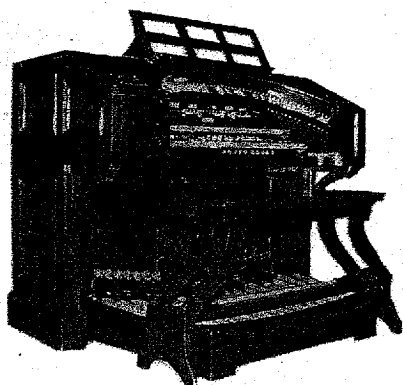


MAY, 2003



2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ  
Marrickville Town Hall

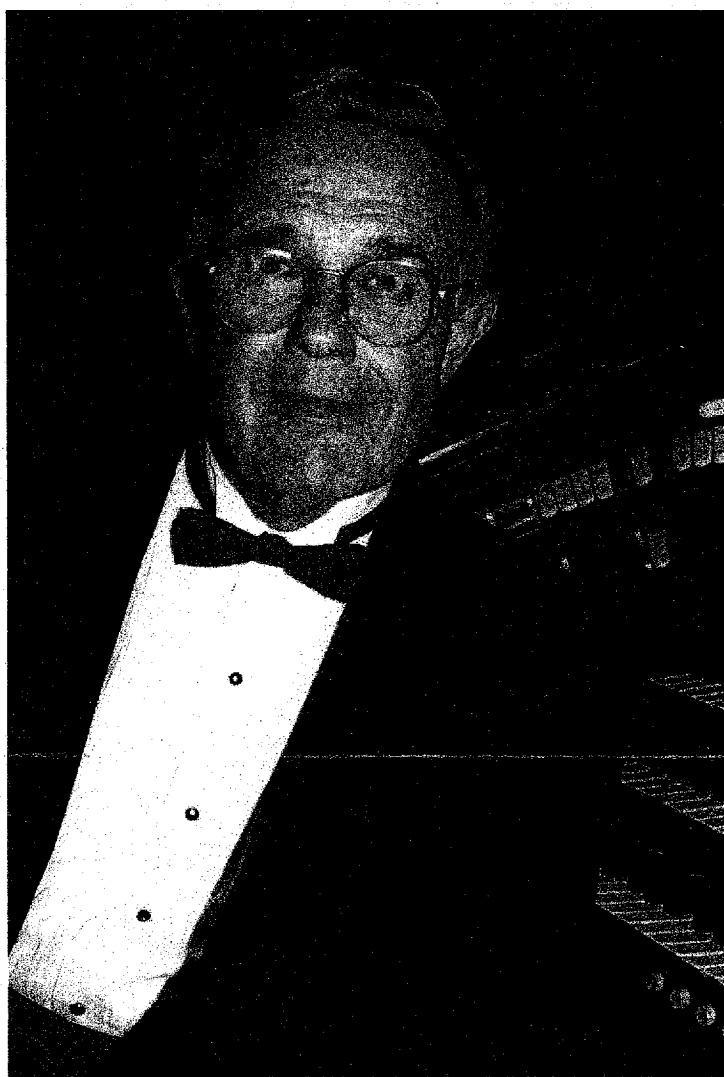
# TOSA



3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ  
Orion Centre Campsie

# Warren Lubich

The  
Welcome  
Return of  
One of the  
US's Top  
Theatre  
Organists



Sunday 4th May, 2003, at 2pm  
Marrickville Town Hall

Volume 42  
Issue 4  
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# TOSA NEWS

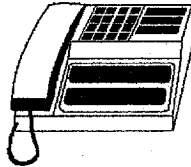
MAY, 2003

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc

For the smooth running of TOSA, please contact the right person :

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Membership, Renewals, Change of Address - MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY  
TOSA NEWS Items, Advertisements - EDITOR  
All numbers use the prefix 02

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## COMING EVENTS

### MAY

- Sunday 4 at 2.00pm Warren Lubich Concert  
Marrickville Town Hall
- Monday 5 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting
- Thursday 8 at 1.30pm Members' Playing Day  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Phone 9716 0151 to confirm
- Thursday 22 at 7.30pm Members' Playing Night  
Marrickville Town Hall  
Phone 9798 6742 to confirm

### JUNE

- Monday 2 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting
- Thursday 12 at 1.30pm Members' Playing Afternoon  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Phone 9716 0151 to confirm
- Sunday 22 at 2pm Margaret Hall Concert  
Orion Centre Campsie

### JULY

- Monday 7 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting
- Thursday 10 at 1.30pm Members' Playing Afternoon  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Phone 9716 0151 to confirm
- Sunday 20 at 2pm "Cliff and Friends"  
Variety Concert  
Orion Centre Campsie
- Thursday 24 at 7.30pm Members' Playing Evening  
Marrickville Town Hall  
Phone 9798 6742 to confirm

The new TOSA  
website is live at:

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

Creators Debra and  
Richard Marschall  
say "thank you"  
to all contributors

## From The President

Walter and his wife are currently on a travelling holiday and unable to be contacted. So for this month the usual items of interest from our President can't be included.

## Editorial

This issue is being put together before the National TOSA Theatre Organ Festival in Adelaide over Easter. I know that at least a few of our NSW members are attending and I hope that they have a wonderful time over there. Reports on the Festival hopefully next issue.

