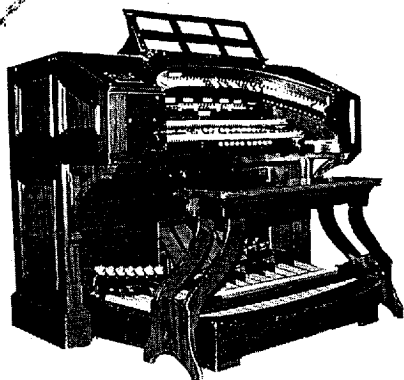
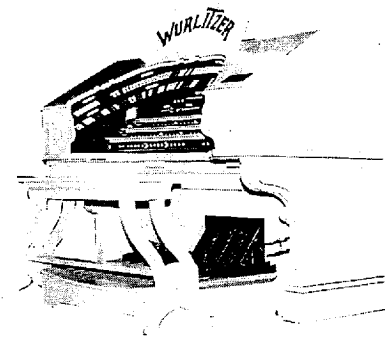


MAY, 1997



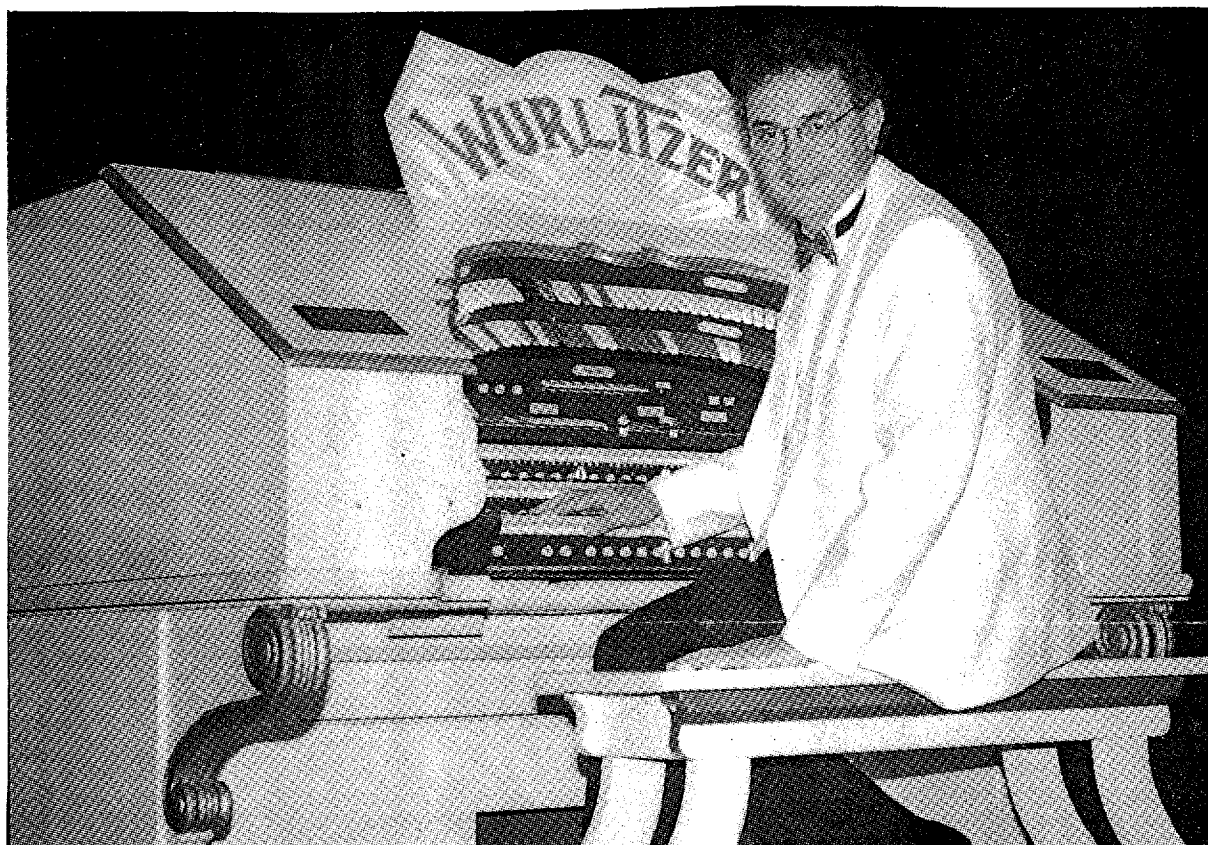
2/11 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

TOSA NEWS



3/17 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

Welcome back to JOHN ATWELL



Sunday, 18th May, at 2pm
Marrickville Town Hall

Marrickville Road, Marrickville

Volume 36
Issue 5
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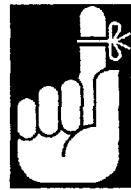
TOSA NEWS

MAY, 1997

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.

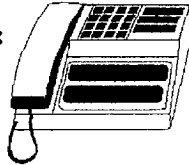
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TREASURER:

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Walter Pearce 9716 0151 (after 7 pm)
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Peter Harding 9629 2257
Walter Pearce 9716 0151 (after 7 pm)

RESEARCH & ARCHIVES:

Ian Cameron (048) 411 616

TOSA NEWS EDITOR:

Colin Groves 9745 2417 (phone or fax)
P.O. Box 1257, Burwood, 2134

TOSA PRINTER:

Robert Gliddon

CONCERT TAPE HIRING:

Neil Palmer 9798 6742

TICKET SECRETARY (Concert Bookings):

George Newell 9750 0362
(Mon - Fri: 10am - 6pm)

ARTIST LIAISON OFFICER:

Bill Schumacher 9985 7318
P.O. Box 36, Brooklyn, 2083

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Barry Tooker (Home) 9744 1535
(Work) 9550 5400

CONCERT RECORDINGS:

Bill Schumacher 9985 7318

PUBLICITY OFFICER:

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MAY

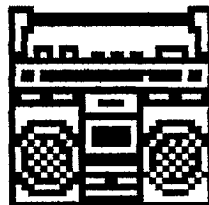
Monday	5	at 7.30pm	Committee Meeting
Sunday	18	at 2.00pm	John Atwell Concert Marrickville Town Hall
Tuesday	20	at 8.00pm	Half Yearly General Meeting Orion Centre Campsie
Sunday	25	at 2.15pm	Selwyn Theatre Home Party (see page 10)
Wednesday	28	at 7.30pm	Members' Playing Night Orion Centre Campsie

JUNE

Monday	2	at 7.30pm	Committee Meeting
Sunday	15	at 2.00pm	Barry Baker Concert Orion Centre Campsie
Wednesday	18	at 7.30pm	Members' Playing Night Orion Centre Campsie

JULY

Monday	7	at 7.30pm	Committee Meeting
Wednesday	23	at 7.30pm	Members' Playing Night Orion Centre Campsie
Sunday	27	at 2.00pm	John Ledwon Concert Orion Centre Campsie



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Presented by Chris Styles

Editorial

All the reports from the **Tasmanian Convention** have been glowing in their praise of the efforts made by this small division to produce an enjoyable time for all Conventioneers. It seems that everyone had a great time amongst friendly people. Congratulations to the **TOSA (Tas.) Division** for such a successful event. See **Amy's** great report on pages 11 and 12 of this issue.

