



*PIPES*

*&*

*PERCUSSION*

206  
July  
2025

**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.wurlitzerorganauckland.com](http://www.wurlitzerorganauckland.com)

## ***WIND BLOWING – PIPES PLAYING – WE’RE ALMOST THERE!***

Such exciting news to share with you all, at long, long last. All fifteen ranks of pipes are now installed and playing and our Adelaide organ techs have two more visits to bring the project almost to a close. The next visit is this month, July, and the next work program is in September.

However, the boys have advised us to now play, play, play the organ as much as possible, to get the action, leather motors and electrics all working again. There will be the odd bugs in the system, but that is why we do this playing exercise before we start to plan an “opening concert”, so that when the people of Auckland hear the organ again, it is at its very best.

To this end, we are planning a *Friends of the Wurlitzer* Club Afternoon for **Sunday 21 September @ 2pm** at the Playhouse Theatre. Ticket details inside this issue, together with a report on the Wurlitzer’s first attempt to sing at the Playhouse Theatre, back in December last year.

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

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**THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND**  
*Invite you to our*

**FRIENDS OF THE WURLITZER  
CLUB AFTERNOON**

**Sunday September 21 @ 2.pm**

**Playhouse Theatre, 15 Glendale Rd, Glen Eden  
Doors open 1.30pm**

*Enjoy the sounds of our  
Wurlitzer Pipe Organ in its new home  
with music from Helen Lukman-Fox  
& John Hardicker*

**Join us for a cuppa after the mini-show**

**PRIVATE FUNCTION FOR FOTW MEMBERS & FRIENDS**

**\$20.00 each**

***NO TICKETS ISSUED AND NO DOOR SALES!***  
***Attendees will be checked in on arrival.***

**Please call/email Jan to organise your payment for the event**  
**PH: 522-8944 / [jandenise@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jandenise@xtra.co.nz)**

**INTERNET BANK PAYMENT**

**Account Name:** The Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland  
**Account Number:** 12-3045-0449278-00

Quote the following:

**PARTICULARS:** **Your Name** / **REFERENCE:** **Club Doo**

**Bookings Close Wednesday September 17**  
**NO DOOR SALES**

## **FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK.....**

Friends, we have had our annual financial audit completed for last year and now uploaded to the Charities Commission website for the world to see. The insurance on the organ for the coming year has also now been paid, leaving our finances dangerously low.

We are obviously not able to use funds granted towards the Organ Project, but the Trust still needs to sustain the monthly charges of running a Charitable Trust, and so once again, desperately need your help. We can't charge you a subscription while the organ is still not playing and there are no shows to enjoy, so we once again seek your help with donations to cover the administration costs, some \$7k, which need to see the Trust through to next year.

**Please call/email Jan to advise of your payment  
BEFORE making that payment - so a receipt can be issued  
PH: 522-8944 / jandenise@xtra.co.nz**

### **INTERNET BANK PAYMENT**

**Account Name:** The Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland

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Quote the following:

**PARTICULARS:** *Your Name* / **REFERENCE:** *Donation*

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## **IN APPRECIATION**

**We waived Annual Subscriptions last year, in lieu of a donation to aid the Trust with the administration costs and once again, members have been so generous in helping the Trust continue and see the organ installation to its completion. The following good people have helped to keep WOTA going. Please accept our heart-felt thanks;**

Mr L. & J. Boyd  
Mr N. Brownlee  
Mr A. Burns  
Mr T. Cheeseman  
Mrs Isobel Clarke  
Mr Terry Clements  
Mr J. Dekker  
Mr P. Franklin & T.K. Atkinson  
Mr J. & A. Fryer  
Mr M. Grace  
Mrs S. Hamp  
Mr D. Handley

Mrs J. Hipperson  
Mr W. Johns  
Mr J.F. Jones  
Mr R. Kilroy  
Mr B. King  
Mr C. Lamdin  
Mr B. Lawson  
Mrs A. McCarrison  
Mr G. McGhie  
Mrs V.E. McMurtry  
Mr C. Mountfort  
Mr & Mrs P. & S. Phillips

Mrs F. Pogson  
Mr. Ian Snell  
Mr John Stallard  
Mr Brian Stevens  
Miss Charlotte Taylor  
Mrs E. Vujnovich  
Mr G. Watt  
Mr J.K. Webster  
Mrs J. Wilcox  
Mr G. Wingate  
Mr & Mrs G J & M Wills

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**Please remember, only make a payment to the WOTA Bank Account after you have advised Jan Denise that a payment is being made. If she does not know to look out for your kind donation, she will not know to provide you with a receipt.**

## **A BIRTHDAY SURPRISE IN SO MANY WAYS....**

### **Your scribe reports...**

Back on the 28<sup>th</sup> December, members of the Playhouse Theatre Trust and the Wurlitzer Organ Trust of Auckland were on hand at the Playhouse Theatre for a special "airing" of our Wurlitzer pipe organ, or rather just a very small part of it.

Coinciding with this, was organist John Hardicker's 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday, which featured a huge surprise for him – a visit by his dear friend Sydney Organist Margaret Hall, who has played for us back at the Hollywood Cinema numerous times, and had flown to Auckland as a birthday surprise for John. With local friend Doug Farr, and Margaret's husband Alan, they went to the Sky Tower revolving restaurant for lunch first, then came on to the Playhouse - another surprise for John.



Neil Warrington and I had loaded John's piston settings into the combination action system together with Margaret Hall's. On arrival at the Playhouse, John jumped on the console, and with the push of a couple of pistons, the most gorgeous sounds were tumbling out of the organ chambers from the 7 ranks playing so far. A little raw with tremulants a bit light in their "throbbing", but none the less the organ was singing.

Margaret and I went upstairs to the balcony and were amazed at how the sound of those 7 ranks filled the theatre - a very "warm" sound, not as hard as it

was in the Hollywood. As Margaret noted, once the reeds go in, the regulators weighted and tremors throbbing properly, it will be a formidable sound in this theatre.

Then Margaret had a go, (as pictured above) and she really coaxed some life out of the old girl, with some great show selections. Playhouse Theatre Trust representatives were very much impressed!!



It was truly an inspiring afternoon - particularly for me, and has gone a long way to reigniting my passion for the now Playhouse Wurlitzer.

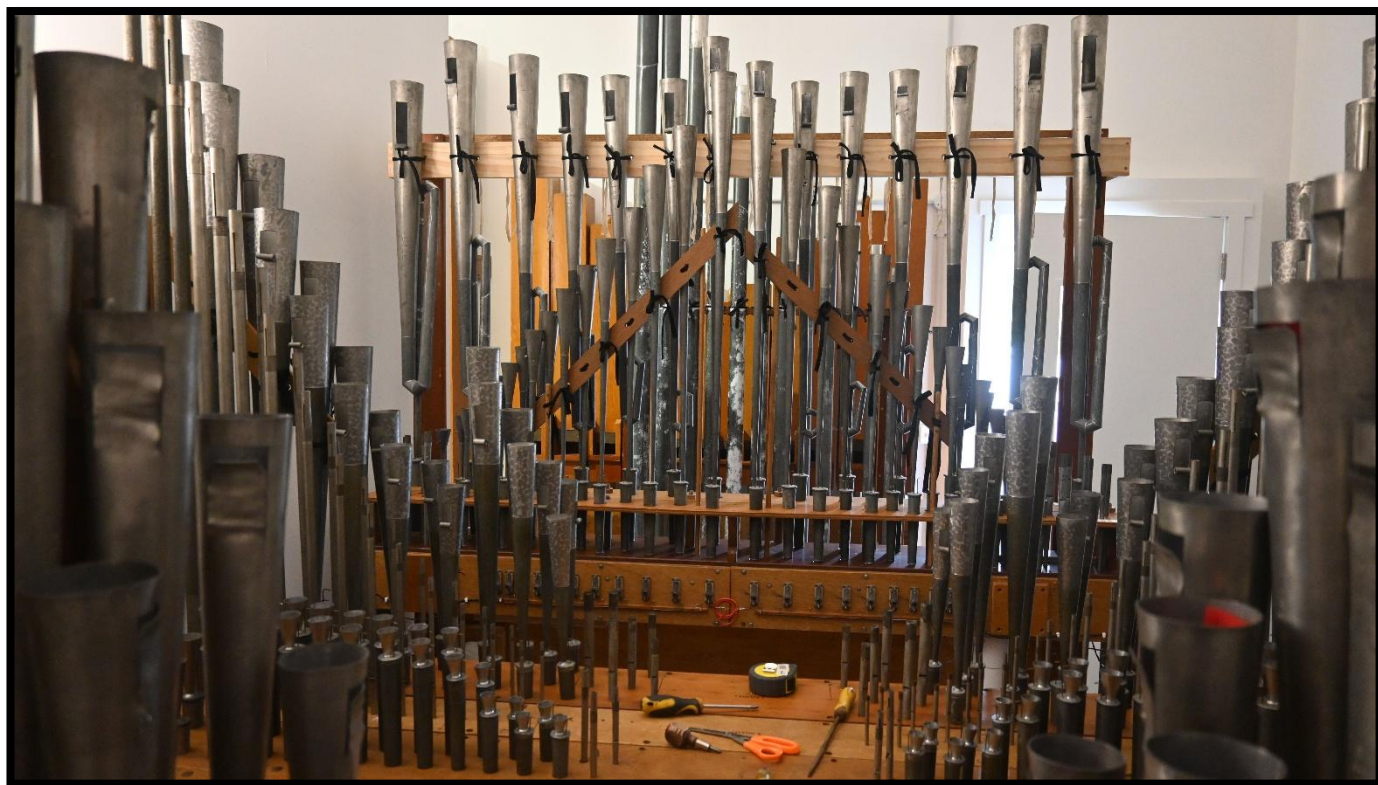
Thank you to Richard & Peter in Adelaide, and Neil with John Swales and their team of helpers, for, bit by bit, bringing this lovely old box of whistles back to life.

Oh - I didn't mention the new Main Blower Motor recently purchased and now installed, giving us our much-needed 18 inches of wind pressure.

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## **NEIL WARRINGTON OUR ORGAN CURATOR REPORTS.....**

As I write this, it is early June and our current position sees us with all of the pipe work operational. We have cyphers and faults to repair including dead notes and one short circuit. There appears to be approximately 20 to 30 issues that we need to resolve. Richard has given the organ its first tune and the organ is now in a playable state, but certainly not ready for any concert.



### ***Solo Chamber almost complete (Peter Hosking)***

When able, John Swales and I will spend a day at the theatre working through the fault list, but currently, the theatre is very heavily booked, and access is quite challenging.

During the unpacking of the pipes from storage, we found four pipes that were broken and of the four broken pipes, three are very small but the fourth is the bottom note of the 8ft Tromba rank. Happy to report that all these damaged pipes have now been repaired by a Mike Young, a technician from the South Island Organ Company. Mike was in Auckland on a three-month rotation from home-base in Timaru and he was able to repair our pipes in WOTA Trustee Raewyn Reade's garage in Mount Albert.

We are noting that there is a lot of heat in the blower room, which appears to be coming from the wind trunking rather than from the blower or motor. We are yet to run the organ with the air conditioning running in the theatre, which may help. Failing that, we will need to put air conditioning into the blower room. This is just something to bear in mind for the future.

Work to be completed currently revolves around the Percussions. We have wind lines extending to the Percussion Chamber and to the area out above the crossover in the theatre. Here we will have the unenclosed percussions – xylophone, roll & crash cymbals. This will be our next area of focus

Sadly, Peter Hosking's wife is quite unwell, but we are hoping that he will be able to be with us in July. Richard is unable to come at this stage due to his work commitments, so while Peter is here, we will get things started in the Percussion Chamber.

We had planned to install the cabling for the Wurlitzer piano and the plug connection on the left-hand side of the stage, but there is no access under the floor. So, it seems our only option is to run the cable and plugs on the console side. The piano itself needs to be stored in the wings, at the rear of the theatre stage and on concert days, be wheeled out and then plugged in to the organ relay, once it is in position.

I have also booked the theatre for another working bee in early September, when we hope to have both Richard and Peter from Adelaide with us, for a 10-day work program which will hopefully complete the Percussion Chamber.

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## **HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE**



<https://www.wurlitzerorganauckland.com/>



**OUR PHOTO GALLERY**

<https://www.wurlitzerorganauckland.com/gallery>

# ORGAN FOR SALE.....\$17,000

It is with some sadness that we advise that Margaret Massey is having to sell her Allen Digital Theatre Organ as leg issues now prevent her from playing the organ.

## **Allen TH-300 compact three manual Theatre Organ. 3 x 61 note manuals and 32 note AGO pedal board.**

Absolutely in mint condition. As new with everything working as it should. This very organ was played by UK organist Chris Powell when this model was first released in New Zealand a few years ago and since then has only had one very careful lady owner.

This instrument previously retailed in New Zealand for \$60,000 in 2012 when released. The organ has too many features to list, but needless to say, includes bench and accessories. This organ has dual voicing (both theatre and classical organ). In addition to the many viewable tabs and controls, it also has two pull out drawers with more controls and touch screen to further enhance your playing experience (including a full transposer, sequencer and voice control).

Although this organ has a very large specification, it was designed so could be transported easily and fit in both large and smaller dwellings. The pedal board is easily detachable. The organ comes with all user manuals, including a special registration guide by USA organist Walt Strony.



This wonderful organ is presently located in Devonport. Auckland with easy access. Margaret has help to assist/supervise with transportation and protective packaging from this end. **Contact Margaret Massey - 09 446-1260**



**Did you receive this newsletter in the post?**

**Could you help the Trust save on the rising costs of printing and postage by having the newsletter emailed to you?**

**Please let Jan Denise know so we can change you over to our email list.**





**THE  
WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST  
of AUCKLAND**

**(REG. CHARITABLE TRUST No.10966)**

Visit us at:

[www.wurlitzerorganauckland.com](http://www.wurlitzerorganauckland.com)

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

Mrs Jan Denise

PH: 522-8944



***SUPPORTING THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND***