

# TOSA NEWS

August 2018  
Volume 57 No.6

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**Come join the party at the  
September 9th Concert  
Scott Harrison  
from Melbourne  
plays  
the  
Marrickville Wurlitzer  
again Celebrating its 50th Year  
at Marrickville Town Hall**

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# President



Bookings are now open for the second of our 50th anniversary concerts - Scott Harrison from Melbourne playing his debut for TOSA NSW

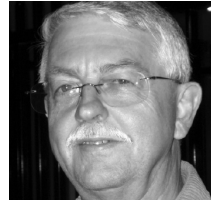
on September 9 at 2pm.

See you there! Regards

Craig Keller

President

# Editorial



Hello all, we're back...

Deb and I had an excellent holiday in the west of the USA before, during and after the ATOS convention. A report on it is still tumbling out of my brain and will be in future editions of TOSA NEWS.

Once again, some excellent music was heard and amazing sites seen as the assembled throng were bussed around the quiet little village of Los Angeles...

A successful social day was held at West Ryde on June 30 with many taking the opportunity to see and hear how the Christie is coming along. Thanks to all involved for organising and especially those who came along. Congratulations to the technical team for their outstanding work so far. The light at the end of the tunnel is becoming brighter.

Your committee recently decided to contract John Parker to undertake essential maintenance to the Orion Wurlitzer console. Keyboards will be refurbished and a number of other console related matters seen to. To facilitate this work the Member Days at Orion Centre are suspended until later this year. We must have the console in tip-top condition ready for Simon Gledhill on November 18 and Tony and John on December 9.

In the meantime, our beloved Marrickville Wurlitzer is still in fine form.

Hello Members,

What a great ATOS Convention in Pasadena where some 400 Theatre Organ music members came to hear some wonderful concerts on so many different instruments. I came back with only 10 CDs and happy memories of meeting friends from far and wide as well as having the chance to chat with a number of the musicians.

The next 50th Anniversary concert of the opening of the former Prince Edward Theatre Wurlitzer in Marrickville Town Hall is approaching fast. Do come along to hear our World Famous Marrickville Wurlitzer in the hands of Scott Harrison and you can BYO drinks and nibbles as well.

Please note the cabaret style seating arrangement for this concert as outlined in this issue. If you need advice on how to book a seat or table please contact Theo Langenberg on 0410 626 131 before 8:pm.

Enjoy the music,

Ernie Vale  
PO Box A2322  
SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235  
[editor@tosa.net.au](mailto:editor@tosa.net.au)

## From the Mailbox...



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Thanks for your responses and please continue to email or write in, telling us what you think.

Where space permits we will do our best to publish your comments, but as space is limited, the editor reserves the right to edit any submitted comments and, as always, the views expressed by any individual may not necessarily coincide with the views of TOSA NSW Div.

Please submit all comments via email to:

The Editor *editor@tosa.net.au*  
or in writing to:

*The Editor - TOSA News (NSW Div)*  
PO Box A2322  
SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235

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### **Transport to concerts from Rail Stations**

Your Committee are keen to assist members with transport from railway stations to concerts as well as to West Ryde Anglican Church for members days.

TOSA ask any member if they would be prepared to pick up members at Sydenham Station for transport to Marrickville Town Hall, and from West Ryde Station to West Ryde Anglican Church for members days and ultimately for concerts there.

Also calling for a member to act as coordinator for members to contact to arrange transport from and to the railway stations.

Please contact Secretary, Simon Ellis on 0403 548 354 to discuss. Thanks - the TOSA Committee.

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### **We need help to set up**

The Committee call upon members who are willing to assist in laying out the tables and chairs at Marrickville Town Hall on Sunday morning September 9th for the concert please. To date we have one volunteer, member Karl Zipzin is happy to help out. Thanks Karl. It would be great if we had one more volunteer to help with set up in cabaret style. There are trolleys for moving the tables and the chairs from storage into the hall. Lunch is provided for helpers. Access is from 9:30am and TOSA is required to set up & put away the cabaret style seating. Please contact Margaret Badman for details on 0417 971 212

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### **Conn Organ for Free**

I have a Conn 644 Martinique organ in good working condition and wish to find it a good home - for free. I live at Glenwood. Please contact Ian Jeffress on 0416 182 155 for details.

