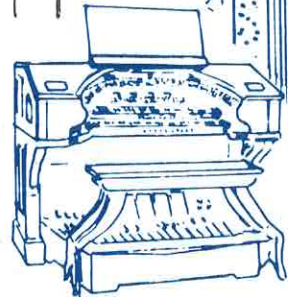


TOSA NEWS

DONT FORGET
NOTABLE NINTH
SYDNEY



Price 40¢

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA, N.S.W. DIVISION

ADDRESS BOX A584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 18th March : MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL 7.30 p.m.

Club Night and Quarterly Meeting A short business meeting will precede the Club night on this date. Members are asked to forward to the Secretary, Mr E. Vale, 49 Boomerang St, Haberfield any business which they wish to discuss. Only those items so recieved by Tuesday 11th March will be discussed. Members and friends will be able to play and listen to the organ and during the evening supper will be served by the Ladies Auxiliary. We look forward to seeing you all there.

Saturday 29th March: HOME PARTY 8.00 p.m. MR & MRS CAMELL

Arthur and Dorothy have arranged an evening of music around their Thomas Celebrity organ. Featured at the console will be Raymond Turner. The details of this young gentlemans ability can be found in February issue of T.O.S.A. News. Book early on 53.9891 as accommodation is limited to 60. The address is: 63 Johnstone Street, Peakhurst. Admission: Gents \$2.50, Ladies \$1.50 plus a plate and all the proceeds will be given to T.O.S.A.

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Friday 4th to Monday 7th April:

Australian Theatre Organ Society National Convention. You have previously received booking forms and brochures covering the full programme. Hurry and book you would not want to miss the wonderful week-end, this promises to be. Anyone who does not have a booking form, please contact the booking Secretary Mr Ron Smith 529.7379.

Saturday 19th April: HOME PARTY

At residence of Arthur and Ruth Sims, 25 Springdale Road, Wentworthville. This is a further opportunity to meet socially around the organ console. The Sims have a eminent 2000 organ and as this is the first chance we have had to visit here, book early as accommodation is limited to approximately 30. Phone 631.9767. Admission: Gents \$2.00, Ladies \$1.50 plus a plate.

Sunday 18th May: MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL 2.30 p.m.

David Parsons has played both Sydney Town Hall and Sydney Opera House organs and has appeared many times on the State, Capitol and Marrickville organs, and on this date returns to Marrickville to again display his talent at the console of our own pipe organ. An item of interest to those who may not be fully aware of David's musical ability, some years ago David represented Australia in Japan at the Yamaha organ playing competition finals, and finished quite high on the list of finalists. Admission: Adults \$4.00, Members \$3.00, Pensioners and Children \$2.00.

Friday 6th June: MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL 6.45 p.m.

Mid-year Cabaret. As it is a little early to obtain catering details and prices, all details for this event which incidently is growing in popularity will be published at a later date. So jot it down in your diary and keep it free.

WEEK-END COACH TOUR OF HUNTER VALLEY An interesting and somewhat different outing has been organised for members. Details are set out below: Coach departs Marrickville Town Hall at 6.30 p.m. FRIDAY 24th OCTOBER, 1980 Travelling via Pacific Highway to Newcastle where Bed & Breakfast are arranged. Saturday 25th October, tour of POKOLBIN Vinyard district. Lunch and inspection of Wyndham Estate or Hungerford (this detail to be finalised), Dinner, Bed & Breakfast back at Newcastle.

Sunday 26th October, proceed to Swan Bay oyster farm where you will be taken by launch to view the Leases. Seafood luncheon provided. The coach on the return trip will stop at Peats Ridge for afternoon tea thence on to Marrickville Town Hall, arriving at approximately 5.30 p.m. The cost of this tour is \$76.00 which includes all lunches, dinner, bed & breakfast, plus all tours and inspections. The fare DOES NOT include morning and afternoon teas.

A deposit of \$10.00 is required when making your booking and the final payment of balance to be made by 26th September, 1980 (Please make cheques payable to T.O.S.A.) People interested in this week-end please contact Mrs Phyl Wilson 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba 2195 or phone 759.6050. Book now avoid disappointment. Fare and itinerary subject to alteration.

FOR SALE HAMMOND CONCORDE Excellent condition. Little use. Current model 2/61 note manuals 25 note pedal board. Comprehensive rythm unit. P.O.A. phone Ian Pogson 86.3199.

The article on KNIGHT BARNETT on page 8 is reproduced from the ADELAIDE ADVERTISER Friday January 25th 1980.

The second side opens with a bright, breezy, up tempo version of "Cabaret" - good full registrations - an interesting ballady break in the middle - then return to full registrations at the end. You can almost imagine Liza Minelli strutting across the stage.

