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T.O.S.A. NEWS.

*The Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society
of Australia, N.S.W. Division
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FREE CONCERT



DAVID PARSONS

IN

CONCERT

at the console of the
mighty
Wurlitzer
Theatre Pipe Organ

LOOK!

COMING ATTRACTION
BEVERLY KENNEDY
AND
RICHARD JAMES

Sunday 24th. February at 2.00pm.
Marrickville Town Hall

DIRECTORY TOSA (N.S.W. Division)

PATRON Ian Davies

VICE PRESIDENTS Frank Ellis (649 7011) Doug Smith (750 0917)

SECRETARY Ernest Vale (570 4953 or 798 6816)

TREASURER Edna Smith (529 7379)

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY Ron Smith (529 7379)

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Box A584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH. 2000.

SPECIAL MEETING OF MEMBERS HELD ON 2nd JANUARY 1985

This meeting was called in accordance with clause 17 of the constitution and by-laws of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia - New South Wales Division, for the purpose of discussing the ballot held at the last A.G.M.

The following motion was put and passed by 42 votes to 26 votes.

MOTION:

That, following scrutineers reports and full discussion of the last Annual Election of officers of the Society on the 14th November 1984, this meeting;

- (1) Declares that ballot invalid.
- (2) Calls for a fresh election of officers as soon as conveniently possible and that the returning officer is to use the "block voting" system, in which a "X" is placed against the name of each candidate supported.

Should a tied vote result it is to be decided by casting of lots.

NEW MEMBERS

(January meeting)

Jim Crampton, Mr & Mrs Doug Whitfield, Keith & Rene Webb, Gil & Chris Williams, Wilfred Bridgeford, Betty Whiteman, David Roach, Mark Patterson, Ray Johnson, Mr & Mrs Wilf Williams, Rita Bradley, Terry & Joyce Barton, Ian White and Miss M Goodkew.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



February

FRIDAY 1st at 8.00pm

TONY FENELON and LYN LARSEN CONCERT

Marrickville Town Hall, Marrickville.

Admission: ADULTS \$7.00 MEMBERS \$6.00 CONCESSION \$4.00

MONDAY 4th at 7.30pm.

COMMITTEE MEETING at 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba.
(Visitors welcome after 8.30pm)

WEDNESDAY 6th at 7.30pm.

SPECIAL MEETING at Marrickville Town Hall

To enable members to review and ratify the amendments and additions to the constitution and by-laws.

SUNDAY 24th at 2.00pm.

DAVID PARSONS

FREE CONCERT at Marrickville Town Hall

March

MONDAY 4th at 7.30pm.

COMMITTEE MEETING at 120 Dennis Street Lakemba.
(Visitors welcome after 8.30pm.)

SUNDAY 10th

HOME ORGAN PARTY at the home of Joe and Mercedes Maennl.
31 Tenth Avenue Oyster Bay.

For bookings please ring 528 6383.

Full details will appear in the next issue of TOSA NEWS.

SUNDAY 24th at 2.00pm.

Marrickville Town Hall, Marrickville.

RICHARD JAMES and BEVERLY KENNEDY CONCERT

Admission ADULTS \$7.00 MEMBERS \$6.00 CONCESSION \$4.00

(Booking form in this issue)

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE.

That the taking of photographs and private tape recordings during concerts is strictly forbidden in accordance with the right of the artists.

High quality recordings are made of each performance and are available to TOSA members through the Society's tape library.

IT'S MEMBERSHIP TIME!

PHENOMENAL FENELON

(by Cliff Bingham)

Tony Fenelon is a phenomenon on the Australian theatre organ scene. In just about every state in Australia a Fenelon concert announcement virtually guarantees a pre sold-out house.

Sunday 16th december at Marrickville Town Hall was no exception. Some 800 people crammed the old hall for a three hour program of theatre organ favourites. After bursting from an over-large Christmas box (nice touch that!) Tony Fenelon opened with "The Good Old Bad Old Days", this number being specially recorded to used as the signature tune for our new theatre organ program on 2CBA FM Stereo 103 radio at 9.00pm each Monday night. A Brahms Hungarian Dance was followed by a softly registered "Down In The Glen." A dazzling (if slightly inaccurate) "Dizzy Fingers" was followed by three contrasting ballads; "A Star Fell From Heaven," (memories of Joseph Schmidt) a Christmas song "Virgin's Slumber Song" and "I Will Wait For You."

The highlight (for me anyway) in the first half was the "Die Fliedermaus" (The Bat) overture, brilliantly played. After the Khatchaturian "Masquerade Waltz," Tony rounded off the first half with a medley of Christmas songs and carols.

A very refreshing interval (thanks again ladies) gave old friends and acquaintances opportunity to swap stories before the second half got underway with "It's All (W)Right With Me" (pun intended). A rather clever medley of tangos under the title "Blue Jealousy" Preceded a varied selection of theatre organ standards, "These Foolish Things, Brazillian Sleigh Ride, Old Piano Roll Blues, Josephine, Brazil, Fritz Kreisler's Schon Rosmarin, Dark Town Strutters Ball, Come Fly With Me, and Doll Dance."

