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T.O.S.A. NEWS

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

ADDRESS BOX A 584 P.O. SYDNEY SOUTH, 2000

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HOME ORGAN PARTY

Ashley Miller
in concert
Wednesday 8p.m.

SEPTEMBER

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LAST Q.
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FIRST Q.
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SHOW DAY (MELBOURNE) 23rd, SHOW DAY (PERTH) 29th

Club
Night

DIRECTORY

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WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS.

Mrs.A.B.Harrop, Mrs.M.Thomson, Mrs.K.Kemp, Geoff Pettit,
Mr.&Mrs. K.Lowder, Peter Martin.

BUS TRIP 23/24 October.

There are just 2 seats remaining to complete a coach full for our Bus Trip to Mudgee in October. Ring Mrs.Phil Wilson immediately and you could still be lucky and be part of a great week-end of fun. Phone: 759 6050 Now!

ALL COACH TRIPPERS PLEASE NOTE...Final Payments of \$49 per person is due by 20th September. Please forward these now to Mrs.Phil Wilson, 120 Dennis Street, Lakemba 2195 and make all cheques payable to TOSA.

PLEASE NOTE:

A visit to the State Theatre originally planned for the month of September has been CANCELLED, due to arrangements and circumstances beyond our control.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

We wish to thank several people who sent letters recently in reference to Noreen Hennessy. Our Committee wish to acknowledge the receipt of these letters and are carefully investigating any possible means to fulfil these suggestions.

CONCERT TAPES.

It is not possible at this stage to provide members with tapes of the Marrickville concerts. It is becoming increasingly difficult to provide tapes at a reasonable cost to members and still retain a standard to suit everyone, in view of the limited overall requirements.

Our member, Mr.Ray Garrett has asked to be relieved of this responsibility. The Committee will ensure that a tape for archive purposes is made of major concerts and will keep the overall position under review.

We take this opportunity to thank Ray for his outstanding efforts over the past years.

Alan Misdale (President)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



SEPTEMBER

MONDAY 6th..Committee Meeting at St.Annes Church Hall, Beresford Rd., Strathfield at 7.30pm.

WEDNESDAY 8th..ASHLEY MILLER concert at Marrickville Town Hall commencing at 8pm. (Ring 759 6050 for instant bookings)

SUNDAY 12th..HOME ORGAN PARTY at No.3 Bulls Avenue, Cronulla. Please ring June Collins or Wendy Raines on 523 3542 for bookings. Commences at 2.30pm.Several artists will be playing during the afternoon. Admission: Gents \$2 and Ladies \$1.50 plus a plate for afternoon tea.

WEDNESDAY 22nd..CLUB NIGHT at Marrickville at 7.30pm. Bring your music and have a play on the WurliTzer. Tea & Coffee will be served.

OCTOBER

TUESDAY 5th..Committee Meeting at St.Annes Church Hall at 7.30pm.

WEDNESDAY 6th..CLOSING DATE FOR NOMINATIONS.

SUNDAY 17th..FREE CONCERT at Marrickville Town Hall featuring CLIFF BINGHAM and CLINTON WHITE from the ACT.

WEEK-END 23/24th COACH TOUR to Mudgee.

NOVEMBER

MONDAY 1st..Committee Meeting at St.Annes Church Hall at 7.30pm

SUNDAY 14th..PAID CONCERT at the Marrickville WurliTzer featuring DAVID PARSONS. (Booking details next issue)

WEDNESDAY 17th..ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at Marrickville Town Hall Commencing at 7.30pm.

DECEMBER

MONDAY 6th..Committee Meeting at St.Annes Church Hall at 7.30pm.

WEDNESDAY 8th..TOSA CHRISTMAS PARTY at Canterbury Leagues Club Commencing at 7pm. (Booking Details in next issue)

ASHLEY MILLER "SUPERB MUSICIAN" Sunday 8th August

What a pleasant and musically rewarding concert this was. A large audience including visitors from all parts of the State plus a good contingent from the ACT made up a record crowd of just over 800 people.

