



— August - October 2025 —

TREMULANT

The Official Newsletter of
Theatre Organ Society of Australia (Western Australian Division) Inc



MEMBERS' DAYS

First Sunday of the
month - 2pm start

No Members' Day
in March

6 April 2025

4 May 2025

1 June 2025

6 July 2025

3 August 2025

7 September 2025

5 October 2025

2 November 2025

7 December 2025

From the President

It is hard to believe that we are now into the last quarter for 2025. Where has the year disappeared to? There are just three Sunday afternoons left this year.

We are looking forward to November, when new member Cath Plowman will host the Waratah Community Singers. They will present some musical items during the afternoon for us. And seeing that we will have some good singers in the room, I have been preparing a sing-song medley as well.

Our final Sunday this year will feature a festive afternoon tea – Christmas fare – so invite your friends along. The booking form is attached to this newsletter. Don't have a big lunch, or you won't have room for turkey sandwiches, fruit mince pies and other enjoyable treats. We will also have plenty of carols and Christmas music, so come along and enjoy.

Our community radio advertising on Curtin FM and Capital Radio appears to be paying dividends. There are now over half a dozen people who have started coming along after hearing the announcements. A big thank you to John Fuhrman for organising the community announcements on Capital Radio. That has resulted in a number of new people hearing about us, including Marye Daniels and Rosemary Tomkinson. May you both enjoy the music for a long time to come.

Meanwhile, both Kevin Banham and Philip Surtees have both been in hospital for some time. We wish you both speedy recoveries. Unfortunately, without Philip, Anne Holland is also unable to attend, and we miss you both.

With that, it is off to do some practice, and get prepared for our next musical afternoon. Hope to see you there, along with some friends.



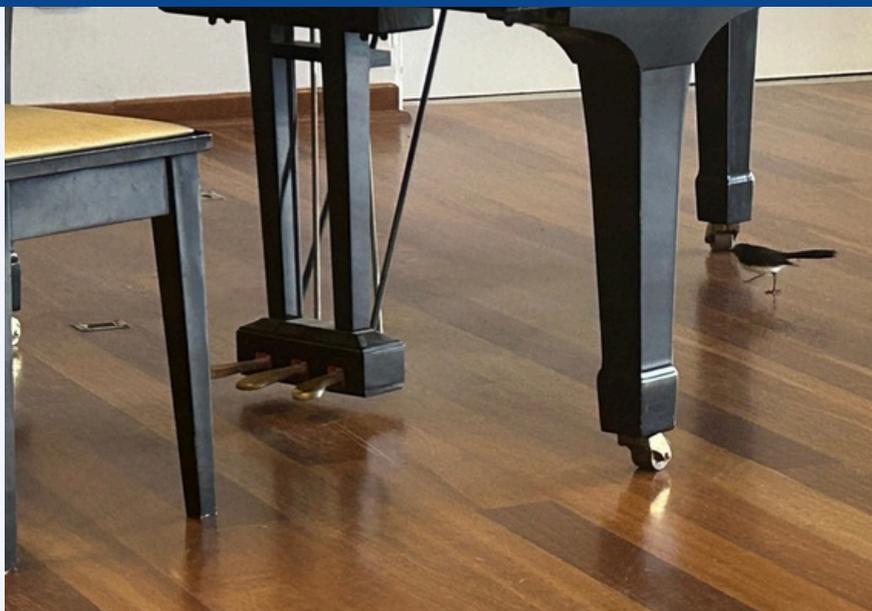
The Waratah Community Singers



Rodney Raymond
President

An unexpected visitor in August

A curious willy wagtail decided to join in the fun during our August members day!



Como Theatre Wurlitzer Update

For the last 18 months, 7 volunteers have been working on sections of the organ whilst in storage. They have completed replacement of all pipe chest and percussion secondary and primary pneumatics. Pneumatics have been recovered in long lasting Kangaroo leather and painted by volunteers with Organ Supply silicone leather conditioner. Chests have been wind tested and wired. It is hoped no further work will be required on the chests for a decade.



Currently the 3 manual console is in organ builder Tomaz Nowak's Bayswater workshop having its 97-year-old key contacts replaced on all manuals and pedalboard, and second touch restored to the great keyboard. A new manufactured straight rail with a second row of stops accommodates multiple couplers.



Following an observation by OSWA "Pipeline" editor Bruce Duncan that the organ only had four 16ft stops to carry twenty-one ranks a decision was made to incorporate three digital stops to augment the pedal division. They are 32ft Contra Boudon, 16ft Diaphone and 8ft Diaphonic Diapason. The integrity of the original theatre organ pipe work remains.

All percussions such as chrysoglot, xylophone, glockenspiel and marimba originally working on old dance band pitch of A=452cps are now lowered to A=440 cps concert pitch. How does the pitch of a short percussion bar get lowered? Shorter means sharper, right? The answer is by lengthening it mathematically with the grinding of a curve on the underside of the bar to make it longer.

