

# *The* **Music Box**

*An International Journal of Mechanical Music*



## **In this issue:**

- A Musical Zarf
- Musical Bamboo Tables
- Musical Oddments 106
- Polyphons with Bells 2

Hands Across the Sea jug  
- See article on page 90

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

**A REGINA CORONA  
SELF-CHANGING 27-INCH  
DISC MUSICAL BOX**

Sold for £10,800,  
26 May 2005, London

**Auction**  
18 October 2005

**Consign by**  
25 August

**Enquiries**  
Laurence Fisher  
lfisher@christies.com  
+44 (0)20 7752 3278

**Catalogues**  
+44 (0)20 7389 2820

**South Kensington**  
85 Old Brompton Road  
London SW7 3LD

View catalogues  
and leave bids online  
at **christies.com**



**MECHANICAL MUSIC, TECHNICAL APPARATUS**  
*London, 18 October 2005*

**CHRISTIE'S**  
SINCE 1766



# From the Editors' Desk

As from a distance we watch the British Isles sinking under the pressure of x million inhabitants, we also consider the benefits. To travel to our nearest meetings we drive for nearly ten hours - to Seattle or wherever the North West Chapter is meeting. It involves at least an overnight stay and another mega return journey. All right, the scenery is breathtaking and the roads pretty empty, but meetings between fellow enthusiasts are not undertaken lightly! In this issue you will find dates for several Christmas/winter meetings as well as reports of earlier summer get-togethers. At all these meetings there is time to listen to unidentified tunes on boxes, time to discuss individual items, their conservation and restoration, with fellow collectors and restorers. If a picture is worth a thousand words then advice on and display of similar items is priceless.

Our first collection 'period' was of pocket watches. We collected verge watches, watches with special escapements and often just movements whose gold cases had been sold for scrap. We started as students (start the violins...) with little disposable cash and learned an immense amount by seeing and handling examples of superb watches at auction, in specialist shops and especially in the homes of fellow collectors and enthusiasts. One of the lessons we only later in life realised was that in having a real interest and no finance we learned a great deal about

the subject long before we were in a position to make too many expensive mistakes.

Listening to musical boxes, one realises that there are differences in tone, volume, musical arrangements as well as quality of the movement and the wooden casework. The more one looks and listens to the boxes (and their custodians) the easier it becomes to select choice items for one's own enjoyment and to snap up the bargain when it finally appears.

Please spare a thought for the Australian collector whose letter appears on page 95 - it is not easy collecting on your own! Fortunately e-mail has made the world an easier place for communication and hopefully people will respond to his plea. If you are contemplating a visit 'down under' there are some great collectors there and sometimes they appreciate a visit.

We were fascinated by Luuk Goldhoorn's article on musical zarfs and will hope to reproduce some pictures in colour in our Christmas issue. These are obviously very rare and desirable objects and it is a most interesting contribution. A big thank you to all our contributors, as usual, and if you are considering putting something into print please do it soon - variety, it is said, is the spice of life, and the more people who contribute the greater the variety of articles we can offer you.

Enjoy the International Meeting!

## Contents

Society News and Topics	66
President's Notes	67
Teme Valley Winders	69
Chanctonbury Ring	70
Derby Meeting	71
Visit to Utrecht	72
CD Review	73
A Musical Zarf	74
Register News	76
Polyphons with Bells 2	78
Another Giant?	79
Collectors' Showcase	82
Musical Box Oddments 106	84
Daniel Imhof Update	89
Hands Across the Sea	90
Alf Rules - OK?	92
News from Other Societies	92
Auction Report	95
Classified Ads	68 & back cover

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

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

The Society and its Editors are unable to accept and hereby disclaim any liability for the consequences of any inaccuracies, errors or omissions in such contributions. No representations, warranties or endorsements of any product or information contained herein are given or intended and full verification of all products and information appearing in this Journal must be sought from the appropriate contributor.

The Music Box is printed for and published by the Society quarterly 27th February, 27th April, 7th August, 7th November from the Editorial Office.

NO REPRODUCTION WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE EDITORS.  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## 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**

Tel: 0117 9684701

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)

## Forthcoming Events

for your diary:

Joint MBSGB and MBSI  
'Hands Across the Sea'  
meeting at Guilford August  
24th - 29th.

Teme Valley Winders  
September 10th.

National Vintage  
Communications Fair at  
N.E.C Birmingham October  
2nd.

Chanctonbury Ring October  
16th.

Christie's South Kensington  
mechanical music sale  
October 18th.

Bonham's Knowle  
mechanical music sale -  
November 1st.

Chanctonbury Ring Open  
Day November 26th



Christmas Get-Together at  
the Wyatt's December 10th.

A remarkable pair of "Twin"  
F LeCoultre boxes: two-per-  
turn (above) and overture  
(below).

See notes on page 68.

(pictures from the Internet)

## From the President

Once again, it is my sad duty to report deaths; firstly, in April (even while the last Music Box was being printed), of our former Vice-President Ralph Heintz. Ralph was always a good ambassador for us in the States, and it falls to his successor, Coulson Conn, to write his obituary (though I am not certain, at the time of writing, whether that will catch this issue).

Secondly, Norman Vince, whom many members will remember from his active days as the Norfolk Polyphon Centre in the 1970s, died aged 94 on June 25th. He never completely retired from business, and still had a wide choice of instruments for sale when the society visited him some years back. Again, an obituary will follow.

