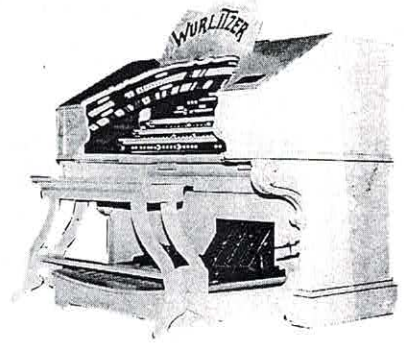


2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

AUGUST, 1995

TOSA NEWS



3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

On his First Australian Tour

JOHN LEDWON



Playing the Magnificent ex-Capitol Theatre WurliTzer
Orion Centre Campsie

Sunday, 3 September, 1995 at 2pm

Volume 34

Issue 7

PRINTED BY TOSA

The Official Publication of Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) Inc.

P.O. Box 36, Brooklyn, 2083

Print Post Approved PP255003/01823

Price

\$1.00

TOSA NEWS

AUGUST, 1995

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.

* DIRECTORY *



PATRONS:

Ian Davies
Mayor of Canterbury, Ald. John Gorrie

PRESIDENT:

Cliff Bingham (Work) 708 6566
(Home) 482 1438 (before 9pm)

VICE PRESIDENTS:

John Shaw 759 5825
Neil Palmer 798 6742

SECRETARY:

Bill Schumacher 98 57318
P.O. Box 36, Brooklyn, 2083

ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

Robert Gliddon

TREASURER:

Geoff Brimley (047) 87 1431

ASSISTANT TREASURER:

Joan Scott 713 9491

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Walter Pearce 716 0151 (after 7 pm)
P.O. Box 243, Burwood, 2134

COMMITTEE:

Barry Tooker 744 1535
Colin Groves 745 2417
John Parker
Paul Luci (043) 74 1108
Peter Harding 629 2257
Walter Pearce 716 0151 (after 7 pm)

PRACTICE CONVENOR (Orion):

Paul Luci (043) 74 1108

RESEARCH & ARCHIVES:

Ian Cameron (048) 411 616

TOSA NEWS EDITOR:

Colin Groves 745 2417
P.O. Box 1257, Burwood, 2134

TOSA PRINTER:

Robert Gliddon

CONCERT TAPE HIRING:

Neil Palmer 798 6742

TICKET SECRETARY (Concert Bookings):

George Newell 750 0362 (Mon - Fri: 10am - 6pm)

ARTIST LIAISON OFFICER:

Bill Schumacher 985 7318
P.O. Box 36, Brooklyn, 2083

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Barry Tooker (Home) 744 1535
(Work) 550 5400

CONCERT RECORDINGS:

Bill Schumacher 985 7318

PUBLICITY OFFICER:

John Shaw 759 5825

TRANSPORT OFFICER

Ritchie Willis 580 3581



COMING EVENTS

AUGUST

Monday 7 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Wednesday 16 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 3 at 2.00pm **John Ledwon Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Monday 4 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Wednesday 6 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie

OCTOBER

Sunday 8 at 2.00pm **Len Rawle Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Monday 9 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**

NOVEMBER

Monday 6 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Sunday 19 at 2.00pm **Walt Strony Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Wednesday 22 at 8.00pm **Annual General Meeting**
Orion Centre Campsie



REMEMBER TO TUNE IN TO
2CBA-FM 103.2

EVERY MONDAY AT 9.00 pm
For "Theatre Organ Highlights"
Presented by Chris Styles

Editorial

Firstly, an apology to those who were expecting their *TOSA News* a little earlier, at the **Jonas Nordwall**. Since a couple of members of our team were away on holidays (not me - though I would have liked to be!), our publishing process was a bit slower this month. We are sorry for any disappointment, but since we all have full-time jobs in other areas, sometimes the voluntary work has to wait its turn, for when the time is available.

A reminder to members that if you have something organ-connected to advertise in *TOSA News*, the procedure is to send a written copy of your advertisement to me, the editor, at the address given in the page 2 Directory. If you are a member and only want a small ad., there is no charge for this service. If the advertiser is not a member, a small ad., costs \$10, payable in advance. A large ad. costs relatively more - up to \$80 for a full page, which is still quite cheap given that our magazine reaches about 700 households.

If you wish to play the **Orion Wurlitzer**, don't forget the next members' playing night - Wednesday, 16th August at 7.30pm. Bring a small item of supper to share.

Due to popular demand, we are hoping to arrange another **Bondi Junction- Waverley RSL** afternoon with **Ian Davies** for the end of October - watch for an announcement in the next *TOSA News*.

Epping Baptist Church is having a pipe organ concert on their *Christie* for the first time in their new, expanded church on Sunday 27th August at 2.30pm. See page 13 for some more details. There is also the possibility of a **TOSA Members' Afternoon** at **Epping Baptist** in September, but this is yet to be finalised. More details in a later issue of *TOSA News*.

I hope you are all coping with the winter months and managing to stay healthy through this chilly and windy time. See you at the next **TOSA** events.

Best Wishes,
Colin Groves



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to TOSA to the following new members. We hope your time with us will be long-lasting and entertaining.

Arthur Albery - Glenbrook
Marjory and Robert Boyd
- Port Macquarie
William Crawford - Padstow
Mr L. and Mrs B. Curtis
- Sylvania Southgate
Mabel Dumbrell - Sylvania
Douglas Friend - Breadalbane
Robert Grant - Frenchs Forest
Pamela Halpin - Miranda
Althea and Roy Heyhorn
- Burrawang
Joan and Ron Lambourne
- Hurstville
Joan and Charles Moore
- Caringbah
Anthony Ridge - Glenfield
Mavis and Keith Schwarze
- Bullaburra
Iris Stone - Bexley
Lorna Smith - Punchbowl
Gloria Stuart - Gympie

From The President

There is not a great deal to report this month, although I would like to take this opportunity to again thank all our members for continuing to support our concerts so enthusiastically.

Last month, a most responsive **Orion** audience enjoyed a wonderful concert presented by **Ray Thornley**. The positive "vibes" certainly got through to **Ray**, who responded appropriately with a well-varied and superbly played program.

Secretary **Bill** and Assistant Secretary **Rob**, along with other **TOSA** members, had the pleasure of attending the **National Convention** of the **American Theatre Organ Society** in **Detroit**. Artists heard included **Jonas Nordwall**, **Lyn Larsen**, **Simon Gledhill** and **Ron Rhode** to name a few, all of whom have toured **Australia**. No doubt we will have a more comprehensive report in a future issue of *TOSA News*.

