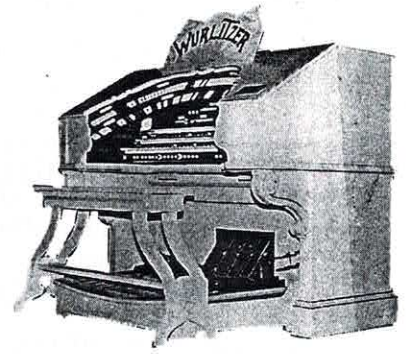


NOVEMBER, 1995



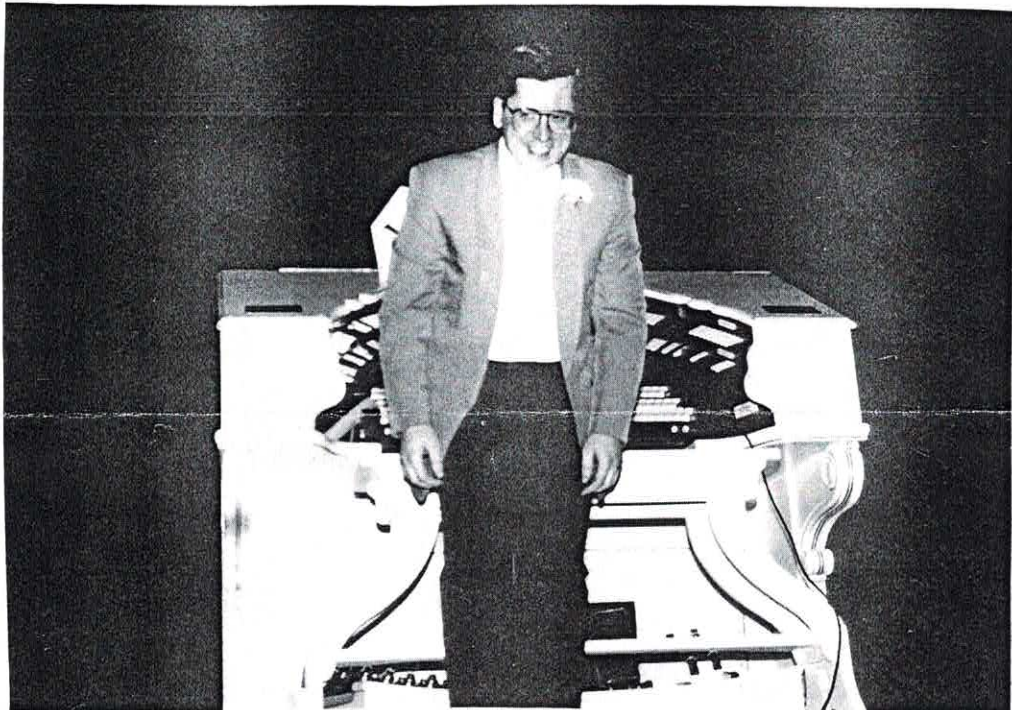
# TOSA NEWS

2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ  
Marrickville Town Hall

3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ  
Orion Centre Campsie

*The Return of America's top Theatre Organist*

# WALT STRONY



**Sunday, 19th November, 1995**

**Orion Centre Campsie**

Volume 34  
Issue 10  
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# TOSA NEWS

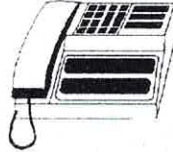
NOVEMBER, 1995

**THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.**

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right person :

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**COMING  
EVENTS**

## NOVEMBER

Monday 6 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**  
Sunday 19 at 2.00pm **Walt Strony Concert**  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Wednesday 22 at 8.00pm **Annual General Meeting**  
Orion Centre Campsie

## DECEMBER

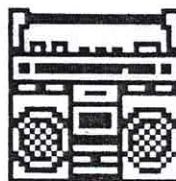
Sunday 3 at 2.00pm **Tony Fenelon's  
Christmas Concert**  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Monday 4 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**

## JANUARY

Monday 8 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**

## FEBRUARY

Monday 5 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**  
Sunday 11 at 2.00pm **John Atwell Concert**  
Orion Centre Campsie



**REMEMBER TO TUNE IN TO  
2CBA-FM 103.2**

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



# Editorial

Len Rawle certainly proved to be a top theatre organist at his October concert, delighting the crowd with his playing and his wit. Especially impressive was his story about the unknown, electronic 'little brown organ' that had been dragged out of the basement of the Perth radio station and which he was asked to play live to air, sight unseen and without even an organ stool, let alone a few seconds to practise! - quite a challenge but an unenviable task to which he proved himself to be more than equal.

I've gathered together a couple of different items about organs in Western Australia for this issue to make a kind of mini-feature of this area. I hope you find them interesting and perhaps you might try to seek them out if you have a chance to visit Perth.

Because of inevitable delays with the production of *TOSA News* over these next couple of months, I've included an advance booking form for December's heavily-booked **Tony Fenelon** concert, as well as one for **Walt Strony's** November concert. If time is very short to **Walt's** concert it may be advisable to phone your reservation through.

If anyone is interested in more Internet addresses, please phone me and I can pass on to you those that I know about.

Thank you once again to **Rod Blackmore** for his reliable and efficient service as our Returning Officer. Also, on behalf of all members, I'd like to thank **Cliff Bingham** for the great job he has been doing as our President, leading our Society to greater heights than ever before. It is not easy to juggle the demands of a full-time job, family commitments and time-consuming *TOSA* duties, as many of us are fully aware. We certainly appreciate **Cliff's** efforts which are often insufficiently publicly recognised.

Thanks once again to the contributors to *TOSA News* - some of whom are able to send me text-saved items on 3.5" disks which saves me having to re-type the whole article - very much appreciated, I can assure you!

See you at the **AGM** on Wednesday, 22nd November at the **Orion Centre**.

Best Wishes,  
**Colin Groves**



## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

*TOSA is pleased to welcome the following new members and to wish them a long and happy association with our Society :*

**Robert Bruce - Belmore**  
**John Connolly - Kingsford**  
**Evelyn & Mel Harris - Rose Bay**  
**Rhona Nicholson - Bass Hill**  
**Ian Patrick - Lane Cove**  
**Peter Sheldon - Point Clare**  
**Peter Turner - Quakers Hill**  
**Norma Wilkinson - Tuncurry**

### Late News

The nominations received were exactly sufficient to fill all of the Executive and Committee positions, with the exception of the position of **Assistant Treasurer** for which no nomination had been received by the closing date.

Therefore, a ballot will not be necessary to finalise any of these positions.

The current office bearers will hold the same positions for the coming year, 1995-96.

# From The President

I would like to take this opportunity to once again ask all **TOSA** members to take an active interest in the running of our Society by attending the **Annual General Meeting** at 8pm on Wednesday, 22nd November, 1995, at the **Orion Centre, Campsie**.

At the date of writing, the nominations had not yet closed and thus I didn't know if we have multiple nominees for the various positions requiring a ballot.

This information should be available in this edition of the newsletter. Please take the time to study the ballot form and vote for the candidate you think is most suited to the nominated position.

I would also like to acknowledge the enormous efforts and abilities of the people who get *TOSA News* into your hands. As a previous newsletter editor, I know only too well the unseen work involved in producing a publication that is interesting, informative, sometimes desirably controversial, and on time. Our current editor, **Colin Groves**, not only does all of this in his leisure time, he, like many of our workers, uses much of his own equipment (computer, printer, etc.).

Once the master issue is finished, it goes to Assistant Secretary, **Rob Gliddon**, who prints all 700 copies on the Society's copier.

