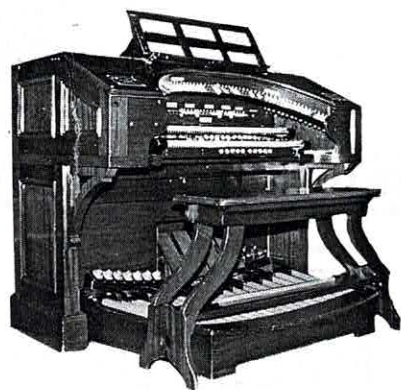
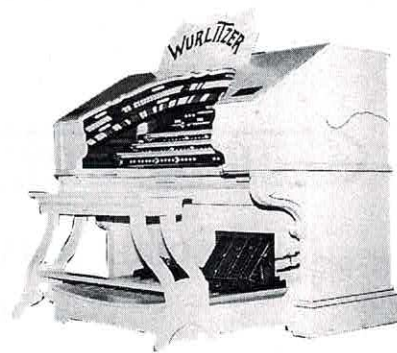


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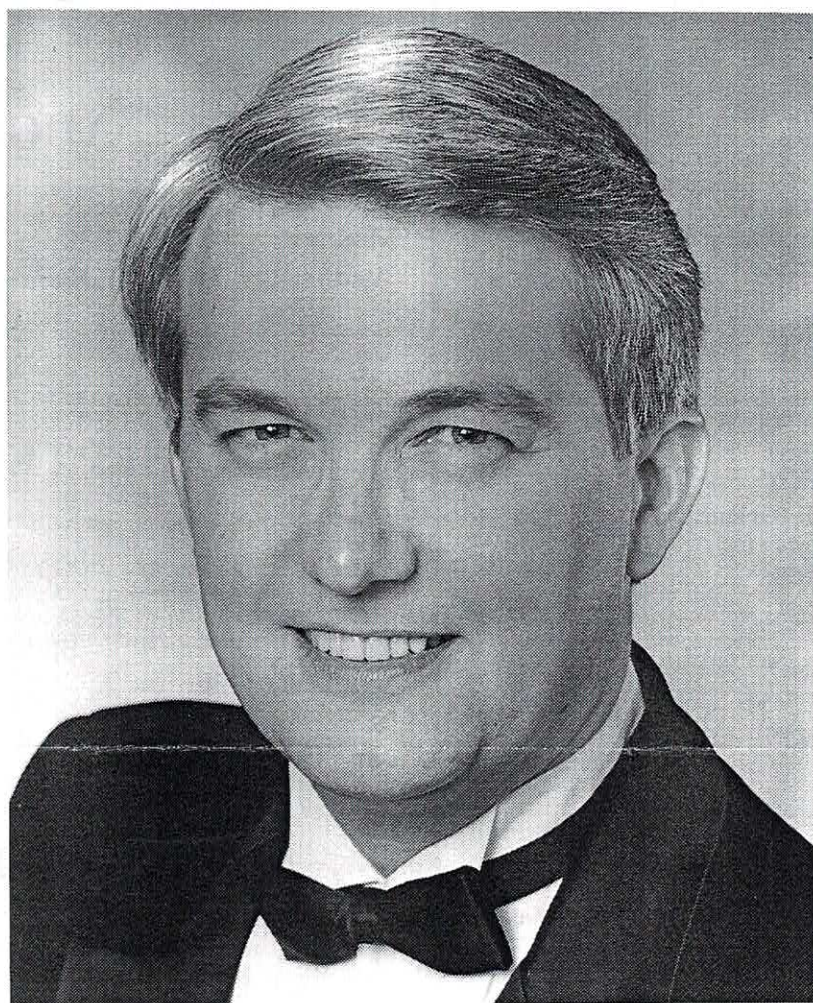
2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

TOSA NEWS



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JONAS NORDWALL



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Issue 6
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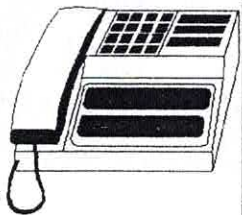
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TOSA NEWS

JULY, 1995

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.

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COMING EVENTS

JULY

Monday 3 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Sunday 23 at 2.00pm **Jonas Nordwall Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie

AUGUST

Monday 7 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Wednesday 16 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 3 at 2.00pm **John Ledwon Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Monday 4 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Wednesday 6 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie

OCTOBER

Sunday 8 at 2.00pm **Len Rawle Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Monday 9 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**



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Editorial

What a fabulous weekend we spent with **Phil Kelsall!** The Dance Night certainly kept our feet tapping, even if we were not all tripping the light fantastic. The concert was a sell-out success and brought a standing ovation from many in the audience.

The Dance Night was enjoyed by all, and most, though not all of course, felt that the light supper was ideal, as opposed to the much heavier fare served on previous occasions, a lot of which went uneaten and so was wasted. TOSA decided to keep costs down by supplying a dessert and hot drinks, and by having the committee, and a few dedicated helpers, do all the preparing and serving. It was a great effort on the part of a few, and prevented the price from rising to \$20 or so, which would have discouraged a lot of people from coming simply because of the cost involved.

The players amongst our membership will, no doubt, have noticed the increased number of **Members' Playing Nights**. The committee has been encouraged by recent larger turn-outs for these nights and has managed to secure extra dates at the **Orion**. If you like the idea of playing the **Wurlitzer**, come and have a go, or at least come and listen to others. It's like a mini-concert, with a variety of organists and styles of playing and of course you can have a closer look at the console and the chambers on these casual evenings for members.

Thank you once again to all the contributors to this issue. Your assistance is invaluable and very much appreciated by me, as editor, and by the members of our **Society**, who enjoy reading your items. A special thank you those who manage to send in their items **before** the much-neglected deadline date of the 12th of each month.

Best wishes,
Colin Groves

Articles in this journal need not represent the views of the committee nor those of the editor



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

TOSA (NSW) is pleased to announce that the following people have been welcomed into our Society. We hope that their membership will be long and enjoyable.