In this column in coming months, I am going to take the opportunity to recognise and acknowledge the efforts of those of our members who put in hours of work to make the activities of our society such a success.

This month I would like to thank our radio "star", **Chris Styles**, who presents our weekly program "*Theatre Organ Highlights*" on **2CBA-FM** (Monday nights at 9pm). As a previous presenter, I know only too well the hours of preparation that go into the production of a successful show. For every half-hour of air-time, there is at least 2 hours of preparation, involving auditioning suitable material, timing the selected pieces, making sure that the program contains the required amount of **Australian** content to keep the **Broadcasting Control Board** happy, and finally going to the studio to record the end result of all this work.

To you **Chris**, many thanks from us all.

Cliff Bingham
President

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



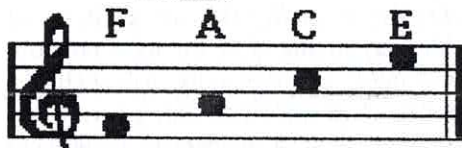
THE MIGHTY WURLITZER
- Joseph Seal.

Although there are no jacket notes, these selections were all played on the 3 manual, 12 rank **WurliTzer** originally installed in the **Regal Cinema, Kingston-on-Thames, London**, and now in the **Musical Instrument Museum at Brentford**.

The 24 Tracks : *Swedish Rhapsody, I Only Have Eyes For You, Down The Mall, The Kitchen Rag, Café Chantant, Warsaw Concerto, Il Bacio, These Foolish Things, Bats in the Belfry, Love is a Very Splendid Thing, Wood Nymphs, La Paloma, Washington Post, Liebestraum, Laura, Czardas, Sanctuary of the Heart, Song of Paradise, Turkish March, Nights of Gladness, Look Lively, Charmaine, Les Sylphides*

Available at **TOSA Concerts**,
or by **Mail Order** from :
TOSA (NSW Division) Inc.
304 Parramatta Rd
ASHFIELD NSW 2131

Postage : \$3.00



THE MUSIC
With **Allan Tassaker**

A friend of **Allan Tassaker** told him he bought an old second-hand organ, but after he took it home and tried to play it, it just fell to pieces. The keys fell off and **Allan's** friend said he couldn't even read the brand name on the instrument.

Allan thought about how his friend had been tricked by the organ seller and instantly announced that he knew the brand of his friend's organ...

"It would have to be a **Conn!**" he told his friend ruefully.



This is your August copy of **TOSA NEWS**. We have held it back this month so I could finish annual holidays and so the mailing labels could be as up-to-date as possible. If your label reads "Expired" and your payment was not sent in the last couple of days, then this is your last.

That all sounds very negative, so I hasten to add that we know that there are many reasons for not renewing - including health, relocation, or just the wish to try other forms of entertainment. Whatever reason we wish you well and still look forward to your company now and then.

I think I said last month that this was a busy time of year. But in addition to updating the records of several hundred members, we have been upgrading the computer program. And in going over the records I have been fascinated by the wide variety of skills and professions held by members - many retired of course.

A lot of us have grey hairs (or very few hairs - like me) even being grand- or great-grand-parents, but what a wealth of talent and experience - including music of all kinds!

Walter Pearce



MEMBERS' PLAYING NIGHTS

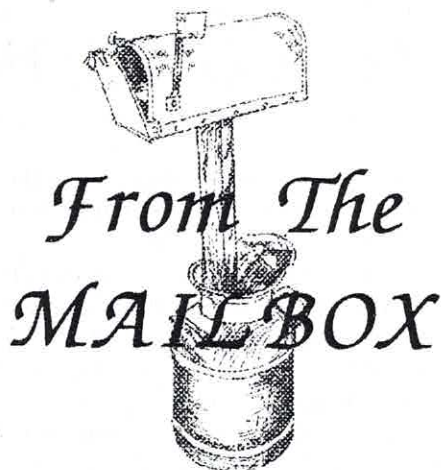
On Wednesday, 14th June about 20 members came to the **Orion** for a pleasant evening of playing the *WurliTzer*.

Eight members played for our entertainment and enjoyment, and all revealed their often unsuspected, hidden keyboard talents!

- Tom Barber**
- Chris Styles**
- Walter Pearce**
- Jim Birkett**
- Elaine Birkett**
- Bruce Brisbee**
- Jack MacDonald**
- Bill Schumacher**

The next playing night for members is Wednesday, 16th August at 7.30pm at the **Orion Centre**. Bring a little bit of supper to share and be prepared to have a relaxing, informal evening centred on **TOSA's** fabulous *WurliTzer*.

**If you are seeking:
an antique,
theatre, console
or spinet organ
contact the
MANNING
ORGAN SOCIETY
(065) 531431
anytime**



Amy Caldwell of Mona Vale writes about a concert that she attended after seeing it mentioned in TOSA News which was given by TOSA member and outstanding organist, Margaret Hall.

Thank you for the recent announcement in *TOSA News*, re **Margaret Hall's** concert at **Lugarno**. I had just returned from **Queensland** to start work again, so I went out to **Lugarno** straight from work that evening.

The concert was well received by an enthusiastic audience, with the church hall being filled to capacity. **Margaret** played her **Yamaha HX1**, and also a **Technics KN2000**. Some very effective orchestral sounds were produced, particularly during one of the highlights of the night, **Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite**.

Two supporting artists for this concert were flautist, **Anna Deitz** and 16 year old violinist, **Phillip Brander**. As well as presenting **Mozart** and **Bach** in their individual items, they combined as a trio to present one of the prettiest arrangements I've heard of *Somewhere Out There*. The flute and violin were accompanied by a modern, electric piano voicing on the **Technics** keyboard.

It was encouraging to see many of our **TOSA** members supporting this concert. I am looking forward to the day when we may have a repeat performance of **Margaret Hall** and **John Giacchi** in concert at the **Orion**. The last I remember was on the **Christie** organ at **Epping Baptist Church**.

Yours faithfully,
Amy Caldwell

From a letter written by Roy Walkley of Goulburn who writes about his Nicholas Martin video, which is available from TOSA's Record Bar for only \$25.00 :

...It is just over 12 months since I purchased a copy of the **Nicholas Martin** video. Right from the beginning I was captivated by the skill and showmanship of this delightful man. The whole performance, to me at any rate, is top entertainment. We have shown the video to many visitors and they have all been delighted by the show. I have also shown it to some people at an aged persons' hostel here in **Goulburn**. They also loved it.

