

VOLUME 25

Issue 5

Price 50¢

MAY 1986

# T.O.S.A NEWS

The Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia N.S.W. Division  
Address- Box A584 P.O. Sydney South, 2000  
Registered by Australia Post-Publication No. N.B.H. 1038

PRESENTING



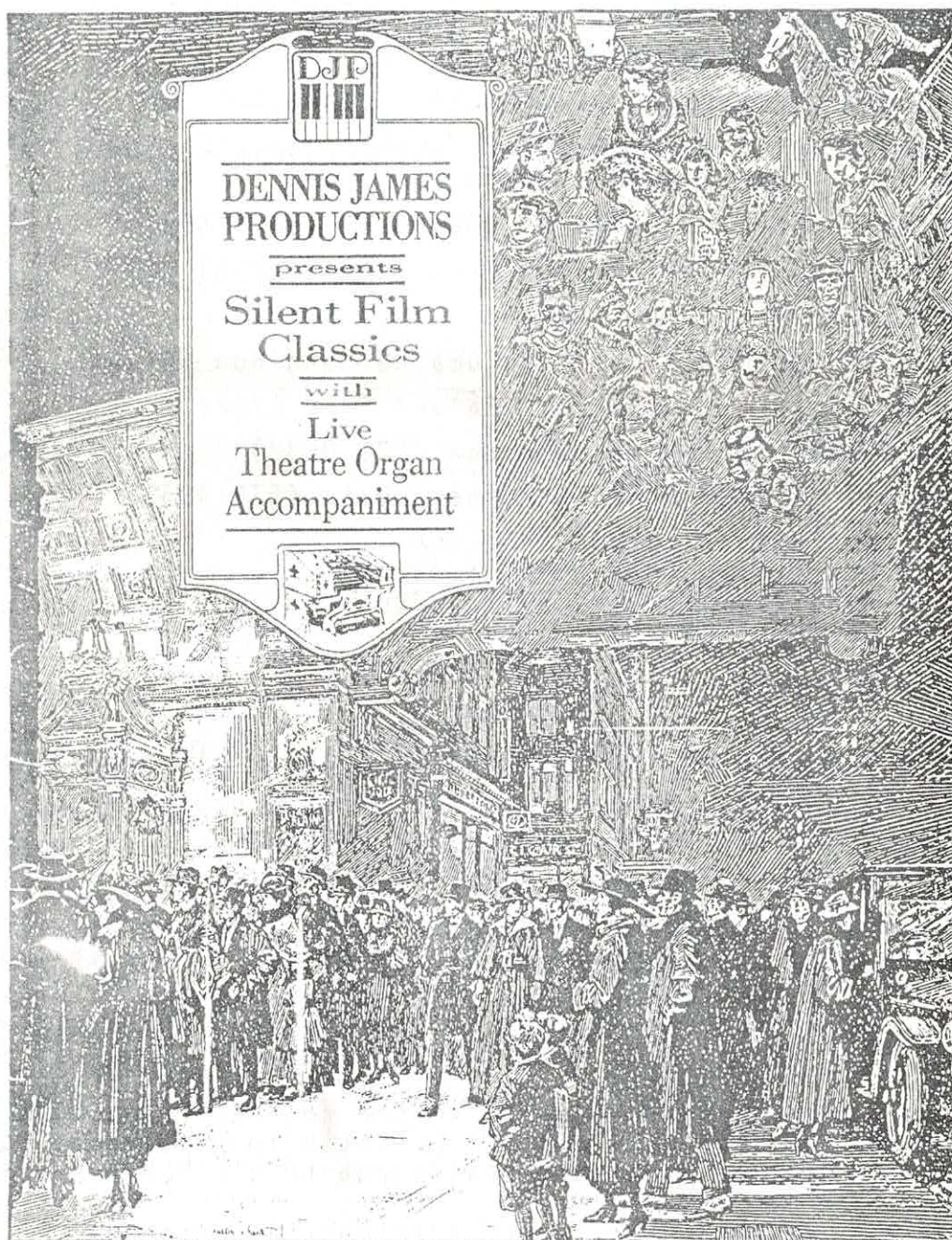
DENNIS JAMES



THOM GALL

IN

CONCERT



AT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

SATURDAY 24th MAY 1986 8PM

ADMISSION: \$ 8.00 ADULTS \$ 6.00 MEMBER \$ 5.00 CONCESSION  
Children under the age of 10 admitted free

D I R E C T O R Y

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION)

PATRON Ian Davies  
PRESIDENT Alan Misdale (525 5554)  
VICE PRESIDENTS Frank Ellis (649 7011) Ernest Vale (570 4953)  
SECRETARY Barry Porter (533 1198)  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY John Clark (649 7497)  
TREASURER Edna Smith (529 7379)  
ASSISTANT TREASURER Ron Smith (529 7379)  
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY Ron Smith (529 7379)  
RESEARCH AND ARCHIVES Ian Cameron  
PRACTICE CONVENOR Jim Crombie (750 4294)  
COMMITTEE Norm Weismantel, Bill Schumacher, Neil Palmer, Robert  
Gliddon, Jack Lawson, David Cook.  
MINUTE SECRETARY Russe1 Robertson (86 1159)  
TOSA NEWS EDITOR Roslyn Porter (533 1198)  
PHOTOGRAPHY Barry Tooker  
CONCERT RECORDING Bill Schumacher and Ron Wilson  
CONCERT TAPE HIRING Neil Palmer (798 6742)  
HOME PARTIES Andrea Harrison (520 8632)  
ARTIST LIAISON OFFICER Ernest Vale (570 4953)  
Address all correspondence to:-  
The Secretary, TOSA (NSW Division)  
Box A584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH. 2000.

. . . . .

I M P O R T A N T   N O T I C E

At the Members Meeting on Friday, 21st March, 1986, while the matter of the "solid stating of the organs" was being discussed, the following motion was put and passed.....

"The Quarterly General Meeting held on Friday, 21st March, be adjourned and another meeting be called by the 19th May, 1986.

The above Members Meeting will be resumed at Marrickville Town Hall on Monday 12th May, 1986 at 7.30pm.

Correspondence in relation to the solid stating of the organ will be read including a copy of a letter from Microset Pty Ltd received from the Society Lawyer subsequent to the March Meeting.

It is important that members attend this meeting.

A.T.O.S. OUTING

Friday, 28th February started off as a quiet day - right for shopping. Then the phone rang. It was our worthy President Alan Misdale with a note of distress in his voice. A car outing had been planned for our American visitors and one vehicle "had no brakes". Could we help? The choice between shopping and a car drive on a warm fine day was not a difficult one. Yes, have wagon, will travel! Shortly afterwards two overcrowded vans arrived, and after a short period of organised chaos, we departed in convoy heading west.

Our first stop was the Featherdale Wildlife Park at Doonside. Our 15 American friends wasted no time in getting to know our unique fauna, particularly the Koala Bears. Many photos were taken of the bears being cuddled and no doubt these photos will bring back happy memories. Our visit was of necessity brief, but before departing we all enjoyed a Devonshire Tea/Coffee prepared by Edna and Ron Smith. There was some talk of the disastrous effect on waistlines of the freshly whipped cream, jam and scones, but no refusals to share in the refreshments.

From Doonside we proceeded along the F4 Freeway to Penrith then up to Springwood. Here we turned off the highway onto the Richmond Road, and stopped at Yellow Rock Lookout not far from Springwood. There was a good shelter shed and tanks of fresh water so it was decided to make this a lunch break. Sandwiches and drinks prepared by Coletta Misdale and Edna Smith were produced and proved most popular as it allowed everyone to remain mobile to enjoy the magnificent view and inspect the various types of flora that grow in the area.

We then drove further along the Richmond Road to the Hawkesbury Lookout for another brief stop and more photographs. Our guests would have liked to stay longer at each stop but we were committed to be back in Sydney by 4pm for an inspection of the State Theatre arranged by Jack Lawson. Unfortunately the heavy traffic from Richmond to Sydney delayed our progress and we did not arrive at the State Theatre until 4.15pm which proved to be too late to start the inspection.

During our trip we were privileged to listen to a tape recording of the beautiful sounds of the 3 manual 23 rank Wurlitzer home installation owned by Chuck and Kay Lyall of California.

Our thanks go to Ron Smith and Alan Misdale for planning the outing and to Edna Smith and Coletta Misdale for preparing the refreshments. Also, our thanks go to our visitors for their friendship and co-operation in making our day most memorable.

Norm and Betty Weismantel.

WANTED

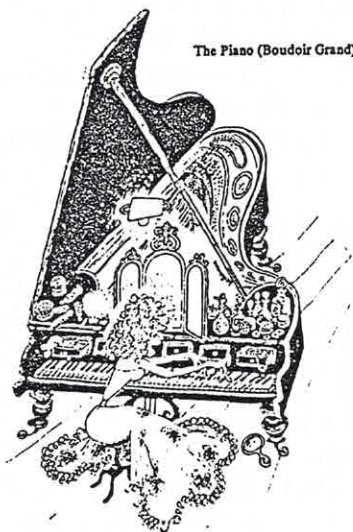
If any member has a tape of Ray Chaffer (a Theatre organist up until the 50's) on pipes (possibly a demo of an electric organ with Penn Hughes), would they please contact RON MILLS, Box 1398, ORANGE. 2800.

. . . . .

DATES FOR  
YOUR DIARY



The Piano (Boudoir Grand)



MAY

MONDAY 5th May at 7.45pm  
Warringah Organ Society  
Andrea Harrison & Peter  
Bloor - at MACKELLAR  
BOWLING CLUB - MANLY VALE.

SATURDAY 24th (Paid  
Concert) 8PM Marrickville  
Town Hall DENNIS JAMES &  
THOM GALL

FRIDAY, 30th at Bondi  
R.S.L. - IAN DAVIES

JUNE

FRIDAY 13th Members  
Night & Quarterly Meeting  
at Epping Baptist Church  
7.45 p.m.

SUNDAY 22nd, 2CBA  
SPECTACULAR, 2 p.m.  
Marrickville Town Hall

SUNDAY 29th at 2 p.m.  
Opening Concert Compton  
Theatre Pipe Organ,  
Canberra.

JULY

SUNDAY 6th - MECCA  
THEATRE - Hurstville at  
2.00 p.m. - DAVID PARSONS  
& ERICA WITT.

SUNDAY, 27th (Free  
Concert) Marrickville  
Town Hall at 2.00 p.m. -  
IAN DAVIES

AUGUST

SUNDAY 24th (Paid  
Concert) Marrickville  
Town Hall - 2.00 p.m.

SEPTEMBER

WEDNESDAY, 10th Members  
Night & Quarterly Meeting  
Marrickville Town Hall

FRIDAY 19th NOMS CLOSE

SUNDAY, 28th (Paid  
Concert), Marrickville  
Town Hall - 2.00 p.m.

OCTOBER

SUNDAY, 26th (Free  
Concert) Marrickville  
Town Hall - 2.00 p.m.

NOVEMBER

WEDNESDAY, 5th - A.G.M.

SUNDAY, 23rd (Paid  
Concert - Marrickville  
Town Hall - 2.00 p.m.

DECEMBER

SUNDAY, 14th (Paid  
Concert), Marrickville  
Town Hall - 2.00 p.m.

XMAS FUNCTION  
Date to be advised

SUNDAY, JUNE 29 at 2pm

OPENING CONCERT OF CANBERRA TOSA's COMPTON THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

A Day trip to Canberra for this historic occasion. The organist will be TONY FENELON and the return coach fare is \$20.00 per head. The coach holds 45 people and we have already filled one coach. If we can guarantee another 42 we will book another coach. The Coach will be leaving from Hurstville MECCA Theatre at 8am For further information and bookings please phone John Clark (after 6pm) weekdays on 649 7497.

