

# TOSA NEWS

Jan Feb 2021  
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**TOSA wish all our members  
a  
HAPPY NEW YEAR  
and  
hopefully a return to some  
Live music on our wonderful  
Theatre Organs for your enjoyment**

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## President



Hello All,

I hope you all had a safe and comfortable Christmas with your family and friends. Yes, this pesky virus is still around but as a whole the country is doing very well. We've worked together to keep it under control as best we can.

Meanwhile work continues on the Christie project. You can see the report on page six. It's getting down to the nitty-gritty now as the beast slowly has more life added to it at every work day - but sometimes it bites back and a new minor challenge is exposed and beaten.

At Campsie we await the arrival and installation of the genuine Wurlitzer Saxophone rank that was purchased from Melbourne a few years ago. The pipes are at John Parker's workshop being refurbished and should be ready in a few weeks to put in place to replace the Denison Saxophone rank that has been in the organ for decades. This should add new spark and life to the solo chamber.

Member's Days continue at Campsie and Marrickville as per the schedule on page five. Remember that all members are welcome - you don't have to play but you can certainly socialise and listen to the music that is played. Contact the convenors at least the day prior just to check the event is on. Occasionally they are cancelled at short notice due to other commercial rentals at both venues.

Your committee is working hard to be prepared for when vaccinations are well underway and we can commence some sort of normality to our lives. We're all keen to hear our Wurlitzers sing to us once more!

Stay safe, keep active and see you soon at a TOSA NSW event.

Craig Keller, President

## Editorial



Hello Members,

I hope you all enjoy the article in this issue about the Travelling Moller, which is the last in that series from the book "Cinema Organ" by Reginald Foort. Many thanks to Rob Gliddon for the loan of his copy of the book.

TOSA has three Volumes of the publication "Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ", Volumes I & II by David L. Junchen and Volume 3 by Preston J. Kaufmann.

I wanted to share some of the history of the Theatre Organ with members. during this difficult time where TOSA is not able to present concerts on our Theatre Organs.

I find the article in this issue titled "EARLY BELIEF CONCEPTS" incorporating comments by Hope-Jones to be very informative. It shows how the development of the Unit Orchestra concept was a struggle to get acceptance by organists generally.

Regards.

Ernie Vale  
Editor TOSA News.  
[editor@tosa.net.au](mailto:editor@tosa.net.au)

## From the Mailbox...



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

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

Please submit all comments via email to:

The Editor [editor@tosa.net.au](mailto:editor@tosa.net.au)  
or in writing to:

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

### 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.

### Vale Alan Mallory

TOSA member, Alan 'Mal' Mallory, passed away at St Vincent's Hospital on Sunday morning, 21st November. He'd been in care there for well over a week suffering

from some respiratory infection. Oddly enough, we had a phone conversation with him the previous afternoon; he was clearly feeling a bit down, but not (I thought) at death's door.

Having worked for 41 years at the Sydney Opera House, Mal was latterly keen on listening to the theatre organ and not only attended the TOSA shows but also brought several friends with him each time.

He frequently bought CDs at the TOSA counter to play in his new car, acquired in his mid-eighties a couple of years ago. Members attending organ events may recall a slightly stooped fellow with wispy white hair.

He was a Queenslander by birth and upbringing, and spoke favourably of Rockhampton! That may have accounted for his wicked sense of humour. Having lived in Woollahra for many years, Mal had moved to a home in the Glebe, but with a large circle of friends he still tried to bring zest into the life of everyone he knew. Rhonda and I will miss his cheerfulness.

Mal was one of those people who clearly believed that on this short day of sun or rain not to be persistently active was to sleep before evening.

*From John Batts.*

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

There may be some light at the end of the Covid tunnel and brighter possibilities for a return to TOSA activities for members this year after we are all vaccinated.

Your Committee are continuously monitoring the situation regarding government requirements for people to gather in enclosed spaces and the wearing of masks.

Committee are meeting on Monday 8th February to reflect on TOSA's possibilities for members to gather once again in 2021 when safe to do so.

We have fortunately been able to continue members days at the Orion and Marrickville up to the end of last year to keep your instruments in good working order.

The refurbishment and restoration of the Christie continues thanks to the project team, including some input from John Parker regarding tuning and advice on certain matters that may arise from time to time.

