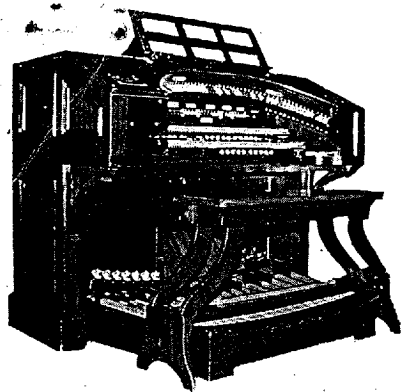
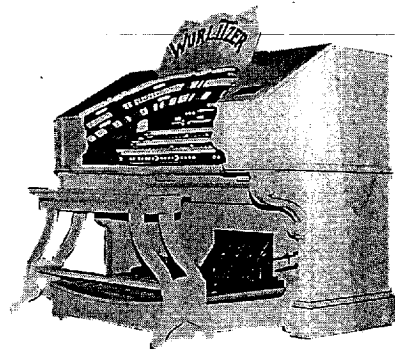


AUGUST, 1996



2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

TOSA NEWS



3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

*Welcome back to Sydney's own
Great International Organist*

JOHN GIACCCHI



**Sunday, 8th September at 2pm
Orion Centre Campsie**

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Issue 8
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TOSA NEWS

AUGUST, 1996

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COMING EVENTS

AUGUST

Monday 5 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Sunday 11 at 2.00pm **Nicholas Martin Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Wednesday 14 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie

SEPTEMBER

Monday 2 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Sunday 8 at 2.00pm **John Giacchi Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
Wednesday 25 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie

OCTOBER

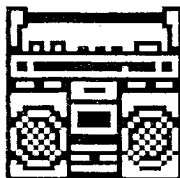
Wednesday 9 at 5.00pm **Nominations close for**
all **Executive and Committee**
positions for **1997**
Monday 14 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**

NOVEMBER

Monday 4 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Wednesday 20 at 8.00pm **Annual General Meeting**
Orion Centre Campsie

DECEMBER

Monday 2 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
Sunday 8 at 2.00pm **Tony Felon and John Atwell Duo Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie



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2CBA FM - 103.2

EVERY MONDAY AT 9.00 pm
For "Theatre Organ Highlights"
Presented by Chris Styles



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

TOSA (NSW) has much pleasure in welcoming 19 new members to our society this month, and we wish them a long and happy association with the wonderful world of the Theatre Organ in NSW:

- Simone Armstrong** - Strathfield
- Patricia Bostock** - Bowral
- Allan Bullock** - Norah Head
- Kathleen Cook** - Canterbury
- Kenneth Feltham** - Glenfield
- Brian Firman** - Ettalong
- Ron Fraser** - Ermington
- June Friend** - Colo Vale
- Valerie Gurney** - Sans Souci
- Peter Henderson** - Bobs Farm
- Pamela Mason-Cox** - Ettalong
- John McDonald** - Jannali
- Diana Moore** - Waratah
- Janet Pearce** - Melba, ACT
- Maxwell Pridmore** - Rouse Hill
- Barbara Reynolds** - Nambucca Heads
- Lillian Thorpe** - Sans Souci
- Noel Thorpe** - Sans Souci
- Thomas Wright** - Ingleburn

Jelani Eddington's concert turned out to be a real "knock-out" - everybody was impressed by his outstanding ability on the **Wurlitzer** and on the **Yamaha** grand piano. What a splendid future must await this personable, young organist with so many talents, including the ability to speak French and Russian, and to pass law studies examinations with flying colours. If you missed him this time, make sure you get to hear him next time he visits!

As usual, many sincere thanks to the contributors to this and other issues of *TOSA News*, to those who write, or send items in, or take and process photographs, etc. Special thanks this month to **Ron Ivin** who went to great pains to make sure his review of **Simon Gledhill's** great concert was as accurate and as detailed as possible, and who also sent in a report on a concert in **Gosford** in which **Hector Olivera** demonstrated the **Rodgers and Roland** instruments. Your efforts and interest in passing on informative information to the members of the **Society** are greatly appreciated by our readers and most especially by the editor.

Reading the recent issues of the interstate **TOSA** organisations' newsletters, it has been interesting to notice their reports on the **Sydney Easter Convention**. Without exception, they have been most favourably impressed by the efforts of our **Convention Committee**, and passed along complimentary

expressions of gratitude to those who did the hard work of organising and running such a large venture. Our **Society** members can be truly proud of those who spent so much time and effort to produce this well-deserved success. All the **Conventioneers** seem to have enjoyed themselves to the maximum over the Easter weekend.

August is turning out to be a busy month for theatre organ enthusiasts. As mentioned in the June issue of *TOSA News*, on Friday 2nd August **Neil Jensen** and **Helen Zerefos** will present a *Farewell to the Phantom* concert at the **Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL Club**. **Nicholas Martin** is playing for a **Supper-Dance Night (Blackpool Tower Ballroom style dance-music on the Wurlitzer)** on Friday night, 9th August - see page 5. On Sunday, 11th August **Nicholas Martin** plays a full concert at the **Orion** at 2pm for all our members and guests. There is a **Members' Playing Night** at the **Orion** at 7.30pm on Wednesday, 14th August. On Sunday, 25th August **Tony Fenelon** will be in **Sydney** playing at the **Cremorne Orpheum**, in tandem with **Neil Jensen** at 1.30pm - see page 6. What a feast of entertainment for lovers of theatre organ music!

I'm sure to see you at one, or several, of these special August events, don't you think? - at least I hope I see you there, because I'm looking forward to your company.

Best Wishes,
Colin Groves

Don't Forget *Nicholas Martin's*

Blackpool Supper Dance

Friday, 9th August, 8pm

(See page 5 for booking form)

AND

Full Concert

Sunday, 11th August, 2pm

Both at the **Orion Centre Campsie**

(booking form in July *TOSA News*)

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

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



NEWS FROM ALL OVER

MEMBERS' NIGHTS

Wednesday, 29th May, saw a small gathering of about 20 members at the Orion to hear and play our fabulous WurliTzer.

