

# TOSA NEWS

May 2010  
Volume 49 No.4

Price: \$2.00

---

**50th Anniversary Year**

**SUNDAY 16 MAY**  
**ORION THEATRE, CAMPSIE 2:00PM**

*AUSTRALIA'S*

**RYAN HEGGIE**  
**at the Mighty Wurlitzer**  
**and**

*AUSTRALIA'S*

**GLENN AMER**  
**at the Grand Piano**

---

*\*Membership is due for renewal by 30 June 2010\**

*You can order a copy of the 50th Anniversary Celebrations Program when you renew your membership or join TOSA NSW Divn*

# Directory

## **Patrons**

John Gorrie and John Atwell

## **President**

Geoff Brimley 6351 3122 *president@tosa.net.au*

## **Vice Presidents**

John Shaw 9759 5825  
Neil Palmer 9798 6742 (after 7pm)

## **Secretary**

Deirdre McMullan 4878 5179 (phone/fax) *secretary@tosa.net.au*  
230, Spring Hill Rd, Mittagong, NSW, 2575

## **Treasurer**

John Wall *treasurer@tosa.net.au* 9528 9158

## **Membership Secretary**

Bob Alleway 9524 7203 *membership@tosa.net.au*  
P.O. Box 2583, Taren Point, NSW, 2229

## **Committee**

Barry Tooker  
John Weismantel  
Robert Gliddon  
John Andrews  
Christopher Waterhouse  
Craig Keller

## **Research and Archives**

Ian Cameron 4841 1616

## **TOSA NEWS Editor**

Ernie Vale 0415 626 064 *editor@tosa.net.au*  
P.O. Box A2322, Sydney South, NSW, 1235

## **Marrickville Practice Convenor**

Neil Palmer 9798 6742 (after 7pm)

## **Orion Practice Convenor**

Walter Pearce 9716 0151

## **Ticket Secretary (Concert Bookings)**

Kath Harding 9629 2257

## **Artist Liaison Officers**

Geoff Brimley 6351 3122  
John Shaw 9759 5825

## **Concert Venue Co-Ordinator**

Walter Pearce

**Photography** Barry Tooker 9744 1535

**Publicity Officer** John Shaw 9759 5825

Printing by Rob Gliddon

## From the President



Since our weekend of shows in March to kick off our 50th Anniversary celebrations, there have been many expressions of congratulations. Congratulations on the excellent musical feast provided by our artists, the professional presentation in light and sound by a dedicated technical group of members as well as the attainment of 50 years of preservation of the mighty Theatre Organ and the presentation of its wonderful music.

Your Committee is determined that this standard will not only be maintained, but will continue to improve. If you believe you can be of assistance in any facet of your Society, please talk to me or one of the Committee. I can be contacted by email or phone as shown on the page opposite.

While the Committee and other helpers can ensure the production of first class shows, we do not know your friends and neighbours. Have you talked to them about the great event you experienced in March? This is a golden opportunity to "rave on" to all who will listen. But don't forget the sales pitch for the next show. With a superb young organist and a world-travelled associate artist you, and your acquaintances, are assured of a show equal to either of the March ones. The best promotion is you talking about your experience. Will you do it?

Happy organizing,  
Geoff Brimley

## Editorial



Well the commemorative fine bone china 50th Anniversary Coffee mugs have arrived and will be available for you to purchase at the May 16 show at the Orion Theatre.

Your Committee members have been busy doing some planning to improve access to the Marrickville Wurlitzer console for members playing days. They have also been preparing to move the Archives which will make them more accessible to members.

I have included an article from the Theatre Organ Journal of the American Theatre Organ Society - ATOS being a review of a recent performance by Nathan Avakian. He is a young artist who includes playing the Theatre Organ in his performing arts repertoire. Nathan won the 2009 ATOS Young Organist Competition and is one of the many fine artists playing at the ATOS Convention in Seattle this year.

There is now an excellent outline of Seattle Convention on their website.

Deadline for TOSA News is the 12th of the previous month.

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

## New Members

TOSA (NSW) welcomes these new members and wishes them a long and happy stay:

Kathryn Dillon  
Don Dillon

## New Service for TOSA (NSW) Divn Members

*Theatre Organ Sheet Music  
Collection & Lending Library*

Would you consider donating unwanted theatre organ sheet music (of any condition) to help get a new collection started? All genres, styles and complexities are welcomed.

*Please contact TOSA member  
Graham Glendenning on  
Tel: (02) 9680 3122  
Mob: 0401 094 884  
Email: [gcglen@gmail.com](mailto:gcglen@gmail.com)*

## For Sale

Dianna Learoyd of

(02) 9437 6025 has a C177

Hammond to give away ASAP

Please. . . Greenwich near Wool-

stonecraft Station. The recipient

will need to arrange transport.

