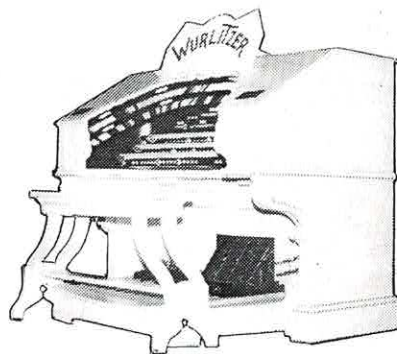
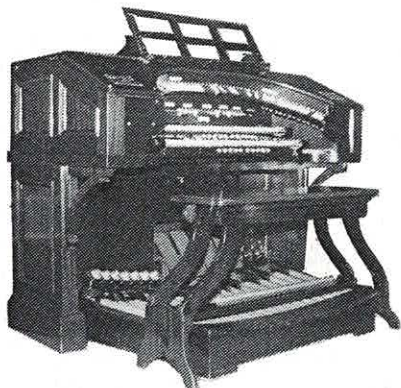


Marrickville Town Hall



Orion Centre Campsie

NEWS

OUR NEXT CONCERT ARTIST

WALT STRONY

plays the
Wurlitzer
theatre
pipe
organ
in the
Orion Centre
Beamish St.
CAMPSIE
at 2.00pm
Sunday
22nd July 1990



BOOKING FORM
WITH THIS ISSUE

TOSA NEWS

JULY 1990

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W. DIVISION) Inc.

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Barry Tooker

CONCERT RECORDINGS:

Bill Schumacher

PROMOTIONS OFFICER:

Kevin Rowland

Please address all correspondence to:

The Secretary
TOSA (NSW Division) Inc.
P.O.Box C462 Clarence Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000.

COMING EVENTS

JULY

- Mon. 2 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Sun. 22 at 2.00pm WALT STRONGY IN CONCERT at Orion Centre WurliTzer. He will also be drawing the winner for T.O.S.A. Guessing Competition.
- Sun. 29 at 2.00pm Rolls Royce Owners Club Afternoon Tea Dance with The Organ, Dance Band & You! FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE SEE PAGE 5.

AUGUST

- Mon. 6 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Tues. 14 at 8.00pm Club Night and Members' Quarterly Meeting at Orion Centre.
- Sun. 26 at 2.00pm Free Concert at Marrickville Town Hall. Artist to be advised

SEPTEMBER

- Mon. 3 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Sun. 30 at 2.00pm A Pay Concert at Marrickville Town Hall. Artist to be advised

OCTOBER

- Mon. 8 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Tues. 16 5.00pm Nominations close for Office Bearers / Committee
- Sun. 28 at 2.00pm Possible Concert Date To be advised.

NOVEMBER

- Mon. 5 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Sun. 25 at 2.00pm Possible Free Concert at Marrickville Town Hall
- Wed. 28 at 8.00pm Annual General Meeting at Marrickville Town Hall.

DECEMBER

- Mon. 3 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Sun. 9 at 2.00pm Tony Fenelon Concert at Orion Centre, Campsie.

REMEMBER TO TUNE-IN TO 2CBA-FM

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT 9.00pm -
For "Theatre Organ Highlights"

FRIDAY NIGHTS AT 7.30pm -
(Repeated Series) "Careers of Australian Theatre Organists"



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

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 1990/91 ?

If not, this will be
your last issue of TOSA NEWS.

CHANGE OF TICKET SECRETARY FOR CONCERT BOOKINGS

Would members please note we have a new Ticket Secretary handling all concert bookings. He is Mr. Ed. Wharton, phone 546 7231. Correspondence or postal bookings should be addressed:

T.O.S.A. Ticket Secretary
P O Box 23
PENSURST N S W 2222

EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

We would like to express our thanks and gratitude to our previous ticket secretary, Eunice Palmer for all her efforts and work for T.O.S.A. whilst in office. Not only did she handle all the bookings for concerts (and train rides), but she also had the responsibility for organising afternoon teas and refreshments at T.O.S.A. concerts.

Like many other honorary jobs which make it possible for T.O.S.A. to function effectively, these tasks made many inroads into Eunice's private time on the homefront.

Many thanks Eunice for a job well done!

LONG TERM MEMBERS OF T.O.S.A. (30 YEARS)

Whilst processing membership renewals, our Membership Secretary noticed from our records that the following have been continuous members of T.O.S.A. for 30 years!!!

Olive Russell
Tom and Ann Halloran
Rod Blackmore

We would especially like to congratulate these members and thank them for their continuous support since joining in 1960.

