

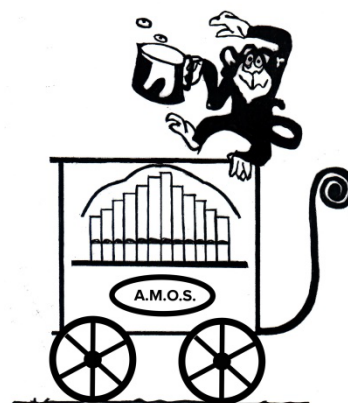


A.M.O.S. WIND CHEST

JUNE, 2021

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

ABN 51 312 657 041



GEORGE KING'S 100th BIRTHDAY PARTY **ANZAC DAY 25th April, 2021**



It was held at the sailing club which he has been a member of for many years.

He is one of a few people still alive who was in active service in WW2 – he was on the HMAS BATHURST.

An officer of the RAN from Canberra was in attendance and presented George with a book signed by an RAN Admiral.

George has been a member of AMOS for many years and we all wish him a belated Happy Birthday.



The photo of the Whyalla on the right (which is at the Whyalla information centre) is a sister ship.

For more information on the HMAS BATHURST – www.navy.gov.au/hmas-bathurst-i

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

AMOS WEBSITE: www.australianmechanicalorgansociety.com

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AMOS WEBSITE

Richard Ellis has just informed me that he has recently updated the “Links” on our website, so some of you may be interested to check it out and see what some other mechanical organ clubs are all about. The web address is – www.australianmechanicalorgansociety.com

Peter Datson sent in a couple of websites to look up that should be of interest to some of our members:

The true story of Gavioli & Cie 89 key G4 Waldkirch 1906 – Factory Number #8869 – This is a well- produced 8 minute video of this organ with its documented history and changes over the years. It also includes photos of the rebuilding/restoration and tuning of the organ.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMTnVRslTWE>

The Beginner’s Guide to Street Organs - This comes from the BOGA Organ Website and has some great information about small street organs options and manufacturers.

<http://www.boga.co.uk/guide.html>

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well some good news at last for our members, the 2021 Rally in October at Warragul, Victoria is going ahead and our AMOS organiser, Peter Datson, has been busy arranging things for the club.

Unfortunately, the Festival of Steam at Thirlmere, NSW has been cancelled for this year, but will go ahead in March, 2022 – article further on in newsletter. Also further on is a message from Pam McDiarmid concerning the Lost Trade Fairs.



It has been a crazy mixed up world all round, as well as a lot of uncertainty in the organ world regarding when and where we can play our organs – even with Covid restrictions in place. Let us all hope that by the end of this year things can get back to some sort of normal and we can put smiles on people's faces again (including our own) with our organ music.

Included with this newsletter is the membership renewal form and rally form, both on coloured paper so that they are easier not to misplace. Please fill them in and return as shown on the forms to Des Lang (both the membership and rally forms). You will also notice that all the fees have been kept the same as last year.

Keep on smiling and keep on grinding,

Daphne Holt

SHEFFIELD STEAM FEST – TASMANIA

From Robert Hill, Tasmanian member



The Sheffield Steam Fest in March, held in Tasmania, had a smaller attendance than in previous years with some restrictions on activities.

The 33keyless Dean and 20note Pell organs provided entertainment for attendees and was upstaged at one stage by the local Highland Band. It did give the team an opportunity to get a coffee and a walk before starting to play again.



THIRLMERE FESTIVAL OF STEAM POSTPONED

This notice was posted on the Wollondilly Shire Council website and sent to me by Richard Ellis.

“Transport Heritage NSW and Wollondilly Shire Council have reached the unfortunate decision to postpone the 2021 Thirlmere Festival of Steam. Ongoing restrictions on mass gatherings of people due to COVID-19 have meant holding such a large-scale

open event in the near future was untenable. The safety of the community needs to be our first priority.

