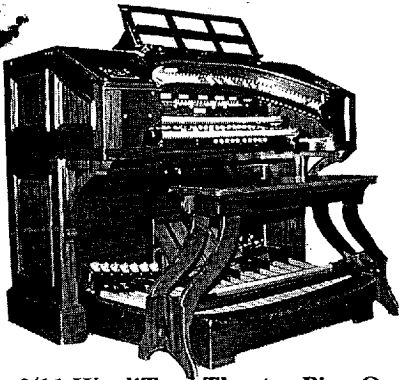
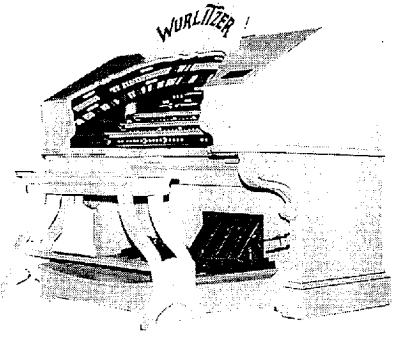


DECEMBER, 1997



2/11 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

TOSA NEWS



3/17 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

*MERRY CHRISTMAS
& A Happy New Year to all
TOSA Members and Family*

*Season's
Greetings*

Volume 36
Issue 12
PRINTED BY TOSA

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TOSA NEWS

DECEMBER, 1997

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.

For the smooth running of TOSA, please contact the right person :

General Business - SECRETARY
Ticket Bookings - TICKET SECRETARY
Membership, Renewals, Change of Address - MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
TOSA NEWS Items, Advertisements - EDITOR



COMING EVENTS

JANUARY, 1998

Monday 5 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting

FEBRUARY

Monday 2 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting

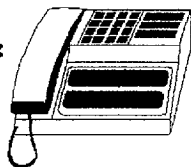
Saturday 28 at 1.00pm Ian Davies and Friends
Bondi Junction-Waverley
RSL Club (see page 13)

MARCH

Monday 2 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting

Sunday 29 at 2.00pm Russell Holmes Concert
Orion Centre Campsie

* DIRECTORY *



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Canterbury Councillor, Ald. John Gorrie

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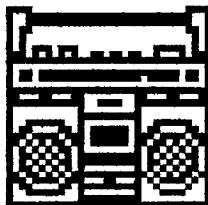
"Soundsational Pipes in Sensational Adelaide"

26th National Convention of the
Theatre Organ Society of Australia
Friday 10th April - Monday 13th April, 1998

Further information from:

The Convention Secretary,
Mrs Gail Ward,
11 Lepena Crescent,
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From the President

1998 should be an interesting and challenging year - and we are asking for YOUR SUPPORT! More in a moment.....

I'm writing a few days after Tony Fenelon's concert, and what a concert it was. I don't think Tony has ever been in better form. He had the audience eating out of his hand. Review to follow in the next News.

After interval, retiring (and a little shy) Eunice Palmer was honoured for her fine work in leading the catering team over many years. Thankyou Eunice and all the helpers. Then she got to draw the raffle!

Patron Alderman John Gorrie then offered a few well chosen words. He went over the changes to our use of the Orion - now in the hands of a management group who have signed a lease with Canterbury Council. They have been most co-operative with TOSA. However they cannot be expected to run at a loss, and this means we have to face something like twice the rentals of the past - plus some other new expenses..

But John Gorrie has been in to bat on our behalf with Canterbury Council, and there just might be some help coming!

There was good response to a concert SURVEY and we drew one out of the barrel (actually John Shaw's laundry basket). Regina Orchard, sitting in the front row, won a one year extension to her TOSA membership.

I was then able to say a couple of things - which I would like to include here.....

As I get to know of the work done by the early TOSA members I am amazed at what they accomplished - and they had very little income. It was only through a lot of hard work and dedication that those original Theatre Organs were piece by piece removed from their home buildings, piece by piece restored to good working order, then piece by piece put into new premises. We owe those founding members a debt.

Fact is that as a result of those labours we have had a good run over the past few years - especially at the Orion - and what we are now facing is simply economic reality. The question is whether we in our turn will do our bit toward TOSA.

Your committee believe we have reached the end of some things we took for granted, but we are at the beginning of a new era. We are still going places as you can already read in Colin's editorial alongside. But it will involve some re-thinking, and some help from you, our members.

It was marvellous to see such a good turn out to Tony Fenelon's concert. But unless we can keep good audience numbers coming we will not be able to make ends meet. In fact, we made a loss at more than one concert this year. **SO WE APPEAL**, please support all our artists. Lets face it the standard of concerts has been extremely high. They are all worth coming to. Bring your friends!

We also need to come and encourage newcomers like **RUSSELL HOLMES** (next March). They are the future of TOSA concerts - and remember, Tony Fenelon was young once!!

Speaking of economic reality, we **MUST** increase our fees. The members present at the Annual General Meeting were very positive and had no hesitation in supporting your Committee in this.

OUR CONCERT PRICES AND OUR MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE CHEAPER THAN ANY OTHER TOSA BRANCH IN AUSTRALIA, AND EVEN WITH AN INCREASE WILL REMAIN SO.

More to follow - watch this space...!

Walter Pearce

Welcome To New Members

TOSA (NSW) is pleased to welcome to its ranks the following new members and to wish them a long and enjoyable stay with us :

Matthew Brennan - Leumeah
Patrick Johnston - Warriewood
Edward Loss - Peakhurst
Claude Williams - Sans Souci

Well, another year has slipped by and it's time to wish everybody in TOSA a very **Happy Christmas**, with a great **New Year** to follow.

This year, 1997, has been quite a difficult one for TOSA, with problems at both of our current organ venues, but at least two rather positive signs have appeared in recent weeks - the resumption of individual playing time at **Marrickville Town Hall**, and the hope that a suitable site for TOSA's **Christie** organ may have been found. There will be more news about the **Christie** when the plans for it move beyond the current preliminary discussion stage into definite proposals, which will be put to the membership before the final decisions are made.

It is to be hoped that our new President, **Walter Pearce**, will have a less stressful time as leader than our retiring, hard-working President, **Robert Gliddon** who deserves our thanks for a difficult job well done. It must be admitted that all our difficulties are far from being resolved and we can only hope for a quick solution to our problems.

However, an easy life for our President is already looking impossible because during my two months' absence, **Walter** is taking the reins of **TOSA News**, in addition to being President **and** Membership Secretary!! Almost a one-man band! (or a unit orchestra) Thank you in advance, **Walter**, for your effort and devotion to our Society.

