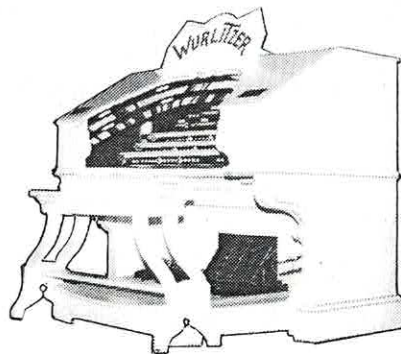
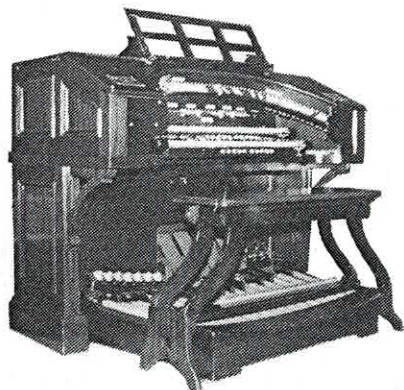


# TOSA

APRIL 1990

Marrickville Town Hall



Orion Centre Campsie

# NEWS

**Announcing: T.O.S.A. EASTER CONVENTION 1991**  
**in Sydney with TWO of Britain's TOP ARTISTS!!**  
**Simon Gledhill & Phil Kelsall**



**FIRST PHOTOGRAPH TO HAND!**

**Simon Gledhill** - at the console of the 5 manual Compton organ  
in Odeon Theatre, Leicester Square, LONDON.

NOTE: A photograph of Phil Kelsall will be published in first issue after receipt.

A PROFILE OF SIMON GLEDHILL APPEARS ON PAGE 8

Volume 29  
Issue 4

The Official Publication of Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) Inc.  
P.O. Box C462, Clarence Street, Sydney 2000  
Registered by Australia Post — Publication No. N.B.H. 1038

Price  
\$1.00

# TOSA NEWS

APRIL 1990

## THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (N.S.W. DIVISION) Inc.

### DIRECTORY

#### PATRONS:

Ian Davies  
&  
Mayor of Canterbury, Ald. John Gorrie

#### PRESIDENT:

Jack Lawson (569 3775)

#### VICE PRESIDENTS:

Frank Ellis (649 7011)  
John Shaw (759 5825)

#### SECRETARY:

M/s Mary Stewart (51 5045)

#### ASSISTANT SECRETARY:

John Parker Home (570 8471)  
Work (758 2580)

#### TREASURER:

Bob Gilmour Home (489 3131)  
Work (241 1568)

#### ASSISTANT TREASURER:

Bill Schumacher (455 1318)

#### MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Ian Somerville (476 4991)

#### MINUTE SECRETARY:

Mrs. Jean Taylor

#### COMMITTEE:

Peter Bidencope (44 2728)  
Margaret Hall (570 8471)  
Ian Hanson (949 6629)  
Peter Harding (629 2257)  
Eunice Palmer (798 6742)  
Neil Palmer (798 6742)

#### PRACTICE CONVENOR:

Bob Staunton (607 8925)

#### RESEARCH & ARCHIVES:

Ian Cameron (048 411 616)

#### TOSA NEWS EDITOR & PRINTER:

Peter Bidencope (44 2728)

#### CONCERT TAPE HIRING:

Neil Palmer (798 6742)

#### TICKET SECRETARY (Concert Bookings)

Eunice Palmer (798 6742)

#### ARTIST LIAISON OFFICER:

Bill Schumacher,  
8 Wharf Rd., Brooklyn 2253  
Phone 455 1318

#### PHOTOGRAPHY:

Kevin Rowland  
Barry Tooker

#### CONCERT RECORDINGS:

Bill Schumacher

#### PROMOTIONS OFFICER:

Kevin Rowland

Please address all correspondence to:

*The Secretary*  
*TOSA (NSW Division) Inc.*  
*P.O.Box C462 Clarence Street*  
*SYDNEY NSW 2000.*

### COMING EVENTS

#### APRIL

- Sun. 1 at 2.00pm FREE CONCERT at Marrickville Town Hall. This will be featuring: Colin ADAMSON, Wendy HAMBLY and Chris STYLES
- Mon. 2 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Fri. 13 - Tues. 17 T.O.S.A. EASTER CONVENTION in Melbourne.
- Sun. 29 at 2.00pm TONY FENELON & JOHN ATWELL  
These two highly acclaimed Artists will be appearing together once again at Marrickville Town Hall. Expect to witness some great duets on the WurliTzer and Grand Piano.