Our visiting American artist Ashley Miller, appeared a trifle nervous as he commenced with A Wonderful Day Like Today and This Could Be The Start Of Something Big. Ashley gradually settled down to present an across the board program which appealed to all tastes. The Wurlitzer was in top condition and Ashley Miller later thanked our maintenance crew for their fine efforts.

Ashley filled the auditorium with sounds we dont always hear from our Wurlitzer. Rather than the old style of theatre organ playing, Ashley Miller has a concept of using the organ in an orchestral approach, which is out of the norm in a lot of artists. His method of playing depends less on hair raising effects and more on solid musicality to impress his audience. He brings out the organ to its full effect by gradually bringing all voices into use and creating a subtle mood for each piece of music, no doubt carefully designed beforehand by this very capable artist, and this is something we dont always hear today at organ concerts.

An Associate of the American Guild of Organists, Ashley Miller displayed a masterful control of the huge dynamic range of the instrument as the 'new' sounds he produced left no doubt in our minds as to his inexhaustive ability to create a different atmosphere as he required it, for any number.

I wont go into a great list of the numbers played, but I will say that not only our audience was enchanted by his artistry, but many of our local artists who were present, absorbed in every detail his creative voicing of the organ. His approach to the up-tempo numbers was excellent and many organists will be saying "why Didn't I think of that?" Some people missed the crash-bang effects, but they also tend to forget that the instrument was designed as a unit-orchestra, and when used to its full capabilities as such by a master organist like Ashley Miller, great music is expressed to its fullest extent.

Two light classics showed Ashley Miller's superb ability as a classical artist and I'm sure that very few of us had ever heard the delightful settings used during these two pieces.

The audience was obviously impressed with Ashley's playing and demanded two encores before he was allowed to leave the console, which proved their complete satisfaction and appreciation of hearing good music.

Congratulations and thanks to Ashley Miller for a great concert!

PLEASE NOTE: ASHLEY MILLER WILL BE PRESENTING A FURTHER CONCERT AT MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL ON.....WEDNESDAY NIGHT..8th SEPTEMBER at 8pm.

SEATS CAN BE BOOKED AT ONCE FROM THE TICKET SECRETARY,

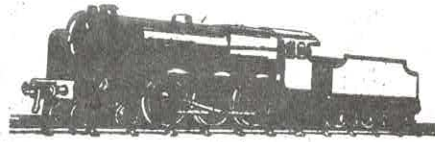
120 DENNIS STREET, LAKEMBA, 2195.

or Phone: 759 6050 now!

TOSATOUR '83.

Details of the tour by T.O.S.A. Members to the U.S.A. next year have now been finalized. Itinerary and current costs will be printed within the next two weeks, and will be given or posted to all members who have expressed interest in the tour.

The Group will depart Sydney on 12th June '83 and return home, arriving 30th June. Should you be interested in joining the tour and not have previously notified this please write to:- TOSATOUR. 127 Quarter Sessions Road, WESTLEIGH. N.S.W. 2120.



RAILWAY CABARET

FRIDAY 19th NOVEMBER at 6.45pm.

MARRICKVILLE TOWN HALL

On Friday 19th November 1982, there will be a Cabaret at Marrickville Town Hall. Whilst I am running this Cabaret for Railwaymen, with whom I work, members of T.O.S.A. are more than welcome to attend.

Starting time is 6.45 pm and on arrival sherries and biscuits & cheese will be served. Table numbers will then be advised and you will be able to dance to the WurliTzer Pipe Organ, in the capable hands of the Society Patron, Mr. Ian Davies. At approximately 7.30pm you will be served a three course meal.

During the evening you will have a chance to singalong to the organ with our selection of Theatre Song Slides.

The Cost of this enjoyable evening is \$22 a double and \$11 for a single...All you need to bring is yourselves and your choice of liquid refreshments. Dress is optional.

Please arrange your party and book now with Mrs.P.Tooker, 114 Mitchell Street, Croydon Park 2133, on the form provided. Bookings close on Thursday 11th November. Please make ALL cheques payable to J.Lawson and NOT to TOSA.

Mr. Jack Lawson (Organiser)

HEAR YE...HEAR YE...AND CONSIDER WELL THAT THOU HAST BEEN TOLD TODAY!