## **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**

**The Orion Theatre Campsie  
Second Thursday of the  
Month**

**Members Days under Covid  
19 restrictions. Contact Craig  
or John to confirm dates for  
Orion.**

**Convener is  
Craig Keller on 0418484798  
or John Batts on 0420424103**

**Marrickville Town Hall  
4th Monday afternoon/evening**

**No Members days for the  
moment until the Corona  
Virus is well under control**

**Convener is  
John Batts on 0420424103  
will email you to confirm the day is  
available or  
Neil Palmer on 9798 6742 after  
7:00pm  
to confirm availability**

## **Christie report for Jan/Feb TOSA News.**

After work was suspended over the festive season:

### **Accompaniment chamber:**

- Adjusted pull tapes for swell shutters.
- All String & String Celeste pipes were tuned except 16' Violone which requires attention from JP to open up feet damaged from long term storage, and voicing of CCC pipe which was repaired by Tim Gilley.

### **Solo chamber:**

- Manifold manufactured and installed for supply to chimes /glock / xylo / effects. Achieved 10" wg pressure at manifold.
- Cleats fitted to trunking in preparation for Tibia, Vox & Tuba/Krumet regulators.
- Components for 3 regulators being prepared for installation.

### **Console:**

- Pedal 16' Piano tab temporarily redefined for 8' Oboe as requested by Phillip Bongers.

### **Piano:**

- Vacuum pump is at Yarramundi for manufacture of mounting frame and supply of motor. Held up due to storm damage to workshop over Christmas/New Year.
- Wiring (both internal & external) to be done.
- Tubing from magnets to action pneumatics to be fitted.
- Uniflex board and power supplies to be fitted.
- Vacuum regulator covered in preparation.

### **General:**

- By swapping components and reviewing settings the relay now starts reliably into "Licence Mode" after the air-switch activates without requiring manual intervention.
- Dismantled a wurlitzer-style trem and corrected loose internal linkage; tested ok.
- Refurbishment of tremulants continues. Total of 7 required eventually.

The organ is being played for regular 8am church services and the frequent useage is proving beneficial as the action settles.

*John Weismantel & Robert Gliddon*



**Articles from**  
**THE CINEMA ORGAN by**  
Reginald Foort, F.R.C.O., A.R.C.M.  
Second Edition

Chapter XIV

**THE TRAVELLING MOLLER**

In the years before World War II, vaudeville was immensely popular in Great Britain. There were upwards of 100 vaudeville theatres, so it was possible to do a two-year tour without repeating. Vaudeville was always run on the same lines: at around 6.10 and 8.50---twelve shows a week. There were no live stage shows anywhere on Sundays. The theatre was run on sharing terms: there had to be a real big-named "Top-of-the-Bill" act to "bring them in" and that person or act always took over the theatre for the week, usually on a 60/40 sharing basis, and assume the entire gamble. Out of his 60% share of the gross box-office receipts, he was responsible for the whole of the expenses of the show, including his own personal costs of transportation, hotel, etc. He would have to engage and pay the five or six supporting acts as well as all publicity costs. The theatre took the remaining 40%.

While I was with the B.B.C., I was permitted to take two outside engagements each month and, within a week or two of becoming B.B.C. Staff Organist, I found that my name had become a household word. If I was billed to play a Sunday Organ Concert in Birmingham or Manchester City Hall, on their very churchy straight organs, the hall would be sold out. If I was on a train and walked along to get lunch and forgot to speak quietly, everybody in the car recognized my voice.

When, after several years, I decided to take advantage of all this build-up by resigning from the B.B.C. to go on tour, I joined forces with a variety booking agency and we formed a company to finance the scheme. We first had to decide on an organ suitable for touring and, in this, I was greatly helped by my friend, Reginald T Watson, of Manhasset, New York, who had a big three-manual theatre organ in his home. He happened to be in England on one of his frequent visits, so we spent hours together making plans and specifications. We had two main problems: What size of organ? And where to get it built? It would have to be specially designed so that we could finish in one theatre on Saturday night at 11pm., pull the organ apart, get out of that theatre, travel anything up to 100 or 150 miles over the week-end and be re-installed in the next theatre ready to play by Monday at 6pm.

I approached various English organ builders but they all insisted on trying to tell me what I ought to want! I knew exactly what I wanted. Above all, the organ had to look and sound like a mighty organ. No earthly use going into the Palace Theatre, Manchester, for example, and have the audience say: "Well, it's a nice organ but they have a far bigger and better one up the street in the Paramount Theatre." My original idea was to have four manuals and 16 ranks, but we kept coming back to the mighty angle and finished up with five manuals and 27 ranks. I did all the working drawings for the console myself with the result that I knew the entire lay-out from memory long before the organ was ever built. Every organist who ever played said that it was the easiest big organ to play because everything was in the right place and you knew exactly where to look for it.