The Festival is the reason why TOSA (NSW) has gone rather quiet in April, but the good news is that our concerts resume on Sunday 4th May with the well-known organist from the USA, Warren Lubich. He has played for us twice before but not since 1983 and 1985. It will good to welcome him back. This concert will be at the Marrickville Town Hall.

There has been an overwhelming, positive reaction to Russell Holmes' concert at Marrickville on 9th March and Russell was full of praise for TOSA's *Wurlitzer* there. Be sure to come along to hear Warren, as I'm sure the reaction to him will be equally as positive.

Thank you to the contributors to

this issue of *TOSA News* for their efforts - this month, I especially want to thank Ron Ivin, Barry Tooker and Allan Brooker for the interesting material they have provided for publishing. As I say regularly: "No contributions = no TOSA News". So, if you see something of interest please send it off to the Editor for publication - it is much appreciated by the members (and the Editor!).

Best Wishes,  
Colin Groves

### Advertising in *TOSA News*

For members:

Small, organ-related  
advertisement = FREE

For non-members :

Small bubble = \$11

Quarter page = \$24.75

Half page = \$49.50

Full page = \$99

Full page insert = \$125.00

(Payable in advance)

## Good News from Chris Styles!

Theatre Organ programme back on Sydney Radio!!

Walter and the Committee have been able to get space on a Sydney community radio station for a theatre organ programme.

Details are : 2NBC - 90.1FM - Monday nights at 7.30

The first programme went to air Monday night, 7th April. 2NBC transmits from Narwee and I think can be heard in a lot of metropolitan Sydney.

They are 30 minute programmes and will basically be similar to those I presented on 2CBA up until March, 1999.

I have obtained quite a few new theatre organ CDs since I commenced a one hour programme on Highland FM107.1 on Monday nights (also in March, 1999) and still have on very long term loan LPs of Rob Gliddon which get regular use here and will on 2NBC. (I promise faithfully I will get Rob's recordings back to him one day soon!!)

I'll do my best to present a programme that caters for all tastes in theatre organ.

Chris Styles

Articles in this journal need not represent the views of the committee or the editor

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



NEWS FROM  
ALL OVER

EARLY ORGANS

A little historical item from Cantos, the Newsletter of the Canterbury Theatre Organ Society of New Zealand :

The world's first keyboard instrument was the organ. The idea of putting a number of variously sized flutes in a frame and directing air from a bellows to them via a keyboard was put into practice as long ago as the third century BC by a well-known Egyptian inventor and barber named Ctesibius. Ctesibius' organ, remarkably like every other pipe organ since, with twenty keys, two banks of pipes and a system of stops, was called by the Greeks a "Hydraulikon", or water organ.

The mental picture of a water-organ squirting jets of water out of its pipes in time with the music is unhappily false - the function of the water was only to keep the air in the air-reservoir at a constant pressure, much the same as the gasometer.

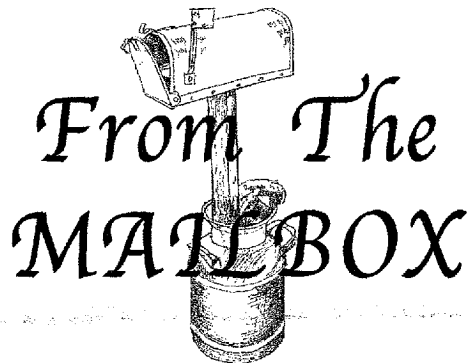
The Romans called it a "Hydraulus" and it was played at public events, by Nero amongst others, to provide incidental music to gladiatorial combats, circuses, and horse races.

The sheer force of the noise it produced made it unattractive to sensitive Romans: "The organ is an instrument composed of diverse pipes, formed into a kind of tower, which, by means of bellows, is made to produce a loud sound." (Cassiodorus c.490-583)

It does seem to have produced an exceedingly loud noise. Contemporary accounts record that the sound of a Hydraulus could be heard sixty miles

away and that many of the organists had to wear ear-plugs.

Perhaps because of the volume of sound it produced, or its association with pagan nastiness, the church would have nothing to do with it, until it changed its mind and began to install organs in churches and monasteries in about the eighth century.



Allan Brooker of Belfield writes in praise of Russell Holmes, our last artist, and Warren Lubich, our next artist:

11/3/03

Russell Holmes at Marrickville, Sunday March 9, now that was a theatre organ concert!

This young man really showed what can be extracted from a theatre organ with skill and aplomb in true, pure theatre organ style. He never put a finger wrong and dazzled us with pure theatre organ magic at it's best. It is little wonder that he won all three divisions (Junior, Intermediate and Senior) in the Young Organist Competition of the American Theatre Organ Society, several years ago.

His program included music from the well-known, to the not-so-well-known for added variety. The prolonged applause at the end of his performance, showed clearly, that the audience appreciated what he had served up and wanted more. I'll leave it to the concert reviewer for the contents of his wonderful program. (See pages 11 and 12)

The Marrickville Wurlitzer never missed a beat and performed impeccably, thanks to the tender loving care given to it by Neil Palmer. That organ never ceases to amaze me with its rich full sound that makes it sound like a much larger organ than it really is. Russell spoke in glowing terms

about the instrument and how everything worked, unlike many other organs he had played around the world.

Thank you TOSA for a brilliant Theatre Organ concert!

I'm really looking forward to the next concert by well known San Francisco Bay area organist Warren Lubich. It's quite some years since he visited our shores, but audiences will love his relaxed and smooth style. He is highly regarded and as such is one of the featured artists at this year's ATOS Convention in Oakland, San Francisco. Don't miss him!