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEER CASUAL ORGANIST

The Berala Nursing Home (15 St. John Avenue), Berala, have a 2 manual Conn electronic organ with a with horseshoe console. They would very much like to hear from one of our members who would be prepared to help them by playing to their patients for about an hour or so each month.

If anyone can help in this way, please contact:
Matron Moss by phone on 644 9226
or their
Diversional Therapist Maureen Ford

Your help would be greatly appreciated.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the couple who joined our ranks as new members during the month. We hope they will enjoy their time with us. They are: Eric and Shirley West.

OVERSEAS AWARD WINNER

T.O.S.A. Member John Giacchi has won a world wide competition as the best under 21 organist, in a competition run by ATOS - judged in America from a tape - result: A Feature Spot at the ATOS Convention in August, all expenses paid.

Well done John and congratulations!

REPEATED BROADCASTS ON 2CBA-FM "Careers of Australian Theatre Organists" by Frank Ellis

Many of our members will be pleased to know this series of 14 broadcasts is being repeated. Those of you who have missed hearing some broadcasts when they first went to air, will now have the opportunity to catch up.

If anyone has not previously heard the series, then we suggest you make a point of tuning in on Friday evenings at 7-30pm.

WURLITZER PIANO

Recently the society has had the good fortune to be offered a fully reconditioned WurliTzer piano, suitable for use with the Orion Centre WurliTzer organ.

To cover the cost of this item in the short term, two long-time members have generously volunteered to provide an interest free loan for 2 - 3 years. This will allow T.O.S.A. to raise the necessary funds over a reasonable period.

You will be advised of progress in this regard in due course.

AN EVENING OF LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT WITH KAWAI

8pm Wednesday, 1st August 1990
at Brashs Keyboard Store, 2nd Floor,
102-104 Victoria Road, Parramatta.

This will feature their latest SR range of organs as well as digital pianos and modules. Head demonstrator Marty Wocester will be playing music in all styles and there will be short talks on things new in the organ world - something for everyone. There will also be a short talk and demonstration on midi.

Light refreshments will be provided by Brashs and informality will be the key for the evening.

Car parking spaces will be available on the property.

Interested members should phone Graham Lockwood on 683 3210 as soon as possible (and no later than 18th July) for an invitation for you and your family (or companion).

If required Graham can also be contacted by fax on 630 6703.

TOSA NEWS

JULY 1990

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

With reference to the letter from Mr Robertson in the June issue of TOSA NEWS, I am somewhat concerned at the implications contained in that letter as to a "replacement" for concert compere Frank Ellis.

May I ask Mr Robertson if he is referring to me? After all, I have been presenting "Theatre Organ Highlights" (a program superbly pioneered by Frank) on 2CBA for some three years. Is this perhaps the next step up the T.O.S.A. corporate ladder for me?

Seriously, if Mr Robertson is referring to several recent concerts compered by other persons, it is my understanding that these were done with Frank's full knowledge and the approval of the committee.

In conclusion, may I suggest that any member wishing to make a point in TOSA NEWS should have the intestinal fortitude and common courtesy to be specific and not indulge in "over-the-back-fence", gossip-style innuendo. There is enough verbal gossip in T.O.S.A. as it is, without creating additional problems through the pages of TOSA NEWS.

Keep up the good work on a most interesting and informative newsletter.

Yours faithfully

Cliff Bingham.

Dear TOSA,

I find the monthly news bulletins interesting but I am frustrated because I can't get to the recitals etc. In a word there is not that much material relevant to country subscribers.

If space permits could you include now and then, details of noteworthy organs, two of which must be those at Marrickville and Campsie? No doubt you have already done this but I'm sure newer members (and older ones who have forgotten) would be delighted to muse about those Tubas, Strings, and Tibias. What I visualise would be comprehensive specifications showing what stops are on what manuals, couplers, second touch items, special features, including an explanation of any gizmos which are not self evident. Maybe it would take two issues to do justice to an organ. Fine!

Yours faithfully

F.C.Frendin

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Do we have any suitably qualified members who are willing to supply suitable [and factually researched] articles along the above lines?

Dear Editor,

Regarding the committee's recent "re-activated" policy on controversial matters and reviews in TOSA NEWS, I was most surprised and disappointed in the inclusion of Mr Russell Roberson's letter in the last issue of our newsletter.

As I am the only other person who has compered any programmes for the society recently, I have naturally taken offence at his personal innuendo, obviously made for my benefit.

