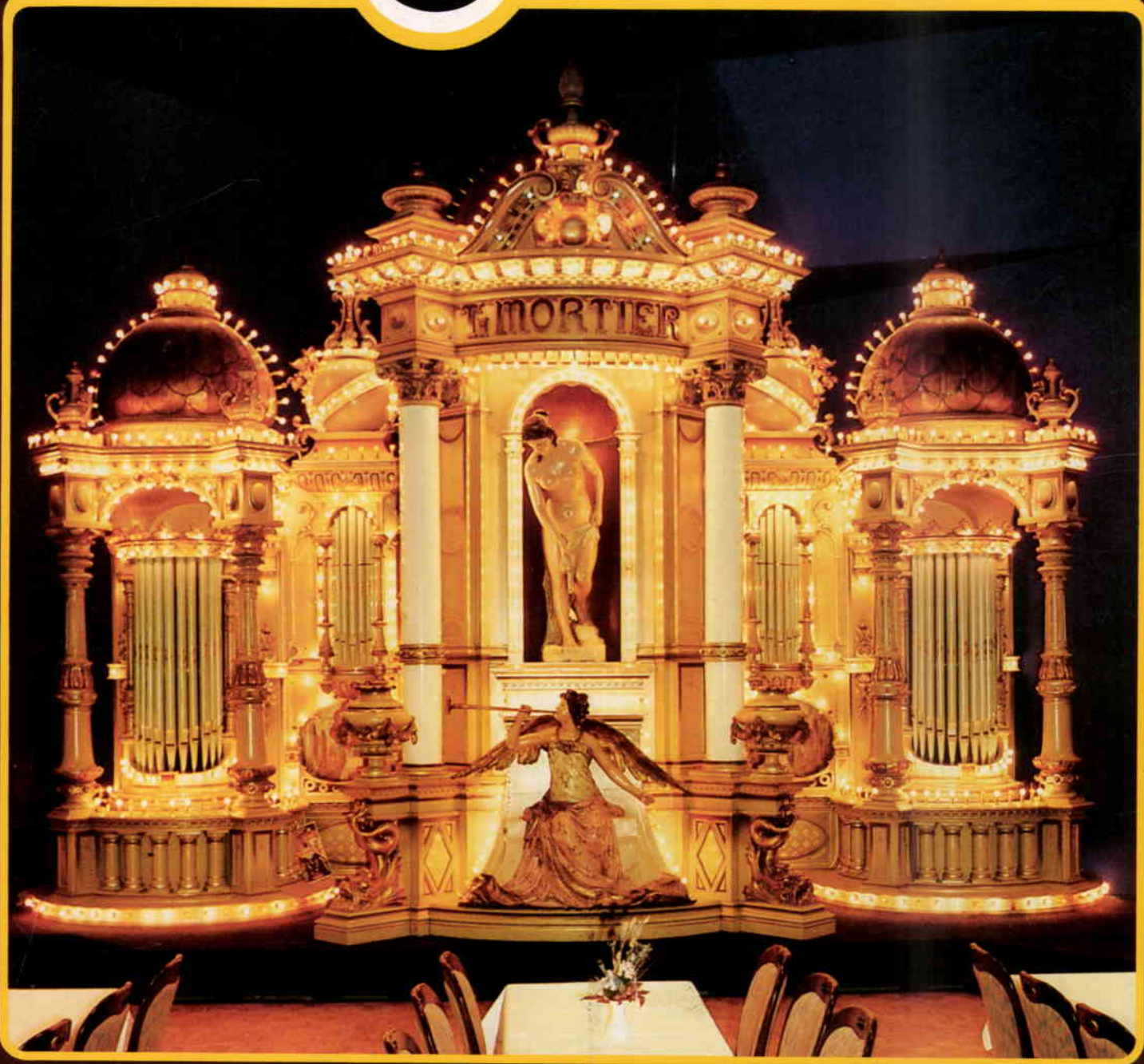


An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 12 Number 8

Winter 1986

The Music Box



Inside

Mechanical Singing-Bird

Music Box Case Decoration

New places to see mechanical music

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

Price £2.50 (3.50 USA). Available free to members on subscription



Mechanical Music for Christmas



This 'Bells-in-view' musical box with a difference, and this G & T 1904 single-spring Monarch Gramophone are among early entries for our sale of **Mechanical Music on December 18th 1986**. A wide selection of talking machines and musical boxes will provide potential Christmas presents for all collectors.

Catalogues
available from
the end of November
from:

Enquiries concerning
this sale should be
addressed to:
Christopher Proudfoot.

CHRISTIE'S
SOUTH KENSINGTON

85 OLD BROMPTON ROAD, LONDON SW7 3LD. TELEPHONE: 01-581 7611.

Belle Vue Box Repairs

Musical Box Specialists
48 ALPHA ROAD, SOUTHVILLE,
BRISTOL BS3 1DH.
Telephone: (0272) 662010

Offer to completely restore the movement of your cylinder musical box
(and the case as well if required). Written estimate supplied.

We can also provide cylinder repinning and governor overhaul services.

However, we do not supply parts or do comb work unless carrying out a
complete overhaul.

Repinning from £11 per inch of cylinder length.

More than 350 cylinders completed.

Good restored boxes for sale.



**48 ALPHA ROAD,
SOUTHVILLE,
BRISTOL BS3 1DH.
Telephone: (0272) 662010**



WANTED

- AUTOMATA - Choice French Pieces by Vichy, Lambert, Decamps, Phalibois, etc. ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN LARGER, MORE COMPLICATED PIECES.
- Large Blackamoor Fluteplayer by Jean Roulet.
- LARGE WELTE ORCHESTRION - STYLE 3 OR LARGER.
- HUPFELD PHONOLISZT-VIOLINA.

I am interested in restored or unrestored pieces of any of the above.

Private collector will pay market prices for these pieces. I'M NOT LOOKING FOR BARGAINS.

Send photos and descriptions to:

**KENNETH GOLDMAN
P.O. BOX 1477
BOSTON, MASS. 02104 U.S.A.
'PHONE 617-444-9539.**

Brian Clegg

SHIPDHAM, THETFORD, NORFOLK.
TEL: DEREHAM 820277,
AFTER 7 p.m. WATTON 881449.
Callers by Appointment please.

**NEW DISC BOXES MADE TO ORDER
AND RENOVATIONS UNDERTAKEN**

**DISCS COPIED AND NEW DISCS
FOR ALL MACHINES**

**WE MAKE THE FOLLOWING TO
SUIT YOUR REQUIREMENTS**

**Cabinets, Bins, Pediments, Star Wheels,
Bedplates, Motors, Combs.**

**DUPLICATED MACHINES FOR
SALE OR EXCHANGE.**

TURNER'S

MUSICAL
MERRY GO ROUND

*Visit us for the best
afternoon or evening out
you've had for years !*

Queen Eleanor Vale,
Newport Pagnell Rd.,
Wootton, Northampton NN4 0HU.
Telephone: 63314.

***Booking Essential.**

MICHAEL SAVINS

QUALITY * VALUE * SERVICE
NEW MODEL 22 KEYLESS FAIR ORGAN



The finest quality, most robust and reliable small Fair Organ available. It is blower operated and has a mellow tone yet is very powerfully voiced. There is a choice of two proscenium styles.

Literature, photographs and tape U.K. £3.50
Overseas £8.00 Sterling.

All other U.K. enquiries S.A.E. please.

FFYNNON HELYG, BONCATH, DYFED, WALES SA37 0JU.
TEL: 023 977 332.

JOHN COWDEROY ANTIQUES

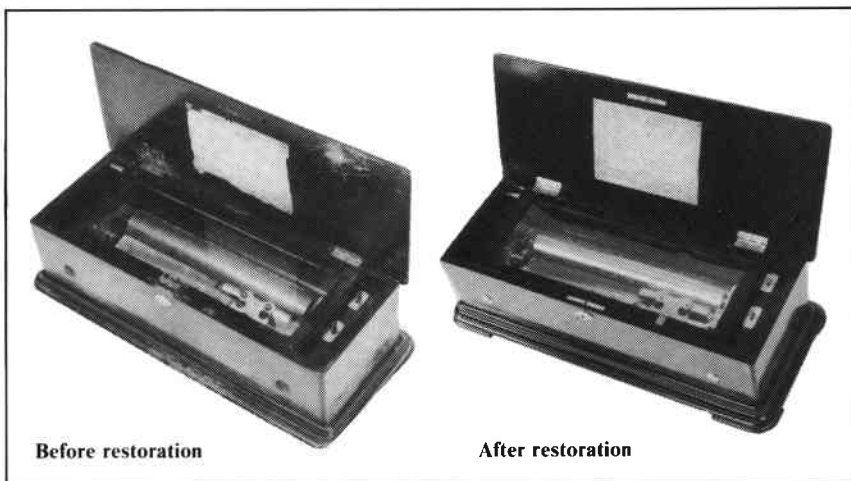
The Musical Box Centre
40 - 42 South Street Eastbourne
Tel: 0323 20058 (Day) 0323 504590 (Evenings)

**SPECIALIST IN THE RESTORATION OF
MUSICAL BOXES AND CLOCKS**

We buy and sell

Musical Boxes
Disc Machines
Clocks
Furniture
Silver
Jewellery
Items of interest

Two large showrooms



MONKTON HOUSE ANTIQUES
(MICHAEL BENNETT-LEVY)



For Buying or Selling
Mechanical Antiques & Curios
Wind-up Gramophones
Phonographs
78 Records
Mechanical Organs
Clocks
Scientific Instruments
Pianolas
Musical Boxes
Medical Instruments
Irons
Typewriters
Early Radios & Crystal Sets
Cameras & Early Photographs
Vintage Bicycles
Automata
Slot Machines
Early Kitchen Equipment
Toys
Machines & Things

Callers by appointment please

**MONKTON HOUSE, OLD CRAIG HALL, MUSSELBURGH
MIDLOTHIAN, SCOTLAND. (15 minutes from Edinburgh city centre)
031 - 665 - 5753**

**NORFOLK POLYPHON
CENTRE**

(NORMAN & JUNE VINCE)

**SPECIALISTS IN:-
ORCHESTRIONS & ORGANS
AUTOMATA
CYLINDER BOXES
DISC MACHINES**

*A wide and constantly changing range
of instruments always available*

WOOD FARM, BAWDESWELL, EAST DEREHAM, NORFOLK.

Telephone: Bawdeswell (036-288) 230

(on B1145 one mile east of A1067 junction in Bawdeswell Village).





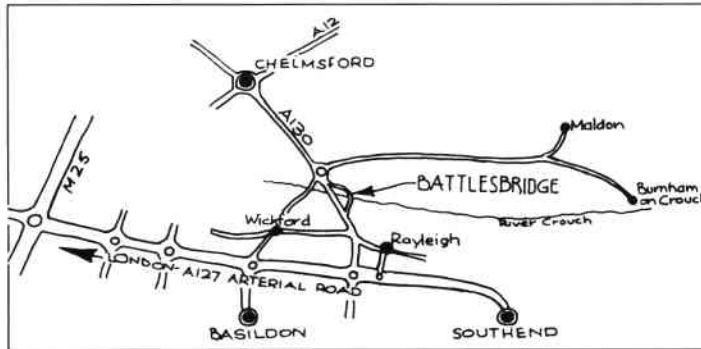
JOE PETTITT at Bridgebarn

COIN-OPERATED AMUSEMENTS
OF ALL TYPES



VICTORIAN TO 1930's ERA
PLUS MANY OTHER INTERESTING MUSICAL AND MECHANICAL ITEMS

*Antiques
of all
descriptions*



*Open most
days and
weekends
Sats. after 2 pm.*

BRIDGEBARN & HAYBARN ANTIQUE CENTRES

THE GREEN, MAIN ROAD,
BATTLESBRIDGE, ESSEX.

Telephone: Wickford (037 44) 63500 & 5584.

44 Other dealers in four buildings (ideal for the ladies to browse!)

SPECIALIST DISC BOX REPAIRS



J. D. WEIR F.B.H.I.

★ Note new address ★

Parkview, 72B Glengate, Kirriemuir, Angus,
Scotland DD8 4JG

Telephone Kirriemuir (0575) 73781

All aspects of work on cylinder boxes undertaken.

Services offered include:-

- ★ Cylinder re-pinning – no limitation to size.
- ★ Eccentric or worn cylinder pins re-ground true to cylinder pivots.
- ★ All manner of comb work.
- ★ Cutting back. Re-tuning.
- ★ Re-leading and Tuning.
- ★ Re-facing star wheels.
- ★ Setting up and adjusting gantries.
- ★ Motor repairs.

In fact anything necessary to completely overhaul your musical box.

Work can be collected and delivered anywhere.
Distance genuinely no object.



Lesley Evans

PLAYER PIANO SPECIALIST

High Quality Grand and Upright Player Pianos
Restored throughout to the Highest Possible
Standards usually available from stock.

We are occasionally able to undertake the
restoration of clients' own instruments. Please
telephone for further details.

**A Large Stock of Original Rolls
(88 and 65 note)**

Plus the entire range of
**NEW JAZZMASTER AND RAGMASTER
ROLLS**

Always available at Competitive Prices

VISIT US AT LISS

(phone Liss [0730] 894086 for appointment)
or send S.A.E. for details to:-

P.O. Box 12 . ALRESFORD . HANTS.

The Music Box

An International Magazine
of Mechanical Music

The Journal of the
Musical Box Society
of Great Britain.

Volume 12
Number 8
Winter 1986

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
new membership should be addressed.**

Meetings Secretary: Alan Wyatt,
The Willows, 102 High Street, Landbeach,
Cambridge CB4 4DT.

Treasurer: Bob Holden,
19 Culworth House, West Road,
Guildford, Surrey GU1 2AS.

Recording Secretary: Sue Holden,
19 Culworth House, West Road,
Guildford, Surrey GU1 2AS.

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, Whitchurch, 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.

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

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

John Phillips: 'Langley', Denmans Lane, Fontwell,
West Sussex.

Alison Biden: St Giles Hilltop, Northbrook Close,
Winchester, Hants SO23 8JR.

Bob Leach: 31 Perry Hill, London SE6 4LF.

Contents

Editor's Notes <i>Graham Whitehead</i>	282
Newsdesk	283
The new Music Box on right lines	283
Organ grinds raise £'s for charity	283
Laser beams read wax cylinders*	283
Organ grinders day at Leamington Spa ...	283
Music Box buyer gets 'just the ticket'	284
Twenty-fifth Anniversary	284
Frank Holland in portrait	285
Cryptic crossword puzzle <i>A. J. L. Wright</i>	285
Society Topics	286
Mechanical Singing-Bird <i>R. Booty (reprint)</i>	292
Collectors Showcase	295
Musical Box Case Decoration <i>David Tallis</i>	296
New places to see mechanical music demonstrated <i>Graham Whitehead</i>	298
Two early cylinder movements <i>Graham Webb</i>	304
Musical Box Oddments <i>H. A. V. Bulleid</i>	306
Letters to the Editor	310
Coming-Up Soon	312
Reviews <i>Ian Alderman</i>	313
New Members	315
Classified	315

*This report first appeared in the "New Scientist", London, the weekly review of science and technology.

Front Cover: The famous Taj Mahal Mortier organ,
at the Magic Casino, Degersheim, Switzerland.
Photo by: Graham Whitehead.

ALL MATERIAL IN "THE MUSIC BOX" IS COPYRIGHT.
NO REPRODUCTION WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION
OF THE EDITOR. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

The Music Box is printed for and published by the Society
quarterly 27th February, 27th April, 7th August, 7th November,
from the Editorial Office, Broadgate Printing Company, Cronal
Road, Exhall, Coventry CV7 9NH.

Back numbers obtainable from Roy Ison, 3 Greenstone Place,
off Minster Yard, Lincoln.

Editors Notes

Once again, through a readers letter, see page 310, the Music Box brings to attention the virtues and ethics applying to mechanical music restoration. David and Lesley Evans, themselves experienced restorers of mechanical music take to task, what they consider to be unethical mutilation of a Gavioli fair organ featured in the Autumn edition of the Music Box. During the rebuilding this instrument received additional and extended pipework and a Glockenspiel. At the same time increasing the scale by 9 keys.

In the past Keith Harding has produced an article on the ethics of musical box restoration. Some would argue that these ethics apply to all forms of mechanical music both large and small. It could also be argued that there is a vast difference between restoring a musical box and a fair organ. Take a cylinder box missing it's cylinder and viable restoration would be impossible. Whilst not intending to over simplify, apart from the case, musical box restoration consists of repairing broken parts, cleaning and adjusting, leaving the finished article still original and certainly looking that way.

On the other hand, take a delapidated organ and that task is very different. Made almost completely from degenerateable material, major parts may have to be completely replaced. Leather, rubber and even the timber itself is likely to be rotten if not eaten away by wood-worm. With major parts missing, these bulkier items not requiring anything like the precision of the musical box maker, can be rebuilt or created. On these occasions, there could be temptation to make alterations in the name of improvements, particularly when the listener on the rally field is likely to judge the instrument by it's sound and not it's history. Here then was the opportunity to build something bigger and because of that, better than the original, a fact in this case that would be hard to dispute.

However, with almost everything completely new including the brass clarinets, brass resonators, for the trumpets and trombones, we have an instrument here which is very commendable, but after such modification it is certainly no longer a Gavioli. The ethics are questionable as twenty years from now someone

may be buying this organ believing it to be original. The restorer may well have enjoyed a greater benefit by painting his name, Andrew Pilmer, across the top board. Organ builders Page and Howard did just that when they built a new Gavioli styled 48 key organ adding status to its image by including the words "Systeme Gavioli".

A similar situation arose in the workshops of Napton Nickelodeon recently when a Kuhl & Klatt orchestration was found to be in such bad condition, authentic restoration was abandoned. With a completely new electro-pneumatic system and the addition of glockenspiel, two ranks of

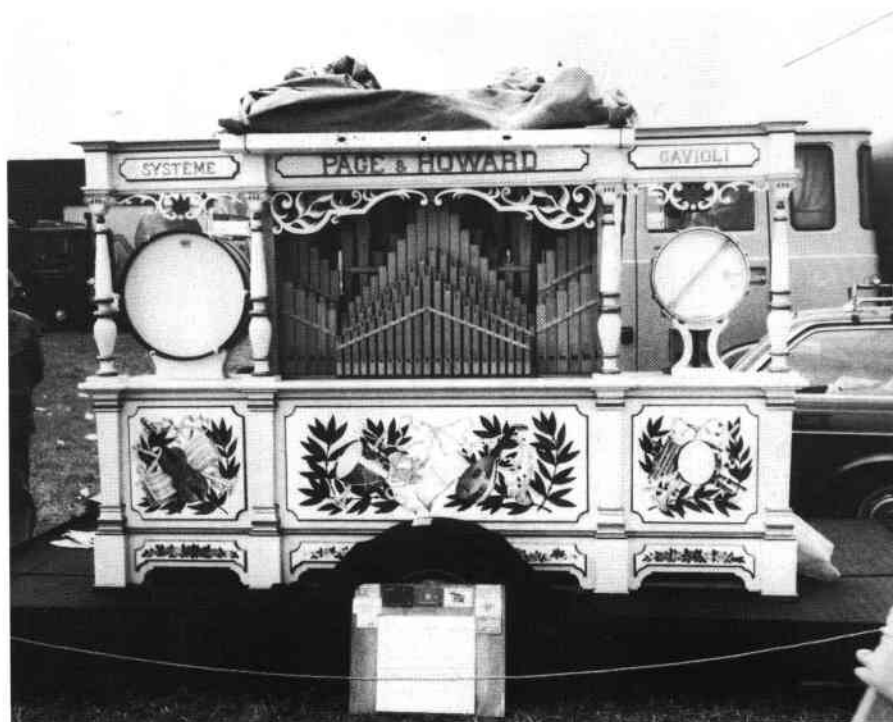
pipes and complete percussion set, played from a new scale, the name was changed simply to an "Electric Orchestra".



Your editor and the committee of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain wish all members a happy Christmas and a melodious New Year.



The former Gavioli bearing Serial No. 7630, now restored and enlarged, making an appearance at Stourpaine in August.



Also at Stourpaine and less contentious a new 48 key organ bearing the Gavioli name, yet clearly identifying its maker.

The new Music Box on right lines

Dozens of letters from readers, and a dramatic increase in the number of new members has left new editor Graham Whitehead and members of the committee in no doubt as to the popularity of the Music Box's new image. Compared with Vol. 12 numbers 1 to 4, nearly three times the amount of new copy and over four times the number of photographs have gone into issues 5 - 8. Colour has also been introduced and the greater range of interests covered in articles produced by regular and new contributors have appealed to a much wider readership. More significantly, the success of the Music Box has been reflected in a sudden upsurge in memberships. Whilst issues 1 - 4 listed only 16 new members, the last four issues of volume 12 have listed 97 new members and this is not counting the 40 or so members that re-joined, retaining their original membership numbers.

Advertisers too have reaped the benefits, with one new advertiser Shelagh Berryman reporting that over £13,000 worth of sales could

be attributed directly to her shrewd decision to advertise regularly on the back page of the Music Box.

