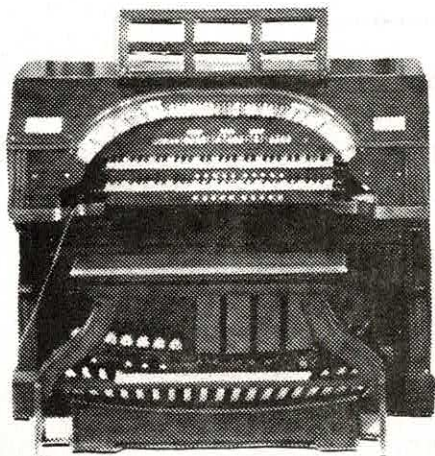


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T.O.S.A. NEWS.

The Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society
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THE MONTH OF APRIL

Committee
Meeting

Monday 2nd.

Wednesday 11th.

Club Night

Twelfth
National
Convention

20th. - 23rd.

DIRECTORY

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Robert Gliddon, Neil Palmer, Ron Smith.

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TOSA N.S.W. Division,
Box A584 P.O.
SYDNEY SOUTH. 2000.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS.

A sincere welcome is extended to these new members and please try and attend our Club Night on Wednesday 11th April at 7.30pm at Marrickville Town Hall when the Wurlitzer organ can be inspected and played by you.

Peg Bartlett, George Jackson, John McDonald, Keith and Gwenyth Donaldson, Mr.W.Bullock, Hazel Mallitt, Ron and Lynette Hammonds, Robert Cook, Wallace and Lola Ford, George Nelson, Beryl Wills, Allan and Meredith Mason.

DEATH OF KNIGHT BARNETT.

KNIGHT BARNETT, resident organist at the Regent Theatre, Adelaide from 1949 until it closed in 1967, and Patron of the South Australian Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia, died on Sunday March 19, aged 80. Many TOSA members attended the funeral service held at ST Matthews Anglican Church, Kensington on Wednesday.

Quite a number of TOSA members became friends of Jack Barnett's during the years 1963 - 1967, when the annual pilgrimage was made from Melbourne to Adelaide, first on Queen's Birthday weekend, and then each Easter, for a Sunday afternoon concert in the Regent Theatre, where Jack, of course, was the star attraction.

Jack had been in very poor health for the past 10 years. Victorians at the National Convention in Adelaide last Easter who renewed the old acquaintanceship at the concert played on his much loved Wurlitzer, now in St Peter's College, knew instinctively they probably were speaking with him for the last time.

----- News source "VOX" magazine, March 1984.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

Sincere condolences to the family of Frank Day who passed away during February this year. Frank has been a member of the Society since 1969 and lived at Punchbowl.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



April

MONDAY 2nd at 7.30pm

COMMITTEE MEETING at 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba.
(Visitors are cordially invited to attend)

WEDNESDAY 11th at 7.30pm

CLUB NIGHT at Marrickville Town Hall.
Have a play on the 2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Organ.
Special Feature: SLIDES FROM THE TOSA TOUR OF AMERICA
Tea & Coffee provided.

EASTER WEEK-END 20th to 23rd

NATIONAL THEATRE ORGAN CONVENTION
IN MELBOURNE

Feature Artist: LANCE LUCE from the USA.

May

MONDAY 7th at 7.30pm

COMMITTEE MEETING at 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba.
(Visitors are cordially invited to attend)

SUNDAY 27th at 2pm

PAID CONCERT at Marrickville Town Hall.

Featuring Super Artists:

TONY FENELON and JOHN ATWELL

playing the WurliTzer Theatre Organ and Grand Piano.

ADMISSION: Adults: \$6, Members: \$5, Concession: \$3.

See inside this issue for booking details.

NOTE: When writing for tickets DONT FORGET TO INCLUDE a self addressed stamped envelope for immediate return of your tickets.

STOP PRESS! STOP PRESS!

DONT MISS Club Night on Wednesday 11th April at Marrickville. As you may know, a large band of NSW TOSA members toured the West coast of America last year which included such cities as Hawaii, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle, just to name a few.

At several places our visitors were able to see and play some of the fantastic instruments in these cities and the slides being shown should be of immense interest to all of our members. A detailed description of the trip will be given and this is our chance to pass on to you all the excitement and visits of this marvellous tour.

SEE YOU THERE !!

LATE NEWS

The famous Sydney Congress Hall Band of the Salvation Army will be presenting a recital in the forecourt of the Sydney Opera House on EASTER SUNDAY 22nd April (not Friday 27th as reported in the March issue of TOSA NEWS) at 12 noon.

4...

FREE CONCERT, SUNDAY 26th February 1984 (by Ron Smith)

Sunday 26th February saw over 500 people at Marrickville Town Hall for the first of our concerts for 1984. It was wonderful to see such good patronage, not only from the organiser's point of view but also for encouragement to the artists, who in turn gave everybody a fine afternoon of good music.

Our artists on the day were Neil Palmer and Clinton White and we were also presented with a guest spot by Damien Scott in each half. Damien, at 15 years of age is rapidly developing as a fine musician and no doubt we will be hearing much of him in the future.

The first organist to play was Neil, and he seemed so relaxed at the console that it was hard to believe such a large audience was waiting to hear him 'Strike Up The Band'. His music flowed in an easy to listen to style and was very well received by our patrons.

Clinton White's contribution to the programme was truly polished and well chosen, complimenting Neil and Damien's selections yet providing contrast in style. His familiarity with the instrument and confidence in playing reflected much planning and practice which went into the programme and for this we must thank him sincerely as so much Canberra/Sydney/Canberra commuting is involved for Clinton to make his practices possible.

All told, it was an enjoyable afternoon and our committee and members thank Neil, Clinton and Damien sincerely for their great efforts necessary to produce such high calibre entertainment for all to enjoy, and we did!



From left to right; Clinton White Neil Palmer Damien Scott.

OYSTER BAY COMES OUT OF ITS SHELL.

At about 7pm on Sunday 11th March the peaceful tranquility of Oyster Bay was broken when number 31 Tenth Avenue erupted with a hive of activity of Disco music, chickens being munched and a 'snake' of energetic dancers threading its way through the large music room to the super accompaniment of Joseph Maennl playing an electronic music computer organ with a fast beat and great professional flamboyancy. The young ones loved it and even a few of the more matured young ones managed to last about ten minutes but finally gave up exhausted and conceded defeat to the experts who were just getting into the groove.

The afternoon thrived with continuous entertainment and most of this was provided by the younger generation who seemed carefree and relaxed and some exciting talent was revealed. The spot by invited guest artiste Margaret Hall on the big Hammond was exceptional and well received by all. Thank you Margaret.

