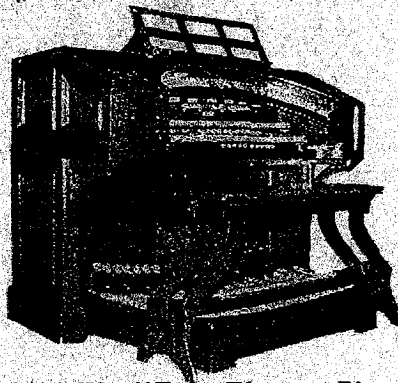
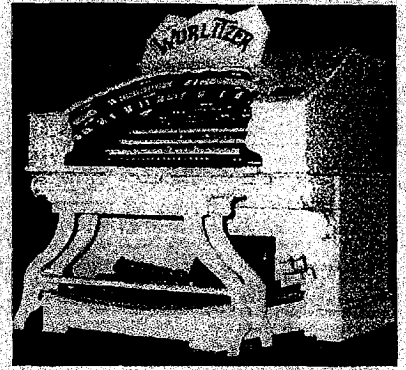


DECEMBER, 2001



2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ  
Marrickville Town Hall

# TOSA



3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ  
Orion Centre Campsie

A Fabulous Duo Christmas Concert  
With Australia's Top Theatre Organists!!

# Tony Benelon and John Atwell



# Sunday, 9th December at 2pm Orion Centre Campsie

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Issue 11  
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# TOSA NEWS

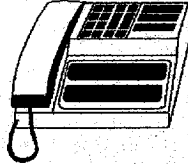
DECEMBER, 2001

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

For the smooth running of TOSA, please contact the right person :

General Business - SECRETARY  
Ticket Bookings - TICKET SECRETARY  
Membership, Renewals, Change of Address - MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY  
TOSA NEWS Items, Advertisements - EDITOR  
All numbers use the prefix 02

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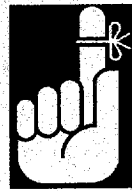
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## COMING EVENTS

## DECEMBER

Monday 3 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting  
Sunday 9 at 2.00pm Tony Fenelon  
and John Atwell's  
CHRISTMAS CONCERT  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Thursday 13 at 2.00pm Members' Playing Day  
Orion Centre Campsie

Important: Phone on the day to confirm 9716 0151

## JANUARY

Monday 7 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting  
Thursday 10 at 1.30pm Members' Playing Day  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Important: Phone on the day to confirm 9716 0151  
Thursday 24 at 7.30pm Members' Playing Night  
Marrickville Town Hall

Important: Phone to confirm 9798 6742

## FEBRUARY

Sunday 3 at 2.00pm Chris McPhee Concert  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Monday 4 at 7.30pm Committee Meeting  
Thursday 14 at 1.30pm Members' Playing Day  
Orion Centre Campsie  
Thursday 28 at 7.30pm Members' Playing Night  
Marrickville Town Hall

Important: Phone to confirm 9798 6742

Important: Phone on the day to confirm 9716 0151

# MERRY CHRISTMAS and A HAPPY NEW YEAR, 2002 !!

## From The President

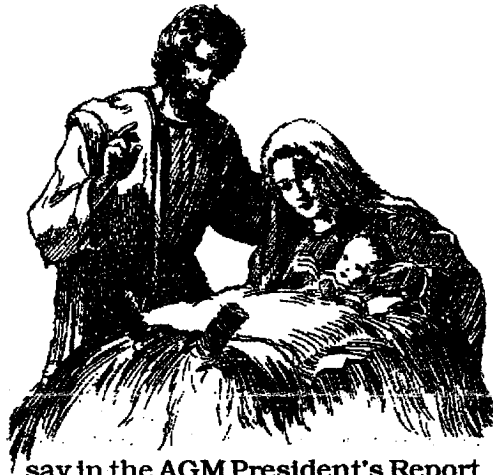
So here we are again at the end of another year, a year which saw the world changed forever in new ways - just as World Wars I and II, the Cold War, and the threat of Atomic War changed the world then.

September 11th 2001 was War. Who knows where it will end? It has set us thinking about serious things, and has made us wonder what the future holds for us and our grandchildren.

As I type this I can hear the voice of Vera Lynn backing a WW II TV program. It reminds me that times of war also bring the need for relief - for entertainment. And what a load of junk, even harmful stuff, we are often offered as an escape from reality nowadays. On the other hand - and you saw this coming didn't you? - good music is therapeutic.

What a marvellous variety of music TOSA brings us on the King of Instruments. Played by artists with an amazing variety of talent. So our membership is down some, so we're all getting a little older, so costs are up and income is down - but folks, let me say to you ... make the most of TOSA this coming year. Take in all the concerts provided, and bring your friends and relatives. Get the most out of YOUR membership!

And why not come along to the Members' Playing Afternoons and Evenings? Have a listen, and even take a turn at the console yourself - no one will laugh! I have more to



say in the AGM President's Report which you can read elsewhere in this TOSA News.

Meanwhile please note that there is no Players' Afternoon at Marrickville in December because it falls on top of Christmas.

By the time you read this, it will be December, and our 2001 Annual General Meeting will be history. Let's hope some good ideas prevailed and some positive things are going to be done as a result.

On behalf of the Committee, I too, with Jenny, wish you a Happy Christmas and a fulfilling year 2002.

See you then - Walter Pearce

## Welcome To New Members

TOSA (NSW) is happy to announce the new membership of the following people to our ranks. We wish them a long and enjoyable stay with our Society:

David Witcombe -  
Toongabbie  
Ron Bain - Dapto

## Editorial

This issue marks the completion of 40 years of TOSA News. Quite an achievement! The Theatre Organ Society has come a long way in those 40 years with the help of so many members over the years. However, we can't keep our eyes focused on past glories - we need to consider the future.

Of course we all hope that 40 years from now the Society will still be continuing its work of saving and popularising this rather special art form. We current members must try to pass our enthusiasm on to a new generation of listeners and potential members. We must all try to introduce new members to the Society through invitations to our concerts and any other publicity we can arrange. The Committee certainly tries hard too.

If you think you can help or have suggestions, please contact a member of the committee or the executive, as listed on page 2 under "Directory".

