

TOSA NEWS

Sept-Oct 2023
Volume 62 No.5
PRICE \$2.50

Thank you to all Members who have renewed your TOSA Membership for 2023-24.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday November 18th at West Ryde Anglican Church commencing at 2pm followed by afternoon tea There should then be time for some playing of the Christie.

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TOSA News David & Margaret Badman

Printer Printers of Richmond

President



Dear Members,

It was great to have Dr John Atwell back to play for us again as I believe the last time he played in Sydney was in December 2019 where he shared the program with Tony Fenelon at Marrickville.

On that occasion I had noted their combination piston settings so I was able to setup John's pistons (as they were in 2019) prior to him coming up. This saved time during rehearsal requiring him only to make some specific changes to suit certain pieces on the program.

For those that don't know, the pistons are the round buttons under the manual keys. When a piston is pressed, the stops physically move on or off depending on how they are set. Thank you to all the volunteers on the day of the concert.

It's nomination time for Office Bearers and you will receive a nomination form either by email or with your TOSA News if you receive a hard copy. Of course, nominations means that an Annual General Meeting is looming and this year it will be held on Saturday 18th November, 2pm at West Ryde Anglican Church aka St. Columbs.

After 16 years of producing TOSA News, our Editor Ernie Vale has given notice that he intends to call it a day at the end of the year. We sincerely thank Ernie for all his years as Editor.

If you are interested in becoming the next Editor in this important role, please contact Ernie (see page 22).

Progress on the Orion Wurlitzer restoration continues as reported elsewhere in this issue.

Regards
Neil

Editorial



Hello Members,

I hope you enjoy Doug Grant's comprehensive review of John Atwell's concert last month. There are three electronic organs available for Free or purchase advertised in this issue.

I enjoyed the Free lunchtime organ recital at Sydney Town Hall when the Newly Appointed City Organist, Titus Grenyer, thrilled us with his program. The mystery Wurlitzer in the last issue was at Blackpool Tower Ballroom.

Best Regards,
Ernie Vale, Editor
editor@tosa.net.au

From the Mailbox...



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Thanks for your responses and please continue to email or write in, telling us what you think.

Where space permits we will do our best to publish your comments, but as space is limited, the editor reserves the right to edit any submitted comments and, as always, the views expressed by any individual may not necessarily coincide with the views of TOSA NSW Div.

Please submit all comments via email to:

The Editor editor@tosa.net.au

Please Note

The Society's only bank account now is with **St George**. Details are **BSB 112-879, account number 442 088 530**.

Please direct all payments to this account with St George Bank.

Jazz at West Ryde

On Saturday afternoon, 15th July we had the great honour of participating in a concert associated with the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (TOSA).

We joined with two outstanding organists to present a

programme of music associated with times past - the great theatre organs featured with the major cinemas of the thirties forties and fifties and the jazz bands such as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw and Duke Ellington of the same era.

It was a great afternoon with an appreciative audience who packed the West Ryde Anglican Church.

Thank you, David and Margaret Badman - longtime patrons of our concerts for inviting us to join with you for a most enjoyable afternoon.

David Clegg.

At a previous Jazz concert with David Clegg I met Geoffrey Ayres who is the Grandson of Harold Grierson. Harold was the Caretaker at Marrickville Town Hall from mid 30s to early 60s. Harold and Family lived in quarters at the rear of the Town Hall - those quarters became part of the Library when it was in the lower Town Hall.

Geoffrey Ayres lived at these quarters from 1944 to 1953.

Editor

***Nominations for Office
Bearers & Committee for the
year 2023-24***

***Nominations close by the
last Australia Post Mail on
Friday October 6th 2023
for TOSA (NSW) Office-
Bearers & Committee
positions for the year 2023-
24 - See nomination form
in this edition or attached if
emailed.***

***Completed nomination forms
must reach the Returning
Officer at Post Office Box
1053, ARTARMON, NSW 2064
by the last Australia Post
mail on Friday 6th October
2023 or scanned & emailed
to gcostin@mac.com by the
29th September 2023,
please include your Member
Number in the email***

***Any Motions or Special
Resolutions for the AGM
must reach the Secretary at:
PO Box 63 Buxton NSW 2571
by the last mail on Friday
13th October 2023 or by
email to secretary@tosa.net.au
by 6th October 2023 so
Members can be advised in
the November TOSA News***

