

# TOSA NEWS

Oct/Nov 2022  
Volume 61 No.7  
PRICE \$2.50

**Concerts are Back**  
**with afternoon tea at \$5 per person**  
**Christmas Cabaret Style Concert**  
**with**  
**Tony Fenelon OAM**  
**Marrickville Town Hall**  
**Sunday 11th December 2:00pm-4:30pm**  
**Mark your diary and calendar now**  
**Tell your Family and Friends**  
**make up a table of 7**  
**BYO Drinks and nibbles**



**/tosansw**



**#tosansw**

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**TOSA News** David & Margaret Badman

**Printer** Printers of Richmond

## President



Dear Members,

Included in my previous columns has been updates on the progress of the Orion Wurlitzer repairs following the water damage. In this edition of the newsletter you will find a progress report direct from the organ builder.

This October will see the first of a Member's Playing event on the Christie Unit Organ at West Ryde Anglican Church. If you are not a player and only want to listen, you are most welcome too! Further details in this issue of the newsletter.

The State Theatre Wurlitzer made a rare appearance recently. It was played by Margaret Hall for a book launch held at the theatre. Photos of the event can be found in the following pages.

Please do come to the Annual General Meeting on 12th November at West Ryde Anglican Church. This is your opportunity to hear first-hand about the running of your society plus, you get to see and hear the progress of the Christie installation. Not to mention the

always convivial afternoon tea that follows! See you there.

Regards,

*Neil*

## Editorial



Hello Members,

This issue brings good news for a number of reasons.

The Christmas concert at Marrickville Town Hall is back with Tony Fenelon.

The former Regent Theatre, Sydney, Wurlitzer has been removed and placed in storage for refurbishment and installation elsewhere.

You can now attend Members Days at the West Ryde Christie.

Restoration of the Orion Wurlitzer following water damage is progressing well.

Margaret Hall played the Wurlitzer at the State Theatre Sydney for the launch of the book "Sorry House Full".

The Executive and Committee has been returned for 2022-23 with one new member.

Best Regards,  
*Ernie Vale*, Editor

## From the Mailbox...



### **Digital Lodgement National Library of Australia ISSN 2208-9098 (Online)**

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

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

NSW Div.

Please submit all comments via email to:

The Editor [editor@tosa.net.au](mailto:editor@tosa.net.au)

### **Please Note**

The Society's only bank account now is with **St George**. Details are **BSB 112-879, account number 442 088 530**.

Please direct all payments to this account with St George Bank.

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### **Marrickville Organ Report October 2022**

Report of an intermittent cipher on Diaphone note D# which became more persistent. At the September 4th Monday group playing event I was able to replicate the cipher. The cause was a deteriorated

magnet cap gasket causing the armature to touch the metal body of the magnet base when energised rather than being separated by the gasket. The residual magnetism was sufficient to prevent the wind from blowing the armature back into the magnet cap when the note was released. I replaced the gasket and the players event was able to proceed.

Still pending investigation is a string celeste cipher but the pipe has been lifted as a temporary stop gap.

*Regards*

*Neil*

Thanks for that update, Neil, and particularly for the technical explanation. I should add that your refashioning of the baffles for the key-desk lights was favourably commented upon by those who played later in the day. Once more your custodianship of this Wurlitzer is much appreciated.

*Kind regards, John Batts.*

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Former Regent Theatre, Sydney, Wurlitzer has been removed from the home of TOSA Member, the late John Atkinson, and placed in storage. Hopefully it will find a home someday.

*Editor*

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

**Nominations for Office Bearers & Committee for the year 2022-23 received were in accord with the number of nominees required to fill each position on Executive and Committee.**

**Therefore a Ballot to fill positions is not required.**

***Simon Ellis, Secretary***

**No Motions or Special Resolutions for the AGM were received.**

***Simon Ellis, Secretary***

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### **Dear Members,**

TOSA would really appreciate your help by encouraging friends to come along to the **Christmas concert on Sunday December 11th featuring Tony Fenelon.**

We would like to fill the Hall with people to enjoy what is a world class Wurlitzer in a perfect room played by our world class musician, Tony Fenelon.

If your friends are first timers they only pay \$25ea and you can book by phoning Theo with their Name and address or email  
Booking in advance really helps with catering requirements.

Please help us to achieve a Full House.