## ***To Watch Out for***

**Concert artists and venues  
for 2018**

**9 September - Scott Harrison  
Marrickville Wurlitzer  
50th Anniversary Year  
Concert**

**18 November -  
Simon Gledhill  
Orion Wurlitzer  
30th Anniversary Concert**

**9 December - Tony & John  
Orion Wurlitzer**

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*As you will have read in the Presidents column the Executive and Committee have engaged organ builder John Parker to do some necessary work on the Orion Console prior to the 30th Anniversary Concert in November with Simon Gledhill. Playing members will also benefit from the work to be done when it is completed. This is fitting to give the Orion console an Anniversary present and ensure it is in perfect order for the future.*

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Scotsman: A man who, before sending his pyjamas to the laundry, stuffs a sock in each pocket.

*Ambrose Bierce*

## **Advertising**

### **Rates in**

### **TOSA News**

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Quarter Page = \$25

Half Page = \$50

Full Page = \$100

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

### **Members' Playing Dates**

#### **The Orion Theatre Campsie**

Until further notice the members days at the Orion have been postponed so that work can be done on the console prior to the November concert.

**Convener is**

**Craig Keller** on 0418484798

**Marrickville Town Hall  
4th Monday afternoon/evening  
at 1:20pm to 9:00pm**

**August 27th**

**September 24th**

Players and listeners welcome.

**Convener is**

**John Batts** on 0420424103

will email you to confirm the day is available or

Neil Palmer on 9798 6742 after 7:00pm

**to confirm availability**

## **Urgent Update on the Orion Wurlitzer**

The new UNiflex 4000 system has now been installed at the Orion -

The purchase cost was just under A\$6,800.00 and thanks to more generous donations from members the donations for this important upgrade have now reached **\$4,234**. Thank you members for your contributions. Members, further donations towards this cost would be very much appreciated. Any amount, large or small, will be gratefully received. Donations can be made in any of the following ways:

1. Cheque or Money Order payable to TOSA and forwarded to:-

Treasurer, TOSA,  
26 Maple Crescent  
Lithgow NSW 2790

2. Direct Deposit to the Society's account through any branch of the ANZ Bank (there is no cost using this system) or Internet Banking  
Details required are:

BSB 012430, Account No. 2321 40985, Account name Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division). Reference 6800

3. Cash or cheque payment at the June 2018 concert - please see Geoff Brimley: a receipt will be issued.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely

Geoff Brimley, Treasurer

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## **Membership Renewal for 2018-19**

For those members who have not renewed before Friday 15th June a new Member Renewal form will be sent to those receiving TOSA News by mail, that has been populated with your member details to assist you in completing your membership renewal for the ensuing year. Those receiving TOSA News by email will receive the Membership Renewal form by separate email.

Prices have now increased slightly as set out on the form. TOSA would appreciate your early renewal please. We have

**Chris Powell** and **Dave Wickerham** booked for next year already.

*Apologies for the incorrect information in the July TOSA News stating that Phil Kelsall was booked for 2019. Editor*

**Time to again Celebrate  
the 50th year of the Marrickville Wurlitzer  
at Marrickville Town Hall  
entertaining our TOSA Members  
and the Sydney Public.**

Following the success of the cabaret style seating at the June 3rd concert it is proposed to again use this format for the September 9th concert. Each table will be covered and have a modest amount of free snacks (chips, nuts etc), cups and drinking water provided. Audience members are welcome to BYO additional snacks and drinks if they wish and this can include wine etc if you wish. TOSA NSW will not be selling any alcohol items so we are in compliance with licencing laws.

For afternoon tea at interval we are also providing some enhanced options. To accompany your tea or coffee you will be able to select from some gourmet delicacies. For an additional afternoon tea ticket you can come back for seconds. A slight price increase will be in place to cover this enhanced service.

Don't worry, even though the tables and chairs will be arranged "cabaret style" it will still be a theatre organ concert. There will not be dancing troupes, magic acts etc. All entertainment will be provided by **Scott Harrison** from the console.

Part of the reason for the change to cabaret style is to provide some social interaction for members and audience. We now know that this new layout does absorb some of the lively audio reflection of the hall that has become more prevalent created by the new chairs and their non-padded shells along with reduced audience numbers in recent times. Thankfully the hall was full of members and friends on June 3rd which made for a most enjoyable social gathering of lovers of theatre organ music.

