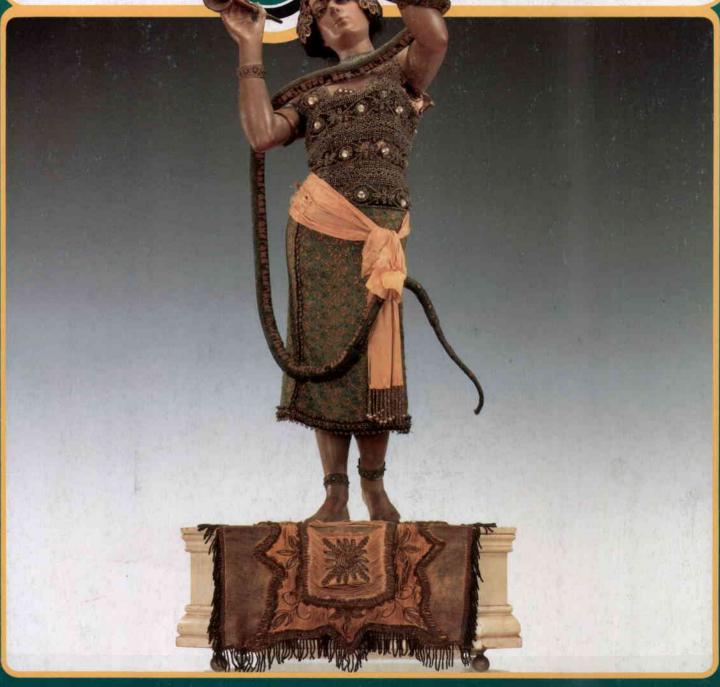
# An International Magazine of Mechanical Music

Volume 16 Number

Winter 1993

Edited by Graham Whitehead



Inside

Register News

**Projects and Wants** 

The Triola Mandolin-Zither
The Furthest South

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#### Front Cover:

"Snake Charmer" from the Betty Cadbury collection sold at Sothebys, New Bond Street, London, September 15th, 1993.

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Volume 16 Number 4 Winter 1993

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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.

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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# SOCIETY TOPICS

# FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Spring Meeting 25th - 27th March, 1994 The Brandon Hall Hotel. Brandon, Warwickshire.

The Brandon Hall is a 17th century shooting lodge and country house set in 17 acres of garden and woodland close to Coventry and is easily accessible via the motorway network.

#### **Hotel Package**

Dinner, bed and breakfast, Friday 25th and Saturday 26th March, £90 per person. Society dinner only, £15 (approx.).

# Programme (still to be finalised).

Saturday morning - Registration and A.G.M. Talk by Christopher Proudfoot.

Saturday afternoon - Coach trip to large private collection.

Saturday evening - Society din-

ner, followed by demonstration and talk by Nicholas Simons.

Sunday a.m. - Visit to Heritage Motor Museum, Gaydon.

It would be appreciated if as many members as possible would bring at least one interesting piece from their own collection to show and discuss with other members, tables will be available.

#### Summer One day Meeting, 18th June at St. Alban's Organ Museum.

This will include Society Auction, viewing of the museum which houses a permanent working exhibition of mechanical musical instruments including organs by Mortier, Decap and Bursens, reproducing pianos by Steinway and Weber, musical boxes etc. Registration fee of £10 includes morning coffee, sandwiches and tea/coffee at lunchtime and afternoon tea.

# Autumn Meeting, early October at Harrogate.

Local organiser John Powell. Full details to be announced in the Spring Magazine.

#### Proposed trip to Holland, 5th - 10th June, 1994. (using Wings Coaches from Sleaford).

The coach will start from Lincoln, (car parking available) and will pick up at Landbeach (car parking at Alan Wyatt's home) and Dartford crossing Dover to Calais then travelling to Amsterdam. Accommodation will be in a 4 star hotel for 5 nights half-board.

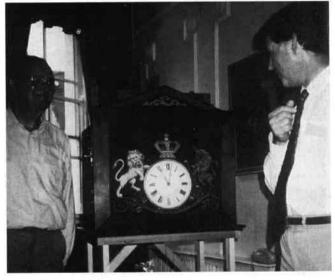
The cost will be £260 for the whole package, insurance **not** included. Coach travel during our stay is included. We plan to visit Museum Van Speeldoos tot Utrecht plus other trips to private collections still to be finalised. We also hope to spend a half-day in Delft.

Advance payment has to be made by 5th January, 1994 and final payment by 1st March, 1994.

Please reserve your place as soon as possible by sending a booking fee of £30 per person and the balance due before 24th February, 1994.

Cheques payable to E. V. Wing & Sons.

Roy Ison, Meetings Secretary.







Above: Nicholas Simons playing a Triola, a most pleasing sound.

Above left: Roy Ison and John Powell admiring the Mukle and Söhne organ clock.

Below left: George Worswick.

# REPORT ON PAST MEETINGS

Autumn Meeting 8th - 10th October, 1993

As one approaches Lincoln the Cathedral dominates the scene from miles around.

Its present organ with its Gothic case, designed by E. W. Wilson, was first erected in 1826 and enlarged/improved, most notably by 'Father' Willis in 1898. In 1960 restoration, including a new console, was carried out by Harrison & Harrison. It has 4 manuals; 51 stops; 13 pedals; 18 couplets; 51 pistons. Wind pressure:flue work  $3^{1}/_{2}$  inches water gauge; reeds  $3^{1}/_{2}$ ,  $7^{1}/_{2}$  and 13 inches. There are also two Chamber organs. William Byrd is the best known of the Cathedral organists.

The City has a well maintained castle, on the same hill as the Cathedral; building started in 1068, over the ruins of a Roman fort. Facing the north wall of the castle is a fascinating Toy Museum which many of us visited for a nostalgic interlude.

The meeting was held in the White Hart Hotel, which is close to the Cathedral. Those who got there by Friday evening had the advantage of being entertained in the home of our hosts Roy and Mary Ison, who not only provided excellent refreshments but also a sale of musical items plus a display of instruments, including those of John Young and Colin Thompson which one was allowed to play. The enjoyment of the visitors was such that the party went on past midnight. Roy and Mary also held 'open house' on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

Further to articles in the latest editions of the British and American Journals, George Worswick who lives near Lincoln, started the Saturday morning session with a report on the achievements of the Register. We were told that it is proceeding very well with over 2,500 cylinder boxes listed on a computer file. Security of the records are assured as very few people know the identity of the Registrar. All post is directed through George.

Already interesting facts can be extracted. There are 380 two air boxes, 286 four air, and 619 eight air boxes. Then again, the basic information can be re-tabulated in terms of manufacture, serial numbers, combs, etc. This information means there are 705 Nicole Freres and 620 key wind boxes and so on.

Next, Ted Brown, an expoliceman, has volunteered to be the security contact. He will liaise with the Police when there has been



Members being entertained by the 'Minstrel' during the Society Dinner.



Don Robinson's 87 key Showmans organ at Market Rasen, Sunday afternoon visit.



Awaiting entry to the Usher Gallery, Lincoln to see the watch collection.

a theft. He pointed out that when applying for a registration number, it would be much better if you could include a photograph of the box. This could be used by the Police if necessary for easier identification.

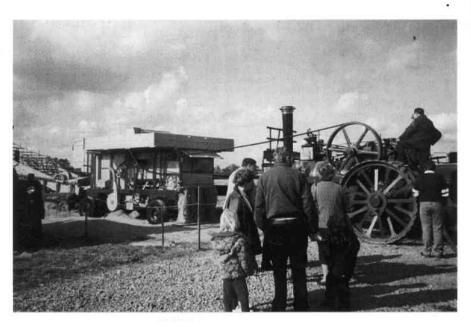
It is hoped that later on the Register will be extended to include disc boxes and organettes. If you do not feel inclined to fill up a registration form because you, or your friend, only have one or two boxes, please remember that your box could be the missing number in a series of numbers. It may be unusual, outstanding or even unique, so hesitate no longer, fill up a form and make a contribution to security as well as adding to our fund of knowledge. When you get your Registration number, mark it on the underside of the box in the rear left hand corner. Add your post code and house number with an ultra violet marker pen as an extra measure if you so wish.

John Powell was the next speaker, who related his trials and tribulations whilst restoring a Black Forest organ-clock, having trade labels of B. Mukle & Söhne on each of three barrels. Its history was a little obscure having previously been in the Arthur Ord-Hume collection and rescued by him after having survived a nearby fire with minor fire damage. Having the Royal Coatof-Arms on the clockface, indicated a possible connection with the Exhibition of 1851 and 1862, but searches through the exhibition catalogues produced no evidence of this.

The three barrels were badly damaged by woodworm when acquired and were subsequently repaired by removing all pins and bridges, filling the damaged areas and then replacing them. John showed one of his charts he had made to record all pin and bridge positions before removal. All 24 tunes were played during his talk, each tune took 50 seconds. They all sounded very well.

The organ plays from 36 keys and four ranks of pipes. Two keys are used for stop changing of the middle two ranks, one key each for the rank of 10 Vienna flutes and 24 for the other 3 ranks, spaced one octave apart making a total of 82 pipes. John had tuned the organ to a system described by Ignaz Bruder for small organ clocks in the early 1800's and recorded by Dr. J. J. Haspells in his invaluable book 'Automatic Musical Instruments their mechanics and their music 1580-1820'.

George Worswick then gave us a slide show and talk about early musical boxes with sectional combs.



Threshing at Market Rasen.

As the movements were mainly used in clock bases they tend to be overlooked by collectors as they are difficult to display attractively. The latest ones appear to have been by Ducommun-Girod who retained 5tooth sectional combs well into the musical box era. Prior to 'solid' combs there were very many variations in design. He discussed the 'norm' and then the variations, some good, some with no apparent benefit. All were made to higher craft standards than later movements, even to the extent of having the undersides of baseplates polished, despite the fact that the mechanism itself was rarely seen by the owner.

Keith Harding then reminded us that he had a register of Gamme numbers for Nicole Freres boxes. He also demonstrated a Henriot box which played 4 airs and is key wound with 3 levers. It sounded very well. He also demonstrated a fine clown automata that his firm had restored.

After lunch we assembled at the Usher Gallery, where George Worswick had many antique watches taken out of their display cabinets and supplying us with magnifying glasses handed them to us sitting around a table. This was an exquisite experience for us to have the opportunity to examine the fine mechanisms; decorated with precious stones; enamelling; engraving and filigree work in one's own hands. On one such item George removed the enamelled back of an automaton musical watch so that we could examine the mechanism. These facilities were probably the first time that they had been afforded to a visiting party. George had prepared the text for the Museum's colour catalogue of almost 70 watches bequeathed to the City by James Ward Usher, who made his fortune by introducing the Lincoln Imp as a tourist emblem.

After this meeting we returned to Roy and Mary's home to further enjoy the fine collection of musical boxes they had arranged for us. Nicholas Simons was there and played his Triola (a mechanical Zither) and his 36 key barrel reed organ, playing five classical tunes from 1850. It was nice to hear them.

The Society dinner, held in our hotel on the Saturday evening was a very pleasant occasion, with an excellent meal with good company. A Tudor costumed music maker played a selection of old type instruments, including a Hurdy-Gurdy during the meal and was well received. Afterwards Captain Arthur Creighton of Monarch Airlines gave a highly entertaining talk on the funny side of flying.

On Sunday morning we made our way to Market Rasen to join a public demonstration of a live steam display of working fair organs; steam engines; steam tractors and all sorts of pumps etc. There were also vintage cars and motor cycles, all demonstrated for the financial benefit of the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade. This visit was arranged by Dorothy and Don Robinson to give a nostalgic atmosphere of smoke; steam; music and mechanical noises from the 'big boys' working their hearts out threshing; cutting and generating electricity etc.

We returned to Lincoln well satisfied that we had a wonderful meeting, with a large component of musical boxes; organs and those special watches, even the weather was kind to us. It was a credit to all those concerned who put in much time and effort to ensure the success that it was; especially Roy and Mary – our thanks to them all.

Continued on page 116.

# Register News

Security is the dominant feature of this edition of the Register. Unfortunately in this day and age it is necessary to take this matter seriously. Please read through the following and note carefully to see if these thoughts would be of benefit to you.

Details of how to register a box were given in Volume 15 on page 116. These are still correct, but there are two additional points which should be mentioned.

1. In the comments section, please remember to note in centimetres the approximate size of the case. Of greater importance, having received a Register number, please mark the number in the correct place. This is underneath the base board at the rear left hand corner. By accepting this pattern, everyone will know where to look for a Register number.

There is a strong case for the Register number being put in on the base board in a different place using an ultra violet pen. A post code could also be added.

2. Please send in a clear photograph of any box and include in the print a ruler placed in such a manner as to give an indication of the size of the box. A white plastic centimetre ruler is ideal. In the case of snuff boxes, a fifty pence piece gives a better impression of size. Remember that the police and many other members of the public have little idea of a Victorian musical box. Most tend to think of a jewel case with a ballerina revolving on top.

Unfortunately, thieves do not just choose to take cylinder boxes. Quite unreasonably they take disc machines and organettes as well. No one offered to take on the job of registering these items, but it really has to be done. Both will now be recorded on separate Registers. Disc machines will be given a D prefix to the number and organettes an O prefix. Please follow the following guide lines for sending in details of your instruments.

#### **Disc Boxes**

- 1. Name.
- 2. Size of disc.
- 3. Model name or number if applicable. Twin or single comb.
- 4. Brief description of cabinet and size. Note where serial number is marked.

Having received details of your Register number, please mark visually in the following places (a) Table models: Under the base board in the rear left hand corner. (b) Upright machines: Rear left hand corner of the back of the machine. Mark outside. Again marking in ultra violet pen in an area that would normally be covered by the disc would be an added security move.

#### **Organettes**

- 1. Name.
- 2. Number of reeds.
- 3. Model name or number if applicable.
- 4. Brief description of cabinet and size. Note where serial number is marked.

