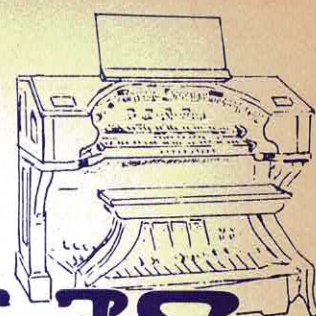
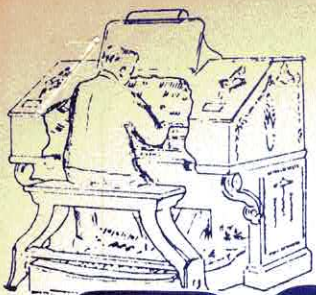


PRICE 40 cents

Volume 14; No.1

January, 1976



EDITOR.

John Atkinson, 46 Lily Street, Allawah, 2218.  
587 3374

# T.O.S.A. NEWS

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

ADDRESS BOX A584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000

REGISTERED FOR POSTING AS A PERIODICAL—CATEGORY B

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IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION FOR 1976 THEN YOU ARE AN UNFINANCIAL MEMBER AND THIS WILL BE YOUR LAST COPY OF TOSA NEWS -- PLEASE SEE PAGE SIX FOR A MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM -- DONT MISS OUT ON AN EXCITING YEAR IN 1976.....

This month begins Volume 14 with a new Titlepage. Some copies will be over printed on the old titlepage for economy. If you receive one of these please understand that we print the front page in lots of 12 months at a time and that next month we will be using only the new frontpages having used up all the previously printed pages. The title art work is by your printing committee and the two console line drawings are of the organs which the society owns namely the ex Capitol Theatre 3/15 Wurlitzer at present in storage and subject to a lot of work by members to refurbish in preparation for a reinstallation in a suitable location and the ex-Prince Edward Theatre 2/10 Wurlitzer installed in the Marrickville Town Hall. The line drawings of the organs are by Barry Tooker and we thank him for his efforts.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

17th ~~17th~~ 16. Tuesday.

### THEATRE ORGAN SPECTACULAR

A Theatre organ spectacular is being organised by the Theatre Organ Society to take place in the Chatswood Civic Centre. It is planned to present a number of electronic organs with different organists in a Spectacular similar to those that have been previously held in Sydney Town Hall and staged last year in the Bankstown Civic Centre. The final announcements regarding this function will be in this magazine next month when they are made known to us.

# WANTED

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### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY cont.

7th March, 1976 - FREE SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT AT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL.



### 16. - 19th April THE FUNTASTIC 5th THEATRE ORGAN CONVENTION

It can now be announced that the guest organist for the Convention to be held in Sydney next Eastertime will be the American Organist, from Portland, Oregon - JONAS NORDWALL.

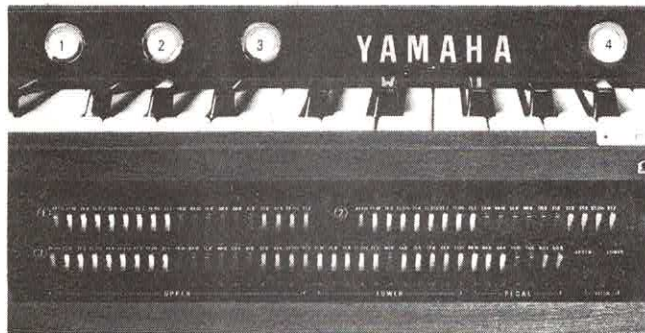
Jonas is one of the most musical young organists on the present music scene. He has played for almost every type of occasion from inaugural organ recitals to skating rinks. After his mother taught him the notes on the piano when he was three an interest began in the accordion and at age four began formal instruction on the instrument. After being exposed to organ through recordings, TV and a local rink he began playing on his own when a neighbour acquired an organ store. His classical organ instruction began at twelve and his pop training was strickly on his own, through influence from local performers and records. He received his bachelor of Music degree from the University of Portland and has since studied with Frederick Geoghegen in Toronto. Jonas was an artist at the 1966 Portland ATOS Convention and the 1971 Seattle Convention too. He is currently also resident organist at the "Organ Grinder" Pizza Palace.