**Advertising
Rates in
TOSA News**

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Quarter Page = \$25

Half Page = \$50

Full Page = \$100

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

Members' Days

**West Ryde Anglican Church
Wednesdays in 2023 are:**

**20th Sept, 18th Oct.
from noon to 5pm.
Convener is
John Weismantel**

0435 258 287 or
whitecoats@bigpond.com

**Marrickville Town Hall
4th Mondays in 2023 are:**

**25th September, 23rd Oct..
Convener is
John Batts on 0420424103
He will email you
to confirm availability**

TOSA NSW Divn Inc Annual General Meeting

**Saturday 18th November 2023 at 2:00pm
St Columb's Anglican Church, Cnr Dickson Ave &
Bellevue Ave., West Ryde**

**Please come along to the meeting and take the
opportunity to hear about the progress on the
Restoration of the Orion Wurlitzer**

**Afternoon Tea will be provided following the meeting
to allow members to mingle and chat to the Executive
and Committee members about your Society.**

**Nominations for TOSA (NSW) Office Bearers &
Committee positions for the year 2023-2024 close by
the last Australia Post Mail on Friday October 6th 2023**

**- See nomination form in this edition or the attachment
if receiving TOSA News by email.**

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2023 so Members can be advised in the November
TOSA News**

Further Progress on Refurbishment of the Wurlitzer at the Orion Centre Theatre Campsie

On Monday 21st August Ernie & myself attended the Orion Centre for some maintenance tasks.

Three top plates for the large reservoir currently undergoing restoration by John Parker were retrieved to be included in the process. Wind line flange to 8' Tibia was secured. 2 x flanges to the reservoir under restoration were re-sealed while accessible.

The troublesome Kinura rank was de-piped to storage in the chamber, and the top plate removed for inspection. It was found that many pallets would regularly stick in the open position.

The top plate was removed to the organ builders factory where it was determined that the leather on the pallets had expanded fouling the guide pins and become hard. The pallet wood was also found to be jamming at the hinge pin, presumably due to the repeated high humidity caused by repeated water ingress into the Solo chamber over the last few years of disuse.

The top plate will be test for flatness and fit leather gasketing (there is evidence of air leaking past the existing cork gasket on the chest walls in several places).

We might be well advised to check the other chests in this 4-rank group for similar issues. To the best of our knowledge this chest group was last worked on over 30 years ago.

The large reservoir is nearly complete; it is intended to return it to the organ when the Kinura top board is complete to reduce the number of visits to the Orion.

Cheers, John Weismantel

Stop Press

The Christie Organ piano is now playable from the organ console

Orion Wurlitzer Kinura Top Board Proposal for Refurbishment.

GOOD NEWS Gentlemen!!!

Thorough inspection of the Kinura top-board has revealed that the pallets DO NOT require recovering!

The pallets were recovered in the late 1980's (due to my influence) and with brushing up are still very suitable. The problem has been the disuse of the organ and dampness. Although not noticeable, the wood pallet guide pin holes have shrunk. Rust has also developed due to lack of use causing the pallets to bind.

Work required will include cleaning/fluffing of pallets, cleaning pallet pivot/guide pins, enlarging pivot holes in pallets.

Certainly, a cheaper option than re-palleting!

Cheers,
John Parker

TOSA approved the above proposal to proceed.

The organ builder, John Parker, has completed releathering the largest Regulator from the Solo Chamber that had blown out its corners.

He has also refurbished the Top Board from the Kinura.

It is proposed to inspect the remaining 3 Top Boards from that 4 rank chest to ensure they are all in perfect working order so that when all reservoirs have been refurbished and reinstalled and the wind is put back on that there are no cyphers in the organ.

Committee members are also taking the opportunity to upgrade the lighting of the stop rails to make it clearer for the organist to read the stop tabs. The music rack has also been given some refurbishment.

Editor

Gulbransen Organ for FREE

I have a Gulbransen Stop electric organ, now about 50 years old. We are moving home to a flat and it cannot go with us. I am looking for a good home for it, FREE.

It is a double keyboard, double octave pedal, stop organ, that can be made to sound like a pipe organ, or with the tremulous, like a theatre organ. There are some notes that will need some electrical TLC, but mostly it is in very good condition. The console is a honey colour, and it has a wide seat as well.

Cliff thought that someone might love it in Toto or be able to use some of it as parts. Either way I would love it not to have to go into land fill.

Sincerely, and with thanks in anticipation,
We live in the lower north shore.

