

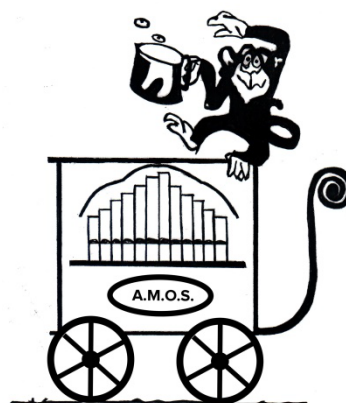


A.M.O.S.
WIND
CHEST

DECEMBER, 2020

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

ABN 51 312 657 041



**WISHING EVERYONE A VERY
MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**YOU WILL BE HAPPY TO HEAR THAT YOUR
COMMITTEE IS BUSY MAKING
ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT YEAR'S RALLY
AND OTHER EVENTS.
MORE NEWS ON THIS IN NEWSLETTER.**

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

PLEASE NOTE NEW EMAIL ADDRESS FOR WEBSITE -Richard Ellis above

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

Doug Murphy from Wellington Point, Queensland

Welcome to the club and hope you can meet other members at some future rally or event.



The club was recently contacted by Mr Mark Waltham on our website asking us if we could put an advertisement for him in our newsletter. Mark is situated in the UK and has been involved in all forms of organ music for many years, working with Alan Pell and Rob Barker, as well as for himself.

He has a wide range of music available for midi, paper rolls and books. Find below his web address, which is well worth looking up even if you do not need anything at the moment.

www.merry-go-round-music.co.uk



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I think we will all be pleased to see the end of 2020, it has certainly been a year no one will ever forget. Now we have to get used to the “new normal” which is - everything we arrange to do is subject to Covid restrictions changing at short notice and throwing a spanner in the works. We experienced that here in South Australia in the middle of November, when without warning our whole state was shut down with only a few hours notice. Fortunately, this was only for a few days, but it does emphasise how things can change very quickly at a moment's notice.

Now to look at the brighter side of things – the committee (along with our helpers) are looking at arranging the 2021 rally at the same place as it was supposed to be this year, also Thirlmere and whatever is on the horizon with the Lost Trades Fairs.

The information for these events is further on in the newsletter BUT I MUST REMIND EVERYBODY THAT ALL EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO THE COVID SITUATION CHANGING and that is beyond our control. We have to be optimistic and look on the bright side that everything will go according to plan in 2021. TIME WILL TELL!

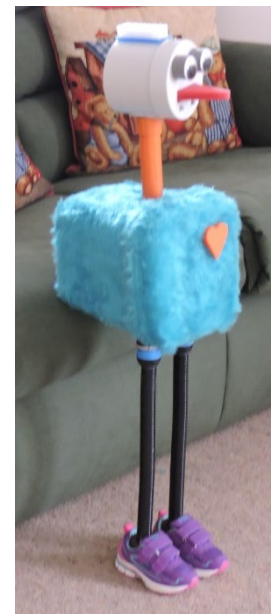
I would like to take this opportunity to send Seasons Greeting to all our members from David and myself, and wish you all a Happy and Healthy 2021.



WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN THERE IS A SHUTDOWN AND YOU HAVE TO STAY HOME ALL THE TIME.

This is what kept David Holt busy when he was not playing his robot organ in the shed. It is a ventriloquist emu made out of all the bits and pieces he had in the shed (and my kitchen if I was not looking).

His hair is a nailbrush, head a piece of PVC, beak from one of my old chopping boards, neck a piece of pipe the builders did not need from next door. His body is a small rubbish bin (I managed to hang onto mine and he went and bought a new one) his legs come off (hose fittings) and his shoes are children's sneakers. Fur fabric from Spotlight finished off his body.



His head turns and his beak opens and shuts just like a normal ventriloquist dummy – and he is a lot of fun. A friend who is a ventriloquist had a lot of fun making him come alive when he “spoke”, but David is no ventriloquist it was just a challenge to see if he could make one.

