

Fenelon Blows In From Down Under

Tony Fenelon commenced his musical studies at the age of 7 years under the tutorage of Constance V. Peters and later Mr. Roy Shepherd of the Melbourne University Conservatorium. Here was to begin a career in music so outstanding, that his very name spells "magic" in his own country — AUSTRALIA.

His parents knew from a very early age that he had a great gift for music. It became evident in his early teens that he was to join the ranks of the truly gifted concert pianists in the world today. In 1949 it all began, and today it is history. Written, that at 28 years, he is "one of the world's greatest musicians . . ."

It was in 1949 that Tony Fenelon won his first competition and this success was to continue for many years to come. In the 1950's and early 1960's he was to win such major Australian awards as the Dandenong Eisteddfod, the much coveted Swallow's Juniors Award, Canberra Eisteddfod (in both the Open Solo and the Bach sections), and the Victorian State Finals of the ABC Concerto Competitions. He was to become official accompanist of the famed Australian Boys Choir, having already appeared with them as an associate artist on concert tours. He was to travel the length of Australia — to Perth, Hobart, Adelaide, Sydney, as well as countless other centers toured by the choir.

As early as 1954 he made his first solo appearance with the Junior Division of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, playing a Mozart Piano Concerto. Since then, he has performed with both the Melbourne and Sydney Symphony Orchestras in major concerts.

In 1959 he commenced a combined Science and Music Study at Melbourne University. During the years 1959-1963 he obtained the Exhibition for Associate Diploma in Piano, the highest marks ever awarded for Licenciate Diploma in Piano, and received his Bachelor of Science. In 1964 he commenced working for the Royal Melbourne Hospital as an Electronics Engineer in Medical Electronics. This was to be his life's work, outside of music. As an Assistant Medical Electronics Engineer he has written several outstanding papers on subjects in Medical Electronics. These papers have gained

him worldwide attention in the highly specialized Heart Electronics field and have been translated into several languages.

It was also in 1964 that Tony began playing the Mighty Theatre Pipe Organ. He had always been interested in popular music both on piano and electronic organ, but this was his first experience in the sound of the true pipes. His first Theatre Organ performance was on Christmas Eve in 1964 at Hoyt's Regent Theatre Melbourne to a large and very receptive audience.

So successful was this appearance that in March, 1965 he was appointed Resident Organist at the Regent.

Today he is recognized as the foremost Theatre Organist in the Southern Hemisphere, Australia's Chief Demonstrator for the Thomas Organ Company, a frequent guest artist at the now famous Dendy Theatre (scene of the 1968 Lyn Larsen season and home of the TOSA (Victoria) 3/16 Wurlitzer), a leading Australian Television personality, the most recorded organist in Australia, one of the most solidly booked concert pianists, and a top Medical Electronics Engineer. All in a 24 hour day. No wonder a leading Australian

show biz journalist, Jim Murphy, was to remark: "Time is his greatest enemy."

In 1966, young Theatre Arts Graduate Dean Mitchell saw Tony Fenelon perform in Melbourne during one of his numerous world tours. So impressed was Dean with his talent that he remained in Australia for three years until December, 1968 during which time he worked with Tony in developing all aspects of his musical career. In January of 1969 Dean returned to the United States and joined forces with Dewey Cagle, Advertising Manager of *Theatre Organ/Bombarde*, to prepare for Tony's first U.S. Concert Tour — thus climaxing three years of work on his part.

As soon as Tony Fenelon arrived in the U.S.A. he was greeted with a huge billboard at the Hillsdale Shopping Mall in San Mateo, Calif. announcing in foot high letters that Australia's leading Theatre Organ stylist would be heard playing in the mall two days hence. A steady schedule of personal appearances in San Francisco area organ dealers paved the way for what was to come. On Friday night Avenue Theatre patrons were asked to "stay in their seats after the movie for a real treat", and a treat it was to hear this fine artist on the Avenue's 3/14 Wurlitzer. Then, for the following week, Fenelon was Thomas Organ Company's "star" at the Hoberg Home Organ Festival. He was

Tony Fenelon at the Regent Theatre, Melbourne, Australia. The instrument is a Wurlitzer Style 270 (4/20) Opus #2009.