Raymond Atkinson - Yagoona
Beverley Bell - Summer Hill
Reg Bell - Summer Hill
Gerry Benjamin - Oatley
Elaine Birkett - Grays Point
Roger Bowyer - Panania
Nan Britton - Sans Souci
Donald Clark - Maroochydore
Adrian Crisp - Bondi
Joan Larking - Beecroft
Ron McVeigh - Belmore
Beryl Murie - West Ryde
Olive O'Toole - Dolls Point
Behy Paterson - Drummoyne
Marjorie Pozzan - Bondi Beach
Kevin Tetley - Bega
Charles Weathers - Annandale
Noelene Whitaker - Sylvania
Glenyce Wooster - Burwood (Vic)
Heath Wooster - Burwood (Vic)

Membership Notes...

I'd like to say a warm *thankyou* to the many members who sent in their renewals early. This is the busy time of the year for me - and it's just not possible to cope efficiently if all the letters come together in the last weeks of June!

By now you will know that your subscription is paid up to the date on your TOSA NEWS mailing label. But if it still reads 1995 and you posted your cheque in the last couple of weeks don't worry - the magazines and labels are printed up to 3 weeks before you see them.

Your brand new MEMBERSHIP CARD may be in this copy of TOSA NEWS - if not, watch for next month.

It's good to see how many new members are being welcomed to TOSA every month....and to have so many husbands and wives now in the society together. Where else would you get a year's subscription for the price - and full-length concerts by top performers for \$10 ?

- Walter Pearce

The deadline for each edition of TOSA News is the 12th of the preceding month

HALF YEARLY MEETING - 31st MAY, 1995

Theatre Organ Society (NSW Div.) Inc.

President's Report

Fellow members,

The past six months have been a period of growth and achievement for our Division, with record membership applications and record concert attendances.

Since the last A.G.M., we have presented 5 major concerts, a dance night and we've enjoyed the friendly hospitality of our co-patron, **Ian Davies**, at the **Bondi Junction-Waverley RSL Club**. Concert artists heard were: **Tony Fenelon**, who established a new, all-time attendance record of 746; **Chris McPhee**; **John Atwell** (in concert with **Tony Fenelon**); a welcome return from **Neil Jensen**; and a great weekend from **Phil Kelsall**, with a **Friday Dance Night** enjoyed by 250 people and a **Sunday Concert** which drew around 650. As I have mentioned in previous reports, our concert attendances are the envy of other TOSA divisions, further reinforcing your committee's policy of presenting only the best concert artists.

Quite a number of our members travelled to **Melbourne** over Easter for the **National Convention**, hosted by **TOSA Victoria**. The music was most enjoyable, the food was excellent and the socialising in catching up with old friends and making new ones was wonderful. Well done, **TOSA Victoria**!

Our concert program for the rest of '95 looks even more exciting than the first half, if that's at all possible. The artist line-up is, to quote my youngest son, "awesome"! **Ray Thornley** in June and then no less than 4 overseas organists - the long-awaited return of **Jonas Nordwall**; the first **Australian** visit of **John Ledwon** from **Los Angeles**; **Len Rawle** from the **UK**;

and the one and only **Tony Fenelon Christmas Concert**. As I said, Awesome!

With the '96 **National Convention** in **Sydney**, the convention committee is working hard to present the best one yet. Tentative arrangements include four **Wurlitzers**, one **Christie** and, we hope, the **Sydney Town Hall Grand Organ**. Two overseas artists (contracts pending) and a veritable smorgasbord of **Australian** talent should "deliver the goods".

May I conclude by again thanking all the people, too numerous to mention, who have contributed so much towards the success of our Society.

Cliff Bingham
President

Marrickville Organ Report

The progress as of Saturday, 27th May, 1995:

The majority of the re-winding of the instrument is complete, with the exception of two regulators which are yet to be fitted to their wind boxes. These particular regulators will provide regulated wind pressure to the 16' and 8' Bass extensions. As the 16' Tibia chest is presently undergoing restoration, the wind lines will be prepared for this once it has been returned to **Marrickville**.

New cable has been fitted to the following items: all bottom boards of the manual chests for the 11 ranks; all Bass extension offset chests (except the 16' Tibia); the solo chamber swell shutters and the Chrysoglott percussion. The Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Chimes and Sleigh Bells units have been transported to

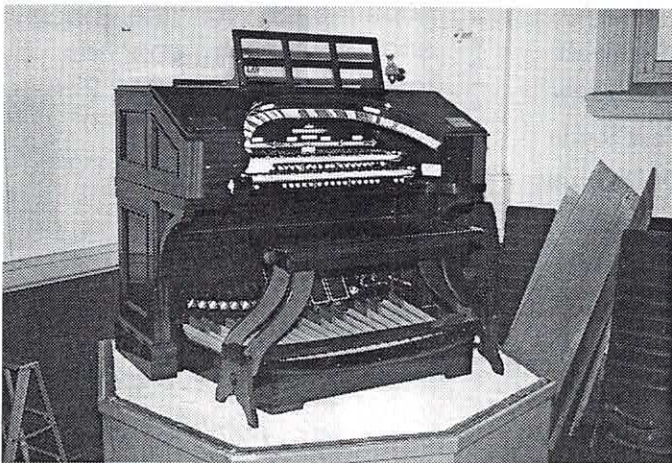
my garage at home to be re-wired and the Xylophone is well under way. Special thanks to **John Andrews** for providing the transport and to **Ian Tullock** and **Chris Styles** for helping to remove these rather heavy and awkward percussions from their wall-brackets. The Chrysoglott had to be re-wired on-site, which was not easy. Another unit to be re-wired on-site is the Toy Counter, and this work commenced last Saturday. While on the subject of the Toy Counter, a Choke Cymbal (or High Hat) action has been built by **Robert Gliddon** for addition to the Toy Counter, which is very much appreciated. Altogether 19 different percussive sounds and effects will be available. The re-wiring done so far entails approximately 930 soldered connections (not including the console). Thanks to **Walter Pearce** and **Robert Gliddon** for their assistance with the wiring.

