

TOSA NEWS

Jan/Feb 2011
Volume 50 No.1

Price: \$2.00

SUNDAY 20th February 2:00PM
Orion Theatre, Campsie
Bill Schumacher



**Plays the
3/17 Mighty Wurlitzer**

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From the President



A Happy New Year to all.

Thank you to all of our members who have supported our shows during 2010. It was a good year as we celebrated our 50th Anniversary despite several set-backs. I would like to acknowledge the hard working Committee members who went the extra mile to ensure the show went on. With the hoist problems at the Orion commencing in May, we were fortunate that Marrickville Town Hall was available with only one alteration to our planned dates. To those members who were inconvenienced by this, I offer my sincere apologies.

With ongoing problems at the Orion, we have been able to arrange temporary storage of the Wurlitzer and its piano on the stage. The Council has advised that, with the repairs having been unsuccessful, it is anticipated that the hoist will be replaced in the next few weeks. At least we have access to our instrument now regardless of any further delays.

The program for the next six months appears in this publication. Reserve the dates – your Committee is determined that as we enter our 51st year the standard will not only be maintained, but continue to improve.

Late Breaking News on the Christie proposal, see second last page.

See you on February 20th at Campsie, and don't forget – bring a friend.

Happy organizing
Geoff Brimley

Editorial



You will find a shopping list of CDs and Cassettes in this issue of Tosa News available for your purchase at our shows or to be ordered by mail for postage to you if you are unable to make it to a show. Please use the enclosed form to order a CD or Cassette to be posted to you.

This issue also includes Your Diary of TOSA activities and shows for 2011 up to and including July.

In addition there is details of the Dinner Dance at Marrickville Town Hall on Saturday 12 March with Mathew Loeser playing the dance music on our great Wurlitzer. Mathew has put considerable time into preparing suitable dance tempo music for your enjoyment.

The Dinner Dance booking form is enclosed so you can invite your friends to come along and enjoy the night. There will be spot prizes and a floor show so even if you don't dance you can still have a great social evening.

Deadline for TOSA News is the 12th of the previous month.

Enjoy the music,
Ernie Vale
PO Box A2322
SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235
editor@tosa.net.au

From the Mailbox...



Thanks for your responses and please continue to email or write in, telling us what you think.

Where space permits we will do our best to publish your comments, but as space is limited, the editor reserves the right to edit any submitted comments and, as always, the views expressed by any individual may not necessarily coincide with the views of TOSA NSW Div.

Please submit all comments via email to:

The Editor editor@tosa.net.au

or in writing to:

The Editor - TOSA News (NSW Div)

PO Box A2322

SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

New Members

TOSA welcome these new members & wish them a long and happy stay

Shirley Neich - Birchgrove

Helen Neich - Birchgrove

Members Change of Address

If you are moving house, or change your email address please advise the Membership Secretary of your new address and/or email address by phoning (02) 9524 7203 or email membership@tosa.net.au

New Service for TOSA

(NSW) Divn Members

Theatre Organ Sheet Music Collection & Lending Library

TOSA express our appreciation to all members who donated theatre organ sheet music to the new collection. The collection is finalised and has been catalogued. Thank you Graham Glendenning for undertaking this project.

Further information regarding the collection will appear in TOSA News shortly.

From David Alldred

Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust

I have just heard the splendid news that our friend, colleague and Vice President of the L.T.O.T. **Len Rawle** has been honoured in the Queen's New Year List with an **M.B.E.**

We are all aware of the tremendous work Len has done over the years in all aspects of Theatre Organ preservation and promotion world wide and congratulate him on this Honour which is richly deserved.

I have spoken to Len and conveyed to him congratulation and best wishes on behalf of the Trust.

All best wishes for 2011.

David.

TOSA NSW send our hearty congratulations to **Len Rawle M.B.E.** on this well deserved Award.

Two TOSA NSW Members

CHECK OUT THE CAPRI THEATRE
"When we arrived around 5pm we were invited to join a special group of young people and their parents for an introduction to the lovely Wurlitzer organ with all its bells, whistles and toy counter. Ross spoke about the history of the organ and Peter Hale played and demonstrated the many different organ styles. It happened to be Ross's birthday and as a surprise Peter played Happy Birthday and we all sang.

"It's such a lovely theatre with very special organ chambers either side behind glass so there's lots to watch, and it was played to great advantage.

The theatre has beautiful chandeliers, plush carpet and comfortable velvet seats in the dress circle. The theatre is handy to Adelaide city - just a quick tram ride and short walk. We really appreciated TOSA's friendly welcome to two interstate enthusiasts unexpectedly visiting the Capri Theatre. It was the highlight of our Adelaide visit."

