

PIPES DOWN UNDER

by Dr. Edward J. Mullins
with contributions by Robert and Betty Heinzen and William Fearnley.
Photos by the author, except as marked.

Seventeen ATOS "Pipes Down Under" tour members met Sunday, February 23, 1986, at the Air New Zealand ticket counter at Los Angeles International Airport with Mrs. Nina Hendrix, a last minute substitute tour escort. This was the first trip "down under" for everyone, except the author. The tour group included Ted Bigger (non-member of ATOS), San Juan Capistrano, California; William and Gladys Fearnley, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia; Robert and Betty Heinzen, Wilmette, Illinois; Charles and Kathleen Lyall, Pauma Valley, California; Mrs. Phyllis Maxwell (non-member), Los Alamitos, California; Mrs. Virginia Mitchell, Los Alamitos, California; Dr. Edward J. Mullins, San Francisco, California; Mrs.

Gloria Norton, Los Angeles, California; Harold Schnaible, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Warren and Jane Tisdale, Harrisburg, North Carolina; Robert F. Vaughn, San Francisco, California; Mrs. Alma Mary Wilson, Santa Ana, California; and Grant Wheeler, Pleasant Hills, California.

We changed planes in Honolulu, Hawaii, and Auckland, New Zealand. Wide-bodied

Air New Zealand 747 jumbo jets were used for the flight to Sydney, crossing the International Date Line on February 24 and the equator on February 25. Drinks were free and the meals were delicious and served with choice of wines. We were seated at the rear of the plane in random locations, and retained the same seats on the different planes, with different passengers on the various flights.

In Honolulu, the New Zealand Girls' Net Ball (basketball) team boarded and sat near us in the rear. They were robust, healthy specimens of New Zealand womanhood whose charm and friendliness were a delight. They demonstrated their athletic prowess when we were roused from our sleep after crossing the equator. The girls made a mad dash for the

"PIPES DOWN UNDER" Tour Group, L to R, front row: Harold Schnaible, Nina Hendrix (tour escort), Warren Tisdale, Ted Bigger. Middle row: Clella Norton, Virginia Maxwell, Alma Wilson, Gladys and Bill Fearnley. Back row: Ed Mullins, Grant Wheeler, Bob Vaughn, Bob and Betty Heinzen (in sunglasses), Chuck and Kaye Lyall, Phyllis Maxwell and Jane Tisdale.





Bob Vaughn tries out the 5/160 Sydney Town Hall organ.

toilets in the rear of the plane, which they occupied in pairs while they performed their ablutions. It was almost one hour before they emerged as vivacious as ever, to the relief of the other passengers. Bob Vaughn and I had the last two seats by the window and beat them, scoring the first two points for ATOS.

Despite the delayed departures in Los Angeles, Honolulu and Auckland, the pilot brought us into Sydney, Australia, the afternoon of February 25 on time. Air New Zealand gets high marks for service, meals, drinks, friendliness and punctuality.

After settling in at our hotel and getting a little rest, we gathered with several officers and members of the New South Wales (NSW) Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia (TOSA) for a "welcome" cocktail party and delicious dinner at our hotel.

TOSA was formed with the aim of preserving and promoting the sound and traditions of the theatre organ in all its forms, and to further the understanding of the instrument and its music. Divisions of TOSA in Adelaide, Ballarat, Brisbane, Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney own and maintain theatre pipe organ installations.

On Wednesday, February 26, we had a sightseeing tour of Sydney by bus, followed by a luncheon cruise of Sydney Harbor — a truly lovely cruise with great views of the famous opera house and other landmarks. Afterward, we wandered about some of the interesting Sydney waterfront and shopping areas, returning for dinner at the hotel.

After dinner we were picked up by our bus and taken to the Town Hall in the Sydney suburb of Marrickville, where the TOSA-NSW Division was holding its Club Night. Their 2/26 Wurlitzer is installed in two chambers in the Hall. It had been enlarged since I first played it in 1975, and its voicing and tun-

ing were perfect. It is an organ of which they can be proud.