As the evening progressed Bill Schumacher took his turn and delighted the audience with his masterful display of swing, ballads, disco and theatre style playing. John Shaw got on to the piano and Joseph Maennl brought out his large set of vibes and a rare jam session developed and Oyster Bay really started to swing! The young ones again led the way with the dancing and another 'snake' developed followed by Zorba the Greek and several others which continued on well into the night. I think I can safely say that our unquenchable thirst for organ music was quenched, at least for a short time anyway.

Our sincere thanks to the Maennl family for putting on this great Home Party for us and to all the artists who performed during the event. Thanks also to all the people who helped in every way with the catering and arrangements etc. About 70 booked in for the day and the sum of \$117 was raised towards TOSA funds, a very big effort indeed. See you at the next one.



Members and friends dancing to the disco music being played by Joe Maennl, Bill Schumacher and John Shaw.



'Lets follow the leader'

Home Organ Party

AT
OYSTER BAY
SUNDAY 11TH MARCH.



Edith Tomek at the keyboard of the hammond organ.



Cheryl Smith dancing with Mario Giachi.



Briggitte Maennl.



Great British Theatre Organs

NEW GALLERY, LONDON.

by Ian R McIver.

In the early 1920s the technology of most organs being installed in British cinemas lagged far behind those in many other parts of the World. In America, Wurlitzer had started installing unit organs in theatres in 1911, by 1917 their instruments were in theatres in Australia (these had been preceded, possibly as far back as 1912, by small Wurlitzer photoplayer pit organs), and they reached Europe in 1921. In England, Compton is believed to have constructed a demonstration unit organ as early as 1914, but of the 33 ranks of pipes in his first major theatre installation, in 1920, at the Exchange, Northampton, only 5 were unified. In 1921, Compton installed his first true unit theatre organ at the County, Sutton, followed in 1923 by the better-known 17-rank instrument at the Pavilion, Shepherd's Bush, London.

But these were very isolated cases. This was the era of the "orchestral" non-unit organ. Although hailed as progressive then, they were little more than conventional instruments with the tonal emphasis switched to flutes, strings and orchestral reeds, rather than diapasons, plus percussions and in many cases an impressive line-up of silent film effects. Most had tubular-pneumatic action, although some were electro-pneumatic, and a few were tracker instruments, with stop control usually by drawstops. The curious instrument installed at the Regent, Brighton, in 1921, led up an eccentric musical blind alley.

It was in 1925 that Wurlitzer organs were first heard in Britain. The first was sent to the Picture House, Walsall, the second to Paramount's new London showhouse, the Plaza, (although it was not opened until 1926), the third to the Palace, Tottenham, and the fourth, our subject this month, to the New Gallery, in London's Regent Street, where it was opened by Jack Courtnay, who had opened the Walsall and Tottenham organs, on June 12, 1925. It was Opus 1034, a modest "Style F" stock model of 2-manuals and 8-ranks of pipes.

It was this instrument which was to overturn completely the established style of British cinema organs and make Wurlitzer's name a household word throughout the Nation. Wurlitzer had struck gold. The New Gallery's initial advantage was that it was a prime West End showplace, in the heart of Britain's film industry, the location for many trade shows, where key men in the industry could not fail to notice the new instrument accompanying their films, which had the adaptability to fast-changing scenes of an organ or piano, but with the tonal capabilities of a medium-sized orchestra. It had other advantages too; it was more compact, since its eight ranks could easily outplay non-unit organs four times its size, it could blend well with an orchestra if desired, and although its capital cost was still high, its smaller size at least kept down tuning and maintenance costs.

In February, 1926, Reginald Foort was appointed organist at the New Gallery, and it was he who brought its sound into homes everywhere. The BBC, who regularly broadcast the New Gallery's orchestra, were intrigued by the sound of the Wurlitzer, and in May 1926, it was heard for 15 minutes of the orchestra's broadcast. Listener reaction was such that within weeks Foort took over the whole hour's broadcast. Record companies were not deaf to the sudden popularity of this new sound. Electrical recording techniques meant that it was now possible to make recordings in cinemas, and Foort was soon signed up by HMV to become the first to record a Wurlitzer organ in Britain. Here again, the location of the theatre was an advantage, since the actual recording equipment was set up in the Queen's Hall complex, the sound being conveyed there from a single microphone in the theatre via GPO telephone lines, by means of an ordinary call through the (then) GERrard exchange.

NEW GALLERY, LONDON. ... cont.

Foort cut 49 sides at the New Gallery organ, all, as far as I am aware, using the telephone lines. Other organists who recorded it include Florence de Jong ("de Yong on the discs), Ena Baga, Vincent Collier, Leslie James, Terance Casey and Claude Ivy (with Jack Hylton's orchestra). The instrument was broadcast regularly until World War II.

As Foort himself said about this organ, "here was something entirely new, an instrument that could play any kind of music in the World - cheerful or sad, symphonic or ballad, fox-trot or folk-song, in such a way that it could be thoroughly enjoyed by the "man in the street". It rendered virtually every British cinema organ obsolete overnight, and British builders rushed to copy its features. The concept of organ music as pure popular entertainment in its own right had arrived."

Foort left in 1928, and was followed by Florence de Jong, who had been assistant to himself and Courtney from opening day. When she left, in 1937, her place was taken by Austin Rayner, until 1939, and then Cecil Chadwick, until 1946. Molly Forbes, Ena Baga and Doris Lamb held positions at the New Gallery as assistant or orchestral organists.

During the late 1920s and 1930s, the main London showcase cinemas were being built around Leicester Square/Haymarket/Piccadilly area, not far from the New Gallery, but sufficient to put it outside the mainstream of the action. In the early 1950s the building was taken over by the Seventh Day Adventist movement, who use it for a variety of functions. The organ was rebuilt in 1953 by S.J.Wright & Son, who had been Wurlitzer's U.K. installation agents, and who until the previous year had still been advertising under the Wurlitzer name, a decade or so after the American factory had built its last pipe organ.

During the rebuild, second touch facilities, together with all percussions and effects except the Cathedral Chimes, Glockenspiel and Snare Drums were removed, and extra couplers and extensions, requiring 12 extra Tibia pipes, were added to the solo manual. This seems a small loss, when one considers that if the New Gallery had remained a cinema, the inevitable installation of a Cinema-scope screen in the mid-1950s would have meant removal of the organ and its probable destruction.

Today it is difficult to imagine that it could so completely have overturned British concepts of cinema organ design. As the somewhat staid, but attractive, polished mahogany console stands demurely in its small pit, it hardly seems a left-wing revolutionary. Yet its effect in 1925 was no less dramatic than that of the Royal Festival Hall organ some 40 years later. It is the oldest Wurlitzer outside North America still in its original installation, and in that time it has seen most of its 98 sister Wurlitzers in Britain come and go.