Many thanks to the faithful contributors to the pages of **TOSA News** - without your kind assistance there would be very little of interest appearing on these pages. Please keep on sending in any items for publication - newspaper clippings or magazine articles, etc. Also, an especially large thank you to **Cliff Bingham** for filling in at the very last moment as guest reviewer of **John Giacchi's** great concert - very much appreciated by a stressed-out editor who visibly had egg all over his face at the time. Not a pretty sight!!

Remember, if you wish to place anything in **TOSA News**, please refer to **Walter** until the end of January.

Season's Greetings and Best Wishes,
Colin Groves

Articles in this journal need not represent the views of the committee or the editor

The deadline for each edition of TOSA News is the 12th of the preceding month

Record Bar News

by Neil Palmer



A further collection of George Wright recordings from the original Hi Fi label master tapes of the 1950-60's featuring the 5/21 WurliTzer of the Richard Vaughn Residence (ex-Paradise Theatre, Chicago):

Impressions of My Fair Lady / George Wright Goes South Pacific

Tracks: *My Fair Lady Overture; Why Can't the English? Wouldn't It Be Loverley? The Rain In Spain; I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face; With a Little Bit of Luck; Ascot Gavotte; I Could Have Danced All Night; Get Me to the Church On Time; On the Street Where You Live; Exit Music. South Pacific Overture; Younger Than Springtime; There is Nothing Like a Dame; Honey Bun, Some Enchanted Evening; Bloody Mary; Bali Hai; Dites-Moi ; Happy Talk; This Nearly Was Mine; Wash That Man Right Outta My Hair ; I'm In Love with a Wonderful Guy.*

COMPACT Disc - \$25.00

Flight To Tokyo / Encores Vol. II

Tracks: *Japanese Sandman; Looks Like, Rain in Cherry Blossom Lane; Cherry; Poor Butterfly; Nagasaki; Rickety Rickshaw Man; One Fine Day; Kyoto Begine; Lady Picking Mulberries; Japansy; Japanese Can-Can. Granada; Laura; Passion Flower; Got the World on a String; Orchids in the Moonlight; Veradero; April in Paris; Bahia ; If I Love Again; Under the Double Eagle.*

COMPACT Disc \$25.00

Let George Do It!

Played on the legendary Pasadena Studio Organ :

Tracks : *I Know That You Know ; What Is This Thing Called Love; The Trouble With Harry; Our Love Is Here To Stay; The Continental; Temptation; I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles; Hi Lili,*

Hi-Lo; Twilight in Turkey; Ain't We Got Fun ; Espanharlem; The Pussy Wiggle Stomp; Dinah; Hawaiian Wedding Song; Polly; Blues In The Night; Yours; There's A Tavern In The Town; Fly Me To The Moon; Alley Cat; Tarantella; 76 Trombones.

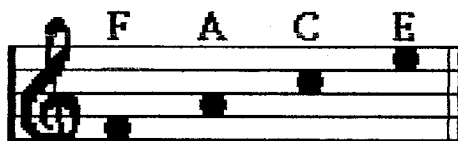
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Manning Organ Society

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NEWS FROM ALL OVER

Melbourne Regent

The Bendigo Organiser, the newsletter of the Bendigo Theatre Organ Society, reported that the Regent's WurliTzer was to be heard publicly for the first time on 14th to 16th November. The Dennis Farrington Show Band and Tony Fenelon played a prelude to the presentation of the restored film version of *My Fair Lady*. The official opening of the organ is set for sometime in the coming year.

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Kincumber Uniting Church

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Impedance 16Ohms
25 W, RMS
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Del Castillo's

Alphabetical

Primer of

ORGAN STOPS

G

GEDECKT (German: table cloth; plate; knife and fork; table cover). Now what do we make of that? Why, simply an organ stop that's a table cover, that's what. So-o-o, a *Gedeckt* is a sort of a sound blanket over which other sounds may be overlaid. But let us hasten to add that in German organ terminology it is a "covered" pipe, which gives it that veiled woody sound like a *bass flute* coming from a sewer. So now, if we may compound the felony, it can best be summarised as a basic *flute* tone which, like all organ *flutes*, can be blended with all the other divisions of *string*, *reed* and *diapason*.

The *Gedeckt* which turns up most often is probably the *Lieblich Gedeckt*, or "Lovely Cover", at 16' pitch in the Pedals, or 8' on the manuals. It's gentle, it's sweet, it's charming, it's darling, if we can trust the literal German translation. So use it freely. It will never bite back like the *Posthorn* or the *Flugelhorn*.

German organ builders seem to have had a special affection for it. In addition to the *Darling Gedeckt*, they also turned out a *Tranquil Gedeckt* ("Still"), *Beautiful Gedeckt* ("Schön"), a *Singing Gedeckt* ("Singen"), and an *Echo Gedeckt* ("Echo"), which was presumably the Yodeller's Delight. The only one to mar this peaceful group was the *Gross Gedeckt*, which is just as fat and hooty and overblown as you might expect.

There are of course a whole covey of *flutes* on most any pipe organ. A lot of them are disguised with names like *Clarabella* or *Melodia*, to say nothing of *Gedeckt*. And then you have all the other pitches, high and low, like *Bourdon* and *Flautino* and *Fife* and *Piccolo*. And the Theatre Organ spawned the whole gamut of *Tibia Clausas* from 16' all the way up through all the overtones to I'. Nevertheless, this glorified

heart-throb, according to Irwin, is nearly matched by the *Gedeckt*. In his *Organ Stop Dictionary* he comes right out to claim that "only the *Tibia Clausa* is a purer *flute*."

I guess my favourite of all, though, is the *Still Gedeckt*. Certainly a stop which means "Silently Covered" must be about as tiny a sound as you can get unless you shut off the motor entirely.

H

HECKELPHONE (*heckle*, v.t., originally **Scotch**; to annoy or confuse a speaker by interrupting with taunts). This figures. A *heckelphone* is a *Low Oboe*, which is about as far down the social scale as you can get. Earlier in this series, the *Heckelphone* was mentioned in connection with the *English Horn*. That figures, too. They are Brudern and Sestern; the *English Horn* being a fifth below the *Oboe*, and the *Heckelphone* a fourth lower than that.

This *Baritone Oboe* was invented by **Joseph Ignatius Rumpelstitzken Heckel** of **Biberich, Germany** - no kidding. He was one of five children and got even by having five of his own: **Artesia Heckel**, **Rimini Heckel**, **Cornelius Heckel**, **Dunkel Heckel**, and **Elfreda Heckel**. His father was **Ludwig von Trinken-Heckel**, the well known **Bavarian** souse and wine imbiber. **Joseph** turned out to be quite a drinker and gabber himself, which is no doubt why he specialised in wind instruments - the *Heckelphone*, the *Bb Heckelclarind*, the *Eb Heckelclarinetto*, and the improved *German Doppel-Fagotto*.

