

THE MUSIC BOX

an international magazine of mechanical music

THE JOURNAL OF THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

Volume 10 Number 4 Christmas 1981



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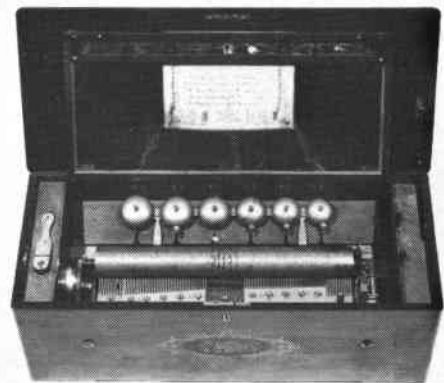
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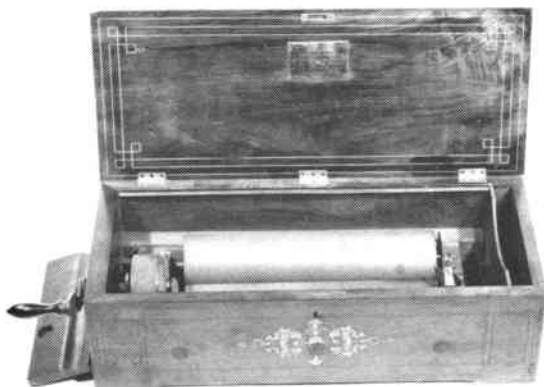
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THE MUSIC BOX

an international magazine of mechanical music

THE JOURNAL OF THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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OUR PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

CHRISTMAS is a time for celebration, for giving thanks.

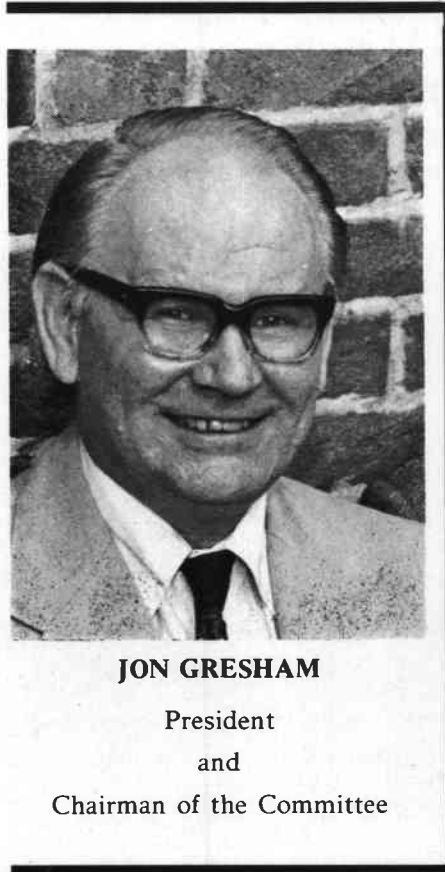
The objects of our Society direct us "to encourage the preservation of . . . instruments wherever possible".

In this we have succeeded beyond the most optimistic expectations of our founders. When our Society was formed, musical boxes were relatively inexpensive curiosities which, if they did not work, were liable to be thrown away. The increase in their value in monetary terms over the period of the Society's existence is incredible. This has partially been caused by the tremendous advance in restoration techniques, so that practically anything can now be restored, coupled with a more general knowledge that they are worthy of restoration and preservation following the greater appreciation and recognition of their intrinsic merits disseminated by the Society and its members.

One has only to read the early volumes of the Journal to realise forcefully how comparatively little was known by the collecting fraternity in our formative years and how much historical, theoretical and practical knowledge has since been researched and shared by our members.

The other part of the paragraph defining our objects exhorts us "to try to gather together those who collect or appreciate musical boxes and other forms of mechanical musical instruments". This aspect of our activities has been no less rewarding.

Our Society is deservedly known as a friendly Society. That differences of opinion occasionally occur between members is inevitable, but these are exceptional. Many societies of similar type seem continually torn apart by disagreements and conflict. We are fortunate in not having this reputation. From the number of changes on the Committee over the past two years it might seem that we too have had problems and it must be a disappointment to the seekers after sensationalism and scandal to know that these resignations from office have largely been the result of inability to cope with the work-load through the pressure of other commitments.

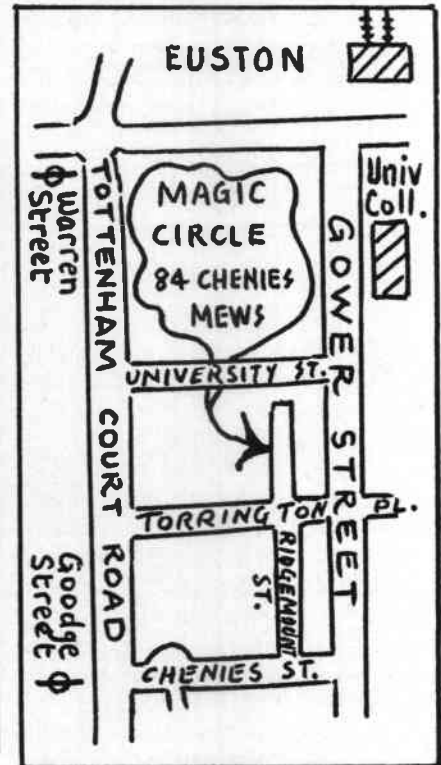


JON GRESHAM

President
and
Chairman of the Committee

If the Journal reaches you in time, remember the Christmas Meeting . . .

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12.



Magic Circle. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Registration Fee . . . £4.

I have found the most rewarding aspect of my membership of our Society the enormous number of friends I have made, people of widely differing backgrounds and contrasting personalities brought together by a common interest. So many of those I now count amongst my best friends I would never have met, without the Society. Those members with views other than my own, I respect, and I must admit that there are some whose conduct I occasionally view with misgivings whom I like immensely as people.

We are, after all, like a large family and nothing has impressed this upon me more forcefully in the past year than having had the opportunity of meeting so many of our American members, whose warmth and friendliness is so overwhelming.

Christmas is, essentially, a family time. If I could be granted a Christmas wish it would be to hope that each and every one of our family of members should receive the pleasure and satisfaction that has been mine from friendships formed through our Society.

JON GRESHAM.



Anthony Bulleid is one of the speakers.

OF STOP-WORK

by Robert Burnett

THE first mechanical clocks are believed to have been made towards the end of the 13th century and they had verge escapements. This escapement has great advantages in being robust and easy to make and adjust. As a result, it was in common use, especially in watches, right up to the end of the 19th century, having been made continuously for six centuries.

The main disadvantage of the verge is its sensitivity to variations in driving force and special means have to be used to even out the pull of the spring between when it is fully wound and nearly run down. The most successful and widely used device is the fusee and chain—Figure 1. The spring is contained in the cylindrical barrel A round the outside of which a chain B is wound and this transfers the pull of the spring to the fusee C. The fusee has on its outer surface a helical groove of gradually decreasing diameter into which the chain fits. Thus as the spring is wound from the spring barrel onto the fusee, the diameter of the fusee decreases and the increasing pull of the spring is compensated for by the decreasing diameter on which the chain acts.

The more complicated singing bird-boxes with the bird moving its head on its body as made by Bruguier, Frères Rochat and others contain fusees. So do a few very early musical boxes in which the comb is made in sections of a few teeth at a time.

Maltese Cross Stop-Work

As better escapements were developed which superseded the verge, there was no longer so much need for the fusee, though it was still retained in some watches of the highest quality. More frequently stop-work was used, that is a device to prevent further winding of the spring sometime before it is fully wound and to prevent further unwinding sometime before the spring is fully run down. The most widely used form of stop-work is the Maltese Cross and nearly all musical

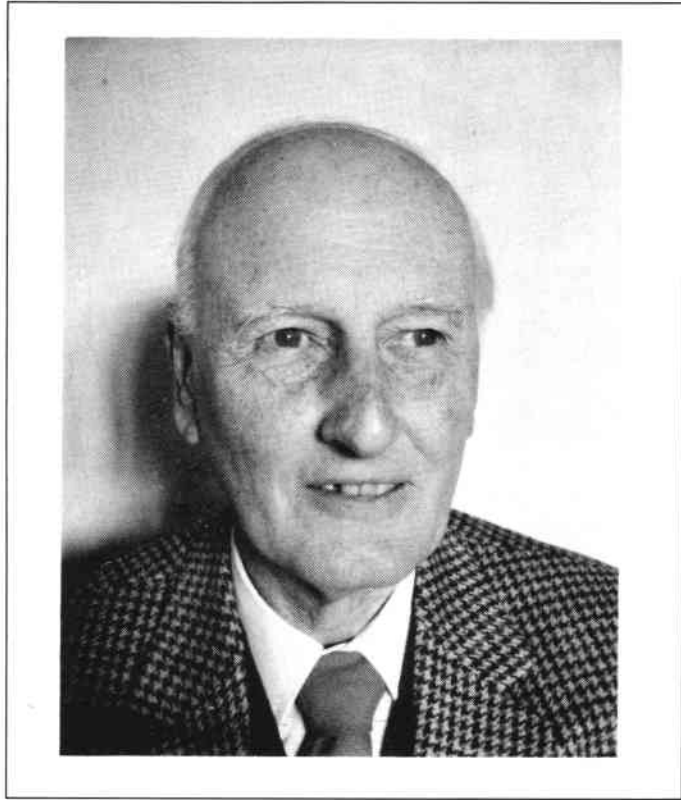
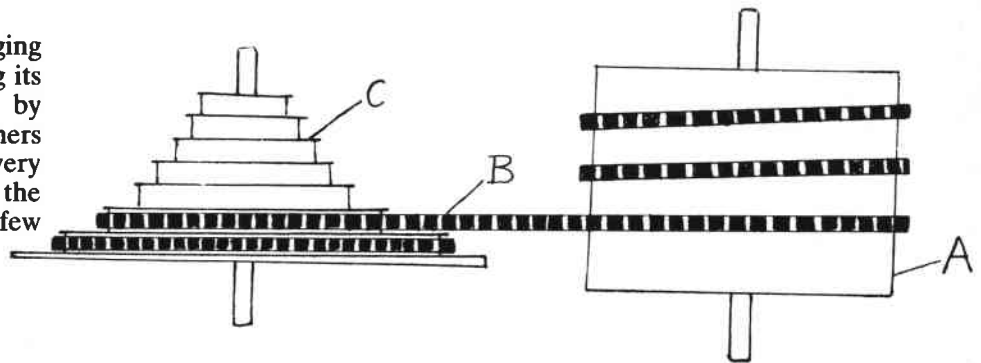


Figure 1.



boxes have (or had when new) stop-work of this type fitted on the face of the spring barrel facing the comb.

In Figure 2, A is the spring barrel and B is the arbour to which the inner end of the spring is attached. As shown in the figure, it is turned anti-clockwise when the box is wound. In the position shown further winding will cause the shoulder C of the central piece to meet the point D on the Maltese Cross. This will prevent further winding although the spring may

well be well short of being fully wound. As the movement runs down, the spring barrel will turn anti-clockwise with the central piece at rest and each time the Maltese Cross comes past the finger on the central piece, the Maltese Cross will be turned round by one section until further rotation is prevented in the same way as further winding was prevented. This is normally set to occur sometime before the spring is fully run down.

It is frequently said that the object of stop-work is to prevent overwinding of the spring. It does, of course, do this, but I would say that the use of excessive force will break the stop-work a good deal more easily than it will break the spring itself. So, having regard to the purpose of stop-work in time pieces, I conclude that its major object in musical boxes is to secure a reasonably steady rate of playing throughout the operating range.

A Rare Form of Stop-Work

I come now to the original purpose of this note which is to describe a very rare form of stop-work fitted to a singing bird-box that I have recently overhauled.

In Figure 3, A is the spring barrel. Attached to its inner wall is a piece of spring steel B about 3mm wide. This has a short steel pin C attached to its free end and there is a small hole in the spring barrel wall through which the pin C can project. When the spring is fully wound, as shown in the figure, the pin C does not project beyond the wall of the barrel. As the box runs down, the mainspring unwinds from the central arbour and moves towards the outside of the barrel until it meets the piece B and pushes it against the barrel wall. This causes the pin C to project through the barrel wall and as it comes round, it meets the part D, also made of springy steel, and pushes it away from the spring barrel so that the point E makes contact with the fan, or air governor, F, and stops the movement.

This stop-work is unusual in that it acts in one direction only, that is it prevents the movement from operating well before the spring is run down, but it has no effect at the other end of the spring's range and allows the spring to be wound fully. This must be accounted a disadvantage. The position of the pin C relative to the mechanism controlling the bird is such that the stop-work only comes into effect immediately after the bird has gone down at the end of the song. It cannot stop the movement in the middle of the song as would normally happen with Maltese Cross type stop-work. This I would say is a considerable advantage. However, if one doesn't know that this type of stop-work is fitted, its effect can be rather disturbing because the bird

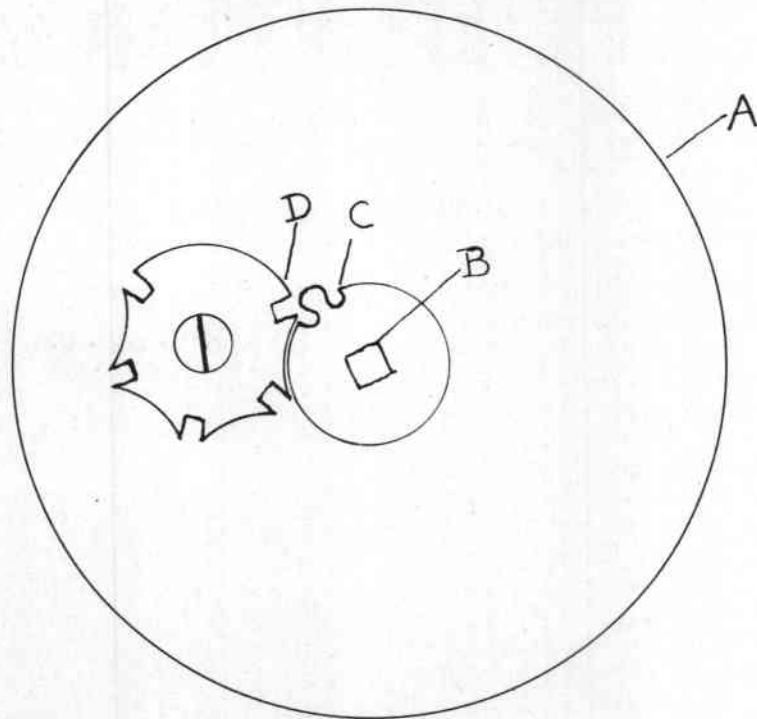


Figure 2.

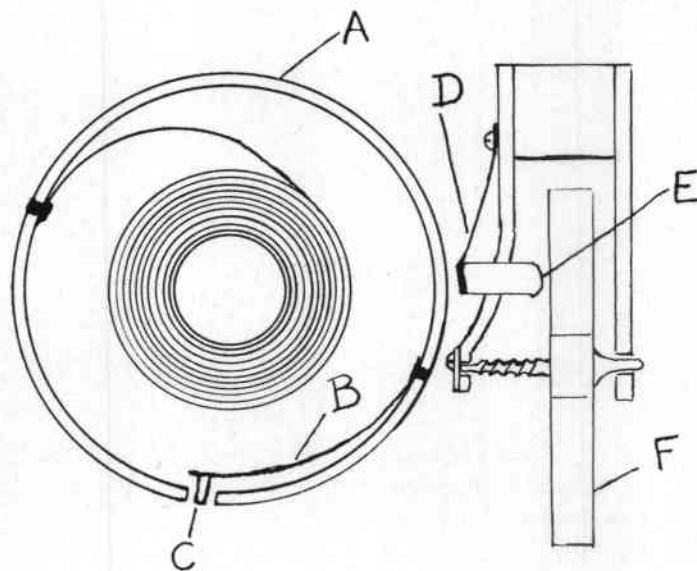


Figure 3.

©Robert Burnett, 1981.

can finish one song at a speed indicating that it is still far from run down, but when one seeks to set it

off again, it will not work at all. One may be led to suspect that something has gone seriously wrong!

HELPING THE SMALL-BUSINESS MAN

IF MUSIC BE THE FOOD OF LOVE . . .

MICHAEL HEALE, maker of historical musical instruments, has one of those small businesses that evokes the more beautiful and artistic side of life.

Originally apprenticed in 1952 to Arnold Dolmetsch Ltd, he spent five long years learning all there was to know about making keyboard instruments. After completing his apprenticeship in England, he decided to further his studies of musical instrument making in West Germany and spent some time with Martin Sassmann.

In 1962, Michael Heale decided to set up his own business in Guildford, Surrey, first making early keyboard instruments such as virginals, spinets and harpsichords, then later, he started to specialise in making early stringed instruments, especially the Viola da Gamba family, which includes the Pardessus da Virole, the Treble Viol, Alto Viol, Tenor Viol, Lyra Viol, Bass Viol (Consort Bass) six or seven strings, the Baryton, Viola d'amore and Lute. Each instrument made by Michael Heale takes about two to three weeks to produce—from the initial cutting out of the instrument to the final intricate detail of hand-carving—which gives each instrument its own individual stamp. All the Viol designs, produced by Heale are taken from antique examples, especially from those produced by the English maker, Barak Norman, who made instruments of exceptional tone and quality during the period 1688 - 1740.

Since starting his business 20 years ago, Michael Heale's reputation for making these early musical instruments has spread far and wide—especially to America, where musicians of private and professional status, together with colleges of music and universities, from New York to Ohio and Chicago, have been thoroughly delighted with the viols they have received from Michael Heale.



In his upstairs workshop in Guildford, early musical instruments hang from all corners. Some are new and are in the process of being turned from a plain piece of pine or maple (the traditional materials for making viols) into exquisite instruments which, when played, hauntingly recall to mind the great composers of past eras. Some of the instruments hanging in his workroom are very old and have

already seen many years of dedicated musical playing, but like anything else, at some time they need to be restored back to their former glory—a job which he will also carefully undertake, on instruments that sometimes date as far back as 1650.

For business information
(COSIRA) see page 152.

RECOLLECTIONS

by C de Vere Green, FDS, RCSEng, DDSToronto, FACD, FICD

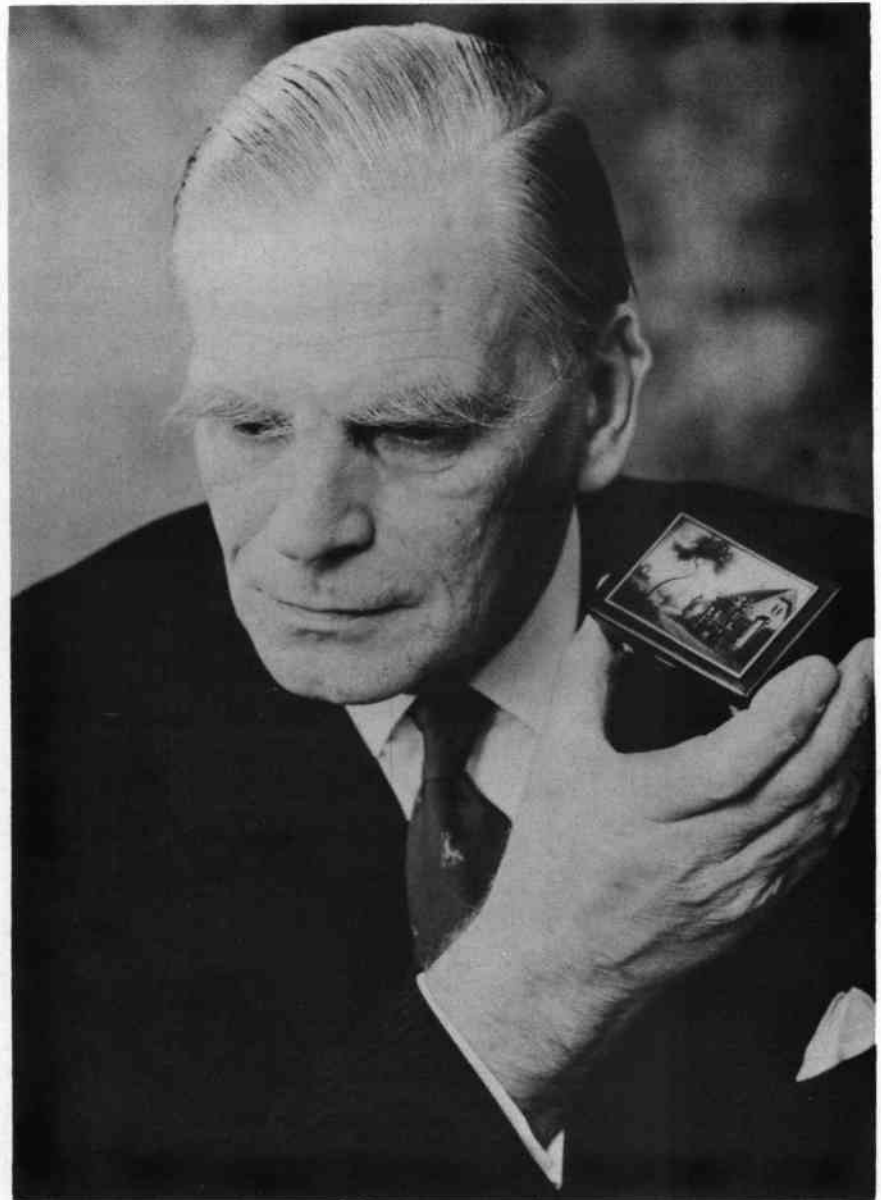
IT WAS in 1912 when I was but three years old that my father bought me my first musical box which I still have. It is a Bremond box playing musical notes on steel teeth, an organ, bells, drum and castanet.