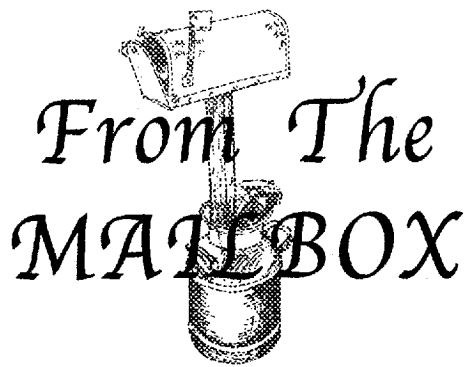
This issue is also the 100th that I have prepared for publication as Editor! It's an unending, and sometimes thankless, job, but I (generally!) feel happy to provide this service for our members, even though I'm often severely pressed to find the time to do TOSA work.

Best Wishes for Christmas  
and the New Year  
Colin Groves

TOSA Member, Colin Adamson will perform a free lunchtime organ recital at St John's Anglican Cathedral, Parramatta Wednesday, 12th December 12.30 - 1.10pm Church St, Parramatta Entry via Hunter St All welcome!

Articles in this journal need not represent the views of the committee or the editor

The deadline for each edition of TOSA News is the 12th of the preceding month



# From The MAILBOX

*Vice President John Shaw's recent comments about the disappointing attendances at some TOSA concerts have inspired 2 members to offer their opinions. Firstly, Bob Cornish, of Buff Point, has some very challenging suggestions :*

1/10/01

Once again, I unhappily read in the October issue of *TOSA News*, re "Brett Valiant In Concert", an "Afterthought" by the author of that excellent review (the author being John Shaw). I quote, "I personally felt sorry for this young organist, who is used to audiences of 1500 in his home city. The simple facts are that, at best, 220 people attended ..." of which 110 were members, etc., etc. Mr Shaw adds to this, "After paying exorbitant rent, artists' fees, travelling costs, ... insurance," etc., it all adds up to a bottom-line loss, which doesn't make good reading for members (and certainly not for the Committee!)

Anyone who has had any experience at all in Showbusiness and its management, (many years in that sphere having been enjoyed by myself as a professional performer on the famous "Tivoli" Theatre Circuit and big-name Circuses) taught me one very important and essential lesson - you can have the best artists in the world on your pay-roll, but if the venue has no appeal, and in spite of creditable advertising, you won't get "Bums On Seats"

I have mentioned in an earlier edition of *TOSA News* that the Campsie Orion is past its "use-by date", with all respects to the suburb itself, but I've always maintained that it is nowhere central, or to be more accurate, not convenient travel-wise for the majority of members or would-be members, as well as the untapped audience that I'm sure are waiting to be 'enticed' to the marvellous organ concerts.

I'm not unmindful of the 'flak' that last statement of mine will generate, especially from those who are fortunately living close to Campsie, but the TOSA Committee and all those connected to TOSA, must face the facts (and the sooner the better,) that as we now know that the Orion is not a big money-spinner, due to aforementioned costs, (particularly rent). And without doubt, costs will increase and unfortunately membership will lessen due to the age factor.

One can find many reasons why shows fail (and I've had the displeasure of being involved in an odd one in past years,) but the secret of successful ones is to be able to assess all the requirements of the show-going public, "itchy" to get to the venue as quick as possible, as comfortable as possible, and, having enjoyed the show (be it Musical, Live Theatre or Cinema), take as little "return-home" time as possible. And, as we used to announce at the finale of the good old "Tiv" days, "We wish you all a safe return to your respective homes."

I have enjoyed some wonderful organ concerts at the Orion (and Marrickville), but I must confess at the time of my attendances, it was sheer hell to drive there from Dee Why, (and return in the thick of the "Sunday drivers" traffic! Now that I've moved away from the rat-race and smog of Sydney, to what I now feel is "God's Own Country", my visits to Campsie have lost their appeal and this Central Coast has won another organ-lover!

But all is not lost! Some wonderful organ concerts are still arranged up here - at the beautiful "Mingara" Recreation Club, Tuggerah - where it seems obvious to me that a whole new area (and population) is waiting to be entertained. (The *Annual Report* posted to members of that Club bears witness of the fact that the money (and the entertainment-seekers) are up here in their thousands. (I've never seen anything but a "Full-House" at all the Organ Concerts that I've attended there.)

As the majority of the population is over the 50 yrs 'hump', what better situation and opportunity for TOSA to "set up shop" with the wonderful old "Wurley" from Campsie? With the millions of dollars planned by "Mingara" to improve the amenities for the members, and with the already established Concert Hall in the

premises, the time is surely right for TOSA to approach the Board of Directors of "Mingara" with the proposition of a truly great musical instrument - the *Wurlitzer* from Campsie, set up with pipe chambers, etc. - to become a 'talked-about' and desirable feature of the Club, with regular organ concerts as per the earlier days of the Orion. The space is there - the club sits alone in a huge flat area, surrounded by attractive wooded hills. There has been talk of adding a triple cinema complex to the Club, but this has been shelved temporarily, which is why I am suggesting all the above before it is too late.

Finally, the F3 highway is now a great road to travel north, as well as the wonderful rail journey, which is a delight - two main reasons why the "oldies" should not balk at the trip to concerts that one day I hope to see established at the beautiful "Mingara".

So, for what it's worth, I hope this letter has "stirred the pot" and provoked TOSA into some serious discussion (and action) whereby our concerts may one day soon be the "Talk of the Town"!!

Yours Sincerely,  
Bob Cornish (Snr)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Also, Joy Geraedts of Caringbah, has written :*

19/10/2001

I certainly agree with John Shaw's remarks in our October Issue of the "*TOSA News*"

I for one (along with my 2 friends) have only missed 1 or 2 concerts in the past 5/6 years. Our idea is that we just love to hear these wonderful old organs giving forth their music regardless of who is up there playing them.

