

An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 13 Number 6

Summer 1988

Edited by Graham Whitehead

The Music Box



Inside A Sight and Sound Spectacular at Thursford Museum
The Divided Barrel Organ
L'Epée - 39 Steps Towards Enlightenment

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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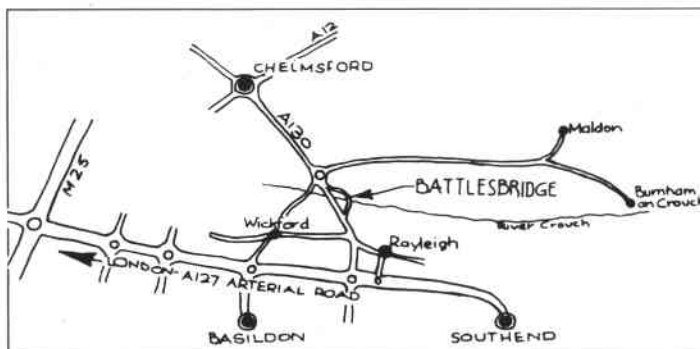
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The Music Box

An International Magazine
of Mechanical Music

The Journal of the
Musical Box Society
of Great Britain.

Volume 13
Number 6
Summer 1988

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Contents

Editor's Notes <i>Graham Whitehead</i>	184
Society Topics	184
Dates for your diary.	184
Newsdesk.	187
Bob Minney's collection stolen - and recovered	187
Harry Secombe visits Chichester Mechanical Music Museum.	188
Mechanical Music Retailer Expands	188
New Paper Roll Organ	188
Organ Grinders Chat <i>Geoff Alford</i>	189
Venues with Mechanical Music - 5 A sight and sound spectacular at Thursford Museum <i>Dorothy Robinson</i>	190
The Divided Barrel Organ <i>Roy Ison</i>	193
The Future of Self Players <i>R. Booty</i>	194
L'Épée - 39 steps towards enlightenment <i>A. J. L. Wright</i>	194
Musical Box Oddments - 37 <i>H. A. V. Bulleid</i>	196
Coming-Up Soon	199
Book Reviews <i>Ian Alderman & Graham Webb</i>	200
Letters to the Editor	202
Classified Advertisements	204
New Members.	204

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A reproduction of a Victorian Lithograph.

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Editors Notes

A forgotten heritage

The other evening I sat eating a late dinner while the rest of my family watched TV. Being screened, was the 1984 version of "Camille", a period 19th century television production made at Pinewood. My interest was attracted by the sound of a 19" Polyphon. It could have been a larger model but I was convinced I was listening to a Polyphon. This musical sequence featured a couple dancing to the music box's rhythm whilst an onlooker was seated at the back of the room. I watched the screen curiously expecting at any moment to see the instrument come in to view, but it did not appear to be there. The tune finished and another tune started. Is this an auto-changer I asked myself, and watched even closer. The couple continued dancing until the onlooker snapped shut a small snuff box. You've guessed, the Polyphon music stopped. Surely the film makers should have realised the impossibility of such pronounced bass sounds coming from such a delicate and small device as a snuff box.

It seems to me that mechanical music, as far as films are concerned, has become a forgotten heritage. Film makers go to great lengths to create authenticity in period productions, yet frequently forget to portray the true period environment. The barrel piano for example, once a familiar and daily sight for Londoners, is never portrayed in modern period films. The cylinder or disc musical box, once a pride of place in every wealthy home, appears almost unheard of in any props department. And what about the orchestrions that once graced the homes of the really wealthy. Opulent period settings never feature an Aeolian pipe organ or Welte Orchestron.

It is therefore not surprising that so many visitors to my mechanical music collection, Napton Nickelodeon, comment that they have neither seen or heard of such instruments before.

The last time I saw an orchestrion in a relatively modern period film was when the largest known Imhof and Mukle made a background appearance in the film "The Go Between". (The instrument is now the pride of my collection).

At least viewers will be treated to a little mechanical music fantasy when the film "Poor Little Rich Girl", due for screening in America about now, is eventually shown over here. Viewers will see a film set depicting Frank Woolworth's music room in which an Aeolian organ really comes to life with a ghostly apparition. ■

SOCIETY TOPICS

Summer Meeting

Saturday, 4th June, 1988 – Summer meeting, Society Auction & A.G.M. at Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London.

All the arrangements for this meeting are now made, and the programme finalised.

We are in for a treat, with a talk from Anthony Bulleid, but following the unfortunate theft of instruments from Bob Minney's mobile collection, sadly Bob will be unable to appear. His place will be taken by a speaker planned for a later meeting. Alison Biden is currently checking which future speakers are able to bring their talks forward. (By the way Alison is always on the lookout for meeting speakers – very many members have specialised knowledge and experience – Alison would be delighted to hear from anyone offering a demonstration or talk at a Society Meeting).

Full details of the programme, catering and directions on how to get there are included on the insert, along with the registration and lunch order form. Other information about the venue can be found by referring to previous issues of the journal. We hope to see you there, but should you be unable to come, please keep the directions for future reference. ■

Autumn Meeting & Annual Organ Grind

Friday, 16th September – Sunday 18th September, 1988 – Autumn Meeting and Annual Organ Grind, Llandrindod Wells.

The Autumn Meeting of the Society at Llandrindod Wells, is proving to be very popular, and an unprecedented number of members registered early. Those members intending to go, and who have not already done so, are advised to book with the hotel and register with Alison Biden as soon as possible.

If you are a member of another organisation interested in mechanical organs you will probably receive information about the Seventh Llandrindod Wells Victorian Festival and/or the Second Llandrindod Wells International Street Organ Festival through other channels. To avoid confusion, please remember that any details about those events refer to those events, and not to the Musical Box Society meeting.

The MBS meeting itself will follow the normal format, with the annual organ grind on the Saturday morning, which effectively will be our joining in the Llandrindod Wells International Street Organ Festival for that period, and members may grind for however long they wish. Other activities (visits, talks, etc.) will be arranged specifically for the MBS members at the meeting, although there will be the opportunity to take in a wider range of activities going on as part of the Victorian Festival. It is also expected that there will be the chance to get together some time with other mechanical organ enthusiasts (owners, grinders, makers, etc.) attending the International Street Organ Festival, who are not members of the Musical Box Society. For the organ enthusiast within the MBS, this is a not-to-be-missed opportunity, while at the same time, the location in terms of the Metropole Hotel and its facilities, the setting of Llandrindod Wells in the heart of beautiful unspoilt countryside, and the occasion of the Victorian Festival, make it an attractive venue for all members. Look forward to seeing you there.

All rooms at the Metropole have en-suite facilities, and the package is excellent value at £55 per person (2 nights' bed & breakfast, society dinner Saturday night). Full details and booking form were in the last issue of the journal. Further information from Alison Biden, Tel. 0962 61350. Metropole Hotel Tel No. 0597 2881. ■



Dates for your diary

4th June, 1988:-

Summer Meeting: Tuke Common Room, Regent's College, Inner Circle, Regent's Park, London.

16th - 18th September, 1988:-

Autumn Meeting & Annual Organ Grind: The Metropole, Llandrindod Wells.

This programme may be subject to alteration.



Members of the Society take to the gondola switchback at Thursford Museum.

SPRING MEETING IN NORWICH 15 - 17 April 1988

by Reg Mayes

Over ninety members and/or their spouses attended our meeting in the beautiful city of Norwich. With a population of some 120,000 it boasts of some 365 pubs and 35 churches. Some of these churches now meet other social needs. For example the St. Peter Hungate Church museum is of particular interest to us in that it has an Italian organ dated 1620, it has 45 keys with 2 stops, Peering through the false wooden pipes on the front of the case it seemed to have something like 60 metal pipes. There was also a Whetstone chamber organ, dated 1820 there. Another building was the Bridewell Museum which had a fine collection of clocks and also a Jaquard punched-card controlled loom.

On Saturday afternoon we had a coach trip to St. Andrews Church, Letheringsett, where there was a revolver barrel organ made by Bates of London. It had three barrels each capable of playing ten tunes. It was restored in 1984 and it sounded very well. Sometimes it is played to accompany the congregation when there is no organist available for the main organ. The coaches then took us on to Thursford Museum, but more about that elsewhere in this issue. (See Venues with Mechanical Music). On our return to the Maids Head Hotel we prepared for the Society Dinner. We had an excellent repast. Our Chairman Jon Gresham welcomed a new member and two members from the U.S.A., Mr. & Mrs. David F. West from Newport Beach, California. Then there were the Parish Notices and an expression of our thanks for all the hard work Alison Biden and her helpers had put in to make the meeting such a success.

On Sunday morning we were entertained to a seminar, with our teachers being Ted Brown; Dr. Robert Burnett; Peter Howard and David Tallis, not to forget the Video presentation of Drs. Haspels excellent museum at Utrecht, Holland. Peter started us off with a talk entitled 'Some aspects of case restoration' he related how he obtained a 17 1/4 inch Stella table model with some 156 discs (those without projections remember) so in the course of restoration he wanted a storage bin. The designs that he had seen did not suit his taste - so he designed his own.

He took us through the details of choosing wood and veneers, then making mouldings with a 'Scratch block' from the end of an old panel saw. Veneers are best bought in four similar sheets at a time so that any future requirement for quartering would be easier to achieve. An assessment of matching can be obtained by placing two mirror tiles on edge and at right angles to each other and the veneer. He found that the best glue for veneer was (animal) Scotch glue. It is important to dampen and flatten veneer before glueing, especially "wild" grains which buckle more than straight grains. Rubbing down flat surfaces required Garnet paper or Lubrisol (silicone carbide) paper. For mouldings, steel-wool 000 grade was best. Water based stains kept their colour longer than spirit stains. A good sanding sealer is diluted french polish containing pumice powder. All that could be said here about french polishing was - learn from your mistakes. For a modern twist a member in the audience stated that he used a micro-wave oven for melting animal glue and for killing off woodworm he places the case in the deep freezer for a couple of weeks - but then he is a bachelor - not many wives are that tolerant!

David Tallis was showing how to refeather a small bird from a singing bird box, which takes him two days to complete. His tools were



New member, Maggie Morris enjoys the gondola ride.



The Maestro of Thursford - Robert Wolfe at the Wurlitzer organ.



Peter Howard



A rendering from Thursford's Carl Frei 100 key organ, now rebuilt as a 112 keyless.

Letheringsett Church Barrel Organ



The eighteenth century barrel organ standing at the west end of the nave of Letheringsett Church. Built by Messrs. Bates & Son of Ludgate Hill, this was originally in Hindringham Church, Norfolk, but passed into the possession of the Lee Warner family; and it was obtained by the Rector after the decease of Miss. E. M. Lee Warner, of Holt, in 1950. It was introduced into Letheringsett Church in 1956, after having been put into working order with the assistance of Mr. J. B. L. Tolhurst, F.R.I.B.A., and Messrs. Williamson & Hyatt, organ builders, of Trunch, Norfolk. It possesses six stops (Fifteenth, Twelfth, Principal, Open and Stopped Diapasons and Bourdon), and thirty tunes, twenty-four hymns and six chants, can be played upon it. The tunes are arranged on three barrels as follows: On the First Barrel: 1. The Old 100th. 2. Luther. 3. Islington. 4. Bedford. 5. Sheldon. 6. York. 7. Shirland. 8. The Old 104th. 9. Hanover. 10. Double Chant (Robinson) played twice. On the Second Barrel: 1. Evening Hymn. 2. Portuguese. 3. Rockingham. 4. Abridge. 5. St. Anne. 6. Devizes. 7. Irish. 8. St. Bride's. 9. Austria. 10. Double Chant (Mornington) played twice. On the Third Barrel: 1. Surrey. 2. Morning Hymn. 3. London New. 4. Manchester. 5. St. James. 6. Mount Ephraim. 7. Sicilian Mariners. 8. Easter Hymn. 9. Single Chant (Tallis) played three times. 10. Single Chant (Battishull) played three times.

"Of all instruments," wrote Dr. Charles Burney (1726-1814) in *The History of Music*, "the barrel organ is most easy of performance, as it merely requires a regular motion given to it by a handle. On this account it is a contrivance of very general use; and recent improvements of some English artists have rendered the barrel capable of an effect equal to the fingers of the first-rate performers." In general use during the time of Dr. Burney, barrel organs have become very rare instruments, and this one at Letheringsett is one of the very few remaining in working order in the country.





David Tallis



Dr. Robert Burnett.



Stephanie Biden plays the "Easter Hymn", on the Letheringsett barrel organ.



A rare experience at Letheringsett for Mrs. West of California.

headband magnifying glasses and a block of Balsa wood approximately 1" x 1" x 3" in which to place the mounting of the bird so that it can be worked upon. The choice of real feathers are obtained from a taxidermist products, Humming birds are best but they can be augmented by Glossy Starlings, Kingfishers and dyed Goose feathers. The body of a bird has to be covered with a thin leather (zephyr skin). Then taking a small feather from one of the stuffed birds and cutting off the quill end and placing it on the table whilst taking up a thin artists brush having touched it onto the spout of a tube of Humbrol tissue paste, this is used to mark the body where the feather is to be applied, then the brush is used to pick up the feather to place into position. Each side of the bird is done alternately. Check after each feather has been applied that the wing mechanism is still free.

Robert's contribution was that of repairing the bellows of a singing bird box. His aids were Zephyr Skin (obtained from Messrs. Bevington & Sons, Neckenger Mills, Abbey Street, London SE1 2AW). Clear Evostick diluted with trichlorethene; some white card, in his case old Christmas cards. The skin was cut to a generous size over the wooden sides of the bellows then layed flat and sealed by the application of a coat or two of diluted clear Evostick. When dry the folds were made to suit the action requirements of the wooden sections of the bellows, starting with that for the reservoir. The edges of the skin were then glued down and the overlap cut off. Next, small pieces of the white card were cut to form a reinforcement to the folds of the skin.

