

PIPES

&

PERCUSSION

193
AUGUST
2020

**NEWSLETTER FOR
THE FRIENDS OF THE WURLITZER**

**& THE "KIWI CHAPTER" of the
AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN SOCIETY**

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UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND
www.theatreorgans.com/wota

THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY !!

I guess many of you will remember that hilarious movie from 1980 and it best describes the predicament we now find ourselves in. We have surely had a trial by fire in our bid to get the Wurlitzer organ into its new home! The first delay was the Glen Eden Playhouse Theatre Trust that owns the Playhouse, sourcing the funding for the construction of the organ chamber annex at the back of the theatre. Then, during construction, the usual "building" issues arose that each needed to be dealt with, to enable the project to continue.

Meantime, the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland was desperately seeking funding to cover the installation of the organ itself. Our search seeming to fall on deaf ears, until late last year, when the **Western Districts Community Foundation** knocked on WOTA's door and offered to help with a magnificent grant of \$100k! Additional funding also came from the **Trusts Community Foundation**, however, there was still a shortfall of some \$30k to find and just before COVID-19 lock-down, **NZ Lotto** awarded the Trust the full amount needed. Now.....our organ crew from Melbourne are unable to enter NZ until things improve in Victoria and NZ opens its borders!

*++ The opinions expressed in this Newsletter ++
are not necessarily those of The Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland.*

NEWS FROM THE WESTERN FRONT

In late July, the completed Organ Chamber Annex was handed over to the Playhouse Theatre Trust, who in turn gave us the key!!

We must acknowledge *Friends of the Wurlitzer* member Mr Graham Upton, an architect, who donated his time to the project by looking after the building design work, the Auckland Council permit process and guided the project through with the builders and the GEPTT. I dare say he too is breathing a sigh of relief, but like us all, is equally determined that our Wurlitzer pipe organ WILL sing again!

A week before handover of the building, a not-so-wee bundle of joy arrived back in Auckland – two large and heavy crates! Late last year we had sent these two crates of vital items from the Wurlitzer over to Melbourne for some specialised surgery. Through Julien Arnold, our Melbourne organ builder, fellow theatre organ technician Neil Hunter, had offered at no charge to us, to “plug-end” all the electrical connections on the wooden pipe chests. This will save many, many hours of soldering when the installation commences. Neil has painstakingly set up plugs on the ends of the hundreds of wires on each of the 26 Bottom Boards from the chests. These new plugs will connect with the cables that go back to the organ’s control relay, which, when the organ is played, sends low-voltage signals to the particular chest, containing the pipes that the organist is playing!

Since January, the Wurlitzer organ’s intimate parts, numbering some thousands of units, has been sitting on the theatre stage, in theory, to be ready for the organ to be installed back in March this year! With the Playhouse now about to open its doors once again for theatre hires, we had to face the task of moving the “old girl” yet again! Rather than fill the organ chambers with parts making it impossible for any installation work to start, it was decided to hire a container short-term, to house sundry bits and pieces. Items such as the two big organ blowers have now been relocated into their new home in the Blower Room, the wind regulators and tremulants are now under the pipe chamber in their new home as well.

Neil Warrington together with his trusty team of “Organ Techs”, cleaned and painted the two pipe chambers and the Regulator Room underneath, so we are able to do a fair bit of prep ourselves in readiness for the Melbourne crew to come. The Glen Eden Playhouse Theatre Trust have blocked off January to March 2021, in the firm hope that the NZ border *might* open by Christmas.

So very many of you have doggedly stayed with us over the last five years since we left the Hollywood Cinema, and your wonderful donations have helped pay for the quality storage of the organ, and in recent times, have helped the Trust meet the insurance costs on the Wurlitzer. Added to this are the costs of just keeping the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland “legal”, with yearly audit costs and Charity Commission charges. Our only source of income is from our shows, which until the organ is playing again, are a non-event, so these donations you each give has helped us to stay the course, and with your help, we too are determined that our Wurlitzer pipe organ WILL sing again!

It is our humble pleasure to acknowledge the wonderful people who have dug so deep, to help keep WOTA going this last year.

