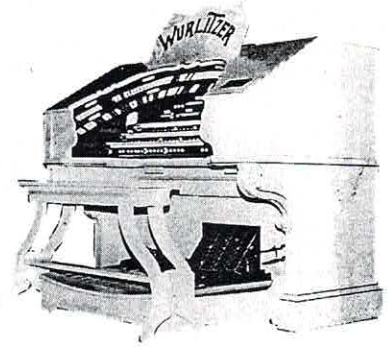


MAY, 1995



TOSA NEWS

2/11 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Marrickville Town Hall

3/17 WurliTzer Theatre Pipe Organ
Orion Centre Campsie

Direct from the UK's Tower Ballroom Blackpool

PHIL KELSALL



Ballroom Dance Night

Friday, 19th May

Orion Centre Campsie

WurliTzer Concert

Sunday, 21st May

Volume 34
Issue 4

PRINTED BY TOSA

The Official Publication of Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division) Inc.
P.O. Box 36, Brooklyn, 2083

Print Post Approved PP255003/01823

Price
\$1.00

TOSA NEWS

MAY, 1995

THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA (NSW DIVISION) Inc.

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COMING EVENTS

MAY

- Monday 1 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
- Friday 19 at 8.00pm **Phil Kelsall's Blackpool
Supper - Dance Night**
Orion Centre Campsie
- Sunday 21 at 2.00pm **Phil Kelsall Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie
- Wednesday 24 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie
- Wednesday 31 at 8.00pm **Half Yearly
General Meeting**
Orion Centre Campsie

JUNE

- Monday 5 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
- Wednesday 14 at 7.30pm **Members' Playing Night**
Orion Centre Campsie
- Sunday 25 at 2.00pm **Ray Thornley Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie

JULY

- Monday 3 at 7.30pm **Committee Meeting**
- Sunday 23 at 2.00pm **Jonas Nordwall Concert**
Orion Centre Campsie



REMEMBER TO TUNE IN TO
2CBA-FM 103.2

EVERY MONDAY AT 9.00 pm
For "Theatre Organ Highlights"
Presented by Chris Styles

Editorial

Neil Jensen certainly proved his ability as Sydney's leading theatre organist at his Orion concert on the 9th April. His concert was a great crowd-pleaser and we look forward to hearing him again before too long, especially as he had a number of extra items prepared but which time constraints forced him to omit from his programme on this occasion.

Our next event is the Supper - Dance Night with Phil Kelsall. The committee is hoping for a good response from members and friends, which will justify the time and effort they put into this special brand of entertainment. If, however, it appears finally that members do not wish to attend this kind of function, this year's Dance Night will probably be the last one, and Sydney will revert to the traditional single Sunday concert when these English dance-specialist organists tour Australia - a pity as some people are prepared to come from great distances just to participate in these fabulous evenings. Remember that on the night you are not obliged to dance - the playing is so entertaining that it is like a 4 - 5 hour Wurlitzer concert in the comfort of the Orion Centre.

Could I ask that people who wish to include something in TOSA News to try to stick to the deadline of the 12th of each month, and even, if possible, submit material earlier so that I have more time to organise, edit, type up, etc., before the last minute rush and the arrival of the inevitable, late items? A little consideration on the contributors' part can make my life easier by allowing me time to juggle all my professional responsibilities with the time-consuming TOSA requirements - if the preparation of TOSA News becomes too difficult for me, in an effort to be fair to all concerned, I will be forced to relinquish my position as editor. A big thank you, though, to the faithful few who are unfailingly reliable and on time every month! I am most grateful.

Best Wishes,
Colin Groves



WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

TOSA is pleased to welcome the following new members and we wish them a long and happy participation in our Society :

John Jones
- Culburra Beach
Patricia Chambers
- Wahroonga
Roland Chambers
- Wahroonga

Articles in this journal do not necessarily represent the views of the committee nor those of the editor

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

Members' Playing Night

On Wednesday 29th March, more than 30 people turned up at the Orion Centre to play, or simply to listen to, the fabulous Wurlitzer.

Those who played included : Bruce Brisby, Reg Cant, Jack Williams, Wendy Hambly, Amy Caldwell, Ernie Erwin, Walter Pearce, Chris Laroux, Tom Barber, John Griffiths, Jack McDonald, Ross Woodley, Chris Styles and Peter Held. A very enjoyable variety of numbers and styles was presented by these members.

Recent Australian and overseas Organ Society journals were available for perusal while the other members played - a practice that may have to be discontinued because some of the journals, destined for our archives, were deliberately (or accidentally!) not returned at the end of the evening. These historical records should all be preserved in our archives and not souvenired by thoughtless members who should know better than to deprive other members of the pleasure of casting an eye over other Societies' newsletters, whether now or in the future. Perhaps they will be returned next time!

Given the popularity of this members' playing night, the committee has moved quickly to provide more occasions for members to play the Orion organ - Wednesday, 24th May and Wednesday, 14th June have been added as members' playing nights. Put these dates in your diary if you are interested in playing or listening to the mini-concerts provided by some of our members who are decidedly talented theatre organists, and very entertaining to listen to.

Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided and many members bring a plate of supper to be shared with all present, thus making a very pleasant evening for players and listeners. Come along if you can and enjoy a social, friendly evening in the Orion which is cooled in summer and warmed in winter for our greater comfort!

