

RALEY, MILTON HOWELL (CAPTAIN)

Broadcast over radio station WBZ, Springfield, Mass. from the Estey Studio in 1926.

A large, stylized handwritten letter 'R' in black ink, centered on the page. The letter has a thick, rounded top curve and a vertical stem that curves slightly to the right at the bottom.

**RALSTON, BOB**

A one time child prodigy born in California. Bob Ralston was an accomplished pianist by the age of 7 and earned his first fees as an organist at age 10 by playing for weddings and funerals. He was also a trombonist in the Salvation Army band.

In 1958 he received a music scholarship for study in Europe where he played pipe organs in eight countries. He returned to the United States and went to Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois where he studied sacred music for two years. After returning to his native California he enrolled in the University of Southern California from which he received a Bachelor of Music degree with Honors in 1964.

**RALSTON, BOB**

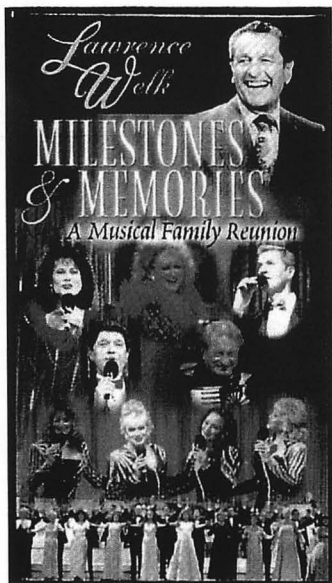
2.

He joined Freddy Martin's Orchestra at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles playing organ, piano, bells, and tuba. While there on recording dates with that orchestra, he came to the attention of Lawrence Welk who engaged him as guest soloist and later as a permanent member of the Lawrence Welk organization. The weekly exposure on nationwide television has caused a demand for Ralston's talents throughout the country. He has quite a number of stereo long playing record albums (13 by 1975) recorded on the RCA and Ranwood labels. He also appears on his own weekly syndicated television show.

Ralston is an accomplished musician on piano, celeste,

**Bob Ralston**, is best known for his 39 years as pianist/organist/arranger with the Lawrence Welk TV Show, still in reruns. He is also a symphony conductor, ASCAP composer, and Musical Director each year of the world's largest Christian celebration—the Hollywood Bowl Easter Sunrise Service. Although he travels extensively throughout the U.S. playing programs on theater pipes, Ralston has been resident organist for the past 13 years at Los Angeles' prestigious Founder's Church. Ralston and his Dutch-born wife, Fietje, reside in Southern California, where they present several concerts each month at their house in Granada Hills. If you are planning a trip to the L.A. area, please contact the Ralstons to inquire how you can attend. Bob and Fietje have a grown son and daughter and one grandson. In 2000 the Ralstons formed a non-profit educational organization called SPOTOMA, the Society for the Preservation Of Theater Organ Music in America. To learn more—and for a complete listing of all Bob Ralston's recordings—please check out [www.bobralston.com](http://www.bobralston.com), or phone (818) 366-3637. You may also write to Bob & Fietje Ralston, c/o SPOTOMA, 17027 Tennyson Place, Granada Hills, CA 91344.

**Dr. Anne Petrie** is professor of voice at Central College. She resides in Pella, Iowa, with her husband, Dr. David Williams (head of the choral department at Central College), and their 3½ year old son, Joel. "There is no singer whose artistry, musicianship and talents I respect more than those of Anne Petrie," says Bob Ralston. That's high praise indeed, since Ralston has been accompanist and/or Musical Director for scores of famous vocalists, including Nat "King" Cole, Jerome Hines, Gordon MacRae, Shirley Jones, Eddie Fisher, Joe Feeney, Norma Zimmer and Tom Netherton.



**LAWRENCE WELK'S  
MILESTONES & MEMORIES**

Now Available on  
VIDEO/CD/CASSETTE

The most popular new title is "Milestones & Memories," the grand reunion of the entire Lawrence Welk Show cast in Branson, Missouri. The two-and-a-half hour video is only \$28; the double CD is only \$20; and the double cassette is only \$17. (All prices include tax.)

**Other Souvenir Recordings** (videos, CDs, cassettes) are available. Bob Ralston's charming wife, Fietje, and our gracious volunteers will help you make your selection after the concert today; Bob will gladly autograph the items for you. Be sure to check out "Tulip Time," which The Pella Opera House commissioned Bob Ralston to record in 2000. This critically acclaimed album is available on both CD and cassette.

**THE PELLA OPERA HOUSE • 611 Franklin Street • P.O. Box 326  
Pella, IA 50219 • Fax: (641) 628-8628 • Box Office: (641) 628.8625**

RALSTON, BOB

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harpsichord, and pipe or electronic organ. Not only does he do solo work on the Lawrence Welk Show but he also serves as accompanist for several of the vocalists.

Ralston is married and the father of two children.

**Welk musician gets  
5 years' probation**

10/27/86  
LOS ANGELES — Lawrence Welk's top keyboardist for more than 20 years was sentenced Friday to five years' probation for molesting a runaway boy he met in New York City and brought to California.

Robert Ralston, 50, of Studio City, pleaded guilty in March to one felony count of committing a lewd act with a child. In a plea bargain, three other lewd-conduct charges involving two other boys were dismissed.

## The Artist: BOB RALSTON

The demand by the Rochester public has always mandated that Bob Ralston perform two concerts per visit to Rochester. This will be his fifth appearance since Bob first appeared here sixteen years ago.

Bob Ralston was born in Upland, California. With his mother a pianist, Bob emulated his parent and by the time he was 10, earned his first fees as an organist at weddings and funerals in churches of several demoninations. He also served as trombonist in a Salvation Army Band. He studied in Europe on a music scholarship, beginning in 1958, and played pipe organs in eight countries. Returning to America, he spent two years in sacred music study at Wheaton College in Illinois. Then he enrolled at University of Southern California from which he was graduated with a Bachelor of Music Degree with honors in 1964.

Ralston is an alumnus of the Freddy Martin Orchestra (1959-62) where he played organ, piano, tuba and bells. During a recording period, he was a guest soloist on a Lawrence Welk program, and became a permanent member of the Welk organization in 1963. Bob's piano and organ solos were a regular feature on Welk's TV show for the next 20 years. He was responsible for many of the fine orchestrations listeners enjoyed each week. In addition, viewers often caught a glimpse of Bob as a singer, dancer and comedian.

Those who have only heard Bob Ralston on Welk's nationally syndicated TV show have no idea of the range of Bob's talents: he's more than a master at the theater pipe organ; he's an all-round entertainer who'll give you two hours of happiness today that you'll long remember.

Bob Ralston keeps active in the recording field; he presently has 21 record albums on the market. Now, since the Welk Show is no longer on the air, Bob criss-crosses the country doing tours as symphony conductor, concert pianist, show producer and theater pipe organist.

With all of his travels, Bob finds his greatest happiness at home with his family. Bob and his Dutch-born wife, Fietje, celebrated their 23rd wedding anniversary this March. Their son, Randy, 21, recently graduated from college and works as a computer operator. Their daughter, Dianne, 19, is majoring in Journalism at the University of Colorado. Even Bob has returned to school; this time working toward a degree in Computer Science.

He has always been personally involved in religious and civil rights movements. He volunteers his time weekly to record for the Blind. He is currently Minister of Music at Whittwood Baptist Church.

## PROGRAM

### Part I (prepared)

A selection of popular, sacred, classical and light classical compositions including

**The Blue Danube Waltz**  
and  
**The Tritsch-Tratsch Polka**  
(both by Johann Strauss)

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### Part II (improvised)

A selection of novelty tunes, Broadway Show Themes, and patriotic melodies including

**A spontaneous medley based on requests from the audience**

## ROCHESTER THEATER ORGAN SOCIETY

The Rochester Theater Organ Society is a registered non-profit organization whose purpose to preserve and present the sounds of the theater pipe organ. The Wurlitzer organ here in the Auditorium Theatre is considered to be among the best in the nation; the Society itself is believed to be the largest of its type in the world. Yes, we are proud to have over 1500 families enrolled!

You are most cordially encouraged to ask about membership at the table in the lobby, or by writing to RTOS, PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or by phoning 544-6595. Yearly dues are a modest \$15, and most of concerts are free for members.

9/84

## THEATER ORGANIST BOB RALSTON RETURNS TO ROCHESTER

Bob Ralston, keyboard artist extraordinaire, will present his highly entertaining show on the magnificent theater pipe organ at The Auditorium Theater in Rochester on October 20 & 21, 1984. The Saturday evening performance will be at 8:15 p.m. and the Sunday matinee will be at 2:00 p.m. Phone (716) 544-6595 for information. \*

Ralston, featured pianist/organist/arranger on the Lawrence Welk TV show for 21 years, is well-known to New York audiences. He has appeared both with the Welk troupe and on his own in Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, Elmira, New York City, Schenectady, Syracuse, Troy, Utica, and several times in Rochester. "It's such a joy to perform for the Rochester Theater Organ Society," says Bob. "They maintain that Wurlitzer in absolutely mint condition, and it allows my music to soar to new heights."

The first half of "The Bob Ralston Show" will feature light classics, Broadway show tunes, and nostalgic easy-listening melodies from the 30s and 40s. For the second half of the show, Bob walks through the audience quickly writing down 20 or 30 requests. He then skillfully weaves these melodies into a magical medley that delights everyone. Bob never knows what people will ask for, but he says, "In Rochester I hope someone requests 'New York, New York!'"

Those who have only heard Bob Ralston on Welk's nationally syndicated TV show have no idea of the range of Bob's talents: he's more than a master at the theater pipe organ, he's an actor, dancer and comedian, who will give you two hours of happiness you'll long remember.

Bob Ralston's professional career began at age 10, when he played for dance studios in his home town of Montebello, California. Then he worked 3 years at the Coconut Grove with the late Freddy Martin and his orchestra. Following that, of course, was the 21 years with Lawrence Welk. Lately, Bob's career has been leading him toward that of producer of musical shows. For 17 years he was an integral part of Birmingham, Alabama's prestigious week-long Festival of Sacred Music. In 1977, Bob was appointed conductor of the Hayward (CA) Symphony Orchestra. For the past 6 years he has been director of the Stars of the Lawrence Welk Show at Holland, Michigan's annual Tulip Time Festival; in May of 1985 Bob will direct 6 performances of that extravaganza.

"I always feel right at home in Holland," says Bob, "since my wife was born and raised in the Netherlands." Bob and Fietje just celebrated their 21st wedding anniversary. Their son, Randy, 20, a recent college graduate and a newlywed, works full-time as a computer operator. Their daughter, Dianne, 17, a former high-school cheerleader, is now a freshman at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Bob himself, who already has his Bachelor of Music Degree (in composition and accompanying) from the University of Southern California, is currently working toward a degree in Computer Science.

\* Shows were cancelled

RAMSBOTTOM, (HAROLD RAMSEY) (see British Biog. file)

Organist of the Rivoli Theatre in New York City in 1925.

**HAROLD RAMSEY DIES IN WESTERN CANADA**

Harold Ramsey, whose name was a household word throughout Great Britain during the golden age of silent film/theatre organ era, died January 31st in Salmon Arm, British Columbia, Canada. He was 70 years old.

Born in Great Yarmouth, England, when he was age nine his parents moved to Western Canada. He studied music, and at age 19 he was appointed organist at Calgary Cathedral. He also became Canada's first broadcasting organist. In 1923, Ramsey was appointed chief organist at the New York Rivoli Theatre and was the first organist to be featured at a Wurlitzer on Broadway.

From 1926 to 1932 he was on tour of major Paramount Publix houses, appearing in Buffalo, Boston, Washington, Dallas, Chicago, Minneapolis, Houston, Atlanta, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

He was brought to Dallas to open the new Publix No. 1 Wurlitzer installed in the Palace Theatre in 1930. During his stay here, he married Mary Fern Haskell who was one of the Texas Rockets in the Publix Stage Shows with our own Doris Garrett.

In England his team of organist included such greats as Sidney Torch, Robinson Cleaver, Joseph Seal, Alex Taylor, Hubert Selby, Phil Park, Andree Conti and Neville Meale.

Harold Ramsey was really a legendary name, linked forever with Granada Tooting.

PHOTO AT LEFT FROM THE CONSOLE MAGAZINE  
DALLAS PALACE WITH PUBLIX NO. 1 WURLITZER



Harold Ramsay at the console of the Wurlitzer, Granada Cinema, Tooting, London, 1973.





**Editor's Note**—We publish below an interesting letter from our member and former Continental Theatre Organist, John Hoeben who is now living in Fleron, Belgium.

"Harold Ramsay, who died on January 28th, 1976 in Salmon Arm, B.C., Canada, was in fact an Englishman who, at the beginning of his musical career, had to go overseas to find himself. He went as a boy to America, with plenty of music in his blood and his fingers tingling with rhythm! He took a degree in music at MacGill University in Canada, after which he faced up to the World, with a living to earn. The result of all this was that big jobs came his way and he rose to be a staff organist and then became a "star" organist at Paramount's principal luxury cinemas as for instance, New York, Boston, Buffalo, San Francisco and Los Angeles. He became very popular with his audiences and at one time he was known as "The Flying Organist", for he bought an aeroplane and flew from city to city in the USA.



Harold Ramsay at the Granada, Tooting, in his heyday.

After some years in America, his native England "borrowed" him from Paramount. He came over and got in touch with Sidney L. Bernstein, who was the proprietor of the

Granada Cinema at Tooting, Mitcham Road, which is a hundred yards south of Tooting Broadway tube station. This cinema was opened in 1931 and gave its name to Granada Street, leading at that time to a special "car and pram" park!

The chief characteristic of the Granada's interior was spaciousness. The entrance hall was big enough for a game of hard-court tennis. There were 3400 seats in the auditorium, all upholstered in green. The very rich decor was by Komisarjevsky and heavily Italian Renaissance in style. Harold Ramsay became permanent organist at Tooting from Christmas 1932 with, as his assistant, Don Baker! I knew them both for between 1933 and 1935 I met them several times at the Granada, where I was allowed to play that magnificent Wurlitzer organ, by kind permission of Mr. Bernstein himself. It was a powerful and very flexible instrument, built originally with twelve units but enlarged to fourteen when Harold Ramsay was appointed. I still remember very well the organ as it stood. It had four manuals, one of which was devoted entirely to percussions, a grand piano attachment and fourteen units installed in two chambers underneath the stage. These were: Diapason, Tibia, Tibia (2), Tuba horn, Saxophone, Oboe, Kinura, English horn, Flute, Gamba, Violin, Celeste, Vox humana, Clarinet.

There was however, another name associated with that organ in those years, namely, Donald Thorne! His signature tune, "My Song Goes Round the World", became almost as familiar as Ramsay's. Donald Thorne filled what would have been an unfortunate hiatus in the Tooting broadcasts and did it exceptionally well!

Harold Ramsay had a very busy time in the heart of the theatre land of New York. Indeed he was playing serious music in the cinema long before the plethora of revolutionary unit organs so captured the admiration of the American public that no cinema, theatre or ballroom was complete without one. In 1921 the largest New York cinemas maintained really fine symphony orchestras of anything up to seventy-five players, supported in many instances by four-manual straight concert organs on which organ classics were played by musicians of the highest calibre. Harold Ramsay was one of the first champions of popular music for the organ in the cinema. He was indeed versatile enough to play both serious and light music, gaining the coveted appointment as organist of the Rivoli, New York, where Irwin Talbot conducted an orchestra of seventy five players, under the direction of Dr. Hugo Reisenfeld, by playing movements from Widor Organ Symphonies and a sym-

phonic arrangement of a popular tune of the moment, "Mambalina". That was in 1923 and soon after his appointment in November, a modern type of unit organ was installed and he was really on the road to widespread fame! The article by Donald S. Inkster in the June 1976 Journal contained a great deal of detail of Harold Ramsay's career in England. However, may I say again that I knew Harold Ramsay very well for we had many dealings together. I remember him as a debonair man of the world, perfectly dressed, standing in the room of some fashionable hotel to answer a fire of questions from the press in a quiet, soft voice, with a slight American accent. But he could also be and was, the musician, sitting every morning at the organ in an empty theatre practicing for hours on end in an old red jersey and a comfortable pair of grey flannel trousers, baggy at the knees!

It was around 1938 that Ramsay formed his Rhythm Symphony Orchestra, the outcome of an idea suggested by the Variety Director of the BBC and his General Manager, Sidney L. Bernstein. One of the vocalists in the Orchestra was Mary Fern for

whom he wrote his famous song "Her Name is Mary". I met her at the time and I must say that she was a pretty American blonde. For her also he wrote "This Lovely Rose" and "Dancing on a Dime", which he broadcast with his new orchestra at that time.

In the Summer of 1936 he enjoyed tremendous popularity. Everyone knew him as "Harold" and American stars over in England made a point of looking him up. But perhaps the greatest tribute to his popularity, in which I assisted, was paid to him in the following way. Eight cowboys and cowgirls from the Rodeo at the White City had heard him playing in Texas and decided to give him an ovation. One night they trooped into the Granada and insisted on sitting in the front seats, despite the fact that these were the worst in the house. Then when Harold Ramsay came up on the organ, eight lassos encircled his neck! He looked down to see several figures in large Tom Mix hats and coloured shirts! It was a tribute of admiration to a great organist; a man with the feeling to play for the people the music they wanted to hear . . . ."

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(Continued from page 21)

Balanced pedal controlling chamber B  
General crescendo pedal  
Indicators for balanced pedals and general crescendo  
Double touch pistons: 8 to each manual  
First touch controlling manual stops  
Second touch providing suitable pedal  
Double touch piston: 1 to each manual  
First touch adding pedal coupler of that manual  
Second touch reducing pedal organ to pp  
Double touch pistons: 4 controlling the bombe department

General cancel on all departmental stop keys on second touch  
Telephonic communication  
Console to chamber A  
Console to chamber B  
Console to relay room  
Console to organist's office  
Console to stage manager's office  
Voltmeter  
Manuals CC to C — 61 notes  
Pedals CCC to G — 32 notes

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#### Who Are They?

The 'cameo' type photographs which we have included on page 17 of this Journal first appeared, uncaptioned, in the April 1955 issue of our magazine. Can you identify the organists featured? The first eight pictures are of the Trocadero, Elephant and Castle Wurlitzer, now, of course, our own organ, and the players are apparently, Henry Croudson, Howard Thomas, Bryan Rodwell, John Howlett, Dennis Mathew, Robin Richmond, Jack Banbury and Eric Spruce. The bottom left picture is also of Eric Spruce, at the Kilburn State, while on the right is Harold Shepherd at the West End Cinema, Birmingham. Happy days!

# E ATTRACT

## UP AND DOWN THE ALLEY

Harold Ramsey, who was loaned by Public to Mr. Sidney Bernstein, of Bernstein Theatres, England, last year, is back and says that business was good in the New Granada, London, where he was featured organist. . . .

Often Ramsey flew to Paris on a Sunday morning and played an organ concert at the Gaumont Palace, for Radio-Paris. Ramsay is now in Los Angeles renewing acquaintance with his wife (who is in motion pictures) and it is rumored will direct an orchestra for Paramount in one of its houses on the West Coast. . . .

### BALTIMORE, MD.

1938

#### HAROLD RAMSAY

In his second year at the Loew Century Theatre in Baltimore, Mr. Harold Ramsay is meeting with great success. He has written several new numbers, which will be released shortly. He was formerly at the Rivoli in New York for a period of four years and one year at Shea's Buffalo, in New York. He has a tremendous following and is very well liked as a result of his very fine personality.

# Have A Nice Day!

Dear Sirs: Photo Forthcoming

I was born 3-11-26 in Des Moines, Iowa. I've never studied piano or organ and have never attempted to emulate any others. I am extremely proud of my totally God given talent and I thrive on making people happy with my concerts. I have played plug-in organs for 29 years. The last six years have been devoted to pipe organ. Appearances in Belleme, Wa., A.T.O.S. Sacramento, Ca. " " 4 Times 7 long term engagements in Sacramento - Pezga Pipea Caraval Pezga-Pezga in Hayward, Connybees, Redwood City, Daly City, Santa Clara. Mt. Baker theater, Bellingham, Wa. I hope this will suffice along with the promo material. Thank you. Hal Randall

ght and he plays by ear. Of course there are plenty of limited talent "ear" players before (e.g. "Fats" Waller) but outstanding ones have always been limited. Of course there are plenty of limited talent (even on records!) who may play in one style or have harmonic concepts which are different. Not Hal Randall. Listening to his music and never guess that he hadn't been thorough in music. He doesn't exhibit any shortcomings though he will privately admit a preference for the lack keys. As we said, Hal is something of

Randall, Hal

limited to one style. The rhythm tunes play interesting improvisation; the ballads in theatrical style, some with fluted open humor surfaces when he uses a familiar tune (e.g. a snatch of Yankee Doodle during all facilities of his instrument, percussions and even a little of the "wah wah" trumpet feature on the "PRO" model at the time

MENT is the Baldwin PRO-200, an instrumented by entertainers for its wide range of possibilities. Besides the full-blown flute has a solo violin (note Fascination), some horns and the "wah wah" trumpet, a big the singular flute organs popular at the time instrument, capable of much "lugging" engagements. The tape from which it was made was recorded during engagements at locations as the occasional background and applause indicate. Yet there is surprise in the acoustical perspectives. It's a an entertainer.

NOTIONS: Watch What Happens; No, Not Quiet Village; Sunrise Serenade; You Made I Will Wait for You; That's Life; Slow Boat e'll Never Be Another You; Sometimes I'm in the Blues; Spinning Wheel; I've Gotta Be or Leave Me; Fascination; Night Train; My ; Patricia; Lover. A wide-range blend of the t.

MENT. There isn't room to comment on all conditions but here are a few; Laura is as ever as she comes alive in her ghostly aura; has all those intriguing jungle sounds, a all adventure in off-beat music; I Will Wait played 4-to-the-bar with jazz variations; St. features a torrid clarinet against ear-catching bass patterns; I've Gotta Be Me had a hint of "Fats" Waller plus schmear glissandos; Fascination, a long ago silent movie love theme, gets a very realistic cello and violin solo treatment; My Wonderful One is played in theatre organ style with well-fluted open harmony; Lover is a fast 4/4 version of the type the late Millie Alexander once lost a shoe performing in concert. Hal slips in a reference to Hungarian Rhapsody as a filler. A lively closer.



organ. Issued as a cassette tape only. \$10.00 postpaid from  
 • Ranlon Corporation  
 6644 Medora Drive  
 North Highlands, CA 95660

THE ARTIST. Hal Randall has been a solid musical fixture in the Bay Area for the past 38 years, except when concert work took him around the country. We first became aware of his musical prowess during a long ago Home Organ Festival: We can state that his playing styles never fail to please. He has a fine ear for harmony and the intricacies of arranging for organ. In fact, Hal is something of a miracle; his musical skills come naturally. He is

Recording is on the light side with a minimum of distortion. Although the tunes were recorded in various locations, except for some background chatter they might have been made under one acoustical condition. Continuity is good. Overall, Hal Randall's initial tape release is a fine example of its genre.

TABS AND DRAWBARS

the song was over!) He continued with *I'm Through a Love* which I found to be a complete contradiction but oh-h-h-h- so pretty! The evening closed with *Mama's Gone Good Bye* (thanks to Tony Loviscek! So happy he's back!), *Deep Purple, Time On My Hands, Dream A Little Dream of Me*, and *Lil' Darlin'*. It was a fun evening.

Lee Vise, reporting

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The DIABLO ORGAN-AIRES held their August meeting in the home of Wilma and Frank Pratt. Wilma started out the evening by playing *Trophy, Yesterday, When I Was Young and Sweet and Gentle*. Jean Lasker followed Wilma at the organ with *Devil by Starlight, Tell Me Why* and *When Sunny Gets Blue*.

Grant Wheeler gave stirring renditions of *This Land Is Your Land, San Francisco* and *Nights of Gladness*. Grant was followed by Rolland Forsyth, who played *Singing in the Rain, You Were Meant For Me* and *Linger a While*.

