

# TOSA NEWS

December 2016  
Volume 55 No.10

Price: \$2.00

**TOSA's World of Entertainment  
brings you**

**"The Christmas Concert"**

**with**

**Tony Fenelon & John Atwell**

**playing**

**The Mighty Wurlitzer**

**Sunday 4th December 2016**

**Orion Centre Theatre**

**Campsie**

**2:00pm - 4:30pm**

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# From the President



Hello everyone,

It was a treat to hear Martin Ellis again during his second Australian Concert Tour in October.

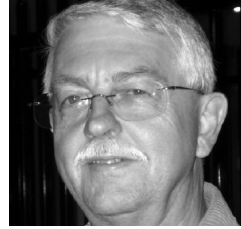
I would like to thank Graeme Costin, David Badman, Chris Styles, John Batts, Tom Barber, Simon Ellis and Cliff Bingham for donating their time in providing a variety of music and playing styles for the Fund Raiser concert at Marrickville Town Hall. John Batts coordinated the rehearsal times for all seven organists. Unfortunately there was only a small turn out which is disappointing considering it was to raise funds for TOSA projects, in particular the refurbishment and installation of the Christie organ at West Ryde. We must not forget the members who volunteer for Front-of-House, lighting, sound and video projection who usually commence setting up some four hours before a TOSA concert.

In October, Marrickville Library invited TOSA to feature the Wurlitzer organ as part of tours conducted through the Town Hall building during the Marrickville Festival. Neil Palmer gave a talk on the instrument then it was demonstrated by John Batts.

I hope you have an enjoyable Christmas with your family and friends and I look forward to seeing you at the Orion Centre Theatre on 4th December.

Geoff Brimley, President

# Editorial



Hello Members, I have included an overview of the Fund Raiser concert at Marrickville Town Hall on Sunday 6th November. The minutes of the AGM on Saturday 12th November are included along with Marrickville and Orion Organ Reports. The Christie report was a verbal one from project leader Rob Gliddon. See pictures in this issue.

As you read the Orion Report you will see that the Executive, Committee and Tech Team has had a challenging year in resolving a number of issues that arose with the Orion Wurlitzer. Thankfully all issues were addressed successfully so that concerts at the Orion could proceed. Thanks to Committee member Rob Gliddon the Saxophone rank that originally came with the Orion Wurlitzer to be installed in the Capitol Theatre, Sydney has been purchased from Melbourne so that it can be returned to the instrument for which it was originally destined.

Doug Grant has done a great review of the October concert by Martin Ellis.

I look forward to a good roll up at the Christmas Concert next Sunday December 4th with Tony and John.

This being the last issue of TOSA News for 2016 I wish you all a wonderful Christmas with Family and friends.

Enjoy the music,

Ernie Vale

PO Box A2322

SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

[editor@tosa.net.au](mailto: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](mailto:editor@tosa.net.au)

or in writing to:

The Editor - TOSA News (NSW Div)

PO Box A2322

SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

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## Member News

### Vale John Harrison

Many long time TOSA members will remember Andrea Harrison who played some concerts for TOSA in her youth as a member of the Young Organists Association (YOA). Andrea's father John passed away on Saturday 12th November after 8 weeks in hospital. He was

nearly 81 years of age. Andrea said he was "Cheeky as Ever". John was Ticket Secretary for TOSA through 1985/86.

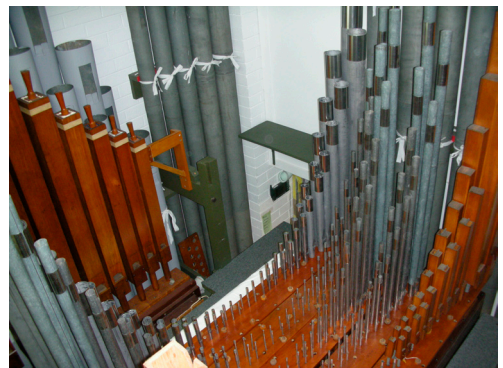
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## Progress at WRAC Christie

We planted most of the Vd'O and Flute. The Vd'O 8' octave pipes have to have supports installed first. A couple of Flutes need boots re-glued.



