



PIPES

&

PERCUSSION

165
March
2015

**NEWSLETTER FOR
THE FRIENDS OF THE WURLITZER**

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

**EDITOR: James Duncan
E-MAIL: tremsoff@extra.co.nz**

**UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND
C/- PO BOX 6707, WELLESLEY ST, AUCKLAND 1141, N.Z.
VISIT US ON [Facebook](#) OR AT: www.theatreorgans.com/wota**

A BIT OF A DOO.....

Well.....yes I suppose our Club Afternoon coming up next month IS a "Bit of a Doo" but also a heap of fun as well! Sure hope you have booked your tickets for this opening event for 2015, remember that the Friends of the Wurlitzer Club Afternoon is not open to the general public, but your friends are very welcome.

Sunday March 8 @ 2pm – Doors open 1.30pm.

If you have not yet contacted Jan Nancekivell to organise your tickets, please don't wait too much longer! For catering reasons we have a limited number of tickets available and we are just over halfway through them now. Tickets are \$10.00 per person **OR**, if you are booking the "2015 Season Ticket", the event is included in the cost of the Season Ticket – but for catering purposes, you **MUST** advise Jan that you are attending. Remember there are **NO DOOR SALES** and we need final numbers for catering by 5pm on Tuesday March 3. Sorry, no exceptions.

We open our 2015 season of Wurlitzer shows with a Weekend Spectacular, over ANZAC Weekend **April 25 and 26**, as we welcome back Melbourne's **John Atwell**.

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

**THE WURLITZER ORGAN
TRUST of AUCKLAND**

PRESENT A

WURLITZER
THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

WEEKEND

WITH

JOHN ATWELL
From Melbourne

SATURDAY APRIL 25 at 2pm
Silent Movie "Wings" (1927)

SUNDAY APRIL 26 at 2pm
*The Music that got us Through
the War Years!*

JAN ØRFSTAD'S
HOLLYWOOD CINEMA

**SEE BOOKING FORM
FOR TICKET DETAILS**

Tickets are not refundable
BOOKINGS CLOSE 21 APRIL

**On Concert Day ALL tickets
will be \$25.00**



**MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE: All Payments must be received by
Tuesday April 21, when Bookings & Discount offer closes !**

**As I noted in our last issue, all our artists this year are seasoned
visitors to the Hollywood Cinema, they know us and we know them,
so this year will be akin to welcoming old friends back to visit!! Our
opening show this year features a very much-loved entertainer here
in Auckland, Mr John Atwell from Melbourne.**

Over the years we have enjoyed some wonderful afternoons of music from John Atwell, and over this coming ANZAC weekend we are going to enjoy a new dimension for us, as John accompanies a classic silent movie never before screened at the Hollywood Cinema – our tribute to the 100 year commemorations of WWI!.



Saturday April 25 at 2pm

Wings is a 1927 American silent war film set during the First World War produced by Lucien Hubbard, directed by William A. Wellman and released by Paramount Pictures. It stars Clara Bow, Charles "Buddy" Rogers, and Richard Arlen, and Gary Cooper appears in a role which helped launch his career in Hollywood.

The film, a romantic action-war picture, was shot on location on a budget of \$2 million at Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas between September 7, 1926 and April 7, 1927. Hundreds of extras and some 300 pilots were involved in the filming, including pilots and planes of the United States Army Air Corps which were brought in for the filming and to provide assistance and supervision. Wellman extensively rehearsed the scenes for the Battle of Saint-Mihiel over ten days with

some 3500 infantrymen on a battlefield made for the production on location. Although the cast and crew had much spare time during the filming because of weather delays, shooting conditions were intense, and Wellman frequently conflicted with the military officers brought in to supervise the picture.

Acclaimed for its technical prowess and realism upon release, the film became the yardstick against which future aviation films were measured, mainly because of its realistic air-combat sequences. It went on to win the first Academy Award for Best Picture at the first annual Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences award ceremony in 1929, the only silent film to do so. It also won the Academy Award for Best Engineering Effects (Roy Pomeroy). In 1997, *Wings* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant", and the film was re-released to Cinemark theatres to coincide with the 85th Anniversary for a limited run in May 2012.