My wife and I were not members of **TOSA** when **Nicholas Martin** visited, but hope to be able to hear him in person some time in the future.

Not many people we have met since moving to the country had the experience of growing up with the **Wurlitzers**, **Christies**, etc., in the cinemas as we had, and they have probably "wondered" about us sometimes, as we travel to **Sydney** frequently for Sunday afternoon concerts. However, after seeing and hearing the video, they are more understanding of our enthusiasm.

We hope that you might have other videos available in the future. We enjoy listening to tapes and recordings, but being able to see the artist at work really makes you feel that you are there.

...All the best

Roy W. Walkley

FOR SALE

LOWREY H25

Full Theatre Console

61 note keyboard, 25 Pedals

2 speed Leslie, 3 Channels

Full Range of rich

Tibias, Reeds and Strings

Special Music Stand

With Manual and Pedal Lights

Set on a Dais with long

Theatre-type Seat

A Good Professional Organ

Price : \$2000.00 or near offer

Contact : Don MacDonald

on 521 4136

Can You Spot The Error?

Well-known **TOSA** member, **Mary Stewart**, kindly passed on for our enjoyment these amusing foreign English mistranslations which didn't quite say what they were intended to :

Bucharest hotel lobby - The lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret that guests will be unbearable.

Paris hotel elevator - Please live your values at the front desk.

Hotel in Athens - Visitors are expected to complain at the office between the hours of 9 and 11 am.

Japanese hotel - You are invited to take advantage of the chamber-maid.

Bangkok temple - It is forbidden to enter a woman even if a foreigner is dressed as a man.

Copenhagen airline ticket office - We take your bags and sent them in all directions.

Italian doctor's office - Specialist in women and other diseases.

Mexican hotel - The manager has personally passed all the water served here.

Vienna hotel - In case of fire do your utmost to alarm the hotel porter.

Japanese air-conditioning instructions - Cooles and Heates. If you want just condition of warm in your room, please control yourself.

Donkey rides in Thailand - Would you like to ride on your own ass?

Swiss restaurant menu - Our wines leave you nothing to hope for.

Hong Kong dentist - Teeth extracted by the latest Methodists.

Budapest zoo - Please do not feed the animals. If you have any suitable food, give it to the guard on duty.

FOR SALE

HAMMOND ORGAN

Aurora Classic

Burlwood Cabinet

Hardly Played

Immaculate Condition

Price : \$2000.00 or o.n.o.

Phone : (Home) 958 0880

(Work) 330 8635

NEWS from the AUSTRALIAN CHAPTER OF ATOS

The following information comes from Brian Pearson, the new President of the Australia Felix Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, and appeared in the June '95 issue of the Chapter's ATOS News Letter :

"Australia Felix"

When Major Mitchell led an exploration party from Sydney to the South coast of what was then New South Wales, finding a thriving settlement of ex-Tasmanians at Portland, he looked down from the Grampian Mountains towards the sea. He was so impressed by the fertile and scenic countryside that he named this part of what is now Victoria, **Australia Felix**.

"Australia" means "South Land", and "Felix" is a Latin word which can best be translated by the phrase "bountiful and beautiful". A strange name at first glance, but a fitting one for our wonderful homeland and the Chapter. It was almost certainly chosen by the erudite Eric Wicks, who has done so much to found and foster this Chapter.

Incidentally, **Felix the Cat** is a native Australian. We saw him in both still and animated cartoons way back in the silent days, long before he migrated to become famous in America.

Election of Executives

At the TOSA National Convention in Melbourne in April, the annual meeting of those members of the **Australia Felix Chapter of ATOS** who attended met in the foyer of the **Malvern Town Hall** to discuss items of common interest. **Gail Ward** was re-elected as Secretary, and also **Gillian Laughton** as Treasurer.

As **Anthony Taylor** did not wish to stand again due to many pressures upon his time and energy, an election was held for the office of President. **Brian Pearson** was elected. The addresses and phone numbers of the new office-bearers are as follows :

President : Brian Pearson
11 Ormonde Ave, Warradale,
South Australia, 5046.
Phone : (08) 298 6201

Secretary : Gail Ward
11 Lepena Crescent, Hallett Cove,
South Australia, 5158.
Phone : (08) 387 1554

Treasurer : Gillian Laughton
10 Sandheath Rd, Elizabeth Grove,
South Australia, 5112.
Phone : (08) 255 1514

Main Activities

In a country as big as ours, the only opportunity members have to meet each other is at events such as **TOSA Conventions**, and this necessarily makes for a low representation of the total membership at the annual meeting. Nevertheless the usefulness of a formal structure analogous to those of the US-based Chapters is readily apparent.

In recent years several young **Australians** have been entered in **ATOS' Young Organists' Competition**, whose winners have their airfares paid to the **American Convention**, as well as receiving a fee for appearing in a cameo concert performance at the convention. **Australia** has been represented among the winners and beneficiaries in a manner out of all proportion to the relatively small size of our population.

Winners over the past years such as **John Giacchi** (NSW) in 1990, **Sean Henderson** (VIC) in 1992, **Chris McPhee** (SA) in 1993, **Heath Wooster** (VIC) in 1994, and **Kylie Mallett** (SA) this year, have won high praise. All entrants have been helped by the written criticisms of their performance tapes by each member of the judging panels, who listen in private and make their comments without reference to each other. Judges are drawn from the ranks of the most experienced and well known **American** organists.

Scholarships worth US\$500 to help pay for theatre organ tuition have also been awarded to some **Australian** youngsters. This year **Lisa Cox** and **Dean Thomas**, two of several fine young organists from the **Ballarat** area,

have been granted scholarships. To smooth the way for entrants and winners in the **Young Organists' Competition**, **Australia Felix** office-bearers have to do a lot of letter-writing and make many interstate and international phone calls to ensure that entries are submitted on time in the correct form, and that travel arrangements and visas are in order. This especially applies to **Gail Ward**, whose dedicated work has been rewarded by the success of these young members.