The Thirlmere Festival of Steam will be rescheduled to Sunday 20th March, 2022 and will include a dinner, live entertainment, and extended carnival. Transport Heritage NSW and Wollondilly Shire Council remain committed to working together to bring about a variety of smaller activations in Thirlmere throughout the year. We look forward to announcing further details about the 2022 Thirlmere Festival of Steam later this year.”

Richard will let us know by the end of the year what arrangements he has made for AMOS members.



HANS MOLL PLAYING AT THE BERRIMA DISTRICT CLASSIC CAR CLUB

Every year the Berrima District Classic Car Club holds its annual rally, an event spread over the whole weekend and visited by hundreds of people in the southern highlands of NSW. In 2019 one hundred and three cars were on display and the dinner and entertainment Saturday evening had about one hundred and fifty members and guests crammed into the hall.

Last year all events were cancelled and this year a small number of club members met and had a drive around the neighbourhood then lunch brought along by the members from home. After that some entertainment was enjoyed by less than a quarter of the membership! Yours truly had the pleasure of cranking the new organ which delighted the small audience and impressed them with its clear sound. Sad but better than nothing!

HANS MOLL

Trailer Organs – the next step in your organ journey?

By Richard Ellis

So, you have built a 20 note organ on the kitchen table. But you have a small workshop in the garage with a few tools and a bench, and an ambition to build a bigger organ that your car can tow to AMOS rallies? Welcome to the world of “trailer organs”. As in, an instrument you can make yourself and mount on a half-tonne trailer (cheap to register) and which will fit in a car port at home?

Realistically you have to have a few woodwork and metalwork skills, but “fear of the unknown” is often the greatest enemy of your ambitions. You will also have to spend a bit of money on materials and a small trailer, but do the kids really need all of your inheritance?

My first “largish” organ was built in a bedroom (with every component dimensionally restricted to be able to go through a bedroom door) in 1987 in a rental flat and its first few outings were on a borrowed 6 x 4 box trailer. I had only 4 music books at the time which must have driven everyone crazy in retrospect!

It is also a fact that larger organs are in some ways easier to make than small ones. For example, larger organs often have a “forge” type electric blower to produce the air supply, which is a lot easier than making bellows, the latter being frequently the scourge of the organ builder. How many small organs are “breathless” when you listen to them? And making other stuff like the pipework is the same but larger scale (and thus less precise and easier to make).

Anyway, now I’ve set the scene, let’s look at trailer organ possibilities.

TYPICAL SCALE

Larger organs tend to start with the 46/48/52 key scales. These all have similar characteristics. For a start, they usually have only 8 bass notes, which means they are “non-chromatic” as this would require 12 notes. Fear not, however, there are lots of hugely acceptable tunes available for these scales.

We then move onto the 11 or 12 accompaniment notes. These are a continuation up the scale from the bass notes, and again are not chromatic. If the bass goes “oom” in a waltz, then the accompaniment goes “pa”, “pa” to create the basic waltz rhythm.

We then have the melody section of 22 or 23 notes which is almost 2 octaves. This is where the “tune” happens and again the notes are a continuation up the scale from the accompaniment. So overall these organs cover 4 octaves from the bottom of the bass to the top of the melody with a few notes missing....

Depending on the scale, there may also be “registers” which activate specific ranks of pipes at specific times in the tune. This is like a church organist pulling out the stops on his or her organ console. So a “Dutch Street Organ” will always have “bourdon” pipes and “violin” pipe registers

which can be selected as required in the melody section (to give the tune the “Dutch” sound), and possibly a “glockenspiel” (xylophone) which can be turned on and off, and also possibly a “tremulant” register which makes the pipes waver in sound, thought to be quite a pleasing effect. Some organs also have a “trombone” register in the bass to boost the bass when needed, or “trumpets” in the melody to give a more “fairground organ” sound.

So going back to my efforts, my first organ had 120 pipes with only one register, which was melody trumpets. My second organ was similar, with fewer pipes but a glockenspiel register on melody. This is achievable by anyone with the time and a few basic skills and a small workshop (and a couple of thousand dollars).