Next Month we will include with this Newsheet an application form for tickets which we would suggest you purchase fairly promptly as this year's convention promises to be the most varied and entertaining ever held in Sydney.

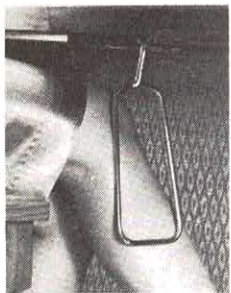
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## REVIEWS

The review for the Christmas Cabaret is not to hand at the time of typing this Newsheet (26th December, 1975) but a small postscript from Jack and Pearl Lawson is included here to keep the record straight.

Jack and Pearl Lawson wish to thank Pam Tooker, John and Robert Weismantel and Steve McDonald for all the help they gave in decorating Marrickville Town Hall for the Christmas Cabaret.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting held at the Burwood Methodist Congregational Church began at 8pm with an address of welcome from President Tom, who declared the meeting open and it was immediately pointed out by Jack Lawson that as in the previous year, there may be insufficient members present to form a quorum. After some discussion (not 1½ hours as on previous occasion) the majority of members present thought that the meeting should proceed and Frank Ellis was duly appointed returning officer with two scrutineers, counting of the votes of those present as well as numerous postal votes proceeded, and at this point 8.25, the business meeting was adjourned to listen to our member David Sacre play the 2/10 Wurlitzer and in spite of the organ being in need of a good tuning the entertainment was well received. It gave members an opportunity to hear an instrument which we will be featuring during our 1976 Fantastic Fifth Theatre Organ Convention. Our thanks to David for a well played and varied programme of music.

Then the business meeting proceeded once again with last year's minutes (or was it?) and the election of officers resulted in:

President: Tom Halloran, Vice President: Des Russell, Herbert Wyatt,  
Secretary: Steve McDonald, Treasurer: Mark Gabriel, Minute Secretary:  
Betty Weismantel, News Editor: John Atkinson, Committee: Barry Tooker,  
Alan Misdale, Bill Schumacher, Robert Gliddon, John Weismantel and  
Kevin Eadie.

All motions as they appeared in these pages during past months were then put to the members and all resulted in a vote in the negative. The motion regarding the Capitol Organ was lost due to lack of a seconder. Further discussion then took place regarding specific Home Organ Parties which have not been reviewed in these pages and especially mentioned was that insufficient credit is given to those who organise and run home organ parties and their financial aspect and the Candy Bar and the matter was once again reinforced, and is stated here, that if information is received by the Editor then it can be printed. Some commitments were entered into by people present ~~by~~ at the time of this Newsheet being printed (26th December, 1975) their work has not been received. Two members, Ian Hanson and Robert Weismantel offered to handle reviews of Home Organ Parties and concerts.

It was announced during the meeting that the organising of working parties on the Capitol Organ will be taken over by Ernie Vale from Barry Tooker and Ernie told the meeting that with the help of the committee he will do his best to get work moving in the New Year.

Ian Cameron had offered his services and facilities to act as custodian of the Society's files & archives. Anyone holding any past records of the Society is asked to contact Ian through the Committee and hand on this information for safe keeping. It was further decided not to allow the \$1 reduction in membership for new member introductions in future. A vote of thanks was unanimously carried to Phyllis Wilson for her work in organising practice times at Marrickville Town Hall. Tom Halloran for a hard working President and a motion was carried regarding the Auditor's acceptance of the Treasurer's report.

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A letter has been received in relation to the Annual General Meeting from Jack Lawson which will be passed to the committee for consideration.

