

T.O.S.A. NEWS

INCORPORATING *The Diaphone*

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

PATRON: REGINALD DIXON, M.B.E.

EDITOR: IAN C. GRIGGS

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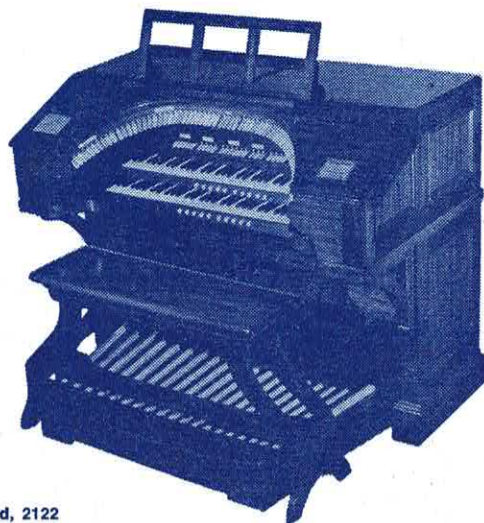
SOCIETY DIRECTORY:

General correspondence to the Secretary, Mrs. PHYLLIS DUNN, 1a Second Avenue, Eastwood, 2122

Financial correspondence to the Treasurer, Mr. OSCAR MOEN, 68 Shepherd Street, Ryde, 2112

TOSA NEWS correspondence to IAN C. GRIGGS, P.O. Box 447, Chatswood, 2067

President: NEVILLE WRIGHT, 67 Clarke Street, Peakhurst, 2210



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VOLUME 9 Number 5

1st MAY 1971

Come to an ...

Organ Party



Two highlight functions for N.S.W. Members this month are two ever-popular "Organ Parties."

On SATURDAY 8th MAY, at 7.45 p.m. will be held the first of these casual get-together make-your-own-fun nights, at the home of Mr. Mrs. Les Jarvis, Unit 21, 9 Anderson Street, Neutral Bay.

Their Lowrey Theatrette Organ is in the living-room of an eighth floor pent-house, with a fairy-tale view over the sparkling lights of Sydney.

Well-known T.O.S.A. Organists ERIC SMITH and DAVID PARSONS will be playing and you'll agree that this will certainly be some treat for the lucky audience.

As numbers must be limited, please ring Les or Mrs. Jarvis by Wednesday 5th May, on 90 1788, if you wish to come. Donation of \$1.00 each will go to T.O.S.A. funds, and a delightful TOSA-Organ-Party supper will be provided by our hosts.

Secondly, an organ party will be held on SATURDAY 22nd MAY, also at 7.45 p.m., but this time in the sylvan-set home of George and Joyce Walker, up in the wilds of the beautiful Cheltenham bushland; 21 Lyne Road.

"The Walkers" is always a fun place to go to for an organ party, so let's see you all there too.

Joyce would appreciate it if you could give her a ring several days beforehand, at 86 5871. Donation of \$1.00 will go to the Pipe Organ Fund; as usual, supper is provided.

« FREE Marrickville ! »

Invite all your friends to join you at Marrickville Town Hall on SUNDAY 23rd MAY, at 2.30 p.m. for another FREE CONCERT.

Our organist for this happy occasion will be Mr. J. Maclean, one of our members who, I remember displayed a distinctive, well-developed Theatre Organ style at our last "Meet your organ" night, in February.

You don't get much for nothing these days. T.O.S.A.'s free Sunday afternoon concerts are however one of these last few joys left, and believe you me, they are "well worth it" (!)

If you think that's all that's on in MAY, you're wrong.....turn the page for more;

DON KINGSTON CONCERT FOR SYDNEYSIDERS

R.H. Elvy Pty. Ltd. is proud to announce that well-known American organist and demonstrator DON KINGSTON will be giving a very enjoyable programme, together with assisting artists, at the Ryde Civic Hall, situated in Devlin Street, and next to the Civic Centre building, on THURSDAY 13th MAY, at 8.00 P.M.

We are fortunate indeed that this year we will have the opportunity of seeing and hearing DON KINGSTON in one of his famous "demonstration-recital" concerts; DON is director of Dealer-training, and Export Manager for CONN Electronic Organs, and will be presenting to us on this night FOUR from the range of models currently available. On stage will be the big three-manual "650", and three spinet models. Two of the four will be equipped with two sets of Electronic Pipes.

This is a "not to be missed" occasion for all organ lovers to hear this fine artist during his 1971 World Tour.

Admission is \$1.00, children half price, payable at the door. (Doors open at 7.) Ample parking space is available.

To assist Elvy's in arranging seating accommodation, it would be a good idea to give them a ring on 29 7222 AS soon as possible, stating your name and the number in your party. That's THURSDAY 13th MAY, RYDE CIVIC HALL, 8.00 p.m.