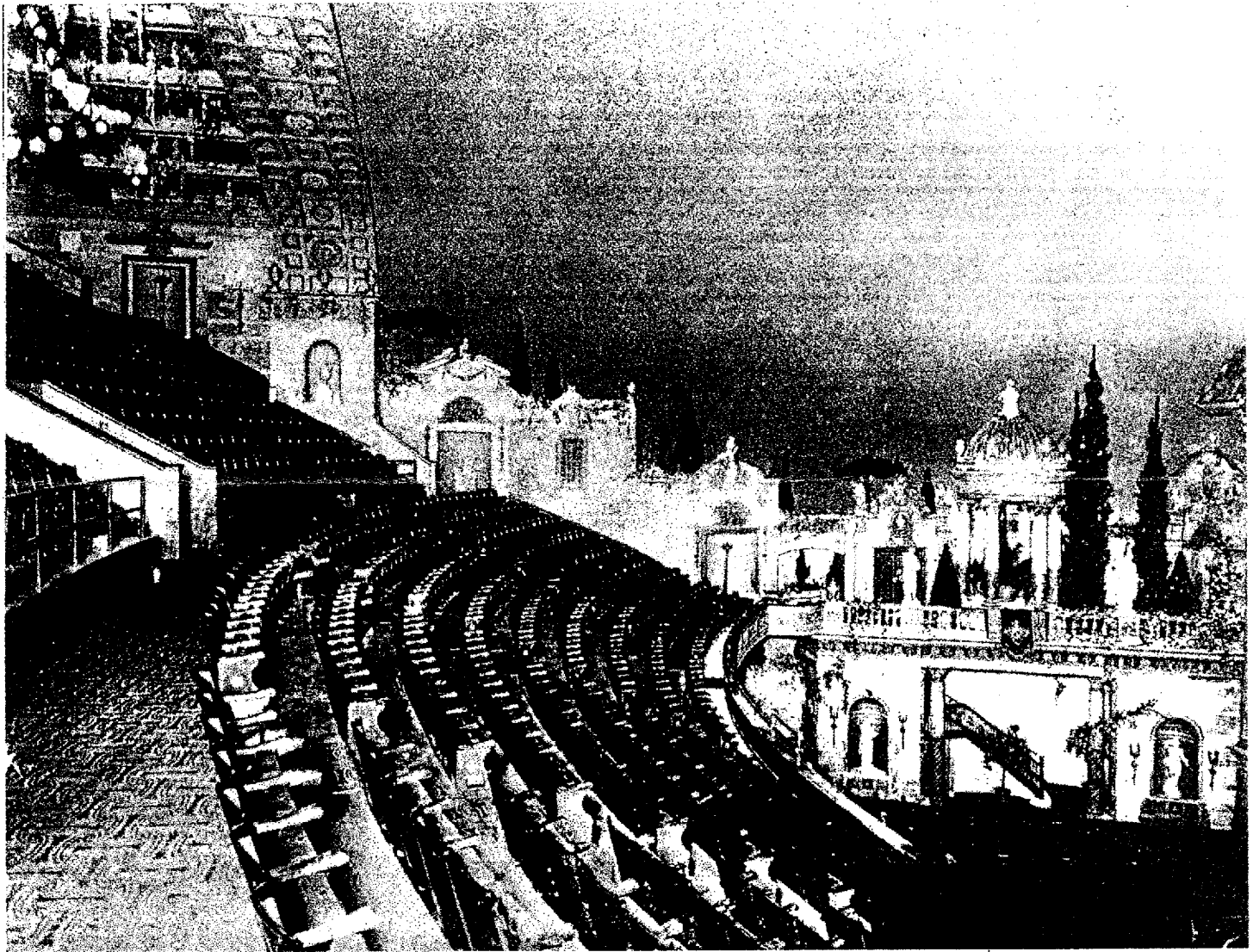
To the committee of TOSA, I say - you can't do any more than you are doing now! Those members who do not attend our concerts are not true supportive members of TOSA.

May I add that my friends and I have yet to attend a concert we didn't thoroughly enjoy!

So come on members, help TOSA keep up the good work and fill those empty seats.

Regards,  
(Mrs) Joy Geraedts

# NEW CINEMA — A FLORENTINE GARDEN



*The beauty of the Capitol, Sydney, with its starlit, moon-drenched Mediterranean sky, its Florentine atmosphere, will astonish city and country residents alike. It opens on Easter Saturday, April 7.*

**A** VENETIAN Palace's façade, with its jewelled masonry, gleamed forth like thousands of coloured electric lights. We gazed spellbound at the spectacle. It seemed impossible that this little bit of Old Italy could stand right before our very eyes in Australia, without having to reach it by water, minus the worry of luggage or the burden of heavy fares.

From just Sydney's Haymarket to a Florentine Garden under a Mediterranean sky, with twinkling stars and gently moving clouds, is the work of transformation upon which several hundred workmen were engaged.

This vast work is now completed and its composite represents the Capitol, Sydney's only atmospheric theatre.

When, on Easter Saturday, it throws open its mighty doors, the Capitol might truly be described as a Temple of Motion Picture Art. Its magnitude, dignity and Oriental beauty will make it an eye-opener to Sydney's thousands, as the construction of a cinema theatre on such a lavish scale has never before been undertaken in this country.

Just in the same way as both country and city dwellers have in their own particular centres watched the modern picture theatre replace the open-air theatre of years gone by, so they will now witness the replacement of modern theatres with an atmospheric theatre.

Despite their massive appearance and dignified architectural beauties, Sydney movie houses have hitherto failed to provide a true "atmosphere" in which patrons might enjoy to the full the picture entertainment which they are witnessing.

So it was left to Union Theatres Ltd. to place the movie entertainment on a higher plane throughout Australia, to introduce to Sydney an atmospheric theatre modelled on the same lines as the Capitol Theatre, Chicago.

During last year, Mr. Stuart F. Doyle spent some months in the leading cities of the United States studying the design of motion picture theatres, and the most modern methods of motion picture presentation, and finally decided to adopt the Capitol Theatre, Chicago, as the most suitable one on which to model his new Sydney theatre.

The Venetian style of architecture was chosen as the most suitable for local conditions, and it was from the pattern at the Riviera Theatre and the Chicago Capitol that Mr. Henry White, a leading Sydney architect, prepared the plans for Sydney's Capitol.

But plain walls or dome-shaped roofs do not make an "atmospheric" theatre, and so as to make the Capitol "truly artistic," £50,000 worth of art treasures were imported from leading art centres of the world.

Tapestries, antiques, paintings, banners, and valuable friezes all combine with the big collection of statuary in giving the Old World Garden its true atmosphere.

Copies of the originals of Venus, Apollo, Danaides and other Gods of the Ancient Greece will add to the beauty of the Venetian architecture.

The foyer, lounge and other parts of the theatre have also been designed to correspond with the main features of the auditorium.

After thoroughly searching America for the most highly talented music masters, negotiations were opened with Theodore Henkel, formerly Musical Director at the Forum Theatre, Los Angeles, and Frederick Scholl, Organist at the Egyptian Theatre in that city.

