

### PIPES

C.



### PERCUSSION

### 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 C/- PO BOX 6707, WELLESLEY ST, AUCKLAND 1141, N.Z. VISIT US ON Facebook OR AT: www.theatreorgans.com/wota

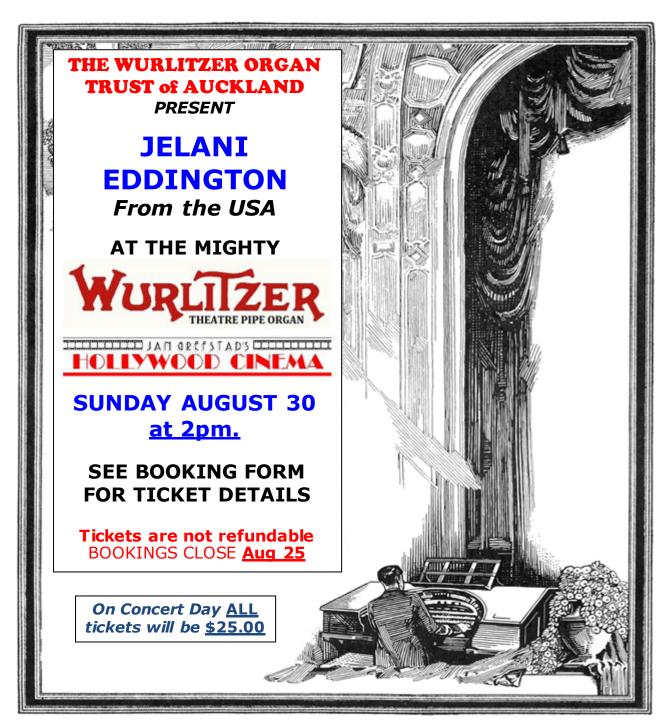
#### LEST WE FORGET.....

We opened our 2015 Season of Shows over ANZAC Weekend with two very different afternoons of music, commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of WWI. On ANZAC Day itself, Melbourne organist John Atwell accompanied the 1927 silent movie "Wings", and then on Sunday John was back at the Wurlitzer for a program of music featuring music that got us through the war years.

**Sunday June 21** will see the welcome return of Adelaide's **Chris McPhee** joined by singer and entertainer **Rosanne Hosking** in a show titled "**Two's Company**". With the theatre now just over half full, there are still some good seats available. Please contact our Ticket Secretary Jan Nancekivell **before** Tuesday 16 June, by this date all payments must be in and bookings close. After that date, it's door sales only on the day, from 1.15pm at \$25.00 a ticket.

Our *feature show* for this issue is another welcome return to the Hollywood, for this **Sunday August 30** show we are to be entertained by one of the USA's leading exponents of this wonderful art form - **Jelani Eddington**.

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



### MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE: All Payments must be received by Tuesday August 25, when Bookings & Discount offer closes!

In 1996, at the age of twenty-two, the then rising star of American theatre organ, **Jelani Eddington**, made his very first concert tour of New Zealand and Australia, with Auckland being the very first port-of-call. So the Hollywood Cinema was Jelani's first contact with a "Down-Under" audience. This began what has become a very close friendship between Auckland and Jelani, with him taking an on-going and very active interest in the fortunes of this small group down the bottom end of the World.

Over the following years, Jelani graduated from Yale Law School to become a practising lawyer and his musical career took off at the same time. Through all of this, Jelani made return visits to play for us here in Auckland, and marvelled at

visit, each on the changes that were unfolding with the Hollywood Wurlitzer, progressed as it through major a upgrade and refurbishment project that took ten years to complete.

Jelani's last visit to us was back in 2011, and his comments on the now completed organ were thrilling to hear, justifying all the money and effort that had gone into transforming the Hollywood Wurlitzer



into a very concert-worthy and fun instrument at which to make music.

On reviewing my notes on Jelani Eddington's 2011 show, I recorded the buzz our audience had that afternoon, as they enjoyed such items as a selection of the hits of Bette Midler, a fascinating pot-pourri of themes from the James Bond movies and as New Zealand was hosting the Rugby World Cup, Jelani rightfully included the beautiful theme song from the 2011 RWC, "World in Union".