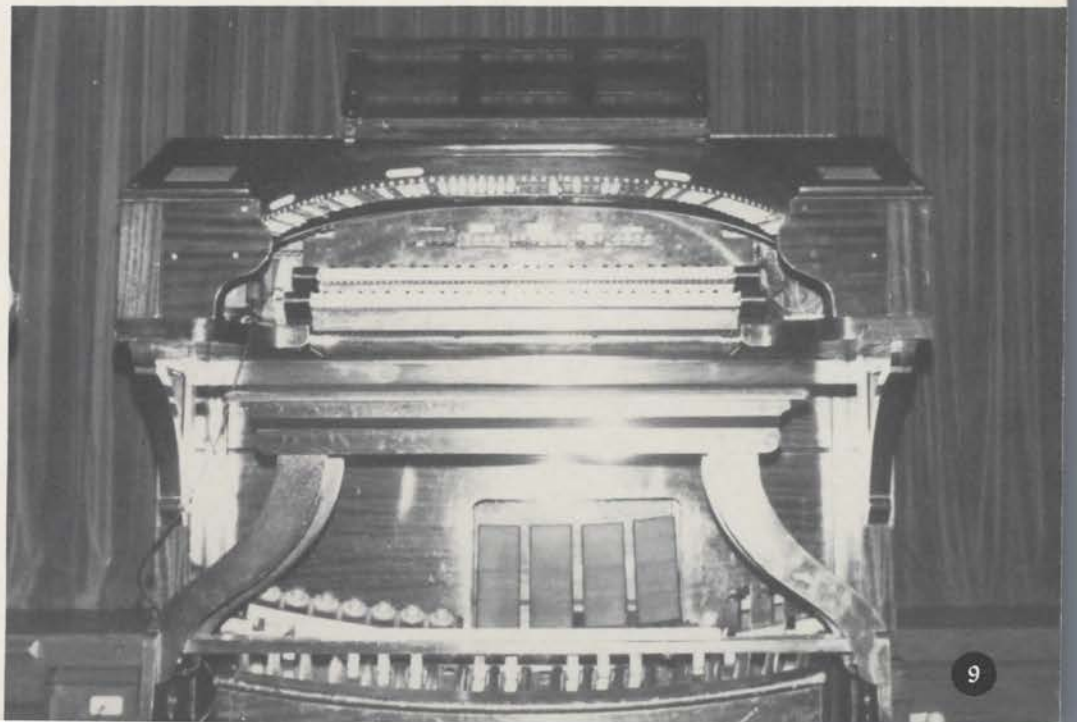
Division President Alan Misdale welcomed us to Australia, then Vice President Frank Ellis took over as Compere (MC) and introduced members and guests for cameo performances of three selections each. An elaborate supper of sandwiches and desserts was served during the interval. The youngest player during the evening was 15-year-old John Giacchi. He is a young man who will go places. Chamber tours were conducted after the program.

For Thursday, a free day, TOSA-NSW members had organized an outing. The group went by motorcade to a small wild animal preserve, where there were many native animals, including the adorable koalas. After a delightful tailgate tea, the group went on to the outskirts of Sydney and headed for the Blue Mountains to enjoy beautiful views of the surrounding country and lots of good talk with the TOSA hosts. Before departing a second wonderful meal was provided. A fine day with some very nice people.

Bob Vaughn and I took the free day to visit Sydney Town Hall. The Grand Organ in the hall is one of the largest and most powerful organs in the world. It was built in 1886 by Messrs. Hill & Sons, London, and was opened in 1890. We were privileged to play the five-manual, 127 stop, 160-rank, 8672-pipe behemoth through the courtesy of Mr. Robert Ampt, house organist. It has a 64' wood Contra Trombone in the Pedal Division. There is only one other organ so equipped in the world.

From Sydney Town Hall Bob and I went to Sydney's glorious State Theatre. The manager, Mr. John Eddyshaw, gave us a personally conducted tour of the atmospheric house built in 1929 and refurbished in 1973. The National Trust of Australia, NSW Division, has classified it as "a building having great historical significance and high architectural quality, the preservation of which is regarded as essential to the heritage of the state."

2/26 Wurlitzer in the Marrickville Town Hall, Australia.



Dr. Ed Mullins tries his hand at the Sydney Town Hall Grand Organ.

The State's 4/21 Wurlitzer is played by house organist Alan Tranter on a regular basis when the theatre is running films. It has a second white console that has never been used. Mr. Eddyshaw extended an invitation to the tour group to visit the State on a "pot luck" basis; several did.

The group toured the famous Sydney Opera House complex that evening. Unfortunately, we did not hear the five-manual, 205-rank, 127-stop organ installed in the Concert Hall in 1979 by Robert Sharp. We had dinner in the Bennelong Restaurant, with magnificent views of Sydney Harbor and Bridge. Afterward, we enjoyed a performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* in the Opera House.

Friday was a free day for more sightseeing in Sydney, but Vaughn and I took advantage of the opportunity to visit my old friend, John Clancy, and his family in the Sydney suburb of Wentworthville. John has a 2/15 Wurlitzer, Opus 1879, installed in his residence. It was the only style R/15 and the largest residence Wurlitzer ever shipped to Australia. When it arrived in 1928 it was installed in the residence of Mr. W.A. Crowle at Rose Bay,

Sydney.

