September 2019 Volume 58 No.6

Price: \$2.00

David Gray - UK

will entertain you on the



Orion Wurlitzer at the Orion Centre Theatre Sunday October 27th 2:00pm







#tosansw

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TOSA News David & Margaret Badman

Printer Printers of Richmond

President



Hello everyone,

Dare I say "welcome to spring"? As I write this it seems like we're having the coldest and wettest winter day this year. However, we had a lovely day on Sunday 25th when Ken Double delivered an excellent concert at the Orion.

It was wonderful to see many new faces among the audience. It was also great to see lots of the regulars of course. We had in excess of 150 people there to enjoy Ken's concert and even his jokes. We took a different promotional approach this time and used all the available channels we could find and had great coverage on radio, print and internet. Thanks to editor Ernie and membership secretary

Margaret for pushing the TOSA barrow and gaining us lots of free coverage. Thanks too to TOSA members who organised groups - large and small – to come along and enjoy the concert.

The misbehaving Uniflex computer that caused a couple of hiccups has been taken aside for "a stern talking to" and poking with a stick. We will have it back in form ready for our next concert – David Gray on 27 October at Orion.

Remember the home party at Peter and Dorothy Robinson's home on

Sunday 15 September. I hope to see many of you there. RSVPs are essential.

In other news, on 8 August I received a phone call from my haematologist giving me the "all clear" following a full body PETScan a few days prior. It looks like we've beaten this non-Hodgkin's lymphoma – but of course regular check-ups etc will be the judge of that, and hopefully I'll get the five-year clearance when the time comes. Thanks to all the members who have contacted me or asked at concerts about my health – your support has been encouraging.

Cheers, Craig Keller

Editorial



I hope you enjoy the article on the 2019 ATOS Convention kindly written by our Patron Dr John Atwell

Look forward to seeing you at the Silent Movie on Sept. 8th and at the Home Party at the Robinson's on Sept. 15th - see details inside. Notice of nominations for the AGM is included in this issue and close with the Returning Officer by the last mail on Friday Sept. 13th

Enjoy the Music Live, Ernie Vale editor@tosa.net.au

From the Mailbox...



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Thanks for your responses and please continue to email or write in, telling us what you think.

Where space permits we will do our best to publish your comments, but as space is limited, the editor reserves the right to edit any submitted comments and, as always, the views expressed by any individual may not necessarily coincide with the views of TOSA NSW Div.

Please submit all comments via email to:

The Editor editor@tosa.net.au or in writing to:

The Editor - TOSA News (NSW Div)
PO Box A2322
SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

Sydney Town Hall Organ Events

Following the need to install a new organ blower motor at the Town Hall adjustments have had to be made to the lunchtime organ recital series as follows:

Concerts as originally planned:

- Monday 9th September, 12:30pm-Thomas Trotter
- Monday 30th September, 12:30pm-Christopher Wrench
- Tuesday 5th November, 12:30pm-Robert Ampt with the NSW Police Band

- Tuesday 17th December, 8:00pm-Christmas at Sydney Town Hall
- Saturday 28th December,
 12:30pm-Young Organist's Day

Robert Ampt Sydney City Organist

Please Note Change to TOSA Bank Account

The Society's only bank account now is with **St George.** Details are **BSB 112-879**, account number **0442 088 530**

Please direct all payments to this account with St George Bank.

The AGM is a little earlier this year to enable the President to attend the Presidents Forum in November

"Whatever its price may be, wine surely is worth more than the money that it costs to buy when it brings joy to your home, the joy of sunshine."

ANDRE SIMON (1877-1970) from "How to Enjoy Wine"

To Watch Out for

You can now pay for tickets at the box office by credit card.

TOSA NSW Divn Inc

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 9th November 2019 at 2:00pm

St Columb's Anglican Church, Cnr Dickson Ave & Bellevue Ave., West Ryde

This is the location of the TOSA (NSW) Christie Cinema Organ. Please come along to the meeting and take the opportunity to hear about and see the significant progress on the installation of the Christie that you will have read about in the Christie Reports in recent issues of TOSA News.

