

# The “*Rally Edition*” of the *Carousel Organ*\*

## 2022—Our 21th Issue

Several great rallies & gatherings this year  
plus a chance to see a rally in Australia  
(our sister society, AMOS)

- 1). Iris Festival, Mountain View, AR
- 2). Shupp’s Grove, Reinhold, PA
- 3). Circus Calliope Festival, Peru, IN
- 4). Proctor Park, Utica, NY
- 5). AMOS

**\*The official journal of the *Carousel Organ Association of America (COAA)***  
*Devoted to enjoying, preserving, and sharing knowledge of all outdoor  
mechanical musical instruments, including band, fair, and street organs,  
calliopes, and hand-cranked organs of all sizes.*

Photos provided by Sally Craig, Dan Davis, Paul  
Senger, Tim Wagner, Dan Wilke, and Bob Yorburg.

# Iris Festival — Mountain View, Arkansas

May 6-7, 2022

COAA and the AMICA Heart of America Chapter met in Mountain View, Arkansas for the first rally of the season. Mountain View once again greeted us with open arms. It was great to greet old friends and make new friends.

On Thursday morning before leaving for the rally, Danell Mauldin did a live remote with radio station KWOZ in Bateville, Arkansas. The remote included what type of organization COAA is, where our membership is located, a brief history of carousel and street organs, why we call the music produced "The Happiest Music on Earth, and what types of organs we expected. It also included an invitation for everyone to come to the Iris Festival to come join the fun.



The rally unofficially kicked off on the evening of May 5 as attendees began to gather at the Rainbow Cafe to eat dinner and begin festivities for the rally. Afterward, some of the group attended a presentation by Vincent Astor about the "History and Restoration of *Madam Laura*" including a showing of a documentary by Memphis PBS. This was an interesting presentation followed by a question and answer session.



Tom McAuley and Jim Quashnock.



Bill Klinger.





One of the carousel organs being demonstrated.

Stone County *Leader's* coverage of the rally, printed May 11, 2022.  
Angelo Rulli and Suzi Hendricks.

Friday, May 6, the organ grinders gathered at the Courthouse Square and began playing the organs for the attendees of the Iris Fest. Roger Gardner, the mayor, came by and visited with our group in the afternoon. That evening we all gathered at the Bushel



Gret Moffitt John Hall and Jim Quashnock .



The welcome banner.

and a Peck Restaurant for a group dinner. Afterwards Vincent Astor repeated the presentation on the "History and Restoration of *Madam Laura*". We gathered at the Pinewoods Pavillion to visit and enjoy snacks.



Greg Moffitt.

Saturday, May 7, we played our organs and instruments for the crowds. The Iris Festival Organizers served us a delicious box lunch from The Rusty Cup. In the evening, several of the attendees ate dinner at Kin Folks Barbeque. Afterward, some of the group



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attended the street dance; some walked around the area to listen to some of the pickup bands; and some once again gathered at the Pinewoods Pavillion to visit and enjoy snacks.



John and Kathie Hall.



Bill Klinger.

Several of the attendees gathered at The Skillet Restaurant at the Ozark Folk Center for Sunday morn-

ing brunch. Afterward some members went to Bill and Nora Klinger's in Flippin, Arkansas for an open house.



Suzy Hendricks.

It was great to visit with Vincent Astor, Dan and Carol Davis, John and Kathie Hall, Ray and Noragene Harding, Bill and Nora Klinger, Gerold and Debbie Koehler, Tom McAuley, Greg, and Trudy Moffitt, Jim and Kathy Quashnock, Elise Roenigk, Suzie Hendricks, Angelo Rulli, and Bob Stout.



Doug and Danell Mauldin.

Doug and Danell, as well as, the Iris Festival Organizers would like to thank everyone that attended for helping make this a successful entertaining event. We want to thank Mike Schoeppner for doing the rally announcement for us this year.