Originally it was a 2/10 and had three consoles, all of which played the pipe work! Crowle imported Wurlitzers in the 1920s and used it as a demonstrator. Upon Crowle's death the organ was removed to the Civic Theatre in Auburn, NSW, in 1934. Only the master console was used, the other two consoles apparently being broken up for parts. Three ranks were added: Brass Trumpet, Orchestral Oboe and Solo String. The Civic, with 3000 seats, was the largest suburban theatre and needed more volume. The Civic is now closed.

Clancy purchased the organ in 1958, and had the premiere recital in 1967. He also owns the second four-manual console from Sydney's State Theatre. He has stripped the original white finish and recently refinished it to natural wood. Future plans include wiring the four-manual console in dual with the present two-manual console and the addition of further ranks to bring the final size to 22 ranks.

On Monday, March 1, we flew to Canberra, Australian Capital Territory (ACT), a beautiful planned city designed by a Chicagoan, Walter Burley Griffin. After a tour of this very interesting city, we were off to the Burbong Sheep Station owned and operated by two brothers who lent a real "Aussie" atmosphere. We had a good barbeque lunch, followed by a demonstration of sheep handling by the ranchers' dogs, a sheep shearing and an explanation of how the wool is graded and sorted. We learned about "Billy tea" and what a "billabong" is, all told with a twinkling eye. We even tried to throw a few boomerangs. All in all, a fine afternoon.

While in Canberra, I was able to see the 3/8 Compton organ owned by TOSA-ACT Division, through the courtesy of the technical director, David Dunnett, who admitted me to Albert Hall where the organ is installed. The organ was originally installed in the Gaumont Palace (later renamed Odeon), Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, England, in 1931. It was dismantled and shipped to Australia in 1968 to go into the Dendy Theatre, Brighton. However, it remained in storage for ten years.

TOSA-ACT bought the organ eight years ago, and members have restored it to its original "as new" condition. This is no exaggeration; it is a real beauty. An English Horn has been added. The organ is installed in two

chambers at the rear of the stage in Albert Hall.

The coach tour included a visit to Parliament House and the Australia War Museum before transferring to the Canberra airport for our flight to Melbourne. They were having a "Moomba" in Melbourne; an aborigine word meaning celebration. There were many festivities in progress and the city was very crowded with merrymakers.

The next morning (Sunday), a sightseeing tour of Melbourne included Treasury Gardens near Parliament House and the Fitzroy Gardens. We visited the Royal Botanic Gardens on the bank of the Yarra River, where we saw the Shrine of Remembrance, Olympic Park and National Museum. It is difficult to say which city is most impressive — Sydney, Canberra, or Melbourne.

TOSA Victoria Division Vice President Eric Wicks had arranged for some of their members to pick us up from our hotel on Saturday afternoon and drive us to the Village Theatre, Reservoir, where TOSAVIC's organ is installed. It has eight ranks of original Blackett & Howden pipe work, plus Wurlitzer wood Tibias, controlled from a two-manual Christie console.

Blackett & Howden was a small English organ builder subsequently absorbed by Hill, Norman & Beard, for whom it made Christie pipe work and assembled Christie organs for some years, as did several other English organ builders. The organ was originally installed in the Prince's Theatre, North Shields, NSW, and was shipped from there in 1970, minus the console.

The Christie console came from Sydney's Lyceum Theatre and is on a lift. The organ crew chief, David Cross, conducted chamber tours. TOSAVIC organists who played for us included Cross, Bruce Ardley, Carole Pinches, and Gail Dibben. ATOS players included Bill Fearnley, Virginia Mitchell, Ed Mullins, Harold Schnaible, Bob Vaughn, and Grant Wheeler. Afternoon tea was served.

After Sunday night dinner we were transported to Moorabbin Town Hall, introduced as "our guests from the States," and given seats reserved just for us.

The 4/22 Wurlitzer in the hall, now owned by the City of Moorabbin, was originally installed in the State Theatre, Melbourne, in 1929, with two consoles. The second console



John Clancy at the console of his 2/15 Wurlitzer.

is now at TOSA South Australia Division's Capri Theatre in Adelaide. Gordon Hamilton bought the organ in 1963, removing it with TOSA assistance, and sold it to Moorabbin City Council in 1968. Lyn Larsen played the official opening concert in 1970.

Tony Fenelon and Ray Thornley rode the white and gold console up playing together. They played solos and duets with Fenelon on a grand piano and Thornley on a Yamaha electronic organ for the most part. An outburst from the audience between numbers, with a definite Aussie accent, asked when we were going to hear the pipe organ. This was the feeling of the American visitors as well. The two artists were in top form, and their concert was the high point of the Australian visit. Tony Fenelon reminded us that "down here, you Yanks talk funny!"

