, when you hear or read now of any so-called "Fox" Special, put your tongue in both cheeks simultaneously and remember that this is *not* an instance of "which came first, the chicken or the egg."

Then, there are other flora and

fauna in the Land of Tremulated Oz. You've heard and read that the largest and most important of William Fox's theatres were those listed previously and the Atlanta Fox, totalling five. Well, it's past time for William Fox to be given more like his proper due. His greatest theatres were not five in number, but . . . are you ready for this? . . . *seven*.

In 1927 he opened the most opulent and the largest theatre in the nation's capital, the Washington Fox. It seated virtually 3500 (3434) and was splendid indeed in terms of silver and gold and cream. Its interior was novel in design: Its mezzanine was at street level and you descended great marble staircases from the lobby to the orchestra level. It held the Fox name for years, even for a while after Fox sold the theatre to the Loew chain. The latter was pleased to benefit from the prestige of the Fox name until the parent firm, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, decreed a change so as to avoid confusion with Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, the firm which succeeded the original Fox organization. Only then did the name become Loew's Capitol.

The seventh theatre in the William Fox chain was not only his largest, it was then, and still holds the record of being, the largest and the most expensive motion picture theatre ever built. Evidence of this has been an "open secret" for years, being noted in several publications, including the late Ben Hall's book, "The Best Remaining Seats." That Fox did not *begin* building it seems to have thrown many off the scent. However, he was so impressed by it that he signed a purchase contract using for a desk a board lying across two sawhorses in the gloom of the unfinished theatre! He could not give the theatre his name because the name by contract already was committed to another. The theatre? None other than the great New York Roxy! You read correctly. Fox bought it, financing its completion with five million dollars and directed its operation until the liquidation of his theatre chain. If anyone thinks the Roxy was not in every sense a Fox theatre, be it known to him that under God and by God *William Fox* thought so! If you'd like to check the gist of the details, find a friend or a library with the Hall book and begin reading on page 76. Ben shared with me much of his source material on this during

preparation of the book, so I can attest to that section being factual. (Ben did make one error; the Roxy Kimball auditorium organ had not 29 ranks but 34.)

Several pieces of literature in recent times have landed on my desk, not any two agreeing on the size and cost of several of the largest movie theatres in the land. Some of the statements have the aroma of wishful thinking, but, again, the truth is far more interesting and fascinating. The final cost of the New York Roxy was *twelve million* dollars, more than the total investment Fox had personally in all his other theatres, studios and film exchanges prior to that time! There was one Roxy ad saying ten million, but that was someone guessing in the public relations office who failed to check before going to the printer. Imagine . . . twelve million dollars and, remember, that was in terms of money value of the *twenties!* A minimum of five times that would be required in dollars of the eighties, meaning sixty million today. Never before, never since, has there been such a theatre of its expense and with all its features and decor. Noting this infers no depreciation of the Music Hall in Rockefeller Center, for the RCMH is a collection of wonders on the same quality level. However, it did cost less and it did, and does, seat less. The Roxy, in the course of its stage history, also ran a greater gamut of variety and presented spectacular stage shows and effects fully the equal of any in the Music Hall.

The New York Roxy seated 6200-*plus* at its opening and for about three years more. Then top balcony seats were rearranged and the total seating then came to slightly over 6100. Next came the Music Hall with 5800, the New York Capitol with 5300, the Detroit Fox 5042, the St. Louis Fox 5035, the San Francisco Fox 4651, the Atlanta Fox 4535 (until new seating in the sixties reduced it to 4464), the Brooklyn Fox 4060 and the Washington Fox with 3434. (New seating for the Atlanta Fox in the near future will restore that magnificent palace to its original capacity, 4535.)

So, whenever you wonder about some latter day romantic declaration, do what you would do before placing a bet at the horse races: Be certain *all* the critturs in harness are horses. As any Southerner can tell you, a mule in horse harness . . . is still a mule. □

# Keep Fit; Keep Playing

by Preston "Sandy" Fleet

For a number of years now I have spent a considerable amount of time sitting at the organ, and while I derive a great deal of pleasure from this experience, I have been aware for some time of a great danger to those of us who enjoy the fruits of this labor. Those who started playing piano or organ at a very young age and have progressed to the ranks of the pro or semi-pro with full- or part-time jobs as performers in the music business should especially take note. We all love you dearly and want you to continue to entertain us for many years to come . . .

Take better care of yourself! Today there is much interest in keeping fit, more so than in the past. Diet is regarded as all-important to good health, and there is plenty of assistance and information available. In my childhood days I remember radio advice: plenty of fresh air, sleep, and exercise, and a well-rounded diet (three squares a day) consisting of a balance of protein, carbohydrates and fats, calories to be balanced with physical activity; more for more, less for less. We have all heard these things before. As we get older we should eat less; the American standard of living is high, and therefore we tend to overdo and overeat. (This is now true for Europeans and the U.K., too.)

Not much has been said about this to musicians, however — organists and piano players in particular. How many artists do we know who let themselves go? Arthritis, stiff joints, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, anemia and an ample-sized rear are all aggravated or caused by *the bench syn-*

*drome.* Sure, I know, there is not enough time to exercise and *everyone* knows hotel and airline food is hardly appetizing, let alone healthfully balanced . . . and fresh air, what's that? Did you ever see an organ outside? (. . . I mean, *other* than San Diego's in Balboa Park.) Enough excuses! I am concerned about you, friend!

Organ technicians generally do all right — they bend and stretch for a living. But how about you? You know the exercises: calisthenics, aerobics, walking, swimming, bicycling, exercycle. Yes, I know exercise can be boring. Watch television or listen to your favorite music on a portable radio or cassette player. Plan your day. Think sweet thoughts. If you have difficulty finding the time, split your exercise routine into two sessions, morning and evening or just before your practice sessions. I know you can find two 10- to 20-minute periods during the day for you and your body. By the way, rhythm is very important in any exercise routine, as it is in your music. It keeps you from tripping over your own feet and entangling your arms *and* it aids breathing — remember to begin your exercises with some deep breaths; you will be surprised what it does for your stamina in *all* situations.

AND you know how to eat properly: watch the fats, the carbohydrates and the salt; include fiber and roughage; alcohol in moderation.

Follow these simple guidelines and, believe me, you will feel better and be more mentally alert. Here's to your good health and many years of organ playing! □

# Closing Chord

**A. Derrick Marsh**, 62, died suddenly in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in February only two days after returning from his native England with his wife, Betty. He leaves three daughters and several grandchildren.

Derrick maintained a lifelong interest in theatre organ. He was a BBC engineer for years until opening his DEROY Sound Service business in 1948 making professional recordings. He later had his own pressing plant as well. He was a member of the Association of Professional Recording Studios (English).

Mr. Marsh is best known by American theatre organ fans as the producer of 99 volumes of *Cinema Organ Encores* — a series of theatre pipe organ 12" LP recordings, many vintage, of English, American, Canadian, Australian, Hawaiian and South African organs. In several instances, his are the only commercial records of certain organs and organists, making them unique and irreplaceable.

STANLEY C. GARNISS

**Alvah I. Winslow** of Foxboro, Massachusetts, a lifetime member of Eastern Massachusetts Chapter ATOS, died unexpectedly at his home on Memorial Day, May 30. The "Old Pro," as he was affectionately called, had been both president and treasurer of the chapter — always willing to help until recent health problems restricted his activities. He was 75, born December 18, 1907. Al was the husband of the late Virginia (Tarr) Winslow and is survived by five sons, two daughters, a brother and 15 grandchildren. He was graduated from Brown University in 1930 with a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering. He taught economics at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, and was a mechanical engineer for Raytheon in Wayland, Massachusetts, for 16 years, retiring in 1972.

Winslow was a fine theatre organist, playing the silents for the Fay Theatre chain in the Providence, Rhode Island area, and was a church organist at several locations in his home area. He also was featured organist until recently for public concerts at

the Hammond Museum, Magnolia, Massachusetts, during the Summer Series. Another genuine member of the "old school" of theatre organists has left our ranks and he will be missed by many.

**Adele S. Thiele** passed away suddenly on June 3, 1983, in St. Luke's Hospital in Pasadena. She was stricken the day before with a heart attack which led to irreversible brain damage. Survivors include her husband Mel, daughter Susann Tyler of La Jolla and son Gary of Duarte, California.

Adele played for the Golden State Theatre chain in Oakland and San Francisco at various theatres during the late '20s and early '30s. In later years after she and her family had



Adele S. Thiele.

(Photo by Bob Hill)

moved to Southern California, she did engagements for various social, religious, and fraternal organizations. Her husband joined her in putting on short silent movies throughout the San Gabriel Valley in Southern California. She was a longtime member of ATOS and later LATOS in Los Angeles, as well as of various other small clubs.

After the Philadelphia ATOS convention at Cherry Hill Inn, she was part of a group of 200 that toured England visiting the many theatre pipe organs.

MEL THIELE  
Arcadia, California

**Charles William (Bill) Roberts** passed away June 3 in Tulsa. Bill was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota,

September 29, 1918. He was owner of Roberts Piano Company in Tulsa, which was started 50 years ago by his father. He and his father serviced theatre organs in the Tulsa area.

This man gave and gave. He gave of his knowledge, which was great. He gave of his time when help was needed. He gave of himself and never asked anything in return. In fact, he always acted a little embarrassed when help was offered him. He didn't want to impose.

Somehow I had always thought of Bill Roberts as being indestructible — that he would *always* "be there" when we needed him — because he always was. Oh, he'd tell you what you'd planned wouldn't work, and then that he would show you how to make it work but that *he* wasn't going to do it — and then he'd proceed to do it anyway. It took some real doing to pass Bill's inspection, and I have a feeling that he'd just as soon do it himself as to settle for anything less than perfect.

I was one of the fortunate ones, I guess, because at one time I did meet his quality control criteria. When Bill, Phil Judkins and I undertook, some twenty years ago, the restoration of the 2/9 Wurlitzer then installed in Tulsa's Downtown Orpheum Theatre, Bill agreed to provide his expertise if we'd provide the materials, and if we'd shut it down and do it right. I'll never forget my first day at "The Store" — re-leathering primary pouches. "Re-leathering is easy, Dorothy, but you've got to work faster," Bill said. That first day I finished *four!* But after I caught on I went faster, and they all passed Bill's inspection. When we finally got around to the relay, we discovered it was a mess! "If I'd known it was this bad, I'd never have started the project in the first place," he fussed. But he thought about it, and tried one thing and another, and in the end it worked. (We did get the organ finished, by the way, and enjoyed it for several years before the theatre was demolished. The organ went to Texas.)

I remember another day at The Store, when I was still working on that interminable pile of primary pouches, and Bill was working on a piano. Something about the veneer wasn't quite right, and he tried to patch-glue it rather than take it all off and do it over. I told him he would never be satisfied with a halfway job

— and sure enough, next time I was there, I found he'd taken it all apart and done it right.

And of course, in recent years, any time anything needed doing with any of the various pipe organs in our area, Bill was always there, with his plans (usually drawn on the back of old piano advertisements), his screwdrivers and his soldering iron. I don't think there was anything about pipe organs — especially theatre pipe organs — that Bill didn't know. But if he didn't know, he'd figure it out.

Lee and I had occasion to drive past 21st and Harvard the day Bill died. I had not seen "where The Store had been" since he closed it the first of this year. What a strange and empty feeling came over me! Roberts Piano Store was gone — and now, so was Bill.

What has struck me more than anything is that Bill ran out of time — a familiar refrain you hear over and over again, but now especially meaningful. All the things he was "going to do" — he is no longer here to do. This has made me feel a tremendous urgency in my own life — not so much to "do things" but to "be" the person I really want to be. Fortunately, our chapter is gloriously free of petty grievances, or even big grievances, and how wonderful that is! But there are areas in my own life that need improvement, and Bill's death has made me realize that I, too, am "running out of time." I don't have "time" for angers, jealousies, pettiness — all the things that can be such big stumbling blocks in a person's life.

Yes, Bill will be missed. It was said that he was needed to work on some other pipe organs. I am sure that when he saw the trumpets at the gates of heaven he proceeded to tell Saint Peter that they would never work that way, they were wired all wrong — and that by now he is joyfully employed in showing them how to do it right! And for Bill, that's heaven, for sure!

DOROTHY SMITH  
*Sooner State Chapter*

**William W. Watts**, San Francisco Bay Area theatre organist, passed away June 17, 1983. At the time of his death he was in retirement, but was always willing and able to put his talents to work whenever a console would shine its tempting stoprail in his direction.

A theatre organist for over 60



Bill Watts doing what he loved most.

years, Bill got his start in 1919 when, at the ripe old age of 11, he had his first job at the Los Angeles Star Theatre. As he said, ". . . The organist (at the theatre) let me play a little and I just kept on going."

Going on, he did. He played in the Los Angeles neighborhood theatres as well as houses in Long Beach. In a recent San Jose *Mercury News* interview, Bill stated, ". . . When I was 8, 9, 10 years old, I used to go downtown every spare moment I had and listen to the great organists; Jesse Crawford, Milton Charles . . . they gave me lessons without even knowing it . . ."

At a point just before the demise of silent films, he was playing the very Wurlitzer his boyhood idol Crawford had presided over — the early installation at the Million Dollar Theatre in Los Angeles. How he loved that organ! When one would engage Bill in a conversation, it was not long before he would liven things with his anecdotes about the Million Dollar days. He was the last silent film organist playing the ancient Robert-Morton in the downtown California Theatre.

During the Depression he played piano in dance bands, including two years in a Roosevelt Administration WPA dance band in Long Beach. Weathering the Depression and a stint in the World War II Army, Bill gained a following playing in Southland clubs.

In 1956, he and his wife, Dee, moved to the San Jose area and he continued his career with teaching, electronic organ demos, and concerts

for area organ clubs. In 1968, he was the first staff organist at the first Capn's Galley in Santa Clara with its R-20 Wurlitzer. Putting his years of theatre music back to work, it was at this time THEATRE ORGAN ran a good feature on Bill and the Wurlitzer (October 1968). A couple of years later he was to preside at the former Oakland Paramount 4/20 organ as installed at Ken's Melody Inn, Los Altos. On this instrument on March 21, 1971, he played a program for Nor-Cal ATOS, with a silent film accompaniment well remembered. He was also featured in a mini-story on the Melody Inn in THEATRE ORGAN, June 1971.

Eventually, interests in the Los Altos establishment opened the Thundermug Pizza in San Jose. Here Bill was in his element playing a fine-sounding 3/13 Wurlitzer. His career slowed in 1974 with a major illness, but he could still be heard occasionally at the Thundermug organ. He never ceased to amaze his followers and audience with his uncanny ability to pull an all-but-forgotten melody from the depths of his memory — and play it flawlessly. In the course of an evening one would never hear a tune repeated unless requested, and always from memory!

His last public performance was for the Santa Cruz (California) Historical Society in a December 1982 silent film revival. He had played the theatre organs in Salinas, California, as recently as two weeks before his passing. Bill will be sorely missed by his many friends made in his long career with the theatre organ.

In addition to his wife, Bill leaves three children, as well as step-children. □

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# NUGGETS

from the  
**GOLDEN DAYS**

Prospected  
by Lloyd E. Klos



Let's look at some of the reviews of organists' presentations which occurred after the silents were gone. Reference was the *Motion Picture Herald*.

*March 28, 1931.* J. WESLEY LORD is at the Omaha Paramount. Patrons had a treat in a brief, but beautiful, organ concert of only six minutes. Lord at the console gave a pipe organ rendition of Suppé's "Poet & Peasant Overture." His recital was played without any notes before him and his technique in manipulating the organ was an artist's accomplishment. The house gave him appreciative applause.

*March 28, 1931.* MARLIN, at Brooklyn's Metropolitan Theatre, called his solo "Opportunity," giving his audience an opportunity to sing a number of really singable songs. He orally introduced each of the numbers, then went directly into playing each of them. The tunes were: "Here Comes the Sun," "Overnight," "Ninety-nine Out of a Hundred," "My Ideal," "When Your Hair Has Turned to Silver," "When I Take My Sugar to Tea," "Got the Park" and "Baby Just Cares." The solo was well presented, and the audience sounded as if it enjoyed singing. Its applause at the finish proved that.

*September 26, 1931.* The RKO Palace in Cleveland has engaged JOE VERO as organist, following its policy of offering a larger program, rather than reducing the admission price as all other first-run houses have done.

*December 5, 1931.* KEN WRIGHT, at Lloyd's State Theatre in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, presented an outstanding and original microphone novelty this week which was a takeoff on a radio broadcast. The announcements were as if some trick announcer were blabbing from station NUT. Many local names and places were used in conjunction with gags. This kept the house in a continual uproar. Songs featured in the solo were from motion pictures and musical comedies, and the audience sang all of them. This solo received much comment and applause.