Sue Rae

Ph 0433 788 381
02 99602316

New Membership Fees

New Membership and Renewal of Membership

\$25.00 Full membership, \$20.00 Concession, Interstate or Overseas \$25. (Only one TOSA News per household)

Membership enquiries David & Margaret Badman

(02) 4776 2192 membership@tosa.net.au
Associate Membership for spouse/partner
an additional 50%

Roland Atelier AT-800 Organ for sale - price \$4,500

Luxurious cabinet finished in natural wood.

Easy to use control panel based on traditional organ playing principles, with touch screen function.

USB port.

Keyboards: Upper 56 keys Lower 76 keys with aftertouch.

Pedals:
20 keys

2 foot switches on expression pedal - function assignable.

Width - 1,350 mm
Depth - 694 mm
Height - 1,328 mm.

Contact: Maureen Burke
0415 276 232.



Organ available from Deceased Estate



Any Offer Considered
Contact Shay Gillings on 0408 444 373

A Musical Soiree Saturday 15th July at St Columb's Anglican Church, West Ryde

David Badman, Vice President of TOSA NSW, opened the afternoon to welcome a wonderful audience of some 100 patrons by giving them some history of the Christie Cinema Organ and how he became involved in TOSA through his interest in music as a teenager. David had experienced the musical talents of both Tony Fenelon and Cliff Bingham at a music store in the city of Sydney. This resulted in him purchasing an electronic organ.

David introduced Cliff Bingham as the first artist to play the Christie. Cliff's program was as follows:-

1. Strike up the Band
2. A medley of two numbers about Sanfrancisco
Sanfrancisco Open Your Golden Gate and Sanfrancisco
3. Be Still My Sole
4. The Old Rugged Cross
5. Chit Chat Polka
6. A Disney Medley

David Clegg's Jazz Band then took over with:-

1. Lady Be Good
2. Sunny Side of the Street
3. As Time Goes Bye
4. Luara
6. Pennies from Heaven
7. Girl from Ipanema

A break for afternoon tea then provided a very tasty variety of nibbles together with percolated coffee or tea. This provides the opportunity for everyone to mingle and introduce themselves.

Then David Badman introduced Simon Ellis to open the second half with:-

1. The Nearness of you
2. In the Garden
3. Shall we Gather at the River
4. Since Jesus Came into my Heart
5. Almost like Being in Love
6. Calling All Workers

David Clegg's Jazz Band then returned to present a Jam Session with his Grandsons, Edward Bernascone playing Trumpet, James Bernasconi playing Trombone and Charlie Sundborn playing Saxophone. All three of these musicians were professionally qualified.

1. Take the A Train
2. Trumpet Solo - I Can't Get Started
3. Pedido
4. Satin Doll
5. Open the Door Richard

Editor

TOSA Executive and Committee were very pleased with the number of patrons that came along to enjoy their Saturday afternoon of music and fellowship. Many thanks to all the musicians for making the day so successful.

The largest musical instrument in the world. Atlantic City boardwalk hall pipe organ

The largest pipe organ in the world at Boardwalk Hall
A construction or organ task was assigned to Midmer-Losh Inc. of Merrick, Long Island, New York. The result was an instrument giant that broke all records of more than 2,500 years of instrument history.

Boardwalk Hall is now the proud owner of the largest pipe organ in the world, which is also the largest and most powerful musical instrument on Earth.

Made of an impressive 33,000 tubes, this gigantic instrument is a train in 5.5 million cubic feet of airspace in the main arena, with a volume six times greater than the train's loudest whistle.

To generate this cracking sound, the organ uses 600 electric blowers capable of blowing 36,400 cubic feet per minute through tubes, generating a wind pressure of up to 100 inches, or about 30 times to a normal organ.

The organ's main console is also the largest in the world, with more than 1,200 stopping points; it is the only organ with seven keyboards (manual records).

From a note by Stephen D. Smith. I found this while reading thru a few of his personal notes. This is in the realm of you've-got-to-be-kidding, but it's truth.

"In total, there are 53 compound stops, i.e. 24 mixtures and 29 two-rank celestes. There are 17 one-rank celeste stops (five diminutive foundations, five flutes, and seven strings). The 20 Principal-class mixtures comprise 113 ranks – just over one-quarter of the total number of ranks. A further 17 ranks are to be found in four other mixtures, i.e. #225 Mixture Aetheria VI (Dulciana tone), #183 Flute Mixture III, #247 Harmonic Mixture III (flute tone), and #285 String Mixture V."