The console has been returned to **Marrickville Town Hall** and looks splendid, sitting back on its dais. The return of the console was almost a saga in itself, and **Barry Tooker** was on hand to take some photos after the removalists had placed it on the dais. While the console was away, I took the opportunity to re-carpet the dais - the new carpet being a mushroom-pink colour.

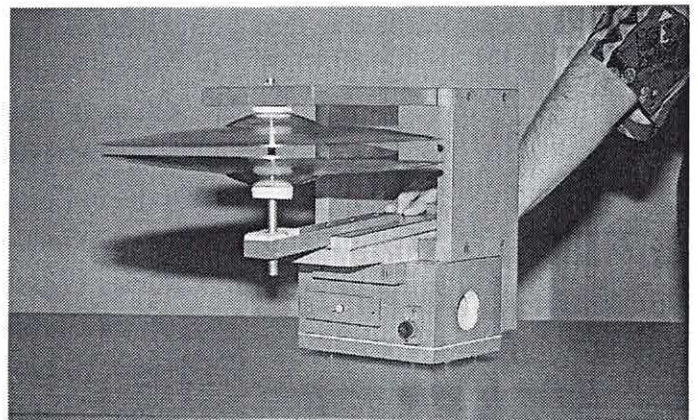
In conclusion, I can say that there is light at the end of the tunnel. However, it is still too early to be thinking about setting a date for the re-opening. There have been too many theatre organs opened before they were ready. We should all strive to see that the re-opening of the **Marrickville Wurlitzer**, the second time around, is a success.

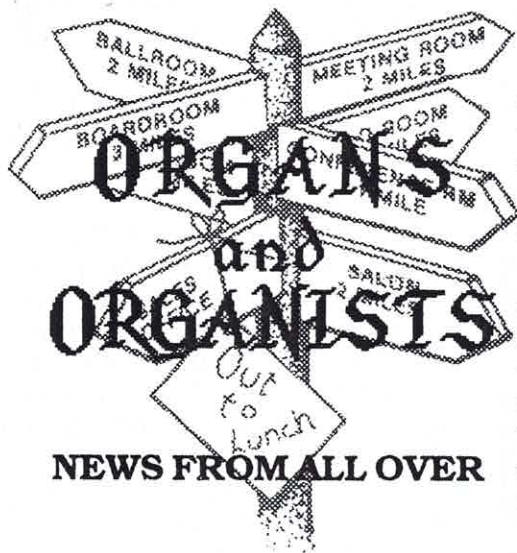
Regards,
Neil Palmer

The Choke Cymbal or High Hat made by Rob Gliddon



The Marrickville Wurlitzer back on its dais





Orion Wurlitzer

Recent months have seen considerable efforts to improve the wind supply and tremulant effect of the Orion organ. Prior to Neil Jensen's concert, experiments were carried out with the weighting of the regulators and the adjustment of tremulants. Weights have now been permanently fitted to regulators controlling the Main, Strings, Vox Humana, Solo and Tibia ranks.

The Tibia pipes have been regulated in the middle-treble octaves to effect a correct tonal "power-curve", which has resulted in an improved musical and listening result.

I am indebted to Neil Jensen for his time taken to explain this method, and for his assistance in achieving the desired result. Neil also took time away from his rehearsal hours to assist with the fitting of the weights and adjustments.

As a non-playing organ builder, it is very helpful to have the assistance of a musician who has benefited from overseas tours, playing many different instruments - both good and not so good!! Later this year I will be privileged to work with Jonas Nordwall on the Orion, and together we will work to refine many tonal aspects of the Orion instrument.

Work was also attended to, prior to Phil Kelsall's visit last month. This saw the removal of the pedal board and the replacement of most of the buffer felts. It is surprising how quickly felts have worn since the opening of the organ in 1988, considering they were all originally renewed from tough

woven stock.

The Orion console was cleaned down and repolished, and all gold trim was repainted. The interior of the console has been cleaned and washed out to remove the dust and accumulated dirt of the last 6 years.

It is anticipated that work will begin in the future to replace the console-to-organ-chamber cable. At this time we will be moving the computer to a more suitable position within the console. This will enable easier operation and, at last, see the fitting of a back panel to the console.

John W. Parker

State Theatre Organ

You may have noticed that the State Theatre's Wurlitzer was given substantial coverage in the Sydney Morning Herald, regarding its present condition.

For the benefit of members, information received reveals that a 30 page report has been furnished to the State Theatre's management (at their request) on the present condition and proposed restoration of the Wurlitzer organ.

At this stage, no plans have been made as to a restoration, but the State's General Manager, David Penfold, is now fully informed of the costs and complexities of a future project, as proposed by a leading, Australian organ building firm.

TOSA members are reminded that this organ is privately owned and that undue interference (even with the best of intentions) could seriously jeopardise any future progress towards the organ's refurbishment. We ask you to please refrain from voicing opinion publicly at this time.

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Pacific Theatre Organs

An interesting listing, for people in our part of the world, of theatre pipe organs (not all of them, sadly, playing as stated and with at least one omission - Chatswood's Wurlitzer) in Australia, New Zealand and Japan from Pipes and Personalities - the Newsletter of the American Theatre Organ Society.

PIPES & PERSONALITIES presents the first in a series of venue lists which will roster public instruments playing in countries around the world. Your editor acknowledges the valuable contributions of correspondents who donated literature and photographs for the project: John Thiele, Ross Lange, Peter Beames, Bruce Moss, and authors of articles in society publications in these countries.

AUSTRALIA:

(Western Australia) Nedlands (vic. Perth), John Leckie Music Centre, 3/10 Compton; Karrinyup (vic. Perth), Community Centre, 3/17 Wurlitzer.

(South Australia) Goodwood (vic. Adelaide), Capri Theatre, 4/24 theatre organ; Adelaide, Wyatt Hall, Pulteney Grammar School, 2/12 Wurlitzer; St. Peters (vic. Adelaide), Memorial Hall, St. Peter's College, 3/19 Wurlitzer.