Once again please mark visually and by ultra violet pen the Register number under the instrument.

NOTE: I HAVE TO HAVE A SERIAL NUMBER TO IDENTIFY ANY MACHINE.

There is no reason why any dealer who is a member of the Musical Box Society should not register his stock. A Register print out of the details would be available for him to include with the box when it was sold. This would also be a possible way of finding new members for the Society. Printed details and a record of a box should also add just a little to its provenance.

The rest of this article deals with how the security system has been organised and deals with what to do should a theft take place. The overriding point to remember is to contact the Security Contact as soon as possible. Matters will be taken on from there. Regretfully, if boxes have not been registered, the amount of help the Security Contact can give is rather limited.

It is hoped that all dealers and repairers who have an interest in musical boxes will be willing to participate in this scheme and be prepared to be part of the Neighbourhood Watch, Museums would find it beneficial to list their boxes as well and be aware of possible stolen goods. Individual members of the Society are encouraged to request a copy of Form (C) and volunteer to keep a watch over their particular area. Ted Brown will soon have a mailing list organised and the system up and running.

When writing to the Registrar, would members please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. The cost of paper, postage, record cards, computer discs and ribbons seem to be rising almost every day.

I must thank Keith Harding for making his Nicole gamme number records available to be put on the Register. This kind of considerate help gives me great encouragement to continue with the project. Ultimately I understand these records along with the Register cards will be placed in the Society's archives.

#### **Musical Box Security**

The Musical Box Society are increasingly concerned at the rising level of theft of antiques. To help combat this trend, a Register of cylinder musical boxes has been established for members of the Society and a type of "Neighbourhood Watch" security system has been formulated around this Register.

To extend this system, all major auction houses, specialist dealers, repairers and other legitimate interested parties are being asked for their co-operation in locating any stolen items. Such co-operation would be most beneficial to all to avoid the anxiety of being caught in possession of stolen property.

Any company or individual who expresses an interest in helping to combat crime in this way will be sent, free of charge, official notification of any theft together with full details of the stolen articles. It is hoped this information would be kept to hand for some considerable time. In the event of property being recovered, notification of that fact will be sent out.

All Registered boxes will have the Register number deeply marked on the underside of the baseboard at the rear left hand corner either visually or by ultra violet pen marker or more usually a combination of both. This with other supplied information will help to identify any item.

If you or your company are willing to assist in this scheme, please advise the Musical Box Society as soon as possible by completing the enclosed confidential request form. Should any stolen or dubious musical box be offered, then immediate telephone

contact with the following should be made:-

- The Police.
- The security contact of the Music Box Society of GB.

The security contact is:-Mr. E. Brown, The Old School. Guildford Road, Horsham, West Sussex. **RH12 3JP** Tel: 0403 832 533.

Thanking you in advance for your anticipated co-operation. Should you be willing to enlist in this scheme, please complete the enclosed form. A sample type of loss form which would be posted to you is included with this article. Some would not have as much information as this specimen.

- The security system will be available to any member who has registered musical boxes and marked them underneath in the suggested manner with the appropriate Register number. Numbers should be marked visually or by using an ultra violet pen marker. Preferably both types of marking should be used. This could best be described as a log book system as the number stays with the box for its life.
- A Security Person assisting the Registrar will be the contact should any member have a musical box stolen. He will liaise with the Registrar in an attempt to locate these boxes.
- Copies of the full Register entry, plus photocopy photographs (if available), of any stolen box will be sent by the Registrar in sufficient numbers to the security contact for immediate distribution to the following:-
- (a) Known police databases.
- Major and well known auction houses.
- Known musical box repairers and dealers.
- Enthusiastic volunteer members of the Musical Box Society of GB who would keep a watch over their particular area.

Note: A sample of the type of information that would be sent out is illustrated opposite.

These volunteer members would be chosen from all parts of the country and would be asked to keep a look out in their area for the stolen items and monitor local auction rooms. Any member locating a stolen box would immediately let the police and the security contact know.

- Employment of this system would ensure that details of stolen boxes would be nationwide within a day or two and that many people would be aware of the theft.
- Hopefully, all participating members, repairers and auction houses will keep any records of stolen boxes for a long time. In the case of the Register, a computer never forgets. Any such box notified in the future would be quickly recognised as stolen.
- 7. In the event of a theft, the following items of information need to be given:-

Name

Serial No.

- (a) The Register number.
- (b) The serial number.
- (c) The makers name.

G/No.

- (d) The telephone number of Police station receiving the report of the theft.
- (e) The Police crime book number of the theft reported.

Item (c) is not so important unless the makers name is clearly marked on the missing box. Items (d) and (e) are obtained at the time of reporting any theft. Compliance with items (d) and (e) also ensures that at least 9 Police forces are notified instantly. More will be setting up Fine Art and Antique squads very shortly.

Reg/No.

H.L	.M.G.	9283	?	R-2550
Тур	e:	4 air. Snuffbox.		
Cyl	inder:	$7.2 \times 1.85 \text{ cm}$ .		
Cor	nb:	50 teeth. Single pi	ece comb.	
		Tun	e Card	
1.	Where ar	t thou dear.		1 oct
2.	Annie of	the vale.	-4	ted loss
3.	Twass on	ice upon a time.	repor	
4.	Fare the	e well chum.	Notion	
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	D.F.	t thou dear. the vale. ace upon a time. e well chum. cimen only	mments	
Bla		sition case with "Tie		
lid.	Picture o	of a French soldier b	olding on to a pig	s's tail to prevent it
esc	aping. Pla	ain tune card with box size case.	a thick and two	thin black borders.
US	uai siiuii i	JUX SIZE CASE.		
		Pho	tograph	
		Photograph wi	ith alternative v	iew
		i notograph w	ton anochhaorvo v	10 11
		c		

8. Providing copies of the full Register print out would mean that full and accurate information would be available very quickly and in sufficient quantities to be effective. It would also remove from any owner the stress of finding information at a traumatic time.

Please note that the name and address of the person suffering the loss is **NOT** sent out with any paperwork.

Added instructions on procedure will be included in the computer copies sent out.

9. A combination of the serial number and the Register number would help less knowledgeable perons to positively identify any box. There are cases of boxes coming from different makers with identical serial numbers. A combination of the Register number and the serial number would remove any doubts or

confusion. Any box having the Register number obliterated from the underneath left hand rear corner of the baseboard would be most suspect.

10. The Musical Box Society of GB, the security contact and the Registrar cannot be expected to be financially out of pocket by providing this service. Members must be prepared to refund reasonable expenses incurred. This may well be recoverable from the insurance company.

11. There are two other organisations assisting in the recovery of stolen antiques.

The Antiques Trade Gazette will accept advertisements reporting theft. Advertisements currently cost between £75 and £100. Contact Anne Bowden, Antiques Trade Gazette, 17 Whitcomb Street, London WC2H 7PL. Tel: 071 930 7195 or Fax: 071 930 6391.

The Arts Loss Register also keeps details of stolen antiques over the value of £500 on their archives. The current charge for registering is £20 for each item.

In both cases insurance companies or loss adjusters may be willing to help with these costs.

Ted Brown has kindly volunteered to be the first security contact for the Society. His working life with the police makes him an ideal choice to take on this important duty.

Contact with Ted should be made at the following address:-

Ted Brown Esq., The Old School, Guildford Road, Bucks Green, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 3JP. Tel: 0403 823 533.

# The Musical Box Register

#### **DU.COMMUN-GIROD**

The Du.Commun family were among the pioneers of the musical box industry. David Du.Commun, born in the last quarter of the 16th century, married his second wife Mme. Girod in the year 1812. She had a daughter, Jeanne Catherine, by her marriage to Girod. By chance, she was exactly the same age as David Du.Commun's eldest son Frederick William. The families were further united by these two marrying in the year 1816 when they were both 21.

It was this union that produced four children and founded the Du.Commum-Girod dynasty. Both of Frederick's sons, Louis and Jean were later to become part of the musical box scene.

In 1820, just five years after moving to Geneva, Frederick Du.Commun commenced manufacturing musical boxes with Custot. This partnership lasted about five years, as by 1826, Du.Commun is listed as a sole maker in records of the time. (See The History of the Musical Box by Allfred Chapuis).

After that Frederick's father and brother worked in the business which had now become Du. Commun-Girod. His two sons also worked in the firm. The business continued making good quality musical boxes until the

death of Frederick in 1862 at the age of 67. His two sons ran the concern until the death of their mother six years later.

In 1869, Louis entered into a partnership with Mittendorf and traded as Du. Commun & Cie. Jean in the meantime had opened up a workshop making parts for musical boxes. He continued this work until circa 1885.

Frederick Du.Commun made excellent quality boxes which often have sustained trills in the upper register. He was also able to arrange music for pinning on the cylinders.

9/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
36	_	?	4 air. Lever wind.	R-2202
60	==	?	? air.	R-180
616	*	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-1451
684	==	?	12 air. Lever wind.	R-181
760	*	?	6 air. Keywind.	R-2492
1077	*	3172	4 air. Lever wind.	R-2484
1159	===	?	3 air. Snuffbox.	R-2532
1340	*	?	6 air. Drum & 11 bells + castanet. Lever wind.	R-182
1397	*	?	4 air. Lever wind.	R-2473
1612	*	567	6 air. Harmoniphone. 16 key organ at bass end.	R-183
1842	*	?	6 air. 8 hidden bells. Lever wind.	R-184
2085	*	?	6 air. Lever wind.	R-2537
3002	-	?	3 air. Keywind.	R-2171
3175	-	?	? air. Keywind.	R-2042
3787	-	?	4 air. Mandolin Forte-Piano.	R-185

3897	_	137	6 air. Hidden drum & 3 bell box. Lever wind.	R-2448
4120	_	?	8 air.	R-186
4204	_	?	3 air. Keywind.	R-187
4247	_	?	6 air.	R-188
4374	*	1038	3 air.	R-189
4380	_	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-190
4716	_	?	3 air.	R-1623
	_			
4842	_	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-2252
4849	-	?	6 air.	R-1725
5002	*	?	8 air. Orchestral box with 9 bells.	R-191
5138	_	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-2431
5179	_	?	6 air. Hidden drum & 3 bells with castanet.	R-192
5381	_	1085	4 air. Lever wind.	R-2353
5401	*	?	Single air on 3 turns. Keywind.	R-2596
5557	_	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-193
5866	_	687	4 air.	R-194
6267		?	? air.	R-1314
6642	_	; ?	8 air.	R-1726
	_			
6697	<del>-</del>	734	6 air. Keywind.	R-2348
7075	*	?	8 air. 20 key organ. Harmoniphone. Lever wind.	R-2483
7256	*	246	8 air. Drum, bell & castanet box. Lever wind.	R-2178
7777	*	?	8 air. 6 bell box. Lever wind.	R-1727
7926	*	?	6 air. Lever wind.	R-1911
8026	_	?	8 air. Drum and bell box.	R-195
8195	_	?	6 air. Keywind.	R-2435
8544	_	?	? air. Clockbase movement.	R-196
8737	_	; ?	8 air. 3 bell with drum and castanet.	R-197
	_	; ?		R-198
8891	*		8 air. 2 per turn. Keywind.	
9695		153	6 air. Keywind.	R-1754
9883	*	?	8 air. Keywind.	R-1624
10995	*	?	4 air. Hidden drum and bell box.	R-199
11266	*	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-2433
12037	_	1835	8 air. 2 per turn Part Overture. Keywind.	R-200
12038	_	790	8 air. 2 per turn. Keywind.	R-2349
12061	*	802	4 air. Keywind.	R-2117
13236	*	?	8 air. Lever wind.	R-2155
15189	_	?	? air. Keywind.	R-1315
15262	*	?	6 air. Drum, 9 bell & castanet. Lever wind.	R-2442
	*	?	4 Overture. Keywind.	R-201
15768			*	R-2350
16155	_	586	4 air. Keywind.	
16258	_	?	6 air. Keywind.	R-2543
16672	_	?	8 air. Keywind.	R-2542
17120	_	?	12 air. 2 per turn. Keywind.	R-2057
17121	_	?	12 air. 2 per turn.	R-202
17390	_	809	? air.	R-203
19833	*	641	4 air. Keywind.	R-204
19867	*	?	8 air. Lever wind.	R-1303
20164	_	?	12 air. 2 per turn. Keywind.	R-1910
20981	_	?	? air.	R-1316
21212	_	?	12 air. 2 per turn.	R-1665
	_		-	R-2351
21391	_	798	6 air. Keywind.	
22386	_	?	12 air. 2 per turn. Forte-Piano.	R-205
23300	_	?	6 air. Keywind.	R-2293
24042	_	?	6 air. Keywind. Forte-Piano.	R-206
26454	_	?	4 air. Forte-Piano. Keywind.	R-1666
28001	*	?	8 air. Keywind.	R-207
28426	*	1140	4 air. Keywind.	R-2595
30473	_	?	4 air. Keywind.	R-1855
30725	*	647	8 air. Lever wind.	R-208
30850	*	?	8 air. 2 per turn. Keywind.	R-2557
32268	_	?	? air.	R-1667
	_	; ?	8 air.	R-1836
34090	*	-		
34409	***	.756	8 air. Keywind.	R-209
34763	_	1645	6 air. Keywind.	R-2352

35344	_	?	12 air. Keywind.	R-120
38424 '	_	841	6 air. Hidden drum, bell & castanet. Lever wind.	R-2354
39577	*	776	8 air. Lever wind.	R-211
39580	*	<b>79</b> 8	6 air. Lever wind.	R-212
48350	*	78	4 air. Lever wind.	R-2120

#### F. EINSIDL

Einsidl was an Austrian manufac-

turer working in Vienna. His movements had the bass teeth at the right hand side and were stamped F. Einsidl in Wien.

9/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
1199	1 — 1	7142	2 air.	R-213
1798	1 — 1	558	2 air.	R-214

#### **FALCONNET**

Falconnet was one of the early makers who had several partners over his working life. He was born in 1800. He moved to Geneva in 1823. Between 1835 and 1844 he was in partnership with F. Lecoultre.