## **Advertising**

### **Rates in**

## **TOSA News**

For Members:

Small, Organ related ads = FREE!

For all other cases:

Quarter Page = \$25

Half Page = \$50

Full Page = \$100

Full Page Insert = \$125.00

### **Members' Dates**

**West Ryde Anglican Church**

**Wednesday 19th October**

**Wednesday 16th November**

**1:00pm - Approx 4:30pm**

**Convener is**

**John Weismantel**

0435 258 287 or

whitecoats@bigpond.com

**Marrickville Town Hall**

**Monday 24th October**

**Monday 28th November**

**Convener is**

**John Batts on 0420424103**

He will email you

**to confirm availability**

# **TOSA NSW Divn Inc**

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 12th November 2022 at 2:00pm  
St Columb's Anglican Church, Cnr Dickson Ave  
& Bellevue Ave., West Ryde**

**Please come along to the meeting and take the opportunity to hear about the significant progress on the installation, including many more aspects of the Christie and the resolution of reliable operation of the Uniflex Relay.**

Afternoon Tea will be provided following the meeting to allow members to mingle and chat to the Executive and Committee members about your Society.

**Nominations for Office Bearers & Committee  
for the year 2022-2023 have closed.**

*The result of nominations are:*

**President:** Neil Palmer

**Vice Presidents:** John Weismantel and David Badman

**Secretary:** Simon Ellis

**Treasurer:** Geoff Brimley

**Committee:** Robert Gliddon; Pam Lawson; Barry Tooker; Ernest Vale; Eric Burwood; Michael Curran.

As there were the correct number of nominations for each position for Executive and Committee there is no need to conduct a ballot.

**Graeme Costin; Returning Officer and Simon Ellis; Secretary**

**Members Days at the Christie Organ  
West Ryde Anglican Church  
Cnr Dickson Ave & Bellevue Ave., West Ryde  
3rd Wednesday of the Month**

As the Orion Wurlitzer is out of action for the time being, our committee has decided to instigate regular members' playing time on the Christie at WRAC. Generally, this will occur on the third Wednesday afternoon each month from 1pm till about 4:30pm, with the **first being October 19th**, followed by November 16th. A donation towards costs is appreciated. Wednesdays have been chosen because the organ crew is normally working those days anyway and there is no foreseeable conflict with Church activities. Dates for 2023 will be determined and advised later if there is sufficient interest shown.

It is envisaged that each regular member player can have his/her piston settings saved for future use, as at the Orion. Of course, as usual, non-playing listeners are also welcome. Contact person for these days will be John Weismantel on 0435 258 287 and "whitecoats@bigpond.com" for the interweb savvy.

***John Weismantel, Vice President***

**Notice re Members Days – A Friendly Reminder**

As you are aware, water damage at the Orion has resulted in long-term postponement of Members' Days at that location. Monthly opportunities are still available at Marrickville when you can enjoy the sounds of the mighty Wurlitzer and, if you wish, have a play on the instrument. All this in a relaxed atmosphere.

The Society incurs costs for these occasions, regardless of which venue. It has been a longstanding arrangement that attendance should not attract a fixed cost, rather those attending, whether players or listeners, make a donation towards costs. Your committee has decided to continue this arrangement with the hope that more members will avail themselves of the opportunity to enjoy the music in a friendly, social environment at a nominal cost.

***TOSA Committee***

# **Concerts are Back**

**on Sunday December 11th, 2022, 2:00pm**

*Mark the date in your diary and on your mobile phone*

Come to the Christmas Cabaret Style Concert

when Australia's World Class Musician

## **Tony Fenelon OAM**

plays the **Wurlitzer**

at Marrickville Town Hall

Cnr. Marrickville & Petersham Rds.

Marrickville 2:00pm - 4:30pm

Tickets: Non Member Adult \$40; Pensioner \$35;  
Members \$25.

Students 18-21years of age, Free on confirmation of  
Student Status

First time attendance for adults \$25 each by voucher at the  
box office

**BYO drinks & nibbles.**

**Jugs of Iced Water & Cups provided on each table**

A delicious Afternoon Tea will be available at \$5 per person.

This includes a tasty treat and fresh brewed percolated coffee  
or tea.

A gluten free option will also be available.