TOSA News will have some more pictures from the Convention soon.

A special thank you to the people who replied to **Cedric Bramsen's** request for copies of some old items from past issues of **TOSA News**. Quite a few people took the trouble to contact him and he was most grateful to receive copies of all the articles that he had asked for. It's good to know that kind members out there are willing to help other Theatre Organ enthusiasts when necessary.

Neil Jensen played a great concert for us in April. Neil on this occasion was a little more subdued than usual, due mainly to the flu that unfortunately he had at the time. However, a few people have complained recently about how our organists often spend too much time on the talk between numbers. At least at **Neil's** concert, no such complaint could not be offered as he obviously felt his voice wasn't up to the strain of talking for long. So as a bonus, we got more great music and less chat for our money's worth!

Be on the lookout for a new CD from **Neil** before too long, recorded on **TOSA's Orion WurliTzer**, where he **sounded so good in concert**. It should be a CD worth hearing and having!

Thank you once again to the people who write or find articles for **TOSA News** - our magazine can only be as good as its contributors make it. If you find anything of interest to our members please send it along and it will be published as soon as the space can be found in **TOSA News**. If you have anything relatively urgent to publish, please try and get it to me before the 12th of the month.

Best Wishes,
Colin Groves



In Sympathy Athol Cave

Friends of **Athol Cave** will be sad to learn of his passing in November last year. His wife, **Doreen**, has written to inform **TOSA** members, saying how interested he always was in our **Society** and how much he enjoyed our organ concerts.

TOSA expresses its condolences to **Doreen** and to **Athol's** family and friends

A membership renewal or joining leaflet should be included in this month's **TOSA News**. If you would like to get in early, **Walter Pearce** will be happy to receive your application as soon as possible to avoid the rush.

There will be another form in the next issue, so if a friend wants to join the form could be passed on to the new member to fill in!

Welcome To New Members

TOSA (NSW) is pleased to welcome the following new members to our ranks, and we wish you an enjoyable stay with our **Society** :

Joy Bee - Sydney City

Martin Doyle - Greenacre

M. Goldsmith - Ermington

Wayne LeClos - Marrickville

Membership

Notes...

If your **TOSA News** label shows 30th June 1997 as your date paid to, then now is your chance to pay early!

It's not that we are itching to get your money - but we do have limited time as voluntary labourers. The sooner we have your subscription, the better chance of spreading the work of updating some 700 membership records.

We look forward to your help - and we look forward to still having you as a member for the coming year. We have been promised another year of top class music, so it pays to belong!

Speaking of membership numbers, you might like to know that in April of 1994 **TOSA (NSW)** had 613 members. This jumped to 664 in 1995, and again increased in 1996 - to 708. However, we have not had an increase this year, and membership stands at the same figure (near enough) of 707 members.

Not that 707 is any problem - all is well and healthy with **TOSA** - but how about encouraging your friends to join? - invite them to a concert and then put the word on them!

Looking forward to hearing from you.....

Walter Pearce
Membership Secretary

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

The deadline for each edition of **TOSA News** is the 12th of the preceding month



TOSA (NSW) is pleased to announce the availability of the following recordings produced by the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust.

“AU REVOIR TO THE WURLITZER”

A souvenir of the farewell public concert of the **Wurlitzer Organ** in the **Free Trade Hall, Manchester**, featuring **Simon Gledhill, Phil Kelsall** and **Nigel Ogden**, September 24th 1995.

Simon's programme: *Get Happy, The Boy Next Door, The Trolley Song, We're Off To See The Wizard, Over The Rainbow, Thunder and Lightning Polka, Themes from "ET", If Love Were All, Selection: The Desert Song.*

Phil's programme: *All I Ask Of You, He Loves She Loves, March of the Siamese Children, Hello Young Lovers, Stranger In Paradise, Do Re Mi, Oh What A Beautiful Morning, Wonderful Wonderful Day, I Could Have Danced All Night, There is Nothing Like a Dame, Once In a While, Ain't Misbehavin', Let's Do It, Dancing In the Dark, Top Hat White Tie and Tails, Stepping Out With My Baby, Keep Young and Beautiful, Let's Face the Music and Dance, I'll See You In My Dreams, I'll See You Again.*

Nigel's programme: *Please, My Girl's a Yorkshire Girl, We'll All Go Riding on a Rainbow, I'll See You In My Dreams, Thanks, Lovely Lady, Auld Lang Syne.*

COMPACT DISC - \$25.00;
CASSETTE - \$18.00

“SINGIN' IN THE RAIN”

Stanley Tudor at the **Wurlitzer Organ** of the **Gaumont Theatre, Manchester.**

Tracks: *Singin' In the Rain, Out of the Blue, Westminster Waltz, Salestalk, Selection from Annie Get Your Gun, Down in the Glen, Serenade from Les Millions d'Arlequin, Quickstep*

Medley: Carolina Moon; Someday My Heart Will Awake; Life is Nothing Without Music; Pedro the Fisherman, Genevieve Waltz, Memories of the Ballet; Tell Me I'm Forgiven, Charmaine, Gilbert and Sullivan Selection, Tarantella, Stardust, Top of the Bill, Buffoon, Spring Double, Cockney Capers, Selection from Singin' In the Rain. CASSETTE ONLY - \$18.00

“ASPECTS OF RODWELL”

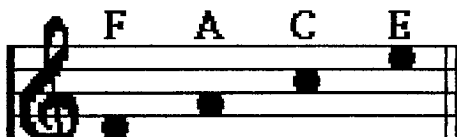
Bryan Rodwell at the **Wurlitzer Organ** of the **Granada Studios Tour, Manchester.**

Tracks: *South Rampart Street Parade, If You Were the Only Girl in the World, Body and Soul, A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square, Here's That Rainy Day, Tea For Two, March Folies Bergères, Moonbeam's Dance, The Second Minuet Lullaby, Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring, Scherzino, Dusk, March of the Bowmen.*

CASSETTE ONLY - \$15.00

Available at **TOSA Concerts**, or by **Mail Order** from:
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Two Cassettes \$2.85



THE MUSIC
With Allan Tassaker

The organ teacher was explaining various parts of the organ to **Allan** a couple of weeks ago, and finally came to the expression pedal.

