

T.O.S.A. NEWS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA, N.S.W. DIVISION

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Price 40¢

*** FREE CONCERT ***

MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

SUNDAY, 26TH JULY 1981 AT 2.30PM

FEATURING OUR SPECIAL GUEST ARTISTS FROM THE A.C.T.

CLINTON WHITE AND IAN McLEAN

BY THE UNDERTAKING OF MANY LONG HOURS OF TRAVELLING TO SYDNEY FOR PRACTISE, THESE TWO FINE ARTISTS HAVE SHOWN ALREADY THEIR KEEN DESIRE TO PRESENT :-

A CONCERT WITH A DIFFERENCE!



Clinton White & Ian McLean from the A.C.T.

DIRECTORY

PATRON: IAN DAVIES.

President: Alan Misdale (525 5554)

Vice-Presidents: Frank Ellis (649 7011) Doug Smith (750 0917)

Secretary: Ernie Vale (798 6816) Treasurer & Membership Secretary:

Edna Smith (529 7379) Practise Convenor: Chris Palmer (92 6534)

Research & Archives: Ian Cameron, Recording Engineer: Ray Garret:
(869 7247)

NEW MEMBERS

Russel Burling, Forster Keys, Mrs. L. Hillis, Forster,
Russel & Lynne Leitch, Lindfield, Janet Baker, Bass Hill, Norman
Ensor, Revesby, Beverly Kennedy, Marrickville, Duncan & Heather
MacGregor, Winston Hills, Peter Ellis, Five Dock,
Tony & Mrs. Van Oosterum, St. Marys, David & Jean Burman, Belmore,
Gladys Fuller, Ramsgate, Greg Crawfoot, Artarmon.

A sincere welcome is extended to all new members and we
hope that you will all enjoy the concerts and various functions
of our Society. Please make yourself known to either our Membership
Secretary (Edna Smith) or myself, Doug Smith, Hon Vice-President.

CONCERT by BEVERLY KENNEDY & RICHARD JAMES

The rather gloomy and wet afternoon of Sunday 24th May did not deter the
attendance of no less than 462 enthusiastic patrons! For a FREE concert, this
must be eligible for the record books, and the response to the efforts of
our two young artists was just as great!

Richard James commenced the first half hour in fine style, with some very
well known up to date numbers and with his agreeable tid-bits of stage patter
between pieces, Richard set the audience in a very relaxed and happy mood.

Our next artist, Miss Beverly Kennedy started her segment showing signs
of nervousness (and who wouldn't be..for the first time) but soon settled
down to reveal an excellent technique and a pleasing appeal in all her
presentations. Beverly was 'mike shy' and our M.C. Frank Ellis announced her
numbers for her. I think that Frank's smiling assistance helped Beverly to relax
and her true musicianship came through as the concert progressed.

Beverly commenced the second half of the programme and included were
two classical renditions which were her forte for the afternoon. These two
pieces revealed her classical training and capability of handling the organ.
I expect to hear a lot from Beverly Kennedy in the years to come. She shows
great promise and is now under the guidance of a well known theatre organ
tutor, and with experienced help in registration her playing will progress
and she should advance rapidly in the near future.

Richard James followed Beverly for the final segment and quite candidly,
I have never heard Richard play better! His experience with the Wurlitzer
after two or three concerts has brought his playing to great heights and a
brilliance that we've never heard before from Richard. A noisy acclamation
called for an encore and Richard gave us an excellent rendition of 'The Holy City'
and then a further encore was demanded which was 'My Way', also very well
received.

At the end of the concert, our M.C. called for both artists to appear
and they were rewarded with a huge round of applause from the audience, and
Beverly Kennedy was presented with a beautiful sheath of flowers.

Our sincere appreciation must go to our maintenance crew, Tom Halloran
and his helpers, for the organ was in great shape and behaved itself
perfectly.

A very pleasing afternoon with a very pleasing attendance!



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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

SUNDAY 19th July, at 3pm. Sydney Opera House.

DAVID PARSONS presents a programme of Light and Popular Classics. Admission \$2.00

SUNDAY 26th July, at 2.30pm. Marrickville Town Hall

Special Guest Artists CLINTON WHITE & IAN MCLEAN (ACT) at our Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ. Admission FREE

MONDAY 1st August, at 7.30pm. Monthly Committee Meeting at the home

of Phil & Ron Wilson, 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba. All Visitors Welcome.