Even at the new subscription rates in 1987, members may be reassured of the excellent value for money offered by this publication and the benefits of membership of the Society. ■

Organ grinds raise £ £ £'s for charity

The annual Cambridge organ grind in aid of Muscular Dystrophy took place on 6th September raising a staggering £1,810.75 for that charity.

One week earlier, your Editor, owner of Napton Nickelodeon, organised an organ grind in Leamington Spa in aid of Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. Fourteen members of the Musical Box Society attended and together raised £1,174, more than enough to cover the cost of training a guide dog for a blind person.

The Society's official organ grind held in conjunction with the Windsor meeting raised some £1,420 of which approximately £650 was collected by the organ grinders themselves. ■

Laser beams read wax cylinders

Japanese engineers are trying to recover the sound recorded on wax-cylinder phonographs. However, it is not easy to recover sound from the fragile cylinders.

Japanese engineers confronted that problem after 65 old wax cylinder recordings were uncovered at Mickiewicz University in Poland. Bronislaw Pilsudski, a Polish anthropologist, recorded speech and songs of the Ainu people of Sakhalin and Hokkaido on the cylinders between 1902 and 1905. Sakhalin Island was annexed to the Soviet Union after World War II, and the folklore of its Ainu people has been lost. Hokkaido is Japan's large northern island.

In mid-1983, engineers at Hokkaido University's Research Institute of Applied Electricity were asked to find a way to play the cylinders. They were wary of using an old Edison phonograph, even if a working one had been available, because the 20-gram stylus pressure, could easily damage the fragile wax cylinders. So Toru Ifukube, Toshimitsu Asakura, and Toshio Kawashima built a low-pressure stylus that reproduced sounds from the 41 intact cylinders.

Other cylinders could not be played mechanically because they had been cracked or broken. The engineers devised a non-contact laser system to do the job. By detecting the angle at which the surface of the wax cylinder reflected the light, the engineers were able to reconstruct the sound. ■

ORGAN GRINDERS DAY AT LEAMINGTON SPA



David Heeley with his Pell organ.



Graham Whitehead, your Editor with his Tomasso barrel piano.



"Open all hours" Peter Hassall, Barclays Bank Manager, takes the morning off and grinds outside their Leamington Spa Branch.

Musical Box buyer gets “just the ticket”

When MBSGB member Danny DeBie bought lot 405 from Sotheby's sale on May 20th this year, he found a little bonus in the bottom of the case. For there was the original receipt from Parkins and Gotto retailers of the box in 1876. The receipt describes this 6 airs Nicole Frères as a “best make” and sold for 10 guineas which with discount rounded the price down to £10.00. Mr. DeBie successfully bid £1050.00 to acquire the piece.

Twenty-fifth Anniversary

On 25th October, 1986 to the day, Graham Webb, well known author on, and dealer in, period musical boxes, celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary in the business.

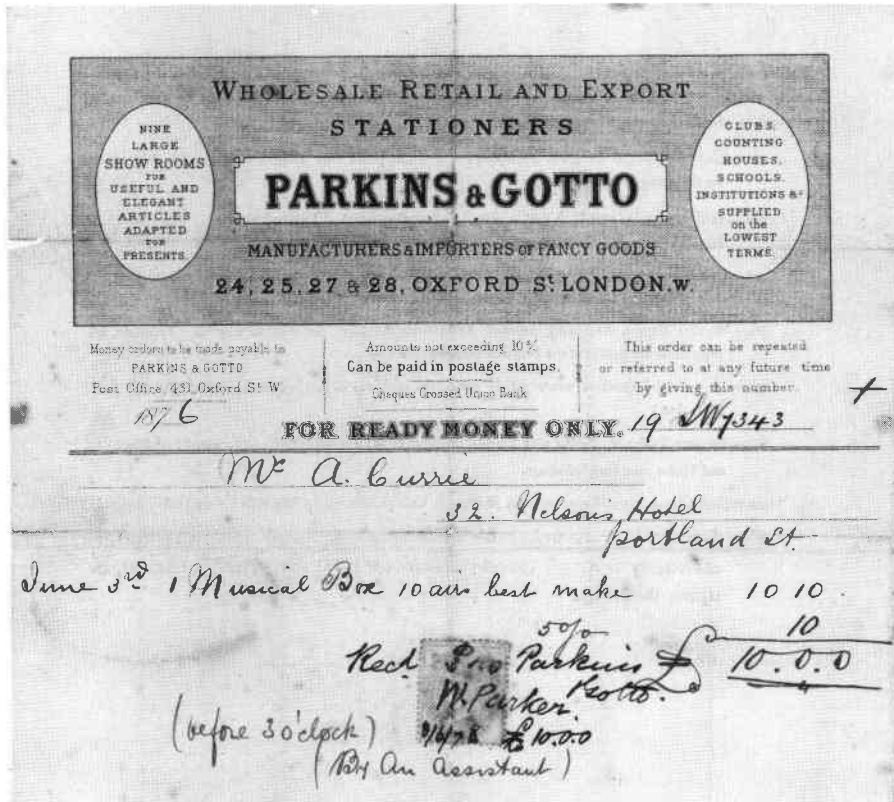
Having an interest in antiques, and dealing part time since 1954, it was in 1960 that Graham bought a partnership in the shop in Portobello Road that was to become a world famous centre for musical box collectors.

At first the business was in general antiques with no particular speciality, but in 1961 Graham bought out his partner and became the sole owner of the shop. Shortly after, on 25th October of that year, he bought not one but seven musical boxes from Ron Lee, a name to be instantly recognised by earlier members. Selling this haul in a matter of hours convinced the antique dealer that here was a subject in which it would be worth specialising. The immediate result was that everything else went by the board in the search for musical boxes. The long term result was that within a few years the shop had become the collector's Mecca which it remains today – now under the management of Member Jack Donovan.

For a long time the specialist at Portobello thought of writing a leaflet on the care of musical boxes so that one could be supplied with each box sold. Later the idea became a possible paper-back book, and, eventually, introduced to Faber and Faber by Keith Harding, Graham wrote 'The Cylinder Musical Box Handbook', published in 1968, to be followed in 1971 by 'The Disc Musical Box Handbook'. It would be fair to say that the basic knowledge of many skilled repairers in the field today was gained from these books. Both have recently been issued in a second edition.

Having been a Committee Member for several years, in 1971 Graham became Hon. Editor of the Journal, a post he held for two years.

In 1973, wearying of the bustle of the by now frenetic Portobello, Graham decided on a complete change of pace. He relinquished the shop, moved to Swandale in North Yorkshire, and became a partner with another good friend, Douglas Berryman, in the West Cornwall Museum of Mechanical Music. He also, again with Douglas, became co-director of WEAP Ltd. (West of England Automatic Piano Company).



The receipt



and the tune sheet!



Graham Webb.

In Yorkshire he eventually opened Britain's first and only Mechanical Music restaurant. It was a success but, missing the daily contact with the converted, Graham and his wife Jo decided to return to the South. In 1977 all other business interests were disposed of and a musical box shop was opened in the famous Brighton 'Lanes' area. The shop proved too small for the busy trade that developed as old and new clients discovered it and soon larger premises were found in Ship Street, almost exactly in the centre of the old town of BRIGHTHELMSTONE, from which Brighton evolved.

When Graham looks back he sees a wealth of friendships, started in commerce, but built up by common interest and good deals. ■

Frank Holland in portrait

The Museum of London was the venue for a reception held on Friday, 3rd October at which the Trustees of the Musical Museum were presented with a portrait of the Founder and Director of the Museum, Frank W. Holland, MBE, by the artist, Margaret Holland Sargeant.

The presentation was made in recognition of the outstanding contribution by Frank Holland to the preservation of player pianos and allied automatic musical instruments, and of his creation of one of the finest collections of its kind in the world.

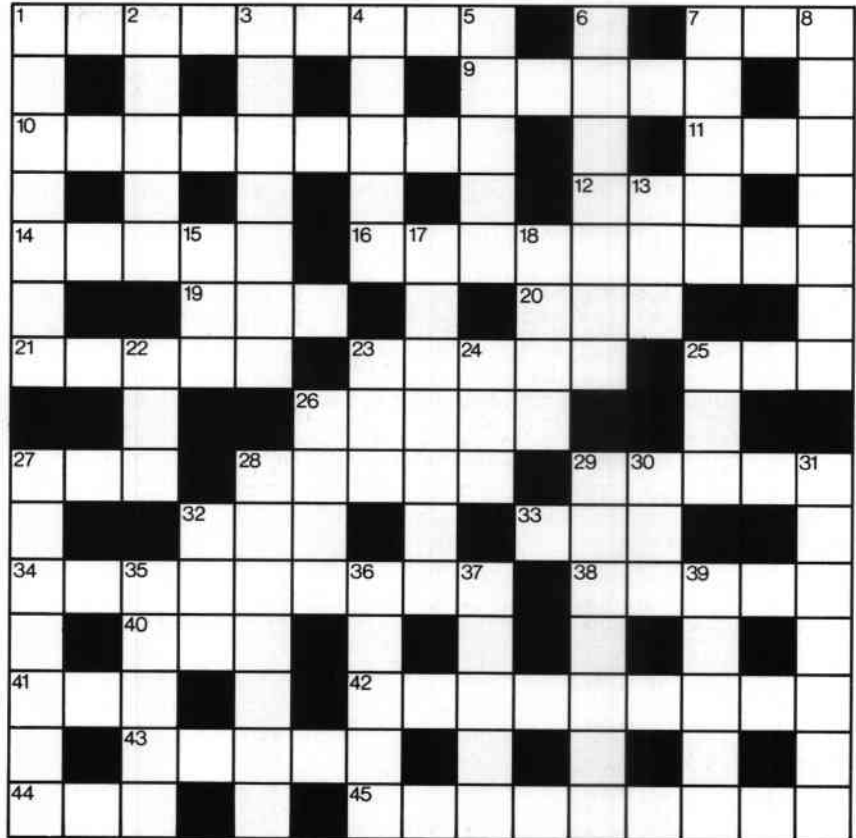
Mrs. Margaret Holland Sargeant, is one of America's leading portrait artists and has painted presidents, princes, heads of state, government leaders and members of many prominent families. Her commissions have included President Ford, President Carter and Mrs. Margaret Thatcher.

Mrs. Sargeant is the daughter of the late Cecil Holland, an uncle of Frank Holland and a most famous Hollywood Make-up artist, who was responsible for many of the thousand faces of Lon Chaney.

The guests were welcomed to the reception held in the Late Stuart Gallery, by Max Hebditch, Director of the Museum of London. Mr. Michael Ryder, Chairman of the Trustees of the Musical Museum outlined Frank Holland's achievements to which he gratefully responded. ■

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD PUZZLE with some musical box overtones

by A. J. L. Wright



ACROSS

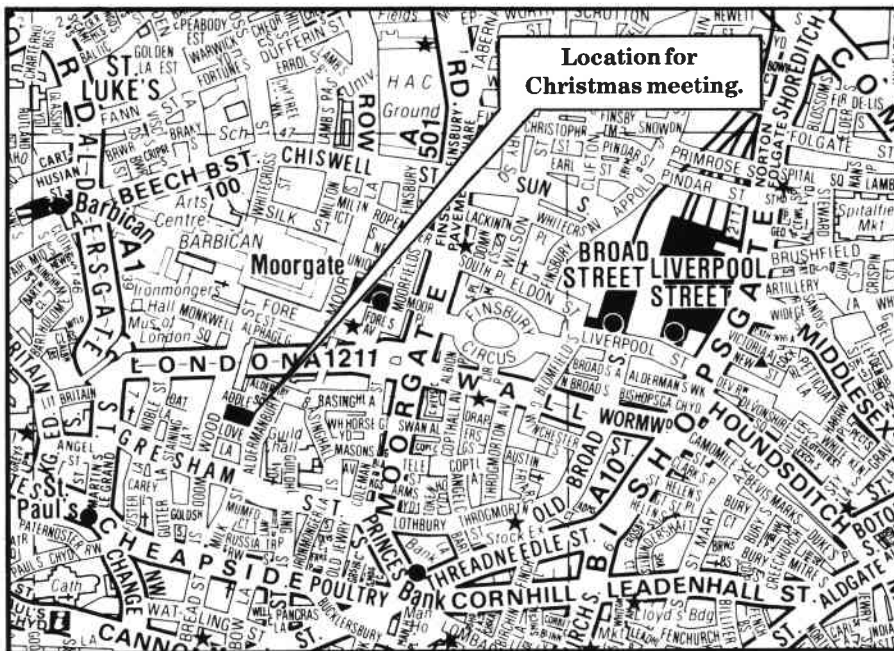
1. Its true I am in reduced circumstances. (9)
7. The Spanish loud little man. (3)
9. A turn for the Controller's gear. (5)
10. Song teacher finds the Queen and I, less expenses, in quarters. (9)
11. Finish applied to a stone. (3)
12. Fabulous flyer. (3)
14. Hold that catch for a century to fall (5)
16. About issue, a peak will provide amplification. (9)
19. Become enthusiastic for making dolls. (3)
20. A short seller returns for every meaning. (3)
21. Always after port it causes wind. (5)
23. Maker of disc or wind music sounds a rotter! (5)
25. Nothing I left will make the going smoother. (3)
26. Everything is upon fibre, we hear. (5)
27. Beat the confused worker. (3)
28. An overweight church is just one aspect. (5)
29. They are deadly dull in Arab or Estonian dialects. (5)
32. Returned saying it's gone tense. (3)
33. The supporter keeps the music steady. (3)
34. Spies rest disguised under the Bishop. (9)
38. Softly in control restores the music. (5)
40. Fine tooth spacing around holes. (3)
41. Length of two novices from the Orient. (3)
42. A run, evil as it may be, happens everywhere. (9)
43. Mary Ann ultimately has to call it off. (5)
44. Speak or approve the point. (3)
45. Use the ten on the musical box. (9)

DOWN

1. The U.S. claim to be harmonious. (7)
2. The confused cleric points around to raise courage. (5)
3. Run, Alan, and arrange to get a round. (7)
4. Publish or the idiot will lose his head. (5)
5. The vessels belong to you, we hear. (5)
6. The old track has a listener who wants to know. (6)
7. Designate a muddled Scot from the East. (5)
8. Red Flea Group, part of an organisation. (7)
13. For a row is nothing to a backward artist. (3)
15. Bleater is reversible. (3)
17. Supports 33 across for ever. (7)
18. Undecided to refuse uprising about exercise. (4)
22. In front of the rest by five and a quarter. (3)
23. Discharge from a denomination. (3)
24. One of many going. (3)
25. Not for you or about you. (3)
26. Its nothing to a good man to dry out. (4)
27. The search giveth no music when it slippest around. (7)
28. Holds together while increasing the tempo. (7)
29. Need turns and taps for thirsty musicians. (7)
30. Singular in its magnificent tone. (3)
31. Hot corner was, in a way, rather worn. (7)
32. Tiny endless grower. (3)
35. Decoratively sunk in song. (5)
36. Rejoice in reaching the apex ultimately. (5)
37. The young offspring was thus turned on. (5)
39. Tapes wound round in papier-mache. (5)

ANSWERS ON PAGE 314.

Location map for the Christmas meeting



Dates for your diary

6th December:-

Christmas meeting, Wakefield room, Wood Street Police Station, see map.
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 -
1st January, 1987:-

Chichester Lodge Hotel,
Chichester, W. Sussex.
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.

3rd - 5th April, 1987:-

Spring Meeting, Moat House Hotel, Silver Street, Northampton. The meeting includes visits to Napton Nickelodeon, a private collection of mechanical music at Saddington, and a Saturday evening dinner at Turners Musical Merry-Go-Round.

Important: Being a popular night spot (with mechanical music), Turners Musical Merry-Go-Round is extremely well booked. As *tickets are strictly limited, priority will be given in order of registration.* Registration and reservation forms are enclosed in this edition.

6th June:-

Summer meeting, Banqueting Room, The Oval Cricket Ground. Use Hobbs Gate entrance. Ample parking inside with easy access to meeting room. Annual Society Auction, speakers to be announced.

12th - 20th July:-

Proposed Swiss trip to include Thun Festival. Details from Alan Wyatt.

This programme may be subject to alteration.

SOCIETY TOPICS

Please remember
subscriptions for
1987 are now due

See special form
enclosed with this issue.

Chantonburg Ring

On 3rd August the Chantonburg Ring held a meeting of which 37 members of the Musical Box Society attended. The meeting was held at John Mansfield's home on a very wet rainy day. John Phillips projected a film showing the Chichester Museum and the Leamington Spa organ grind. Ted Brown gave a talk entitled "It need not cost you an arm and a leg", featuring the cheaper end of the musical box market. Peter Howard gave a talk with aid of slides on a subject of wood veneering. David and Lesley Evans brought their Banana Tree dance organ. Many other members brought musical boxes to demonstrate and discuss, helped by Reg Waylett with his Hofbauer organ. ■

NEW YEAR MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

We would like to remind members of the New Year Meeting at Chichester - details of how to book are enclosed with this magazine. We aim to make this a memorable occasion - a "mechanical music classic". New Year's Eve - Dinner at 8pm at the Chichester Lodge Hotel, with dancing and music (not mechanical!) New Year's Day - Registration and Coffee at our Museum, 9.30 - 10.00am. Demonstration of instruments, 10am - 12 noon. Buffet lunch at Chichester Lodge Hotel, 12.30 - 1.30pm. Back to the museum for more music, 2pm - 5pm. We intend to play over 40 different mechanical instruments, all good examples of their type, including street barrel organs, chamber & church barrel organs, dance organ, orchestron, Mill's Violano Virtuoso, mechanical zither, piano melodico, orchestrelle, cylinder and rare disc musical boxes, phonographs and early gramophones. A musical feast fit for a king!

Please book New Year's Eve Dinner and New Year's Day Extravaganza with Alan Wyatt: book bed and breakfast directly with the hotel.

The only things we ask you to bring are your good selves and a cushion (our Museum chairs are rather hard after an hour!). ■

AUTUMN MEETING, Royal Windsor, 19th-21st September

Report by Reg Mayes



"Is that a mouse up there ?" Frank Holland conducts, as members join a music roll sing-a-long at the Musical Museum at Brentford.

The venue for the Autumn meeting was the Harte and Garter Hotel delightfully situated on the edge of the town centre right opposite Windsor Castle.

The meeting started after dinner on the Friday evening when we adjourned to the Langley room for a general get-together and made welcome four members who had flown in especially from Switzerland to attend the Autumn meeting. They were Mr and Mrs Hans and Elizabeth Woodfli, Kurt Matter and Ursula Reusser. After Ted Brown played his organette, Ursula Reusser was persuaded to demonstrate the technique of organ grinding in Thun, waltzing around us, playing her Czechoslovakian Reed organ carried with the aid of a large shoulder strap.



Ursula Reusser from Switzerland.



Good food, good wine, good company, a reflection on the Society's Autumn dinner, as Authur Ord-Hume, left and our president Jon Gresham, enjoy a good joke.



"Aren't we all having a good time", quips Jim Balchin, as he and a Wings collector pose for photographers.

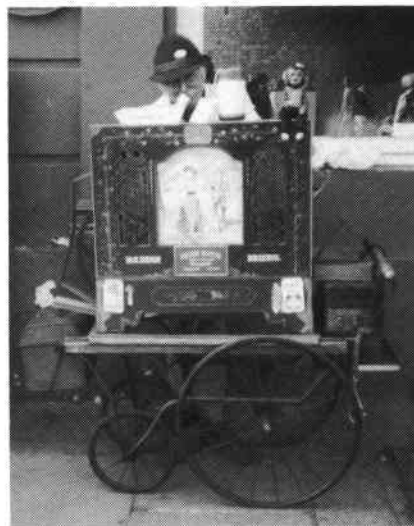
We were up early on Saturday to man some twenty instruments around Windsor, each with a collection box and labels in aid of the Royal Airforce Benevolent Association. The total take for the day was some £1,420 which was about twice their normal collection – well done the ‘Grinders’.

After lunch we enjoyed a guided tour of Eton College, although somewhat disjointed. When it was indicated by our guide that tourists were tolerated at Eton rather than encouraged, together with the number of people present that day, it explained the speed at which we were whisked around. Visiting the Chapel we saw an 18th century organ in the course of being rebuilt by the organ building firm of Mander’s. Some of the pipes were decorated with the coats and arms of Royalty. We sat briefly at the desks of the original school which was for 70 boys between the ages of eight and twelve who had to be competent at reading Latin grammar and plainsong. The present School caters for about 1,200 fee paying pupils (at around £6,000 p.a.; each) but there are still seventy King’s Scholars.

We then had a quick walk back to Windsor’s Great Western Railway station to visit the Tussaud’s ‘Royalty & Empire’ display which re-captures the moment in 1897 when Queen Victoria welcomed Royal visitors from all over the world who had come to celebrate the sixty years of her reign. A replica steam locomotive and coaches were there; as well as models of some twenty Royals with forty Guards of Honour. There was also a theatre show with life sized animated talking models of Queen Victoria (with dog) and other famous Victorians. However, of special interest for us was a coin-operated 19½ inch Polyphon, bearing the date 1897, but had stopped halfway through a disc and the slot was blocked.



