

An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 12 Number 6

Summer 1986

The Music Box



Inside **The Californian Connection**
 The Joys of Owning a Calliope
 Rebuilding the Barrel Piano Keyframe

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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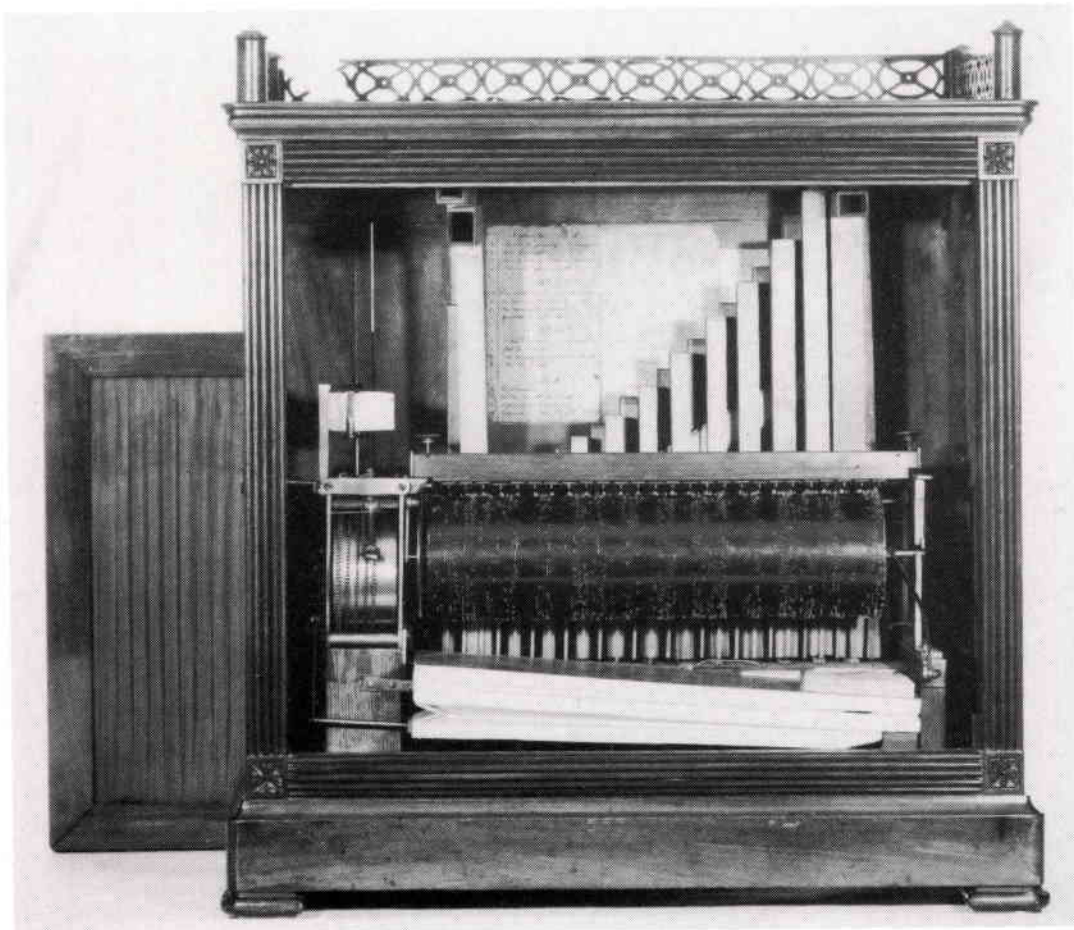


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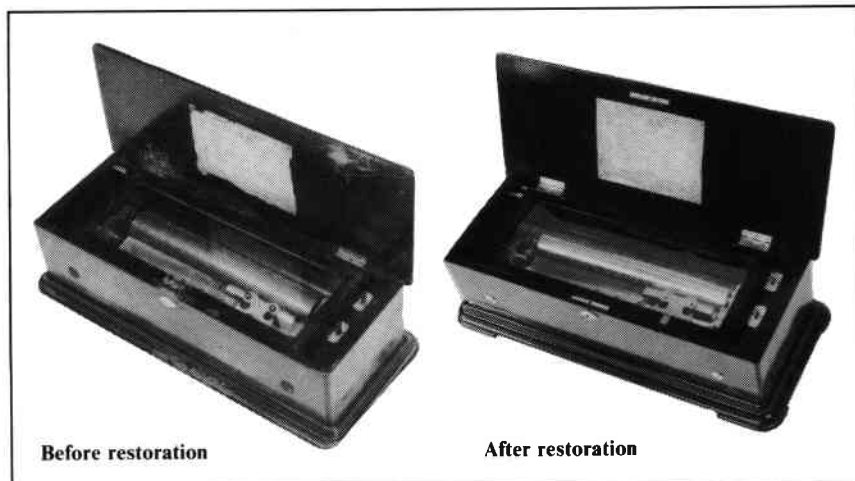
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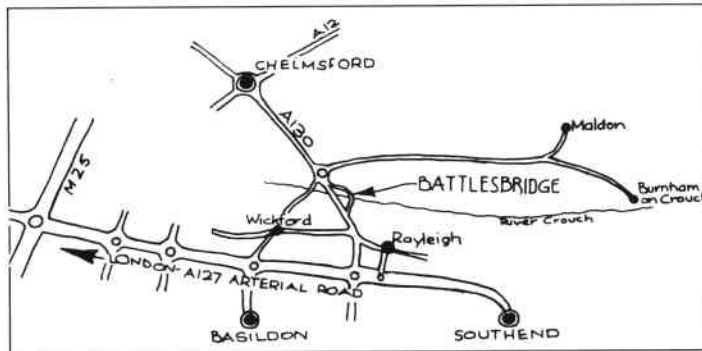
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The Music Box

An International Magazine
of Mechanical Music

The Journal of the
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of Great Britain.

Volume 12
Number 6
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Officers of the M.B.S.G.B. and their duties

President: Jon Gresham
Westwood House, North Dalton, Driffield,
North Humberside.

Vice President: Stephen Ryder
495 Springfield Avenue, Summit,
New Jersey 07901, U.S.A.

Subscriptions Secretary: Ted Brown
207 Halfway Street, Sidcup, Kent DA15 8DE.
**To whom all subscriptions and subscription
enquiries should be addressed.**

Membership Secretary: Reg Waylett,
40 Station Approach, Hayes, Bromley, Kent BR2 7EF
**To whom all applications and queries relating to
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The Willows, 102 High Street, Landbeach,
Cambridge CB4 4DT.

Treasurer: Bob Holden,
Falconhurst, Pilgrims Way, Guildford,
Surrey GU4 8AD.

Recording Secretary: Sue Holden,
Falconhurst, Pilgrims Way, Guildford,
Surrey GU4 8AD.

Auditor: Stephen Cockburn,
Marshalls Manor, Cuckfield, Sussex.

Editor: Graham Whitehead,
Broadgate Printing Co. Ltd.
Cronal Road, Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NH.

Archivist: Peter Howard,
9 Manor Close, Felpham, Bognor Regis PO22 7PN.
**To whom all contributions to the archives should be
sent, and at whose address the archives are housed.**

Auction Organiser & Corresponding Secretary: Roger Kempson,
32 Woodleigh Gardens, Whitechurch,
Bristol BS14 9JA.

**To whom all general correspondence should be sent also
responsible for the organisation of all auctions at Society
meetings.**

Advertisement Manager: John Powell,
33 Birchwood Avenue, Leeds 17,
West Yorkshire LS17 8PJ.

Committee Members:
Christopher Proudfoot, c/o Christies,
South Kensington, London SW7 3JS.

Ken Dickens: 148 Harrowden Road, Bedford,
MK42 0SJ.

Reg Mayes: 171 Barnet Wood Lane, Ashted,
Surrey K21 2LP.

Keith Harding: 93 Hornsey Road, London N7 6DJ.

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Front Cover: A rare treat for Europeans. Ben Lilien's 43 note
Tangley Calliope plays outside his Californian home.

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The Barrel Organ

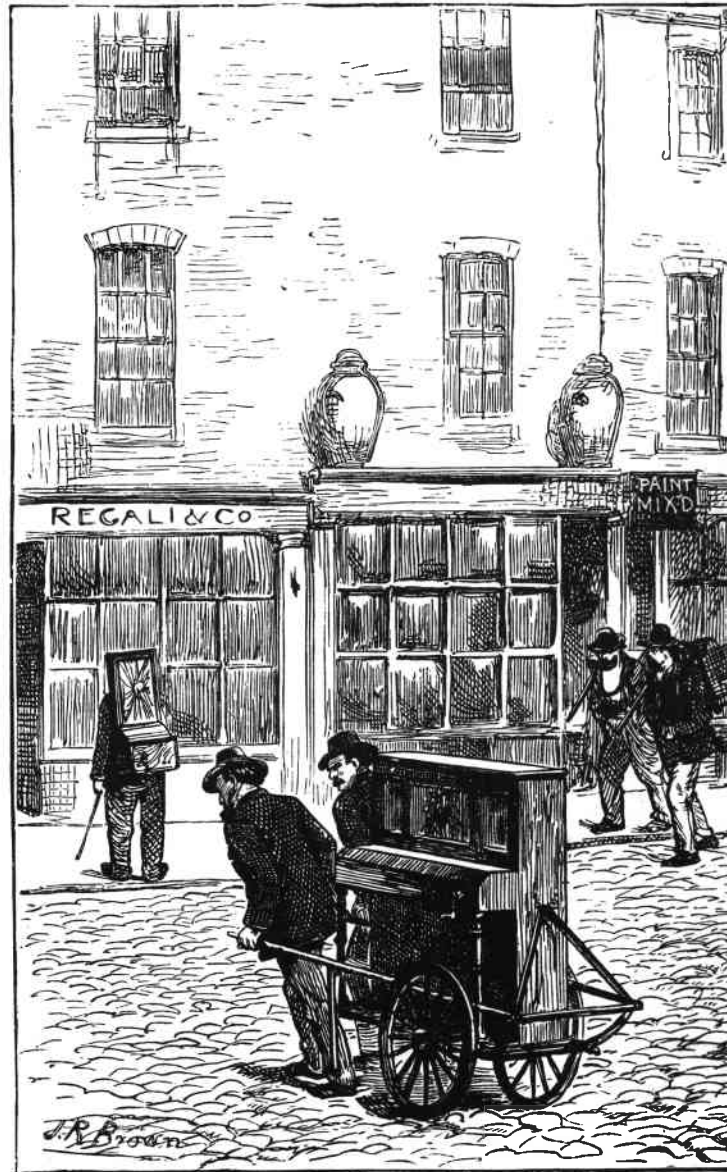
by Alfred Noyes c. 1920.

An extract from a poem discovered by Jim Friend.

*There's a barrel organ carolling across a
golden street
In the City as the sun sinks low;
With a silvery cry of linnets in its dull
mechanic beat,
As it dies into the sunset glow;
And it pulses through the pleasures of the
City and the pain
That surround the singing organ like a large
eternal light;
And they've given it a glory and a part
to play again
In the Symphony that rules the day and night.*

*And now it's marching onward through the realms
of old romance,
And trolling out a fond familiar tune,
And now it's roaring cannon down to fight the
King of France,
An now it's prattling softly to the moon,
And all around the organ there's a sea
without a shore
Of human joys and wonders and regrets,
To remember and to recompense the music
evermore
For what the cold machinery forgets.*

An Italian Colony in London. The organ grinders quarters near Hatton Garden. Picture reproduced from "The Graphic," September 4th, 1875. Kindly loaned by Ted Brown.



Editors Notes

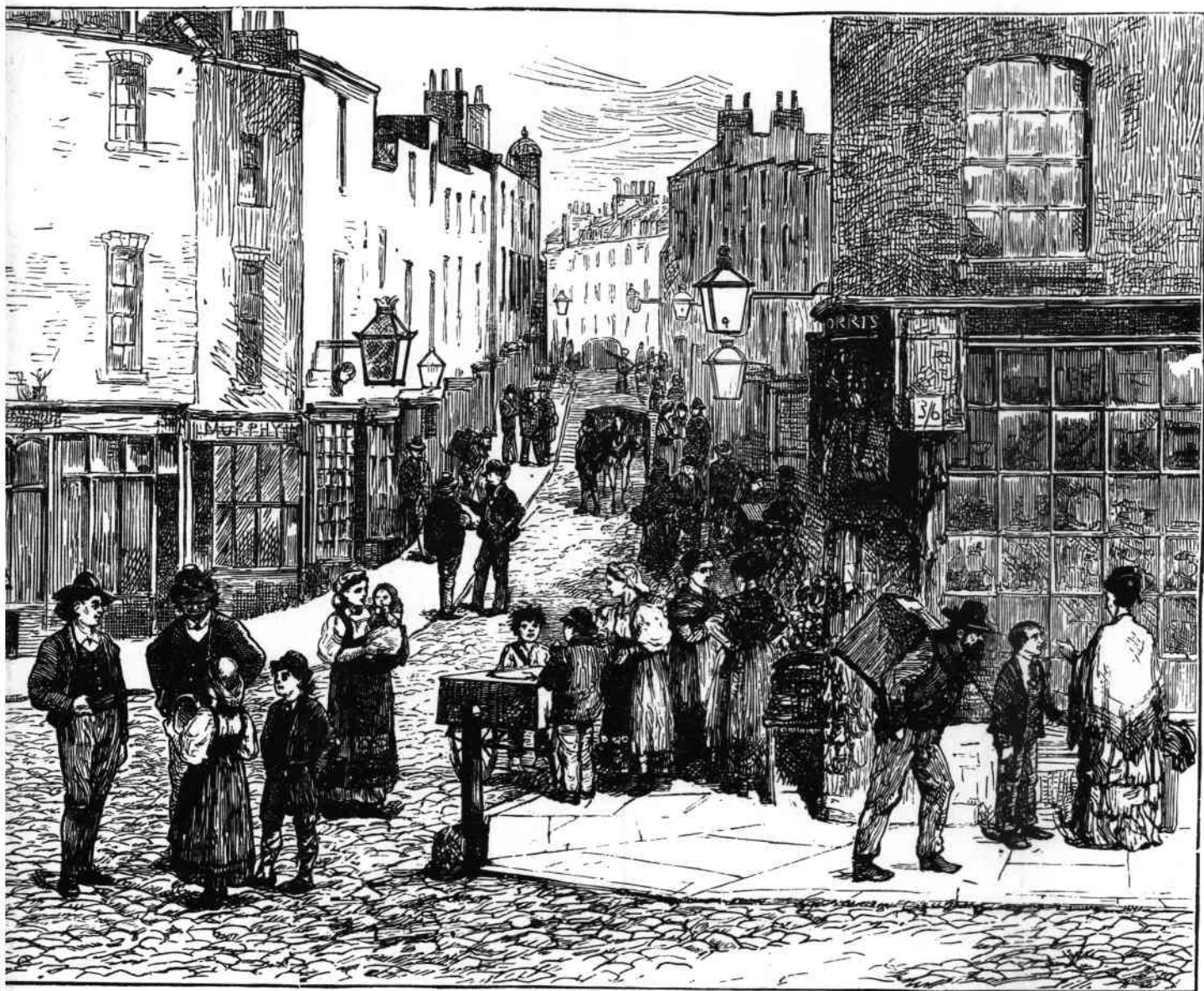
It appears that my first issue (No. 5 of Vol. 12) was well received, with compliments from all quarters. To me Ronald Leach from Holsworthy in Devon gave that issue its greatest credit with his comment "reverts to, but improves upon, the earlier issues which provide interesting reading years after their publication."

Due to the generosity of two printing trade suppliers, colour was made possible on the cover and on

the centre spread. By pursuing contacts for stories, an interesting cross section of articles was reproduced. To continue this standard support must be enthusiastic. Not only are interesting articles needed, but also a substantial rise in the number of memberships. Only this way can the extra cost of "colour" be supported. Your editor has already started a new membership campaign by printing, at no extra cost to the Society, extra copies of the previous issue for distribution to prospective members. If any member would like a spare copy to send to a prospective member, please request one, from me direct. I must emphasise however that this is my personal offer and not the Society's. The Society has spare copies but these are only available as back numbers and like all other issues, priced at the cost when published. My offer will only apply to Vol. 12 No. 5, and once stock is depleted, will not be repeated.

Even without a spare copy to tempt a friend into membership, persuasion should not be that difficult. Leaflets promoting the Society are available free from Ted Brown. Or you could show your own copy of the Music Box. Members are also welcome to bring guests to meetings which may encourage enrolments. Either way an increased membership means benefits for you. Please check whether all your collector friends are members. Even those with just a partial interest in mechanical music may enjoy reading the Music Box. The Society has for a long time looked forward to announcing member number 2000. This significant membership number has gone to Mr. John Morrison of Scotland. Let us now look forward and aim for an actual membership of 2000. Oh, and please don't forget those articles will you?

Graham Whitehead. ■



Newsdesk

Getting the Wife involved

The greatest wish of many members, might be that their wives be as interested as themselves in acquiring musical boxes. This would avoid the need to hide the latest bank statement and lead to a peaceful co-existence.

One way of overcoming this problem is to bring home a piece you really can't afford and say "I thought of something that would make a change from flowers dear. I've bought you a real barrel organ".

MBSG member Douglas Berryman has overcome this problem in a novel way, he is opening a shop, and before his wife had time to object, in came the signwriter and wrote 'Shelagh Berryman' above the doorway. Actually Shelagh did not need much persuading as her interest in mechanical music has always been

as keen as her husbands. Douglas who at one time ran the West Cornwall museum of Mechanical Music with Graham Webb, now operates a piano orchestration repair business in Wells, Somerset.

It was the number of tourists calling in Wells to visit the Cathedral that prompted their decision to open a musical box shop right opposite the cathedral's main entrance. As well as the modern souvenir type musical boxes, Shelagh and Douglas will also be selling cylinder and disc boxes, phonographs, organettes, pianolas, dolls and automata. A large selection of new and old clocks will also be available.

Douglas Berryman's pioneering spirit in mechanical music has led him to be the first to realise the advantage of full-colour advertising in the Music Box. Let's hope others will quickly follow. ■

A Nicole for 50p

The Nicole name is not only famous for musical boxes, for "Nicole" is also proving the best in Guide dogs.

During the Autumn meeting held at Leamington Spa in 1982, an organ festival was held and a collection took place in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, who are based in Leamington Spa. During the organ grind well over £1,000 was raised for this charity, enough money to train a Golden Retriever pup to become a "seeing-eye." And of course, to train her master to handle and understand the guide dog. Even before the pup was born his name had been decided. It was our own Cyril De Vere Green, first Secretary of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain, who proposed the name of Nicole, a fine name in musical boxes, to be a most appropriate name for the guide dog, which the

Society had sponsored by organ grinding.

After two years intensive training, Nicole now enjoys a more leisurely life leading her master around busy shops, across busy roads and can easily sniff-out Boots the Chemist in a town she does not know. In contrast to the Nicole musical box, this Nicole actually enjoys a "run" when her "governor" is not working.

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association have expressed their gratitude to the Society by presenting us with a statuette, now in the Society's archives and a recent photograph, shown here. The fact that charity donations support the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, enables the blind owner to purchase a trained guide dog for a mere 50p. Not all blind persons are fortunate, or even suitable, to have a dog. But with the help of organisations like ours, one more blind person now has almost the same freedom as you and I.

Will you help provide another blind person with a guide dog? Come along with your street organ, organette, barrel piano, to Napton Nickelodeon's organ grind starting at 10.30 am on Saturday the 30th August. This will be followed at 1.15 pm by a lunch, courtesy of the local council and an informal get-together at Napton Nickelodeon in the afternoon, there will also be a buffet tea and entertainment in the evening. If you don't have a suitable instrument we might be able to lend you one. Helpers are also needed for the street collections.

RSVP Graham Whitehead



Nicole the guide dog takes a moments rest in the park.

Second chance on T.V.

A short film of Robbie Gordon's collection, made by Scottish Television, was networked across the UK on Sunday March 9th. The film packed with musical boxes and clocks was one of the series of short programmes called 'Second Chance.'

Mechanical Music Museum Closes

Following an enormous amount of vandalism, the Devon Museum of Mechanical Music has sadly been forced to close its doors for the last time.

Owner and collector Ronald Leach, who wrote the section on restoration for Eric Cockaynes Fairground Organ Book, had advised the Society's Editor that he has "had enough." "The last two weeks in July always bring out the worst in tourists" quotes Ronald Leach "last season saw the most enormous amount of vandalism, such things as photographic enlargements being taken from the wall, an organ pipe stolen, and a Bates church barrel organ broken etc."

Ironically, Ronald blames his

Museum's success as its prime cause of its failure. Last season saw a very bad summer and tourists made a bee-line for the indoor attractions. In consequence, just when Ronald was thinking he was getting over-crowded, yet another coach load would arrive. It was on such a day as this when a tourist lent a helping hand to Ronald's demonstration by playing a complete tune on a Bates church barrel organ, backwards, destroying bridges and tails alike.

The Museum has now reverted to a private collection, but lets hope its doors stay just ajar for more appreciative enthusiasts and members of MBSGB.

It is so sad that a thoughtless few have caused the closing of what was a very popular tourist attraction, but isn't this always the case? ■

SOCIETY TOPICS

***Important announcement of AGM on page 219.**

Dates for your diary

6th June - 7.30 pm:-

AGM. Press Club, 76 Shoe Lane, London.

June 7th:-

Summer Meeting & Auction, Press Club, London.

Speakers: David Tallis - Illustrated talk - The story of the musical box.

Anthony Bullied - More on musical boxes, technical and practical.

Ralf Heintz (USA) - Mechanical music in art and politics

6th September:-

The annual Cambridge Organ Grind in aid of Muscular Dystrophy. All organ owners very welcome to join us for this happy occasion. Please telephone meetings secretary.

19th - 21st September:-

Autumn Meeting, Harte & Garter Hotel, Windsor, Berks.

'Organ Grind', a tour of Windsor and Eton which will take in Madame Tussauds Waxworks, the older part Windsor town and parts of Eton College and the Castle itself. An alternative will be a two hour trip on a river steamer on the Thames. Sunday morning we shall visit Frank Hollands Museum of Mechanical Music.

6th December:-

Christmas Meeting, Press Club, Shoe Lane, London:-

Christopher Proudfoot will give an illustrated talk on some of the more interesting items sold in Christies London, saleroom.

Nicholas Simons to give an illustrated talk 'Playing with the Piano.'

Doreen and Michael Muskett will give us a rare opportunity to hear and see the 'vielle a roue' (wheel fiddle) or Hurdy-Gurdy. This is the real 17th century instrument not the street piano commonly called the Hurdy-Gurdy.

31st December -

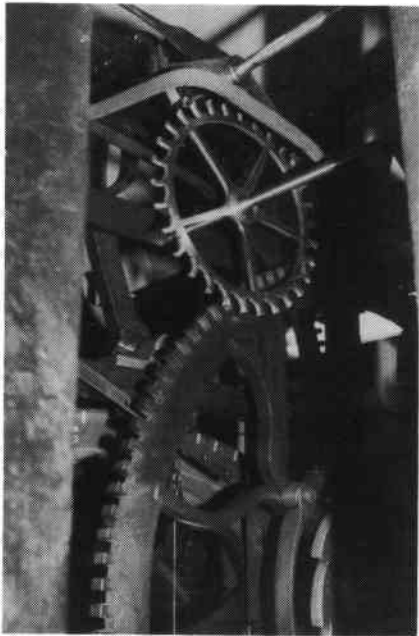
Chichester Lodge Hotel, Chichester, W. Sussex.

1st January 1987:-

New Years Eve Dinner Party. £15.00 per person. Bed & Breakfast. £15.00 per person.

New Years Day - Musical Extravaganza at the invitation of Clive & Enid Jones, The Mechanical Music Museum, Chichester.

The above programme may be subject to alteration.



The clock mechanism's escapement.



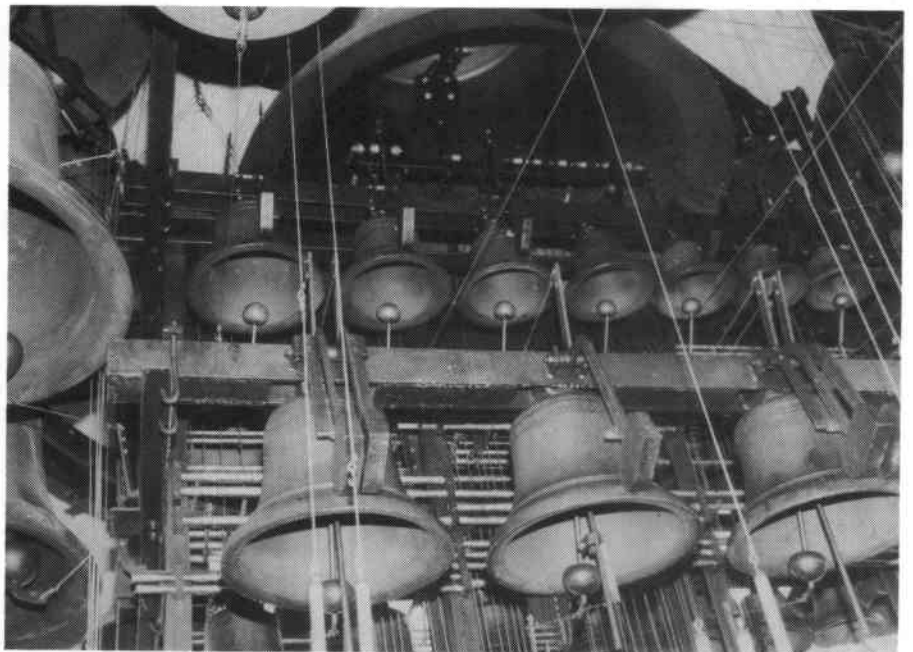
Alan Wyatt looks on in amazement as the barrel of the huge Carillon in the Dom square, Amsterdam begins to turn.

Society's Fourth Overseas Visit

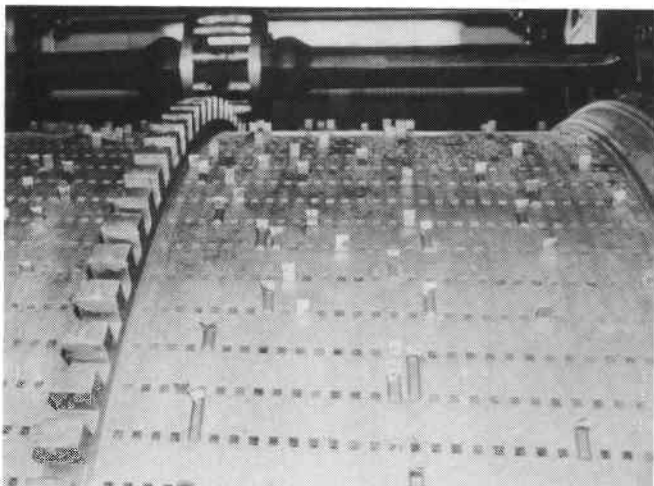
April Fools day started as no joke for the society members who had to rise from their beds well before sunrise, to travel to Alan Wyatt's Cambridge home.

This was the starting point for the Society's Easter visit to collections in Belgium and Holland. Our factory-fresh coach (it had only rolled off BL's production line on Good Friday) was driven most skilfully, perhaps incredibly, around the haphazardly parked vehicles in the narrow streets of Amsterdam by Mike Dockerill, the coach driver requested by popular demand, who also drove us to Switzerland three years ago.

Support for the trip had proved so popular that some members, unable to book space on the coach, had to make their own way to Amsterdam, joining us at our hotel, The Estheréa. During our three full days in Amsterdam many trips were organised to the most enjoyable of collections. We started with a visit to the



Some of the thirty bells in the bell tower.



The Carillon barrel. The longitudinal holes represent every bar of music. When programming the barrel the intervals of the music can be achieved by inserting varying sized stepped barrel pegs.



A heart rendering rendition of "Rule Britannia" being thumped out (literally) by Dr. Haspels at the Carillon's keyboard. The vertical linkages connect direct to the bell hammers.



Arthur Prinsen demonstrates how he arranges music for book organs.



At The House of Musical Boxes, a restaurant in the fishing village of Monnickendam, a Monopol automat gnome shook his head vigorously when a British penny was dropped in its coin slot.



Mrs. Paula Prinsen rattles off a quick tune on the book punching machine.

Royal Palace in the Dom Square. Above this superb building, rich in decoration and marble sculpture, is housed an outstanding Carillon clock. A most obliging Dr. Jan-Jaap Haspels had made arrangements to show us around this beautiful Palace and to view its Carillon. We first viewed the Carillon itself and then ascended the steel steps to the Cuploa where we were treated to a recital by Jan-Jaap Haspels via the manual playing keyboard. Many of us were meeting Dr. Haspels for the first time and his performance on the keyboard of the Carillon left us in no doubt as to his great musical ability.

As we waited to travel back down from the attic, a few at a time on a small lift, Dr. Haspels told me that he had once arranged the tune "Rule Britannia" on the Carillon. Curiously I asked him just how long that task took. Unfortunately at that moment the lift door closed with him the other side and the reply came "I'll tell you when we get to the bottom." Regretably we both forgot to pursue the conversation.

From here we were whisked away on a tourist-spot crawl:- a canal trip, a cheese factory, and even a closed clog factory. The highlight of this whistle stop tour was lunch at a musical restaurant. Rare and exquisite pieces of mechanical music surrounded the dining table and as one ate, the management played first one piece and then another. All of this was a bit rushed and the venue would have been well worth an evening meal visit.

On our second day we travelled back through into Belgium, first to the town of Sint Niklaas, to the home and workshop of music arranger and organ builder Arthur Prinsen. In fact Mr. Prinsen's activities really fall into three categories, the third being a museum operator. We were told that his museum which is presently open for groups is about to close, and will revert to a private collection, allowing him more time for organ restoring and music arranging.

We were first entertained by his beautiful collection of dance organs before being taken into his workshop where we were given a practical demonstration of arranging book music. Mr. Prinsen's wife, Paula, continued the demonstration with her dexterous use of the book cutting machine.

Lunch was taken in real Belgian style, by visiting a nearby cafe which housed a modern style Decap dance organ. With lunch over, Mr. Prinsen escorted us through the winding streets of Antwerp to the factory of Decap where large dance hall organs are still being built. Electronics have taken over these days and the main organ sound is produced in this way, but the accordion, jazz flutes and percussions are still being made just as they were in the 30's, operated by pneumatics.

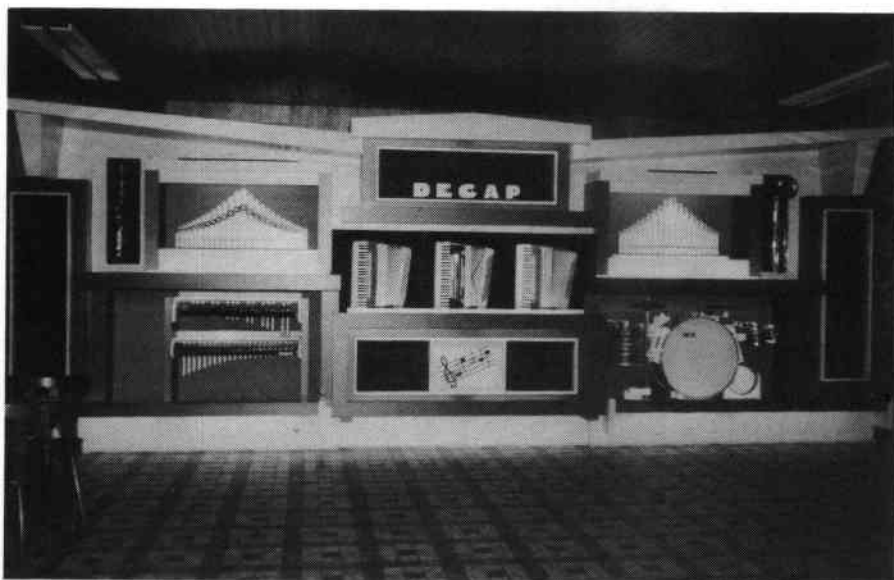
On our way back to Amsterdam we called off in the village of St-Job-In-T-Goor, at the organ building works of Mr. J. Verbeeck. Here we found no evidence of electronics, just traditional organ building, and several of the larger type fairground organs were in the course of construction. In another room organ book music was being manufactured. Mr. Verbeeck invited us to have coffee with him and took us 250 metres along the street to a cafe where there was also music from a modernised Mortier dance organ.

With a busy programme planned by Alan our last day took us to the new mechanical music museum in Utrecht. It is here that its Director and Curator Dr. Jan-Jaap Haspels gave us a very special and thorough demonstration of most of the larger pieces.

Once again Dr. Haspels displayed his considerable musical talent by playing the three manual forty stop church organ made in 1886 by Witte of Messrs J. Batz of Utrecht. This has a tracker action, requiring considerably more effort to play than the modern electric action keyboards. One of the tunes we heard was the hymn 'Old Hundreth'. This was in honour of the late Cyril De Vere Green whose collection is housed here and a bust of him stands in the entrance hall of the museum. Dr. Haspels had played this tune at the memorial service for Cyril in London. We then heard the Easter Hymn played on an English walker Barel and finger organ and whilst Alan Wyatt turned the handle Dr. Haspels provided the embellishments on the two-manual keyboards. The museum named 'Van Speeldoos tot



Mr. Prinsen's magnificent Gaudin organ with over 1200 pipes, manufactured in 1920.



A modern electronic and pneumatic Decap organ in a village cafe near Mr. Prinsen's home. Notice the dance floor in the foreground which is packed each evening.



105-key Robot organ in course of restoration at the Decap workshops, Antwerp.

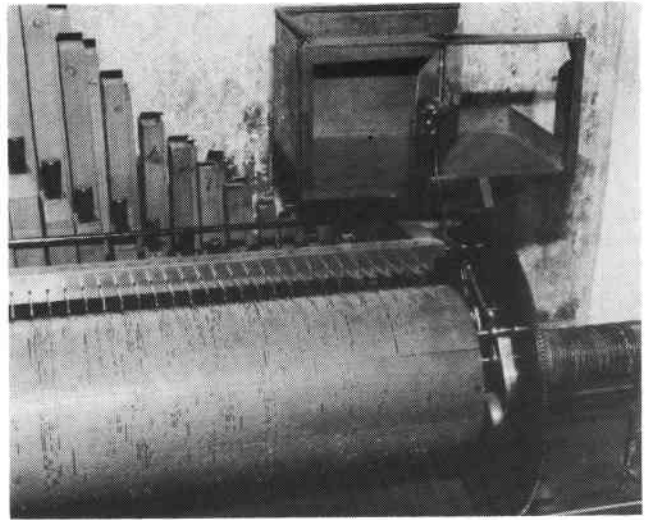
Pierement' (from the musical box to the street organ), is housed in a restored church, the ancient Buurkerk, situated in the city centre close to the previous premises at Acter den Dom 12. The Dutch government contributed £5 million to create a national museum devoted to street organs and other examples of mechanical music. Floors have been created on two levels and the church sub-divided with soundproof walls and doors, enabling many organs to be played at the same time without interfering with each other. Although we didn't have time to see it, the museum must surely have a very well equipped workshop and a team of restorers. I say this because of the large number of instruments that were all in absolute tip-top condition.

Our final port-of-call took us to Avro Studios in Hilversum where a full tour of the studios had been arranged. However, with the time available we had to content ourselves with a demonstration of the Standaard/Compton pipe organ which was installed in 1932 and still in very fine condition.

Our warmest thanks are extended to our hosts who made the Society's 4th overseas trip so informative and enjoyable. Not forgetting of course Alan Wyatt who did a special 'dry run' last year in order to make our trip run as smoothly as possible. ■

Right: The Winkel organ is displayed without a case, enabling the visitor to observe its moving mechanisms.

Below: Another interesting item in the Utrecht museum, a chamber street barrel organ with automata figures.



Above left: A bust of the late Cyril De Vere Green, displayed in the entrance hall of the Museum, Van Speeldoos Tot Pierement in Utrecht.

Above right: A one-wheel wonder, an unusually designed barrel organ made in Holland by Winkel. All the movements including lifting the key frame are derived from the use of just one wheel.



Due to the unfortunate loss of certain photographs during processing, the Editor apologizes for the omission of photographs of Mr. J. Verbeek.

Members who visited the museum Van Speeldoos Tot Pierement, gather for a group photo before departing.





Goodbye to Dr. Haspels, smiles all around but sadly we must leave you, the picture says the rest.



Our organist at the console of the Compton/Standaard 19 rank theatre organ, Radio Avro.



Avro Radio organ's blowing chamber showing the pressure regulators.



Mr. Buurman, manager of the entertainment department at Avro radio station reminisces with George Gingell who last visited the radio station during the war years.



Music from the Mountains

by Graham Whitehead

"The hills are alive with the Sound of Music," sings Julie Andrews in that famous musical 'The Sound of Music.' There can be few people around who have not seen at least once, that immortalised musical filmed in Austria in 1964. Although based on a true story "the hills" were not truly filled with the sound of music, with or without Maria. But take a trip into the mountains westward of Salzburg, in that country which is famed for its musical culture and you might just find what you are least expecting, the hills filled with music.

This unlikely phenomena was experienced during a recent winter sports holiday whilst skiing in the Austrian Alps. January skiing conditions in Austria were far from ideal this year, in fact more snow was falling in England than had fallen in Austria.

On one particular morning I felt relieved to leave the icy slopes early, preferring to relax in the Alpine sunshine sipping Gluevine on the balcony of a mountain chalet restaurant.

It was almost midday and time for ski classes to take a lunch break. The voices of distant skiers came closer. With them came a strange impression of organ music wafting across the mountain-side. At first I thought this was an over loud radio but the sound was too distant to be sure of exactly what it was. I did not recognise the tune, a rather heavy operatic piece. Not quite my taste in music, but still it was music and pipe organ music at that. Most mysterious! my interest was aroused.

A moment later the waitress came out with my coffee "Was ist das?" I enquired, "Ah das ist der heldenorgel auf Kufstein." Actually she said "Ah that is the heldenorgan at Kufstein," no doubt wondering why a man of my age was speaking such schoolboy German. Well at least I knew now for certain that it was an organ of some sort but I hadn't a clue what a Helden was. By the time my wife returned, the sound had abated and we decided to carry on skiing while the ski school classes relaxed.

Curiosity aroused, the following day we made a 3 mile journey to the next town. It was here that we discovered quite by accident a musical sensation. A small sign on the side of the Rathaus pointed towards "Heldenorgel." We climbed the short flight of steps which led up to a courtyard. To one side of the courtyard was built a small stadium with wooden bench seating for maybe 100 people. This faced a memorial cross and just to the side a stone building about 12 feet square with a pointed slated roof and six large windows which looked out on to the cobbled courtyard and stadium seating. Although the temperature was well below freezing at least a dozen people sat huddled together as if awaiting some great happening.



Heldenorgelspieltisch - Heroes organ playing table. The console of the organ is situated inside this snow covered stone building.

"I don't think this is the right place," I told Pat, "this looks like some open air religious gathering." I was beckoned to sit down. Indicating that I was only a sightseer, I wandered across this intriguing courtyard and peeped through the windows into the stone room. My eyes opened wide with surprise for the inside contained a pipe organ console. This was just about the most unlikely place imaginable to find a pipe organ. Was this the originator of yesterdays mysterious music and if so where was the pipe chamber? A glance around the neighbouring buildings gave me no clue. The chamber needed to be as close as possible to the console but if it was there it was certainly well hidden. We wandered back into the main street, quite fascinated by what we had seen but still with a lot of questions in our minds. Where was the sound coming from and why was it even there at all? The most obvious place for this organ and far more practical would have been inside a building.

We popped into a little cafe where we found an English speaking waiter who helped unravel these mysteries. The hill climbs above the shops along the main street. On this rocky bank above, had stood a fortress for the last 800 years. The Settlement below had developed into a market place and then a fortress town surrounded by economic and military importance.

It was looking up towards the Burghertower of this fortress that revealed the location of the organ chamber. As our waiter pointed out, in this tower was contained the pipework of this organ, speaking out with enormous volume through openings over the surrounding mountain-side, even reaching the ski slope 5 kilometres along the valley.



The Burghertower above the rooftops, housing the organ. Note the opening for the sound to speak out. The organ is linked electrically to the console at street level, to the left of these shops.

As our waiter chatted, a clock in a darkened corner began striking. It was twelve noon. "You can see the organ tower now, and now you are going to hear it," he went on. Before another ten seconds had passed, and as if by a secret signal, the organ began to play. The double glazing did little to hold back the might of this ferocious beast and in the fifteen minutes that followed empty cups were inclined to rattle and I might have even seen a pot plant quiver.

A further study revealed that during history Kufstein suffered from the feud between Bavaria and the Tyrolese. It was the Congress of Vienna which re-established for good Austrian sovereignty in the Tyrol and in Kufstein, restoring peace to a land of conflict.

After the Napoleonic wars the fortress lost its military importance. During its history, the fortress had always been associated with war. Political rebels, Italians, Hungarians and Poles were imprisoned in its tiny cells for fighting for the freedom of their nations. So at the start of the twentieth century the townfolk decided to hide its unpleasant past and the idea was created for a more worthy association of linking the fortress with the fallen soldiers of the past. And so was born the idea of a "Pipe organ of Heroes" (Heldenorgel). This unusual idea would honour the heroic German and Austrian soldiers killed in action.

In 1930 the firm of E. F. Walcker in Ludwigsburg (Wurtemberg) built the organ. After preliminary tests to establish the timbre, the building of the organ began, and on the second and third of May 1931 the inauguration took place in the presence of 20,000 guests from Austria and Germany.

The organ was not only to be a memorial but also to serve art. During the building, timbre tests had revealed the possibility of playing in full purity, polyphonic music and in particular the music of Bach. Therefore the instrument became a place of cultivating music and has remained so until the present day. Many famous organists have performed concerts from this console. Since 1931 the Organ of Heroes has had a regular organist who plays daily at 12 noon. Since 1963 the permanent organist has been Reinhold Hindinger.

To have embarked on this project in 1931 was a very risky action indeed as the Burghertower is exposed to all the influences of weather. The sound of the organ is also affected by storm and rain and even more so by temperature changes.

The characteristics of the pipes of an organ of this type are quite different from pipework of an orchestration or even a fair organ. However, the same principles of organ building apply. The volume of a "flue" pipe is relative to its scale (size). Basically, the larger the scale and the higher the mouth's "cut-up," the greater wind pressure needed and so the louder it speaks. An even higher wind pressure would be required to blow the "reed" pipes loudly. As volume was a prime consideration the Kufstein organ was built to work from 20" water gauge (500mm) for the reeds and about 18" (450mm) for the flues. A typical church organ would be winded on 4" to 6" w.g.

At the time of construction the feasibility was highly hypothetical as no such wind pressure had ever been used before. It was pleasing therefore that this bold exercise was a success, rewarding all the parties concerned for their troublesome and difficult task.

After 30 years or so the climatic circumstances took their toll on the organ, crumbling its leatherwork, and in 1965 a renovation exercise had to be undertaken. This included enlarging the organ and it appears it was at this point that a loud speaker was placed in the console room connected to a microphone in the pipe chamber. It appeared to me that the console and chamber were at least 200 metres apart. The time taken for the sound to travel from the castle turret back to the ears of the performer at the console, would be quite significant and this delay would certainly confuse the performer. This problem would be completely overcome by the loud speaker and microphone.

The connection between the electric action of the console and the relays in the organ chamber are by a lead covered cable consisting of 220 wires.

In the extension of the organ an additional cable consisting of more than 200 wires was added. To the existing two manuals and pedals were added a further two manuals and six registration pistons. Originally the organ had 1831 pipes it now has 4307. The wind pressure is produced by a 10 hp motor.

This organ of heroes built by Dr Oscar Walcker in 1931 is a masterpiece. This was the worlds first big open-air organ, and although it is not a piece of mechanical music it will surely fascinate any Society member who may care to visit Kufstein which is located close to Innsbruck. Somewhere beyond the horizon there may even be other hills alive with the sound of music. If there are the Editor (and the readers) would be pleased to hear. ■

Reinhold Hindinger at the console of the Heldenorgel for the recording of a tape cassette produced by Music Mus Tyrol.



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Musical Box Society of Great Britain

Annual Auction

7th June at 3pm
(viewing during morning)

As the final item of the summer meeting an auction will be conducted by Christopher Proudfoot. All commission will go to Society funds. Make this a great event. Bring your entries to the registration desk in the morning.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Annual General Meeting

Members are hereby notified that the 1986 Annual General Meeting of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Friday, 6th June 1986, at the Press Club, 76 Shoe Lane, London.

Under the rules it is only necessary to circulate the membership with proposed change or changes to the constitution and bylaws and, in the event of there being no such proposals, no further notice will be issued.

Jon Gresham
President

It was a wet December day in the year 1859 when the piercing whistles of the American steam organ were first heard in Britain.

People in Streatham and Lewisham and other neighbouring parts of London first heard a soft singing noise growing steadily louder by the minute producing a wailing musical sound. According to newspaper reports of the time people left their houses and gathered in the streets in bewilderment, dogs howled, children ran home to their mothers while police tried to calm the nervous. The gathering crowds were mystified and alarmed.

In the nearby Crystal Palace an American, Arthur Dennis demonstrated before an auditorium filled with music critics, his great invention, the steam organ.

People at that time were well accustomed to the music of the conventional organ producing sounds from pipes blowing at a rate of two to four inches water gauge, but in Arthur Dennis' invention this monstrous instrument had thirty times the volume of any other organ in existence. For the pipes of this organ were made to speak by steam supplied by a thirty horse power engine developing a pressure of something like a 126 pounds per square inch, a formerly unheard of achievement. The tones could be varied from quiet to thunderous, a roar which had terrorised the district around the Crystal Palace.

Despite such thundering power the music critics were unimpressed and the organ was never installed in any part of England. Mr Dennis gave his instrument the name of "Kalliope," later spelt by other manufacturers with a 'C'. He was of the opinion that his organ could take the place of a full military band and suggested that its playing would be an effective way of calling people to church.

Back in America his own people were more enthralled and steam organs were installed in several American cities, New Orleans, St Louis, to name but two. The inhabitants of these towns were reminded that Sunday was the worshipful day by the powerful roaring of this instrument. Other inventors manufacturers began to make Kalliope's and their use in America eventually changed from calling people to church to following the circus into town. Circus people found this noisy instrument an excellent way of making sure the whole town knew the circus had arrived.

The Joys of Owning a Calliope

by Harvey Roehl

With a foreword by the editor using as a source, the book "Patent Applied For," by Fred Coppersmith and J. Lynx, published in 1949 by Co-ordination (Press and Publicity) Ltd.



Harvey Roehl plays his 43-note air-operated Tanglely calliope, built in 1930 and once owned by the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus.

The Calliope, is for all practical purposes, strictly an American Instrument. It was during the first half of the 19th Century, when Joshua Stoddard, of Worcester, Massachusetts, concocted his 'steam piano' – which was a set of tuned whistles blown by live steam. It's not clear to this writer just what his intent was by way of intended use for this device, but whatever it was, it made plenty of noise and surely could be heard for two or three miles.

There were two traditional uses that developed for the steam calliope. One was on the river boats that plied the 'Father of Waters' – the Mississippi river, that was of such great importance to the development of commercial traffic that opened up the great American West, although the music makers were confined to the many-show-boats that visited from town to town. The entrepreneurs and showmen who operated these vessels were able to announce to the entire populace of a community of their coming attraction, merely by playing the instrument starting several miles away from the landing! This is the only place in the USA today where calliopes are still used on a commercial basis; the famed 'Delta Queen' has an instrument, as does the 'Natchez,' and no doubt some others.

The second use that developed was for the circus. Every American who was around, even as a small child, in the late 1930's has fond recollections of seeing and hearing the steam calliope, which was always the last wagon in the circus parade. Circuses travelled between cities and towns at night, mainly on the railroad back in those days, and the early morning hours were spent erecting the tents, feeding everyone including the animals, and getting ready for the first show in the early afternoon.

Late in the morning the parade formed, featuring the pretty ladies in their sparkling costumes, the wagons with the animals in their cages, the elephants marching single file with each one holding the tail of the one ahead with his trunk, the circus band playing atop its own special wagon, and last but not least, the calliope wagon complete with its coal-fired boiler and its fireman, and the artist pounding away at the keyboard. Today's youngsters, who have never had the experience of hearing one of these great machines, complete with the sight of clouds of steam and the smell of soft coal smoke, have indeed missed the thrill of a lifetime and are simply to be pitied!

Circus folk, by the way, pronounce the name 'kally-ope' while most other people say it 'kal-eye-o-pee'. But however it's said is unimportant – what matters is the excitement of seeing and hearing one of these monsters. And monsters they were, with all the headaches of having to make and handle high-pressure steam. This in turn led to the development of smaller, more practical, and more easily portable calliopes during the 1920's. The best known makes of these in America were the National and the Tanglely; there were numerous others, all operated on compressed air.

It is not clear how many Tanglelys, the most popular make, were produced, but it surely has to be around two thousand. Probably at least two hundred survive today, mainly in the hands of private collectors, some of whom attempt to capitalise on their investments by playing them for pay to provide 'ballyhoo', attract attention, or whatever. This writer, for example, during 1984 was engaged to play for five days at a fair in the State of Rhode

Island (350 miles from Vestal, NY) twice for a shopping centre opening, and once to entertain the visitors to a tourist railway in the Catskill Mountain region. He has already contracted for engagements during 1986.

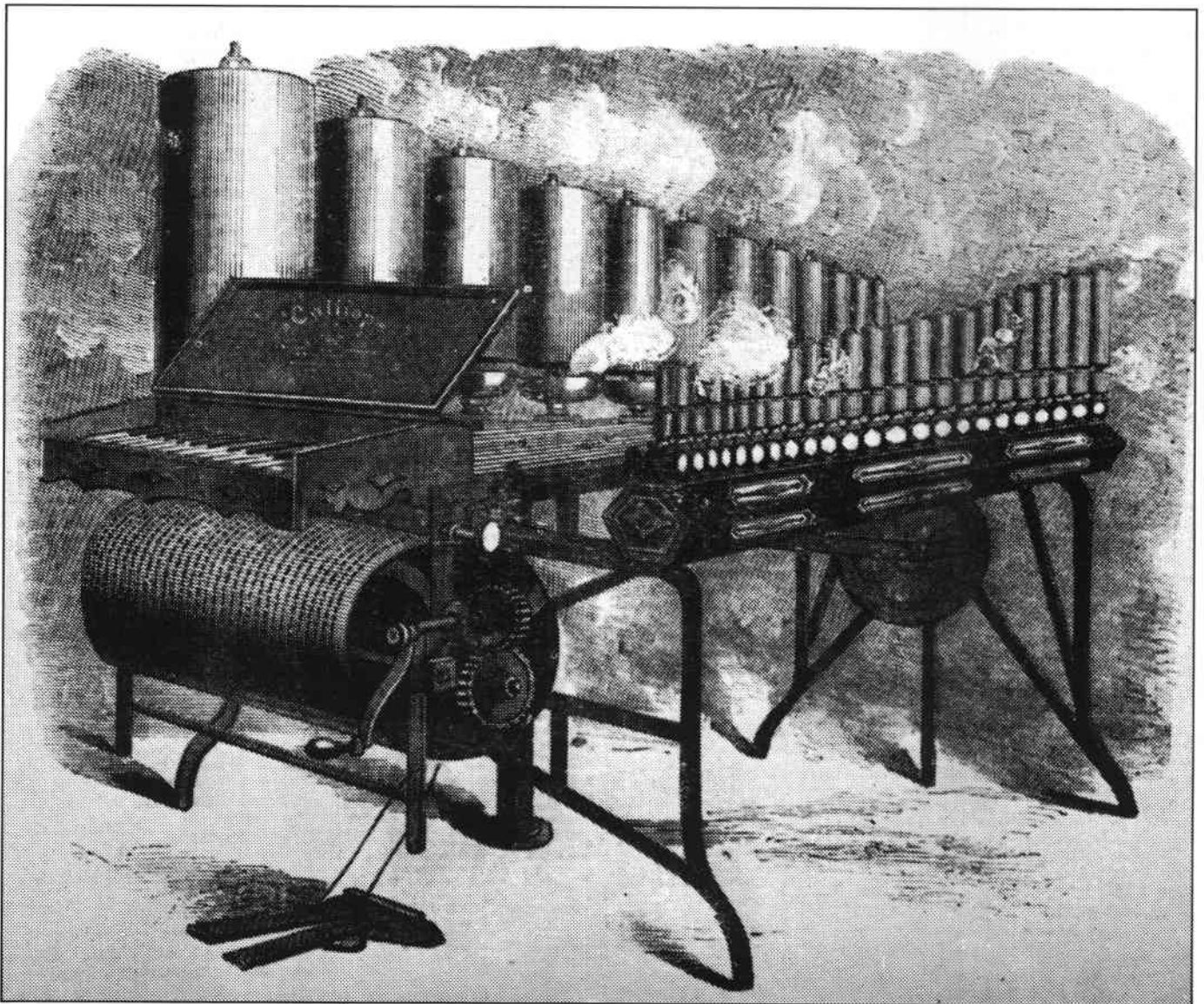
The instrument owned by the writer was once the property of America's best-known circus, the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Shows, which at one time performed in Britain. Some time during the 1940's the show sold off some of its properties, and this instrument was purchased by one Allen Albee for his summer tourist resort in the White Mountains in the State of New Hampshire. For the next 25 years or so he not only entertained his guests with the calliope, but he played it for the parade every July 4th at nearby Wolfeboro. This is the national holiday at which time Americans celebrate their independence from Merrie Olde England and King George III!

When Mr. Albee left the earthly scene for that great resort in the sky, his property was sold to another operator, who promptly ran it into bankruptcy. The calliope was left in a shed to become a derelict. In the early 1980's it was purchased by Q. David Bowers of Wolfeboro, who in turn sold it to W. Murray Clark of North Woodstock, New Hampshire. He in turn sold it to this writer, who in turn hired Tim Westman of Woodsville, New Hampshire to restore it to its original pristine condition.