## Schupp's Grove, Reinhold, PA

June 11th—12th, 2022

Shupp's Grove was filled with whimsical sounds earlier this month as the Carousel Organ Association of America hosted an Organ Rally at the Reinholds antique market on June 11 and 12.



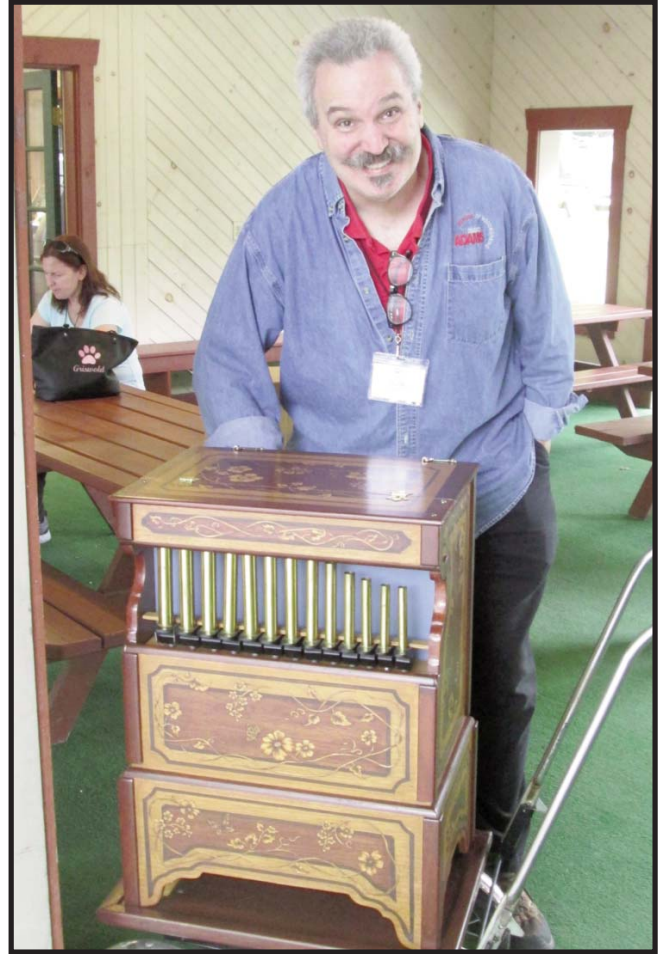
Bob & Maria Griswold.

The group's members celebrate and work to preserve mechanical musical instruments, from hand-cranked organs to calliopes and more. People traveled from as far as West Virginia and New York state to attend.



Stacey Wasson and Robert Meachum.

Attendees played music as those passing through Shupp's Grove shopped.



Bob Yorburg plays Tom Billy's Hofbauer 20-note organ.



Norma Venable plays the *Erie Airs* organ.





Barbara and Charles Hildebrant with their 20-note Raffin with additional metal pipes.



John Wolbach with his John Smith Senior organ at the Saturday organ demonstration.



Sally Craig and Barclay Wilson



First-timer Stacy Wasson tries her hand at cranking an organ.





Bob Buckler with his new Watterot 40-note reed organ and Tom Perna



New member Bob Herring and his 20-note Hofbauer Harmonipan.



The inside of Bob Buckler's Watterot 40-note with MIDI.



Wally Venable figures out the tuning on Bob Herring's organ. Tom Bill supervises in the background.



Barbara Hildebrant with her 20-note Raffin.



# Circus Calliope & Mechanical Music Festival

## Peru, Indiana

June 17-18, 2022

Zachary Morecraft stood in front of a wall of steam surrounded by the shrieking blast of whistles Friday morning. To the 36-year-old Peru native, it was the sweetest sound in the world. That's because Morecraft spent the last year handcrafting everyone of those whistles to be placed on the steam calliope his dad built before passing away in 2016. And Friday, he played the world's newest steam calliope whistles for the first time in public.