Sunday morning members' playing sessions at the Orion also seem to be a step closer to realisation.



NEWS FROM ALL OVER

PARRAMATTA

Colin Adamson, deputy director of music at **St John's Anglican Cathedral, Parramatta**, will be presenting a Sunday afternoon recital on 7th May, 1995, at 2.30pm.

The hour-long programme, played on the historic **Walker Pipe Organ**, will consist of a wide selection of musical styles, with the intention of appealing to all tastes.

Off-street parking is available via **Hunter Street**, and it is only a short stroll from **Parramatta Station**. All are welcome. Sunday, 7th May, 2.30-3.30pm. **St John's Cathedral, Church Street, Parramatta**.

Enquiries : 683 3014

MARRICKVILLE

John Parker reports that the 2-manual console of the **Marrickville WurliTzer** is virtually complete and ready to return to its home in the **Town Hall**.

For the past 11 months it has resided in the North Shore workshop of **Peter D. G. Jewkes Pty Ltd**, undergoing a total refurbishment by organ builder, **John Parker**.

The console has been completely stripped out, and all timberwork cleaned off, stained and repolished. It was found necessary to replace the 2 segments of the top lid and "horse-shoe", and these have been exactly replicated to look original. New stop-tabs, pistons and electrical components have been fitted throughout, and the keyboards and pedal board rebuilt. A new replica music desk has also been

provided.

At the time of writing, the console has been undergoing final electrical testing and the keyboard is being set up. These should be completed by the time this item goes to print.

Neil Palmer reports that he has been discussing the positioning of the printed circuit boards to control the percussion, shutters and tremors with their designer, **John Andrews**.

All manual chest bottom boards have been rewired and plugs fitted. All main chamber offset chests have been rewired. Also the Tibia 8' offset chest has been rewired. The rewiring of the 16' Tuba offset chest is underway. Old cabling has been removed from the Solo shutters, Toy Counter and Chrysoglott. The cable, as specified by **John Andrews**, to be used for the return connections is to be delivered soon.

A meeting was held between **Neil Palmer, John Shaw** and **Sue Beal** (of **Marrickville Council**) to discuss the future of the console housing and the **Council's** general plans for the refurbishment of the **Town Hall**. From this meeting, **John Shaw** reports that major changes to the **Town Hall** are unlikely to happen before 1996. However, **Marrickville Council** has recently installed a new sound system, purchased new seating, and has had an acoustics expert looking at the **Hall** with a view to reducing the amount of aircraft noise.

The **Council's** Heritage advisers are not happy with the organ console being stored in the **Hall** and are looking at ideas for alternative storage, such as the area near the kitchen to the left of the auditorium, but this is probably a long-term plan.

MANCHESTER

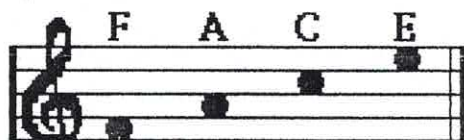
The **Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust** has announced that the **Manchester Paramount Theatre's WurliTzer**, removed 21 years ago to the **Manchester Free Trade Hall**, is to move within the city again, to the **Hulme Hippodrome**.

As a part of a regeneration of the **Hulme** area, the **Hippodrome** will undergo a major restoration to create a **National Centre of the Music Hall**. The alterations will include purpose-built organ chambers with observation windows and perhaps a museum and theatre organ archive within the

building.

The **Hulme Hippodrome** was built in 1901 and opened as the **Grand Junction Theatre**, but renamed the **Hippodrome** in 1905, exchanging names with the theatre that backs onto it, now called the **Hulme Playhouse** and which housed the **Empress WurliTzer** for 17 years. The **Hippodrome** is a splendid example of a turn-of-the-century Music Hall, with a magnificent auditorium rich in Rococo plasterwork and is heritage listed.

This news was reported in the March, 1995, edition of the **UK's Cinema Organ Society's** monthly **Newsletter**.



THE MUSIC
With Allan Tassaker

Allan reckons he trained a chicken to dance a merry tune on top of his organ.

However, says **Allan**, the poor thing dropped dead of exhaustion.

"That ended up badly," said **Allan's** friend.

"Not at all," smiled **Allan**....

"It turned out to be a feather in my cap!"

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Hammond B3000

1986 Model

Cost : \$18,000

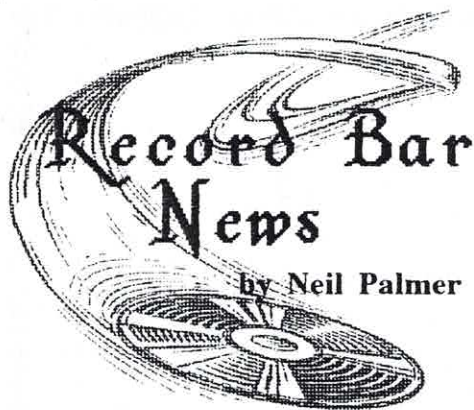
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“MAKING LOWREY MAGIC”

Tony Fenelon at the Lowrey Celebration C500. Tracks include: *Swingin’ Safari, These Foolish Things, Ghost Riders in the Sky, Song For Anna, Strike Up the Band, Nola*, plus more.

