

GERALD (Jerry) NAGANO

Gerald Nagano, 23, did not study on the pipe organ until he was 13. Choosing two of the best teachers available in the area of his Los Angeles home; Gordon Kibbee (technique) and Gaylord Carter (silent film accompaniment), he has learned his lessons superbly well from both.

He first came before the public as an organist in 1973 while playing on the Los Angeles ATOS chapter's "Stars of Tomorrow" show at the Wiltern Theatre. Since then, he has had a number of appearances before organ clubs from coast to coast and has been a demonstrator for a leading electronic organ company.

In addition to his teachers, Gerald has never forgotten the encouragement he was given by the late Joe Koons. Joe installed a hybrid theatre organ in his Long Beach motorcycle shop, and not only did he allow Gerry to practice frequently on it, but he also gave the youngster periodic time slots in the Saturday night open-console sessions.

A young man of other interests besides music, his major at California State Univ. was business Administration. Other courses have included Japanese grammar, geology, physics, oceanography, TV broadcasting, photography, electronics, theatre arts, and as a sideline, helping in college musicals.

However, his father says that music has been the one field which has made Gerald a more out-going fellow, as apart from the reserved, shy individual of about 7 years ago. His rubbing shoulders with persons who share a common interest has accelerated his maturity.

He has made a recording for Jerri-Co Records which includes his stirring rendition of LeRoy Anderson's "Pugler's Holiday." At several ATOS conventions, Gerald has performed cameos, and at last year's conclave in LA, he was featured on the Koons organ on the same program with a Rochester favorite, Lloyd Del Castillo. A nice blending of age and youth.

Reference: RTOS program notes by Lloyd E. Klos, Sept. 1980

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RTOS SEPTEMBER 16, 1989 PERFORMANCE

RTOS welcomes all of you members and guests to the start of the '89/'90 concert season. This evening will be Jerry Nagano's third RTOS performance; he previously appeared here in September 1980 and in November 1985.

Jerry was born and raised in the Los Angeles area of California. He began his musical training at age ten. After instruction on electronic organ for a time, Jerry came into contact with the theater pipe organ through listening to the artistry of Gaylord Carter and attending George Wright's series of Pasadena theater organ concerts. These encounters made him determined to include theater organ in his musical future.

Jerry Nagano received theater organ playing instruction from Gaylord Carter, Gordon Kibbee, and much later with Tom Hazleton. His exceptional keyboard abilities resulted in many invitations to perform concerts throughout the country. Jerry was appointed resident organist at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium in 1980, where he played on the huge former Reginald Foort/BBC Moller pipe organ. Recently he was appointed featured artist at the famed Ye Olde Pizza Joynt in the Bay area, home of the WurliTzer in the Pizza Parlor concept.

Jerry has produced several fine theater organ albums. Aside from a very busy musical life, Jerry has found the time to earn his Bachelor of Science degree in Business. Leisure time finds him travelling extensively, swimming, surfing and diving.

Tonight Jerry Nagano comes back to this Mighty WurliTzer to give us a great start to this RTOS concert season. As the console rises in the shining spotlight, and the King of Instruments once again gives forth its mighty sound—let's welcome back the very talented and personable Jerry Nagano with a warm and hearty Rochester welcome!



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 by RTOS members is permitted during tonight's concert, in the Top Balcony Foyer area, using the facilities provided.

The Rochester Theater Organ Society, Inc.

The Society is dedicated to the preservation of theater organs and the presentation of the music on theater pipe organs. RTOS produces musical events on two theater pipe 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 great entertainment.

ROBERT WOLFE RETURNS ON OCTOBER 13th

That fabulous English organist, Robert Wolfe will again exhibit his amazing talent on this Auditorium Theatre WurliTzer at 8:15 PM on Friday, October 13th. RTOS will celebrate its 25th Anniversary of theater organ preservation with a reception following the concert. Admission is FREE to members. Non-member tickets, at \$5.25 each, will be on sale in the theater Box Office that evening.

THE ARTIST - JERRY NAGANO

Making his second RTOS appearance this evening, our artist has had a fast-rising career.

Twenty-eight-year old Gerald Nagano did not take pipe organ lessons until he was 13. Choosing two of the best teachers available: Gordon Kibee (technique) and Gaylord Carter (silent film accompaniment), he learned his lessons superbly well from both.