“That,” his teacher informed him, “is a **SWELL** pedal, so please don't forget it.”

The following week, when the teacher returned, **Allan** told him, “All last week I've been studying that pedal you said was so swell, and I just can't see anything special about it at all!”

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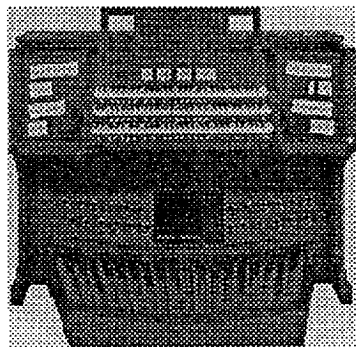
DAVID PARSONS (OAM)

Unbelievable but true... A Pipeless Pipe Organ! And here's a CD to prove it.

An inspiring new limited release CD with David Parsons playing the acclaimed Ahlborn Galanti Pipeless Pipe Organ has just been released. The new \$19.95 CD called 'Majesty' features classical pieces such as Saint Saens Symphony No. 5, La Rejoicance and well known Hymns tunes such as Praise My Soul, Majesty and O For A Thousand Tongues.

The Ahlborn Galanti Chronicer III instrument recorded at St. Patrick's College Strathfield, features note by note recordings of some of the most famous pipe ranks from Europe. This organ is the most authentic pipe organ sound and will thrill you with its majesty and authenticity of tone colour. Some of the recordings used include, Harrison & Harrison, Cliquot, Willis, Metzler and Nicholson to name a few. Readers of TOSA News have the opportunity of purchasing the new CD for only \$15.95 plus postage. Simply fill out the attached coupon or contact the 'easy ordering' information below.

Ahlborn Galanti Chronicer III Specification



GREAT ORGAN

Quintaton 16'
Principal 8'
Bourdon 8'
Flute Harmonique 8'
Octave 4'
Flute Octavante 4'
Super Octave 2'
Larigot 11/3
Fourniture IV
Cymbale III
Bombarde 16'
Harmonic Trumpet 8'
Chimes
Tremulant
Swell to Great
Choir/Pos to Great
MIDI on Great

SWELL ORGAN

Contre Gambe 16'
Flute a Cheminee 8'
Viole de Gamba 8'
Viole Celeste 8'
Prestant 4'
Koppelflote 4'
Nazard 22/3'
Blockflote 2'
Tierce 13/5'
Sufflote 1'
Plein Jeu IV-V
Basson 16'
Trompette 8'
Hautbois 8'
Clarion 4'
Tremulant
MIDI on Swell

CHOIR ORGAN

Principal 8'
Gemshorn 8'
Gemshorn Celeste 8'
Holzgedackt 8'
Flute Celeste II 8'
Spitzflote 4'
Octave 2'
Sesquialtera II
Scharf III
Dulzian 16'
Krummhorn 8'
Corno di Bassetto 8'
Festival Trumpet 8'
Tremulant
Swell to Choir/Pos
MIDI on Choir/Pos

PEDAL ORGAN

Contre Basse 32'
Principal 16'
Subbass 16'
Octave 8'
Bass Flute 8'
Choral Bass 4'
Flote 4'
Mixture IV
Contre Bombarde 32'
Posahne 16'
Trompete 8'
Schalmei 4'
Great to Pedal
Choir/Pos to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
MIDI on Pedal

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Ahlborn Galanti - the pipeless pipe organ

A TOSA member came across this great item last year in a an American newspaper by the name of LifeTimes and kindly handed it over for re-printing in TOSA News. It even includes a mention of our own Chris McPhee.

“Sound that hugs you”

Paul Vandermolen of Glen Ellyn has an unusual hobby that fascinates his neighbours. He does not collect stamps or rebuild classic-cars. He is a theatre-organ enthusiast and has a Robert Morton organ in his home, a gathering place for world-famous theatre-organ artists.

“I like theatre-organ music because it has a warm, round sound that seems to put its arms around you and hug you,” Vandermolen says. Vandermolen is one of hundreds of Illinois residents who call themselves theatre-organ enthusiasts who belong to various organisations attempting to preserve this musical instrument of the 1920s and 1930s.

Vandermolen is a member of the Chicago Area Theatre Organ Enthusiasts (CATOE), which maintains several pipe organs in theatres in the Chicago area and sponsors concerts as well as monthly socials.

In March, CATOE brought in Chris McPhee, one of Australia’s top theatre-organ artists, for a concert at the Patio Theatre on Chicago’s Northwest Side. The Banjo Buddies, a Dixieland jazz band, was also on the billing.

John Peters, president of CATOE, has been a member of the organisation for 30 years. Peters, who maintains church organs as a living, is currently work-ing with the new owners of Chicago’s Oriental Theatre to re-install the theatre’s pipe organ when the theatre is reopened in 1997 for stage shows and musicals.

CATOE is also searching for a pipe organ for the new

North Shore Performing Arts Centre in Skokie. CATOE owns the pipe organ at the Tivoli Theatre in Downers Grove and members maintain pipe organs at Chicago’s Gateway and Pickwick Theatres, the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago and the Hinsdale Theatre in Hinsdale.

On a weekly basis, a corps of 10 to 15 members visit the theatre locations to tune the organs and make needed repairs. The theatre pipe organ, according to Peters, differs from a church pipe organ in the kinds of pipes used and sounds coming out of the instrument.

“The theatre organ,” Peters says, “has an orchestral sound with drums, glockenspiels and triangles.”

Rather than Bach and church hymns, theatre organists play the music of the big bands such as Duke Ellington and Glen Miller, and show-tunes by Rodgers and Hammerstein and Jerome Kern.

“I love it because it’s purely enjoyable music,” says Peters, who is also an opera lover. Vandermolen became fascinated with pipe organs when attending church services as a child. While not allowed to go to theatre pipe-organ performances because of his conservative religious upbringing, as a teenager he got his hands on a record by theatre pipe organist George Wright and instantly became a theatre-organ fan.

“Wright was the best theatre organist there was at

the time,” Vandermolen recalls.

Patrick Roach, who publishes a newsletter for CATOE, also plays the pipe organ. He began taking lessons at the age of five and attended his first CATOE concert in 1967. He has been CATOE member since 1990.

Roach arranges CATOE concerts as well as the monthly CATOE socials. On occasion, Roach says, CATOE members take bus tours to view pipe organs in theatres and performing-arts centres at various Mid-west locations.

They recently visited the Wick Organ Company near St. Louis, one of the few pipe-organ manufacturers left. Members also visit private homes, such as Vandermolen’s, which have pipe organs installed in them.

Vandermolen’s pipe organ takes up two rooms on the main level of his home. There are two chambers in a 10-by-14-foot room that has a 16-foot ceiling. The listening room, where the organ console is located; is 40 feet by 30 feet.

Vandermolen does not play the organ and relies on visiting artists for concerts. He tapes the concerts and through an electronic device is able to replicate the concerts through his pipe organ.

The 1927 Robert Morton organ was originally installed in the Paramount Theatre in New York City. He purchased and had it installed in his home in the early 1980s.

Ben Hall, author of the

Best Seat in the House, a book about the movie palaces of the 1920s, notes that the theatre organ came about because most theatres could not afford to hire an orchestra for stage shows and accompaniment for all of their shows. The first show of the morning and the last show at night featured a performance on the proverbial “Mighty Wurlitzer.”

“Few wonders of the movie palace brought more shivery pleasure to audiences than the Mighty Wurlitzer,” Hall recalls. “Part one-man band, part symphony -orchestra, part sound-effects department, the Wurlitzer was one of the most versatile instruments ever devised by man.”

More Mighty Wurlitzer were made than any other model of pipe organ in history.

Hall adds that the Mighty Wurlitzer became a generic term for theatre organ, even though at the time Kimball, Robert Morton, Moller, Page, Barton and Marr and Colton also manufactured pipe organs for theatres. Many movie intermission concerts featured sing-alongs with the words of the music projected on the movie screen for those who wanted to sing.

The first pipe organs used in movie palaces were church organs, which could not be readily used to play upbeat music. Robert Hope-Jones, an English inventor, developed various innovations to the church pipe organ, which gave it a better variety of tonal range.

In 1910, the Wurlitzer Company bought the Hope-

Jones Organ Company. Adopting the innovations of **Hope-Jones**, the **Wurlitzer Company** produced the first theatre organ, called **The Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra**.

This organ was designed to imitate all the instruments of an orchestra, including drums, grand pianos, marimbas, banjos and mandolins.

With the new type of pipe organ came new organists, the most famous of whom was **Jesse Crawford**, who presided at the **Paramount Theatre** in **New York City**.

Billed as "The Poet of the Organ," **Crawford**, before coming to **New York City**, opened **Chicago's Tivoli Theatre** in the early 1920s. He and his wife, **Helen Anderson**, also played as a duet at the **Chicago Theatre**. The **Crawfords** also made

hundreds of records for the **Victor Record Company**.

Other famous theatre organists of the 1920s included **Eddie Dunstedter**, **Lew White**, **Stuart Barrie**, **Irma Glen**, **C.A.J. Parmentier**, **Ann Leaf**, **Henry Murtagh**, **Don Baker**, **Milton Charles**, **Emil Velazco**, **Milton Slosser**, **Sigmund Krumgold** and **Dick Leibert**.

With the advent of movies with sound in the late 1920s, organs were no longer placed in new movie theatres. The older theatres used them for stage shows and occasional intermission performances.

When the movie palaces closed in the 1950s and 1960s, hundreds of pipe organs were put in storage or scrapped for parts. Some of the more famous organs

were saved by organ - enthusiasts such as **Vandermolen** and organisations such as **CATOE** who wanted to preserve the music for future generations.

Peters says he is encouraged to see younger people attending **CATOE** concerts. Many of them are sons and daughters of older members. **McPhee**, the **Australian** organist who recently performed for **CATOE**, is in his early twenties.

One problem, says **Vandermolen**, is that theatre-organ music is not played on radio and recordings are hard to find. The theatre-organ artists generally peddle their own compact discs at their concerts.

"Like grand opera, theatre-organ music will

always have a limited appeal," **Peters** admits.

But organisations such as **CATOE** hope to carry on the music of the **Mighty Wurlitzer** to the next century.

In addition to **CATOE**, there are theatre-organ enthusiast organisations in **Rockford** and **Joliet**. The latter organisation revolves around the preservation of the historic pipe organ at the **Rialto Square Theatre** in **Joliet**. The **Rockford** organisation, a breakaway group from **CATOE**, services the pipe organ at **Rockford's Coronado Theatre**.

A national group, **The American Theatre Organ Society**, coordinates national conventions with local member groups and publishes a magazine for theatre-organ enthusiasts.

Local Professional Organ Building News

*In a column entitled **Off the Chest** in the 1997 Autumn issue of **The Sydney Organ Journal**, the following details are given of the busy professional life of **TOSA** member and the **Orion's** main curator, **John Parker** :*

After two busy and rewarding years with **Peter D. G. Jewkes Pty Ltd**, **John W. Parker** has resumed business as a sole trader, presently from his former workshop in **Lakemba, NSW**. Since June 1996 the firm has been busy with the usual tuning and maintenance jobs, plus sub-contract and new work. 1997 looks to be a busy and productive year with much work to be carried out for interstate and overseas clients. We are also looking at moving to larger premises to enable greater working space, voicing room facilities and more comfortable conditions during Sydney's hot summers.

Work in hand and recently completed:

Pipe Organ Reconstructions Pty Ltd - historic restoration of Swell and Great slider sound-boards, pedal chests, wind trunks and concussion bellows. Re-bushing in leather of square-beams, rollerboards and trundle arms, manufacture of new tremulant.

TOSA Western Australia Division - restoration and supply of three unit chests

for **3/10 Compton** theatre organ. Restoration and supply of **Viola**, **Celeste** and 8ft wood **Tibia** ranks.

Orpheum Theatre, NSW - re-leathering of stoppers and top lips of 8ft **Tibia**. Provision of topnote chest for **Vox Humana**, re-leathering of swell shutter concussion bellows and quarterly tuning contract.

Orion Centre, NSW - revision to winding system in main chamber, provision of manifold boxes and installation of spotted metal **Violin** and **Violin Celeste** (ex **4/51 Wurlitzer, Organ Grinder Pizza and Pipes, Portland, Oregon**). These ranks replace the original **Viola di Orchestra** and **VDO Celeste**, which have been stored pending restoration. They will be reinstalled as additions in the future.