ATOS and TOSA

There is no connection of any kind between the two organisations, although probably the majority of the **Australian ATOS** members are also members of, and often keen workers for, their local division of **TOSA**. In point of fact, **TOSA** is not a national body - each state is an autonomous body, and their only national linkage is in the annual delegates' meeting at the conventions, which is useful as a consultative body, but which cannot bind any of the divisions. This can be seen by many keen members of **TOSA** as a drawback in some ways - particularly in the co-ordination of tours by the many visiting artists from overseas.

Some influential **TOSA** members believe that **ATOS** is bent upon "taking over" **TOSA**. Nothing could be further from the truth. If you hear such rumours being disseminated, please take every means to assure people that this is not so. **ATOS** members are simply pipe organ lovers who care enough about these magnificent instruments to belong to separate bodies which foster theatre organ music in different parts of the world. For that matter, many are also members of classical pipe organ societies, or of electronic instrument clubs, and quite a few are owners of pipe or electronic organs.

Brian Pearson

*A major reason for belonging to ATOS is to receive their bi-monthly publication, **Theatre Organ**, which is a quality, glossy magazine full of photos and information about theatre organs and the activities of the American Chapters of their Society. - Editor*

“THEATRE ORGAN HIGHLIGHTS”

by Chris Styles

Hi and I'm glad to put a few lines together for our hard working editor about the radio programme on **FM-103** - what's on and coming up. For those of you who listen regularly (and I again thank you for your support), I have recently obtained some new recordings from various sources including some directly from the **USA** and I am expecting some more through the kind graces of **Bill Schumacher** who, as I write, is in the **US** for the **American Theatre Organ Society's** annual convention in **Detroit**.

Three new CDs which have some very interesting cover notes are by **Arnold Loxam**, **David Peckham** and **Quentin Maclean**. I would now like to share some of these with you.

First **Quentin Maclean** - This CD of course is a compilation of twenty-three tracks of **Quentin Maclean's** 78 rpm recordings dating back as far as April 1931 up to, and including, November 1938. The process of transfer from the old 78s has been carried out by a new process called **Computer Enhanced Digital Audio Restoration (CEDAR)** and the sound is generally of a very good quality.

QUENTIN MACLEAN

Now a potted history of **Quentin Morvaren Maclean**. He was born in 1896 and was the son of **Alexander (Alick) Maclean**, conductor of the “*New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra*”. He was studying organ in **Leipzig** by the age of twelve and at eighteen was performing at the **Leipzig Bach Festival**. He was interned for the duration of the First World War, and on his return to **England** took up the position of assistant to **Sir Richard Runciman Terry**, organist of **Westminster Cathedral** (Roman Catholic and not to be confused with **Westminster Abbey**).

His introduction to the world of cinema came when he toured as organ accompanist to the film “*With Allenby in Palestine*” followed by appointments at the **Grand Fulham**, **Globe Acton** and **Regent Brighton**, where his matching of music to the action became

legendary. In 1923 he became organist at the **Pavilion, Shepherd's Bush**, where he made the *first* broadcast of a cinema organ on the **2LO** station, and recorded the **Compton** organ. In 1928 he moved to the **Regal Marble Arch**, where he had had a considerable part in designing the large **Christie** organ. ‘**Mac**’ as he became known opened the **Wurlitzer** organ at the **Trocadero Elephant & Castle** in 1930, and remained there until 1939, when he left for a holiday in **Canada**, and decided to remain there.

Married twice, his first wife predeceased him, and when he died on 9th July, 1962, he was survived by his second wife and a sister in **England**.

The **Wurlitzer** organ at the **Trocadero Elephant & Castle**, where the recordings of **Quentin Maclean** featured on this CD were made, was one of only a handful of theatre organs in **England** that might be called complete. Most of them had only of six or eight ranks of pipes, although some of these small instruments were very effective in their own somewhat restricted way. The ‘**Troc**’ organ was of twenty-one ranks, and was the largest **Wurlitzer** in **Europe**. The pipes were installed in chambers on either side of the proscenium, an arrangement that was considered less than desirable in the ‘thirties. There were complaints of “disconcerting directional effects” spoiling the enjoyment of the listener and making things difficult for the organist who, placed on the left, heard one side of the ‘job’ before the other. Nowadays we call this ‘stereo’, and love it!

This instrument has often been referred to as a ‘**Publix No.1**’ model - even **Maclean** referred to it thus - but on close investigation there are several differences from the standard model, designed by the great **American** organist **Jesse Crawford** for the **Paramount/Publix Corporation**. Certainly ‘**Mac**’ did not design it, for when some visiting **American** spoke of an “**Anglicised Wurlitzer**”, he was quick to point out that the ‘**Troc**’ organ was a standard model from the **U.S.A.** but only three others of exactly the same specification seem to have been supplied by **Wurlitzer**, all for **Australia**. (The **State Melbourne**,

State Sydney and **Regent Melbourne**.) They were known as “**Model 270**”, and were supplied in 1928.

The console was equipped with four manuals, and the basic design was virtually that of the ‘**Publix No.1**’. Where it differed, was in the choice of ranks and percussions, having one Tibia and an English Horn (the ‘**Publix No. 1**’ having two Tibias and no English Horn), and it was certainly better suited to **Maclean's** ‘orchestral’ approach to theatre organ playing.

In the fine acoustic of the large auditorium it sounded quite magnificently, having a fine ‘straight’ buildup as well as the usual **Wurlitzer** specialities such as the **Kinura**, **Tibia Clausa**, **Brass Saxophone** and a big ‘fat’ **Tuba Mirabilis**.

The large string ensemble in the main chamber, consisting of six ranks was unique to any **Wurlitzer** in **England**, and gave a particularly satisfying sound to the accompaniment of the many solo effects available.

After many years of searching for a home for this historic instrument after it was removed when the **Trocadero** was closed in the early ‘Sixties, agreement was reached with the **Borough Polytechnic**, now the **South Bank University**, and it was installed in their **Edric Hall**, and opened on 28th January, 1979, by the organist who had given the last broadcast from the ‘**Troc**’, eighteen years earlier, **William Davies**. It is particularly fitting that it is preserved only a few yards away from the site of its original home - it is all that survives of the cinema in the area, as even the little concrete ‘box’ that replaced the **Trocadero** has since been demolished!

ARNOLD LOXAM

Arnold Loxam was invited by **Grosvenor Records** (it's funny that CD companies still use the word ‘records’) to make another recording at the **Wurlitzer** of the **Tower Ballroom, Blackpool**.

