

T.O.S.A. NEWS

INCORPORATING *The Diaphone*

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

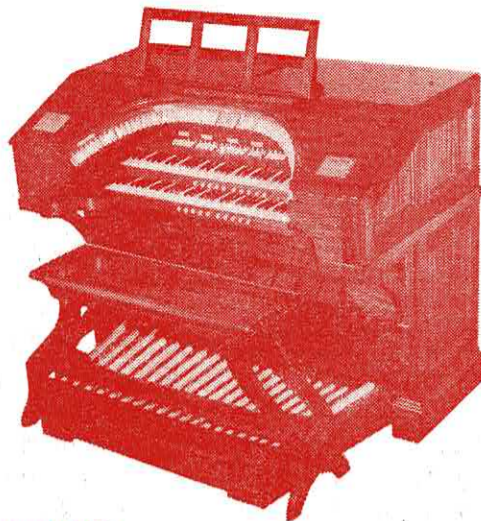
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REGISTERED AT G.P.O., SYDNEY, FOR TRANSMISSION BY POST AS A PERIODICAL.

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PRICE
40c



VOLUME 8 NUMBER 8

1st AUGUST 1970.

WHAT'S ON IN N.S.W. IN AUGUST.

- (A) TUESDAY 11th AUGUST AT 8pm. On this date there will be an organ concert at the Bondi-Junction-Waverley R.S.L. Club. The organist will be PAT QUINN who will be giving his first concert for the Society. PAT QUINN was organist of the Franquin Show during its run at Sydney's Theatre Royal. He also toured with the show interstate as well as appearing in New Zealand. His programme for this concert will be a popular and modern one with a smattering of nostalgia thrown in for good measure. PAT was a pupil of Lillian Harvey, who was also WILBUR KENTWELL'S music teacher. He is organist-demonstrator and salesman at Rees Wills Pty Ltd, the Lowrey organ distributors, and he will be at the console of a Lowrey Lincolnwood model for this concert. Our Honorary member IAN DAVIES, who is resident at this club, will, if time permits, also appear at the console of the Rodgers three manual organ.

This is a FIRST concert by a fine organist presented in the congenial surroundings of this nice club. The function is for our Society only and will not be open to RSL Club members. Come along and support this function and help to extend a warm welcome to PAT QUINN on the occasion of his first concert for TOSA.

Admission will be FREE....YES, ITS A "FREE" NIGHT and you may bring your friends.

- (B) THURSDAY 20th AUGUST AT 8pm. The celebrated American organist ART KAUB will present a concert for us in the Wesley Center Auditorium on this night. He will be playing a Hammond organ, which could be, according to a whisper your Editor heard, the X77. ART KAUB is an organist-entertainer, and as such, has appeared in many of the top night spots in the United States from coast to coast. He and his wife are now resident in Sydney and have a very busy schedule of engagements. He has presented a concert for the Hammond Organ Society, which was voted as a brilliant success and this will be his first appearance for our Society.

This function is for TOSA members and their friends (bring as many as you can) and invitations have also been extended to the various Hammond Society Chapters. Admission will be \$1 per person and this promises to be an exciting and surprising night of organ entertainment. See you all at Wesley on the 20th....

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

Members of the Committee please note that the August meeting will be held on Monday 3rd at 7.15pm sharp. The September meeting will be on Monday 7th September at 7.15pm. All Committee meetings are now held at the new location at the corner of Homebush and Beresford Roads, Strathfield.

DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER TOSA NEWS.

Friday 21st August will be the deadline for news items, advertisements etc., for the September issue. Send your items to the Editor on or before the due date if you will please. Adverts for members who have something they wish to buy or sell are FREE. It would be appreciated if your ads can be kept as brief as possible.

COMING EVENTS.

In September, our Honorary member IAN DAVIES will be appearing in concert at our Wurlitzer at Marrickville Town Hall. IAN has not been heard on our organ since he opened the instrument nearly two years ago. This concert has been scheduled to take place on Wednesday 16th September, so please keep this date in mind.

