

BACAL, DAVID

Born in New York City, August 7, 1908. The Bacal family moved to Philadelphia when David was yet a small boy. It was there that he attended public school and received his basic musical education. His beginning instruction on the piano was from his mother. By 1922 he had taken his first job as a theatre organist, ^(Astor Theatre, Philadelphia) although he was still in high school. For a time he was organist of the three manual, Marr and Colton pipe organ in the Embassy Theatre in Easton, Pennsylvania. At the same time he accompanied vaudeville acts at the State Theatre in Easton.

With the coming of sound pictures the Embassy Theatre dropped the use of the pipe organ, and Bacal returned to Philadelphia and for a time played piano in the Leo Zollo Orchestra at the Ben Franklin Hotel. From here he began broadcasting on the radio as a pianist.

BACAL, DAVID

2.

Later Bacal moved to Chicago where he played piano in the pit band of the Oriental Theatre and played briefly at the Palace and Chicago Theatres on the theatre pipe organ. He broadcast from the pipe organ over Radio Station WCFL when the studios were in the Furniture Mart building, and then over to the new Chicago Civic Opera House where WCFL had taken the entire 42nd floor for studios.

In late 1934 Bacal went to Radio Station WBBM as organist. After a period in military service during World War II, Bacal returned to Radio Station WBBM in Chicago. In 1946 he moved to California and began playing the three manual pipe organ in the old NBC studios on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Vine Street. He also did free-lance work on the Hammond organ playing various night club dates. He continued his radio work in California.

BACAL, DAVID

3.

for the "Jack LaLanne Show" (a nationally known health-exercise star, who encouraged his audiences how to flex their muscles to keep trim), and "Truth or Consequences."

GEORGE BACON

A versatile solo-organist is George Bacon, at the Rochester in his second year, and which he had the opportunity to open. He broadcasts over WHEC and is very well liked by his extensive patronage. Bacon has also filled engagements at the largest houses in San Diego, Calif.

1928

BACON, JERRY F.

Jerry Bacon was born January 4, 1942 in Ada, Oklahoma. His musical education began with choir in junior high school in Arlington, Texas where he sang tenor. When he began high school in Arlington he enrolled in band as well as choir. The high school had obtained a Hammond organ and Bacon began to play it for assemblies, teaching himself as he went along. He learned about classical organ literature at this time and began working on Bach's Eight Preludes and Fugues with some help from Agatha Patterson, organist of the First Methodist Church. Paul Lindsley Thomas of Dallas, Texas was another of his teachers, although Bacon is largely self-taught.

Bacon's professional career includes terms as organist of the Melba (Capri) Theatre in Dallas (three manual, 11 rank Wurlitzer) from 1967-72, and at the Fine Arts Theatre (from 1972-74). At the Fine Arts Theatre a three manual Artisan electronic was used and later two Pilcher church organs were combined into one composite instrument and used for entertainment purposes.

In December of 1974 Bacon was appointed feature organist at the Landmark Pizza

BACON, JERRY F. (Page 2)

and Pipes in Dallas. The following year he was appointed Musical Director of the firm which operates other pizza parlors in addition to the northwest Dallas location. At present (1977) Bacon is featured at the Landmark Pizza and Pipes in Houston, Texas and remains Musical Director for the company.

Other professional appearances have included concerts at Organ World in Dallas, a cameo spot at Casa ~~Mexico~~^{Manana} in Fort Worth, an appearance on Channel 8 television in Dallas and personal appearances at the Capri Theatre, Dallas with John Wayne, Ken Darby and George Kennedy.

BACON, JERRY F.

CONTINUED (Page 3)

In 1978 Bacon was transferred to Dallas, Texas to open as Senior Organist & Musical Director, Pipe Organ Pizza.

The Organ was a Wurlitzer 3/21 which came from the Schnitzel-Haus Restaurant of Milwaukee, Wisc. Organ maintenance was performed by Bacon on this instrument as well as all previous installations of his career. This most successful engagement lasted until May, 1981. Since that time Bacon has performed a few concerts around Dallas, Texas. In October, 1983 Bacon was called upon to perform for the Baton Rouge, Louisiana State Fair attraction called THE WONDERCADE. This was a highly successful eleven day engagement in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

In March, 1984 Bacon accompanied the collection of Laurel & Hardy shorts called THE RETURN OF LAUREL & HARDY At the Granada Theatre of Dallas, Texas on a four day engagement for Landmark Theatres of Los Angeles, Calif.

Since that time Bacon is presently active in Organ Maintenance in the Dallas-Fort Worth area as well as providing rebuilding services for Band Organs, Player Piano's etc.

Bacon is also involved in the Flea Market business etc.

BAGGOT, RENALDO

Theatre organist who played the Neptune Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1925. Moved to the Liberty Theatre in Seattle in 1926, the Fifth Avenue Theatre in Seattle, Washington in early 1927, the McDonald Theatre in Eugene, Oregon in September, 1927, and to the Bagdad and Venetian Theatres in Portland, Oregon in early 1928.

BAILEY, BEA

Theatre organist in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area, who teamed up with pianist-organist Ramona Gerhard for radio broadcasts over Station WCCO Minneapolis, "Twenty Flying Fingers," during the 1930's.

BAGGOTT, RENAALDO

Born in Wenatchee, Washington July 8, 1904, Baggett attended the "University of Washington School of Music". ~~He~~ His first theatre organ job was at the Liberty Theatre, Wenatchee, where he played during his Junior and Senior years of high school. While in ~~Wenatchee~~ he did a three year stint at the Liberty Theatre, Seattle.

In 1928 he teamed ^{joined} up with Donald F. Moore to form the ~~team~~ highly successful team of "Ron and Don" which enjoyed a two year run at the Paramount Theatre, Seattle. From 1930 to 1931 Baggett played the Paramount Theatre, Portland, Oregon and also appeared at the Paramount in San Francisco in 1931.

For the next three years Baggett alternated between the Fox theatres in Beach, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. Then it was his next ~~to~~ to join the staff of Warner's Hollywood Theatre in Hollywood.

Baggott moved to Seattle where he spent seven years as organist of St. Paul's Episcopal Church. He transferred to the Church of the Ascension (Episcopal) in Seattle where, to date, he has served for 32 years. In 1979 Baggott supervised the rebuild of the Ascension organ by Balsam and Vaughn. This was done as a memorial to his wife. The changes made in the instrument permit the playing of more popular orchestral music in addition to classical - liturgical. The finished instrument boasts three manuals, twenty-three ranks and a special tremolo designed by Sandy Balsam.

Baggott has had a parallel career in the insurance brokerage business.

I will be happy to furnish any other information if needed

R. A. Baggott

R. A. BAGGOTT ASSOCIATES, INC.
INSURANCE BROKERS

May 17, 1984



RE: Renaldo A. Baggott

1. Born in Wenatchee, Washington
2. 7-8-04
3. University of Washington School of Music
4. Liberty Theatre, Wenatchee, Washington - during Junior and Senior years in high school
Liberty Theatre, Seattle, Washington - while in college - 3 years
Paramount Theatre, Seattle, Washington - 1928-1930
Duo organ presentations with Donovan F. Moores.
We were known as "Ron and Don."
Paramount Theatre, Portland, Oregon 1930-1931
Paramount Theatre, San Francisco, California - 1931

Fox - Brooklyn, New York City) alternated between
Fox - Philadelphia, PA) these three theatres
Fox - Washington, D.C.) over 3-year period

Warner's Hollywood Theatre, Hollywood, California - 1934
5. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Seattle - 7 years

Church of the Ascension, Episcopal, Seattle - 32 years
Still playing there - one service only on Sunday.
No choir work anymore.
6. In 1979 with the assistance of Sandy Balcom and Bill Bunch of Balcom and Vaughn I had our organ at the Church of the Ascension rebuilt into a very unusual instrument as a memorial to my wife. Both strictly classical-liturgical concert organ music and popular orchestral music can be played with equal beauty and effect from the same console. Three manual - 23 ranks - with a special tremolo designed by Sandy Balcom to be used only on orchestral type music - both classical and popular.

I will be happy to furnish any other information if needed

Ron Baggott



MONTVILLE MORRIS HANSFORD

American Conserva

With Representations of So

WHEN somebody invented the motion picture he made no end of trouble. In the first place he alarmed the dramatic world into thinking that their trade was doomed to be displaced by a man turning a crank in a little metal booth — it



MRS. GERTRUDE BAILY

Pupil of and assistant to Mr. Van Dusen, organist of Michigan Theater, formerly member of Bradley Conservatory faculty, Mus. Bac. of American Conservatory, an experienced organist of large repertoire of organ classics whose musicianship has been tried and proved both in church and theater

actually happens that the world is big enough and hungry enough for entertainment to support both. By the time the church got through worrying about this new form of evil, organists began to get itching palms. Some of them had tingling feet and

BAILEY, DOUG

Theatre organist who grew up in the Richmond, Virginia area. The first pipe organ he ever heard was the Wurlitzer in Loew's Richmond Theatre presided over by Eddie Weaver. After a stint in military service in World War II, Doug Bailey moved to Washington, D. C., where he did a daily three hour radio show on a local radio station from a theatre with a two manual, four rank, Marr and Colton pipe organ. He never lost interest in live radio pipe organ music and in 1965 installed a two manual, eleven rank, Moller pipe organ in his advertising agency offices in Rockville, Maryland for daily broadcasts. In more recent years Bailey has become involved in television and motion picture production, and has played a daily radio show from his studio over a nostalgia oriented Radio Station, WXLN.

BAILEY, GERTRUDE

Played the Michigan Theatre organ in Chicago in 1923 and in late 1924 became organist at the Orchestra Hall Theatre in Chicago.

BAILEY, LEIGHTON

**Was organist of the Clemmer Theatre in Spokane, Washington
in 1926.**

Rochester's Theatres, Organs & Organists No. 24



700 South Avenue

1913 - 1929 *Princess Theatre* (Closed during 1914)

1930 - 1954 *Rexy Theatre*

1955 - 1958 *Closed*

1959 *Fine Arts Theatre*

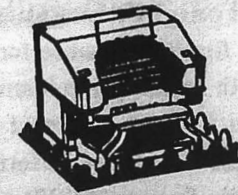
This 500-seat house had a two-manual Kohl organ, built in Rochester. Organists include Joseph L. Briggs (former RTOS member), Margaret Culp, Elizabeth Scurry, Ira F. Shirk, Edwin J. Werp and Louis Perricola.

When it was the *Rexy*, bingo games were operated jointly with the *Pullman Theatre* on Pullman Avenue, communication established by a direct telephone line.

In the accompanying picture, posters advertise "Imitation of Life" with Claudette Colbert, "Diamond Horseshoe" with Betty Grable and John Payne, "Song of Bernadette" with Jennifer Jones and "Circumstantial Evidence" with Michael O'Shea and Lloyd Nolan. The theatre was obviously not a first-run house. Dates of the films were from 1943 to 1959.

The building now serves as an apartment house.

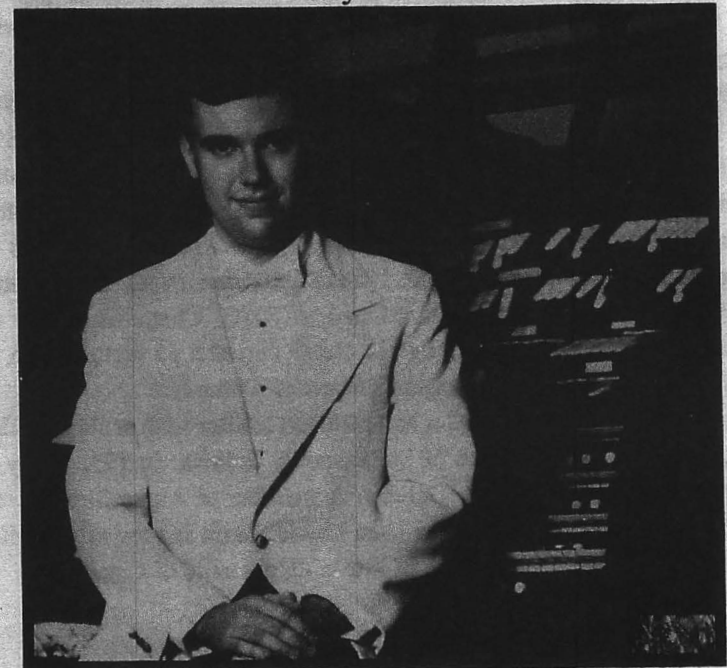
Series Notes by Lloyd E. Kjos



RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS

the Rochester Theater Organ Society

Proudly Presents



Barry Baker

at the Auditorium Center

Mighty Wurlitzer

RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS RTOS

February 18, 1994

We Welcome Tonight's Organist-Barry Baker

Barry Baker is playing his first performance for RTOS this evening. Barry began his career in music with formal piano instruction, while teaching himself to play the theater organ. He was appointed organist and pianist of his church at the age of ten. A year later Barry performed his theater organ debut for the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) on the WurliTzer pipe organ in the Emery Theatre, Cincinnati, Ohio. The response to this gifted youngster was tremendous.

Shortly thereafter Barry began his seven year association with Cincinnati's Springdale Music Palace restaurant, eventually rising to the senior position of House Organist. Currently Barry is heard each week on the large WurliTzer pipe organ at Cincinnati's Shady Nook restaurant.

In 1989, he was named international overall winner of the ATOS "Young Organist Competition" and subsequently was featured at both their 1989 and 1990 National Conventions, as well as the 1993 ATOS Regional Convention in Minneapolis. Barry's busy concert schedule has brought him to perform for numerous ATOS chapters and independent organ clubs, including concerts in Indianapolis, Miami, Denver, Seattle, Chicago, Fairfax (VA), Cincinnati, Atlanta, Wilmington (DE), Orlando, Mansfield (OH), Chattanooga and many other cities. During the summer of 1992, Barry played a 15 performance, three day engagement at the 3000-seat Ohio Theatre in Columbus.

Barry's ongoing music education has included studies with acclaimed theater organ instructor, John Ferguson of Indianapolis, Indiana. In 1992 Barry completed studies at Southern Ohio College. A member of Alpha Sigma Lambda Honor Society, he graduated Magna Cum Laude. Barry is presently a full-time student at the College Conservatory of Music - University of Cincinnati.

The Organ

The console of our Mighty WurliTzer has four 61-note keyboards. The two pipe chambers, Main at the left side and Solo on the right side of the proscenium arch, contain 22 ranks of pipes that produce a wide variety of musical sounds. The rows of colorful stop tablets in the console horseshoe control the 1558 pipes, tuned percussions (including a piano), untuned percussions and "toy" counter. A switchboard located under the stage relays the organist's commands from the console to the pipe chambers. This WurliTzer 4/22 originally came from Rochester's RKO Palace where it resided from 1928 to 1964. When the Palace was closed, RTOS moved it to this location. Since its inaugural Auditorium concert in January 1967, it has thrilled many thousands of concert attendees with the unique sounds of theater organ.

As a Courtesy to All-Please do not take flash pictures during this concert. Tape recording of RTOS events is NEVER permitted in the seating area of the theater. Taping of this concert by RTOS members is permitted only in the Top Balcony Foyer, using the facilities provided for that purpose.

Refreshments Are Available Next to the Lobby

We suggest a trip to the Refreshment Stand adjacent to the Main Lobby during intermission. By our patronage, we help show our support for the continuing renovation of the Auditorium Center facilities.

Tonight's Program

The artist will announce this evening's program from the console.



Membership information is available in the Main Lobby or by writing to:
RTOS Membership, 20 Nymark Drive,
Rochester, NY 14626.

The Rochester Theater Organ Society is dedicated to the preservation of theater pipe organs and the presentation of music on theater pipe organs. RTOS preserves and produces musical events on two fine theater organs: this Auditorium Center 4-manual, 22-rank WurliTzer and the RMSC Eisenhart 3-manual, 11-rank WurliTzer. The Society and its two Mighty WurliTzers have a world-wide reputation for excellence.

Father Andrew Rogers from Saginaw, Michigan Debuts at the Auditorium Center 4/22 on Friday, March 18th starting at 8:15 P.M. The Theater Doors Open at 7:30 P.M.

This will be a Public Concert with FREE admission for 1994 RTOS Members. General admission tickets at \$6.50 each, will be on sale at the Auditorium Box Office during the evening of the concert.

BAKER, DON

Don Baker is one of the best known of the theatre organists of the "golden era" still performing today. Born in St. Thomas, Ontario, Canada, in 1903, he began studying piano at age eight.⁴¹ He attended the Toronto Conservatory of Music and before he was sixteen became a member of the American Federation of Musicians, Calgary, Alberta branch. By age 20 he had moved to New York where he took a position as pianist at the Flushing Theatre, Long Island.⁴² He soon applied for and received United States citizenship.

Baker's theatre organ career began unexpectedly one evening when the organist of the Flushing Theatre didn't appear and the manager asked Baker to "fill-in." He did so and became so fascinated with the organ that he started coming in early in the morning to practice. Within two months he was named chief organist.

From 1923 to 1929, Don Baker played at the Rivoli and Rialto Theatres in New York City. When the Brooklyn Paramount opened he joined the staff there.⁴³ Two years were spent at the Staten Island Paramount after which Baker went to England for a year and a half. There he played at several London theatres including the Granada, Tooting.

After Baker returned to the United States he became staff organist at Radio Station WOR in New York City and in 1935 he began almost fourteen years as chief organist of the New York Paramount Times Square.⁴⁴ He has done a great deal of recording, has had numbers of his musical arrangements published and has made about fifty films for Columbia Pictures.

In 1948 Baker moved west and played at such places as Lake Tahoe, Reno and Las Vegas.⁴⁵ He toured for the Conn Organ Company for several years, played in several pipe organ-equipped pizza parlors and served on the staff of more than one music store. At present Baker lives in Casselberry, Florida where he teaches organ. He continues to travel the concert circuit. Don Baker died of cancer, June 26, 1989.

BAKER, GERALD F.

Played the Kansas City, Missouri, Newman Theatre in 1921.

BAKER, EDDIE ("Doc" Bebko)

Baker was born in 1910 in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge. He began piano lessons at age 4 and at age 13 got his first job playing piano in a neighborhood theatre at eighteen dollars per week. Two years later he was earning seventy-five dollars a week while still attending school and learning to play the organ in his spare time. Two of his teachers were Frederick Kinsley and Don Baker. At age twenty he was playing the organ in the Harlem Opera House, a plush theatre of the period. He also played the Commodore Theatre, the Cosmo Theatre, and many other theatres, particularly in the New York City area, both as regular and a substitute organist. When sound pictures arrived he took other jobs as pianist and organist. One was as a cruise director and band leader on a cruise to South America and the West Indies. Later in radio he was accompanist

BAKER, EDDIE ("Doc" Bebko)

2.

on the show "Famous Fathers," working with personalities such as Lowell Thomas, Harry Langdon, Admiral Byrd, Morton Downey, Eddie Cantor, and Lauritz Melchior. Another show was with Harry Reser's Orchestra on the "Cliquot Eskimo" program. In 1937 he enrolled in the Chiropractic Institute in New York City, believing that the chiropractic occupation offered more security than show business. February of 1941 found him broadcasting over Radio Station ^AWHØM in New York City. In 1941 he married and moved to Olean, New York, where he set up his chiropractic practice, but where he has kept his musical hand in by playing occasional concerts and programs including a series for the Buffalo, New York Museum of Science. He has recorded long playing records of theatre organ music and has performed for organ groups throughout New York state.

"Leslie-Vibratone" Organ Speakers

ELECTRO-MUSIC ACCESSORIES CO.

100 WEST 14th STREET
LOS ANGELES 12, CALIFORNIA

June 24, 1946

June 19, 1946

Mr. D. J. Leslie
Electro-Music Accessories Co.
3604 West 54th Street
Los Angeles - 48 - California

Dear Mr. Leslie:

Thank you for your letter of June 19.

I saw Mr. Jesse Crawford while in New York last week, and he demonstrated your Leslie-Vibratone Organ Speaker for me. I also had a chance to try out personally the speaker you recently delivered to World Broadcasting at 711 Fifth Avenue. Needless to say I was favorably impressed and wish to place my order immediately.

Could you advise me on the following: I have the new Hammond OV Console and new DR-20 Speaker, featuring the heavy tremulant. What hook-up would you advise for best possible results using both speakers?

I would appreciate an early delivery date if at all possible. I could send you a check in full if you would advise just when it was coming - thus saving COD charges.

Thanking you, I remain

Very truly yours,

D. J. Leslie

Mr. Jesse Crawford of the Leslie-Hammond Organ.

Due to difficult manufacturing conditions, we have refrained from this reason we are not in your area. However, we could handle the

... days behind on in mind when ain a speaker.

... Los Angeles, a deposit with

Yours truly

ELECTRO-MUSIC ACCESSORIES CO.

D. J. Leslie
D. J. Leslie

D. J. LESLIE, GEN. MGR.

L. B. BRITAIN

"Leslie-Vibratone" Organ Speakers

ELECTRO-MUSIC ACCESSORIES CO.

3804 WEST 54TH STREET
LOS ANGELES 43, CALIFORNIA
AXMINSTER 1-3211

June 19, 1946

Mr. E. J. Bebko, D. C.
410 West State Street
Olean, New York

Dear Sir:

At the suggestion of Mr. Jesse Crawford of New York, we are writing you regarding the Leslie-Vibratone Organ Speaker for use with the Hammond Organ.

Due to the continued difficult manufacturing conditions affecting our production, we have refrained from expanding our dealer outlets. For this reason we do not have an authorized dealer in your area. However, if you care to order from us direct, we could handle the sale on a direct factory shipment basis.

At present we are about ninety days behind on deliveries, so this fact should be borne in mind when estimating the time it would take to obtain a speaker.

The price is \$545.00, f.o.b. Los Angeles, crated for shipment. We do not require a deposit with an order.

Yours very truly

ELECTRO-MUSIC ACCESSORIES CO.

D. J. Leslie

D. J. Leslie

DJL:G

Our Featured Artist

BARRY BAKER

Barry Baker began his career in music with formal piano instruction while teaching himself to play the Theater organ. At the age of ten he was appointed to his first church position, as organist and pianist. A year later, Barry performed his theater organ debut for the American Theater Organ Society (ATOS) on the Wurlitzer pipe organ in the Emery Theater, Cincinnati, Ohio. The response for this gifted youngster was tremendous, and he was invited to play for the theater's classic movie series. Shortly thereafter, Barry began his seven year association with Cincinnati's Springdale Music Palace restaurant, contributing countless performances on their huge "Mighty Wurlitzer," and eventually rising to the senior position of House Organist. More recently, for four years Barry entertained diners on the 4/30 Wurlitzer pipe organ at the Shady Nook Restaurant in southwestern Ohio.

Despite his youth, Barry Baker is already a seasoned veteran of the concert stage. In 1989 he was named International Overall Winner of the ATOS Young Organist Competition, and subsequently was a featured solo artist at both their 1989 and 1990 National Conventions, as well as the 1993 ATOS Regional Convention in Minneapolis. Most recently, he appeared as a featured solo artist for the 1995 ATOS National Convention in Detroit, and will do so again at the 1997 National Convention in Indianapolis.

Barry's busy concert schedule has brought him to perform for numerous ATOS chapters and private organ clubs. During one summer, Barry played a three day engagement at the 3000 seat Ohio Theater in Columbus, a key attraction of their annual summer movie series. He has played concerts on the famed Detroit Theater Organ Society Senate Theater 4/34 Wurlitzer, and the New York Theater Organ Society's Long Island University 4/26 Wurlitzer (formerly the Brooklyn Paramount). He was the only American organist invited to perform for the Theater Organ Society of Australia National Convention in Sydney (April of 1996), and is already slated to return for a four week coast to coast Australia tour during the summer of 1997. Additionally, a three week concert tour of Europe is set for Spring 1997. His premiere recording of the spectacular 4/33 Ron Wehmeier Wurlitzer, "For The Very First Time," available on CD and cassette, is enjoying strong popular acclaim.

Barry graduated with honors from the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, with a Bachelor of Music Degree in Piano Performance.

When not touring, Barry is an artist at the Organ Piper Music Palace in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, entertaining on the restaurant's large three-manual theater pipe organ.

Our Featured Organ

WURLITZER OPUS 1492

The voices of the Eisenhart Wurlitzer organ:

Part 2 of a 2 Part series

The Main Chamber

As presently configured, the 3/11 Wurlitzer contains four ranks of pipes in its Main Chamber, located at Audience Left. These are:

Diaphonic Diapason 16'. This 85 note rank of pipes produces the sounds that we most frequently associate with the church organ. However, its lowest octave is formed of metal Diaphone pipes, which are rarely encountered in church organs. Diaphones speak promptly and enable the theater organist to use a staccato pedal technique.

Concert Flute 16'. This 97 note rank of wooden pipes contains mellow toned sounds of the orchestral flute variety. Its lowest two octaves or so are formed of stopped wood pipes that make for a very smooth pedal bass.

Viol d'Orchestre 16'. This 85 note rank contains the narrowest scale, and therefore the keenest, pipes in the instrument. The full-length bass pipes are extensively mitred to fit under the chamber ceiling. These pipes came from the Austin theater organ originally housed in the Eastman Theater.

Viol Celeste 8'. This 73 note rank has the same tone as the VDO (Viol d'Orchestre) above, but is tuned slightly sharp. The 8' octave makes a wonderful cello in the pedal. This rank also came from the Eastman Theater organ.

The Tuned Percussions

Chrysoflott -This 49 note instrument is located in the Main Chamber. Its metal bars are struck with soft piano-type hammers to produce a quiet, mellow tone.

Piano -This is a regular 88 note player piano converted for use with the organ by the addition of an electric magnet stack. Unlike the rest of the organ, which operates on pressure, the piano runs on vacuum.

Chimes -This 18 tube percussion, and the next two are located in the Solo Chamber.

Glockenspiel -This instrument has 30 metal bars which produce a bright, ringing tone.

Xylophone -This percussion has 37 wooden bars struck by hard hammers to produce its characteristic sound.

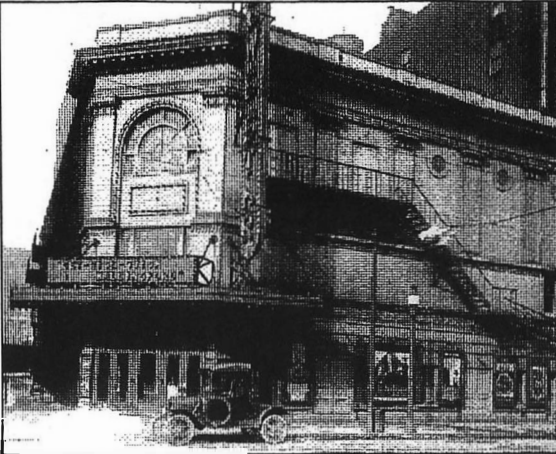
Information compiled by Mark Smith

AS COURTESY TO ALL

*Please do not take Flash Pictures during this Concert,
or use Recording Devices in the Seating Area .*

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST No. 23

At 73 Clinton Avenue North in Rochester, two theaters once consecutively served the public. The first had three names during its history: From 1909 to 1916 it was Gordon's Photoplay House;



from 1917 to 1919, it was Gordon's Theater and from 1920 to 1926, it was Loew's Star Theater, shown above. The house was razed in 1926, the 4-manual Moller organ going to the Monroe Methodist Church where it was destroyed by fire in the sixties.

The Loew's Star was replaced by "Rochester's Most Beautiful Showplace," the RKO Palace, opened in 1928 and razed in 1965. Voyager Tower Apartments were supposed to replace it, but never came to fruition.

It is interesting to list the names of those who played the organs in those theaters. In the former were Susann Appel, Gladys Clark, L. Grace Drew, Forrest Gregory, Rose Harloff, Helen Heintz, Clint LaSalle, Norman Nairn, Harry G. Sullivan and Art Taylor.

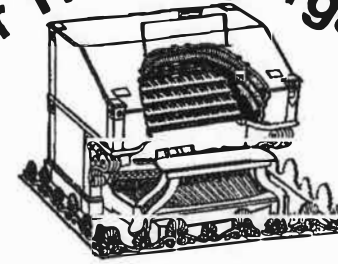
Those who played the Palace included Helen Ankner, Jesse & Helen Crawford, Edward H. Graef, Tom Grierson, Arlo Hults, Rex Koury, Ann Leaf, Walter B. Patterson, Dick Hull and Edwin Werp.

It was the crime of the century when that beautiful RKO Palace was razed! What a terrific "Theater for the Performing Arts" it would be today!

Oh tempores! Oh, mores!

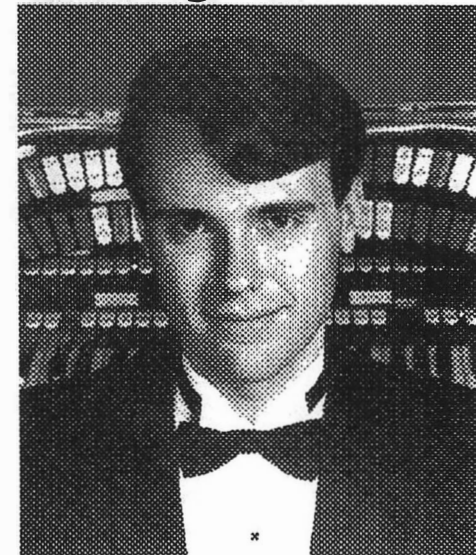
Series compiled by Lloyd E. Klos

Rochester Theater Organ Society



PRESENTS

Barry Baker



at the
**Rochester Museum & Science
Center**

**Eisenhart
Auditorium**

**Rochester NY
January 12, 1997**

(BEBKO, DOC) Baker, Eddie

Our second artist was born in 1910 in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge. He began piano lessons at four and at 13, got his first job playing piano in a neighborhood theatre at \$18 a week. Two years later, he was earning \$75 a week, still attending school and learning to play organ in his spare time. Two of his teachers were Frederick Kinsley and Don Baker.

At 20, he was playing in the posh Harlem Opera House. He literally played in dozens of theatres in this period, both as regular and as substitute organist.

When the silents came, Doc took other jobs as pianist-organist. One was as cruise director and band leader to South America and the West Indies. Later, in radio, he was accompanist on the show "Famous Fathers", working with personalities such as Lowell Thomas, Harry Langdon, Admiral Byrd, Morton Downey, Eddie Cantor and Lauritz Melchior. Another show was with Harry Reser's orchestra.

In 1937, he enrolled in the Chiropractic Institute in New York and two years later, won an audition for third organist at the famed Radio City Music Hall, a position he held for two years.

In 1941, he married, and moved to Olean, N. Y. where the chiropractic occupation offered more security than show business. Since then, he has kept his musical hand in by playing accompaniment for the Buffalo Museum of Science series, ~~and in the sixth season~~ put out a hit record, and performed for organ groups throughout the state.

COMING NEXT MONTH

Father William (Bill) Biebel of Erie Pa. will be here on November 16 a Friday, to play a Concert, with a sing-a-long and a silent comedy.

BAKER, GLADYS BEAVER

Played the Rourke Theatre in LaJunta, Colorado in 1926.

BAKER, JESSIE SAMS

Was organist of the Columbia Theatre in Portland, Oregon in the middle to late 1920's.

BAKER, JIMMY

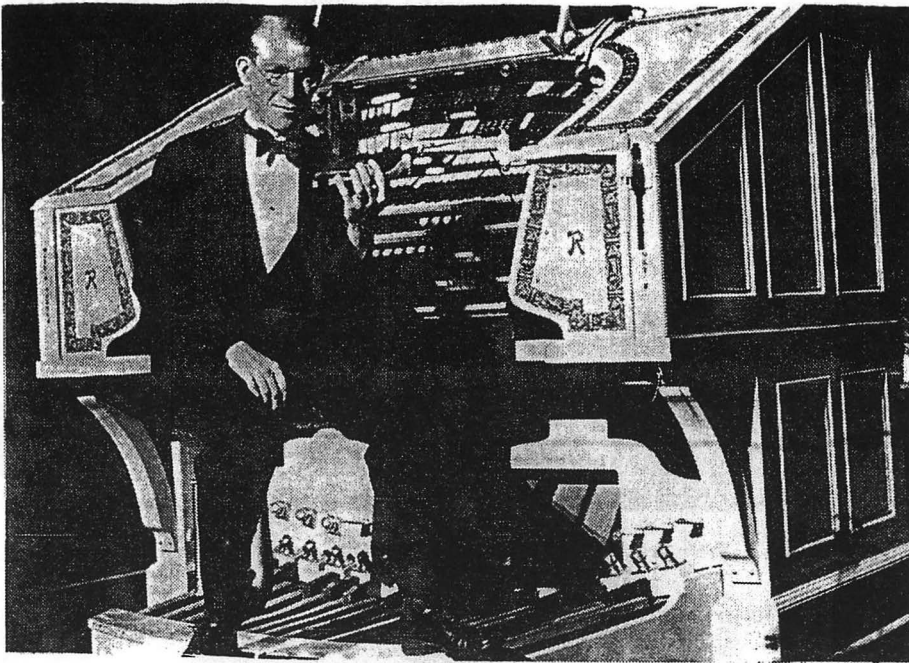
Organist of the Empress Theatre(Kimball), Fairbanks, Alaska in
the 1940's.

BAKER, W. HENRY

Organist of Feeley's Theatre in Hazelton, Pennsylvania in 1928.

BALDWIN, J. GORDON

Organist of the Piccadilly Theatre in Rochester, New York in 1928 and organist of Loew's 4000 seat Rochester Theatre in Rochester, New York where he played a 5 manual/24 rank Marr and Colton pipe organ. He became musical director of Radio Station WHEC in Rochester and played its studio Wurlitzer which was installed in 1934.



One of Rochester's best remembered theatre and radio organists was J. Gordon Baldwin, shown here at the largest console which the Warsaw, NY firm of Marr & Colton ever built.

Mr. Baldwin, a graduate of the Eastman School of Music, was featured in the late twenties as one of "the Console Twins" with Hugh Dodge at the Piccadilly (later Century, Paramount) Theatre. He also played at the Monroe Theatre and was a teacher of organ, one of his students being RTOS member, Dean Robinson. A stint in Los Angeles theatres was followed in 1930 by Baldwin's appointment to the chief organist post at the 4000-seat Loew's Rochester, playing the 5/24 Marr & Colton, console of which is shown above. The writer remembers hearing this instrument which was more strident and brassy in tone than the RKO Palace Wurlitzer.

With a change in theatre policy, Baldwin left the city again, returning in November 1934 to serve as the WHEC organist in their 40 Franklin Street studios, playing a recently installed 3/11 Wurlitzer.

In 1936, he was named musical director of WHEC and remained in that capacity until 1938 when he left town for good. Dean Robinson informs us that Baldwin died about 1960.

Series Notes by Lloyd E. Klos

GAYLORD CARTER, the renowned silent film accompanist, will make his sixth RTOS appearance on Friday, **October 17** at 8:15 PM. Mr. Carter will feature the Harold Lloyd classic silent film "Safety Last" and traditional theater organ solo numbers during this event. Admission is free to RTOS members, with tickets for the general public available at this Auditorium Theatre's box office.

BALL, CLAUDE B.

Theatre organist and teacher in the Chicago area in the 1920's. In early 1926 he was organist of the Iris Theatre in Chicago and was teaching organ at the Kimball Studios in Chicago. In 1928 he was on the staff of the Finchley House Studio in Chicago, Illinois.

BALL, CLAUDE V.

In 1926 demonstrator at the Cincinnati and Chicago offices of the Wurlitzer Company.

Our Featured Artist

CHARLIE BALOGH

Charlie Balogh is originally from Trenton, New Jersey. His interest in music began at age 11 at which time he started organ instruction. He studied with various teachers and eventually attended Trenton State College where he immersed himself in classical studies with Albert Ludecke, while performing in supper clubs throughout the area. For a short time, he also studied with Lee Erwin in New York.

From those beginnings, he has emerged to become a dynamic and exciting performer at the theatre pipe organ. Under the guidance of Lyn Larson, Charlie worked as a staff organist at "Organ Stop Pizza" in Phoenix, Arizona from 1973 until 1976. In 1977 he moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan to become organist at the "Roaring 20's" restaurant. In 1986 Charlie and his family purchased the business that was then renamed "Good Time Charley's." After 14 years at the console of the Wurlitzer, he decided to close the restaurant in September of 1991. He developed a monumental following of fans in Michigan during his tenure which ultimately led to a hugely successful community project to relocate the restaurant organ to a new auditorium in Grand Rapids.

During his years at "Good Time Charley's", he recorded three very successful albums on the organ there. One of those is an album called "Pipes Plus" that combined the sounds of the Wurlitzer with modern day digital keyboards. "Pipes Plus" not only won the praise of record reviewers but other professional organists as well. He also had his own radio program on WGHN in Grand Haven, Michigan.

After closing "Good Time Charley's" in 1991, Charlie decided to move back to Arizona to play for "Organ Stop Pizza," this time in Mesa, at their magnificent new restaurant which features one of the largest Wurlitzer theatre organs in the world. He continues on there to the delight of the thousands of people who visit yearly. In addition to his schedule at the restaurant, he maintains an active concert schedule throughout the country and abroad including Canada, England, and Australia. He has also performed on three separate occasions for the American Theatre Organ Society's national conventions.

Charlie's style stems from a love of jazz and the music of the 30's and 40's along with classical influences and an extensive background in traditional theatre organ techniques. He is, and continues to be one of this country's finest artists.

AS COURTESY TO ALL

*Please do not take Flash Pictures during this Concert,
or use Recording Devices in the Seating Area .*

Historic Organ Saved! Dedicated Preservation in Action

On Aug. 9, the Wanamaker organ in the newly refurbished Lord & Taylor's (Philadelphia) came back to life. The "room" around the console is gone. The dark-wood (mahogany? ebony?) console is now surrounded by a white picket fence and is visible from Designer Women's Wear on the second floor. Keyboards and organist are easily visible from the marble Grand Court ground floor. Not all stops are playing but this Grand Organ is on its way back

The Philadelphia Organ Quartet performed this program, one of several recitals that celebrated the reopening of the Philadelphia Wanamaker store as Lord & Taylor.

The quartet played separately as well as together on the Wanamaker instrument, presenting about an hour and ten minutes of music. The quartet opened with what sounded like a Sousa march. Two were seated on the bench, one playing the accompaniment and the other playing the solo lines. Another stood along side and added glockenspiel riffs while the fourth every so often squeezed in to play a carillon on the newly available 6th keyboard.

Who built the organ? The brochure titled "An Invitation to Become a Friend of the Wanamaker Organ at Lord & Taylor" states that it was built for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair by the Los Angeles Art Organ Company. It took 13 freight cars to bring the organ from St. Louis to Philadelphia in 1909. The installation was complete by 1911. A private organ factory was opened in the attic of the store, employing as many as 40 full-time employees, and added a total of 18,000 more pipes between 1911 and 1930. (The brochure does not state how many ranks, or which ranks this would have been.) The String Organ (a sound to die for!) boasts 7,000 pipes. Some statistics as stated in the brochure: Organ has 28,500 pipes, 6 ivory keyboards, 729 color-coded stop tablets, 168 pistons, and 42 "foot controls". The console weighs 2.5 tons; the entire instrument weighs 287 tons.

Information gleaned from Piporg-I Mailing list

Next Concert!

Artist to be announced

Oct 11 and 12, at the RMSC Eisenhart Auditorium

RTOS AUDITORIUM THEATRE PERFORMANCE ON SEPT. 19th, 1987

The Artist: **CHARLIE BALOGH**

Tonight we have the pleasure of welcoming Mr. Balogh to his first solo Rochester performance. During his two previous RTOS events, Charlie played the organ in concert with other musicians. In 1983, Charlie appeared at the WurliTzer 4/22, with Rochester percussionist Elizabeth Vohecowicz, to put on a demonstration of authentic "Big-Band" sound from organ and percussion that wowed the audience in the Auditorium Theatre that evening. In 1984, Mr. Balogh further demonstrated his musical versatility by playing the then 3/8 Eisenhart WurliTzer with Sal Sparrazza's Dixieland band for an RTOS Mardi Gras celebration.

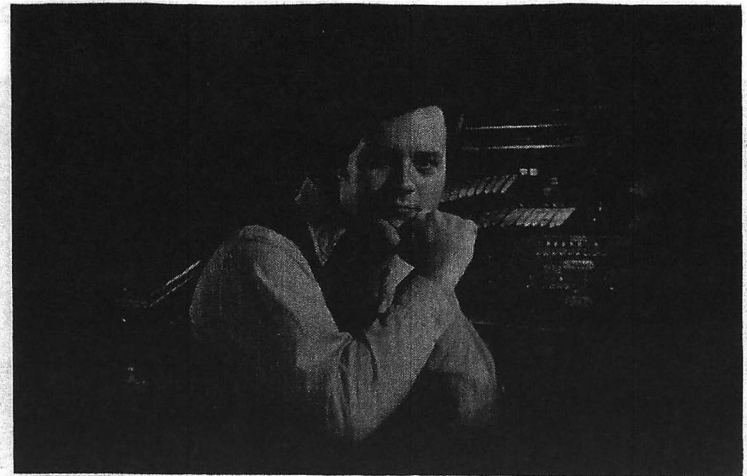
Charlie studied music, with various New Jersey teachers, starting at age 11. Mr. Balogh continued his music education as an organ major at Trenton State College, where he specialized in advanced theory, counterpoint and composition. He gained practical experience by working for several east coast pipe organ builders.

Charlie's experience was extended to electronic organs, when he performed at New Jersey supper clubs, played with a USO travelling show, and appeared on Philadelphia TV programs. Becoming interested in the theater pipe organ, Charlie started playing intermissions at Philadelphia's Brookline Theatre and at the Rahway Theatre in New Jersey. He extended his theater pipe organ experience by touring the "circuit" and by playing at the 1976 Philadelphia and the 1982 Detroit ATOS national conventions.

In 1974, Charlie Balogh was featured at the famous Arizona *Organ Stop Pizzas* in Phoenix and Mesa. While there, he availed himself of the opportunity to study under that well-known theater organist, Lyn Larsen.

In 1977, he moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan where he was featured organist at the *Roaring 20's Pizza Emporium*. Mr. Balogh and his family now own that establishment, which has been renamed as *Good Time Charley's*. This restaurant features one of this country's finest WurliTzer theater organs.

Tonight, Charlie Balogh will provide an example of his musical versatility, innovation and extensive theater organ experience. His program will include music to please young and old alike. As we sit in our seats, waiting for the spotlight to reveal the rising console of the Mighty WurliTzer, we should prepare ourselves for an evening of exciting entertainment. RTOS proudly starts its Twenty-Second season of Auditorium Theatre concerts by presenting---Mr. Charlie Balogh!



CHARLIE BALOGH

The Program: Mr. Balogh will announce his program.

AS A COURTESY TO ALL-Please do not take flash pictures during this concert.

TAPE RECORDING, by RTOS members, is permitted during tonight's concert in the Top Balcony foyer area only, using the facilities provided for that purpose. Taping of RTOS events is NEVER permitted in the theater's seating area!

The Rochester Theater Organ Society:

The Society is dedicated to the preservation and the presentation of the music of theater pipe organs. RTOS produces musical events on two organs: this Auditorium Theatre and the Eisenhart Auditorium WurliTzers. RTOS membership is open to all. Information is available in the Main Lobby, or by writing to: RTOS, PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or by phoning: 544-6595.

You will find that an RTOS Membership Card is your passport to many hours of pleasurable entertainment.

RTOS SEPTEMBER 15, 1990 PERFORMANCE

RTOS proudly presents Charlie Balogh for his third performance at our Mighty WurliTzer this evening. Charlie's previous concerts at this 4/22 were in May 1983 and September 1987. He was also featured at the RTOS Mardi Gras event in 1984 and at an RTOS Wine, Cheese and Dance Party at the Eisenhart Auditorium WurliTzer in 1988. His 1983 4/22 appearance was with drummer Liz Vohecowitz in a "Big Band" show and he was accompanied by Sal Sparraza's Dixieland band during the Mardi Gras event at the Eisenhart.

Charlie is a native of Trenton, NJ. He started organ instruction at age 11. He studied with several teachers before attending Trenton State College where he immersed himself in classical organ studies with Albert Ludecke. While in college, Charlie performed in supper clubs throughout the Trenton area. For a short time he studied with theater organist Lee Erwin in New York City. From those beginnings, he has emerged to become both a dynamic and exciting performer at the theater pipe organ.

Under the guidance of Lyn Larsen, Charlie worked as a staff organist at the "Organ Stop Pizza" in Phoenix, Arizona from 1973 until 1976. In 1977, he moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan to become organist at the "Roaring 20's" restaurant. He continues to perform at the console of the restaurant's magnificent WurliTzer pipe organ for literally thousands of people who visit there each year. The restaurant was featured during the 1989 ATOS convention "Afterglow" with Charlie Balogh providing the entertainment. In addition to being featured at the restaurant, Charlie and his family now own and operate the business which has been aptly renamed "Good Time Charley's".

He has recorded three very successful albums on his restaurant's Mighty WurliTzer. Charlie also has his own radio program on Grand Haven's WGHN. His style can be attributed to a love of jazz and the popular music of the 30's and 40's along with classical influences and an extensive background in traditional theater organ techniques. Charlie Balogh has played for three ATOS national conventions. His appearances in Detroit, Binghamton, Trenton and Chicago and of course his four concerts in Rochester have supplemented his full time work at Grand Rapids.

RTOS welcomes Charlie Balogh to our console for the start of our '90/'91 season of fine family entertainment. Ladies and Gentlemen---the spotlight shines on Mr. Charles Balogh!



As a Courtesy to All--Please do not take flash pictures during this concert. Tape recording of RTOS events is NEVER permitted in the theater's seating area. Taping of this concert by RTOS members is permitted in the Top Balcony Foyer, using the facilities provided.

The Rochester Theater Organ Society, Incorporated

The Society is dedicated to the preservation of theater organs and the presentation of music on theater pipe organs. RTOS preserves and produces musical events on two fine theater organs: this Auditorium Center 4-manual, 22-rank and the RMSC Eisenhart Auditorium 3-manual, 11-rank WurliTzers. This Society and its two WurliTzers have a world-wide reputation for excellence.

RTOS membership is available to all. Membership information is available in the Main Lobby, or by writing to RTOS, PO Box 17114 Rochester, NY 14617. The telephone number is (716) 544-6595. You will find that the \$20 annual RTOS Membership Card is your affordable passport to many enjoyable evenings featuring great family entertainment.

PATTI SIMON DEBUTS ON OCTOBER 19

Popular Colorado Organist Patti Simon will be making her RTOS debut at this Mighty WurliTzer on Friday, October 19th. The concert will begin at 8:15 PM, with the theater doors opening at 7:30 PM.

This Public Concert will be FREE to 1990 and 1991 RTOS members. All others must purchase tickets at the Auditorium Center Box Office for \$5.25 each.



Charlie Balogh
Organist

Making his initial RTOS appearance this evening, is another in the long list of circuit artists whose families have had leanings to music. His mother is a church organist.

Charles Balogh, a native of the Philadelphia area, began organ studies privately with Albert Ludecke, and entered Trenton (NJ) State College as an organ major, specializing in advanced

~~theory, counterpoint and composition.~~ Much practical experience was gained while working for several pipe organ builders on the east coast.

He gained some

~~Adapt at playing electronic instruments as well, Charlie~~ has performed in New Jersey supper clubs, traveled with a USO show, appeared on Philadelphia TV, and made some recordings. Becoming interested in the theatre pipe organ, ~~he played intermissions at Philadelphia's Brookline Theatre, the Rahway (NJ) Theatre, and branched out on the circuit with appearances at Binghamton, Wilmington and Trenton.~~

has

made

In 1974, Charlie ~~located~~ moved to Phoenix, Arizona where he was featured in the Organ Stop Pizzas in Phoenix and Mesa. He helped in the rebuilding of the ex-Denver Fox Wurlitzer which was reinstalled in the latter establishment. In 1976,

← pizza parlor in Mesa

~~he was a performer on the Trenton War Memorial's 3/16 Moller for the ATOS Convention. In 1977, he relocated in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he has been featured at the Roaring Twenties Pizza emporium. In 1979, his first recording was made on the 3/33 Wurlitzer in that establishment.~~ The schedule there allows him frequent appearances on the circuit. *Balogh continues to make recordings*

According to one musicologist, "Mr. Balogh presents in his programs, a musical potpourri to please every individual's taste. His sensitive approach to ballads, a lively feel for the big band swing, and his precise classical interpretations, insure variety, color and rhythm which are sure to please."

← appearance across the country

HCOG 1/10/75

LARRY
BARALDI

Solo Organist

Aldine Theatre
Philadelphia, Pa.

1928

LARRY BARALDI

Larry Baraldi is a genius in procuring all the vibrations he can out of his organ at the Aldine at Philadelphia. He has had former engagements at the Stanley and Earle Theatres in Philadelphia.

1928

BALLOU, MYRON C.

Organist of the Strard Theatre in Providence, Rhode Island in
1926.

BARBARIA, SASA

Organist of Lowe's Bay Ridge Theatre in New York City in 1926.

BARBER, DOROTHY

Theatre organist in the Cleveland, Ohio area. Director of the Cleveland Theatre Organ Club in 1923. In 1928, organist at the Knickerbocker Theatre in Cleveland.

BARCLAY, WILLIAM

After graduation from Baylor University, Barclay went to Fort Worth, Texas where he played a 2 manual/7 rank Wurlitzer in the Palace Theatre, before the advent of sound pictures. He later became head of the Organ Department at Southwestern Seminary. Here he had a 4 manual Hillgreen-Lane pipe organ which he used to broadcast from the music auditorium. His broadcasts were popular music. The echo organ had a Tibia and he had unified it to include trick couplers and a heavy tremulant.

BARKER, HARRY J.

Organist of the Park Theatre in Washington, D. C. in 1925.

BARKER, CLEMENT

Broadcast over Radio Station KLX, Oakland, Calif., in 1924

2

Barker
Jeff

JEFFREY W. BARKER.

I was born in Manchester, England on December 6th 1942.

I studied piano under Mrs Lilian Cruze A.L.C.M. and also at the Manchester School of Music under Dorothy Charlton Mus. B. and Sylvia Forbes A.L.C.M.

My first organ lessons were from Michael Murphy A. R. C. O. on a Hammond C-3 at Swans Organ Store in Manchester. This was at about age 16. The store soon had me playing at various clubs in the city to which they had supplied organs.

About this time I went to a Theatre Organ Club meeting at the Plaza, Stockport and heard my first theatre organ. I loved it. I was introduced to Keith Phillipson, secretary of the club, and he arranged for me to play the Christie organ in the Odeon Theatre, Sale, Cheshire. Keith and I became very close friends. Sadly he died last April at the young age of 47.

About 1961 the manager of the Odeon Sale, Mr Brian Bint, was transferred to the Odeon, formerly the Paramount, Manchester. This gave me access to the magnificent 4 manual 20 rank Publix 1 Wurlitzer. Here, and at Sale I recieved theatre organ lessons from Mr. Eric Lord who had been a house organist at the Paramount. His advice on registration was invaluable. Since I was now working at a piano store just down the street from the Odeon I was able to play all of the lunchtime openings and most of the intermissions. My employers, Crane Piano Company, welcomed it because it was good publicity. I played the Manchester Odeon from 1961 to 1964 when I came to America. I also continued to play the Odeon Sale on Sundays during this period.

Also at this time I played the 3 manual 9 rank Christie organ in the Carlton Theatre in Salford. The house had been converted into a Bingo Hall and the organ was used to entertain the patrons whilst they bought their Bingo tickets. This organ was installed under the stage and it was unfortunately destroyed in a flood when the main sewer backed up and flooded the theatre during a heavy rain storm. I played there for about 18 months in 1962-63.

In 1964 I came to America for a vacation with my friends Keith Phillipson, Reg Mander and Frank Hare. They were all officials of the Theatre Organ Club. We visited many organs, Radio City Music Hall, which Jack Ward let me have a private "bash" on, the New York Paramount, courtesy of Bob Mack and Dan Papp and the Loews Kings and

2

Brooklyn Paramount (now L.I.U.) which Ben Hall arranged for us.

We also went to Long Beach Island to see the 3 manual 13 rank Wurlitzer installed in the Surf City Hotel, N. J. The hotel needed an organist for the summer, they liked my playing and I was offered the job. That's how I came to live in America.

I played the season of 1964 at Surf City and the following years I played at various other restaurants on Long Beach Island using a customised Allen Theatre Organ.

Also in 1964 I met Peter Schaeble, a theatre organ buff from Long Island N. Y.

he was installing a 3-13 Robert Morton organ in his home in Rosedale, Long Island. We became fast friends and, since Pete couldn't play I was elected house organist.

When the Loew's Valencia organ, a 4 manual 23 rank Robert Morton, became available Peter purchased it and I, together with John De Paris, helped remove it from the theatre and install it in Peter's house in place of the other organ. That was in 1966. I recorded the organ for the Concert label in 1967. The album was called "The Young Sound". I enjoyed playing this fine organ regularly until Peter's death 4 years ago. The organ is still in place but his grief stricken mother does not want it touched again. Pete was only 42.

I have played many restaurants in New Jersey on electric organs but in 1975 I was engaged to play the Big Top Pizza Parlour in Carmichael, California. The organ was the former Moon River organ from WLW. In 1976 I moved to the San Francisco area and played for the Capn's Galley Pizza & Pipes chain. I was one of several organists on the staff and I rotated between Redwood City, San Jose, Serramonte and Palo Alto.

I should mention that I was also a featured organist at the A.T.O.S. Conventions in New York in 1970 and San Francisco in 1975. In New York I played the United Palace (formerly Loew's 175th Street) and Peter Schaeble organs and in San Francisco I played the Big Top Pizza organ. Peter Schaeble, Fred Boness, Lee Erwin and myself were responsible for the restoration of the United Palace 4-23 Robert Morton Organ.

In 1978 I returned to England for the first time in 14 years. I was a guest on the B.B.C. Radio programmes "Pedal Percussion and Pipes" and "The Organist Entertains" I have broadcast the BBC Theatre Organ and also provided material from my own private collection. I know regularly visit England for a couple of months each year and regularly contribute to these programmes. I also play concerts for the various organ societies in England and, last September, I played for the International Organ Festival in Manchester at the Free Trade Hall on same 4-20 Wurlitzer that used to be in the Odeon (Paramount) Manchester.

I currently appear nightly at the "Kiku" Japanese Restaurant in Fort Lee, New Jersey.

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I also have just issued a new record album "Jeff Barker plays English Style on the Colonial Theatre Organ". The Colonial is in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania and the organ on the record is a 3 manual 23 rank Kimball with Wurlitzer tibia. The instrument is currently being enlarged to 4 manuals and 30 ranks so maybe I'll have to make another record when its finished. The "English Style" album is soon to be reviewed in Theater Organ Magazine.

I have recently played a series of programmes of early jazz and classic rags on various church organs in the northern New Jersey area. One notable event was last year when I played the farewell concert on the Moller organ of Grace Church, Rutherford, N.J., and the first recital on the new Austin organ which replaced it. Both concerts were very well recieved. Norman Spicer, Dean of our local A.G.O., arranges these concerts for me.

By the way the old Moller went to a good home. The church donated it to the New York Military Acadamy and they are using it to enlarge their present 4 manual Moller concert organ. It should make an excellent antiphonal division.

I hope this information is useful to you. If you need any more details please don't hesitate to write.

Yours Sincerely,

Jeff Barker

JEFF BARKER

BARNARD, JAMES (Barney)

Born about 1900. Took some lessons on the violin but was self taught on the piano and organ, except for some help from a cousin who was an organist. He started his professional career at age 15 playing piano in a Nickelodean. Then he accompanied vaudeville star "Evvy Hayes." He toured the country on the Orpheum, Pantages, and Ackerman and Harris circuits. He started organ work at the Colonial Theatre in Seattle in about 1920, then played at the Rialto Theatre in Medford, Oregon and the Liberty Theatre in Enumclaw, Washington. He played the Pantages Theatre in Seattle for about three years, starting as assistant to well known organist Henri LeBel. He then served as organist of the D & R Theatre in Aberdeen, Washington and the Seventh Avenue Theatre in Hoquiam,

BARNARD, JAMES (Barney)

2.

Washington. Finally, he was organist at Garrick Theatre in Winnipeg, Canada in 1928-29. He was pianist at Radio Station WTCM^N in Minneapolis. He was organist for several years at the Roller Rink in Seattle, Washington and at the Seattle Center Arena.

BARNES, WILLIAM H.

Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, September 11, 1906. Studied piano with local teachers and took a few organ lessons with a local organist. While still in his second year in high school there was an opportunity for him to play the pipe organ in the Strand Theatre in Ashville, North Carolina. After a few days he was hired at the Imperial Theatre on a two manual Robert Morton organ, then on to a theatre in Kinston, North Carolina for a few months before going to the Isis Theatre in Richmond, Virginia. From there he went on to the Colonial Theatre in the same city at a two manual Robert Morton organ, and then on to what was then Richmond's finest theatre, The National with a two manual Robert Morton organ with an echo organ. At this time this theatre was one of the show places of the nation, with orchestra, organ, and stage shows on

BARNES, WILLIAM H.

occasion. When the Capitol Theatre opened on West Broad Street, Barnes went there as organist.

While he was still in Richmond, Barnes studied organ with the organist of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flaxington Harker. Harker was a composer in his own right and had come to Richmond from England.

In 1927 Barnes went to New York City where he was for a time one of the assistant organists at the New York Paramount Theatre. In 1928 he became organist of Loew's State Theatre on Broadway at a four manual Moller pipe organ. He broadcast pipe organ over Radio Stations WHN and WTAP in New York. Barnes played occasionally for Mr. William K. Vanderbilt, on his residence organ on his estate on Greenlawn, Long Island New York. The organ was a three manual Aeolian organ with player attachment. Vanderbilt's home is now

BARNES, WILLIAM H.

3.

a museum and the grounds a park, but in those days it was truly elegance personified.

In 1929 Barnes travelled to London, England and was a guest organist at Leicester Square Empire Theatre which had a four manual Wurlitzer organ. He went to Paris, France for an engagement at the Gaumont Palace but it did not materialize due to political conditions. He went on to Berlin, Germany where he played the studio organ in ^{D J} Die Kamera Litchspiel on Die Unter Ben Linden for Walter Pearce, Wurlitzer distributor for Europe. Barnes was the first organist to play the famous residence organ in the home of Werner von Siemens. His residence was located in Lankwitz, a suburb of Berlin. Barnes opened the two manual Wurlitzer on a lift in the UFA Palast Am Zoo in Berlin, soloing for

BARNES, WILLIAM H.

4.

the shows and also concertizing with various European artists at special Sunday concerts. He went on to Hamburg, Germany to open the Wurlitzer in the UFA Theatre, but returned to play at the UFA in Berlin. He went on to Vienna, Austria and was soloist at the ^{D J} Die Apollo Cinema which had a two manual Christie pipe organ. The Johann Strauss Theatre in Austria was converted to a movie house known as Die Scalla. The Kilgen Organ Company sent over a three manual organ for Die Scalla which was installed under the stage. Barnes finally left Vienna in the mid-thirties when the political conditions were becoming serious which eventually led to World War II. Barnes returned to New York for a short time before accepting a position as organist of the Capitol Theatre in Winchester, Virginia on a two manual Robert Morton organ. After five years there, he went to Knoxville,

Tennessee to the Tennessee Theatre where he played a three manual Wurlitzer. During his years in Virginia, he was organist and choir director of the First Presbyterian Church and held a similar position at the First Presbyterian Church in Knoxville, Tennessee. He dedicated various organs, both pipe and electronic in various cities in that area. He left Knoxville in 1942 for a four year stint in the armed services, during which he toured with an army show "Three Dots with a Dash," and after this went to New York for rehearsals with Moss Hart's "Winged Victory." He returned to Knoxville after his discharge from service for a short time and then started on tour of the Sheraton Hotel chain starting at the Park Sheraton in New York City. He played most of the Sheraton Hotels east of Chicago and spent two years at the Chicago Sheraton Hotel.

After a two year stint at the Sheraton Gibson Hotel in Cincinnati, he became a partner in a business venture there and played the Hotel Alms for a year. Then he went to Martinelli's Supper Club for a twelve year stay. During his years in Cincinnati he was also church organist at the Wayne Avenue Methodist Church. He also served for a time at the Friendship Methodist Church and the Clovernook Christian Church. He is presently organist of the ^{new} Hyatt House Hotel in Winston-Salem playing in the ^{Dining} Greenhouse Room. He is a published composer.

1928

BILLY BARNES

Billy Barnes, one of the youngest organists in the country is featured at the Loew's State Theater in New York City. Barnes only plays restricted high class numbers. He has personality and is a great artist. Barnes broadcasts his organ solos over WHN.

Billy Barnes and "Skeet" Haithcox have recently composed a new number titled "Drifting Along." The number is handled by the Clarence Williams Publishing Company and will soon be released.

THE MAGAZINE FOR

Billy Barnes



Solo Organist

Loew's State Theatre

NEW YORK CITY

1928

BARRIE, STUART

see pp. ----- to -----.

(see British file)

BARRY, EMMA L.

Organist of the Royal Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1927.

BARRIE, EUGENE STUART

Born October 26, 1899 in Louisberg, Nova Scotia, Canada. Barrie was educated at Paris, Berlin, London and Berkeley, California. He attended the Royal Academy of Music in London, England and was an honor student at the Beyer-Royal Conservatory at Kassel, Germany. Later he studied under Dr. Max Reper in Leipzig. Barrie earned the following degrees: Graduate Doctor of Music and Bachelor of Science in Musicology at the Berlin High School of Music; Ph.D. in Comparative Philosophy at the College of Higher Technology, Berlin. He emigrated to the United States and spent seven years as a theatre organist with the Paramount-Publix chain followed by five years as organist for Warner Brothers. In the late 1930's Barrie moved to England and toured for the Granada Theatre chain, broadcasting and recording. He left the console to lecture in philosophy and musical science but returned briefly to record a long playing disc and at least two 78 rpm discs at the Granada, Tooting, England. His signature tune was "La Paloma."

BARRY, EMMA L.

Organist of the Royal Theatre, Seattle, Washington in 1927.

BARRETT, RUTH

Organist in the New York City area in the 1920's. Among the other positions held, she played at the Colony Theatre in New York in 1926 on a 4 manual Skinner organ (the Colony Theatre was located at 53rd Street and Broadway, and ~~William~~ ~~organist~~, Mr. John Priest was chief organist there). Two years later in 1928, Barrett went on to the Cameo Theatre in New York which also had a smaller Skinner theatre organ, one of the first theatre instruments built by Skinner. The building itself was considerably smaller than the Colony Theatre. The Cameo Theatre had also been served by Mr. John Priest as chief organist. Ruth Barrett also gave some concerts of classic organ music in Aeolian Hall in New York City and in later years went on to become organist of the Mother Church of Christian Science at Boston, Massachusetts. There she played the

BARRETT, RUTH

2.

Aeolian Skinner church organ, broadcast from it, and made recordings from it all under the name of Ruth Barrett Phelps.

BARTLETT, FREDERICK J.

Organist of the Isis Theatre in Boulder, Colorado in 1925.

BATH, LEO

Organist of the Grand Theatre in Fairbault, Minnesota in 1922.

