

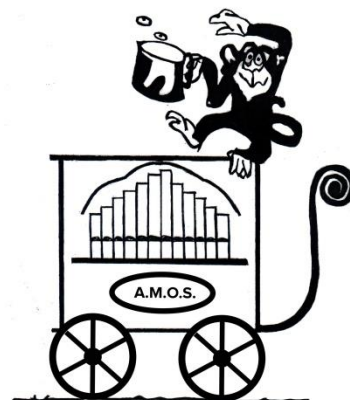


A.M.O.S. WIND CHEST

JUNE, 2022

**The Newsletter of the
Australian Mechanical Organ
Society Inc.**

ABN 51 312 657 041



Richard E – our intrepid organiser of the Thirlmere weekend with his 30 note barrel organ outside his house on the Sunday. Thanks to Richard's quick thinking the AMOS weekend went ahead albeit with a changed itinerary, and everyone had a great time.

A very big THANK YOU to Richard from everyone.

Story on page 3

WIND CHEST — Wind Chest is published by the Australian Mechanical Organ Society Inc. quarterly in March – June – September – December, and **is distributed free to members of AMOS** – **closing dates for Wind Chest are:**

15th February for March edition

15th May for June edition

15th August for September edition

15th November for December edition.

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THE COMMITTEE

The Committee consists of a President, Secretary, Treasurer and Windchest Editor.

AMOS WEBSITE: www.australianmechanicalorgansociety.com

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FOR SALE
48 KEY GAVIOLI – CIRCA 1900
FAIRGROUND ORGAN – NO TRAILER
50 music books



Seen by members at Bathurst Rally in 2014 in Doug's hangar, still located at Bathurst, NSW. In need of tender loving care.

Please make an offer!

THIRLMERE STEAM FESTIVAL CANCELLED AT LAST MINUTE

By Richard E

The Thirlmere Festival was cancelled at the last minute. It had been raining heavily so the Wollondilly Council was concerned about vehicles getting bogged on the recreation grounds etc. which was understandable. More mysterious was the attitude of the steam museum itself, where assurances sought by me that the event was going ahead were met with YES THE EVENT AT THE MUSEUM WILL GO AHEAD WHATEVER THE WEATHER. Then at 9.30am on the Thursday before the festival I got a phone call from the museum to say it was all cancelled. No reason was given.

Several members were on their way from Victoria and Queensland by this stage, so I called them on the phone and all but 2 members decided to come along anyway with the aim, at the very least, of seeing Craig Robson's museum and enjoying a bit of a holiday in the Bargo area.

AMOS members who attended the weekend were:

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Doug M | Hans and Helen M |
| David and Jan D | Graeme and Pam McD |
| Richard E | Peter and Joan D |
| Stephen and Christine L | Craig R |
| Barry W | |

On the Thursday evening various members enjoyed a meal at the Bargo Sports Club, just next door to the motel.

As previously planned, the Friday saw several members enjoying lunch at the "Café Guru" in Mittagong before heading off to Craig's museum in Bowral where we were all given cups of tea and cakes (thanks Craig) followed by an extensive tour of Craig's collection. AMOS member Hans played his and Helen's new Deleika organ, and Graeme played their modified John Smith organ with a "Steampunk" theme (created by Pam and Graeme) as part of the afternoon activities. We then all went to the Mittagong RSL for an evening meal.

On the Saturday a number of AMOS members went for an enjoyable day at the Goulburn Waterworks, about 55 minutes south of our motel, which had their vintage beam engine in steam. This was a STEAMPUNK DAY so various members of the public turned up in fantastical costume, celebrating the sci-fi writings of Jules Verne. Craig R had "The Golden Lion" Mortier organ there and kindly allowed various other AMOS attendees to operate his organ for a couple of hours. Thanks Craig, it was much appreciated! Members then went to the Bargo Sports Club (again) for their evening meal (see coloured photos).