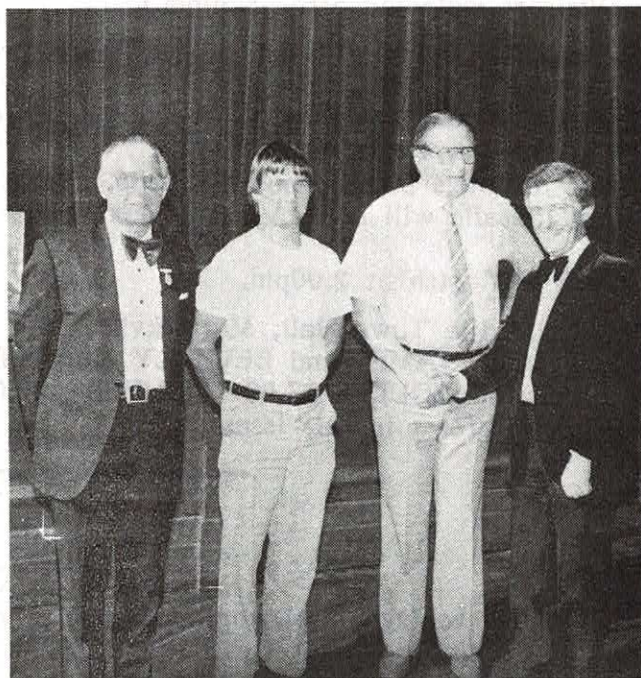
One of the highlights of Tony's programs is his final selection - a medley of audience requests. I think some of the requests were a little tounge in cheek (e.g. Laras Theme, Home Sweet Home, Danny Boy etc) but Tony responded in the appropriate manner

and produced a very amusing and clever selection which had the audience calling for more.

Tony encored with a 'Virgil Fox-ish' "We Wish You A Merry Christmas" for which he received a standing ovation.

So ended a concert of superb musician-ship, excellent registrations, excellent audience rapport and complete mastery of the instrument. My own personal disappointment was an over-abundance of "theatre organ standards." I would like to have heard some new numbers, particularly some music written in the last ten years. Let me stress however, this is a personal opinion and the audience as whole (myself included) thoroughly enjoyed the concert.

What ever you do folks, DONT MISS the Lyn Larsen / Tony Fenelon duo concert on Friday night, February 1st. As they say - "You Ain't Heard Nothing Yet!"



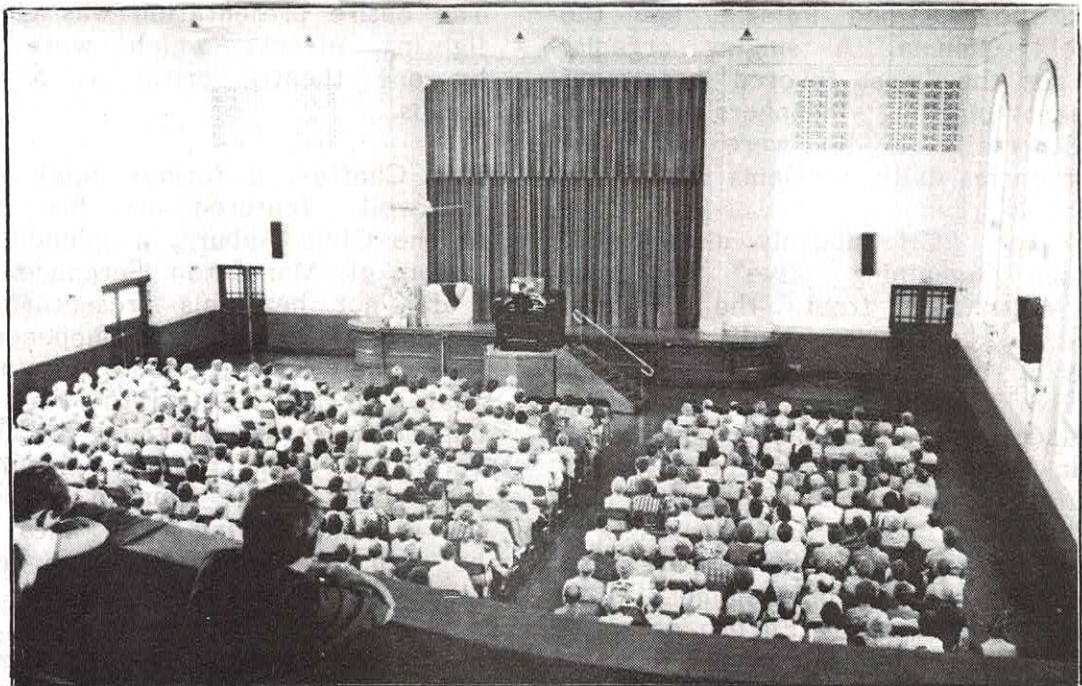
Above:

From left to right.

TOSA compere Frank Ellis, 2CBA FM recording engineer Alan Burton and Reverend Turner, director of 2CBA FM congratulating Tony Fenelon on a fabulous concert.



Above: Tony Fenelon bursting out of the over-large Christmas gift rapped box on stage to the delight of the audience.