Compact Disc \$15; Cassette \$12

“SPREAD A LITTLE HAPPINESS”

Robert Wolfe at the WurliTzer Organ at the Thursford Collection, Norfolk. Tracks include : *Blaze of Glory, You Always Hurt the One You Love, Ma Belle Marguerite, Spread a Little Happiness, Selection from South Pacific, Muskrat Ramble*, plus more.

Compact Disc \$28

“ANY DREAM WILL DO”

Robert Wolfe at the Thursford WurliTzer. Tracks include : *Our Director, A Gal in Calico, Your Cheatin’ Heart, Fascinating Rhythm, Someone to Watch Over Me, From A Distance*, plus more.

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304 Parramatta Rd
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Phone enquiries: 798 6742 after 7pm

Postage : Compact Disc \$3
 Cassette \$2

Ted Hale writes to tell us about an enjoyable concert he attended in Parramatta. As it happens, there is similar one that Colin Adamson invites TOSA members and friends to attend on the Sunday, 7th May.

10/3/95

Last Wednesday (8th March), I and a few friends attended the “Lunchtime Concert” at St John’s Cathedral, Parramatta.

Colin Adamson was the organist at this recital and this young man certainly put on a good show.

His choice of registrations on the J. Walker Pipe Organ (1862) was excellent.

As it was a short one hour recital it would only be fair to say that his ‘rapid’ change of stops to create melodious sounds on both manuals for pieces like *That’s All I Ask of You (Phantom of the Opera), Tonight (West Side Story)* and his excellent change of tones in Greig’s *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen* showed the talents of this young organist.

He also played *Marche Militaire (Schubert), Air from Handel’s Harmonious Blacksmith, Jesus Is Lord (Martin Howe), When I Fall in Love (Victor Young), Because (Guy D’Hardalot)*, and *Theme from the movie Ice Castles*.

All the best
 Ted Hale

Membership Notes

Well, subscription renewal time is nearly here again - as you will see from the enclosed RENEWAL form. We will take it as a personal favour if you send payment early so we don’t have to do all the records and banking in the last couple of weeks of June!

The new fees are:

\$20 full membership

\$12 Country

\$10 Pensioner

Add 50% for voting member spouse

Yes, you can still pay at the Membership desk at the Campsie Orion concerts, and we are happy to meet you there. But why not avoid the annual queue?

Walter Pearce

If you are seeking an antique, theatre, console or spinet organ contact the MANNING ORGAN SOCIETY (065) 531431 anytime

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A Tribute to COLIN TRINGHAM

It is with sadness that we record the passing of yet another faithful member of TOSA.

I first met **Colin Tringham** in 1987 when he phoned me, enquiring if it would be possible to join the **Orion Wurlitzer** work-team. Both **Doug Smith** and I welcomed **Colin's** help and he became an active member of our little group - travelling from the North Shore 3 days a week to our workshop in **Lakemba**.

Colin was involved in many aspects of the project. For me, his untiring work in cleaning and polishing the 13 metal ranks of pipes (some 1,000) is remembered every time I enter the pipe chambers to service the **Wurlitzer**. His knowledge of electronics made him invaluable when it came to running and forming cables, testing the many hundreds of electro-magnets, and the general restoration of pipe-chest actions and parts. **Colin's** dedication to theatre organs, and to good music in general, was seen in his association not only with a couple of organ societies but also with the

Mechanical Musical Instrument Society. His love of reproducing player-pianos, and especially period music boxes and polyphons, was well known among the many who visited his home. A "musical soirée" at **Colin's** home was always a memorable occasion for (i) the fabulous food fare, and (ii) the wonderful music provided either by **Colin** or his guests at the **Gulbransen** organ or by the ever-growing collection of mechanical, musical instruments.

Colin's illness was a long one, but something that he had automatically taken in his stride. He was never a complaining person and when, during the organ restoration he occasionally had to attend hospital for treatment, his biggest concern was that his non-attendance at the workshop may have held up progress.

During 1989 **Colin** took on the TOSA Secretary's position, after having served as a committee member or some time. He held this position for some 18 months, until his health forced him to retire. Nevertheless he continued to hold his musical evenings, contribute

to **TOSA News** and attend concerts - often seen helping out as an usher. **Colin** was well known for his concert reviews and could often be seen taking notes during shows. His last review for **TOSA News** was of the **Ray Thornley** concert in August last year - this was also the final concert **Colin** attended.

It is sad that this is my second tribute in as many months that I have been asked to write concerning a friend who worked with me on the **Orion** restoration team. **Colin** will be fondly remembered by the many people and friends who knew him and shared with him his love of music, music boxes, his flair for entertaining, and not forgetting his insatiable wit and his, at times, wicked sense of humour.

Perhaps **Colin** will best be remembered as a "battler", quietly coping with his personal situation, but always going out of his way to continue his interests and involve friends whenever possible.

John Parker



Colin at the console of the Standaard in Mosman Baptist Church on Sunday, 12th June, 1994

Chicago Stadium Organ Survives Transplant

By Adrienne Drell, Staff Writer for Chicago Sun-Times, Tuesday, November 8, 1994

The pipe dream started 29 years ago when Robert Roppolo first heard the massive organ swell and thunder out "The Lord's Prayer."