I would like Mr Robertson to realise that on the occasions I have appeared at concerts, it has been with the full authority of TOSA Committee. I compered the Jonas Nordwall performance as I was asked by the committee to fill in for Mr Ellis who had recently spent time in hospital. Due to a breakdown in communication, I suffered the embarrassment of Mr Ellis arriving on the day to attend to his usual job - the committee having not informed him of their decision. This created an unfortunate situation, which could have been avoided had Mr Ellis been informed beforehand.

At the request of Mr Robert Wolfe's manager in writing to the committee, I was asked to attend to the M.C. work for the two performances in February. Mr Ellis was present at the committee meeting when this letter was read. He stated that on these two occasions, he would not mind stepping aside.

There is little more I can say except that Mr Robertson should have researched his facts, before putting pen to paper. The vindictive approach of his letter is not one that members should welcome in their newsletter and I feel the editor should have considered this factor before going to press.

I welcome any opportunity to serve the membership and committee in any way I can. The society should not be based on "personalities" as this has been its downfall in the past. I am all for constructive criticism, but not comments contrived round personal vindictive comment and lacking factual information.

Respectfully Yours

John W. Parker

Series: "TOWARDS BETTER ORGAN PLAYING"

This series has been written by one of our members using the pseudonym or nom-de-plume 'John Martin'. The reasons for this are known to your Editor and understood. There are however, members of Committee who believe that articles and letters published in TOSA NEWS should only be included when accompanied by member/author's [real] name/s.

If/when this policy is formalised, it may not be possible for this series to be continued.

Editor

JULY 1990

CONCERT REPORT IAN DAVIES AT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL Sunday 27th May, 1990

By John C. Harrison

I couldn't bear the thought of passing over another Ian Davies concert with the added opportunity of writing a 'Concert Report', for words, once they are written have a life of their own. ".....so, here go my impressions of what I can come up with myself, wish me luck.....".***

Ian Davies is a wonderfully entertaining artist with a wealth of experience from the zenith of the Theatre Organ Sound era, that still holds good today, and that others might do well to copy. Ian gave us an afternoon of excellent music from the twenties to the present day, in his own inimitable style.

Introduced with minimum preamble by our venerable compere, Frank Ellis, (looking as if he would be quite at home doing this job on stage at the London Palladium), Ian was greeted by an enthusiastic audience.

He may sign on and off with 'Cruising Down the River', but he certainly never leads us 'up the garden path', except in a musical escapade which never fails to please. Add to this his insatiable good humour and it is little wonder he has such a large following.

'McNamara's Band' was followed by an excellent Jerome Kern selection, which included one of my favourites: 'Dearly Beloved'. Ian then came up with something unusual and interesting in 'Lament of the Cherokee Indians', then a couple of Dorothy Lamour hits.

'Shortnin' Bread' and 'Dancing Tambourines' brought us to a regular feature of an Ian Davies concert, the Grand Organ Sound with 'Aida March' and 'Jerusalem'.

A bracket of catchy numbers starting with 'Mountain Greenery', brought us all too quickly to the interval, after which the raffle was drawn by Ian's only sister, who had travelled interstate to be here today.

Ian was really in form with his 'South Pacific' selection. Another unusually interesting piece, 'The Enchanted Sea', and onto four separate but comprehensive brackets including 'Al Jolson Hits', 'Country and Western'. Then 'City Name' songs including 'Song of India', ending with 'No Business Like Show Business', and an encore March 'Sons of The Sea'.

The WurliTzer was sounding good too, which was a compliment to today's artist. Having attended my first of many concerts here back in 1983, (Ashley Miller), I just love the way that this installation 'speaks'. Here's hoping we don't lose this configuration to the Council plans for remodelling the hall's interior.

Isn't it marvellous that we still have a performing artist in the form of Ian Davies, to show us and remind us of the high standards that existed in the hands of musicians playing the Theatre Organ during its golden age? Thank you Ian, thank you very much.

Ian's two appearances on the Hayden Orpheum Picture Palace WurliTzer at Cremorne, (during intervals) must have brought back many fond memories. Ian graciously agreed to 'stand in' for Neil Jensen whilst Neil completed an interstate concert engagement in Adelaide.

Unfortunately we are none of us getting any younger, and even to consider a cameo spot entails a lot of hard work. It will be a great loss to the field of entertainment when Ian withdraws from making public appearances 'In Concert', as he is probably the last of many (who is still concertising) who were initially instrumental in helping make this form of entertainment so popular.

***Quoted by David Smith. Marrickville Town Hall, August 1985 when introducing his 'March in the Key of C'.

ADVERTISEMENT

CONCERT IN SERIES "MARSDEN MUSIC"

at Marsden Road, Uniting Church, Carlingford.
Sunday, 29th July, 1990 at 2.00pm

The Organist for this afternoon's programme
will be Cliff Bingham
at the Rodgers electronic organ

The program will include popular, light classical
and some sacred music.