#### MAY

- Mon. 7 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Tues. 15 at 8.00pm Club Night & Quarterly Members' Meeting at the Orion Centre.
- Sun. 27 at 2.00pm IAN DAVIES will present another Popular Concert on Marrickville Town Hall WurliTzer pipe organ.

#### JUNE

- Mon. 4 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Sun. 24 at 2.00pm DAVID DRURY & MARGARET HALL  
These two artists will be presenting a combined concert in their individual styles at the Orion Centre WurliTzer.

#### JULY

- Mon. 2 at 7.30pm COMMITTEE MEETING
- Sun. 22 at 2.00pm WALT STRONGY IN CONCERT at Orion Centre WurliTzer. He will also be drawing the winner for T.O.S.A. Guessing Competition.
- Sun. 29 in afternoon Rolls Royce Owners Club will be holding a dance function at which the WurliTzer will be used in addition to other music. T.O.S.A. Members will be welcome. More details will be advised in future issues.

#### REMEMBER TO TUNE-IN TO 2CBA-FM

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT AT 9.00pm -  
For "Theatre Organ Highlights"

FRIDAY NIGHTS AT 7.30pm -  
For "Careers of Australian Theatre Organists"



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

# TOSA NEWS

APRIL 1990

ANNOUNCING!  
T.O.S.A. EASTER CONVENTION 1991

## OBITUARY - Val Claxton

Member Val Claxton passed away on 10/3/90.

It was with her generous donation, that the Society was able to purchase a Marimba-Harp for the Marrickville Wurlitzer.

## SYDNEY TOWN HALL 1990 GRAND ORGAN CENTENARY FESTIVAL

Many T.O.S.A. Members will be interested to know of the following early evening performances and best of all they are all FREE!

**THURS MAY 3 THE BEST OF BEST**  
Music for W.T.Best's 1890 series of concerts which opened the Sydney Town Hall organ.  
6.30pm - 8.00pm  
Doors open 6pm  
Robert Ampt (Sydney City Organist) with Phillip Gearing (winner of 1989 Syd. Organ Competition).

Programme to include: Concert Fantasy on Men of Harlech (Best), Introduction, Variations and Finale on God Save the Queen (Best), William Tell Overture (Rossini/Lemare, Sonata IV (Mendelssohn) and The Storm (Lemmens).

**THURS. MAY 17 THE SYDNEY CITY ORGANISTS**  
Robert Boughen, City Organist  
6.30pm - 8.00pm  
- Brisbane & Ashleigh Tobin, City Organist - Adelaide join  
Doors open 6pm  
Robert Ampt, our own City Organist to play music made popular by Sydney's first 3 City Organists, Auguste Weigand, Arthur Mason and Ernest Truman.

**THURS. AUG. 16 WITH PIPE AND STRING**  
Continuing the varied programme of organ concerts, the 40 piece Australian Mandolin Ensemble perform with City Organist Robert Ampt in a programme of music which includes a specially commissioned piece for organ and mandolin ensemble.  
7.30pm -  
Doors open 6.45pm  
Truly something different.

**WED. OCT. 10 AUDIO VISUAL PRESENTATION**  
Robert Ampt, City Organist, presents a special evening including slides and information on the Grand Organ - the largest pipe organ in the Southern Hemisphere. Naturally the evening also includes an opportunity to hear this magnificent instrument in action.  
6.30pm - 8.00pm  
Doors open 6pm

**WED. OCT. 24 FAMOUS OVERTURES & OTHER GREAT DUETS**  
Robert Ampt, City Organist and special guest Amy Johansen, American Organ virtuoso, perform a programme of transcriptions in the form of organ duets including "Ride of the Valkyrs".  
6.30pm - 8.00pm  
Doors open 6pm

**THURS. NOV. 8 GALA CONCERT**  
This concert, sub-titled George Frederick Handel - Hallelujah for the Royal Fireworks, features the SBS Youth Orchestra, the Sydney Philharmonia and City Organist Robert Ampt. It draws to a stunning conclusion this year-long celebration of Sydney's largest musical instrument.  
7.30pm -  
Doors open 6.45pm

CONVENTION SLOGAN: - "Double the Fun in 91"

FEATURING: - "The Best of British"

The T.O.S.A. Convention sub-committee are delighted to announce they have secured the services of two of Britain's most sought after artists - Phil Kelsall and Simon Gledhill.