Allan Brooker

\*\*\*\*

Peter Held of Roselands also writes about TOSA's Russell Holmes concert :

11/3/03

I am writing primarily to express appreciation for the quality of the recital of Russell Holmes at Marrickville Town Hall on last Sunday.

The virtuosity of the player in the sheer musicality of his arrangements, the sensitivity of his registrations and the feat of memory involved in pressing the right piston at the right phrase should hopefully serve as a salutary object-lesson to others who play these instruments here and elsewhere.

I'm afraid the speech-reinforcement system used in M.T.H. is mostly ineffective. I lost quite a bit of R.H.'s announcements because of it.

May I just point out that the phrase "concert-pianist" or "concert-anything" is conventionally around the world only supposed to be applied to those players who are acclaimed internationally in the classical field.

In the case of organists, examples could be David Drury, Gillian Weir, the late Reginald Foort, Quentin McLean. I have had the definition of this dinned into me since starting/ becoming a classical prodigy (?) in 1946!!

Again many thanks for your hours at the computer on our behalf!

Kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Peter Held

# BONDI JUNCTION-WAVERLEY RSL CLUB CONCERT REPORT

SATURDAY, 29th MARCH, 2003

Text and Photos by Barry Tooker

Promptly at 1.00pm IAN DAVIES welcomed all visitors and members of TOSA to the Club for a pleasant afternoon of music and camaraderie.



Opening as he so often does, he recounted some of his experiences with the late Roy Rene ("Mo").

Having set the mood for a bit of fun and frivolity Ian introduced Bill Schumacher as first artist of the afternoon.

Opening with a bouncy rendition of *FROM THIS MOMENT ON* Bill continued with a sensitive arrangement of *BLUE PRELUDE*. In honour of our late member Betty Bruderlin who passed away recently he played a selection of her most frequent requests, which included *WITH ONE LOOK*, the perennial *NEW YORK NEW YORK*, *MUSIC OF THE NIGHT*, and *TEA FOR TWO*. Bill continued with *LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME* and *I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING YOU* followed by *SAM THE OLD ACCORDION MAN* and finishing with *MEAN TO ME*.

Our next artist was Wendy Hambly, who naturally opened with



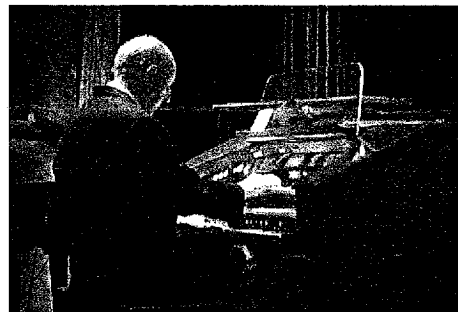
her signature tune *THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE FREE*. And it's true, isn't it? - this was a free concert!

I'm not quite sure what to make of this, but the next two tunes were *KISS OF SPRING* followed by *YOU OUGHT TO SEE SALLY ON SUNDAY*. Makes

one think doesn't it?.

I really loved her playing of the march *ON GUARD*. Wendy closed her contribution to the first half with the beautiful *DREAM OF OLWYN* and the ever popular *CHEEK TO CHEEK*.

Appearing through the curtains at centre stage, Ian took his place at the console to entertain us in his own inimitable style, playing *IDAHO*, *RAIN*



*IN YOUR HAIR* and *THE GOOD SHIP LOLLIPOP*. Included in his selections were *SAN FERNANDO VALLEY*, *THE SKY BOAT SONG* and with Easter approaching, *EASTER PARADE*.

After a short break to quench our thirst at the bar, chat among ourselves, or visit the heads, it was time for the second half of the program.

Bill reckoned that Mary Davies believes that *EVERY NICE GIRL LOVES A SAILOR*, knowing that Ian was in the navy during World War II. His Ray Noble selection was just great and I always did love *WEDDING OF THE PAINTED DOLL*. I have a soft spot for novelty numbers.



Next we took a trip with his around-the-world selection as we experienced *OLD FATHER THAMES*, *DOWN THE MALL*, *SPANISH EYES* and *LADY OF SPAIN*. Across to America for *GOD BLESS AMERICA* and *CALIFORNIA HERE I COME*

finishing up with *I STILL CALL AUSTRALIA HOME*. This all had some significance as Bill had travelled extensively with Tony Fenelon by air and cruise ship last year.

Back to Wendy again with a beautiful rendition of *BY STRAUSS* followed by *SAN FRANCISCO*. Another march, *MARCHE MILITAIRE*, was expertly played followed by a romantic *THREE COINS IN A FOUNTAIN* and *LET ME TRY AGAIN?* Maybe Wendy has a few wishes up her sleeve. I was a little confused to hear *THE FLEET'S IN PORT AGAIN* and *I'M JUST PRETENDING*. Just what is she trying to tell us? Anyway she finished up *ON A WONDERFUL DAY LIKE TODAY*.

Ian appeared through those curtains again to play his French selection which includes *GAY PAREE*, *LA MER (THE SEA)* and the ever popular *CAN CAN*.

As always, the day finished up with a duet of Bill on grand piano and Ian on the *Rogers Trio* playing for a singalong. Just four numbers consisting of *FOUR LEAF CLOVER*, *SILV'RY MOON*, *LET'S ALL SING LIKE THE BIRDIES SING* and *SIDE BY SIDE*.



After a short speech and a presentation to Wendy, Bill took the microphone to reminisce on the many times that he and Ian have played in concerts at the Bondi Junction RSL Club and thanked the management for their generosity in providing the auditorium, organ and bar staff free of charge to TOSA for many years.

MANY THANKS TO OUR PATRON, IAN DAVIES, WENDY HAMBLY AND BILL SCHUMACHER FOR A GREAT AFTERNOON OF MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT.

# Margaret Hall

at the *Wurlitzer* Theatre Pipe Organ

## CHATSWOOD

## TOWN HALL

Also Featuring :

Karen Bruce (Soprano) and Dean Sinclair (Tenor)

FRIDAY, 9th MAY at 8pm

Reserved Seating - 9417 2987

Adults - \$15; Seniors - \$12; Children under 15 - FREE

## Tony Fenelon's Melbourne Regent Concert

by Allan Brooker

I am pleased to report that a near capacity audience greeted Tony Fenelon for the first "Organ Only" concert at the Regent Theatre Melbourne, on Saturday February 22 2003.

He delighted the "purists" with a stunning demonstration of his well known keyboard skills at that magnificent 36 rank *Wurlitzer* originally from the San Francisco Paramount Theatre.

*That's Entertainment* brought the curtain up and then straight into selections from *Paint Your Wagon*, followed by *Russian Dance* and *Dance of the Flutes* highlighting the beautiful flute ranks on the organ, as well as *Dance of the Flowers* preceded a lengthy bracket of tunes from *My Fair Lady*.

A big mover was *Hey Big Spender*, allowing the *Wurlitzer* to speak at full voice. (Shirley Bassey, eat your heart out!)

A Rodgers and Hart tribute followed with such gorgeous numbers as

*With a Song in my Heart, Isn't it Romantic, Blue Moon* and many more by these famous song writers.

I have never known 60 minutes to fly by so quickly as the man voted the ATOS "2002 Organist of the Year" enthralled us with his music in Part 1.

Part 2 began with a selection of ABBA hits, followed by tunes made famous by the Hollywood "Ratpack" - Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr and Dean Martin such as *Come Fly with Me, Candy Man* and *Ain't That a Kick in the Head*.

There was no shortage of variety as Tony slipped into a segment that has become a welcome feature of his concerts in recent years and that is, tunes done in the style of Buddy Cole. Noel Coward's *I'll follow My Secret Heart* preceded Buddy's arrangement of *September in the Rain* and then Buddy Cole's own composition *Sassy Brass* which featured duelling brass sections of the organ.

All too soon the concert's second half

was drawing to a conclusion, but Tony was not going to let us leave without hearing an extended selection from Gershwin's *Girl Crazy*, including *Embraceable You, But Not For Me* to mention just a couple.

Rapturous applause at the conclusion of this wonderful segment would not allow Tony to leave without an encore and a fiery *Brazil* was our bonus treat.

Tony thanked the many people who had come from interstate as well as the locals who came in great numbers to hear theatre organ at its best. Praise went to Julien Arnold and his team for such fine preparation of that historic *Wurlitzer* and the Regent management, especially Jason Marriner and the man whose idea it was to have an "all organ" concert, Sam Schwartz.

I would also like to thank Sam for his foresight and faith that audiences really do come to the Regent concerts to hear the organ! I hope this is the first of many such concerts to come.

# 'Unit Organ' Descriptions

An Internet list subscriber, Mac Hayes, posted: "I keep hearing how much the Theatre Organ sound is dependent on its unit organ design. I'd like to hear an explanation as to why 'straight' organs don't sound as good playing that style of music (other people's opinions - I haven't heard any music that demonstrates why *Unit* is better than *Straight* for certain styles)."

*His request brought a number of interesting explanations from other list members.*

*For example, Jim Swist replied:*

Mac Hayes asks about the characteristics of a unit organ that lend itself to theatre organ sound.

Three things come to mind:

1) Because the divisions are by tone class and not by keyboard, you tend to get a better 'orchestral stereo' effect from a theatre organ (most of which have two chambers). The stops drawn on a given manual are likely to come from multiple places. All the stops in a straight design for a given manual will usually be on one chest or at least on chests close to each other.

2) A borrowed pipe can only sound once, no matter how many stops are selecting it. Thus, particularly in larger combination, a unit organ is "missing" some notes which has the effect of lightening the texture. An equivalent straight organ might sound a bit thick with many 8' ranks drawn together.

3) When a stop is borrowed to a higher pitch (almost all theatre organ ranks are 8' or 16' based) it is usually louder in that higher pitch than an equivalent independent rank would be (otherwise the rank would be too soft at its normal pitch). An equivalent straight set of ranks will be less bright (but of course that is solved by having higher pitched, independent ranks and mixtures available, which makes the characteristic sound of a church organ). So in a certain sense, unification compensates somewhat for the lack of higher pitched stops on most theatre organs. The very bright voicing of theatre organ strings and reeds takes care of the rest.

*Allen Walker also replied:*

Although others have posted on this topic, I would like to offer information organized a little differently.

The unification of a theatre organ was not a goal in itself, and is not its only distinguishing feature. It is simply

part of an overall tonal design that differs in several respects from that of classical organs. Any organ, in order to be a satisfactory musical instrument, has to have some consistent tonal scheme. Otherwise, it is just a collection of pipes, and is one of those instruments that people rightly complain about.