Hollywood Theatre, Auckland, NZ - visit during February to attend to winding and voicing problems. Inspection and notation prior to enlargement of the **2/12 Wurlitzer** to 3 manuals, 15 ranks.

Future contract work:

Wurlitzer Organ Trust, Auckland, NZ - importing of 3 manual 1926 **Wurlitzer** console, complete rebuilding with electric stop actions. Provision of solid state capture action, wiring and multiplex organ relay for 15 extended ranks. Console and relay to be exported to **Auckland** for

installation and connection in November 1997.

TOSA Tasmanian Division - supply, repair, revoice and install 8ft **Harmonic Trumpet** for **3/8 Wurlitzer** organ, **St Michael's Collegiate School, Hobart**.

South Hurstville Uniting Church - rebuild of pedal **Bourdon** primary and secondary actions of 1950's **S.T. Noad** organ.

Punchbowl Uniting Church - refurbishing of keyboards, pedalboard and electric unit action of **James Eagles** instrument.

Mosman Baptist Church - cleaning of organ chambers after church roof replacement.

TOSA NSW Division - Orion Centre: stage 1 of major expansion of **Wurlitzer** organ to 24 ranks. Supply and restoration of 3 unit chests for recently imported pipework; **Wurlitzer Solo String** (15 in.), **French Horn** 8ft (**E.M. Skinner**, 10 in.) and **Horn Diapason** 16ft-4ft (**Hope-Jones Organ Co** c.1911). This work will require substantial rearranging within the chambers with new chest frames, wind conveyances and replica pressure regulators provided. 1997 will also see an upgrading of the **Wurlitzer's** computer relay to a **Unifier 2000** system to replace the existing **Devtronix** unit.

From the **Auckland Herald's Metro** pages comes news of organ-builder **John Parker's** trip to **New Zealand** to work on the **Hollywood Cinema's Wurlitzer**



PIPED MUSIC: **John Parker** back working on improvements to the **Hollywood Cinema's** organ
HERALD PICTURE / GEOFF DALE

Mighty Wurlitzer to accompany classics

By **JENNIFER LITTLE**

Call it the sounds of silents. **Auckland's** only **Wurlitzer** theatre organ will accompany a season of silent movies before the 70-year-old instrument undergoes \$60,000 of corrective surgery to replace its antiquated electrical system.

The rare organ reproduces the sounds of a full orchestra, which it replaced in cinemas during the 1920's before talking movies began.

New Zealand-born, John Parker - a **Sydney-based** organ specialist who maintains church and theatre organs all over **Australia** - has spent two weeks down among the 1800 pipes and masses of cables, wires and bellows at the back of **Avondale's** historic **Hollywood Cinema**.

He helped install the **Wurlitzer** in 1979 and is back now to design a solid-state control system which he will build in his workshop over the following months. Enthusiasts and members of the **Wurlitzer Organ Trust** aim to raise the renovation money with concerts by top-class **American** and **British** organists throughout the year.

The **Hollywood Cinema** owner, **Jan**

Grefstad, hopes the upgrading of the **Wurlitzer** will entice more players, especially younger ones.

"Younger people who hear it are realising it's not some fuddy-duddy, old wind-bag of a machine," he says.

What exactly is a **Wurlitzer**? The name suggests a First World War weapon, or perhaps a type of **German** sausage. In fact, the organ is a forerunner of the synthesizer.

The audience sees only the console with the organist playing several keyboards, yet producing all the sounds of a full symphony orchestra. According to **Mr Parker**, the theatre pipe organ has "more guts, more soul" than their modern relatives.

"They're powerful, they produce a real sound. You just can't get the same sound with, a synthesizer."

This is because many of the sounds are not imitated. There really is a timpani drum, glockenspiel, piano, cymbals, castanets and xylophone behind the curtain that the organist 'plays' from the keyboard.

The **Wurlitzer** reproduces a full range of brass, wind, strings and percussion-instruments from wooden

and metal pipes that range from 5cm to 5m in length.

Behind the stage, the organ has a life of its own. In the theatre basement an electric turbine generates air which is pumped through bellows into the organ.

Theatre organs, such as the **Wurlitzer**, had their heyday in the 1920's and 1930's before the advent of talking films. About 3,000 were made by a **New York** company.

"The organ's design was way ahead of its time," says **Mr Parker**. "The standard of the manufacturing and the quality of the materials mean they will play on forever, if they are properly maintained."

The **Hollywood** organ was built in 1926 for the **Regent Theatre** on **Queen St, Auckland**, where it remained until 1944. It is one of three such organs still in public venues in **New Zealand**.

House organist, **Ron Clark**, will play the instrument to accompany a month-long season of silent films starting tomorrow and featuring **Gold Rush** and **Modern Times**, as well as **Son of the Sheik** starring **Rudolph Valentino**.

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Players include : **Cliff Bingham, Bill Schumacher,**
Chris Styles, John Shaw and David Devenport

With all the talk of the **Hobart Convention** this year, **TOSA TAS's Secretary, Albert Hudson**, was moved to reflect on the beginnings of their division. His item, which tells a familiar story for small organisations such as ours, appeared in their magazine, **Vox Organum**, of March, 1997, and mentions some of the people involved in the creation of their group which has now reached the stage of being able to produce an excellent **National Convention** for the visitors from all over.

"A TIME FOR REFLECTION"

At the time of writing, there is not long to go before the curtain is raised on the first event of the special **25th National Theatre Organ Convention 1997** that we have named "**Organ Pipes and Tassie Sights**". For me, and others like me who have been with **TOSA Tas** virtually since first obtaining our Theatre Organ in 1975, seeing it slowly taking shape over ten years with **Len Rawle** playing the Inaugural Concert in 1985, this will indeed be a special time.

Recently I have been researching our early history and remembering the members who have given their time and effort in whatever capacity they could manage.

The two main directors of the work were Presidents **Owen McDougall**, and **Nigel Bills**. There were periods of head scratching in trying to find out how things fitted together, but in one way or another. Owen got things off the ground and under way. Problems finally got resolved, and on various occasions good advice was obtained from our cousins in other Mainland Divisions.

I remember **Don Breadon** quietly working on wiring down in the Relay Room under a naked light globe, also doing wiring was **Derek Stott** and others. **Derek** was responsible for reconditioning the Chrysoglott to a very high standard.

Over the years people have come and gone but one who was always there religiously most Monday evenings was **Ken Wilson**, almost always accompanied by his very supportive wife **Margaret**, who used to draw up a chair on stage and spend the night either knitting or reading, stopping at 9.30 to boil the billy and lay out the supper that we certainly were ready for. A lot of the time she had the company of **Marie Breadon**.