The organ had—I should say has because it is still going strong—the following ranks: Tuba Mirabilis, Tuba Horn, Brass Trumpet, Chorus Trumpet, English Post Horn, Diaphonic Diapason, English Diapason, Tibia Clausa I, Tibia Clausa II, Tibia Clausa III, Doppel Tibia, Vox Humana I, Vox Humana II, Clarinet, Krumet, Orchestral Oboe, Saxophone, Musette, Viol d'Orchestre, V.D.O. Celeste, Gamba, Gamba Celeste, Orchestral Strings (2 ranks), Muted Strings (2ranks), Concert Flute. Five ranks were carried down to the 16-ft. pitch to form a magnificent Pedal organ: Tuba Mirabilis, Chorus Trumpet, Diaphonic Diapason, Concert Flute, Gamba. The Tibia Clausa I was the biggest ever built—it was 5 notes bigger than the New York Paramount #1 Tibia. That stop and the big reeds were on 15" wind.



The 267 stops were laid out as follows:  
 Pedal Organ 28; Accompaniment 45; Solo (4th manual up) 44; Top  
 (5th manual) 12; Orchestral (3rd manual from the bottom) 53;  
 Great 62; Second Touch 14; and Tremulants 9.



**A close up of the console of the Moller travelling organ.  
 I did all the working drawings for this myself.**

## **Show & Membership Prices**

	<b>All Artists</b>
Non-members	\$40
Non-member Pensioner/Seniors Card holder	\$35
TOSA Members	\$25

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

**All Children FREE accompanied by an Adult**

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

First time Adult \$25 by completed Voucher at Box Office

### **New Membership Fees for 2020-21**

\$50.00 Full membership, \$40.00 Concession, Interstate or  
 Overseas \$50. \$5 discount if TOSA News emailed to you

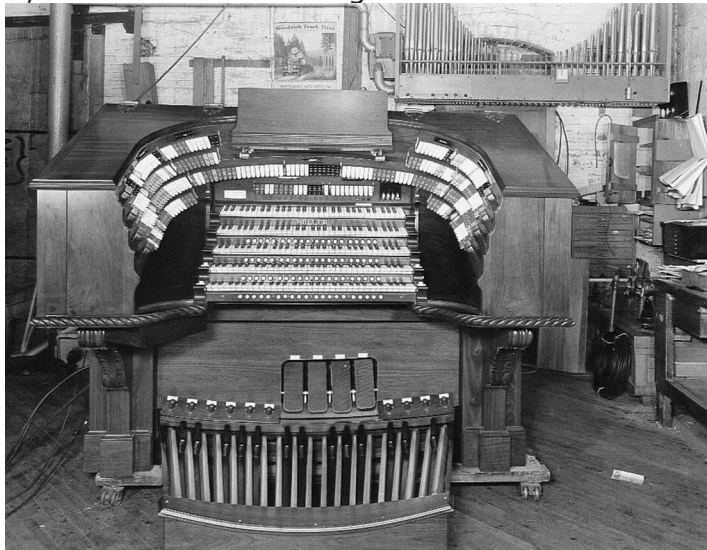
Membership enquiries David & Margaret Badman

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

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

Reg Watson had been closely associated for years with the Moller Organ Co. of Hagerstown, Md.---at one time, he took over their New York office---so he brought all the details and specifications back to America and put the whole proposition before Ted Moller, Jr., Head of the Company, and he agreed to build the organ for me. Instead of trying to tell me what I ought to want, Mollers' attitude was: "Are you quite sure this is what you want? If so, we will build it for you, but don't complain if you don't like it when you get it." When you are a member of the B.B.C. Staff, you don't take a vacation---you are granted "leave", so my wife and I took the last leave we had while still with the B.B.C., had a marvellous trip over to America and spent a whole week in Hagerstown at the Moller factory watching the organ being built.

The enormous console was already complete and, as soon as I saw it, I realized what an immense help it would be, in working out and writing down stop combinations, if all the stops were numbered, e.g., instead of having to describe a stop as Number II Tibia Clausa 16-ft. on the Orchestral Manual, it would be far easier to call or wright it as #187. Years later, as I'll explain in due course, this simple idea became a real life-saver. Ted Moller was so enthusiastic about it that, although it involved an immense amount of labour, he had all the stop keys taken off and put through the engraving machine a second time. So, the first stop on the bottom row of the Pedal stops, the 32-ft. Ophicleide, is numbered 1; the next stop 2, and so on in order right around the console.