OTHER COMING EVENTS

Two exciting happening in June will be a special "Jam Session" at the Capitol Theatre: three well-known organists participating, and a guided tour with lecture and/or films on pipe organ construction, of S.T.Noad & Son's Organ Factory at Auburn. The Arcadia Wurlitzer will be seen there in its myriad bits and pieces state, one point of special interest to TOSA members.

NEW MEMBERS

A big "Hi!" to Mr. & Mrs. J.R. Dornan of Sans Souci, Mr. Barry Crabb of Mortdale, and Mr. & Mrs. S. Hogarth of Pymble. We hope your stay with TOSA will be most enjoyable. Say hello to some of our committeemen at the next function you attend. And (and this goes for all you other members too,) please WEAR your new TOSA nameplate.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Next meetings will be held at St. Anne's Church Hall Strathfield at 7.15 p.m., on Mondays 3rd May and 7th June.

TOSA NEWS DEADLINE

Please keep sending me lots of info to keep the people happy and well-informed; Deadline for June issue will be Friday 21st May.

WHAT'S BEEN ON IN N.S.W.

The ORGAN PARTY at Clyde and Shirley Nott's home, on Saturday 3rd April, was yet another most enjoyable and musically satisfying TOSA function. Charming hostess Shirley Nott compered the evening and after an opening bracket by Joyce Walker, took her seat at the Conn Caprice Organ to present with the help of her son, David and his friend Ray Young, both with guitars, a well appreciated group of ballads and folk songs, the last two of which featured Ray's fine solo voice.

Then followed a varied programme by members, Lyn Badman, Betty Randall, Jim Birkett, Sidney Foster, Lance Wells, Cyril Haynes and George Hughes, each with his or her own particular style. Then to really cap the evening's entertainment, Honorary Member David Parsons opened with two April numbers followed by six request numbers all brilliantly and delightfully played. After an expression of thanks by Joyce Walker on behalf of TOSA, to Clyde and Shirley Nott for the evening, which raised \$25.00, members chatted over a very nice supper to a background of more organ playing until it was time to say "Au revoir" till the next function.

ELECTRONIC ORGAN SUB-COMMITTEE HAPPENINGS

"On the 16th April, a keen group of organ enthusiasts met at the home of Arthur and Lisa Spring for an informal evening of questing and musical appreciation. A "Brains Trust" comprising members George Hughes, Arthur Spring and Ray Garrett endeavoured to answer the vast array of questions relating to the problems encountered by the members present. Questions included "how to supply power to JULIUS oscillators when operated together continuously" (John Wall), "What are the advantages of speakers in the end of cabinets?", and "What are the best suited loudspeakers for a home organ?" (Alan Hawkins.) To further enquiries, information was given on the best forms of reverberation systems and how to achieve the best sound in a home situation including a short discourse on the optimum sizes, materials and furnishings necessary to acquire good reproduction, which, it would appear, is a room lushly carpeted and draped, with irregular walls of all different dimensions.

Discussion included the performance of the "metal plate" type of reverberation unit which we understand from Eric Mirrovitch produces a good effect and can be constructed from sheet of black iron with a magnetic transducer on one corner and a crystal pick-up on the other. Eric also informed the group that a surprising result can be achieved by using a tape system (for the first echo) followed by a spring reverberation unit supplying the supporting echoes; allegedly the tape echo of good quality deceives the ear into thinking what follows is also of the same quality. The validity of stop designations was considered as being only a likeness, reproduction of actual instrument characteristics being well beyond the economics of home instruments, and in many cases not desirable.

Considerable interest was also shown in the forms and characteristics of percussion systems and members showed interest in the way in which various percussion effects may be brought out to advantage by playing technique.

George Hughes brought along a Conn Stobo-tuner and explained and demonstrated the workings of the unit and its simplicity of operation allowing free phase organs to be tuned in a fraction of the time necessary by conventional methods. It was announced that George, with Des Russell, have a similar tuner under construction for the Society; this will greatly simplify tuning of the Marrickville Wurlitzer.

The evening's discussions were followed by a LUNACY segment, composed on a tape recorder by Arthur Spring, involving many nights and ceaseless hours to obtain a few minutes of material. The first of Arthur's compositions was the amalgamation of sounds such as pulsating wireless codes, whistling, howling and the honking brought together with a rushing background in a presentation of rhythmic sounds of the future. The second consisted of "Decomposed" version of percussed strings in a sound which could have been a Moog Synthesiser.

David Parsons was then to give us a demonstration on the latest model of VERNUS II including the use of the best accordion effect yet attributable to an electronic organ, as well as highlighting the solo characteristics of this organ. Peter Held took the stool after David and contributed some very pleasing selections in his own inimitable style. The musical sector of the evening was climaxed by David and Peter joining in several organ duets on the two Vernus II 's.