\* \* \* \* \*

PROPOSAL FOR ADELAIDE TOSA CONVENTION 1987

COACH TOUR 11 DAYS & 10 NIGHTS

Depart Sydney	Tuesday 14th April	- 1st Night	Wagga Wagga
	Wednesday 15th	" - 2nd	" Mildura
	Thursday 16th	" - 3rd	" Adelaide
	Friday 17th	" - 4th	" Adelaide
	Saturday 18th	" - 5th	" Adelaide
	Sunday 19th	" - 6th	" Adelaide
	Monday 20th	" - 7th	" Adelaide
	Tuesday 21st	" - 8th	" Mt. Gambier
	Wednesday 22nd	" - 9th	" Ballarat
	Thursday 23rd	" -10th	" Albury
	Friday 24th	" -	Arrive Sydney

Tour includes Dinner, Bed and Breakfast and use of the coach in Adelaide. Suggested Fare \$630. Tour by Kogarah Coachlines. Organized by R. Willis. Please note - A \$50.00 Deposit to be paid at time of booking and the closing date would be 30/11/86.

If you are interested in taking this trip to Adelaide, Please phone Ritchie Willis NOW on 57 3581. This does not mean you have to pay the Deposit yet, we are trying to get an indication of how many people would consider this trip as we have to make a booking with the Coach Company.

. . . . .

FOR SALE

CONN 3 MANUAL, Horseshoe Theatrette - MODEL: 580, Galaxie of Features including LESLIE, Walnut Cabinet. Carefully maintained. A beautiful instrument for the fastidious buyer. \$6,500.00. Phone 327-6189.

. . . . .

NOTICE

The grand sum of \$3,800.00 was raised for Handicapped Children from the Charity Concert held on 13th April at Bardwell Park RSL.

. . . . .

HOME PARTY at MAENNLS' SATURDAY, 15th MARCH, 1986.

by Andrea Harrison

Oyster Bay was once again the scene of much music and merry-making when 50 TOSA members and friends turned up to enjoy another evening at the Maennl's residence.

Quite a few of the young (and not so young) ones got up and had a play on the Hammond; including Frank Rohanek who delighted us with his own "unique" (and well known) version of "Moonlight and Roses"!!

At around 10.30pm everyone decided to break for supper, which was up to its usual high standard, thanks to the ladies.

After everyone was suitably refreshed, the jazz combo started up. This consisted of Paul on bass guitar, Ralph on Lead guitar, Stephen on drums and of course, Joseph Maennl showing his expertise on vibraphone. As the evening progressed the band grew, and eventually included Brigitte Maennl on flute, Bill Schumacher on piano and a brilliant young trumpet player, Linda.

Sometime after midnight Bill Schumacher got on the organ and enticed a few of the more energetic ones to dance the Can Can, Mexican Hat Dance & Zorba The Greek. By this stage everyone was exhausted - everyone but Frank & Edith Rohanek who took the floor for the tango "Ecstasy".

Needless to say, it was well into the early hours when the party finally broke up. We are indeed grateful to Joe and Mercedes for their continued support of TOSA, and this evening added another \$103 to the needy Capital Organ Fund.



Sharon Maennl at THE GREAT HALL

BY Russell Robertson

The Great Hall at The University of Sydney is renowned for its beautiful interior and also for its splendid acoustics. It is this feature that has made it a popular venue for orchestral concerts, choral presentations and instrumental recitals.

The music that is generally associated with the Great Hall are the organ recitals which are given on Thursdays at 1.10pm during term. They have become a great tradition over the last fifty years and they are probably the longest continual musical series in Australia.

On Thursday 17th April, Sharon Maennl was the organist and her programme was:

1. a) Prelude and Fugue in C minor Bach  
b) Trio Sonata No. 1 in E flat major  
c) Fugue in g minor
2. Sonata No. IV in B flat major Mendelssohn  
Allegro - Andante - Allegretto - Allegro maestoso

Sharon plays with assurance and sensitivity and has a mature appreciation of the demands of the composition. The highlights of the programme, that is the parts in which her abilities were most apparent were the Trio Sonata, which was played on the soft warm flute stops that this organ has, and the Allegretto in the Mendelssohn Sonata, which was played on some of the splendid reed stops that the organ possesses.

Sharon, daughter of Joe and Mercedes Maennl, is a student at The Conservatorium High School where she is now in year 10. She is studying both organ and violin.

I believe Sharon is the youngest organist ever to be invited to give a public recital at The University of Sydney. It is very likely that we will hear her again at The Great Hall in the future.

A Hill organ was installed in the Hall in the last century. It had a brilliant, strong and clear tone. However the electro pneumatic action had deteriorated and the "clack clack" noise heard during quiet passages had become distracting to both player and audience and the University decided to replace the entire instrument.

In 1972 the present organ, designed by Rudolph von Beckerath of Germany was completed. It has three manuals, pedals, 53 speaking stops and almost 4,000 pipes.

. . . . .

YOUTH OF AUSTRALIA - SUTHERLAND CHAPTER

SELWYN THEATRE CONCERT FOR THE CAPITOL ORGAN FUND - SUNDAY, 16/3/86

by Ernest Vale.

Ritchie Willis introduced Lorna Rossiter who was the MC for the afternoon and she informed the audience that amongst the YOA members who would entertain us were 4 winners of Sections of the City of Sydney Eisteddfod - Andrea Harrison, Nerida Rossiter, Mandy Green and John Giacchi. Kathryn and Janelle Hoddinott had each been placed in the City of Sydney Eisteddfod.

Lorna Rossiter and Andrea Harrison played a lively arrangement of **Tea for Two** on Organ and Piano with rhythm accompaniment by Kathryn Hoddinott on a technics keyboard. This set the scene for a relaxed afternoon of musical variety.

Greg Taylor played two popular favourites in "**Whispering Hope**" and the "**Theme From Ice Castles**". One of the younger members of the YOA - Sutherland Chapter, Greg was right at home at the Thomas Lawrence Welk Organ.