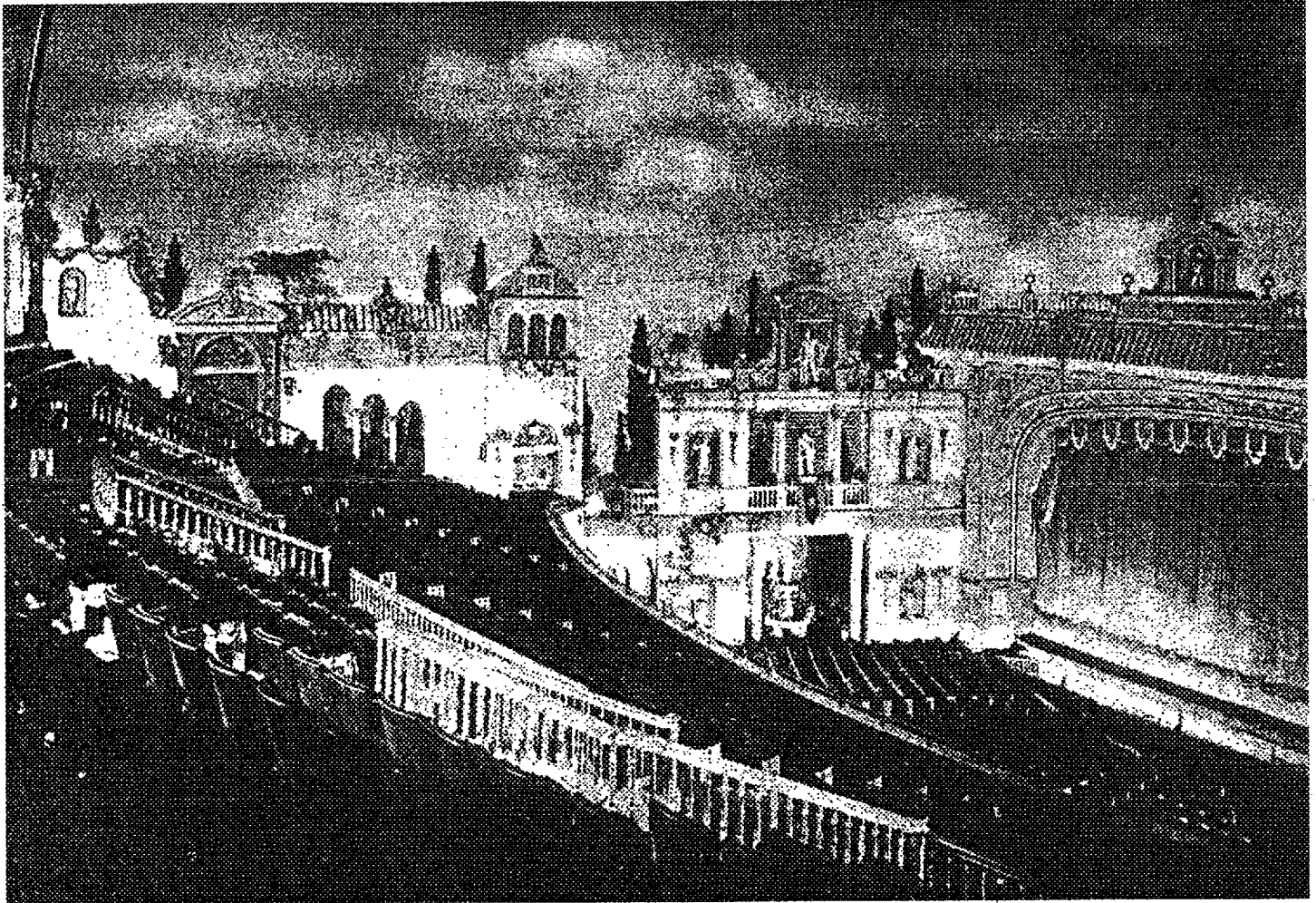
These talented musicians were eventually secured.

Mr. Henkel, who has scored successes throughout the American movie world, will lead the orchestra at the Capitol. While at the Forum Theatre, he had full charge of the stage and pit, and, besides being the originator of the stage presentations, he directed and presented them, and at the same time conducted his own stage band.

Frederick Scholl, who will play the mighty Wurlitzer organ installed at the Capitol, has grown up with the moving picture business, and is a master at the organ.

In association with the mammoth entertainment provided by these two master musicians, there will be offered an aggregation of units that combine the entertainments of London, Paris, and Broadway, New York.

# A VISION OF THE CAPITOL. OPENING AT EASTER.



## Sydney's New Theatre

*A view of the Dress Circle and Stalls, showing a portion of the Proscenium. The Proscenium represents the facade of a Venetian Palace, carried out in rich, yet subdued colourings. Overhead are clouds, which, by a clever manipulation of lights, are made to appear at times as though they moved across the sky. The decorated wall gives a representation of a Florentine*

*garden with a background of stately buildings and tall cypress trees. The aim has been to create a restful rather than a striking effect. The sum of £50,000 was spent on the furnishings, which are the acme of modern theatre comfort.*

Thank you to Patricia Hansen of Vaucluse for providing these pages from this 1928 issue of a magazine called "The Home - The Australian Journal of Quality".



# **Reports For TOSA(NSW)'s ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** - SUNDAY, 25th NOVEMBER, 2001

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Good afternoon, and welcome.

Membership of TOSA has continued to be good value in 2001. Excellent concerts from Ray Thornley, Tony Fenelon (twice - once with John Atwell), Ken Double, Brett Valliant and David Smith, must satisfy all tastes!

Ian Davies still runs his " - *and Friends*" informal concerts at Bondi. He says he's getting older, but he obviously still loves to have friends in for the music. Thank you, Ian, TOSA Patron! In April a very successful "*Southern Hospitality Weekend*" was held. Thank you, Dick and Kerry, Chris and Dominic for your kindness, also to Margaret for being the driving force. In June, at Epping Baptist, we had a "*Members' Event*" which was a bit of fun and good entertainment. More like this are planned.

Bill Schumacher, in his report has listed the artists for 2002, and they continue to look good. There is no lack of quality offered to members of TOSA. And don't forget those Members' Playing Afternoons and Evenings which still offer ordinary people like you and me a play on those powerful *Wurlitzers*.

Unfortunately our membership numbers have continued to fall. In December 1999 we had 586 paying members. In 2000 this had fallen to 540, and now the figure is more like 494. It has been quite normal for us to lose about 10% of members each year for various reasons including change of address, poor health and death. The problem really lies with a lack of New Members. We used to get enough to match the attrition rate, but that is no longer so. Your Committee has thought hard about this, and any further suggestions are welcome. Actually, it needs more than suggestions, it need people to actually DO SOMETHING about the problem.