**Part of the Toy Counter in the Accompaniment Chamber**



**Pipes now placed in the chests in the accompaniment Chamber**

## ***To Watch Out for***

### **Colours of the King Broadcast -Radio FINE Music 102.5FM**

On **Saturday 10th December 6pm - 7pm** the broadcast will carry direct appeal to lovers of the theatre organ. I've put together a program of Christmas music from two discs recorded by Jelani Eddington. One is at the San Filippo 5/80 instrument, and the other (which also features pianist David Harris) is at the 4/26 Robert Morton organ in the Van Der Molen residence.  
*From TOSA Member and broadcaster Andrew Grahame*

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### **Concerts for 2017**

Your Executive and Committee have planned five concerts for next year. Bookings have just opened at the former Marrickville Council now Inner West Council where we propose three concerts at Marrickville Town Hall and two concerts are scheduled for the Orion Centre Theatre.

Once bookings are confirmed information about concert artists will be revealed in the January/February TOSA News along with Season Ticket booking forms.

## **Advertising**

### **Rates in**

### **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' Playing Dates  
The Orion Theatre Campsie  
2nd Thursday Morning  
10:30am to 1:30pm**

**December 8th  
January 12th**

**Convenor is**  
Craig Keller on 0418484798

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**Marrickville Town Hall  
4th Monday afternoon/evening  
at 2:20pm to 9:00pm**

**No Play on December 26  
Public Holiday  
Next players day January 23rd**

Players and listeners welcome.  
**Please contact** John Batts  
0420424103 or Neil Palmer on  
9798 6742 after 7:00pm  
**to confirm availability**

# **The Fund Raiser Concert Marrickville Town Hall Sunday 6th November**

The concert was presented by seven TOSA members who all donated their time and energy in both preparing for, as well as performing on the day. The practice and programming for this concert was coordinated by member John Batts.

“Just a quick word of thanks to you all (MC included) -- kind volunteers as you are --for your efforts at Marrickville today. Early reports suggest that we did provide thorough-going musical entertainment for those present.

There seemed to be general concern that more people had not attended, but the box-office take should all be profit. (*The number present was 36 including all Tech and front of house members - Editor*). It may be too early to analyse why so few people turned up -- even TOSA members were notable absentees. The warm, sunny afternoon may be part of the explanation; some of you have already wondered if advertising of the event was below par.

Finally, I must add a word of appreciation to the Tech' Team who did us proud. Thanks John Weismantel & Co. Meantime, I write to say that your efforts today are appreciated by the undersigned”.

*Kind regards, John Batts.*

## **The following is a list of the organists and broad list of music played at the fundraiser**

### **Graeme Costin**

Beatles Medley - accompanied by a Power Point of the song titles

### **David Badman**

Everything's coming up Roses

Adventures in Paradise

Unchained Melody

The Impossible dream

## **Chris Styles**

Medley of songs - 7 well performed transitions

## **John Batts**

Japanese Sandman

Laura

Davey Jones

## **Simon Ellis**

An American Patriotic March

Neapolitan Medley

Johnny Farnam's Please don't ask me

A piece from The Merry Widow

## **Tom Barber**

Coronation Stop - accompanied by a Video of the inaugural run of the steam train Coronation built for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth.

El Relicario -

Blackpool Tower - Medley: Avalon - You were meant for me - Marie

Covent Garden from London Suite

## **Cliff Bingham**

Sky Song

March - Let 'er go

Barcelona

Stanley

Radetski March

This Fund Raiser was brought to the attention of members numerous times in the section of TOSA News titled "To Watch Out For". There was a two page spread in the November 2016 TOSA News as well as promotion in the Members Diary section devoted to the Fund Raiser and it was promoted on the TOSA Web site. In addition the Fund Raiser was promoted during the Marrickville Fair presentation of the Marrickville Wurlitzer and the Inner West Council emailed promotion information to all people on its Group email list. *Editor*

**THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW Div) Inc**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES**

Saturday 12 November 2016, 2pm,  
St Columb's Anglican Church, Cnr Dickson and Bellevue Aves,  
West Ryde