**You can book now on the TOSA Web site  
[www.tosa.net.au](http://www.tosa.net.au)**

**Book via the link using the Trybooking seating plan  
or phone Theo on 0410 626 131 before 8pm please**

Your Committee are conscious of the fact that we have not been able to promote a concert for some time. Consequently we have retained ticket prices at the same level as past concerts.

We would love to see you at this Christmas Concert. Please encourage friends to come along to hear our great friend, Tony Fenelon, play your World Renowned Wurlitzer in the perfect acoustics of Marrickville Town Hall. **Make up a table of friends to have a fun afternoon of music. 7 seats to a table.**

To keep costs down the bulk of the food is homemade and baked fresh on the Saturday prior to Sundays Concert.

At \$5 this represents great value for a tea or coffee plus tasty treat. There will be a choice of 4 tasty treats, 1 of which will be "gluten free"

Most Coffee Shops now have coffee and cake for \$9.00 plus, so this is a bargain. I'm sure you'll agree.

## **New Membership Fees**

**New Membership up to June 30th 2023**

\$25.00 Full membership, \$20.00 Concession, Interstate or Overseas \$25. \$5 discount if TOSA News emailed to you in color. (Only one TOSA News per household)

Membership enquiries David & Margaret Badman

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

New Associate Membership for spouse/partner  
an additional 50%

# **MACQUARIE SINGERS COME & SING - Ola Gjeilo's**

## **SUNRISE MASS - REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN**

Saturday 12th November 2022 - Turrumurra Uniting Church, 10 Turrumurra Ave, Turrumurra, NSW 2074.

Macquarie Singers invites you to join with us to sing  
Ola Gjeilo's beautiful Sunrise Mass, conducted by  
Dr Sarah Penicka-Smith  
in her last concert with us.

Singers will perform this beautiful and uplifting work with the  
Macquarie Chamber Orchestra, led by Sagar Nagaraj.

Registration includes the score, morning and afternoon tea,  
post concert supper and the option to attend five rehearsals  
with Macquarie Singers from 17th October.

This is a Come & Sing and registrations are now  
open and close on 28th October.

### **To register go to**

<http://www.mus.org.au/sunrise-mass-come-sing>

For any inquiries about the event, please email  
[sunrise@mus.org.au](mailto:sunrise@mus.org.au)

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## **ORION RESTORATION REPORT**

Excellent progress has been made over the past two months on  
Stage One of the Orion Water Damage insurance work.

Wooden wind trunks/conveyances, split and damaged due to  
submergence in water have been fully repaired, and sealed.

The 8 note CCC# side chest of the 16' Tibia bass pipes has been  
fully refurbished.

New felt and leather has been fitted to all pallet valves.

Note primary action blocks have been sanded flat to correct warping due to dampness, and gaskets attended to.

All parts of this Stage are ready for re-installation at the Orion.

Next will begin Stage Two.

Regrettably as we now work with a leasee, we do not have the run of the place we had back in the 1990's, Everything has to be co-ordinated to fit with available storage space. The work has been fitted into 'blocks' – as one stage is completed, the next is moved into the space occupied by the first.

As many will realise, the organ chambers are very cramped, and much time is taken to carefully disconnect and remove large pipes, thus enabling the water damaged chest parts to be removed.

I'm very grateful to those members who have been 'on deck' to do the heavy stuff, and those who have been able to transport parts to my workshop.

Water damage to a pipe organ is not as "final" as fire but left in a damp water-logged situation for a number of months can be almost as 'catastrophic' to the timber parts and actions.

Thankfully the TOSA team was on the ball, and with help from Canterbury/Bankstown Council, wet-vacuumed and dried out the chamber as quickly as possible.

I'm looking forward to starting Stage Two of the restoration work.

*John Parker*  
*Organ Builder*

**TOSA Presents**

**Australia's World Class Musician**

# **Tony Fenelon OAM**



**playing an all-Wurlitzer program  
on Australia's Biggest Little Wurlitzer,  
a World-Renowned musical instrument.**

Tony will play a fantastic variety of popular tunes  
sure to delight all

**Sunday 11th December 2022,**

**2:00pm – 4:30pm**

**at Marrickville Town Hall**

Cnr Marrickville and Petersham Rds Marrickville  
Buses stop directly opposite the Town Hall

**Tables seat 7 persons**

**Tickets: \$ 40; Pensioner \$35; Members \$25.**

**First time attendance for adults \$25 each by voucher at the  
box office**

**Students 18-21years of age Free on confirmation of  
Student Status**

**BYO drinks & nibbles.**

**Jugs of Iced Water & Cups provided on each table**

A delicious Afternoon Tea will be available at \$5 per person.  
This includes a tasty treat, fresh brewed percolated coffee or tea.  
A gluten free option will also be available.

## **Tony Fenelon**

*American Theatre Organ Society Hall of Fame inductee*

**Tony** showcases his incredibly wide repertoire in music genres at his concerts. He provides a tasteful balance between popular and light classics, including music from movies, stage shows, jazz and great standards.

Internationally acclaimed, **Tony** has performed countless major concerts in prestigious venues throughout Australia, New Zealand, USA, Japan, UK, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan on Roland's extensive range of contemporary keyboard instruments.

Over the years **Tony** has displayed an ability to skilfully arrange and sensitively accompany soloists and choirs. He is regarded highly by his peers as a musician's musician for his unique approach and examples of artistry and taste.

In 2003 **Tony** was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours for his services to music.

## **BOOK LAUNCH RAISES STATE WURLITZER!** **SYDNEY** *by Ian Hanson. Photos by Barry Tooker.*

"Sorry! House Full" is the title of a new book on the history of cinema going in the City of Sydney. It is a substantial writing consisting of some 224 pages with many colour illustrations combined with a large amount of text. The book contains the history of nearly 104 cinemas.

When it comes to theatre organs, there are some interesting photographs including one of Ian Davies at the Capitol Theatre Wurlitzer. In addition to several other images of the Regent Theatre Wurlitzer, Prince Edward etc. Also, there is a rather interesting photo of the Estey organ in the old Crystal Palace Theatre, which once stood in George Street.

The authors of this work are Les Tod O.A.M. and Ian Hanson, both well-known writers of cinema history over nearly four decades. Each of the theatres is listed in alphabetical order with details of seating capacity and location including which theatres had organs and which builder.

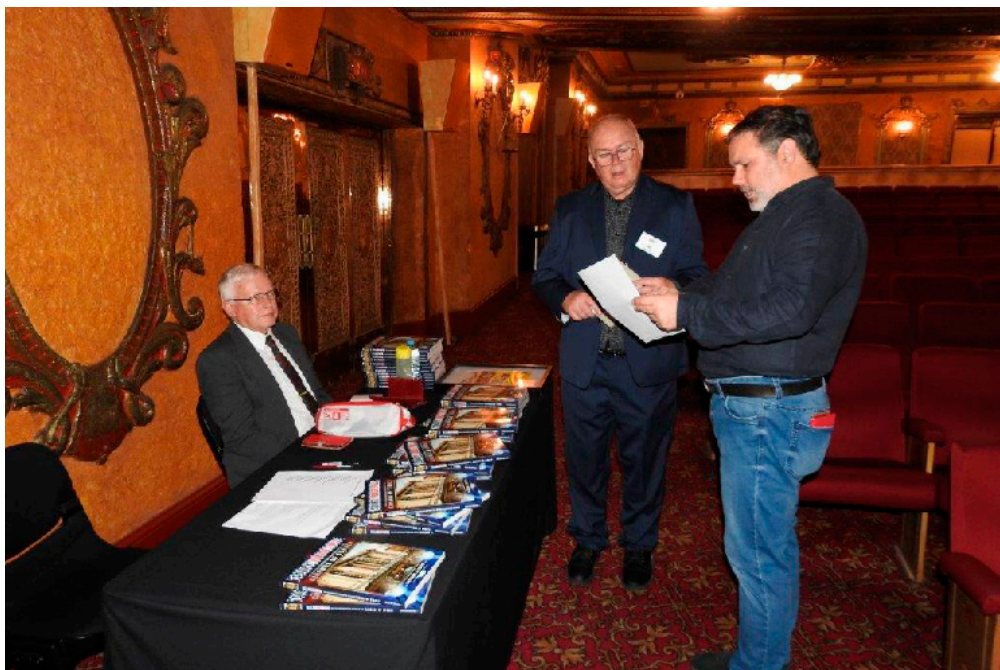
Ian Hanson was not planning on having a book launch owing to the closure of a number of venues as a result of Covid. It was planned to release the book without fanfare as only a limited number of books were published.