This huge wad of paper is then transported to **Mary and Arthur Hall**, who collate it, staple it, fold it, address it, sort it into postcode order and bring it to the concerts for collection by members. Uncollected copies are then mailed the following day. Quite a logistic "tour de force".

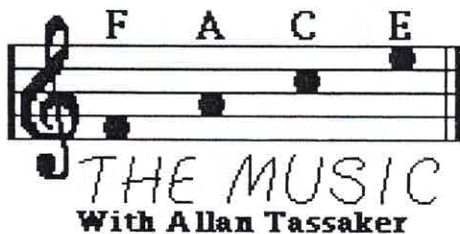
To these people we offer our sincere thanks. The Society could not hope to operate as efficiently as it does without their willing co-operation.

**Cliff Bingham**  
President

*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**





Allan Tassaker, having just returned from Italy, was talking to a friend.

"See that pile of objects on top of my desk?" he asked.

The friend looked down on them in horror and demanded an explanation.

"Well," continued Allan, "while I was in Rome I gave a free concert to the world's most generous group. They call themselves the *Generosity Group!*

I started off my concert with a little speech : 'Friends, Romans and countrymen, lend me your ears.'

Allan pointed to the table.

"...AND THEY DID !!!"

**If you are seeking an antique, theatre, console or spinet organ contact the MANNING ORGAN SOCIETY**

**(065) 531431 anytime**

## AN ORGAN DI-SECTED

According to my Dictionary  
by Allan Tassaker

Today we are going to di-sect an organ - pull it to pieces to find out what makes it tick... However we all know that it is not a clock! We have far too much time for the organ.

Let us start with the ...

Pedals  
Keys  
Tremolo  
Cabinet  
Player  
Scales  
Transistors  
Bench

According to my dictionary, a PEDAL is: A lever to be pressed by the foot.  
Good!

Now - FOOT (according to my dictionary) is a lower extremity of the leg...

So - PEDALS are LOWER EXTREMITIES!

Now - a KEY is an instrument for opening or shutting a lock... LOCK is "FASTENING TOGETHER".

We are getting somewhere!

So we now have : A FASTENING TOGETHER OF THE LOWER EXTREMITIES!!

Now for TREMOLO : meaning "A STATE OF SHAKING".

Meaning: TO AGITATE...

And CABINET: A SMALL ROOM. ROOM meaning SPACE...

So far we have :

"A FASTENING TOGETHER OF THE LOWER EXTREMITIES MEANING TO AGITATE IN A SPACE..."

Now for PLAYER: "TO DO SOMETHING FOR AMUSEMENT" AMUSEMENT is : "TO ACT WITH FREE MOTION"

SCALES : "A THIN FLAKE ON THE SKIN"

TRANSISTOR : "A SEMI-CONDUCTOR"

BENCH : "A WORK TABLE"

WORK meaning : "PHYSICAL EFFORT"

So now we have :

"A FASTENING TOGETHER OF THE LOWER FLAKE OF SEMI-CONDUCTORING SKIN WITH FREE WORKING MOTION AGITATING IN SPACE WHICH IS QUITE A PHYSICAL EFFORT !!"

MEMBERS, I THINK I SHALL ABANDON THIS PROJECT ! ...

I shall leave you all to examine your OWN organs !

.... According to YOUR Dictionary !

## GET WELL

Best wishes for a speedy recovery go from TOSA members and friends to **Betty Weismantel** who is convalescing after major surgery.

## SYMPATHY

TOSA members were saddened to hear of the recent death of long-time, faithful member, **Joan Chamberlain.** Our sincere sympathy to her husband, **Bert,** and to their family and friends.

## FOR SALE

John Giacchi is selling his **Hammond B-3000,** the updated version of the old B-3. It has two 61-note manuals and a 25-note pedal board, and comes complete with Leslie Speaker and Auto-Vary Rhythm Unit. Beautiful cabinet and in excellent condition. Asking \$4,500 o.n.o. Call (02) 380 5101 or (02) 231 6404.

## FOR SALE

Wurlitzer 805 Centura Concert Organ Full Pedal Board 2 Plus Keyboards Built-in Leslies 10 Presets - 125 Variations \$4,000 o.n.o. Phone : (063) 62 9759 Additional Details sent on request



## SCOTLAND

As part of the celebration of the 100 years of cinema, **Scotland** is planning the creation of a **Cinema Museum**. The project would include a 208-seat cinema with a beautifully restored cinema organ to give recitals accompanying films.

The museum in **Coatbridge** would be housed in a restored 19th century building, enclosed in a glass facade, giving the impression of a movie set. The museum's display will be based on the vast collection of cinema memorabilia of the **Scottish Film Archive**.

The Vice Chairman of the Scottish District of the **Cinema Organ Society**, **Dr Iain McGlinchey**, says that they are hoping to rebuild around the **Hilsdon** theatre organ from the **Picture House, Paisley**.

## MANCHESTER

Two concerts were held at the end of September to farewell the **Free Trade Hall** in **Manchester** and its **4/10 WurliTzer**.

*The Last Night of the Choirs* concert included a solo organ spot from **Nigel Ogden** (due here next year to play for Sydney's **1996 Easter Convention**), and the *Au Revoir, WurliTzer* show had 3 organists performing - **Phil Kelsall, Simon Gledhill** and **Nigel Ogden**.

The **Manchester Town Hall** has a superb, under-used **Cavaillé-Coll** concert organ which **Nigel Ogden** played at lunchtimes during September and October, as an encouragement to the authorities to make more use of their magnificent instrument in its wonderful Gothic setting.

## JAPAN

Did you know that the **Mitsukoshi Department Store** in **Tokyo** has a **3/12 WurliTzer** which was installed in 1930 and is the only **WurliTzer** in **Japan**? It is installed on the store's 7th floor in a theatre/exhibition hall in 2 adjacent chambers that face out onto a balcony containing the console. The



console has 2 straight rows of stoptabs and a roll top, and includes a player mechanism.

The organist for many years was **Hiroshi Matsugawa** and he played several short concerts each day.

## NEW YORK

The restoration of the **Radio City Music Hall's** dual console **4/58 WurliTzer** is continuing. The left-hand, **Liebert** console has been completed and its case has been done over in a durable, black satin finish. It has had castors fitted totally out of view under the console, which will make both consoles completely mobile within the area of the pit, the stage and in their famous "niches".

The keys and stoptabs have been replaced because of the excessive wear over the years. The toe studs and piano-like toe levers are shiny chrome. The specification is original except for the addition of **Tibia Clausa** unification, a set of **MIDI** stops, and electronic **Peterson** relays and actions. Complete restoration is expected to be finalised by the middle of next year.

According to a note on the Internet, the original specification was designed by **Kimball**, about 14 ranks were built by **Moller**, only about 26 ranks were unified, and the organ has the only 32' **Tibia Clausa** and 32' **Tuba Horn** that **WurliTzer** built.

This information came via the Internet from well-known US organist, **Scott Foppiano**, who was very impressed by the restoration work and found about 95% of the organ playable.

## PIZZA PARLOURS

One of the traditional sites for theatre organs in **North America** has been in **Pizza Parlours**. For some reason this bit of Americana has not been copied in **Australia**, unfortunately for the sake of saving displaced organs. **Peter Beames** of **Adelaide** has supplied a list of eating establishments with theatre organs which may be of interest to anyone travelling in the **US** or **Canada** in the near future.