D.	Barnard	D.	Handley	R.	Reade
D.	Billing	I.	Helberg	P.	Retter
M.	Blayney	K.D. & J.M.	Hill	V.	Richmond
K.	Bracy	J.	Hipperson	W.	Ridge
P.	Brady	Jan	Holdaway	P.	Robinson
B.	Briand	L.	Howe	O.	Saran
B. & C.	Brodie	R.G.	Hunter	B.	Sherson
N.	Brownlee	W.	Hutchinson	J.	Stallard
A.	Burns	D.	Johnson	B.	Stevens
B.C.	Carstairs	J.F.	Jones	B.	Sullivan
T.	Cheeseman	R.	Kilroy	D. & S.	Swallow
R.	Clarke	A.	Koke	B.	Teague
N.	Clews	T.	Lidgard	G.	Urquhart
D.	Clouston	D. & M.	Matheson	P.	Vellekoop
L.	Clunie	R. & M.	Mathews	E.	Vujnovich
A.	Coppard	A.	McCarrison	P.	Wallace
S.	Crawley	D.	McCombe	G.	Watt
S.	David	G.	McGhie	K.	Webster
R.	Davis	V.E.	McMurtry	M.J.	White
J.	Dekker	T.	McNally	J.	Wilcox
H.	Dorbeck	I.	Mison	G.J.	Wills
S.	Downer	C.	Mountfort	G.	Wingate
J. & P.	Foster	W.	Oldfield	A.	Wolstenholme
A.	Freer	H.	Perkins	C.	Zeff
M.	Grace	S.	Phillips		
S.	Hamp	D.	Rawlinson		

Substantial Donations were received from:

J & B.	Briand	M.	Massey
Ken	Double	I.	McHardy
J & A.	Fryer		MOTAT Society
B.	Lawson	R.	Wainwright

CHANGING THE GUARD

Since COVID-19 struck, many people have had to make huge changes in their working lives and this has impacted our WOTA Trustees. We were saddened to receive Jackie Crawford's resignation two months back. Jackie's work now sees her out of town several times a month, taking its toll on her available spare time.

With WOTA now being three Trustees down and our Trust Deed stating that we should have nine Trustees, we have been thrilled to have interest in joining the Trust expressed by two *Friends of the Wurlitzer* members.

It is a great pleasure to welcome **Tina McNally** and **Bill Ridge** to the Trust.

Here are some images of the new Organ Chamber Annex,



***The organ's
blowing plant
now sitting in
the new alcove
- the Blower
Room***

***(Neil
Warrington)***



***The Shutter openings are
the perfect apertures to
pass the large items
through, into the pipe
chamber***

(Neil Warrington)



The Regulator Room under the pipe chamber which will hold the tremulants and wind regulators. (Neil Warrington)