*December 5, 1931.* DAN DANIELS, at the Green Bay, Wisconsin, Fox Theatre, presented a timely organ solo called "Depression? Who Said So?," which went a long way in helping the audience forget its troubles. Special lyrics to "Wanna Sing About You" told the audience that the way

to end depression was to sing a song. The audience tried its best by singing loudly to end it, and undoubtedly many went away with a happier feeling after singing this entertaining solo. First song was "Guilty," followed by "Now That You've Gone," German lyrics to "Two Hearts," "Bend Down, Sister" and "You Call It Madness." Other popular songs were used with special lyrics for singing, and notes for whistling. Solo did so well that the audience requested an encore and wouldn't stop applause until Daniels played "Call Me Darling," and they sang it. Dan has earned a great popularity since he came to this theatre and he certainly deserves it because he works very diligently to please everyone.

*December 5, 1931.* PAUL MILLER, at the Gowanda, New York, Hollywood Theatre, proved his good taste and playing ability in his recent "Memories of Autumn" solo, which was outstanding in its beautiful registration, combinations and lighting effects. Songs offered were "Memories," "Trees," "Faded Summer Love" and "Shine On, Harvest Moon." The entire solo was centered around registration, harmony and clever lighting effects.

*January 23, 1932.* GUS FARNEY, at Salt Lake City's Capitol Theatre, offered an organ novelty last week which was a direct plug for a coming attraction. He presented it in such a clever and interesting manner that the usual "curse" of plugging features just wasn't there.

Farney took the audience on a musical airplane trip to the film studios, where they met and sang to a few of the film celebrities, whose faces appeared on the screen. Scenes from the film were placed upon the screen as the audience sang, and it was concluded by a shot of Wallace Beery playing the piano while Farney accompanied him at the organ. Farney told the audience that they must return to the theatre and took them back via air (with a film of a plane as background) as they sang a final chorus of a popular tune. The added efforts and Farney's showmanly handling of this solo brought good applause and was a great plug for the feature picture.

*January 23, 1932.* CHAUNCEY HAINES at Los Angeles's United Artists Theatre offered a very musical sketch of California composers and their accomplishments. It was somewhat drawn out, though this writer personally admires the artist's playing. Beautifully played in spots, presented in a showmanly manner, the number still lacked spontaneity. This organist really knows his instrument, and the solo proved to be another case of playing ability overshadowing mediocre material.

*GOLD DUST: 3/31* ART BROWN is at the Flynn Theatre in Burlington, Vermont . . . *8/31* STONEY WALLACE at the Fox Theatre in Hackensack, New Jersey, while HARRY GABRIAL is at Brooklyn's Marbro . . . *9/31* The following organists have transferred: RON & DON from Philadelphia Fox to Brooklyn Fox; WILL GILROY from New York Capitol to Loew's Pitkin, Brooklyn; BOB HAMILTON from Washington, D.C., Fox to New York's Roxy for one week; JOHNNY WINTERS from Houston, Texas, to Warner's in New York City.

Transfers were a part of the life of an organist, but in the depression, to those still playing out of the hundreds who played in the great days, transfers were better than no work at all.

Until next time, so long, sourdoughs!

Jason & The Old Prospector □

Lloyd Klos, a free-lance writer, has been a member of ATOS since 1959 and of the Rochester TOS since 1969. He has contributed his "Nuggets . . ." column for 16 years, plus nearly a hundred other pieces since 1960. In addition to writing for THEATRE ORGAN, Lloyd takes a very active part in the operation of the RTOS. □



# FROM THE WORK-BENCH

by Allen Miller



## Quick Disconnect Winding

Occasionally there is a situation in which it is necessary to make a wind connection where parts must be disconnected often or quickly, or the area of connection is "blind" or otherwise inaccessible and conventional wind connections just won't work.

Robert-Morton used a type of wind connection which was extremely simple and very effective. They were used primarily in winding adjacent chests without resorting to manifolds, and interconnection of "blow boxes" within the console in such a manner that raising the upper half of the console required no flex lines. While the applications may not have been ideal, the design of the wind seal was very clever.

I have always known of this winding method as "kissing flaps," which may not be correct, but is certainly descriptive. To explain how it works, I will describe how kissing flaps were used to connect two adjacent chests.

To work properly, there must be a space between the chests. As little as 1/4" seems to work. The mating chests are usually spaced mechanically so that they cannot be pushed together completely. Each chest is bored with a hole for the obvious wind conveyance. While usually round, any shape will work. A single piece of soft leather, such as that used on gussets or valves, is cut larger than the hole by about an inch all around, and glued in place at the edges only. The flap, which now seems like a loose gasket, is provided with a hole

which is smaller than the hole in the chest by perhaps 1/2". In theory, the hole does not have to be smaller, but most examples seem to be that way.

In operation, the kissing flaps are opposite each other with a slight space between. *They are not glued or fastened together!* When the wind is turned on, air obviously attempts to escape from between the two flaps. The combination of this, and the pressure of the air against the inside of the flaps causes them to balloon together until they touch or "kiss," thus sealing off the air leak. The greater the pressure, the tighter the seal. In actuality, once this has occurred, the flaps remain touching

lightly and seal instantly when the wind is turned on.

The flaps must be soft and have an even surface to seal well. If the leather becomes stiff, the joint may actually produce a kissing sound, or even much nastier "cheers," especially when the organ is turned off. Fortunately, these side effects are not normally produced.

I have found that it is not really necessary to have two sets of mating flaps, as long as one can kiss against a flat surface and the distance is controlled. I have used this system on console wind disconnects and it is very simple and easy to use. The installation of the Thomaston, Connec-

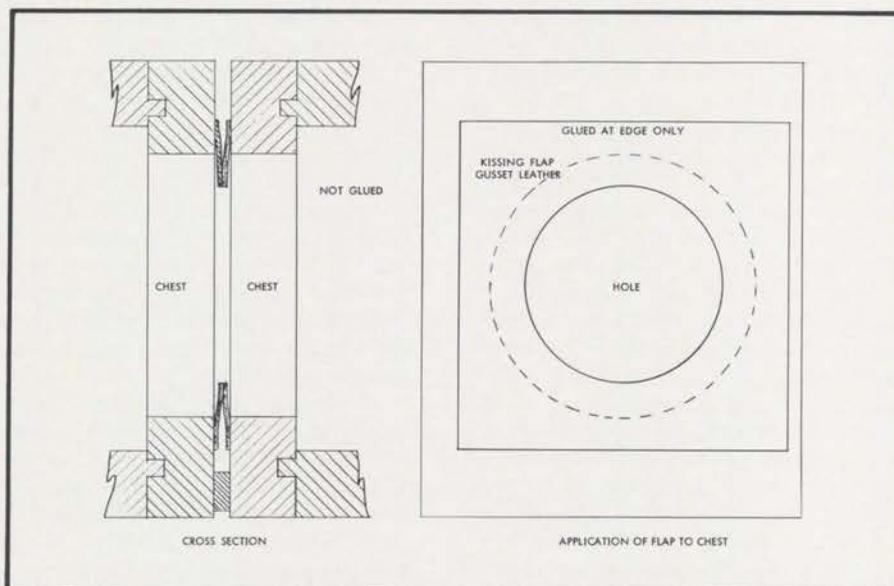


Figure 1.

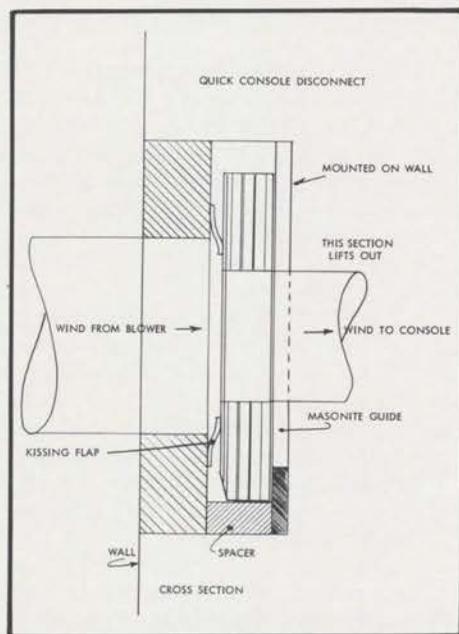


Figure 2.

ticut, Opera House 3/15 Marr & Colton has used this device for nearly 15 years as a console disconnect with two console locations or outlets. Only the fixed "outlets" have the leather flaps. The mating flat surfaces on the console flex connector and the blank "dummy" board which seals the unused outlet, are faced with counter top laminate to withstand abuse. There are no screws or fastenings. The console wind connector merely slides into place in the outlet being used, and the dummy slides into the unused outlet. Changeover can be made with the wind "on," but it is preferable to shut the blower down during the operation.

This system has also been used successfully to join sections of a moveable pipe organ. It is a worthwhile device, and just might be useful in a situation you have in mind. □

# The 1-2-3 of Music

by Ray Gingell

Most of us are probably aware that many of the people who attend theatre organ concerts are not organists, or for that matter, musicians at all. They are just people who enjoy hearing theatre organ music.

For the non-musician, a little understanding of basic music construction can greatly enhance their enjoyment, not only of theatre organ, but of all musical performances.

To understand basic music construction, it is not necessary for the non-musician to learn to read music. All one has to learn is how to listen, and for what to listen.

The theatre organ sometimes is referred to as an "orchestral unit" organ, since in effect its pipes and percussions do imitate various instruments of an orchestra. As the organist has these many sounds at his command, he is really not playing just a single instrument, but many instruments. Actually, he is sort of a "one-man band." In theory then, the music he plays is an orchestration.

What is an orchestration? It is here we discover the 1-2-3 of basic music construction. Music is divided into three parts (or sections): 1, Melody; 2, Counter-melody; and 3, Bass (or rhythm). The *melody*, often called "the first part" (or the lead), is that part of the music by which we follow or recognize as "the tune." It is when we hear the melody that we are able to identify the song. The *counter-melody* gives tonal support to the melody, embellishing it in harmony. The *bass* section completes the ensemble by providing the rhythm.

For complete music we must have the three basic parts: melody, counter-melody and bass. The smallest possible orchestra group is a trio of three instruments, each assigned their respective part of the music. One instrument carries the tune, another plays the counter-melody and the third provides the bass.

Starting with the three basic sections, an orchestra can be built up to any number of instruments, with each player being assigned to his particular section of the musical score.

An orchestration (often called "an arrangement") divides the musical score into its three basic parts, giving each instrument its individual part to

play in the ensemble. For greater variety and effect, players may often be called on to alternate playing melody and counter-melody. For example: A clarinet may carry the lead, with a violin playing the counter-melody. Then, they may alternate with the violin now playing the melody and clarinet doing the counter-melody.

With the three basic sections of an orchestration in mind, let us turn to the theatre organist. He has available all of the various "ranks" of the organ — the pipes that imitate sounds of various instruments and percussions. It is the job of the organist to put it all together to perform complete music.

Theatre organs always have at least two manuals (keyboards). This is for a very good reason. Two manuals are required to create the necessary division between melody and counter-melody. On small organs the top keyboard is usually called the Solo manual and the lower is the Accompaniment manual.

In simple, uncomplicated theatre organ playing, the organist follows the basic 1-2-3 orchestration pattern. With his right hand he plays the melody on the top manual. His left hand plays the counter-melody on the lower manual. His left foot takes care of the bass on the pedals. Thus, the organist makes "complete" music by playing the three basic parts individually.

On the larger theatre organs with more than two manuals, the additional keyboards are for the convenience of the organist in giving him greater control of the various ranks without having to re-set the stops, which would be necessary if using a single manual. The playing technique remains the same.

Except for classical organ music, very little music is composed especially for the organ. Publishers very seldom bother to print "organ arrangements" of popular songs. There is not great demand for such copies anyway, as most musicians prefer to do their own arrangements from the regular piano score.

The organist creates his own "orchestration" by dividing the score into the three basic parts, providing notes for the melody, counter-melody and bass. He arranges the music for

right hand, left hand, and foot.

The piano is thought of as being closely related to the organ since the keyboards resemble each other, and many musicians play both instruments. The playing technique is, however, actually quite different.

Many musical instruments are not really "complete," in that they require the support of other instruments. This is especially true of one-note instruments, those capable of producing only a single note at a time, for example, a clarinet or a trumpet. Single-note instruments need the backing of other instruments to provide counter-melody and bass.

The piano is popular and versatile in that it, like the organ, is a "complete" musical instrument. The piano can provide all three parts of the music. With his right hand, the pianist plays the melody. The left hand does "double duty" by providing both counter-melody and bass. Notice how a pianist swings his left hand, playing counter-melody near the center of the keyboard and then reaching far to the left to pick up the bass notes. He is achieving the 1-2-3 of "complete" music.

A piano does not need the support of other instruments. This is why a piano is so often used to accompany singers and instrumental soloists. The singer, or soloist, performs the melody, the pianist provides counter-melody and bass. This completes the 1-2-3 pattern giving us "complete" music.

When a pianist, untrained on the organ, attempts to play a theatre organ, his music will tend to be "choppy." This is because he will try with his left hand to play both counter-melody and bass. On an organ, of course, the bass should be played on the pedals, which he cannot do because of his lack of training in this technique.

The next time you hear a theatre organ, or an orchestra, listen for the 1-2-3 basic parts of the music — melody, counter-melody and bass. What instrument or pipes are carrying the "tune"? Listen! That's the first part, the melody. Listen for the counter-melody and how it supports the tune. Then, become aware of the low notes and thump of the bass (and rhythm). Now you are listening to "complete" music.

Remembering the 1-2-3 basic parts of music, you will increase your enjoyment of theatre organ by being aware of the skill of the organist as he creates his own individual "orchestration" of the music. □

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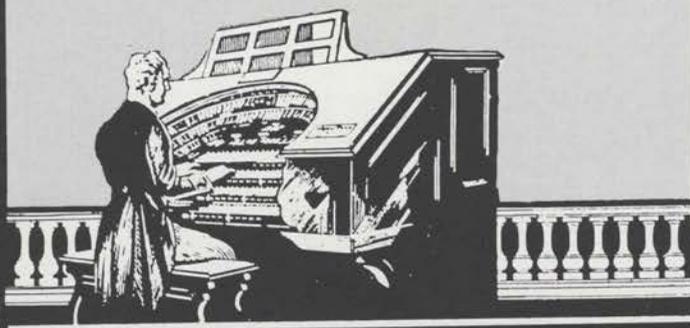
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PUBLISHED MONTHLY



A PLETHORA OF ORGANS

## CATOE GETS ORIENTAL WU



VOL. 22  
JUNE 1983 NO. 6

### LATOS SPONSORING HOLLYWOOD PREMIERE

**FINE 'WIFE'**—Hector plants a big kiss on the Pasadena Civic in appreciation of a job well done for patrons and himself.

### Three Chi Notables Opening Theatre

Three Chicago men, well known in theatre and theatre organ circles, have taken over a Chicago neighborhood house and plan to open it with a policy of screening revival and new plays.

The 700-seat atmospheric style house was built in 1925. It is not installed.

Operation of the Music Box, it is reported, will be on a policy of two Highlowers weekly. Stan Hightower recently resigned as managing director of the famed Chicago Theatre.

### Trade Journal Published For Organbuilders

Volume 1 of *The Organbuilder*, a journal for the organbuilding trade, has recently been published in England. It will be published annually.

The first issue features illustrations on various types of actions, registration systems and the casting of organ pipe metal.

Current subscription rate is £2.50 and may be ordered from June Priestley, Secretary, *The Organbuilder*, Stamford, Newcastleton-upon-Tyne, NE18 0LG, England.

—from *The American Organist*

CHICAGO—May 12—Donation of the 4/20 Wuritzer Oriental Theatre to Chicago Area Chapter ATOS was today in a special letter sent to members of the unit by Board Chairman. He also disclosed that due to a court decision regarding the Chicago Theatre, it also may be necessary to rent an instrument as well as the club's 3/10 Wuritzer presently in North Main High School, plus another theatre organ because movie house may close.

Peters told members, "I have received word today that we are given the four-manual 20 rank Wuritzer Theatre Pipe Organ from the Oriental Theatre, 32 W. Randolph St., Chicago, by its owner and See—ORIENTAL ORGAN—Page 8

### Oriental Wuritzer Worth \$180,000

Donation by Morris K. owner of the famed 4/20 Wuritzer will net a tax write-off of approximately \$180,000, it has been reliably reported. The organ, it is said, has been appraised at that figure.