A list of existing pipe organ pizza restaurants, showing the State, the city, the name of the establishment and the size and make of the organ :

### ARIZONA

**Mesa** - Organ Stop Pizza - 4/48  
**WurliTzer** - CLOSED June '95, but will reappear soon

### CALIFORNIA

**Martinez** - Bella Roma Pizza -  
3/13 **WurliTzer**  
**Redwood City** - Cap'n's Galley -  
4/23 **WurliTzer**  
**San Lorenzo** - Ye Olde Pizza Joynt -  
3/13 **WurliTzer**  
**Sacramento** - Arden Pizza & Pipes -  
4/20 **WurliTzer**  
**Fresno** - Pizza & Pipes - 3/23 **WurliTzer**

### OREGON

**Portland** - Organ Grinder Pizza -  
4/51 **WurliTzer**

### WASHINGTON

**Tacoma** - Pizza & Pipes -  
3/17 **WurliTzer**  
**Vancouver** - Uncle Milt's Pizza Co. -  
3/18 **WurliTzer**

### WISCONSIN

**Milwaukee** - Organ Piper Music Palace  
- 3/27 **Kimball-WurliTzer**

### ONTARIO - CANADA

**Toronto** - Organ Grinder - 3/13 **Hybrid**

### Other eating establishments :

### CALIFORNIA

**San Jose** - Angelino's - 3/13 **WurliTzer**

### OHIO

**Hamilton** - Shady Nook Theatre-Restaurant - 4/32 **WurliTzer**

### PENNSYLVANIA

**Pottstown** - Sunnysbrook Ballroom -  
3/11 **United States**

### UTAH

**Salt Lake City** - Organ Loft -  
5/32 **WurliTzer**

### INDIANA

**Indianapolis** - Paramount Music Palace  
- 4/42 **WurliTzer** - CLOSED about 6 months ago.



# Pipe Organs in Western Australia

A recent item on the Internet by **Geoff Knaggs** prompted me to look out from the files some further information about the two theatre organs in **Perth** and a special church organ at **New Norcia** which recent visitor to **Australia**, **John Ledwon**, had claimed as one of the most interesting organ-playing experiences of his trip.

There are two Theatre Organs in **Perth**, an **English 3/10 Compton** owned by **TOSA (WA)** and a privately owned **3/18 Wurlitzer**, both installed in **Council Community Centres**.

## WURLITZER

**Geoff Knaggs**, who describes himself as "maintenance dogsbody and E-Mail correspondent", writes about the **Perth Wurlitzer** under the heading "**The Wurlitzer in West Australia Needs Help**":

The **Wurlitzer** is privately owned by two former Theatre Organists, **John Fuhrmann** and **Ray Clements**, operating as **Stirling Theatre Organ Productions (S.T.O.P.)** who purchased it when the **Metro Theatre** was demolished in 1973. **John** was the last organist employed by the theatre and played there from the early 60's until 1972.

Following a period of 5 years storage and restoration and negotiation with the **Stirling City Council** who were building a new **Community Centre** at **Karrinyup** (a suburb north of the **City of Perth**) **STOP** was able to have incorporated two pipe chambers, a relay room and an organ storage area complete with powered roll-out stage. The Council then agreed to lease the organ from **STOP** for an extended term.

Originally a **2/12 Style F Opus 1728** the organ was built in the late 1920's and installed in the **Regent** (later renamed the **Metro**) Theatre in **Perth** in 1928. After the installation at **Karrinyup** in 1981, a long range decision was made to add extra ranks and change to a three manual console and accordingly in 1988 a console (ex-**Opus 977**) that had been altered to a 3-manual by the addition of a **Style 260** upper bolster was obtained, as well as

2 extra switchstacks and 6 ranks of pipes. Still to be brought on line is a **Kimball Solo String**, an **Oboe Horn**, as well as an unenclosed **Deagan Marimba** and an upright piano, making it a **3/20**. The selection of the ranks reflects the tonal requirements of the owners and the organ has drawn many favourable comments from the "experts".

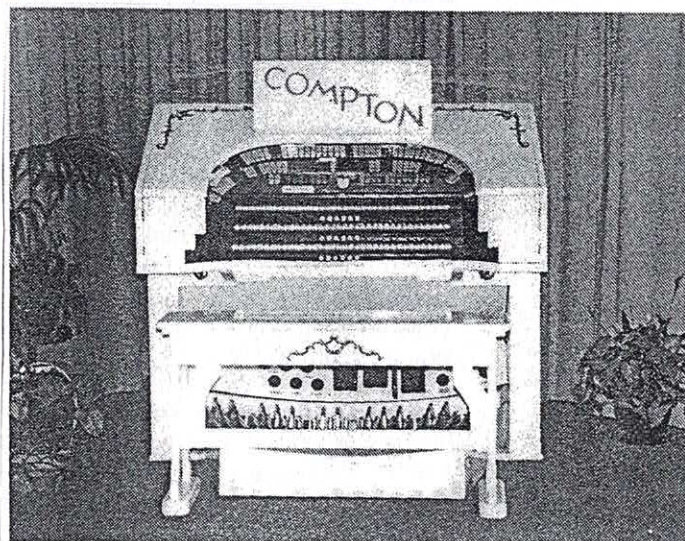
As an interesting aside, this organ is one of three that came to **Australia** that was factory pitched at **A452** and the other two are still in operation one in **Sydney** and the other in **Adelaide**.

Its concert season runs from late February to the end of November and consists of eight concerts featuring **American, English and Australian** artists. Attendances average over 350 per concert and a Season Ticket scheme attracts over 200.

Their current plans for the improvement of the organ require a complete new **Double Bolster Stoprail** to suit a **Style 260** console. This stoprail must be suitable for electric stop action units such as **Sydney** or similar. Can any reader help? If a set of drawings is available so much the better as freight on something of this size would not be cheap.

If you would like to hear this organ when you are in **Perth** (the prettiest city in **Australia**), ring **John Fuhrmann** on (09) 4479837, **Ray Clements** on (09) 2493098 or **Geoff Knaggs** on (09) 3326074.

## COMPTON



From an article by **Brian Northeast** in the **Music Maker** magazine (1983) and from the **Tremulant**, comes this history of the **Perth Compton** :

Sixty years ago in **Britain** an exciting thing happened for cinema goers - massive theatre organs were added to the entertainment. The ornate, illuminated, glass-surrounded console would rise slowly at the front of the auditorium as the keyboard player would set about a popular tune with gusto. The theatre would vibrate with the sounds and the spirits of the audience would soar. It was a magical mixture of lightshow and music.

Among the best of these wonderful creations were organs made by **John Compton**, and one in particular was noted for its elaborate console and spectacular lighting. This **3/10 Compton** was in the **Plaza Cinema** at **Worthing** in the south of **England** until the late 60's.

Now it resides in the **John Leckie Music Centre** in **Nedlands, Perth**. In 1970 the **WA Theatre Organ Society** bought the instrument and had it shipped to **Fremantle** in 9 cases - its total weight was 5 tons and 2 pantechicians were needed to shift the cases from **Worthing** to the **London** docks.

At **Fremantle**, the society ran into problems - because of complications over the organ's tax rating, Customs put it into store. As the months passed, storage costs added to the wharfage and resulted in a bill beyond the Society's means. Fortunately, the organ was bought by **Bob Purvis** who had it

installed in a warehouse in **Myaree** and then later handed it over to **TOSA (WA)** to renovate and use for practice and concerts.

Eventually the restored organ was moved, upgraded to a **3/12** and in 1988 it opened in the **John Leckie Music Centre**.