Daphne Holt

MY NEW DELEIKA HAND TURNED ORGAN

by Hans Moll



I have been considering for a while buying a used Raffin, as the organ I built hasn't a rich sound as it has only 20 pipes.

I could not find anything here and, as we all do when in trouble, I consulted Richard Ellis on the subject. He offered me one of his organs, but unfortunately it is too heavy for me to carry around and it would not be possible to transport it in our motorhome. Richard suggested I contact Andrew Pilmer of AC Pilmer Automatic Music Ltd in England for advice. Richard and Andrew have been friends for a very long time and Richard has every confidence in Andrew to look after my interests. I was not disappointed.

I was after a 20 note 31 pipe instrument (Raffin style) as this is easy for me to carry considering my age. Andrew had sent instruments to this part of the world before and advised me to purchase a new organ if possible, as any wear and tear of a used instrument could mean future issues which would be had to solve here due to the fact that we live so far away from the rest of the world. A new instrument should not present this sort of issue for a long time and would possibly not be that much dearer because of the number of music rolls normally included in the sale with new instruments.

Raffin have ceased to build new organs (for now?) so Andrew suggested Deleika as an alternative. Raffin organs are more expensive partly due to the intricate details of decoration and woodwork. Andrew thinks Deleika organs sound just as good. Andrew is a reseller for Deleika and can offer an instrument for the same cost as dealing with the factory direct. We came to an arrangement quickly as to the choice because, as it happened, Deleika had one almost completed which was not promised to a customer. I placed an order for a 20note, 31 pipe model (without electronic option) painted blue and decorated with folk art details. I also placed an order for a matching cart with pneumatic tyres and several rolls of tunes of my choice (again on Andrew's suggestion) as shipping them inside the crate virtually eliminated the transport cost.

Unfortunately, some complications arose, possibly partly due to the effects of the Corona Virus. The idea was that the organ was to be shipped direct from the factory to me. However, due to the present airline transport cutbacks not many flights were available from Germany to Australia, consequently the shipping costs offered were very high. Andrew did his homework and found that if the organ was sent to the UK (but not to his company) then forwarded to Australia from there he could offer a much more competitive shipping price. The funds were eventually transferred and the sale was completed. In no time after that I got an email from DHL informing me the organ was in customs in Sydney and demanded payment for import duty. A few days later the box with the organ was delivered here. The exchange rate is not in our favour at present and that exercise burnt a considerable hole in my pocket money account! (my Beer supply reserves are now at an all time low!)

My new Deleika hand turned organ, continued.....

After the organ's arrival it took me no time to unpack and play a tune and I was ecstatic with the sound. When the excitement was over I gave the organ a critical inspection and was a bit disappointed with the quality of the woodwork. Also, I discovered that the rolls were cut from paper and not plastic film. I, of course, relayed my concerns to Andrew who contacted Deleika. At first we were made to believe that the plastic film was difficult to obtain, possibly due to the virus cutbacks. It was later revealed that the choice of using paper was a commercial decision, apparently Deleika's music rolls are currently the cheapest (at least on the German market) which is partly due to the use of paper over plastic! The issue as to the quality of the woodwork was a quality control issue, but my organ went to the paint shop without the usual pre paint preparations. Deleika were very apologetic and offered a substantial discount as compensation! Again, Andrew was the one who took it upon himself to negotiate. As he pointed out he was responsible for the sale and wanted customer satisfaction to be top priority. As the instrument bypassed his business he obviously could not inspect it for quality, and due to the current virus situation I had no opportunity to see it in the showroom in the first place. I am sure I was just unlucky to have an issue, but it got sorted. That is where a man on the ground really comes in!

So far I have had a couple of friends and a neighbour visit and they were subjected to a short concert and the result was that they were all impressed with the sound of the music.

