

Australia Fair

Grand Concert Organ

The Happiest Music on Earth



Playing at "Floriade" the National Garden Show in the Commonwealth Gardens ACT

"Australia Fair" is a Belgium built travelling Concert Organ. It was built in the workshops of Verbeeck's Organ Works (Est 1884) in Antwerp and is the only travelling Concert Organ in Australia. It has entertained extensively at all levels from local functions to "Yarralumla" – the residence of the Governor General of Australia.



Garden Party at "Yarralumla" – the residence of the Governor General of Australia

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The Key Frame - where the cardboard music Books are read.

The organ has the equivalent sound of a 20-piece band and operates on air pressure generated by a bellows and regulated by a reservoir. The music is played by way of traditional punched cardboard books that are read by the keyframe, which activates valves that in turn cause the organ to play. The organ has some 442 pipes together with drums, cymbals, bells, woodblocks and animated figures. The organ also has a large library of music and can play all day without repeating selections. The music appeals to all age groups and covers all types from Strauss to Walt Disney including marches, waltzes, musical theatre, children's and popular music. The music evokes a carnival atmosphere and is often referred to as the 'happiest music on earth'.



Some of the Melody Division Pipework – Brass Trumpet, Violins, Flutes, Piccolo & Unda Maris

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Entertaining with Denise Drysdale at Carols by Candlelight

The organ is ideal for Festivals and Fairs, Street Parades, Agricultural Shows, Garden Shows, Fetes, Parties, Promotions, Christmas Carols, Weddings and Divorces (half price if we did the Wedding). It is mounted on a tandem trailer and its dimensions are approximately 7 metres long, 3 metres high (4 metres with the roof raised) and 2 metres deep. It can be powered either by mains 240-volt power or by our on-board generator. The organ has full public liability insurance and complies with all current requirements.



Rear View at Cruden Farm – the home of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch

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Setting up at the Australian Heritage Festival - Jondaryan Woolshed Queensland

These instruments first appeared in Europe and England in the early 1820's and soon became very popular as they travelled between towns and villages entertaining at local Festivals, Fairs and events. Manufacturers flourished and large numbers of these instruments were made, as they were the principal source of music for outdoor public entertainment. Unfortunately, all this changed in 1926 when an American company named Brunswick introduced the world's first electrically amplified gramophone. Sadly, by 1930, amplified recordings and amplified sound were widely and relatively cheaply available. This coupled with the Great Depression; saw manufacturers close and these wonderful instruments slowly fell into disrepair and disuse, until ultimately, the vast majority were lost forever.



Preparing for a Street Parade under Steam

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Rear View at Australia Day celebrations in Martin Place Sydney

However, Australia Fair Grand Concert Organ continues the tradition first started in Europe and England over 190-years ago. The organ travels throughout Australia and is available for hire at moderate rates.



See and hear us on You Tube - search under:

73 Key Street Organ Verbeek Australia Fair
Street Organ – Sydney – Australia Day

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Australia Fair is presented for your enjoyment by:

The Orchestrelle Co.

Since 1861

Rick Alabaster – Manager

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