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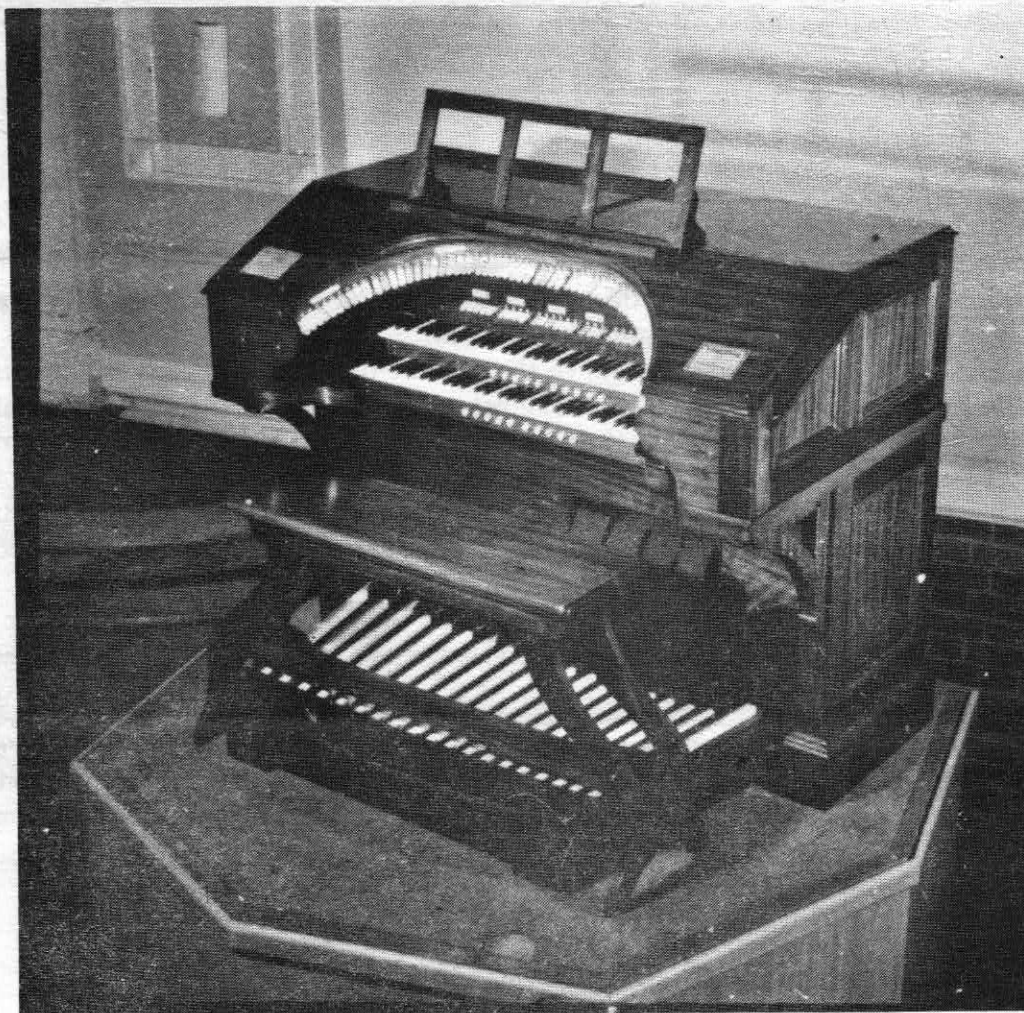
t.o.s.a. news

incorporating **THE DIAPHONE**

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

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EDITORIAL

For those members who were hoping to catch a glimpse of themselves in our Convention photographs, I am afraid you will have to wait for our June issue where a full report will be published about our recent fabulous weekend.

I would like to draw the members' attention to the letter from our member John Shaw. He has put forward some constructive criticism and some interesting alternatives to our existing TOSA NEWS magazine. As editor of this learned journal, I would like very much to have the thoughts of other members on this matter. Please do not put this appeal in your "let someone else do it" file. I want to hear from you. I want your comments on Mr Shaw's letter and I want your additional opinions. Please address your letter to:

The Editor, T.O.S.A. News,
17/26 Huxtable Avenue,
LANE COVE 2066

I am looking forward to a full mail box.