But, hey, we know numbers are down. But there are still more than enough to make a healthy TOSA group. Yes, our expenses are up and our income down - we received a grant of \$1,000 from Canterbury Council, but lost that much at just one of this year's concerts! But we are still solvent according to our Treasurer, and nothing has stopped. Yes, we have limited access to Campsie Orion, but we still manage to fight our way through the debris of ethnic celebrations. So, I don't know about you, but Jenny and I plan to keep taking in the therapeutic TOSA music while ever it lasts, and we look forward to all the benefits of belonging. We ain't dead yet folks. And if we bring our friends along to concerts, and if we keep looking for better places to house our TOSA music machines, then the future just might take a turn for the better! Meanwhile make the most of TOSA!

Finally, I would like to add my thanks to all those who have done their bit for TOSA. I will name just one - Barry Tooker. Unfortunately a change in Barry's employment circumstances means he can no longer get to Committee meetings or to all the concerts. That is why we are having elections this year - to replace Barry on the Committee. Barry has been doing the TOSA thing for many years and we will miss him. However he plans to continue working for TOSA as time allows. So thank you Barry and all those like you who do what they can.

On behalf of the Committee, and Jenny and me, Happy Christmas - and have a Healthy and Musical New Year.

Walter Pearce

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Good afternoon members

Thank you one and all for attending the TOSA 2001 Annual General Meeting. I take this opportunity to thank Barclay Wright, "*Mr Mastertouch*" himself, on behalf of all members for making this unique venue available to us for our meeting.

When I looked at my report from last year it was evident to me that nothing has changed. We still are having great problems with attendances at our concerts. We get great support for the Christmas Concert but the rest of the year leaves a lot to be desired. Please support your committee with your attendance, we put a lot of hard work into arranging and staging concerts, and when we get a poor attendance we often wonder if it's worth the time and effort. We do appreciate those who DO keep coming to concerts and those members who bring friends/relatives/musicians/first timers, etc. along to concerts. Please, could everyone do some of this.

I would like to thank our many workers once again. They know who they are, Eunice and Merv, Edith, Ruth, Jenny, Pam, Kath, Mary and Arthur. The committee appreciates you time and help. Thanks also to the ladies and gents who help with afternoon teas and ushering at concerts. Thanks also to our hard working Committee.

We have some great concerts arranged for 2002 starting on Sunday 3rd February with Chris McPhee at the Orion then, John Giacchi at Marrickville on the 17th March. Our overseas artists will be Chris Powell from the UK in August, Dan Bellomy from the USA in October, and another visit from Len Rawle in November. Please support these and all the 2002 artists.

The Christmas season is not far off now, I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2002.

Bill Schumacher

# Crazy Carols

*With the Christmas season coming up, can you guess the name of each carol that has been paraphrased? If you need some hints, there is a second list below which has the real titles, but they are not in the same order as the first list! There is an answer key at the bottom of the page (but cheating is forbidden!!).*

1. Approach, Everyone Who Is Steadfast
2. Are You Experiencing Parallel Auditory Input?
3. Celestial Messengers From Splendid Empires
4. Creator Grant You Cheerful Thoughts, Noble Sirs
5. Delighted Days Off
6. Ecstasy Toward The Orb
7. Embellish The Corridors
8. The Event Occurred At One Minute After 11:59 PM-Visibility Unlimited
9. Hail Nativity Conifer
10. Hey, Minuscule Urban Area Southwest Of Jerusalem
11. I Auditorily Perceived Clapper Containers At The Peak Of The Yuletide Season
12. I Observed A Trio Of Vessels Returning From Yachting
13. Listen! The Foretelling Spirits Harmonize
14. A Melodic Composition Reverberates Through The Atmosphere
15. Musical Clanging Objects Composed Of A White Malleable Element
16. Our Desire Is Your Yuletide Cheer
17. Ovine Caretakers Supervised Their Charges In The Period Past Twilight
18. The Primary Christmas
19. Proceed To Broadcast This From A Much Higher Elevation
20. Quiescent Nocturnal Period
21. Removed In A Bovine Feeding Trough
22. Seraphim We Aurally Detected In The Stratosphere
23. The Slight Percussionist Lad
24. Song Of Joy From Harmonic Hollow Metallic Devices
25. What Offspring Abides Thus?

*Need some hints? Here are the real names of the titles listed above. However, they are in alphabetical order, not in matching order :*

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. Angels From The Realms Of Glory    | n. It Came Upon A Midnight Clear                 |
| b. Angels We Have Heard On High       | o. Joy To The World                              |
| c. Away In A Manger                   | p. The Little Drummer Boy                        |
| d. Carol Of The Bells                 | q. O Christmas Tree                              |
| e. Deck The Halls                     | r. O Come, All Ye Faithful                       |
| f. Do You Hear What I Hear?           | s. O Little Town Of Bethlehem                    |
| g. The First Noel                     | t. Silent Night                                  |
| h. Go Tell It On The Mountain         | u. Silver Bells                                  |
| i. God Rest You Merry, Gentleman      | v. There's A Song In The Air                     |
| j. Happy Holidays                     | w. We Wish You A Merry Christmas                 |
| k. Hark! The Herald Angels Sing       | x. What Child Is This?                           |
| l. I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day | y. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks By Night |
| m. I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In  |  |

*Answer key is below*

Answer key: 1r; 2f; 3a; 4i; 5j; 6o; 7e; 8n; 9q; 10s; 11i; 12m; 13k; 14v; 15u; 16w; 17y; 18g; 19h; 20t; 21c; 22b; 23p; 24d; 25x



# BACK - OR FORWARD TO THE FUTURE?

*Albert Hudson, writing in Tasmania TOSA's Vox Organum, in July 2001, has the following thoughts to share with all Theatre Organ lovers :*

We have just commenced a new century and a number of us are wondering about our young Theatre Organists taking our beloved Theatre Organ music into the future, and how this might be achieved. We would all like to know that the thrilling and expressive sound of the Theatre Organ, which we have become addicted to throughout our lives, will be around for future generations to enjoy.

Like many other facets of life, music has evolved by moving in various trends and styles down through the years, and in one way or another has become as much a part of our lives as conversation. We were lulled to sleep with it; marched into school with it, and some into war with it; courted, danced and wedded with it; we eat and relax with it; exercise, shop, work and worship with it, and no doubt when it's time to leave the planet, it will be to the accompaniment of music.

It has always amazed me just how long the popular classics have lasted. It seems that they must contain some magic ingredient that will enable them to be heard throughout eternity. This music has followed me around for as long as I can remember. One outstanding aspect is that the classics, consist of large amounts of purely instrumental music, and one of the most effective and unique instruments to play it on, is the Pipe Organ. A one-man (sorry - 'person') orchestra.