To assist with the Wurlitzer's enlargement, much appreciated support has been received from: TOSA (WA) - a wind regulator surplus to requirements; TOSA (NSW) - a reiterating crash cymbal; TOSA (VIC) - multiple Sydneyne stop magnets for additional stop tablets.

The Battle for John Leckie Pavilion

The past few months have been rather tense, with news in May that the sporting groups that use the lower half of the John Leckie Pavilion and surrounding ovals wanted to take over use of the main music hall as well. If this went ahead, it would have seen the end of our Members Days, as well as concerts and rehearsals of other community music groups that, like us, have had regular bookings for decades.

The sporting groups claimed that they had no idea any of us were here... even though they would easily be able to hear our concerts and practice sessions from outside..!

Have Your Say: John Leckie Music Pavilion Proposal

The City of Nedlands is considering a lease that would give the College Park Sport Association (CPSA) exclusive weekend access to the upper-level hall from 1st April to 30th September (Fridays 2pm-Sundays midnight).

This would mean:

- FSO's Winter Warmer concerts would no longer be possible;
- The Claremont Concert Band (CCB) will lose its Friday evening rehearsal and weekend performance venue after 40+ years;
- The Theatre Organ Society WA Branch will lose its regular weekend performance venue;
- This hall is currently used by a number of other community groups for meetings and performances, which will be impacted by these changes;
- Shared storage access for CCB and FSO would be restricted; and
- The upper-level hall would no longer be available for general community use.

Our perspective:

FSO, CCB and Theatre Organ Society first became aware of this proposal in May this year, although negotiations between the Council and CPSA had begun in 2023. The CPSA has full use of the bottom level of the building and the playing fields. We believe changes to the upper-level use must be transparent and that it should continue to be under direction of the Council, not a single group, considering the wider community impact.

Have your say:

We would be very grateful if you could please take the time to review the proposal and complete the survey by the 18th July.

<https://yourvoice.nedlands.wa.gov.au/jp-license-consultation>
(QR code above takes you to this website).

The outcome of this survey will be announced on the 26th August.

Thank you for your ongoing support!
Your FSO, CCB & Theatre Organ Society

Have Your Say...



A community consultation was held, during which time the sitting council was sacked, and a caretaker installed.

Fortunately the community feedback was overwhelmingly against the sporting groups using the music hall, with 73% of the 404 submissions received objecting to granting the sporting associations a license to take over the space.

So for now we can breathe easier, but with Council elections coming up it's quite possible this will be raised again next year...

Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/theatreorganwa

Footy v culture

Five-tonne organ

By BEN DICKINSON

Junior footy players, musicians and a five-tonne organ are on a collision course in Nedlands.

Claremont Junior Football Club wants to expand from its current quarters on the bottom floor of College Park's John Leckie Pavilion to the hall above, following an expansion of its 2000-seat auditorium.

"You would fit 25 people downstairs, and we've got 400-plus kids playing footy," club president Carlin Langer said.

New lights, currently being installed on the lower end at the club's expense, will allow the Tigers to host girls' night games, their home ground after years of outsourcing "home" games to other venues.

The hall has a wide balcony overlooking the oval - ideal for spectators - plus a full kitchen and bathrooms.

But the club's expansion could come at the expense of the Claremont Concert Band, Fremantle Symphony Orchestra and Theatre Organ Society, all of which regularly use the pavilion's upper hall.

It seems extremely unreasonable, "Claremont Concert Band president Elizabeth Duncan told a Nedlands council meeting in May.

"The music hall has been our home since 1999. The hall is also home to one of only two working theatre organs in WA - a five-tonne, 80-year-old behemoth built for silent movies that fills three rooms.

"It produces a big enough sound to fill a 2000-seat auditorium," said Rodney Raymond, president of the WA Theatre Organ Society.

"We're talking four or five tonnes of equipment - it's difficult to shift around."

As well as hundreds of pipes, the organ plays drums, cymbals and chimes.

The music groups were blindsided in May when they discovered the football club had been in talks with Nedlands council for more than two years about taking over the upstairs hall on Fridays and weekends.

But the football club says it was also kept in the dark by the council after officers refused to give them a list of the hall's regular users.

"This has all been a huge mismanagement by the City of Nedlands," said Bradley Forbes, from the College Park Sporting Association (CPSA), which represents the football club and Western Suburbs Cricket Club.

"We've said to the city we're happy to chat to the other user groups."

The city said "No, you're not to do that, that's our job". Council officers sent a written proposal to the CPSA in December offering them use of the hall on Friday nights and weekends.

"It was being directed by the council that they were talking to the users," Mr Langer said.

But the music groups say they knew nothing about the club's plan until it landed on the agenda for the council's May meeting.

"I don't want you to point out people in the room," Mr Caddy told Mr Forbes.

The CPSA, which represents the Claremont Junior Football Club and Western Suburbs Cricket Club, had sought to use the pavilion's upper hall on 14 Friday nights a year when girls' teams play under their home ground's new lights.