I well recall that as a small boy, how it was played to me on Sundays and other special occasions until I was old enough to wind it up and turn it on myself. In 1926 it stopped working but I still would not part with it and even after I was married my silent musical box came with me and then went into store with our other furniture whilst I was in the Army.

In 1960 I was in New York where in a bookshop I saw and purchased a book. *Music Boxes, Their Lore and Lure*, by Helen and John Hoke.

When back home I was fascinated by the record which this book contained and in the book was a list of musical box repairers with only one name in England, J E T Clark. In spite of his having changed his address I managed to find him and happily he restored my musical box which for more than thirty-five years had been silent. These musical boxes enthralled me and I started my collection. One day Mr Clark told me that he had been approached by The Musical Box Society International to organize a branch of that society in England, and he told me that he was too old to undertake such a task. I thought it a good idea but wondered if it not might be better to found our own society, so I invited 30 musical box enthusiasts, whose names had been given me by Mr Clark, to tea one Saturday afternoon. Twenty-eight turned up and thus was founded The Musical Box Society of Great Britain whose membership has now passed 1,500.

My hobby and my collection grew and a few years passed. Whilst I was still the secretary of the MBSoGB I was invited by Messrs Phillips to stage an exhibition with a few other collectors in Holland at Eindhoven. Messrs Phillips made a fabulous dis-



play and it proved a great success. At a later date they held an exhibition of some of my wife's fan collection.

Then five years ago I decided to retire from my profession and to move out of our 17-room house in Wimpole Street to a small cottage in the country.

What to do with my collection presented a great problem. I gave a few boxes to members of the family but apart from my collection of small

musical snuff boxes it still left over 200. I had noted what so often happens to collections which had been donated or acquired by museums in this country. In many instances only a very few items were ever on display and then often other items from the collection had to be requested on an official form to view. This took some considerable time after the application had been made and then the specimen appeared from the depths.

And so I was so very happy to learn about the Musical Box Museum in Utrecht where most of my collection of musical boxes is on permanent display and so many of them are played daily to so many visitors to the museum.

Recently I was shown over the old Military Hospital in Utrecht by Dr Haspels where following certain building alterations it is hoped, on account of the extra space available, it will be possible to show the whole of my collection and to hear them play. I hope I shall be able to attend the opening ceremony.

In the meantime I am left with 15 or so of my favourite musical boxes and my hundred musical snuff boxes. I hope I see the day when they are all reunited as one family.

©Cyril de Vere Green,
1981

The Development Commission which helped Michael Heale was the "Council for Small Industries in Rural Areas" — COSIRA.

Information

Some MBSGB country members run their own businesses and information about COSIRA, the organisation which helped Michael Heale, might be useful.

COSIRA is the main agent of the Development Commission whose prime objective is to regenerate the rural areas of England. Businesses employing up to 20 skilled workers (no limit to unskilled) in rural areas or centres of population under 10,000 are eligible. The idea is to promote village industries, reduce the need to commute, and open up local opportunities for those who cannot travel far. Advice ranges from business management and

accountancy to engineering, wood-working and plastics.

In Wales the Welsh Development Agency address is: Treforest Industrial Estate, Pontypridd CF37, Mid Galmorgan.

The Scottish Development Agency is at 102 Telford Road, Edinburgh, EN4 2NP.

In Northern Ireland the Local Enterprise Development Unit is at Lamont House, Purdys Lane, Newtownbreda, Belfast 8.

For would-be businessmen in England the COSIRA address is: 141 Castle Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3TP. The purpose of COSIRA is to promote prosperity in rural England.

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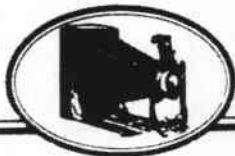
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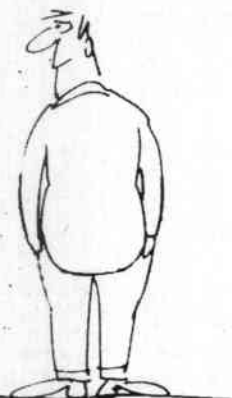


“Also, Peter, ich glaub’ das einfach nicht, daß das Dein neues Journal sein soll...”

... Hörst Du mir überhaupt zu...?”

“Mein Mann hat seit gestern Prokura!”

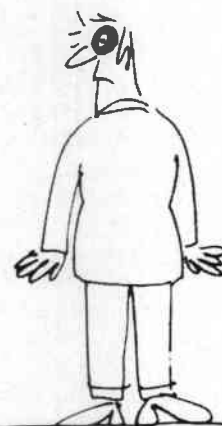
“Ach, dann grüßen Sie ihn bitte und wünschen Sie ihm gute Besserung...!”



“Welches sind die höflichsten Autofahrer?”

“Keine Ahnung”.

“Die Geisterfahrer! Sie sind immer sehr entgegenkommend!”



Festive Fun: Why is Musikwissenschaftliches Museum owner Peter Schuhknecht reading “Playboy”?—especially with a lovely blonde next to him! [Wanted . . . someone to translate German into English.—Ed.]

MUSICAL BOX ODDMENTS

By H A V Bulleid

THE main purpose of these notes about composers is to give a general idea of their period and status and to date their works heard on musical boxes. So, in dealing with Sullivan I face the paradox of ignoring the redoubtable Gilbert; but plenty of excellent biographies are readily available.

Sir Arthur Sullivan

Arthur Seymour Sullivan was born in Lambeth in 1842 but soon moved to Camberley when his father became bandmaster at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. At age 14 he won the Mendelssohn Scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music and this led to him spending three years at the Conservatory in Leipzig. Back in England in 1861, where music composition was at a low ebb, he embarked on a wide range of successful compositions including a collaboration with Tennyson, and he took up a number of teaching and conducting jobs, including the Glasgow Orpheus Choir, Promenade Concerts and the Leeds Festival. He was also the first director of the National Training School, later re-titled Royal College of Music.

He first collaborated with W S Gilbert in 1871 and the pair produced 14 operettas in the next 25 years despite periodic rows and Sullivan's spells of chronic ill-health. In 1878 their fourth, *HMS Pinafore*, had a slow start but, after Sullivan played selections from it at the Covent Garden Promenade Concerts, it took off in a big way and during 1879 there were five pirated versions running in New York. Sullivan's earnings for the year 1880 totalled £9988, of which about £6000 came from *Pinafore* and the *Pirates*.

Sullivan was lionized by society and universally liked. He was knighted in 1883. Naturally he felt a bit irked that his fame rested mainly on less serious music; his one grand opera, *Ivanhoe*, was only a semi-success. Queen Victoria had urged him to compose a grand opera but for a command performance at

Windsor Castle in 1891 she chose *The Gondoliers*. His last works were a song in collaboration with Kipling, *The Absent-minded Beggar* (Polyphon 2627, 10133, 50063) and *The Emerald Isle* which was completed in 1901 by Edward German, hence the two composers shown against the Polyphon series 10347 to 10351 and 50426 to 50430. He died in 1900 and was honoured with a state funeral in St Paul's Cathedral.

I have listed the Sullivan works most commonly heard on musical boxes in date order. Airs from *Pinafore* seem to turn up most frequently, perhaps due to the tremendous 1879 publicity.

Cox and Box	1867
Onward Christian Soldiers	1872
The Lost Chord	1877
HMS Pinafore	1878
Pirates of Penzance	1879
Patience	1881
Iolanthe	1882
The Mikado	1885
Ruddigore	1887
Yeomen of the Guard	1888
The Gondoliers	1889
Ivanhoe	1891
Haddon Hall	1892
The Grand Duke	1896

Acoustics

Over the years I have heard many comments on musical box acoustics, ranging from the obvious to the bizarre and including so many contradictions that I thought some expert advice would be helpful. Southampton University has an Institute of Sound and Vibration Research which has enjoyed high prestige for many years and their Professor of Acoustics is Professor P E Doak who, besides knowing all about this extensive subject, is a keen pianist and a good explainer. So I visited him with two typical musical boxes, both with 13in cylinders and one with drum and bells, and I report as follows. . . .

To radiate an adequate volume of sound a sounding board is necessary. The classic example is the tuning fork; you set it vibrating but it is

almost silent till the stem is pressed on to a surface which it can set into vibration so that strong pulses are sent out into the air. Other typical sounding Boards are found in the violin, (whose body receives the string vibrations via the bridge), and in the piano.

The sound one hears from a musical box depends on three factors....

1. The energy applied by the cylinder pins to the comb teeth.
2. The efficiency with which this energy is converted into vibrational energy of the sounding board and, to a lesser extent, of the bedplate.
3. The efficiency with which this vibrational energy is converted into radiated sound.

In a cylinder musical box the base of the case is the sounding board which receives its vibrational energy mainly from the bedplate legs, or from the blocks to which some later movements are screwed.

Sound waves radiated by the sounding board emerge through the clearances cut in the sides and ends of early boxes and all around the feet of later boxes. These sound waves are enhanced by reflection if the box stands on a reflecting surface (a table) as opposed to an absorbing surface (a carpet).

The transmission of the vibrations to the sounding board depends on the comb teeth being intimately clamped to the bedplate, hence the numerous securing screws. The material of the bedplate is not significant so long as it has a high modulus of elasticity such as brass or cast-iron.

Any loose component on the case or the mechanism will start to vibrate whenever a music frequency occurs of the same pitch as its own natural frequency. In doing so, despite the aggravating noise it sometimes kicks up, it only removes a negligible amount of the vibration energy of the system.

Extra components in the case such as drums and bells (when not play-

ing) and tune indicators and tune changers have practically negligible effects on the volume and the performance of the music. The same applies to the non-music comb teeth operating bells, etc, whether they are in a separate comb or integral with a music comb.

If any tooth starts to vibrate in sympathy with another tooth, then obviously it has received its vibrational energy not from a cylinder pin but from the vibrating mass of the comb, which it has thereby diminished—though probably by a negligible amount.

The size of the case considerably affects performance, because the larger the case the greater the radiating efficiency of the bass notes. I think we have all observed this as an advantage of the later, larger cases. In the early years of the cylinder musical box, larger and therefore more effective cases were a natural and fortunate result of the larger diameter cylinders in overture boxes. In exactly the same way a 'cello-sized body is necessary to extend the bass range of a violin.

It does not much matter what wood is used for the box and its sounding board base; the thickness and the firmness are a lot more important than the type of wood. I have seen Nicole and L'Épée boxes with oak bases and with performance indistinguishable from normal. A classic example of an ideal sounding board ideally placed is a vertical disc machine standing against a wall—large sounding board fixed directly to bedplate and with excellent reflection. You could easily hear it above the pub hubbub.

The effect of shutting a musical box lid whilst playing is mainly to reduce some of the treble frequencies which are being radiated by both the sounding board inside the box and, to a lesser extent, directly by the bedplate itself. Some of these treble frequencies may include shrill or unpleasant harmonics, so they are probably better curtailed. There are also those occasional high-frequency clicking sounds which nobody wants to hear. Hence (as per long tradition) it is generally better to play the box with the lid closed.

It is not easy to grasp the fact that the movement alone, without a sounding board, radiates practically no sound from the bass end and but little from the treble end. But this is very easy to prove; simply take a

movement from its case and support it on sponge rubber pads on a carpet. Then set it going and listen.

Salient features of the theory behind the above observations are as follows. . . .

The speed of sound in air at normal temperatures is about 1100 feet per second, and the corresponding speeds in cast-iron and in brass are respectively about 14,000 and 9,000ft per sec. The speeds in various woods range from 11,000 to 16,000ft per sec.

The connection between the speed of sound (V ft per sec), its frequency or pitch (f cycles per sec) and its wavelength (L feet) is given by the simple formula:

$$V = f \times L$$

So for example the note middle C, of pitch 262 cycles per second, has a wavelength in air of $L = 1100/262$

$$= 4.2 \text{ feet}$$

The efficiency with which a sounding board radiates sound is given approximately by another formula depending on the periphery of the sounding board (P feet) and the wavelength of the sound being radiated (L feet)....

Radiation efficiency	$\frac{(P/L)^2}{1 + (P/L)^2}$
----------------------	-------------------------------

This formula is used to determine the lowest frequency a sounding board will effectively radiate; a periphery to wavelength ratio down to one half is acceptable—corresponding to a radiation efficiency of $(1/2)^2/(1 + (1/2)^2) = 1/4/(5/4) = 1/5 = 20\%$ efficiency. So from the middle C example given above, if the periphery of the sounding board was exactly 2.1 feet then with a note of wavelength 4.2 feet the radiation efficiency would be just acceptable and the lowest note effectively radiated would be the middle C of pitch 262 cycles per second. Lower notes would be audible, but progressively more faintly. This again emphasizes how the bass notes lose out in volume with a small sounding board.

In the accompanying table I have worked out some typical examples. Frequencies are doubled if you go up one octave, halved if you go down an octave—so for example the pitch of

C one octave below middle C is 131 cycles per second. The table also indicates that some musical boxes have one or more notes lower than their sounding board will effectively radiate. The contribution of the extreme bass notes in smaller boxes is decidedly dubious, as you can demonstrate by shutting the lid and counting how many times a chosen bass note can be heard, and then comparing the actual number of times it was played.

Professor Doak has kindly vetted these notes, and says that they are accurate although rather oversimplified. For more general information about musical acoustics, an ideal paper-back is *Science and Music* by Sir James Jeans.

Light relief from a Polyphon

The penny-in-slot Polyphons featured by many pubs in the early 1900s had coin drawers measuring at least 9in by 5in by 3in deep. They could hold about 960 pennies—£4—though I should be very surprised if they ever got so full. However, there is no doubt that the bottom of the drawer was often well covered by coins, perhaps including halfpennies optimistically but vainly inserted.

The presence of these coins caused the distinctive sound, about halfway through the tune, of "hearing the penny drop". So I am rather pained to have seen, in certain of these coin drawers, bits of cloth and even scraps of carpet laid in to deaden this famous sound—often quoted by youngsters who have no inkling of its origin.

Luckily there are still masses of old pennies around to work these machines and to line their drawers, and it is worth remembering that the price of 1d per tune was not particularly cheap in, say, 1910 when the price of a pint was 2½d.

These machines are wonderfully robust, and one sees them with bent winding handles, undoubtedly caused by athletic imbibers who became frustrated by the slower passages of tunes like *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Someone must have tried making a penny slightly sticky so it would traverse the chute but refuse to tip out of the coin tray. If the penny hasn't dropped, the machine is still playing.

H A V Bulleid,
September 1981

SWISS STREET ORGAN FESTIVAL IN THUN

by Henry Waelti

The Swiss Street Organ Festival was held on July 17, 1981, in the beautiful city of **THUN**. Every owner of Mechanical Music Instruments in Europe had been looking forward to this great event. Enthusiasts came... from Germany, Holland, France, and from every corner of Switzerland... millionaires, businessmen, doctors, engineers, men and women of different trades, old and young! They came with great big instruments, small monkey organs, organettes, a piano melodica, street pianos... every type imaginable.

The official list stated that there were 135 instruments, and no less than 21 very large ones were in evidence. The big ones were sited in the old part of the city and the smaller ones were asked to circulate as much as possible.

The largest organ, a 112 key Carl Frei, was imported from Canada by **H P KYBURZ** and **Dr He WEISS**. It arrived just in time for the festival and was stationed at the railroad and boat station. It is claimed to be the biggest mobile concert organ in the world and it weighs 12 tons.

On Friday afternoon, July 17, the whole town began to vibrate to the sound of the open-air music, and this did not stop until Sunday evening July 19th. All the organ-grinders were invited for cocktails in the city hall and then on to a delicious buffet in an hotel. Old friends met and new friends struck up an acquaintance. There was also a Sunday morning boat trip for all the organ-grinders, on the beautiful lake of Thun.

The weather was not too good. Friday was comfortable, and at least it was not raining. Saturday and Sunday were not so lucky, but fortunately there are many arcades in the centre of the city so the music played on. The rain did nothing to drown the high spirits of the crowd.

The initiator and technical director of the Meeting, **HENRY BRECHBUHL** of Steffisburg, often says, "Organ-grinding is a disease, once you get the bug it's hard to get



Ruth and "Hank" Waelti.

rid of it". Everybody participating in Thun seemed to have this "bug", and the milling crowds were immediately infected. There was not one sad face despite the weather!

The main event, a concert by a group of smaller street organ owners took place on Saturday evening and was a tremendous success. The great curling hall in Thun sold every seat, and the show was compered by a well-known radio announcer, **ROLAND JEANNERET**. There was great applause for 15-year old **HOLGER BUSCH** from Heidelberg, Germany, who presented his home-made 22 key organ for which he had punched the music sheets and actually arranged the music. A speciality, for those interested in the technical aspect, was a small street organ in a fully transparent case of plexiglass which allowed viewers to watch the bellows, valves and gears in operation.

The Festival should have finished at 1 p.m. on Sunday but such was the

infectious enthusiasm that no one wanted to go home, organ-grinder or spectator. The cheering went on, not even dampened by the rain, and everyone seemed convinced that it was the greatest organ festival of all time!

Congratulations are due to the organisers; the Tourist Office of Thun, the Commercial Society of the Old City, **HENRY BRECHBUHL**, and all the sponsors of this great event.

It has been decided to hold another Festival in Thun, in 1983, and, who knows, it might become a permanent institution. Let us hope that for the 1983 Festival some British friends will make the long journey and honour us with their presence, helping us to shake the old city of Thun once again!

HENRY WAELTI
© H. Waelti 1981
Rainweg 21
CH-306 Utzigen,
Switzerland.

ORGAN FESTIVAL IN BERNE

by "Hank" Waelti

(Hank's letter is so pictorially warm it is just the thing to read on a cold Christmas morning. This is how it begins: "Sitting on a patio with palm trees, grapes and figs I'm trying hard to compose a report about the Organ Festival in Berne. We are on a short vacation down here in our southern canton where they speak Italian.

... " . . . Here, then, is the report, written amongst the grapes and figs and palm trees!)

Report on the Second Organ Festival in Berne, Switzerland

IN THE autumn of 1979 the old city of Berne saw its first festival of street organs. It was such a success it was decided to repeat the event in 1981. The weekend September 12/13 was chosen. One hundred and four active "musicians" with about 120 instruments answered the call and literally flooded the old part of the city of Berne. There were participants from all over Switzerland, Germany and France; from big fair organs to small organettes, and many kinds of instruments old and new, all musically demonstrated by their happy owners.