The great event of this year, the joint MBSI/MBSGB meeting at Guildford, will be almost upon us when you read this, and we are looking forward to a wonderful event after five years or so of planning.

The auction to be held on the Thursday evening will be small and select, and will include five musical boxes from the estate of a deceased member, who left instructions that his collection should be sold at a Musical Box Society auction.

If space permits, a picture of one of them will accompany these notes - Nicole Frères box, no. 27969, playing eight airs. There is another Nicole, and also an unnamed 3-overture (two revolutions for each) musical box.

At the AGM in June, there was some discussion on ways of welcoming new members and putting them in touch with other members in their area. So many members are reluctant to have their details published in a membership list that there seems little point in having one. New members in some areas are helped by a regular local meeting (in particular the Chanctonbury Ring organised by Ted Brown), and a suggestion was made that, where such a group does not exist, a member might be prepared to stand as a local contact, to whom new members could apply for help in meeting other local members. I would love to hear from anyone who would be prepared to take on such a role.

## Joyce Godier

from her son, **Alan Godier**

Sadly the death occurred recently of Joyce Godier, my mother, after being in hospital for some time.

Those on the continental trips in 1996, 1997 and 1999 will remember Mrs. Godier being able to join us on those occasions. She was able to be present at the New Year Meeting at Alan and Daphne Wyatt's collection in 2004.

Although she was not a member of our Society, she had an interest in mechanical music and always liked to listen to a musical box when I had finished restoring it.

She will be sadly missed by family and friends.

Alan Godier

## Local Notes

(by "BABIL")

Although Miss Clara Butt's concert, which took place last Friday night, is now, in these days of rush and scramble, almost ancient history, yet, as I was unable to speak of it in last week's "Local Notes," I cannot pass it over without a tribute of praise, for it was most enjoyable. Miss Butt is a great favourite in Cardiff, and though the attendance fell far short of what the occasion deserved, the audience made up for it in enthusiasm. It was a pity, however, that, owing to the strenuous encores, many had to leave the hall to catch trains, &c., before the final duet, "Oh, that we two were maying," between Miss Butt and Mr. Kennerly Rumford was sung. It was most exquisitely rendered, and their fine voices blended most charm-ingly. Each item that Miss Butt gave seemed but to increase her popularity and renown. She looked wonderfully well in a robe of old rose pink, covered with a gauze, embroidered with huge tinsel swallows, and ears of wheat and leaves in tinsel, and the bodice trimmed with pink chiffon and spangles - a dress that would have looked too showy on a woman of less commanding appearance.

(from Page 4, Supplement to The Western Mail, Cardiff, Saturday April 30th 1898, found by the Editors in a musical box case!  
Dame Clara Butt was a popular recording artist on HMV blue label single side records in the first decade or two of the 20th century)

# HISTORIC AND IMPORTANT "TWIN" MUSICAL BOXES !!!

These two pieces (see page 66) were made in Geneva, Switzerland by the famous firm of F. LeCoultre, c.1838. These musical boxes are "fraternal twins", produced by LeCoultre on the same day, with differing formats. Both boxes have characteristics as follows:

one-piece, 144-tooth comb, original tune card, keywind, with original winding key, and usual stop/start, instant stop and change/repeat levers, walnut case, 17" long x 7" deep x 6" high (closed), with brass string inlay, in extremely fine condition, with original locks and keys.

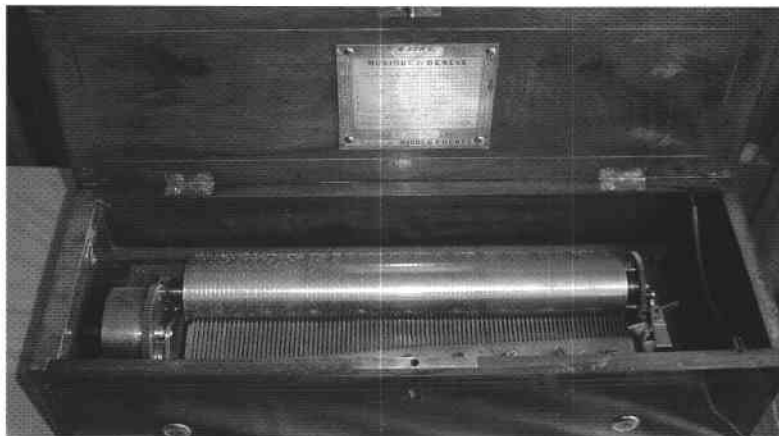
## OVERTURE BOX, SN. 13585

4 airs: William Tell Overture, Barber of Seville, Anacreon, Fra Diavolo, 9" x 2.75" "fat" cylinder.

## 2-PER TURN BOX, SN. 13587

8 airs, including The Gipsy King, The Brave Old Oak, etc. (This was probably specially ordered by an English customer),

Notes and pictures on page 66, reproduced by kind permission of Raphael Cole of Musical Treasures of Miami, Florida, USA.



A fine 8-air Nicole Frères musical box, to be auctioned at the International Meeting at Guilford in the autumn.