The committee hopes that you and your friends will come along on September 9th to help celebrate again and to welcome Scott Harrison from Melbourne to Sydney and Marrickville Town Hall.

*Craig Keller*  
President TOSA NSW Divn Inc

## **TOSA Social Day at West Ryde, 30th June, 2018**

Around 20 people attended the afternoon, with over \$73 in donations raised to augment the Christie installation funds.

Several members took the opportunity to play part of the organ from the console, with the 4' Diapason manual chest available on-air for the occasion (only one, regulated, flexible test air-line is available until the main-line trunking is installed). This meant stop selection was limited to 8' and 4' Diapason tabs, and couplers.

A number of attendees took the stairs to the chambers to inspect work progress. Many questions were raised, and general approval expressed.

A comprehensive question and answer session followed John Weismantel's verbal presentation to the group. It was explained that approximately 90% of the organ is currently playable from the console, limited only by the availability of air-supply. Nearly all console functions are useable, including setting range and content of all piston buttons (both thumb and toe). The Accompaniment chamber installation is almost complete, and the Solo chamber is progressing well.

Coffee and tea was available thanks to Barry Tooker, and many delicacies were supplied by attendees.

The afternoon was capped off by showing of a DVD of the first half of a concert by Tony Fenelon on the TOSAQ Christie at Kelvin Grove State College in Brisbane.

Positive feedback from the afternoon seems to point to the desirability of TOSA arranging more of this type of function, preferably when more of the Christie is playable from the console.

John Weismantel  
Vice President, TOSA NSW





Members day at West Ryde Christie



Sharon Weismantel at the Christie



John Weismantel talks about the organ



The DVD of TOSA Q Concert

## Show & Membership Prices

	<b>All Artists</b>
Non-members	\$35
Non-member Pensioner/Seniors Card holder	\$30
TOSA Members	\$25

**All Students FREE on confirmation of Student status**

**All Children FREE accompanied by an Adult**

Group Booking for 10 or more Adults      \$22 per person

First time Adult \$20 cash by completed Voucher at Box Office

### **Annual Membership Fees 2018-19:**

\$50.00 Full membership, \$40.00 Concession, Interstate or

Overseas \$50. \$5 discount if TOSA News emailed to you

Membership enquiries David & Margaret Badman

(02) 4776 2192 [membership@tosa.net.au](mailto:membership@tosa.net.au)