It was unanimously expressed that the evening's events and entertainment were most satisfying and enjoyable -- we all look forward to the next occasion."(R. Garrett)

RECORDING TAPES

The Society has by arrangement with E.M.I. (Aust.) secured purchasing rights for professional quality low noise, low wear recording tapes at a record low price. Tapes are available to members at this low cost, plus a small levy, in any quantities. The following tapes are available by contacting Ray Garrett at his home, 2 Boundary Road Epping, phone 86 7247, or at any of the major TOSA functions;

Type 99/13	1800 ft 7"	\$4.50
Type 100/24	2400 ft 7"	\$6.00
Type C 90	90 min Cassette	\$2.70

Others are available on request; just indicate your requirements and a stock will be supplied to meet popular demand.

ANDREW FENNER DEFINITELY TO PLAY FOR US AT MARRICKVILLE

Yes, at last the news we have been waiting for. After the British Mail strike is over, and following a couple of long-distance phone calls, we can now announce that the famous ANDREW FENNER, one of today's top British theatre organists, will be coming to N.S.W., and will play a concert for us on our own 2/10 WurliTzer at Marrickville, on WEDNESDAY 28th JULY.

More details of this auspicious occasion later. In the meantime, make a note NOW in your diary that Marrickville Town Hall is where you will be that night.

NEWS FROM INTERSTATE

From Victoria's "VOX" we note that their concert by DON KINGSTON will be held at the Hawthorn Town Hall, on FRIDAY 7th MAY, at 8.00 p.m. Also good luck is extended for the current negotiations with "Cinema North", Reservoir, for the installation therein of the Society's new Christie/Vincent Organ. Pleasing to note that several minor problems of dampness under and around the Dendy WurliTzer have now been rectified. Between the maintenance team, the local Council, and the proprietors of the adjacent swimming pool, ways and means have been devised (we hope, successfully) of overcoming any possibility of future damage to this priceless instrument.

Very impressed with the write-up given of our own CLIFF BINGHAM, following a concert he did at Dendy on 14th February. Quoting briefly from the review, "...The applause of the audience ensured an encore, and, what an encore! Cliff really "stopped the show" with a magnificent "Assurance March". I mean really, you just couldn't ask for anything more than that. Such a fabulous piece of music with his excellent arrangement and playing as the "Ace" Cliff dealt in that encore.....if you, dear reader, were one of those who didn't go to that concert, then it serves you right, because you missed one of the best Society Concerts for a long time, presented by a young organist who is really going places. His Registration for the pieces was excellent, as was his playing and presentation. And here too is one who has learnt the secrets of accompaniment keyboard second touch playing. "

Queensland's "TIBIA" announces that their concert by DON KINGSTON will be held in the Centenary Hall of Brisbane Grammar School, on SUNDAY 16th MAY at 2.00pm. N.S.W. extends hearty congratulations to Gerald Whitehouse, on the marathon effort of organ playing in which he succeeded in breaking the previous record by 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours, making a total playing time of 52 $\frac{1}{4}$ hours! Well done, Gerald.

Tucked away on page 17 of the "Australian", in "Shipping News", was a fine report of the shipping and arrival of QLD Division's Christie organ by container ship, on 15th April (the article, not the arrival.)

"C-SHIP BRINGS 600-PIPE ORGAN

Four thousand parts of an electric theatre organ have been shipped from Maidstone, England, to Brisbane by container. The shipment included more than 600 pipes ranging in length from 8" to 32 feet. The organ was built in 1935, and was played by such old time masters as Sandy MacPherson, Reginald Dixon, Robinson Cleaver, Lloyd Thomas and Harry Farmer. Its Australian home will be an Assembly Hall to be built at Kelvin Grove State School, Brisbane. The organ will be assembled by the Queensland Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Aust. Large crowds are expected when concerts begin late this year. The President of the Society, Mr. H.L.Whitehouse, described the shipment as Australia's biggest jigsaw puzzle. Assembly would take many months, but had been made easier because all parts arrived unharmed despite the fact that most of the pipes were made of a soft special alloy resembling solder. The two containers which lifted the dismantled organ were handled by Associated Containers Transportation." A photo showing Barry Bailey and some of the pipes completed the article.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA reports a concert at Wyatt Hall, Pulteney Grammar School, on MONDAY 3rd MAY, at 8.00 p.m. Here they will present DON KINGSTON at a three manual Conn, with KNIGHT BARNETT and BRIAN RICHARDSON at the WurliTzer. Should be an interesting comparison.

S.A. also gives information on the recording of the recent WARANA SPECTACULAR concert in Queensland. When I receive first-hand info I shall certainly pass it on to you. Looks like a beaut disc to have in your collection.