The *Heckelphone* came into its own when **Richard Strauss** wrote it into *Salome*, the *Heckelclarind* sprang into being for the express purpose of playing the *English Horn* solo in the third act of *Tristan*, and the *Doppel Fagotto* was developed to cope with the more infuriating passages in *Parsifal*.

All told, **Joseph Ignatius Rumpelstitzken Heckel** was hot stuff in the woodwind department, and it is no less than his due to have organists salute him, however unknowingly, by drawing the *Heckelphone*.

I

INTRA - MANUAL

COUPLER. *Couplers* are either *intra-manual* or *inter-manual*, according to the mood you're in. *Couplers* were first mentioned in the **Bible** ("My *coupler* runneth over" Psalms xxiii-5). The poet, **George John Whyte-Melville**, makes a more direct reference to *couplers* in his poem "*Like To Like*":

For everything created

In the bounds of earth and sky

Has such longing to be mated,

It must couple or must die.

Webster's Dictionary goes along with this kind of mush, defining couple as "a man and woman who are engaged, married, or joined as partners in dances, games, etc." Well! What do you mean, "etc.", **Noah**?

But then he gets more explicit and less romantic about the coupler, to wit: "In an organ, a device connecting two keyboards or keys an octave apart so they can be played together." And when he then goes on to add that a coupler is "a person who couples," you see what it that makes you, don't you? You're just an old coupler, that's what you are.

Now an *Intra-manual Coupler* is if you want to take all the junk on one keyboard and add it to another keyboard, like say you have a *Krumet* on the Solo and a *Kinura* on the Swell and a *Chrysoglott* on the Accompaniment and you want to mix them all up together with the *Sleighbells* on the Great. So you push down the *Swell to Great* and the *Solo to Great* and the *Accompaniment to Great* and what have you got? Spinach.

But an *Inter-manual Coupler*, or maybe it's the other way round, is like when you want an extra finger to play in octaves but you're too lazy to stretch that far, so you put down a tab that says something like *Swell to Swell 4'*, or *Swell to Swell 16'*, and it plays the extra fingers for you - an octave higher or an octave lower, or all three together if that's how you feel about things.

Of course if you were the proud manipulator of a Unit Organ you didn't have to do any of these things. **Hope-Jones** decided that if you took all the stops and then put in a lot more stops that played the same sets of pipes at a lot of different pitches you accomplished the same thing and besides, look at what a great big organ with thousands of stops you wound up with, daddy. A **Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra**, no less. And no *Couplers*. Well, maybe a couple of couplers.

So let's *Couple*. It's fun.

Launceston's Unique Water-Powered Organ

by Brindley, Sheffield, England (1861)

During the 19th century, and still to some extent today, if a Church or Institution wished to purchase, or have built for it, a pipe organ, it was customary to place an order with an **English** firm of organ builders.

There were many such builders who provided **Australia** with pipe organs both great and small, and some of these date back to the earliest part of the 19th century. Some familiar **English** firms of that period were **John Gray** (the organ at **St. John's, Franklin, in Southern Tasmania, 1826**), **Bishop & Son** (the organ at **Christ Church, Longford**), **Bevingtons** (several organs including the one in **St. John's Anglican Church in Devonport**) and **Walkers** (including **St. Mark's Anglican Church, Deloraine** and others along the **Bass Highway** and at **St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Evandale**).

Charles Brindley, an organ builder from **Sheffield, England**, built the organs at **St. John's, Launceston** and the one about which this article is written, the one which now stands in the **Launceston Convention Centre - Albert Hall, Tamar Street, Launceston**.

The organ in **St. John's** was built by **Brindley** in 1862. Originally the **St. John's Brindley** organ was smaller than the **Albert Hall** one. The former has since been enlarged and electrified so that it has lost much of the **Brindley** flavour to it.

It must not be thought that because the water-powered organ was meant for a hall, it was a kind of theatre organ. In no sense do the tonal qualities, action or even style of playing, hint at its being a forerunner of the theatre organ. It was, and still is, a concert organ, typical of that kind of organ still being installed, both overseas and in **Australia**. The organs in the **Royal Festival Hall, London; Monash University, Melbourne; Melbourne Town Hall; Sydney Opera House** and

operational helps are missing but it also means that it is a pure medium for playing the true repertoire of organ music from all periods in history.