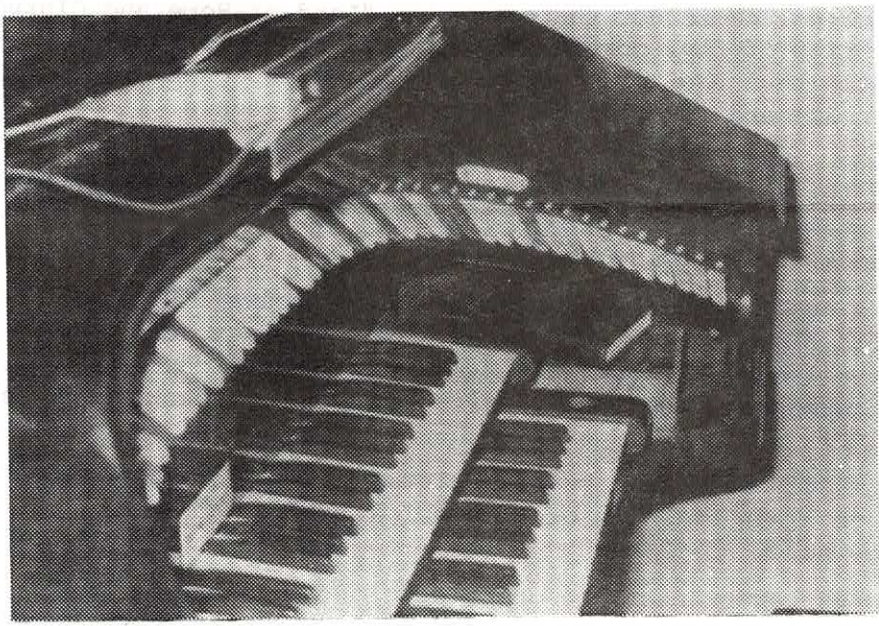
The brass plate on the console still proudly declares "Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra", and as a model of orchestral voicing it could scarcely be bettered. Many people were deceived by radio broadcasts and records in the early days into believing they were listening to an orchestra. Its string tones (Violin and Celeste) have that special flavour one associates with early Wurlitzers, and its Vox Humana is one of the very best. Sweetness of tone is provided by the well-balanced Flute and Tibia Clausa ranks. the latter having a haunting, singing quality. It is not a brash or brassy instrument, intended to blast patrons' ears for ten minutes at a time, but has an overall restful sound capable of delighting the ear for an entire film programme, never insipid, but never blatant. It has fire, in its fine, but mellow Tuba Horn, and its Clarinet is capable of moments of impudence when required.

NEW GALLERY, LONDON. ... cont.

The organ can be heard on an LP of reissues of 78 rpm recordings by Reginald Foort ("Keep Smiling" - World Records SH338). The organ is not often used, even organ society concerts being few and far between, but each December for a number of years it has been played as part of an annual railway film show. On very rare occasions it is used at Sunday night functions arranged by the New Gallery Centre.

Summary Specification.

<u>Solo Chamber (upper)</u>				<u>Main Chamber (lower)</u>			
Tuba Horn	16	8	4	Diaphonic Diapason	16	8	4
Tibia Clausa	8	4	2 2/3 2	Violin	16TC	8	4 2
Vox Humana	16TC	8	4	Violin Celeste		8	4
Glockenspiel				Flute	16	8	4 2 2/3 2
Cathedral Chimes							& 1 3/5
Snare Drum							



At left.
New Gallery Wurlitzer organ.



At right.
Dennis and Heidi James.
Photo taken April 1975.



BITS, BYTES AND PIPES. - Jonas Nordwall playing the 4/44 composite Wurlitzer in Portland's Organ Grinder Restaurant. No. JN-108.

Available at the Record Shop at all Marrickville Concerts. Price \$12.00

We have kept an eye (and ears) on Jonas Nordwall since he was about 16 when he played a session on a Rodgers organ for a group of ATOSers at a Portland-based conclave back in the '60s. He was a remarkable musician then and the years have only sharpened his musical acumen and ability. His music has never let us down. Now to the selections.

Jonas' "Jealousy" is often reminiscent of the 1950's George Wright recording but it's the first version we've heard which we feel could be classed as a successor to that arrangement and performance.

"Bailey Gatzert March" (1902) is descriptive of a Columbia River steamboat according to the jacket notes. Like so many of its genre, the "description" is all in the accompanying notes; it's a typical newsreel march given a slambang performance by Jonas, with lots of Glockenspiel and traps.

"Pomp and Circumstance No. 4" is not the over-ripe "Land of Hope and Glory" but another in the series of five coronation marches written by Elgar. It is far more majestic than the more familiar "No. 1", especially when Jonas brings the four 32' and fourteen 16 footers to the pedals. A real spine tingler!

"Eye of the Tiger" tries to make the theatre organ register rock music. The hard-driving automatic traps help, but whether a 44-rank organ is a proper vehicle for rock is something the listener will have to decide.

From rock to operetta demonstrates the range of Jonas Nordwall's versatility. His "Indian Love Call" draws on just the right organ voices to make it a precious moment from a long ago show (Rose Marie), one which couldn't fail to delight its chief exponent, the late vocalist Nelson Eddy decked out as the ultimate "Mountie".

Side 2 opens with a mostly burnished brass-registered "New York, New York" the first time through. Then it's big organ combinations punctuated with traps. Lots of energy here.

"Memory" is a subtle exploration of the organ's solo voices and ballad combinations via a lovely melody. It builds and builds in emotional content to a climax followed by a "Voxie" coda (the organ has seven voxes).

Smetana's "Dance of the Comedians" is an old warhorse often favored by spotlight soloists during the "Golden Era", mainly because it moves quickly and melodically while cramming a lot of interest into a few rhythmic moments. It also has the required slow middle section but it's the often polyphonic bombast which holds attention. Jonas does it proud!

Scott Joplin's music is always refreshing. Its pleasant rhythmic lilts and colours, reminiscent of another era, are affectionately registered by Jonas with the aid of some of the organ's percussers. "Elite Syncopation" is easy listening.

The closer is a very mellow rendition of Cole Porter's "In the Still of the Night". It's a well-conceived arrangement which solos massed strings, adds Tibia embellishment and uses brass reeds to carry contrasting counter melodies. It's played as a ballad but often in strict but easy rhythm.

RECORD REVIEW ... CONT.

