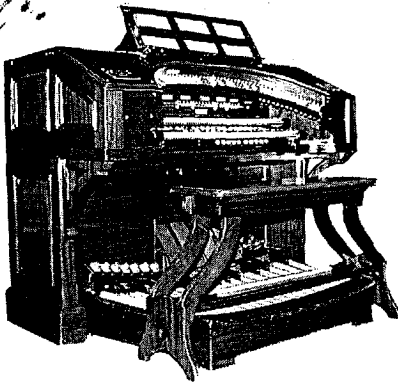
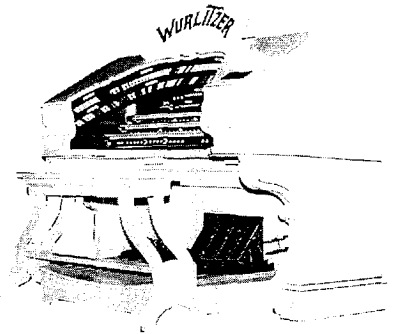


JANUARY, 1997



TOSA NEWS



2/11 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

3/17 Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

HAPPY NEW YEAR

To Start Our Concert Year ..

Australia's Best Young Organist

CHRIS McPHEE



Sunday, 2nd February, 1997

Orion Centre Campsie

Volume 36

Issue 1

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TOSA NEWS

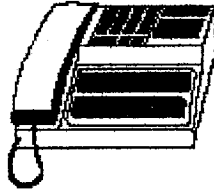
JANUARY, 1997

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WORLD WIDE WEB HOME PAGE -TOSA (NSW)

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COMING EVENTS

JANUARY, 1997

Monday 6 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting

FEBRUARY

Sunday 2 at 2.00pm Chris McPhee Concert
Orion Centre Campsie

Monday 3 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting

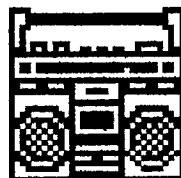
MARCH

Sunday 2 at 2.00pm Concert
Orion Centre Campsie

Monday 3 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting

28th - 31th March National Easter Convention Hobart, Tasmania

The Committee would like to explain that members' practice sessions at Marrickville can not be re-introduced at present due to Marrickville Council's use of the Marrickville Town Hall for storage while the Petersham Town Hall is being renovated. The Committee is hoping to negotiate practice times for later in the year.



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For "Theatre Organ Highlights"
Presented by Chris Styles**

Editorial

I have just returned from the Christmas concert and what a fabulous end of year concert it was with **Tony and John!** Everybody seemed to think it one of **TOSA's** best ever concerts and I would have to agree.

On second thoughts, considering what I discovered *after* the concert, I suppose there would be people with ungrateful complaints about the event. My doubts arise from being told by an influential member of our executive (who, I presume, feels he speaks for a lot of members, or he wouldn't have brought it up, would he?) that what I've been including in **TOSA News** is unappreciated by the members (e.g. the recent items about the **Internet** and the **Melbourne Regent**), that I had wrong priorities about what to include in any particular issue (e.g. reviews of **TOSA** events should always take precedence over events that only feature **TOSA** members, regardless of difficulties such as my HSC marking commitments, etc.) and that in any case, at 14 pages, **TOSA News** was already uselessly too long. So it seems that I have been deludedly wasting my time on trying to give members what I hoped they would consider to be an interesting and informative magazine each month.

His upsetting version of reality is hard for me to accept, especially since I've foolishly spent many hours every week preparing the endless issues (finish one, start the next, etc. - 47 in 4 years), to the decided detriment of my own social, professional and, especially, family life.

There seems to be two logical requests I need to make of members after this revelation of my failings:

(i) I'd like to ask members, of all ranks in the society from the Patrons down, to speak *directly* to the editor about their complaints, rather than telling other members who may very well misinterpret the complainant's original intention as they pass it on to the editor, and this would give the editor a chance to defend or explain any "bad" editorial decisions personally; and

(ii) All members, please actively seek out and nominate someone - preferably before the next committee meeting on 6th January - to take over the editor's job, as my patience with tactless and inconsiderate **TOSA** know-alls is finally running out (and I obviously need to get on with my own life, which I seem, at the present time, to be "wasting" on **TOSA** pursuits).

In all honesty, you would have to agree that it is foolish of me to waste my time any further on a **Society** with so many "ungrateful whingers" (my term - not theirs, of course), most of whom never provide anything at all for **TOSA News**, (unless you count their spoken criticisms) and who obviously just wish to let me know I'm not doing a good enough job, rather than helping to improve the newsletter by supplying better material.

For some time, I thought the occasional sniping and unco-operative behaviour from some members (e.g. ignoring deadlines, calling **TOSA News** an over long rag, etc.) was simply poor manners or a kind of perverted humour, but now I see that it is more likely a part of the negative attitude that permeates some areas of the **Society** - a negativity which is both unproductive, destructive and personally abhorrent to me.

Without the complete support of the executive and committee, I have no wish to continue in the job. My family fully supports me in this decision to withdraw, because they know how much time and effort I put into each issue, and how much it hurts me when people are ignorantly dismissive of the time-consuming **TOSA News** work.

They say pride comes before a fall and I had worked very hard at creating a newsletter that I (and all members of **TOSA**) could be proud of. I've done my best, but the negative elements who are not proud of my effort are strong and well-entrenched, and I don't wish to argue with them, or struggle against them, as I prefer to work in a co-operative and supportive atmosphere.

Let these discontented, negative people choose an editor who is less sensitive to undeserved, disparaging remarks and who will create for them what they want in a newsletter. I have no doubt that a suitable replacement can be quickly found to fill the gap and I will gladly relinquish my committee position to this lucky person who, I hope for the sake of the Society, will have the *total* support of all the executive and committee.

Sincere thanks to those marvellous people who have contributed constantly to **TOSA News**, and to the people who occasionally expressed appreciation of my efforts (even one kind lady today at the Christmas concert - perhaps she was just being overly polite to me!). I have greatly valued your support - keep up the good work.

Sorry to have bored you for so long.
Best Wishes,
Colin Groves

Welcome To New Members

TOSA (NSW) is pleased to welcome the following new members. We hope your stay with us will be pleasurable and entertaining for you :

Daniel Gosson - Stuarts Point

Brian Holden - Five Dock

.....

The destruction of the Parramatta Roxy's Christie

In the absence of a Sydney-based report, here is Perth-based Ian McLean's Internet report on a really tragic event for the theatre organ world in Australia:

In a fire that did over \$2,000,000 worth of damage early Sunday morning, 1st December, some historic pipe organ parts have been lost forever.