He first came before the public in 1973 while playing on the Los Angeles American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) Chapter's "Stars of Tomorrow" show at the Wiltern Theatre. Since then, he has had numerous appearances before organ clubs and ATOS chapters from coast to coast, and has been a demonstrator for electronic instruments.

In addition to his teachers, Jerry has never forgotten the encouragement extended him by the late Joe Koons. Joe had installed a hybrid theatre organ in his Long Beach motorcycle shop, and besides giving the youngster practice time on the instrument, he gave the young musician frequent time slots in the Saturday night open console sessions. Thanks to Koons' widow, this follows thru to today, and the programs have become a tradition.

Jerry's interests are varied. His major at California State University was business administration. Other courses included Japanese grammar, geology, physics, oceanography, TV broadcasting, photography, electronics, and theatre arts.

His father says that music was the one field which made Jerry a more outgoing fellow, apart from the shy, reserved person he was previously. The rubbing of shoulders with his peer group has accelerated his maturity.

Gerald Nagano has made two recordings and has concertized before the 1979 and 1982 ATOS conventions. His stirring rendition of "Bugler's Holiday" is the one number with which he's most associated.

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

NALLE, BILLY

See Chapter 6, pp. ___ to ___.

(see Billy Nalle file - UK)

(" " " " of programs, etc - Record Room)

NASON, RUBYBELLE

A theatre organist of New York City who in 1925 opened the refurbished Keith's Theatre (Wurlitzer Opus No. 1143) in Syracuse, New York.

NEAIARAIED, VICTOR C.

Organist of the National Theatre in 1927.

BIOGRAPHY

JAN. 7, 1985

NELLIS, LYMAN

BORN: RIPON, WISCONSIN - 1908

MY FIRST PROFESSIONAL TASTE OF THEATRE ORGAN WAS PLAYING "SILENTS" ON A BARTON "BARTOLA" AT THE AUDITORIUM THEATRE IN RIPON. DURING MY "TEENS" I STUDIED PIANO AND ORGAN AT RIPON COLLEGE. ALSO HAD A FEW LESSONS WITH JESSE CRAWFORD AND LATER STUDIED AT THE RALPH WALDO EMMERSON THEATRE ORGAN ~~CHURCH~~ SCHOOL, CHICAGO.

IN 1929 I MADE THE "BIG TIME". THE ORPHEUM IN MENASHA, WIS... PLAYING "SILENTS" ON A 3/8 BARTON. THIS BARTON WAS UNUSUAL IN THAT THE THIRD TOP MANUAL WAS SPLIT. IT WAS POSSIBLE TO PLAY A SOLO BELOW MIDDLE C OR A DIFFERENT SOLO ABOVE MIDDLE C. THIS MADE THE ORGAN SOMEWHAT OF A FOUR MANUEL.

1932, THE APPLETON FOX, LATER THE RIO. THE ORGAN WAS A WURLITZER WHICH IS NOW IN THE RESIDENCE OF ATOS BOARD MEMBER LOWEL AYERS. AT THE FOX I PLAYED SOLOS.

DURING THIS TIME I ALSO HAD TWO PROGRAMS A DAY ON WHBY (GREEN BAY) RADIO, IN THE APPLETON STUDIO WITH ITS 2/8 BARTON.

1939 - MOVED TO MILWAUKEE WHERE I WAS

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Page Two

1939 - MOVED TO MILWAUKEE WHERE I WAS AFFILIATED WITH THE HAMMOND/CONN MUSIC COMPANY, DEMONSTRATING, PLAYING CONCERTS, DEDICATIONS AND OTHER ORGAN EVENTS.

AT THIS TIME I ALSO WAS ORGANIST AT RADIO WTMJ, NBC OUTLET FOR THE PATE OIL CIVIC CONCERT SERIES ON SUNDAYS. THIS CONSISTED OF ORCHESTRAS



3/28

CHOIR, AND ORGAN (WICKS CONCERT PIPE ORGAN).

DURING THE 1960'S, PLAYED SOLO INTERMISSIONS AT THE FOLLOWING MILWAUKEE MOVIE HOUSES - WARNER (3/34 KIMBALL). RIVERSIDE (3/13 WURLITZER) ORIENTAL (3/15 BARTON).