The organisers, the Tourist Office and the Trade Union of the old part of the city, were surprised at the large number of participants who registered. It was double the expected number.

Berne, founded in 1191, and Swiss capital since 1848, was almost completely destroyed by fire in 1405. The layout was almost unchanged in the reconstruction, a broad main street in the centre, leading to the famous clock tower and down to the bridge, leading to the bear pit. This is the backbone of the old town. On either side are smaller streets running parallel, going slightly downhill, with the sidewalks covered by arcades.



Hauptgasse. Thun.

On rainy days window shoppers can spend hours following these arcades, looking over the whole city without getting wet.

Being independent of the weather in this way is, of course, ideal for street musicians, and so are the acoustics which are helped a great deal by the walls of the arcades.

Within this most adequate and fitting scenery the instruments were distributed. Traffic was bypassed and a very large crowd moved up and down the old part of the city; looking, listening, and even cheering.

That was on Saturday afternoon, and the music went on until late at night, at which hour several restaurants were allowing the organs to serenade the diners.

On Sunday morning there was a "matinée concert" at the well-known *Kornhauskeller*, a big old cellar restaurant. It was absolutely unique and a *first* for this place. Many of the older organs were presented to the large audience, and



Schloss Thun.
Hotel Metzgerm.

MRS BLOMEIER of Berlin lead her donkey down the broad but steep stairs to the old cellar. The cheering diners were eating "brunch" and drinking wine and beer.

On Sunday afternoon the city vibrated again with nostalgic tunes, and although the festivities were meant to last only until 5 o'clock, there were organs heard well after that time.

Organ festivals of this kind seem to be getting more and more popular in Switzerland. People may be getting fed up with electronic sounds and want a change; older folk also remember the fair organs of their childhood.

For organisers it is beginning to be a problem to limit participation on such events. This may well lead to circumstances where only older instruments will be permitted. This was discussed at Berne, but no one wants to impose any restrictions unless it is to avoid possible future chaos.

It is almost certain that the Third Festival will be held in Berne in 1983. In the home country of the musical box there is still a great interest and love for old mechanical music instruments.

©“HANK” WAELTI, 1981



Mrs Blomeier-style — in Berne.



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For accommodation other than the above:

Arundel Tourist Board,
High Street, Arundel, West Sussex
Tel: (STD) 0903 - 882419

*Booking Fee for Saturday Dinner
(not required by members staying at Norfolk Arms Hotel)
£6.50 to John Mansfield (address above)*

For latest information send SAE to John Mansfield nearer the date of the meeting. However, a comprehensive résumé of the timetable is given in this issue of the Journal.

PLEASE BOOK EARLY

MEMORABILIA

Sent in by founder-member

Alan Ridsdell



THERE'S nothing like a Rolls-Royce for giving "style" . . . and this little piece of *Music Box* nostalgia can begin in style because Alan Ridsdell has had *five* Rolls-Royces. He confesses that he did not actually own them, but the mere fact that he had the use of them (and he wasn't a chauffeur) gives him a unique line in "style".

As a founder-member, of course, his memory is long and his memorabilia is comprehensive. Would not our Meetings Secretary of today like to announce a line-up of speakers as the Society witnessed on March 30, 1963! The President then was Mr J E T Clark, and the

meeting was at The Clifton-Ford Hotel, Welbeck Street, London W1. The notice reads: "The following members have kindly consented to give demonstrations throughout the afternoon.

Mr A Coombs (London)

The fitting and re-tuning of broken teeth in a comb.

Mr F Greenacre (Norfolk)

Demonstration of 15½ Regina and 12" Monopol Disc Machines.

Mr H A J Lawrence

(Warwickshire)

Demonstration of small bird boxes and Nicole Boxes.

Mr Arthur Ord-Hume

(Isle of Wight)

Cleaning and Polishing Cylinders.

Mr G Planus (London)

Slotting teeth for new points.

Mr A Ridsdell (York)

Examples of Boxes from the Lecture and Hints on Cleaning Musical Boxes.

Mr C de Vere Green (London)

Trimming damper wire for length and squareness.

Tea . . . and . . . Au Revoir.

(Our March meeting for 1982 does not have the line-up of speakers, but, look at the venue: ARUNDEL CASTLE . . . how's that for style! Send your Registration Fee, £6, to John Mansfield right away, at, Longbury House, Rock Road, Washington, Nr Pulborough, Sussex. A SAE is always welcome,

and it cuts down the overheads).

Frank Holland is one of the foremost enthusiasts to make use of a church to house his museum. Alan Ridsdell did the same and filled a little chapel with organs and pianolas. However, *tempus fugit*, and Alan is today a much restricted man owing to that painful curse arthritis. The damp in the large Yorkshire building where he lives, and the floodings around the cottage he sometimes uses have not helped his health. We can but wish him all the best in this respect and trust that his activities do not become too limited. In his more energetic days he repaired the turret clock at Gilling Castle (see picture).



My little chapel where I keep my pianolas and organs.



Turret clock at Gilling Castle which I have been repairing.

Alan has also included in his nostalgic bag of MBSGB souvenirs a letter from Arthur W J G Ord-Hume:

“Dear Member: Feb 1963. Here is the first issue of our Journal, *THE MUSIC BOX*. I do hope that it meets with your approval. . . . I want to receive as much material as possible from each and every one of you. . . . This is *your* Journal! In many respects, I hope that you are *not* satisfied with it because this might persuade you to do something about it! . . . May I have the pleasure of hearing from you soon?

Yours sincerely,
A O-H. Editor.”

Times haven't changed, have they? Today's Editor could say, with feeling, exactly the same thing as Arthur almost 20 years ago.

Members like to know what work you are doing. We are pleased to publish your findings.

I notice that subscriptions in 1963 were £2 per annum . . . our present fees are, therefore, quite reasonable.

Finally, in Alan's crop of golden material I found a Christmas card . . . from America.

“Dear Alan,
I think many times of the wonderful evening and want to thank you for bringing those boxes down for all of us to hear. They show up quite well in the film we took of the meeting and hope that you will get a chance to view this film when it is completed. Do you have any of the Overture Boxes available for sale? I would like very much to obtain one of these fine types. With best wishes for the holiday season,

I remain, sincerely,
Hughes M Ryder.
208 Orange Avenue, NJ, USA.

The printed message on the Christmas card was:
GREETINGS AND GOOD WISHES AT CHRISTMAS.



Dressed up for a museum stunt, 1964 . . . or you could say it was me penning a letter to you!

(Founder-member No 25 preparing to write to the Editor.)

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PEERLESS COIN-OPERATED PIANOS

by Ron and Mary Jo Bopp

THE beginnings of the American coin-operated piano industry actually had its roots with the European manufacturers who were producing automatic pianos for several decades prior to 1900. The influence of these craftsmen on the American machines, and especially the Peerless coin-operated pianos cannot be overemphasized.

Those pianos produced by the Peerless Piano Player Company represent an interesting portion of the history of American coin-operated piano business as well as demonstrating the European influence present in the early days of such production. Roth and Englehardt, the company's originators, began production of pianos and push-up piano players in 1890. Both men had a strong background in this particular trade... Roth having worked with Alfred Dolge (noted piano historian) and Englehardt who was active in the Steinway and Sons Company.

In 1898 the first American coin-operated piano was produced by the Peerless Piano Player Company which was located at St. Johnsville, New York. This piano was the Peerless Style D, an endless roll machine with the roll mechanism behind the piano. This unique distinction lasted only a year, however, when the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company marketed a coin-operated piano, the Tonophone, in 1899.

The Peerless Piano Player Company and the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company were neck to neck in production of coin-operated pianos during the first decade of the 20th century leaving other competitors, including the J P Seeburg Co. and the Operators Piano Co., well behind. The ability of Roth and Englehardt to capitalize on being first as well as their ingenuity in production of attractive and rugged instruments allowed them the luxury of "leading the field".

The company flourished with the production of at least twelve different styles of coin-operated pianos. In addition to providing the market with pianos the Peerless Player Company also supplied the music rolls needed for these instruments, much as did the Wurlitzer and other companies existing at that time... it was not until later, when the piano industry standardized the A and G or 4X rolls, that manufacturers of coin-operated pianos concentrated solely on piano production only.

It was to the Peerless Company's credit initially for supplying different rolls for different machines. Later this became detrimental as the numerous machines required increased book-keeping and roll punching facilities and this became one of the many straws to "break the back" of the Peerless Piano Player Co.

In 1908 the firm was changed from Roth and Englehardt to F Englehardt and Sons (Alfred Dolge Englehardt and his brother, Walter Englehardt). The company prospered until 1913 - 1915 when production of Peerless instruments ceased. Finances, competition, prodromal effects of prohibition and the inability to keep up with the industry (1915 saw the Seeburg S roll accepted as the industry standard... the A roll which was a 65 note roll which saw common usage in instruments requiring only a piano and one or two instruments) became the downfall of the Peerless Piano Player Co.

During the summer of 1979 Harvey Roehl (Vestal, N Y) conducted a series of interviews with some of the elderly citizens in St Johnsville to gain insight into the adventures and plights of this interesting company. Although each of these former employees of Roth and Englehardt had his own version why the company went out of

business, none would agree that gambling was the reason for its downfall (a theory raised by some). All believed the company went bankrupt but no formal bankruptcy papers have ever been filed.

Apparently trouble began in the teens when the Englehardts were denied a business loan from Mr Rainey, a local banker. Concurrent with the downfall also was the merging of the Peerless Player Piano Company with the Seybold Piano Company, a company known primarily for making pianos for other manufacturers of coin-operated pianos. Reorganization followed and several satellite companies produced Peerless instruments, primarily the National Electric Piano Co and the Englehardt Piano Co. The National Music Roll Company was formed by Fred Kornburst, an Englehardt employee who previously was in charge of the action factory. His leadership lasted until 1927 when many such related businesses folded.

Rolls

In evaluating and discussing the instruments produced by the Peerless Piano Player Company a working knowledge of the rolls is a necessity. In Fig. 2 we find a list of the styles of rolls, series numbers and 1922 prices (extracted from an April-May, 1922 Bulletin of "Peerless Rolls for Peerless Automatic Piano and Orchestration and for All Styles of Electric (65 Note) Rewind Pianos"). Often the same roll would be produced and made for all existing machines. An example of this is roll #337... "Favourite Dance Selections". In April, 1922 the roll was available for Style RR... #10337; Style O... #20337; Elite... #30337; Trio... #40337; and for all 65 note pianos... #50337.

PEERLESS ROLLS

Type Roll	Serial #	1922 Price
44 Note *	6,000	\$2.75
D, DX, DM *	7,000	\$2.75
RR, Cabaret	10,000	\$4.50
O, DeLuxe	20,000	\$7.25
Elite (88 Note)	30,000	\$7.00
Trio	40,000	\$4.50
65 Note	50,000	\$3.35

* Endless Rolls.

Fig. 2

The Series 6,000 and 7,000 were endless rolls. These allowed for continuous play and dispensed with the silence during roll rewind. Such rolls commonly were of 5 tune length although I have one such roll that has 7 tunes. 44 note rolls commonly were graced with music characteristic of the turn of the century... rags and blues. Such is not the case in most later cut rolls and it is this fact that makes them desirable from a collector's point of view.

The 44 note series (6,000) and the Trio series (40,000) have much in common. Although the Trio instrumentation contains pipes where as the Peerless 44 is a piano only the Trio roll is just an expanded version of the 44 note roll containing all of its 48 perforations in the middle of a 57 perforated roll.

Likewise the Peerless Elite roll (30,000) and the O or Deluxe roll (20,000) were somewhat similar. Both rolls are large by American standards... 14½" and both contain 97 perforations. The Elite roll has a perforation for every note on the piano where the O or Deluxe roll couples bass and treble notes in order to allow for register changes and percussion effects.

Peerless 44

The Peerless 44 was produced soon after the Peerless Piano Player Company's inception and was typical of early American coin-operated pianos. These 44 note pianos were certainly interesting as they utilized only one half of the piano scale and therefore were somewhat limited in their music capability. Peerless was not alone, however, in producing these 44 note pianos as Wurlitzer and several others made them, even as late as 1920.

The typical Peerless 44 (Fig. 3) is an instrument with gingerbread woodwork, bevelled glass and gentle curves. Similarity in case style to the popular Encore Banjo (a self-playing banjo) is evident as side profiles of both the Peerless 44 and the Encore Banjo are similar as are the brass handles mounted on the side of the case.



Fig. 3

This instrument is basically a 44 note piano with no mandolin or other accompaniment. The endless roll is held in a roll bin located in the right lower portion of the case. The roll can conveniently be removed; even while the piano is playing, and this is possible because the tracker bar is located above the roll bin frame and actually presses down on the moving roll while the bin is in place. Expression for this early coin-operated piano is provided by a hammer rail lift, activated by two lock and cancel pneumatics which are latched together.

A cross section of the valve/pouch assembly (Fig. 4) reveals a small envelope pouch... character of European coin-operated pianos but relatively unknown to later American machines.

The Peerless 44 tracker bar scale is laid out over 48 perforations... 44 for playing notes and for shutoff, sustaining pedal and hammer rail up and down.

Peerless 44

Valve Pneumatic System

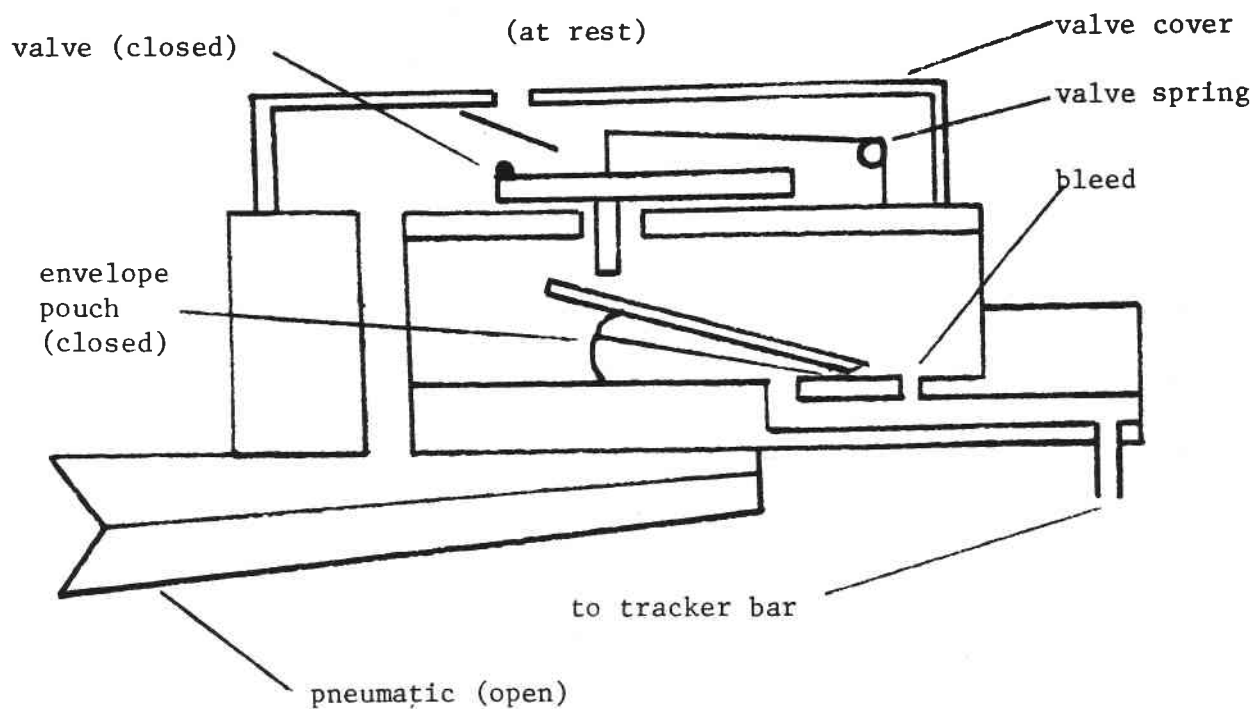


Fig. 4

Peerless Trio

Little is known about the Peerless Trio... only one example is thought to exist. The Peerless Trio is a keyboardless coin-operated piano in an upright rectangular case. Double doors open at the top of the case and contain two panels of colorful art glass. Two ranks of pipes are arranged symmetrically at the center of the case. As mentioned before, the Trio roll contains the Peerless 44 note scale with additional perforations for pipe control, rewind and reply (this roll is not an endless roll).

Peerless Elite

The Peerless Elite, an 88 note coin-operated piano, represents an interesting part of the history of American keyboard "nickeldeons" available after the turn of the century. This Peerless has an artistic case with nicely proportioned art glass and matching hanging lamps.

The Peerless Elite was available in either an oak or walnut case. The interior of the piano was as nice as the outside in that there was much solid maple construction. The instrument uses a two tier stack designed for this particular model and not a "standard brand" available for universal use.

The slightly cumbersome roll frame is located above the keyboard making roll changing somewhat easy. Although changing the large (14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " roll is possible through the center art glass paneled door it is an exercise in dexterity and is much easier if the entire front of the piano is removed for such tasks. The roll plays from bottom to top (similar to other Peerless pianos and orchestrions as well as the most European coin-operated pianos). Another interesting, and often handy, feature is the two buttons in front of the roll which control forward and reverse... either pushed will change directions immediately so even if the machine is rewinding a push of the button will bring it to the playing mode instantly... a nice feature to pick out a favorite tune.

The Peerless Elite rolls (30,000 series) provide an interesting spectrum of music made available for these pianos. The rolls are 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, seven perforations to the inch and, as mentioned before, play from bottom to top. Ninety-seven perforations provide all 88 playing notes as well as soft on and off, sustaining pedal, shutoff, play and rewind.

As with most coin-operated

pianos it is the roll, and the arrangements of the selections on that roll, that determine how well-received that particular piano is. In the case of the Peerless Elite, the rolls do an excellent job in utilizing the 88 note capability of the piano. The arrangements of most of the music is similar to that of the larger Peerless orchestrions, the only difference being that the Elite roll has a perforation for each note whereas the Peerless O roll (not to be confused with the more common Coinola O roll) couples several notes on the orchestration in order to make room on the roll for pipes and percussion. The addition of the extra notes on the Elite roll allows for the use of glissandos in music arranged for this piano.

Several Peerless Elite models exist today and most are not found with the Elite tracker bar and roll frame but rather some version of the common 65 note A roll. Apparently this was common practice among route operators and tavern owners who found it difficult to replace the uncommon Elite rolls. Even the later re-organized National Electric Player Piano Company was known to convert earlier Elite pianos to use the A roll.



Fig. 5

O Roll Peerless Orchestrions

The largest of the Peerless Player Piano Company's instruments were those orchestrions that utilized the Peerless Style O roll. This roll, like the Elite, is 14½" wide with seven perforations to the inch. The roll allowed for 66 playing notes (most of these orchestrions coupled the top and bottom octaves to get an 88 note effect), pipes (one to three ranks) and traps (bass and snare drums, cymbal, triangle and castanets).

Production of these orchestrions began at the end of the first decade of this century. Apparently these were quite popular with their ornate cases, instrumentation and excellent roll arrangements, however, less than two dozen such pianos exist today.

The Peerless Wisteria model was a beautiful tall case orchestration with art glass which was hallmarked with a center panel representing a goddess-like figure (Fig. 5). The Wisteria model included one rank of pipes, castanets and triangle. These were quite popular and a few examples exist today. Like the Peerless Elite, the roll frame is above the keyboard and behind the center art glass panel.

The Peerless Arcadian orchestration, in addition to the pipes, castanets and triangle there is also included a snare and bass drum (Fig. 6). Like the Wisteria model this orchestration was made in either oak

Housed in a large oak case with extravagant torches on the front this orchestration contains 72 pipes allowing for violin, flute and cello effect as well as a full complement of traps.