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF PRACTICE.

1. Thou shalt practise every day, even only for a short period.
2. Thou shalt NEVER practise faster than thou canst play perfectly, for it is written: Perfect Practise Makes Perfect.
3. Thou shalt NOT put off working on the hard parts; David did not invite Golieth to come back after tea.
4. Thou shalt work out a usable fingering, inscribe it on thy papyrs and NEVER vary from same, for Fumble Fingers Find Fate Fickle.
5. Thou shalt never apologise for thy playing, nor say "oops!" when thou makest a mistake, for thou wilt only draw attention to things which otherwise would never be noticed by the thick people.
6. Thou shalt practise each composition in short segments; that thy fingers may not break off more than thy mind can chew.
7. Thou shalt listen..and not only to organists, for it is written: What this untidy world needs is lesser organists and more musicians who can play the organ.
8. Thou shalt NOT play pedals without shoes,,for thy Odour Eaters may be spent, and besides, it leads to sloppy playing.
9. Thou shalt begin and end each practise period with something thou canst play readily, that thou mayest not be discouraged.
10. Thou shalt always remember that thy practise is a labour of love and that by persistence (oft proven by thyself in other undertakings) thou canst bring to pass many wonders.

EXPRESS YOURSELF!

(Courtesy of Theatre Organ Magazine)

Have you ever been to an organ concert where the artist's playing was good, yet the performance left you unexcited? There are two causes of this...bland registration and lack of expressive mood changes. Wise use of the expression pedal can add lots of colour to an otherwise dull programme.

Liturgical organs that were built before and during the time of J.S.Bach were unenclosed. The pipework was not encased, and many of today's instruments use this idea for certain divisions of the organ. As musical history progressed through the Romantic period, more graduations of tone were needed that changing from one rank of pipes to another could not provide. Hence, organ builders began to enclose their pipework and placed shutters, venetian blind style, on the outside to control the volume from the chamber to the listener.

Theatre organs normally have several swell shoes or pedals. Each particular installation varies from the next. A theatre organ will normally have a swell pedal for each chamber, a general for all chambers and a crescendo pedal. (The crescendo pedal ADDS stops gradually and is always on the extreme right. Dont use it to control volume.) In the case of electronic organs however, there's one only for the entire instrument, so one doesn't have much choice. If you're blessed with a console that has two, one will generally control the tibias while the other takes care of the rest of the organ.

When playing the organ, your right foot should be on the volume control pedal, toe to press down for added volume, heel to pull back for less volume, at all times. The noted organist Don Baker once toured the country for an electronic organ firm, giving many concerts and workshops, and as he dealt with this subject, what he said was this: as the melody line of the music goes generally upward, the volume should increase; as the music goes down, so should the volume. It's a good rule to remember. Also, unless you're on the last phrase of a song, leave yourself somewhere to go. If your already playing "loudest", you cant end in a climax. Music is composed in phrases, and each should be contoured in expression. Learn control. GRADUAL increases and DECREASES are much preferred to over sudden changes. Keep your listeners in mind and express yourself..and the music..accordingly.

Sometimes it can pay to tape yourself and then, objectively, listen to it and make improvements on what you hear. DON'T, however, mentally play the arrangement while listening to the tape; that will defeat your purpose. Dont ever let yourself fall into the bad habit of beating time with your right foot on the volume pedal, as this can be musically disastrous. Controlled and wise use of the volume pedal will help you make music.

Here's to improved self-expression through music!

FOR SALE

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* ORGAN - CONN MARTINIQUE 644 with accesory
* speaker equipment (pipe, tone cabinet etc.)
*
* NEW Condition. Price:\$7.300
*
* Please Phone 635 5904.
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THE STORY OF THE ORGAN

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By Ben Hall, a senior editor of SHOW MAGAZINE and author of THE BEST REMAINING SEATS---The Story of the Golden Age of the Movie Palace, as well as numerous articles on the organ.