HAVE BEEN ORGANIST AT SECOND CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST, MILWAUKEE, FOR TWENTY YEARS. THE POSITION WHICH I STILL HOLD. THE ORGAN IS A 3/56 AUSTIN WITH AN ECHOE AND ANTI-PHONAL ORGAN IN THE REAR BALCONY. THESE ARE "FLOATING" DIVISIONS, PLAYABLE FROM ANY OF THE THREE MANUALS.

Dear Dr. Landon.

I hope you will find this information usefull. Thank you for asking me.

Sincerely,

Lyman Nellis

NELSON, ESTHER

Theatre organist broadcasting over Station WTIC, Hartford, Connecticut in 1926

NEUMAN, H. O. (HUGO)

I hope the other information was of interest to you. I am also enclosing a copy of an article on Jack Martin, who opened the Barton organ at the Al Ringling theatre. It is an interesting theatre to see, and retains quite a bit of its original splendor. I am enclosing one of their brochures. There are a few inaccuracies in it and the photos are from pre 1928. They have tours there during the summer and professional organist Marty Dohm has been playing a few pieces for the tours. Bert Reed of ~~St~~ Roseville, Mich., usually comes up to Baraboo once a year and plays it also.

Ringling Bros. tried a Kilgen pipe organ in a circus wagon in 1902 or 1903, but I heard it wasn't successful. I obtained a copy of the contract for it and a photo from the Circus World Museum in Baraboo. The action was to be tubular pneumatic, it was to be powered by an automobile steam engine, it was to have 4 manuals (1 of which played the organ) etc. At cost \$4000-in Ringlings advertising "a fortune".

In a few copies of the opening book of the Ironwood Theatre in Ironwood, Michigan, it mentions "Boyer Cummins organist supreme and librarian".

I ran into an interesting person that played in Milwaukee area theatres a few years ago. He was in his 80's I believe and I hope he is still alive. His name is H. O. (Hugo) Neuman and he lived at Eden, Wis. If he isn't on your list I'm sure he could be reached at that address.



NEWBERRY, TRUMAN L.

Born in Rockingham, North Carolina, August 14, 1908. Received his high school education there. At the age of five he began studying piano for a period of three years. He studied organ for one year. In 1915 at the age of seven he played accompaniments to one-reel movies at the Star Theatre in Rockingham after school until 1925. Newberry played a hand pumped Estey pipe organ in a church from 1920 to 1925. From 1925 to 1926 he played a 2 manual/4 rank Robert Morton organ in the Riggan Theatre in Henderson, North Carolina, and in the Wilson and Burlington Theatres. From 1926 to 1927 he played the Stephenson Theatre in Henderson, North Carolina (2 manual/6 rank Austin). From 1928 to 1929 he played the Bluebird and Brooklyn Theatres in Richmond, Virginia (Wurlitzer-player type). With the coming of the end of silent pictures Newberry played shows

NEWBERRY, TRUMAN L.

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in Memphis, New Orleans, and played showboats on the Mississippi River from 1929 to 1931. From 1933 to 1974 he appeared in nightclubs and bars as organist and pianist, and also did some work as organist in churches. He purchased a piano store in Raleigh, North Carolina and remains active in the music business and entertainment field.



NICHOLAS, HARRY C.

Broadcast over Radio Station WMC, Memphis, Tennessee in 1924

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NEWCOMB, ESTHER

Theatre organist in the Boston, Massachusetts area. On the staff with Frank Mahler at Boston's Keith's Memorial Theatre (Wurlitzer-twin console instrument).

NICHOLSON, MAURICE B.

Organist of Shea's Hippodrome Theatre (Wurlitzer) in Buffalo, New York in 1925 and early 1926. By April of 1926 Nicholson had joined the organ staff of Shea's Buffalo Theatre in Buffalo, New York where he was on the staff with Charles Allison and Lloyd Del Castillo.

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NICHOLS, HARRY

Organist at radio station WMC, Memphis, Tennessee in the early 1930's



The following item was found in the March 1926 issue of Melody Magazine by Lloyd E. Klos:

CONVERSE E. NICKERSON

Converse Nickerson, organist at the Olympia Theater in Portsmouth, N.H., has been very successful in photoplay work.