"Waters of Perkiomen" was a tune well known in the U.S.A. - but I believe not so in Australia. The last version I have of it on record was made in the early 1960's by old time Theatre Organist Gus Farney - Walter's is more appealing.

"Broadway Rhythm" captures the spirit of a place as exciting as Broadway must have been when this number was written. Walter manages to capture an urgency in the interpretation of this piece, it's easy to visualize the busy traffic and bustling crowds. The magnificent full ensemble sound of the Chicago Wurlitzer is displayed to full advantage during the playing of this piece.

The "Jesse Crawford Sound" reappears in "Forgotten Melody" which was Crawford's radio theme. The piece is a ballad, sympathetically played, and those beautiful string and string celeste ranks (with which this Wurlitzer is well endowed) are featured in several short passages. This and the previous track are undoubtedly the highlights of this recording.

"Tonight" from West Side Story" was popular in the early 1960's and at that time was more than a little overplayed. It's refreshing to hear an imaginative treatment of a tune from the immediate past. Unfortunately, as with most Wurlitzers, the organ doesn't take too kindly to the untremmed passage in the middle but this in only a minor fault. "Tonight" makes a fine closing number for this album.

As one can see from reading the preceeding review the recording contains a good cross section of old and new evergreens - superbly played. This record is strongly recommended for your record rack.

It is hoped to next month publish a review of Walter's second and latest record album - recorded at the Organ Stop Pizza Restaurant in Phoenix. Walter's technique has developed since the recording of his first album in 1977 it will be interesting to read of his latest recording effort.

RECORD REVIEW

by Robert Gliddon

SIDNEY TORCH AT THE THEATRE ORGAN 1932 - 1939

Available at the Record Shop during the 1980 "Notable Ninth" Convention.

Much information is currently in print in the pages of T.O.S.A. News in regard to the Theatre Organ career of the great Sidney Torch, it is therefore unnecessary that any of this be repeated.

For those of our number who make it part of their hobby to collect old 78 R.P.M. recordings, one of the ultimate goals is a complete set of all the records made by Sidney Torch.

RECORD REVIEW

by Robert Gliddon

WALTER STRONY PLAYS THE CHICAGO THEATRE WURLITZER.

Available at the Record Shop during the "Notable Ninth" Convention.

This recording marks an important milestone in theatre organ recordings for two reasons:-

1. It is the first commercial recording made by Walter Strony - our special guest artist at the "Notable Ninth" Convention.
2. This is the first time that the famous Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer has been recorded on L.P. record, and almost certainly the instrument hasn't been recorded commercially since the legendary Jesse Crawford made some 78's at the Chicago way back in the early 1920's.

It was on the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer that Jesse Crawford first really became a nationally known identity in the U.S.A. When Crawford married Helen Anderson (during his residency at the Chicago), she too was a well known theatre organiste, the Chicago Wurlitzer sprouted a second console. Eventually when the husband and wife team moved on, they became the highest paid duo act in America, playing the twin consoled 4/36 Wurlitzer at the famous New York Paramount.

A brief personal history of Walter Strony has appeared in the February issue of T.O.S.A. News, so we won't repeat what has already previously been published. It is important to note, however, that Walter has been closely associated with the Chicago Theatre Wurlitzer, both as a member of the restoration team, and since that time in a professional playing capacity. An intimate knowledge of this instrument is revealed in the expert way this young artist has approached the making of this recording.

The opening track is a combination of the old favourite "Chicago" and "Chicago is" (my kind of Town) the second tune having some years ago been popularised by Frank Sinatra. A most appropriate opener by this Chicago born organist.

"Send in the Clowns" a tune of recent times is given a suitable sad, reflective treatment - this is a most difficult piece in which to keep the listener's interest, but Walter certainly succeeds.

"You Didn't have to Tell Me" is a track right out of the 1920's - played in true "Crawford Style".

Likewise track four is an obvious tribute to Crawford with a direct take of his famous arrangement of "I Love to Hear you Singing". It certainly proves that the Chicago Wurlitzer was tailored to Crawford's unique style.

Many years ago George Wright recorded an album of Gershwin including "The Man I Love" - Walter's version of this famous composition compares favourably with Wright's.

"My Hero" from "The Chocolate Soldier" has been recorded by numerous U.S. console artists from Crawford in the 1920's to Lyn Larsen in the 1970's. Though a favourite of many this reviewer finds it a dull, done to death work - Walt makes it as interesting as it could possibly ever be.