# For Sale

**Polyphon 6 bells, Kalliope**  
6 bells, Polyphon Coin-Op, Empty Polyphon Case, Musical Photo Album. Organettes Cob Organ, OrguINETTE, Royal, Kalliston, Cabinetto, Manopan. Keytop 88 note piano player. Music for Ariston, Amorette, Ariosa, Phoenix, Celestina, Seraphone. Piano Rolls Duo-Art, 88, 65 note. Organ rolls Aeolian, Wilcox. Discs Polyphon, Porter [NEW], Symphonion etc. Storage boxes for Pianola, Bags for discs 11 to 20 inch. Recordings CD Orchestrion, Nickelodeon, Musical Boxes, Cinema Organ, Aeolian Pipe Organ. Books Musical Boxes, Carousel Organs, Fair Organs.

kevinmcelhone@supanet.com  
**Tel: 01536 726759.**

**Cotswold 14-note organette** with steel reeds, in nice oak case. Made by Peter Watts of Chipping Norton, with several paper music rolls (brand new - never played). Organette in perfect condition. Very little use. Can bring to MBSGB Convention, Guildford, in August. £300.00 o.n.o.

Also **Ampico reproducing player** piano, fully restored, light walnut case. Details, photo, offers. **0141 881 0304.**

**More Sales & Wants inside back cover.**

## Progressive tooling for Musical Box Restorations

Eternal Tools specialise in precision "hard to find" tooling. Here is just a small sample of what we offer, there's more online.



**Diamond Drills**  
0.75mm - 2.5mm  
£3.50 each



**Diamond Discs**  
22mm x 0.17 / 0.5mm  
£12.95 each



**Diamond Polishing Paste:** 1/4 - 90 mic  
From: £12.95 each



**Diamond Files**  
Fine & Very fine grits  
From: £6.50 each

tel: 0114 268 5472

Visit us online for free delivery

  
www.eternaltools.com

## Teme Valley Winders

from John Farmer

The second meeting of the TVW went ahead as planned on 12th June, 2005, with 15 attendees. John Phillips opened the meeting and gave a brief history of his new home, Eastham Grange, which was built in 1908. Later in the day, members were treated to a tour of the grounds, including John's impressive, but not yet fully functional, workshops.

John Harrold was the first presenter with his early small cylinder movement mounted in a tin box decorated with red patterning. The movement has groups of 5 and 6 teeth and John estimates that it dates from around 1825. The comb is marked LC & FP, and may be an early Lecoultre. It plays with good volume but runs fast. It is unrestored but weights have been added to the governor at some time, and the stop mechanism is faulty. It is unusual to find such an early movement in a metal box, although it does appear to be original.

Later John played his Peerless Organette, which is still in original condition and plays very well. John demonstrated a normal roll, and an endless roll that the machine is designed to play. The repetition rate is very good on this machine (as compared to the Celestina, see below), due to the double valve system, similar to a player piano system.

Doug Pell demonstrated an 8 air cylinder box and is trying to establish a maker. It has a Geneva tune sheet, but the box, which has a chamfered



lid, suggests French origin. L'Epee is a possible candidate. The governor has 'R Zotti' marked on it but no one knew that name. Although the mechanism is lever wind, the case has the drop-down end of a key wind, suggesting it was made during the change-over period.

John Farmer played a Sousa march on a Celestina Organette that he had restored. The small primary valves were found to be in good condition and so were not restored. The instrument now plays well and one listener commented on the quality of the bass. Although not played at this meeting, John has some modern arrangements of old tunes in which the repetition rate is too fast for this machine. Nicholas Simons commented that he felt the arrangements, which he also has, were unsuited to the Celestina.

Richard Manning, a relatively new member from Malvern, brought a large cylinder box acquired in

Bombay. It suffered substantial damage on its journey to the UK, but has been fully restored. When first played after restoration, Richard thought it was out of tune, until he recognised 2 tunes that sounded perfectly alright. He played it to the group and the consensus was that some of the tunes were of Indian music. John Harrold confirmed that boxes with Indian music were not unknown. It was thought the box was made around 1895, possibly by Paillard. Tune No.1 has been obliterated by bending all the pins, possibly to remove a tune the Indian owner did not like ?

John Phillips played his Symphonion No. 4 which is a nicely decorated disc box with lever wind, playing 240mm. (9½ in.) discs, all in original condition. It has 2 combs playing 'Sublime Harmonie'. John had only one disc available to play.

Nicholas Simons brought three instruments. The first was a hand-wound Monopol disc player in the shape of an



upright piano, (style 33 according to Bowers, and playing the 7½-in. disc). Nicholas played several reproduction discs. His second demonstration was a 10-note, 10-tune Serinette made sometime between 1770 and 1840. It is labelled "Antoine Henry – Mirecourt".

Nicholas played the last instrument of the afternoon, his Edison 'Home D' phonograph. The D means it is a Double Standard

machine since it will play both 2 min. and 4 min. cylinders. The demonstrations thus ended on a resounding note with the "Light Cavalry Overture".

Joan & Brian Chapman, and Ros & Terry Longhurst had attended the meeting on their way back home from holiday, so were unable to bring instruments. John Ward also attended but he was in the process of moving his collection and had not

brought anything.

Everyone agreed that it had been a most enjoyable afternoon, particularly the refreshment interlude and the opportunity to sample Hilda Phillips' cakes. It was decided that the next meeting would be a Saturday – 10th September, 2005, 1:00 p.m. for a 1:30 p.m. start. All members are invited – ring John Phillips on 01584 781118 for directions. (You may picnic in the grounds before the meeting if you wish).