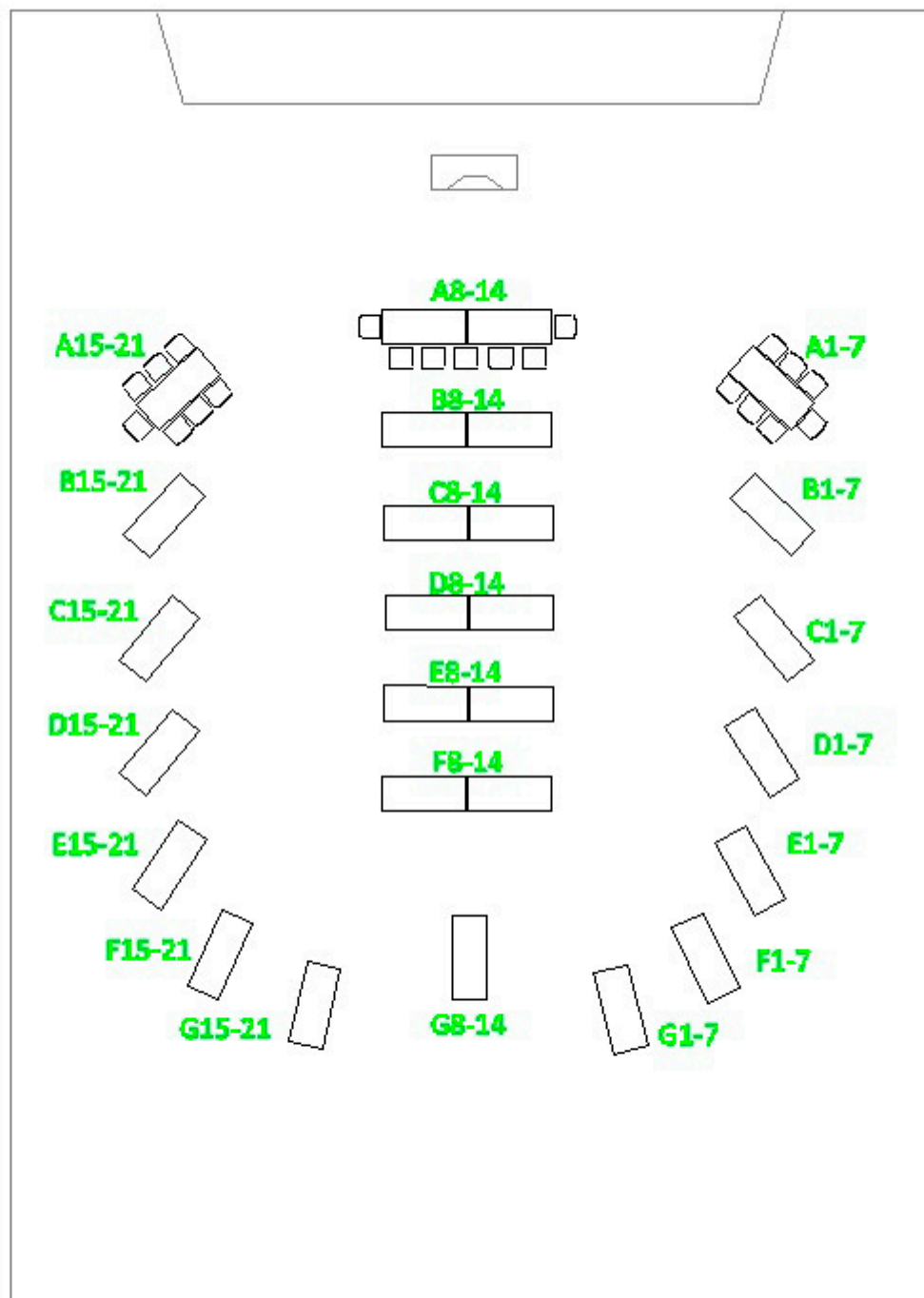
Associate Membership for a spouse/partner is an additional 50%

# Christie Report for August 2018

## Work done since last report includes:

- Orchestral Oboe chest restoration continues: action design is very critical of quality of airtightness. Changes to be implemented to improve seals, including change from Hill Norman & Beard magnets (suspect warpage) to Kimber Allen magnets.
- Tuned Birdwhistle being prepared for installation. Unit was tested with oil in bath and air supply connected, with pleasing results.
- Console pedal first and second-touch contacts adjusted.
- Pedal springing and touch regulation completed.
- New regulators gasket leathering installed on available components.
- Large regulator valves releathered and installed on valve-plate; cone valve leather/felt seal made and installed. Valve spring blocks made and installed.
- 4' Diapason was available for playing from the console on the Social Day, fed from the test air connection via its winker.
- Inoperative middle C on 4' diapason was corrected by removal of pipes and top board, repair of pallet, and reinstatement of chest; tested ok.
- Re-installation of ventil on Vd'O chest to isolate chest for tuning.
- Installed brace on C# end of Clarinet support to correct sagging.
- Assessed components of small and medium-sized regulators; some components are missing and will need to be manufactured. Top plates have errors in spindle opening placement (holes do not line up with valve spindles), so will have to be re-manufactured. The timber can be re-purposed.
- Large regulator will need an adaptor to match to the trunking; measurements taken.

# Seating arrangement for the September 9th Anniversary Concert at Marrickville Town Hall



TOSA's World of Entertainment Presents  
Another 50th Anniversary Year Concert  
of the opening of the Marrickville Wurlitzer  
in Marrickville Town Hall in 1968

## Scott Harrison



**from Melbourne  
will play this celebration concert  
on  
Australia's World Famous,  
fabulous Wurlitzer Unit Orchestra**

**at Marrickville Town Hall  
Cnr Petersham & Marrickville Rds, Marrickville**

***Cabaret Style seating & BYO drinks & nibbles***

***Tea & coffee together with enhanced treats  
available at Interval for just \$3  
Sunday 9th September 2:00 – 4:30pm***

***Come and Join us - bring the grandchildren  
Bring your friends***

**This concert is at Marrickville Town Hall  
to continue the celebration of the 50th Anniversary  
year of the opening of the former Prince Edward  
Theatre Sydney Wurlitzer.**

**This 2 manual 11 rank Wurlitzer** is considered by musicians the world over to be one of the most outstanding 2 manual Wurlitzer installations in the world.

