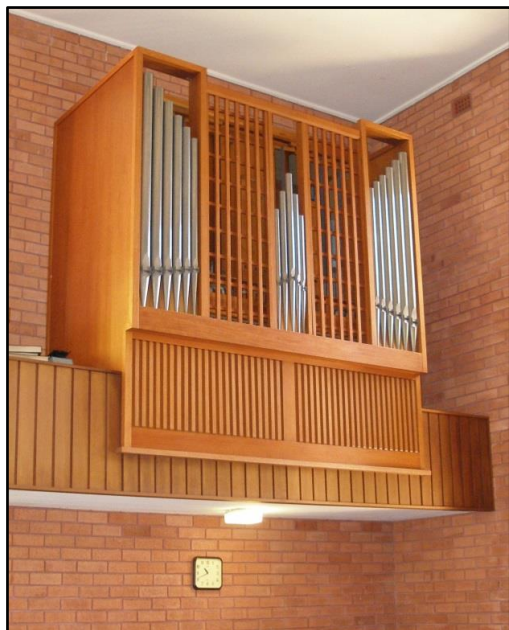


THE GYMEA – MIRANDA UNITING CHURCH ORGAN



The Miranda organ was built as a War Memorial by Roger H. Pogson, of Pennant Hills, in 1966. It was the third of some 32 new pipe organs built by Pogson between 1964 and 1996. Pogson also restored older instruments and is best known for his superb restoration of the Grand Organ in Sydney Town Hall. His final organ project was a restoration of an historic organ at Carcoar in 2001.

Not long after the completion of its new church building, the Miranda Methodist Church resolved to acquire a pipe organ and established a committee that looked at the work of a range of Sydney organbuilders, including S.T. Noad & Son, J.P. Eagles and Ronald Sharp. The committee comprised Eric Baker (choirmaster), Colin Bush, Roy Caddy, Peter Crispin, Neville Faggotter, David Phillips, Ralph Rowlett, Stanley Stephens (organist) and Ray Watson. The decision to choose Pogson was based on an observation of the excellent workmanship and tone of his first two organs, at St Stephen's Anglican Church, Normanhurst (1964) and Wentworth Memorial Anglican Church, Vaucluse (1965). The cost of the instrument was in the order of \$5,300 – a very large amount at the time, given that funds had to be raised separate from those raised for the new church building.

In order for the gallery to carry the weight of the organ, which according to Neville Faggotter is 1¼ tons (about the same as a Holden Commodore), steel supporting frames had to be fabricated, these being seated in the brick walls around the organ. The frames were lifted into place by volunteers, who narrowly avoided injury when supporting planks placed on the church pews moved during the process. The rear gallery was then extended to the eastern wall of the church, with a new section of balcony wall made by Kevin Winter, a fine cabinet maker, who selected and installed it to match the existing panels perfectly.

The Miranda organ is a tiny instrument of 310 metal and wooden pipes grouped in five sets – Principal, Rohr Flute, Spitz Flute, Salicional and Subbass, controlled by 16 stop tabs at the console. There are two keyboards (of 61 notes) and a pedalboard (of 30 notes).



The console cabinet, pedalboard, casework, bellows, wooden pipes, windchests and electro-pneumatic actions were all made by Pogson, while the metal pipes were supplied by George Fincham & Sons, of Melbourne. The keyboards, key contacts, stopkey units and chest electro-magnets were supplied by Kimber-Allen, of Swanley, Kent, UK, while the electro-magnets for the console relays were made

by August Laukhuff, of Weikersheim, Germany. The ¼ horsepower blower was supplied by the British Organ Blowing Company of Derby, UK, with wind pressure set at 2¾" w.g.

The completed instrument was dedicated by The Revd Guy L. Walker (President-Elect of the NSW Conference of the Methodist Church) in a service on Saturday 6 August 1966, with The Revd W.R. Cowper officiating. The organ was presented for dedication to the Glory of God by Mr J.A. Thompson on behalf of the Trustees, the Trust Secretary being Mr Arthur Street and the Treasurer being Mr David Phillips. Others participating in the service were Mr Frank Jackson (President of the Miranda Sub-Branch of the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's League of Australia) and The Revd W.S. Beazley.

The organ was tuned and maintained on an annual basis by Roger Pogson until 1982, when he moved to Orange to establish a new workshop. Maintenance then passed to his former employee, Manuel da Costa, of Croydon, until he retired in 2010. The organ is currently in the hands of Peter D.G. Jewkes Pty Ltd, of Ermington. Apart from routine work, the only significant repairs to the organ have been cleaning and some action adjustments, undertaken by Mr da Costa in 1993 and the releathering of the bellows by Peter D.G. Jewkes in 2015. The latter work was funded by a generous private donor.

Notes prepared by Kelvin Hastie, August 2015, with acknowledgement to Arthur and Judy Street, Peter Crispin and Neville Faggotter.