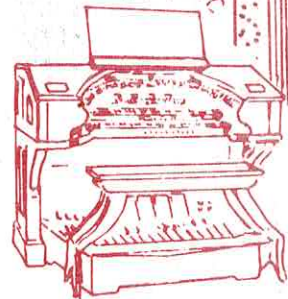


# TOSA NEWS

SPECIAL INVITATION

FROM OUR PATRON

IAN DAVIES



Printed by TOSA Press

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

Price 40c

ADDRESS BOX A584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000

REGISTERED FOR POSTING AS A PERIODICAL--CATEGORY B

Tuesday 3rd. March at 8.P.M.

By courtesy of the Management of the Bondi - Waverley R.S.L. Club our patron, Ian Davies, has arranged to personally present a concert on the Rodgers Trio organ for T.O.S.A. members and friends.

This will be Ian's first solo concert on the Rodgers organ for T.O.S.A. for three years and should not be missed.

Venue Bondi-Waverley R.S.L. Club, Grey Street, Bondi Junction.

Time 8.00P.M.

ADMISSION FREE



FIRST CONCERT FOR 1981

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THE FIRST CONCERT ON OUR 1981 PROGRAMME WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY, 22ND MARCH AT 2.30 P.M. AT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

AND WILL FEATURE.....CLIFF BINGHAM.....AT THE CONSOLE

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CLIFF BINGHAM HAS BEEN ON THE POPULAR ORGAN SCENE NOW FOR SOME FIFTEEN YEARS. CLIFF BEGAN PIANO LESSONS AT AGE EIGHT AND MOVED ON TO STUDY THE CLASSIC PIPE ORGAN SOME SIX YEARS LATER AT ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND, MANLY.

OVER THE YEARS CLIFF HAS CONCERTIZED IN MOST STATES ON BOTH PIPE AND ELECTRONIC ORGANS FOR BOTH T.O.S.A. AND THE THOMAS/ROGERS DEALER NETWORK. CLIFF IS ORGANIST AND DEPUTY CHOIRMASTER OF THE EAST LINDFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH WHERE HE PLAYS A FINE TWENTY-SIX RANK CLASSIC ORGAN BUILT LARGELY TO HIS OWN SPECIFICATION. CLIFF HAS PLAYED MANY TIMES AT THE SYDNEY TOWN HALL GRAND ORGAN AND HAS RECENTLY PERFORMED AT THE POPULAR LUNCH TIME RECITALS AT THE NEW SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE ORGAN.

ADMISSION IS.....FREE.....FREE.....FREE.....

Directory:

Patron: Ian Davies

President: Alan Misdale (525 5554)

Vice-Presidents: Frank Ellis (649 7011) Doug Smith (750 0917)

Secretary: Ernie Vale (798 6816) Treasurer & Membership Secretary:

Edna Smith, Practice Convenor: Chris Palmer (92 6534)

Research & Archives: Ian Cameron, Recording Engineer:

Ray Garrett (869 7247)

Address ALL correspondence to: The Secretary, TOSA, NSW Division, P.O.Box A584 Sydney South 2000

WELCOME to the following new members,

Reg & Jean Bourne, Ermington, Vivienne & Mr. Stuart, Cronulla, Les Belcher, Gloucester, Jim & Pat Bright, St. Ives, Jennifer Penny, Roseville, Edward Hale, Merrylands, Jack & Pat McEldowney, Bexley Nth. Andrew Brown, Woy Woy.

This organisation acknowledges financial assistance from the N.S.W. Government through the Premiers Department, Division of Cultural Activities.

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GREETINGS FROM PORT MORESBY..

Well, the Brisbane Theatre Organ Convention is just around the corner and I trust all participants from the NSW Division are looking forward to it as much as I am. I have heard rumours from Treasurer Edna Smith (with whom I am well acquainted) that the NSW Div. will be well represented.

For all those people, like myself, who are utilising the TOSA accomodation at the Zebra Motel, and have already paid a deposit, it is time to finalise the balance of accomodation costs. Just as a reminder, the cost PER PERSON is as follows:-

In single room	\$35.00	per night	(bed & breakfast)
In double/twin room	\$23.00	"	"
In triple room	\$19.00	"	"

Since you have already paid a deposit of \$20.00 per person, just deduct this from the total amount and forward your remittance of the balance to reach the Treasurer by the ABSOLUTE DEADLINE of 10th March 1981.