(Photo credit: Jeff Snyder)

Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society (PSTOS) was thrilled to host 15 young people for this year's Summer Youth Adventure put on by the American Theatre Organ Society. These kids got to see and play several organs and got world-class teaching and coaching from Jonas Nordwall, Donna Parker, Jelani Eddington, and Don Feely.

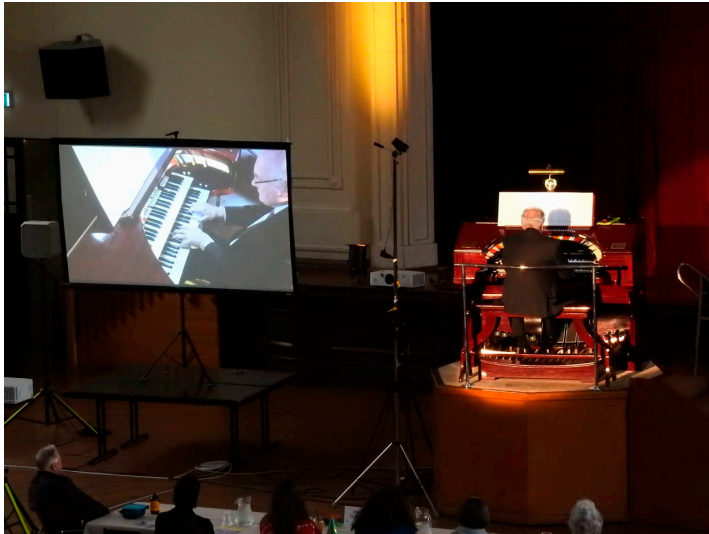
Nearly as important, they got to meet and build relationships with other young people who love theatre organ! Thank you to all those who contributed, volunteered, drove, opened venues, and did all the other little things that needed to be taken care of.

Do you know a student who plays piano or organ and might be interested in Summer Youth Adventure next year? Point them to the American Theatre Organ Society's website and help keep theatre organ alive!

TOSA Members, this is how the American Theatre Organ Society is keeping interest alive in the younger generation being able to experience playing Theater Organ.

Report on Dr. John Atwell's concert Marrickville Town Hall - Sunday 13th August 2023

At the outset, I would call Dr. John Atwell's performance at Marrickville, not just much as a concert, but also a Master Class. Here we watched and listened to a Master Craftsman of the instrument. It was a performance devoid of flashy showmanship, sensitively performed. John is no stranger to the Marrickville organ, having been involved as the Society's Patron, for many years now.



Following a brief introduction from President Neil Palmer, John "climbed" up the podium and opened his musical afternoon with a march-like piece called "*Be Our Guest*" from the Disney movie "*Beauty and the Beast*". John pointed out at the outset, that he has been performing at Marrickville for the half a century of its time at that venue. He said "It is 50 years, almost to the day that I played my first concert here at Marrickville Town Hall! Some of the audience members today were here at that stage, and I am so grateful to have been invited back over those years".

Interestingly, the instrument itself is approaching 100 years of age, having rolled off the Wurlitzer assembly line on the 12th of August 1924, (and whilst we're 'into' statistics – the Marrickville

Town Hall itself turned 100 on the 11th of February 1922 – 101 years ago!).

John reported that the theme of the concert was “Movie Music Magic” adding that it is appropriate that the music would be performed on an instrument designed to accompany movies. He explained the next item as being from the 1971 movie “Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” and was titled “*Pure Imagination*” – a song written by Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley. The song itself is a delightfully languid piece which John performed with sensitivity.

‘The 1995 Pixar/Walt Disney animated movie ‘Toy Story 4’ provided John’s next offering “*You’ve Got a Friend in Me*” written by Randy Newman. A great selection of stops and one could easily ‘hear’ Kermit the Frog’s version.



Clearly a favourite for John was his next item which he explained is from the 2018 movie ‘Mary Poppins Returns’. “*Nowhere to go but up*” is a waltz-time item written by Marc Shaiman, and appeared in the last sequence of the movie. He expressed the view that “The music is just fantastic”. The piece allowed John the opportunity to display the dynamic range of the organ ranging from ‘grand’ organ to PPP, a much-commended attribute of the Marrickville Wurlitzer’s installation. The trem-less finale was delightful.