The ranks of pipes again are arranged symmetrically in the center of the case. The roll frame, as with the Wisteria and Arcadian models, is similar to that found in the Elite, large and bulky but capable of re-winding and replaying your favourite selection. The O roll (20,000 series) was definitely designed for the larger Peerless orchestrions... utilizing all available pipework, especially that found in the Peerless Deluxe. Again, like the Elite rolls, the O rolls contained interesting arrangements, and with the typical European use, and restraint, of traps give a life-like rendition to the selection played.

Peerless Music

No coin-operated automatic piano is any better than any other unless it is programmed to do so. Granted, some pianos may have more pipes, more or different traps, better valve repetition, etc. but still

or walnut case with stunning art glass.

The top of the line of the Peerless Player Piano Company was the style O, or Deluxe model (Fig. 7).



Fig. 6

all are dependent on the music roll that is programmed for them. This is no more true than with the music provided for the Peerless instruments. The company provided for standard "hits of the day" for common saloon/ice cream parlour usage but also produced much more exciting music. Some rolls were designed for early silent movie use and one such role is a 30 minute roll "of 40 Choruses" of music suitable for the motion pictures... "Moving Picture Medley #2". In addition there were classical music rolls arranged. One such roll, #30349 (in this case, for the Elite model), entitled "Special Waltz Roll" contained three long waltz selections. Another classical roll, #30017, is a "Faust Ballet Concert Roll" which has four long play selections.

Interesting also is the quality of music from these rolls. Some of the arrangements are superbly done and the influence of European arrangers is quite evident. Others, however, indicate the desire of the arranger to play every note with each piece and octave coupling is more often than

not. In addition, the use of the mandolin is quite selective. Mandolin perforations are not evident on classical rolls or motion picture rolls. Even on popular hit selections the mandolin is used only sparingly, not like every third stanza in the common A rolls.

Unfortunately the Peerless Player Company did not feel that expression was a necessity and this fact limits the arrangements of some of the rolls. Had this been included to the extent of at least an expression piano such as that provided by the Recordo or Seeburg X/Appolo Red X systems then the music produced would have been comparable to that produced by the superb Hupfield or Weber instruments.

Summary

The Peerless coin-operated pianos elaborated upon in this article certainly reflect the quality capable of the Peerless Player Piano Company. The beauty and design of the external cases and the music produced reflect more thought and planning than later pianos produced by American coin-operated piano companies. We have seen the transi-

tion from a time when only European machines were produced to the early 1900's when American piano manufacturers entered the coin-operated piano business. Certainly the influence of the European manufacturers is apparent, and in effect, help begin the American coin-operated piano trade.

Several other styles of coin-operated pianos exist today but were produced by the later founded National Player Piano Company and the Engelhardt Piano Company and therefore were not included in this discussion.

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PEERLESS ROLLS

Type Roll	Serial #	1922 Price
44 Note *	6,000	\$2.75
D, DX, DM *	7,000	\$2.75
RR, Cabaret	10,000	\$4.50
O, DeLuxe	20,000	\$7.25
Elite (88 Note)	30,000	\$7.00
Trio	40,000	\$4.50
65 Note	50,000	\$3.35

* Endless Rolls.



Fig. 7



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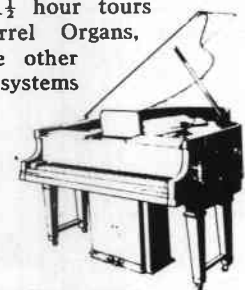
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Robin Timms
(Robin continues his series of articles)

CHAPTER 4

Producing a Graph

THE music arranger has finished his task. What now?

Even if your manuscript is written with meticulous neatness, it is not practicable for a disc to be punched direct from this: the music should be turned into the form of a graph. The format described here is based on the suggestions of Patch Pearce who has, in fact, made most of my Polyphon arrangements.

Use $\frac{1}{4}$ in graph paper, or the metric equivalent. Down the left-hand side write the notes of the musical comb, starting at the bass; 1 A flat, 2 D flat, 3 D flat, 4 E flat, etc. Leave half a dozen squares at the top before you start with the first note.

Every vertical line stands for one beat of music. If, for example, there are four beats in a bar, rule a line in ink over every fourth line to make it stand out. Thus the space between every inked-over line represents a bar of music. You can number the beats at the head of the column *on* the lines (not between them). In bold figures number the bars at the top of the columns. It is also necessary to indicate into what fractions each beat is required to be divided—eg, the figure 6 above a column will indicate that that beat is to be divided into sixths. A fraction, eg, $\frac{7}{8}$, will mean that a note appears $\frac{7}{8}$ of the way between one beat and another, but that the other eighths are not required.

Now you can start covering the graph with dots. A dot on a line indicates that a note comes on the beat. Midway between two lines means a note on a half beat. A quarter beat is shown by dividing a square in half with a vertical line and placing a dot in the left segment, and for three-quarters in the right segment. Other fractions should be written in the square, a dot to the left of the fraction for the first half of the beat and to the right for the second half. Where there is more than one tooth tuned to a particular note, use the teeth in question in rotation.



“Hush, hush, . . .
Christopher Robin is choosing his airs. . . .”

At the end of each horizontal line, repeat the note number, and count how many times that tooth has been used. Keep a running total down the right-hand side of the graph.

CHAPTER 5

Notes on some new arrangements

As a number of members who possess an 11in Polyphon or Regina have asked for copies of my arrangements and have been kind enough to say that they like them, I thought it might be of interest to conclude this series of articles with a few notes on the arrangements (nothing too technical this time) and how they came to be made.

9001 Blow the Wind Southerly

A beautiful folksong, as all will agree, and the first arrangement I attempted. I wrote a short article about it at the time, and this can be found on page 29 of Vol 7.

9007 The Parade of the Tin Soldiers

Known to many of you as the signature tune of *Toytown*. Why did they discontinue *Children's Hour*? Originally written as a piano piece, I believe, it was popular with the fox-trot bands of the 20s. I thought it would sound attractive on the Polyphon, and a colleague from Doncaster lent me the piano score.

9010 **The Mikado: Tit-Willow**

While spending a Sunday afternoon with friends, I was entertained with a recording of *The Mikado*. G&S enthusiasts often complain of the lack of Sullivan on disc, and *Tit-Willow* seemed just the right sort of tune to arrange.

9011 **Oliver: Pick a Pocket or Two**

If Polyphon had continued in business to the present day no doubt this is the sort of music that would be arranged; popular tunes from the shows. In the 1890s it was *The Geisha* and *San Toy*, now it would be *Oliver* and . . . , well you probably know better than I what are the popular shows of the moment. Anyway, I thought it would be fun to hear the Polyphon play something up to date, and this jaunty and rather saucy number in the minor key rather took my fancy.

9012 **A-Roving**

This lively and attractive folksong gives the Polyphon an opportunity to show off with a great variety of ornamentation.

9013 **Old Turf Fire**

A lovely Irish folksong in the Dorian Mode presents a unique challenge. Can the Polyphon play harmonies, etc, which conform strictly to the mode? At first I thought it unlikely, the tuning scale was certainly not devised to cope with modal music, but I found it could be done with a bit of ingenuity by making the second degree of the usual scale the keynote. To underline the modal character of the music the arrangement ends with a rising Dorian scale.

9014 **She's Like the Swallow**

Another modal folksong, plaintively beautiful. This time I have used the relative minor of the key in which the comb is tuned, but with flattened sevenths. Both minor and Dorian sixths are used.

9015 **The Stripper**

I heard this music at the *London Dolphinarium*, during a performance of *Robinson Crusoe on Dolphin Island*. It was some considerable time later that I found out what it was called, and sometime after that I plucked-up courage to go

into Art Nash's music shop and ask if they had a copy. They did: there must be a greater demand for that sort of thing than I realised. The tune affords the opportunity of seeing how the Polyphon will cope with syncopation and chromatic melody. If, like me, you keep the Polyphon in the bedroom, it's a good one to play last thing at night.

9016 **The Trout**

We have Geoff Mayson to thank for this one. He asked me to make four arrangements of this Schubert song for a cylinder box. Having done this I thought I might as well make a Polyphon arrangement. What could be better than using Schubert's own rippling accompaniment? It's as close to the musical box style as anything you are likely to find.

9017 **None But the Lonely Heart**

Tchaikovsky's first disc. While spending Sunday afternoon with friends I noticed on the piano a collection of songs for alto voice. This one struck me as being particularly beautiful and I there and then made a précis of the appropriate length and scribbled out the melody on a scrap of paper. The harmony is very restless and scarcely touches the tonic chord till the very end.

9018 **The Water of Tyne**

A beautiful English folksong. Too short to be played once only, too long to be played twice. I have therefore composed an introduction of eight bars based on the opening of the tune, which seems to be in character.

9019 **The Streams of Lovely Nancy**

This extremely beautiful and intriguing English folksong was heard by a folksong collector in Dorset in 1905. Versions were also recorded in Sussex and the West Country. It appears in *The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*, but seems to have been overlooked by most singers and other musicians. Indeed the collection as a whole is under-rated—possibly some are put off because no accompaniment is given to the songs. The tune fits nicely on a disc with a two bar introduction.

9020 **Ding Dong! Merrily on High**

An obvious candidate for arrangement, and one I have written about at length in chapter 3.

9021 **Rinaldo: Let Me Lament**

I was introduced to this Handel aria by Patrick McCrossan who asked me to arrange it for 19⁵/₈ Polyphon. I did so and later at the request of Brian Clegg added a bell part to make it suitable for a 22¹/₂in machine. Having the music thoroughly in my blood by then I thought I would treat myself to an arrangement for my own 11in machine.

9022 **The Wizard of Oz: Somewhere over the Rainbow**

While taking me for a walk one winter's afternoon near Lesnes Abbey, young Polyphon enthusiast Gareth Stubberfield suggested that we should make this our next arrangement. We were fond of playing it together on the piano. After our walk we started work straight away, then worked independently on it until our next meeting when we compared notes and worked out a final version.

9023 **Moonlight**

I heard this on a 1921 recording sent to me by Brian Rust of one of the Yerkes foxtrot bands, *The Happy Six*. The Polyphon arrangers had their last fling with ragtime, and had they continued into the '20s would have had fun with the foxtrot. You might think that the musical box is not the right medium for a jaunty and syncopated foxtrot, but try it; you might like it! This one begins typically in the minor, but soon moves into the major for the main part of the tune.

If ever you want any historical information ferreting out, Peter Cornford could be your man. He has just come up with original copies of some of the long-forgotten songs which turn up on musical boxes. In a more recent collection of early foxtrots which must date from 1920, he has found the score of *Moonlight*. The words are scarcely worth quoting, but I can now tell you that the composer is one Con Conrad. The music is a very characteristic example of the earliest, and in some ways most appealing, foxtrots.

9024 Bard of Eve

Back to folksong; a seemingly inexhaustible source of beautiful melody which makes all but the finest "composed" tunes seem trivial by comparison. This one is Welsh, and like *She's like the Swallow*, it is minor with modal implications. So we never sharpen the sevenths.

9025 Loved with Everlasting Love

I thought it would be fun to arrange for Polyphon a tune of my own composition. The tune is called *Tywardreath*, but don't ask why, or how to pronounce it! It is a setting of the words of a hymn. I use the key of the dominant of the tuning scale as it suits the compass of the melody better. The music sounds best played fairly slowly. Some Polyphons have a speed regulator, and most play slower when the spring is almost run down.

Christopher Robin is fond of this and sings it very beautifully.

9026 Gestillte Sehnsucht

There is, of course, nothing unusual in finding a Polyphon title in German, but if anyone can come up with an acceptable English translation, I should be interested.

Someone gave me an old recording of Kathleen Ferrier singing Brahms, and this song, scored for alto voice, viola and piano, was included. It is an elusive and haunting melody, and like the Tchaikovsky song poses considerable problems for the arranger. We use the key of the dominant again so as to have a sharpened supertonic available. A slow tempo is preferable.

**9027 South Pacific:
Some Enchanted Evening**

A florid performance on two pianos by Tom Steer and Brian Fitzgerald gave me the idea of arranging this.

9028 In the Garden

Seated one day at the piano, I was asked by some American friends of Brian Clegg to play this tune. The style in which it came out prompted this arrangement for Polyphon.

9029 San Toy: A B C

Do not under-rate discs of *San Toy*, *Florodora*, *A Runaway Girl*, etc. The tunes were attractive, well suited to Polyphon, and beautifully arranged. Michael Miles gave me the piano score of *San Toy*, and while playing it through I found this pretty gavotte which the original Polyphon arrangers apparently missed.

9030 The Arcadians: Arcady is Ever Young

I was pressed to buy a ticket for a performance of *The Arcadians* in which several members of one of my choirs were taking part. The performance was at Woolwich, and not liking late nights anyway, I did not relish the thought of searching for a 75 bus at about 11.30, and then the long, tedious journey home. Mind you, in those days they were still running the faithful old RT-type buses on that route, and you could at least have a chat with the conductor, and there were some great characters among the conductors on the 75 at that time. The route was very unreliable though, and one could be stranded for hours. . . .

However, I went to the performance and enjoyed it much more than I had anticipated, although it went on for hours and ended late. It made a welcome change from Gilbert and Sullivan, and contains some of Lionel Monckton's finest tunes. *The Arcadians* appeared in 1909 and is a charming story about a land of happiness and innocence which time has forgotten. By 1909 Polyphon were producing only a very few new arrangements, and most of these were of German titles.

Arcady is Ever Young is a beautiful tune, "like what they don't write today!"

9031 The Arcadians: The Pipes of Pan

One of the most popular tunes in the show. This busy disc contains 1012 projections.

9032 The Arcadians: The Girl with a Brogue

The brogue is Irish, and the tune is in a lilting three-four time.

9033 The Arcadians: Somewhere

The striking chromatic opening to the chorus is difficult but not impossible on the Polyphon.

9034 The Arcadians: Charming Weather

One of Christopher Robin's favourite duets.

9038 The Arcadians: All Down Piccadilly

One of the liveliest numbers in the score. This arrangement has a record 1039 projections.

9039 The Arcadians: Come Back to Arcady

A beautiful tune in waltz time which no composer would need to be ashamed of having written.

9040 Samoan Samba

This jaunty, syncopated number was composed by Peter Cornford at the age of 14. It was subsequently performed with great success by the local band. I heard it played at a school concert and thought it would be interesting to try it on the Polyphon. The composer graciously permitted me to mess around with his composition to produce this arrangement. What I hadn't bargained for was that he would return the compliment! At a subsequent concert I was astonished to see my own name on the programme: Peter had arranged and extended a composition of mine, *Alexis Gavotte*, which was duly performed by two of the boys. Fame at last!

9041 The Toreador: Keep off the Grass

Michael Miles gave me the score of several Monckton operettas including *The Toreador* and *A Country Girl*. Here's a sprightly number which must sound well on the Polyphon.

**9042 A Country Girl:
Yo, Ho, Little Girls**

The original Polyphon arrangers did arrange this for the large Polyphons (though I do not know anyone who has a copy), but there is no evidence to date that I know of that it was arranged for smaller machines. If ever it does turn up, it would be interesting to compare the "authentic" Polyphon arrangement with this.

**9043 The Bells of Corneville:
Legend of the Bells**

This obviously suitable piece was arranged for the large Polyphons, but not to my knowledge for the smaller ones.

**9044 The Quaker Girl: A Quaker
Girl**

It was my friend Ronald Bourne who introduced me to the delights of Monckton's *A Quaker Girl*. He is an

authority on English operetta of the late Victorian and Edwardian era, and has prepared a book in proof form on the subject. I have pleasant memories of him singing this and the next item while I played the piano at his home in Honor Oak.

**9045 The Quaker Girl:
Come to the Ball**

The most popular tune in waltz time from the show. The opening section of the tune could have been written by Lehar. Personally I prefer Monckton when he does not sound like Lehar, and stand by the opinion that the lesser-known *Come Back to Arcady* is one of the most inspired waltz themes in English operetta of the period.

**9046 Country Girl:
My Own Little Girl**

A tender and lyrical melody of considerable charm and subtlety.

**9047 A Country Girl:
The Pink Hungarian Band**

Here is Monckton in his martial A major mood. Compare this for example with *Soldiers in the Park* from *A Runaway Girl* or *The Lady's Maid* from *San Toy*, the latter wrongly attributed by Polyphon to Sidney Jones.

**9048 The Arcadians:
Half Past Two**

Unlike the other *Arcadians* excerpts, this is by Howard Talbot, and it brings us back to the point at which this series of articles began.

As a matter of fact, Christopher Robin did assist with the typing; so if you find any spelling mistakes, don't blame the printers! He probably asked Pooh any words he wasn't sure of!

(End of Chapter 5)

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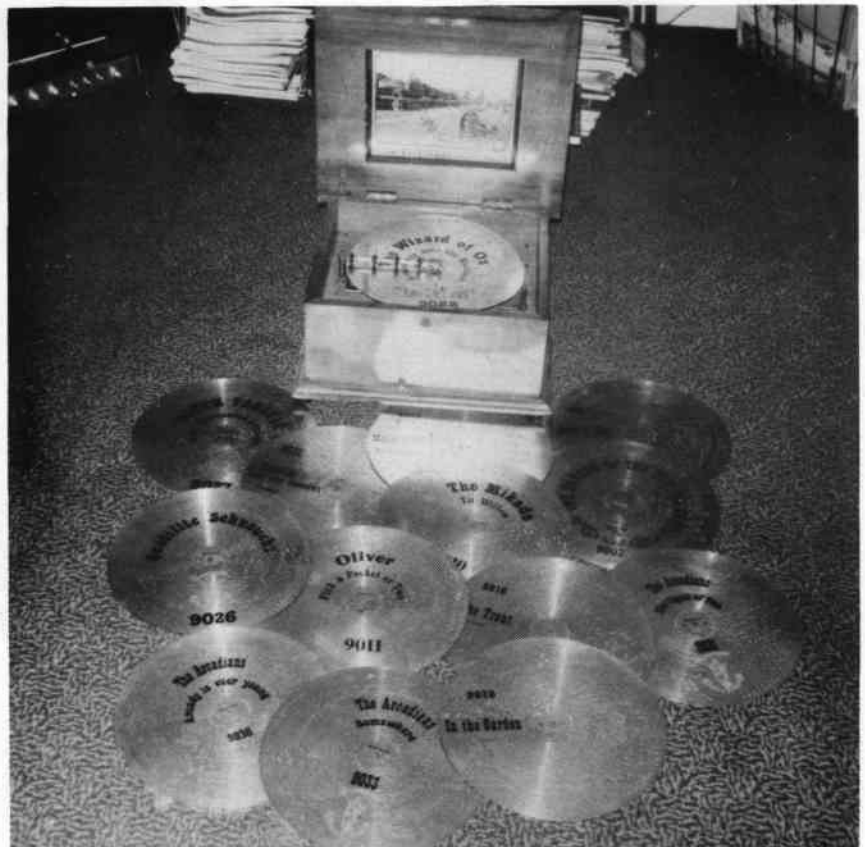
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HARMONIOUS MEANDERINGS

by Roger Booty

THE instruments of our hobby of mechanical music are not often openly on show to the public's gaze other than in the various collections of fair organs around the country, museums, and the occasional singular collection of mechanical music for its own sake. Although I have not visited it I would imagine the "World of Mechanical Music" at Chessington Zoo would fill the bill of the latter as it is apparently made up from the instruments of Douglas Berryman's former museum at Goldsithney in Cornwall. From a 52-key Ruth fair organ to a musical chamber pot, it seems they can cater for most tastes, including those who admire Aeolian pipe organs.

But what about the places where there is but the singular instrument as can sometimes be found in the many houses open to the public? Castle Drogo at Drewsteignton in Devon is a house completed only in 1930 but much was brought there by the family from their previous house so its furnishings cover a wide period. Here, behind a screen in the library, there is a 58-note Aeolian Grand Organ. The case is in fine condition but I was not allowed to play a roll so its playing condition I do not know. Also look out for, on a landing outside the drawing room, a large and elaborate clock which plays—but what?—on the hour. Made by Smith of Clerkenwell for the Paris Exhibition of 1900, it is, if nothing else, interesting.