If anyone reading this report is considering the purchase of an organ from Europe in the future I strongly recommend them to contact Andrew to assist. He is very knowledgeable, is involved with all kinds of organs, and most of all he has proven that he is prepared to spend his time to seek a satisfactory solution if any issues should arise. I was in business myself and it would have been nice to deal with more people with his ethics! Am I trying to promote him because he is one of the most helpful people I have ever dealt with – you bet! If I had to deal with overseas business on my own any issues arising, as it did with this purchase, would have been much harder to deal with and obtaining cheaper freight costs for instance would not have been possible!

You may all wonder why I didn't build a more involved organ to begin with. With the Smith organ it was the first time I got involved in organ building and, as it so happened at the time, I had no contacts to fall back on for advice. The organ was finished when I finally connected with AMOS and all of a sudden there was a wealth of knowledge and advice available, but a bit late for me. I decided to buy a better instrument because I have numerous unfinished projects to complete, and building a better organ would be a long way down the track.

The Corona virus has affected us all and made life much more difficult, I hope that we can go back to some normality soon. I am busting to play my new organ for all to hear. I hope we can play in public again soon, even if things don't go back to normal ever again I am sure sometime soon the situation will change so we will meet again with our organs in tow.

I hope you all keep well and fit to crank those organs to your heart's content.

Photo of Hans with his organ on coloured photos page.

Hans Moll

The Mortier Story

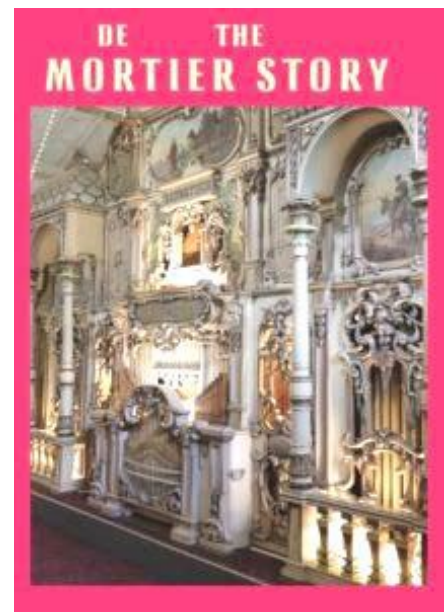
After many years, and the efforts of several diligent researchers, a book covering the history of the Mortier Company was published in late 2020. The initiative was taken by Ruud Brienens, a Mortier organ-owning member of the Kring van Draaiorgelvrienden, and has been written and put together by Tom Meijer with the assistance of a team of knowledgeable contributors. The book deals with the following subjects:

- A chronicle of members of the Mortier family.
- The history of the Mortier Company.
- Details of the factory layout, how it expanded, and a study of the staff that worked there.
- A chapter featuring the various music arrangers that worked for the firm.
- A general overview of firm's products (up to 1914; 1918- 1929; 1930-1944; 1945-1952).
- Descriptions and histories of many Mortier organs.
- Descriptions and histories of many Mortier orchestrions.
- The organ-rental business of Gustaaf Schollaert of Ghent.
- How René van den Bosch continued the Mortier name after the original company was liquidated.
- Appendices including a list of organ and orchestrion serial numbers and photographs of original designs for organ fronts.

The book has over 400 pages and several hundred historic photographs, many of which are being published for the first time, this book deserves a place on every organ enthusiast's bookshelf. Parallel Dutch and English texts should make the book accessible to as many readers as possible. AC Pilmer are pleased to have been involved with the translation of this valuable resource, which they are sure will quickly become a standard reference work.

Price £49.99 plus shipping. Check the details for payment and required for shipping at:

www.acpilmer.com/the-mortierstory



From Peter Datson:

It is a massive and interesting read, but there are lots of details of the history of the organs, their owners and modifications made as the organs changed hands.

There are references to Mortier organs in Australia at 'Fairground Follies' located now in Bowral.

