



## **RWA NEWS MAY 2015**



Welcome

This is day four of organist Tony Wilson's visit from Los Angeles to the UK. We are packing as much as we possibly can into the week and have suggested that Tony has a good rest when he gets home next week! So far Tony has enjoyed seeing Michael Wooldridge's Step-Daughter, Katie Newman, play the lead role in a full scale production of Carousel, experienced a private impromptu performance on the ESN Wurlitzer at Uckfield and played a wonderful concert on the Wurlitzers at Singing Hills Golf Club by kind invitation of Mr. Michael Hunt. The RWA's Thomas Pickering performed a Cameo spot at Wednesday's concert and was very well received by the very appreciative audience.

On Thursday Tony was able to familiarise himself with the Rye Wurlitzer for the first time and presented an enjoyable and highly informative Masterclass for our students, including those from Rye Primary School. He has also kindly given three of our senior students some one to one support to encourage them further. The Mermaid Inn played host to a meet and greet with senior management and governors from Rye College and Rye Studio School.

After this evening's concert we are whisking Tony off for an overnight stay in Worthing before heading to Beer in Devon to listen to Michael perform an afternoon concert on the UK's oldest Wurlitzer (it opened in January 1925, so just a little before our Rye Wurlitzer opened in April 1925) and hopefully to meet with another of England's fine theatre organists, Trevor Bolshaw. On Sunday we hope to have time for a very little sightseeing followed by a lunch visit to the home of The Welsh Wizard, organist Byron Jones, so Tony can hear his delightful home Wurlitzer, followed by a journey on to Chorleywood to visit Len & Judith Rawle and their magnificent Empire Leicester Square Wurlitzer, which has now been in their home for 50 years!

Writing all about this has worn me out, let alone the experience itself, but I am enjoying every minute of the week. As usual the students have been a credit to RWA.

Our recent Silent Movie Night was very well received with around one hundred people attending and raising £550 for our ongoing project costs.

This evening there will be Cameo appearances by Jamyma Hanson and also Robert Eldridge, who remarkably has only had nine short lessons with Michael so far but is progressing in leaps and bounds. Then we have Jayden Vicarey coming along very nicely as one of our Wurlitzer players but tonight showing us he is a very fine singer and you will enjoy his vocal talents in a duet with Lauren McNicholl. Another brand new Wurlitzer player, Isabella Nudd, is going to enchant us with a wonderful song. Last but not least, teacher himself, Michael Wooldridge, will be joining Tony for a few duets!

For those with internet, please visit our website [www.ryewurlitzeracademy.org.uk](http://www.ryewurlitzeracademy.org.uk) or visit our Facebook page the Rye Wurlitzer Academy.

Thank you for supporting our event, we hope you will have a memorable evening.

*Best Wishes*

*Richard Moore*

**Rye Wurlitzer Academy**

## RYE WURLITZER ACADEMY ROLL OF HONOUR

We would like to thank the following for their donations and support in the development of our very special project since November 2009

**In celebration of the life of Rita Akehurst**  
 Rye Old Scholars Association \* R.G.S. Foundation Governors  
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 Mr Glen Twamley St.Leonards  
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 Mr Tony Wilson Los Angeles USA  
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 Mrs Jo Lucas Weston Super Mare \* Mr & Mrs Everton Kenton  
 Mrs A. Young Ashford \* Mrs S. Parker Bexhill  
 Mr B Perkins Tenterden  
 Roy & Joan Mills Woodchurch  
 Mrs Marion Lovell Playden

## OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thomas, Jamyma and Dominic Standing perform at  
 Eden Grove, Filton, Bristol, **Saturday 27th June**

Jamyma Hanson performs a cameo appearance with Len Rawle MBE at  
 Woking Leisure Centre on **Saturday 11th July**

Rye Wurlitzer Academy Students perform at the East Sussex National  
**Sunday October 11th**

Rye Wurlitzer Academy Student Concert, date is to be confirmed  
**November 2015**

UK Young Theatre organist of the year Competition 2015,  
**Sunday 22nd November** Musical Museum at Kew.