The Diaphone

SECTION

EDITOR : ROD BLACKMORE

A THEATRE ORGAN ENTHUSIAST'S DREAM THAT BECAME REAL

By

*John T. Tyner, Member
Chicago Area Chapter
American Theatre Organ Society*

A most unusual electronic theatre organ home installation — complete with lift — is the result of a dream long held by the late Dr. Phillip Brown*, prominent Tucson, Arizona osteopathic physician. While he was able to live his dream for a short year and one half, he did have the joy of bringing it to its full reality.

It all started when he sat down at the age of five in the Fox Theatre, Atlanta, Georgia, and in the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. Brown said, "I got actual goose pimples when the big pipe organ console rose from the floor and shook the seats with the tremendously moving music. It got so that I always felt some sort of magic watching similar performances in yesterday's theatre palaces. The high point of the show became not the main movie, but the introduction to the short subjects, with the organ rising out of the pit, with the audience singing, following the 'bouncing ball', on the movie screen. It wasn't long until I was taking lessons on the pipe organ.

"In all my years of listening to my good friend, Don Baker, and following the music of Jesse Crawford, Dick Liebert and George Wright, I have always wanted to have my own installation which would be reminiscent of the days when the theatre organ was king."

"Actually, it was Don Baker who inspired me to make the installation a reality. A little over two years ago, my wife and I were invited by Roy Olson of Broadway Organ Piano to attend a Don Baker concert at the Santa Rita Hotel here. Don performed on the Conn 650 three-manual theatre organ which was just being introduced. That instrument duplicated the finger feel and sound of my favorite theatre organs so much, that I had to have one as soon as possible. Working through Harris Wynn, Conn Organ's District Manager, Roy delivered a 650 as soon as it could be built at Conn's Madison, Indiana plant."

FACED WITH A DILEMMA

"Now that we had the 650, we wanted to put it in a setting that would be reminiscent of the old theatre with the pit, organ lift, high ceiling, tall windows, gaudy furniture, sparkling chandeliers, and spotlighting. We began to work through the seige of whether to change our house from its original design, or to buy a new one which would lend itself to a theatre organ room. This was out, because we couldn't find a structure in Tucson that would fit what we had in mind. Then, we looked at our rear patio and decided it was the natural site for our theatre organ room, which we planned as a 20 x 24 foot addition to the house, with a 12-foot high ceiling."

SWIMMING POOL RULES APPLY

When Dr. Brown had completed his plans for the organ room he brought them to city hall to apply for a building permit, much like any one would. Here, the similarity ended; there were no provisions in the Tucson Building Code for pits in the floor containing organ lifts!

Since no precedent had been set, the building department determined that the organ pit was the closest thing to an indoor swimming pool, and specified that swimming pool construction be used. So, the six-foot-deep pit floor was poured with 13-inch-thick steel-reinforced concrete. Pit sides are 9-inch-thick reinforced concrete. Dr. Brown commented, "I think this is the first indoor swimming pool with an organ floating in it!"

Ken Wright, staff organist at WKY-TV, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, tells how Dr. Brown got the lift: "Sometime ago I got a note from a friend of mine, J. T. Benzmilller of Stephens Point, Wisconsin, who had this old Barton four poster for sale. He knew that I used one like this years ago in theatre work and thought we might need one for the Conn 650 which we had just acquired here at the station for our regular programs. As much as we would have liked to install the lift, we couldn't because our studio equipment must be easily moved."

"The lift came from the Regal Theatre in Chicago, where it held the 3M/20 Barton which Benzmilller still owns. He also had an old Howard split seat, which I did buy. Soon after corresponding with Benzmilller, I heard from Dr. Brown that he, too, was interested in a lift. Somehow, I got the two of them together and Dr. Brown bought the lift. And, shortly after that, he bought my Howard seat."

A MONSTER IN A DRIVEWAY

Once the concrete work was completed, the pit was ready to receive the lift. It arrived on the day it was promised, but the ensuing events are best described by Mrs. Brown, in an interview with Harris Wynn: "The lift came on a huge truck. There were eight men to take the 3000-pound monster off the truck and put it in the driveway. Using a hoist and much mechanical paraphernalia, they tried, almost desperately, to ease it from the truck bed. They almost had it moved, when Kerblam!, it dropped and broke. Fortunately, none of the mechanical parts were damaged, but the wooden platform had to be rebuilt."

"The fun began after the lift had been sitting in the sun in the driveway for a few days, giving off its odors of old grease. The neighbors would ask, 'What is that monstrosity in your driveway?' I would reply, 'That's Phillip's elevator!' Nobody knew what it was going to be. It was the talk of the community!"