(Queensland) Brisbane, Kelvin Grove High School, 3/8 Christie; Pamona, Majestic Theatre, 2/? Wurlitzer.

(New South Wales) Campsie, Canterbury (vic. Sydney), Orion Centre, 3/17 Wurlitzer; Sydney, Marrickville Town Hall, 2/11 Wurlitzer; Epping (vic. Sydney), Epping Baptist Church, 2/10 Christie; Cremorne (vic. Sydney), Hayden Orpheum Theatre, 3/13 Wurlitzer; Sydney, Mosman Baptist Church, 2/9 Standaart; Sydney, State Theatre, 4/21 Wurlitzer; Sydney, Baulkham Hills Centre for the Performing Arts, 3/10 Christie; Sydney, Sydney Opera House, 5/205 classical organ.

(Australia Capitol Territory - A.C.T.) Canberra, Albert Hall, 3/9 Compton.

(Victoria) Ballarat, Her Majesty's Theatre (Memorial Theatre), 3/9 Compton; Melbourne, Malvern Town Hall, 3/15 Compton; Melbourne, Dallas Brooks Hall, 3/19 Compton; Moorabbin (vic. Melbourne), Moorabbin Town Hall, 4/21 Wurlitzer; Melbourne, Brighton Twin Cinema I (Dendy Theatre), 3/15 Wurlitzer; Melbourne, Coburg City Hall, 2/9 Christie/Blacket & Howden.

(Tasmania) Hobart, St. Michael's Collegiate School, 3/8 Wurlitzer.

NEW ZEALAND:

(North Island) Avondale (vic. Auckland), Hollywood Cinema Theatre, 2/12 Wurlitzer; Paraparaumu, Southward Car Museum, 3/16 Wurlitzer; Tauranga, Conference, Arts and Community Center, 2/10 Wurlitzer.

JAPAN:

Tokyo, Mitsukoshi Department Store, 3/12 Wurlitzer.

MELBOURNE CONVENTION '95

Report by Cliff Bingham

If the **1995 National Convention**, hosted by **TOSA Victoria**, could be summed up in one word, that word would be "friendship". Friendly people, excellent food and good music combined to make a most enjoyable long weekend.

I was fortunate enough to have our assistant secretary (and good friend), **Rod Gliddon**, travelling with me on the long drive to and from **Melbourne**, where we were hosted by longtime **TOSA Vic.** mover-and-shaker, **Julien Arnold**, whose home is conveniently located, close to all the concert venues.

Unfortunately, **Rob** and I were unable to go to all the concerts, due to other commitments and thus I can only report on those that we attended.

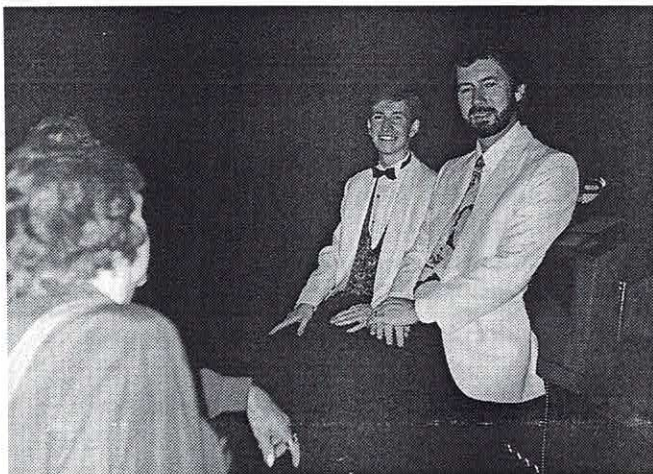
As we had arrived on Thursday night, we were in good time for the national delegates meeting and registration on Friday. Following registration at **Malvern Town Hall**, the opening concert, "**Stars On Stage**", featured a variety of vocalists and musicians, under the direction of **Gordon McKenzie** in a most entertaining program that got the convention off to a lively start.

The evening concert at **Malvern**, "**Double Touch**", showcased the legendary talents of **Tony Fenelon** and **John Atwell** at the excellent, mostly-**Compton 3/15** organ. A dazzling display of keyboard musicianship from these superb musicians set a standard for the rest of the convention artists to maintain. It was perhaps a pity that the piano supplied for the occasion was not judiciously amplified, as it was hard pressed to compete with the very powerful organ. A piano tuner would not have gone astray either.

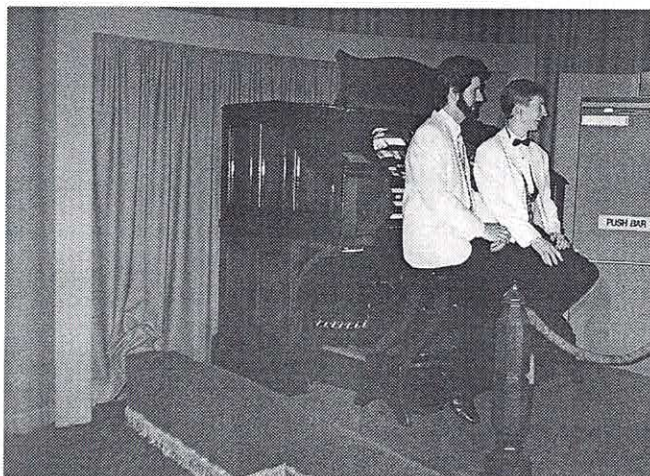
Late on Saturday afternoon, we inspected the **Regent 4/36 WurliTzer** (ex-**San Francisco Paramount**) currently under restoration in **Julien's** factory. The quality of work and the planning of the installation is of such a standard that I for one will be booking my tickets as soon as the opening date is announced.



Featured American organist,
John Seng



Chris McPhee and Ray Thornley



Ray and Chris at the Dendy WurliTzer

Saturday evening saw all conventioners dressed up for the convention dinner/dance at **Malvern**. A pre-dinner friendly hour was followed by a superbly catered dinner. Dancing to follow was accompanied by **Gordon McKenzie's Melody Makers**, a small but excellent dance ensemble, directed by **Gordon** at the organ. The evening finished with the traditionally riotous conga line.