While in Devon, mention must be made of A la Ronde at Exmouth. This unique 16-sided house, built c 1795 for two ladies, and still lived in by their descendants who give guided tours, contains a fine weight-driven barrel piano. Unfortunately now out of order, although still in good condition, the instrument originally had three barrels, but the two containing dances were apparently thrown out by the unappreciative puritan Victorian family members who left only the hymn barrel. I would imagine the drum and triangle in the instrument have little use from this barrel. A photo-



The amazing automata clock commissioned by Basildon Development Corporation in Essex, from Roland Emmett, "opened" on 7 August, 1981, in the Eastgate shopping mall. Representing a celestial Owl and the Pussycat with animal musicians, the clock is surrounded by a pool with fountains and when in action, every quarter of an hour, is accompanied by "rythmic harpsichord music". I think it compares favourably with the Japanese piece noted by Arthur Ord-Hume in *The Music Box*, Vol 9, page 320. Photograph courtesy of the Basildon Evening Echo.

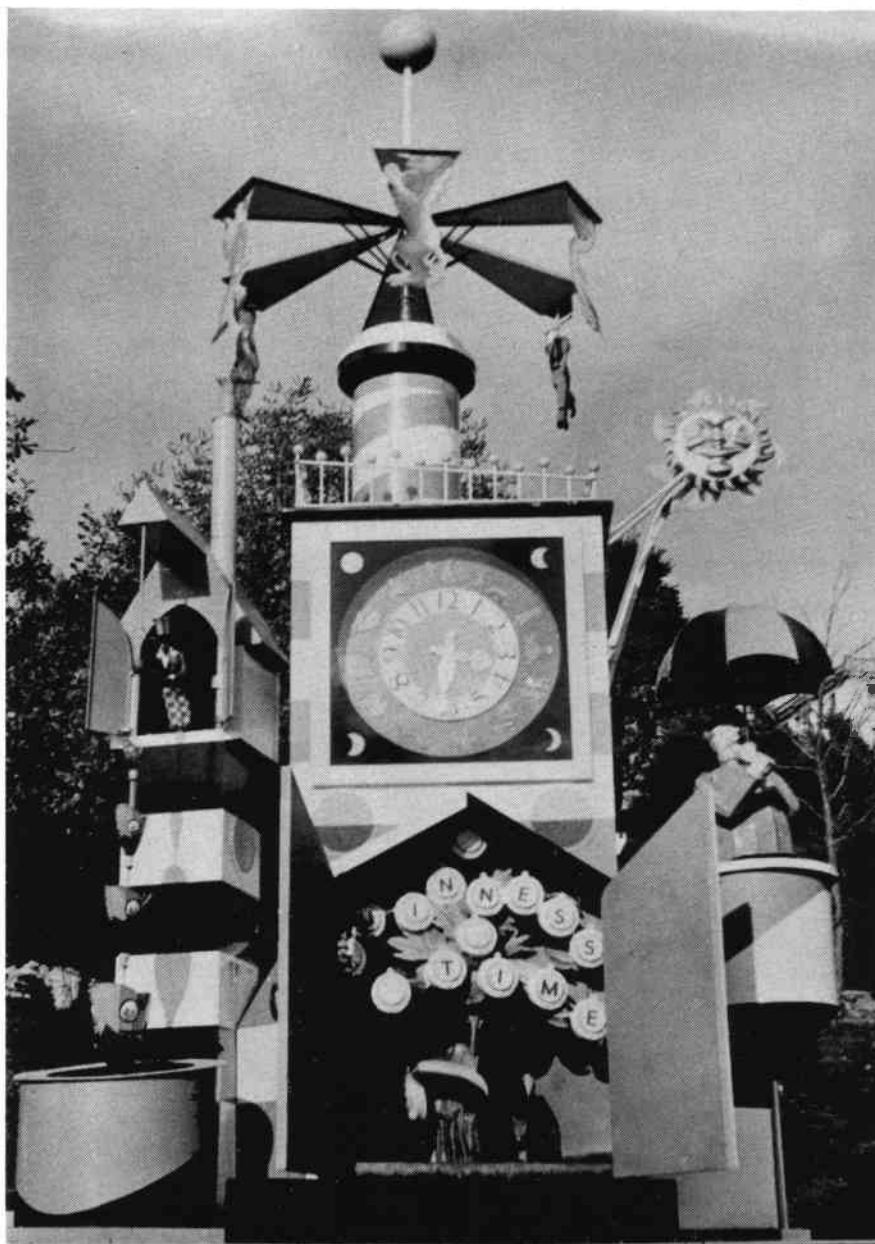
graph of an almost identical piano has appeared in *The Music Box*, see Vol 8, page 23.

Erddig, a late 17th century house near Wrexham in Clwyd, has a small collection of mechanical music in the entrance hall. Two cylinder boxes, one eight and one twelve-air, an Ariston organette with a pile of discs, an Edison Standard phonograph and a Metrostyle Themodist piano player. This National Trust property with its range of domestic outbuildings, all complete and in working order, is one of the most interesting of the larger houses I have visited.

Wookey Hole caves and mill near Wells in Somerset has, among other wonders, the unique Fairground Collection of Lady Bangor. Consisting mainly of carved work from old rides and show fronts, it doesn't neglect the fair organ which is represented in rare style by a 49-key Marengi which is thought to be the only one in the country. Housed within the collection building, its powerful tones drown conversation and force you to listen. Still working from its bellows, it has been known for it to be played continuously all day but normally is only operated while visitors are near. The necessity of having a *Gavi* man with it all day is done away with by the fitting of a continuous loop of music of about half an hour's duration.

While in the vicinity of Wells, a call must be made at the cathedral to see the famous Wells clock. The main face of this clock is within the cathedral and is surmounted by a wooden turret which contains four little horsemen who turn round the turret every hour, although for the visitors during the summer months this happens every quarter of an hour. Close to the clock face there is a jack, known as Jack Blandifer. He strikes both the quarters and hours while a further two quarter-jacks strike bells above the outside face of the clock.

Exeter Cathedral also has a fine clock but the small church of St Mary Steps has a recently restored clock with figures which is far more pleasing to the eye of the general public. Here, above the dial of the 17th century clock in the tower, are three figures known as Matthew the Miller and his two sons, and if my memory is correct, father strikes the hour, his sons the quarters.



Sadly no longer with us, this particular model of the Guinness Clock stood on the prom at Southend-on-Sea. It came to life every half hour (or maybe every 15 minutes, I cannot recall definitely), with at least seven different actions taking place, including a figure fishing and catching a large fish from the mouth of which three other successively smaller fish appeared, a town crier complete with an umbrella as well as his bell, and a pair of counter-rotating toucans at the base of the clock. At least one other model of this style existed, in Battersea Park, London. Probably made in the early 50's as a promotional piece for Guinness, they were all dismantled in the early 60's. While the clock was in action I believe amplified music box style music played. My thanks to Guinness for their help and loan of the photograph shown here.

Carillons are seldom seen and are only heard if you are in the right place at the right time. The following needs verifying but I am sure that some while back, during a television interview which took place within the grounds of St Albans Abbey, a carillon could be heard. But maybe

it was not a carillon, as it is possible to play tunes on bells fitted with an Ellacombe apparatus. Perhaps someone could give me the answer.

The ten bells in the Priory Church at Edington in Wiltshire at one time played, with one note missing, the National Anthem every four hours.

The carillon mechanism is currently dismantled but it was hoped at one time to restore it to playing condition with a new specially written tune.

A newspaper cutting I have seen from July, 1959, contained an interesting letter. Speaking about the church at Tickerhill, Doncaster, Yorkshire, part of it read, "coupled with the church clock, the bells play a tune on the hour every four hours. The tune changes at midnight and we get a different tune every day. The repertoire includes, *O Worship the King*, *Bluebells of Scotland*, *Last Rose of Summer*, *Minstrel Boy*, *Endearing Young Charms*, *Lo, He comes with clouds*, *Home Sweet Home*. Mention is also made of a carillon in the Town Hall at Hove in Sussex.

On page 276, Vol 7, of *The Music Box* there was an article by Freddy Hill and myself about Black Chapel, near Ford End in Essex, and the restoration of its barrel organ by Freddy. I'm sure anyone planning a visit to this unusual little building would like to know the revised opening times which are, open daily 9.30 - 5.30, excepting Monday and Tuesday.

The Gray and Davidson Barrel organ of 1839 in Wiston Church, on the Suffolk/Essex border between Bures and Nayland, is currently out of action, due, it seems, to a possible case of vandalism. A society member, who is well versed in the vagaries of barrel organs, hopes he will be given the word to get it back into order.

Wiston, or Wissington as it is marked on the map, is an isolated church set in a farmyard. Shelland in Suffolk is not even marked on the maps I have although it is well known in our circles for its Bryceson organ which for a while was thought to be the only church barrel organ still in working order and in regular use. One day I saw a signpost to Shelland Green, at Harleston, near Stowmarket. On arrival at the Green I found it even more isolated than Wiston, although here there are at least a few houses nearby. I did not, regrettably, manage to find out if the organ is still in playing condition.

Another church barrel organ, by Bevington & Son, had little more than fields surrounding its former church at Kilton in North Somerset.

Now restored by the Bishop of Ipswich, and re-erected this summer in the church at West Quantoxhead, it is right next to the A39. The organ is thought to date from about 1872 and contains three barrels in a cradle—as in the Bevington at Fobbing. See *The Music Box*, Vol 7, page 304—with ten hymns and two psalm chants on each barrel. There are seven stops, two hundred pipes, and it is thought to be the only working church barrel organ in Somerset. I do not know whether it is used in services but I would imagine that after the expense of restoration it would at least be used for voluntaries.



Another barrel organ thought to be the only one working in a county is at Ossington, a tiny village in Nottinghamshire. The Robson organ, which dates from about 1840, has been broadcast in the past on radio but now has something which makes it even more special, a brand new barrel. It took two years to complete and when installed in 1978 was dedicated in a special service. The organ is apparently still used to accompany the hymn singing.

To finish I make no apology for returning to carillons and the following delightful extract written in the summer of 1939. From *Narrow Boat* by the late L T C Rolt, I quote with thanks to Eyre Methuen & Co Ltd,

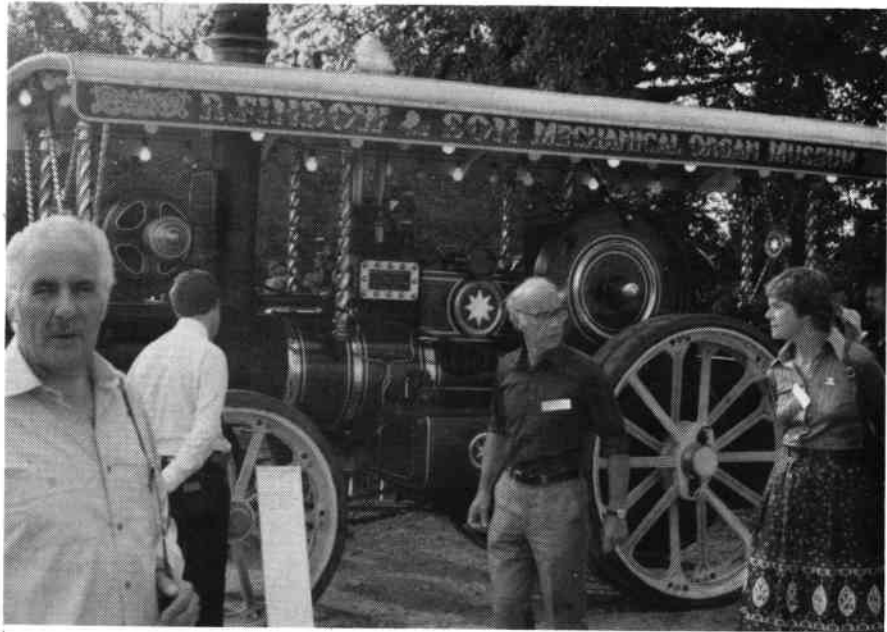
who published it in 1944. Perhaps a member could update this description of the now hopefully restored carillon in the church tower at Banbury.

"Meanwhile, inside the tower two perspiring individuals from a local firm of watchmakers were busily engaged in winding the church clock. This was no mean task, for no less than four great weights had to be raised from the base of the tower. These operated the movement, the quarter chime, the strike and the carillon. This last was installed in commemoration of Victoria's Jubilee, and interested me greatly, because although I had heard the carillons of Dursley, in the South Cotswolds, and of the bell tower of Evesham, I had never before seen the mechanism. The movement was similar to that of a child's musical box, being operated by a revolving fibre drum studded with brass pins which tripped the spring-and-cam-returned bell-cranks that were connected to the bell clappers by cables. When it was desired to change the tune, the drum could be moved laterally along its spindle so that another set of pegs was brought into action. Unfortunately the Banbury carillon was in a sorry state of repair, many of the pegs being worn or broken, so that only two of the original six tunes were still playable.

I was lucky to see it at work, for in order to conserve its failing energies it was only set to play twice during the day. We watched and waited until the clock, ponderously ticking, crept to the hour and tripped the release. Then the old machine came to life with a most prodigious whirring and jangling of cables, and, high overhead, the bells rang out. There is a great serenity in the sound of a carillon, especially if it be heard distantly on a windless evening of high summer, or upon the hills.

Then this measured repetition of simple notes voicing the passing of time seems also to express that unhurried, unshakeable continuity which is the very essence of country life. I hope that the Banbury carillon will not fall silent, but it will be an even sorer day if that tradition which it voices, albeit brokenly, should perish."

©Roger Booty, 1981



Ken Dickens.
(Apologies for not being able to identify the other members. Can anyone help?)



Graham Whitehead.



Ted Brown and his charming collector don't seem to be on speaking terms.



Jim Colley examines the "Little Billy" steam engine.



John Mansfield, Joan Colley, John Powell, Margaret Ball.

Pictures by Ted Brown and Bob Leach.

Society Affairs

THERE is no doubt that the **CAMBRIDGE MEETING**, on September 5 and 6, was an outstanding success. Ninety-two members attended.

ALAN and **DAPHNE WYATT**, the area organisers, can be well satisfied that everything went so happily.

The cheerful atmosphere was set by the management of the Blue Boar Hotel, who announced our arrival with a large notice in the foyer, and who allowed **BARBARA HOLDEN** to wheel her barrel piano into the hotel lounge where she and **BOB HOLDEN** provided our kind of music. Charming hotel waitresses continued to serve drinks to members and guests as long as orders kept coming in, and that was until well after midnight.

The cast of the **HAMLINS MUSIC HALL** troupe joined us, and they also helped during the Saturday morning flag-day collection for muscular dystrophy, in the market square and City Centre. Their olde tyme costumes added just the right flavour to the music.

Saturday, like Friday, was blessed with glorious sunshine. Those who provided organ music for the shoppers and visitors to Cambridge included: **TED BROWN**, **CYRIL de VERE GREEN**, **SHEILA** and **DAVID HEELEY**, **BARBARA** and **BOB HOLDEN**, **GRAHAM WHITEHEAD**, **MICHAEL BENNETT-LEVY** and **ZOE**, cheerful **ROBBIE GORDON**, **JIM** and **JOAN COLLEY**, **LESLIE BROWN**, **JOHN MILLER**, **ALAN** and **DAPHNE WYATT**, **TED BOWMAN**, **JON GRESHAM**, **EAN EMSLIE**, **JOHN POWELL**, **JOHN MANSFIELD** (and our thanks to anyone whose name is inadvertently left out), ably supported by wives, friends and children, and **LINDSEY GRESHAM** who danced beautifully, in traditional costume.



Lindsey Gresham.

PAUL CASAPIERI, Regional Organiser for the Muscular Dystrophy Group, wrote to Alan and Daphne Wyatt informing them that for the whole day £1,427 had been collected, and that more than half was attributed to the music of the organ-grinders in the morning.

Many kind people assisted with the collecting boxes, and they included **DIANA TIMMONS** (who helped Margaret and John Miller), **DORIS PELL**, **LIZ MASON** (who helped Ean Emslie), **MARGARET BALL** (who was with Joan Colley, John Mansfield and John Powell), and the monkey who attracted contributors to Bob Holden's Barrel Piano ("No, No, Not you, Barbara! The little one who sat on top of the piano!").

The Anglia Television crew was active in the sunshine, shooting the lively scenes at the various organ sites, and they were particularly interested in **TED BOWMAN**'s "Big Bertha" Hooghuy, an organ designed for a dance hall in Ostend and built by Louis Hooghuy in 1910.

After mid-day buffet lunch at the Blue Boar two coaches took the MBSGB members to **BOB FINBOW**'s collection of musical instruments at his extraordinary theatre at Cotton, near Stowmarket, in Suffolk.

On arrival members were greeted by a fairground organ playing and a showman's engine ("Little Billy") in steam. Tea was served, and then came some old silent films, complete with accompaniment from the Wurlitzer Cinema Organ, rising

majestically from the pit in real 1930s style. Before leaving members heard a large Marengi Fairground Organ, a Gavioli Trumpet Organ, and several barrel pianos. As the coaches left a Carl Frei organ played *Now is the Hour, When we must say Goodbye*.

JON GRESHAM thanked Bob Finbow and the two excellent organists who had entertained us in the cinema.

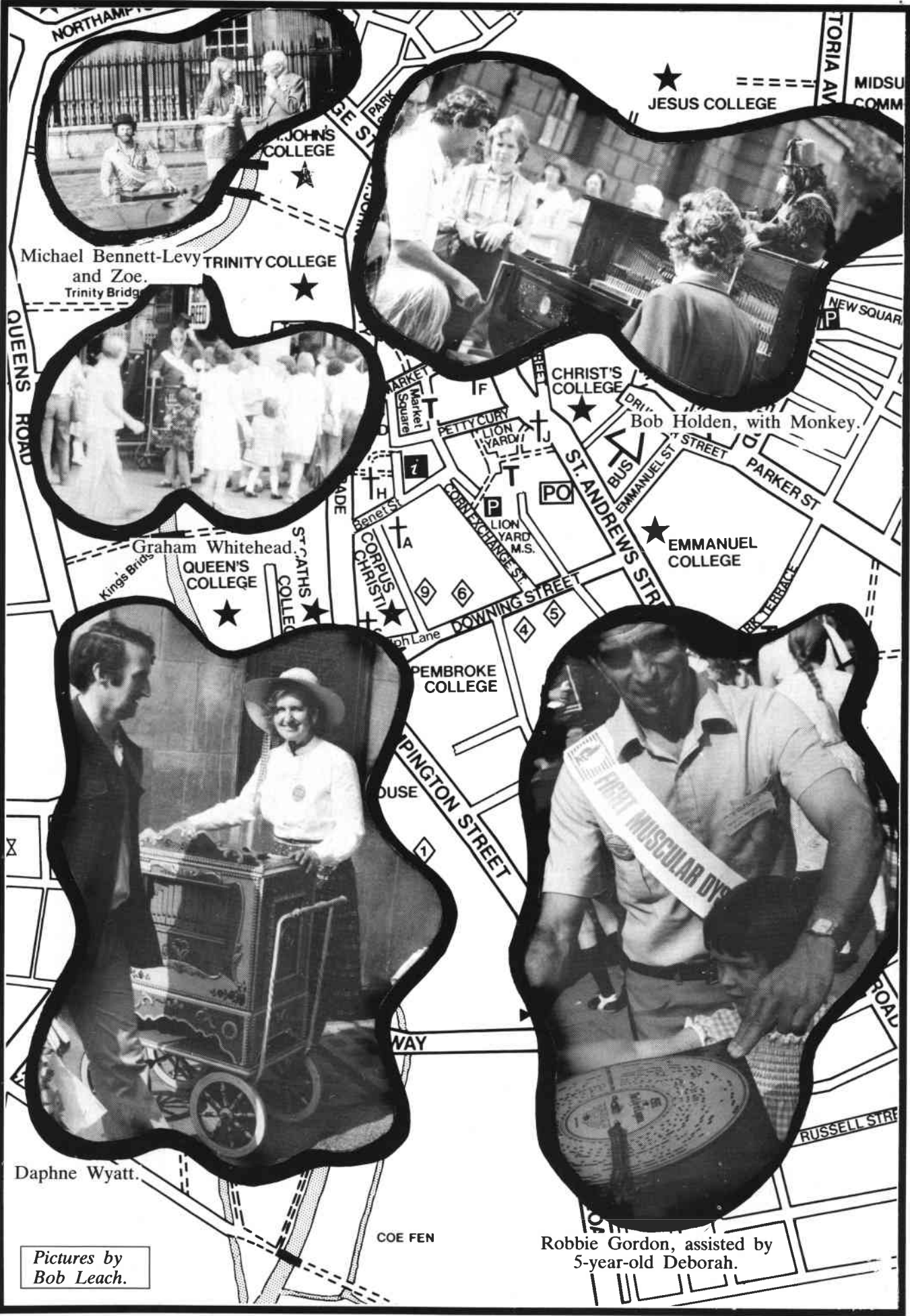
Back at the Blue Boar dinner was served. It was excellent, even *ordon bleu* expert **FRANK VOGEL** must have approved the chef's skill. The staff cleared the tables and "before your very eyes" the dining hall was converted into a modern theatre, the stage skilfully disguised "in the old fashioned way", ready for the Hamlyns Music Hall production. The Olde Tyme Musick Hall-cum-Cabaret was outstanding. Jon Gresham, who "trod the boards" for many years was well qualified to observe, "If all troupes had been as good as this one, Music Hall would not have died!"

On Sunday, with the weather still hot and sunny, most members took the opportunity to view the colleges under the expert guidance of the professional guides.

Later, members were able to take lunch and tea at Sutton, in the most idyllic surroundings, this being the weekend of the Church Flower Festival. There was a tour of the Bates sacred barrel organ, and some of its 30 hymns were played during the visit. For this treat the Society is grateful to **Mr COLLIER**.

Alan and Daphne Wyatt wish to express their thanks to all those who attended, but those who attended will certainly want to thank Alan and Daphne, and the other helpers such as **HILARY KAY** and **FRANK VOGEL**, for making it all possible.

The television programme transmitted by Anglia TV has been recorded and will be shown to members at a future meeting. **KEN DICKENS** and **GRAHAM WHITEHEAD** have, I believe, an organising hand in this project.



Michael Bennett-Levy and Zoe.
Trinity Bridge



Bob Holden, with Monkey.



Graham Whitehead.



Daphne Wyatt.



Robbie Gordon, assisted by 5-year-old Deborah.

Pictures by Bob Leach.

*Le plus célèbre
Cabaret du Monde*

Joy McCombie invites you to "Come to the cabaret, old son, come to the cabaret".

HAMLVNS MUSIC HALL CAST:
Brian Ley (piano), Peter Crussell, Ron Edney,
John Hill, Joy McCombie, John Bowen, Judith
MacPherson, Eileen Crussell, Richard Morris,
Paul Curtis (lights).



*Pictures by
Ted Brown.*

THE Index for Volume 9 has been prepared by **JIM** and **JOAN COLLEY**. For this arduous task we are very grateful to this pair of helpers. **JIM COLLEY** has long served the MBSGB, as his membership number 447 indicates.

In Volume 8, page 337, he wrote an article "Harmoniphone Restoration" and the details of this work indicate his dedication to careful research. In this particular project he was assisted by his fellow member from Bristol, **DAVID WALCH**. David is Number 516 so he, too, is a long serving member.

The work of producing the Index is not just a simple alphabetical list compilation; there is cross-checking, and lists for "Regular Features", "Authors" and "List of Advertisers" to prepare. All this has to be typed, a prodigious effort in itself, and then there is the difficult task of checking the proof copies when they come from the printers.

Those of us directly concerned with the production of the Journal do not take **JIM** and **JOAN**'s contribution lightly; we know what a time-consuming job it is and, on behalf of all our members, sincerely thank Mr and Mrs Colley for their much appreciated help.

Jim Colley is a generous man as well as a dedicated one. He has given to our Archives an original catalogue listing certain Nicole Freres boxes, and also a piece of valuable and interesting music manuscript which he found inside a cylinder he was pinning.

He is a professional repairer and new members might not realise that **BELLE VUE BOX REPAIRS**, of Kent Road, Congresbury, near Bristol, BS19 5BD, is the firm run by Jim Colley. This company has advertised in the Journal for many years, but Jim has not attached his name to the advert. His business telephone is STD (0934) Yatton 832220, and he specialises in complete restorations, cylinder re-pinning, governor overhaul services, and so on. A written estimate can be obtained if required.

A few years ago he came across a copy of *Music Directions*, by J G Murdoch, and he donated this to the Society Archives.

Jim and Joan are regular supporters of Society Meetings and, as this

little tribute shows, they have "done their bit" in helping to keep the machinery of the Society ticking over.

They have now given up the duty of making-up the next Index (i.e., Volume 10), but, for what they have done in this respect we extend our sincere thanks and wish them every success in their home-life and in their business.

When Jim took on the job of Indexing, Arthur Ord-Hume sent him comprehensive instructions, but the footsteps of the present Editor seem to be flying after those of the previous one. Arthur's letter of instructions begins; "Herewith, somewhat hastily before I go to Paris, ..." I have just written a *Music Box* letter with exactly the same words.... Ed.

In his own letter, Jim writes to Arthur, ..."I have been responsible for the selection of the entries while the main work of indexing and then sorting the entries alphabetically has been done by Joan. Also the typing.

Thank you both very much, Jim and Joan Colley.

JOHN MANSFIELD, assisted by **FRANK VOGEL**, has drawn up plans for our Easter programme on Saturday / Sunday 27 / 28 March 1982, at **ARUNDEL**, West Sussex.

For the immediate future we are without a Meetings Secretary so it may not be possible to send out separate information sheets. Therefore, please read carefully the following details. John Mansfield spoke to me at length yesterday (10/10/81) prior to his departure to Utrecht for a holiday with his wife.

First of all, do please send the Registration Fee of £6, NOW, to John's address; "Longbury House, Rock Road, Washington, Nr Pulborough, Sussex. He needs to know as soon as possible the approximate number who wish to attend. A s.a.e. will cut down the overheads.

Second; decide on the accommodation you require. A package price of £21 per person per night has been arranged with the **NORFOLK ARMS HOTEL** in Arundel. Book early if you wish to stay at the main hotel. Write to;

David Horridge Esq.,
Norfolk Arms Hotel,
Arundel,
West Sussex BN18 9AD.

Please specify the type of room required: Double, Twin, Single; and state whether you wish to stay Saturday night only, or for two nights Friday and Saturday, or even three nights, Friday to Sunday, or whatever.

If you book late and find the hotel full, or, if you prefer to stay elsewhere in the neighbourhood, contact the:

Arundel Tourist Board,
High Street,
Arundel, West Sussex,
Telephone (STD) 0903 882419.

Third, and this is for members *not* staying at The Norfolk Arms Hotel. Consider whether you wish to have Saturday evening dinner at the Hotel. They can cater for up to 100 and have arranged a set meal at £6.50p a head. The hotel needs to know the exact number in advance. (Those who have paid £21 per night to stay at the hotel will have this dinner included in the package deal)

Make Registration Fees payable to MBSGB but send the cheque to the area organiser, John Mansfield.

The sums are thuswise:-

£6, Registration Fee (MBSGB)
£21 per night, Norfolk Arms Hotel.

£6.50p (MBSGB, sent to John Mansfield) for dinner at the Norfolk Arms on Saturday, for members not staying at the hotel.

The **MEETING'S PROGRAMME**, as it stands at the present date, is:-

SATURDAY

9.00. - 10.00. Registration and Coffee at Norfolk Arms.

10.30. Talk: John Mansfield, "The Fun of It".

11.30. - 12.30. Dr Cyril de Vere Green, illustrated talk, "Minia tures".

12.30. - 1.45. Lunch. (Make own arrangements).

After lunch two coaches will be available to transfer members from Norfolk Arms to John Mansfield's house (Longbury House) to look at a collection of music boxes from local MBSGB members; followed by tea.

The first coach will leave Arundel at 1.45, leaving Longbury House at about 3 p.m.

A LUCKY coincidence provided Cambridge shoppers with music throughout the city centre, and helped raise £700 for charity.

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain held their Autumn meeting in the City and found that it was also the Fight Muscular Dystrophy flag day. So they got together and 14 barrel pianos, organettes and street organs were set up for the morning alongside the charity's collectors, who were quickly filling the tins with much-needed cash.

The week-end meeting included a visit to the Cotton Mechanical Musical Museum, practical workshop seminars a dinner, old-time music hall and a guided tour of the Cambridge colleges.

● Everyone joined in the spirit of the occasion! Alan Wyatt with his Wilhelm Tiedemann street organ, had two ladies from the music hall cast assisting him with collecting tins for charity. Pictured here are left: Judy McPherson and right, Joy McCumbie with Alan Wyatt.



Members had travelled from all over the country to be present, and many of the instruments were brought with them.

Mandolin effect

Leslie Brown from Stockton played his new Pell organ "The Happy Wanderer" outside the Guildhall as did Bob Holden from Solihull with his unusual 60 note Luis Casali barrel piano. Built about the turn of the century, this instrument was purchased by Bob earlier this year, and has a most distinct mandolin effect. Daphne and Alan Wyatt who live near Cambridge had been responsible

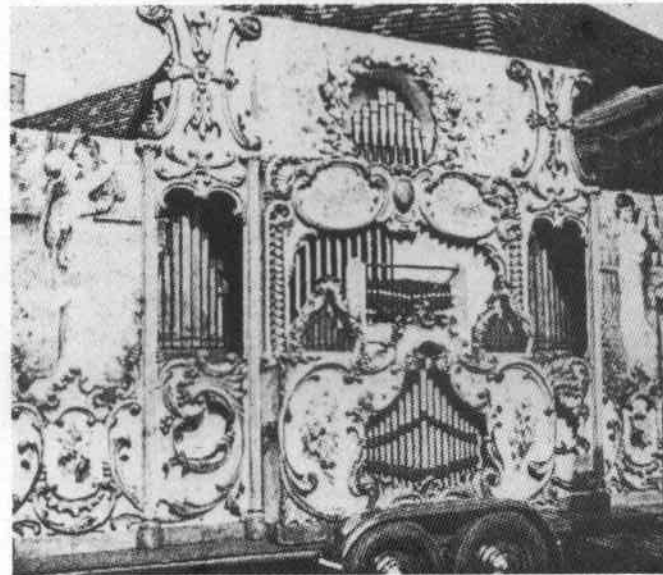
Old time costumes add to entertainment of a unique event

By MICHAEL GATES

for setting up this week-end and they played their 26-note Wilhelm Tiedemann organ, both of them dressed in period costume.

A television film crew were thoroughly taken up with all the instruments and shot a considerable amount of film, a little of which was broadcast on the regional news. The instruments created a great deal of interest among passers-by, and there were certainly some

● A rare sight was this 70-key Hooghuy's owned by Ted Bowman from Bedford. The paintwork and pipework is all original, the organ being built in 1910. There is additional panelwork to build the organ front completely, but it was not in use for the day.



converts for this sort of music by the end of the morning!

Pride of place however, must surely go to the largest organ, and undoubtedly the rarest as far as public appearances. This was the 70-key Hooghuy's "Big Bertha". Owned by Ted Bowman of Clophill near Bedford. Built in

1910 by Louis Hooghuy's for a dance hall in Ostend, the organ can boast completely original pipework and paintwork. There is a great deal of original music books with the organ, many of them arrangements by Scholleart.

To add to the atmosphere, many of the ladies from Hamlyns Music Hall Company who were to provide the entertainment during the evening, donned their stage outfits, and the old-time costumes added just the right touch to this rather unique event.



● Daphne and Alan Wyatt arranged for the organs to be in the streets of Cambridge, and they played their own instrument, a 26-note Wilhelm Tiedemann street organ. Many of the owners dressed in old-time outfits to add atmosphere to the event.

Roger Booty sends this photocopy of Michael Gates's local newspaper article on the MBSGB Cambridge Meeting, 1981.

The second coach will leave Arundel at 3 p.m., leaving Longbury House at about 5.30 p.m.

At 7.30 there is the Dinner at Norfolk Arms Hotel (As stated: free to those staying at the hotel; £6.50, pre-booked, by those staying elsewhere).

At 9.30 there is a magic lantern show at the Norfolk Arms Hotel.

SUNDAY

At 11.00 a.m. there is a visit to the famous **ARUNDEL CASTLE**. It is to be specially opened for MBSGB members and there is to be a guided tour. Although the charge for this is considerable the tour is free to members. The MBSGB organisers hope that the balance from the Registration Fees will cover the cost of the tour round the castle. However, exact numbers must be known, so please let John Mansfield know if you intend to be on this guided tour of Arundel Castle.

Arundel Castle is the ancestral seat of the Dukes of Norfolk. The grounds overlook the River Arun.

Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Arundel, built the castle at the end of the 11th century. In 1643 the castle was badly damaged during the Civil War and it took many years to repair the wreckage.

The title *Duke of Norfolk* was conferred on Sir John Howard in 1483.

Arundel Castle is situated 4 miles north of Littlehampton on the A27, and it is well served by Southdown Motor Services from South Coast resorts. British Rail operates a frequent train service from Victoria Station, London.

Finally.... please remember, Christmas is already on us; Easter is on the way, so, Don't delay, Book today.... Send your £6 Registration Fee (and, for Goodwill, a stamped addressed envelope) to,

John Mansfield,
Longbury House,
Rock Road,
Washington,
Nr Pulborough,
Sussex.

In a telephone conversation with **TED BROWN** I'm given to understand that **ANTHONY BULLEID** is to speak at the Christmas Meeting. This is excellent news.

JON GRESHAM is organising manager of this meeting, to be held next week (if the Journal reaches you at the intended time in UK) ie, **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12th, 1981, 9 a.m.** at

THE MAGIC CIRCLE

84 Chenies Mews,

London. (See Map)

For last minute information, and possible last-minute booking availability (£4 Registration Fee) you may reach Jon by telephoning:- 037-781-284.

The meeting begins at 9 a.m., so, don't be late! It's gonna be great!

Merry Christmas!

Automata

Clocks

& Mechanical Organs

Restored & Made

by

David Secrett

Tiny Cottage, Needham

Harleston, Norfolk.

Tel: Harleston (0379) 852104





This postcard from our good friend Peter Schuhknecht reads; “. . . to your question about the barrel organ on page 137 (Vol 10, No 3): It is a bad photo, but I think it is a 26-key barrel organ—made by Bacigalupo. The interior looks rather new. Perhaps it is a new-built organ of Baum—Copist of Bacigalupo organ in Hamburg. . . .”

Peter also sends details of his newest acquisition; DE HAGENNAAR, Eig. Boomsma, 7961 AK Ruinerwold. Tel 05222 - 1425.

The puzzle organ shown on page 137 can be seen on page 39 (Vol 10, No 1)—Bob Minney, of Luton, is the owner. He played it at the Brighton Meeting in March, 1980. Can we now have full details, please, Bob.

Puzzle No 2.
Who is this handsome young man?



Letters to the Editor

THE accompanying two photographs are of a rather puzzling box I recently acquired. There is absolutely no doubt that the movement was made by L'Epee in the transitional period between key and lever winding. The curious feature is that alongside the Serial No 17338 (which is in typical L'Epee figures) the words "Nicole a Geneve" are stamped, otherwise it is an ordinary 8-tune box with a 13in cylinder.

It is fairly well established that L'Epee made movements for sale under the Nicole Freres name after the latter closed their factory in 1882, but the movement illustrated must have been made around 1860 at the latest. Could it really have been some old stock discovered 20 years later or is it an early attempt to cash in on the Nicole name? Unfortunately, there is no tune-sheet so we shall never know what was on that unless some member has a similar box.

While on the subject of L'Epee boxes I also enclose photographs of one of their large drum and bells boxes with a 15in cylinder, No 26085. The interesting feature on this is the method of mounting the drum and bells combs. Although they are separate from the main comb they do not have separate bases but are screwed and dowelled on to extensions of the main comb base. Incidentally, both boxes have steel inserts instead of endstones on the governor, which seems to have been characteristic of L'Epee practice.

A J L Wright,
London



Figure 1.

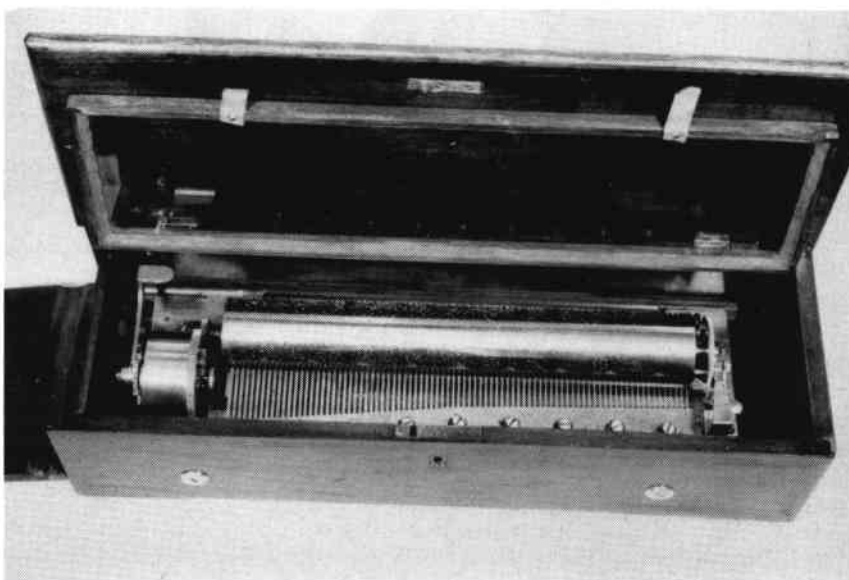


Figure 2.

Fig. 1. L'Epee/Nicole Box. Close-up of Serial Number.

Fig. 2. L'Epee/Nicole Box.

Fig. 3. L'Epee Drum and Bells Box.

Fig. 4. Main comb of L'Epee Drum and Bells Box.

Fig. 5. Comb attachment.

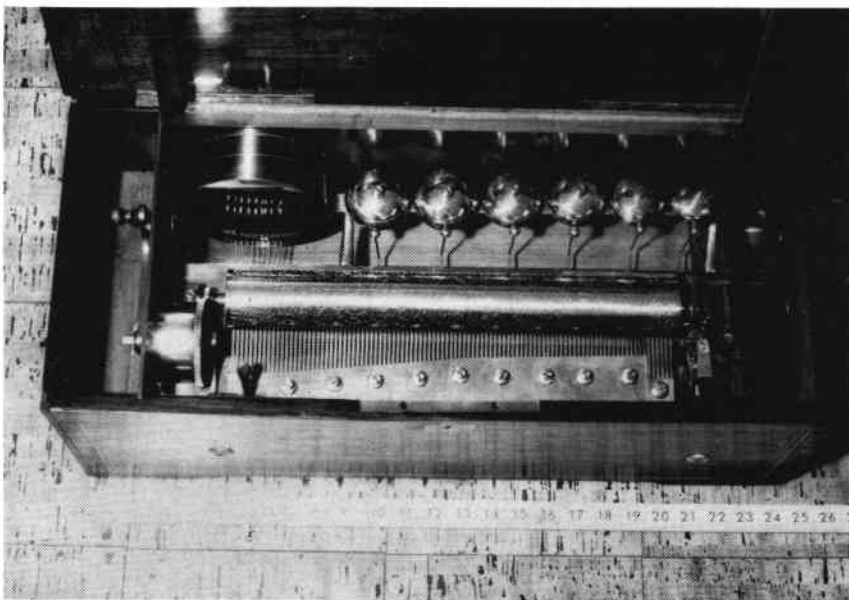


Figure 3.