Commenced: 2:06pm

1. Present 24 people – signed registration list held by Secretary
2. President's opening remarks – received, including mention of situation at Willoughby relating to the Wurlitzer. No TOSA involvement.
3. Apologies - David and Margaret Badman, John Batts, Ian Georgeson, Graham Glendenning, Mike Piquemal, John Atkinson, John and Andrea Harrison, Simon Ellis
4. Confirmation of 2015 minutes – read to meeting as they had not been published in TOSA News. Read and Moved Craig Keller, Second Theo Langenberg Passed
5. President's report (Geoff Brimley) – presented during opening remarks
6. Secretary's report (Craig Keller) – handwritten and read. M Peter Held, S Graeme Costin Passed
  - a. Follow up comments re Brett Kavanagh workshop from Geoff Brimley.
7. Treasurer's report (John Wall) M Theo Langenberg S Barry Tooker Passed – Geoff Brimley - comments from Auditors – we are tracking the way other societies are – just holding on. No negative comments to make, took pity on us – made a little bit of a loss and offered to reduce audit fees to what ended up being \$750 – thanks.
8. Marrickville organ report (Neil Palmer) – submitted and read by Neil. M Ernie Vale S Karl Zipsin Passed
9. Orion organ report (Craig Keller) M Barry Tooker S Doug Grant Passed
10. Christie organ report (Rob Gliddon) – thanked crew who turn up regularly, John Weismantel, Theo Langenberg, Graeme Glendenning, Barry Tooker, David Badman. Close to main chamber being complete, wired, some pipes racked, percussions going in. No promises on time frames – we'll get there when we get there and do a good job. M Barry Tooker S Peter Held Passed
11. Nominations for patrons 2017 – John Shaw – renominated Dr John Atwell S Neil Palmer Passed
  - a. Rob Gliddon – expressed thanks to John and Shirley Gorrie for their years of support of TOSA in many areas.



a.i.Geoff Brimley – any problem TOSA had John Gorrie would get involved and contact CC John Montague to resolve issue. JG helped to get things happening, Shirley Gorrie also interested and supported over many years.

12.Appointment of auditors for 2017 – John Wall – nominated current auditors CM Pitt and Co S Ernie Vale Passed

13.Declaration of officer bearers for 2016/17 by the Returning Officer (Graeme Costin) – declared current office holders re-elected as nominations matched positions.

14.General Business (no notices received prior to meeting)  
Craig Keller

Artists for 2017 – June Justin Stahl USA, November Nathan Avakian USA, December Tony Fenelon and John Atwell. Working on scheduling Australian artists for two other concerts for the year – March and September.

Graeme Costin

TOSA Printer, can now stay at current location until we resolve ongoing printing issues of TOSA NEWS. Three or four years yet.  
Peter Held

spoke to praise TOSA not bury it – thanks to Geoff Brimley re comments on Chatswood – appreciated. Concert attendance comments, suggested promotion of TOSA through radio programs etc

Comments re loudness of fundraiser concert and piston usage.

## Show & Membership Prices

	All Artists
Non-members	\$35
Non-member Pensioner/Seniors Card holder	\$30
Family 2 Adults incl 1 child up to 19 yrs age	\$65
TOSA Members	\$25

**All Students FREE on confirmation of Student status**

**All Children FREE accompanied by an Adult**

Group Booking for 10 or more Adults \$22 per person

First time Adult \$15 cash by completed Voucher at Box Office

### **Annual Membership Fees post June 30th 2016:**

\$40.00 for Full membership, Family \$60 and

\$30.00 for Pensioner Concession, Interstate or Overseas \$40.

Membership enquiries David & Margaret Badman

(02) 4776 2192 [membership@tosa.net.au](mailto:membership@tosa.net.au)

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

Suggested better location of console would help alleviate loudness.  
Craig Keller – comments about theatre organ magic from John Batts and program being available on MixCloud <https://www.mixcloud.com/johnsbatts/>

Geoff Brimley – asked meeting to get people to contact him if they have negative comments. We are trying to improve things not “change” them.

John Shaw

legal aspects – records of complaints so that we know and can action accordingly.

Geoff Brimley – thanked WRAC for their cooperation in allowing us use of and access to facility.

Meeting Closed Circa 3:25pm and afternoon tea was enjoyed by attendees.

A number of attendees took the opportunity to climb the stairs and check out the work on the installation of the Christie.

John Weismantel utilised the AV equipment in WRAC to show videos of the life of the Christie and associated theatre organ videos . (thanks to Barry Tooker for organisation and contributors for bringing cakes etc)

Craig Keller - Secretary

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## **Secretary Report to AGM**

- All members of committee are active email users which makes communication easy and reliable meaning that decisions about simple matters can be made quickly and easily;
- Traditional mail usage is almost non existant – probably only two posted letters received by Secretary in the past 12 months. There has been other communication received via email and social media;
- Use of social media has been worthwhile with various communication being received and provided by use of tools such as Facebook eg information about member days, concerts etc being used.