### Big Apple Society Installing Organ

New York Theatre Organ Society has found a home for the 2/10 Wuritzer from the Claridge Theatre, Monclair, New Jersey, that was donated to the chapter by its owners. A contract has been drawn between Orange County Arts Foundation and NYTOS for installation of the organ in the Paramount Theatre at Midtown, New York.

Owners of the Claridge decided to donate the organ because of extensive remodeling. At first, they believed only parts of the instrument remained in chancery. Upon investigation it was found the complete organ was intact.

Society Member Bob Seedy made arrangements for installation in the Paramount Theatre, it is reported. The contract to place the NYTOS will own the organ and have access to the organ and will co-sponsor programs with the Foundation.

According to an update report published in *The Horsehoe*, NYTOS' official newsletter, the See—BIG APPLE—Page 24

### Wichita Still In For '84 Conclave

Wichita, Kansas is still being considered as the site of the 1984 National ATOS Conclave. It has been learned. Rumors to the contrary were heard during the early part of May, but another source has informed *The Console* that talks are being held regarding use of Century II, where the former New York Paramount Theatre Wuritzer is installed, for convective programs.



### ...A Fine Pair

Laurel and Hardy antics will take place at the LATOS benefit premiere July 12.

In addition to all the premiere trappings, *The Sons of the Desert*, which is a national fan club organization of the two comedians, will be on hand before the 7:30 screening to stage some of the comedy action.

Laurel and Hardy were noted for champagne reception will be held in the theatre for those attending the premiere.

John Quinn, who is producing the show, which will have a one-week run starting the following day, offered LATOS the opportunity to be sponsor and build their Scholarship Fund. Tickets are \$20 each and are tax deductible.

LATOS is limited to 400 and tickets will be sold on first-come, first-served basis. They may be ordered See—PREMIERE—Page 5



FROM THE OUTSIDE the Bayside Theatre does not present the most interesting appearance—but inside it's a different story. And the illustrated feature appears on the inside of this issue beginning on Page Six.

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# ATOS Committee Reports

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT 1983

The 1983 Nominating Committee was composed of Dale Mendenhall, Chairman, Lee Erwin and Margaret Ann Foy.

Thirteen members applied and met all requirements stated in the By-Laws. The Secretary verified their membership with the Treasurer and authorized their names to be placed on the ballot.

The ballots were counted by Rocky Mountain Chapter under the supervision of Margaret Ann Foy. Every effort was made to allow the maximum time for our members overseas to return their ballots. Two supplemental mailings were made to assure ballots were mailed to those new members and renewals that were sent in to National just before the ballot-return deadline.

**BALLOTS**

1st mailing (April 5, 1983)

Overseas	185
Canada and USA	4391
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4576</b>

2nd mailing (April 26, 1983)

Overseas	22
Canada and USA	167
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>189</b>

3rd mailing (May 10, 1983)

Canada and USA	114
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**TOTAL BALLOTS MAILED 4879**

Ballots returned 2307  
Void 15

(voted for more than five)

**TOTAL BALLOTS  
COUNTED 2292**

## RESULTS

Lowell C. Ayars	1563
Ashley Miller	1444
Lt. Col. Jack Moelmann	875
Dale Mendenhall	872
David Barnett	870
Thelma Barclay	801
Marjorie Muethel	770
Russell Joseph	748
Mike Coup	719
Joe Gray	691
Paul Quarino	670
Stephen Ross	581
Ralph Beaudry	473
	<hr/>
	11,077
Write-ins	<hr/>
	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<hr/>
	11,113

## Write-ins

Two votes each:  
 "Doc" E.J. Bebko  
 Tim Needler  
 John Peters

## One vote each:

Frank Babbitt	Phillip Judkins
Harold Bellamy	Stan Kann
Dan Bellomy	Sylvan Kehrsman
W.T. Benedict	Warren Laliberte
Jim Boutell	Lyn Larsen
Gene Davis	R.E. Loderhose
Rodney Elliott	Robert MacNeur
Dean Fossler	Allen Miller
Jeff Fox	Henry Przybylski
Rudy Frey	Margaret B. Sabo
Bob Godfrey	Lois Segur
Stu Green	Helen Sherman
Tom Hazleton	Richard Sklenar
Fred Hermes	Don Thompson
Lou Hurvitz	George Wright

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Halftones	91.00
Typesetting	86.00
Tax	46.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<hr/>
	\$2122.08

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The resumes sent in by the candidates vary so much in length and contain so much information that it is impossible to include all the information in the official resume sheet sent to all members with their ballots. Considerable editing is required and much of

the information must be left out. The person editing uses the information that he deems most important for the member's review; this does not always agree with the candidate's idea of what is most important.

The Board should establish a maximum word limit for the future elections and this limit should be included in the article inviting candidates to send their name for National Director that is published in the Jan./Feb. issue of THEATRE ORGAN. This would eliminate the necessity of editing.

2. The Nominating Committee has found that many of our members are

reluctant to run for National Director due to the time required from their regular jobs and the financial burden that they may incur.

Next year an article should be prepared by the Nominating Committee to fully explain the workings of the National Board of Directors as to the committee assignments and the meetings of the Board, both at the National Convention and the telephone meetings when required, and the financial support provided by the National for meetings and attendance at Conventions.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Dale Mendenhall, Chairman

## 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.** Recently, we had to dismantle the top of our small Wurlitzer regulator, as the cone valve spring had broken and the valve was pounding against the regulator with a loud noise. Not knowing at first what was causing the cone valve to knock, I completely dismantled the cone valve assembly. A short time later, after having replaced the broken spring, I noticed that the organ would play badly out of tune and soon discovered that this regulator was not supplying enough wind when large demands were made upon it. I discovered that I had inserted the two push rods into the wrong valves so the large valve would open before the small one. After correcting this problem, I thought

all would be well. However, even with the corrected push rod assembly, the pressure still drops. I suspect that I may have re-assembled the cone valve and rod incorrectly, but not knowing what the exact dimensions should be, will now ask for your advice.

**A.** It seems to me that your cone valve is out of adjustment in relation to the large and small book valves (flappers). As you say you now have the push rods inserted correctly, I would then measure very carefully to see if your cone valve opens FIRST but will allow the small book valve to begin opening after the cone valve has dropped 1/2". There must be exactly 1/2" of drop for each stage of valves to open. (Many hobbyists make the mistake of changing these increments thinking that they can improve tremulant beat, but instead create a trade-off and end up with a very inefficient regulator. The result is a slower key action and turbulence in the wind to the chest with the tremors turned off.)

**Q.** Our wood pipes, especially in the bass, have a chronic problem with stoppers loosening with every change

of season. I have inserted everything from paper to leather to keep them tight, but they still loosen just enough to drop down into the pipe. How can I repair these stopped pipes on a more permanent basis?

**A.** I have had very good success with smearing mutton tallow on the stopper and replacing it. This substance is very expensive but it will keep your stopper sticky enough so it will not fall down, and at the same time will keep it airtight. This material can be obtained from Organ Supply Industries of Erie, Pennsylvania. However, if your stopper is extremely loose, you had better bush it with some leather first. □

*News from the*

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*Unaffiliated*

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*Groups*

**Lloyd E. Klos**

### *Empire State*

*theatre and musical instrument museum*  
(ESTMIM) — Syracuse, New York  
315/492-0465

Rob Calcaterra, who has played the organ at Radio City Music Hall, returned on March 12 to play his fourth concert for us. Very popular with our audience, Rob played a program with plenty of variety, including two classical numbers, a sing-along and a silent movie. The program was well attended and enjoyed by all.

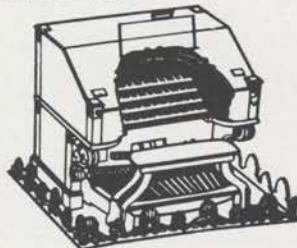
Father Jim Miller, Ukrainian Orthodox priest from the Detroit area, and very well known to ATOS audiences, entertained us on April 16. His first time here (and we hope he can come back soon), it was an evening of good fun and musical entertainment. Father Jim's registrations gave the organ some sounds which we had never heard, including a great waa-waa jazz effect during one number. We've

heard many good comments about Father Jim's concert.

Catherine Thomas, 14-year-old Syracuse organist, recently taped a children's program for cable television, using our 3/11 Wurlitzer. Carl Shea has resigned as program chairman, having had that job since 1975, and booking artists through 1983. We appreciate his good work and extend profuse thanks to him. He continues as our treasurer, however. Fred Schamu has succeeded Carl and is working on 1984 programs. Dave Conway, our young staff organist, tuner, and student organ fixer, is doing his part to get more young people interested in theatre pipe organ. He has brought in some students from his college and we hope they become members and as enthused as Dave. The theatre pipe organ hobby needs more interest from the younger people to survive in the years ahead.

CHARLIE RICH

## RTOS



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

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

On March 18, Rob Calcaterra made his second appearance here, entertaining on the Auditorium's 4/22 Wurlitzer, making jokes about Bach, and exhibiting old song slides of vintage 1930.

The club tried something different on April 23 when the noted pianist-organist-composer-arranger-conductor, Dick Hyman, presented a program heavily larded with jazz and improvisation. This musician can take a melody and play it in the style of Bach, Mozart or what have you. The best portion of the program, in this reviewer's opinion, led off the second half when Dick performed on the Baldwin grand. "The Man I Love," "Carolina Shamble," "Charleston Rag," "Foggy Day in London Town," "The Finger Breaker," and a fine version of "St. Louis Blues"

roused the audience into a crescendo of applause.

It remained for the final concert of the season to show what a competent, imaginative artist is capable of doing, backed by a well-maintained organ. In the opinion of this writer, Charlie Balogh's concert on May 13 at the Auditorium, was the best of the season. His relaxed, easy manner, sharp finger dexterity, good registrations, and excellent choice of numbers (28 in all), added up to an evening of superb entertainment.

Charlie's forte is playing the music of the Big Band Era, and augmenting it with a live drummer. In this case, it was Elizabeth Vochechewicz, a fine artist who, though she never had been exposed to the theatre pipe organ, worked with Charlie as a hand fits a glove. We had misgivings before the show (the organ has a complete traps department), but they were completely dispelled. Albeit, a dimension was added to the performance, the 4/22 sounding like a real orchestra.

Highlights included a five-tune medley in salute to Irving Berlin's 95th birthday, three numbers made famous by Glenn Miller, others by Count Basie, Freddie Martin, Benny Goodman, Jackie Gleason and Perry Como. All in all, it was the type program this reviewer would love to hear again. Come back again, Charlie and Liz!

Program chairman Paul Hoffman has lined up some good talent for our 20th season: September 23, Australia's Neil Jensen; October 15, Eddie Weaver; and November 18, England's Robert Wolfe. Information can be obtained by calling 716/544-6595, or by writing RTOS, Box 17114, Rochester, New York 14617.

LLOYD E. KLOS □

Think  
About it . . .

## Indianapolis

SATURDAY, JULY 7  
THRU  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 11  
1984

**RTOS 29th  
Annual Convention**

# Konsole Kapets

by Shirley Hannum Keiter



Announcing the birth of  
**OUR BABY**

Name:

*Lauren Diane Keiter*

Arrived:

*May 20, 1983*

Time:

*1:21 PM*

Weight:

*8 lbs 8 oz*

Length:

*21 1/2"*

Parents:

*Shirley & Alan Keiter*



## 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:

I've said it before and I'm saying it again — organ buffs are the friendliest people in the world. This was proven again on a recent jaunt to New Zealand.

After 21 hours of air travel Harry and I arrived in Auckland. Norman Dawe of the KIWI Chapter was at the

airport to welcome us. Later we met more members of the chapter and enjoyed three days with them. Harry played their Wurlitzer at the Hollywood Theatre and several electronic home organs. When we were ready to take off in a rented car they gave us names of people to contact along the way.

We stopped in Napier for a visit with Ron and Joan Pearcy. They have a Conn 652 organ and a grand piano in their living room, so Harry felt quite at home there.

In Paraparaumu we visited the Southward Museum, which is a very modern building containing a collection of classic and vintage cars, as well as additional antique items. There is also a concert hall with a 3/16 Wurlitzer. Len Southward gave us a personally conducted tour and, of course, Harry was invited to play the Wurlitzer.

We continued to Wellington and then to South Island. It seems that wherever we stopped there was an organ club and after we contacted them an impromptu social was arranged. As a result, Harry gave sixteen performances in 21 days, and came home with a bundle of orders for his organ album.

In Christchurch we had the added pleasure of meeting Richard Hore, who is a well-known organist in the area.

It was a memorable trip, thanks to all those wonderful KIWIs.

Sincerely,  
Cathy Koenig  
Niles, Illionis

Dear Editor:

A copy of one of your recent "letters to the editors" column has been sent to me here at the AFM headquarters and I note with interest a communication written in the column by Charles F. Harrison relating to his unhappiness with a restriction on tape recording at concerts. Of course I do not know Mr. Harrison's background, but I feel confident that were he a professional musician whose live performances had been exploited by persons who had taped his presentation and those tapes or segments of same had cropped up in television and/or radio commercials; had appeared on phonograph records without his permission; had been used as background music by other performers or had heard his tape playing as background music in commercial establishments, such as hotel lobbies, bank reception areas or his neighborhood restaurant — he would not have shared the views expressed in his letter!

The foregoing are only a few of the things that happen when so-called

home tape recordings of live presentations are made. It is for these reasons, among others, that the American Federation of Musicians, as well as other talent union organizations, on behalf of and in conjunction with the desires of its members, have placed restrictions in performance contracts which prohibit the audio and/or visual taping and recording of live musical presentations. We believe the restriction is justified and fortunately most of the general public agrees with us and registers no objection.

We still hope that the patrons attending live musical presentations do

so to "enjoy the music" rather than to pursue an avocation of electronics and tape recordings.

Very truly yours,  
Robert H. Crothers  
Executive Assistant to the President  
American Federation of Musicians

Dear Sir:

I am the resident organist at the Jane Pickens Theatre in Newport, Rhode Island, where I play before the shows on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. The organ is a 2/8 Marr & Colton with Symphonic Registrator

which is owned by the Southeastern New England Theatre Organ Society.

While the installation is not yet complete, I have been playing on the present schedule since December, 1981. The organ has been well received by theatre patrons.

I would like to make contact with other organists who are playing under similar circumstances. My address is listed below.

Sincerely,  
Bruce C. Netten  
RR1 Box 294  
Reservoir Circle  
Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835 □

## DINNY'S COLYUM

as  
transcribed  
by  
Del Castillo



Sometimes I get discouritch with what us riters call the Mother Tung. It aint so much readin it as it is sayin it. And the names of the top music composers seems to be the worst of all. The guy who is suppose to be the top banana has the name of Bee-Thoven. But that aint the rite way to say it. You suppose to call it Bay Toven. Seems like all the grate composers is furriners and that is why you dont say there names the way they is spelt. And then of course they is the one that the organ players think is top banana by the name of Batch. But do you call it Batch. No, you call it Bark. You might say his Bark is worser than his Bite, but maybe you better not.

Of course American words aint any better as far as that goes. The guy who rote Moon River and a lot of other hits is why my Eyetalian frends say is pernounce Mancheeny. But insted he calls it Manseeny. And then how about all them words that end with the same letters but is pernounce different. Like Through is pernounce Throo, but Tough is pernounce Tuff. But Cough if pernounce Coff. And if that aint bad enough, excuse me, I

mean Enuff, they is Bough which is pernounce Bow. You see what I mean? I jest about give up.

But I guess maybe the composers is the worst. Look at the great Rooshian composer whose name is Tchaikowski. You know what? You dont try to say it, you jest sneeze it. They got a French composer name of Saint Saens. You think you know how to say it? Well, youre rong. I been told how to say it, and the closest I can come to it is San Song. Makes it sound kinda like Chinese. And speak in about French composers, you think you can get away with callin the great French piano composer, only he is Polish, Chop In? Not by a long shot. You have to say Showpang. And that's the way it goes — Poocheeny, Motesart, Deboosy, Paderefsky, Hide-in, Divorshark, you name it.

The trouble is that the Americans they think they got to use Eyetalian words on there music or people will think they aint cultured enough. Once in awhile an American composer like the guy who wrote To A Wild Rose Edward MacDowell that was one of the first peaces my mother taught me when I was takin piano lessons will put everythin in good plain English but mostly you will find the directions is in Eyetalian because mostly it was in Italy that music got started. They use words like Moderato or Largo or Presto and like that there insted of Moderate or Slow or Fast. I picked up a piano book that Mr. Castello give me and it had the darndest furren names at the beginnin of the peaces like Allegretto Tranquillo e Grazioso in a Norwegian peace by Edward Grieg. I suppose I should be glad he didnt rite it in Norwegian. Even a peace by Batch says Andante Sostenuto Cantabile, and then it gets worser

and worser with directions like Vivo e Strepitoso, and Vivo Martellato, and Molto Pesante, and Piu Mosso Sempre Crescendo e Stringendo, which I guess means More Excited.