## Chanctonbury Ring

Meeting report by Alan K Clark

On Sunday 15th May 32 Members, wives and their guests attended the latest Chanctonbury Ring Meeting held at Ted Brown's Old School, Bucks Green. The date of the next summer Open Day was confirmed as 25th June, and not the 18th, as originally planned. The morning topic will be musical clocks, and member's favourite tunes played on Ted's boxes, with the afternoon reserved for organ and organette playing. The next Chanctonbury Ring meeting was planned for Sunday 16th October, and members should bring packed lunches, although puddings will be provided. One of the topics for this meeting will be musical chairs, so we hope for a wide range of different types to be taken for display. The Christmas Open day will be held on Saturday 26th November. As these Open Day meetings are very popular and normally oversubscribed, early booking with Ted is advised.

Ted's glimpses of Victorian

life were read from "The Leisure Hour" of 1870, and ranged from how to cook school dinners for one old penny each, (we all hoped Ted and Kay had not taken this article too seriously!!); a very sarcastic view of certain foreign bandmen who frequented the streets in those days; Gin Palaces in London and a giant hailstorm in Philadelphia.

For the remainder of the morning we were very happily entertained, and educated by Paul Baker talking about, and demonstrating Phonographs and Cylinder Recordings. He started with a brief history of sound recording and rapidly moved on to show us how to obtain the best results whilst playing cylinder records. Two different Edison machines were used to demonstrate the effect of horn length and shape on the range of frequencies reproduced. The improvements made in cylinder recording quality were all explained and demonstrated. We were

treated to the sounds from a range of two and four minute cylinders of various types. Paul ended his very entertaining talk with a rousing Sousa march recorded in 1908, the sound quality of which was superb.

Following a very excellent lunch provided by Ted and Kay, and their helpers, we moved on to examine and be entertained by tinplate toys. Many members had raided their cupboards to assemble a very comprehensive collection of toys, the like of which some members had never seen before. The exhibits covered a musical band where the conductor, who moved his arm, stood on a green mound containing a musical box movement playing the National Anthem, a good selection of Amen Boxes, Melody Makers, toy gramophones, Playrola Organ, etc.

The afternoon finished with music from the 15½ inch

(Concluded on page 73...)



## The Spring Meeting at Derby

Nicholas Simons was the host for the 2005 Spring Meeting, held over the weekend of April 8–10.

On the Friday evening, two first-time attendees (Bill O'Connor and Joan Wright) demonstrated a Sublime Harmony Piccolo cylinder box and a 15-inch Britannia 'smoker's cabinet', respectively. The cylinder box had lost its tune-sheet, and we were able to help identify one or two of the tunes, while the Britannia had an interesting family history. Also with a history was the Gavioli portable reed organ demonstrated by Brian Chapman, which he had restored from (literally) a box of bits.

On Saturday morning, Kevin McElhone broke the organette habit by demonstrating a 'niche' collection of table Polyphons with bells. Significantly, all had been acquired from overseas; these instruments seem not to have been sold in the U.K. when new.

John Harrold then gave a masterly exposition of street barrel organs, illustrated with slides and live examples (a forty-key Imhof of about 1850, a 44-key Corvi, dated 1869, and a South American organ of about 1900 but with a later veneer finish). John demonstrated both his extensive knowledge and his superb restoration skills.

John Ward, still our youngest member, then told us with characteristic aplomb about three favourite items of his



*Nicholas Simons and Dorothy Robinson try their hand at handbell-ringing*

own, balanced by three favourite pieces he would like to own. The latter were a Phonoliszt Violina, a Symphonion Eroica and a Decap Robot organ.

After lunch, it was off to the Royal Crown Derby works for half of us, and to Nicholas's own collection for the other half. The latter party was divided in two on arrival, taking it in turns to enjoy the organs (and some smaller instruments) displayed in a converted outhouse and demonstrated by Nicholas, and those in the house, which were delegated to Kevin McElhone. There were a Bursens and a Ruth organ, as well as a Popper's Happy Jazz Band, a Phonoliszt, a Seeburg Nickelodeon and a 'Piano Orchestrion' - no, not a piano orchestrion, but a Racca Piano Melodico lookalike. Organettes were there in number and variety too great to mention, and much merriment was caused when the British Vice-President

was persuaded to have a go on a player-piano, prompting a wag to remark that he had only to transfer wind from mouth to feet.

The Society dinner in the evening was followed by a most impressive demonstration by a local group of handbell ringers. After their performance, several members took up their invitation to have a go.

On Sunday, the Crown Derby and Simons Collection parties reversed their roles, with a chance to stay on at the latter after lunch for some informal playing and inspection of the workshop. Your reporter missed this part, alas, having to leave early in the morning for duties with the Tool & Trades History Society in Birmingham.

A hearty round of applause, please, to Nicholas for his efficient organising of this weekend, and for his and Eileen's hospitality.

# Visit to Utrecht, April 24-28 2005

By Christopher Proudfoot



*Dr Jan-Jaap Haspels (photo courtesy of Peter Howard)*

Alan Wyatt, former president of this Society and only last year retired from the Committee, has for many years been organising coach trips to the Continent, setting off from Landbeach near Cambridge. This year, the destination was Utrecht, to take in a day at the museum there in Jan-Jaap Haspels's final year before he retires early in 2006.

A full 49-seat coach took the ferry from Dover on the Sunday morning, arriving in Utrecht in good time for a leisurely canalside dinner in the cool of the evening.

Monday was spent in Amsterdam, where the party split in two for morning and afternoon sessions, turn and turn about, in the city or in the Pianola Museum.

