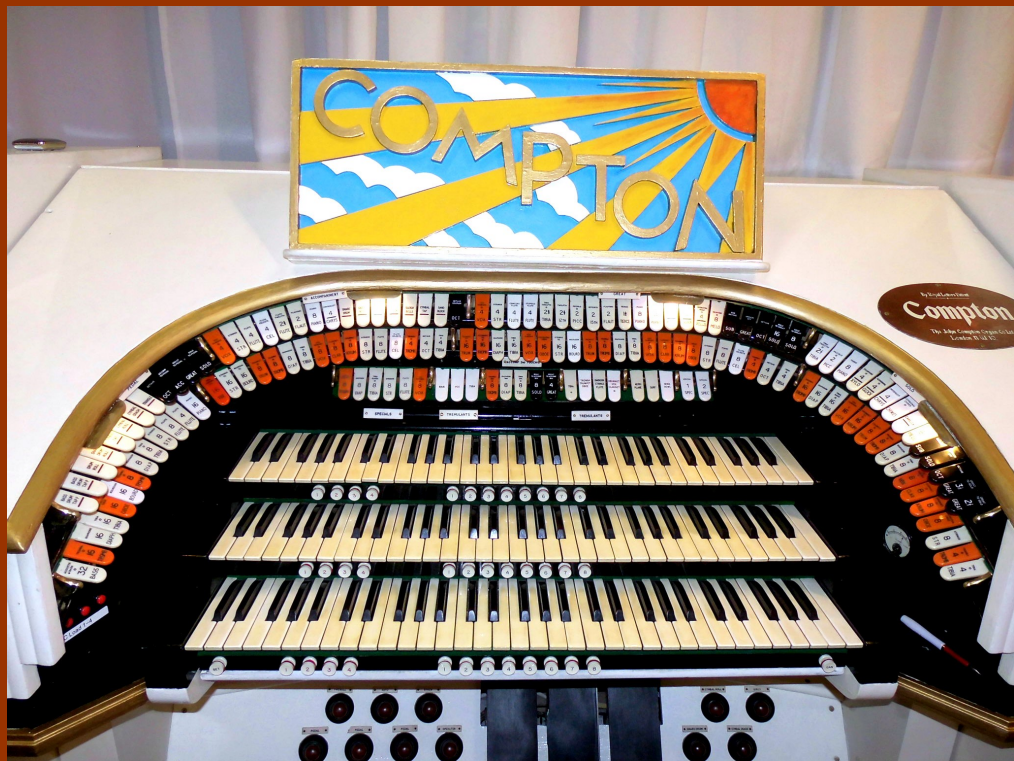


VOX Lancastria

Journal of
The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust



Winter 2019 - 2020





Journal of the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust
Registered Charity 261487

Patron Vacant

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Cover Photo

Heritage Centre 3/11 Compton

Editorial

David Alldred

As we welcome in the New Year we find ourselves at the end of a hectic 3 years of installing the enlarged Ex. Davenport Compton into the LTOT Heritage at Peel Green, Eccles. The installation is now completed and being enjoyed by members, patrons and organists alike. At the beginning of January we invited Robert Balfour Rowley to return to finish some pipe adjustment and tune the whole organ. The result further enhances the uniqueness of this instrument.

Work to re-site the public address speakers and install projector speakers will commence at the beginning of February, followed by putting the final touches to the proscenium arch. The attendances at the monthly coffee mornings are increasing, which has led to a number of new members joining us. We welcome these members in helping us to achieve continuity of the Trust, and hopefully to be able to join the team as volunteers.

Over the last couple of years, a number of our well-known professional organists have decided to retire, or reduce their concert diaries quite considerably. This leaves us with an opportunity to invite younger musicians and new faces to entertain us. However, in supporting and promoting those new faces, we have, in the past, noticed that audience attendances have been greatly reduced. Unfortunately, this leaves us with quite a dilemma, for without “bums on seats” promoting events is not viable. We do respectfully urge you, when new faces are presented to you, to support us at these events. We appreciate that there are varying standards of musicianship and presentation in organists today, but this has always been so, but that should not keep us from supporting our activities. We also appreciate that some artists attract larger attendances than others; again, this has always been the case. May we encourage you to support the Trust by attending all our *Cont. on Page 7*

An Unwanted Christmas Surprise

Sunday the 1st December 2019, saw the Trust receive an unwanted Christmas surprise, that on moving the Wurlitzer at Stockport Town Hall from the lift to the central position, in time for Gordon Cree to prepare for the afternoon event, and finding that the organ did not function.

After lengthy consultation with the technical team, and a call to Kevin Grunill, European representative for Uniflex, it was determined that the cause of the non-function was the failure of the console interface board.

As members and the general public were either at the Town Hall, after the Annual General Meeting, or were already on their way, and after discussion with Gordon Cree, thankfully a multi-instrumentalist, it was agreed that the concert would take place, but presenting an alternative format. It was also agreed that there would be no charge for admission.

After explaining to the patrons on entry that the Wurlitzer would not be part of the afternoon’s presentation, but an alternative programme would be available, all but one were supportive of our dilemma, and joined us for the afternoon’s event.

Gordon devised a shortened programme featuring himself playing piano, trumpet, post horn and musical saw.

Gordon, who was accompanied by his wife Cheryl, had brought along two or three guests. One of the guests was none other than Freddie (Parrot face) Davies. (those of you of tender age will remember Freddie from his TV appearances). To support the afternoon’s entertainment, Freddie presented a couple of spots bring smiles to the faces of many who remembered the comedy of yesteryear.

The afternoon, despite not having the Wurlitzer, was enjoyed by all present and as there *Continued on Page 12*

Chairman's Message - Walter Baker

Here we are again, the start of another year; doesn't time fly.

I would like, first of all, to wish you all a happy and healthy New Year and hope you had an enjoyable Christmas.