SUNDAY 16th August, at 2.30pm. Marrickville Town Hall

GALA CHARITY CONCERT for Spastic Centre of NSW.

Guest Artists will include,.....

BILL SCHUMACHER, CLIFF BINGHAM, IAN DAVIES, RICHARD JAMES, LEONARD LEE, VALERIE HANLON & other vocalists.

Admission: ADULTS \$4 CONCESSION & CHILDREN \$2

(See booking form in this issue)

NOTE: These concerts are always a great afternoon of top class entertainment so get your booking in immediately!

WEDNESDAY 19th August, at 7.30pm, Marrickville Town Hall.

CLUB NIGHT. Come along and bring your friends to hear your Wurlitzer. Bring your music and play them a number! Show your friends what a real organ is all about, and we will show them the actual pipes in action! Have a cuppa together and enjoy a night of 'Music by the Members!'

SUNDAY 30th August, at 2.30pm, Marrickville Town Hall.

"TONY..ALL BY MYSELF"

Yes, it will be that great Artist, Tony Fenelon in person, presenting us with a supreme concert at our Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ.

Admission: ADULTS \$5 MEMBERS \$4 CHILD & CONCESSION \$2.50

(Booking form is included in this issue)

NOTE: WHEN BOOKING FORM IS USED, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT A

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SELF ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE is included with your booking. Tickets can then be returned immediately by mail.

PLEASE, get your bookings in early for both of these concerts and ensure a seat for yourself and all your friends.

This organisation acknowledges financial assistance from the N.S.W. Government through the Premier's Department, Division of Cultural Activities.

DONT FORGET OUR COACH TOUR ON THE 24TH/25TH OCTOBER

COME AND HAVE A WEEK-END OF FUN WITH YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS, AND BRING YOUR FRIENDS ALONG TOO! SEE INSIDE ON PAGE 6 FOR ALL DETAILS.

Howard White (Henri LeBlanc) contributed by Norm Forrester.

Recently in Sydney, the death occurred of Howard White, a man well known and respected in English Musical Circles from the end of the 14-18 war to 1960. His musical career was centred on London and because of this as well as his total absence of any phonograph recordings, he remained largely unknown in Australia. However, his career was a varied and interesting one and it may well be that this short account will touch a chord in the memory of those who may have heard him play.

Howard studied piano, first with his mother then with Miss Hoskyn of the Hampstead Conservatoire around 1909. About 1910 he also commenced organ lessons with Th. Rimmer, who later became Howard's Father in Law. In 1913 Howard won an open scholarship to the Royal College of Music, the youngest student admitted up to that time. He studied organ with Sir Walter Alcock and Theory and Composition with Sir Walford Davies and Thomas Dunhill. The 1914-18 war interrupted his career and Howard White served with the 12th London Regiment from 1916, being twice wounded.

After the war, Howard quickly became part of the London musical scene, where he played piano & organ as required on the movie house circuit. A short list of venues includes: "The Rialto"-Coventry St., "The Grand"-Edgeware Rd., "The Broadway Palladium"-, "The Prince of Wales"-where he was pianist for "The Ghost Train", "The Palace". "The New Gallery" etc.

Apart from the Theatre and Club circuit, in 1926 Howard toured the Hunt Ball circuit with Vassies and also broadcast with Alex Fryer and his band. His engagements were too numerous to mention but in 1929 we find him relieving or 'second organist' at the Capitol; Tussauds; Queens; Forest Gate; Tower; at Peckham, Astoria and Coronation at Manor Park. From November 1929 to September 1930 he was House Organist at "The Elite" Theatre, Nottingham.

Howard White was on many occasions second organist at the "Empire", Leicester Square from 1932 to 1939, when he took over from Sandy McPherson as principal organist. As if this was not enough, Howard also mastered the piano-accordion which he also taught at the British College of Piano-Accordianists and was also organist at St. Michael's Church, Golder's Green.

Howard White made his first broadcast for the BBC on July 10th, 1937 which commenced a long association totalling 98 (at least which can be traced) his last broadcast being on October 28th 1958. He arranged most of his material including, naturally enough, organ transcriptions of his favourite piano and accordion novelty numbers. The following is a typical programme, broadcast on December 8th, 1939...Pomp & Circumstance No.2 (Elgar), Flirt Sur Bois, Valse au Village, (Fauchey), then a zoological fantasy:- Chicken Reel (Daly), Grasshopper's Dance, (an Accordion novelty by White), Flight of the Bumble Bee (Rimsky Korsakov) Teddy Bear's Picnic (Braddon) The Tigers Tail, (Thurban) a Scottish Selection then Tchaikovskyana (arr Saar).

