

*PIPES*

*&*

*PERCUSSION*

168  
*JULY-AUG*  
2015

**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](https://www.facebook.com/wofw) OR AT: [www.theatreorgans.com/wofa](http://www.theatreorgans.com/wofa)**

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## ***FAREWELL TO THE HOLLYWOOD AFTER 32 YEARS !***

**Yes – you read correctly, more on page 2.**

On a happier note, what a fantastic afternoon of music Chris McPhee and Rosanne Hosking gave us on June 21. They made a great duo, and many considered this one of the best combinations we've ever had. Rosie's passion for singing came out very strongly and the variety of music that she and Chris presented was spectacular. Everything from *Phantom of the Opera*, *Don't cry for me Argentina*, light opera, Edith Piaf and musical comedy. Chris at the Wurlitzer was Rosanne's orchestra and they fit so perfectly together. If you didn't make it, you missed a great show!!



## **"HOLLYWOOD" WURLITZER PIPE ORGAN NEEDS NEW HOME**

### **August 30<sup>th</sup> Final Performance in Avondale**

On Saturday afternoon June 20, the Trust was advised by Hollywood Manager Mark Matheson, that he was reluctantly having to end his association with the Hollywood Cinema, ending a fifty year family connection which dates back to his late uncle Jan Grefstad getting a job there as a projectionist in 1964.

The letter went on to confirm that the cinema was to be sold and that the Wurlitzer organ is required to be removed by September 30. Mark had intimated his plans to put the cinema on the market back in April, and it was hoped that the Trust might be able to negotiate a tenancy with the new owner. However, the sale by tender is for "land and buildings" only – not a going-concern.

Faced with this distressing news, the Trust had to quickly decide whether to make Chris & Rosanne's June 21<sup>st</sup> show our last, giving us plenty of time to carefully disassemble the organ, *OR...* to ensure all our loyal supporters were given opportunity to join us in one last musical treat, before we faced the heart-breaking job of removing the over one thousand pipes, the percussions, wind trunking and kilometres of wiring all in just 30 days!! We chose the latter. We are yet to find suitable storage for the organ and all its components, yet alone a new home.

Our historic Wurlitzer pipe organ from Auckland's Regent Theatre, then the Hutt Valley High School was purchased by an Auckland enthusiast in 1978 and brought back to Auckland, where the late Jan Grefstad, manager of the Hollywood Cinema, welcomed the opportunity to provide a home for the organ, having it installed across the stage of the cinema, right behind the motion picture screen. The Wurlitzer Organ Trust was formed in 1993 to take on the care and ownership of the organ.

The task of moving such an immense instrument is monumental, and hopes of a saviour taking the Hollywood Cinema on as a performing arts centre are fading. With just on 400 seats, it is perfect for small groups, not to mention the 200-300+ loyal supporters who regularly attend the Wurlitzer shows featuring the organ alongside bands, piano, singers and of course doing what it was originally created for – accompanying silent movies.

It is hoped either a school hall or church, which might be looking for a pipe organ, might be prepared to welcome the Wurlitzer Organ Trust and their Mighty Wurlitzer and provide a good home. The organ has a big following and has become an important part of the Australia and New Zealand concert tour circuit by the world's leading entertainers in this musical art form. They regard the "Hollywood Wurlitzer" as a showcase instrument and a heap of fun to play as well as to listen too. The organ has brought so much pleasure to so many people of all ages, we cannot let it end here!

If you can provide any assistance to the Trust in storing or perhaps even providing a new home for the Wurlitzer, please contact James Duncan.

Email – [jrduncan@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jrduncan@xtra.co.nz) or Phone 525-7067

Meantime, failing a miracle, the Wurlitzer pipe organ sings its last song at the Hollywood Cinema on Sunday August 30 at 2pm. The USA's Jelani Eddington will ensure we go out on a "high" note! This show WILL SELL OUT!! We are over half full now so members, organise your seats with our ticket secretary with urgency. Your discount ticket price of \$20.00 is available until Tuesday 25 August, when 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 – that is if there are any seats remaining!

**Because demand is now high,  
we will NOT reserve seats without immediate payment.**

**Prepaid bookings through [jandenise@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jandenise@xtra.co.nz) or PH 522.8944**

**THE WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST of AUCKLAND**

**IN ASSOCIATION WITH**



*PRESENT*

**FAREWELL TO THE  
HOLLYWOOD !**

**FINAL SHOW IN THIS VENUE FOR AUCKLAND'S HISTORIC**

**WURLITZER**  
THEATRE PIPE ORGAN

*Featuring*

**JELANI  
EDDINGTON**

*from the USA*

Enjoy a true  
"Pops" program of music from  
the Light Classics,  
30s & 40s, the Shows  
and Today!



**SUNDAY AUGUST 30  
at 2pm**

**TICKETS: \$25.00**

IF NOT SOLD OUT -  
TICKETS ON SALE AT THE DOOR ON  
THE DAY FROM 1.15pm

*"FEELING THE MUSIC" FOR 32 YEARS AT*

JAN GREFSTAD'S

**HOLLYWOOD CINEMA**

**ST GEORGES RD, AVONDALE**

**FOR MORE INFO and  
PRE-PAID BOOKING DETAILS**

**PH: 525-7067**



## ***WHAT NOW - THE FUTURE ?.***

By mid-July we will know a bit more on where we are going. The situation is so catastrophic we are still formulating a plan of action. *Season Ticket* holders – we will look to reimbursing you for the three remaining shows that are now cancelled, unless you wish to make this a donation to the cause. More later.

My friends, rest assured, the Trust will be working to locate a new venue for our Wurlitzer and get the shows up and running once again. During next year we will organise some events for your enjoyment to keep us all together as a family, while we work through this coming dark period in the life of our organisation.

Take heart from the message below from Australia's Tony Fenelon, one of dozens received from all over the world!

"Dear James,

I was so saddened to receive this devastating news of the sale of the Hollywood!

The real tragedy here is the fact that the Hollywood and its world class Wurlitzer were shining lights at your little corner of the world and very much part of the world circuit, admired and loved by all those who performed there.

I feel so proud that I was able to be part of this wonderful era, especially the premier concert way back in 1982. After playing the Wurlitzer in recent years, I was always looking forward to coming back and sharing some more musical hours with you all. Sadly, it seems that it's all come to a close. I will miss the unequalled hospitality of your theatre staff, the trust members and your fabulously warm audiences over the years.

I feel for you all, especially being given such short notice and having concert commitments through to the end of the year! With Jelani's concert scheduled for August 30, it worries me that you and the team will have an enormous task removing and storing the Wurlitzer in the time available. Finding a new venue will not be easy, but knowing the determination of the Trust, I know we will once again hear the instrument in a new worthy venue.

I am also so grateful that I limited my mishaps at the Hollywood to tripping over backstage and avoided any swan dives from the console lift! However, let's look forward to a new exciting installation, with or without hazards! I'll be there with knobs on!

Please pass on my wishes of support to all in the Trust and be assured that I am praying for a miracle too! However, if that is not to be, let's look forward to the next chapter in the life of what has to be one of the best Wurlitzers I've ever had the privilege of playing.

I know I speak on behalf of all the Aussie organists who've loved every moment at the Hollywood in wishing you our best in leaping this current hurdle!

Please keep me posted on any news.

All the best!

Tony Fenelon."

***On a happier note – here's some wonderful images from  
Chris McPhee and Rosanne Hosking's memorable show  
"Two's Company" from the camera of Bill Ridge.***

**Once again Merv  
Thomas did us  
proud with video  
cameras  
bringing the  
action to the  
"big screen".**



**Don't Cry for Me Argentina!**

**Post Show with  
Trust Chairman James Duncan**

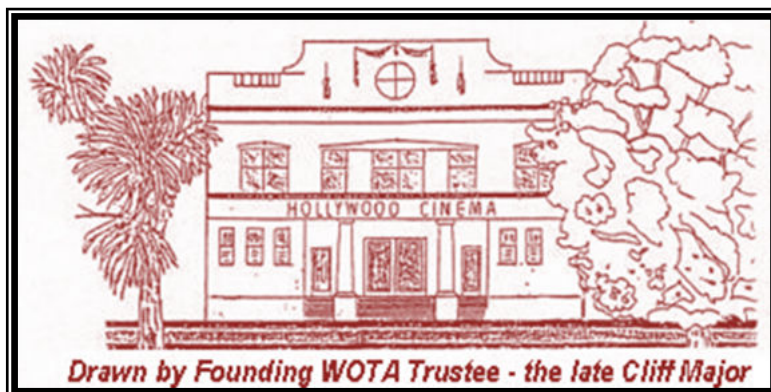


**THE  
WURLITZER ORGAN TRUST  
of AUCKLAND**

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

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**FRIENDS of the WURLITZER MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY  
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