Although complete lists are still being collated, it is known that the 3 manual **Christie** console originally from the **Roxy Parramatta** theatre pipe organ was lost along with two, possibly three ranks of that original 10 rank instrument (the Clarinet and two or three sets of Strings). However, that is only the start.

These parts were but a small component of the **Hills Centre 3/30** planned installation, much of which was also stored with the original **Christie** parts. Along with these parts that have been kept in pristine condition by the same owners for over thirty years much more was lost. So far, thirteen sets of shutters and twelve other ranks have gone. Some of these were choice - **Kimball** strings, **Kimball** Oboe Horn, **Moller** Cor Anglais, **Wurlitzer** strings, and many bass pipes, including Tubas and Tibias.

Truly this is a catastrophic loss for Australia.

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

Last UK Wurlitzer Cinema Closes

In November of last year John Leeming used the Internet to pass on the following item :

The last working cinema equipped with its original Wurlitzer organ, the **ABC Cinema** in **Harrow, N.W. London**, closed its doors for the last time on Thursday, November 7.

For most of its 59 years of existence, the theatre was part of the **Granada** chain. It was sold to **Cannon Cinemas (MGM)** in the late 1980s, and for the past few months only has been part of the revived **ABC** chain.

The organ is a 3-manual 8-rank instrument of a design made specially for the **Granada** chain in the late 1930s, where volume of sound from a small number of ranks was the main criterion in its specification. With English Horn, Saxophone and Gamba, but no Vox, six of these models were installed. The most famous was in the **Granada Clapham Junction**, where its under-stage installation ensured that the sound more than filled that 2,500-seat theatre. In spite of its distinctive range of tonal resources, it could be an inspiring and dramatic instrument to listen to. The example at **Harrow** was not the most successful of these 8-rankers, being installed in two stacked chambers on the right of the proscenium. The sound did not develop as well at **Clapham Junction**, giving a 'thinner' overall effect, though it was nevertheless a very worthwhile instrument to hear.

In recent years the instrument was maintained by the **London Chapter of ATOS**, in whose care the instrument sounded better than it had ever done.

The theatre and organ have Grade II

listing (a minor landmark status), which means that the organ cannot be removed, nor the theatre demolished, without a lot of complex procedures. At present the building is shuttered and the future is unknown. The **London Chapter** have a good track-record when it comes to helping to negotiate problems of this sort (examples being the **State, Kilburn** and the **Granada, Tooting**), so I suspect we have not heard the last of this instrument. The Chapter actually owns one of the other **Wurlitzers** of this design which, in slightly enlarged form, is installed in a community centre in **Woking**, 27 miles south of **London**.

As far as original theatre organs in working cinemas in **Britain** are concerned, there is one with a **3/12 Christie (ABC, ex-Granada, Walthamstow** - my home town!) and a couple with **Comptons (5/17 Odeon Leicester Square** and **3/8 Odeon Weston-super-Mare)**. Others still exist in cinemas converted to other uses, mainly Bingo. One of these, the **Davenport Theatre, Stockport** (180 miles north of **London**) has been a live theatre for the past few years, but is due to close in March next year. It houses a **3/6 Compton**.

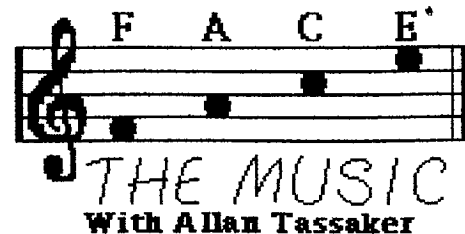
The strangest venue is the **State Cinema, Grays** (25 miles east of **London**). The cinema has been closed for some years, but once a month it is brought back to life for a concert on the **3/7 + piano + Melotone Compton** organ. It is a beautiful example of an original 1930s theatre, and the organ has an illuminated console surround. The theatre projection and lighting facilities still all work, and are used at these events.

Including re-installations, there are about 55 venues in **Britain** where public theatre organ concerts are held periodically.

John Leeming (London, UK).

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ANTIQUÉ MODELS, CONTACT :
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WE CAN HELP**

**Phone/Fax (065) 531 431
Manning Organ Society
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Tinonee 2430**



"My greatest ambition," said **Allan's** friend, "is to play at **Carnegie Hall**."

"I have already played in **Carnegie Hall** - when I was 4 years old!" smirked **Allan** in reply.

"You did?" exclaimed the friend in disbelief.

"Yes, I sure did," replied **Allan** proudly. "My parents took me there for a visit when we were on holidays, and I played hopscotch, spin-the-bottle and I Spy!!"

FOR SALE

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From The MAILBOX



Mona Vale

Thank you for inserting the copy of the Capitol's history into the *TOSA News* mag. that I sent you, I'm sure the members would have enjoyed reading it as I did the first time! History, particularly theatre history, has a fascination unequalled, and, at the risk of labouring the point, but assuming

your readers are "all-consuming" in their love for the "greats" of such venues, I've taken the liberty again of forwarding you an equally interesting extract from the original opening publicity Souvenir of the beautiful **Sydney State Theatre** in 1929, (long before **TOSA**!). I'm sure everyone in recent years was elated at the refurbishment of that icon, as they surely were when the **Capitol Theatre** got "the treatment", especially as both venues housed a **Mighty Wurlitzer**!

I've included the copy of the original artist's impression of that magnificent chandelier hanging from the auditorium's ceiling, (the same one I mentioned in the August *TOSA News*, which **David Devenport** and I made

vibrate when playing the **Wurlitzer** at 7 am, one Saturday morning practice session). And of course in the same sketch sits the same **Wurlitzer** in pride of place on its hydraulic lift at the audience's left of the proscenium. How many **TOSA** members have had the pleasure of hearing and watching that organ at its best in the 1930's? And not forgetting the accompanying orchestra that often enthralled the music-loving "theatre goer"!

The lyric prose that accompanied the artist's sketch of the huge auditorium looking from the stage in June 1929, is worthy of note, as it depicted a literary style that today would be considered a bit "flowery"! For example, the following is the original description of the proscenium as quoted in the 1929 publicity brochure....

