

# The *MUSIC BOX*

*An International Journal of Mechanical Music*



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- Musical Box Industry in La Chaux de Fonds
- Disc Musical Box Comb Layouts
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**The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain**



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# MECHANICAL MUSIC AND TECHNICAL APPARATUS

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# From the Editors' Desk

**N**ow that the dark days of winter have passed it is obviously time to follow the more active pursuits of our hobby. Blow out the cobwebs, tune the organs and play the musical boxes for all to hear. It is time to visit the great specialist collections and be on the lookout for items in out of the way places. We once found a rare very early chamber barrel piano (almost a barrel spinet) in a castle in Scotland. The only other one we had seen apart from ours was in Utrecht museum. You really never know what will turn up where!

The joint meeting 'Hands Across the Sea' is gathering momentum as it grows nearer. A new package has been arranged which covers the weekend only. This will be specially good for the British contingent and represents a good social weekend with the possibility of doing things you always meant to - like a visit to the London Eye etc.

It is great that another chapter is forming in Worcestershire, and we hope that you will support it as enthusiastically as the one in Sussex that reports regularly. Playing with the 'toys' is what collecting is all about and sharing them can be so enjoyable. It is so pleasant to meet socially in a low-key and on neutral ground as well as at auctions or busy Society meetings with a more fixed agenda.

Isn't it typical that when checking Luuk Goldhoorn's article, on the boxes I tried

out the method on I failed to pick up the misdirections! I sometimes wonder about life, the universe and everything and how things work against one in spite of one's best efforts. We do apologise for these errors, but know that, with your ability to read and reason you will not find them insurmountable.

Kevin McElhone has continued his Polyphons with Bells article - please note his requests for photographs and numbers and help if you can. The more members can assist with research the more understood our hobby will become. Luuk Goldhoorn has written an interesting article on the cylinder musical box industry in the La Chaux de Fonds area. Something else to look out for - you may already have a box from this area in your collection.

It was with great sorrow that we learned of the death of Freddie Hill (obituary page 41) and also of J B Nethercutt of the San Sylmar Collection near Los Angeles, California (review page 50). The collection is now a non-profit foundation headed by JB's son Jack and is still open to the public. Admission is free but it is best to telephone first to find out times of tours etc.

We visited the collection in 2000 and admired the magnificence of it all. The Curator, Byron Matson, was kindness itself, and played several instruments for us that were not normally played on tours. We especially remember the Encore Banjo, examples of which we had seen before but never heard.

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**OFFICERS OF THE M.B.S.G.B. AND THEIR DUTIES**

President: **Christopher Proudfoot**

The Old Rectory, Fawkham, Longfield, Kent DA3 8LX  
Tel: 01474 707513 E-mail: cproudfoot@firenet.uk.net

Joint Vice President: **Coulson Conn**

432 Old Forge Road, Media, Pennsylvania PA 1906 USA  
Tel: 610 459 067

Joint Vice President: **Paul Bellamy**

46 Longfield Avenue, High Halstow, Nr. Rochester. Kent ME3 8TA  
Tel: 01634 252079 E-mail: bellamypaul@tiscali.co.uk

Subscriptions Secretary & Treasurer: **Richard Kerridge**

32 Queens Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 4BA  
Tel: 0118 957 7453 E-mail: edwinsmith@btinternet.com

To whom all subscriptions and subscription enquiries should be addressed.

Membership Secretary: **Kevin McElhone**

MBSGB, POBox 373, Welwyn AL6 0WY  
Tel: 01536 726759 E-mail: kevinmcelhone@supanet.com  
To whom all applications and queries relating to new membership should be addressed

Correspondence Secretary: **Robert Ducat-Brown**

MBSGB, P O Box 373, Welwyn AL6 0WY  
Tel: 01438 712585 E-mail: mail@mbsgb.org.uk  
To whom all general correspondence should be sent.

Meetings Secretary: **Roy Ison**

5 East Bight, Lincoln LN2 1QH  
Tel: 01522 540406 E-mail: ison@bight.demon.co.uk

Recording Secretary: **Arthur Cunliffe**

c/o Christopher Proudfoot, as above.

Editors: **David & Lesley Evans**

C/o Christopher Proudfoot, as above. Tel: 001 250 837 5250  
E-mail: David@revelstokemuseum.org

Archivist: **John Farmer**

8 The Lea, Kidderminster, Worcester DY11 6JY Tel: 01562 741108  
E-mail: john@musicanic.com

Auction Organiser: **David Walch**

11 Harford Close, Bristol BS9 2QD

Advertising Secretary: **Ted Brown**

The Old School, Guildford Road, Bucks Green, Horsham, West Sussex  
RH12 3JP Tel: 01403 823533

Committee members:

**Nicholas Simons**

Tel: 01332 760576 E-mail: njas@btinternet.com

**Hugh Morgan**

27 Middleton Street, Wymondham, Norfolk NR18 OAE  
Tel: 01953 603462

**Daphne Ladell**

The Hollies, Box Hill Road, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 7LA Tel: 01737  
843644 E-mail: daphne.ladell@btinternet.com

Website: [www.mbsgb.org.uk](http://www.mbsgb.org.uk) E-mail: [mail@mbsgb.org.uk](mailto:mail@mbsgb.org.uk)

## Errata

Unfortunately some errors occurred in Luuk Goldhoorn's article on Identification of Musical Box Tune Sheets in the Spring issue.

The easiest way of correcting them is as follows:

On page 10, in the central column, after "Is there a trademark on the tune sheet? Go to V" the next few lines should read:

"Are there left and right columns? **Go to VIII.**

Are there three sides with similar motifs? **Go to VI.**

Are there four sides with similar motifs? **Go to VII."**

Thereafter it is correct. We apologise for these errors and assure readers that the culprit has been dealt with appropriately.

## Marvels of Mechanical Music DVD

The MBSI, our colleagues from USA, have produced a new video presentation which offers a fascinating glimpse into the history and lore of mechanical music through its members. Through sophisticated digital video and audio techniques applied by a skilled film crew, you can experience the glorious music that these marvels of ingenuity are able to produce and learn more about them through the words of their collector owners.

The video is available as a DVD or VHS tape (make sure your equipment can play American format!) and can be ordered online at [www.mbsi.org/mart.php](http://www.mbsi.org/mart.php)



## From the President

It is sad to have to report the death in February of Freddie Hill, that ace of barrel-organ restorers and as sweet a man as one could hope to meet. When anyone with skills of that calibre dies, we miss them sorely, and wonder who will ever replace them. An obituary appears elsewhere in this issue.

Some better news; two of the items stolen from Joe Watts in September last (reported in *The Music Box* 21/8) have turned up (separately), and have now been returned to Joe. One is an unusual inverted Hicks type piano, the other an equally unusual manivelle musical box, and it is pleasant to be able to record that two former Presidents of the Society were instrumental in the respective restitutions.

Reference was made in the last issue to the organ festival at Longiano, Italy, September 9-11th, particularly with reference to a competition for composing a piece of barrel organ music. Sadly, few members of this Society would be eligible, given that it is restricted to those of younger years than most of us, but that is no reason not to attend the festival. I can even e-mail you a Hotel Reservation form on request, though it should be returned by April 30, which will probably have passed when you read this.

That most prolific of writers on our subject, Arthur Ord-Hume, who was one of the founder members of this Society as well as a past President and Editor, advises

that a new edition of his 1997 *Restoring Musical Boxes and Musical Clocks* is due out in May at £35 from Mayfield Books (Matherfield House, Church Lane, Mayfield, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2JR). We hope to be able to review the book in due course.

With this issue, you will find entry forms for the Society auction in June, and also for the special auction we are planning for Thursday evening at the joint meeting with the MBSI in Guildford in August. This latter sale will be for selected items only (we have five very nice musical boxes reserved for it already), and I plan to have a list of the entries available beforehand, so it will not be any use turning up on the day with unannounced entries.

## Stanley Sadie

Without the foresight of Stanley Sadie, who died aged 74 in March, mechanical musical instruments might not have achieved their due place in the musical reference works.

Society member Arthur W J G Ord-Hume had become increasingly annoyed at the scant treatment given to musical boxes and other automatic instruments in the musical dictionaries wherein they were invariably trivialised. Matters reached something of a climax with the publication of the fifth edition of the respected *Grove's Dictionary of Music & Musicians* in 1954. Edited by the late Eric Blom (1888-1959), this contained numerous errors of omission including the howler that one disc-playing musical-box

(the Regina) played twenty 7-inch diameter discs.

Ord-Hume, at that time producing a regular series of BBC Third Programme concerts of mechanical music, bombarded the publishers of Grove's, Macmillan Press, with letters of complaint. By this time Stanley Sadie had been commissioned to edit and produce an entirely new and expanded Grove's. Confronted by Ord-Hume's voluminous correspondence, Sadie summoned him to a meeting with the nascent editorial board to explain his problem and, more important, to justify mechanical music.

Sadie and our former editor actually got on famously and were to remain good friends from then onwards. As for Grove's, well the rest, as they say, was history – and Ord-Hume was commissioned to join the editorial board and prepare all the articles on mechanical music and its instruments.

Musicologist Stanley Sadie completely revised the entire dictionary and his new one, published in 1979, replaced Blom's five volumes with a massive – and very expensive – twenty. Numerous 'spin-off' volumes followed including *Musical Instruments* (1984) containing Ord-Hume's current revisions.

Born at Wembley in 1930, Sadie will be remembered as the editor of the *Musical Times* which he ran for twenty years from 1967. His latest edition of Grove's, published in 2001, took this respected encyclopaedia to 29 volumes!



## The Teme Valley Winders

Saturday 26th February 2005 saw the inaugural meeting of The Teme Valley Winders at the home of John Phillips. John had invited John Harrold and John Farmer and their wives, to meet with a view to starting a new local group similar to the Chanctonbury Ring. Since John Phillips' home is nestled in the peace of the Teme Valley, Worcestershire, the name for the group was a foregone conclusion (having dismissed Teme Valley Twisters as a somewhat dubious title).

The meeting was a fairly short affair in the evening, with each member bringing 2 instruments to play and discuss. John Phillips presented firstly a National lever wind box, No. 38422 playing 10 airs on a 9.25" cylinder. The movement is fitted in a rather large box and screwed up through the baseboard rather than through the front and back. His second instrument was an early David Lecoultre key wind box playing 4 airs on a 9" cylinder. The movement is fixed in the normal way, by screws with washers. The comb screws also have washers (whereas John Harrold's example had no washers on case or comb screws). The box is of fruitwood with a walnut veneered lid having one band of stringing. The governor is unusual, consisting of brass rimmed flywheel with 3 vertical vanes, giving a very constant speed, but slow to get up to speed. The tune sheet states

it is "Forte Piano - Piece a Expression", yet the comb is in one piece. It may have had long and short pins, but all evidence of this was lost when it was restored some years ago.

John Harrold had brought a key wind Nicole, No. 20947, playing 4 airs on an 8" cylinder and 113 teeth. The rosewood case has an inlaid lid and inside controls with and end flap. His second box was by F Lecoultre, No. 345, being an overture box playing 4 airs on a 10" cylinder and 161 teeth. It has a plain fruitwood case, inside controls and end flap. There was some discussion about the differences between the two Lecoultre boxes.

John Farmer played a Nicole Frères box from around 1844, having 6 tunes. The first 5 tunes are all Quadrilles by Louis Jullien (1812-1860) from his Alma, or Fille du Fue. The 6th tune is a march, Fille du Regiment by Donizetti (1797-1848). John F finished with a late Helvetia disc box (Made by Thorens in St. Croix) from around 1920 with an Art Deco transfer decoration on the lid. It has a typical loud sound, but is not exceptional, representing the closing years of the musical box era.

To get the new group onto a proper footing, John Philips would like to invite other members of MBSGB to join us at the next meeting, which

will start at 1:00 p.m. on 12th June 2005. John lives in the village of Eastham, Worcestershire, which is just off the A443 near Lindridge, between Worcester and Tenbury Wells. If you are interested, please give John a ring on 01584 781118 to confirm and obtain directions. (Note:- you don't have to be a "John" to join the group).

The meetings will be afternoon affairs, with tea, coffee and biscuits provided. At this stage the format of the meetings will be simply bring and discuss, with each member bringing one or two instruments for the group to hear and talk about. There will be no restriction on types of instrument, in fact diversity will be encouraged, so bring along cylinder or disc boxes, organettes, street organs, or what have you. Depending on the response from MBSGB members, the group will consider widening its membership to other societies, both mechanical music and horological. The format will be determined by the group members as the group develops - new ideas will be welcomed. It is hoped to submit reports of future meetings to The Music Box.

John Phillips is also hosting an Organ Grind at his home on 10th July 2005, to raise funds for Eastham Village Hall. If you have a suitable street organ or other small organ, and would like to join the 'Grind', please phone John as above.



## Chanctonbury Ring

from Peter Howard

Attendees at the February meeting could have been forgiven for believing they had arrived at a variety performance where a famed male duo took centre stage. Not the Two Ronnies, not Morecombe and Wise, not Laurel and Hardy but an equally entertaining though far more serious pair.

The show, entitled 'A Big Little Nicole', was presented by our colleagues Roland Fisher and Anthony Bulleid. A heap of debris purporting to be a musical box had been generously donated to Roland a few years back. So bad was the condition, it was impossible to establish a firm specification other than the comb had 37 teeth and the cylinder was about two and three-quarter inches long. This suggested a 4 air movement at normal track spacing. The only other certainty was that this was going to be a major re-build of almost every part of the mechanism. The temptation to ditch the whole thing must surely have entered Roland's head but he has to be congratulated for having the dedication, patience, skill and perseverance to soldier on to completion.