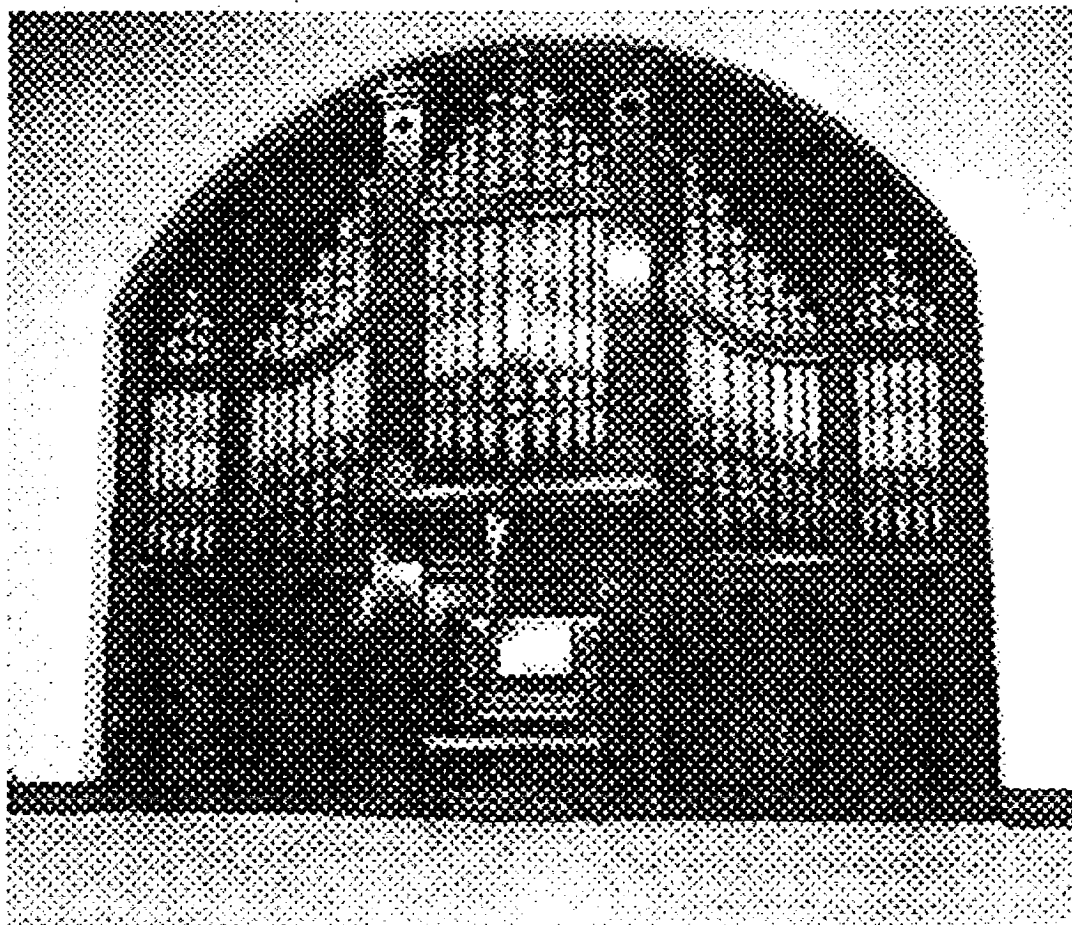
The History

Interested people of **Launceston** raised funds for the purchase of an organ to be installed in the newly built **Mechanics Institute** and **Mr. A.J. Marriott** was called upon to go to **England** to commission **Mr. Charles Brindley** to build such an instrument for this purpose.

On the 16th October, 1860, a report from the **Launceston Examiner** reads; "We are glad to hear by last mail that information has been received that the Organ was at last completed. It was to be "opened" by **Mr. Hopkins of London** with a public performance

a few days after the mail left. There has been great delay in the completion of this instrument, but the builder, **Mr. Brindley**, states that there will be no cause eventually to regret this as it has enabled him to ensure the utmost soundness and perfection in the work, and also to add some important improvements in the mechanism"

The **Mr. Hopkins** of **London** would have been the **E. J. Hopkins** of the **Temple Church**, the uncle of **G. F. Hopkins**, organist and choir master of



Hobart Town Hall, are some examples.

Theatre organs were built to be theatrical in all the senses of that word. They were often played to provide a background for silent movies or for one-man-band operations where a big organ, a **Wurlitzer**, for example, has bells, drums, and other magnificent effects in order to give a spectacular display. A classical organ on the other hand attempts neither the theatrical, nor the one-man-band type of operation. This means that fancy gadgets and

St. John's Launceston during the early part of this century.

The Arrival

The organ arrived on board the bark *Alfred Hawley* on the 20th March, 1861. A report states "*Alfred Hawley* sailed from *Falmouth* on 4th December, 1860. She was a new vessel, this being her maiden voyage - built in *Sunderland* and fitted up expressly for this trade. She was constructed to carry large cargo and has very comfortable accommodation for passengers. Commanded by *Captain Fowler*, late of the *Henry Reed*."

An interesting connection for historians is that the man, *Alfred Hawley*, was the father of the late *Colonel Hawley* of *Evandale* whose family still reside there. He was also a shipping partner of *Henry Reed*, famous in maritime circles of that time.

Reports on the progress of the Organ from 1861 (taken from the *Launceston Examiner*):

2nd April, 1861: "The organ unpacked in *Mechanics Institute*. 27 stops, 3 rows of manuals and 2 octaves of pedals with pedal pipes throughout. We hear that *Mr. Biggs* of *Hobart Town* will at once commence the erection of the Organ in the *Institute*."

11th April, 1861: "*Mr. Biggs* engaged in erecting organ in *Mechanics Institute*. It will probably take one month - six weeks."

13th April, 1861: "It is proposed to hold a Grand Concert in the *Mechanics Institute*. Volunteers wanted to assist." (First meeting was held at *Mechanics Institute* on Thursday, 18th April, 1861 at 7.30 p.m.).

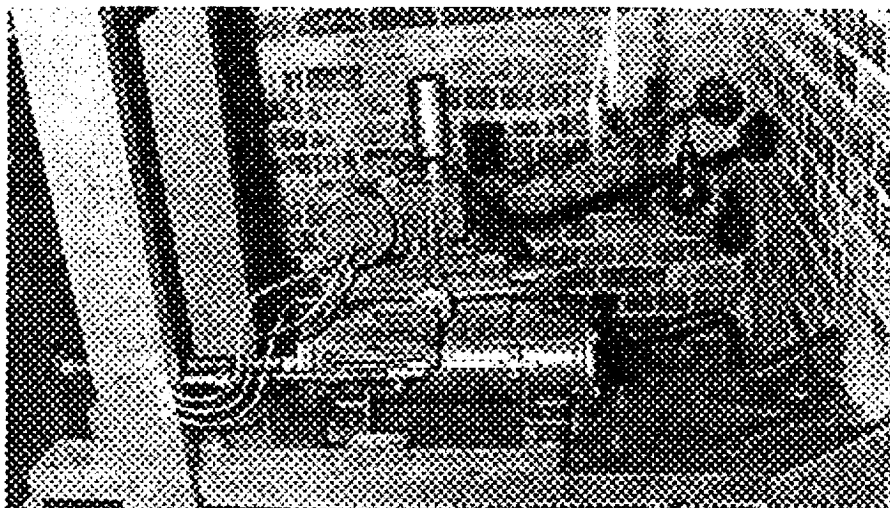
Saturday, 20th April, 1861: "Sub Committee of seven (7) to make necessary arrangements for carrying out Concert. Calculated that chorus of 150 voices will be needed."

Thursday, 2nd May, 1861: "Practice by a goodly number of people."

Saturday, 11th May, 1861: "The 16 foot open Diapason pedal pipes are now in speaking order. They are very prompt in speed and the tone is very deep and mellow. The pipes have also been placed in the choir organ and being very delicately voiced, have a very beautiful effect."

Tuesday, 14th May, 1861: "The Great Organ, as well as the Choir Organ, is now so far in erecting as to be playable. The Great Organ is of greater power and combines brilliancy and depth of tone. The organ will be used this evening at the meeting for practice for the opening Concert."

Thursday, 23rd May, 1861: "Considerable progress has been made in the erection of this instrument during the last few days. The swell is nearly completed and the 'hautboy' placed therein has remarkably fine tone. The 'flute d'amour' is a beautiful stop and



Water Powered Motor of the Launceston Brindley organ

will, when the swell is closed up, form a complete echo to the 'dulciana' on the Choir Organ."

Thursday, 30th May, 1861: "This instrument is at present in statu quo. *Mr. Biggs* had so far advanced with his work that quietness was absolutely necessary to enable him to tune it. This, in consequence of the workmen being employed on the roof, he could not have. He has therefore gone to *Longford* to repair and tune organ there, and on his return in a few days it is believed that the labors of the workmen on the roof will be completed."

Saturday, 15th June, 1861: "The large organ lately erected in the hall of the *Mechanics Institute* is to be opened next week by a Public Concert to be

given by a number of ladies and gentlemen who have been practicing most assiduously the last few months. The Committee having secured the services of *G.R. Pringle Esq.* from *Melbourne*, that gentleman will on this occasion perform a number of selections from the great masters upon the Organ. The day has not yet been actually decided, but the affair will most likely take place next Friday evening.