Afternoon Tea will be provided following the meeting to allow members to mingle and chat to the Executive and Committee members about your Society.

Advertising Rates in TOSA News

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE! For all other cases:

> Quarter Page = \$25 Half Page = \$50 Full Page = \$100 Full Page Insert = \$125.00

Members' Playing Dates

The Orion Theatre Campsie Second Thursday of the Month

September 12th Convener is Craig Keller on 0418484798 or John Batts on 0420424103

Marrickville Town Hall 4th Monday afternoon/evening

Start time is 6:00pm September 23rd

Convener is
John Batts on 0420424103
will email you to confirm the day is
available or

Neil Palmer on 9798 6742 after 7:00pm

to confirm availability

Christie report for September. Work done since last report includes:

Accompaniment chamber:

- Modified and fitted winker for the Celesta and Marimba/Harp.
 Fitted 80mm & 50mm windlines to suit. Measured 11.5" wg (12" target).
- Tremulants still to be installed (3 in this chamber); in preparation.
- All pipes and percussions in this chamber now on wind.
- Marimba considered a bit too soft especially in bass end; trials with hard rubberfaced hammers will be conducted to see if volume level improves without destroying timbre.
- Pipes needing attention: CCC Violone, CC Diapason, some flutes and clarinets, and several 16' Diaphones; JP expertise needed, then all pipework in this chamber to be tuned.

Solo chamber:

- Manufacture continues of narrow regulator for Orch Oboe. Matching wind trunk box complete.
- Winding commenced for 16' Tibia including interface box to supply tuned birds. Due to space considerations the regulator is in the Accomp Chamber feeding pipes in the Solo.
- Support bracket for Orch Oboe tremulant installed.

General:

- Old belt sander is again useable after repair to switch.
- Piano cover manufacture is underway off-site; thanks to Graham Glendenning.
- Updated Uniflex software to accommodate a choice between separate or linked vibratos.

Annual General Meeting of Theatre Organ Society of Australia NSW Divn Inc

Saturday 9th November 2019

2:00pm

West Ryde Anglican Church

Cnr Dickson Ave & Bellevue Ave., West Ryde

Nominations are now open for all positions

on Executive and Committee for 2019-20

A nomination form is included with this TOSA News if posted or as an attachment if emailed

and must reach the Returning Officer

no later than 14th September

ie by the last mail on Friday 13th September

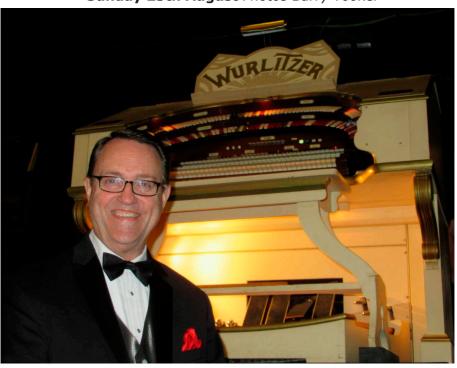
in accordance with the constitution

Any Motions or Special Resolutions for the AGM must reach the Secretary at:

PO Box 63 Buxton NSW 2571 by the last mail on Friday 13th September 2019



Above and Below - Ken Double at the Orion Wurlitzer Sunday 25th August *Photos Barry Tooker*



Three Yamaha Organs for FREE

2 Yamaha FX 20s and one Yamaha FS 70

All have some faults to be fixed

Contact Allen Spicer on 02 6569 0432

Mid North Coast at Stuarts Point

Rodgers 321Trio theatre organ for sale

Nice instrument, but makes a squealing sound when a G key is played.

Selling to make room for another organ. \$500.00 ono

This organ is in Harrington Waters near Taree.