I will try to describe some of those differences:

## BLEND

A classical organ, although containing some distinctive solo voices, has choruses of stops that blend well together to form coherent, composite sounds. Drawing more stops in a chorus tends to result in a louder and brighter or bigger sound, but that chorus is still a single composite sound. [This is one of the reasons why organ students have to ask so much about what registrations an organist they are hearing is using.]

A theatre organ was designed to be a unit orchestra. Its voices are all distinctive, and there are no choruses in the same sense. It is like a band - you can hear both the composite sound and all of the individual instruments, such as the trumpets, trombones, clarinets, etc. In keeping with that philosophy, the individual pipes are louder. A big sound is not produced by a large number of blending pipes sounding, rather it is produced by a smaller number of distinctive pipes sounding. The pipes are voiced at high pressures, and many have sounds that could be described as "heavy." [Organ students who have learned the sounds of the stops can usually guess the registrations used simply by listening.]

## VOICES

In a classical organ, using unification to derive a 4' Octave from the same rank of pipes as an 8' Principal gives us an organ with a 4' octave that is too large in scale and too loud to blend well and form part of a principal chorus.

In a theatre organ, using unification

to derive a 4' Octave from the same rank of pipes as an 8' Tibia Clausa simply creates another not-quite-blending sound, which is in keeping with the overall tonal scheme.

## MISSING NOTES

In a classical organ with unification, you don't quite get something for nothing. If you draw the unified 8' Principal and 4' Octave and play a single note, you will have two pipes sounding. If you play octaves, you will have only three pipes sounding, instead of the four pipes of a non-unified organ. In some of the classical repertoire, this "missing note" phenomenon is noticeable.

In a theatre organ, it is these "missing notes" in the middle range of the instrument that keeps the instrument from having a heavy and muddy middle range. The sound is more transparent than it otherwise would be, and is spread out much more over the audio spectrum, especially if 16' and 4' couplers are used as well. There have been some theatre organ installations where there has been little limit on funds, and extra ranks of pipes have been added and unification reduced. The result has been muddy sound compared to original theatre organs.

.....

There are many other differences as well, including much more ergonomic and technical advancement in theatre organ consoles. As you can see, each feature depends on the others to form a complete tonal scheme. Simply adding or deleting a feature is unlikely to produce good results unless it is done in the context of an overall tonal scheme.

Personally, I prefer music played on an instrument that is appropriate for its type. However, I have been greatly entertained by good musicians performing on "inappropriate" instruments.

For those who would try to change



features of either classical or theatre organs, I can only say: Think through a complete tonal scheme, and how the parts of the tonal scheme will work together to form a useful musical instrument.

P.S. I hope that the List members who are not familiar with theatre organs are getting the impression that there is as much intelligence, musicianship and hard work embodied in many theatre organs, as in the fine historical organs of North Germany, France, etc. They are just different, and like all organs they are better for some kinds of music, and not as good for other types.

*Jon C. Habermaas added his thoughts:*

I've been following this discussion from the beginning and notice that it has seemed to focus largely on the tonal aspects of unit organ vs straight organ design, which while extremely important and interesting to most of us, does not focus on the action issue.

To explain the unit organ action, it seems difficult to approach it without first explaining what the unit organ is NOT, namely your basic, straight pipe instrument.

The very simplest organ we could discuss would be a small, one-manual mechanical organ where the mechanical linkage from an individual key pulls down a pallet (or valve) under the pipe.

If more than one set of pipes is used, a stop action for turning individual voices on and off is required.

For a multi-rank chest a channel runs across the chest under all the sets which is charged with wind when the pallet is opened.

For a 61-note keyboard, a channel for each note or 61 channels would run across the chest.

The simplest and most common stop action is a slider under each set of pipes (running the length of the chest) which has holes corresponding to the pipes' holes on the chest.

When the stop is off, the holes do not align with the channel and the pipe hole.

When the stop is drawn, the slider shifts so that the slider holes and pipe holes align and the wind is allowed to reach the pipe. The number of stops on the console in this case corresponds

with the number of sets of pipes in the organ.

To increase the tonal range of the organ console, coupling can be employed to cause more than one note to play when a key is depressed.

For example, a super octave coupler would cause the note one octave above to play when the key is pressed.

Adding pedals to the organ which can be coupled to the lower notes of the manual pipes increases the organ's capability.

If it is desired to have pipes assigned solely to the pedals, another organ or pedal division is added with its own chests and stop actions.

Adding another keyboard requires another division of pipes with its own chest and stop actions. This second division is often located in a swell box and is called the Swell organ.

The advent of electro-pneumatic and all-electric actions did little to change the basic concept of the organ construction.

Instead of a mechanical linkage, electric circuits (one for each note on the keyboard) energized a magnet which activated a pneumatic action to open the pipe valve.

Some sort of stop action was still required to turn on each set of pipes - in some cases a vent valve which let air into the air-tight section of the wind chest under an individual set of pipes.

When the stop was off and the vent valve closed, there was no air under the pipes.

This tended to be slower and a much more responsive pitman action design was used in which the air under the pipes was always present.

The pitman action is a bit more difficult to explain and a better explanation than I can provide can be found in Dr Wm Barnes' "*The Contemporary American Organ*".

The all-electric action is very similar, actually basically the same, as the action for unit organs. Each pipe has its own electrically controlled valve and the stop action is a 61 note ganged-switch to complete the circuit from the keyboard to the pipe valve.

Due to the increased current required for the additional magnets, a relay is often required to provide a sufficient

number of contacts (usually one for each switch) for each note.

