

## **Bumblng Bruder Tour #4** **June 14-28, 2005**

**Ron Bopp**

The fourth Bumblng Bruder Tour, like all others, began with an anticipation of the expected and unexpected. We were the recipients of both! Forty-eight tour participants (mostly COAA members) arrived in Waldkirch on Wednesday, June 15. The tour started off in grand style with the touring of the Hirschen-Brau beer factory (as tour director, I felt it would be something unusual to do—tour the local beer producing company that made the beer that many of us would enjoy for the next four days). The tour was a hit and gave us an insight of a small but prosperous business (**Figure 1**).

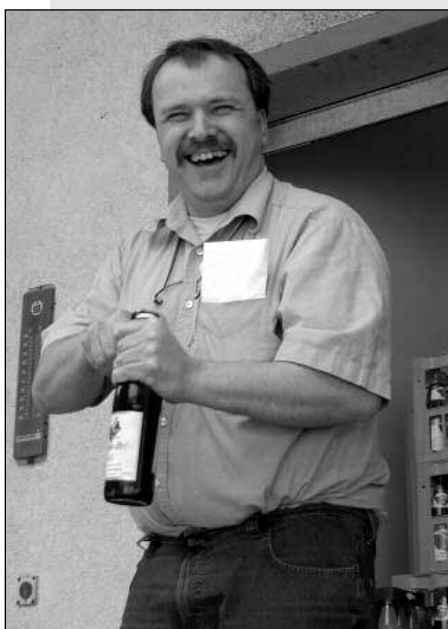


Figure 1. Wolfgang Brommer helping at the Hirschen-Brau beer factory.

Before I go much further into this story I think that likening the tour to a feature film would be in order. In this case we have several directors ranging from museum owners, to docents, and then to organ friends from the past and some, current. Two good friends who helped me orchestrate this trip are Wolfgang Brommer\* of Waldkirch, Germany (**Figure 1**), and Maarten van der Vlugt\* of Tilberg, Holland (**Figure 27**). Both gentlemen made it easier to visit and enjoy the many facets of the trip.

The first of many highlights of the trip was the private reception, tour and dinner at the Elztal Museum. Dr. Evelyn Flögel\* is the current director and takes on the task with enthusiasm. After our tour and dinner she gave a short presentation on mechanical music from the museum's perspective. Our tour was given by Michael Hess (**Figure 2**), a museum restorer (as well as a Jäger & Brommer workshop employee). Most of the museum's early hand organs and large Waldkirch-built organs were demonstrated for us.



Figure 2. Michael Hess\* demonstrating a barrel organ at the museum

Thursday, June 16, was "Switzerland Day" as we traveled to Fredy Künzle's\* *Fredy's Mechanischer Musiksalon* in

Leichtensteig. Many American collectors are familiar with Fredy as he often comes to International meetings in the states. At his museum, we toured the large array of mechanical instruments including the roll-operated 52-key Bruder and Model 35 Ruth fair organs in the basement.



Figure 3. The "Troubadour", a 87-key Gavioli dance organ featured in the gallery of Retonio Breitenmoser's *Dreamfactory*.

In the afternoon we had an all-to-short visit with Retonio Breitenmoser's\* *Dreamfactory* in Degersheim, Switzerland. We had lost time on the trip from Waldkirch so our visit was cut short to enjoy the many instruments and other associated memorabilia that are present in this large exhibit hall which is used for both private parties as well as the occasional auction. During this short visit, however, I caught glimpses of a 52-key Limonaire fair organ, a Bursens dance organ, a Decap Accordion Jazz dance organ, and a large and impressive 87-key Gavioli dance organ, called the "Troubadour" (**Figure 3**).

Our second reception and dinner, in as many days, was held at the Jäger & Brommer Workshop and the Waldkirch Organ Foundation, *Orgelbauersaal der Waldkircher Orgelstiftung*. Outside the workshop and foundation hall was Barth's 126-key



Figure 4. Barth's 126-key Carl Frei street organ at the Jäger & Brommer workshop.

\*Pictured in "Hosts & Docents" photos on page 33.

Carl Frei street organ in its specially decorated trailer. This was a fun organ to which to listen—between each piece was a short interlude on 16 chimes (**Figure 4**).

