

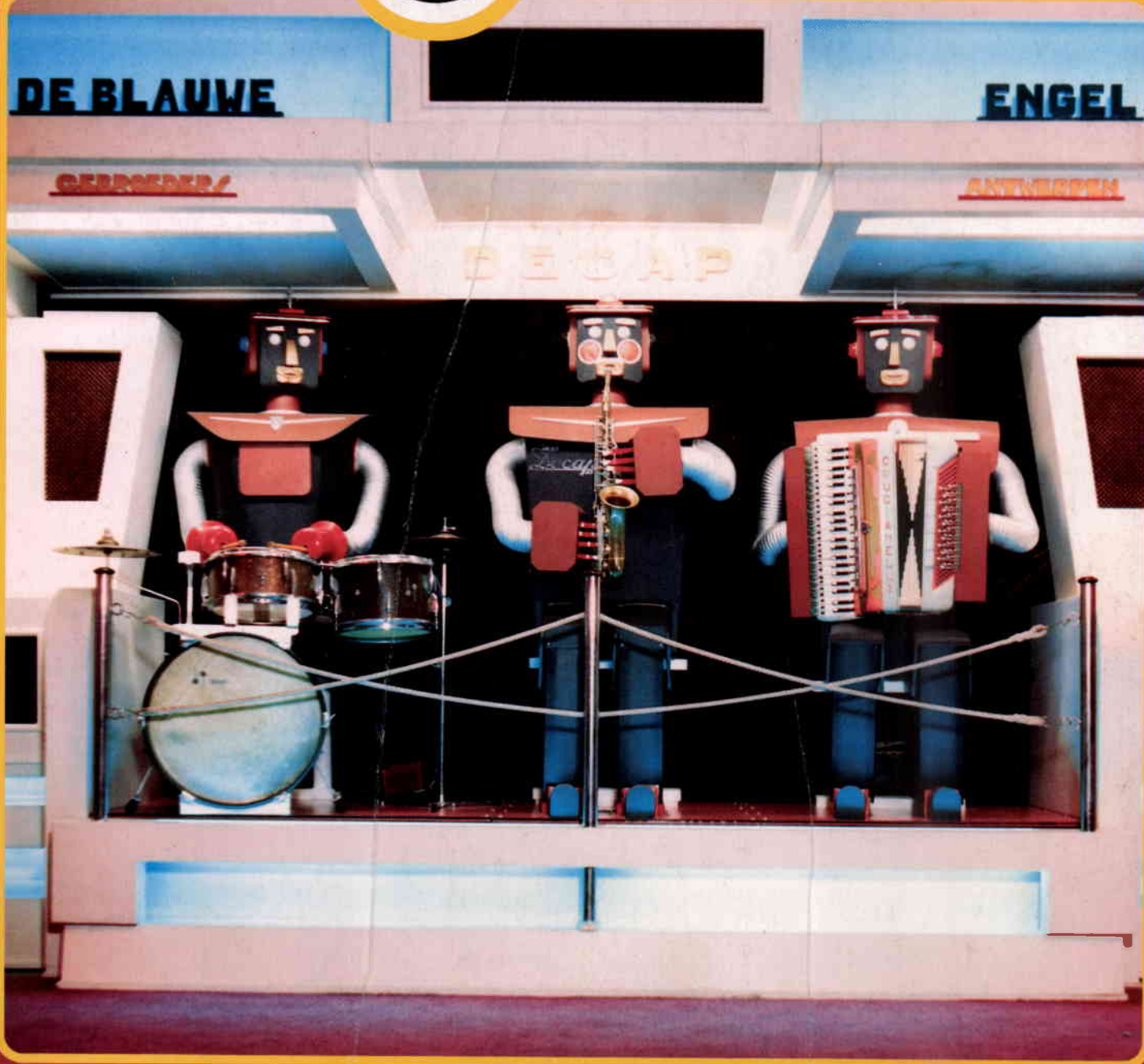
# The Music Box

An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 15 Number 5

Spring 1992

Edited by Graham Whitehead



**Inside**    **The Flute Player**  
**3-Disc Imperial Symphonion**

**The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain**

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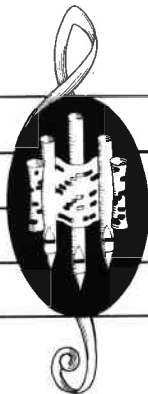
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# The Music Box

An International Magazine  
of Mechanical Music

The Journal of the  
Musical Box Society  
of Great Britain.

Volume 15  
Number 5  
Spring 1992

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### Front Cover:

The Blue Angel robot organ, made in 1957 by the Decap firm of Antwerp and used for dancing in the Blue Angel cafe in Zindhoven until its closure in 1987. Now at Ashorne Hall Nickelodeon.

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## SOCIETY TOPICS

### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

**Spring Meeting,  
10th - 12th April, 1992.  
Park Hotel, Park Place,  
Cardiff CF1 3UD  
Tel: 0222 383471**

Message from the local organiser:  
This is a luxury four star City  
Centre Hotel, and very special  
rates have been obtained as  
follows:

**Package A:** Friday and  
Saturday nights, bed and  
breakfast, plus Society Dinner  
on Saturday evening. £75 per  
person, based on two people  
sharing a room.

**Package B:** Saturday night  
bed and breakfast, plus Society  
Dinner on Saturday evening. £45  
per person, based on two people  
sharing a room.

**Package C:** Society Dinner  
only, Saturday night £15 per  
person.

Please advise in advance if you  
require a vegetarian meal.

Programme: Saturday morn-  
ing - Chicago Challenge - The  
Seeburg Eagle. Talk and  
presentation by David Snelling.

Musical Boxes? - by David  
Shankland.

Look and Listen - Members  
are invited to bring along  
something from their collections  
for us to enjoy.

Saturday afternoon will be free  
for sight-seeing etc., leading to a  
visit to Cardiff Castle.

Saturday evening: Society  
Dinner at the Park Hotel.

Sunday morning: At time of  
going to press, details of Sunday  
morning's programme, to include  
one or two speakers, are still being  
finalised.

There will follow a visit to the  
Welsh Folk Museum, and a visit  
to a private collection. Snacks  
are available at the Folk Museum  
or bar snacks and luncheons are  
served at the Plymouth Arms,  
across the road in the village.

Cardiff is only just over two  
hours drive from London, or half  
an hour from the Severn Bridge.  
The Hotel is situated in the centre  
of the City within easy walking  
distance of the shops, arcades,  
museums, Civic Centre, etc. For  
a special occasion, My Fair Lady  
with Edward Fox is on the stage  
at the New Theatre, just across  
the road from the Park, and a  
visit to the Concert Hall is no  
distance away.

It is hoped that some of you  
will be able to bring something  
from your collection to share with  
all of us. Although the Society  
will bear no responsibility for any  
loss or damage, the Park Hotel is  
able to offer a private room in  
which items can be locked.

It is understood that a Ladies  
Craft Table will be available. For  
more information, please contact  
the Meetings Secretary.

We shall give you a warm  
welcome in Cardiff and if you  
require any further help or  
information, please ask.

Local Organiser: David  
Shankland. Tel: 0222 563605. ■

### REPORT ON PAST MEETINGS

**by Reg Mayes  
Autumn/Fall International  
Meeting,  
Leamington Spa/Warwick  
4th - 6th October 1991.**

The main events for this meeting  
were based at Ashorne Hall close  
to Junction 13 of the newly opened  
M40 just south of Warwick. This is  
the new home of our Editor Graham  
Whitehead's spectacular mechan-  
ical music collection. Accommo-  
dation for the two nights was at the  
nearby Garden Court Holiday Inn.

We were privileged to have join  
us 14 members from America led  
by Bob Yates who had certainly  
done a great deal of work in organ-  
ising a trip from the States to  
coincide with this meeting and to  
visit other collections in England  
whilst over here.

On the Friday morning we set  
off by coach to visit Mary Arden's  
house (Shakespeare's mother), and  
its adjoining countryside museum.  
There, while some enjoyed watch-  
ing a falconry demonstration  
others took the conducted tour  
around the house where our guide

amazed us with tales of squallor in  
which our ancestors must have  
lived during the days when floors  
were made of earth and glass  
windows were a luxury for the rich.

That afternoon the coach took  
us to Birmingham Museum of  
Science and Industry for a private  
viewing of the "Lidell" collection of  
mechanical musical instruments.  
The collection, formed by the late  
Mr L. Lidell, an organist living in  
nearby Bromsgrove, was pur-  
chased for the museum a few years  
ago. The cylinder boxes readily  
identified were Bremond, Henriot  
l'Epee, Mermond, Nicole Freres,  
Paillard, an Ami Rivenc, a 13" 6  
cylinder interchangeable Mando-  
line box and a Serpentine case on a  
matching table beautifully inlaid  
and a gem of the cabinet makers  
art. There were several items by  
Nicole Freres each of a different  
type none of which were run-of-  
the-mill. Altogether there were  
about 30 boxes to be seen.

There were also a dozen or so  
disc boxes displayed both Polyphon  
and Symphonion, such as a vertical  
triple disc Symphonion Eroica and  
a 25" penny-in-the-slot Symphon-  
ion, complete with disc bin and  
pediment. Other interesting in-  
struments included a small hand  
turned barrel organ with a monkey  
fiddler automata.

The collection of large instru-  
ments included several chamber  
barrel organs of varying sizes by  
Clements other items included an  
Aeolian Orchestrelle paper roll reed  
organ, and a Welte rare repro-  
ducing piano. Another item was a  
hot air engine driving a Zither  
instrument which was thought to  
be German.

The largest instrument was an  
Imhof & Mukle orchestrion made  
in 1879 and costing £3,000. It was  
originally installed in the Blackpool  
Aquarium. When the Tower was  
built in 1894 the orchestrion was  
transferred to the Tower building  
and was presented to the Museum  
in 1956. Originally it was weight  
driven and barrel operated. In 1910  
barrels were replaced by punched  
paper rolls and an electric drive  
which was installed to replace the  
weight driven system. The in-  
strument has 350 pipes, a base  
drum, triangle and snare drum, it  
had recently been restored by Paul  
Camps and Graham Whitehead.  
Paul Camps was to have talked on  
the restoration project but  
insufficient time caused this talk  
to be cancelled. Another large



**Graham Whitehead works on the rebuilding of the console.**

The cinema organ's sounds are produced by various ranks of pipes varying from a fraction of an inch to a length of 16 feet.



**Craig Boswell, teenage wonder organist at the mighty console enjoying a little banter with his audience.**



**The Wurlitzer Photoplayer, the fore-runner of the mighty cinema organ we know today. Built in 1912 as a glorified piano with extra sound emanating from the side cabinets containing drums and organ pipes.**



**The Oak Room - The former dining room of Ashorne Hall houses a collection of unusual automata and mechanically played musical instruments.**



instrument was the Euterpeon. The firm of Imhof & Mukle had been established a very few years when this instrument was built, clearly something very special for the Great Exhibition held in Crystal Palace, London in 1851. It is therefore likely to be the forerunner of those to follow as the firm carried on to manufacture a range of Euterpeons, this particular instrument being presented to the museum by the late Lord Hastings.

Our thanks must go to John Hammond for demonstrating most of the instruments with infinite care and answering our questions most thoroughly the writer also wishes to acknowledge that for the above comments he has relied heavily on the notes that John passed around.

After returning to the hotel for a freshen-up we set off again at 7pm for a private tour of the State Rooms at Warwick Castle, England's finest medieval building. After liquid refreshments we were treated to a medieval banquet in the Undercroft, pitched at the time of the battle of Agincourt. We were entertained by court jesters who also gave us reports of the battle as it progressed and as dinner progressed, serving wenches saw to it that we were always well supplied with food and wine.

Saturday morning was the time for organ grinders to play their instruments. We were taken to the main street of Leamington Spa, but the weather, which was very pleasant most of the weekend spoiled itself by raining hard the whole of the morning. Even so we collected over £500 for the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children. In the afternoon we made our way to Graham's Nickelodeon Collection which is located in beautiful country parkland, once forming the boundaries of the Forest of Arden. Driving down an avenue of oak, ash and horse chestnut trees we were greeted at the entrance by the sounds of the Carillon. The eighteen bell Carillon was made by Eisbouts of Holland for the Arndale Centre in Manchester. The deafening noise of the bells played inside the building caused complaints from the shop-keepers and so the bells remained silent for many years until Graham "sniffed" them out and purchased them from the P&O Company.

Inside we entered the main hall now a graciously appointed ball-

room-cum-theatre. There Paul Camps demonstrated the large instruments. 1) Aeolion pipe organ, 2) Decap dance organ, 3) The robot band made by Decap in 1957 for the Blue Angel Cafe in Zindhoven, Belgium, 4) Mortier dance organ and finally what is thought to be the world's largest barrel orchestra the Imhof & Mukle playing 450 pipes and made in 1861 for Lord Hastings of Melton Constable whose name has already been mentioned with regard to the Euterpeon organ at the Birmingham Museum of Science and Industry. Following this we were given a tour of the other rooms containing Automata, Musical boxes, organettes a Mills Violana, a Hupfeld Phonoliszt and one room containing about ten orchestrons including a Loeshe, Popper Happy Jazz band, Hupfeld Universal, Weber Unika, Tino the accordion playing man and two film juke boxes made in 1962 still providing good entertainment.