Remember too, with our silent movie shows, the organ will "play you in" from 1.30pm, an opportunity to enjoy another element in the artistry of John Atwell.

Sunday April 26 at 2pm –The Music that got us Through the War Years!

To continue our tribute to these 100 year commemorations of the start of World War One, John will present a program of the popular music that got us through some very dark days in our history. From WWI to WWII, the Korean War of the 1950s and the Vietnam War of the 60s, some of the happiest and most liveliest music has been written and performed.

Think of the First World War – songs such as *Pack up your Troubles*, or *It's a long way to Tipperary*". Jump to the Second World War, we have some fun songs from entertainers such as Gracie Fields, Flanagan & Allen. Or you might think of Vera Lynn's *White Cliffs of Dover*, *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*, if a lover of the Big Band, well there is always the Glenn Miller Orchestra and their hit *In the Mood!* The Andrews Sisters had a big hit during the Korean War and for me, the Vietnam War of the 1960s brings music of my own growing-up years!

John Atwell has put a massive amount of work into researching some of the more popular songs of these eras, and we are looking forward to a fun afternoon of what could best be described as a true "pops" program!!



PRESENTED WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM



ASB Community Trust

Te Kaitiaki Putea o Tamaki o Tai Tokerau

supported by 'ASB

THIS & THAT FROM HERE & THERE.....

SUBS, SEASON TICKETS & DONATIONS.....

If you received a subscription renewal notice with this newsletter, you might like to consider the option of purchasing a "Season Ticket". These give you your own chosen seat at each and every show for the year, and if you cannot attend a certain show, you are more than welcome to lend your Season Ticket to a friend as your seat will remain empty if you do not attend. Do remember however, your friend will need to borrow your Season Ticket to claim your seat, and then you need it back afterwards, as the ticket **MUST** be presented to the Ushers on the day, for you to claim the seat. See details on your Membership Renewal Form on how to request a Season Ticket for 2015 – it includes your membership of *The Friends of the Wurlitzer*, your attending the Club Afternoon on Sunday March 8 and your chosen seat at each and every Wurlitzer Show for 2015.

Of course our standard membership still stands at \$20.00 per year, the Club Doo and all the shows are optional extras.

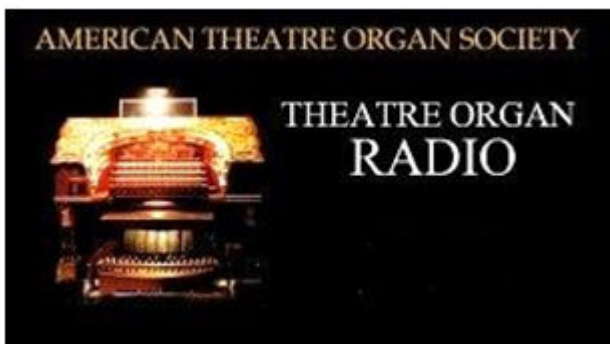
If you did not receive a subscription renewal form, well rest assured that you are all good to the end of 2015!

While John Palmer our Treasurer just loves seeing money in our bank account,

please.... DO NOT PAY MONEY INTO THE TRUST'S BANK ACCOUNT

unless you have emailed or spoken on the phone with Jan Nancekivell, our Ticket & Membership Secretary. We will then be on the look-out for your payment and it will not be lost in the mass on banking transactions in our account.

Donations and/or bequests help to support the ongoing operation of the Wurlitzer Organ at the Hollywood Cinema in Avondale. The Organ is owned and operated by the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland, for the enjoyment and entertainment of our friends and supporters. The Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland is a registered Charitable Trust making donations tax deductible. We thank our friends and supporters for their continuing interest and support. Our Charities Commission Number is 10966



**HOP ON THE INTERNET AND CHECK OUT
THE AMERICAN THEATRE ORGAN
SOCIETY'S WEBSITE!**

**WHILE THERE, CLICK ON THE
"ATOS RADIO" LINK AND LISTEN TO
SOME GREAT MUSIC ON OUR
FAVOURITE INSTRUMENT**

www.atos.org/radio

CLOSING CHORDS.....