He states - “After almost 66 years

of broadcasting, and in my 75th year, my wife, **Audrey**, and I thought it appropriate to revive a few memories. Our son, **Keith**, a light entertainments producer with the **BBC**, came up with the idea of playing music connected in some way with the four seasons of **Blackpool** - after all, over the years I have played in the ballroom Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter."

Arnold introduces each section with a small portion of the appropriate movement of the famous '**Four Seasons**' by **Vivaldi**.

A MARR & COLTON THEATRE ORGAN

Lastly, a new recording by **David Peckham** at the **Performing Arts Center** in **Elmira, New York State**. I have mentioned on the programme about the many 'dunkings' this organ has received over the years and this is the story as told in the cover notes: The organ at the **Clemens Center** has undergone several trials by water, and subsequent renovations have resulted in an instrument quite different from its debut in 1925. The organ was built by the **Marr & Colton Company** of **Warsaw, NY**, and originally consisted of a three manual console controlling 20 ranks in three chambers (Left, Right and Echo). The stop unification was somewhat limited and seven of the twenty ranks were on "straight" ventill chests.

The organ experienced the typical 1920's - 1930's life cycle: accompaniment for silent films and stage shows, then limited use following the advent of sound films.

In 1946, floodwaters from the nearby **Chemung River** damaged the console and Kinetic blower. Installation of theatre air conditioning in the 1950's left the Echo chamber gutted. Some damage also occurred

in the other two chambers.

In 1961, a group of local theatre organ enthusiasts began the daunting task of repairing the damaged components and replacing missing ranks. The purchase of a three manual/fifteen rank **Marr & Colton** organ from the **Palace Theatre** in **Jamestown, NY** greatly aided the project. Many years of effort, working around a busy movie schedule, resulted in a playable organ and a concert was presented in 1965. The organ was occasionally played by visiting organists for informal gatherings until 1972.

In June of 1972 the **Chemung River** again flooded the city. Some eight feet of water stood on the stage and the console floated for days until the orchestra pit could be pumped out. Glue joints in the console dissolved and the cabinet collapsed into a sorry heap of wood and mud.

The theatre owners elected to refurbish the building as necessary, but had no interest in rebuilding the organ.

The theatre closed in 1977 and **Elmira** civic leaders championed the opportunity for its transformation into a performing arts center. The **Samuel L. Clemens Center for the Performing Arts** was formed and the building renovations were soon underway. With financial support from the **Clemens Center**, members of the 1960's rebuilding team (**David Teeter**, the **Peckham** family and **Montford Spencer**) began the rebuilding task again. A four manual **Wurlitzer** horseshoe console was purchased from

Our Lady of Victory Basilica in **Lackawana, NY**. A Post Horn was added and the organ was included on the opening night program featuring **Ella Fitzgerald** in October 1977.

In 1978, the stop unification was expanded and an electronic memory combination system was installed in the console. An annual series of theatre organ concerts began that season, featuring many outstanding artists.

In 1982 water came yet again! However, this time the damage occurred in the Main (left) chamber due to a large roof leak. Many components, including the chests and relay were severely damaged. The insurance settlement provided a core fund for a two year rebuilding effort by the **Peckham** family. The Main chamber was redesigned, the console specification was revised and a **Z-Tronics** relay was installed. Also, several ranks were exchanged between the Main and Solo chambers for better tonal balance: an **Aeolian French Trumpet** was added and a **Wurlitzer** style **D Trumpet** replaced the original **Marr & Colton** **Tuba Sonora**. Additionally, 12-note **Wurlitzer** **Wood Diaphone** was donated by the **Rochester Theatre Organ Society**. These pipes came from the **Regent Theatre** in **Rochester, NY**.

In October 1985 the organ was again playable and its use continues to be part of the programming at the **Clemens Center**. In spite of its trials by water and building alterations, this organ remains the largest existing **Marr & Colton** theatre organ in an original theatre location.

I hope you enjoyed these interesting cover notes which are really a little too long to read on the programme (besides, you want to hear the music, not listen to me). If I come across any more interesting information I will again send the information onto **TOSA News**.

Chris Styles



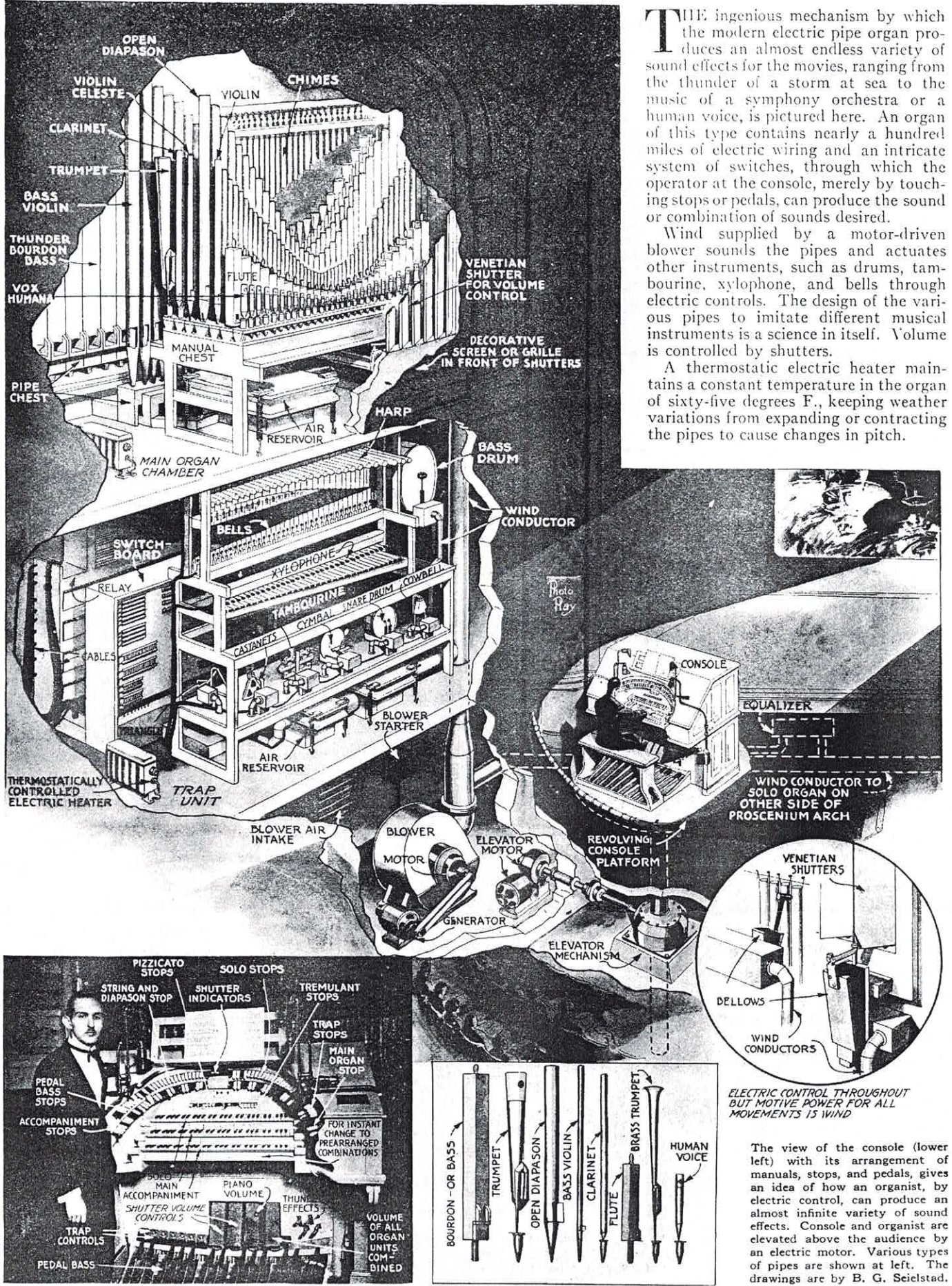
FM-103 radio presenter, Chris Styles, at the Orion Wurlitzer