Mr. Nickerson received considerable of his musical education in eastern Canada and previously to being connected with the Olympic Theater, served as organist for 12 years on the Pacific Coast in the cities of San Rafael, Eureka, San Jose and Los Angeles.

He is at present using a Wurlitzer organ, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ When we asked Mr. Nickerson for some of his ideas on photoplay work, he obliged us with the following:

"The great Shakespeare said, 'If music be the food of love, play on.'

"If music be not the food of love, it is certainly the food of the emotions, and as emotion-portrayal is the heart of the life of the silver sheet, music is a dominant factor in putting across the portrayed emotion. Therefore, playing the picture is like making, or at least, presenting an opera. I try to make of each feature picture an opera, the actors giving the story and the organ giving the music and assisting in bringing out the chief themes by some pointed melody; thus putting across to the ear of the auditor the story in music, as his eye simultaneously registers the action of the piece.

"To do the best work as a picture accompanist, one must concen-



trate so completely upon the story and thought of the action as to live it with the actors; this, subconsciously, brings the interpretation of the music into harmony with the picture. No artist ever does himself justice until he is submerged in sympathetic 'subconcentration.'

"I find, many times, that the use of old melodies forces home points in the picture which otherwise would escape the auditor. Choice bits of comedy or pathos are clearly put over when such melodies are used.

"The single accompanist can do this many times better than could an orchestra for the simple reason that he has all themes instantly under his control. This is illustrated in the instance of heavy agitato scenes of tempest or struggle, when a few bars of a familiar melody which has been used for a motif melody can be worked into the improvised accompaniment, keeping the dramatic theme-melody consciously in evidence. This could not be done by the orchestra unless the music were specially written and arranged.

"Elder folk always enjoy old favorite melodies and when they are heard on the picture program, they win approval. New melodies and sprightly themes, of course, have their values, but any average story of intense emotion will admit of one or more familiar themes which are dear to the hearts of our elders.

"Music is the supreme charmer and the voice of all nations. Rightly handled, it makes our silent friends of the silver sheet speak to us in as real a manner as if we were in their living presence. Perhaps because music is the sympathetic bridge between us and the pictures, the warm conductor which quickens ~~our~~<sup>our</sup> sympathies and places us en rapport with what we understand of action in our interpretation of art. When I say 'we', I mean the soul within,



for always, the soul is the knower and our only means of true  
music appreciation or music interpretation.

George Allaire Fisher



BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF THEATRE ORGANIST

NICKLAS, OLIVER

Born in Springfield, Ohio, December 18, 1895. He began his musical career by playing at the Paramount Theatre in Montgomery, Alabama. Later in years, he became manager of the Majestic Theatre in Springfield, Ohio.

In 1927, he opened at the new State Theatre in Springfield, Ohio, playing the 3/7 Wurlitzer. Later in years, he became manager of the theatre. He continued playing the Wurlitzer before shows and also stayed on as theatre manager until his death in 1970. Both he and his wife, Cotta, were killed in a car crash. A week before his death, he observed his 75th birthday and was also honored for 50 years of service as organist and manager by Chakeres State Theatre. He also served as organist of O.E.S. #426 in Springfield.



Picture was taken opening night, Nov. 16, 1927  
at the State Theatre, Springfield, Ohio.

NIKALS, MR.

Organist and manager of the State Theatre in Springfield, Ohio  
from 1923 to 1970.

NOBEL, CARL

(See Cook, George.)

NOLAN, BUDDY

See Chapter Seven, "The Theatre Organ On Phonograph And Radio."

# NOLAN, BUDDY

**Buddy Nolan**, whose career playing theatre organ spanned more than 50 years, died on April 13, 1986, after a lengthy bout with cancer. He was 68. A native of Norristown,

JULY/AUGUST 1986



Buddy Nolan

Pennsylvania, Mr. Nolan started playing professionally while in the ninth grade. His mother was a pianist, organist and vocalist under whose guidance Buddy learned to love music. "I dropped out of school in the tenth grade," he once said, "and played professionally from then on." He served in the Army in

WWII. In 1952, he began a long association with the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he celebrated his fiftieth year in entertainment with a 1982 concert.

For many years Nolan played "Midnight Concerts" at the Embassy, which became a very popular attraction in Fort Wayne during the '50s and '60s. He recorded "Midnight at The Embassy," which has long since become a collector's item. In addition to his theatre work, Buddy Nolan was well-known in the Fort Wayne area for his nightclub and supper club engagements.