BAUCOM, MISS

Miss Baucom is a native of the Cincinnati area and received her musical education at the Cincinnati College of Music. She started playing the piano in a small neighborhood theatre when she was just out of high school to help earn college money. She played there about two years. At that time, Wurlitzer was beginning to install organs in theatres and she practiced theatre organ music at the Wurlitzer Store in Cincinnati. One day Wurlitzer called her and asked her to fill in immediately at the Orpheum Theatre where the organist had suddenly become ill. He was subsequently unable to return to the job so the job was given to Baucom, who remained there for five years playing four shows a day, seven days a week. These years were approximately 1916 to 1921. In 1921 when the new Capitol Theatre opened, she moved there and stayed for seven years until the

BAUCOM, MISS

2.

advent of sound pictures when live music was discontinued at the Capitol. She then went to the Albee Theatre, Cincinnati's largest and finest picture palace. She was at the Albee Theatre from 1929 until 1931 to 1932 when live music was discontinued there also. For seven years during the Depression, she was in charge of the Federal Music Project for the area. When that project ended she became secretary to Ike Lisbon, a Cincinnati Theatre owner. In 1943 she became Assistant Registrar at the Ohio College of Applied Science.

Her theatre organ career spanned about 14 years, the prime years of the Theatre Organ Era.



From the desk of

EDDIE BAXTER

APRIL 14, 1985

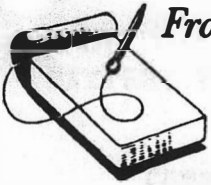
DEAR DR. LANDON:-

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT
EDDIE BAXTER IS ALIVE AND WELL AND
IS A REAL PERSON — NOT A PSEUDONYM.
I'm EMPLOYED BY THE LOWREY ORGAN
CO. AS DISTRICT SALES MGR IN SOUTHERN
AND CENTRAL CALIFORNIA AND ARIZONA.
I HAVE BEEN WITH THEM IN THIS CAPACITY
FOR 20 YEARS AND PRIOR TO THAT WAS
A CONCERT ARTIST FOR THEM. I STILL DO
SOME CONCERT WORK — HOWEVER ON THE
LOWREY ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS. I DID
ABOUT 8-10 ALBUMS ON THE DOT LABEL
AND AM HAPPY TO SAY THEY SOLD WELL.

I'm HAPPY THAT YOU CALLED ME
A THEATRE ORGANIST AS I HAVE NEVER
THOUGHT OF MYSELF AS ONE — HAVING
DONE ONLY ONE OTHER PIPE ALBUM. I
ASSUME YOU REFER TO "HOLIDAY FOR PAPER"
ALBUM — TITLE TUNE WRITTEN FOR ME

re inch long playing record
by Studio (Robert Morton
Lendale, California in

ton, Massachusetts in 1928.



From the desk of

EDDIE BAXTER

By THE FAMOUS DAVID ROSE OF "HOLIDAY
FOR STRINGS" AND "BONANZA TV SHOWS."
I ALSO DID AN ALBUM CALL "WEDDING BELLS"
ON THE SAME HORIN WHITNEY STUDIO ORGAN.
I AM ALSO A CHARTER MEMBER OF THE
LOS ANGELES CHAPTER OF ATOS.

I'M NOT SURE WHY, BUT I HAVE NOT
RECENTLY RECEIVED COPIES OF "THEATRE
ORGAN" MAGAZINE. I'LL HAVE TO
LOOK INTO THAT. THERE ARE ALSO
ABOUT 8 TO 10 "ELECTRIMIC" RELEASES
ON THE DOT LABEL.

I WOULD ENJOY HEARING FROM
YOU. LESTER HARLOW OF SAN DIEGO
GAVE ME YOUR ADDRESS. IF YOU NEED A
FULL RESUME' I CAN SEND YOU ONE.
BEST REGARDS.

Eddie Baxter

re inch long playing record
by Studio (Robert Morton
Lendale, California in

ton, Massachusetts in 1928.

BAXTER, EDDIE

Theatre organist who recorded a twelve inch long playing record of theatre organ music at the Lorin Whitney Studio (Robert Morton 4 manual/24 rank theatre pipe organ) in Glendale, California in 1958. Believed to be a pseudonym. No.

The writer is alive and well and is a real person — not a pseudonym. I'm employed by the Lorrey Organ Co. as District Sales Man in Southern California and I have been with them in this capacity for 30 years; and proud to that I was a concert artist for them. I sang on some cases work — mostly on the Lorrey Electronic products. I did about 8-10 albums on the Dot label and am happy to say they did well.

BEASLEY, BESSIE

Organist of the Bijou Theatre in Boston, Massachusetts in 1928.

That's what you would be a theatre organist as I have never there any other pipe organ. I assume you refer to 'The Day For Pipers' album — title tone written and me.

EDDIE BAXTER

Born in Colorado, Eddie Baxter was playing piano for dancing classes by the age of ten. He moved with his family to Los Angeles when he was thirteen, and music continued to be his hobby.

He began pre-med studies at UCLA which were interrupted by a stint in the Army Air Force in World War II. Following his discharge he joined Glen Gray's Casa Loma Orchestra, and later worked as pianist-arranger with the Frankie Masters Orchestra. Baxter married Marty Baldwin, a member of Masters' vocal quartet, and they eventually settled in the San Fernando Valley.

Eddie Baxter began playing organ in addition to piano, and his career branched out in many directions. He wrote material for night club acts, composed and arranged a Concerto for a motion picture, played organ for numerous radio shows, and worked with Henry Mancini in the picture, "Experiment In Terror." He became staff organist at NBC in Hollywood, where he played for variety shows, a space series, audience participation and game shows, and awards presentations. His organ music was the "soul" of Renzo Cesana's "The Continental," and he recorded with Cesana for Capitol Records.

While at NBC Baxter organized a trio, which subsequently played supper clubs such as the Ambassador Hotel. Between engagements he went on tour for Western Airlines and did TV appearances, including the Johnny Carson Show. He then toured the country as a concert artist for the Lowrey Organ Company before becoming Lowrey's representative in Southern California.

Baxter has recorded eight albums for Dot Records, one, "Super Organ" for Concert Recordings, and six albums for Rendezvous Records, including "Holiday For Pipes." Another pipe organ album, "Wedding Bells," was recorded for Imperial Records.

Baxter is the father of four sons, and he and his wife live in Sherman Oaks, California.

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BAYLOR, GEORGE W.
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A graduate of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Baylor also studied at the American Conservatory of Music and Northwestern University at Evanston, Illinois. He played piano and organ including the accompaniment of silent movies, comedy shows, and for hotel audiences in the Indianapolis, Indiana area for many years. He moved to Chicago, Illinois and became organist of the Hollywood Roller Rink and at the North Avenue Rollaway for 18 years. He taught music privately, served as the organist of several churches and wrote a number of organ compositions.

The Artist: DWIGHT BEACHAM

Tonight, RTOS observes a milestone. Our organist of the evening is the 100th performer to appear in a formal program since the club was launched in 1964.

Californian Dwight Beacham began studying piano at seven and progressed to organ four years later. He studied with Norman Thompson at Chapman College, Calif. from which he was graduated in 1968 with a Bachelor of Music degree. Theatre organ technique was acquired by studying with one of the best, Hall of Famer (A.T.O.S.), Lloyd Del Castillo.

In 1968, Dwight came into his own as a theatre organist. In June, he made his debut before several hundred members of the Los Angeles Chapter, American Theatre Organ Society, playing the 4/37 Kimball in the Wiltern Theatre. A critic remarked: "His beautiful registrations and excellent playing style captivated the audience, and return engagements are a certainty for this young musician".

In July 1968, Dwight was a featured artist at the ATOS Convention in Los Angeles, playing a 3/12 Wurlitzer organ in the Haven of Best Recording Studio. Another reviewer said: "Those who came were happy with the compact but smooth-sounding installation and Dwight's attractive playing".

In his Huntington Beach, Calif. home, Dwight Beacham has installed a two-manual Wurlitzer organ. He has taught privately, and has been one of the organists in the Disneyland Wurlitzer store. He has also demonstrated electronics for several firms.

It is a pleasure for RTOS to welcome California organist,
DWIGHT BEACHAM.

Note: The taking of flash pictures during the performance is discouraged.

The Program:

Mr. Beacham will announce his program. The space below is reserved for your notations.

The Society:

The Rochester Theater Organ Society, Inc is a non-profit organization devoted to presenting the theater pipe organ in its many moods.

Guests are invited to inquire about the Society at the membership tables in the main lobby, or by writing to: RTOS, PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or by phoning: 544-6595.

BEACHAM, DWIGHT

Born in California, Beacham began his musical studies on the piano at the age of seven. Four years later he took his first organ lessons. He completed his bachelor's degree in music at Chapman College in California where he studied under Norman Thompson. Beacham did additional study with Lloyd Del Castillo on theatre organ technique.

Beacham's first theatre organ appearance was in June of 1968 when he played for the Los Angeles Chapter of ATOS on the Wiltern Kimball. In July of the same year he was a featured artist at the National ATOS Convention. He has been featured at other ATOS conventions since that time.

Beacham has installed a two-manual Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ in his home in Huntington Beach, California. He has toured and demonstrated organs for several electronic firms.

BEAUCLAIR, STEVEN

Opened 3 manual/28 rank Kimball pipe organ in the Warner Theatre
in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in May of 1931.

BEAZLEY, KATHERINE

Theatre organist in the Seattle, Washington area in the 1920's.
Played the Grey Goose Theatre in Seattle in 1926 and the Liberty
Theatre in Seattle in 1927.

BRAVER, PAUL

Born in Ohio of musically skilled parents. He received his first instruction in music at home beginning with piano. At the age of ten he began to play the organ and to compose his own music. By the time he was 13 he was holding a position as church organist. Moving to California he became a student at the University of California at Los Angeles, where his studies concentrated in psychology, physics, and mathematics. During this time he held the post of organist at the First Unitarian Church.

He served as an Entertainment Specialist in the Army and upon his release from service he started a successful career as featured soloist in hotels and nightclubs. He played the organ and percussion

BEAVER, PAUL

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with various jazz groups. In addition to composing and publishing arrangements for organ, he ^{has} ~~has been~~ active in recording, television and motion picture studio work. Special musical instruments of his own invention and construction have been featured in films such as "Dr. Zhivago," "The Slender Thread," "Our Man Flint," "Around the World Under The Sea," "Hawaii," "Walk, Don't Run," "In Harm's Way," "An American Dream," and "The Professionals."

He ~~has~~ created special effects for such television shows as "The Munsters," "Bewitched," "My Favorite Martian," and "Run For Your Life."

Beaver ~~has~~ won acclaim as an organist of concert caliber and has made a number of appearances, particularly in the Los Angeles

area including appearances at the 4 manual Kimball pipe organ in the Wiltern Theatre.

Beaver died January 16, 1975. He is remembered for his one theatre organ album, "Reverence To Dream," recorded on the Carson/Kesner Wurlitzer in Hollywood.

BECK, FRED

Theatre organist in the Chicago area. Beck rented a studio complete with a pipe organ in the Wurlitzer Building in Chicago. He used it not only for teaching but also supplied his services to Radio Station WJJD, ^{Mooseheart, Illinois,} ~~Chicago~~ whenever required. WJJD was in the process of installing an organ in their own studios and so their contract with Beck included not only his services as organist but the organ in his rented studio. At different times he rented three different locations to supply Radio Station WJJD with the programs they desired.

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The following item was found in the May 1925 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

OTTO F. BECK

Monday was a bright day; one of the brightest days I've ever seen. Still, when I come to think of it, maybe it really wasn't. That extraordinary brightness may have been due to an interview with a sunny-tempered, sunshine-dispensing artist for an hour or two with Otto F. Beck, organist at Grandall's Tivoli Theater here in Washington, gives one a real Pollyanna, glad-to-be-alive outlook. He is the Peter Pan of organists; A boy who will never grow old, and who always looks for the best in everyone. He has reached the heights in his work, and like most great artists, has thrown away his little hammer and greets the world with a smile. Modest and retiring to the last degree when it comes to talking about himself, he simply has to be pumped for the finest bit of information.

"Mr. Beck," I inquired, "what do you think has made you so successful, really the leading organist of the city?" Mr. Beck came to his feet with a bound. "No, no," he worried, "don't put that in. I don't want to say that." "Well, I'll say it," I returned, "and now that it is all said, just tell me about it."

Little by little, I drew from this unassuming chap that he had been featured at the Rialto in New York, the Lafayette in Buffalo, and hundreds of other leading movie houses, and that he and C. Sharp minor had played a regular game of tag, following each other in a

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tour of the mid-west.

He was born in New York City, and studied both violin and piano at the New York College of Music, at the same time securing a knowledge of organ-playing as it is generally taught at music colleges. Hope-Jones, one of the pioneers in organ building, heard him play and was much impressed by his musical ability. They were closely associated for many years, and Mr. Beck gives much of the credit for his present-day success to the helpful assistance of Hope-Jones' teaching.

Mr. Beck's first position, which brought him to the attention of the general public with a bang, was at B.F. Keith's Theater in Montreal, Canada. While there, he wrote a march song entitled "Take Me Back to Canada." It was dedicated to the Canadian soldiers, and wherever you found them, the song was part of their standard equipment. It made a big hit in the United States when it appeared on Victor records about 1915.

For four years, Mr. Beck was with the Stanley Co. of Philadelphia, one of the leading organists of that city. When Crandall's New Ambassador Theater was opened in Washington, he was at the console of the Kimball Unit Organ there, and made an instant hit with the Ambassador patrons.

The demand for his music was so great that arrangements were finally made for him to broadcast a recital every Saturday night from Crandall's Tivoli. Last fall, he was moved from the Ambassador to the Tivoli with its three-manual Wurlitzer, and this is the organ heard on WRC every Saturday night at 11:15.

Mr. Beck is very enthusiastic about broadcasting; says he feels he is playing to thousands of old friends whenever he uses the microphone. He is a whizz-bang at playing jazz and getting comedy

effects for his pictures, but after giving a program of popular music, and then a program of standard numbers, he says he finds generally that people prefer the better music, and of the popular tunes they prefer the ballads.

Conversation lagged for a moment, so I seized the opportunity to inquire if he found it at all difficult to lay out programs for broadcasting. Immediately warming up to the subject, he replied, "My goodness, no! Why, do you know if I ever played all the requests I've received, I'd be all set on programs for one solid year. The people," he went on, "seem to be very fond of the old songs; I have many requests; especially for Irish ballads. There is one listener who writes us she is an invalid, and each week, she sends a request for one special number, which I always include."

His photoplay public laugh at his comedy imitations and effects, and applaud his novelities and recitals, but he enjoys most of all the letters from his radio audience. He reads every one and answers as many as possible. Unlike some radio artists, Mr. Beck is not at all nervous when broadcasting. The little "mike" has no terrors for him, for he feels he is playing to friends of long standing.

And now, fellow organists, get ready to grasp Mr. Beck by the hand. He says most emphatically (and he pounded his fist on the desk until the pens and pencils did a little dance) "No organist can do good work who is overworked, and everyone should realize it. Work toward the goal of getting quality and not quantity out of an organist." He has two assistants at the Tivoli. He thinks organists should keep in touch with each other. "Don't listen to another organist all primed to criticize, but have just as receptive a mood as you can."

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4

try to build himself up by pulling some one else down. Another point he emphasized was the importance of having an organ in good condition, no matter how large or small it is. It gives him real pleasure to be able to publicly thank Harry Simmons, expert organ mechanic, who has been with the Crandall Circuit for some years, for his prompt attention. Mr. Simmons is never too tired or busy to jump into his Buick and run out to remove a cipher or doctor some small complaint. He is on call 24 hours a day; and this, in a way, is responsible for much of the co-operation of organists on that circuit which makes the various houses stand out with distinctive music.

Irene Juno

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Irene Juno

BECK, OTTO F.

Theatre organist in the Washington, D. C. area during most of his professional life. Was organist of the Rialto Theatre in New York City in 1922. In 1925 he joined the staff of the Tivoli Theatre in Washington, D. C. Also played the Auditorium Theatre in Washington, D. C. that year. In 1927 he played the Rialto Theatre in Washington, D. C. in January, but spent most of his time as organist of the Tivoli Theatre. He continued at the Tivoli Theatre until the early 1930's. He had a midnight radio broadcast over NBC from that theatre.

BECK, R. E.

Organist of Grauman's Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood, California in 1925.

BECKER, REINE E.

Theatre organist in the Los Angeles area. Was Vice President of the Los Angeles Society of Theatre Organists in 1923. Was organist of the Ravenna Theatre in Los Angeles in 1925.

BECKETT, HAROLD

Organist of Loew's Premier Theatre in New York City in 1927. Organist of the Roxy Theatre, New York City, in the 1940's including the post-World War II years.

BEEBE, CHESTER H.

Organist of Loew's Bijou Theatre in New York City in 1927.
In September of 1927, he became an instructor at the Wurlitzer
Organ School in New York City.

BEHREND, NETTIE

Organist of the Lark Theatre in Brazil, Indiana in 1928.

Beebe, Chester

Windstream Webmail

jwlandon@windstream.net

FW: Since you seem interested.....

From : William Webber <willwebb4@windstream.net> Tue, Jun 19, 2018 10:54 PM
Subject : FW: Since you seem interested..... 1 attachment
To : jwlandon@windstream.net

Dr. Landon;

Thanks for your recent information on Esther S. Higgins, theatre organist extraordinaire. If you recall, I shared with you another favorite obscure theatre organist, Chester H. Beebe. I have dug up some wonderful information on him for your files and records. I share it with you below, along with the only picture of him I could find which is attached.

From: William Webber [mailto:willwebb4@windstream.net]
Sent: Saturday, June 16, 2018 3:32 PM
To: 'theatre_organ_academy@yahoogroups.com'
 <theatre_organ_academy@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Since you seem interested.....

This fellow was a theatre organist, teacher, and composer in New York City. He wrote two organ pieces that still exist. One is "Festival March" in 1949 which I play regularly at The Kentucky Theater, which the crowds love. The other one is "Triumphal March," which I am learning, published in 1952. Both of them are WAY out of print. If you would like copies of the organ sheet music, please let me know.

Below is what I know so far. Additional notes at the bottom. From this link:

<http://composers-classical-music.com/b/BeebeChesterH.htm>

"Beebe, Chester Herbert 14.dec.1874-22.feb.1952 USA NY, New York Brooklyn - Long Island, Islip theatre organist, 1896-1897 organist/choirmaster of the First Baptist Church ED in Brooklyn and residing at 390 Monroe Street, 1901 residing at 53 Berkeley Place Brooklyn, 1902-1906 piano teacher at 439 Halsey

Street Brooklyn, 1912 director of a theatre organist training school in Brooklyn, 1915 organist and choirmaster of Janes Methodist Episcopal Church Brooklyn, 1907-1920 teacher of music at 272 Halsey Street Brooklyn, 1930 as musician residing in Islip Long Island ; son of printer Horace Hayden Beebe (Brooklyn 7.oct.1849-a1929 Washington DC) and Mary Elizabeth Kirk Malmgren (NY c1842-a1920 Brooklyn) who married 18.may.1870 in Brooklyn ; 1896 in Brooklyn he married Elizabeth A Morris (Brooklyn 1876-10.sep.1961)"

Title	Parts
<input type="checkbox"/> Stella march. Piano. 1898 dedication American Legion of Honor, Council, Brooklyn NY	
<input type="checkbox"/> Staccato etude in double notes. Piano pub G. Schirmer 1909	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beyond the sea, girls' war hymn. 1nov1918 words Rowena Keith Keyes, Arlington New Jersey	
<input type="checkbox"/> Come unto me. Anthem. Mixed voices Lorenz Publishing, Dayton Ohio 1944	
<input type="checkbox"/> Morning prelude. Organ in Preludes for Service 1951. Lorenz Publishing, Dayton Ohio	
<input type="checkbox"/> Festival march. Organ in The Organist Jan.1967. Lorenz Publishing, Dayton Ohio	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Etudes. Piano	
<input type="checkbox"/> March triumphant. Organ	
<input type="checkbox"/> Magnificat and nunc dimittis. Choir and organ	

**I also found out that he was a member of the Executive Committee of The National Association of Organists (forerunner to the AGO), which I found in their publication THE CONSOLE, August, 1917, Vol. 3, No. 8. The link is below this line.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=fzJAAAAAYAAJ&pg=RA2-PA18&dq=Journal+of+National+Association+of+Organists+august+1917+Vol+3+no+8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjy7amn9NjbAhVFw1kKHZu7C78Q6AEIJzAA#v=onepage&q=Journal%20of%20National%20Association%20of%20Organists%20august%201917%20Vol%203%20no%208&f=false>

Regards,

Bill



BeebeChesterH.jpg
14 KB

BEBE, CHESTER

September 15, 1926 (LP) CHESTER BEEBE, Who presides at the console of the Wurlitzer organ Tuesday and Friday nights at station WOR, Newark, will be heard tonight at nine. Such a responsive reaction has been attained through these programs that Mr. Beebe has had considerable difficulty in fulfilling the many requests which have come in to the station. His programs contain the works of the most classical composers as well as the lighter songs of the day.

June 7, 1929 (LP) A new song, "Go-Grow-Chicago," whose words have appeared in the Chicago Herald & Examiner, will be heard over the radio and in the leading motion picture theatres the next few days.

Station KWW will air it at specific times with four Balaban & Katz theatres featuring the song at every show during the organ program. It will be played at the Oriental by PRESTON SELLERS, at the Norshore by RUTH GORMAN FARLEY, at the senate by MYRTLE PLATT and at the Tower by BASEL CRISTOL.

BELLOMY, DAN

Staff organist of the 3 manual/11 rank Wurlitzer organ installed in the Casa Manana Theatre in Fort Worth, Texas in 1973.

BENDER, BURTON J.

Born February 2, 1903 in Whitehouse, Ohio. He studied piano for seven years with Flo Rakestraw and later with Will Hamilton, a piano teacher from Maumee, Ohio. He studied organ with Leon Idoine. He practiced the organ at the United Brethern Church on Cherry Street in Toledo, Ohio. From 1925 to 1928 he was organist at the Palace Theatre in Toledo, and from 1928 to 1929 at the Rivoli Theatre in Toledo. During these years, he also played at the Loew's Valentine Theatre, the Pantheon Theatre, and the Vita Temple Theatre. The advent of sound films put him out of employment for awhile, but soon he was playing at the Press Club nightly on the Hammond organ. In more recent years, he has been playing at Ann's Restaurant in Whitehouse, Ohio. Bender died in December 1985.

DAN BELLOMY-----Biographical Information

BELLOMY, DAN

Dan Bellomy is a native of Houston, Texas where he began playing the organ at age eight. He began his professional career at age eleven.

Dan has been active in radio and television work from a very young age having made his television debut at the tender age of eleven. In later years, he has made many solo appearances and has served as writer and musical director for several shows.

Dan Bellomy was the first resident organist for the famed Casa Manana Theatre in Ft. Worth, Texas where he delighted audiences with music from the Mighty Wurlitzer.

In addition to extensive concert touring within the United States, Dan has concertized internationally in such exotic places as Australia, Europe, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Dan Bellomy has served as record reviewer for the international music magazines, KEYBOARD WORLD and the CONSOLE.

Dan has five albums to his credit, the latest being POWER PIPES which was recorded on the 4/44 Mighty Wurlitzer located in the Organ Grinder Restaurant, Portland, Oregon.

Dan presently lives in Portland, Oregon where he teaches and coaches in addition to being a staff organist at the Organ Grinder Restaurant where he regularly performs at the 4/44 Mighty Wurlitzer.

FOR CONCERT AND WORKSHOP INFORMATION:

DAN BELLOMY
111 S.W. HARRISON Suite 7-C
PORTLAND, OREGON 97201

Phone: (503) 227-1583

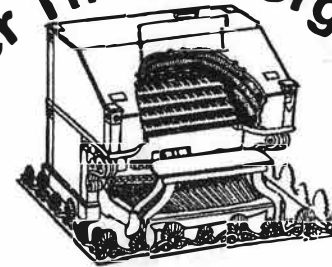
UPSTATE THEATER ORGAN ECHOES No. 4

- Aug. 1924--Harold Osborn Smith is presenting half-hour evening organ programs over Rochester's WHAM.
- Aug. 1924--Since its opening two years ago, almost four million have been entertained at the Eastman Theater. For the anniversary program, "The Covered Wagon" with Lois Wilson is the featured picture. Organists Harold Osborn Smith and Robert G. Berentsen share with conductors Victor Wagner, Frank Weller and Guy Fraser Harrison the credit for the excellent musical programs.
- Sept. 1924--John Hammond, recently at the Eastman Theater and School has become organist at New York's Picadilly Theater. He was succeeded by Harold Osborn Smith who was at the Brooklyn Strand for two years.
- May 1925--Central New York's "Mr Sing-Along," Paul H. Forster, has been engaged for a year as organist in Syracuse's Empire Theater, playing the new 3/10 Marr & Colton, console of which is on an elevator. Solos and specialties are featured by Mr. Forster.
- Nov. 1925--At a cost of \$50,000, the interior of Fay's Theater in Rochester has been newly decorated. Under the stage is the big new Kimball organ with a two-manual console. It supplements the orchestra under Arthur Monk, playing from noon until two p.m. and from five until eight. Forrest Gregory is the organist.
- Nov. 1925--Maurice B. Nicholson and Love Davis alternate at Shea's Hippodrome's "Grand Wurlitzer." in Buffalo while Paul H. Forster and Bartholomew Wright alternate at Syracuse's Empire Theater Marr & Colton.
- Dec. 1925--Three three-story buildings have been started at the Wurlitzer plant in N. Tonawanda. They will be used for expansion of departments which have outgrown space allotted for expansion when the present buildings were completed only last year. The company will have 475,000 feet of floor space, enabling it to turn out an organ a day.

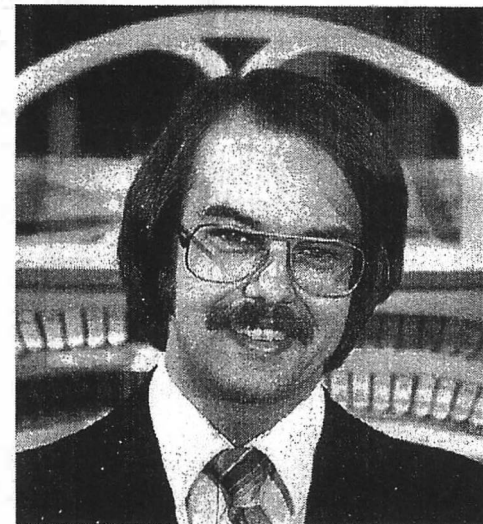
Series Notes by Lloyd E. Klos



Rochester Theater Organ Society



PRESENTS



Dan Bellomy

at the
**Auditorium
Center**

**Rochester, NY
Dec. 5, 1998**

Our Featured Artist

Dan Bellomy returns for his fourth RTOS presentation on the RTOS Wurlitzer. His earlier RTOS concerts were in 1994, 1990 and 1984.

Dan is a native of Houston, Texas and started to play the organ at age eight. He began his professional career at the age of eleven with a television debut.

He continued his television work as soloist, writer and musical director for several shows. In radio, Dan Bellomy has been a chief announcer and did weekly radio programs on KMHD-FM, Portland Oregon's only full time jazz radio station. Back on television, he has also served as musical director for "The Sunday Show" which aired weekly on NBC owned and operated KNBC-TV in Los Angeles, California. He has also provided entertainment oriented segments for several local Portland television programs. Now living in the Boston metro area, Dan is in the process of launching his own weekly television program presenting organ and music features.

Dan Bellomy was the first resident organist for the famed Casa Manana Theatre in Fort Worth, Texas, where he delighted audiences with music from its Mighty Wurlitzer theater pipe organ. He has done extensive concert touring, not only in the United States and Canada, but also in more exotic locations such as Australia, Europe, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Indonesia.

He has served as record reviewer and feature writer for the international music magazines "Keyboard World" and "Console." Dan has contributed feature material to the American Theatre Organ Society's "Theatre Organ Journal," Portland, Oregon's "Downtown" and "Positively Entertainment" publications. His features have also appeared in Vancouver, Washington's daily newspaper "The Columbian" and in the "Winchester Town Crier." He is the current editor of the Eastern Massachusetts Chapter of ATOS newsletter "Eastern Pipes."

Dan has eight albums to his credit including "Puttin' on the Pipes" and "Live from New York...It's Dan Bellomy," recorded on the Wurlitzer in the Brooklyn Paramount, which is now used as a part of Long Island University in Brooklyn.

Dan Bellomy presently teaches and coaches in the Boston area in addition to his extensive radio, television and theater organ playing.

RTOS is proud to spotlight this multi-talented theater organist.

Today's Program

The artist will announce this evening's selections from the console.

Join us tomorrow at the Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of RTOS will be held at the Eisenhower Auditorium tomorrow at 4:30pm immediately after the "Open Console". Come early and find out what the Open Console is all about, then stay for the Annual Meeting and find out what goes on behind the scenes that keep the instruments playing and the artists coming.

The Rochester Theater Organ Society preserves and produces musical events on two fine theater organs: The Auditorium Center 4-manual, 22-rank Wurlitzer and the RMSC Eisenhower 3-manual, 12-rank Wurlitzer. The Society and its two Mighty Wurlitzers have a world-wide reputation for excellence.

**Annual membership is \$35
and includes up to 9 free Concerts a year for
two adults and their minor children.**

**Up to 2 tickets purchased for this performance may
be turned in towards a new membership.**

**Visit the membership table
in the Main Lobby for more information!**

AS A COURTESY TO ALL

*Please do not take flash pictures during this concert,
or use recording devices in the seating area.*

**Next Concert!
Dennis James
At The Auditorium Center
Sun. Jan. 10, 2:00 PM**



The following item was found in the December 1919 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

EDWARD BENEDICT, WIZARD OF THE WURLITZER

Is it a blessing or a curse to be versatile? Mr. Edward Benedict, the famous Wurlitzer organist says it's a curse with a capital "K".

Having inherited a talent for music and a tenor voice in his younger days, Mr. Benedict started out to be a composite Caruso, Campanini and Paderewski. Commencing his music career as a church organist, he was successively (but not always successfully) a musical comedy director, composer, hotel orchestra leader, grand opera chorus man, tenor soloist in a prominent New York church, popular singer, musical director and business manager of Jesse Lasky's "Birdland", a piano-phiend, "single" in vaudeville, combination movie-player and illustrated singer, a society entertainer, leader of a vaudeville orchestra, motion picture organist and finally a Wurlitzer player.

It was after hearing a Hope-Jones Wurlitzer Unit Orchestra that he lost all desire to do anything else but master this wonderful instrument, so he wisely decided to give up his vocal and orchestral aspirations and to devote his entire time, talent and energy to the Wurlitzer. Opportunities for practice and instruction were sadly limited at this period, and he encountered so many obstacles

that many times he was sorely tempted to resume his old calling. After some six months of vicissitudes, during which he played every style of Wurlitzer from the little two-stop "G's" to the largest four-manual unit orchestras, matters commenced to change for the better, and Benedict began to realize the wisdom of the step he had taken.

In the fall of 1914, he was offered the position of organist in the Pitt Theatre of Pittsburgh at a salary of \$60 per week. The following season, he went to the Broadway-Strand in Detroit at \$75. After an engagement of three years, he accepted a like position at the California Theatre in San Francisco for \$125, was raised to \$150, and then came to his present position in the Rialto Theatre at Tacoma for \$225 per week. These phenomenal increases were due largely to a secret which Mr. Benedict discovered early in his career, namely that an organist will get out of his job exactly what he puts into it. By putting hours of unremitting practice on new numbers to add to his repertoire, and by working up the pictures regardless of personal effort, he reaped a financial reward far beyond the dreams of the average musician.