Tuesday 6th October is the date of the BIG, BIG, "ORGAN SPECTACULAR" to be held at Sydney Town Hall as part of the city's Waratah Festival. There will be six electronic organs on stage for this outstanding attraction which will bring popular organ music to the general public in a new and different way. Each of the different makes of organ will be featured in a mini-concert of around twenty minutes. A ballot has been held by the Executive in the presence of as many of the dealers as could make it, and the positions on stage, as well as the positions on the programme have been drawn. Its now up to each and every member to induce as many friends and workmates to come along and enjoy this "NIGHT OF STARS" at Sydney Town Hall on 6th October. Let's all work together to make this event a night to remember.

THE 1970 CONVENTION. The Convention this year will be held on Friday 16th and Saturday 17th of October. It was decided not to carry the event over into Sunday. The final event will feature England's famous and exciting theatre organist VIC HAMMETT at the console of our Wurlitzer at Marrickville Town Hall. Negotiations are under way to enable this year's Convention to feature two theatre pipe organs, plus our own organ at Marrickville, plus an electronic organ concert and a dinner. Plan now to attend the Convention and make a note of the dates on your calendar.

Saturday 5th December. Our annual Xmas party will be held on this date at the residence of our members George and Joyce Walker. It is planned to start the party on Saturday afternoon with an organ concert, followed by a chicken tea after which there will be silent films, more organ music and supper. Those who would like to have a swim in the Walker's pool will be able to do so.

Plans are also being made to celebrate the second birthday of our organ with a big concert in November. All in all, there's going to be lots of music and activity to carry us right through to Xmas time.

LOOKING BACK AT JULY.A "WOW" OF A PARTY.

The sign, "House Full", so dear to the heart of every theatre manager, was not placed outside the doors of the Walker residence on Saturday 4th July, but it well could have been displayed. Though the house almost bulged at the seams, no one was turned away, and the capacity crowd were not beyond the capacity of Joyce and George to cope with, both as to seating and in regard to the usual delightful supper. No less than twelve players took their places at the Conn organ and gave of their best, and with such a large audience, the more timid players among them must have felt as though they were playing a town hall recital, rather than merely playing a couple of items at a friendly home organ party. All received a great deal of encouragement and applause from the very happy gathering.

Wisely, Joyce refrained from inviting DAVID PARSONS to play until all those with less confidence had gone through their paces, for who among those present would have enjoyed being the one to follow him?? Especially so, on this occasion, as DAVID was in top form and delighted everyone with some numbers we had not previously heard him play. He also revealed a few new registration tricks too, which did much to add and maintain interest. It is to DAVID'S credit that he is ever ready to give so generously of his talents, and no request is ever refused if he knows the music. If he doesn't know the requested item, he always offers an alternative, and it is this "niceness" about him, as well as his undoubted talent, that has endeared him to Society members.

First to open the evening's entertainment, was our hostess, Joyce Walker, and she was followed at the console by Mrs Betty Randall, Mrs Eunice Corbett, Mrs Shirley Nott, and the last of the ladies, Heather Moen. Upholding the male domain were, George Walker, Colin Tringham, Ian Choy, Ian Grigg, Sydney Foster, Alan Gwynn and finally, DAVID PARSONS. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening and the sum of \$54 was added to the organ fund as a result. We sincerely thank Joyce and George for their more than generous hospitality as well as their assistance to the organ fund.

The other event set down for last month was a concert at the Capitol Theatre which was to have been played by our member BILL SCHUMACHER. Unfortunately, water damage to the main cable occurred in the pit, and the concert was reluctantly called off.

A notice, announcing the concert's cancellation, was posted out to all metropolitan members in sufficient time to prevent inconvenience to those planning to attend.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS.

The following are the new members for this month, and we do extend a warm welcome to all of them. Please make yourselves known to an official of the Society at the first function you attend. It will be his pleasure to see that you meet other Society members and are made to feel at home with us.

Bryan West (R.A.A.F. Richmond)
Patricia & Thomas Stapleton of St. Ives
Mr & Mrs K.F. Rodham of Roseville

Harold & Beryl Sutton of Oatley
Mark Alamangos of Merrylands
Lorraine Hazzard of West Pymble

Bryan West, who called to see the Treasurer (who was out) was quickly co-opted by Vice-President Des Russell on the day he joined, as Des. had called about the same time for some assistance in lifting his recently acquired Bourne organ. Later the same evening, Bryan was to be found at the Walker's organ party. In all, a very busy first day.

WHAT'S ON INTERSTATE THIS MONTH.

For the benefit of members who may travel interstate this month, the following functions are on and you are welcome to attend. Contact officials in which ever State you may be and let them know of your presence.

