

T.O.S.A. NEWS

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

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CHARITY CONCERT

IN AID OF
THE HANDICAPPED CHILDREN'S
CENTRE OF N.S.W.

MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

SUNDAY 11TH OCTOBER 1981 AT 2 30 PM

A HIGHLIGHT OF THIS CONCERT WILL BE A
PERFORMANCE OF PROKOFIERS "PETER & THE WOLF".

The musical score will
be played on the
Wurlitzer Organ and the
story will be narrated
by Judith Kramer.

ADMISSION

ADULTS \$ 4. 00

CONCESSION \$ 2. 00



VALDA LANG... Organist



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 (529 7379) PRACTISE CONVENOR: Chris Palmer (92 6534)

RESEARCH & ARCHIVES: Ian Cameron, RECORDINGS: Ray Garret, (869 7247)

COMING FUNCTIONS FOR THIS YEAR.

COMMITTEE MEETING Monday 7th September at St. Annes Church Hall
Strathfield at 7.30 p.m.

HURRY HURRY HURRY!! There are four seats left on our Coach Tour
of the Southern Highlands and Bundanoon, being
held over the week-end of October 24th/25th.
Please contact Mrs. Phyl Wilson on 759 6050 for details,

PLEASE NOTE Final Payment for this coach tour is due by
September 20th, and please make all cheques
payable to T.O.S.A.

NOMINATIONS CLOSE at 5p.m., Wednesday 7th October 1981.
All Nomination Forms for executive and committee
must be in the hands of the Returning Officer,
MR. R.D. BLACKMORE, P.O. BOX 124 PENNANT HILLS 2120
by 5p.m. on this date otherwise it will be
declared null and void.

INVITATION NIGHT TO BONDI-WAVERLY R.S.L. Tuesday 20th October at 8p.m.
Our Patron Mr. Ian Davies has again invited TOSA
members and their friends to the Bondi-Waverly RSL
to hear the fabulous Rogers Trio Organ. These are
always great nights of fun and entertainment, so
come along and bring your friends!

COACH TOUR...SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS & BUNDANOON Week-End 24/25th October
Departs from Marrickville Town Hall on
Saturday 24th October at 8 a.m.

SELWYN THEATRE HOME PARTY for TOSA ..Sunday 1st November at 2.30 p.m.
(13 Rosemont Av.) Yes!..Ritchie Willis and Norm Read are again producing
(Mortdale) another afternoon of wonderful entertainment for
TOSA members and friends. Special Guest Artists
will be Miss Beverly Kennedy and Bernard Walz.
Admission is \$2 for Gents and \$1.50 for Ladies who
are asked to bring a plate towards afternoon tea.
DONT FORGET...BOOK EARLY! as this afternoon is sure
to be a sell-out. Ring 57 3581 and book now!!

COMMITTEE MEETING Monday 2nd November at St. Annes Church Hall
Strathfield at 7.30 p.m.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Wednesday 18th November at Marrickville Town
Hall commencing at 7.30 p.m.
All members are cordially invited to attend our
all important yearly General Meeting. It is the moment
when opinions and ideas can be heard, and hear also
what we have achieved this year and what we have
planned for the future.

SUNDAY 22nd NOVEMBER at 2.30 p.m. MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL
Special Celebrity Artist from Great Britain,
Mr. LEN RAWLES in Concert!!
(Details will follow in next issue)

CHARITY CONCERT in aid of THE HANDICAPPED CHILDRENS CENTRE, NSW..3
to be held at MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL on SUNDAY 11th OCTOBER at 2.30 p.m.



VALDA LANG

VALDA LANG began her musical career as a classical pianist. She was awarded the diplomas D.S.C.M. and L.Mus. and gave numerous solo and duo piano recitals and was a member of the Aeolian Trio. During the past ten years she has shared her interests between piano and organ.

Music therapy for handicapped people holds enormous interest for her. Valda works regularly in this field with the young people at Rainbow Lodge, the residential home of the Handicapped Children's Centre of N.S.W.

MARIE TYSOE is well known to Sydney Opera House audiences through her regular appearances in Christmas at the Opera House, The Old Fashioned Show and the Shell Folkloric Festival.

Marie was a member of the National Opera Company and sang many leading roles including the title role in Bizet's Carmen. She has appeared regularly with great success in countless stage, television, radio and club shows throughout Australia.