We returned again to Ashorne Hall in the evening for what was to many the high-light of the weekend. It was a carvery dinner where with wines and drinks and reduced prices, we were entertained while we ate by some of the 35 barrel repertoire of the large Imhof & Mukle. After the meal the whole of the American group sang to us a farmyard ditty to everyone's delight - and then the professional entertainers - a female schoolboy impersonator and the Nickelodeon Can-Can dancers who in turn inveigled men from the audience and dressed them up and what followed was side splitting hilarious fun, as the men tried to copy the girls including cartwheels and even the splits. One American was heard to say "Oh boy are all English musical box meetings like this". The excellent evening was brought to a close by resident organist Craig (dizzyfingers) Boswell playing or dancing in a finale to a great night out.

On Sunday morning facilities for us were again made available at Ashorne Hall where we returned to hear Adrian Little deliver his talk 'Out of the Attic.' He discussed the various boxes that he had brought with him these included a musical box with a sectional comb with only two teeth per section, dating from 1810/15, a forte-piano long and short pin box, several Nicole Freres variation boxes i.e. first air repeated with embellishment, Bremond organoclide, an

unusual Nicole Freres two-per-turn box having all the metal parts excluding the comb engine turned, a Nicole Freres three overture box with case inlaid with brass and coloured enamels, a Nicole Freres four overture box, the case inlaid with brass and pewter. Whilst talking about Nicole Freres boxes Adrian expressed opinion that their three tune overture boxes were better musically than their four tune boxes.

Those that were able to stay on Sunday afternoon were taken to see beautiful buildings within a five mile radius of Ashorne Hall. Our coach first called at the house across the road built by the former owners of Ashorne Hall, the Tree family from Chicago. This was a pseudo Elizabethan mansion built by Arthur Tree for his young 18 year old wife Ethel. She was never to receive the gift as during the time the building was being constructed she fell in love with another man, eventually married him later to become Lady Beatty and her new husband Admiral Beatty of the Battle of Jutland fame of World War I. Arthur Tree who then carried on living at Ashorne Hall, bringing his son Ronald there, let his unwanted mansion to another American James Garland. After a couple of years James Garland fell in love with the area and decided to build a white chateau two miles further down the road and this house and its Italian gardens were our next stop. Moreton Hall is approached by an avenue of Wellingtonian trees planted in 1898 and now each standing about seventy feet high. We were reminded that we were visiting hidden away beauty spots that the general public rarely had the chance to visit. From there we made our way to a more publically known property, Charlecote House the home of Queen Elizabeth I's favourite, The Earl of Leicester. It is now owned by the National Trust. It is thought to have been built in 1558. Around 1583 William Shakespeare is believed to have been caught poaching Sir Thomas Lucy's deer there, he then fled to London where he lived for many years.

And so came the end to a long weekend packed with content, quality, and good friendship. A big thankyou to Graham and Pat Whitehead for their organising the meeting and to Adrian Little for providing yet another informative and fascinating talk. ■

# NEWSDesk

## 6th Llandrindod Wells International Street Organ Festival

### *Preliminary Announcement*

The sixth organ festival in this mid-Wales spa town will take place on August 28-30, 1992

Features of the festival will include:

Lunch-time Pub Grind

Street parade of organs and opening ceremony

Collector's Market

Magic Lantern Show at Lears Magical Lanterns

Evening gatherings in various venues

The organ festival programme takes place against the back-

ground of the annual nine-day Victorian Festival, now in its thirteenth year, with its full and varied programme including plays, shows, country and western, band concerts, beer tasting, costume parade, competitions, street theatre and a host of other activities.

Organ numbers have to be restricted to a figure appropriate to the size of the town, but all organ owners and enthusiasts are equally welcome to come and join in the Victorian celebrations - including the evening functions if tickets are available.

Llandrindod Wells came into being in the Victorian era as a Spa town and its spa waters are still available. It is ideally situated in the heart of one of the most beautiful and tranquil parts of Britain which assists the visitor in being transported back to those more elegant times and all are encouraged to join in by adopting the costume of the day. All the attractions of Wales are within easy reach - the mountains and lakes, the varied sea coast, mediaeval castles and not forgetting the Little Railways of Wales, many of them steam hauled.

If you are interested in receiving further information and application forms when available please write to:

The Organ Festival Co-ordinator,  
Geoff Alford,  
"Heimat",  
18 Tensing Close,  
Kings Acre,  
Hereford HR4 0SA.  
Tel: 0432-267466  
(Frau Alford spricht Deutsch) ■



Llandrindod '91 - The Parade, Middleton Street.



Llandrindod '91 - The Mayor tries out Geoff Alford's new trumpet Raffin.

# Register News

The Register has got off to a very promising start and over two thousand boxes have been noted. This new information has added to the data on many manufacturers and has started off a whole new line of research.

Unfortunately in the introductory article about the Register, we did not get George Worswick's post code correct. Letters have arrived in spite of this, but could you please use the proper post code from now on.

It is:- LN3 5UF

In the next edition of the magazine, part one of the Register will be printed. The Register will be published in the Journal in suitable sections together with some notes about makers and agents.

It has proved difficult to decide how to enter a box in the Register when it has a name or a set of initials that make it a "one off" box. For the moment, these boxes are listed as Unknown, but are placed in a sub-set that notes their characteristics. If a number of similar boxes turn up, they will be re-designated and listed in the Register in the correct alphabetical position.

Snuff boxes have proved to be difficult to record as they tend to have a multiplicity of markings. No doubt as more examples are recorded, patterns may emerge. To date the manufacturers or agents trading under the name H.L.M.G. and R.A. & C. are showing promise in this respect.

Members sending in details of Nicole boxes that are missing their tune sheets may benefit from the Register in that their gamme number may be the same as a previously recorded Nicole that does have its programme listed.

If a programme is available and an S.A.E. is enclosed, I will gladly send on details of the airs. Should you wish me to keep a lookout for programme details, please let me know and your request will be held on a separate computer file.

Obviously, in this case you would have to agree to my holding on to your name and address. Remember also the information may never turn up! All I can say is that two members have benefited already.

An unexpected extension to the Register emerged when a handful of members offered "spares" for boxes. Cylinders from interchangeable movements, zithers, original tune cards and other parts have all been offered.

These parts will be available to the owners of the original boxes or suitable movements. Should any of these original tune cards or other items match up with a serial number made on your register returns, then you will be put in touch with the member holding the "spares."

By great good fortune, I have been able to study a collection of over one hundred letters of the late John E. T. Clark and have recorded much interesting musical box history and folk lore. This information will be published in Register Matters in the future.

Finally, may I ask once again for members to help with the Register project and set some time aside to make a return. If you can contribute towards the general fund of knowledge about musical boxes, please write a letter to me or an article for publication in the Journal. To start it all off; does anyone know anything about H.L.M.G. or R.A. & C.? ■

## New Association for Organ Grinders announced

Following the return of over 50 questionnaires sent out to canvass the views of owners of hand-turned organs, a group of six grinders has agreed to set up The British Organ Grinders' Association. Broadly, the Association's objectives are to represent the interests of organ grinders and provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas specifically of interest to them.

A Prospectus setting out the Association's background and objectives together with an Application for Membership form has recently been sent to 96 grinders together with the first issue of the Newsletter. Anyone who would like further information and a copy of the Newsletter should send a large stamped, addressed envelope to the Hon. Secretary, Peter Churchard at 46 Ligo Avenue, Stoke Mandeville, Bucks HP22 5TY.

The Association's Inaugural Meeting will be held at Graham Whitehead's Ashorne Hall Nickel-

odeon on Saturday 11th April between 2 and 6pm and is designed to give grinders from all over the country the chance to meet in pleasant surroundings. It is planned that the majority of UK street organ builders and music cutters will be there to demonstrate their latest models and music and a representative sample of European organs will also be on display. ■

## STOLEN

from West Dean College  
in the early hours of  
Saturday  
15 February 1992



A Louis XV ormolu mantel clock, the movement and dial signed Gosselin à Paris, the movement with white enamel dial in drum-shaped case with entwined floral and leaf decoration on cushion base with floral-decorated trellis panels on scroll feet, containing a cylinder musical movement with rack of twelve bells. 26 inches high.

Jean Philippe Gosselin, maître in 1752.

**Information to D. C. Spencer  
at Chichester Police Station,  
phone (0243) 784433** ■

## German collector sells

News has reached us that Peter Schuhknecht of Hannover in West Germany has placed his entire collection on the market. Peter Schuhknecht is a well known member of our Society and is a major collector in Germany. Although he has a varied collection, his favourite interests are street organs and he has organised many street organ festivals in Hannover. He has produced an illustrated catalogue and rather than sell by auction, he is disposing of the collection piece-by-piece. ■

# The National Vintage Communications Fair 1992

This is a one-day event for specialist collectors and others interested in buying and selling vintage radios, telephones, televisions, jukeboxes, gramophones, records and other related mechanical-music items, ancient or modern, in order to pursue the enjoyment of their hobby.

The Fair will be held in the 4,000 sq. metre Pavilions Hall at the National Exhibition Centre from 11am to 5pm on Sunday 3rd May 1992 (the first May Bank Holiday weekend), admission will be £2, and £1 for children aged 14 and under. The NEC is right next to Birmingham International Railway Station and Airport and the M42 Motorway, so access couldn't be easier. There will be free car parking for visitors to this event, and there are full bar, restaurant and toilet facilities provided within the Hall. The Hall itself is situated at ground floor level and has drive-in unloading access for stall holders. Stalls are the usual trestle-table type (6' x 2') and may be booked by contacting **Jonathan Hill at 2-4, Brook Street, Bampton, Devon EX16 9LY. Telephone: (0398) 331532.** The price of a stall for this great venue is just £20, and that includes entrance for the stall holder and one helper.

While the core of the event will be stalls selling vintage communications items, there will also be many exciting demonstrations and displays of historic equipment – among these are a Baird 'Televisor' (a 30-line electro-mechanical TV from 1930), a working 405-line Marconi television from 1936 showing pre-WWII BBC television programmes, a unique display of round Art Deco Bakelite radios by E. K. Cole Ltd in various colours and a display by the BBC in celebration of the 70th anniversary of their formation in 1922. In addition, the Fair is designed to be an **information exchange** where collectors can enjoy meeting each other, as well as finding out about the various collectors clubs, magazines and specialists in their collecting fields.

The Fair is run by a collector for collectors. The organiser is author and photographer Jonathan Hill who has been collecting communications equipment and writing on the history of radio, television

and broadcasting for the past 20 years. His best known book on the subject is *Radio! Radio!*. Published by Sunrise Press in 1986, it contains nearly 1,000 photographs of British radios and charts their development from the late Victorian era until the 1960s. He lives and works in the small mid-Devon town of Bampton where he also runs a communications museum in the old bakery attached to his house. In 1976, along with five other collectors, he founded the British Vintage Wireless Society (present membership approaching 1,000 worldwide) and since then has presented two major exhibitions in London – in 1978, 'The Cat's Whisker - 50 Years of Wireless Design' at the Geffrye Museum, and in October 1986, in collaboration with the Museum of the Moving Image, 'Television in the Home' at the Royal Festival Hall which celebrated 60 years of British Television.

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain is taking a stand at this Fair to promote membership, anyone willing to help man the stand should contact Alan Wyatt. ■

## German 17th International Festival

The Society for Self Playing Instruments in Germany announce their 17th International Festival for Mechanical Instruments. This will take place on Sunday 12th April 1992 in the Rhein Halle, Rudesheim am Rhein. Opening for exhibitors is 9.0am and 10.0am for the public. The exhibition ends at 4.0pm. Musical Boxes, street organs, electric pianos, orchestrions, music rolls, gramophones, phonographs, gramophone records wax cylinders and even "steam" radios. Also for sale and wanted, literature and pictures associated with mechanical music. You can also visit the Rudesheim special fleamarket open at the same time for further details contact Seigfrieds Mechanical Music Cabinet, Oberstrasse 29, K-6220 Rudesheim Am Rhein. Telephone 01049 6722 4217. ■

## Automata Exhibition

An Automata exhibition is to be staged at the Royal Festival Hall London 10th March to 12th April in the Foyer Galleries. This is an exhibition of modern Automata featuring the present generation of Automata makers bringing together more than 20 makers whose work displays an unusual combination of talent. They all share an innate curiosity about the way things worked and combine the skills of sculpture artist and inventor. These works will intrigue and entertain, offering witty and unexpected views of the contemporary world. Work of MBSGB member David Secret will be on show so too will be exhibits by Lucy Cass, James Chegburn, Andy Cohan, Frank Egerton, Peter Ellis, Ron Fuller, Andy Hazel, Andrea Heaps, Michael Howard, Tim Tonkin, Oliver Langham, John Maltby, Tony Mann, Peter Marquee, John Mills, Adrian Mokes, Frank Nelson, Keith Mewstead, Sam Smith, Paul Spooner, John White, Benedict Whitebrow and Jan Salude. This exhibit will then be moving to the John Hansard Gallery Southampton 20th April to 30th May. The exhibit is financially assisted by Southern Arts and Crafts Council. ■

## Auction Search Service

Andrew Hilton, who developed the Phillips Collectors Centre in London initially at Hayes Place, subsequently in the Haunch of Venison Yard off Bond Street and most recently at Phillips in Bayswater, left Phillips in the summer in search of a new challenge.