## **Marrickville Organ Report for AGM Nov. 2016**

Good afternoon everyone. Due to circumstances beyond our control, the Marrickville Wurlitzer has rarely been heard in public during 2016. Fortunately it has been played most Monday afternoons during members practice sessions so the organ's electro-pneumatic action hasn't been idle for too long. Most of the repairs during the year have consisted of clearing ciphers or getting dumb notes playing again.

We were invited by Marrickville Library to feature the organ as part of tours conducted through the town hall building during the Marrickville Festival in October. The tours ended with a talk by me and demonstration of the organ by John Batts. We were also able to hand out publicity for the Fund Raiser on the day.

Unfortunately the organ's electronic control system malfunctioned during the Fund Raiser concert by randomly playing pipes and percussions mainly when fairly full combination of stops were drawn although it behaved normally during rehearsal in the morning. This is currently under investigation.

I would like to finish by thanking John Batts, Ernie Vale, Kevin Eadie, Graeme Costin & John Weismantel for their assistance during the year.

I commend this report to you.

*Neil Palmer*

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### **Steck Gotha Pianola Piano available for the taking**

We think it was made around 1907-10 and is a 68 note player. Iron frame with stool and about 120 rolls of music.

The cabinet is in good condition but the bellows are not, they have a number of holes.

We do not expect to sell it but simply want someone with an interest to come and take it away for their own use.

We live in Thirroul, a northern suburb of Wollongong.

Contact Sue Chapman on mobile number 0437302138

**TOSA Presents  
Australia's International Artists  
Tony Fenelon & John Atwell**



**play the  
Christmas Concert  
Sunday 4th December 2016,**

Come and hear your favourite Christmas Carols including sleigh Bells; as well as medleys from "My Fair Lady", "Mary Poppins" & "ABBA". Also an Irving Berlin selection and more

**on the Mighty Wurlitzer  
2:00pm – 4:30pm  
Orion Centre Theatre  
155 Beamish St., Campsie**

For the best reserved seats you can book securely on [trybooking.com](http://trybooking.com) by going to [www.tosa.net.au](http://www.tosa.net.au) then Events, click on the Artists name/show title then scroll down to buy your ticket, click on it, select your preferred seat/s and complete the purchase.

Visa & Mastercard accepted.

Alternatively, Phone Theo Langenberg on 0410 626 131 before 8pm

## **Tony Fenelon & John Atwell**

**Tony's** insatiable interest in lighter music and a love of the majestic sound of the Wurlitzer Unit Orchestra (Theatre Organ) led to his "other" career, leading to his appointment in 1965 as the resident organist at Melbourne's then prestigious Regent Theatre.

**Tony** made his first tour of the United States back in 1969, and has returned at least 30 plus times. He has performed at some of the most prestigious theatre organ venues in the U.S. including, the Oakland Paramount, the Ohio Theatre, Columbus, San Sylmar, the Sanfillipo residence, the Orpheum Phoenix, the Pasadena Civic Auditorium, Seattle Paramount with **John Atwell**, and at the Dickinson High School Kimball to mention a few.

In 1999, **Tony** returned to his old stamping ground to be featured in the Inaugural Concert of the Regent Theatre Melbourne's new Wurlitzer Pipe Organ. This concert was an overwhelming success, drawing an unprecedented record attendance since the civic reopening of the Regent. In 2014 **Tony** returned to the Regent again with Richard Hills in presenting the "Tale of Two Organs" to a very appreciative audience of some 1,500 people from Melbourne and interstate.

**John Atwell** receives repeat invitations to play concerts at theatre organ venues around Australia both as a solo performer, as well as in piano/organ duo combination with his long-time colleague and friend, **Tony Fenelon**.

**John** has also taken his talents overseas on many occasions, playing performances in the USA, Canada, the United Kingdom Europe and New Zealand.

**John's** musical activities have not been limited to theatre organs. He is an experienced classical organist and pianist. In 2012 John accepted the invitation of the City Organist, Robert Ampt, to play a lunchtime performance on the Sydney Town Hall Grand Organ and was very well received by the large audience. **John** has performed overseas on many occasions in recent years playing theatre organ in Europe, the UK and USA. Make a date to come and enjoy two of Australia's outstanding keyboard musicians.

