**40TH ANNUAL OHTA CONFERENCE**

**MELBOURNE AND BALLARAT REGIONS**

**25 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2017**

The Organ Historical Trust of Australia’s 2017 conference will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the organisation in May 1977 as well as focussing upon the work of 19th century Melbourne organbuilder Alfred Fuller. There will be papers and panel discussions associated with these two themes, details of which are given below, together with a number of recitals and demonstrations.

The conference will also include visits to significant instruments, not only by Alfred Fuller, but also by Alfred Crook, George Fincham, Balbiani, Harrison & Harrison, Samuel Joscelyne, Henry Willis & Sons, J.W. Wolff, Hill, Norman & Beard, Halmshaw and Hamlin & Son. The programme will include a number of organ recitals and a visit to the Grainger Museum.

A block booking for OHTA has been made at the Ibis Melbourne Hotel and Apartments, 15-21 Therry Street, Melbourne, but you must contact the hotel directly before 30 June 2017 to ensure a preferential rate, quoting code: ‘**OHTA40’**. Room only cost per night is $125.00 (max 2 per room). Contact Andrew Singer (Reservations Manager), email H1564-RE2@accor.com or telephone 03 9666 0000. Breakfast can be reserved at a reduced rate ($16.00 per day) at the time of booking.

Accommodation for one night only (Friday 29 September) has been reserved at the RACV Goldfields Resort, Creswick, north of Ballarat, and is included in the conference registration.

As the end of the week will be the football Grand Final Weekend, it is suggested that your accommodation and transport to Melbourne be given high priority.

Student bursaries will also be available for full-time students under the age of 25. Applications should be sent to John Maidment johnrm@tpg.com.au

The conference will start on Monday 25 September, with registration from 9.00 am at St Paul’s Cathedral. It will conclude in Ballarat on Saturday 30 September at 12.15 pm and after a lunch break the coach will drop participants at Melbourne airport by 3.00 pm and then central Melbourne. As this will be the AFL Grand Final weekend, it is suggested that accommodation in Melbourne and interstate transport be booked early.

Current plans are as follows:

* Monday 25 September, central Melbourne and to the north and south of the city
* Tuesday 26 September, north of the city – Fitzroy, Carlton and Parkville
* Wednesday 27 September – Alfred Fuller day in Flemington, North Fitzroy, Heidelberg and Blackburn
* Thursday 28 September, south and east of the city – East St Kilda, Caulfield and Hawthorn
* Friday 29 September, country tour – to Craigie, Talbot, Clunes and Creswick
* Saturday 30 September, country tour – Ballarat

Full booking details, including a brochure, are available on the OHTA website [www.ohta.org.au](http://www.ohta.org.au)

OHTA AT 40

The conference will examine in some detail what OHTA has achieved through the 40 years of its existence. The foundation of OHTA in 1977 will be discussed and then specific aspects of its achievements will be examined, including the Stiller documentations, *OHTA News*, the website, conferences, preservation standards, tax deductible appeals, significant restorations and losses, and future directions, such as the setting up of an OHTA foundation.

FOCUS ON FULLER

The conference will focus upon the work of Melbourne organbuilder Alfred Fuller, a number of whose instruments have been successfully restored and relocated. Fuller was born in Kelvedon, Essex in 1845 and worked with London organbuilder G.M. Holdich and gained further experience in North America before his arrival in Melbourne in 1871. Between 1880 and 1900 he built more than 25 new organs, distinctive on account of their excellence of workmanship, design and choice of materials. Fuller retired from organbuilding and moved into real estate and died a very wealthy man in 1923. Sadly, a number of his instruments have either been destroyed or rebuilt beyond recognition.