

PIPES

&

PERCUSSION

172
FEB-MAR
2016

**NEWSLETTER FOR
THE FRIENDS OF THE WURLITZER**

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

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

NEW YEAR GREETINGS !

Hi there, as I write this we are about to roll into February, so 2016 is well underway. However as this is our first newsletter of the year, I will stand by my "New Year Greetings". ☺

Further in this issue I have more good news surrounding our possible new home at the Playhouse Theatre and at last we have hit on a workable concept for the organ chamber.

On the show front, we have our **Club Afternoon on Sunday March 20** and Great Britain's **Chris Powell in concert on Thursday June 9**, both at the Playhouse Theatre, featuring electronic and digital organs respectively. There is a possibility of a third show later in the year and as soon as details are finalised these will be published in the newsletter.

Meantime, we do fervently hope that you will stay with us, as together; we keep each other company until that golden day when Auckland's historic Wurlitzer pipe organ sings once again!

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

THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST
OF AUCKLAND
INVITE YOU TO OUR

**“FRIENDS OF THE WURLITZER”
CLUB AFTERNOON**

**THE PLAYHOUSE THEATRE
15 GLENDALE ROAD, GLEN EDEN**

SUNDAY 20 MARCH @ 2pm
ADMISSION IS BY TICKET ONLY
\$12.00 per person

NO DOOR SALES or SEAT RESERVES
DOORS OPEN at 2pm

**A great chance for us to get together and
check out this lovely venue, which might become
a new home for our Wurlitzer pipe organ.**

Do join us as we enjoy;

- *A light afternoon tea on arrival*
- *Lucky Ticket Prize draw*
- *Music from Ian Johnston playing your requests
on the Baldwin Electronic Organ*
- *20 minute Video Presentation of highlights from the
Wurlitzer organ during its years at the Hollywood Cinema*

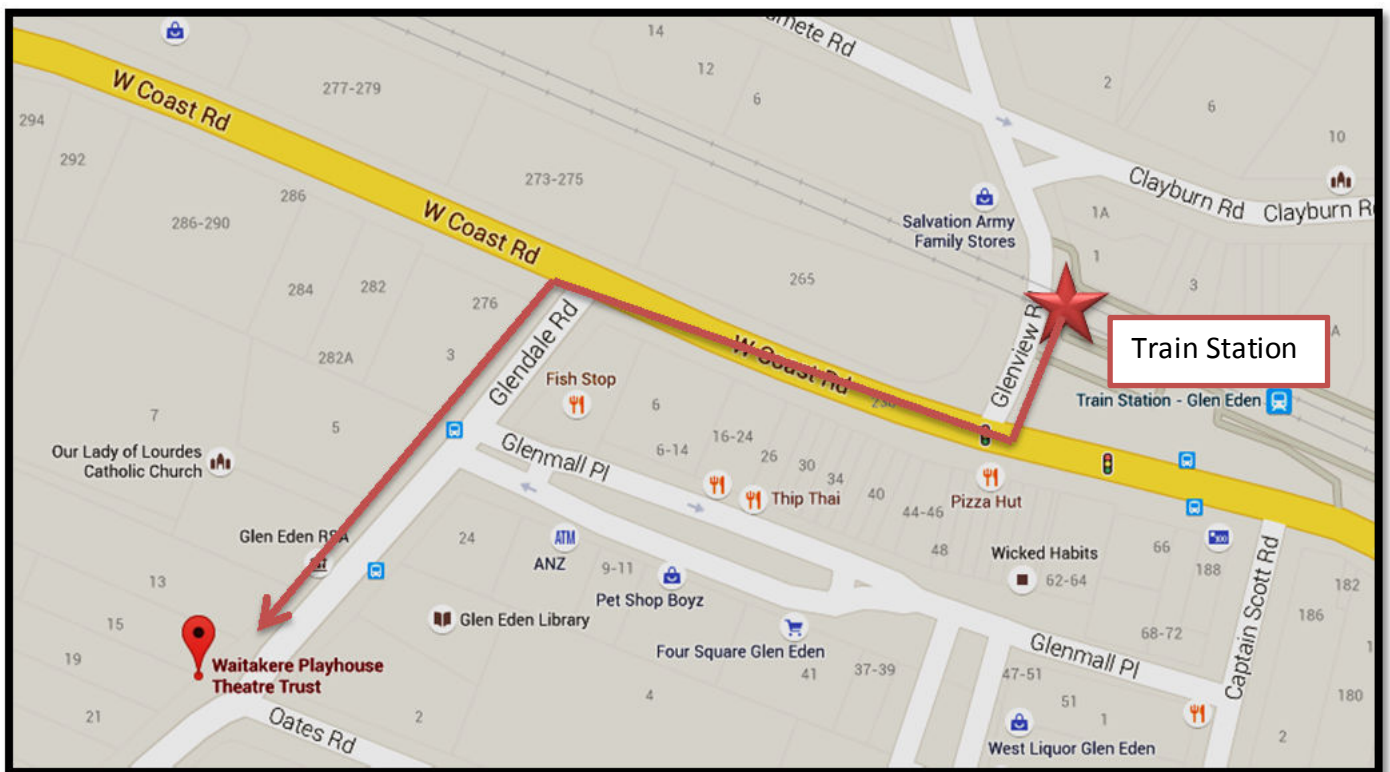
**Remember – NO DOOR SALES !
See your Sub Renewal or the Booking Form
enclosed with this newsletter – there will be no reminders
BOOK NOW! - BOOKINGS CLOSE on March 15**