Emailing of TOSA News

If you would like to receive your TOSA News each month by email it will be in living color as a pdf file which makes it so easy to file.

Please advise the Membership Secretary on membership@tosa.net.au with your name and membership number with a copy to the Editor on editor@tosa.net.au that you wish to receive TOSA News by email.

Advertising Rates in TOSA News

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Small bubble = \$11.00

Quarter Page = \$24.75

Half Page = \$49.50

Full Page = \$99.00

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

Members' Playing Dates 2011

The Orion Theatre Campsie 2nd Thursday 1:30pm - 4:30pm

February	10th
March	10th

Please phone or SMS

Craig Keller on 0418 484 798

Players and listeners welcome.

Please bring a plate of goodies for afternoon tea.

Tea/Coffee provided. Parking at rear off Shakespeare St.

Marrickville Town Hall 4th Monday evening at 7:30pm

The organ is currently undergoing maintenance and will not be available for members to play until further notice from Neil Palmer.

To be sure there is no last minute cancellation at Marrickville please ring Neil on 9798 6742 after 7:00pm

TOSA NSW

Shopping List of Music

ATWELL John, Australia's Mighty Little Wurlitzer, Marrickville Town Hall.
CD \$25

ATWELL John, Here's Malvern! Malvern Town Hall, Victoria,
Compton Pipe Organ. CD \$25

BAKER Barry, For the Very First Time. Wehmeier Wurlitzer, Ohio.
Cassette \$12

BALOGH Charlie, Pipes Plus. Good Time Charley's Wurlitzer,
Grand Rapids. Cassette \$12

EDDINGTON Jelani, Peter and the Wolf & Other Selections. Plummer
Auditorium Wurlitzer. CD \$26

FENELON Tony, Theatre Organ Magic. Melbourne Regent Wurlitzer in the
1960's. CD \$28

HELD Peter, Plays light music on electronic organ. CD \$10

KELSALL Phil, Welcome to My World. Tower Ballroom, Blackpool. CD \$25

PARKER Donna, Lady Elsinore. Elsinore Theatre's Wurlitzer Pipe Organ
CD \$25

RICHARDS Rob, Now Playing. El Capitan Theatre Wurlitzer Pipe Organ
CD \$25

VALLIANT Brett, Lyric Wurlitzer. Little River Studio 3/19 Wurlitzer,
Wichita. CD \$20

WRIGHT George, Let George Do It. Pasadena Studio Wurlitzer. CD \$28

GLEDHILL/DOUBLE/RIGGS/PARKER/HERMAN, Alabama Jubilee.
Alabama Theatre Wurlitzer. 2 Disc set \$35

These items are available for purchase at TOSA shows.

**They may be ordered for postage by adding \$2.00 for postage and
handling using the enclosed form.**

**TOSA NSW Division
50th Anniversary
Commemorative Coffee Mugs**

The mug has a colour picture of the Orion Wurlitzer on one side and a colour picture of the Marrickville Wurlitzer on the other side. It has a double gold rim with gold lettering and gold music notes.

This memento of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia NSW Division's 50th Anniversary would make a very attractive gift.

There is a limited production of the mugs and they will be available to purchase only at our shows until sold out. They come in a special box.

**The price is \$25 per mug or
a set of four (4) mugs for \$80 or a set of six (6) mugs for \$110**



TOSA Members Return to The Orion, Campsie: 11 November, 2010. *From John Batts*

The 11th November was indeed a day to remember this time round, because this was the first TOSA(NSW) members' afternoon at The Orion Centre, Campsie, since last April.

We found that the organ-console lift was free from scaffolding, and worked satisfactorily for the time being. It is understood that Health & Safety Regulations will be met after further work is completed in the New Year.

Despite what seemed little enough notice, this second Thursday of the month attracted numerous organists and a small band of loyal listeners. And apart from one occasional small string cipher, our enforced neglect of the instrument did not breed tantrums from the chambers. Indeed, reeds apart, even the tuning had remained steady. It was good to be back.

The players that day on the bench of this 3-17 (ex-Capitol Theatre) Wurlitzer were: Tom Barber, Ian Georgeson, Peter Held, Ron Ivin, Craig Keller, Deirdre McMullan, Theo Langenberg (an assured first-timer despite being pressured to play!) and John Batts.

David McMullan was once more present to encourage the players and to help with arrangements; welcome refreshments were kindly provided by his wife, Deirdre. Other listeners were Ernie Vale and Colin Groves.

JOHN WALL HOME PARTY 28TH NOVEMBER 2010

TOSA members enjoyed the hospitality of our Treasurer John Wall at his Oyster Bay Home Party on Sunday 28th November where the main attraction was the Rogers Trio organ.



It started life being installed at Paddington - Woollahra RSL Club in 1982 with Ian Davies playing it regularly and is the only Rogers Trio "C" in the country. Ian was also the resident organist at Bondi Junction - Waverley RSL Club and once again played a Rogers Trio.

By the 90's Club administration had changed, the organ was sold and ended up in a nursing home for several years. Cliff Bingham bought it, mid 90's and installed it at his home.

John bought it from Cliff in 2003 - set it up in the Annandale home but is now residing at Oyster Bay, heading an 8 metre long room so that the 16 foot pitch notes will sound correctly.

John is building a virtual organ of 4 manuals in a studio/workshop down the back of the property and intending to keep the Rogers in a

preserved state as a heritage item.

At the opposite end of the room stands a Thalberg Piano Player with the inscription "Carnegie and Sons" Sole Agents, the player action made by Standard.



John's Mother bought it in the 60's and it resided in the family home until 2008 when it was moved to Oyster Bay.

The lead piping has been replaced with plastic tubing and apart from servicing and being tuned after 10 years, it is quite remarkable. John would appreciate any further information on Thalberg pianos.

Players during the afternoon were Craig Keller, Peter Robinson, Jean Alleway, Deirdre McMullan and John.

Afternoon tea was once again a

highlight of any TOSA function and we thank John for opening up his home for another successful TOSA Home Party.

Deirdre McMullan



Craig Keller



Jean Alleway

Show & Membership Prices

The following TOSA show ticket prices now apply:

	Australian Artists	Overseas Artists
Non-members	\$25.00	\$27.50
Non-member Pensioner/Senior	\$22.00	\$25.00
TOSA Members	\$20.00	\$20.00
Students 15-21yrs	\$10.00	\$10.00
Group Booking for 10 or more Adults	\$20 per person	

Child under 15yrs accompanying an adult: FREE!

Annual Membership Fees are now: \$30.00 for Full membership, and \$20.00 for Concession, Country, Interstate & Overseas.

Membership enquiries Bob Alleway 9524 7203 membership@tosa.net.au

Associate Membership for a spouse/partner is only an additional 50%

Vintage Fashion Fair Marrickville Town Hall December 10,11 & 12 2010



Peter Robinson



Deirdre McMullan



Craig Keller



The Rogers Trio "C"

Just to give you a quick report on the Vintage Fashion Fair which was held at Marrickville Town Hall on Friday, Saturday & Sunday last. The promoter Keith Baverstock heard the organ being played during Martin Ellis' practice session whilst being shown around the Hall by Louise Vaughan. Keith enquired about the possibility of using the organ during the Fair as it is normal policy to have some sort of live music segments usually by a small group playing suitable "vintage" music.

As Bill Schumacher was coming down for the Fenelon/Atwell show he extended his stay to play for the Fair. Bill has had many years playing in restaurants and knows very well how to do background organ music.

On Friday evening I went over to the Hall and with Bill's assistance unpacked the organ. Fortunately the console only needed covering up over the weekend as the Hall was well secured during non operating hours.

Friday evening there were a goodly number of customers looking around and buying the very well presented, high quality stock (it filled the main hall and stage area as well). The organ was played softly - no English Horn - and was further tamed by all the stock hanging on the many racks.

Saturday saw new member Theo Langenberg in attendance to answer any questions interested customers may have had. I understand from Bill that it was busy during the hours he played from 11.00 to 1400.

Sunday Ernie Vale, Neil Palmer and myself were there to do the necessities. Ernie even made a purchase - lucky Aye! By Sunday the stall holders and customers were showing their appreciation of the music with their applause at the end of each of Bill's segments. We certainly didn't make any enemies for the organ last weekend.

The next Fair is planned for May 2011 and indications are the organ will have a part to play again! We would have missed this opportunity had not Keith come on the right day. We need to negotiate with Marrickville Council to advertise the organ as being an important part of the Town Hall, after all it has been 42 years there and it was only 40 years in the Prince Edward Theatre. Incidentally, the same situation exists at Malvern Town Hall in Melbourne.

Thanks not only to Bill for playing but to Theo, Ernie and Neil for their help.

Robert Gliddon

With all the diets we hear and read about, it appears there are more problem eaters than drinkers.

Vale Warren Robins

6 March 1922 to 18 November 2010

Warren's father was a Theatre Organist and Warren also played the organ for many years. He was a valued member of TOSA and had many friends amongst the Theatre Organ players.

Warren successfully built his own electronic organ from a kit.

TOSA NSW express their condolences to Warren's family.

Vale James Dibble

Most will remember James as the ABC radio & television broadcaster.

James was a keen follower of Theatre Organ and was a member of TOSA for many years. He in fact compared the opening of the Wurritzer Organ in Marrickville Town Hall. James compared a number of shows for TOSA as well as the annual Waratah Festival Sydney Organ Spectacular at Sydney Town Hall in the haydays of electronic organs.

James owned and played a Rogers Theatre Organ for many years.

I WOULDN'T SAY MY FACE WAS GETTING MORE WRINKLED, BUT THE OTHER DAY IT TOOK A BEAD OF SWEAT TWO HOURS TO REACH MY CHIN

Mike Knowles

TOSA NSW Division Presents

Bill Schumacher



at the Orion Theatre,

155 Beamish St., Campsie

Playing the 3 Manual 17 Rank Mighty Wurlitzer

Sunday 20 February 2011 at 2:00pm

(Disabled access available at the entrance)

Free parking behind the theatre with access from Shakespeare St

Bookings: (02) 9629 2257

Visa & Mastercard accepted

for more information see www.tosa.net.au

BILL SCHUMACHER has given interstate concerts in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. During several visits to the USA, Bill has played a recital for the Puget Sound Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society, and has been guest artist at the Pizza and Pipes Restaurant in Seattle. Bill considers himself fortunate to have visited and played some major US theatre pipe organ installations including the Seattle Paramount and Portland Paramount's San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, the Kern Residence, Detroit Fox and Portland and Denver's Organ Grinder Restaurants.

Bill has been very active in Sydney playing at restaurants and for many TOSA shows and members activities.

Bill entertained the ATOS conventioners in the Seattle Hotel Hammond Bar on a Hammond B3 at supper on many occasions along with Jonas Nordwall and others.

**Tickets for the show can be booked by
mailing the enclosed booking form
or
phoning the Ticket Secretary, Mrs Kath Harding on
9629 2257**

**Visa & Mastercard accepted or
by completing a booking form from www.tosa.net.au**

**Members \$20;
Non Member Pensioner/Senior Card \$22
Non-Members \$25;
Student (15 – 21 Years) \$10
Children accompanied by a paying adult free
Group bookings for 10 or more adults \$20 per person**

Note: If your friends or relations and/or their children have never been to one of these Shows then the first time they come to a show it is free. See www.tosa.net.au **for the free booking form & booking form.** Please encourage your friends, relations and/or children to come to this show featuring Wurlitzer magic.

MARTIN ELLIS' CONCERT REVIEW

Marrickville Town Hall – 14th November 2010

On a hot humid day, about 300 people rolled up to the Marrickville Town Hall to hear Martin Ellis, TOSA's last overseas artist for 2010, perform on Australia's 'Mighty Little Wurlitzer'. Sensibly, Martin dispensed with formality and arrived suitably clad, coat-less and with an open neck shirt, a wise decision in the non air-conditioned 'room' that is the Marrickville Town Hall.

In promotional material, Martin was described as the: "USA Master of Multiple Keyboards", which in 'real-speak' indicated that he has musical credentials embracing both classical and theatre organs. Martin told the audience that he had been classically trained, but developed an interest in the theatre organ thanks to the influence of Donna Parker, also well-known to TOSA(NSW) members. In all respects we were privileged to hear a first-class artist perform on a first-class instrument. It was particularly interesting to note that Martin sight-read music for most of his concert.

He launched forth his 7th out of 9 concerts of his 7-week Australian tour with a full-bodied chorus of the Gershwin's 'Love is Sweeping the Country', perhaps a metaphor for the success of his concert tour.

Martin explained the next item was a favourite from his German grandmother's record collection, Al Jolson's 'There's a Rainbow 'round My Shoulder', but on this occasion, an arrangement by the ukelele-great/singer Johnny Marvin – a metronomically-correct version. The centre-piece featured a pleasing untremmed syncopated variation on the theme.

Martin went on to explain that in spite of his classical-organ musical upbringing, he was influenced at an early stage by Donna Parker, who

was a regular performer at Pizza Parlours in his home town of Indianapolis in Indiana, USA. He began regular performances at various venues and was continually requested to play jazz standards such as the next item, 'Misty' by Errol Garner dating from 1954. Here we heard a gentler side of Martin Ellis (albeit with a microphone falling from it's stand mid performance). Unphased Martin proceeded to provide a dreamy interpretation of this great favourite, ending with an intriguing atonal progression.

A feature of Martin's concert was the between-item information he provided. His next was no exception as he discussed everything from the bird-song accompaniment from outside the hall, to his parrot collection, to the next item co-written in the late 1920s by Wayne King – King's only non-waltz composition, the foxtrot 'Goofus'. Here was a bouncy little number allowing Martin to equally exploit the percussions and flutes and all the 'bitey' sounds of the Marrickville 'Mighty little Wurlitzer'.

At this stage Martin demonstrated his classical background by playing a delightful little piece called 'Andantino' – an interesting piece by the Canadian classical composer Denis Bedard, displaying harmonies and chords reminiscent of Gershwin and various pop songs. Martin commented that the composition allowed the use of many of the solo stops, as he described: "that Wurlitzer did so very well, sounding so beautiful on this organ." A quiet little piece played largely without tremulants with a plaintiff melody line permeating multiple variations on the theme.

Moving on to an item which started life as a classical piece, written by Jean Gabriel-Marie under the title of 'La Cinquantine' (the 'Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary'), made popular by Woody Herman under the title 'Golden Wedding'. Martin's version, which he dedi-

cated to TOSA(NSW)'s 50th anniversary, was based on an arrangement by George Wright. Those who could recall George Wright's arrangement on the HiFiRecord label, would not have been disappointed.

In a fully classical mode, Martin presented a piece which he played at a classical concert in Westminster Abbey, an experience described by him as: "one of the big moments in my career" – the 'Sinfonia to the Cantata No. 29' by Johann Sebastian Bach. Martin's performance put paid to the suggestion that Bach cannot be played on a Wurlitzer. In my opinion, this was the highlight of the concert, and I'm sure the life Martin breathed into the Marrickville Wurlitzer would have 'blown away' most of the very enthusiastic audience. If ever there was a tribute to those responsible for the tuning of the organ, this was the piece to do so.

Martin briefly moved down to the audience level to cool off from the heat and humidity experienced sitting at the console, with fingers slipping over the keys covered with perspiration.

Next item on the agenda was a medley of pieces from the musical 'Wicked' by Stephen Schwarz, which Martin explained he had transcribed for organ to appeal to a younger audience. Not having seen the show, I was not familiar with any of the songs but I have no doubt that Martin's transcriptions would have appealed to many in the audience, even with the intentional dissonances in places – whatever – the "old girl" did him proud!

On to a beautiful jazz standard 'I'm Getting Sentimental Over You', from 1932, with the music written by George Bassman, and a favourite of the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. Performed by Martin, his arrangement was a perfect foil for 'Wicked', - gentle, relaxed, and oh-so-tuneful.

Martin prefaced his penultimate item before interval by explaining that he started studying theatre organ

aged 15 with his teacher John Ferguson, followed by a period working with Lyn Larsen. One of the earliest pieces on which he worked was, as Martin described: "my Dad's absolute favourite piece I have ever played" , Johann Strauss II's 'Voices of Spring'. The version we heard was totally as written, replete with the infectious Strauss waltz rhythms, and the very familiar variations of this 'old faithful.' Martin's classical background was clearly evident in the performance.

He ended the first half of the concert with a waltz called 'Carita', by an unnamed composer, somewhat reminiscent of Perry Como's "Hot Diggity, Hot Diggity, Oh what you do to me". A charming little waltz with apparent neapolitan influences, and a fine way to end the first half.

Back with a vengeance after interval, Martin demonstrated the influence of one of his mentors in 'theatre organ-ology' with the Abba hit 'Mama Mia', and the clearest of emulations of the style of Donna Parker. All of the urgency of the bass accompaniment was there, plus the agitation of the melody line – Donna would have been impressed – as were we – even to the extent of drowning out a Qantas 380 flying overhead. He noted soon after, another aircraft flying in for a landing and remarked that they have a Rolls-Royce plant in Indianapolis, and since he was about to fly back to the USA, the intrusions of aircraft noises: "was not good karma."

Martin's next item was another waltz, an arrangement by the German/French composer Emile Waldteufel titled 'Estudiantina', or 'The Band of Students Dance'. Martin reported having first heard the piece at the Sanfilippo estate in Chicago, played on a fair-ground organ. Americans of an older generation would recognise the piece as the Rheingold Beer commercial's theme. Whatever it's origins, Martin's rendition was as we had come to expect, well-crafted,

accurate and exploiting the standard voices of the organ.

Interestingly, Martin in his preamble to the next item suggested that: "Since you are all connected to England....I thought I would bring you a little morsel from one of my all-time favourite theatre organists, Sidney Torch". The piece he chose was 'On a Spring Note', one of Torch's finest compositions. Martin cleverly captured the typical Torch registrations and style for this very-recognisable melody – if not it's title - an ideal vehicle for the Marrickville installation.

Martin explained that his next item came from a professional piano/vocal musical score produced in the 1920s and utilised for dances etc., a type not available today. The piece he chose was the novelty number 'What a Night for Spooning' made popular by Ukelele Ike in a movie from 1928, and also by Cliff Edwards. Martin provided all the syncopation and bounce reminiscent of the novelty music of the flapper-era.

Still in the 1920s but a more sophisticated composition with Irving Berlin's 'What'll I Do?' which allowed Martin to open softly, and to slowly build on the lovely melody, ending again gently and simply.

Rossini was the source of Martin's next contribution with 'La Danza' a stand-alone chamber vocal piece, but not from one of Rossini's many operas. A great favourite for its dance-like vitality and requiring great fingering dexterity – all provided in full by Martin.

A big-band tune from 1944 was next on the agenda, 'I'm Beginning to See the Light', with words and music by Duke Ellington, Johnny Hodges, Don George and Harry James. Martin provided us with a full-bodied version complete with a prominent bass-pedal vamp and some interesting harmonic variations mid-piece, but he also provided the characteristic big finish.

Martin commented on the size

of the Australian audiences he had encountered during his tour. Surprisingly he said that they exceeded those of the American audiences.

Celine Dion's 'My Heart Will Go On' from 'Titanic' was his next choice, commencing with the wistful base melody, then building to a climax and ending as it began – a sensitive and tuneful rendition.

The concluding item he chose for his performance was John Williams 'March' from the 1979 period comedy movie directed by Steven Spielberg, '1941', which I venture to say was not very familiar to most audience members. The march is probably the most memorable composition of the movie.

The audience 'demanded' Martin's return for an encore which turned out to be 'Don't Rain on my Parade' from the 1964 movie 'Funny Girl' with music written by Jule Styne, and starring Barbra Streisand. It was an admirable choice for an encore, providing the audience with a memorable, toe-tapping finale to a most entertaining program from a very amiable and talented visitor from the USA.

Doug Grant
December 2010

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**Dinner Dance to music
with Mathew Loeser
Playing the Mighty
Wurlitzer**



Nonstop dancing all night

From 7:00 pm to midnight on one of the best dance floors in Sydney

***On Saturday 12th March 2011 at
Marrickville Town Hall
Marrickville Road, Marrickville
Come along and have some fun***

**You Don't Dance? Don't worry – organise a group of friends
and have a great social night whilst enjoying the music**

**Buffet Style Spit Roast Meal
BYO Beer, Wine, Spirits, Soft Drink and a glass
Plus your choice of nibbles
Dress is Cocktail Style**

\$30 per person

Tables are: 3 tables of 16 people; remainder are 8 per table

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As well as the corner of Marrickville Road
With access from Livingstone Road near
the traffic lights*



Vale Rory Thomas

THOMAS,
Sir Rory James O.A.M.

Chevalier de L'ordre des Arts et des
Lettres (France)

Passed away Monday, December
27, 2010, late of Rouse Hill. He will
be sadly missed by his family,
Music Life students, music
colleagues and friends in Australia
and around the world.

Aged 68 years. A blessed,
musical life filled with performance
and outstanding achievements.

Rory's life in focus

*From the Hills Shire Times by David
Catt*

1960s

Trained at the prestigious Berklee
College of Music in Boston.

Roving reporter who covered the
Woodstock Music Festival as well as
other European festivals.

Played with Australian bands Heart
'N' Soul, The Affair, The Questions
and Doug Parkinsons in Focus.

With the Questions, he opened
for The Who on their 1968 tour of
Australia.

Was an assistant conductor on
Broadway.

Assisted in the writing of *Godspell*.

1970s

Was music director of *Godspell* in
Melbourne and Sydney in 1971.

Worked at Channel 7 with such
entertainers as John Farnham, Jon
English, Rex Mossop, and Noeline
Brown.

Concert artist for Yamaha Music in
Japan and southeast Asia.

Helped introduce synthesisers to
the world.

1980s

Taught at Rose Music Yamaha in
Australia and trained at the Yamaha
Music Foundation in Japan.

Education director for Wurlitzer
USA.

Concert artist for Wurlitzer.

Established Music Life in Kellyville,
before moving it to Rouse Hill.

1990s-2010

Took his students to perform at
the Jazz a Vienne music Festival
in Vienne, France every two years
since 1996.

Was Professor of Jazz Studies at
Academie Ponsard in France for 15
years, 10 of those years as director,
and for the last six years of his life
flew there every six weeks to teach.

Established Jazz a Vienne music
festival in the Hills in 2007.

