

TOSA NEWS

July/August 2024

Volume 63 No.4

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LIVE MUSIC AND SILENT FILMS

David Bailey at the Christie Theatre Organ

Saturday, 7 September 2024

West Ryde Anglican Church



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President



Dear Members,

I hope you are coping with the chilly days we have been having of late. The "August winds" seemed to forget that it was still July when they arrived!

The Chris McPhee concert was a fitting end to the Prince Edward/Marrickville Wurlitzer's Centenary concert series. For the concert, Chris had put in a lot of research about the early days of the organ's installation at the Prince Edward Theatre and particularly its association with Sydney organist Knight Barnett who was the first Australian organist to preside at the console. He was usually on the bill as J. Knight Barnett, the J being John although he was often referred to as Jack. He eventually moved to Adelaide and for approximately 18 years was organist at the Regent Theatre in that city and continued right up until the theatre closed for redevelopment in 1967.

TOSA Qld President Brett Kavanagh has been in discussion with Dave Wickerham about the possibility of an Australian concert tour in 2025. Early days yet but hopefully something will come to fruition from the discussions.

Our next show will feature David Bailey accompanying a silent film and some shorts on the West Ryde Christie theatre organ. Silent film accompaniment has really become David's forte. This will be our first venture of screening a silent film at West Ryde Anglican Church. Those of us of an age (?) still refer to the church as St. Columb's so I'm prone to say the St. Columb's Christie when referring to the organ. Whatever it's called, please do come along on Saturday 7th September.

Editor



Hello Members,

On the 7th of July we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Marrickville Town Hall Wurlitzer with Chris McPhee at the console. This was the second concert in the 'Prince Edward Centenary Concert Series', and it was truly enjoyed by everyone who attended (a review can be found on page 8).

Tickets are currently on-sale for the 'Live Music and Silent Films with David Bailey' event which will take place at 2pm on Saturday the 7th of September. David Bailey will accompany a 60 minute film, as well as a variety of shorts on the 2/10 Christie located at West Ryde Anglican Church. Seating is limited to 90, so it is suggested to book your tickets in advance.

Congratulations to member Kevin C. Weight who has won a ticket to the Silent Films event with David Bailey on September 7th for correctly completing the find-a-word in the previous issue!

If you are wishing to write to myself or submit an article/question, you will now be able to write directly to me at "PO Box 2751 CARLINGFORD COURT NSW 2118".

I hope you enjoy this issue, and I look forward to seeing many of you at the silent films event!

Oliver, Editor

The Christie Organ Crew have been working diligently on the instrument preparing it for this event. You'll find booking details in this newsletter.

That's all for now.

Neil, President

From the Mailbox...



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via email to:
editor@tosa.net.au

Please send all submissions
via post to:
PO Box 2751
CARLINGFORD COURT NSW 2118

IMPORTANT NOTE

The Society's only bank account is
with **St George**

Details are :
BSB 112-879
Account Number 442 088 530

New Members

TOSA is pleased to welcome Douglas Stewart of Waitara, Leigh Hatcher of West Pymble, Bob and June McLean of Horsley Park, and Karen Biddle of Marrickville to the society.

Thank You!

The Executive and Committee would like to say "thank you" to all members who have kindly made donations.

Volunteers

In the May/June edition of TOSA News, I asked for volunteers to help me with the set-up and pack-up, before and after concerts. It was disappointing that I didn't receive any responses for the July concert.

However, I would like to thank the Dunk family who came to my rescue - Roger, his wife Alice and their two children Oliver and Calliope for all their help with setting up before the concert and again for packing up after the concert. As well as the other regulars.

Thank you for making my job a whole lot easier.
Margaret Badman

Membership Renewals for 2024-2025

Membership and Renewal of Membership

\$40 Full | \$30 Concession | \$30 Interstate | \$40 Overseas | \$10 Student

(Only one TOSA News per household)

Membership Enquiries

0417 971 212 membership@tosa.net.au

Associate membership for spouse/partner - an additional 50%

UPCOMING TOSA EVENTS

Saturday, 7 September 2024

West Ryde Anglican Church

Silent Movies with David Bailey

Queensland theatre organist David Bailey will accompany the silent film "For Heaven's Sake" (1926), along with a number of shorts on TOSA's newly restored 2/10 Christie Theatre Organ.