Nearly twenty years after his very first visit, it is with much pleasure that we welcome Jelani Eddington back to our shores. He has now become the USA's leading exponent of this musical art form, respected and revered throughout the theatre organ world. On this trip "Down-Under", Jelani is stopping off in Adelaide first, appearing at the Capri Theatre as one of the guest artists at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations of the South Australia Division of the Theatre Organ Society of Australia, over the weekend of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Following this, a welcome holiday here in Auckland is planned, which will include his tenth concert appearance at the Hollywood Cinema.

I urge you not to miss one of the theatre organ world's top entertainers, with a program of music that will as previously, feature items from today and yesterday – a true "Pops on Pipes" show!!

#### PRESENTED WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM



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

#### IN APPRECIATION....

With this issue of *Pipes & Percussion* our subscription rounds are now complete and once again, you have all dug deep and added a shilling or so with your subs, as a donation towards the work the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland does in preserving this mighty instrument, from Auckland's cinema and music heritage.

We were also thrilled to be advised last month, that Foundation North (formerly the ASB Community Trust) has once again provided some funding support towards our series of shows for 2015, and for this we are very grateful.

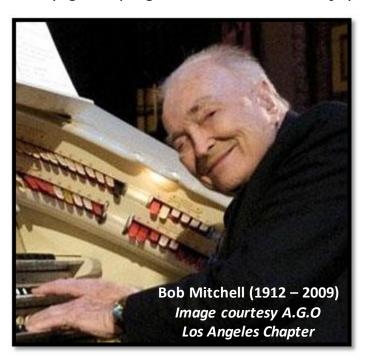
To all you wonderful people we say a hearty BIG "Thank You" – please know it is all very much appreciated, from \$5.00 to \$10.000!! We salute you all;

C.	Banks	V.	Duff	C.	Mountfort
D.	Barker	E.	Eyles	J.	Natali
D.	Barnard	J. & A.	Fryer	D.	Parker
A. L.	Bartlett	P.B.	Garlick	H.	Perkins
H.	Bawden	K.	Glenton	J.	Pettersen
D.	Billing	S.	Goddard	H.	Plesner
M.	Blaney	Р.	Goodier	J.	Prujean
J.	Bouwman	M.	Grace	R.	Reade
L. & J.	Boyd	D.	Handley	P.	Retter
C.	Bright	B.	Hemming	A. & A.	Rule
A.	Brooker	K.	Hill	E.	Stapleton
L.	Brooky	Juliet	Holdaway	B.	Sutton
C.	Carstairs	Jan	Holdaway	K.	Turner
T.	Clements	B.	Iversen	G.	Urquhart
P.	Corkery	A.	King	P.	Vellekoop
S.	Crawley	J.	Layzell	C & K.	Vickers
L.	Davey	Marie	Matheson	S.	Wait
G.J.	Davy	B & M.	Massey	N.	Warrington
R.D.	Dillon	G.	McBain	G.	Watt
H.A.	Dorbeck	V.	McMurtry	M.	White
K. & J.	Drury	1.	Mison	Foundation North	

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

### TEN YEARS AND A DREAM IS FINALLY REALISED ....

Back in 2005, your scribe together with the then Chairman of WOTA, Bill Mitchelhill, had the pleasure of attending the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the American Theatre Organ Society, hosted that year by the Los Angeles Chapter. Amongst some of the many great programs of music we enjoyed on a variety of theatre organs, was a



trip to Downtown L.A. and the historic Orpheum Theatre, one of the great "picture palaces" of the 1920s complete with its original Wurlitzer pipe organ!

It was here that I saw the 1927 silent movie "Wings" for the very first time, accompanied by one of the last remaining silent movie organists, 92 year old Bob Mitchell. The movie was a spectacular in every sense of the word and it was easy to see why it won "Best Picture" for 1927-1928 at the very first Academy Awards in 1929 – the only silent movie ever to do so!

On the coach ride back to our hotel after the movie, I noted to Bill that somehow, we had to share this

amazing movie with our Auckland audience, and I made it a "must-do" on my Bucket List. However, it was not until 2012 that the prospect of screening the movie at the Hollywood became a real possibility, when the movie was restored and released to mark its 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Last year we managed to obtain one of the restored copies of "Wings", and then my creative juices really began to flow! News of our House Organist Ron Clark's planned retirement at the end of 2014 only dampened my spirits slightly; as I recalled a conversation I had had with Melbourne's John Atwell.

John had noted that while he had accompanied the odd silent movie comedy "short", he really relished the opportunity to get creative with a full-length silent feature. Several emails and phone calls later saw us finally agree on ANZAC Weekend, with the Wurlitzer Organ Trust deciding that this would become our own small tribute to the on-going



commemorations of the  $100^{\text{th}}$  anniversary of WWI, the Gallipoli Campaign and all we as New Zealanders hold sacred, surrounding this day of remembrance.

We managed to get John a copy of the movie and he really sank his teeth into researching what information was available about the musical score written for the movie. John's final score comprised a mixture of well-known composer's works, themes specially written for the original release of the movie, and segments composed by himself especially for this event, including opening titles and marches used at several points through the movie, as well as on-the-spot improvisation which is a necessary skill for a silent movie organist.

With the proceeds from our silent movie shows going direct to the Hollywood Cinema as part of the organ's contribution to the upkeep of the building, the Trust extended the parameters of our "ANZAC Weekend Tribute" to include a concert on the Sunday afternoon. As if John Atwell wasn't challenged enough, we gave him another project, that being a program of "Music that got us through the War Years" ranging for WWI through to the Vietnam War of the 1960s!!

Finally Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup> dawned, and our silent movie show with "Wings" became part of a huge number of events being staged that day all over Auckland, to mark this very special year for ANZAC Day.

As we like to recreate the whole experience that was "going to the movies" in the silent era and the first few years of sound, John Atwell also agreed to do a "play-in" to the show – "perfuming the air with music" as one old silent movie organist once described it. Just after 2pm, with the introductions over, this 2 hour 20 minute movie marathon began, as John Atwell used all the Wurlitzer pipe organ's resources to bring this dramatic story to life through the power of music. John had truly put together a dramatic score to match the movie, which, during some of the breath-taking mid-air "dog fighting" scenes between the aviators, saw the Wurlitzer organ in "full-cry" for large chunks of these major action scenes.

Interval provided a welcome break for John and audience before we were back into the movie for the second half. From here the story moved along at quite a with more mid-air pace action culminating in the climax when Richard Arlen's character lay dying in the of Charles "Buddy" Rogers. John Atwell's stirring accompaniment was so much part of what was unfolding on the screen, it added to the emotion and power of an already intense scene, resulting in a number of us in



the audience totally wrapped up in the moment, with tears freely running down our faces! For many of us, John included, we were emotionally exhausted by movie's end. This was truly a unique experience in our silent movie presentations – and delivered so much on so many levels.

To summarise the silent movie portion of our weekend event, it must be noted that the silent movie era was not dominated by slapstick comedies, but more-over, there were a number of great classic and in some cases, "dark" stories brought to life on the silent screen – "Wings" was probably the epitome of them all. The film was made in the days before "green screen" backgrounds and Computer-generated imagery.

The film 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. William Wellman, the Director, 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.

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. For the "dog-fights", cameras were mounted on the planes themselves to capture the realism of the battles. Poor Buddy Rogers had to endure his mid-air scenes, with him putting his plane through loops, ducking and diving, so much so, that after every scene was complete and he had landed the plane, on jumping down he was violently sick. "Wings" is more than just an Oscar winner; it's an epic story of friendship featuring some of the most spectacular stunts ever to grace the screen.



Sunday 26, April John Atwell was back at the console, commencing the show as he had the previous day with the New Zealand National Anthem. We then began a journey in music through the various chapters of the world wars, with the audience singing along to many of the numbers. John included three actual sing-alongs with words projected on the big screen, which rekindled memories of the golden days of going to the movies, when it full was a entertainment package.

One number that brought a smile to the whole house was the inclusion of the theme to the T.V. series "Dad's Army". The show's theme tune, "Who do you think you are kidding, Mr Hitler?" was writer Jimmy Perry's idea. Perry wrote the lyric himself, and composed the music with Derek Taverner. Perry persuaded one of his

childhood idols, wartime entertainer Bud Flanagan, (one half of the very popular comedy duo of Flanagan & Allen) to sing the theme for 100 guineas. Bud Flanagan died less than a year after the recording was made in 1968.

John Atwell took us through some of the darkest days in the history of this little old world of ours, with music that was for the most part, uplifting and toe-tapping, just the thing needed to lift our spirits and give us the strength to soldier on through those dark days. His final number, very appropriately, "We'll Meet Again".