Above: A view of the packed Town Hall taken from the balcony.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

Number 11 of a series by Frank Ellis

Last month I reported that in July 1939, Marcel Dupre was due to arrive in Sydney for concerts in August 1939 at Sydney Town Hall. The success of Dupre's concert season gave rise to the suggestion that other famous organists be brought to Australia, and one of the names suggested, was that of Quentin Maclean who was equally at home whether playing the classics on the Sydney Town Hall's great organ or in a cinema playing a Wurlitzer or a Compton. The idea was that in each capitol city he should play concerts of classical material on the Town Hall organ plus a short season at one or more of the top cinemas possessing a Wurlitzer. It was suggested that his cinema appearances be limited to a few days only in each cinema so as not to displace the resident organist who would have been stood down for a few days. However, the idea never got off the ground.

August 1939 also saw Ray Chaffer at the Civic Theatre Auburn having his contract renewed for a further twelve months. Denis Palmistra was being given the full presentation treatment of colored spots and all the other gimmicks etc., as he did a featured spot at the Burwood Palatial and the Strathfield Cinema. A singing organist usually got the "most favored" treatment from penny-pinching managers in those days. Especially if he were appearing in two theatres daily, as Denis was.

On July 6th, 2CH suddenly discontinued their one remaining "live" broadcast which emanated from the Arcadia at Chatswood. Readers will remember that earlier in this series, I mentioned that "live" theatre organ broadcasts took place over 2CH four nights a week at 6.15pm. Three of these nightly programmes were dropped leaving only the Chatswood organ still going to air. Now it too, was gone. 2CH kept the nightly organ programmes alive by using records (mainly English organists which, whilst very enjoyable, lacked the presence of the live shows.

Penn Hughes was doing a weekly half hour broadcast for the ABC in Adelaide,

about this time, but that benefitted South Australian listeners only and Sydneysiders missed out on that.

Reubert Hayes went for a well earned holiday - to Brisbane I think, and he was relieved by Reg Case and Bert Myers - each doing one week of Reubert's two week vacation. Reg Maddams from New Zealand relieved Billy Dick at the Sydney Capitol whilst Billy went on holidays.

Also in last month's Memory Lane I quoted Ronald Roberts of Music Maker magazine as saying that when the then current show at the Century Theatre ended Des Tanner was to go into the theatre with a novelty combination. Unfortunately, on line 7 of the first paragraph the word "ended" was omitted. It should have appeared between "Century Theatre" and "if ever" to make any sense. Des Tanner's combo consisted of himself on Hammond plus two pianos and a singer. Eventually the then long running show at the Century did end and Des and his combo opened up there. For his first stage presentation at the Century, he featured Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No 2, The Umbrella Man and Alexander's Ragtime Band. Always one to give the paying customers what they want, as well as good value for their money, he included Duke Ellington's Caravan. The entire presentation was given exotic lighting effects which were described by one theatre critic as a stroke of genius.

Ray Chaffer, a former pupil of Charles Tuckwell, featured as his solo spot at the Civic Auburn, a splendid interpretation of Manhattan Serenade. Although I did not hear his presentation in the theatre that week, I happened to pop into the theatre one morning around 10am to say hello to Ray, and he happened to be practising his Manhattan Serenade item. Never having heard that song before, I asked him the name of it and having told me its name he then played it for me as he intended to present it to the audience.

Stan Cummings, then at the Arcadia Theatre Chatswood was delighting his audiences with a very sensitive arrangement of Irving Berli's, You Forgot to Remember.

Stan was one organist who often popped up with something memorable and right out of the box so to speak.

Three records released that same month in 1939, were, Vernon Geyer playing Gianina Mia and Sweetheart of Sigma Chi on the flip side. Milt Herth with Joe Green playing bells gave us Glow Worm and Dancing Stars and Reg Dixon playing his Dixon Hits Number 8. None of the discs received much praise. Of Vernon Geyer's two sides, Gianina Mia was said to be the worst. Oh well, organists can't win 'em all I guess. Well thats the lot for this month. More bits of history and memories next month.

NOTICE OF MOTION

Dear Sir,

We the undersigned desire to have the following motion debated and if the members so think fit to have it passed at the special meeeting of TOSA to be held on 6th February 1985.

MOTION:

"That the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) seek incorporation under the newly proclaimed Associations Incorporation Act of 1984. That to this end a committee be appointed by this meeting to seek the guidance of the Corporate Affairs Commission, to obtain a set of model rules from the Corporate Affairs Commission and to draft the required amendments to suit the operation of our Society. That the committee appointed prepare all the relevant documentation and present that documentation and the draft rules to a further members meeting of TOSA to be held as soon as possible but not later than two months from this date.

Mover: R.J.D. McMinn

Seconder: P.E.Tooker

The executive and committee are aware of the associations Incorporate Act which was proclaimed on 4th December 1984. Inquiries have been made at the Corporate Affairs Commission and the model rules are being drafted and will form part of the regulations.

The regulations are not expected to come into force until April 1985.

DEBBIE HITS THE RIGHT NOTE

Talented Debbie Fitzsummons of Palm Beach (Qld) recently started her career as an Australian Concert Organist, and at a youthful 17, she would have to be one of the youngest organists ever to grace a stage in this capacity.