There, our host Kasper Janse opened the concert with two rolls played by the Pianola push-up on a Steinway grand. He then moved to the Grandiola, an 88 note upright

built in Dresden, Germany. As a demonstration of what can be achieved from standard 88 note rolls, this was outstanding. The first piece he chose was by Smetana- Die Moldau, arranged for player-piano by Rex Lawson. This is normally heard as an orchestral work but through skillful handling of the controls Kasper achieved a result better than many reproducing instruments can produce.

The following day looked like a half-day-off from Mechanical Music, for our destination was the Keukenhof Gardens, wherein the Dutch bulb growers show off their unique product in a beautiful setting. With several pavilions, a massive and elaborate fountain with a programme of different sequential 'spurts', this needs to attract vast crowds in the few weeks of each year that it is open, and it does. There was even a draaiorgel for us

to admire, 'De Adriaen', a 75-key organ built in 1978 from old parts by H. van der Hewel Snr and later restored by Johnny Verbeek.

In the afternoon, there were more organs, when we visited Het Kunkels Orgel, a collection housed, somewhat improbably, in a warehouse in an industrial estate in Haarlem. It takes its name from its original, and star, exhibit, a 112-key Marengi dance organ rebuilt by Karl Frei in the 1930s for the showman Kunkels. Restoration of this instrument from 1969 was the starting point of the collection, which now has nine dance and street organs on display and all in fine working order. We were greeted like royalty and given a superb concert (though perhaps some eardrums would have been less strained in the open air!), and we left with a feeling that we had, as fellow enthusiasts, given our hosts almost as much pleasure as they had given us!

Wednesday saw the event we had come for, the visit to the Museum von Speeldoos tot Pierement, housed in a carefully converted church not five minutes' walk from the hotel. There was so much to see, and Jan-Jaap had so much to say and play, that we cannot do justice here to it all.

Over a welcoming coffee, Jan Jap introduced us to a prize exhibit, one of the Haydn clock organs made by Father Primitivus Nêmec for Prince Esterhazy in the late 18th century. This is a masterpiece of compact engineering, compact because it originally

had to fit underneath a clock, while engineering is an appropriate word, for the little adjusting nuts on top of each of the push-rods looked just like the tappet adjusters in an OHV engine!

Among other delights on display in the museum were an Imhof chamber organ from Great Britain, a replica of a 16th-century mechanical spinet, a Pike organ clock, a Winkel organ with an extraordinary single-wheel motor and a Harfenuhrhammerklavier, a longcase clock with a dulcimer playing music by C.P.E Bach.

A visit to the workshop was a further revelation, highlights being the special jig made for pinning the barrels of the of the Saltzberg organ (see The Music Box Spring 2005) and an astonishing automaton organ clock made for Napoleon, in an urn-shaped ormolu case, for which much of the delicate mechanism was having to be re-made by trial and error.

Dr Haspels is well known not just as a fount of knowledge on mechanical music, but also as a musician and a most entertaining showman. The museum is housed in a former church, and its massive organ is still there, for Jan-Jap to display his skills. What, one wonders, did the museum's many other visitors make of a blast of the Bach D Minor Toccata resolving into Rule Britannia? His unique blend of erudition and humour for Everyman was shown in his analysis of Yes, We Have no Bananas, a 1920s nonsense song whose tune, we learnt, combines the first four notes of the Hallelujah Chorus and the last line of My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean!

We hope very much that retirement will not see him disappearing altogether from

the scene, for his knowledge, his musicality, his humour and, not least, his command of English vernacular idiom make a unique combination of talents. His successor elect, Bob van Wely, has a hard act to follow.

## Chantonbury Report

*(continued from Page 70)*

Polyphon and Regina machines; two organettes; Kevin McElhone's very rare Kalliston organette with 24 reeds and four bells; and a rare F Nicole three air snuffbox with reverse painted picture on the lid.

An important part of these meetings was demonstrated at afternoon tea where a member was overheard to say that "he had come with four musical box problems and had now had them all solved by fellow members". Huge thanks are due to members like Ted and Kay who go to the trouble of organising such entertaining and valuable meetings which help keep our membership together.

## CD REVIEW **Aeolian Pipe Organ plays Duo-Art Music**

**from Kevin McElhone**

This CD has been recorded on the 19 Rank Aeolian Pipe Organ belonging to Paul Morris in Exeter, Devon, England. There are 16 tracks with a wide range of music from rousing marches like Pomp & Circumstance Military March, No.1 by Edward Elgar and A Deed of

the Pen by Neil Moret to much quieter reflective pieces such as At Dawning by Cadman and Murmuring Zephyrs by Jensen.

As far as I am aware this is the first such recording to be made in UK of the 176 hole Duo-Art rolls. Many of these play the same organ notes as the Aeolian 116 note organ but with the addition of 60 more holes which control the stops on/off and the swell shutters (plus re-roll). Dynamics have been put in by the Aeolian Organ Guild where the roll originates from 116-note music. Some of these rolls are actual recordings played on a the recording instrument such as Andantino in Db, later arranged as a fox-trot and immortalised as Moonlight & Roses, played by the composer Edwin H. Lemare, others are played by famous organists of the day. Lemare was about as famous as you could get. Others are by equally famous organists eg Dupre, and Swinnen.

The organ is well tuned and performs these rolls well on a clear recording which has obviously had a lot of time and effort spent on it to get the smaller details just right. It is a difficult player system to get working well and takes a long time to set up perfectly but I think Paul has done a good job. I was pleased to hear pieces I know well but also to be introduced to a few 'new' pieces as well.