On a Sunday afternoon in 1892, members of St. John's Church in Birkenhead, England, assembled for a strange organ recital. The organ of the Church, an old instrument, had been undergoing a mysterious renovation for the past six years. Robert Hope-Jones, a young engineer with the National Telephone Company, had worked on it, chiefly at night, with the help of several men and a few choirboys, but even they were not at all certain what the eccentric Mr. Hope-Jones wished to accomplish with all his curious wires and switches. Now the organ was ready for its first demonstration and Robert Hope-Jones himself, a voluntry organist at the church in his youth would play.

From the first moment, the organ gave out a richer, brighter tone than before, and a variety of sounds completely new. When the recital was finished, everyone turned to look up at the choir loft in the rear of the church to hail the organist, but Robert Hope-Jones was nowhere to be seen. Neither, in fact, was the organ console. At that moment Hope-Jones came striding through a side door of the church. It was only then that the secret was revealed..he had played the entire recital from the churchyard, where the organ console sat amidst the tombstones. A long cable connected the console with the pipes, which were still in their usual place behind the choir loft.

Until that time, organ pipes and their windchests had been linked to consoles by stretched wires or wooden rods; each key required enormous strength from the organists fingers. Now Hope-Jones had devised a system of low voltage contacts, these opened and closed the valves electrically as the organist gently touched the keys.

The pipe organ had been slow to evolve before Hope-Jone's time. Its origins are lost in legend. Some credit old Pan with the invention of the pipes; but no one knows who first got the idea of playing them by means of a keyboard (or manual) with a source of wind other than human lungs. St. Cecelia, perhaps the world's first lady organist, is always shown playing a little one manual instrument. Usually she is assisted by one or more cherubs, no doubt the first organ pumpers, the ancestors of an ancient and perspiring breed of small boys who were still doing duty at the pump handle in village churches only a few years ago.

The first mention of a pipe organ in recorded history appears about 250 B.C., when a barber named Ctesbius of Alexandria, Egypt, invented an instrument called the hydraulis. As its name indicates, the hydraulis used water which, when pumped into a large pottery jar, caused the displaced air to sound a set of pipes placed on top. A Greek, Archimedes, made refinements on the hydraulis and Emperor Nero, (a musician usually identified with a fiddle) had one installed in one of his palaces. Other Romans took a fancy to the hydraulis and imported them in large numbers for use in houses, temples and theatres.

It was natural that the organ, with its inspiring tones, should become part of religious worship. The Hebrew Talmud refers to an organ (called a magraphia) in the last temple of the Jews in Jerusalem, in the second century A.D. "There was an organ in the temple which produced a thousand kinds of melody"; The purely pneumatic organ (using bellows instead of the water principle to provide a steady supply of wind) did not appear until a century later, when one was shown on an obelisk at Constantinople. One of the first clear descriptions of a pneumatic organ comes from St. Jerome, who about 400 A.D., wrote of an organ in Jerusalem with 12 bronze pipes, two elephant skins and 15 black-smith's bellows, which could be heard at the Mount of Olives nearly a mile away.

By the 15th century, the pipe organ had achieved more or less the external form in which we know it now; the keys, formerly several inches wide and requiring the force of a fist to operate, were reduced to their present fingerable form, and the addition of a pedal clavier made the organ a great deal more flexible, The Germans became the prominent organ builders; there were more than 200 organ craftsman in Saxony alone, including Gottfried Silbermann, who built the instruments used by Johann Sebastian Bach.

(cnt'd)

THE STORY OF THE ORGAN (CNT'D)

The great technical advances in the art of organ building which are responsible for the modern instrument did not come about until late in the 1800's, when Robert Hope-Jones started his revolutionary experiment at Birkenhead. His remote console electro-pneumatic organ caused a sensation and soon contracts for other instruments came his way. In 1895 he was called to Worcester Cathedral to rebuild the organ there.

Despite a substantial number of contracts, Hope-Jones suffered a series of financial losses, partly because his new instruments were frequently sabotaged by jealous competitors. Finally, he decided to come to the United States, where, eventually he established his own organ company in Elmira, New York. It too failed, despite a number of backers that included Diamond Jim Brady, Mark Twain and Theodore N. Vail of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. But his capacity for invention flourished in America.