Marc Lasker played *Hawaiian Wedding Song, I Can't Believe You're in Love with Me*, and *I Could Write a Book*. Bill Bouton entertained us with his medley from "Sound of Music."

Leo Thompson was next to take his turn at the organ and played *I'm In The Mood for Love, I'll Get By, Red Sails in the Sunset* and *This Love of Mine*. The final member to take his turn at the organ was Bob Coslett, who played his rendition of *One Voice*.

Frank Pratt, reporting

## RECORD REVIEW

Record merchandisers wishing to submit discs for review may send pressings to TABS and DRAWBARS REVIEWER, Box 3564, Granada Hills, California 91344. Please include merchandising information and a black and white photo of the organist.

by Stu Green



### I'VE GOTTA BE ME.

Hal Randall playing the Baldwin Pro-200 electronic organ. Issued as a cassette tape only. \$10.00 postpaid from

Ranlon Corporation  
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entirely self taught and he plays by ear. Of course there have been excellent "ear" players before (e.g. "Fats" Waller, Steve Allen) but outstanding ones have always been in short supply. Of course there are plenty of limited ear players (some even on records!) who may play in one key, be imitative of one famous organist, or with "holes" in their sense of rhythm or have harmonic concepts which bedevil the listener. Not Hal Randall. Listening to his music one would never guess that he hadn't been thoroughly schooled in music. He doesn't exhibit any shortcomings, although he will privately admit a preference for playing on the black keys. As we said, Hal is something of a miracle.

Nor is Hal limited to one style. The rhythm tunes offered here display interesting improvisation; the ballads are often played in theatrical style, some with fluted open harmony. Hal's humor surfaces when he uses a familiar phrase for a "fill" (e.g. a snatch of *Yankee Doodle* during *St. Louis Blues*).

He uses the full facilities of his instrument, percussions where they fit and even a little of the "wah wah" trumpet which was a new feature on the "PRO" model at the time it was unveiled.

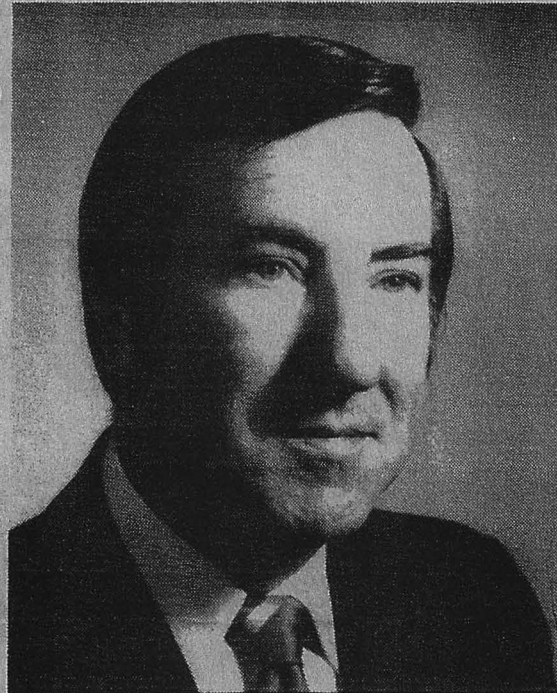
THE INSTRUMENT is the Baldwin PRO-200, an instrument often selected by entertainers for its wide range of instrumental possibilities. Besides the full-blown flute complement, it has a solo violin (note *Fascination*), some reeds, percussions and the "wah wah" trumpet, a big advance from the singular flute organs popular at the time. It's a hardy instrument, capable of much "lugging around" to lounge engagements. The tape from which this compilation was made was recorded during engagements at several locations as the occasional background crowd noise and applause indicate. Yet there is surprisingly little difference in the acoustical perspectives. It's a good organ for an entertainer.

THE SELECTIONS: *Watch What Happens; No, Not Much; Laura; Quiet Village; Sunrise Serenade; You Made Me Love You; I Will Wait for You; That's Life; Slow Boat to China; There'll Never Be Another You; Sometimes I'm Happy; St. Louis Blues; Spinning Wheel; I've Gotta Be Me; Love Me or Leave Me; Fascination; Night Train; My Wonderful One; Patricia; Lover*. A wide-range blend of the old and current.

THE COMMENT. There isn't room to comment on all deserving renditions but here are a few; *Laura* is as haunting as ever as she comes alive in her ghostly aura; *Quiet Village* has all those intriguing jungle sounds, a real Hal Randall adventure in off-beat music; *I Will Wait for You* is played 4-to-the-bar with jazz variations; *St. Louis Blues* features a torrid clarinet against ear-catching bass patterns; *I've Gotta Be Me* had a hint of "Fats" Waller plus schmear glissandos; *Fascination*, a long ago silent movie love theme, gets a very realistic cello and violin solo treatment; *My Wonderful One* is played in theatre organ style with well-fluted open harmony; *Lover* is a fast 4/4 version of the type the late Millie Alexander once lost a shoe performing in concert. Hal slips in a reference to *Hungarian Rhapsody* as a filler. A lively closer.

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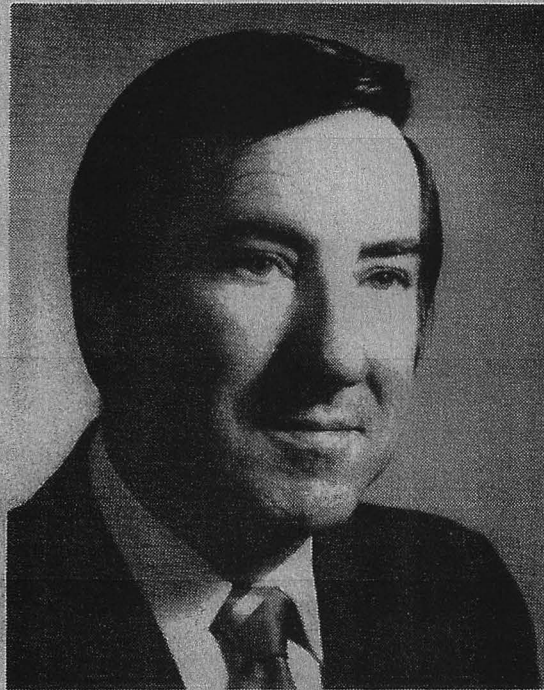


REPUTATIONS HAVE A WAY OF FADING INTO THE FAR OFF DISTANCE WHEN ONE HAS MOVED FROM THE AREA. I AM HAPPY TO SAY I AM ONCE AGAIN WITHIN THE STRIKING DISTANCE OF THE BAY AREA TO DO SOME CONCERTS. TO THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE NOT INFORMED OF MY VERSATILITY, THEY HAVE NOT MANAGED TO BUILD THE ORGAN THAT I DO NOT PERFORM CONCERTS ON. I AM CONCENTRATING MY ENTIRE EFFORTS AT THE PRESENT TIME AND IN THE FUTURE TO THE PERFORMANCE OF CONCERTS AND RECORDINGS. AS I WILL SOON BE INVOLVED IN A.T.O.S. CONCERTS AS WELL AS OTHER CONCERTS AND RECORDINGS, TRY TO ALLOW ENOUGH TIME FOR FUTURE CONCERT DATES. MY NAME? HAL RANDALL.

CURRENTLY DOING CONCERTS ON THE FOLLOWING ORGANS: CONN, RODGERS, ALLEN, HAMMOND, BALDWIN, LOWREY, YAMAHA, AND PIPE ORGAN.

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6644 MEDORA AVENUE  
NORTH HIGHLANDS, CALIFORNIA 95660  
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02 206-733-7655



AS AN INTRODUCTION TO HAL RANDALL AS A PIPE ORGANIST, THE ONLY WORD THAT CAN APPLY TO DESCRIBE HIM IS, "UNIQUE". THIS WORD COVERS A MULTITUDE OF DESCRIPTIONS SUCH AS, THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS AS A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIST, A MAN WHO HAS PERFORMED OVER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY CONCERTS NATIONWIDE, A MAN WHO HAS BEEN ACCLAIMED AS A "ONE OF A KIND CONCERT ARTIST WHO BLENDS REGISTRATIONS ON THE ORGAN AS AN ARTIST BLENDS PAINT ON A CANVAS WITH A BRUSH." THIS IS AN ARTIST WHO TRULY HAS WHAT WE ALL REFER TO AS A "GOD GIVEN TALENT". AFTER YOU HAVE HEARD ONE OF HIS CONCERTS YOU WILL FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE THAT HE PLAYS ENTIRELY BY EAR, IS ENTIRELY SELF-TAUGHT, AND EMULATES NO OTHER ORGANIST. HAL RANDALL ALSO POSSESSES THE UNIQUE ABILITY TO PROMPTLY ESTABLISH A RAPPORT WITH HIS AUDIENCES LACED WITH A TOUCH OF TASTEFUL GOOD HUMOR. HIS AUDIENCES AND HIS PEERS ALL AGREE THAT ONCE YOU HEAR HIM YOU WILL SAY, "A HAL RANDALL CONCERT IS TOP DRAWER".

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or 206-733-7655

RATH, FRANK, JR.

Organist of the Rivoli Theatre in Denver, Colorado in 1925.



RATH, FRANZ, JR.

Organist of the Rivoli Theatre in Denver, Colorado in the 1920's. The organ here was a Wurlitzer Hope-Jones 2-1/2 manual.

Rath studied organ under McClellan at the Morman Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah. In 1922 he became chief organist of the New Isis Theatre in Denver, Colorado and remained in the Denver area until his death in 1927.

During his years a remote controlled piano was added to the organ which could be raised or lowered on its own lift, and it attracted considerable attention in the Denver area in the 1920's.

A news item from Jacobs Orchestra Monthly dated September, 1927 reads, "Franz Rath, Jr., who is third organist at Denver's Isis

RATH, FRANZ, JR.

2.

Theatre (Murtagh 1914-1918) (Keates 1918-1919), has gone into politics."

RAY, DANNY WESLEY

Danny Ray was born January 30, 1951 in Fort Worth, Texas. He began playing piano at age 3 and played in church at the tender age of 4 years. He began formal piano instruction at age 5 and progressed through a course of study with Emmett Smith of Texas Christian University, 1971-74. Since the age of 14 Roy has, himself, been teaching privately.

Ray's career has included a wide variety of settings. He travelled for two years as a keyboard artist with a gospel music group. Later he travelled for two two years as a keyboard artist and arranger with a show group. As of 1977 he was organist at Webb Chapel Methodist Church in Farmers' Branch, Texas, the oldest Methodist congregation in Dallas County.

Since January 1976 Roy has been organist of Landmark Pizza and Pipes in Dallas, Texas where he plays a 3 manual, 10 rank Barton organ formerly installed in Waterloo, Iowa.

RECHTORIS, MRS. STEPHEN (VIRGINIA BYRD)

Sister of Indianapolis organist Dessa Byrd. Virginia was the youngest of the two sisters and very early wanted to follow in her sister's footsteps, although her sister Dessa did her very best to discourage her. Virginia Byrd did become a theatre organist, opening at the Fountain Square Theatre in Indianapolis, Indiana (Marr and Colton) only three months before sound movies spelled an end to theatre pipe organs. She made the transition to Hammond organs and still is active on radio and in television. She is organist and associate director of "The Chapel Door" program, the oldest religious program on television. She is active in civic work through her association with the North Group, the Women's Committee of the Indiana State Symphony Society, and the American Guild of Organists. She also has been active working

RECHTORIS, MRS. STEPHEN (VIRGINIA BYRD)

2.

with Community Concerts.

RECTORIS, VIRGINIA

Organist in the Indianapolis, Indiana area. Sister of theatre organist, Dessa Byrd. Active in the Indianapolis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and well known in church music circles in Indianapolis, Indiana.

REDMAN, WILLIAM (BILL)

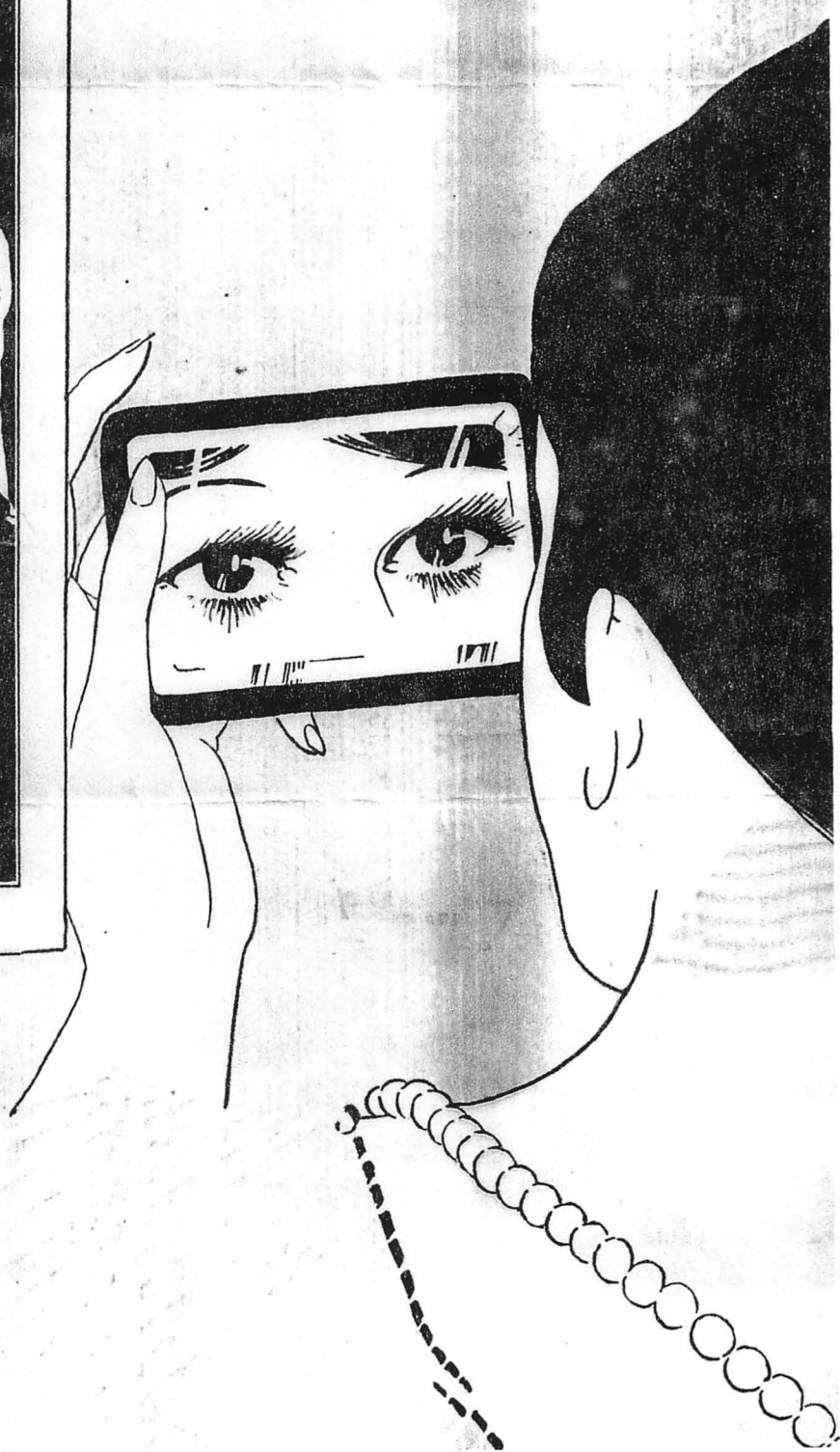
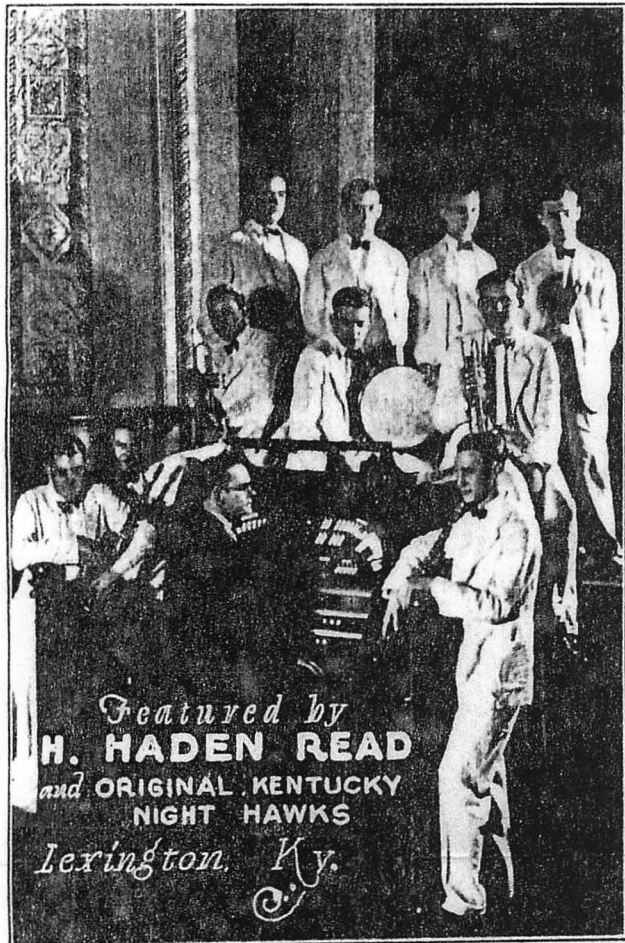
Intermission organist and organ builder. Was representative for Reuter pipe organs out of Lawrence, Kansas during the 1920's, and sold most of the Reuter theatre organs that were installed in the southwest. Organist of the Worth Theatre in Fort Worth, Texas from 1942 to 1945.

REDMOND, JACK

Organist of the Strand Theatre in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1927.

# WHERE'D YOU GET THOSE EYES?

*A Jingling Fox Trot Song*  
*With Ukulele Accompaniment*



Words and Music by  
**WALTER DONALDSON**

Writer of "After I Say I'm Sorry"  
"Let's Talk About My Sweetie"

"You can't go wrong  
with any **FEIST** song"

REED, HADEN

Organist of the Kentucky Theatre, Lexington, Kentucky(3 manual Wurlitzer)in the 1920's.

*October 1928 (LP)* The 3050-seat Loew's United Artist Theatre has opened in Louisville, Kentucky. On the screen is Joan Crawford in *Our Dancing Daughters* (which launched her to fame). The stage show features Jan Garber and his band, while HADEN READ plays the 3/11 Wurlitzer.

REED, HARRY L.

Born in Waltham, Massachusetts in 1894. His early employment included five years as church organist and two years as a pianist and orchestra leader in Providence, Rhode Island. He spent five years as organist-pianist at Loew's St. James Theatre in Boston. In July 1921 he came to Seattle, Washington where he was organist at the following theatres: the Strand, the New Everett, the Fifth Avenue, the Egyptian, the Paramount, and the Fox. From 1931 to 1937 he was assistant program-musical director at Radio Station KJR and orchestra director as well as staff organist for Station KOMO and Station KJR. He was on the staff of the Palomar Theatre from June of 1937 to February 1944. He was also organist for the Daylight Lodge and the Seattle Commandery--over 25 years each. He was organist for the Seattle Elks for 19 years and was

REED, HARRY L.

2.

National Organist for the Eagles. For 33 years he gave daily concerts at Rhodes Department Store. He made many appearances on radio, television, and travelled with road shows, etc.

Reed was president of Local 76 of the Musicians Union from 1944 to 1954, and served a number of terms on its Board of Directors. He was president of the Northwest Conference of Musicians from 1946 to 1952 and was its secretary-treasurer from 1953 until 1962. He was a life member of Local 76, a 50-year member of the Boston Musicians, and a member of the Musicians Locals in Everett, Aberdeen, and Eugene, Oregon.

Reed served on the Chamber of Commerce Education and Arts Committee and the Advisory Board of the Junior Programs, the Seattle Philharmonic, and the



Cornish Junior Symphony. He was chairman of the Welcome Lane Committee for returning Korean War veterans.

Reed was a member of the U.S.O. Executive Committee and the Board of Directors of the Seattle-King County Chapter of the American Red Cross. He was chairman of the Chapter's Entertainment Committee. He was also a member of the Urban Renewal Board and numerous Mayor's committees and was active in Greater Seattle, Inc. He was a Past Master of the Daylight Lodge, F.&A.M., he was a member of the Scottish Rite bodies, the Nile Temple of the Shrine, the Royal Arch Masons, and the American Guild of Organists. Reed died in 1967.

REED, LAWTON

Broadcast over Radio Station KTHS, Hot Springs, in the mid 1920's

---

REID, LAWSON

Organist at radio station KTHS, Hot Springs, Arkansas in the early 1930's

## The Artist: DAVID REESE

Until he made his first eastern tour in 1980, visiting RTOS in the process, David Reese was known primarily in California and Utah. Since then, he has been exposed to audiences throughout the country.

A native of Salt Lake City and now living in San Francisco, David studied classical piano under Mabel Borg Jenkins, one of Utah's most revered teachers. Recognizing his latent talent, she had her precocious student performing in recitals with University of Utah piano majors before he was ten.

Playing his church's organ, he was introduced to the power and majesty of pipes. His classical organ instructor was Roy M. Darly who recently retired from the Mormon Tabernacle staff. Before he was 17, David had a two-year stint playing pre-program music on an electronic at the Valley Music Hall, a theatre-in-the-round near Salt Lake City. A one-year tour of Canada as music director for a stage show followed his high school graduation.

In Salt Lake City, he was introduced to the theatre organ idiom by playing the 5/34 Wurlitzer organ in the late Larry Bray's Organ Loft for several years. Arriving in California, he spent four years at the 3/16 Wurlitzer in the Bella Roma pizza parlor in Martinez, then designed, directed the installation of, and opened the 3/18 Wurlitzer in Bella Roma II in Concord. He is now on the staff of the Pizza & Pipes Restaurant in Daly City, California.

His touring takes him up and down the California coast, and occasionally on a trip to the east. He was featured at the 1975 and 1983 American Theatre Organ Society conventions, has made four recordings, with a fifth being planned.

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



## The Program:

Mr. Reese will announce his program.

## The Society

To our guests, we extend an invitation to join the Rochester Theater Organ Society. Stop at one of the membership tables in the lobbies, or write to: RTOS, PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or call 544-6595.

**Next concert: DAN BELLAMY 8:15 pm, Sat., Oct. 20, 1984**

There has been a change in artists for the October concert. Mr. Bob Ralston will not be appearing. Dan Bellomy will be making his first RTOS appearance for a single concert on Saturday evening, Oct. 20. There will not be a Sunday matinee.

*Lloyd Reese*

A Personal Introduction  
To  
DAVID G. REESE, Organist

"David Reese is fantastic! He is amazing! You almost hear the lyrics as he plays!" These are some of the enthusiastic comments made by appreciative listeners, who regularly come from miles around for an evening with this talented artist of the console.

David, top-ranking San Francisco Bay Area theatre organist, is a native of Salt Lake City, Utah, where his first musical training was the study of classical piano, under the direction of the late Mabel Borg Jenkins, one of Utah's most revered and accomplished piano teachers. Mrs. Jenkins quickly recognized David's unusual musical ability, and before he was ten years of age, he was appearing in recitals with University of Utah piano-performance majors.

But David was not destined to become the concert pianist Mrs. Jenkins was hoping for. Instead, as he sat "for fun" one day at the console of the organ in the church he attended, he pushed the "on" button, pulled all the stops--and discovered the "power of the pipes." At this point David's musical education took a different turn, and the next several years were spent under the meticulous tutelage of Roy M. Darley, organist at the renowned Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake. Meanwhile, lunching Salt Lakers were getting a preview of David's artistry-in-embryo at a downtown restaurant, where he popped in during "off-time" from high school studies, just to get a chance at the keyboard of the "mini" theatre organ installed there.

Before he was seventeen he had also put in two years at Valley Music Hall, a Theatre-in-the Round near Salt Lake, where he welcomed patrons with pre-performance melodies from the console of a Rodgers 33-E electronic organ, and where he had the good fortune to get on a first-name acquaintance with the late Virgil Fox, Liberace, and other great entertainers,

all of whom were lavish in their praise for his work.

