

TOSA NEWS

June 2014
Volume 53 No.5

Price: \$2.00

Sunday 20 July 2014 2:00pm

Donna Parker

**from Portland USA
plays the**

Orion Theatre Wurlitzer

3 manuals 17 ranks

of

Wonderful Wurlitzer Magic

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www.tosa.net.au

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Printing by Rob Gliddon

From the President



Another few weeks and the year will be half gone but, as the optimist would say, the second half of 2014 is about to start. We have just enjoyed the mastery of Dr. John Atwell at the fantastic Marrickville Wurlitzer, and what a program! Well thought out, great arrangements and a varied program to delight the musical senses.

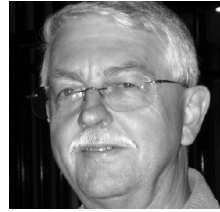
There are four shows in the second half of the year – three with outstanding overseas talent concluding with Australia's own Tony Fenelon. These shows, in fact all shows, need your support in order that the Society remain viable.

To remain viable we also need members. **Membership fees are due at 30th June and I would encourage you to renew early rather than risk membership lapsing through oversight.** Fees have been kept at the same level again this year despite ever-rising costs. Of course, we always welcome new members and anything you can do to encourage others to join will assist to keep your costs down in the future.

Happy organising,

Geoff Brimley

Editorial



Our first show for 2014 at the Biggest Little Wurlitzer in Sydney with Co-Patron Dr John Atwell was indeed a very interesting program that allowed Dr John to explore many registrations on our wonderful 2 manual Wurli.

TOSA had to again deal with difficulties around access to prepare for a show. In spite of having made bookings well in advance for tuning and practice TOSA were only able to tune from 7:30am Sunday morning following which Dr John had his only practice time on the organ.

TOSA are very grateful to the tuner, John Parker for being available at such an early hour along with Vice President Neil Palmer being in early to strike for him. Thanks also to member Peter Robinson for enabling Dr John to practice on his Allen Theatre Organ.

Details of TOSA QLD Anniversary celebration are in this issue.

Deadline for TOSA News is the 12th of the previous month.

Enjoy the music,

Ernie Vale

PO Box A2322

SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

editor@tosa.net.au

From the Mailbox...



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

or in writing to:

The Editor - TOSA News (NSW Div)

PO Box A2322

SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

New Members

TOSA welcomes them and wish them a long and happy stay

Collectors Item

1961 Lowrey Festival FL-220 approx. 75 valve organ - 2x61 note manuals, 25 note pedal clavier. Now mostly dismantled for ease of moving. Used in same church since 1961. Last played by the undersigned on 31/12/13. Essential parts stored nearby.

FREE to collector with technical

background.

Phone Peter Held at any reasonable hour on:
(02) 97595174

State Theatre Sydney Wurlitzer Organ Restoration Update

TOSA sources advise that both Wurlitzer consoles have been restored and are back in the Theatre. The whole of the Solo chamber has been shipped to the USA for restoration as the next step.

It's a waste of time for people to say things they think people want to hear, or try to come off in a certain way. I try to be honest as I can.

--Gwyneth Paltrow

For marriage to be a success, every woman and every man should have her and his own bathroom. The end.

--Catherine Zeta-Jones

The mistake a lot of politicians make is in forgetting they've been appointed and thinking they've been anointed

--Claude D. Pepper

To Watch Out For

Our fabulous season of Theatre Organ entertainment in 2014 continues with 3 Overseas artists - two from the USA and one from the UK followed by Australia's own Tony Fenelon. TOSA look forward to your company in 2014 along with friends and acquaintances.



**John Parker tunes
Marrickville**

Advertising Rates in TOSA News

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Small bubble = \$11.00

Quarter Page = \$24.75

Half Page = \$49.50

Full Page = \$99.00

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

Members' Playing Dates The Orion Theatre Campsie

There will be some players days in 2014 - but not every month. Craig Keller will notify members by text when the dates have been confirmed .

Craig Keller on 0418484798
Players and listeners welcome.