During the second world war, with the bottom fallen out of the professional music market, Howard worked for the Civil Service, but continued to free-lance as a musician and also did the occasional broadcast for the BBC on Theatre Organ. As Civil Service conditions forbade outside employment, Howard adopted the nom-de-plume of 'Henri LeBlanc' at the suggestion of his bi-lingual mother. On the retirement from the Civil Service, Howard also retired from his musical career, and he and his wife came to Sydney in June, 1966, to join his son Derek and family already resident here.

He so completely retired that he disposed of virtually all of his enormous music collection and for 10 years seldom touched an instrument.

Howard White cntd...

Howard was an occasional Dinner Guest at the writer's home, and when an electronic organ became part of the family, Howard needed little urging to try it out. From then on, whenever he visited, we were introduced to past musical worlds. His technique suffered little from its ten year retirement and his musical memory was prodigious. After acquiring a very basic electronic organ himself to exercise his fingers, Howard entered and won the local section of the 1976 Yamaha organ contest and was highly rated in the State Final. His only public appearances after this were two concerts for the North Shore Hammond Organ Society.

At this stage, age and illness caught up with him and after a slight stroke placed him in a nursing home just before Christmas 1980, he retained only marginal mobility until carried off by a final stroke on the 7th March.

Howard White was very highly respected in the London musical world, as evinced by his long association with the BBC. He was unlucky to have obtained his top appointment at the 'Empire', on the eve of world war 2, but probably owed much to Sandy McPherson for the continuation of engagements with the BBC long after he was well known to the theatre going public. His rather quiet and retiring disposition contributed somewhat to his lack of stature as a public figure, but his musicianship could not be challenged.

Our sincere thanks to Mr. Norm Forrester for this interesting contribution to TOSA NEWS.

COACH TOUR of BUNDANOON & SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

WEEK ENDING 24th/25th OCTOBER 1981.

COME ALONG AND
HAVE FUN! FUN!

This Coach Tour is open to ALL MEMBERS & FRIENDS

Day 1. Depart Sydney, Saturday 24th October from Marrickville Town Hall at 8.00 am, and travel to Mnt. Keira with its panoramic views for a morning tea stop. Descend the Illawarra Range through to Kiama and the famous Blowhole. Continue via the Princes Highway to Nowra for lunch. In the afternoon we travel via the Cambewarra Mnt. and in to Moss Vale and through Sutton Forest to Bundanoon. This evening we enjoy a comedy drama show at the Bundanoon Olde Time Music Hall, part of the Motel where we stay.

Day 2. After a leisurely breakfast we spend the morning in Historical Berrima, then travel to Sutton Forest to a local sheep station to enjoy a BBQ lunch and tour of the property, including sheep shearing and mustering demonstrations before returning to Sydney in the afternoon.

The cost of this tour is \$70, which includes Dinner, Show, bed & breakfast and BBQ lunch on Sunday. The fare does NOT include morning & afternoon teas and Lunch on Saturday.

A deposit of \$20 for EACH person is required when making your bookings and payment of the final balance must be made by the 20th September 1981.

(Please make cheques etc payable to TOSA)

People interested in this week-end coach tour, please contact Mrs. Phil Wilson, 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba 2195 or ring 759 6050.

PIPES STAND-IN WHEN ELECTRONIC ORGAN FAILS.

Organist Frank Olsen now resident in Canada, returned from his native Scotland where he was made Honorary President of the newly formed East Kilbride Cinema Organ Society, tells of a concert he played for the group in the Town Hall at Ayr. The club had brought in an electronic while ignoring the ancient 3 manual 30 rank Lewis classical organ slumbering in the gallery. Frank says the first half of the concert went well, but after intermission they couldn't restart the electronic. Frank was desperate as he climbed the stairs to the gallery to see if there was any possibility of pressing the Lewis into service. He pushed the start button and prayed. Outside of one brief cipher and a Clarinet which was permanently "on", the venerable Lewis behaved well, right to the end of the concert. The incident aroused the interest of club members in search of a project. It looks as though the Lewis will be restored by them.

THEATRE ORGAN HOBBY ALIVE AND WELL IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Our man in South Africa, Arthur Hovis, informs us that the 4/14 Wurlitzer formerly installed in the 20th Century Theatre in Johannesburg had the distinction of being the last new Wurlti to be installed in a major theatre anywhere - 1940. Arthur says it is very highly unified, with most voices available at four pitches. The design was by South Africa's prominent organist, Dean Herrick. It is currently installed in a former church hall in Knysna and is owned by Eric Schroder.