MEMO FROM THE SECRETARY

A grand welcome to all new members. This is where it's all happening in the world of popular organ music. TOSA offers something for everyone interested in organ music in general and the Theatre Organ in particular.

The aim of the society is to preserve the theatre organ as a means of entertainment and so increase our knowledge and understanding of this beautiful instrument. To further these aims, your committee is working to provide more concerts, organ parties, social functions, technical data and "teach-ins"

We therefore need a sub-committee of keen members to arrange and co-ordinate these functions. The response to our call for volunteers has been encouraging from the north side of the harbour, but disappointing from the south.

If you are a new (or old) member and feel that you could spare one night per month for meetings, please call me and discuss the matter of this very responsible and rewarding job.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Committee and members to wish our president Tom Halloran and his wife Anne, "Bon Voyage" on his well earned world tour. They will be away for 14 weeks and hope to see many overseas theatre organ installations. God speed you both and we look forward to your safe return.

Cover Photo. Our own 2/10 Wurlitzer looking immaculate (as always) in Marrickville Town Hall.

The Editor,
T.O.S.A. News,

7 Astwin Street,
Croydon.

Dear Sir,

8.4.73

T.O.S.A. News lacking news.

In an earlier Editorial you appealed for constructive criticism from T.O.S.A. members. May I therefore take up your invitation and question the usefulness of our new type monthly journal.

Obviously a tremendous amount of extra work is being entailed with photographs, reams of paper, pages to be sorted out and the menial chore of placing three staples in every copy.

However I feel the result falls short in providing what I look most forward to: details of the months events.

Adequate publicity was given in advance regarding this years Convention, however, the very month it is on, no mention was made regarding attending single functions. For instance, the State Theatre and in particular the Bondi Junction R.S.L. Club, could members attend these functions separately? Could they take friends? Was there an age limit? What were admission prices? Re the concert at Marrickville on Saturday afternoon, which artists were performing? Was this a public concert? What were admission prices?

Your Editorial calls for 'more members' to obtain 'more money', how about then, some 'more information' which closely relates to the former. The April issue also did not contain the usual 'What's on this month' and the heading 'Dates for your Diary' did not include functions mentioned on previous pages. Also it would be most advantagous to be informed which functions are T.O.S.A. sponsored, as others may not match our standard.

In conclusion I personally thank the workers for all their effort in producing my copy of T.O.S.A. news, but I believe you could save yourselves the time and the Society extra expense, by publishing a monthly 'List of Events'. Possibly once or twice a year or more ambitions type of magazine could be printed with the aid of a few sponsors advertising or alternatively a journal similar to the one now printed.

Why not, as an exercise ask members if they are in favour of retaining the present form of montly journal and judge the outcome by those who show no interest.

I only suggest the possibility of the Editorial team wasting their efforts as far as the majority of members are concerned, however either way lets have back the 'NEWS' in T.O.S.A. news.

Respectfully yours,

John Shaw.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

Friday 11th May 8.p.m.

- at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Stan Hogarth, 15 Cross Street, Pymble, an organ party featuring David Parsons at the Conn 'Rhapsody' organ. Accomodation is limited to 45 people so reserve your spot by phoning 498- 3495. Admission \$1.00 for the Capitol Organ Fund.

Saturday May 26th at 8.p.m.

- A swinging organ party at the home of Margaret and Jim Patrick, 25 Dettman Ave., Longueville. (off Stuart Street.)

This will be an organ party with a difference, the accent being on informality. Even the seating will be informal so bring your own cushion! The aim is to accent the music to Swing or Jazz: The organ will help as it is the latest full console Wurlitzer 4570, a truly swinging organ.

Those modern organists who would like to come and play this instrument, please ring early. Limit is 25 people; you are also very welcome to come and just listen. There will be at least one surprise organ 'star'.

Admission is \$1.00 (or more) for the Capitol Theatre Organ Fund. Reserve by ringing 42-1086

B.Y.O.G.