As time marched on, the classics were shared with less serious music contesting the air waves for our entertainment, and for the majority of people, popular tunes became the order of the day as musicians started singing to us, and, apart from jazz, and that particularly exciting era when the Big Bands swung onto the scene, the instrumentalists faded into the background as the vocalists have mainly held centre stage.

The Classical Organ was modified by Robert Hope-Jones and the Theatre Organ was born - with the extended flexibility for performing a broader range of instrumental music, both classical and the popular music of the day. Not only was it used for

accompanying silent films, and for backing vocalists, but also the lush and grand sounds of the Theatre Organ captivated millions of hearts in theatres and concert halls all over the world.

Meantime, musicians were at work busily changing the shape of their art, and we gradually became acquainted with Rhythm and Blues, Rock 'n Roll, Country and Western, Latin American, and Be-Bop - the latest forms being Rap and Techno Pop - to name just a few, with the Guitar becoming the most popular instrument, and the accent being on rhythm and vocal.

Now the question is - where does that leave the modern Theatre Organists and their repertoire? Where do they fit into the picture if they are to present contemporary Theatre Organ music to the modern general public, and what would their programs consist of? Most of the Theatre Organ concert music that we have been entertained with over the past forty years or so, is about sixty or more years old and has consisted mainly of instrumental versions of vocal Ballads, with Marches, Classical, Light Classical and Novelty numbers providing the icing on the cake.

Here is the dilemma! A Young Organist is now up to concert standard and is rearing to entertain. He or she finds that the audience is mainly made up of Senior Citizens who expect to hear 'their kind of music'. If the organist does not deliver, the audience won't return. So we have a young organist having to settle for playing the songs of their grandparents, to gain popularity.

Of course, to a large extent students rely on what their teachers regard as worthwhile pieces to play - some are more progressive than others.

I am well aware of the compositional value of the thirties music from those wonderful composers, but just how long can we hear those pieces (as good as they may be), over and over again with very little of modern music being added to them for variety, and still expect a steady stream of younger people to join the queues. It has been said that our most impressionable years are at the

age of about ten years old. We usually regard music heard at that time as being pretty special.

I suppose the majority of younger people attending our concerts would be about in their forties, which means that their main influence was in the seventies. They heard music from Elvis Presley, Simon and Garfunkel, Herb Alpert, Burt Bacharach, Henry Mancini, Abba, etc. Even if we could entice people in their late twenties or thirties, we would have to make them feel comfortable with music in the era of the Beatles.

Of course, there are limits to what the Theatre Organ is capable of producing with any degree of convincing style, and Heavy Metal would best be left to the instruments and vocalists which portray it best. Unless they are serious students of music, I don't think we can ever attract teenagers to our concerts, but for younger people with mature tastes in music, I feel there is plenty out there which would suit the organ.

Good melodies have always been the backbone of our programs, and good melodies have been composed by Lennon and McCartney, The Bee Gees, Elton John and others. Very often you can't beat the original, but there are heaps of orchestral versions of today's songs being produced by the world's great orchestras that are very enjoyable, and after all, as I have already stated, the Theatre Organ is a single performer's Orchestra - it's purpose was to be an economical replacement for orchestras playing background music for movies, and later featured at intervals in theatres in its own right.

There is a wealth of light Rock music that can be played without a drummer and adapted to organ - but why not have some added rhythm? After all, there is only a limited amount that an organist can provide with the Traps. Movies and Stage shows still provide sources of good music, but it does seem a pity that there is not more purely instrumental music composed today. What we mainly hear at our concerts are the tunes of vocal ballads.

Music should be an adventure in sound, as we are led by the organist down the well trodden aural garden path, and it's nice to occasionally branch off on new and unexpected by-ways, where we may have some fresh and exciting, new musical experiences. And anyway - how did the familiar tunes become familiar in the first place? Being fed the same food day after day eventually dulls the appetite, but the taste buds sharpen up and take notice when something different is substituted,

or added to the daily diet. I feel it's the same with music.

To be a Theatre Organist one must have a huge repertoire, and be constantly looking around for new material to add to it - not resting on past sonic laurels. I am not suggesting that they delve into obscure ditties of the past, or try to knock into shape some of those jangling, twanging, meaningless pieces of disorder. But rather - sort out the popular contemporary evergreens

that can be suitable for our instrument, as has been done in the past.

It takes a lot of planning, research, and programming to achieve the ideal mix for a multi-aged audience, but the organists who take up this challenge will be the ones responsible for attracting the younger people to our concerts, assuring a sound future for the Mighty Theatre Organ. I believe it can be done.

Albert Hudson

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*In TOSA ACTION June 2001, Bill Fraser, of Canberra, gave an interesting history of the organs in the Melbourne Town Hall and this account of the solo concert for the re-opening of the current Grand Concert Organ :*

## **REFURBISHED, READY AND ROUSING**

I was privileged to be one of many thousands of people who thronged the Melbourne Town Hall on the afternoon of Sunday 27th May recently for the historic, opening solo concert on the refurbished Grand Concert Organ.

Melbourne Town Hall has housed a succession of organs. The first was installed in 1872, being built by the famous English builders, William Hill & Son. The Town Halls in Adelaide and Sydney also gained Hill organs, however the Melbourne organ was largely the product of Father Hill, who died in late 1870, whereas the other two were the son's responsibility.

The original organ was of largely classical style, reflecting a continental influence adopted by Hill. However by the turn of the century, fashion had changed, and romantic music was more prominent. The latter style reflects feelings and emotions, whereas the classical, e.g. J.S. Bach, derives its efficacy from complex form and structures.

In 1906, the original organ, notwithstanding its unique characteristics, was drastically redesigned and rebuilt to an exceedingly romantic style, with electric action and other influences of the English builder, Robert Hope-Jones.

Why such a distinctive instrument should be so unsympathetically revamped is difficult to understand,

even for romanticists, however the persons responsible received their just deserts in early 1925, when the corrupted organ and portion of the Town Hall were completely destroyed by fire.

The Town Hall was subsequently rebuilt and enlarged, and a new organ obtained in 1929. By this time, William Hill and Son had merged with another major builder, Norman and Beard Limited, and the new organ was built by the composite organisation. The design reverted to a more classical style, but with significant orchestral content.

By the 1970s, the organ was again out of fashion, due to emergence of the Organ Reform Movement, which was strident in its demand for a return to classicism. Indeed the Adelaide organ fell victim to this influence and was rebuilt in 1970 to a more classical style. The error has since been recognised, but Adelaide sought amends in 1989 by obtaining a completely new organ. However the Adelaide Hill has fortunately survived, is being restored to its former character and re-erected in the Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Tanunda.