The Opening

Thursday, 20th June, 1861: "On Monday the 24th inst. *Mr. Pringle* of *Melbourne* will perform on the above instrument in the day time, for the convenience of residents in the country, and those who are unable to go out at night. Doors open at half past one to commence at 2 o'clock. There will also be a performance on Tuesday evening the 25th to commence at 8 o'clock."

"Tickets of admission are 3/- each, to be obtained of *Mr. J. J. Hudson*, *Messrs. Walch & Sons*, and *Mr. R. Sharpe*, *Brisbane Street*. Family tickets to admit 6 - 15/-."

Opening Programme for Monday 24th June at 2 p.m.:

"1st Part

Andante - *Beethoven*
Wedding March - *Mendelssohn*

"With Verdure Clad" - *Haydn*
Coronation Anthem - *Handel*

2nd Part

Duett - *Mendelssohn*
"Sing unto God" - *Haydn*
Andante - *Haydn*
"He was despised" - *Handel*
Coronation March - *Meyerbeer*"

Saturday, 22nd June, 1861: A further advertisement as for Thursday, 20th June plus the programme for Monday evening:

"1st Part

National Anthem
Andante in 7 - *Mozart*
Dead March in Saul - *Handel*
Song - "Oh, had I Jubal's Lyre" - *Handel*
Cujus Ariman - *Rossini*

March from David - **Horsley**

2nd Part

Flute Concerto - **Rink** (sic)

Song - "Honour and Arms" - **Handel**

Selection from "Il Trovatore" - **Verdi**

Quintet - "As pants the Hart" - **Spokr** (sic)

Benedictus - **Mozart**

"The Heavens are Telling" - **Haydn**"

Tuesday, 25th June, 1861: "The Grand Organ lately erected in the large hall of the **Mechanics Institute** was opened at 2.00 yesterday afternoon by **Mr. Pringle** of **Melbourne**. Owing to the inclemency of the weather and the rather inconvenient hour (inconvenient at least to men of business), there was a rather small attendance."

"It was almost unnecessary to say that the performance of **Mr. Pringle**, who is the leading organist in **Melbourne**, was admirable and those present certainly enjoyed a rich treat in listening to such selections from the great masters so beautifully rendered. **Mr. Robert Sharpe** assisted in the duet in the second part. The organ is really a splendid instrument and the people of **Launceston** may congratulate themselves upon possessing it."

"We revisited the **Institute** in the evening but on account of the inclemency of the weather, the rain descending in torrents, the attendance was very small. The *National Anthem*, *Andante in 7*, *Dead March in Saul*, *Honour and Arms* and *As Pants the Hart* received unqualified praise for vocal and instrumental performance. A second concert will take place this evening, the admission to which is we perceive by advertisement, reduced to 1/-."

Thursday, 27th June, 1861: "On Tuesday evening last **Mr. Pringle** resumed his performance on the organ to an audience which filled the large hall and who, from their remarks of approval, seemed fully sensible of the organists' musical ability. Several vocal selections interspersed the performance and their rendering gave much delight which the audience testified by re-demanding them, a demand that was invariably complied with."

20th July, 1861: "Concert at **Mechanics Institute** in aid of Organ Fund - A Grand Concert of vocal music will be held in the Hall of the **Institute** on Tuesday, 30th inst."

25th July, 1861: "Mr. A.J.

Marriott to act as conductor, **Mr. Robert Sharpe** to preside at Organ (approximately 600 attended)."

Thursday, 1st August, 1861: "Concert on Tuesday an immense success. Repeat entertainment next Tuesday at reduced prices - Adults 1/6 and children 1/-."

These extracts form the basis of the early history of this instrument and indicate some of the interesting facts of life at that time.

The organ then stood in the **Mechanics Institute** for the next 30 years. By an Act of Parliament in 1890, the organ and some property (paintings, etc.) owned by the **Mechanics Institute** were handed over to the **Launceston Municipal Council**. Apparently, this is the only time that any organ has appeared in an Act of Parliament.

The **Council** had built a "pavilion" near **City Park** and decided to re-site the **Brindley Organ** there. The pavilion was soon after known as the **Albert Hall** and by early in 1891 the organ had been completely installed there. The re-installation was in the hands of **Finchams** of **Melbourne**. They improved the organ (although specifically what was improved is not known, except that "the power and effectiveness of some portions having been increased by 200 and 300 per cent"), and they were responsible for the dummy pipes and facade.

The general public probably does not realise that very often the pipes they see displayed at the front of an organ are not speaking pipes but are merely ornamental, and that the real sounds of the instrument emanate from behind, and involve many more pipes than imagined.

Previously the organ would have been hand-blown and it is from the 1891 installation in the **Albert Hall** that we find the water-powered engine placed as the system of drawing air into the main bellows.

This water-powered engine is a unique feature of the organ. It draws water from the mains system and converts the water pressure into a pump action which operates the feeder bellows, (rather like the old-fashioned fire bellows), which in turn feeds the main bellows with air. This air, under pressure, is then carried to the pipework of the organ and when a stop is pulled, and the key depressed, the air is allowed

to reach the specific pipe involved and the sound is made. The water used is apparently not fed back into the system but merely drains away.

During the early years of this century, the organ was in regular use, but from the 1930's it gradually deteriorated until moves were made by interested parties, including the **City Council**, to have the organ either re-sited, or renovated.

Letters and articles in *The Examiner* can be found which advocate various schemes:-

Some wanted it placed in the **Princess Theatre**, others in the **Queen Victoria Museum's** art gallery, and yet others wanted it put in the Gallery in the **Albert Hall**.

Mrs. Elsie Corrick Tilley, in a letter dated 7th February, 1970, where she calls herself "self-appointed *City Organist* for many years", advocates a sound system for reinforcing the sound of the organ. Her last sentence reads, "We want this organ's glories to live forever."

The restoration work was eventually put under way and was finally completed in 1980 with the final voicing and adjustments being made by **Finchams** of **Melbourne**, fittingly so, as they were involved in the 1891 restoration.

Mr. Keith Davis of **Launceston**, and a team of helpers, played the major part in the restoration, painstakingly dismantling the whole organ and systematically repairing and reassembling it.

The organ now is in regular use for public concerts and demonstrations at conventions and gatherings.

An alternative electrical system has been installed in order to conserve the water-powered motor but, interestingly enough, during the re-opening of the **Albert Hall** as a convention centre in November, 1980, the electrical power to the organ failed and the water power was brought into use. For the final part of the concert, the organ was operated solely on water power!

