

TOSA NEWS

March 2015
Volume 54 No.2

Price: \$2.00

Sunday 12 April 2015 2:00pm

Doors open at 1:30pm

The ANZAC CENTENARY Concert

played by

Dr John Atwell

on the

"Mighty Little Wurlitzer" Theatre Organ

Marrickville Town Hall

Cnr Marrickville & Petersham Rds

Marrickville



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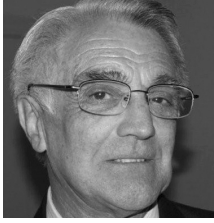
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Printing by Ernie Vale & Graeme Costin

From the President



Our 2015 Show Season commenced at the revitalized, redecorated Orion Centre Theatre with a show that had a bit of everything. Debbie Fitzsummons and husband George Harvey of the famed Four Kinsmen gave a varied program: unfortunately the audience was of medium strength only. We need you!! It was great to have "our" Bill Schumacher join

Debbie in a piano, organ duet to bring the afternoon to a conclusion. He might have moved north some years ago but Bill will always be "ours".

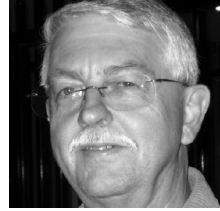
Our April show promises to be something really special – see elsewhere in this publication for details. John Atwell has put a lot of work into preparing this program: do ensure you're at Marrickville Town Hall to hear a top - class artist play a fantastic program on a world class instrument.

The Christie restoration is proceeding – slower than one would hope but with a standard nearing perfection. A lot of money has been expended on the project and financial contributions of any size would be of assistance and gratefully accepted.

Happy Organ-ising,

Geoff Brimley

Editorial



A list of the shows for 2015 is included in the "To Watch Out For" column in this issue so you can mark your calendars and diaries for the year and not miss any show. The ANZAC Centenary Concert is definitely on Sunday 12 April at Marrickville Town Hall 2:00pm.

Details of the ATOS Convention 2015 have been included so you can plan to visit Philadelphia to hear some very interesting organs. Details are also available on the ATOS web site www.ATOS.org

A TOSA Members only visit to the music studio of Member and organist Simon Ellis at Balmoral Village will be on Sunday 9 August. More details later.

Deadline for TOSA News is the 12th of the previous month.

Enjoy the music,
Ernie Vale
PO Box A2322
SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW, 1235
editor@tosa.net.au

From the Mailbox...



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

A warm welcome to New TOSA Members

Antoinette Riley - Marrickville

FOR SALE

Roland Atelier Spinet Organ Model AT300

Has a one and a half octave pedal board, Upper Manual 4 octaves and Lower Manual 5 octaves. This Lower Manual can be played as a dedicated piano.

Has a full range of rhythms, voices and drawbars. 8 Voice memory pistons, and settings

can also be stored on USB Memory. Also One Touch Programs and programmable foot switch functions.

Organ is only 6 years old and in excellent condition, and has hinged lid storage bench and Owner's Manual.

Suggested asking price \$3,000 O.N.O.

Organ is at Bankstown and phone Patricia Overmyer on
02 9796 7354

TOSA SA TOSA (SA) 50th Celebrations 21 - 24 August

GOLDEN PIPES TOSA South Australia Celebrates 50 years

***In addition to Friday nights
locals other musicians
include:***

Dr John Atwell, Tony Fenelon,
Chris McPhee, Rosanne Hosking,
and Caroline Burgess and
Special Guest Organist -

Jelani Eddington from USA

in an exclusive Australian concert

Whilst the Capri 4/29 Wurlitzer will be the main instrument there will be a chance to hear and play the Larritt residence organ and visit the amazing Balmoral Regent for a short movie/slide presentation.

More details when confirmed.

To Watch Out For **in 2015**

The program of shows have been confirmed that provides a mixture of Cabaret style, as well as solo performances presented by a variety of musicians. The overseas artists are both from the USA with Jerry Nagano making his first Australian Tour. Dave Wickerham makes a welcome return as he delighted audiences on his Australasian Tour in 2012.

TOSA Shows 2015

All Shows are on Sunday

April 12 John Atwell MTH

May 31 Jerry Nagano USA Orion

July 19 Chris McPhee &
Mathew Loeser Orion

September 13 Margaret Hall &
Dr Greg Cunningham MTH

November 1 Dave Wickerham
USA MTH

December 6 Tony Fenelon &
Dr John Atwell Orion

Advertising Rates in TOSA News

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Small bubble = \$11.00

Quarter Page = \$24.75

Half Page = \$49.50

Full Page = \$99.00

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

Members' Playing Dates The Orion Theatre Campsie

Thursday 12 March

Thursday 9 April

Thursday 14 May

**These dates have been
confirmed by Craig**

Craig Keller on 0418484798
Players and listeners welcome.