The instrument is worthy of special comment. It started life as a 3/13 Wurlitzer in Portland's Oriental Theatre. What happened after the Oriental was threatened is largely traceable to Dennis Hedberg, who also produced this album. Dennis is one of those people gifted with pipe organ know-how, a keen sense of business and the ability to plan. Dennis gathered some associates (including Jonas) and they laid plans for a super pizzeria with pipes in Portland, starting with the Oriental's 3/13 as a nucleus. The building went up rapidly and the enlarged organ was ready for the 1973 ATOS Convention.

The organ has been growing ever since and is now up to 44 ranks controlled by the former Boston Metropolitan Theatre's 4-manual console. The emphasis here is on excellence. Dennis Hedberg, being a perfectionist, sees to it that the huge instrument is always in top shape, which may be one facet in the Organ Grinder's success story. Another factor is the high quality of musicianship offered, here represented by Jonas Nordwall. None of his selections sound like "pizza music". It's all concert quality.

The music is well recorded. The jacket boasts a fine colour photo of the glass-encased chambers and console. A photo of Jonas graces the back of the jacket. The jacket notes are well-conceived and informative. It's a good package and will get even better when we can afford a digital playback.

Edited from - - - "For the Records" - Theatre Organ Magazine.
September / October 1983.

Please note that this recording is slightly more expensive than most of the other records stocked by the Society this being due to the more expensive processing of this digitally recorded disk.

FIRST "CAPITOL" ORGANIST.

With interest in the Society's ex "Capitol", Sydney 3-manual 15-rank Wurlitzer in every member's mind we reprint from "The Console" magazine a photograph of the Capitol's opening organist:- Frederick Burr Scholl.

"Console" columnist Ray Sawyer adds some details on this famous West Coast U.S. organist:- 'About six-one Ted was as wide as a bale of hay, given to light-colored suits, wore glasses and featured a smile that said plenty.

His walk was a study of contained nonchalance and his arrangement of "Caprice Viennois" was simply marvelous - as well as costing me a dollar-and-a-quarter (because I simply had to buy that tune')."

Of course I could never play it like Ted did, but you can't say I didn't try away back in the twenties!



ORGAN MUST BE REMOVED.

Aloha Chapter A.T.O.S. has received notice that the 4/16 Robert-Morton organ presently installed in the Hawaii Theatre, Honolulu, must be removed by June. It was not learned what disposition is being made of the theatre building. The organ was originally installed in the long demolished Princess Theatre. The Chapter, in addition to maintaining the instrument, has clubrooms in the theatre.

ORGAN OPENING NEAR MANCHESTER.

17th September last saw an important event as the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust unveiled their second organ to be given new life. After the Free Trade Hall, Manchester (4/20 Wurlitzer) organ they have been working for several years under great difficulty, due to location, on the splendid 3/8 Christie in the Bluecoat School at Oldham, near Manchester. The civic opening took place and was a great success. I'm pleased to say. It is another fine organ saved.

Definitely one of the finest Christies, it has a more balanced sound and less brassy than some others by this builder. A rare organ, too, as it has two consoles. Installed in the Egyptian-styled Pyramid Cinema, Sale, Cheshire, near Manchester, it was opened by the late Reginald Liversidge on February 24, 1934. This 2,000-seater had art deco Egyptian decor and the stage console, mounted on a dolly, had Sphinx heads. The other console, in the orchestra pit, was not a slave and was plain finished. In fact, the Egyptian surround could and was later swapped for the pit console and made interchangeable.

When Liversidge was appointed to the Pyramid he quickly changed his signature tune to "The Desert Song" for solos and radio broadcasts from the cinema. Sadly he didn't live to reopen the organ he made famous. His son, Ian, grand-daughter, and widow were in the audience for the opening.

Other famous organists were in the audience for the gala occasion - Robinson Cleaver, Joe Marsh, Joyce Aldred - and to launch the organ there were three artists. Peter Jebson, from Blackpool, who made his first L.P. with Liversidge for the L.T.O.T. at Manchester Gaumont; Nigel Ogden, who also presents the weekly radio show "Organist Entertains", on nationwide BBC Radio; and last but not least Doreen Chadwick, princess of the theatre organ.

Jebson played in an easy-going Blackpool style, and Ogden played numbers in a more modern vein with a superb version of "Autumn Leaves" - quite beautiful and assured handling of the instrument. Doreen gave a sparkling performance as we duly expected - Gilbert & Sullivan, veddy British for a veddy British occasion on a veddy British cinema organ.

Reversible Console Briefly, the plain console is sited on the right-hand side of the hall stage for school functions, but for organ events, the seating is turned around to face the back of the hall. There is an extension of the hall raised up with steps. The risers are in the form of a metal grillwork and underneath this raised section are the two chambers. The raised section itself houses the Egyptian-styled console, so it's an about turn for theatre organ concerts.

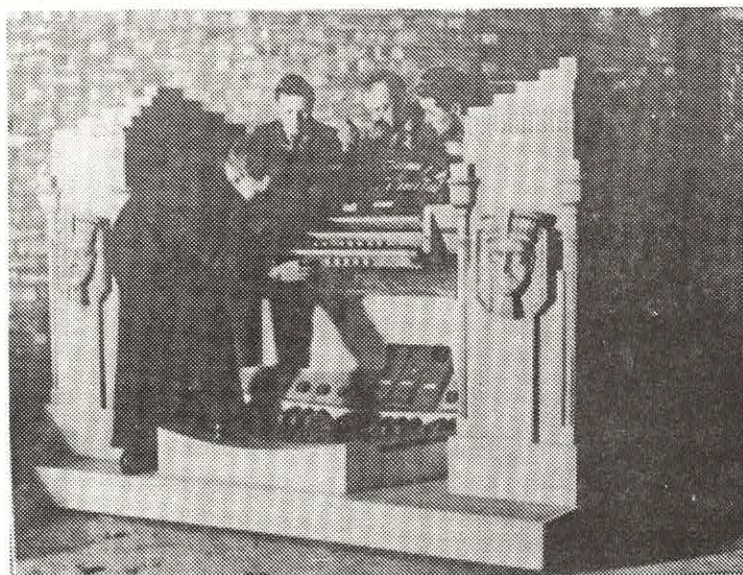
OVERSEAS NEWS. ... cont.

Surprisingly the sound gets out enough for a hall of this size. The BBC recorded the concert and it went out a few weeks ago for the Nation to hear the result of the many years labour the L.T.O.T. technical team have put in. They have made virtually no changes except for raising the Vox Humana chest upwards, and revoicing the Trumpet. Although chambers were built in the cinema at auditorium sides, for some mysterious reason chambers were also built under the stage and the organ installed there. Some pipework had to mitred. These fitted well at the school where there existed about the same amount of room.

