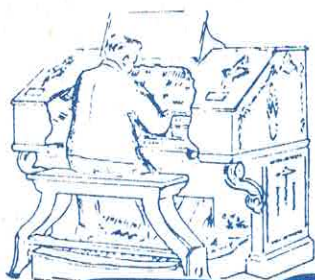
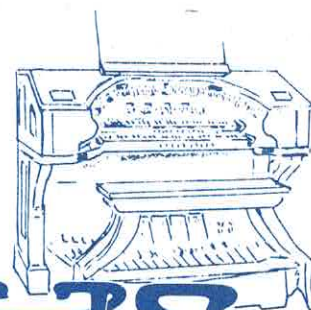


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T.O.S.A. NEWS

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

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T.O.S.A. Diary: Sunday 14th May.

Mr. Lee Erwin, noted American organist of long standing, will be appearing at Marrickville Town Hall on Sunday 14th May at 2.30pm. Admission has been set at \$3.00 Adults; \$1.50 Students, Children and Pensioners; \$1.00 Y.O.A members in uniform.

Please note that no tape recorders will be permitted at this Concert under any circumstances.

Refreshments will be available at Interval.

Please see an article on Lee Erwin contained in this issue.

T.O.S.A. Diary: Friday Evening 16th June.

Cabaret Evening, this succesful function is an annual event and is the result of much hard work by Jack Lawson and Pam Tooker. Patron Ian Davies will be playing the Wurlitzer for singing and dancing . This evening starts at 7.00pm and further details will be found in this issue. Prices \$16.00 Double, \$8.00 Single. A great evenings entertainment is assured. Dress Optional. B.Y.O.G.

T.O.S.A. Diary: Sunday 18th June.

Members, (Committee members in fact!), Bill Schumacher and Cliff Bingham will be playing in Concert at Marrickville Town Hall at 2.30pm on Sunday 18th June. Also appearing in Cameo will be two members of the Young Organists Association This will be a free Concert so don't forget to tell everyone and bring the kids along for what looks like being a great afternoon. Refreshments will be available at Interval.

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LEE ERWIN. A brief summary of his achievements.

This American organist will be playing in Concert on Sunday 14th May and will be the first American organist in Concert in our own Marricville Town Hall for this year.

Lee Erwin was playing organ accompaniments at the age of 12 in the late '20s in his native Huntsville, Alabama hometown. When sound film made live accompaniment unnecessary, he played the organ on a popular Cincinnati radio show. When television undermined the appeal of radio, he played the organ on the Arthur Godfrey Show. When taped music replaced live studio performances, he went back to playing music for silent movies, which, fortuitously, were having a resurgence of popularity. Lee Erwin plays the theatre organ, which he describes as "much more orchestral" than the classical or church organ. Among the sounds that can be produced on a typical theatre organ are oboe, saxophone, trumpet, strings, clarinet, harp, sleigh bells, xylophone, glockenspiel and tuba etc.,. "When people think of silent movie music," Erwin said, "they tend to think of the Keystone Cops and an out of tune piano. But the fact is that the piano was rarely used because it is too much a percussive instrument" (Excerpt from Daily News, New York 9.12.75).

Lee Erwin's musical training began with Mrs. Spragins of Huntsville, then continued at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music with Parvin Titus and Andre Marchal in Paris.

Lee Erwin has been the organist with the very popular "Arthur Godfrey Show" for 22 years and before that was organist on the "Moon River" radio program with Cincinnati's WLW for 11 years. He has composed scores for silent films such as 'The Eagle' and also a composition called 'Abstract Duration, 22:22' a composition for two channel tape recorder and pipe organ so it can be seen that he has covered the entire field from silent film through to modern composition. The film 'The Eagle' starred Rudolph Valentino and Vilma Banky and was made in 1925 and it seems that the silent film is going through quite a revival period in America at the moment.

It would seem that we are going to be very fortunate to have this artist perform for us at Marrickville and everyone should make the effort to come and hear Lee Erwin.

CABARET EVENING Friday 16th June.

Following the success of last years mid year cabaret your Society is again holding such an event.

It will take place on Friday 16th June commencing at 7.00pm at Marrickville Town Hall.

You will dance to our pipe organ which will be in the capable hands of our Patron, Mr. Ian Davies.