The players included Amy Caldwell, Walter Pearce, Tom Barber, John Griffith, Jack McDonald, Ted Mackness, Bruce Brisby, Bill Schumacher and John Giacchi.

Also a similar number of players and listeners came on Wednesday, 19th June. On this occasion the players included Tom Barber, Jack McDonald, Frank Lewis, John Griffith, Wendy Hambly, Bill Schumacher, John Batts (from Canada), Jim Birkett, Elaine Birkett and John Giacchi.

If you would like to come along to play or just listen, the next Members' Playing Night at the Orion is on Wednesday, 14th August at 7.30pm. Come along and bring a small item to share for supper - tea and coffee provided.

POET'S CORNER

Jelani Eddington in Concert

The wonderful talents of this young man from the USA,
 Gave us a magical, musical performance to-day.
 It was so pleasurable right from the start,
 With many, memorable melodies to impart.
 A programme of sheer delight,
 Played so expertly, with such delicate shade and light.
 His talents were superb, so many would agree,
 It was an afternoon filled with joyous, musical pleasures for me.

Bettine Valence

CONCERT NEWS

Two of TOSA's well-known members are giving a duo concert on Saturday, 17th August at 2.15pm. The concert features Wendy Hambly and John Shaw playing piano and Thomas organ at St Matthew's Anglican Church on the corner of Shorter Avenue and Penshurst Road, Beverly Hills North.

The admission is \$5.00 and this includes afternoon tea. Any further information can be received by contacting : 9759 5825.

DAVID PARSONS

Any member within reach of Lismore in September might be interested to hear well-known Sydney organist, David Parsons, O.A.M., play the pipe organ in Bexhill's Church of the Good Shepherd at 1.00pm on Tuesday, 17th September or at 7.00pm on Wednesday, 18th September. This will be the fifth consecutive year that David has performed at this small rural church.

Admission is by programme, costing \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and \$25 for a family, and includes afternoon tea or supper. For reservations or further information, phone, Grant Virtue on (066) 25 1241.

SAD TO GLAD

The US's Portland Organ Grinder Pizza Parlor was recently wound up and its 4/51 WurliTzer sold off in lots. This sad event has indirectly benefitted TOSA (NSW), as we have purchased two of its String ranks for possible, future addition to one of our organs.

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Piano-corder Marantz Unit

Can Be Fitted To Any Piano
 Complete with Cassette
 and Pre-recorded Tapes
 Excellent Condition

Price : \$1,000

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9759 5825



Allan Tassaker tells us that last week a friend of his tried to sell him some music from a TV soap opera.

Allan wouldn't have a bar of it! Boom! Boom!!

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FRIDAY 9TH AUGUST 7.30PM
ORION CENTRE CAMPSIE

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ALL TICKETS MUST BE PAID FOR PRIOR TO 5TH AUGUST (POST BEFORE 2ND)

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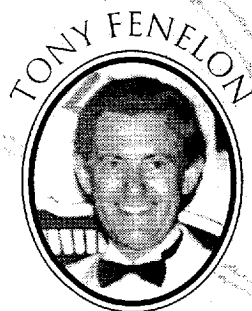
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"Light The Lights"

**NEIL JENSEN &
 TONY FENELON**

A Sparkling programme
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 Duets played by Australia's
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 Artists. Performing
 everybody's favourite
 evergreens including
 "The Rhapsody in Blue",
 "The Warsaw Concerto" and
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**SUNDAY 25 AUGUST 1996
 SHOWTIME 1.30PM**



TONY FENELON

2

RETURN APPEARANCE

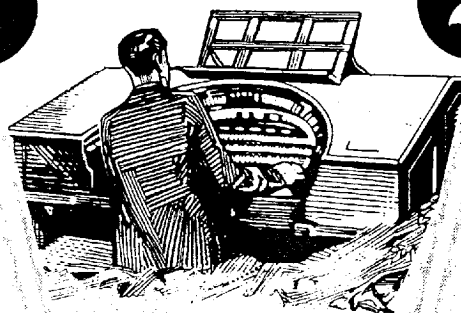
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"The *CAPITOL* Story" from *The Diaphone*

Bob Cornish of *Mona Vale* has sent the following letter and historic article about the *Capitol Theatre* and its *Wurlitzer*, first published in *January, 1964*, and written by the then editor of *TOSA's The Diaphone*, *Rod Blackmore* :

25/4/96

I'm enclosing copies of a few articles that caught my interest in the old "*Diaphone*" dated 1964. It was about 1963 that I first met **David Devenport**, well known in **Sydney** as an accomplished pianist and particularly known for his regular playing at the **Cremorne Orpheum Theatre, Sydney**. It was whilst he was working at the old **Palings Music Store**, George St., that I met him in the organ department, where he expounded the virtue of the famous "**Hammond**" organ to me. But more importantly, he introduced me to "**T.O.S.A.**" and their "**Diaphone**". We struck up a friendship and, probably what was just as important to me at the time, he enabled me to arrange for a practice session on the grand old **State Theatre Wurlitzer** one Saturday morning at 7am, where he and I almost shattered the beautiful huge chandelier hanging from the ceiling, and is still hanging there in all its beauty. But of course as you know, the poor old "**Wurli**" is now "over the hill" and maybe beyond repair. I hope the **TOSA** members can save it!

However, I thought the few pages of the "*Diaphone*" I've enclosed might be of interest to the members, particularly now as the first chapter and first 5 pages are devoted to the original opening (and history) of the icon of **Sydney** theatres - the **Capitol Theatre** in **Sydney's Haymarket**. The photos of the interior of the **Capitol** are particularly interesting, as they show 'our' beautiful white **3/15 Wurlitzer** sitting in all its glory and in pride of place on the left side of the proscenium. That should make all our members swell with pride, knowing that the very same organ which cost £21,000 approximately in those days, is still "alive and kicking" in the **Orion Theatre** at **Campsie, Sydney**, and gets a "work-out" by myself and other members when the opportunity arises.