**The Moller console as it appeared at the factory.**

When the organ was finished, they packed it in 65 packing cases which should have come over in the "Queen Mary". This ship, however, was commandeered because of the Munich crisis, so they came in the old, much slower, "Aquitania" and the delay completely upset all our careful timing. We had engaged a staff of fifteen and purchased four 30-ft. road trucks which met the boat at Southampton.



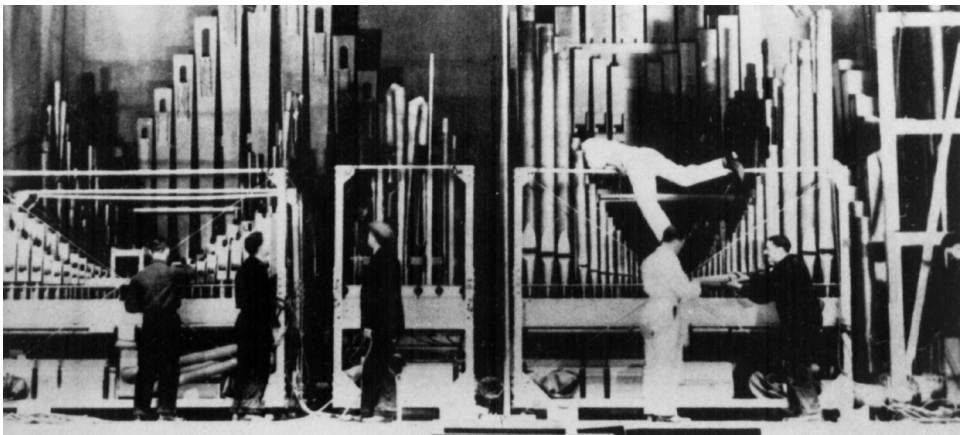
**These were the trucks specially custom built to transport the big travelling organ. We had to purchase a fifth truck, slightly smaller, because it took too long to pack the organ in the rush. I had a very valuable sponsor on commercial radio: MacLeans Tooth Paste. I had three broadcasts every week from Luxemburg and Normandy—stations outside Britain which used to pump commercial programs in English into Britain. Note the MacLeans sign on the side of the trucks.**

By chance, Drury Lane Theatre happened to be in the "dark" at the time, so we rented it to get the organ unpacked and assembled on the largest stage in the world, threw a cocktail party for the Press and had a film made for "Pathe Pictorial" (That takes you back, doesn't it?) The organ was formally dedicated by being played for the first time in public by Sandy MacPherson, who was to be my successor at the B.B.C. Then we had to throw everybody

out of the theatre and rush the organ back into the trucks and on the way to our first week's engagement at the Palace Theatre, Manchester, a distance of 186 miles. Owing to the shipping delay, it only just arrived in time.

I never managed to get a real practice on the organ until half-way through the first week and had to do my opening show with only half-a-dozen of the 100 pistons set, but my luck held and we got away with it. Ted Moller, Jr., did me the honour of coming over to England specially for my opening show.

Altogether the organ weighed 30 tons and our staff to handle it consisted of 4 truck drivers (who rapidly became expert organ builders) 3 real organ builders, 2 electricians, 2 stage riggers, 1 young messenger, a manager in charge of everything whose wife acted as Secretary, and an advance publicity man. We were extremely fortunate to get one of the very few men in Britain with enough knowledge and experience to take charge of this immensely complicated job. He was a young fellow whom I had known and liked for years named John Quarmby; having served seven years' apprenticeship with the Conacher Organ Company, he really did know all about organs: pipe-work and blowers and wind- chests and regulators and electric actions and voicing and tuning and, on top of all this, he played a mean theatre organ! When they had finished building the instrument, he used to sit down and thoroughly try it out, so thoroughly, in fact, that I used to go home for the week-end, come back to the new theatre and walk out and do my show without a qualm.



**The process of erecting the Moller on the stage of one of the many theatres in which it was played.**

All the wind trunks were flexible and were connected like fire hoses, while all the electrical circuits were of the plug-in type. The main cable contained well over 750 circuits and was joined to the console by a removable steel plate held in position by two huge thumbscrews. The 27 ranks were distributed over nine steel frames with enormous casters, each section being complete in itself with its own wind-chests, regulators and tremulants. All the pedal pipes were made of wood for easy separate handling. We had specified only four 16-ft. pedal stops, but Moller cabled to say that they felt the organ needed a 16-ft. string, which they gave us without extra charge. But on tour, the soft metal of these beautiful Gambas so bent and beaten up that we had to leave them behind in store. Later, however, when the organ was permanently installed, these 16-ft. string pipes really completed a superb Pedal Organ. With a normal theatre "get out", it took about 4.5 hours to take the organ down and wheel it out into the trucks which the boys used to back, one by one, right up to the stage dock doors. Our biggest problem was the wind supply: owing to all the different electrical currents in Britain, we had to carry six blowing motors.