Those of you who are not so keen to seek out these records in second hand shops and radio stations, will be delighted to know of a release by the Doric Recording Group of California of 24 tracks of vintage Torch in one double album. This recording has been available previously, and is now again available from our record sales counter at concerts.

All tracks on this record set are made on some of Britain's most important and best-loved theatre instruments:- The legendary 4/36 rank Christie Unit Organ of the "Regal, Marble Arch", the 3/12 Wurlitzer of the "Regal, Kingston on Thames", the 4/15 Christie Unit Organ of the "Regal, Edmonton" (many have said the best Christie ever built), the 4/16 Wurlitzer of the "Gaumont State, Kilburn", (the only Wurlitzer designed to Torch's specifications and tonally adjusted to his particular requirements), and one track on the 3/8 Compton Organ of the "E.M.I. Studios, Abbey Road, London". (This organ was best known in this country for the numerous recordings of the "The Organ, the Dance Band & Me" series in which H. Robinson Cleaver played the organ part).

Rather than attempt to write a completely new review of this really superb double album set, it is intended to quote from the jacket notes on the record, as these will give the reader a more expert resume than this reviewer is capable of providing.

Jeepers Creepers - Torch does for Jeepers Creepers what horses did for racing. The beautiful slow introduction into the verse, the French Trumpet solo in the second half of the verse together with the tasteful use of the xylophone in the accompaniment set the stage for the chorus take-off using the Krumet and full brass in the finale. A typical Torch upbeat tune.

REMEMBER ME - This is an exciting rendition played in with an orchestral style, complete with trumpet licks, and word following phrasing. It's almost possible to hear the organ saying "Remember Me" especially at the ending where the word "Remember" seems to be repeated for the final emphasis - another example of great artistry. The test? -listen for the words!

A TISKET-A TASKET - Torch's registration without tremulant created a sensation in England and came as a great surprise to American listeners when they first heard his recordings many years ago. It is evident in the first chorus with the English Horn melody and the Clarinet as used in the bridge. The minor key take-off is unique and very orchestral and is followed by the big Wurlitzer sound which is non-the-less so very clean and crisp.

BUTTERFLIES IN THE RAIN - This is the first track of the 36 rank Christie, the largest theatre organ built and installed in Europe. A short tune with a lot of humor and cynicism, as evidenced in the use of "The Secret" as a break between the two choruses. Listen to the gossiping in this novelty section, followed by a minor key take-off showing off the big reeds.

THE MERRY-GO-ROUND BROKE DOWN - Opening with the carnival sound of a merry-go-round band organ, this tune is unusual in that it has four measure breaks - again a Torch arrangement to dramatize the dragging out of a mechanical break down. Listen for the ending where Torch at appropriate time turns off the organ and ends the tune as the wind pressure drops in the organ - original and unique!

LOVE AND LEARN - This is one of the best examples of piano registration and execution ever recorded. It is heard in the first chorus backed by the xylophone followed by a fantastic second chorus with piano drawn on the pedal, accompaniment and solo with melody played on second touch. The clean piano arpeggios are a delight to hear.

TWELFTH STREET RAG - A fine Torch arrangement of a rag tune. The English Horn used in the beginning followed by the piano accompaniment are by now the Torch trademarks. Clarinet without tremolo licks followed by a well executed clarinet chorus are replete with orchestral arrangements and clean execution. Truly a classic!

SONG OF INDIA - This is a prime example of Torch's orchestral style, using an arrangement which in the only instance in this issue not his own. Being an accomplished musician, he can sight read well as in this selection. He many times used two copies of music to eliminate the possibility of a pause which might have occurred while turning the page!

TEDDY BEAR'S PICNIC - This is one of the most delightful novelty numbers recorded during Torch's career as a theatre organist. With the Krumet used in the melody line to add humor, Torch romps with joy through the descriptive tune. Listen for the last two notes on the 16' English Horn. On hearing that a friend's cat had broken his only copy of this recording accidentally, Torch remarked, "The cat shows remarkable taste!"

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT A SOLDIER - This is a multi-faceted arrangement which literally turned the English record buying public on its ear! Crisp regal and military, it was a sensation. Note how Torch USES the facilities of this great organ, now removed, in this selection.

DANCE OF THE BLUE MARIONETTES - Here we are treated to a Torch novelty tune utilizing many of the percussions and orchestral effects of which this organ had an abundance. Listen to the fine display of the many fine reeds - bright, fast and capable of rapid staccato response so necessary for his fast execution.

THEY ALL START WHISTLING MARY - This selection shows off many of the sound effects possible on this superb instrument, one of Torch's favourites. Listen for the piccolo solo with Bass Drum, Snare Drum and Cymbal accompaniment. The several straight ranks are evident in this number, which lend to the crisp definition revered by Torch.