Travelled Central America and
documented for French TV the
evolution of indigenous music.

Worked on cable TV project
School's Out.

'The song has ended, but the
melody lives on.

And so it was at Pittwater Uniting
Church on Wednesday as family,
friends and students gathered to
farewell world-renowned jazz musi-
cian and teacher Rory Thomas.

Mr Thomas died at his Rouse Hill
home on December 27 after a long
battle with cancer. He was 68.

True to the colourful and per-
formance-filled life of Mr Thomas,
mourners were treated to jazz
performances by Zooo Superbande,
comprising his students from his

music Life school, as well as individual performances. *(the Zooo Superbande performed for TOSA at Marrickville Town Hall at one of our shows a couple of years ago. Editor)*

Marching band *Nucleus*, again his students, led the coffin out of the church.

Mr Thomas was an accomplished trumpet, piano, organ and saxophone player, and first learned to play piano at age five.

His skills and accomplishments saw him awarded with an Order of Australia Medal in 2006 and declared a Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Government in August.

He is also a nominee for 2011 Australian of the Year.

His passion for music and teaching were best summed up by his stepson Matt Hishon. He said in the final weeks, Mr Thomas' love for jazz converted him from being a lifelong rock musician.

"In September last year, I began music lessons again with Rory. We had five lessons together," he said.

"Rory...dad...you again set me on the right path and I will not falter this time."

Outside of music, Mr Thomas held an unrestricted pilot's licence, and as a master mariner, competed in numerous Sydney to Hobart yacht races.

He also raced high-performance cars.

Close friend Stephen Wellink said Mr Thomas had a lust for life, even when suffering from terminal cancer.

"He would deal with adversity in

his own way and was simply inspirational," he said. "As the great composer Schubert once said: *some people come into our lives and leave footprints on our heart, and we are never the same.* Rory was such a person."`

TOSA NSW express their condolences to Rory's family and his musical students.

Organ Builders

An article about the St. Columb's Christie Organ from APO Magazine, June-July, 1961

"Know anyone who wants to buy an organ?" This question, which passed casually between two musician friends, started a train of events which reached a proud conclusion three years later in St. Columb's church at West Ryde, New South Wales. A discarded cinema organ was to be transformed, through the patient work of three men, into an inspiring guide to harmony in church worship.

The question, which was asked by Post Office Technical Instructor Ken Jordan, aroused the immediate curiosity of his companion, Technical Training Principal Tom Raynsford. Tom was interested, and ideas began to shape themselves in his mind as Ken told his story.

The organ, a Christie, was the English equivalent of the American Wurlitzer and had originally been installed in a suburban theatre at Gordon at a cost of nearly 20,000 pounds. This was back in the 1920's when organs of this type provided a popular musical back-

ground to silent films. With the advent of talking films, however, organs gradually disappeared from theatres and were either stored and forgotten or sold cheaply for their useful parts.

Ken told his friend that this particular organ was going to be sold for scrap-metal and could be obtained for 200 pound. Tom, keenly interested on behalf of the church, arranged for the instrument to be purchased, and from then on, events moved quickly under his capable guidance.

The Three-Man Team

Having assessed the magnitude of the task that faced them if the organ was to be rebuilt and adapted for church worship, Ken and Tom enlisted the aid of Senior Technician Noel Stokes who has made a hobby of organs and organ construction. The three-man team was complete.

The three men who directed "operation organ" combined the three distinct talents needed for the mammoth project. Tom, the leader, is a competent organiser and planner; Ken is a brilliant organist; and Noel is a precise craftsman with experience of the many mechanical and electrical problems to be encountered in organ building. All perfectionists, they approached their task with a full appreciation of the time and work it would entail.

The common bond uniting these three men, and the many others whose aid they enlisted from time to time, was love of music. The whole project, indeed, provided a splendid example of the power

of music as a unifying influence. Music-lovers of all creeds, attracted by the magnitude and complexity of the job, offered to assist in building the organ for the West Ryde church.

A Challenging Task

Handling and identifying all parts of the organ called for extreme care. The largest pipes were sixteen feet long and sixteen inches in diameter. Made of a special lead alloy, they were heavy and unwieldy. At the other extreme, the smallest pipes were only half an inch long and could easily be lost. Replacement of these pipes with new ones to give exactly the same pitch presents a difficult, although not insurmountable, problem.

With meticulous care, the three friends took stock of the material available and examined the condition of all parts of the instrument. They made numerous drawings until they were thoroughly familiar with every detail of construction.

Many Problems to be Solved

Once the blue-print stage had been completed and knowledge of the team had been organised for the long job ahead, new problems arose. One was storage of all the parts at West Ryde while the work was in progress. The material, when collected for removal, filled three furniture-vans.