While we don't like our humble publication to be a constant obituary column, on odd occasions we will make mention of someone who has made a major contribution to the theatre organ scene either here in New Zealand, or internationally.

Your scribe was particularly saddened to read of the passing of one of the theatre organ world's finest teachers of theatre organ style playing, with a list of students who rose to the highest level of concert playing, **John Herman Ferguson, Jr.** passed away in Indianapolis on January 26, 2015 at the age of 79. He died peacefully in his sleep following some health issues.



John Ferguson made a name for himself playing Hammond Organ with piano at fine lounges and restaurants across the USA. He began teaching in earnest while working as the Music Director at the **Paramount Music Palace** in Indianapolis, IN, where he was instrumental in the design and installation of its famous Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ. The Paramount Music Palace was a front-liner in the halcyon days of Wurlitzer equipped restaurants of the 1970s and 1980s.

John's impact on the modern world of theatre organ playing cannot be measured in simple terms. We who listen to the great artists tutored by this teacher have been and will continue to be the beneficiaries of his deft touch and sensitive ear.

When visiting Indianapolis back in 1997, I had the greatest thrill of meeting the "gentleman" who was such a mentor, teacher and friend to my closest friend, Jelani Eddington. Here at the Hollywood Cinema we have, over the years, been thrilled and entertained by some of the USA's leading exponents of this art form, many of whom have been under John Ferguson's tutelage. Jelani Eddington, Barry Baker, Mark Herman, and Martin Ellis to name a few!

The theatre organ world has lost a great and wonderful man.

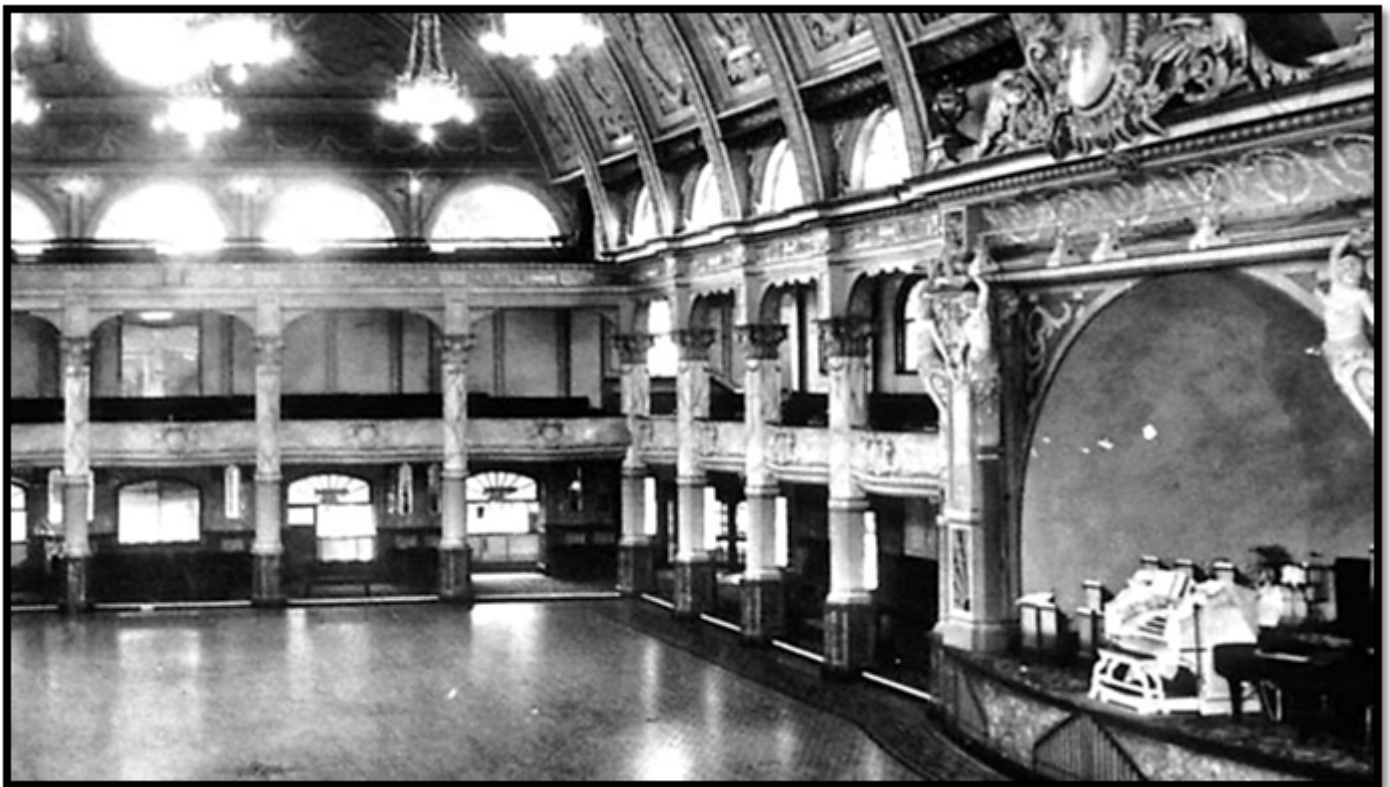
Through **Facebook**, organist Donna Parker noted;