If anyone wants some guidance on making such an organ, I’ve got the information you need. Contact me at australianmechanicalorgan@gmail.com

Richard Ellis



On Mothers Day we had unexpected visitors, Ron and Marianne Vulling together with their two little dogs and hand turned organ.

What a pleasant afternoon it turned out to be taking turns playing both our organ and theirs in our back garden. They had some of the same music as us from Thomas Sterk in Holland and it was great to listen to it on their organ and then on ours.

They are travelling around Australia with their caravan and Ron busks when he can. It is always a great pleasure to meet other like-minded people and listen to their organs.

Daphne Holt

Richard Ellis sent this photo of Harry (who owns The Flying Pieman) at the Campbelltown Steam museum rally on 15th May, 2021.

Unfortunately, the organ was out of tune and is now stored in a shed at the museum.

The Flying Pieman was originally built by Richard Ellis quite a few years ago, but it is nice to know where it is now.



AMO RALLY 2021 UPDATE

The Lions Club of Drouin welcome us as part of their event, the '**Gippsland Garden and Home Expo**' on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th October 2021 which is held at Lardner Park, near Warragul. There is space for both large and small organs, but the trailer Organs will need to be onsite on Friday.

If you are bringing a trailer organ I need to know in advance so we can work out a location on the site (Peter Datson – peter.datson@gmail.com or 0418 350 114). 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 make use of the covered BBQ and camp kitchen facilities, gathering at the Warragul Gardens Holiday Park.

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

More information and a map in the next newsletter.

LOST TRADES FAIRS 2021

Like most other “live” shows, The Lost Trades Fairs will only resume when conditions and the best medical advice recommends they do so. At this stage an announcement about a Sydney Lost Trades Fair late in October will be made around the start of July. Such is the planning time required to mount the show.

To anyone who has not attended the show in Sydney, it takes place at the Hawksbury Showgrounds and is a nice venue with quite a bit of shade and good facilities. (It is located near Richmond, west of Sydney).

As soon as there is confirmation of the event going ahead I will let people know. NO NEWS NO EVENT.

Pam McDiarmid
0417 058 095

FAIRGROUND FOLLIES, BOWRAL, NSW

In the January, 2021 issue of the Carousel Organ Association of America, there was quite a long article (with pictures) written by Craig Robson- who owns Fairground Follies- about the various organs in his collection. Now, with the kind permission of Craig and the Editor of this magazine Ron Bopp, I will be including the article in parts in our newsletter when there is room, complete with pictures of the various organs. I hope our members find it interesting reading and that it will encourage them to come to Thirlmere next March when we hope to take a trip to Craig’s museum over the weekend.

FRIENDS, FOLLIES AND FUN

By Craig Robson

DANCE HALL ORGANS

The Taj Mahal

There are three Mortiers including the *Taj Mahal*, an elaborately carved 101-key, number 976; and a late 97-key café orchestrion. The *Taj Mahal* I think most of us know, probably you saw it in California at the American Galleries. Photo page 8b. It originally was built for St Jean’s palace in Antwerp in Belgium and was one of only two, possibly three, that had the pipe chest separate from the façade. The organ was built to symbolize good luck, prosperity, and love, with its mammoth façade (8 meters x 6 meters high) having magnificent wooden carved figures of Aphrodite in the centre, St Cecilia below, Grecian Urns of plenty, good luck dragons. *Taj Mahal* shape and paintings and over 1000 light bulbs. This is topped off with a remembrance lamp at the top, flames coming out of the urns, and simulated flames operating behind the glass columns.

If you refer to Tom Meijer’s book titled The Mortier Story, both in English and Dutch, it gives a pretty comprehensive history of all of our Mortier machines.

Continued.....page 9

When my Father passed away my Mother decided to go on a trip to Europe, on which I accompanied her part of the way and we saw the *Taj Mahal* playing. I mentioned I would like to eventually own this machine. Her only comment was “Craig, you need your head read” (phrenology). Probably she was right in that this led to purchasing a larger fun factory!

Johnny Verbeeck was professionally involved in the partial restoration many years prior. Since our ownership we have renewed all leathers, fitted MIDI and the machine is giving a lot of pleasure to many people. It has a lovely set of tubular bells and a “change partner” large bronze bell.

The Golden Lion

The Golden Lion is an 80-key Mortier organ, number 838, built in 1913. This was originally a dance hall organ, but with the demise of the dance halls it was cut down to a more manageable size for street use. Photo page 8b. We have seen photos of this organ on a three-wheel trailer being pushed around by two families and also seen photos of it being horse-drawn. My understanding is that the organ was owned by H Gossling centred in Alkmaar in the Netherlands. The organ came to Australia probably in the early 1990s and has travelled extensively around the country.

Being a dance hall organ the music is a pleasure to listen to. We have fitted a xylophone and three extra ranks of pipes to this machine, which seems to give it more of a balanced sound with an unusual circus sparkle zest. Mounted on a collapsible roof trailer with vinyl sides, it is often seen at fairs and functions entertaining, especially with the four bell ringers and one conductor. The organ, although having been completely restored over 20 years ago, looks and plays perfectly.

101-key Mortier Dance Hall Organ

Whilst we are talking Mortiers, there is a Mortier 101-key dance hall organ sitting against the back wall – photo page 8b. Never having been restored, it was apparently part of a travelling Spiegeltent in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Its number is 976, built in 1925 and was owned/operated by Mr Van Beir. It has a superbly ornate façade and a fabulous history, but I don’t believe we will have the time to restore it.

TANGLEY CALLIOPE

I must mention a Tangley Calliope that was brought into Australia by one of our club members many years ago.

It is mounted in a trailer, but what is unusual about this machine is that it has its original roots blower and powered by its original oil engine. I don’t know what makes the most noise, the engine or the instrument.



DANCE HALL ORGANS *continued...*

97-key Mortier

With the carousel we were lucky enough to find one of the last Mortier orchestrions. It's a 97-key organ with what we previously regarded as a not-so attractive façade on it compared to the beautifully carved and early ornamental facades. However, again I've been proved wrong and the façade is a most appealing polished timber front with two accordions and percussion hidden from view. There is much-hidden lighting, and again, it is featured in Meijer's book, page 433.



Obviously built with older parts and during the time of austerity, it even has a bicycle wheel to turn the key frame rollers. We spent a lot of time restoring this machine and it is musically one of our favourites. Now on MIDI it is used next to the carousel and certainly does play "The Happiest Music on Earth."

Editor – more in next edition of Wind Chest.



EDITORS NOTES

Please remember to fill in your membership renewal forms and rally forms and return them to **DES LANG** as soon as possible.

This helps the organisers of the rally to know how many members will be attending when making final arrangements.

Thank you to those who sent in articles also bits and pieces as they all go to make up an interesting newsletter. I do hope you enjoy the article and photos about the organs at Fairground Follies (more in the next newsletter) and that it will encourage you to be part of the Thirlmere event next March.

Keep the photos, article and snippets coming,

Daphne Holt - Editor



George King in his shed at home, wearing his war medals on the occasion of his 100th birthday – 25th April, 2021 (article front page)

On right – at birthday presentation with Craig Robson.