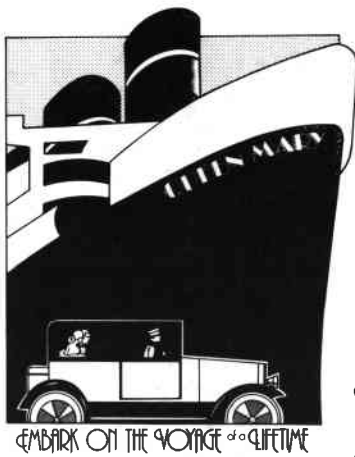
In the meanwhile, the writer and his wife set about to construct of oak, a demountable framework, to fit their Ford 'pickup truck', which in turn would hold a candy-striped canvas canopy made to order by a local upholstery firm. They also prepared equipment so that the calliope could quickly be on or off loaded, and secured a 2.5 kilowatt motor-generator set to drive the turbine which provides the compressed air to blow the pipes.

The instrument can be played from the keyboard, which is how its owner prefers to use it 'in the field', but it is also played by music rolls. The rolls are the so-called 'type A', commonly used for many coin-operated pianos found in America. By careful selection, tunes can be used which are appropriate for this usage and which sound fine on the calliope.

In order to help justify the expenditure, your writer and his wife had the instrument recorded by a professional recording engineer in the Kol-Flo studios in Vestal, New York. Two full hours of its artistic renderings (all from perforated rolls) are available in the form of cassettes (one hour each on two) and a 42 minute disc recording is also available. Interested readers can get them directly from the Vestal Press, or possibly from the St. Albans Organ Musuem, or Leslie Brown in Stockton-on-Tees. This article first appeared in Player Piano Group Journal.



Arthur Dennis's steam organ of 1859. A far "whistle" from Harvey's Calliope built in 1930 by Tanglely.



The Californian Connection

Your Editor's report of the 36th Annual Meeting
of the Musical Box Society International
at Long Beach California,
Autumn 1985

It was as the aircraft descended towards Los Angeles airport that I encountered my first of

many surprises in store on a holiday, billed by the M.B.S.I., as a "Journey of a Lifetime."

As the plane touched down on the scorching run-way a spontaneous round of applause was heard throughout the Boeing 747. "Was there something wrong?" I casually asked the British Airways Stewardess as we left. "Oh no, applauding the pilot is just one of those American customs," came the reply. After an eleven hour non-stop flight we were finally at our destination, well pretty near it at least, and we were looking forward to joining M.B.S.G.B. members Reg Waylett, Keith Harding, Reg Mayes, Brian Campsie, some with their families aboard the Queen Mary.

The Queen Mary, once plied the ocean between New York and Southampton. Today her only movement is with the rise and fall of the tide alongside her permanent berth at Long Beach, California. Like an old horse put out to graze, this work-horse rests serenely yet imposingly in her practically land-locked harbour. With her art deco styling finely restored, she is now a popular floating hotel. The Queen had been chartered for the annual meeting of the Musical Box Society International by the West Coast Chapter. But that marvellous meeting was still a few days ahead so we decided to take in neighbouring Hollywood and Disneyland in the meantime.

It was our first visit to the States. We had wrongly assumed that as our friends spoke the same language they would share the same customs. At first I was alarmed to see cars ignoring the stop signal at the traffic lights. Quite legal, I soon learnt, when turning right. Rather like a filter over here. Other traffic lights gave priority to cars carrying two or more people, and in road signs the Americans seem to have simplified the English language. A "Do not enter" sign simply announces "Wrong way" and "Parking prohibited" becomes "Don't even think of parking here."

Traffic moved at a fraction of the speed portrayed on American T.V. films. We found driving on the Freeways quite relaxing and the system much more sensible. Drivers choose any lane on the freeway no need to keep to the nearside. Overtaking is allowed whichever side you wish, so there is no need to hog the outside lane which is so prevalent on English motorways.

Traffic islands are rarely encountered, in fact we only ever saw one, in Long Beach. Ironically, it's designer was killed attempting to drive his car around it.

After settling into our Best Western Motel, £40.00 per night for a three bedded room with cubed ice on tap, I took my first stroll down Anaheim Street. Flat roofed buildings, mainly motels extended as far as the eye could see, their colourfully illuminated name signs dominating the sites they advertised. Above the signs a network of overhead power lines, like huge cobwebs, supported by extra high telegraph poles, and reaching even higher were the Date trees lining Cattella Avenue standing majestically 70-80 feet tall in the bronze blue sky of a hot California evening. I turned back towards our motel, on the horizon above "Down Town L.A." the sky tinged to a golden brown; - Smog! I was told all weather forecasts included air quality prospects, today was a first stage pollution warning. Breathing the L.A. air was as bad as smoking 40 cigarettes a day I was informed.

Disneyland

Well, it was time to start the California experience with a visit to Disneyland. No need to drive. Free bus shuttles are provided to each Hotel. The bus trundled unhurriedly to the next Best Western Hotel. The driver was more concerned with chatting-up his passengers than the busy traffic around him. We stopped to pick-up a dozen passengers and would you believe who boarded, it was M.B.S.G.B. member Brian Campsie, his wife and two daughters, and all that way from home.

Disneyland itself was well worth the journey to the U.S.A., much more impressive than I had ever imagined:- Disneyland has a mechanical Music Collection, which consists mainly of orchestrions some of which are exhibited.

As we took a tram ride down Main Street we passed a vintage arcade, in the door-way stood a Welte Cottage orchestrion I caught a glimpse of the person inserting a nickel, Brian Campsie again.

Modern Automats (Disneyland prefers to call them Audio-animatronics) convincingly life-like and life-sized abound by the thousand, yes literally thousands. These are to be found in a whole range of entertainments which requires two or three days to see properly. What did impress me was the close attention to detail to which every exhibit is constructed and the standards of cleanliness were unsurpassed.

35,000 people had passed through the turnstiles by lunch-time and not a scrap of litter to be seen anywhere. Hundreds of cleaners constantly pick up any discarded object, or were they really automats disguised as cleaners?

Catchy theme songs have been written for many of the Disney rides. We soon found ourselves humming "It's a small small world," and were later able to buy a 15½" Regina disc arranged by Porter Music Box Company of that popular American tune.

On board the Queen Mary

At last, the real purpose of our journey had arrived. It was Wednesday 28th August the first day of the West Coast Chapter's version of an Annual Meeting.



I glanced at the first item on the programme "6.00 a.m. Meet at registration desk for jogging!" We wisely decided to give this one a miss and so too did at least 800 other members attending the meeting. We were out and about in time to see 66% of the joggers return. Peter Schuhknecht and convention organiser Ralph Schack. We never did find out who the third jogger was.

Eight or maybe nine coaches drew alongside the Queen Mary, they were to take members on a grand tour of private collections. There was so much to see in so short a time that route planning and timing was needed that would do credit to a military manoeuvre. At 8.15 a.m. our coach left to visit four collections on the West route. Three other coaches left visiting the same collectors in a different order, the remaining coaches departed for the Eastern route. Our bus captain made use of the travelling time to describe just what we were going to see!

The House Collections

"On behalf of the West Coast Chapter of MBSI, welcome to this 36th Annual Meeting and to Southern California. This is the West Collection Tour, and today we will be visiting four unique collections for a day filled with musical boxes, orchestrions automobiles, and even a merry-go-round. I know you will enjoy them all. Today, we will be going northwest to our first stop in San Sylmar to see the unbelievable collection of Mr. & Mrs. J. B. Nethercutt, we should be arriving in about 90 minutes. After visiting San Sylmar, we will backtrack a bit to the collection of Jerry and Helene Sutter in Bel Air where we will have lunch. Then it's back up the pass through the Santa Monica Mountains into the San Fernando Valley where we will pick up the freeways which will take us to the Griffith Park Merry-Go-Round. Finally, we will head down into Los Angeles for the wonderful collection of Mary & Ben Lilien, where they will be serving dinner to 240 people tonight! These collection tours are extremely popular. We will be bussing 720 people during the two days of tours, and there is a sizeable waiting list of people wanting to come."

This narration was written mainly by Susan Stricker. Maybe at this point I should also thank Ralph & Gloria Schack for information they provided regarding this whole report.

We had a long way to go to our first stop and we picked up some interesting information on Los Angeles and the surrounding areas. Known mostly for its freeways and movie stars - Los Angeles is an industrial giant and its wholesale trade ranks second only to New York.

Los Angeles airport is ranked third busiest air-travel airport in the world, and sometimes during peak traffic periods there are as many as 100 aircraft per hour on the five runways of the 3,500 acre site.

Nearby in El Segundo you can find the Old Town Music Hall - a wonderful old theatre with a mighty Wurlitzer theatre organ. The small movie house features silents and oldies - such as 'Naughty Marietta' and 'I Married an Angel' with Nelson Eddy and Jeanette MacDonald. Each show has a short organ recital, a sing-a-long and when they show silents - the mighty Wurlitzer provides the accompaniment. It's a real fun place - a sort of a step back in time.

Our itinerary took us along Sunset Boulevard and through Beverly Hills, home to many famous film stars working in nearby Hollywood. Beverly Hills is geared toward service to the wealthy - industrial activity is forbidden within city limits, laws dictate the size of real estate signs and residents and visitors are prohibited from parking on the street overnight. Beverly Hills has more doctors and psychiatrists than any other area its size - there is one doctor for every 52 residents.



Jerry Doring's Mills Violano, but what's in that other cabinet?



Inside the other cabinet:- a rare Violano Orchestra. This device connects electrically to the Mills Violano and using special Violano Orchestra rolls becomes a rhythm unit to accompany the violin and piano. The top part of the cabinet contains the bass drum, wood block and tom-tom. In the lower part is a double beater snare drum and cymbal. Instead of the more conventional vacuum pneumatic operation, the Violano Orchestra, like the violin and piano, is operated entirely by electrical solenoids.

Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford built Pickfair in 1919 and nearly every other famous movie star followed suit. Today, there are three activities possible in Beverly Hills: shopping, eating and people watching. We turn into the famous Rodeo Drive with all the luxury products imaginable, you can stroll and watch and eat in some of the most expensive eateries around - it is one of the most famous and elite streets in the world with perhaps the highest commercial rents in the United States. The cheapest properties are said to be worth £250,000.

At 10.00 a.m. we arrived at a private collection described as functional fine art belonging to Mr. & Mrs. J. B. Nethercutt. Mr. Nethercutt is Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Merle Norman Cosmetics. Nearly 100 priceless automobiles are located on the premises and those which are restored are driven periodically to keep them functioning properly. One of the world's largest and finest collections of automatic mechanical musical instruments also adds beauty to the eye and ear at San Sylmar. It ranges from small and large cylinder and disc musical boxes, reproducing grand pianos, large and lavish orchestrions to a magnificent 1926 Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ restored with a four-manual console and 2500 pipes.

All these objects of fine art are displayed in a setting of breathtaking beauty. Marble floors and columns, gold leafed ceilings, hand-wrought iron balustrades, gilded with gold, intricately fashioned architectural details all combine to provide the perfect environment for the priceless functional fine art contained within the Merle Norman Cosmetics Tower of Beauty.

Our guide at San Sylmar was to be married later that week and had forgone his holiday, when he should have been preparing for his wedding to make our visit to that famous landmark of mechanical music possible. Our guide had also explained that the first attempts to build San Sylmar collapsed "literally," the building was destroyed and many instruments damaged by an earthquake."



San Sylmar's Cameo Theatre with Wurlitzer Style 45 Fotoplayer beneath the stage, and to the left a 14 rank 3 manual Wurlitzer theatre organ on a lift.

For me the "pièce de résistance" was the Cameo theatre, a luxurious movie theatre seating about 70 complete with its own Wurlitzer organ and Photoplayer. Also to the side of the screen was exhibited a 35mm hand cranked movie camera, said to have been used for the filming of "Birth of a Nation." Company employees are treated to the latest films here on Saturday nights. I would have liked a lot more time to take in all those wonders on display, but our schedule didn't allow any lingering and sadly we departed on the shorter journey to Jerry & Helene Sutter's home. The following is a wonderfully accurate description of the Sutter collection, which was done by West Coast Chapter member, Herb Stockinger:

"Musically speaking, the old song that goes, "Horses, Horses, Crazy Over Horses," has just got to be the favourite song of Helene Sutter. Just as surely, Jerry Sutter's theme song must be, "Put Another Nickel In - In the Nickelodeon."

"Their lovely home abounds with arcade games, slot machines, automatons, nickelodeons, orchestrions, battery-operated toys, music boxes, bird boxes, and oriental carved ivory. Their constantly growing collection has necessitated the addition of a **second** music room (or is it a stable with magnificent leaded glass windows and doors?) Reminiscent of a frontier saloon, with its narrow balcony on three sides, it contains some of the choicest pieces in their collection. Helene's breathtaking collection of carousel horses, which she has lovingly restored, is "stabled" on the balcony. Some of Jerry's larger instruments and "slots" are located on the ground floor."

A bonus is their large and intriguing collection of toy and miniature carousels, mostly of lithographed tin, but some of wood and other materials. It is a collection that any toy museum would be proud to possess.

By now the next coach had arrived, and its passengers patiently waited outside until we had adjourned into the garden where a buffet lunch was arranged by Peggy and Holly Hollingsworth.

After lunch our coach departed for Griffith Park to visit the beautiful carousel which is being lovingly restored by its owners - Rosemary and Warren Deasey.

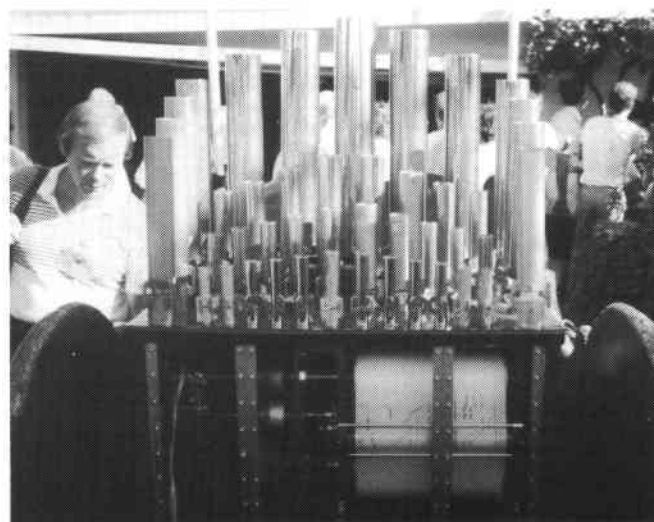
The Griffith Park merry-go-round, was a real gem - built in 1926, it is the only full-sized Spillman Engineering machine still in operation and the only 4-abreast all jumper Spillman in existence. It was first installed in San Diego - where it operated until 1933 when it was on view for the San Diego Exposition - then it went into storage until Mr. Davis, the agent who had originally sold it - bought it himself and moved it to Griffith Park. It is going through complete restoration - stripping,

filling, glueing, patching, cleaning, painting and installing real horse-hair tails - it will take thousands of hours for the specially trained volunteers - it will definitely be more than worth it - it is beautiful now - and it will be even more so.

To the west of the park is the famous Hollywood sign. 45-foot high letters that weigh a total of 480,000 pounds. Erected in 1928 - originally reading Hollywoodland - an advertisement for a realty company - the "land" fell off and the name stuck. The sign was refurbished and rededicated in 1978.

Our last visit on that day was to the home of Mary and Ben Lilien whose charm and hospitality was quite outstanding. In their home, mechanical music of all types occupied every inch of wall space in every room.

Mary and Ben are two of the friendliest people you could ever wish to meet. Their home is on a fairly densely developed estate, not untypical of England. As we approached, we noticed there were already four other coaches parked outside their house (and about five other houses come to think of it). As I alighted from the coach into someone else's drive-way, I spoke to a neighbour getting into her car. "I bet you feel a bit overwhelmed with all these coaches around don't you?" "Oh no we're used to it. The Liliens have a real fun-house." came the reply.



Ben Lilien's 43 note Tangley Calliope playing outside his home.



15 1/2" disc musical box by Regina which also plays records.

We approached their drive-way wondering whether we would even get into the house with all those coaches there before us. Fortunately, the house was not too crowded as most of the visitors were eating a barbeque steak dinner in the back garden. In the drive-way played a Tangley Calliope, the first I had ever seen. This instrument set in a circus cart really captured my attention. In my wanderings I seek the unusual, this really was rare by European standards. 43 whistles so piercing and so loud that it was almost unbearable to stand near. But I enjoyed it



Stephen Rider, Vice-President of M.B.S.G.B. catching up with news from England, talks to Reg Mayes (left) and Reg Waylett (right).

immensely. Inside their house dozens of mechanical musical instruments bedazzled the eyes and ears of the many collectors busily entertaining themselves with the instruments whilst our hosts toiled over the barbeque. In this house mechanical music instruments even spilled out from the bedrooms, organs from monkey to mortuary wail and beguile, while modern automatons dance and prance. Almost every type of musical box, phonograph and nickelodeon is represented including a very loud Wurlitzer band organ and a hugh Popper Rex orchestron. The Liliens have donated thousands of dollars to charity by opening their home to private groups seeking an unusual outing.

The next day for us was a tour of the East collections whilst those members who had enjoyed that tour the day before were now on the West tour. So off we went on our coach journey to Orange County home of the Angels, Rams and Disneyland. Orange County also has Knott's Berry Farm and everyone should have at least one chicken dinner from the famous restaurant there. Along with the ghost town, Knott's has the newer type of thrill rides and Camp Snoopy for younger children. The old ghost town section of Knotts is the oldest historically themed Amusement Park in America. Starting from a roadside fruit stand in the 1920's, the Knott family began serving chicken dinners in 1934 and by 1940 had begun building a Ghost Town. It is made from real and recreated buildings. The Ghost Town was built as an effort to entertain the people waiting in queues for dinner. You see by 1940, Mrs. Knott was serving up to 4000 dinners a day, I think Ben Lilien might have shown her how to do it. Now it is a fully fledged amusement park with rides on stage coaches or roller coasters. Hidden in various corners, you can find a Nickelodeon and a band Organ or two as well.