Don Hyde, of the L.T.O.T. technical team, gave me a thorough tour of the organ. A most splendid job and a credit to L.T.O.T. Well done! Interestingly some of the chamber walls for this venue were built in the 16th century! It would appear that L.T.O.T. will stage most of their concerts here, just 25 minutes from central Manchester as they will never get access to the Free Trade Hall organ as often. Already the Trust have a great lineup of names for monthly concerts.



The Pyramid (Odeon), Sale, Cheshire.



At work assembling the Egyptian style organ console.



OVERSEAS NEWS. ... cont.

SISTERS HONORED.

Another celebration heard nationwide on the BBC was a special programme devoted to Florence DeJong and her sister Ena Baga, the two most famous lady theatre organists in Europe. The programme came, as it had to, from the famous New Gallery, Regent Street, London, and the beautiful vintage 2/8 Wurlitzer. August 10 it was and a fine show, too. They talked and nostalgia flowed greatly. Nigel Ogden interviewed the two.

Florence, 87 years young, and still Director of the National Film Theatre, the state-operated cinema of the South Bank with the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room complex, recalled playing the New Gallery, after the Wurlitzer was installed, with her husband, Harry DeJong playing the violin and leading the orchestra. The selection they presented was Tannhauser. Florence and Ena play silent films in the present day at the cinema.

Ena spoke of her long wartime stint at Blackpool Tower Ballroom, and how, just before this, she was rehearsing at the original BBC theatre organ in St. George's Hall when the studio men said, "Let's get out, miss, quick, there is a big raid on." She said they ran out of the building and seconds later the glass roof caved in under the incendiary bombs that rained down on the building and the organ was gone forever. Both sisters also played a lot in South Africa.

STRONY HAS NEW RECORD RELEASE.

Walt Strony will release a new record album this month. It was recorded on the Wurlitzer in 7th Street Organ Stop Pizza Restaurant, Phoenix, Arizona last fall. Strony has also had a busy fall schedule which took him to concerts in Milwaukee, Indianapolis and Chicago. On top of that he has found time to move from a newer ranch style home in Scottsdale to an older Art Deco residence closer to downtown Phoenix.

- - - News Source,

"The Console" Magazine, January 1984.

HOME ORGAN PARTY NEWS.

Committee man, Ron Smith, has been appointed organizer for all home functions. Members wishing to hold a home party should contact Ron, (phone number 529 7379) who will only be too happy to help you with details.

CALL FOR HELP ANSWERED.

Thanks to all the members for the prompt reply to our call for help in the supply of angle iron to help in the Capitol restoration project.

FROM YOUR PATRON.



...15

POINTS OF INTEREST FROM THE PAST.

Let us go back in time to the late 1920's early 1930's in the City of Melbourne. In those days most Cities had their City Organists who presided at the local Town Hall Organs and whose job it was to give regular midday Recitals and preside at all official functions when required. The then Melbourne City Organist was one William McKie, who was above all notorious for his puritan approach to Organ Music. I heard many of his programmes and they were mostly Bach, Guilman and Franck etc., and never once did I ever hear him come down off his perch and play something in the lighter vein. Shall we say he simply refused to play anything he considered beneath his dignity.

One day William McKie published a scathing article in the daily papers, condemning what he called those monstrosities of things known as the Mighty Wurlitzer or Cinema Organ, which he claimed were dragging the classical image of the organ down into the gutter. To him they were nothing more or less than Hurdy-Gurdy, Merry-Go-Round Organs that should never have been allowed to be built at all. That article was one of the biggest mistakes William McKie ever made, for not long after, he had to eat humble pie and publicly admit he was completely wrong in his condemnation of the Wurlitzer.

William McKie had overlooked the fact that just across Swanston Street, opposite the Melbourne Town Hall, was the famous "Capitol Theatre" known World-wide for its magnificent roof and equally beautiful 3-manual 15-rank Wurlitzer installed there in 1924. Presiding at that console was one of the greatest concert and theatre organists ever to grace the theatre scene - his name was Horace Weber (whom I was later privileged to have organ lessons from). Horace was so infuriated by William McKie's remarks that he challenged him to come across to the Capitol anytime he liked and he would prove that the Wurlitzer was capable of playing any kind of music at all and had more range and versatility than any Town Hall Organ ever built.

The City Organist accepted Horace's invitation and one morning went over to the theatre. The amazing ability of Horace Weber soon had McKie paralyzed. His eyes nearly jumped out of their sockets when he saw Weber's fantastic pedal technique. He really put the Wurlitzer through its paces bringing the console up and spotlight on him. For good measure he played Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, Widor's Toccata from the 5th Symphony, Wagner's Ride of the Valkyries, and brother could he play them!! He was a genius in the extreme. One must admit that those three major works one after the other, was a pretty tall order, but Horace with no effort performed them to perfection.

After all that he turned round to William McKie and said, "Now my dear friend I will do something you can't do and he proceeded to play in every tempo possible the latest current popular hit which at the time was a number called, "I'll String Along With You". To say that the puritan City Organist was impressed, would be the understatement of the age. One could safely say he was speechless and completely demoralized. McKie offered to publicly apologize in the papers and ever after that humiliating organ lesson he and Horace Weber became the best and closest of friends, so much so that Horace would go over to the Town Hall and play McKie's lunch hour programme for him while he sat at the back of the Hall to get an idea of how he would sound to the regular audiences.

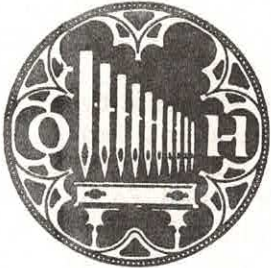
Horace Weber has since passed on to the great "Console in the Sky" and William McKie later became Sir William McKie - Organist of Westminster Abbey, and was responsible for all the music at our present Queen's Coronation, a great honour indeed.

FROM YOUR PATRON ... cont.

I don't know if Sir William is still alive or not as I believe he retired in England. Come what may I'm sure he would never have forgotten the name of Horace Weber, the man who proved to him for all time, that the Mighty Wurlitzer was no "Hurdy-Gurdy", but a magnificent and much loved "King of Instruments".

P.S. Hope you all enjoy this little anecdote from the past.

Ian M. Davies, J.P.
PATRON.



MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ORGAN AND HARPSICHORD

P.O. BOX 92 PARKVILLE, VICTORIA, 3052 * AUSTRALIA

THE FOURTEENTH MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ORGAN AND HARPSICHORD

PUBLICITY RELEASE TO GO TO ALL JOURNALS, 3MBS, ABC FM AND AM AND MELBOURNE NEWSPAPERS

MAY 12 - 19, 1984 - from the Artistic Director, Douglas Lawrence.