Henry Mancini was John's choice for the next three items which included the hauntingly beautiful '*Charade*', '*Days of Wine and Roses*' and from '*The Great Race*', the 'cheeky' little '*Pie in the Face*' Polka' featuring the Piccolo-like stop. Without a break for a comment, John went straight into the John William's theme from '*Superman the Movie*' complete with the very-recognisable fanfare-type opening. John's performance provided all the 'bravado' attributes of the organ.



A movie theme of the 1930's was featured in John's next offering from George Gershwin's '*Goldwyn Follies*' with '*Love Walked in*'. He provided a fine arrangement of that memorable piece, featuring many of the 'voices' of the Marrickville Wurlitzer. Last item before interval was a breezy little piece from the 1955 movie from the Rank organisation in the UK, titled '*An Alligator named Daisy*', (which was sung by Jeannie Carson in the movie), and was called "*I'm in Love for the Very First Time*". He admirably brought out all the light and shade' of this "cheeky" little piece.

After a similarly brief introduction from TOSA President Neil, Dr. John resumed his 'Movie Music Magic' with the rousing "*Florentina March*" from the 1996 British movie '*Brassed Off*', written by Julian Fucik, a Czech composer known as 'the Bohemian Sousa'.



Patrons enjoying John's presentation on August 13th

Note there are no curtains over the windows and there is a dark section about half way down the windows, A combination of a cloudy day and the new treatment of the windows meant no need for curtains. Hooray!!!

The next item featured the music made famous by the Canadian-born singer Deanna Durban, who as John explained, was a female film star up until the age of 29, until she walked away from the movies due to her considering that she was being unfairly treated by the movie industry. John added that ironically, Deanna Durban virtually saved the Universal Studios from bankruptcy. John's selections included "I Love to Whistle" and "Serenade for Stars" from the movie "Mad about Music", followed by "It's Raining Sunbeams" from "One Hundred Men and a Girl", and finally, from the movie "Spring Parade" - "Waltzing in the Clouds". John's long involvement with the theatre organ were clearly demonstrated in the segues between the multiple Deanna Durban favourites. He went straight into his next number with "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" written by Elton John (with lyrics by Tim Rice), for the 1994 original animated version of movie "The Lion King". A lovely languid performance by John calling on delightful string registrations of the organ.

For his next bracket of numbers, John chose music from (as he described him), "a giant of the movie-music era, not well recognised at the time, although being awarded 3 Oscars for his work." John was referring to Harry Warren who was the composer of music for the movie "42nd Street". Harry said he could write in any genre, and the three pieces John chose were "*I Only Have Eyes for You*" from a 1934 movie "Dames", "*You'll Never Know*" from the 1943 movie "Hello Frisco Hello", and finally "*All's fair in Love and War*" from the movie "The Gold Diggers of 1937". An admirable choice of Harry Warren favourites and clearly favourites of John's.

In introducing his next piece John described it as quite different to his former item "*All's Fair in Love and War*", in that it reflects the "*glory of love*", a song written by Billy Hill in 1936, and featured in the 1997 movie "Guess who is Coming to Dinner?" and in "Beaches" in 1988. He dedicated the item to Deborah Keller (wife of the former President of TOSA(NSW)), for her birthday. His arrangement commenced 'minus trem's' giving a lovely introduction to the charming sentimental piece and went on to demonstrate the best attributes of the 'strings' of the organ.

A significant change of sentiment comprised the next item (as John commented – "from the sublime to the ridiculous") music from the trilogy of the "Godfather" composed by Nino Rota and Callum Coppola . The 'Title Piece' was followed by '*The Wedding Mazurka*'- described by John as "movie music of a laconic nature". The 'Wedding Mazurka' demonstrated amazing dexterity of fingering.

Selections from the 1953 movie musical 'The Bandwagon' were chosen by John for his main closing item for the recital, with music by Howard Dietz and Arthur Schwarz. The bracket included '*New Sun in the Sky*', '*You and the Night and the Music*', '*I Guess I'd Better Change My Plans*', '*Dancing in the Dark*', and finally '*That's Entertainment*' providing a well-rounded selection.

In response to very warm audience applause, Dr. John thanked everyone and introduced his encore piece '*As Time Goes By*' from

the movie Casablanca, with the comment, "Let's hope we can meet again at some stage – not too long". The admirable choice of encore was simplicity in itself and a delightful end to a well-planned and executed program.

Doug Grant
August 2023



TOSA thanks all members and patrons who came along to enjoy such a well prepared and presented program of 'Movie Music Magic' on our Biggest Little Wurlitzer in the very experienced hands of Patron "Dr. John Atwell"

**TOSA also appreciate that Ken Barwick brought along some students to gain practical experience in setting up audio and video equipment for the concert
The two video projectors presented the clearest pictures we have seen at Marrickville to date**

Many Thanks Ken

A Note from the TOSA News Editor

Dear Members, TOSA activities were curtailed because of the Covid 19 Virus that affected the way of life of all of us over a long period. Consequently, TOSA took the responsible approach in the interest of everyone remaining healthy and not contracting Covid through Social contact by not organising Concerts or Events that might place people at a health risk.

You are also aware that the Orion Wurlitzer Solo Chamber was flooded, causing some damage to parts of the organ. This additionally meant TOSA could not even hold Members Days at the Orion. The need to deal with restoring the damaged parts of the organ has meant negotiating with Canterbury Bankstown City Council who thankfully agreed to fund most of the restoration costs.

Due to the lack of use of the Orion Wurlitzer and the water damage in the Solo Chamber which then resulted in the leather on the Regulators drying out and blowing out their corners it has meant Executive and Committee Members of TOSA have been working very co-operatively with John & George Khoury, the Lessees of the Orion Centre Theatre, and the Organ Builder, John Parker, to remove various parts of the organ to be restored and then returned and placed in situation for your future enjoyment.

Council have also undertaken the upgrading of the Stormwater Drains under the Council Car Park as well as the Stormwater Drainage System at the rear of the Orion Centre Theatre. This has further ensured no water floods into the rear of the Theatre.

All this necessary activity has meant that The Executive and Committee have taken the opportunity to look at how TOSA should operate in the future bearing in mind the many aspects of social media available to promote TOSA Events in the future. Therefore Committee Member, Michael Curran has been tasked with setting up a Sub-Committee of TOSA to consider how Theatre Organ could survive into the future and how it might be promoted to the younger generation of musicians and music lovers.

Calling for a New Editor of TOSA News

As I have been Editor of TOSA News since 2007, some 16 years, I feel it is timely that a younger member of TOSA takes on the role of Editor of TOSA News with the ability to utilise the many Social Media tools available today to gather material.

I have enjoyed immensely the role of Editor over the years and assure a new member they would find the role very rewarding.

I am happy to hand over the Editorial records that I have accumulated as well as guide the new Editor in the preparation of TOSA News utilising the TOSA computer and other equipment.

I propose to finish up with the December 2023 TOSA News. Please give me a call on 0415626064 if you are interested in discussing what is involved and are keen to give it a go! I look forward to hearing from you.

Ernie Vale Editor

Debut recital by Titus Grenyer
newly appointed City Organist

Sydney Town Hall Tuesday 15 August, 12:30pm

Program

Prelude in E Flat Major, BWV552a
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Andante from Piano Concerto No21 in C, K. 467
W.A. Mozart (1750-1791)

Winter Sketches

1. Early Morning
2. Clouds
3. Elation in a Late Storm

A Fancy

William Byrd (c.1543-1623)

Concerto No.4 in F minor, Op.8, RV297 "Winter", from The Four Seasons Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

- i Allegro non molto
- ii Largo
- iii Allegro

Fugue in E Flat Major, BWV 552b

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

What a wonderful musical experience for Titus to be able to play the Sydney Town Hall Organ for his own program. He certainly arranged each piece of music to take full advantage of the voices available to him as he danced across the Pedal Board and the keyboards. Yes he did use the 64' stop too.

This was a marvellous hour of music not to be missed. Many organists from around Sydney were in the audience including the former City Organist, Robert Ampt.

Mark your calendars now for the next recital on Monday 16th October 12:30pm to 1:30pm titled **Organ for all ages**

Then on Wednesday 20 December 8:pm

Christmas at the Sydney Town Hall

The Christmas story in words and music. A spectacular of carols and pageantry with massed choir, children's choir, soprano, harp, NSW Police band and the grand organ.

Thursday 28 December

Young Organists Day

Featuring the talented young organists of our City.

TOSA NEWS

Sept-Oct. 2023
Volume 62 No5

**PRINT
POST
100004836**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**

Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) Inc. ISSN 2208-9098(Online)
PO Box 63 BUXTON NSW 2571
If undeliverable please return to : **PO Box 589 RICHMOND NSW 2753**
www.tosa.net.au