MARIE TYSOE

JUDITH KRAMER

who will narrate the story of Peter and the Wolf is an entertainer with a wide range of talents. As a singer in opera, operetta and musical comedy. Judith also makes regular appearances on the Mike Walsh Show, where her charm and quick wit endear her to her audiences.

DONT MISS!! this afternoon of top professional entertainment.....

ADMISSION: ADULTS \$4.00 CONCESSION & CHILD \$2.00

BOOKINGS AVAILABLE FROM:-

THE TICKET SECRETARY



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SELWYN PRODUCTIONS

PROGRAMME (ORGAN) for latter half, 1981.

SELWYN THEATRE...13 Rosemont Avenue, Mortdale.
Please ring 57 3581 for all bookings.

SUNDAY	27th September, 2.30 pm	RICHARD JAMES
"	18th October, "	REG BLACK
"	1st November, "	HOME PARTY for TOSA, BEVERLY KENNEDY & BERNARD WALZ.
"	15th November, "	VALDA LANG SHOW for Handicapped Children.
SATURDAY	12th December, 8.00 pm.	BERNARD WALZ SHOW for Handicapped Children.
"	19th December, "	DAVID PARSONS.

WELCOME to our new member for August, Hazel Williams of Glebe Point.

FOR SALE

Italian electronic WELSON organ, model MG200,
2 manual, rhythm box, tape recorder. This organ is in new
condition. Price: \$1200 or O.N.O., please ring. 533 4875.

LOWREY 'DEBUT' organ, hardly used, 18 months old with
headphones and Genie keys. Price: \$950.
Please ring: 529 6793.

BALLARAT ORGAN SOCIETY..

The following is part of a letter we received from the Ballarat Chapter a few weeks ago....

"A little on our Compton installation progress. A few week-ends ago we drove to Adelaide to bring back the console and several hundred pipes, which had been at George Stephen's workshop for re-wiring overhaul and re-voicing. The console is now sitting on the lift in the Theatre with the only remaining work to be done being the wiring to relay racks and air connections. We confidently hope to have the Compton playing by Christmas, and we are planning the grand opening Concert and other activities for Queen's Birthday week-end, 1982. We hope to see many of your N.S.W. members at the grand opening."

This is good news and I can imagine that excitement is slowly starting to build up, as this huge project is starting to come to fruition. When the final advice is received we will promote this grand opening concert and encourage members to attend if possible.

HELP WANTED!!.....We would be very grateful if ANY member who is engaged in professional printing could possibly assist or advise us in DESIGN FORM and ART FORM for our News Magazine. If you can, please contact Ron Wilson (759 6050) or Doug Smith (750 0917) and we will get together and discuss this most important matter.

Our TOSA NEWS is always open for tid-bits of information and any articles that you think to be of interest to our members. Please send to our P.O. Address.

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



REVUE.. CLINTON WHITE & IAN MCLEAN, Sunday 26th July 1981.

Well! our two visitors from the ACT Chapter certainly made a good impression with their 'Debut' concert at Marrickville.

The programme content included a good proportion of popular music, (quite nice for a change) and was played in two entirely different styles before an appreciative audience of some 400 plus.

Ian McLean opened the programme with a rousing Cant Stop The Music, merging into a luscious Sound Of Music, both delivered in a highly orchestrated style quite different from anything we've heard at Marrickville in recent times. Being a Sunday we got Cruising Down the River and an amusing rendition of I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now, including story, Klaxon Horn & wolf whistles, well received by the audience. Then an embellished Sunday Kind of Love and Ian rounded off his segment with a romp through New York New York, The Lonely Shepherd (a bit shreeky) and then came syncopation a la extravaganza with The More I See You and everyone was gasping in amazement!

Clinton White then commenced with a bouncing Man of La Mancha played in true theatre style and the audience bounced right back with loud applause. Sentimental Journey followed and a well registered Begin the Beguine then the old favourite You'll Never Know. We then heard a good contrast in the well arranged I Write The Songs which included a haunting Tuba counter melody, very well done. A keen golfer? Clinton's last before interval was the ever popular Under The Double Eagle in fine marching style, and the audience let go with hearty approval.

As we enjoyed our hot cuppa during interval, again provided by our bevy of faithful ladies, many people commented on the immaculate dress of our two artists. It was obviously well appreciated and left no doubt that these two artists at least, didn't need any hints to up-date! Their appearance was further enhanced by two professional spotlights provided (free of charge) by John and Rob Weismantel. They certainly make a difference to any concert.