As renovation progressed it became clear that this was far from a normal movement. Not only had the track spacing been closed up to give six tunes in the axial distance normally occupied by four (track spacing of 0.012" instead of 0.017"), but the surface speed of the cylinder had been reduced from a more usual 0.06 inches per second to almost

one half, at 0.033 inches per second. The slowing of the surface speed gave sufficient time to squeeze in two tunes per turn so the original four air expectation blossomed into a twelve air reality. A far better deal than the 'Buy one - get one free' offered by most modern supermarkets!

Why should Nicole, the makers, have stretched their dimensional precision to these exacting lengths? Why face the extra problems associated with spring power and governor control for the lowered cylinder speed? Was this a test piece just to see how far you could go? It seems to have been a 'one-off' so maybe they realised any anticipated benefits did not warrant the manufacturing headaches.

With more dimensional freedom, another of our visitors treated us to a few tunes with the box kept under wraps. Nobody was able to correctly identify the instrument until the covers

were removed to reveal a Capital 'Cuff' musical box. These devices may be reasonably common in the land of their manufacture but they are certainly something of a rarity in our country. It was therefore a treat to be able to listen at length and compare with disc boxes having similar size combs.

The breadth of mechanical music was amply illustrated by further presentations of a 'coin in the slot' buffet box, a Saphone gramophone, a flamboyant photo album on a mirror stand and politically incorrect instruments relating to smoking and to hunting.

The Bucks Green Summer Open Day will be held on Saturday 25th June. A variety of instruments will be played during the morning and then we will concentrate on organs throughout the afternoon. Please contact Ted Brown A.S.A.P. if you would like to attend.

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# *“The Salzburg Stier Barrel Organ—just why does it roar?”*

Mounted high in the wall of the mediaeval Castle of Salzburg is the world's oldest barrel organ built in 1502 and recently fully restored. It plays music – and roars like a bull! The music we understand, but why does it have a bull's roar? Nobody has questioned this but Arthur W J G Ord-Hume reveals the long-forgotten reasons

Many things in life are taken for granted yet if we pause for a moment and think we are sometimes hard-pushed to come up with a reason behind something. We tend too easily to accept things at face-value and not to question when there is something we cannot understand. So many of our common sayings have meanings that are lost in the past, yet we still repeat them today without having the faintest idea what they really mean – like ‘swinging the lead’, ‘going off at half-cock’ and ‘reading between the lines’.

Occasionally, though, there is something that maybe we ought not take for granted but should actively seek explanation. The Salzburg Stier is one of them.

The City of Salzburg held a huge celebration in 2002 to mark the successful conclusion of a two-year project to restore this world-famous mechanical organ to its original condition. The City dignitaries and their guests from around the World did all the usual trappings of celebrating a major event in an important city.

The organ played its newly-restored barrel with its ancient musical programme to be greeted by well-earned smiles, applause and even cheers. The roar was equally received with joy.



*A general view over the top of the Hohensalzburg showing the 'organ shed' to the lower right of centre.*

Salzburg, long possessor of the World's oldest poorly-playing barrel organ now had its historic instrument in tip-top condition. It played its music and at the start and end of each tune it roared mightily over the City spread out beneath it. This was the traditional roar that it had been producing since 1502 and it was an event ingrained in the Salzburg folk-law.

There was only just one small

question. *Why* does it roar like a bull? Why is it called the Stier (which is German for 'bull') and why is the animal depicted in a famous woodcut from the 19th century as a malevolent black bull emerging over the Castle walls immediately above the organ?

It was a question that I asked when I first went to Salzburg around the early 1970s. Everybody knew about the





Ulf Seidl produced this woodcut of the castle with its overbearing bull emerging immediately above the organ-shed in the latter half of the 19th century.

roar (except that nobody seemed ever actually to have heard it above the traffic noise), but there wasn't anybody who seemed keen to offer an explanation that I could accept.

The stories bandied about were all different and included some which I shall summarise. Although the coat of arms for Salzburg depicts a lion, the people venerated the bull because, allegedly, of the 'legend of the bull-washers'. The story goes that the Castle was under siege and after a time the trapped defenders realised there was no food left, only one solitary bull. Desiring to hide this fact from their attackers, they painted the bull black, exposed it from the high battlements, took it away, washed the paint off and repainted in white for a second showing. They kept this up, repainting, displaying and then washing the bull until the enemy became convinced that the castle was defended by a bevy of bullocks.

That sounded a load of bull to me. As did the story of the bull signifying the

archbishop's run-in with one Georg von Wisbeck and to remind him who was boss of the castle. A pretty feeble tale if ever I heard one and it reminded me that the insubstantial libretti of many early operas were invariably saved by the music and the singers. Here was an insubstantial story that meekly warranted an organistic belch without explaining it in any way.

None of this seemed to stand up to scrutiny, in particular as the legends sounded vaguely familiar. I then found that similar tales were told to justify vastly different historical events elsewhere in mediaeval Europe. The conclusion was that if there was a shortage of actual improbable events, the number of professed explanations was inexhaustible!

When two years ago I found that the story hadn't really advanced much and still the bull's-roar was thought to be merely a call to worship, I decided it was time to investigate the truth, especially now that the organ was playing again – and the bull roaring as new.

The history of the Stier is rather fragmentary during the 17th and early 18th centuries, but we do know that it was built to remind the people of Salzburg to go to their

worship regularly. According to this, then, the Stier acted as a sort of organised church-bell created to bring people to Church. It seemed a curious explanation and I spent the next thirty years quietly pondering why they didn't use a bell like everybody else.

There is plenty of literature on this instrument, the works of Gerhard Walterskirchen (*Das Hornwerk der Festung Hohensalzburg and Musik auf der Festung Hohensalzburg*) being among the better-known, but I became convinced that the real story lay elsewhere than in the words of organ historians and musicologists. I turned to history instead.

We know that the first organ and bull was erected in 1502. Salzburg's ruler of the time was Archbishop Leonhard of Keutschack who acceded in 1495 until his death in 1519. At this time Salzburg was a somewhat decadent place where the religious influence of Rome had waned rather dramatically.

The city's great castle, the Hohensalzburg Fortress, had been built by Archbishop Gebhard in 1077. Standing 119 metres above the town, the dominating position of the edifice now inspired Leonhard to enlarge it, a task he completed in 1500-1501. After many years of religious uprising against the papal

Detail of the old keyframe and barrel.





influence, Leonhard had been installed by the Pope with a simple mandate: to restore the city to the Catholic faith. In fact, not only was this the Archbishop's given task, it was one that he grasped with fervour and he devoted the rest of his life to reinforcing Catholicism.

The Papal representative, for whom nothing but the closest adherence to the Catholic faith could be countenanced, decided to have erected a salutary lesson to the people of the town below his castle. It was a mechanical organ. As for devotion and worship, Salzburg needed not just waking up, but a constant reminder that Rome ruled. Leonhard did it in a very interesting way.

The style for the public organs in Austria that was peculiar to this age was called *Hornwerke*. In effect this was a semi-open-air instrument having all-metal pipework – equivalent, if you like, to the German *Blockwerk* organ. This style wasn't restricted to German instruments, of course, for it existed as early as the year 980 in the great organ of Winchester in Hampshire.

The difference was that this one, to gain the attention of a captive audience, would before and after each tune produce a sound very much like the roar of a bull so as to remind everybody that the papal influence was always at hand.

The allegory of the bull in the Catholic faith is probably less understood today than even a century ago. A 'Papal Bull' was a charter or edict of the Pope a die Incarnationis, in other words an Apostolic brief. Lewis Atterbury the English Divine (1631-93) wrote: 'A fresh bull of Leo's had declared how inflexible

*The bull's roar comes from these two brass blocks screwed to the left end of the barrel surface. The roar comes at the start and finish of each tune, so there is a very wide street between the beginning and end of the pinning. The gap between the blocks allows for tune-changing in the normal way by lateral shift.*

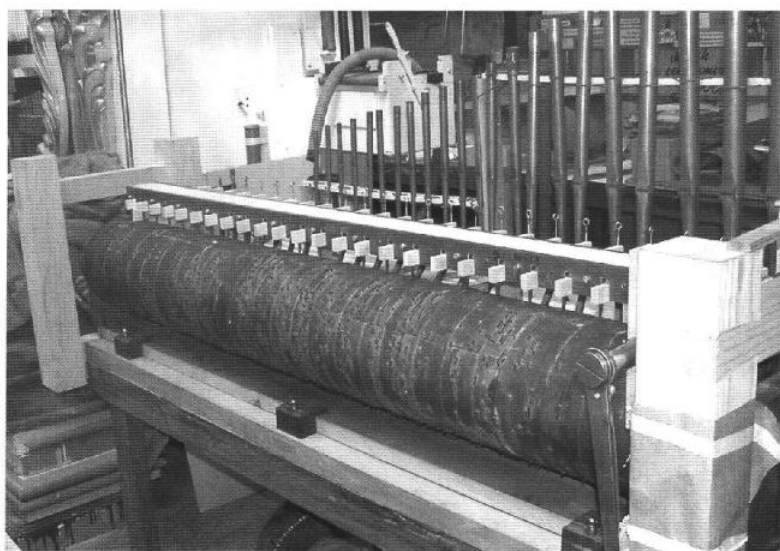


the Court of Rome was on the part of abuses'. He writes of Pope Leo X (Giovanni de Medici) who, born in 1475, demonstrated that Popes of the past died young: enthroned in 1513 he was dead by 1521.

The actual term 'Papal Bull' is a specific reference to the heavy lead seal used to impress wax on the communication that carried the name. Here 'bull' is itself a corruption of the colloquial Latin for seal (*signum*) which is *bullā*. (The pun works equally in German, where *Bulle* also means a male bovine). The Salzburg Stier, the origins of which seem today to have been

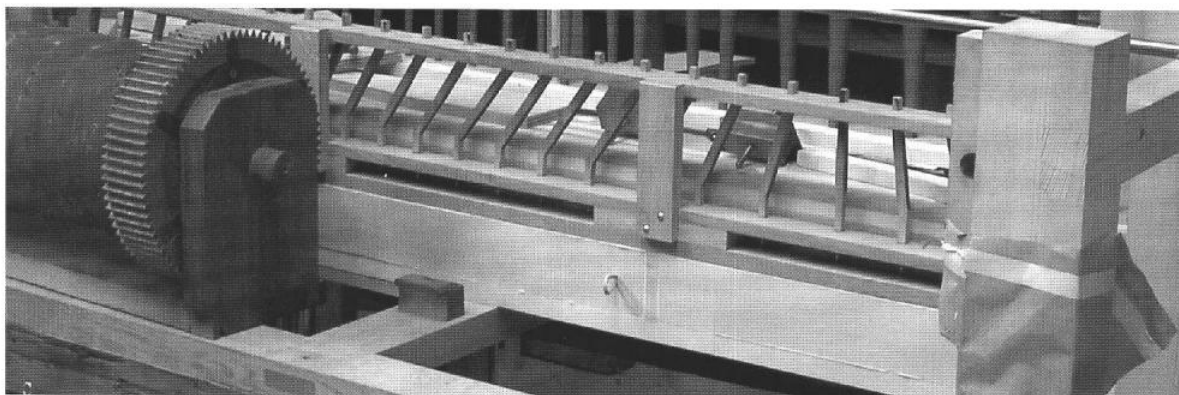
overlooked by the present-day city, was thus a constant reminder of the power of Rome to a people thought (by the archbishop) to be too far removed from Catholicism.

Quickly nick-named by the public as the Salzburg Stier (itself something of a dangerous religious snub to Rome), the organ was erected by an unknown maker in 1502. There is some uncertainty as to what music it played at this early date other than the piece *Alten Choral* written in the year of the organ's construction (therefore probably expressly for it) by Augustin Ebler. However, Johann Evangeliste Engl (*Das Hornwerk auf*



*Here in the workshop the old barrel is calibrated with the new keyframe with a single row of pipes on the new organ chest. Part of the new structural building frame can also be seen in this view.*





With the old barrel partially inserted into the new organ chest/keyframe arrangement, this view shows the uncommon shape of the organ stickers which are of square-section wood and cranked.

Hohensalzburg, Salzburg, 1909) tells us the organ played every morning at four o'clock and every evening at seven, sounding an *Ave Maria*.

The practice of religion at the end of the Dark Ages certainly demanded a good deal of personal sacrifice, sleep being just one thing.

In 1539 a Hymn composed by Paul Hofhaymer set to music the ode *Ad Lydiam*. In 1669 the organ played three pieces but by 1753 this had been increased to twelve. By 1753 two pieces by Leopold Mozart were being played: the allegro *Die Jagd* and the *Menuetto Pastorello*. At the same time, Johann Ernst Eberlin's *Wiegenlied* and his *Menuetto* were pinned. In 1791 Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Mailed* (*Komm lieber Mai und mache die Bäume wieder grün*) was installed and, finally, in 1804 Michael Haydn's *Sehnsucht nach dem Landleben* sounded out from the organ high up on the castle wall.

In July 1668, a restoration was carried out but not until the next century do we find a reliable name associated with the instrument when, in 1745, Johann Christoph Egedacher carried out an extensive restoration. The musical barrel seems to have been renewed or repinned several times over for, in 1797, Josef

Haydn composed his Austrian *Folkhymn* for the organ.

Housed in a rickety-looking shed protruding rather precariously from the top of the castle wall, the old barrel organ, for a long time referred to as the oldest in the world (but a bit like the ancient broom that had had five new heads and three new handles), gallantly soldiered on. But its imperious roar at the start and end of each tune had long been emasculated by the mounting rise of modern traffic noise in the city below, reminding, now effete and only to those that cared, that 'Rome was watching'.

When played, the louvered shutters at the front were opened but their presence meant that the organ was always exposed, at least in part, to the atmosphere. It was still played by turning a rather too-small hand wheel but the organ room was so small and cramped that there was only sufficient room for one person at a time and photography was a challenge even with a wide-angle lens.