Zachary Morecraft plays the calliope as the Miami County Honor Guard stands by during the memorial tribute for veteran circus clown and Peru resident Pat Kelly at the Circus Hall of Fame (2021 file photo).

Today, the boiler-powered apparatus is one of only around 20 in the U.S. that are still operable. But Friday, it was joined by three more of the cacophonous instruments at the first-ever Circus, Calliope and Mechanical Music Festival held at the International Circus Hall of Fame.

For Morecraft, a die-hard calliope aficionado who is the only person alive who can still build tunable steam whistles, the sight of four calliopes sitting together at the same place at the same time was overwhelming. "It's still kind of surreal, really," he said. "I'm just kind of on an adrenaline rush, and I haven't really had a chance for it to sink in." That adrenaline was on display as he made the rounds to every calliope at the festival to play through one of the songs in his large repertoire of music. It almost felt like Morecraft was a kid let loose in a candy shop.



Dennis Green and his motorized Tangle calliope.

But it wasn't just calliopes on scene during the festival. Throughout the grounds, dozens of other performers played instruments such as organ grinders and small, accordion-like concertinas. Three electric band organs complete with pipes, drums, symbols, and chimes pumped out cheerful tunes throughout the day.



A group plays concertinas and monkey organs outside of the circus barns during the Festival.

Inside the circus museum, four organ-grinder owners pumped out tunes as groups wandered through the displays and exhibits telling the weird and wild stories of circus performers from around the world. One grinder had two small gorilla dolls in the front that bounced and danced along with the



Bob Ebert and his bouncing gorilla dolls.



music when the owner used the crank. One man let people step up to the instrument to turn the wheel that powered the organ.



Twins Ruth and Mary Berkebil, of Peru dance to the music playing from the DeWitte Concert Organ.

In front of the DeWitte Concert Organ outside, Mary and Ruth Berkebile busted out some interpretive dancing inspired by the whimsical sounds of the instrument. The two elderly twin sisters from Peru danced around each other wearing identical outfits as the organ piped away. It was a quirky scene, but it seemed perfectly normal at the festival, which had its fair share of colorful characters.



John Gordon with his stone calliope.

One of those characters was John Gordon, who stood beside a calliope he constructed out of a huge piece of granite he found in his field in Vermont. After drilling holes into the massive stone to place dynamite, he realized he could get notes from the holes by blowing air over them – just like blowing over the top of a pop bottle. “And the calliope was born,” Gordon said. That was in 2017. When he heard about the calliope festival in Peru, Gordon said it was a no-brainer to haul his massive granite instrument to the event. And that’s just where he was on Friday, wearing a black top hat and black

vest, standing by a poster board telling the story of his one-of-a-kind calliope. “When I heard it was a calliope festival with steam calliopes and air calliopes, I knew I could not miss this,” he said. “Plus, with COVID, I’ve been stuck at home for two years, so I can finally get out and do something.”

The festival is part of the hall of fame’s 100th anniversary celebration of the two historic barns on the property, which were constructed as part of the city-sized circus winter quarters once located at the site.

Carson Gerber, *Kokomo Tribune*  
([www.kokomotribune.com](http://www.kokomotribune.com))  
Photos: Kelly Lafferty Gerber,  
*Kokomo Tribune*



Wally Venable cranks for the visitors.



Ted Guillaum salutes the photographer.



Bob Blomberg shows off his organ grinding.



# Proctor Park, Utica, NY

September 10, 2022

Combine two Utica, New York residents, one of which is a COAA member, with another COAA member, who happens to be the current organization president, and what do you get? This year's COAA Band Organ Rally in Utica, NY of course! Thanks to a collaboration between COAA members Bob Yorburg and Boyd Bissel, and Utica native Philip Bean, the idea of adding a splash of musical color to a celebration of local parks became a band organ rally reality.



Phil Bean gives a tour of the 1928 Stanley Movie Theatre in Utica.