Another reason for Benedict's success is his ability to interpret on the organ the so-called popular music. Always a lover of ragtime, he has made a special study of its latest manifestations in jazz, and the Wurlitzer instrument, being provided with saxophone, marimba, Chinese block, and piano, lends itself admirably to this form of music. The phonograph likewise is an important adjunct to this study, and Mr Benedict incorporates in his own repertoire every new "jazzism" which comes out on the records. As a

BENEDICT, EDWARD

Began his musical career as a church organist but also held positions as a director of musical comedy, hotel orchestra leader, chorus man in grand opera, tenor soloist in a prominent New York church, popular singer, musical director and business manager of Jesse Lasky's "Birdland." Accompanied silent pictures on piano, leader of a vaudeville orchestra, composer of several pieces of music, and eventually a motion picture organist. In the fall of 1914 he was offered the position of organist in the Pitt Theatre in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at a salary of \$60.00 per week. The following season he went to the Broadway-Strand in Detroit, Michigan (Hope-Jones 3 manual/15 rank instrument) at \$75.00 per week. He played at the Rialto Theatre in Tacoma, Washington in 1919, the

BENEDICT, EDWARD

2.

California Theatre in San Francisco, the Capitol Theatre in Chicago in 1923, and the Chicago Theatre in Chicago, Illinois in 1925. He opened a theatre in Coral Gables, Florida in 1926 and in October 1926 he was broadcasting over Radio Station WGN in Chicago. In 1927 he became staff organist of the Kimball Company and opened the 2 manual/8 rank Kimball in the new Hilliard Square Theatre in Cleveland, Ohio in April. (The Hilliard Square Theatre was an atmospheric house.) A part of his presentation on that occasion was, "A Trip Through Kimballville"--a demonstration of the organ. In April 1928 he played the State Theatre in Youngstown, Ohio and May 1928 found him in the Capitol Theatre in Jackson, Michigan.

Appeared with his son, Gardner Benedict as a piano-organ

team at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, playing classical and popular music. In 1930 they broadcast a 15-minute program direct from the Edgewater Beach Hotel several nights a week.

In addition to his work as accompanist of silent pictures and featured organ soloist, Benedict also taught theatre pipe organ. During his professional life he appeared almost exclusively on the Wurlitzer pipe organ.

BENEDICT, GARDNER

See Edward Benedict.

BENGER, LELAND F.

Played the Park Theatre in Rockaway, Long Island in 1922.

BENNETT, EVA

Played the Hollywood Theatre in Petosky, Michigan in 1926.

BENNETT, MABEL

Played the theatre organ in Boston, Massachusetts in 1924.

BENNETT, PAUL

Organist of the Delft Theatre in Muinsing, Michigan in 1926.

BENNETT, WILLIAM J.

Born in Marinette, Wisconsin in 1900, Bennett attended Beloit College and the University of Wisconsin. He studied under R. W. Pellow, Frank Van Dusen and Arthur Dunham. He appeared as a solo organist in the Chicago area for Balaban and Katz theatres in 1922. He accompanied Carrie Jacobs Bond (composer of "The End of a Perfect Day," "Just A Wearin' for You" and other songs) on concert tour in 1924. He appeared at other theatres in the midwest before joining the Hammond Organ Company as a demonstrator. In the early 1940's he appeared at the Interstate Glass House Restaurant in Chicago.

BELLAMANN, HENRY HAUER—Pianist. Teacher. Author. Born in Fulton, Mo., 1882. *Education*: Westminster College, Missouri; University of Denver; Paris; London; New York; pupil of Philipp (piano); Widor (organ, composition). *Degree*: Mus. D., DePauw University (1926). Dean of School of Fine Arts, Chicaora College for Women, Columbia, S. C. (1907-24); pianist and lecturer on modern French music; chairman of examining board of Juillard Music Foundation (1924); with Curtis Institute, Philadelphia. *Compositions*: Piano concerto; violin sonata; piano quintet; choral works. *Author of*: *A Music Teacher's Note Book* (1920); novels; verse.

BELLISON, SIMEON—Clarinetist. Born in Moscow, Russia, 1881. *Education*: Graduate, Moscow Imperial Conservatory. *Appearances*: With Symphony and opera orchestras in Moscow; member of Moscow Art Theatre Orchestra; tour of northern Europe with chamber music ensemble (1908); member of Petrograd Imperial Opera Orchestra (1915); organizer of "Zimro" Chamber Music Ensemble; led it on world tour (1917); toured with it in the United States and Canada (1918-20); organizer of "Stringwood Ensemble." First clarinet, Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York (since 1920); assisting artist with major chamber music groups of America and Canada. Member of faculty, Manhattan Music School of New York, New York School of Music, Teachers College of Columbia University, Community Center Conservatory of New York and Englewood Conservatory of New Jersey; conducts own studio (since 1920); also conducts Bellison clarinet ensemble of seventy-five members. *Compositions*: Arrangements for clarinet solo and chamber music combinations. *Author of*: *The Adventures of Jivoglot*, novel. *Recordings*: Columbia and Simeon Bellison Phonograph Records. Contributor, *Who Is Who In Music* (1940-41 Edition). *Address*: 751 Walton Ave., New York City.

BELNICK, ARNOLD—Violinist. Born in New York City, 1924. *Education*: Pupil of Ronald Murat. Winner of Grand Prix, Seattest Rising Musical Arts Contest (1938). *Appearances*: Soloist, Friends of Music Orchestra; National Orchestral Association; New York Philharmonic Symphony; recitals throughout the east. *Management*: Arthur Judson, Inc., 113 W. 57th St., New York City.

BELTZ, MARY LOUISE—Contralto. Born in Nickerson, Kan. *Education*: University of Kansas; Juilliard Music School (fellowship); pupil of Paul Reiners. *Degree*: A.B., University of Kansas. *Appearances*: Soloist in Bach Christmas Oratorio at Meridity College, Raleigh, N. C.; Verdi *Requiem* at Ann Arbor, Michigan; Gaul's *Holy City* with Washington Heights Oratorio Society; in *Eugene Onegin* with Andonia Bricco's Symphony; Carnegie Hall; soloist with Back Circle, Town Hall. At present, full member, Music Department of Baylor College, Belton, Texas. *Management*: George Leyden College, RKO Bldg., New York City.

BENDER, WILLIAM ISETT—Organist, Pianist. Born in Wheeling, W. Va., 1926. *Education*: West Liberty State Normal School; pupil of G. Darlington

Women's Chorus, Yonkers, N. Y. *Address*: 20 Cumming St., New York City.

BENDITZKY, LEON—Pianist, Teacher. Born in Russia, 1891. *Education*: Kiev Conservatory and Petrograd Imperial Conservatory, Russia; pupil of Mme. Anna Essipoff-Leschetzky (scholarship). Recipient of first prize, Conservatory of Kiev. *Appearances*: With symphony orchestra, Russia; instructor at Conservatory in Tiflis. *Radio*: With Henry Weber Orchestra, WGN (5 years). *Address*: Station WGN, Chicago, Ill.

BENDIX, MAX—Violinist, Conductor. Born in Detroit, Mich., 1866. *Debut*: 1874. *Appearances*: As Concertmaster, Metropolitan Opera House (intermittently, 1886-1910); Concertmaster and Assistant Conductor, Theodore Thomas Orchestra (1886-96); tour as soloist with Bendix Quartet; conductor of orchestra, St. Louis World's Fair (1904) and San Francisco Exposition (1915); Concertmaster and Conductor, Manhattan Opera House (1906). Formerly conducted own studio in New York. At present, conductor in Chicago. *Compositions*: Works for orchestra and songs.

BENEDICT, EDWARD—Accordionist, Composer (Popular). Born in Lincoln, Neb. *Education*: With private teachers. At present, accordionist and vocalist at Riccardo's, Chicago. *Compositions*: Songs and Hymns. *Address*: 306 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.

BENNETT, BOYD—String Bass Player, Violoncellist. Born in Battleford, Canada, 1905. *Education*: Detroit Institute of Musical Art, Wayne University and Columbia University; New School of Social Research, New York; with private teachers. *Appearances*: Organized and played in Little Theatre Trio, Detroit (1928); organized and played in Chromatic Art String Quartet, Detroit (1933-34); conducted jazz concert, Central Opera House, New York (1937). *Radio*: Directed ensemble from Detroit Symphony in series, WWJ, Detroit (1929); "Magic Key," NBC; "Swing Session," CBS; also MBS. At present, with Ben Bernie Orchestra. *Recordings*: Series of jazz records, with Nick La Rocca (Victor); dance records (Victor, Columbia, Brunswick, Vocalion). *Address*: 76 Washington Sq., New York City.

BENNETT, DONALD WESLEY—Conductor, Educator. Born in Oelwein, Ia., 1912. *Education*: University of California at Los Angeles, University of Southern California. *Degree*: B. Ed., University of California. *Appearances*: As Conductor, All-City Junior High School and Junior College Orchestras (combined), Los Angeles Music Festival (1939). Chairman, Music Department, Virgil Jr. High School; Director, Los Angeles All-City Junior High School Orchestra. Teacher, University of California; Organizing Chairman, National Junior High School Orchestra. *Member*: University of California at Los Angeles Music Alumni Association (Treasurer). *Address*: 152 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Cal.

BENNETT, HOWARD GORDON—Musicologist, Educator. Born in New York City, 1894. *Education*: Harvard University; Universities of Berlin and Munich (musicology); pupil of Rubin Goldmark (composition); Clarence

ent, Professor of Music, University of Vermont. *Address*: Department of Music, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vt.

BENNETT, JOYCE—Mezzo-Contralto (Popular). Born in Mount Olive, Ill., 1920. *Education*: Gordon and Le Studios. *Appearances*: As singer and dancer. *Radio*: KXOK, St. Louis (1940). At present, member of Louis Panico's Orchestra, on tour. *Address*: 1258 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Ill.

BENNETT, ROBERT RUSSELL—Composer, Arranger. Born in Kansas City, Mo., 1894. *Education*: Pupil of Carl Busch; Nadia Boulanger, Paris. Recipient of Guggenheim Fellowship. *Compositions*: *Sights and Sounds Abraham Lincoln Symphony*; *Charleston Rhapsody*; *Paysage*; *Concert-Grosso*, for orchestra; *Maris Malibran* opera; March, for two pianos and orchestra; orchestrations of musical comedies (since 1910).

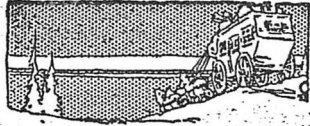
BENNETT, WILLIAM J.—Organist. Born in Marinette, Wis., 1900. *Education*: Beloit College; University of Wisconsin; pupil of R. W. Pellow, Mar Miranda, Frank Van Dusen, Arthur Dunham. *Appearances*: Soloist, Balaban & Katz theatres (1922); concert with Carrie Jacobs Bond, Janesville, Wis. (1924); recitals throughout midwest; tours as demonstrator of Hammond organ. At present appearing at Interstate Glass House Restaurant. *Address*: 1400 Belle Plaine Ave., Chicago, Ill.

BENSON, HAROLD C.—Pianist (Popular). Born in Chicago, Ill., 1908. *Education*: Buffalo College of Music. *Appearances*: With various bands. *Address*: 5668 Ridge Ave., Chicago, Ill.

BENTER, LIEUT. CHARLES—Bandmaster. Born in New York City, 1888. *Degree*: Hon. Mus. D., Columbus University, Washington, D.C. *Appearances*: As conductor of U. S. Navy Band throughout the United States. At present, Officer in Charge, U. S. Navy School of Music; Conductor U. S. Navy Band, U. S. Navy Symphony Orchestra. *Compositions*: *Irresistible* (1923), *Our Navy* (1924), *Navy Blue* (1938) and other marches. *Author of*: *Benter's Book of National Airs* (1927). *Recordings*: Victor, Brunswick. *Member*: American Bandmasters Association, ASCAP. *Address*: Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.

BENTONELLI, JOSEPH—Tenor. Born in Kansas City, Mo., 1902. *Education*: University of Oklahoma; Paris and Milan; pupil of Jean Reszke, Edmond Clement, Vittorio Vanzi, Enrico Rosati, and Blanche Blackman. *Degrees*: B.A., B.M., University of Oklahoma. *Debuts*: European, in *Don Giovanni*, Nice, France (1924); American, Chicago Opera (1934); Metropolitan Opera (1936). *Appearances*: In opera, concert, and recital throughout Europe and the United States; command performances for Queen Wilhelmina and Mussolini. *Radio*: Metropolitan Opera Broadcast "Sunday Evening Hour," "Open House," "General Motors Hour," "Ed Wyer Hour," Bergen-McCarthy program "Opera-In-English," "Paul Whiteman Hour." Formerly member of Teatro Reale dell'Opera, Rome; Paris Grand Opera; Vienna Staatsoper; Philadelphia Opera. St. Louis Opera sa

1928



**HOLIDAY
GREETINGS**

BILL BENNETT

**SOLO
Organist**

And Master of Ceremonies

Now at

**ALLEN THEATRE
RACINE, WIS.**

THE TOWN

1928

BILL BENNETT

Bill Bennett is master of ceremonies and solo-organist at the Allen Theatre in Racine, Wis. He features solos before presentation work goes on and has been voted a success by the patrons of the Allen Theatre who always greet him enthusiastically.

BENTON, PAUL

Organist of the Cleburne Theatre in Fort Worth, Texas.

BENTZ, CECIL

Organist on the staff of Radio City Music Hall from 1950 to 1973. Standby organist at Radio City Music Hall in the 1970's.

BENWAY, ANTOINETTE

Played the Empire Theatre in Glens Falls, New York in 1926.

BERKY, ETTA HAHN

Theatre organist in the Denver, Colorado area. Mother of theatre organist Eunice Berky. Etta Hahn Berky, and her sisters, Grace, and Ida May ran the Western Conservatory of Music in North Denver, Colorado. A number of Denver area theatre organists were trained there in the silent picture days.

BERKY, EUNICE

Played the new Isis Theatre in Denver, Colorado which opened in 1913. This Wurlitzer instrument was the world's largest organ and when installed in 1915. Berky also played the Rialto Theatre in Denver, Colorado.

BERRY, GRACE

Organist of the Isis Theatre in Boulder, Colorado in 1925.

BERRY, LEON

A well known recording artist, for many years organist of the world renowned Hub Rink in Chicago. Berry recorded a widely received high fidelity long playing recording of pipe organ music from the 2 manual Wurlitzer theatre organ installed in the basement of his residence in 1956. The record was entitled, "Beast in the Basement." He has also recorded a number of records on the 3 manual Wurlitzer pipe organ in the Hub Rink, Chicago from 1956 onward.

At the Wurlitzer

By NICK KATZ

Leon Berry sat at the console of the Wurlitzer pipe organ in the basement of his Park Ridge home, a slight smile on his face barely revealing the pleasure he felt as his hands roamed the two rows of keys on the massive instrument.

Berry seemed lost in concentration as he ran through a series of songs that demonstrated both his ability and the capabilities of the almost 60-year-old organ — a Christmas carol complete with sleigh bells, a version of "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "La Paloma," including castanets.

As he played, a series of vertical baffled panels that comprise the far wall of the basement opened and closed controlling the volume of the music.

AS THEY silently swung open, the panels revealed rows and rows of pipes, mounted on the floor, the walls and anywhere else Berry could find room for the approximately 800 pipes that are controlled by the keyboard.

Berry flipped a series of levers changing

Theatre in Crystal Lake ("They were remodeling the theater and it was in the way") took Berry a year to install and includes pipes from the church in his native Alabama where Berry had his first organ lessons. He also soundproofed the basement to keep his neighbors as happy as he is when he plays.

"This one (organ) I can feel happy playing all the time," Berry said. "I can't explain it, except I simply like it."

BERRY MAY not have the name recognition of a Michael Jackson or Madonna or scores of other rock musicians. But among organ music aficionados he is just as well known.

He has recorded 15 albums since his first, "Misirlou" hit the top of the billboard charts in 1953. Since then his albums have been distributed to organ music fanciers throughout the world.

Berry began playing professionally in 1936 while working in the factory of the Hammond Clock Co. Berry was working nine hours a day, six days a week for \$18, he said.

When the company, which also



the sound of the organ from an oboe to a flute. Other levers produced the sound of a bird singing, a trotting horse, a fire bell, train whistle, bass drum and cymbal, made with actual instruments played by remote control.

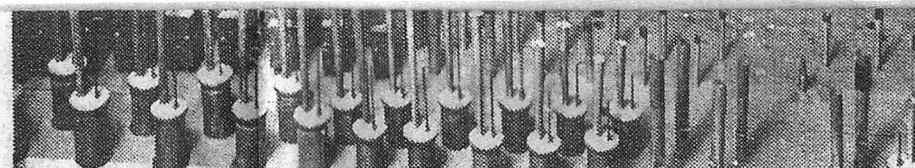
The organ, retrieved from the Lake

manufactured electric organs, installed one in the Arcadia Rink in Chicago, Berry got a job playing the instrument. At the rink Berry earned \$80 a week for working three hours a day.

DESPITE OTHER ADVICE, he decided his future was in playing the organ.



Leon Berry sits at the console of the Wurlitzer pipe organ he installed in the basement of his Park Ridge home. Berry, known around the world, has been playing professionally since 1936.



Leon Berry stands among some of the approximately 800 pipes that give the pipe organ in his basement its full sound and range of tones. (Staff photos by Geoff Scheerer)

"I came along at a time when the advice given me was that it's stupid to follow that line of work. There was no work. (But) I had an ambition to play and I thought I could while other people didn't," Berry said.

"Eventually, I learned to play it and was able to get a good paying job playing it. I found that it was very gratifying. That's been my main means of earning a living all my life."

After the Arcadia, Berry played for several years at the Trianon Ballroom on Chicago's south side and for 18 years at the Hub Roller Rink, also in Chicago.

IT WAS EVEN THROUGH his music that Berry found his wife Mildred, herself a pianist and piano teacher.

The couple had met at a restaurant where Berry played an electric organ and Berry invited Mildred to a pipe organ concert at the Patio Theatre.

"I was a widow. I had never heard him play a pipe organ," Mrs. Berry said. "He invited me to go to the concert and that was it. Three months later we were married."

Berry was still enjoying a successful career in 1972 when tragedy struck. It was the couple's second anniversary and he and his wife were in Buffalo, N.Y., 18 hours before a scheduled concert when Berry suffered a stroke.

BERRY, WHO still sometimes walks with a slight limp, was paralyzed on his left side. He lacked the strength even to press the keys on the organ.

"I was half dead. I was literally half

dead," Berry said.

He underwent months of physical therapy including electrical shocks to his unused muscles. Also, his wife worked with him constantly to help him relearn the use of his paralyzed body.

"You had to keep at him and keep at him and keep at him," she said. "I made up my mind he was going to play again."

"SHE WOULD tell me to take a step," Berry recalled. "I'd say you wiggle your ears and I'll take a step."

Berry, with his wife's endless pushing, struggled to regain not only the use of his legs, but the ability to play the organ as he had before the stroke. Finally, two years ago, Berry returned to the Patio Theatre for his first concert since the illness.

"I just sat there. The tears were streaming down my face to think he was back from the dead and performing," Mrs. Berry said. "To me, I think it was a moment of triumph."

Although Berry is more or less retired, he still plays one night a week at a roller rink in Palatine. He is also scheduled to open a special program — the Park Ridge Chamber of Commerce's vaudeville show — in the Pickwick Theatre in Park Ridge on the theater's Wurlitzer pipe organ.

In August Berry will again return to the Patio Theatre for a concert as part of the annual convention of the American Theater Organist Society.

And although Berry, who recorded his last album on his home organ in 1972, seems doubtful he'll make any more records, his wife has different ideas. "Oh yes, he is going to make another record."

BERRY, LEON C.

A well known recording artist, for many years organist of the Hub Rink, Chicago, Berry was born July 2, 1914 at Selma, Alabama. His early musical training was at the hands of local teachers. By the time he became a teenager the "talkies" had taken over but Berry did play some organ solo spots on the 2/6 Robert Morton organ in Selma's Wilby Theatre. His growing interest in pipe organs led him to become apprenticed to Kimball's southeastern representative where he learned many valuable lessons about organ building.

Berry moved to Chicago and studied for a number of years under Dr. Frank Van Dusen at the American Conservatory of Music. His musical education was interrupted by a four year stint in the U.S. Coastguard engaged in anti-submarine warfare. His professional organ playing experience began earlier dating back to 1936 when he was working for the Hammond Clock Company. The company which had just begun manufacturing Hammond Organs had installed one in the Arcadia Rink in Chicago. Berry was hired to play it at \$80 a week (3 hours per day). He decided, as a result, to make organ playing his profession.

Following his stint at the Arcadia, Berry moved to the Trianon Ballroom, Chicago and later spent 18 years as organist of the Hub Rink. In 1956 Berry installed a 2 manual Wurlitzer (from the Lake Theatre, Crystal Lake, Illinois) in the basement of his Chicago home. There followed a series of recordings on the instrument the first of which was entitled, "Beast In The Basement." Berry also recorded a number of records on the Hub Rink Wurlitzer making a total of 15 albums so far.

Berry met his wife at a restaurant where he played an electronic organ. On his second wedding anniversary in 1972 he had a stroke and suffered paralysis on his left side. Through the heroic efforts of his wife

and his own "never-say-die" spirit, he underwent an intensive period of physical therapy and in 1983 gave his first organ concert since his illness. Berry is one of the artists who was heard at the 1985 National ATOS Convention in Chicago.

BERRY, MARGARITE

Organist of the Majestic Theatre in Portland, Oregon in 1923.

BERRY, RAMON (Real Name Charles Raymond Berry)

Born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, January 9, 1906. Parents, Jessie A. and Charles L. Berry. Ramon Berry attended Sioux Falls, South Dakota High School. He began piano study at age 5 under Claude Gondierre in Sioux Falls. He gave his first recital at age 10. He began his pipe organ study at age 13, and became organist of the First Presbyterian Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, a post which he held from 1919 to 1924. He was also organist at various theatres in Sioux Falls and in the summers of 1922 and 1923 he studied concert organ in St. Paul, Minnesota under Professor G. H. Fairclough. He was organist of the Princess Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1923. He studied theatre organ under Claude B. Ball in Chicago in 1925. He was solo organist of the Irving

BERRY, RAMON (Real Name Charles Raymond Berry)

2.

Theatre in Chicago from 1925 to 1926. Opened the Fargo Theatre in Fargo, North Dakota, March 15, 1926 as soloist organist, served as solo organist at the Alamo Theatre in Chicago from 1926 to 1928. He was President of the Chicago Society of Theatre Organists in 1929. Later he was guest organist for the Lynch Circuit in Chicago, and appeared in concert in Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Fargo, North Dakota; St. Paul, Minnesota; and Chicago. He served as instructor at the Ball Theatre Organ School in Chicago.

RAYMOND BERRY

1928

Raymond Berry is the solo-organist at the Alamo Theatre and is well liked by the above theatre's patrons. His organ specialties are original and refreshing to hear. *Chicago*

1935

LEW BETTERLY (Detroit RKO Downtown) appears to be settling finally with some ease into his surroundings here. This solo, "A Lecture on Applause," is undoubtedly his best performance since his first appearance here, over a month ago. Heretofore there has been more evidence of his ability in incidental playing between screen units than in his actual solos. He has probably been making too great a conscious effort to please. The week's program includes a number of hand-appeal slides, such as, a beer stein and a symbol of prosperity. The lyric numbers are, "Dream Sweetheart," "Paradise," with whistling lines; "By the Fireside," and "Somebody Loves You." The latter proves a good choice for a strong finish. Betterly's first program on the opening day included a tongue twister composed of an alliteration of m's. In his second show he substituted a sibilant tongue twister which drew decidedly better response. Altogether a splendid reception from a sparse house.

1938



**Richard
BETTS**

Feature Organist

AT THE

CENTURY THEATRE

"Formerly the Loew State Theatre"

BUFFALO, NEW YORK

RICHARD BETTS

1938

One of the most well liked feature organists is in his first year at the Century Theatre in Buffalo, N. Y. He has had the opportunity of opening numerous new houses under the Schine Corporation. He is a prime favorite of the patrons of the Century. Good luck, Richy!

The following item was found in the March 5, 1930 issue of the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle by Lloyd E. Klos:

RICHARD "DICK" BETTS

Unable to read a note of music, but possessing a musical sense surpassing, it is declared, that of many musicians who have spent years in the cultivation of their talents, Richard Betts, the new organist at Loew's Rochester Theater, is able to play any musical number, from the jazziest jazz to the most difficult classical composition after hearing the number played once--or twice at most, it is said.

Mr. Betts, a young man in his early twenties, was discovered by H. M. Addison, the managing director of Loew's Rochester Theater, when he was scouting around for an entertainer who could perform at his theater during the noon hour wait, before the regular daily program begins.

"You mean to say," asked Mr. Addison, when told that young Betts could play any number after hearing it once, "that he can play these numbers well enough for a public performance?" He was told that such was the case.

A skeptic--Mr. Addison has been in the theatrical business more than a quarter of a century--he went to see for himself, and he returned convinced. The next week, young Mr. Betts was engaged

to play the 5/24 Marr & Colton organ at Loew's Rochester, and all of the things which were said about him have proved true, it is said.

Mr. Betts sits at the console every noon, between the time that the theater doors are opened and the opening of the regular performance, and entertains in a novel manner. With his back to the audience, but his face turned toward patrons in the orchestra, he talks to the audience much as he would if he were entertaining in a private home.

He asks the audience for the name of a composition and when it is given, he plays it promptly. There is no improvisation in this work. Before each of the three daily performances at the theater, Mr. Betts takes his place at the console and gives a spirited concert, often getting the entire audience to sing the number which he is playing.

"I had no musical education," said Mr. Betts, when seen in his dressing room. "But, I have a musical heritage. My mother and sister were both organists, and my father played the violin. I was too lazy--or too interested in games and sports--during my boyhood to study the piano. But when I left school, I fell back on the piano for recreation and found that I could play without notes, so I never bothered to learn. Then I took up the organ and found it not much more difficult than the piano. First it was fun, and now it is business, but it is still fun."

BELTS, WILLARD ("DICK")

Organist of Loew's Coney Island Theatre in New York City in
1927. Organist of Loew's Rochester Theatre in Rochester, New York
in 1930.

Benzmiller

Jim Benzmilller has appeared in theatre organ concerts in many mid-western and eastern cities. Audiences enjoy his unique programs which feature popular standards, selections from musicals, light classics and his specialties of dixieland and jazz.

Benzmilller frequently plays feature intermissions at the Grand Theatre, Wausau, WI, broadcast a radio program for several years and was among the artists who appeared at the 1977 ATOS national convention. His album, "Bold, Brassy & Brilliant" received highest acclaim from reviewers and colleagues alike.

At age thirteen Benzmilller was appointed organist of a Stevens Point Church, subsequently was appointed choir director and director of music. In 1982 he accepted a new position at St. Stephen Catholic Church in Stevens Point and he continues to serve on the music committee of the Diocese of LaCrosse.

Benzmilller has also frequently appeared in recitals with the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point soloists, ensembles and Choirs.

Interestingly, music is an avocation with Benzmilller, his full time responsibilities being that of President of a family owned manufacturing company.

BENZMILLER, JIM

Benzmiller began playing the organ at age 10. Four years later he was appointed organist at St. Stanislaus Church, Stevens Point, Wisconsin. He was later appointed choir director and director of music for this church. In 1964 Benzmiller was granted permission to tonally redesign the church's 1930 vintage Moller pipe organ. The result was a more theatrical sound which Benzmiller captured on a long-playing stereo disc, "Bold, Brassy, Brilliant."

Benzmiller has played organ intermissions at the Grand Theatre, Wausau, Wisconsin and broadcast over the radio over a period of years. He was one of the featured artists at the 1977 ATOS national convention. He has given theatre organ concerts in a number of eastern and midwestern cities.

In 1982 Benzmiller accepted the position of organist at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Stevens Point. He continues to serve on the Music Committee of the Diocese of La Crosse.

Benzmiller has appeared in recitals with University of Wisconsin (Stevens Point) soloists, ensembles and choirs.

Music is an avocation with Benzmiller. His full-time employment is that of President of a family-owned manufacturing concern.

BERNSTEIN, BEATRICE (Miss)

Organist of Loew's Elsmere Theatre in New York City in 1927.

BERNSTEIN, EDNA

Organist of the Central Park Theatre in Chicago, Illinois
in 1928.

BERNOUR, "KATIE"

Organist of the Colonial Theatre, the Strand Theatre, and the
Palace Theatre in Akron, Ohio.

Echoes from Wausau's first conservatory filter th

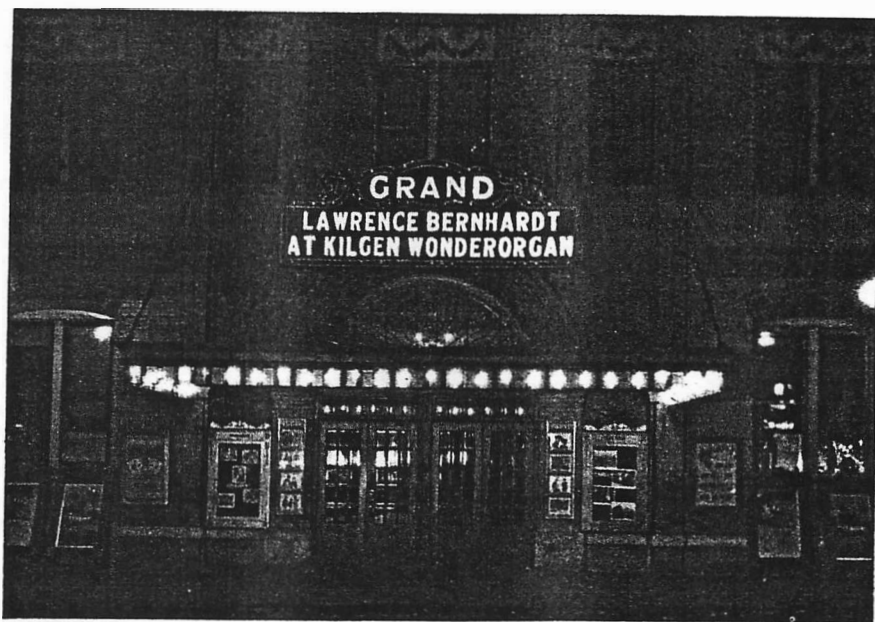
Pause near the YMCA around 4 o'clock on a darkening winter afternoon. You might hear echoes of young pianists and violinists who found music there during the 1920s and early 1930s. They were students at the first Wausau Conservatory of Music.

Today's Wausau Conservatory of Music is the second music school of that name. The first, a private school open from 1926 to 1932, is a memory now. It is as much a story recollected about the man who started the conservatory, as it is a story about the conservatory. That school was founded and directed by Lawrence E. Bernhardt — musical prodigy, organist at St. John's Episcopal Church at age 12, student at the New England Conservatory of Music, accompanist for silent movies at the Majestic and Grand theaters, friend of Josef Lhevinne, and a respected piano teacher in New York City.

Bernhardt's window, Marion (Brooks) Bernhardt, recalls him as a "charmer." Mrs. Bernhardt, now 76 and living in Minocqua, said, "People loved to hear him play the piano. He made students like him enough that they wanted to please him."

A faculty member, Pearl (Quade) Imingen, 81, remembers him as "creative." Mrs. Imingen, a Wausau resident, taught on one of two Steinway concert grand pianos in the conservatory's downtown studios.

Bernhardt, at 30, opened the school in a house at 606 Sixth St., because he wanted a "place to teach," said Mrs. Bernhardt. He was already well known in Wausau as a teacher and performer. Born in 1896 in a small logging town in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where his father was a millwright, Bernhardt became interested in the piano through his mother. Years later, he told his wife he could "still smell the



Bernhardt both played the organ and conducted the orchestra for shows at the old Grand Theater. Located on the site of the present Grand, this building was opened in 1899 and torn down in the 1920s. This photo was taken during the 1920s, as indicated by the billboards for silent films starring Dorothy Gish and Adolphe Menjou. (Photo courtesy of Marion Bernhardt)

varnish" on the first piano in his childhood U.P. home. After moving to Wausau, his talent was recognized by Dr. and Mrs. David T. Jones, who took the boy into their home to live with them. He studied piano with Professor Hoyt in his Third Street studio. At 12, he served as the St. John's organist, as noted in a Chicago *Tribune* photo captioned "World's Youngest Church Organist." While a high school student, Bernhardt gave piano lessons to "pupils of all ages at 50 cents a lesson," recalled Mrs. Bernhardt. The Jones's sent him to the New England Conservatory in Boston for advanced studies. His work there was interrupted by World War I. At 19, he was serving as an Army band leader in France.