### LETTER FROM MEMBER

#### The Capitol Organ

At the recent Annual General Meeting of the Society the President announced that I had agreed to organise some work parties on the organ. I would like to make it quite clear to members from the outset that I see my role as one of co-ordinator of members and friends to carry out various restoration projects. I do not intend to take the full responsibility for everything that is done to, or happens to, the organ during its restoration and re-installation because whilst I am a Theatre Organ Enthusiast I am not an expert on its construction and workings. In my opinion the responsibility for the restoration programme lies with the executive and it is they who must make the decisions on how it is restored and where it is installed. To this end I feel that all negotiations for installation must be done through the executive.

What I hope to achieve is to take an inventory of the organ and its whereabouts which will enable some degree of control of its whereabouts at all times. Then with the co-operation of the executive establish a programme of restoration and an estimate of materials required. Having done this it should then be possible to establish work groups not only in the Metropolitan area but with our enthusiastic members in Newcastle, Orange etc. Therefore I ask members to bear with me for a short while until a programme is worked out.

I ask members also to realise that some things are bound to go wrong between now and the glorious day when we are able to listen to the 3/15 in its new location but if we all work to-gether most problems will be ~~in~~ minimised and we will have enjoyed the taks of restoration. Rather than call for names and addresses at this stage I propose to establish a programme after which I will call for names and addresses at which time members should receive a fairly positive response as to how and when they can help.

I would like to add that the past years have not been entirely idle because when re-stacking some of the pieces last Thursday I noted that one of the small chests was restored in 1973 by Stewart McKern it being one of several he has worked on. The Tookers have a chest on which they are working and in the past several work parties have been organised by them. I remember on more than one occasion Barry Tooker showing members the progress on various parts of the organ. Jack Lawson is working on Bottom Boards and we have had several work parties at my place with the assistance of enthusiastic members so that work on the console has commenced. To date 66 stop motors have been recovered and a further 60 have been allotted to a member for covering.

Lets all look forward to a year of progress in 1976 and towards the National Convention at Easter.

Regards, Ernie Vale.

The photograph opposite is Autographed in the corner 'Yours sincerely, E. 'Manny' Aarons, Organist "State" Theatre, Sydney'. It is a much younger Manny Aarons than most of us will remember, he having been resident organist at the "State" for over 20 years. More astute readers will recognize, however, that the console is our "Capitol" Wurlitzer 3/15, and not the "State" 4/21. 'Manny' often exchanged organs for short periods between Union Theatres two prestige houses and is known to have accoustically preferred the "Capitol" organ. Note the dark wood of the console and the rail behind the organist's bench."

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Send to: The Membership Secretary,  
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Box A584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000.

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FLASHBACKS - Ian Cameron

THE U.S. ORGAN - continued from December issue.

Buying an organ is a more complicated task than buying an automobile, and if one becomes too much involved, it may actually reach the proportions of an avocation. William H. Barnes, for instance, author of 'The Contemporary American Organ', had taken up the avocation to the point of installing organs for other persons and a most unusual one for himself.

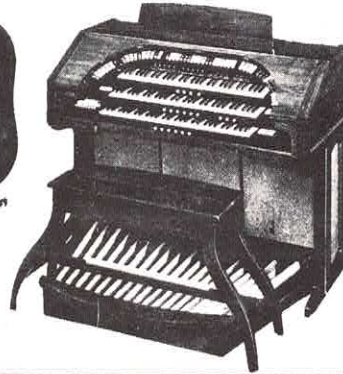
Among conservative builders who should be visited, while organ shopping is the Austin Organ Co., remarkable alike for the tone of its instruments as well as for its mechanical ingenuity. It is said that Austin owns more patents covering organ mechanisms than any other manufacturer in the country. In 1930, they installed fifty five organs for about \$900,000. Their premier instruments include those in the Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City; the Cathedral of All Saints, Albany; the fine open air organ in Balboa Park, San Diego and that given by Cyrus H.K. Curtis to the City Hall, Portland Maine. The thriving theatre organ business is conducted by the W.W. Kimball Co., notably in Chicago. Their installation at Roxy Theatre, Manhattan, is played by the versatile Lew White. Among the conservatives also is Welte-Tripp. Very fine liturgical work is done by George Kilgen & Son, Inc. (mirabile Auditu), notably the organ in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Manhattan. Casavant Freres of Canada has sold a good many organs in this country and is rated among the finest builders in the world.