# Pipe Organs in Western Australia (Cont'd)

## NEW NORCIA

New Norcia, Australia' only Monastery town, was founded in 1846 by Benedictine missionaries under the leadership of **Dom Salvado** and named after **Nursia**, the birth place of **St Benedict**. Its cathedral houses a unique organ built by the **German** organ-builder, **Albert Moser**, and exhibited at the **1922 Munich Exhibition**. It was purchased by the Benedictine community and officially opened in 1923.

The organ was renovated and converted to electro-pneumatic action in 1978 and consists of two 58-note manuals, a 30-note pedalboard and 34 voices.

**John Ledwon** on his recent tour of **Australasia** visited and reported on it under the title "**Moser Organ in New Norcia, W. Australia**" as follows :

One of the most unique instruments I had the pleasure of playing while in **New Zealand** and **Australia** was an **A. Moser (Munich)** instrument built for the **Munich Exposition** of 1922 and later moved and installed about 1923 in a monastery in **New Norcia, Western Australia**, about 120 kilometers north of **Perth**. I thought you might be interested in its unique stoplist.

### I. Manual (58 notes)

16' Bourdon  
8' Open Diapason  
8' Soloflute  
8' Dulciana  
8' Unda Maris 2 rks  
4' Octave  
Mixture 3 rks  
8' Trumpet

### II. Manual (58 keys, 70 notes)

16' Rohrflute  
8' Viola de Gamba  
8' Violon d'orchestre  
8' Vox coelestis  
8' Concertflute  
8' Lieblich Gedackt  
4' Gemshorn  
4' Echoflute  
2 2/3' Nasard  
2' Piccolo  
1 3/5 Third  
1 1/2 Seventh  
8/9 Ninth

Harmonia aetherea 5 rks  
1 1/3' Cymbal 3 rks  
16' English Horn  
8' Clarion et  
4' Clarion  
8' Vox Humana

### Pedal (30 notes)

16' Major bass  
16' Echo bass  
16' Sub bass  
16' Bombarcon  
8' Bass flute  
8' Violincello  
8' Stopped bass

### Mechanical Stops

Manual II. to I.  
Pedal coupler to I.  
Pedal coupler to II.  
Sub-octave coupler II. to I.  
Super-octave coupler II. to I.  
Super-octave coupler II. to Pedal  
Trumpet off (ventil)  
English Horn off (ventil)  
Clarionet off (ventil)  
Clarion off (ventil)  
Vox Humana off (ventil)  
Bonbardon off (ventil)  
All reeds off (ventil)  
Bell  
Tremolo for I. man.  
Tremolo for II. man.

### Pistons

Manual coupler II. to I  
Pedal coupler to I.  
Pedal coupler to II.  
Sub-octave coupler II. to I.  
Super-octave coupler II. to I.  
Super-octave coupler II. to Pedal

**Independent compositions in the Pedal, working automatically on both manuals.**

Pianissimo  
Piano  
Mezzo Forte  
Fortissimo  
Free combination on  
Free pedal piano on  
Fixed pedal piano on  
Fixed pedal piano off  
Crescendo on for all speaking stops  
All collective combinations off  
50 more pistons for free combinations

### Pedals

Manual coupler II. to I.

Pedal coupler to I.  
Pedal coupler to II.  
I. Man. off

### Balance Pedals

Crescendo for all stops and couplers (leftmost pedal) Swell II. manual  
Swell I. manual

**Handles with Scale** (Large levers on left and right sides of keyboards) Transposing apparatus for the whole organ Crescendo and diminuendo for all stops and couplers

### Indicators with scale

Swell I. manual  
Swell II. manual  
Wind Indicator

The console has curved stoprails in a semi-horseshoe style. The upper row is tilt tablets while the lower two rows are small (1/2" pull out knobs). The pull out knobs duplicate the tilt tablets so that the organist may preset a different combination on the smaller knobs and then switch to that combination through the pistons. All tilt tablets and little knobs cause lights to come on above the tilt tablets as do the many blind combination pistons.

The pedal stops are duplicated on both sides of the console (Manual II. on one side, Manual I. on other side) so that you could have a bass combination suitable to a particular manual combination. Playing on either manual causes the pedal stops to automatically switch to that manual's pedal stoptabs...with tilt tablet lights flashing continuously from side to side.

Confused? When we arrived, I was given a sheet of single spaced type written "instructions" on how to operate the instrument. From unlocking the roll top to stop operation all require instructions.

The organ has a delightful sound and once you get used to the console it is really a joy to play. Big full sound at the console (directly in front of the chambers) but due to an incredibly long and narrow sanctuary the organ is quite soft in the rear. Note : the "Ninth" 8/9' stop, playing a "C" causes a "D" two octaves above to play.

John Ledwon



# Pipe Organs in Western Australia (Cont'd)

While on the subject of theatre organs in Perth, this article appeared in the *Tremulant*, the newsletter of TOSA(WA), prompted by Bendigo TOSA buying a Christie organ which was said to have been, at one time, installed in a Perth theatre. The *Tremulant's* editor, Dave Parker, writes :

## Did Perth ever have a Christie Theatre Organ?

This is a question that has caused a great deal of discussion in Perth for several years. We know that a Christie was ordered for installation into the Regent Theatre. We also know that it arrived in Fremantle, but we could not find anyone who remembered the organ being installed in the Regent Theatre in Perth. Numerous people remembered the 2-manual WurliTzer in the Regent, later to become the Metro, that became the basis of the 3-manual WurliTzer, now owned by John Fuhrmann and Ray Clemens, and installed in the Karrinyup Community Centre.

The question of what happened to the Christie came to the fore again recently when the Bendigo division of TOSA purchased the Christie organ, which was by then installed in the Adelaide home of Geoff Smith, and reference was made in TOSA Newsletters to the Christie having been installed in the Regent in Perth. However an answer seems to have emerged thanks to the research done by South Australia TOSA's historian and photographer, John Thiele, and a follow-up article written by Ian R. McIver.

Just to explain what follows. In 1988 John Thiele ran a series of excellent articles, complete with photos, in the South Australia TOSA News on the Regent Theatres of Australia. These articles prompted a reply from Ian McIver under the heading "From Pillar to Post (Horn)", or "Now You See Them, Now You Don't". Because Ian's letter is very interesting, not only for the references to the Christie, but also to all those of us who are interested in the theatre organ, I have reprinted it in full, with only minor changes, such as changing references like "a decade ago" to "twenty years ago". My thanks and appreciation go to John Thiele and Ian

McIver for the excellent work they did researching what follows. I am sure that all readers will find it most interesting.

Reprinted from November 1988's edition of *S.A. Tosa News* :

"From Pillar to Post (Horn)",

or "Now You See Them, Now You Don't" by Ian R. McIver.

Once again I have found one of my old friend John Thiele's splendid articles thought-provoking, and what follows is the result of those tangential thoughts.

In his history of the Regent, Adelaide, organ in the September 1988 issue of *S.A. TOSA News*, John mentions the 2-manual organ originally ordered for the Regent. This was a 2/8 Style F, and John touches on a most remarkable chain reaction of organ removals, diversions and enlargements which occurred during 1928 and 1929, and affected all the mainland state capitals except Brisbane.

The drama may be said to have been set in motion when Hoyts placed an order for two Style F WurliTzer organs. These bore the Opus No's 1728 and 1730, and they left the North Tonawanda factory on 15th and 16th September, 1927, bound respectively for the Regent Theatres in Adelaide and Sydney. Presumably the twin organs travelled on the same ship. Since these theatres were to seat 2,300 and 2,200 respectively, it is not immediately apparent why such small organs were to be provided for them. The 2/7 Style 185 organ (Opus 259) installed in 1922 in Hoyts DeLuxe Theatre in Melbourne may have proved adequate in that 2,000 seat theatre, but the Regents were far more cavernous and less intimate in design. Perhaps Hoyts overlooked this, or thought that one more rank (a Tibia) would provide the extra volume needed.