Today has been a day of remembering so many of life's treasured moments that included John Ferguson. Our gang built Roaring 20s in Grand Rapids, then on to Indianapolis to build Paramount Music Palace. And the kids came... Martin first, then Dwight, Jelani, Barry, Jim, Mark... you left the world with not only your beautiful music, but you taught so many others to sing their song too. You will be missed, dear friend, but what memories we have! I know I have been blessed because of you... 'deed I do!



OPENING CHORDS.....

On a happier note, we can announce a "birth" in the theatre organ world! Though not a person, this is actually a "new" theatre organ – Blackpool's Empress Ballroom has a Wurlitzer organ once again.



The Empress Ballroom back in the 1930s with its original Wurlitzer organ. The organ chambers were above the stage and spoke out through a grill work in the ceiling. BBC Archive.

Back in the good old, bad old days, Blackpool could claim FIVE theatre organs in this bouncy, breezy seaside resort town. *The Tower Ballroom, The Opera House, The Empress Ballroom, The Palace Ballroom* and the *Odeon Theatre*. Blackpool has been famous for theatre organ entertainment, brought about by the legendary **Reginald Dixon** who played the Wurlitzer organ in the Tower Ballroom for dancing for close on forty years! The other venues had their "star names", but it really was Dixon at the Tower and Horace Finch at the Empress that were the real crowd pleasers.



ABOVE: Horace Finch at the Empress Ballroom Wurlitzer 1935

LEFT- Reginald Dixon at the Tower Ballroom Wurlitzer - 1935



The Blackpool Wintergardens Complex, viewed from the Blackpool Tower, and home to the Blackpool Opera House and Empress Ballroom.

BBC Archive

Until recently, only two of these original Wurlitzer installations survived in Blackpool, the *Tower Ballroom*, (pictured below) still played for dancing seven days a week for seven months of the year and the *Opera House*. The latter was given a major refurbishment some years back and has now become the "concert" Wurlitzer for Blackpool.



The newsletter of *The Theatre Organ Club* in Britain, reported the news of the return to Blackpool of a third theatre organ. Editor Grant Pilcher wrote....

Your editor was delighted to be a part of the team present at the Empress Ballroom in the Winter Gardens at Blackpool on 7th December, ensuring the organ was ready for the grand opening in this wonderful ballroom. Since the much regretted removal of the original Wurlitzer in 1970 there has been a desire by many to hear the strains of an organ back in the Empress now remarkably achieved by Steve Tovey and his loyal band of helpers in the **Cannock Chase Organ Club**.