---

Claret is the liquor for boys;  
port, for men; but he who  
aspires to be a hero (smiling)  
must drink brandy.

*Samuel Johnson*

# To watch out for..

**Sunday May 16 Orion Theatre  
Campsie 2:00pm**

*Ryan Heggie & Glenn Amer*

---

**Sunday May 30 2:00pm  
at John Batts**

*Home Organ Party*

---

**Sunday July 25 2:00pm  
Marrickville Town Hall**

*Members play: A show for the*

*Christie Organ Restoration Fund*

---

**A.T.O.S. Convention, 2010 will be in  
Seattle, Washington.**

**Overture June 28**

**Main Events June 29 - July 3**

**Encore July 4**

- 7 music filled days including concerts on 14 organs by world - class performers and local stars
- Several historically significant instruments and venues
- Based in Seattle with day-trips to the north, south, and east
- Luxury hotel accommodations at an incredible bargain price

*For T.O.S.A. members to attend you need to be a member of A.T.O.S. You can join via a link on the A.T.O.S. website as part of the registration page.*

From the organ point of view there are quite a few original installations as well as some excellent latter day ones.

Go to [www.atos.org](http://www.atos.org) and click on the text referring to the convention - all the links are on the left side of the page.

## Advertising Rates in TOSA News

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Small bubble = \$11.00

Quarter Page = \$24.75

Half Page = \$49.50

Full Page = \$99.00

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

### Members' Playing Events 2010 Dates

**The Orion Campsie  
2nd Thursday 1:30pm**

May	13
June	10
July	8
August	12

To be sure there is no last minute cancellation at the Orion please ring Walter on 9716 0151

**Marrickville Town Hall  
4th Monday evening at 7:30pm**

May	24
June	28
July	26
August	23

To be sure there is no last minute cancellation at Marrickville please ring Neil on 9798 6742 after 7:00pm

## **For the TOSA Members who have a keen interest in the railways**

### **China's high-speed train breaks record** *by Malcolm Moore, SMH 15 February 2010*

#### ON BOARD THE HARMONY EXPRESS

"WOW, It is faster than a helicopter," exclaimed Luo Rong-guang as the Harmony Express eased out of Wuhan station and began to gain speed.

Within a minute the world's fastest train was travelling at 193km/h. By the time the Harmony Express, or Hexie Hao, hit its first bend, it was doing a steady 350km/h. As the lush rice paddies of Hunan province, China's breadbasket, passed the windows in a blur, the inside of the train was eerily still.

Wholly Chinese-built using technology from Siemens and Kawasaki, the Harmony Express is faster than Japan's Shinkansen bullet trains and France's TGVs.

In testing, it reached nearly 400km/h and it covers the 1000 kilometres between Wuhan and Guangzhou, the equivalent of a Journey from Sydney to Brisbane, in three hours. The trip previously took almost 11 [hours].

"It is just amazing," said Mr Lou, 33, a businessman from the eastern city of Ningbo who was visiting factories in Guangzhou.

"When the minister for rail said last year that China would one day have trains running at over 300 mph, I thought it was an empty boast. Now I can see it is not a dream at all".

The Harmony Express is just the first step of an epic \$850 billion project to build nearly 30,000 kilometres of railways in the next five years, 13,000 kilometres of which will be tracks for high speed trains.

China, the US and Japan are locked in a race to build superfast train routes. All three countries are hoping that trains, rather than polluting planes or cars, will once again form the backbone of their domestic travel network.

More than 5 million Chinese have travelled by train every day this month in the run-up to yesterday's New Year holiday, always the peak travel weekend.

The high-speed train routes to be rolled out over the next three years will spread economic development to the countryside and bind together unruly regions such as Tibet and Xinjiang.

"I remember taking my first train back in 1989," Mr Lou said.

**'Now I can see it is not a  
dream at all.'**

*Lou Rong-guang, passenger*

"It was one of the old green locomotives that roared with noise and

travelled at 30mph... The passengers just dropped their rubbish on the floor, so cleaners had to pass through every hour. There was one lavatory for every 200 passengers and the queues were horrific."

But aboard the Harmony Express, and at Wuhan's \$2.7 billion French-designed railway station, everything is spotless.

For some, it is one of the most visible signs for how far China has come. By 2012 the high-speed line will extend all the way to Beijing.

*Telegraph, London*

### **TOSA MEMBERS AT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL: 22 March, 2010.**

A better attended Members' Evening for TOSA(NSW) at Marrickville Town Hall was held on Monday, 22nd March.

Those who played at the 2-11 Wurlitzer were Graeme Costin, Ian Georgeson, Deirdre McMullan, Walter Pearce and John Batts. On hand, David McMullan listened faithfully and provided help with organising the console and laying out cakes, biscuits, plus tea/coffee. Once more we were all grateful for Deirdre's refreshments.

