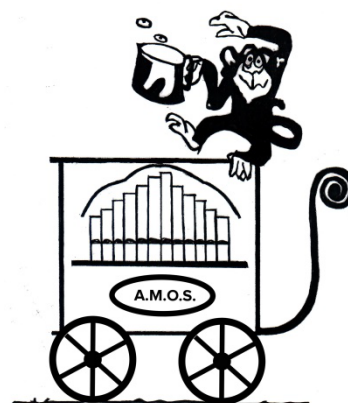




A.M.O.S.
WIND
CHEST

JUNE, 2020

**The Newsletter of the
Australian Mechanical Organ Society Inc.**
ABN 51 312 657 041



IMPORTANT NOTICE

CANCELLATION OF 2020 RALLY

Unfortunately, due to current circumstances regarding the virus, the club committee have unanimously decided to cancel this year's rally.

Later in the year when things have settled down we will let you know re events in the future.

ACCOMMODATION ALREADY BOOKED FOR THE RALLY – Please remember to cancel any bookings made for October, 2020.

Daphne Holt, President
Des Lang, Treasurer
Janet Dickins, Secretary

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 August for September edition
15th May for June edition
15th November for December edition.

.....
THE COMMITTEE

AMOS WEBSITE: www.australianmechanicalorgansociety.com

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors and may not necessarily represent those of the management and members of AMOS. All text and cartoons are copyright and may be reproduced with permission and acknowledgement

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome three new members to our club and hope we may see them at one of our rallies in the future.

MICHAEL KIMMER, from North Dandenong, Victoria

DAVID DILKS, from Waikanae, New Zealand

GEOFFREY BAKE, from Cheltenham, Victoria

I got a very interesting email from Richard Ellis the other day to say that:

GEORGE KING celebrated his 99th birthday on Anzac Day

On behalf of all our members I would like to say a belated HAPPY BIRTHDAY to George, who has been a member for many years, and we do miss seeing him at events playing his organ.

PHOTO – George playing his Raffin hand turned organ at one of the rallies we had at Bathurst, NSW.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



This year has turned out to be completely unique for our Club and for Australia. First there were the terrible bushfires which did such unbelievable damage to everything, displacing people, businesses and inflicting a terrible toll on the wildlife around the country. Next the Thirlmere Steam Festival was cancelled as it is organised by the Picton Rotary Club and they were all out fighting the bush fires, so there was no time to arrange the Steam Festival. This also caused the cancellation of the AMOS visit to Craig Robson's Fairground Follies organ museum at Bowral (formally in Sydney), a special trip we were all looking forward to. Then, if that was not enough, along came THE VIRUS, which has brought the whole world to a standstill.

Back to AMOS – we were very lucky that the Lost Trades Fair at Bendigo went ahead just before everything locked down. Pam tells me that the new venue is absolutely terrific with plenty of room for everybody and our members had a great time. So that event was a pleasant highlight, but then came THE VIRUS to spoil everything. Not so lucky for the Toowoomba Lost Trades Fair as that has been cancelled and it is still too early to know if the Sydney Lost Trades Fair will go ahead later in the year.

With all the uncertainty the Committee unanimously decided that for the very first time in our club's history we would have to cancel the rally this year. Some members were unsure if they would attend if it went ahead, but nobody knows if we could even hold it so cancellation was the only option left to us. We are certainly not alone as personal friends in the UK have told us that all their rallies for this year have been cancelled and that there will be no organ events at all. When things have settled down later in the year we may be able to arrange something, but time will tell. JUST WATCH THIS SPACE and I will let you know when I know.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CANCEL ANY ACCOMMODATION BOOKINGS YOU HAVE MADE!

I must say a special thank you to Richard Ellis and Peter Datson for all their hard work in arranging the Thirlmere event and the Rally event only to have them cancelled – we do appreciate all they have done to arrange these events when they cannot go ahead.

I hope you have all taken advantage of the stay at home lockdown and caught up with all those odd jobs that need doing, but that we always seem to put off doing. I think one of the main things we have all missed is catching up with friends face to face and going out for a nice meal. These things are gradually coming back and it will be interesting to see what the new normal is like.

Keep well and keep safe – David and I look forward to catching up with everyone sometime in the not too distant future.

Daphne Holt – President

CLARRIE FINDLAY – Australian Organ Builder

It is with sadness that I must let you all know that Clarrie Findlay, musician, music arranger, organbuilder died on 21st March, 2020 after a long illness.

Members of AMOS know him because he built several organs, the first being a roll player similar to the Luna Park organ, then six fairground organs with another partly finished. His first fairground organ belonged to Des Lang (which he no longer has) – the next was built into a Transit van – the third was for Daphne and David Holt (which they no longer have) – the fourth was for John Smythe of Ballarat – the fifth for Bob Constance in Perth – the sixth for Des Lang (which he still owns) – and the unfinished one was bought by another member Doug Wayne.