At some time he was in partnership with Reymond, probably before 1835. The firm Falconnet et Reymond produced some fine quality and large overture boxes. The name was always stamped on either the comb or the bedplate.

From 1841, he was associated with Lacroix. The partnership called Lacroix, Fils & Falconnet. This association may well have continued until his death in 1861.

9/93. v. 1.

S/No.		T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
Falconnet. Falconnet et Reymond. Falconnet et Reymond. Falconnet et Reymond.	56	* - -	? ? ?	4 air. Keywind. Part overture box. 3 air. 4 air. Keywind. 3 overture. Keywind.	R-215 R-1669 R-2369 R-2368

#### E. FORNACHON

Edmund Fornachon came from a family of watch merchants. He was based in La Mothe in Switzerland and will be best remembered for his patents and designs towards the speeding up of musical box production. He was working around 1886, but exactly when his work commenced and finished is very uncertain. Some of his ideas were used by Mermod in their interchangeable boxes and that firm may well have made boxes for Fornachon. To date only one box has been found with his name stamped on the edge of its comb.

10/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
7660	-	?	8 air. Lever wind.	R-216

#### **HENRY GAUTSCHI & SONS**

Gautschi was born in St. Croix and later settled in America. He was an assembler of musical boxes, although he did claim to be a manufacturer and have a factory back in St. Croix. He did patent his ideas in America, the latest being as late as 1903. Tune cards with Gautschi and Sons label of 1030 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia are quite common in America. Very few are seen in Great Britain. His boxes strongly resemble Paillard movements. 10/93. v. 1.

S/No.	T/C * = Yes	G/No.	Comments	Reg/No.
Henri. Gautschi & Sons. 6188	*	1531	10 air. Drum, bells and castanet box.	R-217



In this new column, Coulson Conn and Barry Johnson of the USA teamed together with Kevin McIlhone our Society's new archivist, to provide news on projects that enthusiasts across Europe and America are engaged with. The intention is to help to bring together specialised knowledge by letting others know of the needs of information or special materials that may be of help to the person carrying out the project.

In this column we join forces with Musical Box Society International of America with the intention of enhancing knowledge to the benefit of collectors everywhere.

As is the custom in England, addresses of members are not printed but correspondence can be made by contact with Kevin McIlhone. As this column has already been running in the Musical Box Society International News Bulletin, this column starts with an American emphasis.

If British members tell us of their projects and wants, information if appropriate, will be submitted to Kevin, to his partners and probably included in the American listings too.

To set the ball rolling a project from your Editor himself. Graham Whitehead would like to communicate with anyone who has had the experience of applying MIDI (Musical Industry Digital Interface) to control mechanical music. Graham has successfully computerised the music for an 18 bell carillon (technically a chime) and tune titles at random are played on the hour using "Cakewalk" a notator programme on a standard PC. Graham is also using the same principal to control a multimedia show at Ashorne Hall. Eventually Graham would like to adapt the system to read musical box discs in order that arrangements made for one machine can be edited and used programme disc cutting machines for an entirely different musical box.

As the MIDI interface system is solenoid operated, an easier starting project would be (because of its electric action), the Mills Violano Virtuoso and it is possible that there are enthusiasts out there already experimenting with the Mills. Communication from them is especially welcome.

Whilst on the subject of MIDI, **Donald Brown**, 27 Curve Street, Bedford MA01730 writes about building from scratch, from the original patent, a Star 88-note roll perforator and an 88-note roll frame with photo transistors in a 61-note tracker bar to get a MIDI interface circuit to record selections on a computer. The goal is to score a sheet of music from rolls.

Dave Crothers, 3866 Krugel Street, Hatboro PA19040 tells about using Kerbschnitzen (chip carving) to construct 72-note cylinder musical boxes using linden wood.

Dick Hack, 2051 Chesapeake Rd., Annapolis, MD 21401, is making Weber Unika roll recuts and he and Durward Centre, 2100 St. Paul St., Baltimore, MD21218, are making 75-note orchestrion rolls. They are also starting a project to recut Violano rolls. Contact them with your wants or if you have special rolls you would like to see recut.

Please contact Kevin or Barry if you would like to help complete any of the following lists. You will be asked to help with the copying and postage costs.

A word about using the original published tune lists for finding the missing tune titles. There were mistakes made on those lists when the lists were first printed. For example, I found on a Stella original list a mistake on No. 958, Intermezzo from the Gondolir, listed as the Gondoliers by Sullivan. A Stella 171/4" tune disc had the correct title printed on it so I figure someone incorrectly set the type. I also found a 1905 Regina original tune list that had different numbers for the 8" disc size when I compared the numbers on original tune discs. Maybe they reused the numbers with new tune titles so one has to be careful when gathering information.

Hendrick Strengers of Grabijnhof, Delft, 2625 LM, Netherlands, wrote to us about his Kalliope disc research. He said, "In Musical Boxes and Other Musical Marvels you can find my research on the heading of "The Kalliope Makers" (pages 119-135). I cannot obtain copies of these original catalogues: 1895, 1898, 1900, 1903 and 1911. Also I need the missing numbers in the list of discs between 762-1000 and above 1120. Furthermore, there are Kalliope gramophone records that were made from 1904 up to 1937. All data concerning this production is virtually unknown. I am very grateful for all information in this matter and especially photocopies, illustrations and pamphlets."

Bob Yates, 901 Glenshaw Avenue, Glenshaw PA15116, is considering the making of new strips for the Calliston organette. If you are interested in such strips, please contact him.

Steven Simpson is offering to make organette rolls and organ books any scale, key or keyless even one off tunes, contact Kevin McIlhone.

Kevin McIlhone is looking for Aeolian 116-note pipe organ rolls. If enough owners are interested, he will arrange to have them newly made. Kevin is also compiling a listing of cobs for the Gem 20-note and Concert Roller Organ 32-note; please send your listings to him. Also, please send your listings of New Century, Lochmann, Britannia, Stella/Mira, Komet and Adler discs and any Polyphon discs not listed in The Disc Music Box Handbook by Graham Webb to Coulson or Barry for updating of their master lists. The MBSI has a complete listing (over 3,000 titles) of all Regina tune discs compiled by Lee Munsic and John Bishop.

Next, one of our new colleagues, Nico Wiegman of Hilversum, Netherlands, has sent a list of tuning scales which he possesses for the following musical boxes:

**Kalliope** - 14cm/5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>", 18cm/7", 23cm/9", 25cm/9<sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>", 34cm/13<sup>2</sup>/<sub>5</sub>", 45cm/17<sup>7</sup>/<sub>10</sub>", 52.5cm/20<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>", 64cm/25".

**Symphonion** -  $19^{1/2}/7^{3/5}$ ", 34.5cm/13<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>", 38cm/with 10 bells/ 15" (edge drive), 30cm/11<sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub>".

**Polyphon** - 28cm/11", 36cm/ 14.7", 40cm/15 $^{1}/_{2}$ " (2 types), 45cm/ with 12 bells/17 $^{7}/_{10}$ ", 50cm/19 $^{1}/_{2}$ ", 62.5cm/24 $^{1}/_{2}$ ".

**Troubador** - 22.5cm/with 4 bells/ $8^4/5$ ", Komet 62.5cm/ $24^1/2$ ", Stella 66cm/26", Stella 45cm/ $17^1/2$ ", Adler 54cm/ $21^1/4$ ", Harmonia 41cm/16", Junghans 12.5cm/5", Monopol 19.5cm/ $7^3/5$ " (Christmas tree), Monopol 30cm/ $11^4/5$ ", Adler 30cm/ $11^4/5$ ".

# Organ Grinders chat by Geoff Alford

Leicester Organ Extravaganza took place on Saturday 24th April and when I arrived in the City in steady rain the previous evening I was very glad that I was attending as a guest of Lord Mayor Bob Wigglesworth and not as an organ grinder. However, Saturday dawned dull but mild and dry which helped the event to be a success both as an organ meet and as a charity day. Organisers Colin Bullock and Eric Dilkes were kept busy frantically charging round emptying collecting buckets to minimise the security risk, and when counting finished the following day it was found that the grand total achieved for Heart Link was £4,400. Not bad at all!

Approximately 35 organs took part in the event. Most came from within a radius of about 80 miles but there were exceptions with some travelling from as far afield as Bristol, Weston-super-Mare, Aberystwyth and Gravesend. Leicester has a large shopping centre so there was bags of room for organs to spread out - though it would have been a different story had it rained. On the afternoon walkabout with the Lord Mayor we managed to cover about half of the organs, which had each been given specific locations. This was partly because the Lord Mayor had to stop to speak to so many of his constituents and partly because I tended to stay too long with each organ.

NEW ORGAN MODELS were in evidence at Leicester, partly because of the presence of builders Paul McCarthy and Peter Trueman. I often think that the main benefit of a larger organ lies in the extra pleasure it gives its owner, for it is doubtful whether many of the public appreciate the difference. Gary Marsden was playing his new 21 note Trueman with a second melody rank - the first such model. Next to him Peter was playing the prototype of his five register organ, stopped flute, bourdon, violin, piccolo and glockenspiel. It is quite surprising how much has been compressed into the standard Trueman case, although the glockenspiel doesn't

take up much space as it lies flat against the rear case. The original 31 note Raffin had tubular bells. which although more attractive sounding were much bulkier and considerably more expensive. A bell sound can be most attractive in certain circumstances as Peter Trueman demonstrated, but it is not a feature for which most organ owners would wish to pay a large sum on top of the normal pipework. Paul McCarthy was demonstrating his new 26 note organ which uses the Ian Alderman extended 20 note scale. Carl Frei has been supplying music for 25 note organs for some years which also is an extension of the standard 20 note scale. But in his case the 25 note music can be played on the 20 note organs. It appears that this is not intended to be the case with the Alderman scale and that only 20 note music will be playable on 26 note organs - not the other way round. I am still not convinced of the advantages of this. Who wants to play music that only uses 20 of the 26 available notes unless the arrangements are really outstanding. I like to think that organ ownership makes people more musically discriminating and that they will wish to purchase music of good quality which uses the whole range of their organ.

Also present was Peter Trueman's 20 note reed organ. Well, there are reeds and reeds. The softer sounding ones are hardly distinguishable from pipes, but the harsher accordion reeds I find much less attractive. So the 20 note reed organ is my least liked Raffin organ. The Trueman reed closely follows this design but in more



Christa Niemuth in Hereford, May 1993.

basic form – for one thing it doesn't have the 'door' at the front which can control the sound output. Personally I have never understood the popularity of these instruments as I find them noisy and harsh and one soon bores of their sound. They are a far cry from those delightful little Bohemian organs with their softly voiced reeds which were so light to carry.

ART OF THE ORGAN GRINDING for most people is merely the ability to turn a handle at a steady constant speed. For most people this is no problem, though it may require a little practice. But just as a small number of people cannot sing in tune or march in step, so there are some that find turning a handle evenly an impossibility. Then there is the group at the other end of the spectrum whose method of turning seems to be to attack the handle and apparently try to wrench it from the organ. Fortunately organs tend to be built strongly enough to withstand this violent treatment this type of person is usually quickly exhausted by the expending of so much energy.

Manual registers on street organs have been around for a very long time - on barrel organs as well as the early roll-playing instruments. But it was not generally intended that they should be frequently operated in play. Most early post-war street organs were fairly basic compared with older organs for good economic reasons and even organs like the 20 note Hofbauer with manual sliders did not call for much use of these. For one thing, the organ was either very quiet or very shrill with only one melody rank operating.

The development of the second Raffin organ in 1983 with a new 31 note scale and four manual sliders plus a volume control introduced a completely new dimension. The builder demonstrated that in order to get the most out of the organ it was necessary to use the registers judiciously to produce the appropriate tonal effect in music passages. The pressure lever permitted music to be played loudly or softly according to taste for the first time and even to produce a degree of tremulant effect. The ability to use these extra benefits to their full effect is given to very few. The organ's designer, Josef Raffin, is an expert exponent, particularly in the art of using the volume control as a tremulant, which appears to defeat most

grinders, including myself! Some have a natural bent for using registers whilst others, and notably professional grinders, tend to play continuously with all stops out.

MAYOR OF HEREFORD'S INTERNATIONAL **ORGAN** CELEBRATION. In a month of unsettled weather Lady Luck smiled on Hereford and very little rain fell throughout the three day event. However it was too much to expect four days on the trot and it was very wet for the pre-festival organ grind. The venue was changed at the last moment to an old-world pub just outside the town where there was room to play organs inside as well as socialise. Intended as a 'one-off' event with maximum international participation, about a third of the entrants came from outside Britain and nine countries were represented. A lastminute entrant from Holland, handicapped Dave Saes from Weert (well-known for its end of season Hinzen fair) was not only the youngest grinder but also probably the one with the greatest endurance and was rarely to be seen without an organ handle in his hand. I soon found that his Belgianbuilt organ was not easy to turn. Dave was soon winning the hearts of the other grinders. Builder Josef Raffin was making his first visit to Britain and, playing in company with Stefan and Ulrich Suter from Berne they attracted the crowds and the co-operation of local storekeepers. Big Balbo Sundergeld seemed to be everywhere with his wife Puppi and two outstanding organs from his collection - the 42 keyless Bruns Violinopan and 38 key Holl - and he made a highly professional appearance on BBC TV. As requested most entrants wore colourful costume which added to the public interest - Kurt Niemuth looked extremely smart in his 19th century military uniform complete with pickelhuber.

An official reception was given in the Town Hall on Saturday where the German choir from Hereford's partner town gave an impromptu concert in the gallery. The Saturday night 'Trip into the Blue' by coach was to the Herefordshire village of Fownhope where, in the function room of a timbered inn, the organ grinders provided their own entertainment with acts by Taffy the Clown, Axel Jödicke and Bruno and Rita Gundolf.