I hope that you are able to reprint all or some of the enclosed *Diaphone* data, it will surely enhance that 'mag' which

is already top quality reading to all organ-music lovers!

Yours Sincerely,
Bob Cornish

The Diaphone, January, 1964

THE *CAPITOL* STORY

Sydney's 'Capitol' Theatre opened on 7th April, 1928 - built at a cost of £180,000, on a ground space of 170' x 102', the theatre has an auditorium of 140' x 102' with a seating capacity of 3200.

The theatre was unique among other **Australian** buildings of the same era. The '**State**' Theatre was under construction at the same time and was built on the formal lines of the **Empire** period - but the **Capitol** introduced to **Australia** a type of theatre which had attained popularity in **London** and **America**. The object of this class of cinema was to create by decoration and art, an architectural picture of a certain place or period. The **Capitol** is **Venetian** in style, reproducing an elaborate piazza and garden, so that whilst the auditorium is entirely enclosed, the illusion of an exterior scene in **Venice** is retained. The **Capitol** was designed to an identical pattern of two then existing theatres in **America** - one being the **Riviera Theatre, Omaha**. Seated in the theatre, one is surrounded by the exteriors of buildings adjoining the "garden", including many reproductions of **European** statuary. One of the most conspicuous buildings contains one of the organ chambers of the mighty **3/15 Wurlitzer** organ, opus 1813, whilst the other chamber plays from behind a lattice grille at the rear of a huge ornamental fountain. The upright piano incorporated in the organ is located in a built-in box at floor level beside the console pit, whilst the big **32'** *Diaphones* rock the theatre from above the ceiling.

To complete the atmosphere of out-of-doors, the ceiling of the theatre is a huge blue bowl of sky. For many years by the ingenuity of lighting experts, a special machine played ever-changing effects on this "sky", reproducing atmospheric effects of sunrise, sunset, night with twinkling stars, drifting clouds, end even rainbows.

On 17th December, 1927, it was

announced in the Press:- "**Mr. Stuart T. Doyle** (managing director of **Union Theatres Limited**) announces that his company has purchased an orchestral organ in **America** for installation in the new **Capitol Theatre**, now being erected in the **Haymarket**. This instrument, which he describes as being the largest of its kind sent abroad from **America**, has been constructed by **Wurlitzer** and contains 173 orchestral and organ effects. The cost is £21,000."

And then, 7th April, 1928 - Opening Night! - "The speeches finished, a burst of delighted applause greeted the entry of the orchestra which was hoisted up on its platform from a deep pit, playing vigorously. Then, after a new film had been presented, **Mr Fred Scholl** gave a series of pieces on the **Wurlitzer** organ, he also shooting up unexpectedly from the depths in front of the stage. A transcription of the **Rigoletto** quartet showed the instrument to possess a full and finely impressive tone which rang forth vibrantly into the huge building without seeming to blare. In his jazz number, *Ain't That a Grand and Glorious Feeling* **Mr. Scholl** was obviously at tremendous pains to see how many curious and unusual stops he could use, and for those who love novelty for its own sake, the effect, though wild in the extreme, probably seemed very stimulating. The *Love Call* from **Rose Marie** showed the capacity of the organ in softly sentimental mood." Later, during interval, **Fred Scholl** played excerpts from the opera *Mignon*.

Fred Scholl came to the **Capitol** from **Grauman's Chinese and Egyptian Theatres, Hollywood** - the souvenir programmes stated: "He is known right throughout the length and breadth of **America** as one of the four greatest organists ever heard at the console of the mighty **Wurlitzer** organ." An old placard of the '30s found in the theatre recently shows **Fred Scholl** as playing for the main sessions and **Knight Barnett** (now organist at the **Regent Theatre, Adelaide**) playing the intermediate sessions. Organist, **Billy Dick**, is another who reigned at the **Capitol** for many years, and **Renee Lees** and **Jean Penhall** played there and were featured in many broadcasts of the organ. **Manny Aarons** occasionally exchanged with **Jean**

Penhall - Jean playing the big **4/21 WurliTzer** at the **State Theatre** while **Manny** entertained the patrons at the **Capitol**.

Jean Penhall was the last professional organist at the **Capitol** and the organ was 'closed down' about 8 years ago. The theatre is in an unfortunate position, away from the main entertainment sector of the city, and now screens a collection of second-rate films which attract a young audience. The **City Council** also has long-range plans for redevelopment of the land, so that professional use of the organ again is unlikely.

Reubert Hayes recorded a 10" LP (Diaphon DPR-4) on the organ in about 1950, of melodies from the musical **South Pacific**. "The **Capitol** organ" says **Mr. Hayes** on the record cover, "has the finest acoustics of any I have played." There is no doubt that of **Sydney WurliTzers**, the **Capitol** organ is the most ideally installed. Its chambers play unhampered into the auditorium - from some positions one can see the swell shutters opening and closing; seated at the console an organist can maintain perfect balance between the two chambers.

In stop nomenclature this organ is identical with that at the **Regent Theatre, Sydney**, but the voicing is entirely different. Whereas the **Regent** organ is noted for its sweetness and beautiful Tibia chorus, the **Capitol** organ is more noted for its blatant reeds and thunderous Diaphones. The console is painted white, with gilt ornate

carving, and rises on a hydraulic hoist to the left of the orchestra pit in front of the stage.

TOSA member, **Milton Speers'** memories are typical of many, when he says: "My love of the organ goes back to the time my elder brother took me to the **Sydney Capitol**. After our local "cinema", this theatre was almost unbelievable with its immense size and enthralling beauty, its blue sky with clouds and stars; but it was the **WurliTzer** organ, at that time played by **Fred Scholl**, that really impressed me. I can still see it rising out of the pit, bristling with stops and sparkling like a diamond tiara. I still remember the piece the organist played that day; it was called *A Precious Little Thing Called Love*. I was about 11 years old at the time."