- * Mechanical action throughout
- * Three manuals - Great, Swell, Choir
- * Full pedal board

*This article is taken from the leaflet available at the **Albert Hall**. The non-standard spelling is as given in the original documents - Ed.*

From the ATOS's May-June 1997 *Theatre Organ* magazine comes this item about their new **World Wide Web** page, for those with access to, or an interest in, the **Internet** :

ATOS DEBUTS ON WORLD WIDE WEB!

By David C. Kelzenberg, Chair, ATOS Computer Networks Committee

By now, most people have heard terms like "Internet," "Surfing the Web," and "Home Pages." Some even know that these terms concern computers and those who use them. But what does all of this have to do with theatre organs and the American Theatre Organ Society?

One of the highlights of the ATOS Convention in Los Angeles was the unveiling and demonstration of the new official ATOS Home Page on the World Wide Web. This exciting development promises to introduce the theatre organ and its history to an ever-expanding audience. ATOS and its many chapters can only benefit from this presence.

The Internet is a vast interconnected network of thousands of computers around the world. Through the Internet, people who have a computer and an Internet connection can communicate almost instantly via electronic mail ("e-mail") with others throughout the world. Communication can also involve large groups of people who share common interests, through e-mail lists such as PIPORG-L, and Usenet newsgroups. But, the most exciting and dynamic "branch" of the Internet by far is the World Wide Web (WWW), popularly known as "the Web." While most of us have heard of the Web, some may not know what it is or how it works.

The Web is made up of millions of "Home Pages," each of which is a document stored on an Internet computer somewhere. Anyone can create a Home Page; businesses, organizations, and individuals have created them by the millions. Using an Internet "browser" (a special software program used to find and display Web pages—popular browsers include Netscape, Mosaic, Lynx, etc.), one can view any of the millions of Home Pages on the Web. It is possible to search for pages by subject, making it very easy to jump from one page to another. The real beauty of the Web rests in the freedom and creativity possible in designing Home Pages. It is a true multi-media environment, in which spectacular artwork, photography, and design can be incorporated. As if that weren't enough, it is also possible to incorporate sound and animation or motion pictures for those whose computers are capable of displaying them.

The Web is expanding continuously, both in content and in number of users. It has become a logical means of advertising and displaying goods and services. More and more people are discovering the ease with which they can find topical information of interest to them. One of the goals of the Computer Networks Committee was the creation of a Home Page for ATOS, a project which came to fruition in May of 1996.

To join me on the Computer Networks Committee I recruited Dee Williams and Mark Renwick. Both are knowledgeable computer-users and subscribers to PIPORG-L. We discovered, to our dismay, when we discussed the creation of a Web page, none of us had the knowledge or experience necessary to do so. My colleague at the University of Iowa, Paul Montague, offered to contribute not only his expertise in the creation of the page, but also the crucial disk space for storage of the finished product. With help and input from Dee and Mark, I wrote a series of articles on the history, development, and make-up of the theatre organ. Paul and I then designed the Home Page (actually a series of linked documents), with Paul turning our ideas into spectacular reality. Paul's Web knowledge made him an invaluable addition to the Computer Networks Committee, and the attractive appearance and functionality of the page is entirely due to his efforts.

We are very proud of the ATOS Home Page, and invite you to "check it out!" It has several articles on the theatre organ, its history, biographies of famous theatre organists, information on the Society and individual chapters, with lots of other information and photos! As with many (if not most) Web pages, it is still "under construction" and likely will never be completely finished. Some of the links are not yet functional, and updates and corrections are constantly being incorporated. We are hoping to make a number of significant changes in the near future, including the addition of more artist biographies and photos, concert information from around the world, links to individual chapter and other related Home Pages, and the inclusion of photos of chapter organs from Marion Flint's annual display; a list of organs is already available on the page. We hope to eventually add another dimension: sound bytes!

How can you find the official Home Page of the American Theatre Organ Society? Here's the "URL" (address)—just point your browser at:

<http://webeye.ophth.uiowa.edu/atos>

The *Theatre Organ* magazine comes out every 2 months.

If you are interested in joining the **American Theatre Organ Society**, the fee is \$35 for Australia (+ \$35 if you want the magazine air-mailed).

The address is : **ATOS Membership**
P.O. Box 551081
Indianapolis
IN 46205-1081
USA

Orion Update!:

Thespians forced offstage by private operators

By ROBERT WAINWRIGHT

Amateur theatre groups across Sydney are being "squeezed to death" by councils forcing them out of community halls in the face of privatised management and huge rent increases, actors claim.

A production of *Fiddler on the Roof* by the Canterbury Theatre Guild has been forced out of the Orion Centre at Campsie because the Canterbury Council has leased the building to a wedding reception company.

Under the new management, rents for a performance night had gone up 500 per cent — from \$300 to \$1,500 — and fees for rehearsal evenings had jumped 800 per cent — from \$50 to \$400 a night.

The group says it cannot afford the new fees.

Four theatre groups based in Chatswood — the Phoenix Theatre Company, Centre Players, the Savoy Arts Company and Theatrefest — say they are also concerned about their future after Willoughby Council privatised the management of the Zenith Theatre.

Other groups at Sutherland, including the Miranda Musical Society and Sutherland Shire Operatic Society, are also complaining about the council charging "prohibitive rents" for use of the Sutherland Entertainment Centre.

The chief executive of the Association of Community Theatre (ACT), Mr Martin Mitchell, described the Canterbury situation as a "disgrace", adding that he was concerned at a growing trend across Sydney to "limit access to artistic facilities".

"Can you imagine any council in Sydney privatising its local cricket oval and lifting the charges for amateur clubs by 500 per cent?" he said.

"There are 60 community theatre clubs in Sydney entertaining more than 300,000 people each year. We can't survive without the support of our local communities and councils."



Sour note . . . Fiddler On The Roof cast members, from left, Marie Turija, Michelle Perim, Sally Pegg, Mark Wheeler, Tara Nandi, D'Arcy Horam (baby), Raeleen Phillips as the fiddler, and Walter Van Poppel. Photograph by ADAM PRETTY

Meet the fiddlers with no roof

By ROBERT WAINWRIGHT

The Canterbury Theatre Guild has been forced out of its home in the Orion Centre at Campsie, unable to meet a 500 per cent rent increase demanded by the new private manager.

While its production of *Fiddler on the Roof*, due to open on November 19, has been switched to the Enmore Theatre, the guild itself is without a roof and an uncertain future.

"It's a one-off that we can barely afford. I don't know what is going to happen after this production is finished," a spokesman said yesterday.

The guild's financial position is typical of amateur musical and theatrical groups, under threat from soaring

rents and competition from local cinemas.

Councils such as Canterbury and Willoughby, both big supporters of the arts in the past, have been forced to privatise the management of their theatres because of multi-million-dollar losses.