The Civic Service on Sunday was

in accord with the happy mood of the event. Josef Raffin and Ulrich Suter played voluntaries on two 31 note Raffins before the service and Ave Maria before the sermon. Local schoolchildren performed on instruments and danced and after the service Big Balbo played the Bruns as the congregation left. Afterwards Puppi demonstated a small Raffin to the children present. No one was more surprised than the Mayor's Chaplain and Vicar, Preb. Peter Wood, when he received a spontaneous round of applause in the crowded church at the end of his sermon. Was this another first?

Perhaps the hardest worked organ present was the 89 key Robinson's Gavioli making a return visit to the city after a break of almost exactly 54 years. Throughout the celebration it played outside the West Door of the cathedral. On Friday evening it entertained the organ party outside the Leisure Pool near the River Wye and on Sunday it played a concert outside the Town Hall after the service as the congregation left the church opposite.

It is not appropriate for me to praise a home event, but it is fair to say that the reaction from shopkeepers, public and participants was most favourable which is most important to get a successful event. There is no doubt that the public enjoy activities being organised in town centres, but the most difficult to satisfy are the shopkeepers. If nothing is put on to attract business they complain whilst if attractions are brought in they still complain. It was for this last reason that great care was taken to site fair organs where they would be least likely to raise objections. I knew that there was support from the local department store over Keith Pinners De Cap but I was a little disappointed that a local shop complained about Ron Armstrong's Limonaire. This is precisely the reason I do not look for many fair organs for street events. Whilst the public enjoy them, their extra powerful output does call for a large open space which it will exclusively dominate. The success of Hereford has, as a result, received the approval of the local council who have agreed to fund a similar event on May 20/22 1994. Hopefully, if we can get similar overseas support, it will be almost as successful.

NIEMUTH STUEBER AND BALLMANN is an organ building

partnership which has only been in existence for a couple of years but in that time we have seen several interesting organ models at Llandrindod and Hereford displayed by the well-known organiser of the Berlin Organ Festival. Kurt opened the eyes of a number of enthusiasts when he first brought his 45 note trumpet organ to Britain in 1986 which prompted Alan Pell to produce his somewhat larger organ for this scale. Now the partnership are offering a range of Harmonipan and Violinopan organs for both 20 and 26 note scales. The price range starts at £2,200 and rises to £4,800 for the top of the range model, a two register organ with inlay. The Violinopan offers the more distinctive Berlin sound to which we are accustomed and I certainly much prefer the brighter sound provided by violins backing the pan flutes rather than wood. In all there are eleven price permutations according to taste and size of pocket. The 20 note range takes all standard 20 scale roll music but the 26 scale music is obtainable only from the builder. On the credit side Henning Ballmann who provides the music, is a prizewinning arranger who provides distinctive and superior arrangements. A variety of 30 rolls is available for the 26 scale which provides an excellent range of good music. A new Harmonipan organ in the 30/40 scale range is promised for next year's festivals.

# Anyone interested in a group organ camping holiday?

Hereford has re-exported the Organ Festival to its partner town, Dillenburg in Germany. Following a visit by their Bürgermeister last May the town has decided to have a similar Drehorgelfest on July 15-17, 1994. This will be organised in collaboration with Christa Niemuth who is looking for lots of entrants from Britain.

Those taking part would arrange their own ferry crossing etc. and a camping location would be provided at Dillenburg. Overnight sites would have directions provided. Geoff and Peggy Alford would expect to join the group for the return journey which would include the proposed additional visits.

Anyone interested in taking part should contact Geoff and Peggy Alford, 18 Tensing Close, Hereford HR4 0SA. Tel: (0432) 267466.

# The Triola Mandolin-Zither

by Lyn Wright

This instrument was first patented in 1919 by Paul Reissner and others. It was perhaps intended to be an improvement on the earlier autoharps in that the musical theme was played by a paper roll and the player's skill was only required to play the accompaniment. But more of that later!

Being always a sucker for lost causes, I was delighted to acquire a Triola in 'distressed' condition last year. It's distress was evident from its rather banana shape (if you can imagine a flat banana) caused by the tension in the strings which had pulled the frame into a curve. The front and back boards could not accomodate this twist in the frame and had buckled and split as can be seen in Fig. 1. The roll-playing mechanism, however, was in quite good condition apart from some dusting of surface rust, and appeared to have had very little use, like the 24 rolls with it. Three strings were missing but the rest seemed in good condition if a little tarnished. But it was obvious that a complete rebuild would be necessary.

The complete roll mechanism was easily removed being screwed on to the base between dowels. The mechanism itself will be described later. The instrument has a total of 49 strings, 25 played by the paper roll and 24 forming the 6 accompaniment chords ('accords' in the original playing instructions).

In order to store the strings for re-use, I first made up a wooden template the shape of the instrument, with holes for the wrest



Fig. 1. Warped body as bought.

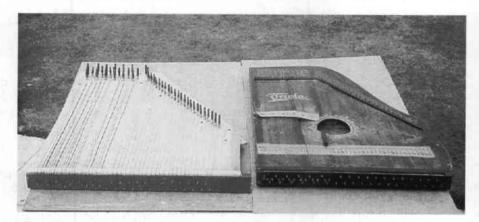


Fig. 2. Strings transferred to a template.

pins and panel pins in the bottom end in place of the hitch pins. The wrest pins were standard piano type and, using a normal tuning handle, the first wrest pin was unscrewed until the string was slack enough to slip the other end off its hitch pin. As the string was comparatively short it was quite easy to hold it vertically and turn it with the wrest pin until it could be removed from the wrest board still on its wrest pin. It was then transferred to the corresponding position on the template, first fitting the loop end over the panel pin and then tapping the wrest pin into its prepared hole just sufficiently to hold it firmly, finally tightening the string enough to keep it taut. The complete transfer is shown in Fig. 2.

All the various small pieces of furniture attached to the top board were carefully removed and stored for re-use. The top board itself was buckled in all directions and split in many places so it was removed piecemeal, but those pieces bearing the 'Triola' logo, centre-hole design and scale were kept aside until later. Incidentally, the scale was rather magnificent, running the complete width of the instrument and



Fig. 3. Scale printed on the front board of the 'Triola'.

showing the scale of all the strings in three different notations (see Fig. 3).

The frame seemed rather inadequate to cope with the tension in 49 strings. It was made with glued butt joints that had come apart and the member on the straight side was of quite small section and had bowed. The whole frame was therefore reassembled with glued and screwed joints, metal strengthening brackets and an extra wooden stiffener on the straight side. The whole thing was clamped to a flat surface with packing under the straight side to correct the slight warp, and left for a couple of days, as shown in Fig. 4, after which the new front board and original crossmembers were glued and clamped in position (Fig. 5).

The problem of how to replace the logo, scale and centre decoration was solved by taking the carefully assembled pieces of the original (having been soaked and flattened where necessary) to an establishment with a colour photocopier. The results were most gratifying - better than the originals! They were carefully cut out and glued to the front board and gold lining was applied in the same way. After fitting a new back board, the back and sides were painted black as originally. The original furniture was fitted to the front and it was then given several coats of thin varnish, the result being satisfyingly similar to the original finish.

Replacing the strings presented no problems particularly using tips given by David Snelling in his article "Restoring a Tingelary" (Music Box Vol. 14, No. 3, Autumn 1989) though at time of writing I have still not been able to replace the three missing strings. Fig. 6 shows the final result. Surprisingly, the roll playing mechanism was in excellent condition apart from a little stiffness due to lack of use and deterioration of the felt pads on the oscillator.

The roll-playing mechanism is an ingenious piece of engineering shown in position in Fig. 6 with

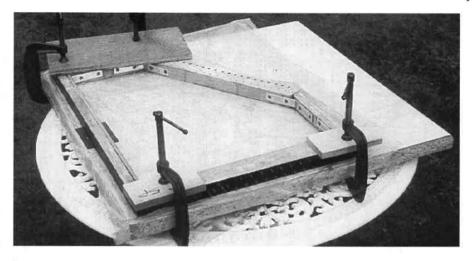


Fig. 4. Frame assembled and cramped up.

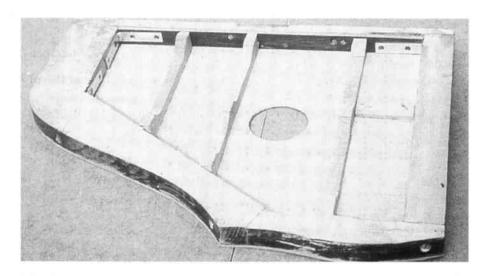


Fig. 5. Assembly with front board.

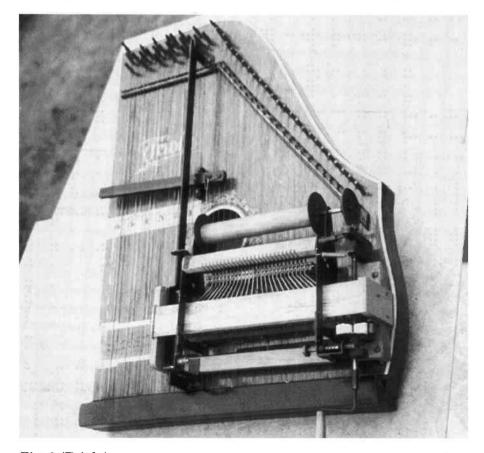


Fig. 6. 'Triola'

an underside view in Fig. 7. The method by which the slots in the paper select the notes to be played is shown diagramatically in Fig. 8. at an instant when a note is being played. The lever A has a spigot which fits into a slot in the bar B when a slot in the paper allows it to do so. When there is no slot in the paper, that end of the lever is pressed down by the paper and the other end of the lever rises, pulling with it the twine C. This pulls up the block D about its pivot E so that the plucking string F is drawn clear of the playing string and no note is played. Each note has a similar block D and these are all held in a frame G which is suspended on two vertical flexible steel strips, one of which is shown at H. This frame is oscillated in a regular rhythm so that blocks/springs that are down strum on their respective strings in a mandolinelike manner.

The plucking spring F is fixed to plunger I, held in position by spring J and can be adjusted for height by the slotted grub-screw K, A *very* light hairpin spring L, assisted by the block's weight, normally keeps the block in the 'down' position against the stoppin M. Another stop-pin N bears against a pivotted bar P. This is connected by a long twine to the

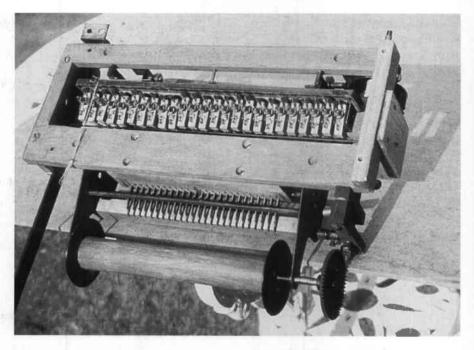


Fig. 7. Underside view of the playing mechanism.

'loud/soft' control bar which pulls it forward for 'soft' and allows the blocks to come only half-way down so giving reduced sized tweaks to the strings.

The mechanism for oscillating the frame of plucking blocks is shown in Fig. 9. The spindle Q is rotated by the handle R and has attached to it a disc S. This disc has on it three elongated felt pads T symmetrically arranged 120 degrees apart. Each is formed by a strip loop of felt around two pins. Referring also to Fig. 6, the

frame G holding the plucking blocks D, and suspended on the flexible strips H, has attached to it a steel bracket V. This has two rollers V attached as shown, which ride on the felt pads T as the disc rotates, giving the frame a regular smooth oscillation.

The spindle Q is extended to drive the paper roll through a pinion and contrate gear. Note that in order to thread the end of the paper roll through, the bar B turns upwards 180 degrees which also disconnects the paper roll

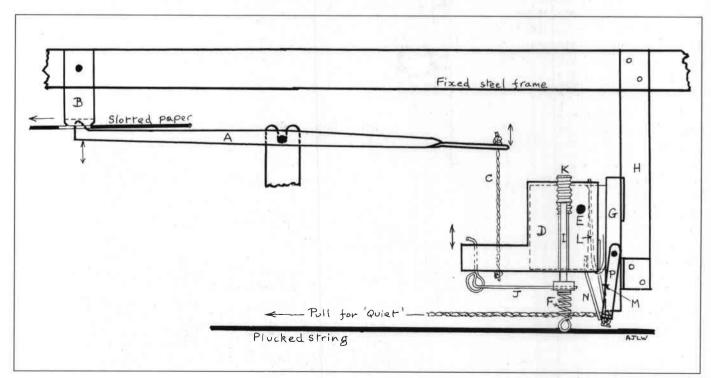


Fig. 8. Diagram of the roll interpreting mechanism.

drive for rewinding. It's interesting to note that none of the rolls show any sign of wear at the edges of the holes which is a tribute to the design of the mechanism.

The completed instrument plays very well but getting the best out of it is not quite as easy as one might expect. As a start, it is very sensitive to quite small changes in humidity and temperature, and is very prone to going out of tune. The original instructions supplied with the instrument are shown in Fig. 10 and I must confess that I have yet to master the art of reading moving instructions on the roll and carrying them out correctly (as I turn the handle) while also operating the 'loud/soft' bar, all at the same time. Perhaps I should stick to instruments where I only have to turn the handle!

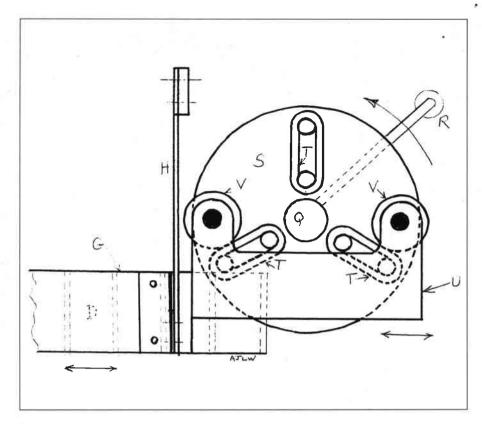
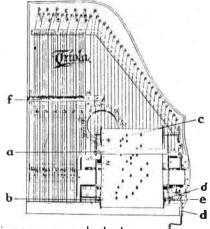


Fig. 9. Diagram of the oscillating mechanism.