The basic ranks are: Trumpet, Tibia Clausa, Kinura, Orchestral Oboe, Saxophone, String, Oboe Horn, Quintadena, Diaphone, Tuba Horn, Clarinet, Viole d' Orchestre, Celeste, Open Flute, and Vox Humana.

Early in 1963, **TOSA** obtained permission from **Greater Union Theatres** to do restoration work on the **Capitol** organ with the object of making it suitable for broadcasting and recording. Small teams of workers with the assistance of tuner, **Peter Rowe**, weekly began to repair the many faults which had developed since the organ had last been professionally played. Certain ranks, such as the Tibia, Diaphone, Trumpet, Orchestral Oboe and String were concentrated upon and

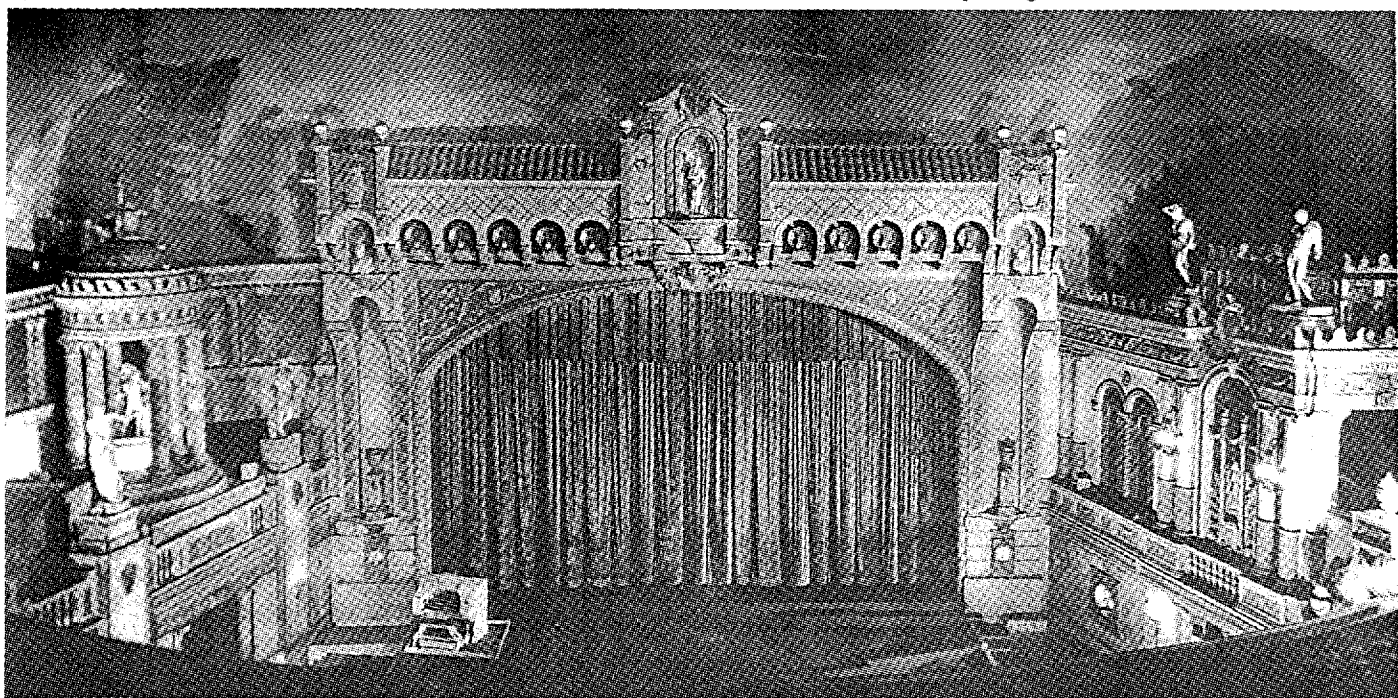
stripped to renew blown air motors, and in the relays some dead magnets were replaced.

Towards June work reached a fever pitch to ensure that the organ would be playable for the opening recital of the **1963 Convention** by **Reubert Hayes**. Although playing under difficulties - **Reubert** had to hand-register as the air motors operating from the combination pistons are in bad shape - **Reubert** presented a memorable recital, some of which was shown on television. Since June, work has continued and a sub-committee has been formed to plan the work to the best advantage and carry it out. The organ has not yet reached the stage where it can be classed as being in reliable broadcasting condition.

R.D.B.

Thank you for the item, Bob, - I'm sure there are quite a few articles from past issues of the theatre organ publications which are worth printing again, because of their historical interest, or because, like me, most of our current members probably have not had the opportunity to read these older items. It is always fascinating to read what was said back then, knowing now what the fate of the instruments has turned out to be, e.g. the Capitol organ now so successfully installed in the Orion Centre, etc.

*Don't forget that the wonderful video of the Capitol's history, **Once Upon A Dream**, is available from TOSA's Record Bar for \$25 + \$5 postage. Ed.*



The Capitol Theatre in the 1960's

Photo by Barry Tooker

Reflections on a trip "Down Under"

By John Ledwon

During August and September last year John Ledwon toured parts of Australia and New Zealand. I asked him to jot down his impressions and relate his experiences, and the result is this interesting report on his travels.

When I left Los Angeles it was hot and summery. Dick and Shirley Obert (LATOS president) took me to dinner at the *Proud Bird* - a restaurant located about 1,000 meters from the touchdown end of the south runways at LAX. Ten and a half hours later I was in winter in Auckland, New Zealand. As a person who travels a considerable amount, I don't think the immensity of the trip hit me until I saw the blue neon "AUCKLAND" sign at the Auckland International Airport from the airplane window. According to our flight crew, we had just made one of the shortest Pacific crossings in United Airlines history - a little over 10 hours. Consequently we were early - very early...like two hours early...and because of this, there was no one to meet me. Fortunately my welcoming committee arrived shortly and I was off on an adventure that was to last a month and result in meeting some of the nicest people I have ever had the pleasure of knowing.