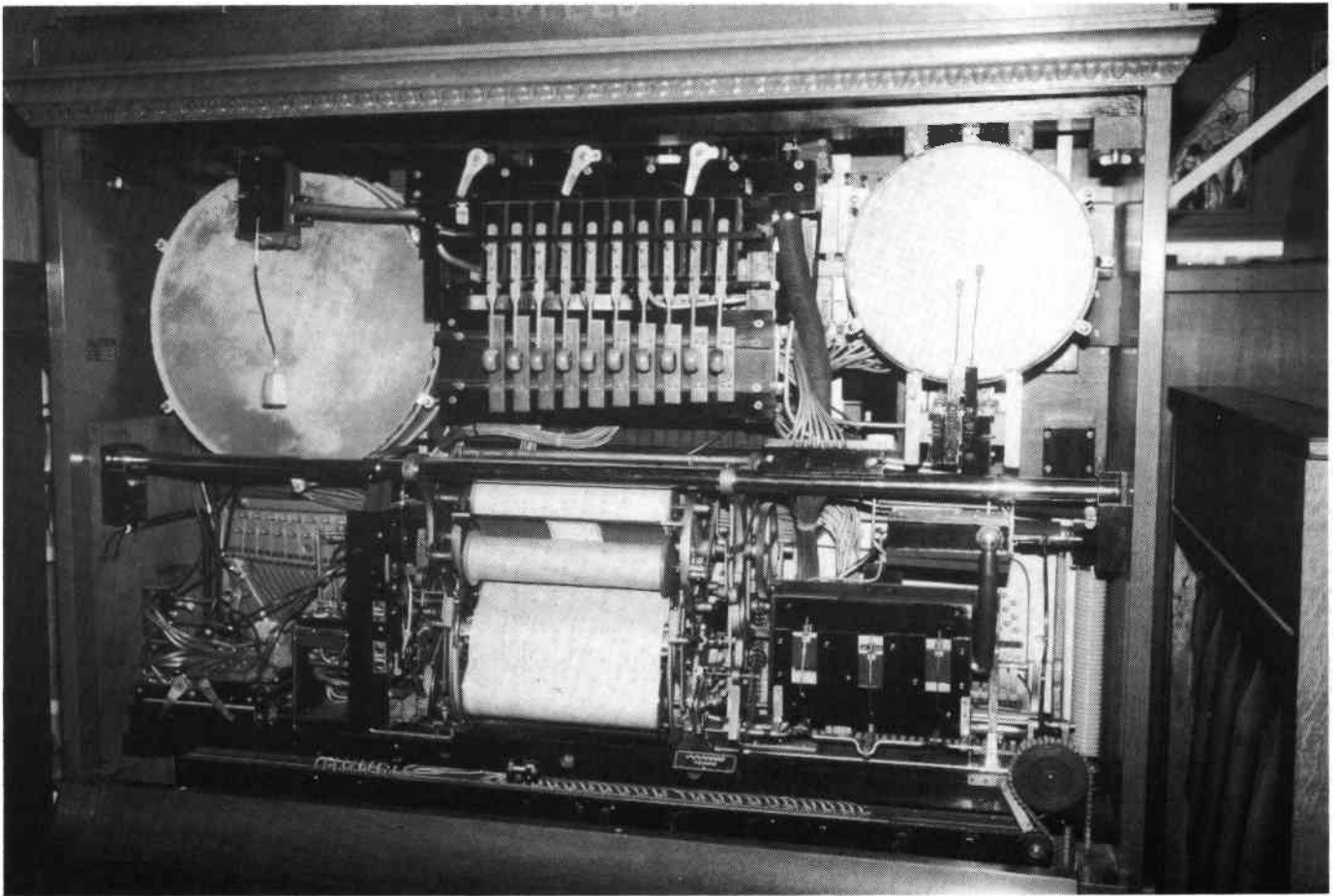
Orange County is less agricultural than it once was. The South Coast Plaza was once a bean field. The biggest industry now seems to be housing. Except for a few days in summer, smog doesn't get as bad in Orange County as it is in Los Angeles and that is a big plus for home owners. Not only the agricultural flat-lands have been developed but also the hills. Our first stop at the home of Norma and Rudy Edwards was in this area and there we were able to see the Wurlitzer Mandolin Piano Orchestra Style 12, a Wurlitzer Photoplayer, a Mills double Violano and some beautifully restored Weber instruments.



A most beautiful 15½" Regina auto-changer with ornate art-glass door. Dwight Porter Musical Box Company are currently making exact copies of this instrument.



Our host at Rudy Edward's collection, demonstrates a Link 2-E coin piano with mandolin and xylophone. Note the endless paper music roll!



The gleaming interior of a well restored Hupfeld Helios which has a revolver type spoolframe. To the right of the spoolframe is the vacuum operated spool drive motor. Above it is seen the snare drum with double beaters. The bass drum is to the left and in the centre, a 10 note glockenspiel or "orchestral bells."



(Photo: Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente e. V.)

The main exhibition hall at San Sylmar, home of the famous Nethercutt collection. Foreground - Mason & Hamlin grand piano with Ampico 'B' reproducing action. Background - Steinway Aeolian-Duo Art reproducing grand. Wurlitzer 5 manual theatre organ with 2500 pipes hidden in chambers to each side of the Hupfeld Pan Orchestra.

We were soon to leave the Edwards collection and Orange County and back on the freeway to the Paul Milhous collection.

Featured are many large orchestrions including a Cremona J, Seeburg E Special, F, G and L, Coinola X and CO, Nelson-Wiggen style 3, 5X, and 6, Wurlitzer style IX and IB, Link style C with flute pipes, Hupfeld Animatic Clavist, Mills Double Violano, several reproducing organs and a style 45 American Fotoplayer . . . not to mention the musical boxes! We also saw the workshop where many of these fine instruments were impeccably restored.

Unfortunately due to the tight time schedule, there was not time to see as much as we would have wished and we soon found ourselves hustled back onto the bus and heading towards Pasadena.

It was near Pasadena where we visited the Dorings' residence to see their wonderful collection of American and European Orchestrions. There was a Welte Philharmonic Organ, a Weber Violano, a Hupfeld Helios, a 72 key Mortier and a 52 key Bruder.

Again time was running short and we soon found ourselves on the coach heading back towards Long Beach to participate in a harbour dinner cruise.

The other events

We had enjoyed ourselves so much over those two days visiting the homes of private collectors that we thought that the best part of the meeting was over. In fact many more surprises and thrills were still in store. Friday's programme consisted of 'workshops,' it was not possible to visit them all and I found it difficult to decide which ones to omit.

Kathleen Eric and Robbie Robins were demonstrating graining and polishing using American Mohawk products. Dana Hawkes of Sotherby's Auction House in New York was explaining what you should know when buying and selling antiques at auctions. Bill Toeppe was using his home computer to generate music. Ralph Heintz has a large collection of mechanical music pictures which were shedding interesting light onto the subject of mechanical music in art and politics. George Baker has helped to build the newest reproduction, the Wurlitzer Harp, described just how they were made by copying the way Wurlitzer made them. Part for part, screw for screw even the exact number of nails used in the cabinet. Rick Wilkins and Paul Baker were showing the fascinating history of talking machines. Bill Emerson was displaying the art of reproducing art glass panels. And Chuck Pheiffer was telling what he had learned about the history and manufacturing of Mills Violano rolls, revealing why some rolls sound better on different style machines. All of these workshops were so interesting, it would really have taken one 3 days to have attended all of them.

All too quickly Friday evening had arrived so too had at least eleven coaches alongside the Queen Mary. We were all off to the Wiltshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles. In this Theatre was installed a Barton Cinema Organ at which Gaylord Carter an 80 year old famed silent film organist admirably accompanied silent comedies and played popular songs whilst slides appeared on the screen.

The annual meeting (AGM) took place on a Saturday morning.

At the close of the meeting the band organ rally commenced in London-Towne. London-Towne is a selection of pseudo-Elizabeth buildings erected alongside the Queen Mary which are really meant to represent the town of London, implying that the Queen Mary was berthed on the Thames. I always thought the Queen Mary's berth was in Southampton.

After lunch we were amazed by the sheer size and number of stands at the Mart. I would think about 8,000 square feet of floor space had been taken up by stands and exhibits. Almost anything could be bought, at a price, whilst band organs and orchestrions, all competing to be seen and heard, sometimes played simultaneously, creating one hideous din. This mart offered something for everyone, but not enough time to find it. I had a shopping list but by the time the various stands had been found, items I wanted had already been sold.



Al Choffnes hands over his "Chain of Office" to newly elected President Ron Bopp. The American Chain of Office was originally presented to M.B.S.I. by our own Society.

As our "Journey of a Lifetime" began to draw towards an end I began to recount our experiences and realise how utterly different to back home is the Californian scene. If you wish to see a cylinder musical box, the last place on earth to visit must surely be California. I think I saw only four during my whole stay. On the other hand if you enjoy orchestrions California can surely boast the greatest selection anywhere in the world.

Most of these instruments are very finely restored, the quality of workmanship certainly scores over the normal European standards.

One other very un-European instrument in abundance, was the Scopitone. The fore-runner of the video juke box. This machine operates from 16mm films, 36 of them on a huge carousel. It seemed odd because although these are nothing to do with mechanical music, almost every collector had one.

With 800 people or so attending this meeting, credit must certainly be given to the organisers who must surely have spent many long evenings organising an event of such magnitude and with such attention to detail. The organising committee was headed by Ralph and Gloria Schack.

The high-light of the meeting for me was the house visits and if Oscars were due these would surely be presented to the private collectors who so kindly opened their houses to the benefit of so many of their fellow collectors.

The meeting closed in style with a banquet and dance in the grand saloon. Everyone attending was presented with a souvenir to mark the occasion of the West Coast Chapter's annual meeting. The Wurlitzer harp was not the only reproduction at the meeting for over the past three years our hosts of the West Coast Chapter had been crafting miniature orange tree automats made from wood left over from the construction of the Spruce Goose aircraft in the late 1940's. These orange trees were a copy of (but sadly not an exact replica), of the orange tree sold as Lot 49 of the Rothschild collection at Mentmore Towers in Buckinghamshire ten years ago.

As Pat and I said our sad goodbyes Ron Bopp their newly elected president, took from his lapel their Society badge and placed it in mine. An act of friendship not only personal but surely intended as a gesture of friendship between their Society and ours. ■

Organina Addendum

by R. Booty

Searching for patents is a task which can be both unexpectedly rewarding, and, soul destroying. Instruments sometimes carry patent numbers, but often only dates, so invariably a little fore knowledge of patents issuing systems is of help. As my own experience covers only British and United States patents I do not feel suited to the job of explaining how to trace one, but in any case, that is not the purpose of this short article.

My reason for writing is to correct a mistake that should not have occurred in the first place had I carried out my homework properly! I refer to my piece on the Organina, Music Box Vol. 11, p. 119-122. In the caption for fig. 2 I stated; 'Behind the row of pallets at the top is a label which reads, "Patented Aug. 2nd 1881." This must refer to Arno's U.S. patent no. 245,113...'. This has turned out to be incorrect. Unfortunately, when I was searching for relevant Organina patents I looked only for those applied for by Oliver H. Arno, on that date. In a more recent U.S. patent search I came across the correct patent referred to on this label, no. 245,238.

It was applied for by Frank Stone of Worcester, Mass., he assigned it to the Munroe Organ Reed Co., also of Worcester. The diagrams illustrated here, could quite easily be taken from life as they very closely resemble the actual instrument shown in my article. The fact that the Munroe Company are now brought onto the scene only serves to complicate the question of who was truly responsible for the Organina and its manufacture. I ask again, perhaps an American member could resolve who the manufacturer was?

There is a further mistake in the article, this time no fault of mine, the photograph for fig. 3 is upside down. The patent diagrams are reproduced with acknowledgement to the comptroller of HMSO.

(No Model.) F. STONE. 3 Sheets—Sheet 1.
MECHANICAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.
No. 245,238. Patented Aug. 2, 1881.

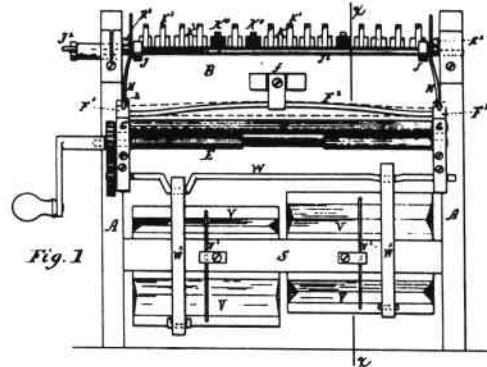


Fig. 1

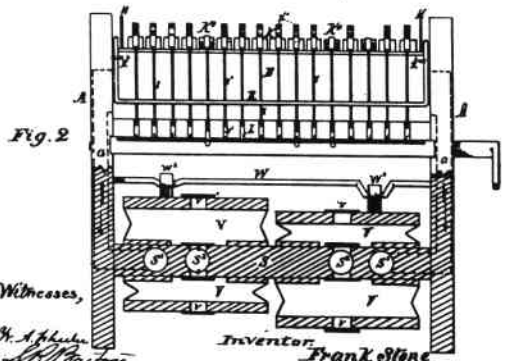


Fig. 2

Witnesses,
W. A. Wheeler
S. W. Burtson
Inventor, Frank Stone
By Chas. H. Baulleigh, Atty.

(No Model.) F. STONE. 3 Sheets—Sheet 2.
MECHANICAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.
No. 245,238. Patented Aug. 2, 1881.

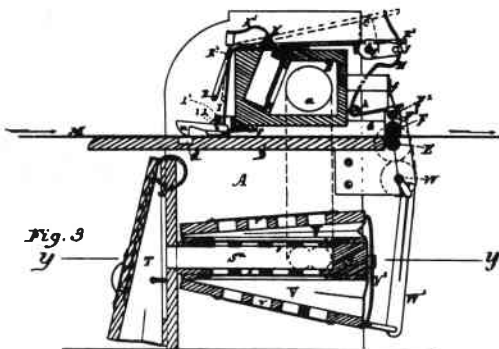


Fig. 3

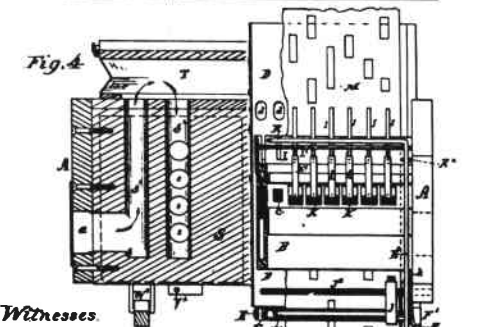


Fig. 4

Witnesses,
W. A. Wheeler
S. W. Burtson
Inventor, Frank Stone
By Chas. H. Baulleigh, Atty.

(No Model.) F. STONE. 3 Sheets—Sheet 3.
MECHANICAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.
No. 245,238. Patented Aug. 2, 1881.

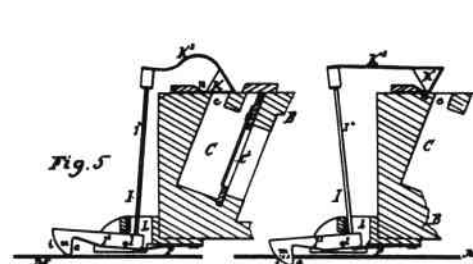


Fig. 5

Fig. 6

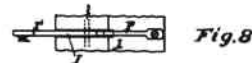


Fig. 8

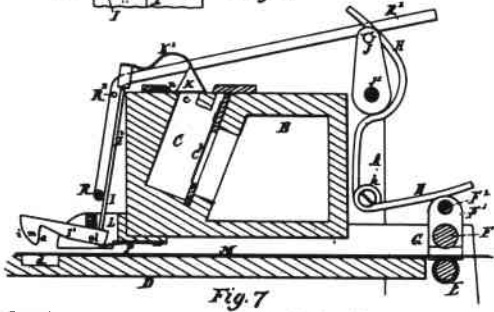
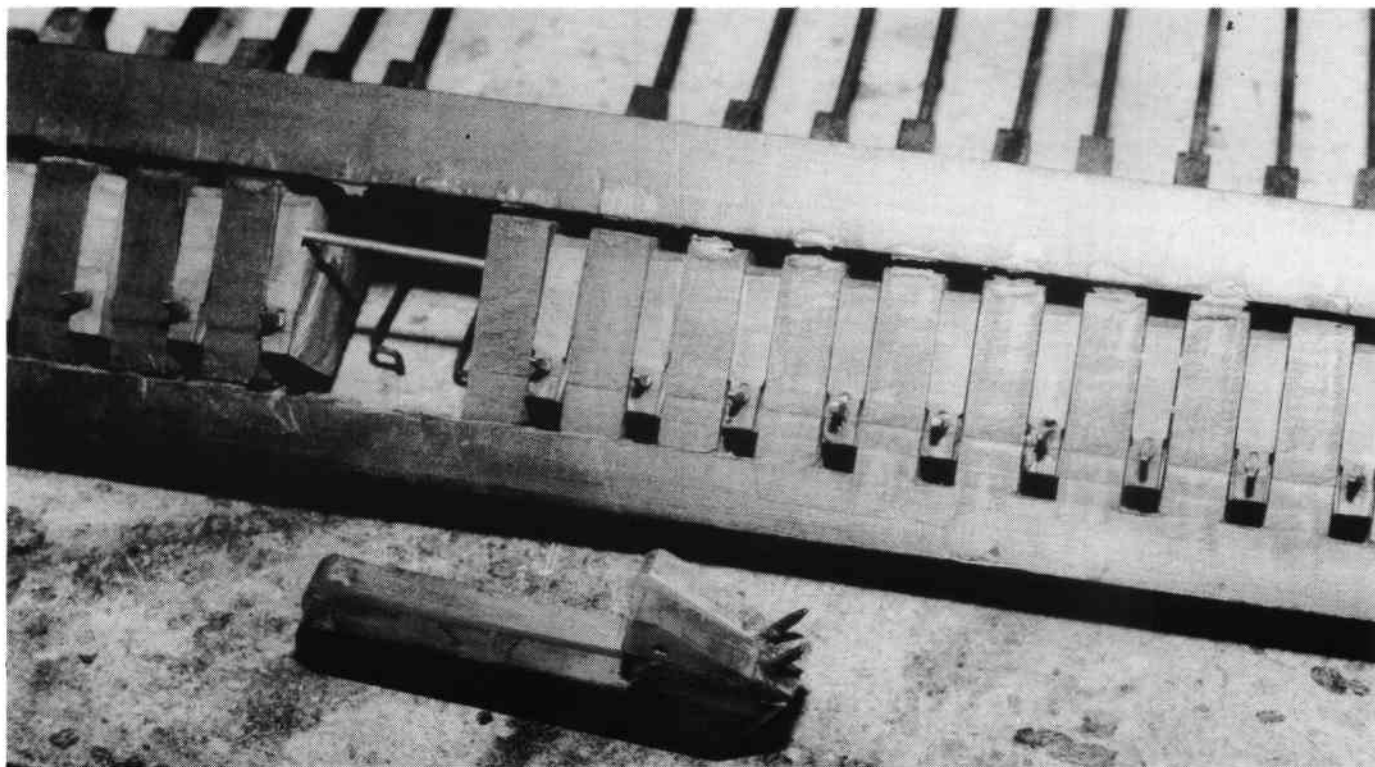


Fig. 7

Witnesses,
W. A. Wheeler
S. W. Burtson
Inventor, Frank Stone
By Chas. H. Baulleigh, Atty.