INSTRUCTIONS
FOR PLAYING THE

# "TRIOLA" Mandoline-Zither.



- 1. First turn upwards the bar  $a_{\star}$
- 2. Put the music-roll in its place b b. Slip out the end of music-roll underneath bar a, and fix it into the slit c on wooden roller. Turn roller until the mark  $-\frac{1}{4}-\frac{1}{4}-\frac{1}{4}$  shown on music-roll comes just underneath bar a; turn bar a down. The printed figures on music-roll should now show uppermost.
- 3. Fix handle on spindle d. The instrument is now ready for playing. Turn handle to the right only.

- 4. Choose first a song or other simple piece, in order to learn the accompaniment by sounding with thumb of the left hand the accord, which is indicated by figure on the music-roll. Care should be taken to sound the strings just at the moment when the figure goes beneath the bar.
- 5. The quick and proper reading of the figures on the music-roll for the accompaniment, is the main point:—
  - A figure with a ring means: Sound only the bass string.
  - A figure underlined means: Sound the whole accord.
  - A figure only: Sound the bass string only, and the holes following mean: Sound only the three strings of the same accord as many times as the holes appear. This fits in with the proper time of the piece, such as in a Valse (3/4 time), the bass is one, and the two following holes, the three accord strings sounded twice, being two and three.
- 6. To re-roll, turn the bar **a** upwards, remove the handle and fix it on the re-rolling spindle **e**. To keep the paper flat and firm, place the left hand on the music-roll while turning.
- 7. To play soft or loud, move the bar f forward or backward. p means play soft, mf medium, f loud.
- 8. Care should be taken to keep the music-rolls dry and rolled up.

Fig. 10. Copy of the original instructions issued with the 'Triola' reproduced from 'The Music Box', Vol. 3, No. 4, Christmas 1967.

I expect that most readers will be familiar with some aspects of the **British Antarctic Expedition of** 1910-1913? This expedition was when Captain Scott led a team of scientists on useful work and investigations into Antartic life, magnetism, weather patterns,

This also included as a small part of the three year expedition an attempt on the South Pole. This was never a race, but was technologically quite advanced in many ways, including the first use of air cooled Motor Sledges.

and much more.

It was also the only expedition so far to take a Pianola with them . . . . It was 80 years ago in early November since the bodies of the 'Pole Party' were found and as is often the case with bad news, this sad outcome rather overshadowed peoples memories of this expedition.

I saw many years ago, before I was really interested in Pianolas a photograph of the Pianola which Scott took with him. So about a year ago I decided to investigate and see what I could find out about it. I have found that almost everyone on the expedition wrote books about the time spent there from officers down to seamen and I have tried to track down copies of most of these to get what little information follows.

The Pianola was given as a gift by the Broadwood Piano Company. This would no doubt have been a tremendous advert for the durability and reliability of what is basically the most complicated piece of domestic machinery available to a 'household' in 1910.

Can you imagine the treatment which it had to withstand? On the way from New Zealand they experienced terrible storm conditions with the ship rolling up to 50 degrees. This must have been quite alarming because on a normal ship this was near the point of capsizing, but the Terra Nova had the Plimsoll line painted out and was two foot below this in the water. The Pianola itself was transported in a small cabin called the Nursery, (the youngest members of the scientific officers shared this cabin), which was designed for four men, but had to hold six plus the Pianola. Everything in the cabin had to be

sheeted over as water leaked through the ceiling from the deck above everytime heavy seas were encountered. This 'cabin' was also the passageway between the Ward-room and the Engine room. I don't think I would have been too keen to sleep on the lower bunks as even though roped down, the instrument could have broken loose with dire consequences.

The expedition held a Sunday Service and on one famous occasion they tried to play the Pianola to accompany the hymns, but, since the rolls were scored rather for musical effect than for Church services, the Pianola was suddenly found to be playing something quite different from what was being sung. All through the expedition Scott felt they needed someone who could play by hand as on his previous expedition when one of the officers used to play each evening. Scott commented that the hour of music became an institution that none of them would forego and he felt that the music smoothed over many a ruffle and brought them to dinner each night in excellent humour.

Once they had arrived at Cape Evans they built a 'hut' which had cavity walls filled with a seaweed compound and unloaded all of the equipment. One of the three Motor Sledges fell through the ice between the ship and the land and was lost. The Pianola was left until the very last item and whether the loss of this sledge was the reason or not, it was dismantled and re-erected in the hut by someone called Rennick who was not staying south over the winter. The Pianola was in his special care and Scott felt that he had gone to great pains to put it right for them.

What would you feel like if your Pianola had to be dismantled and dragged on sledges over a long distance of sea ice which was gradually melting during the weeks it took to unload all of the expedition stores . . . .

by only other from he whice of the state of During the winter months the only other entertainment brought from home was a gramophone, which normally lived on top of the Pianola. There was

some description of an average 'day' (it was dark for 24 hours for a few months), which said that as supper approached some kindly disposed person would

sit down and play on the Broadwood Pianola which was one of their blessings. The gramophone was usually played after dinner and they had records of good classical music. The kindly disposed individual who played them had his reward in the pleasant atmosphere of homeliness which made itself felt.

That, I'm afraid is all I could find out from the dozen or so books I have read. I do have a photograph which may or may not be reproduced with this article. I have tried to find out what happened to the instrument and have contacted the Scott Polar Research Institute at Cambridge and also their out station in New Zealand. One of them says they don't know what happened to it and the other says it is still in the hut. So unless someone gets me on to Jim'll Fix It I can't tell you if any rolls remain and what they took with them. If the 1948 film starring John Mills as Scott is to be believed they certainly took some dance music suitable for the Russian dog handlers to dance a lively dance to.

I would like to know any more details if any members have any books about this expedition. Also it should tell us all that you can take a Pianola just about anywhere if you really want to. Would anyone else know of any other Automatic musical instruments in unusual places?

#### Post Script

I have since found out that a book about Broadwood Pianos issued in  $the \, last \, 20 \, years \, has \, the \, whereabouts$ of Scott's Pianola in it, after the 1914-18 war - Does any Music Box member have a copy of this book.

I have also found out that Parry took a barrel organ on his expedition in the mid 1800's and Ernest Shackleton took a Pianola to the South as well, which was lost when his ship sank.

# **Musical Box Oddments**

by H. A. V. Bulleid

Number 59

Some interesting *Dialogues of Dead Musicians*, reported in 1868 and reproduced hereafter, prompt me to mention one of their less-remembered names . . . .

Niccolo Piccinni (1728-1800) composed about 130 operas during the period 1754 to 1794. He was one of the central figures in Italian and French opera at that time, living in Naples until 1876 and thereafter in Paris. I expect he would be better remembered if more early boxes had managed to retain their tune sheet; those of his operas most likely to have graced tune sheets, and still occasionally noted, include . . .

Zenobia	1756
La Cecchina	1760
also as La bonne fille	1771
Roland	1778
Atys	1780
Didon	1783

Around the year 1777 there was terrific rivalry between supporters of Piccinni and his contemporary, Gluck. This is duly reported among the Dialogues, although Piccinni has been ruthlessly deprived of one n-perhaps just to let him rhyme with Rossini.

#### **Mandolin Forte Piano**

The rarity of this type of movement, previously mentioned in Vol. 12, page 232, is due to it needing at least 175 comb teeth which allows only four airs with a 13" (33cm) cylinder. The few recorded are all twin comb types, made in Geneva by Ducommun Girod, Langdorff and Nicole, dating between 1858 and 1865, in the heyday of the forte piano period and about ten years before the coming of sublime harmonie.

Fig. 1 shows a 13" (33cm) cylinder, 4 air example of unknown make, with the intriguingly low serial number 186. The forte comb has 132 teeth, a teeth 31 and 32, relative stiffness 130. The piano comb has 47 teeth, a tooth 21, relative stiffness 90. The forte to piano stiffness ratio is therefore about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 1, in line

with most contemporary makers other than Nicole who used a ratio of about 3 to 1 which sometimes means that their piano passages are disconcertingly quiet.

Ordinary forte piano boxes differ widely in the apportioning of comb teeth, the forte having anything from one-and-a-half to three times as many as the piano. So few mandolin forte piano boxes are known that the present range, from twice to 2.9 times, is not likely to be the full story. Here, serial 186 uses its 132 teeth for a full and very exuberant mandolin effect while the piano comb offers a plain background accompaniment. The mandolin forte is all the more impressive for being sparingly used, as can be seen from the pinning shown in Fig. 2. In contrast a box like Langdorff 11258, made in 1858, with 162 forte and 55 piano teeth contrives to give full mandoline play from the piano comb, see Fig. 3.

The cylinder of serial 186 has 1998 forte and 1038 piano pins, giving averages of 8 and 4 notes per tune per second. The average number of cylinder pins per forte comb tooth is  $3^{3}/_{4}$  per tune compared with  $5^{1}/_{2}$  piano, showing up the comparatively sparse forte pinning. Forte comb teeth tuned to the same pitch are mostly in groups of five.

Blank number 21 is stamped on bedplate and cylinder and spring parts. Serial 186 is stencilled twice on the bedplate and stamped in several places including flat of winder, great wheel, and bass cylinder end cap which is also scribed "Mandoline."

The tune sheet is shown in Fig. 4. It is a very uncommon type, emphasising made in Geneva and steel dampers and printed locally by J. Dajoz who supplied Bremond tune sheets. Tune 1, by Anne Fricker in 1855, is the latest excepting tune 4 which I cannot trace; perhaps it is by Isaac Strauss, who was not related to Johann and who died in 1888 with a long string of dance tunes to his credit, mainly composed in the period 1843-1863.

The case has serial 186 stencilled on and under its base board. The interior is finished in red except the tops of the two partitions and the glass lid frame which are black; this is not unusual during the gradual change from red to black interiors, it occurs on Nicole boxes up to about 1875. The inlaid lid has four lines of stringing, and the overall size is 21 by 7½ inches.

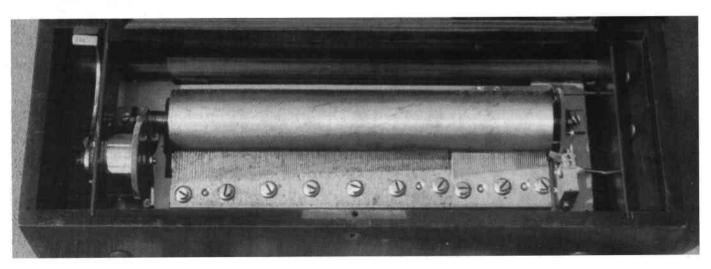


Fig. 1 Four air mandoline forte piano with serial 186 stamped on the flat of the winder.

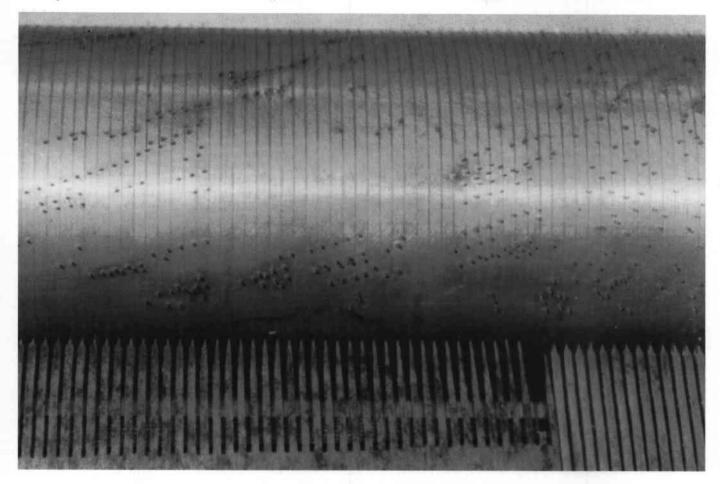


Fig. 2. Wide open spaces among the mandolin pinning for the forte comb of serial 186. Unusually, the helical lines run "uphill," highest pitch note playing first.

#### **Bremond dating**

The Rivenc dating chart given on page 93 of Vol. 15, Autumn 1991, has stood the test of time – and many more fixes. I have no reason to doubt its accuracy to within a year or so for all Rivenc boxes up to serial 45,000. But on page 95 of the same issue I rashly offered to produce a Bremond dating chart for the next issue. I have made some progress thanks to the

Registrar and several members, notably including John Hammond who started listing Bremond and Rivenc boxes, with tunes, way back in 1970. My Bremond story so far is shown in Fig. 5, in which I think the line AB is reasonably accurate for Bremond boxes with serial numbers between 5000 and 21000. It is derived from the latest tunes on fifteen boxes all with either their governor stamped BAB or their

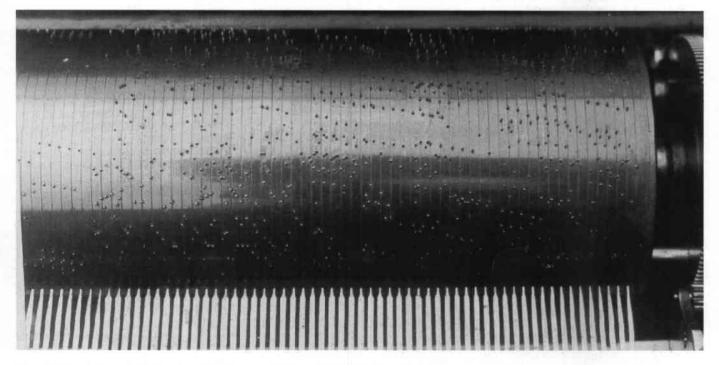


Fig. 3. Mandoline pinning for the piano comb of Langdorff 11258.