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Clinton White resumed the second half with Consider Yourself, again in a real theatre style and the audience was applauding before he finished! Dont Cry for Me Argentina was delivered right from the heart, and in his efforts to coax the right mood out of the organ, I think he bent forward and pushed down a stop with his nose! From where I was sitting, it appeared that way but I wont enter into any correspondence about it. The Scott Joplin ragtime..Easy Winners again saw Clinton White bouncing on the organ seat, and the crowd just loved it. Then came the well known piece Those Were The Days, a bit gushy and slow San Francisco and he ended up with a big show-biz rendition of Swanee and was loudly applauded for his efforts.

Ian McLean virtually jumped on to the organ seat and we were blitzed with There's No Business like Show Business (if you didn't believe it before, you sure do now!) with many key changes and rapid progressions. Well done Ian! Then came an absolutely marvellous version of Sunny followed by Love For Sale (what no story?) A request from one of our audience for Strangers In The Night came next, and this brought forth the true musician in Ian McLean. For an unrehearsed off the cuff version, it was excellent. I hope the requestee was pleased for I certainly was. A catchy Franky & Johnny and then we heard a re-do version of the ballad, What I Did For Love..quite enjoyable. Ian's finale was the full presentation of the off beat Slaughter on Tenth Avenue, and I can only say that this was a tremendous presentation and a true show stopper in more ways than one.

My congratulations to both artists, who had obviously given a lot of thought to programme content, and all tastes were catered for during the afternoon. One thing I didn't miss was the usual classical piece being forced out of a Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ.

Clinton joined Ian for a final bow and the audience showed their appreciation to the utmost.

If this was an example of what they can do at a 'Debut' concert, then I hope it wont be too long before we hear from these two fine artists again!

T .O.S.A. Victorian Division are celebrating their 21st
Birthday with two sparkling concerts, and
admission is FREE!

Sunday 13th September 2 pm CINEMA NORTH

Featuring: GORDON HAMILTON & DAVID JOHNSTON

Sunday 20th September 2 pm DENDY THEATRE

Featuring: TONY FENELON & JOHN ATWELL

If you are in Melbourne during this period, here is your big chance to go and hear four highly celebrated artists, and two of the Victorian Division's famous Theatre Pipe Organs.

OFF THE SICK LIST.

We are glad to hear that one of our long standing members Judy Bailey is recovering slowly after a sudden attack of gall bladder trouble. Everyone was relieved to hear that her illness was not as bad as we thought, and we know it wont be long before Judy is back with us again. With

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HISTORIC PIPE ORGANS IN NEW SOUTH WALES,

by Graeme Rushworth

Our oldest States, New South Wales and Tasmania, represent unique storehouses of nineteenth century pipe organs that have survived for a hundred years or more. Although many examples have been irremediably lost through indifference or ignorance, survival of the majority has occurred either because churches have had a genuine awareness of the historical and intrinsic value of their organs, or due to their having insufficient funds to effect replacement or rebuilding in misguided attempts to "modernise".

New South Wales, being the older and larger state is especially rich in historic pipe organs, particularly from the best English builders. By 1900, when the population of New South Wales was 1.3 million, there were about 230 organs here, of which only 60 (26%) of the total had been constructed locally. Although the imported article may have been preferred for reasons of prestige, price, or quality, organs produced by our local nineteenth century builders were well made and durable, and just as worthy of preservation.

The first organ known to have been brought to the colony arrived in 1791 with Philip Gidley King on H.M.S. "Gorgon". It was a barrel organ, the first of a number of such instruments built for secular or liturgical use, and able to play a variety of hymns or other tunes. They worked by turning a handle to slowly rotate an elm barrel pinned with staples to contact the mechanism that caused the appropriate pipes to speak.

Barrel organs were installed at a number of churches before 1840, including St. Philip's in Sydney, St. Luke's at Liverpool, St. John's at Parramatta, and Holy Trinity at Kelso. Regrettably none of these have been saved, and our only remaining example is at St. Thomas' Church at Port Macquarie. Here is a delightful little organ in an elegant Gothic case, but being rather later (1856) it is both a "finger" organ (that is, played with a keyboard) and barrel organ combined. It was built by the English firm of J.W. Walker, who supplied some thirty organs to N.S.W. last century.