I spose if I was up to tryin to play classical music I might have to buy me a Eyetalian dictionary or at lease a Music Dictionary, but I guess I will jest stay on my own level and pick out peaces like Barney Google and Yes We Havent Any Bananas and let it go at that. □

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# PIPES & Personalities

## Lee Erwin To Play Fabulous St. Louis Fox August 15

Gloria Swanson's legendary film, *Queen Kelly*, with Lee Erwin at the console of the 4/36 Wurlitzer, will be shown at the St. Louis Fox on August 15.

The only previous theatre showing of the film in this country was in 1967 at the Beacon Theatre in New York. At that time the New York Chapter of ATOS commissioned Lee Erwin to compose an organ score for the Swanson film and to perform it on the Beacon Wurlitzer.

Erwin's score was the first movie music written specifically for theatre organ. During the silent film era organists used either a piano or conductor part for films that had an original music score, or they used transcriptions of orchestral music, or piano pieces — or they improvised.

Shea's Buffalo Theatre Wurlitzer console, recently unveiled at a surprise party for the theatre's Organ Committee, whose members have volunteered their time for more than five years to completely restore the instrument. The organ is Opus 1206A, a Model 285 Special, one of only seven such models built.

(Photo by Ronald J. Collier, The Buffalo News)



The St. Louis Fox was purchased in June, 1981, by owner-managers Leon and Mary Strauss. They made a special trip to New York in May of this year to see a private screening of *Queen Kelly*, with Lee Erwin playing his score on the Carnegie Hall Cinema organ. Mary and Leon were so impressed that they immediately engaged Lee to bring the show to the Fabulous Fox. The performance will include a two-reel Swanson short and the infamous North African footage from *Queen Kelly* which very few people have ever seen.

The big St. Louis Fox Wurlitzer, rebuilt under the supervision of Marlin Mackley, will be the center of attraction for the gala occasion. Lee was in St. Louis for two weeks in April playing a festival of silent film shows at the St. Louis Art Museum. During that time he had an opportunity to get re-acquainted with the big Wurlitzer. His report: "FABULOUS!"

## Ashley Miller Honored in England

According to recent word from England, the Board of Trustees of the Southern Music Training Centre recently conferred upon ATOS Director Ashley Miller an Honorary Fellowship Diploma. The award was made "in recognition of his outstand-

ing contribution to the advancement of the organ as an entertainment medium through his playing, his published musical arrangements and for his work as an organ teacher."

The Southern Music Training Centre is an old and respected musical institution in England, and awards an Honorary Fellowship on an annual basis to individuals who have contributed much to the organ world. Prior recipients of this honor have been Kenneth Baker, the leading organ music arranger in England and Albert Gillett of New Zealand, who is one of the leading organists in that country. To give some idea of the standards achieved by pupils of the Centre, three of the last six winners of the London Chapter's Young Theatre Organist of the Year competitions belong to its Alumni.

Manny Motashaw of the London and South of England Chapter, who sent us this news, said, "I feel that this is something of which both Mr. Miller and the ATOS can be proud . . . Indeed, as long as there are organists of Mr. Miller's calibre around, we may yet see a resurgence of interest in the instrument."

## Bob Hess Still Playing

Earl Venstrom of Ormond Beach, Florida, reports that Bob Hess was pleased to see his life story in a recent issue (Jan./Feb. '83). Bob and Earl and seven other retired men are members of an organ club which meets every other week in members' homes. All play the organ, but no one is fortunate enough to have a pipe organ.

Bob was 80 on March 31. He would like to hear from old friends and former theatre organists. His address is: Bob Hess, 22 Coachlight Court, Daytona Beach, Florida 32019. Phone: 904/767-5263.

## Move Over, Mendelssohn!

When organist-composer Lee Erwin's good friends Nina Casadei and Joel Ackerman were making plans for their wedding last April, the bride wanted something out of the ordinary for a wedding march. It must be said right away that this was no ordinary wedding. Both the wedding service and the reception took place in a very elegant Broadway catering hall, starting at 4:30 in the afternoon. With potted palms, Tiffany lamps and hand-

picked waiters in tuxedos, it looked like something out of *The Great Gatsby*. The reception began the moment you arrived at the door and were served champagne — while a string ensemble serenaded from a balcony. Another orchestra stood by, ready for the dancing to come later. All this set the tone of the occasion, and clearly, “Here Comes the Bride” would not do. Nina had already turned to Lee for help. He had composed a new wedding march — and he played it as the beaming bride came down the aisle.

As if that were not enough, at another recent wedding attended by Lee, at Webster College in St. Louis, another bride-to-be desperately wanted something other than the traditional Mendelssohn or Wagner wedding march. At the last minute she appealed to Lee for help. There was not enough time to compose one, so Lee improvised and played another new wedding march on the spot, thus saving time, and the day, and making people happy. What else are friends for?

TED CREECH

*P.S. Copies of the New Wedding March are available to ATOS brides upon request. Address: Lee Erwin, 306 East 15th Street, New York, NY 10003.*

### Segur's Music Goes to the Dogs

ATOS President Lois Segur tries her hand at Bob McGillivray's Conn 652, while three of Bob's six dogs listen.



### WTO and Stokowski a Hit

Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc. recently had quite a surprise and then reciprocated by giving one. The story began at one of the three fine arts FM radio stations in the Wichita area, KSOE, of Friends University. Its program director, Bill Brant, wanted to present a musical tribute in April to the late conductor and musical giant, Leopold Stokowski. He checked the membership roster of the international Leopold Stokowski Society and discovered that two WTO men are members, Michael Coup and Bill Pearce. Brant inquired of both men for any information as would lead to locating special recordings and tapes for broadcast in a celebration of the conductor's 101st birth year. He was greatly surprised to learn the two had much special material of early broadcasts and concerts, plus rehearsals, not publicly available. Brant then invited the two to prepare a musical tribute and the challenge was taken. The result was a remarkable seven-hour period of Stokowski conducting a variety of orchestras from the '20s to his last period in the late '70s in London. Some material never previously had been broadcast anywhere, including rehearsals with “Stokey” talking to the musicians. Also included were tributes to the maestro from several world famous people contacted by WTO. These included Igor Kipnis, harpsichordist, Oliver Daniel, CBS producer, Abram Chasins, pianist and director of WQXR in New York, and others.

Audience response continued for days afterward and attention was drawn to WTO in terms completely unexpected. Brant and his university colleagues were so impressed by the program and response that they now are submitting the entire broadcast to several radio award panels to be judged in national competition. Perhaps the end of the story and the surprises are yet to come.

### Organ Artist Who Doesn't Make Music

One day, after classes at the Ohio Visual Arts Institute in downtown Cincinnati, Larry Klug walked to the Emery Theatre to hear the 3/26 Wurlitzer owned by the Ohio Valley Chapter of ATOS. Thus began his fascination with theatre pipe organs. E. S. “Tote” Pratt of OVC helped

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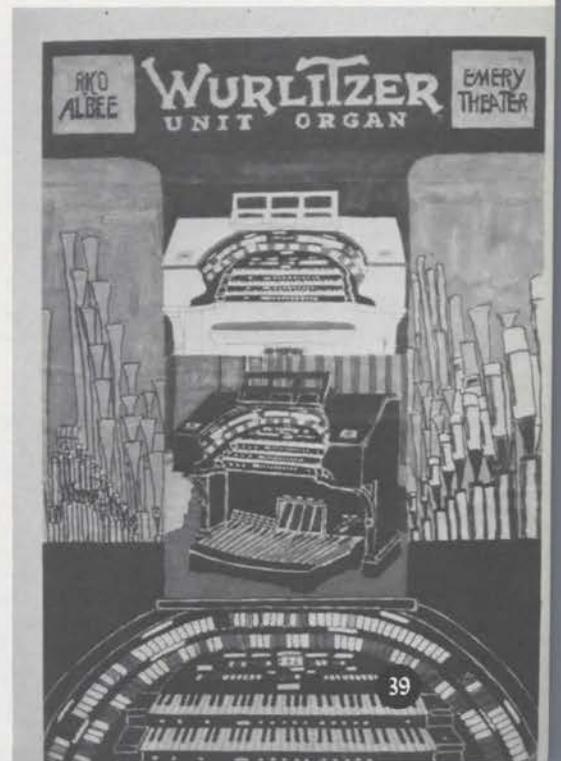


Cover illustration for a book on which Larry is working, titled “Famous Cincinnati Organ Builders of the 19th Century.” The book will feature German organ builders Matthias Schwab, Johann Koehnken and Gallus Grimm, who came to Cincinnati in the early 1800's.

him learn something about the instrument, and Larry soon became a member of OVC.

It wasn't long before he began to express his interest in pipe organs through his art training, by building models and painting illustrations. Larry has had several exhibits of his work, including two at the Emery Theatre, one at the Cincinnati Public Library, another at Hyde Park Meth-

Larry Klug's first organ rendering, depicting the history of the RKO Albee/Emery Theatre Wurlitzer.



odist Church and a special exhibit at Calvary Episcopal Church for the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

### New Organ Radio Program

Fresno, California, now has a pipe organ radio program which Ron Musselman is hosting at the request of KFCF program director Randy Stover. He had thought of airing a program combining theatre organ and classical organ for some time, and after finding out that Ron was a member of ATOS with an extensive library of organ music and several contacts in organ circles as well as having experience in producing broadcast material, Randy asked him if he would like to host a three-hour show every month. The answer was "Yes!" The program, "Pipe Organ Showtime," airs once a month on a Sunday evening from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m., and is divided about equally between theatre organ performances and classical organ (mostly romantic organs) with the theatre organ half leading off each program. A broad spectrum of both styles will be covered. Several special features are planned, including interviews with organists and technicians to give the lay audience a better understanding of the pipe organ and its capabilities. The first program began with George Wright's first HI-FI RECORD re-

lease to start off with "the best foot forward." In the future, there will be some on-location live broadcasts, including some home installations. KFCF's listeners are generally well educated, quite loyal to their station and are open to new musical experiences, so a good deal of interest in the theatre pipe organ may be generated by this program. And as the Fresno area has no real organized organ enthusiast group currently active, it's likely that a lot of isolated organ "nuts" will be flushed out of the woodwork when word of the program gets around.

### T.O. Goofs (Again!)

Not being acquainted with the lady, we trusted our usually trustworthy source and called her Doris Hendricksen, when her name is really *Marguerite* Hendricksen. She was pictured in the lower left-hand corner of page 28, March/April 1983 issue.

\* \* \*

Once Rochester's most beautiful neighborhood theatre, the 1600-seat Riviera was hit with the wrecker's ball in January. An X-rated house for a number of years, property taxes were unpaid since 1977. The city took it over, and after months of vacillation, padlocked it last year. The Communication Workers Local bought the front part which includes offices and stores.

Organist Rob Calcaterra is shown at New York's Beacon Theatre 4/19 Wurlitzer, which he recently played for a group touring the movie palace. The tour, arranged by the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in conjunction with the "American Picture Palaces" exhibit, was led by THS Director Michael Miller and visited Radio City Music Hall, the Regent, and the newly-restored Metro.

(Alfred J. Buttler photo)



China nights, bank nights and bango (as it was called in the thirties) vied with stage acts and screen presentations in the Riviera. A 3/11 Marr & Colton was installed when the house opened in 1926. Those who played it included Frank "Gus" Clement, Halburton Clough, Hugh Dodge, Harold Geschwind, Edward Graef, Tom Grierson, Rose Harloff, Ruth Meyer and colorful Edward C. May. Eddie also managed the house until he left the city in 1936 for Kentucky and other points. Ironically, his death came the week prior to the announcement of the theatre's demise.

\* \* \*

Logan, Utah's Charles Fletcher has fond memories of the five Loew's theatres in the Metropolitan New York area, and their 4/23 "Wonder" Morton organs. "Loew's Valencia in Jamaica, Long Island, was where I first heard John Gart play. I lived in Flushing then and often went to shows in Jamaica. As was my wont, I attended every "Wonder" theatre, either on opening day or opening week: the Paradise, the Pitkin (in the wilds of Brooklyn) and the Kings. Shortly after, I attended Loew's Jersey City. This one must have been a favorite of the Loew's people, because a picture of the house adorned their stock certificates.

Other big Loew's neighborhood theatres were the Triboro in Astoria, and the 175th Street which is now Rev. Ike's United Palace, kept in good condition, the organ being used weekly.

\* \* \*

Buffalo theatre aficionados were shocked to learn in January that the guiding genius behind the saving and restoration of Shea's Buffalo Theatre, Curt Mangel, had resigned his position as managing director of the theatre to accept the executive directorship of Denver's Paramount Theatre.

The 31-year-old native of Bradford, Pennsylvania, served as resident engineer of the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda in 1973, helping restore the house and the Wurlitzer therein. A year later, he moved to the 3400-seat Buffalo, establishing residency in a dressing room apartment. For eight years, he worked on the

physical plant and the 4/28 Wurlitzer, first with the "Friends of the Buffalo," and later with officials of the City of Buffalo which owns the property. He was indeed "Mr. Shea's Buffalo," having known every square foot, every mechanical apparatus and every facet of the building.

For six months in 1982, officials of the Denver Paramount had been after Mangel to join their organization. Several contracts were dangled before the talented fellow until he agreed to one which gives him carte blanche on policy. The Denver Paramount is a 1930 structure of about 2100 seats with an Art Deco interior. It has a 4/20 Wurlitzer with twin consoles, and we're certain that Curt will see that the instrument is restored to top condition. Buffalo's great loss will become Denver's great gain.

LLOYD E. KLOS

\* \* \*

Word comes from Bob Ayrton of Pizza, Pipes & Pandemonium in Groton, Connecticut, that with the passing of each week, the 3/11 Wurlitzer in that establishment sounds better. "As we filled the chambers and emptied the checkbook, doubts existed whether the job would be completed, but we finally opened.

"Our organists, Don Wallin and Steve Schlessing, are doing a great job, playing around stops not yet working. Some theatre organists have taken a turn at the console: Rosa Rio,

Jim Hauserman dimming stage lighting for the artist's next number.



Ginny Vanore and Jeff Barker, among others. Fill-in organists are locals Jim Arsenault, Alden Mitchell and Lyn Murdock.

"Groton, being the submarine capital of the world, has a strong economy, and this has brought us through the first winter with brisk business. We seat 500 and have had capacity crowds on weekends. I invite readers and theatre organ enthusiasts to join in the fun if they are in the Groton area. We are located in the Groton Shoppers' Mart on U.S. Route 1."

\* \* \*

Chester E. Klee, who played organs in five Rochester theatres in the great era, announced his retirement as organist of St. Mary of the Angels Church in Olean, New York, after 40 years in the position. Mr. Klee played the Eastman (4/15 Austin), Madison (2/7 Wurlitzer), Monroe (3-manual Kohl), Piccadilly (3/13 Wurlitzer) and the Regent (3/11 Hope-Jones Wurlitzer). He was a 1932 graduate of the Eastman School of Music before settling in Olean to teach at St. Bonaventure University. When the college's glee club performed at the Radio City Music Hall with Milton Cross as announcer, Klee was the accompanist. His other endeavors in Olean included playing organ for the Kiwanis Club, school board membership, columnist for the *Olean Times-Herald*, and organizer and president of the Olean Civic Music Association. Mr. Klee was feted by his friends and neighbors at the Bartlett Country Club on April 17.

### Behind The Scenes

This is a picture story of three high school lads who became stagecraft experts through their association with the San Diego Chapter of ATOS.

We who sit in the audience do not realize the backstage work entailed in producing a theatre pipe organ concert — especially in a real theatre. Someone has to pull that curtain, monitor that PA system, man that spotlight, etc. San Diego Chapter is very appreciative of David Irwin, Jim Hauserman and Burke Stuchlik, who make our concerts a little more attractive to our audiences. We are very fortunate that our 3/14 Wurlitzer is installed in a downtown old movie palace — the California Theatre. Under the professional guidance of one of

THEATRE ORGAN



Burke Stuchlik placing a "gel" in the border lights for curtain color effects during the organ concert.

our members, these three young men put a lot of "pizzazz" and flare into our concert productions. Two of them take theatre organ lessons.

An example of their showmanship was when a 19x24-foot U.S. flag was used, waving under special lighting, while flashes and stage-smoke explosions were synchronized to recorded cannon sound effects (excerpted from the 1812 Overture), as Gaylord Carter beautifully played "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." This brought the audience to their feet with thunderous applause.