On the Sunday AMOS members arrived mid-morning at Richard E's dusty premises to see his collection. Peter and Joan D brought their 46 key Whitehead organ along, so we started with cups of tea and cheese and biscuits kindly provided by Hans and Helen with the Whitehead playing, courtesy of Peter and Joan. A relatively small fairground organ, but truly loud in the spirit of the fairground and playing very well!

This was followed by an explanation and the demonstrating of Richard's small organs – the 30 key barrel organ imported by Palings Music shop, the 27 keyless Derek Deane paper roll organ and the 36 key Verbeeck. We then went to the Thirlmere Pie Shop for our lunch – real chunks of beef in a pie and not the usual sludge, plus patisserie items. (Editor – having been there with Richard on another occasion I can assure you that one pie is a whole meal and something really special).

In the afternoon we played the 52 key Gebroeder Decap 52 key organ “Berber Maria” in Richard's shed, followed by the 92 key Mortier scale organ “Lionheart” made by Richard and finished in 2007. We finished off with more tunes on the Whitehead organ and more cups of tea.

Several AMOS members concluded the Sunday with a Chinese meal in Tahmoor in the evening, served by a wonderfully incompetent waitress. Hopefully her second day in the job will be better. I do always enjoy the food there however!

I would like to thank everyone who turned up and I think everyone had a good time in spite of the cancellation of the main event. Ironically for both the Saturday and Sunday the weather was excellent, so the festival could have gone ahead, I think. A bit of a shame really. As it was we got to meet some new and interesting AMOS members and hopefully we will all meet again at future AMOS events.

Richard E

NEW DATE FOR CANCELLED THIRLMERE STEAM FESTIVAL SATURDAY 25th AND SUNDAY 26th JUNE, 2022

Richard E has advised me that the Thirlmere Festival of Steam has been put forward until 25th and 26th June, 2022.

As there has been no interest from the members that were sent an email on 24.3.22 AMOS and Richard E will NOT be organising anything for this event.

If any members decide to go it will be as a member of the general public and not as an AMOS member!

It is hoped that maybe in another year in the future there may be an opportunity to arrange another get-together.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is almost like the Thirlmere steam weekend was not meant to be, what with bush fires, then Covid and to top it off all the rain on the East Coast. Richard E did a marvellous job of salvaging the weekend after the last minute cancellation by the Steam Museum and I know that everyone who went greatly appreciated all the trouble he went to. MANY THANKS Richard for going to that extra effort! Richard and AMOS will **not** be organising anything for the new date for the Steam Festival as no one has shown any interest in going.

Plans are well under way for the upcoming annual Rally at Griffiths and I hope that members have booked their accommodation, as it is a very busy time because of their festival throughout October. I know a lot of people are looking forward to the Rally as it will be three years since we could all get together, have a good chat and play our organs. So, dust them off, make sure they are in tune and head to Griffith in October from wherever you live. SEE YOU THERE!

Included with this newsletter is your membership renewal form and rally form – please fill them in and return them as soon as possible, as this helps make life easier for those who handle these things. You will also notice that these forms are printed on coloured paper to make it easier to pick them out from your newsletter. The cost of the Rally has had to go up this year to \$70 after many years staying the same price. Keep safe and keep grinding,

Daphne H – President

AMOS INSURANCE – This is a reminder (after such a long break in playing our organs, also for new members) that to be covered by our Public Liability Insurance there are a couple of rules to abide by:

You cannot play for money – you may accept a donation, but that is all.

For your insurance to be valid you must notify Des Lang (contact details on page 2) at least 3 working days prior to the event with the details of where, when and how long you will be playing so that he can write it down in the insurance book. If you cannot contact Des you can send the information to me.

These are very important rules which must be followed!



Craig R recently did a video, which went out as a podcast, he has given us permission to let you know the website so that you can watch it yourself, which I am sure you will enjoy.

<https://vimeo.com/686496227/7127a953e6>

EDITOR'S NOTE – It was nice to receive an article from the point of view of a new member, so even though some of it covers what Richard E wrote I put the article in the newsletter in its entirety.