**Marrickville Town Hall
4th Monday afternoon/evening
at 2:30pm to 7:00pm**

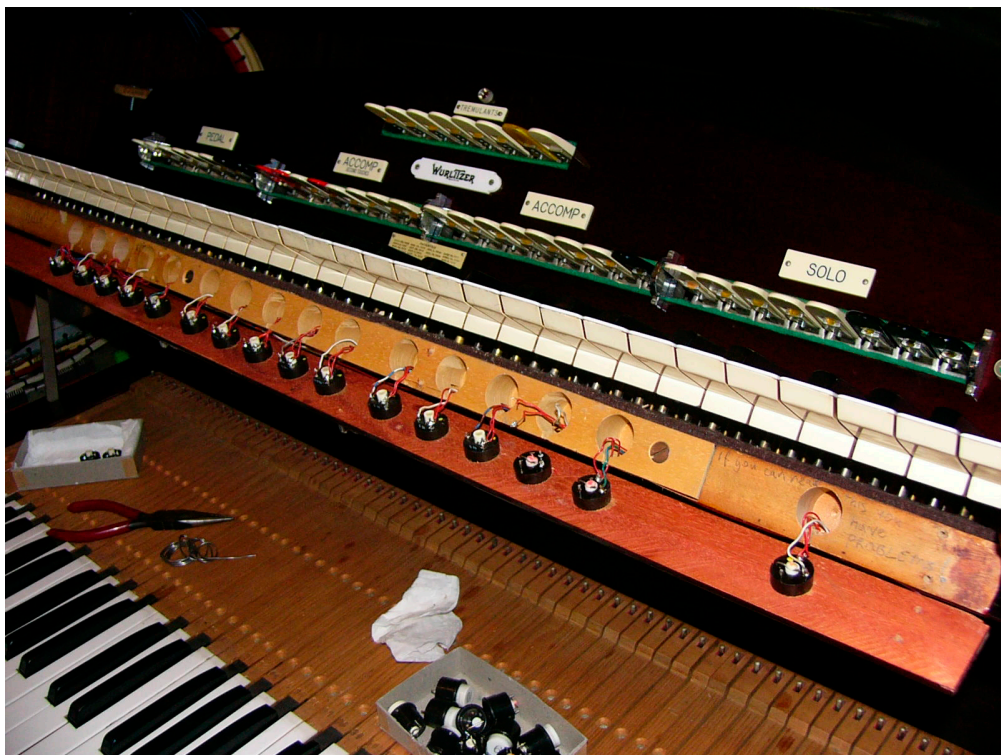
**Not available in June
because of Opera Australia
Please contact Neil or John
Batts to confirm availability**

To be sure there is no last minute cancellation at Marrickville please ring Neil on 9798 6742 after 7:00pm the Friday before.

MAINTENANCE ON THE MARRICKVILLE WURLITZER CONTINUES

At a recent players day at Marrickville some of the piston buttons became inoperable. Vice President, Neil Palmer made some inquiries of a company in the USA that supply piston buttons and discovered there had been a design fault in the manufacturing of the pistons in use on the Marrickville Wurlitzer. Bearing in mind the May show with Dr John Atwell was not far away the TOSA Committee determined that all the piston buttons should be replaced with a much better designed version. The Piston buttons were imported from the USA and then had to be fitted in time for the May show.

Thanks to Neil Palmer, John Batts and John Wall, all piston buttons were replaced in time for Sunday 18 May.



The upper keyboard was lifted so that the piston rail could be folded down. Then each soldered connection had to be unsoldered, the old button removed, the new button inserted and resoldered. As there are 16 pistons per manual this was a very time consuming activity.

Organs Available for Sale or to a good home

HAMMOND E311

**2 x 61 Note Manuals
25 Note Pedal Board
includes a Leslie Speaker
\$200**

**Phone Bernadette Rayner
(02)99231015
0414330907**

This organ has been well maintained and was used by TOSA Members at the church in Campsie for members playing days.

