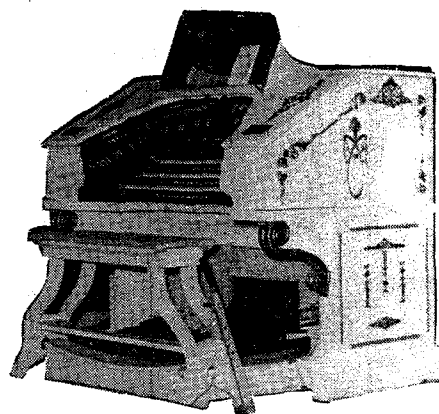


Marrickville Town Hall



Orion Centre Campsie

JUNE 1988

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PRESENTING

"FIVE FOR FIVE"

FIVE ARTISTS FOR FIVE DOLLARS

**IAN DAVIES
ANDREA HARRISON
DAVID PARSONS
TRISHA WATT
plus
MYSTERY ARTIST**

2.00pm. SUNDAY 26th JUNE 1988

MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

ALL TICKETS \$5.00

VOLUME 27

ISSUE 6

PRICE \$1.00

The Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society
of Australia, N.S.W. Division, Inc.
Address - Box 474 Sutherland 2232
Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. N.B.H. 1038

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MEMBERSHIP FEES

In last month's issue of TOSA NEWS, we included a membership renewal form. Many people have already returned the form with their subscription for 1988-1989. To those people - THANK YOU.

To those who have not yet paid their subs, you may do so either by mail or at a concert. In either case, PLEASE make sure that you send or hand in the form that was with the last issue (May) TOSA NEWS.

REMEMBER. To retain continuity of membership, your fees must be in by **30th June.**

NEW MEMBERS

The Executive Committee extend a warm welcome to the following new members. We look forward to meeting you at our coming functions.

John E. Barry, Christopher Eddy
 Peter Beames, David Charrett
 Susan McLoughlin, Julieanne Heywood
 Bill Kensell.

TOSA JACKETS

Remember those smart looking light blue jackets that so many TOSA members are wearing, well they are still for sale and with winter well and truly here, what better time to get yours.

The jackets are of first class quality, hand made in Sydney and guaranteed to keep you warm. They cost \$32 for the jacket and \$3.50 extra for the TOSA cloth badge.

To order your jacket, ring Pam McMinn on (02) 542 3937 and remember you are helping a good cause, the little bit of profit we do make goes to help run TOSA.

THANKS

Neil Palmer on behalf of the committee, would like to thank member John Morris from Lisarow, near Gosford on the Central Coast, for his prompt reply to the wanted ad in last months newsletter and for his kind donation of a 6ft. step ladder which was urgently required for organ maintenance at Marrickville Town Hall.

DATES FOR
YOUR DIARY

**JUNE**

- Saturday 4 9.00am. - 3.00pm. **GARAGE SALE - TRADING POST**
To be held at the residence of John Rattray and Murray Ries.
153A Haldon Street Lakemba. (Corner of Haldon and Gillies Streets.)
- Monday 6 7.30pm. **COMMITTEE MEETING**
- Saturday 11 2.00pm. - 4.00pm. **CAPITOL FUND RAISING CONCERT**
Paddington - Woollahra R.S.L. Memorial Club.
226 Oxford Street Paddington.
Featured artists playing the Rodgers Organ during the afternoon
will be Ian Davies, Bill Schumacher and Neil Palmer.
Admission: \$4.00
- Sunday 26 2.00pm. **PAID CONCERT - "FIVE FOR FIVE"**
FIVE ARTISTS FOR FIVE DOLLARS
MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL
Featured artists will be David Parsons, Ian Davies, Trisha Watt and
Andrea Harrison, **PLUS** a mystery guest artist.
Admission: EVERYONE \$5.00 CHILDREN UNDER 15 - FREE
Booking form in this issue. Please book early.

JULY

- Monday 4 7.30pm. **COMMITTEE MEETING**
- Sunday 31 2.00pm. **PAID CONCERT - CAMPSIE ORION CENTRE**
Featured artists will be Cliff Bingham, John Crawford
and vocalist Bronwyn Hall.
Admission:
Adults \$9.00
TOSA Member \$7.00
Pensioner \$6.00
TOSA Pensioner \$5.00

AUGUST

- Monday 1 7.30pm. **COMMITTEE MEETING**
- Saturday 20 8.00am. **3801 STEAM TRAIN TRIP**
Depart Central Station, stopping at Strathfield, arrive at Moss Vale
where, during the two and a half hour stop-over, lunch will be served.
Travel down the mountain to Unanderra, returning to Sydney via
Wollongong, stopping at Hurstville on return journey.
Party of 8 compartments can be booked.
For enquiries, phone John Rattray or Murray Ries on 750 3779. (AH).
BOOKING FORM IN THIS ISSUE BOOK EARLY AND SAVE
- Sunday 21 **HANDICAPPED CHILDRENS CONCERT**
BARDWELL PARK R.S.L.
For all details, please ring Ritchie Willis on 57 3581.
- Sunday 28 2.00pm. **PAID CONCERT - MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL**
FATHER JIM MILLER IN CONCERT.
Admission:
Adults \$9.00
TOSA Member \$7.00
Pensioner \$6.00
TOSA Pensioner \$5.00

SECRETARY'S REPORT

THEY DARED TO BE DIFFERENT
NATIONAL CONVENTION ANOTHER VIEW

When the 16th National Convention was first given to TOSA ACT and they decided to hold it, not at Easter, but over the three day ANZAC weekend, many were sceptical. We always have four day conventions, how can you hold convention over three days? How can you hold a convention when you only have one theatre pipe organ? These were but two of the mutterings of the sceptics.

Well, the sceptics, those who attended anyway, were proved wrong, TOSA ACT have just staged the best weekend of Theatre Organ music and other pleasant activities that we have attended in a long while. The weather was indeed extremely kind, beautiful balmy days in the mid 20's, the nights somewhat cooler but not unpleasant and the TOSA ACT organisation ran like clockwork. In chronological order convention comprised;

Registration, dinner and cabaret style concert on Friday night with entertainment, in the first half by local musical society members and others followed by the inimitable David Johnston, humour, silent movies and all. In our opinion there is no better way to warm up the audience and start a weekend convention than having a David Johnston "experience".

Saturday took us tripping about Canberra sights, the Film and Sound Archives then to Duntroon where we had a short classical recital. Our next port of call was the New Parliament House Exhibition Centre where we saw an audio visual presentation of the design and construction of the

new "aviary". Or as someone commented "In 30 minutes I learnt how to spend \$2 billion". We then went to the Carillon for lunch in the park.

After lunch some conventioners took part in the National Delegates meeting whilst the remainder went on a tour of the embassy areas.

TOSA ACT President Col Lacey chaired the delegates meeting and one might be excused for believing that such is Col's full time occupation, for whilst allowing adequate discussion he, at all times, had control of the meeting.

It must fairly be said that prior to Convention '88 few of us had heard of Tony O'Brien. We expect now that few conventioners will ever forget Tony O'Brien. The feature concert of the convention must surely go down in the record books as the most outstanding and unusual Theatre Pipe Organ concert ever staged in this country. They indeed dared to be different. The curtain rose to the sounds of the Compton Organ shrouded in smoke and likewise after interval where we were treated to a light show that was quite unique.

During his concert Tony made great but sparing use of a Yamaha DX21 synthesizer affixed to the music rack and a Roland drum machine. Whilst again the purists will say that these electronic gadgets are not needed to support the Theatre Pipe Organ they were not used, by Tony, to support the organ but to enhance the performance, for instance during the playing of Malaguena you could hear the guitars - generated by the synthesizer.

It is our belief that this young

man is one of the most dynamic and interesting organists we have ever seen or heard, that his music takes the theatre pipe organ almost to the limits of it's capabilities and that he has and will continue to have an immense affect on all those who hear him. An entertainer, a performer of this calibre and nature will do much to attract young people to the ranks of the Theatre Pipe Organ movement and we all know how much we need new young members.

In all the main concert of the 16th National Convention was a remarkable and memorable performance by a talented musician.

Sunday saw us lunching or brunching as it was called at Cotter Dam. First course, just the way to start Sunday, was hot fresh bread with stacks of jam and cream. Unfortunately your scribe had to give that a miss but the hot roast lamb and hot roast turkey that followed, again with all the trimmings, was most appreciated. Over the entire weekend the food, all catered for by a local caterer, Maxwell's, was excellent. We have not eaten so much or such quality at catered functions for a long time. Another plus for TOSA ACT.

Sunday afternoon featured Cliff Bingham and John Crawford in concert at the Erindale Centre followed by the Woden Valley Youth Choir. Cliff was playing the ex Ian McLean Rodgers Century 340 and John Crawford a Yamaha grand piano. These two artists team well together and as always Cliff is a delight to hear, be it on pipe or electronic organ. The Woden Valley Youth Choir presented a tremendous hour of song, truly a credit to themselves, their organisation

and the people behind them.

Sunday night's Gala Ball, or as Clinton White said, is it a "Galah Ball" was held again at the Albert Hall with the catering by Maxwells. During the night several TOSA ACT members played spots on either the grand piano or the Compton Organ. After some cajoling and lubricating of the nervous system one Ian McLean, yes the Ian McLean of the "PEN" fame (or nowadays word processor fame), actually demonstrated that he does and can play Theatre Pipe Organ. Ian played a short bracket accompanied in part by the drummer from the dance band and considering the manner in which the whole act arose acquitted himself in a competent and professional manner. Many scribes scattered throughout the hall were seen to be furiously reviewing this impromptu act, no doubt to be able to "get their own back", in future issues of their divisional journals. Hopefully we may see more of the musical talents of this organist.

Monday's Accent on Youth Concert brought together the talents of four young people from various parts of Australia and New Zealand. John Giacchi, an 18 year old member of TOSA NSW, opened and whilst a little nervous played in his usual attractive style. John has previously won first and second places in City of Sydney Eisteddfod's and has twice appeared at Marrickville Town Hall.

The second act of this concert was probably the most remarkable performance on Theatre Pipe Organ ever seen in Australia. Sean Henderson from New Zealand is 9 years old, he has been studying for only three years and allegedly has a repertoire of 70-80 numbers. This performance

included his own arrangement of Dizzy Fingers and along with the other pieces he played was fantastic, inspired playing. Sean received the only standing ovation of the whole weekend and thoroughly deserved it. Several conventioners were heard to say "I am 50 years old, I have been playing for thirty years and cannot play like that. I am going home to burn my home organ and to cut off my fingers."

Such is the talent of this young lad that many of those who heard him, including your scribe, were overcome. We say to Sean's parents, that at all costs their son must continue his study, so that he may continue to share his gift with those of us who appreciate good music and great talent. To Sean we say simply "thank you and please come back".

Ian Kipling aged 17 years and from South Australia played next and in all fairness probably found it difficult to follow the previous act. Ian's numbers were well played and he is assured of success in the Theatre Organ world in the future.

Last but by no means least came Carole Pinches, a 21 year Melbourne organist who has twice won the Theatre Organ section of the Royal South Street Eisteddfod. Carole's performance was polished and professional.

After lunch, yes another great meal (I think I left Canberra 4 stone heavier than when I got there) we were treated to a workshop session by Tony O'Brien wherein he explained his philosophy about electronic music and why he uses synthesizers with the pipe organ. It is to be hoped that this session did much to dispel the scepticism of a few after the Saturday night concert

because, as Tony explained what he attempts to do with electronics is to use the technology to enhance the performance or to enrich the experience - not to replace the pipe organ.

The workshop was meant to be the penultimate event of convention proper with only open console to follow however someone and bless them that they did, organised a one hour classical concert by Tony O'Brien on the Wesley Uniting Church organ. Here we were to see the real talents of this amazing young American artist who has done at least some of his classical study with Hector Olivera. This scribe is not generally a devotee of the classic style but found this recital to be enthralling.

We did not stay for the "after-glo" functions but returned to keep the home fires burning. To TOSA ACT we say - congratulations upon the organisation and presentation of your first convention, we enjoyed it as a magnificent weekend of functions and events. The organisational side was superb, the music fantastic, the food most appetising and the sightseeing interesting and enjoyable. We thank you for DARING TO BE DIFFERENT.

This review is but the opinion of two people, no doubt others will differ and whilst we respect but maybe disagree with their opinion, we will always fight to ensure they have the right to express their opinion and trust our right to express ours is likewise assured.

Bob and Pam McMinn

FROM YOUR PATRON



Ian Davies

THOSE WONDERFUL ATMOSPHERIC THEATRES

Going back in time to the late 1920's, where Super Cinemas were being built all over the world, Australia was very fortunate to have two magnificent theatres that opened together in 1929, one being the State Theatre Melbourne, and the other, the Capitol Theatre Sydney.

These two famous movie palaces were known as atmospheric masterpieces of the day.

To witness them and be entertained in such elaborate grandeur, left a lasting impression that remains to this day.

As one sat in the dress circle of the State Theatre in Melbourne in particular, one was transported back to the days of ancient Rome as you found yourself sitting in an open air amphitheatre, such was the custom in the time of Nero the Roman Emperor.

On looking up at the ceilings, your eyes were greeted with one mass of blue skies, twinkling stars, with moving cloud formation, all done by clever trick lighting.

Dropping your gaze slowly down, you focused on all the fantastic statues of various figures, both male and female that adorned the walls and the proscenium arch.

Either side of the stage were the organ chambers disguised as Roman Temples and being within the theatre itself, the sound of the organ was as clear as a bell.

The organ was a dual console 4/20 Wurlitzer, the left hand console being on a hoist and turntable, the right hand one was stationary. Organ duets were often performed as both

consoles were coupled to the same set of pipes.

Arnold Coleman was the organist there for years and was famous for his A.B.C. broadcasts every Sunday night at 7.00pm. called the 'Epilogue'.

The original organist who opened at the State Theatre in 1929 was one Frank Lanterman, an American.

Returning back to the Sydney Capitol, it was identical to the Melbourne State in every way, the exception being the Wurlitzer, which was a single console 3/16 rank organ.

The original orchestra there was led by Ted Heinkel and Fred Scholl, another American, was the organist.

It is interesting to note that the stationary 4 manual console from Melbourne State Theatre is now in the Capri Theatre Adelaide. The main console is in Moorabbin Town Hall in Victoria.

The Sydney Capitol 3/16 is now being installed in the Orion Entertainment Centre at Campsie.

What wonderful memories we all have of that golden era when one could go to those glorious old theatres and sit in the best seats in the house for five shillings, get super entertainment and above all, the glorious sounds of a Mighty Wurlitzer.

Times have changed, haven't they!

More next month . . . Ian Davies J.P.

CAPITOL FUND RAISING AFTERNOON

PADDINGTON- WOOLLAHRA RSL

Society Patron, Ian Davies, is once again presenting an afternoon of music at the Paddington-Woolahra RSL. Ian has informed me that the Rodgers organ has had a lot of work done to it, including the repositioning of the speakers.

So why not support the efforts of our Patron and the Society in making this a successful afternoon.

Ed.

NEWS FROM



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

THE DENDY ORGAN RE-LIVES FOR
TOSA MELBOURNE

RE-OPENED SUNDAY 17th APRIL 1988

The famous DENDY Wurlitzer organ owned and operated by the Victorian Division of TOSA, has been re-opened to the public after an absence of almost four and a half years. In that time a new twin cinema complex and shopping centre has been built on the site of the old theatre and surrounding areas. So the Dendy organ is now the "Brighton Twin Cinema One" organ, although I suspect it will still be known as the "The Dendy" for some time.

The reopening of the organ took place with a series of two concerts to accommodate all those that wished to attend as the seating capacity of the new cinema is somewhere around half of the old Dendy. Ironically, Twin Cinema is actually built in part of the shell of the old theatre using the old projection box (although upgraded) and though the organ was totally removed from the building, it is now forward and about 20 or 30 feet higher than where it was. The new installation is more spread out and organised than the original installation and much easier for those working on the organ. It is a credit to all those involved and TOSA in Melbourne should be justly proud of how it has turned out. One major change with respect to presentation of concerts there, is that the console is now on the right hand side of the auditorium and no longer on a lift. Instead, the organ slides out of a cavity in the wall. I believe it will do this automatically to begin a concert, but this still has to be finished (sounds like when we first got our lift going here and used it for a concert).

One other important change from the organists point of view, is the changing over to electronic switching, replacing the switches, relays and wire dating back to 1924! Working differently to the Capri electronics, it should ensure the organ is

more reliable than ever and lower maintenance in the electrics to virtually zero. The question is HOW DOES IT SOUND? I have always been a fan of the Dendy organ with its unique sound, particularly its deep strong bass. It boasts a set of 32 foot diaphones and when they are used, you know all about it. You feel them and it's great. If they weren't so big I might have brought one back in my suitcase! However, the Dendy still sounds like the Dendy. It's loud and it can bite when it wants to. It's a different bite to, say our Capri posthorn, but it can bite none the less. There is a small difference to how it used to be, but certainly it can be said - "The Dendy's back". Acoustically the new cinema is totally dry - there is no echo at all. When an organist lifts his/her hand from the keyboard the sound stops - end of story. This gives the organ a very tight sound - a little echo would not hurt, but I still like it how it is.

The organists called upon to reopen the Dendy were Tony Fenelon, David Johnston, John Atwell and two young local organists, Kah Kit Yoong and Terezia Kalkbrenner. To begin the proceedings, a short film showing behind the scenes of the organ was shown and Tony opened the music with 'On a Wonderful Day Like Today'. Time was at a premium due to cinema commitments, so it was out on organist and in the next all day.

A varied program was presented, and in particular it should be noted that Kah Kit Yoong, a young chinese boy almost 15, played very well considering the rush and importance of the occasion. If he keeps it up he has a promising musical future.

The day was very enjoyable and it was a pleasure to attend.

Congratulations TOSAVIC.

Wayne Bertram.

CINEMA NORTH UP FOR SALE

BLOW TO TOSA MELBOURNE

It was recently announced that Cinema North, home of TOSA Melbourne's 2/8 Theatre organ is to be auctioned next month. If the worst happens, TOSA may have to remove their organ and find a new home for it. This would be a major blow to TOSAVIC,

coming just after reopening the Dendy organ. TOSA's resources have been stretched to the limit, and if it comes to removing the organ, it is the last thing they want at this stage.

Let's hope it doesn't come to that for their sake as they will have two organs to find homes for - they are presently restoring their third organ, a Compton they have had for many years.

Let's all keep our fingers crossed it works well for the Vic's.

News source... South Australian TOSA NEWS

NEWS FROM



MEMORABLE RE-OPENING AT BRIGHTON

The re-opening of the Brighton Wurlitzer - TOSA Victorian Division's proudest possession in its new home in the Village Brighton Twin Cinemas No.1 theatre on Sunday 17 April had been looked forward to by hundreds of people for more than four years. The great day, when it came, was worth the wait.

Audiences totalling about 900 attended the two sessions, at 10.30am. and 2.00pm. The occasion attracted visitors from Adelaide, Canberra, Sydney, the Gold Coast and New Zealand, as well as contingents from Bendigo, Warragul and Ballarat, the last two groups in chartered buses.

The volunteer staff - hostesses, recording engineers, projectionist, lighting operator, record bar-sales people, along with organists and compere, began arriving around 9.00am. to be joined by theatre staff ushers and ticket sellers at 9.30am. From then on, right through the day until the end of the afternoon concert by 4.30pm. everything went smoothly.

The programme (the morning and afternoon concerts were identical in content) opened with a 12 minute film shot and edited by TOSA member Hartley Davey, in which in-

stallation supervisor Bruce Hester introduced the audience to the heart of the organ, the contents of the chambers. This settled down the audience, ready for the great moment when they would hear the Wurlitzers great sound again.

As the film faded from the screen, spotlights illuminated the console as Tony Fenelon let go a burst of sound - a few bars of George Blackmore's Dendy March to introduce A Wonderful Day Like Today.

BRIGHTON WURLITZER OPENING SOUVENIR

An attractive Souvenir Book of TOSA Victorian Division's 3/15 Wurlitzer is now available.

A striking colour photograph of the beautiful Wurlitzer console, which can be detached and framed if so desired, forms the frontispiece of the book, which was produced for the organ's re-opening concerts at the Village Brighton on Sunday 17 April.

Of A4 size and bound in a strong maize coloured cover, the book contains all the important facts about the Wurlitzer - when and where it was built, the dates of its openings and closings, information on the present Brighton installation and a complete specification and stop list.