I also have two other articles re the weekend from which I will put parts in that are not covered by the other articles. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT DOES NOT USUALLY HAPPEN, AND I GREATLY APPRECIATE THE EFFORT MEMBERS MADE TO PASS ON THEIR THOUGHTS REGARDING THE WEEKEND. MANY, MANY THANKS!

AMOS AND THE THIRLMERE STEAM FESTIVAL

By new member Barry W from Victoria

For weeks many of us have been contemplating the Thirlmere Steam Festival, where our organs would be displayed and played. We were hoping against hope that Covid would not cause yet another club activity to be cancelled, it didn't but we hadn't counted on the weather which flooded many areas of New South Wales.

Some of us watched the flood warnings and when Picton, which is but a few kilometres from Thirlmere, was mentioned in dispatches a number of times we became despondent. However, early in the week of the festival news came through that the Steam Festival was to go ahead, so five members from Victoria and one member from Queensland set off on our long journey to make the fairground in time.

On the eve of the festival the writer happened to be standing in front of the town map of Thirlmere when a phone call advised that the Festival had been cancelled, and soon portable sign boards began to appear along the roadways, testifying to the fact. What a blow! All those miles and all that high priced petrol, not to speak of the hours of driving, and what a disappointment that we would not be able to show off our organs and allow them to speak in public!

While there were thoughts of cancelling our accommodation arrangements there were those of our number who were not content to leave matters as they were, so they planned to salvage the weekend and give it a kind of resurrection. Eventually they began to talk with Richard E, who was largely responsible for what later transpired. Richard got in touch with Craig R, who was to be our host for a guided tour through his Fairground Organ Museum in Bowral. It was decided that because there were now eight of us and some others from Bowral and Canberra that we would still visit the museum for a low key presentation.

Let me assure there was nothing low key about the visit! Photo – Richard E at left, Craig R on right.



Craig spoke about and operated all of the organs which were part of his amazing collection. Some of our members, who had carried or towed their organs from the nether regions, set them up then played for us. It was a fantastic Friday afternoon and following the entertainment and refreshments, we adjourned to a local venue for dinner.

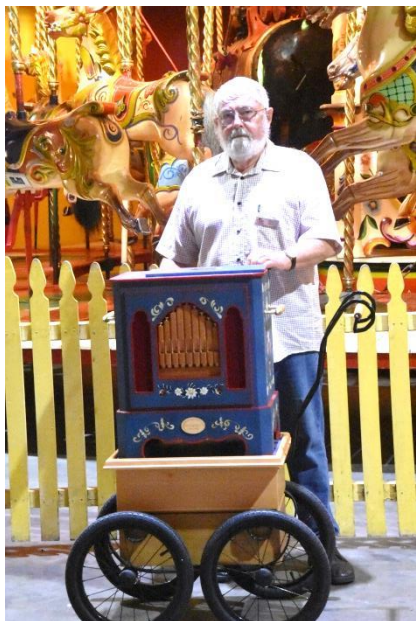
Saturday could have presented something of a problem, but one of our scouts discovered that Goulburn, some 100kms South was hosting a Punk Steam Festival at the historic Water Works. Craig had been engaged to take one of his organs there and thought that our interest and help might be of an advantage.

Despite the huge well preserved steam driven pump, there did not seem to be much in the way of steam driven attractions, but the Punks were there in earnest. Many of them were dressed in all manner of costumes, some conventional, but most unconventional. Their makeup was superb and it is impossible to describe the atmosphere generated by their creative costumes and gear. Throughout the day Craig – the wizard of Oz as he manipulated things from behind the big organ – ran book after book of music through the machine. Some of our team remained with him and assisted him in a variety of ways. It was great to hear the sounds of organ tunes wafting over the fairground for this very pleasant day.