Since the last edition of Vox, work at the Heritage Centre on the Compton organ has continued at a slightly reduced pace because, to all intents and purposes, the installation is complete. Work is however still going on to fine tune and maintain both organs; it always will because you never reach the point when there is nothing left to do.

Our weekly concerts are being fairly well supported with audiences averaging just over 55 for the whole of 2019, this was very similar to the previous year, having said that we would still like to see a few more each week to help cover the ever increasingly costs.

It's amazing how many hidden costs there are in having a building like the Heritage Centre which is open to the general public. We all know about the utilities costs that we have at home, but there are other costs which are not as well-known such as the annual PRS music licence, fire extinguisher maintenance and inspection, stair lift annual inspection, and the testing / inspection of the building's electricity supply and wiring. All of these are requirement that we cannot do ourselves because they have to be carried out by people who have been certified to do the various checks so we have to pay for this work to be done.

Apart from Wednesday each week and the coffee morning on the first Saturday of the month, the building is not used, so all of our running costs have to be covered by these events. Over the years different things have been organised to try and utilise the building more, Valentine's Day, St George's day concerts, silent movie evenings for example, none of which have been supported well enough to make them worthwhile. If you have any ideas on new events that could be tried to bring in more

income I would be very interested to hear them.

The concerts at Stockport Town Hall are carrying on as usual with audiences at the lunchtime events remaining fairly static. Unfortunately this cannot be said for the Sunday afternoon events where audience numbers, to say the least, are disappointing. Finally I would like say a big thank you to our volunteers who come along and help out at all our events; we could not manage without them.



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Manchester Organists' Association at the Heritage Centre



MOA members waiting to try their hand

Many of the members tried their hand at the Console, and with little or no experience were soon feeling at home, coaxing some very pleasant registrations from the two instruments.

Volunteers of the Trust were on hand to guide members of the association around the collection of Theatre Organ memorabilia, and the Hope-Jones items on display on the lower floor. The guests were also shown the layout of the chambers.

On Saturday the 18th January 2020, the Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust was pleased to welcome members of the Manchester Organists' Association along with this year's President Derek Sharples.

About twenty members were present and were welcomed with a piece of cake and a cup of tea.

Your editor gave an A/V presentation on the formation of the Trust and the development of the Heritage Centre, and a brief introduction to the history of the Theatre Organ, along with reference to classical organists doubling up as cinema organists in the 1940's, and also explaining the system of unification.

This was an enjoyable afternoon, and an opportunity to present the Theatre Organ to an alternative group with similar interests.



President Derek Sharples giving the vote of thanks.

**The Lancastrian Theatre Organ Trust
Annual General Meeting 1st December 2019**

Meeting Opened at 12-30pm

The Chairman Welcomed those present.

Apologies: Mr & Mrs Clark Ian Wolstenholme
 Len Rawle Judith Rawle
 Michael Holmes John Field
 Bob Clary Richard Wright

Minutes of the 48th Annual Meeting:

Proposed by A. Crossland - Seconded by G. Kingston. All Agreed.

Matters Arising:

None.

Trustees Annual Report As Submitted:

Proposed by P. Ratcliffe. Seconded by R. Fisher. All Agreed.

Accounts as Submitted:

Proposed by J. Loud. Seconded by J. Hyde. All Agreed.

Election of Trustees (By Rotation):

David Alldred - Gary Trinder - Charles Brown.
Proposed by P. Ratcliffe. Seconded by J. Hyde. All Agreed.

Election of President:

Re-appointment of Frank Read.
Proposed by W. Baker. Seconded by J. Hyde. All Agreed.

Election of Vice Presidents:

Re-appointment of Joyce Alldred, Len Rawle, Nigel Ogden, Eric Halsall.
Proposed by R. Fisher. Seconded by G. Kingston. All Agreed.

Election of Membership Secretary:

John Loud—Proposed by W. Baker. Seconded by D. Alldred
It was agreed that John Loud would be co-opted as a Trustee for the ensuing year.

Examiner of Accounts:

Peter Ratcliffe
Proposed by G. Holmes. Seconded by G. Kingston. All Agreed.

A.O. B:

Mr George Holmes proposed a Vote of Thanks for the work the volunteers had undertaken at the Heritage Centre. All Agreed.

Judy Hyde suggested that LTOT Events and Concerts be advertised via the ATOS and TOSA websites.

George Holmes questioned the use of the Hammond at the Wednesday concerts, and that he would like to see the piano brought into view each week. —Walter Baker explained possible suggestions for future concerts.

Sylvia James asked if the Trustees would look at fixing a plaque on the Hammond in memory of Doreen Chadwick.

It was generally agreed that future start time for the Annual General Meeting would be more beneficial at 1-00pm. All Agreed.

The Chairman Closed the Meeting at 1-00pm.

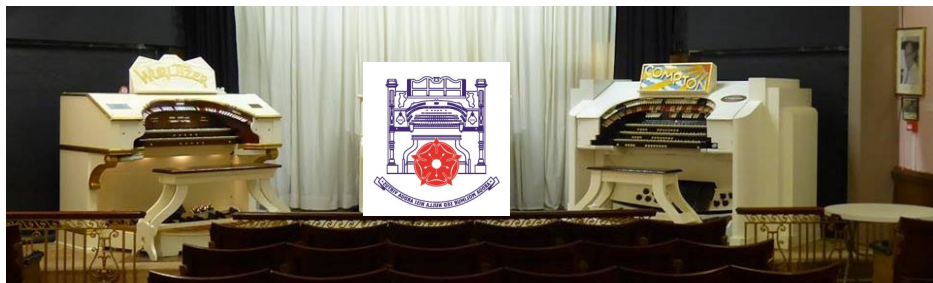
From Page 3

events, whenever possible, not only to encourage the new faces, but in helping the Trust to promote events that are viable.