The ton and a half lift was finally installed with a crane, which picked it up from the driveway, carried it through the unfinished roof and gently placed it in the pit. The next step was to get it operational. It arrived with its original electric motor, a three-phase, three-horsepower unit. Because three-phase power was not available in Dr. Brown's neighborhood, he had to seek out electronics companies who would install a phase converter. While this was being done, he cleaned and regreased the lift.

In operation, the motor moves a gear train which turns four worm gears beneath the lift posts, raising and lowering the lift in the same manner as an automobile jack. Travel space is about 5½ feet, just enough to bring the organ up from its sunken position to about two feet above the floor.

Another problem presented itself — one of the balls on top of the posts was missing and could not be traced. Undaunted, Dr. Brown went to a local foundry, had a mold made of one of the other balls, had it cast in aluminum and machined to match the other three.

Meanwhile, the dream began to gain further realism when the walls and roof were completed. Dr. and Mrs. Brown wanted to have marble-topped tables built for two of the three main sitting areas in the room. While they were planning the table construction with the local tomb stone maker, he began to reminisce about the days when people used to install marble walls in their bath areas instead of using today's synthetic materials. As the conversation went on, the Browns discovered that the man had a marble wall in the storeroom, and that it was quite close to the dimensions of the wall area across the room for the organ installation. Says Mrs. Brown, "Because this looked so beautiful and because the room was to be heavily draped and carpeted, we decided we needed at least one very hard wall to bounce the sound around on, and had it installed. In addition, we used marble around the fireplace, as well as on the table tops."

Following interior finishing, wall-to-wall red carpeting was installed. Then, on the wall next to the organ installation, about 65 yards of crushed Polish red velvet draperies were placed on each side and over the organ installation to give the impression of the curtains raised on a theatre proscenium. About 30 yards draped the adjoining wall.

ELECTRONIC PIPES AND A BROKEN WINDOW

To further establish the visual and audible illusion of the old theatre organs, Dr. Brown ordered five sets of Conn Electronic Pipes to be mounted on the wall next to the lift. The pipes do not require swell shutters, because their tones are first shaped by the organ's voicing circuits, and then transmitted through loudspeakers mounted in the bases of the pipe sets, and then into the air columns of the pipes. The air columns and the pipes (which resonate to individual notes) then transmit and disperse the sound into the surrounding air.

Mrs. Brown recounts a sidelight: "Don Twining, who is Roy Olson's partner at Broadway Organ Piano, delivered five sets of the Electronic Pipes successfully. Then, as he turned and left to go home, he walked right through the plate glass window on the entrance door. Fortunately, he was more surprised than hurt." Dr. Brown added, "The pipes, with their gold brushed aluminum finish below the red drapes added greatly to the old theatre effect. However, there appeared to be blank space on either side of the installation, so we called Don a few days later and asked him to deliver two more sets, and to make sure to open the door this time after the installation was completed!"

To put the finishing theatre touches on the room, the Browns hung two crystal chandeliers which were ordered from Czechoslovakia. They had to be shipped via Italy, and took two months to arrive. Lighting effects are controlled by six dimmer switches mounted on the wall opposite the organ installation. They regulate the chandeliers, and the down spots which illuminate the organ and pipe area.

DON BAKER DEDICATES THE ORGAN

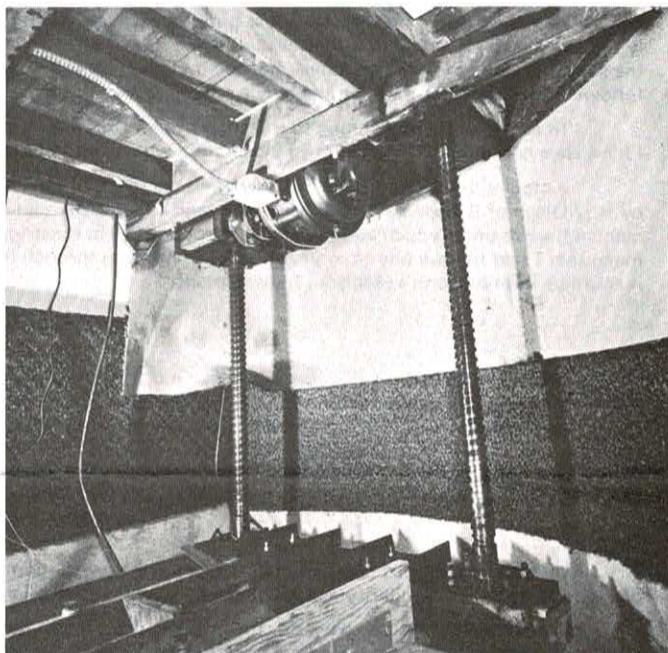
Because it was Don Baker whose concert finally inspired Dr. Brown to begin work on his room, he felt it was fitting that Don complete the circle and be the first to officially "open" the room, which he did before a large group of friends in the spring of 1969.