Clarrie played the saxophone and clarinet in several bands over the years including the Savoy Salon Orchestra, which was a 5 piece group that played at weddings etc; he even played for the Queen at Government House when she came here.

In his later years he belonged to his local model steam club and had his own 5 1/2inch locomotive.

Clarrie will be sadly missed in the music world and by all those who knew him. Our sincere condolences to Gene, his wife, and the rest of the family.



Photo – David Holt with Clarrie (right) picking up his Fairground organ, complete with conductor and bellringers, which were also made by Clarrie.

THE THURSFORD COLLECTION – It is with sadness that I must inform our members that George (Teddy) Cushing died on 24th February, 2020. He was well known in the UK for his 68key Bursens organ and Burrell steam engine “Princess Mary”.

Another sad passing on 26th February, 2020 was well known organ builder Josef Raffin who died at the age of 87. He was an apprentice organ builder to Schwarz, but started the Raffin company in 1960. Josef Raffin obtained the current premises in Uberlingen in 1972 and with his wife built up a thriving business that is now managed by his daughter and son-in-law Friedlinde and Rafael Engeser

Some of our members have Raffin organs, which have a lovely sound and are well known in the organ fraternity all over the world.

(Many thanks to MOOS – Mechanical Organ Owners Society, UK – for these two updates).

Bendigo Lost Trades Fair

Bendigo Lost Trades Fair seems so long ago now, since the coronavirus has saturated the headlines. It was so lucky to be held before the outbreak affected life in Australia.

The decision to relocate the event from Kyneton to Bendigo turned out to be positive from every aspect. The grounds are much larger, paved paths break up the extensive well-grassed areas, car-parking is adjacent to the grounds and the facilities are more than adequate.

AMOS members were well spread out throughout the grounds and once again our playing brought pleasure to the 22,000 plus appreciative crowd at the fair over the weekend. Bendigo Council has thrown their support behind the event. The superb weather was a bonus for everyone. AMOS members had a great time, and we enjoyed several dinners together as well!

“In the week that followed, everything changed.

As event organisers we had to play the waiting game for 3 - 4 weeks to ensure that no one in attendance over the weekend presented with coronavirus. The last thing we wanted to do, was to email you all and advise that you all needed to self isolate as there were people onsite that had presented with Covid-19. I am very pleased to say that even with over 20,000+ in attendance and no social distancing there were no cases linked to the Lost Trades Fair in Bendigo.”

GREAT REPORTS: The weekend was one of magical mayhem, meeting many new artisans and makers, welcoming new cultures and trades, catching up with friends, new talents, inspiration and pure passion - thank you for sharing your skills, promoting what you do and continuing to make the fair a success.

We were again overwhelmed by the incredible talent shared over the weekend and from all reports and feedback, so was everyone that attended.

THANK YOU: To everyone involved - artisans, musicians, food producers, coffee providers, craftspeople, staff - all your support people - and all those that work tirelessly behind the scenes - you do what you do with passion, integrity and a raw honesty that makes the fair so captivating and something we can all be incredibly proud to be part of.

The event's continued success is due to the dedication of artisans openly demonstrating their skills and sharing their stories of how they came to be practising their trades, as I have said before, this is something we will never take for granted and we will continue to ensure that this is what the fair champions, always.

Lisa Rundell

AMOS was represented with 10 organs and, once again, the crowd appreciated our attendance by asking us as many questions as they did of other artisans during the weekend. It was good to welcome new member Michael and his friend to the Fair. With the expanded area, our organs were well spread out so the crowds could enjoy our music throughout the grounds during the weekend.

Toowoomba and Sydney LTF's 2020

Unfortunately the Toowoomba LTF had to be cancelled for 2020, and it is too early yet to know if the Sydney LTF will go ahead in October, “We look forward to running the (Toowoomba) Lost

Trades Fair at the same time in May 2021; we want to deliver an amazing visitor experience - without compromise and showcase you as artisans and makers to as many people as possible. - Lisa”

Watch the next Windchest for further updates.

Pam McDiarmid

A brief history of our (AMOS) attendance at the Lost Trades Fair.

I attended the very first Lost Trades Fair in Kyneton in the grounds of the Kyneton Museum around 10 years ago. When it moved to the Kyneton Racecourse, I approached Lisa and told her about AMOS. I suggested that our instruments and music would be an enhancement to the LTF, as they represent a bygone era of entertainment, many of our organs have been hand-build by owners or AMOS members and we would provide entertainment free of charge.

Lisa embraced the idea and each year since we have been invited back to participate and warmly welcomed by an appreciative public.