The Trust is always on the look out to source other bookings for the Heritage Centre, whether they are Theatre Organ related, or not. The Centre has considerable overheads to maintain, so if you have any suggestions, please present them to any Trustee. The

Centre has all necessary requirements for multiple use, including Catering facilities, Film Presentation License, Air Conditioning, Stair lift and disabled Ramp. PRS/PPL registration, Entertainment License and Insurance are also in place.. There is ample free parking covered by security cameras.

In conclusion, may I thank you all for your continued support and look forward meeting up at our future events.



A photo on a leaflet started an unusual interest in Denmark..... by Anton Stormlund

On a tourist trip to the UK back in 1992 my wife and I visited the Kew Bridge Steam Museum and enjoyed seeing the large beam engines and especially the good talks to the volunteers working with the engines. On our way out we found a leaflet showing a large, white organ of a sort I did not know. I had a good knowledge of Hammond organs and also of other types, but this type of organ was absolutely unknown to me. It was

made a good presentation of all the mechanical music "machines" my attention was focused on the WurliTzer console. Suddenly the guide asked the visitors if anyone played an organ. "Yes I do", I answered and was allowed to enter the bench and play the organ! Absolutely amazing!

This was the start, and in the coming years I made arrangements with other groups behind cinema organs all over the UK about



a leaflet from the nearby Brentford Musical Museum, and we were told that we could walk to the museum, which we did.

Here we took part in a conducted tour among other visitors, and even if the guide

DIY when we visited the country....in particular to Peter and Liz Palmer in Huntingdon who had a 3 man. WurliTzer and a 4 man. Compton in perfect condition. I became a member of the COS and learned

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a lot by meeting these always kind people in the organ societies. I was very impressed by the enthusiasm in the cinema organ world and did not understand WHY we here in Denmark did not have any cinema organs at all! And honestly: I was a little bit envious when I saw private installations.



In 2000 and 2001 I played public concerts at Penistone, and in 2002 I found an advertisement in the COS newsletter: A Christie 3/8 cinema organ plus grand piano for sale. Originally the organ was built in 1927 and delivered to the Empire Cinema, West Ham Lane, Stratford, London East.

As I already had a former village house for my electrical organs and could include a real cinema organ I made contact to the owner, Mr Leys in Bathgate in Scotland and bought his organ. I took the long trip to Scotland and dismantled the organ with help from the late Mr Gordon Lucas.

The organ parts arrived on October 23, 2001, and I started with just very little knowledge to wire the chests to the large solid state relay. The cloakroom was changed into a "blower / relay-room", the chests were placed on the balcony and the console plus grand piano were placed in the middle of the room. At that time I was still active at work, so the installing work had to be done in nights and in week-ends. After 8 months the organ was on wind and playable

and was now more attractive for visitors than my collection of antique Morse telegraphs and model steam engines. Since then the organ has been enlarged with an "Oboe Horn"-rank and has had another set of glockenspiel, xylophone and vibraphone connected. I have constructed a set of 36 tuned German cow bells and have made two circuits, so it sounds as if it is being played by two mallets. A small motor switches between these circuits: 1) C, C#, D, F#, G, G#.....and 2) D#,E, F, A, A#.H. and the effect is really good!

I must admit that the organ has never been in concert condition, but it plays and visiting guests like the sound. For everyone this is something absolutely unknown as my cinema organ is still the only one in Denmark.

Now it is 27 years since I found the leaflet in Kew Bridge Museum, and I have had so many good experiences by playing and by meeting people with the same interest in the UK. Here in 2019 I had some "high-light"-experiences when I was asked to play a concert on the Welte Rundfunk organ in Norddeutsche Rundfunks Studie 1 in Hamburg and right after was asked to come and play concerts in Harlem (3 man. Compton) and Steinweg (4 man. Strunk-organ) in Holland. Seeing the positive reaction from the audience I must have chosen the right repertoire.



The Davenport, TOC Stockport July 1967 From the Archives

A hundred and forty people met at the modernistic Davenport Theatre on sun-day, 16th July, for an afternoon of music on the three manual, six unit Compton, the proceedings being opened by David Alldred with a selection from "Fiddler on the roof," "In the still of the night," "The Harry Lime Theme" and "Love is a many splendoured thing," "Vienna, city of my dreams" and "Under the roofs of Paris" commenced a short contribution by Roy Perry, who continued with "My dearest dear" and "Real live girl."

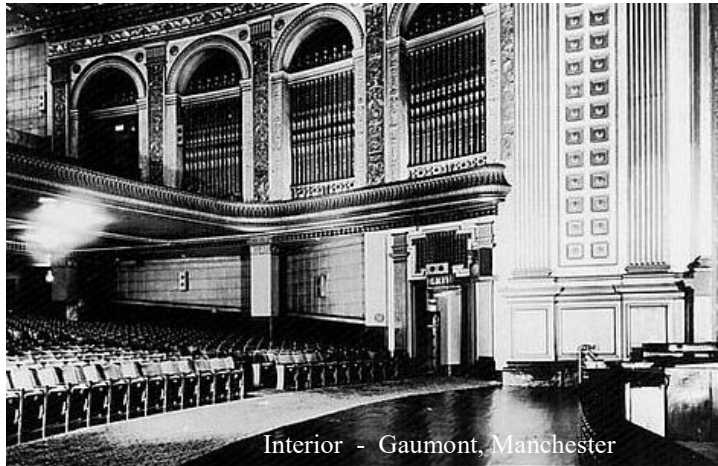
The first part of Norman Scott's programme contained popular numbers such as "I've got you under my skin," "Music to watch girls by," "The boy next door," "Blue moon" and "Chattanooga choo choo," whilst music of slightly more serious nature was heard in the second part. Here the items were "Faith," the introductory theme of the "Chapel in the valley" broadcasts, Debussy's "Golliwog's cake walk," "Terrace by the sea" by Ernst Fischer and the "Bagatelle Overture" by Rixner.