A number of the committee were also present, lending moral support and taking measurements preparatory to providing a more suitable stair access to the console. The volunteer labourers were John An

draws, Neil Palmer, Ernie Vale, and John Weismantel.

Again the TOSA portable staircase proved to be inaccessible, hemmed in behind heavy stacks of tables and chairs. We had to rely upon additional caution and the small portable steps. No personal disasters were occasioned. *jsb/04/2010.*

### **TOSA Members at The Orion, Campsie: 8 April, 2010.**

TOSA(NSW) members' afternoon at The Orion Centre, Beamish Street, Campsie, attracted half a dozen organists, with a handful of Committee members intermittently working with the "spare" pipe-work below.

The players that day on the bench of this 3-17 (ex-Capitol Theatre) Wurlitzer were: Frank Lewis, Geoff Lloyd, Paul Luci, Deirdre McMullan, Walter Pearce, and John Batts. Yet again that ubiquitous man of Mittagong, David McMullan, was present to encourage the players and to oversee the refreshments kindly provided by his wife, Deirdre.

Being late, I unfortunately missed hearing Paul Luci play. Otherwise it was pleasing to listen again to member Geoff Lloyd, an all-too-infrequent visitor to this bench. There were some other listeners at different moments, including John Andrews, Ernie Vale and John Weismantel. *jsb/04/2010.*

## For sale

**Electronic Wurlitzer model 805,** built about 1977. It has two full sized manuals, a 2-octave pedal board, and is in excellent condition. The organ stool has a large music-holding capacity and includes the original instruction manuals.

As a piece of furniture, it is in superb condition; as a practice instrument, it would be excellent. (Everything works, but in due course it would be good to have an organ specialist look at the stops. They all speak, but some have lost their distinctive tonal qualities - I expect that the contacts are dusty.)

Price \$500 with the purchaser to cover the transport costs. Crows Nest NSW

Phone Peter on (02) 9436 2400



## For Sale

### **Allen Renaissance R-311 theatre organ with Allen Ensemble Division.**

Would you like to own a theatre organ that contains sounds copied from a real Wurlitzer and has a breathtaking real timber console that is comfortable to play, simple to operate and is backed by an unbeaten, international record for after sales support and service? Then this organ could be for you.

This is the organ that Tom Hazleton played for the TOSA convention in Sydney in 2000. Built by the company that pioneered the development of digital sampling and digital music and produced the world's 1st digital musical instrument in 1971.

It has been upgraded with an Allen Ensemble Division with 243 extra sounds. Two sounds from the Ensemble Division can be assigned simultaneously to each manual/pedal division expanding the organs capability to 20 ranks. 2 x external speaker cabinets are included to compliment the inbuilt console speakers. An optional "bass boost" facility with an extra amp channel was included when this organ was built for the convention. Each note of each of the organs twelve ranks is individually adjustable.

The manuals are Allen's own adjustable, wooden keyboards. The accompaniment manual has second touch. All preset pistons are "user configurable". The stop controls are traditional, moving tabs.

The beautiful timber console is finished with real walnut.

This instrument is offered with a Five Year Parts / Labour warranty.

It has been replaced by a larger Allen theatre organ.





**For Sale**  
**Allen Renaissance R-311 theatre organ with Allen**  
**Ensemble Division.**



**Asking price \$40,000.00**  
**Available for inspection in Sydney. PH 0412-758651**

## **Show & Membership Prices**

The following TOSA show ticket prices now apply:

	Australian Artists	Overseas Artists
Non-members	\$25.00	\$27.50
Non-member Pensioner/Senior	\$22.00	\$25.00
TOSA Members	\$20.00	\$20.00
Students 15-21yrs	\$10.00	\$10.00
Group Booking for 10 or more Adults	\$20 per person	

Child under 15yrs accompanying an adult: FREE!

Annual Membership Fees are now: \$30.00 for Full membership, and  
\$20.00 for Concession, Country, Interstate & Overseas.

Membership enquiries Bob Alleway 9524 7203 [membership@tosa.net.au](mailto:membership@tosa.net.au)

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

## **Nathan Avakian: Outside the box--**

### **A Celebration of Music and Movement** *By Mike Bryant*

*From the March April 2010 Theatre Organ Journal of ATOS*

This isn't going to be your traditional concert review. That's appropriate, because Nathan Avakian's *Outside the Box* performance wasn't your traditional organ concert.

The Elsinore Theatre in Salem, Oregon, is a beautifully restored facility with Shakespearean decore. It's home to a terrific 3/26 Wurlitzer, installed and maintained by the father and son team of Clayton and Rick Parkes. It boasts a fully equipped stage and a Steinway D concert grand in addition to upright piano that is connected to the organ.

Now, what could an innovative young artist do with all these goodies? Well, if he thought outside the box...