Our oldest imported organ is to be seen in the gallery of St. Peter's at Watson's Bay. Made by the London builders Robert and William Gray in 1796 for the Hon. Spencer Percival, it is said to have been lent to Napoleon, and after his defeat in 1815, the organ was returned to England. Brought to Sydney in 1917 by Dr. C.A. Edwards, it was installed in St. Peter's in 1920. A typical chamber organ of its time, it has a delightful quality of tone and its case is of classical English style with towers and flats of display pipes surmounted by pipe shades and a heavy cornice.

The most historic organ in New South Wales is surely that standing in the Francis Greenway church of St. Matthew at Windsor. This is the first "finger" organ to be made in the colony. Built in Sydney by William Johnson and John Kinloch in 1840, it possesses a charm and character in complete harmony with the beauty of St. Matthew's. Its simple mahogany case of classical English form is beautifully detailed with pipe shades, mouldings, and cornice, and the display pipes are decorated in blue, gold, and brown. Although alterations

have been made to it early this century and again in 1972, it is most fortunate that this unique instrument has survived so well.

An organ built by John Kinloch and probably dating from 1845 is proudly owned by St. Paul's Anglican Church, Rose Bay. This little organ was originally in St. Andrew's Scots Church, and although changes have been made to the disposition of its pipework and the key compass altered, here again we must be grateful that preservation has been sustained.

Christ Church at Bong Bong has a perfect example of an English chamber organ of about 1840. Made by Samuel Parsons of London, it is in exceptionally original condition and of exquisite tone and visual beauty. Its mahogany case with Gothic arches to the flats of gilded display pipes is perfectly proportioned, and the delicate, refined tone enchanting.

Edmund Blacket often took an interest in the organs for the churches he designed, ensuring they were from the best builders, and in several instances, designing the organ case himself. The delightfully combination of Blacket architecture and fine large organs can be experienced at a number of churches.

In All Saints' at Woollahra stands a superb example of the work of the celebrated English Organ builders, Forster & Andrews of Hull. Built in 1882, its brilliantly diapered display pipes present a splash of colour to compliment beautiful stonework, stained glass, and the glorious sounds this organ can produce. The Cathedral of St. Saviour at Goulburn has a slightly larger organ by the same builders, with a case designed by Blacket. At St. Paul's Burwood, is the best remaining example of the work of the local organ builder, William Davidson.

Last century a number of Sydney residences were graced with pipe organs, later to be removed to churches when the homes changed hands or were demolished. The large Bryceson organ of 1865 that stood in the ballroom of the McQuade home "Bomerah" at Potts Point is installed at St. Brigid's at Marrickville, and the William Hill & Son organ at Christ Church St. Laurence was purchased from a private home in 1905.