It was almost 35 years ago that I was invited to inspect the state of the instrument and discuss a project for its ultimate restoration. This was my first visit to Salzburg and on that occasion I was accompanied by Prof Jorg Lässig and was escorted over the organ by local Salzburg historian and musical-instrument collector Otto

Fichtinger.

At the time of my inspection the instrument was still playable but without any degree of musical accuracy as heavy keyframe and barrel-pin wear combined to produce both wrong notes and no notes.

The musical compass of F – g2 was made up of 125 all-metal pipes. Interestingly, the overall pitch of the organ had been lowered at some time by very heavy cone-tuning. Subsequently this end has been better achieved by the soldering of extensions to the tops of all the pipes. The so-called roar of the bull is from a separate department on the chest where a large number of pipes play the chord F A C in a blast at the start and finish of the music. The keys to sound these pipes are raised by thick, wide brass blocks screwed to the extreme left end of the barrel's surface.

In a charmingly 'olde worlde'-style, the air in the bellows reservoir was maintained at the correct pressure by the use of rocks of various sizes placed on the upper board.

Restoration finally got underway in the year 2001 in order that the 500th anniversary of the inauguration of the first and original barrel organ could be suitably marked. The restoration process was



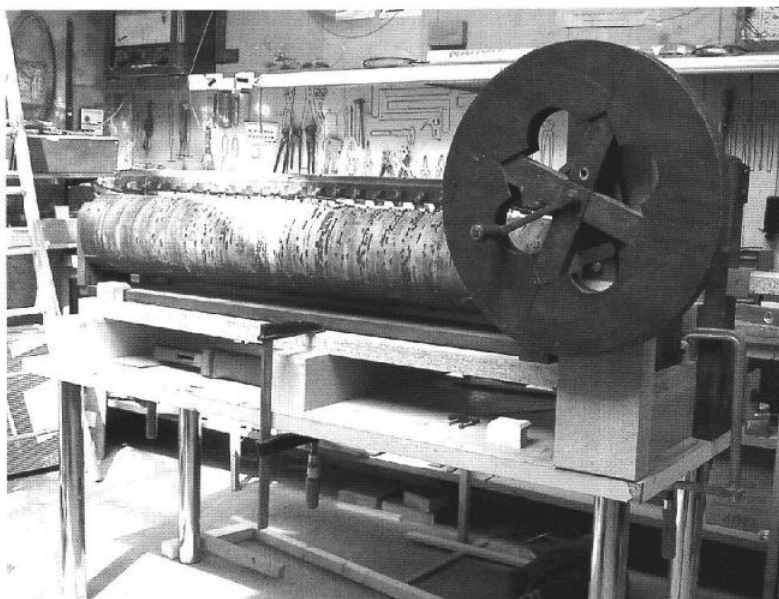
undertaken by a team including organ-builders Ferdinand Salomon of Leobendorf and the Nationaal Museum in Utrecht where a wholly-new barrel was made and pinned with a replica of the 1753 12-tune Mozart/Eberlin programme. On October 26th 2002 the restored Bull organ once more shouted out its papal warning over the heads of the Salzburgians again, marking half a millennium since Archbishop von Keutschach first dreamed up his cunning plan to re-affirm Catholicism in a then-religiously-delinquent Salzburg.

Perhaps it is a shame that few people today understand the power of belief and religious upbringing for then we would find it easier to understand what a powerful symbol the Salzburg Stier really was in

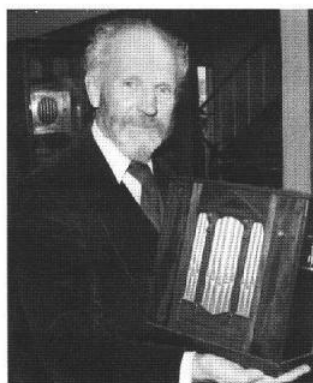
its day. Now it is merely a tourist attraction and a statistic for the history-books. This is the first time this explanation has, to my knowledge, appeared in print. Incidentally, for the benefit of those that know their Bible, there

is another misunderstanding that ought to be corrected: the 'wild bull' of the Old Testament is now thought to have been but an Oryx.

So there!



*The old and the new unite as the original heavy wooden handwheel with its quatrefoil cut-outs is connected to the new organ.*



*Freddie Hill at Godalming, circa 1990 (Photo: A.W.J.G. Ord-Hume)*

an expert on timepieces. He was probably the first collector to specialise in the English Church and Chamber Barrel Organ and, as a meticulous organ restorer, set a very high standard for restoration. His home was the gate-house to Aldro School, a private school in Godalming, Surrey, that was run by his brother and it was here that Freddie made his living teaching music.

In November 2002 he had the honour of being admitted to the Freedom of the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers. His ancestor, Octavia Hill, was a renowned 19th century social reformer and co-founder of the National Trust. It was his prowess in barrel-organ repair by which he is best remembered and he restored a number of

## Freddie F Hill

February 9 1932 – February 11 2005

One of the earliest Members of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain, Freddie Hill, died in February following a stroke.

Freddie Hill was trained as a clock-maker and restorer and quickly became

historic mechanical organs around the country including the John Longman instrument that accompanied the explorer Scott on his polar excursions a century and more ago. This instrument is today in the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge.

I was privileged to know Freddie Hill for more than 40 years during which time his knowledge and enthusiasm inspired me to undertake my own mechanical organ work and build a new instrument. In January 1963 and at my instigation he joined the fledgling Musical Box Society, becoming Member Number 30.

Since retiring from Aldro School, Freddie lived quietly in a small house in Godalming, where he maintained a small but high quality collection of chamber organs as well as two of the finest Hicks-type portable street pianos that it has been my pleasure to know. Freddie has bequeathed his barrel organ collection to the Royal College of Music.

By his passing we have lost not just a much-loved member, but a man of immense talent, great sensitivity and rare skill. His inspiration to others is his finest legacy.

*A O-H (Member No. 4)*

# Mechanical Music Scams on eBay

On eBay recently there was an auction for an upright Regina disc musical box. The more observant noticed that an apparently identical machine had been for sale a few weeks earlier. The warning signs to look out for on a scam are: 0 rating on the seller, high-price item, Private Auction, and money order or cashier's check for payment. It turned out that the 'scammer' had copied the images from the previous (genuine) auction and entered the same description as the original vendor had. A buyer of such an item would have to pay for it before it would be shipped, and would only find out that (s)he had been 'had' after many weeks of ignored emails etc. eBay does give a 3 month economic guarantee but it is quite easy to spend more than that time arguing with a distant vendor via email, only to find that (s)he has vanished before a successful conclusion is reached. This is not by any means an isolated case.

If in any doubt about anything in an Internet auction, it is always worthwhile to email the seller, asking for further pictures, such as the top of the musical box, or some view not shown. It could be that it could tell you about the condition of the wood and give some indication of the environment that the item was kept in over the years; humidity, temperature, etc. A reputable vendor should be happy to provide extra pictures or additional details. You could ask to hear the box over the phone, though if it is a long distance the vendor could just object to the cost of the phone call! A zero response to such requests should be viewed with great suspicion a lot of careful thought, as people have lost their money to such devious vendors.

Should you be unlucky enough to spot a scam, you can go to the eBay contact page, follow the links, and find the category for reporting an

auction that you suspect to be fraudulent. Go to this link: [pages.ebay.com/help/contact\\_inline/report\\_listing.html](http://pages.ebay.com/help/contact_inline/report_listing.html)

and select 1. Report a listing policy violation or... then 2. Fraudulent Listings, then 3. Report a listing you think is fraudulent. The seller of the original item has a different option under the second box, "Copying of your listing."

It should be pointed out that dishonesty is not rife on eBay, and that similar caution should be exhibited in the use of any on-line auction site. Just be aware that it can happen.

Thanks to the various contributors on this subject to the Mechanical Music Digest on the Internet, from which this has been condensed.

## This Nanny State

*From Arthur W J G Ord-Hume*

Occasionally things occur which make us all stand back and wonder where on earth we are heading! Usually it is our politicians behaving childishly, but increasingly it is the European Parliament and its dictates that undermine the very nature of things. An example was the attempt by Brussels to ban ginger marmalade, pint beer mugs, English chocolate and a few other urgently important things not forgetting the British sausage!

But there are other even more destructive forces at work in our midst, among them the Health and Safety Executive that has successfully banned, modified and prevented many of the things once normally taken for granted. Yes, sure, soft ground around children's playgrounds instead of concrete is fine and probably there's a valid

case for preventing anybody from attaching a plug to an electrical appliance or wiring up a light in the shed without supervision.

However in March came news that the HSE has prohibited the use of a particularly favourite fairground ride. No, not those fearsomely dangerous switchbacks or death-defying rides that make visitors scream, but the gentle and amusing Cake Walk.

Once the mainstay of the amusement arcade and the showground, the moving walkway, popularly nick-named the Cake Walk after the dance popular at the time it was first introduced, has fallen foul of the Government's Amusement Device Inspection Procedures Scheme. Only one of these wonderful entertainment devices from a bygone era survives – and now

that has been ordered to close because it no longer meets modern safety standards!

The offending device has been at Felixstowe's Amusement Park (one-time Butlin's Holiday Camp) since 1933 and it is believed to be the last surviving. Curiously, in view of the reasons given for closure, nobody has ever been hurt on the Cake Walk during its 72 years of existence. The HSE people think that there is potential for injury – and that's enough to seal its fate.

Back in the 1960s there used to be a travelling Cake Walk last seen by your reporter at an open-air event in Oxford where a 54-keyless Bruder Gebrüder organ played serenely while a dozen or so happy people attempted to walk across the gently oscillating walkways.



# Making a 'Tunagig' or 'Aeolian Carillon'

By Ian McIntyre

The idea for this device stems from the widespread reappearance after many years, of cheap hand cranked musical box movements. It occurred to me that if a wind turbine were fitted in place of the crank the resultant machine could form a novel, tuneful, alternative to the ubiquitous wind chime and might make the world a happier place.

My first discovery was that to be audible the movement would need to be fixed to a sounding board. An empty 200g cylindrical tuna can was found to yield sound volume that was adequate but unlikely to brand the user as a neighbour from hell.

Realising that the cylindrical can could also serve as overhead weather protection for the movement I addressed the problem of securing the movement inside the can. Although the movement incorporated tapped fixing holes, annoyingly no matching screws were provided and suitably threaded screws had to be found by trial and error. An 'L' shaped bracket was folded from 1.5mm aluminium sheet so that the movement could be secured inside the can with the input shaft projecting centrally downward from the open end. One limb of the bracket was drilled to accept the movement securing screws. Two additional holes were drilled in the other limb so that the bracket (with the movement already fixed) could be secured centrally through the closed can end by nuts and bolts via suitable drilled holes. The latter fixings served also

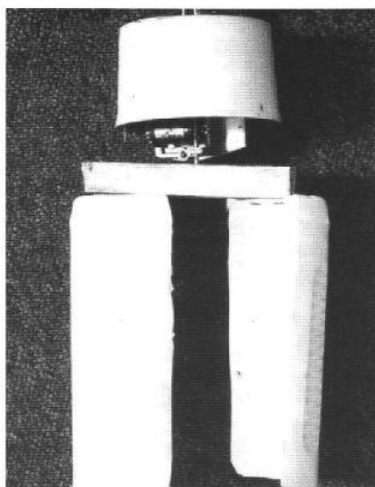


Fig 1. The completed Tunagig

to secure a hanging loop of thin metal strip to the outside.

Before fixing the movement the input crank was first carefully bent straight and the terminal knob removed. For straightening two pairs of pliers were used and care was taken to maintain the movement mechanism itself free of any bending stress.

To work in winds from any point of the compass a vertical axis radial flow turbine seemed an obvious choice - something akin to a smaller version of the wind powered rotating advertising signs sometimes seen outside shops.

Having at hand a 500ml plastic cylindrical washing up liquid bottle I cut this lengthways in half and used the two halves as turbine blades. Cutting off and discarding the conical end sections I nailed the bottle halves through their bottoms both to one face of a 20 x 20mm wooden beam some 120mm long. This was done symmetrically with the insides of the two bottle halves facing at some 30mm separation but displaced laterally by about two thirds of their diameter

(i.e. with a one third diameter overlap). The displacement was made so that the turbine would turn the input shaft forwards when rotated by the wind (i.e. with the convex faces of the blades advancing). I fitted the turbine by forcing the movement input shaft into a hole, sized to provide a forced fit, previously drilled in the middle of the wooden beam. I avoided end loading the input shaft bearings by applying counter-force using long nosed pliers to grip the shaft. For additional security I first coated the end of the shaft with waterproof glue.

It then only remained to finish the exterior with spray paint and lightly lubricate the movement (excess lubricant would mute the comb). The completed instrument was then ready for field trials - see Fig 1.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that the 'Tunagig' (named in a punning allusion to both construction and function) worked straight away belting out 'The Entertainer' in any breeze over Force 3. Also it continues to work after some eight months of outdoor exposure even though the movement was probably only intended for occasional indoor use.

I have now made several 'Tunagigs' (various tunes) which I have supplied to friends for site evaluation. A friend suggested 'Aeolian Carillon' as a more proper descriptive name for the device. Has anyone heard of anything like it before? It is certainly well within the capacity of our forebears to have produced.

# News from Other Societies

Compiled by John Farmer

Following my appeal for interpreters I now have someone to review the Dutch journal *Het Pierement*. Peter Whitehead's first two reviews follow. Many thanks Peter. (Anyone for German, Italian or French?).

**Het Pierement (Quarterly magazine of de Kring van Draaiorgelvrienden (KvD), the Dutch street organ friends) - October 2004**

A double CD appears in this issue, commemorating 50 years of the society, and consisting of recordings of 50 organs from the 1911-1941 period, the idea being to make available music from the era before the founding of the society and which is no longer heard.

