# ‡.o.s.o. neus

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

# Printed by T.O.S.A. PRESS

Volume 13 Number 7	SOCIETY DIRECTORY	July,	1975.
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WHAT'S ON IN JULY 6th July, Sunday 2.30 p.m.

# THE MECCA SAVOY THEATRE

# HURSTVILLE

A chance we must all take advantage of and bring our neighbours and friends, as in conjunction with Ray Thornley, Flanagan and Winter and the Mecca Savoy Management we will be presenting a concert and silent film afternoon in a Theatre with the atmosphere which only a building of this type can give. This building, saved and restored in all it's "Art Decco" splendour has been recently saved in the 'nick of time' from the demolisher's hammer, by the hard working management and staff and restored to a condition that it must have presented when the building was first opened, (see photograph, page 3, this issue). It is a present day monument to Phil Doyle's efforts as outlined in preceeding months in these pages. (We save mighty Wurlitzers -He saves magnificent Theatres). Come along and enjoy an afternoon in surroundings befitting the entertainment which will be offered. Ray Thornley will play a concert and entertain us with the accompaniment of silent comedies to make the afternoon one to be remembered. This will be an entertainment not to miss... Admission \$2.00 General Public -- \$1.50 Tosa Members.

> Registered with the G.P.O. for posting as a periodical-Category B

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3rd August, Sunday, 2.30 p.m. A home Matinee recital has been arranged by Ritchie Willis of 13 Rosemont Avenue, Mortdale. Our idea for this function on a Sunday afternoon is to keep you at home on these cold winter evenings, so come along and enjoy five artists who will make their time available for the Capitol Wurlitzer Organ Restoration Fund. We have Janice Wilson, Barbara Dixon, Ian Sommerville, Ron Smith on the Thomas Lawrence Welf Theatre Organ and John Shaw on the Gulbransen Piano. Book now by ringing Ritchie Willis 57 3581 as seating is limited to 36. A donation of \$1.50 for Gents and \$1.00 for Ladies. Come along, enjoy yourself, and help a very worthy cause, book early and don't be disappointed. See you there.

21st September, Sunday, 2.30 p.m. TONY FENELON in concert at MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL.

<u>25th October</u>, <u>Saturday</u>, <u>8.00 p.m</u>. Eric Smith plays to the film 'Son of the Shiek' at Ritchie Willis' during a Roaring 20's evening.

<u>23rd October</u>, Thursday, featuring the organ in Sydney Town Hall, playing a private concert for members of the Organ Society and the Theatre Organ Society, will be Eric Smith with popular classics and light music.

October, FREE SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT MARRICKVILLE

1976 IS SYDNEY CONVENTION YEAR .

.... the FUNTASTIC FIFTH .

Members please note there are no pipe organ concerts in July & August at Marrickville town Hall to allow the work of regulation to proceed. Members who have practice sessions during this period would be advised to contact the Practice Session Co-ordinator, Mrs. Phyllis Wilson on telephone No. 759 6050 before proceeding to Marrickville.