The Sydney Regent opened on 9th March, 1928, with Roy Devaney at the console of Opus 1730, said to have cost £21,000. Incidentally, whatever became of former Publix organist, Samuel Mensch, who was scheduled to open the instrument, and had arrived from America on the *Ventura* in January, 1928, wearing "a peculiar

straw hat"? Roy Devaney's contribution to the opening show was to accompany the silent film, *Jewels of Venus*. "The WurliTzer organ, capably handled by Roy Devaney, will find favour with Sydney audiences", said the *Daily Pictorial*, quoted in *Everyone's*, 11th March, 1928.

As far as I am aware the Sydney Regent's 2/8 was never used for solo features. It would have been far overshadowed by the 3/15 played by the ebullient Fred Scholl on, and from, its opening at the Sydney Capitol Theatre, a month later on 7th April, 1928.

Hoyts obviously realised that it was too small and decided to not to install its twin in their Adelaide Regent, which opened without a pipe organ on 29th June, 1928 - there was a Mustel reed organ, played by Leon Foulon, in the orchestra. A 3/15 Style 260 WurliTzer had been ordered and was despatched from America on 21st June, 1928, a week before the theatre opened. Hoyts were then faced with the problem of what to do with Opus 1728, which had already been lying around for some months. I have not been able to discover whether it was stored in Adelaide or Sydney. Hoyts decided to install it their 2,000 seat Perth Regent, where it was opened on 25th August, 1928, by Roy Devaney, who had opened its Sydney twin. In January, 1929, whilst Percy Burraston was organist, it was enlarged to 12 ranks.

The transfer of Opus 1728 to the Perth Regent created a further problem, for a 2/8 Christie (Opus 2720) was already on its way from England, bound for that theatre. The Christie would have left England around April/May, 1928. The sea journey might have taken up to 3 months, so it will be appreciated that the long lead-time for ordering did not leave much scope for rapid changes of plan. Obviously the Christie was no longer needed when it eventually arrived at Fremantle harbour.

What then happened to it was always something of a mystery, but thanks to Max Bell of Perth who carried out some detective work 20 years ago, interviewing the late Mick Dodd, organ builder of Perth, we discovered that it was installed for about 3 months at the



# Pipe Organs in Western Australia (Cont'd)

**Rosemount, North Perth.** It was never advertised there, and I don't know if it was ever featured. **Mick Dodd** had got to hear of it through the local organ-builders' "grapevine", but never got to see it. The reason for the apparent secrecy is not known, but it was the first **Christie** organ in **Australia**. After its sojourn there it was moved on to **Hoyts DeLuxe, Melbourne**, where it was opened by **Charles Tuckwell**, replacing the **Wurlitzer** (Opus 359) which itself moved on to the **Paramount, Melbourne**, being opened by **Manny Aarons**.

Meanwhile the 3/15 Style 260 (Opus 1896) for the **Adelaide Regent** had arrived and was hastily installed there. It was first heard by an invited audience on 16th September, 1928, and was formally opened on 22nd September, 1928.

Something would obviously have to be done at the **Sydney Regent**. The simplest solution appeared to be to enlarge the organ. Four more ranks were shipped from **America** on 23rd August, 1928, and would have arrived in early November, 1928.

However, by this time, a 3/15 Style 260 **Wurlitzer** (Opus 1808) was available in **Australia**. This had been

shipped over a year previously (16th September, 1927) for the **Capitol, Perth**, which had been under construction since early 1927. The theatre's construction had been subject to considerable delays (it was eventually opened on 4th May, 1929), and in the meantime **Wurlitzer** organs had been installed in both the **Perth Regent** and **Ambassadors Theatres**. The **Capitol** management changed their policy and decided to double the size of the orchestra to 30 players and to dispense with the organ. This, at least, was the reason given. Reading between the lines, one can surmise that sound films were just around the corner, cash no doubt was tight and they did not wish to tie up too much capital in an organ that might soon become redundant. Despite the announcement of the decision to cancel the organ, another announcement was made in December, 1928, that **Leslie V. Harvey**, then at the **Victory, Kogarah**, was to move to **Perth** to "take over the instrument installed at the **Capitol, Perth**."

For whatever reason, Opus 1808 became available and it was snapped up by **Hoyts** (at a bargain price??), and in December, 1928, the 2/8 (Opus 1730) was removed from the **Sydney Regent**

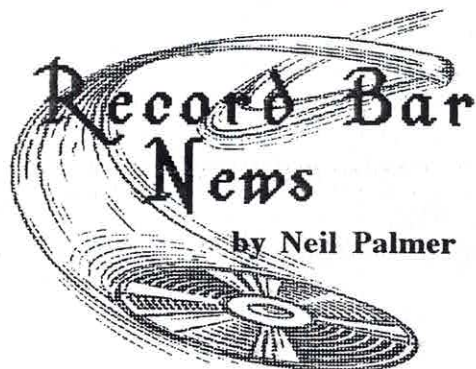
to allow its installation. Opus 1808 was opened there on 11th March, 1929 by **Wallace Kotter**. Opus 1730 was rebuilt with the extra ranks it had so nearly acquired in the **Sydney Regent** and was installed in the **Melbourne Plaza Theatre** (below the **Melbourne Regent**) for that theatre's opening on 10th May, 1929.

Thus concluded the fascinating sequence of events, stemming from a bad decision nearly 2 years previously. It was certainly the greatest upheaval of its kind in **Australian** theatre organ history, and its unravelling at times has made the Gordian knot seem a minor tangle!

Ian McIver

Well, there we have it. **Perth** did have a **Christie** theatre organ, if only for a short time, and not in the theatre it was intended for. It would be good now for someone to come forward and say that they had seen, and possibly heard, the **Christie** when it was in the **Rosemount**, and the matter could be finally put to rest. Let us hope that once it is installed in its new home in **Bendigo** that it enjoys many more years of providing good organ music for its new owners.

Dave Parker



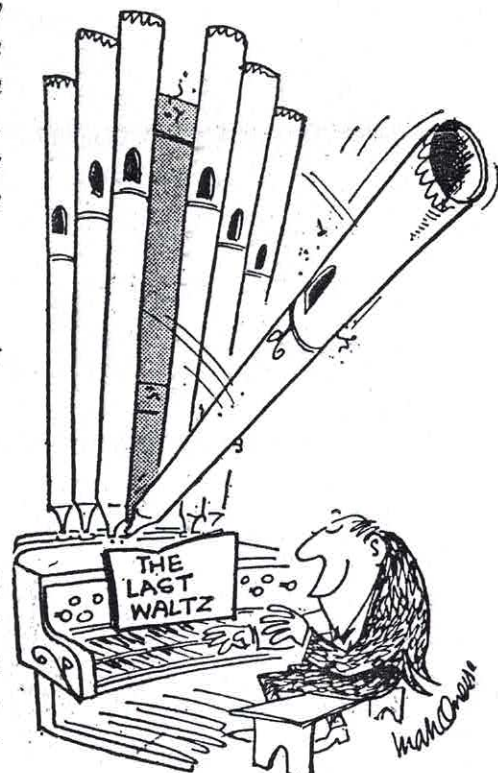
*March to the Scaffold, Fantasy on Nursery Tunes, At The Codfish Ball, September Song, Toccata in F, Pavane, A Cheerful Fire, Grandfather's Wooden Leg, The Kettle Boils, Someday My Prince Will Come.*

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Tracks include : *Fanfare for the Common Man, Rialto Ripples, Theme from Schindler's List, Fanfare in D, Amazing Grace,*



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# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is given for the Annual General meeting to be held at the Orion Centre, Beamish Street, Campsie at 8.00pm on Wednesday 22nd November, 1995

**BALLOT CLOSES 8.00pm**

## AGENDA

1. Welcome and opening of the meeting
2. Apologies
3. Call for 2 Scrutineers
4. Reading of previous AGM & 1/2 Yearly minutes and confirmation of said minutes
5. President's Report
6. Secretary's Report
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Marrickville Organ Report
9. Orion Organ Report
10. General Business
11. Declaration of the ballot by Returning Officer
12. Closing remarks by chairman & closing of meeting

At the conclusion of the meeting supper will be served.