Other items include articles on the successful acquisition of a Ruth model 36, having only two previous Swiss owners, by a Dutch collector

and an article expressing appreciation at the good state of maintenance of an 'Adieu' organ, the Cello, a 56-key Carl Frei organ dating from 1926.

An 'Adieu' organ is the name given to one that has left Holland, often in the fifties and sixties, before export regulations became more effective, to find a home abroad, in this case Canada. Such organs often have a reputation of being poorly maintained, once they leave Europe.

A report on the successful restoration of an 87 key Gavioli, one of four organs in the Efteling theme park, by the Pluer family, shows just how thoroughly the work was handled by these restorers, - the organ had performed good service over the 50 years during which it had stood in the same spot in the park and richly deserved

this recent attention.

An interesting short article on taking the Kleine Radio from Holland to the Liechtensteig (Switzerland) organ festival (organised by Fredy Künzle) shows just how difficult exporting such an item can be, even though only on a temporary basis.

On arriving at the border post at Konstanz/-Kreuzlingen the owner, Hans van der Velde, was asked the value of his organ, and turned out to have to deposit 10% of this value with the authorities (presumably German) as guarantee of the organ's eventual return.

This necessitated leaving the organ at the border, a trip to Liechtensteig to obtain the necessary (cash!) funds and a return to the border post to pay the deposit and collect the organ. Not quite what was expected, but at least the

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money was repaid without difficulty by the authorities when the organ came back into Germany.

It seems the *pasa-doble* is, quite possibly, likely to feature more and more on arrangements for street organs, according to a brief article by Jan van Dinteren; the music is particularly well suited for these instruments. Several tune titles are mentioned as having appeared on organs, amongst them 'Churumbelerias', by Emilio Ruiz (I only mention this as a test for our new editorial team!) - Thanks! - Ed.

A medal of honour, the Romke de Waard medal, has been instituted by the committee of the society as a way of commemorating Mr. de Waarde, who recently died. It has been awarded, for the first time, to the committee of 'Het Kunkels Orgel', the Haarlem organ museum.

Other regular pieces in 'Het Pierement' include one on recently appeared CDs; an up to date calendar of future events in Holland and abroad; and a nostalgic trip through Brabant's organ past, as they put it.

#### **Het Pierement - January 2005**

The second of a series of articles on G. Perlee street organs, by Tom Meijer, follows this Amsterdam family firm through the thirties and into the last war. The firm was, during this time, a prominent supplier of music for mechanical organs, also providing music for special occasions such as a film production in 1934 and celebrated its 25th year of existence in 1935 by contributing items for a radio programme. Interest in the company from

abroad is shown by two quoted letters from Canada, each seeking to purchase an organ.

Life immediately before the war became difficult for the firm when the Amsterdam authorities (in an effort at promoting Amsterdam as a modern cosmopolitan city) withdrew playing licences for the entire city centre.

During the war, in 1941, Gijs Perlee senior registered the firm with the National Paper Office, hoping to protect his import of paper from Belgium. He died in June 1942, and the firm was taken over by Gijs junior, who had a difficult start when, in September 1942, the German occupying authorities forbade all street music, effectively putting a stop to the firm's organ hire business. The warehouse was then used as a packaging centre - small cartons of washing powder and talcum were made up from large bales by female workers. Gijs junior, however, did not, unlike other organ-hire businesses, sell off the organs, no doubt hoping for better times. There will be a third in this series of articles.

A fascinating translation, by Hendrik Strengers, of an article from the French paper *L'Illustration* of July 1892 describes a street organ competition organised by the Paris city council. The contest itself sounds to have been organised chaos - each player was given 5 francs to do his best, and the prizes allocated were, it seems, as diverse as a ticket for a haircut or a bag of coal. The article is accompanied by a stunning series of pencil sketches of street musicians, by a George Scott.

A brief biography of the American composer, John T. Hall (1868-1954), by Jan van

Dinteren, shows what you can do with a little cheek. It is thought that John Hall may have been the first to set up a song-poem business, in which adverts were placed in magazines, inviting readers to send in their musical compositions, together with a financial contribution to secure publication of their composition, with which they would then become eligible for royalties. This was the theory, at any rate, but things went awry in 1913/14 when John Hall was arrested and sentenced to two years in prison for mail fraud. He did, however, manage to publish several compositions (among which, the first, *Wedding of the Winds*, contains the interesting 'Looney Coons' ragtime) of predominantly waltzes before his fall from grace.

Book and CD reviews in this edition of *Het Pierement* include a book/CD combination on the famous organ clock which was given by Joseph Haydn in 1793 to his employer, Prince Anton Esterhazy and which is now in the Dutch National Museum in Utrecht, from whom the combination is available.

Black Forest Orchestrons (ISBN 3-932275-84-5), a hardback by Herbert Jüttemann, and consisting of two parts (1. Development and construction of orchestrons. 2. Companies and production programmes) is given recognition as the definitive work on this subject.

A page is devoted to a montage of photos of the 2004 Great Dorset Steam Fair.

The summary of the March 2004 AGM of the Society (no doubt preparatory to the next AGM on 5th. March, 2005) makes mention of concern about reduced

interest by the public in organ shows, possibly due to the economic recession on the European mainland, but, on the other hand, the support by the town of Deventer in setting up a preservation society for the organ The Turk is applauded and it is hoped that Haarlem will be equally helpful in setting up an organ museum. Mention is made of Nigel Myers' (from Yorkshire) invitation and subsequent attendance with the organ de Grote Gavioli at the Arnhem organ day on 6th. June. No mean feat.

### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 180, September/October 2004**

This issue advertises "Hands across the Sea", the August 2005 joint meeting with MBSGB, giving brief itinerary and registration details. The usual Chapter reports include one from the Japanese chapter and their visit to four museums in Japan – The Kobe doll museum, the Hall of Halls at Rokko, the Horie museum and the Kyoto Arashiyama Orgel museum. Several interesting exhibits are pictured (but only in black & white). There are no additional articles in this issue.

### **The Key Frame (Issue KF3/04)**

FOPS always seem to manage to cram a lot into their A5 format journal, and this issue is no exception. James Dundon writes about his first Fair Organ, a 31 keyless of unknown make which he acquired in 2003 from the Rye Museum. He spent about a year fixing various problems and then had his first 'booking' in April 2004. Dr. Andrew Leach gives details of the restoration of a Wilhelm Bruder Sohne Model 79, 48 keyless, organ built in 1926. The organ was completely

original, never having been modified, which is quite unusual!! The restoration took 3 years with every effort being made to keep original parts (apart from the leather, of course). Paul Kirrage relates the story of his passion for Voigt fair organs and his recent acquisition of one. It is a 56 keyless instrument and its restoration was nearing completion when the article was published. - We visited the Southern Counties Organ Festival (reviewed later) where the Voigt was present, having just emerged from its restorer's workshop the night before, and can confirm that Paul's organ is indeed magnificent! - Ed.

Peter Trueman recounts his trip to the 50th anniversary celebrations of the KDV in Holland, and Bill Minshall explains, briefly, a tuning method based on tuning 3rd harmonics and octaves instead of the usual 5ths and 4ths. The Journal congratulates Ted Reed of Amersham who has successfully registered his collection as a charity. Its new name is The Amersham Fair Organ Museum. The charity aims to improve the existing building and gradually enlarge the collection as important instruments become available.

Herbert Silcock describes the 3 favourite organs in his collection, which are Crichton's No.1 Bioscope Organ, the Emerson Organ, and the Welsh Organ. His latest acquisition is an 89 key Gavioli from the Eltztalmuseum in Waldkirch. The Music from Belgium series by Tom Meijer covers the life of Louis Somers, who joined Mortier as an arranger in 1949. He became independent when Mortier closed in 1952, and then eventually worked for Decap from 1967. He died in 1975. Gary Hall outlines his recently built "MIDI"

controlled organ based on Alan Pell's modular organ pipes. The organ is 30 key and includes drums & cymbal and Glockenspiel. In similar vein, Tim Joiner briefly describes how he built his "House Organ", for playing inside. It is based on a rank of Leiblich Gedackt 4' stopped pipes and various other parts all purchased through the internet (E-bay of course) for a total cost of £350. The organ is MIDI controlled so can be played from keyboard, computer or disc player. E-bay was also the source of several postcards purchased by Rob Barker who asks for help in trying to identify some of the organs featured on the cards.

### **Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Fall 2004, Vol XXIII, No.3**

The Society President suggests that many ROS members will have been affected by the recent hurricane, Charley, and thus encourages members to send donations to the various relief organisations.

Brenda Ebie traces the history of the Organ and Melodian builder Orson C Whitney and his various companies in Cleveland, Ohio, whilst Donald H. Martins, Ph.D., describes his restoration of a Seybold 2MP Reed-Pipe Organ which included a completely new air supply system. Rey Akai gives a report from Japan (The Reed Organ Club of Japan), and David Frostick explains his technique for repairing broken reed tongues (could be useful for repairing Organettes too ??). David also wants to know how to get a 2'8" wide harmonium through a 2'6" door !!

Until now I perceived this journal as mainly "non-technical", but a New Column headed "The Beehive Buzz"



promises to change that. John Morningstar of The Beehive Reed Organ Service starts the new column with "Disassembling a Reed Organ" and invites members to write in and request future technical topics. Finally Ned Phoenix describes the Estey & Greene Meloden at the Estey Organ Museum, and Nelson Pease provides provenance on the same organ.

### **Player Piano Group – Bulletin 172, September 2004**

Julian Dyer celebrates the centenary of the Welte-Mignon with a 24 page treatise on the company and the machine. He then follows up with an article on Schmoele's Electro-Magnetic Orchestra of 1876 which destroys the myth that M. Welt & Sohne were the pioneers in the use of paper rolls for Orchestrions – they didn't do it till 1887 !!

Patrick Handscombe gives extensive advice on home-made suction supplies using vacuum cleaner motors, and Roger Waring of the Pianola Workshop gives background details of his electrification setup for which he is now taking orders. On a lighter note (!), there is a report on the "Hand Roll Piano" from Yamano Music Co. of Tokyo. It is a portable electronic piano with a flexible plastic "keyboard" which rolls up to allow the compact unit to be carried in small bag, with a total weight of about 1kg. It's a roll piano rather than a piano roll !

### **Organ Grinders News, No. 50, Autumn 2004**

David Wilcox gives a brief description of his 12 key barrel organ which he designed and built based on information gleaned from AWJG Ord-Hume's "The

Barrel Organ", and Herbet Jutteman's "Waldkirch Street and Fairground Organs". Terry and Jenny Jordan review the Hunstanton Organ Festival, and Angie Harrold describes a wonderful weekend in the magical city of Erfurt.

Rafael Engeser gives a brief life history of Josef Raffin, who celebrated his 70th birthday in 2002 by launching a new product – an electronically controlled flute-clock.

The Musical Museum and Friends Newsletter, issue 35, Summer 2004

The Friends have taken a major step in securing the museum's future by securing a £1.8 million grant from the Heritage Lottery fund. This gives them the much needed funding to fit out their new building due to be handed over in the near future. The newsletter expands on the internal design of the new museum and their plans to get the best out of it. The internal construction will be such that the space can be re-arranged if the initial layout doesn't work. Their general aim will be to make the museum able to cover its own running costs from revenue. Thus, recognising that museum visits alone will probably not achieve this, the building will be capable of generating funds from other activities.

Other articles include details of the Friends' visit to Amberley Working Museum, an appreciation of Ena Baga (Vice President of the Friends) who died in July 2004, some notes about the museum's Pasquale barrel piano, and a history of Brentford Gas Works (now replaced by an Arts Centre).

### **Organ Grinders News, No. 51, Winter 2004**

The majority of this issue covers the BOGA annual gathering held at Snibston Discovery Park at Coalville, Leicestershire, in October 2004. The officers reports and the annual accounts are reproduced. The next Annual Gathering is proposed at Swindon Railway Museum on 15/16 October 2005.

Dennis Baumber tells how his first experience of a Busker organ at a Model Engineering exhibition in 2001 led to him building 2 organs of his own since then. Fred and Ruth Robinson detail their trip to Wintzenheim in France for the town's 5th Organ Festival.

Events announced are 13th Annual Little Downham Bygone & Organ Extravaganza on 26th March, 2005, an Open Day at Duncan Mallow's home on 5th April 2005, a Spring Gathering at the Black Country museum, Dudley (West Midlands) on 14/15 May 2005 (organised by John Harrold), and Hunstanton Street Organ Festival on 16/17 July 2005.

### **Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Winter 2004, Vol XXIII, No.4**

The President's Message introduces several subjects for further discussion:- whether the Society should start an Archive of music for Reed Organs, whether the Society should create a Museum, and the establishment of a standard dictionary of reed organ terms.

Coleman Kimbrell details his restoration of an unusual organ made by the Uxbridge Cabinet Organ Co. of Uxbridge, Ontario. It was very well made and had several unusual, but well

thought out, construction features. This was an early Uxbridge model made in 1875. In the centre of the journal is a reprint of the music for Horace Waters & Co. Grand March, the first of a planned series of such reprints.

Brenda Ebie adds more to the story of Whitney & Raymond, and the United States Organs, including several extracts and pictures from their catalogues. The regular 'E-Bay' auction summary shows prices varying from \$5.50 for a Burdell (or Burdett) high top to \$1200 for a fully restored Palace organ. There are also reports of several organ concerts.

#### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 181, November/December 2004**

The President's message gives the background to one of MBSI's recently completed projects – the translation and publication in English of Jean-Claude Piguet's book, *The Music Box Makers*. (The next addition to the MBSGB Archive, I think). Joseph Roesch gives a comprehensive review of the book later in the Bulletin.

In addition to the regular Chapter reports, there are reports from the 55th Annual MBSI meeting in Orlando, Florida during August 24th – 29th, 2004. Shirley Nix reports on the whole week, whilst Pat Cavanaugh reports on the Trustees' and Business meetings.

