

## The Micromoog “Sogga” and Tom Rhea’s Sojourns to Australia - 1974 & 1975

My memo to Chuck Hendry *et al* (January 27, 1975) re Micromoog production numbers was assiduously ignored, of course. I indicated that we had developed a fine little synthesizer and should open the production floodgates. **Nope.**

I challenged Norlin’s decision to build only ten (10) units for a “marketing study” by stating that I could sell that many immediately. Subsequently I did as much, by traveling to Manny’s (NYC), Sam Ash Music (Long Island, NY), and Chuck Levin’s Washington Music Center (Wheaton, MD.) At each dealer three (3) Micromoogs had been brought in. It took me exactly one (1) day per each dealer to sell all nine (9) of them. I stood on those dealers’ floors until it was done.

So, OK. Open the floodgates, right? **Nope.** The decision came down that there would be 103 units in the first production run. Wow! I told Norlin’s brass I would sell that entire production run at the next NAMM show. In fact, I *did* sell all 103 of those Micromoogs to Rose Music Pty. of Australia at that NAMM show. In fact, we trounced ARP’s AXXE synth at that show, which I loudly and somewhat injudiciously proclaimed very publicly to ARP’s reps and their brass!

Now, Alan Rose immigrated to Australia as a young man with hardly anything to his name but the clothes on his back, and had built a sizeable empire of music dealers there. One whose size was commensurate with Norlin’s dealers in USA, given relative differences in total populations.

Mr. Rose was a man of vision—he could see that synthesizers were the coming thing. In fact, I recall his browbeating one of his Company Principals about this in a meeting we had, saying: “. . . now look here—he (Tom Rhea) is an expert—listen to what he is saying to us!” This was during the first visit I made to Australia (see exhibit below: letter of September 23, 1974). During that several weeks long visit I sold many Moog Sonic Six and Minimoog synthesizers from Perth to Sydney to Melbourne. Rose wangled me into teachers’ conferences, the leading academic institutions as a speaker, etc. In a word, they did a fine job of it! And so did I . . .

Due to the confidence I had garnered with Rose Music during that initial visit to their country, Rose Music Principals visiting that NAMM show took my word for it that I could sell these Micromoogs throughout Australia. They signed for all 103 of them!

But of course, we had missed the benefits of “scale,” i.e. by producing a larger number of units! Even so, Scott’s little Micromoog became a *roaring* success, despite Norlin’s early “misgivings.”

Indeed, another trip for me to Down Under (Australia) was scheduled for 1975 (see resulting letter of 9 October 1975 below).

These letters are followed by a few photos of sales events in Australia. The gent on the left was Mr. Brian Brown of Rose Music . . . who could mimic all the local accents and dialects of the entire British Isles. What an ear he had! And I enjoyed oysters Mornay most days while there!

September 23, 1974

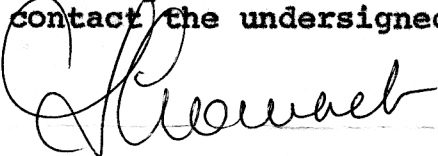
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that Dr. Tom Rhea residing at 1908 Glen Echo Road, Nashville, Tennessee is a Marketing Consultant retained by CMI International, Inc. (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Norlin Music, Inc.) for the promotion of Electronic Musical Instruments in Australia.

Dr. Rhea will be leaving the United States for Australia on the 10th of October and will stay through October 27th. During this time Dr. Rhea will demonstrate musical instruments to dealers, players and educationalists throughout Australia. This tour is sponsored by our exclusive distributor for Moog Electronic Instruments, namely, Rose Music Pty, Ltd., 17/33 Market Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3205.

CMI International, Inc. will be responsible for the expenses incurred by Dr. Rhea in connection with his travel to and his stay within the Commonwealth of Australia.

Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.



J. G. R. Crouzet, V. P.  
Musical Instruments

Subscribed and sworn to before  
me this 24th day of September 1974.

SEAL

  
Notary Public

My Commission Expires March 6, 1978



# ROSE MUSIC PTY. LTD.

INCORPORATED IN VICTORIA

## MUSICAL MERCHANDISE

REGISTERED OFFICE: 17/33 MARKET STREET, SOUTH MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, 3205

TELEGRAMS: ROSEMUSIC MELBOURNE. TELEX: 32225

PHONE: 699 2388

Mr. William T. Heinze  
Export Sales Manager  
Norlin Music International Inc.  
7373 North Cicero Avenue  
Lincolnwood  
ILLINOIS 60646

9th October 1975

Dear Bill

Tom Rhea left here yesterday after what I think was a most successful visit. I expect you will get a report from him in the near future, meanwhile I am enclosing a copy of letter I have just written to Les Propp which will keep you fully in the picture.

Attached to this letter is our Banker's cheque covering money we owe to Tom. We would have given him the funds prior to his departure, but this involved unnecessary complications on his part. Whilst his total earnings would not have incurred tax, we would still have had to deduct, and he would have had all the trouble and expense of hiring a tax agent to claim a refund.

Accordingly he asked us to send you the cheque direct and presumably you will pass over to him in due course.

Thank you again for your co-operation, I trust that you had a successful visit to the Japanese Music Trades Fair and I look forward to seeing you in Frankfurt.

With all good wishes.

Sincerely

Enclosures