Would all members please bring something to share for supper.

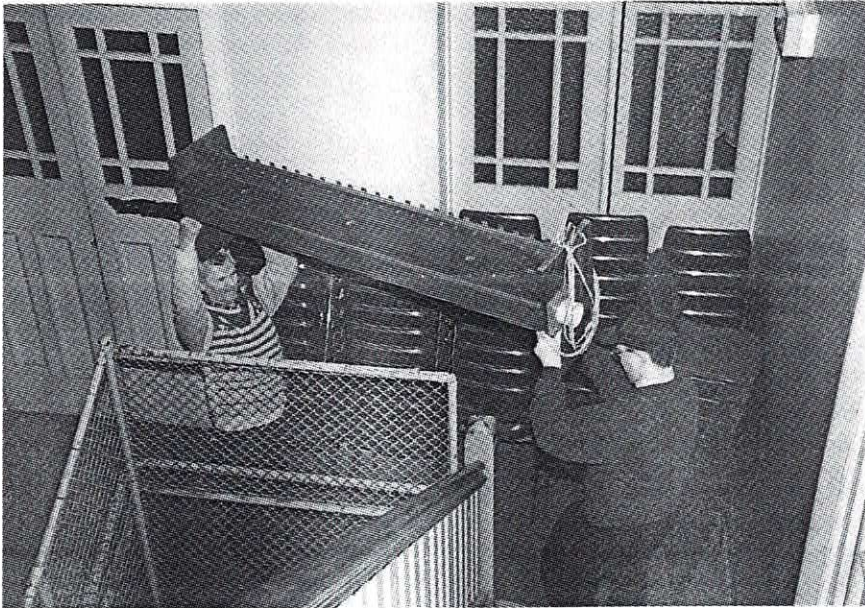
Clifford Bingham  
PRESIDENT



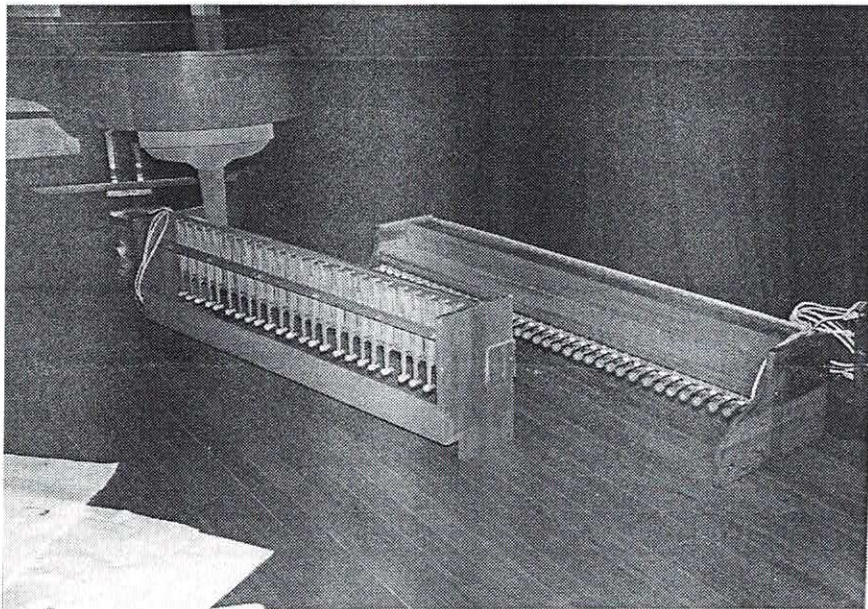
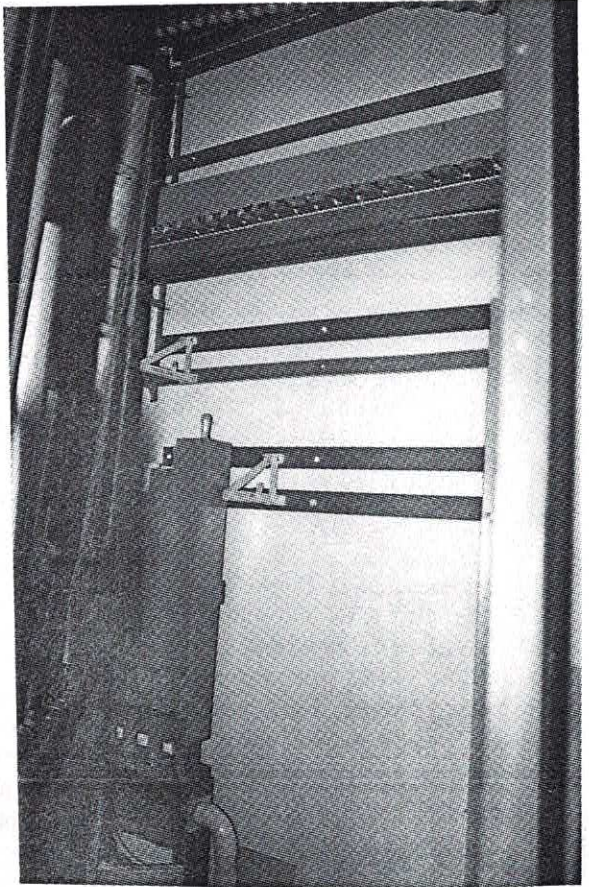
# MARRICKVILLE *WurliTzer* News

On Saturday, 7th October, the Blower was switched on for the first time in 18 months! This caused several of the pipes to cither (sound), due the dust, which had been dormant, now being blown through the system. The instrument is not playable from the console as yet. The installation of the electronics will commence in November. The weeks ahead will see time spent on eliminating leaks in the new windlines and adjusting the regulators, so that the correct windpressure is supplied to the various ranks of pipes.

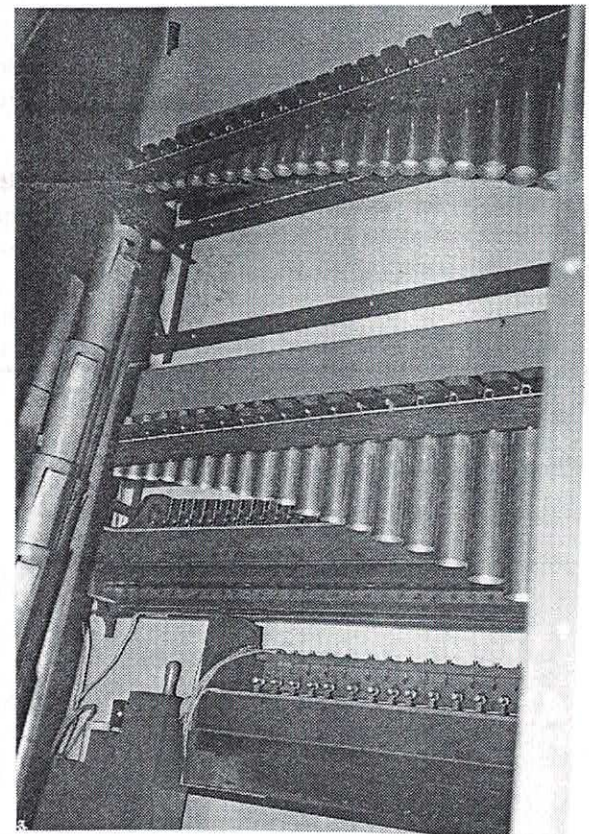
Tuned percussions being replaced  
- before and after



**John Andrews and Neil Palmer**  
manhandling a chest up to the chamber



Percusion chests, backstage at **Marrickville**



## **BOOK FOR SALE**

### **“Behold the Mighty WurliTzer”**

The history of the Theatre Pipe Organ, by John W. Landon.  
ISBN 0-313-23827-8 Published 1983.