REAL PIPES SOUND DURING PLUG-IN CONCERT

by Elmer Fubb

Jack Loren is perhaps best described as a "character." He's also a fine musician. Jack is a teacher of organ in Santa Monica, Calif. He might now have a pipe organ in his home if that home had not started to sink back into the Jurassic muck, as homes in California are sometimes wont to do. When the bathroom listed to starboard, Jack got his valuables out of the house right away — the parts of his disassembled pipe organ — but left his wife, gaggle of dogs and himself to the mercy of the shifting not so firma terra at the edge of the San Andreas fault. They are still there, and the house has settled down; that is, the concrete slab it is built on has stopped buckling. It hasn't moved more than a foot since the organ was removed, and now Jack regrets selling the instrument. However, a four inch-wide crack recently opened in Jack's yard, and a helluv an echo comes back when you holler down it. That's when he equipped his dogs with Alpine climbing boots and roped them together, just in case.

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in fast company, for many famous organists were there . . . and they were listening. Fenelon proved to be on a par with the best of them!

For the next three weeks he traveled to Sacramento (Carl Greer Inn), Seattle (Paramount Theatre and Bob's Restaurant), Detroit (Senate Theatre), Chicago (Hoosier Theatre), Phoenix (Bill Brown's), Los Angeles (Wiltern Theatre) and San Francisco (Avenue Theatre) plus a quick visit to New York for good measure. He visited the Thomas factory in Sepulveda, and the Lake Tahoe region. When he rested, we have no idea! He always seemed vigorous and "ready to go". His extremely warm personality was most evident as he good-naturedly kidded us "foreigners" about our accent. Tony introduced each number with an informative chat, then proceeded to play circles around many of our prominent artists. Customers at the Avenue Theatre compared him only to that other Britisher who really made a name for himself at the Avenue, Vic Hammett. Tony promises to be back in 1971 — make emphatic note of that — and don't miss him! □

With no more than these minor details on his mind, Jack decided it was about time he played a concert. He does it every so often. He's been doing it since he was a lad when he had a pipe organ in his Oakland home. He'd prefer to do his concert on the gigantic Moller organ in the LA Shrine Auditorium — but it's still undergoing rehabilitation. After checking the condition of several available pipe organs in the area and finding them mostly out of kilter, Jack decided he'd use a plug-in. He made arrangements with Conn's District Manager, "Buzz" Olson, for the use of one of that firm's new 3-deckers. Then he hired the Wilshire-Ebell Theatre, just off famed Wilshire Blvd., for the evening of Peace Moratorium day!

Deciding he'd like some press coverage, he contacted this reporter only to learn that we don't normally review plug-in programs in these pages; we



Jack Loren (right) and helper. Things went from bass to worse with a little effort.

ALLENTOWN THEATRE ORGAN SCHOOL ALUMNI SOUGHT

Organist Howard Burton, of Marion, Ohio, wants to contact others who studied at the Knauss School of the Theatre Organ in Allentown, Pa. He has some school literature and mementos he would like to share. Write him care of this mag.

type for pipes. Jack thought a moment, and then hit on an idea. If we insisted on pipes as a condition, he'd do something with the old Morton languishing unused in the theatre. We agreed to attend with a sharp pencil. That ancient Morton hadn't been heard since Martha Lake was in rompers!

On the night of the concert Jack allowed his far out sense of humor to express itself occasionally with such unexpected exploits as a parody on the "lush tropical nights with birdcalls" theme, during which he drew a pistol and shot the interrupting bird, inducing a shower of yellow feathers from above. The tune was "Yellow Bird." Later, a "Beverly Hills-type bum" appeared with a battered Tuba to play the last note of the music when Jack stopped in surprise at the sight of the bum. Outlandish events during what was supposed to be a dignified concert. Lots of surprises, but no pipes. So, far, only the Conn. It was a good sound but we had been promised pipes.



GAYLORD

Then it happened. Jack started giving a spiel about Gaylord Carter and how he played "The Perfect Song" for the "Amos 'n Andy" show twice each night for seven years, when the sound of real, honest-to-goodness pipes was heard. And the tune was "The Perfect Song." It was wheezy and badly out of tune, but the Morton in the Ebell theatre was heard once more. And at the console, none other than Gaylord Carter — in person. Gaylord hopped over the footlights for a selection or two on the Conn and then home to bed; he had just lighted from a plane returning him from Detroit where he had played a concert at the Redford theatre the night before.

So Jack Loren earned his review, and here it is; Jack played all his music real pretty and didn't hit any clams. □