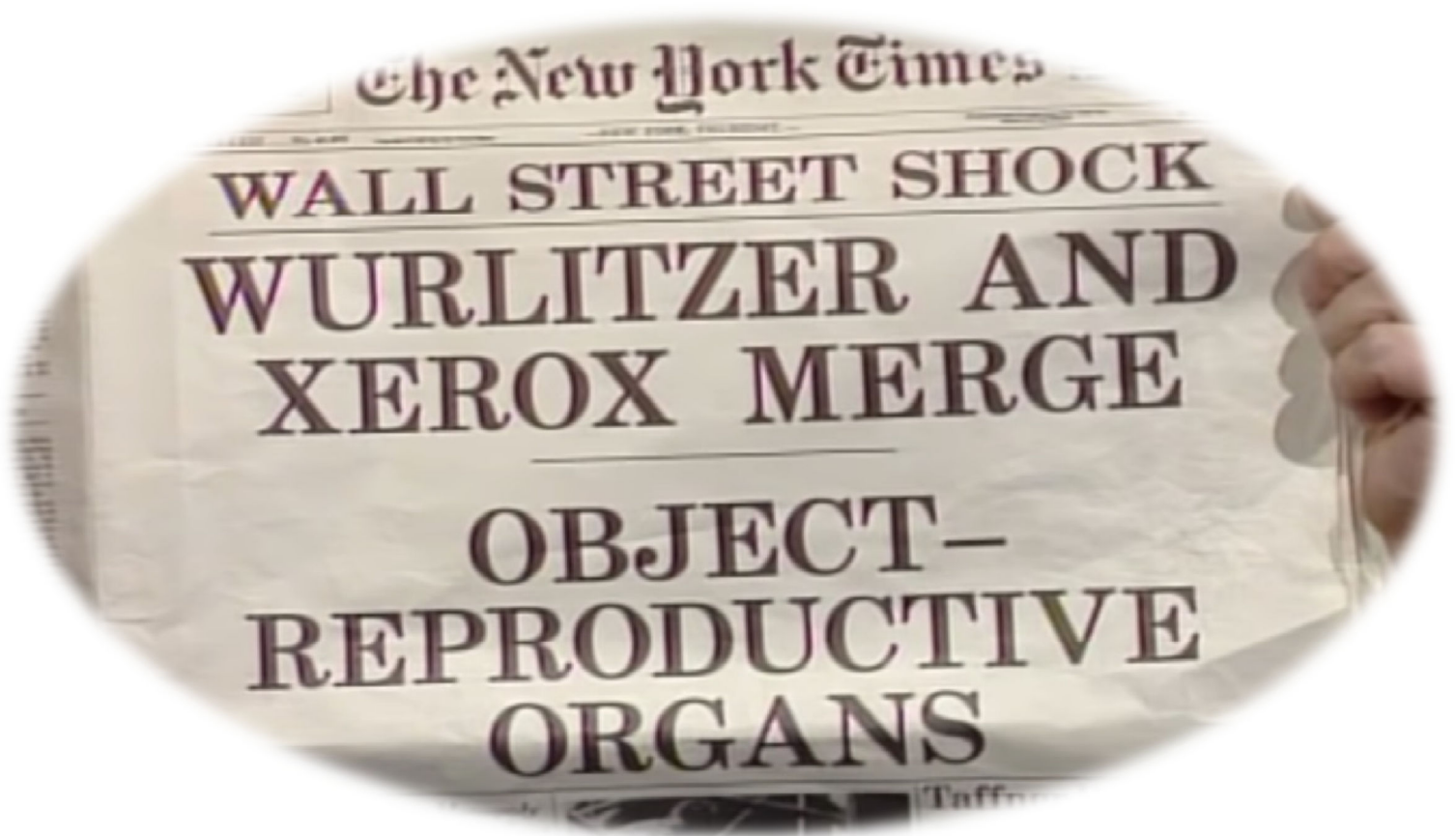
Looking through the Swell Shutter opening of what will be the "Main Chamber". The seats in the auditorium are just visible in the background.

(Neil Warrington)

An exterior view of the new Organ Chamber Annex. (Neil Warrington)



Time for a chuckle.....



*Thanks to Terry & Louise Creighton
from the Tauranga Theatre Organ Society for this gem.*

A FINANCIAL MOMENT...

For those who are still to renew their membership subscription, a renewal form is enclosed with this newsletter. If no form enclosed, rest assured you are good until next year.

However, once again we must make a desperate plea to all of you who make payments by internet banking.

**WOTA is NOT a business !
The bank does NOT advise that
a payment has been made to our account.**

You MUST advise Jan by phone or email if you make a payment into the WOTA bank account for any reason – subs, donations, or tickets for a show!

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY....

***Friends of the Wurlitzer Afternoon
Sunday November 8
The Playhouse Theatre
@ 2pm***

+ Light Afternoon Tea

***+ "Music from the Movies!"
Wurlitzer Organ Video Presentation***

+ Checkout the new organ chambers

***Not a public event – Members only
Booking Details in our next Newsletter***



**THE
WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST
of AUCKLAND**

(REG. CHARITABLE TRUST No.10966)

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www.theatreorgans.com/wota

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Ms Tina McNally PH: 828-0963
Mr Bill Ridge PH: 636-9579

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and CONCERT TICKETS:** Mrs Jan Nancekivell PH: 522-8944



THE MOTAT SOCIETY



SUPPORTING THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND