

# The Music Box

An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 16 Number 3

Autumn/Fall 1993

Edited by Graham Whitehead



**Inside**

**Register News**

**Members Holidays**

**Waiting for the Unika**

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

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# The Music Box

An International Magazine  
of Mechanical Music

The Journal of the  
Musical Box Society  
of Great Britain.

Volume 16  
Number 3  
Autumn/Fall 1993

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## Contents

Society Topics .....	64
Summer Meeting and A.G.M. ....	64
Newsdesk	
Theft from Graham Webb's shop .....	65
Receivers take over York Museum .....	66
Insurers join Antiques trade .....	66
Register News .....	67
Members Holidays	
Kevin McElhone and Jim Hall .....	70
Waiting for the Unika .....	74
Musical Box Oddments	
H. A. V. Bulleid .....	75
Classified .....	84

The Editor welcomes articles, letters and other contributions for publication in the Journal. The Editor expressly reserves the right to amend or refuse any of the foregoing.

Any contribution is accepted on the understanding that its author is solely responsible for the opinions expressed in it and the publication of such contributions does not necessarily imply that any such opinions therein are those of the Society or its Editor.

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### Front Cover:

Line drawing from the collection of Peter G. Schuhknecht, Hannover.

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## SOCIETY TOPICS

### FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

**Autumn Meeting**  
**8th - 10th October, 1993**  
**The White Hart Hotel,**  
**Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR.**  
**Tel: 0522 526222**

The White Hart is an elegant, traditional hotel dating back in parts to 1387. It is within very easy walking distance (2 mins.) of the Cathedral and Castle, and also museums and antique shops. Ample under-cover camera surveyed parking.

#### Hotel Package

Dinner, bed and breakfast, Friday 8th and Saturday 9th October £116 (please note "Winter Warmer" rate for 3 nights, bed, breakfast and evening meal £149). Society dinner only, Saturday night £15 (approx.). Please advise in advance if you require a vegetarian meal.

#### Programme

##### Friday evening

After meal at hotel there will be an open evening at the home of Roy and Mary Ison for a glass of wine and viewing of private collections of local members - any other boxes from visitors are very welcome.

##### Saturday

Registration.

Talks by:- George Worswick on "the musical box register".

John Powell on "the restoration of a B Mukle and Söhng organ clock".

George Worswick on "early musical boxes".

Alan Pell on "barrel organs".

Adrian Little on "unusual musical boxes".

##### Saturday afternoon

A group of up to 25 members can view the Usher Watch collection with George Worswick. Anyone who missed the Friday evening viewing of private collections of local members at Roy Ison's will be able to do so.

A visit to the Lincoln Toy Museum is highly recommended.

##### Saturday evening

Society dinner - followed by Captain Creighton, Senior Captain for Monarch Airlines on "The funny side of flying".

##### Sunday morning

Coach trip (approx. 15 miles) to visit a special demonstration arranged by Dorothy and Don Robinson called "How it was done in Grandfathers Day."

This will include fair organs, six steam engines, a steam threshing demonstration plus three large sheds full of fascinating by-gones, all collected by a local enthusiast.

Hopefully a Ladies Craft Table will be available on Saturday.

Less expensive accommodation is available near to the White Hart in smaller family-run hotels. Further details may be obtained from local organiser Roy Ison on 0522 540406.

The organiser is aware that the hotel price is higher than usual but because of the short notice and the locality, it is the best that could be achieved and he hopes that this will not deter members.

It is hoped that this will be a more traditional music box meeting and it would be appreciated if as many members as possible would bring a music box or any interesting item from their collection for other members to view.

We hope that members attending

for the day on Saturday will try and stay for the Society dinner.

Although the Christmas meeting has proved to be the least popular of the year, (especially when held in London), and therefore no meeting is scheduled for this Christmas, Roy would like to hear from anyone who would like to organise a small local meeting that perhaps the keener members willing to travel at that time would also be interested in attending.

Roy is also considering an overseas visit to the Netherlands, probably May or June next year. This would include a visit to the Mechanical Music Museum at Utrecht and to other local collections. In order that he may assess the interest, would anyone wishing to consider going on that trip, please contact him on 0522 540406. ■



**Christopher Proudfoot takes a bid from the back of the room at the Society's annual auction.**



**Curator and Director of the Musical Museum, Brentford, receives on behalf of the museum, a framed certificate from our President Alan Wyatt, proclaiming Honorary Life Membership of MBSGB.**

## REPORT ON PAST MEETINGS

Summer Meeting and A.G.M.  
5th June, 1993

At the Society A.G.M. attended by 58 members on Saturday, 5th June at the Musical Museum as part of their 30th Anniversary Celebrations, at the conclusion of his Report our President, Alan Wyatt, presented Honorary Life Membership to the Museum.

In accepting the framed certificate, the Curator and Director, Richard Cole, praised the volunteers who contributed so much in maintaining the high standards set by the founder, the late Frank Holland, MBE.

The Hon. Treasurer, Bob Holden, was able to report a surplus for the year of £204.14.

The Hon. Editor reported that due to the adoption of new technology, particularly in the make-up of the pages, which accounted for two thirds of the cost of producing the Journal, he was able to maintain, or even slightly reduce, the cost which enabled the Treasurer to recommend to the meeting a continuation of the £18.00 subscription. Next year will thus be the fifth year in which the subscription has remained the same.

Due to other commitments Ted Bowman was unable to offer himself for re-election as Subscriptions Secretary and Adrian Little was unable to continue as Meetings Secretary. In expressing appreciation of their contributions, the President announced that Bob Haiselden had been nominated as Subscriptions Secretary and Roy Ison as Meetings Secretary. Other officers remained unchanged and are listed on the contents pages of this Journal.

Two other major matters were discussed. The President, in view of the falling attendance at the Christmas meeting, asked if the members present wanted a Christmas meeting. It was obvious that they did, but possibly in, say, Birmingham rather than London.

A petition having been received from Jim Hall objecting to the holding of the Annual General Meetings in London on the grounds of difficulties in getting to London and their losing money (which they do not) the President pointed out the By-laws permitted the A.G.M. to be held in the Summer or Spring. After considerable discussion it was decided to hold it on the Friday night of the Spring meeting, wherever the Spring meeting was held, ideally alternating between the North and the South.

During the course of the meeting reference was made to the major operations on Ted Brown and Reg Waylett, both of whom seem to be well on the way to recovery, and David Snelling, who has had a successful five way bypass.

Finally, a display sign bearing the name of the Society which had been donated by Alan Pratt was on display, and it was intended to use it whenever possible.

The meeting broke one tradition of the Musical Box Society, it finished within the time allocated for it.

The full Minutes of the A.G.M. and the Financial Report submitted by the Hon. Treasurer are available from the Hon. Minutes Secretary on request. ■

### Acknowledgement

The diary of British events featured in the last edition of Music Box had been compiled by Kevin Bryne for the Fairground Organ Preservation Society for which this listing supplied and incorrectly credited to Dorothy Robinson, is gratefully acknowledged.

## NEWSDESK

# Graham Webb's Musical Box Shop Raided

Sadly it is becoming quite a regular occurrence in the pages of Music Box, reporting details of stolen musical boxes.

In this edition we report of a theft from Graham Webb, a former Editor of this magazine, whose antique shop specialising in mechanical musical instruments was broken into between the evening of the 16th and morning of the 18th August. As in the raid on Clive Jones Museum in Chichester, the burglar alarm had been disarmed enabling the thieves to take away 30 or so musical boxes all of which had been repaired or restored and were ready for sale. At the time, Graham Webb was on a touring holiday of France and was eventually tracked down by George Glastris of the mechanical music department at Sotheby's who has already notified other auction houses internationally of the loss and details of the boxes taken appear below. Anyone suspecting seeing these boxes should contact Graham Webb at his Brighton shop in Ship Street, telephone: 0273-321803.

1. Interchangeable cylinder musical box No. 45143 with 3 x 7 tune slotted cylinders and tune indicator. The lid veneered in rosewood with cross banding and centre inlay on plinth with drawer for extra cylinders. Cylinder 9" long (23cm). Overall 28" long (71cm). Swiss c. 1890.

2. 8-tune musical box by Ami Rivenc with centre drum and four bells. Lid veneered in rosewood with centre inlay and grained case No. 58484. Cylinder 9½" long (24cm). Case 20¾" long (53cm). Swiss c. 1885. Bird strikers to bells.

3. 'Sublime Harmonie' musical box with two musical combs each with bass and treble. Case with rosewood veneered lid and grained with centre inlay. Cylinder 11" long (28cm). Case about 20" long (51cm). Swiss c. 1885.

4. 6-bell musical box by Paillard with chaise and bells. Case and lid with elaborate inlays. Cylinder about 9" long (23cm). Case about 18" long (46cm) and almost a cube. Swiss c. 1885.

5. 6-bell musical box playing 10 tunes, with tune indicator. The case and lid veneered in Ambayna. Cylinder 7¼" long (18.5cm). Case 17½" long (44.5cm). Swiss c. 1885.

6. 3-bell musical box. Case grained with small transfer to lid centre. Cylinder 6" long (15cm). Case about 18" long (46cm). Swiss c. 1890.

7. Coin-operated cylinder musical box No. 28945. The lid in two parts to allow winding without access to interior. Coin slot to lid and drawer in right side of case. Tune card to lid interior with 8 tunes. Plays two tunes for one old penny. Cylinder 8½" long (21cm). Case 18½" long (47cm). Swiss c. 1895.

8. Symphonium disc musical box with 10⅝" metal disc. The movement with two combs. The case with panelled lid, veneered overall in walnut. Size about 15" x 15" (38cm). German c. 1895.

9. 'Hidden Bells' cylinder musical box, the bells under the bedplate out of sight. Tune card on lid interior written in German. Case in rosewood with inlay to lid centre. Cylinder probably about 30" long (76cm). Swiss c. 1880.

10. 'Mandoline' musical box by Ami Rivenc playing two tunes per revolution of the cylinder. Coloured tune card on lid interior. Movement nickel plated. Case lid in rosewood with good inlay. Cylinder about 13" long (33cm). Case about 22" long (56cm). Swiss c. 1890.

11. 12-tune musical box by L'Epée. Tune card on lid interior marked 'A.W.' (for Adolph Woog). Card in black and white. Case front and lid in rosewood with cross-banding. Good large inlay to lid. Cylinder about 14" long (35.5 cm). Case about 26" long (66cm). French c. 1880.

12. 'Mandoline' 'Early Lever' musical box by Paillard (P.V.F.) Tune card to lid interior listing 6 tunes. Front and lid in rosewood with brass stringing. Cylinder 13" long (33cm). The narrow case 21¼" long (54cm). Swiss c. 1875.

13. 12-tune, 2 tunes per revolution of the cylinder musical box by Nicole Frères No. 32015, keywind. The case grained with lid in rosewood with extra fine brass and 'enamel' inlays. Cylinder  $12\frac{1}{4}$ " long (31cm) x  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " (7cm). Case  $20\frac{1}{2}$ " long (52cm). The tune card not original. Swiss c. 1850.

14. 12-tune, 2 tunes per revolution of the cylinder musical box by Nicole Frères. 44 thousand series. Lever wind. The case grained with lid in rosewood with fine large inlay to centre. Cylinder *about*  $12\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $2\frac{3}{4}$ ". Case *about* 22" long (56cm). No tune card. Swiss c. 1885.

15. 8-tune, 2 tunes per turn of the cylinder musical box probably by Nicole Frères but name not stamped. Serial No. 20491. Lid interior with Lager Nicole tune card. Key-wind. Case in burr walnut with box stringing. Key restraining panel missing. Cylinder  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " (22 x 6cm). Case 16" long (40.5cm). Swiss c. 1840.

16. Large carriage clock with singing bird above in glazed reserve in keeping with clock. French c. 1880.

17. Carriage clock with musical movement below. Music plays on hour. French c. 1890.

18. 12-tune musical box by Paillard. No tune card. Case lid in rosewood with inlay to centre. Cylinder *about* 13" long (33cm). Case *about* 23" long (58.5cm). Swiss c. 1880.