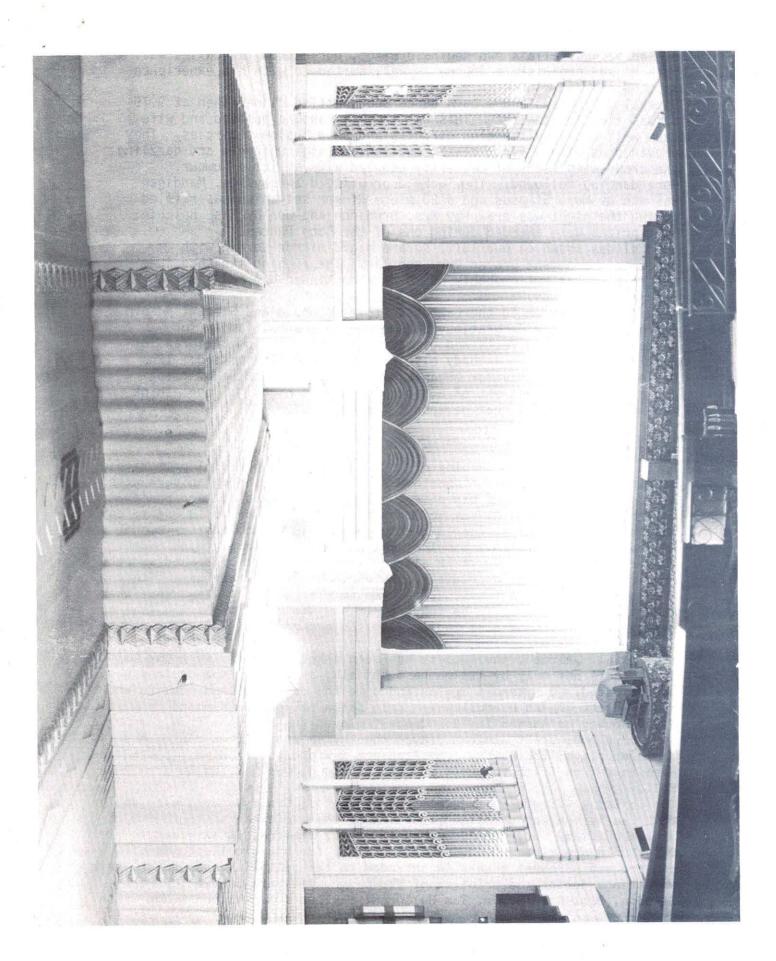
### REVIEWS:

### MID YEAR CABARET

Wednesday night, May28th was cold and it looked like rain but Marrickville Town Hall was ablaze with lights, the ceiling and stage decorated and pulsing with the sound of our own Wurlitzer.

A three course meal consisting of Fruit Cocktail, Roast Dinner and Apple Pie and Cream satisfied the inner self and was followed by coffee. Guests of honour were Mr. & Mrs. Maddigan - the deputy Mayor and his wife and Mr. & Mrs. Brunsdon - the deputy Town Clerk and his wife.

Page 2: TOSA News, July, 1975.



Billed as Australia's own Reginald Dixon, our Patron Ian Davies was both MC and organist, a job he is well suited to with his experience in theatres and clubs.

Several quicksteps and a barn dance soon settled dinner then at 9.15 it was time for the act. This was the Allysons, a husband and wife team well known on the club circuits and show business circles. They provided us with a first class juggling and high unicycle act dazzling the crowd with feats of dexterity coupled with a little humour. More dancing followed. The lucky door prize drawn by Mrs. Maddigan was won by Mrs. Simpson and a 20 piece dinner set which was raffled during the night was drawn by Mrs. Brunsdon and won by Mrs. Balchin. Spot prizes were awarded during one of the Barn Dances. Song slides shown on our 18ft. square magic mirror screen with organ accompaniment proved very popular. The evening finished just before midnight but probably would have continued had not tomorrow been a working day.

Many thanks are due to the Lawsons, Steve McDonald and Stewart McKern for hall and stage decorations and to the Weismantel family for curtains lighting effects and gimmicks etc. Also to Tom Halloran for work on the organ and anybody else who many have been missed. Ian Davies deserves thanks for organising the act and for the sterling job he did having got out of a sick bed on this night. I don't think

many people realised that he wasn't feeling 100%.

B.T.

### BANKSTOWN ORGAN SPECTACULAR

During the mild Autumn evening of 3rd June a most successful promotion, namely the Bankstown Organ Spectacular climaxed for the organisers with a capacity house hearing six different, popular brands of electronic theatre organs played by six top musicians in the organ world and to say that the evening was an incredible success would be no understatement. We heard light classical, popular, swing, dance, up tempo, club type, Theatre type, in fact music of all varieties in a well organised smooth presentation that was a credit to the various music houses participating. The stage hydraulic movements were used to startling effect so that when a particular organ was to be featured it was the most compalling item on stage with everything else fading into the background. The lighting was unobtrusive but effective, the whole presentation most tasteful and successful. Already the society has been asked 'when are we going to do another' not only by its members but also by some of the dealers who participated. Our thanks are extended to the organists and dealers who supplied the organs as follows :- Eric Eaton played the Hammond from Music Houses of Australia; Joh Congert played the National from the Organ Stop, Burwood; Cliff Bingham played the Thomas from Winton Music; Ray Thornley played the Lowrey from Flanagan & Winter; Kurt Zimmer played the Wurlitzer from Stamford Music and Peter Held played the Yamaha from Rose Music.