Suffice it to say I was treated royally in New Zealand and really enjoyed my week's stay there. I was the guest of Peter and Carole Nichol森 who were absolutely fantastic in their hosting skills. They very generously showed me a goodly portion of New Zealand, including all the way north to the Bay of Islands. Willing to grant me my desire to satisfy my diseased mind's need to visit antique stores, I actually had to send home a very large package from this, my first stop. I found the Hollywood Theatre's WurliTzer to be a delightful instrument sounding much larger than it really was. I was fortunate to be able to present another concert in New Zealand in Tauranga, celebrating VJ day. This instrument, an absolutely wonderful, totally operative 2/10 WurliTzer residing in a beautiful modern civic theatre, was a joy to play and fortunately a very forgiving organ as I only had about 30 minutes to practice and set pistons before the capacity crowd was let in.

After several more days sightseeing New Zealand, it was up bright and early on August 16 to catch the

remaining portion of my UAL flight to Melbourne from Los Angeles. This time the situation was reversed timewise and while arriving on time, Australian customs took quite a while to admit us, and so my host, Bruce Hester, was concerned that I might not be on the flight. Fortunately he was patient and eventually I appeared from immigration... a free man for exactly 22 days, when my visa expired!

We immediately went to see the three manual Compton in Malvern Town Hall. A beautiful venue and an excellent instrument. Several of the crew were there and I enjoyed meeting them and talking organs. Bruce then took me to my hot hotel room in Brighton where I left my belongings before going over to see the rebuilding of the former San Francisco Granada Theatre WurliTzer. I was most impressed by the rebuilding efforts and from all that I could see, a superior instrument will be the result in the Regent Theatre. Later that evening in my hotel room a digital thermometer on my clock radio registered about 35 degrees in my room. The next day the hotel manager discovered that the previous guests had raised the thermostat to its highest setting! Bruce also was an excellent host and we visited the extremely clean, nicely installed Dendy Theatre WurliTzer the next day, and later that day I had a chance to become familiar with the Morrabin Town Hall WurliTzer where I was to present my concert. I found this instrument to be an absolutely wonderful organ. The live acoustics and general good balance of the organ made for an excellent experience from my point of view. On a somewhat different track, I was impressed with the general over-all condition of all the organs I played in Australia and New Zealand, especially considering that all but one of them were equipped with their 60 year old pneumatic combination action and relays. It was kind of neat being able to play concerts with complete instruments equipped exactly as they were 50-60 years ago. During my actual concert I was pleased to see Peter Beames in the audience - he had endured an 8 hours' drive to come to Melbourne.

Following my concert it was tourist time again...but not until I had visited my old Tibia Clausa that was in my

organ when my home burned in one of Southern California's infamous brush fires. After an hour train trip south to Geelong and the home of Alan Glover, I was able to hear and see my old "friend". Darn thing sounds a lot better in that organ than it did in mine! The following day I ventured into Melbourne to check out the city...which I thoroughly enjoyed. While not a tram buff it was interesting to see a complete surface rail system intact and functioning.

I had this sort of "burning desire" to see a real live kangaroo so my hosts took me on a "kangaroo hunt" so I could get some pictures of them. Unfortunately we came up blank even after climbing over several fences but I did get to see some really interesting places around Melbourne. Bruce and I had many an interesting hour talking organs and watching organ videos in his apartment with his house guest from Adelaide, Brian Pearson.

Time marches on and soon it was the time to leave Melbourne for the western city of Perth. Now loaded down with a third suitcase (purchased at Victoria Markets for the princely sum of \$12.00 Australian...and still going strong!) and two of your hats with the corks dangling from the brim, it was time to depart Melbourne. Bruce took me to the airport and then patiently waited until my Ansett flight was called. Four hours later I was met by John Furhman in Perth. I felt very much at home in Perth - similar climate, landscape and tundra to Southern California. Loved the view of the city from the far side of the river. The Furhman family proved that good hosts abound down under. I was once again treated wonderfully. I enjoyed meeting his wife and three daughters and was quite surprised that a family heavily into the theatre organ was also equally involved in sports. In the US, sports and the arts rarely mix. I found the Karrinyup WurliTzer to be another fine example of theatre organ. I thought the selection of voices on this instrument particularly good (I do like a good Flute Celeste!). John left me to practise on the instrument on two occasions and I really got to like the organ. I must compliment him and all the others for their foresight in getting the town council (or whatever you call the powers to be down there!) to provide organ chambers in the plans for the

building.

I had a number of memorable experiences while in **Perth**. One **John** would probably just as soon forget when we were touring the dock area late one evening (showing me the **America's Cup** yacht area), I asked if the petrol gauge was broken in the very empty range and he suddenly became very quiet and started looking immediately for a petrol station where none was to be found. (But then we won't mention the person in another city who couldn't find his car in the airport parking lot...we must have walked 2 miles looking for it...we did, however, finally locate it!) ...Actually fun experiences...I guess people are just as human everywhere!

Back in **Perth**, I once again mentioned my desire to see a real live kangaroo in other than a zoo, so **John** and a friend took me to a wild animal park outside of **Perth**. This was the place! Kangaroos and wallabies everywhere. And while not technically "in the wild" a heck of a lot better than a zoo. This one cute little Joey greeted us at the gate and followed us around for a goodly portion of our stay in the compound...quite possibly because **John** was carrying a large bag of kangaroo food! I am absolutely fascinated by their ability to move and their sort of "tricycle" type of "landing gear" (my pilot influence coming out I guess!). While at this animal park I also was able to hold and get photographed with a Koala bear. I still wonder about the heavy padded "vest" I had to wear. Surely these cute little beasts wouldn't harm anyone now...would they? Yes, I understand they can be a bit irascible. Certainly a highlight of my trip (I'm really easy to please - show me a kangaroo and I'm happy).