Her debut as an Australian Concert Organist with WurliTzer was at the company's convention in Adelaide on November 18th 1984 and then a guest appearance at the final of the Spotlight On Talent Festival in Adelaide the same week-end. And that is just the start of her travelling career doing what she enjoys most - entertaining people with her brilliant work. The end of November found Debbie in Perth on a 13 day tour. 1985 will be a new life for her after leaving school to work full time for the company.

Her selection as a national concert organist is the result of a "lifetime" of work devoted to music. She has achieved more success and accolades than many organists twice her age and undoubtedly there is more to come.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SYDNEY
in association with
THE SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA SOCIETY
proudly presents
J.S.BACH

300th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS
TUESDAY 19th March at 6.15pm.
FREE ALL BACH RECITAL
Robert Ampt - Organ
WEDNESDAY 20th March at 6.15pm.
FREE ALL BACH RECITAL
Robert Ampt - Organ
TUESDAY 21st March at 8.00pm.
300th Birthday Concert
Peter Seymour conducting THE AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



ITINERANT PIPE ORGANS OF HAWAII

The year was 1921. The place was Van Nuys, California. Two 4/16 pipe organs were being readied in the erecting room of the Robert Morton factory before shipment to Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii.

Both organs, siblings in design, were being built for two new theatres about to open in downtown Honolulu. While the organs were almost of similar specifications, the theatres for which they were intended were operated by different owners and were of distinctively different design.

The Green Brothers' Princess Theatre on Fort Street and Cohn's Hawaii Theatre on Bethel Street opened in October 1922 as show case motion picture palaces with sumptuous appointments equal to the finest on the mainland. Each had pipe chambers built in on both sides of the stage and each had facilities for stage performances and vaudeville, as well as motion pictures.

The large auditorium of the Princess Theatre, capable of seating many hundreds was amphitheatre in design, with illuminated fountains below the organ grilles and even live models posing amidst greenery. The Hawaii with its broad auditorium was equally huge and boasted of a two-level cantilevered balcony, two lobbies and stageside boxes with wicker chairs. In Grecian architecture, it was like an opera house.

Both organ consoles were installed stage center in orchestra pits; the one in the Hawaii Theatre being on a lift, while the one in the Princess Theatre rested on the floor.

Of great interest in both theatres were collections of statuary, fine arts and paintings collected abroad by the owners.

The Hawaii Theatre still has over the stage proscenium a large painting of Diana and her entourage consistent with the Greek theme.

Later, both theatres were acquired by Consolidated Amusement Company, a local corporation which now operates a large chain of movie theatres in the Islands.

The Hawaii Theatre remains in its original decor, somewhat faded and worn, but retains all the elegance of the great silent movie period.

Consolidated Amusement Company's new Waikiki Theatre on the local world famous Waikiki beach opened in 1936 with the new Model A Hammond plug-in which the company replaced with the pipe organ from the Hawaii Theatre. As the Waikiki was built without pipe chambers, two were added later above the "rainbow proscenium", now partially covered by a "wide screen".

A few years ago the Princess Theatre fell under the wreckers' ball, a victim of downtown urban development, but not before a determined group of pipe organ enthusiasts moved the organ three blocks away to backstage of the Hawaii Theatre. This group called itself the Hawaii Theatre Organ Club, later affiliating with the American Theatre Organ Society and is now known as Aloha Chapter.

Mention should be made that the Waikiki Hammond was moved to the Liberty Theatre where it was played regularly until Consolidated Amusement Company leased the house to an exhibitor who showed only Chinese movies. The Hammond was then moved to Aloha Chapter's club room in the Hawaii Theatre.

The Robert Morton, lying many months backstage in the Hawaii Theatre, was eventually installed in the empty chambers by William Blunk, with the understanding that Aloha Chapter would maintain it. Maintenance has been an on-going project of the chapter ever since.

A 3/10 Buehler theatre pipe organ was installed in Honolulu's Kaimuki Theatre around 1925, moved in 1954

to a church, and recently was acquired in part for installation in a private Honolulu residence.

The briefest installation was in the Kalihi Theatre, formerly known as the Star, where a 2/4 Wicks was installed about 1928 and sold in 1932 to a mainland mortuary.

This tale of itinerant Hawaii theatre organs would not be complete without a dramatic note about the 3/7 Robert Morton installed about 1925 on the "Big Island" of Hawaii in the city of Hilo's Palace Theatre, and later moved to the Hilo Theatre. The theatre and console were badly damaged by a tidal wave, but surviving were the pipe works, now installed and played from a Wurlitzer console in a private Honolulu residence.

News source... Theatre Organ
Journal of the American Theatre
Organ Society.

CANDI PACKS 'EM IN!

If Los Angeles Theatre Organ Society could always sponsor concerts as successful as its Candi Carley show August 25th at San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, the ATOS unit would undoubtedly become the richest chapter in the national organization.

Candi attracted an audience of 889 and LATOS members were more obvious by their absence than attendance at this live-wire, colorful show. Candi has an established, enthusiastic following made up of the general public and apparently many different electronic organ club groups.

Her show included, in addition to her own organ and piano presentations, several on-stage items, and an audience surprise of "kazoo" or "bazoo" belching in honor of her birthday.