Utica native Philip Bean moved back home several years ago to take on the job of preserving a piece of his boyhood and the city's history. Philip currently serves as Chair of Olmsted City, a program sponsored by the Landmarks Society of Greater Utica. Olmsted City seeks to promote the well-being and awareness of the parks and neighborhoods in and around Utica, NY, which were designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., and his firm, Olmsted Brothers.



Stanley Theatre, Utica, New York.

COAA was invited to participate in Utica's Proctor-Olmsted Day, a celebration of the Olmsted, Jr., designed parks and the Proctors, a local family who brought the Olmsted firm to Utica over a century ago. The rally took place in Frederick T. Proctor Park, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Before cranking up the music on Saturday morning, COAA members gathered on Friday afternoon to explore another of Utica's treasures, the magnificent Stanley Theatre. Opened in 1928, the 3000-seat picture palace is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as one of the best surviving works of celebrated "movie palace" architect, Thomas Lamb. After marveling at the striking exterior, our members were graciously toured throughout the cavernous interior by Philip Bean, surrounded by elegance at every turn, an expectation of any respectable movie palace of the era.



The 35 feet wide chandelier.

Operating for 80 years without a chandelier, Stanley Theatre audiences were surprised and suitably impressed in 2008 with the installation of the world's largest free-hanging LED chandelier. At 35 feet wide, 11 feet tall, and weighing over three tons, the impressive chandelier was designed, manufactured and installed by Meyda Lighting. Custom crafted of steel, blown glass and acrylic, this beauty is hand-finished in antique gold and bronze to complement the theater's Mexican Baroque Moorish theme. The chandelier has been lightening and brightening the faces of all who glance upward.



Following the informative tour, rally attendees were treated to a wine and cheese reception in the lobby, hosted by Mr. Bean and his family.



John and Roberta Ravert with the 90-key Page & Howard *De Witte*

Blue skies and sunshine graced the 16-acre meadow of F.T. Proctor Park on Saturday morning for Proctor-Olmsted Day. COAA members were ready to greet the day with song, accompanying several community groups and local business offering family-friendly activities and items for sale. Approaching the park's Grand Entrance, visitors were greeted by the sweet sounds of the British built 90 key Page & Howard organ *De Witte*, located inside the tree-lined entrance and manned by owners John & Roberta Ravert, Watsontown, PA. John has made several tonal additions/improvements to this impressive organ since acquiring it from a previous owner.



John Prtljaga and Margie Hagan with the *Moose-Ika* organ.

A short stroll further into the park revealed John Prtljaga's *Moose-Ika* organ. Traveled from Ravenna, OH, this delightful self-built organ, originally dubbed a '165+' and based on the Wurlitzer 165 band organ roll scale, has been tonally altered by John, since I first encountered the organ in 1998 at the Trolleyville, OH band organ rally where COAA was formed. Keeping company nearby, Phil Williams proudly played his fairly recently acquired North Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works Style 155 Military Band Organ. This brass trumpet instrument is at least 104 years old, and you'd never know it. It's a beauty! Phil was the lucky one of the rally bunch, traveling a whole 20-minutes from home to attend the rally.



Philip Williams with his Style 155 North Tonawanda Musical Instrument Works organ

John and Mary Lou Van Dorn's Wurlitzer Style 103 band organ was the fourth trailered organ at the rally, hauled from Sugar Grove, PA. Appearing in Wurlitzer's 1923 catalog without drums, this particular instrument has 'em! Playing Wurlitzer Style 125 rolls, the compact Style 103 band organ, with wood trumpets, was designed especially for minia-



John and Mary Lou van Dorn's Wurlitzer 103 with drums.



ture carousels, kiddie swings, and other children's amusements. Per the catalog, this instrument has exceptional volume for its size. It's true!



Craig and Kathay Smith with a Molinari organ.