There are also biographies of the artists who took part in the Brighton opening concerts and a brief history and outline of the activities of TOSA Victorian Division. As well as being a desirable personal souvenir, the book would be a welcome gift for theatre organ enthusiast friends elsewhere in Australia or overseas. Copies may be ordered from Eric Wicks, 19 Beatty Street, Ivanhoe, Victoria 3079 at \$4 each, post free.

CINEMA NORTH SALE OFF

Information that the Cinema North theatre property at Reservoir would be auctioned mid-May caused concern among TOSA members in recent weeks.

Latest news is that arrangements for the auction did not proceed, and currently the theatre is not for sale.

News source . . 'VOX'

CLUB NIGHT - QUARTERLY MEETING

Marrickville Town Hall
11th May 1988.

President Phyllis Wilson opened the meeting at 8.00pm. and welcomed all members and their friends to the quarterly meeting and club night held at Marrickville Town Hall. Secretary Bob McMinn then presented his report and also announced the running of a fund raising raffle from an idea that was suggested by member Nick Lang. Full details are in this issue.

Treasurer John Rattray then presented the financial report to the members, and in answer to a question from the floor, told of how the \$70,000 that has been raised over the years, has been spent on the restoration of the ex-Capitol organ. John then announced the artists and format for the opening of the ex-Capitol organ in the Orion Centre at Campsie during the long weekend in October this year.

Neil Palmer was then called upon to give his report on the maintenance of the Marrickville organ followed by John Parker's report on the Orion installation. John thanked all of his co-workers for a job well done and in particular, James Hardie Industries for the supply of various sizes of PVC piping, which will be supplied to the society at manufacturing cost. The 12" diameter PVC piping will be used for the wind supply from the blower room to the solo and main chambers.

Following general business, the President closed the meeting at 9.00pm. Organist Don Stagg from the USA was then introduced, who then entertained the members for about forty minutes.

After a short break in proceedings for a hot cup of tea or coffee, a twenty minute video of Phil Kelsall playing at the Blackpool Tower Ballroom was shown. Special thanks go to Cliff Bingham and John Parker for the use of their video equipment for the night.

Thanks must also go to all the members who supported the function and to those who supplied all the 'goodies' for supper.

Ed.

NEWS FROM

Letter to the editor.

Dear Ron,

Possibly some of your members may be travelling to Brisbane during the next six months to visit Expo, and if so, TOSA - Q would be very happy to welcome them to our Clubnights, Concerts, etc.

We would be grateful if you would make your members aware, through your magazine, that they can make enquiries regarding TOSA events to myself on (07) 349 6577. Should they wish to have access to our Christie pipe organ, Elizabeth Cowell, (07) 349 2084 will only be to pleased to arrange it for them.

Our Clubnights are held on the first Monday of each month, usually at Kelvin Grove High School Auditorium, and we look forward to being able to welcome some of your members there.

Yours sincerely,
Jan Barham
Editor - 'TIBIA'.

HECTOR OLIVERA - LIVE FROM SYDNEY AUSTRALIA

The double cassette of Hector Olivera's concert recorded at Marrickville Town Hall last September and released at the National Convention in Canberra, was met with outstanding approval and success.

If you would like to purchase a copy of this double cassette, phone John Rattray or Murray Ries on 750 3779 or by phoning Ron Wilson on 759 6050.

The price for this double cassette is only:-

\$15.00

Postage in Australia \$1.50 - Overseas \$5.00

THE REGENT THEATRE

SYDNEY'S MOST LOVED LANDMARK

(A synopsis of the recent events)

By John Giacchi.

A new government has meant a new high-rise office block on the site of Sydney's Regent Theatre. The decision of the Greiner Government to lift not only the interim conservation order on the auditorium itself, but also the permanent conservation order on the foyer and facade has shocked Sydney's Theatre circles.

The question that arises is: "How can a government that has been in office for such a short time possibly assess the merits of the theatre building and conduct the required studies?". Talking to radio 'King', John Laws, he stated that the decision of the fate of the Regent could have well been made by the toss of a coin. It's a shame that we haven't got a brave government in NSW!

The decision to gazette all the conservation orders was declared on Wednesday 13th April 1988, and according to Actor's Equity, Leon Fink whose family owns the Regent, has legal rights as from midnight the following Saturday to commence demolition. 'Gazetting' usually takes 8 to 10 days before the owner can start demolition, therefore the government and Mr. Fink had been already doing their homework and had already a head start. This puts Actors Equity and other participating groups concerned with the Regent's restoration and conservation at a severe disadvantage and with no legal leg to stand on. As soon as the announcement had been broadcast, The National Trust conducted an urgent meeting to attempt to force through an injunction on the Regent's demolition. This was unsuccessful. The following Saturday, (16th April), unions met to try to place formal bans regarding the demolition of any part of the building.

Sunday 17th marked the ironic opening of Heritage Week and Actors Equity had organised a protest to take place (which it did), but the premier had sternly said that if any minority group got in the way with the Regent demolition, they would be sued. Actors Equity is definitely not a minority group!

Attitudes:

Leon Fink's attitude to the Regent is very

cold and stubborn. Only last November, a chance existed for the Regent to be reborn as theatrical entrepreneur, Wilton Morley offered to buy the Regent Theatre from Leon Fink and restore it as a live theatre venue. Leon Fink did not reply.

There is still a small glimmer of hope that the Regent will be saved. The government decision is being studied by the lawyers of Actors Equity as it is possible that there are huge legal holes in the government's decision. They should be credited for their work and other conservation groups as they have been working very, very hard to save this historical landmark.

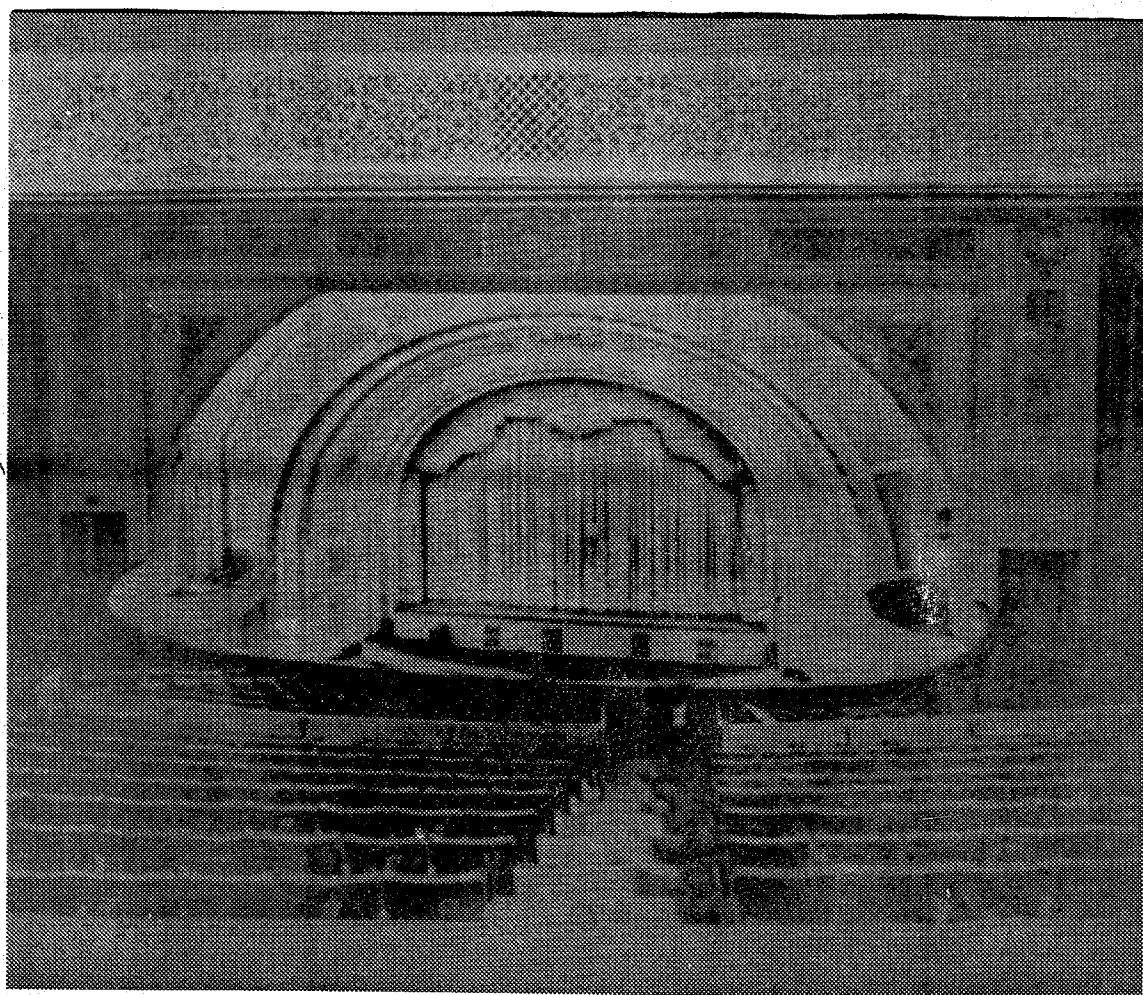
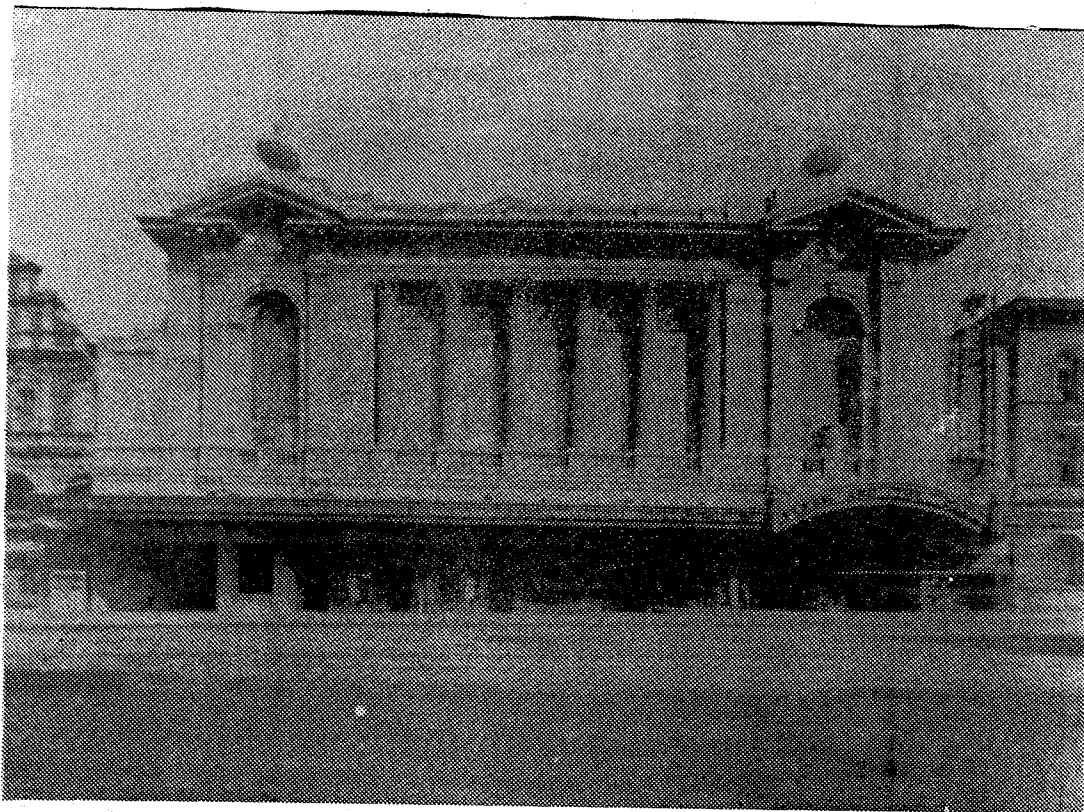
If the Regent Theatre is demolished (which might well be the case by the time you read this article) it would be interesting to note the expressions on the faces of the owners of the State Theatre, Greater Union, as the State Theatre has turned somewhat into a white elephant.