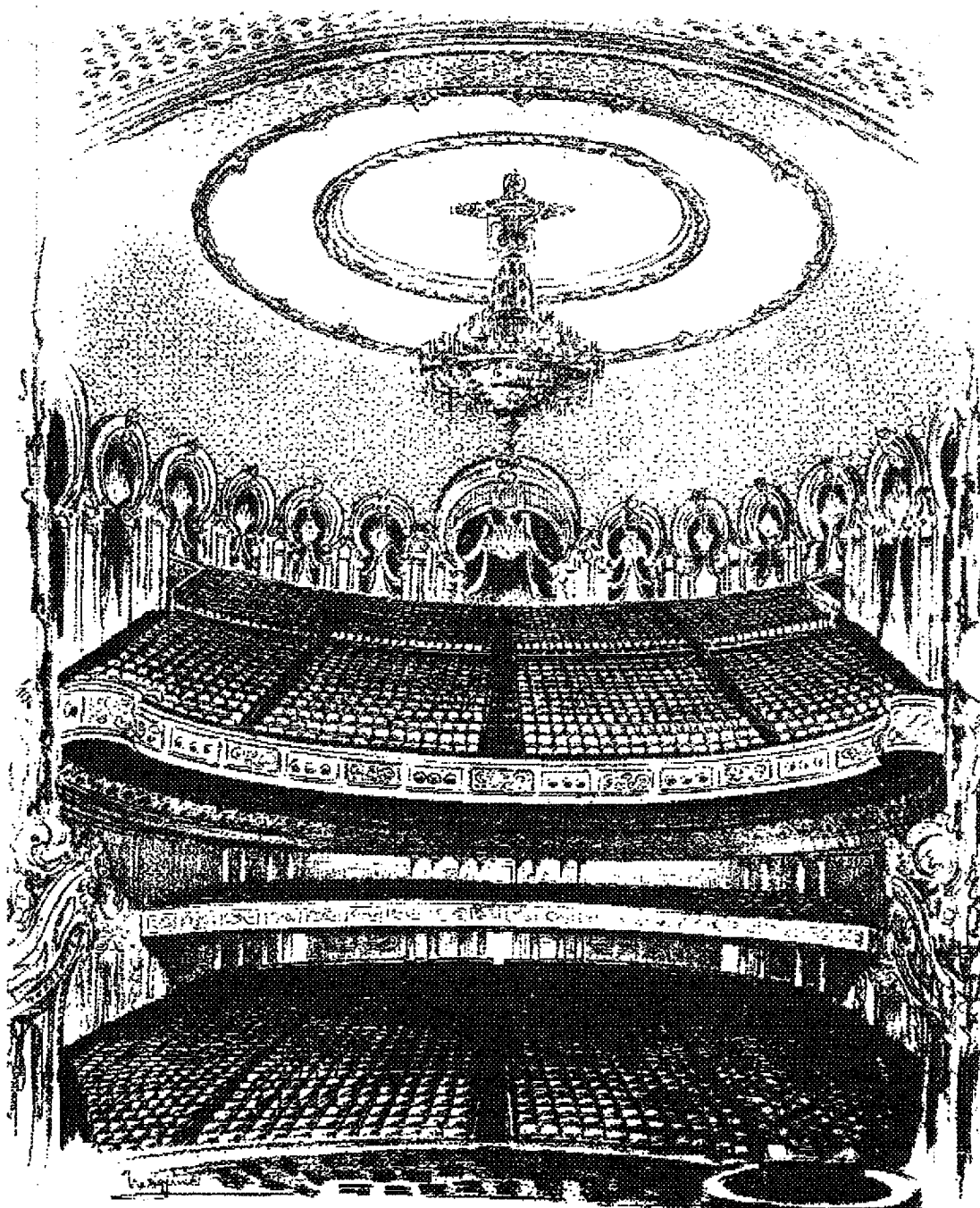
"The **State's** gigantic proscenium, a poem in iridescent red, and gold, and ivory, is a fitting centre-piece for the splendour of the Auditorium.

"The noble sweep of the three arches, a mass of arabesques in burnished gold, the over-powering height and colour magnificence, the glorious cascades of the cardinal red velvet curtain - where are their compeers in theatre adornment anywhere?

"From the Proscenium, the whole colour scheme of the Auditorium floods out in one amazing burst of surpassing beauty, a magnificent fan of startling glowing light. It is the giant gem in the **State's** Crown! A scene of transcendent beauty at which you thrill with sheer wonder and magnificence of it all!"

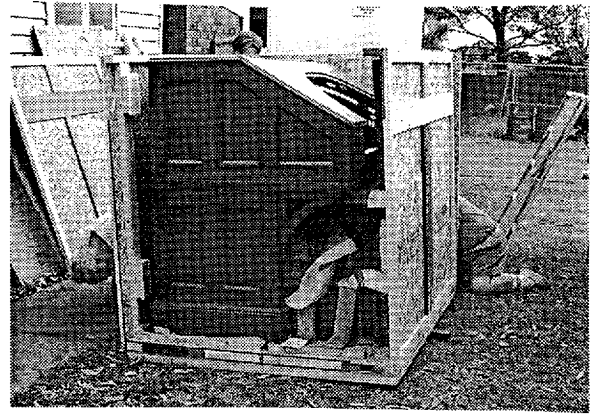
Phew! dear **TOSA** readers, I wonder if their publicity prose got them full houses in those days!!? But then, with the reigning organists such as **Jean Penhall, Manny Aarons, Fred Scholl, Knight Barnett, Billy Dick** and **Reupert Hayes** on the 'bill', who wanted publicity?!!

Bob Cornish



The State Theatre from the stage. The above is a pencilled sketch, drawn in 1929 for the opening booklet, showing the "magnificence of it all", and the Wurlitzer bottom right.