Sherries will be served on arrival followed at 7.45pm by a three course dinner. To uphold our tradition we have again booked a top line act for your enjoyment and all you have to do is bring your own liquid refreshments. The cost of this fantastic evening is \$16.00 double and \$8.00 single. Dress is optional.

Please make up your party now and book early with Pam Tooker, 9 Blanche St, Belfield 2191 using the booking form available in this issue.

Please include Christian Names and surnames of all members of your party and make Cheques payable to T.O.S.A and not Mrs. Tooker. Bookings will close on 8th June and phone enquiries can be made by ringing Mrs Tooker on 642 6086 or Mrs Lawson on 569 3775.

Anyone requiring acknowledgment of booking please send stamped addressed envelope with booking. PLEASE GIVE THIS YOUR SUPPORT AND HAVE A GOOD NIGHT.

The Concert that was advertised in the last copy of T.O.S.A News featuring Bill Schumacher and well known Artist Carmen La Motte on the evening of 18th April was most interesting and revealed that Bill is most competent on electronics as well as pipes. Carmen La Motte played a Hammond Monarch and Bill played a Hammond X5 with a Revo cabinet. They both played together and the style is very jazz oriented and they both showed their digital dexterity by calling for requests from the audience and playing them with no problems which is not at all easy in a duet situation as most of us use different chord structures but Bill and Carmen have a natural rapport in this respect which makes listening a pleasure. The Concert was held in association with the Hammond Chapter No. 3.
(Editors review).

T.O.S.A Concert 16th April (Editors review).

Sunday 16th April saw some three hundred people at Marrickville Town Hall on a beautiful afternoon with David Parsons in full command of the WurliTzer. Numbers played included the Barber of Seville, We'll gather Lilacs, I'm always chasing rainbows, Blue Moon, Mood Indigo, Ragamuffin, Tales from the Vienna Woods and a bracket of four Marches which included the March of the Siamese Children. David also played a very interesting instant composition made up from telephone numbers and he played in such a way that he had full audience support at all times. He did not have it all his own way, the public address system decided not to function and David simply decided to speak and the acoustics of the hall allowed him to be heard from all around the hall. The organ sounded great, no ciphering at all and the tuning was spot on. The ladies were there working the refreshment stall and coffee, tea and drinks were available at modest prices and the profit was \$31.00 which is a great credit to all concerned.

John Atkinson had his records for sale and there were some new releases available and it was quite an enjoyable afternoon. The sun streamed through the windows, the music flowed from the chambers and one sat back and just enjoyed the whole experience.

David is a very accomplished player and presents our instrument very well and presents his performance in a very unassuming way and this gets across to all present.

SELWYN THEATRE DATES;

Member Ritchie Willis has the Selwyn Theatre at 13 Rosemount Ave, Mortdale and has announced a list of dates fro 1978. As seating is limited please contact Ritchie direct on 573 3581. Ladies are asked to bring a plate and all proceeds go to charity or the Society on an alternate basis.

Sunday 23rd July: Members Ron and Doug Smith

Sunday 6th August: David Parsons.

Saturday 16th September: Eric Smith.

Sunday 29th October: Reg Black.

Sunday 26th November: Bill Schumacher.

Saturday 9th December: David Parsons.

Please note that all Concerts begin at 2.30pm.

The Society thanks Ritchie Willis for his effort in these concerts as here is a member who virtually went out and purchased an instrument for artists to come and play on so that Concerts could be arranged for fund raising purposes. All members who can get along should try and give their support.

SEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION. (Article by Jack Lawson.)

Having been fortunate enough to attend this wonderful event I must commiserate with those who were unfortunate enough to miss it.

The weekend got away to a bright and entertaining start on Friday night with a show by the Reverend Father Anthony Taylor of the South Australian Division, using some informative slides and organ accompaniment. He traced the birth of the Theatre Organ from a Bamboo Reed cut from the Banks of the Nile, anyone fortunate enough to have heard or seen Father Taylor will realise the amusing and well played show that it was. This was followed by a supper and really was a great starting point for the weekend.

Saturday morning saw some 300 Conventioneers back at Pulteny to be entertained by the 'Big Sound Stompers', this was a jazz group of eight, and they provided a very polished performance. They were intermingled with organ cameo spots by Ray Clements, (W.A.), and Barry Hall, (S.A.). A hot chicken and salad lunch followed with background music by band and organ.