Nathan did, and an audience of 400 saw a program that not only demonstrated the artistry that resulted in his being named winner of the 2009 ATOS Young Organist Competition, but gave a glimpse into what well may be the best chance for the survival of the art form of theatre organ.

You see, what he presented was not an "organ concert," but a true musical event. The organ was the primary focus, but it also served in a supporting role, accompanying dance routines performed by NW Fusion Dance Company, and a vocal solo beautifully performed by Claire Avakian, Nathan's talented sister. We'll get to that Steinway a bit later.

Nathan's selection of music was wonderfully varied, ranging from Louis Vierne ("Carillon"), to Jerome Kern ("Waltz in Swing Time"), to George Gershwin ("Embraceable You"), to Dave Brubeck ("Blue Rondo a la Turk"), to Billy Joel ("Root Beer Rag"), to Aram Khachaturian ("Sabre Dance"), and beyond. Throw in a couple of ballads, and you have a playlist with truly something for everyone.

There was no point in Nathan's program where one would say "this sounds like the (insert artists name here) arrangement." While there were a couple of instances where a registration associated with someone's recording of a number popped up, it was transitory. The arrangements were fresh and, I'm told by Donna Parker (Nathan's teacher), his own.

Three numbers deserve special mention. "Waltz in Swing Time" was one of the numbers performed by NW Fusion with organ accompaniment. With the overlaid rhythms, this is not just a tricky number to play, but is

also tricky to dance to and to use as an accompaniment to dance.

Nathan had limited rehearsal time with NW Fusion, but you'd never have known it. NW Fusion is described as a "pre-professional" company for dancers 14 to 18 years of age. Well, pre-professional must mean only that they aren't getting paid, because there was absolutely nothing amateur in quality about their performance.

Dave Brubeck's "Blue Rondo a la Turk" is in 9/8 time (mostly), but not in the typical 3-3-3 accent pattern. Instead, the main theme is 2-2-2-3. The sax and piano solo parts shift to 4/4 time signature, which alternates with the main theme -- sometimes shifting nearly every measure. There is a solo section on the original album recording ("Time Out," 1961) that gave Paul Desmond and Joe Morello opportunities to display their improvisational chops. The temptation for some would be to duplicate Desmond's sax solo, as it is well known from the Brubeck recording. Instead, Nathan took off down his own path and demonstrated some very advanced improvisational techniques.

No dyed-in-the-wool Brubeck fan would be satisfied with "Blue Rondo" being played on, let's say, a Vox and String combination. You pretty much need a piano connected to the organ to pull it off. Sadly, many organ attached pianos are either too slow responding or suffer from inconsistent regulation. The Elsinore's piano kept up with the rapid passages Nathan threw at it with no problem at all. Clayton and Rick Parkes have put a lot of work into that piano, and it has truly paid off.

Joseph W. Clokey's "Jagged Peaks" showcased the organ's quieter sounds beautifully and effectively captured the mood of this seldom-heard piece.

A word about the organ installation is in order. The organ is installed in three chambers above the proscenium, and it speaks through a reflective grillwork which directs the sound to the main floor and first balcony. The console is located house left in front of the stage, where it doesn't receive much of the reflected sound. The organist simply can't hear the balance of the instrument well. As a result, quiet, subtle accompaniment combinations such as Nathan used in "Jagged Peaks" are tough to keep balanced against the melody. Nathan adapted nicely, and his lighter registrations worked very well.

So what about this Steinway? Nathan's program included a dramatic scene entitled "Too Late for Happiness" which he performed with Signe Larsen, a student at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle. The stage was set simply with only a park bench and a piano. Ms. Larsen was on the park bench, and Nathan was on the piano bench with his back to her. The piece alternates between the two characters' dialog and monologue

Please come and enjoy the Music in  
**Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year**  
**of the founding of**  
**TOSA NSW Division in 1960**

featuring **Ryan Heggie** playing



**The Mighty Wurlitzer**  
formerly **Capitol Theatre Sydney**

& **Glenn Amer**  
playing **Grand Piano**

**Orion Theatre**  
**155 Beamish Street, Campsie**  
*(Disabled Access available at the entrance in Beamish St)*  
**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at 2:00pm**  
*Free parking at rear of the Theatre*

**Book by phoning: (02) 9629 2257**  
Visa & Mastercard accepted

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at 2:00pm**

**Ryan Heggie & Glenn Amer**

Music has always been **Ryan's** 'outlet', and he enjoys listening to and playing organ and piano music in his spare time. Whilst studying at a special interest music school, **Ryan** attained associate diplomas in organ performance with Yamaha and the AMEB (Australian Music Examinations Board). In '97 he won the Intermediate and Overall Divisions of the American Theatre Organ Society's Young Organist Competition, in Indianapolis, and played at the ATOS convention in San Francisco the following year. **Ryan's** musical taste is varied, and includes classical, jazz, and popular. He has played in numerous venues locally and interstate, both as a solo artist, and in a 'duo' capacity. When he can find the time, Ryan enjoys 'dabbling' in photography, aquariums, and camping.