Not only did we enjoy the local Hirsch-Brau beer and the Black Forest dinner but also we were entertained with several media forms. Wolfgang had arranged for the Chilean Organ Grinders to perform for us. This group of Chilean performers were sent on an cultural exchange program to Waldkirch for the festival. We heard several pieces on their barrel organ accompanied by a father and son team of dancers/percussion (bass drum, cymbal, and triangle) players. The song *Que Sera Sera*, jokingly, became a tour favorite (**Figure 5**).



Figure 5. The Chilean barrel organ performers, complete with two dancing percussion members.

Heinz Jäger\* gave a short presentation on his favorite organ, an early (1855) Gebr. Bruder hand-cranked “Sargorgel” (coffin organ) organ with a Napoleon an scene built into the front of the organ. Adrian Oswalt\*, a premier arranger of hand organ music, then asked for a piano accompanist from the audience to play Wolfgang Mozart’s *Rondo aus KV 166—für Drehorgel mit Klavier* (arranged by Adrian) with him on the hand organ. The tour director was picked from the crowd and fulfilled the role (yes, this was prearranged and the music was practiced before the trip).



Figure 6. Fred Dahlinger being congratulated by Dr. Evelyn Fogel, Elztal Museum Director, for his presentation at the Orgelfest.

Fred Dahlinger gave an English version of his Orgelfest workshop talk (**Figure 6**), “Waldkirch Fair Organs in North America.” This was followed my slide presentation of “Past Bumbling Bruder Tours—the People, Places and Organs Seen.”

Friday, June 17, was spent in Triberg where most of the group toured the *Schwarzwald-Museum*. Many mechanical musical instruments are represented including a huge barrel-operated orchestrion, a large Weber orchestrion and many oth-

ers. Of course our interests lay in the many fine examples of hand organs and fair organs in the museum. Included was a fine example of a 69-key Wrede fair organ (circa 1925) that many tour members enjoyed cranking and three nice German barrel organs (**Figure 7**).



Figure 7. A 40-key Holl (1920, Berlin), a 52-key Franz Kolb (1905), and a 49-key Frati (1885, Berlin) barrel organ present in the Schwarzwald Museum in Triberg.

Sight seeing, eating local Black Forest delicacies and souvenir collecting filled the remainder of the day. On returning to Waldkirch we participated in the opening of the 8th Tri-Annual *International Orgelfest*.



Saturday and Sunday comprised the *Waldkirch Orgelfest*. The two days were spent touring the street-blocked town, listening to 20 or so large fair organs and over 100 hand-cranked organs (including many Moritot Singers) (**Figures 8 & 9**).



Figure 8 (above, left). Axel Stuber sings as he cranks his organ.  
Figure 9 (above). A participant cranks a book-operated organ.



Figure 10. A small but powerful 41-key Wilhelm Bruder.

A few blocks away stood Stefan Fleck’s workshop where one of the smaller organs of the rally (but not the softest) played (**Figure 10**). This was a 41-key Wilhelm Bruder organ which was built late to complete with the “new” loud speakers made for the carousels. The