The untiring efforts of the Chief co-ordinator, Ernie Mansell were amply rewarded by the enthusiastic reception of the audience to the fruits of his labours and our thanks, on behalf of all members, is extended to him. Our thanks are also extended to Frank Ellis for his excellent job of compere and personal thanks is extended to the following people for their assistance during the printing of the programme; Mark Gabriel, Robert Gliddon, Bill Schumacher, Tom Halloran, Phyllis & Ron Wilson & Ron Smith.

Page 4: TOSA News, July, 1975.

# POPULAR MUSIC OR CLASSICAL? the ALLEN Digital Computer Organs



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SUBSEQUENT HISTORY AFTER 1928

For the next ten years the renovated theatre and the organ proved to be a popular drawcard for theatre patrons. Joseph Wayne as organist and George Roberts as orchestra conductor made an excellent working partnership, and even judging solely from the programme printed in the April edition on pages 8 & 10, the musical standard set by these two partners and a highly skilled orchestra was a very high one. For those in the audience with classical and serious tastes, Joseph Wayne made known that he would be prepared to play classical works with a week's notice for preparation by him

As a matter of passing interest, the drummer in this orchestra was Keith Kersey, the brother of Valda Kersey, the first lady organiste at the Kings Theatre, Gordon. She, too, received her organ tuition from Joseph Wayne. Valda died about eighteen months ago, and Keith is now the Secretary of the Musician's union.

With the onset of the depression, the orchestra was much reduced, but the organ remained in the Theatre until 1928 when it was sold to the Savoy Theatre, Hurstville. Its history from then on is linked with the history of that theatre.

The history of the Kings Cross Theatre from then on is very obscure and information is not only hard, but virtually impossible to come by. However at some time, in what one may hope is the not doo distant future, quite a wealth of historical material may be unearthed as the result of the work of Mr. Darby Jewell, of Greater Union Theatres. Among the pictures of various Greater Union Theatres shown to me by him was one of the interior of the Kings Cross Theatre, including the console of the organ, but no one at it. The most we can therefore say for certain at the present is that at some stage after 1938 the Theatre came within the scope of the activities of Greater Union Theatre. As we learn from the April edition that the last screening was on 30th April, 1963, we can also infer that its history in its later years was one of continuous decline.

LAST DAYS: APRIL, 1963 to MARCH, 1966

After its closure as a theatre, the building was turned into a Rock and Roll Theatre, and unfortuantely acquired a very unsavoury reputation during this period. It was known as 'Surf City' and it was there that Bill Thorpe and his Rock and Roll 'Aztec' Group made their debut. There was also an illegal gambling club known as the 'Victoria Club' just behind the theatr in existence at the same time as Billy Thorpe's group. What it had originally been cannot be ascertained. So, to the conventional, law-abiding citizens of the period the area could hardly be described as having anything of the odour of sanctity about it.

The noise from 'Surf City' continued until the early hours of the morning and police were frequently receiving bitter and angry complaints against it. But, being on private property, these protests could not effectively be followed up. Remeber that in those days the words 'noise pollution' had probably not even been heard of.

However by this time the area had become too valuable for it not to be utilised to its full potential, and it was inevitable that 'Surf City' had to give way to the Crest Hotel and complex.

No doubt many of the local residents and business people heaved a sigh of relief when the first bricks of the much execrated 'Surf City' began to fall under the demolishers hammers. But no doubt too, many would look back nostalgically to the days of its early grandeur -- its origin due to the hopes and initiative of Mark Foy and A. Jerome and its further fame after renovation and installation of the organ.

Page 6: TOSA News, July, 1975.

# STAMFORD INDUSTRIES PROUDLY PRESENT

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They would recall such orchestra conductors as George Roberts and such organists

as Joseph Wayne and a line of worthy successors.