Sunday saw us all at Richard's home in Thirlmere. He showed us three smaller organs and talked about their characteristics and their makers. After a luncheon of locally made gourmet pies we were treated to an introduction of two of Richard's larger organs, one of which took him 10 years to build. They are both excellent instruments and we appreciated their sounds. Some of our number unpacked their organs and we also had the opportunity to inspect and listen to them. Even garnering ideas from the organ trailers was not without merit.

Our weekend was finalised with a meal together at the local Chinese restaurant. Indeed, we enjoyed the opportunity to share our thoughts on all manner of topics as we gathered around a table.

I think that a word of thanks should be said to Richard who contributed so much to salvage the weekend for us. It would have been a complete loss without him! Of course, there must have been others who had some input, but as I am only a new member I did not have those connections. In all it was a very worthwhile weekend despite our initial disappointment.



Left – Hans M with his hand turned organ, in Craig's museum.

Right – Peter D with his hand turned organ. He played his bigger organ on the Sunday at Richard's place.



AMOS GET-TOGETHER AT THIRLMERE, 2022 by David D

The weekend at Thirlmere was to be the first AMOS gathering since Covid19 started. We had received the Final Program from Richard E and had just finished packing the car when Jan came to the door holding phone with a call from Richard to say that the Museum had called him at 9.00am to say that the weekend had been cancelled.

As we had already made a motel booking at Mittagong, we decided to go anyway and promptly unpacked chairs and “Diadem” from the car. As things turned out we were not the only ones to continue the journey as it was a little late to stop members from Victoria. To cut a long story short we had contact with Richard via mobile phone and found that he had been able to sort out a few things and that we would meet for lunch at the Guru café in the Mittagong shopping centre and then drive down to Bowral to Craig’s “Fairground Follies” museum for an afternoon of organ music and fellowship with those we had not seen for some time.

At the museum we were met by our genial host, Craig, who led us into the barn like structure and a welcome cuppa, cakes and biscuits. He then gave us a tour of the organs and other exhibits, demonstrating each one as we went around and all controlled from his ipad. At the conclusion of the afternoon, Craig presented us with a copy of the CD featuring the 89 Key Gavioli organ.

After the tour several members brought their organs in and played them for our entertainment. At the close of the afternoon we all returned to Mittagong and the RSL club for the evening meal.

The Goulburn steam museum was having an open weekend and several members went there for the day. Jan and I stayed in Mittagong as Goulburn was half way home, so we went and spent the morning walking around the shops in Bowral.

Sunday Richard opened his home in Thirlmere for the day and all were invited to attend. Jan and I were not able to go as we had to go home because we had another function on the Monday. Many thanks to Richard for his untiring and sterling effort to keep the weekend from being a total loss, as all appreciated his hard work.

As we had to return home on the Sunday morning, we will have to leave it to others to fill in the Saturday and Sunday.

David and Jan Dunnet.

NEWS FROM TASMANIA – our member in Tasmania is wondering if any members would be interested in a mechanical music gathering he would like to organize in that state – not our annual Rally, but just a get together. He says anyone wanting to join in from the mainland would be most welcome. If anyone is interested in finding out more his details are: Robert H robert5872@hotmail.co.uk (yes it is a UK email address, but he now resides in Tasmania and it will reach him)

PAM THIRLMERE AND STEAMPUNK

Firstly I must thank Pam McDiarmid very much for her article on Thirlmere, but as I have previously stated I had three other articles as well so I will leave out her Thirlmere remarks at the beginning of the article and carry on with the STEAMPUNK day at Goulburn.

STEAMPUNK – from the dictionary – Science fiction set in an alternate version of the historic past, especially 19th century England, and involving advanced technologies usually based on steam power. (Think historical science fiction, and then a bit) This event was held on the Saturday at the Goulburn Steam Museum.

This turned out to be a very interesting, colourful (in tones of black and white) and entertaining event. Like many events now, tickets had to be pre-purchased from TryBooking, and it is a considerable achievement to do this on a mobile phone. Peter Datson managed and after typing '6' we all gained entry.