Rebuilding the Barrel Piano Keyframe

written by Graham Whitehead in consultation with restorer Paul Camps

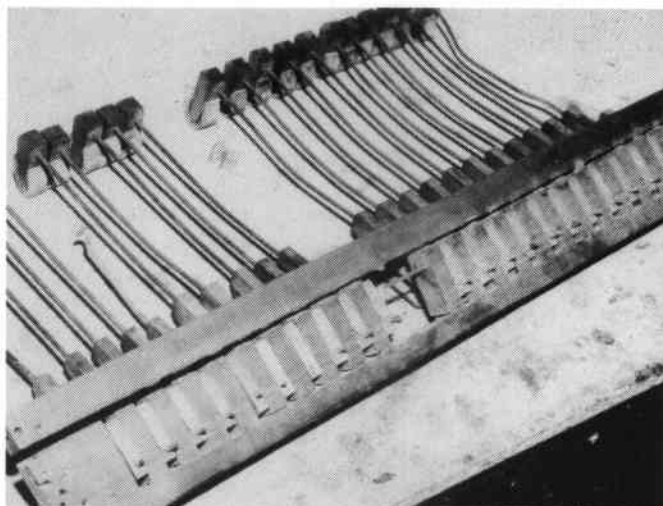


One of the many problems that frequently occur in the Barrel Piano is within the keyframe. Constructed from two parts, and glued together the keyframe often ends up not glued together. Originally, hot glue was used, and as expected after many years of exposure to the elements, this glue deteriorates and the keyframe splits apart.

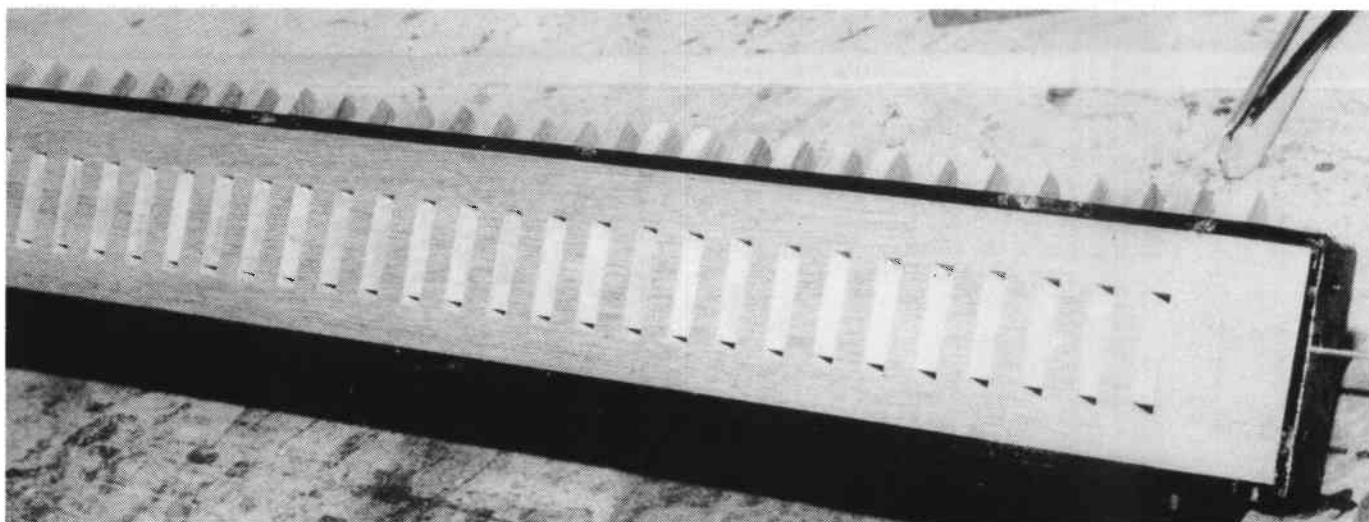
The simple, usually crudely made keyframe, which is the heart of the barrel piano is also its most vulnerable part, easily damaged by misuse when weakened by old age. Patching-up repairs are often made but there comes a time, when, if the instrument is expected to play well, the keyframe must be re-built.

At first thought this may seem a daunting task, but finding the right piece of timber is actually the most difficult part. Maple or Beech were probably the manufacturers first choice, both are difficult to obtain these days. This is not such a problem for your editor and his restorer Paul Camps, for fortunately, some years ago a variety of well seasoned timber was obtained from an organ building firm that had closed in the 60's.

The completely distressed keyframe, showing odd size keys.



The new keyframe, rebuilt from scratch.



Whilst rebuilding a customers Barrel Piano we encountered the problem of the distressed keyframe. The keyframe had obviously broken apart sometime in the past and repaired possibly once or maybe twice before. Any further restoration was impossible because the keyframe was soaking with oil. Some well meaning mechanic probably thought he was doing the instrument a favour.

In an earlier repair, many foreign keys had been substituted which were the wrong size and too sloppy, causing the tails to pass around the bridges. The quickest and surest remedy was therefore to build a new keyframe complete.

Having selected and cut to size a suitable piece of timber, we first made a saw cut along its length to correspond with the top edge of the slots. The keyframe is now in two pieces. Taking the larger piece, the problem was to drill a small hole approximately $\frac{1}{16}$ " diameter through the whole length of the keyframe. Even W. H. Smiths' Do-it-All could not oblige with a 4ft by $\frac{1}{16}$ " drill but a close inspection of the original revealed the Barrel Piano makers' secret:- A fine slitting saw is passed along the edge of the keyframe producing a groove to a depth of about $\frac{3}{4}$ ". A length of piano wire is temporarily placed in the bottom of the groove and a small slither of wood or veneer is glued into the groove and faced off. When the piano wire is withdrawn a $\frac{1}{16}$ " square hole is left the whole length of the timber.

The next operation is to mark out the slots to be cut into the frame. This has to be done by close reference to the original, because with the limitations of the early 20th century wood-workers tools, and the probable use of semi-skilled labour for cheap construction, there was quite a variation in the actual spacing between one key and the next. It would be a mistake to correct these inaccuracies as such variations would correspondingly be built into the pinning of the barrel. It is important though that the slot widths are made constant, leaving the variations in the wood retaining the slots. This will allow the keys to be made all to the same thickness.

After sawing out the slots the $\frac{3}{4}$ " section of wood that was cut from the keyframe at the start of the job can be glued back into position. This operation should be carried out with cascamate adhesive and the frame held clamped together for at least 12 hours.

Now would be a good time to make the keys. We do this by selecting the timber and planing it to a thickness that would make it a tight fit into the slots. Selecting a good example key we make a template from $\frac{1}{16}$ " aluminium sheet or similar, and after marking round, cut them out and sand them on a finishing machine.

We can now go back to the keyframe itself. We need next to make the $\frac{1}{16}$ " square hole into a $\frac{3}{32}$ " round hole. Taking an over-length piece of $\frac{3}{32}$ " brass, we make a point at one end and file it into a small cutting edge. At the opposite end we attach into a chuck of a hand-drill and drill down through the square channel through the whole length of the keyframe. This piece of brass now becomes our centre wire, retaining the keys in position. Next, this wire is withdrawn and re-inserted, this time with the keys in the slots which have been pre-drilled in a jig.

In this particular case there are only 23 hammers on the instrument played from the keyframe. The remaining 30 notes are produced on a separate frame which is a tremelo device. Therefore only 23 of the keys will have to be drilled to take the shanks. The keys will need to be removed from the frame for drilling the shank holes, but before doing so use a straight edge to mark the position of

the holes for the tails. When removing the keys keep them in order as by now each key will have been dressed-down to fit in it's respective slot snugly but still leaving a clearance, otherwise the first time that you take the instrument outside on a damp day, the wood will swell and the keys will bind. Whilst the keyframe is dismantled the hammer shanks and hammers should be fitted and so too should the tails. New tails will probably have to be produced by using $\frac{3}{32}$ " silver steel. Making fifty or so tails to the original pattern, a consistent size, may well be the most difficult and tedious part of the operation. Having completed this part, or having leaned on an engineering friend, the keyframe is now ready for final assembly.

The whole piano action including keyframe was often left untreated. A light application of button polish to the hammers and keyframe may be desired. But do not polish the sides of keys or slots. These may be lubricated with graphite if necessary.

When the springs and other ironmongery have been attached, there is a further piece of wood which needs to be screwed back. This acts as a key stop and has a felted edge.

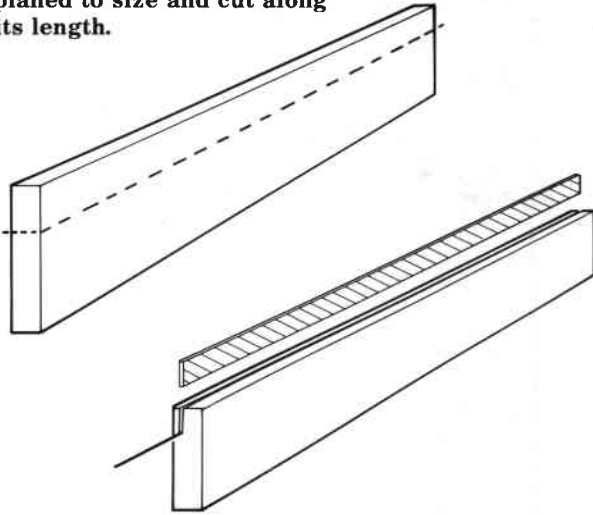
Your new keyframe is now ready for re-assembly into the piano. During the setting-up process lower the keyframe at the un-pinned starting point of the barrel to check that the tails are level. Here you may find an impression of the points of the original tails. It is important that the tails be lined-up in register. It may be necessary to bend the slightly hardened tails to bring them into alignment. Set the keyframe for tracking and adjust the height of the lowered keyframe to within $\frac{1}{16}$ " of the surface of the barrel or to produce the best possible repetition on quickly repeated notes. ■



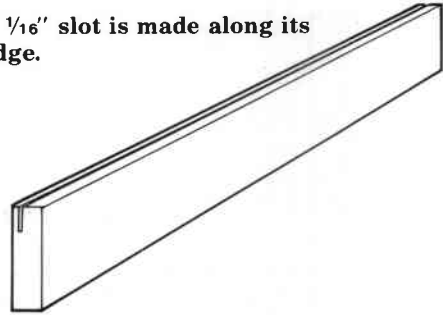
The keyframe should now look like this!

Stages of Construction of the Keyframe

1) The timber is selected, cut and planed to size and cut along its length.



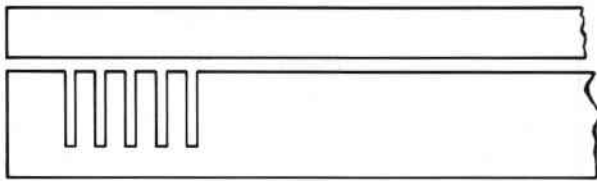
2) A $\frac{1}{16}$ " slot is made along its edge.



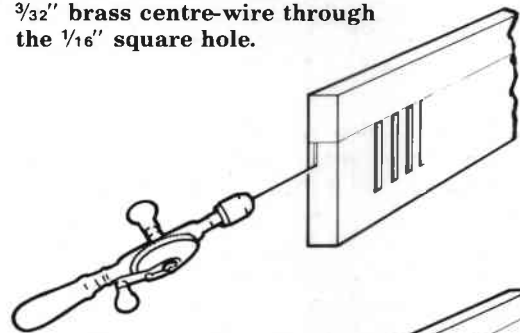
4) The key slots are cut.



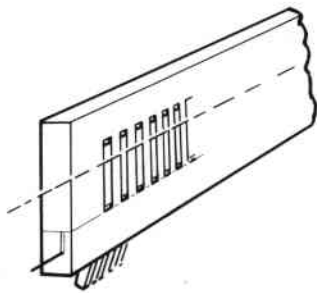
3) A piece of piano wire is laid in the slot and a filler glued in.



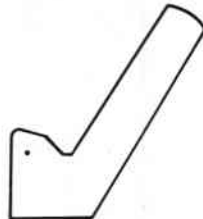
6) Use a hand drill to wind the $\frac{3}{32}$ " brass centre-wire through the $\frac{1}{16}$ " square hole.



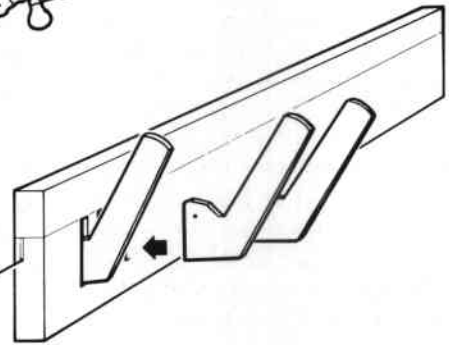
5) The two pieces of timber are married together.



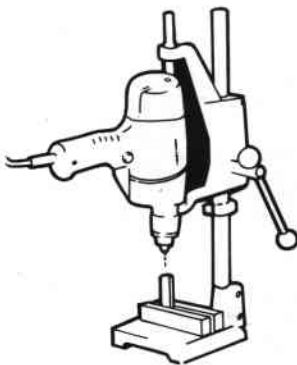
7) Make keys.



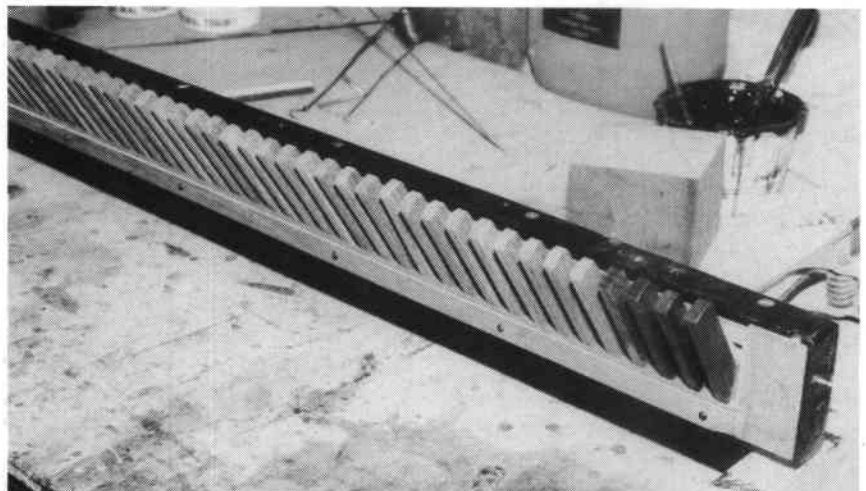
8) Re-insert the centre-wire with the keys inserted in slots.



9) Mark the position for fixing the tails.



10) Drill holes for tails and shanks into the edges of the keys and re-insert into keyframe.



11) The keyframe should now look like this.

Musical Box Oddments

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 29

The Langdorff Mandoline Forte Piano tune sheet illustrated herewith lists a strange mixture of tunes. The first is the **Krönungslieder** (= coronation songs) waltz by Johann Strauss II composed in 1857. Next is the often heard gypsy chorus from **Il Trovatore**, 1853. The "Melodies Valaques" of tune 3 are folk tunes of Wallachia, the country which joined with Moldavia in 1859 to become Roumania. Composer Edouard Wachman (1836 - 1908) was born in Bucharest and his wide range of works included a collection of local folk songs, as here played. Another folk tune turns up in the excellent "Triumphal March." This is by the Danish composer Peter Heise (1830 - 1879) and the basic melody of the march is practically identical with the nursery rhyme tune for **Baa Baa Black Sheep** which in turn is the same as a French tune, **Ah vous dirai - je Maman** the source of which is lost in antiquity among European folk tunes.

Three distinctly unusual tunes in a repertoire of four ! It would be so interesting to know whether they were chosen by Langdorff or by a customer (or by a tune arranger).



Typical Langdorff tune sheet, size 150 x 90mm including the extra depth for the words **FORTE PIANO**. It belongs to serial 11258, Gamme 641, manufactured in 1858.

Mandolin Forte Piano

The very few mandolin forte piano boxes known are all distinctly different, and there is little doubt that they were regarded as expensive specials. The tune arrangers must have had a lot to say about the comb sizes. Langdorff 11258 noted above with 15¼ in. cylinder playing four airs has 162 forte and 55 piano teeth. Ducommun Girod 3787 with 16 in. cylinder also playing four airs has 156 and 76 teeth. Nicole 35359 with 21¼ in. cylinder playing eight airs has 122 and 49 teeth.