All are invited

Admission \$10.

**HAVE YOU RENEWED
YOUR MEMBERSHIP
FOR 1990/91 ?**

**If not, this will be
your last issue of TOSA NEWS.**

JULY 1990

U.S. THEATRE ORGAN SAFARI - Part 4

This is the concluding article in an occasionally published series commenced in October 1989 issue.

The last day of the 1989 Detroit Convention consisted of "afterglow" events. One had a choice of going to Frankenmuth (Michigan's Little Bavaria) or going to south west Michigan for more theatre organ, I opted for the latter.

Our first stop was in Grand Rapids where we were to have lunch at "Good Time Charley's" Restaurant. Owner/organist Charlie Balogh entertained us on the 3/31 WurliTzer occasionally augmented by a pianist or Kurzweil synthesiser. The building was a typical "Pizza Parlour" style layout with unenclosed percussions and pedal pipes etc.

The organ was originally in the Stanley Theatre, New Jersey and has a striking mahogany console. It is actually a four-manual shell but with only 3 manuals, which allowed sufficient space for it to control 25 ranks in its original home. Due to the noise from the 300 or so people in there, I really only got to hear the louder ranks. Beside serving food, most of the employees sing or play a musical instrument themselves. We were treated to some fine entertainment from some really talented people.

Our next stop was the town with that famous name, Kalamazoo. Kalamazoo had made the headlines earlier in the week when Elvis Presley was reportedly seen in the local 7-11 store! A few of us walked there for coffee, but no sign of him!

The concert here was Rob Richards at the State Theatre's 3/13 Barton. The State is a beautiful atmospheric theatre which is very much like our own Capitol Theatre both in appearance and that it is in need of restoration. The organ however, is in good condition and fills the auditorium with its very pleasant sounds.

Rob Richards is a capable musician and displayed some good ideas with his duets using a Yamaha FX-20 as Rhythm and accompaniment to the organ. He also cued a silent film and did a "Follow the Bouncing Ball" sing-a-long led by John Giarding, a talented tenor who performs regularly with Rob. This was the last event of the convention.

Tony and I rented a car and drove through Canada and made our way to New York State, where we stopped in the little town of North Tonawanda. Early this century, North Tonawanda was the centre of the American Mechanical Music Industry and the many companies in the town produced Carousels, Band Organs, Orchestriions and Player Pianos supplying the entire U.S. market.

Today, all that remains of this once thriving industry is an excellent museum in the former Hirschell carousel factory.

During the early 'teens WurliTzer took over many of the town's smaller firms and expanded their premises and product range considerably, so much so, that when they turned their attention to large theatre organ manufacture, they were able to build one complete organ per day by 1926. The WurliTzer factory is still there, complete with its large tower and neon "WurliTzer" sign along with the unchanged facade. Today it is called "WurliTzer Industrial Park" and contains among

its tenants a bakery, furniture repair shop and music store. The rail depot from which over 2000 organs were shipped, has become overgrown, but one can still see where the railway tracks were.

The restored home of the late Fanny WurliTzer is nearby and is now used as a private club by the North Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce.

A few days later we were in New York City and decided to take the guided tour of the "Radio City Music Hall". This fabulous Art Deco behemoth should be on everyone's "must see" list when in New York City. It seats over 6000 and contains one of the world's largest and best equipped stages. The music hall is actually part of the enormous Rockefeller Centre which takes up at least two city blocks.

In its earlier days the centre boasted no less than FOUR WurliTzer organs, a 4/58 in the music hall (the largest organ built by WurliTzer), a 4/34 in the smaller "Centre Theatre", a 3/14 in the broadcast studio and a 3/16 in the Rockefeller Centre "Rainbow Room". The 4/58 is the only one left and an inspection of one of its two consoles is part of the very comprehensive guided tour provided by the Music Hall of this fascinating palace.

The last organ we encountered on this trip was the famous 6 manual 469 rank instrument in the Wannamaker Store in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Wannamaker Store was originally built in 1876 and soon expanded to become Philadelphia's biggest privately owned building. It's like a giant David Jones department store!

In the centre of the building is the magnificent "Grand Court" which rises 4 floors and has 6 galleries. The organ was installed in 1911 and takes up one end, rising up 3 stories, with an Echo Division opposite on the fourth floor. The main organ has 8 Divisions. The total number of pipes in the organ is 30,067 on wind pressures from 5 to 27 inches water gauge. These are played from a console with six manuals and 964 other controls (e.g. stop tabs, pistons etc.). One unexpected feature of this instrument is the comprehensive tonal and non-tonal percussion section,

The organ today is suffering from neglect as there is only one full time organbuilder taking care of the instrument and he is flat out keeping it in tune, let alone fixing dead notes etc.