Bob Evenden came to the console to play "The lady is a tramp," "These foolish things," "Over the rainbow" and "With a smile and a song," after which Joyce Alldred, the Davenport's most regular organist, presented a contrasting programme, comprising "Brazil," "Isle of Capri," "Chinatown," "Granada," "I'll walk beside you," "O my beloved father," the march from "Aida," "Nun's Chorus," Toselli's "Serenata," "Blow the wind Southerly" and a selection from "The Sound of Music."

The afternoon's music was completed with a masterly performance by Hubert Selby, who opened with a selection of Operatic Airs, Of special fascination was his Latin-American medley containing "Tico tico," "El

Cumbanchero" and "Tea for two," after which came "Love everlasting" and a selection of such well known Victor Herbert melodies as "Ah, sweet mystery of life," "I'm falling in love with someone," "Gipsy love song" and "March of the toys." In the mood" and "Twelfth Street Rag" closed the programme, and led to the time when thanks had to be expressed to the organists for their excellent entertainment and to the theatre proprietor, Mr. Jack Edge, for permitting the visit.

ORGANISTS OF THE GAUMONT MANCHESTER LTOT Archives



Interior - Gaumont, Manchester

In the 1930's the new super cinemas were being described in the press as Cathedrals Of The Movies and just like their ecclesiastical counterparts, they had organists appointed to play their Wurlitzer, Compton, or Christie organs.

The first and by far the best known organist at the Gaumont was Stanley Tudor. Having won many prizes at school for musical ability Stanley Tudor left at the age of 14 and became solo pianist at the Capitol, Hanley, broadcasting every day on the Stoke-On-Trent relay station. He moved to the Hippodrome, Stoke-On-Trent as organist, having already become acquainted



with the organ as an instrument through a church position. In 1931 he went to London joining Gaumont-British, touring their theatres in the London area with the Gaumont, Hammersmith as his base. The sudden takeover of the Manchester Granada by Gaumont-British probably saw Stanley Tudor moved quickly North to fill the vacant post which would previously have been planned for one of the Granada team of theatre organists. It was a fortuitous move for the people of Manchester.

When the Gaumont, Manchester opened in October 1935 Stanley Tudor was at the Wurlitzer and quickly established himself as one of the top flight of British theatre organists by his unique and rhythmic use of the organ, the specification of which was ideal for his approach to the music of the period. He chose as his signature tune, perhaps not unnaturally as a Manchester based organist, "Singing' in the Rain" and this became well known to Gaumont patrons and very soon to the nation as Stanley Tudor commenced regular broadcasting.

Stanley Tudor at the Wurlitzer (occasionally in the press "Tudor At The Organ") remained as a regular feature of the film programme until war broke out and he was called up into the Royal Air Force. Who was then at the console after Stan's

departure is not on record but probably by late 1941, and certainly early 1942, Arthur Esgate was there as resident being invalided out of the R.A.F. with injuries sustained in bombing raids over Europe. Arthur Esgate broadcast the organ (it was always a favourite of the B.B.C. because of its clarity over the radio) on several occasions. By late 1942 Tommy Dando was at the Wurlitzer and is believed to have also presented the organ on the air. He was followed by Stuart Barrie in March 1943 and it is then thought that the young Charles Smitton took over because he broadcast the organ in August and September 1944 and featured it at film performances. By February 1946 Stanley Tudor had returned and remained until theatre organists became victims of financial cuts in August 1953. He returned during the period of long run films with a short residency from 1959 to 1960 by which time he had changed his signature tune to "Powder Your Face With Sunshine", perhaps in response to those who criticised his first as enhancing Manchester's reputation as a rainy city!

All the organists mentioned above were of the standard expected in a large city centre Cathedral Cinema, but no record would be complete without the name of an organist in the same category, long associated with the Gaumont, Doreen Chadwick. Doreen deputised for Stanley Tudor on many

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occasions and frequently played film interludes, and broadcast and recorded this famous Wurlitzer.

Organists who have broadcast the organ but as far as is known have not held a resident post include: Sandy Macpherson, Gerald Shaw, Reginald Liversidge, Bobby Pagan, John Madin, Alan Gough and Frank Gordon. To Nigel Ogden and Jeff Clubbe goes the distinction of featuring the Wurlitzer on television. Other organists who have also presented the organ in public are: Reginald Dixon, Jackie Brown, Lyndon Laird, Rudy Lewis, Noel Briggs, Andrew Fenner, Ken McKinley, Ronald Curtis, Raymond Wailbank, David Shepherd, Peter Jebson and Eric Barlow. Featured at private Theatre Organ Club concerts have been: Reginald New, Cecil Chadwick, Arnold Loxam, Reginald Holland, Joyce Alldred, Ian Hamilton, Eric Lord, Vic Hammett and many others.

Now with its reinstatement in Granada Studios Tour for the enjoyment of the public the Wurlitzer offers opportunities for a new generation of theatre organists to show just how entertaining a fine Wurlitzer organ can be with its ability to cover all kinds of music.

Ed This organ is now installed in the Folly Farm complex in South Wales

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was no admission charge, patrons were asked that if they had enjoyed the afternoon any donations would be appreciated. As a result, donations given far exceeded that which would have been collected on admission. Thank you all for your support and generosity.

As for the faulty interface board, it was suspected that the cause of the failure was static. A replacement board was sourced from A.C Pilmar and delivered to us via member Peter Taylor.

Unfortunately, as the General Election was approaching, the Town Hall was closed for a number of days, before and after the count, for security reasons, which gave us

additional concern as the next Monday Wurlitzer showcase was only 4 days after the election date and with other events taking place in the hall over that weekend.

However, on the morning of the Monday concert featuring Andrew Nix, the LTOT team arrived early at the Town Hall and managed to replace the faulty board and re programme the computer with minutes to spare before the start of the lunchtime show.

As a backup, Andrew had agreed to set up his travelling organ, just in case the Wurlitzer wasn't ready. The patrons really enjoyed the programme Andrew presented on both organs.