It is through the efforts of the experienced that the young and eager to carry on are brought into our chapters.

GALEN PIEPENBURG

David Irwin stands by to lower the curtain on cue, nearing the end of a silent movie sequence.



Organist Rosa Rio, "Queen of the Soaps," continues to entertain audiences, whether the instrument be a pipe organ or an electronic. On May 1, the artist gave a benefit concert at St. Michael's Church in Beacon Falls, Connecticut. The organ was a new Allen and the musical program ran the gamut from Saint-Saëns' "My Heart At Thy Sweet Voice," to "Memory" from the current Broadway hit, *Cats*. Rosa was ably assisted by her husband, Bill, who served as MC and contributed some interesting remarks alluding to Rosa's life and music career.

### Proctor's Theatre Acquires Organ

Proctor's Theatre has agreed to purchase the 3/18 Wurlitzer organ owned by Mr. Claude Newman of Minneapolis, Minnesota, to replace the original organ which was removed in the early 1960's. The 2750-seat house is now run by Art Center Theater, a non-profit organization which operates the theatre as a performing arts center. Currently, the theatre is being used about 300 days a year for a wide variety of events such as Broadway shows, symphony orchestra concerts, and special theatrical and musical presentations. A film series has been in place for the last two summers, and has proved to be a popular event. It is planned to feature the or-



Console of the 3/18 Wurlitzer purchased by Proctor's Theatre from Claude Newman of Minneapolis.

Interior of Proctor's Theatre, Schenectady.

(Carl Steubing photo)



gan in future years for the film series. A capital fund drive is underway which shows every indication of providing the needed funds for major renovation and refurbishing projects, the organ installation being a high priority effort.

The organ was acquired by Mr. Newman from the Aurora, Illinois, Paramount and enlarged from its original 14 ranks to 18, with the addition of a second Tibia and Vox, a Salicional Celeste bringing the string complement to a total of four ranks, and a new Post Horn made by Möller. The three-manual waterfall console was water damaged several years ago, and when it was rebuilt the stop complement was enlarged and a Peterson computer capture combination action was installed. Plans include changing to a solid-state relay when the organ is installed in Proctor's, as there is not room for the Wurlitzer relay and switch stack.



This cartoon appeared on the editorial page of the April 23, 1983 edition of *The Detroit News* and is reprinted with permission.

new paint, stop tablets and combination action really does shine! Rehearsals and performances in the Center slowed us down into June, but we hope to have the bulk of the remaining work finished by late October."

\* \* \*

Del Castillo enjoyed a couple weeks of festivities in connection with his 90th birthday. On March 27, he received a certificate of appreciation at his mini-concert at San Gabriel, California. At this event, Del's numerous compositions were featured. On April 2, twenty of his relatives gathered to honor the organist-writer-humorist. This happening was generated by a granddaughter. Del has three great grandchildren, too. Finally, on April 10, Del played a concert at the Koons' Motorcycle Shop in Anaheim. Happy birthday, Del, from all your ATOS friends and admirers!

\* \* \*

Jack Skelly, veteran theatre organist, and always the source for rich memorabilia, hasn't disappointed us this time, either.

"Winters & Weber did a stint at the New York Paramount, but it wasn't very long. When Weber was at the Music Hall, he would stop to visit Harry Blair, friend of all the organists, who had his office on the Sixth Avenue side of the building. When

Plans are now being made for the installation work to be done over the summer months, and we look forward to having the organ playing during the fall season. A dedicatory concert will be scheduled, probably for early 1984, and further details should be available soon. Meanwhile, local ATOSers Sandy Murdoch, Allan Plunkett and John VanLaak have been volunteering their efforts in getting the chambers ready for the organ — painting, plastering, and installing fluorescent lighting and modern electric heating units. We look forward to an active concert series, and both the local organ group and the theatre management are enthusiastic in their support of the project.

SANDY MURDOCH

\* \* \*

Since November 1981, when Bill Floyd and his two sons moved the Wurlitzer from an RKO theatre in New York to Richmond, a dedicated crew has been steadily installing and restoring the instrument in the Virginia Center for the Performing Arts (ex-Loew's Richmond). "I have a wonderful team of men working on it, mostly from the phone utility here,

and very knowledgeable, organ-wise," says Bill. "We are not trying to meet any deadline because this adds up to sloppy work, and we've done pretty well so far. The console with its

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Five Manual Kimball Roxy Theatre Console with 28 ranks now owned by Phil Maloof.

Harry introduced us one day, Weber said, 'Oh, you're the one who plays like Fred Feibel.' Quite a compliment!

"One reason for small attendance at the Long Island Paramount (ex-Brooklyn Paramount) is its bad location. Though the DeKalb Avenue subway station is across the street, people are afraid to ride the subways. When Rudy Vallee played the New York Paramount, he also played the Brooklyn Paramount the same week. Finishing a show at the former, he'd dash across the street and take the subway to the latter. It was faster than by taxi, and for cost-conscious Rudy, fare was but a nickel. Of course, he was hidden behind smoked glasses. This was but a mere 50 years ago."

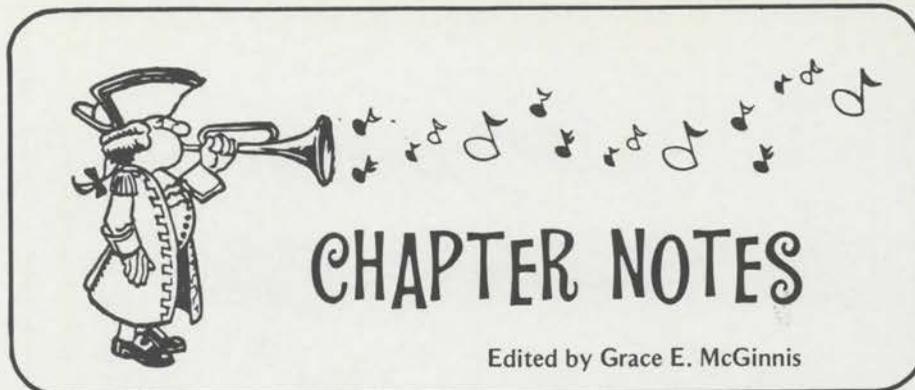
\* \* \*

From time to time, due to apathy and indifference in getting news to the Pipe Piper, the list carries an installation which has long been abandoned. Such is the case of the Village Inn Pizza in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The place went out of business two years ago, and the organ is now in the Pipe Organ Palace in Elkhart, Indiana, according to Mrs. Marilyn Ambrose, one of the two organists who played the 3/12 Barton.

However, Fort Wayne has a new installation, the Cardinal Music Palace, at 911 West Washington Center Road, boasting a 4/42 Wurlitzer. The beautiful console came from a New York theatre, the pipework from Grauman's Chinese Theatre of Los Angeles. Don Springer and Buddy Nolan are the organists, and the restaurant is open daily except Monday.

\* \* \*

Ex-New York Paramount organist Jack Skelly, on seeing references to colleagues in the various publications, contributes thoughts of his own: "Fred Feibel was always concerned about his premature baldness, but he was certainly tops as an organist. Egon Putz was a concert pianist in his pre-organ days. He showed me copies of programs he did at New York's Town Hall. The white-haired gentleman who played the piano in the lobby of the Paramount was Hans Hanke. I recall these things about the great theatre and its musicians because it was only 50 years ago." □



Edited by Grace E. McGinnis

### DELAWARE VALLEY Philadelphia 215/566-1764 or 215/626-2456

On Saturday, October 23, 40 members and friends of the Delaware Valley Chapter traveled by bus to the home of Dick Kline in Thurmont, Maryland. They made the journey to hear a concert played by Frank Lybolt on Dick's beautiful 4/28 Wurlitzer, acquired from the Capitol Theatre in Washington, D.C. A detailed description of this organ was published in THEATRE ORGAN, June 1970.

Mr. Lybolt, who admits to being more than 70, is the organist-choirmaster of the Portsmouth, Virginia, historic Trinity Episcopal Church. There, he carries on a full program of liturgical services, especially during the Church's most important holy days. In addition to being an accomplished musician, Frank is an outstanding calligrapher. Many of the church bulletins for these services are enhanced by his handiwork.

In earlier days, Frank Lybolt was a theatre organist in the New York City area, as well as a church musician. It was in the former role that we were introduced to him at Dick Kline's home.

He played a program that lasted about an hour-and-a-half, broken into two segments. The first section of approximately one hour was followed by a period of open console for members of the chapter. Frank then returned to the bench to entertain us for another half-hour or so, playing not only numbers of his own choosing, but also audience requests.

Although Frank maintains that he has almost no opportunities nowadays to play theatre organ, there was no evidence that his skills have dulled from disuse. He played in a variety of styles, offering pieces that spanned

the period from the early 1900's through the fifties. There were hit tunes from musical shows of bygone years, sentimental ballads and ever-popular jazz. From time to time, he changed the mood by playing semi-classical favorites.

For this writer, Mr. Lybolt's approach to his selections was both interesting and unusual. Very often he would begin with a simple statement of the theme or tune, frequently announced on a solo rank, using a simple second manual and pedal accompaniment. Then he would gradually develop the melody line adding more color to the registration and more voices to the theme. Along with this kind of treatment he would add very interesting, and sometimes intricate, countermelodies on the second manual. The pedal line was rarely a simple "ump-pa" or "ump-pa-pa" bass, but often gave forth with tricky and appropriate rhythms. Mr. Lybolt's playing was never flamboyant, but handsomely brilliant when the character of the piece suggested it. He



Frank Lybolt at Dick Kline's Wurlitzer October 23, 1982.

brought into play all the resources of this very interesting and beautiful instrument.

At the conclusion of the program there was another opportunity for the organ buffs to "do their thing." At about five o'clock, we adjourned to the Cozy Restaurant in downtown Thurmont for dinner. Then back home to Philadelphia by 11:00 p.m.

October 23, 1982 — a warm, sunny day — good friends and organ buffs — a beautiful home and organ — a grand concert by a fine organist. An experience to be long remembered by T.O.S.D.V., Inc. members.

FRANK MADER

*Editor's note: We sincerely apologize to Delaware Valley Chapter for the delay in publishing these notes. They were lost in our "high-tech" filing system.*

## CEDAR RAPIDS AREA

Iowa

319/362-9815 or 319/363-9769

This chapter endeavors to have two silent movie/theatre pipe organ spectacles each year. If my tally is correct, we have experienced our twenty-eighth sell-out, or near sell-out. The latest rave-performer was Rob Calcaterra, who left over 1600 clamoring for more following his evening at the 3/11 Wurlitzer in the beautifully restored Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids on April 30. Rob certainly lived up to his advance publicity and to the article appearing in the March/April issue of THEATRE ORGAN regarding his appearance at Oral Roberts University. Once again, kudos are due Jim Oliver, as director of the maintenance crew, for the faultless performance of the organ.

The Christmas season included a meeting at the lovely home of member Joy Weiler with each attendee bringing a plate of goodies. After the delicious buffet, everyone gathered in the family room which just happened to contain a piano and an electronic organ. All performers contributed solos on either instrument or engaged in duets. The highlight of the afternoon was when Joy's son, Jeff, agreed to sing a selection from the *Messiah*, accompanied by guest-from-California Max Lyall, a friend of George Baldwin. The magnificent baritone of Jeff Weiler was matched

every inch of the way by the sensational sight-reading of Max. Wotta pro! A most delightful party.

The chapter is quite proud of Jeff, who is a doctoral candidate in music at Northwestern University. Part of his study in organ has been with Lee Erwin in New York. Lee has been featured twice in past silent movie spectacles for our chapter. On April 9, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia of Northwestern University presented *Phantom of the Opera* with original score composed by Jeff Weiler and performed by him on a Rodgers theatre organ.

The chapter meeting of April 17 was a bittersweet affair held in the Iowa Theatre in Cedar Rapids. This house contains about 1500 seats and a 3/14 Barton. Aside from a short business meeting, the entire program consisted of open console. The reason for this was that the Cedar Rapids Community Theatre has purchased the house and was commencing the next day to remodel. This will reduce the house seating to 550 in order to provide rehearsal rooms and other facil-

ities. Seven members participated in the open console. We anxiously await next fall to see what the Barton sounds like in the reduced house.

CRATOS was quite impressed to receive a \$20.00 check from Girl Scout Troop #2318 (Grant Wood School) to be used for "restoration work on the organ at the Paramount." Gives one hope for the future.

LOREN H. FRINK



GRACE E. MCGINNIS.



## CHAPTER CORRESPONDENTS PLEASE NOTE

To help ease the burden on the editorial staff of THEATRE ORGAN, please observe the following:

Type all copy, double-spaced, on letter-size (8½" x 11") white paper, leaving 1½" margins on top, bottom and both sides. Do not use erasable paper. Please include your name, address and telephone number.

Type photo captions on Scotch (3M) Post-it Note sheets (#654 - 3" x 3" or #655 - 3" x 5") and attach to *back* of photo. DO NOT use any kind of tape or rubber cement to attach captions to photos, and DO NOT attach photos to sheets of paper.

Send Chapter Notes and photos to:

Grace E. McGinnis, Associate Editor  
4633 SE Brookside Drive, #58  
Milwaukie, Oregon 97222

### DEADLINES

December 1 for January/February  
February 1 for March/April  
April 1 for May/June

June 1 for July/August  
August 1 for September/October  
October 1 for November/December



Console of Walter Draughon's 3/15 Wurlitzer. Some 45 chapter members spent the day at his home and enjoyed a sumptuous lunch. (John Otterson photo)

# CENTRAL FLORIDA THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



Tampa

813/685-8707 or 813/863-2264

Our April meeting was held at the home of Everett and Eleanor Bassett in Ridge Manor. We are always happy to meet there as the Bassetts have a fine 2/4 Robert-Morton which we enjoy hearing and playing. During the meeting a report was given of the Tampa Wurlitzer installation. We

had hoped to have it completed, but the theatre has been unavailable on weekends, causing some delay. This is a time when our electronic and electrical specialists can work. In spite of the delay, quite a bit of wiring has been done, particularly with the console and in the chambers. So, just a little longer and we should have that instrument playing.

Our artist of the day was our own Al Hermanns, a fine organist and teacher, who played several radio theme songs in addition to other favorites of the '20s. Afterwards, it was open console, giving us all a chance to play. Our thanks to the Bassetts for their hospitality.

On May 8 a short meeting was held during our first bus trip to Fort

Myers. Our visit was at the home of Walter Draughon who owns a 3/15 Wurlitzer. The console is beautiful and the pipe installation sounds great in the home with a fifteen-foot high A-frame ceiling. The home also houses a grand piano, a Hammond organ and a player piano.

The assistant organ technician, Steve Brittain, demonstrated the stops and played several numbers for us, including "Laura" which was played on the organ along with the player piano. What a nice duet that made. Once again, there was open console. Among those who played were Beverly Johns and Audrey Williams, two guests from the London chapter. Our sincere thanks to Walter for allowing us to visit and play his very fine instrument.

SANDRA SHOOK



**CENTRAL  
INDIANA  
CHAPTER**

Indianapolis

317/283-3410 or 317/255-8056

Central Indiana Chapter has fired up to a busy spring and summer. A registration class was held at Manual High School on March 27. The April meeting was held at the beautiful new St. Luke's Catholic Church with the artists including CIC Vice-President Virginia Rectoris; Alexia O'Neil, St. Luke's church organist, and Floyd Perry. Also, Bernice Fraction of local fame sang for the club. Attendance was 104.



Ev Bassett, vice chairman of the Central Florida Chapter, at the 3/15 Wurlitzer in Walter Draughon's Ft. Myers home. The two ladies in front row center are Bev Johns and Audrey Williams, visitors from South Wales. (John Otterson photo)



Lee Wilson, rear, and Ed Lawrence checking the wiring and solid-state units in the console of the 3/12 Wurlitzer which CFTOS is installing in the Tampa Theatre. (John Otterson photo)

Two busloads, 96 persons, made the trip to Cincinnati and Dayton on April 23 and 24. Organ installations visited included Springdale Music Palace, the Emery Theatre in Cincinnati, The Shady Nook Restaurant in Millville, Ohio, Fred Reiger's Red Barn at Waynesville, John Gogle's house at Kettering, and the Dennis Werkmeister house.

April 29 and 30 saw the first of a proposed series of theatre organ concerts which the chapter hopes to produce. Lin Lunde was the artist. The concert was highly successful. It was held in the Hedback Theatre on the Page 3/16 organ. A busload of Michigan ATOS members attended the Lunde concert. Bob and Donna MacNeur hosted receptions after the concerts on both Friday and Saturday evenings.