Phone Phillip 02 6556 1249 or 0450093187

Show & Membership Prices

All Artists

Non-members \$40 Non-member Pensioner/Seniors Card holder \$35 TOSA Members \$25

All Students FREE on confirmation of Student status All Children FREE accompanied by an Adult

Group Booking for 10 or more Adults \$22 per person First time Adult \$25 by completed Voucher at Box Office

Annual Membership Fees 2019-20:

\$50.00 Full membership, \$40.00 Concession, Interstate or Overseas \$50. \$5 discount if TOSA News emailed to you Membership enquiries David & Margaret Badman (02) 4776 2192 membership@tosa.net.au Associate Membership for a spouse/partner is an additional 50%

Randwick City Council's Twilight Concerts presents

The Breaking of the Drought

Franklyn Barrett's silent film + live music

at The Ritz Cinema, Randwick



SUN 8 SEP 2019 6.20 pm - 8.20 pm The Ritz Cinema Randwick, (Cinema 2) --43 St Paul's Street, Randwick - The Spot.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to immerse yourself in an authentic silent-film experience with live musical accompaniment.

Filmed in 1920 by Randwick local, director and cinematographer Franklyn Barrett, and now accompanied by the talented **John S. Batts** on the "Theatre" organ.

The Breaking of the Drought will transport you back in time to 1920. Come and experience what captivated your great-grandparents one century ago.

Entertaining historian Bruce Dennett will introduce the film and answer any questions you may have at the conclusion.

Screening at the splendid art deco Ritz Cinema Randwick, and featuring live accompaniment on the Theatre Organ. Cost: Tickets \$10 via Eventbrite and/or at the door.

There are many buses from the City and Central Railway that stop at the Spot at Randwick just around the corner from the Ritz Theatre. 372 to Coogee from Eddy Avenue opposite Central Station. 373 from Circular Quay to Coogee. M50 from Drummoyne to Coogee via Town Hall -Park Street stop.

There is plenty of on street parking that is not restricted after 6:00pm on Sundays.

Come along and enjoy the atmosphere in the art deco theatre complete with candy bar selling choc tops, pop corn, cold drinks, coffee and other delights. The bar may be open upstairs.

Our very accomplished organist and TOSA Member, **John Batts** will accompany the silent film on an Allen Theatre
Organ and he would love to see many members come along.

Randwick Council have kindly agreed for TOSA to promote our next Wurlitzer concert with David Gray in October by handing out flyers to patrons as they enter the theatre prior to the film screening.

The Ritz Cinema Randwick, (Cinema 2) -- 43 St Paul's Street, Randwick - The Spot. SUNDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2019
6.20 pm - 8.20 pm

SEE YOU THERE

The Next Concert The fabulous young Scottish musician

David Gray



Plays The Orion Wurlitzer

Sunday October 27th at 2:00pm 155 Beamish Street, Campsie

Tickets: \$ 40; Conc/Senior \$ 35; Members \$25 First time patrons \$25 by Voucher at the Box Office Credit cards accepted

Adult Group of 10 or more \$22/person - Organiser and driver of the group has Free entry to the concert

A TOSA Member who organises a Group receives Free entry to the next concert

Students free on confirmation of student status.

Book securely on line at Trybooking via www.tosa.net.au/events click on the booking link

OI

Phone Theo Langenberg on 0410 626 131 before 8:pm please

David Gray

This will be David's last Australasian Tour as he intends to pursue his concert piano career from next year

A rare opportunity to hear David, master of the Wurlitzer

In 2015 David completed a Master of Arts degree in piano performance at the Royal Academy of Music in London. On graduation night he was awarded the prizes for the highest concerto marks and final recital marks in his year as well as collecting two prestigious Academy prizes. This recognition was extended when he was named the 2015 "Organist of the Year" by the American Theatre Organ Society.

David plays a wide repertoire of music ranging from classics to stage & screen, jazz & swing numbers ensuring something for everyone.

David as International Organist played the 3/17 rank Kimball theatre pipe organ, Connor Palace Theatre, Cleveland, Ohio, USA on 6th July 2016 as part of the American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) 2016 Annual Convention. A report from TOSA Committee member, John Shaw who attended the concert, stated that it was a sensational performance including 8 Duke Ellington numbers.

As you will read in the article in this issue about the 2019 ATOS Convention, David again performed for the conventioneers - "David Gray's concert was worth the effort of the red-eye flight into Rochester. He played a varied program of mostly well-known numbers including a selection from Cole Porter's Anything Goes."

Don't miss this opportunity to be entertained by David Gray on Sunday October 27th at the Orion before he moves onto his career on Concert Piano.

You can now pay by credit/debit card on the day

American Theatre Organ Society Convention 2019

A review by TOSA NSW Patron Dr John Atwell – Photos by Vice President John Weismantel

The American Theatre Organ Society (ATOS) holds its convention in late June/early July each year, and was held this year with its home base in Rochester, in Western New York. The Rochester Theatre Organ Society is an affiliate of ATOS and were hosts for this year's convention. I was privileged to attend the convention this year and would like to share some memories of the event with you. My commentary will not be a complete coverage of all events as I was not able to attend everything. Rather I'd like to mention specific events which were stand out highlights for me on this trip.

For those of you who have never attended an ATOS Convention, you may wonder what it might be like. Suffice to say, it is not for the faint hearted, as the schedule is guite intense, especially for those of us whom age is not on their side. In the five or so days of the Convention, concerts are crammed in, not necessarily in the one location. Therefore, on some days, one has to be ready to board a bus at 8am and not arrive back at the Convention hotel until 11pm that night.... then possibly be ready for the same routine the next day! Yes, you can sleep when you get home! I liken the feeling at a Convention similar to being served a five-course high quality dinner, with all the courses served at the same time or in short duration. Concerts, like courses should be savoured slowly for maximum enjoyment. But that is not a luxury at a Convention. One superb concert is quickly followed by another, and at the end one wishes that they could all be played back in slow motion to enjoy again. But the bottom line is that you are glad that you were there, to join with a group of like-minded enthusiasts of the theatre organ to savour such high-quality performances.

I missed the pre-glow on Sunday 30th June. I was still on an overnight flight from San Francisco to Rochester via Chicago, but was determined to attend the opening concert that evening at the **Auditorium Theatre**, **Rochester** featuring **David Gray**. The pre-glow consisted of visits to several churches in the area as well as **George Eastman's house** (founding father of Kodak) which houses a residence organ. **David Gray's** concert was worth the effort of the red-eye flight into Rochester. He played a varied

program of mostly well-known numbers including a selection from Cole Porter's Anything Goes. I had played the Auditorium organ in concert a couple of times in the 1990s and was pleased to find it still in fine voice. Other stand-out items were the 'Bacchanale' from Saint Saen's Samson and Delilah and the pot-boiler, Eric Coates' 'Dam Busters'. This was played with much verve, and David included a tricky obligato melody as well as the melody and accompaniment. Wow! When Tony Fenelon and I play this piece as a duo, we split the melody and obligato between us David played the lot!



MC Ken Double made a grand entrance on the console hoist to welcome Conventioneers

Don't miss David Gray when he comes to Australia later in the year. It could be your last chance to hear him as he is considering pursuing his piano career from 2020.

Monday's program included an afternoon concert with **Jerry Nagano** again at the **Auditorium Theatre**, home to the **4/23 Wurlitzer** originally from the RKO Palace Theatre Rochester, and the main house for RTOS activities. I missed this concert due to other activities, but from comments I heard, it was very well received. In the evening we had performances by three Young Artists vying for the Young Artist award for 2019, held at the **Eisenhart Auditorium (3/15 WurliTzer)**, part of the Rochester Science Museum. The winner was **Aaron Hawthorne**, a 21year-old Scot from Glasgow, same home town as David Gray. His opening humorous comments had the audience on his side

even before he played a note. **Aaron** is showing a lot of potential, and we should watch out for his name in the future.



Jerry Nagano at the Auditorium Theatre

Tuesday (July 2nd) was **Buffalo Day**. Buffalo is a city on the shores of Lake Eerie about an hour's drive from Rochester. Once a vibrant industrial city, it has seen a downturn in fortunes with changes in employment, as has Rochester, once a vigorous hub with industries like Kodak, Polaroid and Bausch and Lomb, but sadly now in decline. Our first stop for a photo opportunity was at the site of the **WurliTzer factory in North Tonawanda**, where WurliTzer theatre organs were manufactured from about 1914 to 1940.