TOSA NSW own this wonderful musical instrument and are very proud of the fact that it has been kept in excellent condition for members and the public to enjoy.

**Scott Harrison**

I'm Scott Harrison and I have been performing on Theatre Organs since 1987. I have been privileged to appear at many of the great theatre organ venues around the world including in Australia, New Zealand, the United States and England.

My first major gig was as 'City Organist' for the then City of Moorabbin (now City of Kingston), Victoria, Australia from 1987 to 1993, residing over their magnificent 4/21 Wurlitzer. During this period I also spent two years residing over the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (TOSA) Victoria's prize 3/15 Dendy Wurlitzer.

Some of the highlights of my regular Australian concerts include the opening celebration concert for the Warragul Wurlitzer along with the re-opening of the refurbished Kingston Wurlitzer in 2005. I was also the organist for the special City of Kingston concerts to celebrate the Kingston Wurlitzer's 80th anniversary (2009), and it's 40th anniversary at Kingston City Hall in 2010.

TOSA would appreciate you all telling as many people as you can about the significance of this musical instrument and the special occasion this presents. Please encourage people to come along whilst they have the opportunity to enjoy the sound of one of the finest 2 keyboard Wurlitzers in the world.

Tickets : \$ 35; Conc \$ 30; Members \$25

Adult Group of 10 or more \$22/person

First time attendance for Adults \$20 by voucher at the box office

Download a voucher from [www.tosa.net.au](http://www.tosa.net.au)

Students Free



## John Giacchi's Golden Celebration — John S. Batts.

Fifty years is a fair span of time in anyone's life and especially so in the theatre organ world wherein the decades of demand for organists to ply their public careers were not extensive.

However, the theatre organ has often exceeded its natural life-span by evolving and finding venues outside those involved with showing films. **The Prince Edward Theatre's Wurlitzer (Opus No. 875**, now in Marrickville Town Hall) under the ownership & care of TOSA NSW, has fared much better than most and in its inner-city-west placement has thrived, arguably extending its reputation world-wide as a superb installation that has attracted the praise of a world-wide cast of organists.

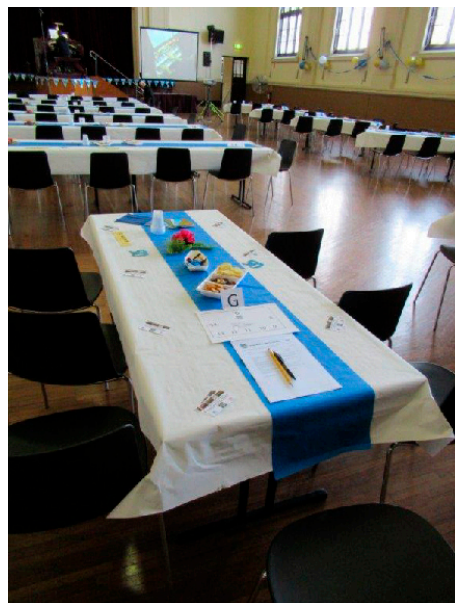
Sunday, 3rd June 2018 therefore was especially chosen to honour the Wurlitzer's 50th year of residency in Marrickville Town Hall. The occasion demanded a preeminent Australian theatre organist, and **John Giacchi**, now recognised internationally for his playing skills, was a good choice of performer.



### John Giacchi's final practice before the concert

Formerly a TOSA Committee member in the late 1980s, he also offered an additional credential of being Sydney-born, though he now lives in Melbourne. Little wonder he was welcomed by an

enthusiastic crowd, a dozen of whom had come for the day from Canberra. Attendance may have been helped by a note of this event in the weekend edition of the *Sydney Morning Herald* (p.28; 19-20 May). The seating had been especially laid-out in cabaret style with tables and side-walls decorated with balloons and twisted crepe bunting. There was a slight delay in beginning as



late-comers adjusted to the new arrangements, so there was time to appreciate visually the extra effort made by Margaret Badman and her team of volunteers in setting up the seating and decorations. Pam Lawson and her team catered well for the additional afternoon tea treats.