If the boys could arrive with the organ outside the next theatre by 6pm. On the Sunday evening, everybody was happy. They used to take the organ right in onto the stage and set it up roughly in position and then go away for a good night's sleep, returning at 7am. To complete the installation by 10am. When they had to stop for the orchestral rehearsal. Then they had until 6pm. To do any necessary adjustments or tuning. It was amazing how little tuning was required: apart from an occasional slipped stopper in a tibia pipe, the flue stops mostly stayed dead in tune and Moller's had fitted the tuning wire of every reed pipe with a set screw which prevented the reed getting bumped out of tune over rough roads.

Of course, it all seems like a dream now and I still occasionally have pleasant dreams about it, even after all these years. But, at the time, it went with a bang right from the start. Up to the war, I don't believe there was an empty seat at any performance in any theatre: we simply broke all records wherever we went. My overheads, including my staff and the transportation of the organ, and the cost of supporting acts and all the publicity, worked out at the rate of \$100,000 a year. And we were making a clear profit, after paying all expenses, at the same rate, viz., \$100,000 a year. But that happy state of affairs lasted only some 8.5 months and then World War II burst upon us. Of course, we had not been going nearly long enough to cover bare costs of the organ and the trucks



and all the stage equipment we had had to buy. The government closed all the theatres for several weeks and the R.A.F. commandeered two of our trucks right away. When the theatres were allowed to re-open, we decided to resume touring, cutting down the organ by about one third so that we could take it by train. We kept on touring right into the blitz and had some terrible experiences. One night, in Liverpool's Empire Theatre, for example, there were three incendiaries burning in the roof space, which John Quarmby personally climbed up and extinguished because he was afraid the organ would be destroyed, while H.E. bombs were dropping all around for ten hours.

The B.B.C.'s own organ in St. George's Hall had already been destroyed in the first air-raid on London, though details of that kind were kept so secret that, for quite some time, no one knew anything about it. Then we began to notice that all the theatre organ radio programs were being played on a Hammond so we made a few enquiries and I promptly offered the B.B.C. my travelling organ for the duration. They were delighted at my offer and took over a theatre in North Wales, well clear of the danger area, and installed the organ therein. And that was when my stop-numbering scheme really pulled its weight. Mollers had scrapped their standard system of self-setting pistons with a setter button at the console and reverted to a practice, which they had adopted ten years previously, of using multitudinous switches on a recorder board on the back of the console, which they felt would be far safer in an organ which would often be rushed maybe 150 miles over British roads at night. They had visions of my having to play my first show on a Monday evening with none of the pistons working! So each of the many guest organists who broadcast on the organ, handed a typewritten list to the organ men of the stops he wanted on his pistons—using the numbers only. When he came along to rehearse, he found all his pistons already set.

The B.B.C. kept the organ right through until the end of the war at a nominal rental which barely covered the cost of insurance. By that time, so many theatres had been damaged or destroyed, and vaudeville was so obviously on the way out that I had to give up all hope of taking the organ on tour again. The B.B.C. and I really had each other over a barrel: they could not hope to get delivery of a new organ for years—and who else would want to buy such an organ? So we made a deal and they bought it.

They acquired a disused 2,000 seater church in London (known as Jubilee Chapel), bricked up all the windows, removed the

gallery and all the pews, and installed the organ therein. They put all the pipes and percussions in the original heavy swell box in the sanctuary and the console at the other end, and by the grace of God, the acoustics were simply fabulous. Holes were cut in the floor and all the regulators and tremulants placed in the basement, with the result that you could open all the swell shades and still have no wind noise. So, my beautiful organ became the permanent B.B.C. Theatre Organ. I frequently broadcast on it and actually did two television shows which were most popular.

After 25 years, the authorities decided that Britain had heard enough of it and sold it to a radio organisation in Hilversum in Holland, where it is still going strong. Heaven knows how many hours it has been played by this time. Before we left England at the end of 1951, we calculated that it must have been played around 39,000 hours. Since then, it has had a further 18 years of active use. There's no doubt that it must have been some organ when Moller's built it!

Now I hear rumours that, since the B.B.C. sold it, it has been so sadly missed that they are contemplating buying another big theatre organ which is being removed from a theatre in North London. I do hope this is true.



**Here's Sandy MacPherson at the BBC organ on October 8, 1963.**



**The Travelling Moller Organ as it now appears in  
its permanent home in the Pasadena Civic Auditorium  
USA**

Those members who attended the ATOS Convention in Pasadena in 2018 heard a concert played on this organ by Richard Hills.

*And as they say in the movies "That's all folks" Editor.*

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**EARLY BELIEF CONCEPTS:**

*An excerpt from The Encyclopedia of the American Theatre Organ  
Volume 3 by Preston J. Kaufmann*

*I hope members enjoy the history included in this  
article about the development of the "Unit Organ"  
later called the "Unit Orchestra"*

Robert Hope-Jones sought to make the most of the successful debut of the Ocean Grove project. Yet there were still those who declined to accept entirely the style of organ promoted by the noted inventor. Edwin Lemare played concerts on the



instrument that opening season in 1908, but his opinion on this new type of organ construction was largely negative.

A few months later, Hope-Jones attended a dinner in honour of Lemare in New York City, where his request to speak to the assembly was turned down. This caused him to write Lemare and those in attendance the following day, October 15, 1908. The result documents Hope-Jones' general beliefs and theories at the time, as they related to organ construction, their sounds and people's acceptance of innovations: "I am deeply interested in the question of console standardization that our guest put before us. I intimated.....that I would like to say a few words, and I regretted Mr. Lemare's suggestion that the organ builders should not be allowed to participate in the debate.

"Mr. Lemare wishes to induce the organ builders of the country to adopt in all instruments they build, certain plans that his unique experience as performer has led him to believe to be best. It seems to me that this can only be accomplished by allowing free discussion. Difficulties present themselves to some of our minds and we want enlightenment. A position that has to hide itself from friendly and courteous criticism does not strike us as a strong one.

"My admiration of Mr. Lemare's genius is unbounded and his opinion as to the utility or non-utility of any device weighs with me more than that of any other man. I have already learnt from his words and writings, and am honestly striving to be convinced and if so, to be guided by his precepts.

"One thing above all others I admire in our guest of honour, and that is the indomitable courage he has shown in refusing to allow his genius to be cramped by others. He introduced a new treatment of the organ and, though assailed by the highest authorities in England, has persevered until he has forced almost universal appreciation of his methods.

"Fifteen years ago, I often heard our most promising organists speak with regret of the manner in which Lemare was 'degrading' the organist's art.

The man proved greater than his critics. His name is now a household word throughout the world, and I opine the true significance of his work has yet to be recognized. In 50 years time, he will be regarded as a giant and a pioneer.

"He has throughout been guided by his own judgement, and sad would it have been for us, if he had swerved and been moved by the dictum of his seniors—those high in authority. It seems to me

that we in our small way ought to emulate his courage.

"Some of us have put forward ideas that have revolutionized the art of organ building. Ought we set aside these carefully thought out plans at the simple word of an individual? Ought we not rather seek through full and free discussion all the information and enlightenment that can be procured, and then to be guided by our own judgement, as Lemare was by his? If that judgement be in error, the demand for our particular form of organ will soon die and other builders will not imitate.

"Prematurely to standardize is to paralyse. Do we not all admire the pluck shown by 'Father Willis?—The greatest authority in England (the Royal College of Organists) condemned his pedal board. It could not convince, so it vainly tried to coerce him. Orders for organs that would have gone to him went elsewhere. (I myself was asked by an officer of the college to adhere to the R.C.O. straight board in building my organ for Worcester Cathedral.) Willis defied them—as Lemare defied his critics. We are all grateful for his courage. The radiating and concave principle he advocated is now being adopted everywhere.

"To standardize is to paralyze. If the R.C.O. and other sufficiently powerful bodies had agreed to standardize the organ 20 years ago, we would still be suffering from straight pedal boards, short compass manuals, short compass pedals, hitching spring swell pedals, and many other trials.

"Three or four years since the A.G.O. wished to fix 8.5-inches as the standard distance that the middle pedal sharp should be pushed back from the tip of the lowest manual white key, my plea for 11-inches was declared extravagant. In all organs built from that date I put my keyboard on slide rails so that the organist can adjust this distance to suit himself. I have measured and find the average distance to which the organists have set these keys is 12-inches!!

"Moral—don't standardize prematurely! The fact that pianos are now built practically to a standard is urged as reason for at once standardizing the organ. Yes! Standardize the organ by all means, but do it in the same way--by 'survival of the fittest'.....

"Who standardized the piano? Thank goodness no one. Genius was not suppressed by laws and regulations. Every maker was allowed to contribute his best and the fittest survived. If Paderewski had lived 100 years ago and had persuaded the various makers to adopt as standard, what he thought best—what a poor instrument the piano would be today. The standard would have

been little better had he gathered round, to endorse his views, all the best pianists of the day. Standardization would have stifled advance.

"Thirty years ago when I first turned active attention to the organ, what resemblance had it to the best instruments we see now? Pneumatic action was slow, electric practically unknown, and one seldom found a reed on anything heavier than 3.5-inches [wind pressure]. Real string tone yet to be heard. Octave couplers were curiosities. Screeching mixtures predominated. Short compass stops abounded. Manuals seldom had more than 56 notes, and pedals rarely had 30. Cement swell boxes, stop keys, movable consoles, suitable bass, combination keys, smooth Tubas, Tibias, keen Orchestral Oboes, Phoneumas, Tiercenas, Diaphones, multitudinous couplers, etc., had not been suggested—neither had the 'Unit Organ'.

"Organists were entirely ignorant as to the possibilities of their favourite instrument. How fortunate they did not meet in solemn conclave to 'standardize' and thus impose restrictions and hamper the inventor.

"In my few years I have seen greater advances in the art of organ building than any previous century can show. We are still too near these advances to be able to see which will live and which will die. Nay! We are in the midst of them. This very year has brought forth the 'Unit Organ' and what Mr. Lemare describes as 'the finest reeds I ever heard' (50-inch wind)—also the finest swell box effects.

"My 15 years as a church organist and choirmaster has qualified me to appreciate the force of many of the criticisms and arguments that Mr. Lemare and others advance. But the fact that these good people differ seriously amongst themselves tends to throw me back upon my own judgement.

"Was my introduction of stop keys instead of draw stop knobs a mistake? Mr. Lemare says emphatically 'Yes!' I have over 50 stop key organs in England and I sent a circular to each of the organists some years ago asking the question. The verdict in their favour was absolutely unanimous. All the organs I build here have stop keys put in by request of the various organists concerned. Several builders in England and in this country have now adopted them. Does not this prove that there is a growing demand?

"Let us keep an open mind—let us hear and study the various arguments, pro and con; but do not let us foolishly legislate against them. The fittest will survive. Is the automatic 'Suitable

Bass' useful in artistic organ playing or is it not? Your guest answers in the negative. As its use is optional, as Mr. Mark Andrews describes it as 'the greatest assistance given to the organist since the invention of composition pedals'; as those ordering organs wish it and pay extra for it, there can be no harm in continuing to supply it.

"Is the 'Unit Organ' with its division into tone families (foundation, wood wind, string and brass)- its arrangement of 'any stop on any manual at any pitch'—its enclosure of every pipe in swell boxes—is this 'Unit Organ' an improvement upon the old style of instrument or is it not? After careful study of the Ocean Grove example, Mr. Lemare stated that with but 13 stops and so small a sum of money available, he thought the arrangement the best that could possibly be devised and he considered the result a striking success. He affirms however that under other circumstances, he cannot and does not approve the 'Unit' principle.

"Another of the gentlemen who gave recitals on the Ocean Grove organ wrote from there—'the more I play the organ, the more I am convinced that your Unit System is going to gain headway in the approval of organists and that it will become the standard method in organ building.'

"A well known organist said at the close of one of Mr. Lemare's Ocean Grove recitals, 'I've had more pleasure in listening to that than I ever got from his recitals at St. Margarets Westminster, and I've heard several of them. It seems incredible that you have only 13 stops'.

"Another organist after reciting on an eight-stop 'unit organ' decided that he would rather have in his church a duplicate of that instrument than the 27-stop ordinary organ he had contemplated acquiring.

"This very day, in placing the order for a four-manual, 32-stop 'Unit Organ', an organist declared that study led him to be sure that the instrument would yield more variety of musical effect than an organ with four times the number of stops constructed upon ordinary lines.

"I suggest we keep an open mind and do not close the door against an innovation that may prove of inestimable value, simply because it fails to appeal to the first great virtuoso who tests it—'Many men, many minds'-- if unfit, it will not survive—if fit, no legislation, no boycott of the press, no combination of the 'powers that be', will kill it.

"If the 'Unit Organ' be adopted, the arrangement of stop knobs,

etc., that Mr. Lemare suggests becomes impracticable.

"Lest from reading the above any of you gentlemen should deem me antagonistic to the great artist we met to honour, I venture to repeat that I look up with the deepest admiration to his genius and that I can wish for no better fortune than some day to be called upon to build an organ under his direction and to his designs—I am sincerely anxious to learn.