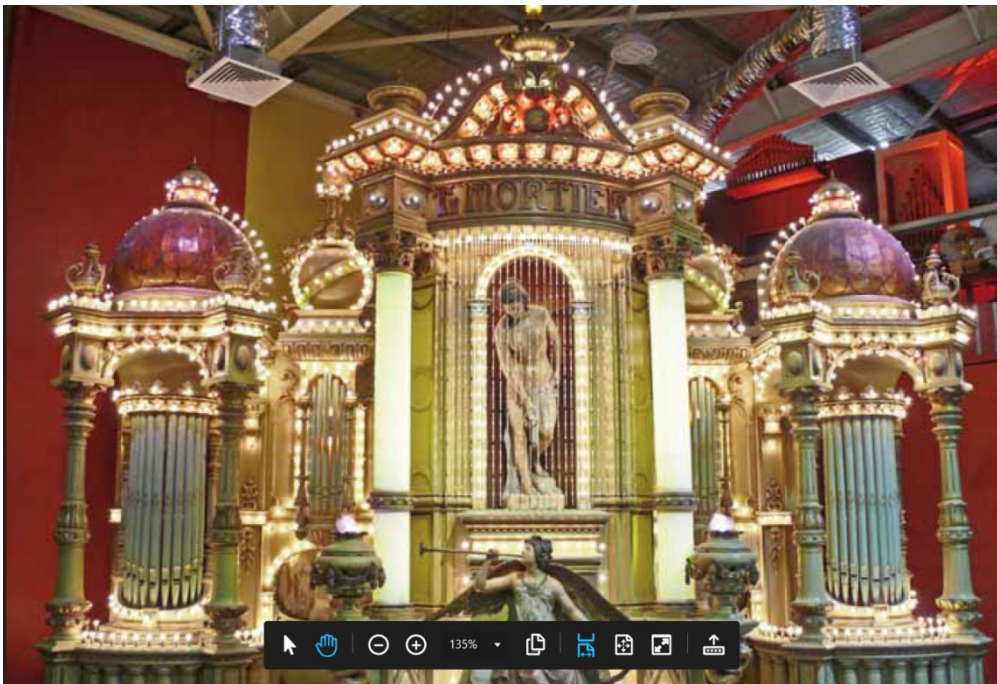
Left –Pam and Graeme on Carousel with Richard Ellis at Craig Robson's museum Fairground Follies.



Right above - Ron Vulling's "Marianne" hand turned organ(article page 6)

Right -The "Flying Pieman" with Harry when he first purchased it from Richard Ellis (article page 6)





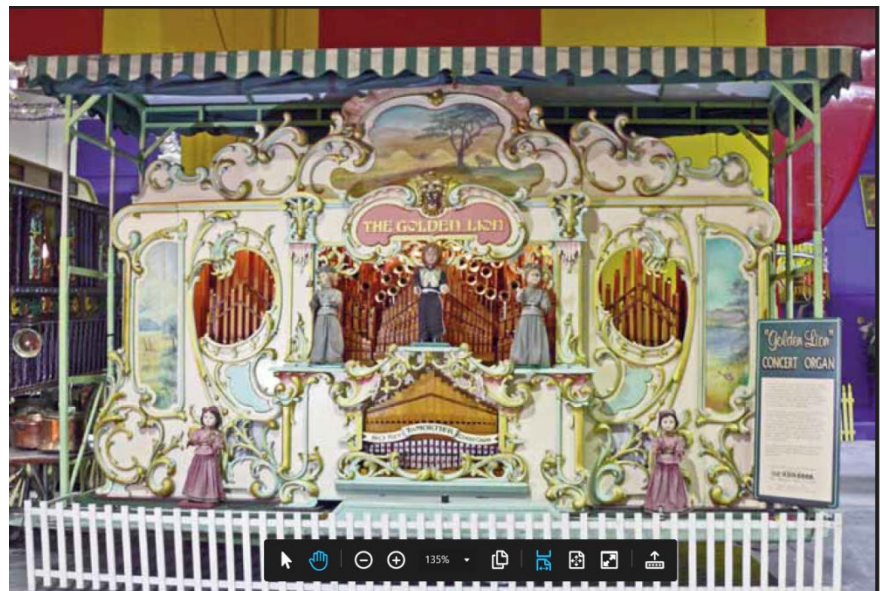
FAIRGROUND FOLLIES
– owned by Craig
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Taj Mahal

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101-key Mortier Dance organ