Although some tests have been made on the interface board, we cannot state categorically that static was the cause of the problem. Unfortunately there are no repair facilities in the US, so efforts are being made to source someone to advise on the possibility of a repair. The cost of the replacement interface board including VAT was £840.00. If repairable, we would have a back up board which could be used in all the Trusts instruments.



**Theatre Organ Heritage
Centre**

Coffee Mornings

**First Saturday of each
Month**

10-30am to 12-30pm

Great Music

Hot & Cold Snacks

LTOT's "Historic Collection" is Back on Display after over Two Years.

Roger Fisher updates us on the re-opening and future plans for the
Museum at the Heritage Centre.

It was back in August 2017 that the ex-Davenport Compton theatre organ began to arrive in pieces, for installation at the Heritage Centre.

Since then the area where the Museum is has been used as a workshop and storage area, and because of the nature of the on-going work we were unable to admit anyone downstairs to see the collection of historic

nearring completion. Indeed, by the time you read this it may well be finished. The Vintage Sales stall is now upstairs in the main auditorium, and is doing more "business" than it ever did downstairs.

So here we are at the beginning of a new year, and after just over two years the work is finished, and a tidy-up has been done.

Although there is still a lot to do, and some changes to be made, we can now allow interested people to go and see what the Trust has in their collection.

One minor point should be mentioned. We thought that perhaps the word "museum" conveyed an impression of cobwebs, musty old exhibits, and generally an air of Victoriana. Quite a discussion took place as to what alternative title could be used to freshen up the image. The word "collection" (as the Thursford Collection is known), seemed the most popular. I suppose the full title could be "The Trust's Collection of Historic Organ artefacts" but that's far too lengthy. Suggestions welcome please!

There is still a lot of more thorough cleaning up to do, and some of the larger exhibits need to be moved around a bit, but everything's there for anyone to come down and see for themselves. When the new "collection" is tidied up and settled down, there is then the Guide Book (price £3) to be revised.

Some items not directly relevant to the history of the theatre organ have been removed, being replaced by some more relevant items. Apart from the obvious organ-related things, there are a few unexpected things to be seen, such as an early 20th century telephone, a Synchronome master and two slave clocks,



organ artefacts which the Trust has acquired over many years.

There has occasionally been a quick tidy-up for a small number of private group visits, but as soon as their visits were over it was back to work with the Compton.

Then more recently we have built a new dressing room for our weekly featured organists. This is an improvement on the old dressing room which had been created in a space under the stairs, right next to the organ blowers. No organist can relax before their concert in an area so noisy it seemed more like being in a ship's engine room! The new little room, using space formerly occupied by the Vintage Sales stall, is now

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a thermostatic switch that was used in an organ chamber in Southport many years ago, and a huge iron nameplate from an electric crane by the Manchester firm of Royce & Company. The inclusion of these items may seem strange, but all are connected to the story of the development of the theatre organ, so are relevant to the collection. How do you find out the connection? Come down and have a look, and read the accompanying information! All fascinating stuff!

The display feature – “Organ of the Month” – has been re-instated. This gives information and photographs of a different organ built by the “Father of the Theatre Organ”, Robert Hope-Jones. As his firm built around 150 organs, mostly in churches,

in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it takes some time to display each for a month. So there’s another reason to visit the “collection” at least once a month!

Now that we have two organs – the Wurlitzer and the Compton, the collection should reflect this, so we are getting an increasing number of exhibits relating to the work of John Compton. Keep a look out for these. You shouldn’t need me to tell you about the connection between Hope-Jones and Wurlitzer. For anyone who doesn’t know this, and would like to find out, then a visit to the refreshed “collection” downstairs at the Heritage Centre is a must. For those less able on stairs we have a chair lift especially for you. We look forward to seeing you all there.



LTOT Theatre Organ Heritage Centre - Compton Console now completed.

The BBC Theatre Organs

By the late Mike Candy

Editor: This edited article, originally appeared in a magazine called Prospero, a BBC magazine for its retired employees. It was first reproduced in edition 12 of Vox in 2003, by kind permission of the magazine and its editor, Peter Gearing. Photo's The BBC Theatre Organ—by Reginald Foort.

The first BBC Theatre Organ in the old St. George's Hall - burned out from incendiary bombs in September, 1940 - had a life of about four years from 1936. About a week before the hall's destruction, Sandy Macpherson had moved to Evesham,



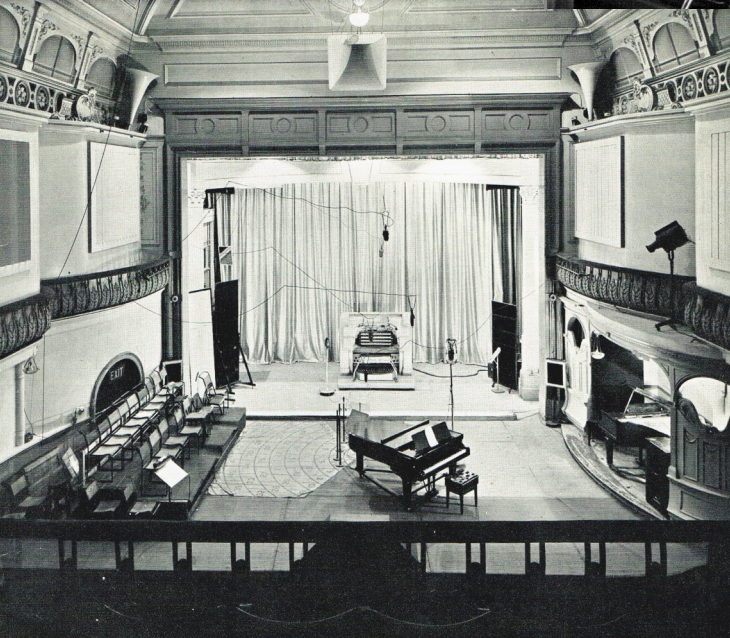
Reginald Foort at the Compton

where a Hammond electro-
-tonic instrument had been installed. Outside broadcasts from theatres etc. continued where practicable.