Auckland Wurlitzer Console Arrives



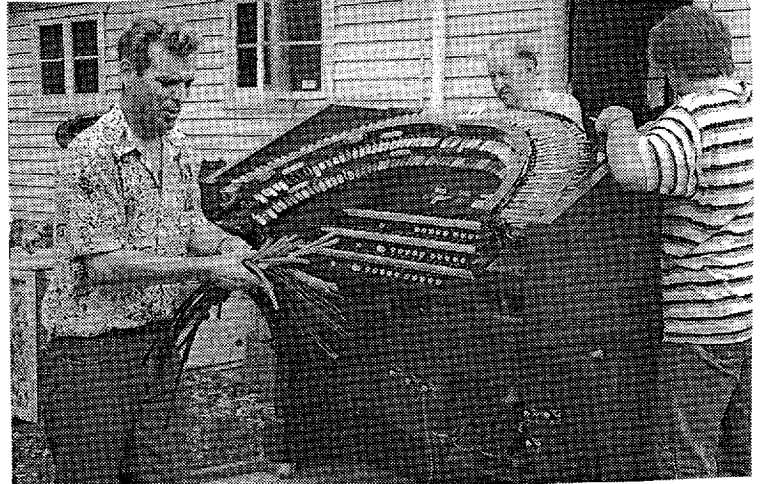
The 3 manual console bound for Auckland's Hollywood Cinema, was off-loaded at the Sydney workshop of John W. Parker, Organ Builders, on Saturday 16th November. On hand were

The "Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland" - the new owners of the organ - have also taken this opportunity to commission the manufacture of a new Solid State relay, to replace the

The top keyboard has been thrown out and replaced, as it was not an original Wurlitzer set. Luckily, an authentic keyboard was obtained and sent with the shipment to complete the 3 manuals.



present electro-pneumatic system which is now showing its advanced age. The new relay will be built here in Sydney by Tonal Resources - their first total relay and combination



a number of enthusiastic (it was 9am!!!!) TOSA members and friends to assist with the unloading of what was quite a large shipment.

package manufactured for the export market. The new system will allow the organ to be increased in size to control a total of 15 ranks of pipes.

Recently, 160 new stop key magnet units and 56 new thumb pistons have arrived for the refurbishing. Negotiations are presently underway with the Auckland Wurlitzer Organ Trust as to whether new stop tablets should also be purchased.

The console, originally built for Loews Theatre, Norfolk, Virginia, in 1926, is a splendid example of its type - a magnificent "panelled" console in walnut stained mahogany - a three manual version of our own Marrickville console.

Work has started on the stripping of the console, with all the former pneumatic pads being dispensed with.

The console will undergo a total refurbishment while in Sydney. All stop actions will be fully electrified and a new combination, piston capture action will be supplied. The console has been re-specified (new stop list) to suit the existing 12 rank Auckland organ.



Together with the console, the shipment also contained a Solo String and French Horn for the Orion Wurlitzer, an Orchestral Oboe for TOSA member Steve McDonald's home installation, and a Trumpet for the TOSA Tasmania division - quite a collection!..... and, once again, all of this was located, packed and shipped by our good friend in the USA, Russ Evans.

From the reports of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 20th NOVEMBER, 1996 - ORION CENTRE, CAMPSIE

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is with quite mixed emotions that I bring my final report as President. On one hand, I feel a certain relief that late-night committee meetings will be a thing of the past, while on the other hand, I have enjoyed the challenge of guiding the biggest and best TOSA division through the past three years.

Our 1996 concert program has once again been an outstanding success and this, coupled with a superb **National Convention**, has made it a great year to be a TOSA member. May I add that 1997 is looking just as exciting.

Presently however, there are still some areas for concern regarding the long-term viability of **Marrickville Town Hall** and the **Orion Centre** as concert venues and even as homes for our **Wurlitzer** organs. During the prolonged (but very successful) restoration of the **Marrickville** organ, there were a number of personnel and policy changes in the **Marrickville Council** bureaucracy that have made negotiations regarding confirmation of proposed concert dates and the resumption of a members' practice program rather difficult. Your Committee will continue in its endeavours to solve these problems in 1997.

I know that most, if not all of our members, are aware that **Canterbury City Council** recently took the decision to put the management of the **Orion Centre** out to private tender. To date, the successful tenderer has not been named. However, **Canterbury City Council's** General Manager, **Mr Jim Montague** has confirmed in writing our requested concert dates for 1997, thus ensuring our **Orion** concert season for next year. We will, however, have to negotiate all future hiring fees for concerts and members' functions with the new management, whoever that may be.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all those members who have helped out at our functions this year - booking officers, publicists, furniture movers, ushers, cooks, bottle washers, etc. Without you it would not happen.

I would particularly like to thank the executive and committee for its support in what for me, in some ways, has been a difficult year. Towards the end of 1998, I informed them that I would not be able to stand for President in 1996 due to increased business and domestic responsibilities, in particular having a son sitting for the HSC. The expressions of support from committee members and a willingness on their part to lighten my load enabled me to convince my tolerant and understanding wife to allow me to stand for another term. We are blessed with a group of very talented and dedicated people serving on committee:

Vice-President, **John Shaw**:- publicist and 'ideas-man extraordinaire'.

Vice-President, **Neil Palmer**:- peerless keeper of the **Marrickville** organ and manager of our very successful record bar.

Secretary, **Bill Schumacher**:- Society 'house-keeper supreme'.

Treasurer, **Geoff Brimley**:- who, while not always enjoying the best of health, has maintained the society's coffers in such successful fashion, that we are probably in the most sound financial position ever.

Membership Secretary, **Walter Pearce**:- 'Mr Efficiency' .

TOSA News Editor, **Colin Groves**:- a most difficult, vulnerable and essential task, performed with enthusiasm and style.

Assistant Secretary and President-Elect:- **Rob Gliddon**:- another successful convention under his leadership.

Assistant Treasurer, **Jim Booker**:- a loyal and supportive right-hand man to our treasurer.

Barry Tooker:- the totally professional 'candid-cameraman' .

Paul Luci:- a quiet worker behind the scenes and chief 'button-pusher' at the **Orion** centre concerts.

Peter Harding:- super signwriter and changer; another quiet achiever.

John Parker:- master organ builder, tuner and keeper of the **Orion** organ.

I would particularly like to thank both **Neil** and **John** for the immaculate condition and presentation of both of our **Wurlitzer** organs.

Finally may I thank you, the members, for your support, both expressed and unexpressed, over the past three years and urge you to maintain and indeed increase this level of support for your new President and my great friend, **Rob Gliddon** and your new Committee. You are in good hands.

Cliff Bingham

From the reports of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

20th November, 1996 - Orion Centre, Campsie

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The year 1996 has been a busy and exciting one for TOSA (NSW Division). One of the "hi-lights" of this year was our division's hosting the **National Convention** which was voted, by those who attended, a great success. Our choice of overseas artists, **Barry Baker** and **Nigel Ogden**, was a wise one, each artist had a completely different style. All the organs were in great shape.

Our concert line-up has been a great one - **John Atwell**, **Margaret Hall**, **Tony Fenelon**, **Simon Gledhill**, **Jelani Eddington**, **Nicholas Martin**, **John Giacchi**, **Ray Thornley** and the Christmas concert with **Tony Fenelon** and **John Atwell** looks like being a "Full House".