Find out more on the next page!

Sunday, 1 December 2024

Orion Centre

**TOSA's Annual Christmas Concert
with Patron Dr John Atwell**



Advertising

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TOSA News

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Quarter Page = \$25

Half Page = \$50

Full Page = \$100

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

Members' Dates

West Ryde Anglican Church

Wednesday, 21 August

Wednesday, 18 September

Convenor is John Weismantel

0435 258 287 or

whitecoats@bigpond.com

Please email him to confirm availability

Marrickville Town Hall

Monday, 26 August

Monday, 23 September

Convenor is John Batts

0420 424 103

Please call him to confirm availability

Orion Centre

Thursday, 8 August

Thursday, 12 September

Convenor is Craig Keller

0418 484 798 or

craigkeller1966@gmail.com

Please email him to confirm availability

LIVE MUSIC AND SILENT FILMS WITH DAVID BAILEY

Saturday 7 September 2024

2pm

West Ryde Anglican Church

Introducing David Bailey...

David Bailey is an Australian theatre organist, composer and silent film accompanist based in Brisbane with a musical style influenced heavily by the popular music of the early to mid-twentieth century.

A theatre organist firstly, David's main form of musical expression has always been connected to the silent film world, but in 2007 he brought this expertise back to the cinema and pursued an interest in silent film accompaniment.

Since then, he has composed and performed scores for films from all over the world and every genre including many screenings for the Australian Cinematheque at GOMA.

David strives to creatively reveal the huge musical resources of the theatre organ to modern audiences and offer a cinema experience that is simultaneously novel and nostalgic.



Location

West Ryde Anglican Church

14 Bellevue Ave, West Ryde NSW 2114

Limited parking onsite.

Church parking entry via Dickson Ave. Lots of on-street parking in surrounding neighbourhood streets if carpark is full.

Church is 900m from West Ryde Station.

A courtesy car can be arranged for pick up and drop off at West Ryde Station. Please contact David Badman at 0408 230 337 prior to the concert if you'd like to utilise this service.

Bus route 501 provides stops along Victoria Road from Parramatta to the City via Ryde.

Bus routes 513, 523 and 524 also stop on Victoria Rd at Bellevue Ave.

Time & Date

2:00pm

Saturday, 7 September 2024

Ticket Prices

(Afternoon Tea Included)

Member	\$35
Adult	\$50
Concession	\$40
Student	\$15
Child	FREE
Membership+Ticket	\$75

A special price of \$25 per ticket is available for group bookings of 10+ people.

Booking

Tickets may be booked and reserved online using the link provided.

<https://www.trybooking.com/CTKDA>

MEMBERS' PRACTICE AT ORION

18 July 2024

Photos Provided By
Barry Tooker & Oliver Dunk

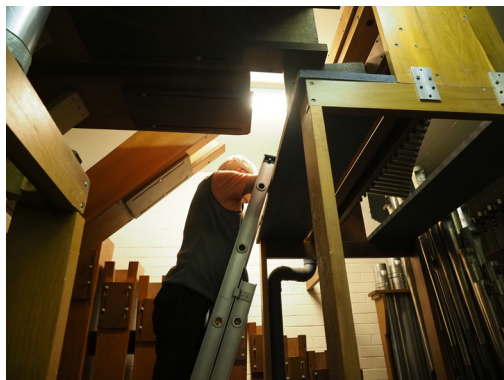


Above & Below: Kevin Eadie



Above (L-R): Oliver and Roger Dunk

Below: Graeme Costin



John Weismantel fixing a stuck note on
the Chrysoglott in the main chamber

REVIEW OF THE CHRIS MCPHEE 100th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

7th July 2024
By Allen Davis

A most delightful afternoon of music, performed by Mr Chris McPhee from Adelaide, was held in the magnificent and historic Marrickville Town Hall before a large and appreciative audience. The music was played on the 100 year old Wurlitzer Organ which had been saved from loss when the Prince Edward Theatre, located in Castlereagh St near the Hotel Australia, closed in the 1960s.