Arranged by Candi's mother, Virginia Carley, there were balloons, a bright, cheerful back drop of painted balloons, mirrored ball and slide effects, clowns (all fans of Candi's who donned costumes and garrish make-up - there were notable ATOS members taking part in this such as Annie Olive, Bob Hill, Staid Sam Dickerson) and a Swing-style dance team with Candi accompanying them on the Wurlitzer.



Above: Candi Carley

The extra touches in this show illustrated that variety adds to any performance; the departure from just straight concert playing brought enthusiastic response from the audience.

There may be some concert artists who can still attract sizeable audiences with their solo console capers, but the ones who offer "something different" stand a better chance to attract new segments of the public. The "something different" sell might get them to leave home TVs and part with hard earned shekels at the box office.

CANDI SET FOR '85 TOUR OF AUSTRALIA

Next April, Candi Carley will go on concert tour in Australia during the first part of the month. She returns to U.S. in time for an eight-day engagement at the end of the month on board the River Boat Mississippi Queen. She will appear with fellow organists Jack Gustafson and Don Thompson.

News source...The Console Magazine
July/August 1984

WARREN LUBICH REPORTS

The Thanksgiving Turkey has cooled off and the Season of Advent is upon us. With it comes thoughts of a rapidly approaching 1984 Christmas and many friends both far and near, friends whose path I may have crossed in this past year and those whose path has eluded me for far too long.

My year began in good health, and so continues, but Mother's paralyzed and speechless condition and the wear and tear it was causing Father was an ongoing emotional strain. January and February were spent getting the last matters of 1983 out of the way and planning 1984's activities. In March I flew to Boise to accompany two showings of the film classic "Wings" and stayed on for three more days of skiing at Bogus Basin. Our Pachard Automobile Club was invited to display our cars in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in San Francisco and much to my surprise, my 1953 Clipper took second prize in the Vintage Automobile Division. I knew that 'ol gal would do me proud one day.

April passed quietly and by May it was time to get the Calliope and Fire Engine shined up for the Annual "Run for Heart" on Mother's Day.

June brought sadness to the family when Mother suffered a fatal stroke and died quietly on the 7th. A few days later I was at U.C.L.A. proudly looking on as Daughter Nancy received her Master's of Business Administration Degree from the Graduate School of Management. With her educational goals reached, she was ready to take on the world and seems to be doing just that. She garnered a position with the Bank of America as Senior Research Analyst and now is in her own digs which she shares with Tibia and Licorice (cat and dog).

June 21st marked the reopening of the San Francisco Cable Car system and a gala parade included the Calliope, myself, a Roaring 20's band and several of American Airlines' best flight attendants aboard the official American Airlines Cable Car.

July started off again with the Calliope and myself entertaining some Film Ranch in Marin County. In past years I've never been sure if I've been surrounded by any of the space people, as sports attire is the dress of the day for this annual picnic. But this year I saw several diminutive adults around and I knew I must be among the Ewoks.

Our work in the Brain Tumor Research Centre continues and with the answer to each question comes two new questions. We upgraded the equipment I use in my work to the computer age and after a three day training seminar I finally learned the difference between "software" and a 1928 Hudson.

August and September were busy with Calliope playing and Vintage Automobile gatherings as well as the ongoing Saturday and Sunday evenings at the Capn's Galley in Redwood City. I played a concert for the Sierra Chapter of A.T.O.S. at the Fair Oaks Club House on September 9th and on October 16th left to give three concerts in England. The trip was a mixture of emotions, for on October 1st Father suffered a fatal heart attack, but unlike Mother, he suffered less than sixty minutes. For this we are all grateful to the Good Lord.

With the concerts behind me, I visited friends in Amsterdam listening to the music of the Barrel Organs of the Kalverstraat.

Now, on the eve of December I wish to express my sincere best wishes for a Happy, Healthy and Safe Holiday Season to each of you and much Prosperity in the New Year.

Warmest regards,

Warren

NORFOLK ISLAND TOUR

3rd September 1985

Several members are planning a 14 day tour of Norfolk Island in September.

Those interested in joining the group, please ring Ron Smith at work on 387 3711 or at home on 529 7379 for full details.

THE STALACPIPE ORGAN
THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT
THAT PLAYS STALACTITES

In June of 1954 a visitor took his young son to Luray Caverns, in Luray, Virginia, as a special treat on the lad's fifth birthday. During the escorted tour of the cave, their guide struck a stalactite at just the right spot to bring forth a deep, resonant musical tone. To the visitor, who is also an accomplished organist, the sound was the vibrant, rich tone of an organ.

From this incident has come one of the world's most impressive musical instruments. The Great Stalacpipe Organ. Today, as you walk through the vaulted "Cathedral" of the cavern 164 feet down, you literally walk into the heart of this remarkable instrument, for you are surrounded by stalactites that play the individual tones. Visitors stand enthralled as melody and chords play all around them. No tinkly tunes these, but full-throated music rolling through the cavern.

The man who visited the cave that day with his five-year-old son was Leland W. Sprinkle, who follows electronic engineering as a profession. For years he has spent every spare-time minute developing and building The Great Stalacpipe Organ.