After graduating from high school, David went on a one-year tour of Canada as Music Director for a popular stage show, then he returned to Salt Lake to continue his education at the University of Utah. During this time he was introduced to Lawrence Bray's famed Wurlitzer at the Organ Loft in Salt Lake City, and before long he was a staff organist for Larry. Here he spent several years, not only advancing his expertise at the keyboard, but also gaining a knowledge of the complexity and intricacies of the inner workings of the giant installation. This technical experience, coupled with his fine-tuned ear, has since proved invaluable, for not only is he a master at the console, he can, when necessary, be a trouble shooter for ailing or out-of-tune pipes.

Following this Salt Lake City "apprenticeship" David found a new home in California, where he quickly made a name for himself among local theatre organ buffs. Now, as time passes, his popularity continues to mount, and each night he plays finds "regulars" among his listeners, who think nothing of driving several hundred miles a month to hear David Reese at Bob Paterson's posh Pizza & Pipes installation in Serramonte Center, Daly City.

This is easy to understand once you have experienced "an evening with David," for he is the consummate entertainer. He is a superb showman, with an indefinable something - a sparkle and charisma that few keyboard entertainers possess. For lack of more descriptive terms, his loyal followers say "He plays with feeling," and as if this isn't enough to make his performance outstanding, David is a virtuoso on keyboard and pedals. He has a genius for registration and special effects; and he is unsurpassed in his flair for improvisation. He has total mastery over his instrument - his arrangements of everything he plays are his own, and he never plays a selection

twice in exactly the same way. Even fellow organists talk about the "David Reese style" and many try to imitate - which, after all, is the ultimate compliment they can pay another artist's work.

David is an exciting entertainer, and the announcement that "David Reese Will Be Presented in Concert.." always assures a full house! David has given concerts for many of the California organ clubs, and by popular demand he makes at least two returns yearly to the Organ Loft in Salt Lake City. His annual Christmas concerts have been played to overflow audiences, and early 1980, when he made his East Coast debut in Rochester, New York, he had a "sold-out" house, and a shouting, whistling, standing ovation from his enthusiastic listeners proved that his faithful West Coast friends know what they are talking about when they say "David Reese is fantastic!"

And he is!

###

RECORDS:

David has released three popular albums under the label of Concert Recording: "Rollin' With Reese," "You're Gonna Hear from Me," and "The Way It Is." An exciting fourth, "Yesterday and Today," was released under his own label "Aquarius," and a beautiful fifth, recorded at The Organ Loft in Salt Lake City is now in the planning stage.

###

Prepared by: A. Walker, Publicity Consultant  
Telephone: (415) 689-4047

REESE, FLORENCE K.

Organist of the Selma Theatre in Selma, California in 1927.

REIMER, CLAUDE L.

Organist of Loew's State Theatre in Los Angeles, California  
in 1925.



REID, LAWTON

Organist of the Princess Theatre, Hot Springs,  
Arkansas in the 1930's.

SIGHT OF SOUND

# Once Fine Morton Is Now A Basket Case

by Don Keilhack

Yes, I'm afraid it's finally bitten the dust, or almost, anyway—the KMBC (Kansas City) three-manual Robert-Morton, on which the great P. Hans Flath played a nightly program for years (and also many daytime shows) is a basket case.

When the station moved out of the Pickwick Hotel in downtown Kansas City in 1951, the organ was put in storage and never played again. (The station moved into the big building, with auditorium, which now houses KMBC TV, from which the now-famous anchorwoman, Chris Craft was fired, resulting in the current sex-discrimination lawsuit.)

When John Gilbert, staff organist at the time, heard the organ was to be sent to the dump, he "offered" to take it off the station's hands, and they agreed. He finally got it hauled to his home and packed away in the garage. There it remained through extremes of heat and cold, dampness and dryness, until Thanksgiving 1976, when it was moved to San Diego, California.

I had kept in touch with Gilbert over the years about the organ, having a special interest in it, which I'll explain shortly. John never did anything with the organ, but didn't want to sell it. Then, in '76, I happened to mention to Wayne Gilbert in San Diego (no Relation to John in Kansas City), when we were listening to a tape of Flath playing the Morton, that it was still in storage.

Something sparked his interest and he called John, who agreed to sell the organ to him. Wayne sent Marty Stuhler and Ray Krebs (fellow San Diego organ buffs) in a rented truck to K.C. In no time they had the monster loaded and headed back to San Diego. Wayne put it in commercial storage and I went to see it—for old time's sake. HORRORS! We all know what these organs can look like after lying around in storage for so long, but I remembered how it looked and sounded in the studio. Now it was a DISTASTER! The console looked a wreck—keys all curled up like somebody had taken a torch to them, the pedals wrecked, panels falling off, etc.

## Landon Organ Is 'Taking Shape'

Another Lexington organ, the 3/7 Page Dr. John Landon is installing in his residence, is gradually taking shape. "We still haven't sold my three-manual Wurlitzer console which must be moved out before we can bring in the Page console," he reported. "I hope to get the project into high gear as soon as Christmas is over. Meanwhile I've been playing Christmas carols on the Pilcher classic I have installed. It's not very "mighty" but it has real pipes, and a nice sound," he added.

The chests, pipes, and everything else looked like they'd been through the Blitzkrieg for sure.

Wayne kept the organ in storage for a number of years, and not too long ago made some type of arrangement with San Diego Chapter ATOS. They've got what's left of it in storage in a school in suburban Spring Valley, all mixed up with parts from other organs. Wayne kept some of the instrument, and Ray Krebs got some of the Diaphones. The school wants it all out pronto, and the chapter has no immediate plans for it—except to try and sort out everything and see just what IS there.

P. Hans Flath would be shocked and saddened to see this. He told me that he and Arthur B. Church, Sr., founder of KMBC, went to Tulsa, Oklahoma to see about purchasing the organ for the station. It had been installed in the Wade Hamilton Studios there, according to Mr. Hamilton's specifications (see *The Console*, Sept. 1969, p. 14 for photo of it there), and had to be sold when the studio failed during Depression. So this is when KMBC got it, and Flath said

when it was ready to set up there, he and his wife personally cleaned each and every pipe and other parts. Flath, who was Music Director of the station, and had been a theatre orchestra conductor and brilliant organist from the very beginning (he was born in 1883), played the Morton through the years for so many programs, as well as his own nightly concerts, and it was heard as far away as Texas, due to some special transmitting stations. A photo of the console and its 'slave', and candid photo of Flath was published in *The Console*, Oct. 1968, P. 12.

As a kid in Kansas City, I hardly ever missed Flath's late night program, and finally got to know him and be in the studio for the broadcasts. He did let me play the organ, of course. I still remember the first time I heard it in the studio and was not prepared for the impact!

Over the air, and tempered through broadcast equipment, with highs cut down, and probably a little echo added, the effect was pleasing and mellow, although it could sound full and 'big'. But this was nothing like what I heard that first night in the studio. Flath talked to me until a minute before he went on the air, then climbed on the bench, looked in the mirror above the music rack for the cue from the control booth on the opposite end of the studio, and opened almost full-organ with his dra-

matic theme-BLAST—and I almost fell out of the chair!

Volume in that soundproof studio was almost deafening. The organ sounded totally different than over the air, and while it was thrilling in the studio, I think the overall effect was better after broadcasting equipment tamed it down, and took out some of the 'rawness'. There was a monitor booth outside you could sit in and see into the studio, but you heard the broadcast there through a big speaker system and as it sounded over the air. Many people preferred, apparently, to listen and watch from there. Flath's granddaughter has told me she was "scared to death" as a little girl when she was taken into the studio and that huge, loud organ was played by her grandpa.

Now you see why, with Flath's unmatched ability, and the Robert-Morton, and my exposure to this when growing up there, I am sorry to see the end of the line for "the dear old Organ," as Flath called it.

But who knows, maybe some of it will play again from its own console. I'll sure encourage ATOS here to treat it kindly and find, for what's left of it, a home.

## Organist's Death Reported Late

Ann C. Reiling, 79, widely known Kansas City musician, died Friday, April 1, 1983, it has been learned belatedly. In 1928 she became organist at the New Center Theatre in Kansas City. After talking pictures silenced organs she played in musical groups over radio in Kansas City and Chicago. In 1950 she returned to Kansas City and became organist for the Blues baseball team.

In 1980 she once again accompanied silent films at the Jewish Community Center and also played another series sponsored by the Society of Cinephiles.

## Organist Starts Service Business

Organist Bill Taber, of Brecksville, Ohio, has recently launched North Coast Organ Service in addition to his organ playing schedule. He already has several church contracts for maintenance and is doing all the Rodgers work for a local dealer.

# Reader Recalls Final Flath Show In K. C.

Columnist Don Keilhack's recent articles about Kansas City organists prompted Organ Buff Clark Welling, of Montrose, Missouri, to recall his association with P. Hans Flath and Mary Singleton.

"Through John Gilbert I was able to be in KMBC studio many times during Mr. Flath's organ programs. I have a 78rpm recording of his program on September 1, 1955 on a Hammond which was dedicated to John and his wife on the birth of a son who was just five hours old.

"Many yers ago I was active in the Hammond Organ Society in Kansas City. Mr. Flath worked for Jenkins Music Company, and during the Saturday preparation for a monthly meeting the next day, my mother took a lesson from him in his Jenkins studio. He was to be the featured organist the next day during the regular meeting.

"After his introduction he was seated at the console and commented that he had waited many times for the second hand on the clock to point straight up and receive the signal from his engineer to begin his theme.

"He made a gesture indicating the time, played three bars of his theme and fell from the organ bench, a victim of a fatal heart attack. I do not recall the date, but the scene is still vividly etched in my mind.

"I have known Marie Singleton since 1946 when I purchased my first Hammond and she has been a close friend

since that time. She had high praise for your talent.

"Bravo for the last sentence of your article. I am a true theatre organ nut and no sound can equal that of an instrument played in an elegant old movie palace. However, I, too, have a lot of enjoyment playing a non-pipe. My equipment includes three Hammonds, an M with two reverb speakers, a B-3 with two JR20 speakers and an H 382 with a 1082 speaker, tubular chimes and a Solovox. I live in a 70-year-old house with 12-foot ceilings of pressed metal and, at full volume, I can make them shake and rattle."



Tom Wibbels  
Theatre Organist

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## Questions and Answers on the Technical Side

by Lance Johnson



### Do you have any questions?

Send them direct to:

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

ATOS member Ken Ladner passes on this tip: Wurlitzer swell shade ball bearings are still available from the Nice Bearing Company. Specify No. 602; cost is about \$2.50 each. (Check your local bearings dealer, but don't ask for closed precision bearings or you will spend about \$7.00 each instead! — Editor)

**Q.** Can you explain how Wurlitzer wired their couplers so there would be no back feed?

**A.** Your key contacts are divided so that each contact has a function. One contact could fire the relay primary but others must be used in order to have couplers. In other words, one contact per coupler of any kind. Others would be used for second touch, etc.

**Q.** Do I understand correctly that the valve increments on a Wurlitzer regulator are to be such that the small valve has ½" of play and the large valve 1" play? In other words, the regulator top must fall 1" before the large valve is to open?

**A.** The first valve is the cone which breaks the seal. The second is the small book valve which opens ½" farther down as the top falls. The

third valve, the large book valve, opens ½" later, so that it actually will not open until the top falls 1½".

**Q.** I was interested in your answer to the question concerning chamber sizes (THEATRE ORGAN May/June '83) that the swell opening could occupy the full size of the listening room wall. I am sure you will agree that it would be unwise for most amateur enthusiasts to attempt revoicing of theatre-oriented pipes, so would not such an opening in a domestic environment make listening, with all but minimal registration, a dreadful, ear-splitting experience? An approach to this problem adopted in several instances here in England is to mount the swell shade assemblies on sub-frames within the chamber and allow only a restricted opening of about 1'x4' into the listening room, at a height of six or seven feet above floor level, with up to one opening for each swell shade frame. Such an approach means that listeners are not blown out of their seats in the listening room. Perhaps you would agree with me that some theatre organs, when reinstalled in domestic or even restaurant surroundings, produce a sound which can be just too coarse and loud for enjoyment. I appreciate that we cannot all have the luxury of extensive basements and living rooms with cathedral ceilings. But the artifice described above will help a lot toward establishing a reasonable listening level, even though the domestic sound is still deficient in the auditorium acoustic.

**A.** No two organ builders will agree as to the exact size of tone opening a given organ should have. I prefer to have a maximum opening, so that when the family is out of the house I can just cut loose and not worry about

Reiling, Ann C.

offending anyone. This also allows the maximum differential between loud and soft, which I desire. When you are playing for guests you will naturally keep most of the shades closed to save their ears. I can well remember a few years ago when we had an ATOS jam session at my house with piano, accordion and what not, and I had to open the shades on the organ completely to compete! I have heard residence theatre organs with the small tone opening you have recommended and found them to be anemic and lackluster. To each his own, I guess. □

## Closing Chord

Ann C. Reiling, widely known musician and ATOS member, was born in Kansas City, Kansas, in 1904 and began piano lessons at age five. There was a neighborhood nickelodeon at 13th and Quindaro in Kansas City, where little Annie watched, listened, and became acquainted with the lady who accompanied films on piano. The lady showed her the tricks of the trade on cueing the silent pictures. By 1915 she was relief pianist once or twice a week, and chose movie accompaniment as her career.

She studied piano with Wiktor Labunski and Esther Shaw Gibson, and organ at the Kansas City Conservatory of Music with such great Kansas City organists as Edna Scotten Billings and Powell Weaver. After her graduation from high school, she worked briefly for Jenkins Music Co. playing and selling sheet music.

Her first organ job was in 1928 at the New Center Theatre at 15th and Troost (now Truman Road) in Kansas City, Missouri, playing a two-manual Style D Wurlitzer accompanying *Wild Oats* with Colleen Moore. The job lasted one year.

In 1929 she became a radio organist, having her own "Little Organ Annie" program over KMBC, Kansas City's CBS outlet, playing a three-manual Robert-Morton. Miss Reiling also played solos and with ensembles over the Kansas City Star station WDAF and over WHB during the thirties.

Ann moved to Chicago in the 1940's and accompanied silents once again at the Nickelodeon in the Museum of



Miss Ann Reiling as she played a Baldwin organ, Meuhlbach Hotel, Kansas City, 1982.  
(Ed Mullins photo)

Science and Industry. In 1947 she played the two-manual Moller organ in the Marine Dining Room of the Edgewater Beach Hotel. She later played the 3/11 Wurlitzer at the Trianon Ballroom in Chicago, frequently with Lawrence Welk's orchestra.

During her 18 years in Chicago Miss Reiling was associate organist at St. Vincent De Paul Church, where she was assistant to Dr. Arthur Becker, Dean of De Paul University Music School. In the 1950's she returned to Kansas City, where she was organist for the Kansas City Blues baseball team at Blues Stadium. Ann also played in the Drum Room of the Hotel President for six years.

While in Chicago she was organist at many of the supper clubs, including Math Iglar's German Restaurant where she played a Hammond. She left Chicago for the Missouri Ozarks in 1977, but returned to Kansas City in 1979.

In 1980 she resumed her silent film career providing the musical accompaniment for *The Art of the American Silents* film series at the Fine Arts Theatre in Mission, Kansas, a Kansas City suburb. The series was extremely popular and continued yearly up to the time of her death.

During the 1981 Labor Day weekend Ann not only accompanied several films on piano for the Society of Cinephiles' Cinecon 17 convention, but also played the organ interlude on a Wurlitzer electronic at the Midland Theatre, before Bob Vaughn cued the feature. As Vaughn



Miss Ann Reiling, "Little Organ Annie," when she played the three-manual Robert-Morton organ over KMBC, CBS outlet in Kansas City, Missouri in 1929.

remembers, "She was one of the best movie players."

Ann Reiling was also organist at the Marlborough United Methodist Church and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. She died April 1, 1983, at Trinity Lutheran Hospital, Kansas City, after a brief illness. She was 79. Funeral services were held April 4 at the Cathedral. She is survived by three brothers: A. L. Reiling, Jr. and Gill Reiling of Kansas City, Kansas, and Robert Reiling of Chula Vista, California.

DR. EDWARD J. MULLINS

**Luella Edwards Wickham**, "The Sweetheart of the Console," died November 1 at the Loretto Geriatric Center in Syracuse, New York. She was 91.

Luella was born in Port Gibson, New York, and was only 14 when she performed her first church organ program. In 1911, the same year as her marriage, she subbed at the Savoy Theatre in Syracuse. She was graduated from the Eastman School of Music in 1920. After pit work with vaudeville, she returned to the theatre

organ playing guest engagements in several eastern cities and the Crescent, Eckel, Empire, Regent, Rivoli, Strand and Temple Theatres in Syracuse.

After those days, she had odd jobs to support her family until electronic organs came in and she worked for several dealers as a demonstrator. When the second era of theatre organ dawned, Luella became a part of it, playing concerts for clubs and ATOS chapters, including a benefit for the saving of the Syracuse RKO Keith's organ, now on the NYS Fairgrounds. In 1973, she went on a six-week nationwide road tour. One of her last recitals was for the Rochester Theater Organ Society's 10th anniversary program in 1974. She taught organ and piano to senior citizens into her eighties, until she broke her hip in 1975 and was forced to retire. A biography of Luella appeared in the October, 1973, THEATRE ORGAN.

Noted THEATRE ORGAN writer Stu Green has known Luella since the '20s, and the following is from a letter he wrote to the editor: "I first discovered Luella before starting my rather brief career as a theatre organ-

REISER, VIOLET

Reiser was born in New York City. She served as organist on the Loew's circuit in New York. In 1927 she was playing at Loew's Victory Theatre and later she played Loew's Rialto, both in New York City. She composed and published a number of songs.

REISER, VIOLET (Miss)

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

RESIG, LEONARD

Organist for the ABC Network in Hollywood, California from 1943 to 1947. Played the Minnesota Theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1951.

RENARD, PAUL (REYNARD)

Made his concert debut at the age of seven. Before he was 27 he had played an estimated total of 3,000 popular and classical concerts. He studied both privately and in conservatories for a number of years. He had some of the foremost teachers of organ and piano, composition, theory, and musicology. Renard himself teaches, arranges, accompanies, and has written a number of articles and books on various musical subjects. He has been active on radio and television since the late 1940's, has served as musical director for many stage shows and has appeared in hotels and nightclubs at various locations around the country. A very versatile musician, Renard is at home with harpsichord, piano, celeste, electronic organ, and the pipe organ. Renard

RENARD, PAUL (REYNARD)

2.

has recorded several long playing discs including one entitled "Fortissimo," which featured him at organ, harpsichord, celeste, and piano, and another entitled "Fortissimo; Pipe Organ," which was a program of George M. Cohan music on the Wurlitzer pipe organ of the Radio City Music Hall studio, New York.

REYNOLDS, HAROLD.

Organist of Loew's State Theatre in Boston.

REYNOLDS, HAZEL (MRS.)

Organist of the Suburban Theatre in Omaha, Nebraska (2 manual/  
4 or 5 rank Hilgreen-Lane pipe organ) in the 1920's. This  
theatre was later renamed the Beacon Theatre.



RHOADES, WINIFRED (EMMANUEL) (MRS. SAM EMMANUEL)

Well versed in piano playing by the age of seven, Rhoades could attend a concert, come home and play the entire score by memory. Her mother noting her tendency to play by ear insisted that she learn how to read music. She received her first instruction from her mother before studying from other teachers. At the age of 15 she was hired for her first job in a theatre playing pipe organ and for six years she played for the Pantages and RKO Theatres in Spokane, Washington. During this time she also broadcast from the Orpheum Theatre in Spokane over Radio Station KHQ and from the Fox Theatre (3 manual Robert Morton pipe organ) in Spokane over Radio Station FHIO. After the coming of sound movies, she switched to electronic organs and has appeared in numerous private clubs and restaurants in the states of Washington, Idaho, and

RHOADES, WINIFRED (EMMANUEL) (MRS. SAM EMMANUEL)

2.

California. In more recent years she has appeared playing a series of concerts on the Wurlitzer pipe organ installed in the Food Circus Building in the Seattle Center, Seattle, Washington.

RHODE, RON

Born in 1952 in Moline, Illinois. Rhode began his musical education at the age of four with the study of piano. By age 11 he was organist of the Methodist Church in Port Byron, Illinois. He studied popular piano for six years, had three years of instruction on the French horn and seven years of classical organ at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois and at St. Ambrose College in Davenport, Iowa where he has completed three years toward his Bachelor of Music Education degree. He has performed in college and community musicals, has demonstrated organs in music stores, and has played in skating rinks in the states of Illinois and Iowa, in addition to his church organ work.

In 1973, Rhode moved to Phoenix, Arizona where he became associate organist of the Organ Stop Pizza No. 1 (Wurlitzer pipe

RHODE, RON

2.

organ). In June 1975 he opened the Organ Stop Pizza No. 2 in Mesa, Arizona where he was chosen as feature organist. Rhode has performed programs of theatre organ music in Iowa, Illinois, California, and at the Rochester Theatre Organ Society, May 9, 1975. He gave a program of classical music at the Central United Methodist Church in Phoenix, Arizona.

RHODE, RON

RON RHODE

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

With a background of popular piano and classical organ, and three years toward a Bachelor of Music Education degree at St. Ambrose College, Davenport, Iowa, Ron Rhode moved to Arizona from his native Illinois in mid-1973 to become the Associate Organist at Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix. He has been the Featured Artist at Organ Stop in Mesa, Arizona, since its opening in June, 1975.

During his career as a concert and recording artist, Ron has performed on most of the major theatre organ installations throughout the United States. He has also played before audiences in Canada, Australia, and England. His recordings include two on the Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ in the Organ Stop Pizza, Mesa, Arizona, and one on the Wurlitzer in the Wm. P. Brown residence, Phoenix, Arizona.

RON RHODE

CONCERT BACKGROUND:

Arizona

Mesa, Organ Stop Pizza, 10 concerts (3/23 Wurlitzer)  
Phoenix, Central Methodist Church, 3 concerts (3/39 Rueter)  
Phoenix, Patriot's Square (Yamaha E-5)  
Phoenix, Phoenix College Auditorium, 2 concerts (Allen 620 and Wurlitzer 2/10)  
Sun City, Mountain View Auditorium, 2 concerts (Thomas 782 and Baldwin Cinema II)  
Tucson, Broadway Keyboard Company (Conn 830 and Martinique)

California

El Segundo, Old Town Music Hall, 4 concerts (4/24 Wurlitzer)  
Laguna Hills, Leisure World, 2 concerts (Conn 650 + Piano)  
Los Angeles, Wiltern Theatre (4/37 Kimball)  
Redwood City, Capn's Galley (4/23 Wurlitzer)  
San Diego, Organ Power Pizza (5/35 Moller)  
San Diego, San Diego Fox Theatre (4/33 Robert Morton)  
San Gabriel, Civic Auditorium (3/15 Wurlitzer)  
Sylmar, San Sylmar, 5 concerts (4/35 Wurlitzer)

Colorado

Colorado Springs, Reed Auditorium (3/9 Wurlitzer)

Connecticut

Thomaston, Thomaston Opera House, 4 concerts (3/13 Marr and Colton)

Florida

Eustis, Civic Auditorium (Gulbransen Rialto II)  
Holiday, Civic Auditorium (Gulbransen Rialto II)

Georgia

Atlanta, Fox Theatre (4/42 Moller)

Illinois

Chicago, Chicago Theatre, 2 concerts (4/29 Wurlitzer)  
Chicago, Mont Clare Theatre (3/11 Barton)  
Downer's Grove, North High School (3/10 Wurlitzer)  
Milan, Trio Roller Rink (3/15 Barton)  
Naperville, North Central College (4/36 Kimball)

Indiana

Ft. Wayne, Embassy Theatre (4/15 Page)  
Indianapolis, Hedback Theatre, 2 concerts (2/10 Page)  
Indianapolis, Paramount Music Palace (4/42 Wurlitzer)

Iowa

Cedar Rapids, Iowa Theatre, 2 concerts (3/14 Barton)  
Cedar Rapids, Paramount Theatre (3/11 Wurlitzer)

Maryland

Bethesda, K & B Theatre (3/9 Wurlitzer)

(cont.)