**Marrickville Town Hall
4th Monday afternoon/evening
at 2:30pm to 7:00pm**

**Monday 23 March
Monday 27 April
Monday 22 June**
Players and listeners welcome.

**Please contact Neil or John
Batts to confirm availability**

John Batts 0420424103

Neil on 9798 6742 after
7:00pm

2015 ATOS Convention Registration Open

Registration is now open!

To register, please visit the [2015 Convention Registration Website](http://www.regonline.com/atos2015) hosted at regonline.com. The link address is: <https://www.regonline.com/atos2015>

Note that you must be a member of ATOS in good standing. To join or renew, visit our [Online Membership Join/Renew Website](#).

****Concerning "Necessary meals"**

Because of the bus schedules and travel times, it will be necessary to eat 2 of your lunches and 3 of your dinners en-route. The cost of these meals is included in your registration.

Hotel Information

Doubletree Hotel, 237 S Broad St, Philadelphia PA 19107

Phone: +1 215-893-1600

ATOS convention rate code is TOG - \$119 per night plus tax

Current Schedule

Overture on Thursday July 2

Longwood Gardens with Jonas Nordwall

Welcome Cocktail Party with cash bar (Open to all, not just Overture)

Macy's (Wanamaker organ) with Peter Richard Conte

Day 1 Friday July 3

Membership Meeting

Macy's Greek Hall with Ron Rhode -- Group A

Colonial Theatre with Mark Herman

Dickinson with Dave Peckham

Day 2 Saturday July 4

Membership Forum

Macy's Greek Hall with Ron Rhode - Group -B

Colonial Theatre with Young Organist Competition
Colonial Theatre with Andrew Van Varick
Dickinson with Dave Wickerham

Day 3 Sunday July 5

Allen Organ Octave Hall with Lance Luce – Group A
Grand Theater with John Barrata and film – Group B
Allen Organ Octave Hall with Lance Luce – Group B
Grand Theater with John Barrata and film – Group A
Sunnybrook Ballroom with Awards Banquet/Ceremony

Day 4 Monday July 6

Dickinson with Hector Olivera (theatre organ concert)
Wilmington & Western Railroad ride
Dickinson with Simon Gledhill and Richard Hills in duet

Encore Tuesday July 7

Atlantic City
Broadway Theatre with Don Kinnier
Boardwalk Hall with Steven Ball (main hall)
Boardwalk Hall with Steven Ball (Ballroom)

I will be happy to answer any questions. Send e-mail to
b.dilworth@atos.org
Bob Dilworth
2015 Convention Chairman
[2015 Convention PRINTABLE Registration Form](#)

**The next Free recital on the Grand Organ
in Sydney Town Hall
with City Organist, Robert Ampt
is on Monday 16 March at 12:30pm**

The restoration that took five years is now complete and in her 125th year of service, she has received a facelift. The organ has been cleaned, repaired, documented and now tuned for this first recital of the year.

TOSA MEMBERS' AFTERNOONS IN DECEMBER (2014)

From Players Day Convenor John Batts

One week later than usual thanks to a postponement, TOSA was back at The Orion, Campsie, on 18th December for a Thursday Members' Afternoon, giving Wurlitzer's Opus Number 1813 its first airing since Richard Hills had played the previous month. The third Thursday rather than the traditional second Thursday was used because of renovations to the kitchenette area off the front of the auditorium. It is pleasing that the new lessee (George Khoury) was willing to offer the alternative day. Once more the Wurlitzer piano was also brought up to hall level and engaged; the new casters mean that moving it around is no longer a physical challenge. The piano-pump remains a bit noisy, but I understand plans are in prospect to dampen its metronomic throb.

This Thursday get-together drew seven players and two listeners. Those who took turns at the Wurlitzer were: **Tom Barber, Graeme Costin, Simon Ellis, Ian Georgeson, Titus Grenyer, Craig Keller, and John Batts.** Adding to the throng were **Barry Tooker** and **Ernie Vale.**

The following Monday, 22nd December, TOSA Players convened at Marrickville Town Hall to run the air through its Opus 875 Wurlitzer. The Sleigh Bells and Chimes were much in evidence – 'twas the season to be jolly! The revoiced Post-Horn continues to draw favourable comment. Only four members were present to enjoy an extended time on the bench: **Graeme Costin, Kevin Eadie, Ian Georgeson, and John Batts.**

TOSA MEMBERS' AFTERNOON, 8th January, 2015.