Now for the few of you still remaining after all of that, let's get on to Unit Organ Actions.

By its very nature a unit organ has to be electro-pneumatic or all-electric. Each pipe has its own electrically activated action. Stops control ganged-switches which complete the circuit between the key and the pipe.

In the straight organ, there are 61 pipes in a set or rank.

In a unit organ, since each pipe is controlled individually, it is possible to shift the range by the way the switch is wired to the chest, to any range we wish.

We could select to play the pipes as a 4' stop by shifting the connection an octave higher.

The same set of pipes could be played at 16', 8', 4', 2 2/3', 2', etc., as individual stops. In order to accomplish this, the pipes would have to start at 16' and extend through the 2' range - or instead of 61 pipes, we now need 97 pipes for the full range.

Due to the large number of magnets being fired, some type of relay is necessary to spread the current load. (The amount of current required for multiple magnets would soon burn through a single key contact)

The older electro-pneumatic and electric relays are being replaced in many cases by more compact and efficient solid-state devices.

The major differences between a unit organ and the classical straight organ are:

1. Each keyboard no longer controls a specific division
2. The number of stops no longer represents the number of ranks in the organ. Commonly a 4 manual/20 rank theatre organ can have over 250 stop keys

There have been many instances over the years where some unit organ applications have been used in straight organs.

One common instance was *Moller* organs where a unit flute was used to give more flexibility. It was used at 16', 8', 4', 2 2/3', 2' on the Swell and at 4' on the Great. This was especially useful on smaller ten rank instruments.



# Wonderland, Wurlitzers and War

## The Story of the Bill McNally Collection.

### Part Three, continued from Summer Vox

The music scene in Manchester and its interest to me was enhanced by an aspect of presenting music which I had not seen before. Both the Manchester cinemas had pianos in the organist's dressing rooms and much time was spent writing, timing and rehearsing 'organ shows' The main theme of the show was put together and then the slides prepared which would appear on the screens the next week. Words and decorative designs were incorporated and the material sent off to Morgans Slides in London, whence came back, almost by return of post, the prepared slides. Throughout the war years Gordon Banner featured "The Gordon Banner Organ News Reel".

He extracted stories from the press as late in the week as he dared and then wrote catchy words which were played to well-known tunes of the day.

One example of this that sticks in my mind was based on Cheek to Cheek, following the appeal of Ernest Bevan, the Minister of Labour, for women to work in munitions factories.

Bevan, Ernest, Bevan.

He must be regarded as a modern sheikh.

He has issued an appeal that is unique.

For a hundred thousand women in a week,

wants them all to train,

for filling up shells,

come along gals,

And bring all your pals.

To Bevan, Ernest Bevan.

If a job at filling shells is what you seek.

Go and join the hundred thousand like a streak.

And live on fifty-five and six a week.

Gordons' efforts were always popular and well received by the audiences. However, it was with music which was new to me that I became fascinated. Both these gentlemen had twelve inch 78 rpm records which contained the orchestral parts of piano concertos and these they played and filled in the piano parts, thereby gaining valuable practice. I was not a classical music fan, indeed I knew nothing about it, and was most certainly not a Hallé concert goer.

Following a discussion with Esgate about the merits of classical music I was much surprised when he made me an offer I couldn't refuse: he would buy me a ticket for a Hallé concert and I need pay him for it only if I didn't enjoy it. He picked his concert well: a Rossini Overture, Romeo and Juliet, and I've no doubt perhaps Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto. I had to admit that I enjoyed the music and consequently had to pay up, but more to the point became a Hallé regular and in no time at all was a season ticket holder.

Mention of the Hallé brings in more stories of interest to the organ scene. I had gone to the Odeon one day to hear Gordon's show and he suggested I should go and stand at the back of the circle. (a lovely spot from which to hear the organ in all its glory), there is another fan up there. There was and I found myself standing next to Sir John Barbirolli.

So even then the Queen was appreciated by all good music lovers.

So what of the organ scene now to one who has watched it for over 60 years?

The three Wurlitzers which have meant most to me are still singing away, and when I think that within one hours travel I can listen to six Wurlitzers, six Comptons and a Christie I come to the conclusion that we are very well off in our part of the world. What is more they can be heard for two hours at a time instead of a ten minute interlude at the cinema.

As for organists, here too the scene is splendid. We have organists today who could well stand up to the stars of yesterday and thanks largely to the dedicated organ societies we have up-and-coming musicians to carry on the tradition.

The second story leads back to the Esgate humour and not least to his reputation of being a bit tight with cash. In the days following the loss of the Free Trade Hall in the blitz the Hallé played where they could, and apart from the Manchester Hippodrome and the Kings Hall at Belle Vue they appeared from time to time at the Essoldo Stretford.

One Sunday afternoon Arthur, Paul, Paul's young lady and myself had attended a concert at Stretford, when Arthur had the bright idea of going for tea at the Regal, Altrincham café.

Tea, teacakes, and wartime cake having been consumed the question arose of who was going to pay. By popular vote it had to be Esgate because he had suggested it and



After the fire at the Regal Altrincham, but note the similarity of the interior to the Plaza interior.