HAMMOND COLLONADE

**2 x 61 note manuals
Full Pedal Board**

FREE to a good home

**Well maintained
Requires some servicing**

**Phone Jan on 95436605
at Illawong**

**Interested person to arrange
transport**

FREE BALDWIN STUDIO II, LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

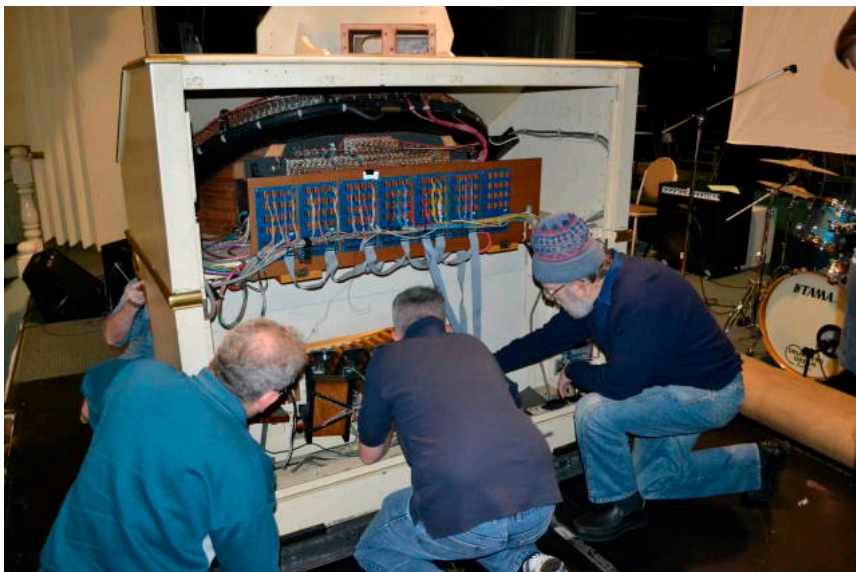
We have an electronic organ, looking for a good home. It is a **Baldwin Studio II, with 2 keyboard manuals and 25 note pedal board.**
See pictures attached.

The organ has been kept very clean and plays in tune, but may need new capacitors to reduce a humming noise in the background. We inherited it from a friend who is no longer able to play. Pick-up only from North Shore, Sydney. Please contact Dennis on 0466 417 383.



The Orion Theatre Wurlitzer workshop on Saturday 3rd May

TOSA is most grateful to Canterbury City Council for allowing a maintenance team of TOSA members to have a full day at the Orion Theatre to carry out some important updates to the Wurlitzer organ console platform and to have a general tidy up.



The organ console has been moved to stage level. Now Craig Keller, Graeme Costin and David Badman are disconnecting the wiring to the pedal board so it can be removed.



Neil Palmer releases the pedal surround so the pedals can be removed and the console lifted off the platform



Craig Keller unscrews the block behind the four silver pedals so the pedal board can be slid away

Show & Membership Prices

The following TOSA show ticket prices now apply:

	All Artists
Non-members	\$32.50
Non-member Pensioner/Seniors Card holder	\$27.50
TOSA Members	\$23.00

All Students FREE on confirmation of Student status

All Children FREE

Group Booking for 10 or more Adults \$20 per person

Annual Membership Fees are now: \$35.00 for Full membership,
and

\$25.00 for Concession, Country, Interstate & Overseas.

Membership enquiries Geoff Brimley (02) 6351 3122

membership@tosa.net.au

Associate Membership for a spouse/partner is only an additional
50%



As many hands as can move the console lift it from the platform



Margaret Badman oversees the removal of the old wheels from the platform frame by David Badman and Craig Keller



A new metal bracket to replace the old bracket is to be welded in place so the new wheels can be bolted on.



The work team l. to r. Craig Keller, Ernie Vale, Gerry, John Wesimantel, Ian Georgeson, John Wall, David & Margaret Badman, Geoff Brimley and Neil Palmer kneeling plus Barry Tooker who took the photos.

The Next Performance

Direct from the USA

One of Americas Foremost Theatre Organists

Donna Parker



plays

“Wurlitzer Magic”

on the 3 manual 17 rank Wurlitzer Theatre Organ

at the **Orion Centre Theatre**

155 Beamish Street, Campsie

Sunday 20 July 2014 2:00 – 4:30pm

Tickets to the show: Members \$23; Non-Members \$ 32.50;

