

David Pitts

An organ donor- of the musical variety

Music has been a central part of David Pitt's professional and personal life for many years. For David, this love of music and a desire to support the performing arts in Newcastle were the driving factors in his generous donation of a digital organ to the University. David's donation of a magnificent Ahlborn-Galanti AG3200 62-stop digital organ to the University now sits proudly in the Great Hall, and also features a 26-channel powered speaker system donated by Friends of Newcastle University.

"I thought I would like to build on the support (of the broader Newcastle community) by offering my skills and experience as a personal donation," David said.

David is a Novocastrian who, during the late 1960s and early 70s, was active as an organist giving concerts, teaching, and playing at charitable fundraisers, weddings and special conventions. In 1976, he opened a music store in Gosford with the help of Newcastle music identity Vince Millington, which eventually expanded to three stores on the Central Coast with a music school of 600 students. In 1987, Mr Pitts became interested in a new type of classical organ developed in Italy, a digital organ that was to become the acclaimed Ahlborn-Galanti Pipeless Pipe Organ, and he sold his businesses to focus on being their Australian distributor.

"The opportunity for a new organ at the Newcastle University was first mentioned by Professor John Marley. From there, a groundswell of support from university staff, in particular Dr Bernard Curran, made the dream a reality," said David.

"The completion of the Newcastle University Great Hall in 1974 was a memorable occasion. In many ways, it heralded a coming-of-age for the performing arts in Newcastle and demonstrated encouraging support of the broader community," said David.

The cost of a new pipe organ with a similar specification has been estimated at more than \$1.6 million. The value of the new organ installation has been estimated at \$320 000.