Simon Gledhill's photograph is featured on this month's cover and it is hoped a photograph of Phil Kelsall will soon be received for publication.

Other details will be published as they come to hand.

## A SPECIAL THANKYOU . . . .

As Australian Co-ordinator and organiser of the two Robert Wolfe programmes at the Orion Centre, I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all those members and friends who helped to make the recent shows such a success.

TOSA Committee are to be thanked for again allowing me to arrange details for Robert's two shows. It is most encouraging to be a part of a group that is occasionally prepared to take a gamble and I am sure that TOSA has benefited from the two promotions.

We strived to work towards efficient staff and to those who helped with ushering, door duties, candy bar and ticket bookings etc., I extend a personal thankyou. On concert day we utilised the services of eight ushers which greatly improved efficiency and had patrons seated very quickly.

Colin Peet, our honorary member and lighting engineer is to be congratulated on a superb job of lighting both the dance night and concert. It is no fun "hanging" around on the 30 foot high "tall-o-scope" putting the lights in place, but both Colin and John Giacchi do this frequently to ensure that we have the most professional lighting possible at all our Orion programmes.

Pianists at the dance night - John Shaw, Peter Held and non TOSA member Jim Perry are to be thanked for giving their time free of charge to TOSA. All were warmly appreciated by the audience on the night. Also Bill Schumacher entertained at the piano in the foyer during the Sunday show - Thanks Bill.

There are many more names, but you know who you are. Its YOUR hard work that makes the shows work and although there are still a few things to iron out and improve, our concert presentation standard is still up with the best, and getting even better.

Lastly the audiences! Without the fantastic turnout from TOSA members and their friends, the two programmes in question would not have been the success they were. Robert Wolfe's Sunday Concert drew the largest audience we have yet had at the Orion. The Dance Night was fully booked for the numbers we could allow and still have room to dance. Thankyou all for your support!

Such was the public response here in Sydney, Robert Wolfe hopes to be back next February . . . . if you want him! I am sure that after the last two performances, there will be no difficulties in filling the Orion to capacity once again.

Although hectic, its all worth it when things "go right" and its been a pleasure being part of the making of YOUR entertainment.

J.W.Parker

APRIL 1990

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

During the month three new members have joined our society and we extend to them a warm welcome.

The new members are:

Louise Hiser, Kenneth Vinton & Edmund Hore.

## ARTIST NEEDED

From time to time the society needs the services of an artist to create 'line drawings' for use in our stationery and publications. A typical example would be say a line drawing of an organ console.

Do we have any suitably qualified artists amongst our members who would like to volunteer their services? If so would you please contact the Editor on 44 2728.

## CONCERT REVIEWERS

You may be interested to know that so far we have had absolutely no response to our appeal for volunteers to write the occasional concert review.

It would be nice if we could get some new helpers to assist in this regard, as it would add a wider variety to the reviews we now publish. How about it members?

## FOR SALE

THOMAS LAWRENCE WELK - Model 726c  
Horseshoe Theatre Spinnet with 25 note pedals,  
Bandbox/Playmate Combo - Excellent Condition.

\$1500-00 o.n.o.

CONTACT: Mrs McDonald PHONE 868 1396

## TOWARDS BETTER ORGAN PLAYING

Number 6 - By John Martin

This month we will examine one of the most difficult aspects of playing the Theatre Organ - and one which is most often ignored, this is the proper use of the Swell and Sforzando pedals.

The overwhelming majority of home Electronic Organs have only one swell pedal, and this affects all sound equally. In addition this pedal acts instantaneously leading some players into the error of using it to accent certain beats during rhythmic playing. The Theatre Organ by comparison has four pedals which can seem quite bewildering for the novice player. However by knowing what each pedal does, a wider range of sounds can be produced.