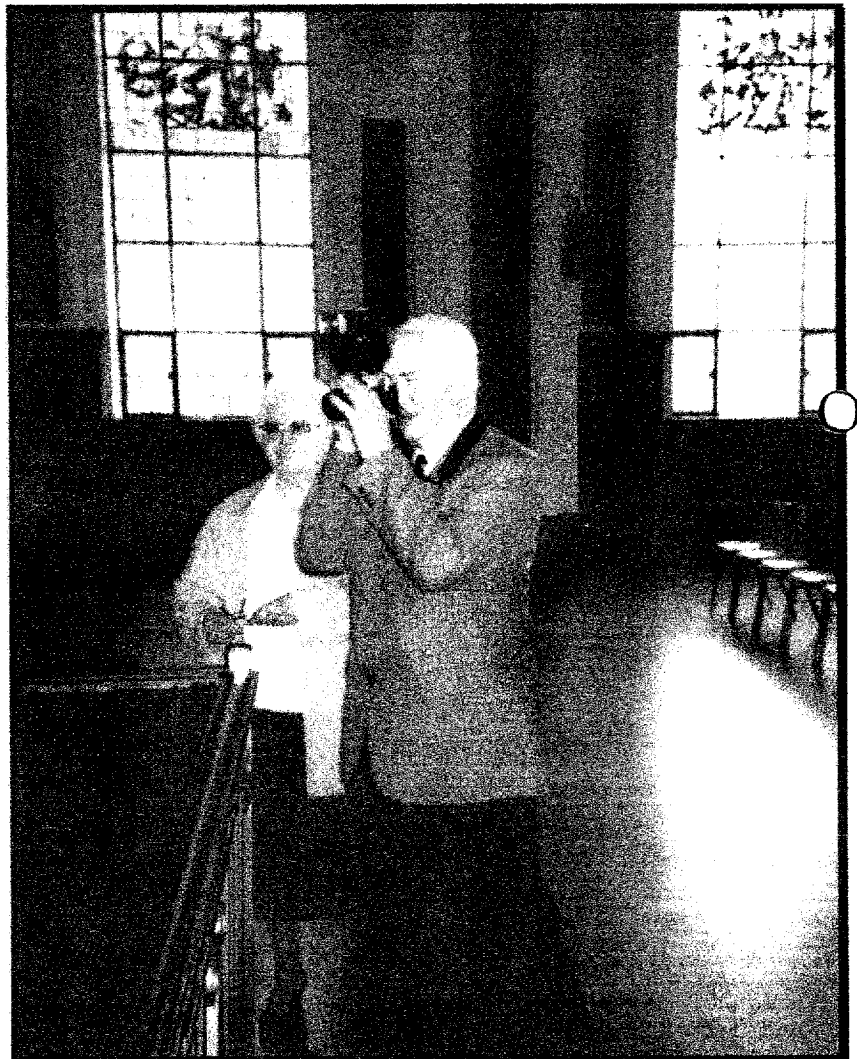
he it was who paid. Not by any normal means however. He asked the waitress to bring the manager and on his arrival told him who he was and suggested that as there was about half an hour before the opening he would bash the Compton for the price of the teas. The manager was highly delighted and announced to an early audience that they had a special guest organist from Manchester.

Half an hour of organ music we had, and he was invited to come back any time. Don't let Hocky know said Arthur, a reference to the then Gaumont manager. I don't suppose he ever did.

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*This concludes the article which was included mainly because Arthur Esgate was known to quite a few TOSA people in Australia, and by all reports he was an "interesting" character.*

*Thank you to the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust for permission to reprint items of interest to us in Australia from their Vox Lancastria magazine. (www.voxlancastria.org.uk)*



Bill McNally at work in Stockport Town Hall

# A Review of the Russell Holmes Concert

Marrickville Town Hall

by Ron Ivin

Sunday, 9th March 2003

Those of you who were unable to attend Russell Holmes' concert missed out on a 'top line' performance. Russell Holmes presented a programme of crowd-pleasers. His offerings were not only captivating but flawless. I was not able to attend Russell's last concert in 2002 at the Orion in Campsie, but those who did must have been looking forward to this occasion with great anticipation.

If you ever have the opportunity to hear him at some future date, make it a priority.

Incidentally, I know of no other concerts of this type that can be enjoyed for an outlay of less than \$20.

It is worth knowing a few of Russell's accomplishments, bearing in mind that he is only twenty-four years of age.

His claim to fame goes back nine years when in California, USA, he was declared

winner of the International Young Artists Competition. But there is more! Five years before that he won the junior title in Detroit, USA.

Prior to his visit last March he had delighted audiences in Europe, the Australian capitals and New Zealand, as well as major cities in America. The list could go on. Russell also gives pipe organ, electronic organ and piano recitals.

I recommend that you purchase his latest CD. Its title is borrowed from our well-known Australian sit-com, *Home and Away*, which will delight you with seventy-two minutes of musical pleasure. (Catalogue number WRH 104)

From where I was seated at the back

of the town hall, it was difficult for me to catch very much of Russell's preamble to the items he played.

*Sunny Side Up* was the first breezy tune which, if you are familiar with the words, gave good advice. This piece is attributed to the well-known song writers, De Sylva, Brown and Henderson as far back as 1929.

Next came a march which, some will agree, is nasty to play - *Under the Double Eagle*, by Joseph Wagner, the bass solo coupled to the manual.



Russell could not give enough praise to the old Prince Edward WurliTzer, stating that we should be proud to have an instrument of this calibre which he considered to be amongst the world's finest.

In 1935 Jimmy McHugh and Dorothy Fields teamed up to write the well-known tune *I'm in the Mood for Love*. Russell gave us a moody, sonorous, then maestoso rendition of this number with almost imperceptible modulations. He used modulations cleverly in just about everything he performed.

*La Rosita* by Paul Dupont goes way back to 1924. I didn't know this, but my excuse is that I wasn't born then. However I did recognise that the

*Spanish Gypsy Dance* crept in. This was an expression of Latin American styling.

*When Sunny Gets Blue* from the 1950's preceded pieces we all know from the famous pen of George Gershwin who was born in 1898. This was one of Russell's longest segments. The reason why George Gershwin was so good is that he was a Virgo! From the extensive collection of Gershwin's compositions, Russell chose *Rhapsody in Blue* as an

introduction and reprise which sandwiched *Swanee*, *Someone to Watch Over Me*, *Liza*, *Our Love's Here to Stay* with a clever jazz feel, *Strike up the Band*, *But Not for Me* and *I Got Rhythm*. Delightful!

Now we go way back to 1920 and before interval Russell played *Five Foot Two* including the

verse. I often wonder where recitalists obtain the verses. They certainly are difficult to find in old titles.

Russell's ears should have been burning as the buzz of complimentary comments was heard during interval. One long autopsy with a member almost did me out of my coffee and biscuits. Another member, Ted Dunk, said he was glad he came.

In the middle of the last century a piece was sung by almost everybody. Russell used this bright tune *Put Another Nickel in the Nickelodeon*, *Music, Music, Music*, to open his after interval segment. It is perhaps unusual for an organ recital to have more than one march but the *National Emblem* by Bagley was one of a few in the entire

recital. In this march Bagley employed the well-known tune from 1906 composed by Charles Zimmerman, *Anchors Aweigh*.

Having given our spirits a good rise it was time for us to relax to the beautiful strains of *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*. This nostalgic melody, composed by Eric Maschwitz and Manning Sherwin, gained its fame during World War II and still holds good today. A commendable rendition this time by Russell.

It took three men to write the alphabet song, *A You're Adorable* - Buddy Kaye, Fred Wise and Sidney Lippman, in 1949 but it took only one man to make it popular and that was Perry Como.

Russell treated us to a magnificent arrangement the tunes of Lionel Bart's *Oliver* in this order: *Consider*



*You Read My Mind?* and *The Raiders' March*.

*Two Weeks with Love* is a 1950's musical with Jane Powell, Debbie Reynolds, Louis Calhern, Ann Harding and Carleton Carpenter. The latter duetted with Debbie in *Abba Dabba Honeymoon*. It seems that Russell enjoyed it too.

*Yourself, Where is Love, Pick a Pocket or Two, As Long As He Needs Me, Who Will Buy, Oom-pah-pah* and, as a reprise, *As Long As He Needs Me*. You can hear this again on Russell's CD.

Now it was time for a delightful insert, *The Teddy Bear's Picnic*, especially for the young(-minded) in the audience.

Russell then played some well-known film themes, all by John Williams, except for the *Twentieth Century Fox Theme*. They were *Star Wars, The Empire Strikes Back, Can*

To a dismayed audience, this was to be the last piece. However Russell was not going to leave us without an encore. He brought Mr Strauss along, or at least his famous *Radetsky March*.

This ended the concert on a bright note leaving the audience happy. Why not? They certainly had a feast of music served up by a professional.

I am sure everyone will look forward to Russell's next time around 'down under'.

Photos by Barry Tooker

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# OUR NEXT ARTIST :

## Warren Lubich

WARREN LUBICH began his formal music education at age seven with four years of classical piano followed by two years of pop arranging and harmony. Upon graduation from college he became involved with the Avenue Theatre in San Francisco and its *Wurlitzer*. After honing his skills on a pipe organ, he was named staff organist at the Avenue and performed the Friday night "solo spots" until the theatre ceased operation in 1984.

In 1978, Warren also became staff organist for *Pizza and Pipes, Inc.* and performed first at the Daly City location and then the Redwood City location until it ceased operation in 2001.

Between 1980 and 1985, Warren performed 22 overseas concerts in England, Australia and New Zealand, and performed several silent movie programs at the Egyptian Theatre in Boise, Idaho.

In 1993, he joined the organ staff at the Grand Lake Theatre in Oakland, California, and in 2000, he was added to the organ staff at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco. He performs weekly at both locations and occasionally at the Towne Theatre in San Jose which now houses the organ from the Avenue Theatre.

Aside from all this, Warren enjoyed a thirty six year career as a Staff Research Associate at the University of California's School of Medicine in San Francisco working in the fields of osteoporosis and hyper/hypo parathyroidism with the Department of Medicine and brain tumour research with the Department of Neurosurgery.

His hobbies include gardening and his collection of vintage automobiles.



Sunday 4th May,  
2003, at 2pm  
Marrickville  
Town Hall

*Two photos of  
Warren Lubich  
during his previous  
visits to Sydney in  
1983 and 1985*



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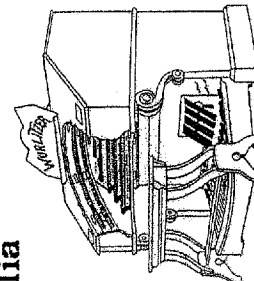
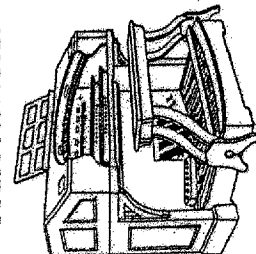
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