The Playhouse Theatre is only ten minutes' drive further west from the Hollywood Cinema, and is VERY accessible by train.



The Swanson train service is very regular, in fact I have used the train several times to attend meetings at the Playhouse and the theatre is an easy 5 minute walk from the train station as seen below.

There are limited parking spaces at the back of the Playhouse, these are marked with a "PH" for those coming by car. Street parking available as well.



So here's what we have planned for this years "Club Doo".....

- As the Playhouse theatre has a **"No Food & Drink"** policy in the auditorium, we will begin with Afternoon Tea in the "Supper Room" at the front of the theatre.
- Following afternoon tea, we move into the auditorium, where we will share with you all, the proposed plans for the installation of the Wurlitzer organ.

- Ian Johnston will play your requests for 30 minutes on his Baldwin “travelling” electronic organ. We will have a pad set up during afternoon tea for you to jot down your favourite tune for Ian to play.

Ian Johnston has been part of our House Staff helping out with ushering at our shows for many years. Few will know what talent lies beneath those torch carrying hands! Ian began his 9 year piano tuition at the age of 5. He was playing in 3-4 piece dance bands at the age of 14. Because of his ability to play by ear he was never without opportunities and this continued until he bought his first electronic organ in the late 1960s. It was then that he began playing solo, transporting his organ to venues sometimes up to 7 nights a week. Nowadays he only performs the occasional concert playing audience requests of popular 1920-1980 music



- The afternoon will conclude with a nostalgic trip down memory lane, as we enjoy some of the more notable highlights in a 20 minute video tribute to our years at the Hollywood Cinema with the Wurlitzer organ. Artists include; *Mark Herman & Anthony Snitker, Margaret Hall with Brett’s New Internationals 1920s style band, Chris McPhee & Ryan Heggie*, and to conclude, the spectacular *Robert Wolfe!*

If you are new to the *Friends of the Wurlitzer*, this video will give you a taste of some of the fun afternoons of music we have in-store, when the Wurlitzer organ hopefully returns to the Auckland music scene next year.

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

2016 – THE YEAR OF MUSICAL RATIONING

It is going to be a quiet year musically while the organ chamber is built and the organ gradually installed at the Playhouse (hopefully). However our biggest dilemma currently is finance.