Visitors to Philadelphia may hear the organ twice daily at noon and 3pm.

I hope you have found this series interesting despite its irregularity in publication and I look forward to writing for you again soon.

Nick Lang

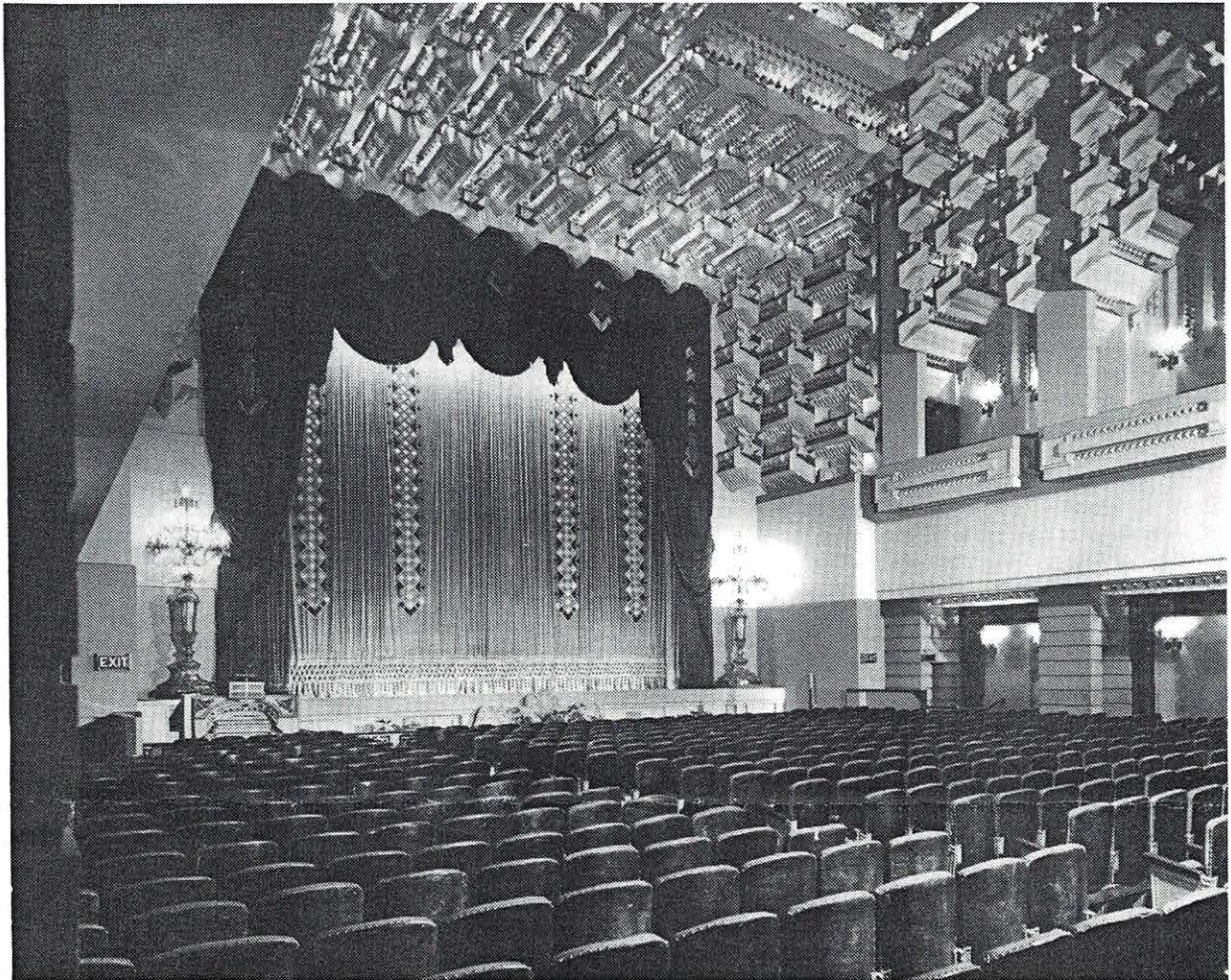
EDITOR'S NOTE:

Thank you Nick for your time and effort in doing this series and letting us learn of your experiences during what must have been a very rewarding trip. Personally I have enjoyed reading your occasional articles very much.