This has been very much a team effort, be it at the "coalface" with wire, felt, leather and paint or in providing parts, funding or just encouragement. The role of honour is a long one, but the sheer dedication and hard work has ensured the project has been fulfilled. Getting literally tons of organ parts on the roof of the Ballroom is no mean feat! We should also mention the wonderful support forthcoming from the staff of the Winter Gardens who have been superb. We must remember this is a public commercial venue and cooperation is important to build the necessary goodwill.

The organ is something of a hybrid but those present were more than satisfied that it sounded "right". The wonderful acoustics are a big part of the sound but the pipework has been carefully assembled by Steve to get as close to the original "sound" as possible. An original Blackpool Tibia is matched by an early Wurlitzer example to give a wonderful Tibia chorus to roll around the ballroom. Most of the pipework is Wurlitzer but there are two fine examples of Booths of Leeds work in the English Horn and Krummet, with Compton work in the pedal offset pipework department as well as a fine 'Cello and a superb Tuba. Booth's support in repairing and regulating pipework has been important to the success of the project.



The basis of the organ is Compton in as much as chests, regulators and relays are all from the Cosham Compton. The console (pictured left) is also from that organ, ingeniously adapted to give the look of a Granada Style Wurlitzer.

The project still has work planned to finish it off. A saxophone has yet to be installed and there are plans to update the specification at the console. There is also a piano on the way. It was however agreed to get the organ out into the public realm as soon as was

practical. This proved to be a good plan as over 700 people were in the Ballroom on December 7th to enjoy the music, dancing and company of friends. There were many organ fans, well known organists and representatives of the clubs and societies all over the country present, having travelled many miles to be there. More importantly, there were also large numbers of dancers and music lovers who are the people who will ensure the organ's popularity going forward, doing what it was designed to do.

There was a good deal of media coverage on the day and afterwards including television exposure. Everyone there was delighted to have Jill Steele (Reginald Dixon's daughter) together with her family with us. She performed the opening ceremony with the Mayor of Blackpool. Mr Dixon's biographer, Peter Ashman, was also present, making a speech to open proceedings. The first few notes of "Beside the seaside" set the scene for an enchanting afternoon with the contrasting sounds of Cameron Lloyd and David Lobban at the console. As the event unfolded it was clear that all the old sounds we enthusiasts associate with that venue were there and the ghost of Horace Finch, (*The former star organist at the Empress - Ed*) was surely with us on the "Prom prom promenade" complete with bass drum!



***The Empress Ballroom Organ Opening. Console on the left of the balcony.
(Photo by Canon Quentin Bellamy)***

MORE OPENING CHORDS

Still more good news to report..... With the retirement of Founding Trustee and House Organist Mr Ron Clark, at the end of last year, the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland needed to fill Ron's shoes and comply with our legal requirements for a specified number of Trustees.

I am thrilled to advise that **Graham McBain** has accepted the invitation to join the Trust. Graham has been a *Friend of the Wurlitzer* at the Hollywood Cinema for a number of years now, and is a passionate theatre organ enthusiast. Graham brings a huge amount of knowledge on electronic circuitry to us and proved his worth last year when, during some remedial work on the organ console, some of the I.C. units failed rendering the organ unplayable. Following a phone call or three to John Andrews in Sydney, whose theatre organ control system drives the Hollywood Wurlitzer, Graham was able to source the necessary components, and complete the intricate job of soldering and installing them in the console.

Moving forward, Graham's knowledge and skills will be much appreciated and it is great to welcome a fresh face, and some new thoughts and ideas on the way we do the things we do. Welcome on board Graham!