The wide variety of the more than 40 tunes and songs from the late 19th, and most of the 20th century proved an excellent selection for all to enjoy. Interspersed with the music were details provided by Mr McPhee of the history of the organ and its players, principally Noreen Hennessy and among others, the American Eddie Horton and our own Penn Hughes.



Any performance that includes *Oh My Papa, We'll Meet Again*, and the *Darktown Strutters' Ball* is OK by me. We reminisced to *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* and we tapped our feet to *Java, S'Wonderful* and *Alley Cat* to name only a few. The superb talent of Mr McPhee was clearly demonstrated when we witnessed the competent moves from the slow and sacred to the fast and furious.



The Town Hall was set in Cabaret style with tables and chairs placed for all to see and hear the show in comfort. The organ was placed at mid point on the stage and on each side were screens showing film of actions of the musician both on the keyboard and foot pedals. The afternoon tea was excellent and a vote of thanks and congratulations must be given to the Theatre Organ Society of Australia for the faultless presentation of this wonderful event.

Allen Davis



MEMBERSHIP

If you are still wishing to renew your membership, please do not hesitate to do so.

If renewing online via QR or Email link, can we ask that you advise any changes by forwarding your completed paperwork to membership@tosa.net.au

If renewing by Direct Deposit, we will require your paperwork, email or at least a phone call or we won't know about it. This will make our job a lot easier to track the monies going into the account.

Paperwork is important so we can keep track of any changes e.g. address, phone, age group, status...

If you wish, just call Margaret on 0417 97 1212 with your credit card information to renew.

Members not intending to renew can help by advising Margaret by phone or email so they can be removed from the mailing list.

Payment can still be made online using the QR code or link below:
<https://square.link/u/mSyhuPxv>



MY ENTHUSIASM FOR ORGAN MUSIC

A Reflection By John S. Batts

Part 1: The Early Years

There was an upright piano at home and my mother had also learned to play in her teens – for example, I still possess her sheet-music copy of Frederic Logan's 'Missouri Waltz' (1914). Nonetheless, I cannot recall her sitting at its keyboard; but I do remember her expressing admiration for the occasional piece that my father had played – possibly some musical relief after the latter's repeated work on memorizing Anglican chants for Canticles and Psalms to be sung the following Sunday! In my mother's family, two of her sisters were musical, learning the violin and piano respectively; further, my father had a young sister who also played the piano in my paternal grandfather's house and I have some of her sheet-music too. One may conclude therefore that I had the benefit of being brought up in an encouraging and tolerant musical household.

There were two family stories which suggest my very early exposure to the theatre organ. One is that my holidaying family took me into The Plaza Cinema, Swansea, Wales for a live broadcast of the Christie cinema organ by resident Tom Jenkins. This event was, of course, dependent on the baby making no noise whatsoever – and I must have obliged! The second report is that at an early age when still tentatively forming words, I repeatedly referred to my father's father as 'Grandada' – this at a time when BBC Radio broadcasts from the Granada Wurlitzers at Tooting and Clapham were still frequent.

Whereas the above two links are apocryphal, there were two other early real musical leads, well before I began formal piano lessons with Miss Ivy Gilbey LRAM at the age of six. Both

threads concern musicians who had been evacuated to my home town during World War Two. Louis H. Torr FRCO, LRAM, LTCL, was a Southampton-based recitalist who had once been Assistant Organist at Winchester Cathedral. He became a family friend and used to practise on our piano. Well after hostilities ceased -- he was a frequent letter-writer – Mr Torr invariably enquired after my musical progress. Moreover, he left a deal of printed organ music with my father, some of which displayed an interest in lighter music, such as Arthur Meale's 'Fountain Melody'; I still possess some of that series "Music for Recital in Concerts, Churches, & Cinema".