As producer of the weekend's two shows, your scribe admits to being very moved by seeing "Wings" at the Hollywood, accompanied by our very own Wurlitzer "Unit Orchestra", just as I had hoped to do since first seeing it in 2005. The work John Atwell had put into both programs was very touching for me personally, demonstrating John's dedication to his craft. For me, this was a milestone in the life of the Hollywood Wurlitzer. *Thank you John!* 



Our new Coffee Van service

CAFÉ 2U

looking after patrons during intermission on ANZAC Day.

### BEWARE THE WRATH OF THE CHURCH ORGANIST

Following on from a story published in our last issue of *P&P*, Dunedin organist Denis McCombe has responded with some equally funny tit-bits....

"You knew that would appeal to me didn't you!!!!

I have been one of those for a very long time. I played my first church service in October 1949, so last year I had been a church organist for 65 years. How about that?

As you can imagine, I have worked with a fairly high number of clergy in that time - and I can honestly say that I have never had hard words with, or fallen out with, any of them. I was however, admonished back in the 50's, for playing The Dambusters March as an outgoing voluntary but that was by a member of the congregation, not the minister. This person told me "It was like going out of a cinema, not a church". Probably quite right too! I never played it again all the way through but I found that the "Trio" from the march was extremely effective at a colour service, played softly while flags were being handed back to the bearers and then volume up as they marched out. I did that many times and was never criticised. Now of course the Trio has the words of a hymn set to it and is used as a hymn in church.

Once too, I was soundly told off by the Clerk of Session of the church where I was organist, for having asked the members of the Choir round to my

house one Sunday evening, after service, for a cup of tea and (what Anne my wife and I thought) was a pleasant social gathering. This man thought it was not on that I had asked these girls out on a Sunday evening – never mind that the men of the choir were there too and of course my wife.

I never did much that was "naughty" at the organ in church except that a few times I played Happy Birthday to a choir member, bringing the melody out on the pedals!

Funerals, however, are completely different. I have played everything from Big Band, to Show music, to particular Hit Parade tunes, Marches, Irish, Scottish, you name it. On one occasion I was asked to send out a lady who had been a leading light in the local Dramatic Society, to the strains of There's No Business Like Show Business. I have several times played the deceased out with So Long it's been good to know ya, He'll have to go, and Another one bites the dust. On one occasion I sent him out with the trumpet call that you hear at a race track.

I wish I had made a note of all the things I have been asked to play over the years, it would make interesting reading!

Cheers, Denis

### AN ORGANIST'S "WEDDING FROM HELL"

Many theatre organists have at one time or another been church organists, and most have a few disastrous tales to relate. This one comes courtesy of THE ORGAN MUSIC SOCIETY OF SYDNEY and TOSA NEWS, and is by **Geoff Beck** editor of THE SYDNEY ORGAN JOURNAL. Featured in *P&P* before, but well worth a repeat!!

The following occurred many years ago when I was organist-choirmaster of **St. David's Anglican Church, Arncliff, Sydney**, a church popular at that time for weddings.

The organ had a tracker action & attached console, and resided on a gallery under the church tower, some 20ft. above the chancel. It was originally built by Joseph Massey in typical turn-of-the century style and splendidly rebuilt and enlarged in 1969 by Pitchford & Garside, their last job while with noted organ builders Hill, Norman & Beard. Nine pipes of the bottom octave of the 8ft Open Diapason were conveyed off the chest and formed three towers on a display case.



The wedding party on this occasion was large and of the type where the bridesmaids all seemed to be called Gaylene or Leanne and were arrayed in acres of pink chiffon.

The blokes were mostly hung-over and uncomfortable in electric blue tuxedos with pink cummerbunds and bow ties. There were flower girls, page boys and guests dressed to kill for the reception afterwards at the RSL.

There was a bagpiper (for no apparent reason) and a lady who was to sing **Let the Bright Seraphim** because this was what Prince Charles and Diana had had and because we refused her first choice of a pop song by Kylie somebody-or-other.

In all, the sort of wedding where nobody would notice if you played **The Dead March** from Saul or **Three Blind Mice!!!** 

All went well until the 'just cause or impediment' prior to the exchange of and Ι was aware disturbance and something moving Too late, I failed to above my head. catch the bottom C Open Diapason pipe as it fell from the middle of the display case, bounced on the loft railing and landed with an almighty thwack right at the feet of the tightlycorseted bride's mother and her party at the left hand side of the chancel.