"The balcony shook as they turned on all the stops. I got chills and tears came to my eyes. I will never forget it," Roppolo said.

From that moment on, Roppolo, now 46, vowed always to be near the majesty and beauty of the 70-ton Barton pipe organ. Suspended from the ceiling of the Chicago Stadium, it was the largest theatre organ of its type in the world.

Over the years, Roppolo, a musician and organ collector, worked as a volunteer to help maintain the 4,000-pipe instrument powered by a massive 10,000-pound, 100-horsepower blower.

"It could shake glass and break plaster in a smaller auditorium, but it was fine in the stadium," Roppolo said.

Last week Roppolo's dream became a full-blown reality.

After lengthy negotiations and three months of dismantling and moving, the mammoth organ he calls "The Granddaddy of Them All" was his. Actually, the 40,000 pieces that comprise the organ belong not only to Roppolo but also to eight unidentified investors who hope to sell it for a profit.

"I want a place where the organ can be installed and be enjoyed by at least three more generations," Roppolo explained.



Bob Roppolo sits in front of the Barton organ that shook the Chicago Stadium for 65 years. Roppolo and a group of investors bought the organ when the Stadium gave way to the United Center.

He'd also like to see it somewhere in the Chicago area, where a dozen theater organs remain. Popular in the day of silent films, theater organs fell into disuse after films with sound debuted.

The organ was installed in the stadium loft in 1929, and its voice became part of the background din of thousands of sporting events.

Now the gilded console sits silently on the second floor of The 19th Hole, the ballroom-dancing hall Roppolo owns in west suburban Lyons. Its pipes, keyboards, pedals and wind blower pieces are stored in warehouses throughout the area.

It took hours of hard work by volunteers to take apart and clean the organ, and six semitrailers to haul it from the stadium this summer.

Roppolo would not reveal how much he and the

other investors paid stadium owner William Wirtz for the organ, but others suggest it was more than \$100,000. Terms of the deal included no discussion about the sale until the instrument had been moved out and no disclosure of the price.

"It is like a classic old Duesenberg car. It is like the Hope diamond. This organ is unique," Roppolo said. "It has six bass drums, six snare drums. It has four glockenspiels. It has four xylophones, castanets, tambourines. This is real stuff. These are not artificial sounds like an electronic organ. This is the real thing."

If William Wirtz were to change his mind, Roppolo would be willing to install the Granddaddy in the United Center.

♪ A HAPPY SONG ♭ # ♪ ?

Thankyou to TOSA member Val Page of Taree West for tracking down the music to "Hard Hearted Hannah" for me! When I offered to pay costs and postage Val just said, "No.... I'm happy to help because I've had lots of help and made good friends through TOSA. Now its my turn"

*It pays to belong!
- Walter Pearce*

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Two pages from *Vox, Melbourne TOSA's* newsletter, about the new *Melbourne Wurlitzer*, with organist and editor, *John Atwell*, reporting on the arrival of the *Wurlitzer* for the refurbished *Melbourne Regent Theatre*, and noting a *Melbourne* member's memories of it.

The Eagle has Landed.....Paramount Wurlitzer destined for Regent Theatre hits Melbourne—safely.

At 12.35 pm precisely on Wednesday, November 23rd, the first container with its precious Wurlitzer cargo came to rest on the pavement outside its temporary storage home while restoration takes place. It was only three hours late, and for those gathered to help unload the organ, it was almost an anticlimax.

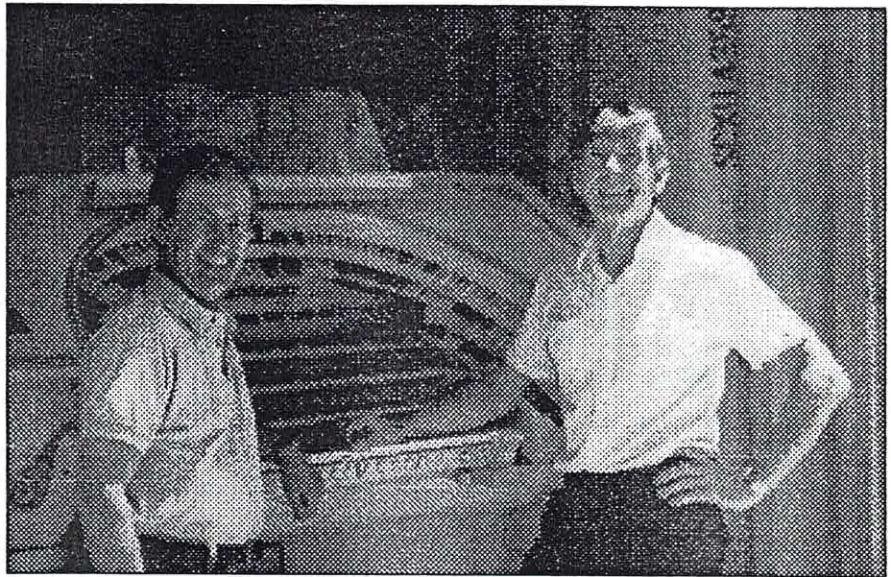
The boat had been due in on the previous Sunday, but in fact had arrived and left the Friday before. Customs and clearing agents said 9.30 Wednesday was the time. The delay was in part caused by the oversight of loading the container on a truck without end cranes to enable off loading at the destination. This required a separate mover to be called from the South Melbourne depot, and somewhere in South Road, 17 tons of Wurlitzer was changed from one truck to another.