Fig. 4. Unusual and unattributed Geneva tune sheet of serial 186, probably about 1859 and almost certainly before 1865. Litho by J. Dajos, Geneva, who printed many Bremond tune sheets. Tune 2 is one of a set of songs by Offenbach published in 1852, words by A. de Musset.

tune sheet printed with the name Bremond. (The majority of Bremond boxes, I have sadly found, lack the absolute certainty of this identification).

Bremond dating is interconnected with Greiner and Rivenc, so in Fig. 5 I also show the Rivenc line CD, and the possible Greiner line OC. Greiner was aged thirty in 1850 and I have taken the liberty of starting his production that year although he was only registered as a maker in 1857. He must have started earlier than that to reach serial 19000 when Rivenc took over in mid 1869. Also it is rather unlikely that Bremond would have gone into partnership with a new maker of only one year's experience. I have indicated in Fig. 5 that period of partnership, 1858-1863. Due to lack of data I have shown dotted the probable Rivenc output from serial 44,000 until he amalgamated with Langdorff and Billon Haller in 1902. I cannot even guess at dating Bremond output beyond the line AB, until 1908 when his son took over, partly because of his boxes with serial numbers between 30,000 and 42,000 which have tunes no later than 1875, and partly because of boxes with low serial numbers and tunes too late for the line AB. Another strange feature is that, unlike Rivenc and other contemporaries, Bremond boxes with tunes later than 1890 are astonishingly rare.

It is very unfortunate that we have no reliable information about the tune sheets used by Greiner, though it seems probable that they were similar to those used by Bremond. This could be one reason why Bremond types are found with and without Bremond printed in the margin. Any box with an un-named Bremond type tune sheet and with its latest tune early enough to lie above the line OC in Fig. 5 is more likely to be by Greiner than Bremond. The example marked X is serial 12505, latest tune 1862, early

lever-wind with case interior red with black tops, key-wind type of tune change lever and spring and governor bolted from under the bedplate. The tune sheet has white cross over lyre at top centre and panels of composers in the side borders.

Of the several reported boxes with tunes too late to fit the line AB, the most interesting example is marked at Y, Fig. 5. Its serial number is 759 and it has a well-known 1865 tune. So it is difficult to explain unless Bremond had two sets of serial numbers; yet every serial number above about 5000 so far reported fits the line AB, excepting the thirty thousands.

#### **Bremond serial 759**

I think we can dismiss the possibility of Greiner starting again at number 1 after 1863, in which case serial 759 is indisputably by Bremond. The tune sheet is appropriate, see Fig 6, and the rather sprawling serial number under the case is typical, see Fig. 7. The box is early lever-wind with cast iron bedplate, key-wind type of tune change lever, spring and governor bolted from under the bedplate. Case interior red with black tops. The 13" (33cm) cylinder plays eight airs on 83 comb teeth with separate 9-tooth comb for the nine plain bells with ball strikers, Fig. 8. The 22" (55cm) case has rounded corners and five lines of stringing with banding around fine marquetry designs on the front and the domed lid.

As explained in the caption to Fig. 6, the tune sheet dates the box at 1865 or soon after. Its earliness is confirmed by the absence of a lever for silencing the bells, extremely rare with bells in view though normal practice with hidden bells which were then slowly drifting into obsolescence. I am repinning its cylinder

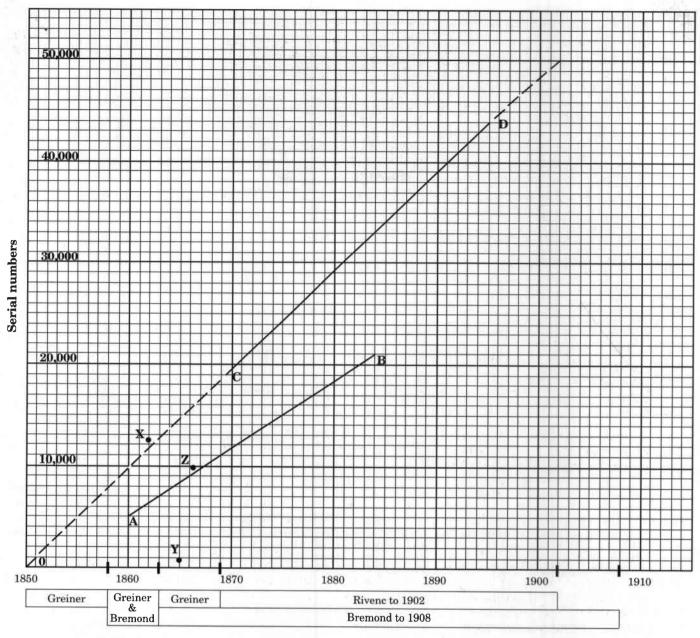


Fig. 5. Dating chart. The line AB is reasonably accurate for most Bremond boxes with serial numbers between 5000 and 21000. Line CD is accurate for all Rivenc boxes but its extension to the year 1902 is not fully confirmed and is shown dotted. The other dotted line, OC, is merely an estimate but I think it is fairly safe for Greiner boxes with serial numbers above about 8000.

X marks a box which could be by Greiner or Bremond.

Y marks Bremond serial 759 which has the same tune sheet as serial 9886 marked Z. They were probably made within a year of each other, see Vol. 15, page 189.

and hope to report several interesting details in the next Oddments.

#### **Dating clues**

There are many internal and external signs, of help in rough-dating boxes of unknown make. All manufactured goods display these progressive signs, like ever bigger boilers and therefore shorter chimneys on steam engines. A useful dating diagram of similar changes in musical boxes is given on page 258 of the Ord-Hume book, and I think this idea is well worth extending.

A musical box made before 1858 is almost certain to have all the following characteristics . . . .

- 1. Key wind.
- 2. Brass bedplate.
- 3. Case with red interior.

- 4. Mechanism secured by screws through front and back of case.
- 5. Spring and governor bolted from below the bedplate.
- 6. Tune change lever pivoted near centre.

Equally certain, a box made after about 1878 will have all the following characteristics; but the dates added show their first recorded appearance....

- Lever wind 1859.
- 2. Cast iron bedplate 1864.
- 3. Case with all-black interior 1865.
- 4. Mechanism fixed to wood blocks in case 1864.
- 5. Spring and governor bolted from above 1864.
- 6. Tune change lever pivoted at end 1868.

Ducommun Girod were first in the field, I think, on items 3, 4 and 5 though they might have been pipped at the post by Paillard. L'Epée led with cast iron

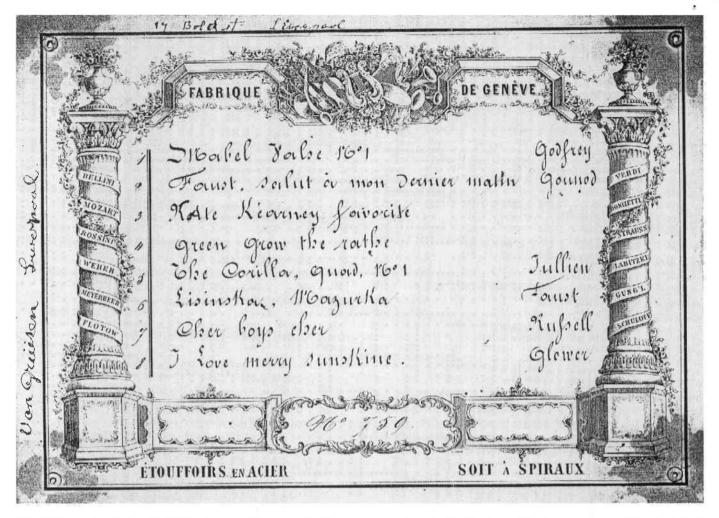


Fig. 6. Tune sheet of serial 759, a design often used by Bremond and probably Greiner. The four tunes positively dated are nos. 1, 2, 3 and 7, respectively 1865, '59, '37 and '52. Tune 4 is early, from the Burns poem. Tune 5 is by Jullien who died in 1860. Tune 6 by the prolific Carl Faust is probably early 1860s. Tune 8 is most likely by Stephen Glover, in the mid 1860s. So it is probably safe to take tune 1 as the latest (it is in the hot hit position) and so to date the box at around 1866. The agent or seller's name in the margins and on a transfer in the case is Van Gruisen of 17 Bold Street, Liverpool.

bedplates in 1855. Many makers were slow changers and I am compiling a suitable tabulation. It will take time.

#### Wisdom from 1868

A popular magazine of the 1860s was *Once a Week* published in London every Wednesday and available "through all News Agents, and at all Railway bookstalls on the day of publication" price two pence (= 0.83 of a current penny). It included a serial, topical articles, a full-page picture and sundry short items labelled "Table Talk." This added up to a very good outline of current news and views. Occasionally a series of special articles was included an example

Fig. 7. Typical large sprawling figures under the case of Bremond 759.

being Dialogues of the Dead. Number VI in this series appeared in the December 19th, 1868 issue and dealt with famous composers who had been joined by Meyerbeer in 1864. All were heard on musical boxes at that time so it is doubly interesting to read this 1868 assessment of their popularity and staying power. Strong and often witty opinions are attributed to them, and Sir Henry Bishop would not have liked to hear his *My Pretty Jane* (1835) bracketed with *Champagne Charlie*. The couplet at the foot of page 509 shows one way how the tops of the pops were recognised, recorded and repeated in 1868.

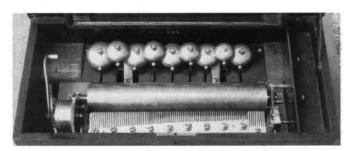


Fig. 8. Bremond 759 in unrestored condition. A previous owner reversed the winding lever which then fouled the partition. Easy to solve that problem – chuck it away. Then it suffered a comprehensive run, wiping out seven of the eight tunes and perhaps imitating hells bells.

## DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

#### VI.

AMONGST THE MUSICIANS.

#### BACH.

HENCE comes it, Handel, that we hear no About the doings of the tuneful Muse On Earth? Since Mendelssohn came down below --And that seems ages long ago-I know Of no Musician, worthy of the name, Who deigns the honours of this place to claim. Is the race quite extinct? Your men of song, In general, don't live so very long; The common fate of Genius they share, Whose inward fire the strongest frame will wear. Beethoven, true, was rather prone to riot, But, possibly, his deafness kept him quiet; And thus it was his fate on Earth to labour Longer than Mozart, Mendelssohn, and Weber. I speak not of myself, nor yet of you; We never quarrelled, as musicians do; And so, of earthly life, enjoyed a span As great as falls to any common man. But though a shade all mortal passion spurns, I'm not indifferent to what concerns

#### HANDEL.

The progress of my Art; and so 'twere pleasant

To hear what's doing in that line at present.

That wish you easily may gratify.

Amongst yon troop of spirits passing by,
You see that lean shade with a sallow face?
He's not been long a dweller in this place.
His name is Meyerbeer, and I was told
By Mendelssohn that many people hold
His operatic works in great esteem,
Though Mendelssohn, 'twixt you and me, don't seem
To care about them. See, he comes this way,
Let's hear what the lean shade has got to say.
You, Gluck, shall question him.

#### GLUCK.

Herr Meyerbeer,

Welcome to Hades; nay, good sir, draw near, We all are followers of the gentle Muse, And, to be friends, you, surely, won't refuse. See, Bach and Handel, mighty men, I trow, And gentle Mendelssohn—but him you know—Lo! here Beethoven comes, with brow o'erladen, On one side Mozart, on the other Haydn, Eager to give—on earth the task is hard—A kindly welcome to a brother bard.

#### MEYERBEER.

I know you all Think not, oh mighty Handel, Because I am not fit to hold a candle To such as you, that I am blind to see The light in others which is not in me. Ye mighty Monarchs of the realms of Song, Whose genius men have worshipped—aye, so long—Low at your feet in reverence I fall.

HANDEL (aside).

Bless me, the Shade's no donkey after all.

MOZART.

Rise up, my little ghost.

#### MEYERBEER.

Little! forsooth, I'm quite as tall as you. To speak the truth, Methinks I am the taller of the two.

#### MOZART.

Nay, don't be angry, friend, but tell us who On yonder Earth is king of music now? When Mendelssohn was taken from the plough In manhood's prime, he told us that Rossini, With Auber, Donizetti, and Bellini, And Weber, were the idols of the day. To them do nations still their homage pay?

#### MEYERBEER.

Verdi has kicked Rossini from his throne;
There's no great love for Donizetti shown;
Bellini's simple strains begin to pall;
And as to Weber, he's no where at all.
Gounod and Flotow are the heroes now;
And great Auber to Offenbach must bow.
The Traviata, or the Trovatore,
Of Il Barbiere have eclipsed the glory.
As Margarita Patti fills the stage;
And Marta, sung by Nillson, is the rage.
To see La Belle Helène the people press;
And throng in crowds to view La Grande Duchess.
You think I'm joking; nay, I'll tell you more,
Mozart won't wash, and Handel is a bore.

#### HAYDN.

This change in taste applies to France alone, Not Germany and Italy; the tone Is surely purer in those lands of song? And what of British taste? is that, too, wrong?

#### MEYERBEER.

The sweeping censure I have dared to lance Applies to Germany as well as France. As for poor Italy, I'm loth to chuck A stone against a nation down in luck; And British taste is past my comprehension, To its vagaries I pay no attention. But here's a shade from England just arrived, And he can tell you what has now survived Of ancient predilections.

#### SHADE.

Well, not one; Aught that is old the British people shun, To novelty alone they homage pay. The Barrel Organs—

#### MOZART.

Stop, sir; what are they?

#### SHADE.

A Barrel Organ's like the public press, It echoes music which has most success.

#### MOZART.

What a strange instrument!

#### SHADE.

Sir, from your land There comes a stranger still. Your German band, With cornets, creaky, and with trombones, blazy, Infests our streets, and makes all people crazy; But though the curst discordance rouses passion, It's not because good music is in fashion; On worthless shows we love our time to waste, We've lots of money, but have little taste.

#### HANDEL.

Nay, friend; methinks the truth you have disguised.