Ted stood in the corner behind a table, on top of which looked like a knackers yard for music box parts. However Ted cheerfully stated that there was no better way of 'getting to know your box' than lovingly getting them together with repaired items and building them into good sounding boxes. It was obvious that Ted is a man of great dedication and resolution to the broken, as he was showing us broken bedplates; near toothless combs, endless screws formed from wire wound around a straight brass spindle etc. One new member, who was attending her first meeting said "How sad it was to see music boxes so mutilated" But of course this is what our Society is all about - bringing musical boxes and other mechanical items back to life.

So once more members have given of their 'Trade Secrets' at our meetings to enable others of us to have courage to attempt our own repairs. So our thanks go out to- Peter, Peter, Robert and Ted for helping to give us another very interesting meeting. ■

NEWS DESK

Bob Minney's collection stolen - and recovered

*Thanks to
"Detective Donovan"!*



Bob Minney playing the Tanzbar.

Just as we were preparing to print a report on the theft from Bob Minney's mobile display van, whilst parked in the drive of his Luton home overnight, we were delighted to hear news that the burglars had been apprehended and the items recovered.

Bob Minney's travelling showcase has spent the last three years touring the summer rally fields and the story of this unusual travelling exhibition appeared last year in "Music Box". The exhibition was due to appear at the Society's next meeting.

Bob used a generator to light his exhibition and it is thought that the thieves originally entered the van for this and the amplifier and then decided to help themselves to whatever else they could. However, their luck changed as they tried to dispose of the mechanical music. With a 28 note Tanzbar under his arm, one of them visited Jack Donovan's shop on the Portobello Road in London. Jack's suspicions were confirmed when he noticed that the music rolls were cut from plastic, he knew these were Bob's. Whilst Jack's assistant Colyn chatted with the thief, Jack nipped next door to summon the police, he then detained the thief in the back room. A few minutes after the thief had been arrested, in walked another man

asking "where his friend had gone", Jack and Colyn detained the second man while the police were called again. The police also apprehended a third colleague, a woman waiting in a car nearby. She had with her Bob Minney's 31 note table organette.

Other items were subsequently recovered by the police during a search of the home of one of the accused and on the instructions of the police, one of the accused went and bought back two of the stolen items he had already sold, the generator and the amplifier.

Bob tells me that even though the goods have been returned, he now feels it is too risky to leave such valuables outside in a vehicle. Instead of touring with the mobile exhibition van, he will be visiting rallies with just one instrument - his 48 key Imhof barrel organ which is small enough to be carried in a car. ■

Harry Secombe visits Chichester Mechanical Music Museum

ITV's "Highway" production team with it's presenter/star Harry Secombe recently visited Clive Jones's wonderful mechanical music collection at Chichester. The programme which will feature the Helios orchestrion and the dumb organist will be broadcast on ITV on 12th June at 6.45pm.

Clive's museum is not the only one to be currently featured on TV. BBC2's visit to Thursford Museum coincided with the MBSGB's visit and that feature was broadcast in the east and south of England on 22nd April in a new holiday programme. ■

Mechanical Music Retailer expands

Following the tremendous success of a specialist Mechanical Music Shop, established two years ago; husband and wife team Shelagh and Douglas Berryman are expanding their business in the West Country town of Bath.

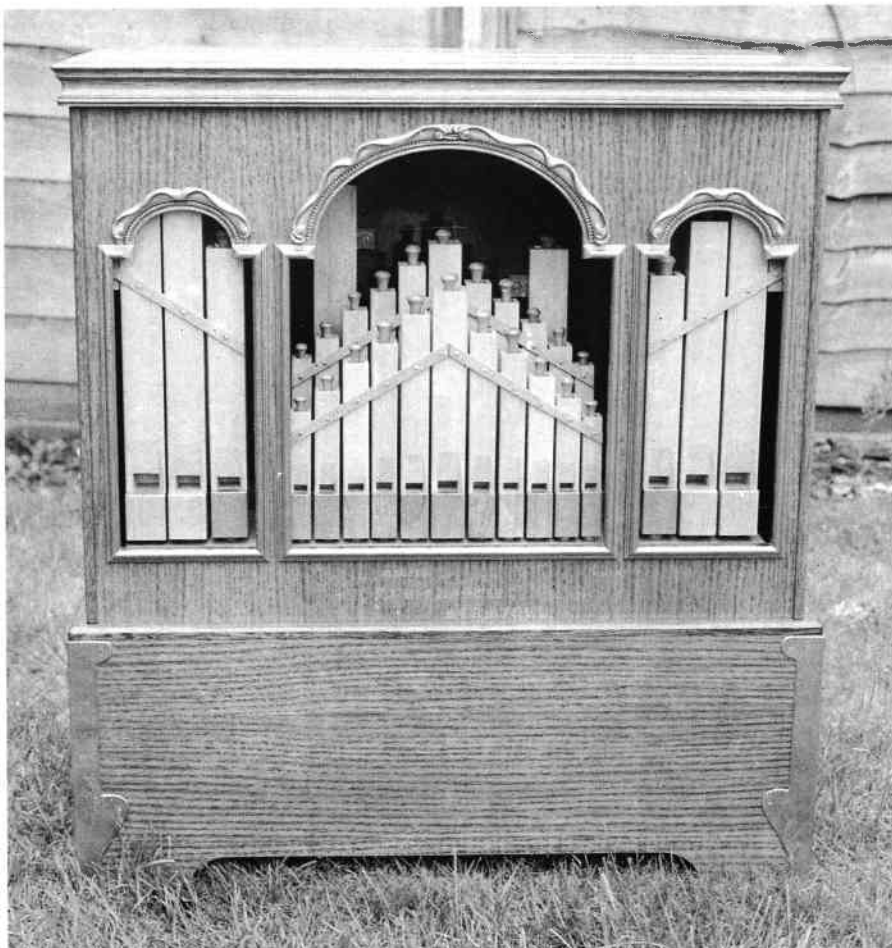
The beginning of May sees the opening of their second enterprise, trading as "Douglas Berryman" at Bartlett Street Antiques, Bartlett Street, Bath. This is already a well established business, the present proprietor specialising in musical boxes as well as antiques. Douglas, who is well pleased with the appreciating value of "mechanical music" pieces in recent years, intends to continue specialising in musical boxes and clocks but will also be expanding his sales to include other interesting antique items. ■

Any Volunteers?

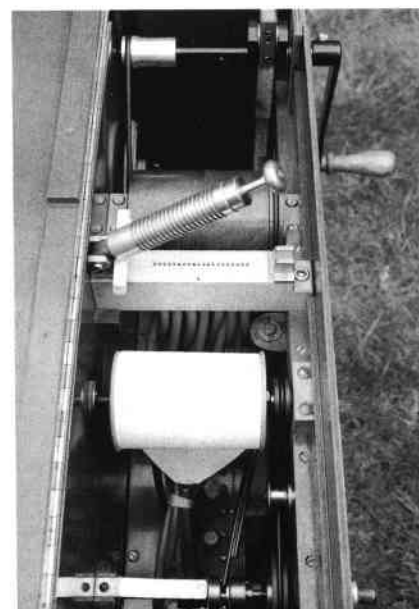
Our Advertising Manager, John Powell, having held this post for the last 6 years, has given me notice that he wishes to retire.

Your Editor or John Powell would be pleased to hear from anyone who is prepared to undertake this duty.

New Paper Roll Organ



Views of the new 20 note organ built by F. & R. Fussell of Stamford.



A new paper roll street organ has been launched to compete in the 20 note market. This is being made by F. & R. Fussell and your Editor recently had the opportunity to wind the handle outside the home of Pete Watts at Chipping Norton.

One is naturally inclined to make comparisons with the well established Hofbauer and Raffin. This instrument stands a little larger than both at 27" wide, 30" high and 15½" deep. There are 33 pine stopped pinewood pipes consisting of 11 melody (x 2) 2 bass (x 2) and 7 accompaniment. The weight is just about that one man could manage to lift easily into a car boot or estate although the heavy brass handles are of little practical use, being too close to the case to hold.

The overall impression is one of quality. The wood-workmanship is really first rate and many of the parts that could have been produced in plastic have been lathe turned in brass. There is an abundant supply of music which also plays on the Hofbauer and Raffin available from many sources including Pete Watts.

A price tag of only £1,600 makes it a serious contender in the 20 note market, but I would recommend anyone contemplating the purchase of a 20 note organ to listen to other instruments or recordings of them to see which sound they prefer. The company can be contacted at 8 Balk Road, Ryhall, Nr. Stamford, Lincs. An extra £200 buys a register facility with 11 more open pipes. ■

Organ Grinders chat by Geoff Alford



Another year, and another season of organ meetings and festivals is under way. There is something about Berlin which attracts organ grinders from many countries every year. A major reason is the general acceptance of Berlin as the home of the street organ. But it is also a fact that this City has an indefinable something, and nowhere are organ grinders awarded the warmth of welcome which Berlin provides. Last but not least, the full programme gives ample opportunity to socialise and see something of this unique City. Anyone wishing to take part in the official programme is required to register at the Berlin Tourist Office on the afternoon of Thursday June 30th. Some of the highlights of the 9th International Organ Festival organised by Kurt Niemuth and Christa Mademann are as follows:-

Thursday 30th June - 8 p.m.

Official opening and Dinner, Charlottenburg Ratskeller.

Friday 1st July - 8 p.m.

Reception at the Berlin Casino.

Saturday 2nd July - 10 a.m.

Concert in Tiergarten around Neuer See.

2 p.m. - Parade with organs along Kurfürstendamm with vintage vehicles.

3 p.m. - Concert at Ludwigkirchplatz. Fairground stalls. Kindl Brewery.

7.30 p.m. - Mystery trip.

Sunday 3rd July - 10 a.m.

Parade with organs to Lützowplatz for Closing Ceremony.

Other Continental organ festivals include:-

1st - 3rd July. 16th Organ Festival, Hannover.

6th - 7th August. 2nd Int. Organ Meeting, Marburg.

2nd - 4th September. Musica Mechanica. 3rd Organ Festival, Göttingen.

30th Sep. - 1st Oct. 2nd Int. Organ Meeting, Ulm.

8th - 9th Oct. 2nd Int. Organ Meeting, Wesel.

At home, 1988 is the year of the Manchester Organ Festival which will take place, in spite of the latest of British diseases, Ratecapping, at Heaton Park on September 10/11. I am informed by Albert Taylor that a number of street organs will be taking part. Llandrindod Wells Victorian Festival lasts from September 10 - 18 and I shall be organ grinding there so unable to sample the delights of Manchester. Members will know that the 2nd Llandrindod Wells Int. Organ Festival takes place side-by-side with the M.B.S. Autumn Meeting on September 16 - 18. Numbers of organs officially participating already total 16. An important ingredient of the major Conti-

nental organ festivals is the active attendance of organ builders displaying their latest models, and sometimes they achieve substantial sales through this direct involvement. So I count ourselves fortunate that Alan and Amanda Pell will be taking part in the Festival at Llandrindod where it is anticipated that one of their new organ models will make its festival debut. Alan is well known already for his 27 note organ, a number of which are owned in Britain and at least one participated in the Thun Festival last year. Also making their first public appearance will be two new street organs by organ builder Ian Alderman. I am sure that other enthusiasts, like myself, will look forward in eager anticipation to seeing and hearing these home-grown products.

Through my letter box have come the first two issues of a free newspaper titled *Mechanische Orgelwelt aktuell*. Roughly translated - *Mechanical Organ World Today* - 'a newspaper for the friends of modern mechanical music'. The paper omits any publishers name, but as the only modern organs mentioned are Hofbauer instruments one must assume that it is produced by that firm - so a more appropriate title might be *The Hofbauer Micro Mag*. Of interest is reference to the new reed microbox organs being produced in 28 and 41 note form, which take all the cassettes of the 26 and 37 pipe organs respectively. These new instruments have been appropriately named 'Harmonica'. I suppose it is only natural that builders of microbox organs should concentrate on extolling the undoubted advantages of the system, but I do wish that they would 'bite the bullet' and deal positively with the subject of their battery power, rather than pretending it does not exist and ignoring it. If there are snags involved, prospective purchasers should be made aware of them. Several years after the introduction of micro technology into organs I still have no knowledge of the size, weight and life of the batteries required for any of the Hofbauer range, or even where they are installed.

Mechanical organs have again achieved a place in the Guinness Book of Records. The 1988 issue records that Peter Sahn of Bad Grund has made a new record for continuous organ grinding of 44 hours 14 minutes on a 37 note microbox Hofbauer. Although the Micro clearly avoided the necessity of changing music, one wonders how the problem of battery changing was overcome without stopping. Of course a barrel organ could do the job just as well and would be one way of learning a tune inside out. Any volunteers to break this new record?