Don comments about the installation: "It certainly does remind me of the old theatre. This is the most gorgeous looking room I have ever seen in my life. It is almost identical to the old theatre. The atmosphere here is perfect: the organ, the pipes, the piano, the decor, the lights, the speakers, and even the screen that drops down in back, so we can see our old favorite, the bouncing ball! This room is a most suitable monument to a fellow theatre organ lover, and friend."

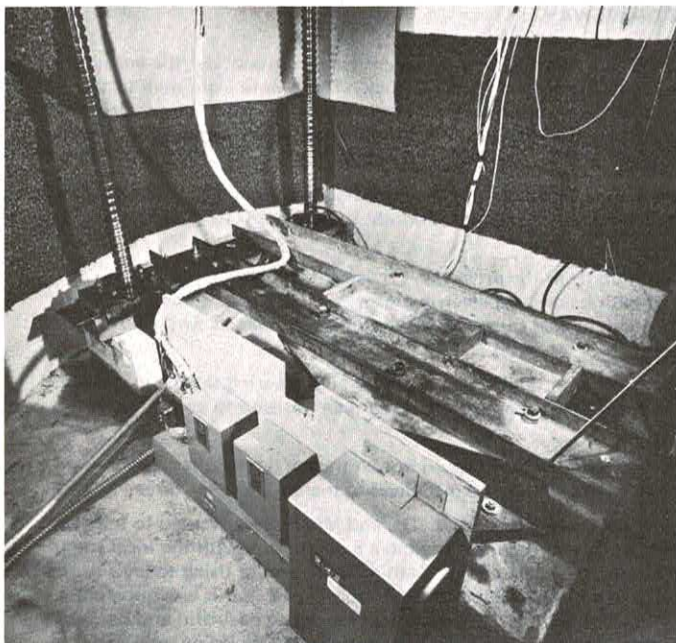
* Note - Dr. Brown was making final corrections on this article when he became ill and died late in the fall. His wife, Frieda, agreed to its publication as a memorial to Dr. Brown and his enthusiasm for the theatre organ and its majestic music.



In playing position, the organ installation is in the old theatre palace environment that Dr. Brown always dreamed of re-creating. The remotely controlled movie screen is on its way down from its hidden position in the ceiling, flanked by two chandeliers from Czechoslovakia. Additional lighting is provided by the downspots in the ceiling, plus spotlights from the back of the room. The chandeliers can be brought from a soft candle-like glow to full sparkle by dimmer switches.



Looking upward from the pit floor. The three-horsepower, three-phase motor operates jack screws to raise and lower the lift. Carpeting hanging down the sides helps muffle the sound of lift operation.



Looking into the pit. In the foreground is the electronic equipment that converts single phase power to the three-phase power necessary to operate the motor. The lift weighs one and one half tons.



The late Dr. Phillip Brown (right) reminisces with theatre organist, Don Baker, when Don officially dedicated the room before a large group of friends in the Spring of 1969.

FROM NEWCASTLE

"The big news of the month is the unanimous vote by a large gathering of members at the monthly business meeting endorsing the change of name to the "Newcastle Organ Society" and the promulgation of a new Constitution. Full marks to President Keith Joice and his Executive for the hard work done in presenting a suggested constitution which with very minor amendments was accepted by the meeting."

A concert (s) is (are) planned by Don Kingston on FRIDAY 14th MAY and SATURDAY 15th MAY. Don't know yet where they will be. I suggest you contact someone up in Novacastria if you want to go. Eric Smith drew over 600 people to his last concert. A marvellous crowd; nice going, Eric.

I received a letter regarding my remarks last month concerning the proposed change in name of the Newcastle Hammond Society, and am rather disturbed at the way these remarks were taken by the particular party. I cannot understand it at all. If however I have offended someone then my apologies are extended. May I say though, that in practice, all Organ Societies, whether Theatre, Electronic, Classical Pipe, or whatever, certainly do have a mutual recognition and respect, a situation which I trust will continue unblemished for 2001 years.

NOTES FROM COL TRINGHAM

The response to the Questionnaire has not been exactly overwhelming, but the sheets which have been returned have yielded some interesting answers. One direct result of the questionnaire is that a Jam Session has been arranged for the Capitol Organ. 100% of sheets so far returned requested this form of concert. Actually, with a fairly small number of returns, each is directly responsible for some action, so if you have any ideas for events, send them in now.

WANTED Colin Tringham would like to hear from any member who knows how to get hold of a small synchronous motor, preferably with a 115 volt winding, and a shaft speed on 50 cycles, of 180 revolutions per minute. This is required to drive the optical scanning assembly which provides the very complex vibrato system for his Gulbransen Organ. Phone Colin at 93 7947 evenings, or 759 8844 between 9 and 4 if you can help.