QUEENSLAND DIVISION.

Sunday 16th August at 2.30pm At the Eldorado Cinema, Indooroopilly - organ concert which will feature WILBUR KENTWELL and BARRY BAILEY

VICTORIAN DIVISION.

Sunday 9th August at 2.30pm Four man concert at Dendy Cinema, Brighton.
Tuesday 11th August at 6pm Thomas Organ Seminar conducted by LYN LARSEN to be held Princes Gate Building Flinders Street Melbourne.
Wednesday 19th August at 8pm Variety concert with WurliTzer at Moorabbin Town Hall
Sunday 23rd August at 8pm Musical evening - telephone Les Jackman 56-4576 to see if accomodation still available.
Sunday 30th August at 3pm St Kilda Town Hall - Pipe organ "pop" concert.

WEST AND SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONS.

We regret that word of activities in S.A. and W.A. has not arrived in time for publication. Members visiting these States should contact officials for details.

TOSA CAR STICKERS.

Following the announcement last month, concerning the TOSA car stickers, there has been such interest in these, that the Committee have decided to issue ONE STICKER FREE to each member instead of having them available for sale at a future concert as previously announced. Accordingly, those who would like to receive their free sticker are asked to send a stamped and addressed envelope to the Secretary. Extra stickers will be available at a cost of 25 cents each.

NOTE. These transfers DO NOT REQUIRE TO BE IMMersed IN WATER. Merely peel the back off the transfer and apply it directly to the inside of your car window.

WE CAN HELP YOU TO HELP THE SOCIETY.

If you would like to hold an organ party to aid the Pipe organ Purchase fund but you do not possess the necessary organ - this need no longer deter you. Our member, Alan Gwynne has a Thomas (Lawrence Welk model) which he is prepared to loan for such an occasion. Transport to the site is no problem, as Alan has a van. Providing there is no difficulty in getting the organ into the house (no block and tackle jobs by request) your problem is solved. So if you have a large lounge room and no organ to fill it with sweet music, you can still hold a successful organ party at your place and help swell the fund. Contact President Tom Halloran at 523-5077 for details.

DON'T FORGET - PAT QUINN AT THE BONDI RSL CLUB ON TUESDAY 11th AUGUST AT 8pm
ART KAUB AT THE WESLEY AUDITORIUM ON THURSDAY 20th AUGUST AT 8pm

NEW ORGAN TEACHING METHOD.

Our New Zealand member, Leo Cassin, a professional organist, pianist and teacher, has discovered a new way to teach piano and organ in an easier, faster and more pleasant way than the normal teaching methods. In a letter to our President, he said that when teaching his youngest daughter, he reached the conclusion that there must be an easier way for both of them. And he found it. From notes accumulated over the years he formulated a system of teaching music by tape recorder. He tried it out on his daughter, and she flew through the first six lessons in one week, after which, she could read music and confidently play with two hands, she even tackled Beethoven sonatas. Further lessons she is now undertaking have given her a sound knowledge of chords and basic harmony - she can now construct in a split second all the major, minor, seventh, augmented and diminished seventh chords and is now commencing to reconstruct harmony to enhance the sound of common ordinary everyday tunes.

Leo went on to say that so successful was the test run that he used a couple more "guinea pigs" to make sure that he wasn't in the middle of a beautiful dream, and then he decided to make the course available to the public.

You can take as long as you wish over each lesson, and take lessons at any hour of the day or night to suit yourself - your teacher is on duty 24 hours a day. The system will not make overnight concert artists but it will teach anyone of average ability to play quickly, easily and pleasantly, and be able to play for friends and at parties etc. Leo has offered the system to members of TOSA who may be interested, so if you would like further information write to :-

Mr Leo Cassin, Space-Age Entertainment, 38 Torrance Street,
Auckland 3, New Zealand. Don't forget to mention the fact that you are a member of TOSA NSW Division and that you read about the new system in TOSA News. Your Editor understands that Leo will offer a discount to TOSA members.

ARCADIA THEATRE ORGAN STORY NOT CORRECTLY REPORTED.

Member Ian Griggs has expressed his dismay at the re-printing in July TOSA News, of an article which appeared in the North Shore Times, regarding the proposed re-installation of the Arcadia 2/10 WurliTzer at Chatswood. He says much of the information which was printed was incorrect, as anyone interested in this theatre and the project will know.