It was a good 750 metres to the main event, so there was a choice of ways to get there – Shuttle bus, miniature motorised train with carriages, two charming sleek black stallions with carriage or shanks' pony (walking for those who do not understand this Australian slang term Ed.) We decided on the latter and set off to find Craig and his organ providing the welcoming music half way down the track as the visitors arrived. The



organ was located midway between the entrance gates and the Fair and received great attention from passers-by as they came and went from the event. Many stopped to listen and talk and quite a few AMOS cards were handed out.

The Steampunk Festival was fun! We saw bosoms, bums, girdles, gaiters, braces, monocles, bowler hats and helmets, bustles, waistcoats, “foxes” and “cats” (dressed up people), 3-wheeler bikes, walking sticks, fancy parasols, studded boots, black lace everywhere, chains, watches and chokers. Truly a feast for the eyes!! All Fun! Apparently there are steampunk ‘professionals’ who attend all similar events around the country, dressed to the ‘nines’ and enhancing their costumes wherever possible. I’m not sure what music is favoured by ‘steampunkers’, but they certainly embraced the music provided by Craig’s **The Golden Lion** concert organ.

While some of us went back and forth between the organ and the festival supplying our group with refreshments, Craig and his friends took time out to spend time at the festival trusting AMOS members to look after and play the organ. What a bonus for everyone! Then after another great day another meal at the Bowls’ Club.



Photo taken by Barry W inside Fairground Follies museum.



Left – members at the Steam Punk Festival at Goulburn standing next to the back of Craig's GOLDEN LION organ.

Below Left – fairground figures in Craig's museum.

Below Right – Pam and Graeme McD with their self-built hand turned organ.



STEAMPUNK FESTIVAL CHARACTERS



Some of the weird and wonderful costumes around the Festival.



On Sunday Richard invited us to his place in Thirlmere to hear a number of his organs. He played some interesting historical instruments: His

30 note barrel organ which was made in Germany for the Australian retailer Palings (photo front page)

Derek Deane 27 note organ with its small band mounted on top

A small organ built by Verbeeck around 1990 which is a 36 key and has 3 registers (ranks) of pipes manually selected by the operator.

Finally, we were entertained by 'Berber Maria' a 52 key organ made by Decap Brothers of Antwerp in about 1989. (photo below right)



After a genuine Thirlmere Pie lunch the whole recital was capped off with music from Richard's own built **LIONHEART** – a truly magnificent instrument. (photo above left)

Yes, we were dismayed to hear the Festival of Steam had been cancelled and we were disappointed to not be able to play our organs there, but sometimes the unexpected can turn up other unexpected events, and so it was this weekend. You can never tell!

Pam McDiarmid

CARTERS STEAM FAIR – FOR SALE

Those of you who have travelled to the UK will most likely have heard of, or seen, this very famous Steam Fair, which has been run by the same family for many many years. Peter Datson sent me an email he had received about the steam fair doing its last tour before it went up for sale. If anyone is interested I can forward a copy of the email as the web address is absolutely huge and would be better sent on this way, so that you can just tap onto the web address on the email. (no mistakes made this way)

LOST TRADES FAIR, BENDIGO 2022

The Lost Trades Fair in Bendigo signalled the end of Covid restrictions, and the start of major events being held in Victoria. As recently as three weeks prior the event was still going to be severely restricted in numbers of both artisans and public! Then the ban was lifted and Lisa was told it could run at full capacity, though there was insufficient time to get additional permits to increase artisan participants.

She invited Graeme and I to bring 2 organs and would fit us in under existing permits as artisans. Because of the former restrictions the Lost Trades publicity had been limited, and it was evident with the lifting of the restrictions that all eyes would be on Bendigo as it was the first major public event to return in Victoria.