I must again thank our many helpers. **Jean** and **George Newell**, **Eunice** and **Merv Palmer**, **Ruth Brimley**, **Edith** and **Frank Rohanek** and **Carl Zipsen** who turn up month after month, putting off other engagements, to make our concerts and the Society's operation a great success.

Thanks also to **Miles Perry** for the magnificent lighting he has given us throughout the year, and to the members who help serve the refreshments at concerts, and who help in preparing our auditoriums for the concerts. The concerts just would not happen without these people giving up their time.

I would again like to thank the members of the executive and committee for their work and help during the year.

I hope you will all give some thought to the possibility of attending the **National Convention** in **Hobart** next year. It is a big gamble for the small **Tasmanian Division** in staging the **Convention** and they need all the support they can get.

At this time I would like to wish all members of **TOSA NSW Division** a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Bill Schumacher

TREASURER'S REPORT

It gives me pleasure to present a report of the **Society's** finances for the past year (ending 30th June, 1996).

As in the past the accounts are on an historical basis, rather than at today's values. There is not a great deal to be gained by either accounting method and our Accountants have suggested that for the present we continue to use the system which has been in place for some years.

Just a few details : the combined Gross Profit from Record Bar sales, Afternoon Teas and Candy Bar amounted to just under \$4,400. Our thanks must go to those who put in the sterling effort concert by concert to achieve this result..

Perusal of the Profit and Loss Account will show income was down across the board. This needs to be reversed and the only logical way of achieving this is for each of us to encourage our friends to at least attend the concerts and preferably become members of the **Society**. Whilst the net loss appears rather gruesome at just on \$22,800, this is not so bad when you note that this result is after depreciation of \$27,350. Remember that although for accounting purposes the **Society's** instruments are depreciated, the love and care they receive in effect results in appreciation.

To bring you up a little more up to date - the last major expense for the restoration of the **Marrickville** organ has been paid, the balance owing for the electronic relay \$7,814. Electric cable has been purchased at \$310 and this means that there are only a few small amounts and an Electrician's account to come.

An account has been opened in readiness for the restoration of the **Christie**, with a donation of \$250 from the members who organised our **Blackpool Dance Night**.

Thank you,
Geoff Brimley

MARRICKVILLE ORGAN REPORT

After approximately three years, the long awaited return of the **Marrickville WurliTzer** to the concert circuit took place during the **Easter Convention** under the capable hands of **Chris McPhee**. Since the completion of its rebuild, the instrument has been featured in three public concerts and a function for the **Marrickville Heritage Society**. All, organists who have played it speak favourably of its versatility

A lot of time and money has been spent on bringing the instrument into top condition, however, its specification is not quite complete. We need our members to show their support by attending the **Marrickville** concerts to make possible our goal of completing the organ's specification. We should not forget that the **Marrickville** concerts helped raise the money for the **Orion** installation.

I would like to thank **Mr Barclay Wright** of the **Mastertouch Piano Roll Company** for the donation of some player piano bellows for the **Vibraphone** project. This is a long term project that a few members are involved in.

At the time of writing this report, we are still waiting on **Marrickville Council's** reply regarding access to the organ for members' practice.

Neil Palmer

Ian Davies & Friends at Bondi Jcnctn-Waverley RSL

It is always great to visit the Bondi Junction-Waverley RSL Club and Ian Davies goes out of his way to welcome members and friends. Saturday afternoon on the 19th October was no exception.

I arrived early and was surprised to hear the Rodgers Trio organ sounding better than ever. Ian was checking it out in its new position in front of the stage.

The organ normally resides on a moveable platform in the function room behind the auditorium now. With the speaker cabinets on either side of the console, also in front of the stage, the organ sound really projected itself into the audience. The reflected sound added to the ambience giving a good reverberant theatre experience.

Naturally being a good MC, Ian started off with a joke about the little boy who was late for school "cos he had to take the bull to the cow". When the teacher said his father could have done it instead, the little boy piped up, "Yes, but not as well".

Having primed the good sized audience Ian introduced the first artist for the afternoon, the lovely Wendy Hambly.

Wendy opened with a bright and smoothly played The Best Things In Life Are Free, followed by a tender rendition of Waltz Of My Heart. Since it was an RSL Club, and in recognition of this fact, she next played Thank You America for any returned servicemen from the Second World War.

Something I have not heard for ages, Pedro The Fisherman, came next followed by Old Father Thames. We were missing a garden show in the Blue Mountains but our imagination was invited to make up for it - In A Monastery Garden. Wendy finished off with Eric Coates' Dambusters' March, complete with a realistic effect of droning aeroplanes flying overhead.

Bill Schumacher now took his place at the organ, opening with that great

A Review by Barry Tooker

Rodgers & Hart song With A Song In My Heart. Next came Richard Youman's More Than You Know.

Bill loves the songs from the big musicals and over the years has memorised a large repertoire of hits. He laments the fact that the era of memorable, catchy songs, when everyone could sing or whistle at least half a dozen tunes from a show, seems to have disappeared. Most recent shows are not remarkable for the number of songs that you can remember. I wholeheartedly agree.

Having been a fan of George Gershwin for many years, Bill played his *Waltz By Strauss*. The Platters made Twilight Time and My Prayer famous and this was followed by Willie Nelson's Crazy and David Rose's One Love.

Ian Davies now took the console, opening with Eh Compari, I'm Happy When I'm Hiking and Reginald Dixon's theme tune I Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside. All catchy tunes played in the typical Davies style we have grown to love. He finished with I Threw A Kiss In The Ocean and Anchors Aweigh. Do I detect a bit of a nautical theme here?

It was time to check the "engine room" and check our refreshments.

After interval Ian invited Bill Schumacher back to the console. Betty Bruderlin was delighted to have New York, *New York* played in her honour.

Moving to the Petrof grand piano, Bill demonstrated his great keyboard dexterity by playing Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's With One Look. Returning to the console, he entertained us with

selections from the current hit musical Crazy For You and finished with hits from another great musical, Showboat.

Wendy now returned to give us The Mardi Gras March, followed by Overhead The Moon Is Beaming and San Francisco. A change in pace gave us the Cuckoo Waltz and then, a Wendy specialty, Music Box Dancer, complete with winding up the mechanism, but it always runs down before the music finishes. She concluded with The Victory Polka.

It was now time for Ian to return and, in true theatre style, as only he can play, he gave us There's No Business Like Show Business, and from his theatre days The Wind And The Rain In Your Hair. From Annie Get Your Gun came You Can't Get A Man With A Gun and he finished with his own theme song, Cruising Down The River.