Non Member Pensioner/Senior \$ 27.50

Group bookings for 10 or more adults \$20 per person

Students “Free” on confirmation of Student Status

Children “Free” accompanied by an adult

Bookings: Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131 -

14 Warrah Place, Greystanes 2145,

Please include a stamped self addressed envelope for return of tickets

Visa & Mastercard accepted

DONNA PARKER

Donna began studying organ at age seven, and among her instructors are many notables including Richard Purvis, Gordon Kibbee and Lyn Larsen. She has served as Official Organist for the Los Angeles Dodgers, Product Specialist for Conn Organ Company, Organist for the Los Angeles Sports Arena (professional ice hockey and tennis). She has been staff organist for a number of restaurants including Roaring 20s in Grand Rapids MI, Paramount Music Palace in Indianapolis IN, Organ Grinder in Portland, Uncle Milt's in Vancouver WA, Organ Stop Pizza in Phoenix and Mesa AZ.

In 1996 she received the American Theatre Organ Society's prestigious Organist of the Year Award. Donna has entertained theatre organ audiences internationally, performing in Canada, Austria, Australia, Japan and New Zealand.

She has provided daily holiday concerts at the Tropicana Casino and Hotel in Atlantic City NJ for the past several years, taking theatre organ music to a whole new audience. She performs regularly for groups across the U.S.

Donna is a member of the Summer Youth Adventure group of instructors, showing young musicians in the USA the art of playing Theatre Organ

Donna is the Membership Secretary for the American Theatre Organ Society - ATOS and is also the Publisher of their Journal - Theatre Organ

For the best reserved seats you can book securely on trybooking.com by going to www.tosa.net.au then Events, click on the Artists name/show title then scroll down to the text to buy your ticket, click on it, select your preferred seat/s and complete the purchase.

“Has the age of the signature tune disappeared?”

From TOSA Member and organist John Batts

Ernie, I found your item on “Has the age of the signature tune disappeared?” interesting, not least because in the examples cited the title and organist did not always correspond with my own recollection of the songs used by English organists. Time can distort and even corrupt memory, of course. And yet, providing substance to your implicit challenge has sent me on an extended visit down Memory Lane! In what follows I’ve not attempted to be comprehensive, so not every cinema organist who ever sat on a bench in the UK is featured.

Well John, as I have not had any input from members I will continue updating your list as follows:

Sidney Gustard: Old Fashioned Town;

John Howlett: I Want To Be Happy;

Laurence James: Lets All Go Down The Strand;

Leslie James; Looking At Life;

Tom Jenkins: App Shenkin (Son of Jenkin);

Florence De Jong: Passing Thoughts;

Eric Lord: Bye, Bye, Blues;

Nick Olsen: Blaydon Races;

Louise Macdonald: Louise;

Harold Nash: *No entry for Harold Nash;*

Reginald New: Jolly Good Company;

Edward O’Henry: The Mountains Of Mourne;

Phil Park: St James Park;

Austin Rayner: Dusk;

Hubert Selby: I'll See You In My Dreams;

George Senior: *No entry for George;*

Charles Smart; Ah! Sweet Mystery Of Life;

Reginald Stone: *No entry for Reginald;*

Alex Taylor: *No entry for Alex;*

Howard Thomas: Waltz Without A Name;

Lloyd Thomas: Let The Great Big World Keep Turning;

Cecil Atkinson: Happy Days Are Here Again;

George Blackmore: Chinatown, My Chinatown;

Harold Coombs: Remember Me - Valse Mignon;

Cyril Gell: Life Is A Song;

John Holton: I Hear A Rhapsody;

Stanley Harrison: Painting The Clouds With Sunshine;

Charles Horrex: Riding On A Rainbow;

Peter Keane: Music For You;

John Mann: Anything Goes;

Joe Marsh: Cherokee;

Len Rawle: There's No Business Like Show Business;

Mike Slater: I'll See You In My Dreams;

Don Thompson: California Here I Come.

Pages From The Past

*An article from the PUGET SOUND PIPELINE - May 2014
with the kind permission of the Editor, Jo Ann Evans*

BILL BUNCH collected every bit of organ related information he found throughout his life -- newspaper articles, letters, catalogs, photographs, copies of documents, and more. This invaluable collection is the source of most "Pages From The Past" articles.

The following article is from a packet of photocopied pages stapled together. It is undated and neither source nor author is identified. Several more installments will follow.