Monday morning my long-time friend Dick Hope arranged for Bob Vaughn and me to visit the residence of Bill Glasson in Caulfield, while others in our tour group were sightseeing in Melbourne. I met Bill in 1977 and we visited the old Dendy Theatre in Brighton then.

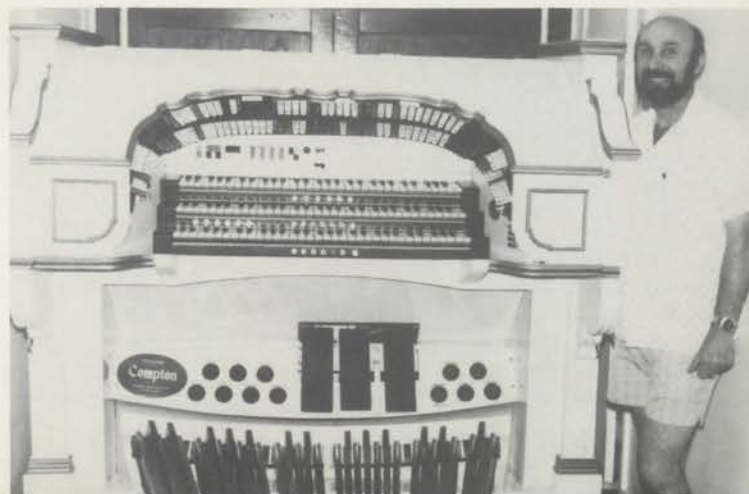
Glasson has in his home a little gem of a

"Billy tea."

(Robert Heinzen photo)



David Dunnett, technical director, and the 3/8 Compton console, Albert Hall, Canberra, Australia.



Wurlitzer for which he imported the various components from England. The console is from the New Cross Kinema in London, the seven-rank organ is from the Trocette Cinema in Bermondsey, the relays from the Bristol Regent Theatre, and he has the 61-note Brass Saxophone from the Gaumont Cinema in Waterford.

We also visited the new twin Village Cinemas at Brighton, on the site of the old Dendy. The 3/15 Wurlitzer is installed behind the screen in two chambers, and is winded. The console has been refinished and a new music rack built with matching mahogany veneers. A solid-state relay is being added. The glistening mahogany console will slide out from a niche on the right side of the screen, a la Radio City Music Hall, when completed.

TOSAVIC purchased the 3/15 Style 260 from the Capitol Theatre in Melbourne in 1963. It was originally installed in 1924 and used until 1958. TOSAVIC installed it in the original Dendy Theatre, Brighton, in 1966 through the kindness of the late Mr. Bert Ward. It played for 18 years, opening with TOSAVIC Patron George Blackmore in April 1967, until the theatre's demolition in 1984.

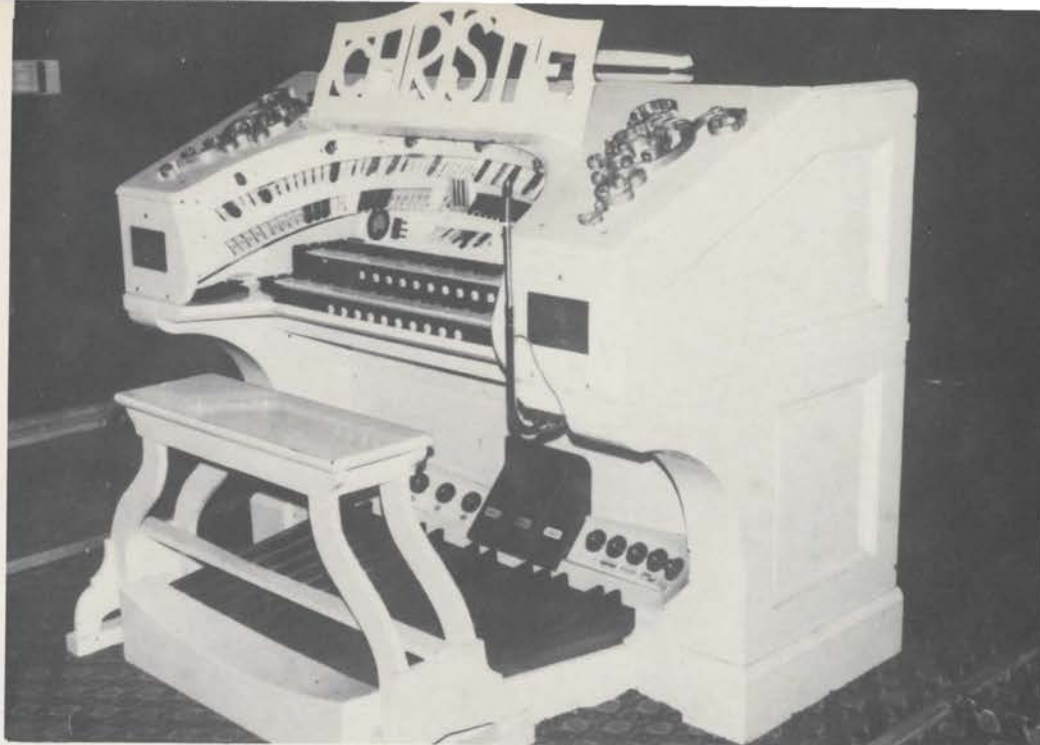
When the final decision was made to redevelop the Dendy and surrounding sites as a shopping, theatre and residential complex, the Ward family insisted the Wurlitzer should go back into the new cinema.