Some of Hope-Jones' innovations include the now familiar "Horseshoe" theatre-organ console, with its curved rows of coloured stop tablets (also invented by Hope-Jones) that replaced the less convenient draw knobs still used in many church or straight-organ consoles today. He invented a number of new ranks of pipes for the organ, including the diaphone, a deep throated bass top with a voice so stentorian that it was also adapted by the U.S. Coastguard as a fog warning device. But his most important gift to the theatre organ was a system of pipe unification which made it possible for every set of pipes to be played on every manual at many different pitches. Thus a unit organ of six ranks (six sets of pipes each with distinctive voicing) could be made outshine in flexibility and tonal variety a straight organ with more than thirty ranks.

In 1910, as organ music was beginning to assume greater importance in movie theatres, the Hope-Jones organ company, along with its founder, was absorbed by the Wurlitzer Company of North Tonawanda, New York, and the modern theatre organ was born. Called the Wurlitzer Hope-Jones Unit Orchestra, it opened a new era of music in the theatre. Hope-Jones, embittered by financial failure, took his own life in 1914. But his monument lies in the fact that today many of his revolutionary inventions are incorporated in many of the finest church and theatre organs being built.

The era of the Mighty Wurlitzer is over; only a few of them remain in theatres today, and fewer are being played. Even the theatres that once housed these remarkable instruments (as well as those made by other organ builders such as Kimball, Moller, Kilgen, Robert Morton, Barton and Marr & Colton) are vanishing rapidly as tastes in entertainment change. Many of the displaced organs have been rescued by individuals who have set them up in their own homes, and the American Association of Theatre Organ Enthusiasts, a society dedicated to their preservation and to the whole cult of theatre-organ music, recently celebrated its tenth anniversary with a special concert at New York's Radio City Music Hall.

More happily, the church and concert organ has gone through a recent renaissance and many magnificent instruments are being built and heard by great numbers of a public whose appreciation for organ music has been heightened through the medium of recordings. Organ Memories gives us a chance to hear the fascinating differences between two superb straight instruments (one in a concert hall, one in a church), the world's largest theatre organ, an organ designed for studio use and now installed in a private home, and an organ built to provide dance music in a lavish ballroom. All are definitive examples of their kind. And all are played by consummate artists who know how to show them off to the best advantage.

(My sincerest thanks to long standing member, Mr. Jack Lawson who kindly submitted this very interesting article for the benefit of all our members. Ed.)

HOME ORGAN PARTY AT THE SELWYN THEATRE...SUNDAY 25th July



This pleasant Sunday afternoon revealed a big attendance of just over 70, and with a beautiful white JVC organ to hear and a beautiful girl to play it, why not!

Our star for the afternoon, Miss Beverly Kennedy, presented a varied program of very well played music. Showing off the subtle voices of the organ with pieces such as Love Theme, Hungarian Dance, Reverie, Prelude, Surrey with the Fringe on Top, Beverly occasionally used a small additional keyboard for expressive solo voicing and this made a good contrast to the organ voices.

Songs like Bad Habits, My Fair Lady selections and Ritual Fire Dance were among many well known pieces and we also heard several others not so well known but still recognised by many of the listeners. In all, a very good afternoon of well played music. Another beautiful girl, Miss Margaret Hall, who was visiting from N.Z. joined Beverly for three piano-organ duets to end the day, and these were very popular with the audience. This was a remarkable achievement as Beverly and Margaret had only met each other for the first time on that day, so I say full marks to both girls.

Beverly Kennedy then made a generous donation of \$110 to the Theatre Organ Society and this was gratefully received by President Alan Misdale, who thanked both artists for their fine efforts.

Selwyn promoters, Ritchie Willis and Norm Read were also thanked for their fine work in organising the afternoon for the Society.

DAVID PARSONS, OUTSTANDING SUCCESS at SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE. Sunday
4th July

An enthusiastic audience of 1100 people enjoyed a very entertaining programme of great music by well known artist David Parsons at the Sydney Opera House organ on Sunday 4th July.