The Melbourne organ has now been rebuilt and enhanced by the Schantz Organ Company of Orrville, Ohio, USA. This firm was established in 1873 and claims to be the oldest and largest American pipe organ builder still under the management of its founding family.

The enhancements include restoration of pipework and addition of around 50 ranks of pipes, resulting in a total of 246 drawstops. A new organ chamber was required to house two new 32' ranks and a dual mobile console has been constructed. To retain originality, a 1929 *ventil* has been provided which can silence all of the 2001 additions.

Thomas Heywood, concert organist, is a man with a mission. He has sought to re-establish the practice of performing transcriptions of non-organ music, as well as promoting the romantic repertoire in a most intense and intelligent manner. Both these practices, although formerly popular, were largely stifled by the Organ Reform Movement.

The program commenced with a stirring Heywood arrangement of the *National Anthem*. Then followed a comprehensive program including one organ work by J.S. Bach, one by E.H. Lemare, and all remaining items being transcriptions of orchestral works, those of Rossini, Rachmaninoff, Elgar and Beethoven's *5th Symphony*.

After a standing ovation, three encores were provided, the first being Tchaikovsky's *Dance of the Sugar-Plum Fairy* which utilised the percussion on the organ.

Further organ concerts are planned. These are commended for the interest and support of our members keen on the continued promotion and enjoyment of popular organ playing.

# Review of DAVID SMITH's Concert

Sunday 21st October by Wendy Hambly Marrickville Town Hall

With a very dynamic fanfare to start, David's opening number was "Good ol' Bad ol' Days" with lots of fill-ins with a softer middle section. Some great runs, and then add Chrysoglott and also Cymbal to pedal to build up to full theatre organ with crash Cymbal for a huge finish. A great start to a daringly different programme. Let me explain.

David had brought with him a Kurzweil Mk 10 Digital Orchestral Piano (German name, designed in America, made in Korea and sold here!). A truly amazing instrument with a huge variety of sounds. The piano was mounted on a specially constructed platform to the right of the WurliTzer console. In fact it was close enough to lean across and play piano one hand and organ with the other. Two instruments at once? Absolutely! And it works incredibly well.

Mind you, I'm glad David has long arms, as a full stretch is required to reach between the two instruments. Due to the distance between the pedals of the two instruments, a special bar was attached to the sustain pedal of the Piano, extending towards the WurliTzer console, which enabled David to use the sustain pedal on the Piano without moving his feet too far. The Piano has the ability to record material on disk and play back when required and this facility was used to great effect during the afternoon.

Well, now that I've tried to explain the unexplainable, let's continue.

Next came "I Say a Little Prayer for You" - vamp left hand and pedal and right and Tibias and Strings, building up - did I hear a Triangle in there somewhere? A well-balanced rendition with full Tibias plus Oboe right hand and a Triangle to finish.

Let's move to the piano for "Michelle" - Piano sound then add Strings - just lovely with a great feel - good improvisation in middle section, then back to melody with Vibraphone - amazing variety of tones on the Digital Piano.

A little Gershwin now - "I Got Rhythm"/"Who Could Ask for Anything More"/"Embraceable You"

- on both instruments. Straight organ to start, with a run down to vamp with right hand on Piano and left hand on organ then back to organ for Tibia Chorus plus Vox with great runs - amazing - Cymbal to pedal for a very jazzy feel - real toe-tapping stuff.

David then introduced singer Graham Stroud, to sing "On a Wonderful Day Like Today" with David playing a superb accompaniment on Piano. Graham managed to easily fill the auditorium with his voice, and especially with his enthusiasm, and was very well received by the audience.

Next came a soft Tibia introduction for Graham to sing "I Won't Send Roses". These two artists complement each other beautifully. Back to Piano with soft arpeggios and voice choir sound from David as Graham sings "Ave Maria" - just beautiful.

With David still on Piano, an audience participation song now - "Flash, Bang, Wallop - Put it in your Family Album" - vamp to start with audience clapping hands and tapping feet. It was lots of fun.

We'll give Graham a well-earned rest now and David plays "Man From Snowy River" - let's start on the Piano and use the disk. David played the first section on Piano, then pressed the appropriate button and the Piano played itself as he played organ accompaniment. Perfect balance between the two instruments - it was just amazing.

For "Jessica's Theme", Electric Piano and Strings on keyboard - second time Piano plays itself and David plays and improvises underneath using straight organ and sometimes Tibia Chorus - just magic.

Now for an all time favourite of mine, "A Love Until the End of Time" - commence on Piano with Strings - single note melody line on organ and then accompaniment on Piano and melody left hand on organ with a run to finish.

Next came "As Time Goes By" from *Casablanca* - minor chord and right hand run up to start and then build up registration with good short runs then

to full Tibia Chorus. A Chrysoglott run down and fill-ins on Piano - a sensitive rendition.

Next came David's own composition - "March from the Sea" full theatre organ and Cymbal with both hands on upper manual. Phrases of straight organ and also quieter Tibia/Diapason sections and then back to full theatre organ. A very busy middle section with plenty of trills - I loved the various themes all meshing together. A dynamic piece. All building up to a grand finale with Cymbals and all stops out!

After interval we heard "Sing, Sing, Sing" from *Sister Act* - rhythmic fanfare with good use of Chrysoglott, etc - even a Drum routine with full chords on upper manual to finish. Imaginative and great fun.

Then came "Scarborough Fair" - on Piano and organ. Commence with a "space invaders" type sound, including Vibraphone, then to Piano sound - very laid back rendition using sound effects on Piano. Then add Strings and set rhythm on Piano and then turn to organ and use haunting Tibias underneath recorded Piano version - perfect balance. Use of untremmed organ also. Run up on Tibias to finish. Just lovely daringly different.

For a total change of pace, let's try classic organ now with "Here I am Lord" - untremmed Tibias - single note right hand and then 2 note right hand, adding stops gradually. Church organ fanfare in the middle and return to single note melody line - excellent improvisation section with untremmed organ to finish.

Another one of David's compositions came next - a Billy Joel-ish type of tune - "Billy Can". (If Billy can, then so can I!). Think I like this one already. A very upbeat number with Piano to start with rhythm, then go to full theatre organ and Chrysoglott - also straight organ section. Improvisation done on Piano by half turning around, and keep left hand on organ - full organ to finish. I just loved it.