Photos:

©A J L Wright, 1981
(Stourbridge).

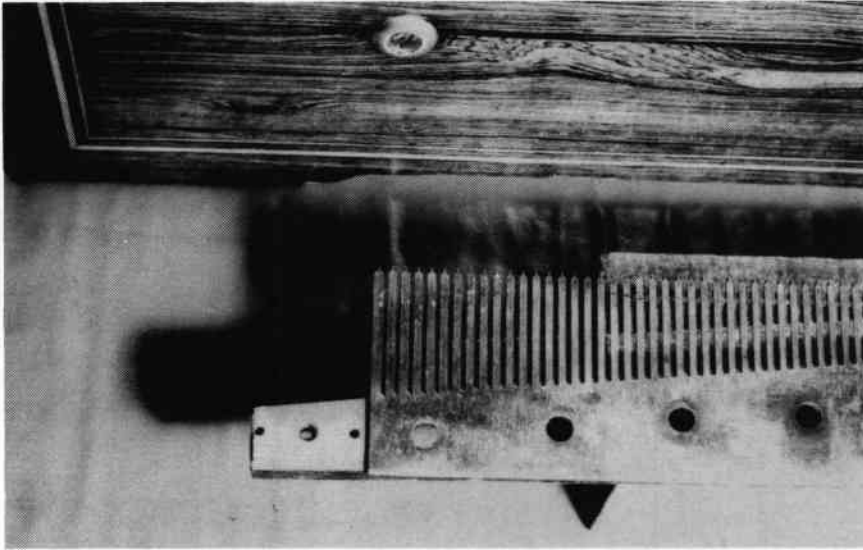


Figure 4.

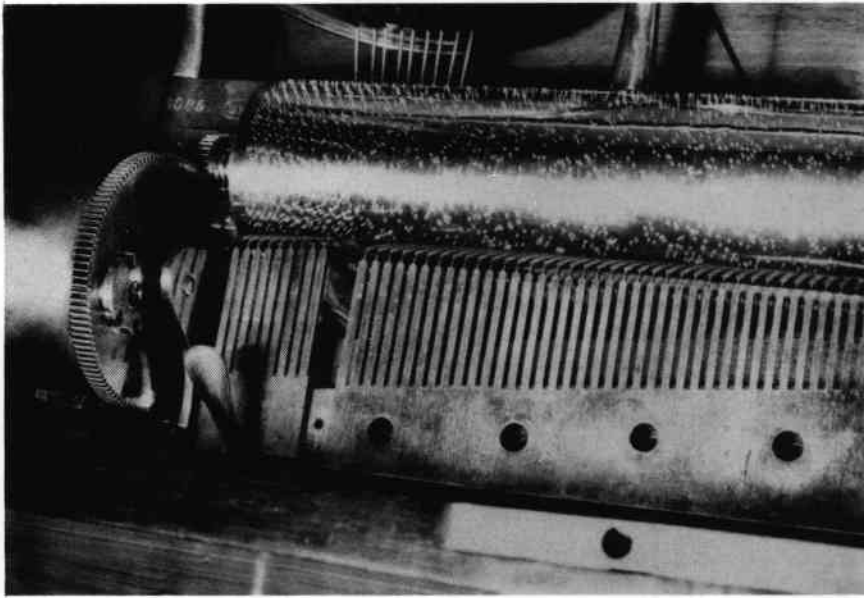


Figure 5.

Saw that my friend **SHANE SEAGRAVE** had a nice article in this most recent edition of *The Music Box*. Shane and I met while I was over at the MBSGB's Annual Meeting in 1979. Quite a delightful young man.

Ron Bopp,
Joplin, USA.

Our next barrel street-organ Festival (Hannover) will be May 7/8/9, 1982. Please give this information to MBSGB members.

Best wishes to all.

Peter Schuhknecht,
Musikwissenschaftliches Museum,
Hannover.

I AM looking for someone who can make some pictures for me of the piano. I am also working on some drawings of the mechanism of the player-piano, parts like the tempo box, pedal valve box and the melodist action, the last one being the most difficult. (But, what troubles me most is how to write explanation etc. in English!)

On Friday last week, just back from holiday, I went to a newly opened second-hand shop. Someone had told me that they had a 12-air cylinder music box. Such items are not easily found in Norway. The box did not work. The endless screw and the cock were gone, and 9 teeth

were broken. The cylinder seems to be without too many bent pins. So I bought it, for about £30. I have made a copy of the tune sheet. Can you help me with identification? I think I shall need some help with the comb and the governor.

Now I have 3 of these (Langdorff & Lecoulre, the last one) and none in proper working order. In Norway no-one does these kind of repairs. Can you recommend someone?

Do you know anyone who has an Empeco Player?

Yours sincerely,
Tom Walle,
Oslo 10, Norway.

Please send send the tune sheet and we will publish it, asking for information from our members. Regarding repairs; study *The Music Box* carefully and then write direct to the repairer of your choice. If anyone has a Player-piano of the type you specify they will write to the Editor who will be pleased to forward the information to you.

Always pleased to hear from you, and will send appropriate information to your Norway address as it is received at the Editorial Office.

(Ed.)

JUDITH Howard, Secretary of the Mechanical Organ Trust, feels bound to reply to the H E Verolme and G A H Mouthaan letter on page 138 of Volume 10.

The subject matter concerns the famous Dutch street organ "De Klok". With the deadline for the Christmas Journal only 48 hours away Judith does not have the time to compose either a comprehensive letter or a short article on her feelings about the "De Klok" proposals, but on October 2nd 1981 she wrote to Harvey Roehl in America, explaining fully her views. She has sent a copy of this letter to the Editor of *The Music Box* and in a telephone conversation Judith has suggested that publication of her letter to Mr Roehl probably constitutes the most expedient method of conveying her feelings, and information, about "De Klok".

Dear Mr Roehl,

You may recall our correspondence back in summer 1978 a propos of your interesting article in *The*

Music Box, on your trip to South Australia, in which among other things you described your visit to *De Klok*.

In the latest issue, just received, of *The Music Box*, I was amazed to read the letter from Mrs Verholme and Mr Mouthaan regarding *De Klok*. As she mentions "your visit in 1977", I can only assume her letter was originally addressed to you and kindly forwarded by you to the Editor for publication. It is on this assumption that I write to you:

Why I am particularly surprised, is that I was aware that some months ago the Dutch government, through their ambassador, attempted to discuss a proposal to return *De Klok* to Holland, which Mrs Verolme apparently totally rejected. So I'm curious to know what can have caused such an unexpected U-turn. (Could it be linked with the cost of the premises in Light Square, which I believe cost around \$300,000 and must have been heavily mortgaged?)

One other thing seems somewhat inconsistent. I have from time to time been in correspondence with Mrs Verolme, and I note in her letter to me of 25th Jan. 1979 she commented "the organ has been transferred from ownership of the Netherlands Smith to a Trust. It may only be used for charitable purposes and cannot be sold." This was also reported in other sources. So I am wondering how it is now apparently possible to sell the instrument? (I am myself Secretary, as you see, of a small charitable Trust, and understand that property and assets of such Trusts can in normal circumstances only be disposed of to another similar trust or charitable body). I don't know if you were sent any further information that might enlighten us on this point?

Furthermore, I note that the asking price for the organ is now \$100,000 – almost ten times what Mrs Verolme originally paid for it in 1976 (\$11,000, or 35,000 Dutch guilders). I can't help wondering whom they got in to value it! I'm pretty well up on the market situation here in England and in Holland, and for an organ of comparable style and size the "going rate" is up to £15,000, or approx. 80,000 guilders.

I realise that the Netherlands Society in S.A. must be short of funds to consider selling the organ at all; but I feel they are being a little optimistic in placing quite such a high price on the organ. It does look to me uncomfortably like profiteering. I can't help re-reading with certain wry amusement your comment in your *Music Box* article, that "it was not bought with the idea of a speculator making money on it." Can you honestly still say that now?

Unfortunately, this may lead to *De Klok* simply being sold off to the highest bidder, without regard to suitability.

I must admit, I am also doubtful about the statement that the organ is "mechanically still in perfect condition"; did Mrs Verolme mention to you whose expert opinion is quoted here?

In connection with this, there is one point which I think I *must* raise, seeing that the organ is now more or less "advertised" in the columns of *The Music Box*. I feel it is the duty of a respected organisation like the MBSGB/MBSI to encourage honest trading, based on fair valuations and truthful descriptions; and to discourage profiteering in any way. (After all, genuine enthusiasts, as I think most of us are in the Society, see these instruments as our hobby, and not as a way of making money). I can only say, in my opinion the Trustees' letter as it stands does not come up to these high standards.

As you know, I've been closely involved with the whole "saga" of *De Klok*, and care very much about its wellbeing. During the last year I eventually managed to buy a music cutting machine at a price I could afford, and have been busy (in my limited spare time!) arranging and cutting some music for *De Klok* and other street organs; in fact, only the other week I sent off the first parcel of books to Adelaide. Now I'm wondering if the organ will still be there by the time they arrive, surface mail being so slow!

In closing, may I stress that I've enjoyed our amicable correspondence on organ matters in the past, and news of your collection at Vestal Press (up-to-date instalments always welcomed). I've just bought the Reblitz/Bowers tome on scales etc.,

– another real mine of information (all I need now is time to absorb it all!). Congratulations on another fine production from Vestal.

Hoping you can help me with the points raised,

All good wishes,

Yours very sincerely,
Judith Howard.

'STOP PRESS'

AS PROMISED, I enclose the photos of "De Klok" showing damage to the case. These were taken by a friend of mine in Adelaide a couple of years ago, so the damage may probably be even worse by now. As well as damage to both side cases and the side-wings, where the wood has split along the grain, the whole centre section of the "cap" has split right across. As you can see, in some instances the cracks in the boards have pulled the mouldings apart, although these are carved from solid wood. I'm afraid there is rather more than just repainting necessary here!



Cracks in the case.

No doubt similar damage is occurring inside the instrument as well. By the time the pipework too becomes similarly affected, the organ will – alas – be virtually beyond repair (once one starts having to replace the pipework wholesale, the organ gradually becomes a mere replica).

The other prints show the state of the soundboards before *De Klok* was exported from Holland (nowadays, of course these would be made from laminated timber, not from solid timber as here). One of our reasons for opposing the export was the fact that *De Klok* was already overdue for a restoration; unfortunately, as Mrs Verolme decided only at the very last moment to have the organ looked at, all that could be

done was to patch up De Klok as well as time permitted; many of the basic defects remained, to give future trouble. The work included releathering of the pallets and bellows, new plastic tubing, enlarging of the bellows (to compensate, no doubt, for the large amount of wind-leakage in the wind chests etc.); the wind pressure was raised, presumably to improve the speech of the Trombones – but this unfortunately also caused tuning problems with the rest of the pipework (I see the Bourdon stoppers now sit much higher in the pipes, in an attempt to flatten the pitch again); in fact, the Trombones needed new tongues, or at least re-burnishing, and several also needed new shallots, the originals having been lost at some stage (probably during the War when the organs went into hiding). Large splits in the soundboards have simply been plugged; ideally these should have been taken apart and new slips inserted. If hot, dry weather causes the splits to open further, as is possible, serious trouble will result.

I will point out that the older street organs were built for the relatively damp European climate and were never intended to withstand extremes of temperature or humidity. Much trouble is experienced with older church organs owing to the effects of modern, super-efficient church heating systems. The only real answer is to build new organs using modern materials where suitable, e.g. laminated timbers, modern chemical glues, etc. (this is now almost standard practice in new church organs). Pneumatic actions, such as are used in street organs, are particularly sensitive to the effects of climate, especially low humidity. I feel it's a testimonial to Mortier's excellent workmanship in the first place, that De Klok can still play at all!

Before parting with any money, I think any prospective purchasers would be well advised to have the instrument independently inspected by an organ builder, and if possible, independently valued (by comparison with similar recent sales).

All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Judith.

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In response to the request of a number of members full addresses are on longer going to be listed in the Journal. The Committee request that when a member wishes to contact another member for the first time he does so through the ENROLMENT SECRETARY — temporary address: 40 Station Approach, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 7EF.

WANTED — URGENTLY...

Someone able and willing
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Please contact the Editor
immediately.

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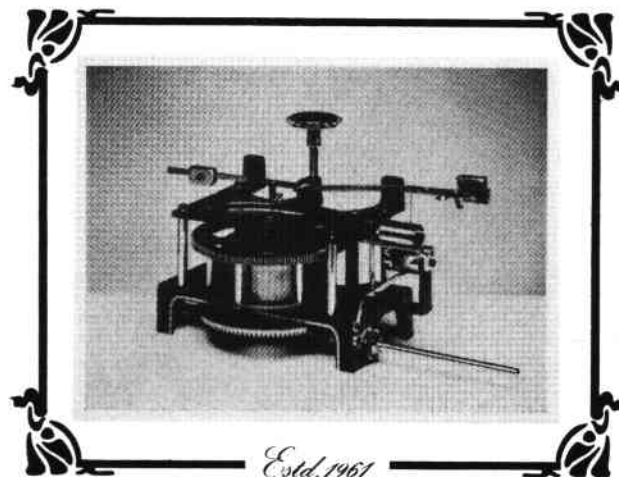
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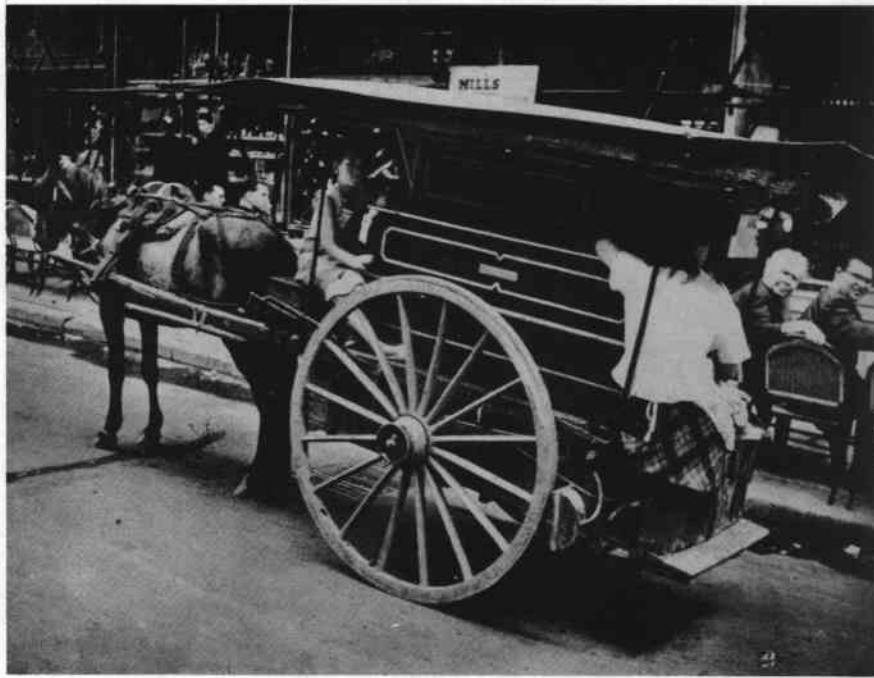
THE Cockney barrel organ music interested the beautiful West Indian schoolgirl. She stood for several minutes, outside Brixton Town Hall, listening to the tunes of old London.

Jamaica - born Perpetua Kingdom had come to Brixton, in 1963, to join her mother and two elder brothers. After much searching, her family found a c c o m m o - dation with a group of fellow West Indians; about 20 adults and children crowded into one house.

The building Perpetua's family moved into was an ancient three-storied terrace house with ten rooms. It was bought at a bargain price from a young white couple. A verbal agreement stipulated that an old man who lived in the attic should remain there. This was accepted, in the tacit knowledge that it wouldn't be too difficult for the new owners of the house to make the old fellow want to move. There were not many white people left in that particular road, and most of the houses were overcrowded.

Sixteen-year-old Perpetua had been asked by her Comprehensive School to stay on and take "A" Level English, but she was anxious to leave school. "Education is essential for a girl!", her mother told her. "No girl will get a decent job without qualifications. You take your "A" Levels!"

The children of school age living in the house were mothered by one woman, Mama Bongo. She was



assisted by any of the men or women who happened to be out of work, but she made them so busy that they were glad to get back into a job. There were no slackers in this community. Perpetua's two brothers, with three other young men, had been given one of two rooms immediately below the attic, and Perpetua had been put into the other top room, sharing it with three resentful young West-Indian girls, who went out to work and who constantly complained of overcrowding in their room. The instruction given to the young people occupying the two top rooms was to make as much noise as possible, to drive the old white man from the attic. There was a waiting list of folk who wanted to share the large attic, so it was bad business to only have one rent coming in.

A fire escape passed outside the girls' room and Perpetua's roommates often came in late, and not always alone, using this route. Perpetua slept on the floor and she never got a decent night's sleep.

There was nowhere for her to do her homework.

It had been noticed that the old man in the attic crept downstairs in the early hours of the morning and went for a walk before dawn. A chain was therefore fixed to the front door especially to lock the old man out, until the first worker left shortly after seven o'clock.

The first two or three times this happened, the old man said nothing. On one occasion,

however, he was in great distress. The weather had been dry at five o'clock but heavy rain had come and two hours later, when the front door was opened, the old man was soaked to the skin and shivering. Despite his pitiful condition the white man said nothing, and the coloured people did not hinder him as he made his way upstairs.

Nothing was seen of him for a week but no one took any notice. It was a waiting game. He would leave, or have to go to hospital, before long.

It was always impossible for Perpetua to do her homework in the house. One particular night the girls in her room were squabbling and there was a blaring background of pulsating steel band music from the boys' room. The amplified Reggae music could be heard all over the neighbourhood. It all but silenced the sad sound of the barrel organ.

Perpetua shut her school books and one of the girls told her to go to the Brixton

Library to study and not to sit on the floor looking so miserable.

The noise! It made Perpetua's head ache. But she hated the walk to the library, past groups of boys lounging in shop doorways and pestering her.

"Man! Black IS beautiful! Goin' my way?"

She turned her large bright eyes Heavenwards.

The attic.

What had happened to the old white man?

His life had been made Hell, but he still remained in his lonely domain.

How could he stand all this noise?

Perhaps he was ill.

Perpetua hadn't seen him since his early morning soaking.

He was a fool.

Why didn't he go and live with white folk?

Perpetua went downstairs to see Mama Bongo.

Her answers were always the same.

"Study in the public library", "Sleep in any room where you can find a bed", "There's no room with me. I've already got four women and two of them are pregnant", "Sleep on the floor of the dining room if you want to be alone", "Go away and don't bother me".

Midnight came. Her room-mates had gone out. The room had been empty for several hours but Perpetua had not been able to settle to her work.

A compelling curiosity made her stare at the bedroom ceiling, her imagination desperately needing to see through into the attic above.

Was the white man dead?

She had never seen a dead person.

The house was quiet. The people who had stayed in had gone to bed, and those who had gone out had not returned.

Perpetua climbed the stairs to the wooden doorway of the attic room. After a long pause she tapped gently, so gently that she knew the old man would not hear.

A very dim light filtered under the door. She remembered then that the men had cut off the old man's gas and electricity. They would have cut off the water but the pipe was buried in the wall.

Perpetua knocked again, a little louder. She did not expect a reply

and none came.

She tried the door handle. It turned easily and silently. She pushed it a fraction of an inch and it moved to her touch. She bit her bottom lip, took a deep breath, and opened the door.

The old man was sitting on the edge of his bed. By the light of a single candle Perpetua could see that he was fully dressed. He looked up, expressionless, his eyes shaded in half closed lids.

"Are you, are you all right?" Perpetua stammered.

He seemed too surprised to either move or speak. He just sat there, looking vacantly at the tall West Indian girl.

"You were wet through, and we haven't seen you for a week."