APOTHEOSIS OF THE MIGHTY WURLITZER - Part 4

Early in 1926 Roxy had read of the plans for the Wurlitzer organ that was being built for the Paramount Theatre then under construction. The shrewd showman realized that this organ, with Jesse Crawford at the throttle, would be one of the brightest stars in Adolph Zukor's galaxy, and he decided when his own Roxy Theatre opened the next year, it must "out organ" the Paramount. Roxy had already contracted with the W. W. Kimball Company of Chicago to build three organs for his new theatre----a large instrument in the auditorium, and two smaller ones in the broadcasting studio and the Rotunda respectively. Perhaps he would have preferred Wurlitzers---but Roxy had to be different, so Kimballs they were. In any event, instructions went forth to Kimball to build the most flamboyantly "visible" organ in the world for the new Roxy Theatre. Kimball rose to the occasion (and to the juiciest single order any theatre organ builder ever got) and promised Roxy that he would have something that would "knock 'em dead" on opening night.

The something was a mammoth antique-gold console with five manuals, flanked by two equally aureate consoles of three manuals each, all rising out of the pit on separate worm-gear lifts. Three consoles with three organists working away simultaneously (Roxy issued an edict that he "wanted to see plenty of feet moving all the time") was a tone not unlike a cello, the whole thing being played from the console.

Before 1930, when the advent of talkies called an abrupt halt to the installation of any more organs in theatres, nearly every movie house of more than three-hundred seats had some kind of organ in it. The smaller theatres were equipped with either little two manual instru-

ments of seven or eight basic ranks, or with devices resembling player pianos bolstered with pipes and an array of special effects. These remarkable instruments were housed in large cabinets, flanking the piano case, and usually were installed in what would have been the orchestra pit in a larger house.

The Robert Morton Fotoplayer was a typical "pit organ" (although nearly all the organ builders made a similar economy model). The Fotoplayer made a similar economy model). The Fotoplayer was distinguished by the fact that its effects (gong, drum, whistle, klaxon, etc.) were operated by a row of ropes with wooden handles that dangled in front of the operator. It required the combined talents of a streetcar motorman and a carillonneur to keep everything going at once. In some of the more modest cameos around the country there was no regular musician on the payroll; instead, a small boy would be put in charge of the Fotoplayer (which could be operated by standard piano rolls as well as by hand). All he had to do was rewind the roll, or occasionally change it when the audience became restless, and yank the daylights out of the sound effects whenever he felt the action on the screen dictated---which was always.

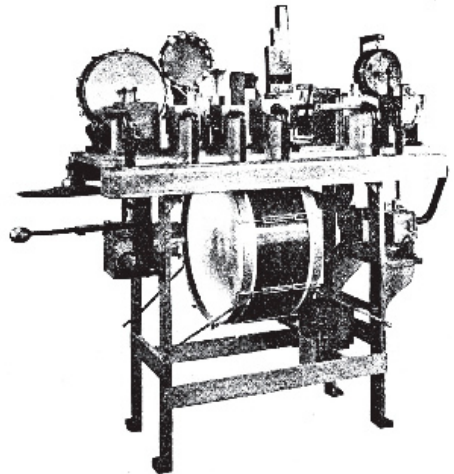
In the movie palaces, of course, things were quite different. The mightiness of the Wurlitzer within came to be a status symbol as newer and grander theatres were opened. Consoles were designed to match any decor---an original temple with jewel-eyed Buddahs guarding the rest rooms might boast an organ console that rose from the depths crusted with crimson dragons and lacquered lotus blossoms. A vast Italian garden, open to an Eberson sky, could feature a console frescoed with peacocks or (as in the case of the Paradise Theatre in Chicago) acrawl with alabastine cupids.

In Denver, the Isis Theatre reached new meteorological heights when a lighting machine was installed as part of the organ.

ORGAN SUPPLY CORP.