With Bill on the piano and Ian on organ we were invited to sing along to Those Wedding Bells Are Breaking Up That Old Gang Of Mine, Red Red Robin and Side By Side. Since Christmas is not so far away we had a chorus of *Santa Claus Is Coming To Town*.

Mary Davies was invited up on stage to do the presentations to the artists, along with one other person who was there to enjoy the show and could not understand why he was singled out. The staff who provided the lighting and refreshment facilities were also publicly thanked.

Ian and Mary celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary only days before on 17th October and we congratulate them on achieving something which so few achieve these days.

Many members may not be aware that our patron was taken seriously ill and, but for the prompt action of Mary in getting him rushed to hospital by ambulance, he may not have survived. He only came out of hospital a little over a week before the concert and should have been taking it easy but, trooper that he is, he insisted that the show go on and also that he should participate as he always does.

Good on you, Ian. You are the greatest.

Barry Tooker



CHRIS McPHEE'S USA TRIP

Early last year *Chris McPhee* visited the USA and this is the report of his travels and organ playing written by *Chris* for the *South Australian T.O.S.A. News* in April 1996 :

Traveller's Tales - Chris McPhee's Tour of the USA

During my recent trip to the USA I was accompanied by my brother, **Michael**. On arriving in **Los Angeles**, our first stop was **Disneyland**, where we spent the evening and went on the new Indiana Jones ride - it was unbelievable! Amongst many tourist spots in **Los Angeles** we managed to fit in a trip to **Universal Studios** - another "must" when visiting this city.

In **Las Vegas**, **Michael** and I took in all the sights. A highlight was the **Michael Crawford** show at the **MGM Grand**, where we enjoyed wonderful music and some exciting special effects.

Then we moved on to **Seattle** where I began preparation for the first concert at the **Johnson** residence **4/48 WurliTzer** - as good as they come. A pleasant touch was that **Ed Zollman**, who installed, voiced and maintains the instrument, came over to prepare it for the concert. The first concert was on me before I knew it! A full house of 350 - 400 people seated wall to wall in their lounge room, with some sitting within a metre of the console. It's an amazing feeling knowing people are watching everything you do so closely!

The concert was a huge success for the **Puget Sound Theatre Organ Society** and it was very nice to be given a standing ovation. The occasion was the highlight of my theatre organ career to date and one I'll always remember. The **Johnson** residence overlooks the attractive **Gig Harbor** and you can see the harbour from the organ console when looking at the audience.

I was grateful to our **Seattle** hosts, **Russ and JoAnn Evans**, who were like adoptive parents for **Michael** and me for the five day visit.

During our stay in **Seattle** we were able to visit **Tacoma Pizza and Pipes** one evening, where I was able to play the organ while diners ate their meals.

After a day of sightseeing in **Seattle** we went to **Wenatchee, Washington**, a two a half hour drive through snow

country, and started preparing for the programme at the **Wenatchee Museum**, home of a **2/9 WurliTzer**. The surroundings were intimate, with between 250-300 people, and a wonderful organ. There was also a beautiful **Steinway** piano which I played - the first time I'd played piano in a concert in the US. I appreciated the great reception from the audience and it was a really enjoyable concert.

After farewelling **Russ and JoAnn**, we drove to **Portland** with **Jim and Shirley Clausen**, where we were guests of the **Nordwall** family. Whilst **Jonas** and **Nancy Nordwall** were at work **Jim** and **Shirley** went out of their way to take us sightseeing, snowboarding and to visit many fine home organ installations.

We also went to the **NBA** basketball match between **Houston** and **Portland**. With **Jonas**, I attended a **Hector Olivera** concert and visited the **Rodgers** factory where I spent some time with **Donna Parker** and **Jonas**. I also tried out the latest **Rodgers** theatre organ - the model **360** - which was very, very nice to play.

One evening we went with **Jonas** and some fiends to **Uncle Milt's**, a famous pizza restaurant, where we enjoyed some fun and great music, and I was delighted to have an opportunity to play this very fine instrument again. **Uncle Milt's** pizza business is really going well with good crowds and terrific music.

Then it was back to business with preparation for the concert at **Salem, Oregon**. It is about an hour and a half hour drive from **Portland** to the **Elsinore Theatre** in **Salem** and its **3/26 WurliTzer** - another very fine instrument that has been tonally finished by **Ed Zollman**. It also has the latest **Uniflex 2000** operating system installed. The concert was compered by **Jonas Nordwall**, which was nice, and the organ was really great. I had another chance to play a beautiful

Steinway - tunes like *An Affair to Remember* and *Dream of Olwe*. This piano used to be a concert instrument for the **La Beck** sisters, a brilliant **French** duo. The theatre is supposed to be haunted, but I never saw the ghost.

The next move was to **Chicago** where we stayed with **Paul van der Molen**, whose home has a very fine **3/21 WurliTzer** installed. I had a great time there with the chance to catch up with friends made during the 1993 trip for the **ATOS Convention**.

On this return trip I was engaged by the **Chicago Theatre Organ Society** to play the same instrument as in 1993 - the **Patio Theatre's 3/17 Barton**.

The concert was shared with **The Banjo Buddies**, a five piece **Dixieland** jazz band, and included the chance to play some tunes with them. There were about 1,000 people there and the event was very well received.

A dream came true with the chance to visit the famed **Sanfilippo** residence for an afternoon. **Michael** looked at the many musical instruments while I played the wonderful **WurliTzer** designed by the late **Dave Junchen** for **Jasper and Marian Sanfilippo**. I was also able to record several tracks on their computer system for other visitors to hear in the future. The organ sounds brilliant on CD, but is even better "live" - a most incredible sound. Our host was **Robert Ridgeway** who is the curator of the collection. **Lyn Larsen** is the musical director of the **Place de la Musique**.

We soon had to think about coming home and back to work. It was nice to get home, but I am hoping to have the chance to do another trip in the next year or so, to take up some further offers of concerts.

I'd like to thank all our hosts, family and friends who were so supportive and made our trip such a memorable and happy one.

Chris McPhee

Review of JOHN GIACCHI in Concert at Willoughby Town Hall - Saturday, 26th October, 1996

by Amy Caldwell

Chatswood Civic Centre was the venue for yet another outstanding concert. This time played by our own TOSA member, **John Giacchi**.

John opened with a sensitive performance of *One Fine Day* from *Madame Butterfly*, and one could picture the drama unfolding as he played.