So much for conservatism. So much for dignity and form. American pride would suffer a bad jolt were we not the possessors of the largest organ in the world. As a matter of fact we have the two largest, the first being that in Wanamaker's store, Philadelphia, built by the Art Organ Co. of Los Angeles for the World's Fair in St. Louis in 1903, where it acquired a reputation for shaking plaster from the walls. Since then, it has been made larger by Wanamaker's own organ shop, and its more voluminous than ever. Its six manual keyboards have been played by almost every great organist in the world. Its size will be exceeded by an organ now building in the Atlantic City Convention Hall under the direction of Senator - Architect Emerson L. Richards. This Midmer-Losh mammoth will have 35,000 pipes comprising no less than 1,000 different stops to be played on seven keyboards for the hands and one for the feet. The practicality of it has not yet been proved. The company claiming to have the biggest capacity of production is M.P. Moller, Inc. of Hagerstown, Maryland, capable of outstripping the Wurlitzer pace of one organ a day. Mr. Moller at seventy six is the oldest active organ builder in the country.

And again, American pride would suffer a severe jolt had we developed nothing more progressive in organs than what has arisen from English tradition. But here we are saved by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Co. to whom it is now time to return.

There is no immutable reason why an organ should be considered correct merely because it is classic, or even merely because it is English. Electrification has probably revolutionized the organ more drastically than conservative builders has as yet realised. For instance, the conventional divisions into great, swell, and choir were at one time mechanically necessary; today, the organ keyboard is in the nature of a telephone exchange, and conceivably more resources can be tapped by grouping the stops in some other manner than that which has been outlined. An outstanding diapason structure is academically desirable, but the modern arts are notoriously anti-academic, and organists are very likely to join this parade in the near future. Of such a probability, the Wurlitzers are very well aware. They have made a bold step into the possible future. They have developed an esthetic of their own, the principles of which they have drawn from the contemporary civilization around them. They stem directly from Hope-Jones, and are consequently romantic; for form they have substituted color, for contrapuntal strength they have substituted drama and song. But along with this romanticism, and out of it, they have developed that variety typical of modern life and expressible by an almost infinite linking of organ voices.





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This is achieved by a mechanical perfection capable of the most subtle and surprising turns. If, as conservatives maintain, the character of their ensemble is not suited to formal, ascetic music, it is popular with parishioners nevertheless. It is noteworthy that those who like the Wurlitzer organ are unable to get a long with any other. This is by way of contrast to the organs of other builders, between whose tones it is very difficult for the wayward amateur to distinguish.

In a sense therefore, the Wurlitzer company deserves to be called "American" even more than Aeolian; their organs have been listened to by more Americans than those of any other manufacturer; they have made more converts to the organ, they have stirred more emotions. The Wurlitzer has also a quality of universality, for its builders are able to adapt their tonal designs to many different requirements, the residence organs being quite distinct from those installed in churches. But if a single word is to be found for the Hope-Jones--Wurlitzer tendency, it is 'orchestral'. Treating the diapason as a blending stop, they have called all manner of other stops into the great organ. The stops are all interlinked or unified. The result has not been short of the spectacular. Paramount; Jesse Crawford, holding the fort at the corner of Broadway and Forty-third Street, Manhattan, is the dazzling peacock of the organ world, at something less than \$50,000 a year (excluding radio broadcasting, of course to which the Wurlitzer tone is pre-eminently suited). Mr. Crawford will tell you frankly that he could not be what he is without the Wurlitzer organ; he could obtain his effects on no other. He will tell you also that when he first heard the Wurlitzer, as a struggling organist in Spokane and Seattle, he thought it was musically wrong; that in discovering the Wurlitzer qualities he discovered something that people desire. Until this brilliant musical family took up its manufacture the organ was an electric instrument, giving pleasure to rekindle souls about once a week. But it is not enough to say that no other organ manufacturer has succeeded in reaching the great American heart; none but Wurlitzer has so much as tried.