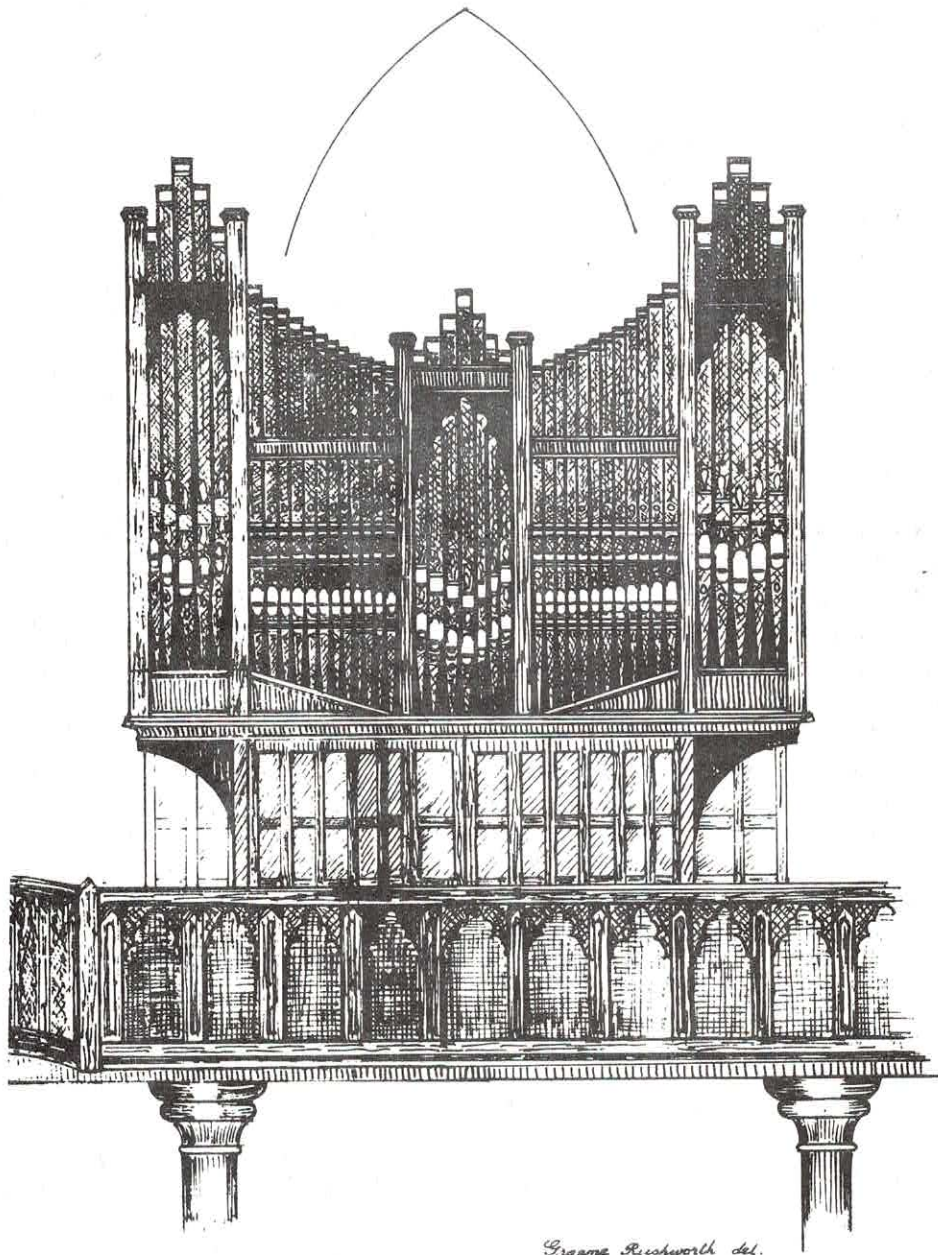
William Hill & Son of London received lasting fame as builders of the organ in Sydney Town Hall (1886-1889). At the time it was the largest organ in the world, and today it remains as the best unspoilt example of a nineteenth century concert organ anywhere. Of twenty organs by this builder brought to N.S.W., ten remain in a substantially original state, and two have been broken up.

Perhaps the most visually splendid organ within N.S.W. is that at the Arthur Blacket church of Hunter Baillie at Annandale. This too is a Hill organ, built in 1890. The dark woodwork of the case contrasts with burnished tin display pipes in a lofty case surmounted with gilded fretwork pipe shades. Like many Hill organs, the console is fitted with draw stop knobs with solid ivory heads, and the tonal resources and quality of this superb instrument represent the pinnacle of nineteenth century English organ building practice.

The charm of old organs lies in their individuality as works of art, and their ability to give both aural and visual pleasure. That

so many beautiful instruments remain in our churches is no cause for complacency but rather should arouse a sense of urgency to ensure preservation and protection. The Organ Historical Trust of Australia, working in conjunction with the National Trust, and the Heritage Council of N.S.W. has brought a new awareness to the subject that is already succeeding in assuring preservation to a number of threatened instruments.

Graeme Rushworth is a member of the Organ Historical Trust of Australia.



The 1890 organ by William Hill & Son in Saints Peter and Paul, Goulburn.



overseas news

GREETINGS FROM PORT MORESBY.

After just reading my copy of the T.O.S.A. News, I decided it must be time to remind all my good friends down there that in fact I'm still alive and kicking. Obviously the Committee has been doing a great job judging by not only the quality of the concerts being held but also the successes of them both financially and in enjoyment by the patrons many of whom have written to me.

I was so pleased to have been able to attend the Brisbane Convention and thoroughly enjoyed not only the wonderful entertainment arranged by T.O.S.A. Queensland but also the chance to be able to see so many of my friends from what seems like another era.