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Hard Cover, totally unmarked - as new - 231 pages - Illustrated  
Biographical Notes on 79 organists and Theatre Organ Listings

Price : \$40

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# Report on Len Rawle's Concert

Orion Centre - Sunday 8th October, 1995

by Chris Styles

After a very pleasant lunch in my spring garden with two of my theatre organ loving friends, I was looking forward to a delightful afternoon, knowing the talents of one Mr **Len Rawle** - and I was not disappointed! **Len** brought up the superbly-tuned instrument to *There's No Business Like Show Business*, in a version best described as "Wow!". I have no doubt **Len** was genuinely pleased to be back in **Sydney** and for the first time at the **Orion Wurli**, and this continually showed through his playing all afternoon.

He started the programme proper with requests - unusual, but then again, why not? And did I detect *Tara's Theme* from *Gone with the Wind*, *Blaze Away*, *Stars Fell on Alabama* and a bevy of castanets in *Granada*? I have a particular liking for *Stars Fell on Alabama* having first heard it on "Muzak" back in the early seventies and having made extensive enquiries at that time to get the music.

Moving right along (as we say in radio!), **Len** presented a march written for him, appropriately called the *Wurlitzer March*, and then a number called *Cat from Goose Bay* with asides to *Alley Cat* (not my fine bred Birman - **Benedict**!). These were delightfully played and **Len** used (as he did a lot through the concert) our very fine **Wurlitzer** piano to great effect. I'd say the above-mentioned was a very 'cool' cat.

In a classical mood (briefly), **Len**

tackled a composition by the late **George Blackmore** who is sadly missed on the theatre organ scene. This was *Festal Day* - must get a copy for my occasional Sunday forays into church organ. The piece is best described as reflecting its bright title.

Now a word of thanks to **Len**. Whenever I have featured his next number on "*Theatre Organ Highlights*" I've thought, "How do you pronounce *Primer*?" Why 'Prymero' of course - thank you sir **Len**! This, **Len** related to us, reflected our First State status. (Sorry **Victoria**!)

**Len**'s "party piece" was next. He told us it had been imitated by many but he has made a habit of changing the arrangement to confuse the imitators! *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, and, boy, was that 'floor shaking'! Would somebody find out when **John Parker** installed the 64' pedal stop on our **Wurlitzer**? As the piece was adapted to represent a **Channel Tunnel** journey (**London** to **Paris**), we had some fabulous effects from **Len**.

Can't tell you what **Len**'s second-half opener was, though. Who cares? - it was all one expects of a piece of music of the "bring-the-console-up" type.

*Blue Moon* again was a wonderful interpretation (as I have never heard before) and then came *Bless this House* with great feeling and tremors off - a lot of the time again demonstrating the fine tuning of the organ.

Amongst other gems was *Memory* from *Cats* which is unfortunately so "overplayed" it needs to be put away for 10 years or more, so that we can get to like it again - no offence to **Len**'s interpretation though.

**David Davies** (better known as **Ivor Novello**) featured musically towards the end of the afternoon and then **Len**'s *Barn Dance* fun.

**Len** then again expressed his "utter joy" at playing our organ and played *I'll See You in my Dreams*

A hitch with the computer interrupted **Len**'s encores but this gave him the opportunity to tell us an hilarious story about a visit to a **Perth** radio station when a small, ancient electronic organ was removed from the bowels of the station for him to play "live".

After this he decided not to tempt fate again by restarting his encores and, being the true showman he is, he took the organ down, as he had brought it up at the top of the concert, with *There's No Business Like Show Business*.

To summarise - a great entertainer presenting great music with much panache and energy, a real showman and "faster than a pentium" (thanks to my friends **June** and **Craig** for these last comments!)

Thank you, **Len**, for a great afternoon's entertainment, and we will welcome you back to **Sydney** whenever you feel the call.

## A REMINDER OF COMING EVENTS

Walt Strony's Concert  
Sunday, 19th November  
(See booking form on page 13  
and perhaps confirm by  
PHONE if time is short)

## AGM

Wednesday, 22nd  
November  
Orion Centre 8pm  
(Bring a Plate)

## Tony Fenelon's Christmas Concert

Sunday, 3rd  
December  
(See booking form on  
back page)



# OUR NEXT ARTIST

# WALT STRONY

**Walt Strony** is one of only a few **American** organists who have established themselves in the worlds of both classical and theatre organ music. He made his public debut at the age of 18 and has since won a tremendous following throughout the **USA** and the world. He has appeared in programmes from coast to coast in the **United States** and has performed extensively in **Japan, England, Canada** and **Australia**, and he has undertaken all kinds of theatre organ duties, for example, he was featured for 3 months at **Expo '75** in **Japan**.

**Walt** has been invited to perform on numerous occasions for the Conventions of the **American Theatre Organ Society** and for the **American Guild of Organists**. He has made many highly acclaimed recordings and was the first ever to release a video of a live organ concert.

**Walt Strony** was born in 1955 in **Chicago, Illinois** and grew up in the **Chicago** area. He began his music studies at the age of 7 and was soon making minor concert and television appearances. His first and only theatre organ teacher was **Al Melgard**, who for 45 years was the master of the giant 6-manual, 62-rank **Barton** organ in the **Chicago Stadium** (often claimed to be

the largest theatre organ in the world), and a foremost theatre organist during the golden era of theatre organs. It was **Melgard** who sparked **Walt's** interest in the theatre organ by allowing him to try his hand at this huge instrument. Subsequently he studied classical organ with **Herbert L. White** at the **Sherwood Music School** in **Chicago** and with **Karel Paukert** at **Northwest University** in **Evanston**. He also studied piano with **Giulio Favario**, associate conductor of the **Lyric Opera of Chicago** and who held the post of principal viola in several community symphony orchestras.

Following the restoration of the **Chicago Theatre's WurliTzer**, once played by the immortal **Jesse Crawford**, **Walt** has been closely associated with that instrument. In fact, he has frequently been on the payroll of that theatre, the first organist to be hired there in 25 years.

**Walt** was the highly-acclaimed featured organist at **Pipe Organ Pizza** in **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**, but he is remembered by many **Americans** for his 10 year engagement at the **Organ Stop Pizza Restaurant** in **Phoenix, Arizona**, where he performed nightly on the 4-manual **WurliTzer** theatre pipe organ. This famous restaurant was

considered by many to be the flagship of this distinctly **American** institution. Only the best artists were asked to play at this venue, where the organist had to play the full range of music from today's electronic sounds to the great orchestral classics and beyond - quite a demanding task!