The address is, The Treasurer, TOSA NSW Div.,  
47 Horbury Street  
SANS SOUCI 2219.

Now all we need is for the weather to be kind over the Easter week-end, but whatever it is, it will be cooler than up here, I'm sure. Hoping to see many of you there,  
Regards,

Ron Smith in P.N.G.

(NOTE) Full convention programmes and application forms to attend are attached to the rear of this edition of TOSA NEWS.

THE PIPES SCORE AGAIN!

Our member Gareth Thomas of Warilla met a charming young lady while attending organ lessons at Woollongong Town Hall. He decided that they both had a lot in common and wedding bells were the result. Congratulations to Gareth and his new bride Robyn, who is now a new member of TOSA.

WHO IS our youngest member?

A computer would probably be needed to decide (reluctantly) who is our oldest member, but there is no doubt that our youngest member is Miss Laura Hazell of North Ryde, and Laura has now been learning to play for four months. Her age is 5½ years and she has already attended several concerts at Marrickville.

SINCERE APPRECIATION.. from Gosford  
to Mr. John J. Williams for his donation of  
\$5 towards TOSA funds.

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COMING FUNCTIONS

Saturday 7th March at 8 p.m.

Members are cordially invited to attend a Home Party at the home of Pat & Mal Mackay at 21 Inverness Avenue, Penshurst. Please book your place early as seating is limited to 45 persons.

Cost is \$2 for Gents and \$1.50 for ladies who are asked to bring a plate. Dress is casual, and dont forget to bring your music and have a play on the Thomas Celebrity organ. Pat & Mal have a very interesting collection of historic reproducing musical instruments and many other items of interest.

There will be a raffle and lucky door prize, so come along and have a good social night with your fellow members. Please ring 57 1303 for bookings immediately.

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Saturday 4th April a 2 p.m.

Mrs. Myers of 82 Rothschild Avenue, Rosebery invites members to a home organ party. Special arrangements have been made for the Patron of TOSA, Ian Davies, to be guest organist for this function, and Ian will be playing the Thomas 294 Californian along with other artists.

The cost is \$2 for gents and \$1.50 ladies who are asked to bring a plate. There will also be a lucky door prize and a raffle, so ring at once on 662 1647 and book your spot as seating is limited to 30 persons.

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SYDNEY TOWN HALL

Commencing on the 5th March and through to 1st October, DAVID PARSONS will be presenting the 'twilight' concert on the First Thursday of each month, from 6.15 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The Grand Organ Console has at present been disconnected for a complete re-newing, so David will be playing an Electronic Theatre Organ.

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WURLITZER ORGAN REPORT.

The Wurlitzer should be just about finished as you read this note. A couple of minor setbacks were encountered when some existing metal parts proved unsatisfactory and new ones had to be specially made, and fitted. This event delayed the original time for completion by approx. two more weeks. When adjusting and testing has been completed, members anxious to recommence their practice hour will be advised accordingly.

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FOR SALE \*\*\* FOR SALE \*\*\* FOR SALE

'HAYDN' Single manual Harmonium -pre 1824- Mahogany casing, Stops include Diapason, Vox Humana, Melodia, Dulciana, Oboe and two couplers. Instrument has been fully restored and casing polished.

PRICE \$300..... Enquiries to: Taffi Lindsay  
70 Kentwell Road  
Allambie NSW 2100 Ph: 93 5378



## THE ORGAN CONCERT

BY Billy Nalle

Complaints from some concert situations about lack of attendance have brought me to some observations born of research and experience since ATOS was founded twenty-five years ago. The fundamentals essential to presenting successful theatre organ concerts are exactly the same as apply in other major music fields. Unfortunately, coming to appreciate and honor these fundamentals has been a far slower process than known where the other major musical instruments are concerned. No person deeply believing in and caring for the welfare of theatre organ has escaped encountering an isolationist mentality which wants everything to remain static. The resulting slow suffocation now is showing its effects in several locales at both ends of the concert hall, at the console and at the box office.

To return theatre organ to the entertainment mainstream, everything on both sides of the footlights must be totally professional. Now, individual and group activities on a hobby basis provoke from this chile of God a "Yeaaa Team"! However, standards in every field are defined by the highest quality of a commodity presented in highest quality terms. Unfailingly, the highest professional standards in planning and performance are the best and strongest insurance for the continuance and strengthening of the hobby groups. Some of them still have not learned this after a quarter century.

A successful theatre organ concert series, or occasional concert, draws the public directly relative to the appreciation of adult musical fare by the sponsor, professionalism in planning, promotion and production, and the musicianship of the artist. That these fundamentals still are on the firing line after many years makes plain that too many concert sponsors and players in this field are not teachable. Further, no group which harps constantly on giving the public history lessons will draw serious support. Today, people have available in quantity and variety the finest musical fare presented in finest terms, with no nonsense. Right here is the crux of the matter, the blind spot shared by too many sponsors and players alike: The instrument is put before the music, which is the proverbial cart before the horse.

Support is built on what the theatre organ was created to do, make MUSIC! When all efforts are invested in presenting the finest music in the finest musical terms, support will follow and the instrument will take care of itself. Only we theatre organ buffs can love the instrument for itself and endure the wallowing in throbbing cascades of ill-tremulated sounds accompanied by breastbeating. The public has no interest in all that! Either it is irritated by such, or, at best, considers it quaint. What the theatre organ can provide uniquely and magnificently, MUSIC, if it is top drawer, will move and win and draw those in the "outside world."

There are some places setting a good example on the international scene. One of the best is found in mid America, in Wichita. Here, in a city of 275,000 and far from the largest metropolitan areas, Wichita Theatre Organ, Inc., from its initial concert eight years ago, has put the chief emphasis on musical product in professional terms. Pricing of tickets, promotion, production, selection of artists and avoidance of too frequent public presentations are in accord with the standards which



obtain in the other music fields. Even when competing events or/and bad weather have occurred on concerts evenings, the audience never has been less than 1,200. The high majority of concerts through the years have drawn from 1,500 to 2,000 plus. WTO retains ownership of the organ while operating via a businesslike contract with Century 11 Centre.

All concerts for the public are in the evening, usually Saturday, giving people at a distance sufficient time for travel. That people drive and fly various distances to the concerts every year, in itself speaks for itself. Early and late, alpha and omega, Music is the paramount consideration.

Appreciation of, and insistence on, adult musical fare by the sponser.  
Professionalism in planning, promotion and production.  
Musicianship of the artists selected.

Wherever these are honored, no one needs to worry about theatre organ.

You win the world to a musical instrument by its music....and by nothing less than, nothing other than, its MUSIC!

REPRINTED by courtesy of "JOURNAL of the AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY.

Dr. William Harrison Barnes, noted pipe organ architect and consultant, died at the age 87 in an Evanston, Illinois, hospital on October 11, 1980. Dr. Barnes' book, *The Contemporary American Organ*, now in its ninth printing, is considered to be the definitive text on the subject.

A strong voice for pipe organs, DR. Barnes built his first organ at the age of 15. During a 65 year career he designed and built more than 400 pipe organs throughout the United States. He was an accomplished organist and was acquainted with most of the better-known classical recitalists. At one time, his Evanston residence contained a pipe organ designed with parts from the 1889 Roosevelt organ in the famed Auditorium Theatre, Chicago.

Dr. Barnes was a life-long resident of Evanston but in recent years spent winters in Arizona where he and the late Dr. John Klein were frequent companions. He was president of A.R. Barnes Printing Co. and was a director of the First Bank of Evanston for over 30 years. The YMCA and other philanthropic endeavors also occupied much of his time.

Dr. Barnes is survived by his wife, Katharine; a daughter; a step son five grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

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Viril Fox was the most prominent, flamboyant, wonderfully talented and beloved organist in the world. While classical organists at large shunned his showmanship, he, more than any other human being, brought the classical organ to the masses.

Early on, Virgil decreed, "Who would pay to watch Heifitz fiddle behind a potted palm" and went to a major electronic classic organ builder. They designed "Black Beauty" a touring organ. Coupled with the light show, Virgil hit the road concertizing to packed houses across this country and the world at large.

They danced in the aisles and clapped in time to the "Gigue Fugue"



opened in 1939 it was decided - as an afterthought - to install a Wurlitzer, and Horace was given the job of drawing up the specification of what proved to be the last new Wurlitzer to be despatched from America to this country. It too was soon heard on the air. Whilst in the RAF Horace appeared as guest organist at the various cinemas near his camps including the opening of the Ritz Lincoln. After the war Horace returned to Blackpool and the Empress Wurlitzer and although his radio dates were no longer quite so frequent his popularity remained undiminished. His first solo organ recordings were 78s for the Rex label in 1939 using the Tower, Opera House, and Granada Clapham Junction Wurlitzers. These are now collector's pieces. However, thanks to BBC records and Derrick Marsh of Deroy, we have a number of LPs of Horace's playing by which to remember him.