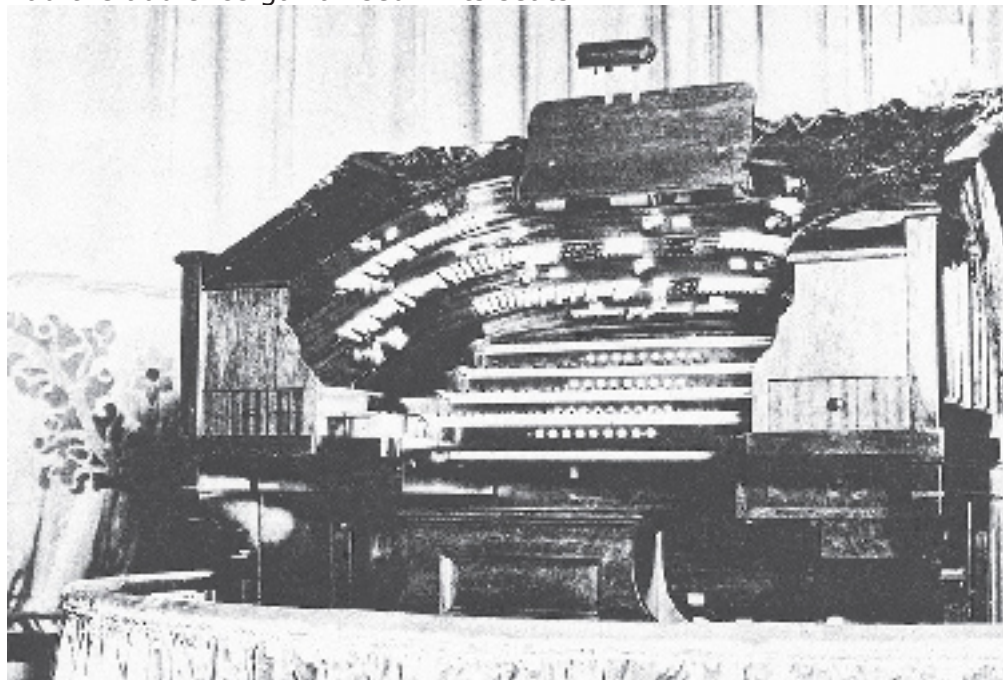
540-550 East 2nd Street

ERIE, PA.



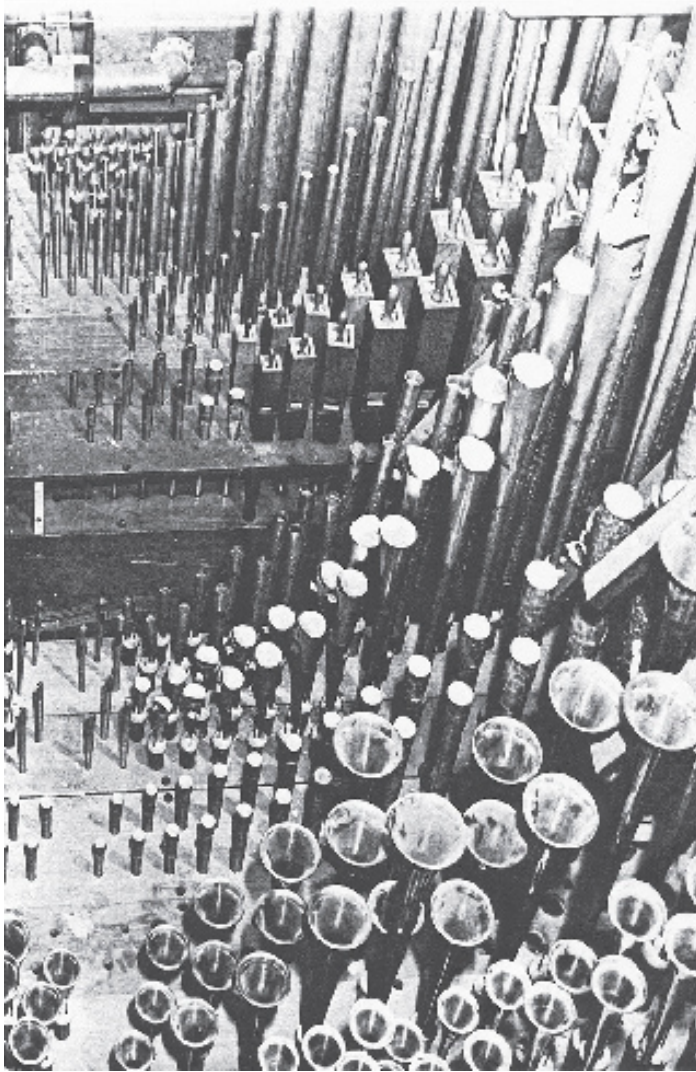
This "toy counter" could be hooked on any organ (the name brands, of course, had their own). It included (l. to r.) snare drum, bird call, tambourine, auto horn, wood block, steamboat whistle, triangle, castanets, surf effect, tom-tom, crash symbol and bass drum -- a real one-man band.