Mandy Green gave us a change of pace playing two rock numbers on the organ - "**Boogie Rock & Tijuana Rock**". Nicole Aggett gave us a memorable selection on piano of some of my favourite music in "**Under The Bridges Of Paris**" & "**Plaisir D'Amour**" followed by "**Country Road**".

Mr. Personality, Jay McCormack gave us his fine rendition of some favourites in "**The Entertainer**", "**Tijuana Taxi**" and "**Alley Cat**". Kathryn Hoddinott kept us in the mood with a fine performance of "**Honey Hush**" and "**Smoke Gets in Your Eyes**". Lisa Aggett gave us a piano selection of "**Yesterday**", "**Up Where We Belong**", "**Swinging Shepherd Blues**" and a lovely arrangement of "**MEMORY**".

Janelle Hoddinott showed us a great command of registration of the organ when she played a medley of "**I Left My Heart in San Francisco**", "**Manhattan**", "**Chicago**", "**Georgia**" and "**Manhattan Serenade**".

In view of the weather, John Giacchi played a bracket on the organ of "**Tales from the Vienna Woods**" followed by a jazzy arrangement of "**Stormy Weather**".

To close the first half Janelle and Kathryn Hoddinott sang the popular Bette Midler song "**The Rose**" accompanied by Andrea Harrison on piano.

The second half opened with Bev Kennedy playing piano and Robert Long playing guitar. Robert opened with a guitar solo called "**Out of Nowhere**". "**Prelude No. 1**" by Gershwin was Bev's opening number on piano. "**Crystal Silence**" by Chick Corea introduced the audience to Bev and Rob in duet. A lovely haunting piece of music. A jazz arrangement by Jo Pass was Robert's next solo then "**Love Song**" by Liszt was beautifully played by Bev on Piano. A duet on the number "**Green Dolphin Street**" was a bouncy change of mood followed by a guitar solo in jazz mode of "**All of Me**".



"Scherzo" by Litolff was masterfully executed on piano by Bev - without the music and she received a well and truly deserved long applause. A duet called "A Child Is Born" was very smoothly presented to the receptive audience who called for an encore which was a Charlie Parker composition called "Ornithology". I hope we have the opportunity to hear more of Bev Kennedy and Robert Long both individually and in duet.

Lorna then introduced Nerida Rossiter to play a "Tocatta in D Minor" by Bach which showed us that Nerida is progressing very well in the musical tuition of David Smith.

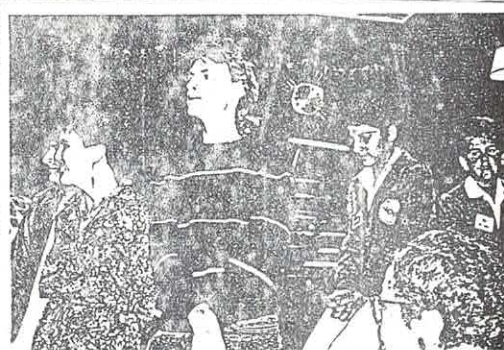
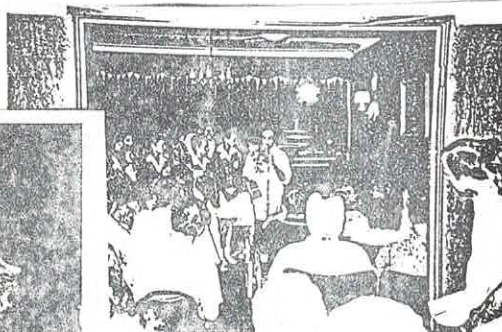
Andrea Harrison then played two very interesting arrangements on the organ of "Valencia" and "Love Look Away". Nerida Rossiter then teamed up with Andrea Harrison when they played firstly a Flute & Piano duet of the "Theme from Mahogany" followed by two flute & keyboard duets of an "Adagio" by Haydn followed by "The Rainbow Connection" especially dedicated to Ritchie Willis.

John Giacchi closed the show with a fine accompaniment of "Just a Little Street Where Old Friends Meet" and the audience joined in with heart and voice.

The afternoon provided a wealth of musical pleasure from a group of young musicians and TOSA is most grateful to them all for their generous donation of time and talent to raise a further \$205.00 for the Capitol Organ Fund.

#### N. B.

David Devenport, one of our newer members to TOSA, was so impressed by the concert that he most generously matched the sum of \$205 raised making the total for the day \$410.00. Thanks David.



HOME PARTY AT HARRISON'S SATURDAY, 19th APRIL, 1986.

by Cec Paddy

What a wonderful Autumn day; more like summer for the Bar-b-que at the lovely home of Joy & John Harrison at Heathcote.

By 11am, most of 60 folk who attended had gone off into National Park, via the back fence, for a bush walk. They were away a little over an hour and as usual came back as hungry as bears, thinking all would be ready for their lunch, but those of us left behind were busy sunning ourselves.

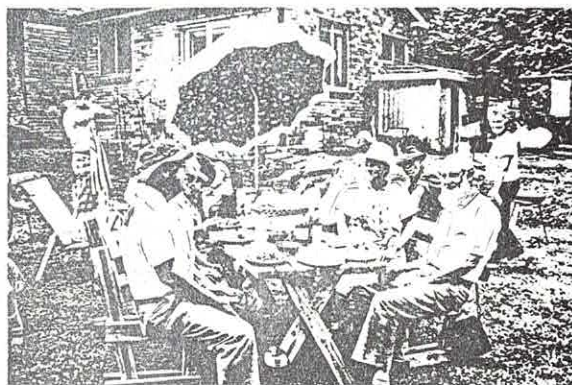
After a beaut lunch, we were entertained from the upstairs music room, which was very well set up with organ, piano and keyboard. It is always amazing the amount of talent there is in our Society. We had singers, Joy Harrison, Jan Pringle and Peter Ellis and on piano, Sharon Peters, Barry Porter & John Clark who played some very lovely music both in the afternoon and later in the evening. Andrea Harrison & John Giacchi played duets - very easy listening, also Wendy Hambly played organ. The numbers that were played varied and just too many to list. Many thanks to everyone who took part.

The raffle was a great success with three very nice prizes. 1st Prize was won by Peter Ellis, 2nd by Joan Scott, 3rd Nancy Shaw.

The lucky door prize was won by John Giacchi and believe it or not it wasn't a door.

It was Birthday day for Barry Porter - the cake was so loaded with candles, we thought it would explode when the candles were lit.

Around 5pm our President asked for a vote of thanks to Joy, John and Andrea for all the hard work that was done to make a wonderful happy day which brought for the Capital Organ Fund the tidy sum of \$315.00.



ORGAN RESTORATION REPORT

by Norm Weismantel

THE ORION CENTRE

The Orion Organ Console has now been moved to its own storeroom in the Orion Centre. In order to protect the immaculate paintwork by Ian Palmer, Alan Misdale constructed a travelling case complete with wheels. This case is open back and front to allow restoration work to continue and will finally be removed when console restoration is complete. Ross Adams made his truck available for the move and ensured that no harm came to the paintwork or the crew assisting with the move. Those who assisted with the move were Ian, Neil and Merv Palmer, Alan Misdale and myself. The pipe sorting crew at the Orion assisted with unloading.

An accurate measurement of both pipe chambers has been taken so that a model can be prepared. This model will assist in the most suitable placement of the organ components and the design of the framework to support them. Two sides of each chamber model will be clear plastic to give a three dimensional view of the interior.

Sorting and stocktaking of organ pipes is being conducted under the leadership of John Clark. This job is almost complete. The four tremulants donated by one of our American TOSA members, Walter Cook, are now stored at the Orion Centre.

John Weismantel is nearing the end of the stop rail wiring job and the stop rail will then be installed in the Orion Console.

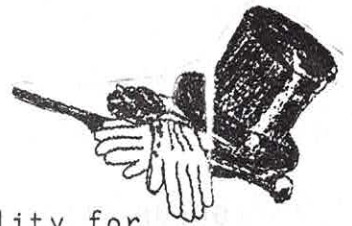
THE MARRICKVILLE ORGAN

The Marimba Harp will soon be moving to Marrickville Town Hall. Alan Misdale is organising the brackets to support the two chests, bars and resonators on the angled wall of the solo chamber. It will not be playing for a while yet, though, until new Kimball-Allen magnets recently purchased from George Stephens are fitted. The caps of the existing magnets were found to be too light-gauge a metal to resist the air pressure in the chests and tended to leak air.



BRISBANE CONVENTION 1986

by Cecilia Paddy



Brisbane certainly turned on the sunshine and hospitality for the Fabulous Fourteenth Convention by Puttin on the Ritz for Easter 1986, with the Committee and members dressed for the occasion in the fashions of that era.

FRIDAY, March, 28th.

Most of the conventioners had gathered by 5pm to register and by 6pm were busy talking, renewing and making new friends. A very nice light tea was served - chicken or fish, whichever you preferred then into the Kelvin Grove High School for the first Concert of the Convention.

The opening number 'Puttin on the Ritz' was well received, then the Waltz from Swan Lake played by John Masson joined by Nigel Wherritt on drums and The High School Dancing Girls did a fine routine to the tune of a Fred Astair & Ginger Rogers medley which well and truly set the happy mood for the whole convention. It really set one's feet tapping.

Next was the official welcome from President John Lynch, to all States of Australia including Tasmania and our friends across the sea from New Zealand. Brisbane's theme song was played and sung "When I hear the Christie play".

David Redfern played next with a Cinderella Selection - Unforgettable, Flaperette & Real Live Girl - It was very enjoyable and once again lively.

The Golden Wedding was quite a change played by Neil Wickham on Clarinet and Nigel again on the drums.

A duet on piano and organ is always easily listening and when John Ellis and Judy Vale played Shaking the Blues Away, it really did that. They also played four other numbers and songs by Florence Venning.

From N.Z. Barry Brinson did a great job on Waltz of the Flowers and I Got Rhythm, then the pace was on Glenda Kubler - some very stirring Marching numbers for the Westside Marching Girls Association, about 4 or 5 different Clubs did some precision steps and even down to tiny little girls, all did very well and their practise showed when the girls finished Glenda played Autumn Leaves and Carousel Waltz.

The Andrew Sisters (that is what they were called) did in my opinion fantastic numbers - Chattanooga Choo Choo and Tuxedo Junction - only 17 years old and I believe one day we will be hearing and seeing these girls on T.V. Remember their names, Jennifer Drew, Robyn Hamilton and Rebecca James.

The little bit of frivolity which followed "The Flat Foot Flusi" to the dancing of the flapper era brought a lot of giggles and applause.

Simon Bowes was next - A medley called 'A Touch of Broadway' then came the T.O.S.A. singers who gave us 'Side by Side' and 'The Man I Love'.

The last performer was John Van Kleef - a young local player and well they may be very proud of this young man - he played 5 pieces including an Australian Medley which the audience joined in singing and so came to an end. A very pleasant and exciting evening of revue - certainly a change from all organ even though we all love the sound of the beautiful pipe organs. It was indeed a pleasure to have a smorgasboard of talent and that is exactly what it was.

### SATURDAY, March, 29th

At 9am Saturday morning the Conventioneers arrived at St Andrews Uniting Church where Steven Nisbet gave us a programme of music fit for lovers of music on the quiet side. I dont mean quiet in sounds, because this magnificent organ could burst your ear drums it's so powerful - his programme included "Fanfare", Toccata & Fugu in F by Buxtenude and many others. He also played a couple of hymns being Easter and the convenioneers joined in the singing. After this Steven invited us to view the Console and pipework then he continued on with more of the same music. I am not particularly fond of this kind of music, no doubt I was the only one, as Steven was very well applauded and it was a very worthwhile visit for everyone.