Some theatre groups are faced for the first time with having to pay commercial rents they cannot afford.

Few make money, but that is not the point, says the Association of Community Theatre, which argues that community arts should be supported because of their social contribution, not their bank balances.

The association's administrator, Mr Roger McKenzie,

said many community arts groups were struggling to stay afloat.

The association was established three years ago to help groups cut costs by co-ordinating advertising, production costs, stage sets and even costumes.

"The entertainment dollar only stretches so far and we have to compete against so many other activities to survive," Mr McKenzie said yesterday. "Groups are realising that they cannot be isolated from one another. They cannot afford to be elitist because they can't survive without each other."

"In days gone by a new company would start up at the drop of a hat."

The general manager of Canterbury Council, Mr Jim Montague, confirmed that the council had signed a 10-year lease for the Orion Centre which guaranteed access to theatre groups, but this did not cover the rent.

He said the group could ask the council to help subsidise the new rents and was "surprised" that the production had been moved to the Enmore Theatre.

The chief executive of Willoughby Council, Mr Michael Bielby, said the council had lost more than \$1 million since the 200-seat Zenith Theatre was opened in 1989.

Under the new management deal, theatre groups were guaranteed use of the facilities for 14 weeks a year, he said.

"Rent increases would be kept to a minimum," Mr Bielby said.

"We could easily have gone the full commercial route but we recognise we have a commitment to community theatre."

On Wednesday and Thursday, 5th and 6th November, these two articles appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald. They show the results of Canterbury Council's private leasing decision on the Canterbury Theatre Guild's November production, originally scheduled to be in the Orion.

TOSA's position is exactly the same - we are being priced out of the venue but we can not easily move our WurliTzer elsewhere! The Society can not go on losing money on every Orion concert, handing over our hard-earned takings and small savings to pay for the venue. So, serious re-planning is in progress for next year.



Peter Held has provided us with more about his interesting trip to Ireland and the UK, in June and July, earlier this year :

The first occasion on which I had the chance to see a hear "*The Duchess*" (for the uninitiated: the 5/17 Compton in the Odeon Leicester Sq, London), was the special concert to honour **Robin Richmond**. It was held on a THURSDAY night (!) early in July. Contributing organists were : **Carlo Curley**, who was out in the foyer, welcoming the customers with a handshake, including yours truly. Also playing was **William Davies**; and later **Robin Richmond** came up on the console himself, in the 2nd half, and played a short cameo spot. He's now about 85. Sitting with him, a few rows in front of me in the stalls was **Ena Baga** and she's 92!, I believe.

I'm told much of the interior decor of the **Odeon** has been replaced, by stuff which is sound-absorbent, allegedly to favour the cinema sound. (Was this ever a difficulty in the **Sydney Capitol**? - I doubt it!). Even when one sits back, near the edge of the Dress Circle, as we did on the 2nd visit; the otherwise magnificent **Compton** sound (so sadly reminiscent to me of the **Compton** in the **Theatre Royal, Dublin**) does not "envelope" one as it is supposed to. The acoustic is about as dry as the proverbial Mulga tree on the **Nullarbor**!

The famous **Melotone** unit has been "hors de combat" for some time and liable to remain so until inherent technical difficulties can be solved. I did not have the time to establish the exact nature of these problems.

I was invited to accompany my host, on a service call to the **Ritz Cinema, Brighouse**, up in **Yorkshire**. Here, after he corrected some faults in the control system, I had the chance to play the 3-manual **Wurlitzer** on the stage of what is now a Ballroom. The console

comes out of a bunker at the back of the stage. The organ is in 2 chambers, one each side of the stage, AND... (wait for it!) ... the sound from the well-regulated ranks, comes together beautifully, at the console !!!,

David Lowe, the organist featured at the recent **TOSA Convention in Hobart**, had to drive over from **Bingley** to let us into the **Ritz** that morning. He kindly gave me a brochure on the organ itself, with photos of the console, when in its original home, the **Gaumont, Oldham, (Lancs.)** where it was opened in 1937 on the 14th June, to be precise.

Unlike what happened at many other cinemas, the "opening" organist became the resident (**Jack Fenner**, by name.), and he remained, according to the brochure, for the next 10 years.

The ranks were/are : SOLO: Tibia Clausa, Vox, French Trumpet, Brass Saxophone (!). MAIN: Diaphonic Diapason, Bourdon/Concert Flute, Violin, Violin Celeste. As with so many, the **Gaumont Oldham**, became a victim of television, finally closing on 2/12/61.

Just prior to the **Gaumont's** closing, the organ was bought by the **Cinema Organ Society**, and became the **C.O.S.'s "Northern Wurlitzer"**. After almost FOUR YEARS of work (part-time), it opened at **The Dale Hall, Hampsthwaite**, in 1966. It migrated to the **Trinity Arts Centre, Pudsey**, opening there in June, 1991. This venue became, I'm told, unviable, and the next move was to the **Ritz, Brighouse**, a stadium cinema, which was equipped with an organ chamber on each side of the proscenium.

At least one photo was taken of me at the console, with my "disposable" type camera. Regrettably, it was one of the 6 or so, out of the 27 (?), which didn't "take"! - although the camera clicked and flashed in the usual way. The same appears to have happened when, whilst still in **Ireland**, a friend took a night-time photo of me standing beside the only remaining stretch of track of the **County Donegal Railway** (3 foot gauge) on the pier at **Killybegs**. This is the largest of **Ireland's** 3' gauge railways and closed in 1959.

Outside of the two organs in the **St Albans** organ museum, the **Ritz Wurlitzer** was regrettably the only pipe organ I got the chance to play in **Britain**.

Peter Held

Coburg Town Hall

Since our last report on the **Blackett and Howden** hybrid organ in the **Coburg Town Hall (Melbourne)** substantial progress has been made. Indeed, working alone, **Bill Worley** has done wonders. Could it be, however, that the giant at the **Regent** has siphoned off the volunteer support this restoration might have otherwise attracted?

In mid October the pedals were installed and wired into the system, the manuals having been previously brought into operation on all voices. Tremulants and shutters respond reliably and all major problems have been overcome, including an unexpected one with the hoist.

This rugged mechanism is a feature to be admired. Powered by a 2HP three phase motor, a robust worm operates in an oil-filled casing to elevate the console a little over two metres into full view.

Things worked just fine, the platform rising smoothly and stopping as programmed but with the additional load of the console, bench and organist the motor just couldn't cope. Two alternatives were under consideration - either install a more powerful motor at considerable cost, or change the pulley ratio, so reducing the speed of elevation to an unacceptable level. Back to the drawing board calculations confirmed that the motor should not be stressed by such a load, so the question arose: "Was the loss of power arising in the pulleys or in the worm?"

