

Phantom of The Concourse

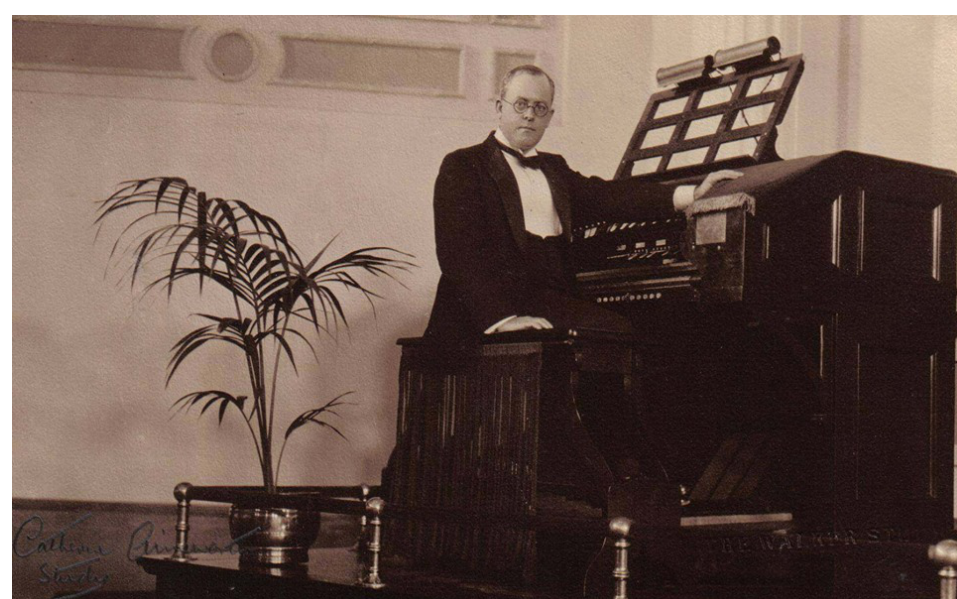
The rise and fall of Willoughby's grand WurliTzer organ



Daily Telegraph

The grand WurliTzer organ from the Arcadia Theatre, Chatswood, languishing in The Concourse

The history of the grand WurliTzer organ now languishing in The Concourse at Chatswood dates back to 1926 when it was installed in the Arcadia Theatre in Victoria Avenue (west) at a cost of some £10,000. The organ was played before the movie and at interval.



Daily Telegraph

Nicholas Robins at the Wurlitzer -- Arcadia in 1926

After the closure of the Acadia theatre in 1962 the Crispe family donated the organ to the people of Willoughby. The organ was re-housed in the then Civic Centre.

When the Civic Centre was demolished it was decided to restore the organ prior to its relocation into The Concourse. Council allocated \$500,000 for the restoration project. \$600,000 had been spent when tragically, a key member of the restoration team had to withdraw from the project. The project languished. Council advertised throughout Australia and worldwide for a replacement, but to no avail.

Eventually, Willoughby Council came to the realisation that they could not complete the project. Naturally, this decision was poorly received by many.

Pathetic, outrageous and a complete stuff up

With its new pipes and upgraded keyboard the WurliTzer is now well suited to symphonic music.

Organists

**Nicholas Robins
Eddie Horton
Charles Tuckwell
Barrie Bretonner
Knight Barnett
Ron Sinclair
John Atwell
Desmond Tanner
Jim Williams
Penn Hughes
Denis Palaiastra
Leslie V. Harvey
Stanley Cummins
PaulCullen
Idwal Jenkins
Muriel Jaevons
Ron West**