The WurliTzer factory in North Tonawanda

The WurliTzer Tower still holds a commanding position over the site, but the factories are now put to other uses. It was kind of eerie to be at the place where it all happened so many years ago, and was part of the basis of why we were getting together for the Convention. From there it was a short drive to our first venue for the day, the Riviera Theatre, North Tonawanda, housing a 3/16 Wurlitzer, originally around 11 ranks. This was the closest Wurlitzer installation to the factory, and in the days of production, this organ was used as a demonstrator instrument for moderately sized Wurlitzers. The console treatment is one of a kind, featuring painted cupid murals by an artist from the Wurlitzer Band Organ division.



The Riviera Theatre Console

The organ and the theatre are a tribute to the persistence of volunteers. I played this organ in concert twice in the 1990s and it wasn't in good shape. All sorts of additions had been made to the organ, some of which were located in positions where they could not be tuned, not a good idea. Mercifully this was all sorted out in 2010, with superfluous 'stuff' removed, the remaining ranks tonally finished so that it now makes a gorgeous sound in an equally gorgeous suburban theatre. When I was there previously, the over-riding aroma in the theatre was of stale popcorn. All different now, thanks to a team of dedicated volunteers.

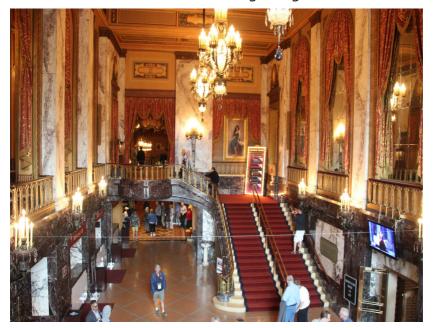
Nathan Avakian did the honours at the console, playing a lively concert in his inimitable up-beat style, coordinating well with the lighting engineers to provide a very modern exciting experience.



Nathan Avakian plays the Riviera Theatre Wurlitzer with exposed percussians in the background

The afternoon and evening were spent at **Shea's Buffalo** Theatre in downtown Buffalo. This was the major drawcard which attracted me to the Convention. The theatre was built in 1926, but by 1974 was almost facing demolition because of back taxes owed. Enter a gentleman named Curt Mangel who formed "The Friends of the Buffalo", and over the years, with many volunteers giving of their labours as well as many millions of dollars of funds raised, the theatre was saved from extinction and is now one of America's finest and most spectacular theatres. The heart of the theatre is the Style 285 Wurlitzer, which has had a legendary reputation for its sheer beauty of sound and presence in a big theatre setting. I was aware of the sound from a glorious recording by Lyn Larsen made back in the 1990s. Since then the organ has needed extra refurbishment, even quite close to the Convention schedule, I will say that no deficiencies were evident on this day. The theatre and the organ were absolutely spectacular. I soaked up every minute of the time there so that I could remember it later. The organ had a resonance and sound that I had not previously experienced in a big theatre setting. Under the hands of Mark Herman in the afternoon and Richard **Hills** at the evening concert, the organ gave of it best, with an

awesome spectrum of sounds that will long be remembered. What a day! (I could almost have died and gone to heaven!) This day was in itself worth all the costs of getting to the convention.



Foyer at Shea's Buffalo



Mark Herman makes the big Wurlitzer sing
Then came Wednesday. A bus trip again, this time in the
opposite direction from Rochester to the very picturesque
Finger Lakes area (home to the very familiar (Corning Glass

Works). On the way we stopped for lunch in Geneva on the Seneca lakefront, then continued on to Elmira at the bottom end of the lake for the afternoon concert featuring Simon Gledhill at the Clemens Performing Arts Centre. Elmira was the town where Robert Hope-Jones, father of the theatre organ, set up his organ company after emigrating from the UK. Eventually his company was absorbed into the Wurlitzer organisation. The performing arts centre, once a cinema, gets its name from Samuel Langhorn Clemens, a resident of Elmira, better known as author, Mark **Twain**. He was also an early investor in the Hope Jones Company. They say organs attract both water and fire, and the organ at the Centre has been no exception, having been subject to at least two floods in its lifetime, but no fires, fortunately. The organ was essentially a Marr and Colton, but has been refurbished and added to over the years, under the curatorship of organist and organ technician, **David Peckham**, who played the evening concert. The afternoon concert by Simon Gledhill was nothing short of spectacular, with many fine nuances of sound coaxed out of the instrument by a master of the theatre organ. Simon plays with no music, nor does he even have a 'cheat sheet' of notes to remind him of what piece was next on the program. All from memory... unbelievable! He certainly knows how to get the best out of any theatre organ he plays. Again, a major highlight at the convention.