#### My Oratorios are surely prized?

Well, the Messiah draws; but don't be proud, A missionary gets a greater crowd; And tuneless hymns roared out with voice sonorous, Create more rapture than the finest chorus. Or would you learn to what a depth of folly Mortals can sink, in striving to be jolly; Know that a set of men, with blackened faces, By means of antics, and of foul grimaces, Whilst singing strains (of which to say, I'm curst, If poetry or music be the worst) Attract an audience, which, in every sense, Is more productive, both of praise and pence, Than that which gathers in the well-known hall For Israel in Egypt, or St. Paul; Or that which may be drawn the strains to hear Of Haydn, or Beethoven, or Schubert; Or sweet Mozart, and birds of such like feather,

#### MOZART.

Or-in a word-the lot of you together.

You crush the hope my fancy loved to cherish,— I thought my Operas would never perish.

#### SHADE.

Nor will they. There are still some people left Of judgment and good taste not quite bereft; By them your works will ever be preferred, And rouse fresh rapture every time they're heard. But other strains excite the beery crowd, And vulgar nonsense wins applause most loud; In music halls—erected for the sale Of Spirits and Tobacco and Pale Ale—The people throng to hear the puling strain Of Champagne Charlie, or My Pretty Jane; My Pretty Seusan gets its three encores, And Not for Joseph draws the crowd by scores; Nay! Princes think it no disgrace to honour The Jolly Nash or Vance the Great.

#### BEETHOVEN.

Oh Donner

Und Blitzen! Tell me, do the upper classes Frequent these hovels of the lower masses?

#### SHADE.

Well, no. They have their places of resort, Where they pretend the tuneful Muse to court; But if unto the Opera they go,
'Tis not to hear the Music—but to show
Themselves. Nor is their taste a bit superior
To that shown by the class they deem inferior;
In Melody alone delight they find,
Nor care for Music that enchains the mind.
Verdi's loud brass the largest audience draws,
And Gounod's patchwork wins immense applause.
Yea, though they listen when the Diva Patti
Warbles La ci Darem, or Batti, Batti,
To sense of beauty they are yet so lost,
That Don Giovanni pleases less than Faust;
As to Fidelio 'tis shunned—

#### BEETHOVEN.

What, what! Has Music so far fallen? Ach, mein Gott! Is Adelaida scorned?

#### SHADE.

Not by the few.

And even from the idle, thoughtless crew—
Should Sims Reeves have the noble condescension
To give it utterance—it wins attention;
But, even then, I fear, the people throng
Rather to hear the singer than the song:
For sentimental ballads far surpass—
In favour—Music of the highest class.

#### MENDELSSOHN.

There was a time when Music had the power On feeblest verse immortal fame to shower. Take anything which you Libretto call, The words are nothing—and the Music all.

#### SHADE.

The times are altered; and the words, if strong, Will often make the fortune of a song. Your Lieder ohne Wörte made men bow Their heads in gratitude; but Music, now, To Poetry is such a wretched feeder, 'Twere best to hear the Wörte ohne Lieder.

#### BEETHOVEN.

I fear the British taste is scarcely sound.

#### SHADE.

'Tis not for want of Critics; they abound. No foolish modesty their valour awes; In perfect freedom they lay down the laws. On them, alone, of Art depends the fate; They teach us what to worship or to hate: And loudly boast, in terms impertinent, They, only, can tell what the artist meant. In Music, specially, are they profound; They know the hidden meaning of each sound. And not content that Music should express All mortal feelings, even to excess, They strive to prove that sound can represent Of Nature's aspect the embodiment. To every piece they must a title set: This is the Ocean, that a Rivulet. With you, Beethoven, they are pleased to take Especial liberty, and nicknames make

For your Sonatas. How could they be finer By such addition? That in C sharp minor, Which opens with a sweet and plaintive wail, Is called The Moonlight now—

#### BEETHOVEN.

Beasts! 'twas a tale

Of unrequited passion. To this hour,
Immortal as I am, I feel its power.
Slave though I was, I scorned to be a slave;
Nor stooped, in maudlin misery, to rave.
Though ruined hope will raise a storm of grief,
The fury of my passion was but brief,
I breathed no sound of anger; rather strove,
To show the holy tenderness of love.
Midst all its bursts of madness, ever kind,
And though crushed by despair, for aye, resigned.
But let that pass; I fain, good sir, would learn
If, in the present day, you Britons spurn
My music.

#### SHADE.

Nay; spurn is too harsh a word. Your works, with pleasure, by some few are heard; But though they draw an audience, they are, By no means, with the public popular, Nor suit the taste, which Fashion daily lowers, Of concert-players, and of concert-goers. Men ever take delight in feats of skill, And fools, by tricks of Art, are tickled still. Aught that is monstrous will attention claim, What's merely natural is far too tame. Poets and Painters, and Musicians, too, Foster the madness of the fevered crew, And pander to their vain and foolish cries. Since Thalberg took the public by surprise, Playing as if he had a hundred fingers, His influence has flourished, and still lingers. Performers strive each other to excel, In manual feats which seem impossible. Some pound the piano; some again will do With one hand what another does with two. For Style—the violent is most in favour, A modest utterance is poor in flavour. So, Feeling is, in general, neglected, And Execution is alone respected. Moreover, there's a school sprung up of late, Whose followers are noisy, if not great. From common prejudice they are exempt, And melody regard with deep contempt, As a poor gift the vulgar only prize, A means to please that Genius should despise; The laws of Harmony they quite disclaim, To be most incoherent, is their aim. And they profess to find the most profound And subtle meaning in chaotic sound.

#### SCHUMANN.

You rate too high the power of melody: The music of the Future will be free From that at least.

#### BEETHOVEN.

I have not heard it yet, And if I never hear it, I shan't fret, Considering how very brief the span Of mortal life; 'tis passing strange how man Will deign to listen to the voice of fools Who preach that Genius is above all rules. And worship novelty, in any guise, Far more than excellence that never dies.

#### MEYERBEER.

The love of novelty no doubt betrays
Man's judgment, and he oft bestows his praise
On works which scarcely can outlive their day.
Not all are pearls we gather on our way.
But yet 'tis scarcely wise or just to blast
The present, in our reverence for the past;
For if Investigation we decline,
Who shall say what are pearls and which be swine?
Such prejudice would only take the bread
From living mouths, and not enrich the dead.

#### GLUCK.

The world is slow to recognise true worth; All that excites the sluggish soul to mirth Is hailed with gratitude; but the appeal To nobler feelings must possess Time's seal To be at all successful.

#### MEYERBEER.

True, oh sage;
When you were writing for the Paris stage,
One called Piccini shared the people's praise,
And, for awhile, produced a mighty blaze;
But Time corrects the errors of the past,
And Genius receives its due at last.

#### MOZART.

We know where Gluck is now; but where's Piccini?

Some, too, outlive their fame. Why poor Rossini Must grieve to see his works laid on the shelf, Whilst Verdi, Gounod, Flotow and yourself Usurp the throne he filled with so much grace-I don't mind saying it before your face-But you, Herr Meyerbeer, are much to blame For all the degradation and the shame On sweet Euterpe fallen. For I'm told Your faith in her divinity is cold; You dragged the gentle goddess through the mud; And made her chew, of bitterness, the cud; You scrupled not to break her holy laws, And, to obtain the vulgar mob's applause, You stooped to means an Artist should despise, Nor blushed to take your audience by surprise. Your monster drums and trombones rent the air, And fools believed that Genius was there; In pomp and pageantry you loved to flaunt. Think you the tinsel could conceal the want Of solid worth, for any length of time?

#### MEYERBEER.

It answered for the day. Is it a crime Of worldly wisdom to obey the rules, And give to fools the food that's fit for fools?



News of sharply rising prices comes from Sotheby's London Sales of the 15th September and 8th October.

Prices realised on items sold were often many times the estimated value. The 15th September featured the Cadbury Collection with 90% of the items sold and realising £560,000 including buyers premium.

On their sale of 8th October, the mechanical musical instruments raised £240,000 with 99% success rate with 80% of the items sold to buyers from the Far East.

The sale on 15th September included the property of the late Betty Cadbury. Betty was an avid collector known in name rather than in person by fellow collectors. Her museum which opened for private bookings, contained a display ranging from the rarest early wooden "Queen Annes," expensive luxury Parisian Dolls, and the unusual optical toys of the Victorian period right down to the nursery ephemera. Her collection featured many mechanical toys and exquisite automata and in 1976, Betty produced her book "Playthings Past."

The pride of Betty's collection was her mechanical toys and automata and these pieces realised good prices at the Sotheby's sale, the most desirable being a musical automaton of a snake charmer by Roullet et Decamps, French circa 1890.

The mulatto composition woman had well moulded features and glass eyes with articulated eyelids, real black hair held in a plaited bun, standing on large square base holding holding a horn in her right hand and a filigree metal snake in her left. The base contained the keywind stop start musical movement playing four airs and causing her head to rock gently from side to side, heaving her chest in a breathing rhythm and lowering her eyelids while gazing at the asp, then her right arm draws the horn across to her lips. Clothed in the original beaded vest, cream silk sash with beaded edge, yellow and green brocaded skirt with beaded edge, elaborate pierced beaded head-dress with matching bracelets and anklets.

'Zulma' the Snake Charmer was a successful act portrayed by Misses Paula and Nala Damajanti at the Folies-Bergères in Paris in the 1890's; this piece, one of only six, was the only mechanical doll that could perform in the nude.

The fashion of the period was oriental and her rich jewellery and bracelets perform their own special task as they hide the articulation of her arm. Without these it would have been impossible to leave her arm bare. Her particularly beautiful face and moving eyelids give intense life to her expression.

See AUTOMATA And Mechanical Toys by Mary Hillier - Page 119 for identical piece. Also AUTOMATA The Golden Age by Christian Bailly - Pages 112 and 137 for a similar piece. Other examples of this automaton are located at The Monaco Musée des Automates; The Christian Bailly Collection and three in private collections. Estimate £40,000-£60,000 - Hammer price £67,500 plus buyer's premium.

Another popular piece was the Gustave Vichy Musical Automaton of a Pierrot serenading the moon. Made from white paper mache, the Pierrot with an open mouth, teeth and an articulated tongue is seated on the chin of a crescent moon with an articulated lower jaw and eyes. Wearing black tights and an original gold satin jacket with pearlised buttons and cream stiffened muslin ruff, he strums a lute, bending, turning his head as he sticks out his tongue. This piece had a key wound stop/start musical movement contained in the base which played 2 airs. Estimate £15,000-£20,000 -Hammer price £25,300 plus buyer's premium.

At the more affordable end of the scale was a Decamps Musical Automaton of a sleeping doll. The doll had a bisque head impressed "1079 Halbig S & H 1.5" and had an open mouth with teeth and articulated blue glass eyes. She wore a blond mohair wig and was lying on a scrolled base bed holding an all bisque baby in her bisque arms. The base of the bed contained the key wound stop/start musical movement causing the doll to sit up, open her





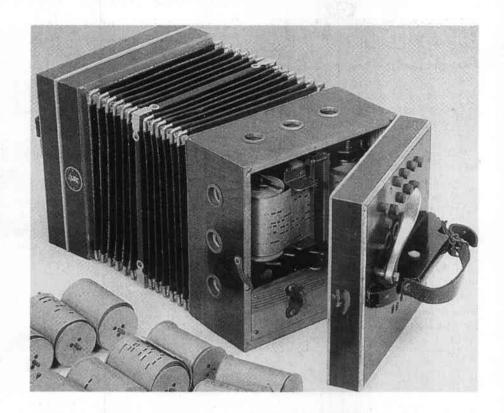
eyes and lift the baby while bending her head and then lying back still raising the baby up and down. Estimate £800-£1,200 – Hammer price £1,023 plus buyer's premium.

Always popular are the smoking monkey automata. This one by Gustave Vichy with missing spectacles (Lorgnettes) had been professionally redressed in rust red velvet breeches and a tail coat edged and lined with vigoured yellow satin. This was estimated at £5,000-£7,000 and sold for £4,025 plus buyer's premium. A smoking Chinaman also by Gustave Vichy, which was missing a tea cup from his left hand, failed to sell. The estimate being £10,000-£15,000. This item had also been redressed using old material.

Another well known piece, the Negro Fruit Seller, made by Gustave Vichy circa 1870, estimated at £15,000-£20,000 sold for £11,500 plus buyer's premium.

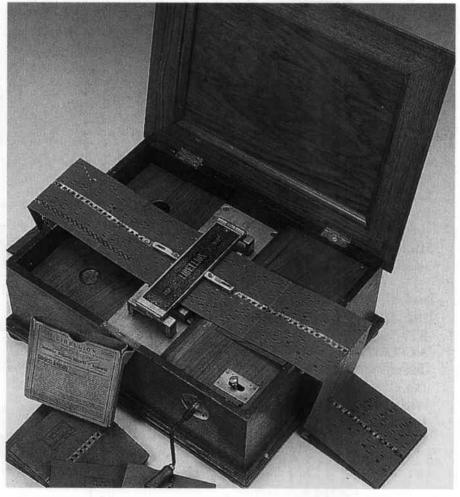


Sotheby's sale of mechanical musical instruments, 8th October featured a 16 note automatic accordion "Tanzbar." The accordion was sold with 19 rolls, all in a plush lined leather covered carrying case, with a luggage tag inscribed "Percy Honri." Percy Honri was one of the great music hall stars in Britain at the turn of the century. This item sold for £2,645 plus buyer's premium against an estimate of £300-£500.



A couple of lots later came a rare Libellion book playing musical box. The Libellion is an unusual machine which could be considered as a cousin to the disc musical box. It was patented by Frederich Adolph Richter of Rudolstadt, Germany and plays from cardboard book music with a metal

reinforced centre drive. Interestingly the book music with this example came in 2 widths – 5.5" and 6.5". The conical shaped drive sprocket along the middle of the box engaging into the round reinforced holes prevents any wander. I cannot think of any other instrument that can handle different width books.



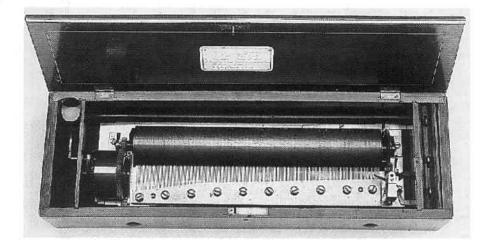
A 22 note Bruder automaton barrel organ featuring 6 painted automaton figures, a king with snakes, a maid pumping water, a naval officer with telescope, an army officer with sword, an angel behind large wings and a maiden with a collection tray were the players in this scene. The 22 note instrument played 11 airs and was sold for £26,450 plus buyer's premium.

£4,830 plus buyer's premium was paid for a Moulinie Aine (Langdorff) forte-piano 4-overture cylinder musical box. The 11.25" x 3" diameter cylinder, signed "44" was in a rosewood veneered case with tune card, end-flap and brass and mother of pearl inlay. The front of the case with brass cartouche with makers signature and with a wooden handled winding key (see cylinder musical box designer repair by H. A. V. Bulleid – page 73-76).

In the "bargain basement" was a 15.5" table Polyphon with a single comb in a poor case which would probably be a replacement which fetched £345 plus buyer's premium against an estimate of £500-£700, proving once again that it is only the choice pieces that attract premium prices.

Coming up at Christies South Kensington, Thursday 9th December, are many items the property of the late Dr. Robert Le Grice Burnett. Included is a rare Mandolin musical box playing 4 airs (mandoline teeth in groups of up to eight, extending approximately twothirds of comb length), with unusual winding lever, hand-written tune sheet signed A. Golay-Leresche -Geneva and grained case with inlaid and strung rosewood-veneered lid -21in. (53.3cm) wide, the cylinder  $13^{1/8}$  in. (33.4 cm). See illustration.

Ord-Hume (Musical Box, p. 305) refers to this box as bearing the stamp and tune sheet of Golay-Leresche. In fact, no stamp is visible (without total dismantling), but on the front edge of the comb base, visible when removed from the case, is inscribed L. Kimmerling (the initial is indistinct). Kimmerling is referred to by Ord-Hume, quoting Grosclaude, as joint inventor, with Ducommun, of the flutina musical box. The winding-lever is not, as Ord-Hume suggests, hinged in the middle; it is cast in one piece in a cranked form, so that the hand-grip end is central within the end compartment, rather than on the right as normal. In practice, this design offers no obvious advantage over the conventional form of lever. The box is illustrated in Graham Webb, The Cylinder Musical Box Handbook, 1968, plates 11 and 12. The comb has a total of approximately 187 teeth. – £2,500-£3,500.



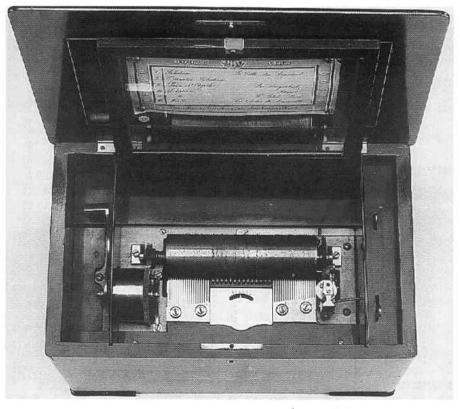


In this sale will be 8 singing bird boxes and 22 snuff boxes from his collection. A report on the sale will appear in the next edition of Music Box.

Lot number 147 is an organ musical box with a nickel plated motor, with a stamp N P & Co on the governor. This piece has 14 key organ

playing 6 airs and is estimated at £700-£900.

The largest musical box in the sale is a 27" orchestral Regina disc musical box in an upright oak case with double comb. This style of cabinet includes an integral disc bin and 11 discs are included.



# The Musical Box Society of Great Britain

Please complete and return this form if you or your company wish to be kept informed of the theft of musical boxes and are willing to co-operate in this fight against crime.

Returning the form places no one under any obligation other than a willingness to inform the following should stolen items be recognised:—

(a) the Police.

(Tel: 0403 823 533)

(b) The security contact of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain.

Name	
Company Name	
Company Name	
Address	
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Post Code	Ar and
Full Telephone No.	
Preferred Contact Person (if applicable)	
Return to:-	
Mr. E. Brown,	
The Old School,	
Guildford Road,	
Bucks Green,	
Horsham,	
West Sussex,	
RH12 3JP.	

Form (C)

# **SOCIETY TOPICS**

Continued.

As we go to press we hear with sadness of the death of Dr. Gall. David, his home was in Lymington, had been a member of the Musical Box Society for many years. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

#### **Society Archives**

The society wishes to thank Peter Howard for his services as Archivist to the Society. Peter took on the task of holding and documenting a thousand or so items in 1984 and with changing work commitments has decided to step down at this time. Kevin McIlhone has been co-opted by the committee to fill this position and is well known to many members as a compiler of tune lists especially of Aeolian rolls. We offer Kevin our best wishes in his task of moving and re-housing the archive collection.

This is left blank so members can fill in and return Form C on previous page.



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

## Memorable weekend

#### **Arthur Cunliffe writes:-**

I wish to thank all members, their wives and friends who put so much effort into organising and presenting the recent Lincoln meeting.

The weekend was memorable in that so many musical items were demonstrated or put on display. This event had a special atmosphere very reminiscent of Society meetings of yesteryear when everyone brought some item along and contributed enthusiastically.

A special vote of thanks to the ladies who did so much work to ensure the meeting ran so smoothly. Without their efforts I doubt if the meeting would have taken place at all. Thanks too for the excellent layout of the craft table.

To those members who decided to give the Lincoln meeting a miss, I'm afraid you missed a really first class show. Hard luck, but try harder next time to attend a meeting. I certainly will remember this event for a long time with great pleasure.

## Musical box register

# Jean-Marie Verheggen writes from Embourg:-

Recently I have made the effort to outline the characteristics of some of my music boxes in order to send them to our "Registrar." It is true that this requires some effort and a little time because it is necessary to dismantle certain parts such as the comb. But in this I was rewarded on receiving the extracts from the Register and the details therein, about the identity of the manufacturer, the approximate date, etc. The discovery of these details was made possible by the comparison with other similar pieces.

On the other hand, this dismantling is the perfect opportunity to maintain the mechanisms, with a little cleaning, or a drop of oil on the spindles. It's always worthwhile.

I am therefore resolved to continue this work with the other pieces of my modest collection and I strongly encourage all members to do the same. I am convinced that it is an excellent way to progress in the historical and technical study of the marvel that is the music box. The evidence for this is the fact that Mr. Bulleid, to whom it would be difficult to teach anything in this domain, has asked me through the intermediary of the "Registrar," for

information and complementary photos.

In this I was greatly honoured and it proves that every one of us certainly possesses certain interesting elements in his or her collection, albeit small. It is important to let this be known, all the more so because we may have confidence in the discretion of the "Registrar" who, ultimately, is solely interested in the study of musical boxes, not by their location, which is susceptible to change (sales, exchanges, inheritances, etc.). I hope I have convinced those who are hesitant to make their returns (see Vol. 15, page 116), and I congratulate all those who are working on the compilation of this Register and the study of the data it contains. The "Registrar" tells me he has indexed approximately 2,500 music boxes. Meanwhile, there must surely be many more in existence in the world!

## Re: Mr. George Bingham

Miss D. B. Joll, Hon. Secretary of Silhouette Collectors Club, 5/13 Brunswick Square, Hove, BN3 1EH. Tel: (0273) 735760 writes:-Re: Mr. George Bingham of Manchester 1794-1820? an organ-

Reward for stolen boxes

Mr. D. Barclay of Gridiron Cottage, Little Bardfield, Essex CM7 4TW is offering a reward for information leading to the recovery of his two stolen musical boxes. Mr. Barclay has no other items of mechanical music, is not a collector or a member of the Society, but has kindly sent the society a donation towards the cost of publishing the details below:—

#### **First Musical Box**

Manufactured by Nicole Freres. Approximately 12" long interchangeable cylinder playing 8 tunes. Movement and all associated combuilder/maker and repairer of barrel organs. Address: 10 & 21 Ridgefield, Manchester.

Mr. George Bingham was a maker of barrel organs – has anyone heard of him and do you have any information on him?

The reason I am wanting this information is that it seems likely that Mr. Bingham was also a silhouette "artist" at the same time. We have the address 21 Ridgeway for Mr. Bingham the silhouette artist, but when I checked with the Manchester Local Studies Unit they only had a record of Mr. Bingham as an organ builder etc. I suppose it is not impossible that they were one and the same. Mr. Bingham may have played his organ and at the same time advertising his skills as a silhouette artist!

### Burglary

# Mr. A. L. Daffurn writes from Gloucestershire:-

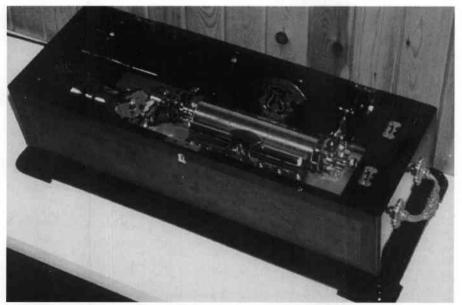
My house was broken into on the 1st November and among other items stolen was an  $11^{7/8}$ " table symphonium.

When it was stolen the bed screws and Geneva stop had been removed and are still in my possession.

ponents fully restored to pristine condition. No missing comb teeth or cylinder pins. Burr walnut veneered cabinet 32" x 11" x 7" on ebonised plinth with brass end handles all in superb condition.

#### **Second Musical Box**

Serial Number 29494. 13" x 2.125" cylinder with 12 airs and 56 teeth, in box approximately 23" x 14" x 9". Box veneered, with inlay on lid comprising flowers and mandolin-like instrument. "Shadow" of old transfer on front of box. Movement restored to pristine condition and incorporating 6 bells, also in same condition. Original tune sheet fastened to interior of lid.



## CYLINDER AND DISC BOX REPAIR AND RESTORATION

Services offered include:-

- **★** Cylinder re-pinning no limitation to size.
- ★ Pins can be raked (angled) if required.
- ★ Eccentric or worn cylinder pins re-ground due to cylinder pivots.
- \* All manner of comb work.



- **★** Cutting back. Re-tuning.
- \* Re-leading and tuning.
- ★ Re-facing star wheels.
- \* Setting up and adjusting gantries.
- \* Motor repairs.

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

Woodbank, Charleston, Glamis, By Forfar, Angus DD8 1UF Telephone and Fax number 0307 840473

Cylinder repinning, due to workshop expansion I can offer a complete cylinder repinning service in a realistic time with no limitations on cylinder size, anything from snuff box to Plerodienique, including orchestral and organ cylinders. Organ cylinders can be repinned with or without partial bridge repairs or full re-bridging.

## Cylinder pins are finished straight or raked as required.

Single cylinders from interchangeable sets can be repinned without surcharge. All repins are charged at the same basic price of length x diameter x 85p plus £85. With an additional charge for raking if required of length x diameter x 20p. All measurements to the nearest half centimetre.

Organ cylinder repinning charges are assessed on the full length of the cylinder including the bridged section. This is to allow for the extra time spent preparing and finishing these. Organ bridge repairs are charged at £15 per hour.

### Collection and delivery.

All work can be collected and delivered door to door by insured carrier. Large items can be collected and delivered personally.

In fact anything necessary to completely overhaul your musical box.

Part jobs welcome.



We wish all our friends and customers a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous

1994





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Specialist Restorer of Disc Musical Boxes
Seven point Five.Drayson Mews.Kensington.London.W8
071.937.3247

# Classified Advertisements

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN NEXT ISSUE:-7th February 1994.

Members: 14p per word (bold type 7p per word extra). Minimum cost each advertisement £4. Non-Members: 28p per word. (bold type 14p per word extra). Minimum cost each advertisement £8.

CASH WITH ORDER PLEASE TO: Advertising Secretary, Ted Brown, The Old School, Guildford Road, Bucks Green, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 3JP. Tel: 0403 823533

#### FOR SALE

**Discs for Sale,** Symphonion 37½cm (10 bells), Polyphon 36cm (12 bells), Stella 44 and 24cm, Kalliope 45cm. **Rolls for Sale,** Ampico 'B' Jumbo rolls. Office: 0335 300 300, Home: 0335 345 865, Fax: 0335 344 300.

Good selection of **Player Pianos** plus new and second hand rolls, Duo-Art etc. Export service available. Also restoration **materials**. Send S.A.E. for list and wants. Laguna Rolls, Lagoon Road, Pagham, Sussex PO21 4TH, England.



I would like to take
this opportunity of
wishing you all a
very Happy Christmas, and ask you
to remember this
column when you get

all those duplicate mechanical music Christmas presents that you will need to dispose of in what I hope will be a very prosperous New Year for you all. – Ted Brown.

#### WANTED

Musical Automata. Enlarging collection. Top prices. 815 Moraga Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90049 (213) 471-3000 Mr. Levy.

Organette music wanted. Ariston Disc Number 3846 Tootsies Serpentine Dance, any Dolcine card music any condition. 14 note Melodia and Clariona music (on spools). All other organette music, bands, spools, discs, any condition considered. Contact Ted Brown 081-300-6535.

Some classified adverts to make this page more interesting. You get 27 words, (three of them in bold type) for the £4 minimum charge. Yes this many!

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** 

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#### RATES FOR DISPLAY ADVERTS FROM JANUARY 1994

SPECIAL POSITIONS (offered as available).

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Full page £125, Half page £72, Quarter page £45, Eighth page £30 5cm box in classified area £27, 3cm box in classified area £18

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

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#### Deadline Dates for Display Advertising Copy

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

Editorial copy  $\mathbf{must}$  be submitted at least

8 days prior to above dates.

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



The Editor and the Committee of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain wish all its members a Happy Christmas and a Melodious New Year.



# 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.

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



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