We attend the Lost Trades Fair as invited guests of the organisers of the Lost Trades Fairs. We pay no fee to be there, unlike all the artisans that Lisa has assembled and we are granted free entry each year. Lisa and Glen are committed to maintaining high ideals for the LTF, and to this end I am aware that some artisans have not been invited back for a variety of reasons.

I really value the invitation for AMOS members to participate in this event. Over the years there have been discussions at our AGMs about how we might attract new members to AMOS. Whilst no new members might have resulted so far directly from our attendance at these venues, our reputation has spread throughout the community and you never know when someone will be motivated to enquire about our association, build an organ, or invite members to play their organs at other community activities.

As members of AMOS we are invited to be part of the Lost Trades Fair at the organisers’ invitation, and, as such, our individual attendance is subject to their approval. Let’s keep in mind our very special association with the Lost Trade Fairs so that we can continue to promote AMOS through these wonderful events.

Pam McDiarmid

MORE MOOS NEWS: Their annual AGM has also been postponed due to the virus.

In their magazine VOX HUMANA Peter Datson did a very nice article about our Numurkah rally last year, complete with photographs.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE — enclosed with the newsletter is a green sheet explaining the rules and when you can use our club insurance. **PLEASE READ IT!**

LIFE BEFORE MECHANICAL ORGANS

With the Thirlmere Steam Weekend cancelled we decided to go back to the Power of the Past event in the Adelaide Hills at Mt Barker. This is a wonderful event with lots of old working (and not working) machinery, trucks, cars, motorbikes etc etc, with all sorts of stalls selling old tools and other relative things.

One of the stalls that particularly interested David was the South Australian Vintage Speedcar Assn stall with numerous pieces of memorabilia and lots of old photos of older members and their cars. Would you believe it, he found one of himself in his speedcar when he used to race at Rowley Park in Adelaide when he was young (photo above).

We had a lovely day there playing for an appreciative audience who were all interested in how everything worked and enjoyed the music.



Daphne Holt

Organ Monkeys

A person who plays a barrel or mechanical organ is known as an organ grinder. During the 19th and 20th centuries, grinders would crank their organ in some public place, then, after collecting a few coins, would move to another location to avoid being arrested for loitering or chased by people who did not appreciate hearing the one tune *ad nauseum*.

The grinders started using monkeys to scamper around and collect coins from the passers-by. Often these were white-headed capuchin monkeys, tethered to a string, and they were trained to do tricks and attract the attention of the audience.

Organ grinders and their animals provided entertainment to people who were too poor to afford to go to music halls or purchase phonographs, but a lot of people regarded them as a public nuisance. They were sometimes seen accompanying puppet theatres in the streets. It was quite common for the monkeys and their owners to get into trouble, and instances of monkeys biting people were recorded.

Eventually the organ grinders began to disappear from the streets, and many barrel organs fell into disrepair or were destroyed, which was a shame, as these barrels contained a record of the popular music of the day. Before the invention of the cylinder record player, this was the only permanent recording of these tunes.

***The choice of monkey is a very personal thing. Check out these well-behaved monkeys and see if you can identify which organ they belong to. See coloured pages.**

'The stereotypical organ grinder was a man, bearing a medium-sized barrel organ held in front of him and supported by a hinged or removable wooden stick or leg that was strapped to the back of the organ. The strap around his neck would balance the organ, leaving one hand free to turn the crank and the other to steady the organ. A tin cup on top of the organ or in the hand of a companion, was used to solicit payments for his performance'.
(Wikipedia)



Anders Bernhardt Nielsen and his pet monkey performing in Brisbane in 1908. Anders owned several performing monkeys and travelled to mostly country shows with them, accompanied by his wife Mary Kate.

The Organ Grinders' Garden by Mildred Plew Meigs In the winter, in the winter, When the clouds shake snow, I know a little garden Where the organ grinders go; A cozy little garden Where the fountain makes a fizz And round about the lattices The sunbeams sizz; Where underneath the bushes In the nodding afternoons, The frisky little organs sit And spill their tinkly tunes;	While tingle, tingle, tangle, Go the pennies in the cup, As all the baby monkeys Practice picking pennies up. In the winter, in the winter, When the sharp winds blow, I know a little garden Where the organ grinders go; A giddy little garden Where the fruit is always ripe, And every grinning grinder Sits and pulls upon a pipe; While all the father monkeys Hang their fezzes on the twigs, And teach the baby monkeys How to master little jigs;	Until at last the mothers come, As day begins to fade, And tuck the baby monkeys up To snooze in the shade. In the winter, in the winter, When the clouds shake snow, I know a little garden Where the organ grinders go; A garden where the grinders And the monkeys on a string Are pleased to wait serenely For the coming of the spring. From: <i>The Organ Grinders' Garden-Poems Younger Children Love</i>, Compiled by Marjorie Barrows, Rand McNally, 1938.
--	--	---

A brief look at the cymbal banging monkey toy Charley Chimp's history:

The Charley Chimp cymbal banging monkey has a long list of siblings dating back to 19th century street musicians known as "organ grinders". The toy is based upon these early street performers. The battery-operated cymbal banging monkey toy has certainly become one of the world's most recognizable toys it can be perceived as both playful or scary depending on the viewer and into what context the toy is placed.