CONCERT BACKGROUND: (cont.)

Massachusetts

Babson College Knight Auditorium (3/13 Wurlitzer)  
Stoneham, Stoneham Town Hall (2/14 Wurlitzer)

Michigan

Detroit, Senate Theatre (4/34 Wurlitzer)  
Kalamazoo, State Theatre (3/12 Barton)  
Pontiac, Theatre Organ Pizza and Pipes, 2 concerts (3/21 Barton)  
Royal Oak, Royal Oak Theatre (3/17 Barton)

Minnesota

St. Paul, World Theatre (Rodgers Custom 340)

New Jersey

Trenton, War Memorial (3/16 Moller)

New Mexico

Roswell, Pearson Auditorium, 2 concerts (3/14 Hillgreen-Lane)

New York

Binghamton, Roberson Center, 2 concerts (3/17 Link)  
Brooklyn, Brooklyn Paramount Theatre (LIU) (4/26 Wurlitzer)  
Elmira, Clemens Center, 3 concerts (4/22 Marr and Colton/Wurlitzer)  
North Tonawanda, Riviera Theatre, 4 concerts (3/13 Wurlitzer)  
Rochester, Auditorium Theatre, 3 concerts (4/22 Wurlitzer)  
Salamanca, First Congregational Church (2/11 Wicks)  
Syracuse, Empire State Theatre, 3 concerts (3/11 Wurlitzer)

Ohio

Akron, Akron Civic Theatre (3/13 Wurlitzer)  
Cleveland, Gray's Armory, 2 concerts (3/15 Wurlitzer)  
Columbus, Ohio Theatre (4/23 Robert Morton)

Pennsylvania

Pittsburgh, Keystone Oaks High School (2/10 Wurlitzer)  
Pittsburgh, South Hills Theatre, 2 concerts (2/6 Wurlitzer)

Washington

Seattle, Seattle Paramount (4/20 Wurlitzer)

Wisconsin

Stone Lake, Indian Hills Resort (Rodgers Custom 340)

Australia

Adelaide, Wyatt Hall, Pultney Grammar School (2/12 Wurlitzer)  
Brisbane, Kelvin Grove High School (3/8 Christie)  
Gosford, Gosford High School Auditorium (Gulbransen-Rialto II)  
Melbourne, Dendy Theatre (3/15 Wurlitzer)  
Melbourne, Moorabbin Town Hall (4/21 Wurlitzer)  
Perth, Carrinyup Cultural Center (Rodgers 33E)  
Sydney, Marrickville Town Hall, 2 concerts (2/10 Wurlitzer)

Canada

Toronto, Casa Loma, 6 concerts (4/18 Wurlitzer)

England

Manchester, Free Trade Hall (4/20 Wurlitzer)

## **The Artist: RON RHODE**

Our artist burst upon the theatre organ scene about ten years ago, and he has steadily risen among the top performers on the circuit. This evening's RTOS appearance is his fourth.

The 33-year-old performer is a native of Moline, Illinois, and began his musical education at four with piano study. At 11, he was organist at the Methodist church in Port Bryon, Ill. His formal training included six years of popular piano, three of French Horn, and seven of classical organ at Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill., and St. Ambrose College in Davenport, Iowa where he studied for a Bachelor of Music degree.

His extensive background provided him with the versatility to play in such disparate places as churches, music stores, skating rinks, college productions and community theatre group musicals in Illinois and Iowa.

In 1973, Ron moved to Phoenix, Arizona where he became associate organist under Lyn Larsen at Organ Stop Pizza #1. In June 1975, he opened Organ Stop Pizza #2 in Mesa and continued as staff organist. He and a partner took over this establishment in 1984.

Ron has toured the English theatre organ circuit, has been featured at four American Theatre Organ Society conventions, and has several recordings to his credit.

When not engaged in musical activity, Ron Rhode enjoys writing, swimming and traveling.

## **The Program:**

Mr. Rhode will announce his program from the console this evening.

## **The Society:**

An excellent gift idea! A membership in the Rochester Theater Organ Society will provide the recipient and the recipient's family an entire year of musical enjoyment and variety. The cost is a mere \$15 per year!

Membership information is available in the lobby, or from: RTOS, PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or by phoning: 544-6595.

**May your Holidays be Joyful with Best Wishes for the New Year.**

-From the Staff of The Rochester Theater Organ Society

RHODES, DUSTY

First organist of the Rialto Theatre in Lockport, New York (Wurlitzer). (The theatre seated 1,752 persons.)

Organist of the Family Theatre, Batavia, New York (2 manual/6 rank Wurlitzer) in the early 1920's.

RHODES, BOB

Chicago, Illinois area organist who played at various clubs there as well as the Trianon and Aragon Ballrooms. He moved to Fort Lauderdale, Florida where he played for several years at the Dania Jai Alai Palace. He gave Sunday afternoon concerts at Victor's in Fort Lauderdale. He died September 10, 1975 in Phoenix, Arizona.



# Flamboyant theater organist captured audiences

# 275

When one reminisces about the pipe organs which accompanied silent movies in the 1920s, and later provided organludes with the advent of talking pictures, he normally remembers the organs in the big downtown theaters – the ornate palaces where one sought the total overwhelming feeling of escape for a few hours.

## A Resident's Recollections

BY LLOYD E. KLOS



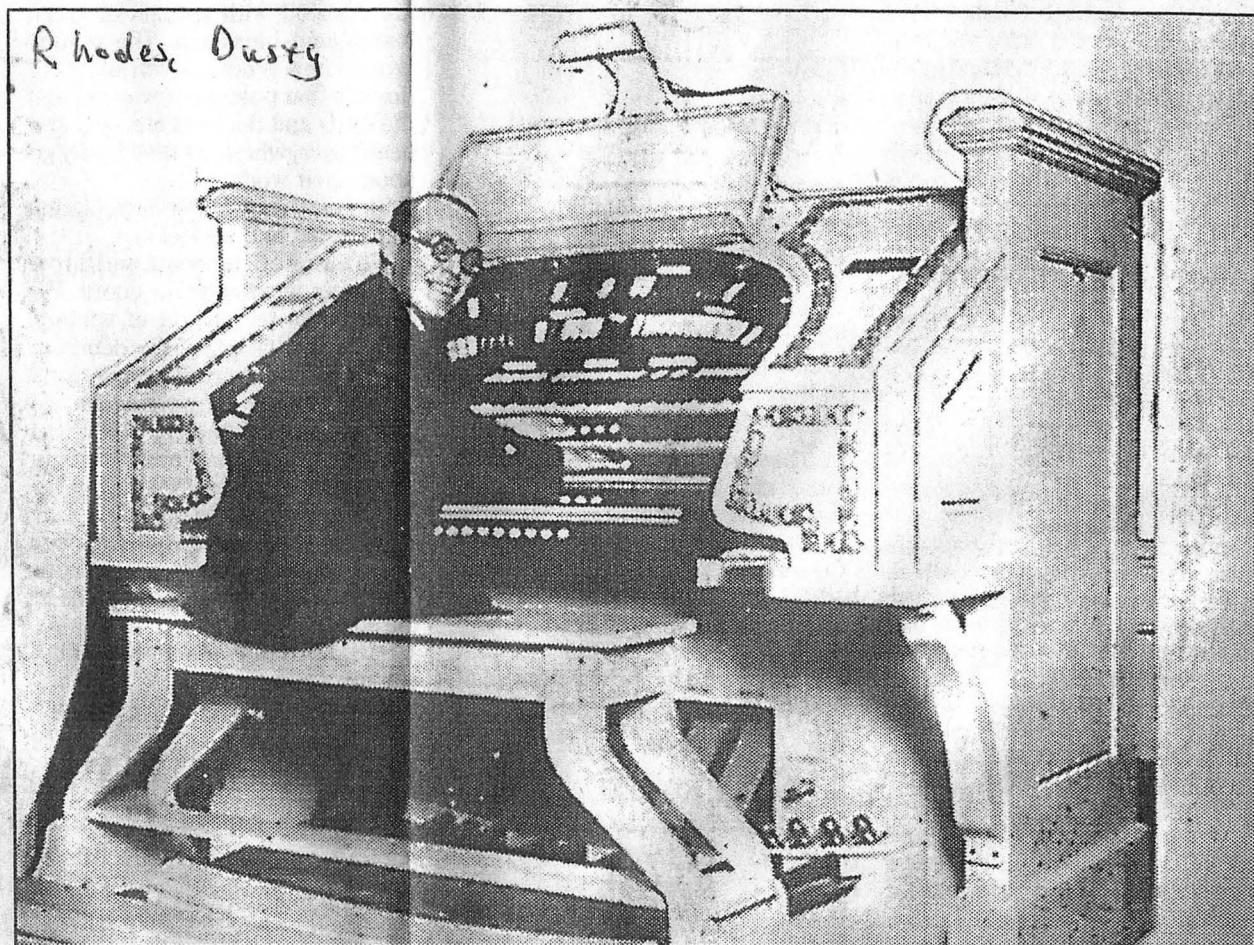
However, there were neighborhood theaters also, possessing Mighty Wurlitzers, Bartons, Robert Mortons, Kimballs, Kilgens and Marr & Coltons, to name a few of the more than 100 makes.

About 35 years ago, I was launched in the world of the theater pipe organ, not as a player, but as a writer and researcher. One of my ventures took me to Batavia, and a visit to the Family Theater.

The house still had its two-manual, six-rank Wurlitzer, installed in October, 1923. The theater's manager, John Oberle, was most cooperative in showing the instrument, answering questions, and volunteering additional information.

The 1,000-seat theater was located on a one-way side street. It had a striking interior with balcony, ornate carvings, beautiful curtain, and modern seating. The organ was in typical unused condition – dusty and dirty. A fire near the stage sometime previously resulted in torrents of water being showered onto the console.

It was in 1923 that the owners of the Family decided to modernize it. This was rather startling in itself be-



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Dusty Rhodes at the console of the Marr and Colton organ at Buffalo's Genesee Theatre.

other Batavia citizens, the name of organist Dusty Rhodes was mentioned often.

Much information on Rhodes was obtained from Robert O. Monaghan, a teacher of music at the New York State School of the Blind nearby. Though blind himself, Monaghan had experiences as an organist in Wolcott and Fredonia before going to Batavia. He knew Rhodes well and often subbed for him at the Family. From the viewpoint of

regard for his memory and feel that he gave me much which was of value to me in my own career," Monaghan said. "He was an excellent organist for so relatively small a community and attracted a large audience who came specifically to hear the music. He was, of course, a showman, playing in a somewhat spectacular and emotional style, but he drew from the sonorous tones of that organ thrilling effects – warmly sentimental selections, spine-tin-

I asked another friend, Hollis R Upson, for his impressions of Rhodes. Upson, once a theater organ tuner in the upstate area (including Rochester), is a charter member of the Rochester Theatre Organ Society.

"I don't know what Rhodes' real name was, as I never heard it," Upson said. "He was about 40 when I met him in 1927. He was balding, slightly built, with height of about five feet, five inches. I never knew if he was

Dusty Rhodes at the console of the Marr and Colton organ at Buffalo's Genesee Theatre.

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Even though Rhodes was being paid the enormous sum, for those days, of \$250 a week, the theater management was able to realize the cost of rehabilitating the theater in a very short time. The organist built up a tremendous following and several people have attested that the audience which always packed the theater did so just to hear Rhodes' artistry on the Wurlitzer, without regard to the calibre of the film being shown.

"I maintain a high and respectful

regard for his memory and feel that he gave me much which was of value to me in my own career," Monaghan said. "He was an excellent organist for so relatively small a community and attracted a large audience who came specifically to hear the music. He was, of course, a showman, playing in a somewhat spectacular and emotional style, but he drew from the sonorous tones of that organ thrilling effects - warmly sentimental selections, spine-tingling and stirring march rhythms, rapturous waltzes, current song hits, fast or slow, but more often the slower ballads. He resorted to rather violent crescendos and diminuendos at times to further the effects he wanted."

"Most valuable and appreciated were the times he permitted me the opportunity to sub for him - usually during the news and comics - sometimes by myself and sometimes as a shield to read the captions for me," he continued.

"Then Rhodes gave me a little coaching, standing beside me as I played, and making terse suggestions always much to the point as 'Don't fill up your chords with all the notes each hand can play. I don't know why organists have to play with big chords. They do not need to. Whenever you can, keep a counter melody running above or below your tune.'

"By picking up the chord from beneath each other's hands, we made the transition so that most folks did not know there had been a change of organists."

Frequently, when the supper hour approached, Monaghan would take over the playing for his idol. When the proper moment arrived, Rhodes would say, "Take over, Bob. I'm going for sandwich." Rhodes would edge to the left of the bench, Monaghan would place his fingers under Rhodes', and assuming his spot in the center of the bench, would continue the playing without a hitch.

Annually, the theater management would book a big-name organist to play as an added attraction. These big names were famous throughout the country and were always a hit. However, in Batavia, they received but polite applause.

When Rhodes returned to the console for the film accompaniment, the polite applause would break into a crescendo. The people of Batavia considered him one of their own, and his status remained quo until the end of his engagement in 1925.

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"I don't know what Rhodes' real name was, as I never heard it," Upson said. "He was about 40 when I met him in 1927. He was balding, slightly built, with height of about 5 feet, 5 inches. I never knew if he ~~was~~ married, as he never mentioned a wife.

"He had a sort of free-wheeling style of playing - loud and fast, an average small-town theater organist. His successors (from whom I took lessons) certainly were much better educated, musically, than he.

"At that time of the Roaring Twenties, people in show business were supposed to be a little outre; Rhodes was flamboyant. He certainly drank too much, and at that time there was more drinking than now, even in Prohibition, in the upper and middle class.

"One night, he drank a bottle of Benedictine, if you can imagine that, and he became terribly ill. He couldn't perform, being out in the alley, tossing his cookies. The assistant organist, Catherine Washington, daughter of the theater's janitor, filled in. She had attended the Eastman School of Music and played passably well, if not spectacularly."

Rhodes and Western New York Theatrical Enterprises parted company in 1927 or 1928, and he became organist at the Palace Theater in Lockport, which had a 3/11 Wurlitzer. He did not stay there long and no one seems to know what happened to him.

Where he went after that is uncertain. He did have a tenure at the four-manual Marr & Colton in Buffalo's Genesee Theater. Some say he eventually went to Canada for awhile.

One thing is certain, however. Of the more than 16,000 residing in Batavia today, there must be a few hundred who still remember the blinking console lights in the Family Theater, the bow of the performer, and the artistry which belonged to Rhodes during the Golden Days of the theater organ in that little upstate New York City.

Lloyd Klos is an Irondequoit resident, a local historian, and writes this column monthly for the Irondequoit Press.

RHODES, STANLEY

Theatre organist who opened the 3 manual/16 rank Moller in the Lincoln Theatre in Trenton, New Jersey in 1928.

1932

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RUSSEL BICE (Detroit RKO Downtown) brushed the dust off the console, which has been silent for a number of weeks. His opening performance seems weak on selections, but with the assistance of Schwab and Wiegand, banjo and accordion players, Bice gets fair response and applause. The program, entitled "Song-it-is," consists of "Dream Sweetheart," "Whispering," "I'm Happy When You're Happy," "Somebody Loves You" and "Please Handle With Care." The best of the banjo and accordion numbers is "Light Cavalry."

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RICH, JIMMY (JAMES S. REICH)

Born in New York City, New York, February 9, 1900. His parents were Rose and Louis Reich. Rich's stage experience started at the age of 13 when he played piano in a theatre in New York City. He studied organ and harmony with Hugo Troetchel at the German Evangelist Church in Brooklyn, New York. He then played the organ at various theatres throughout the New York City area until 1918 when he went to Jersey City for Haring and Blumenthal at the National Theatre for years, then the Central Theatre until September 28, 1929, at which time he went to Loew's Theatre in Jersey City, New Jersey which opened on that date.

RICHARDS, E. JOHN

Broadcast over Radio Station WOC, Davenport, Iowa in 1922

RICHARDS, ROB

Rob Richards was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota, December 19, 1955. He took piano lessons during his public school years. Upon graduation from high school Richards began work on a Bachelor's of Science degree in music, during which he studied harpsicord with Michael Civiello, piano with master pianist Alyce Berggren, and composition under Ann Gebuhr. He composed a choral setting entitled "Sonnet" as well as fugues, inventions, ballads and pop tunes.

In the summer of 1974 Richards served as house organist of the Homestake Opera House (2 manual, 5 rank Wurlitzer) in Lead, South Dakota -- their first organist in over forty years. He played organ intermissions and an occasional concert at the Fargo Theatre, Fargo, South Dakota. Richards also served as Music Director of two summer theatre companies in South Dakota before joining the organ staff as associate organist at the Organ Stop Pizza, Phoenix, Arizona in February 1977. He has continued organ studies with Lyn Larsen.

**RICHARDSON, ALEXANDER**

Born in New York City. Received his early instruction on the piano from his mother. When he was age 13 he began practicing on the pipe organ in the Temple where his father was a Cantor. He was hired as organist of the <sup>Putnam Avenue</sup> Temple--a post he held for seven years. His advanced music study took him to the Julliard School of Music on a scholarship where he studied organ, piano, harmony, and theory. He studied advanced organ techniques with Gaston Dethier and graduated from Julliard in 1918. He served in the Army during World War I and following his discharge he became one of the staff organists at the Rialto Theatre in New York in 1920 where he remained until 1925. Organists on the staff with him at the Rialto included Sigmund Krungold, Arthur "High C" Geis, Oliver

**RICHARDSON, ALEXANDER**

2.

Strunk, and C. Herbert MacAhan. Richardson also played the Rivoli Theatre in New York after leaving the Rialto Theatre, was on the Roxy Theatre staff for a time, played the Brooklyn Fox Theatre in 1928, the Academy of Music from 1929 to 1932, the RKO Roxy Theatre, Rockefeller Center in 1938, and the Radio City Music Hall in 1939. He recorded for all major companies, RCA Victor, Columbia, etc. One of his recordings on the RCA Victor label was of Christmas Carols done on the Radio City Music Hall Studio 3 manual/14 rank Wurlitzer.

Richardson served as concert organist for the New York Philharmonic Symphony Society. He also served as accompanist for famed violinist, Fritz Kreisler during his appearance with the Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall in New York. Richardson has served as concert



RICHARDSON, ALEXANDER

3.

accompanist to such famous Metropolitan Opera stars as Lily Pons, Jan Peerce, Richard Tucker, Martha Lipton, and Evelyn Sachs.

He performed a series of 250 organ recitals between 1933 and 1934 from Carnegie Hall over Radio Station WOR, New York. He has served as organist of churches of several denominations in the New York City area. In 1940 he was organist with the André Kostalanetz Orchestra. He served as music director of Radio Station WNYC, New York City from 1945 to 1968 and during those years gave many organ recitals from that station originating in the Brooklyn Museum. He has spent some time composing and arranging music. He has also appeared on television including the United Nations Anniversary Concert in 1955 with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Leonard <sup>Bernstein</sup> ~~Bernstein~~

RICHARDSON, ALEXANDER

4.

from UN Headquarters in New York. He has served as organist and choir director of the Central Synagogue, New York City which broadcast "The Message of Israel," Sundays over Radio Station ABC, New York. Dr. Richardson passed away January 6, 1978 at the age of 81.

RICHARDSON, DICK

Organist of the Old Mill Theatre in Dallas, Texas, in the 1920's.

Organist of the Palace Theatre in Dallas, Texas in 1925.

RICHTER, ARTHUR

Organist with Les Hoadley at the twin-console Barton pipe organ in Milwaukee's Wisconsin Theatre in March 1927.

TAKE ACTION INDICATED  
NOT LATER THAN

SUBJECT { .....  
( ) SEE ATTACHED SHEETS

Return to me ..... ( )

See me personally ..... ( )

Need not be returned ..... ( )

Being sent for your  
information ..... ( )

Furnish data requested ... ( )

Take action indicated ..... ( )

Take up with ..... ( )

Investigate and report to . ( )

Express your judgment ... ( )

Set time when we may  
discuss this ..... ( )

Richter, Dr. Francis

10 inch Radio Maston

in Radio KSTP Address  
Station ↑ located in ↑ Hotel  
Manned

Had a pipe leg  
in line asphyxiated -  
Moved to Pacific Northwest

3 weeks  
added  
to it  
by  
Wahlster  
later.  
a Factory  
address

RICHTER, DR. FRANCIS

Blind organist at Radio Station KSTP in Minneapolis, Minnesota  
in 1929, Station WCCO in 1924 and Stations KYG and KGW in Portland,  
Oregon.

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

FRANCIS W. RICHTER

You are now to imagine yourself in Minneapolis, being introduced to Mr. Francis W. Richter ("Frank" among the boys), famous concert pianist and organist of that city. Richter, who plays the DeLuxe performances at the Strand Theater, is totally blind, and has been so from birth.

He is, without doubt, one of the finest organists and most talented musicians in the country. His knowledge of music is nothing short of remarkable, and he is a master of the Wurlitzer orchestral organ. At the age of 10, he was playing piano in an orchestra with his father, who was also a very talented musician; at the age of 16, he composed a complete opera, "The Grand Nazar", which he completed without any assistance. He is now only 37.

Besides his opera, he has also written several symphonic suites, a great number of violin and piano solos, and his first "Symphony in C Minor" may well be classed with the Tschaikowski and Richard Strauss works. Some of the largest symphony orchestras are planning to feature his symphony this season. Mr. Richter is now writing a "Symphonic American", in four movements, for one of the largest modern jazz bands in the country.

Mr. Richter studied abroad for three years: piano with Leschetizky in Vienna; composition with Labor in Vienna; orchestra and opera construction with Karl Goldmark in Vienna; and organ with Alexander

Guilmant in Paris, one of the greatest organ teachers in the world. After rounding out his musical education in Europe, he gave recitals in London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna, and his success in these cities was tremendous. Returning to America, he toured the far west and middle west extensively, giving recitals, and he has made a name for himself as an organist in the larger west coast cities.

Mr. Richter speaks Italian, French and German besides English, and is a profound student of everything which tends to make him a better musician.

Minneapolis is indeed favored in having the services of so remarkable a musician. No small credit is due to his wonderful wife for the success which is now Mr. Richter's. She sits next to him at the organ, giving each cue as it comes on the screen. It is a very rare occurrence, indeed, when Richter misses even the smallest cue in the picture, a thing which even the finest organists who have good eyesight sometimes do. He has an unlimited repertoire, all memorized, which enables him to fit perfectly the most difficult pictures.

You will hear more about this wonderful musician in the near future.

Ward Allen

RIDLEY, HARRIETTE G.

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

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**RIEDER, HAROLD**

Born in Dexter, Michigan, December 13, 1894. His parents were Katherine Wagner and Peter Reider. Reider received his education from Dexter High School, Michigan State Normal College, and The University of Michigan. He married Ethel May Leaman. His musical experience included the position of director of music at Adrian College in Adrian, Michigan, <sup>and</sup> instructor of music at Michigan State Normal College. His theatre experience included the position of organist at the Majestic Theatre in Detroit, the Rialto Theatre and the Criterion Theatre in New York City, as well as feature organist at the Tivoli Theatre and Stanley Theatre in Newark, New Jersey and the Stanley Theatre of Jersey City, New Jersey. He was also organist of the Branford

**RIEDER, HAROLD**

Theatre in Newark, New Jersey. He recorded several discs for Columbia Records in the 1920's from the Tivoli Theatre in Newark, New Jersey (3 manual/11 rank Wurlitzer).



RIEDER, HAROLD

Born in Dexter, Michigan, December 13, 1894. His parents were Katherine Wagner and Peter Reider. Reider received his education from Dexter High School, Michigan State Normal College, and The University of Michigan. He married Ethel May Leaman. His musical experience included the position of director of music at Adrian College in Adrian, Michigan, <sup>and</sup> instructor of music at Michigan State Normal College. His theatre experience included the position of organist at the Majestic Theatre in Detroit, the Rialto Theatre and the Criterion Theatre in New York City, as well as feature organist at the Tivoli Theatre and Stanley Theatre in Newark, New Jersey and the Stanley Theatre of Jersey City, New Jersey. He was also organist of the Branford

RIEDER, HAROLD

Theatre in Newark, New Jersey. He recorded several discs for Columbia Records in the 1920's from the Tivoli Theatre in Newark, New Jersey (3 manual/11 rank Wurlitzer).