The long sixteen-foot pipes were too tall to fit under the roof in the space allotted at the rear of the church. Their shape had to be altered before they could be properly accommodated.

TOSA NSW

* 2011 - OUR 51ST YEAR *

All shows at 2:00pm

First Show for the year Sunday 20 February

******Bill Schumacher at the Orion Theatre******

Contact Kath Harding on (02) 9629 2257 for details
of shows and bookings or go to www.tosa.net.au

TOSA South Australia

Tuesdays and weekends TOSA (SA) members play the
4/29 Wurlitzer in their Capri Theatre, Goodwood Road,
Goodwood (08) 8272 1177

TOSA Western Australia

John Leckie Music Centre 3/12 Compton

Contact: Pat Gibbs (08) 9450 2151 patgibbs@tadaust.org.au.
October 17th John Atwell

TOSA Gold Coast

Club Musical Afternoon on the 3rd Sunday of each
month (except December)

Contact: Rosa Free 5575 3295

TOSA Queensland

Secretary: Mike Gillies (07) 3279 3930

Stirling Productions

Karrinyup Community Centre, Perth, Western Australia

All concerts are on Sundays at 2pm. Prior bookings are
essential with John Fuhrmann on (08) 9447 9837

TOSA Victoria - mto

Christmas Celebration and Launch of 2011 Concert Subscription

Malvern Town Hall Wednesday 8 December at 6:30pm

Contact Margaret Sutcliffe on (03) 9891 7227 by 3 December

Warragul Theatre Organ Society

Events Contact: Bee Mellor (03) 5122 2131

Fifteen miles of wire were used before it was completed. To keep costs to a minimum, various manufacturers were approached for scrap lots. As a result, the expenditure on materials used in the whole project was kept down to 100 pounds.

At the end of the first twelve months, the basic layout of the new organ was completed. The work then settled down to a steady process of giving new life to neglected materials and restoring their mechanical and electrical vim. This was a tedious period of trial and error when the skill and judgment of the three men directing the work were put to severe tests. Their enthusiasm, far from diminishing, was communicated to other people who readily came to their assistance with various special tasks.

To be continued in March edition

A Home for the Christie

I am pleased, actually more like ecstatic, to be able to bring you this update.

As this issue of TOSA News was being finalised, we received advice that the Society's proposal for a home for the Christie had been accepted in principle.

In fact, this is not just a home – the Christie is going home!

You are probably aware that this instrument was, for many years, installed in St. Columb's Anglican

Church, West Ryde. It was removed from the old church building some years after the new church building was constructed. Some provision had been made in the new church building for the organ but the Christie was never re-located. It was then acquired by a private individual from whom TOSA eventually purchased it.

Following initial phone contact, a meeting was arranged with representatives of West Ryde church at which general agreement on terms was achieved. As previously advised, the congregation and its leadership were unanimous in their desire to see the Christie "come home". The whole matter was then referred to the Sydney Anglican Diocese for their approval. This has now been forthcoming with no further condition being placed on the proposal.

The final step is the preparation and execution of the formal legal agreement. Preparation is receiving attention and will be referred for legal opinion prior to execution. We do not envisage any major problem in mutually agreeing to the official wording and anticipate execution within the next couple of months.

The Christie then will be completely restored and installed – a time frame of two years has been agreed for this work.

Watch this space for further information!!

Geoff Brimley

**Members Diary
January 2011**

**Saturday 29th 10:00am to noon
Members Visit to the Wesley Centre Theatre
Pitt Street Sydney
Hear John Batts & Graeme Costin play the Christie
followed by open console**

**February
Monday 7th 7:30pm**

Committee meeting Burwood RSL

Sunday 20th 2:00pm

*****Bill Schumacher*****

plays the Mighty Wurlitzer

Orion Theatre, Campsie

March

**Monday 7th 7:30pm
Committee Meeting Burwood RSL Club**

Saturday 12th from 7:00pm

Marrickville Town Hall

****Dinner Dance****

with Mathew Loeser at the Wurlitzer

Non Stop Dancing from 7:00pm

Radio.

Radio 2MBS-FM 102.5 "Colours of the King" (program of the Organ Music Society of Sydney) 2nd Saturday of each month, 5pm till 6 pm

Web Sites of Interest:

www.tosa.net.au

www.theatreorgansaust.info (history of cinema organ installations in Australasia)
www.sydneyorgan.com (our sister society, the Organ Music Society of Sydney OMSS)

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**Happy New Year to all members & friends
Bill Schumacher
at Orion Centre Theatre 20 February 2011**