So as a result of the Regent's demise, the purpose of a permanent conservation order is defeated. So much for permanency!!

What has this article got to do with the Society in general? Well, as most of us know, the Regent was once the home of a 3/15 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ, which was removed many years ago and installed in a private residence. It is quite certain, that this is the largest single unit restored from the Regent. Theatres, such as the Regent and Capitol, were the environment where the theatre organ thrived, and where most of their interest as a musical instrument, was conceived. A majority of patrons who attend theatre organ concerts do so to revive and relive the magic and nostalgia of entering into a spacious foyer, buying a ticket (which even had its own element of magic) and walking up marble staircases whilst their ears were bathed in a kaleidoscope of music from the Mighty Wurlitzer, which rose majestically from the depths like a huge yawning mouth. Such an experience I would have loved to have witnessed.

Ah, yes! The Regent Theatre was a beautiful theatre, the likes of which future generations will never see again. From its demolition onwards, the Regent Theatre exists only as a story!!

Aurevoir Regent!!!



The photos above show the exterior and interior of the Regent Theatre. Thanks to Ian Hanson for the loan of the two historic photos.

PRESS RELEASE

From the first of June there are just 122 days before the 3 manual Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ that first played over 60 years ago, will rise from the depths of the Orion Centre and "PIPE DREAMS" will become a reality.

It is fitting that 1988 should see the re-birth of the ex-Capitol Theatre Pipe Organ, for this year is the 60th anniversary of the first opening of the organ, in the magnificent atmospheric theatre in the Haymarket area of Sydney. The organ, indeed the Capitol Theatre, opened on April 7th. 1928, and a printed brochure about the occasion records, "The speeches finished, a burst of applause greeted the orchestra which rose on its platform from a deep pit. Then after a new film had been shown, Mr. Fred Scholl played a series of pieces on the Wurlitzer organ, he, also shooting up unexpectedly from the depths in front of the stage (their words not mine). A transposition of "Rigoletto Quartette" showed the instrument to possess a full and finely impressive tone which rang forth vibrantly into the huge building without seeming to blare."

The opening programme said of the Theatre "A great theatre is like a great thought - it is beauty and its paths are paths of joy, happiness, of delight. There can be no dark clouds to dim its radiance, as there can be no sinister doubts to shatter the wonder of a thought that is sincerely sweet and truly great." Of the organ, the same programme said "Into the Capitol Theatre has been placed the greatest triumph of the human brain, the Mighty Wurlitzer organ. Conceived and created to add to the modern scheme of musical accompaniment - it is an amazing monument to the progress of science and art!"

And so it shall come to pass that after some speeches on the night of Saturday 1st. of October 1988, in the hands of Australia's most talented and famous organist Tony Fenelon, the mighty Wurlitzer will speak again. During the programme, of some two hours duration plus an intermission, Tony will be assisted by another first class and talented musician, John Atwell. Together, Tony and John will present not only the re-birth of a mighty Wurlitzer, but also some of their famous organ and piano duets that Sydneysiders have come to love.

As if one concert is not enough, on the Sunday afternoon (2nd October) at 1.00pm. we will present the talents of our own Margaret Hall and Neil Jensen, who now makes his home in Sydney. These two artists are well known to theatre pipe organ devotees, Margaret for her many appearances in Sydney and interstate and Neil for the release of several recordings. The more relaxed, less official nature of this performance will prove to be a great opportunity to hear just how brilliant the Wurlitzer sounds in the magnificently restored Orion Centre, which is fully air-conditioned and boasts an elaborate stage lighting installation.

SUNDAY EVENING. To round out this weekend, to provide an occasion to chat to old friends and to imbibe a little. A five piece dance band will play the right sort of dance music, the organ will be featured for some numbers and a smorgasbord of gastronomical delights in true music hall style will be served.

For 16 years, members of TOSA NSW have dreamt of the day - the day the Capitol Pipes would speak again - hence the weekend has been named "PIPE DREAMS". Help us make PIPE DREAMS come true. Do not miss the re-birth in its 16th year, of the mighty Wurlitzer that was announced on 17th December 1927 in the following quotation - "This instrument is the largest of its kind ever sent abroad from America. It has been constructed by Wurlitzer and contains 173 orchestral and organ effects. The cost is \$42,000." Of course we know that bigger Wurlitzers were shipped after ours, but bigger though they might have been; is bigger better?

PIPE DREAMS - October 1st and 2nd, 1988

DARE NOT TO MISS IT

A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

NOT PERSONALITIES

By Doug Smith

At the end of April 1986 I began working on the Capitol organ restoration and have become engrossed by the vast amount of parts (both large and small) all being meticulously renewed, to help bring back to life the wonder of musical instruments.

During the first 12 months, with the generous aid of one or two helpers, I completed the restoration of the solo and main chests, bottom boards (30 of them - 2 per rank) re-installed all the primary and secondary pneumatics (1,836) plus pallets and springs (918) then after testing all the magnet coils, three of the four chests were re-assembled (440 screws). We put them on wind and surprise of surprises? They worked like a charm (or so I thought!). Isn't that amazing, I didn't think I could write a years work in just one paragraph!

Our organ builder, John Parker, arrived after the Convention in April 1987 and patiently listened to all the details of what had been done, and after inspecting the 3 completed chests, my inflated ego received a rapid deflation when John quietly said "they'll all have to come apart Doug and be done again I'm afraid".

Sure, the chests appeared to work well but -

No.1 The pallet springs had far too much tension, which meant that some notes would not play when an artist used chords with both hands.

No.2 I had adjusted the pallet spoons slightly unevenly, which meant that in 61 pipes, they would each play at a different volume - normally a nightmare - Ho, Hum, yes I know - any dill would know something like that surely, but when the various apparent experts, amateurs also, inspected the chests operating, **NOT ONE** picked up these discrepancies.

These were only some of the unprofessional work practices that were found by our obviously professional organ builder and he was right of course. Under John's expert guidance, the chests and many other items are now completed and tested ready for installation in the chambers.

Restoration of an organ is a huge undertaking and many well meaning people do help to get the job done sooner but, we all should realise that to get a top quality result, we must insist that recognised first class principles in organ building be maintained throughout, and even though it hurts sometimes, this is just what John Parker has rigidly insisted upon. Anyone who has seen the instrument in its present state will obviously see what a very high standard of

workmanship has been achieved.

I do hope that you will all continue to help support this great project for it is now nearly assembled and looking absolutely stunning. I for one have never seen any other installation in this country to compare to it and the careful planning of details should make the organ complete in every aspect possible by today's standards.

FOR SALE

Pre-owned console organs, thoroughly checked by our service department.

1. RODGERS TRIO 321

Three manual horseshoe console.
Price: \$11,950

2. RODGERS AMERICAN CLASSIC

Three manual drawstop console with two, 100 watt tone cabinets.
Price: P.O.A.

3. LOWREY PROMENADE C- 300

Price \$5,900

4. THOMAS SYMPHONY 856C

Price: \$2,900

5. GULBRANSEN PRESIDENT 4217

Price: \$2,900

6. CONN RHAPSODY 626,

Valve model.
Price: \$950

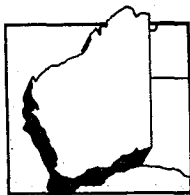
7. KAWAI C-503

Classical organ with 30 note radiating concave pedalboard. Current model. Suit new buyer.
Price: \$9,250

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NEWS FROM



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

TIME: 7.45am. Sunday 28th March 1988,

PLACE: Society Headquarters, John Leckie Pavilion, Nedlands.

AIM: To install conduited electrical wiring from switch-room through ceiling to projected console site at far end of auditorium.

FORWARD: A dedicated group of organophiles ably led by President Stan Higgott and Vice President Geoff Knaggs, produced the most significant day's work in terms of productive achievement since the inauguration of the Compton Pipe Organ Project.

DESCRIPTION: Mobile scaffolding, organised by society stalwart Ron Burnett, was quickly erected and ceiling access achieved. President Stan Higgott, with enthusiastic support from committee man Ken Meeks, led by example in organising multiple electrical cables through the now-installed ceiling conduit, meanwhile, high up in the ceiling, Ron Burnett and Treasurer Stan James ensured the smooth passage of the cables through the conduit.

Inevitable problems along the way were met and overcome, and eventually to everyone's delight, the wiring emerged at the console site. Physically exposing the chamber swell shutters to the auditorium was next on the agenda and was quickly achieved by re-positioning the mobile scaffolding and cutting away the appropriate wall sections. The now exposed shutter blades were then painted a neutral colour.