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## SOLOS

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HAROLD RIEDER (Jersey City Stanley) presented an entertaining solo called "Radio Popularity Contest," which was built up in a manner to give the reigning radio favorites and the songs associated with them a big hand. Rieder opened by announcing the solo and explaining how the winner could be determined at the finish. This of course was to be determined by the greatest applause for the particular star. Just before the singing of each number, a photo of the artist was shown and then those in the audience who favored this star sang the song. The numbers used were "Just One More Chance," "For You," "In My Arms," "Many Happy Returns of the Day," and "Love Letters in the Sand."

## The Artist: JIM RIGGS

A California native from the Oakland area, Jim Riggs is a dedicated partisan of rhythm tunes on the pipe organ, and is a fan of the work of Fats Waller, Paul Whiteman, Fred Astaire, and others of their ilk. Originally a pianist, he heard a friend play her Wurlitzer organ and fell instantly under its seductive thrall. He taught himself how to play the organ so the result you hear tonight is the product of a labor of love. Due to its tonal resemblance to the orchestra, he has long felt that the theatre organ is a "natural" on which to play up-tempo material.

Jim likes best the music that flourished between the wars, and plays it with a good, sound feeling for the period. He doesn't restrict his work to simply the most popular music rather, Jim plays tunes that are both fun to play and fun to hear. Drawing his inspiration from such far-flung sources as animated cartoons and school choir arrangements, he rarely produces ordinary work.

Sixty years ago, it was common; today it is unique as Jim Riggs he plays the pipe organ in not one, but two Bay Area movie theatres. Friday through Sunday he plays at the Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland, and Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Jim plays at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco.

Before his current positions, Jim was a favorite at San Francisco's Avenue Theatre, and has also played in restaurants in the Southwest. He has presented concerts for the American Theatre Organ Society both in the San Francisco area and at two national conventions.

## The Program:

Mr. Riggs will announce his program.

## The Society:

The Rochester Theater Organ Society invites all interested persons, and their families, to join the ranks! As a nonprofit organization, it is dedicated to presenting the best of artists at one of the best theater organ installations in the country!

Membership information is available in the lobby, or from R.T.O.S., PO Box 17114, Rochester, NY 14617, or by phoning 544-6595.

**Next Concerts: BOB RALSTON 8:15 pm, Sat., Apr. 5 & 2:30 pm, Sun., Apr. 6**

Bob Ralston is familiar to many as the organist on the Lawrence Welk Show when in was on TV. Once again, Bob will be returning before RTOS audiences for two of his entertaining shows; each will be different.

### **We Welcome Tonight's Organist-Jim Riggs**

Jim Riggs returns to our Mighty WurliTzer console this evening after his earlier RTOS concerts in March 1986 and December 1989. In this digitally synthesized age, Jim is something of a rarity: a genuine theater organist playing pipe organs in theaters for live audiences. House Organist for the fabulous art-deco Paramount Theater in Oakland and the newly-restored Stanford theater in Palo Alto, Jim has held similar posts at the Grand Lake Theater in Oakland and at the Castro Theater in San Francisco. It is estimated that Jim has performed for well over a half-million patrons in these four movie houses.

Jim's active playing schedule involves concerts all across the U.S. and in Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. He has released four theater organ recordings; the latest being "Granada", recorded on the 21 rank Barton organ in the Granada Theater in Kansas City, Kansas. Jim's concerts and recordings have been heard on radio throughout the United States and on the BBC. He has performed at seven American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) conventions and was honored by that group as Organist of the Year for 1990. Jim currently holds a seat on the ATOS Board of Directors.

Jim is a dedicated partisan of orchestral music played on the pipe organ and likes best the music between the two World Wars. Drawing his inspiration from the 1930's dance band arrangements, movie and cartoon scores and scratchy old 78's, he always produces distinctive toe-tapping results. Jim is one of the nation's leading silent film organists, having composed and played original scores to the films of Chaplin, Keaton, Laurel & Hardy, Garbo, Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chase and many more.

His hobbies include cooking, entertaining and collecting vintage sheet music and fountain pens and pencils. Jim, his wife Janice and their new daughter Georgia make their home in Walnut Creek, California.

### **The Organ**

The Mighty WurliTzer console has four 61-note keyboards and a full pedal-board. 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 chambers.

This WurliTzer 4/22 originally came from Rochester's RKO Palace where it resided from 1928 to 1964. When that theater was closed, RTOS moved it to this location. Since its first Auditorium concert in January 1967, it has thrilled thousands of Rochesterians and visitors with the 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, P.O. Box 17114, Rochester, NY**

**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.

### **Stan Kann Returns on Saturday, March 20th**

*Stan Kann, famous theater organist, TV performer and avid collector of strange household appliances, will perform at our Mighty WurliTzer on Saturday, March 20th starting at 8:15 P.M. Theater doors open at 7:30 P.M.*

*This Public Concert is free to RTOS Members. Tickets for non-members at \$5.50 each will be on sale at the Auditorium Center Box Office on the evening of the concert.*

RIGGS, LEO

Broadcast over Radio Station WJZ, New York in the mid 1920's

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RILEY, BOB

With organist Dissell (Dick LaSalle). Played the final concert  
on the Minnesota Theatre organ in Minneapolis.

Inter-Office Exchange

Memo to ..... from .....

TAKE ACTION INDICATED  
NOT LATER THAN

- Return to me ..... ( )
- See me personally ..... ( )
- Need not be returned .... ( )
- Being sent for your information ..... ( )
- Furnish data requested ... ( )
- Take action indicated ..... ( )
- Take up with ..... ( )

SUBJECT { Roderick Ri Nardo  
( ) SEE ATTACHED SHEETS

~~Ri Nardo~~  
Ri Nardo,  
~~Ri Nardo~~

Roderick

Broadcast for  
Uptown theatre,  
N. Philadel.

Radio digest in  
Philadelphia area - late 1930's  
and early 1940's.

( see Richard Herber's tape)

## THE ARTIST

Ralph Ringstad, Jr., a native of northern New Jersey, started his formal musical training on piano at the age of seven. Having a broad interest in music, he later branched out into other instruments including cello, French horn, euphonium and tuba. However, his attention was drawn especially toward the "King of instruments", the pipe organ, and he eventually pursued formal training in that instrument, graduating with a degree in music from Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, where he served as president of Phi Mu Alpha, the national honor society for musicians. In addition, Ralph studied theatre organ under Frank Cimmino and has gained recognition as a popular entertainer and musician, performing regularly in supper clubs in the North Jersey area. Ralph has performed in concert on many of the major theatre pipe organ installations in the New York area, and is making his third concert appearance at the NYMA Moller. He is a member of the American Theatre Organ Society. Ralph currently performs at Marco's Restaurant in Wayne, New Jersey, and along with Frank Cimmino, is co-director of Landmark Theatre Organ Arts Company.

Ralph will announce his program from the console.

## THE ORGAN

The NYMA 4-manual, 31-rank Moller pipe organ, Opus 4925, containing more than two thousand pipes and situated in four chambers, was custom built and installed by the M. P. Moller Company of Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1927, and was dedicated in April, 1928, "To Ours Who Served." The instrument was designed by H. Leroy Baumgartner, music professor at Yale University who described the organ in the dedication brochure as one which "demands all the requisites of a church and concert organ in tonal variety, power and dignity...but will also be used to accompany motion pictures and other forms of entertainment...and must contain all the musical requirements of the modern theatre organ." However, the professor expressed a lack of enthusiasm for the theatre organ in his correspondence to Moller: "The pipe work of the typical theatre organ is much too coarse in quality...for any purpose other than picture entertainment, while even for that it leaves much to be desired." His tonal design resulted in the wide range of voices found in the NYMA organ that contribute to its unique orchestral ensemble, a sound perhaps far more theatrical than the professor had expected.

Over the past several years the NYMA organ has undergone extensive renovation, and in addition to the redesign of the console, many improvements have been made to enhance both the tonal characteristics as well as the electrical and mechanical operations of the instrument. Thanks primarily to Bob Seeley of Circleville, NY, who has volunteered countless hours of labor, skill and pipe organ expertise in leading the project of maintaining and restoring the NYMA organ, along with Tom Stehle, the Director of Guidance at the Academy, with the assistance of other volunteers, the instrument has been upgraded to the extent that it is considered by many to rank among the finest theatrical pipe organs in existence.



## Our Featured Artist

**RALPH RINGSTAD**

Ralph Ringstad last appeared for RTOS at the *Auditorium Theater* in May of 1994. He is a resident of Whippany, New Jersey. At seven years old he knew his calling was the organ. By seventeen he was performing alongside Frank Cimmino on the 3/17 Wurlitzer at the Suburban Restaurant in Wanaque, New Jersey, and by eighteen he had made his concert debut on the 4/31 Moller pipe organ at the New York Military Academy.

In addition to the organ and piano, Ralph is a tubist, having performed extensively on the tuba with orchestras and concert bands throughout New Jersey and New York. As Minister of Music for over a decade for various churches, and as a member of the Diocesan Music Committee of Paterson, he has made his mark in the liturgical field as well. Ralph is former principal organist for the Orchestra of St. Peter by the Sea under the baton of the Rev. Alphonse Stephenson. He has played concerts throughout the Northeast and Midwest, in addition to appearances for silent films, television, organ societies, restaurants and fundraising events.

After receiving his degree in music at Ithaca College, Ralph went on to found the Atlan Organization, a performing arts firm. He is active in the American Theater Organ Society.

Ralph has recorded a compact disc entitled "One of a Kind", a recording of music of the 1930s, '40s, Broadway and light classics, featuring soprano Maria Zito-Kaufman. These recordings are for sale in the lobby.

## Next Month's Concert

RTOS will be featuring, *from England*, **Paul Roberts**.  
The Concert will be here at the RMSC Eisenhart Auditorium on  
Saturday **March 15th** at 2 and 7 PM

### AS COURTESY TO ALL

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

RIO, ROSA

See chapter \_\_\_\_\_, pp. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.



**ELIZABETH G. CURREN**

HERE 'N' THERE

## Chatting with Rosa Rio

*Rosa Rio*. Now there's a legend in show biz annals. She's one of the few performers who never

claimed to have played the Shubert Theatre.

"I would have loved to, but they didn't have an organ," Rio, the internationally famed organist, told me Wednesday by phone from her home in Huntington.

Rio's just back from a tour of the Far East on the Queen Elizabeth 2's Theater at Sea, entertaining and making ports of call in Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and Hong Kong. Also on the trip were *Mary Martin*, *Richard Kiley*, *Larry Kirk*, *Juliet Prowse*, *Patricia Neal* and *Helen Hayes*.

Rio reported that Martin recited from "Peter Pan" and showed two TV specials that she did in the '50s, one with Noel Coward and the other with Ethel Merman.

Rio and Martin are obviously fast friends. "Mary called me one night at 11:10 and asked me to accompany her to the Waldorf Towers to audition for Cole Porter's new show "Leave It To Me."

Two huge doors leading to Porter's suite opened automatically as they got off the elevator and entered the palatial living room where Porter was entertaining about 200 formally attired guests, Rio recalled.

"He was very sweet to both of us . . . introduced us both to his friends and explained that he asked Mary to come over at that late hour so that all could hear her audition.

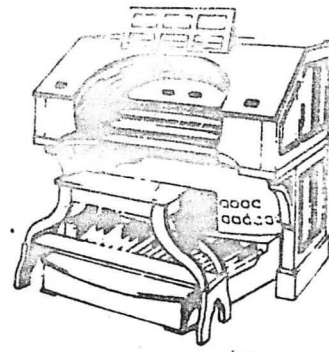
"I sat down to the piano and she broke into 'My Heart Belongs to Daddy' and got the job that launched her to stardom."

Rosa told me that Martin paid her a tribute on the QE2, telling the audience of their friendship.

Quoting from her book, "My Heart Belongs," Martin slipped to Page 57 and read aloud:

"All my life I've had a problem with rehearsal pianists — if they follow and don't lead, if they can change keys at the drop of a hat, if they can play uninterrupted chords which tickle my imagination, I'm happy. Rosa had all that I wanted

# ROSA RIO



KLU, RUSA

THE ARTIST -- Though she presided at theatre organ consoles throughout the country during the first great era of the instrument, Rosa Rio became even more famous in the thirties and forties as "Queen of the Soaps" as she provided background music for over a dozen of these daytime radio potboilers.

Her musical leanings were revealed at the age of four when she could pick out tunes on the family's piano. She discovered her aim in life when she visited a Cleveland movie theatre and heard the "breathtaking organ music". She attended Oberlin Conservatory followed by study of motion picture accompaniment at the Eastman School of Music.

Her first theatre job was in Syracuse at \$40 for a seven-day week! Other engagements followed in New York, New Orleans, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Pennsylvania and Connecticut. She played "Auld Lang Syne" as she closed a number of organs following the advent of talking picture.

Radio then beckoned and her musical background credits included such shows as "The Shadow", "Between the Bookends" with Ted Malone, "The Gospel Singer" with Edward McHugh, "Lorenzo Jones", "My True Story", "Front Page Farrell", "Myrt and Marge", "Town Hall Tonight", "Ethel and Albert", "Hannibal Cobb", "When a Girl Marries", and "The Bob and Ray Show".

Some of the actors with whom she worked, and destined for greater things, included Lucille Ball, Art Carney, Jack Klugman, Henry Morgan, Jeanette Nolan, Bert Parks, Tony Randall, Orson Welles, Agnes Moorehead, Keenan Wynn, Karl Swenson, Elliott Reid, Richard Widmark, Cliff Arquette, Santos Ortega, Ed Begley, Mary Jane Higby, Anne Francis and Staats Cotsworth.

Rosa was Mary Martin's accompanist the night the vocalist auditioned for Cole Porter's new show "Red, Hot and Blue". She sang "My Heart Belongs to Daddy", thereby launching her to stardom. Mary has prolific words of praise for Rosa in her recently published autobiography.

When television arrived, Rosa performed in that medium for awhile. After marrying Rochester-born announcer, Bill Yeoman, the couple settled in a beautiful home in Connecticut, called "The Cave by the Waterfall". Here, she teaches and prepares for concerts. She has been featured artist before three American Theatre Organ Society conventions, and awhile back, made a recording on the Brooklyn Paramount organ.

She has been around the world and has had the honor of a command performance before the United Nations General Assembly at the request of then Secretary General U'thant.

Concerts, recordings, arranging, composing, and especially teaching keep Rosa Rio on a very busy schedule. She is very popular with her students and they have responded by being winners in Junior and Advanced Scholarship Awards. Walter Murphy Jr. with his recent hit record "A Fifth of Beethoven" is a good example of stardom achieved by her students.

Her life story was recently televised over Connecticut Public Television from the Thomaston Opera House where she played the Connecticut Valley Theatre Organ 3/17 pipe.

Don't miss the talented and vivacious Rosa Rio.

January 1, 1985

For Immediate release:

Multi-talented organist, Rosa Rio of Huntington, Conn. was recently added to the Hall of Fame by the American Theatre Organ Society. Shortly after this honor, she played a concert and silent film at the Proctor Theatre in Schenectady, N. Y., which acted as a spring board to a new venture. Rosa is now in the process of recording original music to over 190 silent films for Video Yesteryears, Sandy Hook, Conn. She played the silent films a long time ago and now has come full circle in the release of: The Gold Rush starring Charlie Chaplin, The Hunchback of Notre Dame starring Lon Chaney, The General starring Buster Keaton, The Thief of Bagdad starring Douglas Fairbanks, The Phantom of the Opera, Metropolis, Intolerance, Birth of a Nation and others which are now available for home video cassette recorders. She plays a Hammond B 3000 for the multitude sounds needed for these films.

On January 5, 1985 at 1:00 p.m., Miss Rio entertains at the piano an "Update" meeting of the United Nations Associations of Greater Bridgeport at the Stratford United Methodist Church in Fellowship Hall. She will talk informally about her musical experiences under Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold and U'Thant.

Bill Yeoman  
130 Mill Street  
Huntington, Conn. 929 1652

P. S. Additional list of films now completed:

Birth of a Nation, Battleship Potemkin, Sally of the Sawdust, Woman in the Moon, Count of Monti Cristo, Pulse, Blood and Sand, Passion, The Count and the Adventurer, A Tramp,

## Spotlight

## Radio's Queen of Themes

By Katherine S. Seigenthaler

**W**HO KNOWS whose deft hands played radio's theme song for "The Shadow"? Heh, heh, heh.

Rosa Rio knows.

So do others who remember radio's golden years, when Rio provided theme songs and background music for more than 40 shows. Included in her repertoire are such favorites as "When a Girl Marries," "Ethel & Albert," "Between Bookends," "The Bob and Ray Show" and, of course, "The Shadow."

Sunday at 3 p.m. at the Bethesda Cinema 'N' Drafthouse, Rio—with her husband Bill Yeoman as emcee—will be the featured artist for Pipe Organ Concerts Ltd.'s special "Golden Age of Radio" show.

"I played for the first 'Shadow' series when Orson Welles was the Shadow and Agnes Moorehead was his girl," she says. "He looked quite differently than he does today—so young and slim!"

Yet the radio series of yesteryear are having a revival. Says Rio, "Young people love it because they don't see a person, and *they* can create what the characters look like."

Preferring to call herself "forever young," Rio won't reveal her age. "That's what's wrong with this country!" she says. "People are too worried about how *old* everybody is!"

She will only say that she first became interested in playing background music when, at 10 years old, she was asked to play piano during a movie for 5 cents an hour. "They told me to play fast and loud over the projector," she says, "but I never finished the hour and I never got paid. My father found out and grabbed me out of there by the back of the neck. Playing the organ in church was all right, but not in a movie house! I was bitten by the bug from then on, though."

In 1939, after studying at the Oberlin Conservatory and the Eastman School of Music, she joined the staffs of both NBC and ABC in Radio City. At that time the two were distinguished only as the blue network (ABC) and the red (NBC). The networks jointly employed symphony, semiclassical and jazz orchestras. "I went in as a substitute," Rio says. "Out of 156 musicians, I was the only female. They didn't plan to keep me, because they wanted a man." She



Rosa Rio

stayed on for 21 years, although she says it was almost 10 years before another woman joined the staff.

"I had a very difficult time as a woman," Rio says. "My husband says that if he hadn't married me he would never have known how macho the business world is." Even today, when she goes to see a concert, the first thing she does is count the number of women in the orchestra—"And then I'm overjoyed!"

There were exciting times in radio. She remembers the night Poland was invaded. She was called out of bed at 2 a.m. and told to take a taxi to the studio. "The whole place was dark, but it was pandemonium!" she says. "During the times when we couldn't get anything from the wires, I was supposed to play, only I had to play the appropriate thing. We went straight through like that until 12 noon without a break."

And there were fun times, such as her first experience with "The Bob and Ray Show." "The first time I played for them, they didn't have any

sort of script at all, and so I thought they were just rehearsing," she says. "They were so funny, I laughed out loud through the whole thing and didn't play my very best. Then they just said goodbye, turned around and walked out. The studio went dark, and I sat there thinking, 'What happened?'"

In 1960 Rio's radio career ended. She played briefly for television, and then moved to Connecticut with her husband to open a music studio where she still teaches. "The stress, strain and politics of TV was so unlike the family feeling of radio, and I just didn't like it," she says.

The most important thing in life, she believes, is self-expression. "If you want to be a mother or father, fine. If you want to be president of Bendix, fine," she says. "I want to play the piano and organ, and that's fine, too."

And play she does, to anyone who will tune in. "I'll play at the drop of a hat if they'll listen," Rosa Rio says, "but *not* if they talk."

January 8, 1985

Greg Rister  
427A S. Pacific Coast Hwy.  
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Dear Dr. Landon,

Thank you for thinking of including me in your Biographical Dictionary of Theatre Organists. While I haven't appeared in concert on an organ of any kind in a while (or even played one for over a year), I do intend to begin working out on the instrument again, as soon as I have moved my instrument over from my parent's home (this month!?).

In any event, I have endeavoured to provide the information you need:

**BORN:** May 9, 1952, in Compton, California.

**STUDIES:** At the age of eight, I began Accordion lessons for 3 years under two teachers, neither of whose names have stuck with me over the years, sadly.

My organ studies were begun at the age of eleven, under the tutelage of Shirley Taylor, and 6 months later her husband, the late Don Taylor, assumed the reins of my musical education, which continued for another two years before I went out on my own. I played my first professional (PAID!) organ concert at the age of 13, on an Artisan electronic instrument.

**THEATRES PLAYED:** I have actually played few formal organ concerts in theatres, although I have played organs in a great many theatres. My first "in theatre" organ concert was at the Whittwood Theatre in Whittier, California, a neighborhood house, on a Thomas Electronic instrument. That was in December of 1967.

In October of 1967, I played the Wiltern Theatre's 4/37 Kimball, a Stradivarius-quality instrument, in a double-feature concert with Jay Rosenthal. I played the Wiltern again in 1971.

**"OTHER":** This category encompasses most of my career, since 1963 when I started on the organ. I have played numerous organ store and studio concerts, been staff organist for the now-defunct Artisan Organ Company (and produced a demo record for them in 1967).

In 1977, I produced a recording of my "work-to-date" on the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium Wurlitzer. It was more or less a swan-song for my traditional theatre organ work and style.

I became involved with synthesizers in the mid-70's, and since 1979 have become very involved in both synthesizer and rock n' roll music. I have been keyboardist in numerous bands which have played the L.A. club circuits, and have recently completed (if they ever are) a small recording studio, designed for professional songwriters and other musicians. I have also done a significant amount of studio session work and engineering.

This year, I hope to begin recording my next album, on

RISTER, GREG

a theatre pipe organ. I have to admit that, when I take stock of all of the fine musical instruments I have been exposed to, the theatre organ is probably still my favorite, and certainly the one most oriented to solo performance (besides piano).

I hope this information is of help to you in compiling a "bio". I sometimes wonder if I really fit into the mold of the Theatre Organist as well as many of my contemporary organists.

I regret that I have no current promotional photos, but I did come across some proofs which are about 4 years old (the hairstyle is a bit dated, having given way to a more "punkish" style). I have included the best of these and hope it is of acceptable quality.

Thank you for your consideration, and good luck on your current and future projects.

Sincerely,  
  
Greg Rister



RITTENHOUSE, JOHN REMLEY

John Remley Rittenhouse was born December 16, 1903 in Reading, Pennsylvania. He studied piano with Mr. Grover Heckman of Reading, Pennsylvania for thirteen years. He also studied violin. His organ studies were with Walter Heaton from England who was organist of Holy Cross Methodist Church in Reading, Pennsylvania. During his career as a theatre organist he played in the following theatres: the San Toy in Reading, Pennsylvania from 1920 to 1923 (2/7 Morton); the Lyric in Reading, Pennsylvania from 1923 to 1925 (2/6 Moller tracker); the Colonial in Lebanon, Pennsylvania in 1925 (2/4 Morton); the State(Hippodrome) in Reading, Pennsylvania from 1926 to 1928 (2/4 Morton); and the Academy in Lebanon, Pennsylvania from 1928 to 1932 (2/10 Marr and Colton). In more recent years he served as organist of various churches in Berks County, Pennsylvania until retiring in 1974.

ROBERTS, ED

Was a pseudonym for organist George Epstein. The name Ed Roberts was used on the Jewell label for some 78 r.p.m. recordings released by that company.

ROBERTS, FRANK E.

Born in New Kensington, Pennsylvania, February 21, 1900. Parents, Rachel and George G. Roberts. Roberts received his education at the New Kensington High School and Adrian College. He married Amy Kruger. He served as musical director at the Rowland and Clark Theatres in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Also as organist for Warner Bros. Theatre in Pittsburgh.

ROBBINS, PERCY

He opened the Embassy Theatre in Fort Wayne, Indiana, ~~XX~~ (4 manual/  
15 rank Page pipe organ), May 14, 1928.  
Hewas one of the regular organists on the staff of Radio Station  
WOWO, Fort Wayne, Indiana (Page pipe organ of about 12 ranks).

# Entertainment



Jon Robere is sitting where he can usually be found, on an organ bench, this one at The Tivoli Theatre. Joining him for the showings of the Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy film

"Rose Marie," is Greg Watson, will be a Mountie, and on duty—ing doors and helping patrons (Alex McMahan)

## Jon Robere — Phys Ed And Mus

## Just Naturally G

## 'Rose Marie' Is Next Tivoli Movie

"Rose Marie," one of the outstanding musical films of 1936, is the next movie classic to be shown at The Tivoli Theatre. The beautiful Rudolf Friml score is sung by Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy. Together, this duo melted the hearts of a generation of moviegoers as America's Singing Sweethearts, the King and Queen of the musical silver screen.

Their voices filled every nook of those long ago, fondly remembered cinema palaces, and earned permanency as part of our cultural heritage.

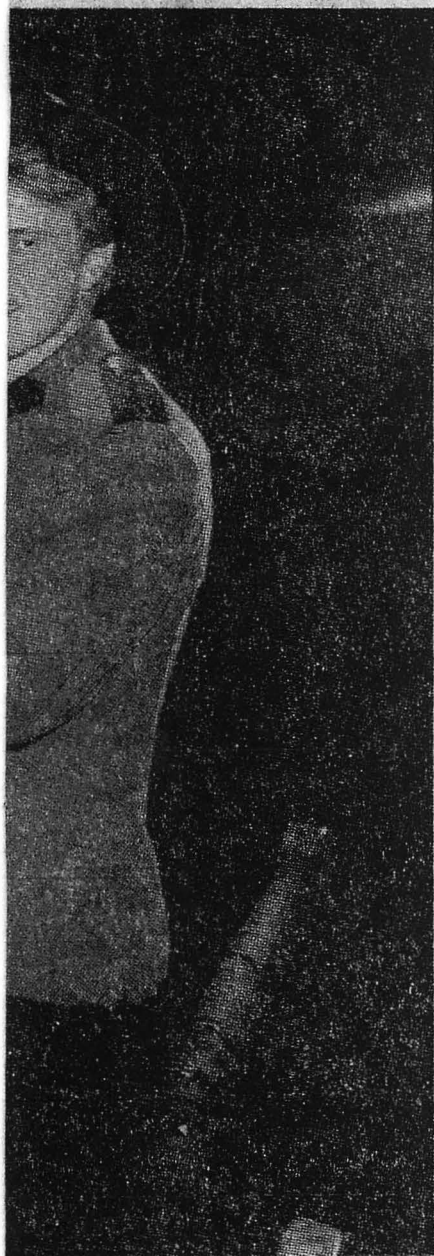
The titian-haired ex-chorus dancer from Philadelphia plays an opera star and the blond concert singer from Providence is a sergeant in the Canadian Northwest Mounted Police.

"Rose Marie" was filmed on location, a rarity in the 1930s, at Cascade Lake and Emerald Bay at Lake Tahoe.

Also starring in the film are James Stewart, Reginald Owen, David Niven, Alan Mowbray, Gildy Gray, Una O'Connor and Anita Loos.

In the opera scenes, the tenor is Allan Jones, who later starred with Ms. MacDonald in "The Firefly." He is the father of entertainer Jack Jones.

"Rose Marie" will be shown Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 6:40 and 8:50 and Saturday at 2 p.m. Jon Robere will be featured on the Wurlitzer organ, and there will be a uniformed Mountie at the door helping patrons as they arrive.



a student from Knoxville, who at the front of the theater opens as they arrive. (Color photo by



ic.

o Together

ROBERTS, HELEN

Organist at radio station WBAP, Forth Worth, Texas in 1928

ROBINSON, DEAN

Born in Sodus, New York. At the age of 12 he had his first experience with a pipe organ, the 2 manual/5 rank Marr and Colton in the Rivoli Theatre in Fairport, New York. His first job was to accompany the Saturday afternoon kid shows which were usually Western films. To gain more experience he became relief organist for the regular evening showing. He became relief organist of the Temple Theatre in Fairport, New York (2 manual/4 rank Wurlitzer) until the advent of sound pictures. He studied organ under J. Gordon Baldwin, who was an excellent musician and himself featured in several theatres in Rochester, New York. After the coming of sound pictures, Robinson went to work for Eastman Kodak.

After four years of military service in World War II, Robinson

ROBINSON, DEAN

2.

began playing the Hammond organ as a solo artist in the Buffalo, New York area until about 1950. He then toured for two years with a group called the Cromwell Trio, somewhat similar to the famous "Three Sons." Robinson also has more recently played a stint at the Dresden Hotel in Dresden, New York, and does an occasional special program for the American Theatre Organ Society in his area. He has installed a 3 manual Wurlitzer pipe organ in his home in Himrod, New York.



## Our Featured Artist



**PAUL ROBERTS**

For well over a decade Paul Roberts has delighted audiences in many parts of the world with his excellent musicianship and superb abilities as an entertainer. As one of the younger generation of performers, his inventive programs and professional presentations have generated demands for his services internationally.

Paul has an extensive musical education, including studies of classical organ, piano, clarinet, musical theory and performance. He has also shown his talents as a composer. His organ studies have provided him access to a large variety of instruments from the Royal Festival Hall to the Tower Ballroom WurliTzer in Blackpool. Paul was appointed the organist and choirmaster of a church at the age of 17. In 1985, he secured the position of resident organist at Sanford Park in Dorset, a venue which attracts large and discerning audiences during their long summer season. This is one of England's prime positions for an organist.

His theater organ tours extend beyond the U.K. to the Channel Islands, Holland, and Canada. He tours the United States regularly two times a year. He recently completed a World tour to Australia, New Zealand and Canada. His 1991 concert in nearby North Tonawanda, NY elicited the comment by an attendee: "I was tremendously impressed with the musical capabilities which Paul Roberts demonstrated at the Riviera Theatre's mighty WurliTzer".

Paul Roberts has made many BBC broadcasts including appearances on their popular radio program, "The Organist Entertains." He has produced several LP, tape cassettes and CD albums over the years of his career. Recently, he produced an excellent video using the huge dual console (one console for classical, the other for theater) Compton organ at The Guildhall in Southampton.

Drawing upon his vast musical repertoire, Paul is able to create extremely varied programs and has the knack of recalling nostalgic memories yet also entertaining with the most recent music from the contemporary scene. It is rare to find a musician with such consummate skill and artistry in so many styles.

### AS COURTESY TO ALL

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



ROBYN, DR. ALFRED G.

Organist for a time of the new Grand Central Theatre in St. Louis, Missouri (a Kilgen organ). Also chief organist at the Rialto Theatre at Broadway and 42nd Street in New York City which opened April 21, 1916 under the direction<sup>of</sup>/Roxy (the organ there was an Austin). Robyn composed "The Yankee Consul," "All For The Ladies," and other light opera pieces.

RODGERS, HARRY E.

Organist of Loew's State Theatre in Boston, Massachusetts in the 1920's. Also played the Boston Keith-Memorial Theatre the night that it opened.

Following is an editorial which appeared in Jacobs' Orchestral Monthly Magazine, appearing in July 1915, and submitted by Lloyd E Klos.

MOVING PICTURE MUSIC

ALFRED G. ROBYN

A question of vital importance to the orchestral players in this country, and one which should be so considered, is the marvelous growth of the moving pictures as a form of popular entertainment, and its influence upon the future of theatre music and musicians. In its embryo, the music at a "picture show" was a travesty--a nightmare of pounded pianos and drowning and discordant drums at which sensitive and unsensitive ears rebelled. At first, moving pictures were regarded as merely a popular craze which soon would expire from inanity or, living, would speedily reach its legitimate level--a status which was not thought to be particularly high. It has found its level, but, paradoxical as it may seem, that level is constantly changing, rising higher and higher, and wielding a pronounced and potent influence upon the music of the theater--for the moving picture house is become a theatre.

In the beginning, there was neither art nor dignity attached to the new toy of public fancy. Now, however, there is no longer any question of the steady advancement in its art, both in mechanical and histrionic production, and each successive season finds added dignity of art in the accompanying music and the corresponding demand for musical artists in its interpolation and rendition. Each season, the musical community is astounded at the brilliant names which are lending themselves to the musical part of this form of public entertainment, and each season finds the name of some noted instrumentalist added to the special features of the moving picture theatre.

Many of the better class of theatres have installed, or are installing, the great organ as the sole musical offering, while some of the larger ones are utilizing both organ and orchestra as musical concomitants. And therein lies the grave question--the future of the orchestral instrumentalists in the picture theatres. Will they or will they not be finally excluded by organ and piano, or will they unite with these and make a perfect whole?

One of the latest names to lend its dignity to art in motion picture music

is that of Mr Alfred G Robyn--not a name of high local fame only, but that of a very competent conductor, composer and organist, known throughout the country. We reprint from a recent New York announcement, relative to the last great name to join the "allies" against incongruous music in the moving picture theaters:

"S L Rothapfel, managing director of the new Rialto Theatre at 42nd Street and Broadway, announced recently that he had placed under contract as organist for the new theatre, Alfred G Robyn the well-known composer and director.

"Through his musical compositions and his direction of many symphony societies, Mr Robyn is probably the best known organist in America. For many years, he was director of the Apollo Club, Amphion Club and the Symphony Orchestra in St Louis. He came East definitely five years ago to succeed Clarence Eddy as organist of the Tompkins Avenue Congregational Church in Brooklyn. This post he held for two years and is at present organist at St Andrews Episcopal Church in this city. As a concert organist, Mr Robyn has been one of the features of artistic life in America. He is the composer of the comic operas "The Yankee Consul," "Yankee Tourist," "Princess Beggar", and "Jacinta" for Henry Savage; for Sam Bernard, "All For The Ladies," and for Kitty Gordon, "Pretty Mrs Smith."

His songs have had wide fame, principally "Answer" and "You", while his piano compositions comprise the world famous "Manzanilla," "Concerto in C Minor," "Quintette in G Minor," "Four Impromptus, Op 38," "Menuetto," "Chansonette" and many others. His "Storm at Sea", composed for grand organ, is probably one of the best known characteristic pieces published in this country. - Lately, Mr Robyn composed the music for the Lambs Gambol at the Century Opera House. He is at present directing his own school of music at 23 West 42nd Street.

"Mr Robyn is authority for the statement that in the new Rialto Theatre, he will preside over the most wonderful orchestral organ which has ever been built in this country, the specifications for which are now being made under

the direction of Mr Rothapfel and himself. He has played on all the great church organs, notably the Stewart Memorial Organ at Garden City, and the enormous organ in the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City.

### **We Welcome Tonight's Organist - Father Andrew Rogers**

Fr. Andrew Rogers is the Associate Pastor of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Saginaw, Michigan. He began his musical studies on the accordion at age seven, winning frequent national competitions throughout high school by playing transcriptions of classical orchestral music. He later appeared in the orchestra of Broadway productions at Michigan State University where he holds his degree, with honors, in Psychology.

During his religious studies, he became familiar with the organ by playing improvisatory music for retreats. Since his assignment at Holy Trinity, he has studied theater organ techniques and theory with Fr. Jim Miller, and is now augmenting his studies with Dr. Marilyn Mason, Organ Chairperson at the University of Michigan. He delights in transcribing classical piano and orchestral works for the instrument as well as composing his own compositions.

In 1988, Fr. Andrew accompanied Fr. Jim on his second tour of Australia and Norfolk Island, appearing both in joint concerts and solo engagements. Last year, he traveled to Italy and Switzerland on an Historic Organ Tour with Dr. Mason, participating in six public concerts, and will tour France in June of '94.

To keep out of trouble, he is also on staff of the Detroit Fox, has played for the movie series at the Ohio Theatre, and works in Fenton as a travel agent.

He has performed jazz, pops and symphonic works before enthusiastic audiences in the U.S., Canada and the South Pacific. New and return engagements attest to his own blossoming style under the tutelage of both Fr. Jim and Dr. Mason with an infectious style of playing and an ever-widening repertoire based upon requests in concert.

### **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.

"TILL THE BENCH BREAKS"



THE BIOGRAPHY OF

HARRY E. RODGERS

*as told to*

LOUIS C. KING

... as if it had been shot in a rainstorm. This  
caused by carbon ash from the arc-lamps on the  
projectors. It was a long time before laws were  
passed, requiring exhaust ducts and blowers to be  
installed. Not, however, to protect the film, but  
projectionists who were being killed off from  
inhaling the gases given off by the burning carbon  
filaments in the lamps.

Summer time meant the hectic round of dance-halls  
and the movie houses which didn't close for the  
summer. Harry met a number of excellent musicians,  
and his summer dance-band jobs. Men from the Boston  
Symphony and theater orchestras, who were out of work  
when the theaters closed for the summer. Those  
summer jobs may have meant a lot of rushing hither  
and yon for Harry but they provided him with much  
valuable experience in working with other musicians and  
earning the money he needed while he was in the Con-  
servatory.

Harry completed his courses at the Conservatory  
in the spring of 1909 and now it was up to him to  
support himself as a twenty-year old musician.

#### A PROFESSIONAL, AT LAST

Of course, during his school years he had been  
working at a variety of musical jobs so he could  
hardly have been classed as a rank amateur. He could  
have started much earlier. Let me quote from one of  
his letters. "In 1903 they tried to get me to go on  
the road, playing piano for the first feature length  
picture, 'The Great Train Robbery'. I did not go  
but finished school ... " In 1903! At fourteen  
years of age! I do not know who "they" were but it  
says a lot for his ability after only two years of  
lessons. Well, at that age he was already playing  
piano in school. But his decision to stay in school  
and to go on to the New England Conservatory was the  
wisest he could have made.

In 1907, as it was, he already had a steady job,  
even though it was for only two and a half hours.  
He then was engaged to lead the orchestra at the  
City Theater. I have already mentioned that engage-  
ment and include it here only because it extended  
through the first four years after leaving school.

One day, in 1910, he got an emergency call from  
another theater, Sheedy's, which had vaudeville as  
well as movies. Their orchestra leader had become  
ill and he was asked to take his place. That ended  
his connection with the old Ward Street house and he  
continued on at Sheedy's until a new theater opened  
nearby. Freeman Beshong had formed a small group to  
play there. He directed and played violin but he  
needed a pianist. He prevailed on Harry to fill  
that spot. With a cornet, clarinet and drums, they  
had a very good little orchestra at the Elm Street  
Theater, where Harry remained until he went to Boston  
in 1912. In the meantime, he married.

It might easily be imagined that, between going  
to classes in Boston, playing two theaters and work-

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**WALTER M. ROGERS**

1958

Walter M. Rogers, feature organist at the Mark Strand Theatre in Worcester has been three years at the above house.

Miss



RON AND DON (DON MOORE AND RON BAGGOTT (RENALDO))

See full entry under Moore, Donovan. Born in Wenatchee, Washington in 1904. He studied organ in Seattle, Washington and while a freshman in high school started playing at the Liberty Theatre taking the breaks, swing shift on the weekends, while the theatre organist was gone. In 1924 he became head organist and also started studying classical organ with Carl Page Wood at the University of Wisconsin. / He was one of the two people privileged to play the organ with Oliver Wallace. Ron and Don met at harmony classes in college. Ron was playing at the Neptune Theatre in Seattle, Washington so they met there for workouts. Von Herberg of <sup>the</sup> Jensen-Von Herberg theatre chain heard them and hired them as a team, and they started playing at the Bagdad Theatre. They were hired by the Paramount Publix chain for

RON AND DON (DON MOORE AND RON BAGGOTT (RENALDO))

2.

the opening of the Paramount Theatre in Seattle, Washington in 1928. After two years there they went to the Paramount Theatre in Portland, Oregon for six months, the Paramount Theatre in San Francisco, California and the Fox Theatre in Brooklyn <sup>New York</sup> and then toured with the Fox Theatre Corporation for two and one-half years. They are best remembered for their twin console productions which also involved the use of a small portable keyboard wired into the regular organ where no twin consoles were available.

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# ORGAN

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RON & DON (Brooklyn Fox) presented for the opening program of their second engagement a special solo called "Our Birthday Party," which commemorates the Fox theatre's third anniversary. Don again was seated at the big pit console while Ron was at the baby stage console. They opened with a specially written lyric about the anniversary party to the tune "Smile Darn Ya," and then went into the singing of "By My Side," a special challenge chorus between the boys and girls to the tune "Got the Bench," another special, written to the tune "Just a Gigolo," a whistling and singing chorus of "Whistling in the Dark," and a final chorus of "Million Dollar Baby." Just before the final chorus, Don surprised the audience by singing a Jewish version of "River Shannon," and though it was sung in dialect and in a comedy vein, the good tone quality of his voice was evident.

ROLLER, WILLIAM

William Roller, former film accompanist and entertainer in the Puget Sound area, died of cancer at the age of 89. <sup>1985</sup> Mr. Roller was organist at the Bremerton Rialto Theatre (now torn down) and Bremerton Masonic Lodge, and later appeared at the Neptune Theatre in Seattle, the Seattle Elks Club and the popular Seahorse Nightclub in Mukilteo. After living in the Puget Sound region for 50 years, he moved to Soap Lake, in eastern Washington, where his wife died in 1980. In addition to membership in fraternal organizations, he belonged to the Musician's Association, was on the board of directors of the Ephrata Senior Center and was a planning commissioner for the city of Soap Lake.

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ROND, CARL

Organist of the Brooklyn Theatre (3 manual Wurlitzer) in  
Richmond, Virginia in the 1920's.

ROPER, SAM NELSON

Organist of the Sunbeam Theatre in Los Angeles, California in 1927. Roper had earlier been organist of the Kinema, Los Angeles, from which he moved to Des Moines Iowa in 1918. He was featured there at the Robert Morton organ in the Rialto Theatre. (Des Moines).

ROSE, ANN

Organist of the Metropolitan Theatre in Brooklyn, New York (a 4,000 seat house) in 1918. Rose died of the influenza in 1918. (There was an epidemic of the influenza in the United States following World War I.)

ROSEAUX, (FIRST NAME NOT KNOWN)

Organist of the Elmwood Theatre in Buffalo, New York in 1923.

ROSEELE, HARRY

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

ROSEAUX, (FIRST NAME NOT KNOWN)

Organist of the Elmwood Theatre in Buffalo, New York in 1923.

ROSEELE, HARRY

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

ROSEVEARE, JAMES

Roseveare was born in Paso Robles, California, November 5, 1942. His early boyhood years were spent in San Jose. Of a popular and well-known family, Roseveare's grandfather, George Clinton Innis, assisted Thomas Edison in engineering the installation of the first incandescent lights in Boston. He is also related to Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph.

Roseveare began his musical education studying piano with Earl Bowman, who had appeared professionally and recorded with the Benson Orchestra of Chicago in the early 1920's. During these years of piano instruction Roseveare heard his first theatre pipe organ - and that via radio. He chanced upon a local broadcast over an Oakland, California

ROSEVEARE, JAMES

2

station which featured June Melendy playing the Wurlitzer in the Oakland Paramount Theatre interspersed with poetry reading by an announcer. Captivated by the sound, Roseveare prevailed upon his parents to buy a Wurlitzer spinet for his very own. With it came lessons with a teacher, Betty Darien, who introduced Roseveare to the works of serious composers for the organ. Later Roseveare studied with Richard Purvis. Roseveare's interest in classical organ music received a boost when he heard John Weaver in recital. When Weaver played the Scherzo from Vierne's Second Symphony, Roseveare knew he would have to learn how to play this fabulous composition for himself. Building upon this base of formal instruction, Roseveare went on to refine and perfect his console technique.



ROSEVEARE, JAMES

Roseveare has made professional appearances at the organ at the Wiltern Theatre, Los Angeles; the Fox, San Diego; the Paramount, Portland; the Paramount and the Orpheum, San Francisco; and Downer's Grove High School, Chicago. He was organist for the reopening of the Oakland, California Paramount where, in addition to a half-hour organ intermission, he played with the orchestra under the direction of the late John Scott Trotter.

Roseveare continues to do some technical work on theatre pipe organs. His interests and abilities extend beyond that of performing artist.

ROSEVEARE, JAMES

4

In theatre organ circles Roseveare is perhaps best known for his renditions of Jesse Crawford arrangements. He is one of only two artists singled out for praise by Crawford's biographer who commented that Roseveare's recording of "A Broken Rosary", was "uncanny" in it's realism. Roseveare is a banker by profession and views theatre organ as his avocation.

## The Artist: JIM ROSEVEARE

If you could walk into a theatre auditorium blindfolded, and hear the playing of ballads by this evening's artist, you'd swear that Jesse Crawford had been reincarnated. Jim Roseveare's playing of music, made popular by the Poet of the Organ, is a carbon copy of the original.

As was the case of most successful musicians, the 42-year-old native of Paso Robles, California, began his studies before his teens. Hearing a radio broadcast which featured a theatre organ, Jim was hooked on the sound. His advanced instruction was under the renowned Richard Purvis, organist of San Francisco's Grace Cathedral. For awhile, he worked in a bank, but his musical activities have taken over the bulk of his time.

He has played for Universal Studio tours, and the premiere of San Francisco's Castro Theatre Wurlitzer which occurred during the International Film Festival's showing of the George Cukor-directed "Rich and Famous", the director and stars being present. His first recording was done on the 3/13 Wurlitzer organ in Portland, Oregon's late Oriental Theatre. He has been featured at four American Theatre Organ Society conventions and has concertized before organ clubs for the past 15 years, primarily on the west coast.

At present, Jim is staff organist at the restored Oakland Paramount, playing its 4/27 Wurlitzer organ. He dedicated the organ in 1981, playing under John Scott Trotter, renowned as Bing Crosby's music director on the Kraft Music Hall. This is ironic because as a youth, Jim listened to remote broadcasts from that theatre, featuring its original 4/20 Wurlitzer. His artistry has been praised by such contemporaries as Richard Purvis, Virgil Fox, Ashley Miller and Billy Nalle.

Besides music, bachelor Jim Roseveare's interests include classic cars, architecture, study of human behavior, and last but not least, good food and drink.

The Rochester Theater Organ Society cordially welcomes the initial appearance of the leading Crawford interpreter on the theatre organ circuit today, JIM ROSEVEARE.

## BIOGRAPHY

Jim Roseveare was born on November 5, 1942, in the little town of Paso Robles, California, where his father was on temporary assignment at Camp Roberts for the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. The only child of a popular and well-known San Jose, California family, Jim is a fourth-generation Californian.

He began study of piano when in grammar school. As a teen-ager he heard a radio broadcast of the Wurlitzer in the Oakland Paramount Theatre and thus became hooked on the sound. Eventually he studied classical organ with Richard Purvis, internationally-acclaimed concert organist and composer.

For the past fifteen years he has been playing concerts and conventions for the American Theatre Organ Society and was chosen to be premier organist for the reopening of the restored Paramount Theatre in Oakland, California (the same theatre whose original organ captured his attention); on this engagement, he was privileged to play under the baton of the late John Scott Trotter, who was for years Bing Crosby's musical director. On October 1, 1981, he was officially named house organist for the Oakland Paramount, where he presides at the theatre's recently-installed Wurlitzer (the theatre's second organ to be installed there), a beautiful and thrilling 4-manual, 27-rank Special.

Recently, he played the organ parts for a Universal Studio Tour show, recorded on the MCA/Whitney Robert-Morton, and premiered the magnificent Wurlitzer in San Francisco's Castro Theatre on the occasion of the San Francisco International Film Festival premier of "Rich and Famous", the George Cukor-directed film starring Candice Bergen and Jacqueline Bisset; on this occasion the director and both stars were in attendance.

Jim is single and divides his time between his apartment in San Francisco and his house in San Jose. He has for many years considered himself fortunate in enjoying the friendship and acquaintanceship of musical, social, and theatrical personalities on both the East and West Coasts.

Among his other interests are classic cars, good food and drink, architecture, and human behavior; his favorite cities are San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Buenos Aires.

Roseveare  
Jim

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by the

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CARNEGIE, PA.

## ABOUT WINDOW DISPLAYS

If there was ever a time of year when the shop keepers should devote care to the trimming and decorating of their show windows it is now. It is surely a matter for wonder, why some merchants fail to understand and appreciate the selling value of their windows. Why even a second-hand store can stimulate sales through this means of showing the public what you have to sell. The merchant who has any fair sized window space, and who utilizes it to its full value ought to be able to make his window, or windows, pay the rent.

Window trimming is yearly becoming more and more an art. Men study it carefully and are continually working out new and ingenious ways to attract the public's eye. A merchant will do well to watch the windows of other shop keepers, not only those in the same line of merchandise, but all windows. If he keeps his eyes open he will often pick up a good selling idea from a display from an entirely different line of merchandise. A careful study should be made of back grounds; never mix two conflicting lines of merchandise in one display—for instance you would not if you had a meat market place live fowl in a window with rare cuts of meat. For the small town merchant there is no better method of securing good results than to change the window display often—at least every week—and feature one or not more than two lines at a time.

And the meat man, the grocer, the baker, the butter and egg man or the delicatessen have just as wonderful possibilities for producing a beautiful window trim as the milliner, the dealer in ladies' gowns, the department store, the florist or any of the more pretentious emporiums of trade.

There are the most wonderful possibilities for the man who trims the windows in a grocery store, or any place where foods are sold. And one must never lose sight of the one great essential—absolute cleanliness.

Those who usually send out Christmas cards will do well to visit their local printer and place their orders early so as to avoid the rush—also get chance at better selection.

### UNIQUE TRIUMPH

R. Wilson Ross, organist incomparable, played his joyous way into the innermost hearts of Carnegie music lovers last Friday and Saturday a week ago. In the process he discovered an abiding loyalty to the old sweet songs of America's finest tradition, a loyalty which years of scarlet jazz could not bow down, a loyalty that left even him, veteran of a thousand concerts, breathless with pleasure. The story will bear repeating: He was playing a double organologue of unusually tricky and whimsical appeal—one of those which his prestige in



Robert Wilson Ross

the New York musical world has for months past enabled Carnegie to tie in almost simultaneously with Broadway—with scarcely more than a shadow of the applause to which he was accustomed. Puzzled at first, a long smouldering conviction suddenly took form that America was "fed up" with the bizarre and racy in music, and that her genuine love and longing for the sweet melodies of yesteryear was once again coming into flower. His imagination gave him the dare, and he took it with a will. This was the way of it.

First he inserted a slide, which read as follows: "My goodness, such a small percentage clapped that time—What's wrong—Don't you like this kind of music?" Then the poem:

#### A JANGLE IN THE JINGLES

I'm not a musician, I'll make this admission,

I haven't a musical ear;  
But isn't it awful, it's almost unlawful,  
The terrible things that you hear.

From old "Annie Laurie" to "Lonesome and Sorry"

Is quite a long jump I'll admit,  
But how do they stand it and who would demand it.

This "Say It Again" called a hit.

Now "Animal Crackers" may have lots of backers,

"The Prisoner's Song" may be fair;  
But "Somebody's Lonely" and "I Love You Only"  
Should certainly stay off the air.

The ditty called "Horses" has caused more divorces

Than newspapers tell you, I'm sure;  
For "In My Gondola" and one they call "Nola"

There must be some kind of a cure.

The "Bells of St. Mary's" some think is the berri's

And "That Certain Party" a wow;  
For "Love Comes a-Stealing," and "That Certain Feeling,"

"I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now."

The music we're getting is just like the petting,

It's not what it was years ago;  
It's more energetic and not so aesthetic,

That's why they all fall for it so.

VAN H. ESHELMAN.

followed by this final verse of Mr. Ross's own authorship:

"If this is our motto let's sing obligato  
To music composed for a cause;  
And if it's appealing and strikes your good feeling,  
It may be I'll get more applause."

lit which swung with beautiful rhythm into the strains of "Way Down South." The effect was electrical. The house rocked with applause. Encore after encore pealed out, and the old-fashioned melodies came gloriously back into their own. The audience joined in tumultuously. Without a whiff of exaggeration it was one of the most soul stirring spectacles that the beautiful Carnegie theatre has ever witnessed. Tears mingled with laughter. Restraint was thrown to the winds. It was the happiest party the old town has enjoyed for many a day, and many were the thanks that went out to good old Robert Wilson Ross, organist without peer, for his audacity in giving the people what his heart felt they wanted instead of what New York said they wanted.

Many a young man has had laid away for him at one of the stores something for his sweetheart as a Christmas gift. This practice is not alone confined to lovers—even husbands have been discovered picking out something for the wife, with the request that it be "held until called for."

If you use coal for fuel and haven't got it in you should be getting about it. We're hoping for a long, mild fall—but you never can tell about these weather men.

## A New Silhouette



The Formal Mode Introduces a Distinctive Gown Which Molds the Hips

Departing from the debutante mode which featured gowns of bouffant appeal and period aspects, the new evening gowns are designed along sophisticated lines and reveal a silhouette of chic de-

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How many of you remember Rochester's Victoria Theatre? It stood at South Clinton and Johnson Street from 1911 to 1931. In 1927, a three manual Marr & Colton pipe organ was installed there and the man who played for the better part of a year was Robert Wilson Ross.

Born in Duluth, Minn. in 1901, Ross and his family moved to Philadelphia in 1905 where the youngster received most of his musical training. His love of baseball was a deterrent to his musical activities. Also, the infant medium of radio took a lot of his time as he built a home wireless station. Kept back in grammar school four times, it was predicted by some that "he'll never amount to anything".

With wireless stations prohibited in World War I, he again turned to music. At \$8 a week, he received a theatre position, then took a two-year course in piano and theory at Coombs Conservatory. Becoming interested in the theatre organ he studied under four teachers. He took several positions in Philadelphia theatres and became affiliated with the Marr & Colton firm, opening new installations. He became adept at composing lyrics for song slide presentations and fitting music to them.

On February 15, 1927, he opened the \$30,000 Marr and Colton organ in Rochester's Victoria Theatre. He was featured four times daily. A piece in "Metronome" described him as from the old school of playing. "He's one of a few theatre organists to use both feet in pedaling, and uses the compositions of Bach, Guilmont and Widor to accompany domestic scenes in the picture. He repairs and tunes the instrument and is writing a book 'Theatre Organists' Guide'." It was never completed.

In 1928, seeing the handwriting on the wall for theatre organists, Ross gave his two weeks' notice to the Victoria. The theatre was closed, then reopened briefly as a burlesque house. It was razed about 1931. Ross had a short term at Rochester's Thurston Theatre, then left for Pennsylvania where he played a few theatres and taught at State Teachers College in Mansfield. He died in 1976, survived by his widow Edna who lives near Elmira.

ROSS, ROBERT WILSON

Organist of the Liberty Theatre in Carnegie, Pennsylvania in  
1926.

ROTH, ALBERT

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

ROUSE, HAROLD

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1901. Had no formal training in music. Began playing <sup>piano</sup>/professionally in 1919 in Atlantic City, and was influenced by the organists in the theatres there. Rouse claims to have played the first Wurlitzer organ installed in Atlantic City.

Back in Pittsburgh he opened the Grand Theatre's (Warner) new Wurlitzer organ, then on to the Sheridan Square Theatre and its new Wurlitzer. Other Pittsburgh theatres in which he played were the Liberty Theatre, the Kenyon Theatre, and the Davis Theatre, where he met the world famous magician, Harry Houdini. Rouse moved to Los Angeles' Loew's State Theatre and then on to Hilo Hawaii to the Hilo Palace Theatre until 1937 when he retired. Rouse is a member of the Society of American Magicians, the Pittsburgh Area Theatre Organ Society, and the West Penn Theatre Organ Society.

ROWAN, ELOISE

Born in Winona, Minnesota, July 17, 1905. Her <sup>mother was</sup> ~~parents were~~ Margaret A. <sup>Rowan</sup> ~~and~~ Rowan. She received her education in Fargo High School in Fargo, North Dakota and Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She broadcast over Radio Stations KSTP and WCCO in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Also played the Kimball organ in the Municipal Auditorium in Minneapolis for many years.

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ROWAN, ELSIE



Eloise Rowan

Organist

State Theatre

MacPhail School of Music

Main 4424

Kenwood 1004

PLAYED STATE IMPLS

"

PARAMOUNT DENVER

to one who knows

DOSE

Article for the Grove's Dictionary of American Music and Musicians

Rowan (Dilling), Eloise -- Theatre organist and teacher

From the age of 9 through high school she studied classical piano at the Dakota Conservatory of Music in Fargo, North Dakota with its director, Ernest Boehmer. She continued her studies in piano, theory, and accompanying from 1922-23 at Northwestern University and from 1923-26 at the University of Minnesota, also beginning classical organ with George Fairclough. While still in college, she turned to theatre organ, took lessons privately with Eddie Dunstedter, and accompanied silent films at the Loring, the Strand, and the Garrick Theatres in Minneapolis. In 1926 <sup>S. All</sup> ~~Rowan~~ succeeded Dunstedter as featured organist at the State Theatre and in 1928 at the Minnesota Theatre. There she played spotlight solos, provided background music for the weekly feature film, and accompanied stage shows for such celebrities as Ted Lewis, Ray Bolger, Burns and Allen, and the Mills brothers. From 1930-31 the Paramount Publix theatre chain transferred her to Denver, Colorado to open the Paramount Theatre (restored in 1980) as "Jean" of the duo organists "Jackie and Jean". Between 1931 and 1944 she taught theatre organ at the MacPhail School of Music in Minneapolis, served as NBC staff organist on radio station KSTP and as organist at the Minneapolis Auditorium for special events, ranging from international bicycle races to the war bond tours of Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Dennis Morgan. In Chicago, 1944-45, she was employed by NBC radio affiliate WBBM. After moving to San Francisco in 1945 she played for local and network shows on NBC's KPO and ABC's KGO. A pioneer in local San Francisco television from 1950, she appeared on programs produced by stations KGO, KPIX, and KRON. After her retirement in 1975, she continued to teach and to be active in the American Theatre Organ Society of Southern California.

Eloise Rowan's career as an organist spans the era from the silent film in the 1920's into talking pictures, from radio of the 1930's and 40's into television.

Margaret Dilling

University of California, Berkeley

1930

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS: DENVER, COLORADO, FRIDAY, AUGUST 29

## Denver's New Paramount Ready



This party of "inspectors," headed by Ted Mack, left, at top of stairs, officially inspected the playhouse yesterday and pronounced it a veritable "palace." Lower right are the artists who play the twin organs, Jackie Kaderly, left, and Jean Rowan.

Katherine  
Eloise  
Rowan

29th. *Denver*  
Following is a story which appeared in the Denver Post which covers the opening of Miss Rowan's engagement in Denver.

Jackie and Jean, the "Paramount Musical Twins," will make their bow next Friday night to Denver as the organists of the giant twin console organ in the new one-and-a-quarter-million-dollar Paramount theater when the new edifice of motion pictures has its gala inauguration.

The musical pair reached Denver Tuesday and straightway tested out their prowess on the giant organ. Both are "pint-size", and at the dual consoles present the illusion of two tiny dolls.

Young in years, each of the charming and talented girls has had long experience at the organs in the big eastern Publix houses. Together they represent the first duo of girl organists ever to appear in any theater in the United States. Beginning with Friday night's inaugural program they will be a daily feature of the bills at the new Paramount.

Although not exactly alike as two peas in appearance, the two girl organists are identical in musical genius and are accredited with being able to play anything in the realm of music from the "hottest" snappiest jazz pieces to the most difficult classics of the great composers.

Audiences, the Paramount management promises are due for a great treat and series of thrills.

Next Friday night the audience at the gala premiere will be introduced to Jackie and Jean when the musical twins play the stirring "Star Spangled Banner." The pair will be unseen as they play this patriotic air—then the first-nighters will get their first glimpse of them as they arise on the opposite sides of the pit on the twin "lifts."

But the melodies of Jackie and Jean will not be confined to the theater alone. Through the magic of radio the two girls will be introduced to the entire Rock Mountain region. Tonight at 11:30 p. m., Jackie and Jean will stage a "Slumber Hour" broadcast by station KLZ, featuring their programs frequently. As far as possible these "Slumber Hour" programs will be composed of restful tunes, as a proper preparation to the slumbers of the listeners.

ROWELL, PHILLIP

Associate organist at the Galax Theatre and relief organist at the Strand Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama in 1925.

ROWLANDS, MAMIE POPPLE

Born in Blaine, Washington, November 15, 1889. Took her first music lessons in Blaine and gave her first recital at the age of ten years, ten. She studied at St. Ann's Academy in New Westminster, British Columbia, where at age 16 she won a Gold Medal as an outstanding student. She studied theatre organ in Chicago. Her first job was in Blaine, Washington playing piano for the first movies at the Crystal Theatre. She later moved to Bellingham, Washington and played the American Theatre (Robert Morton pipe organ), the Bell Theatre, the Dream Theatre, the Egyptian Theatre (Wurlitzer pipe organ), and the Mount Baker Theatre (Wurlitzer pipe organ). She has also been organist for local churches playing Estey and E. M. Skinner pipe organs.

ROWLANDS, MAMIE POPPLE

Mamie's first teacher of piano was none other than Nellie Cornish who founded the Cornish school of music in Seattle in 1914. She began playing piano for silent films in 1908 in Blaine, Wa.(films) For about seven years, she played the Robert Morton Organ in Bellingham's American Theatre and also played intermissions there at a later date. She also studied organ one summer in Chicago at Kimball Hall. In 1966 she was called again to accompany a Harold Lloyd film at Western Washington State College (now Western Wa. University) on the 3/27 Moller Concert Organ. She played electronic organs here for many events for years.

Rowlands1.jpeg

# Mrs. <sup>MAMIE</sup> Popple Rowlands

## Silent Film Organist

by Sara Stewart Campbell

After a visit with Mamie Popple Rowlands, I felt it was natural to discover that one of her earliest pictures should show her only as a blur. Apparently she has always possessed that zest and drive which are so apparent in her conversation, and the mementoes of her long career.

Mamie's talent was music, and her first teacher was none other than Nellie Cornish, who founded the Cornish School of Music and Art in 1914. "I had ten or twelve lessons, at 50 cents each from Miss Cornish, and I was very impressed with her."

Mr. Popple was a contractor, and built his family's home right on the U.S.-Canada line. Mamie was sent to St. Anne's Academy in New Westminster, B. C., which graduated her with honors and a gold medal for her outstanding musical ability. A bout with rheumatic fever made it necessary for her to recuperate for about a year, during which time she lived with relatives in Princeton, B.C.

Mrs. Popple wanted her daughter at home, in Blaine, so Mamie returned to take a job at the elegant new Fitts-Phillips theatre. She had made her professional debut

customers at 10 cents apiece. Mamie played for the silent films and often sang the "slide songs" used between showing - one she remembers introducing to the area was "I Love A Lassie", to accompany a Mary Pickford release. "It was so popular, it was held over twice as long as usual." "The Big Parade" with John Gilbert, was one of my personal favorites". She also occasionally cranked the hand-turned projector (before electricity). The theatre finally folded, due to a lack of Blaine customers willing to pay big city prices for their entertainment.

For about seven years, Mamie played the organ at the American Theatre in Bellingham, accompanying their silent films. She studied organ one summer at Chicago's Kimball Hall. "Many of the pictures had their own music, like "Able's Irish Rose", but some I improvised for, using a lot of classical music. Not everyone tried to follow the picture when they played - you might hear the "Gypsy Love Song" backing an Indian raid or a train robbery!" In a tribute to her abilities, made during a silent film festival at WWSC in 1966, Mr. F. R. Feringer wrote, "...The improvising of

never intended to be exhibited silently.

Prior to 1927 when sound films were made piano and orchestral arrangements and compositions were planned to accompany films. More and more frequently, however, musical accompaniment was left to the imagination of the organist or pianist who specialized in this unique craft. By 1920 there were several thousand silent film accompanists in the U.S., but only a few ever achieved recognition. With the advent of sound, these craftsmen scattered to other occupations. ... Mamie Popple Rowlands has made her name known to all who appreciate music. We were delighted to find such a talented and vivacious spirit to enhance our series."

During the Depression Mamie went to Los Angeles where she played for dance and vocal schools, and was associated with Southern California Music School as an accompanist for their opera students. It was about 1930 that she began to be a regular feature of the Pioneer Picnic as she played for the open air programs. "Usually operetta favorites, or current pieces like "Nola" "Tea For Two" or

at the Odd Fellows Hall at the age of 10, and had played at dances, etc., since she was 13.

By 1908 standards, the Blaine Theatre was cosmopolitan, indeed, with an outside barker to pull in the

music to supplement moving visual images is in itself a rare art form, especially today. The so-called silent films were

"Moonglow" were all popular. Now living on Marine Drive in Bellingham, Mamie (it is somehow impossible to think of her as Mrs. Rowlands) is surrounded with memories and souvenirs of a fascinating past, but it is her vital and spirited present that she remembers best.

*Organist American  
Theatre Robert Morton.*

Rowlands2.jpeg

The improvising of music to supplement moving visual images is in itself a rare art form, especially today. The so-called "silent" films were never intended to be exhibited silently. Often, prior to 1927 when sound films were first made, piano and orchestral arrangements and compositions were planned to accompany films. More frequently, however, musical accompaniment was left to the imagination of an organist or pianist who specialized in this unique craft.

By 1920, there were several thousand silent film accompanists in the United States, but only a few of these ever achieved real distinction.

The presence of Mrs. Mamie Popple Rowlands and Mr. William Madison to accompany THE FRESHMAN lends an authentic note to the presentation. The almost forgotten art of providing spontaneous background music for silent films flourished in the late twenties when there were scores of organists and orchestral directors able to write and play suitable music 'to the movies.' With the advent of sound and the sudden demise of the 'silent,' these craftsmen soon scattered to other occupations.

Mamie Popple Rowlands began her career with a piano recital in Blaine in 1900. Her first piano instructor was Miss Nellie Cornish of Blaine, who founded the Cornish School of Music and Art in Seattle in 1914. Mrs. Rowlands graduated from St. Anne's Academy in New Westminster, B. C. with honors and received a gold medal for her outstanding musical ability.

The first silent films Mrs. Rowlands played for were in the Blaine Theater (before they had electricity and were using a hand-cranked projector). She often sang the 'slide songs' that they used between showings, and a favorite of her's was "I Love A Lassie." Then she played the piano for silent films at the American Theater in Bellingham for about seven years.

During the depression Mrs. Rowlands went to Los Angeles where she played accompaniment for dance and vocal schools. She was also associated with the Southern California Music School as an accompanist for their opera students.

Since coming back to Bellingham, Mamie Popple Rowlands has made her name known to all who appreciate music. We were delighted to find such a talented and vivacious spirit to enhance our series, and glad for the opportunity to give this special recognition to Mamie.

Mr. William Madison moved to Bellingham in 1954 from Olean, New York. He has studied the organ with Einar Moen and Dr. David Schaub. No small part of the credit for the sound effects in these films goes to him.

F. R. Feringer, Director of Extension

ADMISSION: Adults \$1.00, students with ID cards 65¢

Films to be shown Winter Quarter ...

February 18, 1966 THE STRONG MAN

February 25, 1966 AN EVENING WITH BUSTER KEATON

Mamie played the  
Robert Morton @  
B'ham's American Th.



PUTZ, EGON

On the staff at the New York Paramount Theatre during the years that Jesse Crawford was chief organist there.

PYLE, HARRY

On the staff of the Paris Theatre in Denver, Colorado with organist Henry Murtagh.

# Organ player Sybil Rubini brough

**B**ack in the 1920s, when Mary Pickford was the girl next door and Douglas Fairbanks the supreme swashbuckler, Sybil Rubini added a missing ingredient to silent films — sound.

Fingers and feet flying on big theater organs, she wrapped audiences in a blanket of music suited to the herky-jerky shadows and subtitles that flashed on the silver screen.

With what she calls "pathetic" music, she evoked lumps in the throat. With slapstick tunes, she inspired peals of laughter. And with heavy minor chords, she sent shivers of fear throughout the theater.

When poor, imperiled Pauline was tied to the railroad tracks, a train bearing down on her, Rubini heightened tension to the breaking point, always, of course, ready to switch to hearts-and-flowers when the hero performed his rescue and the grateful damsel melted in his arms.

"If we were lucky, we had cue sheets," says Rubini, digging into her old files to show what they looked like. "The cues told us how long we'd have to play romantic music; and then how long we'd have to switch to a chase scene. And, of course, every movie had a main musical theme. But a lot of the time, we just improvised.

"You had to keep alert all the time, watching the screen with one eye and keeping the other on the stops so you wouldn't pull the wrong one and produce a sound that wasn't appropriate."

Rubini did it well, playing in the Colonial, State, Palace Hip, Egyptian, Strand and Fremont. Most of the time, her employer was John Danz.

Often she played almost continuously through the night, stopping between shows only long enough to run to some downtown

## DUNC'S PEOPLE



**DON DUNCAN**

Times Sunday columnist

eatory, such as Mannings, for a cup of coffee and a doughnut before resuming her work.

"At the Colonial," she says, "we had regular customers, like the man who always came in about midnight, sat in the front and took off his shoes. By the time he was ready to leave he had kicked his shoes under a seat a few rows away. He'd make an awful fuss until an usher found them."

Several times, Rubini filled in on one of the really big theater organs around town, reveling in the spotlight, all eyes on her as the organ rose out of the orchestra pit and her fingers danced lightly over the keys.

The pay wasn't much — \$25 for a seven-day week. But to Rubini, who had learned to play a theater organ by borrowing against a life insurance policy to finance a three-month class advertised in a Seattle newspaper, it was the fulfillment of a dream — a dream that began when she took her first piano lessons as a child in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and was honed when she was a starry-eyed movie buff in the very first class to enter Seattle's Lincoln High School.

She hoped the job would last forever, that she'd always be playing music to match the actions of leading men such as debonair John Gilbert. But a movie called "The Jazz Singer," starring Al Jolson, ended the dream. Audiences heard Jolson sing, and never again would they be satisfied with subtitles.

The Roaring '20s were about to become the Depressed '30s. Rubini, whose husband, Stanley, was a barber, set up a dressmaking business on Beacon Hill, played the piano for fashion shows around town and once performed for three weeks with a singer friend on KXA radio.

Unfortunately, "Leah and Sybil" couldn't find a sponsor.

Rubini is now 93, her hearing isn't what it was and she looks even smaller than the 5 feet she claims. But she bounds around her little North End apartment with remarkable vigor.

From an old chest, she extracted sheet music from her performing days, along with photographs of Lon Chaney that appeared on theater marquees more than half a century ago.

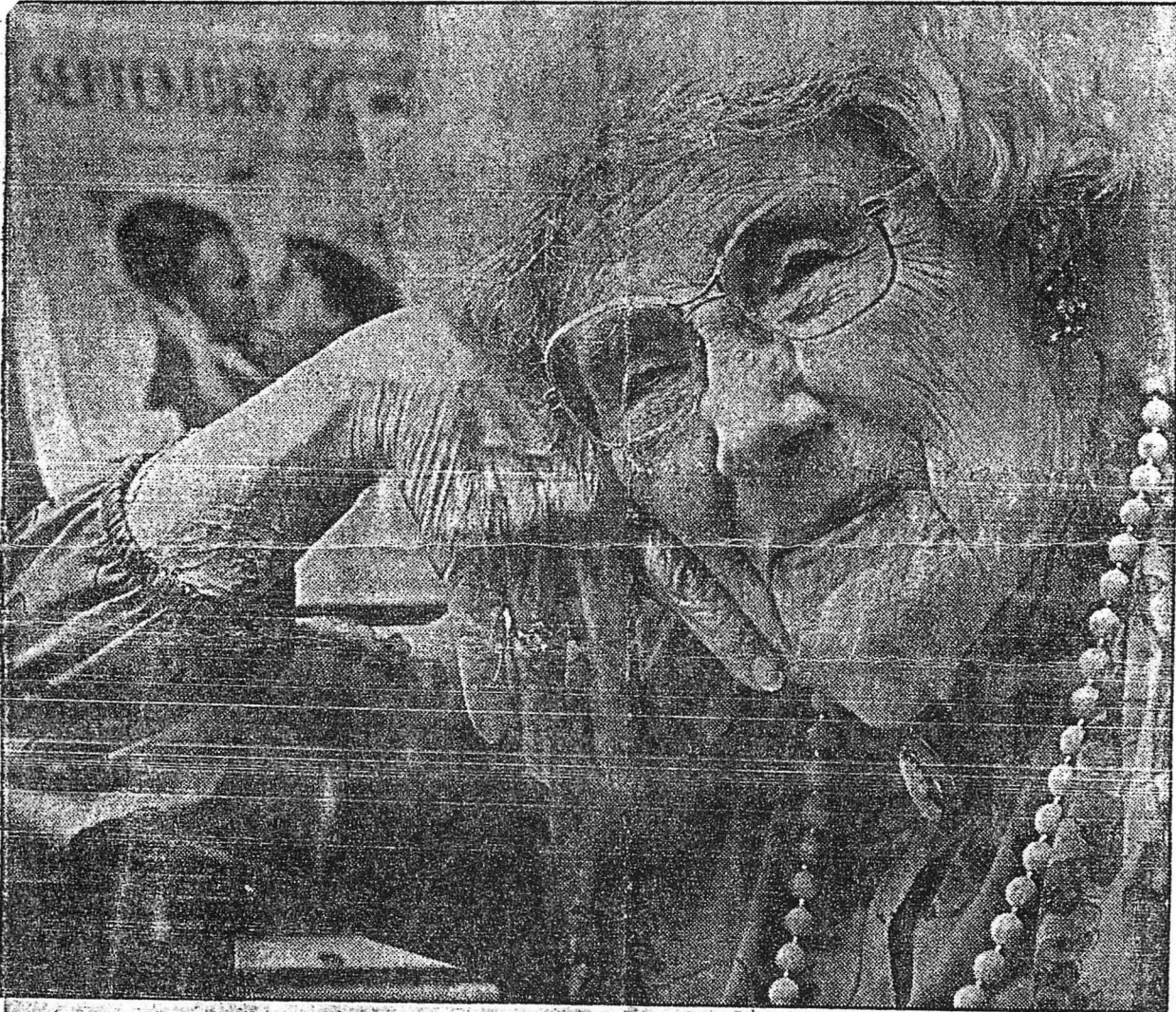
"Oh, how I did love Lon Chaney," she said. "I played for his 'Phantom of the Opera' and 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame.' Those took real organ work."

As she talked, she edged closer to a highly polished, double-manual organ in her living room. The question hung between us. OK, "Can you still play it?"

Rubini beamed. Can Sinatra still sing? Can Hepburn act? Can Walter Payton run?

Rubini sat down and her fingers glided over the keys. "You're

# Feel sound to the silent screen



**Sybil Rubini recalls when movies were silent but movie houses were not, thanks to her musical talent.** Benjamin Benschneider / Seattle Times

Nobody 'til Somebody Loves You. . . ." She slipped as easily as a sled on snow into "When I Grow Too Old to Dream" and then into

Often she played almost continuously through the night, stopping between shows only long enough to run to some downtown

"Whispering," polishing off the impromptu concert with that old Walter Donaldson-George Whiting standard, "My Blue Heaven."

Iowa, and was honored with a starry-eyed movie buff in the very first class to enter Seattle's Lincoln High School.

For a brief moment, she was back 60 years. The only thing missing was the man in the front row, looking for his shoes.

RUE, JACOB

Organist of the Howard Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia (3 manual  
Robert Morton pipe organ).

3/93

# Making of a noted theater pipe organist

By Lloyd E. Klos

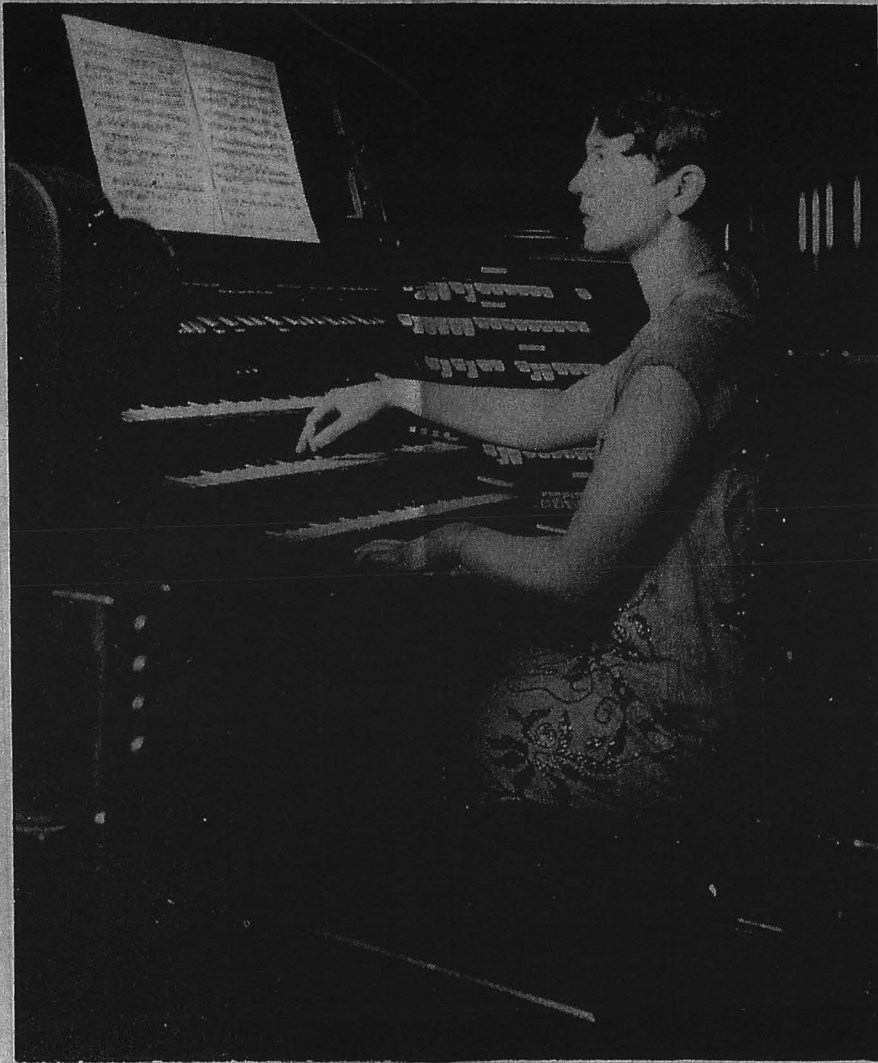
During the great era of the theater pipe organ, the Eastman Theatre had what was advertised at the time of its installation in 1922 "the World's largest theater organ." One of those who played the four-manual, 155-rank Austin was an attractive young girl, Beatrice Ryan. I tracked her down in Florida, and she graciously consented to supply material necessary in compiling this story.

Beatrice Ryan was born in Lockport, N.Y., receiving her early education there. "When I was graduated from high school, I had to build a bank account because my father had just died, and I wanted to attend the Eastman School of Music, determined to get a degree. That Summer, I studied with an organist, whose name escapes me, in Buffalo's Elmwood Theatre. I also played piano in dance bands, which I loved, having done this while in high school. Finally, I played for a committee at Eastman as part of my entrance exams.

"The good news arrived that I was accepted by the school. A great help were the three years of instruction I had received from a wonderful Lockport piano teacher, Professor Halstead. He drilled me in scales, arpeggios, Bach, Mozart, etc.

"With \$500 in my purse, with a song in my heart, and no thought but to get my bachelor's degree, I left Lockport for Rochester. Having a room in the girls' dormitory on the old university campus on Prince Street, I was listed as a special student until the Fall semester, and was extremely fortunate to have been accepted by Harold Gleason on organ, and a brilliant Hungarian and Chopin expert, Sandor Vas, in piano.

"There was a motion picture accompaniment course, utilizing a 2/7 Murlitzer and complete projection



Beatrice Ryan was 18 when she was pictured at the Eastman Theatre's Austin console.

calmly as I could to the door and started screaming. You never saw such activity! Down to the basement and through the two steel doors I went to pick up with the orchestra.

"As I was playing at movie level, someone touched my foot, and I looked down into a terrified face. I never stopped playing.

was at the Eastman Theatre daily, and the *Democrat and Chronicle* ran the following news item, dated Jan. 2, 1927:

"With two special stage presentations, the brilliant 'Spanish Caprice' overture by N. Rimsky-Korsakoff, and an organ solo featuring Miss Beatrice

Beatrice Ryan had a daily radio program of dinner music from 5 to 6 p.m. over WHAM. On one program, it was announced in 1927 that she would be leaving soon to study in Europe.

jeans or sneakers in those days! Our almost constant companions were the Berentsens, the Art Kellys, and all the friends from the faculty and theater.

"Then - boom! The talking pictures arrived, which killed organ accompaniment of the films. Ferrin and I vacationed in Europe for awhile. Upon our return, Ferrin became continuity director at CBS, and I continued composing. Our son Peter was at Browning School where I'd occasionally see opera singer Rise Stevens, whose son was a friend of Peter's.

"We met animal hunter and trainer Frank Buck in 1932 at a literary luncheon. Though his 'Bring 'em Back Alive' had been acclaimed, there was a misunderstanding between him and the author. So he collaborated with Ferrin in all Frank's books, magazine articles, and radio shows until his death.

ng year.

"Meanwhile, I got calls as substitute organist in a couple of theaters: the iccadilly (two-console, 13-rank Wurlitzer) on Clinton Avenue North and the Regent (3/11 Hope-Jones Wurlitzer) on East Avenue. At the latter, I met organist Anna Walker, who was so sweet to me that she must have thought me a precocious child.

"I entered Eastman as a sophomore in my first year, and never took a vacation in the three years there, going to summer school at the university while continuing in organ and piano.

"In a fateful stroke one year at Christmas Eve when Bob Berentsen wanted off from his Eastman Theatre duties, he asked me to sub for him. I was so thrilled I spent my savings on a beautiful white chiffon dress, sparkling with rhinestones. I pushed the 'up' button on the console and performed a solo. As fate would have it, George Eastman was in his mezzanine seat. He left and got in touch with the manager, saying, 'I want that girl to play more often!'

"From then on, I played four solos a day, and also picked up from the orchestra to play through the silent film. I just loved that beautiful Austin! I particularly liked it when I could pick up from Mitch Miller's oboe; you couldn't tell where he left off and the organ began.

"Victor Wagner conducted the orchestra, composed mostly of Philharmonic personnel. Everyone was in mortal fear of him as he often broke one or two batons at rehearsal. But I loved him dearly as he was so helpful. His assistant conductor, Guy Fraser Garrison, was much calmer, and we became very good friends.

"The Austin's console had four buttons on the left jamb; one to raise to concert level, one for movie level, one lower to the basement where you mounted or left the bench, and one for help with an 'H' on it. I had occasion to use the last one!

"To get to the console when it was resting at the bottom of the pit, one had to pass through two steel doors, and the atmosphere down there was a bit scary. There had been a Peeping Tom sighted at various times on the fire escape and in other spots, frightening everyone.

"One night, everyone was unnerved as this pervert was on the loose again. When I went to my dressing room to change, there he was on the fire escape outside my window! I walked as

of the work, the organ started to cipher. When the audience heard this, they dug into their pockets and purses for the new organ immediately!

"At this time, the newly formed American Opera Company had its headquarters at the Eastman School, and I often accompanied rehearsals. Val Ring directed the opera department, and many of those artists went on to fame. They performed regularly in the theater as did the ballet company, headed by Triesault, who later appeared in many movies. Thelma Biracree was prima ballerina and in later years organized with Olive McCue, Rochester's Mercury Ballet Company.

"When Eugene Goosens was conductor of the Philharmonic and with the console in the basement, I played, using a mirror to follow him. The stage was built out over the pit, but with an aperture in the floor. One of the most nerve-wracking jobs was to count 700 measures, play for six, wait for 700 more, etc. This happened often, the "1812 Overture" being one.

"Once a month, the organ students had to play a recital on the Aeolian-Skinner in the school's 500-seat Kilbourn Hall. I once played all the major Bach preludes and fugues: The A, the big G, the fast-moving D; all the Franck chorales, Vierne's symphony, Widor's Toccata - the whole program from memory.

"While involved in all this, Ferrin W. Fraser, later my husband, and also a Lockport native, was at Columbia University and studying writing with John Erskine. He had an idea for a musical comedy. He sent me the script with dialogue, I wrote the music, and Ernie Ponicelli orchestrated it. The whole school was involved with 'Hot Cinders' and the school's director, Dr. Howard Hanson, went along with it. He was a wonderful man and all for the young people. We had three wild performances in Kilbourn Hall, the third on royal command of Dr. Hanson. I directed all three.

"It took some time for the school to simmer down after that, and then came graduation. I had to play the organ for the rehearsal. About a thousand graduates, plus their families, were present. For the final exercises, I had the great honor to do Dr. Hanson's organ concerto with his directing the Little Symphony. I was the second one to play the concerto in public, Harold Gleason being the first."

Following graduation, Bea Ryan

Bea also had a daily radio program of dinner music from 5 to 6 p.m. from the Eastman's broadcasting studio over WHAM. On one program, it was announced in 1927 that the organist would be leaving soon to tour and study in Europe.

"My mother in Lockport, who listened in every day to WHAM, almost had a heart attack! I hadn't had the time to write her, what with graduation, packing, work, etc. However, I managed to spend two days with her and give a recital on the Palace Theatre's 2/8 Wurlitzer.

"Then off to tour Europe, and to Paris to study composition with Nadia Boulanger and organ with Marcel Dupre. I was extremely fortunate to have studied with Mr. Dupre as he took only pupils recommended to him for special instruction, and especially with Miss Boulanger to whom all composers flocked. She was magnificent!

"Ferrin Fraser followed me over, and we were married in Paris. On that day, his first novel, 'Lovely Ladies,' was published. It was all so beautiful then, the concerts were scintillating, and we went practically every day. Ravel was the big name, and we saw the opening of the Salle Pleyel when all the important composers were present to see him conduct a program. I also had the chance to hear pipe organs in England, Scotland, Germany, Italy, and France."

Her European sojourn over, Beatrice returned to Rochester in August, 1928. The *Democrat and Chronicle* publicized her return thusly:

"Following an absence of more than a year during which time she studied under some of the great masters of Europe, Beatrice Ryan returns to the Eastman Theatre this week as featured organist. So far as known, she enjoys the distinction of being the youngest featured organist in any of the great theaters of the country ... At the Eastman this week, Miss Ryan is being given a special spotlight and a featured place on the bill. She will play 'Get Out and Get Under the Moon,' a popular number."

"I did some post-graduate work at the school; pedagogy with George McNabb, voice methods with Frederick Haywood, and choral training with Dr. Herman Genhart. A whole group of us were living in a newly opened apartment building.

"Concert nights were big events at the Eastman, with visiting artists, and we in long dresses and tuxedos - no

radio show 'Little Organist' which originated in Lockport with Pierre Andre as the singer and Larry Larson as the accompanist. He could travel as long as he arrived at the station on time. I did scripts for 'Nick the Detective,' 'Suspense,' 'Arch Oboler's 'Lights Out' while, we had bought a house outside Albion, N.Y., which was fully renovated between 1927 and 1928. During all this, I never stopped posing.

"We had to settle down to our son, and this we did in town, Lockport. For a few rudiments of music at the Newfane Central School, I was organist-choir director of the Congregational Church.

"Then I opened the School of Music, specializing in piano and organ. I was invited in 1928 as organist-choir director of the First Presbyterian Church in Lockport. I remained with so much to do for 24 years. Its 3/38 year olds and irresistible all my anthems here, composed by Ferrin on four book themes for children, taught by me to a class of 30 students a week in bell choirs. It was a most fulfilling life imaginable.

"Ferrin died in 1968 and I moved to this lovely church in Florida called 'The Church of the Friend in Florida' where I collected some mobile homes in the Leesburg area. One was ranged for two days on the mobile home on the shore of the Canal. Within five minutes it flew back to Lockport from my church position. Later was in Florida for

"I was just getting started when I was invited by a lady from a church to organize a bell choir again, no retirement! I did a chorus for three years until I said 'That's enough!'

However, even in Florida, Beatrice Ryan Fraser was more than ever. "I'm still substituting in churches, practicing every day, posing, and loving ever do some solo work at my home in Florida Lakes Park on the shore. I love seeing my old classmates and are always welcome here

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for movie level, one  
asement where you  
e bench, and one for  
on it. I had occasion  
!

onsole when it was  
tom of the pit, one  
gh two steel doors,  
re down there was a  
ad been a Peeping  
arious times on the  
other spots, fright-

ryone was unnerved  
s on the loose again.  
ny dressing room to  
vas on the fire escape  
dow! I walked as

buying a new organ, and in the middle  
of the work, the organ started to ci-  
pher. When the audience heard this,  
they dug into their pockets and purses  
for the new organ immediately!

"At this time, the newly formed  
American Opera Company had its  
headquarters at the Eastman School,  
and I often accompanied rehearsals.  
Val Ring directed the opera depart-  
ment, and many of those artists went  
on to fame. They performed regularly  
in the theater as did the ballet com-  
pany, headed by Triesault, who later  
appeared in many movies. Thelma  
Biracree was prima ballerina and in  
later years organized with Olive  
McCue, Rochester's Mercury Ballet  
Company.

"When Eugene Goosens was con-  
ductor of the Philharmonic and with  
the console in the basement, I played,  
using a mirror to follow him. The stage  
was built out over the pit, but with an  
aperture in the floor. One of the most  
nerve-wracking jobs was to count 700  
measures, play for six, wait for 700  
more, etc. This happened often, the  
'1812 Overture' being one.

"Once a month, the organ students  
had to play a recital on the Aeolian-  
Skinner in the school's 500-seat  
Kilbourn Hall. I once played all the  
major Bach preludes and fugues: The  
A, the big G, the fast-moving D; all the  
Franck chorales, Vierne's symphony,  
Widor's Toccata - the whole program  
from memory.

"While involved in all this, Ferrin  
W. Fraser, later my husband, and also  
a Lockport native, was at Columbia  
University and studying writing with  
John Erskine. He had an idea for a  
musical comedy. He sent me the script  
with dialogue, I wrote the music, and  
Ernie Poncicelli orchestrated it. The  
whole school was involved with 'Hot  
Cinders' and the school's director, Dr.  
Howard Hanson, went along with it.  
He was a wonderful man and all for  
the young people. We had three wild  
performances in Kilbourn Hall, the  
third on royal command of Dr.  
Hanson. I directed all three.

"It took some time for the school to  
simmer down after that, and then came  
graduation. I had to play the organ for  
the rehearsal. About a thousand gradu-  
ates, plus their families, were present.  
For the final exercises, I had the great  
honor to do Dr. Hanson's organ con-  
certo with his directing the Little Sym-  
phony. I was the second one to play  
the concerto in public, Harold Gleason  
being the first."

Following graduation, Bea Ryan

musical effects."

Bea also had a daily radio program  
of dinner music from 5 to 6 p.m. from  
the Eastman's broadcasting studio  
over WHAM. On one program, it was  
announced in 1927 that the organist  
would be leaving soon to tour and  
study in Europe.

"My mother in Lockport, who lis-  
tened in every day to WHAM, almost  
had a heart attack! I hadn't had the  
time to write her, what with gradua-  
tion, packing, work, etc. However, I  
managed to spend two days with her  
and give a recital on the Palace  
Theatre's 2/8 Wurlitzer.

"Then off to tour Europe, and to  
Paris to study composition with Nadia  
Boulanger and organ with Marcel  
Dupre. I was extremely fortunate to  
have studied with Mr. Dupre as he  
took only pupils recommended to him  
for special instruction, and especially  
with Miss Boulanger to whom all com-  
posers flocked. She was magnificent!

"Ferrin Fraser followed me over,  
and we were married in Paris. On that  
day, his first novel, 'Lovely Ladies,'  
was published. It was all so beautiful  
then, the concerts were scintillating,  
and we went practically every day.  
Ravel was the big name, and we saw  
the opening of the Salle Pleyel when  
all the important composers were  
present to see him conduct a program.  
I also had the chance to hear pipe or-  
gans in England, Scotland, Germany,  
Italy, and France."

Her European sojourn over, Beatrice  
returned to Rochester in August, 1928.  
The *Democrat and Chronicle* publi-  
cized her return thusly:

"Following an absence of more than  
a year during which time she studied  
under some of the great masters of  
Europe, Beatrice Ryan returns to the  
Eastman Theatre this week as featured  
organist. So far as known, she enjoys  
the distinction of being the youngest  
featured organist in any of the great  
theaters of the country ... At the East-  
man this week, Miss Ryan is being  
given a special spotlight and a featured  
place on the bill. She will play 'Get  
Out and Get Under the Moon,' a popu-  
lar number."

"I did some post-graduate work at  
the school; pedagogy with George  
McNabb, voice methods with  
Frederick Haywood, and choral train-  
ing with Dr. Herman Genhart. A whole  
group of us were living in a newly  
opened apartment building.

"Concert nights were big events at  
the Eastman, with visiting artists, and  
we in long dresses and tuxedos - no

at the box office.

"Ferrin got the contract to do the  
radio show 'Little Orphan Annie,'  
which originated in Chicago with  
Pierre Andre as the singing announcer  
and Larry Larson as organist. We  
could travel as long as the scripts ar-  
rived at the station on time. We also  
did scripts for 'Nick Carter, Master  
Detective,' 'Suspense,' 'Terror,' and  
Arch Oboler's 'Lights Out.' Mean-  
while, we had bought an old house  
outside Albion, N.Y., which we gradu-  
ally renovated between our travels.  
During all this, I never stopped com-  
posing.

"We had to settle down to give roots  
to our son, and this we did in our home  
town, Lockport. For awhile, I taught  
rudiments of music and a chorus at  
Newfane Central School, and was or-  
ganist-choir director of Plymouth Con-  
gregational Church.

"Then I opened the School of Magic  
Music, specializing in pre-piano pu-  
pils and was invited in 1954 to become  
organist-choir director at the beautiful  
First Presbyterian Church, where I re-  
mained with so much love around me  
for 24 years. Its 3/38 Moller was 2  
years old and irresistible. I composed  
all my anthems here, collaborated with  
Ferrin on four books with music  
themes for children, taught an average  
of 30 students a week, and directed  
bell choirs. It was a most beautiful and  
fulfilling life imaginable.

"Ferrin died in 1968 and I continued  
in this lovely church until 1978. A  
friend in Florida called, saying there  
were some mobile homes for sale in  
the Leesburg area. On impulse, I ar-  
ranged for two days off and found a  
mobile home on the shore of Melody  
Canal. Within five minutes, I bought  
it. I flew back to Lockport, resigned  
from my church position, and a month  
later was in Florida for good.

"I was just getting settled when I  
was invited by a large Methodist  
church to organize a bell chorus. Once  
again, no retirement! I directed the  
chorus for three years until 1982 when  
I said 'That's enough!'

However, even in retirement,  
Beatrice Ryan Fraser seems busier  
than ever. "I'm still subbing at several  
churches, practicing every day, com-  
posing, and loving every minute of it. I  
do some solo work at musicals in Mid-  
Florida Lakes Park on a Wurlitzer. I'd  
love seeing my old classmates; they  
are always welcome here."

Inter-Office Exchange

Memo to ..... from .....

TAKE ACTION INDICATED  
NOT LATER THAN

- Return to me ..... ( )
- See me personally ..... ( )
- Need not be returned ..... ( )
- Being sent for your information ..... ( )
- Furnish data requested ... ( )
- Take action indicated ..... ( )
- Take up with ..... ( )
- Investigate and report to . ( )
- Express your judgment ... ( )
- Set time when we may discuss this ..... ( )
- ( )

SUBJECT { .....  
( ) SEE ATTACHED SHEETS

Ryan, Elsie

also played State

Theatre Ryan, Municipal