It was his long association with the Embassy that helped save the theatre in the early '70s when it was threatened with destruction. Buddy gave several well-publicized concerts and rallied support among the Fort Wayne public, who did not forget the years and years of theatre pipe organ pleasure given them by this very talented performer.

Surviving Mr. Nolan are a sister, Marcella, of Norristown, Pennsylvania, and a brother, Eugene, of Ellentown, Florida. Services were held in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne with burial in the Catholic Cemetery.

TIM NEEDLER

Rocky Mountain Chapter was saddened to learn of the passing of one of its long-time, very active members. **Jerry Cutshall**, husband of our secretary, Alice Cutshall, passed away on March 21 following a heart attack. Jerry donated many hours of his time working with chapter members to maintain the Paramount Theatre organ in downtown Denver. He retired from the Rio Grande Railroad after 48 years of service and, in addition to our chapter, he was active in Colorado Live Steamers, the Mile High Railroad Club and the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. He is deeply missed by all who knew him.

DONALD ZELLER □



# Care, repair of Embassy organ behind effort to build trust fund

By **HARRIET HOWARD HEITHAUS**  
Assistant features editor

**W**ith its voice that ranges from thunder to rainfall, the Page theater organ of the Embassy Theatre, 121 W. Jefferson Blvd., is a grand gold-and-white animal that requires custom care.

The Lima, Ohio, company that built it is no longer in existence. And there are only two other Page organs of its type around, as far as Joan Leal, general manager of the Embassy Foundation, which operates the theater, knows.

"One's in a warehouse, and one's in a private home. They're in Michigan and Alabama, but we're not sure what is where," said Leal.

That means replacement parts must be custom built and maintenance figured by skill rather than from a book, she explained.

"In the next two years, it's going to need a complete overhauling, and we'll have to take it apart and send it away for that."

An early estimate of the cost is \$15,000 to \$20,000. Anticipating that need, the Fort Wayne Woman's Club is planning a fund-raiser Friday to start a trust fund for the organ's repair and maintenance.

The fund-raiser is a memorial as much as a cultural endeavor, explained Mary Carroll, philanthropy chairwoman of the organization. The group wants to repay the Page organ's champion, the late Buddy Nolan, who helped undertake the massive campaign to save the Embassy itself

## Coming attraction

**WHAT:** Social to benefit the Page theater organ maintenance fund, including refreshments and music by local musicians  
**WHERE:** Fort Wayne Woman's Club, 402 W. Wayne St.  
**WHEN:** 7 to 9 p.m. Friday  
**ADMISSION:** Tickets \$7.50 at the door

because of the organ. Nolan performed annual concerts and played movie interludes on the organ during the early 1950s.

"Our goal is to be able to have a trust fund that can take care of the organ's maintenance, so it can always be kept up. That's what would have made Buddy happy," said Carroll.

"I feel like I owe him this for everyone who's heard him play," she said.

And just about everyone with a few years of Fort Wayne residence has heard Nolan play. Nolan was considered the city's premier organist, performing at restaurants, theaters and nightspots in Fort Wayne over a period of 29 years.

He played a series of theater organ concerts on the Page organ and popularized midnight concerts on the instrument. Nolan's 50th year as a performer was celebrated with — what else? — a concert on the Page organ.

The event Friday won't include the Page. Five local performers who knew Nolan — Robert Goldstine, Dyne Pfeffenberger, Robert Ort, William Zabel and Byron Fogt — will perform on an electronic organ during a reception at the Fort Wayne Woman's Club, 402 W. Wayne St.. But all of them were friends, so to speak, with the Page organ and another theater organ at the former Paramount Theater on East Wayne Street behind the G.C. Murphy building.

"We would come in and take turns playing the organ at the Paramount before the theater opened for the afternoon, and we were there when Buddy first came in looking for a job," recalled Ort, 60, a retired teacher.

Ort remembered Nolan's performance heyday in Fort Wayne, when he was the evening entertainer at the Yacht Club on Calhoun Street, an exclusive restaurant where the customers selected their steaks and lobsters before the dinners were cooked. (The restaurant was next to the site of the present Belmont Yacht Club beverage store.)