Instead of breaking even with our shows as previous, with no other income, it is imperative that whatever shows we do present, some form of profit is needed to help cover the on-going storage costs of the Wurlitzer. Auckland has a number of electronic organ clubs all putting on concerts, and it is not our intention to step on their toes by doing what they already do, our point of difference was and still is the Wurlitzer pipe organ. However we do need to keep you, our loyal supporters, “engaged” and staying with us until the Wurlitzer is music-making again.

With this in mind, we have Chris Powell from Great Britain visiting us in June and we are currently looking at one more event before the year is over – hopefully we will have details in our next newsletter.

For those whose memberships are expiring, your Membership Renewal Form is enclosed with this issue of your newsletter. If you did not receive a renewal letter, rest easy as your membership is current through to the end on 2016. ☺

A friendly reminder too about paying on the internet.....

BEFORE YOU MAKE A PAYMENT- call **Jan Nancekivell FIRST** to confirm the total value of what you are paying for and the details such as whether it is membership sub, or tickets for the Club Afternoon.

If you're making payments to us for any other reason, please contact John Palmer; Phone **(07) 855-3267**, or email, **john.palmer@xtra.co.nz** and he will advise you what details we need.

For Subs & Ticket Enquiries contact Jan Nancekivell; Phone **522-8944**, or email, **jandenise@xtra.co.nz**

When writing or updating your will, please consider a gift towards the ongoing operation of Auckland's historic Wurlitzer pipe organ. 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 of our work. Our Charities Commission Number is 10966

PLAYHOUSE THEATRE UPDATE

FOTW member Graham Upton has created a concept drawing for the Organ Chamber to be built at the back of the building, with the swell shutters opening into the back wall of the stage.

Our organ tech in Melbourne, Julien Arnold, has created a mock layout on paper and it would seem that he can accommodate all the 15 ranks of pipes in the one large chamber – it will be a tight fit, but is still workable for tuning and maintenance.

The “noisy” mechanical parts of the organ such as regulators and tremulants are being installed in a sub-chamber under the floor of the Organ Chamber, which will quieten the organ “wind noise” down greatly.

The Percussion Section is planned to go in a small chamber at the back of the stage up above a walkway that connects to the Green Room.

At this stage the *Waitakere Playhouse Theatre Trust* who administer the theatre, seem very happy with this

third design concept and once they officially approve this, it’s then off to the Council for building approval.

There is concern from some members of the *Playhouse Theatre Incorporated*, who are the resident theatrical group at the Playhouse, that the organ will see them ousted from their home, not to mention other negative effects that the installation of the Wurlitzer will have on the theatre.

It is sad that this misinformation has created a situation that is totally unnecessary, and dampens slightly, the win-win for all parties should the organ come to the Playhouse. We are working with the WPTT to try and quell their fears that this is *not* a take-over, and that we *can* work together in harmony. The organ only uses the theatre for approximately 21 days scattered throughout the year.

We certainly never dominated or dictated terms to the Hollywood Manager, we were very much there by good-grace only, and we knew it!

WELCOME ABOARD!

It is a thrill to welcome a new face to the **Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland** – the group that own and care for the former Regent Theatre Auckland, Wurlitzer pipe organ.

Margaret Cox has had a career in banking, spent time living up in the Pacific Islands while her late husband was looking after Air New Zealand’s office up there and now in retirement (*she says laughing!*) Margaret is a

volunteer host out at the Auckland Airport, meeting and greeting passengers from international flights.

She has been a willing volunteer on our House Staff for the last year or so while we were resident at the Hollywood Cinema. She brings huge enthusiasm for our beloved Wurlitzer to the table and we are so pleased to welcome her aboard

2015 IN REVIEW

For your interest, we reprint some of the more newsy items from the 2015 Annual Report of the Chairman of the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland.

The Shows in 2015:

2015 opened in the usual way with a successful and fun Club Afternoon for our *Friends of the Wurlitzer*.