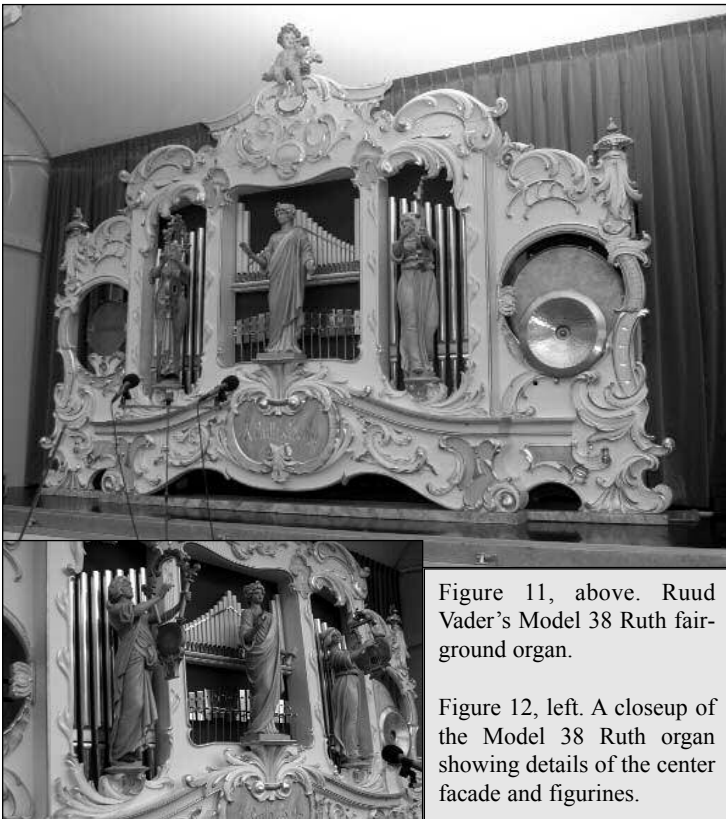


Figure 11, above. Ruud Vader's Model 38 Ruth fair-ground organ.

Figure 12, left. A closeup of the Model 38 Ruth organ showing details of the center facade and figurines.

organ played at only one level—loud! This alternated with Ruud Vader's newly acquired Model 38 Ruth which played for our enjoyment (Figures 11 & 12).

Inside Fleck's workshop were two organs, a 46-key Wilhelm Bruder with a hunting scene on the facade (Figure 13) and a 45-key Alfred Bruder fair organ. In the evening a rock band performed, accompanied by the Model 38 Ruth via a specially arranged roll. One way of getting the younger generation involved with our mechanical organs!



Figure 13. A 46-key Wilhelm Bruder with a hunting scene on the facade.

Sunday morning found a dozen or so tour members making the tri-annual trek up to the Kastleberg castle (Figure 14). The castle defended Waldkirch for centuries but is now in preserved ruins. A walk up the trail leaves one somewhat breathless but the view from the top of the castle overlooking the town and the Elztal river is spectacular.

Monday, June 20, we left our Waldkirch accommodations and traveled a short distance north to Bruchsal. We had chance to spend several hours at the *Badisches Landesmuseum, Museum Mechanischer Musikinstrumente* where Elke Biber\* and her husband, Klaus, presented the tour. The museum has recently increased in size, thanks to the acquisition of several

Figure 14. Kastleberg as seen from downtown Waldkirch.



*In Waldkirch steht die Kastleburg hoch oben uberm Tal.  
Invielen hundret Jahren bot Trotz zie den Gefahren.  
Ich gruss, ich gruss, ich gruss dich tausent Mal,  
Ich gruss, ich gruss, ich gruss dich tau send mal.*

"In Waldkirch you will find the castle Kastleburg high up in the mountains.  
Over the hundred years she fights against all coming dangers.  
I say hello to her several thousand times . . ."

nice mechanical music pieces from the Jens Carlson collection. We saw many different forms of unusual instruments. A wine reception was held in the organ room where we enjoyed a 48-key operated Wilhelm Bruder in an original touring trailer (240 pipes, circa 1891), a 1900 50-key Gebr. Bruder, a model 37 Ruth, another 41-key Wilhelm Bruder, and the Creme-ala-creme Bruder "Selection" (an organ covered in the article, *Some Comments from an American Collector* by Q. David Bowers in Issue #2 of the *Carousel Organ*). The organ is a magnificent example of a figured organ (Figures 15 & 16). The sound was great although muffled by insulating material used to attenuate the volume.



Figure 15, above. The 94-key Gebr. Bruder "Selection."



Figure 16, left. A close-up provides some detail of the animated figures.



Figure 17. Gottard Arnold cranking an organ he built in 1980.

Tuesday, June 21. We left Bruchsal and traveled to Speyer to view and enjoy the *Technik Museum Speyer*. Our tour of the many mechanical instruments was led by Gotthard Arnold — those that attended the MBSI annual convention in 2002 will remember him playing his organ while accompanying a dancing doll (**Figure 17**).

The technical museum has set aside a special building to keep most of the mechanical musical instruments—*Der Wilhelmsbau* which houses a 43-key, paper roll-operated Bruder, a 49-key Ruth barrel organ, a 125-key Mortier dance organ, and not one but two (a 46-key and a 88-key) Molzer fair organs made in Vienna. The large building used for displaying planes, trains and automobiles contained two Decap dance organs (one made in 1940 and one in 1969) and a most unusual (and reportedly the longest organ in existence—12.5 meters, or 40.5 feet) 101-key Mortier dance organ placed on a balcony for all to see (**Figure 18**).