Basically, the music is produced by rubber-tipped plungers striking stalactites Sprinkle has carefully selected. The plungers, electrically powered and electronically controlled, are actuated in one of two ways; manually, by playing the console, which is very much like that of a standard pipe organ; or automatically, by turning a plastic belt into which holes have been melted. To Sprinkle, the organ is far from finished despite its ability to produce majestic music. He feels, after years of work, that he has made a fairly good start! Now in use are stalactites covering acres of territory; thus it exceeds in area any other instrument in the world.

This is only a fraction of the console's potential. Separate stalactites were selected, tuned and wired for each note of every octave.

OBITUARIES

One of Adelaide's finest organists passed away on Friday November 9th. James Govenlock was the organist at St Francis Xaviers Cathedral and was for many years the tutor for organ at the Elder Conservatorium of Music. TOSA last heard from James at Easter Convention in 1982 when he gave a very entertaining demonstration of the organ in Elder Hall. His passing will be a sad loss to the Musical life of this city.

On October 23rd the well known English organist, David Hamilton, died in Pinderfield Hospital, Wakefield, England. David was well known to us here in Australia as he was once the staff organist for Conn Organs Internationally and toured the world. He played here for Lloyd Rover and was the first organist to play in our Capri on a Conn when we were negotiating the purchase of the building. David, under Lloyd's auspices, played several concerts for TOSA and the Electronic Organ Club.

About five years ago David fell ill with a brain tumor and was operated on in America and recovered miraculously. However, this trouble reoccurred and he was only ill for ten days. During this time he did not suffer, and died peacefully in a coma.

It was my privilege to stay with him in his little cottage near Huddersfield last year and help him in his music shop for three days. He introduced me to one of his special friends, Kay Pickard, and it was she who rang me with the news of his passing.

David was an orphan, brought up in a monastery so has no family for us to extend our sympathy, other than Kay and his other friends world wide.

Candi Carley

Bringing New Life To Theatre Organ

By Bob Doerschuk and Bill Irwin

JUST BECAUSE YOU'LL probably find the nearest theatre organ in a pizza parlor, that doesn't mean there isn't a potential for artistic expression lurking within its floodlit console. And just because the masters of this razzle-dazzle instrument perform to the crunch of crust and the swirl of soft drink rather than to the tomlike hush of the concert hall, that doesn't mean they are not true virtuosos. In fact, the greats of the theatre organ world can quite often hold their own against the best of their classical cousins in terms of technical brilliance and sensitivity to the nuances of registration.

Each school has its controversial players as well. Throughout his career the late Virgil Fox scandalized the conservatives in the classical organ world with his gung-ho joy rides through the Baroque and Romantic repertoire. If he has a counterpart among theatre organists, it may be Candi Carley. But hold on! There are crucial differences between them too, both artistically and personally.

Where Fox enjoyed exorcising the reactionary demons he encountered through words as well as music, Carley is personally soft-spoken and shy. Fox stumped the country with his Allen electronic organ, while Candi, more of a homebody, lives with her mother, her Rogers 33E organ, Hammond B-3, Hammond A-100, Steinway baby grand, and vibraphone in southern California, and has spent nearly eight years playing from two to four nights a week at the Great American Wind Machine Restaurant in Reseda. Fox passed away in 1968 at age 68; Candi, a concert veteran at 29, apparently is just beginning a long career behind the console.

So where is the similarity? Carley, like Fox, has caused purist eyebrows to rise in her chosen musical field with interpretations that are in their own way as iconoclastic as Virgil's. She makes rich use of the tremulant, on up-tempo tunes as well as ballads, and slams home the beat with drums, cymbals, and other "toy box" percussion triggered from the console. Her insistent rhythms reflect her interest in jazz and R&B, exotic influences among theatre organ traditionalists.

"I love to do riffs, and I like to wail on the pipe organ," she tells *Keyboard*. "There's something really special about trying to get the organ — or the piano, or any instrument — to talk. On a Hammond that can be difficult, because it's so percussive, although Hammonds are really neat for jamming with other people. It's much easier to develop the voice of a jazz or soul singer on the pipe organ because of the tremulants and stops."

The trade magazine *Theatre Organ* was at times taken aback by her vigorous style. In their review of her second album, *Just For You*, they ventured that her performance of contemporary tunes "sometimes approaches frenzy," and after attending one of her concerts at the 1979 American Theatre Organ Society convention, they described her treatment of "A Sunday Kind Of Love" as "just about the sexiest rendition of the tune imaginable. It swayed, it undulated, and one could almost sense the aroma of an expensive perfume." This is pretty steamy language for most theatre organ buffs. That alone is evidence of the fact that Candi Carley is not your typical theatre organist.

Born prematurely in a Maywood, California, hospital, Candi was kept in an incubator for the first two months of her life. Because she received too much oxygen there, she contracted retrolental fibroplasia (RLF), which left her blind from infancy on. She exhibited an early musical precocity, and began listening attentively to her family's record collection at the age of two. Four years later, when her older brother Bob began taking piano lessons, Candi discovered it was easy for her to poke out his exercises by ear, first in one-fingered renditions, then in fully-chorded versions, and to transpose to other keys. By the time Candi had reached the age of 10, her mother, Virginia Carley, numbered about a thousand titles in her daughter's repertoire. When she was 12 years old she had progressed enough to attract the attention of the Braille Institute, which awarded her a grant to study classical piano. Yet it wasn't until she was 14 that she would receive her first formal instruction.