In between his hectic concert, recording and composing schedule, he is organist at **Augustana Lutheran Church** in **Phoenix**, and is consultant for **Arizona Organ Associates**, the **Arizona** representatives for the **Allen Digital Computer Organ**. He also teaches advanced organ on a limited basis. In his spare time, he has restored a rare Art Deco house in a historic **Phoenix** neighbourhood.

**Walt Strony** has become one of the rare breed of today's theatre organists to have developed a style of playing uniquely his own. While looking back respectfully to the masters of theatre organ tradition, he manages to look forward with a refreshing approach in all his musical arrangements. It is style that is inventive, harmonically interesting and, above all, right for today.

We are proud to welcome back to **Australia** this brilliant and world-famous artist.

## BOOKING FORM

Post to:  
The Ticket Secretary  
18 Dudley Street,  
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NSW 2196

Always include a stamped self-addressed envelope with your booking. If this is not done, tickets will be held at the Box Office.

### WALTER STRONY CONCERT ORION CENTRE

**SUNDAY, 19th NOVEMBER, 1995 at 2.00pm**

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Between 10.00 am & 6.00 pm. Mon. - Fri. only

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**5 - 8 APRIL, 1996**

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Special group discounted fares of 40% off the normal full economy class airfares have been negotiated for delegates and their partners, subject to availability of V class seats at the time of booking. For Associated airlines such as Airlink, Eastern Australia Airlines, Southern Australia Airlines or Sunstate, the discount level may vary. Please quote the following reference number to receive the applicable group discount or any special fares at the time:

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Please call the **Qantas Association Help Desk** on:

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As this Convention falls during Easter, the busiest time for air travel throughout the year, we suggest that you secure your flight reservations well in advance.

INTERNATIONAL

For overseas/international delegates please call your nearest Qantas office to obtain the best available fares to Australia and quote the following reference:

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**ACCOMMODATION**

The most central accommodation to our major convention locations is in the Ashfield/Haberfield area.

Bookings should be made **DIRECTLY** to your choice of the three recommended motels. As Easter is the busiest holiday time of the year it is suggested you phone immediately to secure your room.

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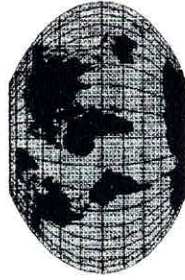
**CONVENTION BUS TRANSPORTATION**

It is proposed to provide bus or mini bus transportation between the suggested motels and convention venues if there is sufficient interest by registrants. The price is yet to be determined, however, it would be "at cost". Please indicate on the back of the booking form if interested and we will be in contact with you.

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*Presents*

**THE BEST  
OF  
BOTH WORLDS**



*24th National  
Theatre Organ  
Convention  
Sydney  
5th - 8th April, 1996*





## CONVENTION PROGRAMME

EVENT ONE - (Good Friday 5/4/96)  
4.00pm onwards "REGISTRATION"  
Orion Centre, Beamish St, Campsie  
Conventioners are invited to arrive at the Orion Centre any time from 4 pm to begin registration. Plenty of time has been allowed prior to dinner for you to meet old friends and make new ones.

6.00 pm "BUFFET DINNER"  
Orion Centre, Campsie  
Our convention caterers will serve a delicious buffet of hot dishes, salads & deserts.

8.00 pm "NIGEL OGDEN IN CONCERT"  
We are pleased and proud to present England's most entertaining organist. Nigel comes to us from Manchester where he has been associated with theatre organs for more than 25 years. His ability to perform the many and varied styles have placed him in frequent demand throughout Europe. Nigel is heard weekly throughout Britain as resident compere of the BBC radio programme "The Organist Entertains". Please welcome him to Australia on his first visit.

EVENT TWO - (Saturday 6/4/96)  
10.00 am. "CHRISTIE ORGAN SHOWCASE"  
Epping Baptist Church,  
Cnr. Ray & Carlingford Roads, Epping.  
Once again we're able to present the now widely known Christie Unit Organ. This instrument was premiered during our 1985 Easter Convention. Two of Sydney's most popular artists **Cliff Bingham** and **Bill Schumacher** will present the Christie in concert.  
Since our last visit the church has undergone extensive additions and renovations. After the concert we'll have a "Hamburger Barbecue Lunch" in the new car park.

EVENT THREE - (Saturday 6/4/96)  
2.30 pm "A CHRIS MCPHEE CONCERT"  
Marrickville Town Hall, Marrickville Road,  
Marrickville.

Chris's name has become well known in theatre organ circles in a very short time, and deservedly so! We're glad to be able to present our only interstate artist featured at this Convention at the TOSA (NSW Division) "original home" instrument. The Marrickville Wurlitzer has recently undergone a rebuild and incorporated some new technology. This will be its reopening performance.

EVENT FOUR - Saturday (6/4/96)  
7.00 pm "CONVENTION DINNER"  
Canterbury - Hurlstone Park R.S.L. Club Auditorium  
Canterbury Road, Hurlstone Park.  
The evening will commence with a three course dinner with main course choice (which should be indicated on your return registration form). Following dinner we will be entertained for both dancing and listening to the Julian Lee Trio. During the Registration Session all Conventioners will be "signed in" to the Club enabling you to use all its facilities during the evening.

EVENT FIVE - Sunday (7/4/96)  
8.00 am "CHATSWOOD DEBUT"  
Willoughby Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Chatswood.  
Following a Continental Breakfast of Fruit Juice, Croissants, Danish Pastries, Tea & Coffee we will be treated to a performance by **John Giacchi** on the completely restored Wurlitzer in the Centre. Yes we've waited a long time to show off the organ to a National Convention audience and who better than our local first A.T.O.S. "Young Organist of the Year" winner to play for you. Sorry folks, only those who purchase "Full Convention Packages" will be accommodated at this event!!

EVENT SIX - Sunday (7/4/96)  
10.00 am "YOU ASKED FOR IT"  
Orpheum Theatre, Military Rd, Cremorne  
**Neil Jensen & The Yellow Rolls Royce Orchestra**  
We've had so many requests for a repeat performance for this most popular combination in the Art Deco splendour of the Orpheum Theatre, Cremorne that we

couldn't refuse! What more can we say... Following the show we'll have a boxed lunch to keep the hunger pangs away.

EVENT SEVEN - Sunday (7/4/96)  
2.30 pm "BARRY BAKER IN CONCERT"  
Orion Centre, Beamish St, Campsie  
Completing our theme "The Best of Both Worlds" we're equally pleased and proud to present our U.S. representative.

Barry Baker comes from Cincinnati, Ohio and is also a former winner the the A.T.O.S. "Young Organist of the Year" Competition. Though only 23 years of age his playing shows complete maturity. Destined to become one of the world's great popular organists, we welcome Barry to Australia on his first visit.

EVENT EIGHT - Sunday (7/4/96)  
6.00 pm "BUFFET DINNER"  
Orion Centre, Beamish St, Campsie  
Our convention caterers will serve another delicious buffet of hot dishes, salads & deserts to complete a busy day's activities.

EVENT NINE - Monday (8/4/96)  
9.00 am "SYDNEY TOWN HALL"  
George St, Sydney  
The Sydney Town Hall Hill Organ is one of the world's legendary concert organs. **David Drury's** name is synonymous with fine performances on this instrument, having already released two CD recordings.

EVENT TEN - Monday (8/4/96)  
11.00 am "SYDNEY HARBOUR CRUISE"  
Commissioner's Steps, Circular Quay  
No Sydney convention is ever complete without a trip on the world's greatest harbour. The traditional Doyle's fish & chip lunch will be served during the cruise.

*Special accommodation information on back of page.  
Make your reservation NOW.*