The Organ "Scene" in PNG is far from bustling in fact its closer to being non existing although I do find I'm now more of a small fish in an appropriately small pond so to speak. Living here at the Wales Mess is, for a non-drinker, interesting to say the least, but in recent months we've arranged a few film evenings for the families of "Barkies" in Port Moresby and in particular we have our "Family Night" each month which has been actively employing the organ (and your's truly) for dinner music, sing-a-longs and a little dance music. If nothing else, it has made several people aware of the versatility of a theatre organ, even if electronic. But----, I'm presently in bother as the organ is (to use the pidgin) "buggerup true" which, as you probably guessed, means its broken down. I've recently sent a printed circuit board down to Sydney for repairs so I'm hoping to have that back soon and the organ in action again. It has been used on a few occasions in the local Baptist Church too where we have a small band comprising organ, piano drums, two electric guitars, two acoustic guitars and a tambourine. The Sunday evening services in particular are very bright and a lot of fun. The local Burns Philp department store has just acquired a very small organ but since they have nobody who can play it, I've been seen on occasions demonstrating it during lunch times. You've got no idea how the sounds it makes leave the Nationals (as local Papua New Guineans are respectfully called) absolutely spellbound. Generally speaking they're a very simple people but they love music in any form.

I don't believe I have anything else to report as apart from murders, tribal fights, bashings, robberies and hundreds of car thefts, nothing ever happens in Port Moresby.

I hope everyone is in good health and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible during my mid-term leave in November.

***** Cheers from Ron Smith in POM.

THE PARAMOUNT THEATRE OF OAKLAND CA. (Courtesy, The Diapason)

The Paramount Theatre of Aokland, CA has announced the restoration and installation of a 4 manual 27 rank Wurlitzer Organ to replace the original Wurlitzer placed in the building when it opened in 1931 but sold during the 1960's. The project which involves the assembly of console, pipes and parts from various sources, is expected to be completed in time for the theatre's golden anniversary celebration this fall, when George Wright will perform on Nov 7th.

The "new" instrument will include among its percussions a piano, xylophone, mandolin, cymbals and two harps; it will have a digital solid state relay and swithching system, as well as a digital tape player for reproduction of concerts. The Paramount was one of the first surviving "Movie Palaces" to be restored for use as a

It's like the "Phantom of the Opera". From beneath the stage floor of the old Paramount Theatre, a magnificent French Baroque theatre organ rises magically out of the dusty past.

It is grandeur and it is guts. It needs none of the artificial electronic rock music amplifiers that have filled the hall with cacophony in the last decade. The theatre's original 20 rank pipe organ is in its renaissance for the international convention and annual meeting of the American Theatre Organ Society, opening today, in Seattle.

"There are a lot of people who didn't even know it was here," said Terry Pennington, an Edmonds audio and electronics engineer, and one of the local theatre organ buffs who helped refurbish the gigantic instrument. The mighty Wurlitzer is the largest original remaining theatre organ still in its place, and functioning in Seattle. And how it functions. When it opens its throat, the hall shakes. The tingle goes through the ornate hall up the 3000 seats into your backbone. Some 600 theatre organ aficionados from around the world are here to be a part of the instrument's re-birth, the fruit of some 1000 man hours labour of Pennington and other Puget Sound area theatre organ disciples.

GRANDEST OF ITS DAY.

"I don't think you could duplicate it today for anything short of \$250,000" said Russ Evans, of Evans Music. "In its day it was the grandest theatre organ of many in Seattle, and it's the last still in its original setting. I'm convinced this is going to help the old Paramount turn the corner and come alive again". Through yesterday afternoon, locals were working on the organ, clearing its throat of old theatre dust which, in its intricate innards, can produce "phantom" (accidental) notes. Don Myers, pipe organ builder for Balcom & Vaughan Pipe Organs, emerged grease-stained from the organ's insides to greet early conventioners. "She's almost ready to go", he said, wiping his hands. "The piano attachment hasn't played in 16 years...and it still works beautifully!"

CANNIBALIZED FOR PARTS.

The Paramount's Wurlitzer was installed in 1927, and is one of six Washington State theatre organs still in its original hall. Its gleaming ivory and gilt, spotlighted console is in strange contrast to grimy old walls, the battered seats and the worn, tattered carpeting. She is a grandma star making her operatic come-back in an old hall that smells not faintly enough like a public wash room.

That she survived at all is "a miracle" according to Ashley Miller, of New York, Radio City Hall Fame, one of the conventioners. "So many of the great old theatre organs fell prey to what we call the "Midnight Parts Company" cannibalized for their parts. During the war, many were sold for the scrap value of their pipes...imagine! And many others disappeared from the East Coast and the Midwest when the West Coast pizza parlours with organs thing took hold". The comment was a gentle jibe perhaps, at white haired Thelma Barclay, chairperson of the local theatre organ group, who plays the almost as large Wurlitzer at Bellevue's Pizza and Pipes Restaurant.