Outside the church 5 buses were waiting to take us to the newly opened Performing Arts Complex. This is a beautiful building, very well planned and a lot of thought must have gone into the needs of everybody who would be performing there - nothing has been spared to make it workable. The tour was very interesting and from this complex we were taken to Albert Park where we had a boxed lunch and were entertained by local artist on a Yamaha FS-20 - some very relaxing music while we had a rest and had our lunch. I think we were beginning to wilt some but we had a long way to go so off to Oxley next to Blair Linnets home and the Compton played by Arthur Midgley - the idea was for the buses to arrive at 3/4 hour intervals but something went wrong and oh boy, what a shamozzle - the first bus was OK but all the buses arrived too close - can you imagine these huge coaches trying to fit into a small suburban street? But it didnt matter the music was enjoyable - the heat was unbearable and that was that. Back to the Motel to get ready for the main Concert.

Richard Hore brought up the Christie playing the rousing '2001' Right from the start I knew we were in for a treat with this young man. He certainly knew what he was doing whether he was playing light classics or up tempo - his awareness of everything around him - he knew we were all enjoying what he was doing and saying making us laugh with his quipps. His first piece 'Wunderbar' was followed by 'Delikado' & 'I can see clearly now'. Richard played 'Bells across the Meadows' and it was beautiful, but I dont think I have ever heard anyone play 'Goody Goody' like Richard it nearly brought the house down (my kind of music).

Narelle Close on piano joined Richard for some duets playing "If I Loved You", "Sleepy Shores", "Elizabethan Serenade" some nice harmonies from Narelle made easy listening.

When Richard played 'The Overture to Zampa' the audience went wild with applause - stamping feet and several of them stood up to applaud Richard's last number 'The Way Old Friends Do' Certainly made me cry and I could hear quite a few more around me so to you Richard Hore from New Zealand please, please come back again - We luv ya.

### SUNDAY, March 30th

Again we boarded the coach for a run down to the Gold Coast past Dreamworld and onto the wharf where we boarded the boat for our Luncheon Cruise for 2½ hours. We leisurely cruised around looking at the homes of the millionaires on the banks of the river and were served lunch and coffee on board then back to the coach's again to the Gold Coast Concert held in the Church Hall. We just didnt expect the surprises that were in store for us - we were a little late arriving and it wasnt too easy finding seats but Barry Bailey who was the first artist was playing 'The Holy City' then 'The Strauss Waltz'. President Shirley Nott welcomed everybody and thanked us for coming. Bev Black then played quite a few numbers on the Conn Organ which was a beautiful instrument - next came Stewart Free, only 17 years old, and already a fine artist, Narelle only 14 years old and playing very well. The duets played by Estelle Brown and Catherine Beattie were very enjoyable. 'Country Garden' 'Morning' (Peer Gynt Suite) 'Dream of Olwyn' all beautiful.

What can we say about Debbie Fitzsimmons. I heard Debbie 5 years ago and I predicted then what I heard this day. Good Luck for the future Deb you sure have one.

We stopped for afternoon tea and what we got in the way of entertainment after interval could only be seen to be believed - they called themselves the Galloping Grannies but they would have put a lot of young ones to shame. The Revue 'Beside the Seaside' was a delight. The girls and boys all dressed in their 'neck to knee' costumes, singing and dancing the rest of the afternoon was a sheer delight and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. After a stroll back to the coach we were on our way back to the Beenleigh Rum Distillery now named Morans Wharf Restaurant for a Banana Benders Banquet - it should have been called a Mind Bending Binge - the food was beautifully presented in a banana boat, everything from Prawns to Pavlova's and as much as you could eat. I am told some piggies went back for sixers. WOW. Anyway the last coach left about 11pm what a day more than 12 hours of fun and games, but it was the end of another perfect day.

### MONDAY, March 31st

Now the time had come for our last day and we were back to Kelvin Grove High School for our last Concert. The first part was taken up with Local Artists Narelle Close, Lorraine O'Brien from Ballarat David Gates and forgive me for not having all the names but all was great listening then the big surprise, up comes Christie and who was our (Mystery Guest) Richard Hore, imagine everyone's surprise, also Barry Brinson on Piano. This to me was the highlight of the whole convention when they played Tchaikowsky's Piano Concerto which was their last piece together. They received a standing ovation for quite some time and very well deserved.

12.30 Lunch was served and then onto some more music on open Console. All states were well represented (Ballarat) Warwick Kittorn, Clinton White (ACT) Andrea Harrison (NSW) John McLennon (VIC) Carole Pinches (Ballarat) Col Bennett plays for some community singing, Narelle Close and Lorraine O'Brien and so came to a close, a very successful and very happy Convention. Thank you Queensland.

The Convention was closed by President John Lynch and he thanked the 460 who attended the Convention and the hundreds that packed

TUESDAY, April, 1st

Quite a few conventioners stayed the extra day for the boat trip to Tangalooma. I wasn't there but I believe it was a hair raising ride so I'm glad I didn't go. I did go to Glenda & Ian Kubler's (who I forgot to mention acted as M.C. for all the concerts - he did a marvellous job) home, along with about 46 people at Boondall for a last evening of merry making and a lovely chinese meal. It was the icing on the cake as far as the entertainment was concerned - most of us left for home on Wednesday feeling very weary but extremely happy.

. . . . .

WHAT'S ON INTERSTATE

MAY

- 4 Malcolm & Heather Ross - Capri Theatre, S.A. at 2 p.m.
- 30 John Atwell & Ray Thornley - Melbourne Town Hall - Hill Norman & Beard organ 8 p.m.

JUNE

- 15 Dennis James at Compton Pipe Organ & Singer/Entertainer Thom Gall - Memorial Theatre - Ballarat.
- 30 David Johnston on Wurlitzer at Moorabbin Town Hall.

. . . . .

THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY

If any members are interested in becoming members of the American Theatre Organ Society, and receive a monthly Queen size magazine with plenty of interesting reading and colour photos, please write to: A.T.O.S. MEMBERSHIP OFFICE, P.O. Box 420490, Sacramento, California, U.S.A. 95842.

. . . . .

EDITOR NEEDED

T.O.S.A. Requires the services of an EDITOR. After the issue of the MAY NEWSLETTER there will be a vacancy for someone who could assist the printer of the monthly newsletter. PLEASE PHONE: 525-5554 533-1198.

. . . . .

THE JOE KOONS PIPE ORGAN  
LONG BEACH, LOS ANGELES. U.S.A.

It all began in 1956, when "Spud" Koons, Joe's wife, was away for 2 weeks helping at Girl Scout Camp. When she returned home she discovered that Joe had traded in the spinet Hammond purchased only 3 months before, and had bought, instead, a full-sized Hammond

Immediately, Joe began adding "extras" to the organ. First came chimes, then a rhythm box, next an attachment that produced unusual sound effects, then red and green lights under the keyboards, and finally, a large cymbal operated by a mechanism he built of parts from an old Indian motorcycle. A significant day came when he decided to add organ pipes. He built a small chamber in the garage next to the den and installed one rank of pipes, wiring them to play from the Hammond keyboard. But the result "sounded horrible", so he resolved that he had better learn more about pipe organs and forget the Hammond entirely. He also realised that his house was too small for the instrument he wanted, so he decided to build it in his motorcycle shop. Since working on the organ was a hobby he now pursued day and night, building it in the shop would let him do it while still running his business

The present organ began in 1967 when Joe bought the 10 rank Welte which once played in the lounge of the swank Del Mar Club in Santa Monica. Then he bought a 2 manual, 10 rank Wurlitzer from Barnsville, Ohio. Next, was a 7 rank Page organ from the New Hope Baptist Church in Long Beach. These three organs formed the foundation of the new instrument, with parts of other organs added to complete it. The tubas, for example, came from an organ in Glendale, traps from one in Sherrard, Illinois, and the harp from the Pacific Coast Club in Long Beach. The 3 rank mixture, however, he purchased new.

Joe collected all these organ parts in a garage located under an apartment near the shop. When he inspected the inside of the chests he was pleased to find them in excellent condition, looking as if they had been made yesterday. But disaster struck. One day, the faulty clothes washer in the apartment upstairs sprang a leak while the occupant was away, flooding the garage below and soaking all the organ parts. The damage was so great that everything had to be releathered, setting back the project many months.

In November 1967 construction began on a pipe chamber in the back of the shop and Joe began installing organ parts. In the log book which he kept, his first entry is typical of the experience of organ installers the world over. It says, "Aug 1968 Wind on chests (Many wind leaks)". In December 1968 he started reconstructing the 2 manual Wurlitzer console in order to add a style D bolster, thus providing more space for stop tablets. By April 5, 1969 the second pipe chamber (the Tuba Room) was finished.

When Malcolm Epley, columnist for the Long Beach Independent Press-Telegram, visited the shop on April 22, 1969, 12 ranks were installed and Joe demonstrated how they sounded, using a "hot wire". By September 14, part of the console was hooked up and the first notes played from the console. On September 18, Joe noted in his log, "Gaylord Carter played and liked the organ VERY MUCH."



The opening Christmas Concert, held on December 13, 1969, featured organists Ken Kukuk, John Hoffmar, John Pawson, Greg Rister, Dennis Watts, Dennis Leonhart, Don Thompson, Gordon Snow, and Jack Shemick. Over 200 people attended.

In the following year, 1970, while Joe continued to add more ranks of pipes and new features, many individuals and groups visited the shop to play and hear the unusual instrument. Some of these groups were the Pasadena Shakespeare Club, Jett Set Organ Club, Organ and Piano Teachers Association, Millikan High School adult organ class, and the Pedal Pushers Organ Club. On September 23, 300 people attended a party at the shop sponsored by the American Theatre Organ Society, and on October 8, the American Guild of Organists held a party there, with Gaylord Carter as the featured organist. Joe commented in his log, "Well received. I've made Christians out of 200 church organists."

In November 1970, Joe bought a 3 manual Wurlitzer 260 console originally installed in the Elmwood Theatre, an old movie house in Buffalo, New York. By December 1970, 13 ranks were playing and Joe was already known for his famous theatre organ parties. In June 1971, he bought the Wurlitzer piano. In December he started disconnecting the 2 manual console and by January had the 3 manual console "sort-of" working.

During 1972 the mass media discovered the organ. Programs and articles about it were produced by the Long Beach I P-T, Los Angeles Times, KNXT, KRLA, KNBC, Console, and Off the Keyboards. By this time, the free Saturday night concerts, with open console and open pipe chambers, were well known. The organ was now at 22 ranks or about 1600 pipes, and Joe estimated that he had spent \$35,000 on it. In an interview for KRLA, he explained:

We'll let anybody play it that can play an organ. We've had some remarkable people play this organ. Some of the finest organists in the country have been here. They like this organ because it does have everything they want. I was very particular about that when I finally decided to go all the way. I wanted to be sure that they had everything they needed.

The year 1972 also saw the beginning of professional recording of the organ. Five artists have produced records on it: Del Castillo, Gene Roberson, Dor Thompson, Ramona Gerhard Sutton and John Scot.

September 1972 marked the start of construction of the third pipe chamber, and a year later, in September 1973, the East Room had been completed with the installation of 6 more ranks of pipes, a 3 rank mixture, harp, and orchestral bells. This brought the organ to 32 ranks or about 2000 pipes.

Joe also bought the pipes and provided space for two more ranks to be added later a Gedeckt, and a Wurlitzer band organ. In 1974 he designed and built a pneumatic action to operate a train bell, and in July it was installed.

. . . . .

GEOFF ROBERTSON

Frank Ellis's journeys "Down Memory Lane" have made interesting reading over the past two years, the last especially so to a Victorian whose close association with the theatre organist fraternity began not long before the outbreak of World War 2. One point that occurred to me while reading of the console swapping in 1941 was that Charles Tuckwell, Lionel Corrick, Les Waldron and Geoff Robertson had all at one time been pupils of Horace Weber, at that time in the middle of his longest stint at Melbourne's Capitol, from 1938 to 1944.

Geoff Robertson would have been a busy boy indeed if he had done all those things enumerated by Frank at the same time. Spread over 12 years or so, with four years AIF service in the middle of it, they were less demanding. Geoff was something of a wheeler-dealer in Hammond organs and flogged one to the Old Galleon coffee lounge in St. Kilda, where it was played for a short time by Arnold Coleman before Geoff took over, some time in 1940. In the same year he had joined Hoyts' suburban circuit, playing week about with Len Davis at the Victory, St. Kilda and the Padua, Brunswick. Sorry, Frank, but the organ was not transported from theatre to theatre. There was one in each, and also in the Regent, South Yarra, the latter unused in 1941.

Early that year Geoff's influence resulted in a Hammond being installed in Rumpelmayer's Restaurant, in the basement of Howey House in Collins Street, and Geoff became the organist, playing three times daily, for lunch, dinner and supper. His working day started at 12.30pm at Rumpelmayers, where he played until 1.30pm, then he was free until 6-7pm, at the restaurant.

Promptly at 7pm the drawbars would be pushed in, the organ switched off and Geoff would head for Swanston Street if he was going to St. Kilda or Elizabeth Street for the Padua, catching a tram which would take him to the theatre by 7.30pm. After playing before the show, for the stage presentation and for interval, it was back onto a tram for the city and the restaurant, from 10 to 11.30pm.

All this ended suddenly when Geoff joined the Army on a Friday early in 1942. During the afternoon and evening Geoff was sent off in fine style by his many mates, even though he was not finishing work until the following Thursday. Rumpelmayers had a very genial organist that Friday night, when he arrived for the supper session. About 10.45 Eric Grant, the proprietor, noticing the absence of music, came through from the kitchen to find out why. He then noticed the restaurant was half empty, and the usual theatre crowd wasn't pouring down the stairs. He found Geoff at the top of the stairs in Collins Street, giving a good imitation of a commissionaire in his dinner jacket, and telling potential customers as they made to go down stairs, "Sorry, sir (or madam), we're closed". Eric sent him home.

Prior to the following Thursday Geoff asked me if I would be his minder on his last night, to keep him out of trouble. I accompanied him to Brunswick after the dinner session, sat through the first half of the show, and returned with him to the restaurant staying until the end of supper. At the Padua he included two of my then and now favourites, Hold Me and Drifting Down the Shalimar, in his programs. As he switched off the Hammond at Rumpelmayers he said: "Well, that's it. Thanks, pal", and went.

Geoff arrived unexpectedly for a lunch session at Rumpelmayers about three months later, played for an hour or so, then departed. I heard nothing of him until early 1945. Sitting waiting for the show to start in an open air picture show in Lae, a bloke talking behind me said "Geoff Robertson". Having ascertained it was THE Geoff Robertson, I trekked about four miles next night to his unit to find him. Just in time. He was moving back to Australia next day. Somewhere up the Ramu Valley he had come by a small Japanese keyboard instrument, about three octaves, which he asked me to try. It sounded like a chrysoglott wrapped in a woollen jumper. He looked a bit worried when I said so. When he took off the back of the box you could see why. Every available nook and cranny not occupied by the action had been packed with Yankee cigarettes. I told him your average Customs officer was unlikely to notice the muffled sound.

Geoff was playing at the Regent, Adelaide in 1949 during the great coal strike, when Premier Playford shut down the organ to conserve coal. True! So he moved back to Melbourne and took over from Horace Weber at the Regent while he took three weeks holiday, and was then fired, leaving Geoff with the job. Horrie was very hurt that Geoff could take his job from him. He used to think a lot of Geoff.

Geoff lasted at the Regent about three years, for much of the time with a weekly Thursday morning broadcast at 9 am on the ABC. He also owned a Hammond which he had leased to the Kings Theatre in Russell Street. In 1952 the organist left and Geoff had no option but to leave the Regent and play the Hammond himself when he could not find a replacement.

Later he took the Hammond on tour with a road show. As far as I know, the truck overturned somewhere in Tasmania and the organ was destroyed. Geoff then became Franquin's organist, playing a Bourne electronic. But his health began to fail as dropsy developed, a result of his ware service. Geoff died in 1957, aged 47. Stanfield Holliday played for the funeral service at a Dandenong church. Ian Davies was among the many mourners from music and theatre circles at the funeral.

Eric Wicks. Ivanhoe.

. . . . .

THE SELWYN THEATRE CLUB MORTDALE  
THEATRE ORGAN RECITALS 1986

JUNE 15th	SUNDAY	2.15pm	Bernard Waltz
JULY 20th	SUNDAY	2.15pm	Reg Black
AUGUST 10th	SUNDAY	2.15pm	Jan Thompson & David Devenport
SEPTEMBER 21	SUNDAY	2.15pm	Patricia Wooldridge, John Brosnan and Robert Goode.
OCTOBER 12th	SUNDAY	2.15pm	David Smith
NOVEMBER 9th	SUNDAY	2.15pm	Ian Davies
DECEMBER 20th	SATURDAY	8.00pm	David Parsons O.A.M.

SELWYN PRODUCTIONS, 13 Rosemont Ave., Mortdale. Phone 57 3581

Sunday 6th JULY 2pm 1986



HURSTVILLE

IN CONJUNCTION WITH

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY



of AUSTRALIA

n.s.w. division



PRESENTS

DAVID PARSONS organist

&

ERICA WITT soprano

and a " SING A LONG "



Admission : Adults \$5



concession \$3

Tickets Available at BOX OFFICE  
of Mecca Theatre Hurstville  
or from Ticket Secretary phone-  
12 Dillwynnia Grove Heathcote 520-8632