Thence around to St. Peters College to hear the 3/15 ex Adelaide Regent, this was played by the Patron of South Australia, Knight Barnett, who was only discharged from hospital three days previously, having been in the intensive care on the electro-cardiac machine to correct a heart irregularity. Knight gave a performance which whilst short must have surely brought back memories to all those who remember the 'Golden Era'.

David Johnston then took the console and gave us a sample of the Johnston Theatre Touch. After interval Brian Richardson accompanied a talented saxophonist and finally John Slater closed the afternoons entertainment.

Saturday evening saw the Dinner Dance held at the 'Dom Polski' Centre, a reasonably new air conditioned structure, which was a very suitable venue for this function.

Lloyd Rover provided a Conn 3 manual organ for a warm up which was played by a representative from most of the States for short Cameo spots until the 'Big Sound' band arrived. Might I suggest that if anyone shows signs of being sceptical, I admit I was when the thought of a Big Jazz Band hit me, we were both wrong as this band was very reminiscent of the Big Band Era and had the Glen Miller Sound of those days. They were the highlight of the evening and whilst I do not dance I did hear many favourable comments of their dance tempo which was evident by the large number of people on the floor. During the evening Mr. Alan West interrupted the events with a special Presentation. He called up Knight Barnett and his wife and wished Knight a Happy Birthday, he was given a cake and presented with a large framed blowup photograph of the Regent Organ Console, which he had played for 18 years. Knight was 75 years old on Saturday. The evening went on until 12.30a.m.

Sunday morning saw us all assembled at Wyatt Hall to catch buses to Adelaide Hills to lunch at 'The Old Mill', at Handorf, which was a sheer gastronomical delight. Then on to inspect the David Walton Home made Home Organ, this is a 2 manual 4 rank which all works and really is a credit to David.

Thence on to the Church of the Epiphany at Crafers. This is a very nice Church with a three manual Console. The organ was originally a two manual tracker action which has been rebuilt into a three manual horseshoe console organ with electrified action. We heard it played as a classical organ and also some numbers were played in Theatre organ styling. A stirring event here was the singing of a gathering of 300, the Easter Hymn "Christ the Lord is Risen", accompanied by the Adelaide City Organist. Back by bus to Wyatt Hall and home to tea to prepare for the Main Concert at Wyatt Hall. This was the Piece de Resistance, Tony Fenelon and John Atwell on organ and piano. Imagine three hours of combined talent, it really was a fitting climax to the weekend.

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SEVENTH NATIONAL CONVENTION. -Continued-

Monday Morning was open console at Wyatt Hall and was an opportunity to hear players from all States play a couple of numbers. The morning wound up with Barry Hall playing the Maori's Farewell and Auld Lang Syne. The South Australian Organisers and Committee are to be Congratulated on their efforts and it sure makes it hard for the other States to keep up a standard. Once again I was glad I was there and felt sorry for those who could not make it.

NEW MEMBERS.

The Society welcomes the following new members and hopes that their association will be a long and happy one:-

Mr. Sam Fairbairn, Woolarah, Dennis and Shirley Lovell, Peakhurst, Mr & Mrs J. Dornan, Blakehurst, Mr. Eric Needham, Rockdale, Mr & Mrs David Burman, Belmore, Wally and Maureen Lott, Condell Park, Mr. Victor Evans, Padstow, Mrs. C. Millington, Highfield, Mr. John Clark, Berala, Don Munro, Cabramatta, John Williams, Gosford, Mr. R.G. Stanton, Auckland N.Z, Mr & Mrs N Pearce, Stan & Gloria Small, Forestville.

CAPITOL ORGAN RESTORATION. Working Bee, Saturday 27th May, 1.30pm.

Ernie Vale advises that the next gathering at the Organ Loft will take place on Saturday Afternoon 27th May at 1.30pm at 49 Boomerang Street, Haberfield. These working bees are very relaxing and very productive sessions as people get to know one another as well as get to know the workings of the instruments they like the sound of. Background music is provided and the work is not that difficult. The pipe organ is constructed of thousands of small parts and to overhaul each of the parts is what has to be done to get the instrument back on it's feet. The type of work being done at the Organ Loft is reasonably simple and yet each part has to be done with precision. Anyone that can help should contact Ernie Vale on 798 6816.

YOUNG ORGANISTS ASSOCIATION.