The CD contains a coloured insert explaining the instrument & showing the console and player unit.

The price is £11.50 direct from Paul Morris including postage but I am personally carrying a

*(concluded on Page 75)*

# A Musical Zarf

By Luuk Goldhoorn

Favre's invention, a carillon without bells and hammers, was fitted in a tin box, with normal measurements (about 6 by 8 by 2 cm), as we can read in the minutes of the Société des Arts from February, 15th 1796, it played two melodies, and was therefore not at all a miniature work, as generally is suggested.

We know that this invention was not immediately picked up and it wasn't until 1802 before Leschot (first associate and afterwards successor to Jaquet-Droz) practiced the invention, not in snuff boxes, but in rings. A couple of them are preserved, but they don't have Leschot's signature. The two in the Seewen collection are Isaïc Piguet's work. This man, associated with Henry Capt, worked between 1801 and 1804 for Leschot, and probably copied Leschot's work for his own benefit.

The fashion of musical rings was over in 1805, and new ideas had to be developed to apply the musical works in other gadgets. Of course in gadgets, for the tones that are produced by these very early works hardly deserves the word 'music'

Piguet and Henri Capt picked up this challenge and made in the years within which they were associated (1802-1811) bijouteries, pendants and harps.

In the beginning the musical works, fitted in these trinkets had

individually screwed teeth, but very soon these teeth were 'united' in what we now call a stacked comb. This construction was not replaced by the 'sur plateau' mechanism, as housed in watches from about 1815 (in the Seewen collection is the earliest

one dated with 1817), but by the normal form: a separate comb, spring barrel and cylinder.

Most of the products made by Piguet and Capt were attractive for the European upper classes, and therefore stayed, after selling or inheriting, in Europe.

But part of these products was also sold to the Middle East, and then the way back to the European market is not too common. Known are a couple of watches with automata and music with dials with Turkish hour signs, but the Near East was more interested in bird boxes. Specimens of these valuable items appear sometimes in European auctions, but the climate in those regions has destroyed quite a lot of those

A specific product made for the



Fig 1. A Musical zarf



Fig 2. Slightly later zarf with 'sur plateau' movement



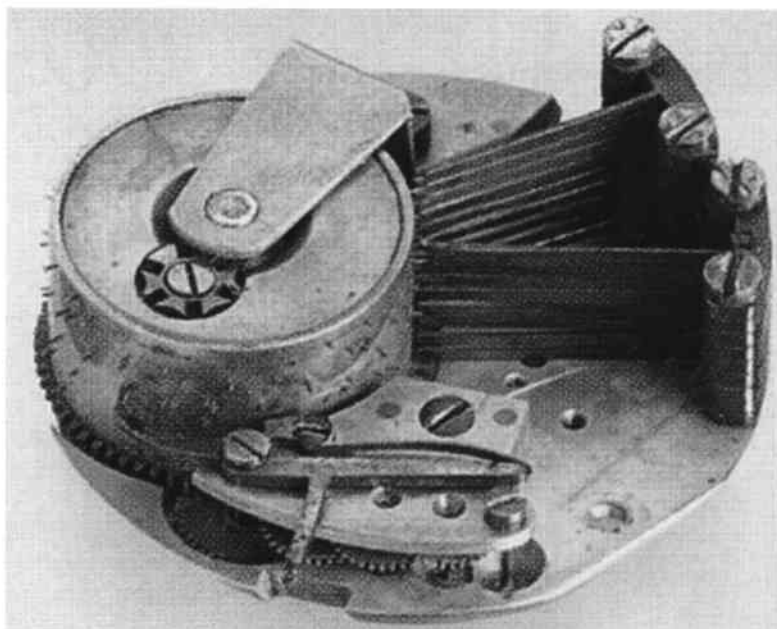


Fig 3. The 'stackedcomb' movement of the earlier zarf

Turkish market which seldom finds its way back to the Western world is the zarf.

What is a zarf? Shortly said: a coffee cup holder.

Coffee was discovered in Ethiopia but coffee drinking was perfected as an art in Turkey. The new beverage was served in a tiny china cup without handles, placed in a metal holder known as zarf, which both protected the cup and prevented the drinker from burning their fingers. Since it was the holder that was visible, this became a work of art decorated with numerous techniques.

The Farouk collection, which was sold by Sotheby's in 1954, contained almost 22 zarfs, of which only two were musical.

Since then, musical zarfs seldom came up for auction. One was in the Sotheby's New York sale of 1993, and this year Antiquorum sold two of them. The New York zarf is almost identical with the one depicted in figure 1, be it that it has a rim with half pearls.

Fortunately Antiquorum described and pictured the musical works, a practice we seldom see in catalogues from the renowned auctioneers as far as it concerns miniature musical items.

Zarfs were produced during quite a big part of the 19th century, and therefore it is understandable that the two zarfs sold by Antiquorum are at least made 10 years apart

from each other.

The first one, signed by Piguet and Capt for the musical work and by Jean Georges Rémond et Compagnies for the zarf, is not later than 1811, the year in which they ended their cooperation, and, because of the straight form of the teeth (not the grasshopper's form), may be even a bit earlier.

The second one has that very rare 'sur plateau' mechanism which is believed to date from the 1820's. The fact that there are two solid combs, each (originally) with 10 teeth, proves that it can't be made far before 1820. Unfortunately it was not marked, neither on the musical part, nor on the housing.