Shadows are necessary to bring out brightness and excellent design in any edifice, and the shadows over the last days of the old Kings Cross Theatre only bring into prominence the greatness of concept and the initiative and courage needed to develop such a concept to its high st peak. Viewed in this perspective, the old Kings Cross Theatre deserves a worthy and fitting place in the history of the film hou es of Sydney.

Acknowledgement: Mr. P.V. Kelly, Planmacist, of Victoria Street, Kings Cross for information on 'Surf City', Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, and the 'Victoria Club'.

Some additional facts and figures supplied by John Gardiner are that Joseph Wayne, who incidentally taught Knight Barnett, in 1930 went to the Wintergarden in Brisbane and was followed at Kings Cross by Stan Cummins until May, 1931 when Desmond Tanner took over up to January, 32 when he moved on to the Roxy Parramatta. Dennis Palmistra came during this time and became feature organist from 1932 until May 1934 and he also relieved Billy Dick. After Dennis' time at the Kings Cross console the organ became idle.....subject to correction.... Joseph Wayne recorded on the organ for Columbia a four sided release in March 1930 Nos. 01725 and 01726 the items were 'Pagen Love Song', 'Mean to Me', 'When my Dreams come and 'Kiss me Again'.

Following removal from the Kings Cross Theatre the organ was opened at the Hurstville Savoy on 4th September, 1937 by Paul Cullen and Owen Holland was the last featured organist with the organ being moved once again in 1958 to its

current home in the Congregational Church at Burwood.

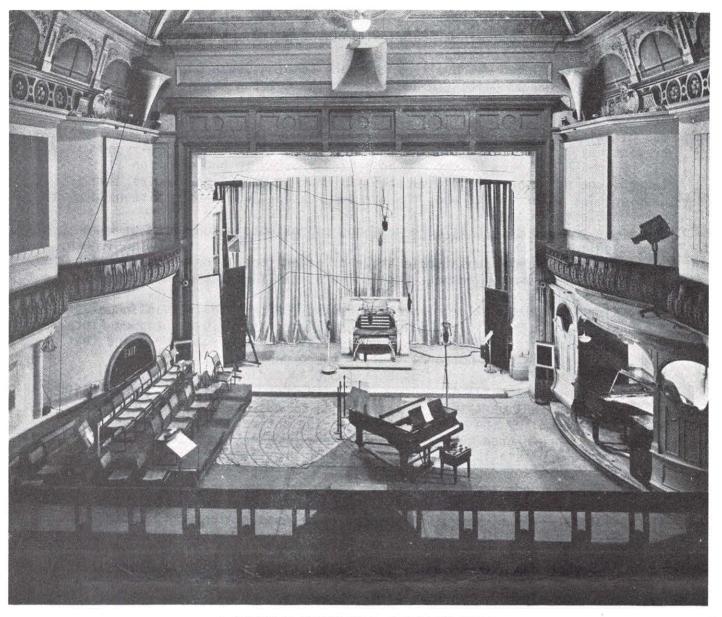
### THE BBC THEATRE ORGAN

(A description by Reginald Foort) This month we begin a reprint of some part of a little book which was loaned to us by Eric Smith on the Compton Organ in installed in the S.George's Hall, the first organ in Britain to be specifically designed and built for Radio Broadcasting.

Although I have been Staff Theatre Organist for more than a year and a half, I never sit down at the BBC Theatre Organ without experiencing a thrill at the thought of playing one of the grandest and most versatile and satisfying theatre

organs in the world

During the years since those first organ broadcasts from Shepherd's Bush Pavilion and the New Gallery Kinema, the universal popularity of cinema organ broadcasts has steadily increased and it is hardly surprising that it was decided to install a large theatre organ in S.George's Hall--the first one in this country to be specially designed and built exclusively for broadcasting. The immense advantages of having such an organ are obvious; there are no audiences to be considered; broadcasts can take place at any time of the day or night; all kinds of interesting combinations of other instruments or singers can be incorporated; acoustics can be studied and the organ designed and voiced throughout from the point of view of br adcasting; every effort can be concentrated on producing perfect results for the listener through his radio set. The BBC Theatre Organ has been an unqualified success. As it is not merely an ordinary 'cinema' organ but is also a very fine and complex concert organ, in addition to its immense popularity as a solo instrument, it has proved its worth by being used to enhance practically every type of show produced by both Variety and Music Productions Departments. It is a kind of one-man orchestra Page 8: TOSA News, July, 1975.