Sadly his playing career ended prematurely in November 1962 when an accident to his left hand prevented him from playing, and he retired to the Lake District. However in recent years, the call of Blackpool brought Horace and his wife back to the Fylde. Sadly yet another of the greats has left us, but happy memories remain.

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REPRINTED by courtesy of THE CINEMA ORGAN SOCIETY.

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#### TAPE SALES

Recordings of concerts will be available for members only and orders will be taken at the concert. This has now become a privilege of membership of the Society. All details will be on the order form.

Membership forms will be on hand at concerts to facilitate orders.

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#### HOME ORGAN PARTY. (Phil and Ron Wilson)

Another very enjoyable afternoon and evening was spent at the home of the Wilson's when numerous members enjoyed the cool clear waters of the pool followed by the barbecue and many delicious salad dishes in the pool area.

After dinner everyone moved inside to listen to the Lowrey H4 organ and piano played by many of the members.

It was a most successful party raising \$136. including a raffle for a direct cut record of Jonas Nordwall kindly donated by Bill Schumacher.

Many thanks to Phil and Ron for a most enjoyable party.

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#### NEWS FLASH \*\*\*\*\* TONY FENELON IN WOLLONGONG \*\*\*\*\* 3rd MARCH \*\*\*\*\*

The Lowrey Organ Cottage is again presenting Tony Fenelon in Wollongong. This time the venue is the Wollongong R.S.L. Burelli Street, Wollongong. For enquiries, please phone Jan or Bob, 042 291261.

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and "stayed between God's walls forever free" in the "Prelude and Fugue in E Minor (the wedge).

They stood in the lines and then sat in awe of the beauty of Bach's "Come Sweet Death" and "Sheep May Safely Graze," (both of which were played at his funeral services in Palm Beach and Dr. Schullers crystal cathedral in California.)

Flamboyance was his forte. No one can forget Virgil in his beret and cape taking his bows or standing on the pedals with his hand pushed heavenward at the end of a piece. Best of all he was a friend of the theatre organ. It started when he was a boy in Princeton, Illinois. He played the theatre organ in his father's theatre and always took delight in the growing popularity of the theatre organ.

He made one recording on a theatre organ, the 4/37 "Dowager Empress" Wurlitzer in Wichita's Century 11 Civic Auditorium. After this recording, even his classical concerts included arrangements from this album.

Simply, Virgil loved the organ as long as it was music and was brought to the world to enjoy. Virgil Fox was unique, witty, wonderful and to quote the order of the memorial service, "A sunbeam has gone from the world"

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REPRINTED by courtesy of "JOURNAL of the AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY"

#### HORACE FINCH

Many members will doubtless have heard Nigel Ogden's announcement and short tribute to Horace Finch in the T.O.E. programme on October 17th

The announcement also appeared in the national press. He passed away on September 30th at the age of 74 and our sincere sympathy goes to his wife in her loss.

Horace Finch was a native of St. Helens, where he received his early musical training on piano and church organ. His first church organist appointment was at the age of nine at a local Methodist Church. In his early teens the family moved to the Fylde coast when piano tuition was continued. His original intention was to be a concert pianist, but while continuing his studies, he turned to cinema playing. At the age of 20 he was appointed orchestral pianist in the Blackpool Orchestra, and, apart from his war service in the RAF, remained with the Tower Company for the rest of his professional life. He was first heard on the air and on record as pianist arranger with the famous Bertini Orchestra, also playing accordion, xylophone and organ when required. When the Wurlitzer was installed in the Empress Ballroom in 1935, Horace was appointed organist and rapidly established himself as a firm favourite with dances and concert audiences alike. By the following December he had made his first BBC broadcast from the Empress and many more were to follow including some from St. George's Hall after the BBC had installed their own theatre organ. In 1938 he gave a guest broadcast from the Compton of the Theatre Royal, Manchester - as far as we know this being the only broadcast ever made from this theatre. When the new Opera House was

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SUNDAY 1st March at 3 p.m. (Time could be changed because of flight delays, check first with Noel)

Noel Smith presents TONY FENELON in concert at the Port Hacking High School, The Kingsway, Miranda. For all enquiries please ring Noel Smith on 524 4186.