The opening music was bright and brisk, Harry Warren's (1893-1981) upbeat "All's Fair in Love and War" (1937), not heard by our audience I suspect since Donnie Rankin was at The Orion. The second chorus opened more quietly before the sound built up and the English Horn on second

touch underscored the cheerfulness of Al Dubin's unheard lyrics. It all led to a splendid finale that moving columns of air breathing via wooden and metal ranks of pipes can rewardingly produce when orchestrated by a gifted organist.

Then there was contrast, and theatre organists (and their audiences surely) appreciate contrasts. The organist's choice was a personal favourite of his, Ronald Hanmer's "Pastorale" [ca. 1947] recalled by many as the theme music for the long-running radio show *Blue Hills*. This lyrical work, featuring in turn some of the small reeds then the flues, was played in cantabile style and was accompanied, not for the last time in the afternoon, by some very deft hand-registration changes. The quasi-rustic quality of the piece was emphasised by a cuckoo-motif towards the close and an English-style untremmed arpeggio cadence. Hanmer (1917-1994) prior to his emigration to Queensland had been, among other things, a cinema-organist with Granada Theatres in England. His arrangements of collected melodies, such as *Viva Mexico* played for TOSA by Richard Hills some years ago, have long had a place in

the theatre-organ repertoire.

After a few words from the console – yes, we all regretted that 18 years had lapsed since his previous concert in Sydney – there was more musical change, namely, a number with a Spanish flavour called “Sweet Marijuana” (Arthur Johnston and Sam Coslow) from a long forgotten 1934 Hollywood film *Murder At the Vanities*. That began with fierce chords rising, followed by quieter rhythmic playing. There was a particularly pleasing section featuring a Tuba melody beneath right-hand elaborations. Once more there was an elaborate flourish for the ending.

Next came an attractive Billy Mayerl composition for piano, “Ladybird Lullaby,” the second part of a musical suite titled *Insect Oddities* (1940). Mayerl (1902–1959), who possessed a fine keyboard technique, was the piano soloist when Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” made its London debut; many readers will know his tricky piece “Marigold”. John Giacchi has recorded “Ladybird Lullaby” on his Capri Theatre CD *Journey Into Melody*. The gentle character of the music embraced a Chrysoglott arpeggio, several untremmed passages, and contrasts of volume as the kaleidoscope of sounds continued. More busy hand-registration was observable.

The artist reminded us that twenty years have passed since the passing of legendary U.S. organist, George Wright (1920-1998), who was uppermost in his mind when offering “Blue Twilight” where, like Wright, the registration did not spurn the available “traps” (cymbals, drums etc.). After all, Wurlitzer used the phrase “Unit Orchestra” on its name-plates. That said, in my youth I did encounter some English cinema organists such as the late Peter Kilby (ABC circuit) who studiously avoided untuned percussions. Here John Giacchi opened with a pedal cymbal against the Harp in the accompaniment! If the facility exists and can be used musically, why not?

Then it was the music of U.S. popular-song composer Harry Warren (1893-1981), responsible for many songs in several productions titles *The Gold Diggers of ...* series; from 1934, our organist featured “Honeymoon Hotel” (1932, from the film *Footlight Parade*). Notable for an untremulated opening – tremulants by the way do not have to shake at all times! -- and what seemed like a dialogue between the right-hand and left-hand parts, this lively music amusingly incorporated the motif of Mendelssohn’s famous “Wedding March”.

The first half closed with a generous selection of songs



composed by Rudolf Friml (1879-1972) and Herbert Stothart for a musical which opened on Broadway only two months prior to our Wurlitzer's debut at The Prince Edward Theatre in 1924. This operetta-style work, *Rose-Marie*, has had numerous stage performances and has been filmed at least thrice. By now a number of its songs have become standards in the U.S. Songbook; this selection has also been recorded by this day's organist on his *Journey Into Melody* CD. The opening was stentorian, arresting any lagging attention, and the title song moved at an animated pace. Throughout the phrasing was exemplary, especially in "Indian Love-Call," and the segues between songs never less than interesting as the charm of the above-mentioned piece gave way to the furious, Tuba-led lead into "Totem Tom-Tom". The ballads were lushly registered, often Tibia-based, and thanks to the executant the instrument sounded to be overall sympathetic to the romantic or sentimental passages of music as well.

The second half opened with the TOSA NSW President acknowledging various members of very long standing for their sustained contributions to the organisation.