The wheels fell off the **Melbourne** weather wagon on Sunday, but the wind and rain failed to dampen spirits as the convention moved to **Moorabbin Town Hall** for again a superbly catered spit-roast dinner, followed by the main convention concert featuring the **American** artist, **John Seng**, playing the **4/22 WurliTzer** organ. I must confess that I have been an admirer of this musician since the release of his first LP back in the early 60's. From the opening bars of his **West Side Story** suite to **George Wright's Roller Coaster**, it was obvious that we were listening to a performer of enormous talent. **John** gave us a memorable performance, made even more significant by the fact that he had to deal with a sometimes recalcitrant organ.

The **Dendy Theatre, Brighton**, was the Monday morning venue for "**Dendy Delights**", featuring **Ray Thornley** and **Chris McPhee** at the **3/15 WurliTzer**. The combination of these two fine **Australian** musicians delivered a concert with a wide variety of good theatre organ music, superbly played on this fine-sounding organ.

Following this concert **Rob** and I headed for **Bendigo** to spend the night with old friend, **David Cross**. Since moving from **Melbourne** some years ago, **David** has become involved with **Bendigo TOSA**, which has recently purchased the ex-**Enfield Savoy 2/8 Christie** with plans to expand it up to a **3/12** and install it in a local civic auditorium. We wish

MELBOURNE CONVENTION '95

them well and look forward to hearing it.

Finally, I apologise to those artists whose concerts I was unable to attend - **David Johnston, Heath Wooster, Gail Dibben** and **Carol Wyatt**. From all reports, they maintained the high standard of musicianship and professionalism that helped make **Convention '95** such a success. Well done, **TOSA Victoria!**

AFTERGLOW AT WARRAGUL

Hosted by the Warragul Organ Club -
TOSA (Gippsland Division)

Report by Amy Caldwell

We gathered, bright and early, outside the **Victoria Hotel**, ready for the coach to take us to **Warragul**. Officially there were 22 passengers on board, but in fact we had 22.5, the half being the little junior member from **Adelaide** who had to sit on Daddy's lap.

Our coach driver was **Warragul** member, **Robert Cross** and we had a most enjoyable trip via **Packenham**. The hand microphone was passed along to each member and we gave our views about the highlights of the convention. This was interesting and helped us to get to know still more people. The scenery was beautiful, with the autumn colourings of the countryside far more advanced than in **Sydney**.

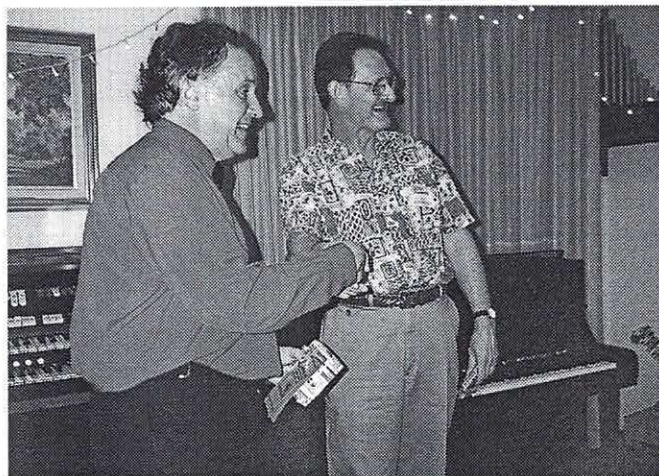
At **Packenham** our hosts, **Rae** and **Ronald Webster**, were waiting with

their many members of the **Packenham Organ Club** to greet us. Here we were offered a most welcome and bountiful morning tea. Scones and pikelets with "real" blackberry jam and cream seemed to have everyone exclaiming, "Never since Grandma's days have we tasted and smelt such jam!"

Rae and **Ronald** live on a lovely country property, "**Narnargoo**", and the whole of the drive to the house is lined with proteas which, as well as being a real joy to see, are also a business interest. Later on we were to see some beautiful floral arrangements at **Warragul** featuring the lovely King Proteas. Another fascinating feature was the field of fairy toadstools, brightly coloured orange with paler spots of colour, some as large as plates.

Then we were on our way again to the **Pindari Blind Centre** at **Warragul**, where the **Conn Martinique** is installed in their hall.

Our compere for the entertainment was well-known organist, **David Johnston** and the featured artist was **Sydney's Bill Schumacher**. **Bill** started with some lovely nostalgic items and was



Bill and David at Warragul

obviously quite at home on the organ. We heard some very nice effects brought into play in the arrangements.

Also included in the afternoon's entertainment was local singer, **John Black**, accompanied on piano by **Warragul** member, **Carol Doyle**.

After a break for a delicious, hot, country-style meal, we were back for more music and mirth. **David** welcomed "**Cliff**"?? back to the organ (It had been a VERY long week!!), so **Bill** graciously thanked "**Tony**"?!!

Some right royal entertainment then followed with **Bill** at the organ and **David** at the piano. Some of the highlights being *Birth of the Blues*, *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, *Down by the Riverside* and a **Cole Porter** medley

David and **Bill** were changing instruments in between times and **David** was actually jumping from one end to the other on the piano stool. The left foot was beating time so much, **Bill** got a cramp in his leg, but we all laughed and enjoyed the day so much.

We were privileged to hear such entertainment and it was an afterglow to end all afterglows. The president of the **Warragul Organ Club**, **Kent Wilson**, should be proud of all the members who rallied to entertain and look after us so well.

Photographs kindly taken and supplied by Amy Caldwell, and processed by Barry Tooker at Network Graphics



David Johnston and Bill Schumacher in front of Warragul's Conn Martinique

MELBOURNE CONVENTION '95

Report on OPEN CONSOLE by Amy Caldwell

There were two choices for Open Console - one being the **Compton** at the **Malvern Town Hall** and the other at the **Dendy** on the **WurliTzer**. I chose to go to the **Dendy**, where **Heath Wooster** is the resident organist. **Heath** was there to give any assistance we required, as he is so familiar with the organ. This was quite a help to some of us.