Before WW 11, in 1938, the first staff organist, Reginald Foort, had resigned his position in order to tour his new American-built Moller organ.

The instrument was transported in several large vehicles. But wartime travelling difficulties brought that operation to a halt, and in 1941 Reggie offered the organ on loan to the BBC for the duration, at least, of hostilities.

It was erected in North Wales, whence the Variety



St George's Hall

The console has been wheeled into position ready for a solo broadcast.

Note the organ swell-boxes—those on the left-hand side are open and those on the right are closed. Near the roof can be seen the loudspeakers through which all the sounds of the Electrone are produced. At the right-hand side is the grand piano which is playable from the keyboards of the console.

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Department had been evacuated after going initially to Bristol.

The organ was first located in the Grand Theatre in Llandudno, between 1941-43, and then in the County (later called the City) Cinema in Bangor.

After the war, the Corporation purchased the organ from Reginald Foort, and it was installed by the British firm of John Compton (who had built the previous St. George's Hall instrument) in the former jubilee Chapel, in East Road, Hoxton, North London. There it remained until 1963 when,

being no longer required by the powers that be and Sandy Macpherson having officially retired although still broadcasting.

The organ was purchased by one of the Dutch broadcasting organisations. Initially re-erected in a Hilversum church, the Dutch organist behind the project died a few years later, and the intended studio development to house the organ never came to fruition.

The organ then found its way back across the Atlantic, and after a few years in a Californian Pizza Parlour, was eventually reinstalled in the

Civic Auditorium in Pasadena, where it remains to this day.

The long-running Radio 2 programme "The Organist Entertains" was started by the late Robin Richmond in 1969.

He had founded the BBC Club Organ Society in 1967. Robin was a staff producer at the time, and although nominally retiring at age 60, he continued to present the show, Chris 'Organ' Morgan becoming the official producer, for about 10 years until moving to the South of France.



The Moller in the Civic Auditorium, Pasadena.

Charles Clerk-Maxwell took over the programme in the late 70s, with various presenters, until, Nigel Ogden, became 'resident' about 1980.

About that time, Radio 2 Music was 'organisationally' transferred to Manchester, where Peter Pilbeam took over production. Some years later, Radio 2 Music was transferred to Birmingham, where it is still based today.

Robin had promoted the idea of a third BBC Theatre Organ during the late 1960s, and the result was the purchase of the



The Playhouse, Hulme, Manchester

Ed. The console was placed on the RH balcony - The chambers were erected on the stage, with the solo chamber behind the RH column and out of sight and sound. To balance the sound for the organist, the solo chamber was amplified and fed to a speaker which was placed at the RH side of the console.

Wurlitzer from the Empress Ballroom in Blackpool.

This was reinstated in the former Manchester Playhouse Theatre, which had become a Light Entertainment studio for audience broadcasts etc., the organ being officially 'opened' there in 1970. It remained in the Playhouse for 20 years or more, until the studio was closed down.

Ed: The following letter appeared in a later edition of Prospero:

As a follow up to Michael's piece in the December Prospero, 'How and where the organists have entertained'.

I understand that after the Playhouse Theatre in Manchester closed as a BBC Studio, the Empress organ was sold to a group of 'organ enthusiasts in the south of England and subsequently installed as part of the organ installation in Worthing, Sussex.

Ed. A footnote from Cameron Lloyd 2020: The console, keyboards, stops, pedals are back at the Winter Gardens minus its inner workings, but I have managed to get replacements. The Main Tibia is also back in the current Empress Organ as is the 8ft octave of the Flute and Horace's Bass Drum!

I'd have to check exactly where the other ranks are but I believe the bulk of it is at Worthing.

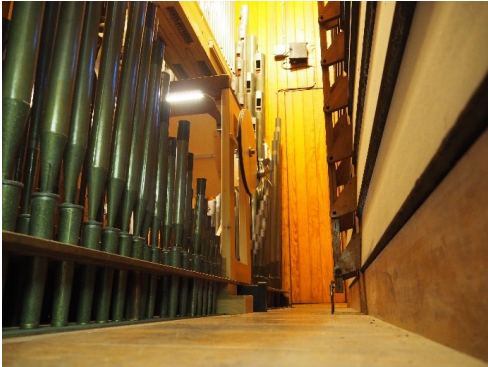
Theatre Organ technical notes - the tremulant

by Charles Brown

This article continues a discussion of some of the technical aspects of the mechanical and electrical components of the recently installed ex-Davenport Compton organ at the Peel Green Organ Heritage Centre.

Tremulants are devices which impart a variation in wind pressure to the pipes of the organ. When the tremulant is operating, this lowering and raising of wind pressure causes variations in the amplitude and pitch of the playing pipes. Those variations heard in the sound produced by the pipework can be affected by the physical connection of the tremulant within the winding system, as well as by adjustments which can be made at the tremulant, and are also affected by the voicing of the pipes themselves.

Tremulants have been installed within church or concert instruments for several centuries, although these are usually set so that their effect is quite subtle, and the effect is more to volume than pitch. However, within the theatre organ, the heavier pressure enables the tremulant to produce a much stronger effect on both pitch and volume.



There are a number of different types of tremulant, including hinged valves within the wind trunks, and 'beater' and 'bellows' types which exhaust air from the winding system. The Austin organ company produced a 'fan' tremulant – this being a thin board, about 2 feet wide, mounted directly over the tops of the pipes, pivoted on an axle and rotated by an electric motor (figure 1). However, the traditionally used tremulant in theatre organ installations is of the bellows type (figure 2).



Fig 1. The blade of the Austin 'Fan Tremulant' can be seen just below the strip light above the pipework. The fan is rotated by the disc in the centre of the picture.

Fig 2. One of the tremulants at Peel Green.