Tickets : \$ 35; Concession \$ 30; Members \$25

Family ie 2 Adults including 1 or more children \$65

Adult Group of 10 or more \$22/person;

First time patrons \$15 by Voucher at the Box Office

Students up to 25 years Free on confirmation of student status.

## **REVIEW OF MARTIN ELLIS' CONCERT ORION CENTRE THEATRE – 9TH OCTOBER 2016**

At what must have been one of the most disappointing audiences to date, Martin Ellis greeted those deigning to attend, with good grace. He last visited Australia in 2010, and had performed admirably, but that time was at Marrickville Town Hall. It is ironic that on that occasion Martin commented that "the size of the Australian audiences he had encountered during his tour, surprisingly, had exceeded those of the American audiences"! Unless we have contracted the American-audience disease, it would be worthwhile addressing the dearth of an audience on this occasion.

It was also noted in the 2010 review of that concert that Martin performed his entire concert sight-reading the music. He did so again at this concert. Mike Bryant, the Journal Editor of the American Theatre Organ Society commented that "Martin and Dave Wickerham are the two best sight-readers I know". He added "It's amazing how you can throw something up for them, cold, and they can play through as though they'd been playing it for years". We weren't a party to whether or not Martin was performing "cold", but whatever it was, we few audience members were treated to yet another first-class performance from a master musician.

Martin Ellis is one third of the celebrated 'Trio Con Brio' from the USA. His Trio colleagues Jonas Nordwall and Donna Parker, familiar faces to TOSA(NSW) patrons, remained behind on Martin's return engagement to Australia. However, he did manage to convey the greetings to Australia from Hilary and Donald.

His first contribution rang out stridently as we all strove to identify the piece as 'The Olympic Fanfare', which was performed at the opening of the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984. This signature piece is generally attributed to John Williams, but was actually 'inspired' by Leo Arnaud's 'Bugler's Dream', composed in 1958. As impressive a piece as it is, I couldn't help expecting to see John Wayne or Dr. Spock appear at any time. However, Martin utilised the Wurlitzer's Tuba Horn, the English Post Horn and Brass Trumpet ranks to the fullest to take advantage of the marvellous opening fanfare.

To a very British selection commencing with 'Midnight in Mayfair' by Newell Chase, followed by 'March of the Bowmen' by Frederic Curzon, both pieces being favourites of Sidney Torch as an organist and orchestra conductor.

Martin expressed his admiration for the 'Great American Songwriters', George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Jerome Kern, and continued with a very sympathetic rendition of 'Can't Help Loving that Man of Mine' by Kern.



Martin introduced the audience to a project with which he is involved in the USA which attempts to musically engage young people, and to get them away from their iPhones. It involves acapella singing to an array of music dating from the era of Gregorian chants, through to the present day, all no longer that 4 to 6 bars, but seamlessly linked - as Martin called it, - a "mash up". He challenged the audience to identify the respective pieces of a typical exercise titled 'Evolution of Music', which truly did begin with a Gregorian 'favourite', and progressed through numerous examples from different eras of music including Pachelbel's 'Canon', Beethoven's '5th' and 'Danny Boy'. I could identify



everything up to Freddie Mercury's 'Bohemian Rhapsody' - after which I was lost!! I was utterly flummoxed!! I admit that I don't warm to much of the music of the so-called 'new era'. I find it lacking in the 'best of' rules of harmony and counterpoint, and I simply can't come away from performances whistling the likes of 'I Could have Danced All Night' etc. etc. Oh well - to me it was an interesting exercise, but.....

Martin's next choice was 'Farrago', a lively Latin-American Cha Cha from 1957. Unfortunately nobody took up his offer to use the dance space at the front of the hall.