The evening program with **David Peckham** at the organ was none-the-less enjoyable, but different to Simon's as he shared the program with **The Paragon Ragtime Orchestra**. One of the claims to fame of this orchestra is the provision of the very pleasant turn-of-the-century background music to Main Street USA in Disneyland. This was evident in some of the selections they played. **David** and the orchestra worked well both separately and together in the program. A highlight was the short silent film featuring Harold Lloyd in "Get Out and Get Under". This was accompanied jointly by David and the orchestra, with the percussionist from the orchestra providing excellent extra sound effects, such as gun shots and rain from his kettle drum. And so, it was another excellent day's music – so much good stuff piled into one day!

Thursday (July 4th) was the final day of the Convention proper. I attended the **Walt Strony** concert in the afternoon, which was again held at the **Auditorium Theatre**. I had not seen Walt since

the 2013 Convention in Atlanta, and it was interesting to hear how he made the Auditorium organ sound differently to when David Gray played it at the start of the convention. I was reminded that Walt was on the program at the first ATOS Convention I attended some 40 years ago in Los Angeles. We've all been around a while! It was good to catch up with him again this trip.



Walt Strony dressed appropriately for 4th July to play the Auditorium Theatre WurliTzer

I missed the afterglow day on the 5th as we moved on to Seattle. However, reports came back to me that a good time was had by all participants, visiting *Niagara Falls*, having lunch at the *WurliTzer Building* and experiencing a silent movie at the *Riviera Theatre*, *North Tonawanda* under the capable hands of **Clark Wilson**.

Conventions, such as this one, never happen by chance. There is so much activity that goes on behind the scenes by volunteers, organising bussing (which worked well this year) boxed lunches, the record bar and general hospitality staff, etc. They all deserve our grateful thanks. Likewise we give our thanks to the organ technicians and helpers who have prepared each organ to such fine voice to enable each artist to give of their best (and I will say the performance bar was set very high this year) so that we can have several high-powered days enjoying the 'Sounds of Wonder' that we all love.

Many Thanks to Patron - John Atwell for the text & John Weismantel for photos - Editor

TOSA Home Organ Party

including afternoon tea Sunday September 15th, 2:00pm

Peter and Dorothy Robinson

invite TOSA Members

to come and play their many keyboard instruments

Allen Lyn Larsen - 3 manual theatre organ

Lowrey Imperial 2 manual organ

Yamaha AR100 2 manual organ

Conn 3 manual organ

Technics electric piano

in their delightful Music Room

at

13 Harley Crescent, Eastwood Please phone Peter & Dorothy

on 9804 0916 to reserve a seat

places are limited to 40 so please book early

See you there

Members Diary

Next Committee Meetings - Monday September 2nd & Monday October 14th, West Ryde Anglican Church

Sunday 27 October 2:00pm Come along to enjoy

David Gray

entertain you playing the Orion Wurlitzer

Remember this will be David's last Theatre Organ Tour before he pursues his concert piano performances in 2020

Don't miss this very talented musician Please tell your friends & Neighbours and your church, club or local retirement village

Book Tickets - www.tosa.net.au/events/trybooking or Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131 Before 8:00pm please

www.theatreorgansaust.info (history of cinema organ installations in Australasia)

www.omss.org.au (our sister society, Organ Music Society of Sydney OMSS) www.ATOS.org American Theatre Organ Society

Theatre Organ Magic on RNB - FM from Sydney, NSW, Australia.

88.7 FM and 90.3 FM 12 noon first Sunday of the month for one hour

Web Sites of Interest: https://www.facebook.com/tosansw

www.ATOS.org American Theatre Organ Society

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