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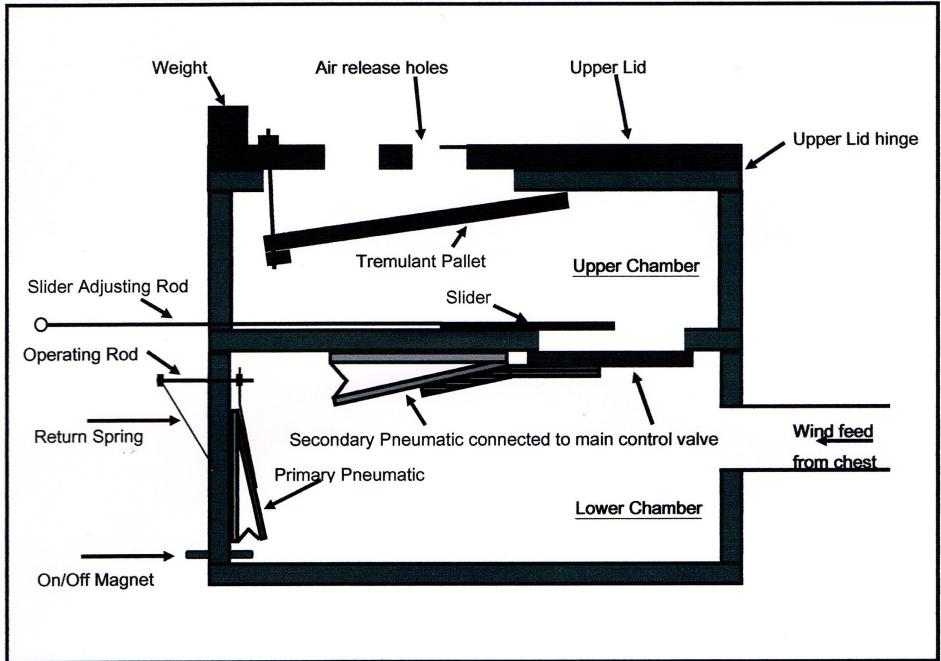


Figure 3. Tremulant at rest

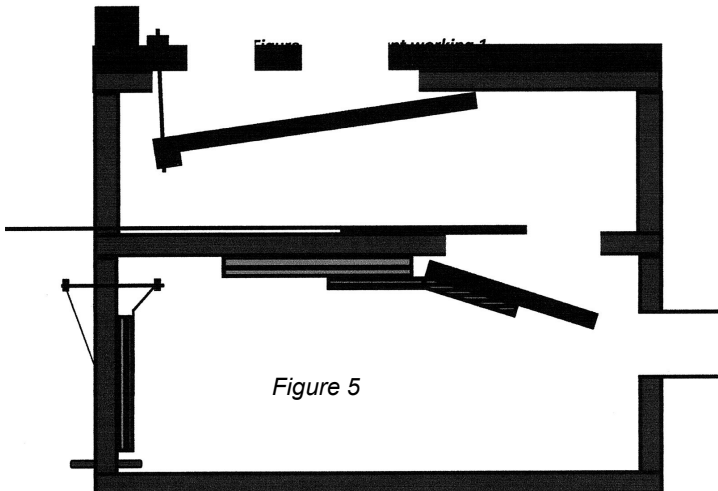
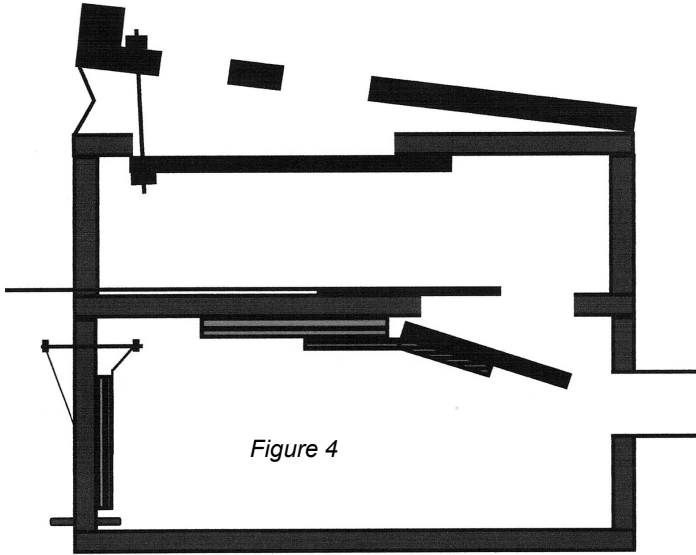
Figure 3 shows a Compton tremulant in the 'off' position. The device comprises two chambers with a set of expandable bellows attached between the top of the upper chamber and the upper lid. The upper lid has two air slits in it and is connected to a long pallet covering a hole in the top of the upper chamber by a metal rod. As the bellows open, so the pallet covers the lower hole. As the upper lid falls, so the lower hole is uncovered. A large metal weight is attached to the top of the lid.

Air from the chest is constantly fed into the lower chamber. A hole connecting the lower chamber to the upper chamber is closed off by a large leather covered control valve, which is next to, and fixed to, the top of a secondary pneumatic bellows by two wooden arms (also see figure 7). In the 'off' position, this secondary pneumatic is expanded with air – so closing off the hole between the chambers and leaving the upper chamber empty of air. The passage of air into the secondary pneumatic is controlled by the primary pneumatic, which is filled with air when the tremulant on/off magnet is not energized. Filling the primary pneumatic with air operates a rod and valve located within the wall of the tremulant to fill the secondary pneumatic with air.