"I thought it would be a challenge for me to learn more about classical playing," she

recalls. "At that time, I needed a challenge, so that I wouldn't go stale. I had to learn the correct ways of fingering. Mom had to do a lot of driving for me; she was exhausted!" Candi had a number of teachers, some of them in Santa Barbara, 70 miles away from her home. "I think Maurice Zam in Santa Barbara was my favorite," she says. "He was so much fun! He and Richard Purvis both kept me from getting uptight and frustrated. They both had a sense of humor, and that really helped a lot. But in a way I'm glad I started off teaching myself, since that made it easier for me to develop the ability to play from the heart as well as from the head.

When Candi's mother saw the progress her daughter was making on the family upright, she decided to haul in a better instrument to help inspire her further. "She knew I was steadily going crazy practicing on our piano," Candi laughs, "so she said, 'Well, I think she needs a Steinway.'"

Through long hours of practice at the Steinway, Candi developed her ability to improvise. "I did loads of improvising," she remembers. "I'd get songs from the radio, from records, from wherever I could grab them. From the beginning I would play a straight version of the tune, then sometimes I'd think, 'I'm not so sure I like that chord,' so in the second chorus I'd embellish it or play it another way."

This free attitude bothered Candi's first teacher, but then again, Candi says, "Everything bothered her! My teacher was real adamant about doing scales and arpeggios and that sort of thing. I practiced a lot of Czerny, but it was mostly pure technical stuff, without a whole lot of meaning. When I got into Chopin, that's when I really started feeling good. That's when I could put something besides technique — romance — into the music."

Like many organists, Candi is thankful that she began her keyboard training on the piano. "It's good to be exposed to both instruments, so that you don't play the organ like a piano or vice-versa. A lot of people think that if you play the piano well, then you can play the organ too, but that's not really true. You've got to understand the pedals, for

one thing, and you've got to know how to deal with the differences in sustain. On the piano, you hit the note, and, *plink*, it's gone. With the organ, it sustains as long as you want. Working that kind of understanding into your style is important. It also helped a great deal to understand the variety of staccato you can get on the piano. The organ is easier to play, to be honest with you. You don't have to worry about the touch that much, since you're not striking anything when you press down the keys."

Since childhood, however, she had also been aware of the pipe organ through records. In 1961, the Los Angeles Organists Breakfast Club, the Orange County Professional Organists Guild, and the Long Beach Professional Organists group staged a benefit concert in order to buy her a Hammond B-3 with a Leslie speaker. On this, her first organ, she took two years worth of lessons, but it wasn't until she met Paul Beaver, later a pioneering synthesist, that she felt the organ would be her main instrument in years to come.

Candi's mother recalls the scene: "The first time Candi ever heard the organ played live was when we were invited to a friend's house, and Paul was playing the pipe organ. Candi was just wiped out. She couldn't believe the sound, so Paul asked her if she wanted to try it, and she said, 'Sure, I can do

it.' By just hanging off the bench she could barely reach the pedals, and within a very short time she was handling it super well. The funny thing is that I have a tape of Paul playing at this friend's house, where he made one very obvious mistake. Candi listened to the tape, and the next time we ran into Paul over there, she got up and played each song off that tape the way he played it — including the mistake. Paul just fell off his chair!"

Looking back on the first time she'd ever played a theatre organ, Candi exclaims, "I was totally mindblown. The first pipe organ I ever played was a four-manual Robert Martin in Los Angeles when I was about 17 or 18. I felt like I was being showered with the sound. I used to listen to it when I was small and think, 'Gee, it would be nice to do that.' When I finally had the opportunity, I just went crazy."

Candi studied with several gifted teachers, including Richard Purvis and the veteran theatre organist Gordon Kibbee, who tutored her on theory and arranging. "The classical lessons especially helped me in my footwork," she explains. "Richard Purvis was really super about that, even if he did call me 'Suzy Sludgepedal.' When I held the pedal down too long, he would say, 'All right, Suzy Sludgepedal, get your foot off the pedal!' Sometimes when we would do duet work he would forget that I was blind and leave the music on my bench for me to read while he would strain over to see it from the second organ. We'd tease him and say, 'Where'd you put the music? I can't see it!'"

As for Gordon Kibbee, "he approached the organ in more of a cool, collected way. But once in a while we would improvise. He would play the lower part of the Hammond keyboard, I would play the higher part, and he would ask me to wail with him. He had a neat setup where you'd be playing a 16' and 4' Tibia on the solo manual, an 8' and 4' Tibia on



Candi Carley

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the bottom. He'd also use an 8' and 4' Tibia in the middle as the third voice, separating it from the bottom by using glissandos and rolls. I also liked his spicy chords. That's what separates the old theatre organ style from what's happening today. What I remember hearing on Jesse Crawford's [early theatre organ] records was lots of simplicity. Now I hear a lot of people getting into more colorful chords, and I think that's great." [Ed. Note: For more on the history and essence of the theatre organ style, see *Keyboard*, Nov. '77 and Mar. '82.]