Concurrently, other members were kept busy throughout the day with many tasks, such as painting the switch-room ceiling and walls and checking for air leaks in and around the various chests, etc. Following the recent commissioning of the blower unit, President Stan Higgott concluded the day's work (incidentally, the hottest March day for 29 years!!) by sincerely thanking all participating

members. Also deserving of special praise is newly-elected Secretary Charles Danger (a Telecom employee and talented technician) whose representations on behalf of the society to his employer, resulted in the generous donation of some 200 metres of pre-used wiring which was gratefully accepted and utilised on the Compton installation.

WELL DONE MEMBERS

GARAGE SALE - TRADING POST

A garage sale will be held at 153A Haldon Street Lakemba on Saturday 4th June at the residence of John Rattray and Murray Ries between the hours of 9.00am. and 3.00pm.

This will be a great opportunity for members and their friends to dispose of those unwanted goods you no longer have use for.

Before submitting your item or items for sale, please fix a price on the article. If you have any queries, please ring John or Murray on 750 3779 (A.H.).

All proceeds from the afternoon sales will go towards the installation of the organ into the Orion Centre at Campsie.



VIEWS & NEWS

from

Ian McLean

CANDI CARLEY IN CONCERT
Hayden Orpheum 3/12 WurliTzer
27th March 1988

Power, rhythm and fabulous harmonies. They were the hallmarks of this very interesting concert.

The sparkling white console rose with the petite CANDI CARLEY performing a powerful version of the Beatles "Day Tripper". The contrast of such awesome musical control against the fine physical features of the organist were quite dramatic. Candi's costumery and build could lead an audience to expect to hear a frilly insubstantial trip though something like the

"Sound of Music". What Candi Carley delivers is not related to this in the least.

Candi's arrangements, interpretations, and choice of programme are full of modern and traditional jazz, rock and contemporary harmonies and tunes.

These days Candi performs under a changed professional name that now includes her married name. Consequently all the advertisements read "Candi Carley Roth". Not only does her change in name tell of Candi's alteration in marital status, it has also heralded in a new programming direction for her.

When Candi was managed by her mother, VIRGINIA CARLEY, she was presented in a most professional way in programmes of sometimes great musical and production contrasts. In this way the existing tastes of audiences were catered to and at the same time they were exposed to contemporary music and unique treatments born from a style that in the theatre organ world is peculiarly Candi's. Candi had taken exception to this type of production and under her new management (by basically herself and assisted by her husband MARK ROTH) she has taken a more contemporary programming approach. Did it work? The answer has to be, for this reviewer, not entirely, and for the audience, generally, no! And, the fault did not lie in the contemporary nature of the arrangements or numbers.

Candi appears to have lost sight of the need to provide contrast whether everything is being treated in a contemporary manner or not. In this concert she grouped too many pieces of the same style and rhythm together so that their individuality was lost and, as a result, the programming contrast was poor. Added to this Candi displayed a lack of contrast in registration.

Now don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I got my "goose bumps" reactions in "Day Tripper", "Tin Roof Blues", "Ease On Down The Road", "Deep Purple" and a "A Place For Us". However, the concert was somewhat flat. This feeling was also aided by Candi's almost off hand and poorly thought out repartee with the audience. Candi didn't have her previous sparkle which was often heard live and even in the music contained on her records. I think that the evolution that she has put herself through to prove that she can stand on her own two feet

have provided positive results for her. She now needs to utilise in her own way, the professional programming values that her mother employed to present Candi so well. I don't mean lets have flowers and balloons all the time! That should only be done if Candi is happy with that style of production and if the situation deserves such a treatment without becoming tacky.

Firstly her programming must become better balanced and this can be done using contemporary music, treatments and arrangements. Too much of the same, as with the old NEIL JENSEN propensity to playing nearly all blockbluster finger twisters, becomes tiresome and uninteresting for the listener. Professionalism doesn't mean assailing your audience with either how clever you are, or, with an attitude of what "they should be listening to". The audience has rights and preferences based on previous experiences. Even experiences of Candi's earlier performances.

The audience is there at the concert because of what they like/d. The audience will gradually change its make-up and tastes if new sounds, music and styles are introduced succinctly and in context with what is good programming on any instrument, or in any musical style or idiom.

This concert was, from all reports by those who were at the first concert the week before, immeasurably better than the first. This was due, according to Candi, because of the organ's improvement (Candi had almost refused to play it when she first arrived).

My drive from Canberra was still well worth the effort. I thoroughly enjoy hearing what is one of the most interesting new styles to have emerged on the theatre pipe organ. Also I love to hear contemporary music treated with authenticity. The very idea of hearing modern music made to sound like it was all written in the 20's just because it is being played on a theatre pipe organ makes me wild. Candi Carley never does this and as a result, is always worth hearing, even with the programming faults present on this day. The Orpheum WurliTzer was a delight to hear and the theatre with its fabulous, sumptuous lighting and ambience is just an incomparable setting and experience in itself.

Candi Carley continues to play with incredible creativity. Her rhythmic feel is

unique. Her concerts are always musically interesting. At the moment though she must lift her programming and production.

THE DENDY RE-OPENS - FOR THE THIRD TIME !

The Dendy Theatre 3/15 WurliTzer
Sunday 17th April 1988.

My favourite Australian WurliTzer. Would it still deliver that "Dendy" sound?

This special Style 260 3 manual 15 rank WurliTzer theatre pipe organ had first been opened in 1924 at the Melbourne Capitol theatre where it achieved Australian fame. Its second lease of life began in 1967 at the Brighton Dendy Theatre. In the time there it achieved world wide acclaim and now here we were to hear it at the new Dendy theatre (now called the Brighton Twin Cinema One) for its third opening.

The first half consisted of formalities by compere, MALCOLM SIMPSON, and TOSA VIC President, KENT WILSON together with musical performances by TONY FENELON, DAVID JOHNSTON, KAH KIT YOONG and JOHN ATWELL.

Tony Fenelon's music in this first half was, for me, a quite forgettable bracket of numbers. Tony Fenelon although always nervous before any performance was noticeably affected by a tense nervousness at this second opening concert. This was no doubt due to the complete loss of the combination action that occurred in his final bracket at the morning concert. Tony confirmed this to me later on. However, the organ sounded forth with gusto but with the driest "studio" sound I have ever experienced. The new, completely curtain shrouded theatre adds absolutely nothing to the organ.

David Johnston played a very pedestrian, inexcusably poorly prepared performance which seems to be becoming his hallmark these days. Why doesn't he apply the same intensity of creativity and concentration to his solo spots as he does to his movie accompaniments?

15 year old (on this day) Kah Kit Yoong played a competent, but unfeeling bracket of music. As one of the "new wave" (as described by Malcolm Simpson) Kah should have been given more time and guidance in the preparation of his numbers. I got the

impression that we didn't get to hear of his best.

John Atwell delivered a memorable set of numbers starting with "A Great Day". His arrangements showed innovation and great thought. His usually uncontrollable nerves stayed under control this time and he made the organ sing. John showed just what the artform is really all about in his bracket, drawing out the best from the organ and displaying a great love and dedication to his music in his choice of numbers and their arrangements. I was very impressed. The audience responded well. One thing though, John's flat verbal delivery, like a flat frisbee, did not achieve lift - it just fell on its face. He has to develop a more interesting, more relaxed console patter.

Following intermission where all sorts of scuttlebutt about TOSA VIC, TOSA NSW and TOSA SA politics permeated the atmosphere (who needs the TV soapies when you are a member of TOSA?) we were treated to the same major artists once again and the other "new wave" artist for the day TEREZIA KALKBRENNER.

David's "Les Miserables" was, quite frankly miserable. Full of mistakes and carelessness this version did not come close to the more than worthwhile version of this musical's virtues that David delivered on the quite indifferent Canberra Compton last year. Poor show David!

Terezia showed quite convincingly that she had excellent musical feel and a touch of real dynamism. However, the numbers she played were lacking in sensitivity for the instrument and this resulted in them being some what bombastic and blasting. I think that this woman shows great promise. Once again though I think that a little more guidance and time for preparation before this concert would have done her abilities more justice.

I have to say that the "new wave" artists on this day did not play up to a publicly acceptable standard as is often heard from artists of the same age in other states and later on, a week later at the Celebration 16th TOSA National Convention's "Accent On Youth Concert".

Unfortunately John Atwell in his second bracket reverted to his most common public performance form and his nerves and his technique did not allow him to deliver his

still wonderful arrangements with anything like the musical authority that were at his finger tips in his first bracket. He has to learn to relax and/or choose less demanding arrangements. A number of people I spoke to stated just how tense he made them feel as he nearly didn't make it or, didn't make it! I love JONAS NORDWALL, WALT STRONG, GEORGE WRIGHT, HECTOR OLIVERA, and SYDNEY TORCH arrangements as do many other organists and members of the audience. Not all of us can deliver such musical delights publicly. John often tries, but rarely is able to deliver them with the effortless style that makes them listenable. His "Crazy Rhythm" was garbled as a result. However, Fenelon was still to come.

I have known this organist for over 20 years now. I have heard him play some amazing public performances and, some boring public performances. His private performances have always been exciting because this man will take musical risks in that environment that are quite often exhilarating. Lately, in his public work with RAY THORNLEY what used to only be heard in private is now being heard on stage. The effect is simply electrifying. In his new life with the, at times, equally electrifying NOLA, he has found a new contentment and stability. I believe that the combination of the Thornley association and the happy home life is providing Australians with a theatre organist and pianist of not just world class, but, of a unique place in the world of music. Tony Fenelon's last bracket of "Czardas", "Tangerine", "Big Bad Leroy Brown" and the memorial to the late BERT WARD, "I Left My heart In San Francisco", demonstrated this with so much authority that it was quite simply awesome. The audience was stunned.

Speaking to Tony the next day he said that he played what he thought "they" (whoever that is) wanted to hear in the first half and what he wanted to play as the organ's sound and feel stimulated him in the second bracket. What a difference! I have never been so excited by an Australian organist before. I have never ever considered that this man was capable of delivering other than basically sanitized public performances always with professionalism but usually with little guts, sensuality or, excitement. This day was so wonderfully different. And the Dendy?

In the first half's Atwell bracket and this quite extraordinary Fenelon closing bracket the organ showed that it still had the characteristics that have made the Dendy the classy instrument that it was. I would like to hear some finer regulation next time and possibly the clarity that the addition of a Posthorn would add (Wurlitzer did not consider any specification was complete without one except in some residence installations).

This concert was a very positive, exciting event for theatre organ in Australia. The theatre's acoustics can be offset with the addition of some correctly installed digital reverberation which should make the organ more commercially digestible. Our foremost theatre organist for so many years has his favourite instrument back and we are able to hear him play it.

Finally, for this opening unlike the disaster prone openings at the Capri and the Canberra Compton, this organ worked to high concert standards at its opening which is a large testament to the refurbishment and reinstallation crew led by BRUCE HESTER and electronics design and leadership by DON BLADIER. So, a fuse blew, so what!

The Dendy's back - with pizzazz, class, and that sound!

SOME OTHER THOUGHTS:

Chamber mixing needs improvement - it is too directional; Harp action is far too noisy; Traps too soft and indistinct; mid range of Tibia not prominent enough; ensemble too blaring (Tuba and Diapason too prominent); where were the colour reeds? - they are too soft. I liked the improvement in Brass Sax and the Brass Trumpet. From my point of view now that the instrument has been opened it is time for some innovation in the specification of the instrument, both at the console and in terms of completing its tonal array. After all an original specification (which the current one isn't) seems out of place in a theatre environment which is totally foreign to anything originally in mind when Wurlitzer designed and built this instrument.

THE CELEBRATION 16TH NATIONAL TOSA CONVENTION

Organisationally great, the "Celebration 16th" proved to be the best yet in terms of outside activities and what it takes to make things happen!

Finally, after fifteen attempts, the organisational aspects of a National TOSA Convention have been delivered almost flawlessly. And, by a Division in its first ever attempt! Without doubt this was seen to be the best feature of this convention. By almost unanimous consensus the convention food came in a very close second. It was apparently the best seen (and eaten) by those conventioners who have attended most of the 16 National TOSA Conventions presented.

This year, due to the Bicentennial Celebrations having booked out accommodation in Canberra years in advance over Easter, the 1988 effort was held over the Anzac day weekend. Did this cause problems? Not in any way that was apparent to me.

Friday night following registration saw an extensive set of entertainment titled "Cabaret Capers" - a night of frolicking good fun in the music hall tradition. This was followed immediately by a lengthy silent movie show with DAVID JOHNSTON accompanying at the COMPTON console with very stifled pipes attempting to be heard from behind the not very sound transparent screen. Still, this was also fun with that very serious (?) corsets movie! (You needed to be there!)

The weather was simply gorgeous and the autumnal colours that Canberra can, and did provide, made for a sumptuous carpet ride of visual experiences for those who went on all of the tours and Afterglow events. For interstateers this was reported to be their highlight of the convention. What was intended to be the highlight was the main convention artist, TONY O'BRIEN. Did he deliver the promised grab bag of musical goodies promised in TOSA ACT's promotional blurbs? The answer unfortunately just has to be a very loud no!

MUSIC

By W. L. HOFFMANN

Convention item fails to deliver promise of treat

Saturday night's concert by visiting US organist Tony O'Brien promised to be a highlight of the 16th National Convention of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia held last weekend in Canberra. Unfortunately, it turned out quite disappointing.

The Albert Hall was full and the Compton Theatre Organ looked fine in its colourful stage setting but the playing left a lot to be desired.

I have heard a number of concerts on this organ in the past, but whether there were some problems of tuning, or because of the style of O'Brien's playing, or through a combination of both, this performance was certainly the least enjoyable I have experienced.

The organist's arrangements of even well-known standards seemed to overload the texture to such an extent the sound was frequently muddy, with registrations used that added to this turgidity and which, as the evening wore on, became downright unpleasant.

In some of his medleys, the bridge passages seemed quite aimless, while some of the pieces played sounded as if they were being improvised as they went along. For example, *Memories* just went on and on as if the organist had lost his way.

And much of his playing was rhythmically unsteady: this was very apparent in Morton Gould's *Pavanne*. A pavan is a stately Spanish dance — in this performance, it sounded more like a Mexican hat dance.

It was an odd program, anyway. *Send in the Clowns* was overlaid with a harmonisation entirely different to Sondheim's original.

It completely destroyed the essential bitter-sweet character of the piece while the organist played what he announced as a special *Bicentennial and Anzac Day Medley*, which concluded with *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* — and what has that to do with Australia?

The presentation of the concert was unnecessarily gimmicky. There was no appreciable aural or expressive advantage in adding a synthesiser to the organ, at least not in the way O'Brien used it.

And a Bronx cheer to the person responsible for blowing clouds of smoke into the audience so that, for minutes at a time, we could not see the organist.

Having found the previous concerts on the Compton Theatre Pipe Organ in the Albert Hall so enjoyable and entertaining, Saturday night's effort, and as part of the TOSA Convention, was all the more disappointing.

Tony O'Brien

Rather than go on for too long about this artist's musical devastation of the packed Albert Hall audience, please read the "Canberra Times" music critic's review that follows.

Although I don't agree with Mr Hoffman's comments on improvisation the way that they have been printed, I have to say that I am entirely in agreement with his sentiments. However, I do have a couple of additional points to make.

Tony showed that his improvisational talents in the classical manner were exceptional. His classical improvisations on "Five Foot Two"

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were intelligent, interesting and entertaining. In a lengthy conversation the next night with Tony he demonstrated the most open and honest demeanor that I have encountered from any artist. He knows exactly where he is at musically. He wants to learn about real jazz. He wants to learn about utilising the theatre organ more effectively. He stated quite categorically that he is a classical organist who wants to learn about theatre organ! Why then did TOSA ACT invite him to be the featured artist? He didn't know. I'm sure that I didn't either.

I heard him play the 40 plus rank Uniting Church hybrid while he was in Canberra and the shortfalls in technical ability that were apparent in his Compton concert were also apparent at this hurriedly prepared affair - except when he was improvising. On the Compton and this instrument had no apparent technical problems when he was improvising.

This concert overall was much more enjoyable. It was obvious that Mr O'Brien was more at ease, and at home, on a classical instrument and programme. His Perth concert on the Karrinyup WurliTzer was, according to all reports, was also better than the convention concert, as were his efforts at the private Atkinson WurliTzer social night in Sydney. Once again he was more at home, but this time on his most familiar theatre instrument - a WurliTzer. Why did TOSA ACT have him play the dramatically different COMPTON?

To ask an almost totally inexperienced theatre organist, a musician with classical improvisational skills and little contemporary or jazz improvisational skills to be the featured artist at a National Convention for theatre organ aficionados was a poorly considered decision by TOSA ACT. It was injurious to theatre organ in the ACT, Australia, and to the prospects of an honest, capable musician that Tony O'Brien is. This musician is interested in learning all about using a theatre organ in a contemporary way. He is just the sort of musician that we all need and want to be interested in the theatre pipe organ. It is unfortunate that he now has to contend with some negative reports about his musical abilities. Although he did accept the booking.

It is interesting to note that the featured artist concert was also a major debacle in

the production sense. Stage smoke effects can look great but not time after time throughout the artist's performance. And, not with great hisses bellowing out from the stage every time the apparatus was used to create the smoke. It was a tasteless execution.

Bose PA speakers were placed at the back and the front of the Albert Hall resulting in the rhythm unit and synthesizer effects being totally disembodied from the Compton (in fact louder than the organ at the back of the hall!) so that there was absolutely no musical cohesiveness. The speakers were not even provided with separated, channeled signals!

I understand that the prime mover in choosing the artist was also the person who was responsible for all of this night, quite possibly the very worst theatre organ concert experience I have ever seen and lived through! Kitsch, sloppy, overdone and an insult to Tony O'Brien and the audience.

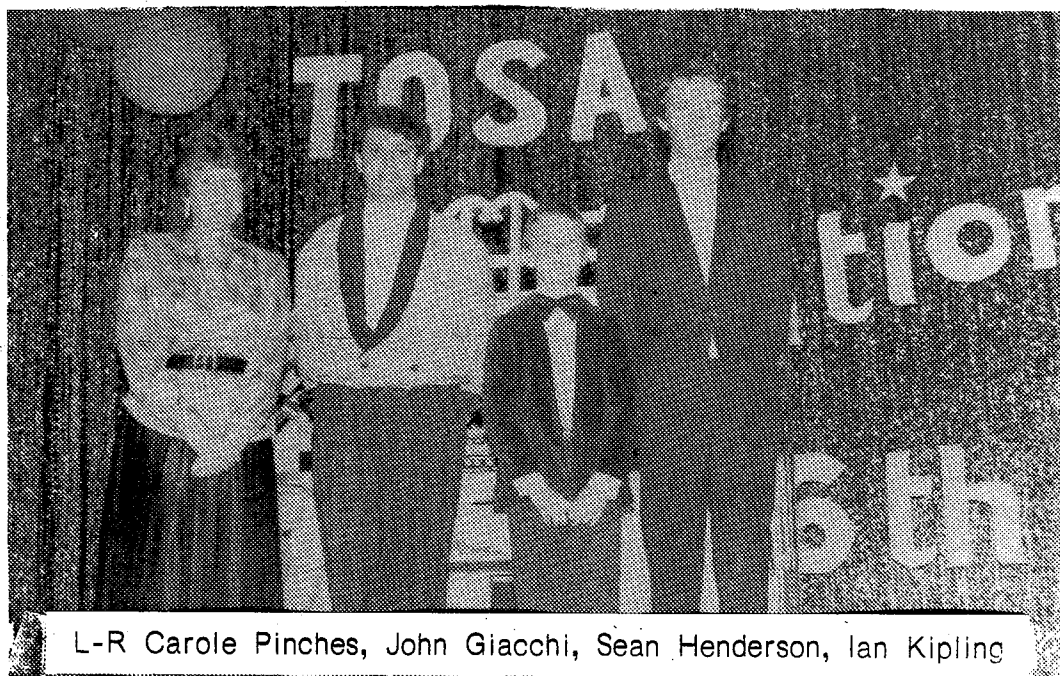
Before I leave this event and move onto something more positive I must state that Tony O'Brien's use of the forever crackling Yamaha synthesizer (not the Yamaha's fault) was probably the least innovative use of a synthesizer that this writer has ever sat through. The sounds used showed very little imagination and this instrument's inclusion was nearly always only achieved by Tony adding great pauses to the music, or worse still, additional bars of tedious vamping!

Without insult to Tony O'Brien it has to be said that, judging him on this Compton concert he isn't yet a competent traditional, or, a contemporary theatre organist, or, for that matter a competent contemporary musician. He is, however, a very good classical musician with an uncommon improvisational gift in that idiom.

Finally, it has to be said that the winding problems of the Compton are so obvious that the instrument was not in a fit state to be the featured instrument. To play it is not unlike attempting to push a load of slime uphill. There simply is not enough wind getting to the pipework! More importantly the blame for this cannot be pointed at the hardworking TOSA ACT Compton team. They implemented a winding design created by a professional!



Tony O'Brien



L-R Carole Pinches, John Giacchi, Sean Henderson, Ian Kipling



"Reel Tradition" entertaining at Cotter Dam reserve.

Cliff Bingham, John Crawford and the
Woden Valley Youth Choir

Well, musically things only got better. The CLIFF BINGHAM and JOHN CRAWFORD concert featuring Yamaha concert grand and Rodgers Century organ, together the world class WODEN VALLEY YOUTH CHOIR was first class. Crawford exhibited some awesome imagination and pianism in the delivery of his Oscar Peterson and Peter Nero inspired arrangements. Bingham, judged from this and other recent concerts, surely has to be one of our most under rated organists. To the two together, just the same, is immeasurably better than each on their own.

The Rodgers, after some careful regulating work by its current owner, STEVE LANHAM, and Adelaide visitor, PAUL FITZGERALD, sounded, at times quite authentic and filled the Erindale Centre Theatre with authority. The Yamaha, like so many 6'6" C5 models was noticeably uneven in its tonal finish. The music was so good that I doubt that anyone really noticed.

The Woden Valley Youth Choir was simply superb, delivering real "goose bumps" stuff. This choir is a tight, dynamic well choreographed group that is a monument its Director, DON WHITBREAD. Even though the jazz lacked a little in 'feel' sometimes the beautiful dynamic control and tonal balance still made their jazz selections exciting for this listener. Like the "Cabaret Capers" event, this concert was the brainchild of teaching studio impresario, JILL BELLCHAMBERS. Congratulations, Jill you gave the Celebration 16th a touch of class.

Accent On Youth

The Celebration 16th was billed as having an "Accent On Youth" and so the final official musical event was to be an Australasia wide potpourri of talented youth who have ventured onto the theatre organ console. Even though they had to contend with the gasping 3/9 Compton these artists made this instrument sound forth with authority and, even some style. At least the forever working Compton crew could relax a bit as interstate conventioners heard that their work was not in vain. Finally, it could be understood that the Compton was after all a musical instrument

of worthwhile possibilities.

The most successful of the artists in terms of extracting the best from the Compton was, for me, Victoria's CAROLE PINCHES. She has it altogether, and surprisingly for a female organist, she has a great 'feel' and empathy for what she's doing musically. I hope to hear her in full concert.

The star of the day was the 9 year old New Zealander, SEAN HENDERSON. He performed with remarkable authority for someone so young, and on such a difficult instrument! His arrangements were, from a full concert artist aspect somewhat incomplete, but who cared! His performance was simply outstanding in every other way. He deserved his standing ovation. My wish now would be that he be able to expand his arrangements fully and that his Bach pieces are now learned completely. Now that he has wowed the audience they will expect even more next time. But what a standard he has already set!

JOHN GIACCHI, TOSA NSW's representative, showed once more that he has got past the potential stage and is beginning to present at a more than worthwhile concert level. I feel that he has all the necessary technical and musical ingredients to be fine theatre organist in the orchestral sense. However, he must find a more empathetic way of relating to his audience.

TOSA SA's IAN KIPLING played a competent but uninteresting selection with not only a lack of 'feel' for his music but almost a coldness. However in the company of this quite august group he could be forgiven for possibly being intimidated. Who would want to play on a programme with a 9 year old who just makes it seem effortless?

This concert was most successful and I hope that it becomes a standard inclusion for all national convention programmes.

There were other convention events where music was heard - at the Gala Ball, and at the Tony O'Brien workshop.

The workshop was a success. I believe that this due to the fact that many TOSA members have never been exposed to the functioning of a synthesizer. When this was coupled to Tony's quite basic approach to this instrument I believe that the majority of those present found it interesting. The

musician's present didn't. So, unlike many visiting organist's workshops where the only people to really understand and enjoy what was going on were the musician's in attendance, this workshop worked for the ordinary member.

Next year Perth has its first convention. They didn't bother to attend the 16th to see the results of effective organisation. I hope that they can deliver that aspect in 1989.

The Celebration 16th TOSA National Convention will be positively remembered for its great organisation, enjoyable food, interesting tours, brilliant weather, exceptional young artists, the smooth and classy Bingham and Crawford, and the superb Woden Valley Youth Choir. We can only hope that more thought is given to the featured artist than has been over the last three years. After all this is a music society which is supposed to be presenting the best of this incredible musical artform. TOSA WA? Its your turn!

STOP PRESS

After lengthy and careful negotiations, Australia's largest theatre pipe organ project to date, has been given approval to proceed. The 3 manual, planned 25 rank instrument, is to be one of the major focal points in the \$10,000,000 auditorium centre that will be its home. The instrument is expected to be opened in 1992. After nearly two decades of looking for the ideal home, the present owners of the instrument are naturally elated! Full details in this column next month.

STOP PRESS STOP PRESS

(By John Giacchi)

The Regent theatre case will go to court on Thursday 9th June, 1988, not only to bring into effect an injunction on the demolition of the theatre building, but to re-process the decision through the correct methods required, such as inquiries, reports, etc.....

ORION REPORT

Progress during May has seen the full completion of the two Main chamber chests and their installation at the Orion Centre. Framing has been constructed for the support of the tuned percussions in the Solo chamber and has been fixed in place.

All tuned percussions have now been installed and the toy counter is in place above the Marimba/Harp in the Main Chamber.

Work proceeds on the cleaning and repairing of the pipework for the Main chamber. All pipes have been cleaned in a mild acid solution, polished with soap impregnated steel wool, and then finished with brasso. Wooden pipes have been planed off, sanded and finished with sanding sealer and two coats of shellac.

The wind distribution box and its three regulators for the Main is currently close to completion and will shortly be installed ready for trunking up of the chamber to begin.

The organ console will soon be moved to the Kingsgrove workshop for wiring up. Keyboards will be rebushed, springs retensioned and contacts adjusted. Tabs will be refitted to suit the revised specification, and generally, the console will be finished to the stage where it can be wired to the organ "ready to go".

Wiring and cables are on order to enable us to begin the task of wiring the organ up, when all other essential work is completed.

(See photos on next page)

WANTED - WOODWORKER

WANTED - Cabinet maker - Woodworker.

Neil Palmer requires the services of a woodworker to perform some small carpentry work on the Marrickville Town Hall Wurlitzer. Work will entail making muffler covers for some of the percussion units.

Please ring Neil Palmer on 798 6742 after 5.00pm. if you can help with the above work.



Photo above: Arriving at the Orion Centre with another load of chests and pipes for the Main chamber.

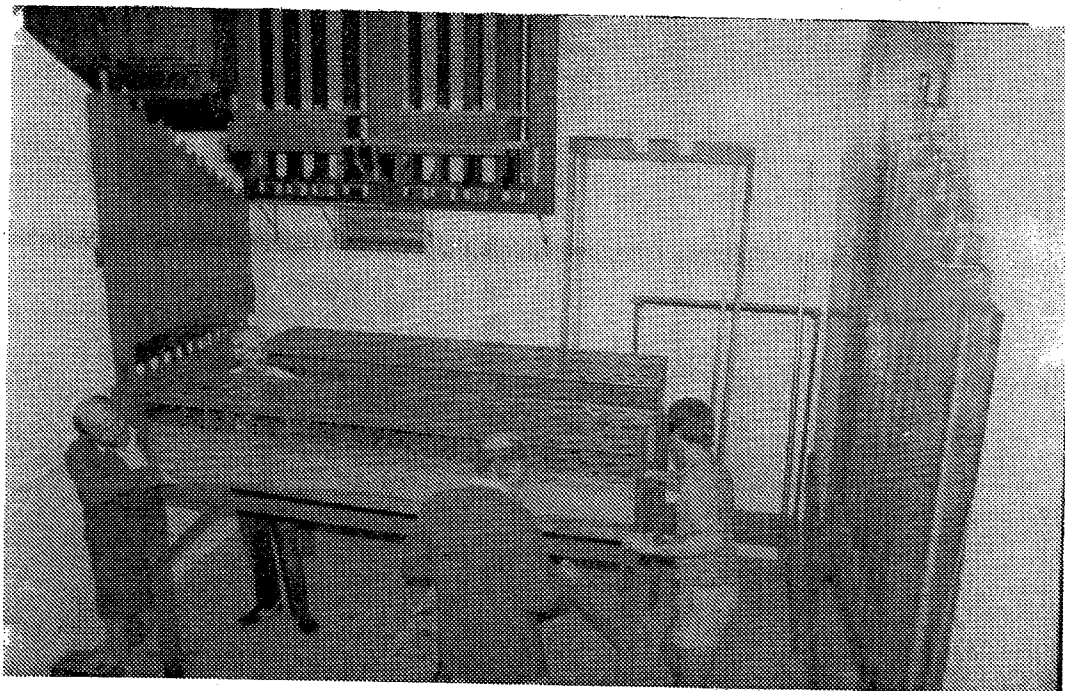


Photo above: Assembling the chests on the steel mounting frame in the Main chamber.

The workers from left to right are Rob Gliddon, Cliff Bingham
Doug Smith and John Parker.



VIEWS & NEWS

from

Ian McLean

THE ORPHEUM - WHAT A HEADACHE!

Since my last report on the Orpheum WurliTzer installation a number of occurrences have placed this most important theatre pipe organ installation in jeopardy. I will try to put some of the rumbling rumours into context.

Firstly, the organ is not yet about to be shut down! However, this has been suggested by some of the upper echelons of the Hayden Theatres' management if the organ does not become a stable proposition.

Despite the enormous dollars spent (according to reports between \$120,000 and \$160,000 on the installation) to get the Orpheum's 3/12 WurliTzer installed there have been problems of major consequences. Why did it cost so much and why are there still major problems?

A great deal of the cost was apparently due to the time constraints put on the installation. "It has to be in by the beginning of October", or, something like that was demanded. It was also believed that the organ wouldn't need much refurbishment. It didn't, but it needed a lot more than was thought. The theatre was being rebuilt at the same time as the organ was being installed. Hardly a conducive environment for a problem free instrument. Still, they made it. However, to make the installation time frame demanded, this required that GEORGE STEPHENS (professional organ builders of Adelaide) had to have as many as seven people available working up to 18 hour days to get the instrument installed! Obviously a large proportion of the professional costs went in the "lugging" type of work rather than just for purely technical expertise. Console refinishing, by JOHN PARKER, and other costs have been included in the total costs above.

The Principal Director of George Stephens Organ Builders, George Stephens, stated at the completion of his part of the installation that there should be other work done to ensure that the instrument was stable. Some of this work has been carried out by NEIL JENSEN and ex-New Zealand organ builder John Parker.

Under an agreement hammered out in August 1987 between Neil, JOHN LOVE (Orpheum Project Manager), George and myself, some of the special requirements requested by Neil were prepared by George and his partner, RICHARD LARRITT on the condition that Neil take full responsibility for that work's direction. Some of this work did not deliver the goods - specifically the Tibia regulation. Neil took responsibility for this (as he should) and following extensive calls to the U.S. (at Neil's cost) to his "experts" the Tibia was "made good". The need for this extra work was not as a result of any shortcomings by George Stephens'.

To get the organ into a better than just playable state Neil and John Parker went to work. Sometimes the work was performed by Neil alone. All of Neil's efforts were to have been carried out under John's supervision. I had negotiated this arrangement with John Love however it broke down due to some events that are purely John's responsibility, and, also due to his full time commitment to TOSA NSW. I am sure that Neil and John Parker could have worked out and maintained a better solution.

Due to John Parker's effective departure from the Orpheum scene, Neil had been carrying out the work himself. The work? Regulation and winding alterations necessary to get enough wind to the organ, especially to the Main pipe chamber. As John Parker has stated, and as can be heard, a great deal of this work by Neil has 'been very successful. However, some very basic work standards for pipe chambers were reportedly not met by Neil. To complicate these the effect of these shortcomings there was, and still is, a residual magnetism problem that was complicated by the very dirty, dusty environment that the organ was installed in. The dust caused some magnets to choke up. Now, following Neil's work PVC "sawdust" was also choking them up!

It seems that Neil had been cutting PVC piping in the chambers and this found its way into the magnets! Added to this was Neil's fitting of flanges and gaskets when he was making winding changes. Many of these were very poor. The result? More leaks!

This seems to me to be quite ridiculous when Neil's primary reason for doing so much work was due to the lack of air

reaching so much of the pipework. Neil had been loudly blaming George Stephens for all of this problem due to George's approach (according to Neil) to the winding specifically from the blower. I think he's probably right about the way that this was done but that company's warranty may have been voided by the work done by Neil. And the work was done in such a sloppy way that it only complicated the matter! And there was more!

Whoever designed the electrics to the blower and the belt system from the motor to the blower did it in a way that did not provide maximum efficiency. No staged starting system. The result? Screaming belts and a motor at full speed at start up!

With this aspect taken into account, how can the finger be pointed at George Stephens. No finger pointing should have been done until these problems were fixed. The Posthorn chest is another story - it is just too slow and Neil Jensen has told me that George Stephens will be replacing it with another of more efficient WurliTzer type design. Proof of George's and his company's intentions and professionalism.

One very worrying thing has happened in all of this. If Neil had decided that George's work was suspect or not complete he, or rather Hayden, should have rung George immediately to inform him and thereby give him a chance to fix the problems. George Stephens Organ Builders provide an extensive warranty. Further to this all work done by Neil should (and could have) have been cleared with George in a way that would not place that warranty at risk.

It is most disappointing that this installation, one that is so important to the Australian theatre organ scene, could have been treated in such a cavalier way by some of those involved. Neil's headlong, headstrong approach has threatened to damage not only his income and a unique musical opportunity but also the very existence of this instrument. John Parker's behaviour cost him credibility at Hayden. If John's usual professional approach had followed through I believe that the awful movie sessions at the Orpheum that have been a result of this haphazard approach would have been eliminated or been less extreme (ie maybe less of those sessions where up to a dozen or more notes were ciphering at once!)

The pressure brought about when U.S. organist Candi Carley arrived to prepare for her two concerts, may not have been necessary. She had to almost refuse to play the Orpheum to bring the matter to a head. Hayden took action.

Candi's reaction to the WurliTzer caused Hayden to call John Parker back into the picture and a resulting Hayden Orpheum management meeting resolved that no one other than John Parker is permitted to enter the pipe chambers. A giant move forward.

The first Candi Carley concert reportedly suffered due to the organ's indifferent state. The second concert, after a week of midnight to dawn work by Parker and lay theatre pipe expert, ROBERT GLIDDON, was played on an instrument which had the most cohesive WurliTzer sound I have ever heard in Australia!

There are positives as result of all of this but they could have been achieved without so much pain. They are:

1. At the second Candi Carley concert the Orpheum WurliTzer sounded quite the best I have ever heard any Australian WurliTzer sound.
2. John Parker's and George Stephens (the company and the man) workmanship is of the highest standard.
3. Neil Jensen has accumulated some theatre pipe organ building techniques that all organ builders in Australia should take note of. For without these aspects being implemented at the Orpheum it would not sound as well as it did.

This instrument can represent the very best symbiosis of musician and technician. I hope to see more of such positive interaction - it is the best way to go.

NOTES:

1. Due to the problems in the Orpheum WurliTzer that are yet to be addressed, the instrument's audible condition could vary markedly for the listener. However, sources tell me that since the Parker/Gliddon efforts the WurliTzer has been virtually trouble free. Now, isn't that good news!

2. Due to the loss made on the Candi Carley Orpheum concert and cancellation of the Neil Jensen Mother's Day promotion it is reported that all future concerts after the Fenelon/Jensen effort in June have been shelved.

THEATRE PIPE ORGANBUILDING IN OZ

As a result of the Adelaide Capri, Albert Hall Compton, Sydney Orpheum and Epping Christie, the new Melbourne Dendy and Perth Karrinyup Wurlitzer, I believe that the following appraisal states the current situation from my point of view as regards the capabilities of organ builders who dabble in theatre pipe organs.

1. The Epping crew (Robert Gliddon, John Andrews, David Bruce) have had great success with basic winding and regulation.

Proof: the best regulated theatre instrument in Australia.

2. Neil Jensen should be utilised for some specific Wurlitzer winding and regulation tricks.

Proof: the Orpheum.

3. John Parker is proving that he is suitable for all work, including voicing but not yet for winding design. Also probably the best theatre organ tuner in Oz.

Proof: His work in New Zealand, around Sydney and the Wurlitzer 3/15 project for Orion Centre.

4. George Stephens, the company, for all work but not for theatre organ winding design. Use George Stephens, the man, for excellent voicing results, basic regulation and pipe and remarkable wood work construction work. He is still the best reed regulation expert in Oz.

Proof: Ballarat Compton, Epping Christie, and many other fine examples. Winding implementation: the Canberra Compton, Capri hybrid, Cremorne Orpheum not completely successful.

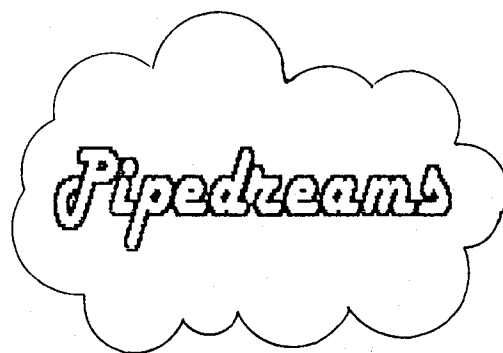
5. Use Steve Laurie for all basic work. He once said that he could regulate a gas pipe on high wind pressure. The new Dendy shows that he has some positive theatre organ skills. However, I don't consider that they demonstrate the finesse of Stephens

and Parker.

6. MOST IMPORTANT: TOSA should use whatever overseas sources exist for the best expertise that there is for winding and regulation. These people know through vast, and sometimes bitter, experiences that haven't yet been available to the Australian professionals. The results are beginning to manifest themselves in Australia through the Orpheum in the Phoenix/California connection (Grahame Davis, Walt Strony and John Seng) and Karrinyup/Epping in the Seattle connection (Russ Evans/Greg Smith/Ray Whelpley).

The point that I am trying to drive home is that a complete set of theatre pipe organ building expertise does not yet reside in any one of our professional organ builders in Oz that carry out work on theatre pipe organs. TOSA, other organisations and private individuals with theatre pipe organs, need to look at all resources (world wide) to have a successful theatre pipe organ installation. Within TOSA, groups like Karrinyup and Epping, and musicians like Jensen resides much useful winding, regulation and tonal balancing expertise and sensitivity. The professional complements this. My final point however is this - The professional is still essential to a successful result.

At this stage one cannot exist without the other. The solution, I believe, is to balance the available expertise, and manage these resources to work together.



THE GRAND OPENING
OF THE
EX-CAPITOL THEATRE
WURLITZER THEATRE PIPE ORGAN
IN THE
ORION CENTRE
BEAMISH STREET CAMPSIE
OCTOBER 1 - 2 1988

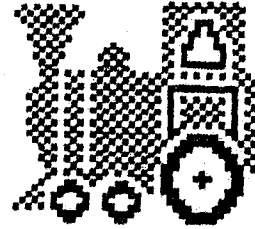
FENELON & JENSEN IN CONCERT

ON SUNDAY 10th JULY 1988

Commencing at 1pm.

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Keymedia Productions will premiere the Sydney debut duo performance of Australian celebrity artists Tony Fenelon and Neil Jensen in a "Keyboard Spectacular".

A variety packed programme featuring a sparking kaleidoscope of popular piano and theatre organ duets and solos will be presented by two internationally acclaimed entertainers.

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Due to the popularity of these two artists and in view this programme will be a 'one only show', seat reservations are recommended.

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Reservations can be made by enclosing a stamped addressed envelope enclosing payment and details of requirements.

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Doors open at 12.00pm.
No-Host pre-show cocktails available.

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SATURDAY 20TH AUGUST 1988

**DEPART CENTRAL STATION
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THEN TO

**MOSS VALE
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ON TO

UNANDERRA

WOLLONGONG

AND BACK TO

SYDNEY

0000000000000000

**DON'T FORGET - BOOK EARLY TO AVOID
DISAPPOINTMENT**

(Final times are yet to be set by SRA)