A chance meeting with the State Theatre management in July would change the situation completely. After a few meetings with senior management, an offer was received to hold the book launch in the State Theatre complete with the recently restored State Wurlitzer organ.

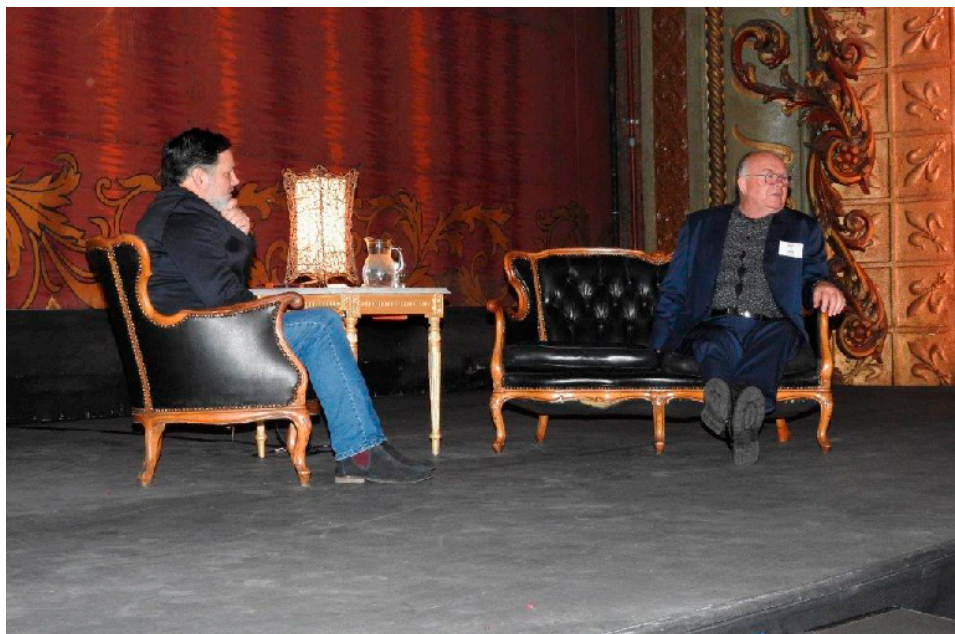
The launch of "Sorry! House Full" took place on Monday morning August 29. The use of the organ was a last-minute decision and resulted in Margaret Hall being the organist for the ceremony. The audience of about 70 guests were treated to the wonderful sounds of the State mighty Wurlitzer. After some speeches and interview with Ian Hanson, the audience were allowed to tour the State Theatre whilst Margaret played the Wurlitzer for an hour or so. A very historic occasion indeed.

I still have copies of the book, "Sorry! House Full" in stock. It is only on sale through my web site: [WWW.SORRYHOUSEFULL.COM](http://WWW.SORRYHOUSEFULL.COM). Copies can be purchased there. \$69.95ea plus \$15.00 post and packing. *Ian Hanson*





**Ian Hanson, Centre, at Book Launch, State Theatre, Sydney**



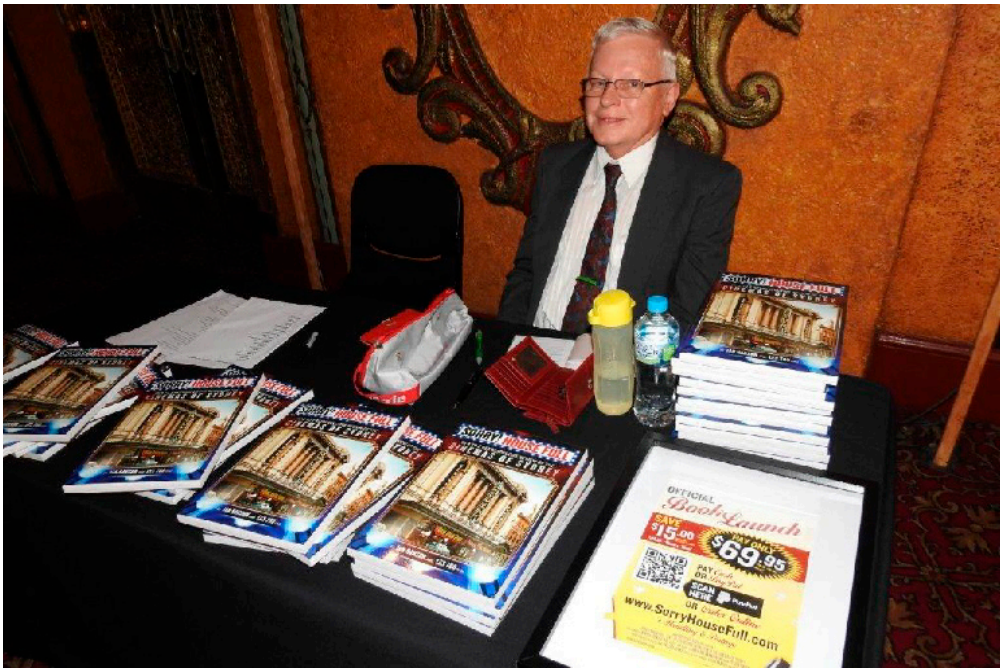
**Ian Hanson, on right, on Stage at the State Theatre, Sydney**