It was a bit of a shock to be called up first to start the proceedings. However I was happy to have **Heath's** help with registration.

The **Dendy** is a cinema complex and of course we only visited the cinema which houses the **WurliTzer**. The seating is covered in red velvet and very comfortable. The floor of the cinema slopes upwards to the back, so a good view is assured wherever one chooses to sit.

The "essentials" were in front of the stage - that is, the tea, coffee and biscuits, to which we helped ourselves throughout the morning.

We were invited to view the installation, which is at the back of the



Amy Caldwell and the Dendy WurliTzer

screen. It was suggested that we climb up a ladder and see the rest of the works. However, as I only go up the first two rungs of a ladder, I had to miss this part!

People were chatting and listening to the music, while having a restful and sociable morning. We heard a lot of very nice selections, and many different styles of playing. As most of us had varying degrees of competency, it was a good chance to exchange ideas, and of course to have our own chance to play the **WurliTzer**.

I recall **Ralph Hurrell** from **Victor Harbour** who played at an Open Console for the first time, and did very well, too. Again, **Heath** was on hand to help, which I'm sure **Ralph** appreciated.

Ryan Heggie was one of the featured young organists in **Adelaide** during their last convention. We all enjoyed his music at the Open Console and I'm sure we will soon be hearing a lot more of this young man with the crew-cut and the cheeky grin.

Some others who played were **Errol Storey** and a **Daniel** from **USA**, **Elsie Howie** of **Perth**, **Albert Hudson** from **Tasmania**, **Brian Pearce**, **John Slater** from **Adelaide** and, of course, many more, but it's hard to recall the names of each one. We had approximately 50 people at the **Dendy** Open Console. We heard medleys, marches, movie themes, negro spirituals and jazz.

Everyone had a pleasant morning which, all too soon, had to come to a close, because the cinema would be screening films again in the afternoon.

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in business hours

Members' Playing Nights

On Wednesday, 24th May over 20 members came to our playing night at the **Orion**. A very pleasant evening was spent listening to **Jim Birkett, Tom Barber, John Griffiths, Jack MacDonald, Peter Held, Wendy Hambly, Bill Schumacher, John Giacchi** and **Cliff Bingham**.

If you wish to experience the sense of power and pleasure that playing TOSA's **Mighty WurliTzer** from the old **Capitol Theatre** can give, come along to the **Members' Playing Nights** on :

**Wednesday,
16th August
and
Wednesday,
6th September**

7.30pm at the
Orion Centre.

Recent **Interstate** and **International Newsletters** available for perusal, while members play for us.

A friendly, entertaining social evening.
Drop in for a short time only, if you wish.
Bring a plate and share in a light supper during the evening.



This month we were hoping to be able to advertise **Phil Kelsall** recordings. However, due to the overwhelming response at his concert, most titles are now sold out. We do have a small quantity of **Phil's** cassette **Steppin' Out**, played on the **Yamaha FX20**. The cassette has 28 strict tempo dance tracks, most of them medleys of numbers too numerous to list.

The dance styles include : Quicksteps, Waltzes, Foxtrots, Rhumba, Cha Cha, Samba, Jive, Boston Two Step, Bossa Nova, Tango, Barn Dance and others.

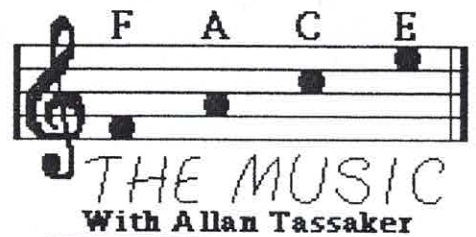
The tunes include : *The More I See You; Love's Last Word Is Spoken; Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps; Dolores; The Soldiers of the Queen; Take Me back to Dear Old Blighty; I was Never Kissed Before; Five Minutes More* and scores of others.

Available at **TOSA Concerts**, or by **Mail Order** from :

TOSA (NSW Division) Inc.
304 Parramatta Rd
ASHFIELD NSW 2131

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10 rank Pipe Organ
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Switches
Contact : G. Newell
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As usual, during a home concert, **Allan Tassaker** had placed a bowl of fruit on top of his organ. Unfortunately, during the first half of his performance, an orange rolled from the bowl and fell down deep into the depths of the instrument.

...Consequently, in the second half of the concert, **Allan** had no choice but to play music from the "**Clockwork Orange**"!!

THANK YOU

I would like to thank the kind person who found and handed in my wallet, which I lost at the **Phil Kelsall** concert.

It is great to know there are still honest people around. Much appreciated.

Dave

If you are seeking
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contact the
MANNING
ORGAN SOCIETY
(065) 531431
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Review of PHIL KELSALL Concert

Orion Centre

by Wendy Hambly

21st May, 1995

The lights were dimmed, our compere, **John Parker**, announced our artist for the afternoon, followed by a welcoming round of applause, BUT then nothing happened!!!! (Compere **John Parker** by now had a large family of kittens!) Another round of applause brought the welcome sound of the **Wurlitzer**, with **Phil** rising to greet us, playing his signature tune, *I Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside*. **Phil** welcomed us warmly and said, "Gee, I didn't know we'd started. I was having a lovely chat down there!" This comment produced much laughter from the audience. Music, laughter and fun were the order of the day. **Phil Kelsall** concerts are never dull - there is simply too much happening. **Phil** gets up to a lot of mischievous tricks to entertain his audience - both musically and visually. Let's move on and see what he got up to at his latest **Sydney** concert.

Phil informed us that it was **Reginald Dixon** who perfected the "Blackpool style", back in 1930. **Phil** has certainly taken this style and created one which is very much his own. First up was a medley of marches, including *Spanish Gypsy Dance* played with full organ, gradually reducing to a solo stop, then with a key change and a bridge into a new march, building up again to full organ. *Colonel Bogey* was played with each hand playing a different part. The audience loved this and responded by clapping in time with the music. **Phil** responded by doubling the speed and totally confusing the audience! What fun!