Musically, the initial item was a staple in theatre-organ repertoire since a 1950s recording of it by George Wright, that is, Richard Rodgers' *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue*. The piece, originally conceived of as ballet music for *On Your Toes*, lends itself to a series of dramatic contrasts, an attractive means of showcasing the many moods of a theatre pipe organ. The playing opened with those menacing octave notes that gave way to a lively section that culminates in the pipes' screaming upper-work. Much

of this music exudes tension.

For a change of mood, a relatively quiet theme song "Ruby" (Heinz Roemheld, 1901-85) from the 1952 film *Ruby Gentry* immediately followed with its haunting melody initially played on low registers in jazzy fashion. The registrations here spoke to an agreeably orchestral conception of the music. Our visiting artist then moved to the world of musicals with an unusual perhaps but welcome choice in Rodgers & Hammerstein's *State Fair* (1945), music which began uncharacteristically as film fare before graduating to the stage in 1969. After a verbal recapitulation of the "light and fluffy" (John's phrase!) story-line of the Iowa context, his selection included "It Might As Well Be Spring" and "It's a Grand Night For Singing," "Our State Fair," "All I Owe," "That's For Me," and "Isn't It Kind of Fun." Here the playing reminded one just how orchestral a Wurlitzer can be, even though some of the numbers had a hoe-down feel. Here the organist was happy to use both hands on either manual, to use the Glockenspiel as riff, and did not eschew soloing a single note for a melody lead.

The programme proceeded with a piece of light music called (I think) "My Romance" by Rudolf Friml, demanding dextrous fingers reinforcing the notion that the afternoon's artist was an accomplished exponent of the art of theatre-organ playing.

The final substantial offering were the four movements from Ferde Grofé's 1925 orchestral tone-poem, *Mississippi Suite*, musically depicting scenes along a voyage down the Mississippi River from Minnesota down to New Orleans. First was "Father of the Waters" suggesting the birth of the river in Indian lands, slowly and sombrelly registered. Second was a short piece "Huckleberry Finn" (using Mark Twain's novel) where the jaunty rhythms seem to ponder Huck's prankish nature. The third movement had a ponderous opening, a slow-moving melody over a Vox/String accompaniment suggestive of Spirituals hymned by slaves in the cotton-fields. Finally, "Mardi Gras" opened with a lively dance rhythm suitable for the pre-Lenten celebrations in that city of jazz, New Orleans, leading into the familiar "Daybreak" segment possessing lovely harmonic progressions. This movement also demonstrated some neat pedal-work as it gained tempo towards a splashy ending. For most of the audience this had been at least fifteen minutes of rarely-heard music on a theatre organ. However unfamiliar, it was well worthwhile because it should have reminded listeners of the musical potential of this instrument. And, by the way, this was the only moment in the afternoon when the

organist did not rely upon his memory. But *pace* George Steiner or even Reginald Foort I don't believe for a moment that not knowing by heart equates to not really loving the music deeply enough.

After sustained applause we were treated to a surprise choice of encore, Manos Hadjidakis' "Never On Sunday" (1960) played with gusto and end-of-show abandon; jazzy and harmonically interesting, This version included some amusing touches too – how often do we hear the Klaxon and Train/Boat Whistle these days?

We had been well and truly entertained, and the 1924 Wurlitzer had sounded so attractive. It is often remarked that pipe organs are built to last. With reasonable good fortune this theatre organ may be able to entertain another audience in another fifty years when it will be 144 years young; after all, the pipe organ I'll be playing in church on Sunday is 133 years out of George Fincham's Melbourne. Watching **John Giacchi** in action with no score in sight, flawlessly recalling the notes from memory and finding apposite registrations at the same time, I marvelled at the unfolding kaleidoscopic musical tapestry. The music pours forth as if from the executant's very being. As Dante wrote "musica e rapimento" (music is rapture). At a performance like this, one may well reflect that in the right hands the possibilities of a Wurlitzer theatre organ to articulate attractively a wide range of different feelings or emotions is widely under-appreciated by today's public. And that may well be one of the key challenges for TOSA over the next half-century.



**The very appreciative audience that welcomed John Giacchi back to Sydney for this celebration Concert**

# **The organs of the 2018 ATOS Convention Pasadena Overture**

## **Plummer Auditorium, Fullerton**

In 1929, the Fullerton High School District started construction of a 1,300m seat auditorium, later to be called Plummer Auditorium. At the same time, a special 4-manual, 28-rank "concert organ" was designed and manufactured by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company.