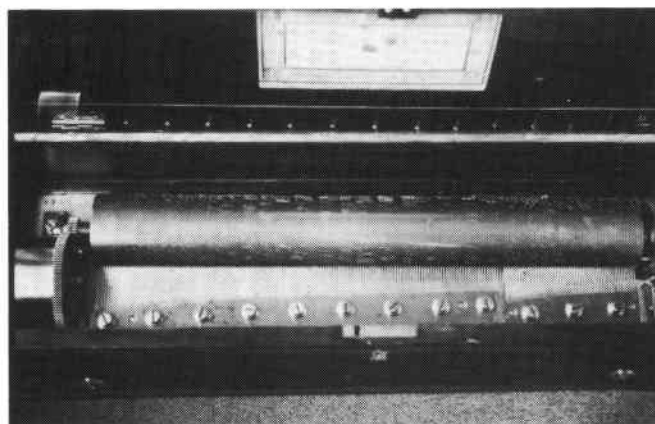
In comparison, the fairly common and rightly admired Nicole smaller Mandolin boxes playing six tunes with 11 in. cylinders have 115 teeth; Bremond 16742 with 13 in. cylinder playing six airs has 124 teeth; large Nicole 46516 playing twelve airs with 18½ in. cylinder has 98 teeth; and the early "super mandoline" boxes by Lecoultre and others playing six airs with 19 in. cylinders have about 200 teeth.

So these mandoline forte piano boxes certainly have ample teeth in their forte combs, and the extent of the mandolin effect in the piano sections depends on both the teeth available and the tune arrangements. Only one

thing is beyond doubt – more teeth allow more mandolin effect, despite wonders worked by some tune arrangers.

On Langdorff 11258 the teeth tuned to a (=440Hz) are nos. 28 and 29 in the forte comb and no. 9 in the piano comb. The stiffness ratio of these teeth is 1.5 to 1, forte to piano. This permits adequate contrast between the two combs while leaving the piano teeth stiff enough to add a bit of volume and a bit of "sublime harmony" effect when, as happens in all four tunes, both combs play for dramatic passages and for the finales.

Most of the 37 teeth at the treble end of the piano comb are tuned in sets of four to the same pitch; and most of the 112 teeth at the treble end of the forte comb are in sets of four and of six, giving a wide mandolin facility. It is an interesting feature of these good mandoline boxes that despite the number of notes played per second there is no feeling of the music becoming florid or over-decorated. The extent of the mandolin effect seems to have been as much a matter of taste as of expense, so perhaps for these special mandolin forte piano boxes wealthy customers may have had a say in the tune arrangements as well as choosing the tunes.



Langdorff 4-air Mandoline Forte Piano 11258.

Notes per second

The mechanical musical box and the hand-operated piano have this in common – there is virtually no limit to the number of notes per second that they can play. Both can increase their striking rate by repeated massive chords and tremolos for all sorts of special effects and for adding contrast to quieter passages in the music.

Given this shared facility, an interesting question is, what is the average note-per-second rate in typical melodies heard on musical boxes and pianos . . . bearing in mind that the artistic ideal rate is well below the available maximum rate.

Pianists can attain a fantastic striking rate. The tremolo exercise in Hanon's classic work of 1900, **The Virtuoso Pianist in Sixty Exercises**, calls for a maximum rate of 38 notes per second. Most of these notes come in chords of two and six notes; and it seems to be generally agreed that single notes or chords played faster than about sixteen per second lose their effect due to blurring.

Musical boxes lack the piano's ability to hold a sustained note so sometimes a sustained trill is substituted. I have measured several of these on different boxes and found many around sixteen notes per second – for example a long trill on a Nicole overture box consists of 180 notes played in eleven seconds, just over 16 per second. Added to the melody being played at the same time, this totals about 24 notes per second.

Composers add variety by contrasting the numbers of notes per second in the various parts of their music. A typical piano score of *Die Fledermaus* has rates from 11 to 21 notes per second; the flower song from *Faust* 8 to 11; *La Donna Mobile* 6 to 12. I measured a pianola roll of *Roses of the South* and found a range from 9 to 15 with overall average 12.

From these typical examples I think it is fair to say the slowest rates in a tune are not much below two-thirds of the average rate, and the fastest not much above four-thirds. Also I think that in a batch of tune sheet tunes the fastest average rate will be about twice the slowest. These assumptions are relevant because, when examining the number of notes per second played by musical boxes, one is limited on cylinder machines by having to average over all the tunes played. (No one has yet volunteered to count the individual pins per tune, whereas it is a simple matter to tot up the total whilst depthing during re-pinning).

I expect the tune arrangers had a good idea of the ideal notes-per-second rate; and they must have been dismayed when offered too few. Consider the simple case of a typical 6 in. by 1¾ in. cylinder with about 3000 pins and playing for 50 seconds per tune. The more tunes it plays, the fewer the notes per second and the fewer the number of comb teeth. The result is that, though the average number of pins per tooth per tune remains constant, the musical quality falls off rather sharply as shown in this little table.

No. of tunes	average cyl. pins per tune	pins per tune per second	no. of comb teeth	pins per comb tooth	pins per comb tooth per tune
4	750	15	90	33	8.3
6	500	10	60	50	8.3
8	375	7½	45	67	8.3
10	300	6	36	83	8.3
12	250	5	30	100	8.3

Four tunes allow full mandolin effect whereas with twelve tunes the number of notes per second is less than half the desirable range. All the teeth remain hard working throughout the range; more complex boxes such as forte-piano have extra teeth for only occasional use and so the average number of pins per tooth per tune is decidedly lower.

The accompanying table gives the average number of notes per second and the necessary supporting data for several types of cylinder musical boxes. Excluding specials like the Organocleide and the Nicole Mandolin, they all average between about 11 and 13½ notes per second. Interestingly, the only two over 13 are distinctly on the florid side – the Ducommun Girod (not typical) and the Sallaz & Oboussier (not a leading maker). The Conchon Harpe Eolienne is rather florid; it has more notes per second than the Paillard and decidedly too many on the harp comb.

I think the Nicole Forte Piano is a model of the ideal note rate for this type. It is a bit surprising that the Alibert, which is typical of top quality “earlies,” has the lowest striking rate, but the reason is that it is the only one without embellishments. The comparatively low count for the Bremond Mandolin is due to restrained mandolin effect supported by bells.

The many people who do not like the drum effect will see confirmed the disproportionate number of cylinder pins “wasted.” Drum sections of cylinders are almost always heavily pinned, because most tunes sport a number of sustained drum rolls.

Note rate on disc musical boxes

These machines have no inhibitions as to the notes-per-second they are instructed to play by the disc placed upon them, except at the bass end. So the range of rates involved is quite interesting. I take the ubiquitous 15½ in. disc as the “average” for disc machines, and 64 seconds as its intended playing time. I could get no expert to give a ruling on this time, so I have assumed 67 seconds per rev. These discs have one hundred peripheral driving holes and at this speed they rotate at 1½ holes per second. Between 4% and 5% of a revolution is lost at tune start, hence 64 seconds per tune. My guess is that this varies from about 58 to 70 seconds from fully wound to run down. (Even faster in Pubs where heavy drinkers leaned on the winding handle.)

Polyphon 1086, the Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana*, has 690 projections giving, with the above assumptions, a rate of 10.8 notes per second. In contrast Polyphon 10457, *A Summer Idyll* from *Hiawatha* (which does not sound florid or over-decorated) has 1160 projections, giving 18 notes per second. I expect wider extremes exist, but basically the discs occupy the same range as the cylinder machines.

It would be interesting to have comments on all the above from someone who, unlike myself, really knows something about music.

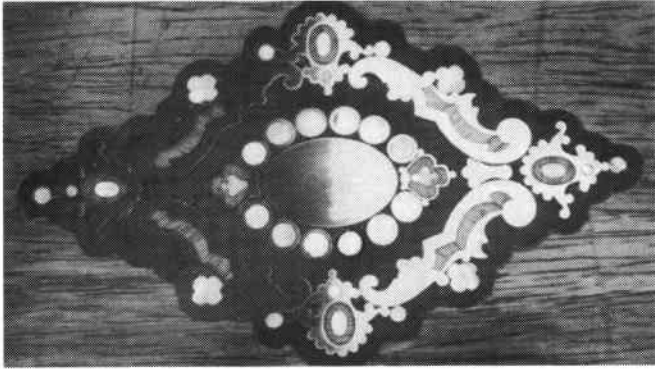
Patina

Dictionary definitions of patina vary widely, but generally agree that the word is derived from the Latin patina, a shallow dish, and was originally used to describe the greenish film produced by age and oxidation on bronze. The meaning was later extended to the gloss acquired with age by old wooden furniture.

Bronze, a copper/tin alloy, certainly acquires a greenish coat of oxides and carbonates but brass, a copper/zinc alloy, goes to a very dark brown as commonly seen on the domed washers at the front and back of most cylinder musical box cases. This also occurs in varying degrees on brass inlays, and the accompanying illustration shows an interesting example.

But stay! What causes the other type of patina, the “gloss acquired with age by old wood” so beloved by the antique furniture brigade? If you can imagine the lid of a musical box in use from say 1860 to 1900 with at least two generations of average families, it will have been dusted at least weekly and polished at least annually, but in between these attentions it will have been subject to fire and tobacco smoke, occasional dribbles of water, oil and candle-wax, accidental coughs and sneezes, dirty fingers, excreta of flies etc and damp bottoms of cups, mugs and glasses. Some of these will have been wholly though more likely partly wiped or dusted off, leaving remnants to become sealed in at the next polishing. Pictures hanging on the wall are obviously less subject to these polluting influences, but even so they get absolutely masked by dirt – which one often sees being dramatically removed with cottonwool swabs by art experts on TV programmes.

When all this mess on our musical box lid has age-hardened it may well be called patina but I must say I prefer to be without it and to see the marquetry as the case maker presented it; which is why I applaud restorers who carefully clean and lightly re-polish these cases. Luckily most of the dirt has been deposited above the original french polish, and careful rubbing with 000 grade wire wool dipped in a mixture of wax polish and turpentine will generally see it off.



Marquetry, brass and mother-of-pearl inlay, half cleaned - lid of Bremond 29290.

Restoration Comedy

At an auction viewing I was looking at a very well restored Nicole lever-wind which had been fitted with a well-written and matching replacement tune sheet. A lady seemed very taken by it and asked me, "Is this musical box brand new?" I said it was actually made just over a hundred years ago, and I thought its makers would have

been quite pleased to hear her question. She seemed slightly put off, and I fancy she was thinking "but does it look like an antique?"

At the movies

An interchangeable cylinder musical box with bells appears briefly but plays quite a bit in the film *Holiday* (1938, directed by George Cukor for Columbia). It has a large case on a matching plinth for spare cylinders but there is no tune sheet. When switched on by K. Hepburn a fairly convincing **click** is heard but the music is extraordinarily emasculated, suggesting a mere 20-note comb whereas the machine depicted would have at least 70 music teeth. The playing completely lacks any bass and is without any trills or other decorations, but it renders *The Blue Danube* for about two minutes while some serious dialogue is being spoken by Hepburn and Grant.

So yet again a musical box comes over as "tinkling." Black mark to Columbia; they could just as well have done it properly . . . or could they? It might have so surprised the audience to hear a good musical box that they would not have listened to the dialogue. ■

Maker Type Serial no. approx. Date	Cylinder length x dia inches mm.	No. of tunes	Seconds per cylinder rev. at correct tempo	Cylinder surface speed, ins/sec.	Cylinder pins		
					Total quantity	average per tune	average per tune per sec.
Paillard V.F. Harpe Eolienne No. 1617 1875	8¼ x 2 210 x 50	6	50	0.12	Main comb 2416 Harpe comb 1010 Total 3426	403 168 571	8.1 3.3 11.4
Conchon Harpe Eolienne No. 7220 1875	5¾ x 1¼ 150 x 40	4	50	0.10	Main comb 1700 Harpe comb 800 Total 2500	425 200 625	8.5 4 12.5
Nicole Forte Piano No. 40767 1865	17½ x 2½ 445 x 54	8	60	0.11	Forte comb 4033 Piano comb 1561 Total 5594	504 195 699	8.4 3.2 11.6
Ducommun Girod Forte Piano No. 22386 1850	12¾ x 2¼ 324 x 54	12 at 2/turn	90	0.07	Forte comb 5144 Piano comb 2096 Total 7240	429 174 603	9.5 3.9 13.4
Sallaz & Oboussier Hidden drum & bells No. 2126 1870	11½ x 2 292 x 50	4	55	0.11	Music 2915 Bells 453 Drum 843	729 113 211	13.2 2.1 3.8
Bremond Mandolin, 10 bells No. 17614 1885	14 x 2¼ 355 x 54	8	60	0.11	Music 5685 Bells 515	711 64	11.8 1.1
Nicole Mandolin No. 41573 1866	11 x 2 280 x 50	6	55	0.11	6038	1006	18.3
Make unknown Organocleide No. 5959 1885	17½ x 2¾ 445 x 67	6	75	0.11	7160	1193	15.9
Alibert Standard No. 6245 1835	7¼ x 1¼ 184 x 40	4	55	0.09	2404	601	10.9

Table comparing notes-per-second played by typical cylinder musical boxes

Letters to the Editor



Letters sent to the Editor may be reproduced in part or whole, unless marked, "Not for Publication." Due to the amount of work involved in producing the "Music Box" the Editor regrets he cannot answer all letters personally.

Harvey Roehl writes from the Vestal Press, New York:-

Your readers will be interested in knowing the status of Graham Webb's book on Disc Musical Boxes.

The typesetting for this is now complete (except for indexing) to the point where we are ready to make a final layout. We have to work this in between other jobs, so it will be a matter of months before it gets into print. But we're on the way!

It will follow the same general format as his other book that we produce, and probably retail at \$16.95. ■

No. of comb teeth	average no. of pins per comb tooth	ditto per tune
53	46	7.7
24	42	7.0
77	44	7.3
51	33	8.2
23	35	8.7
74	34	8.5
87	46	5.8
42	37	4.6
129	43	5.4
89	58	4.8
33	64	5.3
122	59	4.9
114	26	6.5
15	30	7.5
12	70	17.5
91	62	7.8
9	57	7.1
115	52	8.7
165	43	7.1
101	24	6.0

Dr. COULSON CONN writes from Pennsylvania USA:-

I enjoyed the Christmas 1985 edition of 'Music Box' and was particularly interested in the article on the Kommet. It is indeed a beautiful sounding box though of course, there is some "Hype" in the write-up.

I have a 20½" upright coin-operated model with a beautiful gold painting on the glass and a stand to match. The smaller 13" one is of the horizontal "Victorian" table model types. Our particular interest is the Lid picture of the 13" box which has the "Schutz-Marke" in glorious colour, almost the same as the photo on page 120 except more facial detail. It is done in green, blue, brown, red, orange, gold, black and white, along with yellow in the stars it rightly ranks as one of the most beautiful of all the lid pictures I have collected or seen.

If you ever get an opportunity to publish in colour again, I'll be only too happy to forward a photo for publishing. The other point that particularly caught my interest was the mention of a projection-less Kommet disc. I have seen several other Kommets and have never even heard of projection-less Kommet discs. I wonder if any one of our members has ever seen one.

Many different styles were advertised but some never actually produced. To my knowledge only three French-Swiss boxes, Stella, Harmna, and Edelweiss in the larger sizes, operate with projection-less discs. Also the discs of my boxes and the others have a blueing on the projection side. Is this present on all Kommet discs? Was it an attempt to protect from rust? On a personal note I have obtained an 8,000 18" New Century Box (four combs tuned harmonically) 156 separate notes each doubled, it has a magnificent sound that is unsurpassed by any other make, along with the twin 24½" Lochmann. It stands as the Apex of my collection along with the other 6000 Disc Shifter. ■

Ron Todd writes from Exeter:-

I very much appreciated the article by R. A. Moss in the Xmas 'Music Box,' on the history and development of organette's. Like Mr. Moss, I have a great love of these instruments and currently have a Celestina and a Draper in my collection.

I am a little puzzled by his comments on the Draper 'Orchestral Organette' in that 'The method of operation appears not to have survived' I have such an organette which is playing very well now that it has been re-bellowed and I feel sure that many more must be around in collectors hands.

Mr. Moss is quite correct in his assumption about the three stops. The Expression stop half closes the two flaps to lower the volume, the Flute stop closes one fourteen note row of reeds to leave the 'flute' playing and the Vox Humana does exactly the opposite. I suggest that 'furnishing the grandest

orchestral effects,' is rather tongue in cheek advertising as whilst I am very fond of the Draper it in no way compares with the Celestina for playing quality. Amongst other rolls for the Draper, I have Handel's Hallelujah Chorus which when opened out measures 32' 4". You know that you have played it! On the bottom of the instrument are the full operating instructions and the legend 'By Royal Letters Patent' and the machine number which is 12,670.

Readers should remember that the Winter Vol. 12 No. 4 edition of the Music Box contained reprinted articles from the early pioneering years of the Society. Allowances must be made as these articles contained information that would be incorrect with today's knowledge. Ed.). ■

Henry A, Waelti writes from Switzerland:-

Sorry Graham you didn't have much snow during your stay in Austria. Next time you better come to Switzerland - prices may be higher but the quantity and quality of the snow is surely better here. After all, you get what you are paying for.

As for Information: On June 21/22 there will be an organ festival in "vieux Lyon," the old part of the city of Lyon, France.

July 18/20 another festival (the second one) in Les Gets, France.

I am looking forward to cranking my old Gavioli in the streets of France (it must even sound better in its homeland). ■

David Tallis writes from Yoxford:-

Very many thanks for the new Journal which I have just received. Your task is not one I envy, but it certainly seems to have got off to a terrific start. What more could we ask for than such quality in the articles, all enriched with Jon Gresham in full colour on the centre page. ■

Stanley R. Burden writes from Bath:-

Congratulations on the 'new' Music Box. I have always enjoyed reading 'my' magazine - this one is so full of good items and it is good to see some colour photographs. ■

David Heeley writes from Wellesbourne:-

Graham, we were delighted to hear you on 'The Organist Entertains' on Friday evening 28th February and we enjoyed listening to the Compton and Wurlitzer again. It also made us realise that we haven't been over to a concert for over a year and we wondered if you would let us have a few copies of your current programme as several friends are interested in coming to Napton.

We must congratulate you on your first edition of 'The Music Box.' It was beautifully presented and made very interesting and enjoyable reading. ■

Ronald Leech writes from Devon:-

I have just received the Spring 1986 journal. I am writing to congratulate you on a first class effort.