#### THE SYDNEY STATE THEATRE DUAL CONSOLE - by Dianne Brown

The 4/21 Wurlitzer organs in the State Theatres, Melbourne and Sydney were both ordered and delivered from the USA, equipped with two 4 manual dual consoles. The Melbourne Wurlitzer was installed with both 4 manual consoles playing; and later when the organ was sold and subsequently installed in the Moorabbin Town Hall, only one console was used, the dual console being shipped to Darwin and then to South Australia, eventually. Thus one console now remains in Melbourne while the other resides in Adelaide.

What was the reason for having two 4 manual consoles on one theatre organ? Well, apart from the novelty of hearing duets by husband and wife teams etc., it meant that a major orchestral work could be orchestrated fully, so that one player could control the woodwinds and strings, while the player on the other console controlled the brass and foundation ranks. Or, in an orchestrated jazz number while one player took the lead melody, the other player had both hands free to knit an improvised filigree around the basic theme of the piece. (A series of records issued just after the war by Aubrey Whelan and Laurie Wilson playing the dual consoles of the State Theatre Melbourne Wurlitzer, gives some idea of the possibilities of the twin console concept.

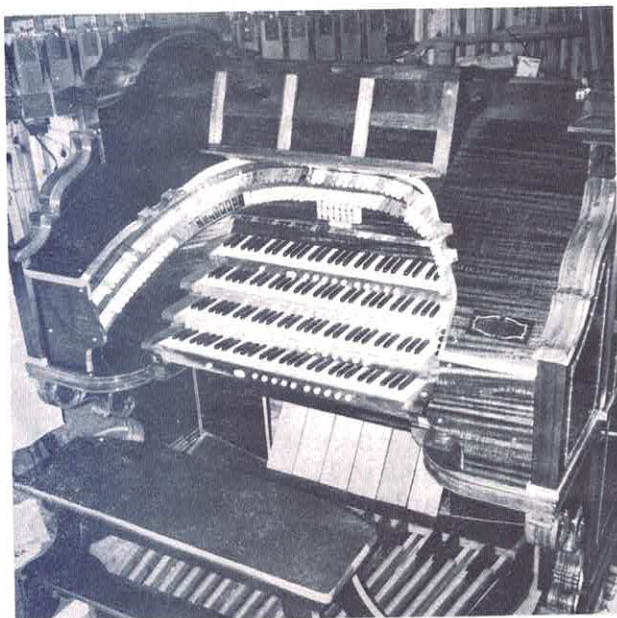
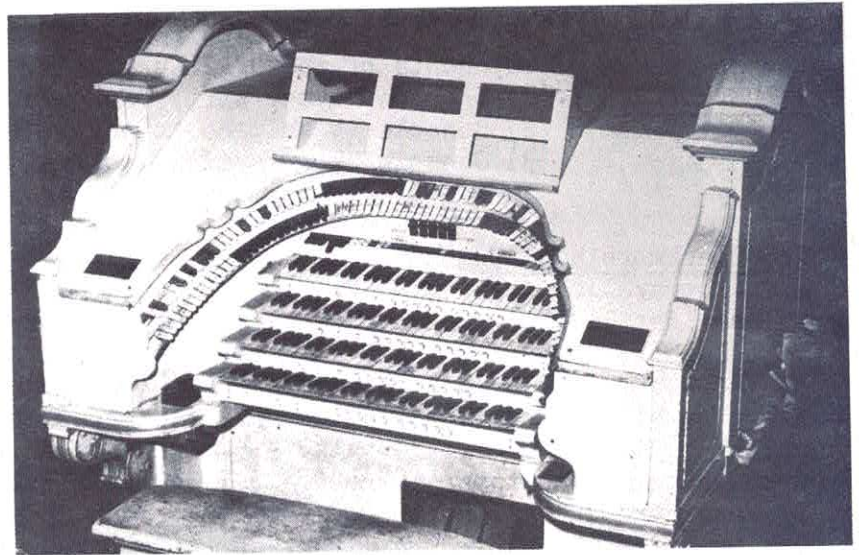
When in 1928 the mighty Wurlitzer for the State Theatre, Sydney, arrived from the USA, and installation work commenced; it was discovered that space was not all that large, and after the first console, plus the elevating platform, plus the orchestral stage elevator, plus the grand piano were all distributed across the proscenium, there was little space left. So the second 4 manual console, which was a fully operational unit, and almost identical with the first console, was never used in the Theatre, but was placed into storage.