"Every dining spot then had live music," said Ort. "Those were in the days before television, when that was an evening's entertainment."

Nolan's later nightly performances at the Varsity Club on Wells Street (now the Navy Club) were broadcast on radio, he recalled.

Nolan had most popular songs committed to memory, and couples knew him as the supplier of musical romance with their dinners. When Nolan was ill,



Buddy Nolan with

friends who were staying with him constantly received get-well wishes from people who had courted over dinner and Nolan's organ music.

"They associated Buddy with their romance and marriage," Ort said.

Until he died in 1986 at age 68, Nolan's favorite instrument was the Page organ. Even after he moved to California for about 10 years, Nolan would fly back to play it. He moved back to Fort Wayne permanently in 1962 when he felt the org was in danger of being stripped and sold.

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY EMBASSY THEATRE

## Buddy Nolan with the Page theater organ

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Until he died in 1986 at age 68, Nolan's favorite instrument was the Page organ. Even after he moved to California for about 10 years, Nolan would fly back to play it. He moved back to Fort Wayne permanently in 1962 when he felt the organ was in danger of being stripped and sold.

With four manuals and 15 sets of pipes, it has percussions that simulate a xylophone, bells, chimes, drums and

cymbals. Its special effects equipment — popular for movie accompaniment before the advent of sound films — reproduced sirens and auto horns. Even a commercial pilot who dares to sit down at its forest of stops and presets would be intimidated.

Playing the 58-year-old organ is more than the pleasure of making beautiful music, said Ort, who played the organ during the opening of the Festival of Trees during December.

"It's the sheer power you had at your command. You can make the whole building shake," he said of the deep pedal pipes. "With a theater organ, you have a whole orchestra at your fingertips."



NOLLER, RUTH

Ruth Noller began her musical training as a child in Terre Haute, Indiana. Piano instruction was begun at the Terre Haute Conservatory of Music under Professor Arens and Amelia Myer. When the Noller Family moved to Indianapolis, Ruth began organ study with Carrie Hyatt Kennedy at the Metropolitan School of Music. Following this instruction Noller began playing the pipe organ in Indianapolis theatres. Her career was a full one including appearances at the Isis, Apollo, Ohio, Loew's and Lyric theatres. She continued on a theatre organist until the coming of sound films and the Depression silenced live music in most theatres.

NOLLER, RUTH

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Following this Noller played with an all-girl band known as the "Brick Tops." Later she organized her own all-girl band known as "The Varsity Red Hots." She travelled with this band for several years. After the group disbanded, Noller went into radio work (about 1930) and eventually into television. She teamed up with Ada Straub, an excellent pianist to form a duo known as the Piano Twins. This team remained together for seventeen years doing radio and television broadcasts and some personal appearances. They travelled to Chicago and recorded for the Rondo Record Company (which was also recording organist Ken Griffin during this period).

NOLLER, RUTH

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In 1947 Ruth Noller opened her own studio and taught organ and demonstrated organs for the two major music merchants in Indianapolis--Pearson's and the Wilking Music Company. Noller continued with this work until her retirement in 1961.

NONAMAHER, GEORGE

For many years theatre organist for the Stanley Warner Company. Worked with the Warner chain until about 1957. after which time he played several resort spots in Stone Harbor, New Jersey, his summer home. He died September 1, 1967.

NORDWALL, JONAS

See Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, pp. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

## MAY 18, 1991 PERFORMANCE AT THE RTOS 4-MANUAL, 22-RANK WURLITZER

RTOS welcomes the return of Jonas Nordwall to the console of our Mighty WurliTzer for his fourth concert. Jonas last played for us in February 1987, with earlier appearances in 1978 and 1980. In the summer following his last performance here, Jonas was selected as the "Organist of the Year" by the American Theatre Organ Society.