Alan and Daphne Wyatt.



Peter Hoyte.



Harry and Renee Markham.



An admirer watches Freddie Hill and Cecil Cramp.



John and Margaret Miller.



John Mansfield.



Mrs. S. Atkinson shows David Pilgrim her Raffin organ.

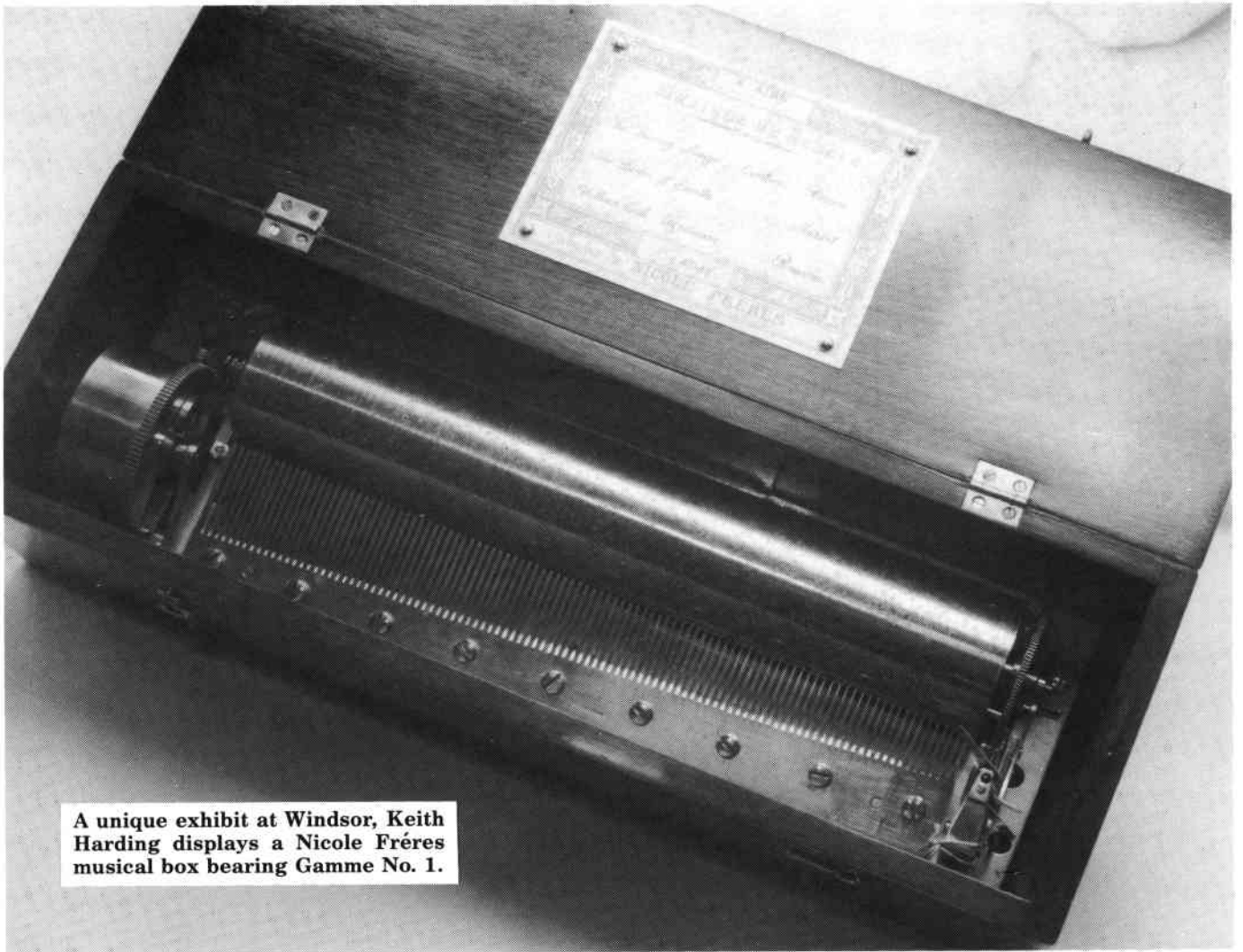
The Society dinner was held at 7.30pm and the main speaker was Arthur Ord-Hume, who had honoured us by flying in from Rome, where he was engaged with the restoration of a hydraulically activated organ. Using some very fine recording equipment to reproduce the sounds of some interesting mechanical musical instruments he covered the historical development of mechanical music. It seems that there is now some evidence that musical boxes were around in the 1750's, we await Arthur's further research with keen interest.

Next Keith Harding demonstrated an early Nicole Freres No. 14046 cylinder box, which did not have a cover over the control levers at the end of the box. The box was of special interest because it bore the gamme No. 1!!! Keith had been unable to identify three of its six tunes and those that were recognised were very fine arrangements. We couldn't help Keith to name the unknown tunes but all the tunes sounded very well indeed.



Arthur Ord-Hume addresses the meeting.

Society Dinner at Harte and Garter Hotel, Windsor.



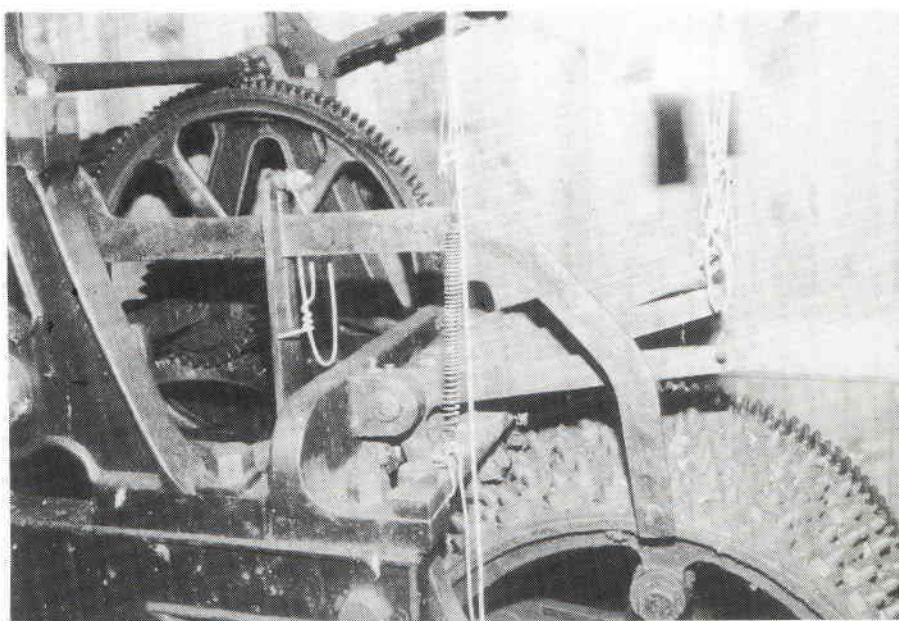
A unique exhibit at Windsor, Keith Harding displays a Nicole Frères musical box bearing Gamme No. 1.



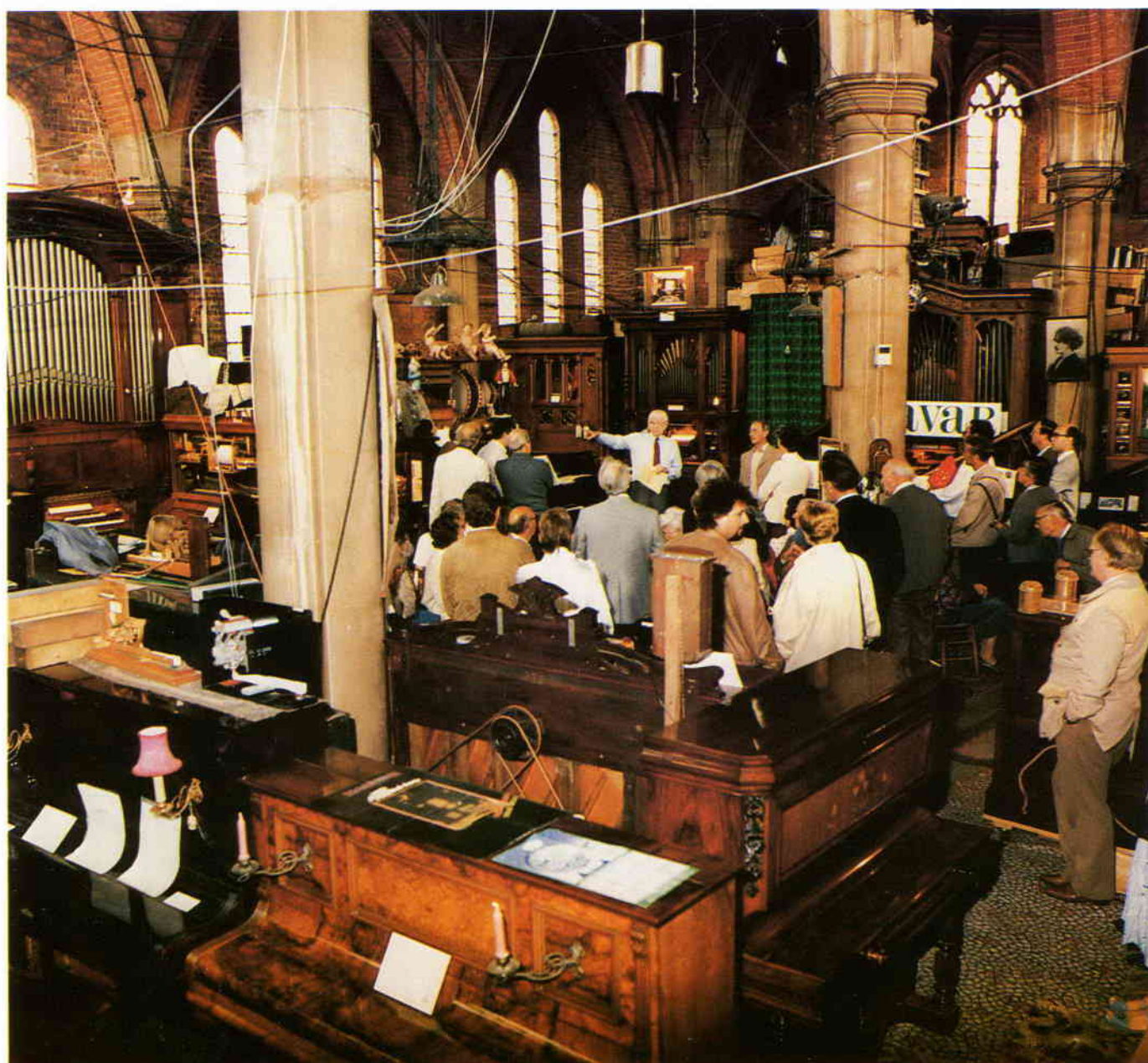
Frank's 18 rank Aeolian pipe organ with a Duo-Art-organ roll playing attachment wired in above.

Sunday morning saw us take a coach to visit Frank Holland's Musical Museum at Brentford. Frank had obtained a special dispensation to allow the Church bells of his carillon to be rung. In his inimitable way we were led around his grand collection of piano players; player pianos; orchestrions etc. All completed instruments were in very fine voice. We were also entertained to a demonstration of an alternative method of musical notation called Klavar, where instead of the stave being horizontal it is vertical i.e. in line with the keys of a piano. As a finale we hear the cinema organ operated by a rare Wurlitzer player attachment.

The good offices of our 'locals' Brian and Brenda Campsie and their energy in organising the arrangements made another fine meeting. With Alan and Daphne Wyatt providing long range backing, one is not too certain who is closer to God to order the fine weather with which we were blessed. Our President, Jon Gresham was also with us and not only enjoyed himself but he expressed our thanks to all those who gave of their time and effort. ■



The carillon at St. Georges church, Brentford, now the Musical Museum. The church was built in 1886 and the carillon installed in 1913. Operating only six hammers this device should more correctly be termed a "Chime".



Franks world, Society members visit the Musical Museum, Brentford.

Mechanical Singing-Bird

R. Booty

The descriptions and drawings here come from editions of the 'English Mechanic' and 'World of Science' between September and November, 1880. The drawings are all reproduced same size as the originals, and the only name affixed to it all was 'Cosmopolitan' R. Booty.

The invention of this most ingenious automaton is ascribed to Robert Houdin, the celebrated clockmaker and prestidigitateur, of Paris. It has, since his time, been somewhat improved, and its general arrangement modified with a view to compactness; but practically, those we see of modern date are replicas of Houdin's wonderful original. Birds have also been made to chirp, and flit from bough to bough in the most natural manner, and I have constructed a cage, 14 ft. long by 10 ft. high, full of birds flitting about and singing mechanically for exhibition purposes, which proved a great attraction. As some of our numerous readers seem desirous of making a singing-bird, I have great pleasure in sending the necessary instructions; but they will find it a task likely to tax all their patience and perseverance, yet an unrewarding pleasure when successfully accomplished.

The working drawings herewith refer to the arrangement usually found in singing-birds mounted on a bouquet of flowers in a porcelain jardiniere, and is that presenting the most charming and lifelike illusion.

On reference to Figure 1, the base-plate, or foundation, is represented at A. It is of brass generally, must be quite flat, and of good substance; hard brass is best. It is firmly fixed inside the bottom of vase by means of three screws passing through holes drilled in the porcelain base, the screws being tapped into the brass plate at equal distances. Zinc collets or washers are necessary over the heads of screws, slightly cupped-shape, to take the draw of screw, otherwise the porcelain is apt to split. Of course, the respective parts will all have to be fitted before the final screwing-in of base-plate. The relative positions of the pieces which require to be first made and fitted are shown in Fig. 1, and a certain amount of clockmaking skill will be indispensable, but the train of



wheels can be obtained without much difficulty, the rest is comparatively easy, and can be readily made with such tools as amateurs usually possess.

Space must be provided under side of base-plate and interior of vase for the heads of screws, which attach the movement to foundation by means of the pillars, DD, of frame, as well as for those which secure the wooden base of bellows, B, to base-plate. A hole $\frac{1}{2}$ inch square must be made in base-plate, under the fixed end of whistle, N, and a corresponding hole somewhat less, shape immaterial, in vase, to permit the free passage of air and sound from whistle.

Figure 1 is intended simply to show the general arrangement of the parts attached to foundation-plate; each of these parts will, in subsequent drawings be described in detail. Figure 1 is half actual size.

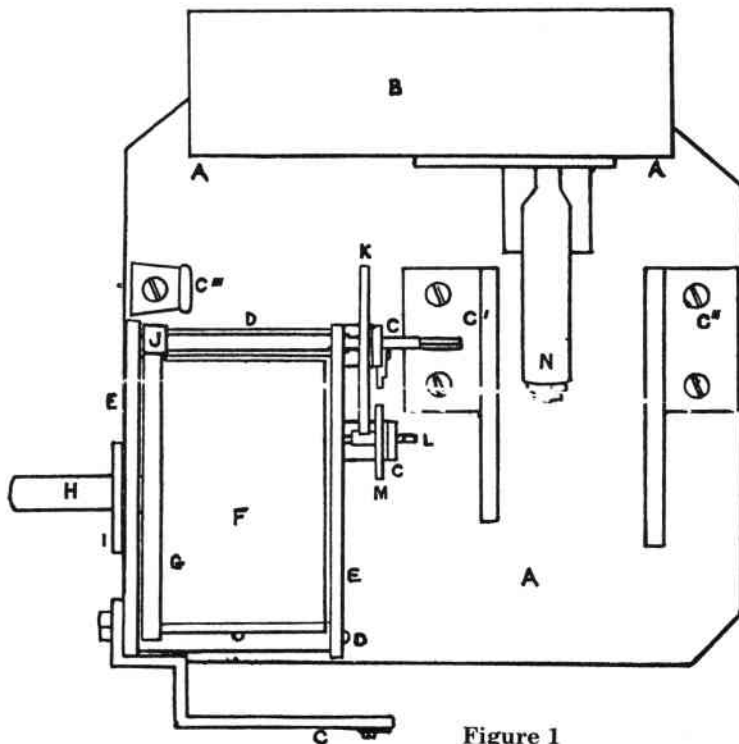
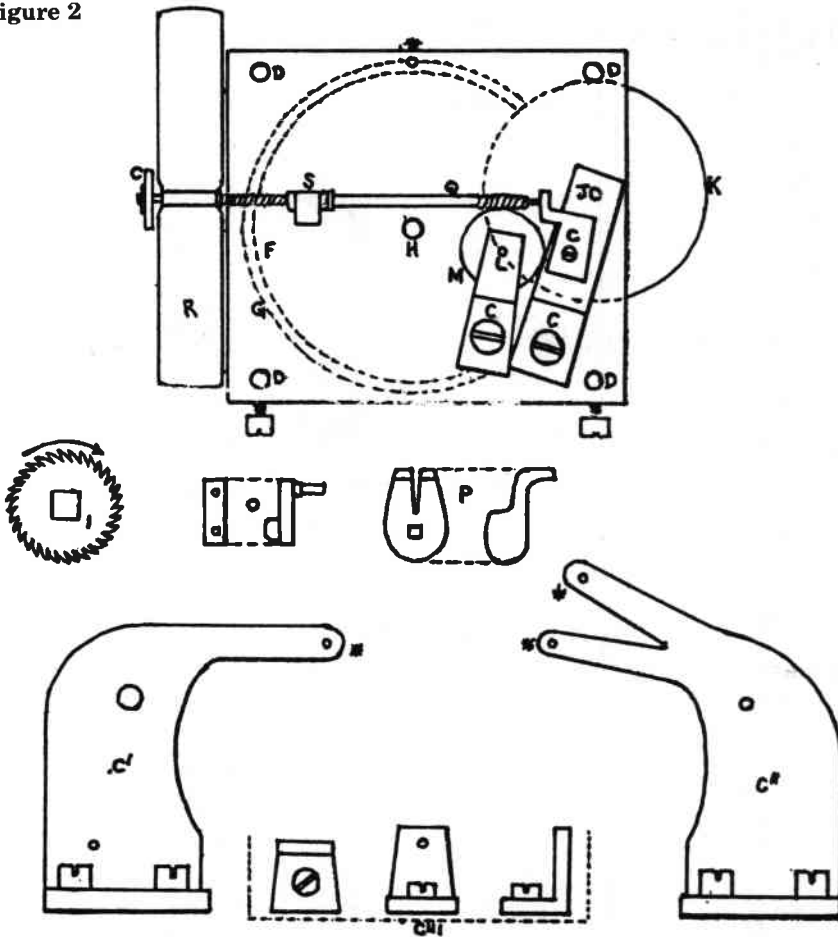


Figure 1

References for Fig. 1

- AAA. Base-plate.
- B. Bellows.
- C.C.C.C.C. Cocks.
- D.D. Pillars of frame screwed to base-plate.
- E.E. Frame-plates.
- F. Barrel.
- G. Barrel-teeth.
- H. Barrel-arbor.
- I. Ratchet-wheel.
- J. Pinion of main wheel.
- K. Main wheel.
- L. 'Scape-pinion.
- M. 'Scape-wheel.
- N. Whistle.

Figure 2



References for Fig. 2

- C.C.C.C.C.C. Cocks.
- D.D.D.D. Ends of pillars.
- F. Barrel, 120 teeth.
- H. Barrel arbor.
- L. Ratchet, 27 teeth.
- J. Pinion of mainwheel, 14 leaves.
- K. Main-wheel, 100 teeth.
- L. 'Scape-pinion, 8 leaves.
- M. 'Scape-wheel, 42 teeth.
- O. Bellows-crank squared on end of 'scape-pinion L.
- P. Claw-crank, squared on J.
- Q. Endless screw.
- R. Fly.
- S. Stop-piece for intermitting action.
- * Pivot holes.

Reference to Fig. 2 shows the arrangement of trains of wheels and mainspring, which constitute the motive power; the pillars of frame are pinned in the way usual in clockwork; the screws shown at base of frame serve to fasten the movement securely to foundation-plate, and are tapped into the centre of pillars.

The ratchet-wheel I is squared on to the barrel arbor, and is held by a click and spring as usual, attached to pillar-plate, but not shown in drawing.

The pivot-hole * at top of plate, has a corresponding one in cock C11; they carry a pivoted bar which gives motion to head and tail of bird. The bellows crank, O, transmits motion to the bellows by means of a rocking-bar, which is pivoted at one end in the hole seen near base of C1 and at the other end in pivot-hole of C111, the relative positions of which are shown on Fig. 1.

Figure 3 shows disposition of levers which give motion to head and tail of bird, and pump bellows; as well as the position of wheels which actuate them. T is a long bar pivoted at each end, on which is rigidly fixed T11, the two levers T111 in centre of this bar have a hollow socket,

which turns freely on the long bar. The shorter of these levers T111 moves tail of bird by means of a slender steel wire leading up to it; motion is given to it by the end of long lever T111 falling into spaces of wheel 1. The lever T11 is fixed rigidly on the long bar in accord with T1, after T111 has been placed in position, it (T11) gives motion to head of bird by the rising and falling of T1 in spaces of wheel 2; attachment is made to head by means of another long slender steel wire. The spiral spring seen on long bar is set up so as to pull on T11 and keep the lever T1 close down to the wheel; one end of the spring goes over plate E, the other over T11. The bar U has two levers fixed rigidly on it, which derive an up and down motion from the revolution of a crank squared on end of 'scape-pinion. The crank-pin entering a slot filed near the end of U1, the pin in end of bellows B entering a slot in U11.

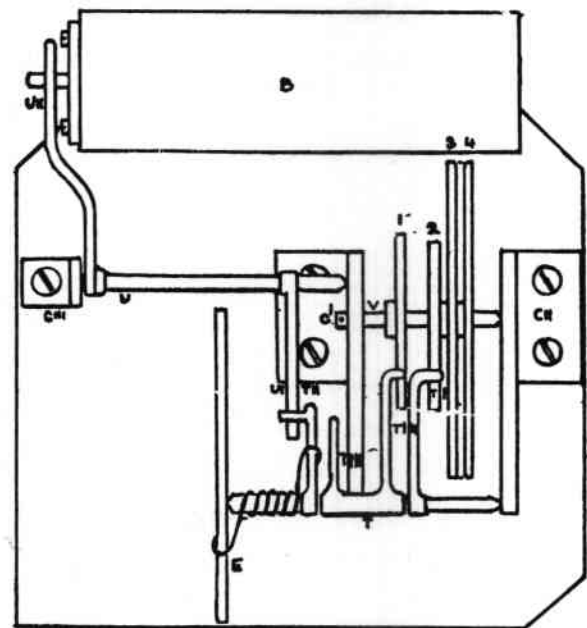


Figure 3

References for Fig. 3.

- T, a bar pivotted into frame plate E, and in upper pivot hole of cock C11; it carries three levers, T1 and T11, which turn head of bird, and T111, which moves tail U, a bar pivotted into C1 and C111; it carries two levers, U1 and U11, which, with rocking motion, actuate bellows B. V, an arbor impelled by claw crank P, and bearing wheels Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, which give motion to head, tail, beak, whistle and wind-valve of bellows.

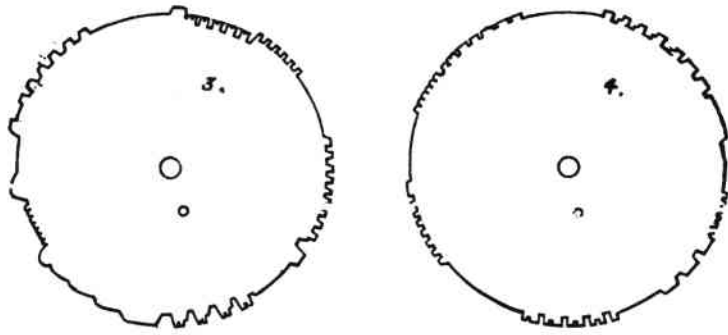
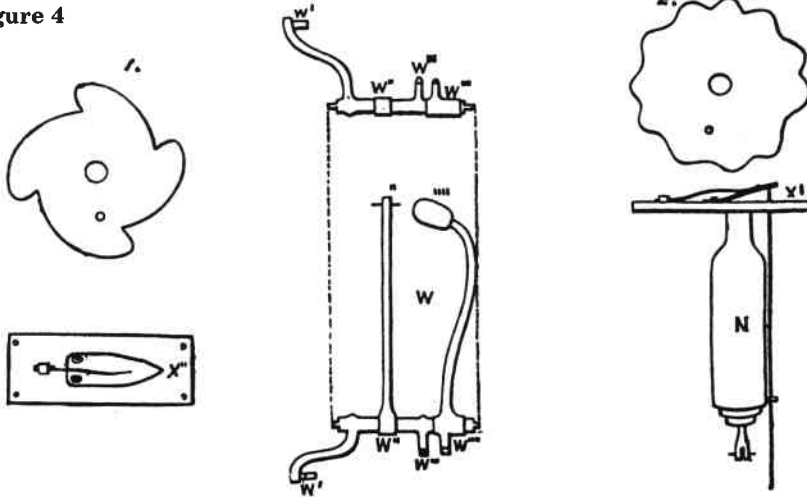


Figure 4



References for Fig. 4

- 1. Wheel moving tail.
- 2. Wheel moving head.
- 3. Wheel moving piston of whistle N.
- 4. Wheel moving opening wind-valve X1.
- W. An arbor carrying four levers, pivoted at * C1 and C11.
- W1. Opens beak.
- W11. Moves piston of whistle N.
- W111. Trips over teeth of wheel 3.
- W1111. Trips over teeth of wheel 4.
- X1. Side view of wind-valve.
- X11. End view of wind-valve.

Reference to this diagram shows the actuating wheels of the lever illustrated on Fig. 3. 1 and 2 move head and tail by the medium of long slender steel wires, reaching up to the ends of short brass levers inserted, on a wood block, in body of bird, the wires passing through the legs of bird so as to be invisible.

Wheel 1 also gives motion to a supplementary bellows, mounted over the clockwork movement (but not shown in diagrams), which causes the intermittent singing.

3 and 4 are the wheels which require most care in construction, as on their graduation, especially No. 3, depends the beauty and vraisemblance of the note. No. 4 is used to open the bellows-valve, and regulate the supply of air to the whistle.

1,2,3 and 4 turn simultaneously; a steady pin passes through them to insure it.

The whistle N contains a piston sliding freely by means of the rod seen projecting, attached to W11, the short lever W111 at right angles to it enters the spaces in wheel 3, the depth and

length of which, by causing the bar to vibrate as the wheel turns, thus sliding the piston in and out various depths, so govern the note.

Figure 5 shows the arrangement of bellows. The base is framed up of wood sufficiently thick to hold the screws which have to be inserted; the

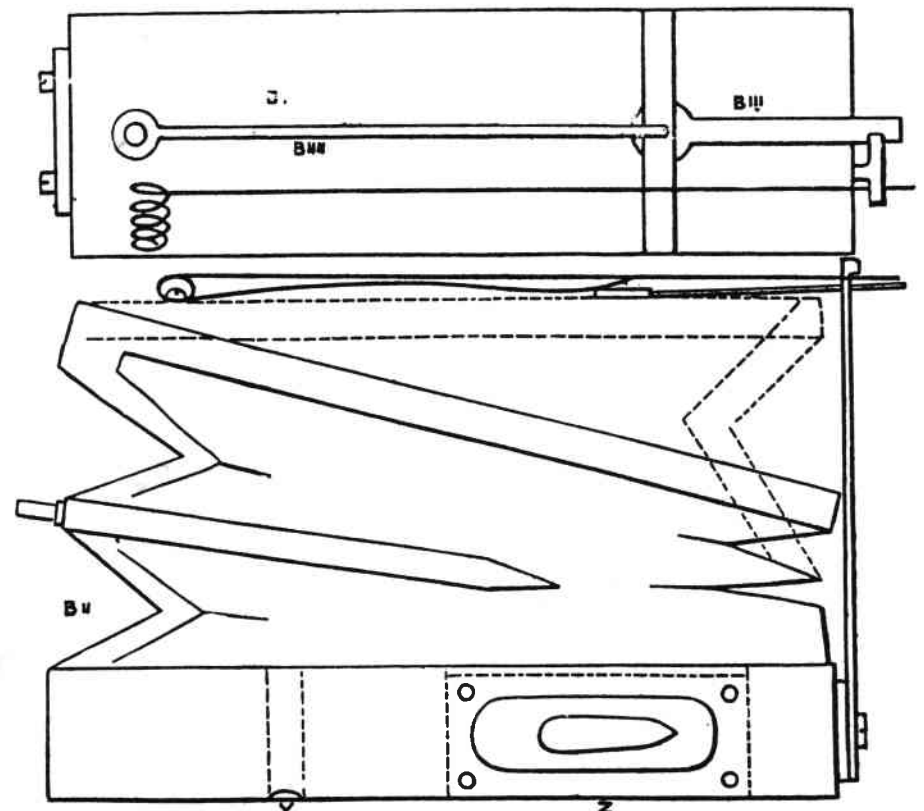
centreboard has an up and down motion imparted to it by the rocking-bar seen in Fig. 3. The air inlet is seen at Y; it is covered inside by a thin flexible piece of leather, finest kid, such as used in glove-making, which admits air on the up-stroke of bellows-board, but closes by air-pressure on commencement of board's descent.

As the bellows fills the top board rises, its weight and the pressure exercised by the setting-up of spiral spring seen on top keep a steady supply of air to whistle. The place of attachment for base-plate of whistle is seen at Z. The side of base of bellows must be hollowed-out sufficiently to admit of perfect freedom of action to piston and valve of whistle, as shown in Fig. 4.

The safety valve on top of bellows comes into operation as soon as board rises high enough (when full) to open it, by the tail of valve, B111, catching under a hook fixed on end of bellows. The leather used in making bellows must be very pliable; nothing suits better for the purpose than kid attached to wood by very thin glue. References; B1 top view of bellows; B11 side; B111 safety valve; B1111 spring to close safety valve; Y air-inlet valve; Z position of whistle valve X.

This will conclude the mechanical details of the automaton, which I trust have been sufficiently clear to enable those who wish to make one. Supplemented by an illustration of the finished bird on vase of flowers the subject will be complete. ■

Figure 5



Collectors Showcase

An Interesting piece

Many collectors undoubtedly have unusual pieces in their collection. Sometimes these pieces may be somewhat mysterious with regard to origin, maker, or somewhat unconventional design. Such features may make the piece more collectable and more interesting to other collectors. A member with such a piece may often wish for more information, which could be forthcoming if a description and photographs are published in the Music Box. "Collectors Showcase" is to become a regular feature and it is hoped that collectors will send photographs of their special pieces for inclusion under this heading. Copy need not be in the form of an article, just a simple description, even if the information is incomplete or not quite right, we won't mind. No doubt the specialist will soon write in with corrections or more information which in turn will be published in the following edition. When writing to the editor please make clear whether or

not you wish your name to be published. Confidentiality will be respected if requested. Even anonymous contributions will be accepted. But if the article is not yours, please make sure you have the owners permission.

Dr. George Fraser of Glasgow has sent in a request for information on a very interesting musical clock base and writes as follows:-

"I recently acquired a period musical clock base of which I enclose photographs. The base is of veneered mahogany and the five tunes are engraved on the curved brass plate at the side. They are:-

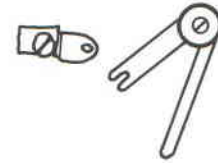
- 1.) Waltz
- 2.) ? . . . de Vache
- 3.) Hornpipe
- 4.) French Romance
- 5.) God Save The King

The last title dates and movement are pre 1838 and I guess it is 1820-1838 in origin. I have found the buttons that screw into the levers through the three small slots in the

curved brass plate. My queries are as follows:

- 1.) What is the origin - French, Swiss ? There is no information on the mechanism.
- 2.) What roughly is the date of origin ?
- 3.) For what purpose is the top long slot in the base plate. For what use are the parts as sketched below ?

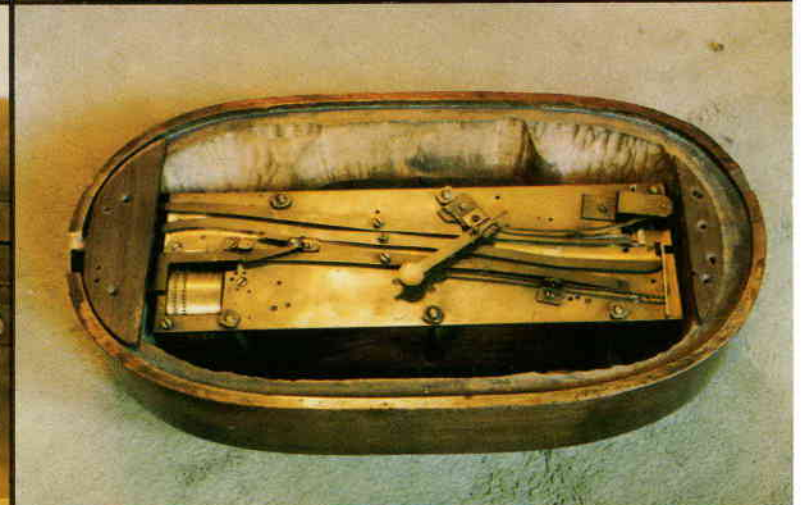
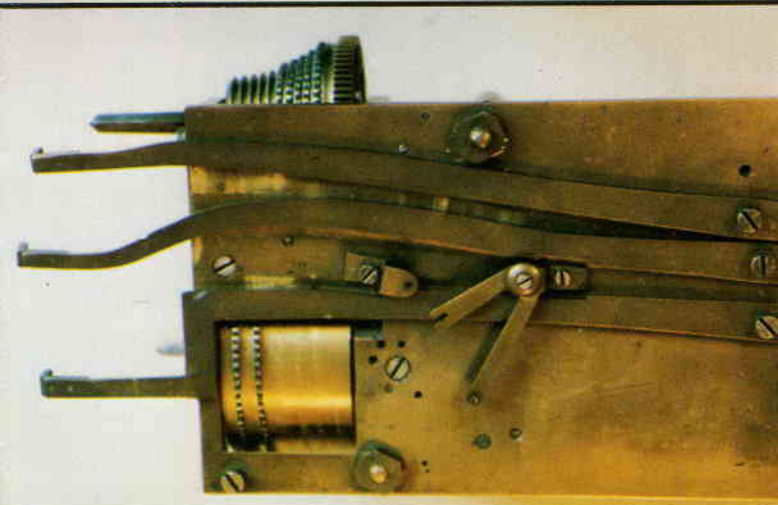
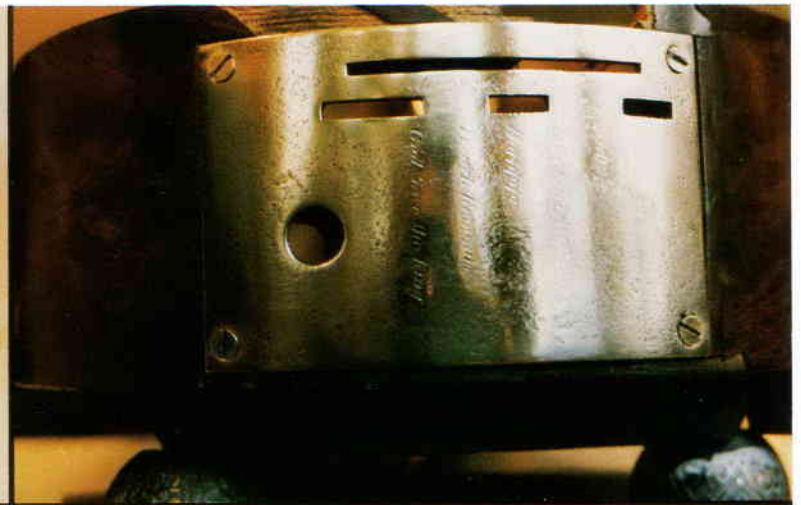
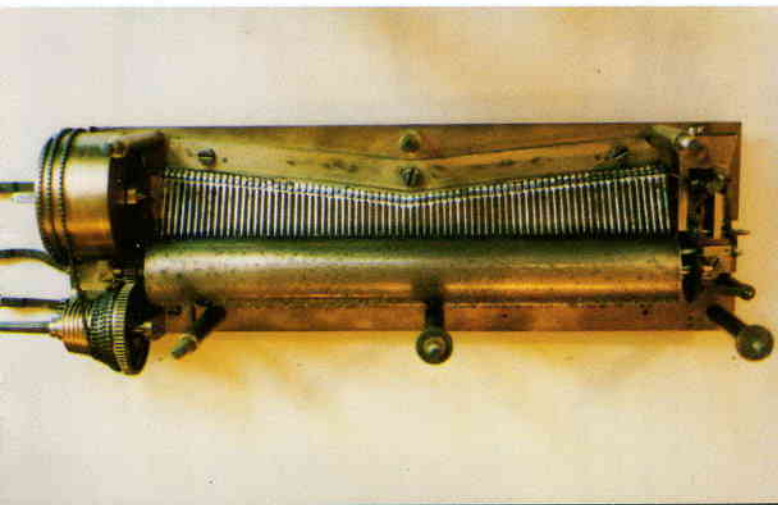
The box plays very beautifully and it is in very fine order, being fusee wound. I will be grateful for any help from readers."



Members Comments

Keith Harding and Arthur Ord-Hume both believe that the piece may be earlier than suspected, probably 1810-1820. The long slot referred to is almost certainly a silencing lever to prevent the mechanism being activated by the clock.

Are there any ideas from other readers ? If so please send them to the editor who will be happy to forward correspondence to Dr Fraser and publish comments under this heading in the Spring edition. ■



Musical Box Case Decoration

by David Tallis

There are certain kinds of musical box cases which are worthy of note for the decoration of the case itself. The illustrations show six examples of cases whose decoration makes them quite sought after by the keen collector.



1



1



1

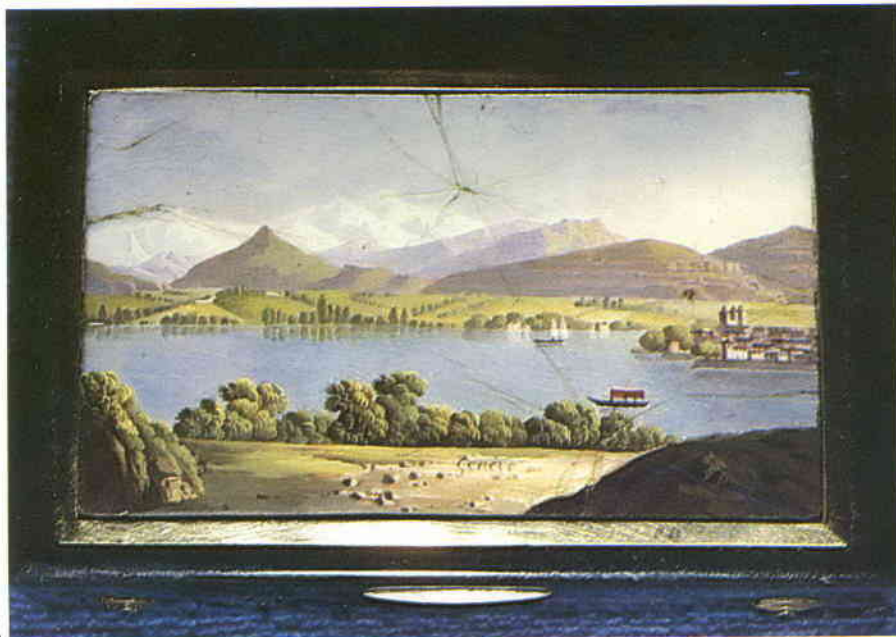


2

1) First we have the familiar Sycamore wood Tea Caddy which recently appeared in a sale at Christies, South Kensington. It is almost certainly a product of the town of Mauchline in Ayrshire, where sycamore boxes of all sizes and decorated with transfers had been made since the last quarter of the 18th century. Not only is it a large box compared with the usual patch and snuffboxes, but it contains one of the earliest examples of a musical movement which we have seen to date. The movement has a comb of individual teeth and the clockwork has a fusee and chain mechanism.

The musical scale is stamped on the back of the comb bedplate and the two folk tunes played are notated in the nodal scale used so much for folk music. Such scales conveniently ignore the black notes on the piano ! The words of the airs are written on the tops of the two tea containers inside the box. The glass mixing bowl between





4

3) This miniature is of the best quality and shows a sea scene painted 'sous verre' or on the back of the glass. Such miniatures are often referred to as crystoleums and must have been difficult to execute. The box is of a burr-wood with an integral hinge, and the movement is unsigned with the comb in sections of three.

4) Enamelling always demands very great skill and here we have a fine picture of Geneva, the Lake, and Mont Blanc from the Jura side. The movement has a one-piece comb, but literally one, with an integral comb, bedplate, and tuning weights.

5) It was not always possible for the man in the street to be able to afford to buy a musical box, because of the high price of the materials of the case. Perhaps this is why cheap tin cases were first made. But they were usually decorated with a transfer picture, sometimes of a local beauty spot, so that they could be taken home as a souvenir, in this case a woodmill by Brienz See. The movement in the box is of the best quality and is a product of Ducommun-Girod of Geneva.