Figure 18. A very wide (12.5 meters) 101-key Mortier dance organ. This organ is maintained in the Technik Museum at Speyer.

After an enjoyable day at the Technik Museum we traveled to Rudesheim where we met up with Siegfried\* and Greta Wendel. Several glasses of wine later and we all were in a good mood to enjoy Rudesheim (**Figure 19**).



Figure 19. Siegfried Wendel has a laugh with tour members over a glass of wine.

Photo: Matt Jaro.

*Siegfrieds Mechanisches Musikkabinett* is a fine collection of musical instruments housed in a medieval castle, overlooking the Rhine River. The collection is varied collection with some specialization of violin-playing machines including the first Hupfeld

Phonolist, a newly-made Phonolist with six violins, a one-of-a-kind Poppers Violinovo and of course, a double Mills Violano. In the wine cellar is the organ collection, which consists of a 56-key Wellershaus, a 52-key Gebr. Bruder and an 80-key Gebr. Bruder housed in an oriental facade.

Being in Rudesheim is akin to being in a fairyland. Amongst the beer gardens, gift shops, and the bakeries are the romantic sights and sounds of the electric railroads on land and the barges and cruise vessels on the Rhine River. Many tour members took a ride on an excursion boat while others enjoyed the chair lift to the mountainside overlooking Rudesheim and the Rhine. Here we were able to view the Niederwalddenkmal monument and have a beer as well.



Figure 20. “Jüpp und Jüppchen,” an animated orchestra play on the drop of an Euro.

Formed by Hanns Buschman this unusual tavern had six mechanical musical instruments including a 50-key Wilhelm Bruder Barrel organ as well as paper roll-operated coin pianos. Also, of interest, was a puppet duo consisting of “Jüpp und Jüppchen”, an accordion/tuba orchestra played by life-size mannequins (**Figure 20**). Not only did the accordion player stand, sit and make facial movements during the playing but the tuba player’s music was actually the result of the tuba being played and fingered normally. This was quite unusual, and most entertaining!

A side-highlight of the stop was walking downtown Cologne and visiting the Dom Cathedral, the largest Catholic Church built. This cathedral took several hundred years to build and contains the remains of the Three Magi (transferred from Milan in 1164 a.d.). The church was built in the Gothic style (**Figure 21**).

While in Waldkirch we came across *Jan Hoefnagels*, a Dutch showman, whose collection I have tried to visit several times in the past.

Unsuccessful previously, because of his work schedule, it was a

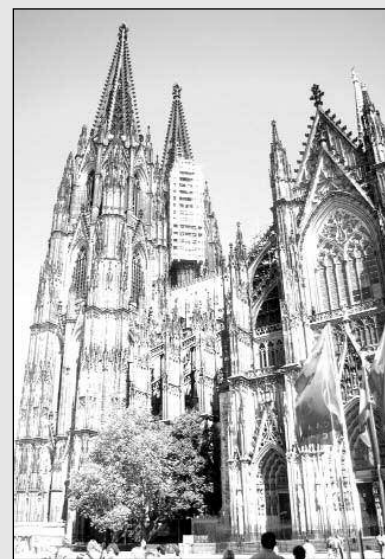


Figure 21. The Dom Cathedral, the largest of it’s kind in the world.

On Thursday, June 23, we left the Rhine and Rudesheim for Utrecht, Holland. On the way, we stopped at Cologne where we enjoyed a beer and some typical regional food at *Papa Joe’s Biersalon ‘Klimperkasten’*.



Figure 22. The 48 member Bumbling Bruder Tour group poses in front of Jan Hoefnagel's Model 36 Ruth. Jan is in the white shirt in the back row, far right.

bonus when he invited the Bumbling Bruder group for a visit. We were delighted to find six German fair organs (in trailers) including a 59-key Wellershaus, a Model 34 Ruth, a Model 35 Ruth and three (yes, 3!) Model 36 Ruths. One of the Model 36 Ruths is the first one built and served as a background for the posing Bumbling Bruder group (Figure 22).