However, not to worry. Ian tells us that the booklet he is preparing will soon be reaching its final draft stages, and is well on the way to becoming a publication of interest not only to those in the Chatswood area, but over Sydney generally. As well as the definitive history of the Arcadia, it will also contain rare historical notes on the early days of movie-showing on the North Shore, notes on the world's largest radio station (2FC) at Castlecrag, complete biographies of all the Arcadia organists, resident and relieving, and a collection of photographs never before published. The booklet will conclude with details of the restoration and re-installation of the organ, as well as specification and facts about the old and new chamber layouts.

Ian hopes to publish this book shortly before Willoughby Council's \$1,000,000 Town Hall is opened around July next year, so it will be available to coincide with the re-opening of the Arcadia WurliTzer. As the time approaches more details will be given, but in the meantime, can anyone help out with a photo of any of these men at the Arcadia console: Stan Cummins, Paul Cullen, Eddie Horton, Charles Tuckwell or Leslie V. Harvey? If you can, please ring Ian at 41-0133, or 86-1586 (home).

TOSA News was aware of the inaccurate statements in the article at the time we re-printed it, however, the fact remains that the article as reprinted in TOSA News, did, in fact, appear in the North Shore Times. We merely wished to point out to members that the project, and the Society's involvement with it, are receiving some notice by the press, and this can only help to project to the public, the image of a Society which is prepared to assist a Municipal Council in preserving another WurliTzer organ for future generations. And this is a good image to project.

FOR SALE.

Hammond C3 with PR40 Tone Cabinet...Good condition...Price \$2,800For full particulars contact our Honorary member Eric Smith...Phone 39-5985

FOR SALE ... SERENELLI Piano Accordeon ... 120 Bass ... 3 couplers
in very good condition. Used only by professional musician
Price \$80 Phone 649-7011 after 7pm only

ORGAN SPECTACULAR AT SYDNEY TOWN HALL - TUESDAY 6th OCTOBER - TELL YOUR FRIENDS...

The Diaphone

SECTION

EDITOR : ROD BLACKMORE

THE YOUNG RADICAL COMES OF AGE

by

American theatre organist & TOSA member BILLY NALLE

As the theatre organ has been making its return to the international music scene in recent years, much of the thinking and articles concerning the instrument have had the smell of King Tut's mothballs in Aunt Pittypat's attic. Of course, this is understandable in the United States where sixty years are viewed as six hundred in most other countries. Our quaint notions about music and our ways of dealing with history do not square with the sophistication applied to the space and undersea programs. In the happy hoop-de-doo of taking inventory of the theatre organ's percussion effects and accompanimental virtues, professional journalists and public alike largely have ignored the instrument's fullest capabilities and contemporary uses. It is one of a very small and elite group of musical instruments properly called complete. Until this is understood, neither the instrument's capacity for making music nor its history can be viewed fairly and valued fully.

The English inventor and organ builder Robert Hope-Jones conceived and fathered a new kind of organ approximately sixty years ago. His intention expressed to friends and associates was to build an instrument which could encompass areas of music for which a straight organ was not suited. The man's reasons were *musical* ones, not anti-church ones and not pro-one particular use of the instrument. In building an organ appropriate to the character of Popular and Semi-classical music categories, he succeeded brilliantly several years *before* his patents and firm were bought by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company. The ingenuity of his inventions and the quality of his workmanship were of the highest order as attested by contemporary organ builders, players and amateurs alike who have done their homework. The theatre organ cost approximately four times more to build than the straight organ. Church organ committees take note! That the instrument was ahead of its time as to its fullest potential only now is beginning to be understood. This gives reason to believe that in due course a large kettle of highly adulterated hogwash will be given the ceremonial flushing it so richly deserves.

Two tenets of this absurd brew are that restoring a theatre organ is akin to unearthing and repairing the antiquities of Pompeii and that it is mainly a large and mysterious sound effects machine both old and old fashioned. The time is ripe for the gentlemen of the Fourth Estate to heed their own admonition to reporters: Get the *whole* story and get it *straight*. No restoring of any other instrument ever is viewed in print via dust laden adjectives. No other musical instrument ever is relegated just to one particular use. No other musical instrument is adjudged "old fashioned" because it has been on the scene for some arbitrary number of years. For all their evolving, musical instruments are *timeless*. However, some journalists and others ignorant of the theatre organ make it the exception to this, though the reader will search in vain for a sensible, mature reason. In their saying it is old, we reach the choice irony and peace de resistance. All the other major instruments are hundreds of years old via their various stages of development. The theatre organ "old"? It is the *baby* in the history of musical instruments! By hundreds of years it is the *youngest* of them all! Was iss dass dis "old"? Can't you hear the very question on the lips of Sebastian Bach? Facts ober alles!