A jam session was held at the Paramount Music Palace Saturday at midnight for both the Michigan and Central Indiana Chapters. Several persons from each club participated. The Paramount also made available a big breakfast Sunday morning with Donna Parker playing several selections on the Paramount Wurlitzer. Following this fine meal, the two chapters went to Long Center in Lafayette to hear Ken Double, and then to Kokomo to hear Bill Tandy at the Pipe Dream.

On May 10 the CIC joined the AGO for a program by Tim Needler which included a Buster Keaton silent movie. Several excellent organists participated in the open console segment.

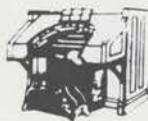
On May 15 Mary Drake presented a program at the Speedway Christian Church on the organ built in 1961 by

the E.H. Holloway Corporation. This organ was renovated in 1981 by Goulding and Wood Incorporated.

WAYNE R. PIPHER



CONNECTICUT VALLEY  
THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY, INC.



Thomaston

203/378-9192 or 203/583-8334

From San Francisco to Thomaston, Connecticut, came Jim Roseveare to play our Marr & Colton pipe organ in the Thomaston Opera House on May 14, 15. We are glad he made the trip because he gave us an excellent concert. Among compositions from the '30s, Jim played excellent arrangements of "Journey Into Melody" by Robert Farnon, "In My Garden" by Isabelle Firestone, and some arrangements in the Jesse Crawford style. His encore was Max Steiner's "King Kong March."

This artist acquaints himself thoroughly with the origins of the music he plays. As a result, he is able to provide his audience with many interesting comments pertinent to the music heard. We at Thomaston found this enlightening, adding meaning and depth to the music, but not at the expense of musical listening. His program was very generous and there was not "too much talk and too little music." The comments were well-presented and not wordy.

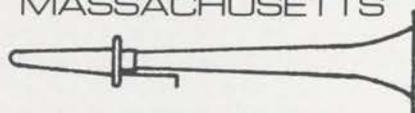
Following his concert, Jim appeared offstage to chat with anyone

interested in doing so, and a number of the audience lingered to comment and ask questions brought to mind by Jim's program. It was an entertaining and enlightening evening orchestrated by Jim Roseveare and thoroughly enjoyed by an enthusiastic audience. We look forward to subsequent appearances of this talented artist from California.

Our next concerts at Thomaston Opera House will feature Jim Bensmiller on September 17, 18, and Lyn Larsen, October 15, 16. Tickets and information are available from Concert Tickets, P.O. Box 426, Seymour, Connecticut 06483. Telephone 203/888-9696.

W. F. POWERS

EASTERN  
MASSACHUSETTS



Babson College, Wellesley  
617/244-4136 or 617/757-9793

A cold, pelting rain outside, but a warm, friendly atmosphere prevailed within our Babson "home" on April 24. Invited guests included Boston Audio Society, electronic organ groups and friends of our famous guest organist, Mildred Alexander. Business was minimal. Anticipation was maximal.

Mildred's plane was late so member Tim Holloran filled in admirably detailing Boston's long affiliation with pipe organ building. He then demonstrated each rank with infor-

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mative comments, including the percussions and most traps. Suddenly, loud cheers erupted as Millie was wheeled into the auditorium returning to EMCATOS after a thirteen-year absence. Quiet then ensued as she proceeded to explain certain techniques which she demonstrated with snatches of music. Some of her popular teaching lessons were used as she showed off several stops and effects. Recounted were early theatre organ days, including hers at Radio City Music Hall where so few female organists have been employed. Mildred also told of the "drying up" of theatre organ playing opportunities as the talkies took over and of having to go "electronic" even though her heart remained with pipes.

This informal afternoon showed many touches of her console "magic" and why she is called "Mildred The Great." Despite physical problems, this gallant lady would not leave the console until she had given it a "good try." She had all present on their feet showing their affection with loud acclaim — an inspired tribute for courage and devotion.

One of our best double concerts was produced May 7 and 8 with "Mr. Music," Eddie Weaver, also called "Mr. Personality of Richmond" and "The Living Legend" — not without good reason. This was his fourth appearance for EMC and he still combines the winning, crowd-pleasing ingredients of wit, showmanship and overall musicianship. Weaver is one of a rare breed, having made a lifetime career playing theatre organ from his music-student days at Eastman School of Music up to his present post at Byrd Theatre in Richmond, Virginia. His first theatre organ job at \$100 weekly was accompanying the silents at the Lafayette Theatre in Batavia, New York. Here he met the future Mrs. "W" who was then cashier. Eddie had weekly theatre organ styling lessons from the famous Henry Murtagh and later from Jesse Crawford himself.

Our guest played thoroughly enjoyable three-part programs, concert, sing-along and silent movie accompaniment. A varied tempo "Swanee" was his opener each day, but there were numerous differences in programming. Eddie even sang and played a catchy, up-beat "Hello, Hello, Hello, What a Wonderful Word Hello." Eddie's song slides and



Gulf Coast Chapter's Robert-Morton console reproduction ready for its white and gold finish.

parodies brought many a chuckle as did his tongue twisters, comical triple paraphrases, parts for the "boys" and for the "girls." All encouraged excellent audience participation. *Habeas Corpus* with Laurel and Hardy, one of the last Hal Roach pictures, was the silent with Weaver at the console.

Each concert had an enthusiastic audience rise as one amid long applause at the conclusion, such was their delight. Weaver's talent in sizing up his audiences has not diminished over the years. Eddie knows how to please as he extracts most listenable music from his chosen instrument. What higher goal could an artist aspire to!

STANLEY C. GARNISS

### GULF COAST Pensacola 904/433-4683

Sir Winston Churchill was speaking of Great Britain when he said, "Never have so few done so much for so many." Well, our chapter can also make this same statement. We are few, with some small assistance from a few more, who are doing so much that so many can enjoy this wonderful organ when it is reinstalled in the Saenger Theatre here in Pensacola, Florida.

Each day sees more progress on the console, which is completed except for the finishing. B.D. Rhea, M.D., our console builder supreme, was

honored by a full page spread with pictures in our local newspaper. This really pleased us and generated much interest locally.

Months of countless hours have gone into the carving on the console and our crowning tiara, the "fence" around the top. This was done entirely by hand by Dr. Rhea in his shop. The original Robert-Morton used wooden dowels to hold the "fence" together. Ours has all brass dowel pins and receptacles mounted in the wood to extend its longevity. Dr. Rhea has also built a "muffler" to tame the noise of the giant blower in the basement of the theatre. The blower is all wired, fired and ready to go!

Before the chest work is installed in the new second chamber, all 16' pipes will be put in place. The chest work is being assembled and mounted in the chambers on framework being assembled at this time.

The console is all primed and ready for its final coat of white and gold leaf — beautiful. Dr. Rhea conferred with experts at duPont before considering the final finishing. After all, they should know paint and finishes!

Our concert playing/organ builder Chapter Chairman Tom Helms is working closely with Dr. Rhea on this organ installation tasks. It is exciting to know that our organ is in the last stages of reproduction. Hope to hear it soon!

DOROTHY STANDLEY



Land O' Lakes Chapter  
AMERICAN THEATRE  
ORGAN SOCIETY

**LOLTOS  
St. Paul**

**715/262-5086 or 612/771-1771**

The supposedly last concert performance with "Goldie" at Cedarhurst on April 24 featuring Paul-Wesley Bowen drew a full house. Paul-Wesley played a beautiful selection of some of his favorite arrangements covering all types of music. He is especially adept at showing off the instrument and what it can produce. His footwork on the pedal board is fantastic, and that Sunday afternoon we heard sounds from that organ we had never heard before.

On May 25 Mike Erie, one of our talented young organists from the chapter, played for the 3M Vacation Club (with a membership of nearly 700) in the Orient Room at the 3M complex on the east side of St. Paul. The organ he played was a Kimball Xanadu furnished through the courtesy of Schmitt Music Centers.

Memorial Day weekend found some of us traveling to Bobby



Father Jim Miller at the Coronado Theatre, Rockford, Illinois.

Schmidt's Indian Hills Resort at Stone Lake, Wisconsin, for three different seminar-programs featuring Rob Calcaterra at the custom Rodgers organ and Dr. Kerry Grippe, University of Iowa, at the concert grand. The resort is always a pleasant place to spend a holiday with song fests, piano duets, piano and organ duets, 94-years-young Arma Neff with her violin, good friends and good food.

VERNA MAE WILSON

**LAND OF LINCOLN  
Rockford**

**815/965-0856 or 815/399-8536**

An enthusiastic crowd attended the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Illinois, on April 28 to hear Father Jim Miller and his low-down-blues style music. He quickly established rapport with the audience and proved he was master of the Barton keyboard from the beginning. The "Padre of The Pits" (his term) coaxed special effects, softer Flutes, brassier brassy and stereo effects from the instrument to achieve just what he wanted from each number. "Basin Street Blues" with bass drum, cymbals and rhythm brushes was a ringer. Particularly pleasing was Fr. Miller's inclusion of the verses of the old songs. Too often neglected, the verse is a melodic introduction and an integral part of the composition. Although most of the songs were in the rhythm and blues category, Fr. Miller showed his romantic side with the lovely "When Day Is Done." It is obvious that Fr. Jim enjoys what he does, and his audiences echo that 100%. About 1200 people attended the Fr. Miller show, some coming from as far away as California, New York, Iowa and Wisconsin. Members and friends gathered backstage after the show to meet Fr. Miller and to enjoy a variety of munchies, chatting with friends and greeting new members.

Ed Boroweic, a LOLTOS organizer and charter member, entertained members and guests at the May social. The Grande Barton under Boroweic's direction responded flawlessly as if loosened up from the workout given it by Fr. Miller just two weeks earlier. Boroweic played a wide variety of music from show tunes to waltzes to medleys of old favorites. The Barton rose from the pit with Ed playing a 1924 tune, "Open Your Eyes," which was Eddie Dunstedter's



Ed Boroweic, LOLTOS charter member, takes his turn at the Coronado Grande Barton after Father Jim Miller loosened it up two weeks earlier.

theme song. Ed and his family used to live in Minneapolis, and he was a friend of Dunstedter's at that time. "Tico-Tico" was dedicated to the organ maintenance crew. This fast tune requires accurate reponse of all moving parts of the artist and the organ.

LOLTOS has talent of many types among its members. It's good to know that it is available for the asking.

BARBARA NICHOL  
DON BISSELL

**LONDON & SOUTH  
OF ENGLAND**

**8956-32369 or 1-788-8791**

Despite the disappointment of not being able to feature Ashley Miller as our prime concert artist in May, due to the late cancellation of his European tour by his agent, we managed to book the indefatigable British artist John Mann amid his extremely busy pipes, electronics and summer season vaudeville schedule.

An exceptionally talented musician and entertainer, John took to the famous 4/16 "Torch" Christie organ in the Top Rank Club, Edmonton, in Northeast London, as very much matching his bright and imaginative style. Although he had previously aired this unique instrument on the famed BBC radio program "The Organist Entertains," when Robin Richmond was its prexy, surprisingly, John had not hitherto played it in concert. With a spectacular and exciting performance to a large and appreciative audience, despite a downpour outside the theatre, John did us really proud, and certainly no marks were lost due to the late change of artist; indeed, we believe many were gained, thanks to his outstanding profession-

alism and happy personality readily identifying with the mood of the day.

Two more highly successful Chapter Club Nights have also been featured at our favorite 3/19 Wurlitzer in the ever-hospitable home of Edith and Les Rawle at Northolt in North-west London. Our April guest was widely accomplished Alec Leader, long-time friend of the British organ clubs and a real enthusiast with a strong sense of nostalgia, especially for the Deanna Durbin era of the cinema. Currently working professionally in the electronic organ business at Ware in Herfordshire, Alec is a frequent performer at the famous organ-in-a-pub at the nearby Plough at Great Munden which has long housed the 3/12 Compton formerly in the Gaumont, Finchley in North London. He was in fine form for the highly appreciative Northolt Club Night audience.

Our May event then featured the great Douglas Reeve, who has been

such an outstanding favorite at the huge dual-purpose Hill, Norman and Beard Christie organ at the Dome Brighton on the South Coast for more than forty years. Although he had sadly lost his lovely wife, Joyce, and her captivating singing voice, at the beginning of the year, Douglas was in brilliant form at the Wurlitzer, providing an exceptionally enjoyable and memorable performance which included a lusty sing-along and a goodly lacing of his special brand of humor. All in all, a fabulous musical evening.

We were also delighted to welcome Nor-Cal member Dean Coombs (and his camera!), having already had him with us at our Edmonton concert. Surprisingly, as with Alec Leader, this was Douglas' first ever visit to Northolt, despite having been a firm friend of Edith and Les Rawle and of our chapter for many years.

A gratifying interlude during Douglas' concert was the launching of the first public recording made by

our popular young member Janet Dowsett. Coming to the fore in one of our early "Young Theatre Organist of The Year" competitions, Janet is now professionally employed by the Yamaha organization in the UK and has a busy schedule of pipe and electronic concerts up and down the country and on special assignments overseas. Though not a chapter promotion, it was most fitting that Janet's recording debut, "The 1st of Jan," should feature our 3/19 Wurlitzer in Northolt which she handles in fine style, including an excellent arrangement of Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." Janet has already appeared once in concert at the famous ex-Granada Clapham Junction 3/8 Wurlitzer now in Geneva, Switzerland, and has been invited to return for another "double event."

Organ restoration work continues apace and we hope to be able to report good news on several fronts before too long.



Behind the scenes at Granada Slough, with Len Rawle at the console.

(John D. Sharp photo)



London Chapter member Vera Crook received a bouquet on her birthday during the October meeting.



John Mann at the "Torch" Christie, Edmonton, in May.

(John D. Sharp photo)



Dancers Nancy Candea and Jim Holdman with Eddie Weaver after Eddie's show at the Royal Oak Theatre in April. (Fred Page photo)



Tim Needler, ATOS national secretary, presents Marge Muethel and Harold Bellamy with a replacement charter for the Motor City Chapter at the Paramount Music Palace. (Bill Vogel photo)



LOS ANGELES  
THEATRE ORGAN  
SOCIETY  
California  
213/792-7084

LATOS ended its spring concert season with two of the most outstanding programs ever presented — George Wright at San Gabriel on May 7 and Hector Olivera, in his Los Angeles debut, at Pasadena on May 20.

San Gabriel's long-awaited new Brass Sax arrived at 1:30 p.m. the day before the Wright program and crew chief Carl Nebe, technical director Peter Crotty and the crew had the rank in and regulated and ready for George's practice session on Saturday morning! In addition, the revoiced Solo String was also featured in his program. The San Gabriel 3/16 never sounded better, and George's usual great artistry made for one of the most memorable programs ever presented in Los Angeles.



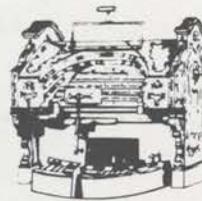
Hector Olivera at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium Moller. (Zimfoto)

"The Dazzling Sounds of Hector" was the second show's billing, and both Hector and the magnificent five-manual Möller lived up to the claim! A standing ovation, two encores and the demand that he be brought back again testify to the audience's complete delight and satisfaction.

Our Barton installation in the Wilshire-Ebell is proceeding on schedule and we hope to hear its first sounds in the fall. In June the chapter hosted a group of 16 Australians for several days of organ crawls. Tours of various installations and, often, open console sessions can be arranged by contacting LATOS in advance at our permanent mailing address: P.O. Box 1913, Glendale, California 91209. Any ATOSers in the area are welcome to call our telephone (213) 792-7084 for up-to-date concert information.

RALPH BEAUDRY

Motor  
City  
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Detroit  
313/537-1133

Dennis James accompanied the D.W. Griffith silent film *Broken Blossoms* at the Redford Theatre on March 5. The audience obviously enjoyed Dennis' appropriate musical scoring to the 1919 release which contains tinted stock and stars Lillian

Gish and Richard Barthelmess.

On March 13, over 200 people attended our first chapter concert at St. Clare Church in Windsor, Ontario, to hear Tony O'Brien at the 2/7 Wurlitzer. Originally installed in the Knickerbocker Theatre in Detroit, the existence of the instrument, which was moved to the church in 1934, was discovered two years ago by chapter member Jim Casterson, and it has become a chapter project. Last serviced in 1974, considerable restoration of the organ was necessary in preparation for the concert.

Richmond's "Mr. Music," Eddie Weaver, appeared at the Royal Oak on April 9 before a very enthusiastic audience. In addition to his famous song-slide parodies, Eddie accompanied the 1920 Harold Lloyd film *Haunted Spooks*. One learns to expect the unexpected at an Eddie Weaver concert, and this time it was Nancy Candea and Jim Holdman in a dance routine in mime to "Music Box Dancer." All in all, a very enjoyable evening for Eddie's fifth appearance for our chapter.

