

Meet your COAA Member

My first music box was a four-tune cylinder “souvenir” type of thing that my parents bought for me in Switzerland when I was four years old. I played with this a lot as a kid. The big “breakthrough” came when I was 10 and I heard my first player piano, and it seemed like the greatest thing I’d ever seen, much less heard! But it wasn’t until 1946 after returning from WWII service that I could have one of my own.

One other little piece of background: one day a small circus came to my hometown of Ithaca, New York, (this would have been around 1940) and they needed someone to play the calliope for the parade through town. They engaged one of my high school classmates, and Art Buckingham got to tootle what I guess was a Tanglely all through downtown Ithaca. Golly, was I envious! Since 1981, when we got our own Tanglely, we’ve played at lots of events and parades and I can only hope that I make a lot of youngsters envious enough to want to carry on the tradition.

Larry Givens gets the credit for inspiring us to build a collection of music machines. We saw what he had in the mid-fifties and figured we’d better try to accumulate some for ourselves. We

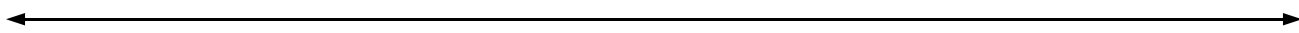


Harvey and Marion Roehl relaxing at a recent COAA rally. Harvey is well known for his manual playing of their Tanglely Calliope.

sought out all the enthusiasts we could learn about and visited many of them, read all the information we could dig up from a wide variety of sources, and did all the other things one does when the “bug” bites. We looked for machines and bought what we could afford. The first band organ was a WurliTzer 146A which over the years has been featured on a number of successful recordings.

Of course we had to get across the Atlantic to see fair organs, and our first visit there was with Mr. William Barlow who invited us to see and hear what he had in his English country home. What a thrill it was to hear not one, but five of them! It was a few years before we acquired one of our own. Dave Bow-

ers and Terry Hathaway were then dealing in machines in California, and one day Dave sent me a picture showing six that had just come in from Europe. He offered any one of them in exchange for our Welte Philharmonic Pipe Organ. We picked the 57-key Gavioli, and the Welte organ found its way through them to the Nethercutt collection. The Gavioli has been restored to nice condition and it, too, has been recorded for the public to enjoy if they can’t get to Vestal to listen in person!



Meet Your COAA Member

Each issue we will feature one of the COAA members who have provided familiar faces, organs and music for the many organ rallies of the past. This way, new and not-so-new COAA members can learn what others have contributed to the field of outdoor mechanical music.

Do you have a suggestion for someone you would like to see featured in this section? If so, contact the editor.

Correction!

Last issue’s “Meet Your COAA Member” column featured **Cliff and Roberta Gray** and the last sentence was cut off. Here it is in its complete form:

Since retiring and moving back to Texas — the little Piney Woods town of Jefferson — Cliff and Robbie have hosted a rally in Jefferson, and have attended most every rally they’ve heard about.

Future COAA Rally

The third COAA rally of the year will be in conjunction with the Snow Belt chapter of the MBSI. The rally will be at **Pioneer Power**, a steam and gas tractor show (going on for 26 years), in LeSueur county, Minnesota. We will play our organs on Saturday and Sunday, August 26th and 27th. Organizer, Ralph Schultz, has planned many additional activities. These include an open house/picnic at his house on Friday along with a tour of Albrecht’s carousel; a trip to view the Artizan organ on the Allan Herschell carousel at Valley Fair; and also a chance to see the newly restored Wurlitzer 153 on the Cafesjian’s carousel in Como Park in St. Paul. Of course, there is the famous Mall of America with its endless shopping facility (and a Stinson organ