Pulleys are quite efficient, so attention was directed to the worm-drive where no change could possibly be made, except to the lubricant. When this was done, and at small expense, the problem was solved!

It was on 23rd February in the mid seventies when the organ was opened at its previous venue, **Cinema North**, in the suburb of **Reservoir**. If attention to the usual teething problems, voicing and regulating can all be carried out by the end of November there may be sufficient time for work-up and proving, and opening in February '98 may be possible close to the 23rd. It is likely that this instrument will be listed for exposure at **Melbourne's Convention** in 1999.

TOSA will keep you informed.

A Report on John Giacchi's Concert

Sunday, 26th October

Orion Centre Campsie

It was a disappointingly small but most enthusiastic audience that was treated to an excellent display of the two 'ships,' (musician and showman) by ex-Sydney and now Melbourne resident, John Giacchi.

It was a welcome return to the Orion Wurlitzer console for a young man whose music is maturing to the point of being world-class, a fact borne out by his most recent trip to the USA as a featured ATOS convention artist.

From the first chords of his opening number, *Where There's You There's Me*, it was obvious that we were in for an afternoon of some fine theatre organ artistry.

The first half of the program featured *One Fine Day* from *Madame Butterfly*, a Harry Warren ballad, *The Words are in my Heart*, *In Party Mood* by Jack Strachey (also known as the *Housewives' Choice* radio theme), *I'll Never Smile Again*, *Lazy Bones* by Hoagy Carmichael and a most original arrangement of *Harlem Nocturne* featuring the trumpet with a delay-vibrato effect, simulating a real trumpeter. Following Robert Farnham's *A Star is Born*, the first half of the program concluded with a medley of Harry

by Cliff Bingham

great days of the radio serials, the hauntingly-beautiful theme from *Blue Hills*, more correctly-titled *Pastorale* by Ronald Hanmer. John's interpretative arrangement was one of the highlights of the program as he painted a 'music picture' of those "Blue Hills."

A complete change of mood resulted from the next piece, the novelty number *Goofus*, highlighting some fine 'digital dexterity'. John's second Harry

Warren songs which included *Shadow Waltz* and *Lullaby of Broadway* in a tribute to that great director of Hollywood musicals, Busby Berkeley.

Following a refreshing interval and the customary raffle draw, John brought the console up to a beautiful arrangement of *Sapphires and Sabres* and followed up with a lively *Alligator Crawl*. The next item was one which brought back many memories of the

Warren selection was virtually a straight take from his CD "*Beyond the Blue Horizon*" (a must for any theatre organ CD collection) and contained such favourites as *We're In The Money*, *By a Waterfall*, *Young and Healthy*, *About a Quarter to Nine* and *All's Fair in Love and War*. A Cole Porter number with the awesome title of *Down in the Depths on the 90th Floor* preceded the finale and a piece fitting of this status, the full arrangement of Ponchielli's

Dance of the Hours, brought the program to a conclusion almost. Following prolonged applause, John obliged with an appropriate encore. (The name escapes me at the time of writing!)

The one negative aspect of the concert was that more people were not in the audience to enjoy a wonderful program from one of the finest exponents of the theatre organ today, John Giacchi. Thank you, John, and well done.



John at the Orion console with his parents and nieces

OUR NEXT EVENT

Members' Afternoon - Saturday, 28th February, 1998

Ian Davies at Bondi

Our Patron, **Ian Davies** has invited all **TOSA** members to a special **FREE** afternoon at the club where he regularly plays. The date is **Saturday, 28th February**, at 1.00pm and the club is the **Bondi Junction-Waverley RSL Club**. Several of our leading player-members will be playing the **Rodgers "Trio" Theatre Organ** including, of course, **Ian** himself.

The club is at 1 Gray Street, **Bondi Junction** and is very close to **Bondi Junction Railway Station**. Parking will be available in the **Grace Bros** car-park until the end of the afternoon's great entertainment. Come along and enjoy a relaxing afternoon in the Club, being entertained by these first-class performers. No bookings necessary, just be there by 1.00pm!

A Profile of Ian Davies

Our patron, **Ian Davies**, started to study music at a very early age. He began piano lessons under the tutelage of his mother. Two years later, he became a pupil of **Miss K. Cox** and continued with her for 3 years.

It was at this point that the pipe organ made its entry into **Ian's** life. His mother frequently played the organ at **St Joan's Presbyterian Church** at **Essendon, Victoria**. **Ian** persuaded her to give him lessons and after 6 months he became a pupil of the organist of the church.

Ian began his professional theatre organ career in **Melbourne**, playing the **Plaza, Regent** and **Capitol Wurlitzers**, and the **Hammond** organs at **Brunswick** and **Albert Park**.

During the war, while serving in the **R.A.N.** overseas, **Ian** was guest organist at the **Regal Theatre, Grays Forum Theatre, Liverpool**, and the **Bristol Theatre, Avonmouth, Wales**.

Upon arriving back in **Melbourne**, he returned to the **Hoyts** circuits, his last theatre organ season being at the 3-manual, 15 rank **Wurlitzer** at the **Capitol Theatre**, where he held a 5 year residency. He then moved to **Sydney** and spent some years in the showrooms of **Rees Wills Pty Ltd**, demonstrating **Lowrey** and **Rodgers** organs.

His magnificent opening recital at the 1965 Convention of the **Theatre Organ Society of Australia** was long remembered by those who attended. He was also the featured opening organist at the 1966 Convention on the **Capitol Wurlitzer**. These are but two of the many memorable programmes he has played and which made **Ian Davies** so popular with **TOSA** members. He played over 90 concerts for the **NSW Division** during his long association with **TOSA**, always drawing a large crowd of devoted fans.

For many years **Ian** has been resident organist at the **Bondi-Waverley RSL Club**, playing each Friday for an hour in the club's auditorium for the pleasure of the club's members and guests.

In 1972 following the retirement of **Reginald Dixon** from the **Blackpool Tower** and from the position of patron of **TOSA NSW**, **Ian** was elected to the position and to this day he remains faithfully still as our patron.

He has always been ready to give of his many talents for the members of our **Society** and we are sure that many members will appreciate the opportunity to hear **Ian** play again at the **Bondi-Waverley RSL Club**, in the company of some of our other player members. Come along and bring a friend to this special event. The last **TOSA** visit to **Ian's** club was enjoyed greatly by all those who attended.

BOOKING FORM

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18 Dudley Street,
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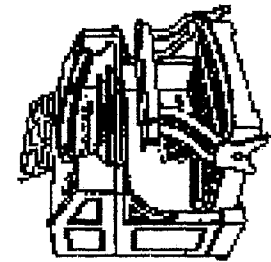
TOSA NEWS

DECEMBER, 1997

Theatre Organ Society of Australia
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TOSA NEWS

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