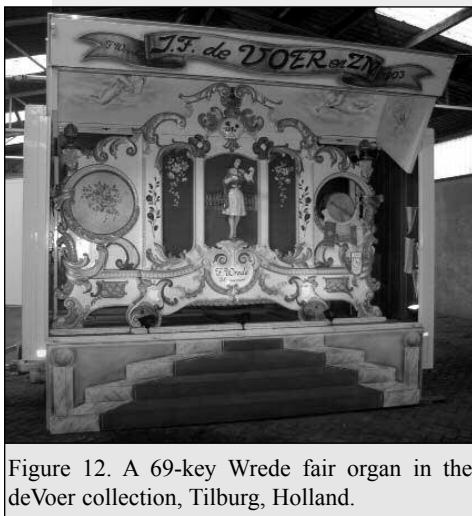


Figure 12. A 69-key Wrede fair organ in the deVoer collection, Tilburg, Holland.

Friday, June 24, was very busy as we visited five Dutch collections of organs. Our friend, Maarten van der Vlugt\*, who resides in Tilburg, Holland, was our guide for today as well the next three days. The first visit was to the *deVoer Brothers* of Tilburg. Three brothers who live next to each other have several German organs

including two Wrede Fair Organs, a Wellershaus, two Wilhelm Bruders, a Richter and a Ruth. The morning was spent enjoying the organs and the hospitality of the deVoers (Figure 23). After a Dutch country lunch we visited the workshop of *Theo Heesben* where four Dutch Street Organs and Belgian Dance Organs played at the entrance. The workshop is interesting in that it is in a mobile home park but the neighbors seemed tolerant of the afternoon concert. Just down the street is the *Adreiaasen Collection*, which was also available. Mr. Adreiaasen died last year but his family heard of our visit and wanted us to stop and listen to the instruments. A medium size Limonaire was present as well as an unusually cased Bruder organ, and several very large dance organs.

From there we traveled to *Wies Schwagten's collection* which was nearby. This is a beautifully laid-out (new and huge music room) collection of Decap and Mortier dance organs as well as one Dutch street organ. Each was perfectly restored and played well (Figure 24).



Figure 24. A Decap dance organ with lit panels in the Schwagten collection.



Figure 25. A new 42-key street organ modeled after a Limonaire style.

The day was topped off by a visit to *Chris van Laarhoven's\* workshop* and home. We enjoyed a spare rib dinner and music from a 59-key Marengi; "The Harp," a new DSO build by Chris and Toon Heesben; a large Decap and as a special treat, a recently-made Dutch street organ, made for Rick Cooley. Rick was given the honor of unveiling the organ and viewing it for the first time. Outside of their building was another new organ, a 42-keyed organ with a nice Dutch street organ sound (Figure 25).

The weekend arrived and on Saturday, 25 June we made an all-day trip to Amsterdam. On the way we stopped by the *Elbert Plier\* workshop* in Bussum. Most COAA members are familiar with "The Squirrel," a Plier-built organ owned by Kevin Sheehan. Here we found both Plier-built or Plier - restored instruments. Rein Schenk was our guide and pointed out the necessity of making book music in volume for the large number of customers—automated book punching machines were on display. (Figure 26).

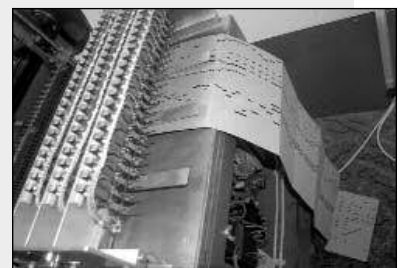


Figure 26. An automatic book-punch machine in the Plier factory.

Sunday, 26 June was spent viewing two large collections of organs. In the morning we traveled to de Wijk, Holland, where we enjoyed the collection (*Folkloreklanken*) of COAA member Henk Veeningen\*. Henk's collection was featured in an article, *Henk Veeningen's Draaiorgels (A Collection of Street Organs in Holland)*, in issue #19 of the *Carousel Organ*.



Figure 27. Maarten van der Vlugt cranking one of many of Henk's organs.