Peter Bidencope

THEATRE ORGAN HERITAGE
Capitol Theatre, Melbourne, Victoria.

By Ian Hanson

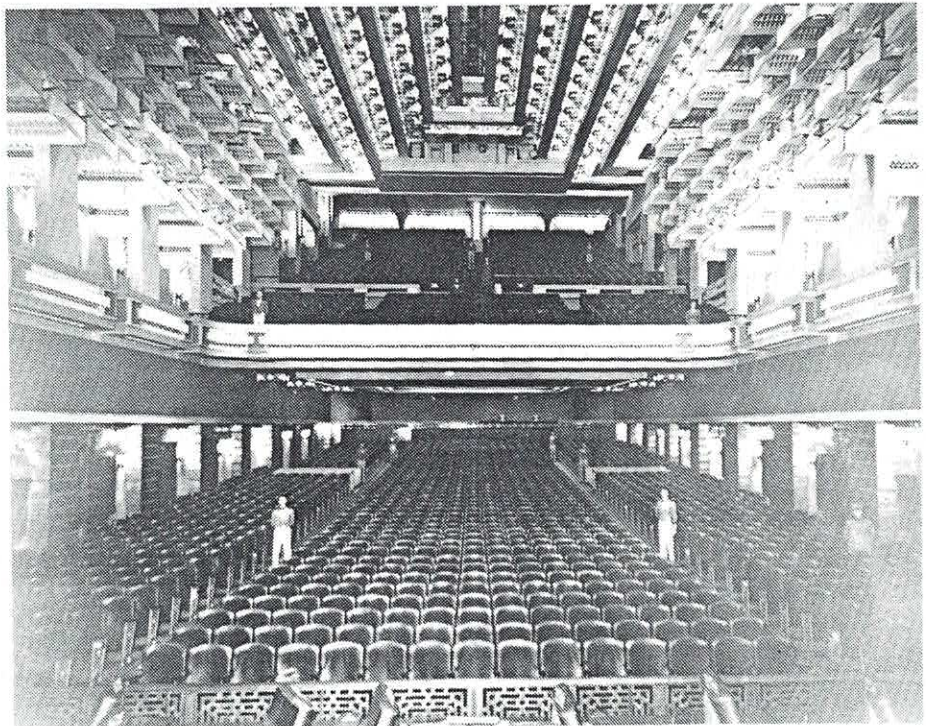


IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH, TAKEN IN 1950, THE TRUE ATMOSPHERE OF MELBOURNE'S CAPITOL IS CAPTURED. THE WURLITZER CAN BE SEEN TO THE LEFT.

Photo: Author's Collection.

AUDITORIUM VIEW
LOOKING BACK
FROM THE STAGE

Photo: Author's Collection.



JULY 1990

THEATRE ORGAN HERITAGE - Capitol Theatre, Melbourne - Continued

Walter Burley-Griffin is remembered as the noted American architect and town-planner who designed the City of Canberra. Burley-Griffin also designed several theatres, which began in Sydney in 1914 with the completion of the Australian Picture Palace. Burley-Griffin's truly remarkable edifice was Melbourne's Capitol Theatre, which was completed in 1924, after more than four years on the drawing board.

It was all stops out on that eventful night of November 7, 1924 when a large orchestra under the baton of Sam R. White rose up from the depths on the city's first hydraulic orchestral stage. Alongside rose Horace Weber at, what was for a number of years, Australia's largest Wurlitzer pipe organ.

The Capitol Wurlitzer was truly unique, it possessed a large 3 manual console with 15 ranks of pipes. A large battery of percussions included a marimba harp and a piano, which was housed in one of the organ chambers. The reed section in this instrument was notable for its exceptional quality of tone. The organ also came with a set of 32' diaphone pipes and the two chambers were originally built high up in the roof and spoke through the unusual geometrical plaster shapes of the ceiling. Being a great distance from the patrons, most of the sound from the organ could only be heard in the balcony and was considered unsatisfactory.

About 1928/29 the organ was dismantled from its lofty position and placed in new chambers considerably lower down near the proscenium. This was a vast improvement and the organ sound filled the theatre adequately.

Horace Weber was the Capitol's first resident organist and remained at the post until 1929, when he accepted engagements at other theatres, which included the opulent State Theatre in Sydney.

Following completion of the re-installation of the Wurlitzer organ, the Capitol management decided to completely re-vamp its musical and stage presentations. American organist, Newell Alton, who had opened the Wurlitzer at the Los Angeles Orpheum Theatre was brought out specially for the Capitol, and personality conductor, Jan Rubini was commissioned to form a new orchestra. Rubini's stay was only brief and later he was engaged at Hoyts Regent in Sydney and later still was featured in the orchestra of Fox Theatre, San Francisco.

The organ console by this time lost its polished natural timber finish and was painted in white. Several years later, it was again decorated by the addition of ornate wood mouldings.

In 1930, management of the theatre changed hands. The three Phillips brothers who were chiefly responsible for the theatre's completion decided to quit the Capitol, no doubt due to enormous running costs made worse by new competition, namely the Regent and State Theatres, which both seated 3,500 each. A ten year lease was granted to Paramount Pictures who were attempting to establish their own chain of Paramount-Publix Theatres. (This was the largest chain of theatres in the U.S.A. at the time and a number of these theatres had specially built Wurlitzer organs, known as the "Publix" No.1 and later No.2 models etc.).



AMERICAN ORGANIST - NEWELL ALTON SEATED AT THE CONSOLE IN 1929. ALTON WAS THE CAPITOL'S ONLY "SINGING" ORGANIST!
Photo - Mitchell Library.

Other organists who appeared in the 1930's were Percy Burraston, who held a brief sojourn in 1931, before going to Sydney to open the Burwood Palatial 3/10 Christie. Horace Weber returned during the years of 1933/34. Weber was again featured some years later for a period of six years. In a brochure published for the closing of the Capitol Wurlitzer, in 1963, Hal Stead is shown as organist from 1934-38.

With dazzling stage prologues in the 1930's, the organ was featured at every session - six days a week. It was noted that Bert Howell's stage band was appearing followed later by Isador Goodman.

Prior to 1940, the usual arrangements at the Capitol saw Horace Weber playing for each of the three daily shows, whilst the stage band only appeared at the afternoon and evening sessions.

During 1940, Paramount did not wish to continue their lease on the large theatre, which originally housed 2,137 patrons. Subsequently the Capitol passed to Hoyts Theatres Ltd., but as this company already conducted a number of other theatres in the city, in particular the Regent, which had its own orchestra, then the Capitol was seen as an over expensive burden and subsequently stage prologues and the stage band were abolished, but the organ remained in use under the hands of ex Plaza organist, Mervyn Welch.

One of the most famous of all Australian theatre organists was Stanfield Holiday, who had previously played at the Ambassadors, Perth. Holiday appeared at the Capitol from 1944 to 1953, at which point he gave innumerable broadcasts as well as being featured daily. His term was broken briefly in the late 1940's when he appeared at the Adelaide Regent.

Continued on Page 9

JULY 1990

THEATRE ORGAN HERITAGE - Capitol Theatre, Melbourne - Continued.

The last appointment to the Capitol Wurlitzer came in 1953, when Stanfield Holiday was moved to the Regent and Ian Davies moved into the Capitol. Ian continued the tradition established by his predecessors and broadcast the instrument many times during his years as organist there. Ian Davies was always identified by his signature tune "Cruising Down the River".



IAN DAVIES SEATED AT THE CONSOLE CIRCA 1954.
Photo Authors Collection.



HORACE WEBER SHOWN HERE AT THE CONSOLE DURING THE FINAL CONCERT, 17/11/1963.

Photo from a colour slide by Brian Pearson.

It was rather unfortunate that Cinemascope - the newfangled wide screen process introduced to the Capitol in 1954, was to force the Wurlitzer off its hoist and moved it on to the floor, just to the left of the stage.

The introduction of television in 1956 saw attendances, particularly at the Capitol, rapidly diminish and this brought further cuts which included the demise of the Wurlitzer. In a series of articles which Ian Davies wrote in this journal some time ago, he recalled the fact that during his last week at the Capitol, in 1958, he was often playing for a mere 10 patrons, whereas by contrast only 12 months or so previously, Ian had been playing regularly to full houses.

Despite the cessation of the organ, the instrument remained at the theatre for a number of years. During 1963, the Capitol itself was threatened with closure. A then very young Victorian Division of the Theatre Organ Society made an offer to purchase the disused, but still playable instrument from Hoyts. Their offer was accepted and permission was granted to hold a final farewell concert. This took place on Sunday, November 17, 1963. On the final day, Horace Weber, who had originally opened the organ, returned to close it, after a period of some 40 years, in which he had been organist for three terms of engagement which totalled 13 years! Two organists were heard on that afternoon, the other being Gordon Hamilton.

The organ was then removed in earnest, as the theatre ceased trading in February, 1964. The constant threat of demolition was averted and the Capitol was re-opened in December, 1965, resplendent, but smaller and without the orchestral and organ embellishments which made it so famous.

The organ was given a new home in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton, where it was restored and re-dedicated at the Dendy Theatre in April, 1967, by T.O.S.A. members.

Any review of the Melbourne Capitol is not complete without some mention being made of its incredible lighting which constantly changed colours. All lighting was indirect and was simply unbelievable in its effect. The manager of the theatre told the writer in 1982, that it took 2 electricians, three weeks to change all the lamps! Regrettably, the Capitol was closed last December and may be converted to retail premises.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Bruce Ardley, Les Tod and Commercial Photographic Company.

CAPITOL THEATRE - MELBOURNE

3/15 WURLITZER

Main Chamber

Tuba Horn
Diaphonic Diapason
Clarinet
String
Viol D'Orchestra
Viol Celeste
Flute
Vox Humana
Chrysoglott

Solo Chamber

Trumpet
Tibia Clausa
Orchestral Oboe
Kinura
Saxophone
Oboe Horn
Quintadena
Percussions
and Sound Effects

JULY 1990

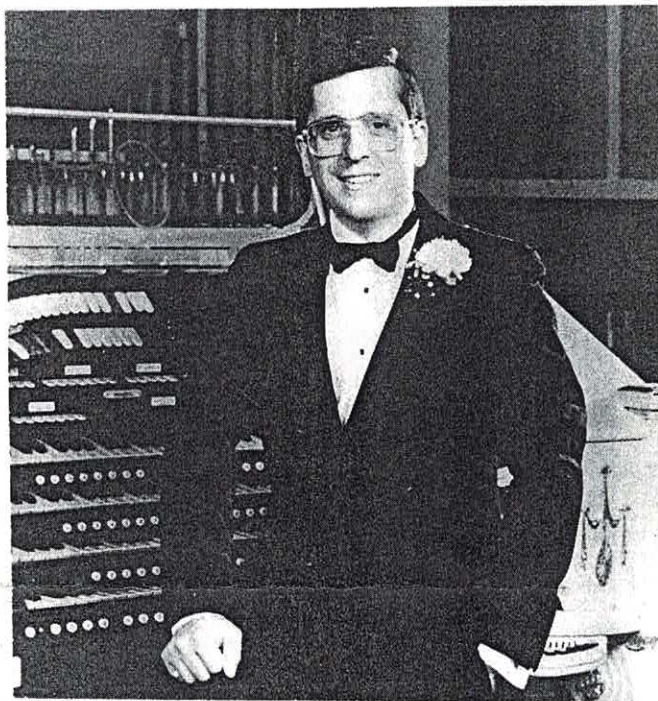
A Profile of WALT STRONY

Our next artist to entertain you
at the Orion Centre Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
on Sunday, 22nd July, 1990 at 2-00pm

Walt Strony is one of only a few American organists who have established themselves in the worlds of both classical and theatre organ music. He made his public debut at the age of 18 and has since won a tremendous following throughout the world. He has appeared in programs from coast to coast in the United States and has performed extensively in Japan, Australia, England and Canada. Walt has been invited to perform on numerous occasions for conventions of the American Theatre Organ Society and the American Guild of Organists. Thus far in his relatively young career, he has made ten recordings, each highly acclaimed. He recently released the first ever live organ concert video, and is currently working on a compact disc which is due to be released later this year.

Walt Strony was born in 1955 in Chicago, Illinois. He began his music studies at the age of seven and was soon making minor concert and television appearances. His first and only theatre organ teacher was Al Melgard, a noted theatre organist from the 1920's who was organist at the Chicago Stadium, which houses the largest theatre organ in the world. Walt's formal classical training was with Herbert L. White at the Sherwood Music School in Chicago and with Karel Paukert at Northwestern University. He also studied piano with Giulio Favario, associate conductor of the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

He is remembered by many Americans for his 10 year engagement playing the theatre pipe organ at the Organ Stop Pizza Restaurant in Phoenix, Arizona, where he performed for millions of people. This famous restaurant was considered by many to be the flagship of this distinctly American institution.



In between his hectic concert, recording and composing schedule, he is organist and choir director at Augustana Lutheran Church in Phoenix, and is a consultant for Arizona Organ Associates, the Arizona representatives for the Allen Digital Computer Organ. He also teaches advanced organ on a limited basis. In his spare time, he is restoring a rare art deco house in a historic Phoenix neighbourhood.

One reviewer noted that "Strony has become one of the rare breed of today's younger theatre organists to have developed a style uniquely his own. While looking backwards respectfully to the masters of the theatre organ tradition, he manages to look forward with a refreshing approach in all his musical arrangements. It is a style that is inventive, harmonically interesting, and above all, right for today."