**Margaret Hall at the Wurlitzer,  
& Stage Curtain, State Theatre, Sydney**







**Less Todd at the Book Launch (above) The crowd (below)**



## ORION RESTORATION REPORT Continued



**8' Tibia Wind Trunks Restored**

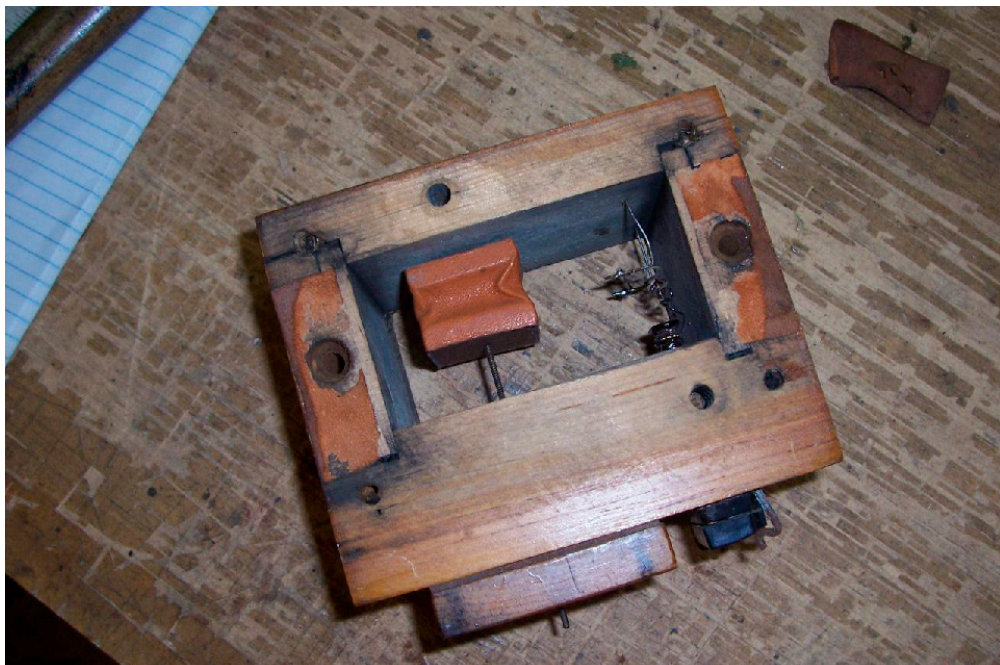


**16' Tibia wind trunk restored**





**Tibia 16' new felt and leather**



**Tibia Primary Block water damaged**



**Tibia Primary blocks sanded and restored**



**Tibia 16' ready to reinstall**



**Repairs to Tibia wind trunking**



## **BEGINNINGS:**

*Continued from September 2022 TOSA News  
An excerpt from The Encyclopedia of American Theatre Organ  
Volume 3 by Preston J. Kaufmann*

### **THE UNIT ORCHESTRA FLOUNDERS: September To December 1912**

*FW to RHJ in Manhattan, November 12, 1912:* "This morning to my surprise, Mr. Kelly telephoned me and told me that he had received the following telegram from you: 'Will send McSpadden to Syracuse Wednesday night. Am finding it impossible to secure player. Telephone me Hotel Martinique, New York, Tuesday 1 O'clock. I think I had better meet their own musician in Syracuse Thursday and teach him to play the instrument.'