**Glenn Amer** tours Australia extensively as both a soloist and accompanist. His popular, Liberace style of piano playing is always extremely popular with audiences who are also impressed with his Robert Goulet/Mario Lanza style singing! He has also appeared in the jazz world with renowned Diva, Su Cruickshank and popular violinist Ian Cooper as well as the beautiful television personality, Helen Zerefos.

**Glenn** has appeared as a headline entertainer on the Radisson, Royal Caribbean, Silver, Celebrity, Crystal, Norwegian, Orient, Holland America, NHK, Saga and Seabourne cruise lines. Touring with these lines has taken him around the world, many times over!

**Tickets to the show :**

**Members \$20;**

**Non Member Pensioner/Senior Card \$22**

**Non-Members \$25;**

**Student (15 – 21 Years) \$10**

**Children accompanied by a paying adult free**

**Group bookings for 10 or more adults \$20 per person**

**Note:** *If your friends or relations and/or their children have never been to one of these Shows then the first time they come to a show it is free. See [www.tosa.net.au](http://www.tosa.net.au) for the free booking form & booking form. Please encourage your friends, relations and/or children to come to this show featuring Wurlitzer magic.*

“thoughts” of the characters. The piano accompanies the “thought” sections. Near the end of the piece, the two characters sing their thoughts in a duet.

Two things make this number noteworthy. First, while some organists think they can sing, Nathan really can. Second, he composed the music for the piece. Although this is a commercial one-act with a published score, when Nathan first performed it the publisher was late in sending the music. Nathan wrote replacement music in case the score didn't show up in time to be rehearsed (it didn't). It is difficult for me to see how the original music could fit the piece any better than Nathan's composition.

Nathan's stage presence no doubt comes in part from his background in performing arts (he attends a performing arts high school). His demeanor on the bench exudes a quiet confidence, and his casual ease with the audience had them in his pocket right from the beginning.

A lament heard all too often, in one form or another, is “Theatre organ is dying. We used to fill the house, and now we're lucky if we get 100 people to a concert by a top artist.” Those who were fortunate enough to attend this event have seen one of the best counters to that mindset to come along in recent years.

Nathan Avakian is a multi-talented artist who, no doubt, we'll hear a lot about and from in the coming years. His next program will almost certainly be different, but I think we can count on him to bring his love of theatre, dance, and the performing arts in general into the theatre organ world in new and innovative ways.

If you will indulge me a minute of editorializing...it is programs like *“Outside the Box - A Celebration of Music and Movement* that will attract new and larger audiences. Most of this audience consisted of people I'd never seen before, not just “the usual suspects” that show up at organ events. The average age skewed far younger than any organ concert I've attended in years. No doubt some of the great attendance figure can be attributed to the performance being on Nathan's home turf, but the fact that it was an event that combined the organ with other performing arts speaks volumes about the worth of pursuing such combinations as a matter of course.

Theatre organ groups around the country and other parts of the world have found success coupling organ with silent film, big bands, jazz bands, dance groups, live radio re-creations, and the like. The young artists of today are our future, and outside the box is where we need to look to ensure the continued life of theatre organ.

## 50th Anniversary Program

### **TOSA NSW Division 50th Anniversary Commemorative Coffee Mugs**

**The fine bone china coffee mugs have arrived and will be available to purchase at the Ryan Heggie & Glenn Amer Show at the Orion Theatre on 16 May.**

**The mug has a colour picture of the Orion Wurlitzer on one side and a colour picture of the Marrickville Wurlitzer on the other side. It has a double gold rim with gold lettering and gold music notes.**

**This momento of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia NSW Division's 50th Anniversary would look fine in any china cabinet.**

**As there is one of our Wurlitzer Theatre Organs on either side of the mug you may like to purchase two mugs so you can display each organ in your china cabinet.**

**There is a limited production of the mugs and they will be available to purchase only at our 50th Anniversary shows this year.**

**The price is \$25 per mug and they come in a special box.**

For members who were unable to attend the celebration weekend they have the opportunity to purchase a copy of the 50th Anniversary Program when they renew their membership by adding \$3:00 to their membership fee.

The program will then be posted out to you with the TOSA News. For those members who receive the TOSA News by email the program will be emailed to you as a pdf. file.

*see the membership form, also available on the TOSA web site.*

### **Closing Chords**

*from Pipes & Percussion, the Newsletter for the Friends of the Wurlitzer & the "KIWI Chapter" of the American Theatre Organ Society*

In early March, the theatre organ world lost one of its gems from the "Golden Years", when Britain's **Arnold Loxam** passed away at age 93 and closer to home, one of the great gentlemen of pipe organ building here in New Zealand also passed on - **William (Bill) Croft** saw 96 years of life. His family company George Croft & Son were responsible in the early years, for looking after Auckland's two Wurlitzer pipe organs while in their respective homes of the Regent and Civic Theatres.