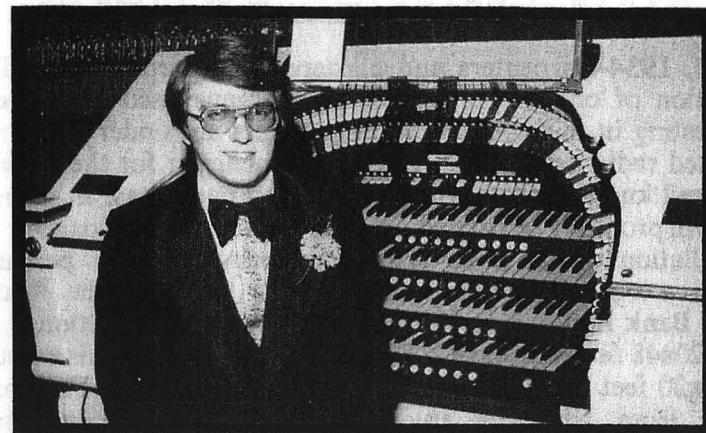
A native of Portland, Oregon, he still resides in that area with his wife Nancy and their two children. Jonas began accordion lessons at age four and added organ and piano instruction at ten. His music instructors included Goldie Pos, Arthur Hitchcock and the great Canadian organist virtuoso Frederick Geoghegan. He also studied with the late great American organist, Richard Ellsasser. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree from Portland University in 1970.

Jonas Nordwall has enjoyed a variety of musical experiences. He played the accordion for King Gustav Adolph of Sweden.. He has been organ soloist for the Oregon Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver (British Columbia) Symphony, the Portland Chamber Orchestra and the Portland Festival Orchestra. He has been organist and choir director and is now the Musical Director of Portland's First United Methodist Church.

On the theater organ side of his experience, Jonas Nordwall was the last house organist of both the Oriental and Paramount Theatres in Portland. For 10 years, he was Senior Staff Organist for the Organ Grinder Corporation, which features one of the largest theater organs, a 4/48 WurliTzer, in an elaborate restaurant setting. He recorded several albums at that location.,

His theater organ playing has included extensive touring of the United States theater organ circuit, as well as several tours of Australia. Jonas was the first to play for a theater organ FM stereo program from the Sydney, Australia Town Hall. He has won high acclaim for his performances wherever he has played.

RTOS is proud to present Jonas for our season finale event this evening. Let us all celebrate Rochester May and Lilac Time, as we listen to the great musical entertainment by Jonas Nordwall!



**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** 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 WurliTzer and the RMSC Eisenhart Auditorium 3-manual, 11-rank WurliTzer. This Society and its two Mighty WurliTzers have a world-wide reputation for excellence.

**RTOS Membership is Open 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 evenings of great family entertainment.

### **FATHER JIM MILLER KICKS OFF '91/92 RTOS SEASON ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th**

*Father Jim Miller, will bring his Dixieland styling to our Mighty WurliTzer to start our new season with a bang! This event is our Annual Membership Event that allows all RTOS members to invite their friends as guests with no admission charge. The performance begins at 8:15 PM with the doors of the Auditorium Center opening at 7:30 PM.*

Jonas Nordwall

Organist of the Year

Jonas Nordwall was born September 7, 1948 in Portland Oregon, the only child of Swedish-American parents. Nordwall started piano lessons at age three and a half. At age four he began taking accordion lessons from accordion teacher Joe Parente. His initial interest in the organ came from watching Korla Pandit on television. Continuing accordion instruction until he was seventeen, Nordwall entered the Northwest accordion competition taking first place for six consecutive years. Eventually he travelled to New York City where he won third place in the national competition for his age category.

During the summer of 1964 Nordwall had the privilege of travelling to Sweden as part of a performing troupe of west coast teenagers of Swedish ancestry. The tour was sponsored by the Vasa Order -- an international Swedish organization. During an unscheduled tour of the king's summer residence, Nordwall was honored in being asked to perform before King Gustavus Adolphus.

Nordwall's interest in the theatre pipe organ developed when he was about twelve years old. He had heard the four manual, eighteen rank Wurlitzer in the Oak Park Roller Rink in Portland. His parents bought an electronic organ and Nordwall began instruction from a teacher named Goldie Pos, whose father had been conductor of Capitol Theatre Orchestra in Duluth, Minnesota in the 1920's. Although Ms. Pos was a piano and organ instructor



of classical music she was open-minded about her pupil's interest in popular music as long as it was done with good musical judgement and technical precision.

When he was thirteen, Nordwall played his first theatre pipe organ -- the Wurlitzer in the Oriental Theatre, Portland. Dennis Hedberg had charge of the organ and kept it maintained and Nordwall persisted in asking for permission to try it until Hedberg agreed. Later Nordwall played the Wurlitzer in Portland's Paramount Theatre.