Each of the works plays one tune, with quite a lot of embellishments, but of course it is not breathtaking. It is definitely not Turkish music, as could be hoped for or expected. The work is wound at the bottom, and a small knob at the outside activates the music. A nice thing is that you can look at the movement, without any dismantling. The upper part can be lifted out and the work is then visible. In the photo's you'll see the works without the inner part of the zarfs.

*A serious (?) set of instructions for the would-be house guests, contributed by Peter Howard (right)*

## CD Review

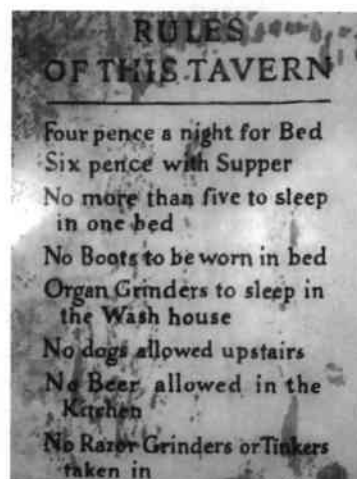
(continued from Page 73)

stock at £10, which can be had from me without postage at many events this year.

kevin\_mcelhone@hotmail.com  
01536 726759

The tracks included are:

1. American Fantasia .  
V. Herbert Firmin Swinnen
2. Liebesfreund. Kreisler Rollo  
Maitland
3. Romance Op.45, No.1.  
Grunfeld Aeolian Organ Guild
4. Intermezzo in Db.  
Hollins /A.O.G.
5. At Dawning. Cadman Archer  
Gibson
6. Meadowbrook Foxtrot.  
Kraus /A.O.G.
7. Rudolph's Narrative.  
Puccini /A.O.G.
8. Murmuring Zephyrs.  
Jenson /A.O.G.
9. Dragon Flies. Shelley/Composer
10. Ride of the Valkyries.  
Wagner /A.O.G.
11. Deed of the Pen March.  
Moret. /A.O.G.
12. Les Sylvains  
Chaminade /A.O.G.
13. Noel & Variations.  
Daquin/ Marcel Dupre
14. Coppelia selection.  
Delibes /A.O.G.
15. Andantina in Db.  
Lemare /Composer
16. Pomp & Circumstance March  
No.1. Elgar. /A.O.G.



# Register News. Summer 2005

*from Arthur Cunliffe*

Compiling the Register is sometimes a complicated and tedious task. Occasionally it becomes difficult to see the wood for the trees. When looking through the Register the other day, I happened to notice quite by accident that the name Imhof appeared as a composer of a tune. On checking a second time I discovered that the name Mukle also appeared as a composer. Now I knew full well that Imhof and Mukle sold many musical boxes from their agency in London, but I had not realised that both names also featured on tune cards as composers.

Mukle as a composer appears only on Nicole boxes. He composed the Windsor Castle Polka which is featured on Nicole Freres serial numbers 36849 and 37364. He must have composed La Migonette Valse No.1 sometime later as this tune features on serial numbers 38090, 38825, 39906 and 39907. He seems to have had little success other than these two tunes.

Imhof did a little better in that his melodies were featured on boxes made by Bendon, Mermod and Nicole.

La Belle Vue Schottische seems to have been the first of his compositions to feature appearing on the tune cards of Bendon serial number 45317, Nicole 38090, 38825, 39906 and 39907.

His next tune named The Lorry Polka appeared, which, up to date, is featured only on Nicole No. 39025.

His third tune, Fruhlings Fest Valse is featured on three Nicole boxes, serial numbers 39980, 41003 and 43341.

One wonders if Imhof and Mukle asked or suggested to Nicole that some of their tunes should be pinned on their products as part of an

agency agreement. We will never know the answer to this question for sure, but I wonder if all this took place around the time when Nicole were making boxes in the 38,000 to 39,000 series? Does anyone know anything more about the partnership of Imhof and Mukle and the links between Nicole Freres? Please send a letter to the journal and add to this information if you can.

There is a possibility that a further supplement to the Tune Sheet book could be produced, but this would only be achievable if sufficient material were to hand. If you have a box with an unusual tune sheet which has not been featured before in the Tune Sheet book or any of the supplements, please let Anthony Bulleid or any of the committee know. It is important to look at the detail carefully as often the difference between printings is minor. A classic example can be found the "columns and composers" type of tune sheet where there are different numbers of composers and names. Again this is an area where we can all help to advance our hobby. Finally the Register has topped the 7,000 figure. Nicole boxes number 2,730 which is roughly 1/3rd of the total. Some members have been very surprised at such a large number of Nicole's and wonder why this should be. The combined output of all the other makers must have exceeded the output from the Nicole establishment many times over, so why is not reflected in the Register? It cannot be anything to do with shoddy workmanship or poor quality, as many of the other manufacturers made excellent boxes. Has anyone

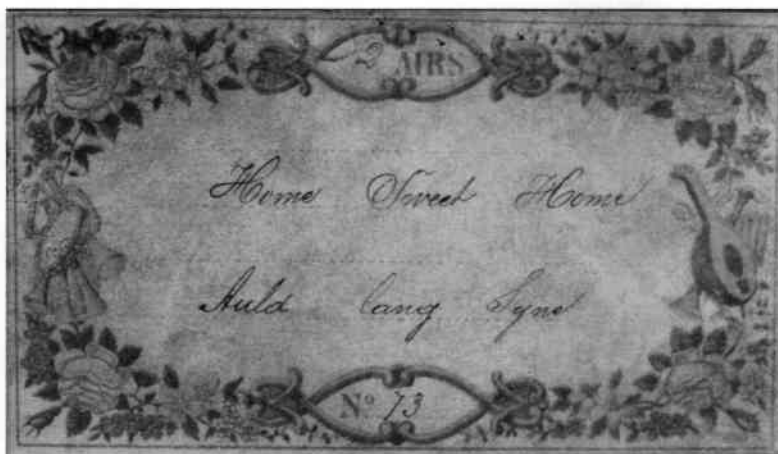
any views on this disparity? I know the subject was mentioned in the last Register News so a letter to the editor on the subject would be most welcome.