Strolling further down the tree-lined road defining the park's meadow, a half dozen COAA members and spouses engaged park visitors with a variety of hand-cranked organs and, in the case of Craig and Kathay Smith from Pittsford, NY, several instruments. The Smiths brought and displayed:

- A 41 key, 5-rank Frati barrel organ, imported to Mexico by Wagner and Levien in its distant past, and converted by Craig to a MIDI activated instrument, because the original barrel was lost.
- A 23-key, 9-tune barrel organ made by Molinari in Brooklyn, NY in 1933-34.
- A 23-key, 7-tune barrel organ made by Molinari in Brooklyn, NY in 1930.
- A 20 note, Castlewood paper roll organ, serial #001, made from a kit.
- A 20 note, GEM roller/cob organette.
- A 20 note, Amorette organette playing metal disks.
- A 20 note Melodia organette playing paper rolls.

Beverly Chatfield and Bear Schultz traveled from LaGrange, IL to join us with Beverly's newly acquired 20-note Vienna Woods Bauchorgel, built



Bear Schultz with a 20-note Vienna Woods Bauchorgel.

by Christian Wittmann, while employed at Der Orgelbau im Wienerwald, in Pressbaum, Austria. This instrument, serial # 25, was previously owned by Dr. Tom Griffith, who wrote about it in the COAA Journal after he acquired it, inspiring me to purchase one (*Finster Baby*, serial # 41) several years later. It was a treat (and rarity) to have two of these instruments at a rally. It was also interesting to notice some differences in materials and in the rewind mechanism.



Greg and Linda Swanson and their Raffin organ.



Greg and Linda Swanson brought their 31-note Raffin organ from Webster, NY, "Where life is worth living" (so says the road sign at village borders). Formerly owned by COAA member Mike Knudsen (deceased), it was the first MIDI-fied crank organ I had encountered, back when Mike brought it to a Knoebels rally all the way from Maine. A talented musician, Mike added MIDI capability to the organ so that he could perform his own arrangements and compositions.



Paul Senger and his John Smith home-built 20-note Busker organ.

Kenmore, NY native Paul Senger brought his self-built 20-note John Smith organ from his home in Silver Spring, MD to join us at the rally. Paul also designed and built the folding cart for the instrument.

Dan and Anne Wilke from Buffalo, NY brought their 36-key Verbeeck book playing organ. Formerly owned by carousel, band organ, and roller coaster enthusiast "Wild" Bill Winston in Milwaukee (deceased), this instrument has been liberated from its Wisconsin apartment and is now out and about entertaining folks, as intended. Dan has added many books to the music library since acquiring the instrument from his dear friend's widow.

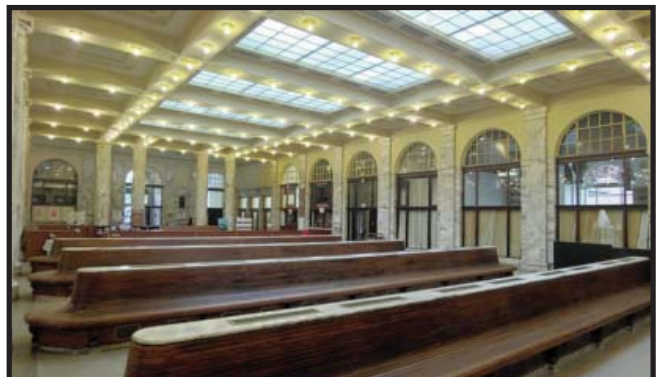


Dan Wilke and his 36-key Verbeeck organ.

*Finster Baby*, my 20-note Vienna Woods organ, was the last of the instruments to appear at the rally on Saturday. *Finster Baby* and I drove in for the day from Fairport, NY. At 1 PM, our cordial cadre of organ grinders performed a crank organ concert under the "small top" tent, to an appreciative audience. We were fortunate to have a barrel organ, a book organ, paper roll organs, and a MIDI-activated organ in our lineup, allowing us to address the changes in music encoding technology as part of our concert. Our organ grinders presented a variety of information to our audience as we each presented a couple of tunes.