Ken was a bit like me in being a Jack-of-all-trades, helping out in a variety of jobs. I think he worked with **Eef Nyman** on the construction of the Chambers. **Eef** is a quality, all-round handyman which also included painting.

A job that usually kept some of us very much occupied was the releathering of a lot of the motors. I read from my trusty diary that **Owen** and I talked about our early days and childhood as we dabbed the glue and

trimmed the leather. On other occasions the ladies had a go at this job. Goodness knows what their conversation consisted of.

Others who have wielded a tool or two in one way or another were **Rob Smith**, and **Graeme Jones**. **Graeme** was responsible for the initial painting of the Console and **Ken** whipped a coat on the seat.

Originally the organ was cream in colour, with a red lettered **Wurlitzer** music rest. The lettering was changed to white with a gold background, and further down the track I got to work with an old Electrolux vacuum cleaner and sprayed it an off-white, satin enamel. At the time of writing I am in the middle of painting the seat to match.

David Chandler being an expert with fibreglass met the challenge by building some special pipe fixtures and has been a good right hand man through the years, in a variety of ways.

It's amazing just how many Engineers are interested in Theatre Organs and incidentally, steam engines. We have had our quota of them in President **Ian Eadie**, **Alan Rider**, **Laurie Hippman**, **Derek Stott**, **Kevin Jacobson**,... the list goes on and I believe it's the same in other divisions. Their knowledge has been indispensable.

We've had a new overhead walkway installed in the Main Chamber by **Kevin**. Metal fittings and help with the installation of our new Orchestral Oboe has been carried out by **Alan**, and in bringing proceedings up to date, **Ian** and I have been working consistently together for some time.

He has done a great job wiring up the Oboes from the Relay Room, also the timber framing for them. I have re-leathered quite a few Secondary Motors and Pallets, also carried out some housework in the chambers with the polishing of the woodwork, and tidying up of the wiring.

Even though the work sometimes is frustrating, and patience is needed to see some of the larger jobs finalised, I have found a certain harmony in working with the people mentioned. It provides an opportunity to get to know my fellow members who usually are there for the same reason as me, they have had a keen desire

to see our **Wurlitzer** installed and operating to its highest potential.

To the devoted ones, organ maintenance is not just a task to be endured, but becomes a way of life. Something done for the love of it. Perhaps one of the most dedicated was our late President, **Nigel Bills**, who used to love "The old dear" with a passion. [wonder how many evenings I used to see him walk in the hall door carrying his tool box and some milk and bikkies from **Sue** for supper. They were great days.

Just think of that stack of crates that had just been delivered to **St Michael's Collegiate School** containing Pipes, Relay Boards, Chests, Tremulants, Regulators, and miles of wires including the Umbilical cord from the console which had been half severed.

Somehow all this finally has been constructed into the *King of Instruments*, and as **Ian** and I agreed upon recently, for those of us who play as well, it becomes an added bonus, that we can use what we have built. To create music from a heap of timber, metal and a bucket of screws, is surely a wonder to be pondered upon.

I can also remember **TOSA Vic** member, **Julian Arnold**, battling with weights and scales as he balanced our Regulators and wind pressures, also **TOSA NSW** organ builder, **John Parker**, voicing our pipes, adjusting things like key contacts, and generally going over the organ with a fine tooth comb as well as other tools. A visit from **Neil Palmer** also from **TOSA NSW** resulted in me understanding the wiring of the Percussion Department a little better.

In 1971 **Geoff Long** and **Colin Crawford** both wanted to start an organ club. They did a very sensible thing in joining forces to establish the **Tasmanian Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia**.

From that humble beginning we have come a long way to the point where we are hosting this **Convention**. To those who have aspired, and put in the effort in whatever form, this will be a pinnacle of their achievement - the result of a labour of love. Enjoy!!.

Albert Hudson

TOSA's Tasmania Convention '97

"The Friendly Convention"

DAY ONE

This had to be one of the happiest conventions I have attended, and well deserving of the informal naming, the "Friendly Convention".

Being a smaller group, of approximately 100 people, we had more opportunity to meet and to get to know each other. With the initial settling in to our quarters and getting organised over, we made our way by various means to **Linmor Hall** for registration. From here we moved to an adjoining hall for a buffet meal.

It was then time for the first concert - **Tassie Talent!** Here we heard members playing their **Wurlitzer** for our entertainment. Firstly, **TOSA (Tas.)** President, **Ian Eadie**, opened the show with a very nice arrangement of *Tea For Two*. This tune has special meaning for the local members and was played as a tribute to their former President. **Ian** then came to the front of the stage to give us a warm **Tassie** welcome.

Secretary, **Albert Hudson**, resplendent in red jacket, followed next with a bright, showy medley, making good use of the percussion.

A complete contrast after **Albert** was a most gracious, senior member - **Joan Cousins**. This lovely, silver-haired lady could certainly teach today's singers so much - in diction, presentation, and the art of real singing. **Joan** finished with a monologue by **Joyce Grenfell** - "*Ethel*". This almost brought the house down. Other members who entertained us on this first night included **Kevin Jacobsen**, **Bruce Galvin**, **Alan Ryder**, **Kevin Harding** - certainly no lack of talent

by **Amy Caldwell**

despite the smaller number of **Tasmanian** members.

The closing items, again by **Tasmanian** President **Ian**, were a delightful and sensitive rendition of *Christopher Robin Is Saying His Prayers* and then music from *The Sentimental Bloke*.

Not to be forgotten were two young ladies who played flute and clarinet for us, accompanied on piano by their teacher, **Ann Morgan**. We heard duets by **Mozart**, and also solo items. These two girls are pupils at the school where the Convention was held, and **Ann** is the music mistress at the school. It was very enjoyable, and a pleasant contrast to the rest of the concert. It is to be hoped that both **Aleesha** and **Alana** will continue with their studies and perhaps make a career with music.

DAY TWO

Day 2 started with a visit to the famous **Salamanca Markets**. This was most interesting and a lot of fun. The markets are spread along and across the street, much more colourful than our **Paddy's Markets**. There was a young man displaying his talents at a piano, just set down in the street. He was doing a good trade with his tapes.

I bought some local chocolate, including a coffee and almond one - wish I'd bought more! I also bought some timber samples in various shapes of fruit. These were myrtle, sassafras and Huon pine, and were very realistic.

From the markets we made our way to the wharf for a cruise and buffet lunch. On board, we were entertained

by more music played on piano by **Eileen Hopkins** from **South Australia**, and **Bruce Calvert** of **Hobart**.

There had obviously been a lot of thought put in by the committee to ensure that we

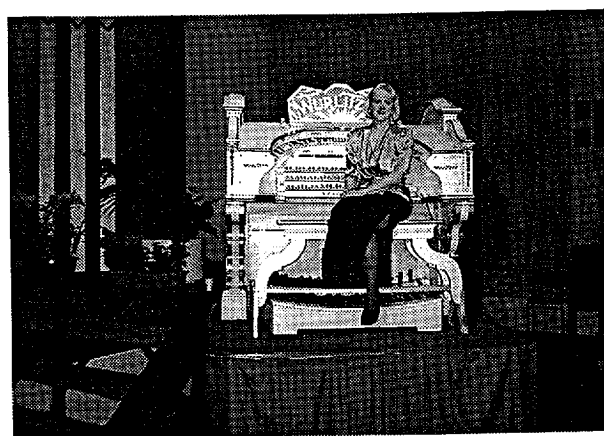
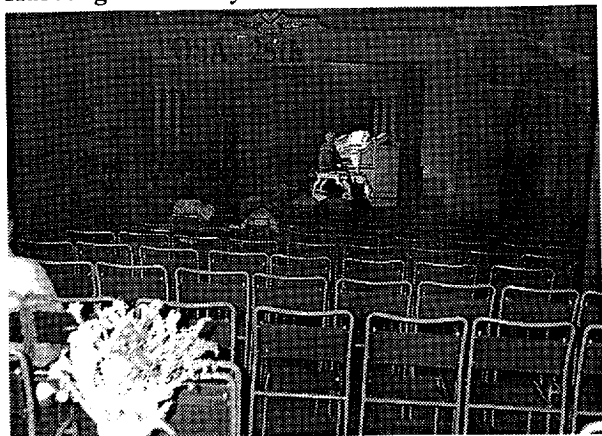
were well fed and well entertained, and that we would see quite a lot of the local areas.

Arriving back at the wharf after this very pleasant morning, we boarded buses to take us to **Battery Point**, where we could visit the **Maritime Museum**, or stroll down to see some of the antique shops. **Battery Point**, situated on the water, is an older suburb with picturesque, turn-of-the-century homes. Pocket handkerchief-sized front gardens were filled to overflowing with the most beautiful flowers. Roses abounded, lavender, fuschias and golden ash trees were prominent.

Returning once more to **Linmor Hall**, for a quick rest and that oh-so-welcome "cuppa", we were soon back on a bus and whisked away to **Wrest Point Casino** for our evening meal in very restful surroundings. We all found a bonus **Keno** ticket with our place settings. I believe there were a few lucky tickets among them. The aspect from the Casino gave us a marvellous view across the water, where boats of all shapes and sizes were moored.

The evening of Day 2 was exciting because we were to hear our own **Margaret Hall** in concert. As Conventioneers had come from "all over the place", it was appropriate that this was also the title for **Margaret's** opening number! A clever choice! **Margaret** had the audience laughing with her as she greeted everyone, but left out **South Australia**. **Ted Lloyd** lost no time in reminding her!

With the stage decked out with a fantastic floral display done by **Shirley Hudson**, **Margaret** dedicated her next item, *Spring, Spring, Spring*, to **Shirley** and the display. Some clever lighting



TOSA's Tasmania Convention '97 (cont'd)

effects were used here. I understand that **Melbourne's Heath Wooster** was involved in the lighting. There were some good, contrasting moods helped by the lighting boys throughout the Convention.

At times it seemed the audience was mesmerised by the tiny, blonde figure, dressed in dark skirt and gold top, sitting up at the organ. Particularly so during the *Porgy and Bess* segment!

We heard some of the tunes made popular by **Bing Crosby**, and another selection that **Nat "King" Cole's** daughter, **Natalie**, had made popular. **George Gershwin** was also featured. **Latin** music had its share, along with a march dedicated to **John Parker**. The **Bing Crosby** selection was absolutely outstanding, not only the choice of numbers, but the whole arrangement. Certainly one for the CD when it becomes available. *Porgy and Bess* also is a must for the CD!

There was a selection based on the "big bands" era and some Boogie Woogie. We loved it!

This was a full evening's concert and **Margaret** had won the hearts of all by the time she came to her closing numbers.

A great concert, and full marks to **Tassie** for their choice of both artists! **David Lowe's** comment on **Margaret's** concert was in one word - "Brilliant!"

DAY THREE

Today we went by bus to **Richmond**. Here we inspected the old goal, which was rather gruesome. We saw solitary confinement cells; a small concrete cell; very heavy wooden doors; barely room to lie full length on the bare floor; and with the door shut it was pitch black. We also saw the stand where the prisoners were flogged - often for petty offences.

At **Richmond**, we saw the oldest bridge in **Australia**, built by convict labour in 1823-1825. Today this is a peaceful, picturesque spot, and home to families of little ducks. The bridge is a scaled-up copy of a famous bridge in the **English** garden at **Stourhead**, often called the most beautiful bridge in the world!

After a smorgasbord lunch at **Banilla Restaurant** (a must for visitors to Tasmania), we went on to a concert

at **St Mary's Cathedral** in **Hobart**. We heard items by **Bach**, **Dubois**, **Moszkowski** and **C. Lang's Tuba Tune**, all played by organist **Peter Warren**.

Back on board the buses and off to **Linmor Hall** to relax with tea and coffee. We were all eagerly looking forward to hearing **David Lowe** play for us. **David** was an extremely likeable young man with a pleasant personality and a great interest in trains. He even took home to **England** a small wooden train whistle which had 3 different pitches. He found this when we visited an apple processing plant.

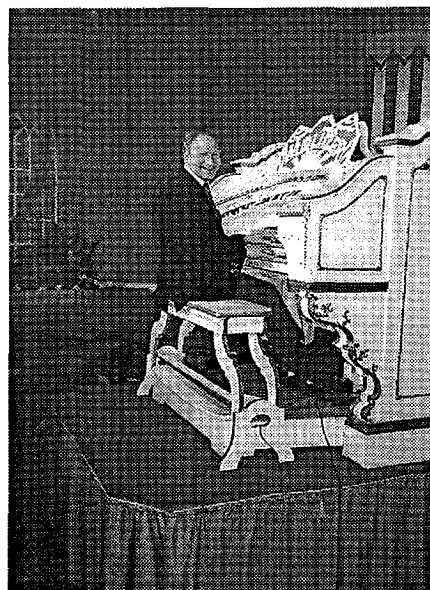
Before **David's** concert we enjoyed a spit roast dinner at the Hall, followed by home-made plum pudding and cream. There must have been many busy ladies behind the scenes.