I was also taken to a general aviation airport where I could check out how general aviation operated in your vast country. Would have loved to have taken a check ride and gone flying but it was so windy you could hardly stand up. Perhaps next time...

Following this kangaroo safari, it was back to concert preparation. In all five concerts I gave in **New Zealand** and **Australia** I was quite concerned how people would receive my particular style of playing which isn't the usual fare normally associated with theatre organ. As a proponent of more contemporary music I programmed over half of my concert to be music from later than 1950. While this hardly constitutes "modern music" it still

includes a good deal of music not usually performed on the theatre organ. While I can't be a really good judge of audiences likes and dislikes as I have nothing to compare responses to, I felt, from their reaction, that they at least tolerated my choice of music. All audiences gave a warm response and, while I realize that **Australian** audiences are generally quite warm and friendly, they seemed to enjoy the different musical programming that I do. At any rate, the **Karrinyup** audience seemed warm and friendly. I was somewhat surprised at the major acoustical change in the auditorium from empty to full. Even though, on hindsight, the acoustic change was exactly what one would expect from a live empty hall to a full, not very reverberant hall.

While in **Perth** I was able to see and play many classical instruments including the **Sharp** in the **Perth Concert Hall**. Beautiful hall and a nice instrument but I would have liked a bit more fundamental in the instrument. I saw many other instruments, including the excellent **Compton** owned by the **TOSA(WA)** and was taken on a day long trip to **New Norcia** to see and play the really delightful instrument in the monastery. A really unique instrument with a most intriguing sound...and the only organ I have encountered that required a two page instruction sheet just to turn it on and get ready to play it. Definitely different...but "good" different. While I was "poking around" with the instrument a tour group came in so they were given a short treatment of the title song of **Phantom of the Opera** in this most holy of monasteries!

From **Perth** it was off to **Sydney**. **John** had to go to a government meeting in the Capital, so he accompanied me on this flight. The four hour trip passed rapidly with **John's** often humorous and witty conversation. Upon arrival in **Sydney** with three suitcases and my now infamous outback hats with the corks, I was met by **Cliff Bingham** and taken to my hotel and then off to a private club for dinner.

The next day saw me get acquainted with the **Orion Centre WurliTzer**, certainly the most **Americanized** of the organs I played. With its all-solid-state relay and combination action and **Sendyne** stop actions it had a more familiar feel. Not meant in any way to look unfavourably on the others as it was wonderful to be able to play instruments that were in an almost original configuration. The **Orion**

WurliTzer is a most comfortable instrument to perform on and generally I felt quite at home on it right from the start. Due to the fact that I had to return home the day after my concert, I did all my sightseeing and tourist "stuff" prior to my concert. I got up to the **Blue Mountains** and **Jenolan Caves**, including visiting the cave with 1,100 steps, all of them "up", as I remember it. It was quite an experience to ride a large tour bus right through the opening cave. Spectacular place.

I totally fell in love with **Sydney**, particularly the harbour and **Circular Quay** area, equating it to a similar love of **Victoria Harbour** in **Hong-Kong**. Both of these cities now fall in my "most enjoyable" category. **Cliff** took a day off work and showed me around **Sydney** and environs and was able to get us in to see and play the absolutely fabulous **Sydney Town Hall Organ**. This was a major highlight of my trip. I'd had heard so many great things about this instrument and the hall it is in and I was anything but disappointed. Fabulous sound and building. I had wondered what a true 64' pipe would sound like and while not quite what I expected I was impressed...for some reason I expected more "shake" and less "rattle" for something so big!

Well, all good things must come to a close and Monday, September 4 was it for me (besides, my visa expired on the 4th and I would be an illegal alien after that!). Off to the **Sydney Airport** and home at last! Can't say I was too happy about that fact since I had to report to school (where I teach mathematics and theatre arts) on Sept. 5. Fortunately quirks in the International Date Line allowed for me to arrive home several hours before I left **Sydney**! So I basically had about 24 hours before I had to be back in the saddle. One last surprise awaited me a **Sydney Airport** though - three flights with exactly the same flight number except for an A and a B after two of them. These two flights were combined as evidently **United Airlines** had had a wee bit of trouble on the two previous days and had to cancel both days flights to **Los Angeles**. One of these days I must talk to **Rudy Frey**, a **San Francisco** theatre organ buff who is in management in **UAL's** maintenance facility at **SFO**!

At any rate, thanks for the memories, most wonderful memories from a myriad of great people, superb instruments and beautiful countries. I would love to return.

John Ledwon



From The
MAILBOX

TOSA member, John Adey of Wahroonga writes on behalf of the Australian Theatre Historical Society :

6/6/96

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the **Australian Theatre Historical Society** to say thank you to **TOSA(NSW)**, and to extend my own personal appreciation to the **TOSA** committee, for allowing me to feature the **Capitol WurliTzer** organ with **John Giacchi** at the console, in my documentary video, *Once Upon A Dream*.

It was good that our two societies had the opportunity to work side-by-side on this production, and I hope that we can continue a close relationship in future ventures of this kind.

Secondly, I would also like to thank the many **TOSA** members who have shown their overwhelming support by purchasing the video at the **Easter Convention**, and at the two most recent concerts at **Marrickville** and **Campsie**. **Neil Palmer** reports that mail orders have been going well too, and I thank him for all his efforts in helping me to merchandise the video within the society.

We are now on our second "duplication" run, and the success of video sales - from the original "duplication" session - can be attributed to the interest and generosity shown by your members.

Sincerely,
John Adey

Producer and Director - **Robert Fielding**
Productions

Publicity and Promotions - **ATHS**

Producer, John Adey (left), selling copies of his video, Once Upon A Dream, at the Convention.