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL WURLITZER HIGHLY PRAISED.

Pursuant to its policy of trying out new ventures, The Radio City Music Hall, New York, earlier this year, presented for four days a very rare film, made in 1927, one which runs for over four hours. It was Abel Gance's Classic silent "Napoleon", which never achieved status due to its limited showing originally. For the Music Hall performances, a new and original score was composed by Carmine Coppola and played by the 60 piece American Symphony Orchestra and organist Leonard Raver of the New York Philharmonic and teacher at the Juilliard School of Music.

Raver was loud in his praise for the Music Hall Wurlitzer (the World's largest theatre organ). "I've been having the most wonderful treat, living a dream come true. The organ is probably the last of the great theatre organs and any organist would give his eyeteeth to play it. With four manuals, full pedal-board, 4,300 pipes and even a grand piano built into it, it is also notable for its brass and tremolos."

THOSE GROWING WURLITZERS.

Does anyone have a spare 3 or 4 manual Wurlitzer console they'll sell to a Theatre Organ Club in Scotland? The East Kilbride Cinema Organ Society (previously mentioned in this article) has purchased the 2/10 Wurlitzer formerly from the New Victoria Cinema, Edinburgh, one of the last Wurlitzers left in Robbie Burns Country. They want to enlarge it by about 6 ranks but there is no room for expansion on the original console. The cost of a new console would be prohibitive says Cyril Wood, the clubs secretary, so they will opt for a used console if one is available. (Don't we have just a similar problem with the Marrickville Wurlitzer perhaps we should be making just the same appeal to our American counterparts???? Ed.)

(cont....)

(overseas news cont....)

AN "ORGANIZED" TAVERN IN THE TOWN.

In the little town of Carnation, Washington, U.S.A. (yes it is the original home of "Carnation Milk - from contented cows."), is a tavern which looks more like a church than a bistro. It is called "Goliath's Pit," Goliath being a 3 manual Wurlitzer organ originally installed in a Salem, Oregon theatre in 1926. Like its name the building has stirred up some goliath-size controversies between the owner, Kirk Whitcombe, and the authorities. Such things as building height, septic system, ramp for the handicapped, firewood stacked outside the front door, (the building is entirely of wooden construction) unpopped popcorn kernels on the floor, and a liquor licence, all were seized upon, simply because officials didn't want another tavern in the town. Things have been resolved, though and after council meetings, the members now adjourn to Goliath's Pit for refreshment. Whitcombe plans to run for mayor later this year.

News sources courtesy of A.T.O.S. Magazine - THEATRE ORGAN.

PROFILE

"THE IAN DAVIES STORY"

By Frank Ellis.

(Reprinted from T.O.S.A. News April 1967)

This month's PROFILE brings you a word portrait of one of Australia's best known theatre organists. Like so many other theatre organists, Ian Davies started to study music at a very early age. At the age of seven he began to study piano under his mother, who was well qualified to teach him, being an ALCM. Two years later, he became a pupil of Miss K. Cox (LRAM) of Ascot-vale, a very well known and highly successful teacher, and continued with her for three years. It was at this stage that the pipe organ made its entry into young Ian's life. Sometimes his mother deputised at the organ of St John's Presbyterian Church at Essendon, Victoria, and as Ian's interest was aroused, he persuaded her to give him lessons on this fine pipe organ. After six months tuition from Mrs Davies, Ian became a pupil of the organist of the church, the well known J. Dean Wells (Mus Bach).

It was the 2/10 Wurlitzer of Hoyt's Plaza Theatre Melbourne, that gave Ian his first taste of the thrill of a horse-shoe console, and he lost no time in persuading LIONEL CORRICK to accept him as a pupil. Although LIONEL CORRICK was organist at the Regent Theatre he used the Plaza organ for Ian's lessons. The Plaza is located beneath the Regent and below ground level. It was fitting therefore, that Ian's first appointment to a theatre, should be the Plaza and the organ he had learned so much on. It was early in 1946, that he came to the Plaza remaining there for two years, and to quote his own words, "loving every moment of it". For the next three years he was to double between the upstairs Regent and the downstairs Plaza, as occasion demanded it until the year 1951.