"In Memory" remembers Ben Lilien, Hyman Friedman and Edward Zelinsky

#### **Mechanical Music, Vol 50, No.2, Autumn 2004**

In this issue Coulson Conn

starts a series of articles entitled "Bastard Disc Musical Boxes" with The Ariophon. The series title refers to disc-type boxes which use media other than the standard metal disc. Examples are the Capital Cuff box, the Libellion, the Ariophon, the Roepke, the Unikon, the Baskanion and the Arno. These use a variety of media such as the truncated cone, books and strips, cardboard discs and paper rolls. In this first article Coulson includes reprints from articles from Das Mechanische Musikinstrument and The Music Box to supplement his own writing. The article gives a very detailed history and technical description of the machine enhanced by a number of good photos and diagrams. Coulson also suggested the next article, which is a reprint of Hughes M Ryder's treatise on The Capital Cuff Box from the MBSI Bulletin Vol.XIII, No.2.

Larry Karp's third instalment of "Cylinder-Box Restoration Tips for Novices" covers dampering with Parchment and Mylar, as used mostly on modern and smaller boxes. Larry's text is supplemented by some excellent close-up photographs in crisp black and white.

"Mechanical Music in the Movies" is the title of Ron Bopp's article in which he describes some of the best examples of mechanical music instruments appearing in movies. His best choice is the Sherlock Holmes story "Dressed to Kill", made in 1946, in which the locations of stolen Bank of England printing plates are coded into the musical arrangements of cylinders. He quotes many other examples with varying degrees of involvement of mechanical music, including

"Old Gringo" (1989) in which an Aeolian Orchestrelle appears to produce player piano music when pumped. An extensive list of these movies can be obtained from Ron Bopp.

Luuk Goldhoorn writes about "Musical Box Makers who hide their Light under a Bushel?" and identifies two examples where makers stamps on combs have been covered, apparently to hide them. Luuk discusses some possible reasons for these, but admits he is only guessing. John Powell describes some details of his Reymond Nicole cylinder box, No. 135 which has much evidence of pin modification (filing and chamfering) to correct misalignment. This is a reprint from The Music Box Vol.20, No.1, Spring 2001.

The rear cover of the journal displays 4 examples of postcards showing children and mechanical music. These pictures weren't included in an original article on the subject by Ralph Heintz in the Winter 1986 issue of the journal. The article may be reprinted at some stage.

#### **Player Piano Group – Bulletin 173, December 2004**

Patrick Handscombe (Chairman) raises the regular problem of getting articles for the journal. In the case of the PPG bulletin, Julian Dyer, the editor, seems to write most of the articles too, and is finding it an onerous task. Julian himself follows up with some useful advice to encourage members to try their hand at writing.

The bulk of this issue is given over to Julian Dyer's very revealing article "Universal Music Company



piano rolls, A roll collector's overview". Universal was actually an Aeolian roll manufacturing business which enabled them to sell piano rolls through non-Aeolian retailers. This, however, was just the beginning of a much bigger expansion by Aeolian who ended up producing rolls for a large number of labels:- Meloto, Metrostyle, Themodist, Metro-Art, Uni-Record, Harrods, Perfecta, Artistyle, Regent, and no doubt many others. Julian's article gives a detailed history of each of these and is illustrated by images of many of the labels.

Christine Robinson makes us aware of the Russian composer Anatol Konstantinovich Lyadov (1855 – 1914). Of particular interest was his ability to compose well-crafted, exquisite, piano miniatures, although he did compose larger pieces. Probably his best known piece is "Musical Box" which can be found on Duo-Art rolls D-9 and D-641. He was highly praised by his contemporaries such as Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorsky. Unfortunately he missed his chance of real fame when he was asked by Diaghliiev to compose music for "The Firebird". He procrastinated and failed to complete the work on time, so it was given to the then unknown Igor Stravinsky. The rest is history.

Julian Dyer adds further information to his article in the previous bulletin about the Welte perforator, and Bob Senior tells of his personal project to create a database of Hupfeld rolls which he hopes to submit to the PPG for publishing in the next year. Finally, Roger Waring explains the intricacies of restoring a player piano so customers

can understand the high cost, and would-be DIY-ers understand what they are taking on. He intends to follow up with details of actual restorations of a Claviola pushup and an upright Bluthner.

### **Vox Humana – Winter 2004**

The Editor reviews the Great Dorset Steam Fair which, although, again, an excellent event, seems to have turned away one or two very good organs, and one of the evening concerts was slightly spoiled by noise from the 'heavy haulage' section. He also sympathises with friends and family of Fred Dibnah who died on 6th November 2004. In a separate article Jeremy gives a number of useful questions and answers about Performing Rights.

Peter Mackett reviews the first Southern Counties Organ Festival which was held at Fontwell Park, West Sussex on 18th & 19th September, 2004. Although poorly attended (possibly because of a venue change from Hollycombe Steam Collection), the 170 or so visitors who attended over the 2 days were able to hear 24 organs without distraction from other attractions. The organs playing ranged from a 20 note Fussell to a 109 key Decap Herentals "The Carnival Clown". A better turnout next year, perhaps.

Peter Craig attended the 2004 MBSI convention at Orlando and recounts the visits to Bill and Cyndy Hall's collection, the Millhouse Collection, and Mark and Christel Yaffe's newly established collection. He also visited the Grand Floridian Hotel to see and hear the Gavioli, "Big Bertha". Robert Harris tells of his visit to the organ

builder Adrie Vergeer in Holland to hear the recently restored "De Lekkerkerker". Finally, Alan Roberts explains the origins of "Organ Alley" at the Great Dorset Steam Fair.

### **The Key Frame (Issue KF4/04)**

David Williamson, 21st century woodcarver, has been praised for his workmanship in producing new "Crown Droppers" for a set of 1902 Walker Gallopers. Pictures of his work are included. Paul Kirrage gives additional information on his Voigt model 34 with the discovery, during restoration, that it was made in 1928, a few years later than first thought. Tom Meijer concludes the Music from Belgium series by mentioning a few other arrangers and providing a list of Mortier's arrangers from 1908 (Carl Frei) to 1952 (Louis Somers).

Dr. Evelyn Flogel gives a preview of the 2005 Waldkirch organ festival to be held 17th – 19th June. He also gives some new information from the Elztalmuseum, and a brief history of organ construction in Waldkirch. Raymond A. Elliott and Peter Mackett write about the 2004 Great Dorset Steam Fair, and James Dundon reviews the Southern Counties Organ Festival with some excellent pictures by David S. Smith.

The Water Organ at the Villa d'Este is explained in some detail by Rodney Briscoe who built the new replacement. It is mostly bronze and stainless steel to help it withstand the very damp atmosphere. 13 year old Robert Heywood writes about his favourite organ, the White's Gavioli, and Nick Marler and Pater Clarke give their views of

the North West group's Rally at Widnes in September 2004.

Russell Wattam discusses the possibility of a FOPS lending library and asks who would be prepared to donate relevant books. Peter Haywood writes the obituary for Society Treasurer Brian Kempton who passed away in early November 2004. The West of England Society (20th-22nd August, 2004) is reviewed by James Dundon, whilst Boz Oram details arrangements for the 2005 AGM on 2nd April at the Coors visitor centre, Burton on Trent. Younger member Nick Williams (age - just gone 20), gives a brief autobiography. As ever, many of the articles are supplemented with good quality colour pictures of organs.

#### **Other Non-English journals**

#### **Musiques Mecaniques Vivantes – 4th Quarter, 2004-12-14**

Highlights:- Christmas tree musical stands, An E. Wahrle musical clock with 8 pipes, A Debain Antiphonel is born again, A curious musical machine (a musical box with more organ, bell and percussion teeth than tuned teeth), Renovation of a philharmonic Welte organ (part3), Souvenirs of Ch. L. Hooghuys, Viewing the inside of a Cinema organ, Advice to potential buyers of a barrel organ.

#### **Das Mechanische Musikinstrument (Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente), December 2004**

Subjects covered (guessed at with assistance from Collins Gem German dictionary) :- Musical clocks, problems

restoring the "Apollo clock", an unusual barrel organ from 1830, Dealing with squeaking musical boxes, the Polyhymnia, What is a Museum?, This issue also comes with a reproduction catalogue for Bial & Freund, Breslau, for 1902, showing disc boxes, organettes and phonographs.

#### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 182, January/February 2005**

The centrepiece of this issue is a detailed 5-page account by Susan Robinson of her visit to the Great Dorset Steam Fair in 2004. She was very impressed by the many historical steam traction engines and other machines, but her favourites were obviously the eighty-one fair organs present. She finishes with encouragement for her fellow MBSI members to make the effort to visit the Fair in 2005 if they are attending the joint MBSI/MBSGB meeting.

Projects & Wants has an appeal from Richard Dutton of New Jersey who is working on his book "The Roller Organ Cob Handbook". His book will include information on the music for the 20-note and 32-note roller organs with an individual entry for nearly every cob identifying the tune by type, composer, lyricist and date. In many cases the entry will also list a source of sheet music, and some will include further history about the tune. His appeal is aimed at owners of 32-note (Grand) cobs since he has much less information on these. Owners are asked to let him have details of the cobs they own. (If you have any information, e-mail him at rollerorgancobs@aol.com. )

#### **Mechanical Music, Vol. 50, No.3, Winter 2004**

Klaus Lorenz writes about the history of Rouillet et Decamps Automaton and the Musée de l'Automate in Souillac where many of their automatons are displayed. The firm continued until 1995, although in later years they made battery operated toys and large automated electric commercial displays. Klaus Lorenz is a restorer and builder of automatons who studied in the Rouillet and Decamps workshops where he restored historically important automatons for museums and private collectors.

Larry and Casey Karp, Robin Biggins and Dale Lorang present an article on Alternate Tip Musical Boxes with details of a specific example and a discussion of why they exist. This is followed by David Wells who makes several observations about Reymond-Nicole boxes with shaved pins. Various technical issues are discussed, but no real conclusion as to the reason for shaved pins is reached.

The Peerless 44 is the subject of an update from Ron Bopp who first wrote about the 44 in the AMICA news bulletin of October 1981. The Peerless 44 is a 44 note coin-piano which uses endless rolls, generally having between 4 and 7 tunes per roll. The instrument was made by Roth and Engelhardt of St. Johnsville, New York from about 1903.

Finally, Bill Wineburgh tells of his detective work in establishing the maker of a Most Interesting Disc Musical Clock following an internet enquiry. Having narrowed it down to either Polyphon or Regina, he checked the serial number



found on the spindle in the Regina Company records and found it related to a 27" disc changer, hence the clock must be a Polyphon. It remains an unusual example, with a Lenzkirch clock in a very unique case style.

#### **Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Spring 2005, Vol. XXIV, No.1**

This issue opens with a tribute to "Oedipuss", who was chief cat and mouser for Coleman Kimbrell of Kimbrell Restorations. Oedipuss joined the firm as a kitten and soon showed his love of the smell of old organs since he would normally take his naps on the shop instruments. As a result he soon became a legend, being photographed on customers' organs to the extent that customers were offended if they didn't get a photo of Oedipuss on their organ. Unfortunately, Oedipuss, at the grand old age of 18½ passed away in December 2004.

Nelson Pease recounts his visit to the past when he went to a concert of period music at the 1854 Italianate villa, Ishaam-Terry House. The house is still fitted with actual furnishings of the period and was the perfect setting for the concert, played on an Estey & Green melodeon. Laurence Libin writes about early Organised Pianos, i.e. pianos with organ sections. These first appeared in the 1770's and used pipes and/or reeds, although the article concentrates on reed versions. Laurence gives particular attention to an unusual but anonymous instrument from around 1830 which is now in storage at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Other instruments covered in this issue are a Vocalion, by Lawton W. Posey, and the Estey Grand Salon reed

organ, by Brenda Ebie. The sheet music series continues with H. W. Fairbank's "Galop", and Wm. B. Godfrey's version of Shoninger's Cymbella March.

#### **Organ Grinders News, No. 50, Autumn 2004**

Details of the forthcoming BOGA Spring Gathering at the Black Country Museum on 14th & 15th May, 2005 are given by John Harrold and Fred and Ruth Robinson recount their visit to the Pavilly Organ Festival in September 2004. Yvonne Gosling tells of an unusual meeting in Ilfracombe when she and her husband, Shon, met an Argentinean and his family who now live in Milan. They were in Wales because his grandfather was Welsh and emigrated to Patagonia which, apparently, has a large population of Welsh descent.

John Brattle (aka Bluey the Clown) congratulates Ian James (aka Taffy the Clown) for being awarded the Grimaldi Award for "outstanding contribution to Clowns International". Geoff Todd tells of his visit to the 7th Festival d'Orgues de Barbarie at Montesquieu Lauragais which sported some 35 organs. Unfortunately this was to be the last such festival. Derek Deane from New South Wales, Australia, writes about the AGM of the Australian Mechanical Organ Society (AMOS), which meets only once a year. 31 members had travelled around 14,500 miles (round trip) to attend with their 19 organs.

#### **Non-English journals**

#### **Musiques Mecaniques Vivantes – 1st Quarter, 2005**

Highlights:-

Visit to the mechanical music museum in Varkaus.

A miniature Carillon.

Maintenance of metal sheet discs.

The Welte Philharmonic Organ (end of part 3).

Limonaire Frères, 1839 – 1936 (Part1, 1839 – 1886).

(Note – I still need interpreters to help with German, Italian and French, please).

## **JB Nethercutt**

October 11th 1913 – Dec 6th 2004

'JB' as he was always known, always appreciated the quality of fine craftsmanship, and amassed one of the world's finest collections of classic cars. In the late 1960s, JB and his wife Dorothy went headlong into mechanical music by buying the whole of the Hathaway and Bowers 'reference' collection, which encompassed most of the world's finest and largest orchestrions.