A GENERAL VIEW OF S. GEORGE'S HALL

The console has been wheeled into position ready for a solo broadcast. Note the organ swell-boxes—those on the left-hand side are open and those on the right are closed. Near the roof can be seen the loudspeakers through which all the sounds of the Electrone are produced. At the right-hand side is the grand piano which is playable from the keyboards of the console.

side of the stage when not in use and wheeled out to any desired position on the stage for broadcasting. It has four manuals or keyboards, known from the lowest one upwards as Accompaniment, Great, Solo, Orchestral, in addition to the pedal board-- which is a replica of that of the orthodox organ, on which the bass notes are played with the feet. The Stop-keys are arranged in three rows in the usual horse-shoe lay-out. Notice how the various stops which operate on their appropriate manuals are grouped. This

Page 9: TOSA News, July, 1975.

which can be used to perform practically any type of music or reproduce

almost any sound in existence.

The BBC Theatre Organ was built by the John Compton Organ Co., Ltd., It has four manuals, 23 units (in addition to the Compton Patent Electrone) a grand piano playable from the console and a complete equipment of tonal and non-tonal percussions. It took seven months to build and erect and was officially opened on October 20, 1936. Since that date up to the present day, 597 solo recitals have been given on it, 386 by myself and 211 by the 68 guest organists who have been invited to broadcast on it. Indeed, one of its happiest advantages is that so many fine players have been enabled to broadcast who, for various reasons, would otherwise have been unable to do so.

The organ has 260 stops, 1,780 pipes, and approximately 100 miles of wire were used in its construction. Pipes vary from ½ inch to 16 feet in length. It incorporates every conseivable shade of organ tone. The units comprise Tuba Magna, Tuba Horn, Trumpet, English Horn, two fine Diapasons, large wood and small metal Tibia Clausas, Vox Humana, Clarinet, Krumet, Orchestral Oboe, Kinura, Cello, Cello Celestes (2 ranks), Gamba, Violin, Violin Celeste, Strings (2 ranks) Salicional, Solo Concert Flute, Hohl Flute, Stopped Flute. Will the reader kindly imagine that he is visiting S.George's Hall and that

I am escorting him on a personal tour of the organ?

We enter what, at first sight, appears to be an ordinary, not very large, theatre of the music hall type, complete with rows of stalls, a circle and a large stage. But certain alterations will be observed to have been made; the stage, which, by the way, is as big as the entire auditorium, has been permanently thrown open to make a magnificent broadcasting studio, several of the front rows of stalls have been removed to provide space for a large orchestra, and a sound-proof control cubicle has been installed on one side of the stage through the glass windows of which the engineers and balance and control experts can observe everything taking place in the hall. The circle was formerly of the old-fashioned type running along both sides of the theatre right up to the proscenium arch, but now the two ends of the horse-shoe have been converted into organ swell-boxes to hold all the organ pipes, drums, bells, etc. To the fascination of the vilitor, the vertical swell shutters open and close in full view all the time the organ is being played as the organist controls them with his right foot to increase or reduce the volume of tone.

Let us first have a close look at the console, the part of the organ at which the player sits. In forms a really striking picture and gives an immediate idea of the size and complexity of the organ.

THE CONSOLE

The visitor's first spontaneous remark is invariably 'How on earth do you manage to remember and operate all those hundreds of stops and gadgets?' My reply is that it is equivalent to thinking and talking in a foreign language. Just as a person who knows two or three or more languages fluently has no difficulty in remembering many hundreds of words, so the organist must know his console and every stop it contains so thoroughly that he can think in terms of it instinctively.