The organist, with the help of hundreds of light bulbs (and some pneumatic motors which operated quick-acting switches), mounted behind the organ grilles over the proscenium could set off an electrical storm during the course of the *William Tell Overture* that had the audience galvanised in its seats.



“What you must often wonder,” mused a critic called “Screencomber” in the late Twenties, “happens to the organist when once he sinks down into the earth’s bowels? To what red hell...? Exactly! Simply that he returns to the Organist’s Purgatory, a vast subterranean limbo populated by lost souls and consoles of organists, doomed to wander forever in this kingdom of the damned while the Mightiest Wurlitzer of Them All plays a perpetual interlude, alternating between *Poet and Peasant* and *William Tell* except on feast days when they substitute *The Whistler and His Dog*.”

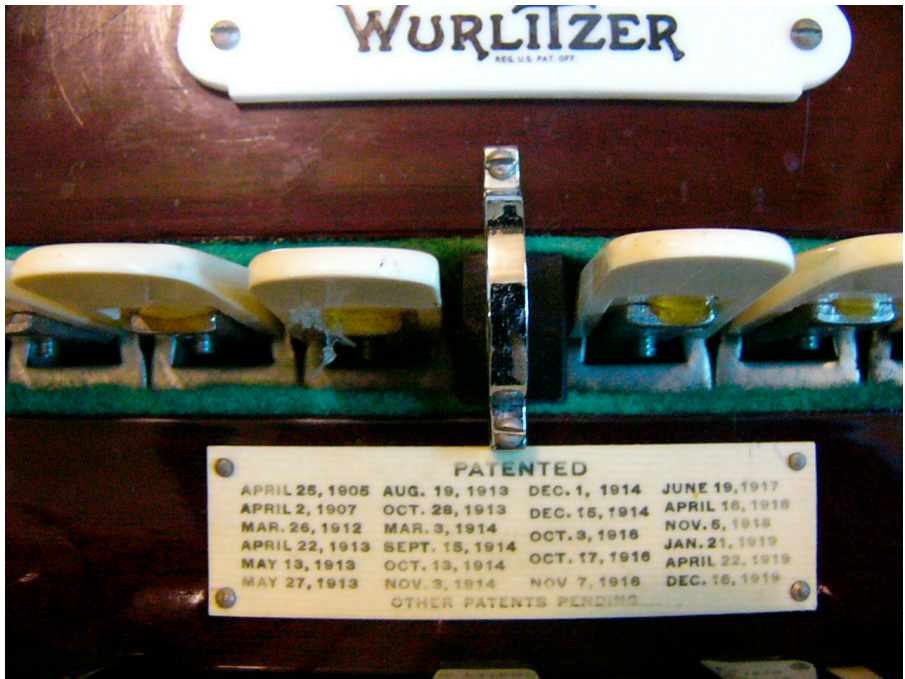
“Screencomber” had it all wrong. The organist spent the rest of his nights up in the organ chamber tuning pipes and patching leaking wind chests so that on the morrow he and his beloved might rise again in golden and pitch-perfect glory, while the applause swirled around them and all the girls--over twenty-nine, under twenty-nine, who cared?--threw back their boyish bobs in a love song. That’s why theatre organists were born.



Some units of a Unit Orchestra. This view of the right half of a Wurlitzer organ chamber shows parts of some of the more typical ranks. From bottom to top: Brass Saxophone, Brass Trumpet, Quintadena, Oboe Horn, Krumet, Tibia, Salicional, Orchestra Oboe, and Kinura. The Tibia (square wooden pipes with stoppered tops) is the sobbing tone most characteristic of theatre organ; the Kinura (top row with flared mouths) is reed tone, sharp and bleating; Salicional (slender pipes behind Tibia) is violin-like string tone; Brass Trumpet (taller flared pipes behind Sax) looks and sounds like a - brass trumpet.