He has joined Thesaurus where rather than banging his gavel he will help develop their Auction Search Service.

Thesaurus receives the auction catalogues of some 420 odd auctioneers in the U.K., Ireland and Channel Islands. These they process and then they notify their subscribers of those items that are coming up for auction which the subscriber seeks.

By way of an example, a subscription to the Thesaurus service detailing simply musical boxes on 23rd January 1992 produced a list of 27 lots included in 21 auctions at



that time. These the subscriber would have been alerted to, thus enabling him to participate in the auction of which he would otherwise have been unaware.

The system also collates sale prices – valuable in establishing trends etc., and plans are well advanced for the inclusion of auctions outside the UK.

Currently Thesaurus is offering an introductory annual subscription for a specific category costing £195 (including VAT) per annum for a U.K. resident with a facsimile machine. (There is a £60 supplement for postal subscriptions). Alternatively a starter subscription of

£55 for twenty despatches of information is available. This may be 'cashed in' for an annual subscription if the subscriber decides to extend after the initial period.

The unique Thesaurus system demonstrates that even the traditions of collectors and auction houses have succumbed to the Computer – in this case to everyone's advantage – after all imagine subscribing to and reading the catalogues of 420 auctioneers in order to collect musical boxes!

Andrew Hilton may be contacted at Thesaurus, 76 Gloucester Place, London W1H 4DQ. Telephone: 071-487 3401.

The following is an example of the printout from our database:

Our Sale Number 011708

Peter Cheney	Date	08:01:92	Phone 0903 722264
Western Road Auction Rooms	Time	9.30am	
Western Road	1st lot	1	
Littlehampton			
West Sussex BN17 5NP			

Viewing: 4th Jan, 9am - 12 noon & 6th and 7th Jan, 9am - 1pm & 2 - 4pm.

57 Ornamental castle musical box.

David Lay	Date	23:01:92	Phone 0736 61414
The Penzance Auction House	Time	10.00am	Fax 0736 60035
Alverton	1st lot	1	
Penzance			
Cornwall TR18 4RE			

Viewing: 18th Jan, 11am - 4pm; 23rd Jan, 9am - 7.30am and day of sale from 8.30am.

62 A Nicole Freres 10.75 ins cylinder six airs key wind music box number 2 2663 (C. 1840), playing a one piece comb. The three controls and winding hole behind a hinged end flap. The inlaid rosewood and rosewood grained case with original songsheet titled *Musique de Geneve*. Full length 18 in.

Phillips Exeter	Date	23:01:92	Sale name 407
Alphin Brook Road	Time	11.00am	Phone 0392 439025
Alphington	1st lot	1	Fax 0392 410361
Exeter	Contact Patrick Toynbee		
Devon EX2 8TH			

Viewing: 21 January, 9.00am - 5.00pm, 22 January, 9.00am - 7.30pm, morning of sale

- 15 A 19th century Nicole Freres cylinder Music Box the key wound movement No. 20808 with makers stamp on comb and bed plate the 8 in. cylinder playing four airs with original tune sheet in a mahogany case 13.75 in. wide. E300-400.
- 16 A 19th century Swiss cylinder Music Box the lever wound movement playing ten airs on seven bells with tune indicator and tune sheet to the underside of the lid in a rosewood and ebonised case, cylinder 8 in. long, overall size 1ft. 9 in. E350-450.
- 17 A 19th century Swiss cylinder Music Box with a lever wound movement and 6 in. cylinder in a simulated rosewood case 14 in. wide damaged. E80 100.

## LATE NEWS

### CAMBRIDGE

Autumn Meeting and Organ Grind, 25th - 27th September, 1992.

Please refer to booking form for details of the hotel.

The weekend activities commence Friday afternoon when Alan and Daphne Wyatt will welcome members for a cup of tea and a trip round their collection.

Don't be late arriving at the hotel, for after dinner on Friday evening, members will be entertained by the HAMLYN'S, an Old Time Music Hall show, a performance not to be missed!

Saturday morning we shall be grinding our organs in the City Centre. Don't be put off if you're not able to bring an organ – the "grinders" need plenty of support.

Saturday afternoon we take a relaxed coach trip into Suffolk, to see and hear the fabulous collection of Robert Finbow at Cotton, near Stowmarket. If you have not visited before, this is a must. If you have, you surely cannot wait to go again. Society dinner in the restaurant will round off the day.

Sunday: Guided tours of the City and Colleges, and a visit to Weldreth Church to view and hear the Walker Finger and Barrel Organ.

Sunday afternoon: For those who didn't make it on Friday, Alan and Daphne extend a welcome to visit them at Landbeach, three miles from the city boundary. ■

### Have you paid your 1992 subscription yet?

Have you paid the correct amount of subscription for 1992. If not please send to Subscription Secretary:  
Ted Bowman, April Cottage, 24 The Slade, Clophill, Bedford, MK45 4BT.

# Organ Grinders chat

by Geoff Alford



How many times do we hear someone say of an organ music cassette that it is not like the real thing. And of course it isn't, no matter how good the recording, for the stereo microphone cannot reproduce human hearing. But there is another, and I think more important reason with the appearance of the organ and the ornateness of its facade. We enjoy listening to the organ whilst simultaneously enjoying the artwork on the front. These were invariably much larger than the frontal area of the organ case behind. This reached the ultimate on many of the street and dance hall organs of the Low Countries which could be several times the size of the case. There have always been national characteristics to the style of decoration or carving, but because carvers often worked for several builders they would not usually identify the make of organ. Exceptions include the organs of Th. Mortier with their distinctive style of front. A wide range of style of front was offered in the catalogues of the organ builders, a number of them heavily baroque in design. So why were the street barrel organs and pianos so terribly plain in appearance by comparison. It is true that most organs had inlaid work on their fronts, but they were all much of a muchness. The only reason I can think of is that a high proportion were owned by rental businesses. Even in my home town of Hereford there was once a man who rented out barrel pianos. Obviously the amount of wear on these instruments would be far greater than on showmen's fair organs for example, with perhaps a different grinder taking the organ out every day in all winds and weathers. The small workshops where these organs were stored, repaired and maintained would have had difficulty accommodating organs with large fronts. Because of the nature of their work, they were usually encased in leather as protection against the elements, with flaps or apertures to operate the organ.

The post war era produced a totally different situation. Organ rental in most countries, with the notable exception of Holland, virtually disappeared as did most fair and street organs. With the organ revival purchasers of new organs found the much higher labour cost involved in a carved front prohibitive. Modern organs became instantly recognisable, if not by their less professional sound, then by their

unattractive fronts 'decorated' with plastic strips. Once again Holland seems to have been the exception, where the quality of their facades appears to have been maintained – or at least not fallen to the low level we have had here. In Germany, post war organs tended to follow the decor of their predecessors well with Italian veneer and high gloss cases. Franz Oehrlein broke away from this tradition with his comparatively large-fronted street organ. Although this front was of plastic, it gave all the appearance of being in carved wood. Production stopped after only a few models had been built as Herr Oehrlein decided he didn't want to produce lots of similar organs. More significant in this area was the entry of Josef Raffin into the street organ field by producing a small street organ which radically departed from standard German practice. It was available in a wide variety of decoration and colour and with twin oil paintings which helped to make each organ unique and individually identifiable. For the first time street organ purchasers were being offered what might be described as 'a complete service!' and choice. Many early Raffin organs bore reproductions from the works of their most famous painter Carl Spitzweg. Totally unknown to me until then, I have since become a Spitzweg enthusiast and I have gained some entertainment in identifying the source of paintings of various organs. For example, my own is taken from 'The Postman in Rosenthal,' John Allen's is from 'The Everlasting Suiter,' whilst Fred Merrisck's appears to be from two paintings, one of which is another popular subject 'The Clarinetist Beggar.' The popularity of these new organs caused many other builders to produce street organs with brighter cases, often following closely the Raffin pattern.

In England a reputation for 'service to the consumer,' a rare commodity these days, was being built up by Alan Pell. His 27 note organ being available in standard salon type case or as a fair organ style organ. Unfortunately few other British street organ builders have been prepared to cater for consumer needs, producing, in effect, miniature British fair organs. These featured identical and usually bulky cabinets playing bulky music more suited to static locations than for mobile use. Remember that old saying 'You can buy any colour car providing it is black'? Of the newer breed of builder following Alan Pell, Peter Trueman perhaps came nearest to producing a proper street organ with a 20 scale instrument of the right size and sound, although it still kept to the French card music system and identical cabinets. Now that the organ has proved itself I understand that it is intended to provide customer options. There is a limit to the number of options any builder can offer whilst remaining competitive and Alan Pell has announced that he will in future only be producing street type organs using roll-playing and Harmonist music systems and book playing organs will no longer be produced.

Occasionally street organs have been produced with larger 'show-organ' style facades. Carl Frei built several Special models in the eighties and these fronts, with their carved figures, look most attractive and certainly help the organ to stand out. However, they have never taken off in Germany for some reason, which I find slightly surprising. In Holland large fronts are more the norm as the smaller street organs are less often seen, but Jack Leemburg's 20 note Carl Frei, which he brought to Llandrindod, has a very attractive front in the Dutch style. Until 1991 I know of no other builder who has made one of these style fronts available as an option.



Street organ by Jaeger and Brommer of Waldkirch on their stand.

When Josef Raffin made such a choice available I ordered it and now own what is up till now the only model. The front is well carved and painted and has three excellently proportioned carved figures operated from the tracker bar. Occasionally owners wish to paint the case themselves. A Swiss friend has had some difficulty getting a street organ which suits and with a music scale which will be of sufficient simplicity to permit him to arrange music of good quality. He finally came back after unsatisfactory efforts with 45 scale organs, to the Raffin 31. He took a case to an artist whose work he liked, told him the kind of thing he was looking for and gave him a free hand. We met up when he brought the case in to be 'filled.' It was certainly eye-catching being startlingly painted in shades of blue ranging from green to purple. He is very pleased with the result, which is the main thing, and it will certainly stand out in a crowd!

Books on the mechanical organ in English are few and far between. Once you have proceeded beyond Bowers and Ord-Hume you are at the end of the road. In Germany there is much more written, albeit in smaller doses.

'Der Leierkasten, Ein Wahrzeichen Berlin' (The Music Box, A Symbol of Berlin) is a 120 page soft cover publication produced as a joint effort by members of the International Organ Friends of Berlin, a club formed a few years ago. It is well illustrated with drawings and diagrams and with old and new pictures – of organs, of organ builders over the years and of organ grinders old and new. What is a little unusual about the book is that it largely comprises a number of articles on various organ related subjects by a variety of contributors well known in the organ field, including Kurt and Christa Niemuth, Drs. Hellmut Wiemann, Dietmar Jarofke, and Herbert Juttemann as well as organ builders Rudolf Bruns and Josef Raffin. There are articles on flute clocks, organ construction, pipework, Berlin organ builders and lists of German organ builders and the scales of the known sizes of organs.

Until recently my knowledge of the French street organ scene was almost totally non-existent. This has changed somewhat since the visit to Britain in 1990 of the energetic Prof. Emilie Garrigues who organises an organ festival at Castelmoron sur Lot in the South of France. Her energy has obtained an EC Grant for the production of an international display on the history of mechanical music which is designed to travel around the four countries co-operating – Britain, Germany and Italy as well as France of course. Already a high gloss introductory brochure for the exposition has been produced (illustrating two



Range of organs displayed on the stand of Goeckel of Heidelberg.

British grinders – Alan Wyatt and myself). Hopefully the finished display will come to Britain and be displayed over a period at various locations – organ festivals, museums and perhaps society meets. What is intended is that each country will delve more deeply into its own mechanical music scene to produce their own national extensions to the international display and some British enthusiast is needed who is willing and able to take on this task. I believe that such a display, as a permanent historical multi-nation record is a worthy task and I would be very interested in hearing from anyone who is interested in helping to work on the British end.

In Britain uninformed public refer to the street organ as the barrel organ, whether or not it has a barrel. I have always been fussy on terminology ever since, as a teenager I was reprimanded for referring to an aeroplane as a 'plane or aircraft. So I was a little concerned to read barrel organ used in the French brochure when street organ is actually meant. I suppose that it isn't such a serious error as the other error of calling a fair organ a steam organ.

A number of members will have heard of the disaster which has occurred at Teddy Read's organ premises, where some of the best fair organs in Britain were housed. In Southern Germany Drehorgelbau Schlemmer are an up and coming firm of street organ builders who recently moved to new premises. These have now been destroyed by fire, a catastrophe for a small building firm, and the organ club C.D.D. have launched an appeal for Herr Schlemmer. The firm have produced a number of organ models which seem to improve each time. I thought that the firm's strap-carried 20 note pipe organ was quite interesting, and recently I really enjoyed playing his new 33 note

trumpet organ which had a good sound and was also a reasonable price. This scale of organ has been hard to come by. I believe that Hofbauers only made three – no doubt because of the price – and Rudolf Bruns is likely to make only a few. Although there are not many 33 note organs there are some excellent arrangements for the scale, some of these being by Louis Joosten, whose father owns one of the Hofbauer models.