When the tremulant is switched on, the energized magnet exhausts air from the primary pneumatic to atmosphere. The primary pneumatic collapses, so moving the operating rod and its wall-valve and allows air from the secondary pneumatic to exhaust to atmosphere. This collapsed secondary pneumatic now swings open the main control valve between the two chambers. Air now entering the upper chamber 'blows open' the bellows on top of the

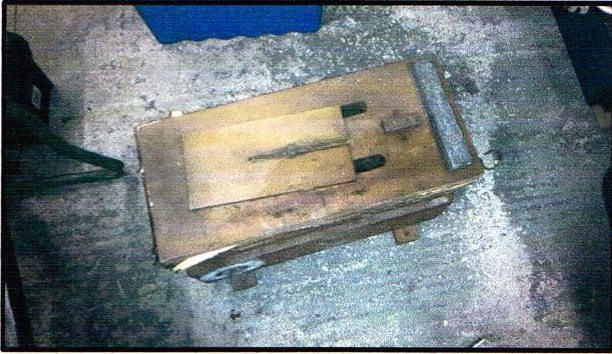
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tremulant. The rising upper lid then shuts off the air supply to the bellows. With no air entering the bellows, the contained air exhausts to atmosphere through the two air release holes, and the weight causes the lid to drop. This opens the pallet again, allowing air to enter the bellows. These two phases occur rapidly one after the other, with a quantity of air being dumped to atmosphere each time. This cyclical air dumping alters the air pressure throughout the winding system, and we see the regulators bouncing and hear the change to the note of the pipes. Figures 4 and 5 show the two cycles of the tremulant in operation.



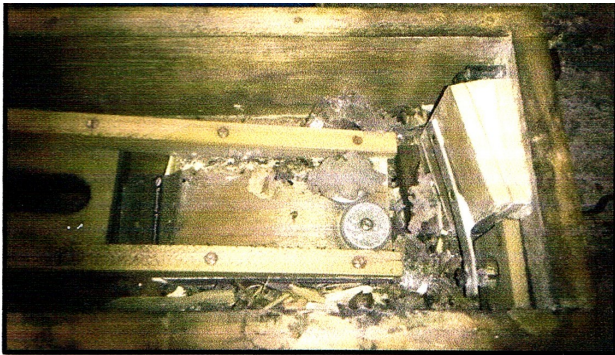
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A number of factors can be controlled at the tremulant. The slider between the two chambers can be adjusted to alter the 'depth' of the tremulation. A wooden plate attached to the top lid can alter the size of the air exit holes, so altering the speed of the tremulation.



The length of the connecting rod between the upper lid and the tremulant pallet can be adjusted to adjust the timing of the air dumping phases.

The following photographs record the restoration of a tremulant to be fitted on the Davenport Compton. The unit had been in storage for many years and at some time had obviously been 'home' to a small animal.



Top-Figure 6

Tremulant for Restoration

Middle - Figure 7

Inside of tremulant for restoration, looking into the lower chamber after the base has been removed. The secondary pneumatic, with its two small weights is in the centre of the picture, and the primary pneumatic is on the right.



Bottom - Figure 8

Under side of top bellows showing tremulant pallet



Figure 9

Looking into upper chamber from above showing slider adjustment rod and wire with hook, to alter "depth" of tremulation



Figure 10

Newly leathered pallet valve



Figure 11



Figure 12

Restored tremulant installed in chamber

Theatre Organ Heritage Centre

2020

Wednesday Lunchtime Organ Showcases

Subject to Alteration - No Reserved Seating

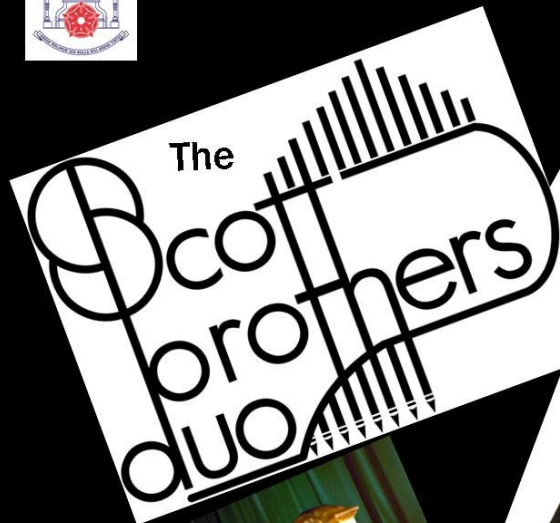
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|----------|------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|---|
| January | 1 | Closed | July | 1 | Martin Atterbury |
| | 8 | Michael Carter | | 8 | Lee Longden |
| | 15 | Elizabeth Harrison | | 15 | Elizabeth Harrison |
| | 22 | David Redfem | | 22 | Alec Walters |
| | 29 | Will Shaw | | 29 | Lisa Needham |
| February | 5 | Nicholas Martin | August | 5 | Dorian Collins |
| | 12 | John Bowdler | | 12 | Michael Wooldridge |
| | 19 | David Windle | | 19 | Declan Poole |
| | 26 | David Lobban | | 26 | Mark Laffin |
| March | 4 | Andrew Nix | September | 2 | Kevin Morgan |
| | 11 | Nigel Ogden | | 9 | Nigel Ogden |
| | 18 | Lisa Needham | | 16 | Len Rawle |
| | 25 | Damon Willetts | | 23 | Andrew Nix |
| April | 1 | Kevin Morgan | | 30 | David Lobban |
| | 8 | Stephen Austin | October | 7 | Nicholas Martin |
| | 15 | David Redfem | | 14 | Chris Powell |
| | 22 | David Ivory | | 21 | John Bowdler |
| | 29 | Len Rawle | | 28 | Matthew Bason |
| May | 6 | Byron Jones | November | 4 | Stephen Austin |
| | 13 | Richard Monks | | 11 | David Ivory |
| | 20 | Michael Baron | | 18 | Cameron Lloyd |
| | 27 | Alec Walters | | 25 | Damon Willetts |
| | June | 3 | Michael Wooldridge | December | 2 |
| 10 | | Nicholas Martin | 9 | | Mark Speight |
| 17 | | Joe Marsh | 16 | | Elizabeth Harrison Xmas Party - (Ticket Only) |
| 24 | | Richard Morgan | 23 | | Closed |
| | | | 30 | Closed | |

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Presents



Stockport Town Hall

Sunday 29th March 2020 2-30pm

Admission £10.00

LTOT Member concession £8.00

Easy Parking - Bar facilities - Tea/Coffee during interval