After the war, Bernhardt returned to Wausau, partly because of his mother's illness. In the next years, he accompanied silent films at the old Grand Theater and on a white Steinway piano at the Majestic Theatre formerly in the 600 block of Third Street. He also taught

piano students, played with a band for Wausau Club dances, and was organist for the Universalist Church.

First conservatory opens

As his wife noted, the opening of the conservatory provided him with a place to teach. An ad in the *Wausau Pilot* in 1926 suggests that the young school was flourishing. Lawrence Bernhardt and Mrs. Imingen were two of four piano instructors. There were violin teachers, one for cello, two for woodwinds, one for saxophone, one for fretted instruments, one in theory, and three in the voice department. The ad announces the "Engagement of Mario Carboni as Director of the Voice Department." Citing a review from the *Chicago Herald-Examiner*, the ad describes Mr. Carboni as a "baritone, with the true Italian warmth and impetuosity." (Mrs. Imingen said Carboni stayed here less than a year. "He sang very well, but there weren't enough students for a teacher of his stature," she explained.)

BERNHARDT, LAWRENCE

ugh today



Mario Carboni was a voice instructor at the first conservatory. He taught in Wausau briefly during 1926. (Photo courtesy of Marion Bernhardt)



Bernhardt shown at the Kilgen organ in the old Grand Theater. Larry Beltz, long associated with the Grand, says this organ may have been traded in for the Kilgen organ now in the Grand. (Photo courtesy of Marion Bernhardt)

Later that year, the school was moved to the Boehm house, a two-story brick building at 809

Third, now the site of the YMCA parking lot. An article reporting the move says the school had "grown to be considerable of a factor in the educational opportunities of the city." Because the new downtown quarters were "just ten steps from the car line," it would be convenient for pupils from the west side and northern and southern parts of Wausau. A "materially strengthened" faculty was mentioned.

The new location was furnished beautifully, said Mrs. Bernhardt. There were the two Steinway grands. Reproductions of famous paintings were hung throughout.

Music flourished

Most of the 100 students were young people, who came to the conservatory for lessons after the school day had ended. "After school hours, you'd always hear two or three things going on at once," remarked Mrs. Bernhardt, herself a piano student of Mrs. Imingen. "There was a lot of activity," said Mrs. Imingen, who earned 30 cents of each \$1 paid for half-hour lessons.

Unlike today's conservatory, students didn't appear in recital. Faculty members, however, performed for each other at Bernhardt's home, and Bernhardt gave annual recitals, often in the old Grand Theater. And, he arranged Wausau concerts by the Maier and Patterson piano duo, the French pianist Dumesnil touring America with a piano that had belonged to Chopin, violinist Max Rosen, pianist Moissaye Boguslawski of the Boguslawski College of Music in Chicago, and, in 1931, pianist Josef Lhevinne.

In 1933, Bernhardt left Wausau for New York City. The conservatory was closed, and there would not be another in Wausau until the present one opened in 1981. The first one certainly contributed to Wausau's cultural life, but it had not made "much money," according to Mrs. Bernhardt.

Mrs. Imingen left the conservatory several years before its closing, moving to Mosinee with her husband, Hans Imingen. They had met at the school when Mr. Imingen, a violinist, was looking for an accompanist. (Their first date, she said, took them to a concert by renowned contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink in the Old Main auditorium at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point). A 1922 graduate of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Mrs. Imingen continued to teach. She had as many as 60 students in Wausau and 12 in Mosinee at one time. "I don't know how I did it," she says now. She has four adult piano students today.

As for Bernhardt, he had begun a friendship with the Russian pianist Josef Lhevinne, at that time a musician as admired as, say, Itzhak Perlman is today. The friendship was based, in part, on a shared fondness for fishing, particularly muskie fishing once Lhevinne became acquainted with northern Wisconsin and Mrs. Bernhardt's family cottage.

In the summer of 1933, Bernhardt went to Seal Harbor, Maine, where Lhevinne was conducting master classes. That fall, Bernhardt was teaching in New York with the assistance of Lhevinne, who had recommended him to young students. With the Bernhardts was one of the two Steinway grands that had been in the Wausau conservatory. (That piano was later sold, said Mrs. Bernhardt.) The Bernhardts regularly visited Josef Lhevinne and his wife, Rosina, one of the great piano teachers of this century. During their weekend visits, Mrs. Lhevinne, disliking to do her own correspondence, would have Mrs. Bernhardt write letters for her.

The following years took Bernhardt to Milwaukee, where he

Continued on page 17

INSIDE THE *Rolltop*



Charles Hott

Director

Dear Friends,

Upon becoming Director last September, I immediately perceived a need for a better, more comprehensive means of informing the Conservatory's diffuse constituency. Welcome to ENCORE!!

Inside the Rolltop will be a regular feature of ENCORE. It is my chance to highlight some of the many things going on at the Conservatory, as well as present my thoughts on the good, the not-so-good, and the path to a better community music school.

Why the name *Inside the Rolltop*? For those of you who have not visited my office on the second floor of 407 Scott Street, I spend much of my time seated before a large rolltop desk. Many of the ideas I am working on are jotted down on slips of paper and filed in one of several pigeon-holes.

I love music. If I had the time, I would be studying with several of the Conservatory's faculty. All our teachers share my love affair with music. If you are not a member of our musical community — student, faculty, financial contributor, volunteer, or audience — I urge you to get to know us. Take a course! Attend a concert! Volunteer your skills! Make a tax-deductible donation! or ALL OF THE ABOVE! Partake of what we offer. We depend on you for our very existence.

One of my greatest pleasures associated with being the Director is the fact that I am responsible for employing musicians. Musicians are eminently worthy of satisfying employment. With your help, my responsibility will be backed by resources. Thank you supporters.

(continued from page 11)
Echoes from the past



Pearl Quade Imingen, shown here in a photo from the 1950s, was a piano instructor at the first conservatory. She lives in Wausau now, remaining active as a piano teacher. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Imingen)

taught piano, and then back to New York in 1942 for a position with Community Concerts. "He was a crackerjack salesman," said Mrs. Bernhardt about her husband's years with Community Concerts. In 1951, Bernhardt, still with the concert agency, moved to Chicago. He died there the next year. "I was comforted and pleased, then, that so many of his former students, as well as piano tuners, expressed their admiration for his musicianship and gratitude for his influence on their own musical appreciation and abilities," said Mrs. Bernhardt.

Some of the furnishings of the first conservatory, notably the reproductions of the paintings, are in Mrs. Bernhardt's Minocqua residence today. She also has photos of the conservatory and staff and a collection of the letters from Josef Lhevinne and many others to her husband. "I am glad to know that a music conservatory still carries on in Wausau and that Larry is still remembered," she said.

When the new conservatory was opened, the organizers were unaware of the earlier Wausau Conservatory of Music. "We didn't know about it," said Bellamy Hosler, the contemporary school's first director and now a piano instructor. "The Marathon County Historical Society found a clipping of the old PILOT ad after we'd gotten started. They gave us the clipping, and we will frame it." "Conservatory" was included in the school's name, said Hosler, because it suggested "quality," which was probably Lawrence Bernhardt's thought nearly 60 years ago.

The first conservatory is a memory today. But its influence continues, through the people who taught there, and through the students of teachers like Pearl Imingen and Lawrence Bernhardt.

Note: This is by no means the complete story. If you have more information about the first Wausau Conservatory of Music, please let writer Don Aucutt know, 848-2482.

BENZMILLER, JIM

Benzmiller began playing the organ at age 10. Four years later he was appointed organist of St. Stanislaus Church, Stevens Point, Wisconsin. He has remained in that position for several years, now also serving also as a choir master.

In 1964 Benzmiller was granted permission to totally redesign the 1930 Moller pipe organ. The result was a more theatrical sound which Benzmiller captured on the long-playing stereo disc, "Bold, Brassy, Brilliant."

In addition to his church duties Benzmiller finds time for occasional theatre organ concerts particularly in the midwest. He is one of several of the younger generation of theatre organists who have been influenced in style and approach by well-known theatre organist, Kay McAbee.

JIM BENZMILLER

Jim Benzmiller is another midwest organist who has been presented in concert by CATOE. A resident of Stevens Point, Wis., Jim is minister of music at St. Stanislaus Church in that upstate Wisconsin town. Its 3-manual Moller received a lot of attention from Jim who liked the organ so much he cut an album on it. More recently, he has been involved with work on the Grand Theatre Kilgen in Wausau, Wis. It was he who ~~had~~ brought the large-scale 3/14 Parton from the Chicago Regal Theatre. He sold it to CATOEr Harrison Baker before being able to reinstall it. Now, he is busy setting up a 3/21 in his home, the basis of which is the Toledo State Theatre Marr & Colton. Jim plans future record releases when the organ is completed.

Reference: 1977 ATOS Convention brochure

BERGH, INGA

Organist of the Arcadia Theatre in Winber, Pennsylvania
in 1926.

BERGMAN, MARION (Miss)

Organist at Loew's Victoria Theatre in New York City in 1927.

BERENTSEN, ROBERT J.

Born in Chicago of Norwegian descent. He studied music in Minneapolis and later in Europe. While overseas, he was the only organist to participate in Norway's Choral Celebration of its Constitution's 100th Anniversary.

Berentsen returned to the United States and located in New York City serving as organist in the New Atlantic Theatre, Brooklyn, the Academy of Music, the Broadway Theatre, and the Capitol Theatre. In 1923, he served as President of the New York Society of Theatre Organists.

George Eastman appointed him to the post of organist at the Eastman Theatre in Rochester, New York in 1923 succeeding Deszo Von D'Antalfy, who resigned to return to New York City. Harold

BERENTSEN, ROBERT J.

2.

Osborn Smith shared the bench at the 4 manual/155 rank Austin pipe organ in the Eastman Theatre. Berentsen taught the motion picture organ course at the Eastman School of Music, using a completely equipped studio and a 2 manual/7 rank Wurlitzer pipe organ on the fifth floor. He also broadcast from the Eastman School over Radio Station WHAM, Rochester, New York.

In 1929 with the beginning demise of sound pictures, Berentsen left the theatre organ profession to enter business as a broker. For 14 years, however, he served as organist and pianist of the Rochester New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and for 24 years he was organist and choir director of the Central Presbyterian Church.

Berentsen was elected three times to the post of Dean of the

BERENTSEN, ROBERT J.

3.

Rochester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. In 1954, he became Assistant Medical Aide Coordinator for Monroe County Civil Defense. In April of 1955, he retired and moved to Florida where he died in 1962.

1924

Profile of the Maestro

ROBERT BERNTSEN - beloved organist and choir director of Central Church, was literally born into a world of music with hillabies sung to him by his mother, a renowned coloratura soprano, known as the Norwegian Nightingale.

Although born in Chicago, young Robert was first heard from in Minneapolis at the tender age of thirteen, when he made his debut as assistant organist at All Saints Episcopal Church. A year later he became assisting organist at St. Marks Protestant Episcopal Cathedral. At sixteen, the already famous boy organist was engaged as organist at St. Augustus Lutheran Church and had his first experience as a choir director of sixty voices. At seventeen he went to Norway and soon acquired a Continental reputation, averaging thirty concerts a year. In his spare time he taught singing in the public schools and conducted a male chorus of 100 voices.



MR. ROBERT BERNTSEN
Minister of Music

1929 he became organist of Lake Avenue Baptist Church and a year later he came to Central, where we have been fortunate in having him as our organist and choir director for fourteen years.

"Arbe's" ability is not limited to the realm of music, his swimming and skiing are the envy of outdoor enthusiasts. And members of the choir still talk enthusiastically about a Sunday sermon he preached several years ago at their annual outing at Camp Cory.

The maestro is also Dean of the Rochester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and he was formerly President of the Society of Theater Organists of New York City.

While his reputation as a master musician and artist commands our humble respect and admiration, it is Robert Berntsen the man, who has endeared himself to hundreds of people in Central Church and out of it. Although he is such a busy man it exhausts us just to say his name, he always finds time to help and inspire others, to visit the sick, and quietly to lend a hand in a multitude of ways. If any man ever worked at being a Christian twenty-four hours a day, that man is Bob Berntsen!

We are indebted to George Eastman for his presence in Rochester, for it was in 1923 that Mr. Eastman succeeded in bringing him to the Eastman School as instructor. While at the Eastman School he also became organist of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra—a position he still occupies. In

next four years were spent as organist at the Academy of Music in New York City.

Robert Berntsen returned to America, where his Royal Conservatory of Music in Berlin, Germany, in 1911. After four years of study at the in 1911. After four years of study at the the King of Norway at the Centennial Exposition career, including a Command Performance before Honor of all sorts highlighted his European and conducted a male chorus of 100 voices.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.

ROBERT BERENTSEN

A varied list of virtues can be added to Robert Berentsen's triumph! A very thorough musician and teacher of organ at his studio, which is a branch of the famous Eastman School of Music in Rochester; broadcasting over WHAM and the much desired opportunity to open the Capitol Theatre in New York are all qualities that have helped Berentsen to achieve his spectacular success. He has been featured at some of the largest houses in New York and has been connected with the Eastman organization for six years. His delightful personality and optimism have helped him to gain in his remarkable height in the world of organists.

1928

The following item was found in the May 1938 Diapason by
Lloyd E. Klos:

ROBERT J. BERENTSEN

In Robert J. Berentsen, the organ world has a member of marked versatility who has won a reputation in varied musical activities, both in his native America and in Norway, the land of his ancestors. Mr. Berentsen is at present organist and director at the Central Presbyterian Church of Rochester, N.Y., and organist and pianist of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra.

To establish ~~XXX~~ his right to be classified as versatile, it may be mentioned that he has achieved fame, not only at the console, both in church and theater, but as a vocal teacher and as a choral conductor of the first rank. The son of a distinguished singer, he has developed throughout his life the talent which was his by birth.

Robert Berentsen was born in Chicago in 1891. His mother was a renowned coloratura soprano, Anna Smith Behrens, known in her day as the Norwegian nightingale. When Robert was only 4, he was taken to Minneapolis, where he had his first piano lessons from Miss Zaidee Eaton. At 15, he was substitute organist at All Saints' Episcopal Church and at St. Mark's Pro-cathedral. A year later, he was appointed organist and choirmaster of St. Ansgarius' Lutheran Church.

Going to Norway when he was 17, he soon became assistant organist

of Holy Cross Church in Bergen. Later, he was placed in charge of vocal instruction at the Hambros High School and gave an average of 30 organ recitals a year in various Norwegian cities.

In 1910, he went to Germany to study at the Royal Conservatory in Berlin, and was a pupil in organ of Bernhard Irrgang and in theory of Max Seiffert.

In 1914, Mr. Berentsen was the only organist to appear in recital at the Centennial Exposition in Oslo by command of King Kaakon.

After the beginning of the World War in 1914, Mr. Berentsen returned to the United States and for four years was organist at the old Academy of Music on Fourteenth Street in New York. This was followed by his appointment to be chief organist of the Capitol Theater. He was elected president of the Society of Theater Organists, which included the leading movie players of that day.

In 1922, Mr. Berentsen moved to Rochester to become organist of the Eastman Theater and teacher of organ and motion-picture playing at the Eastman School of Music. In 1929, he was appointed organist of the Lake Avenue Baptist Church, and a year later, went to the Central Presbyterian.

He has been organist of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra for more than 15 years. When the A.G.O. held its general convention in Rochester, he was in charge of the local arrangements and received credit for much of the success of the meeting.

Mr. Berentsen is doing thorough work at his church and has developed its musical program with zeal and ability. It is his purpose to give everyone with a voice and the desire to use it an opportunity to sing and to receive special training. Central Church has a junior choir of 50 boys and girls from 9 to 14; a high school choir of 35, and an adult chorus of 55, as well as a paid quartet.

Each of the choirs has some part in every service and once a month, the three choirs and quartet unite to give a large work. The junior and high school choirs each have one anthem a month at the church services and the adult choir sings an anthem every Sunday. The work of the musical organizations under Mr. Berentsen's leadership has been acclaimed throughout Rochester.

Tom Blundell

Deal

June 14-2006

1994

BIGGS, ARTHUR H.

Theatre organist in the Seattle, Washington area. Organist of the Woodland Theatre in Seattle in January of 1927, organist of the Ridgemont Theatre in Seattle, June of 1927.

BILGER, BILLY

Organist of the Uptown Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1927.

BILLINGS, ROBERT

Born in Macon, Missouri, April 5, 1900. Attended the West Division High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Was recording organist for the Q. R. S. Music Roll Company for one year, and six years with the U. S. Music Roll Company. He recorded hand played rolls covering the musical spectrum from classical to fox trots. There are many musicians in his family. His father was an inventor of improvements on musical instruments. Billings also studied voice extensively.

BIRCHALL, HERBERT

Organist of the Regent Theatre, Dunkirk, New York in 1923.

BIEBEL, FATHER WILLIAM

Father William Biebel, a native of Erie, Pennsylvania, has the enjoyment of several simultaneous careers, those of clergyman, educator, and organist. Following studies at Gannon University, St. Bonaventure and Catholic University, he was ordained to the Catholic priesthood in May of 1962. Since then he has been assigned to his high school alma mater, Cathedral Preparatory School as instructor in English, theology, German and music. Since 1969 he has served as Assistant Headmaster in charge of academic affairs and earned his Master's degree in religious studies from Marquette University in 1970.

Biebel's interest in music was inspired and promoted by his family. He did formal study at the Erie Conservatory of Music and graduate work at Catholic University in liturgical music, chant and composition. He served as Dean of the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and plays occasional programs of sacred music and does some liturgical composition.

Like most theatre organists, Father Biebel was fascinated by the special sounds of pipes at an early age. On his return to Erie in 1962 he began first-hand experimentation with the 3/13 Wurlitzer formerly in Erie's Warner Theatre and soon moved to almost weekly programs on the 3/31 Wurlitzer formerly in the Stuart Gee residence.

Since the mid 1960's Biebel has played many local programs and was chosen to open the theatre organ at Gannon University, a Tellers instrument saved from the now demolished Shea's theatre in Erie. He has performed most often on the 4/28 Wurlitzer located in the Maryland home of Richard F. Kline, an instrument associated with recordings and concerts by Lee Erwin and more recently an album by Lyn Larsen. His concerts there included those for the Potomac Valley Chapter of ATOS, the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, the Washington Chapter of the AGO, a special concert for the Association of Anglican Church Musicians in 1976 and a concert for the national convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders in 1982.

"Father Bill" as many call him, has been a featured artist for many chapters of the ATOS; Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit (Motor City), South Florida, Eastern Massachusetts. He has been featured three times at the Kimball of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society in Wilmington as well as the Detroit Theatre Organ Club, the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, and the Niagra Frontier group at North Tonawanda. Additional programs have included concerts for the Bluegrass Chapter on Dr. John Landon's restored instrument in Lexington, Kentucky; a concert at the Clemens Center, Elmira, New York, and one on the organ of the Macomb Theatre in Mt. Clemens, Michigan.

His formal study at the Erie Conservatory of Music and graduate work at Western University in historical music, organ and composition. He served as organist of the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and plays occasionally at the University of Western Ontario.

While still a student organist, Father Miller was fascinated by the specific aspects of pipe organs and their history. In his return to Erie he has been instrumental in the restoration of the organ at St. Ignace Church and has acted as advisor to the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Since the late 1960's Father Miller has given many recitals throughout the Erie area and has been a featured artist at the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He has also been a featured artist at the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He has also been a featured artist at the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He has also been a featured artist at the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Biographical Sketch: Rev. William E. Biebel

BIEBEL, BILL

Fr. William Biebel, a native of Erie, Pennsylvania, has the enjoyment of several simultaneous careers: those of clergyman, educator and organist. Following studies at Gannon University, St. Bonaventure and Catholic University, he was ordained to the Catholic Priesthood in May of 1962. Since then he has been assigned to his high school alma mater, Cathedral Preparatory School as instructor in English, theology, German and music. Since 1969 he has served as Assistant Headmaster in charge of academic affairs and earned his Master's degree in religious studies from Marquette University in 1970.

His interest in music was inspired and promoted by his family and he did formal study at the former Erie Conservatory of Music and graduate work at Catholic University in liturgical music, chant and composition. He served as dean of the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and plays occasional programs of sacred music and does some liturgical composition.

Like most theatre organists, Fr. Biebel was fascinated by the special sounds of pipes at an early age. On his return to Erie in 1962, he began first-hand experimentation with the 3/13 Wurlitzer formerly in Erie's Warner Theatre, and soon moved up to almost weekly programs on the 3/31 Wurlitzer organ formerly in the Stuart Gee residence.

Since the mid-60's, he has played many local programs and was chosen to open the theatre organ at Gannon University, a Tellers built instrument saved from the now demolished Shea's Theatre in Erie. He has performed most often on the 4/28 Wurlitzer located in the Maryland home of Richard F. Kline, an instrument associated with recordings and concerts by Lee Erwin and more recently an album by Lyn Larsen. His concerts there included those for the Potomac Valley chapter of ATOS, the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, the Washington chapter of the AGO, a special concert for the Association of Anglican Church Musicians in 1976 and a concert for the national convention of the American Institute of Organbuilders in 1982.

"Father Bill" as many call him, has been featured artist for many chapters of the American Theatre Organ Society: Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit (Motor City), South Florida, Eastern Massachusetts. He has been featured three times at the Kimball of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society in Wilmington, as well as the Detroit Theatre Organ Club, the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, and the Niagara Frontier group at North Tonawanda. Most recent programs have been concerts for the Bluegrass chapter dedicating Dr. John Landon's restored instrument in Lexington, a concert at the Clemens Center, Elmira, N.Y. and one on the organ of the McComb Theatre in Mt. Clemens, Michigan.

DIEBEL BILL

Father Biebel genuinely enjoys sitting down to a real theatre pipe organ in the presence of a live audience. That situation seems to evoke a successful blend of careful organ registration, pleasant humor and solid, traditional theatre organ sounds. He enjoys playing many standard tunes of the 20's, 30's and 40's, and usually seems to locate some musical selection that many have forgotten and bring it back with a surprising gusto. Silent film accompaniment and old-fashioned sing-a-longs are frequent features of his programs. A great part of his enjoyment in playing concerts comes from the warmth of his audiences and the frequent correspondence and lasting friendship he enjoys with many of the popular artists in the theatre organ field.

Coming concerts:

- July, 1983 The Detroit Theatre Organ Club
- October, 1983 The Western Reserve Theatre Organ Society, Gray's Armory, Cleveland, Ohio.

- Nov. '84 ATOS Chapter Concert, Lockport, NY
- Dec '84 Annual Christmas Concert, Gannon Univ. Erie,
- Dec '84 Premiere Concert: Dennis Under Residence
Sharditz, Erie, Pa.

He has performed with the Maryland and Pennsylvania Theatre Organ Societies, the Maryland and Pennsylvania Theatre Organ Societies, the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, the Washington Chapter of the ATO, a special concert for the National Anglican Church Musicians in 1974 and a concert for the national convention of the American Institute of Organ Builders in 1981.

"Father Bill" as many call him, has been featured artist for many chapters of the American Theatre Organ Society: Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit (Notox City), South Florida, Eastern Massachusetts. He has been featured three times at the Kishall of the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society in Wilmington, as well as the Detroit Theatre Organ Club, the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, and the Niagara Frontier group at North Tonawanda. Most recent programs have been concerts for the Bluegrass chapter dedicating Dr. John Lambson's restored instrument in Lexington, a concert at the Clemens Center, Elkins, N.Y. and one on the organ of the McComb Theatre in Mt. Clemens, Michigan.

Father William Biebel

at

THE GANNON THEATRE PIPE ORGAN



About the Artist

F r. William Biebel is presently Pastor of St. Joseph's Church here in Erie. He has had a number of assignments in the Erie Diocese, the longest of which was the Assistant Headmaster of Cathedral Prep for around eighteen years.

Father has an excellent musical background in both education and public performance. While attaining his theological training for the Catholic Priesthood at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., he also undertook musical studies in Classical Music and Pipe Organ.

Father's public performances on the pipe organ include both Classical and Theatre type instruments around mostly Eastern and Midwestern parts of the country.

He is responsible for keeping this pipe organ alive at Gannon for the entire time it has been set up in this Gannon Commons Room.

Father is constantly sought out by numerous organizations seeking his time to perform, and in spite of his tight schedule, he manages to please as many of these groups as his time and obligations permit.

Gannon's Theatre Pipe Organ

The organ was saved from the wreckers iron ball by organ buffs back in 1968. It was housed in the Shea's Theatre which was marked for demolition, located where the Quality Court Hotel now stands.

The organ was installed by the Tellers Pipe Organ Co. back in 1921, and was the first theatre contract by the company with about twenty or more to follow in other theatres. Tellers was mainly a church organ builder then, until the idea of organs to accompany silent movies caught on and many other companies around the country got on the band wagon to also build theatre type pipe organs. All the demands for this type of organ was stopped by the introduction of sound movies. Organists were laid off and had to find other types of work unless they were also involved in church music work.

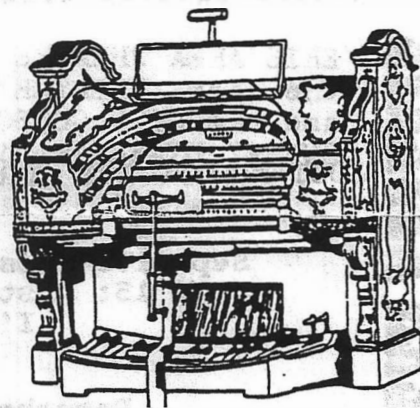
This organ has been up here in the Commons room for about eighteen years, and was kept alive by the art-

istry of Father William Biebel, Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, over the years.

The organ will soon become a fourteen rank instrument. It is presently ten. As soon as the larger console of three manuals is complete, replacing the two manuals currently in use, we will hook up the tuned and untuned percussions which are already in place. A new switch stack and relay, multiplex and memory system is also included in the renovation, enabling us to hook up all of the additional ranks and percussions. These pieces of equipment are time consuming to wire up and install, and cost a bundle to purchase. But it is necessary for operating all of the organ.

When finished, the organ can be classified as a 3/14 Robert Morton Tellers Theatre Pipe Organ.

Please keep supporting us by joining our organization, or by attending all of the "Pipe Dreams" concerts.



RTOS AUDITORIUM THEATRE PERFORMANCE--DECEMBER 11, 1987

RTOS takes pleasure in welcoming Father Bill Biebel to his encore performance at our Mighty Wurlitzer console this evening. Father Bill's previous RTOS appearance was in November, 1978.

A native of Erie, Father William Biebel has enjoyed his simultaneous careers as clergyman, educator and theater organist. He was ordained a Catholic Priest in 1962. Fr. Bill is the Pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Erie, PA, and he has been the Assistant Headmaster at Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie for many years.

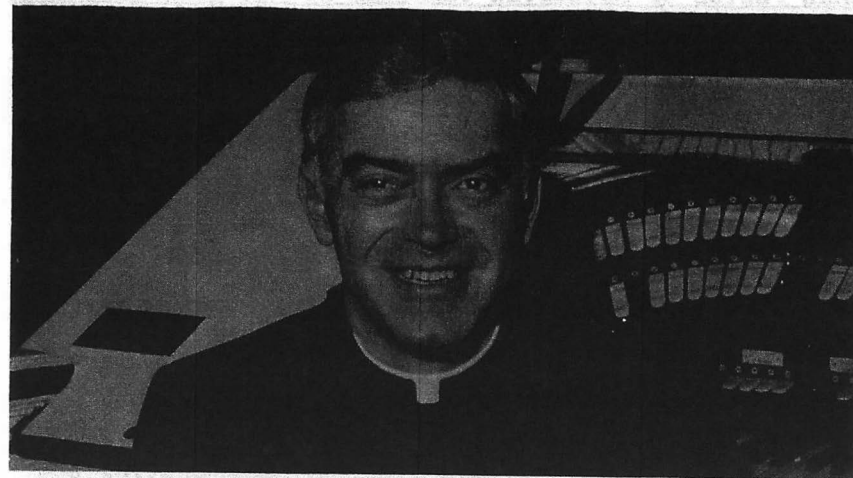
Father Bill Biebel's early interest in music was inspired and promoted by his family. His formal music studies were at the Erie Conservatory of Music, with ensuing graduate work in liturgical, chant and composition at Catholic University.

Like most theater organists, Fr. Biebel was fascinated by the special sounds of organ pipes at an early age. After his return to Erie in 1962, he started experimenting musically with the 3/13 that was formerly in Erie's Warner Theatre. He moved from there to almost weekly programs on a 3/31 resident organ.

Father Bill Biebel always enjoys performing at a theater pipe organ before a live audience. The combination of Father Bill, a theater organ and a live audience evokes a successful blend of pleasant humor and solid traditional theater organ sounds. He especially likes to play the wide variety of standard tunes of the 20's, 30's and 40's. Father Bill often finds a musical selection that many have forgotten and then brings it back to life with a surprising gusto that makes it new!

Father Bill's love of theater pipe organs has led to performances before audiences in many locations across the country. Besides his earlier RTOS appearance, he has presented concerts in Wilmington, DE; Washington, DC; Cleveland, OH; Pittsburgh, PA; Elmira, NY; North Tonawanda, NY; Lexington, KY; Detroit, MI; Mt. Clemens, MI as well as at theater organ installations in Eastern Massachusetts and Southern Florida. He has performed on several theater organs in Erie.

In Father Bill's opinion, the theater pipe organ is the most versatile "Pops" instrument available today and can perform music of unbelievable variety. Father Bill Biebel will illustrate this opinion during this evening's performance. Ladies and gentlemen---Please give a hearty greeting to Father Bill Biebel---as he presents us with an evening of fine theater organ entertainment.



FR. BILL BIEBEL

The Program: Father Biebel will announce his program.

AS A COURTESY TO ALL---Please do not take flash pictures during this concert.

TAPE RECORDING, by RTOS members, is permitted during tonight's concert only in the Top Balcony foyer area, using the facilities provided for that purpose. Taping of RTOS events is NEVER permitted in the theater's seating area!

The Rochester Theater Organ Society:

The Society is dedicated to the preservation and the presentation of the music of theater pipe organs. RTOS produces musical events on two organs: this Auditorium Theatre and the Eisenhart Auditorium Wurlitzers.

RTOS membership is open to all. Information is available in the Main Lobby, or by writing to: RTOS, PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or by phoning: 544-6595.

You will find that an RTOS Membership Card is your passport to many hours of pleasurable entertainment.

COMING ATTRACTION: ALLEN MILLS, the talented resident organist at Schenectady's *Proctor Theatre*, will perform his fourth RTOS concert at 8:15 PM on **Saturday, January 23rd** at this *Auditorium Theatre* Wurlitzer. Admission for RTOS members is free, and non-member tickets at \$5.25 each will be available at the Box Office on the night of the concert.

BIEBEL, WILLIAM E.

Born in Erie, Pennsylvania on November 23, 1936. Ordained to the Catholic Priesthood in 1962. Assistant head master at Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Received his early music training in piano, organ, and theory at the Erie Conservatory of Music, and continued study for his Master's degree at Catholic University, Washington, D. C. with studies in liturgical music, organ, and composition under Russell Woolen and Conrad Bernier.

Since 1963 Beibel has avidly studied theatre organ styling and has played weekly at the Stuart Gee residence (3 manual/33 rank Wurlitzer). He has performed for American Theatre Organ Society chapter events, for the Potomac Valley Chapter, the

BIEBEL, WILLIAM E.

2.

Western Reserve Chapter and the Dickinson Theatre Organ Society, as well as PATOS. Several of these concerts have been played on the Richard Kline residence Wurlitzer (4 manual/28 rank) with programs scheduled there in 1976 along with programs in Wilmington, Delaware, Los Angeles, and other cities.

Biebel is the former Dean of the Erie Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He enjoys doing serious organ study and performance and has played several dedicatory recitals in the past two years.

BIECK, ELMER

Theatre organist in the California area. Recorded a number of 78 r.p.m. recordings on the Hollywood Rythms label, approximately 1950. It is not known what organ was used for these recordings.

BIENNE, MARCEL

Theatre organist in the Seattle, Washington area in the 1920's. Organist of the Ridgemont Theatre in Seattle, Washington in April 1926. In November 1926, organist of the Embassy Theatre there, a post which he was to hold for several years.

BICKFORD, GEORGE

Born in Washington, Iowa. Began Piano lessons at age 8 from a local teacher. Took some organ instruction in later years from Helen Crawford. He organized a five piece band and toured the country for three years after graduating from high school. He started playing the organ for silent pictures at the Fox Theatre in Washington, Iowa. During the next several years he played at the Rialto Theatre in Boone, Iowa; the Strand Theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and the Englert Theatre in Iowa City, Iowa. In 1928 he moved to Davenport, Iowa and was engaged to play organ at the Garden and Capitol Theatres there, as well as the Fort Theatre in Rock Island, Illinois. His last theatre organ assignments were at the Des Moines and Paramount Theatres in Des Moines, Iowa. In later years, he managed the

2.

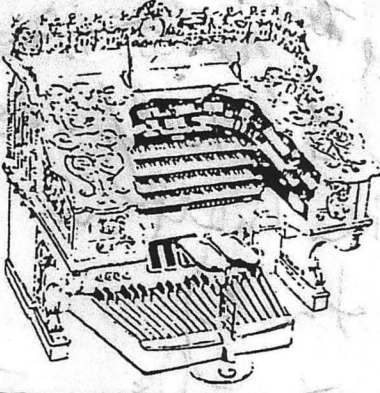
BICKFORD, GEORGE

Davenport Club, a private luncheon and dinner club in Davenport, Iowa. The Club has a Hammond organ which he plays occasionally.

BIRDSONG, MABEL GRAY

Organist of the Washington Theatre in Dallas, Texas in 1914, (two manual, eleven rank Hillgreen-Lane organ), and at the same time organist of Christ Episcopal Church, Dallas.

Birdsong studied with George Perfect, dean of Dallas theatre organists. She had planned to become a concert pianist and studied under Isabel Hutchinson at Bush Temple Conservatory, Dallas. Her plans changed when she married Lawrence Birdsong, Sr., and moved to Longview, Texas where she became organist of the First Baptist Church in 1919. For a short time she played at the Rembert Theatre, Longview, but finally settled for the church job exclusively. In 1945 she studied with Roy Perry of Kilgore, Texas. She was honored in 1970 for her 50 years as organist of Longview's First Baptist Church.



— Bill Tunstall sent ~~me~~ this WILD EXAMINER



Birdsong, Mrs. Lawrence (Mabel) Sr.

LAWRENCE BIRDSONG, JR.
P. O. BOX 1146
104 WEST WHALEY ST.
LONGVIEW, TEXAS 75601

Sept 12
1984

Hello: Sorry my scribbling is sloppy because of my bad hand.

Enclosed is Purvis' complete and Lynn's also. About 1/2 of Jerry - (you may have attended his or were you able to make it?) Any others you want, I'll make from my disks of Bill's.

Not much ~~flat~~ fidelity lost in transferring. Hand recorder quality. Mother played at the Washington Theatre in Dallas (1914) and Christ Episcopal concurrently. The theatre organ was a 2 manual Hilgreen - Same of about 11 ranks (display pipes



on both sides of proceeding). The ^{theat} front was
full of light bulbs and was a half-dome
shape like band ~~shell~~ shell on the wall in
Central Park. (Typical design of the time.)

She studied with George Perfect - Dean of
Dallas theatre organists who had a bunch
of pupils. She aimed for concert pianist career
but her teacher, Isabel Hutchison's plan for
her at Bush Temple Conservatory (Dallas)
led out to marriage and ^{then to} Longview at the
Baptist church in 1919. For a short time,
she played at the Rembert theatre here in
Longview, then settled for the church job
exclusively. In 1945 she ^{STUDIED} worked with Roy Perry of Kilgore.

The piano rolls on the organ sound great!

Please, let me in on some of them.

Hope George sounds good to you. My sister
went to Kilbourn and took snapshots of STATE
all boarded up. Organ gone to Tottenham Court -
said the manager of Bingo hall (in side entrance
of STATE) have sent them to Rad. Will send
to you when he returns them. She could not get in the
theatre proper.

Must get these ^{tapes} mailed to you. Sorry
Errors for delay.

BLADES, EARL

A native of Benton, Wisconsin, Blades studied organ under Frank Van Dusen in Chicago. He held church organist positions in the Chicago area turning most of his energies to playing the organ in Chicago theatres. For several years he was organist of the Gumbiner DeLuxe Theatre, Chicago. A graduate of the American Conservatory of Music(Chicago).

PLAYING

Contributing Editor

atory Theater School

ne of Its Successful Products

tingling imaginations: they wanted to get into this new game and see what could be in it. These venturesome souls have created, in hardly a decade, a new art in music, an art of sufficient magnitude to require a definite curriculum and teaching force in



EARL BLADES

Pupil of Mr. Van Dusen, native of Benton, Wisconsin, experienced church and theater organist, played in Chicago churches four years and Chicago theaters eight years, now playing in the Gumbiner De Luxe Theater where he has been for the past four years; Mus. Bac. American Conservatory

Who
gradu
Hall,
gradu
the c
Gold
teach

the most advanced conservatories.
Who was the first to begin a definite curriculum, to establish a definite school, to formulate a definite practise of teaching organists to play in the theater? If you have nothing especially pressing to do for

BLAIR, ADELE (Mrs.)

Wife of Harry Blair, well known song plugger for Shapiro-Berstein, who ran a music service for theatre organists. Adele Blair played the Loew's Gates Theatre in New York City in 1927, at the time that Harry Blair met and married her.

BLAKE, GEORGE

Theatre organist who was heard over Radio Station WJZ New York in 1930.

Broadcast as a substitute for Lew White from the RKO Center Theatre, Rockefeller Center, New York City. Blake was announced as Lew White's protege. He later became an organist in a church in South Orange, New Jersey.

From: William Webber <willwebb@windstream.net> Tue, Jul 24, 2018 12:29 PM
Subject: Dr. Landon...
To: jwanzon@windstream.net

Dr. Landon;

My, how fate almost brought us together so many times....me and theatre organ, that is.

As with David Hegarty and Esther Higgins, I have discovered that another one of my favorite composers of church organ music, George Blake, was a celebrated theatre pipe organist. I pass these folks on to you for your records, for it is only in preserving their work that the musical influence of theatre organists will be acknowledged.

GEORGE BLAKE

At age fourteen, George Blake (1912-1986) began to play the theater organ professionally at the Franklin Theatre in Nutley, New Jersey. His father having died when he was very young, Blake quickly became the primary provider of his family's needs and he lived with his mother in New Jersey for many years until her death. His mother was the cartoonist Bud Blake (of the popular comic strip "Tiger.")

BLAKE, GEORGE

Theatre organist who was heard over Radio Station WJZ New York in 1930.

A student and protégé of Lew White (organist of the original Roxy Theatre), George Blake served as principal organist for a number of theaters in New Jersey and New York City, including the New Roxy (later the Center Theatre) in Rockefeller Center. He was also a regular performer on several radio programs of the day, including the "Lucky Strike Hour." As the age of the cinema organist ended, Blake focused primarily on sacred music. During his cinema years, he was organist at several churches in New Jersey including St. Andrew's Episcopal (South Orange) and Grace Episcopal (Nutley) and was the school organist for Columbia High School (Maplewood). Blake composed and published extensively in both sacred and secular genres. He co-wrote a number of popular songs with Richard Leibert, organist of

Windstream Webmail

jwlandon@windstream.net

Dr. Landon.....

From : William Webber <willwebb4@windstream.net> Tue, Jul 24, 2018 12:29 PM**Subject :** Dr. Landon.....**To :** jwlandon@windstream.net

Dr. Landon;

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Radio City Music Hall, several of which were performed and recorded by leading artists of the day, including Mario Lanza. For Lorenz Publishing Co., Blake wrote many original works and arrangements in the organ and choral genres.

William Webber, CAGO

Organist, First United Methodist Church, Andover Campus

Associate Organist, The Kentucky Theater

Lexington, Kentucky

(859)381-8476

Windstream Webmail

jwlandon@windstream.net

George Blake...theatre organist....

From : William Webber <william.webberiv@windstream.net>

Sun, Jul 28, 2019 06:35 PM

Subject : George Blake...theatre organist...

📎 1 attachment

To : John Landon <jwlandon@windstream.net>

Dr. Landon,

Here is the information on George Blake I promised you.

George Blake

At age fourteen, George Blake (1912–1986) began to play the theater organ professionally at the Franklin Theatre in Nutley, New Jersey. His father having died when he was very young, Blake quickly became the primary supporter of his family through his performing, and he lived with his mother in New Jersey for many years until her death. His younger brother was the cartoonist Bud Blake (of the popular comic strip "Tiger.") A student and protégé of Lew White (organist of the original Roxy Theatre), George Blake served as principal organist for a number of theaters in New Jersey and New York City, including the New Roxy (later the Center Theatre) in Rockefeller Center. He was also a regular performer on several radio programs of the day, including the "Lucky Strike Hour." As the age of the cinema organist ended, Blake focused primarily on sacred music. During his cinema years, he was organist at several churches in New Jersey including St. Andrew's Episcopal (South Orange) and Grace Episcopal (Nutley) and was the school organist for Columbia High School (Maplewood). Blake composed and published extensively in both sacred and secular genres. He co-wrote a number of popular songs with Richard Leibert, organist of Radio City Music Hall, several of which were performed and recorded by leading artists of the day, including Mario Lanza. For Lorenz Publishing Co., Blake wrote many original works and arrangements in the organ and choral genres.

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*William Webber, CAGO***Organist, First United Methodist Church, Andover****Associate Organist, The Kentucky Theater****Lexington, Kentucky****(859)381-8476**

BLAKELY, ARTHUR

Broadcast over Radio Station KHJ, Los Angeles in the mid 1920's

BLANCHARD, WILLIAM G. (Dr.)

Theatre organist in the Indianapolis, Indiana area in the silent picture days. Among the posts he held was that of organist of the Indiana Theatre, Indianapolis.

Blanchard was born September 5, 1905 in Greencastle, Indiana. He studied music at DePauw University, the University of Michigan, Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and Columbia University. He did considerable radio and theatre work before becoming super-indendent of music at a high school in Sidney, Ohio. Six years thereafter he moved to Claremont, California where he became Professor of Organ at Pomona College and organist of the Garrison Theatre. He served as organist of The Claremont Colleges, Claremont Graduate School and in 1938 he began a long tenure as organist of the Claremont United Church of Christ.

2

BLANCHARD, WILLIAM G. (dr.)

Blanchard retired in 1971 and later suffered a stroke from which he never fully recovered. He died December 19, 1978.

BLOOD, J. J.

Organist of the Queen Theatre, Muscatine, Iowa in 1913.

BLUE, ALICE

Organist of the Palace Theatre in Hilo, Hawaii (3 manual/7 rank Robert Morton pipe organ). Became organist of the Princess Theatre, Honolulu, Hawaii (4 manual/16 rank Robert Morton), following the tenure of Edwin Sawtelle, famous Hawaiian theatre organist of the 1920's. She continued in this position until the early 1930's.

BLUM, FLORENCE (MISS)

Organist at the Strand Theatre in Schenectady, New York in 1923, and of the Prospect Theatre, Flushing, Long Island, New York; in 1927. Organist on the Reid Circuit of Theatres in New Jersey in 1928.

BLUNK, BILL (John William Blunk).

Professional organist in the northwestern United States. Played occasionally at the Paramount Theatre in Anderson, Indiana. Was organist of the Alexandria Roller Rink in Alexandria, Indiana. Leader of a dance combo which held a five year engagement at a popular Oregon coast dinner club, Staff Organist at Portland International Airport's famous Port West Dining Room. Teaches piano and organ at the Day Music Center in Portland, Oregon and owns the giant 5 manual/24 rank Marr and Colton theatre pipe organ that was originally installed in Loew's Rochester Theatre in Rochester, New York in 1927.

BODE, FRANCES

Organist of the Clemmer Theatre in Spokane, Washington in 1926.

BOCK, SYBIL

Radio organist who played the pipe organ theme for the "Lum and Abner"
radio broadcast.

BODYCOMBE, ANEURIN ("RED")

Perhaps the best known of the organists of Pittsburgh radio station KDKA. Born in the little village of Pontandawe, Wales in 1899, Bodycombe's childhood was filled with the rich Welsh heritage of music and resulted in his decision to begin to study piano. After serving in the British Navy in World War I he emigrated to Wilkesburg, Pennsylvania where his grandfather lived. Upon his arrival in 1922 he found a job as an organist accompanying silent movies but he didn't enjoy the work because the management wanted him to play popular music of the day. As a recent immigrant he didn't know many tunes popular in the United States.

Bodycombe turned toward the field of church music. In 1923 he became organist of the First Presbyterian Church in Wilkesburg and before long he accompanied some singers from the church on KDKA. It was his first taste of radio and he liked it. In 1929 he joined the KDKA music staff. He played the organ and piano and accompanied singers and groups. The next year he married a Wilkesburg girl, Esther Bothwell. In 1935 he became Musical Director for the station and for nearly thirty years he served the station in various capacities. In 1961 Bodycombe celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary as organist and choir master of the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. During his years there his sacred compositions sold thousands upon thousands of copies. He retired from KDKA in 1964 spending the last few years with the sales department after the dropping of live shows in the mid-1950's.

One of the greatest honors Bodycombe ever received was an honorary Doctor of Music degree awarded him in 1954 by **Waynesburg**

College. For several years he played a series of weekly broadcasts for the Dairyman's Cooperative Sales Association entitled, "DCSA Organ Melodies" and featuring Bill Nesbitt as announcer. These broadcasts demonstrated his sterling musicianship and also were typical of the format of organ broadcasts across the country.

BOEHMER, LOUIS M.

Resident organist of the Hilliard Square Theatre in Cleveland,
Ohio in the mid-1920's (2 manual/8 rank Kimball organ).

BOHR, RAY

See pp. ____ to ____.

*Organist
Rocky City Music Hall*

*Rocky City
New York*

RAYMOND F. BOHR

BOHR, RAY -- Ray Bohr assumed the position of chief organist at Radio City Music Hall following the retirement of Dick Leibert. He served more years on the staff than anyone other than Leibert.

Bohr was born in Nyack, New York, November 2, 1919. He began studying piano at age six, and although he never took a degree in music, he was fortunate in having some excellent private teachers. Before World War II he studied with Robert Morse at St. John's Church in Greenwich Village, New York City. After the war he studied with Harold Friedell at Calvary Episcopal Church, New York City.

At age fourteen Bohr took a job with M. A. Clark and Sons, who built and maintained pipe organs. He convinced the manager of the Rockland Theatre near his home that the two manual, seven rank Wurlitzer in the theatre needed restoration. Bohr did most of the work himself, and once his ability as a musician became evident, the theatre manager hired him as regular organist.

Bohr also held church organ posts in Haverstraw and Pearl River, New York, before going into the army in World War II. The only time he touched an organ during the war years was when he played a memorial service at Iwo Jima for the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

After World War II Ray Bohr took a position as organ demonstrator for Wurlitzer and continued his classical organ studies. He became associate organist at Radio City Music Hall in 1947 while continuing to demonstrate for Wurlitzer. He began playing the pipe organ in the Rainbow Room at the top of the RCA Building in Rockefeller Center. During these years he also became organist for the television show "Bride and Groom," a post he was to hold for a year. He continued as associate organist at the Music Hall until he was advanced to chief organist in 1973, a position he held until the Music Hall closed and reorganized in 1979.

Bohr
(pc)

Raymond F. Bohr Jr., the last chief organist of Radio City Music Hall, New York, died May 15, 1987 after a long illness.

Bohr was born in Nyack, New York, November 2, 1919. He started studying piano at age six and although he never took a degree in music he was fortunate in having some excellent private instruction. Before World War II he studied with Robert Morse at St. John's Church in Greenwich Village, New York City. After the War he studied with Harold Friedel while Friedel was organist of Calvary Episcopal Church, New York City. Bohr continued private lessons even after Dr. Friedel moved to St. Bartholemew's Church, and remained under his tutelage until Friedel died suddenly. Friedel was President of the Examining Board of the American Guild of Organists.

Fascinated with pipe organs since he as a boy, Bohr added a home-made pedal board to the piano in his parent's living room. At age fourteen he took a job with M. A. Clark and Sons, who built and maintained pipe organs. He obtained permission to practice at a local theatre. The police found him practicing away one morning at 4 a.m. enraptured with the instrument. Having sung in the choir of Grace Episcopal Church, Nyack, New York since he was six, he began sneaking into church after hours to try playing some jazz piano pieces on the pipe organ. One day the choirmaster caught him red handed, but, being impressed by the sounds the boy was producing from the organ, gave him the job of helping as relief organist for choir rehearsals. Bohr also convinced the manager of the Rockland Theatre near his home that

the two manual, seven rank Wurlitzer in the theatre needed restoration. Bohr did most of the work himself and once his ability as a musician became evident, the theatre manager hired him as regular organist.

Bohr also held church organ posts in Haverstraw and Pearl River, New York before going into the army in World War II. The only time he touched an organ during the war years was when he played a memorial service at Iwo Jima for the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

After World War II Ray Bohr took a position as organ demonstrator for Wurlitzer, and continued his classical organ studies. He became associate organist at Radio City Music Hall in 1947 while continuing to demonstrate for Wurlitzer. He began playing the pipe organ in the Rainbow Room, at the top of the RCA Building, Rockefeller Center. During these years he also became organist for the television show, "Bride and Groom," a post he was to hold for a year. He continued as associate organist at the Music Hall until he was advanced to chief organist in 1973 following the retirement of Dick Leibert. Bohr served longer as organist on the Radio City Music Hall staff than anyone other than Leibert. Leibert's last performance at the Music Hall was May 9, 1972. After a leave of absence of several months he notified the Music Hall that he would not be returning, whereupon Ray Bohr was appointed chief organist in this coveted position which he held until the Music Hall closed and reorganized in 1979. Bohr's last performance was Wednesday, April 25, 1979.

Bohr's career did not end when the Music Hall closed to reorganize. Shortly thereafter he joined Ron Bishop as associate in the Northeast District representation of the Schantz Organ Company, a post he held until his death. Bohr is also remembered for a number of outstanding recordings of theatre pipe organ music which were made at the Paramount Theatre, Times Square, New York and the organs of Radio City Music Hall.

A scholarship in Ray Bohr's name has been established at the Julliard School of Music by Ron and Emmie Bishop. Contributions may be sent to (Grace, Ron Bishop said he sent you this information. Perhaps you can insert the address to which contributions may be sent).

BOISCLAIRE, STEPHEN C.

Organist of the Leland Theatre in Albany, New York in 1922.

Organist of the Ritz Theatre in Albany, New York in 1927. Broadcast
over WGY, Schenectady in 1924.

THE MAGAZINE FOR



"STEVE" E. BOISCLAIR

OF W.G.Y. FAME

Now Featured Organist At the

AVON THEATRE

UTICA, NEW YORK.

1928

UTICA, N. Y.

1928

STEPHEN E. BOISCLAIR

Anyone that has been successfully associated and featured at the Proctor Theatre for a period of four years and with the W. G. Y. General Electric Co., and originated the Organ Club in Utica and has culminated with an engagement at the Avon Theatre in connection with the Schine enterprises, has created a triumph and one can be safe in saying he is a "sure thing" in the solo organist field. He is a national favorite and his playing is a stimulant to a music lover, as well as an incentive.

*Return to British file - Hickling
Revision
Refile in USA
Bioy-file*

BOLLINGTON, AL

Born December 8, 1904 in Normanton, a small village on the borders of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire (near Sherwood Forest). In 1914 he received the A.L.C.M. (Associate of the London College of Music), the youngest person to receive this award up to this time. Bollington also studied at the Royal Academy in London. In 1915 he became assistant organist at the Methodist Church and in 1920 he began playing for silent films. In 1922 he was the playing/piano on board an Atlantic oceanliner for New York, and later for a liner bound for the mid-east. While in New York, he heard a theatre organ for the first time. Two years later he himself became orchestral organist at the Palace Theatre, Blackpool. In 1927 he became assistant organist to James Swift

BOLLINGTON, AL

2.

at the Kilburn Grange Theatre in North London. In 1928 he became assistant organist to Quentin Maclean at the Regal Theatre, Marble Arch. The next year he became assistant organist to George Pattman at the Brixton Astoria Theatre. In 1930 he became solo organist at the Streatham Astoria. In 1935 he was solo organist at the Plaza Theatre in Piccadilly Circus and in 1937 he was solo organist at the Paramount Theatre in Tottenham Court Road, London. He made many guest appearances at other Paramount Theatres, broadcast a number of times over BBC and made recordings H. M. V. label. During World War II he was a pilot with the Royal Air Force. Upon his return to civilian life in 1945 he took the position as organist of the Odeon Swiss Cottage Theatre and then the Paramount Theatre now

BOLLINGTON, AL

3.

Rank Corporation to open the new Odeon Theatre in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. There he remained for two years until he became organist of the Victoria Theatre in Toronto in 1950. In 1950 he also took on the task of playing at Shea's Theatre in Toronto and did a number of coast-to-coast broadcasts on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on a series sponsored by the A&P Food Stores. This he did for four years and recorded during this time for RCA Victor and the Dominion label in Canada. In 1954 he became organist of the University Theatre in Toronto. In 1955 he moved on to Woodland Hills, California where he played for Universal Movie studios and appeared on the Lawrence Welk television program. He toured the United States and Canada for a 15 year period doing

BOLLINGTON, AL

4.

concerts first for the Conn Organ Company and then for Wurlitzer. He also played many pipe organ concerts during this time.

Bollington has published 73 theatre style arrangements for organ. He designed a "Theatre Organ Stylings Course," which has gone to various parts of the world. He has recorded on the Dot label, the Decca label, and for Concert Recording. He has since retired to Woodland Hills, California.

Signature tune: Ravel's "Bolero"

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40506-0027

PATTERSON OFFICE TOWER
ROOM: 663

AREA CODE: 606
257-3351

October 22, 1985

Mr. Al Bollington
P. O. Box 49
Woodland Hills, California 91364

Dear Mr. Bollington:

I would like to have you send me biographical information about yourself in order to include your name in a forthcoming issue of Theatre Organ magazine, in my continuing column, "A Biographical Dictionary of Theatre Organists." The information which I would like to have is:

1. When and where you were born *12.8.1904 Sth Normanton, nr Sheewood Forest Nottingham*
2. The persons under whom you studied *no one for theatre organ*
3. Theatres played and when *see Auto Bios*
4. Other professional experience in the music world. *92 arrangements plus originals published*

I would like to have you send a glossy photo of yourself (non-returnable) to be used with your biography when it appears in Theatre Organ magazine. Any publicity materials about yourself which you ordinarily send out will be a welcome addition to my files. *Mills Music N.Y.*

Your help is appreciated. A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. ?
Thank you.

Sincerely,

J. W. Landon
Dr. John W. Landon

JWL:mgn

I think you are right listing me British, however I am proud of being an American Citizen & am probably equally or even better known in U.S with 15 yrs of concerts throughout the country, TV exposure for promoting the concerts & my recordings & arrangements.

Demand for photos at theatre organs were heavy at one time but now I have difficulty in finding any. Mr Alan Ashton of BBC Manchester played a radio program in 1985 to celebrate my 80th birthday - sent me a cassette. Best Wishes, Al Bollington

- 1904 (December 8th) born at 20 Market St. Sth. Normanton, Derbyshire, Eng. Mother was Martha Elizabeth Bradshaw, Father: James Thomas Bollington, deputy coal miner & surveyor also had a grocery shop at the corner of Market & Queen plus a photographic studio. Population of Sth. Normanton at that time about 7000.
- 1911 Began studying piano at 7 first with Mr. Radcliffe of Alfretton & later with Dr. Allen of Mansfield At 14 yrs won the degree A.L.C.M. (Associate of the London College of Music) was too small to use the cap & gown that went with it. Later tried for the L.R.A.M. but failed on the theory part. From 12 yrs of age I was assistant organist to Sidney Croft at the Mount Tabor Chapel. Re education: I first attended a school in Sth Normanton & at 14 took the train to the Claycross Grammer School.
- 1920 At 16 I became pianist at the local cinema (believe it was called "The Palace") playing for silent movies such as "The Perils of Pauline" If the picture was bad I was often pelted with garbage, so much so that the piano had to be moved behind a curtain on the stage.
- 1922 After seeing jobs offered for all instrumentalists aboard Atlantic liners I journeyed to Liverpool & was soon on my way to New York on board the one funnel liner "Lancastria". I could play real well but with no orchestral experience was playing everybody's part & was cussed & finally told "Just carry the music".
- On approaching the dock at Liverpool the band leader told me I was seeing the last of his boat. Then to my dismay I saw Mom & Dad waiting to greet me on the dock. How could I admit failure? Then I was handed a telegram telling me to report to the "Carmania" (2 funnels) so I was able to report to my parents that I had already been promoted. The Carmania was bound for a three month cruise & by the end of that I was fairly good at playing with an orchestra.
- 1924 For health reasons my parents & two brothers moved to Blackpool & bought a boarding house on Lord St.
- 1925 After a traffic accident in New York I turned up in Blackpool in a battered condition & my father said "That's enough sea for thee me lad" & got me a job as orchestral organist with Mons. Spiero at the Palace cinema. It was a pedal organ & I walked miles every programme.
- 1927 I married May Crookall the girl in the Box Office & we celebrate our 56th December 8th 1983. We have a daughter, son, three grandchildren & three great grandchildren.
- 1928 Harry Hall, general manager of the Palace & Tower Co. informed me that a Wurlitzer pipe organ was on its way to the Tower Ballroom & offered me the job. Having first heard the mighty Wurlitzer in New York this is what I wanted to do but I had already signed a contract to be assistant on a Wurlitzer at the Kilburn Grange, London. Having travelled so much Blackpool had become too small for me. I believe two other organists were appointed to the Tower for a short time & then my friend & golfing partner Reg Dixon had the job for over 30 years.
- 1930 After two years as assistant at the Grange & the ^{*}Regal, Marble Arch I was appointed solo organist at the brand new Astoria, Streatham, London. I was told that my name was too long for the marquee & that Alfred would be shortened to AL.

- 1930 We were blessed with the arrival of daughter Patricia & we rented a house in Pollard's Hill (nr. Streatham). It was on the edge of a golf course & I eventually reduced my handicap to seven. I made my first record for Decca but it was not good enough to be published.
- 1935 Was thrilled to be appointed organist at the posh Plaza in Piccadilly Circus. It proved to be miserable. The Prince of Wales & The Duke of Kent were often in the small Royal Balcony & it was said that one could not toss a coin from the stage without hitting a retired Admiral or General probably suffering from gout. If they ever applauded it was probably with thumb nails. Furthermore I was not allowed to use my normal style of presentation. Son Peter born 1936. Real proud.
- 1936 The Paramount opened on Tottenham Ct. Rd. & Reg Foort played there for a couple of months before becoming the B.B.C. organist. I was delighted to be moved there for I was given every encouragement from the manager & the audience. H.M.V. gave me a contract to record solo & with Anton & the theatre orchestra, we made over 100 records in three years.
- 1937 I took the first violinist to Sth. Normanton & the Mount Tabor Chapel to help them financially with a Sunday afternoon & evening concert. We were invited to tea by Farmer Bryant (the Common towards Sutton).
- 1938 I joined the Civil Air Guard & became a pilot. Then in 1940 I joined the R.A.F. as a Pilot Officer & eventually ferried Wellington Bombers to North Africa, dropped Paratroops on "D" day & at Arnhem.
- 1945 (Jan. 19th) posted to 24 Squadron, Hendon, to be a V.I.P. pilot. July 6th my crew & I flew King George VI & Queen Mother Elizabeth from the Isle of Man to London. August 2nd Princess Juliana & children from London to Holland. Other passengers were Field Marshall Montgomery, Anthony Eden, Harold MacMillan, Sir Charles Portal & many others, regretably no mention of Churchill in my log book. On Aug. 18 I was demobbed & later on awarded the A.F.C.
- 1948 After returning to the Paramount for two years I was sent to open a new Odeon Theatre in Toronto, Canada, my family followed & for six years I made records, played broadcasts & also played at the Shea's Theatre. Daughter Patricia became married to Orville Singer.
- 1955 (January) Moved to Hollywood to record for Decca, play background music at Universal Movie Studios plus appearances on T.V. Bought a brand new home in Woodland Hills, about 20 miles north of Hollywood & in the San Fernando Valley.
- 1959 After an appearance on the famous Lawrence Welk T.V. show the Conn Organ company offered me a contract to tour the U.S. & Canada giving promotional concerts on their make of organ. I also made records on it for Decca. Son Peter attended San Diego College, awarded B.A & M.A. degrees, now a professor at Pendelton Marine College with some trips to the far East teaching on aircraft carriers & destroyers.
- 1972 After similar concert tours with the Wurlitzer Co. I retired from constant travel & stayed home composing & arranging. There are over 90 tunes published by New York publishers. The "Keyboard World" included one of my arrangements & since then I have sent many to different parts of the world.
- 1983 So now I write, garden & play golf twice a week.

This was requested by folks in Sth Normanton & it is written "Canon" & will be in an instrument to you.

Al Bollington

BOLTON, ISABEL

Organist at the Windermere Theatre in East Cleveland, Ohio.

BOLTON, LAWRENCE

The Hippodrome Theatre in Dallas, Texas had a 2 manual/19 rank Pilcher. Bolton was organist of this theatre sometime in the decade before the 1920's. He also served as organist at the same time of an Episcopal Church.

Owner, George Walker opened the Ronile Theatre located on Knox Street in North Dallas, Texas early in 1920 using a Steinway Grand piano to accompany the picture. A 2 manual/4 rank Hillgreen-Lane was installed shortly after the opening and Lawrence Bolton was engaged to play the organ. When he arrived to prepare for the opening the janitors started up their cleaning equipment which irritated him and he walked off the job refusing to play there any further. Bolton was a regular organist of the Hope (Melba-Capri)

BOLTON, LAWRENCE

2.

Theatre in Dallas, Texas on Elm Street in the early to middle 1920's. He did some radio broadcasting over Station WRR in Dallas, Texas. Bolton was a fine classical musician. He did play some radio broadcasts also over Station KRLD but he never was a staff member at that station. He also taught piano and organ in the Dallas area. He died in the late 1960's.

BONAWITZ, (KARL)

Theatre organist in the Philadelphia area during the days of silent pictures. Played the Germantown Theatre in Philadelphia in 1924 and was vice president of the Theatre Organists' Society in Philadelphia that year. In mid-1925 he went to the Stanley Theatre on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City and in November of 1925 he was back in Philadelphia at the Stanley Theatre. In 1929 he was back at the Germantown Theatre in Philadelphia and broadcasting over Radio Station WIP. He opened the Moller organ at the Metropolitan Theatre in Philadelphia.

Bonawitz died August 1977.

BOND, EARLE

Organist of the Princess Theatre in Honolulu, Hawaii (4 manual/16 rank Robert Morton) with Virginia Smith with whom he alternated for a time beginning in 1942 after organist Don George left to become musical director of USO shows during World War II. In 1942 organist John Demello came to the Princess Theatre. Bond remained for a time as his assistant.

BONAWITZ, KARL

Broadcast over Radio Station WIP, Philadelphia, in the mid 1920's

Theatre Historical Society of America

President Emeritus
Irvin R. Glazer
624 Wynne Road
Springfield, Pa. 19064

Vice Pres., Editor
Robert K. Headley
6510 41st Avenue
Hyattsville, Md. 20782

University of Kentucky
College of Social Work
Lexington, KY 40506-0027

Attn: Dr. John W. Landon, Associate Dean

Re: Karl Bonawitz, Philadelphia organist

Dear Dr. Landon:

Only picture I have is a fair photocopy 2" x 3" adjoining an article, Synchronized Pictures and Their Impression on a Theatre Organist. - The Exhibitor 7/1/28. His predictions in the article that organists in large theatres would be retained, of course, proved wrong.

I know that Bonawitz was the highest paid organist - ever - in Philadelphia. He was very highly regarded. He was listed in the ads for the Fox Theatre, 16th and Market, the most prestigious house in Philadelphia (Moller) until the Mastbaum opened in 1929 with Stuart Barrie and later Milton Charles.

Bonawitz played at the new Stanley, Atlantic City (opened ~~1928~~ 7/3/25), prior to that at the Germantown Theatre, Phila. - both Kimballs.

Karl Bonawitz salary - 1928 was \$400.00 per week (Stanley Co.)

He played at the Warner, Atlantic City (Wurlitzer), Colonial, Phila., Byrd, Richmond, Keswick, Glenside (Phila. suburb), had recital on Curtis Organ, Irvine Aud. Univ. of Penn. (159 rank Austin), broadcasted on stations (radio) WTP, WCAU (Phila.)-WFG (Atl. City) and WRVA -?

He was reviewed by Phila. Inquirer. His address was Emanuel-Goodwin Publications or Elkins Park, Pa. (Phila. suburb).

That's my file.

How do we attract people to organ concerts? I am sick sick sick of Bach, Bach, Bach dominating every program. I dont like the organ when it sounds like a hurdy-gurdy or carousel. - a very small part of one man's opinion.

Sincerely,



BONAWITZ, KARL

Dr. John W. Landon, Associate Dean
University of Kentucky
College of Social Work
619 Patterson Office Tower
Lexington, Kentucky 40506-0027

Note Anne Probst

Dear Dr. Landon:

*below. In what city
was the Uptown Theatre*

I must apologize for not answering your letter sooner but I have just returned from the hospital. I knew and worked with Karl Bonawitz before WWII but knew him only in a professional sense. He was a very private person. He was one of the top organists in the Philadelphia area and, in addition to playing most of the best theatres, he broadcast frequently on radio with his own show and as an accompanist for vocalists. He also did an occasional stint with symphonic groups. I studied with him briefly in 1939 when he was concertizing as head of the John Wanamaker (Philadelphia) piano and organ department. He sold me my first Hammond organ. Shortly after, he left for California to join the staff of a Hammond Agency where he sold and demonstrated electronic instruments. He wrote me at this time to say that he had struck a gold mine musically there, and urged me to join him as a demonstrator and teacher. World War II intervened and I enlisted and lost touch with Karl permanently. I'm sorry I don't know more about him for your Biographical Dictionary. I do recall that when the Metropolitan Theatre opened in 1929 he was head organist on the giant 39-rank Moller. I heard him there and it was a magnificent sound. Leonard MacClain was his assistant on this engagement.

when she played

For further information on Bonawitz I suggest you contact the following persons:

- Mr. Lowell Ayars, 72 Lincoln Street, Bridgeton, NJ 08302
- Mrs. Dottie Whitcomb, Box 32, Rees Road, Devault, Pa. 19432
- Mrs. Violet A. Egger, 1334 Spencer Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19141
- Mrs. Esther Higgins, 17 W. Browning Road, Collingswood, NJ 08108
- Mr. Al Hermanns, 1398 Temple Street, Clearwater, Florida 33516

Mr. Al Hermanns is the author of several instruction books on popular organ playing and is originally from the Philadelphia area. He should know about Bonawitz. Mrs. Dottie Whitcomb was formerly Mrs. Leonard MacClain.

I am enclosing information on Anne Probst which was sent me a few years ago by Al Hermanns who studied under her. She was a magnificent organist. I am enclosing her picture taken in 1940 at the console of the Uptown Theatre Kimball (which I purchased in 1952 for my Hall of Fame Studio along with several other Wurlitzers). Anne was a dedicated teacher. I studied with her for two years and admired her not only as a rare teacher but as a warm, loving human being. The only other teacher who compared to her in my estimation was Jesse Crawford who was my teacher in 1947. I am sending you her photograph for your Biographical Dictionary. I would appreciate if you would return it to me after you copy it for your files.

Dr. Landon, I hope the above has been helpful. Good luck with your book. Incidentally, I have your books, "Behold the Mighty Wurlitzer" and "Jesse Crawford". Both are treasured by me and are part of my Hall of Fame archives.

Best of everything to you.

Charles Slack

313 O'DONNELL LANE
GIRARDVILLE, PA. 15047

University of Kentucky
Dear John W. Landon
Dear Sir;

Dec. 6 - 1986

In answer to your request about information on Theatre organist Karl Bonawitz; I one year ago he played at the Germantown Theatre on Germantown Ave below Chelton. There were three big theatres together "Germantown Theatre", "Colonial Theatre" and around the corner "Arpheum Theatre". Later when I played at the Chestnut Hill Theatre owned by a man named Hess; his nephew Carl Hess managed the theatre. Carl Hess and Dr. Ettinger a Podiatrist and Karl Bonawitz were close friends. When Karl Bonawitz opened the Met. Theatre on Broad St Phila they were given special passes to attend, the opening night was Sunday (no Sunday movies then). Mr. Hess invited me to go with him and Mr. Ettinger to hear the concert. It was the first time I ever heard him play as we both worked same hours. I can tell you I was very much impressed with his style and talent. One selection was "March Slave" in full. It remained with me ever since. Everyone I am sure knew him for the fine musician he was.

I heard later he went to Hollywood and played back ground music for television just where I do not

Now I also heard he married into the Costello family? believe the same Costello famous actors and actresses. I know one Costello married John Barrymore.

Since I received your letter I tried to reach Mr. Ettinger but was told he passed away three years ago and his son was continuing the practice at the office which is on Olney Ave, 5th St. Phila. I want to talk to him when I can reach him as I thought some of the past may have been discussed in the family. If I learn anything more I will write you.

Respectfully

Violet Egger

1334 Spencer St

Phila Pa 19141

P.S. I tried to reach Irwin Glazer. He told me you had contacted him. His book was on Theaters in the area and not organist.

I have been to the...
back ground music for television...

BORONE, VERA

Played the Grove Theatre in Chicago, Illinois in 1928.

BORSA, THOMAS S.

Organist of the Rialto Theatre, New York City in 1927.

BOOMHOWER, CHARLES (C. D.)

Alternated with Robert Gordon Clarke as organist of the Capital Theatre in Detroit (3 Manual Hillgreen-Lane) in 1925. In 1927 an advertisement showed him "At The Golden Voiced Barton at Detroit's Oriental Theatre."

BOREA, CEAZAR

Organist of the Hope-Melba Theatre in Dallas, Texas in the 1920's.

BOND, WEBB

He was born November 30, 1913 at St. Johns, Michigan. His interest in music was only a hobby until after World War II when he studied music at Hope College at Holland, Michigan. He played the organ at a number of restaurants in the Grand Rapids-Muskegon area in the late 1940's. He was staff organist at the Majestic Theatre, Grand Rapids from 1949 to 1952 where he played for such special functions as the Miss Michigan Pageant. About this time he met the manager of the Michigan Theatre in Muskegon, who was instrumental in getting the organ renovated for the first time after many years of silence. He played at the Michigan Theatre as well as for the "Twilight Melodies" program on WKBZ, ^{Muskegon.} He played at a number of restaurants in Michigan before moving to Cincinnati in 1956. He

BOND, WEBB

2.

has played at many Cincinnati area restaurants, some special shows at the Paramount Theatre in Cincinnati and in 1961 was organist for the Cincinnati Reds.

BROWN, GRACE TAYLOR

Organist of the Society Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1927.

BROWN, JEANNE

Broadcast over Radio Station WOWO, Fort Wayne, Indiana from the Embassy Theatre (4 manual/15 rank Page).

Brown, John David

Born in 1952 in Long Beach, California Brown began organ study during his high school years. He graduated with an Associate of Arts degree in Liberal Arts from Golden West College. During his college years he studied classical organ with Dr. Justin Colyar and Warren Peterkin.

Brown was employed in the Retail Home Organ Sales Division of the Gould Music Company. In addition to his employment and schooling, he found time to study theatre organ with Edna Scanlan who helped prepare him for the 1972 Scholarship Competition sponsored by the Orange County Professional Organists Guild. Brown won first place and received a scholarship to help further his musical education. He majored in music and graduated with honors from Golden West College in 1974.

Following graduation Brown taught at the Hammond Organ Studios of Orange County and served as organist for a chain of Wurlitzer-equipped pizza parlors in Southern California. He continued his own organ studies under the tutelage of Gene Robertson and Bill Thomson. He was hired as musical director for the Bird Cage Theatre at Knott's Berry Farm where his assignments included playing the calliope.

After a stint as organist at a pizza parlor in Indiana Brown returned to California where he teaches privately and appears as a freelance concert organist.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

and

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

of

JOHN DAVID BROWN
16946 Tahoma Street
Fountain Valley, California 92708
714/963-9485

BROWN, JOHN D.

PROFESSIONAL OBJECTIVE

To become extensively involved within the concertizing circuit and obtain future engagements with various organ chapters throughout the United States. Specific areas of interest include private organ tutoring, coaching and directing organ productions and events.

EXPERIENCE

Technical

- 1984 - Provided tonal work on the 3/10 Robert Morton at Anaheim High School
- 1983 - Assisted in the complete restoration of the 2/10 Robert Morton Theatre Pipe Organ at Santa Ana High School

Teaching

- 1982 - Present: Residence instruction including students' homes in the Orange County area
- 1981 - 1982: Gould Music Company, Mission Viejo, California
- 1978 - 1979: Gene Roberson Studios, Huntington Beach, California
- 1975 - 1977: Gould Music Company, Santa Ana, California
- 1971 - 1977: Hammond Organ Studios, Santa Ana, California

Professional Engagements

- 1983 - Present: Organist, Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Fountain Valley, California
- 1980 - 1981: Senior Staff Organist, Band Organ Restaurant, Mishawaka, Indiana
- 1979 - 1980: West Coast Staff Artist, Conn Organ Corporation, Chicago, Illinois
- 1978 - 1980: Musical Director, Accompanist and Calliopist, Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park, California
- 1977 - 1979: Substitute Organist and Associate Organist, Pipe Organ Pizza, Tustin, California
- 1973 - 1979: Staff Organist, Shakey's Pizza - 3 locations, Anaheim and Placentia, California
- 1973 - 1978: Senior Staff Organist and Choir Director, St. Boniface Church, Anaheim, California
- 1971 - 1972: Organist, First Baptist Church, Orange, California

Expertise Appointments

- 1) Adjudicator and judge for the International Yamaha Electone Organ Festival and related activities - 1974
- 2) Guest Artist and Speaker for the National Home Organist Adventure - 1978, 1979 and 1983
- 3) Guest Artist, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Notre Dame, Indiana
- 4) Chairman of the Southern California Tri-Counties Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society
- 5) Concert Tour of Lake Tahoe - 1976
- 6) Concert Tour of Southern Michigan - 1979
- 7) Several guest appearances at the Anaheim Convention Center, Disneyland Hotel, South Coast Plaza Hotel, and Meadowlark Country Club
- 8) Several engagements performed at the Anaheim High School on the 2/10 Robert Morton theatre pipe organ
- 9) Guest artist for 1984 Fresno Organ Bash performing on the 4/15 Robert Morton theatre pipe organ at the Warmor's Theatre
- 10) Various performances in organ stores and clubs throughout Southern California
- 11) Performed several engagements on a Wurlitzer pipe organ at a Palm Springs private residence
- 12) Provided surmountable maintenance and tuning expertise on various theatre pipe organs
- 13) Performed in concert on the famed 3/17 Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium
- 14) Performed in concert on the giant four-manual Kimball theatre pipe organ at the Wiltern Theatre in Los Angeles

Associations

- 1) American Guild of Organists
- 2) Orange County Professional Organists' Guild
- 3) Orange County Organ Society
- 4) Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society
- 5) National Association of Music Teachers
- 6) Chairman, Tri-Counties Theatre Organ Society

CREDITS

One digital "long-play" album entitled, "The Unique Sound of John Brown," released in 1978.

SCHOLARSHIPS

First Place - 1972 Scholarship Competition sponsored by the Orange County Professional Organists Guild

EDUCATION

AA Liberal Arts - Golden West College, 1974
Scholastic Award - Dean's List, Golden West College, 1974

PRIVATE STUDY

Clyde Gilliam - 6 years
Clyde Lange - 3 years
Edna Scanlan - 3 years, coaching
Gene Roberson - 2 years, coaching
Dr. Justin Colyar - 1 year

Warren Peterkin - 1 year
Bill Thomson - 2 years, coaching
Charlie Balough - 1 year, coaching
Ron Walls - coaching
Lyn Larsen - coaching

PERSONAL DATA

Born: December 11, 1952
Marital Status: Single
Health: Excellent

Height: 5 feet 10-1/2 inches
Weight: 165 lbs.
Hair: Dark Brown
Eyes: Brown

BROWN, MRS. JOY

Played the Wurlitzer Opus 392 style 210 Special in the Liberty Theatre in Bellingham, This organ was re-processed by Wurlitzer, 6/20/24. She also played the Robert Morton at the American Theatre and opened the new Mt. Baker Theatre April 29, 1927 playing the style 215 Wurlitzer Organ. Opening show was William Haines in "Slide Kelly, Slide". Mrs Brown later worked at Stark Piano Company which was Bellingham's major music and record store and was employed there for many years.

BROWN, MAE

Organist of the Kedzie Theatre in Chicago, Illinois in 1928.

BROWN, OLLA RAE

Student organist in the Eastman School of Music in March of 1924.

BROWN, WEST

Well known organist in the Seattle, Washington area in the mid-1920's. Played the Blue Mouse Theatre in Tacoma, Washington in 1925 and 1926. In 1926 went to the Embassy Theatre in Seattle, and from there to the Paramount Theatre, Seattle, early 1927 and on to the Columbia Theatre in Seattle in late 1927.

BROWN, WILLIAM DEWITT

Organist of Cleveland's Palace Theatre in 1927 and of Allen and Loew's Stillman Theatre, Cleveland. Broadcast over various Cleveland radio stations in 1929.

BRUBRACHER, RAY

~~Ray Brubacher~~

Ray Brubacher was born in Washington, D.C., in 1940. 170 He began piano lessons at the age of nine and switched to organ at age 16. He studied classic organ with Dr. Louis A. Potter, F.A.G.O., and with Conrad Bernier at Catholic University of America.

Highlights in Brubacher's professional career include: serving as organist for the American Film Institute at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, concertizing on the organ in the George Washington Masonic Memorial, Alexandria, Virginia; performing at the 1972 National Convention of the American Theatre Organ Society; scoring and playing 14 full-length silent films for educational television; serving as senior staff organist and teacher for Keyboard Centers in Wheaton, Maryland; and serving as associate organist at St. Matthew's Catholic Cathedral in Washington, D.C. ②

BRUBACH-
BACHER

In addition to his other duties and activities Ray Brubacher finds time to tour and play concerts here and there across the country and to participate actively in the American Theatre Organ Society both on a national and local chapter level. He is an Associate Editor of Theatre Organ Magazine and is a past Chairman of the Potomac Valley Chapter of ATOS. He is heard weekly on radio in his own show of pipe organ music, and when home, enjoys playing his ^{five} manual, ^{five} rank Moller residence organ.

BRUBACHER, RAY

restoration of the Wurliitzer organ in the Tivoli/in Frederick,
Maryland, the last theatre organ in a theatre in that state.

He recorded a long playing record of theatre pipe organ music

at the Tivoli Theatre entitled, "Who is Ray Brubacher, and What's
He Doing With Those Pipes?".

¹⁷⁰Most of the biographical information on Ray Brubacher was
compiled by Lloyd Klos for the Rochester Theatre Organ Society
printed program of Ray Brubacher's concert, February 14, 1974.

BRUGGERT, WILSON G.

Organist of the Windameer (Windermere) Theatre, the Yale
and
Theatre, the Elmira Theatre, /the New Broadway Theatre in Cleveland,
Ohio.

BUELL, EDNA

Organist of the Colonial Theatre in Columbus, Ohio in 1923.

BUHRMAN, BERT

At ten years of age Buhrman began playing the pipe organ at St. John's Episcopal Church in Springfield, Missouri. He was a student of organist Glen Stanback, who was the organist at St. John's as well as organist of the Electric Theatre. In the early 1930's, Buhrman attended Kansas City Junior College and he played the organ over Radio Station WOQ, owned by the Unity School of Christianity. His broadcasts originated in the Wurlitzer Building on Grand Avenue in Kansas City from either the 2 manual/5 rank or 3 manual/10 rank Wurlitzer organs there. In 1933 Buhrman had a program over Station WHB in Kansas City using piano and organ. The organ was a 3 manual/5 rank Wicks instrument from the Jenkins Music Company. Buhrman attended the University of Kansas at Lawrence from 1934 to 1936 and he played

BUHRMAN, BERT

2.

organ and piano programs on Radio Station WREN. The programs were broadcast from the Reuter Organ Factory in Lawrence which had a small studio organ. Buhrman graduated from the University of Kansas with an A.B. Degree in Music. After graduation, he returned to Kansas City and joined the newly opened Radio Station KCMO as musical director. He played organs in the Newman Theatre and the Main Street Theatre in Kansas City, both of which have since been renamed, accompanying slides for sing-alongs, playing for vaudeville acts and giving organ presentations. From 1936 to 1940 he was doing eight shows on radio and five daily shows in the theatre. In 1940, he moved to New York City and took the position of staff organist with CBS, a position he held until the end of 1962. He also broadcast over NBC, ABC, and the

THE SCHOOL OF THE OZARKS

Presents

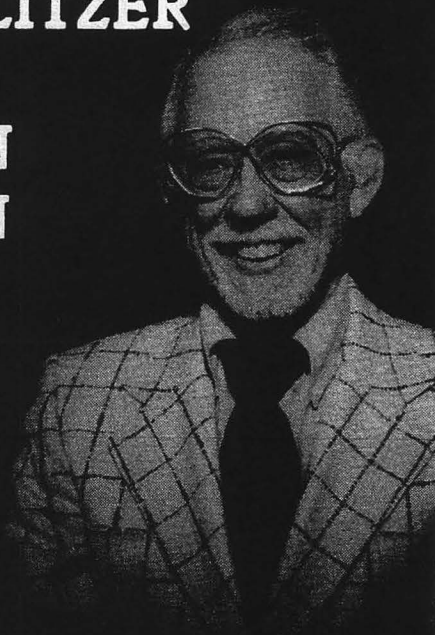
THE BERT BUHRMAN THE

AT THE MIGHTY WURLITZER

WITH HIS

PHANTOM TWIN

JOHN BUHRMAN



Mutual Radio network. This was done by arranging schedules so that artists could appear on a variety of programs and networks. Some of the radio programs with which he was affiliated were, "Sherlock Holmes," "Bulldog Drummond," "Joyce Jordan, Girl Interne"; television programs include, "Strike It Rich," and "The Big Payoff." For 15 years he played the organ on "The Guiding Light," on both radio and television.

During the time that he lived in Ridgefield, Connecticut, Buhrman played the organ at St. Mary's Church for a period of three years. An opportunity came to return to his home state of Missouri to the School of the Ozarks at Point Lookout, Missouri. Buhrman decided to leave the pressures of big city life and accept the job. In February 1963, Buhrman moved to Missouri. His duties on the campus

include overseeing the installation of a 2300 pipe Skinner pipe organ in Williams Chapel. A 3 manual/15 rank Wurlitzer from RKO Keith's Theatre in Flushing, New York was purchased and installed in a theatre in the Nettie Marie Jones Learning Center on the campus and here theatre organ concerts are presented, silent films accompanied, etc. The auditorium seats 1,000 people.

BULLIS, CARLTON

**Organist at B. F. Keith's Hippodrome Theatre in Cleveland,
Ohio. Director of the Cleveland Theatre Organists' Club in 1923.**

BUNNELL, HARRY

Bunnell began playing piano and organ in theatres in Southern Michigan when he was 17 years old. He spent a year and a half at the Majestic Theatre in Homer, Michigan in 1928 to 1929 after which he went to the Coliseum Theatre at Bronson, Michigan for a year. He spent four months at the Rex Theatre in Jackson, Michigan, did a stint at the Garden Theatre in Marshall, Michigan, and played for five months at the Bohn Theatre in Albion, Michigan. From 1934 to 1936 he was organist at the First Baptist Church in Battle Creek. Returning to Detroit he became^{organist} at the First Church of Christ Scientist, a position he has held since 1936, and organist and choir director at Scottish Rite Cathedral. He was staff organist at Radio Station WJEK in 1945 to 1946 and was pianist in the Cass Theatre Orchestra for

BUNNELL, HARRY

2.

legitimate theatre productions at various times in the 1940's.

BURLAND, HERBERT W.

Organist of the Rialto Theatre in Los Angeles, California in
1922 and 1923.

BURNHAM, FRED

Organist of the Irvington Theatre in Portland, Oregon in 1927.

BURICH, S. J. (Mrs.)

Broadcast over Radio Station WOC, Davenport, Iowa in 1922

BURNS, ROBERT ("Bobby")

West coast organist in the 1920's, organist of the Liberty Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1926 and organist of the Broadway Theatre in Portland, Oregon in 1927.

BURRSTON, PERCY

Organist in the Salem, Oregon area, who opened the Elsinore Theatre in Salem, Oregon in 1926 and remained there as organist.

BURRIES, MAY W..

Organist of the Broadway Theatre in Richmond, Virginia in 1925.

BURRIS, DOROTHY

Organist of the Pekin, Illinois Theatre in 1930.

BURROUGHS, W. RAY (WESLEY)

Organist of the Regent Theatre in Rochester, New York in 1914.

Organist of the Madison Theatre (Wurlitzer) in Rochester, New York
and Lyndhurst's Kohl organ in Rochester in 1927.

in 1927. Later Contributing Editor to Diapason Magazine, where he
wrote articles and submitted news clips on the theatre organ to that
periodical.

The following item was found in the December 1927 issue of Jacobs Orchestral Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

WESLEY RAY BURROUGHS

The Lyndhurst Theater in Rochester, N.Y. recently installed a two-manual organ which was opened on September 12 with Wesley Ray Burroughs at the console. The organ is one of several which have been built and installed by a local concern, the Kohl Organ Company.

Mr. Burroughs received most of his training under the direction of Dr. William C. Carl, at the Guilmant Organ School in New York City. Not unlike other theater organists of note, Mr. Burroughs, who is an organist of the old school, had built and maintained a reputation as church organist and director before the organ had taken permanent abode in the theater pit. One of his most notable positions in this field was that of organist and director of the Delaware Baptist Church of Buffalo. Directing a chorus of 30 voices, Mr. Burroughs proved his ability and talent for the work, and remained as director from 1908 until 1913, when this field was forsaken for theater work.

In 1914, the Regent Theater, which was the first large motion picture house in Rochester, was built, and Mr. Burroughs was selected to design the specifications of the organ to be installed, and be head organist.

He was at the Regent three years when he accepted an offer to go to Detroit. He remained in Detroit two years, then he received

call to return to Rochester and a position at the Piccadilly Theater. After playing there for two years, Mr. Burroughs accepted his former position at the Regent, where he remained until his latest opening. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

Mr. Burroughs has made several recital tours and has a record of 20 recitals on the Pan-American organ in Convention Hall, Buffalo. For the past 12 years, he had conducted a motion picture column in the Diapason. Rochester is fortunate in having an organist of Mr. Burroughs' calibre at the Regent console.

R. Wilson Ross

BURTON, HOWARD

Born August 6, 1901 near Woodburn, Iowa in Clark County. Burton began playing the piano and organ for silent movies at the Strand Theatre in Creston, Iowa in November of 1923. He played a winter engagement at the Rex Theatre in Geneseo, New York in November 1926 and then returned to the Strand Theatre in Creston, Iowa playing there until August 1929. He then entered the Knauss School of Theatre Organ Playing at Allentown, Pennsylvania for an advanced seven months' course in theatre study. He also was featured on theatre organ study. He broadcast over the radio on Station KMA in Shenandoah, Iowa and Station KSIB in Creston, Iowa. He played for many special events such as horse shows, clubs, and dances.

BURTON, HOWARD

2.

Burton's last theatre engagement was at the Paramount Theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where he was featured soloist on the Wurlitzer from November 1958 to 1961.

BURTON, MARTHA

· Played the Rembert Theatre in Longview, Texas (a 1 manual/4 rank Seeburg combination piano organ).

BUSHONG, ERNEST

Played the Ligonier Theatre in Ligonier, Indiana in 1926.

BUSWELL, BILL

Buswell started his professional career at the age of 16, at the Comerford-Publrix Roosevelt Theatre in Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he was billed as "Scranton's Youngest Organist," and where he gave daily radio broadcasts from the organ console of the Masonic Temple. For 15 years he played intermission solos at a theatre in Newark and Irvington in New Jersey and at Cleveland, Ohio. When sound movies displaced the theatre organists, he turned to playing and selling electronic instruments in the Pocono Mountain Resorts, in Baltimore and in Cleveland. One engagement had Buswell playing piano and organ simultaneously each evening for ten years. At the same time he was Staff Organist at Radio Station WGAR with his own

BUSWELL, BILL

2.

shows, "Top of the Morning," and "Give Billy a Hand." Baseball fans enjoyed his artistry at the Cleveland Municipal Stadium for two seasons. In 1957 he joined the sales staff of the J. L. Hudson Company of Detroit in their piano and organ salon and subsequent engagements have been in hotels, clubs, and restaurants in the Detroit area. He played several concerts for the Detroit Theatre Organ Club and for the Detroit Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society. He is an Honorary Member of that organization.

BUTLER, EDDIE

Born in Council Bluffs, Iowa, Butler began studying piano at the age of four at St. Francis' Academy in Council Bluffs. At age seven he learned the rudiments of playing the organ and by eleven years of age he began accompanying silent films at the old Liberty Theatre.

Butler took organ lessons in Chicago once per week beginning when he was eleven. His father worked for the railroad so Eddie Butler used his pass, took the seven o'clock sleeper on Friday nights, and awakened the next morning in Chicago, ready for his lesson.

BUTLER, EDDIE

2.

Butler's career has taken him around the world. He has performed at church and theatre organs in Rome, Paris, London, Vienna, Madrid, Prague, Budapest, New York City, Mexico City, and Los Angeles. In 1969 he gave a private recital before Pope Paul VI at the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. He has recorded with Mario Lanza and Andre Segovia, classical guitarist. He served for a time as official organist for the Academy of Motion Picture, Radio and Television Arts and Sciences. Yet of all his experiences, none was more memorable than becoming organist of the 3 manual/13 rank Wurlitzer in Omaha's Orpheum Theatre. It was a case of "local boy makes good." The Orpheum designed by Rapp and

BUTLER, EDDIE

3.

Rapp, seated more than 3,000 people, and boasted a ceiling of ivory and gold, walls lined with marble imported from Italy, and a \$7,000 chandelier. Advance publicity described it as "a triumph of beauty, elegance, and majesty." Opening night, October 9, 1927 featured guest artist J. Earl Estes at the organ accompaning a silent film, "The Fighting Eagle" (starring Omaha's own Hollywood star, Rod La Rocque).

Butler, long associated with the Omaha Orpheum, now plays the organ at St. John's Church on the Creighton University campus (Omaha) each Sunday. He plays an electronic organ for the

BUTLER, EDDIE

4.

appearances of the Kansas City-Omaha Kings at the City Auditorium, and operates his own recording company in Harlan, Iowa where he now makes his home.¹

¹Information concerning the life of Eddie Butler and the Omaha Orpheum Theatre comes largely from: "Orpheum," a souvenir (magazine) of the grand opening of the Orpheum Theatre, Omaha's new home for the performing arts, 1975.

Holiday Greetings



ELLIS BUTLER
SOLO-ORGANIST
AT TIVOLI THEATRE
GARY, IND.

GARY, IND.

1928

ELLIS BUTLER

The Tivoli Theatre in Gary, Ind., have an ingenious solo-organist in Ellis Butler, who opened the above house. Previous to that engagement he played at the Grand Theatre in Gary for three years and broadcasts now over WJKS. He is very successful in his featuring of screen presentation and solos and novelties.

BUTLER, EDDIE

Was Staff Organist of the Orpheum Theatre in Omaha, Nebraska
(Wurlitzer).

BYERS, GENE

Organist of the Rainbow and Climax Theatres in Milwaukee,
Wisconsin in 1927.

BUTTE, FRANKLIN

Butte was a radio engineer from Portland, Oregon assigned to Juneau, Alaska in September 1953 by the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He restored the Kimball organ in the 20th Century Theatre, Juneau and played intermissions daily from 1953 to 1955. Also, because of Butte's involvement as a radio announcer engineer, the organ was featured on a live radio morning show and in Sunday afternoon broadcasts. Butte played requests sent in by listeners. This instrument was subsequently sold to Mr. Howard Remly of Douglas, Alaska who later presented it to the State of Alaska. In 1976 it was installed in an enclosed courtyard of the State Office Building in Juneau.

In 1965 Butte purchased a 2/8 Wurlitzer from the Northern Lights Presbyterian Church, Juneau (he had previously owned and sold this instrument) and installed it in his home. In 1971 he moved the organ to a larger residence adding a console from the Rivera Theatre, Chicago which was shipped to Anchorage via Northwest Orient Airlines jumbo-jet. Since 1971 thousands of school children from the Anchorage School District and hundreds of adults have toured the installation.

Butte has also performed at the 3/8 Robert-Morton pipe organ installed in 1975 at Uncle's Pizza in Anchorage.

BYRD, DESSA

Born in Robinson, Illinois, Dessa Byrd won a scholarship to the Indianapolis Conservatory of Music. Her first job upon graduation in 1918 was playing the piano at the Alhambra Theatre, Indianapolis, Indiana. She left the Alhambra after six weeks to play the organ at the Rialto Theatre. Her only experience at organ had been playing for church in her hometown. The hours were long at the Rialto so Mother Byrd insisted that Dessa must look for another job. The Circle Theatre (the leading theatre in Indianapolis) had opened under the direction of the famous S. L. "Roxy" Rothaphel in the summer of 1916. It featured an orchestra of 22 to 30 musicians. S. Leopold Spitalny was hired as orchestra conductor for the opening. Edward Resener, who played violin in the

BYRD, DESSA

2.

orchestra was later to marry Dessa Byrd.

Dessa Byrd had begun teaching piano at 75¢ per lesson. She could see no future in this so when a pianist's position opened at the Circle Theatre in 1919, she accepted.

The Circle Theatre boasted a Hook and Hastings pipe organ (see illustration in Appendix). Dorothy Knight Green was organist when Dessa Byrd first came to the Circle. The relief organist position became available and Byrd accepted the post. While she was relief organist, she found time to play in a Dinner Music Women's Ensemble at the Claypool Hotel where she had the chance to meet Victor Herbert and John Philip Sousa. When Dorothy Green left

the Circle to get married, Dessa Byrd became lead organist. Later, a Wurlitzer pipe organ was installed at the Circle, and Byrd was featured soloist on this fine instrument until 1929 when she moved to the Indiana Theatre, Indianapolis, where she served as solo organist until 1934. Byrd studied pipe organ with Carrie Hyatt Kennedy beginning about the time the Circle Wurlitzer was installed. She also studied with Walter Flandorf from Chicago, who, with Bormar Cramer, Herb Koch, William Blanchard, Dale Young, and Jimmy Boyer served as relief organists of the Circle and Indiana Theatres. Organist Lester Huff also played at the Circle in 1930.

In 1926 when the owners of the new Indiana Theatre were

deciding what organ to purchase, they sent Dessa Byrd to Chicago to look over and select a 3 manual/17 rank Barton. Byrd played at the Indiana Theatre from 1929 until 1934. She played with orchestras, accompanied films, played organ overtures, sing-alongs, stage shows, and organ solo spots. Byrd began playing at the Circle Theatre again in 1931 and remained there until 1939. She holds the distinction of being the first organist to broadcast over the radio (WFBM) in Indiana. The year was 1926.

Byrd also played the Marr and Colton organ in the Fountain Square Theatre in Indianapolis, on Radio. For a period of four years she accompanied Carl Baker on a program for the Davidson's Indiana Fur Company.

Dessa Byrd had married Edward Resener, second violinist in the Circle Theatre orchestra, in 1923. They worked together professionally for a number of years before their divorce in 1939.

In 1935 the Hammond organ had just been introduced. Byrd had left the Indiana Theatre the year before, was continuing at the Circle Theatre, and was also hired by Pearson Music Company to be the first Hammond demonstrator in Indiana. In December of 1935 she introduced the Hammond to an audience at Indiana University. She broadcast many programs on the Hammond from Pearson's organ studio. Indianapolis radio station W.K.B.F. was purchased by Eugene Pulliam, publisher of the Indianapolis Star-News. He changed the call letters to W.I.R.E. Byrd broadcast both on

Hammond and pipes over this station. One of the broadcasts was called, "Uncle Connie and Aunt Dessa"--a piano organ duo that she played with Harry Bason. Byrd and Bason combined their talents for other radio broadcasts entitled "The Song Treasury," and "B's At The Keys," which appeared three times weekly coast-to-coast on the Mutual Radio Network. Their local Indianapolis broadcast was known as "The Three Favorites."

In 1942 Dessa Byrd married Leo M. Rappaport, a corporation attorney and one of the owners of the Circle Theatre. She then retired from her active professional life but played for her friends and an occasional banquet for Eli Lilly and Company.

Leo Rappaport died in 1959 and Dessa Byrd began to look for outlets for her creative musical energy. In 1963 she purchased a large electronic organ for her home and began taping radio broadcasts for WFMS-FM. She broadcast over 100 half-hour programs of organ music, and thirty programs of piano music from her home over this station.

Tom Ferree brought the theatre organ back to life in Indianapolis when he installed the remarkable three manual Louisville Uniphone in the Rivoli Theatre. Dessa Byrd started to play on pipes again. In 1971 she was presented in a "final" concert at the Rivoli. Although it was a cold, snowy, evening, she

played to a standing-room-only audience. There still was magic in her name.

Dessa Byrd and her sister, Virginia (now Mrs. Steven Rechteris, also an organist), have appeared in concert on every radio and television program in the Indianapolis area. Virginia has been with WISH-TV for twenty-five years.

In September 1976, Tim Needler, President of the Central Indiana Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society presented Dessa Byrd with a plaque and certificate of lifetime membership.

Byrd has recorded a number of long-playing discs of piano and organ music, both electronic and pipe. By all accounts she is the best known and most famous theatre organist from the Indianapolis area.

Dessa Byrd died in May of 1977.

BYRD, VIRGINIA (MRS. STEPHEN RECHTORIS)

Virginia Byrd Rechteris, younger sister of Dessa Byrd.

Virginia Bly Byrd was born August 12, 1914 to William N. Byrd and Emma Holt Byrd in Robinson, Illinois. William Byrd was quite musical, playing several instruments without formal training. Sister Dessa was 16 years of age when Virginia was born and brother Noel Byrd was 14. William Byrd died shortly after Virginia was born. When Dessa won a scholarship to study piano at the Indianapolis Conservatory of Music, mother Byrd moved her family to Indianapolis to a house on Walnut Street where the Scottish Rite Cathedral now stands.

BYRD, VIRGINIA (MRS. STEPHEN RECHTORIS)

2.

Virginia attended Shortridge High School and Arthur Jordan Conservatory of Music. Theory, counter point, history of music and composition were every day classes along with piano lessons. At age 14 Virginia began to study organ with Dale Young, organist at Roberts Park United Methodist Church. While studying music, Virginia found practical application by playing for weddings, dance classes, parties and banquets.

In 1936 Virginia was employed by the Pearson Music Company, Indiana agents for the new Hammond organ. The first Hoosier demonstrators of the new electric instrument were Dessa and Virginia Byrd. Virginia traveled to Pearson's stores in the state of Indiana to give programs and demonstrate the versatility

BYRD, VIRGINIA (MRS. STEPHEN RECHTORIS)

3.

of the Hammond organ.

Outstanding mastery of the Hammond organ led to the selection of Virginia Byrd as demonstrator of the electric organ at the National Music Dealers Convention in New York City in 1941.

In 1940 Virginia entered the field of radio doing programs for WIRE (with studios on the ninth floor of the Claypool Hotel). The NOVACHORD, with tone produced entirely by oscillating radio tubes, had been invented by Lawrence Hammond of the Hammond Instrument Company. Virginia's Hammond organ and Novachord talents were aired on a daily feature "Editorially Speaking." Virginia became staff organist at WIRE when sister Dessa married in 1942.

BYRD, VIRGINIA (MRS. STEPHEN RECHTORIS)

4.

In January of 1942 Virginia married Stephen Rechteris. When daughter Beverly was born, big sister Dessa took over for Virginia to play her programs. Beverly Ann Rechteris is now a graphic artist with WRTV, Channel 6, Indianapolis, Indiana.

During the eight years with WIRE Radio Virginia was organist on the "Trolley Trio," featuring Harry Bason and vocalist Frank Parrish. On "The Block's Make-Up Program," heard daily from the WIRE studios at 12 o'clock noon, Virginia played Deagan chimes amplified through large speakers on the roof of the Claypool Hotel daily. A most popular program aired each night at 11:00 for Hook's Dependable drugs was "Starlight Trail," with Sidney Mason reading poetry.

In September 1949 Jimmy Boyer returned to Cornell University to finish his college degree. He offered to Virginia, and she accepted, his staff position with WISH-TV, a new station started in 1943. Her first program was in 1949 from the Indiana State Fair WISH studios. Virginia had many commercial programs while at WISH (with studios located in the Board of Trade Building).

Virginia Byrd Rechteris has a number of firsts with WISH and WISH-TV. By playing at their inaugural program, she was the first organist to play at their new studios at 1440 North Meridian Street. On July 1, 1954, almost four years later, Virginia played the background music for the dedicatory program of the second

television station of WISH-TV, Indianapolis, Indiana.

"Virginia Byrd Time," an all request program, was on radio for several years. Virginia was featured soloist on "The Catherine Daniels Show," and the "Laugh With the Ladies" show.

"Chapel Door," a 15-minute interdenominational religious program, debuted on television in 1954. It ran a full 16 years, becoming the longest running religious program in the Middle West. Virginia was co-director of the show and played for the respective singers who assisted the minister with the program.

Currently Virginia is heard on "Meditation," a sign-on and sign-off program for WISH-TV. Each week Virginia programs ministers of different denominations taping seven, 3-minute sign-on

BYRD, VIRGINIA (MRS. STEPHEN RECHTORIS)

7.

and seven sign-off programs. Virginia plays a piano background for the seven programs which are taped on Monday. They are viewed 14 times the following week.

On occasion, Virginia also appears on the current "Indy To-Day Show," with Alpha Blackburn.

Along with her musical association with WISH-TV, Virginia has found time through the years to devote many hours to civic work. She received the T S P Award for her many civic and volunteer projects. T S P stands for Those Special People, and is an honor conferred by the Women In Communications group.

BYRD, VIRGINIA (MRS. STEPHEN RECHTORIS)

8.

Presently, Virginia is a member of the Civic Theatre Board of Directors, Christian Theological Seminary, Repertory Theatre of Christian Theological Seminary, American Theatre Organ Society, and the American Guild of Organists.

Husband Stephen Rechter is treasurer of Hugh J. Baker Steel Company.

Died Feb. 11, 1990.

to background
They are viewed
rent "Indy To-Day

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1990

Organist Virginia Wolfram killed in crash

A longtime Indianapolis organist, who accompanied several nationally known entertainers en route to achieving local fame on the long-running religious TV series *The Chapel Door*, died Sunday in an auto accident on the city's Northside.

Virginia B. Wolfram, 73, who performed on television, radio and in theaters and nightclubs as Virginia Byrd during the 1940s and 1950s, may have become ill shortly before the accident about six blocks from her home.

Wolfram, who served 37 years as music director of WISH-TV (Channel 8) and was a former staff musician for WIRE-AM radio, was northbound in the

WISH-TV, Virginia has hours to civic work. vic and volunteer ople, and is an honor up.

5000 block of North Pennsylvania Street when her car slammed into a tree about 12:30 p.m.

She was returning home after playing organ during morning worship at Unity Truth Center, where she had been organist for at least 15 years.

Wolfram apparently became ill and ran a flashing stoplight at Pennsylvania and 49th streets, according to Indianapolis Police Department spokeswoman Wendy L. Snitko. The car veered across the southbound lane, grazed a fire hydrant and struck a tree on the west side of Pennsylvania, just south of 51st Street.

Civic Theatre Board of Repertory Theatre of Theatre Organ Society, of Hugh J. Baker

She died shortly after the accident in Methodist Hospital. Relatives told authorities Wolfram had been treated for heart problems, Snitko said.

She was probably best known locally for her performances on radio and television, including the former WISH-TV program *The Chapel Door*, where she performed 16 years.

Wolfram, who retired in 1986, was a staff musician for WIRE during the 1940s. She performed on the now-defunct WIRE programs *The Trolley Trio*, with Frank Parrish and Harry Bason, and *The Starlight Trail*. Wolfram left WIRE in 1954

for then-WISH-AM radio, where she worked as staff organist and accompanist in 1949, moving to WISH-TV when it debuted in 1954.

She was the widow of Stephen Reichtoris.

Services will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday in Meridian Street United Methodist Church, of which she was a member. Calling will be from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday in Leppert & Hurt Mortuary.

Memorial contributions may be made to the donor's favorite charity.

Survivors: husband, Donald J. Wolfram; daughter, Beverly Reichtoris; Hobbbs; stepdaughters,



FILE PHOTO
Virginia Wolfram performed as Virginia Byrd.

Gretchen and Kristen Wolfram; Erica Hunter; Heidi Hamitto; nine grandchildren.

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BUFFALO, N. Y.**DWIGHT BROWN**

Shea's Buffalo Theatre is fortunate in procuring the most promising of Pietro A. Yon's pupils, Dwight Brown, a solo organist who has held the attention of the critical Dallas audiences at the Palace Theatre in Texas for seven years. Mr. Meurta and Mr. Yon are both personal friends of Mr. Brown and the celebrated Jessie Crawford recently sent in a wire of congratulation to Mr. Brown. He broadcasts over WGO and has been very successful with his own compositions and features various interesting novelties and slides.

BROWN, DWIGHT

Brown was born in Dallas, Texas. Attended Forest Avenue High School in that city. It was at Forest Avenue High School where he began his musical career as leading trumpeter in the school band. He soon switched to piano under the tutelage of Elizabeth Gay Jones and Julius Ilbert Jahn and progressed to the organ under Pietro Yon, later organist of the Vatican. Most of all he credited C. Sharpe Minor as the best of his teachers as far as the theatre organ was concerned. He played the Hippodrome in Dallas, Texas, became organist of the 4 manual/20 rank Wurlitzer organ in the Dallas Palace in August of 1925, opened the 3 manual/10 rank Barton organ in the Texas Theatre in Dallas in 1927. He opened the 4 manual Wurlitzer in the Paramount Theatre, Toledo, Ohio in 1929

BROWN, DWIGHT

2.

and went on to a stint at Shea's Buffalo Theatre, Buffalo, New York in 1929. He also played engagements in Houston and San Antonio, and at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia. He returned in 1932 to the Palace Theatre in Dallas and was there for a time but relinquished the organist position to Joe Proctor, who remained there until the organ feature was discontinued. In 1935 he was selling Hammond organs in the Dallas area and he opened the first **electronic organ** in the Dallas Athletic Club. In 1942 he returned to the **Palace Theatre in Dallas, Texas** when organ intermissions were begun again. He played a number of years for the State Fair of Texas and did radio and night club work from the late 1930's until the 1960's. He remained in the Dallas area until his death, December 9, 1965.

BROWN, B. (Mrs.)

Organist of the Garrick Theatre in Duluth, Minnesota in 1926.

The following item was found in the April 1925 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

ALBERT F. BROWN

It is certainly possible for an organist of the theater-concert type to gather to himself the enthusiastic and whole-hearted interest of a surprisingly extensive following.

This was well exemplified in the case of Albert F. Brown when he recently left the Forest Hills Theater organ console for a tour through the South. The patrons of that Long Island theater--one of the finest in the East, and serving probably one of the most exclusive residential suburbs of the Atlantic coast, united in a petition to the theater management to have this popular organist returned. They were so urgent that Mr. Brown cut short his tour, ^{for a short time,} and soon was back/at the Forest Theater console, to the great satisfaction of theater patrons, who had submitted this unusual, but decidedly complimentary petition.

At present, Mr Brown is located in Geneva, Illinois as demonstrator for the Geneva Organ Company (formerly the Smith Unit Organ Co.). He also presides at the organ in the Fargo Theater in Geneva and broadcasts nightly from WJJD, the big station maintained by the Loyal Order of Moose, at Mooseheart, Illinois.

Mr. Brown's programs are attracting world-wide interest. The suitability of this organ for broadcasting is demonstrated by the clever artistry of Mr. Brown, which brought messages of appreciation

from points as remote as Alaska, South America, and Pacific liners enroute to Honolulu, to say nothing of the numerous ones received from radio fans in the States and Canada.

When the new Ambassador Theater on the Lake Drive in Chicago opened in May, Mr Brown was chosen to initiate the wonderful new organ ~~XXXX~~ which ~~is~~ ^{to make} is equipped ~~into its duty of making~~ good photoplays interesting, by adding to them the charm of appropriate music. One extremely interesting facet of this opening is that for the first time in the history of music, an organist will "play in light colors" in addition to playing in "tone colors and different pitches. The new organ in the Ambassador is a Geneva product.

Mr. Brown's success as a photoplay organist-broadcaster is, of course, due to his excellent preliminary training, his 12 years or more of work with leading teachers of effective photoplay presentation, and the inherent assets which made it possible for him to profit so fully from study and experience.

Mr. Brown belongs to that school which believes in absolute synchronization of the music with the picture at all times. We venture to state that a large part of his popularity with theater patrons is accounted for by his ability with which he does this difficult yet necessary thing.

BROWN, ALBERT F.

Theatre organist in Forest Hills, New York in 1925.

BROWN, ALBERT F.

Born in New York City 1895. Organist at Mooseheart, Illinois from 1922 to 1924. In 1925 he was organist of the Falrgo Theatre in Geneva, Illinois. Opened the Granada Theatre for the Marx Brothers in Chicago in 1926 and the Marbro Theatre for them in 1927. Was guest organist at the Oriental Theatre in Chicago while regular organist Henri A. Keates took his vacation in 1926. Broadcast from Radio Station WJJD in Mooseheart, Illinois on a Geneva organ during the time that he was organist in Mooseheart.

BROVALL, KAI

Organist of Loew's Lincoln Square Theatre in New York City

in 1927.

BROOKS, EDYTHE (Mrs.)

**Organist of Loew's Victory Theatre in New York City in July
1927.**

BROOKS, THEODORA

Organist of Loew's Lexington Theatre in New York City in 1927.

BROOKS, ARTHUR S.

Broadcast over Radio Station WPG, Atlantic City, New Jersey in the mid
1920's

BROADBENT, GEORGE W.

Organist on the staff with Roy L. Medcalfe at the Imperial Theatre in Long Beach, California in 1927.

BROCKHORN, GEORGE

Organist of the Sanford Theatre in Sanford, Florida in 1926.

BRITE, JOE (Joseph L. Brite)

Born in Canton, Missouri, July 9, 1903. His parents were Jennie and Sterling P. Brite. Brite was educated in the Laramie, Wyoming High School and attended the University of Wyoming. He married Cordelia Metcalf. He had five years experience as a pianist in theatre orchestras in the middle west, played several months in various Chicago theatres, appeared with Milton Charles in a special organ act at the Balaban and Katz Tivoli Theatre in Chicago during the summer of 1925. He opened organs at Greeley, Colorado; Boulder, Colorado; and Alamosa, Colorado. He was organist at the Elks/ Theatre in Rapid City, Colorado during 1927 and 1928. Also served as organist of the Home Steak Opera House in Lead, South Dakota. Brite later became manager of the Rialto Theatre in Alamosa, Colorado

BRITE, JOE (Joseph L. Brite)

2.

and he played the 2 manual/7 rank Wurlitzer organ almost every night from the late 1920's until his death, September 17, 1974.

Joseph L. Briggs, 84; ex-theater organist

During the era of silent movies, musical accompaniment was performed live by an organist. Joseph L. Briggs, who performed at a number of theaters here for about 30 years, died Monday (Feb. 22, 1988) of heart failure at Kirkhaven nursing home. He was 84.

Mr. Briggs had been living at the nursing home for about three years. Earlier, he was a resident of the Rochester Presbyterian Home for four years.

A native of Turners Falls, Mass.,

Mr. Briggs came here in the 1920s after a six-year stint with a traveling band, said a longtime friend, Kenneth McNeill of Rochester.

Mr. Briggs came here to take a course in organ music at the Eastman School of Music, McNeill said. He studied for one year at the school.

Mr. Briggs played at the old RKO Palace theater on North Clinton Avenue, the old Arnett Theater on Thurston Road, the Princess Theatre on South Avenue, and the old Regent Theater on East Avenue, friends said.

He also played the organ at the old RIT ice skating rink, now the Skating Institute of Rochester Inc., at 1 Boys Club Place, friends said.

"He played the organ quite well," said a friend, bandleader Carl Dengler of Rochester. "He was more of an organist than a pianist. He taught both organ and piano at his home on Devonshire Court.

"He taught a lot of young people during the 1940s and '50s," Dengler said.

Mr. Briggs was a lifetime member of the Rochester Musicians Association and West Avenue United Methodist Church.

Mr. Briggs is survived by two nephews and a niece.

A memorial service was to be held at 11 a.m. today at the Rochester Presbyterian Home, 256 Thurston Road.

Donations can be directed to the Presbyterian Home.

BRIGHAM, RALPH

Organist in the early 1920's of the Strand Theatre located on Broadway in New York City. Brigham was organist of the Strand from 1918 through the mid-twenties. In 1925 he became organist of the Orpheum Theatre in Rockford, Illinois.

BRILL, KENNETH

Served as substitute organist at the Roseville Theatre in Roseville, California, during the first two years after it opened.

BRIGHAM, RALPH H.

Born October 10, 1883 in North Adams, Massachusetts. Brigham was a student at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Massachusetts from 1900 to 1903. He gave over 2,000 organ recitals in the United States. He served as organ soloist at the Strand Theatre in New York; ^{from 1918 through the mid-twenties;} the Capitol Theatre in St. Paul, Minnesota; and the Senate Theatre in Chicago, Illinois. ^{In 1925 Brigham became organist of the Orpheum Theatre Rockford, Illinois.} ~~He came to the state of Illinois to~~ ^{ed} open the Coronado Theatre in Rockford, Illinois in 1927.

He held many positions as church organist including the First Congregational Church of North Hampton, Massachusetts and the Second Congregational Church in Rockford, Illinois. He is listed in Who's Who in Chicago and Illinois (1946).

Brigham died September 23, 1954 in Rockford, Illinois

BRIGHAM, CHESTER

Theatre organist in the Boston area in the 1920's. Director of the Boston Theatre Organists' Club in 1929. Assistant organist to Arthur J. Martel at the Metropolitan Theatre in Boston (now called a Music Hall). (This house seated 5,000 people.)

BRIDWELL, MAC

Played the Majestic Theatre in San Antonio, Texas (a 4,000 seat atmospheric John Ebersson house) on a 3 manual/10 rank Robert Morton organ.

P.S. I noticed in the last A.T.O.S. magazine the mention of a Mac Bridwell in your column of biographical sketches. You said he played in San Antonio, Texas at the Majestic theater.

I can't help but wonder if he also played in Madison, Wis. in the late 20's - early 30's as Mel was an admirer and friend of an organist at the Capital

The following item was found in the June 1925 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

RALPH H. BRIGHAM

We have heard the old saw that if a man lives in a dense forest and makes the most perfect mouse-trap in the world, his eager customers will beat a path to his door, or words to that effect.

Not that there's much connection between pipe organs and mouse traps, although a sufficiently nimble wit could doubtless establish a few on even such short notice as this.

Anyhow, when that bit of homely truth is applied to pipe organs, the name of Ralph H. Brigham comes to the minds of those who know him or know of him. Brigham prepared himself for success by thorough study, being graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music. He was then for a number of years, organist and choirmaster in Northampton, Mass. While serving in this capacity, his gift for improvising attracted the attention of S.L. Rothaphel, better known as Roxy, and shortly afterwards, Brigham was presiding at the console of the Strand Theater organ in New York, where he remained for seven years.

He appeared as organist with Sousa's Band at the Hippodrome in New York; has given more than 500 successful organ recitals; was organist at the Capitol Theater in St. Paul, and the Senate Theater in Chicago; is a colleague of the American Guild of Organists and a member of the National Association of Organists. At present, he

is associated with the Orpheum Theater in Rockford, Illinois.

In all these activities as student, church organist, recitalist, and all-round musician, it was Mr. Brigham's sincerity and ability which brought him success and the audience approval which goes with it.

He considers "perfect synchronization of music with the picture" the most necessary detail of the many which go to make the theater organist's work successful. He is also extremely successful in contriving special featured numbers for the theater gram, and putting them over in a way which redounds in a d degree to the credit the playhouse, and incidentally, his own.

As we intended to say in the beginning, if a man has the necessary ability, makes it practical by carefully directed study and wisely chosen experience, is sincere in his interest and alert to present what his experience has taught him is best, and most desirable to fit the situation in which he finds himself, he can succeed as church organist, recitalist, theater organist, or anything else, in fact.

Mr. Brigham has proved it so, and consequently, I can effectively step down from the pulpit.

BRIGGS, JOSEPH

Organist on the staff of the Regent Theatre, Rochester, New York--an 1800 seat house located at East Avenue and Chestnut Street which opened November 10, 1914 and boasted a 3 manual Hope-Jones Wurlitzer, designed by Robert Hope-Jones himself. (Hope-Jones took his own life in Rochester, New York three days after the theatre opened.)

BRERETON, ROBERT

Robert Brereton, is widely known to concert-goers across the country--as a pianist. In a bitterly competitive field, the San Francisco-born virtuoso has carved out a career for himself that is doubly remarkable, for Brereton has been blind from birth.

In addition to instruction from some of the finest keyboard teachers in the world--including Artur Rubinstein and the late Olga Samaroff Stokowski--Brereton has been tirelessly assisted by his mother. Since only a small portion of the vast piano library is available in Braille editions, a quite unusual method was devised to enable Brereton to learn the extensive repertoire that is now at his command. Whenever a new composition enters his repertory, Mrs. Brereton (herself not a trained musician) reads off the printed page in every

BRERETON, ROBERT

2.

detail until it is thoroughly absorbed. "First I read off the title. If there's a dedication, I read that too. Next come the key signatures and tempo markings. Then the pedal marks, and, of course, all the notes."

Brereton made his West Coast debut while still in his teens and a few months later put in his first orchestral appearance with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Rudolph Ganz. When he left California to come East, he entered the Juilliard Graduate School where he received three successive fellowships.

In his early twenties, Brereton gave two New York recitals in that city's renowned Town Hall. The New York critics, unquestionably the toughest audience in the nation, were unanimous in their enthusiasm.

"A remarkable display of skill and musicality," commented the New York Times, while Harriett Johnson of the Post found him to possess "such strength he is like a first-rate athlete at the piano, but combined with the sensitivity of the poet."

The following year Brereton was back in California. Here he repeated his triumph with the San Francisco Symphony, this time under the aegis of Pierre Monteux. Of Brereton's talents the diminutive maestro stated: "He is a very fine pianist with a beautiful conception of the works he plays. His art combines verve, brilliancy and a delicate poesy." High praise from a great man. His recitals in the Bay area evoked memories of such masters as Horowitz, iclé's influential Alfred Frankenstein marked him as a pianist of "exceptional gifts."

Ensuing seasons have taken Brereton cross-country several times in recitals, chamber music programs and appearances with orchestra.

Brereton first took up the organ a few years back--"just for my own amusement," he says smilingly. He usually plays the small electronic Hammond organ, but when the occasion arose to record on the magnificent pipe organ that is a landmark of New York's Paramount Theatre, the challenge was too provocative to be missed. Subsequently, he recorded a long-playing recording of organ transcriptions of of orchestral music on this organ (Camden CA5591).

BREESKIN, DAN

Organist of the Apollo Theatre in Washington, D. C. in 1927.

BREITENFELD, EMIL

Organist of the California Theatre in San Francisco in 1923.

BRAY, LEWIS E.

Theatre organist in the Boston area in the mid-1920's.

Organist of the Shawmut Theatre in Boston during those years.

BRECK, EDWARD S.

Theatre organist who was heard broadcasting over Radio Station
WRNY, New York City in 1927.

BRASS, PAUL (Raul de Toledo Galvao)

Known professionally as Paul Brass, Galvao came either from Brazil or Argentina. He was a theatre organist in the New York City area in the late 20's and early 30's. He played the Momart Theatre in Brooklyn, New York in 1928 and was on the staff of the RKO Center Theatre, New York City in the 1930's. Remembered as being somewhat eccentric, he told friends he liked to eat his lunch in a nearby cemetery because it was "so quiet there." "His lunch always consisted of turkey legs."

BRANDT, IDA

Theatre organist on the staff of Loew's Woodside Theatre in New York City in 1927.

BRAINARD, RALPH S.

Theatre organist in the New York City area. Played the Strand Theatre in New York City in 1922 and 1923.

BOYER, JAMES H.

Born September 10, 1909 in Elwood, Indiana. Boyer began learning piano at age seven. His first teacher was his mother. A year later he began taking from his mother's teacher, Claude Wright. Boyer's mother passed away in 1920 and his father remarried. His father was ordained to the ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1921. During the time that his father served a church in Bedford, Indiana from 1923 to 1926 Boyer studied piano, organ, and harmony with Roma Owen Martin. He also had two years of harmony in high school. He attended his senior year and graduated from the Martinsville, Indiana High School in 1927. That same year he studied piano at the Metropolitan School in Indianapolis (later merged with the

BOYER, JAMES H.

2.

Indiana College of Music to form the Jordan Conservatory) with artist-teacher Willard MacGregor. During those four years Boyer was church organist first in Bedford, Indiana and then in Martinsville, Indiana.

Boyer spent nine months' travel as a singing evangelist, ending up in Indianapolis, Indiana and it was here that he got his first real taste of theatre organ music, and decided to become a theatre organist. He studied organ with Ruth Noller for nine months, well known Indianapolis organist, Dessa Byrd for two years, one year's study of piano with Roger Cushman, and seven and one-half years of voice with B. F. Swarthout. In 1949 Boyer matriculated in Columbia University in New York City, and while there studied piano for

BOYER, JAMES H.

3.

four years with Harold Triggs.

Beginning March 1928 until September 1928 Boyer played for the Roy Bair Corporation Neighborhood Theatres. From September 1928 to December 1929 he played at the Circle Theatre and then the Indiana Theatre in Indianapolis, Indiana. From January 1930 to May 1931 he was staff organist of Radio Station WFEM (then a CBS affiliate). From May 1931 to May 1933 he was staff organist of the Indiana Broadcasting Corporation and Radio Station WKBF (now Station WIRE, Indianapolis), and Station WGBF in Evansville, Indiana. From May 1933 to July 1941 he broadcast over WIRE, and from January 1936 to July 1941, he was staff organist and vocalist with Shirley Brothers Morticians. From March of 1936 to April 1942

BOYER, JAMES H.

4.

he organized and conducted his own band around the Hammond organ. From July 1941 to September 1949 he was musical director of Radio Station WISH, Indianapolis, and also did solo club work with time out for World War II. September 1949 found Boyer at Columbia University in New York City. From March 1950 to May 1951 he played in a trio at the Shelton Hotel and broadcast over Radio Station WOR, New York City three nights weekly. In June 1951 until November 1951 he did solo club work on the organ at the House of McAray. From June of 1952 until July of 1959 he was organist of Budd's Restaurant in Jackson Heights, New York. During these working years, Boyer attended Columbia University and graduated in 1955. In February 1959 he taught for the Baldwin

Company in New York. In March 1959 he became organist and choir director of the Valley Stream, Long Island, Presbyterian Church and spent twelve years in that position. From January 1962 to November 1970 he taught in Hackensack, New Jersey for a Baldwin-Gulbransen organ dealer. In November 1970 he retired and returned to Indiana. Boyer died in February of 1976.

BOYCE, JIMMY (James F.)

Boyce began piano study at age 5 and organ study at age 12. At 15 he was organist and choirmaster in a church and upon graduation from Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore he was granted a degree. While a teenager he was enraptured by the sound of the theatre organ by listening to Art Brown and Milton Slosser at Loew's Capital Theatre in Washington, D. C. In 1949 he was appointed organist at the America-On-Wheels Roller Skating Rink in Alexandria, Virginia, a cavernous building which resembles a National Guard Armory. It is a full city block long and 65 feet high.

Boyce believed that the theatre pipe organ was the answer to proper music in the arena. In 1956 with the approval of doubtful

BOYCE, JIMMY (James F.)

2.

owners, a 2 manual/6 rank Wurlitzer was installed. By 1960 a larger organ was desired and a 4 manual/34 rank Wurlitzer organ originally in the Center Theatre in New York was purchased. It took several years before the new installation was playing, and the resulting installation more than adequately fills the arena with big sound since all pipes, percussions, and traps are installed without chambers. Boyce has been continually playing his particular brand of skating rink music over 25 years.

He also plays a 3 manual/11 rank Barton at the Virginia Theatre which is only a few blocks away from the roller rink. On Sundays he is organist and choir director at St. Christopher's Church in Springfield, Virginia. The rest of his time is devoted to teaching,

BOYCE, JIMMY (James F.)

3.

recording sessions, and concert appearances. He performed for the American Theatre Organist Society's Convention in 1972.

Boyce became one of a few theatre organists to appear in a motion picture. It was "Scorpio" starring Burt Lancaster.

Boyce died December 31, 1980 at the age of 52 years.

BOWEN, CHARLES

Assistant to Chester W. Walton at the American Theatre, Bellingham, Washington in the early 1920's.(Robert Morton organ). He was later a teacher of classical piano and maintained a studio in the Fine Arts Building on Holly Street in Bellingham. Bowen was organist Gunnar Anderson's first music teacher.

BOSSERT, LUCILLE

Theatre organist in the Seattle, Washington area in the 1920's.
Played the Ridgemont Theatre in Seattle in 1926 and early 1927.
Played the Woodland Theatre in Seattle beginning in mid-1927.

BOUCHARD, GEORGE ALBERT

Theatre organist in the Buffalo, New York area. Played the
Strand Theatre in Niagara Falls, New York in 1922. In 1923 he
played the Statler Hotel in Buffalo. In 1925 he played at Shea's
Hippodrome Theatre in Buffalo, New York.