The theme of the convention is "Peace, Pipes & People". And the Paramount's is by no means the only Northwest theatre organ they'll see and hear. More than a dozen bus loads of conventioners will make it to Portland, to hear the Organ Grinder Restaurant Wurlitzer with 44 ranks of pipes which approximate distinct orchestral voices.

PERFORMING ARTISTS.

They also will hear artists on organs in that city's Benson High School, and in Tacoma's Temple Theatre, Bremerton's Masonic Temple and in Seattle's St. Mark's Cathedral, Calvary Temple and the Pizza and Pipes Restaurant in Greenwood and Bellevue. Besides Miller, performing artists for the convention will include Billy Nalle, Fr. James Miller, Sherri Mael, Andy Crow and Seattle's Tom Cotner. Now that we've pulled out all the stops, comes the bloopers! The concerts aren't open to the public. But the Paramount's Wurlitzer isn't going to sit out the year at the bottom of the pit beneath the floor. "We're

MARRICKVILLE WURLITZER SCORES AGAIN

Yes, our faithful and apparently tireless maintenance crew have now completed a re-furbish of the Chrysoglott. Alan Misdale Tom Halloran and their small band of helpers removed this rather large percussion instrument to the 'Organ Loft' at Haberfield and with the help of a few other dedicated mambars, re-newed all the air motors with specially imported leather from the U.S., and adjusted all the necessary working parts. The instrument is now back at Marrickville and showing a marked improvement in its operation.

Pipe organs are renowned for their of constant attention, and our workers are noted for answering this need promptly. I hope that we never cease to appreciate the hundreds of man hours given freely by our maintenance crew, in keeping our instrument in top condition.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION.

Kevin and I thought that the Clinton White and Ian McLean concert was most melodious. The programme was delightful, with refreshing registrations and the arrangements were wonderfully well thought out. These two very musical and imaginative organists treated us to organ techniques which provided a fresh aural experience. Kevin and I do hope that we may hear them again soon.

Yours Sincerely,

Joyce Powell, North Ryde.

A COMBINED LETTER FROM NEW ZEALAND

from Mr. John Parker (organ builder) and Miss Margaret Hall.

Dear Sir,

It was with great pleasure that we read Ritchie Willis' account of his recent trip to New Zealand, and more especially his mention of the Civic Theatre Wurlitzer Organ, now installed in the Southward Museum in Wellington, and the ex Regent Theatre Wurlitzer, at present undergoing restoration and installation in the Hollywood Theatre in the suburb of Avondale in Auckland, Also the re-print of the article reviewing Margaret's concert in Tauranga during March came as a pleasant surprise.

I felt that as Ritchie has mentioned our restoration venture at the Hollywood Theatre, it may be an opportune time to present to your readers a brief run down of the ex Regent Wurlitzer and some of its history.

The organ was shipped from North Tonawanda on the 26th October 1926. Sadly, its installation in the Regent Theatre, Queen Street, was not completed for the opening of the theatre on the 14th December, and the opening concert was presented by the organist Eddie Horton a week later. The organ was used till 1944, when it was sold to the Hutt Valley High School in Wellington, its home till 1969. In 1969 (due to flood-water damage) it was sold again to a person in Wellington, who envisaged it being installed in his home at a later date. It was put into storage till 1978 when it was sold to an Auckland, Mr. Les Stenersen. During August 1978 the organ made its return journey of 600 miles to its original 'home' city, Auckland.

Arrangements had already been made with the Hollywood Theatre manager, Jan Grefstad, regarding the installation of the instrument and work commenced the week-end after its arrival. Finding out what we DID have and what we DIDN'T have was the biggest headache of the entire job.

It required virtually erecting the organ in the basement workshop of the theatre, till we discovered what parts were actually missing. We found that 90% of the ground frame & chest building frames had disappeared over the years, not to mention all the zinc air conveyancing. The air reservoirs (regulators) had been ruined by water (while in the school) and no wiring existed on any parts except the switch stack. These up-setting discoveries discouraged many people, but being an organ builder myself, I realised that it was not an insurmountable problem, and could be overcome with a bit of hard work.

That was three years ago! Now, in June 1981, I look back over the Sundays and Public Holidays that the 'team' have worked on the organ, it hits home that it has been all very worth while. Virtually, what has been done on the organ is as follows:-

The console has been fully re-stored and all new key contacts and piston action contacts have been fitted. This has required the complete re-wiring of the console. The keys and pedals have been stripped down & re-felted, re-bushed and regulated. A full range of couplers has been added and these are as follows:- Solo Octave, Solo to Accomp, Solo to Accomp 2nd touch, Solo to Accomp Quint, Solo to Pedal, Accomp to Pedal, Accomp Octave.