Next came *The Parade of the Tin Soldiers*. Excellent use was made here of all the old, silent-movie sound effects, together with traps and toy-counter. This for me was a highlight of the concert, showing what can be done with a little imagination. Then arpeggio up, changing time and mood into ragtime - which got faster and faster. After that it got faster and faster again,

with **Phil** starting at the Solo keyboard (top) and then playing the Great keyboard (middle) and then the Accompaniment keyboard (bottom). **Phil** did this at great speed in both directions, which of course gives a different sound for each keyboard - a spectacular effect! Oh, I nearly forgot - one has to keep an eye on his feet as well. Sometimes they play at opposite ends of the pedalboard and move towards the centre, other times they actually cross over each other to play different pedals at the same time. Put all these things together and you have an amazing sound, with eye-catching physical feats. Just one question, **Phil** - How do you stay on the bench without falling off?



Continuing on with this medley were some slow numbers with true theatre organ sounds - plenty of Tibias; use of higher footage and fractionals, which gives almost a shimmering effect. Then *Bless This House?* Yes, a traditional full church organ sound for the first phrase, then Tibias only for the next, then add Tuba and build up to full sound for the finish. Altogether a beautiful rendition of this lovely, old favourite. Then straight into a fast and furious *Tiger Rag*, using full chords with both hands on the same manual - giving a very full effect. As **Phil** was getting a little tired at this stage, he took a short rest by leaning on the console with his left arm, and continuing the music with his right hand and feet. Then a big, no make that a

"huge", finish for this medley. Lengthy applause followed, which was just as well, as **Phil** needed a rest after this medley - approximately 20 minutes long.

The next medley was my favourite - lots of songs from **Richard Rodgers**, all my favourite shows - *Oklahoma*, *Sound of Music*, *King and I*, *South Pacific*. All done in traditional theatre styling - full chords, lots of Tibias. I loved the interludes with the left hand playing Tibias only, and the right hand playing piano. I particularly liked *March of the Siamese Children* - Chinese Block and Reeds, no Trems.

The next medley commenced with *Crazy*, and allowed **Phil** to go crazy, doing fun things for us to watch. I even saw him polish the keys and then wipe his brow with one hand, while playing with the other! (This took a while, as he couldn't decide which pocket his handkerchief was in!) He also crossed his hand and his feet, and played up and down the keyboards. You cannot take your eyes off him for one minute - Who knows what he'll get up to next? Then came interval which was extended to 30 minutes, due to an over-capacity audience.

Rising again with his signature tune, **Phil** continued on with a medley of slower-style tunes, using different Reed and String ensembles: **Gershwin's** *I Hear Music*, *Dancin' Cheek to Cheek*, *Charleston*, *Varsity Drag*. **Phil** often uses the left hand for melody, with full chords in the right hand one octave up - this is where he gets his unique sound from.

Next came some classic pieces: *Meditation*, with Tibia and Flute combination to give a hauntingly beautiful sound which just floated around the auditorium, then String was added, Glock arpeggio to finish. Then *Intermezzo*, with full chords, all Reeds, one phrase at double speed, one at normal dance speed, and again at double tempo. We also had *How Great Thou Art* and *Can Can* in the middle of all of

this!

Next was a Latin-American medley, full of Castanets, Chinese Block, etc., with tunes like *Hernando's Hideaway* and *Tico Tico*.

Then came **Phil's** favourite medley, "Ballroom Nostalgia", with songs that were popular during the war - *There'll Always Be An England*, *White Cliffs of Dover*, *Maizey Doats*, *Gonna Hang My Washing on the Siegfried Line*, *Wish Me Luck As You Wave Me Goodbye*, *Baby Face*, *I'll Be Seeing You*, *We'll Meet Again*, *Land of Hope and Glory*. This medley was sing-along time, too.

Then, with all stops out and using every trick he could muster, a show-stopping rendition of *12th Street Rag*. This signalled the end of the concert, and approximately a quarter of the audience rose to their feet - the applause was extremely enthusiastic. **Phil** the said his Thank You's and took the console down with his signature tune.

Phil Kellsall is unique. One cannot simply go to hear a **Kellsall** concert, you must go to watch and participate, as well. **Phil** entertains in his own special style and his sense of musical fun is contagious. Hundreds of people now have "**Kellsall Fever**", and why not? This was a most energetic and fun-filled concert. **Phil**, we shall await your return with finely-tuned bars, and eyes glued to the console!

Wendy Hambly

BLACKPOOL DANCE NIGHT

What a night and what a roll-up!!! Over 240 people met at the **Orion Centre** for what can only be described as a most memorable occasion - an evening in the company of **Blackpool Tower's** resident organist, **Phil Kellsall**.

The night got underway promptly at 8pm with the console rising to the well-known signature tune, *Beside the Seaside*. **Phil** played a couple of quick solo numbers and then got down to the evening's business by calling for everyone to take the floor for the first dance of the evening, a Slow Waltz. The audience's reception of the first dance

was excellent, with up to 60 couples taking the floor. This set a precedent for the rest of the night which saw never less than 80 people on the dance floor.

It was very pleasing to note many new faces - people from **Dance Clubs**, **Sydney's Rolls Royce Owners' Club**, visitors from **Bowral, Canberra, Newcastle**,

members of other **Organ Clubs** and even 3 people from **Blackpool**, including **Joan** and **Alvin Whelpton** who flew out especially for **Phil's** two **Sydney** performances, as they did when he appeared as a **TOSA** guest artist at the **1991 Convention**. (Photo bottom left)

Canterbury Council are to be thanked for their generous decision to allow us the use of plants and shrubs from the **Council Nurseries** for our 2 performances.

We were fortunate in having well-known **Sydney** radio newsreader, **Jim Angel** (2UE), to draw the evening's raffle - **Jim's** wife, **Annette**, having kindly donated 2nd prize. **Jim** spoke of former **Sydney** theatres with (and now, without) theatre organs, and entertained patrons with an animated prize draw. We were grateful for his participation and hope to see more of him at future **Society** events.