Sunday 27th May, at 2 30 p.m. Another of our FREE Sunday afternoon concerts on our Wurlitzer will feature RAY THORNLEY. Those members who heard Ray during our recent Convention will be eagerly waiting for this concert I'm sure. BRING A FRIEND, to an afternoon of good music from this talented young musician.

A SWINGING PARTY AT THE WILSONS

Genial hosts, Ron and Phyl Wilson entertained members in a right royal manner at their lovely Lakemba home on Saturday 24th March. The scene was set, on a mild autumn evening, for an enthusiastic audience to hear the Wilson's magnificent Thomas "Celebrity" organ. In fact, 54 members came along to the party which was opened by our nervous host w playing ad the ever popular "Ebb Tide." Next to play were VERNE EVERETT and BARBARA COXHEAD both of whom did full justice to a strange organ. Our guest organist, LANCE WELLS took his place at the console and thrilled everyone with a polished performance; his repertoire ranging from nostalgic "Jolson" to modern day "pop" A magnificent supper followed and president TOM HALLORAN extended a note of thanks to the Wilsons on the society's behalf.

JIM PATRICK re-opened the musical proceedings exhibiting an unusual but very acceptable "jazzy" style.

MERLE WALKER followed with some fast "12th Street Rag" and other popular numbers. Lance Wells then rounded off the evening with some lively polkas and marches.

As the hour was late most members slipped away, pleasantly sated in mind and body, but one, FRANK DAY produced a saxophone, and with your secretary on harmonica, Ron Wilson on melodica and Lance at the organ, the evening concluded with a resounding "noise." Ron assured us that he has understanding neighbours which is great because a return visit is assured. A very successful evening raised \$54.00 for the Capitol organ fund. Our sincere thanks to the Wilsons. (J.R.)

By the time readers receive this issue, the once-beautiful Eastwood Duke of York cinema (Odeon) will be reduced to a heap of rubble; another heap to add to the many of the past few years. No-one really thought that Eastwood would go. It came as a tremendous shock to the locals, like even me, who often frequented this lately very popular cinema. The last three years had shown excellent houses; presentation and service in the hands of Mr. G. Gulliver were first class.

Eastwood started during the First World War. Erected by the locally well-known Summerhayes family, it started at the time of the great majority of suburban shows, and later, when finances allowed, Mr. Chick built the substantial building he named the Duke of York, in late 1922.

Mr. Jack Pitt, musician and projectionist, came to Eastwood in 1928, and took over the "orchestra" of violin, piano and trumpet, doubling as projectionist till the coming of sound in 1929. Eastwood was the first in the Northern Districts, and installed disc/sound-on-film Western Electric Systems. Jack then became full time projectionist and stayed until 1956.

Like many cinema Managers of the twenties and thirties, Mr. Smythe succumbed to the temptation of purchasing a Theatre Organ, luckily with great success. A 2/7 Christie was installed, after various others were demonstrated, including a piano-keyboard Wurlitzer in Romans's, played by Eddie Horton. (I wonder where this organ is now.) After hearing Manny Aarons at the Lyceum Christie, a contract was signed with Hill, Norman and Beard, and the Christie was opened on 14th May, 1932, by Stan Cummins. Stan Cummins came to Eastwood from an engagement at the Concord Ritz, where he played the Christie Organ which was later transferred to the Strathfield Melba. Other well known organists to take over the console at Eastwood included Penn Hughes, Cyrus Tuckwell, Brian Hatfield, and Ray Chaffer. (This was Ray's first appointment.) Jack Pitt himself took over later and was the last to play in 1940, when Union Theatres decided to close the organ down.

The organ sat under dust covers, untouched for many years. Jack Pitt would occasionally blow out the cobwebs with a few tunes between sessions and one day Manager Alf Shaw was so impressed as to re-open the organ on a regular weekend basis. Jack Pitt set up a childrens' Choir, which even managed radio engagements. The popular Saturday afternoon matinee Odeon Childrens' Cinema Club flourished for many years.