It's important to Candi to keep the theatre organ style fresh with a modern flavor. Where other organists may fashion arrangements around older tunes that reflect the era with which they are identified, Candi takes a more freewheeling tack. "Let's say I'm playing 'I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me,'" she explains. "At the beginning I'll play it in a Twenty-ish style, very simple, but then I'll build it up and go crazy with it — embellish, improvise, get more progressive with the chords. I don't see any reason to just stick with one era stylistically. It's more fun to do that once and then just wail."

In terms of registration, Candi also follows her own path. Characteristic of her approach is a heavy use of the tremulants, whose rich vibrato reflects her desire to inject a human vocal quality even to her up-tempo songs. "A friend of mine, who owns a beautiful Rogers 340 organ, has a Posthorn stop that he tremms," she says. "He plays very well, but he tells me, 'When I play a Posthorn like that, it doesn't sound good. But you do that really well.' The problem is that people think they can only trem Posthorns for things like 'That's Entertainment,' but sometimes it's good to use it with a trem and phrase like Grover Washington would phrase on a saxophone. Posthorns can make neat trumpet sounds if you play them right."

When asked for specifics on how she tries to integrate jazz into her pipe organ performances, Candi indicates that the secret for her lies in the chord voicings, the toy counter effects, and most of all, the grace notes she sprinkles onto the melody. "I do single melody grace notes," she points out, "and sometimes I'll do them as glissandos in parallel fourths, like sliding down from D# real fast to C, and from A# to G in the lower voice at the same time. I usually do my glissandos in the right hand on the great manual, if it's a three-manual organ, with the parallel glissando voiced down in the accompaniment."

Candi constantly reworks and updates her arrangements, and seeks out new tunes in order to keep pace with audience requests. She learns most of her repertoire by ear at a rate of from one to four new pieces each week, and files them at home on records, cassette, reel-to-reel tape, and sheet music. Eventually they will be catalogued in a computer for her easy reference.

If a song is available only in printed form in her collection or elsewhere, she may have someone dictate it to her; after one reading, she usually has it in memory. She never mastered Braille editions. "I tried reading them, and it was like learning to walk all over again," she admits.

Coping with the complex stop arrangements on theatre organs is a less intimidating hurdle for Candi. Before each performance she and her mother spend an hour and a half to two hours fastening Braille labels to each tab, using clear tape so that sighted organists will be able to visually identify all the stops. In music, as in other facets of her life, Candi feels no real handicaps from her blindness, and is occasionally put off by those who treat her as if she should. "I go crazy when people say, 'She's pretty good for a blind person.' That's the only thing I hate," she confesses. "Being blind really doesn't bother me. There are so many visual distractions for sighted

people, who often don't look past the surfaces of the people around them to see what's inside. I can pick up vibes real strong as it is. When somebody with bad vibrations walks into the Wind Machine when I'm playing there, my fingers just freeze. After they leave, it's like the fog has lifted, and I'm fine. But the truth is, there are some things I really do miss seeing — parts of nature, like a sunrise."

In early April, the Great American Wind Machine closed down, bringing an end to Candi's longtime residency. There are no other theatre organ establishments in the immediate vicinity, yet her musical future looks far from bleak. She is in demand as a concert artist, and her albums continue to sell. To date she has recorded three LPs — *Candi* [MxRC 2001], *Just For You* [MxRC 2002], and *Sweet City Woman* [MxRC 2003], all for her own Minx label [Box 737, Norwalk, CA 90650].

In her local appearances as well as in recitals far from her neighborhood, Candi will continue to keep busy and to learn from the people and sounds around her. One recent episode came to mind, an encounter with a patient in the spinal injury ward of the Long Beach Veterans Hospital, where she makes monthly appearances as a pianist. "One of the patients told me to hang in there," she marvels. "Can you believe it? He can't move anything but his head, and he tells me to hang in there!"



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THE SILVER NATIONAL CONVENTIONCHANGE OF VENUE.

The Convention Committee has reluctantly had to make the decision to change the location of the concert on Saturday night, 6th April 1985, to Marrickville Town Hall.

This decision has been taken because we are not able to guarantee that the Willoughby Organ will be in concert condition at the time of the Convention.

If it eventuates that the organ is in playable condition by April - it will be presented on registration night.

The concert on Saturday night, 6th April 1985, will now be presented at Marrickville Town Hall, commencing at 8.00pm.

The committee hopes you appreciate the reason for this change.

POSITIONS VACANT

HELPERS REQUIRED

The maintenance team urgently require members interested in the restoration of the Capitol Organ.

If you can help in anyway (you don't have to be a qualified tradesman) please give Doug Smith a ring on 750 0917.



T.O.S.A. SPRING FETE
Marrickville Town Hall
Saturday 12th October 1985

As published in the last issue of TOSA NEWS, the Society is planning to hold a fete at Marrickville Town Hall. This will be a special fund raising event in aid of the Capitol Organ Fund. During the fete, various organists will be playing the Wurlitzer Organ.

People interested in taking charge of a stall or helping in anyway, will they please contact the Committee.

Jack Stronach, who is a very keen gardener, has been in touch with the Committee and has offered to run the garden stall, so if you can help Jack in the supply of potted plants, cuttings, bulbs etc, give Jack a ring NOW on 50 4171.



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