Peter Datson

AMOS: PROJECTS

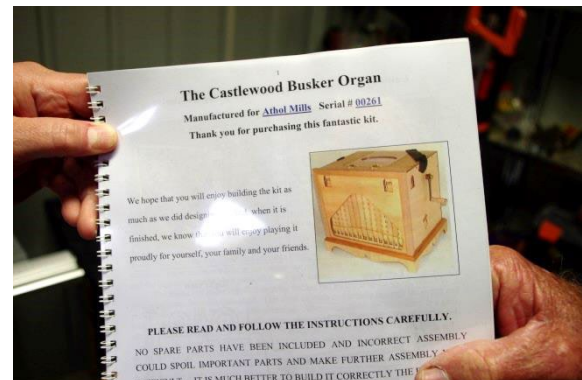
In response to the request in the last edition of the 'Wind Chest' for news items relating to organs being built, we wish to submit the following project for publication. This is a story of two members from the Bendigo area of Victoria.

Athol, a member of AMOS, began to build a small, 20 note 'busker' organ, following the 'plans' of John Smith. He was a fair distance through construction when he realised that everything did not fit as described in the 'plans'; he became somewhat frustrated and disheartened, thinking that he may not finish the project.



These two photos show the 'almost completed' Smith organ.

His lovely wife Phyllis, knowing that Athol had a birthday coming, then ordered a kit organ for Athol from Western Australia, and much to his delight, the plans for this organ, (the Castlewood Busker Organ), were more accurate and easy to follow - and this one is now almost complete. The kit came with everything, including all materials cut and ready to assemble, as well as a tuner! Athol is now at the tuning stage and is looking forward to being able to display his handiwork.



The best part of all is that while Athol now nearly has a completed organ, he has also gained more ideas and the skills necessary to complete the original John Smith organ!

The other member, Ken, also commenced work on a 20 note Smith busker organ in early 2018. However, ill health, which was eventually diagnosed as a perforated appendix, plagued him until he was admitted to hospital in February 2019. He lost all interest in 'building' this organ and has purchased a 26 note Smith organ from another member of AMOS who lives in South Australia. Early 2020 saw Ken's health much improved, but a couple of model steam engines got in the way of the organ project. Ken & his wife visited Athol & Phyllis this week and the enthusiasm to 'get on with the Smith project' has returned - hopefully next year will see a finished instrument.

Ken Bock and Athol Mills

AMO RALLY 2021

We have confirmed with the Lions Club of Drouin that we are a welcome part of their event, the **‘Gippsland Garden and Home Expo’** on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th October 2021. There is space for both large and small organs and this is held at Lardner Park, near Warragul. Big Organs will need to be onsite on Friday.

Warragul is east of Melbourne (109 kms) in Gippsland along M1 (Monash Freeway -> Princes Highway) and approximately 1hr 20 minutes drive from Melbourne.

For our Friday night BBQ, we plan to use the covered BBQ and camp kitchen facilities at the Warragul Gardens Holiday Park.

More details will be in the March AMOS Newsletter.

Book your accommodation NOW! It is easier to cancel or amend later as there are lots of traders from the Garden Expo staying in the town and these are the only 4 Motels and Caravan Park in the Warragul/Drouin area.

ACCOMMODATION

All the accommodation that we have looked at is in close proximity with the township of Warragul and 15 minutes drive to Lardner Park and based on 2 adults per room/cabin.