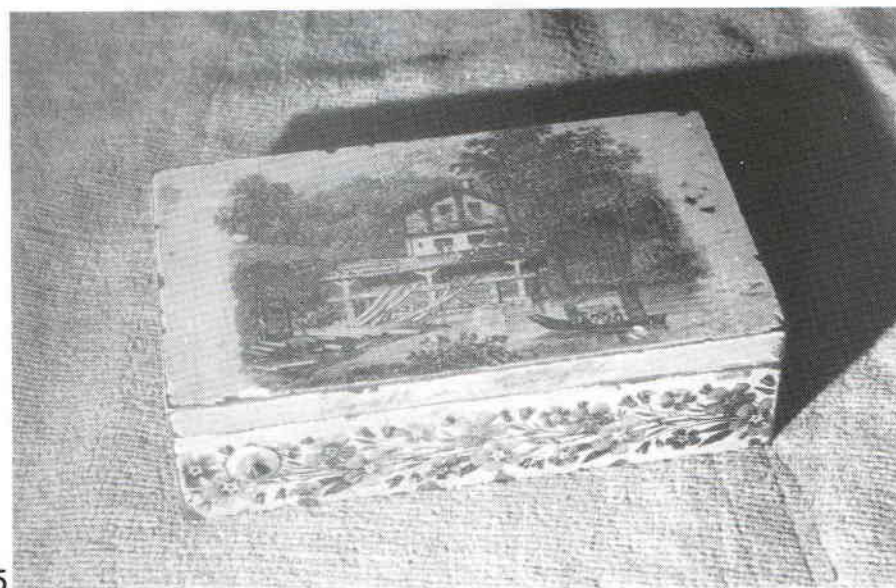
6) Finally we have a hand-painted tin with a well-painted but bawdy interior scene. The movement is of average quality but fairly late or about 1880.

Collecting boxes with diverse decoration is really to be recommended. One is not restricted to the musical box aspect of collecting, because there is so much to be learned about the skills involved in decorating the cases themselves. ■

the two tea containers is missing. Although this case is fine, it does not do justice to the music which sounds thin.

2) The next box is in a tortoiseshell

case decorated with a miniature on ivory of Diane and Cupid. Not of the highest quality, but very colourful. The movement has a comb in sections of three and the box dates to before 1819.



5



3



6

New places to see mechanical music demonstrated

This is the last edition of the present volume of the Music Box. During the two year span of volume 12 the world of mechanical music has seen a few changes. Prices have risen significantly, especially upright disc musical boxes, but also during this time mechanical music has gained popularity in the expanding industry of tourist attractions. Whilst nothing major has emerged in England in the last two years, at least three well known collectors have developed tourist attractions on the continent. Back home, as a novelty value, several attractions have added the odd item of mechanical music to their displays. The most common being the upright disc musical box which has been added to the features at Madame Tausaudes at Windsor and at Bicton Gardens near Exmouth. In Devon, Watermouth Castle has seen an extension to their mechanical music presentation with the addition of dancing water fountains accompanied by a Mortier organ.

Your editor has travelled around England and the continent taking note of new attractions featuring mechanical music and collections that in the last two years have opened for the first time to groups or the general public. A brief description follows.

CAMBRIDGE

Described by radio 4's pm programme as possibly the smallest museum in England is Alan and Daphne Wyatt's mechanical music collection at Landbeach, Cambridge. Alan is well known to most members as our hard working meetings secretary. Alan and Daphne have devoted two large rooms in their Georgian home for the collection of musical boxes, barrel organs and an orchestrion. Planning permission was recently granted for their use, and although not open to the general public, the Wyatt's frequently entertain pre-booked groups with mechanical music with tea and biscuits.

WELLS

Despite press reports to the contrary, Glastonbury is unlikely to see an opening of a mechanical music museum in its town centre. But take a trip 7 or 8 miles to the neighbouring town of Wells and you will find what is possibly the second smallest museum

in England. A large room above the shop of Shelagh Berryman houses a collection of musical boxes of which browsers in the shop below who become entranced by the wonderful collection of goods on display for sale, may for a 50p fee, browse upstairs too. A demonstrator is present and these instruments are also for sale.

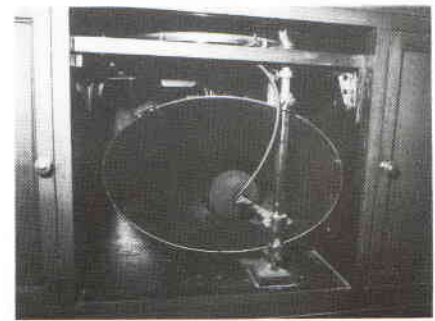


KILKHAMPTON, North Cornwall

When one door closes, they say, another door opens.

Earlier this year we sadly announced the closure of Ronald Leach's Devon Museum of Mechanical Music. Last July saw the opening of the Cinema and Mechanical Music Museum less than 10 miles from the former Devon museum. Situated in a barn alongside the A39 between Bude and Kilkhampton. Owner, Mr. A. Buxey who has recently returned to this country after spending many years in Australia, has bought two or three exhibits from Ronald Leach. The most notable being a late style Arburo cafe organ. The display includes a small collection of musical boxes (non playing), pianola's, early gramophones and phonographs. In the main the barn is filled with vintage cinema equipment, and sound recording gear.

Unfortunately exhibits displayed fall well below the standards set by better known museums, but still worthy of a visit on a rainy day.



Kilkhampton, Gramophone volume control. A plunger blocks the horn.

Left: The Symphonion Orchestrion on display above Shelagh Berryman's shop.

Below: Kilkhampton, Gramophones, cinema equipment, and the Arburo in the background right.



MONSCHAU Germany

1986 has seen the opening of a new mechanical music museum in Monschau, close to Aachen on the German/Belgian border. Monschau is a small delightfully picturesque town, frequented by day trippers and coach operators. In 1985 Thomas Janssen set up a small display of mechanical music for the peak of the holiday season. Impressed with the response he has now taken a lease on two floors of the former council/town hall building. With very little alteration needed, he was quickly able to establish his collection there in time for the start of this years tourist season. His collection includes a 92 key electronic Decap, a card roll operated Imhof & Mukle with approximately 300 pipes, a Hupfeld Animatic S and a Lösche orchestrion amongst many other interesting pieces.



Mechanical Music Museum, Monschau, occupies the lower two floors. Photographed prior to opening in July 1986.



Thomas Janssen plays the most popular Lösche instrument made. An orchestrion with flute and violin pipes.



Village scene, Monschau.

LINZ Germany

Holidaymakers touring the Rhine Valley in Germany have for long had an excellent mechanical music museum to visit at Rudesheim. Now a second venue has emerged, 100km up river at the ancient town of Linz just south of Bonn. Here a castle built in 1365 and until recently owned by the council, has been re-developed by four businesses to form a Torture Chamber, Restaurant, Disco and a Mechanical Music Museum. It is here that is housed the collection of Mr. Fischer. Occupying two floors, the collection features a style A hupfeld Violina with double spool frame, of which only two are known to exist in the world, a Hupfeld Symphony Jazz orchestrion, a Weber Maestro orchestrion and poppers Welt Style X orchestrion. The museum's "flagship" is a Welte and Sohn Philharmonic organ made in 1925, with 21 ranks of 1100 pipes. A novelty item is a small Decap Robot organ, minus its facade. Many smaller items of musical boxes and phonographs are played. A collection certainly well worth visiting.



Herr Klaus Fischers new museum at Linz. Left to right: Weber Maestro, Poppers Welt X, Imhof & Mukle with piano & percussions, Welte Philharmonic, Welte 'Red' reproducing piano, Barrel Orchestrion - maker unknown.



Klaus Fischer's Hupfeld Violina Phonoliszt. Only two examples of this style 'A' with duplex revolver system (2 x 6 rolls) are known to exist, the other is in course of restoration for its new owner, Kenneth Goldman in the U.S.A.



Phonograph display at Linz.

BRUGGE Belgium

Towards the end of our Societies tour of Belgium and Holland, earlier this year, a brief visit was made to Brugge. Whilst there, members had the opportunity of visiting the recently opened organ museum in the old town at T Zand-vrijdagmarkt. This was the collection formerly owned by Mr. Dagraedt at the sea-side town of Koksijde which was sold to a national Belgian book firm. This is certainly a very large and significant collection with over 120 exhibits, most of them rather large. The collection includes musical boxes, street organs, orchestrons and dance organs. As one progresses along the avenues of exhibits the instruments become larger until a 101 key dance organ bearing the name P. Verbeeck is seen. This instrument of an immense size approximately 35ft x 16ft was originally a Mortier, (at least the facade certainly was) having been re-built by Mr. P. Verbeeck. There is one small criticism of these large organs. The facades of these instruments have all been repainted, predominantly yellow, but obviously by the same artist. The effect of seeing several instruments with the same colour scheme spoils their individuality. This slight disappointment is certainly compensated by the very last exhibit. A most beautiful 84 key Mortier cafe organ known as the Black Cat. This instrument is fronted by a most beautifully carved oak facade shown in the picture alongside.



A most beautiful carved oak front. 84 key Mortier at Brugge.

If the ceiling isn't high enough – cut a hole in it.
Mortier organ rebuilt by P. Verbeeck.





One of the smaller Mortiers on display – this one is an example of the once popular art deco style.

DEGERSHEIM Switzerland



Automata drummer in the entrance hall of the Magic Casino. Made in West Germany by Franz Oehrlein.

£5,000,000 has been spent in the construction of this vast temple of magic and music. More of a night club than a mechanical music museum, but the few mechanical music pieces blend nicely and add to the special night-out atmosphere. Open in the evening as a dinner-dance-cabaret venue, the building has been cleverly designed so that each diner gets almost a forward looking view of the entertainment which takes place on both sides of the dining room. Whilst

dining, entertainment is provided by the mechanical music instruments which include a style C Hupfeld Violina, Phonoliszt, a Welte No. 3 Cottage orchestrion and the famous Taj Mahal Mortier, pictured on the front of this edition.

The Taj Mahal is a huge ornate 101 key Mortier organ. Built in 1924 it stands 26ft wide, 20ft high and 15ft deep. Originally the organ was built for St. Jean's Palace, a dance hall in Antwerp. When the dance hall closed for re-development, the instrument was moved to another dance hall in Ledenberg. The organ was sold again



Hupfeld Helios orchestrion.

and the new owners acquired considerable wealth from the use of the organ when in the Reseda dance hall in Zel Zate. It was here that the instrument was used until 1952. In more recent times the instrument was bought by Dave Bowers and taken to America for restoration and use before being bought by Retonio Breitenmoser and shipped back to Europe.

In his book "The Encyclopaedia of Automatic Musical Instruments," Dave Bowers quotes the Grymonprez family as claiming that this particular Mortier is the largest and most finely voiced organ in existence today.

Michael Jean Cataray, a magical entertainer of some renown, attempts to conduct the Taj Mahal. But the Taj Mahal possesses a repertoire of its own. It was amazing how many people thought that someone sat at a keyboard somewhere and played that organ.



Magic Casino cabaret.



Reto's collection of ventriloquist dummies.

The show really starts after dinner when Retonio, that is Herr Brietenmoser's stage name, (he is a well known ventriloquist in Switzerland) joins in a routine with Michael Cataray and a dozen or so English chorus girls, as the evening starts to sparkle.

The casino is part of a 10,000 sq. ft. complex built on the outside in traditional Swiss style, with a luxurious internal finish that includes a marble entrance hall and staircase. The casino is also partly used during the day when an adjoining attraction, the Museum of Magic is open. In the

Magic Museum one can see many interesting pieces or automata displayed, which being behind glass cases are not demonstrated. The Magic Casino is located in Degersheim 10 miles south west of St. Gallan, well away from the tourist area and difficult to find without a large scale map.

Coming soon

Whilst the viability of embarking on a mechanical music museum as a business venture may be dubious, many collectors would enjoy the opportunity, and appreciate the revenue, of opening their established collections to the general public on a semi-commercial basis. This has been the ambition of Brian Etches for the

past eleven years. Unfortunately, it has taken him that long to persuade the planners to allow him the necessary permission. With the backing of the Arts Council and Museum Council, both of which supported his planning application, progress is now well advanced and Brian is preparing to open his new museum, the Purbeck Toy & Musical Box Museum, in time for next years tourist trade. Using a former garage/studio premises in the grounds of his home Brian hopes to have this 800 sq. ft. conversion open for Easter. As priority is to be given to the toys, the premises will not be large enough to include all the musical boxes in Brian's collection but as several unusual pieces are planned to be exhibited, the Purbeck Toy and Musical Box Museum sounds well worth a visit. To be included in the exhibition will be a Bremmond cylinder musical box with an automata of a carpenter's workshop and what is believed to be the largest diameter musical box cylinder in existence made in 1872 by Nicole Freres, the cylinder has a length of 18 in. and a diameter of 5¼ in., playing no less than 36 tunes, four per turn. The museum is located in the village of Arne which can be loosely described as being behind Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour, a rather isolated location which is approached by turning left off the A351 1 mile south of Wareham.

Readers wishing to visit any of these collections are advised to contact the museum before travelling, for details of opening times. ■

1987 is the Silver Jubilee Year

KEITH HARDING

Clocks & Musical Boxes

93 Hornsey Road, London N7 6DJ. Telephone: 01-607 6181/2672.

*"Years may come and years may go",
but we will continue to offer our,
Expert Restoration Service,
for many a day to come.*

We buy and sell to clients
from all over the world.

Musical Boxes.

Disc Musical Boxes.

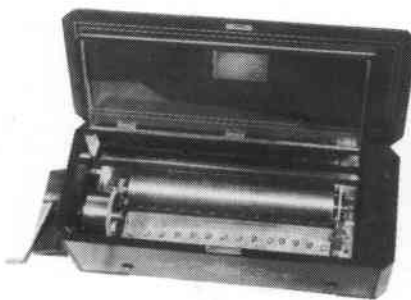
Automata.

Clocks.

Modern musical items.

Books.

Catalogues available.



HAPPY CHRISTMAS



One of two Nicole Freres Forte Piano Overture Musical Boxes,
Serial Numbers 318 and 31611.

SUPERBLY RESTORED IN OUR WORKSHOPS AND SOLD BY US.

Two early cylinder movements

by Graham Webb

Close on the heels of reading 'An Early Austrian Musical Box' by E. M. J. Blyelle-Horngacher (Vol 12, No. 7), I came into possession of two early sectional comb movements.

The first, bought in Spain, not only has a sectional comb, but has fusee drive, most rare and a pleasure to find. The second, complete with best part of its case and bought in England, is of more classic design at first glance, but on examination revealed some interesting points.

Fusee Drive Movement

Fig. 1 shows the whole movement with the fusee drive* to the right and governor assembly to the left. The change hook and cam are situated at the governor end, the cam being of classic early design. The comb, with two teeth per section, has its bass to the right as with Austro-Hungarian movements.

The movement is of the "tall" type normally seen with fusee drive, in that, except for the spring barrel (and of course controls), the basic parts are set above the solid-piece brass bedplate (Fig. 2).

At this early stage with cylinder musical movements, the fact that the bass is to the right of the comb is not necessarily indicative of Austro-Hungarian origin. The period, which I hesitantly put at about 1810, has thrown up various arrangements of teeth, the chevron, or centre treble - bass at each end is one example; the triple: bass - treble, bass - treble, another.

Fig. 2 shows the four bolts that fasten the comb base to the bedplate, the interesting way the control arms are fashioned for proper positioning at each end, and, most unusual, a leaf spring, to hold the change hook in place, against which the lever must work to move the change hook out!

Fig. 3 shows the delicate and fine shape of the governor bracket and the steel cock which forms the bearing for the endless screw. It also shows the use of four wheels (including the big wheel) in the governor train rather than the normal three. Seen too is a bracket which holds a piece - seen from a better angle in Fig. 4 - that drops immediately the stop/start lever is raised, to prohibit the return of the lever to the stop position. A piece with a similar purpose, though not necessarily of the same shape, is generally used on movements intended to be started from a clock, as this movement almost certainly was.

Another, perhaps more significant, use of such a piece is in Austro-Hungarian movements, whether with clocks or automata, or in musical box

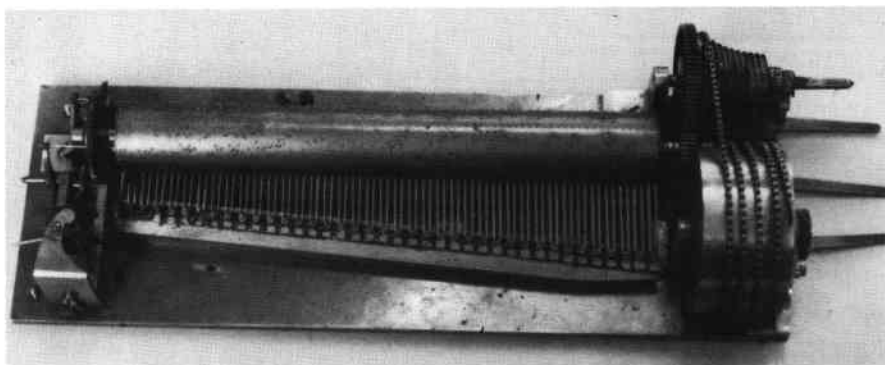


Figure 1.

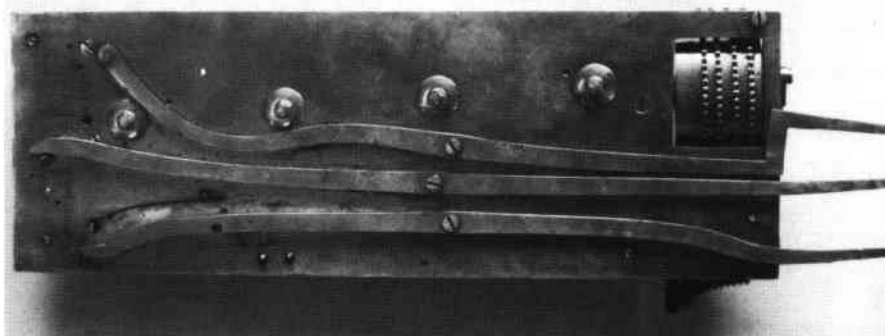


Figure 2.

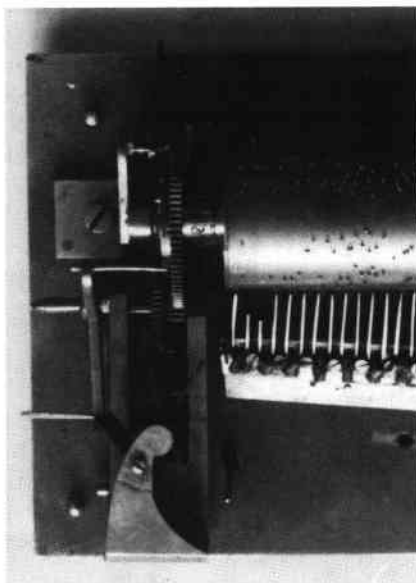


Figure 3.

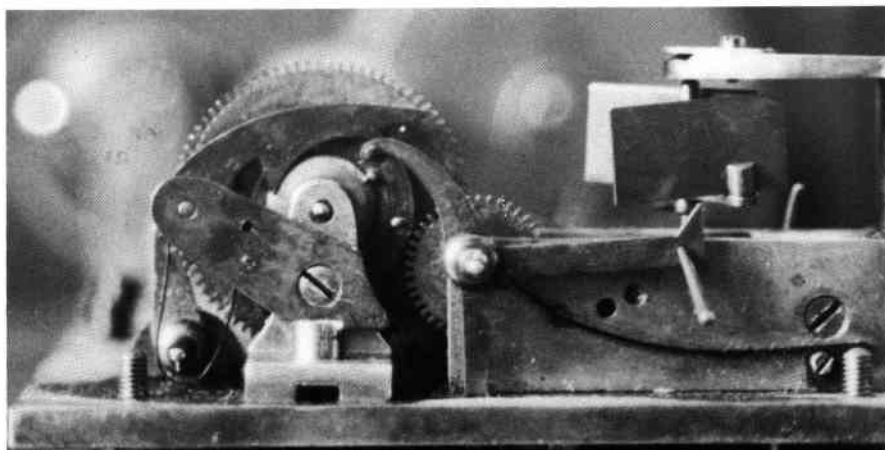


Figure 4.

cases. In many of these movements controls are kept to a minimum, there being a fixed tune change hook, and a simple pull cord to start the movement. To allow an instant pull start the piece is used. In all instances a pin set in the surface of the big wheel removes the piece from contact during play, so that the lever may return at the end of play to stop the movement. Ideal for use with clocks, where only one tune at a time is required, this is an obvious disadvantage when longer play is required.

In Fig. 4 is seen the piece described, and also the stop/start leaf spring. The shape of this is that described by M. Horngacher as a 'typical Austrian spring' - as, in fact, is the one below the bedplate (Fig. 2). On the other hand the wing or fan assembly is of distinct Swiss pattern.

Sectional Comb Movement

This movement (Fig. 5) is of far more classic construction for its period, at first glance, than the one described above. The going spring barrel is to the left and the governor assembly to the right, both spring barrel and cylinder enter cut-outs in the bedplate (Fig. 6) and even the front-mounted push/pull controls are not unusual. The comb of course, with its two teeth per section, has its bass notes to the right, but even this is only a little more fuel to the is-it-Austrian-or-Swiss controversy.