The bride's mother, thinking perhaps that this must be a Visitation from On High (or possibly from the effects of tight corsets), fainted rather gracefully into a convenient choir stall and had to be fetched a glass of water. The bride and groom looked anxiously around, perhaps waiting in fear of some other visible manifestation of their obvious unfittedness to be joined together in Holy Matrimony.

The rector gazed benignly into space as if this was just a customary part of the rite at **St. David's** and the congregation waited, hushed, as if to see what else was going to happen.

Clearly, the pipe could not be left where it was and, as nobody else seemed inclined to do anything about it, I descended from my loft, like a ministering angel in red, white and blue, to rescue one of the fallen and in order to fit it through the spiral

staircase which led to the organ loft, bore it upright, like a processional cross (we were as *High Church* as we dared to be at Arncliffe) and put it behind the organ.

The service continued with the congregation clearly now eager for some other event to occur and some seemed disappointed that the organ continued to play despite missing one of its obviously vital components: the newlyweds departed to sign their lives away in the vestry.

The singing lady arrived and looked nervously at the remaining pipes on the case and I smiled in what I hoped was a comforting manner so as to reassure her that any further attack from the organ was unlikely.

We had not had a rehearsal or even spoken before, so I launched into the *Bright Seraphim* at a fairly brisk pace as experience had shown that too leisurely a tempo could often run an unpractised singer embarrassingly out of breath.

Instead of coming in on the C with "Let" she came in with "Our Father" and when she continued "Which art in Heav'n", I realised that I had got it wrong, she had got it wrong, or the people who prepared the program had got it wrong.

Fortunately, like all organists of my generation, I could play *The Lord's Prayer* in my sleep and I quickly switched into that dismal composition with what I considered to be great flair and aplomb but with the awful realisation that we were now in F major and Lord knows how she was going to cope with the coming A on "Thy", much less what would be a top C at the end of "ever".

Drastic measures seemed necessary so when we came to the bit where the organ introduces "give us this day" as a solo, I switched to E flat and played that lead-in on full swell to give her a decent cue.

But not her – she started again on the original Bb and I had to follow, but now Madam was fast running out of breath and getting very red in the face.

We continued and with the organ's upperwork and mixture to help with her final shattering top C, a sound that to quote the American comedienne, Anna Russell, "...could have easily killed a bowl of goldfish", the lady collapsed onto the loft chair like a balloon that has been exhausted, leaving the second "ever" and "amen" unsung. I hoped she had not had a stroke!!

When she recovered her breath and wits she said that the organ was out of tune. Rather testily, I asked what had happened to the *Bright Seraphim* – she tossed her head and said, "Oh, I changed my mind at the last minute. It was too heavy and highbrow."

As for the Open Diapason, after it was put on a broom handle to straighten and its languid bashed back into place, it sounded as good as ever, but the following weekend we wired all the display pipes to the casework.

The organ, sadly, was destroyed some years back.

...and No...I did not make any of this up!!

Geoff Beck.

#### THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND

#### WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM



PRESENT

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### PRESENTED WITH FUNDING SUPPORT FROM FOUNDATION NORTH

#### **CONCERT TICKET ENQUIRIES & RESERVATIONS**

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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 EVENTS

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

#### 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, "*Two's Company*", 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......

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



FROM 1.30pm ON WURLITZER SHOW DAYS

#### 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 much-loved become а Auckland entertainer to 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 toetapping 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
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AVONDALE, AUCKLAND, N.Z.

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

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• Wednesday June 24<sup>th</sup> 10.30am – Latin

#### Next OPKSA Concert:

• Sunday 28th June at 2.pm variety concert.

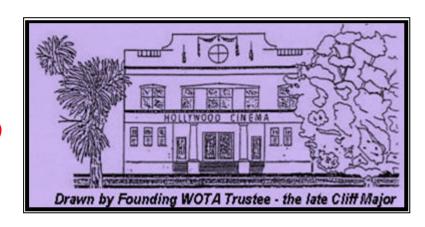
Contact Rob or Barbara on PH: 838-7346

# THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND

(REG. CHARITABLE TRUST No.10966)

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