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FOR THIS EVENT**

★ ★ The Rye Wurlitzer Academy Proudly Presents ★ ★

# ★ An Evening of Music & Song ★

**Join us for this special opportunity to hear and support our Rye Organists and Singers in a repeat of last summer's very popular and enjoyable evening**

**Featuring a Cavalcade of Rye's Young Star Singers Performing A Wide Variety of Musical Treats**

★ ★ **FRIDAY 17TH JULY** ★ ★  
 ★ ★ **at 7.00pm (Doors 6.30pm)** ★ ★  
 ★ ★ **Admission £6 including An Interval Cake!** ★ ★  
 ★ ★ **Children Aged 5 and Under Free** ★ ★

**MILLIGAN THEATRE - RYE**  
 Milligan Theatre, Rye College, The Grove, Rye, TN31 7NQ  
**BOOK NOW - Call RICHARD on 01424 444 058**  
 Or Contact Mrs. Dale in the Music Department

## R.W.A. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To provide tuition in the art of theatre organ playing and presentation to young scholars free at point of delivery.

To educate young scholars in the art of theatrical presentation and the performing arts in general.

To teach young scholars the art of maintaining and preserving Theatre Organs as a part of our musical heritage for future generations to enjoy.

To provide opportunities for young people to develop like skills through interaction with other like minded groups.

To establish a national network of similar academies throughout the UK.

It is great to see the Wurlitzer being incorporated in to more and more of Rye College's events and activities. It has recently been an integral part of the GCSE Performing Arts examination performance, a very well presented promenade performance with a tale about aliens landing. In this photo the masked aliens gather around the Wurlitzer console, enchanted, as we all were, by the haunting sounds of current Young Theatre Organist of the Year Thomas Pickering showing some of his other talents, playing the flute superbly.

There had already been a song and dance number to the Wurlitzer, which must have come as quite a shock to the examiner as it suddenly rose out of the floor playing!

Just a few years ago it would have been virtually inconceivable that this could happen. Now the Wurlitzer is just a part of every day life for students in the College. Quite wonderful.



**AN ADVANCE DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!**

**Friday October 2nd at  
The Milligan Theatre**

**Tickets £10.00**

**Children Under 16 £3.00**

**To include Special Interval Cakes**

The RWA present a very special evening featuring top ABBA Tribute - Chiquitita

Enjoy an evening with the iconic songs of Abba from Agnetha & Frida, brought to Rye with stunning costumes by professional singers Mel and TreeAnna.



**ANOTHER ADVANCE DATE FOR YOUR DIARY**

Our plans for 2015 just keep getting better and better.

On **December 4th**

we have our special

**Christmas Concert.**

Each year we like to be different and this year is no exception as we have engaged the

**Brighton Welsh Male Voice Choir**

More details of the choir and the evening will be posted in future editions of our news sheet.

For now, please make a note of the date in your diary

The choir will sing some seasonal duets with

**Michael Wooldridge**

on the Rye Wurlitzer



**The ESN 4-star extravORGANza  
Deluxe Organ Festival  
9th to 11th October 2015**



Places for this very special weekend festival are going fast.

As well as the UK's very top players at the Wurlitzer and various electronic organs and keyboards, there will also be trade stands with the latest organs and keyboards for sale from Musicland, Yamaha, Allen and Lowrey, plus an afternoon presentation by our young stars from the Rye Wurlitzer Academy.

**Book now by calling 01780 782 093**



**The Mermaid Inn, Mermaid Street, Rye, Tel: 01797 223065 Fax: 01797 225069  
www.mermaidinn.com AA Rosette AA \*\*\* Supporting the Rye Wurlitzer Academy**

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## INTRODUCING MR. TONY WILSON

In his very early teens, Tony was an active member of a youth organisation called the Young Organists Association (YOA). Their charter was to engage and encourage the youth of America to play theatre pipe (as well as electronics) organs. The YOA played a significant role in the start of Tony's growth as a musician and performer, and in the initial building of his confidence. This fact is shared, since it is one of the reasons why Tony is supportive of the Rye Wurlitzer Academy.