19. 10-tune musical box by Paillard (P.V.F.) No. 6793. Tune card to lid interior. Lid in rosewood with central inlay. Cylinder 13" long (33cm). Case  $21\frac{1}{2}$ " (55cm).

20. 3-bell cylinder musical box. Tune card to lid interior. Case grained with rosewood lid and inlay to centre. Cylinder *about* 6" long. Case *about* 18" long. Swiss c. 1895.

21. Musical box by Ami Rivenc. Needs work on both case and movement.

22. Small musical box in grained case with rosewood lid and small inlay to centre. Cylinder *about* 6" long (15cm). Case *about* 12" long (30.5cm). Swiss c. 1885.

23. Cylinder musical movement in wood box.

24. Large 8-tune 'Mandoline' musical box by Nicole Frères. Tune card to lid interior. Case in rosewood with good large inlays to front and lid. Lever wind. Probably 40 thousand series. Good well shaped case with plinth. Cylinder *probably about* 16" long (40.5cm). Case *about* 30" long (76cm). Swiss c. 1885.

25. 4-tune key-wind Nicole Frères cylinder musical box. No.

20808. Tune card to lid interior. Case of plain fruit-wood. Cylinder  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " long (19.5cm). Case  $13\frac{3}{4}$ " long (35cm). Swiss c. 1840.

26. Small cylinder musical box in grained case. Cylinder *about*  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " long (11.5cm). Case *about* 8" long (20cm). Tune card to lid interior.

27. Damaged musical box. List incomplete. ■

## Insurers join Antiques trade in tracking Stolen Goods

This was the heading in a recent article in "The Times" newspaper where their reporter Anne Caborn reported on the "Art Loss Register" which pools information on stolen valuables.

To help locate stolen property the Insurance industry with the Art and Antiques trade has set up the Art Loss Register at 13 Grosvenor Place, London. The register contains a data base of stolen antiques and pictures and any owner of a "lost" property can register the stolen item for a £20 fee provided that the article is worth at least £1,000. Major insurance companies notify the register if the owner is not a subscriber. As thieves or their accomplices often try to sell stolen items through auction houses, the register checks auction catalogues for stolen items. So far the register has helped recover items worth over £4,500,000.

"The Times" report, emphasises the value of the services voluntarily and freely provided by the Music Box Registrar on behalf of the Society and its members. For security reasons the name of the Registrar who holds this information in confidential files, remains a guarded secret. Needless to say this person is an active and well respected member of this Society. Quite apart from the more obvious benefits of being a registered owner in the unfortunate position of having a musical box stolen, the lists compiled into the data base provide an excellent historical record and enable us to learn more about the makers and their music with information continually being updated under the heading Register News. A form to enable members to register their items is enclosed in this Journal. ■

## Receivers take over York's Museum of Automata

On the 22nd June the City of York was stunned to learn that the Museum of Automata, which opened there on 8th March 1990, is now under the control of accountants Kidsons Impey of Leeds, who have been appointed Joint Administrative Receivers.

This magnificent Museum remains open, but it might be wise for anyone planning a long special journey to first telephone to check the current position, the number being 0904 655550.

The Museum which features the personal collection of Jon and Andrea Robertson, and includes much of the former Jack Donovan collection, has been superbly and imaginatively displayed regardless of expense.

It has been reported that Jon Robertson invested £3 million of his own money into the project and that additionally just under £2 million is currently owed to Bankers Securum UK Limited. The Museum is expected to lose £300,000 in addition to shortfalls of £430,000 in the first two years. The Museum was unable to meet the obligations under its mortgage, the receivership gives a breathing space and there have been rumours of the possibilities of forming a Trust.

A spokesman for the Receivers stated that it was emphatically not their intention to dispose of any part or parts of the collection nor to hold an auction to dispose of any of the pieces. Their prime object in the short term is to continue to run the Museum as a going concern and to preserve the attraction intact.

The Museum has deservedly won many awards and would be a serious loss both to the City of York and the country if it was forced to close. ■

**HAVE YOU PAID  
YOUR 1993  
SUBSCRIPTION  
YET?**

# Register News

The number of boxes recorded on the Register has now reached 2,500. What has been particularly pleasing to note is the increase in interest from Europe and the U.S.A. Information is starting to come in from both these areas.

To obtain a better presentation, the plan of the Register has been altered to avoid printing the makers name for every record. This has made space available for inserting more information in the comments section. I hope members will like the new layout and find it less tiring to use.

The brief notes on each of the makers is not intended to be a comprehensive account of these manufacturers. Rather it is designed to be an outline of their work and an encouragement for the reader to study further. Those having extra information on any of the makers are requested to send in such information for inclusion in any Register update.

Regretfully the security aspect of the Register has not been finalised, but this work is being considered carefully at the moment. When it is complete and has been put into operation, there ought to be an improved chance of recovering any stolen item. Obviously, any box will have to be on the Register and have the allocated Register number marked on the rear left hand corner of the base board to qualify for the search procedure.

Some members may have read recently in "The Times" that the Arts Loss Register is undertaking a similar service for the recovery of stolen paintings. It seems as though they are having some success and

their work is appreciated by the police and the insurance industry. Both organisations have endorsed their efforts and are willing to co-operate. Possibly the Musical Box Register will impress both police and the insurance people as well, but it will have to be an efficient system and fully established.

My thanks to the member who sent in some excellent photographs of ratchet winders as used by Nicole. The findings to date on the use of these winders indicates they were sold only with the more unusual or classic type of box and were not sent out with the standard boxes. Of course some must have become separated from their original box and are now being used in any Nicole box that has the same key size. It is possible to spot in the Register where this has happened. There were minor changes in design between the early and late winders.

Ratchet winders appear to have been used between the 25,000 and the 43,000 series. The first recorded box is numbered 25,224 and the last batch using ratchet winding finished with serial number 43,985. There are two later exceptions that may well have acquired this type of winder at a later date. 29 boxes are listed as having a ratchet winder. They are 3 and 4 overture, forte-piano, mandolin, oratorio, variations and grand format type of boxes with a standard box noted occasionally. An interesting point is that the majority of these boxes also have either green or blue tune cards.

Members have benefited from the Register in that I have been able to supply details of the gamme number on their Nicole boxes. The gamme

number usually gives details of the tunes, but it may not necessarily do so. The tunes may be in a different order and there are some outstanding and well known mistakes in the Nicole lists. If you have a Nicole complete with tune card and gamme listing, please let me know if you have not done so already. There may well be another member waiting for such information.

Many Nicole gamme numbers have the letters "bis" after them. I do not have a definitive ruling on what this means and there seems to be many interpretations. The most likely to date, is that the gamme number has a very minor alteration in the tuning scale to suit an individual box. May I ask for any information you have on this topic.

On the subject of Nicoles, any views on why they used different coloured tune cards and the significance of that would be welcome.

Most auctions for musical boxes are now held in London. Often the catalogues give only brief information and sometimes this is incorrect. If a couple of members who regularly view these auctions would volunteer to note down details of boxes, including the airs when present, it would be a very valuable service. Possibly the work could be shared. Are there any volunteers?

My thanks to all who have made the effort to send in details of their boxes. To those who are meaning to but cannot quite get round to it, please make the effort. If you write up details of one box every week, it will not be so onerous a task after all.

*The Registrar.*

## The Musical Box Register

### BRUGER AND STAUB

Bruger and Staub were certainly not manufacturers but importers of

boxes. They were listed as trading from 79, High Holborn, London. It is not known who supplied them with

boxes. Trade name is on the tune card.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C	G/No.
	* = Yes	
1607	*	?

Comments

6 air. Hymn box. Lever wind.

Reg/No.

R-157

### C. BRUGUIER

This family name is very much linked with the production of fine snuffboxes and singing birds. They also made automata and larger boxes. Charles Abraham Bruguier the elder worked for a time in London having addresses

at 52, Great Marlborough Street and Greek Street. He returned to Geneva around the year 1823. Born in 1788, Charles the elder survived to the age of 74 well above the average for that period. His son was also named Charles Abraham. He too worked in

Geneva but not at the same address. It is not really possible to distinguish between the work of father and son, but it is likely lower serial numbers are the work of Charles Abraham senior.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
338	—	?	2 air. Snuffbox in silver case.	R-158
599	—	?	12 air. 2 per turn. Keywind.	R-2366
678	—	?	2 air. Snuffbox.	R-1659
58082	*	?	12 air. 2 per turn.	R-159

## H. CAPT

Henri Capt worked between 1802 and 1850. At the start of his working life he was associated with Isaac Piguet. Capt made very fine quality

boxes. His early work was mainly the making of musical watches and snuffboxes. He was also one of the first makers to use a one piece comb. Between 1840 and 1850 he made

some very fine quality large overture boxes along with variants of standard boxes.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
6374	*	?	3 air. Snuffbox.	R-2000
12688	—	?	? air. Forte-Piano.	R-1662

## CHAPUIS ZOLLER

Abraham or Abram Chapuis was born into a clock making family in 1777. In 1803 he married Suzanne Zoller. Following the Swiss custom of the time, he combined names. His work is usually marked Chapuis Zoller but not always. There was a short partnership with Jean P. Desire which lasted from 1810 to

1817 after which Chapuis worked entirely on his own. He is mentioned by name as being a musical box maker in official Swiss records of 1826.

Noted as being a maker of good quality boxes, his early movements had sectional combs. One example of this type of box is unnumbered and has a cylinder that seems to have never been filled with cement.

It was designed for use in a clock base. Chapuis died at the age of 55 in 1832.

There was a second Chapuis listed as being a musical box maker. His name was Jacob Chapuis. It is impossible to say if any of the surviving movements were made by him.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
4179	—	?	4 air. Part overture. Keywind.	R-2291
4181	—	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-2292

## F. CONCHON

In 1847 Francois Conchon was listed as working in Geneva as a musical box manufacturer. Two business addresses have been listed, 9, Place des Alpes and 2, Rue des Paquis. At that time he was already 37 years old and must have had experience in the musical box industry. It seems likely that he was making boxes prior to 1847. Conchon boxes are of

good quality and often have more than one comb. By 1878, Conchon claimed to be employing 50 workers. Later, he produced helicoidal movements as well as other innovative ideas. Musically his movements were good. Two types of trade marks are to be seen. The first is stamped on the governor bracket in the form of two ovals arranged like butterfly's wings. The letters F.C.L. are

stamped in the left hand oval and a musical lyre with three dots are stamped in the right hand oval. Later his trade mark was a five pointed star interlaced with a lyre.