The annual Collector's Market at Ruedesheim, the popular tourist spot on the River Rhine, which takes place in Siegfried Wendel's Music Cabinet, has become well known as it has been an annual event for some years. Unfortunately it takes place early in the year, I assume so that it will not interfere with the tourist season. This makes it less easy to get there unless one makes a special journey. A similar event now takes place at the Auto and Technik Museum at Sinsheim, situated a little north of Karlsruhe. This is organised by Arnolds, the local organ building firm who have been responsible for restoring all the mechanical organs scattered around the two industrial units comprising the museum buildings. We were only able to attend on the Sunday which was a pity as the bargains had been snapped up on the Saturday, and I am reliably informed that there were bargains, as a result of the opening up of the east where they have a much lower value expectancy. The market includes music boxes and gramophones and I saw a substantial number of the latter, some of which appeared rare and valuable. There were a number of organ builders present, apart from the Arnold stands which included a wide range of organ related items from old books to parts of orchestrions. Le Ludion included a Gasparini fair organ on their stand

and Raffin Orgelbau displayed a barrel street organ of unknown make and a small barrel piano. The remaining organ builders were showing only newly built organs – Kollmer-Hoertig (formerly of the now defunct De Leika partnership), Jaeger and Brommer of Waldkirch, Goeckel of Heidelberg and Schlemmer. Aristons are undergoing a revival and one firm engaged in building replicas, J. and A. Blueml from Upper Bavaria, was demonstrating several models – standard 24 note salon and street models as well as miniature and larger versions. The firm also produces music discs, some from the original catalogue and a few new arrangements. A lot of music arrangements made for the Ariston are completely unfamiliar and the majority leave me cold. But every so often you hear one which sounds delightful.

I was a little put out at having to pay the normal admission price in order to visit the collectors market. Mechanical music forms very much a minority display at Sinsheim where the automobile and international militaria predominate. So precious few of the museum visitors have any interest in our subject. It would seem more appropriate if the market had its own separate entrance and was partitioned off from the museum. Actually, nearby Schloss Bruchsal which houses the outstanding Jan Brauers collection of mechanical music, would be a much more appropriate place to hold this event.

Schloss Bruchsal houses what must surely be the largest collection of mechanical music in public hands. It took Jan Brauers of Baden-Baden some years to gather together so wide-ranging a collection and I had an interesting chat in the museum recently with one of his assistants from those days who travelled abroad to dismantle instruments for transfer to Germany. One notable occasion was the collection of the large Imhof and Mukle orchestration from Old Warden Park. Now that it is owned by the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg its future should be assured. And it is appropriate that it should have such an impressive site in the state which may be regarded as the cradle of the mechanical organ industry. Many of the instruments were constructed within its borders. What I had suspected from previous visits was confirmed to me. The museum is not content just to maintain the close on 200 items which it took over, but has shown itself prepared to add to the collection in order to fill gaps and make the collection even more representative. This may create further space problems as three exhibition rooms were originally made available and the museum is now bursting at the seams. Each time I pay a visit I see additions. The number of visitors is steadily

increasing and the professionalism of the guides has also greatly improved, each has her own commentary and chooses which instruments to play and tours last about an hour. On the debit side, it is possible to play only about 10% of the collection in the permitted time and whilst some get played virtually every tour, others perhaps as high as 50%, never get played. I don't think this is good as I believe that instruments benefit from periodic use. One way round this would be to have periodic evenings for enthusiasts when many more instruments in the collection could be heard. I find it especially disappointing that I have never heard any of the street instruments played, whether of the small Ariston class or the large trumpet organs. The street organ section is very fine and some will only be heard by

ordinary enthusiasts like myself at organ festivals like Thun. However all the street organs have been relegated to the exit passage through which the visitor passes after the conclusion of the tour. In this position there would seem no possibility of their ever getting played.

The success of the Llandrindod Organ Festival has encouraged others to organise similar events. Despite the shortage of money through the recession it is good news that Llandrindod is 'on' again this year. It is still the one place in Britain where you can see such a wide variety of British and Continental street organs so it would be a shame if it died for lack of funding. Although size of the venue is a limiting factor on organ numbers, this is more than balanced by the advantages of excellent facilities all



**Small barrel piano by Felice Chiappo of Torino offered at DM5,000 on the Josef Raffin stand.**





**One of the Sinsheim exhibits. An ornate barrel piano by G. Bacigalupo of Berlin.**

within a short distance. Having had to do a tremendous amount of tiring organ pushing at some Continental events to get from A to B, makes me appreciate Llandrindod even more. Under these circumstances it is important to promote the 'show' aspect of the event, where organs and organalia, new and old, can be bought and sold. This requires the support of organ enthusiasts and builders, and there was evidence in 1991 of an increased interest which justifies increased space and time being earmarked for it. Unfortunately there appears a tendency for other towns copying Llandrindod not to wish to spend effort on organisation but to just throw sums of money at organs and, steam rally fashion, for the bulk of money to be offered to owners of large prestigious organs. My experience is that some owners of business premises complain about the noise from small organs. Few town centres have a sufficiently open centre to accommodate an 89 key Marengi or similar without multiplying the complainants.

As the number of street organ owners continues to grow – and as a wild guess they must now number around 200 – it is not surprising that some are pressing for a new society or association to cater for their special needs. To some extent this must reflect a widely held feeling that the existing societies are not satisfying their needs. Whether that feeling is justified is another question. Certainly Music Box can claim to cater for this group, through this regular Chat column and other articles. I have always argued against increased dilution of service to enthusiasts which I regard as the main result from increased numbers of clubs or societies. The main benefit to membership is always the magazine and few can appreciate the cost of this

in time, effort and money. Most, if not all, existing bodies in the international scene have had problems in this area which are often ongoing. If long-established societies have difficulties how much more difficult it must be for one starting from scratch. It is surely better by far to operate within existing organisations, however hard that may be.

Organ events are certainly a growth area both here at home and on the Continent. It is difficult to provide a comprehensive list of these in a quarterly journal not least because of copy dates and dependence on other quarterly journals for information. The Editor of Die Drehorgel points to another reason. A number of organ meetings are organised by individual members rather than societies and these are usually small, calling for up

to 20 organs. If they were all listed in journals they could each attract up to 100 applications. This could result in 80 or more refusals with resulting complaints. So events are only publicised upon request – a wise precaution. Here the situation is a little different. I cannot envisage any British town welcoming 100 plus organs as in Switzerland and Germany, but even here, with the growth of street organ ownership, there is an increase in small informal events which it is not practical to advertise.

April 19 - Collectors Market, Ruedesheim/Rhein - S. Wendel, Oberstr. 29 D-W-6220.

April 20 - Assen Organ Festival - Organ Museum, Amstelstraat 6, NL9406TH Assen.

May 2 - Braunschweig Organ Festival - Verkehrsverein, Frau Hagemann Postfach, D-W-3300.

May 30 - International Organ Grinders Meeting in Heidenheim.

May 28-31 - 8. International Organ Festival Linz/Rhein - Staedische Verkehrsamt, Herr D. Hau, Rathaus am Marktplatz, D-W-5460.

June 6-8 - 3. International Organ Festival Ile-Tudy, Brittany.

June 13-14 - Lichtensteig Organ Meeting - Verkehrsamt Lichtensteig, Herr R. Geiger. CH.

July 2-5 - 11. International Organ Festival Berlin - Frankenstr. 5 D-1000 Berlin 30.

August 8-9 - Pforzheim Drehorgelei - Stadt Information, Herr W. Trautz, Marktplatz 1, D-W-7530.

August 28-30 - 6. International Street Organ Festival, Llandrindon Wells. G. Alford, 18 Tensing Close, Hereford HR4 0SA. ■



**Llandindon '91. The Mayor tries out the 45 note Hofbauer Microbox trumpet organ of H-J Klies of Olpe.**

# THE FLUTE PLAYER

by Hank Waelti

Franz Oehrlein in Mainz, Germany is an organ builder of multiple talents. After constructing several different and superb monkey organs, he thought of doing something more sophisticated, more challenging. He started to add automated figures to his organs.

Inspired by old Bruder organs he designed instruments with an orchestra and Boulevard Café or a Circus scene on top – with moving figures, always a big attraction for the audience.

Other creations of automata, connected to flute playing instruments and mainly activated by pneumatic actions made the name of Franz Oehrlein well known.

For the museum in Linz on the Rhine he made two full size trumpet players and at this same exhibition (K. Fischer collection) is also one of his "Berlin organ players". A figure in uniform with helmet provided with jingling bells, is cranking an organ on a trolley, and with the other hand and a foot he is playing a snare and kettledrum – just like the cartoon where a little girl is asking the man: "And with your nose, couldn't you do anything else?". Franz who only makes limited quantities of his creations, has a restless mind. While still working on a project, he is already figuring out another one.

In his little showroom is one of his almost full size drummers, (Siegfried Wendal has also one at the entrance to his famous Musical Cabinet at Rüdesheim on the Rhine). There is also "Charly", a clown beating the drums, as an attachment to one of Franz Oehrleins fine organs.

And his latest work, the flute player! On a fairly large base, a half size harlequin leans against a banister where a little bird is sitting.



The figure turns its head, moves the eyes and plays the flute, shifting and moving its fingers in such a way that each grip corresponds exactly with the note the flute (a set of pipes in the chest) is sounding.

After playing a melody, the little birdie takes up the same melody an octave higher – and finally they perform together, playing and whistling away in a duet.

I was overwhelmed – the way this nicely dressed harlequin is leaning nonchalantly against the

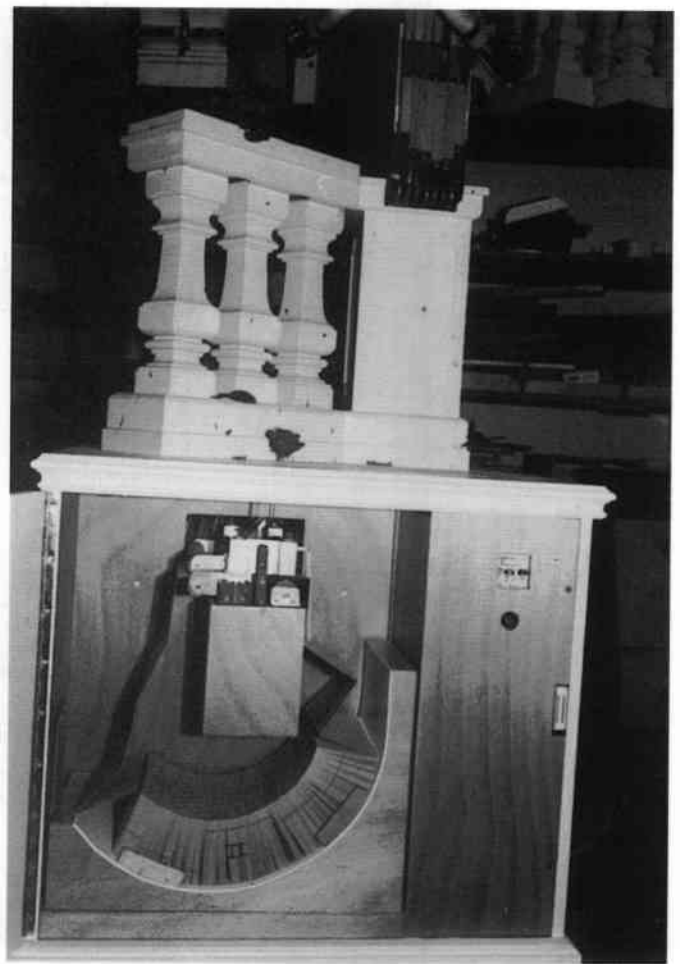
banister where the bird is sitting, the movements and the sound – it is one of the most beautiful mechanical things I have ever seen.

Franz, pleased with my enthusiasm and knowing that I always like to see "what makes them tick", started to undress his masterpiece and to lay it open to the eye of my camera.

As I mentioned before, unlike other designers of automates Franz Oehrlein works mostly with pneumatic action. The whole automat, the music as well as the



**The pipes for the flute are contained in the chest. To the left, little birdie is sitting on the banister.**



**The control centre in the base of the automat. Punched cardboard offers the possibility of an almost unlimited repertoire.**



**The master making some adjustments.**

movements is controlled by punched card and powered by bellows. Therefore an almost unlimited variety of music can be arranged for his automata.

The whole construction is of excellent quality and very well designed, with love and care for every little detail.