That would displace the 40-odd member Claremont Concert Band, which practises in the purpose-built music hall every week.

"The music hall has been home to our band on a Friday night since the 1990s," concert band president Liz Duncan told the commissioners.

Four light towers, installed last month, have allowed the girls sides to play at their home ground for the first time, after years of outsourcing "home" games to other venues.

But football club vice president James Baker told commissioners that many parents were not coming to watch their girls play because there was nowhere they could watch out of the weather.

A public consultation organised by the council received a substantial 404 submissions, 73% of which objected to granting the sporting association a licence over the upper hall.

But Mr Forbes said Nedlands staff had misrepresented the CPSA's position in "biased" consultation documents that contained "countless errors and mistruths".

Mr Forbes pleaded with commissioners to put off a decision, but Mr Caddy said he had heard enough.



Surround sound... Rodney Raymond at College Park's theatre organ, one of only two in WA. Photo: Ben Dickinson

Eileen 'Red' Bond dies

By LYDIA GORMAN

Eileen Bond - the vicar's widow of tycoon Alan Bond - died on Wednesday after a stroke. She was understood to be 88 but always kept her age a secret.

She was due to fly to Singapore on Thursday for a family reunion with her children and grandchildren.

Known as 'Red' because of her distinctive hair colour and vibrant personality, Mrs Bond, of Peppermint Grove, was a great football fan and co-owner of baseball team Perth Heat.

"She was at the footy with her beloved South Fremantle last weekend and was in fabulous health and great form," said daughter Judy Forster, a prominent Cottesloe real estate agent.

It came quickly and as a great shock to us. Eileen married Alan Bond in 1952 when they were both 17 and remained married for 27 years, until their divorce in 1979.

She was with him through the heady days of the American Cup win and the WA Era era which he created and for which he served four years in jail.

Alan Bond died 18 years ago following heart surgery. They had four children, John, Craig, Suzanne and Judy.

Footy v culture

• From page 1

"The first time we saw the proposal as detailed was in Friday's agenda," Ms Duncan told the Tuesday meeting.

The report called for a community consultation about the proposal, which is now open on the Your Voice Nedlands website until July 18.

The proposed licence agreement would have the biggest impact on the 40-piece Claremont Concert Band, which holds rehearsals at the pavilion every Friday night while girls' footy matches will be played.

"It's got acoustic tiles and wooden floors," Ms Duncan said.

"It's got everything acoustically to make a great performance space. "We've got a grand piano in there as well."

The band is preparing for its 50th anniversary gala concert in September, but Ms Duncan worries that could be "under threat".

"It's a community hall," she said. "Exclusive use I don't think is the way to go."

Other groups may not be directly impacted, but say they are worried about losing access to the pavilion if the CPSA is made its head tenant.

"We don't know whether we're going to be looked after or we're going to have to fit in around the football club," Mr Raymond said.

Mr Forbes said the CPSA wanted to explore other options, such as a sub-lease to the concert band on Saturday nights, but had been hamstrung by a diabolical council bureaucracy.

"We've probably been through five leasing [offers]," he said.

"You spend a few months getting up to speed with someone and then two months later they're gone."

"Each time we'd email, something would come back that was completely different to what we'd been speaking about."

"Looking back on it now I wish I'd gone back and spoken to some of those other users earlier because I didn't know that they existed."

Mr Forbes said it was never the CPSA's intention to displace other pavilion users.

"I completely understand their position that if we've got a licence we've got control over the building," he said.



This Compton organ has been a staple at the John Leckie Pavilion since 1988.

"The Tigers even spoke to the footy commission to see if they could move their girls' games to Saturday night, they've said no."

Councillors are due to make a decision on the pavilion in July, after the results of the public consultation are collated.

The last report to councillors said it was "unclear" if the football club's proposal would exclude the music groups from the hall on weekends.

"The whole thing has been a mess," Mr Forbes said.

Concert band survives shirtfront

By BEN DICKINSON

The College Park Sporting Association has lost a bid to push music groups out of the John Leckie Pavilion during girls' football matches.

Nedlands council's commissioners voted unanimously to knock back the takeover bid at a meeting on Wednesday night, minutes after the CPSA's Brad Forbes unloaded on council CEO Keri Shannon, who he accused of mishandling a public consultation.

"The entire process has been a bit of a farce and the City administration are the ones to blame," Mr Forbes told the meeting.

He named two council staff members.

"They've let all of us down - all of the groups - horrifically."

The spray prompted an intervention from chief commissioner David Caddy. "I don't want you to point out

people in the room," Mr Caddy told Mr Forbes.

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Brad Forbes



T.O.S.A. [W.A.] Inc. MEMBERSHIP FORM 2025

I / We wish to renew my membership of T.O.S.A. (W.A.) for 2025.

Membership fees are **\$60** Family or **\$40** Single Membership.

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