Following this, we heard a complete change of style with *Theatreland*. From here **John** chose to show off the softer side of the organ, with an old-favourite - *Harlem Nocturne*, and a quite different style of registration.

To the 20's and 30's era - *Shadow Waltz*, *Daydreaming All Night Long* and *Lullaby of Birdland* were some of the pieces in this selection.

By this time it was obvious that the audience was thoroughly enjoying the concert and was appreciating the pleasant manner in which **John** introduced the music.

Before the concert started, I had time to look around the hall, and I found that, featured on the walls, are some very interesting quilted murals depicting various scenes. I noticed one featuring the **Australian** flag; another with musical symbols and hands at a keyboard; little old-fashioned family scenes; and another showing our beautiful waratah flower. These are well worth inspecting when visiting the Chatswood Civic Centre.

While **John** took a well deserved break, we were treated to some delightful, light opera, sung by **Miss Leslie Martin** and **Mr Dean Sinclair**, accompanied by **Mr Ron Sinclair** at the **Wurlitzer** organ. This sounded like **Strauss** or **Léhar**, but as it was unannounced, I will not try to name the pieces. Un-named or not, it was thoroughly enjoyable.

Just before intermission, the audience welcomed **John Giacchi** back to the stage, when he played an old melody *In Party Mood*. We were told that this was the theme music for the old ABC radio programme *The Housewife's Choice*. The programme obviously had a lot of thought put into

it, as the wide variety of music showed and it was well appreciated by the enthusiastic audience

Following intermission, from a suite of 6 pieces, came the music from *Blue Hills*. This, of course, was the popular ABC radio serial which I believe went to air for many, many years.

Some of the **Harry Warren** melodies came next, a collection which **John** calls *Gold-diggers Cavalcade*. Rightly so, as we heard *In the Money*, *Plenty of Money and You* amongst others in this bracket, and including the beautiful, old favourite *By A Waterfall*.

Now, time once more for our very popular vocal artists to return to the stage, again accompanied on the organ by **Ron Sinclair**. The two singers obviously enjoy working together - their voices blended beautifully and the audience enjoyed their selections, as evidenced by their applause.

John returned next, with yet another fine interpretation - this time **Ponchielli's** *Dance of the Hours*. We were reminded that this was the music used in the **Walt Disney** production, *Fantasia*.

A most intriguing piece of music was chosen as **John's** closing number - entitled *Chopsticks*, it featured the old two-finger tune we all used to try playing - *Oh, Can You Wash Your Father's Shirt?* What a great little piece this was to finish on!

As an encore, all artists combined on stage to present *Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life*.

With **Leslie** and **Dean** singing together, backed by **Ron Sinclair** on the grand piano and **John G.** on the **Wurlitzer** organ. This was just beautiful to watch and hear, as was shown by the applause from a well satisfied audience.

The whole programme was well planned and combined with such a lovely instrument as the restored **Wurlitzer** organ no-one could help but go home in a most contented and satisfied mood.



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Review of the Tony Fenelon and John Atwell Concert

Orion Centre Campsie

Sunday, 8th December, 1996

by Wendy Hambly

There was an air of excitement at the **Orion Centre** on Sunday. A capacity house was waiting for the show to begin. **Tony and John** opened their concert with *You're Just In Love*. What a great opener - bright and up-tempo. This is just the type of music the audience came to hear and they showed their appreciation accordingly. Now the stage had been set for one of the most musically outstanding concerts I have ever had the privilege of attending.

Next came *Holiday for Strings*. Strings, obviously, on organ, then full tibia chorus for middle section. I could hear the glock here and there; descending arpeggios on piano, building up to a great finish. Superb technique by **Tony** on piano to give varying effects in the different sections of this piece. A difficult piece masterfully executed by both artists.

Solo from **Tony** now - a number sung by **Harry Secombe** (**Tony** promised not to sing!) - *If I Ruled The World*. Arpeggio to start; tibias, then soft string ensemble; harp left hand and string/diapason right hand building to full organ. Back to 16' reed and soft tibias, then strings right hand with great harmonies. Second touch was put to good use here, as was harp and fractional tibias for that 'shimmering' sound. Glock arpeggio to finish.

Tony's classic bracket now - D maj/B min medley with the music of **Bach; Purcell**, etc. Straight sound with reeds in these very busy pieces. I heard many different sounds in this medley, including piccolo; trumpet; full chords left hand, and then both hands on great manual. Lots of trills and other little 'fiddly bits' were heard - all expertly and cleanly executed and finishing with a 32' pedal - what a big sound!

Time now for **John** to return to organ with a **Bach** feel piece - *100,000 Songs* - contrapuntal (in the style of counterpoint - two or more melodies intertwining). Soft tibias to start, with piano taking a very clear melody line. Throughout this piece the melodies intertwined beautifully between the instruments. It was almost as if the instruments were talking to each other. Different techniques were used throughout to enhance the number, eg organ taking melody line with soft arpeggios on piano. A thoroughly entrancing number.

Who Framed Roger Rabbit? Well, I don't know, but **John** thought it would be a great idea to play a solo number from this movie - a bright, jaunty piece with good use of second touch - fractional tibia and vox section, also appropriate use of glock with a full organ finish.

Now from the movie *Sleepless in Seattle* - *When I Fall in Love* - a beautiful piece played very sensitively by **John**. Effective straight reed to open, then add tibias and

fractionals. A haunting melody line through using various solo stops. Second chorus full organ with excellent harmonies throughout and some fragment chords as well. **John's** expertise in arranging really makes his music come to life. A full tibia chorus with both hands on great manual gives a full sound, then dropping back to solo tibia ending.

Then came *On a Spring Note* - now we hear the clear tones of the clarinet, together with fractional tibias/diapason. A light and jaunty piece with clever use of almost every solo stop on the organ.

Tony returned to piano and he told us he had been rummaging around in the garage with the silverfish !!! and had found **Chopin's Grande Valse Brillante** in Eb major. Piano to start, then organ joins with tibias. This is one of my favourite **Chopin Valses** and as I closed my eyes and listened to the excellent right hand piano technique and tibia ensemble I could almost see all those beautiful ball gowns swaying to the music.

From *Sunset Boulevard* we had *As If We Never Said Goodbye*. Arpeggios on piano and soft strings on organ to start, with organ taking melody at first and then swapping to piano with 'echo' from organ. An excellent arrangement of this beautiful song. Change of key for second last chorus and returning to original registration and then a build up for a big ending. I had not heard this song before and would love to add it to my repertoire.