Absent for the last three or four weeks, Colin is due to arrive back in Sydney early in May from a lecture tour of South Africa. He has taken his camera and will be recording, pictorially, any events which may interest TOSA members.

RECORD REVIEW

Joseph Seal at the WurliTzer ----- plays FAMILY FAVOURITES Vol 3. Astor GGS 1190

Recorded at the A.B.C. cinema, Kingston-upon-Thames, London.
Available at Palings, Ground floor record bar. Price \$2.75.

Opening number "Under the Double Eagle" is played most tremms off and at a steady march tempo. "Littl Grey Home in the West" follows and is quietly, tastefully played with a beautiful Tuba solo in the middle section. "In a Persian Market" shows to full advantage the percassion units on the Kingston WurliTzer. For those who like overtures, "Waltz, Wine, Women & Song" is very cleanly, precisely played "Dainty Doll" the concluding piece on Side 1 is an unusual novelty number in which Glockenspiel and Vibraphone play an important part.

Side 2 commences with the March from "A Little Suite", which is the theme for the popular BBC T.V. Series, "Dr. Finlay's Casebook." "Claire de lune", a favourite of many, follows and is played in a romantic manner with plenty of lush tibias and strings. The "Petite Wãtz" contrasts tremmed string-tibia passages with untremmed bright small reed passages. "Un peu d'amour" a piece not often heard, is in the same vein as "Claire de Lune". Concluding track is the march "Blaze Away" which is highlighted by subtle use of the posthorn rank, and also the crescendo pedal.

This record is highly recommended for your collection, the programme is well balanced and played as always, on the technically exact Seal manner.

(R. Gliddon)

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE TUNES

There is a copy of this popular but hard-to-get-hold-of music book available from Mrs. Shirley Nott. It is a new copy and anyone interested in purchasing same should give Shirley a ring at 638 0199 x 255, or A.H. 638 3488.

Ed.'s note: If Shirley has sold this copy when you ring, then I have one as well, which is as new, and open to offer. Please ring Shirley first though.

THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THIS ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN S.M.H. ON SATURDAY 24th APRIL RE THE HAMMOND X-66 ORGAN.....

It's in to have an organ in your house

by ALAN GILL

WITH laboured grunts worthy of the object being carried, Australia's newest status symbol was heaved into Grace Brothers' auditorium recently.

A few hours later the American organist Tom Thompson pressed a few tabs . . . and Bay Street was flooded with the sort of sound guaranteed to make you reach for your cheque book.

Only the younger members of the audience tapped their toes to the music. The rest listened in awed silence. The Hammond X-66, \$13,900 worth of engineering marvel, was making its first appearance in Australia.

"We don't exactly roll them off a production line," said Mr John Bann, manager of the Sydney music store which has the exclusive Hammond franchise for Queensland and NSW, when I asked him about sales.

Nevertheless I venture that a few months from now there will be several of them dotted round the more exclusive Sydney sitting rooms.

With cinema organs being sold off as scrap, and the few that remain being shrouded under dust covers, you might be forgiven for thinking that the organ as a medium for popular entertainment was dead.

But you'd be wrong. Thanks to modern electronics the organ is now enjoying unprecedented popularity as an instrument to be played in the home.

It's really rather insulting to

call the X-66 an "instrument" — it could probably out-perform the average orchestra. Not only can it emulate virtually every instrument known to man, but it can combine these in such a variety of tone colours that you could play non-stop for five years without repeating yourself.

Laurens Hammond, who got the idea while experimenting with a gramophone turntable, patented the world's first electric organ in 1934. It was bought by Henry Ford, and is now in a museum. No. 2 was bought by George Gershwin, and is still playing in a New York restaurant.

Three years after the birth of the instrument came one of the most remarkable lawsuits in history, when, in response to a demand from the Federal Trade Commission, Hammond had to prove that his instrument really was an organ.

This was solved with a side-by-side comparison between a Hammond organ and a traditional pipe organ. A screen was drawn in front of the jury, who were asked to guess which was which . . . a task which defeated them.

Today a similar dispute exists — among purists, not lawyers — as to how far one can include automatic playing aids in an instrument without "cheating." The Hammond Piper, which arrived in Australia a few months ago and costs \$1,495, incorporates an automatic "phantom bass" which allows the player to keep his left hand in his pocket and still play an accompaniment worthy of Glenn Miller.

The distributors admit this one is in a separate category, "bought by a different type of

person." To avoid upsetting the purists, the word "organ" is omitted from advertisements for it.