A Box of Sounds for the Movies

THE ingenious mechanism by which the modern electric pipe organ produces an almost endless variety of sound effects for the movies, ranging from the thunder of a storm at sea to the music of a symphony orchestra or a human voice, is pictured here. An organ of this type contains nearly a hundred miles of electric wiring and an intricate system of switches, through which the operator at the console, merely by touching stops or pedals, can produce the sound or combination of sounds desired.

Wind supplied by a motor-driven blower sounds the pipes and actuates other instruments, such as drums, tambourine, xylophone, and bells through electric controls. The design of the various pipes to imitate different musical instruments is a science in itself. Volume is controlled by shutters.

A thermostatic electric heater maintains a constant temperature in the organ of sixty-five degrees F., keeping weather variations from expanding or contracting the pipes to cause changes in pitch.



ELECTRIC CONTROL THROUGHOUT BUT MOTIVE POWER FOR ALL MOVEMENTS IS WIND

The view of the console (lower left) with its arrangement of manuals, stops, and pedals, gives an idea of how an organist, by electric control, can produce an almost infinite variety of sound effects. Console and organist are elevated above the audience by an electric motor. Various types of pipes are shown at left. The drawings are by B. G. Scielstad.

An explanation of a theatre pipe organ from an ancient movie magazine found and passed on by Kevin Clancy and Neil Palmer

BABYLON BEHIND BERLIN BARRIER

The Poet, the journal of the Jesse Crawford Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, recently carried this article, with an unexpected Sydney connection, about an organ in Germany, written by Dr Edward J. Mullins

On November 9, 1989, after 28 years, the **Berlin Wall** opened between **East** and **West Berlin**. 80,000,000 East and West **Germans** were peacefully re-united on October 3, 1990. Five and a half years after the opening of "Checkpoint Charlie", construction cranes, 20 storeys high, now silhouette **Berlin's** skyline. This cosmopolitan city of 3.5 million people has \$30 billion in building projects in the works. Most projects are slated for completion by the year 2000. One of these projects is the restoration of a theatre organ, and it should be finished this year.

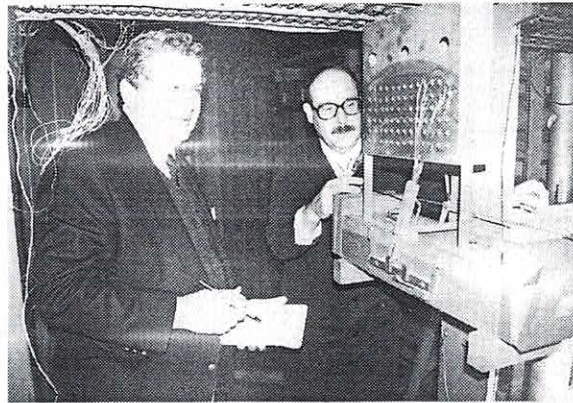
The **Babylon Kino**, a cinema located at 30 Rosa-Luxemburg-Strasse in what was **East Berlin** opened in 1929 and had a 2-manual, 15-rank **Philips Kinoorgel** (cinema organ) installed by the **Philips** organbuilding firm of **Aschaffenburg, Germany**.

Although a grenade caused a fire during World War II, the building was otherwise not damaged. In 1960 a new screen and curtain were installed for Cinemascope. The last organ rebuild was in 1960 and organbuilder **Glöckner** and **Münzer** were the last reconstructors. More recently the ceiling of the auditorium collapsed and the cinema was relocated to the foyer, with a piano for accompaniment when silent film are exhibited there.

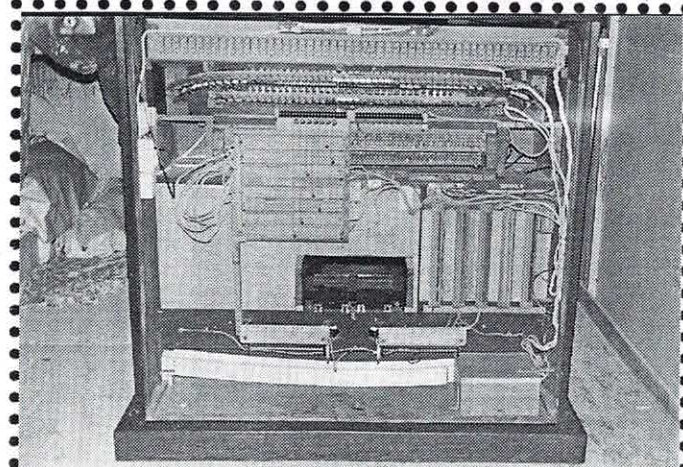
Before reunification, a man with a life-long interest in the pipe organ, **Dr Dagobert Liers** (Doctor of Engineering Science), was teaching Electrical



Dr Dagobert Liers at the console in the organ shop on the stage of the Babylon Kino



Dr Ed Mullins and Dr Liers inspect the Eisenbahn or Railroad Effect. Curved metal rods, resembling an old fashioned carpet beater, slide across metal studs attached to a hollow wooden box which acts as a resonator. The rods slide back and forth across the studs, simulating the sounds of a steam locomotive



Back of the console. The box in the lower right corner is the relay made by Dr Liers

Engineering in an **East Berlin** Technical College. Seeing that he would be made redundant, he decided to combine his training in electronics and his organ knowledge to go into the organ building business, and started his business in 1990.