**AT THE HOLLYWOOD WURLITZER –
“POPS ON PIPES” FOR 2015**

**PRESENTED WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM THE
ASB COMMUNITY TRUST**

CONCERT TICKET ENQUIRIES & RESERVATIONS

JAN NANCEKIVELL – PH: 522-8944

OR E-MAIL: JANDENISE@XTRA.CO.NZ

*TO ENCOURAGE INTEREST FROM YOUNG PEOPLE, WE OFFER AGES 10 - 18,
ACCOMPANIED BY A PAYING ADULT, FREE ADMISSION TO OUR SHOWS.
NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE SILENT MOVIE FUND RAISING EVENTS*

*** PLEASE NOTE THAT THE UNAUTHORISED VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING
OF CONCERTS AT THE HOLLYWOOD CINEMA IS NOT PERMITTED ***

**DON'T FORGET TO BOOK FOR OUR
“FRIENDS OF THE WURLITZER” CLUB AFTERNOON
BEING HELD ON SUNDAY MARCH 8 @ 2pm.**



**Join us for music on the
Wurlitzer pipe organ,
Featuring;
MARGARET MASSEY &
CAMPBELL CRAWFORD!**

**Afternoon tea,
Lucky Door Prizes and
A Video Presentation of
theatre organ Clips
from the World-Wide-Web!**

**TICKETS \$10.00 each
Bring your friends along too!
PLEASE BOOK WITH
JAN NANCEKIVELL
Ph: 522-8944 asap!**

**BOOKINGS CLOSE TUESDAY
MARCH 3.**

**SATURDAY APRIL 25
(ANZAC DAY) at 2pm –
"Sounds of Silents –
WINGS 1927 Silent Movie"**

To open our year, we are bringing Melbourne's John Atwell over to present our small tribute to the on-going commemorations of the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War.

We have had many fun afternoons of music with John Atwell over the years as he has performed alongside an Auckland based 1920s Dance Band, piano, trumpet and vocalist... Now a new dimension as John accompanies a great classic from the silent movie era, "**Wings**" made in 1927 and regarded as one of the last great classics from the silent movie era.

See and hear how the Wurlitzer organ brings the silent movie to life through the power of music!!

**SUNDAY APRIL 26 at 2pm –
"The Music that Got Us
Through the War Years!"**

John Atwell returns to the console, this time to share some of the most well-known music ever written.

The program features music from some of the darkest days in our history... The First World War, World War 2, the Korean War of the 50s and the Vietnam War of the 60s. Each period saw music written and songs sung that will ever remain in the public mind and will always be associated with that particular theatre of war.

Most of this music turns out to be some of the liveliest and happiest music ever written, again all designed to lift our spirits and give us the strength to soldier on!!

Join us for an afternoon of fun music at this, our tribute to the music from the war years.



**FOR A GREAT CUP OF COFFEE
BEFORE THE SHOW and
DURING THE INTERVAL.**

**PARKED OUTSIDE THE
HOLLYWOOD CINEMA
FROM 1.30pm
ON WURLITZER SHOW DAYS**

SUNDAY JUNE 21, at 2pm – Chris McPhee & Rosanne Hosking (AUS)

Over recent years, Adelaide's Chris McPhee has also given us some great music at the Hollywood Cinema. As one of the younger generation of Australian theatre organists, Chris enjoys the opportunity to work with other talented artists and for this trip, he is joined by Rosanne Hosking also from Adelaide.

With over 20 years' experience in the entertainment industry, Rosanne's genuine love and passion for singing and performance shines through in everything she does. Possessing a natural warmth and an endearing quality, she is able to connect with audiences and students, young and old.

Chris and Rosanne have performed several shows together with theatre organ in Australia, and for our show, which they've titled "**All Stops Out**", Rosanne will demonstrate her great vocal skills as Chris accompanies her on the Wurlitzer pipe organ. It will definitely be a "Pops" program that includes some of the hits of Edith Piaf, some Light Opera, the great Burt Bacharach, Andrew Lloyd Webber and much more.....

SUNDAY AUGUST 30 at 2pm – Jelani Eddington (USA)

Now a real thrill as we welcome back to the Hollywood, one of the USA's younger generation theatre organists.

Jelani is a true consummate musician and over the years, he has become a much-loved entertainer to Auckland audiences, since his first visit in 1996 at the age of twenty-two.

Definitely a program that will feature music for all tastes, from the classics, movie & TV themes, the 20s & 30s, and right on up to today – "Pops on Pipes" this certainly is!