In the course of time it was sold to an organ enthusiast, who also bought up no less than 4 (!) theatre organs from local theatres. These organs, plus the 4 manual console, formed the nucleus of his residence organ, which occupied a



specially built 3 storied building on his estate, filled with organ pipes etc, plus a second independant pipe organ. (Thus organ duets could be played on two pipe organs in the same building.) The owner was an inventor who liked to experiment with organ tones and actions, and a lot of his time was taken up with the care and maintenance of such a large instrument, so over the years the big console did not really get much use. The organ in itself was actually so large that when the owner died, it was just too big for anyone to buy straight out and much of it was burnt, including the big 32' pedal pipes. Fortunately the 4 manual console itself was saved, though it proved very difficult to remove as it was installed in the basement. Once again it was placed into storage, and then a visit to Australia by a wealthy theatre

organ enthusiast from the USA opened a new world of ideas regarding its ultimate destiny. When he inspected the console his reaction was clear. A lengthy discussion followed. The console itself looked less than inspiring covered with faded cream paint, and there seemed no reason for some of the carved wood decoration on it. The enthusiast stated that the cream paint would have preserved the original wood under it, and aht if it was stripped off something surprising would be



revealed. And so it proved, for under the paint was not only one type of wood, but many kinds matched together to form a pattern, and now the reason for the carved wooden sections became apparent, as these were also made up of wooden inlays. Great care had to be taken on the project, which took the best part of two years to strip and polish. The work was entrusted to Mr. Lachlan Guymmer, and he did an excellent job. Other improvements were made to the console such as direct electric stop and piston controls, and the possibility of fitting it with a multiplex system so that the whole organ can be played from the console using only a few wires in the main cable is being investigated.

The organ itself now consists of ranks of pipes collected from many places over a period of 25 years; however as a total of 42 ranks are Wurlitzer pipes, it is regarded as a 4/42 Wurlitzer Theatre Organ. The eight divisions of the organ are; PEDAL, CELESTIAL, BOMBARDE, ORCHESTRAL, SOLO, ECHO, FANFARE and PERCUSSION. The last three are 'floating divisions' that means that they are duplexed so as to be playable on any of the four manuals at any pitch. The Hope-Jones principal of 'families' of pipes has been followed; for example the Fanfare Division consists entirely of reeds; while the orchestral division consists largely of strings. There are six swell and crescendo pedals, and the relay system is solid state. The Wurlitzer Theatre Organ itself is too big (and loud) to achieve its full potential where it is currently located in Sydney, in private premises and will finally be placed in a theatre auditorium, where it is sure to join the ranks of other famous giant Wurlitzers.

There are only five of the 4 manual Wurlitzer consoles existing in Australia. The 4/21 and the 4/42 in N.S.W. are both playing; while in Victoria the 4/22 at Moorabbin is playing while the ex Regent 4/19 is in Storage; and finally the 4/15 in South Australia is currently undergoing restoration.

---Dianne Brown, visiting Australia on research for her degree, has designed the solid state components of the 4/42 Wurlitzer.

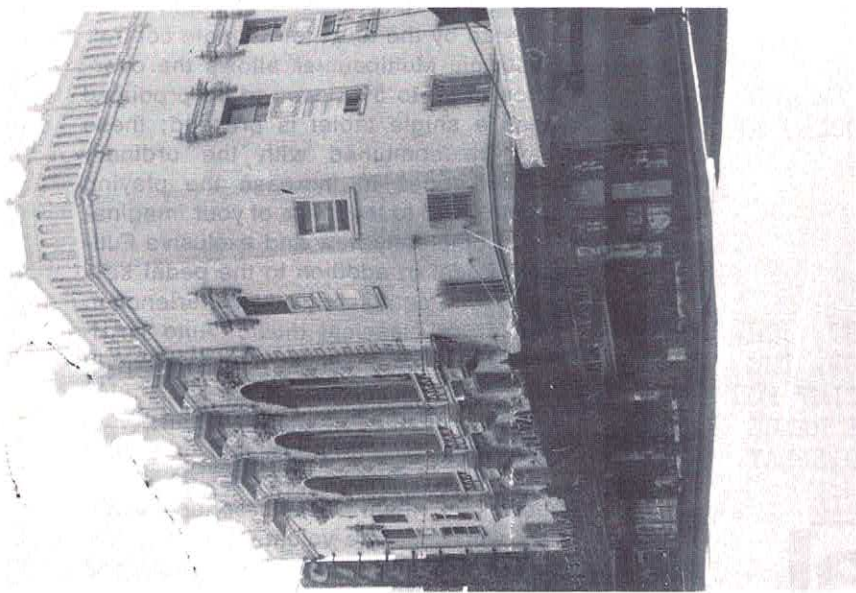
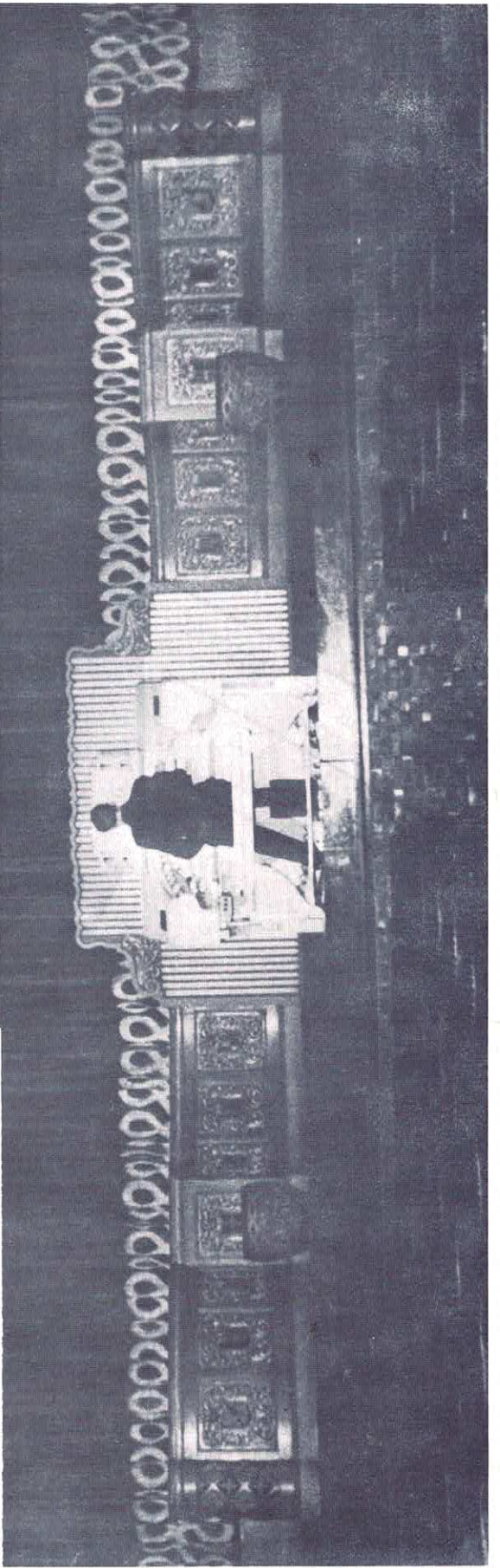
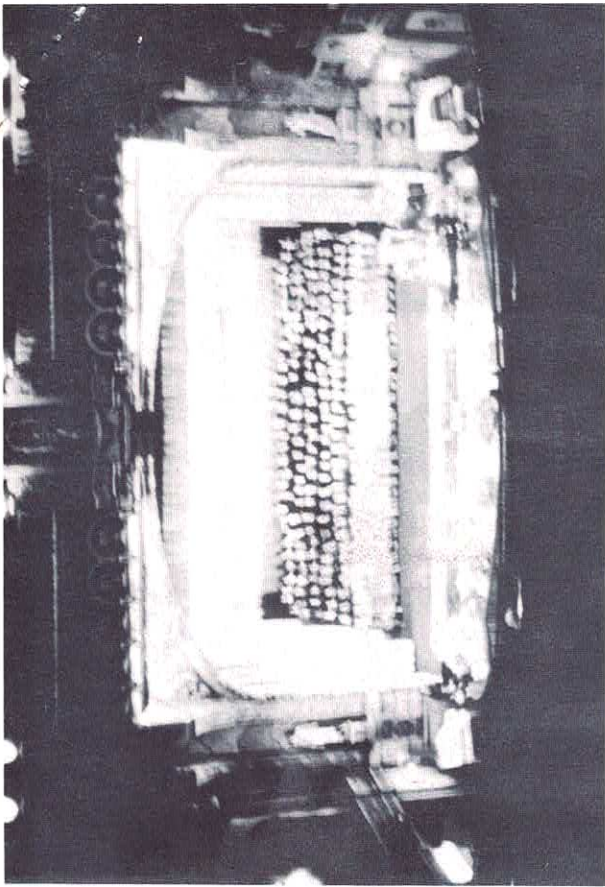
ILLUSTRATIONS: (1) Lachlan Guymer stripping paint from the pedal board.  
(2) Console as shipped to the State Theatre.  
(3) Console shortly after polishing was completed.  
Additional stop tabs, etc. have since been added.