Above and below are views of the New York Central Station.







The barbershop.

After packing up in late afternoon, most members retired to their hotel before driving to nearby Herkimer, NY for our dinner treat. Several of us took the opportunity to visit the vintage New York Central Railroad Station in downtown Utica before dinner. Built in 1914, this impressive structure remains in use as intended, and is one of the few train stations which retains its barbershop. Had it been open, I would have taken advantage! As it is, a photo through the glass door would have to suffice as my encounter.



Boyd Bissel's Heidelberg Café.

A nine-mile drive east from the train station brought Gary Colborn and me to COAA member Boyd Bissel's Heidelberg Café for the rally dinner. Tucked behind Bissel's Heidelberg Bread production facility, the Café is a hidden gem, decorated and outfitted by Boyd. He generously provided rally attendees a delicious German-style dinner for us, along with hot hors d'oeuvres, beverages, live accordion music and dessert, all in a delightful atmosphere. Prost! Following dinner, I drove Gary Colborn to the train station to begin his journey home to Paw Paw, Michigan, and then continued my drive west to Fairport.



Boyd Bissel, Bob Yorburg and ?

On Sunday morning, gray skies and some light showers in the Utica vicinity didn't bode well. A lack of people in the park, with no festival activities planned, the lack of a tent (which had been removed Saturday evening), and the absence of a generator for power made the decision to disband quite logical. Though this was a disappointment, everyone did enjoy a wonderful Saturday of friendship, music and food, and a delightful Friday theatre tour. In all, I estimate that 29 COAA members and friends attended the rally on Saturday.

Tim Wagner



Brant Estrata.



Crank organ concert.



# The "Special Rally" issue of the *Carousel Organ*—2022 Edition



Margie Hagan behind John and Mary Lou Van Dorn.



Bear Schultz, Beverly Chatfield, Kalanna Lester and Maureen Hooper with Beverly's "Der Orgelbau" organ.



Left: Dan Wilke and Craig Smith.  
Right: Greg and Linda Swanson.



John Van Dorn cleaning the tracker bar on his Wurlitzer 103 organ.



Valerie and Lon Wilson.



Left: Beverly Chatfield at the crank organ concert.  
Right: Paul Senger at the crank organ concert.



# AMOS Organ Rally Griffith, New South Wales Australia

October 14—16, 2022

*The Australian Mechanical Organ Society (AMOS) is the new sister society of COAA. We are therefore including their activities with our Rally Edition. They are a great group from Australia and the Great Barrier Reef. Six Australians traveled with the Bumbling Bruder Tour giving many COAA members the opportunity to get to know the group better. Additionally, many participate with the monthly Zoom presentations found at "thewonders.org." Two members have presented and will do so again this coming year. You will get to know them better and everyone is encouraged to communicate with them strengthening our bonds. Enjoy the news from down under—Bob Yorburg*

*After two years of experiencing upset plans, surprise lockdowns, cancelled events, and every other type of disruption to our lives, our next Organ Rally is finally being planned for: Griffith, NSW.*

*This centrally located city with a population of 26,000 is quite an oasis in central inland New South Wales and almost any fruit you can think of is grown in the area, sustained by the Murrumbidgee Irrigation System. I was told quite seriously that if you plant a three-inch nail in the soil, within a week or two it will grow into a full length star picket!*

*Jesting aside, Griffith seems a centrally located and admirable place with adequate facilities to meet our Rally needs.*

*Griffith will be holding its annual Spring Fest at this time, and we will join in these celebrations. Amongst the events taking place will be the Citrus Sculptures and 'Open Gardens' weekend, a multicultural festival in one of the town parks, historical Pioneer Park activity and a Rotary market. We will be playing our organs at all these locations.*

*Our accommodation will be at the Exies Bagtown Motel and function centre. There is a swimming pool on site. The biggest benefit of this motel is that it has a large area down the far end of the units suitable for parking our large organs.*

There was an air of expectancy when this was announced in 2022 since the previous two annual rallies were not held due to Covid. AMOS members are situated in the eastern states of Australia (namely Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and South Australia), so it is usual for the rally to be located in a town somewhere in eastern Australia for accessibility by as many members as possible. This

year the town chosen was Griffith, in central New South Wales, which would still mean a drive of 800 – 1000 kilometers for some members towing organs.