Then in April, Melbourne's John Atwell was in town for an ANZAC Weekend presentation featuring the silent movie "Wings" and a program titled "The Music that got us through the War Years". The movie "Wings" was John's first foray into a "main feature" silent movie score and he sure brought this 2 hour movie marathon to life.



June saw Chris McPhee and Rosanne Hosking from Adelaide (*pictured left*) give us a spectacular show, the enjoyment of which was somewhat marred when we were advised by the Hollywood Cinema manager that the building was going on the market and the organ must be out by September 30!

Our October and November shows had to be cancelled with our already booked August show featuring the USA's Jelani Eddington, bringing to a close 32 years of music-making at the Hollywood Cinema by our Wurlitzer pipe organ.

Obviously, our statistics are somewhat skewed by the short concert season,

with our average audience numbers attending shows rising slightly from 226 in 2014 to 241 this year.

As a matter of interest the Trust raised \$2366.74 for the Hollywood Cinema from the "Wings" silent movie show.

Once again this year, our application to *Foundation North* (formerly the *ASB Community Trust*) for funding support for the five planned "Pops Concert" shows was accepted. This funding was for the following essential operating costs;

- Organ Tuning = \$540 per show.
- Venue Hire = \$517.50 per show.
- occupation of the stage by the organ chambers = \$720.00 per show
- Coast Radio Advert Campaign = \$2825.55
- NZ Herald Advertising/Promo (portion) = \$600.00 per show

Total applied for was \$14,538.60

Total Awarded by Foundation North was \$10,000.00

As the full total was not spent as intended, *Foundation North* permitted us to transfer the balance of \$3500 to assist in the cost of removal of the Wurlitzer organ from the Hollywood Cinema and putting it into storage.

Promotion

Once again I uploaded information and promotion for our shows to the *Eventfinda* website with us receiving hits up in the thousands for all shows. It proves that although all website viewers of the event did not actually attend the show, we do have a presence and people are aware of our work. All the main media sources such as the NZ Herald feed from *Eventfinda* and populate their own "What's On" columns from info on this site.

I also continued to maintain the Trust's website and keep show information updated. Our promotion is boosted by the small number of printed posters, circulated by some Trustees and FOTW members to libraries and music shops, together with a shared ad with the cinema placed in the NZ Herald promoting each show over two weekends prior.

The Trust resolved to run an advertising campaign with "Coast 104.5 FM" in a bid to boost numbers. It had been hoped that the *Foundation North* funding might assist with this but the grant did not cover this expense, so WOTA carried this cost itself.

Organ Works

Our biggest project for 2015 was ultimately the dismantling, crating and transport to storage of our heritage 1926 Wurlitzer pipe organ.

Quotes were sourced with urgency and an application made to *The Trust Community Foundation* who awarded WOTA \$25k.

The finished job actually cost \$32,148.16.



Lead by WOTA Trustee Graham McBain, a great team of volunteers came forward to assist Melbourne Organ Builder Julian Arnold, his son Mark and Mark's fiancé Robyn. Julien together with our team had the Wurlitzer out of the Hollywood in a mere ten days – this despite statements from another organ builder that it would take at least a month or more to dismantle, crate and transport the instrument away. It now resides in a safe, dry and stable atmosphere at a Kennards Storage Facility.



Laurie Mathews camera captured the organ console on its trolley about to leave on the journey to Kennards storage facility.

The Hollywood's manager had originally stated that the two plinths that housed the console and piano respectively could remain in situ together with the organ chambers on the stage. Our only requirement was to ensure that the holes through the stage floor, that once carried the organ wind lines, be patched up. However the builder doing this work stated he could not fulfil this task with the chambers in situ, so the decision had to be taken to demolish the chambers. This cost was shared with the Hollywood 50/50, an unexpected expense that WOTA certainly did not need.