The Festival will again present its unique and beautiful blend of music, centred around the organ and the harpsichord; from the opening orchestral concert, through the corridors of the Renaissance and Baroque to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Instrumental and choral music will be presented by some of Australia's finest musicians, joined by players representative of the best in Europe today. The early music area will be well covered by the splendid ENSEMBLE DUFAY from New Zealand.

This Festival presents eight days of exhilarating music making; a chance to hear many fine instruments - very old and very new - and to join in the total experience of Australia's oldest and finest keyboard Festival.

The performers are:-

- Stephen Darlington - Organist and Master of The Choristers, St. Albans Abbey, England.
- John Wion - Principal flautist with the New York City Opera Orchestra.
- Glen Wilson - Brilliant young harpsichordist, now living in Holland, he is a distinguished soloist, and has performed in duo recitals with Gustav Leonhardt, Wieland Kuyken, Alice Harnoncourt and James Bowman.
- Ensemble Dufay - Robert Oliver - tenor, viol, rebec; Greer Garden - soprano, harp, psaltery; Geoffrey Coker - counter tenor, virginals; William Bower - lute and Andrea Oliver - recorder, renaissance flutes, virginals. New Zealand's leading early music ensemble, Ensemble Dufay will be making its first visit to Australia.

..... cont. on page 18

DOWN MEMORY LANE

...17

NUMBER 3 OF A MONTHLY SERIES BY FRANK ELLIS.

This month's collection of "bits and pieces" takes us back, once again, to the year 1938, to the month of November and we find some very interesting and nostalgic pieces indeed.

Last month I mentioned that Penn Hughes was reported to have been responsible for the sale to the management of the Astra Theatre, Drummoyne, of the organ which was installed there, and that he had sold a similar instrument to the Regent Theatre, Wentworthville, which was owned by Mr. Reg. Payne. These instruments were not Wurlitzers or even Christies but were locally made. The Wentworthville organ was a three manual and was described in the theatre's programmes as the "Regent Concert Organ". Reg Payne owned the Regent Theatre, Wentworthville and also had an interest in the Astra Theatre at Parramatta. His partners in the Astra, Parramatta were the owners of the Astra, Drummoyne. As the three theatres all had organs, it was inevitable I suppose, that their organists should be regarded as common property, and able to be shuffled around at will.

Recently I came across a copy of a contract between the Richards brothers as owners of the Drummoyne theatre and part-owners of the Astra, Parramatta on the one hand, and Reg. Payne as part-owner of the Astra, Parramatta and sole owner of the Regent, Wentworthville on the other hand with organist Penn Hughes who was contracted to play in any one of the three theatres owned by the partnership as directed by them. The contract stipulated that he must present a feature presentation in addition to playing interval music and also allowed him adequate practice time as well as the right to teach pupils, provided that there were no more than twelve pupils at any given time.

The "concert" organ of the Wentworthville Regent was later replaced by a small Wurlitzer of (if I remember correctly) 7 ranks, and this was opened by Les Denley. Deputy organist was Tom Kelly who was, in 1938, assistant to Ray Chaffer at the Parramatta Astra.

During that same month of November 1938 Bert Myers had been playing interval music on the Roxy Theatre, Parramatta, Christie, whilst Knight Barnett was relieving at the Strathfield Cinema. It was not uncommon, in those days for a star organist like Knight Barnett to play his feature spot in his own theatre after the Newsreel, and then to feature in another theatre in the circuit after interval. This "doubling-up" usually only took place when an organist was sick or on holidays. It would have been under such circumstances that Bert Myers would have played the interval music at the Roxy.

The best organ presentation of that month was said to have been Charles Tuckwell's "William Tell Overture" although the critic's review failed to mention which theatre Charles was playing in. It also said that Charles Tuckwell's "interval" music was Bach's "Air from the Suite in D" which was beautifully played until it was spoilt by one of the "talking advertisement slides" advertising some brand of starch. Ye gods - what sacrilege!!

The magazine also said that the Tuckwell tradition was not only being maintained but was being re-inforced at the Eastwood "Duke of York" Theatre where Cyrus Tuckwell was then playing. The reviewer went on to say that Cyrus, although showing signs of his brother Charles' influence in his playing, had the makings of a fine "hot" style organist who could, with some hard work, have a fine career ahead of him.

DOWN MEMORY LANE ... cont.

The best organ record of that month was said to have been Sidney Torch's medley of "Snow White" music. There was also mention of a medley of waltzes by Henry Croudson, and another "Dixon Hits" by Reginald Dixon.

Sydney's Plaza Theatre Wurlitzer had been given a coat of gold and was said to show up very well against the background. Stan Cummins called the gold colored console his throne and applied to the management for his crown. (Presumably a gold one to match the console).

Knight Barnett found some amusement with a mathematical problem. He worked out that during his six months season at the Roxy, Parramatta he would have travelled 13,200 miles (not kilometers) to play for just under 100 hours. He spent four hours a day in the train. Who would be a theatre organist???

Kurt Herweg was the sixth organist to be featured at the Prince Edward Theatre. He opened his season on September 3rd. 1938 and remained until sometime in October 1940. He had a wide and very varied musical career behind him before he arrived in Australia in 1938. He was born in Landshute, Bavaria of Jewish parents.

He began to study piano at the age of five, then started to learn singing three years later. Became member of his hometown St. Martin's Church Choir, also studied clarinet and trumpet. Went to Hoch-sohe Conservatoire at Frankfort where he studied and coached singers. Went to the Royal Academy of Music studying piano-counter-point and French Horn. Was wounded in the Great War after which he returned to his hometown where he sang in local Municipal Theatres. Conducted the orchestra at Volk's Theatre and coached singers at the State Theatre. In 1920 was first conductor at the Municipal Theatre at Memal. Toured Holland in 1924. Returned to Berlin where he stayed for two years studying at the State Academy of Music.

The next few years were spent in conducting orchestras and playing the piano in various cinemas throughout Germany. He was then appointed organist in one of the largest cinemas in Germany at Essen where one of Germany's first Wurlitzer organs was installed. He spent some time in London composing, many of his works being used in BBC Radio Broadcasts.

Arrived in Australia to conduct orchestras for J.C. Williamson shows in Melbourne after he became featured organist at Sydney's Prince Edward Theatre.

Bye for now - more fascinating bits and pieces for you next month when we'll delve into December 1938.

Australian artists and groups to perform will be:-

Camerata Lorenzo

The Choir of Ormond College, Melbourne

Gerald English - tenor (with Glen Wilson)

Organists - ~~Michael Dudman~~ (Sydney) , Bruce Steele, John Beaverstock.