Following the last Committee meeting it was resolved that members of the Young Organists Association in uniform will be allowed admission to all Concerts where there is an admission fee for the amount of \$1.00 per member.

YAMAHA ELECTONE FESTIVALS 1978.

These are currently in progress around the metropolitan area, (see last issue), and, just as a point of interest, your Editor, (got the flu as well), and his young son Mark entered into the Eastwood Dealer Festival and both came home with Senior and Junior First Prize respectively. A trophy now sits on each side of the organ at home. Next comes the Regional Finals. ? ? ?

REGENT THEATRE RICHMOND.

(Article by Rob Weismantel).

It will probably interest members to know that during April the Regent Theatre Richmond screened the original silent movie 'Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde'. This movie was accompanied by our good friend and member Eric Smith at the Regent Theatre's Wurlitzer electronic organ.

The programme started with a Charlie Chaplin movie after which the Theatre owner, T.V. Celebrity Mike Walsh ascended on the organ hoist, with Eric sitting at the console. Mike Walsh welcomed the audience to the Theatre and talked with Eric about the movie. The hoist then descended into the pit and the gold velvet curtains parted as the house lights went down to reveal a second second set of white silk curtains which in turn parted as the footlights dimmed and the organ sounded out it's first chords of accompaniment to an excellent print of this old movie.

Eric's precise timing and amazing musical ability enhanced the story till the last frame when the silk and gold curtains closed and the usual recorded Theatre music was cued in.

Those lucky people who were fortunate enough to attend will agree that this type of program is still good to see and to hear.

Our thanks must go to the theatre management for their interest in showing this type of programme. The dates of other movies to be shown will be published in T.O.S.A. News when they become available.

The following weekend the Theatre presented the world famous singer Kamahl.

For this special show the management engaged for the Friday night show, 11 year old Micheal Chin, who played the Wurlitzer console up before the show.

Micheal played a half hour programme without the aid of music and featured many modern numbers.

For this effort the almost capacity audience applauded loud and long till the house lights dimmed and the gold curtains parted to reveal Mike Walsh who introduced Kamahl. The first half of this excellent show passed without a hitch and at interval once again Micheal played the console up again until the screen was lowered. Behind the curtain and on the stage managers cue he lowered the hoist and played background music to the advertising slides, at the end of which the console was once again raised and Micheal played for another ten minutes. After interval the curtains parted again and Kamahl entered the stage again to start the second half. But before Kamahl started Micheal was called on to take a second bow and a short chat about his musical career.

The same procedure took place on the Saturday night when Bernard Crowe took his place at the console. Both Micheal and Bernard are Y.O.A. members and it is good to see them playing in such important places with such big shows.

For those who have not yet had the privilege of visiting this outer city theatre, the trip is worthwhile. With the efforts of John Love, the old, dilapidated theatre was transformed into a very attractive theatre. Seating about 1000, the theatre has been refurbished almost entirely, the old caneite gave way to white plaster grilles with concealed lighting and canvas awnings in the arches on either side of the proscenium. The foyers are decorated very tastefully with glass lamps and mirrors and are carpeted with high quality gold coloured carpet throughout. A Wurlitzer butterfly electronic grand piano occupies a corner in the Regency Lounge behind the Dress Circle. A lot of time and effort has been put into the theatre and I can thoroughly recommend a visit to this Theatre. The Theatre is on the main street in Richmond.

Rob Weismantel also requested that we go back to the established ideas of running articles on theatres and also including photographs of them. This is currently 'in the pipeline' and the first batch of photos could appear in the next issue. We are considering the viability of paper plates on the suggestion of Ernie Vale and as so much time has passed since we last saw photographs in the news we have to check with the platemaker and so on to get the best deal and the first photographs will be those that were taken at the Convention so all members may rest assured that photos will be appearing soon.

Our Secretary, Doug Smith, raised the question of home parties during some discussion held recently. Home parties are a wonderful form of entertainment and can take many forms such as barbecues, pool parties, informal evenings and so on, members can meet and get to know one another and discuss topics of common interest and listen to music as they like it. Would any member who has an organ, is willing to open their home for this purpose please get in touch with the Secretary, Doug Smith on 750 0917 for any further inquiries that you may have in this matter. Information sought is such as to how many you feel you could accomodate, the type of instrument that you have, what type of function you would like to have and the possible dates on which you could hold the function. Plenty of notice is best as the function then can be given publicity in T.O.S.A. News. Confirmation by letter to the Secretary is required for record purposes.