In 1930, the same year that the auditorium was dedicated, the debut concert on the organ was performed by Dr. Alexander Schreiner, the famous organist of the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City, Utah. The pipes and percussion instruments were located in three chambers. To our knowledge, the Plummer organ had the only remaining example of a "remote capture action" built by Wurlitzer. The concept was that the organist could quickly and easily modify which stops were changed in response to pressing a piston, while sitting at the organ.

Led by electronic relay-system innovator Bob Trousdale and Orange County Theatre Organ Society (OCTOS), the organ received extensive modifications and renovations over the past three decades and is in regular use today through concerts and school events.



**The first concert at Plummer Auditorium  
4-manual Wurlitzer played by Simon Gledhill**



## **Trousdale Castle Placentia**

The Trousdale Castle is a private studio located in Orange County, California. The concept of a meeting place in the style of a medieval hall was developed by Robert Trousdale and Randy Bergum while maintaining the Plummer Auditorium Wurlitzer in Fullerton. The building was built to be not only an acoustically fine environment, but also stable from temperature and the elements. The blower and tremulants are in a subchamber separated by a concrete floor, and HVAC equipment keeps the organ's tuning stable.

The 3/26 composite organ consists of largely Wurlitzer components, such as the console from the Circle Theatre in Indianapolis (Opus 541), parts from the Walker Theatre in Santa Ana (Opus 741), ranks from the Lorin Whitney Morton, Grauman's Chinese Theatre, and the Fox Theatre in Fullerton.

To complement the organ, a stunning 9' Steinway concert grand piano sits next to the Wurlitzer organ console.



**The Trousdale Castle 3-manual Wurlitzer console  
Second concert "Cole, Cole, Cole" played by Pierre Fracalanza**

## **Pasadena Civic Auditorium**

The Pasadena Civic Auditorium is home to one of history's most traveled pipe organs. Built by Moller in 1938 for the famous BBC organist, Reginald Foort, the organ was, despite its massive size, designed to be "movable" from place to place. It wasn't exactly portable, as it still required a large crew of technicians two days to set it up, but nonetheless, it was built to tour around the United Kingdom.

Opening in 1932 in the midst of the depression, the Pasadena Civic Auditorium missed the city-owned municipal-organ mentality by more than a decade. But the grillwork was there, and there was chamber space backstage, even if it was taller than wide. Built in an Italian Renaissance Revival style, the auditorium can seat over 3,000. A favourite of Hollywood producers because of its wide house, sweeping sightlines, and easy load-in, it has served as the home of the *Prime Time Emmy Awards*, the *People's Choice Awards*, and many other broadcast events.

When the Foort Moller became available, Gordon Belt and J.B.Nethercutt formulated a plan to purchase the organ and donate it to the City of Pasadena for installation in the auditorium. In January 1979, the city council accepted the organ. On April 23, 1980, Tom Hazelton presented the dedication concert. Reginald Foort was in attendance, and was moved to tears. Dave Junchen and Steve Adams performed the installation and tonal finishing over a period of nine months.



**Richard Hills played the Opening Concert dressed in tails**

## **Members Diary**

Next Committee Meeting - Monday August 6th at 7:00pm

West Ryde Anglican Church

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**Sunday 9th September 2:00pm**

**Come to the Party  
to celebrate with**

**Scott Harrison**

**playing the Marrickville Wurlitzer  
in its**

**50th Anniversary year  
at Marrickville Town Hall**

**Cabaret style seating**

**if you wish to reserve a seat and or a table and  
to assist with catering please contact  
Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131 Before 8:00pm please**

More details inside this issue

[www.theatreorgansaustralia.info](http://www.theatreorgansaustralia.info) (history of cinema organ installations in Australasia)

[www.omss.org.au](http://www.omss.org.au) (our sister society, Organ Music Society of Sydney OMSS)  
[www.ATOS.org](http://www.ATOS.org) American Theatre Organ Society

***\*Theatre Organ Magic\** on RNB - FM from Sydney, NSW, Australia.**

88.7 FM and 90.3 FM 12 noon first Sunday of the month for one hour

**Web Sites of Interest:** <https://www.facebook.com/tosansw>

[www.ATOS.org](http://www.ATOS.org) American Theatre Organ Society

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