The old man moved at last. He walked slowly to a large table beneath the window built into the roof. Perpetua saw him pick up something and as he turned she realised that he was adjusting a hearing aid.

So, all the noise beneath him had been in vain. Perpetua smiled. There was relief in her face.

The man saw that the girl's smile was sympathetic.

"Come in," he said.

He was several inches shorter than Perpetua's five feet ten inches but his figure was still sturdy and his head well covered with a sheath of pure white hair. A moustache and beard were well clipped. His shoes were clean, his tie neatly done up at the collar, and even his suit was reasonably well pressed. Only the discipline of a fixed routine could have produced such a pleasing effect.

"I hope you don't mind me coming here," said Perpetua, and she sat down when he motioned her to the solitary arm-chair. At a loss for words Perpetua's eyes roamed around the dimly lit room. On a chest of drawers by his bed, immediately behind the flickering candle, she saw a photograph. Then she looked at the old man, sitting on the bed as he had been when she entered. His face was composed and this gave her the confidence to pick up the photograph. It was of a married couple.

"Your son, or daughter?"

"No. I never married. School-masters didn't get much money in my day. Even as a Headmaster I was

poor. I retired 19 years ago. I'm 84."

"That's a wonderful age."

"I've spent 53 years in this house."

"Fifty-three years, man!" said Perpetua.

"It's a long time."

"Yes. A long time. I say, this couple in the photograph looks like the couple who sold us the house."

The old man's face clouded. He looked unutterably sad.

"I'm sorry . . . I . . ." Perpetua put the framed picture back on the chest of drawers.

"Sylvia is my niece. When she married she had nowhere to live. And no money. I sold the house to her husband for a few hundred pounds . . . ooh . . . five years ago. That's all the money he had then."

"But," Perpetua cried, "the West Indians gave them a lot of money . . . and . . . why didn't you go with them?"

"They have . . . they have their own lives to lead."

"Oh, but that wasn't fair!" said Perpetua, her youth outraged at the concept of so much dastardly treatment being meted out to the old man. Her eyes, now accustomed to the light from the solitary candle, could see rows of books on shelves across the far wall. How could his niece take his house, sell it, and then leave her uncle to the mercy of alien folk?

His thoughts mirrored those of Perpetua, and he smiled as she spoke her mind.

"It's . . . well . . . it's an outrage that they could just . . . take everything, and walk out on you!"

The old man smiled again at Perpetua's indignation; her newly found concern for his plight.

". . . 'tis worse than murder to do upon respect such violent outrage. You must excuse me quoting from Shakespeare, but that is all that is left for a scholar sometimes."

"Yes, but, we're no better than your niece and her husband. We locked you out in the rain!" she said, sticking to her own line of thought.

"I will weep no more. In such a night to shut me out? Pour on. I will endure!"

He smiled sadly and Perpetua knew he was quoting something.

"How have you managed?" she asked.

"I use the fire escape. There is an outside toilet."

"Do you know Shakespeare very well?" she asked.

He smiled at her innocence.

"My quotations were from King Lear . . . an old King who gave away his land to his daughters and who was then cast out by them."

"I'm supposed to be studying Lear for my 'A' Level. He was the man who was more sinned against than sinning, wasn't he?"

My child, take this candle and fetch me my copy of Lear. Perhaps I can help you."

It was four in the morning, but it was as though only a few minutes had passed. The tragic story of Lear was firmly embedded in Perpetua's mind now. She had wept at the reconciliation of the dying Lear and his favourite daughter, Cordelia.

"Sir, do you know me?"

"I think this lady to be my child Cordelia."

"And so I am, I am!"

Clasping the much-thumbed copy of King Lear, Perpetua lay on her back on the old man's bed, and as her head sank into the pillow she was fast asleep. He looked down on the girl, undecided what to do.

"*'Thou art a soul in bliss'*", he whispered, and gently laid a cover over the sleeping form.

Perpetua awakened with a start. She was in a strange room. Then it all came back to her mind. She saw the old man boiling a kettle on a primus stove and he turned towards her when she got off the bed and stretched her arms in morning sleepiness.

"It's time you went to school," he said.

"Yes. Haven't you slept?"

"I haven't slept at night for ten, or twelve years. I've been using the fire escape this week for my morning walks. I didn't think of it at first. I didn't want to disturb anyone."

If Perpetua had been more sophisticated or worldly wise she would probably have been secretive about the night's adventure, and the foundation of her new-found friendship would have crumbled beneath her. She swept into the relationship with wide-eyed innocence.

The second night she studied Chaucer and then she returned to her own room, only to be violently awakened by one of her room-mates, locked in the arms of a white man, falling on top of her. Perpetua pushed the entwined couple away, and cursed. There would be no more sleep for her that night.

Her resolution to see justice for the retired headmaster became fixed. She stormed into Mama Bongo's room, woke her up, and blurted out the whole story of her lessons in the attic, and the men must turn on the gas and the electricity because it wasn't fair to turn them off!

It took several weeks for Mama Bongo and the Leader to be convinced, but during the first week in October the facilities were turned on again.

"And tell him he can use the front door for his morning walk. We'll not lock him out anymore!" said Mama Bongo grudgingly. "That fire escape ain't safe for a man of his age."

"You cannot understand Shakespeare by only studying one play!" the old man told her. "We will study them all."

"Yes, sir."

Perpetua had dropped into the habit of calling him "Sir".

She was Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, weighing up her chastity against her brother's life; she was Lady Macbeth urging her husband to murder; she was Juliet dying for her Romeo; she caught the secret charm of Viola in *Twelfth Night*:

*"Oh, it came o'er the ear like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets."*

She brought flowers to the old man's attic, and new curtains, and soap and towels, and despite his protestations she cooked him an evening meal. At night, when the studies were over, she slept on his bed, and when she woke, he left the room so that she could wash and dress in privacy.

"Don't go out this morning," said Mama Bongo to the old man, "it's raining. Stay and have some breakfast with me here. How is Perpetua doing with her studies?"

The school staffroom was noisy and smoke-laden when the English teacher came in, excited at something.

"What's up?"

"Perpetua Kingdom . . . she's a marvel!"

"Oh, our great dramatic actress. Must say she was good in *Antony and Cleopatra* last night."

"I was doing Chaucer. She knows more about the man than I do!"

"She's a cert for 'A' Level."

"Wonder what made her stay on? I felt sure she'd leave!"

"I hope she goes on to university, she has a natural flair for literature, and an understanding beyond her years, best pupil I've ever had!"

In his now clean and tidy attic the ex-headmaster smiled at Perpetua as she surveyed her handiwork. She put the scissors and comb into the top drawer by his bed. The beard, moustache, and hair at the nape of his neck were neatly trimmed.

She had been with him long enough to have dropped into a routine. No longer did he sleep all day and sit up all night. Mama Bongo had become a good friend. He went to the launderette for her, he did shopping, and they had a mid-day meal together. In the afternoon he rested, and after school Perpetua joined him.

"They've asked me to play Viola in the Evening Institute production!"

"I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you not mad indeed? or do you but counterfeit?"

"Believe me, I am not: I tell thee true"

And they shared their literary banter with infectious laughter.

Mrs. Kingdom was far from satisfied with the situation. She was not going to have her only daughter live with an old man. At least, not without some consideration. This old gentleman could not expect the exclusive services of a strong healthy teenage girl without paying some, well, some recognition to the mother of the girl. Anyway, the daughter couldn't serve her mother and the man at the same time. Some compensation for loss of service to the mother ought to be considered. Perpetua was a very beautiful girl. Oh yes, no mother would be a

mother if she allowed such a daughter to be used, to be at the service of, an old man in an attic. It wasn't right. It wasn't decent. Perhaps, with the blessing and permission of a mother it might be possible for some, for some arrangement to be made.

Having worked herself up into a state of righteous indignation, Mrs Kingdom swiftly climbed the stairs, opened the attic door and stepped resolutely into the room.

The old gentleman looked up with mild surprise, but Perpetua gleefully jumped to her feet and with the enthusiasm of a dedicated actress thrust a school copy of *Twelfth Night* into her mother's hands.

"Oh Mum, you're just in time. We're studying the dialogue between Olivia and Viola . . . look . . . when I say, 'I would not understand it', you come in here, Olivia's part, are you ready?"

Perpetua began her lines.

"In your denial I would find no sense;

I would not understand it!"

Perpetua stopped and Mrs Kingdom dutifully read her line, in a slow, flat voice.

"Why, what would you?"

And Perpetua replied with Viola's speech,

"Make me a willow cabin at your gate,

And call upon my soul within the house,

Write loyal cantons of contemned love

And sing them loud. . . ."

Perpetua was interrupted by her white haired mentor.

"No, No! Perpetua. Your heart is secretly weeping, you love Duke Orsino, but you are disguised as a page boy so he thinks you are a man. You know he can never return your love, and worse, you are Olivia's messenger, and you know she will never return the Duke's love. You love him dearly but there is no one you can tell, certainly not your mistress the rich Countess Olivia, let your eyes shine dryly but your heart weep with the tears it has to hide, make this come through the words, make us feel the impossibility of your love. Again, Perpetua."

"Make me a willow cabin at your gate. . . ."

Perpetua began quietly. She could feel herself sitting in this lonely cabin dying slowly of an all-consuming love for the noble Duke. . . .

"And call upon my soul within the

house. . . ."

Mrs Kingdom did not understand the play but the magic of her daughter's acting constricted her throat, and the mother stood, hand below her chin, silent, open mouthed, at the drama being enacted in her presence. She was an outsider in a world beyond her comprehension.

" . . . between the elements of air and earth,

But you should pity me!"

Perpetua stopped and waited.

The magic disappeared.

"Oh, Mum! Look! It's your line, Olivia, read it!"

But it was more than Mrs Kingdom could do. Her hand was still at her throat. She could see the line she had to read but, following the power of her daughter's declamation she was unable to utter a single sound.

"You might do much. What is your parentage?"

The old man read the line for Mrs Kingdom, but Perpetua was disturbed by having the mood of the scene ruined. She took the book from her mother who, desperately anxious to escape, said, "I must go. Goodbye, thank you, Sir!", and neither Perpetua nor her teacher said a word as she left.

The instant the door closed she was forgotten.

"Now, back to your speech . . . *"Why, what would you?"*

"Make me a willow cabin at your gate,

And call upon my soul. . . ."

It was not until they were satisfied that the rehearsal ended.

Perpetua began to tidy up her books and papers.

"May I keep these George Cavendish books, please?"

She was referring to her two favourite literature text books which he had lent her some weeks previously.

"Of course, my child. Keep them, and with my blessing," said the old man.

By Christmas Perpetua's teacher-in-the-attic had become accepted by the whole household and they had given him the courtesy title of The Professor. Perpetua had the idea of holding a Christmas party in the attic and she went to each room, making a collection to pay for food and drink. One of the men had put two power points in the attic and with a gaily lit tree and two borrowed reading lamps and bright decorations the room looked most festive and

Christmassy.

Jamaican song and drama ruled the evening, eager volunteers playing the parts given out by the now-accepted drama queen, Perpetua:

The lover . . .

"You goes for me?

I goes for you

Like how pickpocket goes for money!"

The city guy . . .

"Hi man, I glad to see you man!

I had to hire a taxi come look you up, man!"

and the professor joined in singing such classics as, *Lemon Tree*, *Banana Boat Song*, and the *"Dey oh, Dey oh, Dey de night and I wanna go home"* rang long into the early hours of the morning. In the street outside a barrel organ played carols. Perpetua opened the window and her friends sang with the music.

Dawn was breaking when the last of the guests departed.

The professor was resting in an armchair, his hands clasped behind his neck, a tired but contented smile on his face. Perpetua and Mama Bongo were tidying up, quietly crooning a Jamaican lullaby:

"Blackbird a eat puppa corn, oh, Blackbird a eat puppa corn, oh."

When their song finished the professor looked up, and in a gentle voice sang:

"On Christmas night the angels sing. . . ."

"O-ho!" laughed Mama Bongo, "you've reminded me of that Cockney barrel organ. Such cheerful music, man!"

Each night Perpetua slept in the professor's bed, and he slept on the made-up mattress on the floor. Nothing had ever been said about the matter. It was the way they wanted it. Each morning the professor went down to Mama Bongo while Perpetua washed and dressed. Before this, however, Perpetua always prepared a pot of tea and then she woke the old man and they drank together, silently, huddled in their dressing gowns. The success of the Christmas party had established their right to this relationship. They hardly ever spoke during the first waking minutes. It was part of the understanding they shared. The love they shared, the purest of loves, one which could not be measured by words. A slow, early-morning smile was all they needed to exchange.

That was why, one cold morning

in March, Perpetua knew exactly what she had to do.

She quietly got dressed and left the attic via the fire escape.

The neighbourhood had never seen such a funeral, and there were so many flowers that some bouquets had to be carried in the cars bringing up the rear. Only the inmates of the house were allowed in the tiny chapel of the crematorium, and never had the singing of the hymns been louder or more reverent. The music was taken up by the West Indian community congregated outside the chapel. Mrs Kingdom and Mama Bongo comforted the dry-eyed Perpetua. She sang no hymns, she said no prayers. Her eyes looked straight ahead. *Let your eyes shine dryly, but your heart weep with the tears it has to hide.* She had a purpose in life, a task to perform, a message to give, a message of love, love through literature and drama, handed on to her by the professor, it was now her gift, her responsibility, hers to pass on to others.

Later, solicitors called at the house. A letter to Mrs Kingdom told her, in simple language, that

Perpetua's fees at university and then at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art were to be paid for out of the professor's estate.

They also handed a letter to Perpetua.

She climbed the familiar stairs to the attic. She closed the door, and she sat in the only easy chair in the room. Slowly she opened the envelope, and as she took out the single sheet of paper so did the flood-gates behind her eyes burst, and as she read, tears fell copiously on to the treasured page. Every word was brushed with full depth of love; every sentence was a declaration of gratitude, of faith, of adoration, of the sublimest regard of one human being for another, of divine unspeakable love. Her tears washed the words off the page but her will planted them permanently as polished vignettes in her memory. It was the most beautiful curtain speech ever written. And it was signed at the bottom, in bold secure handwriting, *George Cavendish.*

"Oh, sir, sir! Why did you never tell me your name until now? Those books. Those lovely, lovely books!"

She knew the letter off by heart after one reading. But no one would

ever hear it, because it belonged to Perpetua, now destined to become a leading dramatic actress, enigmatic in her beauty, powerful in the secret of the drama of her real love. She would not fail.

As if from a long way below her the sound of Mama Bongo's voice drifted upwards and filtered through the isolation bounding Perpetua's mind. The song was one they had sung together at Christmas, here, in the professor's attic.

"Somebody waiting for Salizon,
Somebody waiting for Salizon,
Somebody waiting for Salizon,
Take up your letter an' go."

The time had arrived for Perpetua to leave the attic. There was work to be done. She paused for a moment at the doorway, turning to gaze at the empty armchair. She gave her "slow early morning smile", and quietly closed the door behind her.

As she walked past Brixton Town Hall she waved to the organ grinder. West Indian children were dancing to the music.

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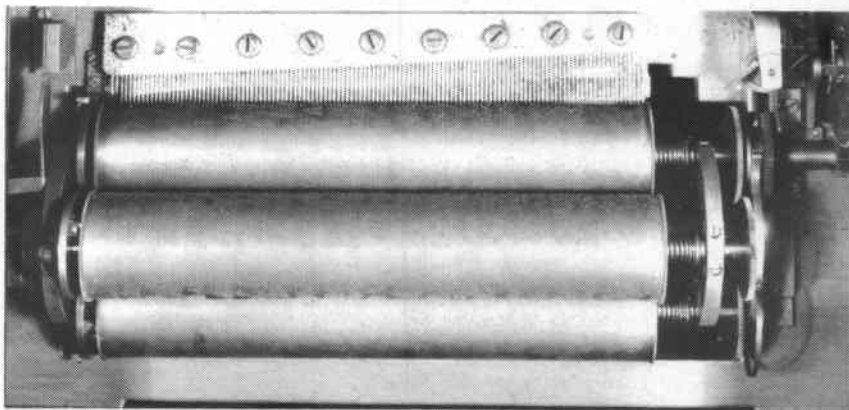
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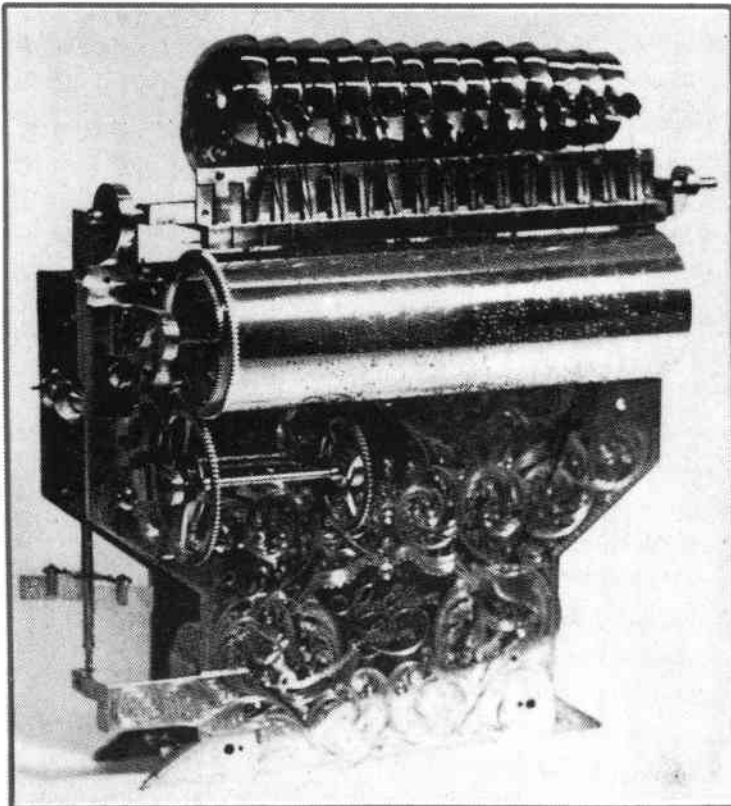
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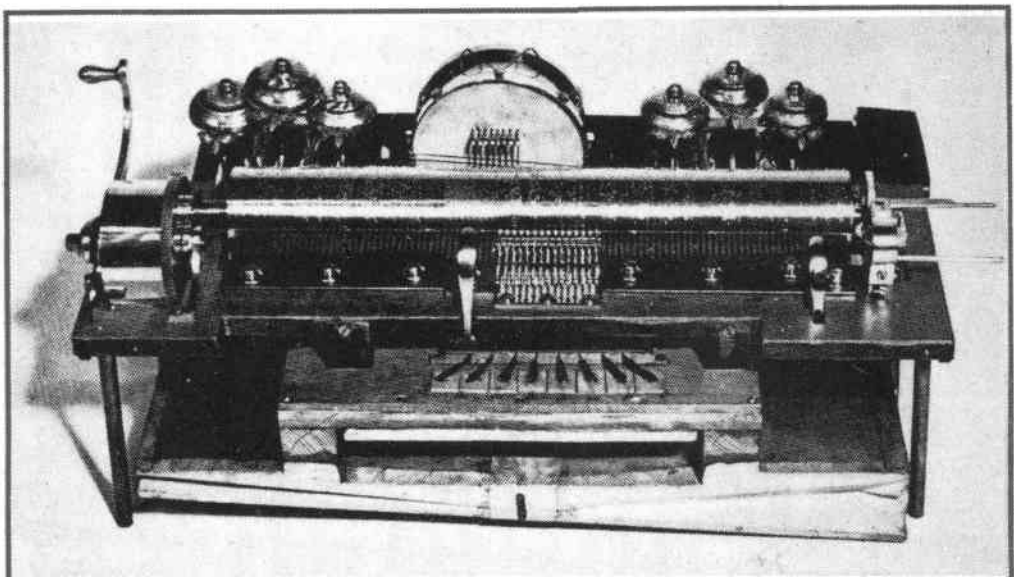
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