The present number reverts back to -but improves upon - the earlier issues, which still provide me with interesting reading, years after they were issued. ■

Kevin Byrne writes from Pewsey:-

Congratulations on your first issue, I like the new format.

With reference to Michael Savins article on PP's 192/3 of Spring issue N.S. Vol. 12. Here are a few further comments I would like to reply to in relation to my own article on setting music for small organs. PP 111/2/3 Music Box Vol. 12 No. 3.

First Michael mis-quotes me in my first paragraph. It's the organs not the music that costs an arm. This renders his penultimate paragraph a bit pointless because I was not referring to the cost of the music.

The second point is about heavily winded passages. Most organs made and played in the traditional way, whether old or new are susceptible to the atmospheric conditions that are prevailing at any given time.

Why only last weekend when the Mechanical Organ Owners Society were in Brussels with Geoff Ghyssels, he had been very worried about the weather conditions during the recent long cold and very dry spell and I quote "I am so glad the rain has come, for up until last Tuesday, the organs were very sick. It has been so dry!"

No further comment needed.

Yes Michael, any good organ can cope with heavily winded passages on a good day. But it takes a good Noteur, to know how far he can rely on the bellows to suit ALL weather conditions.

3rd scales. I view both the 22 and 28/30 scales with some suspicion, but to say that the 22 scale is better than the 28/30 is rather non-sensical. It stands to musical reason that the more notes there are the better chance you have of making a decent go of any tune. You only have to listen to some of the "Many 22 scale offerings" to see that the noteur is having considerable trouble in trying to sort out the music for lack of notes. This is one of the main topics in my article in the first place.

In fact the continentals in the form of Prinsen, Perlee, Verbeek and Pell in the UK, have the small scale problem cracked. Prinsen on his 32 note scale has five bass notes C, D, E, F, G, then he goes virtually fully chromatic for the rest of the 27 notes missing the first G sharp on the way up. A very flexible scale and no keys wasted for keyframe mute: a simple button to evacuate the reservoir is all that he uses, again very effective.

As to the tambourine, I agree to differ with Michael here, if good sensitive Hi Fi equipment can't pick up the tambourine then what can? We all hear things differently anyway. ■

Geoff Alford writes from 'Heimat,' 18 Tensing Close, King's Acre, Hereford HR4 0SE:-

I wonder how many owners of hand-turned mechanical musical instruments have visited one of the well organised German Organ Festivals and wished that we could have something rather similar in England. I know that the occasional effort has been made here but for one reason or another it seems not to have achieved 100 per cent success and there has been no follow up. The snag is that apart from playing in the confines of one's home there are few suitable places or occasions for playing small instruments for the benefit of a larger public.

The Organ Festival scene in Germany is expanding and is now extending into neighbouring countries such as Belgium, France and Italy as more towns come to appreciate the commercial value of these events as a central area attraction. This in turn increases interest in and sales of small instruments and enables more festivals to be organised. I doubt if sales of small mechanical organs will ever 'take-off' here as they have on the Continent - they were never really part of our culture (unlike barrel pianos) as they were in Germany and, unfortunately, there does not appear to be the same degree of interest in music itself.

Despite, or perhaps because of, all this I think that there may now be a sufficient number of owners of mechanical instruments in Britain to permit the organisation of Organ Festivals on a limited basis. Some Councils and Chambers of Commerce are taking a more enlightened view concerning the bringing of open air music into town centres and it certainly needs their co-operation and financial help to make any event sufficiently attractive to encourage enough street musicians to attend.

Another problem we have to contend with is communication. Fragmenting our efforts appears to be a national failing and this certainly applies to the organ field where we have at least four societies catering for the needs of enthusiasts. In Germany the three societies have merged into two producing a single magazine jointly - a practical and money-saving solution. What is needed

is a fund of information on instruments and owners, so I have started to compile a list or index, partly to help gauge the likely support for festivals. It would be of great assistance if members could let me have any relevant information, whether it be of their own instrument or that of a friend or acquaintance. I know that there is a reasonable range of street organs here, including Ariston, Bruder, Imhof and

Moltzer among vintage builders and Bish, Bruns, Hofbauer, Oehrlein and Raffin covers the modern builder spectrum. But how many more are there?

It appears that Geoff Alford is out of touch with the activities of the Society. To say that street organ festivals have received only the occasional effort and not been followed up, is a massive understatement. The Society has run six successful festivals on an annual basis which started in 1980 at Leeds followed by Cambridge, Leamington Spa, Beverley, Plymouth, Aberdeen and this year Windsor.

In Great Britain mechanical music societies are not fragmented, they are 'specialised.' Two of the German societies mentioned merged because they shared exactly the same interests. Our Society specialises in the "Musical Box" but also encompasses many other forms of mechanical music including the large Fairground Organ. On the other hand the Fairground Organ Preservation Society specialises in the Large Fairground Organs (which would be too cumbersome for town centre rallies) and does not attach the same importance as we do to the small street organ.

The Mechanical Organ Owners Society permits membership only to owners of organs, while the Musical Box Society of Great Britain allows membership to all enthusiasts.

Let's hope that now Geoff Alford has been enlightened we will be seeing him at Windsor. By all means Geoff compile your list which would make an interesting article for publication. I can assure you of great support should you volunteer to organise an organ festival in conjunction with the Society's Autumn meeting in 1987. No doubt Alan Wyatt will be on the telephone to you as soon as he reads this. Ed. ■

David Shankland writes from Cardiff:-

The enclosed photograph appeared in the local newspaper about a year ago and after looking at it carefully I wonder if it was True or False? Personally it looks false but The characters appear to be genuine and it is hard to believe that someone took so much care to make up an imitation barrel organ and if so I wonder when?

I have tried to obtain more information about the photograph but without success - it will have to be up to Members of the Musical Box Society! ■



All the Fun of the Fair

It was Noel Coward who claimed that he had "a talent to amuse."

Recreational amusement is the therapy we all crave for and need to balance the present day work stress and redundancy with pure indulgence in our chosen hobbies and interests.

An odd shaped truck covered with a canvas sheet, or a lorry with a body built in an irregular shape and a white roof, causes the public great interest "whatever is that Mrs. ?"; one replies with great pride a Mechanical Organ.

What is it about mechanical organs that is so fascinating? Why do they continue to obtrude into our lives year after year?

The fairground organ is now in great demand again. The travelling showmen had to move with the times and give the people what they wanted. Economics played a big part in that a record player was cheaper than book music!

The organ, as an instrument, has always had the power to influence man's emotions. The deep tones of the Church Organ, or the joyful lilting melodies of the Fairground Organ; and for some innate musical reason, the mechanical Organ shares a large part of the past for many of us.

The fair organ has a mysterious "folk lore" atmosphere with its gilded baroque carvings, moving figures and multi-coloured lights.

So it is that hundreds of organs are preserved, lovingly and painstakingly restored to their former glory, or rebuilt to something even better.

"You know" there's just a little touch of magic in that trailer!

Enjoy a day out, visit some of the British well known rallies and see and hear some of the largest musical boxes of all playing "The Melodies of the Masters."



The 89 key Gavioli organ belonging to M.B.S.G.B. members Don and Dorothy Robinson.

STEAM ENGINE AND ORGAN RALLIES British Events 1986

MAY	25th/26th	BURTON CONSTABLE HALL, NORTH HUMBERSIDE
MAY	25th/26th	CARRINGTON PARK, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE
JUNE	28th/29th	BANBURY STEAM SOCIETY, HOPCROFTS HOLT, MIDDLE BARTON, OXFORDSHIRE
JULY	5th/6th	ELVASTON CASTLE, DERBYSHIRE
JULY	5th/6th	BROMYARD GALA, MINTRIDGE FARM, STOKE LACY, BROMYARD, WORCESTERSHIRE
JULY	19th/20th	MASHAM RALLEY, near RIPON, NORTH YORKSHIRE
JULY	26th/27th	KEGWORTH CARNIVAL, KEGWORTH, DERBYSHIRE
AUGUST	2nd/3rd	CROMFORD RALLY, MATLOCK, DERBYSHIRE
AUGUST	9th/10th	KNOWL HILL, MAIDENHEAD, BERKSHIRE
AUGUST	9th/10th	ASTLE PARK, CHELFORD, CHESHIRE
AUGUST	24th/25th	TOWN & COUNTRY FESTIVAL, R.A.S.E. SHOWGROUND, KENILWORTH, WARWICKSHIRE
AUGUST	24th/25th	RALLY, HAREWOOD HOUSE, LEEDS
AUGUST	24th/25th	EXPO STEAM, EAST OF ENGLAND SHOWGROUND PETERBOROUGH
AUGUST	24th/25th	BISHOPS CASTLE RALLY, SHROPSHIRE
AUGUST	29/30/31st	GREAT WORKING OF STEAM, STOURPAINE BUSHES, BLANDFORD, DORSET
SEPTEMBER	6th/7th	MANCHESTER ORGAN FESTIVAL, HEATON PARK, MANCHESTER
SEPTEMBER	13th/14th	ROXTON PARK RALLY, OFF A1, AT ROXTON, BEDFORDSHIRE

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**Coming up
Soon**



Collectors interested in enlarging and enhancing their collections will be interested to learn that Sotherbys next specialist sale to include mechanical music is on May 20th. The sale comprises over sixty lots which include gramophones, phonographs, organs and organettes, cylinder and disc musical boxes.

The gramophone section is particularly strong and includes a stylish art-deco cabinet gramophone, English, late 1920s, veneered entirely in luxurious satinwood (estimate: £600-800). There is an H.M.V. Monarch gramophone, and Junior Monarch, English, c.1905, both complete with original sectional wooden horns (estimates: £600-800 and £400-600 respectively); and an art-nouveau inspired Klingsor gramophone with lyre decoration to the front, (estimate £350-500).

Cylinder musical boxes make up nearly half the lots on offer, with estimates ranging from £200 to £5000. One of the more expensive and arguably most prestigious pieces is the Charles Paillard Grand Format Mandolin Interchangeable cylinder musical box, c.1880. The box comes complete with five cylinders, and handsome table base with storage drawer.

In the disc musical box section you will find a very rare 14 1/8 in. Polyphon bell-box, c.1900. The sublime harmonie combs are accompanied by two banks of six nickel plated bells (estimate: £2000-3000). One of the more amusing lots in this particular area is a Kalliope Gloriosa Christmas Tree stand. The box plays a tune of your choice as the Christmas tree revolves (this might be worth bearing in mind – only 218 more shopping days left till Xmas!).

Another slightly more unusual form of mechanical music (for collectors interested in some of the more bizarre and amusing aspects of the musical box) comes in the form of an Hohner 44-key "Magic Organa" Automatic Accordion. The accordion can be played manually, or for those who would like to impress their friends, but lack the necessary musical prowess, the accordion comes complete with a collection of 11.5 cm paper-rolls and a foot-pump.

For further information regarding the condition of any of the lots, bidding advice, or more information

for the sale in general contact Kerry Taylor at Sotherbys, Collectors Dept., 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA.

On March 6th, Christie's of South Kensington conducted a very popular sale which included part of the private collection of the late Roy Mickelburgh of Bristol. The sale attracted a large number of buyers resulting in the nicer pieces selling at higher prices.

An Amorette with two dancing dolls sold for £550. A Kalliope coin slot disc music box with a gambling device included, sold at £2,400 and a Fusee driven 7 1/2" cylinder movement with single tooth sectional comb concealed beneath a tea caddy sold for £2,000.

The highest prices of the day were achieved by the revolver cylinder musical box. JM & Co St. Croix which sold at £9,000 and the Eroica three disc musical box with clock bought by Clive Jones for his mechanical music museum at Chichester for £9,500.

NEW MEMBERS

The Committee welcomes the following:

- 2006 Daniel De Bie
Balen, Belgium
- 2007. Brian Noble
Derby
- 2008 Mr. & Mrs. M. Kaufman
California, USA
- 2009 G. W. Holmes
Surrey
- 2010 B. J. Ross
Staffordshire
- 2011 Bruce Charles Crowther
NSW, Australia
- 2012 Wm. R. Black
Florida, USA
- 2013 Dr. Hillarie Rothman
California, USA
- 2014 Wm. G. Oldham
London
- 2015 Mrs. M. Lefevre
Guildford, Surrey
- 2016 J. A. Smith
Keighley, West Yorkshire

Correction to

Vol. 11, No. 8, Xmas 84

- 1946 Mr. K. Giles, Kent.
- 1947 Mr. J. E. Barker, North Yorks.
- 1948 Dr. J. A. Hensel, Hampshire.



Paillard interchangeable.

Klingsor gramophone.

Rare Polyphon bell box.

Kalliope musical Christmas tree stand.

Classified Advertisements

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN NEXT ISSUE:-
7th JULY 1986.

PLEASE NOTE NEW CHARGES

Members: 9p per word (bold type 13p per word).
Minimum cost each advertisement £2.
Non-members: 18p per word (bold type 26p per word).
Minimum cost each advertisement £4.

CASH WITH ORDER PLEASE TO:-

Advertising Manager
John M. Powell, 33 Birchwood Avenue,
Leeds 17, West Yorkshire LS17 8PJ.

RATES FOR DISPLAY ADVERTS	
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Outside back cover (two colours): (full colour, one photograph to max. size of 8 x 6" with square sides, large sizes £25 extra)	Full page only £84.
Inside covers: Full page	£210
Half page	£66
	£36
POSITIONS INSIDE JOURNAL (as available)	
Full page	£54
Half page	£30
Quarter page	£18
These charges include typesetting but are exclusive of any artwork and camera work which may be required. Half-tone, line, and line-and-tone negs plus artwork, design and layout facilities can be provided if needed at additional cost. Squared-up half-tones £9 each. Cut-out half-tones £12.50 each.	
SPECIAL COLOURS	
If required, advertisements can be printed in a second colour. Rates available on application.	
DISCOUNTS	
Four or more consecutive insertions with same copy:	Area rate less 10%
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FOR SALE

Nice selection of **Player Pianos** plus New S/hand Rolls Duo-Art etc. Export service. Laguna Rolls, Lagoon Road, Pagham, Sussex PO21 4TH, England.

Discs for Sale: 6 x 9 1/4" Mira; 28 x 10" Symphonion; 7 x 13 1/4" Symphonion; 7 x 13 1/4" Kalliope; 9 x 14 1/4" Kalliope; 10 x 9 1/4" Kalliope; 10 x 13 1/4" Komet; 4 x 6 3/4" Komet; 12 x 6 1/2" Picolo; Polyphon 9", 11", 15 1/2", 19 1/2", 24 1/2".

Organette Discs: External diameter Do-nut shape, 50 x 1 1/4", 10 x 1 1/2", 50 x 9 1/2".

Tel: 0706 224617.

Model "S" Orchestrille: New pallets, retubed, pneumatic renovation with rolls case polished.

Evans: 0730-894086.

Duo-art rolls; Q.R.S., AMR, Ambassador, 45 titles. New, never played.
Offers to 0209-716465.

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ROLLS: Hupfeld-Helios, -Clavist, -Animatic-S, -T, -S-J.

Will swap my 36 Ducartist (arrived in error) for equivalent value in Duca, or for above wanted styles. Also for any rare reproducing piano systems. Frank Holland, 01-560 8108. Evening.

Box for 15 1/2" table polyphon with R.H. side wind - D. H. Snelling, P.O. Box 23, Douglas, Isle of Man. Tel: 0624 823483.

PIERRE EICH SOLOPHONE and other interesting orchestrions. Also **DECAP ROBOT ORGAN** and **ARBURO CAFE ORGAN**. G. Whitehead, Napton, Nr. Rugby, Warks. 092681 2183.

Deadline Dates for Copy:

June 15; September 15.

For Advertisements

July 7; October 7.

Posting of next edition,
7 August.

NOTICE

The attention of members is drawn to the fact that the appearance in *The Music Box* of an advertiser's announcement does not in any way imply endorsement, approval or recommendation of that advertiser and his services by the editor of the journal or by the Musical Box Society of Great Britain. Members are reminded that they must satisfy themselves as to the ability of the advertiser to serve or supply them.

Est. 1968

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- RESTORATION SUPPLIES:** Governor Jewels, pin straighteners, damper wire in 7 sizes, damper pins in 4 sizes, tip wire, slitting discs, Geneva stop parts, pawls, comb steel, ratchet wheels, Regina moldings, lid pictures, paper goods, keys and much, much more! 30 pg. catalog only \$4.00 (Fully illustrated). (overseas, \$5.00) REFUNDABLE.
- TUNE CARDS:** Fully illustrated catalog of 80 different styles of reproduction tune cards for Cylinder boxes. Some in original multi-color! Send \$1.50 (overseas \$2.50).
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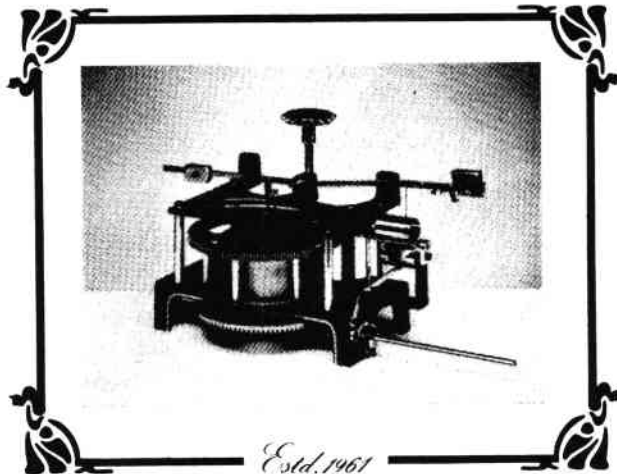
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Fine Mechanical Musical Instruments
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LONDON
TUESDAY 20TH MAY 1986



A Dulcimer in a mahogany marquetry case,
English, mid-19th century, 95 cm. high.
Estimate: £800-£1,200

Enquiries: Jon Baddeley, Collectors' Department

Shelagh Berryman

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- * Phonographs and Organettes
- * Reproducing Pianos
- * Dolls and Automata
- * Orchestrions, Clocks and Novelties

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Wells (0749) 76618