The console is built of beautifully grained Austrian oak, with quartered panels and is really striking in the simple severity of its design. It is mounted on a kind of movable trolley so that it can be stowed away on the

Page 10: TOSA News, July, 1975



A 'RHYTHM BROADCAST' IN PROGRESS IN S. GEORGE'S HALL In the background is the soundproof cubicle from which the programme is balanced and controlled.

grouping is clearer on the BBC Theatre Organ than on any other organ of its size in existence. The Pedal stops are on the left-hand side; next to these are the Accompaniment stops -- which operate on the lowest keyboard. The stops for the Great occupy the two rows beneath the music desk, and those for the Orchestral and Solo manuals are on the right-hand side of the horse-Second touch -- by which the organist can play a melody and an accompaniment all on one row of keys -- is provided on the Accompaniment and the Great. For facility in controlling the stops, there are 12: ... under each manual. These enable the player to change combinations of stops instantly and are 'set' at the console by of the general pistons which merate all the stops of every department at once. Toe pistons are provided for operating the pedal stops and for working some of the effects. There are 4 swell pedals 3 of which control the swell shutters of the three swell boxes, the fourth being a general crescendo pedal wich adds all the stops on the Great and Pedals one by one without moving the stop keys. The console is connected to the organ itself, via the relays, by means of a flexible armoured cable which contains 970 wires, each insulated from the remainder. Every stop key, every piston, every note of the keyboard, is virtually an electric switch, and whenever one of them is moved by the organist, it makes a contact which allows a 15-volt current to travel through its appropriate wire in the connecting cable to do the necessary work upstairs in the organ chamber. When the or anist wishes to play, he puts down some of the stop-keys, thereby causing certain electric switches up in the re ay room to make contact; this brings into action the required sis of pipes or effects Then, when he plays the organ by pressing down the keys at the console, further electric contacts are made, and the current is sent through more wires in the connecting cable, and this, operating through the relay mechanism, allows the

# TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT MONTH.

# TEACHERS CORNER

wind to enter the pipes.

## CONTRASTS:

To get more variety in your playing make it a habit to contrast where ever possible. This adds to the general presentation and 'listenability' of your music.

Some of the possibilities are discussed in this article.

1. The choice of melodies.

Make it a habit to play a faster melody, followed by a slower one, also the choice of a modern melody followed by an older one is usually good.

2. Pitch or key

Make sure that no two melodies are following one another in the same key. By staying in the simple keys of C, G, F etc. you can get plenty of variety.

3. Single note melody or m lody in chords.

This is one of your main wapons, use it.

4. Contrast in sound per keyboard.

Use multiple pitches (16-8-4) on one keyboard and a single 8ft. on the other keyboard. By jumping from the one to the other you get instant changes of sound. The best result here is in using both hands on the same keyboard and jumping with both hands on the other keyboard.

Page 12: TOSA News, July, 1975.





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5. Pop tunes and classics.

This is always a good contrast, if you can handle each type of music properly it will add considerable to the variety of your repertoire.

6. Pedals.

A very striking contrast is often used by playing a section of the music entirely without pedals. Then, using the pedal as an accent, it can be highly effective.

7. Summary.

Many contrasts will suggest themselves, just briefly a list:

Old Tune v. New Tune; Fast V. Slow; Classic v. pop; different key on each tune, Pedal v. no Pedal; Tremulant or vibrato on one kerboard and not on the other. Leslie v. Main speakers; Console speakers v. separate box; Sustain voices v. no sustain; Dull voices v. Bright voices; single pitches v. multiple pitches.

You can easily find many more possibilities for contrasts if you are prepared to look for it. After all, most of the famous organists are doing exactly that in their records.

J.C.

FUNCH	HUID	MUSIC:
FUNCH	HUUK	MOSIC.

As a mark of extended Community impact the Pitt Street Congregational Curch at 264 Pitt Street, Sydney is presenting a 10 week season of lunch-hour music each Tuesday from 1st July till 2nd September. Each session will be held from 1.10 to 1.50 p.m. and will present instrumental recitals, organ recitals and vocal renditions. Admission is free but a retiring offering will be asked to help with the organ restoration which has already had \$3,000 spent on it in recent times. The artists appearing are listed as follows:-

Tuesday, 1st July	E. McNeal Grantham B. Mus., A.Mus A	ORGAN
Tuesday, 8th July	Keith Garrett Eric Smith - Accompanist	BARITONE ORGAN
Tuesday,15th July	Eric Smith A. Mus A. LTCL	ORGAN
Tuesday,22nd July	The Patricians Children's Choir St. Patrick's Convent Church Hill, under direction: Sister Kathleen	CHOIR