When he was sixteen years old Nordwall became relief organist to Don Simmons at the Oaks Roller Rink, playing Sundays and Mondays. He remained there for five years. Nordwall's father had died before Jonas enrolled in college so, in order to help with expenses, he took the position of organist at a synagogue, Congregation Neveh Shalom, and as intermission organist at the Oriental Theatre. On Friday nights he had a scant ten minutes to travel from one job to the other. He also played many dance engagements during these years.

Nordwall studied organ under Arthur Hitchcock (himself a former theatre organist in the Los Angeles area) at the University of Portland and got plenty of theatre organ practice at Bill Blunk's five manual Marr and Colton located nearby. When the Oriental Theatre closed, Nordwall went over to the Paramount where he continued playing intermissions regularly.

In 1970 Nordwall graduated from the University of Portland.



with a Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance. In 1971, he married a girl he had met in college and they now have two children.

Nordwall has appeared at the Wiltern Theatre, Los Angeles; the Fox Theatre, San Diego; the Elks Temple, Los Angeles; the Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles; the Granada Theatre, Seattle; the Senate Theatre, Detroit; in Rochester, New York; Wichita, Kansas; the Avenue and Castro theatres in San Francisco; the Paramount Theatre, Seattle and at various other locations and for a variety of ATOS chapters throughout the country, in addition to his stints of several years at Portland's Oriental and Paramount theatres. In 1974 he toured Australia appearing at the Dendy Theatre, Brighton, the Moorabin Town Hall (both locations are suburbs of Melbourne); the Poultney Town Hall and St. Peter's College, Adelaide where he was interviewed over Australian radio. He also appeared in Sydney, at the Marrickville, Chatswood, and Sydney town halls. His last appearance at the Sydney Town Hall was in 1980.

Nordwall plays the Vollum residence Wurlitzer when it is used, is a Product Marketing Manager with the Rogers Organ Company, Hillsboro, Oregon, and organist of the First United Methodist Church, Portland. He served as senior staff organist at the Organ Grinder Restaurant's four manual Wurlitzer until 1984, all of which adds up to an unbelievable schedule which no one with less energy and ability could manage.

Northey, Robert E.

Organist of Auditorium Theatre  
in Newark, Ohio. (Kimball Pipe Organ).

(Source - Jeff Fox).

NOURSE, EVERETT

See Chapter 6, pp. \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_.

DEAR DR. LANDON: - I'M SORRY FOR THE DELAY IN GETTING THIS TO YOU. E.N.

### EVERETT NOURSE- Biography

Everett Nourse is best known for his long tenure as staff organist at the San Francisco Fox Theatre and for his recordings on that organ. He served as organist at the Fox from 1944 until closing day in February 1963, when he played the final notes to be heard on that great instrument just prior to the demolition of the theatre. Three of his recordings were on Fantasy label and two additional recordings were released later on Doric label. Everett's friend, organist Tiny James, was also featured on some of these records.

During this period Everett also played occasionally at various other major Bay Area theatres.

Everett was raised in Oakland, Calif. and began piano lessons at the age of six. At the age of sixteen he started organ lessons and soon was playing at a neighborhood church. His first opportunity at a theatre organ occurred shortly at the Dimond Theatre in Oakland where he was given the job of playing occasionally for Saturday matinees. In the following years he played many Eastbay organs for various occasions, including the Fox Oakland Theatre which was his favorite at that time.

He attended U.C. at Berkeley in 1929 and in 1933 earned a B.S. degree. In 1936 he was married and moved to Vacaville, Calif. where he has lived ever since.

Since the closing of the S.F. Fox about 22 years ago, he has given numerous theatre organ concerts, mainly in the Bay Area and Sacramento area. His most recent concert was at the Oakland Paramount last year.

Everett has also been quite active in the electronic organ field, playing at many fairs, conventions, special events over the years. In 1956 he was official organist at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco.

He is still in demand with his specially designed electronic organ equipment which he plays each year for U.C. Davis activities, Rotary conventions, special events, and many concerts.

Everett Nourse died January 31, 2000.



NYCHLICEK, GEORGE

Assistant organist of the San Francisco Fox Theatre (Wurlitzer)  
before the 1932 closing.