HOT DOG - This is the most famous recording that Torch made! It's pure razz-ma-tazz. The second chorus using the tuned bird whistles, the pedal runs, the horn licks in the third chorus and the finale are without equal in the annals of theatre organ recordings! Truly a Torch Classic - and a fitting selection with which to end this presentation!

NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members and hope your membership with us will prove very enjoyable.

Ken & June Knight, Gynea Bay, A.J. Anderson, Westleigh, Arthur & Mary Hall & Margaret, Hurstville, Norm & Cecily Paddy, Penshurst, Mr & Mrs D.W. Hooke, Lakemba, Paul & Pam Kelly, Engadine, Jim & Nancy Dickinson, Emu Plains, James & Joyce Lawton, Beverley Hills, Mr & Mrs J. Whitehouse (John & Marj) Woy Woy, Dennis & Christine Clarke, Lithgow, Joan Salisbury, Pennant Hills.

THE FLYING SCOTSMAN - Annie Laurie riding the London & North Eastern Railways Flying Scotsman on the fastest trip it ever made from Edinburgh to London - 2 minutes and 35 seconds! One of the greatest renditions of descriptive music ever done on an organ. Note the fast tempo, clean playing, and the sound effects - especially the steam driven air pump which is heard at the end of the selection. The locomotive exhaust sound was made with the left forearm on the accompaniment keys.

YOU'RE A SWEETHEART - The only example of Torch recording on a Compton Theatre organ heard on this release. Note the snappy Xylophone solo on the second chorus. The fast tremolo setting heard on the Tibia Clausa at the beginning of this selection was prevalent in England during the 1930's.

WHERE ARE YOU? - A ballad from the film 'Top of the Town'. This has an intro in the middle of the recording, 'There's No Two Ways About It' with a snappy piano chorus.

BUGLE CALL RAG - Torch's experience as an orchestral arranger comes to the fore. The English Horn take-offs, the piano solo, the question and answer phrases, and the drum and cymbal breaks are evidence of his skill in arranging, here very much in evidence.

WHAT GOES UP MUST COME DOWN - Here's a tune from the 'Cotton Club Parade' which is big, brash and brassy but in such good taste. Listen carefully for the glockenspiel in under the big band sound - exquisite phrasing and beautiful expression give it a very orchestral flavour.

I HADN'T ANYONE 'TILL YOU - This always popular Noble tune is well done as an upbeat ballad. Listen for the English Horn intro to the second chorus and the tasteful use of the resources of the organ throughout this fine selection.

WHEN EAST MEETS WEST (part 1) - The three selections on side two, record one provide a good opportunity to hear the metal tibia for which Christie was famous. It is interesting to note that Wurlitzer rebuilt this organ in 1949 and replaced the metal tibia with a standard scale wood Wurlitzer Tibia Clausa together with its own regulator and tremolo!

WHEN EAST MEETS WEST (part 2) - Many of the modern tricks which today's theatre organists use are found to exist on these recordings. Note the ending chord with the sudden cancellation of the stops leaving only the vibraphone holding the notes - proving the old adage "There's nothing new in music".

BEI MIR BIS DU SCHON - Here a ballad is moderately paced in the first chorus with a definite upbeat in the second. Listen for the orchestral trumpet licks in the bridge in the second chorus and the unusual fifteen second ending with Tibia Clausa and Vox Humana.

I HAVE EYES FOR YOU - This is about as ballad-like as Torch plays. Listen for the delicate inter-weaving left hand accompaniment and counter melody. As he sometimes did, he introduces a second selection in medley style. Its interesting to listen to the answering phrases in the breaks.

WHEN DAY IS DONE - Torch wastes no time in putting the world to bed in this upbeat tempo ballad. This is done in the typical Torch style, quite a departure from most readings which usually die a slow death.

KNIGHT'S MELODY PLAYS ON

Knight Barnett riding the glittering Regent organ as it rose grandly from the gloom ... the opulent theatre awash with magnificent music...

That's how many Adelaide people fondly remember it, but the odd thing is, the Regent organ never rose from the depths, it was firmly fixed to the stage. The lights went up, but Knight Barnett didn't.

He can't explain why so many people remember it the way it wasn't. "But they get pleasure from the memory. Nowadays, I haven't the heart to tell them".

Of course, in his time Knight (Jack) Barnett drove several organs which did ascend. There was one in Sydney which not only escalated, it majestically turned sideways as it reached stage level.

Inevitably, there were organs which played up like slow-starting cars, leaving him trapped below or hoisted high and dry on an organ which wouldn't budge.