There is also a problem about add-on rhythm units, advertised (in one case) as "the drummer that never misses a beat." They're too perfect, which explains why in Britain the Musicians' Union has banned their use. Pop groups wishing to use them now have to transfer allegiance to the Variety Artists' Federation.

Things haven't yet reached that stage in Australia, largely because there are few out-of-work drummers. "I hope you're not trying to stir something," said Mr Bann.

He's also not very happy about the "status symbol" bit. He admits an organ is a good status symbol but says that's not why people buy one.

"The modern home organs are unique," he insists. "After 20 minutes practice you feel good. And you just go on getting better."

In America, however, there's no doubt about it: organs ARE status.

This is proved by the fact that very few home organs are made with lids if you want a cover for your organ you won't find one in Sydney. People have complained that when covered up they look like writing desks or even like coffins, and what's the point in having an organ in your sitting room if people cannot recognise what it is.

Last Christmas a man entered Mr Bann's store, pointed towards an organ, and said: "How much does that one cost?" when told the price he produced a pocketful of notes and said: "I'll have that if you can put it in Christmas wrapping paper."

For the next half-hour the staff were busy with sticky tape and string producing Sydney's biggest Christmas parcel.

PETER PLANAVSKY IN CONCERT

For those members interested in classical pipe organ music, and I know there are quite a few, I just can't resist highly recommending two recitals by this famous organist (currently resident in Vienna) at St. Andrews Cathedral on Friday 30th April, and Kings School Parramatta on Sunday 2nd May (this one at 3p.m.) Hope you get TOSA NEWS in time.

NOTES FROM FRANK ELLIS

Frank received recently one of his regular news-letters from our patron, REGINALD DIXON. Reg stated how very pleased and honoured he was to have been selected once again as Patron to N.S.W. Division of TOSA. However, he also suggests tactfully, that next year perhaps someone a bit closer to home might be given the opportunity of fulfilling this post; he regrets being so far away and thus not being able to be as "close" to us as he would wish.

Frank also received a letter from our friend WILBUR KENTWELL, who is at present amidst a hectic tour; hectic, but very very successful, exciting and rewarding. Frank has got postcards from Rome, New York, London, Chicago, and Edinburgh.

Over Easter, Frank also had a busy time, happily spent showing two members from Queensland Division, on holiday, Don Clarke and David Sacre. It was a great pleasure to have them and to show them around our fine city. Most exciting for them would have been inspections of our own Wurlitzer at Marrickville, the State and Capitol organs, and the Christie from Gordon Theatre now installed at St. Columb's, Ryde, where Alan Tranter kindly gave a demo. How they managed to squeeze in the "Royal" as well, I don't know, but it's always a pleasure to meet friends in the "T.O." game from interstate and show them what's what, as Frank soon discovered. See you again soon, chaps.

ARGADVA

Thursday 15th April saw the console, wind chests and other big pieces go over to Noads' factory, and on Monday 19th April I supervised the rest of the "big bits"; toy counter, bellows, all the relay equipment etc, arriving at Auburn safely. Horrified to find parts missing (like some 8"0" Open Diapasons.) Also less important things like the seat, generator for action current, and the Wurlitzer nameplates. Why people would souvenir such items I don't know, but if anyone hears anything interesting, please let me know (in strict confidence.)

Meanwhile, those members who offered to help with re-leathering etc., let Des Russell know, because work will be starting sooner than you think.

"GOLDWYN SILENT CLASSIC GIVEN STUDIO PREVIEW SHOWING WITH CARTER PLAYING HIS OWN SCORE AT SIMONTON'S "BIJOU" THEATRE. From "Console."

Samuel Goldwyn executives, headed by Mrs Samuel Goldwyn, were on hand Thursday evening 28th January to preview one of the film company's old silent film classics, "The Winning of Barbara Worth", and hear Gaylord Carter play his original scoring of the production on the 4/36 Wurlitzer in the Richard C. Simonton Bijou Theatre, North Hollywood.

Arranged by William Ramsey, who is in charge of bringing out a series of Goldwyn silent films for exhibition throughout U.S.A., the preview was held expressly for studio personnel; Henry King, one of the famous Motion Picture Directors who made the film was also in the audience, and was lavish in his praise of Carter's score. "If we had had him at the Forum when the film was given its Premiere, with the music he has played tonight, it would have been even more successful than it was." He referred to the Los Angeles house where the Wiltern Kimball was originally installed. Carter at that time was solo organist at Graumann's Million Dollar Theatre, Third & Broadway, in downtown Los Angeles. ""

Now, if you're wishing that this sort of showing was more frequent in Sydney, then might I just hint that if you're lucky, you mightn't have to wait too long!

Well, I think I've exhausted all the bits of paper I've got spread all around the desk (and floor), so Bye Bye till next month.

Des B. Gaigg
Editor. 24.4.71