"I could not understand why you should telegraph Mr. Kelly and not reply to my telegram that I sent you yesterday. Mr. Kelly felt and I felt, that it was urgent that this matter should be attended to at once and not let it go until Wednesday night or Thursday, and we therefore started Mr. Marr off immediately to Syracuse, and I telephoned Mr. Grimes to tell you not to send McSpadden. No doubt he delivered the message to you. I also told him to do everything possible to get a man to play the instrument because unless we start this instrument off right on Friday, it certainly will be a failure, even if we do get another man by Sunday or Monday that will play it right--it is the first impression that counts.

"Several hours after I attended to these things, I received your wire reading as follows: 'Wrote you last night. Have Syracuse situation in hand. Will not fall down on it.'

"Now this afternoon I have received your letter and Mr. Kelly also advised me that you phoned his office at Rochester, stating that it was impossible for you to secure a player and that you will go to Syracuse and try to break in the man they have there.

"I wired Chicago this morning to see whether they had a man that they could send on, but have not had an answer, and I doubt whether we can get anybody, because the only man they probably had to spare has no doubt been sent to Kansas City for the Moving

Picture Show Convention there, and from your letter I see that Dr. Ronfort is going to play the Cort Theatre instrument beginning with Sunday night.

"I think it is best we keep Marr in Syracuse for next week to be sure that everything will go right so far as the mechanical parts of the instrument are concerned. When Mr. Marr played the instrument here in the Erecting Room, he usually played it very well with the music rolls. Of course, if you are there, you can do this and do it very effectively, so that even if we haven't a good man to play the instrument, we may make a success of it through the music rolls.

"Yesterday we sent 20 rolls to Syracuse we thought would be effective for the instrument. Of course, the rolls that sound best cannot be used for skating. They can only be used in between times. We have sent rolls with dance music on them for the skating and these are the ones that will have to be used for that purpose.

"As soon as you get to Syracuse and know what the situation there is, you can let me know whether you want McQuarrie to go down there. . . . if we cannot get anyone to play it satisfactorily, this would be the best thing to do. Wouldn't it be possible for Houze to come back to the Statler sooner than Sunday? I hope that the demonstration at the Martinique will prove a success and that this matter will be settled definitely and not left in any indefinite shape.

"In regard to your thinking that the instrument has gotten out of order in Syracuse since McSpadden left, this is not the case . . . . When the Style J was here it played any 65-note roll and repeated properly, according to what Mr. Marr says.

"In regard to the heater, I understand that the ones at New York were sent up there . . . but the people from whom we ordered the other heater returned our order, stating that they did not make any for alternating current. We telegraphed them and wrote them to send what they had, but so far we have had no reply to our telegram or letter. We wired them on Saturday."

*RHJ in Manhattan to FW, November 13, 1912:* "Yours of 12th just to hand. I am sorry that rush of other pressing matters prevented my writing as fully to you as I should have done.

"I thought that as you had put the Syracuse matter in my hands you would be sure I would not fall down on it but would see it through satisfactorily. After failing to get a GOOD man used to playing for skaters and dancers I thought (and still think) it the best plan to train the excellent musician they have and who they say is up in exactly the kind of music they require--to play the Style J. This I could easily have done tomorrow. I phoned Mr. Kelly to make sure he would be there to meet me. I also would have seen to the instrument working its best.

"As your wire to Mr. Grimes shows you have sent Marr and a musician from Chicago, I do not feel there is a need for me to go to Syracuse. I will however put in a call there on my way home. . ."

*FW to RHJ in Syracuse, November 14, 1912:* "I have your several letters in regard to the Martinique instrument, also, in regard to the instrument at Syracuse. Be sure and stay long enough in Syracuse to see that the man that is being sent from Chicago is all right, because we do not want to take any chances of falling down there. . . ."

*RHJ at factory to FW, November 18, 1912:* ". . . This morning I wrote Mr. Uhl regarding the manner of playing the Style J instrument for demonstrating purposes. If you and he think well, perhaps the letter might be passed to Dr. Ronfort and to others who demonstrate.

"I am glad to learn the Chicago House has organized a class for players of these smaller instruments, such as Style H and J. They require an entirely different grade of men to those who are willing to make a success of the Unit Orchestras. . . ."

*To be continued (Editor)*

# TOSA NEWS

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