The left-most is normally the Shutter control pedal for the MAIN chamber, while the next pedal is for the SOLO chamber. You can control both chambers simultaneously by straddling your right foot across the two pedals, but rather than worry about putting your foot in exactly the right place, there is normally a third pedal just to the right of these which affects BOTH sets of swell shutters. Of course the first two pedals are not disconnected and to operate the third pedal successfully, both the SWELL and MAIN swell pedals must be fully in the 'UP' position. Leaving the MAIN pedal down and then using the third 'General' Swell pedal will mean that this pedal will only open and close shutters in the SOLO chamber as those in the MAIN chamber will already be open. This can lead to some confusion - especially if you use both feet on the pedal-board and then inadvertently slip your right foot back onto the wrong pedal. Practice will overcome the difficulties.

Naturally the Swell pedals on a Theatre Pipe organ operate quite differently to those on a home electronic model. The Pipes in Theatre Organs each sound at a certain volume and this cannot be altered by the player, so the Swell pedals operate by opening and closing a series of (usually) vertical shutters which pivot to allow sound to escape.

As there are normally about 20 shutters, you would think that there are 20 volume steps, but this is not the case. The first shutter to open has a large effect on the sound escaping from the Pipe chamber and is usually made quite deliberately very slow to operate. It is often a narrower shutter than the rest. As more and more shutters are operated individually, a situation is reached where each shutter makes very little difference to the overall sound. To try and give equal 'volume' steps as the pedal is used, the last few steps of the swell pedal operate several shutters at once. This gives far less than 20 volume steps, but yields a more even and pleasing effect to the player and listeners alike.

Using the Swell pedals intelligently is probably the hardest part - no matter how smart the organist is. Playing a piece at one volume level can be quite boring although changes in stop selection during the playing of the piece will give a little light and shade. However the judicious use of Crescendos and Diminuendos during most melodic passages will add a great deal to your playing.

One technique to avoid completely is to allow the swell pedals to follow the melody line. I have seen this effect in operation and the result is quite horrible. As the Organist's melody line reached higher and higher up the keyboard, the swell pedal was pressed down harder and harder, the effect was to turn a nicely regulated and voiced Organ into a screaming travesty of an instrument. The Organ voicer would not have been pleased.

The other poor swell technique is to allow the feet to swing the swell pedals wildly all through the playing. This has a confusing effect on the music and will quickly cause the swell shutters to become noisy and possibly even bang together. If the swell shutters are visible, then the sight of the wildly operating shutters can be very distracting for the audience.

However there is one technique which should be used by all good Theatre Organists - that is to ALWAYS raise all the swell pedals fully, and turn off the tremulants at the end of each piece of music - especially if you are going to announce your next piece or vacate the Organ bench. All the mechanical noises inside the Organ chambers - such as the small ever-present wind leaks, and the noise of the tremulants operating will be eliminated.

The fourth pedal is the Crescendo pedal and is another difficulty for the average home organist as there is no equivalent on the home instruments. As this pedal is depressed, more and more stop tabs are operated - as if by phantom fingers. However the actual tabs do not move, and raising the pedal will turn the stops off again. The first sounds affected are normally the softer ranks, the strings and flutes, but as the pedal is pressed ever closer to the floor more and more ranks of pipes are added ending with the loudest (usually the Tuba rank) and finally the percussions. Possibly the greatest use of the Crescendo pedal is obtained in Orchestral playing - especially in Overtures. The fingers are busy enough on the keyboards, and only the Crescendo pedal allows the player to accentuate the highlight of the piece with extra ranks of pipes. However (and in this regard I agree with a recent controversial review in TOSA NEWS), the Crescendo Pedal does NOT supplant the need for varied and judiciously chosen stop changes. NEVER forget to fully raise the the Crescendo Pedal after using it. There is often a light on the Console to indicate when the Crescendo pedal is fully raised. Failure to do this will result in one or two stops being on all the time.

## "BLACKPOOL DOWNUNDER". . .WHAT A NIGHT!!!

EDITOR'S NOTE In the last TOSA NEWS (March issue) it was stated that a review had not been written for this function. This was correct at the time, however since then the following has been received from John Parker. Thanks John!

It was not long after bookings opened for TOSA's second "Blackpool" dance night, that it was realised that it was to be another great success. TOSA members were quick to book this year after word had spread about the fun and enjoyment shared by those who attended the similar function in February 1989 and it was refreshing to see so many new faces. There was an emphasis on youth too, with numerous young couples there to enjoy themselves on the dance floor.