What is the youngest of all major musical instruments "up to" these days? Astonishingly much and most of the story lies outside commercially operated theatres. The Music Hall in New York, the Fox Theatre in St. Louis, the Byrd Theatre in Richmond and some others provide entertainment organ fare on a regular basis. However, it is in several hundred homes and the many new situations (with more in planning) in colleges, universities, commercial auditoria, civic centres and even one performing arts centre where most of the musical activity on new terms can be found. Even the presentation of the instrument in its accompanimental function, whether for silent films or soloists or groups, is in a new context. The major field of activity growing apace in all these locations is that of theatre organ concerts. The instrument's flexibility and tonal range and quick response are the basis for its having been a great solo instrument from its earliest days. The big difference now is that it is being heard in all manner of locations non-existent until recent years. Just a few examples are representative of both sides of the Atlantic:

- The Kirk of Dunedin auditorium (Dunedin, Florida)
- Roberson Centre for the Arts and Sciences (Binghamton, N.Y.)
- Rochester Theatre Organ Society (Rochester N.Y.)
- Empire State Theatre Museum (Syracuse, N.Y.)
- Detroit Theatre Organ Club (Detroit, Mich.)
- Wichita Civic Centre (Wichita, Kan.)
- San Gabriel Civic Centre (San Gabriel, Calif.)

Just in the foregoing alone there is now or soon will be full season concert series annually, a fact of no small significance. Not touched here is a long list of commercial situations presenting regular concerts. Involved also are numerous chapters now around the country of the American Theatre Organ Society, organized in 1955, and like societies in all the British Isles, Australia and elsewhere.

The American Guild of Organists has given the finest kind of comprehensive witness in its devotion to the organ by including theatre organ concerts at its national conventions and individual chapters increasingly are including such in their yearly planning of musical activities. One of these is the Canton, Ohio chapter which presented a theatre organ concert in October, 1969, as an official part of that city's Festival of the Arts.

The Young Radical indeed has come of age. No longer is it regarded as the least radical. In fact, conservative aficionados in the theatre organ world are more conservative than their straight organ counterparts. Twelve years ago, about fifty years after the debut of the theatre organ, the writer recorded an album of contemporary jazz seasoned with some rock rhythms. The ensuing brouhaha in print, assorted conversational flaps and even poison pen letters (really!) were memorable. Desecration had taken place at the High Alter of the New York Paramount!

Happily in recent years it has come to be appreciated that, as there needs to be more than one type of orchestra, so there needs to be more than one type of organ if the organ is to serve (for want of better terms) *both* Classical and Popular music. That which unceasingly sits in judgment on both types of organ, Music, remains the source of all we call radical and ever has the final word because it alone justifies the very existence of these and all other musical instruments. Both types of organ will remain alive and young as long as they can say "Music is bigger than us both".

"DIAPHONE" SECTION

1856 Organ restored and beautifully tuned

Port Macquarie's famous organ—pipes and barrels of 1856 vintage—has been completely restored, at a cost approaching \$4,000.

A Brisbane firm, H. W. Jarrett Organ Services, commissioned by the parochial council of the Church of England, carried out the restoration.

Mr. H. Jarrett came down from Brisbane just on twelve months ago, dismantled the valuable organ for transport to Brisbane where almost six months work was done to bring a unique and rather famous musical piece back to life again.

On his return to Port Macquarie, Mr. Jarrett spent another two weeks re-assembling the organ, and tuning it.