Let's reintroduce Graham Stroud for another selection of songs. First

came "Somewhere" from *West Side Story* with accompaniment on organ - hmmm - just lovely.

Then with David on Piano "Some Enchanted Evening", then "This is the Moment" - DS Piano and Strings - excellent fill-ins and change of key last time - magnificent! Lastly, came "I Still Call Australia Home" - introduction on organ with Crash Cymbal.

Come and visit us again Graham - we liked your style and your selections.

Back to David now with "God Bless America" - intro on Piano, then to Tibias - quietly and gently and add stops gradually - fill-ins on Piano, building to full theatre organ with full chords both hands. Next verse - melody line on pedals and accompaniment with both hands on upper manual and then finish with Crash Cymbals.

Whew! A medley from *Chess* came next, opening with an oriental sound - 4ths to be exact. I heard Tibia Chorus statement/response between the manuals with runs and trills and all sorts of embellishments.

Now for "You'll Never Know" - full Tibia Chorus - cut back to soft

Tibias and add Clarinet right hand with great runs and fill-ins - a delightful rendition. Time for a Gershwin medley now - "It Ain't Necessarily So"/ "Summertime" - organ Drum roll and arpeggio on Piano with contrary motion runs and Strings on Piano, then back to organ and reach across to Piano with right hand for fill-ins, etc. Plenty of light and shade for a great 'feel' in this selection. Let's move to the piano for one section and leave rhythm running and go back to organ for a huge finish!!!!!!

David's well-deserved encore was "Mean to Me". A vamp introduction on Piano - laid-back feel, then to organ. Did you hear the higher interval chords? An improvisation section was played on Piano and then a big finish on organ.

David is a risk-taker - no doubt about it. Today he was at his adventurous best and produced some of his finest work yet. All arrangements, including accompaniment for Graham were David's own. In many instances when playing both instruments, melody was played by left hand on organ and accompaniment played right hand on Piano. Have you ever tried doing that? Taxes the brain somewhat, I must say.

However, David did this with relative ease, I have to report.

Switching between instruments was certainly no mean feat either and was done without losing the rhythm and feel of the music. It was fascinating to watch, as well as to listen to, David.

There is surely a wider audience out there who would respond well to adventurous performances such as this, as a step to getting hooked on the unique musical qualities of theatre organs. Some of the songs David presented to us today were written during or after the 1960's and a few even featured (soft) rock rhythms. Theatre organ can be part of the contemporary music scene, without detracting from its magnificence. It's all in the presentation and adventure of daring to be different.

This was an exciting programme, with something for everyone, whether they be adventurous folk or traditionalists. I think every music realm was covered - from classics to modern, and everything else in between.

David is a fine musician with an unstoppable imagination and excels as an arranger. Congratulations, David, you dared to be different and you have succeeded 100%.



by Neil Palmer

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# OUR NEXT ARTISTS:

## John Atwell and Tony Fenelon

# TONY FENELON

It was clear from an early age that music would play a significant role in Tony's life. As a child, he showed astounding talent as a pianist, and later studied at the Conservatorium of Music in Melbourne. He won the Victorian Final of the ABC's Concerto and Vocal Competitions and the Open and Bach sections at the National Eisteddfod in Canberra. Shortly after, he obtained the highest marks ever awarded for his *Licentiate Diploma in Performing Piano* at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

Tony's insatiable interest in lighter music and a love of the majestic sound of the theatre pipe organ led to his "other" career, with his appointment in 1965 as the resident organist at Melbourne's then prestigious Regent Theatre.

Now an internationally acclaimed artist, Tony has completed twenty major concert tours overseas including the United States, the UK and Japan. He has released seventeen record albums and has also recently been exploring the world of electronic music, midi and computers, with many of his orchestral arrangements and CDs featured on FM radio in Australia.

Tony's concerts provide a tasteful balance between popular tunes and light classics, and include music from the films, stage shows, jazz, and great standards. As the piano has always been his first love, his extensive repertoire of piano classics now forms an increasingly large proportion of his concerts, a feature widely requested by his audiences.

Tony's latest CD, *Collections*, featuring light classics and popular ballads, has received great acclaim in the United States, UK and Japan and is enjoying a similar reaction throughout Australia.

On Easter Monday, 1999, Tony featured in the inaugural concert of the Melbourne Regent Theatre's new *Wurlitzer* pipe organ. Since the civic opening of the Regent, Tony has been featured on the *Wurlitzer* organ during the seasons of the re-release of the films *My Fair Lady* and *Gone with the Wind*.

A man of great versatility, Tony's dedication, energy, musical integrity and personality make him an artist of constant demand throughout the world.

# JOHN ATWELL

It is just over thirty years since John Atwell gave his first performance on a theatre pipe organ at the Dendy Theatre, Melbourne, during the 1968 TOSA Convention. Since those early days, John has presented many concerts around Australia and overseas.

He continues to play concerts at theatre organ venues around Australia both as a solo performer and in duo collaboration with his long-time colleague and friend, Tony Fenelon. Some of these concerts have been premier recitals on new organ installations, including the Capri Theatre, Goodwood, SA. John has acted as consultant on many of these installations.

He has been one of the organists privileged to present the sounds of Australia's newest and largest *Wurlitzer* installation in the Regent Theatre, Melbourne, in the last two years.

There have been overseas concerts in the USA, Canada, the UK and New Zealand. Recent tours have included concerts at the *Wurlitzer* in the Washington Centre for Performing Arts in the USA and the Manchester Paramount *Wurlitzer* in Stockport Town Hall, UK

John has played many classical recitals on instruments including the Melbourne Town Hall organ and the *Casavant* organ in the Melbourne Concert Hall. He has also been an active vocal and choral accompanist in Victoria, including seventeen years with the Maroondah Singers.

He and Tony are well known and loved for their special duo concerts, so don't miss this latest chance to enjoy an afternoon of great music and entertainment at the Orion Centre.

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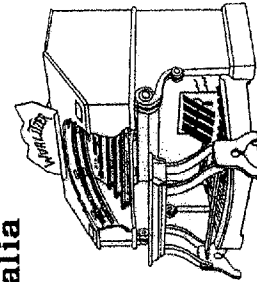
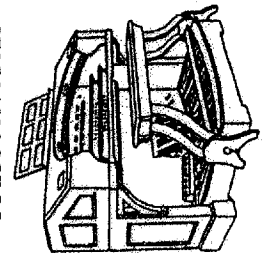
# TOSA NEWS

## DECEMBER, 2001

Theatre Organ Society of Australia  
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