Comfort Inn Motel & Suites, Warragul (4 Stars) – 1845 Princes Highway, Warragul
(The main motel and closest accommodation to Lardner Park which has parking for organ trailers)

www.warragulmotel.com.au 03 5623 2189

info@warragulmotel.com.au

www.warragulmotel.com.au

Warragul Gardens Holiday Park, 44 Burke Street, Warragul – 03 5623 2707

enquiries@warragulcaravanpark.com.au

www.warragulcaravanpark.com.au

Edinburgh Motor Inn Motel (4 Stars) – 61 Princes Way, Warragul (03 5622 3339)

info@edinburghmotorinn.com.au

www.edinburghmotorinn.com.au

Warragul View Motor Inn Motel (4 Stars) – 50 Rulemount Rd, Warragul. (03) 5623 5222

email@warragulviewsmotorinn.com.au

www.warragulviewsmotorinn.com.au

Thirlmere Festival of Steam and a visit to “Fairground Follies”: 19-22 March 2021

Thirlmere is a small town about 80km south west of Sydney, and fairly close to the Hume Highway (route 31). It has the largest railway museum in NSW, and is the home of 3801, a very well-known NSW locomotive.



For 2021 the local council and the museum are planning to hold the Thirlmere Festival on Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st March, 2021, virus permitting. As I write this, things are looking OK but obviously this could suddenly change, and therefore this event should be considered provisional until nearer the date in March. However, it is important to book your accommodation now, on a refundable/ cancellable basis, to ensure that you have secured a bed if/when the Festival occurs. There aren't many accommodation options in the Thirlmere area. Do not book anything on a non-refundable basis in case the event is cancelled.

The steam museum has said that it would be keen for AMOS to attend the event with our organs, as we have done in the past, on both days. All AMOS members who we know are coming will get free museum entry.

On the Sunday (only) central Thirlmere will become a pedestrian (car free) area, with stalls, a parade, street performers, local bands, etc.

We have arranged to visit Craig Robson's "Fairground Follies" at Bowral at 10am on Monday 22nd March, we should be away by 1pm.

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

1) Book your motel room at the Bargo Village Motor Inn.

There are "Bargo" exits from the freeway in both directions. The motel is on the old Hume Highway which runs through Bargo. The motel is just south of the town & is next to the Bargo Bowling Club (a 2 minute walk).

This is the preferred stop over location with basic but clean rooms. The AMOS rate for a double room (2 people) is \$95/night, or a single room (1 person) for \$85/night. They also have a couple of "family" rooms. Only 14 rooms so book now. Phone (02) 4684 3727. Make sure you tell them you are from the "organ club" and that they acknowledge the rate (they can be somewhat disorganised).

Bargo also has a caravan site and the Tahmoor Inn has motel rooms.
Continued page 10.....

2) Let me know that you are coming

Richard Ellis: Ph (02) 46819237 (leave a message on the answering machine) or 0490 806554 (leave a message on voicemail) or better still email richard.ellis@ozemail.com.au.
[Leave your name/contact details.](#)

3) Friday 19 March 2021 – meet at Richard Ellis’s house (in afternoon)

Come to my home at 19 Oaks Road, Thirlmere in the afternoon, & we can play a few tunes, have cups of tea, discuss final details, etc. If you have a trailer mounted organ come first to my house & then we can go to the museum & position it. We plan to have an evening meal at the Bargo Bowling Club. To get to my house, go down the Thirlmere main street, past the school and the sports ground, over the creek, round the right hand bend and I’m on the left just past the 80km sign.

4) Saturday 20th March 2021 – Play organs at the steam museum

The museum has chairs & shade available. There’s plenty of space. If it rains, we can move the small organs under cover. Organs can be left in a secure place at the museum overnight.

5) Sunday 21st March 2021 – Play organs at the steam museum

As well as the museum activities the festival events on the main street will be going on. Go for a stroll around the stalls, see the parade etc

6) Monday 22nd March 2021 – “Fairground Follies” (morning)

We visit Craig Robson’s fabulous museum in Bowral. This is the largest collection of mechanical musical instruments in the southern hemisphere, located only a 30 minute drive south of our motel.

Richard Ellis

EDITOR’S NOTE – If you are interested in going to Thirlmere please make sure you let Richard know so that he can keep you up to date with any news regarding this event. The next newsletter comes out the first week in March which is very close to the event, and may be not enough notice for anyone intending to go.