As mentioned in a previous issue of **TOSA News**, this may have been the last Dance Night arranged by the **Society** had the response been poor. I believe I speak for all who were in attendance when I say that this was probably the most enjoyable and exciting Dance Night we have organised, certainly the one with the most participation from people there purely to dance.

There have been a number of comments from patrons who mentioned that the supper could have had more of the hot, savoury type food. **TOSA** committee have discussed this at a recent meeting, and they will see to

an improvement for any future events.

Special thanks must go to **John Atkins**, **Tracey Parker** and **Paul Luci** for their help from 9am to set up the hall on the day. Also, to **Eunice Palmer**, **Frank Ellis**, **John Shaw** and **Cliff Bingham** who helped collectively with the shopping requirements.

Miles Perry, our resident lighting



technician was unable to provide his usual excellent services for us over the weekend, but after setting the lights for us on Thursday and Friday, he handed over to **John Giacchi**, who graciously offered to man the lighting panel on Friday night.

We must not forget the catering corps, led by **Cliff Bingham**, **Colin Groves**, **Bill Schumacher** and the numerous others who were busy preparing the cheesecakes for supper. "**Cliff's Catering**" and "**TOSA Meals on Wheels**" were a couple of mentions, as they appeared with their trolley, dutifully delivering plates to every table. Naturally we must not forget **Karl Zipsin** who manned the Candy Bar all evening and **Françoise Groves** and her assistants who ran the foyer Coffee and Tea Bar.

Altogether, many people helped in many ways and to them we extend our thanks. With those who were prepared to take a day away from work to assist, and those who came direct from work, it helped to make the night run smoothly and get off to an early start.

Phil Kellsall enjoyed himself immensely. He commented that it was one of the most positive programs of the tour, as he was able to mix and mingle with patrons during the evening - very similar to his daily work at the **Tower Ballroom**. This brings about a more friendly and informal atmosphere, not achievable at a concert.

Special thanks must go to those members who attended with their friends and groups, plus a large number of non-members. The request forms provided for all tables were most enlightening, and showed that there were many people attending a Dance Night for the first time. These names and addresses have been kept for the future, in the hope that they can be informed of other **TOSA** functions.

Thanks again to **TOSA** members for your support. I sincerely hope your interest in this evening of 19th May, 1995, will see the continuance of similar ventures when dance organists are available.

John W. Parker



OUR NEXT ARTIST:

JONAS NORDWALL

A native of **Portland, Oregon**, in the **USA**, **Jonas Nordwall** received his Bachelor of Music degree in 1970 from the **University of Portland**, studying with **Arthur Hitchcock**. Additional study was done with **Frederick Geoghegan**, the noted **English/Canadian** organist, and **Richard Purvis** of **San Francisco's Grace Cathedral**. As a teenager, **Jonas** had the privilege of studying with **Richard Ellsasser**, one of the greatest virtuoso organists of this century. At the age of 15, **Jonas** had the distinction to play for **Sweden's King Gustav Adolph**, performing on the accordion, which was the first instrument he learned to play.

Jonas Nordwall possesses unique talents as a concert organist. His ability to perform both popular and classical organ music is rare. He tours the **North American** continent annually, presenting recitals and workshops, as well as maintaining an active recording schedule. Since 1971 he has served as organist for the **First United Methodist Church** in **Portland, Oregon**. He is also the organist for the **Oregon Symphony Orchestra**, with whom he has made solo appearances and participated in a CD recording of the orchestra on the **Delos** label. Additional orchestral appearances have been with the **Vancouver B.C. Symphony Orchestra**, **Portland Chamber Orchestra**, **Columbia Symphony Orchestra** and the

Portland Festival Orchestra.

Jonas' international concert appearances have included **Australia**, where he was the first organist to broadcast a solo recital in FM Stereo from the famed **Sydney Town Hall** on the magnificent 1888 **Hill Concert Organ**. He has also made concert appearances in **China** and **Japan**.

Jonas is a contributor to the renaissance in the popularity of the theatre organ as a recital instrument. He has recorded over 15 albums, in addition to his concert schedules at major performing arts auditoriums. For 10 years he was the senior staff organist for the **Organ Grinder Corporation** in **Portland**, which also had a large custom designed theatre organ in a restaurant location in **Denver, Colorado**. He has been a featured recitalist for **National Conventions** of the **American Theatre Organ Society** since 1966 and was organist of the year in 1987.

As a clinician, **Mr Nordwall** teaches musicians about the fine arts of hymn playing and choral accompaniment, and especially about the art of registration - the creation of appropriate sounds on the organ for the music being played. In this field, he is recognised as one of the most innovative organists. He is always looking for different, but musical, sounds to enhance the meaning of the music he is playing.

The correct, but meaningful, performance of liturgical music has always been of paramount importance for **Jonas**. He has long been recognised as one of

the finest hymn players and accompanists. In 1976 he was selected as the head organist for the **General Conference of the United Methodist Church** and has served as organist for large convocations for many different denominations.

The design and manufacturing of both pipe and electronic organs have been a passion for **Jonas**. Since 1966 he has been affiliated with the **Rodgers Instrument Corporation** in many capacities - he is a frequent recitalist and clinician; a design, manufacturing and marketing consultant; and a major influence in the development of control concepts for the classical organ world to enter the 21st century via the use of MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface). This includes the incorporation of MIDI with pipe organs, combination pipe/electronic organs, as well as electronic organs.

Jonas has consulted on many organs by various builders and was selected to supervise the installation of the former **Carnegie Hall** custom 5-manual **Rodgers Organ** into its new home, the **Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall** in **Portland**. **Jonas** was the artist for both the solo and orchestral inaugural concerts of this famous organ.

Critical acclaim has been earned by his performances as they bring fresh vitality to organ playing for both the new and old listener, allowing the organ to speak as the "**King of Instruments**".