The other musical luminary who had been evacuated to my country town was Horace Curtis, FRCO, who took charge of the local church choir. Well before my 5th birthday, my mother had enrolled me; she thought it might improve my learning of the English language! So each Sunday I became a Decani treble in cassock, surplice and ruff. Moreover, I saw a lot of Mr Curtis because he was billeted in a house opposite my grandmother's greengrocery shop. And when post-war he left, he presented me with a book.

The local church organ, a duplexed Hill gifted to the church in 1930, had a wondrous Voix Celeste and a theatrically throbbing Tremulant. Even as a young chorister, I loved it. My mother told me that I had once horrified my Uncle Bob in later years by playing "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" (J.S. Bratton, 1907) on it! In retrospect, I suspect this instrument was perhaps more Christie than Hill, and it did attract some recitalists – including a visit from BBC Theatre Organist 'Sandy' Macpherson, of which more later on. And about "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" I should add that a very early delight in this had come from one our evacuee families; one of the two Miss Barnard sisters who had been bombed out of their home in Bristol played the piano well enough to attract

my attention, So reportedly and before proper speech I was forever encouraging her to play that piece for me!

I was still quite young when my father was appointed as accompanist to the local male voice choir. Public performances around the district used pianos of varying suitability mostly in church halls. I used to tag along to these events -- often to act as page-turner! During the decade of concerts during all seasons except summer, I became familiar with the standard repertoire of Welsh Male Voice Choirs, compositions like the love-song "Myfanwy" (Joseph Parry, 1875), hymn-tunes like "Ar Hyd y Nos" [English: "All Through the Night"] (Edward Jones, 1784), "Rachie" (Caradog Thomas, 1921) and another staple for Welsh Male Voice Choirs titled "Crusaders".

In the days before TV reception reached our locality these popular public performances usually included soloists and duettists as well as the choir. The tenor of these offerings was at least quasi-religious: "The Lost Chord" (Arthur Sullivan, 1877) was frequently struck, as was "Where My Caravan has Rested," (Edward Tschemacher & Hermann Lohr, 1914) and "Watchman, What of the Night?" There was also "Open the Gates of the Temple (Fanny Crosby (lyric) and Mrs Joseph Knapp, 1911). Only one as I recall was a humorous song, "The Two Gendarmes" (from Genieve de Brabant by Jacques Offenbach, 1867), less famous these days for its repeated chorus line "We'll Run Them In!". There were recitations too. A couple I recall were "The Lion and Albert" (1930) by Scots-born Marriott Edgar (1880-1951); and there was also Holloway's own composition featuring the repeated plea "Sam, Pick up thy Musket". Both were spoken in a working man's voice. Stanley Holloway (1890-1982) famously recorded both.

Of special interest to me, however, were the soloists who came to the house to rehearse.

I recall being particularly keen to accompany Bill James's version of 'Goodbye' from the 1930 musical White Horse Inn by Stolz and Benatzky, but I was never offered the chance! I even learned 'One Fine Day' from Puccini's 1924 opera Madame Butterfly, but Beryl never invited me to try supporting her. Nonetheless, it was all part of an eclectic early musical education.

By this time I had come unwittingly onto the radar of the County Music Organiser (Ms Ogwen Thomas), who arranged to visit me at home, where I played the piano for her. I am not certain what either of us made of that day. Perhaps at best it was to offer encouragement; she had complimented me on my 'touch'! However, as far as I know nothing further eventuated from this meeting.

Having reached physical size to reach the organ pedal-board, I gave up taking piano lessons and examinations. Instead, I began organ instruction proper under the tutelage of J Humphrey Carden, director of music at the nearest Cathedral, on the 3-manual Hill instrument. He had been an articled pupil of Sir Herbert Brewer at Gloucester Cathedral. At the end of one of these lessons I recall him inviting me to play a popular song – don't ask me why! I chose Jack Jordan's then popular 'Little Red Monkey' a radio hit in 1955 which I knew by heart). My limited but immediate audience was silenced! I cannot think I had reminded him of Quentin Maclean or any of the cinema organists he might have heard! The invitation was never repeated.

To be continued...



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