The tour group departed by private coach Monday afternoon for a 110-mile drive to Phillip Island, spotting several koalas in the trees en route. The nature reserve provides a home for the shy koalas, and rookeries for the mutton bird, native pelicans and gulls.

After a delicious lobster dinner at the Jetty Restaurant, Cowes, we went to the shore where, at dusk, hundreds of penguins come out of the sea and wade ashore. These lovable birds comically make their way across the sand to their burrows in the dunes in what has come to be known as the "Fairy Penguin Parade." On the return to our hotel we passed the State Theatre in Melbourne, still operating sans organ.

Early Tuesday morning our bus driver picked us up for the trip to the airport for our flight to Christchurch, New Zealand. As we bade farewell to Australia with memories of koalas, kangaroos, wallabies and emus, and our many new friends, we were mindful of the unfailing courtesy and hospitality of the Australian people, from the shopkeepers to the hotel people, and especially from the theatre organ friends who hosted us and saw to it that we were made welcome.

On this last morning in Australia we had yet another example of the special treatment we received all along the way. Our bus driver was from Utrecht, Holland. He had not had much contact with theatre organs before driving our little group, but after attending some of the concerts and hearing tapes of more concerts, he told us about his love of the old street organs of Utrecht, and how he enjoyed playing records of their music at home. On the way to the airport, we suddenly were aware of



Christie console in the Village Theatre, Reservoir, Melbourne, Australia.

some delightful music coming from his tape deck. He explained that he had gotten up at 6:00 that morning and had copied one of his favorite recordings on tape, so that we could hear it. He sang the words in Dutch for us, and then thanked us for a wonderful time! It was one of those unforgettable things that happens along the way of which memories are made.

And so we were off to New Zealand, about a four-hour flight from Melbourne, arriving in Christchurch on the South Island. New Zealand and Australia have many things in common, having been settled mostly by Europeans at about the same time, but while Australia is a vast country with many contrasts, New Zealand is a lush agricultural country with, it seemed, millions of sheep, and some of the most breath-taking scenery in the world.

We had a brief tour of Christchurch on Wednesday, and then went on to Dunedin, a delightful city with beautiful churches, gardens and flowers everywhere. Even though the season there corresponded to our late August-early September, the gardens were still beautiful. The drive to Dunedin through the Canterbury Plains was a relaxing trip, after all our busy sightseeing in Australia.

There weren't any theatre organs on the South Island, but in Dunedin on Thursday we visited the Anglican Cathedral and the Town Hall, where a few of us tried out the classical organs.

Thursday was spent traveling by private coach across the Tairie Plains and through the townships of Balclutha and Gore, arriving at our hotel in Te Anau in time for dinner.

On Friday morning we set out through the spectacular mountain scenic valleys of Eglin-

Ray Thornley, left, and Tony Fenelon at the 4/22 Wurlitzer in Moorabbin Town Hall, Melbourne, Australia.





Bill Glasson on the bench of his 2/7 Wurlitzer.

ton and Hollyford, through the Homer Tunnel and down the majestic Gleddau Gorge to Milford Sound. The highlight of our visit to the Sound was a luncheon cruise through the waterway of the fjord, where we saw the cascading Bowen and Stirling Falls, the sparkling glacier of Mount Pembroke and Mitre Park.

After the launch cruise we passed through the township of Kingston, where several railroad buffs in the group inspected the narrow gauge railroad and engine. Our coach had a sign "Pipes Down Under" in the front window and many "Kiwis" thought that we were bagpipers, so upon arrival in Queenstown Bob Vaughn made another sign reading "Organ Not Bag" and taped it on the window.