Neil Palmer works on the delicate wiring of the Piston Buttons on the Marrickville Wurlitzer



Robert Hope Jones continuously worked on developing the Wurlitzer Theatre Organ seen here by the Patents Plaque on the Marrickville Wurlitzer, the last entry being December 1919

TOSA QLD 1964-2014



Join us as we celebrate 50 years of TOSA in Queensland!

Friday evening 29 August to Sunday afternoon 31 August 2014

The Queensland Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia invites you to two-and-a-half days of outstanding music and social events to be held in Brisbane, Australia. The celebrations will be centered at Kelvin Grove State College, the home of our Christie cinema pipe organ. To book use contact details below.

The Organs

The Christie 3/11 cinema pipe organ at Kelvin Grove State College. It is acclaimed as one of the best Christies in the world.

The ex-Regent Wurlitzer 3/15 theatre pipe organ in the Cinematheque at the Gallery of Modern Art (GoMA). The Wurlitzer is beautifully restored and installed in a state of the art cinema.

The Artists

Tony Fenelon needs no introduction other than to say he is Australia's most highly regarded theatre organist.

Walt Strony has been a star of the American circuit for many years and is also well versed on classical pipe organs.. He is recognised as a very adept organ tuner and finisher.

David Bailey has made a name nationally for his silent film accompaniment. A Brisbane local, David is resident organist at the GoMA Cinematheque, playing the Style 260 Wurlitzer.

The Kate Street Mob Big Band is one of the most vibrant swing-era bands in Brisbane and their singer Shoshanna will enchant you with her golden voice. They will be joined by a cavalcade of top local organists on the Christie cinema pipe organ.

For more details: **T** - 0412-379 676 (Brett) **E** - tosaqld@gmail.com **W** - www.tosa-qld.org

TOSA Qld 50th Anniversary - Accommodation

It is the responsibility of delegates to arrange their own accommodation during the 50th Anniversary celebrations. Four accommodation houses have been selected from budget to 4-star. Please select your preferred accommodation and book directly with the motel/hotel. Web page links are provided below.

Option 1: Budget Motel closest to Kelvin Grove

Continental breakfast available (\$8), parking, kitchenette.
Mention "TOSA 50th" for a 30% discount rate.

Herston Place Motel
Corner of Wyndham & Weightman Streets
Herston 4006
Brisbane
Tel. 07-3216 0111
www.herstonplacemotel.com.au



Option 2: Budget Motel near Kelvin Grove

Halfway between Kelvin Grove and CBD.
Mention "TOSA 50th" for a cont'l breakfast for 2.

Best Western Plus
397 Gregory Terrace
Spring Hill 4000
Brisbane
Tel. 07-3832 1769
<https://www.bestwestern.com.au/brisbane/hotels/best-western-plus-gregory-terrace/>



Option 3: 3-4 star hotel inner Brisbane

Directly across the river from GoMA etc.

Ibis Brisbane
27-35 Turbot Street
Brisbane 4000
Tel. 07-3237 2333
<http://www.ibis.com/gb/hotel-2062-ibis-brisbane/index.shtml>



Option 4: 4 star hotel inner Brisbane

Bed and Breakfast package available.

Mercure Brisbane
85-87 North Quay
Brisbane 4003
Tel. 07-3237 2300
<http://mercurebrisbane.com.au/special-hotel-deals.html>



Members Diary

Monday 2nd June Committee 7:00pm

Sunday 20 July 2:00pm - 4:30pm

International Musician

Donna Parker
plays

“Wurlitzer Magic”

On the **Orion Theatre Wurlitzer**

155 Beamish Street, Campsie

Book at www.tosa.net.au

or

Contact Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131

Radio 2MBS-FM 102.5 “Colours of the King” (program of the Organ Music Society of Sydney) 2nd Saturday of each month, 5pm till 6 pm

Web Sites of Interest:

<https://www.facebook.com/tosansw>

www.theatreorgansaustralia.info (history of cinema organ installations in Australasia)

www.sydneyorgan.com (our sister society, the Organ Music Society of Sydney OMSS)

www.ATOS.org

Google: Jesse Crawford for more information

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Please renew your Membership by 30 June

SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235 **www.tosa.net.au**