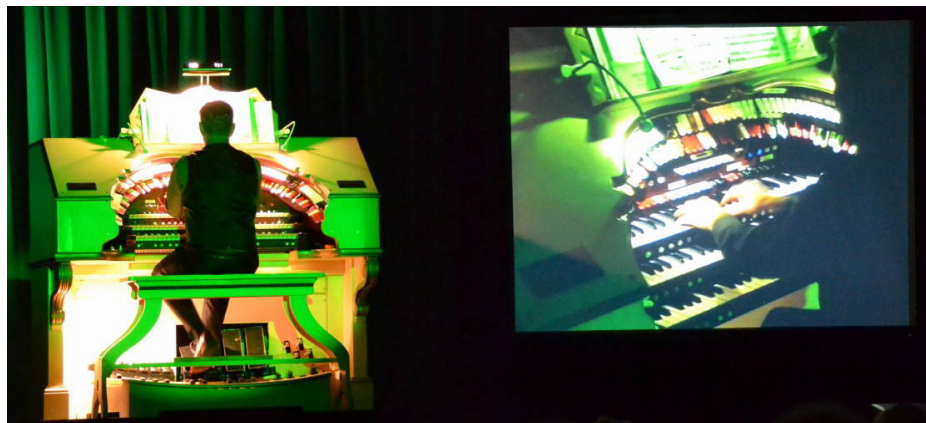
It was then time to see and hear the other persona of Martin Ellis as he changed into classical mode. Unfortunately, the necessarily brief program notes can't address the very full realms of musical experience possessed by the artist-of-the-day. Martin's classical organ background is extensive and readers are directed to Google for more information in this regard. He pointed out that the program for the day was called 'From Bach to Broadway', and he introduced the 'Bach-bit' by explaining that Johann Sebastian indulged his lighter moments by performing in the coffee shops of the day, with small string ensembles and portable organs. Martin invited the audience to enjoy a typical J.S. Bach work possibly heard in the coffee shops of Leipzig etc, He chose the first movement of the so-called Organ Concerto in A minor (BWV593) - (actually the work is Bach's arrangement of a composition by Antonio Vivaldi). If anyone needed to be reminded of the versatility of the Wurlitzer theatre organ, and its ability to provide a clean classical organ sound, Martin's fine rendition of this charming composition, provided all the answers.

Martin's Mother's favourite song provided a lovely soothing return to nearly the present day, with Errol Garner's composition of the jazz standard 'Misty'. Martin's restrained rendition provided a languid tempo, ending with an intriguing ascending atonal sequence of notes.

A relatively recent composition reminiscent of the ragtime era was provided by Billy Joel in 1974, and was recreated by Martin as his penultimate item before interval. Featuring some sparkling right-hand arpeggios, the Joel composition more than did justice to the syncopated 'ragged' rhythms of the ragtime era.



The final item was a medley of some of the music composed for Walt Disney animated movies from the so-called modern-era. At risk of again pushing my 'hobby-horse', I am unable to relate to such music, which I find rather unremarkable, however Martin was obviously suitably impressed with the content.



Refreshed from the interval break, Martin returned to open with the 'March from 1941', by John Williams. This was a somewhat unremarkable movie directed by Steven Spielberg. The story involved panic in California after the attack on Pearl Harbour. The music contains sounds of morse-code, trumpet calls to arms, martial marching themes, and 'Big Country' reminiscences.

'I'm Beginning to See the Light' – a great swing number by Duke Ellington from 1944 was next on the agenda, complete with a Chrysoglott 'outing', and a stomping beat from the pedals.

Clearly a favourite of Martin is the British organist Sidney Torch, being the second time Torch was presented in the concert. This time it was 'On a Spring Note' – played at a much faster tempo than Torch's own performances.

'Those Sweet 60/70's' medley was the title chosen by Martin for his next bracket, which again criss-crossed the Atlantic by commencing with 'Sing a Song', best remembered from the Carpenters in 1973, moving on to 'Both Sides Now' made popular by Judy Collins in 1968, and finally 'Downtown' from Petula Clark from 1965. It was interesting to note Martin's comments

regarding the generational change in people's musical recollections and popularity of items from the various eras of music. The members of the audience at this particular concert also could certainly relate to Martin's comments.

Nothing like an eclectic mix from Martin Ellis, as he introduced a piece written in 1925 by the Spanish musician and composer Jaime Teixidor, named after one of his piano students, the then 12 year-old Amparito Roca. The inclusion of this item was akin to the statutory march, generally considered mandatory in theatre organ concerts. Martin likened it to the US's 'Under the Double Eagle', frequently included in his countrymen's performances. Up until her death in 1977, Amparita Roca would have been so proud to have such a popular piece named after her.

Martin related the story of his youthful introduction to the theatre organ at a local restaurant, the Paramount Pizza Palace in Indianapolis, possessing a 43 rank (mainly) Wurlitzer. He explained that the resident organist often played 'sympathetically' as patrons were finishing their meals and the organ console descended into the pit. The charming little piece chosen for then and now was 'Sing a Rainbow' from the show 'Finian's Rainbow'. He explained his choice of this item was to demonstrate some of the quieter sounds of the Orion Wurlitzer, which is exactly what he did – a lovely choice.



Finally, we came to the closing scheduled item, a medley from the 2003 Broadway musical 'Wicked' with music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, the writer of 'Godspell' and 'Pippin'. 'Wicked' is another of those musical creations Martin referred to as part of the realities of "generational acceptance of musical styles". The four items included 'The Overture', 'Nobody Mourns the Wicked', 'For Good', and 'Defying Gravity'. Of those items, 'Nobody Mourns the Wicked' is the one that is the most memorable with its jaunty rhythm and uncomplicated style. The closing bars of the medley are notable for a disturbing discordant bass register chord retaining the sinister element of the otherwise comedic musical.

As an encore, Martin chose to play the old favourite 'I Love to Hear You Singing', a favourite from the repertoires of Jessie Crawford and George Wright. The piece was composed by Haydn Wood in 1925, and is still very popular today. It was a fine way to wind up yet another very professional performance, but to a small (but select) audience.

*Doug Grant*

October 19th 2016

Photos *Barry Tooker*

With thanks for the assistance of Barry Tooker and Craig Keller.

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## **90th anniversary performance of the famous silent film METROPOLIS by Fritz Lang at the Babylon Cinema in Berlin**

You may be interested to learn about an event in Berlin on 10th and 11th January 2017, which will feature the Babylon Cinema's miraculously preserved cinema organ.

The Babylon Cinema first opened in 1929 at the Rosa-Luxemburg-Platz, and still retains much of its period glamour. Renowned today for its cutting-edge art-house programming, it has long been a destination for the city's discerning cinephiles.

The Philips Kinoorgel is Berlin's only surviving instrument of its kind, and the largest in Germany.

It was built in 1929 to provide a thrilling musical accompaniment to silent movies, complete with sound effects including beating drums, horses hooves, car horns and ringing telephones.

And with credentials such as 100 stops and 913 pipes, even

non-experts can appreciate that this is a rather special music-making machine. It was restored, along with the rest of the cinema, in 2001, but its subsequent use has been a patchy affair.

Now, however, the Babylon has found a full-time organist – Anna Vavilkina – who has already mastered the instrument’s complexity, and Berliners enjoy the frequent programme of silent movie classics with ‘soundtracks’ provided the old-fashioned way.

The first “outing” for the organ with full orchestra will be on Tuesday January 10th 2017 and will be the official 90th anniversary performance of the famous silent film METROPOLIS by Fritz Lang.

The performance will also feature the Metropolis Orchester Berlin – a recently-established cinema orchestra. They will perform the original music by Gottfried Huppertz, and Anna Vavilkina will be heard on the organ for the full two and a half hours of the movie’s duration! Rehearsals began in October.

This milestone event will bring live music to the listeners’ ears just like it was in the days of the silent film era, and will bring something completely new to Berlin’s cultural landscape.

Further information (in English or German) can be found at:

<https://www.startnext.com/en/metropolis90babylon>

Here are some links about the Kinoorgel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZb9PwWeLXI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1a85O3KpMjY>

*From Lavinia Whitaker, Australian oboist performing in Berlin since 2001, and a member of the Metropolis Orchester Berlin.*

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## **ORION WURLITZER REPORT AGM 2016**

2016 has been hard work for our largest instrument. We have faced, managed and resolved a few issues.

Situations such as a power supply issue with the Uniflex computer left us in a challenging position for a couple of months. Fortunately we have great skills and generosity available in our ranks and John Weismantel was able to repair the computer’s power supply – which prevented us having to buy and configure a new computer. I was also able to supply a temporary loan

computer that got us through the rough patch.

We also had problems that surfaced during Tony Fenelon's April concert when accompaniment tabs would not stay off. Neil Palmer and I later traced this to a burnt out chip on an output board inside the console. Fortunately a few years ago TOSA bought a spare board for just such a situation. Neil and I were able to install and configure the card and restored function. Once again John Weismantel came to the rescue and he has repaired the damaged board which now becomes our spare.

Just recently and days before the Martin Ellis concert we discovered that the power supply inside the console had faulted meaning that tabs would not "fire" when a piston was pushed. John Weismantel quickly made a running repair in time for Martin to be able to set pistons and rehearse for the concert. He has since properly replaced the blown components in the power supply.