Ron Ivin writes about the demonstration of new model organs by Hector Olivera :

On 1st June, 1996. I was delighted to attend a recital given by **Hector Olivera** at the **Holiday Plaza** at **Terrigal**. Unfortunately the audience was limited to approximately two hundred owing to the size of the venue.

The purpose of the recital was to introduce two magnificent additions to the organ world. They are the **Rodgers 360 Theatre Console** and the **Roland Atelier AT90**. The afternoon was sponsored jointly by **Rodgers/Roland** and **Mr Peter Rohr**, manager of **Macron Music** at **Erina**.

The **Rodgers** was magnificent and beautifully demonstrated by **Mr Olivera**, I think that most attention was paid to the **Roland AT90**, the largest of their range which includes spinets. A unique feature of the **AT90** is the 76 note lower keyboard upon which can be played a very authentic sounding grand piano. Also this keyboard can be split into to separate manuals. **Mr Olivera** gave us an extremely good insight into the **AT90's** capabilities.

I cannot say more in this limited space but can only urge you to make an opportunity to hear these instruments. Further information can be obtained from our president, **Mr Cliff Bingham**.

Ron Ivin

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SIMON GLEDHILL CONCERT REPORT

by Ron Ivin

The second of June, 1996, was one of those days when the **Australian** sun was to give of its best for a winter's day. However, inside, it must have been very encouraging for **Simon Gledhill** to rise up from the depths of the **Orion** understage and, after his first piece, to cast his eyes on such a tumultuous crowd. The hall was filled to capacity to witness his performance.

It is always intriguing to speculate about the opening number. Will it be *That's Entertainment*, *This Could Be the Start of Something Big* or *There's No Business Like Show Business*. But however, **Simon's** choice was a rollicking rendition of **Cole Porter's** *It's De'Lovely* only to be shadowed by well deserved applause. Not satisfied, **Simon** continued to give a wonderful exposition of this classic using a pot pourri of stop combinations. In his comments following, **Simon** gave great praise to the overall improvement of the **Orion** since his last visit about three years ago. Accolades to **John Parker**.

The next offering was a calypso style piece by **Madeleine Irving**, *Caribbean Dance*, incorporating the use of Strings, Tibias and the occasional Vibraphone.

Any composition by **Cole Porter** is appreciated and his piece *If Love Were All* was no exception. The use of soft ensemble sounds was, I feel, the correct choice for this beautiful melody.

I am always disappointed when at any time an announcer gives the title of a piece but omits the composer's name. For example, everyone knows the music from *Hello Dolly* but how many could name the composer? Well, it was **Jerry Herman** who, incidentally, made a great contribution to the **Hollywood** musicals. Some of the tunes and songs are not readily familiar to most of us, but a good wind-up with the title piece, *Hello Dolly*, made up for our ignorance in the end. I should make reference to the marvellous use of Reed voices and Percussion throughout this excellent arrangement.

Simon's next offering was a bracket of tunes from the pen of **Billy Mayerl**, namely *Autumn Crocus* and *Ace of Hearts*. I am far from being an expert on registrations but I think I heard Oboe, Horn, Post Horn and Trumpet.

I feel I could ask a lot of people before I would find one that does not appreciate the compositions of **Jerome Kern**. As for me, he is one of my favourites and I am always intrigued

by his deviations of harmonic sequences. **Simon's** choice from **Jerome Kern's** vast list of titles was *The Song Is You*. The use of the fabulous Tibia and String sections was parallel and **Simon** should be applauded for his ability to supply a splendid counter-melody at all times.

If anyone asked me who composed *Melody on the Move*, I would have suggested **Leroy Anderson**. However I would have been entirely wrong, as the person to be praised for this delightful piece is a composer by the name of **Clive Richardson**. The playing of it was, I'm sure, enjoyed by all. **Simon's** comment was: "I always breathe a sigh of relief when I finish this piece". Fairly said.

The last piece before interval was the **Max Steiner** march from *King Kong*. I must say I was not greatly impressed by this march as I am comparing it with some of the marches which have become famous, perhaps in times of great tribulation. However that does not subtract from **Simon's** excellent performance of this work.

As I had come alone to the recital it enabled me to wander around the audience at interval and unintentionally eavesdrop on some of the comments made. Some of these were, "I quite enjoyed **Simon Gledhill's** concert last time he was at **Marrickville** but this time he seems to be better."; "**Simon Gledhill** does not have arthritis like me."; "I'd give anything to play like him." Personally, I am faced with the decision to give up or practise more. I think I will do the latter.

After interval **Simon** brought the "Wurly" up to **Frederic Curzon's** *March of the Bowman*. This showed the **Orion's** capability to produce excellent lethargic sounds or, as I have heard our committee member, **Paul Luci**, say: "taking the tickle out of the tone." Music suited to the **Robin Hood** era. I was pleased that **Simon** gave many enlightening pieces of information relating to the items he played. It enabled the audience to have a greater appreciation of the performance.

Next was a medley of tunes dating back to the times of **Fred Astaire** and **Ginger Rogers**, which included ingeniously spliced numbers such as *Let's Face the Music and Dance*, *Isn't it a Lovely Day to Be Caught in the Rain*, *The Way You Look Tonight* and

Jerome Kern's fantastic composition, *Pick Yourself Up* (with a cute, intended and corrected 'blue' at the end).

The next item was a good contrast with *Little Serenade* composed by **Ernest Tomlinson**, a piece that made for pleasant and relaxed listening.

The composer of *Spectre on the Spree*, **Louis Mordish**, has unfortunately recently passed away and was a well-noted recitalist. As **Simon** stated, this piece was suited for Halloween with a myriad of "spooky" sounds.

Simon's next choice was **Lyn Larson's** romantic ballad styled *Open Your Heart* played with nostalgic voices comprising the **Orion's** famous Tibias.