Features of this rally will include:

- Many AMOS members have built their own organs, some large, decorated organs permanently mounted on trailers, some with well over 100 pipes.
- Others are small portable organs that may have as few as twenty pipes, which are played by hand-turning small paper rolls through the organ.
- 39 AMOS members, with five fairground organs and seventeen small portable organs will be playing their instruments at different venues around Griffith over this weekend.



The Orange Chariot—the orange sculptures looked spectacular.

Whilst Covid was still on the minds of all Australians, this was not the event that threatened to derail our rally. No, not bushfires nor drought this time but floods! The eastern seaboard of Australia



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was experiencing greater than average rainfall that inundated towns and cut roads in all states. After a very wet Winter, we were experiencing an even wetter Spring. As the rally approached, some members phoned in that they could not attend due to the floods while others reached Griffith by taking circuitous routes around the countryside.



Hans Moll cranks his 20-note Deleikacart organ.

Finally, the weekend was enjoyed by all, although the aforementioned problems accounted for the reduced number of visitors to the gardens. This was also the first of many Spring activities after two years of canceled events, so many of the neighboring towns were also trying to lure people to competing activities after the Covid hiatus.

For once, the weather was kind and the entire weekend remained rain-free. Our activities commenced on Friday night with a barbeque hosted by the owners of one of the Open Gardens. It was an evening of chatter and excitement as everyone met

up with old friends or was introduced to new members of AMOS. After the tasty bar-b-que and tea the weekend's activities were outlined and large and small organs relegated to the different venues. Throughout the weekend reports kept coming in about 'all these organs in Griffith.'



Peter Datson with his A. Whitehead fair organ.

On Saturday night we held our annual Dinner, followed by our Annual General Meeting, where the business of the club took place. After the election of office bearers, general business was discussed. One of the outcomes of this was the suggestion that a database be established recording organs in Australia and Australian-built organs since there is currently no central record of these instruments or their history.



More orange sculptures.

The concluding rally consensus was that we might have been better to space the organs around fewer venues to create more time for the organ grinders to socialize, particularly as two fairground



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and a number of small organs did not end up attending for various reasons. In 2019 we finished that rally with an open-air concert featuring all organs in a town square. Of course, every town is different, and there was no such Town Square in Griffith, but this was deemed to be a positive activity to include in future rallies.



Pam McDiarmid, rally organizer, giving instructions to members.

Finally, on Sunday night, we enjoyed an informal evening meal together and another great chinwag. We look forward to the next AMOS rally in October/November 2023 at a location to be announced early in the new year. (P.S. All the oranges are collected and sent off to be 'juiced' at the end of the festival).

Pam McDiarmid



John Wolff plays his 20-note Stuber, featuring some of his hand-cut rolls.



Pam McDiarmid with her John Smith 20-note organ. Named *Polly* it was built in 2015.



Robert Hill's 33-keyless Dean Organ. It has 120 pipes and plays with cardboard books.



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Huntly Vroland plays his 20-note John Smith Senior organ.

Peter Datson's 46-key A. Whitehead fair organ. The organ has 96 pipes and uses the Gavioli scale.



Lorna Hawkey with her 20-note John Smith Busker Organ

AMOS photos courtesy of Peter & Joan Datson, Robert Hill, Helen Moll and Anna Wolff.



Joan Datson, Pam, and Graeme McDiarmid in front of *The Pioneer*, an organ built by Richard Ellis in 1993 and acquired by the McDiarmids in 2019. It plays with 48 keys on the Limonaire scale.