That's the background! Visitors did turn out in their thousands to view the wonderful creative things the artisans crafted. The fair was spread over the whole public area of the racecourse this time, which meant that groups watching each artisan at work were more spread out too. Perhaps there were a few less artisans – didn't count – but the reaction of people was as positive as ever. We met people from Warrnambool, Traragon, Echuca, Clunes and it is clear that people will travel long distances to spend a day at the fair. Some, but not all of them, combined it with a visit to the Bendigo Gallery where the Elvis Presley exhibition opened on Saturday.

Graeme supervised **The Pioneer** and I played **Polly** non-stop (no pun intended) all day and it is our hope and expectation that other AMOS members will be invited again to next year's event.

I do not know if Toowoomba or Sydney will run a Lost Trades Fair this year, but if it is offered, I will send out the information to members.

Pam McD

AMOS ANNUAL RALLY

GRIFFITH, NSW

14TH, 15TH, 16TH OCTOBER, 2022

An email was sent out to all AMOS members that we have an email address for on 6th March, but below are all the details for everyone.

Griffith will be holding its Spring Fest from 9th – 23rd October! Among the events taking place during this time are the Citrus Sculptures and "Open Gardens" weekends, in which we will be participating. (There will also be a multicultural festival in one of the town parks on Saturday 15th October, which I am told is privately organised and will not impact on our rally).

Griffith is centrally located for our members to attend – of course, Queensland and South Australian members always have further to travel to any rally, but the location should be good for everyone. It is an oasis in inland NSW and almost any fruit you can think of is grown in the area.

Annual Rally continued.....

Due to all the events being staged during the Spring Festival it is very important that you book your accommodation as soon as possible. Apparently large numbers of buses bring even larger numbers of visitors to the city during this time, so accommodation becomes fully booked quickly. Our recommended motel is below:

EXIES BAGTOWN MOTEL and Function Centre
2-4 Blumer Avenue, Griffith
Contact Karen – phone 02 6962 7166

They offer a choice of either a Standard Room for \$130 per night or a Premium Room for \$150 per night. All rooms have a Queen bed and a single bed, toaster, kettle, microwave and hairdryer. The main difference between the two types of rooms is that the Premium rooms have been refurbished recently, have a slightly different bathroom layout and include a small kitchen sink.

We will be able to take our chairs out onto the veranda, and since the rooms face each other across the drive/parking area, we can choose to sit in the sun or the shade according to the weather. The biggest benefit of this motel is that it has a large area down the far end of the units suitable for parking our larger organs.

IF YOU INTEND TO COME TO THE RALLY – AND HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO – PLEASE MAKE YOUR BOOKING NOW!

A MAP OF HOW TO GET TO THE MOTEL AND WHERE OUR FRIDAY NIGHT BBQ WILL BE HELD, WILL BE IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER.

Your Renewal of Membership and Rally forms are included with this newsletter. They are on coloured paper to make them easier to pick out from the newsletter. Please fill them in and return them with your money to our treasurer Des L.

You will notice that the price of the Rally has risen – for the first time in many years – to \$70 because everything has increased in price since our last rally in 2019. This price does include the Friday night BBQ (bring your own drinks) and the Saturday night dinner.

CANBERRA BRUDER ORGAN – David D

During our time at Craig's museum the talk turned to the state that some of the organs had been in before restoration and Craig asked me to talk a little about the Canberra Bruder organ.

Below, for the interest of members, are two photographs the first showing the state of the organ in the shed in Melbourne before it came to Canberra. The second showing the completed organ and façade in the workshop before it was moved to the new facility at Macquarie. This being the culmination of some forty (40) years work! Further work was required, and this took two more years before it could be taken out and played in public.





EDITOR'S NOTES

Special thanks to those members, old and new, who sent in articles for the newsletter it was very much appreciated. Please keep it up!

Do remember the AMOS newsletter when you start going out and about with your organs again, as little bits and pieces (together with a photo) is what helps to make up the newsletter.

Hope you enjoy this edition, fill in your forms and those of you who can make it come to the Rally at Griffiths. We all have a lot of catching up to do!



Some more photos from the Steampunk festival at Goulburn which shows some of the costumes that people wore.