Richard Rodger's music for *Carousel* started with **Simon** giving an introduction of haunting sounds which moved into the now famous waltz. Then *If I Loved You* followed by June is *Busting out all Over* in a rollicking mood. A rather plaintive phrase of *What's the Use of Wonderin'?* closely followed by *Mister Snow* and *When the Children are Asleep*. Big, robust organ sounded out *A Real Live Clambake*. I'm glad we got the lot of *What's the Use?*. How sad to have missed out. A little development of *If I Loved You* again before the climactic rendition of *You'll Never Walk Alone* - simply tremendous. The intermingling of the various themes in the extended conclusion was enjoyed immensely. I thought there was going to be a standing ovation but there was shouting and tumultuous applause. Without doubt a clever and enjoyable compilation. At this point **Simon** sang praises not only to the **Orion WurliTzer** but to all those responsible for its maintenance and condition.

Simon could only be commended for his dexterity and speed in the performance of his final programme offering which was *Russian and Ludmilla Overture* by **Glinka**. This left us wide-eyed and him no doubt breathless. This piece would require such energy, especially after the foregoing programme.

The expected encore gave us two nicely presented farewell titles - *Can I Forget You?* by **Jerome Kern** and *Goodbye* from *White Horse Inn*. In concluding, I observe that **Simon** has developed a unique style and, **Mr Gledhill**, you are to be congratulated. Well done!

OUR NEXT ARTIST :

John Giacchi

John Giacchi holds the honour of being the first young Australian theatre organist to be awarded a place in the **American Theatre Organ Society's Young Organists Competition**. He subsequently travelled to **Indianapolis** to perform for the Convention audience there and had the opportunity of playing some of the famous theatre organs around the **San Francisco Bay** area.

At the relatively young age of 26, **John Giacchi** from **Cronulla** has already achieved considerable success in his theatre organ career, although **John** has not been seen or heard much in the very recent times on the theatre organ circuit. However, his passion for the theatre organ has not waned in the slightest.

Having commenced electronic organ studies at 12 years of age, **John** was awarded, just a few years later, first place in the Classical category and second place in the Popular category of the **Sydney Eisteddfod**.

In that same year, **John** made his theatre organ debut on **TOSA's 2/11 WurliTzer** installed in the **Marrickville Town Hall**. His performance was highly acclaimed and since then **John** has made a number of other appearances for the **TOSA NSW Division** and interstate.

In 1988, **TOSA NSW** sponsored a competition to compose a piece of music appropriate to the Bicentenary and **John** achieved first place with his entry. As a result he was invited to play his composition, called *Opus '88*, on the 5-manual **Hill and Son** grand pipe organ in **Sydney Town Hall**.

With an intense interest in the technical side of theatre organ, **John**

was a member of the project team who rebuilt the **Capitol Theatre WurliTzer** and installed it in the **Orion Centre**, seeing the project from its initial stages through until the opening concert in 1988.

The 1990 international **Young Organists' Competition**, sponsored by the **American Theatre Organ Society**, saw **John** become the first Australian to be awarded first place in the Senior Division (19-21 years). In 1991, as part of his prize, he travelled to the annual **ATOS Convention** in **Indianapolis, USA**, to play a solo spot as part of **Barry Baker's** concert on the 3/26 **WurliTzer** installed in the **Manual High School Auditorium** in front of 800 enthusiastic conventioners. While in the **USA**, he also played the 4/27 **WurliTzer** in the **Oakland Paramount Theatre**, the famous 4/21 **WurliTzer** in the **Castro Theatre** and many other installations.

He was highly praised for his February 1991 performance in **Victoria** at the 3/15 **WurliTzer** in the **Dendy Theatre, Brighton** and has since played both interstate and overseas engagements, always to high acclaim.

At **Sydney's 1991 National Convention**, **John** played a memorable concert with **Margaret Hall** on the **Christie Theatre Organ** in the **Epping Baptist Church**. That convention also marked the release of **John's** first recording entitled *Night Moods*, which was recorded on **TOSA's 3/17 WurliTzer** in the **Orion Centre**.

Since that Convention performance, **John Giacchi** conducted a 10 week tour of **New Zealand, the United States** and **England**. Some of the instruments

he played included: **Castro Theatre 4/21 WurliTzer, Oakland Paramount Theatre 4/26 WurliTzer, Seattle Paramount 4/20 Publix No. 1 WurliTzer, Krughoff Residence 4/33 WurliTzer, Patio Theatre 3/16 Barton, Bellevue Pizza and Pipes 3/17 WurliTzer, San Gabriel Civic Auditorium 3/16 WurliTzer, Founder's Church 4/31, Southbank Polytechnic 4/24 WurliTzer, Odeon Leicester Square 5/17 Compton, Granada Theatre Tooting 4/16 WurliTzer, Cannon Theatre Walthamstow 3/12 Christie, Oriental Theatre, Milwaukee 4/33 Kimball** and many others.

In recent years he has been kept busy with his job as a Law Clerk and his studies for his Bachelor of Laws degree from the **University of Technology, Sydney**. On May 1, 1995, **John Giacchi** was conferred his Bachelor of Laws degree at the **University of Technology** and is now a practising solicitor in the Media, Defamation, Copyright and Insurance areas.

At this year's Easter Convention he was acclaimed by many interstate and local reviewers as the outstanding performer of the whole event, with his Sunday morning mini-concert on the **Chatswood WurliTzer**.

Later this year, he will conduct a mini-tour of several installations around the country and has recently been working on his second recording which will be entitled: *Beyond the Blue Horizon* - scheduled for release this September to coincide with his concert on the same **WurliTzer** in the **Orion Centre, Campsie**.

Sunday, 8th September at 2pm

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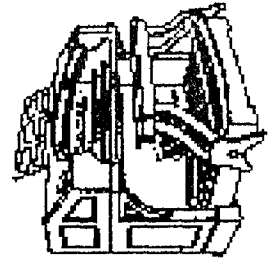
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