There are not many like myself who are mad enough to take their street organs on to the Continent to play at festivals, and the numbers of Continentals like Johan van Loon who come the other way is also limited. To be correct, of course, a carnet should be obtained when taking any valuable object like a street organ abroad, if only to prove that you took it out with you when you bring it back through customs. With small organs that fit into the back of an estate few of us bother, but in the case of a larger organ fitted in a

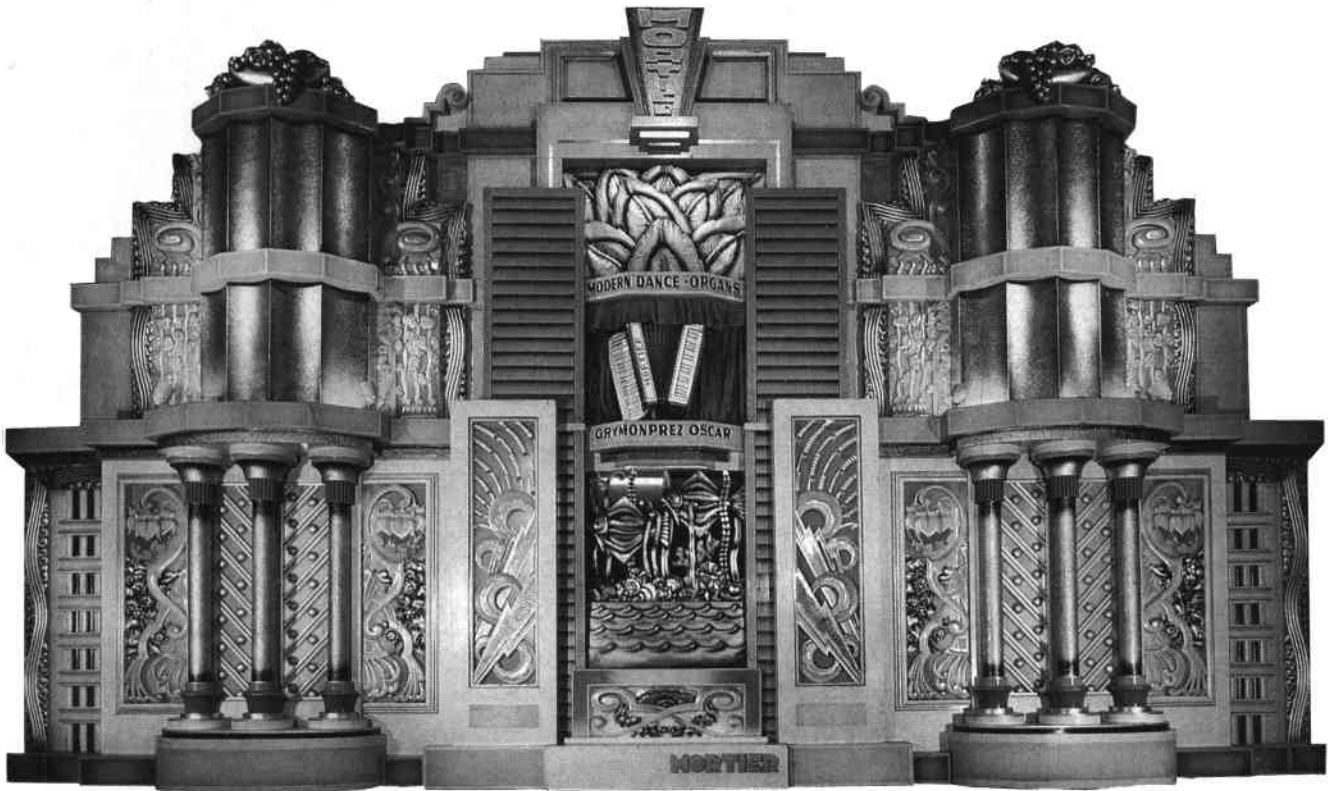
commercial vehicle one has no choice, and the snag in recent years is that the 'Powers that be' insist that such vehicle be entered on the ship's manifest. As soon as this happens the Harbour Board levies a commercial charge to the ferry operator who in turn then has to levy a commercial ferry rate which can be quite prohibitive. In my 1987 crossings I saw a number of horse boxes and motor racing team vehicles and the mind boggles at the ferry costs for owners such as these taking part in Continental sporting events. The Channel is sufficient barrier in itself without Government increasing the problems and if we are to fully take our place in Europe, the Government should be applying its mind to minimising the barrier-effect of the Channel, not the opposite - especially where non-profitmaking events are concerned. Last year two Dutch street organs were discouraged from coming to Llandrindod because of massive ferry costs, and I have no doubt that the same thing will happen this year. The Government is committed to encouraging tourism to create jobs but the tighter customs controls of recent years do not help this. Similarly, Harbour Boards have done very nicely out of ferry operators.

I was very sorry to hear that Bob Minney had recently had an accident with his street organ when the organ slipped out of his hands, damaging the cabinet. I understand that the organ interior escaped damage, fortunately. In international terms, Bob's 48 key Imhof barrel street organ, believed to have been built in London in the 1850's, is an outstanding example of the organ builder's art brought to near original perfection by its owner. In British terms, it is probably the most outstanding vintage street organ in the country. Daniel Imhof set up business in London not long after he founded the Imhof and Mukle firm in 1848 in Vohrenbach, in the same area of the Black Forest where the TV series 'Black Forest Clinic' was filmed. Interestingly, one episode of that series includes film of a village street festival which included a realistic looking clockmaker journeyman bearing his load of flute clocks on his back. But the accident acts as a timely reminder to check our insurances. Organ insurance is not cheap if you take it to festivals, etc and, as with house insurance, premiums have a nasty habit of increasing with depressing frequency. It is possible to include organs as individual items on a house contents policy, but it is usually cheaper to join a group policy. As a compromise it is worth considering just insuring the instrument and carrying the risk of accessories and music oneself. ■



How young can you get?

Venues with Mechanical Music — 5



A sight and sound spectacular at Thursford Museum by Dorothy Robinson

The Museum was a barn, the yard was littered with engines through which weeds grew wild and thick, some of the engines at the back seemed to have taken root, and always there was a good selection of farmyard tabby cats.

My father always insisted on parking his car in Harry Bushells' yard opposite, only because two Thurston's engines stood there as status symbols to nostalgia.

As a young girl visiting Thursford frequently, George Cushing's engines and organs awoke a passion in me for fairground organs and steam engines that has never left me. George has never changed, got older-looking maybe but then haven't we all! He was always dressed in old worn trousers, old boots, a check cap and a jacket, he was often unshaven and his first remark upon meeting in recent years was usually "Cor blimey if I had known you were coming I would have had a shave", but then of course that wouldn't have been George Cushing. Thursford is a tiny village about eight miles from the north Norfolk coast. My parents lived at Fakenham, to get there one went along the A148 to a pub, called the "Crawfish", turned left along the narrow lane, took another left turn and then found a homemade sign "To the Organs", that is where it all began.

Over the years many changes have taken place, until today one can visit probably the most famous fairground and organ museum in the world. Norfolk fairs have a place in history, Kings Lynn, where a famous charter fair was drawn up by King John "Lynn Mart". Frederick Savage, Charles Burrell and other Norfolk inventors of the 19th century had aspirations of living folk history,

in which fairs were a significant inspiration. As the traction engine in the fields needed to adapt to the land, so the Showman's Engine needed to adapt to hauling trucks and generators of light. The fairs brought electricity with them, most villages in Norfolk had oil-lamps till the late 1940's.

The organs in today's Thursford collection are either Dance, Fairground, or Street organs. They all play by the paper system invented in 1892 by an Italian, Ludovic Gavioli.

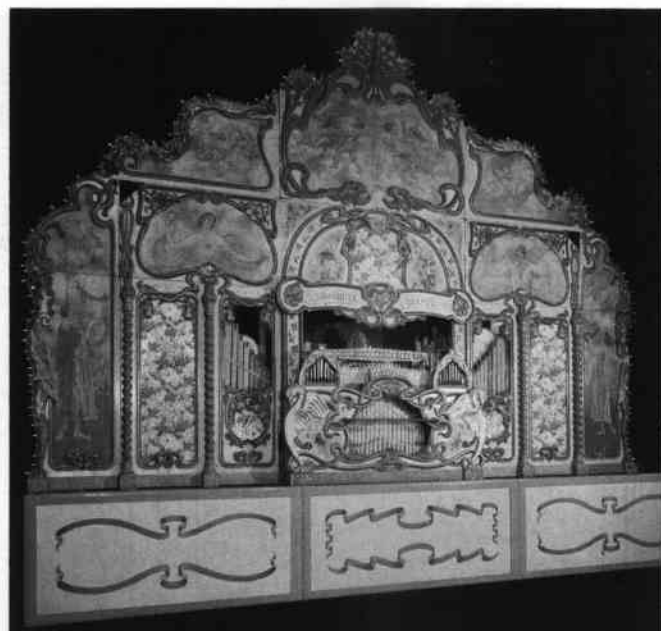
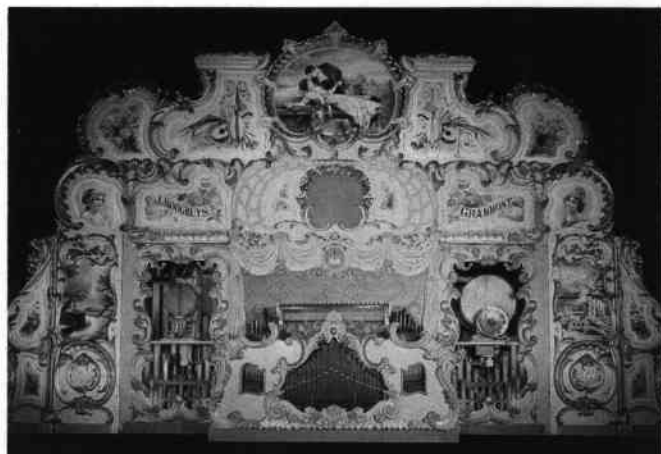
De Leeuwin "The Lion"

Built in 1898 by Messrs. Koningsberg in Roosendaal, Holland. A street organ, typical of what can be seen in Holland today. A very loud organ with sharp, bright notes which soon brings a festive mood to the streets.



The two 101 Key Hooghuys Organs

Made in Belgium in 1900 and used by the Becquart family of Brussels on their fairground rides. The organs are painted in pastel colours and the facades have flowers, pretty girls and ornate gardens painted on them. Their style of music is highlighted by bright fast, musical arrangements.



Carl Frei 172 Keyless Concert Organ

This organ is typical of many of the rebuilt organs one sees in Germany today. The width has been increased. It was originally made as a 100 key instrument in 1910 by Carl Frei Senior, but was rebuilt in Waldkirch in Germany in 1965 to the present 112 keyless scale. It has new figures, carved in Germany, two life-size drummers



and small cherubs; this organ is noted for its tubular bells that ring before the start of a book of music.

The 98 key Marengi

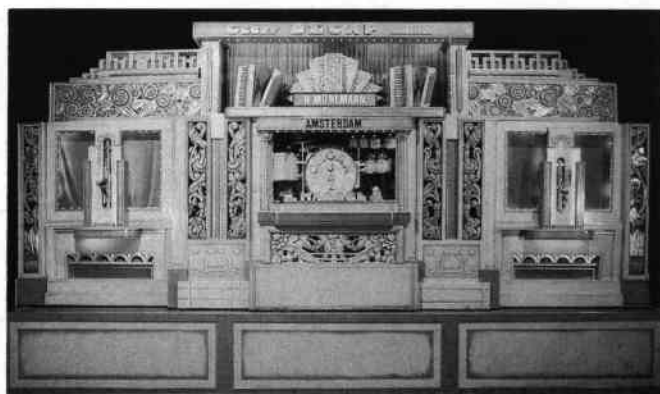
This was the first organ to arrive at Thursford, in 1959. Charles Marengi had once worked as foreman for Gavioli, but following their financial difficulties in the early 1900's he left and took with him the best of the craftsmen to make his own distinctive organs.

This organ was built in Paris in 1911. The front is said to have been used in a Paris dance hall, before being transported to England. In 1920 it was owned by Chipperfields, then the Barry family in Belfast. The colour in this organ is magnificent, having been recently repainted by James Tiller of Long Sutton, who is now over 90 years of age, and has been responsible for a number of fairground organ repaints, including our own Gavioli. The panels at the sides represent the four seasons, the "Bacchic" head above the central pipes is typical of Marengi, but the top centre is really wonderful, a chariot pulled by twin white stallions with a delightful lady riding inside holding a wreath in her hand.

The 100 Key DeCap

Hank Mohlmann the Dutch Organ builder was responsible for this organ and the Hooghuys coming to Thursford.

The organ was built in Antwerp in the late 1930's. It has 121 keys and reflects changes in style to the "jazz era". It uses accordions, saxophones and rhythm section with a large bass drum and flashing lights. DeCap built many organs - some with electronic Hammond organs as part of the instrumentation. A number can still be found in cafes, in Holland and Belgium. Last year I visited a very fine example, a "Montyat" made in Holland, which guaranteed to get your feet tapping even if you didn't get up to dance.



84 Key Wellershaus

This organ played on the fairgrounds in Holland and was built in Germany in the early part of the century. I am often asked "do you have a favourite organ", well this one certainly ranks in my top ten.



The Gondola Switchback

The Gondola Switchback was first owned by George Aspland of Boston, Lincolnshire who bought it new from Savages, Kings Lynn in the 1890's. The ride was sold to Percy Cole in 1938 and travelled the West Country Fairs. It was a frequent visitor to Stratford-upon-Avon, and a regular visitor to the Stourpaine Rally. The switchback is believed to be the only one of its kind left. Eight ornate gondola cars coupled by drawbars and stays to a traditional roundabout spinning frame are pulled round the circle climbing two steep hills and dipping to valleys.

The Gavioli Organ has 98 keys, and was probably cut down from a larger 110 key frame. The organ had a rebuild in 1926 by the Verbeeck firm and a complete restoration in 1979 by Tim Blyth and is now playing to perfection.

In its history this ride has travelled the length and breadth of the country and now resides in a sympathetic setting in Norfolk, not far from King's Lynn, a fitting tribute to Frederick Savage who achieved fame as a pioneer of steam driven roundabouts.

The Wurlitzer

This organ is one of the largest Wurlitzer's seen in Europe. It was built in 1931-2 by the Rudolph Wurlitzer Company in New York for the cinema in the Headrow in Leeds. There are 1,339 pipes ranging from 16 ft. to ½ in. in length. The pipes were originally in two chambers on either side of the screen, and two chambers had to be built at Thursford, separated from the main hall by wind-operated swell shutters which open and close as a volume control of the organ.

The organ played to 3,500 people in the cinema. A disc blower is driven by a 15 h.p. motor and supplies air at some 1,500 cubic feet per minute, at 1 lb. per square inch. The console is connected to the organ by a flexible cable 120 ft. long, containing 1,000 wires, this was invented by Robert Hope Jones who was a telephone engineer and part-time organ builder. There are nineteen ranks of pipes, each rank being a different tone colour. The console is white with gold lining 6 ft. across. The Wurlitzers were made, like the fairground organs to entertain people. They are different but

complement each other, after all, the cinemas started on the fairgrounds.

The Engines

"The Age of Steam", many examples can be seen in the museum. Victory, Unity, Alexander and King Edward VII. The four Burrell Showman's Engines were the main source of power for the rides and shows of the Thurston family till the late 1930's. They are classic engines, the weight and mass of them is impressive. They are great examples of the perfection and detail of English craftsmen. If you have never seen one all lit up and working, go to one of our English Rallies on a Saturday night, stand next to them and see how big they are, you will not believe it. The engines were as much a part of the fairground as the rides, organs and dancing girls.

Away from the Showman's engines, general purpose engines of all makes and types can be seen as these are tangible pieces of history and a way of life that was hard but very rewarding and typically English. Restoration is still taking place on a number of exhibits and it is a tribute to the skills of all who have contributed.

Opened in the last year are the Thursford Shops, in renovated farm buildings. There is a specially styled period Icecream Parlour! Cream teas are served on the lawns and there is an adventure play area for the children, numerous ducks are to be found looking for a free bite of food and there is also "Cackler".

"Cackler" is a steam locomotive built in Leeds in 1889 by the Hunslet Engine Works. It was originally named "Port Dinorwic" when it worked at the Dinorwic slate quarries, Llanberis. This is one of a pair of the 'Mills' class engines and now runs on this 1 ft. 10 in. gauge garden railway.

Thursford is a Museum of Edwardian extravagance, not a huddle of dusty exhibits, which now amaze visitors but without George Cushings' wisdom it would have been destroyed, rusted away or dismantled. It was George Cushing, his depth of feeling for the old fairgrounds and the things he saved, that prompted many of us to try and do the same in a small way. ■

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The Divided Barrel Organ

by Roy Ison

In the past twelve years or so there have been two articles published in the Music Box about the Divided Barrel Organ. Both articles – Vol 6, No. 2 and Vol 7, No. 8 describe this type of barrel organ, of which Clements appears to have been the only manufacturer.

The barrel organ shown in Fig. 1 is yet another example of this rare type – sometimes known by its original name “The Flageolet and Tabor”. This particular organ was also manufactured by Clementi & Co., Cheapside and from the article published in Vol 7, No. 8 this brings the grand total of such organs to Five.

The barrel organ shown in Fig. 1 is contained in a mahogany “Gothic” styled case. It has three barrels – one left in the playing position and two stored in the base.

Fig. 2 shows the divided key frame also the tabor and drum and

triangle. The keyframe is made up in two sections of unequal length and each part can be controlled separately, but a link in the centre ensures that when the right-hand portion of the keyframe is raised the left-hand side follows.

The barrel organ is controlled by ten stops which are labelled as follows:- flageolet, tabor, drum, diapason, principal, twelfth, flute damper, triangle and organ.

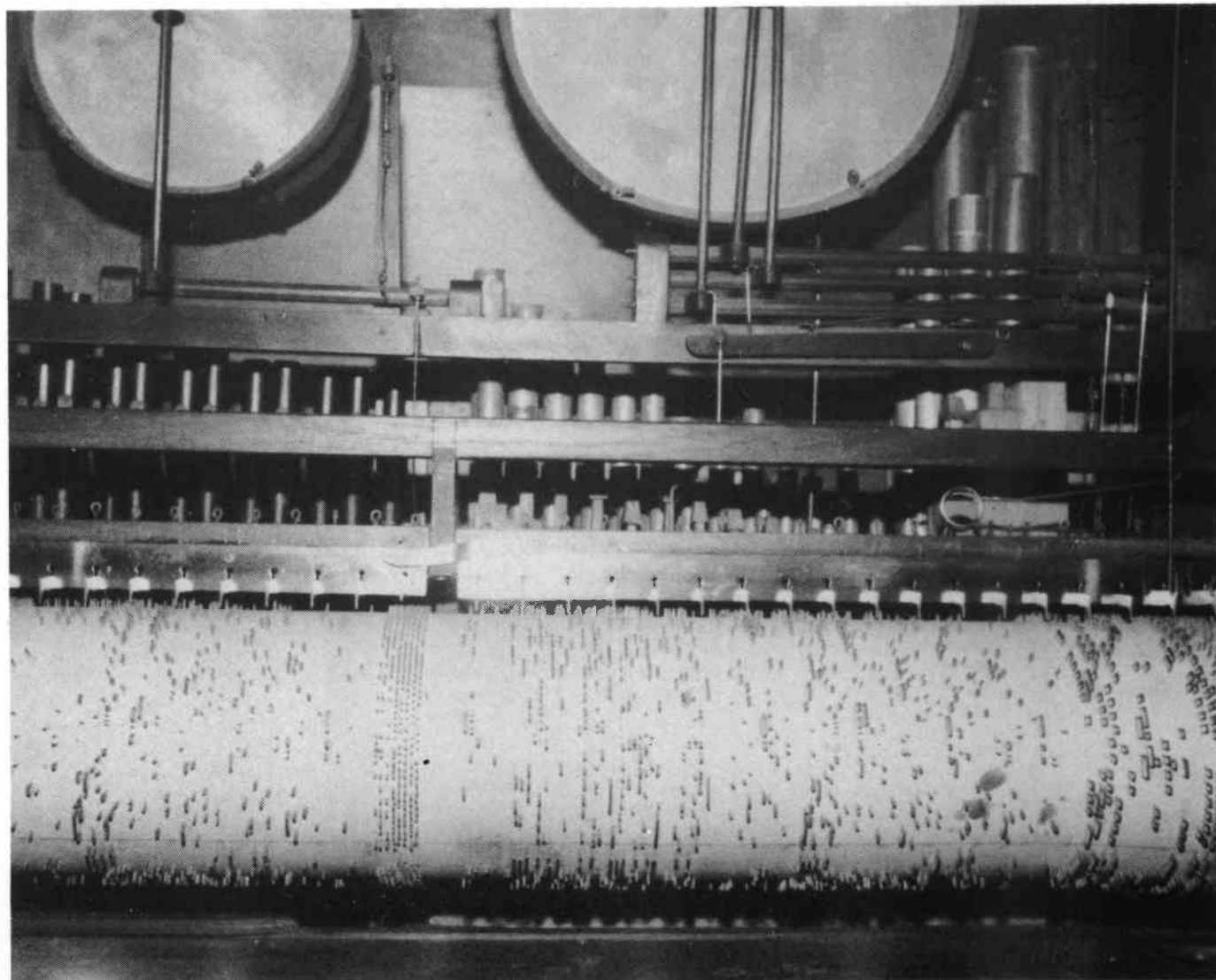
The smaller section of the key frame has twelve keys which operate the flageolet and tabor parts of the organ and the larger section of the keyframe has eighteen keys and operates the main organ, drum and triangle.

The pipework consists of:- one rank of twelve box-wood pipes for the flageolet, two ranks of sixteen wooden pipes for the diapason and flute and two ranks of sixteen metal pipes for the principal and twelfth.



Figure 1

Figure 2



THE FUTURE OF SELF PLAYERS

From R. Booty
MUSICAL OPINION &
MUSIC TRADE REVIEW
JULY 1st 1900

The number of self playing instruments now on the market and the number of those that are in course of construction and that will likely soon be placed on the market, impress the trade with the fact that these devices are destined to become a prominent feature of the music trade. It is astonishing to note the popularity that these self players have won; and yet, on the other hand, it is not astonishing. It is remarkable, however that they should have made such notable progress in so short a time. It is not a long time since the public was given the opportunity to see the first self player, and now everyone is apprised of their value in the musical home and their popularity as a means of giving refined and elevating amusement is fixed in the public mind.

The piano dealers now handle these self players as a necessary adjunct to their lines. They have found that the instrument has a ready market and that people who love music and cannot play find in these attachments a friend in need. There are so many uses for the self player that the public at large cannot appreciate the diversity in their use until experience has taught them. The business man can find in the device a source of restfulness after the onerous duties of the day. The members of the household are familiarized with the higher grades of musical forms, and their musical knowledge in consequence is enlarged. Then there is also comfort in the thought that at a moment's notice music can be furnished – and the very best class of music, and performed in a faultless manner – for a dancing party. Or a *musical* can be given for a number of cultured friends who love music. Therein is the value of the self player. It is always at hand for any impromptu musical affair that may be arranged. It will not take long to convince anybody that this is a very desirable feature in an instrument that is of a musical emergency character. A good deal of money must be offered if one expects to engage a first class musician to play at a private entertainment. And then there is the nervous wear and tear that one always has to undergo when dealing with musicians. The self player saves the expense, and the annoyance, too, and gives perfect satisfaction to everyone who likes to hear the music played in a finished manner.

The self player is just at the present time high in price – too high for the general public – and that will necessarily limit the market. But the time will come when improved methods and an increased demand and new ideas will materially lessen the cost of the production. Then the popularity of the self player will be more generally attested that it is to-day. There is no use denying the fact that all of these self playing inventions are beyond the reach of the general public in the matter of present price. The real demand for them will soon begin when they can be made and marketed at a reasonable figure.

If the self player could be marketed at a lower price, the demand for them would come at once. The reason is very plain. So many people want music, but they cannot get it without using some artificial device and there is the golden opportunity for the man who sells the self player.

The self player will also help to sell pianos to the people who have the means to gratify their tastes. The love for music will be the underlying cause. So long as money will gratify this musical longing in a permanent way, the money will be gladly expended. The future of these inventions is large and the dealers will before long be made to understand their proper importance.

– The Chicago Indicator ■

L'EPÉE

39 steps towards enlightenment

A. J. L. Wright

The ubiquitous L'Epée musical boxes have interested me for some time as they turn up in so many guises yet are instantly recognisable. All of them, to my mind, have a quality comparable with the more famous makers.

The comments by Mr. Bulleid in the Summer issue of 'The Music Box' (and previously) stirred me into listing all the L'Epée boxes I have come across, together with all those that have been mentioned in 'The Music Box' over the 20 or so years I have been a member. The total came to 39, each one a step towards the truth! Information on some is extremely sketchy but, hopefully, the present owners may feel inclined to fill in the gaps and members might even consider sending details of some boxes not listed.

In the tabulation I have assumed that they generally have the usual L'Epée identification features and are straightforward conventional movements unless stated otherwise. Variable features have been listed and, where appropriate, reference to the M.B. issue in which they were mentioned.

Even with this small sample a pattern emerges and tentative deductions can be made, also some intriguing anomalies become evident.

Deductions

1. Serial Nos. 8267 to 19754 contain all the boxes marked 'NICOLE A GENEVE' and all those of early construction, e.g. 3 controls under end-flap, etc., also the only two key-wound boxes on record. None have drum or bells. Those marked 'NICOLE A GENEVE' seen so far, generally have 3 controls under end-flap, front and back case screws, winding by brass lever, usually reversed under a full-length glass lid. Where known, the tune-cards have been long, narrow with no maker's name. It seems probable that these were manufactured in the period 1840 to about 1855 which would give an output of approximately 800 per annum.
2. Serial Nos. 20057 to 25661 give us very little information but seem to be of later type construction and include the first drum and bell boxes (see also under 'Anomalies'). Covering, perhaps,

the five years up to 1860 would give a production rate of about 1200 boxes per annum.

3. Serial Nos. 26000 to 32322 include all those with Samuel Woog marks, covering the period 1860 to 1865 and giving an output of some 1300 boxes per annum. This also seems to have been the era of the wooden knob on winding handles, although an occasional one does occur later on.
4. Serial Nos. 33390 to 37489 would probably cover the 5 years up to 1871 and would show a reduction in output to about 900 boxes per annum, but the data is very sparse.
5. Serial Nos. 38482 to 49109 contain all the boxes with the Adolph Woog mark and should cover the period 1871 to 1889. On this basis the annual production had dropped to about 650 boxes, but the period does include the time when the L'Epée factory was disrupted by war. Rather clumsy looking cast iron winding handles appear in this period, probably only on smaller movements.

Anomalies

1. Since L'Epée continued to make musical boxes up until 1914, one would expect a large number of Serial Nos. over 50,000, but in fact we have only two and no information at all. Serial Nos. 522 and 1216 are of a late drum and bells type which would fit much better into this later series although 522 being 'hidden' should come nearer the middle period. These are a bit of a mystery as is the F. Conchon tune card on 1216.
2. Serial No. 11443 is the only two-per-turn 'fat' cylinder box so far known. It is heavily built with 3 control levers mounted vertically on elegant brass pillars screwed to the right-hand end of the bedplate. A full-length glass lid covers these and a reversed brass winding handle. It has three fastening screws through the bottom in addition to four back and front case screws. An odd feature is that the tooth spacing is .110" on the upper 80 teeth and .112" on the lower 20.

This serial number is in the middle of the 'NICOLE A GENEVE' group at a period when Nicole Freres two-per-turn boxes of almost the same dimensions were very popular. If no other similar L'Epée box comes to light it is possible that this was a prototype with a view to supplying Nicole?

3. Some other boxes seem to be out of character with the period indicated by their serial numbers. 43388 has all the L'Epée features except that the bedplate is of ribbed cast iron painted silver and the whole movement is nickel-plated including a zither. It is in an ornate late-type case with brass carrying handles and has an original 'Zithare Tremolo' tune card in black and gold on buff exactly as No. 73 in Ord-Hume's 'Musical Box' attributed to Samuel Troll (about 1885). One would have expected a rather later serial number for this box. This applies even more to 33390 which is another late type box with drum and five bells in a fall-front case with brass carrying handles and a similar tune card to 43388. Serial No. 36350 is again nickel-plated with a zither and 'Mandoline' setting which is probably much the same as the 'Tremolo' of 43388.

Serial No.	Date	Features
8,000 - 20,000	1840 - 1855	Early type construction including key-wound. Also those marked 'NICOLE A GENEVE'.
20,000 - 26,000	1855 - 1860	Later type including first drum and bells.
26,000 - 33,000	1860 - 1865	Mostly marked S.W. often with wooden knobs on winding handles.
33,000 - 38,000	1865 - 1871	Similar but unmarked.
38,000 - 50,000	1871 - 1889	Many varied late type boxes mostly with A.W. marks. Some C.I. winding handles.
50,000 - 55,000(?)	1889 - 1914	

Carried away by enthusiasm, all this could be summarised into a simple dating table, always remembering that *it should be treated with great reserve* until more information is available.

So how about it, members? This is only a shadowy picture which could be developed into a positive guide to L'Epée boxes if

you would send details of as many boxes as possible to me via the Editor, so that I can attempt to sort it out and pass him back a new tabulation. Boxes with serial numbers below 8000 and above 50,000 seem particularly scarce and more details of them are essential. Also, where are all the Thibouville-Lamy boxes?

STATISTICS ON L'EPÉE MUSICAL BOXES

Serial No.	Cyl. ins.	Airs	Type	Winding Handle	Tune card	Glass lid	Remarks	Date	M.B. Ref.
522	13	8	Hidden D & B						V13 N2 P59
1216	12½	6	D & 6B	Br.	F. Conchon type			1880	V13 N2 P59
8267					lg. narrow no name		'NICOLE A GENEVE' in lozenge on bedplate		V10 N6 P284
10136	11½			KEY		long	'NICOLE A GENEVE' in lozenge on bedplate		V10 N5 P224
10349							'NICOLE A GENEVE'		
11443	11½ x 3¼	12	2/turn	Rev. Br.	lg. narrow	long	3 contr. levers on pillars. See note.		V10 N6 P284
12942							'NICOLE A GENEVE'		
14943	12	6		KEY					V13 N2 P60
16295							'NICOLE A GENEVE'		
17101							'NICOLE A GENEVE'		
17338	13	8		Rev. Br.		long	'NICOLE A GENEVE' on bedplate.		V10 N4 P186
19754	11½	8		Rev. Br.	lg. narrow	long	End flap and 3 controls		
20057	8	8		Rev. Br.	T-L		End flap & 3 controls. Repaired 1865.		V11 N4 P159
24056	11	6	D & 3B		lg. narrow no name		T-L catalogue 1901 (sketched)		V5 N6 P283
24111	21½	12	Hidden D & B						V13 N2 P59
25661	8	6							
26000				Rev. wood knob		long	S.W.	1860/5	
26085	15	8	D & 6B	wood knob			S.W. on bedplate. B & D combs screwed to main comb base.	1860/5	V10 N4 P186
26779	12	6	D & 3B						V13 N2 P59
26925	16¼	12					S.W. on bedplate	1860/5	V12 N7 P270
27984	8	6				long	S.W. on bedplate	1860/5	
30353	3¼	4		wood knob					
32322	11½	8					S.W.	1860/5	
33390	13	10	D & 5B	Br.	As S. Troll		Fall-front case. Br. handles.		
34711	6	4		wood knob					
36350	15½	12		Br.	T-L		Mandoline, Zither, Ni. plated. See note.		
37489	8		5B				Ornate case with Br. handles.		V11 N4 P159
38482	9¼		6B	Br.	T-L		T-L catalogue 1901 (sketched)	1871/89	
38487	9¼	6	7B		A.W.			1871/89	
40804	9¼	6	7B		A.W.			1870	V13 N2 P59
41897	12	8		wood knob			Birch case. W. S. Scotcher, Wrexham		
43388	15½	12		Ni. pl. br.	As S. Troll		Ridged C.I. bedplate. Ni. pl. movement.		
							Ornate case w. br. handles. See note.		
							'Zithare Tremolo'		
43645	6	4		Rev. C.I.					
44588	8	6		C.I.	lg. narrow no name		A. W. rubber-stamped on tune card	1871/89	
46802	15	8	Hidden D & B					1873	V13 N2 P59
48192	15	8	D & 6B		A.W.			1871/89	
49109		4			A.W.		Ornate case with br. handles	1871/89	
52642			6B						
53411	12								

Musical Box Oddments

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 37

Léo Delibes (1836-1891) came from a musical background and entered the Paris Conservatoire in 1847. He started composing one-act operettas in 1856, some playing at Offenbach's theatre, the Bouffes-Parisiens. Later as chorus master at the Théâtre-Lyrique he arranged the vocal scores of Gounod's *Faust* and of operas by Bizet and Berlioz. In 1864 he became chorus master at the Paris Opera (before the *Phantom*) and he collaborated with L. Minkus on a ballet for which he composed the waltz *Naila*. His first major success was the ballet *Coppelia*, and all the critics said that in melody, harmony and orchestration he had that graceful, light-handed touch welcomed by musicians and non-musicians alike.

His works to be heard on musical boxes include . . .

La Source, Naila	1866
Coppelia	1870
Sylvia	1876
Jean de Nivelles	1880
Lakmé	1883

By the late 1870s there was a tendency towards noisier tunes, and I have heard the slow waltz from *Sylvia* altered to end on noisy chords instead of its delicate fading away at the last note of an ascending scale. Perhaps this seemed a bit tame to an arranger who had just done the grand march from *Aida*.

Mermod Freres

The obvious attractions of disc machines in the early 1890s threw great emphasis on improving and if possible cheapening multi-cylinder facilities, and Mermod was one of the several Ste. Croix manufacturers involved. They had started scaling-up production of the larger types of musical boxes in 1883, and they had re-designed the classical format mainly to facilitate interchangeability but also with improved tune selection and indication, an effective speed-controlling governor, and silent winding by crank-handle.

These features all appear on Mermod serial 103162, a sublime harmonie movement with 11 in. cylinders playing six airs on two 39-tooth combs. The combs are set at 7° angle to the bedplate and the axis of the 2½ in. diameter cylinder is 5.7 mm below the tooth tips, giving an angle of 18° between the comb and a line from tooth tip to cylinder axis. This compares with the traditional 15° angle.

The gearing is also conventional, one revolution of the cylinder making 1344 revs. of the endless, which is rather less than in the early days simply because the fan brake is larger and can therefore run more slowly. The cylinder revolves at a surface speed of 0.12 in. per second at the ideal playing time of 60 seconds per tune.

The usual sublime harmonie conventions are retained, including tooth dimensions; teeth in the left hand "bass end" comb are slightly longer, wider and thicker than their opposite numbers in the other comb and, unexpectedly, they are all slightly stiffer in the ratio 1.2 to 1.

A fundamental alteration occurs in the tune track width, up from the traditional Swiss 0".017 to 0".022. This had become general practice with interchangeables made in Ste. Croix. It allowed tooth tips at least 0".016 wide so that a cylinder could be as much as two thousandths of an inch out of perfect alignment in either direction without loss of quality. But you got 25% less teeth which must have caused gloom among the tune arrangers.

Mermod advertised themselves on the parachute check and on a small plate enumerating four patents, 1885 - 1890. Also both combs and the tune selector carried their mark - a cross entwined with the letter S - known to some as "Ord-Hume 9," see page 126 of *The Music Box* Vol 13 No. 4. One of these patents was taken out in America by C. H. Jacot who was Mermod's agent in the U.S.A. Mermod boxes of the design here described were sold by Jacot in America under the trade name

Ideal Sublime Harmonie, see *The Music Box* Vol 7 pages 147 and 227. They also appeared in coin-operated "Fidelio" machines.

As fairly often seen on later Ste. Croix cases, a number stamped in figures 8mm high (here 9305) appears at the back of the top surface of the left side of the case.

Design of Mermod 103162

The large cast iron bedplate, 22 by 6 inches overall, is deeper than normal but relieved below to give less weight and improved rigidity. It is locally extended above the working face to provide two V-type felt-lubricated bearings for the spring arbor and the drive shaft, see Fig. 1. The spring arbor is integral with the winding disc and supports the in-line drive shaft which carries the great wheel, the ratchet gear for the parachute check, and the driving plate. The outer coil of the spring is attached to the great wheel. No stop-work is fitted, but winding is silent; a small housing in line with the winding disc has a tapered slot carrying a brass roller which lifts clear of the disc for winding then jams against it to prevent run-back. The serial number is stamped on this housing. The two shaft bearings have brass cover plates; grub screws permit their adjustment to provide a close running fit when the four securing screws are tightened.

Robust brass bearing slots bolted to the bedplate receive the extended cylinder arbor, the drive end automatically clamped down by a sprung toggle. This incidentally is only 2mm wide and suffers wear because the arbor is lifted against it during the second half of every tune; if this wear is not taken up the cylinder will float slightly during play. The whole cylinder assembly is pressed away from the drive end by a sprung plunger in the driving plate. This keeps the left end-cap in contact with the tune change cam.

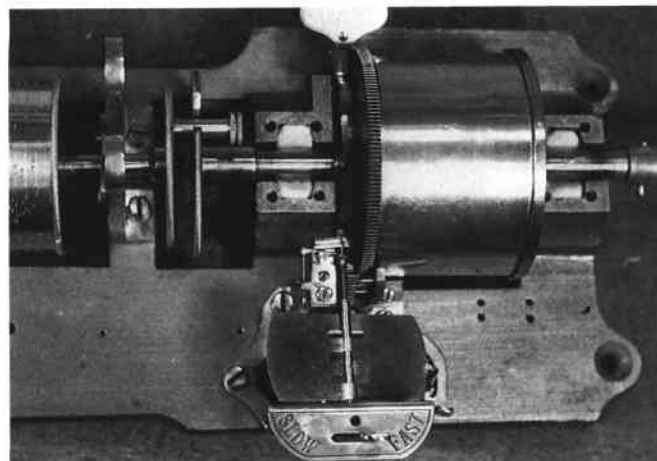


Fig 1: Drive assembly of Mermod 103162 with bearing cover plates removed to show the cast iron bearings with felt oil pads. From left to right, the handle attached to the disc on the cylinder arbor engages the slot in the driving plate. Then comes the robust bearing, the ratchet gear for safety check, the great wheel driving the governor, the spring cover, winding disc and second bearing.

Governor

The governor is re-designed as shown in Fig. 2. The jewel is replaced by a hardened steel insert mounted on a pivoted, spring-loaded lever. The spring thrust on this lever is reduced when the speed control lever is moved towards SLOW, which makes it easier for the thrust of the wormwheel to push the lever away from its normal position. When this happens a brass disc ahead of the worm contacts a steel finger which reduces its speed, thus giving effective speed control. The finger has its own adjustable compression spring.

The change to a 2-start worm is specially significant for coin-operated machines, because the more favourable helical angle greatly reduces the risk of a governor failing to start.

Altogether there are two setting adjustments and two spring adjustments on this governor. They are comparatively simple to make, helped by the fact that they can be done with the cylinder as well as the comb out of the way.

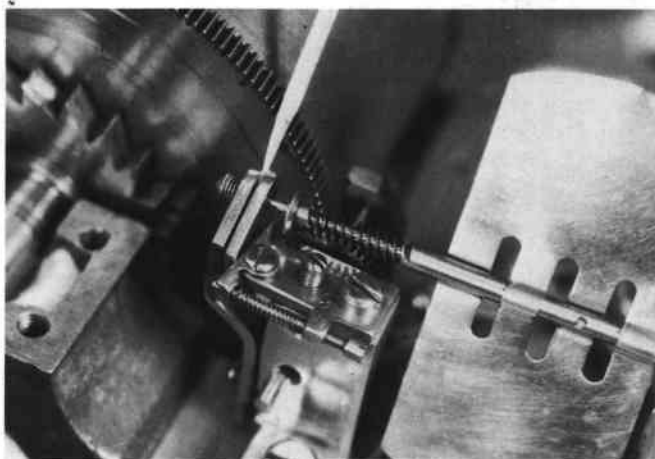


Fig. 2: The governor. From left to right, the grub screw with hardened face in pivoted spring-loaded lever; top plate bent to provide worm spindle bearing; brake disc; 2-start worm; one-piece fan secured with small pin. The top plate is secured by the screw at the right and adjusted for depth by the central grub screw. It also carries the sprung brake finger engaging the brake disc. I have inserted a wood sliver to show how the pivoted spring-loaded lever moves away for speed control.

Tune change

This is entirely re-designed, with one face of the flat tune-change cam always in contact with the left end cylinder cap. The new shape of this cam is like the snail on a chiming clock. Two modifications to the cylinder are also needed, a slot cut in the cam path on the end cap to turn the snail to its next face for automatic tune change, and a cam mounted on the surface of the cylinder to unlock the tune selector knob. These are shown in Figs. 3 and 4. I must say the device works perfectly well, but a sensitive engineer (or horologist) may shudder slightly when turning the snail knob to select another tune, and also when thinking about the snail rubbing remorselessly on the end cap pressed against it.

Lubrication

There are oiling holes at both ends of the endless, if you will forgive an Irishism, and also the usual oil sinks for the two intermediate governor gear spindles. The only other oil holes are two on each of the cover plates for the main drive bearings. An occasional touch of oil or grease in the cylinder arbor bearings and on the faces of the snail cam is also advisable.

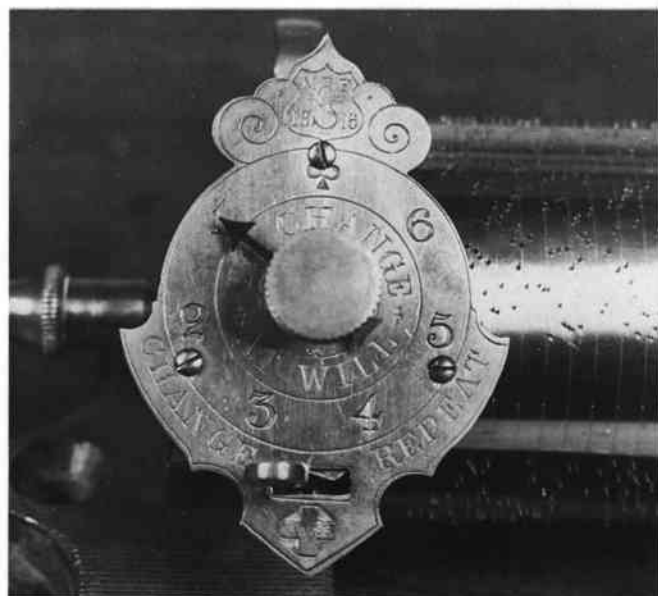


Fig. 3: Tune selection is by rotating the knurled knob at tune end with the lower lever at "change". The cam which can be seen through the slot clamps the snail cam for repeating a tune when the lever is moved to the right.

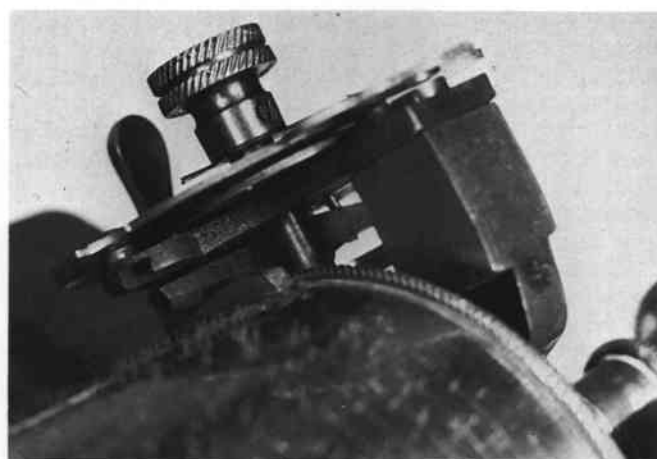


Fig. 4: The cam attached to the cylinder has lifted one end of a lever to withdraw the retaining pin visible at its other end, thereby freeing the snail cam to rotate during the tune gap period.

Zither

Most pictures of Mermod and other movements show the zither favouring the treble end, since it is never applied to the lower notes; but on serial 103162 its support bracket is specially made to suit the treble end screw of the bass comb, and the bracket is also relieved underneath to clear the lowest note on the treble comb. This places the zither as shown in Fig. 5, where it cannot reach all the treble notes. Even so it performs adequately, for those who like the effect, but I think it indicates yet again the very casual attitude of the makers towards these zithers.

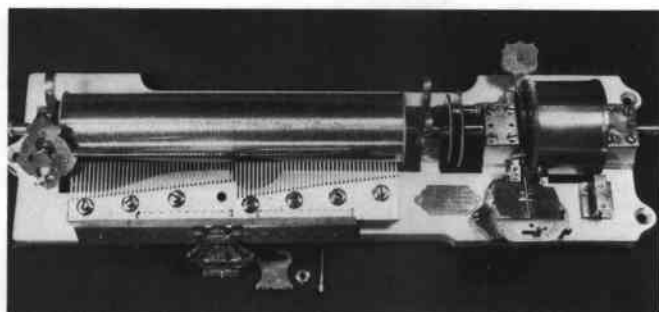


Fig. 5: Mermod 103162 interchangeable – the zither is here shown in line with its working position, with the two sections of tissue marked.

Performance

The musical performance of this Mermod is quite as good as any other 78-tooth sublime harmonie movement. So it should be, because its combs and cylinders and set-up are fully in accord with the best classical tradition. So why do people sometimes say that these later boxes are "cheapened"? I think the answer lies in the extra size involved. For example, Geo. Baker in Geneva was making 12-air sublime harmonie movements at the same period. They had 16 in. cylinders and two 38-tooth combs and cases the same size as this Mermod. You could not distinguish them for musical quality, and for twelve tunes the Mermod was at a disadvantage with its extra cylinder to carry around. After twelve tunes of course the Mermod had vast potential, but who ever hears of any such boxes with more than a modest handful of cylinders?

Grosclaude

An important but lesser-known maker of clocks and musical boxes in Geneva in the 1870s was L. A. Grosclaude. One of his advertised addresses was 10, quai de la Poste, which is on the south bank of the Rhone nearly opposite Billon et Isaac. He exhibited two musical clocks and three musical boxes in the 1878 Paris Exhibition – an orchestral, a harpe harmonique piccolo with tune selector, and a long-playing box (40 minutes) with tunes of different lengths. Grosclaude, Bremond and Langdorff won the three highest musical box awards.

Yet boxes by Grosclaude are so rare that one is driven to the assumption that a lot of his output must be among the multitude of "anonymous" boxes. So far the only clue to his manufacture seems to be L. A. GROSCLAUDE, GENEVE stamped on the governor side-plate. This for example identifies a box in the Murtoth Guinness collection illustrated on page 171 of the MBSI Silver Anniversary Collection. It has drum, castanet, four bells struck by two mandarins, a reed organ and a wood pipe organ, and a singing bird . . . but no tune sheet.

Luckily Grosclaude serial 40299 still has its tune sheet, reproduced in Fig. 6, and the same identification on its governor side plate. It is a nickel-plated movement of conventional layout, the 14 in. cylinder playing ten airs with drum and seven bells, shown in Fig. 7. Its quality is well up to the high standards always maintained in Geneva.

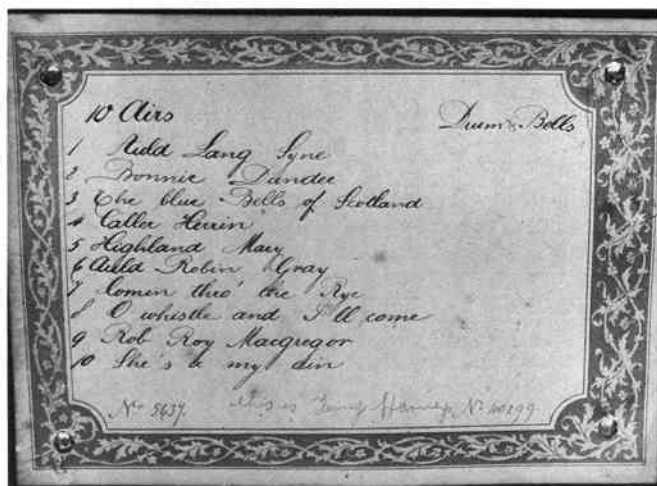


Fig 6: Tune sheet of Grosclaude 40299, written by someone who was certainly not going to risk running into the right hand margin. No. 5637 could be gamme no. but is more likely an agent's number as it is in a different hand. There is an endorsement by T. Harvey, claiming ownership.

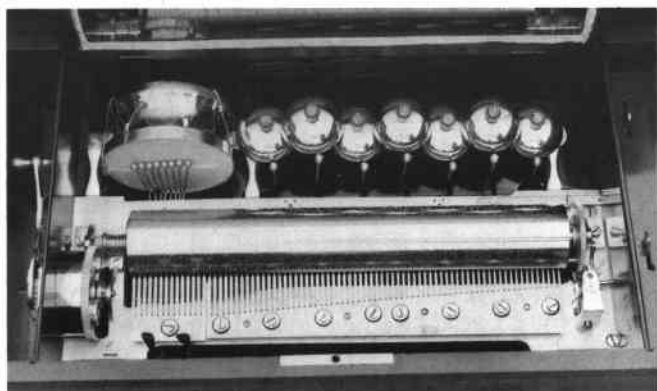


Fig 7: Conventional layout of 40299, with 66-tooth comb in two parts and separate comb with on/off levers having 8 drum teeth and 6 bell teeth for the 7 bells – a common device, but odd.

Most makers must have made comparatively few "super" boxes with bells, organs etc., among hundreds of more modest types. Possibly some makers were less concerned to stamp their names on their less exotic products, leaving a clear field for their agents. Now it so happens that Weill and Harburg of Holborn Circus were importers of musical boxes from Geneva, and they acted as British patent agents for L. A. Grosclaude in 1875. They also patented a (seldom seen) tune selector and indicator in 1869. These facts were detailed in *The Music Box* in Vol. 7 page 60 and Vol. 9 page 71.

Weill and Harburg were not makers, so it does seem very likely that at least some of the boxes bearing their tune sheets were made by Grosclaude – for example their serial no. 6210, with 8 1/4 in. cylinder playing 8 airs accompanied by drum and six bells and including two Chinamen bell strikers.



Fig 8: Agent's tune sheet on a 6-air Forte Piano movement probably dating from about 1855.

Agent Knobloch

The tune sheet in Fig. 8 is a good example of an agent obliterating any possible clue to the maker of a musical box. It was obviously copied, rather badly, from the original tune sheet or tune list and it carries the agent's name as the heading and his address along each side. Bremerhaven being a notable port about 30 miles from Bremen and about 50 from Hamburg, it is not altogether surprising that musical details of the tune sheet design are partly replaced by transport – a steam engine and a couple of ships. An accent has wrongly been added to Forte; the French adopted this Italian word for loud music and they pronounced it Italian style as we do, but they do not write it with an accent.

Member Angelo Rulli sent this tune sheet – and a lot of praise for the movement. Any further Knobloch information would be very welcome, particularly an example of this tune sheet on a box of known make.



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There was a time when larger instruments would fetch little money presumably because many collectors could not house them. But alas no more, bigger collectors with even bigger premises seem to be looking for that Piece de Resistance, something that will tower above and impress all those who are willing to gaze upwards at these towering instruments. After Nidd Halls Imhof & Mukle comes lot 83 from Christie's December sale, estimated at £500 - £1,000 an Aeolian Orchestrelle and sold to a North Country collector at £4,400. As with the Imhof, Christie's have omitted to name the model which appears to be a "Y", this instrument was formerly the property of the late Bruce Angrave having been restored by Arthur Ord-Hume. This was the largest 58 note Aeolian Orchestrelle built and a highly commercial future is planned for it, which will be reported in "Music Box" when coming to fruition. The highest bid for Christie's December Auction was £9,350 (including buyers premium) for a 24½ inch upright coin-in-slot Polyphon. At the other end of the scale a musical photograph album was sold for £38.50 and another also with a two air movement for £71.50.

A rather unusual item was lot No. 9, a "Colonial" mains receiver in a form of the globe, the valve chassis with speaker all enclosed within.

Christie's last Mechanical Music sale was on 10th March. A 24½ inch upright Polyphon made a similar price to that in a previous sale being £9,500. Two smaller Polyphons playing 19½ inch discs sold for £3,000 and £3,800 respectively. A fusee driven key wind musical box by Martinet made £1,400 whilst the walnut cased interchangeable box with bell accompaniment and zither attachment, featured on the inside front cover advert of the last edition of Music Box sold for £6,000 against an estimated price of £3,000 - £4,000. With this box came the original invoice from Henshaw and Loebell, 22 Swan Street, Manchester, dated December 13th, 1883.

Christie's next sale

The Mechanical Music Sale at Christie's, South Kensington, on June 9th promises a bonanza for the gramophone collector, with over 100 gramophones and phonographs. These range from a Gramophone & Typewriter Ltd 'New Melba' with mahogany horn down to a range of portables and even cabinet gramophones. There is an Edison Class M Electric, an Opera (without its horn) and many horn gramophones.

In the field of true mechanical music, there will be an Imhof & Mukle barrel orchestrion, cylinder musical boxes including forte-piano and sublime harmony, and disc models in various sizes and formats, including a 24½-inch Lochmann "Original" - full details are not known at the time of writing.



58 note Aeolian Orchestrelle, sold at Christie's for over £9,000.

Kruse, car and mechanical music auction held in Basel, Switzerland in April.

The Nuba Exhibition Centre in the Swiss sector of the town whose boundaries span three countries was the venue for Retonio Galleries latest sale which was held in conjunction with the American car auctioneers Kruse Inc. The auction date coincided with the Nostalgia exhibition also mounted by Retonio Galleries which consisted of an Edwardian fair, complete to every detail even with showman's engines and circus tent used as a restaurant during the two day auction. A major clock and jewellery exhibition was also taking place simultaneously. Brochures were mailed to around 120,000 people, mostly car collectors, although on the day of the sale there was a disappointing attendance with more than ¾ of the 400 seats provided, being empty. Graham Webb and Douglas Berryman were the only English mechanical music enthusiasts in

attendance and neither of them spotted any other known mechanical music collector. With a £40 admission charge to the auction, all but the most serious buyers would be put off from the start anyway, but this did offer reasonable value as included in the £40 was admission to the Nostalgia Edwardian Fair, a champagne reception, and meals during the two day event. The mechanical music items that were sold went mainly to two newcomers, one from America and the other from Japan. I am told that the auctioneers reserved the right to offer the lots in a random order which must have been highly confusing if not irritating. Out of the 800 lots, which included mechanical music, Art Deco, Clocks, Fair-ground Carvings, etc., only the cars sold well. Will this be a signal for Retonio Galleries to concentrate more on this in future auctions? ■

BOOK REVIEWS

Musée d'instruments de musique mécanique

Review by Ian Alderman.

Published by G.A.M.M. from
Musée, Impasse-Berthoud
75003, Paris.
Price: Europe 120 francs
(surface mail)
N.America 160 francs (air mail).

This book is concerned with the collection of Henri Triquet, now presented in its new (1983) gallery in Paris. Immediately the question is raised; is one man's collection, however splendid (and this is splendid indeed) suitable to be offered to the paying public and defined a museum? For surely a museum is a place with a purpose, that purpose being broadly educational, so that the interested visitor can compare and contrast the development of the objects displayed, whether they are dinosaurs or furniture – natural history or art. Or have we to become resigned to being treated as mere day-trippers, with no more idea of scholarship than a giddy butterfly, going from one gay blossom to the next, with never a thought as to what it all means?

A Collection, however, is an altogether more exotic thing. There is a purpose behind it, but nothing so resolute as instruction. Indeed the driving urge which causes the collector to covet this object, reject that, to pay a King's ransom for something that another would instruct the dustman to remove; to not look twice at a thing desired by his neighbour – that urge wells up from the recesses of the subconscious and it may be all but impossible for an outsider to penetrate the connecting link between objects in a collection.

The book under discussion presents the Triquet collection as a tour from room to room, after a cursory introduction explaining the transformation of the museum premises from the grim cul-de-sac parking space to pretty paved courtyard, colour-washed and foliage-bedecked buildings. There is the briefest historical introduction, featuring the famous picture with which Engrameille began his 'La Tontechnie' (Paris 1775). This illustration is of great interest to makers and collectors, since it contrives to show a workshop where the two craftsmen are each marking barrels employing the methods in common use: the "clock face", described by Dom Bedos (and later explained by Ord Hume) and the "marking strip", possibly used by D. N. Winkel in his wonderfully elaborate and accurate barrels, and certainly employed today by those who mark out book music for fair organs (see de Waardt and Cockayne). A most intriguing illustra-

tion here is a harpsichord with what we have learned to call a "dumb organist" offered up to it. While this idea of mechanically playing ordinary instruments is familiar to us from the nineteenth century onwards, to the Pianola "push-up", I have never seen anything from the eighteenth century – I wonder if any of our members have? Perhaps such barrels might have been marked from Merlin's invention, as one can guess from the device in the harpsichord combined with forte-piano that survives in the Deutsches Museum, Munich.

There appears, alas, to be nothing from the eighteenth century displayed here, and the collection does include large numbers of gramophones (including one H.M.V. portable – now is the time to get yours down from the attic), but it would be churlish to take a stern view of their inclusion as some might be inclined to do, since it offers such frivolous delights as a gramophone en forme de fleur (rose pink), or, even better, one in the guise of a pagoda.

The first room in the building appears furnished as one might wish one's own drawing-room to appear, where money is object, and one's own family equally enthusiastic. There is a handsome horn gramophone and on the wall a Black Forest Trumpeter clock with exuberant and frothing carving. Round the walls are lined pianos, both barrel and M. DeBains invention (very pretty). A most interesting exhibit is the Aristoflute – a sort of Ariston with pipes, the casework removed, revealing those pipes and the bellows.

So from room to room you go, viewing animated pictures, from the usual farmyard scene (with an anatomically incorrect cow), to a study of the cats' disorderly tea-party, in a mouse-ridden kitchen (one mouse too bold).

There are piano orchestrions, street organs, and one orgue de salon. As is regrettably common in exhibitions and books, nowhere is the music discussed, which especially in the case of that organ I would have wished. Music after all is the point of these delightful inventions, and from that music sprang the astonishing mechanical complexities which so intrigue the collector now. It is a case of not seeing the wood for the trees.

The exhibition offers musical boxes, both cylinder and disc, and all is illustrated, often in colour. As I am supposed to tell you what to expect, then you think of a catalogue prepared by one of the better Auction houses, shining and well-presented; this is what the book resembles. It all looks good, but you can't see quite enough. How precisely does the Frati change mechanism work? The fronts are certainly photogenic

– but what are the details of the decorations?

But, curate's egg-like, the exhibition does have at least one great virtue. If it doesn't go back earlier than the nineteenth century, it resolutely presents stuff from this century, making a particular point of showing modern instruments, those which are being manufactured today. French instruments, of course.

Perhaps here is something that English exhibitors could emulate. There are now a number of professional mechanical instrument builders in this country; there are the reasonably priced McCarthy's, the workmanlike Deans and the splendid Pells – I mention only makers of smaller organs – and there are certainly others. These should be as proudly displayed in public collections as this French exhibition shows off its countries productions.

This piece is supposed to be reviewing a book, but inevitably one ends up by reviewing the collection in catalogues. It is little more than a catalogue, lavishly illustrated, and with a token nod at historical scholarship.

You may feel that it is highly priced at nearly £11, but it is a pleasantly chunky thing to have (if you can read French).

The compilers have a narrow view of English instrument building, seeming only to recognise church barrel organs, remaining resolutely silent on those magnificent eighteenth century creations of Alexander Cumming, Charles Clay, Cox, Weekes, Henry Jenkins and many others including, of course, Chiappa et al in the twentieth century. But perhaps they are as ignorant of those machines as I am of French instruments other than the unambitious productions of Mirecoult.

I am of course being contentious, and it is my purpose to set le chat among les serinettes when I tell you that my research has revealed the principle which lay behind the assembly of this collection. It is more than to celebrate all things French; it specifically excludes anything English. ■

'Musical Boxes and Other Marvels – A Decade of Enjoyment'

Review by Graham Webb

An anthology of articles appearing in the Technical Bulletin of The Musical Box Society International 1975-1985, Editor Angelo Rulli, published by The Musical Box Society International, U.S.A., 1987

The idea of an anthology is a good one, bringing all the most important articles together under one cover, making them easily available for reference. The source, however, makes, inevitably, a curate's egg of a book, its value to the individual

depending on their particular interests. The treatment of a subject in any depth relies on whether one or more Members of the Society, with knowledge and the ability to impart it, had an article or articles published during the period covered.

'Automata', the opening section of the book, consists of four short articles. Though what is there is worth reading, bearing the names of Ralph Heintz; Stephen Ryder; Murtoth Guinness and Frank Metzger, it is so small as to illustrate the above remarks exactly. It is seven pages long.

Appropriately, the sections on musical boxes take up almost half of the book. Equally appropriate is the opening of the section on cylinder musical boxes with a piece, 'The "Fabrique" and Musical Box Industry in Geneva in 1867', by masterly researcher into mechanical music Dr. Pierre Germain. The article is a gem, and is followed by one on B. A. Bremond by the good doctor and his daughter Suzanne Maurer, which gives equal pleasure.

Among the offerings in this section is 'Paillard's "Gloria"' by Mark and Nancy Fratti; a good piece on forte-piano boxes by our own H.A.V. Bulleid; an esoteric article 'Tuning, Tempering and Musical Boxes'; a well thought out piece on pin accuracy by David Wells, and articles by Olin Tillotson and George Worswick.

For this reviewer the jewel of the section 'Miniatures' is an absorbing piece by Dr. Frank Metzger titled 'A Repairer's Pleasures, or Why Do Repairers Repair'. The article, with twenty photographic illustrations, shows a real eye for the sometimes minute differences between one movement and another. David Tallis appears in this section, as does Marguerite Fabel on Necessaires.

A well researched article on the Kalliope by Hendrik Strengers opens the section on disc musical boxes. Also present are 'Disc Collecting', a piece on the rare 'Euterpephon', and 'Musical Box Lid Pictures', all by disc expert Coulson Conn, and two articles on the 'New Century' by Al Choffnes.

The 'Orchestrion' section contains three offerings. The first article is devoted to Bernhard Dufner and his instruments. The Duffner (Dufner) family is well known as makers of musical clocks and organs. They were mainly situated in the Furtwangen area. Bernhard went to the U.S.A. in 1867, where eventually he built orchestrions. Bill Edgerton, the author, goes on to describe such an instrument, with photographic illustrations.

The second piece is an excellent description of a Popper & Co. 'Felix' orchestrion by Rick Crandall, and final article, by J. Ronald Bopp, is about those interesting 20th century phenomena 'Fotoplayers'.

Apart from the excellent, if short, 'A Gavioli History' by Robert G. Miller, the section titled 'Large Organs' is disappointing. Considering the interest in these 'gentle giants' it is surprising to find so little on them, even in this context.

'Small Organs' is also disappointing. More properly it would be called 'Organettes', since it deals with these instruments or their music except for a reprint article on music publishing accompanied by a series of contemporary photographs of the manufacture of street barrel organs, and one on the new small organs of Joseph Raffin. Having said this, the pieces on

organettes are very informative, particularly those dealing with the cutting of music strips, and scales.

'Pianos' is a heading which is graced with four articles bearing some of the best known names in the book. First Q. David Bowers writes 'Robert Hope-Jones Investigates Violin Pianos' (pianos with violin pipes added). Close on his heels comes Harvey N. Roehl with 'The Steinway Company and Mechanical Pianos', this is a neat short study. Then we have A.W.J.G. Ord-Hume's 'Note Accenting on Player Pianos', and finally musicologist James Spriggs with 'The Piano Man - Conlon Mancarrow', about the extraordinary, still living composer who writes almost solely for the piano player.

The section 'Strings' contains two pieces only. Fortunately both are excellent. Perhaps my favourite of the whole collection is the twenty-eight page resume of a series of interviews by David Barr with Bert Mills, sometime innovator with Mills Novelty Co. of Chicago, makers of the famous 'Violano Virtuoso' among other marvels. The other piece is a nicely concise description of the 'Orpheus', Erlich's mechanical zither which uses the 'Ariston' 24-note card disc, by Joseph H. Schmacher.

Under the title 'Other Art-History-Reference' there are some fifty-two pages devoted to various aspects of mechanical music that do not fit within the other sections. A.W.J.G. Ord-Hume gives us 'Countries Known to Have Been Associated With Mechanical Music', Frederick Fried writes most usefully 'A Researcher's Guide to Mechanical Music', listing a large number of publications to do with the subject. There is an excellent and learned piece on Mozart's clockwork pieces by Hans Haselbock, Hendrik Strengers gives us 'Mechanical Music in Dutch Illustrations', Frederick Fried writes on sound effects for silent films. A good article is 'The Great Snuff-Box Mystery' by Ralph Heintz, who delves into music, written under various titles, inspired by the sound of musical snuff-boxes.

A section on 'Photographs' contains a fine piece written by Rick Crandall. It is an account of John Gabel, designer of the first disc-playing jukebox. Even those not interested in early gramophones will find it fascinating. The other offering here is one by Patty Marchal on Edison phonograph dolls with several interesting contemporary prints.

The book ends with a glossary, some of it suspect, especially from a non-American point of view, together with a list of publications of the Society and related books.

For non-members of the International Society this book is a must, if only to take a fresh view of our hobby and gain some of the knowledge available in the United States. The reviewer has taken more space than usual to allow a reasonable picture to be formed of the book.

The book is recommended because it contains some pieces of fine quality and worth, and a considerable amount of excellent information. In Ancient Greek an anthology is 'a collection of flowers of literature, beautiful passages from authors'. Not all the contents are flowers, but then, where is the perfect garden? Beauty, as is well known, is in the eye of the beholder. ■

Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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Attractive collecting

Mr. L. Goldhoorn writes from Utrecht, Netherlands regarding our "Oddments" Column.

Dear Mr. Bulleid,

For all the information you give to us, the collectors, we are very grateful. As I know that all this information comes from a lot of sources, we collectors have the duty to look after these sources, lest they should dry up.

Maybe the following data can be of help to this process. On p. 16, 17 of your book an ideal playing time for a cartel box is about .1 inch per second. I fully agree but have to tell you that my F. Nicole overture box, diameter of the cylinder 6.3cm, has a revolution time of about 125 seconds, thus 0.06 inch per second. This playing speed, and also lower speeds, is achieved by all snuff-boxes of the pre-1860 period. The lowest speed I have measured was ca .035 inch per second. The highest speed I recorded on a pre-1900 miniature musical box was about .08. After 1900 it reaches .14.

A second question was the patent number 6059 on the Vidoudez box. It was granted to Paul Junod, rue de la conversion, Sainte Croix on 15 March 1893. The patent was for a very short time: in 1894 the patent was withdrawn. The subject was "Pièce à musique à cylindre interchangeable". I am not in possession of the text of the patent.

It is not clear at what time the Cuendet-family started manufacturing musical boxes. I can't help you with the patent-listing: the first patent in the name of a member of the Cuendet-family was dated 18th February 1891: "Nouvel étouffoirs indépendant et indérangeable pour instruments à musique à lames d'acier". It was granted to Cuendet-Develay fils & Cie, Ste. Croix.

You are not certain which Jaccard made blanks in 1890, but I would like to guess: Patent 4446, dated 29th January 1892 "Pièce à musique à cylindre de recharge perfectionnée" was in the name of George Rochat "contre-maitre (foreman) de la fabrique de blancs de Justin Jaccard, Ste. Croix".

(A George Rochat lived in 1896 as a "mécanicien" at Rue du Petit Montreux, à Ste. Croix).

There was another patent, no. 5326, dated 23 June 1892, called: "Nouveau genre d'ébauches pour petits pièces à musique" in the name of S. Jaccard & Cie, fondateurs et fabricants d'ébauches, Culliairy près s Ste. Croix. The inventor was Alph. Décrevel-Clerc.

So maybe Justin, maybe Samuel was the name of the blank-maker. Of course there were a lot of other members of the Jaccard-family. A number of them took out patents, but these are the two who called themselves manufacturers of blanks.