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The Poet of the Organ

It is with the deepest regret to have to report that one of Australia's finest organists, Wilbur Kentwell, passed away in early February this year.

Originally from Sydney, Wilbur Kentwell played regularly at several of the Theatres until he eventually moved to Queensland. There he became Resident Organist at the Regent Theatre Brisbane for many years, and because of the magic 'Kentwell' touch he became well known and respected as the Poet of the Organ.

During his lengthy career he also became Musical Director for Channel 0 in Brisbane and was one of Australia's most prolific recording artists. Wilbur Kentwell also did two recordings on the Christie theatre pipe organ at Kelvin Grove Auditorium but these have not been released to date.

Wilbur Kentwell's passing is a sad loss to the Organ World and there is no doubt that 'The Poet of the Organ' will be remembered for many years to come.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

All the photographs that have appeared in the magazine that were taken at Concerts or the Cabaret are available to members for the sum of \$1.00 each plus postage. All photos are in colour and many more were taken than appear in the magazine. Proofs may be inspected at Club Nights or at the Monthly Meetings. Print size is 5" x 3½" and larger sizes can be ordered by arrangement.

In the near future it is hoped to be able to offer to members a Set of Colour Prints of the Marrickville Wurlitzer which will give several views of the console and pipe chambers etc. When these are available, details of cost and ordering etc will be published in the TOSA News.

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LATEST ON THE DENDY THEATRE (VIC)

The latest official news about the proposed alterations to be made at the Dendy, which will necessitate the removal of TOSA Victoria's 3/15 Wurlitzer, appears to be that there isn't any. Those with their ears to the floor of the stalls believe nothing drastic will happen during 1981.

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The next Committee Meeting will be held on:  
Monday 2nd March at 7.30 p.m. at St. Annes Church Hall, Strathfield.

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QUEENSLAND'S 3/8 CHRISTIE THEATRE PIPE ORGAN.

This organ is installed in the Kelvin Grove School Assembly Hall complex and is the pride and joy of the Queensland Division and they are very proud of it. I admire their pride for some of the problems that had to be overcome to get this instrument together were enormous to say the least.

The organ was originally the property of the Granada Cinema Circuit in England and was installed in their 'Showcase' Cinema in Maidstone, Kent. It was opened in 1934 and was regularly used until 1968 when the river Medway flooded and enveloped the stalls and console in 8ft. of water. Fortunately the pipework up higher was not damaged.

After exhaustive arrangements the purchase was made, the organ was packed by an expert and arrived in January of 1971 in good condition. A major problem then was to find a suitable console and after endless enquiry a two manual console was located. This console was originally in the 'New Empire' theatre, Dunedin N.Z., but was suitable for conversion to a three manual, another huge project.

Upon learning of the pending construction of the Kelvin Grove Assembly Hall & Library Complex, the Headmaster was approached to have the Christie organ incorporated in the building design. This proved to be a most successful meeting and resulted in agreement to the proposal.

Prior to the completion of the auditorium the organ Restoration Committee spent several thousand hours restoring the instrument to 'as new' condition. The work team consisted of three electricians, several technicians, a plumber, a skilled organ builder, other qualified tradesmen together with other persons, all of whom were prepared to do any task which needed to be done.

In June 1973 the chambers were completed and work began on the actual installation. The wind for the organ is supplied by a 7½ hp electric blower housed in an adjacent building. Wind is then conveyed by metal ducts to the two pipe chambers located on each side of the proscenium arch. There is 316 pipes in each chamber and the left-hand (accompaniment) chamber has the following ranks of pipes: Diapason, Concert Flute, Viol D'Orchestra and Celeste along with the Chrysoglott from which the Vibraphone and Carillon is derived. The right-hand (Solo) chamber has the Tibia, Vox Humana, Tuba and Trumpet plus Chimes, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Drums, Cymbal, Siren, Bird & Boat Whistle, Castanets, Tambourine, Blocks & Triangle. A Stelzner piano, playable from the console is not enclosed and may be moved around the stage.

The Inaugural Concert took place on Monday 24th November 1976 and the artist on that great occasion was Tony Fenelon.

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I sincerely hope that you can attend the Theatre Organ Convention in Brisbane this year. The Convention is held over the Easter week-end and being aptly named "The Tremendous Tenth" will feature among other things the Christie Theatre Pipe Organ described above. Apart from its beautiful attractions, Queensland is noted for its hospitality, and a good time is assured for everyone. Registration forms are attached to the back of this issue.

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