Suddenly it is noticed that the left-hand control is provided with a pointer, which leads to the discovery (Fig. 7) that it is, in fact, a threaded rod. The rod is fitted with a very unusual tune change device in the form of a stepped 'cone'. As the rod is turned, the thread takes it in or out, to position one of the four steps, one for each tune, so that a right-angled steel piece positioned above the 'cone' is raised or lowered. The other end of the piece or finger rests on the end-cap of the cylinder, which is moved laterally as the finger is raised or lowered against a spiral arbor spring at the governor (right) end of the cylinder. Presumably the pointer, set outside the case, would have been accompanied by a disc numbered 1 - 4 to which it could point as appropriate.

A major drawback to this kind of tune changer is that there is no means of securing the rod so that it cannot be turned during play, leaving the movement open to damage from small or careless hands. The damage to both teeth and cylinder pins may well be evidence of this. ■

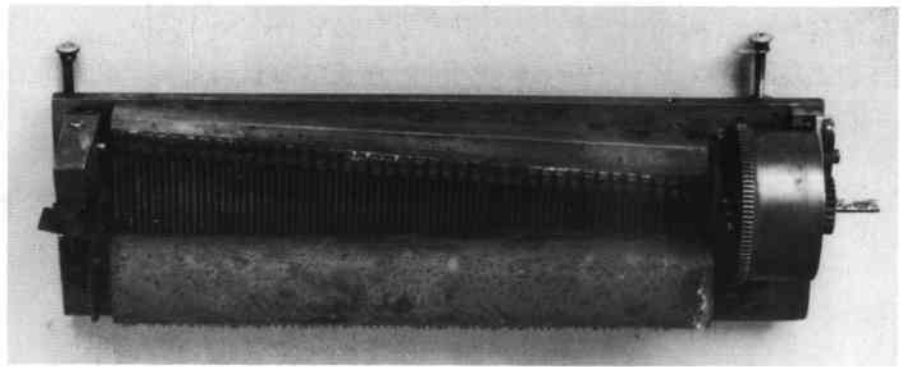


Figure 5.

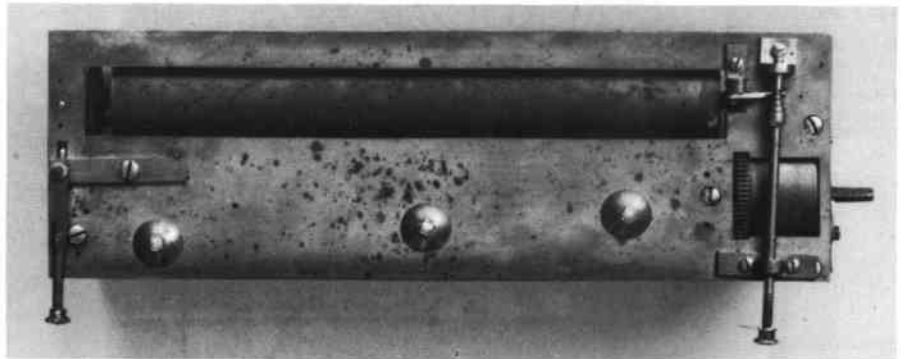


Figure 6.

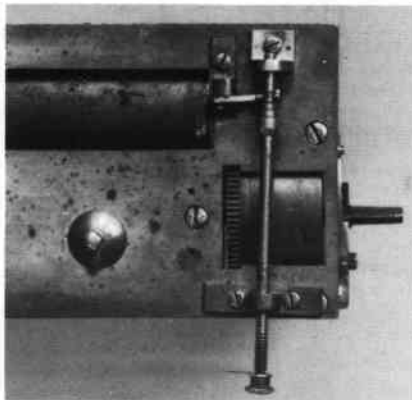


Figure 7.

*Fusee drive: a method, known in clocks since as early as the mid 15th century, basically a mainspring equaliser. Winding takes the chain (earlier a gut line) from the surface of the spring barrel onto the cone-shaped fusee. As the movement plays, the chain is drawn off the narrow end of the fusee 'cone' where there is less leverage, to compensate for the extra power of the fully wound spring. As the power of the spring diminishes, the chain is drawn from a gradually thickening 'cone' so compensating with a greater leverage.

The Geneva stop is used on the vast majority of musical boxes, both cylinder and disc, to perform a similar function in a simpler way.

Wanted

Long term storage space required for back numbers of the "Music Box"

Roy Ison, 3 Greenstone Place, Minster Yard, Lincoln, is moving to a smaller house and requires someone to store small numbers of back editions on a long term basis, while drawing from his own stock on a day-to-day basis.

Reply to: R. Ison
Tel: 0522 42383.

Membership Renewals are now due

Please help the Society by paying without delay.

Send your remittance now to:

Ted Brown
207 Halfway Street,
Sidcup, Kent DA15 8DE.

United Kingdom, Europe and Near East £12.00.

Australia, New Zealand and Far East - Air Mail £22.00 - Surface Mail £14.00.

United States - Air Mail \$35 - Surface Mail \$25.

Canada - Air Mail \$48 - Surface Mail - \$35.

Will members paying by standing order please advise their bankers of the new rate !

Wanted

Articles for publication in the "Music Box"

Let the membership as a whole benefit from the experience of individual members. Write a letter or send a complete "article". Photographs of unusual pieces are also required for "Members Showcase".

Address your correspondence to:

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

Musical Box Oddments

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 31

Langdorff tune sheets from about 1848 to 1860 with their piano *motif* included Musard among their featured composers; but no one recollects any tunes by this Phillipe Musard, born at Tours in 1793. He composed mainly waltzes and quadrilles, some of which were published in London from 1817 onwards, and it was said that a typical Musard melody line employed trombones, cornets, first violins and flutes – not a huge help to musical box tune arrangers. In 1835 he conducted the balls at the Paris Opera and in 1840-41 he conducted the London Promenade Concerts at Drury Lane and the Lyceum. He was a less flamboyant showman than Jullien, and was considered by the French to be the doyen of dance composers and popular conductors. He retired in 1852 and is said to have been already forgotten before his death in 1859 – though not, of course, by Langdorff tune sheets.

Organ and Orchestral Boxes

Somewhere around 1870 sets of fifteen or more reeds were first added to some musical boxes, their air valves opened by plungers operated from bridges replacing pins on a section of the cylinder. Sometimes pairs of reeds

were used, tuned to vary in pitch by four to eight cycles per second and so giving a characteristic beat or warble. This rarer type of organ box is correctly described as “Flutes Voix Celestes,” presumably after the celeste stop of an organ.

Air for the reeds is taken from a bellows below the bedplate pumped by a rod oscillated via a wheel or crank mounted on an extension to the first gear shaft of the governor. The resulting cyclic load, occurring twice per revolution, necessitates a compensated butterfly, preferably with three wings each restrained by light springs so that their braking effect diminishes when the governor loses speed. The considerable extra work demands a stronger main spring. Unfortunately the bellows are rather prone to air leaks which make the organ distressingly “short of puff.”

Naturally, some boxes were made with reed organs alone; very rare, very nice, but not musical boxes.

The term Orchestral is now applied by general consent only to musical boxes incorporating organ, bells, drum and castanet. It is an adjectival version of the original Swiss description *Orchestre* which simply means Orchestra. These boxes were almost always set up with drum at base end, six or more bells and reed plungers central, and castanet at treble end, – a good display, if rather noisy. Very occasionally organ pipes as well as reeds were fitted, sometimes with a separate spring drive to the bellows.

Fig. 1: Bremond Orchestral “Flutina” tune sheet, size 10 by 7½ in., duly inscribed by Agents Parkins & Gatto and sub-headed “with accompaniment of drums, bells and castanets silenced at will.” When not silenced some tunes are very boisterous and Arditì’s kiss is positively elephantine.

There are numerous varieties of the details, composers, and sizes of this type of tune sheet and they come from at least three different printers.

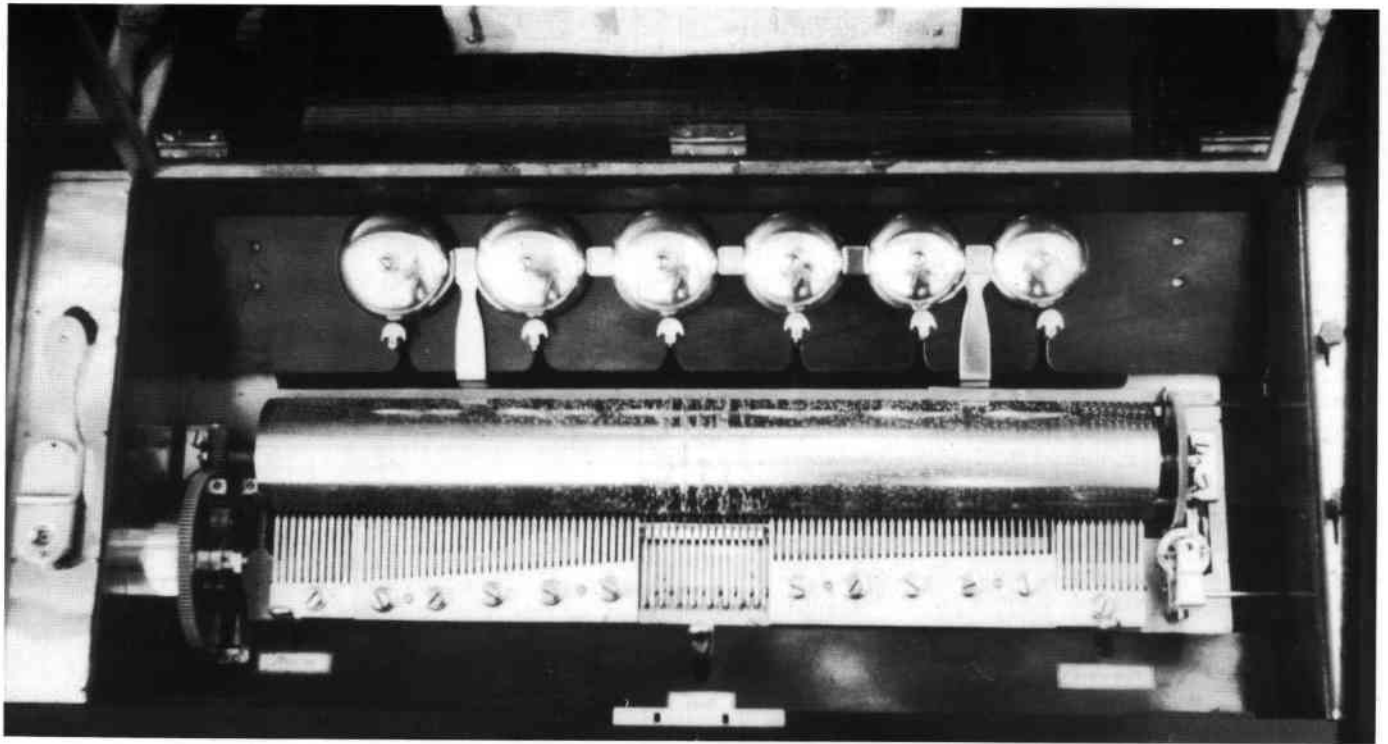


Fig. 2: Bremond 6329 mechanism, with vertical winding handle folded away.

Almost all the leading makers made Orchestral boxes, including specials with extras such as mandarin bell strikers; and there were some super-specials with clocks and automata, notably those made for the Shah of Persia by Gueissaz & Fils described by A. Chapuis on p. 266 of *The History of the Musical Box*. One of them was sold by Sothebys on 23-1-1985.

There were exceptions to the general style of Orchestral boxes, and the tune sheet and details of one are illustrated herewith, – Bremond “Flutina,” serial 6329. The drum and castanet are hidden below the bedplate, presumably a hangover from the early days of drum and bell boxes which gives the advantage of the strikers being fixed directly to the comb teeth.

Separate levers always permitted the silencing, sometimes mercifully, of drum or bells or castanet, – or the lot; but the option of silencing the organ was rare as it involved retracting the plunger assembly away from the cylinder.

Some later Orchestral boxes paraded all these effects at the expense of teeth in music combs, resulting in far more noise than music; and everyone who really likes the genuine *Music de Genève* should avoid Orchestral boxes which have less than about 65 teeth in their music

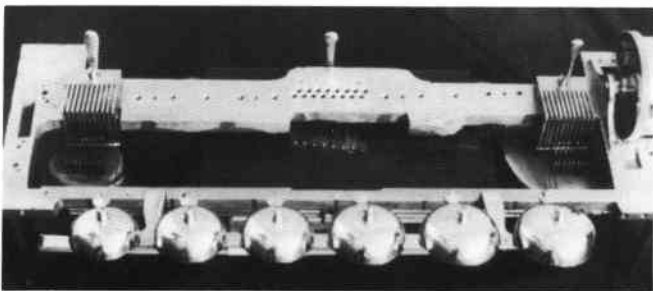


Fig. 3: View from back of 6329 without cylinder and music combs, showing drum and castanet strikers fixed directly to comb teeth. Three teeth from each of these combs operate the six bells and can be silenced by the centre on/off lever – quite a complication in the cause of symmetry.

combs. Bremond 6329 noted above has 72 music teeth plus 22 for the drum, bells and castanet and 16 levers for reeds, allowing ten airs on its 19½ in. cylinder.

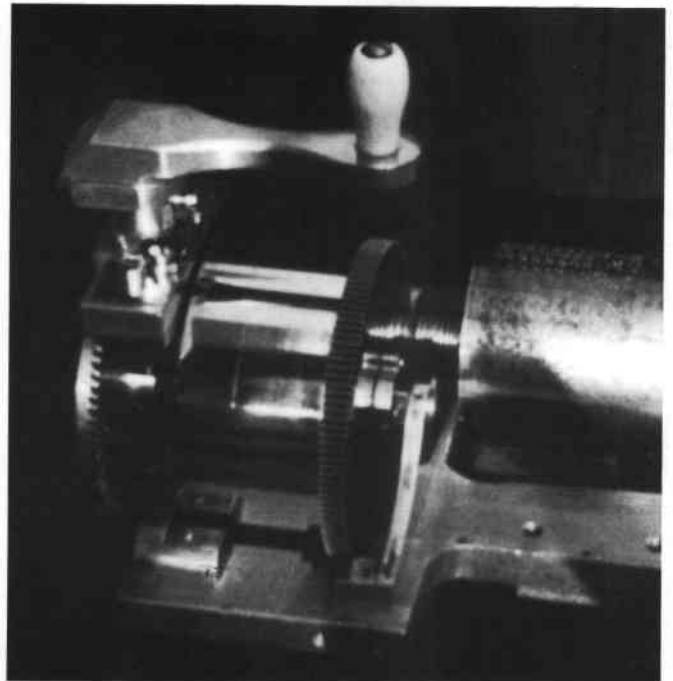


Fig. 4: Handle folded to winding position, on shaft with a small pinion engaging a large crown gear on the spring arbor.

Langdorff

Several members kindly responded to the request for more Langdorff data made on page 197 of the Spring 1986 *Music Box*, and the list is now extended to 28 examples as shown in the table herewith. They all fit into the sequence of year dates scratched on their bass end cylinder caps – with the exception of either 6876 or 6882, one of which either lagged behind or anticipated the New Year – not a rare occurrence during production of about ten per week.

Three new names appear in the table, – Bourquin, Lee, and Lion. There must be several more such names of Agents or Associates or other Traders, so it is well worth looking for the Langdorff characteristics on any movement with an unusual or un-recorded name stamped on the (probably brass) bedplate, usually just under the serial number which is always stamped in comparatively large figures, 4mm or 4½mm high. Any further Langdorff examples will be warmly welcomed by Patrick McCrossan on Heathfield (04352) 3452.

Some admirers of Malignon and Moulinié Ainé boxes feel troubled that these famous names were probably not musical box makers; but surely it is rather a compliment to them (as well as to Langdorff and Metert) that, when asked by their customers to provide high quality musical boxes, they decided to place orders on Langdorff rather than start up manufacturing themselves. I think we can reasonably assume that they took a positive interest in the quality of boxes made for them, just as to-day Chain Stores monitor the quality of their "Own Brand" goods made by specialist makers. This is particularly borne out in the case of Malignon by the uniformly high quality noted by member Olin Tillotson in the MBSI Silver Anniversary Collection. Malignon used distinctive tune sheets headed with the name A. Malignon, the description "Fabricant d'Horlogerie et de Bijouterie" and the address Rue de la Corraterie No. 11. Also, he sometimes affixed a second copy of the tune sheet to the bottom of the box. We must all agree with Olin's comment on this: "If only all makers had done the same".

Serial no.	Attributed to	Marks on cylinder end cap	Cylinder length, inches	No. of tunes	Type
1409	H. Metert	G16-44	8	4	F-Piano
1686	H. Metert	G179-44	12¼	6	F-Piano
1849	Moulinié Ainé	G448-44	11¼	4	F-P overture
2328	Moulinié Ainé	G419-45	9	4	F-Piano
2597	F. H. Bourquin	G178-46	8	4	Standard
2683	H. Metert	G232-46	13	6	F-Piano
2856	H. Metert	G391-46	11	8	Standard
3828	Lion Freres à Hambourg	G727-47	–	8	Standard
3919	Langdorff	G136/48	11¼	4	F-P overture
4171	Moulinié Ainé	G248-48	13½	6	F-Piano
4217	Malignon	G356-48	13	4	Overtures
5011	Malignon	G591/49	15¼	6	F-P, 11 bells
5192	Malignon	G185-50	13	–	–
5264	Malignon	G290/50	13	6	F-P, 11 bells
5280	Malignon	G266-50	8	4	Standard
6157	Langdorff	G550/51	15	6	F-Piano, interchangeable
6622	Langdorff	G431/52	13	6	F-Piano
6876	Lee et Fils	G11/53	13	6	F-Piano
6882	Langdorff	G602/52	13	6	Hidden D & B
6959	Langdorff	G715/53	–	–	–
7625	Langdorff	G113/54	9	4	Hidden D & B
7667	Malignon	G151/54	20	6	Part overture
7785	Langdorff	G302/54	–	–	–
9601	Langdorff	G571/56	13	8	Standard
10051	Langdorff	G262/57	15¼	8	F-Piano
11258	Langdorff	G641/58	15½	4	F-P mandolin
13645	Langdorff	G36/63	13	4	F-P overture
14534	Langdorff	G25/65	13	4	F-P mandolin

Table showing a sequence of serial numbers and cylinder end cap markings of Gamme and year on musical boxes which all have the "Langdorff characteristics." All are key-wind except 13645 and 14534. This sample of 28 out of 13,000 is far too small to permit even guesses about the Langdorff product range and the number of their Agents. Some earlier combs, e.g. serial 5192, are stamped ML, presumably Metert Langdorff. Metert left the partnership in September 1852.

Comb finesse

If a tooth has been bent sideways, the ill effects are easily visualized – eccentric lift and wear (both impairing quality of sound) and fouling pins of adjacent tunes (causing stray noises).

Less clear are the ill effects of a tooth bent up or down, perhaps because such teeth are still released, and therefore still play, at their correct timing.

If a tooth is bent down the tip has become closer to the cylinder, because tooth tips are always set **above** the plane of the cylinder centreline. Being closer, the intermesh of the pins is greater, therefore the lift is greater (measured from earlier start to normal release) and so volume may be harsh and dampers may be distorted.

If a tooth is bent up the converse applies – less volume and perhaps damper noise due to pins hardly touching the damper.

So these are prime reasons for getting all tips in line.

But there is one further important hazard to recognise; when it comes to honing tips to remove wear, any tooth bent upwards will be seriously shortened, as shown in the diagram herewith.

Conversely, a tooth bent down will not touch the honing stone and will therefore become overlength compared with its neighbours, thereby increasing the ill effects mentioned above.

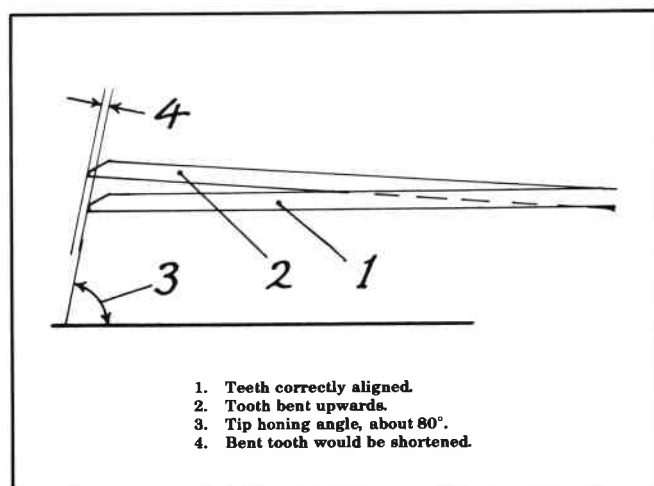


Fig. 5: Diagram showing how honing a comb will shorten any teeth bent upwards.

Dentistry

Discussions with expert specialists are always rewarding as I found again while quizzing member Adrian Little recently, mainly on the subject of teeth.

Cylinder musical boxes are only too often found with at least one missing tooth, and the problem of tooth replacement can be divided into two distinct parts, – (1) replacing the tooth, and (2) fine adjustment of the tip and the tuning.