Behind the scenes there was much organisation and planning with a group taking a day off work to set up the Orion Centre. A floor plan was established, tables set up and decorated, the bar was stocked and the stage set. Canterbury Council must be thanked for their kind donation of the use of twelve magnificent potted palms which were used to enhance the foyer, auditorium and stage for both dance night and Sunday concert.

Doors opened at 7pm with patrons arriving promptly for the 7.30 start of the evening. Thanks must go to those committee members and friends who pulled together to get the bar underway after a few hiccups developed in the staffing. Nevertheless, it was not long before things were running smoothly and efficiently.

After a brief welcome from compere John Parker, our guest organist Robert Wolfe rose with his now popular (Orion) theme, "Beside the Seaside" and once the lights went down, we were for all the world at Blackpool - in the Tower Ballroom.

Robert, tanned and looking healthy after a month's holiday in Melbourne, welcomed everyone and gave the newcomers a taste of his bubbly personality and humour. Rob made it quite clear that he wished for plenty of audience participation and that everyone was there to have a good time. Request slips were placed on all 35 tables and patrons were encouraged to request favourite tunes for Robert to play, and it was not long before the box was filling with them!

Not one to waste time, Robert began his first 40 minute segment by calling a Foxtrot and in no time the dance floor was packed with dancers, moving gracefully around the Orion. It is a wonderful sight to see so many people "having a ball" to the accompaniment of the WurliTzer organ and most rewarding to those who worked so hard to organise the night.

In between the Quicksteps, Waltzes, Samba, Tangos and Veletas, Robert read requests and dedications from many in the hall. It was quite a thrill to know that the popularity of last years Blackpool Night, prompted visitors from Queensland, Gold Coast, Newcastle, a bus load from TOSA ACT, a husband & wife from Norwich England, Melbourne and four people from Auckland New Zealand - who flew over for the weekend! It certainly proves that Robert Wolfe's unique form of entertainment has a "people pulling power" of which few other entertainers can boast.

Throughout the night guests were entertained during Robert's breaks by pianists, John Shaw, Peter Held, and Jim Perry - all of whom played with enthusiasm, demonstrating their own individual talents and musical style. The piano breaks were warmly appreciated by the audience who also enjoyed this time to "cool off" between dances.



ROBERT WOLFE AND HIS TYPICAL FUN STYLE MANNER AT THE WURLITZER.

Robert continued throughout the night to create the atmosphere of Blackpool and its famous organist, Reginald Dixon. The Orion WurliTzer contains some unique coupling devices that enable the organist to register that famous "Blackpool" sound and at times Robert really had the organ "Bouncing" - literally! We were treated to a couple of his favourite diversions, namely "Twelfth Street Rag" and "The Old Pianna Rag" which certainly stopped the dancers in their stride! Suddenly the dancers converged on the organ console to watch Robert display his flare for Console Gymnastics! No wonder Robert keeps himself looking trim! all that manual to manual jumping works up a sweat and judging by the pool of it left on the organ bench and the seat of his trousers, its a wonder he doesn't lose a stone in weight at every show!

Again TOSA's WurliTzer organ performed magnificently, proving again the worth of the new computer action which provides reliability, versatility and musical excellence - with NO problems.

TOSA President Jack Lawson, resplendent in a dinner suit drew the raffle and took that opportunity to welcome and thank everyone for supporting the night. Robert once again took to the console to play a selection of "St Bernards Waltz", Quadrilles, Barn Dance, Rhumba and for the kids (and BIG kids). . . "The Birdie Dance", well known from its exposure at the recent Commonwealth Games. This had all assembled in fits of laughter when Robert showed he could play faster than people could do the song actions and clapping.

Sadly, but eventually, it all had to end at 1am, with a fanfare, radiant smile and a wave, Robert Wolfe descended at the console with "I do like to be Beside the Seaside", ending a most enjoyable and memorable night of entertainment.

APRIL 1990

## ROBERT WOLFE'S SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT

(11th February 1990) by John Parker

TOSA staff were on hand early to set up the Orion for the largest audience attendance we have had to date at the Centre. 700+ pre-booked tickets had been sold during the weeks before the programme, leaving virtually no door sales available on the day. Ushering staff had been doubled to aid the quick seating of patrons and these people are to be congratulated on a fine job.