Skaters' Waltz was next with piano commencing and organ taking melody line with soft reeds. Glock put to good use also. Reeds used as special effects and echoes. Did I hear sleigh bells too? - I'm sure I did. For one section, each instrument took a melody line and then swapped around for the next section. All building up to a big ending. This number really came alive and was a highlight for me.

I had not heard the next piece for many years - *London Fantasia* - a very dramatic piece of music expertly presented. Full organ to start, coming back to tibias and diapason, then add piano, taking melody. Percussions were also used for special effects. Did you hear the air-raids sirens? - (untremmed running 4th intervals). Many musicians can play well, however not too many duo artists can make the music and instruments come alive so vividly.

Tony and John commenced the second half of their programme with *The Sheik of Araby* - with musical parodies and cliches. A real fun number, with lots of different styles. An unexpected, but delightful, arrangement.

John's solo spot now - *I'll Be Home for*

Christmas - soft tibias with fractionals; oboe for melody; then tuba; change of pace and full sound coming back to soft sounds and glock to finish. *A Medley for Christmas* came next, including *Good King Wenceslas; First Nowell, Good Christian Men, Holly and Ivy; O Come All Ye Faithful*. Full church organ sound with trumpet - as you would expect to hear in a cathedral, but with a touch of theatre organ.

Tony returned to the piano for *With One Look from Sunset Boulevard* - piano and organ commence together - clarinet and tibia melody line, then reed. Good use of chimes for melody.

Solo from **Tony** with tango time now - did I hear *Jealousy* amongst other things? Full organ and percussion to start - played with gusto. *Jesus Christ Superstar* next - **Tony's** imagination never ceases to amaze me. Just loved the dixieland style arrangement of *Herod's Song. I Don't Know How to Love Him* was played with straight organ phrase and then to full organ - very effective.

Duo time again for *Limelight on Chaplin* - played with all the feel and warmth that only a theatre organ can produce, with bridges between songs that you barely knew were there. Next came *What'll I do?* Piano takes melody line with string chorus on organ. The melodies intertwined beautifully and seemed to float around the auditorium.

Tony and John's final piece was the First Movement of **Greig's Piano Concerto in A minor** - 32' pedal and drum roll for a spectacular start. This was the best presentation of this piece that I have ever heard and the many people who rose to their feet and applauded at the conclusion obviously agreed with me.

Tony and John would certainly not be allowed to escape without an encore. What a great choice they made with a *Ragtime* medley. These two exceptional musicians certainly know how to have fun and allow the audience in on the act as well. The applause was thunderous and very well deserved. No-one wanted this concert to end, I know I didn't.

This was truly a magical day - one of those very rare 'perfect concerts', where we had a capacity audience; excellent choice of music, which had been expertly arranged, not to mention tasteful registrations on organ and superb piano technique. This is as close to perfection as you can get. **Tony and John** are an amazing and creative duo. They seem to think almost as one person and can make their music come alive. This compatibility certainly shows in world-class concert presentations such as this. **Tony and John** - you are simply the best! We know you will return to us next year, but I'm not too sure if we can wait that long!

OUR NEXT ARTIST

Chris McPhee

2nd February-ORION CENTRE

Chris McPhee began learning electronic organ in **Adelaide** at the age of 9, studying through the **Australian Guild of Music and Speech**.

His natural ability combined with hard work and enthusiasm gained him the Associate Diploma of Electronic Organ with Honours, as well as places in many competitions, talent quests and National Awards from AGMS. In 1990 he achieved full marks for his Matriculation Music (Performance and Theory) and in 1992 was the winner of the Royal School of Church Music's Scholarship.

He is a church organist as well as a rostered house organist for film shows at **Adelaide's Capri Theatre**, and a part time organist for a commercial undertaking. Last year he released his first commercial tape, **Introducing Chris McPhee**, recorded on a **Lowrey Heritage** electronic organ and his efforts were widely acclaimed.

Chris is in the enviable position of having the **Wurlitzer** in the **Capri Theatre, Goodwood, S.A.**, as his home-base instrument. The availability of such a fine instrument and the opportunity to play it regularly for film shows has done much to aid **Chris'** development. **Chris** also has the honour of being the Vice-Patron of the **Electronic Organ Club of South Australia**.

In 1992 he visited the **USA** on a

concert and study trip, where he spent a month under the tutelage of the brilliant musician, organist and teacher, **Jonas Nordwell**.

Probably his greatest achievement so far is the winning of the senior section of the **1993 Young Theatre Organist Competition** conducted by the **American Theatre Organ Society**, as well as being declared the Overall Winner of the whole competition, which includes entrants from **England, Canada, America and Australia**. His \$3,000 prize included a trip to the **USA** in July, 1993, to play at the **ATOS Convention in Chicago**, where he took part in a concert at the **3/17 Barton organ in Chicago's Patio Theatre** and was presented with his award. He was invited back last year to play at their **1994 Convention**, which was held in **Fresno, California**.

In the last 5 years of the **ATOS Young Organist Competition, Australian** entrants, sponsored by the **Australia Felix Chapter of ATOS**, have been awarded several scholarships and secured winning places on no less than 4 occasions - **John Giacchi** in 1990 (Senior), **Sean Henderson** in 1992 (Junior), **Chris** in 1993 (Senior), and **Heath Wooster** in 1994 (Intermediate). This is certainly a great achievement for our young organists and a compliment to their teachers, especially since there is so much

competition which appears to be getting stronger every year. **Chris** is the first **Australian** to be chosen as the Overall Winner, as well as winning his age-group

Chris has recently played in **Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide, Ballarat** and **Sydney**. Avid **TOSA** Conventioneers will have heard **Chris** at the **1989 Perth Convention**, when as a 15 year old he shared the stage with **Ballarat's Sean Dunwoodie**, and at the **1993 Adelaide Convention**, when this 19 year old's brilliant technique and sensitive interpretation were the exciting surprise of the whole Convention.

In September 1993, **Chris** joined the ranks of duettists privileged to perform in tandem with the piano talents of **Tony Fenelon** at the **Capri, Adelaide**. They played to an ecstatic full house there and received a similar welcome at the **Orion** in December, 1993, when **Tony** introduced **Chris** to **Sydney** audiences for the first time.

These achievements and his stunning ability, combined with the warm, engaging personality which **Chris** unassumingly displays during his performances, provide the ingredients for a truly superb concert from this rising young star, whose concert last year was a rousing success.

Welcome back, **Chris**.

Booking Form : page 14