## Thomas Edison's Concrete Piano

When Edison was 52, his iron ore mining operation, ran with his own ore crushing invention, ended in massive failure and he was flat broke. But Ole Tom was not easily deterred. He put the defunct machinery to use in the production of cement instead. His patented improvements to the efficiency of Portland cement production led to overproduction in the industry, and finding alternate uses for his product became a sensible business strategy. Edison went with the flow. He proposed that concrete be used to make just about everything, from roads, to houses and furniture.

The great man's intentions were honourable; concrete is desirable building material in many respects. And Edison believed wholeheartedly that a parlour piano was a healthy addition to every family. He wanted to provide America with an affordable instrument of high musical quality. Unfortunately for Americans, Edison's concrete plans did not make it far off the drawing board. Eleven of his concrete houses were built, but the public rejected them; despite their low price tag, they sat abandoned for months.

All over the world, press laughed at Edison's plans for concrete appliances, and his application for a furniture patent was denied. The concrete piano died before it had been born. But then...in 1931, the Lauter Piano Company took up the cause, and patented a process to build Edison's concept. They then built and sold many of them. The model looked for all intents and purposes as any other 5-foot baby grand, albeit heavier. Kim Hunter of Orange Coast Pianos in Santa Anna, California has played one. He says "the piano sounded like a terrible spinet" with no musical value, and it would be" better as an anchor."

It seems logical that the sound of a piano depends on the properties of the piano body. Whereas the wood body of a wooden baby grand resonates with the wooden soundboard, the concrete of a concrete baby grand absorbs the sound, deadening it. However, Professor Joe Wolfe, a physicist who specializes in music, points out that "the properties of the case contribute little to the acoustics (apart from its geometry). Theoretically, then, it should be perfectly feasible to produce a concrete piano with a wooden soundboard that mimics the sound of a normal piano.

Ironically, Edison's own creation, the phonograph, contributed to the ultimate demise of the parlour-room piano. In 1909, 374,000 new pianos were sold in America. Only one hundred thousand were sold in America in 1999, despite increased population and household income. None of them were made of concrete.



## **TOSA South Australia**

Tuesdays and weekends TOSA (SA) members play the  
4/29 Wurlitzer in their Capri Theatre, Goodwood Road,  
Goodwood (08) 8272 1177

## **TOSA Western Australia**

John Leckie Music Centre 3/12 Compton  
Contact: Pat Gibbs (08) 9450 2151  
patgibss@tadaust.org.au.  
May 16th Scott Harrison

July 18th "Three Men and a Tenor"- local artists  
September 12th Matthew Loeser  
October 17th John Atwell

## **TOSA Gold Coast**

Club Musical Afternoon on the 3rd Sunday of each  
month (except December)  
Contact: Des Gutterson (07) 5524 6607

## **TOSA Queensland**

Secretary: Mike Gillies (07) 3279 3930

## **Stirling Productions**

Karrinyup Community Centre,  
Perth, Western Australia

\* 2010 - Our 28th Concert Year \*

May 30th Tony Felon

July 25th David Gray (UK)

August 22nd Ray Clements and John Fuhrmann

October 3rd Simon Gledhill (UK)

November 7th Martin Ellis (USA)

November 14th Cabaret Xmas Party

All concerts are on Sundays at 2pm. Prior bookings are  
essential with John Fuhrmann on (08) 9447 9837

## **TOSA Victoria - mto**

**50 years 1960-2010 September 10 - 12**

EARLY BIRD FULL PACKAGE \$110

Includes 50th Birthday Dinner

offer ends june 20, 2010

# The Orion Centre - How To Get There

The Orion Centre is located at 155 Beamish Street, Campsie. Disabled access is available at the Beamish Street entrance.

Buses to Campsie Station (on the Bankstown line):

415 from Strathfield Station 12.25pm, 1.25pm on Sundays only.