Tim Needler, chairman of the Central Indiana Chapter, turned out to be the mystery artist for our theatre organ concert, workshop and dessert extravaganza, co-chaired by Irene FitzGerald and Marge Muethel, at the Redford Theatre on April 15. Following Tim's concert, a check for \$3,000 for our roof repair program at the Redford was presented to the chapter by the Deluxe Check Cashing Foundation, which annually gives grants to organizations they believe to be worthwhile community interest ventures.

The Second District and Ladies



Motor City Chapter receives Americanism award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Standing in front of the Redford's flag are: (l to r) Alan Wojtas, Second District Commander; Harold Bellamy, Motor City Chairman; and Don Lockwood, Master of Ceremonies. (Bill Vogel photo)

Auxiliary of the Veterans of Foreign Wars presented the chapter with an Americanism award on April 20 at the Redford Theatre. As the organist plays the National Anthem at the beginning of each bi-weekly film showing, the curtains part to reveal a 20x30-foot American flag. Donated by member Jim Brown, in the name of Eileen F. Moore Brown, R.N. (1950-1974), the flag was first displayed on March 7, 1980.

Some 45 chapter members enjoyed a charter-bus organ crawl to our neighboring state of Indiana on April 30 and May 1. Organized by Fred Page, the group first stopped at the Cardinal in Fort Wayne to hear Don Springer at the 4/30 Wurlitzer (console from the Brooklyn Fox) before arriving in Indianapolis for an evening concert by Lin Lunde at the 2/12 Page at the Hedback Community Theatre. A midnight jam session at the Paramount Music Palace featured Donna Parker, Bill Vlasak, Lin Lunde, Tim Needler and several chapter members at the 4/42 Wurlitzer. Following breakfast at the Paramount Music Palace, the group traveled to the Mars Theatre (now the Long Performing Arts Center) in Lafayette for a concert by Ken Double at the 3/13 Marr & Colton. The final stop was at the Pipe Dream Restaurant in Kokomo, where members were entertained by "Wild Bill" Tandy at the 3/14 Wurlitzer.

Henry Aldridge, who is on the board of the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor, was the Second Sunday artist at the Michigan in March. Bill Taber, from Akron, brought along friend Jim Timko for some piano and organ duets during his Second Sun-

day program at the 3/13 Barton in April. The chapter is celebrating ten years of regular intermission organ interludes at the Michigan.

John Lauter performed at the Michigan as our Fourth Sunday artist in March. In April, Burt Castle, organist at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Bay City and the Shrine Temple in Saginaw, was the featured artist at the 3/16 Barton for Fourth Sunday at the Royal Oak.

Upcoming programs include Charlie Balogh at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor on September 10, and Fr. Jim Miller and the New McKinney's Cotton Pickers at the Redford Theatre on October 1. For information, write Motor City Theatre Organ Society, 17360 Lahser Road, Detroit, Michigan 48219. Telephone 313/537-1133.

DON LOCKWOOD



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

"It's really nice to have an organ where all the pistons are working the way you want them," declared Bill Taylor at the outset of his Castro Theatre debut for Nor-Cal on Sunday morning, May 22. This was his way of pointing out that it was not only his show, as the man playing the organ, but that of his brother, Dick, the man behind the painstaking craftsmanship exerted in the installation of the instrument. For each, it was at least a



Henry Aldridge was the Second Sunday artist at the Michigan Theatre in Ann Arbor in March. (Bo Hanley photo)

plateau that had finally been reached after many years of effort. Together, what beautiful music they made!

Since our last chapter meeting at the Castro, their Wurlitzer has grown to a 4/15 instrument. The meticulous care in the winding, voicing, regulating and balancing of the organ is immediately apparent to the listener's ears.

Young Bill Taylor presented a well-rounded program featuring ballads of the lush, lilting variety (including his father's favorite, "Love Locked Out"), upbeat novelty numbers such as "Java," and love songs of the thirties. He closed his program with Bronislaw Kaper's "San Francisco," which is the traditional closing piece of house organists Elbert La Chelle and David Hegarty for their nightly interludes. Then, for an encore, Bill played the sonically spectacular showpiece "The Galloping Comedians." Big, rich and melodious organ



Bill Taylor, who played for the Nor-Cal Chapter at the Castro Theatre in May. (Claude Neuffer photo)



Program Chairman Buddy Boyd assists Grace Lerner with registration of the John Beck Wurlitzer. (Wally Eakins photo)



1983-84 officers, l to r: Ernest (Buddy) Boyd, 1st Vice Chairman; Dolly Durham, 2nd Vice Chairman; Lorena McKee, Secretary; and Irving Light, Chairman. Not shown is Dr. Robert Lloyd, Treasurer. (Wally Eakins photo)

tones flowed from Bill's fingertips so smoothly that the program seemed shorter than it actually was. Those of us attending this meeting got a fine example of good theatre organ sound. Practice and polish certainly show! I'm sure I speak for the whole chapter in expressing thanks to each member of the Taylor family for their individual and combined efforts in bringing such a high standard of excellence to the Bay Area theatre organ scene.

BRUCE GRULKE  
ED MULLINS



**NORTH  
TEXAS  
CHAPTER**

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

The newly-elected officers of the North Texas Chapter inaugurated their activity at the April meeting in

John Beck Hall. Then the meeting became the stage for Program Chairman Ernest (Buddy) Boyd and a program of nostalgia and fun. For nostalgia, a taped excerpt of a Lee Erwin concert, played on what is now the NTCATOS Robert-Morton while it was still in its original home (Loew's Jersey City Theatre), really whetted our appetites to complete the restoration of this gem and see it installed in a proper home. This is the major goal of our chapter — though not a simple one, for sure! The fun part was open console on the John Beck Wurlitzer pipe organ. This was an exceptional open console, as members who have usually been intimidated by the big console and its puzzling stop array stepped up and played without any arm-twisting. The secret of this, it turns out, has been some extra-curricular activity on the part of several members. This dedicated group, tired of missing out on chances to play the pipe organs, persuaded teacher/or-

ganist Charles Evans to conduct a series of pipe organ registration sessions at John Beck Hall. The entire chapter benefited from the resulting non-stop organ music — these are some of our best organists on home instruments. We were also fortunate at this session to have Larry Birdsong, member from Longview, Texas, in attendance. Larry can really make that Wurlitzer sing, and he received well-deserved ovations from a very appreciative audience.

We are sorry to report the closing of both pipe-organ equipped pizzerias in Dallas. The sign on the marquee of one of them sums it up rather succinctly, "Sorry we're closed — you weren't here." Unfortunately for us in ATOS, we now have lost three places where we used to hear the majestic sound of the theatre pipe organ (Gene Powell's Organ World pipes went into storage last year).

Faced with rather short notice to remove his pipe organ from one of the pizza houses, Mark Kenning received expert assistance from fellow NTC-ATOS members Dick Cooper and Fred Garrett. Understandably, Mark is very grateful for their gracious help.

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**OREGON**  
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On Saturday evening, April 23, we gathered in the Benson High School auditorium to hear the 4/24 Kimball played by "Mr. Seattle," Dick Schrum. Attendees included members from Vancouver, Eugene, and as far away as Medford.

The Benson Kimball has several straight ranks in each chamber which operate as floating divisions. Because of space limitations on the stop rails, these sets are controlled by tabs on the back rail to be coupled to different manuals as desired. This utilizes the entire organ, but makes the instrument not too easy to play. The auditorium has superb acoustics.

Dick Schrum is well known to the ATOS as a former National President and a concert artist. He has made several recordings, including one on Bill Blunk's famous five-manual Marr & Colton. Dick is an excellent showman



Laura Burke gets an autograph from Dick Schrum at the Benson Kimball.

(Claude Neuffer photo)



Gerry Gregorius in the chamber of the Gaylord's installation.

(Claude Neuffer photo)

as well as musician. He conjured up a very creditable windstorm for his "weather report" which included "Stormy Weather," "Singing In The Rain" and other appropriate numbers. Thanks to Benson High School, to Loren Minear's maintenance crew, and to Dick Schrum for a wonderful evening.

On May 22, a fine spring day, we were again guests of Jerry and Nickie Gaylord in their beautiful country home in the hills southeast of Portland. Their organ started life as a 2/4 Wicks, but now is a 2/7 hybrid. The compact console was built by former owner Bob Rickett. Since our last

meeting at the Gaylord's, the chests have been relocated to the rear of the chamber away from the shutters. With less direct sound egress, the expression is much smoother and the voices better blended and diffused. The volume is just right for the large downstairs recreation room.

Our artist for this afternoon was the popular Portland organist Gerry Gregorius, whom we have not heard for some time. His program was an excellent variety of show tunes, light classics and numbers by Irving Berlin and Leroy Anderson, all played with top professional registration and precision.

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## KARL COLE

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In the absence of Chairman Joe Gray, Marie Briody did a very creditable job as MC for this meeting. Thanks to Gerry Gregorious for his fine music and especially to Nickie and Jerry Gaylord for their wonderful hospitality.

BUD ABEL

## PUGET SOUND

Seattle

206/852-2011 or 206/631-1669

Jane Johnson appeared at the Seattle Paramount Theatre in April, along with students from Bellevue Community College, in a production entitled "Music You Remember Cavalcade - Spotlight on 1943." Jane played prior to the program, at intermission, featured solos, for a sing-along, and with the choirs and band in the finale, "God Bless America."

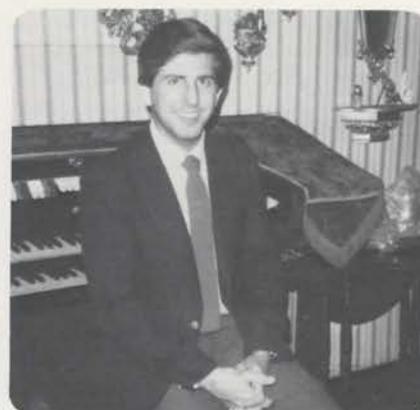
April 10 was the Potluck and Auction held at Haller Lake Clubhouse. The day started with open console on our own 3/8 Wurlitzer, with many members coming early for instruction and help with registration.

May 21 we traveled to Mt. Vernon, a small town about 60 miles to the north, to the Lincoln Theatre where they have a 550-seat auditorium. The two-manual Wurlitzer was installed in 1926, and has seven ranks with



Lorraine Nelson at the Fargo Theatre 3/9 Wurlitzer. (S. Carlson photo)

Piano, plus other tuned percussions. Uniquely, the Chime rank is spread around the perimeter of the auditorium. Our concert was played by Ken Fenske, co-owner of a music store in Mt. Vernon. Assistance in planning this concert came from the Peace Arch Organ Society, a new group (unaffiliated) that is just getting started in the Vancouver/Bellingham area. Bert Miller is their chairman. After an open console session, Jeff Fox played "rip-roaring" theatre organ using bird whistles, siren, etc. Jeff is helping restore the Wurlitzer and also has the Bellingham Mt. Baker Theatre Wurlitzer in his care. We were told that the Mt. Vernon theatre would give us



Lance Luce at the Johnson residence, 2/8 Robert-Morton (hybrid). (S. Carlson photo)

open console time nearly any day if we make prior arrangements — a tremendous gift to our members.

CHRISTINE PRIDE

## RED RIVER

Fargo

218/287-2671 or 218/236-9217

On April 21 the weather was perfect, the Fargo Theatre sold out, and the concert was wonderful in the capable hands of Lance Luce at the console of the Mighty Wurlitzer. The audience clearly loved the performance and the performer. They were thoroughly attentive throughout and sang out heartily for the sing-along. Dur-

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ing the first half a slide presentation entitled "A Mary Pickford - Buddy Rogers Scrapbook," gave the audience some background about them and their movie, *My Best Girl*, which was to follow intermission. When he turned to take his final bow, Lance Luce got a certainly deserved standing ovation. A reception for members and guests was held on the mezzanine. Lance spent one evening at the home of Lance Johnson where he played some of his concert selections on the 2/8 Robert-Morton hybrid. His Fargo visit was a total pleasure. He's like one of our family now.

In June, the family series of classic films begins again at Weld Hall, Moorhead State University, Moorhead, Minnesota, where we have chapter organ #2. It will be used before or during each of the ten Monday evening showings. Melita Nelson, a chapter member and organ teacher, brought a student down to the Fargo Theatre to try a theatre pipe organ for the first time. The young lady's name is Lorraine Nelson and she did so well that she was invited to play one of the prologues for the film series.

SONIA CARLSON

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Denver

303/343-3930 or 303/233-4716

Several years ago this writer met Bill and Mitzie Fife at an ATOS gathering, and Bill invited several of us over to their home to see the pipe organ they were installing. Well, there it was — just sitting there in piles and boxes. I sat down and interviewed Mitzie about how the whole thing came about. It seems that over the years, with lots of rejuvenation, deliberation, procrastination and plenty of frustration, they started putting it all together with the help of friends and the ATOS. We had a meeting at



2/6 Wurlitzer console at Bill and Mitzie Fife's home.

(F.R. Gandy photo)

their home on a Sunday afternoon in April and found the organ up and playing.

Mitzie Fife had this story for me to share. Back in the late twenties, Vernon Ackerman accumulated from here and there a Wurlitzer console and over 500 pipes and, in his home in Mt. Carroll, Illinois, put together a pipe organ. Some pipes were made for him by Pete Howell in Dixon, Illinois. Pete is still making fine organs. Vernon's organ had six ranks that included Diapason, Strings, Oboe, Tibia, and a Vox that is exceptional. He bought a Xylophone (that is still waiting for an action) when a Chicago supply house was moving and let him have it for ten dollars. The organ cost about \$2,200 at that time. He had some installation problems. His mother took a negative view of the whole thing when some plaster fell off the ceiling after a very resonant bass pipes was installed and spoke roughly. Mr. Ackerman was a theatre and church organist and was well rewarded when the organ proved out perfect.

In 1934 Vernon Ackerman was rehearsing at church with a guest violinist from the womens' college in Mt. Carroll. To make a long story short, they fell in love, married, and the new Mrs. Ackerman's sister turned out to be Mitzie (not yet Fife), who also attended the college, and the pipes for the organ were installed in an extended room made from her bedroom closet. Mitzie was studying to be a concert pianist, but fell in love with the organ, married an airline pilot, moved to Colorado and, when Vernon Ackerman fell ill and had to make some changes in their home, the organ was dismantled and sent out to Colorado to the Fifes as a gift.

The builder of the Fife's home, being a musician, responded to the call for help and dug another room in the underground level for the organ. Before pouring a ceiling of concrete, he lowered the Spencer Orgoblo by crane into the lower level. Then followed many years of slow repair and refurbishing, fixing air leaks, re-leathering, replacing missing pipes and receiving many hours of help from

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Partial chamber view showing shutter motors on right. (F.R. Gandy photo)



Original Spencer Orgoblo shipped with organ. (F.R. Gandy photo)



Shutter/chamber access door in open position. (F.R. Gandy photo)

ATOS members, even those who had never seen a theatre pipe organ. There is still work to be done here and there, but it is playable and sounds great.

An innovation they had to make was having the shutters mounted in the frame of the door that is also the access door to the chamber. Hinged on one end with rubber casters on the bottom, it rolls out for easy entry into the chamber. The Rocky Mountain Chapter is pleased with the installation and the Fifes are wonderful hosts when we meet in their home.

FRANK R. GANDY

### SAN DIEGO California

619/279-2867 or 619/561-2269

The month of April brought the San Diego Chapter the opportunity to hear Dan Bellomy. Dan treated our audience to a night of dazzling music. Throughout his concert, he demonstrated his versatility by his typical theatre stylings, sentimental romantic

ballads with very progressive harmony and the ever-popular novelty numbers. The highlight of the evening was Dan's use of progressive harmony in jazz style. Jazz lovers were treated royally all through the evening while his orchestral registrations did so much to enhance his renditions. His use of our organ, featuring a newly-installed Sub-Vox rank, was greatly appreciated, as was his grace and ease in his performance.

Our April membership meeting, held at Piano & Organ Exchange, set the wheels in motion for our summer events. Committees were chosen for our fund-raisers and our summer socials, all in preparation for busy summer months when our Mighty Wurlitzer will be inoperable because an additional five ranks are being added. A report was given on the club's procedure to become a non-profit corporation.

What better way to start the month of May than with an extravaganza featuring the mighty Gaylord Carter.