Videos and cameras were working overtime recording the event. By this stage, Julien Arnold was anxious to get the container open and struggled with the bolts after he broke the seal. It may sound dumb, but it brought a lump to this writer's throat (as it does now as I write it) to see those doors swing back to reveal a stately 4 manual console which once occupied a beautiful site on Market Street, San Francisco. Famous personages with names like Oliver Wallace, Iris Vining-Wilkins, Tom Hazleton, Ann Leaf, George Wright, Jonas Nordwall had graced this console with their presence, not to mention the not-quite-so-famous, but no less important Australians who had seen and played the organ in its Portland, Oregon home. And now its in Melbourne!

There was a timeout for photos were taken, somewhat akin to those of Frank Lanterman fingering the keys of the State Melbourne Wurlitzer console while still in the crate on its arrival in Melbourne.

With those formalities out of the way, the metal ramp was placed in position and the console removed by forklift to allow the rest of the container to be unloaded. And boy was there a lot of organ... and that was only a little more than half of it.

Tuba pipes which can flatten almost in front of your eyes had been packed on their bells in a special construction built specifically for the pur-



Tony Fenelon and Julien Arnold at the Paramount Console

pose in Portland. They came out of the container in the same condition as they were packed in Portland.

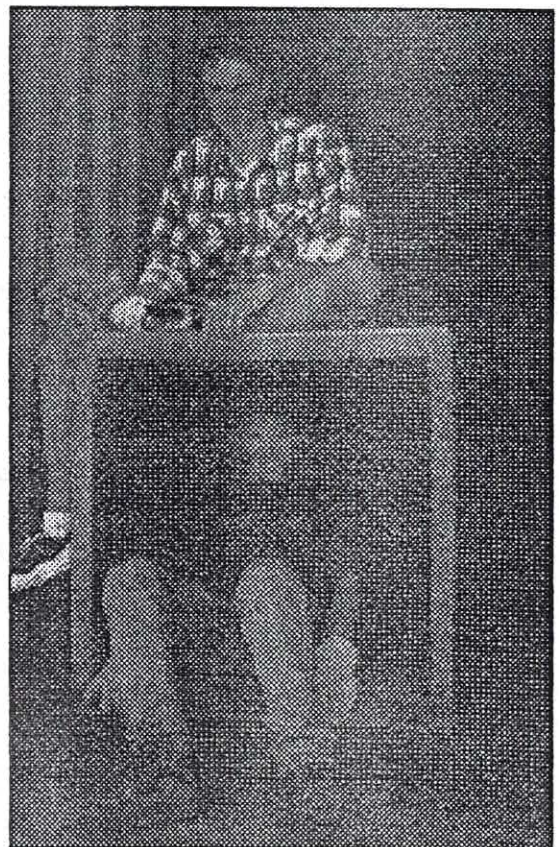
For the next four and a half hours a willing team laboured to clear the container, a time somewhat less than that taken to load it! It had to be emptied by the end of the day as the next container was coming the following day. Ten boxes of precious pipes, all expertly wrapped for storage and shipment by the late Dave Junchen some years before were unloaded.

We took time to lever off the top of the crate containing the brass Saxophone and Trumpet. What a sight! Small pipes superbly wrapped, and larger pipes resting in a bed of expanded paper packing, glistening as if they had just left the pipe shop the day before.

The tibia basses were interesting, being made of redwood, quite different to anything seen here before, and so light to pick up.

The 32' Diaphones and 16' Bombardes (Tuba Mirabilis basses) took up possibly half of the container. And they were heavy. The photo shows Mark Arnold and David Atwell perched and sitting in the top section of the bottom C Diaphone pipe. Years ago a promotional movie was

made of this organ leaving the Wurlitzer factory for its journey to San Francisco. It shows a workman sitting in the same pipe holding one of the smallest pipes in the organ. Yes, copies of this historic footage have arrived in Australia, which will make the travels of this Wurlitzer one of the better documented ones.



Bottom C 32' Diaphone with Mark Arnold inside and David Atwell sitting on top

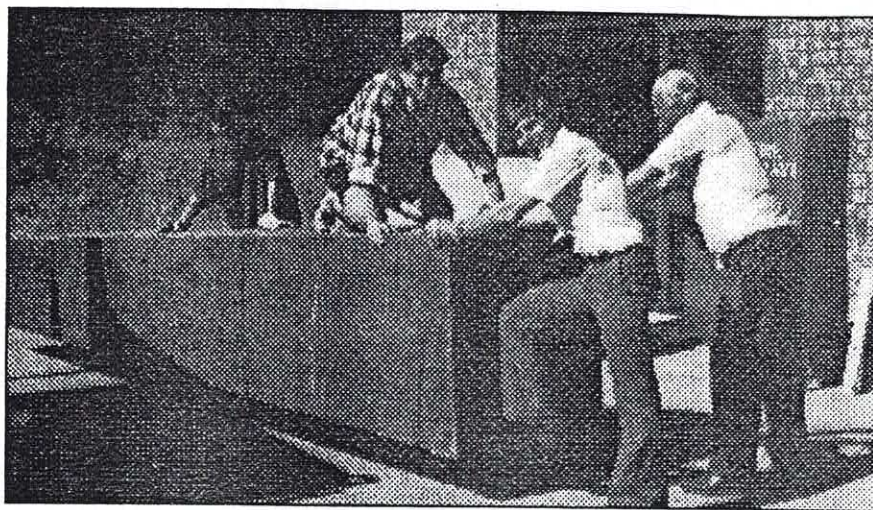
The following day the rest of the organ arrived, the remainder of the pipework, the tonal and non-tonal percussion instruments. (Two bass drums...one super size!), and the chests and shutters. This writer was not able to be present on the second day, but a subsequent inspection of the parts turned up some gems.

One chest is about two feet longer than what we have come to know as standard Wurlitzer chests from later organs. This organ was 1921 and up to that point possibly the largest Wurlitzer had yet built. It just looks as though things had not quite reached production line techniques Wurlitzer achieved later in their output. And nine ranks all on one chest in the Main. What a beast!

Close inspection by Mark Arnold discovered the autograph in pencil of one of the workmen on the side of a percussion unit with a 1921 date. Also one Bombarde was monikered by one Tom Hazleton, staff organist 1960-1964.

The piano is a pressure variety, with two degrees of touch per note, small valve and pallet, large valve and pallet, plus about three degrees of expression controlled by the swell pedals.

In the console there was an interesting servo operated power assist mechanism on the swell pedals to allow the organist to open and close the swell shutters by hand from the moving chamber indicators in the centre of the top stop rail, as well as by the foot expression pedals. I do not know whether it was standard on all large multi-chambered Wurlitzers. Maybe it was an early patent that they did not persevere with.



Top of the biggest Diaphone pipe out in the Aussie sun for the first time. From left, Mark Arnold, David Atwell, Julien Arnold, John Kellett

The organ was subsequently inspected by the new owners, Regent Management/ Staged Developments Australia, and they were delighted with their purchase. One person commented on what good condition the organ was in, having been built so long ago in 1921.

Work has now started checking each individual component, refurbishing or releathering where necessary. I lost count on the number of tremulants and regulators. There are heaps.

But the work is not insurmountable, it will just take time.

To those international readers who may be concerned about the fate of Opus 416 so far from its original shores, and disappointed that it has left the USA, be reassured. Those involved in the restoration are well aware of the historical significance of this instrument. According to the Wurlitzer list, it is one of only three or four intact style 285s remaining, two others being Shea's Buffalo and the Chicago

Theatre. the organ is intact as it can be considering the losses and replacements effected over the years, none of which will have changed the essential character of the large Wurlitzer. It will remain intact and it is going into a building which will do the organ justice.

In the week of its arrival in Melbourne, the organ has received radio press coverage based on press releases from SDA, and through interviews with Mr David Murriner, plus announcements by Mr Murriner and Mr Jeff Kennett at a Rotary function.

As a theatre organ community in Australia, we can rightly expect that the higher profile for this theatre organ gained by press coverage, expected to increase over the next twelve months or so before the Regent reopening, should help raise the profile of theatre organ right across Australia. As I see it, it can only be beneficial for us all.
John Atwell

Local Member Recalls Hearing Paramount Organ in Original Location

Longtime local TOSA member, Wal Chamberlain is most excited about the organ acquisition for the Regent, as he is probably one of few Australian buffs (maybe the only one) to have heard the organ in its original Market St San Francisco location in the Paramount.

It was March 1962 and Wal met the manager Mr Earl Long along with Ed Stout and Tom Hazleton. After the show, Tom played the organ till 5 am. Wal recalls, "I remember the sound when Tom played *Granada* was the best I have heard from the six chambers. The acoustics of the theatre were

perfect." Wal also sent in an ad which was in the 1961 edition of *Tabs and Drawbars* advertising a Tom Hazleton Christmas concert at the Paramount.

Publicity which came with the ad states that the organ had remained silent for some 20 years until Ed Stout and his associates started its restoration in the winter of 1960. It would therefore appear that the organ fell silent around the war years.

Console releathering which Stout did at this time looks as though it could have been done yesterday.

The Fabulous **Paramount**
WURLITZER THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

is back with
TOM HAZLETON
Organist Young Organist of the 1930s

CHRISTMAS
ORGAN CONCERT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13th AT THE CONTEMPORARY ROOMS OF M.F.M.

Following the hour 5th concert tickets are available at each show
you will be entertained as never before.

Mr. Howard H. Shaw, Jr. organ press restorer has loaned many
books, including the great *Wurlitzer* for your greater pleasure. Many
small changes have been made to the programme which will thrill music
lovers.

Mr. Hazleton includes in his program *Chickadee* music and a recap
of his *Wurlitzer* restoration "The Story".

TICKETS ON SALE AT THEATRE BOX OFFICE

General Admission	\$2.00
Patron's Dinner	\$5.00
Box Seats	on loan

Report on the Members' Afternoon at Bondi

Saturday, 25th March, 1995

Report and Photo by Barry Tooker

I guess it was my lucky day - I found a parking space outside **Bondi Junction-Waverley RSL Club!** Then a quick trip upstairs to find a completely renovated auditorium, and **Ian Davies** waiting to welcome us.