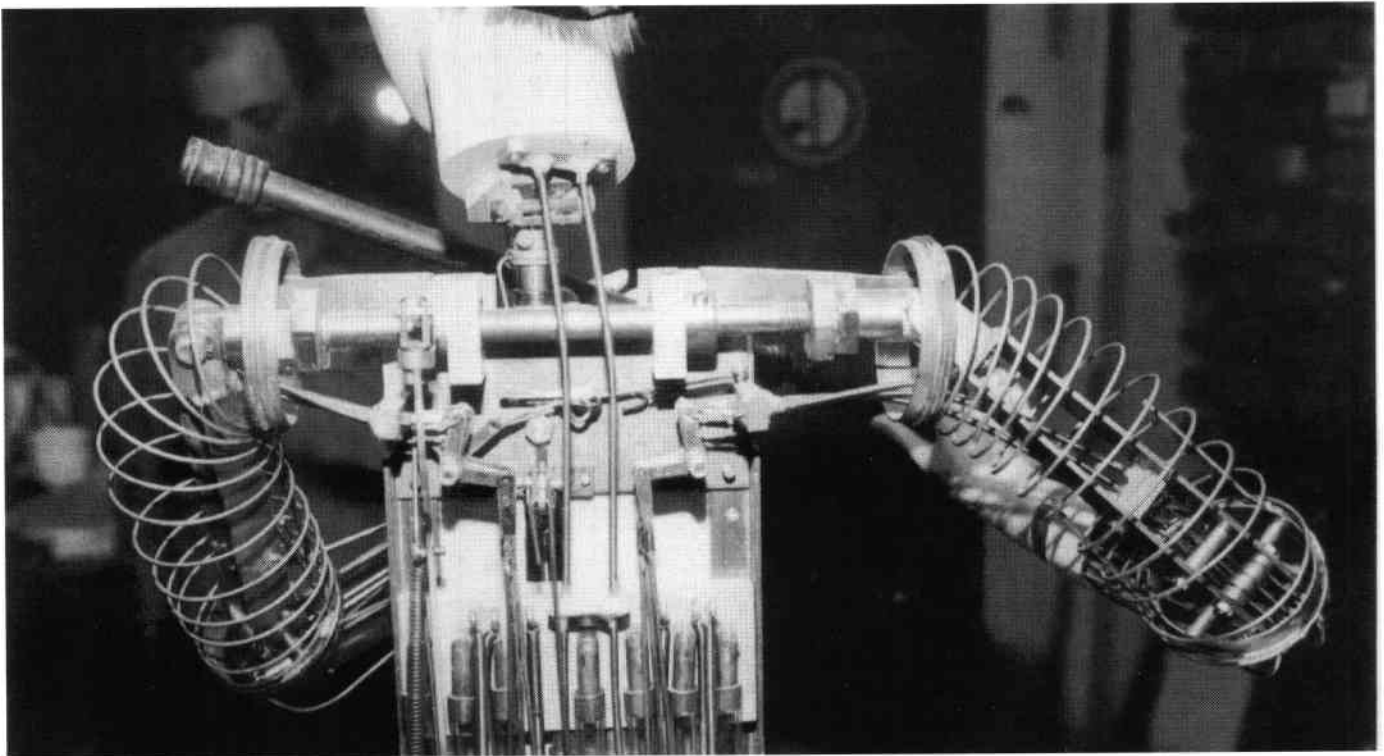
Just to give an idea about all the work involved in construction of this flute player, Franz showed me his workbook where he had recorded all the different procedures and parts necessary. Here are a few details from it:

part of automate:	work procedures:	parts necessary:	holes to drill:	screws:
head	310	115	81	5
body	2875	1680	14	16
windchest for movements body and arm	663	241	481	10

Most of the work is done in a few rooms at the basement of his home. There is limited space, but Franz prefers to have his workshop close at hand: "It often happens that I've got an idea at

night – then I jump out of bed and start working right away" he explains.

And ideas he still has plenty – who knows what will be next? ■



The whole construction is of excellent quality, with love and care for every little detail.



Franz Oehrlein with some of his creatures, the drummer and the Berlin-organ player.



# The 3-Disc Imperial Symphonion

## Those Fortunate Fabulous Finds – How Do They Happen?

by George E. Speake

We all hear stories of unusual finds and wonder if they are ever going to happen to us. How do you find that rare Van Gogh in the attic?

This story starts many years ago. In 1983 a friend from the east coast was visiting and enjoyed my collection of music boxes. He then visited his son in Portland, Oregon, and in discussing the collection with his son discovered another acquaintance that had a pile of rusted parts and two boxes of discs. The acquaintance was not too sure just what he had, but he was considering taking the discs to the local flea market to sell as souvenirs to hang on the wall.

Fortunately for me, my friend thought it would be worth a phone call to me to ask about this curious collection of rusted parts. Since the owner was not too sure just what he had, he couldn't give me too much information over the phone. Based on a strong suspicion, I urged the friend not to sell the discs but to take some pictures of what he had and send them to me. A few weeks later some photos arrived (**Figure 1**). A check of the usual source books in references A, B and C indicated that it was pretty obvious that the parts were

from a large 3-disc Symphonion. I found the last sentence in reference A to be of real interest "... another was lost in a hotel fire in the western United States."

With only the information I had from the pictures, I had several problems. How much was missing? How much was damaged beyond repair? How much damage would be involved in getting it to Los Angeles? How much damage would be inflicted in taking the unit apart for cleaning and restoration.

A fortunate solution to getting the parts to Los Angeles occurred when another friend happened to be in the Seattle area with a pickup truck. I knew he had taken a load of furniture to a daughter in that area. I called him and asked if he would pick up a music box movement that was in the Portland area on his way to Los Angeles. He had seen some of my typical music boxes with a usual cylinder of about 11" and I assured him there was no box involved. With that call, he kindly agreed. What I carelessly had overlooked was the size and weight of the parts. The unit is designed to go straight into a standard piano case, and the three

standard units of a 17<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" Symphonion were bolted together in a heavy iron framework. By now, I know that it takes two strong men to lift the unit, and even then, with some difficulty. To add to the problem, my friend had not thought to tell me that he had already loaded his truck with some furniture for the return trip. When he arrived at the location of the rusty pile, he had to totally unload his truck to make room for this monstrous mess. Needless to say, our friendship was a tad strained for a while after this incident.

Even so, it was a happy and satisfying time as I laid out the parts on the garage floor and wondered where and how to start. I noted there was evidence of black soot along with the rust and an accumulation of decades of neglect. The long cranking rod that tied together the three mainstring barrels was blackened and warped out of line. I wondered if this was further evidence that my find could be the missing box listed in reference A as being lost in a fire. There were 12 broken teeth on the six combs. It was obvious that there were several parts missing and as the work progressed, I found more

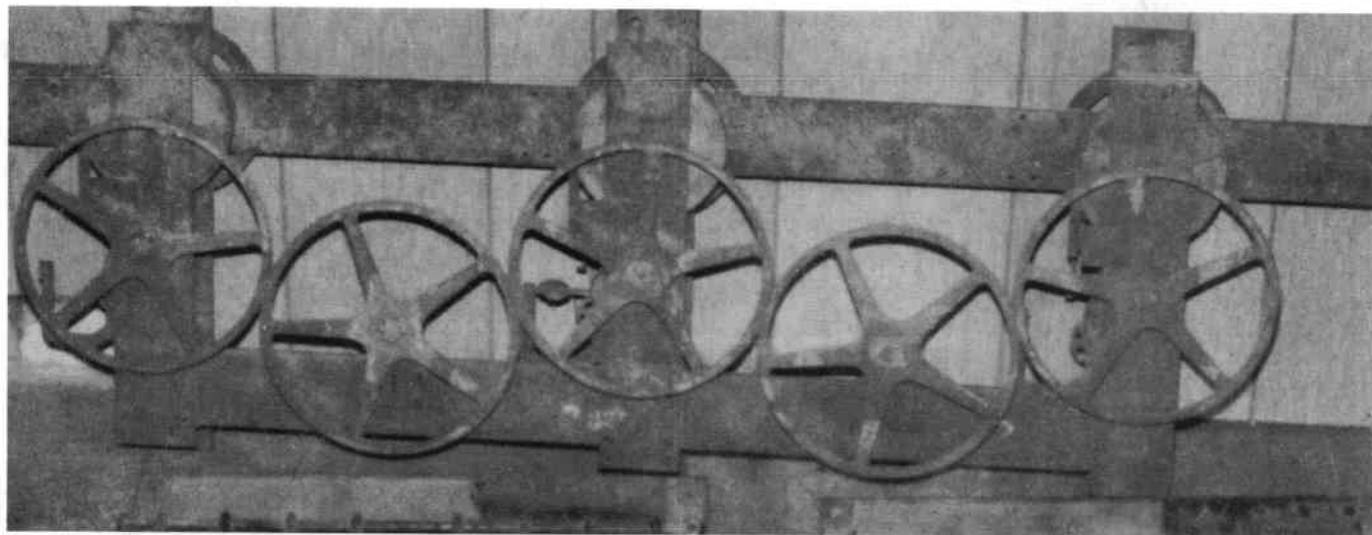


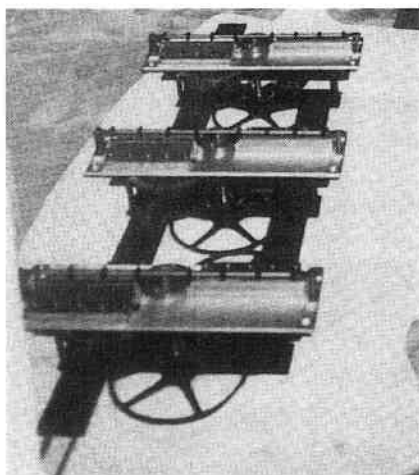
Figure 1.

blank spaces where parts were missing. Every gear, every bearing, every bolt and screw was rusted solid. Suffice to say, after ample saturation with penetrating oil and some heavy pounding and pressing and pulling, I did manage to get it all apart without breaking anything.

I did what reading I could in the references mentioned and sent a letter to many of the music box people to see if anyone had any additional information on this type of box. I located two of the units. One belonged to Fred Scharpenberg in Bakersfield, California, and the other in Bellm's Museum in Sarasota, Florida. I went to both places to view these units and took pictures, measurements and notes to help with my own work. If any readers know of any other boxes like this, I would certainly appreciate hearing about them. There are, of course, several 3-disc units by Symphonion that use the smaller disc and are usually mounted vertically, often in a clock. These music boxes are called "Eroica." This Symphonion uses the large (17<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>") discs that have the centre drive and are mounted horizontally.

This particular mechanism is most interesting in that it seems to be assembled from three standard, complete Symphonion movements that are rather simplistically bolted together with some 1/4" x 3" iron stock. These three movements are ganged together with large cast-iron gears. The three separate spring barrels were also ganged together with a common cranking shaft. It is also worth noting that the screws in the standard movements are all metric screws that would indicate a European source. However, the iron parts that support the three movements are bolted together with U.S. standard threads. This of course, would indicate that the assembly was done in the United States.

In addition, the bedplates of the movements were NOT cast with "Symphonion New York." This leads me to believe that this box was assembled from movements still being imported from Germany. Some of the references suggest that these large units could have been



**The restored unit ready to mount into the piano case.**

just samples or perhaps made to order.

The size, weight and awkwardness of the massive mechanism meant that the first job was to make a stand to mount it so that I could work around the whole thing. Once it is mounted in the case, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to do any work on the machine. I mounted the mechanism horizontally at work-bench height so that I had access to both sides of the unit. It was on this stand, hanging in mid-air, that I heard the first strains of alleged music. With no sounding board, there was very little bass response but at that stage, I welcomed every chirp and squeak or grunt with pleasure and joy. It meant it would be worth some further effort.

Then came the problem of the case. By this time I had discussed different possibilities with several music box members. In my visits to Bakersfield and Sarasota, I noticed two things about the cases involved. First, they are quite plain and secondly, they were the exact size of a standard upright piano of that day. This leads me to the following supposition: During the early days of the New York factory operation, a proposal could have been made to assemble three standard mechanisms to make up one unit. There had been some successful double units and perhaps a triple unit would go well.

Like all proposals, they would not want to invest too much in inventory for an untried product, so they might have just offered a

few piano cases from a local manufacturer and installed these 3-disc units in these cases. Perhaps by the time these were sold, with the whole music box industry suffering from the introduction of the phonograph, the project was discarded.

Finally, I decided I had two routes to pursue. From the drawings and pictures I had of the two located boxes, I could, at considerable expense, try to locate a cabinet maker who could approximate a case similar to the known ones. This, however, would still be a copy, and the conservative collector might resent the attempted restoration. The second route would be to try to locate a piano case of the same period and make the necessary modifications to hold the unit. I hope the purists will forgive me, but I chose the second route. I gave myself two requirements: first, I wanted the music to be as melodious and authentic as possible; and second, I wanted the case to be artistically beautiful.

I finally located a used piano that met the conditions mentioned. It was, of course, a bit aged, but I felt that the case would end up looking just fine. The task, however, turned out to be a bit more than just a simple afternoon's task. The removal of the keys and associated mechanisms was the easy part. To remove the strings, and the massive casting holding them, was the real hassle. There are 88 notes, and most notes have three strings. Cutting these strings, under tension, took some time, and I ended up with a few nicked knuckles. Each string end was held with a fine threaded steel pin, held in a hard, old, dry, oak block. It took 72 turns (I counted them) for each steel pin to be removed, and they were so short and tight that I could not get a power drill on them for easy removal. Three strings times 88 notes times 72 turns at one quarter each turn meant many long hours of work. I have since wondered, since the depth of the case was adequate, if I should have left all those pins in. After all, no one would see them inside the case. (The next one, I will). Next came the task of getting the large casting



**The 3-disc Imperial Symphonion**

out of the case. I did not want to damage the fine-sounding back board in the rear of the case, and I did not want to weaken or take apart any of the structural parts of the case. The casting was very heavy and when it was finally free of the case, it took two of us to get it out.

After getting the mechanism properly installed in the case, the next project was to finish up the many details that would make it look like quality installation. Small things like finding the fretwork between the bedplates took some time. There were many modern panels made for speakers but with square designs. I wanted something that looked like the turn of the century. When I did find the design that looked right, it was only available in cold rolled steel, and I had to buy a whole sheet. After I cut the pieces to size, I had them brass plated.

Then a decision had to be made for the front of the case. The pictures in the references do not make it clear just how the case

opens up to load the disc. The unit at Bellm's Museum is probably closest to the original boxes. That one has a moderately plain front that folds down with a long horizontal hinge. This means when it is down it sticks out a bit when changing the disc. It also means there is nothing to see when closed, and the level of the music is somewhat diminished. Fred Scharpenberg's music box seems to be an original case, but the loading door appear to be a later change. They are framed glass and are hinged vertically at both sides. Discussing this next step in the restoration with several of the music box members in the area, I got a surprising amount of agreement. Most seemed to agree that it would be nice to see "the wheels go round," so I made three sliding glass doors for the front. I then had these glass doors etched with some simple, typical Victorian motifs. These designs were fitted into the corners of the glass to line up with the discs. I then removed the unit from the case for some final adjustments and sent the case

to Tim Arias for refinishing. It really looks beautiful.

I feel fortunate that I have 88 discs for the unit. If this was the unit that was ruined in the fire, the discs were probably in another room. There is no evidence of fire or damage on the discs. The discs are not the edge-type, but are centre driven with three location holes that mount on the centre spindle. The sets are marked A, B and C, but seem to be identical, but some teeth are off as much as 40 cents ( $\frac{1}{100}$  of a semi-tone), perhaps to give some resonance.

It has been a long process with many busy times. I have enjoyed the challenge and appreciate so much the interest and support of the music box friends in the area. I would be most remiss if I did not mention those who have worked on the unit and given me so much encouragement to keep after the collection of rusted junk until it was restored and playing. I hope I do not leave anyone out, but all those who have worked on the project have my sincere thanks. These include Dick Rigg, Chris Eric, Robin Biggins, Tony Ciuffini, Ben Lilien and Tim Arias. As I mentioned earlier, if anyone knows of any other units like this, I would certainly like to hear from you. I would like to collect all the information I can on these particular units.

And, we still have the question, "THOSE FORTUNATE, FABULOUS FINDS. HOW DO THEY HAPPEN?" I really don't know. I only suggest that you enjoy your music boxes and share this joy with all who will look and listen.

#### References:

A – *Silver Anniversary Collection*, The Musical Box Society, Edited by William Edgerton, 1974.

B – *The Encyclopaedia of Automatic Musical Instruments*, Q. David Bowers, The Vestal Press, 1974.

C – *The Musical Box*, Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume, Allen & Ulwin, 1980.

D – *The Disc Musical Box*, Graham Webb, The Vestal Press, 1984. ■

# BIRDS, MICE, WIND AND WATER

by Mark Venning

## Triumphs and tribulations of an organ tuner's life

Visitors to churches and cathedrals will occasionally be surprised, alarmed or affronted by curious semi-musical noises emanating from transept or triforium. Those who listen more carefully will recognise the unmistakable sound, all too familiar to vergers and other nature-lovers, of the organ tuner calling to his mate. Shy and retiring by nature, he is one of the unsung heroes of the world of church music.

The organ is the largest and most complex of all musical instruments, and the tuner needs to be a highly-skilled technician with a keen musical ear. He can make all the difference to an organ's health and happiness. Quite often, he can prevent a catastrophe – in small ways, by curtailing the activities of woodworm and field-mice: or sometimes on a larger scale. When our tuner visited a famous chapel in Nottinghamshire a few years ago, he observed a crack in the floor – concealed within the organ – which had not been there on his previous visit. He reported this to the owners, just in time to avert the complete collapse of the building due to mining subsidence. Multi-million-pound repairs have only recently been completed.

More often, of course, it is necessary to deal with disasters after the event, and most tuners have a rich store of such experiences. Water is a common cause of fun. I well remember receiving an eyeful from the front pipes of a village organ while investigating a report of mysterious gurgles

from the Open Diapason – the organ had literally filled up with water from a hole in the roof. More spectacularly, the ringers at a Bristol church left the bells "up" overnight a few months ago. It rained – perhaps unusually hard; the bells filled up with water; and on Sunday morning when the bells were "pulled off," ringers and organ received a ten-bell soaking. Even more recently, a school swimming bath was due for maintenance: the water was drained but, unfortunately, the wrong tap was turned and the entire contents emerged in the Chapel, flooding the organ to a depth of several feet.

Water may be unwelcome in organs, but wind is essential. Sadly, few organs now are blown by hand – human blowers were often ripe and simple characters, about whom a rich fund of stories developed ("It takes 396 pumps for the Hallelujah Chorus, and I don't care if you haven't finished"). Water-powered blowing came next, as recalled in an enchanting series of letters to *The Times* a year or two ago, including one from James Lancelot about being forbidden to take a bath during Matins because the resulting drop in water pressure would cause the organ to wail into ignominious silence. Oil and steam engines have also been tried – the organist of one of our country churches was killed when he became entangled in the machinery. Another fuel was gas, the fumes of which ruined many an organ before it was phased out.

Today, most organs are

blown less erratically by electric fans. The Royal Albert Hall has 56 horsepower. The equipment in Peterborough Cathedral is underground in the churchyard, and strong men turn pale when a tombstone rises and the ghastly figure of an organ builder is silhouetted against the darkening sky. At Peterborough, too, a nineteenth-century candlestick recently jammed inside an obscure part of the wind system and caused an embarrassing wind shortage. It must have been lying there innocently since 1894; the sub-organist points out anxiously that candlesticks usually come in pairs. At Ely, the main wind trunks run up the outside of the cathedral: one day last year they fractured near the triforium, causing an extremely rude and continuous noise which could be heard all over the city.

Some blowing faults are easy to cure. Not long ago, I received a bitter complaint that one of our organs was short of wind, so I made a long journey from Durham to investigate. The blower was in a hutch in the beer garden of the Choristers' Arms, next to the church. Amid ribald comments from the customers I inserted myself into the blowing chamber, to discover that the fan was running backwards after the church had been re-wired. The fault was solved, and the smell of alcohol in the organ area was at last satisfactorily explained. Quite often there are creatures, alive or dead, to be dealt with. Woodworm are an obvious threat. Moths eat felt,



and mice eat leather. At Westminster Abbey the quality of the music was such that a mouse went into an ecstatic trance between the folds of the bellows, and awoke in heaven when the organist switched off the wind; his flattened skeleton was eventually found by Mr. Harrison on a visit of inspection. Birds have an unhappy way of dying in organ pipes. One pigeon had lodged itself so firmly in the crook of a Trombone pipe that the tuner despaired of dislodging it. Eventually he had the bright idea of attaching a hose to the narrow end and turning the water full on; the bird, in a ripe state of decomposition, shot out and flew, faster in death than in life, straight into the path of the Vicar, who needed re-voicing afterwards. Other similar stories are too gruesome to print.

Then there is the human element. Is the organ unaccountably silent? Thieves may have removed the pipes, or the lead from the roof. Is a note sticking? The organist may have dropped a hymn-book on the keys, or a pencil lead between them. Has the bellows jammed? The flower ladies may have put the Christmas crib, assorted vases and the spare candlesticks in that useful cupboard just below the organ pipes. Canny workmen are a constant source of problems. Electricians fasten cables to moving parts, and a trailing flex is quite enough to knock over the smallest pipes, ready to be trampled on; builders and decorators fill the organ with rubble, or drop bricks from a height. The permutations are unlimited.

Some episodes veer between fantasy and farce. A stained-glass expert arrived at a country church one day to examine a window behind the organ. He stood on a row of sixteen-foot pipes, which duly

collapsed with a domino effect, bringing him with them. Thus brought low, he picked himself up and went off to the Vicarage for a restorative cup of tea. When he returned with the Vicar, the church was full of smoke – an electric cable had fractured and set fire to the bellows. The fire brigade brought the saga to a watery end – leaving the tuner to clear up.

Cyphers (unwanted notes, alternatively known in country districts as syphons) are the most conspicuous of organic misbehaviour. Some are written in the music. Long pedal notes are always worrying for the organ builder, especially at opening recitals: Franck's Prelude, Fugue and Variation is notorious for bringing tuners out in nasty rashes. At the dedication of the Hereford Cathedral organ, the tuner dived in head-first to silence the offending note – in the ensuing race between

him and Franck, the latter won by a semi-quaver.

Organists vary in their reactions to mechanical difficulties. The best of them sail serenely on through perils and disasters, modulating as necessary. I was called out one Saturday afternoon to a Cathedral not a thousand miles from here; my small daughter (useful for reaching the parts most organ builders cannot reach) and I mended the cypher five minutes before a big service. We then sat inside the organ and watched through a chink in the wainscot while the Bishop, Chancellor, Dean and Canons entered in stately procession. The music sounded familiar: we soon recognised an eloquent arrangement of the organ builders' signature tune, "Oh dear, what can the matter be?"

*Mark Venning is Managing Director of Harrison & Harrison Ltd., who have been building organs in the City of Durham since 1872. ■*

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# Musical Box Oddments

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 52

Sidney Jones (London, 1861-1946), the son of a bandmaster, turned to composing after some years with his father as clarinettist and conductor. His first song success was *Linger longer loo* (1893) and he also composed twelve comic operas including . . .

A Gaiety Girl	1893
An Artist's Model	1895
The Geisha	1896
A Greek Slave	1898
San Toy	1899

Many of these are on disc, but on cylinder only the vastly popular *Geisha* is often heard.

## Arthur Junod

Among the several close-knit Ste. Croix families in the 1880s and 90s were the several Junods. Of special note is Arthur Philippe Junod who was a maker and inventor of musical boxes closely linked with Mermoud and Cuendet. He was also grandfather of our member Roland Fisher who has kindly supplied a huge amount of helpful data.



Fig. 1. Arthur Junod's sales catalogue for J.A.C. musical boxes, printed in Neuchatel, 1889. Louis Jaccard, their agent in Germany. The price columns left blank, unfortunately.

Arthur's parents, Felix Junod of Ste. Croix and Rosa Cuendet of L'Auberson, were married in 1855 and he was born in May 1864, one of a large family. He must have gone through the usual apprenticeship with one of the Junods or Cuendets, and in about 1888 he launched the firm Junod, Aubert & Cie. with an extensive sales catalogue as shown in Fig. 1. It emphasized his patents including UK 13057 of October 1886 which protected his in-line mechanism, with left-hand crank winding and unusual safety check, illustrated in the catalogue as in Fig. 2. The initials J.A.C. were the firm's registered trade mark, shown on their catalogue and sometimes incorporated in a transfer design on case fronts, and on some tune sheets.

In 1889 Arthur Junod married Anna Turin, and by 1894 he was in business as Arthur Junod-Turin, it being the local custom to add the wife's family name. Their headed paper first read "Manufacture de Pièces à Musique en tous genres" (of all types) - later simplified to "Manufacture de Boîtes à Musique."

In a letter dated 12 Sept. 1894 to his wife, which begins "Ma bien chère Anna" and apologises for delay since he last wrote, Junod describes his business meetings and sales of automata during the last leg of his travels. When this letter started he had reached Meiringen (only a year after Sherlock Holmes toppled Moriarty into the nearby Reichenbach Falls) and was annoyed because "M. Althaus and his accountant were both away, I found the foreman who should have finished a Duplex but was delayed by a broken spring." I expect this Duplex had two parallel cylinders. An example of the in-line type is shown in Fig. 3. The letter goes on to record his journey to Brienz, then across the lake to Iseltwald, back to the north shore at Riggensberg, on to Berne (accompanied by a friend) then Fribourg

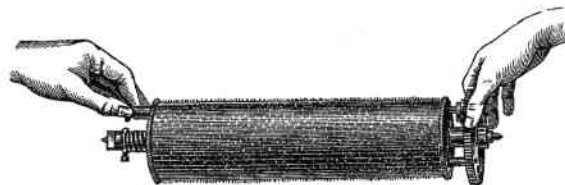
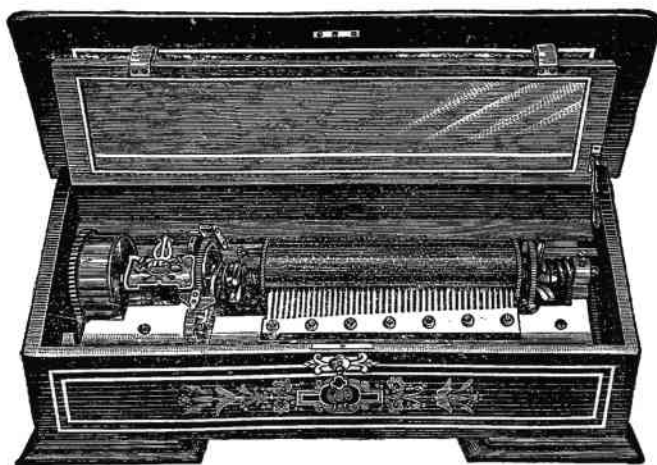
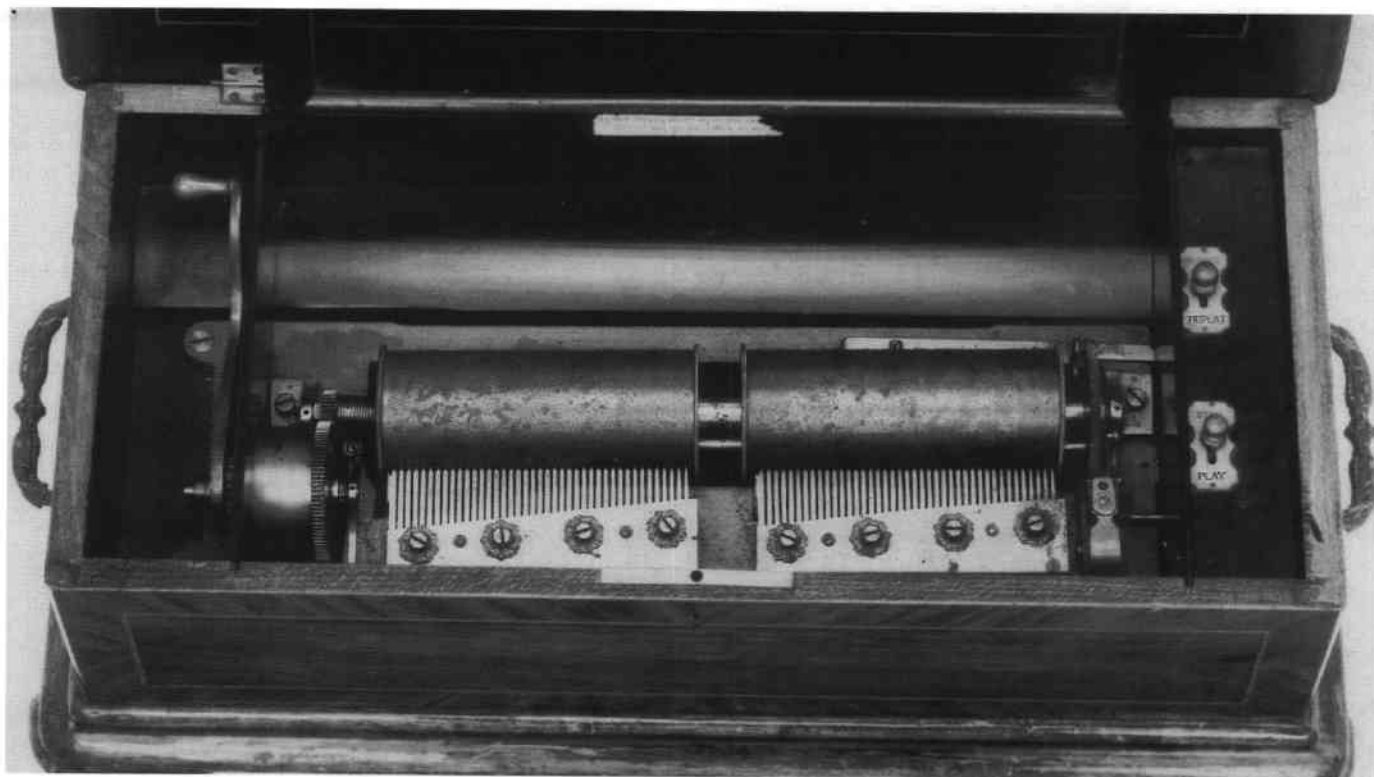


Fig. 2. Catalogue illustration of Helvetia interchangeable, with plaque embossed "J.A.C. Déposé" between spring and governor, and HELVETIA PATENT at the centre of the long transfer on case front - fudged in this drawing!



**Fig. 3. Ami Rivenc in-line Duplex serial 41271, probably made in 1891, with two 6" = 15cm cylinders playing eight airs. The two 41-tooth combs are of conventional sublime harmonie type, the right comb having more higher-pitched teeth than the left. So the only novelty is the combs and cylinders being separated by about one inch, 2½cms. I doubt whether this noticeably improves the sublime harmonie effect. Photo by courtesy of Sotheby's, London.**

(where he took an order) and to Payerne (where he just missed M. Perrin) and Lucens (where he found M. Perrin) thence back to Lausanne where "on the way to the station I sold an automaton in a temperance cafe where I went for a cup of coffee." Then straight back to Yverdon where he found his mother and "some items sent down for the Exhibition." They were comfortable main line railway journeys except crossing Brienz lake and the detour to Payerne and Lucens south-east of Neuchatel lake.

In 1896 Junod drafted a contract offering terms to Bornand for the rights to his Helicoidal patent (Swiss no. 12243) and to his "rechange simple" system for interchangeable cylinders. The helicoidal is described in Vol. 7, page 174.

In another draft contract dated February 1901 he offered Mermod Freres another invention which he had sent to the Swiss Patent Office on February 8, 1901, and of which he had made a working model. This draft includes a note stating that he had worked since February 13th at the Mermod factory on using perforated plates to replace cylinders. Both contracts include down payments and royalties for the use of the patents, which is a strong indication that makers were prepared to pay for new ideas; and it may explain why some innovations were so quickly adopted by several makers.

Though it is not known to what extent these two draft contracts were finalized, there is no doubt that Alfred Junod was a significant figure in musical box development. More would have been heard of him, had he not died aged only 40, in 1904. I hope these notes may trigger further information about him.

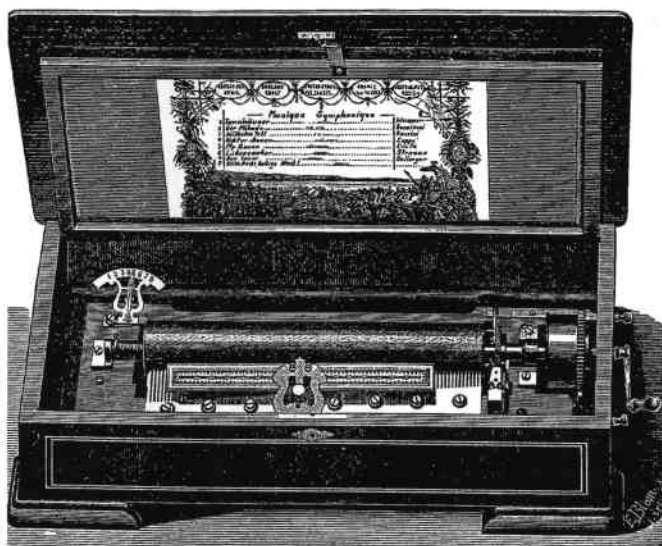
### **The J.A.C. Sales catalogue**

This 1889 catalogue is very similar to those of Paillard and Mermod in offering a wide range of musical box types and sizes, with all the usual embellishments and a choice of case styles. Three models are offered . . .

THE HELVETIA interchangeable, patented. This



**Fig. 4. This "Helvetia standing" design was used on Swiss postage stamps from 1882 until 1907. It was also adopted by the Swiss Patent Office in 1889. Photo kindly provided by the Royal Philatelic Society, London.**



Cartel Jurassien se remontant par le côté.

Fig. 5. Accurate artist's drawing of the "Cartel Jurassien wound from the side," in which all eight tunes are legible and so is the notorious spelling of Staates in the top centre patent panel (Ord-Hume No. 32). Tune 2, Der Mikado, is the latest, 1885, here attributed to Bucalossi. The two external controls can just be seen and the catalogue stresses that side winding makes these movements suitable for mounting in various objects and so they are priced separately for sale without a case.

comes in fifteen varieties, cylinder lengths from 5½ to 16 pouces (15 to 43cms), six to twelve airs, - all usual types plus "Melomedium Expressive" which I cannot explain. All are fitted with a safety check, for which the

French word as used in the catalogue is parachute meaning literally "warding off a fall" but used figuratively as "warding off a failure." To the Swiss and French, every type of safety check is simply a parachute, and that is how Mermod labelled theirs. If only we'd known. Extras available for the HELVETIA were double springs, Longue Marche, nickel-plating, superior cases, and separate cases to hold three cylinders. Cylinders with any desired tune could be made to order for all types. Some tune sheets and case transfers included the figure of Helvetia, the Mother of Switzerland, holding a staff and a shield with white cross - as on the 1882 issue of Swiss postage stamps, Fig. 4.

LE JURASSIEN ("Of the Jura"). This "special, simplified" musical box is crank-wound at the right side from which the two control levers protrude. The glass lid covers the whole interior. Tune indicator and zither are fitted. Extras available are double spring drive, nickel plating and parachute. Special types available are mandolin, piccolo, sublime-harmonie and Baryton-harmonique - a term also used rather mysteriously by Langdorff. Thirty varieties are listed with cylinders from 7½ to 16 pouces (20 to 43cms), the catalogue illustration is reproduced in Fig. 5.

MUSIQUE ORDINAIRE. This is a conventional lever-wound model offered in almost every known variety including sublime harmonie quatuor, and in most combinations of bells, drum, castanet, flute and singing bird, with several case styles. Extras available are double or quadruple springs, tune indicator, tune



Fig. 6. Junod's tune sheet design, exactly as in the catalogue illustration for Musique Ordinaire. In full colour, this one is on serial 13746, six air Harpe Harmonique Zither with 11" = 28cm cylinder. A small oval agent or retailer's label is affixed - Julius Seifert, possibly at Leipzig. Tune 5 is the latest, 1877, here translated into German. Tunes 3 and 6 are both from 1875 operas.





**Fig. 7. Paillard "Columbia" serial 96998, eight airs, with PVF tune sheet and oval plate at left front of bedplate embossed C. Paillard & Co./Manufacturers/Ste. Croix Switzerland. Some later bedplates had cast lettering in the same position reading USA/PATENT/SEPT 25th/1894. The stub axle engaging the snail cam carries a fork which is driven from a peg on the spring barrel, as shown.**

selector and zither. Its tune sheet design is shown in Fig. 6.

The catalogue also offers repairs, provides user instruction in German, French and English, and illustrates 31 available spare parts. I think it is most unlikely that all types of boxes were kept in stock, but the number of different blanks involved was comparatively small and I expect any model could be completed from the blank stage in well under a month.

### **Paillard Columbia**

By 1890 most Ste. Croix makers had partly adopted the basic design change which placed the cylinder and the spring drive axially in line. Junod's design is noted above and Mermod's in Vol. 13, page 196. Paillard had similar bearings, some cast integral with the bedplate, and used the spring housing as the great wheel driving the governor, with the spring cover plate providing the stop slot for the stop arm. The Paillard design was less venturesome than Mermod's, retaining their established types of tune indicator, tune selector, safety check and governor. They apparently continued their practice of fitting the safety check, tune selector and speed control only to their more expensive models, sometimes as optional extras.

As usual in these late designs the cylinder arbor is replaced by a stub axle on each end cap, with a compression spring at the base end to hold the cylinder

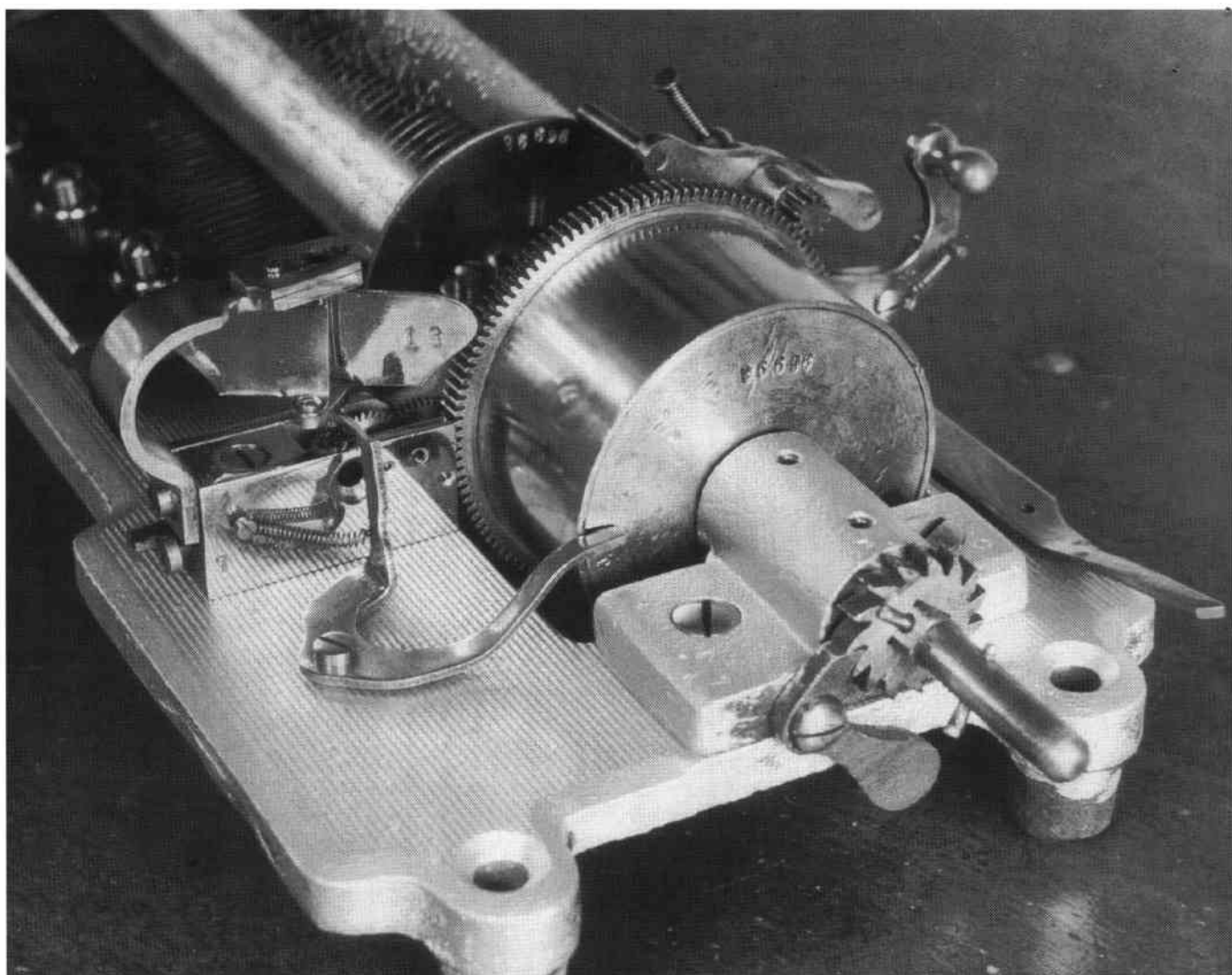
against the snail cam. An ingenious feature of the Paillard design is the enlarged snail cam which is mounted off-centre on the spring housing, so that the treble end stub axle bears directly on a cam step. This retains the sound design principle of the old traditional design, namely that during play there is no movement between the cam and the stub axle locating point.