David Lowe in Concert

The final concert of the Convention with **David** dressed in traditional grey trousers and black jacket opened with a rousing medley - *Another Opening, Another Show, On a Wonderful Day Like Today, and Great Day*. What great titles to finish the day and the week.

The **Hobart WurliTzer**, named "**Madame**", was originally delivered to **England** in 1927 for **Madam Tussaud's Waxworks'** cinema. It was bought by the **Theatre Organ Society** in **Hobart** and brought out from **England** in 1975.

David went on to play **Hoagy Carmichael's Skylark**, then an interlude of **Latin American** music - *Sirocco, Rio Chambera*. We also heard



Beatles' music - interesting to note the vivid pinks and purples by the lighting boys during this. The first half finished off with a **Glenn Miller** selection.

A bit of fun to start off the second half, with **David's** interest in trains - we heard *Chatanooga Choo Choo* with steam engine sounds below the melody and a touch of whistle sounding now and again; *Pennsylvania 6-5,000*; and *Moonlight Serenade*.

Noel Gay's music from *Me and My Girl* was featured next. It's frustrating when one recognises the tune but can't put a name to it. Certainly, the next tune that was played was familiar - *The Lambeth Walk*, and then *Leaning On a Lamp Post*. This was quite a lovely selection - no-one stirred, not even a mouse, until the applause at the end. **David** urged everyone to see this show, which was playing at the historic **Theatre Royal** in **Hobart** while we were there.

Next, a selection for railway buffs, and especially for host **Ian Eadie**, complete with whistles blowing and the sound of the train huffing and puffing up the hill. Unfortunately, mere words can't describe this lot. *Take The A Train, Puffing Billy, Choo Choo Samba* were featured in this selection. **David** finished off the show with music from *Crazy For You*.

With two wonderful artists, such as **David Lowe** and **Margaret Hall**, we had been well entertained with the best of both worlds. But we weren't finished yet!

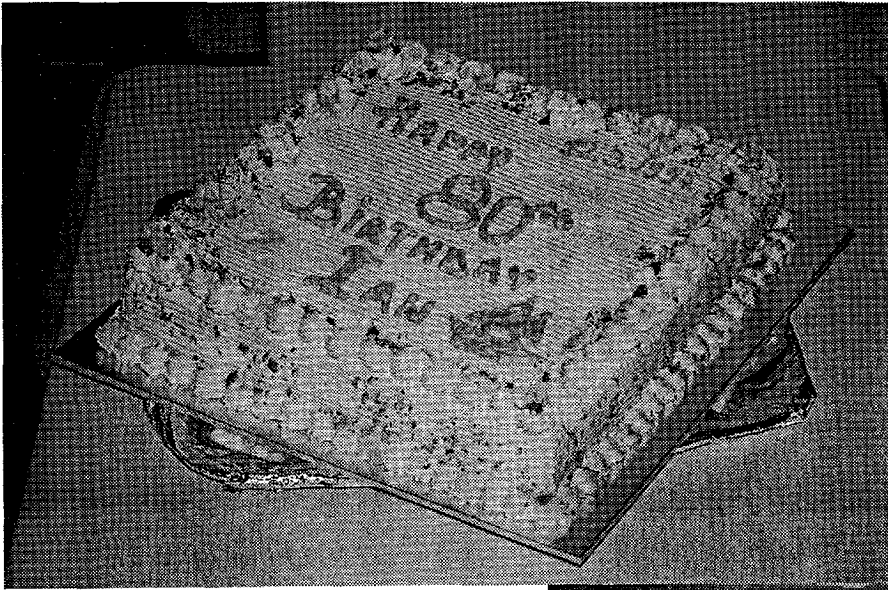
DAY FOUR

Open Console : We arrived a little late, but I know **Nola Whitfield** had already played and **Eileen Hopkins** (S.A.) was playing when we came in. It was **Heath Wooster's** turn as soon as we arrived, with music from *Sunset Boulevard*. Following was **Jim Murdock** (Vic.), **Norma Wilson** (Warragul), **Ralph Hurrell** (S.A.), **Amy Caldwell** (NSW and Gold Coast), **Ryan Heggie** (S.A.), and **Heath** (Vic) returned for a second item.

This was the final event. Most people were preparing to return home, while some chose to stay a few more days. The most frequent comment from the Conventioneers was that it had been the friendliest Convention that they had ever attended!

TOSA (NSW) PATRON TURNS 80 !

by Barry Tooker



striptease, which saw her lose about 20 kilos at the end of her act.

The shapely Vonnie then took over as Master of Ceremonies for the night. This was to be in the form of "IAN DAVIES - THIS IS YOUR LIFE". Various guests and Ian's family including sister Nonnie, who seems to be a regular visitor to Sydney from the Southern State these days, Directors and friends from the RSL and Bowling Clubs recounted memories and funny stories about our patron.

Then it was cake cutting time, singing HAPPY BIRTHDAY and 'FREEZER' JOLLY GOOD FELLOW. There were not 80 candles on the cake, but then again that may

Long time member and TOSA (NSW) patron, Ian Davies, reached the grand old age of 80 on March 12 this year.

To celebrate the occasion, his wife Mary, daughters Cheryl and Wendy, and son in law Jerry, organised a great party in the Function room at the Bondi Junction-Waverley RSL Club. Ian has been a member, Director, Health Officer and Entertainment Officer, etc. of this club for many years.



have presented a fire hazard, setting off the fire sprinklers and smoke alarms.

It was a wonderful tribute to a man, who has served TOSA well for many years.

Congratulations Ian. Now for the next 80 years.

Over 50 friends were invited, Mary had organised pre-dinner savouries, and drinks from the bar and the ladies' auxiliary had prepared a hot buffet style meal.

Although it was Ian's birthday, he entertained his guests playing his beloved Rodgers organ which the club has featured as part of its entertainment for over 20 years,

A surprise was the song and dance skit put on by his daughter Cheryl and her friend Vonnie. After this the fat lady did a novel



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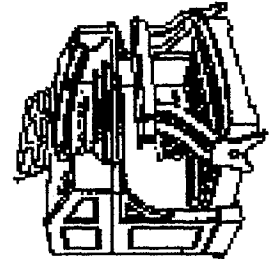
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