When the organ removal invoices were totalled up and submitted to TTCF for confirmation of our expenditure, although we had made significant savings, there were additional costs such as the Chamber demolition, that were not foreseen and we requested that the surplus balance be used to cover these invoices, however they declined the request, and a sum of some \$4027.06 had to be paid back to TTCF and WOTA had to find a further \$3306.25 to cover the Chamber demolition and stage floor repairs..

WOTA has only enough funds to cover the storage costs of the instrument until the start of 2017.

Possible New Home for the ex-Regent Wurlitzer pipe organ

Shortly after news went public on the sale of the Hollywood and the fate of our historic Wurlitzer organ; we were approached by people associated with the

Playhouse Theatre in Glen Eden, suggesting we might consider it as a possible new home for the Wurlitzer organ.

Over the following months, negotiations began, discussing possible concepts for the location of the organ's infrastructure and this has been a slow, but steady process. The WPTT are determined in their hope that the organ might move there, and are proceeding with due diligence to ensure that the other parties at the Playhouse are not disadvantaged by the organ's installation. The WPTT have also co-opted WOTA Chairman James Duncan.

It would appear the best solution is for an annex to be built on the end of the building at the back of the stage and this to house all the pipe work. A smaller chamber built above the rear of the stage will house the percussions. Console and piano will be installed in the orchestra pit at the front of the stage. The WPTT are hoping for building to be completed by mid-2016.

Julien Arnold is a key advisor in these negotiations and Trustee Neil Warrington is Project Leader and coordinator.

General

- Jan Nancekivell, continued to look after the critical roles of Concert Ticket Secretary and Membership Secretary for the Friends of the Wurlitzer.
- Neil Warrington managed the Open Console Sessions until August when the organ was removed from the Hollywood.
- As we moved closer to "O.R-Day" – (Organ Removal), I must admit to being comforted by the stalwart commitment shown by Trustees, as demands on their time was tested with almost weekly meetings, either face-to-face or via Skype. I think it true to say that this dramatic turn of events could have seen our demise, but it actually had the opposite effect. Through your very vocal support of my leadership and the dedication for the organ's survival that you all demonstrated, we survived our darkest days! For this I give you my heart-felt appreciation.



James Duncan

Chairman - Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES....

PRESENTED WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM
FOUNDATION NORTH

CONCERT TICKET ENQUIRIES & RESERVATIONS

JAN NANCEKIVELL – PH: 522-8944

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

THE PLAYHOUSE THEATRE
15 GLENDALE ROAD, GLEN EDEN

SUNDAY MARCH 20 at 2.pm – *Friends of the Wurlitzer "Club Afternoon"*

An opportunity to view the future new home of the Wurlitzer organ. The afternoon will include a light afternoon tea, your requests played by Ian Johnston on the Baldwin electronic organ and a video presentation.

This is not a public event – FOTW members only and their friends are very welcome too.

THURSDAY JUNE 9 at 2pm – *Chris Powell (UK)*

Despite the Wurlitzer not being available, Chris Powell's lively "Blackpool Style" of playing the organ can still be enjoyed on a digital organ.

Thanks to *Musical Sounds* we will have an Allen digital theatre organ and with the support of Paul Solt, a Roland keyboard will provide a thrilling contrast in sounds and playing styles.

A great afternoon indeed is in store with this very popular international touring artist. ***Please Note: this is NOT a Sunday show – Tickets on sale in April!***



THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST OF AUCKLAND

(A REGISTERED
CHARITABLE TRUST - CC 10966)

PRESERVING THE HISTORIC
FORMER REGENT THEATRE AUCKLAND,
1926 WURLITZER PIPE ORGAN.

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**THE
WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST
of AUCKLAND**

(REG. CHARITABLE TRUST No. 10966)

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**FRIENDS of the WURLITZER MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
and CONCERT TICKETS:**

Mrs Jan Nancekivell

PH: 522-8944



**FOUNDATION
NORTH**

*Te Kaitiaki Pūtea ō
Tāmaki ō Tai Tokerau*

**CONTINUING TO SUPPORT
THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST OF
AUCKLAND**