THE MIGHTIEST WURLITZER EVER BUILT!

This WurliTzer is currently under construction and reconstruction by WurliTzer and is being installed in WurliTzer World Headquarters, De Kalb. The largest WurliTzer organ built to the present time is the instrument in Radio City Music Hall which has four manuals and fifty-eight ranks of pipes. The instrument that is being assembled at present by the WurliTzer Company will have five manuals and sixty five ranks of pipes, 341 stops and well over 7,200 pipes, in addition it will have a duplicate percussion section, one open and one under expression. Step 1 was locating and acquiring all the parts, pipes and traps, each of which had to be 100% WurliTzer, Step 2 was rebuilding the relays, replacing worn leather and checking out miles and miles of cable. Step 3 consisted of modifying the console to take five manuals and this work has been completed by the WurliTzer plant at Corinth, Mississippi, by expert craftsmen cabinet makers.

The WurliTzer Company had purchased the the former Notre Dame complex just outside DeKalb, Illinois, during February 1976 to revamp as the world headquarters. With this acquisition, the company will close the famous North Tonawonda plant where the original pipe organs were built and the research and development will be housed at DeKalb. Electronic organs and electric pianos will be made at Corinth and Holly Springs, Mississippi, where all the piano actions are also fabricated.

The hall in which the organ will be housed has a ceiling height of 42' and it had always been at the back of the mind of Farny WurliTzer to preserve one of the instruments and it seemed to be the time when the new headquarters were taken over. David Ashby, WurliTzer, stated in the Console, May 1977, that the instrument will have glass fronts on the chambers and this will be masked by special non-absorbent drapes. When lights are off the chamber areas will not be seen; with lights on, they will come into view.

Over.

THE MIGHTIEST WURLITZER EVER BUILT!

Continued.

Sides of the exterior parts of the chamber areas will be done in marble, from floor to ceiling, and there will be a multicoloured drape, a contour curtain similar to Radio City Music Hall's in the proscenium arch.

The console will roll onto the stage since there is no room to install a hoist. The console itself is the former Brooklyn Fox slave console and has been modified to take two full stop rails with two shorter rails under them and looks very much like the standard Fox console of St. Louis, Detroit and San Francisco. The pipe specifications at this stage is a combination between the Fox 36 rankers and the Radio City Music Hall Wurlitzer; so there is everything that the Fox instruments had plus so much more. There will be an orchestral division near the ceiling, strictly 19 ranks of of orchestral beauty, strings, diapasons, celestes, flutes and some rare ranks that have been located.

The instrument should be ready to play around the middle of 1978 if all goes to plan.

(Information for this article from Console, May 1977 and Col Stewart of Revesby who sent me photostats of Keynote, the Wurlitzer house magazine).

WANTED TO BUY.

Beecroft Presbyterian Church are looking for a replacement pipe organ to replace their 1937 Hill Norman and Beard 2 manual 3 rank instrument which currently is not the best. The specifications that they have in mind are 2 manual 5 rank or larger traditional pipe organ for the Church. Please contact David Larking on 84 1987.

FOR SALE.

Ernie Davidson on 706 326 has a Thomas Paramount 585 for sale with an asking price of around \$2000 O.N.O. This instrument has 2 x 44 note manuals, 25 note pedal board, 3 speed Leslie, Vibrato and Reverb, Sustain and Repeat etc.,. Ernie suggests that anyone interested call on Saturday or Sunday mornings.

Well!, thats about it for this month, as I have already put in somewhere, I have the slight problem of battling with this flu that is going around at the moment so if there is anything that I have left out please excuse. I collected quite an amount of material from Barry Tooker which I have yet to go through fully but I was able to use some of this in the article on the Wurlitzer that Wurlitzer are putting together so there will no doubt be a lot more that can be used in future issues and please don't forget that articles for the newsletter are requested so long as they have the name and address of the sender included.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Monday 1st May at Marrickville. | Monday 7th August at Marrickville. |
| Monday 5th June at St. Annes Strathfield. | Monday 4th September at Strathfield. |
| Monday 3rd July at Marrickville. | Monday 2nd October at Marrickville. |

All members are welcome at Committee meetings, this is your Society, you can help to keep it running smoothly by showing your support at meetings.

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