Quoting in a letter from Hill, Norman and Bears -
'The installation was a rather hectic period, the organ was shipped to Sydney and we took delivery on a Monday morning with the opening planned for the following Saturday week!! There were many all night work sessions as we were on a penalty clause of, I think about fifteen pounds per day. Nevertheless it opened on time. During the opening an organ builder was stationed in each chamber to remove any ciphering pipes.

It was the first Australian built Christie with, naturally, some imported parts. At the time it was claimed that the vibraphone was the first installed in an Australian theatre organ.' (Ed. Note. This was not so, as both Sydney and Melbourne state 4/21 Wurlitzers had vibes. Perhaps it was the first Christie to have this unit in Australia.

The specification was as follows:-

Solo (61 Notes)

Diaphone 16
Tibia 16
Violone 16
Tuba 8
Violin Diapason 8
Violin Celeste 8
Tibia 8
Clarinet 8
Vox Humana 8
Echo Violin 8
Clarion 4
Violin Diapason 4
Violin Celeste 4
Tibia 4
Clarinet 4
Vox Humana 4
Tibia Twelfth 2 2/3
Piccolo 2
Vibraphone 49 notes
Xylophone 37 notes
Orch. Bells 25 notes
Chimes 18 notes

Pedal (30 Notes)

Diaphone 16
Tibia 16
Violone 16
Diapason 8
Cello 8
Tibia 8
Tuba 8
Clarinet 8
Tibia 4
Chimes 18 notes
Bass Drum
Cymbal
Tom-Tom
Drum Roll (2nd touch)
Snare Drum (2nd touch)
Triangle (2nd touch)
Crash Cymbal (2nd touch)
Solo to pedal coupler

Accomp. (61 notes)

Diaphone 16
Tibia 16
Violone 16
Vox Hum.T.C. 16
Tuba 8
Violin Diapason 8
Violin Celeste 8
Vox Humana 8
Echo Violin 8
Violin Diapason 4
Tibia 4
Vox Humana 4
Echo Violin 4
Echo Violin 2 2/3
Echo Violin 2
Echo Violin 1 3/5
Vibraphone
Xylophone
Orch. Bells
Chimes
Snare Drum
Tambourine
Castanets
Tom-Tom
Chinese Block
Triangle

General

10 Pistons per Manual
5 toe pistons
1 Reversible piston to
coupler
Tremulants to all ranks

Then came television, and we all know that sad story. The organ ceased to be used in 1956, and in late 1957, was sold to Epping Baptist Church for 750. It cost 2000 to build chambers, and many months of hard labour for the willing Epping Baptists, but finally, on 29th August, 1959, the organ was heard once again, in a recital by Paul Edgar, present organist of St. Stephen's Willoughby. The theatre closed finally on 11th January, 1973, despite dramatic last bid protests to save it.

In the theatre, the organ was installed as follows; (E. & O.E.)
Console on a raised dais, left hand side (no hoist)

Two chambers :	<u>Left</u>	<u>Right</u>
	Tibia 97 pipes	Relays and switches
	Tuba 73 pipes	traps
	Vox Humana 61 pipes	tuned percussion
		vibraphones
		violin diapason 97 pipes
		Diapason celeste 97 pipes
		Clarinet 73 pipes
		Geigen 61 pipes

When the organ was first installed in the Church, the console was placed on the left hand side, and the chambers were on the right. It was a most unorthodox system, in that there were two chambers inside one another, each with their own set on shutters. In 1966, this set-up was altered, the console being moved to its present position on the right hand side, and two chambers installed, side by side. The traps have been removed, but the organ still contains the 18 chimes, and 30 Orchestral bells.

Under the capable hands of Bruce Wilkins the organ is sounding very good indeed for general Church use, and is more than reasonable for recitals, however, unfortunately it has lost its peculiar 'theatre' sound.

Acknowledgements: Northern District Times; Mitchell Library;; John Gardiner Ernie Hood; Jack Pitt. Photot by I.C.G. November 1972.

Deadline for June issue of TOSA NEWS is 20th May.
All contributions in the editor's mailbox by this date please.
Committee members are reminded that the next meeting is on Monday 4th June at St. Ann's Hall, Strathfield. Visitors are welcome.