Don’t worry about facebook or Google collecting data on you, your vacuum has been collecting your dirt for years.

The nicest thing about egotists is that they don’t talk about other people.

One of the keys to happiness is to have a bad memory.

The latest news on Lost Trades Fairs, 2021



The easiest way to update you on the LTFs is to give you Lisa's words, showing the frustration and disappointment in planning of such an event from Pam –

10 November

So . . . it is just 16 weeks until many of us would be heading to Bendigo to start setting up for the 2021 Lost Trades Fair. I thought we should touch base as many of you have made contact to find out just where we are right now with respect to planning.

To be perfectly honest - we would love to know right now as well . . . believe me - there is nothing I would like more to be doing than announcing that we are good to go, getting tickets online, posters and flyers printed, booking in media, staff, hire infrastructure and getting the show on the road . . .

But - it has been one crazy year, March seems a lifetime ago. We have seen nearly ten years of work and a seemingly secure future disappear over the past eight months. With the cancellation and refunding of all our artisan workshops and two Lost Trades Fairs cancelled (Qld & NSW) - and no 'pandemic' insurance, we find ourselves ineligible for any government funding or rescue support supposedly available for events, festivals and small business as we are in the 'creative industries' category, and still unable to run workshops because we are not classified as 'education' or 'essential'.

Frustratingly we continue to wait; even now 16 weeks out from our flagship event to find out whether events and festivals even have a 'roadmap' in 2021. Ironically we were the last and largest event to be run in the state before the pandemic lockdown - and even in this position we still cannot get any advise from councils, state government or state tourism boards.

So here is what we know.

Right now we are allowed to have people at an event.

There is no 'roadmap' for events and festivals with any clear direction - our state government don't have one.

There is no date that we can expect an update on crowds and gathering - it is just in steps.

There is no insurance company that will now cover cancelation due to covid or communicable disease or pandemic.

There is no support for regional events and festivals from Visit Victoria.

What we do know is that there are around 150 artisans ready to share their skills, show the crowds what it means to be creative and do something with passion and live and breathe it every day.

So we will wait until 22 November for the next update.

We do know that we cannot pull a fair together in 6 weeks - nor risk it being cancelled if we do. We are patently aware of destroying what we have built by trying to forge ahead regardless and delivering something that is a watered-down version to suit restrictions.

We will be working closely with the team at Bendigo City Council and Heritage Attractions towards delivering a calendar of activity around trades and workshops if the Fair is unable to run due to continued crowd restrictions.

Our 'roadmap' is to make a call in December if things do look like they will change and we may be at Covid normal by March, vague I know - but as we keep telling ourselves, 'this is just where we are right now'.

Stay safe, stay happy and boy we hope that we can see you all in March !

21 November

LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD SAT 6th & SUN 7th March 2021

... and book your accommodation if you need to as this year Bendigo was booked out.

The update: after meeting with Bendigo City Council and further discussions yesterday with the head of Tourism - we have it on reasonably good advice that our State Premier will have good news for us tomorrow (22 November) and that we should start planning for the show to go on. YAY !!!!

So with that in mind, I am giving you all advanced notice that if you are prepared to join us in 2021 for a weekend of magic - then booking accommodation in the next couple of days may be a good idea.

We were planning on letting everyone know on Monday but the Bendigo Advertiser got a little excited the week before last and announced we would be going ahead - so to save me another few days of answering emails and phone calls from the general public about tickets; we are pushing the buttons to GO!

Dates have been confirmed with the racecourse yesterday. At this point in time there will be no ticket sales at the gate; tickets are only available online due to the necessity to collect contact tracing details. There is a lot of layout planning still to be considered to ensure we can meet the strict event guidelines in place right now such as utilising the undercover space and the indoor space, how many people we can have onsite, etc, etc - but our plans will be flexible to change with the hopeful lifting of restrictions by March.

I have never been so pleased to email everyone on a Saturday afternoon.

Have a great weekend and see you in 14 weeks!

22 November

I have to have the conversation with Andy Rigby that the music program cannot go ahead and I am guessing the organs may be the same as it promotes crowds gathering.

We are trying to work around many issues and are unfortunately cutting artisans where there is duplication of trades and halving the food vendors as well. Not good conversations to have - but necessary if we are to proceed at all.

The latest phone call to Lisa confirmed the above, with little chance of us being able to bring a number of organs to Bendigo. Of course a lot can change on the COVID front in 3 months, as we all know. The biggest threats are the Australian Open and a protest rally being organised for Australia Day in Melbourne. These 'massed' events are just a few weeks ahead of the LTF in Bendigo, so if there is going to be another outbreak, these will be likely causes.

Yes, they can spread out in Bendigo, but all the costs will be the same, or more – eg. over \$12,000 for hand sanitizers every 50 metres, no seating for eating (probably recommend people bring their own picnic lunch), recording every person's contact details – even if people buy tickets and give them to friends, bollards, ropes, etc to keep the public back from sites; the list is endless.

The good news is -

LOST TRADES FAIR
TOOWOOMBA – QLD

Planning for 15th & 16th May 2021
Cobb+Co Museum, Toowoomba

LOST TRADES FAIR
RICHMOND – NSW

Planning for 23 & 24 October 2021
Hawkesbury Showgrounds, Richmond.

Queensland and New South Wales have both been proceeding with events, but it is too early to confirm what the actual situation will be. I will keep you informed.

Meanwhile, keep safe, virus -free and happy and hope to see you in 2021 - somewhere.

Pam
0417 058 095

EDITOR'S NOTE – Unless things change dramatically it is unlikely many (if any) organs will be able to attend Bendigo. Those interested please keep in touch with Pam as the next newsletter does not come out until the first week in March.

A message from Peter Datson to all members with organs –

I have been in touch recently with James Dundon from Mechanical Music Radio. He would love to have any music that has been recorded on Australian Organs to play on the radio (with acknowledgement).

The only one I have is a Ruth organ previously owned by George King (now in Craig Robson's museum). I know Des has some CD's, but I'm wondering if there are any others held by members. I can arrange to have them converted to audio files and sent to James which is much cheaper than posting CD's.

Please contact me on – 0418 350 114 or email peter.datson@gmail.com



EDITOR'S NOTES

I must thank those that sent in articles for this edition of the newsletter, it has been great to have plenty to put in the newsletter. For the first time in a long while I have had to hold over an article for the March Edition, so keep them coming.

Just another reminder that all events mentioned in the newsletter are subject to change due to the Covid situation, which is something no one has control over. We will keep you informed of any changes when we get them. Editor

Janet Dickins (our Secretary, who lives across the river from Corowa) sent us a little bit of nostalgia from 21st January, 1998 with this article which was in their local paper about Craig Robson's organ coming to town.

A Well Travelled Organ Comes To Town 21/1/98

I'm sure that during the week you must have seen - or at the least, heard - the fabulous old European dance hall organ that had been playing at various locations around the town.

It is a well travelled organ, too. Mr Craig Robson, of Sydney, takes the organ, which was built at the turn of the century by European company Mortier, throughout the Eastern states of Australia. They attend such events as

the Royal Easter Show, Floriade and other shows up and down the states.

This is its first trip to Corowa. Many festivals were on a waiting list, but only four win out each year.

The organ is usually kept at the Antique Mechanical Music Museum in Alexandria, Sydney.

Originally hand-cranked, the organ now runs off a small electric motor. The music is played from

slotted books drawn through the back, similar to a pianola. The books control pressure valves which activate the 400 pipes, cymbals, bass and snare drums and animated bell-ringing dolls.

The organ was used in dance halls up until 1932, when it was converted for use in the streets. It used to be drawn through the streets of the Netherlands and used for concerts and busking, and has appeared in several feature films.