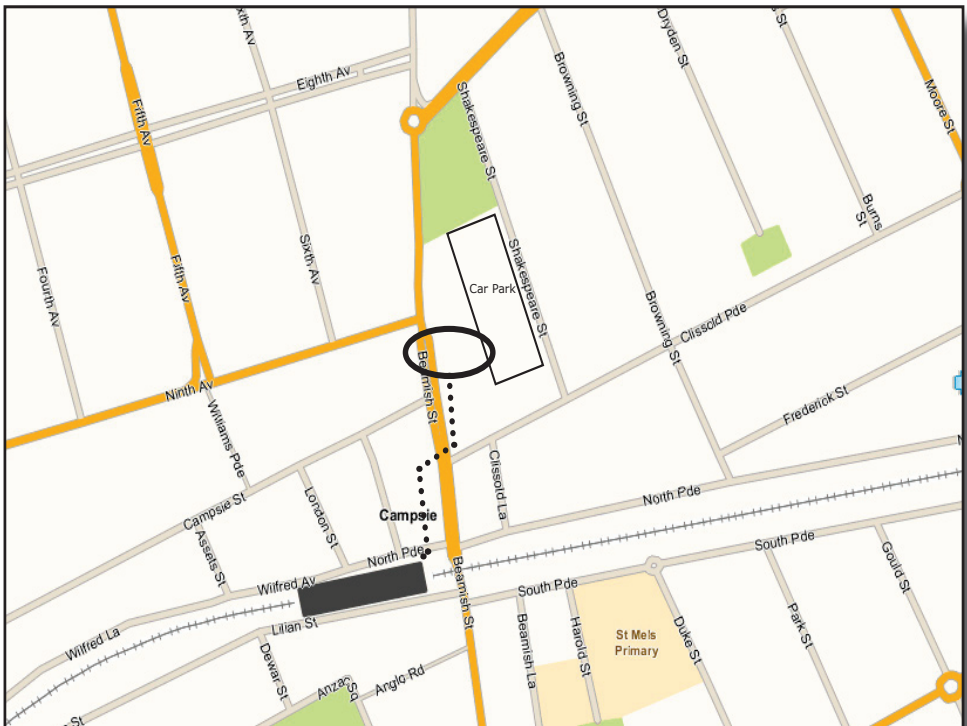
400 From Burwood Station, Bexley North Station and Rockdale Station.

492 and 494 from Rockdale Station and Kingsgrove Station.

Exit station on to Beamish Street, turn left to traffic lights, cross Beamish Street to the opposite corner (hotel). Turn left and walk down to the Orion Centre on your right.

Free parking is accessed from Shakespeare Street via Clissold Parade from Beamish Street or Brighton Avenue.

Please refer to the map below for a detailed view, or search for the Orion Entertainment Centre, Campsie NSW on [www.whereis.com](http://www.whereis.com) on the web, or [www.131500.com.au](http://www.131500.com.au) for transport details.



**The next show is**  
**Ryan Heggie**  
**at the**  
**Mighty Wurlitzer**  
**and**  
**Glenn Amer**  
**at the**  
**Grand Piano**  
**Orion Theatre**  
**155 Beamish Street**  
**Campsie**  
**Sunday 16 May at 2:00pm**

---

**Sunday July 25 2:00pm**

**Marrickville Town Hall**

*Members play on the fabulous  
ex Prince Edward Theatre 2/11 Wurlitzer*

**A show for**

**the Christie Organ Restoration Fund**

*Admission \$10 per person includes afternoon tea*

*Come along and bring your friends*

## Colours of the King

(Programme of Organ Music  
Society of Sydney)

Prepared and presented by  
Andrew Grahame.

### 2MBS FM 102.5

2nd Saturday of each month,  
5 – 6 pm

### Saturday 8th May, 2010

Four organ works based on the  
melody "God Save the King"

J H C Rinck – Theme and Varia-  
tions in C major on

"Heil' dir im Siegerkranz"

Ludger Lohman at the 1750 Ga-  
bler organ in Weingarten Abbey

S S Wesley –

"The National Anthem"

James Lancelot at the 1993 Har-  
rison & Harrison organ in the Em-  
manuel Church, Chesterton, Mary-  
land, USA.

M Reger – Variations and Fugue  
on "Heil, unserm König, Heil"

Josef Still at the 1974 Klais organ  
of Trier Cathedral

W T Best – Introduction, Varia-  
tions and Finale on

"God Save the Queen"

Robert Ampt at the 1890 Hill or-  
gan in Sydney Town Hall

### Saturday 6th June, 2010

Three modern American organs,  
each of 2 manuals, demonstrating  
the flexibility of the carefully-de-

signed smaller organ.

Karg-Elert – Postludio Festivo

Friml – Echoes of Spring

Jason Alden at the Reuter organ  
(2000) at Our Lady of the Lake  
Catholic Church, Rockwell, Texas.

Neustedt – Gavot

J S Bach – Chorale Prelude

"Lord Jesus Christ, be present  
now" BWV 655

Susan de Kam at Reuter organ  
(2000) at Our Lady of the Lake  
Catholic Church, Rockwell, Texas.

Lefebure-Wely – Bolero de Con-  
cert

Jason Alden at the Reuter organ  
(2000) at Our Lady of the Lake  
Catholic Church, Rockwell, Texas.

Daquin – The Cuckoo

Wolstenholme – Allegretto

Wood – Caricature of a Sunday  
School Song

Ronald Krebs at the Reuter Opus  
1742 unit organ in the Reuter fac-  
tory, Lawrence, Kansas.