Concert Organiser and Australian Co-ordinator for Robert Wolfe, John Parker began the show at 2pm with a brief welcome to the 728 patrons, then Robert's introduction drew a magnificent round of applause as the white and gold console rose bearing Robert waving and smiling with his well known opener "Beside the Seaside".

The fact that Robert's programme included well over 80 tunes, makes it difficult to review his concert, but there was certainly something for everyone - plus more! It was not long before he had the audience enthralled and providing plenty of "audience participation", singing and generally "bouncing" along with him.

The Orion 3/17 WurliTzer was again in fine voice with its Tierce and Quint couplers providing their worth in creating that famous English sound. The release of Robert's latest recording "G'Day AUSTRALIA" was recorded on the Orion organ and is a credit to Robert and the instrument. Fortunately the tape was completed ready for sale at the two Sydney concerts and was enthusiastically snapped up by many of Robert's Sydney fans.

It was a hot day and the Orion's three airconditioning plants were stretched to the limit to extract the heat generated by the enthusiastic audience. Robert was generating some heat too, judging by the pool of sweat on the organ bench and the soaking wet seat of his pants! At one stage a glass of water was called for by the maestro, generously supplied by a patron in the front row and warmly appreciated by the audience who were all revelling in Robert's friendly, sincere approach to his people.

Some of the highlights would have to be a stunning "Phantom of the Opera" selection running for some 15 minutes, and using every facet of the WurliTzer's

tonal feelings. From the very softest voice to the most powerful climax, Robert's arrangement of these numbers was excellent. We were treated to plenty of "Blackpool style Bounce" and numerous requests left over from the dance night. Robert is a master at the performance of Marches and we were treated to a rousing selection featuring "Sword & Lance, Washington Post, and Radetzsky March" played in striding tempo with lots of brass.

The influence of Robert's visits to America became evident in many of his ballads with lush Tibia/String/Vox combinations and melodic use of second touch. "My Heart & I" (featured on his new recording) would be a personal favourite in this department, building to a magnificent crescendo, only to taper away to the softest chrysoglott . . . beautiful!

As already mentioned, it was a great thrill to welcome so many people from so far away to the two Robert Wolfe programmes. Imagine Robert's and David Cates' surprise on the Friday evening, to arrive at the Orion prior to the show and see New Zealand tour co-ordinator James Duncan sitting at a table with TOS Auckland Vice President Annie Ross! These two had decided to spend some pennies and fly over from New Zealand for the weekend (to see how we do things in Sydney perhaps!?!?) for the two shows. It was all hush hush and the boys knew nothing of it!

Sadly all good things have to come to an end and after an extended encore of some 20 minutes!!!, Robert took the organ down with "Beside the Seaside". The length of the concert was somewhere in the vicinity of 3½ hours, but who cared! Nobody left early! They just wanted more!!!!

Sydney has proved the most responsive and enthusiastic venue of the 1990 tour with the largest audiences. Other divisions should take notice of NSW dedication to make things work and provide for their members and public alike. Plans are well under way for the return of Robert Wolfe with all venues in New Zealand already accepting.

It was all over too quickly. . . . Hurry back Robert !!

Space permits some of the March Issue

photographs to be repeated here.



THE ORION CONSOLE ILLUMINATED BY CONSTANTLY CHANGING COLOURED LIGHTS. THIS ADDED GREATLY TO THE VERY PLEASING OVERALL EFFECT.



## U.S. THEATRE ORGANS - Part 3

This is a continuation of the articles published in TOSA NEWS in October & December '89.

For those of you who have been waiting for Part 3, here it is, with my apologies for the delay.

The concert that everyone at this convention will always remember was the Wednesday morning concert at the "Fabulous Fox" Theatre [in Detroit]. This was to be a two-artist programme of two hours duration due to the theatre's busy schedule. Jack Jenkins' half of the programme began with selections from the library of a St Louis theatre organist. Following this was a clumsy attempt to play Don Baker's arrangement of "The Apartment".

As the programme ran overtime he shifted to GOSPEL MUSIC and began to sing as well. To top this off, he had a friend in the orchestra pit set off some pre-programmed synthesisers. By this time he was 45 minutes overtime and the ex-audience in the foyer was very impatient.

When Ron Rhode was finally introduced, the seats began to fill up again as he brought the console up. Ron's short programme featured mainly 20's pop tunes and novelties, finished off with a wonderful orchestral transcription, the title of which escapes me. Ron was the only organist who got some articulate sounds from this organ and the standing ovation at the end was deserved.