Harpsichordists - Roger Heagney, Peter Watchhorn and Elizabeth Anderson (with John Wion).

The Festival will embrace twenty-six concerts, recitals, student recitals and master classes, as well as social events.

Venues to be used at this Festival will include The Melbourne Concert Hall, St. Patrick's Cathedral, the two great Catholic Churches of Our Lady of Victories, Camberwell and St. Mary's, Star of the Sea, West Melbourne, Melba Hall at the University of Melbourne and several beautiful, smaller university and suburban churches.

A brochure with full details can be obtained by writing to:- M.I.F.O.H., P.O. Box 92, Parkville, Victoria 3052 or by telephoning 529 4322.

Liberace

LIBERACE - THE ORGANIST

From Ian Cameron - Research & Archives

World famous pianist, Liberace, visited Sydney last month for a series of spectacular concerts. His visit prompted me to write of an interesting hidden talent he possesses - that as an organist. Indeed, he owns a real Welte theatre organ.

Some years ago, Liberace purchased a beautiful mansion in Hollywood, which was originally built for Rudy Vallee, who, in fact, never took up residence in the house. Built in 1926, the residence was equipped with a Welte organ. When Liberace purchased the property, the house had been empty for some years and mice and rats had badly gnawed the general mechanism of the organ.

Initially, Liberace tried to have the instrument removed, but nobody wanted it. Instead, everyone wanted him to restore it to playable condition, or at least pay for its transportation. As he could not even give it away, he decided to spend money on restoring it, and admits that he's glad he did so, for he has had a lot of fun with it. Liberace has had the console gold-leafed.

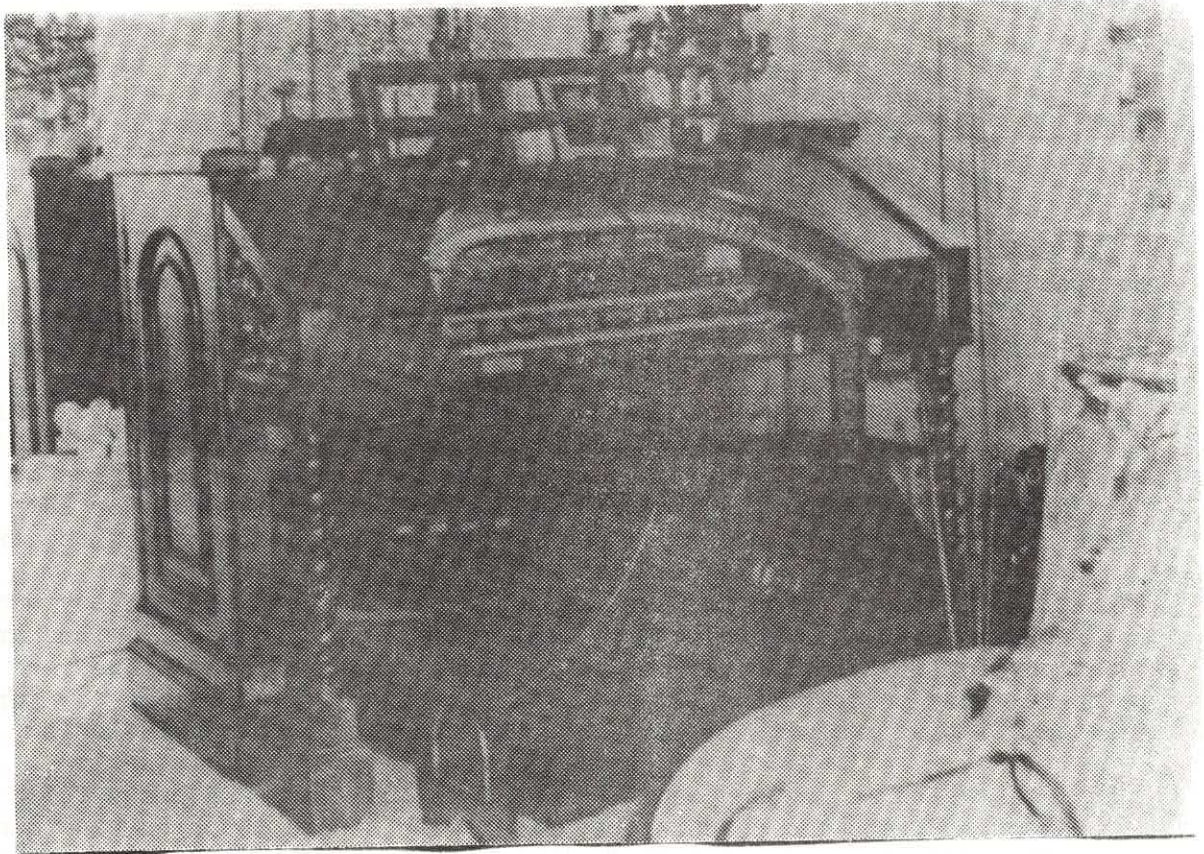
Today, the Welte is in top condition, is fully unified, and has a full complement of traps and percussions, along with second touch on each manual and some pedal stops. An unusual feature of this organ is in the traps in that three bird whistles have been provided. Each is of a different tone, and are twittered, so to speak, by push levers (for quick twits) on the backboard where the second touch stop tablets are placed, or by regular tabs on the single stop rail.

Liberace plays the instrument for his own personal enjoyment and also utilises the player attachment to hear his extensive library of Welte rolls. That he enjoys the organ so much genuinely establishes him as a real organ buff! His preference for the rolls he owns ranges from pop tunes to the classics. One of the lighter selections is "Song of the Flame", which was a leading tune from an early Warner Brothers film. He plays "Poet and Peasant Overture" regularly, and is partial to the "Prelude and Fuge in G major #2", a really beautiful roll cut by the late, great Lynwood Farnum.

A single chamber installation, the organ speaks through wrought iron grilles into the living room. Its console is located in a small alcove situated on the eastern side of the room, and there are three arches at the rear of the keydesk; the centre being an opening into the chamber. Two Spencer blowers; a 3hp for the main organ and a $\frac{1}{2}$ hp vacuum blower for the player unit, are located in the basement. Also housed in the blower area is the main tremulant with large reservoir - the Vox tremulant being housed in the chamber.

This wonderful instrument receives regular maintenance. When organ technician, David Harris was finishing some work on the instrument many years ago, he asked Liberace's housekeeper, "Where do you keep the rolls?". Her answer was quick: "Why, honey, I don't know for sure, but I think it's in the driveway." She thought he was referring to Liberace's white Rolls Royce

A final quote comes from Liberace's autobiography. At a press interview following the Hollywood opening of "les Puppees de Paris", one of the reporters asked Mae West, "Miss West, where are you and Liberace going after the reception?" Mae West smiled and said (as only she could), "I'm going over to Liberace's home to see his gold organ. I've seen every other kind, but I've never seen a gold one before." After touring the mansion and partaking of a light supper, Liberace says, "And for the finish, I showed hermy gold organ. I not only showed it to her...I played it for her."