In addition to his later music studies in college, Tony Wilson received instruction from organist Anne Randall, and coaching from Gordon Kibbee, a renowned organist, arranger and recording artist in the USA.

He has actively performed on theatre pipe organ since his teens at Pipe 'n Pizza in California, one of the *first* restaurants (anywhere) to featured a Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ. In the years that followed, Tony performed frequently on theatre pipe organs

at the Great American Wind Machine (Los Angeles); the Pipes & Pizza restaurants in Utah; and on the large 5-manual theatre pipe organ at the famed Organ Loft in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Tony Wilson performs concerts regularly on both theatre and classical pipe organs at noteworthy venues in Los Angeles, as well as concerts throughout North America and abroad. He was a featured concert artist at the 2012 national convention for the American Theatre Organ Society in Los Angeles, California, and is a featured artist for Rodgers and Roland instruments.

Alongside his performance schedule, Tony is now Vice President and co-owner of Motion Picture magic, a firm who work making links between major brands and the major film and TV studios, including Paramount Pictures, Warner Brothers, DreamWorks and Universal, so when you next watch a film and see products and brands on screen, it may be that Tony was the man who put them there!

To keep his performing edge, he has a large 58-stop classical organ in his home in the San Gabriel Valley (California), and also has access to some of the finest theatre pipe organs in the western United States.

## RYE WURLITZER ACADEMY OUR SPECIAL TIMELINE

**NOVEMBER 2009** We receive an initial donation of £600 to be specifically used for Wurlitzer organ tuition to Rye College Students

**JANUARY 2010** Master Class with Len Rawle MBE attended by 12 Students.

**APRIL 2010** One to One tuition started with Michael Wooldridge, at first with lessons only about every five weeks but gradually increasing as funds allowed to our now regular sessions most weeks during school time

**SEPTEMBER 2011** Teaching extended to Rye & Broad Oak Primary Schools

**OCTOBER 2011** First field trip for students to the East Sussex National Wurlitzer Organ at Uckfield, and our first student evening. Wonderful testimonials including from leading Australian Theatre Organist Dr. John Attwell who attended.

**JULY 2012** Seven students and three adults attended an all expenses paid trip to the ATOS Theatre Organ Convention in Los Angeles.

**AUGUST 2012** BBC Radio2 broadcast a special 30 minute programme about the RWA and the recent USA trip with performances and interviews by the students.

**APRIL 2013** Ten students attend a field trip to the North West of England to perform and listen to theatre organs in seven different venues in four day period.

**OCTOBER 2013** Leading American organist John Ledwon, resident organist at Disney's El Capitan Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard visits Rye to give a masterclass presentation to our students

**MARCH 2014** A social gathering attended by over 50 students and parents at the East Sussex National, with an exclusive tour of the pipe chambers.

**JUNE 2014** Field trip to the Musical Museum at Kew Bridge for our YTOY entrants

**JULY 2014** The RWA's Thomas Pickering wins the ATOS UK Young Theatre organist of the Year Competition 2014 with Jamyma-May Hanson as runner-up at Fentham Hall in Solihull

**SEPTEMBER 2014.** Jamyma Hanson appears with Len Rawle MBE in concert at the Christie Organ in Ipswich

**DECEMBER 2014** Students featured in the BBC Radio 2 programme The Organist Entertains with interviews with both Thomas & Jamyma as part of the feature on the Young Theatre Organist of the Year Competition. Also during this month Thomas appears with Len Rawle MBE at his Christmas Concert at the superb ATOS Woking Wurlitzer.

**FEBRUARY 2015** Jamyma & Thomas appear in concert with Michael at the West Surrey Organ Club on Electronic Organ and a very well received.

**MARCH 2015** New students from Rye Primary School start their Wurlitzer Journey which celebrates 55 students that have now experienced the Rye Wurlitzer Theatre Organ, whether it be for a short time or still with some original students

**MAY 2015** American organist Tony Wilson travels over especially to perform two concerts in aid of RWA and to give a masterclass to all students and one to one tuition to our most senior students.

TENSION? STRESS?  
ACHING BACK  
& SHOULDERS?



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