Wednesday afternoon's concert was New Zealander, Robert Hore at the Redford Theatre. Richard opened with a slide presentation of New Zealand which he accompanied on the Barton Organ. This was a great start which had the audience fascinated. Unfortunately the rest of the concert was disappointing. Having heard him play before in Australia & New Zealand; I found this performance below his usually high standard.

The evening concert was Melissa Ambrose at the Royal Oak Theatre in Royal Oak which is an attractive town about a ½ hour drive from Detroit. Melissa had put a lot of work into this concert and showed she is capable of producing a good performance. Having heard her in 1987 when she won the Young Organists Competition, I was delighted at her progress. The 3 manual 16 rank Barton sounded great, although the very loud combination action spoilt some of the softer pieces.

Thursday was spent in Ann Arbor which is about a 2 hour bus journey from Detroit. The first concert on this extremely humid day was at the Hill Auditorium of the University of Michigan, where we were to hear Gerry Gregorius and Kurt Von Schakel perform organ and piano solos and duets. The organ is a 125 rank instrument composed of Farrand & Votey and Aeolian-Skinner pipework. Kurt did a musical tour through the organ from the softest Echo Dulciana to the loudest chorus reeds. Mention must be made of the French Trompette on this organ which is the best (and loudest) I have ever heard.

This was an excellent programme encompassing music from many eras, all played with accuracy,

taste and showmanship. A concert by this duo is a great musical event and to me was a highlight of the convention.

The afternoon concert was Lyn Larsen at the Michigan Theatre on the 3 manual 13 rank Barton. Lyn's performances in the last few years have always contained a high level of musicianship and taste but haven't been what you would call exciting.

However I'm glad to report that this concert showed a significant change in Lyn. Not only is he looking younger, but his music is starting to become exciting again. The organ was probably the best Barton I heard during the convention, although the English Horn sounded like 61 tuned Freight Train Horns! The Theatre has recently undergone an expensive and comprehensive restoration and is very attractive.

Friday was the last official day of the convention, but by no means was it an anti-climax. The first programme of the day was Dan Bellomy at the D.T.O.C. WurliTzer. This concert had the audience clapping and cheering more than any other of the convention. Dan played most of the concert solo, but the rest of it was in duo with local drummer Alan Finkbeiner. Despite having very little practice time together, these two got it together very quickly and reeled off some terrific jazz. Dan Bellomy's ballad and jazz arrangements are a breath of fresh air and it's not surprising that he is very much in demand as a performer.

From the Senate Theatre we moved on to St Florians Church in the suburb of Hamtramck. There we heard organist Robin Dinda in an excellent programme of Orchestral Transcriptions and late 19th Century Music. Robin is an organist of considerable skill with sensitivity to all forms of Organ Music. His eloquently spoken introductions gave the listener a good understanding of the era of each composition. The instrument was a 40 rank Austin organ of 1928 vintage. A rare example of an unaltered orchestral organ.

Friday night's programme was the "Old Fashioned Variety Show" held at the by now very familiar Redford Theatre. This programme was typical of the "pre film" shows staged in cinemas everywhere in the 1920's. Ron Rhode opened the show with 3 numbers at the Barton organ. He re-appeared several other times in between acts and finally closed the show. Most of the "Variety" acts were very good although there were a few we could have done without. Ron played well, although compared with his performance at the "Fox" it was a little bland, however I suspect the cause of this was that playing only 3 numbers per spot did not allow him to relax.

THAT'S ALL FOR THIS TIME - The fourth & final instalment will hopefully be along next month.

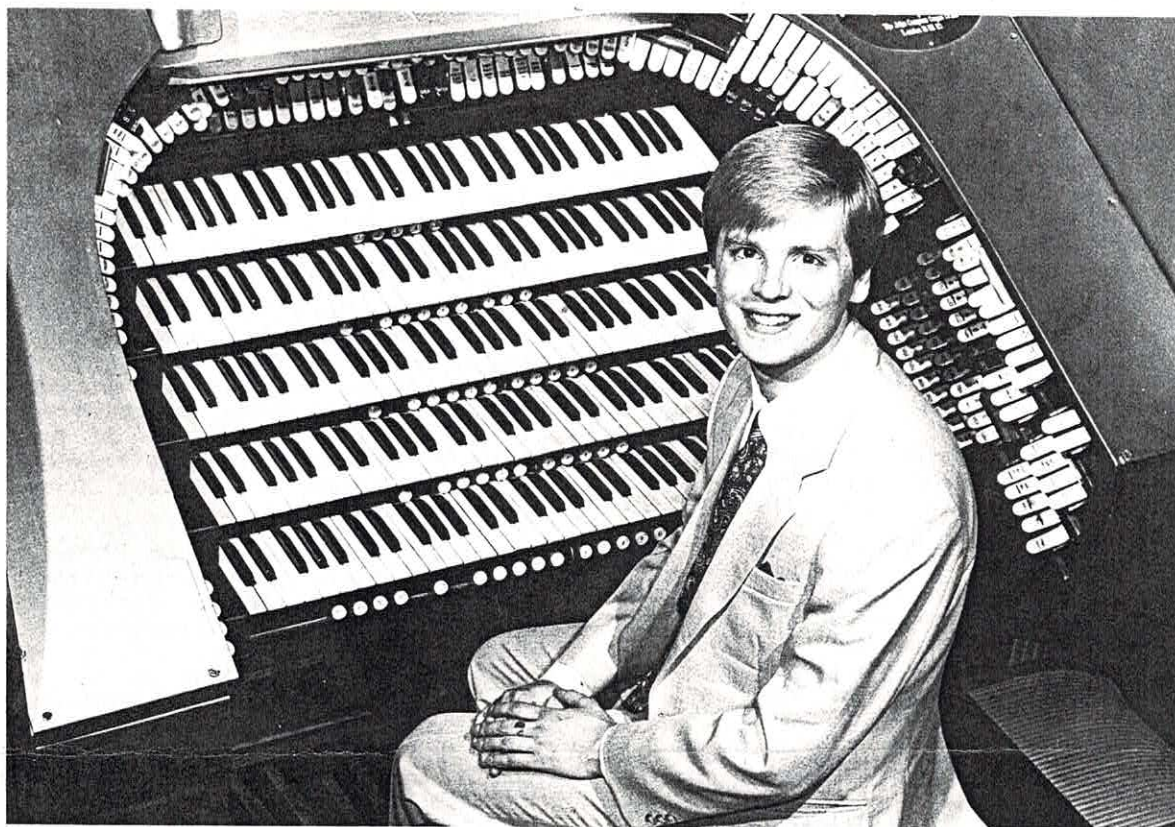
Nick Lang

# TOSA NEWS

APRIL 1990

## PROFILE OF SIMON GLEDHILL

ONE OF OUR TWO TOP BRITISH ARTISTS  
FOR  
T.O.S.A. EASTER CONVENTION 1991



Simon Gledhill was born in Halifax, West Yorkshire in 1965 and displayed a keen interest in music at an early age. He took up the piano accordion when he was six and subsequently won several championships on this instrument under the tutelage of David Ainley, but an important turning point in his musical career came at the age of ten when his parents bought him a small electronic organ. Simon taught himself to play for two years before beginning lessons with Michael D. Woodhead, who also gave him tuition in classical organ and piano.

Hearing Ernest Broadbent play the Mighty Wurlitzer of the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool inspired Simon's interest in the theatre pipe organ and in a short time he was practicing regularly on a local privately-owned instrument. In 1982, at the age of sixteen, he became the Northern Young Theatre Organist of the Year and was invited to make some recordings on the B.B.C. theatre organ for broadcast on national radio. A flood of concert offers followed and Simon has since performed on nearly every major theatre

organ installation in Britain. Three cassettes and an L.P. record have been released and there are plans for a Compact Disc recording in the pipeline.

Simon was the first recipient of the Cinema Organ Society's Ian Sutherland Award, now given each year to a young organist considered to display outstanding talent and potential. He has taught at the Society's annual Summer Workshop and is a member of the Yorkshire District Committee.

Simon's American concert debut was made in Arizona in 1987, with such distinguished figures as Walter Strony and Ron Rhode in the audience, and was very warmly received. Since then he has received invitations to play at three national conventions of the American Theatre Organ Society, and is the only non-American organist to perform in the Organ Pops concert series at the magnificent Paramount Theatre in Oakland, California. There are also invitations to play in Holland and Australia in the near future.