As the Swiss patents only started in 1888 it is very difficult to get useful

information from the patent listing. Besides, the musical-box makers only hesitatingly found their way to the patent-office. So the oldest patent on musical boxes was dated 20 December 1888 in the name of Paul Ehrlich. He got number 402. There was an older number, no. 392 in the name of the unknown François Willemin, but it was dated 1 February 1889. It concerns "Perfectionnements apportés à la construction des pièces à musique".

Please continue with your Oddments, it makes collecting a lot more attractive. ■

New Logo

Keith Harding writes from Gloucestershire

It is not without a certain amount of sadness that The Keith Harding World of Mechanical Music have decided to change their well known Logo for something new and exciting. The new cartoon is to come from the pen of up and coming cartoonist Christopher Fothergill, who is fast gaining a name for his cartoons based on North-leach and the Wool Trade of old. Many will know him and wife Gillian through their piano restoration business, but until now few knew of this hidden talent. His delightfully detailed work can be seen at the Gillian Fothergill Gallery in Northleach. ■

Help needed

P. G. Jarvis writes from Surrey:-

As a member who has very little knowledge of mechanical music and only joined after, almost by accident, acquiring a disc playing box, I now find the journal very interesting indeed to read, so thank you for all your efforts on our behalf.

The main purpose for writing was brought about by seeing your picture with an organ where you were collecting for charity in Warwick. As a member of the Rotary Club of Kingston I have for some time fathered a strong desire to have such a machine which we could use for street collections, particularly at Christmas. I have no idea where one would go to find such a thing, what sort of price we would have to consider, or how such an item could be serviced after purchase by somebody who would be quite unable to carry out the simplest repairs.

Perhaps one main thing to consider, is the type of music you wish to play. If you intend to use an organ especially at Christmas then obviously carols are quite desirable. The barrel organ has a very limited repertoire. By buying a new organ, paper roll operated, you will then be able to acquire your own choice of music. Peter Watts, of 14 Rock Hill, Chipping Norton would be a good contact for music rolls to fit the Raffin, Hofbauer and similar types of organ. However, there are a large selection of new or recently built organs on the market and several of the advertisers in Music Box specialise in making and supplying them, Alan Pell and Fr. Oehrlein both being leading makers. Your other option is to advertise your want in the classified section. Ed ■

Clarification

Writers name withheld at discretion of the Editor.

I hesitate to write this, as going by other peoples published arguments these things can run and run, however the letter titled "Design Faults?" from Mr. Rigg needs some clarification, as I am the restorer referred to. Last year I undertook the repair of the B.B.P. and Cie with an extensive rebuild following a run, the work involved lowering the bass teeth which had been bent upward by the run. The comb in general had a slight distortion caused either by the run or by internal stresses within the metal, relieving itself over the years. This can result in teeth moving up, down, or sideways. This kind of distortion is not always apparent to a visual examination. The final comb work was quite intricate, as apart from about ten teeth in the bass visibly bent up, the teeth in the bass and middle sections had been bent upwards very slightly giving a slight bow to the combtips and causing the middle section to play very softly. This was corrected by lowering individual teeth to bring them into line and then lowering by approximately .002 inches the leading edge of the middle section of the comb bass. The end result was the tips in line, the lift of individual teeth set and corrected and the box playing well. However, there was a discord as Mr. Rigg refers which occurs only once in the whole repertoire. The tune in question, was one that I was unfamiliar with and which had what I have heard referred to as a broken chord, approximately half way through the tune. What in effect it meant was that at one point the chord was played with two teeth playing a half tone out at the top of the chord. I have heard this done for deliberate effect, especially in operatic arias, and it can also be caused by a pinning mistake or the teeth in question being out of tune. In this case, as the teeth in question played correctly at other times they could not be out of tune. The cylinder holes have no clear deletionmarks (small lines drawn across or below a wrongly pricked or drilled hole) at this point, so although this does not rule out a mistake in the original setting out of the tune, it makes it less likely. Occasionally, wrong notes are pinned in addition to those required and these can be identified by ear and the wrong pins removed, however, in this case what appears to have happened is that two notes in a chord have been misplaced up by ½ tone, e.g. a chord requiring C and F mistakenly pinned with C# and F#. As I explained to Mr. Rigg, while in theory it would be possible to break out the wrong pins and drill holes in the cylinder for the correct pins, he had paid me to restore his musical box, not re-design it. I have learnt that Mr. Rigg is taking a second opinion, to which I have no objection, however, I feel even the "lesser experienced" restorers would support my explanation and maybe persuade him that an original mistake of this type should be left, as any radical correction such as rearranging would destroy the originality of the music box. ■

Organ Grinders Wanted

Two letters have been received by organisations requesting grinders with large or small instruments and members are invited to contact and negotiate with the organisations direct.

It would be worth mentioning at this point, the feelings of the committee regarding organ grinding fees at official MBSGB functions.

It is quite normal and reasonable for participants of an organ grinding event to charge an attendance fee. This has not been the practice in the past at the Society's yearly organ grind, neither has it been the desire of members to levy any charge against the organisations they are supporting. Maybe we have been a little too benevolent in the past and at future organ grinds the Society will be expecting the benefitting organisation to make a donation to the Society's funds (badly needed) of 25% of the figure collected.

It would therefore seem logical and beneficial if the same guidelines were applied, when members not wishing to make a personal charge, grind and collect for other organisations such as below. Obviously this is only a suggestion and individual members are welcome to negotiate in any other way they feel appropriate.

Request 1.

**Coombe Abbey Country Park,
Brinklow Road,
Binley, Nr. Coventry
Park Ranger - Murray Hayden
Tel: 0203 453720**

The Freemans Guild of Coventry are holding an event in the above Country Park planned for 3rd July 1988. We consider that one large or several smaller street organs would be attractive on this occasion and would like to enquire whether any of your members would be free on that day and what sort of fee would be charged.

Request 2.

**The Guide Dogs for the Blind
Association,
Honourous Secretary -
Mr. K. Allen,
97 Mallory Road,
Bishops Tachbrook,
Leamington Spa,
Tel: 0926 28944**

You will recall that in 1986 you supported the Association's Flag Day in Leamington Spa with the presence of your members of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain.

I am writing to advise you that should you be kind enough to consider arranging similar support for us this year, Warwick District Council have allocated Saturday 23rd July as our Flag Day for 1988.

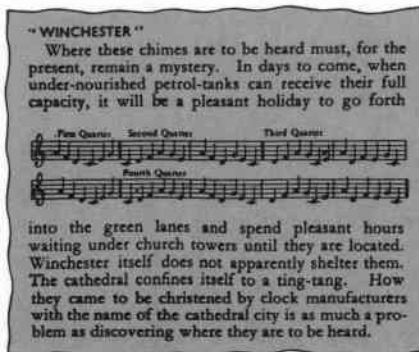
As no doubt you are aware, Leamington now has a shopping precinct known as Royal Priors, and we have been given permission to have collectors and a static display within the precinct.

I look forward to hearing from you, and hope that the Musical Box Society will again be able to give us its very valuable support.

Chimes and Carillons

**L. Richard Lankes writes from
Salinas, U.S.A.:-**

As part of my review of literature pertinent to the study of preserving music, I have made note of the distinction between carillons and clocktowers with chimes given to identifying the quarter hours. Naturally I was pleased to find part of Vol 11 Nos. 4 and 6 of *The Music Box* devoted to the subject of chimes and carillons.



From 'The Music Box', Vol. 11, No. 6

My reason for this writing is simply one of forwarding an item which was found in my "random access file" and which by mere chance may offer something of use to Mr. J. G. Fox of Exeter. In his brief discussion of Winchester chimes, their association with the cathedral was somewhat of a mystery. Of course, at this late date he may already have found the answer to his question. If not, the enclosed copy, which was left on my desk while I was doing consulting work with NASA at the Manned Spacecraft Center, may offer a useful lead. It is unfortunate that the donor did not reveal the source of the information.

Winchester Chimes

These lovely chimes were named for the Winchester Cathedral in which they first played. Winchester is an English city, the capital of Hampshire, and 60 miles south-west of London. At one time, Winchester was the capital of England. In 1645, it was taken by Cromwell, and the castle dismantled, and the cathedral pillaged and vandalised. Today, Winchester is the home of the great College of St. Mary.

St. Michael Chimes

A true story of adventure surrounds St. Michael's Chimes. The bells, cast in London, were installed in the St. Michael Church steeple in Charleston, S.C. in 1764. During the Revolutionary War, the British took the bells back to England. After the war, a Charleston merchant bought them and sent them back to America. In 1823, when cracks were discovered in them, they were sent back to London to be recast.

In 1862, during the Charleston seige, they were moved to Columbia, S.C. for safe-keeping, but Sherman's army set fire to the area, and nothing but fragments of the bells remained. These were sent back to London once more, where the original molds still stood, and again, recast. In February 1867, the eight bells were reinstated in the St. Michael steeple, and on March 21st they rang out joyously, seeming to say: "Home again, home again, from a foreign land!" There was great rejoicing by the entire city as the bells rang out. Since then, they have endured a cyclone, earthquake and fire unharmed.

Note: source unidentified.

Winchester Chimes



St. Michael Chimes



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.

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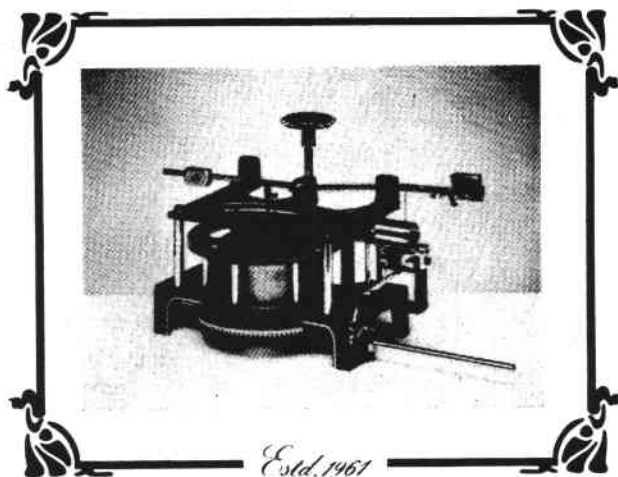
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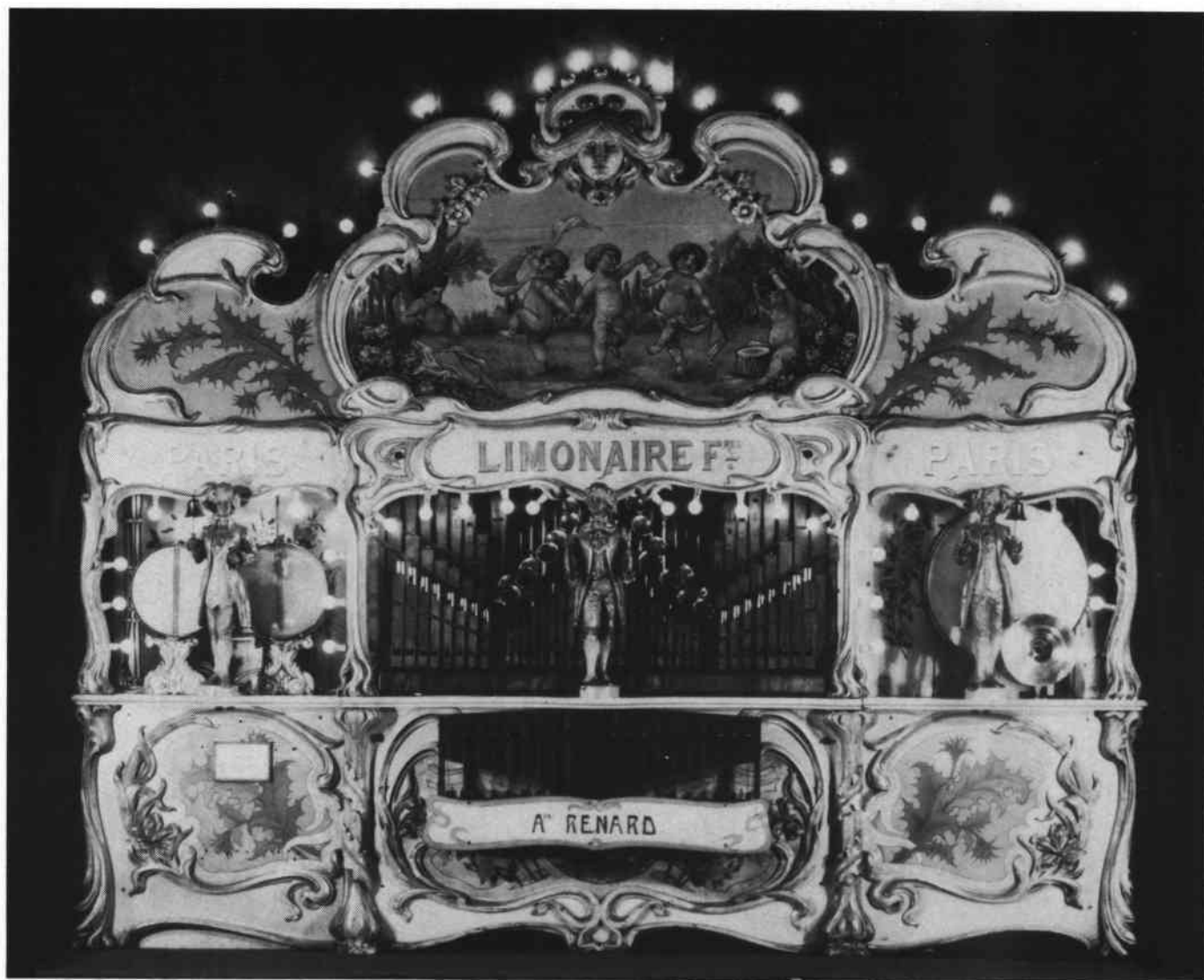
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