- A common saying:

"I want to speak to the organ grinder, not the monkey!"

(The person who is in charge, rather than a lackey or representative)

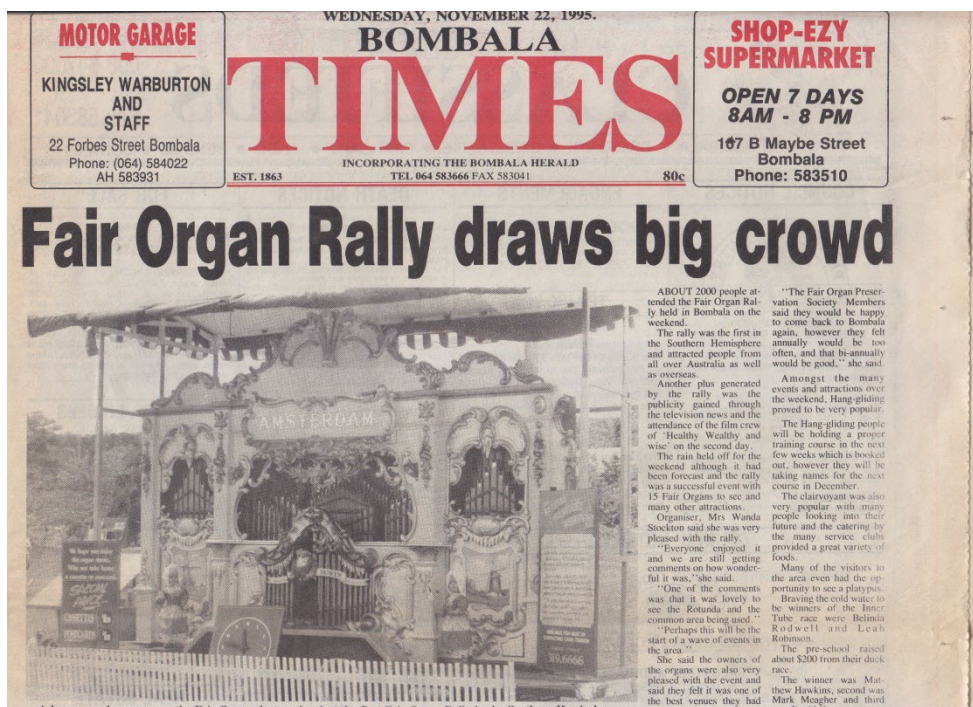
- Capuchin monkeys are named after the 16th-century monks because the monkey's hair resembles the monks' hooded robes.
- Picking out parasites and dirt from each others' fur is a way for monkeys to communicate, form social hierarchies, and strengthen family and friendship bonds
- At the tip of a monkey's tail is a patch of bare skin that acts similar to a human's fingertips. It is sensitive to touch and also has tiny ridges that gives the tail a better grip.



Pam McDiarmid (photo Wikipedia)



What a beautiful set up from bygone years, photo thanks to Peter Datson
(acknowledgement source – Adam Ramet VFO, Vintage Fair Organs)



Memories of a very early rally held in the small town of Bombala, which was a terrific success. The locals were thrilled that the organs were there, and the organ grinders thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Thanks to Des Lang for sending the old cutting from the local newspaper.

EDITOR'S NOTES

This edition has a great variety of articles also bits and pieces of information which I hope you will all enjoy.

Included with this newsletter is your membership renewal form, plus a green sheet explaining how our AMOS club Public Liability insurance works, and your responsibility to let Des Lang know when you intend to use it.



I would like to thank Pam McDiarmid for her interesting articles – the answers to her organgrinder monkey quiz are below:

ORGAN GRINDER MONKEY PHOTOS QUIZ

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------------|
| A | Huntley Vroland | B | John Wolff |
| C | Peter Dickins | D | Richard Ellis |
| E | Janet Dickins | F | Pam McDiarmid |
| G | Peter Speedie | H | "Fred" Daphne and David Holt |
| I | Reubin Grieger | J | George King |
| K | Daphne and David Holt | | |

Many thanks to Dorothy Lang, Peter Datson and Pam McDiarmid for their photos taken at the Bendigo Lost Trades Fair – much appreciated.

Don't forget any organ related anecdotes or bits of news are always welcome – it is your newsletter after all.

Daphne Holt – Editor