Queenstown is a resort town in a magnificent setting along a lovely lake, with the mountains of the Remarkable Range all around. On Saturday our group went sight-seeing around the town and visited Deer Park Heights, where we had fun feeding the many deer and goats that roam freely.

In the afternoon we had one of the most exciting experiences on the South Island, a jet boat ride on the Shotover River. A power

boat skims along the surface of the river, coming within a hairsbreadth of the canyon walls. We got soaked during the high speed ride, especially when the boat spun.

That evening we ascended Bob's Peak by gondola cableway to the Skyline Chalet, located 1500 feet above Queenstown, for dinner. A spectacular panoramic view of the Remarkable Range and Lake Wakatipu added to our dining pleasure. Reservation cards placed on our tables read "Pipers Down Under." Hoot mon!

Sunday morning we were off to Mount Cook, in the spectacular southern alps. We traveled via the Kawarau Gorge, Lindis Pass and the Mackenzie Plains, along the shores of scenic Lake Pukaki to Mount Cook National Park, well known for its alpine scenery. Mount Cook is the highest peak at 12,349 feet, and dominates the scene.

We had anticipated an afternoon float plane ride up through the mountains to a glacier, but the weather didn't cooperate. The flight was rescheduled for Monday morning, but again the weather forced a cancellation. We returned to Lake Tekapo through Burke's Pass to Christchurch for our flight to Wellington on the North Island.

That night we were guests of the Wellington Electronic Organ Society at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Whyte. President Jim Houston welcomed us. The Whytes have a Lowery organ and a Welmar piano in their living room.

Society Treasurer George Gibson led off the cameos, followed by Bob Vaughn and Harold Schnaible. Bill Fearnley then played the piano for us. Bill spent 32 years at the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, playing in the dining room. Back to the Lowery were Mrs. Phyl Cree, Ed Mullins, Grant Wheeler, and Emile Van Ryswyk. Mrs. Val Gibson played the piano in a duet with husband George, followed by Harold Schnaible at the organ. Other performers at the piano were Phyl Cree and Ann Richard-



Bill Fearnley playing the concert organ at Dunedin Town Hall, New Zealand.

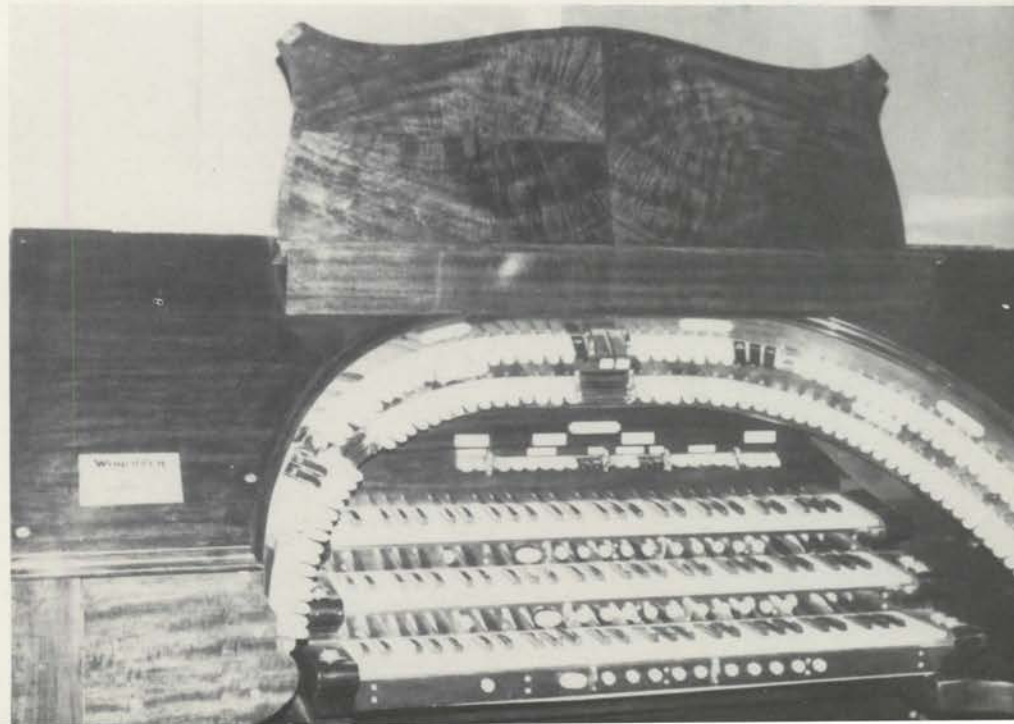
son in duets with May Bushby and Gordon Whyte, respectively. They concluded with a Maori tune, "Hine E Hine," with Whyte at the piano and Gloria Bushby at the organ.