#### Rod Blackmore's HISTORY CORNER (No.2)

A much travelled organ and console; pictured here is Wurlitzer opus 748 whilst installed in the Plaza Theatre, Sydney. The organist is possibly Penn Hughes. "748" commenced life as a 2/7 Wurlitzer, with opening night at the Wintergarden Theatre, Brisbane, on 1st August, 1924 - it had no Tibia rank! - where it remained until transferred to Sydney's Plaza late in 1938. There it replaced a Christie organ which is also the most travelled Christie in Australia. A Tibia rank was then added. Bought by Penn Hughes in 1958, the bulk of the organ formed the basis of his Bexley residence hybrid Wurlitzer-Christie organ controlled by the ex-Dunedin "Empire" Christie console which is now the controlling unit of Queensland's TOSA Christie organ. Penn's organ later was connected to the 4 manual slave console ex Melbourne's State Theatre; the organ comprised was to travel by double decker bus to Darwin, from whence it was rescued by South Australia TOSA who apparently had a couple of months prior knowledge of Cyclone Tracy. The console of "748" in the meantime was ~~variously continuing its own journeys, at one time destined for a boy's home in Glebe, at another the Avalon Theatre, finally getting really attached to Cec. Taylor's residence organ at Harris Park - and now we hear to grace the Star Theatre, Padstow.~~

The further photograph - although it has some movement attributable to time exposure is an interesting interior of the State Theatre, Melbourne, about 1960, with 4/21 Wurlitzer opus 1987. On the left can be seen the main console on its lift, and behind that the grand piano. On the right, on its dais, can be seen the dual (slave) console. Sydneysiders will be forgiven for noting the resemblance otherwise to Sydney's Capitol Theatre. "1987" of course is now famous as the installation in Morabbin Town Hall Melbourne.

++++ Information earlier in this issue regarding 'Manny' Aarons was supplied Page 12 TOSA News, January, 1976. to us (with illustration) by Rod Blackmore.





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