"The organ I just couldn't give away, so I had it restored", from 'The Things I Love', by Liberace.

Below.

'Liberace at the Console of his 2/15 Welte', from 'The Console', June 1966.



STOPLIST DETAILS OF THE LIBERACE 2/15 WELTESOLO

16	Trombone
16	Contra Tibia Clausa
16	Contra Viol
16	Vox Humana
8	Trumpet
8	Diapason
8	Tibia Clausa
8	Viol d'Orchestre
8	Orchestral Oboe (Syn: 8 VDO & 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ Nazard)
8	Vox Humana
8	Kinura
8	Flute
8	Dulciana
4	Cornet
4	Octave
4	Tibia Flute
4	Violin 1
4	Violin (plays Viol 11)
4	Vox Humana
4	Forest Flute
4	Dulcet
2 $\frac{2}{3}$	Nazard
2	Piccolo
1 3/5	Tierce
4	Xylophone
4	Chrysoglott

ACCOMPANIMENT

16	Bourdon
8	Trumpet
8	Diapason
8	Viol d'Orchestre
8	Viol Celeste (no pipes - plays VDO)
8	Vox Humana
8	Kinura
8	Clarinet
8	Flute
8	Dulciana
4	Violin 1
4	Violin 11 (no pipes - plays Violin 1)
4	Vox Humana
4	Forest Flute
4	Dulcet
2 $\frac{2}{3}$	Nazard
2	Piccolo
4	Xylophone
4	Chrysoglott

Snare Drum Roll
 Snare Drum Tap
 Muffled Drum
 Chinese Block Roll
 Chinese Block Tap
 Tom-Tom
 Castanets
 Tambourine

ACCOMPANIMENT SECOND TOUCH

8	Trumpet
8	Diapason
8	Tibia Clausa
8	Clarinet
4	Tibia Flute
4	Chrysoglott
	Chimes
	Snare Drum Roll
	Snare Drum Tap
	Triangle
	Bird

PISTONS - SOLO

1 - 6 (First Touch Solo; Second Touch General), Cancel

PISTONS - ACCOMPANIMENT

1 - 6 (First Touch Accompaniment; Second Touch Pedal), Cancel,
 Traps Cancel, Drums On, Bird 1, 11, and 111

PEDAL

32	Acoustic Bass
16	Contra Bass
16	Bourdon
8	Trumpet
8	Diapason
8	Tibia Clausa
8	Cello
8	Flute
4	Violin
	Bass Drum
	Cymbal
	Snare Drum

PEDAL SECOND TOUCH

Chimes
 Chinese Gong
 Persian Cymbal
 Bass Drum
 Cymbal
 Tympani

TOE PISTONS

PEDAL (4), Triangle, Bird 1, Bird 11, Bird 111

TOE LEVERS (With Indicator Lights)

Muffled Drum
 Chimes Soft
 Chimes Sustain
 Chrysoglott Sustain
 Sforzando
 Persian Cymbal
 Chinese Gong
 Grand Crash

TREMULANTS

Main Vibrato
 Vox Humana Vibrato

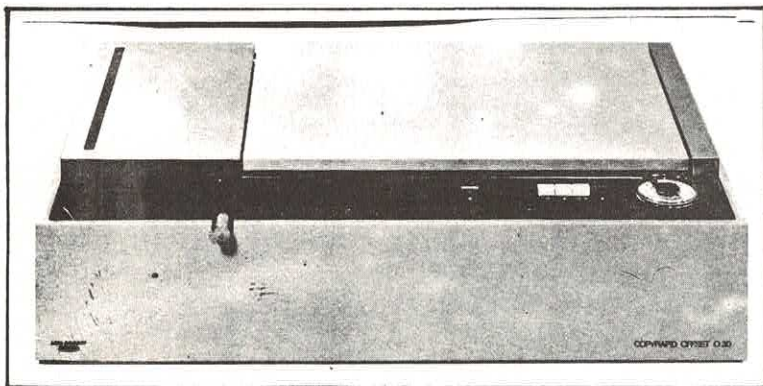
EXPRESSION SHOE

CRESCENDO SHOE

Article Extracts from: 'The Console', Vol.4, No. 6, June 1966
 'The Things I Love', by Liberace
 'Liberace', An Autobiography

Photographs: 'The organ I just could'nt give away, so I had it restored', from 'The Things I Love', by Liberace
 'Liberace at the Console of his 2/15 Welte', from 'The Console', June 1966

For Sale



The Society has for sale a Agfa-Gevaert plate maker (Model Copyrapid 0-30). Copyrapid Offset 0-30 is a combined exposure and developing machine for aluminium and paper offset plates. Machine comes complete with instruction book, some chemicals and metal plates. For all enquiries, ring Ron Wilson on 759 6050.

LOWREY SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRAL THEATRE ORGAN (Model H25-4)

A completely solid state, self contained, quadraphonic home console organ with two 61 note keyboards and 25 pedals. The organ includes four high performance amplifiers four separate channels with seven speakers , two 12 inch bass speakers in a sealed acoustic tone chamber, two 6" / 9" speakers, and 8" midrange and 3" treble speaker and an enclosed Leslie rotating speaker system.

For further details, phone 759 6050.

YAMAHA organ model E70- 2 years old with TM5 tone cabinet \$8500 (Neg.)
For all enquiries, ring Bruce Dun at Group 7 Leagues Club Kiama. Phone 042 321777.

Stop Press

We have just been advised by the Victorian Convention Committee that members attending the Monday function (Geelong trip) will probably find it difficult to purchase any food or drinks etc.

A basket lunch can be arranged by the Convention Committee at a cost of \$3.00 per head.

Anyone interested in ordering a basket lunch, please write to Betty McKillen, 13 Berkeley Street, Doncaster 3108. (Please make cheques payable to TOSA Vic. Division)
Closing date is April 6th.

TOSA NEWS.

Dont forget we are always needing articles for our magazine. If you have an interesting story to relate that would be appealing to your fellow members, please write and tell us about it.

Send your contributions to: Ron Wilson, 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba, and if suitable we will be happy to print them in TOSA News. If you include photos with your article, we will do our best to reproduce them and promptly return them to you.

We have often received historical items of interest, but there must be many experiences to relate to more recent happenings, so write in and tell us about them.