Meanwhile we have had a range of chamber maintenance issues to deal with, one of which was to re-route the wind line that feeds the Glockenspiel. This has solved the problem where the glock would cipher with a reiterating note. The rank was getting high pressure feed when it really only needed no more than 15" of wind.

The usual other little problems arose too and nearly always in the solo chamber – which is good because it is the far easier one to access. Things like faulty solenoids, blown secondary motors – the usual niggles. The solo string celeste is also in need of a major overhaul and this is getting closer to being addressed. It is currently "blanked off" awaiting action to replace the chest and have pipes repaired. The sand block is also removed for repair following its cipher during Martin Ellis' concert.

We were fortunate to be able to purchase out of Victoria, a genuine Wurlitzer Saxophone rank set. This will be used to replace the existing non-Wurlitzer rank in place. This work will occur during next year. Thanks to Rob Gliddon for his persistence in following this matter to completion and driving to Melbourne to collect the pipes.

Maintenance on the piano and pump are underway and this will see the end of the "rattling piano pump" and should improve the vacuum situation in the Wurlitzer piano and therefore lift its volume.

Tuning has been regular during the year - prior to each concert. John Parker is our tuner and he is doing a superb job at

keeping Opus 1813 on song. John is ably assisted by chief striker Neil Palmer – who must have the patience of a saint to sit there and play slow tuning scales according to John’s cries from the chambers – and Neil has to play the scales multiple times over several hours.

You will of course note that all concerts this year, except last week’s fundraiser, have been at Orion centre. This is due partly to booking challenges we faced with Marrickville council. President Geoff is managing that situation and now has better access to be able to book MTH further ahead than the six month limit that MC implemented. All this extra work for Opus 1813 has of course put unexpected stress on her but she has coped.

Member days have been more regular this year and have changed times. This was done partly to enable some young players, under the guidance of Simon Ellis, to access the instrument at times that were expected to suit them better. Sadly this has constantly run into challenges, but Simon is still encouraging young players to come along, and they all show promise.

The change in times has also benefitted our regular players and listeners too. It means that travel, especially the homeward bound trip, is not in the melee of Sydney peak “hour”. Attendance has been good with at least four regular players at each session and even a couple of newbies. Listener numbers have been good too. I recall that we have only had to cancel member days on two occasions this year due to essential maintenance requirements – thank you to members for their cooperation on this count. Thanks also to John Batts for his untiring efforts in promoting member days and being the other half of the member days team. Thanks too to the regular attendees.

Relations with Orion Centre management continue to be excellent. The trust and support shown has been exemplary. Thanks to George and John Khoury for their cheerful and helpful attitude.

Concert presentations continue to improve and I thank all the technical team for their outstanding efforts and can do attitude. Having been to a few concerts at ATOS conventions, I can tell you that I miss the professionalism and “show” of our concerts. Lastly thanks to all the people who assist in maintaining Opus 1813 – your efforts and time commitment is greatly appreciated by all the committee, members and audience.

*Craig Keller*

## Members Diary

**Sunday 4th December 2016**

**2:00pm - 4:30pm**

**Orion Centre Theatre**

**Tony Fenelon & John Atwell**

**Christmas Concert**

*see centre pages for details*

**Book your reserved seats by contacting  
Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131 Before 8:00pm please**

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## **The concert program for 2017**

**In view of the Baird Government amalgamation of  
Council's during 2016 Marrickville Town Hall  
is now within the Inner West Council**

TOSA Executive & Committee have planned a series of five concerts for next year - three being at Marrickville Town Hall  
As we await confirmation of bookings on nominated dates  
we are not in a position to advise of details  
until the January February TOSA News when  
Season Ticket Booking forms will also be included.

Radio FINE MUSIC 102.5 "Colours of the King" 2nd Saturday of each month,  
6pm till 7pm. Tune in on Saturday 10th Dec for a Theatre Organ Program

**\*Theatre Organ Magic\* on RNB - FM from Sydney, NSW, Australia.**

88.7 FM and 90.3 FM 12 noon first Sunday of the month for one hour

**Web Sites of Interest:** <https://www.facebook.com/tosansw>

[www.theatreorgansaustralia.info](http://www.theatreorgansaustralia.info) (history of cinema organ installations in  
Australasia)

[www.omss.org.au](http://www.omss.org.au) (our sister society, Organ Music Society of Sydney OMSS)  
[www.ATOS.org](http://www.ATOS.org) American Theatre Organ Society

# TOSA NEWS

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