Tuesday,29th July	Conservatorium Students Ensemble	STRING QUARTET GUITAR, CELLO, PIANO
Tuesday, 5th Aug.	David Parsons	ORGAN
Tuesday, 12th Aug.	John Freeland	FLAUTIST
Tuesday 19th Aug	Fric Smith & Robert Broughall	ORGAN

Tuesday,26th Aug.	(Inc. Rhapsody in Blue)	
	Joyce Gibbons	SOPRANO
Tuesday, 2nd Sept.	E. McNeal Grantham B.Mus., A.Mus.A.	ORGAN

Any members wishing to attend will be made most welcome. Page 14: TOSA NEWS, July, 1975.

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# STATE THEATRE SYDNEY SOUVENIR BOOKLET

(Interstate and overseas Editors please copy)

The Sydney State Theatre is the only Theatre left in its original comdition complete with 4/21 Wurlitzer organ and National Trust classification and it is quite unique throughout the enfire world as being amongst the few remaining examples of 'a fabulous and foolish era' of architectural design.

There is available a reprint of the opening programme which cost the Theater operators more than \$1.00 each to produce and which was reprinted for the opening of the Sydney Opera House Festival. Anyone wishing to obtain this priceless piece of historical memorabilia can do so at 30¢ each by applying in person to the ticket office in the State Theatre or by sending a SAE envelope measuring 8" x 11" and cheques/money order payable to Greater Union Organisation, Attention, Manager State Theatre, Market Street, Sydney.

The booklet is entitled "Your personal souvenir of Sydney's Glorious State Theatre". Get your copies while they still last.

# IMPORTED RECORDS - REMINDER

This is a reminder to all members that fully imported organ recordings are available from John Atkinson, 587 3374; Robert Gliddon, 869 2083 and The Organ Stop, Burwood. Recordings are from the following companies: Deroy, Doric, Allen Associates, Malar, Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust, Amberlee, P.I.P.E., R.T.O.S., Organ Stop Pizza and others.



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TELEPHONE 70-1027

## FOR SALE

Thomas Trianon, 3 Manual - It has a full pedal board with 'fancy foot', band box and Automatic Rhythm's. The cabinet has a special Spanish finish which is antiqued and carved with a matching padded stool. The owner is updating to a larger organ, and is asking \$4,500.... For any additional information you may require please contact Herbert Wyatt on 48 3427.

# SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

During the recent Film Festival it could be truly said that the number of sessions were a marathon for the audience but there was certainly no less marathon for the organist. Ron West had to play as frequently as any of the old time Theatre Organists ever had to and he was received by capacity audiences in the State Theatre, from a predominantly 'University type attender' audience with extreme enthusiasm. It may also be reported that on one Saturday evening before the 8p.m. start Alan Tranter played for the session for half an hour and the audience went bananas'. Alan plays with bridging music between his individual numbers but the audiences acclamation between each number forced him to take a bow before he could continue. It was certainly a very heartening reaction and an excellent display of the fact that the popularity of the Theatre Organ has not wanned.

# INTERSTATE CONCERT BY SYDNEY MEMBER

On 21st September, Sunday, we have news that Eric Smith will be playing for the Victorian Division of the Theatre Organ Society at the Cinema North installation in Reservoir. Anyone able to attend would be made most welcome.

# QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING

A Quarterly General meeting is being organised for a date in August and a major item of business to be discussed and for which each individual member should give serious consideration is the position of Secretary. Nominations for this position should be passed to a consistee member at the earliest possible opportunity.

### DEADLINE

Our August Edition deadline is 18th July so any information you require to appear should arrive at the Editors address before that date. Many interesting tidbits are arriving a bit late and lose the impact by the following month, so get busy with pen and paper and let us hear from you......

# DISTRESS CALL FROM TREASURER

At a recent function we had a new member join the Society, a J. Atkins and that is all the information we have on file.... Please J. Atkins, Miss, Mrs. Mr. or Ms. could you contact Mark Gabriel and let him have your vital statistics so that you can become fully entered on our files.

Page 16: TOSA News, July, 1975.