The highlight was the 89-key Gavioli organ, which Henk played several tunes on. His Dutch street organs were most interesting as we heard when Maarten van der Vlugt demonstrated (Figure 27). Since our last visit in 2002, he has completed the restoration of an 84-key Mortier dance organ. It played quite well and lacked only painting

of the facade. It was for sale and quickly was acquired by a tour member for our enjoyment in the states.

Of course, a trip to Holland wouldn't be complete without a visit to a windmill. It just so happened that within a block of Henk's museum was a beautiful specimen of a Dutch windmill and most tour members jumped out of the bus to photograph it (Figure 28).



Figure 28. A Holland windmill, just a few hundred feet from the Veenigen collection.

The afternoon was spent at the museum in Assen, *Stichting Draaiorgelvrienden Assen*, where museum curator, Gerrit Hulsolf, cares of nearly 20 mechanical organs including a large Mortier, a large Ruth fair organ, a Henrich. Voigt, other smaller



Figure 29. "De Stolwoker," one of many Dutch street organs in the Assen museum.

Ruth fair organs and several Dutch street organs including "de Stolwoker," which is my favorite organ of this genre (Figure 29).

Several hours were spent in the museum listening to the organs.

Our last day of touring, Monday, 27 June, found us up and about at the *National Museum van Speelklok tot Pierement (From Musical Boxes to Street Organs)*. Museum Director, Jan Jaap Haspels\*, will soon retire, and our group was the last American group to be led by him. The museum is undergoing a

fresh renovation and some instruments were placed differently but more visibly than on previous visits. The organ rooms remained the same as before, however, and the tour group was entertained by Dutch street organs of Limonaire and Gasparini origin as well as by fair organs by Gebr. Bruder (a nice 61-key specimen) and Richter. The large organ room found "De Shuyt," a 105-key Carl Frei Dutch street organ, a large Mortier, the last DSO made by Carl Frei with bellows, one of the largest existing Hooghuy's organs (Figure 30), and a new DeCap dance organ.



Figure 30. Jan Jaap Haspels pointing out details of the Hooghuy's organ.

After a sandwich lunch at the museum the group was taken to the museum workshop where a 65-key Gavioli fair organ was being restored. This organ has sat in the large organ room in the past and has been a favorite of mine because it is still hand-cranked, and for a large organ, is not that hard to crank. Saying goodbye to Jan was hard to do knowing that he will not be there to greet us at the next visit to the museum.



Figure 31. The "Kunkels Organ," a 112-key Marengi restored by Carl Frei — looking as good as it sounded.

Our last tour of organs began in the evening of 27 June where we traveled to Haarlem to visit the *Kunkelstiching*, the collection of organs managed by the Friends of the Kunkels



**\*Hosts & Docents**

Top row: Jan Kees de Ruijter; Jan Jaap Haspels; Chris van Laarhoven; Adrian Oswalt;

Left: Retonio Breitenmoser.

Right: Elke Biber, Cornelis Ruijgvorn. Dr. Evelyn Flögel; Elbert Pluer

Row (below): Henk Veenigen; Wolfgang Brommer; Heinz Jäger; Fredy Künzle;

Bottom Row: Siegfried Wendel; Rein Schenk; Maarten van der Vlugt; Jaap Harryvan (our bus driver—a new organ enthusiast and our newest COAA member).

Organ. Their new quarters are much more up-to-date than the leaky-roofed work building they were using previously. Jan Kees de Ruijter\* and Cornelis Ruijgvorn\* were our host and played the various Dutch street organs including favorites “Jupiter” and “Rosita.” This highlight, however, was the playing of the “Kunkels Organ,” a large 112-key Marengi organ converted to the DSO system by Carl Frei and recently restored. This organ was terrific and played both popular and classical music with ease (**Figures 31 & 32**).

This trip, the fourth of such for the Bumbling Bruders, had

to have been the best with many, many fine collections of organs viewed. It is incomprehensible to imagine the different organs, both small and large, seen. It is only possible because of the short travel distances as well as the help of Europeans such as Wolfgang and Maarten that helped me map the strategy for such a tour. In addition, the gracious hospitality of all of our hosts/docents made this a successful event.

All tour members will have hundreds of photos and many hours of videos to savor the memories and the good news is, there is always the Bumbling Bruder Tour #5 of 2008.