With his usual enthusiasm, JB added many fine instruments to the collection over the years. The musical box collection ranges from a Capital Cuff box to the only known Monopol Gloria Double-Disc upright machine playing two 26 1/2" discs. The orchestrion collection includes Hupfeld Excelsior Pan, Popper Gladiator, Welte Wotan and many others, many of them unique. We were fortunate enough to visit the collection at San Sylmar, California, in 2000.

JB was preceded in death by Dorothy, who passed away on October 8th 2004. They leave a huge gap in the world of mechanical music collecting on the grand scale.

**The Editors.**

# The Manivelle

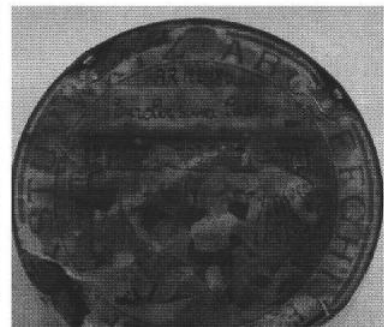
By E Hollingworth



The photographs show a Manivelle that is  $3 \frac{1}{10}$  " in diameter and  $1 \frac{2}{5}$ ths deep. The picture on the top is of two toboggans, one behind the other, being ridden by children in an alpine scene. The picture on the bottom, which has suffered slightly from rust, has the letters of the alphabet round the outside and depicts three children at a piano, a girl playing a cello, a boy playing a flute and another girl holding a mandolin. The letters and numbers AR122180 appear in ink at the top underneath the

title of the music, Tyroler Sina Lustiq. The circular case appears to be nickel plated and stamped on the side, "Switzerland". The winding handle is a reverse S shape. The most fascinating aspect of the whole manivelle is that the tune seems to play for a surprisingly long duration considering the size of the box, is continuous and plays regardless of whether the handle is turned clockwise or anti-clockwise. As it plays so beautifully and because the barrel is attached to the base

by four metal crimps, one is somewhat loath to prise it open to look inside. How it plays so well in exactly the same way clockwise or anti-clockwise therefore remains a mystery.





**Ch. and J. Ullmann.**

These two brothers took over a Paris musical instrument company in 1881. (Details in Vol. 17 page 55.) They became interested in the idea of miniature interchangeable one-tune cylinders for Petites Musiques and for Manivelles, which were rightly considered as toys.

In 1882 it was already clear that these small musical boxes could be produced far more cheaply in Ste. Croix than in Paris or Geneva. So Ch. and J. Ullmann headed that way, and in February 1882 they linked up with H. Thorens and François Jaccard and others to set up a manufacturing business in L'Auberson.

As Piguet reports: the



**Fig. 1. A 5-cylinder Multiphone in grained case 7 by 4 by 4 inches (18 by 10 by 10cms) with a drawer for the cylinders not in use.**



**Fig. 2. Remains of the original stuck-in-lid tune sheet. The Manufactured in Switzerland stamp dates it at 1892 or later. I think the neat copy seen in Fig. 1 was made while the box was still young. The latest tune is no. 107, 1882.**

Ullmann brothers acted quickly, and within a year theirs was the largest business in L'Auberson. They were past masters in the promotion arts, and published a catalogue whose main claim was a quality guarantee, labelled "Excelsior." The catalogue

stated "When buying Fancy Goods and Musical Boxes, buyers will not be exposed to any claims of bad quality."

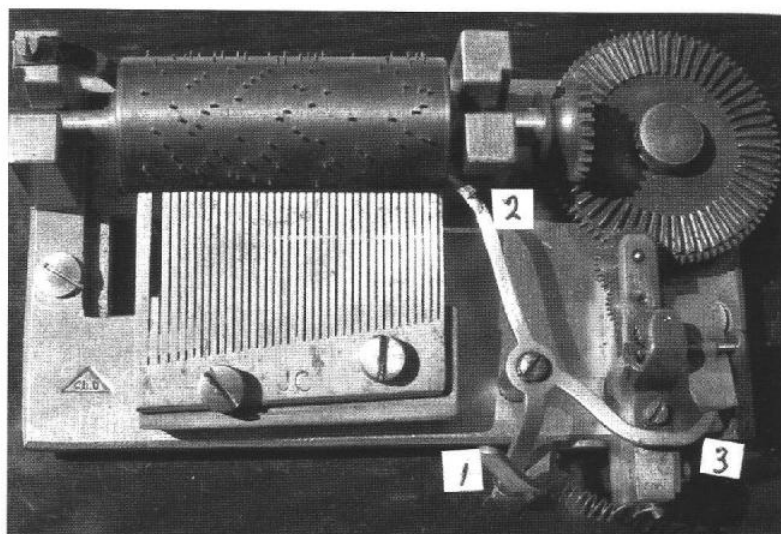
John Manger (& Co.) was a very active London agent with wide contacts, and it is no surprise that the Ullmanns got him to apply

for the UK Multiphone patent in 1886.

Piguet reports that in 1887 the L'Auberson factory employed twelve men and ten women and several others working at home. He includes a catalogue picture of the spring-drive 5-cylinder version, headed L'AUTO-MULTIPHONE. Its price, at L'Auberson, was 16.50 Swiss francs, extra cylinders 12.50 Swiss francs per dozen. Prices in Paris were slightly higher. In the 1890s 25 Swiss francs were worth £1.00 or \$4.80. So the box cost about £0.7 or \$3.40, equal to about £50 in 2004 money.

**Multiphone.**

A typical Multiphone is shown here in Fig. 1. Typical, I am sorry to say, because undamaged specimens must be extremely rare. Here, one comb tooth is missing and the tattered original tune



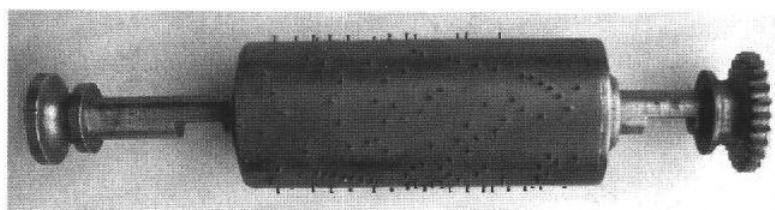
**Fig. 3.** The leaf spring at top left maintains the cylinder in playing position. When the on/off lever (1) is pushed to the left it removes the stop arm tip (2) from a hole in the cylinder end cap and withdraws finger (3) from the governor blade.

sheet, seen in Fig. 2, is hidden by a neat new tune list.

Fig. 3 shows a cylinder in its playing position and at end of tune. The spring arbor, wound from under the case, culminates in the combined gear wheel and crown wheel, driving the governor and the cylinder. The end of the stop arm is kept in position by a slot in the brass bearing block. When withdrawn from the cylinder, it also frees the governor, so the music will start.

When at tune end, the cylinder can be removed by sliding it to the left against the push of the leaf spring. That releases the cylinder from the stop arm and brings the flats on the arbor in line with slots in the bearings, so it can be lifted straight up and out. See Fig. 4.

The single tune is pinned on the cylinder dots and track lines. The tune track width is 0.036". The cylinder diameter is 0.66", circumference 2.1". I think they were pinned at 0.08" per second, so one turn of the cylinder takes 26



**Fig. 4.** A Multiphone single air cylinder and arbor, overall length 3.4" (86mm). The drive gear is at the right, treble end.

seconds. This could readily be sold as "about half a minute."

The comb has 37 teeth, with "tips" of their full width. They are about 0.026" wide, separated by 0.010" slits. The width of the slits varied a lot among the thousands made. The stamped JC, seen in Fig. 3, is for Jules Cuendet of L'Auberson.

The cast brass bedplate with integral bearings is stamped with the Ullmann registered device, Ch. U in a 1/4" triangle. The same device (reduced to 3/16"! ) is stamped on the bass end of every cylinder, together with its tune number, as seen in Fig. 5. A larger 3/4" version appears as a casting mark under the bedplate.

### Manivelle.

The contemporary hand-turned version of the Multiphone, usually referred to as a Manivelle, came with the excellent multi-coloured lid picture shown in Fig. 6. It almost completely covers the lid, which is 6 by 5 inches (152 by 127mm). The case height over lid and feet is 3 1/2" inches (9cm).

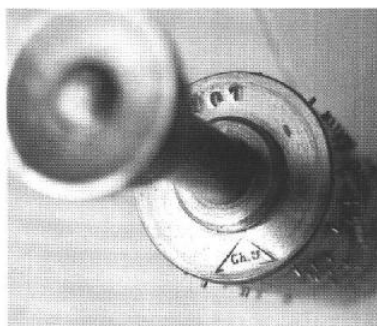
A sad specimen is in Fig. 7, missing its tune list and about half its comb teeth. A comb repair would be far from cost effective, costing around four times the value of the box. Those combs were made by the thousand, and surely some are lying around, awaiting a mating

cylinder. These combs are not dowelled; you simply place it central to the pins and when you get correct play from all teeth, tighten the two screws. It is a tester of patience - a dummy setting cylinder must have been used in production.

The combs, bearings and return springs are the same on both models, but the Manivelle cylinder has a 50-tooth gear wheel added at the treble end. It engages a worm on the crank spindle, as can almost be seen in Fig. 8. When rotated at a comfortable two turns per second, the tune lasts 25 seconds.

The bedplate is another very simple Ullmann brass casting, with the same casting mark and letter C





**Fig. 5.** Ullmann's cylinder for tune 107.

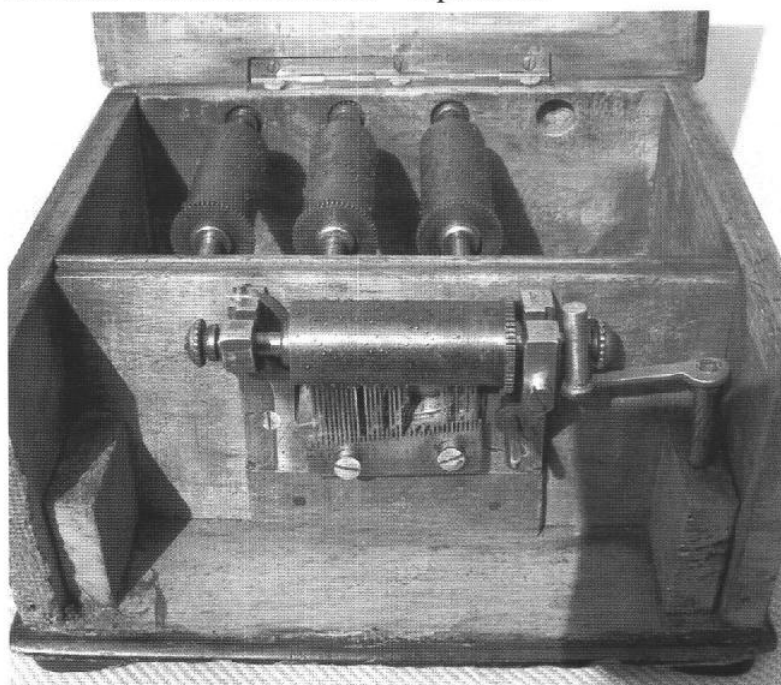
stamped on the front. After machining the bearings and slots, only two items have to be added, each with a solitary screw - the return leaf spring and the dowelled front bearing for the worm, see Fig. 8.

Both these boxes are capable of fully acceptable modest musical quality. Rather brief admittedly, - but they do offer the advantage of instant repetition. They were followed in due course by a two-tunes-per-cylinder version, with the same spring drive but tipped teeth to let the idling pins get past. The cylinders carried the two tune numbers and had a



**Fig. 6.** This powerful lid picture claims, in four languages, that any tune can be supplied. It emphasizes its European and American patents, and it neatly shows its Ullmann trademark on the cherub's tambourine. Printed by E. Dubost of Asnières (very handy for the Ullmanns in Paris). Thanks to Ralph Heintz for this picture and for some apt data.

notch in the treble end cap which turned a rectangular cam and played the two tunes alternately. No instant repetition!



**Fig. 7.** The Manivelle, - seen all the better after the sad loss of its case front. One cylinder is also lost - they all came as 5-cylinder interchangeables. The crank winding handle is parked on a convenient peg.

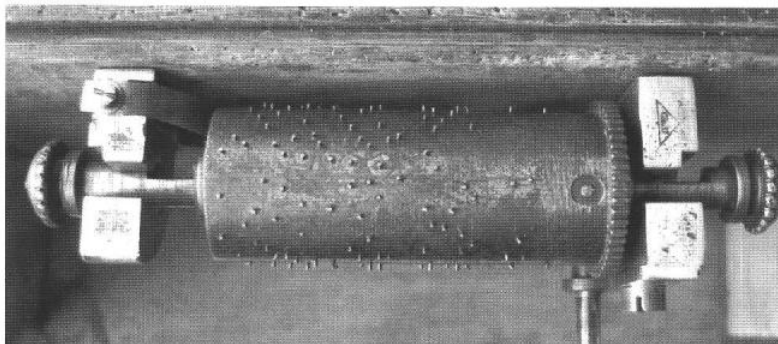
Tune numbers up to 260 have been noted, but so far no comprehensive listing is on record. There must have been such listings in the 1890s. The five here recorded are in Figs. 1 and 2.

#### Hearing Bass Notes.

Right from my first full interest in cylinder musical boxes I was annoyed that I could not hear the extreme bass notes. The annoyance got worse when I started to do serious restoration work. I found that, even looking and listening intently, I could not clearly hear these notes though I could discern their contribution to chords.

The action I took and still take is simple but a bit bizarre, - though based on a method used by engineers to diagnose faults in bearings (now eliminated by electronics)....

I set the box playing on a table, and sit facing it with



**Fig. 8.** A Manivelle cylinder in starting position. The dot-in-circle on the treble end has to be in line with the bearing slot, then the cylinder tune gap is clear of the comb teeth and the cylinder can be pushed to the left and lifted out. Only the four tops of the two bearings were polished, one stamped with the  $\frac{1}{4}$ " Ch. U triangle.