Part (1) consists of making a new tooth to dimensions exactly matching its neighbours; hardening and tempering it so that its tone matches the comb; soldering in position; tuning; and finishing with no disturbance to adjacent teeth. At this stage the tooth tip is left about 8 to 10 thousandths of an inch oversize in width and length. The bottom face of the tip is perfectly in line.

Part (2) consists of finishing the tip for length and width; fitting the damper; and if necessary making a fine adjustment to the tuning.

The point powerfully made by Adrian Little is that any amateur with patience and a diamond file can readily undertake part (2) whereas part (1) needs a lot of experience and equipment, and errors can be very deleterious to the comb. Therefore, he says, why not let the professional ("such as myself") do part (1) and leave yourself to do part (2), bearing in mind that this halves the cost of the job. Bass teeth cost about £12 to £15 and treble teeth about £10 for fitting only, and these costs are doubled if part (2) is added.

I must say I think this point is well argued, and it offers a useful facility to all but the most dedicated amateur restorer. You only have to go auction viewing to see examples of damage done by unskilled tooth replacers. Moreover Adrian has three factors going for him that the average amateur lacks: he has acquired experience from replacing hundreds of teeth; he keeps technically up-to-date with improvements to method and equipment; and he has a lot of (expensive) special equipment—much of it, appropriately, dental. His 'phone number is Brighton 413540.

The same general argument applies, not so forcibly but with proportionately more financial advantage, to replacing tooth tips.

An interesting technical fact about comb steel is that by applying a lot of local heat it is easy to set up local distortion. The reason for this stems mainly from one of the problems in comb manufacture, namely the difficulty of maintaining a perfectly flat surface when soldering steel to brass. L'Epée got over this problem by making the comb support of cast iron which has almost the same coefficient of expansion as steel; but with brass, in cooling from soldering temperature of about 220°C, the brass for a 13 in. comb contracts nearly 0".002 more than the steel so the comb centre will be bowed upwards as much as a sixteenth of an inch.

The Swiss craftsmen probably prevented this bowing by soldering in stages of an inch or so, starting at the centre of the comb and cooling after each stage so that the effect of differential expansion is virtually eliminated. But this is a slow process and it is a quite likely that with increased production the soldering was done in one operation but with the comb and brass securely clamped with about a sixteenth of an inch curvature in the opposite direction, resulting in flatness after cooling.

This method is used by Adrian Little when faced with this job, which arises when there is any defect in the original soldering. Any such defect leaves that part of the comb inadequately "solid" with the brass and therefore with the bedplate, and the result is the teeth at that part of the comb sound dull.




However the soldering is done, the differential expansion (except perhaps with L'Epée) leaves some residual stresses in the steel, ready to cause slight distortion if local heat is carelessly applied.

More absolute fiction

Many successful thrillers came from what was wittily called the Canning Factory, but there could be detail imperfections . . .

George Constantine was thirty, a big man, built like a full-back, with a sun-burned, square, almost pugnacious face. He was rounding up some villains called **Scorpio** under a chair-lift in Switzerland when "Over the clack of the rollers at the supporting pylons he could hear the endless tinkle of cow bells, a sound that always gave him the impression that he was living inside a musical box that for ever played a rather limited tune."

Perhaps most novelists have never listened to a good musical box. ■

Est. 1968

Nancy Fratti
PANCHRONIA ANTIQUITIES

Post Office Box 28
Whitehall, New York 12887.

Specialist in
Antique Music Boxes and
Restoration Supplies.

Offers You:

MUSIC BOXES: DISC and CYLINDER Music Boxes in many sizes and styles. All are fully restored and guaranteed. Send wants. (Due to fast turnover, no listing available).

DISCS: 100's of discs in stock for many machines. Send your specific wants plus 50¢ postage and I'll send you a FREE listing of discs currently in stock for your machine. . . . OR . . . send \$3.00 and receive a listing of ALL discs in stock. All discs listed by number, title and condition. (overseas, \$4.00).

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).

BROCHURE: "So, You Want to Buy a Music Box. . . . Things to Look For". Originally presented by me as a lecture at an MBS meeting, made into a booklet telling the basic workings of a music box movement and how to look for potential mechanical problems. Send \$1.50 (overseas \$2.50).

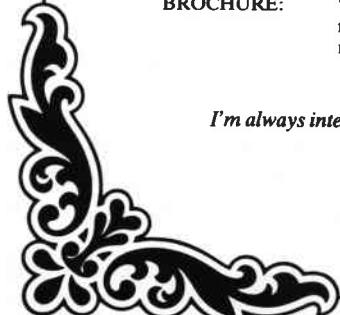
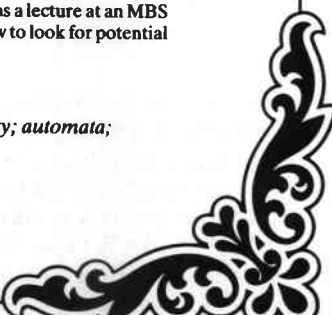
I BUY TOO!!

I'm always interested in purchasing Music Boxes in any condition; Discs - any size, any quantity; automata; music box parts. Prompt, courteous and confidential service.

Your SATISFACTION is always GUARANTEED!

TERMS: US Currency OR Bank Check in US Funds.

518-282-9770

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.

Ethics of restoration.

David and Lesley Evans write from Liss, Hampshire:-

The report of the rebuilding of the Gavioli fair organ in the Autumn edition of "The Music Box" prompts us to ponder the ethics of restoration once again.

Never in history has preservation been taken as seriously in restoration circles as it now is, and in our opinion this is absolutely right. Our mechanical music machines are microcosms of a bygone age – they are time capsules of musical culture – or should be – and we wonder how right it is to modify and enlarge them according to one's whim. Very often such modifications are only improvements in the eyes, or ears, of those who have carried them out, though they may be applauded by the cloth-eared and the par-blind. Would one, we wonder, be proud to announce that one had taken a dilapidated Nicole Frères musical box, then increased the length of its cylinder by four inches, added an 18-note reed organ, a drum and six bells, beside re-tuning it to equal temperament and concert pitch? Surely it would be more laudable to start from scratch if this is the end one wishes to reach?

It has been argued that organs are a different case. This we do not believe. That commercial pressure was applied to organ builders to modify them by showland owners in times past we do not doubt. Obviously the conversion of barrel operated instruments to book music made sound economic sense when fair organs were used to drum up business on the fairgrounds, but today it should be a different matter.

There are now exceedingly few large barrel-operated fairground organs left. If it has not already arrived, the time is nigh when the few still extant will be much more highly prized than those which have been modified, and it can be hastened by collectors and other buyers exercising more discernment. We have always advised collectors and investors to buy only those examples which are as original as possible, whatever the subject matter may be. Altered examples should be bought at a very much reduced price, to reflect the cost of restoring them correctly to what they once were, should such work even be possible. Our own Alfons Bursens dance organ still has the specification it had when new in 1932, and that is the way it will stay. We would not even contemplate the purchase of an instrument which had been substantially altered, no matter how low the asking price. Certainly we have new music books cut for it, but were it a barrel instrument, we should be making new barrels for it, not converting it to a different form of playing.

Regarding the materials to be used in restoration, the article by Edward Rogers in the same issue of "The Music Box" says it all. We think we can identify all the players in this scenario! ■

Materials for restoration.

Jim Hall writes from Kendal, Cumbria:-

I could not agree more with Edward Rogers, (last issue) about people thinking twice about using modern materials and glues when trying to restore old instruments.

Having had the experience of trying to strip off cellophane, plastic and some kind of white adhesive which someone had recovered the book motors of an Aeolian Orchestrelle with. Boiling water would not shift it, the wood would rather tear.

A few years ago, a Bates barrel pipe organ which had been 'overhauled' shortly before, and was giving trouble. The soundboard faceboard consisted of a number of franked cheques. The cheques were glued with white glue, and overlapped each other, so that one could see the amount and signature on each cheque. Whether this was some kind of advertising, I do not know. To get at the pallets, one had to tear off the paper cheques, and plane the wood level before fitting a proper faceboard. Plywood had also been introduced into the organ, when the so called overhaul was done. It must have had woodworm already in it, if the dates on the cheques were anything to go by. I have a few photographs of the "botch-up" for my album.

"Scotch" glue which you heat in a gluepot is not readily available at ironmongers. One supplier of Croid "Aero" glue is Cannons of Halifax, Yorkshire, HY1 4ET, which can be obtained in 5 kilo tins.

That zany character, G. Planus, exiled in America, came up with a real hoot about the musical box graveyard, I chuckle every time I see the photograph. Keep up the good work Gerry. ■

Rare Nicole Frères.

Rita Ford writes from New York:-

I note with interest in the autumn/fall issue, Keith Harding's building up of records concerning extant Nicole Frères boxes.

I have a fine Nicole Frères with "Nicole Frères a Geneve" on the right side of the bedplate and serial No. 22777 on the left side. Length of cylinder: 9 3/4", diameter: 3 1/2". The tune sheet is titled "4 Airs", a gamme No. 27F (?). The case is of ash and measures 18" x 8 1/2" x 6 1/4". The tunes are as follows: The . . . in the World – Caramente; At the Royal Ball – Gallop; All Around in a Circle – Allemandé; Menuet, valse – Guige.

You might also be interested in knowing about another rare box I have.

It is a Langdorf keywind, 1820, with four full-tone classical selections on 13" cylinder. The lid has large, but subdued inlay of flowers and musical instruments. The tunes are as follows: William Tell – duet – Rossini; Judas Macchabee – Ecco

s'avanza – Handel; Marchen – walzer – Gungl (?); Ana – Schottish – Strauss.

With all good wishes to you and to members of the British Musical Box Society. ■

New mechanical music museum.

Henry Marraige writes from Essex:-

Whilst on holiday we visited the Mechanical Music collection at Bruchsal in West Germany.

I am not sure how much has been written about this collection of some 200 items. The amazing Schloss is easy to find and car parking was immediately adjacent. The rebuilt castle is itself worth a visit – however the 80 minute duration tour of the rooms was what we were there for – as always far too short. The lady guide spoke little English, but items are clearly labelled and we were extremely fortunate in that an English speaking local happened to be there at the time. I understand that there is a catalogue/list but we did not locate it. They have everything in tip top condition, in great variety such as I have never before seen or heard.

Our list of items would be impossible from memory (or notes), but to an amateur enthusiast there appear to be representatives of every type of mechanical music maker.

If you would care to print this letter or part of it in our excellent magazine it may encourage readers/members to visit a first class collection, I can recommend thoroughly.

Obviously I should attempt to get the list from the castle so that it could be available to any member, but I am not sure how to go about it.

A party of society members visited the Badisches Landesmuseum in Bruchsal in 1984. The castle houses a major collection of mechanical music owned jointly by the County of Baden Wurttemberg and a well known German collector Jan Brauers, see pages 181-183 of this volume. Ed. ■

No merger likely.

Neville Rose, Hon. Secretary of the Fairground Organ Preservation Society writes from Norwich:-

Regarding a recent letter in your columns by Mr. A. B. Oram, no doubt your readers were as surprised as I was to read that an amalgamation between the Fair Organ Preservation Society and another mechanical organ society was being considered.

I can assure you, Sir, that at no time has this possibility been discussed at any level of the F.O.P.S. and in view of past events it is most unlikely in the future. ■

More on organ festivals.

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

First I must congratulate you on your revitalisation of the Music Box which has

turned what was a rather stodgy and rather technical product with a limited horizon into an attractive, bright and much more readable magazine appealing to a much wider readership. I suspect that the standard may be difficult to sustain without considerable personal effort.

Thank you for printing my earlier letter in the Summer issue. It seems however that certain of my comments may have been misinterpreted, not least by yourself. In no way was I criticising the Society for a lack of street organ festivals in the U.K. On the contrary, it has provided the only chink of light in an otherwise very dark tunnel, by holding an annual organ festival since 1980. However, whilst this may be termed 'regular' it can hardly be described as 'frequent'. My main purpose is to increase the popularity of street organs by encouraging the organisation of more street organ festivals. To help to achieve this I would have thought it important to know of as many street organ owners as possible and secondly to involve official organisations so that the cost of attending such an event is not a factor likely to deter many people, as it has up to now deterred me. As an example, at the last German organ festival only weeks ago payment for attending covered two thirds of the hotel bill for the two of us, all meals were provided plus social evenings. As a result the event was attended not only by 'hobby-grinders' like myself, but by professional organ grinders as well who are often disabled and less able to afford expensive hotel bills than pensioners like myself.

I also noted that you objected to my use of the word fragmented, but surely mechanical music is mechanical music whatever the type of instrument and the spirit in Germany which has brought about a merger of two societies and very close collaboration with a third must surely provide some sort of lesson. I am sure that many, like myself, belong to two or more Societies whose sole interest is in mechanical music. It appears that you are out of touch with the activities of the Fair Organ Preservation Society. As a regular contributor to 'Key Frame' I ensure, together with other enthusiasts, that there are regular articles for lovers of street organs and there have been several features recently on orchestrations. Comparatively little space is now devoted to 'Large Fairground Organs' as most members possess much smaller fry. At the last AGM at Weston two of us played our street organs outside Winter Gardens, but I would have liked there to have been many more of us.

I was really most astounded by your assertion that "large Fairground Organs... would be too cumbersome for town centre rallies." Like myself you have attended Hannover Organ Festival where there are usually about seven or more large organs, often including Herr Feuerigel's Type 38 96 keyless Ruth Konzertorgel - they don't come a lot bigger. And what about Waldkirch, that small Black Forest town which had from memory about 16 large organs including two claiming to be the largest in the World, both Carl Frei organs. Around these parts we have street fairs which gunge up the town centres for several days. Ledbury, Tewkesbury Mop, Chipping Sodbury; even our own Hereford May Fair. Some of the older rides once carried large fair organs in their midst and one modern ride was sited on the Cathedral forecourt courtesy of the Bishop. No room for large fairground organs? Really!!

Regrettably I have had no response to my letter from MBS members so far despite there being (presumably) more hand-turned organ owners than the FOPS from which I have received enthusiastic, if very limited, response. As for organising an Organ Festival, as the cook-book says, first catch your hare - or in our case, first catch your organ-grinder! Unfortunately family commitments abroad seem to clash regularly with Society events, whether MBS or FOPS, and I shall be unable to attend Windsor, but I should be delighted to meet any fellow organ-grinders at the Schwäbisch-Hall or Wesel Organ Festivals the following month.

To owners of paper-roll operated organs, I am hoping to arrange to have a roll of "English" Christmas music cut in the near future, probably for 20 note instruments but possibly 31 note as well. This should appeal to American as well as British owners, with the German music being generally little known (Heilige Nacht excluded). Plans are still in the formative stage and price will depend on demand but I am collaborating closely with Orgelbaumeister Josef Raffin for whom I am U.K. agent. I shall be pleased to provide further information when available to anyone sufficiently interested to send me a stamped addressed envelope.

Thank you for your comments Jeff. Long letters inevitably do tend to loose their point although I thought you made yours clearly. Please allow me to take up your points again in this letter.

Our Society's interests are fairly broad based. Only a small percentage of our members own street organs and for us to hold an organ festival more "regular" than annually would exceed the interests of many members. That is why we have only one "Official" organ festival. However, this year the Music Box has announced no less than THREE "Organ Grinds" linked to the Society, all within four weeks of each other, i.e. Windsor, Leamington Spa and Cambridge. Many would consider this as too "frequent". Those members sufficiently enthusiastic have attended all three. We would have welcomed you at one or all.

I am sorry you have had little response from society members regarding listing of owners and organs but I am sure members would have taken your suggestion more

seriously had they been able to meet you and talk to you at one of these organ grinds. However, I do support your proposal of compiling a list of organ owners and encourage members to write to you with information.

The "lesson" provided by the merger of the two German societies only served to prove that it was wrong to split into two in the first place.

I concede to your claim that regular articles for lovers of street organs and other small instruments are now featured regularly in "Key Frame". However, my comment was based on speaking to members of the Fair Organ Preservation Society, owners of fairground organs who certainly seemed biased towards the larger fairground organ. I cannot however concede to your claim that there is room for large fairground organs in many town centres. Hannover is fortunate in having many open areas, but Jeff, both you and I were at Thun. In terms of attendances festivals don't come much bigger and neither do some of the organs which attend. But where were they? In the town centre, no; on the railway station and in car parks so as not to cause the congestion that would most certainly otherwise occur. The fairs which "gunge" up the town centres of Ledbury, Tewkesbury and Chipping Sodbury are there by established right. The idea of closing town centres for the purpose of an organ festival is a super idea, but a far from practical one!

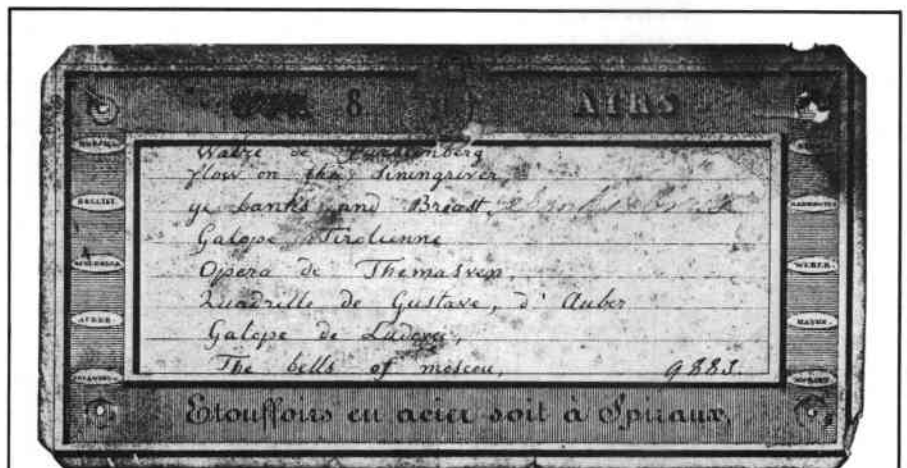
Finally Geoff, you obviously have a vast knowledge on the subject of organ festivals abroad which I am sure would make the subject of a very interesting talk at a future society meeting. I know our Meeting Secretary would be delighted if you offered to talk to us on this subject. ■

A tune sheet error.

Lyn Wright writes from the West Midlands:-

I thought you might like a photostat of this tune sheet off an early key-wind Ducommon-Girod box (old enough to have controls projecting out of the end of the case).

We often hear of curious errors in tune sheets but I suppose one might say the writer made a bit of a boob of tune No. 3!! ■



Lyn Wright sends a copy of this Ducommon Girod tune sheet for this editions 'Letters' picture entitled: 'A bit of a Boob!'

**Coming up
Soon**



and Going, Going,

GONE!



Sold for £12,100. 19½" Polyphon autochanger.

Early news relating to Sotheby's first sale of 1987, which will be held on 10th February, promises some interesting items. The largest, in size and value will be a 64 key Imhof & Mukle orchestrion pictured here. For the collector of more domestically sized instruments, there will be a symphonium Erocia disc musical box, a 25 in. polyphon disc musical box and no less than three 19½ in. disc polyphon musical boxes. At the time we go to press, information is a little sparse, but there will also be an unusual musical cathedral clock.

Sotheby's sale on Monday 22nd September achieved some exceptional prices. Unsold was lot 35, a large 101 key Mortier dance organ with an ornately decorated facade in a combination of recco and art deco style. This instrument failed to meet the reserve at £22,000 and is still on Sotheby's books for sale by private treaty. Located in Belgium, this item can be viewed by arrangement through the collectors department.



Certain to be the star item in Sotheby's next sale will be this 64 key Imhof & Mukle Orchestrion with 20 90cm barrels and 4 ranks of pipes. The instrument was built around 1880 and is weight driven. The pulleys protruding from the right hand side of the case show that the instrument has been converted to be driven from an electric motor. This type of instrument is very sought after and Sotheby's present estimate of £25,000 to £35,000 is probably on the low side. Your Editor expects this instrument to sell substantially higher, provided of course that there are sufficient buyers with high ceilings. Actual measurements are 119" x 64" x 38½" (303 x 162 x 98cm). Larger photo inside back cover.



Still for sale:- lot 35.

A smaller 98 key dance organ, again by Mortier, serial number 947 did sell, for £16,500, having a total of 657 pipes, plus usual percussions and a large quantity of book music.

At the smaller end of the scale, a Troll and Baker orchestral cylinder musical box with a 35.5cm cylinder playing 10 popular airs accompanied by a 20 note reed organ, snare drum, castanets and 6 engine turned saucerbells surmounted by birds and wasp strikers, was sold for

News from Christie's

The Mechanical Music sale at Christie's South Kensington on December 8th, carefully timed to cater for that urge to buy presents for oneself or one's loved ones, looks like including a large and varied selection for all comers. Full details are not available at the time of going to press, but entries so far received or expected, include a choice of upright Polyphons from 15½" to 24½", a Lochmann of similar size, a Chordephon, a Piano Orchestrion (of Piano Melodico type), a Bruder street barrel organ, an Orchestrelle, and several organettes.

Cylinder musical boxes include a mandoline by Nicole Freres, a forte-piano two-per-turn by the same maker, a Mermod sublime harmony interchangeable and a range of visible bell boxes including the 'theatre' style shown in the Christie's South Kensington advertisement in this issue.

There are also various spare parts, cylinders, and empty musical box cases, all waiting for the man who has the right movement to fit.

Gramophones include several good models of the G. & T. period, among them an early tone-arm Monarch with brass horn, and a Victor-labelled pre-tone-arm version. From the 1920's there is one of the ever-popular HMV Lumiere Pleated Diaphragm models. Even the radio section has an entry from its earliest days: a Marconi crystal set from within a few years of the appearance of the crystal detector in 1906. Radio equipment of the pre-First War era very seldom comes to light, and this is perhaps comparable to a musical box made in 1800. ■

£4,000. Considerably more than the estimate of £2,500-£3,000.

£4,100 bought lot 61. This was a Bells drum and castanets-in-sight interchangeable cylinder musical box on a stand, each of the five 38 cm cylinders play 8 airs as listed on the tune sheet lettered AW for the retailers Samuel Woog.

£3,500 was paid for a 27 in. Regina Sublima disc musical box, this one being a table top version with two hinged



Table top 27 in. Regina. Sold for £3,500.

REVIEWS by Ian Alderman

Record Reviews

Christmas Past [Polyphon] Snowflake Records. 12" 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm record ST115.

Music Box Memories (Christmas) [Regina] Snowflake Records. Tape Cassette SC119.

Music Box Dancer [Polyphon] Studio One Records. 12" 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm record ST5001.

Coming up soon continued

doors opening to form a playing surface. A 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. Polyphon disc musical box on a stand was sold for £8,300, again substantially higher than the estimate £4,000-£6,000 but the highest price of the day was paid for a rare 19% in. polyphon autochange disc musical box which realised £12,100.

Items of musical automata were sold the following day and the star of this sale was a fine musical automata tight rope walker by J. Phalibois. Made around 1870, the performer and two musicians have painted wooden faces. The central figure walks the tight-rope holding a flag in each hand, her black cotton hair in two plaits, a drummer on one side, a negro minstrel the other, each in gold paper-edged green, red and white silk outfits. In the background are four arched mirrored glass panels elaborately decorated with blue and gold braid on mauve quilting. The base contains a pull-string musical movement playing four airs, the keywind stop/start mechanism activating the tightrope walker to jump and kick her legs and turn her head while the minstrels also turn their heads lifting their right arms to play their instruments. Estimated at £4,000-£6,000, this lot realised £9,200, see picture below. ■



The tight-rope walker by J. Phalibois. Gone at £9,200.

Music Box Magic [Cylinder boxes] Studio One Records 12" 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm record ST5006.

Musical Box Treasury [Polyphon Studio One Records]. 12" 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm record ST5002.

(All the instruments in these recordings were restored in the Keith Harding workshops. The records are available from Keith Harding, 93 Hornsey Road, London N7 6DJ).

It seems logical to start the discussion of all this music by describing the two recordings from Snowflake Records, since they both offer Christmas music played on 19% disc machines. The record has a Polyphon supplied by Keith Harding and the tape, a Regina supplied by the Musical Museum at Brentford, and both duplicate many of the carols, but confusingly the L.P. has also Schubert's (spelt with a C Snowflake proof-reader!) and Gounod's Ave Marias, and the Hallelujah Chorus, making a total of 12 tunes, while the cassette tape offers 10 tunes. While some of the cards appear on both formats, presumably different sets of discs were involved, even though the cassette insert says the 19% discs are interchangeable for both makes of machine. The music was all familiar to me except "Christmas Song" which seems an all-purpose title for this anonymous tune. "What Child is this?" (tape) will be instantly recognizable to English listeners as "Greensleeves" in a version which sounds very like the much admired modern disc arrangement. The L.P. cover is nicely done, showing an upright Polyphon surrounded by a festive wreath, and the tape cassette has a table model Regina nestling in tinsel and wrapping paper.

The remaining records (also available as cassettes) are all of instruments supplied by Keith Harding, and recorded by Studio One Records. Before discussing the music I must dispose of the one thing that comes between me and total enjoyment of the Studio One issues: the record covers are unbelievably dreadful. Almost wilfully the design on one cover features pictures of discs which play on the record in the other sleeve. But this other sleeve features a hatchet-faced ballerina (the music box dancer?) which can only at best recall a modern popular tune, or more likely the trash end of the music box market, which emphatically is **not** what is recorded here. The lettering used on the cylinder box record (Music Box Magic) belongs more to 1930 than 1830. Worst of all is the dreadful uncertainty concerning the music. There are spelling mistakes, mistranslations of opera titles, an unease about where opera aria names differ from the work itself and indecision about which language to use. For instance, The Bohemian Girl is an English opera and it is perverse to translate it into French. There is a strange disregard of the usual rules of grammar, such as that the next word after a full stop begins

with a capital letter. So, for me, the artwork, with its display of uneducated preconceived ideas about musical boxes, spoils the work as a whole.

The recordings under review here are from a technical point of view, splendid and without obvious fault. All the instruments have been restored by Keith Hardings team, and are, as far as I can tell, without blemish. Better than that, they are all digital recordings (and as well as being available also as tapes, I believe C.D. versions will soon appear).

The two Studio One Polyphon discs each carry 10 tunes, and I must admit that I find one tune sounds much like another, and "Bill Bailey" follows Handel's "Largo" in a quite natural way. Polyphon's arrangers knew what they were doing, and all is effective. To save you worrying about which of the two discs to choose, I should suggest you have both.

Like a child I have saved the best till last. "Music Box Magic" is a record of six cylinder boxes, of memorable quality (unlike the one illustrated on the cover). It is not practical to mention each of some 40 tunes. From the Bremond Overture box (C.1850) I pick the "I Lombardi" aria. But then the Overture to "Semiramide" is not without charm. The Nicole Frères of 1830 does a specially good Quadrille from "Robert le Diable", while the 1880 Bremond offers the most stately Sailors' hornpipe I've ever heard, and a version of the Keel Row which really is hauntingly beautiful and original. The Grand Format "Mandoline Harpe" Heller had an especially effective "Martha" excerpt and when it began "The Carnival of Venice" a friend who was listening and who until then I had regarded as solid and respectable joined in with words beginning "I'd like to go to Paris, but I haven't got the fare", and continuing in a way that means I shall have to regard her in a totally new light. So you see, this record will bring quite unexpected delights. The Rossini "William Tell" prayer is very good and imaginative too. The 1840 Henriot has four tunes: "When the Dew is on the Grass" remains in the memory.

The last box is a Nicole Frères "Variations" of 1865. It plays Vincent Wallace's "Variations on Robin Adair", I have to admit to being absolutely bowled over by this box and I have played it over and over again. The whole village here goes about its business singing Robin Adair, but no one can essay the runs and trills this instrument puts forth. It is the very essence of Victorian brilliance at the keyboard set in a cylinder, (indeed I am told it comes from the pianoforte original). It is breathtaking, it will make you gasp and jump up and down with amazement and glee.

All the records I've reviewed are enjoyable - the Christmas ones recommend themselves - and you all know what disc boxes sound like. But if you wonder which one record to buy, then it must be the cylinder boxes. Indeed, if you buy no other record in the next twelve months, buy this one. In fact, buy them all. I promise you, you will not be disappointed.

Book Reviews

Harmonium - The History of the Reed Organ and its Makers by Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume, pub. by David and Charles, Newton Abbot, 1986.

A book on the harmonium must fulfill a need for someone who is anxious to learn, and Mr. Ord-Hume can always be relied upon to slip a volume into that niche unoccupied by other musical historians. This present book sets out to examine the history of the harmonium, from its invention, through its development by makers in various countries, to its decline and eclipse.

The book follows a pattern which Mr. Ord-Hume's readers will now be familiar with; there is the obligatory nod in the direction of scholarly musicology, with the mention of the Chinese Sheng, invented by the Emperor Huang Tei, 2,500 B.C. (fancy not knowing that) and a note concerning its conjunct (and disjunct) tetrachords. A leap of some 21 centuries brings the attention of the reader to relatively modern times (from Chapter 2) and the Seraphine. For me, it was downhill all the way after the Seraphine, but the development of the harmonium from here is carefully charted and documented with reference to inventions and patents, which is something Mr. Ord-Hume is so good at. The impression this reader was left with was that musically the instrument progressed very little, whether the reeds were sucked or blown, in single rows or banks of dozens.

If nothing much appears to happen inside the harmonium this was because, makers, presumably knowing when they were beaten, put all their energies into the casework. Mr. Ord-Hume mentions the use of new factory wood machining facilities, and I should have liked to know more about the way the instruments were manufactured, for there is no doubt that the harmonium most of us know exists because of the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century.

Mr. Ord-Hume touches on music, and perhaps it is significant that a book dealing with a musical instrument has very little to say about music. Five pages, in fact, of which three and a half are taken up with diagrams and photographs. It would appear that Berlioz, described as "an eminent writer on orchestration" (who could quarrel with that?) dealt at length with the reed organ. I would have quite liked to know what Berlioz had to say about the harmonium. Mr. Ord-Hume, never averse to bleeding chunks of other men's work does not quote him. I wonder why not? The statement that the harmonium, having achieved the status of a folk instrument (by factory production?) thereby attracted the attention of composers who gave it "good" music raises many conflicting ideas which can not be pursued here. As music specific to the instrument is mentioned in the text, I would have liked at least one music example; this might have demonstrated why Karg-Elert's "Passacaglia" (how do we identify this when ordering the music?) is described

as "important", which makes the music sound like an item in an auction. Since there seem to be so few composers who wrote music for the harmonium, why was Rossini's "Petite Messe Solenne" (1863) omitted? The chapter on composers mentions Strauss. This really will not do. Strauss? Which Strauss?

There is a chapter on the Social History of the Reed Organ, but this is little more than a record of sales of the instrument in various countries, and although these figures are interesting they do not constitute social history.

Mr. Ord-Hume's output is prodigious and this reader must be forgiven for feeling that each book is a continuation of the last, with familiar characters re-appearing. So here we have automatic harmoniums and organs, which have already been dealt with in the Author's book on Player Pianos, and before that in the book on Barrel Organs. If these books have been brewing for so long (in the present case apparently for 20 years), could they not have been better organised to stick to their subject?

The section on "How the Reed Organ Works" is clear and instructive, so if you didn't know what happens when you treadle, there is no excuse. The drawings, as is used in Mr. Ord-Hume's books are very clear, and they are supplemented by diagrams from other sources.

Chapter 10 is hefty and fascinating, consisting as it does of lists of names and addresses of enormous numbers of makers, with a considerable amount of biographical and other material. I hurried to look up the maker of my own harmonium, who isn't there. So I respond to Mr. Ord-Hume's invitation to us all to add to the list and offer Richard Heslop, London; 5 octaves, C-C in a flat-top mahogany case with 10 optimistic stops and two banks of reeds.

There are 3 Appendices, dealing with stop specifications, lists of fanciful names given to precursors of the harmonium, and a reprint of Mason and Hamlin's "Instructions for Tuning and Regulating".

As an example of printing and book production the present little volume is beyond reproach. There are many photographs, and scattered throughout the text are reproductions of period advertisements which give that familiar flavour to Mr. Ord-Hume's work. The very typography illustrates the concern with which the author is involved with presentation, and you may echo my Great Aunt's cry of astonishment - "It looks like my Mouse's Tale" - when the tables illustrating sounding and mechanical stops are examined.

The book promises so much, but in the end delivers very little, for the author's apparent intention to offer a work of scholarship is defeated by his determination to present his material in no great depth and employ that literary style of a provincial journalist. Even the use of curious phrases like "tonal Franco-Victoriana" do not succeed in bringing together these disparate aims.

Mr. Ord-Hume has travelled to the opposite ends of the earth for this book and one can only wonder at the dedica-

tion involved, for it will be a very long time before anyone else can pay the harmonium such loving attention. If the chunky shape of the book fits it awkwardly for the shelves, it will rest most attractively on the coffee table.

The Music Box Handbook Vol. II. Disc Boxes (2nd edition) by Graham Webb. Published by The Vestal Press Ltd., N.Y.

This enlarged and revised version of the valuable book which appeared first in 1971 can only be welcomed. It does not totally supersede the first edition as some material there (e.g. the Polyphon tune-list) does not appear in this new book. What is new, or at any rate much enlarged, are the lists of tuning scales for most of the machines you are likely to find, and a great many for books which only extreme good fortune will send your way.

The book falls broadly into two parts, beginning with a survey of the development of the disc box and its manufacturers in Europe and America. This section reveals the complex relationships between the various makers and their products and Mr. Webb must be congratulated on unravelling the tangled involvement in this field.

The section on restoration is founded on sound good sense and practice. I am happy to say that this book does not repeat the kind of advice I felt to be wrong in the volume on cylinder boxes, such as filing down the tune-change cam, rather than re-pin the cylinder. (This criticism was excised from my review of that book). Mr. Webb assumes a high skill in engineering, but the book abounds in warnings suggesting that you should know when to call in the professional restorer.

The operation requiring the use of hot concentrated sulphuric acid rightly stresses that you are dealing with dangerous stuff and it could usefully have reminded people to protect themselves, especially their eyes.

The directions for case-work repair owe little to the standards set by good furniture restorers and museums, but may serve the amateur.

The book concludes with a most interesting and comprehensive list of makers and agents, and their addresses.

Illustrations are good black and white photographs, sensibly showing most types of disc machine, rare and common, and details of their workings. To complement the repair section are clear line drawings.

Anyone who has an interest in musical boxes which he wishes to explore and improve really should add this book to his reference library. ■

Crossword Answers

ACROSS 1. miniature; 7. elf; 9. wheel; 10. serinette; 11. end; 12. roc; 14. creel; 16. resonator; 19. wax; 20. per; 21. lever; 23. Adler; 25. oil; 26. orion; 27. tan; 28. facet; 29. bores; 32. was; 33. fan; 34. priestess; 38. repin; 40. net; 41. ell; 42. universal; 43. annul; 44. say; 45. tunesheet.
DOWN 1. musical; 2. nerve; 3. annular; 4. utter; 5. ewers; 6. learner; 7. elect; 8. federal; 13. oar; 15. ewe; 17. endless; 18. open; 22. van; 23. arc; 24. lot; 25. our; 27. tipless; 28. fastens; 29. barrels; 30. one; 31. single; 32. wee; 35. inlay; 36. exult; 37. scion; 39. paste.

NEW MEMBERS

- 2037 John M. Taylor
Moray, Scotland.
- 2038 David V. Williams
Surrey.
- 2039 Geoffrey Barker
Essex.
- 2040 John Payne
Lancashire.
- 2041 David Rasey
Herts.
- 2042 J. Jacob Smith
Kentucky, U.S.A.
- 2043 John Baddeley
London.
- 2044 Joyce Evans
London.
- 2045 Peter Wilson
Aberdeen, Scotland.
- 2046 Owen Royce
Wisconsin, U.S.A.
- 2047 S. R. L. Artem
Calvenzano, Italy.
- 2048 Pierre Germain
Jhonex, Switzerland
- 2049 David Milne
Moray, Scotland
- 2050 Heinz Spinnler
Zunzgen, Switzerland

- 2051 Kurt Matter
Thun, Switzerland
- 2052 Martin Wyss
Meikirch, Switzerland
- 2053 Reto Breitenmoser
Appenzell, Switzerland
- 2054 Geoffrey Coombes
Cardiff
- 2055 D. A. Nichols
Cornwall
- 2056 Richard Hains
North Devon
- 2057 Mary Hillier
Surrey
- 2058 Richard Howe
Texas, U.S.A.
- 2059 Tanaka Bijutsu
Tokyo, Japan
- 2060 G. C. T. Whatmore
Kent
- 2061 Chris Evans
Arizona, U.S.A.
- 2062 J. R. Worker
Yorkshire
- 2063 Michael J. Avis
Devon
- 2064 Fred W. Willets
Suffolk

- 2065 Mr. & Mrs. S. J. Slater
Iowa, U.S.A.
- 2066 Alan A. Briggins
Bedfordshire.
- 2067 D. H. Vincent
Berkshire.

Change of Address

- 1797 M. J. Loach
Oxon.
- 0732 W. W. Wolf Esq.
Western Springs, U.S.A.
- 1903 J. R. Ellis Esq.
New South Wales, Australia
- 1186 E. C. Prior Esq.
Ohio, U.S.A.
- 0450 F. Address Esq.
Alabama, U.S.A.
- 0463 J. K. Root Esq.
Singapore
- 0411 W. Bick Esq.
Ontario, Canada
- 1479 R. Boul Esq.
Texas, U.S.A.
- 1743 G. C. Gray Esq.
Ontario, Canada

Classified Advertisements

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN NEXT ISSUE:-
15th JANUARY 1987.

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

SPECIAL POSITIONS (offered as available).		
Outside back cover (two colours):		Full page only £84.
(full colour, one photograph to max. size of 8 x 6" with square sides, large sizes £25 extra)		
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%
Four or more consecutive insertions with differing copy:	Area rate less 5%
Two or more full page advertisements in the same edition:	Area rate less 10%

FOR SALE

Steck Aeolian Upright Pianola. Reproducing action. Duo-Art, Pedal operated. In good working order with test roll. Offers over £500 by negotiation. Telephone: Roberts, Oxford 64287.

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

Recut Organette rolls and strips available for many instruments. Schmidt's Music Rolls, 5010 Elsmere Place, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, U.S.A.

Deadline Dates for Advertisements:

1st February; 1st April;

1st July; 1st October

Posting of magazine:

27th February; 27th April;

7th August; 7th November.

WANTED

Empty Polyphon/Symphonion case wanted (15½" Table Model) can offer nice Adler/Fortuna in exchange. Also 15½" and 24½" Polyphon discs wanted. (0580) 880614.

His Masters Voice Advertising Ephemera and associated items. Also wind-up Gramophones and Phonographs in any condition. David Williams, 5 Spreighton Road, East Molesey, Surrey. Tel: 01-941-2435.

Symphonion "Eroica" Discs Also wish to purchase Chamber Barrel Organ. Please write to: Frank Freedman, 68 Rosemont Ave., Caulfield 3161, Australia.

Cylinder Boxes with badly damaged combs, having few or no tuning marks or combs missing. Must be of interesting arrangement such as interchangeable, multiple comb, overture, Piano Forte, Sublime Harmony, Large cylinder or early movements, offers or information to John Powell (0532) 663341.

19½" Polyphon Discs wanted MBSGB member would like to buy discs for newly acquired instrument.

Steve Greatrex Phone: 01-868-7184.

*Send in your classified
for the next edition
NOW!!!*

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.



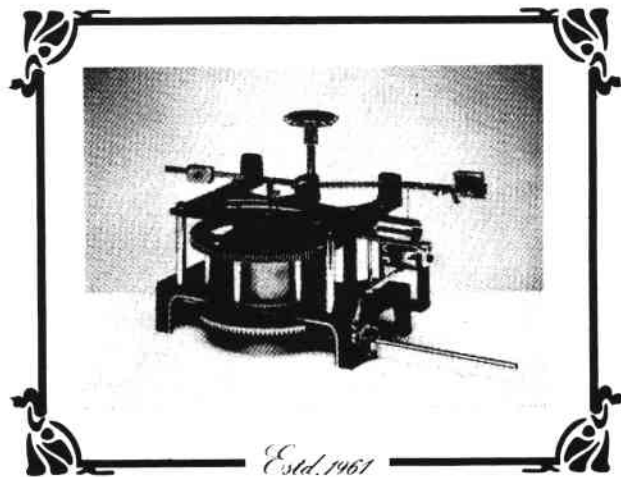
JACK DONOVAN

93, PORTOBELLO ROAD,

LONDON, W.11.

Telephone
01 - 727 - 1485

Specialist in
Mechanical Music
Automata
Singing Birds
Music Boxes
Polyphons
Juvenalia
Unusual Clocks
Phonographs
Gramophones
&c



ROBERT KANE TRENDER

Specialist Restorer of Disc Musical Boxes
Seven point Five. Drayson Mews. Kensington. London. W8
01.937.3247

SOTHEBY'S

FOUNDED 1744

Mechanical Musical Instruments

LONDON

TUESDAY 10TH FEBRUARY 1987



A fine Imhof & Muckle barrel orchestrion, German, c.1880, 303 by 162 by 98 cm.

Fully illustrated catalogues available upon request.

Enquiries: Jon Baddeley.

Sotheby's, 34-35 New Bond Street, London W1A 2AA. Telephone: 01-493 8080. Telex: 24454 SPBLON G.

Shelagh Berryman

**ANTIQUE
MUSIC BOXES
CLOCKS**

15, The Market Place
Wells,
Somerset BA5 2RF
Tel: Wells (0749) 76203



Established Specialists in Music Boxes, and Fine Clocks. We usually have in stock 10-20 Long Case clocks, 30-40 Bracket clocks and a varied selection of cylinder and disc music boxes.

We have now opened our first floor showroom to display our increasing stock of furnishing antiques.

OPEN: Monday to Saturday 10am to 5.30pm

Shipping Service ★ Valuations ★ Restoration