"All I desire to argue against is premature standardization. True the organist of today suffers much from multiplicity of designs, but he must suffer patiently in order that his brothers of another generation may benefit. Out of this multiplicity of designs the fittest will survive, and the result will be a glorious instrument.

"It is a poor view that considers present comfort of the artist rather than future advancement of the art.

"I give the position of one of America's most celebrated organists. Speaking recently of an organ about to be built, he said (in effect), 'We are both artist—each must stick to his own field—give me the advantage of your art—design and build the most effective organ you can—I will then study its special features and play it as artistically as I can'.

"Well nigh all improvements in organs have come from organ builders—though nine-tenths emanate from those builders who have also had practical experience as organists.

"It is well known that any organist working alone is prone to fall into a groove and to lose breadth of view. It is necessary for him to meet his fellows and superiors, to exchange ideas if he were to avoid narrowness. We are grateful that such an opportunity was given at the Lemare dinner yesterday evening...."

The furore over Hope-Jones' design precepts still hadn't calmed down two years later. Lemare continued to resist the inventor's ideas, and his own viewpoints were presented in a letter published in the August 1910 issue of *The New Music Review*:

".....It has been proved over and over again, not only to this writer, but to some of the best organists, that there is no possible advantage to a competent player in being able to use the same stop on different manuals.....This false idea of economy has lately been carried to such an extreme that a large four-manual organ is, in reality, nothing but a loudly voiced one-manual, plus the possibility of being able to play a solo on one manual to an accompaniment (which must usually be of a different tone colour) on another....."

Hope-Jones used a talk to members of the National Association

of Organists as a vehicle to counter Lemare's statements. Following are excerpts from this speech, given on August 6, 1910, at the Auditorium in Ocean Grove (keeping in mind that he was now an employee of Wurlitzer). The topics covered were similar to his earlier lectures, except now the phrase "Unit Orchestra" starts to creep into his vocabulary, as well as the suggestion of using organs in theatres. The lecture was later reprinted in booklet form under the title of "Recent Developments of Organ Building" and distributed to prospective purchasers of instruments from Wurlitzer: "I deem it a privilege to be allowed to address this, the largest association of organists in the world.....Should I speak too much of my own work, pray forgive me. It is difficult to avoid what lies so near to my heart.

"Experienced organists are usually conservative. For this there is a reason. Twenty or 30 years ago they approached the comparatively crude instruments of the day and by patient study and incessant practice mastered their manifold difficulties, achieving success and perhaps fame. These gentlemen are not likely now to approve some modification in the organ that will necessitate their unlearning their life acquired methods and beginning the study of the instrument afresh.

"How, for instance, could such an artist as Edwin H. Lemare ever advocate the double touch?- a device that your secretary (Mr. Beebe), a man trained in technique by modern scientific methods, declares presents no difficulty whatever—a device you younger organ students know will be adopted universally.

"Mr. Lemare is perhaps the greatest living performer on the old fashioned organ. In his student days almost all organs had very heavy touch and as he was preparing to play these in all parts of the world, he cultivated a touch calculated to break down the resistance of the most stubborn tracker action he might ever meet with in his travel. When one sees him attempting to play a modern instrument unconsciously hammering the keys to their lowest possible limit—double touch and all—one can well understand his dictum that double touch is impracticable.

" Similar reasons tend to set the experienced organist against well nigh every change introduced—make him in fact ultra-conservative.

"Has it ever struck you how almost every improvement has met with determined opposition at the hands of organists?

"Within the lifetime of some of us, organs were so tuned that music could be rendered on only a few of the keys. These keys



were more perfectly in tune than anything we are accustomed to but woe betide the musician who by straying into any of the forbidden keys encountered the 'wolf'.

"Who opposed the beneficent change to equal temperament? Some of the leading experienced organists of the day.

"Willis did succeed in winning over that great musician to his radiating and concave pedal board—but the majority of the leading organists strenuously, and for many years successfully, opposed its introduction....today his pedal board is accepted as the standard in England and America and will be throughout the world.

"Sir Walter Parrat of St. Georges Chapel Windsor, the Royal Academy of Music, etc., was but one of the majority of the accepted authorities who strenuously opposed the introduction of higher wind pressures. Fortunately, some of us were daring enough to ignore the conservatism, with the result that almost all builders are now adopting this great improvement.

*This article to be continued*

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**TOSA members at the December 2020 Orion players day**

*Photo by President, Craig Keller*

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