With support from our members and some great publicity timing, the show had the largest attendance in years. Gaylord again outdid himself with two short features, *The Bank Dick*, with W.C. Fields, and *Hairbreadth Harry*. The feature film, *For Heaven's Sake*, with Harold Lloyd, gave our audience 60 minutes of side-splitting laughter and fun. Again, Gaylord enjoyed the stage effects, a 20x40-foot American flag as a backdrop during his "Old Ironsides" number and, during a special arrangement of "Foggy Day in London Town," being engulfed in a sea of fog!

The Orange County Organ Society took the opportunity to enjoy a day in San Diego. Arriving at the California Theatre in the morning, they were treated to a concert featuring Chris Gorsuch, the designer and builder of the solid-state relay system recently installed in our organ. Following this it was open console for all to enjoy. Then it was off to Balboa Park to

*Donna Parker*

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Dan Bellomy at the San Diego Chapter Wurlitzer.



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hear the Sunday afternoon concert on the Spreckles organ, the world's largest outdoor pipe organ. Concluding the day was dinner and an evening of musical entertainment at Tommy Stark's Organ Power Pizza in the Lemon Grove area.

To conclude the month of May, San Diego was fortunate to enjoy the talents of Hector Olivera in concert at the Spreckles organ, a 4/53 Austin in Balboa Park. The large audience, consisting of many ATOS members and the general public, was overwhelmed and responded to this witty genius at the organ with many standing ovations.

CONNIE REARDON

**SIERRA**  
Sacramento  
916/726-5132 or 916/332-2837

On February 6 Sierra presented Bob Vaughn at the 2/11 Wurlitzer in the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse accompanying *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* Filmed on the Sacramento River, this silent comedy starred Buster Keaton

in a rollicking riverboat story that was really brought to life by Bob Vaughn's seasoned skills.

Sunday, March 20, Sierra teamed with the Roseville Theatre and Allen organ dealer J. Nelson to present Rex Koury accompanying *King of Kings*. Koury's score and performance were magnificent, with nearly all the music written especially for the film by Rex himself. The Allen three-manual theatre organ's tone cabinets were placed in the still-empty pipe chambers of the Roseville with spectacular results. The program was a fund-raiser for Sierra's organ installations project at the Roseville. The generous cooperation of J. Nelson in supplying the Allen is most appreciated.

April 10 at Arden Pizza & Pipes, Sierra Chapter's entertainment for the month consisted of a show of all women performers or, as billed in our newsletter, "An all-gal deal." An informal program allowing chapter members to practice and then play before a group, it was great fun. Participating ladies included Kay Ruland, Betty Taylor, Karen Cuneo, Joy

Lindberg and the organizer of the event, Sue Lang. The last few numbers even included a vocal quartet of Louise Daggett, Diane Lovely, June Anderson and, so not to violate the theme, Mr. Ed Posehn in drag.

May 1, Sierra brought to the Sacramento suburb of Fair Oaks, Kevin King at the chapter's Wurlitzer. Kevin is a young organist making his way in the Bay Area pizza circuit. Providing us an afternoon of most enjoyable music in true theatre style, Kevin's showmanship was put to a test and came through with flying colors as he had to cope with blower failure several times toward the end of his program. The problem? Our building was recently converted to three-phase power with only 208 volts. Our Spencer wanted 220 and overheated in protest. Chapter electrician Hal Wilmunder has installed a voltage booster to solve what is hopefully the last of Sierra's string of blower problems.

May 14 a busload of members crossed the mighty snowladen Sierra mountains to chapter member Fred Beeks' residence installation to hear



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the wonderful Miss Candi Carley. A concert by Candi Carley is always most inspiring as she plays and changes stops without the benefit of sight. Fred demonstrated his custom-built roll-player with some tasty Crawford rolls (it was used by George Wright during the '79 Convention).

RANDY WARWICK

## SOONER STATE

Tulsa

918/742-8693 or 918/437-2146

April's meeting, held in Tulsa's beautiful Gothic-style First Methodist Church, was an enjoyable step into the world of church organ music. Mr. Richard Doverspike, organ curator, gave us an interesting history of the more-than-100-rank instrument, and organists Alta Bush Selvey and Vicki Stumpf presented a program from classical organ literature that was a delightful tour through the instrument's divisions, including the polished copper *Trompette en Chamade*.

The organ was originally built by Aeolian-Skinner in the 1920's, a gift from Foster Parriott in memory of his parents. The interest from the trust fund for the organ's maintenance has, over the years, accumulated enough that it was decided to enlarge the instrument. Mr. Doverspike, with

the expertise for masterminding the project, was selected to do so. Ultimately, there will be 200 ranks and a new console with a multiplex cable. The expansion is being done by Schantz Organ Company.

The end of April found a contingent from our chapter in Wichita, Kansas, to hear the Lyn Larsen concert on the former New York Paramount Wurlitzer in their Century II Exhibition Hall. Several of our new members were first-time attendees and were quite impressed with the instrument, the installation and Lyn Larsen himself! Needless to say, the program was a sheer delight.

May found us back at the Central Assembly of God Church with open console at the 4/14 Robert-Morton. Lorene Thomas delighted us with her many and varied selections. Later, we especially enjoyed organ and piano duets with Joe Crutchfield at the grand piano — you'd have thought they had been playing together forever!

Bob and Betty Weddle are still talking about their recent trip to Bella Vista, Arkansas, where they visited Russell and Florence Joseph and their four-rank Wurlitzer. They report a beautiful installation in the Joseph's home, spotlessly clean with everything looking brand new. The organ's four ranks sound like a "big organ,"

complete with a full Wurlitzer toy counter. Russell has a Wurlitzer Tibia he plans to add as soon as he can locate a suitable Wurlitzer chest. Russell, a onetime pupil of the late Milton Slosser, entertained them with his music, and they also heard a tape of Bob Ralston playing the instrument when he was there not long ago.

Hervey and Janice Barbour are well along on the new house they are building around their 2/11 Kimball. Several members of the "Pipe-Pack-in" Platoon" had assembled in Pryor some time ago to help move the bigger parts and pipes from their old house to storage.

Dorothy and Lee Smith are also talking "sheetrocking." Their house-addition is coming along slowly, but the blower room for their now seven-rank mostly-Wurlitzer is enclosed.

Phil Judkins reports that his Trivo Wurlitzer-style Post Horn is tremendous, and those who have played it agree! With his Austin Clarinet finally playing, his mostly-Wicks organ now has ten ranks.

DOROTHY SMITH

## SOUTHEAST TEXAS

Beaumont

409/886-1689

Ava Irick, organ and piano teacher in nearby Nederland, played on the

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Don Baker in 1983. (George R. Hockmeyer photo)

3/8 Robert-Morton in the Jefferson Theatre for the Chapter's April meeting. This open meeting received extensive advance publicity in the local newspapers and from the TV stations, so that we had a record attendance of 325 persons. Although Mrs. Irick played from sheet music, her program was well received.

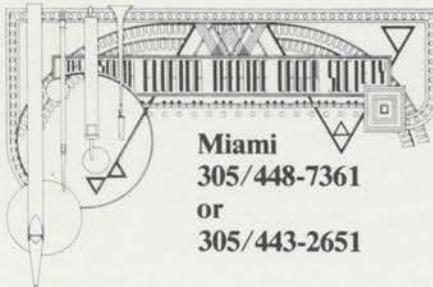
Rick Mathews of Houston, who has been both installer and performer for a pizzeria Wurlitzer in Arizona, played a varied program for our May meeting.

The Chapter's Annual Spring Concert — actually in June — was entitled "Sixty Years of Pipes," celebrating the long career of Hall-of-Famer Don Baker. Despite threatening weather, nearly 500 people came to hear Don's program. His arrangements of golden-oldies brought out the full range of the Robert-Morton's eight ranks, while demonstrating all the clichés of old-time theatre organ. Don accompanied a showing of the Laurel & Hardy silent, *Double Whoopee*, with a combination of sound effects and

appropriate background music. After a standing ovation, Don concluded as usual with "God Bless America."

A cameraman from TV channel 12, although not using any supplementary lighting, proved to be a distraction during the first 15 minutes of the program. It remains a question whether the publicity benefits from the subsequent showing outweighed the distraction.

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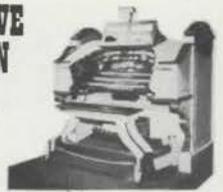
Connecticut organist and technician Allen Miller treated the South Florida Chapter to a program on the 4/15 Wurlitzer in Andre Hall on May 24. A member of the National Board of Directors, Allen currently has his own firm, Allen Miller Associates, which is active in pipe organ design and manufacture as well as design and fabrication of various custom electronic systems.

His program for the Miami theatre organ fans, however, was not electronic, but nostalgic, as Allen played his favorite music from old movie musicals. This included selections from *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *Top Hat*, "King Kong March" and a medley from *Wake Up and Live*. Other treats were "Just a Bird's Eye View of My Old Kentucky Home," an arrangement of the oldie-goldie, "Nola," and the theme from *Ice Castle*, "Through The Eyes of Love." His rousing finale was "Forty-Second Street."

JO WERNE

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Akron Civic Theatre was the place for our March meeting. The organ is the twin to our Armory 3/13 Wurlitzer. Staff organist Bill Taber delighted us with a well-planned concert. Bill and pianist Jim Timko played several duets including "Hooked on Classics." Members were delighted with the opportunity to enjoy open console.

The Akron Civic Theatre proudly presented Ron Rhode at the Wurlitzer on April 9. Members of the chapter were present to enjoy his style of performance.

Driving through a late-winter snow storm on April 17, our members were delighted to visit the Oberlin Conservatory of Music on the Oberlin College campus, Oberlin, Ohio. Garth Peacock, Professor of Organ, guided us on a tour of the practice hall and most of the organs on the campus. Organ students have access to twenty-five instruments of varied design. Of the mechanical action tracker organs, six are Flentrops, one Brombaugh and two Noacks. Of the electro-pneumatic, six are Holtkamps and one a Moller. Warner Concert Hall contains a three-manual, 44-stop Flentrop built entirely in mid-eighteenth century classical North European style. Also in Warner is a six-stop positiv organ from Flentrop, and in Finney Chapel there is a large three-manual, 60-stop Aeolian-Skinner organ.

A Brombaugh organ, built by John Brombaugh and Associates of Eugene, Oregon, is installed in the Fairchild Chapel. The organ, situated in

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Keyboard of Brombaugh organ in Fairchild Chapel. Note the "broken octave" and split sharps on the Great.  
(Photo courtesy of Oberlin College, Conservatory of Music)

the rear gallery of the chapel, is a two-manual instrument of 13 stops. Its case, mechanism and tonal resources are inspired by the important developments in organ design which took place in the first half of the seventeenth century. The versatility of the organ is expanded through the "broken octave" configuration at the bass end of the keyboard, which allows the player to reach larger intervals than possible with modern keyboards, and also through the presence of sub-semitones (split sharps) which extend the usual limits of the meantone temperament in which the organ is tuned.

April 23 found some members attending a concert at the Lorain Palace Theatre in Lorain, Ohio, with artist Ken Demko at the 3/11 Wurlitzer.

Rounding out a busy April, WRTOS was proud to present Larry Ferrari on the Mighty 3/13 Wurlitzer. The first half of the program was a

musical trip around the world starting in America, then to England, Europe, Asia, Hawaii and back home. Larry played steadily for an hour and fifteen minutes. After intermission, he honored Henry Mancini with a medley of his well-known songs. We were then entertained with a Laurel & Hardy silent movie. He closed with 20 minutes of hymns.

The next day members journeyed to Canton, Ohio, for a meeting at the Canton Palace Theatre, which gives the illusion of an open-air amphitheatre surrounded by Spanish gardens and covered by a blue Mediterranean sky containing twinkling stars and moving clouds. The Canton Palace is a sister to the Akron Civic Theatre.

Staff organist Bob Beck played the 3/7 Kilgen. He opened with "Valencia," then demonstrated the different effects of the Kilgen, some of which were Siren, Bird Whistle, Tom Tom, Castenet, Chrysoglott and Chimes. Next he played "My Buddy" while the curtain rose to reveal a beautiful garden scene on a backdrop. Another backdrop appeared later while he played "Someone to Watch Over Me." Members enjoyed a chance to play this organ when open console followed.

JIM SHEPHERD



#### WOLVERINE CHAPTER

of the American Theatre Organ Society

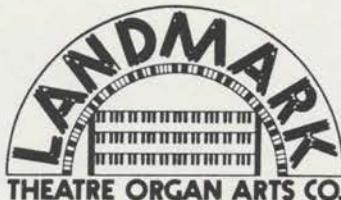
**Central & Lower Michigan**  
**517/793-5418 or 616/364-0354**

Our April meeting was held at the home of Roger and Sue Mumbrue in Bloomfield Hills. Each visit to the Mumbrue's is looked forward to with great anticipation of what new and interesting sights and sounds will be in store for us. This year their three-manual hybrid organ has been expanded from 32 to 36 ranks with the addition of three Strings (for a total

of nine) and a Trivo Musette, plus a 16' extension on the Trumpet. A second Glockenspiel, a third Xylophone and a set of tuned bird whistles have also been added and are exposed in their basement room. The bird whistles are unique because each of the 18 notes is marked by a small stuffed bird with a light over it to indicate which bird is singing! Making the Mumbrue's music room unforgettable are various other unique visual and animated effects connected to the organ. There is a large parrot that flaps its wings in time to the music and that even lays "eggs." Another smaller parrot blows up a balloon, and a gorilla "drummer" beats out the time of the music on a garbage can lid with a tin cup.

John Lauter, a talented young organist from Livonia, played a very pleasant program for us in his own bouncy and toe-tapping style. John has become quite well-known locally as a rising star in theatre organ and will no doubt become better known for his artistry in the future across the nation. Since John is very familiar with the Mumbrue's organ, he was able to demonstrate many of its vast resources, both tonally and visually. What a tremendous sound that beautiful organ can produce! We are grateful to the Mumbrues for so graciously hosting our group once again, and we enjoyed John Lauter's performance very much.

On April 30 and May 1, a bus group of Wolverine and Motor City Chapter members went to Indiana for a weekend organ tour hosted by the Central Indiana Chapter. Lin Lunde from Richmond, Virginia, played a beautiful concert that Saturday evening at the Hedback Theatre in Indianapolis. Following Lin's concert was a midnight jam session at Paramount Music Palace which commenced after closing hours with staff organist Don-



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John Lauter at the Mumbroe's console.



Ken Saliba at the console of the Pied Piper Pizza Peddler's Wurlitzer.

(Max Brown photo)

na Parker bringing up the console. Several other visiting organists entertained us on the Mighty Wurlitzer during open console. It was great!

Paramount Music Palace's general manager Bob MacNeur had a special "breakfast crew" come in early the next morning to prepare and serve us cafeteria-style a very nice and filling breakfast before we left to go to Lafayette. They did a super job of it, too. So you thought the Paramount Music Palace was *just* a pizza parlor! We got an unexpected treat — about 15 minutes of delightful music by Donna Parker on the Palace's 4/42 Wurlitzer!

When we arrived in Lafayette, Ken Double played a short but sweet concert for us at the Mars Theatre, now the Long Performing Arts Center. Ken certainly got many beautiful sounds out of that 3/17 hybrid organ.

The last stop on our Indiana Organ Tour was at the Pipe Dream Restaurant in Kokomo where we were entertained by staff organist Bill Tandy,

who definitely catered to our musical tastes by playing a lot of "oldies." A couple of our members had the opportunity to play Pipe Dream's 3/12 Wurlitzer. Dr. John Elleman, one of the owners, played for us, too. We certainly thank the Central Indiana Chapter for doing such a marvelous job of hosting!

On May 15 our Wolverine meeting was held at Pied Piper Pizza Peddler in Warren. Ken Saliba, an owner of the Pied Piper, played an impressive special program for us prior to the opening of the restaurant for business. Ken's excellent musicianship and experience as a church organist and organ teacher were very much in evidence throughout his performance. His style and technique are super and he seems to have a flair for using second-touch resources. His right foot counter-melodies high on the pedal board were unique and added a pleasant element to several selections.

It appeared that Ken enjoyed utiliz-

ing the organ's softer and more subtle sounds as much as we enjoyed hearing them. His ballads, played in a lush, romantic style, were really gorgeous. Bach's famous "Tocatta in D Minor" paired with a toccata by Gigout were fine vehicles to display Ken's classical training. His arrangement of "Ebb Tide" included bird calls and surf sounds created by himself and not the usual devices found in theatre organs — unique and effective! His encore was a moving arrangement of "You'll Never Walk Alone."

Following Ken's program, several members ventured forth to play for us during open console. During our lunch, we were treated to the music of Pied Piper organist Rick Cucci. Rick is a talented 17-year-old musician well on his way to making a name for himself in theatre organ. We thank Ken Saliba and Pied Piper Pizza Peddler for a really super music-filled day!

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