A great afternoon indeed is in store with this very popular international touring artist.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3 at 2pm
THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
1925 Silent Movie"

Another "great" from the silent movie era, and for this screening, the USA's Dave Wickerham will be at the console of the Hollywood Wurlitzer to use all the organ's resources to bring the silent screen to life.

Currently enjoying a resurgence of interest, this 1925 silent horror classic, stars Lon Chaney, Sr. in the title role of the deformed Phantom who haunts the Paris Opera House, causing murder and mayhem in an attempt to make the woman he loves a star. The movie remains most famous for Chaney's ghastly, self-devised make-up, which was kept a studio secret until the film's premiere.

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4 at 2pm
Dave Wickerham (USA)

In a complete change of pace from the drama of the silent movie, Dave Wickerham will share some lively toe-tapping music with us in another true "Pops" style program.

Who could forget Dave's last visit back in 2012, when he invited his audience to note down their favourite requests during the interval, and then featured almost every item requested during the second half! This proving the amazing virtuosity of this great keyboard entertainer

The audience yelled for MORE! So in answer to that call, here he is!

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8 at 2pm – “PIPES n’ PIZZAZZ”

Scott Harrison (AUS) with Tauranga’s Bay Dixie Band)

Join us for a fun afternoon of “Dixie Jazz” when the Wurlitzer pipe organ and Tauranga’s Bay Dixie Band join forces to make music together.

The combination of the Dixie band and pipe organ recreates some of the hottest sounds in music since the great Fats Waller first featured this mix back in the 1920s.

Scott Harrison from Melbourne and the Bay Dixie Band were featured at the Hollywood Cinema last year and our audience were VERY vocal in their desire to hear more of this magic combination!

What a spectacular way to conclude this vintage 1926 Wurlitzer pipe organ’s 32nd year of entertaining Auckland at the Hollywood Cinema.



**THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST
OF AUCKLAND**
(REGISTERED CHARITABLE TRUST – CC10966)
**PRESERVING AUCKLAND’S HISTORIC 1926
WURLITZER PIPE ORGAN,
AT JAN GREFSTAD’S
HOLLYWOOD CINEMA,
AVONDALE, AUCKLAND, N.Z.**
*“FEELING THE MUSIC”
FOR 32 YEARS AT THE HOLLYWOOD CINEMA*
WWW.THEATREORGANS.COM/WOTA

**Organ Piano and Keyboard Society of Auckland
98 Captain Springs Rd, Onehunga**

Mini Concerts every 4th Wednesday in the month with a featured theme are;

- Wednesday March 25th 10.30am – *Transport*
- Wednesday April 22nd 10.30am – *War Years*

Next OPKSA Concert:

- **Sunday 19th April at 2.pm featuring “Dave Hallam Trio”.**

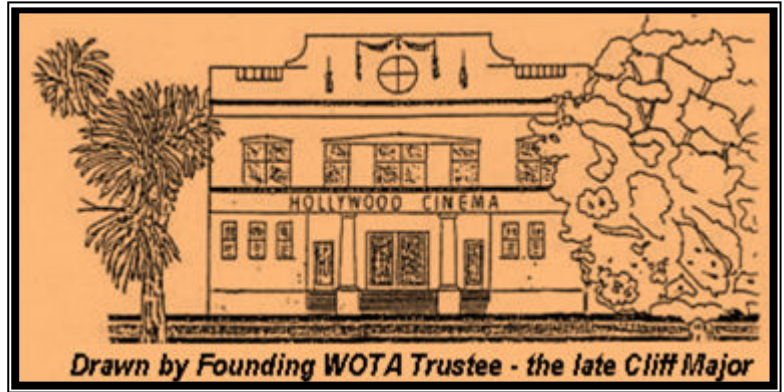
Contact Rob or Barbara on PH: 838-7346

**THE
WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST
of AUCKLAND**

(REG. CHARITABLE TRUST No.10966)

Visit us at:

www.theatreorgans.com/wota



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**FRIENDS of the WURLITZER MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
and CONCERT TICKETS:** Mrs Jan Nancekivell PH: 522-8944