Like the other makers, Paillard used the same basic design with different bearings for models with interchangeable cylinders, though these had their track widths increased from .017 to .022 inch (.43 to .56cm).

### *Design details*

One of the Paillard Columbia models is the sublime harmonie and a typical example is shown in Fig. 7, serial 96998. Both combs have 38 teeth, the **a** teeth (440Hz) being nos. 18 and 19 on the bass comb and no. 9 on the treble, all with relative stiffness 325. The cylinder length is 11<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (30cm) over end caps, with 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (27cm) pinned; diameter is 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (27 lignes, 60mm). The tune gap is rather wide at 7/<sub>8</sub>" (22mm). Ideal playing time is about 68 seconds per cylinder revolution, giving 60 seconds per tune with cylinder surface speed .11" (2.8mm) per second. The governor butterfly makes 1800 revs per cylinder rev.

The large, robust, single cast iron bearing for the spring arbor is bolted to the bedplate and carries the pivot bolt for the winding ratchet pawl, gravity



**Fig. 8. Treble end of Paillard serial 96998 showing the spring arbor bearing block with oil holes; gravity pawl; and special stop arm engaging a slot in the spring cover while its vertical arm arrests the governor stop tail. A coil spring holds it in the stop position. The pin on the Play/Stop lever pushes it forward for the Play position.**

controlled, as shown in Fig. 8. This also shows the stop arm in the shape of a bell-crank pivoted to the bedplate with one arm shaped to engage the slot in the spring cover and the other bent vertically upwards to engage the stop tail on the endless.

Blank number 7 is stamped on the treble edge of the bedplate and on the spring arbor bearing, snail cam and governor - though a stray 13 appears on one butterfly wing. Numerals 1 and 7 and letters which could be GPG or CPC are cast under the bedplate - the latter suggesting C Paillard & C.

The serial number 96998 is stamped in six places including the treble end cap, governor and cylinder bearing cover. Gamme 294 is scribed on both bass leads.

The springs on these in-line movements have to supply only a quarter of the torque needed for a 4 to 1 gear drive, but they correspondingly have to be about four times longer. In this movement the spring thickness is down from the usual .025" (.64mm) or so to .016" (.4mm), the width is about normal at 1 3/8" (35mm), but the length is over 20 feet. It comfortably runs the movement for ten minutes, if desired, as claimed on the tune sheet, Fig. 9, though it will slow down until a heavy chord stops it because no stop-work

is provided. Winding-up is very brisk, needing one turn per tune, but again the lack of a Geneva stop means the thin spring takes the shock of arresting a strong-armed winder, which must be why I had to repair the broken spring on serial 96998.

The case measures 25 by 10 by 9 inches high (64 x 25 x 23cm) over podium and feet, with colourful transfer on front, a marquetry picture of flowers and garden tools on the domed lid, and carrying handles. Under the case, 97094 has been crossed out and 96998 added. The difference of 96 serial numbers may represent a mere week's output by Paillard.

### *Performance*

This 11 inch 8 air 76-tooth Paillard sublime harmonie demonstrates very clearly the advances made in almost everything except tune arrangements, over the period 1875 to 1890, when compared with a 13 inch 8 air 96-tooth Nicole. The Paillard gives roughly equal musical quality with 25% fewer teeth. Such was the general opinion when these boxes played *Sweet Spirit* from *Lurline* (by Wallace, 1860), but about 66% voted in favour of the Nicole for its more delicate arrangements. In fact the Paillard was a bit below par in exploiting the variations in volume possible with sublime harmonie - one of the assets clearly claimed in the Paillard patent.



Fig. 9. Tune sheet of Paillard 96998. Columbia Sublime Harmonie is in blue and red; To run 10 minutes is in red; Made in Switzerland is the usual purple stamp and the rest is in black. Tune 3 is the latest, 1888 - and tune 5 is the earliest, 1795. Usual high quality multicolour litho, done in Paris, size 8 by 5½ inches (20 by 14cms).

### Who made what?

An interesting complication in tracing the maker of a musical box arises when he buys from another maker and labels the result as his own. George Baker certainly did it, and in the example seen he did nothing to obliterate the actual maker. He added his own tune sheet and his own special leather glass-lid lifter, embossed with the large BTB monogram.

L'Épée serial 49470, with 4½" = 11cm cylinder playing four airs mandolin has this lifter and a plain Baker-Troll tune sheet (as in Fig. 7 on page 140, Vol. 14) which gives the serial number 4349 and lists the tunes, all before 1872. The movement is fixed by screws from under the base board into the bedplate legs, in a plain grained case, spring, governor and tune indicator nickel-plated, all typical L'Épée.

Another box, with nickel-plated 6" = 15cm cylinder playing six airs has its serial number 15976 stamped on the bass end cylinder bearing, and CM on the treble end bearing. Its chunky bedplate with rounded corners is screwed down on blocks in a conventional case with inlaid lid. It has the BTB lifter but unfortunately no tune sheet. Latest tune is from *Carmen*, 1875. I think it was almost certainly made by PVF. Nailed to the underside of the glass lid frame is a small rectangular plaque inscribed GEO. BAKER & CO./Musical Box Manufacturers/GENEVA.

Perhaps Geo. Baker, with or without Troll, had an occasional or pressing demand for these smaller

movements and preferred buying to making. It certainly suggests that these makers all held their manufacturing quality in equal regard. PVF are known to have made some of the 50,000 series Nicole movements.

### Non period piece

A justifiable out-of-period use of a musical box occurs in the Lionel Jefferies 1972 film, "The Amazing Mr. Blunden." Music needed for a scene set in the year 1818 is effectively provided by a cylinder box with cylinder about 11" = 28cm. Where they went a bit astray was in choosing a typical 1880s box, lever wound and with tune indicator and zither - clearly seen but definitely not heard.

It is so rare to find an effective working zither at an auction viewing that perhaps one should never expect to hear the effect on film or read about it in fiction. Yet apparently everybody yearned for a zither in the 1880s, and they were well catered for in the Junod catalogue. Some of the Helvetia and Jurassien models came with zithers, noted in the catalogue as "Symphonique-zither" or "Piccolo-zither;" and for all Musique Ordinaire models a zither was available as an extra, "for changing at will the sound of the box."

This raises yet another puzzle, because serial 13746 noted in Fig. 5 must have come with the zither promised in its tune sheet. But the "Harpe Harmonique Zither" type is not mentioned in the 1889 catalogue. ■

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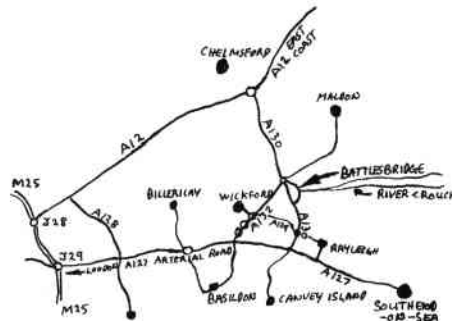
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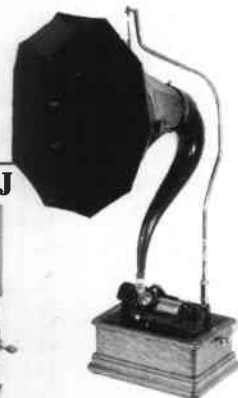
Polyphon No. 5 K-Changer  
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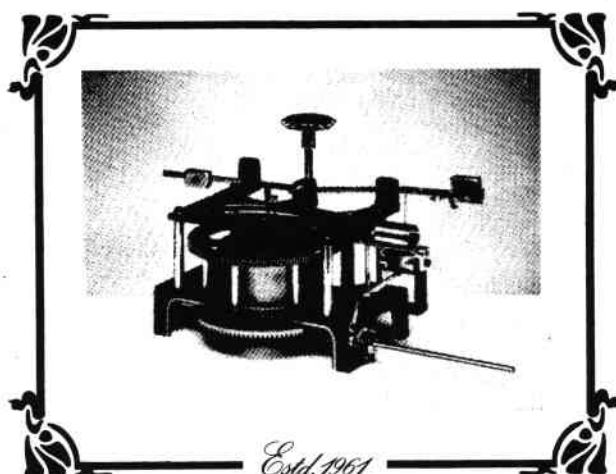
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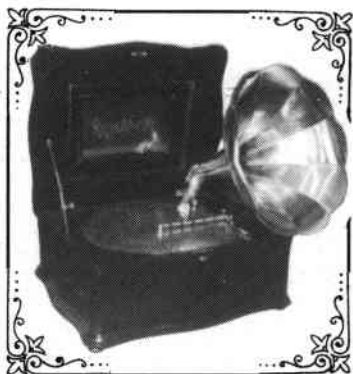
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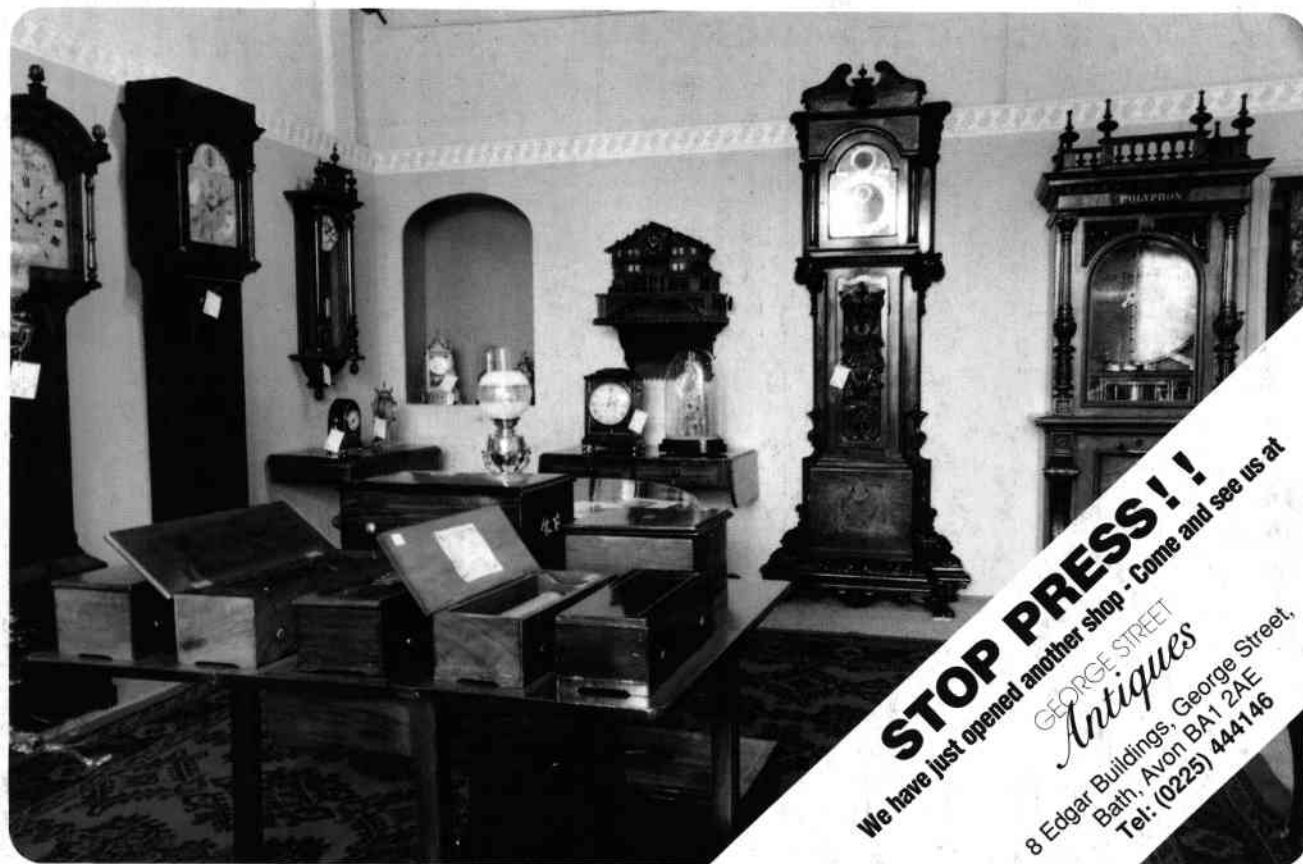
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