Kiwi hospitality tried to outdo the Aussies. A supper was served and many received a night tour of Wellington from the various drivers who chauffeured us back to the hotel.

On Tuesday, March 11, after a day spent touring Wellington, a lovely city on a large bay, we traveled by coach to Paraparaumu for a tour of the Southward Car Museum, Theatre, Conference Center and Restaurant. We were greeted by Sir Leonard Southward, recently knighted by Queen Elizabeth II, and his charming wife, Lady Vera. We were offered wine and then were free to wander around the museum, which was closed to the public for the evening, but open to our group and the local theatre organ group.

The Southward Museum is a remarkable collection of vintage and classic automobiles, lovingly restored to mint condition. There are also other interesting items on display, in-

TOSA Victoria Division's 3/15 Wurlitzer console in the Village Cinema, Brighton.



Harold Schnaible plays the Dunedin Town Hall organ as Virginia Maxwell inspects the draw knobs.



cluding vintage aircraft and boats. Sir Leonard delighted in showing off the collection, even starting up a few of the cars. We were then conducted into a dining room for a buffet dinner, followed by a concert in the auditorium, a most interesting place. The floor of the auditorium is mounted on large lifts which can make it level for dancing and dinner parties, or tilt it to accommodate chairs for concerts and other activities. When Sir Leonard learned from Bob Heinzen that he was active in community theatre, he insisted on giving a guided tour of the backstage facilities and dressing rooms, of which he is justly proud.

In the auditorium there is a 3/17 Style 260 Wurlitzer, Opus 2075, installed on a lift. The organ is exactly as it was when installed in the Civic Theatre in Auckland, except for the console being refinished white. When installed in the theatre it was augmented with two additional ranks, an English Post Horn and a Horn Diapason. Equipped with a Wurlitzer roll player and 72 rolls, it was a treat to hear Jesse Crawford's "Baby's Birthday Party" and "Wedding of the Painted Doll" played. During open console following dinner, tour member Bob Heinzen sang "Soon It's Going to Rain" in his fine baritone voice, accompanied by Bill Fearnley at the organ.

The next morning we flew from Wellington to Rotorua, and in the afternoon visited the Maori village of Whakarewarewa. A Maori guide escorted us through the arts and crafts institute, where the Maori traditional wood carving skills are passed on from one generation to the next. Then we walked through a region of gushing geysers, bubbling mud pools and steaming hot springs. That night in Rotorua we were treated to a Hangi, or Maori feast, somewhat similar to a Hawaiian luau, with roasted pig and many other delicacies, with entertainment by costumed Maoris performing traditional songs and dances.

On Thursday we visited the Agridome in



Feeding the animals at Deer Park Heights.

(Robert Heinzen photo)

Rotorua, featuring 19 different breeds of sheep and a shearing demonstration. From there we went to Rainbow Trout Springs, home of the kiwi, New Zealand's National Bird.

The next day we traveled over a bush-clad Mamaku Ranges to Waitomo. There we visited the famous Waitomo Caves, where we boarded a launch and glided silently through a very dark grotto, with thousands of glow worms providing the only light.

We traveled on to Tauranga, and, after dinner, attended the last Club Night, in the Town Hall, of the Home Organ Society of Tauranga. The city owns the 2/10 Model H Wurlitzer, Opus 1482. Installed in the Deluxe (now Embassy) Theatre in Wellington from 1929 to 1956, it was moved to Tauranga in 1972. It is to be moved next door to the Bay

Court in the near future when the present hall is demolished. Rex White was the original organ keeper and instigator to get the instrument installed in the Town Hall; Len Hockley is the present organ keeper.

Hockley opened the program, and members and visitors took turns playing. Mrs. Margaret McClymont, club president, ended the cameos with two selections, after which another of those wonderful suppers was served. Len Hockley gave a musical farewell, playing "I'll See You Again" before we departed.

On Saturday we continued our trip by coach through Waihi, Ngatea and the Bombay Hills to Auckland, finishing the day with some sightseeing and dinner in our hotel.

Sunday morning was devoted to more sightseeing, during which we visited the summit of Mt. Eden, Auckland's War Memorial Museum, the Winter Gardens, Tamaki Waterfront Drive, Mission Bay and the Westhaven Marina.

In the afternoon we went to the Hollywood Cinema in the Auckland suburb of Avondale for the final concert of our tour. The artist on the theatre's 2/12 Wurlitzer was Brett Morris, a very talented 21-year-old New Zealander. His musical training was on the piano; he is self-taught on the organ. Judging by this performance, he should have a brilliant future.