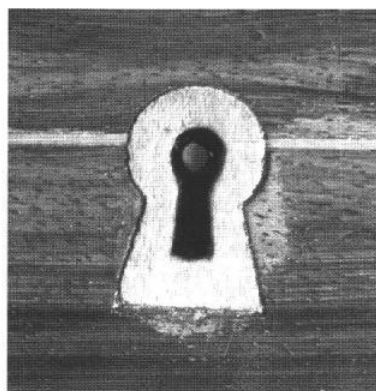
my elbows on the table, eyes on the comb, and hands over my ears. Then, every bass note is distinctly heard as it is released from its pin. The slight snag is that treble notes are inaudible, but this can be solved, if desired, by freeing the right elbow and ear. If no table is handy, put elbows on box lid - what the box rests on is immaterial. If seeing the comb and hearing the treble is essential, open the lid and place the left elbow on the front corner of the case.

By this method, if a bass note (or its cylinder pin) is acting awkward, it gets found out very quickly.

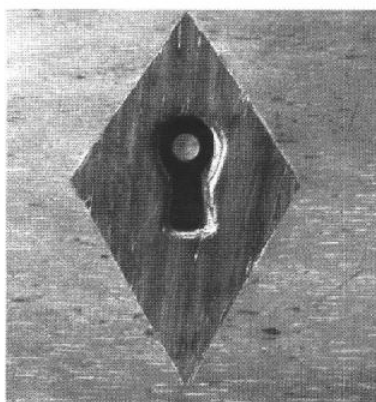
### Keyhole Escutcheons.

Early cartel boxes had side-hook lid fasteners but these were very soon upgraded to conventional locks and keys. Those were tolerated throughout the cylinder musical box era, despite their tendency to rattle which became more marked with larger boxes. Judging from auction viewings, at least 75% of these keys got lost; but I have never seen a keyhole filled in and obliterated, despite many locks being immobilized to prevent rattling.

So the great survivor was



**Fig. 9.** Boxwood insert on E & A Paillard 5889, 6" 4 airs 1851.



**Fig. 10.** Shaped inlay on Nicole 18860, 10  $\frac{1}{2}$ " 6 airs 1839.

the keyhole, and with it, inevitably, the keyhole escutcheon.

That is the posh word for a shield, and it was also used for the keyhole cover on a door. Now it describes any decoration to any keyhole and that affects about 50% of

cartel musical box cases. The others have no embellishment, but their keys were generally lost before the keyhole suffered serious damage from boozy key fumblers.

The earliest escutcheons were simple keyhole-shaped boxwood inserts as in Fig. 9. They also came in brass, as commonly seen on furniture. Sometimes they were extended to simple veneer inserts like the diamond in Fig. 10. Sometimes quite fancy marquetry was applied, even including brass and pewter scrolls as in Fig. 11. All these gave the advantage that case cleaning



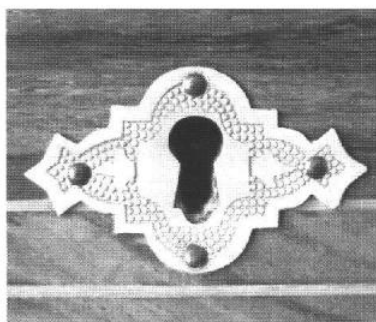
**Fig. 11.** Decorative inlay on Bremond 19662, 13", 6 overtures, 1881.

and repairs were not complicated.

But it was an economically obvious move to replace (or "enhance"! ) this type with an affixed escutcheon. Mass produced, cheap, easily fixed, potential to enhance case appearance, any bad keyhole work concealed... but hard luck when the case front needed overhaul. The most common type was a thin, plain or fancy-shaped plate, often of the cheapest metal available, sometimes with an embossed pattern as in Fig. 12.

About the 1890s "shaped

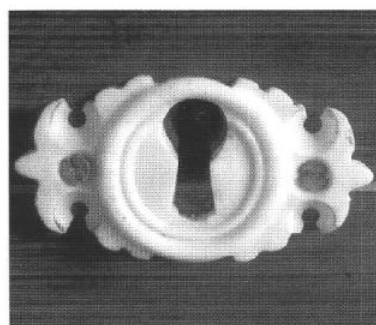




**Fig. 12. Flat metal plate on Baker-Troll 15473, 13" Sublime Harmony, 1881.**

and carved ivory" escutcheons appeared, probably celluloid plastic mouldings. They look smart when clean, Fig. 13, but cleaning them is tedious.

Of all these types, the fruitiest seem to be the brass castings. A simple but unusual type is in Fig. 14. The best of them that I have so far seen is 3½" wide on a



**Fig. 13. "Ivory" on Ch. Ullmann 1917, 13" Drum, Bells & Castanet, 1891.**

22" wide case, Fig. 15. Some of them were copied with complex embossed designs on thin sheet brass, nice but fragile as noted on page 218 of Vol. 19, Oddments 87.

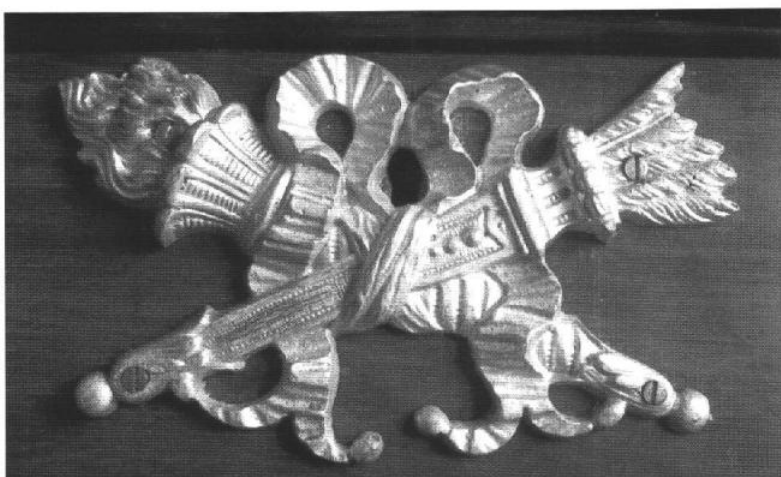
I do not know who decided what escutcheon should go on which box; but I take this opportunity to remind us all that in general there is no connection between the maker of a box and its case. The blank was delivered in its lidless case to a musical box maker. He duly sent it to



**Fig. 14. Brass casting on B. H. Abrahams 44610 made by Rivenc, 13" 1896.**

one of several outfits, (all unrecorded), for a lid and veneer and perhaps feet and even a podium, all with a

specified quality of finish. A typical blank can be seen on page 125 of Vol. 19, Oddments 84.



**Fig. 15. Deluxe brass casting on Rivenc 44292, 13" Harmonical-Harp-Piccolo, 1895.**



**Street piano at Kettering about 1900. Brown Collection**

# Disc Musical Boxes - Comb and Bell Layouts

By Kevin McElhone

I am trying to research Disc Musical Boxes with added Bells and am tired of reading various reference books & finding that the configurations given for teeth, or even disc dimensions in disc musical boxes are wrong or incomplete. I am therefore trying to compile a 'table' of these details as below which I hope to include in a future book on the subject. I would also like to collect CLOSE-UP pictures of all disc musical box lid pictures in the hope that they can either be included in a book or even on a CD so that replacements can be colour-copied if in book form or printed if on CD.

If you can add a line or two to this chart or contribute any lid pictures, then please send me the details. I can be contacted at: e-mail: kevinmcelhone@supanet.com or telephone 01536 726759 or in writing care of the Editor.

Notes 'Glocken' means Saucer Bells  
Klangplatten' means Flat Glockenspiel bar bells.  
28er' means 28 teeth in the Comb.  
Teeth are counted from Bass end No.1 upwards

Model	Disc Diameter	Disc Type	No. of Teeth in comb/s	No. of Bells and teeth worked from	Weight Kg	Comments
28	16.5cm 6.5"	28er	30	-	1.8	Manivelle
28S	16.5cm 6.5"	28er	30	-	2.5	Side Lever Wound
28SG	16.5cm 6.5"	28er	30	4 - from bass teeth	-	Side Lever Wound.
30	16.5cm 6.5"	28er	30	-	-	Hand Turned - Green Painted metal case.
?	20.7cm 8 1/4"	41er	41	6 - teeth 2 - 7	?	Front Lever Wound - Schatullen type case.
29	20.7cm 8 1/4"	70G	30	4 - teeth 31 - 34	3.5	Front Lever Wound
41	20.7cm 8 1/4"	41er	41	-	3.5	Front Lever Wound
41G	24.6cm 9 3/4"	71G	41	6 - teeth 42 -47	5.5	Front Lever Wound
46	24.3cm 9 1/2"	46er	46	-	5.5	Front Lever Wound
46G	28.1cm 11"	72G	46	8 - teeth 47 - 54	9.5	Front Lever Wound
42	28.1cm 11"	42er	54	-	9.5	Top Wound
42N	28.1cm 11"	42er	54	-	9.3	Top Wound Inlaid Lid Picture - Nussbaum
42D	28.1cm 11"	42er	2 x 54 = 108	-	10.0	Top Wound
42CG*	36cm 14 1/8"	48er	54	12 - teeth 55 - 66	15.5	Side Wound
48	36cm 14 1/8"	48er	2 x 54 = 108	12 - teeth 55 - 66	21.1	Side Wound
43B	39.5cm 15 1/2"	43er	77	-	17.0	Side Wound
44D	39.5cm 15 1/2"	43er	2 x 77 = 154	-	20.0	Side Wound
45	39.5cm 15 1/2"	43er	2 x 77 = 154	-	23.5	Side Wound Marquetry Picture on Lid
43BG	45cm 17 3/4"	43G	77	12 - teeth 77 - 88	19.5	Side Wound
47C	50cm 19 5/8"	104er	118	-	26.5	Side Wound
Empress	56cm 22 1/2"			16	-	End Wound Folding-Top Table Model
49C	56cm 22 1/2"		118	16	-	Spiral Spring Only Folding-Top Table Model
52	62.5cm 24 1/2"		159			Spiral Spring Only Folding-Top Table Model

## Polyphon Table-Top models - Schatullen / Jewel (cheaper quality cases)

70G	20.7cm c.8 1/4"	70G	30	4 - teeth 31 - 35	4.5	Front Lever Wound Cheap Transfer on Lid
71	20.5cm 8 1/4"	41er	41	-	4.7	Front Lever Wound
72	24.5cm 9 1/2"	46er	46	-	6.4	Front Lever Wound
72G	28cm 11"	72G	46	8 - teeth 47 - 54	8.0	Front Lever Wound
73	28cm 11"	42er	54	-	11.4	Front Lever Wound
73G	36cm 14 1/8"	48er/73G	54	12 - teeth 55 - 66	15.1	Side Wound



\*Type 42GC is unusual in that when the bells are switched off, instead of the notes being lost or silent there is a very short 12 note comb which plays instead of the 12 bells, unlike the twin comb machine 48 which loses those notes when the bells are switched off. This short 12-tooth comb plays even when the bells are in use.

Type 45 also called 'Sublime Harmony Piccolo' in some Polyphon catalogues.

NOTE: I feel that the 48er type, 36cm, discs ought to have been called 73G and also that 43G type, 45cm discs ought to have been called 74G.

Kalliope	Teeth	Bells	
40G 18 cm 7 1/2"	36	4	Centre Wound
50G 23.5cm 9 1/4"	49	6 - teeth 2 - 7	Centre Wound
60G 34cm 13 3/8"	61	10 - teeth 5 - 14	Centre Wound
62G 34cm 13 5/8"	61	10 - teeth 5 - 14	Centre Wound.
108G 45cm 17 3/4"	82	10	Deluxe Walnut Case.
52.5cm 20 5/8"		12	Front Handle Wound.
			Upright.

**Regina** [Only 3 models with bells, no upright models]

215 39.5cm 15 1/2"	Single Comb - 62 teeth	12 - teeth 63 - 74	Table-Top
216 39.5cm 15 1/2"	Duplex/Twin Combs	12 - teeth 63 - 74	Table-Top
217 39.5cm 15 1/2"	Duplex/Twin Combs	12 - teeth 63 - 74	Table-Top Coin Slot.

\*\* These are special 15 1/2" discs arranged for 124 comb teeth (2 x 62 teeth combs). They were labelled "For Bell Instrument only".

Symphonion	Teeth	Bells	
32P 16 cm 6 1/4"	32	4	Side or Front Lever Wound. Uses Std discs.
10GI 19.5cm 7 11/16"	41	4	Side Handle Wound. No.10 Std Discs
48K 25.5cm 10"	48	8	Side Handle Wound. Klangplatten
48GI 25.5cm 10"	48	8	Side Handle Wound. Glocken
60K 33.5cm 13 1/4"		8	Side Handle Wound Special Order.
60GI 33.5cm 13 1/4"		8	Side Handle Wound variation of 60P.
121GI 37.5cm 14 3/4"		10	Side Handle Wound Horizontal & Vertical Glocken Bells seen.
178G 40 cm* 15 3/4"	78	10	Special Order.

\*seen in original catalogues as 38, 39 or 40cm!

Troubadour 6 ?

NOTE - Any machine that plays the bells from bass end teeth, e.g. numbers 2 - 7 are playing standard discs and the bells duplicate the note of the matching comb teeth. If the teeth used are higher numbers than number of teeth in the tuned comb then they are playing a true accompaniment and are therefore specially arranged discs, e.g. Polyphon 71G. Discs of this type will often play on other standard machines which use discs of a similar diameter, but the tuning is different and therefore they will sound terrible.