It was nostalgia day when I visited Jack Barnett, 76, in his Rosslyn Park home. I'd been writing about the SA Theatre Organ Society and his name came up.

This it was bound to do. For years Jack Barnett was the resident organist at the Regent Theatre in Adelaide.

Before that he was well known in Sydney, and equally well known for his ABC radio "Melody Land" broadcasts and as organist at the Cottage Theatre.

He still plays publicly now and then, he teaches, and he'll probably be on the roster when the SA Theatre Organ Society's project with Capri cinema is completed.

The society has bought the Capri and is paying off a big mortgage, a bold step indeed, especially as its main aim is simply a home for an organ.

It is one that TOSA bought in Darwin. It already has one in Pulteney Grammar School, and access to the former Regent organ in St. Peter's College.

The latest acquisition is being lovingly restored.

Meantime TOSA has to make the Capri work as a cinema. The present method is to let it to Valhalla, a film-showing organisation also run by enthusiasts.

The theatre organ society has a paid basic staff, but the cinema is mostly manned by TOSA volunteers working on rosters.

Chambers are being built for the organ, which will eventually be restored to all its former glory, with a few modern touches.

One of these is to put the pipes and the "instruments" into glass cases, illuminated so that audiences can watch them, apparently played by invisible performers.

It's an idea being used in pizza palaces in America, where the Great American Wind Machines, or theatre organs, are almost as popular as the pizzas.

There's a new, growing - and younger - audience for theatre organs. Some of the support comes through nostalgia, most of it from sheer enjoyment of melodious music.

Good news for such as Knight Barnett who's had a lifelong love affair with organs. He played his first (church) organ when he was 12.

He was once a Sydney radio announcer winding up the gramophone, hoping it wouldn't slow down before the end of the record, filling in breaks with recitations and piano medleys.

His wife, a professional violinist, played in the radio station's trio which later grew to be the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. So Jack Barnett can say he conducted the orchestra when it was a baby.

He also directed cinema orchestras. Then he mounted the Wurlitzers, vamping and improvising fitting the music to the movie, to the capers of Keystone Cops and the tears of Talmadge.

In those silent film days the organist had to be not only nimble-fingered but quickwitted as well. Nowadays he'd probably find it a strain.

But he still plays that Regent Organ. He has a key to St. Peters College Hall, and he nips in there now and again to play for pleasure. "It's the best organ I ever played - and I've played them all."

He means every Australian cinema organ. During World War II his Army unit moved from city to city and while other soldiers popped into pubs he nipped into cinemas and played their organs.

For those of us who had trouble sorting out left and right on the piano there's magic in a man who handles those mighty organ consoles so confidently.

I suppose he was born to it. Before I left, he played a record which he and Tom King made years ago, the two of them on one piano, romping through ragtime like Liberace.

It is marvellous stuff, bouncy and bright, integrated, syncopated, and perfectly timed although he told me they had little rehearsal, and no music. Just two minds in tune.

It wafted me out into the sunlight, still humming those old tunes. On the way back to the city I told taxi-driver George Delaney about the interview.

"Knight Barnett?" he said excitedly, "Knight Barnett? Of course I remember. I'll never forget that old Regent organ, rising in a blaze of lights, the walls shuddering with those wonderful bass notes."

There it was again, the organ-rising bit. I simply hadn't the heart to tell him.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Members will be pleased to hear that Anita the 10 month old granddaughter of Mr & Mrs Doug Smith our Vice President who was in hospital with a bad virus attack which brought on convulsions is now much improved and has been allowed to go home. We trust that Anita is now fully recovered.

Mrs Hall, the mother of Margaret the Mecca Kogarah organist, has gone home from hospital where she has been for the last month. We hope she is now fully recovered.

Members will be sorry to hear of the passing of Mr Held, the father of member Peter Held. We extend our sympathy to Peter in his sad loss.

10...

Sunday 3rd February, 50 members gathered at the home of Ron & Phyl Wilson for an enjoyable relaxed evening of embracing swimming. Barbecue Tea and plenty of good music from the organ, piano and guitar. Whilst members brought their own steak a special vote of thanks must go to Ron & Phyl for the superb array of salads they supplied.

Also a thankyou to Robert Gliddon who donated 2 pipe organ records to be raffled, the tickets for these sold well and the whole evening netted the Society almost \$130.00. During the evening a cake with an illuminated Question Mark was brought in as it was well known member Bill Schumacher birthday. A great effort and once again our thanks to Ron & Phyl.

Due to circumstances beyond my control the continuation of articles relating to Ladies of the Console will not appear in this issue but will be included at a later date.