Pelz – Festive Intrada

Boyce – Voluntary in D

Vierne – Scherzetto,

Lied and Divertissement – from  
"24 Pieces en style libre"

Sousa – The Liberty Bell March

Ronald Krebs at the Reuter organ  
(2007) at St Bartholomew Catholic  
Faith Community, Wayzata,  
Minnesota

# The Theatre Organ

Prepared and presented by  
Andrew Grahame

**2MBS FM 102.5**

3rd Saturday of each month,  
6.30 – 7.00 pm

## Saturday 15th May, 2010

Holst –  
Mars, Venus and Jupiter from  
"The Planets" (Simon Gledhill)

Medley –  
Songs from the British Isles  
(Richard Hills)

## Saturday 19th June, 2010

Delibes – Music from "Coppelia"  
(Richard Hills)

Heykens – First Serenade  
(Tony Fenelon)

Coates – Bird Songs at Eventide  
(John Mann)

Wagner – Grand March from  
"Tannhauser" (Jonas Nordwall)

## Saturday 17th July, 2010

Glinka – Overture to  
"Russlan and Ludmilla"  
(Simon Gledhill)

Sibelius – Finlandia  
(Jonas Nordwall)

Puccini – Musetta's Waltz Song  
(Tony Fenelon)

Wagner – Ride of the Valkyries  
(David Wickerham)

---

## A Very Enjoyable Musical Afternoon at the

### Selwyn Theatre

TOSA NSW Vice President, John Shaw on piano and TOSA NSW Committee Member, Christopher Waterhouse playing the Thomas organ and entertaining cabaret style put on a fine afternoon of music.

All those in attendance knew most of the songs and were invited to sing along with Christopher. It was great fun and thanks to Ritchie Willis for inviting them to perform.

---

## Just for a Laugh

George Gershwin, wanting to be regarded as a serious composer, asked Maurice Ravel for lessons.

Ravel asked Gershwin how much a year does he earn from his music. "About \$100,000" said George.

Ravel said "I earn about \$10,000. Why don't you give me lessons?"

## **Emailing of TOSA News to Members**

If you would like to receive your TOSA News each month by email it will be in living color as a pdf file. The TOSA News looks very nice in color and it makes it so easy to file.

Please advise the Membership Secretary on *membership@tosa.net.au* with your name and membership number with a copy to the Editor on *editor@tosa.net.au* that you wish to receive TOSA News by email.

## **Members Change of Address**

If you are moving house, or change your email address please advise the Membership Secretary of your new address and/or email address by phoning (02) 9524 7203 or email *membership@tosa.net.au*

---

## **HOME ORGAN PARTY**

Sunday 30th May 2010 at 2:00 pm

Host: John Batts

#(Unit) 7d – 337 Bronte Road, Bronte.

Thomas Celebrity Royale A7181 – open console

Bring your favourite music and plate to share for afternoon  
tea

Numbers are very limited – Please register on  
a first-come /first accepted basis to guarantee your place.

Please contact John on 042-042-4103 or

email at [jsbatts@gmail.com](mailto:jsbatts@gmail.com)

# **Members Diary**

**May 2010**

**Committee meeting Monday 3rd 7:30pm**  
Burwood RSL Club

**\*\* Sunday 16th 2:00pm Orion Theatre Campsie \*\***

**Ryan Heggie on Wurlitzer**  
**and**  
**Glenn Amer on Grand Piano**

**Sunday 30th 2:00pm**

Home Organ Party - Host John Batts  
#(Unit) 7d – 337 Bronte Road, Bronte.

**June 2010**

**Committee meeting Monday 7th 7:30pm**  
Burwood RSL Club

**July 2010**

**Committee meeting Monday 5th 7:30pm**  
Burwood RSL Club

## **Radio.**

Radio Northern Beaches 2MWM-FM 88.7 & 90.3 for "Theatre Organ Magic"  
the first Sunday of the month at 12 noon presented by John Batts

Radio 2MBS-FM 102.5 "Colours of the King" (program of the Organ Music Society of  
Sydney)  
2nd Saturday of each month, 5pm till 6 pm

Radio 2MBS-FM 102.5 "The Theatre Organ" 3rd Saturday of each month, 6.30 – 7.00 pm

## **Web Sites of Interest:**

[www.tosa.net.au](http://www.tosa.net.au)

[www.theatreorgansaust.info](http://www.theatreorgansaust.info) (history of cinema organ installations in Australasia)  
[www.sydneyorgan.com](http://www.sydneyorgan.com) (our sister society, the Organ Music Society of Sydney OMSS)

# TOSA NEWS

May 2010  
Volume 49 No.4

**PRINT  
POST**

PP255003/01823

**POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA**

Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) Inc.

230, Spring Hill Rd, Mittagong, NSW 2575

If undeliverable please return to :

PO Box 2583

Taren Point NSW 2229

<http://www.tosa.net.au>