*Editorial note: Illustrations of a number of the models described above may be found in the Encyclopedia of Automatic Musical Instruments by Q David Bowers. We have taken the liberty of illustrating Model 48 (14 1/8" disc size) with twelve saucer bells on display on the front cover. This machine uses the spiral wire-type mainspring, which is helical in form and extends almost the full internal width of the case. From the Editors' collection.*

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# *The Cylinder Musical Box Industry in the area of La Chaux de Fonds*

**Why don't we have bronze teeth in musical boxes?  
asks Luuk Goldhoorn**

Beside the well known centres of the Swiss cylinder musical box industry, Genève and Sainte Croix, there has been quite a production in the Argovia districts about which the former curator of the Seewen museum has written an extensive article (in German) which appeared in the Klangkunst catalogue. (Unfortunately there is no English translation available.)

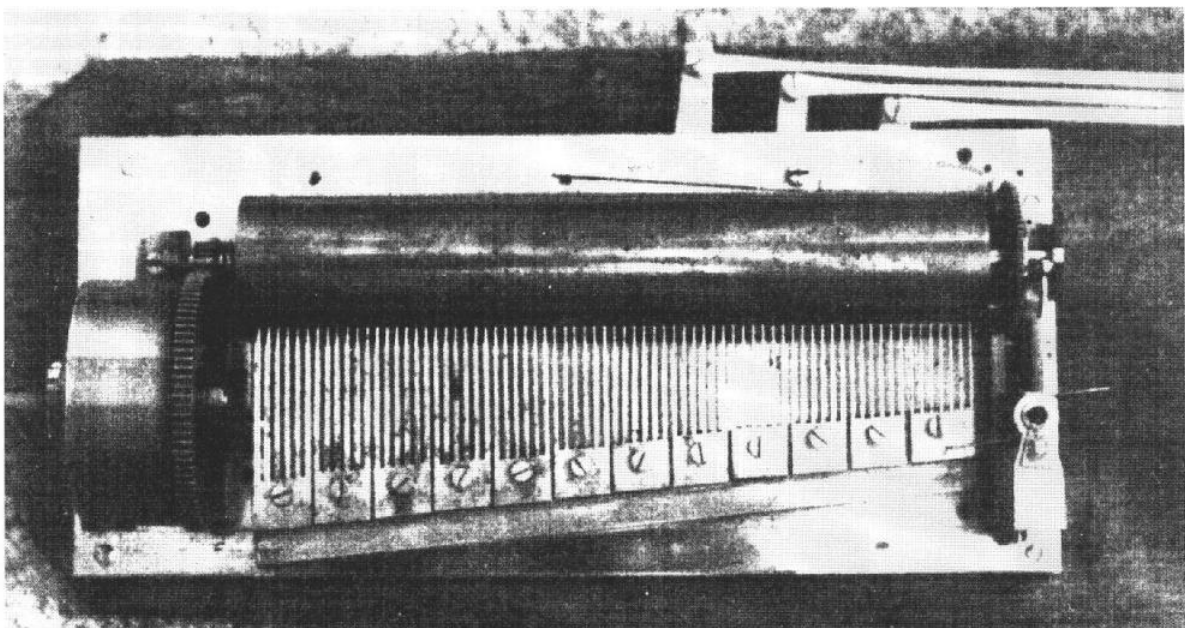
Outside Switzerland, Sainte Suzanne in France housed the l'Épée works while in the vicinity of Paris some activities have taken place, about which until now hardly anything is known. Far from Switzerland, in Austria, were two centres in Vienna and Prague where cylinder musical boxes were made during the 19th century. But there is more, which until now has attracted very little

attention, and that is the region of La Chaux de Fonds.

It is not remarkable that in this region mechanical music was developed, because the Neuchâtel area was famous for their clock industry. And as musical clocks came into fashion in the 17th century, Neuchâtel build organ, dulcimer and flute playing clocks for a long time. But the building of these expensive clocks came to a halt as Switzerland went into a deep economical depression around 1800. There was a short renaissance for musical clocks when cartel musical boxes saw light, around 1820. The Neuchâtel clockmakers built these works in (or under) their clocks. These were far less expensive than the flute clocks, so not only the happy few could afford to buy

them. But tastes change and in about 1830 the demand for musical clocks was over. Even the clock work industry disappeared almost completely from this region.

To find out what activities took place in La Chaux de Fonds, Le Locle and Neuchâtel, we have the books of Chapuis about the 'Pendulerie Neuchâteloise' and of course 'the History of the Musical Box Industry', in which on p. 170 a couple of lines is devoted to this subject. The oldest information is found in the journal Musée Neuchâtelois (1879) which published an article from 1823(!) entitled: 'Etat de Notre Industrie vers 1822' (State of the Art of our Industry around 1822). Originally it was written as a contribution to a contest in which was asked for 'publications about an



**Fig. 1 Musical Box movement from the Neuchâtel region, with the teeth in groups of six or seven, circa 1822.**



historical note about our industry in our mountains giving its origins, its progress and its actual state'. To this contest only one essay was sent in. The jury was not very pleased with the conclusions the writer made, and the result was that the article disappeared in the lower desk drawer.

But in 1879, the librarian of Neuchâtel found the paper and published part of it in the journal 'Neuchâteloise'. It is quite an extensive paper, but unfortunately for our purposes, the musical box industry, it is very short. Chapuis discovered the name of the writer: the famous watchmaker Phinée Perret from La Chaux de Fonds (1766-1851). Perret was not very pleased with the development of musical works in clocks. He wrote: "I wish to mention the mistake that men of science and big talent have made: I want to talk about the automatons, the organ works, carillons and birdcages which are built into clocks, often being detrimental to their good running and their solidity. It is M. Jaquet-Droz who is mostly responsible for this development". A few lines later he states: "In our region

one is busy with carillons, musical works, birds and other infantile gadgets in works of mediocre quality which of course will harm our reputation abroad."

Perret states that Geiser Frères (Jonas and David) were the makers of these musical works, along with Charles-Frédéric Nardin, all of them from La-Chaux-de-Fonds; Nardin is in the opinion of the experts, the best of the lot. His products are far better than the musical works from Geneva, which are for the greater part of a bad workmanship. "We have the devices to make good clockworks, in Geneva they are not able to do that".

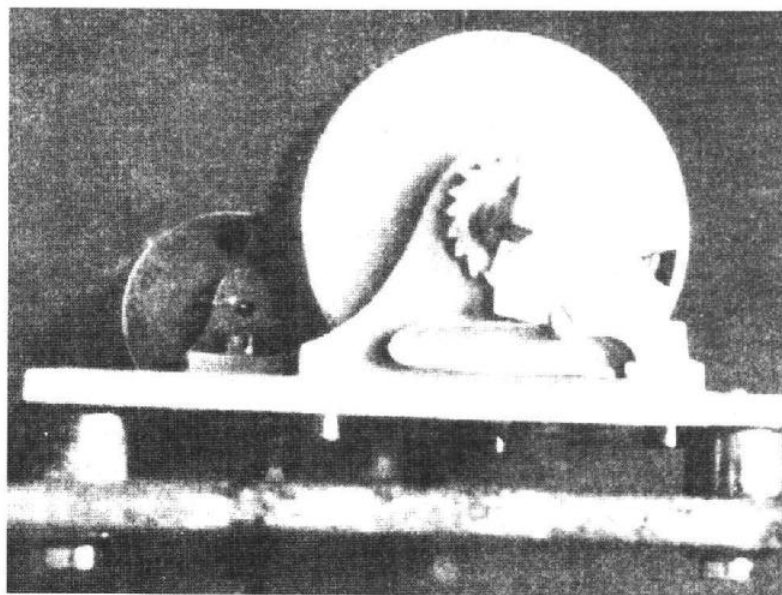
When Chapuis wrote his books about the Neuchâtel industry (1917 and 1932) he had not yet studied the musical box industry, and therefore we learn almost nothing about the people who built these mechanisms. Musical clocks are reported in detail, but he seldom said anything about the musical works which those clocks housed. We learn that Captain Charles Henri Jacot made a clock with music, but what kind of musical work is not stated. Chapuis also found a

letter from Maria D.-G. Hugenin written in 1817 in which she reported about a visit she made to a clockmaker in La Chaux de Fonds. She saw there musical works for tabatières and clocks. Henri Constant Borel, a merchant, sent 22 movements for clocks and a number of musical works to Berlin between 1820 and 1826.

In the History of the Musical Box Chapuis wrote: "The Neuchâtel region, which had occupied such an illustrious position in the production of musical clocks, played only a secondary role in the area of musical boxes. A majority of these musical movements, reputed to be excellent, were used in mantel clocks or those placed on chest of drawers. In other instances, musical units were placed in an enclosure between the clock itself and its pedestal, which gave a new balance to the whole."

All in all not too much for an industry which lasted less than 15 years. So, I was very pleased to find an article in the 1866 journal 'Musée Neuchâtelois' entitled: 'Essai sur l'industrie à Neuchâtel' and written by a certain Dr. Sacc (initials were not given). The article, which appeared in three parts, totalled 23 pages, and as the musical box industry had disappeared in Neuchâtel, only a few lines are devoted to our hobby.

He tells us: 'the construction of machines for small mechanics, and more specifically, those used for the construction of precision tools, was practised in our region on an extensive scale. But it has disappeared and made room for the musical box industry. Also, the construction of metal thermometers, the automatons of Maillardet and the precision balances, which were constructed here and which left nothing to be desired,



*Fig. 2 Key-wound mainspring barrel from a musical movement from the Neuchâtel region.*

disappeared. Let us hope these industries will return.'

About the automatons he said: 'The automatons left us in the lurch, because their construction is better than any other presenting interesting problems and difficulties, which has to be solved by the keen witted constructors. The musical boxes are irreproachable as far as the mechanical part is concerned, but they lose their sound by the nature of the boxes they are put in. That is because metal, horn, or hardwoods, by their lack of elasticity, resist transmitting the sound. To be convinced, put such an instrument on a table of fir, and next on one of mahogany or of marble, and one immediately notices the difference.

If a musical box will produce its utmost effect, it is necessary to make the box from an elastic kind of wood, such as fir, or any other, which one would desire. The steel teeth, which are put in vibration by the pins of the cylinder, and in that way produce the sound, should be far more sonorous if they were made of bronze. Moreover one could reinforce the effect if one would fix the movement on a hollow box of fir, which will play the same role as in the

violin, which one places below the strings.'

With these suggestions, the subject devoted to musical boxes is finished. From known musical boxes, we know that his advice about another material for the teeth was not followed. His comments about the wood were perfectly right, though it was considerably later that the makers from Sainte Croix exchanged the hardwood for a more elastic kind.

It is said that the musical box makers in the Neuchâtel region never learned to make combs from one piece of metal; all their combs are sectional. At a certain moment they were able to make sections of over 5, a procedure which was not done in Geneva or Sainte Croix. As said before, the fashion of musical clocks diminished rapidly in the 1820s, and taking in mind the production and quality of the musical boxes from the nearby region of Sainte Croix, the musical box industry never came to full growth.

After all these facts would it not be nice to see a musical work made in this region? If the makers had marked them it wouldn't be so difficult, but they didn't. So we have to judge on other peculiarities. One is the

spring, sometimes it is signed (and even rarer dated). Sometimes the bedplate markings can tell us the story. Of course the dating of the music can help us. But none of these are hard proofs.

The example which I show you in the photos is most probably from the Neuchâtel region. It has a sectional comb with teeth in groups of 6 (the highest notes even in a group of 7) and it has a spring with the signature of Peugeot and the year 1822. One of the melodies is 'Freut euch des Lebens' ('Life Let Us Cherish') composed by Hans Georg Nägeli, but made world-famous by Mozart. The work has lost its housing but it was definitely once part of a clock base.

## New Members

We would like to welcome the following new members who have joined us since the last issue. If you would like to contact them please contact the correspondence secretary.

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2907 Mrs. Sally Furlong, Hampshire  
2908 Captain A.Farrar-Dalmar, Hampshire  
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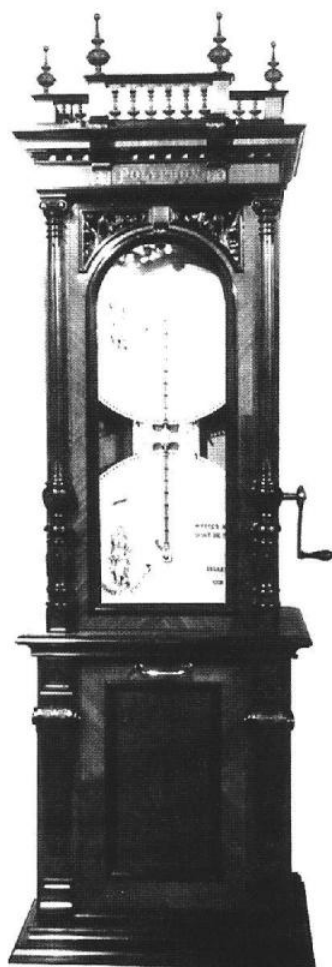
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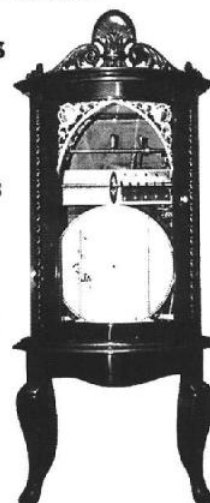
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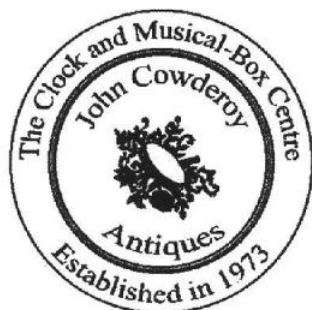
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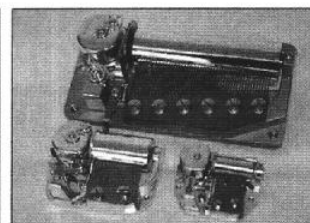
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