With 10,500 pipes and 178 stops to play with, David provided a most varied program of tunes, taking time to stop and explain some of the pipes and demonstrating the flutes and strings, as he played Ave Maria. David features special items for the ABC 50th Birthday, American Independence Day plus a selection from Oklahoma, now playing in Sydney. His final item, I Still Call Australia Home using full organ was a rousing finish to end an afternoon of superb music.

David's popularity at the Opera House Organ has obviously become well known, and he will be playing a concert at the Marrickville Wurlitzer during November, (date to be advised), for the Theatre Organ Society of Australia.

overseas news

5/21 WurliTzer to be installed in Rhode Island, U.S.A.

For 14 years, Byron Carlson painstakingly restored the 5/21 WurliTzer which had originally been installed in Chicago's Marbro Theatre, one of three 5-manual organs built by WurliTzer. Purchased from the theatre in 1959, Carlson made the instrument a focal point in his St. Paul, Minnesota, home. With wife Lillian, the enthusiast is to move to California, and offered the organ for sale at \$85,000. The successful buyer was the Ocean State Performing Arts Centre in Providence, Rhode Island, and in January an eight man crew dismantled the instrument and loaded it into two vans for its journey eastward. Shipping and installation will cost a further \$30,000.

Providence is contributing \$50,000 in community development money. A fund drive will, it is hoped, defray the remaining cost. The WurliTzer is being installed in the former Loew's Providence Theatre, which had a 4 manual Robert Morton previously. Subsequently damaged in the hurricane of 1954, the Morton is in a private home. The WurliTzer console is already on the original elevator, blower and relays in place. Chambers have been re-plastered and re-painted. Plans called for the organ's playing in May, with a Halloween show to include a running of "Phantom of the Opera" in October.

LOS ANGELES Theatre Organ Society to sponsor Concert series.

Following four highly successful individual concerts on the 5/28 Moller Theatre Organ (designed and built as a touring instrument for the late Reginald Foort and later purchased by the BBC before being purchased by American interests) donated to the Pasadena Civic Auditorium by J.B. Nethercutt of San Sylmar, the L.A.T.O.S. Board of Directors has programmed the first series of concerts on the large Moller by three superstars of the organ world.

Gaylord Carter will inaugurate the series on Saturday, September 25th at 8.30pm, celebrating his sixtieth anniversary in show business with his Flicker Fingers presentation, "60 Years of Chasing," composed especially for this series. He will also accompany a silent film "For Heaven's Sake", starring Harold Lloyd, an hour long comedy chase not seen by the Western audience in recent years.

On Sunday, January 23rd at 2.30pm, Dennis James will also accompany a silent film using a similar "chase" style to Carter's. Dennis recently appeared at West Coast consoles before capacity audiences viewing the silent film "Napoleon".

Argentine born Hector Olivera will display his mastery of the keyboards in his appearance Sunday, May 8th, 1983 at 2.30pm. Frequently featured at National Conventions, Hector will present a varied programme ranging from Bach to rock. All seating is reserved at Pasadena for the three concerts, ranging in price from \$25 loge, \$22 orchestra, \$20 balcony to \$14 main floor area. Early purchasers of the series of three concerts will receive a bonus admission to an Individual performance by Lyn Larsen on the San Sylmar 4/35 WurliTzer on Saturday, June 12th at 6.00pm and 8.30pm. Individual admission to Pasadena concerts is \$8.50, with discounts available to groups of twenty or more.

SHOWPLACE of the South changes format.

For over 54 years the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.A. was a movie theatre. The 2,500 seat house opened December 26th, 1927. It was (and is) equipped with a 4/20 WurliTzer (Crawford Special) Opus 1783.

After a long struggle to keep the downtown theatre operating as a regular movie house, the owners have been forced into a change in operations. Since re-opening after a brief closure in January, the theatre has been rented for special events and meetings. The owners plan to continue to maintain the organ and use it for concerts. Relations between Alabama Chapter of A.T.O.S. and the theatre management are very good. The chapter has been asked to continue its work on the organ and will be permitted to hold chapter meetings there as well as renting the theatre for major public concerts.

(Courtesy "Theatre Organ Magazine")