From Players Day Convenor John Batts

At the start of another calendar year TOSA was back at The Orion, Campsie - Thursday, 8th January. This gathering was rather unusual in that there were many more listeners than players, maybe a new trend is afoot. All of us could admire the renovations that have occurred in the hall, this time without the lingering smell of paint. The old place looks smarter and less dirty. With many of the technically minded present it was inevitable that the playing segment was on hold as the problem with the 16' Diapason tab on the Great was solved. Major thanks to **John A, John W, Rob** and

Craig; at the console the back was off and the top was removed before a diagnosis was made and the glitch removed. Barry's photographs of this operation have already appeared in the January edition of TOSA News; we are fortunate that he is very much the pictorial archivist documenting so many facets of our Society's activities.

It is interesting to observe that now the Wurlitzer piano is regularly part of TOSA Members' days at the Orion, not every organist uses the piano and certainly not during each session of the bench – surely a good thing! And, by the way, I learned that day that this Wurlitzer piano was not part of the original set-up while the instrument was in Hay Street's Capitol Theatre; this piano was acquired later and from a different source.

Those who took turns at the Wurlitzer were **Tom Barber, Craig Keller, and John Batts**. Members who enlivened the occasion were (alphabetically): **John Andrews, Rob Gliddon, Pam Finos, Barry Tooker, Ernie Vale and Sharon & John Weismantel**. Please come again!

As ever, we are grateful to those who brought along some goodies to eat.

Show & Membership Prices

The following TOSA show ticket prices now apply:

	All Artists
Non-members	\$32.50
Non-member Pensioner/Seniors Card holder	\$27.50
TOSA Members	\$23.00

All Students FREE on confirmation of Student status

All Children FREE

Group Booking for 10 or more Adults \$20 per person

Annual Membership Fees are now: \$35.00 for Full membership,
and

\$25.00 for Concession, Country, Interstate & Overseas.

Membership enquiries Geoff Brimley (02) 6351 3122

membership@tosa.net.au

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

Actor Richard Burton & the Theatre Organ!

From TOSA Member John Batts

Interesting asides for the devoted! This is an extract from the star of stage and screen's his diary entry for 3 October, 1966, while working in Italy:

"Listened to World News, News from Britain ... from the BBC It is peculiar to me I think because I remember the 9.00 pm news as a child and the remoteness of it. Franco has fallen. Dunkirk. Battle of Britain. One of our aircraft is missing. This is Sandy MacPherson [1897-1975] on the Theatre Organ at Blackpool. The Palm Court Orchestra at Bournemouth. ITMA. Munich. Hunger Strikes" (Richard Burton Diaries, ed. Chris Williams London & New Haven: Yale UP, 2012, pp.131-32).

I was interested to notice famous actor Richard Burton's (1925-1984) reflection on listening to the BBC in his youth, and especially the relative space given to "theatre organ". It is notable, too, that he uses that term rather than the more usual phrase "cinema organ" in the UK. "Sandy" did broadcast extensively during WW2, but never to my knowledge from Blackpool.

After the destruction of the very first BBC Theatre Organ I -- the Compton installed in London's St. George's Hall -- Reginald Foort offered his 5-27 touring Moller to the BBC and eventually this instrument was set up in North Wales at Llandudno during the war years. "Sandy Mac" had succeeded Reg Foort as BBC Organist in (?)1937. A third conclusion must be that Burton's memory reflects (albeit inaccurately) the reputation of Reginald Dixon at The Tower Ballroom, Blackpool; I suspect Burton had no knowledge of Horace Finch's broadcasts from and recordings at the Empress Ballroom, Blackpool.

See article on the Empress Ballroom Wurlitzer in this issue



"The Australian and New Zealand troops have indeed proved themselves worthy sons of the Empire."

GEORGE R.I.

The Next Performance
The ANZAC CENTENARY Concert
played by
Dr John Atwell



on the
"Mighty Little Wurlitzer" Theatre Organ
Marrickville Town Hall
Cnr Marrickville & Petersham Rds
Marrickville

Sunday 12 April 2015 2:00pm

Doors open at 1:30pm

*2 hours of music for just \$32.50 or \$27.50 conc.
TOSA Members \$23*

A tribute to the start of World War One.

John will play a program of the popular music that got us through some very dark days in our history. From WWI to WWII, the Korean War of the 1950s and the Vietnam War of the 60s, some of the happiest and most liveliest music has been written and performed.

Think of WWI – songs such as “Pack Up Your Troubles”, or “It’s a Long Way to Tipperary”. Jump to WWII, there are some fun songs from entertainers such as Gracie Fields and Flanagan & Allen. You might think of Vera Lynn’s “White Cliffs of Dover”, “A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square”, then there is the Big Band sound of the Glenn Miller Orchestra and their hit “In the Mood”!

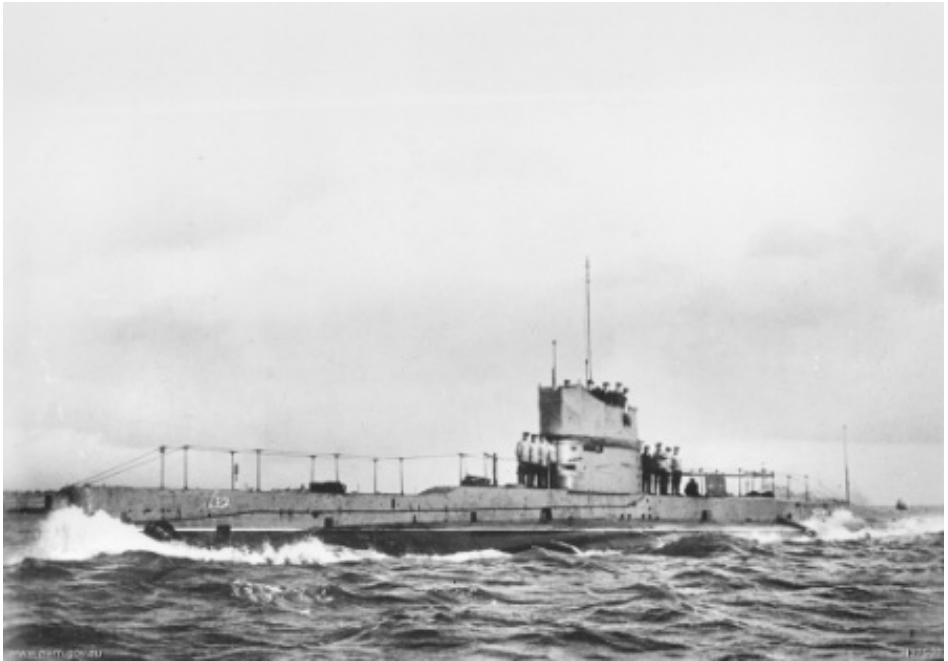
John Atwell has put a massive amount of work into researching some of the more popular songs of these eras, so you are assured of a fun afternoon of a true “pops” program!!

Booking Information

For the best reserved seats you can book securely on trybooking.com by going to www.tosa.net.au then Events, click on the Artists name/show title then scroll down to the text to buy your ticket, click on it, select your preferred seat/s and securely complete the purchase.

Tickets to the show: Members \$23; Non-Members \$ 32.50;
Non Member Pensioner/Senior \$ 27.50
Group bookings for 10 or more adults \$20 per person
Students Free on confirmation of Student Status
Children Free accompanied by an adult

Bookings: Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131 -
Visa & Mastercard accepted



HMAS AE2 *Donor W. M. Warburton*
**The Australian Submarine that snuck through the
Dardanelles**



**Australian Troops charging an Ottoman trench,
just before the evacuation at ANZAC Cove.**
U.S. National Archives & Records Administration.

The New Empress Ballroom Organ:

There were those who said it could never happen. There were those who complained about it not being all Wurlitzer, but on the whole there has been immense support for the new Empress project and the proof is in the fact that the new organ will be played in public for the first time on Sunday December 7 when there will be dancing to Cameron Lloyd in Sequence, Ballroom and Latin modes, with interval music to ensure non-stop dancing from noon. Tickets are an amazing £3 on the door.



The console awaits its official opening by the Mayor of Blackpool and Jill Street

The project was begun in late 2012 when Cannock Chase Organ Club was permitted to install its own organ in the Empress Ballroom. After much planning, work began on sourcing parts, not only pipe work but all the other parts which go into making a theatre organ.

It was the intention to replicate the original Empress Wurlitzer, which has been done with both original and pattern ranks (by Booth's of Leeds). This includes the original Tower (and therefore one of the original Empress') Tibia. An addition is a solo string. It all runs on good, reliable Compton relays and is played from a Compton console.