Right on time, the lights were dimmed, a spotlight illuminated the stage, and **Ian**

strode on introducing the afternoon's entertainment with a joke. Having warmed the audience up, he proceeded to announce the first artist, **Wendy Hambly**.

Wendy opened with her signature tune, *The Best Things in Life are Free*. This was followed by *Summertime in Venice*. She hoped we enjoyed our journey on the *Showboat*, and then, for **Ian** and club members, **Wendy** played the *Army, Navy and Air Force March*. From **Ivor Novello's King's Rhapsody** came *Some Day My Heart Will Awake*. Was her watch wrong - or was it really *A Quarter To Nine?* A lively *Mardi Gras March* ended **Wendy's** segment.

Ian returned to the stage to thank **Wendy**, then told us a joke about a policeman, before introducing **Bill Schumacher** at the console.

Bill introduced his segment with selections from **Cole Porter**, including such well known and loved numbers as *So In Love*, *From This Moment On*, *You, The Night and The Music*, *It's De-Lovely* and *Night and Day*. A change of pace followed with the ballad, *My Foolish Heart*, from the film of the same name.

Having recently seen the show at the newly refurbished **Capitol Theatre**,



On with the show - **Ian's** turn! **Ian** is an old master from wayback and we always get a nostalgic theatre organ presentation in the traditional style when he is in control of the console.

We heard *I'm One of the Nuts From Barcelona* and *Stay As Sweet As You Are*. The next number I thought he announced as

I'm Getting Over a Huge Hangover, but it sounded suspiciously like *I'm Looking Over a Four Leaf Clover*.

Ian always likes to demonstrate the Cathedral sound of the organ and he showed this off with *All Glory Be To God On High*. In a lighter vein he played some sea shanties, including *The Girl I Left Behind*, *A Life On the Ocean Wave*, *Shenandoah*, *Blow the Man Down* and *What Shall We Do With The Drunken Sailor*. To finish up **Ian** played *Honey Bun* and *Easter Parade*.

All the artists were called back on stage for their richly deserved applause and the ladies were presented with a small gift by **Bill Schumacher** on behalf of **TOSA**.

We all had a fine afternoon's entertainment, thanks to the generosity of **Ian Davies**, the Management and Directors of the **Bondi Junction-Waverley RSL Club**, **Wendy**, **Bill**, and **Valda** - and it was all FREE. Refreshments were available in the auditorium at club prices, and guests were invited to avail themselves of the club's amenities, should they wish to stay on.

On behalf of **TOSA**, we thank you one and all, and let's hope it will not be too long before we are invited back for another similar afternoon.

Bill concluded his part of the show with selections from *West Side Story*.

This brought us to a short intermission, so members could investigate the engine room and purchase refreshments from the pleasant young lady behind the bar.

Before we knew it **Ian** was introducing **Valda Lang** to open the second half. *On A Wonderful Day Like Today* was her opening number. **Valda** is an accomplished organist but confessed to having great difficulty in trying to switch on the microphone. Having mastered this seemingly impossible task (or was it part of her act?) she continued with *Sleepy Shores* and a haunting *Ebb Tide*.

Due to **Bill Schumacher** obtaining the music for her, **Valda** was able to play *Bach Goes to Town* written by **Alec Templeton** and arranged by **Bill Davies**. This was followed by *Souvenirs of Andalusia*, played on the club's fine **Petrov Grand Piano**. She returned to the **Rodgers Organ** to play *The Blue Danube* and *Tritsch Tratsch Polka* by **Johann Strauss**.

This concluded **Valda's** segment and **Ian** returned to thank her, and tell another of his innumerable jokes, this time about a young, colour-blind man on his wedding night.

Review of NEIL JENSEN's Concert

Sunday, 9th April Orion Centre

by Amy Caldwell

What a wonderful day, and what a superb show by Mr Music himself - Neil Jensen!

Introducing Neil was our Blue Mountains member, Keith Milton. Keith told us that the policy of TOSA is to present on stage the best entertainment from around the world, and thanked the audience for their continued support. Keith then proudly presented our own Sydney-based, international artist, Mr Neil Jensen.

Neil brought the organ up, with much applause, playing *Who (Stole My Heart Away)?* A splendid beginning to an excellent concert.

Neil then greeted the audience, saying how wonderful it felt to be there at the Orion, particularly as it was a nostalgic time for him - his 21st anniversary of playing at theatre organ concerts. The TOSA (NSW) Society was actually responsible for giving Neil his first break, thanks to our Frank Ellis.

So, on with the show, with nostalgic music from the 20's and 30's, using orchestral transcriptions, which work so well on the Orion WurliTzer, Neil started with *Harlem Nocturne*, a very descriptive arrangement and registration. Then came a medley called *Dancing with Fred Astaire*, which started with *I Won't Dance*, then *Let's Call the Whole Thing Off*, *Dancing Cheek to Cheek*, *The Continental*, *Changing Partners* and *The Way You Look Tonight*.

The arrangements were enjoyable, with fragments of each number appearing cleverly and unexpectedly throughout the whole of the medleys.