Dr Liers had collected many old documents since 1958 and much of his knowledge was acquired from these papers. His archives contained documents from the **Babylon Kino**. He approached the **Babylon** management, showing them the documents describing the organ in the cinema. They couldn't believe it - they thought the organ had been destroyed but agreed to have a look in the old auditorium.

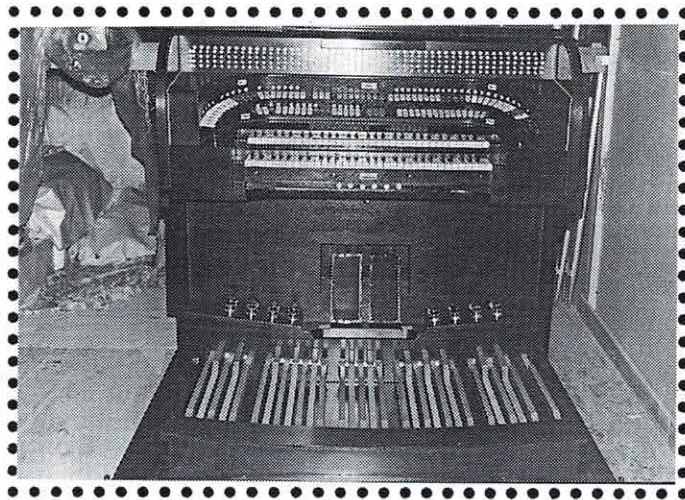
The backstage, steel chamber-door had not been unlocked for 30 years, and there was no key for it. The door was opened with the help of a locksmith, and there it was! It was amazing that no pipes had been plundered or stolen. Unbelievable! The old roll-top console was in the loges. **Dr Liers'** inspection revealed that the siren and one of the drums were missing, 3 of the stop tablets were defective and needed replacement, and that the organbuilder had been excellent at soldering pipes but not so good with electrical connections. The installation is in one concrete chamber to the left of the screen, with the percussions at the front of the chamber and the relay up in the wall.

The next step was to obtain funding for reconstruction of the cinema and the organ. A press conference was held to

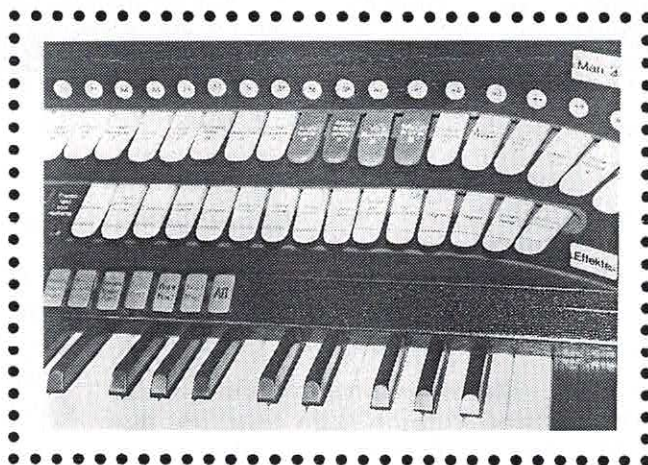
demonstrate the organ to the management and to the press. **Liers** provided a console and ran a cable from his console in the loges to the chamber. He got 4 ranks playing after all those 30-plus years. This resulted in favourable publicity, and a preservation order was obtained from the court for the restoration of the organ and the cinema. **Dr Liers** received 25,00 deutschemarks for his project to rebuild the instrument, and an organ shop was set up backstage.

Shortly after the appearance of an article about the **Babylon** organ in the **Berlin** newspaper, *Tagespiel*, **Liers** received a small package in the post with no return address. The package contained the missing siren and an unsigned letter telling him that it was from the **Babylon** organ. **Liers** is still looking for the only missing piece, the drum, and he thinks that it would also be returned if he advertised for it.

The exterior of the console was refinished with new veneer by a cabinet-maker, and a new **Philips** nameplate was ordered. The 3 new tabs, the **Vox Humana** 8', **Waldhorn** 8' and **Lotosflöte** 8', replaced the defective ones. The restoration includes: all new gold contacts; all new connections to the cable inside the console; all new coils; new **Reisner** magnets - 750 large ones and 200 small ones. All the magnets are 90 ohms, 15 volts. **Liers** made a new console electronic relay himself. There are 100 stop tablets, 20 press switches, 6



The console of the Babylon Philips Kinoorgel, showing the setter board above the keyboards and the tabs



Close-up of part of the console

pistons, 8 toe-studs and 2 expression pedals.

The **Ventus** blower is the original 1929 blower - 8.5 horsepower, 300mm pressure. The manufacturer, **August Laukhuff** of **Weikersheim, Germany**, is still in business, and the **Ventus** and the smaller **Ventola** blowers are still made today. The **Vox Humana** is under extra pressure and has a separate, small tremulant. The tremulants are located in the blower room.

The setter board is located across the top of the front of the console, enabling the organist to set the free combinations from the console, whereas **American** organs would have them in the back of the console or have the setter boards in drawers. Of the 100 stop tablets on the stop

rail, 51 stops would have a number above the stop, e.g. 42, **Tibia Clausa** 8', **Manual** 2. The number 42 would be located on the setter board and set. Six pistons under the lower **Manual** 1 control the 5 free combinations, plus an "AB" **Ausschalten**, or cancel. Ten press switches over the upper **Manual** 2 control the fixed combinations with an AB (cancel). Eight couplers are to the right of the fixed combinations with an AB cancel switch.

Dr Liers invited me to lunch at his apartment, where his wife had prepared a delicious meal. His son, who speaks fluent English, translated for us to ensure that I got all the information correct. During our conversations **Dr Liers** told me that the only place he would like to visit is **Sydney, Australia**, to see the **Sydney Town Hall** organ. He was surprised that I had played the organ in 1986, along with **Bob Vaughn**, during the "Pipes Down Under" tour. The next time I'm in **Australia** I will send him a postcard of the **Town Hall** with its 64' **Contra-trombone** stop.