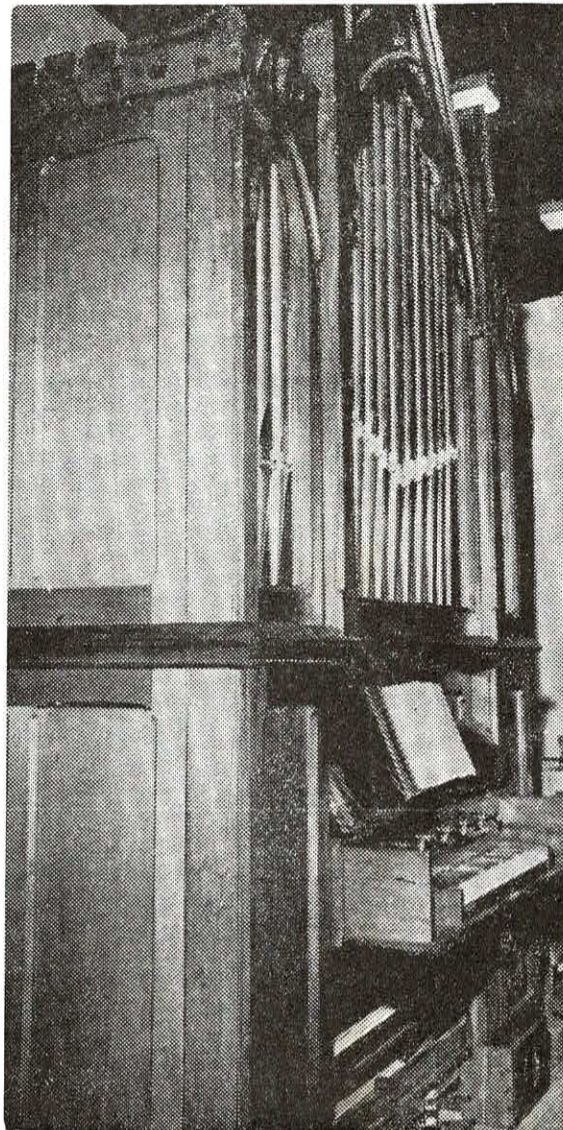
He believes it could well be that the organ is now properly tuned for the first time ever, for on its delivery to Australia from England back in 1856 there would be no one in Port Macquarie capable of tuning it properly.

The complete mechanisms—the barrels, pipes, pedals and keyboard—have all been overhauled; repairs and replacements have been made, and with the final polishing of the cedar framework the organ is as new.

Mr. Jarrett, a specialist in his field, is extremely happy with the result of his labours, and says Port Macquarie has something to be proud of indeed.

As part of the restoration of the convict-built church of St. Thomas to its original form, the organ has been returned to the loft, or choir gallery, at the western end of the church.

Before this was done, the gallery, which had been extended to the full width of the church, was cut back to its original size and today there is a remarkably beautiful simplicity about the gallery and the organ which graces it.



The total cost of purchasing the organ and bringing it from England to Port Macquarie in 1856-57 was £161; it spent six months at sea on its way out here.

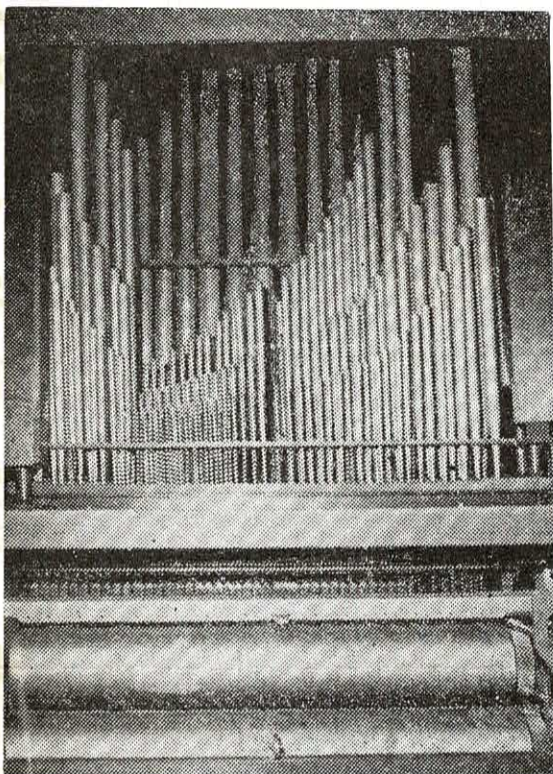
It is generally believed that this Barrel Organ is the only one of its kind still in use in Australia. No longer, however, will it be necessary for boy or man to stand by the pump-handle, for this function of the organ is now electrically operated.