Conchon ceased trading in 1898 after 20 years of business. He lived on to 1913 having achieved the age of 76.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
3004	—	?	? air. 6 bell box.	R-1663
3946	*	?	10 air. 9 bell box.	R-165
5050	—	1595	8 air. Drum and 6 bell+ castanet.	R-166
5941	*	?	? air. Harp Harmonique Piccolo.	R-167
6730	—	?	6 air. Harpe Eolienne.	E-168
6810	—	?	8 air. Mandoline Zither. Lever wind.	R-368
6822	*	?	4 air. Harpe Aeolian.	R-169
6827	—	?	8 air. Rechange Flute-Voix-Double.	R-170
7220	—	?	4 air. Harp Eolienne.	R-171
7291	—	?	? air.	R-1313
7340	*	?	4 air. Lever wind.	R-172

7481	*	215	8 air. Harpe Tremolo. Deux Cloviers.	R-173
7657	—	?	? air.	R-174
8354	*	?	8 air. "Quator" Sublime Harmony. Lever wind.	R-1922
9238	—	?	8 air. Interchangeable 9 bells. (6 cys).	R-1664
9594	—	?	8 air.	R-175

### CUENDET DEVELAY ET FILS

Manufacturers of late period musical boxes with some innovative if unsuccessful ideas. In 1891, they

produced boxes with "Patent Undestroyable (sic) Dampers." These did not seem to work well. They also produced interchangeable cylinders designed to play one tune

only. These were very heavily pinned. Very few of these boxes have survived.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
253	—	?	L'Universelle 3 bell Interchange.	R-1552

### A. L. CUENDET

All that seems to be known about this maker is that he worked in Switzerland around the year 1810. The only recorded box by this maker

does have a sectional comb. It is in a composition case with a lid picture of the Arc de Triomphe. This was not built until the year 1836, so the evidence indicates he may well have

been working up to then assuming the movement has not been re-housed at some time.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
5463	—	?	3 air. Snuffbox.	R-2021

### J. CUENDET

A St. Croix firm that made large numbers of movements for all types of small musical items. They also made some larger boxes. The refer-

ence books list many members of the family, but Jules Cuendet is probably the best known. His trade mark was an anchor entwined with a snake. He also used the initials

J. C. usually with the words Marque Deposee above. Jules Cuendet died in 1926 having reached the age of 98.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
2017	*	?	2 air. Musical stereoscope.	R-1381
2749	—	?	? air.	R-1382
3220	—	?	? air.	R-1383
4335	—	?	? air.	R-1384
7716	*	?	10 air. Hidden drum and Bell box.	R-177
28846	*	?	2 air. Snuffbox type movement fitted to jewel case.	R-178
30056	*	1752	2 air. movement fitted to Victorian workbox.	R-179

### DAVID CADET

David started working in Geneva around the year 1820 making first class movements. Many have sectional combs. He seems not to have been content just to make

standard musical boxes. He is credited with having devised and made probably the first four comb movement. Each comb was sectional with the teeth in groups of five. He listed it a Quator. This was thought

to have been around the year 1840. He made all types of boxes. His forte-piano sectional comb movements are noted for having the combs set in a chevron configuration.

6/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
108	—	?	? air. Forte-piano.	R-1660
755	—	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-2432
796	—	?	4 air. Clock base movement.	R-160
950	—	?	4 air. Forte-piano. Keywind.	R-1380
1202	*	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-161
1279	—	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-162
1605	—	?	? air.	R-1661
2180	—	?	? air. Clock base movement. (?)	R-163

# MBSGB Members Holidays

Kevin McElhone travelled to the U.S.A. and  
Jim Hall to Switzerland

## U.S.A. 1993

by Kevin McElhone

How on earth did I come to visit the U.S.A. for 16 days, to stay in 8 places in 6 states and fly on 7 planes on my own with musical penfriends?

In 1989 I started to compile an Aeolian 58 note Organ Roll Catalogue and requested collectors in many musical societies in the U.S.A., U.K., Netherlands and Australia to help provide lists of rolls in their collections on to copy original literature. Whilst a large percentage of replies were from people nearer to home (most of whom asked me to list their collection myself as they did not have time to do it), I got perhaps 50 replies from collectors "around the world". I have swapped literature and rolls with many of these contacts and 6 of them have visited me whilst in the U.K.

I decided that, as many people had said, "when you come to the U.S.A., do come and visit me," that I would write to 6 penfriends with tentative dates in mind about 6 months ahead. There were a lot of letters and finally one phone call to each person on the list and 5 people agreed to have me stay with them, so I booked all of my flights for mid-week as it was up to four times the price at weekends.

As I was flying from Gatwick I stayed with my Aunt, about 3 miles from the terminal and left the car there to avoid parking charges, so on Thursday 27th May I flew out of Gatwick at 11am our time for a 7 hour flight to Atlanta, Georgia, at which point I altered my watch to be 5 hours earlier than at home, so it was now only 1pm in the afternoon. I had to clear Customs and Immigration and then had 2 hours to look round this huge airport with 98 gates and 4 runways! I flew on a small 27 seat propellor plane for a further hour to be met at Ashville Airport, North Carolina by Harold Sims.

Harold is a retired (10 years early, his choice) University Lecturer in Biology and Ecology. He knew what I looked like as I had sent a photo to all of my contacts who were meeting me at

Airports. We drove 30 miles in a 3 month old 7,000c.c. "Truck" which gave a really good view of the countryside as we drove to his home in Cashiers. He lives in this home in the Summer as it is 4,500 feet up in the wooded mountains overlooking a lake and the temperature range is 40°F at night to 65°F in the daytime. The home would be huge by

U.K. standards and was made totally of wood, but was less than 20 years old with well water electrically pumped into the house from 35 feet underground which tasted very nice. I could ramble on for ages about all the differences in their systems of Tax, Education, the Post Office, Driving, Health Care etc., but will confine myself to the musical items for the rest of this article, if possible.

The next day we went round the local antique shops and found 6 pianolas for sale, some were working, all were 88 note, but one was a "made up" Nickelodeon with an old piano and new additional parts all painted pink (yuk), but it sounded nice, (\$2,000).

The next day we spent riding on a steam train which runs only four times a year from Dillsboro to Brycon City (population only 6,000!), a distance of 25 miles each way. The train was 15



**No it's not a roll operated radio – it's an ordinary pianola with a radio built in – maybe the first multi-media music centre.**

cars long, including old coaches, 6 cabooses, air conditioned on 'open' carriages; you could book to travel in any of these. The locomotive was a Class 5160 (there are 3 of these in the U.K.) and the temperature was 79°F most of the day. We also visited a few antique shops, but found no automatic musical instruments except 'common' 88 note pianola rolls.

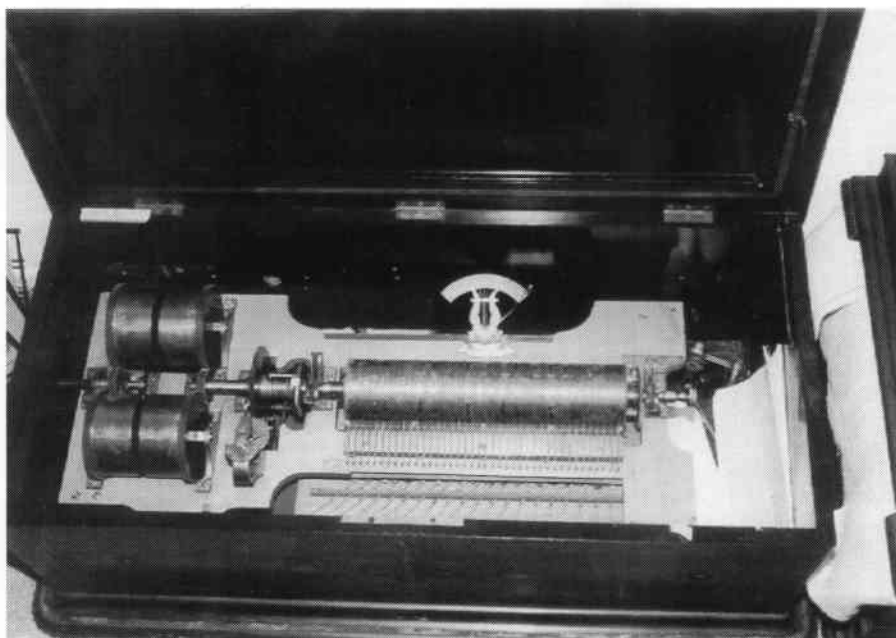
We spent the following days in the Smokey Mountains National Park which is at the southern end of the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina (yes, they start in Virginia like the Laurel and Hardy song). We also visited a town, called Cherokee, where all the houses and shops were owned by Indian's, who were selling crafts. At one point I suddenly shouted "quick, stop the car" as I had seen a red double-decker bus. When I took a photo of it I saw it was advertising "Santasland", (an all year Christmas Park!), but more amazing was the number plate of the bus which was JBD . . . ., which is Northamptonshire and therefore I could well have travelled on it as a child! We saw and heard lots of hand played traditional instruments and even managed some more photos of the steam train's progress through a fierce thunder and lightening storm, which was quite spectacular.

The following day we left the mountains and drove about 350 miles south getting hotter all the time and in one shop we found a 12 stringed instrument which was played laying horizontally on a table with a violin-like bow (sorry I did not get the name). Harold bought a canoe for use on his lake at the bottom of the home plot in North Carolina, (to add to his collection of 6 canoes) in a place called White Springs, Florida. In this town we visited the Stephen Forster (who wrote Swanee River) Memorial Park which had a Folk Festival in the park that day. There was also a huge tower with a Carillon in it. The motel was really cheap at \$29.95 (£20) and had two double beds in it which meant that if there were 4 of us it would have been only £5 a head! We had our own bathroom and air-conditioning and Home Box Office (a film channel on TV) which we did not watch as we had an early start for a special day ahead.

We left White Springs at 8am after a huge breakfast (the portion I ordered was called "small"! ) for the two hour drive to Wayne Edmonston, a dealer in Jacksonville, Florida.

Wayne worked previously as a physicians assistant and now has a huge bungalow on twin plots of land in which the restored instruments are displayed and played to visitors. There is a new 'bungalow' in the grounds which is the workshop and two craftsmen (including the doctor who he previously worked for) work full time on the restorations.

I will attempt to list some of the instruments, many are common in the U.S.A., but few are seen in the U.K.



**An unusual "All-organ" musical box.**

There was a 58 note Pushup, a modern electric pianocorder pushup (88 note), which played cassette tapes, Nickelodeons of styles A, O and G by Wurlitzer, Seeburg etc. and the inevitable Ampico Chickening Grand Piano. The more interesting items were a 1915 built Mollanari 26 key, 44 pipe barrel organ playing 8 tunes from a barrel. One Nickelodeon, a Wurlitzer IXB had bells, mandolin and an automatic roll changer which held 6 multi-tune rolls and was made in 1923 (price \$22,000!). There was an 84 key Mortier Dance Organ which is common in Europe, but not in the U.S.A. and was therefore reduced to \$110,000 and also a Wurlitzer 150 band-organ with loud trumpets on view at the front. There was a Link AX Orchestrion which had piano, xylophone, drum, triangle, wood-block, tom-tom, and tambourine, serial number 2979 built in 1925. This had 5 pieces of 'Art' glass on the front and played long endless rolls which were fascinating to watch moving through the tracker bar. There was an 8ft tall brand-new (10 years old) Universal Orchestrion which played "O" rolls, with etched glass and 9 instruments which played when you inserted 25 cents (17p!).

My two favourites, besides the Violano which are common in the U.S.A. was the "Wurlitzer Organette". This was a huge style "8", serial number 105968 built in 1927 with a walnut case. It contains an expression piano, mandolin and 4 ranks of pipes (total of 150). It is 59 inches tall, 62 inches wide and 49 inches deep, but the blower and main reservoir were in the next room and only the small vacuum motor for roll action was in the actual room. Only 18 were made to accompany silent films with twin tracker bars so one roll could play whilst the other was re-winding, a very pleasant mellow sound.

The last two instruments I will mention were both Reprodico instru-

ments. One was a very rare one which had 98 organ pipes and a full set of chimes, serial number 283521, made in 1926 by the Operators Piano Company and it played OS-NOS 10-tune rolls. This could have been used in a theatre or a funeral parlour. The other one had a 61 key manual for organ playing and a full 88 note manual for pipe playing which is the more usual arrangement. The rolls even control the small shutters for the organ as well as piano loud/soft. This had twin/duplex tracker bars for mood changes or continuous playing.

We had spent three hours with Wayne, which as you can imagine was an amazing time of sight and sound. We then drove 30 minutes to St. Augustine (the oldest city in the U.S.A.) which is Spanish in design and layout. We had lunch in a Spanish street cafe and then went to the Lightner Museum. This has many exhibits of historical, geological, sociological and other interests, but needless to say had a music room where we heard a Violano, a German barrel orchestrion, a Gem 20 note Cob organette, an 'A' Nickelodeon and a Regina 27 inch auto-changing disc music box to name a few.

We then drove on and were stopped at a level crossing to allow a freight train to pass. Nothing unusual you might say, but it was hauled by 6 locomotives and I couldn't even fit them all in the viewfinder of my camera! We arrived at Deland in Central Florida via a few more antique shops and a Railway "Supermarket" with tea in a "Subway" restaurant which was modelled on the New York Subway system. Our last stop for the day and accommodation was to be with Bob Gellerman who many of you will know has written several historical and restoration books about reed organs.

In the house was a home-made Wurlitzer Band Organ and an "A" Nickelodeon, both of excellent quality

and then we went to the "shed in the yard". This was about 30ft x 40ft, air-conditioned and was 25% workshop, closed off from the rest of the building. We saw many American organs, Harmoniums, 2 Orchestrelles, a Seraphone, another Reproduco and even an American Estey organ which had an ornate back to its case which was decorated just as much as the front! Bob is working on another book which should be out later in 1993. We spent some time swapping photos and tapes and so forth and finally retired to bed about 10pm as we had a very full day and Bob was off to a Band Organ Rally at 8am the next day in Ohio.

The next morning we looked at some antique shops, surprise, in a Spanish village and later on in Orlando where we found a 30(?) note modern children's pianola for sale, but it was made entirely of plastic except for the paper music rolls. After several other non-musical stops we arrived in Clearwater to stay in Harold's Winter home, where there is of course, a model "W" orchestrelle which he has just finished restoring, and an Ampico Upright. Outside there is a swimming pool, very nice when the temperature at 6pm is finally dropping down from its maximum for the day of 93°F, Phew! We spent the next day catching our breath and we only drove to St. Petersburg, but on the way back we visited a Crafts Supermarket about the size of an average Sainsbury's/Tesco's in the U.K, but all craft goods! I managed to purchase a very useful twin-bladed knife, (and a spare blade). I have never seen one quite like this before as the gap between the two blades is fully adjustable with a screw thread for complete accuracy when roll cutting. In the evening Richard Poppe who lives six miles away in Lango with his wife Janelle came to Harold's to collect me for the next stage of my travels. We had had a nice evening meal together and plenty of news and views to exchange.

The next day Rich and I picked up Harold for another 'heavy' day. We just went to Sarasota about 35 miles away where in fact all of our visits were to take place. First we visited Larry Hunter who had helped Harold physically fix his orchestrelle when my diagrams could do no more! Larry works four ten-hour days a week at custom furniture construction and this was Friday, his day off. He had made from originals, borrowed all new carving panels, door and columns for his model 7 orchestrelle which took 350 hours! So it can be done – note to owners in the U.K. with missing panels! He also has a Francis the First in good order and an early 46 note Aeolian, plus other items such as a "band" organ and gramophones. We spent a couple of hours here in his five year old self built Victorian style house and then we went 2 miles to a University building to a place where Larry spends a lot of his "spare" time. This house was originally the home of Charles Ringling of the Circus Brothers (his brothers house was nearby) and it still contains

an Aeolian 30 rank pipe organ, with echo organ and Duo-Art roll player, serial number 1570. A team of six people are helping Larry who is one of only 2 skilled organ "nuts" to restore the instrument.

The console is 3 manual and the music room seats 120 people with plenty of space to spare. We visited the main pipe chamber, then on the first floor the blower room, (all original and restored nearly to new) and the relay/switching room and finally the echo organ for which we had to go across a flat room and got a wonderful view across the Gulf of Mexico to the West who's shoreline came onto the property. It will be another 1 to 2 years before this is completed and then concerts will be available to the public.

It was now 2.30pm as we said goodbye to Larry and paused for 30 minutes for lunch on the way to Walt Bellm's museum. This has 147 old cars and between 1,500 and 2,000 musical instruments. Unfortunately they only played short excerpts of tunes on a few instruments, but I got plenty of photos and a set of 3 L.P.'s for \$10 in the museum shop. Rich had given Walt advice about problems with his Violano in the past and we were all invited back to Walt's home, about 2 miles away. We saw fantastic items such as one of the 20 new Phonolizst Violin Players (\$160,000 or £100,000!), a new Wurlitzer Auto-Harp and an example of every Porter and Thorens/Reuge new musical box made in the last 20 years. There were so many items I can't mention them all, but it included an Art-Carved Ampico of high value and several very rare music boxes. This was certainly worth going to see and I feel lucky to have been invited. We then returned to Richard and Janelle's for our evening meal, after taking Harold home, ready to drive back the 650 miles to North Carolina the next day – what a week!

During the evening I heard Rich's Model 'W' orchestrelle, (surprise) which was the reason he and Janelle had met, (they are the same age as I am which is unusual in mechanical music both here in the U.K. and elsewhere). I also heard another Violano, number 6 or 7, a Seeburg Nickelodeon and some organettes, we also did some swaps and I got a new plastic roll-playing mouth organ. The mind boggles, I know!

They had asked me where I would like to go over the weekend to non-musical places as a "rest" from my holiday. We went to the Epcot Centre, which is an adult theme park run by Disney on the Saturday, and we stayed with Janelle's mother near to Orlando on Saturday night after a 9pm firework illuminations finale to a great day. The Sunday was a visit to Kennedy Space Centre which was truly amazing as I had followed all the Apollo flights in the 1960's and of course, my school, Kettering Grammar School was well known for the space tracking enthusiasts led by one of my teachers.

Anyway, this was another one of those days to remember, as was most of the holiday, but all good things have to end and the next morning at 7.30am I was driven to the airport by Janelle as she had to collect someone from there for work. So by 8.15am I was booked in for my next flight, a little earlier than intended, but with plenty of time to look around the airport before leaving for Chicago about 10am. The flight was very enjoyable with little cloud and long views, but Chicago was about to have a very nasty electrical storm. I was booked out on a flight at 2pm but was offered an earlier one at 12 noon which I took. This was held on the runway for 1 hour as it was considered too rough to take off. In fact the only time I had my coat on in the entire 2 weeks was to get to the plane through the rain when regulations would not allow the issue of umbrellas due to the risk of lightning strikes. Anyway, the weather was pretty rough and the journey was a little like lots of "hump back bridges" one after the other, and we arrived in half the booked time as it was definitely breezy. On arrival, still 2 hours before I was due to be picked up, I heard that the flight I should have been on was cancelled and that Chicago Airport was now closed, so I was glad to have changed to an earlier flight to Eneen Bay, Wisconsin.

I phoned Carl from the airport and he said he would leave straight away, but I must say that a 1 minute call only 25 miles away cost \$1.85 (about £1.20) which I thought was rather high.

We duly arrived at Carl's old farmhouse and he explained that nowadays most farms are huge, but the ex-farmhouses are sold off for people to live in which has given him 2 barns for useful storage and a larger house which has been extended to have six rooms in the basement where it is nice and cool. I met Charlie, a retired friend, who had been an electrical engineer and so between them they were able to make music rolls using either original rolls or someone hand-playing into the computer via an electronic keyboard. Testing can be done via an Austin 20 rank pipe organ, which can also play 88/65 note rolls directly via a home-made electro pneumatic reader now installed in a nice old gramophone cabinet. There were also 2 Nickelodeons, a Western Electric with Xylophone and a smaller home-made one, and an Ampico Upright. We spent a long time discussing future roll making ideas and also found time to have a meal out with one of the neighbours in a local establishment. I stayed only two nights here and was then driven on to my last contact down to the south.

I will not identify my last contact as I found the situation and the very rough locality not to my liking so the only way out was to come home the next day. This was a shame as I had planned to meet two other friends at a show the following weekend, but I had no regrets about coming back early as I found half an inch of water in one of my music rooms.

As I was back, I dealt with the problem and only lost a carpet, but I may have lost musical items if my return was as planned.

I flew back via Milwaukee, Cincinnati and Detroit to Gatwick and even managed to visit the Mitchell Air Museum.

To sum up, I worked hard at this holiday and learnt a great deal about life in the U.S.A. in general as well as what is going on.

It would be difficult to single one instrument out as an overall favourite so I'll just mention a unique one and won't say where it is. A cabinet the size of a sideboard had a gramophone and radio in it, but also a two-thirds normal size Welte reproducing piano, all restored and very compact. I would very much like to go again, but probably not before I go back to work when my 2½ year old goes to school. It is well worth writing to people in other countries as basically only the keen people will write back once and the very keen more than once, so get writing, you never know where you might end up. ■

## Musical Box Venues

by Jim Hall

In the month of May, Doug and Val Pell, my wife Kathleen and I went for 10 days holiday to France and Switzerland. One of the objectives was to visit St. Croix and L'Auberson, in our travels.

The 8.00am ferry crossing took us from Dover to Calais, and then we motored across France to Chamonix, where my son Brian and his wife, had put their chalet at our disposal.

One day we went to Geneva, and came across the Brunswick Monument, and saw the stone figures of the winged dragons which are a feature of Ami Rivenc musical boxes. We also noticed that the lamp posts alongside the lake near the Monument, also have the same emblem. We then travelled along the lake to Thonon and Evian (where the spa water is bottled) and returned via the Gorge du Diable and Les Gets, where we found a musical box museum, but being a Monday it was closed, but there was a conducted tour the next day at 1.30pm. So the next day after visiting a glacier in the morning, we went via Cluses at the bottom of the valley, round torturous hair-pin bends to Les Gets, advertised as the "Capitale de la Musique Mecanique."

The lady who took our entrance money at the counter did not speak English, and our French was rather limited to say the least! She was rather insistent that no photographs were allowed, and took possession of our cameras and camcorders which were stored away in a cupboard.

We made our way upstairs and joined

the guided tour which had just started. The museum has been newly fitted out, with over 300 exhibits, including the biggest musical chalet known in Europe. The staff we met were all ladies, who did not speak English which we found a drawback when we wanted to ask any questions. I would have liked to have heard the Chordephon played, but my request was declined, perhaps, because they had a set routine to conform to, in the tour demonstration time. The display was well set out, in light airy conditions, and Doug and I paid out 10 francs apiece for a postcard which we saw signed by the automat Colombine.

Later in the week we vacated the chalet at Chamonix and travelled up the valley via Martigny in Switzerland, and on Interlaken where we found two shops in the main street, (both owned by the same firm) which sold products of the Reuge factory. Musical boxes both cylinder and disc, singing bird boxes and cages, watches, etc., in abundance. English was spoken and staff at both establishments were very helpful and courteous, we were in one shop at 10.00pm, closing time.

The next day, Friday, we travelled via Berne (saw the bear pit) and on to St. Croix, where I felt like kissing the hallowed ground, for we were now at the heart of the musical box industry. We found the Reuge factory, but it was closed because of a holiday. There is the CIMA building which houses the information centre, a museum of mechanical music with guided tours lasting an hour, and a sales centre for Reuge products, where we saw brand new interchangeable musical boxes, a new revolver box all sparkling with polished brass cylinders, singing bird boxes and cages, disc boxes, automata, Manivelles, watches, dolls, key fobs, boxes large and small – the whole range, all priced and for sale.

On to L'Auberson, just a few miles away, where along its one main street just set back off the road, we found the Baud Freres establishment. It is a family concern, and one of the Baud ladies made us very welcome, and after paying the entrance fee, we joined a conducted tour.

What an Aladdins cave, what treasures of mechanical music to see and listen to, all on one ground floor.

When we came out of the museum, we were treated to more 'music' as a herd of cows complete with bells around their necks were led up the road past the museum as it was milking time!

It was then that Doug drew my attention to an upstairs window of a building near the entrance to the Baud Museum. There appeared to be a Polyphon and other items, so we went to investigate. There was the sound of a musical box, and up the stairs we found Mr. Michael Bourgoz demonstrating a cylinder box to a prospective customer. Around him there was a roomful of restored items, all for sale, with price tickets attached. On coming down the stairs we were met by the lady who had

first greeted us, and as the light was rather dim she switched on some lights, to reveal shelves packed with musical boxes all labelled and waiting restoration. She led us through to the workshop, and showed us various work which was on the benches. She personally does repinning work, from melting out the cement, inserting new pins, and grinding to length, in a machine with an upright position for the cylinder. Work was also in progress replacing the bridges of an 'organ' box, and broken teeth in a comb were having attention.

We made our farewells, and continued down the road on the way out of the village, when I noticed a building with Gueissaz, who has made musical boxes for the Persian market, (reference an article and photograph by Bob Atkinson in an earlier Journal). I thought good heavens, another place, and we are running out of time.

The place was closed – on holiday like the Reuge factory, and we were about to leave when a car drove up to the front door, and a chap started to open up. I bounded out of our car, before he had a chance to disappear, but we had language difficulties. Val our interpreter was called in to help, complete with phrase book! It was explained to us that the factory had not made musical boxes since the 1940's, and were now engaged in work for the plastic industry. He was very reluctant to allow us inside the factory premises, but eventually we were allowed in.

I had left the factory, when Val called me back, and we were joined by a young lady, a grand-daughter of Mr. Gueissaz, who took us to an office, where on a side table was a large object covered by a green cloth. The cloth was removed and there in all its glory was a lovely interchangeable cylinder musical box, complete with tune sheet made by Gueissaz. Underneath was another object covered with a cloth, which I thought might be a box with the spare interchangeable cylinders, but no, it was a smaller version of the one above. Both had plated movements. On the wall, was fixed a show case with various small musical box movements by Gueissaz. We were told that if we came back at 6.00pm the manager would be available if we wanted further information.

It was now late afternoon, so we bade our farewells, and reluctantly left L'Auberson and headed out of Switzerland and into France only a few miles away, to find a billet for the night, before we made our way back to Calais and across the Channel and home.

We were rather impressed by the number of people who were being conducted around the various museums, with children being especially interested.

Back home and the arrival of the Summer MBSGB Journal, where Mr. C. G. Nijssen admirably describes the museums in more detail, which makes this account rather superfluous. ■

# Waiting for the Unika

"Everything comes to he who waits," so they say. Unfortunately life is too short if you ask me. It's like saying wait long enough at any bus stop in Bradford and a bus will come along going to Ulam Batar. Granted, patience is a virtue if you are convinced the object you desire will turn up. What does this have to do with collecting?

Basically, if you want an Ampico or Welte Mignon then you have to go and look for it as they won't come to you.

I first became interested in Player Pianos and musical boxes in 1976, which was the year a well meaning collector told me, "all the best instruments have been located and bought now." I didn't believe it then and don't now, almost twenty years later.

I started to advertise for the items I wanted and soon found that they were there to be found. In fact, I have located, bought, and in many cases sold to fellow collectors almost every type of Player Piano.

I have to confess though to being not a little excited when the Berlin Wall crumbled and the former East opened up. I had soon located a few newspapers in Czechoslovakia in which to advertise. Most of the replies were the usual bog standard junk of which there is plenty in Derbyshire without flying 1,000 miles for, but one day came something different. It was a Weber 'UNIKA'.

The 'UNIKA' was made in quantity in the first quarter of the twentieth century and this model dated 1927 was in untouched but first class condition. The only faults being the wiring for switches, lights and motor had been removed. This was done by a representative of the Czechoslovakian government who stated that it didn't conform to regulations and must be re-wired before use. The instrument is an orchestrion mainly for use in a Cafe and automatically played the Feurich Piano, a pipe organ and Mandolin Rail. It was complete with sixteen rolls of music. Being located in Bratislava, I found it easier to fly to Vienna with Lauda Air and hire a car to drive thirty miles to Bratislava.

At best, you might describe my German as naive, but it's much better than my Czech. The deal was quickly struck with the agreement that the instrument would be paid for in full with Austrian schillings on collection.

Having had no problems driving through customs on my three previous visits with music boxes and clocks in the boot and being informed by a piano removal company in Holland that only a T1 form is required, I must admit to being lulled into a false sense of security. Incidentally, I obtained two quotes for removal to the United Kingdom. The highest being £1200, then £900, then the Dutch company £280 (I should have known better). The date was set. I duly arrived at Vienna airport and negotiated the purchase of the required amount of schillings and by 4.00 pm the instrument was paid for, loaded onto the juggernaut and off to the border. I went off to the city to find an hotel for the night and check



**An example of the popular Weber Unika, a best selling instrument with piano, mandolin rail, and a rank of violin pipes.**

out the antique shops for which I had several addresses. I thought I was home and dry. By next week it could be working in my music room thought I. But the best laid plans of mice and Brian.

Upon my return, there was an urgent message to call the removal people 'Unfortunately Mr Chesters the customs wouldn't let the instrument out and so we had to take it back to where it came from.' It would appear that a private individual cannot export from Czechoslovakia. However, in a months time the country will split in two and the rules may change.

I'm not a gambling man but I would imagine the feeling was like having put a few months wages on a horse which would win or lose with no in between, but I was committed now. The foreign office were sympathetic, the DTI was interested, the trade delegation in Prague were hysterical, the customs department in Prague were comatose, but the customs in Bratislava provided a sharp relief to the pleasantness of the Bolsheviks. What I did learn though was that there are many ways to export such an instrument, for example:

1. Sell it to a diplomat on paper who could add it to the chattels of his house and send it out after his term of office is over.
2. Dismantle it and bring it out in bits.
3. Take it to the border with the commonwealth of independent states (Former USSR) and a bundle of US dollars and try the same with Poland.
4. Organise a democratic Coup.

I had decided on option two as being the best with the whole operation taking approximately one week, when I reluctantly decided to sell it and let someone else sort it out. After much telephone sales, I finally found that Mr. Smith (See note 1) who resides near a million miles from Leeds had a friend Herr Schmidt not a million miles from Bremen, who would buy it. In fact as soon as the deal was struck verbally he was off on the long journey to Bratislava. Apparently he had a warehouse in Prague from which he would export it with other items he had.

I duly collected my cheque from Mr. Smith, happy in the knowledge that I had got my money back with profit, but

I was fascinated to know how he would go on.

Herr Schmidt and his fraulein drove all day and all night in shifts to arrive at the pre-determined time. The instrument was exactly right as described, and so was loaded up, but instead of taking it to his 'warehouse' he obtained a hand written receipt for the equivalent of £100 and made for the border. It was obvious the border guards were unimpressed when they threatened to impound the van and orchestrion and place Herr Schmidt in jail. However, after much negotiating with a freight forwarding agent, it was decided he could go back to what was now called Slovakia.

A lesser mortal would have thought 'once bitten, etc', but not our tenacious Herr Schmidt. Let's try another border. However, the next one on the West side was in the Czech Republic and not Slovakia, but no matter it was almost non existent, a bit like England and Scotland, or so he thought. Imagine his dismay then after having tried to drive through and being surrounded by armed soldiers, who fairly relished the idea of jailing Herr Schmidt and impounding the piano and van.

Again, after much negotiation with the agent on the telephone (one of the few working examples in the country) it was decided to impound only the Weber Unika and rolls. Herr Schmidt could go free. He was made to drive to a secure storage warehouse where the instrument now lies with no less than 85 other pianos of all shapes and sizes.

Well, such is life, they say. A dejected Herr Schmidt is back at home. I have to console myself with the photographs and the instrument is still in between two halves of a country that is quickly falling out with itself. Things could be worse though. . . .

The Weber is not in Sarajevo and the country may join the EEC in the next thirty years which would make things much easier.

Everything comes to he who advertises though and I have booked another series of adverts for the same country, but in future, if it won't fit in the boot of a hire car, then it will have to stay where it is.

Note 1: The names have been changed to protect the correspondent. ■

# Musical Box Oddments

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 58

The French composer Olivier Métra (1830-1889) was bracketed with Musard and Isaac Strauss as "the trio of leading dance composers in France in the 1870s." Of his four operettas and several ballets and several hundred dance tunes the only items often seen on tune sheets are . . . .

Les Roses waltz	1866
The Waves waltz	1869
The Volunteers march	ca 1874

Tune 3 of Fig. 1 herewith, *Little Red Riding-hood*, must be one of his ballets, probably composed in 1875 while he was conductor at the Folies-Bergère.

## Arthur Junod

The tune sheet in Fig. 1 has two 1885 and two 1884 tunes and its box, Junod serial 1650, was almost certainly made in 1886 or 1887. As shown in Fig. 2 it has an 11" (28cm) cylinder playing ten airs on a comb of 62 teeth of which the first six at the bass end operate the bell strikers. That leaves 56 music teeth of which the fourteenth and fifteenth are tuned to *a*, 440Hz. Their relative stiffness is 300, not excessive

for a medium-sized movement in a large case, 23 by 11½ by 11" high over lid and feet (58 by 29 by 28cm). The case is grained and has two lines of stringing on the front with three lines on the veneered lid with marquetry design shown on page 24 of Vol. 16.

The mechanism is secured with the original standard of two screws front and back, and there is no nickel plating, both slightly unusual in the late 1880s.

Serial number 1650 is stamped on the bass end cylinder bearing and on the great wheel. The bass end cylinder cap is scribed *G 39* and the comb base *39 EG*, presumably the gamme number, though such a low number does not seem likely to have much significance. Blank number 1 is stamped on the bedplate edge and spring and governor, and number 18 on cylinder assembly.

It seems certain that there were separate suppliers of bell, drum and castanet details to the musical box makers, because these items do not have blank numbers but are sometimes marked with the box-makers name – as illustrated here for Junod in Fig. 3.

I must say the modest 56 teeth of this box perform remarkably well, helped by the six bells and by the fruity support from the bass end which in turn is helped by the large case. It is 2" longer and 1" wider than strictly necessary, giving a sounding board of

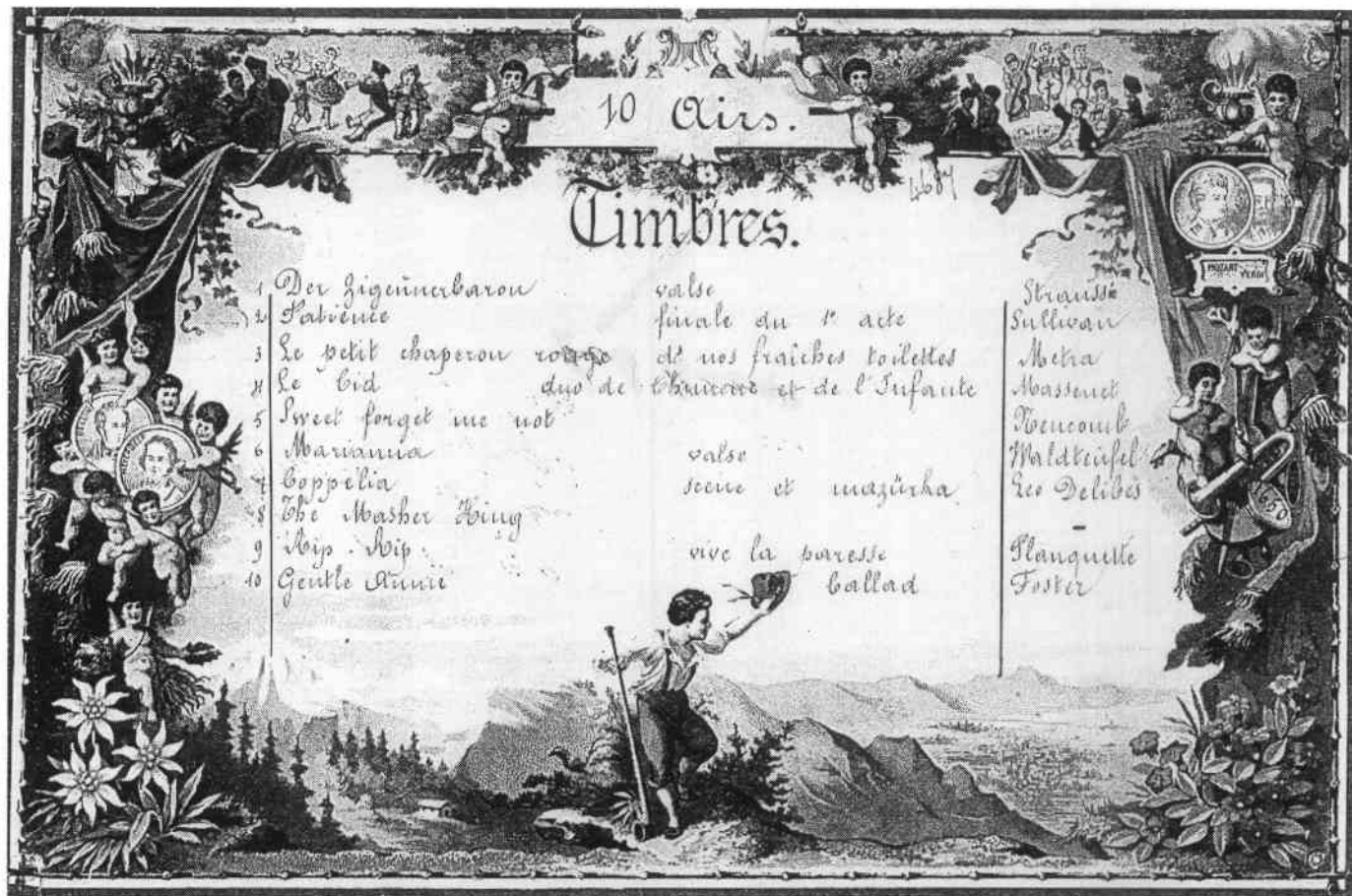
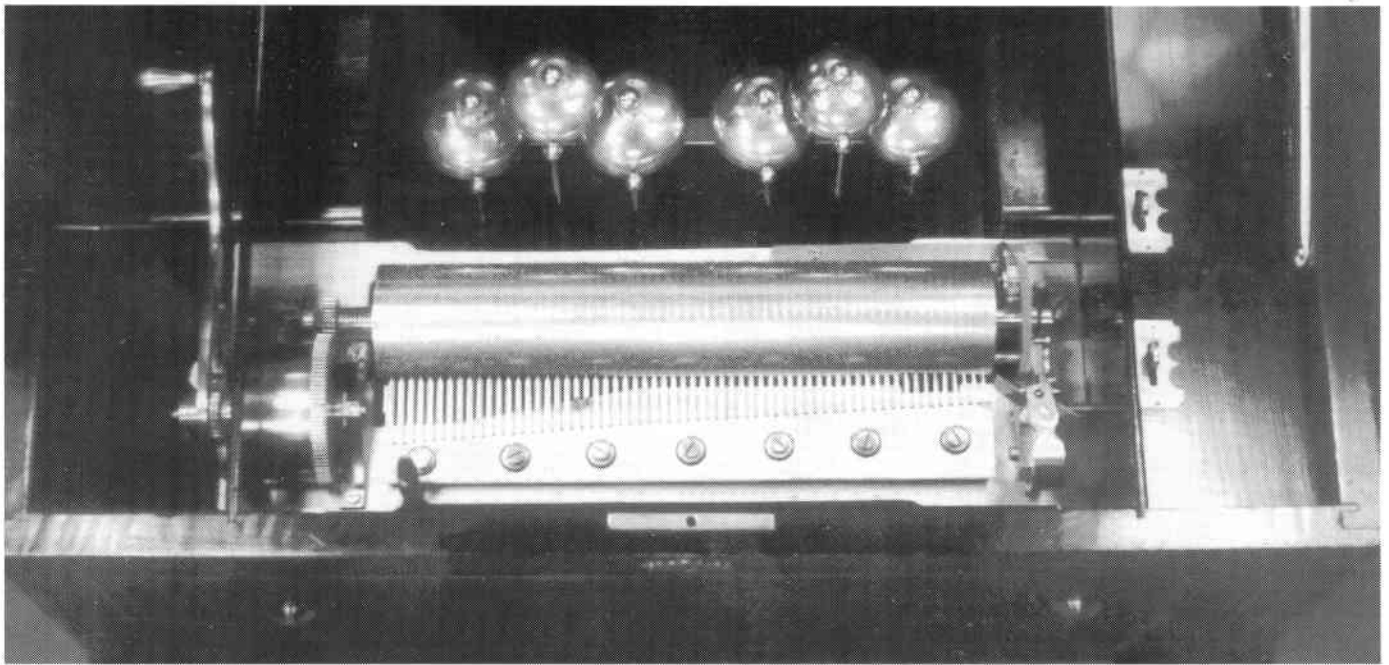


Fig. 1. Junod tune sheet on serial 1650. Tune 4 premiere was in November 1885. Tunes 5 and 9 are both 1884, 9 translates as "long live laziness." Tune 10 is the earliest, by Stephen Foster, 1860. The excellent tune 7 is from 1870; Delibes is disappointingly rare on cylinder.



**Fig. 2. Typical 11" (28cm) 10-air layout of Junod 1650 with *a* teeth marked. Plain bells and strikers and the usual scalloped control lever escutcheons.**

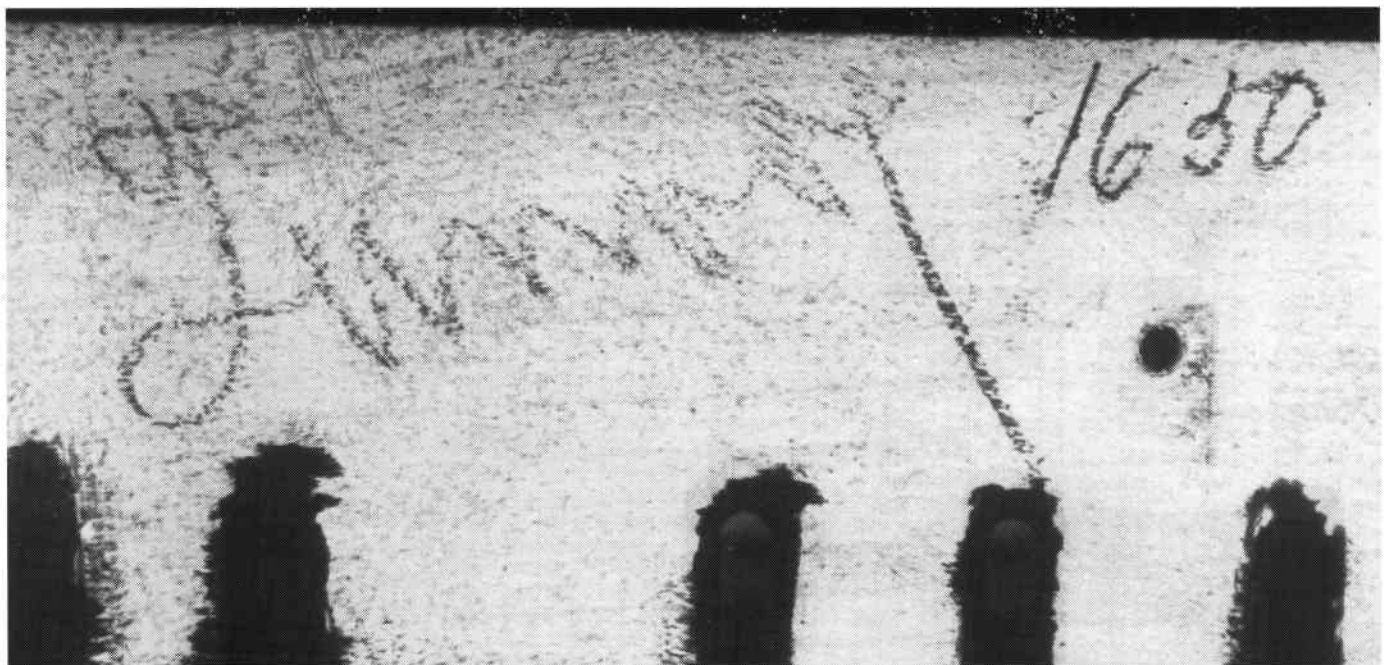
periphery  $62\frac{1}{2}$ " (159cm) and allowing unrestricted radiation of the lowest notes. Also the ten tunes are efficiently arranged and well contrasted; eight are by notable composers.

Another Junod box also playing ten airs with 11" (28cm) cylinder is serial 19110. It has no bells so its case is smaller at  $22\frac{1}{4}$  by  $8\frac{1}{4}$  by 6" (57 by 21 by 15cm), though still big enough to house a 13" (33cm) cylinder movement. It has stringing and banding and a leafy transfer on the veneered front and a large marquetry inlay on the domed lid. The coloured tune sheet is of the same Junod design but 10% smaller, and the winder is shorter,  $4\frac{3}{4}$ " compared with  $6\frac{1}{4}$ " on serial 1650, also reflecting the smaller case. The bearing brackets, spring barrel, great wheel, cylinder

assembly, governor with ratio 1820 from endless to cylinder, and control levers and their escutcheons are identical on both boxes. Both have tune 1 on the cylinder dots.

The 62-tooth comb on serial 19110 has *a* tooth No. 19, relative stiffness 240. JSD is cast in the comb base and *G* 11 is scribed on cylinder cap and bass lead – adding to doubts about its validity as a gamme number on such a high serial number. This serial 19110 is stamped on bass cylinder bearing and the side of the winder and scribed on several components. Blank number 3 is stamped on bedplate edge and on most components of spring, cylinder and governor.

Only two of the ten tunes are by well known



**Fig.3. Underside of serial 1650 bell gantry support marked for Junod in blue crayon.**

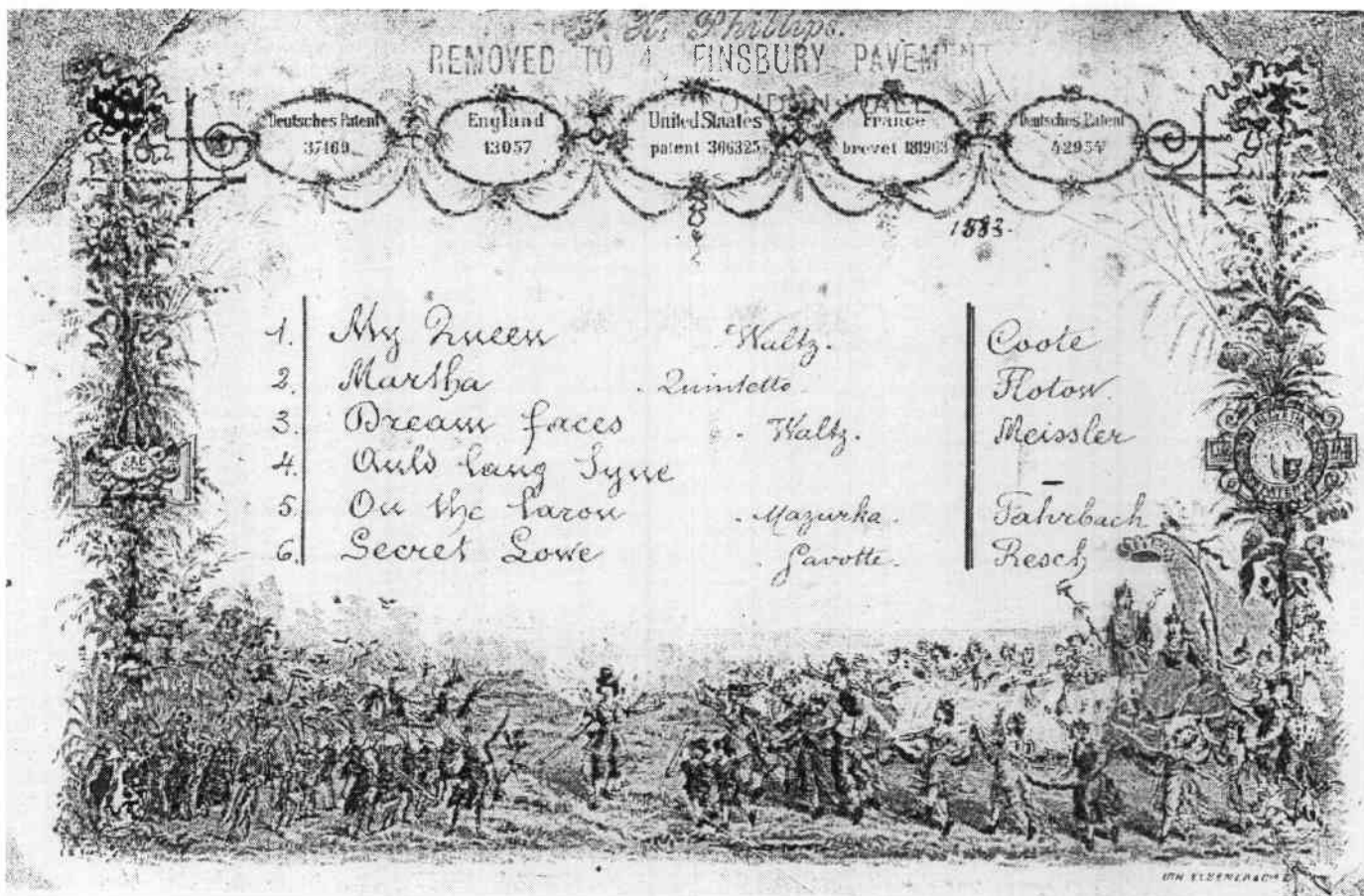
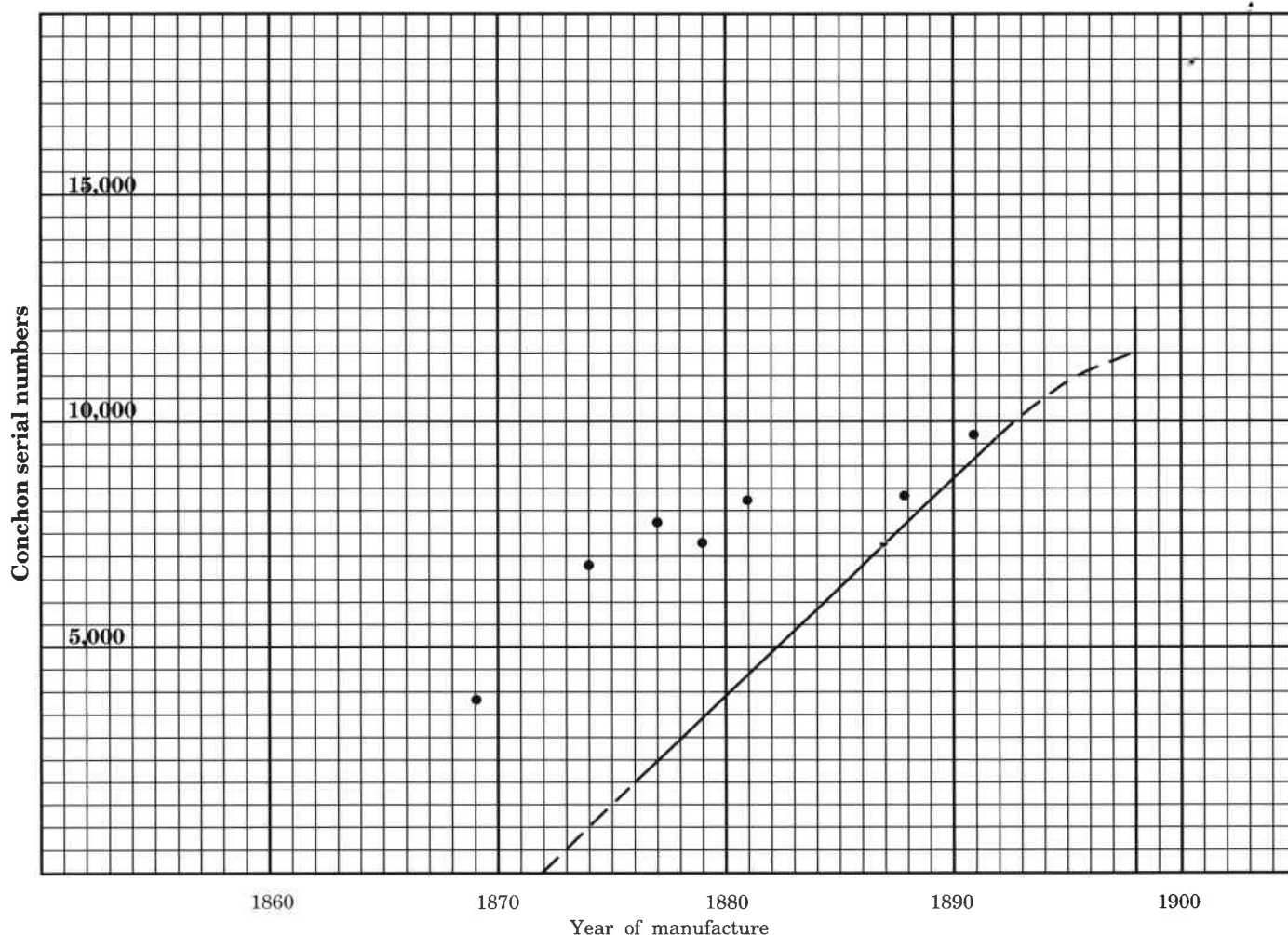


Fig. 4. "Patents along top" style of Junod tune sheet, on serial 1583, 6" (15cm) cylinder, 6-airs. Latest tune no. 3, 1882.



Fig. 5. "Isle Rousseau" tune sheet on Junod 699, 13" (33cm) 8-air tremolo. A circular plaque fixed to the bedplate gives the Longue Marche patent dates, England 1879, USA 1881. Latest tune no. 2, 1880.



**Fig. 6. Conchon dating chart, assumed to start at 1872, and ending mid 1898. Most boxes have their latest tunes ten or more years before their date of manufacture, but the latest two points shown are reliable fixes – serial 8405 with 1888 tunes and serial 9594 with 1891 tunes.**

composers, Sullivan and Planquette. The latest tune is *Not much, or better than nothing at all* by Kate Royle, 1887. The box was probably made in 1888 or 1889; again there is no nickel plating but the bedplate is fixed to blocks in the case. This is done with a real eye on security against over-vigorous winders, with two large countersunk screws at the back under the winding lever and two more at the front beyond the governor. This fixing on blocks is a cheaper and equally effective mounting but was slowly introduced; Ducommun Girod used it as early as 1864.

Junod seems to have been pretty shrewd with his choice of tunes and arrangers. Here, in addition to the *Mikado*, we have a good Scottish ballad and an "old favourite", *Wait till the clouds roll* by composed in 1883 by H. J. Fulmer.

### Dating boxes by Arthur Junod

First one has to exclude boxes by Alfred Junod which I think are mainly if not solely his two patented types; the Alexandra with interchangeable slip-on sleeves and the conventional interchangeable cylinder type, the Orpheus, which has its spring drive and governor under the bedplate.

Boxes by Arthur Junod, most of which must have been made by his Company, Junod, Aubert et Cie.

(J.A.C), come with three types (at least!) of tune sheets, all in multi-colour lithographs . . .

Type A as in Fig. 1. Type B as in Fig. 4. These two are exclusive to Arthur Junod and are also shown with extra data on page 158 of Vol. 15. Type C is shared with other makers and is one version of the "Isle Rousseau" design, shown in Fig. 5.

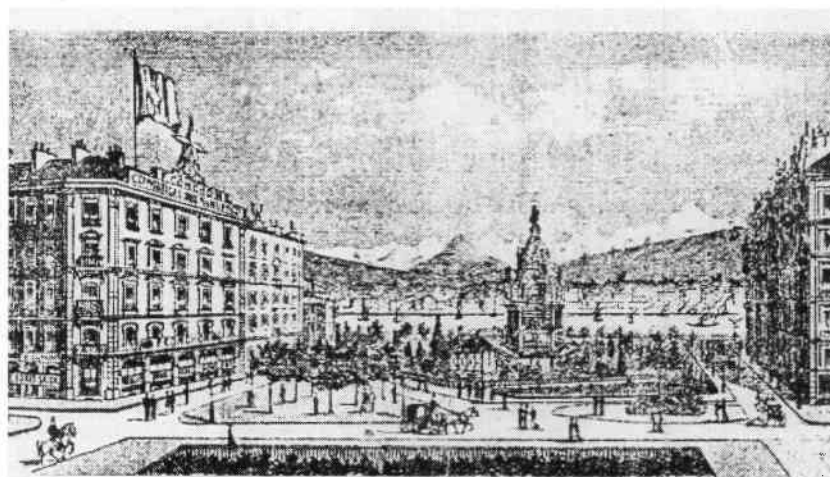
These three tune sheets, which all come in different sizes to suit lid sizes, appear to have been used indiscriminately. The period under consideration is from about 1885 (when Arthur Junod was 21) until about the end of 1892; this is a reasonably safe assumption because none of the boxes so far reported have their tune sheets endorsed with the stamp "made in Switzerland" which was required during 1892. The range of serial numbers reported is as follows, with the dates of their latest tunes added in brackets . . .

Type A from serial 1194 (1887) to 1650 (1885) and from serial 13746 (1877) to 19110 (1885).

Type B from serial 1104 (1887) to 1583 (1882).

Type C from serial 699 (1880) to 1050 (1887). The type C boxes are identified as Junod by a plaque embossed J.A.C. on the mechanism or the J.A.C. and Helvetia on case front, or both.

The only conclusions I dare draw from all these



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Fig. 7. About 1880 F. Conchon issued a sheet of general instructions, part of whose heading is shown here. The view is looking South towards the lake of Geneva and the Brunswick memorial. Conchon's Star Works, with flag and five point star above, is at the left, on the corner of Place des Alpes and the side street, Rue des Paquis (pasturage). Kindly provided, with other Conchon data, by member Roger Baffer.

figures are (1) that the serial numbers are independent of tune sheet type and (2) that there were probably two sets of serial numbers. Otherwise how can we explain batches of similar up-to-date tunes on boxes with serial numbers 18,000 apart? So it may take many more fixes before a Junod dating chart can be devised.

### Conchon dating

François Conchon (1837-1913) was listed as a Geneva maker from 1874 to May 1898 but I think he must have started a bit earlier, say 1872. He won Exhibition prizes from 1877 to 1896. His manufacturing range included all types and Orchestrions, and in the 1890s he was certainly noted for larger boxes.



Fig. 8. Yverdon-Ste. Croix train emerging from the Covatanne tunnel, altitude 950 metres, about 3km from Ste. Croix station. Kindly provided by Roland Fisher.



Fig. 9. Ste. Croix market place, winter 1900.



Fig. 10. Ste. Croix market place, October 1987.

Despite shortage of fixes and the fact that many known Conchon boxes have early tunes I think the dating chart in Fig. 6 is a useful guide. His output of cartels probably declined towards the end, as shown dotted; the last positive fix is serial 9594, latest tune 1891, probably made in 1892 or '93. I doubt if Conchon serial numbers ever reached 12,000.

## Conchon Helicoidal

F. Conchon never seemed to be in any doubt about the versatility of his ideas or his output. The former is noted in a letter of his dated 27-11-1891 (in Vol. 6, page 186) and the latter is clearly expressed in his unpacking and operating instructions. These were headed by a location picture of his Star Works flanked by lists of his products in French and English. Fig. 7 shows the English side of this heading.

The instructions printed below covered all types of musical boxes except helicoidals. All were quite conventional except: "If after a time, the instrument shows signs of slackening place a drop of fine watch oil on the screw-worm B (see drawing)". This drawing is of a governor alone, seen from the bass end, with a hand holding probably a feather whose tip touches the worm through the hole in the side plate; but this hand is in an impossible position, just where the cylinder must be, so I cannot imagine why they did not show it being done in the only possible way – from the opposite side.

Conchon also issued some specific instructions, for example with serial 9662 whose tune sheet has the Star Works trade mark at top left, and F. CONCHON, Fabricant, GENEVE in the top border. The heading above the list of tunes reads: "Interchangeable Continuous play Cylinders Sublime Harmony Piccolo and Bells". A Helicoidal!! The accompanying special instructions are stupefyingly verbose and further hindered by uninspired translation from the French. They take a lot of words to explain that with helical pinning there is no tune gap on the cylinder which is pinned all round and therefore has to be moved away from the comb for its return to tune 1. They powerfully emphasize that the triggers at each end of the cylinder bearings must be firmly pressed down to move the cylinder away from the comb before a cylinder is changed and also before using the tune selector . . . "pressing them until a snapping sound is heard which is a sign that the unlatching is entirely produced – then the cylinder can be placed on the bridges without fear of hurting either the pins of the cylinder or the small hair spring under each tooth of the comb."

No clue is given as to how the movement of the cylinder towards and away from the comb is achieved; the explanatory note simply reads . . . "It has been necessary to combine a mechanism producing the recoiling of the cylinder to a sufficient distance

backwards from the comb in order then to allow it to slide from the last revolution to the first and then to come of itself against the comb to play from the beginning, all these different movements being done automatically."

This Conchon helicoidal system is probably simpler and certainly quite different from that patented by Arthur Junod in 1896 and explained with drawing in Vol. 7, page 184. Conchon first exhibited a helicoidal in 1878, but probably it was not an interchangeable.

Conchon 9662 has three 6-air cylinders, two of them conventional with operative airs up to 1879 and the third a helicoidal, described on the tune sheet "continuous play cylinder," with the Wm. Tell overture. The Sublime Harmonie combs have 42 teeth each with separate combs for Piccolo, 30 teeth, and six for the six bells. The cylinders are 15" (38cm) by 2.4" (6cm) diameter, giving 70 seconds per tune and 7½ minutes for the overture. The box was made in 1892 – according to Fig. 6.

## Sound early advice

It is sometimes sobering to read up-to-date advice set out by craftsmen centuries ago. For example . .

When you have cast the bells in the way described above, if the tones are imperfectly matched through negligence or carelessness, correct them. If you want to have a bell with a higher tone, file the bottom of the rim; if lower, file round the rim on the outside.

This quote is taken from Book 3, Chapter 87, "Small Musical Bells," written in the year 1122 by Theophilus, a Benedictine monk. The complete work is entitled "On Divers Arts" translated from the Latin by Hawthorne and Smith, Dover Publications, New York. It ranges from painting to wire-drawing, from stained glass windows to hardening files, and gives a good picture of 12th Century craftsmen.

## Weather conditions at Ste. Croix

Arthur Junod's daughter Edith collected picture post cards in the 1903-1914 period and several in her collection including one reproduced here in Fig. 8 are reminders of the severe winter weather at Ste. Croix, sometimes with very persistent snow and cloud cover blanketing the area.

The railway from Yverdon was successfully planned to be reliable despite adverse weather, though that involved a detour of about eight miles to keep gradients from exceeding 1 in 25 during the 2000 feet climb. The altitude at Yverdon on Neuchâtel lake is 435 metres and at Ste Croix station 1066. The town centre altitude is 1076, so you hadn't finished climbing when you got off the train.

Fig. 9, from an 1899 post card kindly supplied by the Swiss Tourist Office, shows the snow problem in the market place at Ste Croix, not at its worst; and Fig. 10 shows the same spot in October 1987. ■

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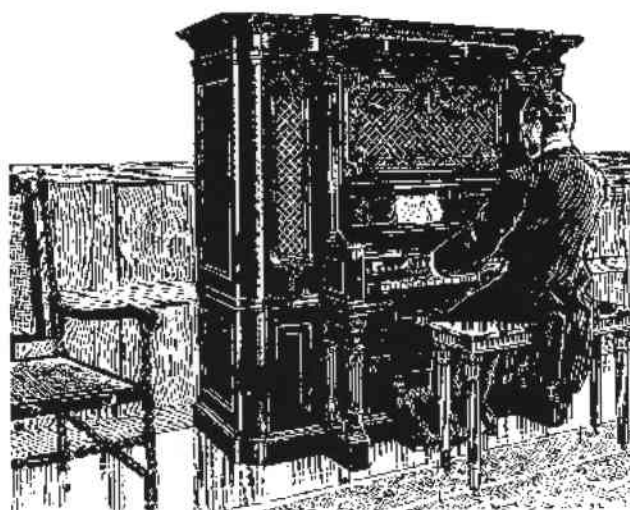
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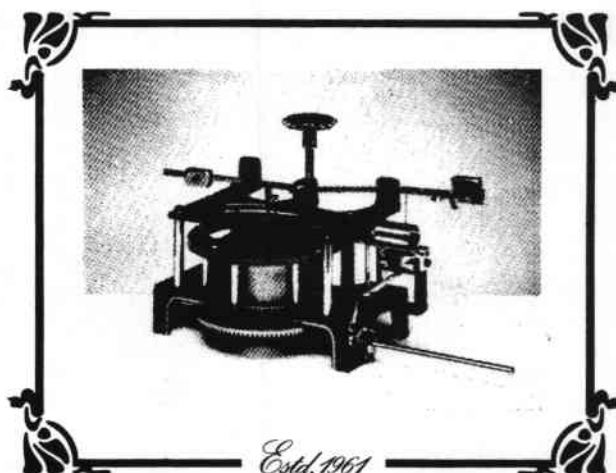
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The attention of members is drawn to the fact that the appearance in *The Music Box* of an advertiser's announcement does not in any way imply endorsement, approval or recommendation of that advertiser and his services by the editor of the journal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

## Deadline Dates for Display Advertising Copy

7th April; 7th July;  
7th October; 7th February

Editorial copy **must** be submitted at least 8 days prior to above dates.

**Posting of magazine:**  
27th February; 27th April;  
7th August; 7th November

Any members wishing to write to classified advertisers can send letters direct to me and I will forward them. For security reasons addresses are only disclosed at the request of individual members. Ted Brown. (Address in front of Journal).

### Musical Box Society of Great Britain

#### LAPEL BADGES

Available from Ted Brown,  
207 Halfway Street, Sidcup,  
Kent DA15 8DE

£1.70p

Far East £1.80p, U.S.A. \$2.50, Canada \$3.00.

## Have you paid your 1993 subscription yet?

Have you paid the correct amount of subscription for 1993. If not please send to Subscription Secretary:

Mr. R. Haiselden, Martlets, High Orchard, Pencombe, Bromyard, Herefordshire HR7 4RS.

## RATES FOR DISPLAY ADVERTS IN NEXT EDITION

SPECIAL POSITIONS (offered as available).

Outside back cover  
One additional colour to match front page  
Full colour

Full page only £160

£57

£360

£57

8 x 6 colour photograph

Inside covers: Full page £140, Half page £75

POSITIONS INSIDE JOURNAL (as available)

Full page £105, Half page £60, Quarter page £38, Eighth page £25

5cm box in classified area £22, 3cm box in classified area £15

These charges include typesetting but are exclusive of any artwork and camera work which may be required. Half-tone, line, and line-and-tone negs plus artwork, design and layout facilities can be provided if needed at additional cost. Squared-up half-tones £15 each. Cut-out half-tones £19 each.

### SPECIAL COLOURS

If required, advertisements can be printed in a second colour. Rates available on application.

DISCOUNTS (applicable only on accounts that are settled within 30 days, otherwise strictly nett).

Four or more consecutive insertions with same copy:

Area rate less 10%

Four or more consecutive insertions with differing copy:

Area rate less 5%

Two or more full page advertisements in the same edition:

Area rate less 10%

### MECHANICAL DATA type area:-

Full page 10½" x 7½" (270mm x 180mm), Half page 10½" x 3½" (270mm x 88mm) or 7½" x 5½" (180mm x 135mm), Quarter page 5½" x 3½" (135mm x 88mm).

## Wanted

Articles for publication in the "Music Box"

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

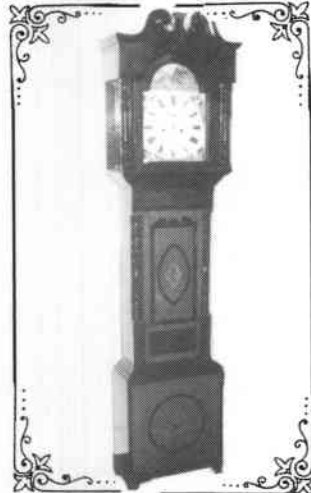
Address your correspondence to:  
**Graham Whitehead,**  
**Broadgate Printing Co. Ltd.**  
**Crondal Road, Exhall,**  
**Coventry CV7 9HN.**



# JOHN COWDEROY

*The Musical Box Centre*

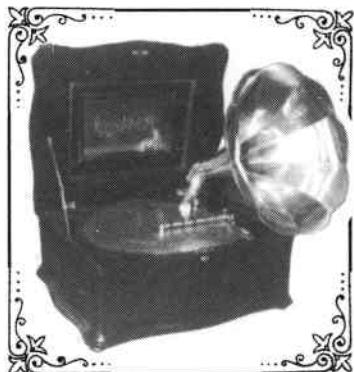
**SPECIALISTS IN THE RESTORATION  
OF  
MUSICAL BOXES AND CLOCKS**



**We buy and sell -  
CYLINDER MUSICAL  
BOXES, CLOCKS,  
DISC MACHINES,  
OLD AND RECUT DISCS  
- Large Showroom**

**FRIENDLY FAMILY  
RUN BUSINESS**  
— ♦ —  
**PERSONAL SERVICE  
ASSURED**

**EXPERT PACKING AND  
DELIVERY ARRANGED -  
ANYWHERE  
WORLDWIDE**



## JOHN COWDEROY

The Musical Box Centre  
42 South Street Eastbourne  
East Sussex BN21 4XB  
Tel: 0323 720058 (Day)  
0323 504590 (Evenings)  
Fax: 0323 410163

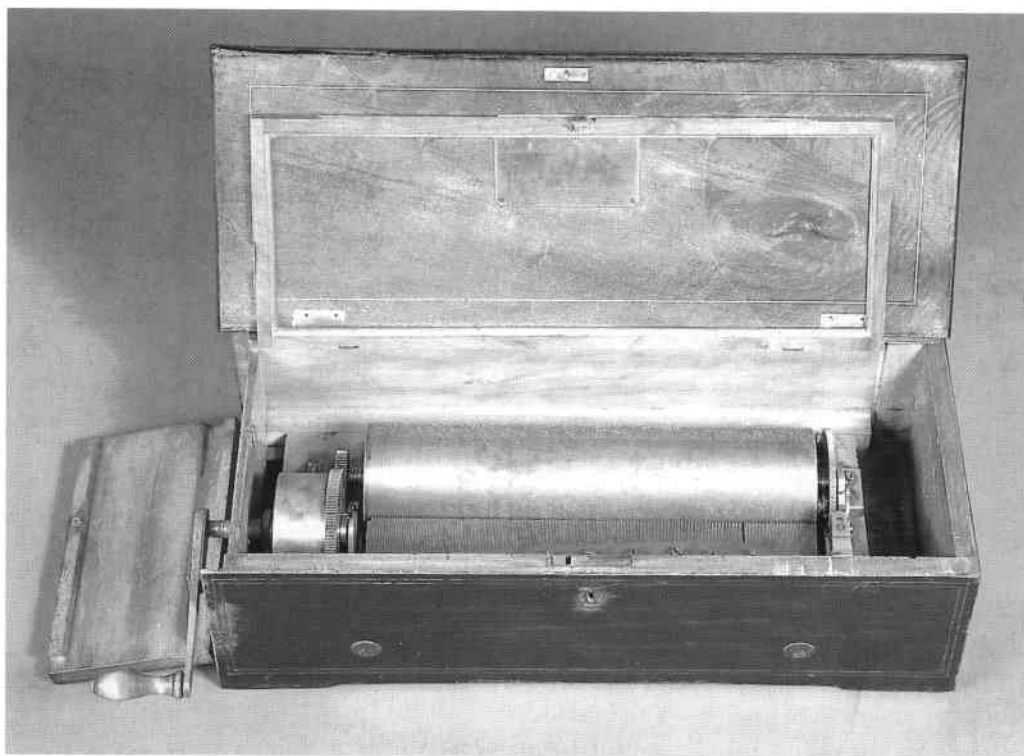




10 Salem Road, Bayswater, London W2 4DL  
Telephone: 071-229 9090

# MECHANICAL MUSIC

Tuesday, 14th December 1993



*A rare Nicole Frères Piano-forte overture musical box, No. 36793, Gamme No. 1713, sold recently for £6,800.*

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Entries are now being accepted for future sales.  
For further enquiries, please contact  
Antony Jones on: (071) 229-9090 ext. 214.

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Facsimile: 071-792 9201  
LONDON · PARIS · NEW YORK · GENEVA · BRUSSELS · ZURICH · THE HAGUE · DÜSSELDORF

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