Next came a highly successful tour of the suburban cinema circuit of Melbourne playing the electronic organ - this lasted twelve months and took him into the Padua Theatre Brunswick, Park Theatre Albert Park, Barclay Theatre Footscray, and the 1800 seat Victory Theatre at St Kilda.

(cont.....)

At the conclusion of this season, Ian returned to his first love, the beautiful Plaza Theatre, as resident organist for a further eighteen months.

Then came five years residency at what was, undoubtedly, one of the world's most outstanding movie palaces, the magnificent Capitol Theatre Melbourne with its fantastic Burley Griffen ceiling and plushy atmosphere. This "plum" organ spot remained as Ian's home until the shutdown of the organ. During his seasons at the Plaza, Regent and Capitol Theatres, Ian broadcast regularly, and his theme of "Cruising Down The River" guaranteed the radio listeners, that the thirty minutes of organ music to follow would be in the best tradition of theatre organ styling.

Ian ruefully recalls one occasion at the Regent Theatre, when the water pressure to the hoist built up due to a sticking valve. When Ian pressed the button to bring the organ up from the pit, the console rocked violently for a moment, then shot up at a tremendous speed, stopping at the top with a jerk that almost dislodged the console from its platform. The audience seemed to think it was all a part of the presentation, but the spectacle of the organist, hair standing on end, and sheet music spilling in all directions must have been a never to be forgotten one.

Asked for his favorite theatre and organ he didn't need much time to think about the question. Smiling broadly, he told us that the Plaza Theatre and organ were his idea of perfection- the console was centrally located which made balancing of the sound from each chamber so much easier. In addition, this organ spoke into the auditorium in fine style. A case of first love being the last for Ian.

These days Ian is to be found at the showrooms of Rees Wills Pty. Ltd. where he happily extolls the virtues of the Lowrey and Rodgers organs. He is also resident organist at one of our leading clubs. (That was so in 1967 when I wrote the article - it does not apply today, although he is still resident organist at the same RSL Club at Bondi Junction. Editor)

He has been an Honorary member of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) for some years and has given many recitals for the Society. He is ever to give of his many talents for the members, and an IAN DAVIES recital for the Society always attracts a full house of enthusiastic members and their friends.

Friendly, natural, talented and a sparkling personality withal- this is IAN DAVIES our PROFILE OF THE MONTH

GET WELL SOON

~~We are~~ Sorry to hear that our Treasurer, Edna Smith, Dot Wilkinson and Mr. Gliddon (Senior) have all been on the sick list and are now on the way to recovery.

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ARE YOU TRAVELLING INTERSTATE?

Members of the Theatre Organ Society are always welcome to attend concerts etc in the various inter-state divisions. This gives everyone a chance to hear other Theatre Pipe Organs and meet other people with a similar liking to our own.

Listed below is a series of phone numbers where contact can be made for advice on local concerts etc. These phone numbers are local numbers in the various cities and cost 10¢ for a call when using a local phone box.

BRISBANE John Ellis 378 4491
GOLD COAST Peter Kingsway 35 2921
NEWCASTLE Bill Waite 48 8374
VICTORIA Neville Smith 859 6521
ADELAIDE Bernie Challen 31 0700

BALLARAT CHAPTER RAFFLE

Ballarat Chapter held a raffle during the Convention in Brisbane and the result of the raffle is as follows:

Winning Ticket No.628 (Coffee Table)
Mrs. M. Blair, 7/14 Flowervale Road,
Noble Park, Victoria.

The proceeds of this raffle go to help the Compton installation fund at Ballarat.

Thanks to all who participated from Ballarat.

.....STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....

YES! Another Home Party has just been finalised for Saturday 12th September, beginning at 7.30pm.

Our Hosts on this occasion will be members John & Pat Guthrie and their address is 11 MILLET STREET, HURSTVILLE PHONE 57 7764.

John & Pat are now the proud owners of a new Thomas Celebrity Model 7181 complete with synthesiser and full pedal board. Our Special Guest Artist for the evening will be ERIC SMITH along with one of his very promising pupils, Miss Patricia Guthrie.

Admission will be \$2 for Gents and \$1.50 for Ladies who are asked to bring a plate towards supper. Members and friends are asked to bring their music and cord charts etc and have a play during the evening.

The Guthries also have a piano so, anything could happen during the evening!

Bookings for this Home Organ Party open on MONDAY 13th JULY and seating is limited to 30 persons. The previous party held by the Guthries proved to be very successful so be ready and book your spot on Monday 13th July!