In its 113 years in St. Thomas' the organ has been the background of much happiness and sadness, of much joy and sorrow.

It will no doubt see a great many more people enter and leave the famous old church.

The cutting back of the organ loft was a part of the second stage of the restoration work. A circular cedar stairway within the tower, that will give access to the organ loft for the organist and the choir, will complete the second stage.

The stairway will permit access to the roof of the tower and on each stage to the top will be found muniments and quite an interesting collection of pieces associated with the church from its ball and chain beginnings.



CONVERSATION PIECE



This genial organist of yesteryear is GEOFF. ROBERTSON — "a likeable bloke" — but who can identify the organ? Send your ideas to the "Diaphone" editor.

• Pictures show front and rear views of the organ (with the spike-studded barrels clearly visible) and at the keyboard is the man who restored the organ, Mr. H. Jarrott, of Jarrott Organ Services, Brisbane.

WANTED - A HANDY-MAN CARPENTER.

We need the services of a good carpenter member to make a wooden bollard for our WurliTzer organ at Marrickville. The bollard will be housed inside the dais of the console and will enable the cable to be coiled neatly and without kinks in it. As the old motto says, "Prevention is better than cure" and a bollard around which the cable would be coiled will prevent kinks in the cable and the very many resultant malfunctions which could occur. So if some good, loyal, carpentering type of gent would like to assist us in this "bollard frolic", he could ring President Tom Halloran at 523-5077. You never know, but we might "splice the mainbrace at the same time" or whatever it is that seafaring types do with their tot of rum.

WANTED.

Four ranks of organ pipes - down to Open 4 foot or stopped 8 foot speaking - all on same pressure (up to 6 inches) Telephone 57-1303

TOP RANKING ORGANIST NOW NOT COMING TO AUST.

The famous English theatre organist, DON THOMPSON, who has been resident in the United States of America for about two years, has advised your Editor that he has very reluctantly had to cancel his planned trip to Australia. This has been made necessary owing to his very heavy future commitments. From March through to end of May, he gave about 30 concerts, TV, or personal appearances, and he was described in the magazine, "Off The Keyboards", as rapidly becoming America's most featured concert organist. Future bookings have made it impossible for him to visit Australia next year, as planned, Don said.

DON and your Editor have been in constant touch over the last year or so, and, whilst I fully appreciate the position, quite naturally, I am disappointed that I will not be meeting him at Sydney's airport in early January. Although we had been making plans for his arrival, I decided against announcing details in TOSA News until all details were finalised. However, now that his decision has been taken, there is no reason to withhold the news that we almost had this world famous artist in our grasp. A tape of his concert at the Old Town Music Hall WurliTzer, which DON sent me recently reveals him to be a complete master of the organ in all fields of music both classical and popular. He has a flair for the "roaring twenties" idiom and a real crowd pleasing personality. On April 3rd, at San Francisco's Avenue Theatre he made his sixth return visit by popular demand. In England he was featured at the Odeon Theatre Manchester at the 4/21 WurliTzer where he made his debut. He has played in many parts of the Continent including the Brussels Fair, and a season in the Middle East at a Beirut Cinema. Aside from having played throughout his native England, he has appeared in twenty countries in concerts, radio and TV shows. It would appear that now America has "adopted him" there is little chance of him appearing in this country in the foreseeable future.

NEWCASTLE - A FAVOURED CITY ??

My Newcastle "spy" reports that a local radio announcer, obviously a theatre organ fan, has been playing quite a few organ records in his programmes. He has even given details of the organs played as well as notes about the organists. Mention has been made several times, of our WurliTzer at Marrickville, the Moorabbin Town Hall WurliTzer, REGINALD DIXON, TONY FENELON etc. Additionally he has informed his listeners about our Society and what we are doing. If only there were more enlightened announcers like this one - most radio types seem to display an enormous knowledge of twangy guitar sounds (they all sound the same anyway) and an abysmal lack of knowledge of the better class of popular music. More power to him, I say.

VICTORIAN NEWS. REGENT THEATRE CLOSES.

A handful of TOSA members were in the audience of around 600 who attended the final night of the fabulous 3,300 seat Regent Theatre, Collins Street, Melbourne on July 1st. It was a non-publicised event, and certainly had a terrible pair of films to accompany this tragic night. The only bright spark in the evening performance was the playing of tapes of TONY FENELON playing the now removed 4/19 Regent WurliTzer. These must have been private tapes as we had never heard them before.