Cameron Lloyd may well smile



Damon Willetts, Jill Steel and David Lobban



**Peter Ashman after his welcoming speech
Steve Tovy on the wheelchair holding the mic**



David Lobban in action



Three generations of Dixon decendants - and Cameron

It has been very much a team effort, with members of the Cannock Chase Organ Club, plus other volunteers (you all know who you are) giving up their spare time to do everything from wiring and soldering (a tedious task at the best of times) to lugging parts from the ground floor, up the Empress balconies and across the roof to the organ chambers (the original ones). This includes the blower, which, as anyone who has moved one will know, weighs a ton (and this in no exaggeration). I have seen this one before as it was donated to the project by a well-known organ restorer.

Whilst it has been a team effort, it has been led by the indefatigable Steve Tovey. Even though he has been confined to a wheelchair just recently, he has been with the team all the way, just imagine how his voice must have rolled around that ballroom, given the lively acoustic...

Cannock Chase Organ Club is indebted to Blackpool Winter Gardens, The Winter Gardens Trust, and Blackpool Council for their efforts to make this venture possible and it is their wish that many of you will join in this memorable occasion, celebrating the opening of the first new theatre organ in Blackpool for over 60 years.

Of course, Blackpool in the winter can be very bracing, as our

Chairman, Simon Gledhill, will find as he is performing on the wonderful Wurlitzer of the Opera House on the preceding Wednesday, December 3 at 2:00pm, why not enjoy a holiday? The Tower Ballroom will also be open, so make the most of three organs in one town in one week.

The opening event was a terrific success, the organ sounded warm and as if it had always been there.

After being welcomed by Peter Ashman, Reginald Dixon's biographer, the opening ceremony was performed, jointly and fittingly, by the Mayor of Blackpool and Jill Steel, Reginald Dixon's daughter.

Organists Cameron Lloyd and David Lobban provided the music which led the dancers and entertained the listeners.

An amazing 672 tickets were sold and everyone has a good time - and that's what it's all about really.

Amongst the friendly faces from around the country I noted organists Stephen Austin, David Ivory, Paul Kirner, Donald MacKenzie, Nigel Ogden and David Shepherd.

The team has done a grand job and and Steve Tovey's foresight, organisational skill and sheer determination has led them all the way.

A pity the event wasn't also used for some token of the recognition he deserves - but perhaps at a later date...

The organ is intended to be used for monthly dances, so there is a chance to hear it in the future if you missed this event, and again if you, like me, enjoyed it the first time around.

Articles from the COS News November/December 2014 and January/February 2015 issues with kind permission of the Editor - Wayne Ivany

"[Wine] awakens and refreshes the lurking passions of the mind, as varnish does the colours which are sunk in a picture, and brings them out in all their natural glowings."

Alexander Pope

"A man who could sit under the shade of his own vine with his wife and his children about him and the ripe clusters hanging within their reach in such a climate as this and not feel the highest enjoyment, is incapable of happiness."

James Busby

Len Rawle writes of news of Sweden's only Wurlitzer:

An article from COS NEWS January/February 2015

If you know little or nothing about the only cinema in Stockholm to house a Wurlitzer, then that would not surprise me one iota.

It was not until comparatively recently that I heard moves were afoot to try and gain access to stored away component parts of their one and only Wurlitzer. It is a Style E Model, Opus 1254 and is known today as The Scandia Wurlitzer.

Various questions regarding restoration were asked of me via emails, and by Swedish enthusiasts visiting the UK. Without fully appreciating the local situation, and never having been to Sweden, I did my best to be helpful and encouraging.

What now follows you may find difficult to believe, but I have spent a week helping to 'finish' and commission their 2 manual, seven rank Wurlitzer, installed in Sweden's first Atomic Reactor Hall.

Yes, I did use the words Atomic Reactor, and to that I could add Nuclear, just to emphasize the intrigue. It was certainly one of the most indescribable trips a touring theatre organist is ever likely to experience, but let me try by starting at the beginning, for it is a story well worth committing to print.

Wurlitzer Opus 1254 was installed in a single pipe chamber in Stockholm's cinema in 1926, Willard Ringstrand being appointed as organist in 1927, and it is known he still played there in the 1950s. The organ was however removed in the 1960s and sometime thereafter was of use in the most magnificent City Hall, when the 1923, 5 manual classical organ by Walcker & Co. had its first restoration.