In contrasting style, Neil gave us one from the light classics - his own arrangement of *The Grande Waltz Brillante in E^b* by Chopin, which delighted the responsive audience.

A selection of Cole



Porter tunes finished off the first half of the concert, including *It's De-Lovely*, *My Heart Belongs to Daddy* - great blues style, *I've Got You Under My Skin* - complete with wolf whistles, cymbals and some very neat pedalling.

I must apologise for not listing all of Neil's programme which was quite extensive and the names of some of the older numbers were not known to me, even though the music is so memorable.

After interval, with Neil drawing the lucky raffle numbers, we had a Harry Warren selection which started with *Shuffle Off to Buffalo* - I think everyone would have picked up the clever little addition of the *Wedding March* appearing throughout this



medley - and finishing with *Chatanooga Choo Choo*, complete with steam whistles, the chug-chug of the engine, whistles from distant trains and wheels on the tracks. Very realistic!

Neil Jensen is a master of the console - he plays very orchestrally. The organ to him is an orchestra and we hear that in his change of registration, his lightning fast piston changes and contrasting phrases.

This was illustrated in the next little item, *This Nearly Was Mine*, from *South Pacific*, played in a dreamy nostalgic style.

Neil took time out to offer a vote of thanks to John Parker, and all those concerned, for the absolutely wonderful, tip-top condition of the WurliTzer organ. He then continued with music from *Guys and Dolls*, using piano and chimes for *Luck Be a Lady Tonight*

I've Never Felt Like This Before never sounded so good before! Neil played a lovely arrangement of this piece.

From Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*, we heard a piece that may not be so well known, a lovely tune called *With One Look*.

The programme finished with the well known and ever popular *Showboat*.

As an encore Neil chose to play a tribute to his former teacher, Wilbur Kentwell. This was the *Sabre Dance* by Kachaturian - the pedalling had to be seen to be believed! Neil first played this in the Brisbane City Hall at, if I heard correctly, his first public concert.

Lighting also played a big part in the enjoyment of the concert. An excellent blend of subtle colour changes fixed the moods of the music throughout the afternoon.

A wonderful concert by a true showman, and a great organist. Thank you, Neil Jensen!

OUR NEXT ARTIST :

Phil Kelsall

Phil was born in **Warrington, England**, in 1956. His first memories of **Blackpool** are as an 8 year old, listening to the legendary **Reginald Dixon** at the famous **Tower Wurlitzer** organ.

He took no great interest in music until his secondary school years in **Southport**, where he opted for piano as an extra "artistic" study. A family move to **Blackpool**, when **Phil** was 15, saw him attending **Rossall School**, studying for his "O" levels in academic subjects.

Leaving school at 18, **Phil** made his way in the world as a clerk at **Barclays Bank**, but all the while studying for his **ALCM** privately. **Reginald Dixon's** successor, **Ernest Broadbent**, was now established as **Tower** organist at this time, and it was he who introduced **Phil** to the **Tower Company's** musical adviser. This led to a post, playing electronic organ for the **Blackpool Tower Circus**.

It was not long before **Phil** was deputy to **Ernest Broadbent** and, at the age of 21, **Phil** was appointed resident organist at **Europe's** most famous **Wurlitzer** in the **Tower Ballroom, Blackpool**, on **Ernest's** retirement.

No-one could have guessed the extent to which **Phil Kelsall's**

career would blossom in successive years. Radio and television appearances have been crowned by national accolades such as the title "**Organ Personality of the Year**" and being voted **Patron** of the **Theatre Organ Club** no fewer than 4 times.

As well as best selling albums, he has consolidated his fame by becoming one of the first non-pop artists to seize on the potential of the video age, as a means of showcasing his dramatic and highly visual performances.

Every winter **Phil** tours all over **Britain**. His annual visits to the **USA** are now booked in advance in his calendar, and his regular Christmas concerts at **Thursford Museum** are eagerly awaited by thousands.

In 1991 **Phil** made his longest trip abroad as guest artist for the **Theatre Organ Society of Australia (NSW Division)** at the **TOSA National Convention in Sydney**. His appearance at the **Convention** was a major highlight and, with a second concert a week later, he firmly entrenched his style and personality on the **Sydney** audiences who have clamoured for his return ever since.

The year 1993 saw **Phil**

travelling to **London** to receive the **BASCA Gold Badge Award** for his contribution to "middle-of-the-road" music. This award from the **British Academy of Songwriters and Authors** was presented by those famous figures of **British** showbusiness, **Roy Castle** and **Elaine Page**. It is interesting to note that **Phil** has also received numerous awards from the **British Retailers Association** for his albums, cassettes and CD recordings.

Phil Kelsall fairly rocketed to the pinnacle of his profession and has firmly established himself, not only on the coveted bench of the **Tower Ballroom's Wurlitzer** organ, but also in the hearts of his thousands of music-listening fans.

Many of his concert appearances have featured **Phil** performing on his own electronic organ, which has added an exciting new dimension to his playing.

Those who hear **Phil** play all attest to the same reassuring feeling - the **Mighty Wurlitzer** and the world-renowned playing "style" of **Reginald Dixon** are in safe hands for years to come.

TOSA (NSW) is proud to welcome back to the **Orion Wurlitzer** such a great organist.