Hoyt's newspaper adverts carried small simple words to inform the public that their greatest theatre was closing - 'last day'. However, the South Yarra and Ballarat Regent Theatres did not get even this mention when they closed on the same night. At a supper party in the upstairs foyer afterwards, many of Hoyt's top staff were present along with some of the originals of the 1929 Regent. Some had travelled long distances to pay their respects to the Regent but we don't think anyone really

enjoyed themselves at this sad farewell. The Plaza Theatre under the Regent will remain open until later this year when it too, will close in time for the Melbourne City Council to take possession in November at which time they plan to demolish the complex to build a multi storied hotel/office box to 'enhance' the City Square.

Before and after the closing of the Regent, a constant stream of letters have been appearing in Melbourne newspapers attacking the Council's demolition of the theatre. No letters have appeared in defence of the Council! It is therefore obvious that most people do not want the Regent to go, but unfortunately, seem to do little about halting the Council's plan. We can only suggest that the stream of letters into the papers be turned into a flood. Perhaps public and Council apathy can then be stirred enough to have alternative plans submitted which will still give the Council the added income it seems to need so badly and the public can then still enjoy the Regent Theatre.

NSW members are saddened to see the Regent go - its the last of Melbourne's really big houses, the State having been twinned some years ago. Fortunately, the almost priceless heritage of the Capitol's magnificent Burley Griffin ceiling has been saved from the rubble and rubbish of so called progress, even though it is a smaller more intimate theatre, these days.

ERIC LYN LARSEN PLAYS THE THOMAS.

For his first ever public appearance in the city of Sydney, ERIC LYN LARSEN was presented at the Anzac Auditorium by the distributors of the Thomas range of organs, the Winton Music Center. The concert, which took place on Saturday 25th July was presented to a full house of around 350 persons.

The concert started ten minutes late due to the lack of the public address system, and this was a handicap to LYN and compere CLIFF BINGHAM who must, without a doubt, have found it difficult to establish easy contact with the audience.

For most of the first part of the programme, LYN LARSEN set out to show how the more popular style of music had changed over the years, the styles of the last century evolving leisurely over many years. In the 1900's however, a different pattern seemed to emerge with each decade bringing its own style of popular music. The 20's, 30's and 40's in particular having decided styles, and tempos. LYN played music from each period, and played it well. His style is crisp and clean and his arrangements imaginative. Highlight for me was his playing of an early JESSE CRAWFORD number which was said to have been recorded in England in the 1920's.

The guest artist, a young light baritone Grahame MacFarlane, was an excellent choice indeed. He has a very fine, true voice, and delivered his songs with an assured and natural polish and a quite engaging manner. His songs were complimented by excellent accompaniment at the organ from CLIFF BINGHAM.

After intermission, a thirteen minute silent film comedy was screened with LYN handling the organ chore. This, he did very well indeed and it was quite obvious that he is familiar, not only with this movie, but with the art of silent movie accompanying in general. All in all, a very enjoyable evening.

NEED AN ORGANIST ??

Member Alan Gwynne who owns a Thomas (Lawrence Welk model) organ is available for parties, dances and similiar functions. Alan has a VW light van in which to transport his organ to engagements, so if you know of anyone who would like to engage an organist complete with organ, we suggest you contact him.

QUEENSLAND DIVISION SIDELIGHT.

The Editor of the Queensland Division's monthly journal, "Tibia" is none other than that "cheeky chappie" Tom Ellis. (apologies to Maxie Miller for pinching his title). Tom loves to poke good natured fun at various people like Howell Whitehouse, Nev. Seymour, Wilbur Kentwell and others. As Editor, I guess this is his right. But this latest example of his deep-dyed villainy is beyond the pale - well, I mean, it's not cricket is it? It appears that Tom won a record at one of their functions recently. The record was one of WILBUR KENTWELL'S new L.P.'s. What on earth Tom won it for I'll never know. Anyway the wily Tom never received his ill gotten loot, and in the latest issue of "Tibia" he had the effrontery to print the following nasty little bit. "Notice is hereby given that unless the said record is received without further procrastination, person concerned may find his tea "sweetened" with Epsom Salts". Could be that KENTWELL CAN'T WELL part with the record.??

Back to the nut factory now - see you next month.

THE EDITOR.