The **Babylon** organ will be a showcase for **Dr Liers'** organ building abilities. His workmanship is clearly superior and I could tell it was a labour of love. His career in the organ business is off to a good start. The auditorium was full of scaffolding when I visited the **Babylon**, and the organ will probably be playing before the ceiling is fixed.

FOR SALE

LOWREY ORGAN

H25-4/C500

Theatre Console

Price : \$3,000

Contact: Jim

on (02) 533 4093

LOST

At the Phil Kelsall Weekend

A Gold, Clip, Filigree

Ear-ring

If someone found it, could

you please ring Mrs Jarvis

on (047) 588023

FOR SALE

LOWREY ORGAN

"Celebration"

Excellent Condition

With Stool, Books, Music

\$7,500 o.n.o.

Phone :(02) 713 6672

RAY THORNLEY CONCERT Report

Orion Centre Campsie **(by Barry Tooker)** Sunday, 25th June, 1995

The house lights dimmed and an unseen announcer introduced the artist. The stage curtain rose, revealing a colourfully-lit back curtain, as the sounds of the Mighty *Wurlitzer* filled the air. **Ray Thornley** rose from the pit seated at the console, playing *Happy Days Are Here Again* - an appropriate number for the start of a great concert.



Ray at the console of the Orion Wurlitzer

Selections from **Lionel Bart's *Oliver***

followed and included such numbers as *Consider Yourself, Where Is Love?, Oom-Pah-Pah, I'd Do Anything, Food, Glorious Food* and *Pick a Pocket or Two*.

A beautiful rendition of **Cole Porter's *Forgotten Dreams*** followed and then we were treated to two tunes made famous by the great **Fats Waller**, *Stormy Weather* and *Ain't Misbehaving* from the films of the same names. This selection featured the haunting sounds of the 8' and 5 1/3' Tibias and piano.

Leaving Tin Pan Alley for a while, **Ray** played the ever beautiful *Sleeping Beauty Waltz* by **Tchaikovsky**.

Under a pile of bricks and rubble on a demolition site, **Ray** found a pile of old 78rpm records. After careful cleaning and inspection, one which took his fancy was called *Taming the Tenor*, a novelty number played on tenor banjo. **Ray** made good use of the piano and xylophone when playing this tune.

From the 1930's came a melancholy version of *My Funny Valentine*, then he

took us into the interval break with four main themes from **Sigmund Romberg's *Desert Song***. Now it was time for a welcome "cuppa", served by our obliging ladies auxiliary, and a bit of social chit-chat.

The second half of the program started with the raffle draw, and then **Ray** re-appeared from the depths, playing the *Middy March* as the house lights dimmed. From this he progressed to selections from **Gilbert and Sullivan's** comic opera, *The Pirates of Penzance*. This included *Oh Better for to Live and Die* or *I Am a Pirate King*, *Oh There Is Not a Lady's Breast*, *A Policeman's Lot is Not a Happy One*, *Poor Wandering One* and *With Cat-like Tread*.

A complete change of pace and sound now as he used the Solo String and Chrysoglott to play *Meditation*. This brilliantly demonstrated what can be done with the quieter stops. It was quite a change from the fuller organ sounds.

Next we heard the syncopated sounds of **Scott Joplin's *Maple Leaf Rag***.

Ray explained how **Jerome Kern** gave life and feeling to the shows he composed, leaving one feeling that the music really belonged. Such as with *Showboat* which puts you in the mood of living and travelling on one of the great **Mississippi** paddle steamers plying the river. *Only Make Believe, Why Do I Love You, Bill* and,

of course, *Old Man River* were tunes played from this great musical.

A **Billy Joel** selection gave us *I Love You Just The Way You Are* and *Root Beer Rag*. As a finale, he played a Neapolitan Tarantella, *La Danza* by **Gioachino Rossini**.

However the audience would not let him go without an encore, so the ever-obliging **Ray** returned to play *Anchors Aweigh*.

I like **Ray's** orchestral arrangements and it is obvious that he goes to great lengths to play a well rehearsed and balanced program. His use of some of the quieter and more subtle stops is refreshing, giving a good blend of contrasts in sound.

Once again **Miles**, our unseen lighting artist, did a superb job of enhancing the mood of the music.

Well done, **Ray**. We hope to see you back again next year.

Text and photo by Barry Tooker

NEXT MEMBERS' PLAYING NIGHT

at the Orion Centre, Campsie

Wednesday, 16th August, at 7.30pm

Tea and Coffee Provided. Bring a Small Item of Supper

EPPING BAPTIST CHURCH

is pleased to present

CLIFF BINGHAM

on the *Christie* Theatre Pipe Organ

together with

BARRY WILKINS

at the Grand Piano

in a concert of light popular music

Sunday, 27th August, 1995 at 2.30pm

Corner of Ray and Carlingford Roads, Epping

Suggested Donation : \$10 (Concession : \$5)

Enquiries : Church Office - 869 1951

OUR NEXT ARTIST : Direct From The USA

JOHN LEDWON

John Ledwon, a native of **California, USA**, has been playing the organ since he was 12 years old. His parents purchased him a 3-manual, 11-rank **Wurlitzer** when he was 15, and he has been associated with the theatre pipe organ ever since then.

John has toured the **United States** and **Europe** on several occasions as a concert artist and at one time had his own weekly radio show where he played the 4-manual, 61-rank **Robert Morton Theatre/Concert Organ** in the old **Elks Temple**. After a 15 year hiatus from the concert circuit to pursue his

career in education and to serve both as Director and National President of the **American Theatre Organ Society**, **John** is now returning to the concert and recording field.

In the past year, he has released four recordings from his personally designed 4-manual 52-rank **Wurlitzer Theatre Organ** installed in his **Agoura, California**, home. Three of these recordings are a set of cassettes containing Christian music and the Fourth is a CD entitled **Wurlitzer on Stage and Screen** and consists of music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber, John Williams** and **Leonard Bernstein**. **John**

presently has a fifth recording entitled *Sounds of Love* which was to be released late in July this year. This CD will include the most requested love songs in **John's** 30 year tenure as principal organist at a popular Southern Californian Wedding Chapel. He figures he has played over 2,000 weddings to date, having started working there when he was 14.

While **John** plays pop music from all periods, he favours music that has been composed in the past 30 years. His program will be varied with selections from the 1920's onward to current pop tunes.