The Solo to Accomp Quint (2-2/3) is a very useful synthetic stop coupler that converts the entire Solo Keyboard to a 2-2/3 stop, due to the coupler switching. All the switching for the couplers is contained in the console and is of the English 'Kimber-Allen' type. All the pipe chest have been entirely re-leathered..motors, pallets etc. with new wiring from the relays to the chests. New building frames have been constructed for the main chests in both the Solo and Main chambers. The chambers have now been constructed behind the motion picture screen, with a space of 12ft. in between. In this space is an unenclosed Tromba unit of 16' to 4' pitch, which is an additional rank to the organ.

A second console (Wurlitzer 135 style) is being installed as a 'slave' console, and this will have a smaller range, and the stops will be duplexed to the master console. This 'slave' console also includes a piano and a double player mechanism for playing rolls. Eventually the piano rolls will play the whole organ. The 88 note piano is also an addition to the organ and is playable from the main console in 16' to 4' on the solo and 8' to 4' on the Accomp and 16' on the pedal. Provision has been made on the console for the future addition of an English Horn 8', Harmonic Horn 4', (seperate ranks) and a Kinura 8'. To date we have added a 'Henry Willis' Orchestral Oboe 8', playable on both manuals and a Virole de Orchestra 8' & 4' on the Solo. The Solo Tibia has been extended down to 16' and up to 2-2/3 and 2' pitch. New electric relays have been added to the switch stack to enable all additions to be carried out.

Although it sounds impressive, so far we have only completed 50% of the organ. It is hoped that we will be able to present the organ to the public later this year fully completed, so we are still working very hard at present. Each work session, another stage is completed, which is very encouraging to the work team.

I would like to extend a personal invitation to any TOSA members who happen to be visiting NZ to come and visit us at the Hollywood Theatre and view the work done on Opus 1475. We are there every Sunday from 9am till about 3pm, and I know that Margaret Hall would appreciate seeing some of Australian friends too!

Yours Sincerely, John Parker and Margaret Hall.

14...

OUR SINCERE THANKS....

to Mr. John Parker and Margaret Hall for this very informative letter. There is no doubt that many of our readers will be glad to hear of and admire your efforts in this huge project, and of course any news about 'our' Margaret is most welcome to hear.

Thank you for the invitation to visit, and I'm sure if any of our members are visiting your area, they will call and see you. Please keep us informed of your installation so our members can be notified in our TOSA NEWS magazine.

STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS

IT'S WITH EXTREME REGRET THAT I HAVE TO INFORM YOU THAT THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION OF THE THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY WILL NOT AND I REPEAT NOT BE ABLE TO HOLD THE NATIONAL THEATRE ORGAN CONVENTION IN ADELAIDE IN THE COMING YEAR OF 1982.

THE S.A. PRESIDENT (Mr. ALAN WEST) HAS ADVISED US THAT TIME WILL NOT PERMIT THEM TO OVERCOME CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, OVER WHICH THEY HAVE NO CONTROL.

As you can imagine, this piece of news was given a lot of discussion at the recent Committee Meeting in August.

A suggestion was put forward that PERHAPS we could promote a small regional Convention in Sydney over the 1982 Easter Week-end, but at the moment ideas and planning would have to be formulated and decided upon.

If anything concrete does eventuate, we will inform our members as soon as we can, but dont forget, this type of venture takes a lot of time to put together and includes the initial stages of enquiries for bookings, artists, planning, catering etc. before we can even begin to programme the week-end. We will keep you informed if anything can be done re this suggestion.

STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.

SPECIAL CLUB NIGHT

WEDNESDAY 30th SEPTEMBER 1981 at 7.30 pm.
MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

SPECIAL FEATURE: SLIDES OF THE GOLDEN ERA OF THE CINEMA IN AUSTRALIA, WITH COMMENTARY BY IAN HANSEN.

DONT MISS THIS GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE SOME TRUE PART OF AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY IN DETAIL.

ALL MEMBERS ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND AND BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

ADMISSION: MEMBERS \$1 VISITORS \$2

ALSO MUSIC FROM OUR WURLITZER ORGAN AND A LIGHT SUPPER.