The Theatre Organ Society of Auckland, our hosts, provided a very pleasant wine and cheese party after the performance, and we had a chance to chat with members, all very interested in the States and what is happening here on the theatre organ scene.

The Hollywood Cinema Wurlitzer was installed in the original Regent Theatre in Auckland in 1926, and it remained there until 1944. It was then installed in the Hutt Valley High School auditorium, staying there until 1968. It was sold after sustaining severe water damage following torrential rainstorms, and was stored until it was purchased in 1978 by Les Stenersen of Auckland. Les, with the as-

Shotover Jet Boat ride, Queenstown, New Zealand. Front row, L to R: Phyllis Maxwell, Ed Mullins, Pilot. Middle row: Bob Vaughn, Grant Wheeler, Alma Wilson, Clella Norton. Back row: Harold Schnaible, Gladys Fearnley, Bill Fearnley (waving), Ted Bigger and Kay Lyall. (Shotover Jet Photo)



sistance of Auckland pipe organ builder John Parker and many enthusiasts, restored the organ over a period of five years. The first concert was presented in 1983. The Theatre Organ Society of Auckland was organized subsequently and now has 180 members, with John Parker as president.

Kiwi ATOS Chapter President John R. Granwal, his wife Mollie (chapter secretary), and founding president Norman Dawe joined us for the farewell cocktail party and banquet Sunday night, as did many guests from the Auckland group. Ian Johnson provided music during cocktails and after dinner on his Baldwin electronic organ. Ian Davis, a gemologist, presented each tour member with a hand-crafted key ring he had made from New Zealand gem stones. At the close of the banquet we sang the Maori farewell song "Now Is The Hour," then all 43 people present joined hands in a huge circle and sang "Auld Lang Syne."

The following day John Parker arranged for us to visit Auckland Town Hall to hear the concert organ. In the afternoon we visited Ian Davis' home, where he has built a three-manual Devtronix electronic organ with real traps.

The majority of the group departed for home Monday night (March 17). Five of us left on Tuesday for the Fiji Islands, later going on to Hawaii, where we visited Honolulu over the weekend.

Bob Alder plays two intermissions Friday and Saturday nights on the 4/16 Robert-Morton in the Waikiki III Theatre. Aloha Chapter met Sunday morning at the Hawaii Theatre in downtown Honolulu. The Hawaii Theatre Center is refurbishing the house to make it a performing arts center. Recently, four layers of flooring covering the original orchestra pit were removed, revealing the Otis console elevator intact. It was last seen in 1936, when the original Robert-Morton organ was removed to the Waikiki Theatre. Otis repaired the lift the following week, making it possible to elevate the console from the Princess Theatre to stage level.

Everything on our "Pipes Down Under" tour went so smoothly that we were seldom aware of any difficulties. Our lovely escort, Nina Hendrix, did a splendid job of getting us



2/10 Model H Wurlitzer in the Tauranga Town Hall, New Zealand.

where we were supposed to be on time. She was an active and inquisitive participant in all the proceedings, and she kept her serenity and poise at all times in spite of all the details she had to handle.

Our bus drivers, without exception, went out of their way to make our trips enjoyable. Where else would a bus driver stop in busy traffic to let a passenger photograph a street sign which happened to be his own name? Or help with all the details of baggage at hotels and airports, so that not a single piece of luggage was lost or even late. Quite an enviable record. Or the day in Auckland when the driver let us off at a shopping mall so that he and Nina could take care of the hotel registration and room keys without having us wait in a crowded lobby. Or the driver who drove us down a country road (that he was not supposed to use) so that we could see koalas in the wild state. Small matters indeed, but what a nice feeling of their concern for us. We reciprocated by inviting them to the organ concerts

and crawls, which was a first time for most of them.

The hospitality of the theatre organ groups was outstanding. There was nothing that they would not do for us. Open console was the rule at all the installations we visited, except for the formal Fenelon/Thornley concert, where it would have been impracticable. Of course, ten minutes or two numbers is really a teaser for an organist who could spend an entire day exploring the possibilities of any one of the instruments, but we had to be realistic and thankful for even a few minutes of sheer enjoyment.

The Australians and New Zealanders were most gracious hosts, and all their extra efforts that helped make our visit so enjoyable are deeply appreciated. A large delegation of Aussies and Kiwis are expected to come "Up Over" to attend the 1987 ATOS Convention in Los Angeles, and we hope that when they return to their homes they will feel about us as we do about them. □

Brett Morris at the 2/12 Wurlitzer, Hollywood Cinema, Auckland, New Zealand.



Bob Vaughn playing the 3/17 Wurlitzer at the Southward Museum, Paraparaumu, New Zealand.