Its temporary role over, the Wurlitzer was stripped to its many thousands of component parts. For 35 years they lay scattered in an enormous tone chute for conveying sound from a very remote Echo Organ installed in the roof of the main hall. One could easily drive a family car through the 100 yard long chute, the cost of which alone, must have been tremendous.

A group, nominally known as the 'Society of Skandia Organ Friends' was formed as a charitable association, and for some years it has been quietly active in sorting and bringing back every part of the Wurlitzer to 'as-new' condition. With no other Swedish Wurlitzers, or any experts for reference, one cannot underestimate

the thoroughness of the work that has been undertaken. I simply could not fault the workmanship.

After 35 years in storage and then the rebuilding process, at last a place to re-house the organ came to the surface. Well not exactly, for its new home was in fact to be 21 metres (just over 68 feet) underground.

The Cave Experience:

Stockholm is well blessed with a most magnificent University, as well as an extensive complex known as the 'Royal Institute of Technology, Arts and Engineering'. Today the Institute boasts wonderful opportunities for young people to study a wide range of engineering, which they can combine with 'the arts', including an impressive music facility.

One of the places available to students, and others, for presentations of their work, lies below ground. It comprises a huge, disused concrete bunker originally built in 1947 for Sweden's first atomic nuclear reactor. As a matter of interest it carried out early military and private research, the end results being low quality plutonium, boiling water and some cancer treatment research. The reactor was decommissioned and taken apart in 1970, all the core rods and radioactive materials being disposed of at Sellafield.

By 1998 the redundant reactor hall was finally ready for a new life and in conjunction with the University, the Institute felt it should become some form of 'Cave Experience'. To this day it is used for a wide variety of multi-media creative work. Music, light shows, opera, dance and sound recording have all been accommodated.

Apart from witnessing the incredible atmosphere and unique location, my own involvement with the finished organ has been to confirm the correct standard of building, make final tonal adjustments, check out and propose the final specification, agree on the tuning method, check winding, including sympathetic tremulation, offer advice on performance technique and finally to give the organ a good workout. This lovely organ proved to be faultless, its special location, neat size and reliability encouraging creativity.

So what is the result like? Without doubt most would describe this as the biggest little Wurlitzer anywhere. (*The Marrickville Town Hall, NSW, Australia 2/11 Wurlitzer was described as "Australia's Mighty Little Wurlitzer" on a recording made by Patron Dr John Atwell in 2010 Ed*).

This is largely due to the beautifully smooth, 3-second room acoustic. There are no standing waves and the balance and control exercised by the swell shutters and excellent chamber design provides organists with a most expressive and easy to play instrument.

Although the organ has been reconstructed so that, if necessary, it can be reassembled elsewhere, its present, very stable location, guarantees a long-term life.

So yet another worthy Wurlitzer is given the very best of restoration and I commend the entire Swedish team on the total success of their undertaking.

The Good Old Days Concerts Sydney Town Hall

11:00am & 2:00pm

Details from Bernard Walz

The "Follies Spectacular" on May 11, starring the irrepressible Rhonda Burchmore, with special guests, comedian Al Showman, instrumentalist Ross Maio and the Popset Follies Dancers, promises to be a fantastic show. Judging by the number of requests for information about the show we have received, it is set to be another sell-out concert! So send in your booking forms as soon as you wish as seats will disappear quickly. Remember we do operate on a "first-in, best-seated" basis. Bookings are now open!

Tickets \$40 Adults \$35 Seniors & All Concessions

Enquiries: (02)9587 4569 (10am-2pm, Mon,Wed,Thurs)

Middle age is the time when a man is always thinking that in a week or two he will feel as good as ever.

Don Marquis (1878-1937)

Middle age is when your age starts showing around your middle.

Bob Hope (1903-2003)

Members Diary

Monday 4 May Committee 6:00pm

St Columb's Anglican Church, West Ryde

Sunday 12 April 2:00pm - 4:30pm

The ANZAC CENTENARY Concert

played by

Dr John Atwell

on the

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Marrickville

Book at www.tosa.net.au - Events **OR**
Contact Theo Langenberg 0410 626 131

Radio 2MBS-FM 102.5 "Colours of the King" (program of the Organ Music Society of Sydney) 2nd Saturday of each month, 5pm till 6 pm

***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.theatreorgansaust.info (history of cinema organ installations in Australasia)

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

TOSA NEWS

March 2015
Volume 54 No.2

**PRINT
POST
100004836**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**

Official Publication of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) Inc.

101 Crinan St., Hurlstone Park NSW 2193

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