Latest developments in the world of computing leave me exceedingly pleased that right from the start details of every box on the Register has been noted on 7 x 5 record cards. The 7 or so large storage boxes should stand the test of time unlike tapes, CD's and DVD's. In our last journal, our editor noted the difficulties that are besetting electronic data storage. The technician of a recording firm informed me the other day that the life of good quality discs and tapes is unlikely to be more than 100 years even if they are stored correctly. Cheap discs that are "burnt" using a CD burner found on home computers are very unlikely to last long. It is all to do with the quality of the discs and the quality of "burning". Already it has been proved that these cheap home produced discs if left out on a window sill in the sun for a period of 24 hours have already started to degrade. Like photographs, discs must be kept properly and out of the light when not being used. There is still much to be said for pen and paper!

I would like to make another appeal to all of you to send in details of your boxes. If a photograph can be included that would be indeed a bonus. I know sending in details takes a long time and there is always something else to do that is urgent, but without facts research into our hobby cannot continue. I know many of you enjoy reading Anthony Bulleid's Oddments in every issue of the journal.

Anthony is increasingly using the Register to assist him with his research and findings. Indeed, it is always a joy to me when I can send masses of material for Anthony to sort through. Often the information is there and I have not seen the wood for the trees, but Anthony has been able to concentrate his efforts on a particular item. Boxes are becoming dispersed far and wide, so it is important to record what we have before it is too late.

Regarding the sending of photographs when registering any of your boxes is of prime importance, but I do have a minor problem regarding copyright. The law says that copyright stays with the person that has taken the photograph and it may not be used without permission. Most people do not mind their photographs being used. In fact they are only too willing for this to happen if it advances our knowledge or helps to solve a specific query. To assist in overcoming this minor problem, I would like to make known that anyone sending a photograph to the Registrar for use in the Register by doing this also gives their express permission for it to be



*An ornate 2-air tune card from the Register*

used in any publication of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain. The name of the photographer will not be published unless specifically requested. By making this move, photographs can be used in the case of theft without having to waste time

finding out who actually took the photo! A minor alteration will be made on the Register form.

Please register your boxes and if at all possible use the official Register form. Copies are always available.



# MusicBoxFix



- First-class cylinder re-pinning
- 4-6 week turnaround
- Comb repairs, dampering, teeth & tip replacement
- Full restorations

Typical re-pinning prices (Ground & Raked)  
8" x 2" £230 + P&P 11" x 2" £280 + P&P

For more detail & prices contact:  
**Brian Whytock**  
**Chamberwells Farm**  
**By Glamis, Angus**  
**Scotland DD8 1UP**

[musicboxfix@glengoat.fslife.co.uk](mailto:musicboxfix@glengoat.fslife.co.uk)

Tel: 01307 840543

# Polyphons with Bells - 2

by Kevin McElhorne

I would like to follow up my last two articles about Disc Musical Boxes with bells so perhaps this should be called "Polyphons with Bells [2]"? (Indeed - Ed)

I have had only two responses to my request for help in expanding the chart of Disc musical boxes with bells which I outlined in the last issue of the magazine so would welcome any further help.

I could continue describing all of the various models going up in size from the smallest examples which I mentioned in Vol.22, No.1 but I think you can get most of the information from the chart in Vol 22, No.2.

I think it worth explaining a little more about the 36cm or 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch diameter Polyphon with 12 bells. This was made in several different models and case styles. This is an 11 inch Polyphon with the addition of 12 tracks around the outside of the disc for the Bell accompaniment tracks and the discs are edge drive looking very similar to the standard 15  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch discs at first glance. The cheapest model was, of course, in the Schattullen / Jewel case which is called the 73 or 73G [G = Glocken].

The next model was a 42CG which was the same mechanism but in a nice walnut veneered case similar to the 43B which is the standard 15 $\frac{1}{2}$  inch Polyphon case type. The bells for both the above types are in one row of twelve at the front of the case. The above types are slightly unusual in that there is a standard single 11-inch



Fig 1. Polyphon Model 42CG

Polyphon comb of 54 teeth but there is also an extra 12-tooth comb at the treble end that plays as well as the bells. This means you hear bells plus teeth when the bells are switched 'on' or just the teeth when the bells are switched 'off' This means that the accompaniment tracks are always playing so perhaps this should not really be considered as an 11 inch Polyphon with bells as

it is a slightly different machine.

There are three types of double comb version playing this 36cm disc. All play the same standard double 11-inch Polpyhon combs. There are twelve bells that may be switched off but when they are 'off' the accompaniment tracks play nothing as there is no additional short 12-tooth comb like on the single comb models. The variations are in the way the bells are arranged. Model 48, in the 1909 catalogue had the bells in two groups of six at the front and rear of the case, nested vertically like the smaller models. The model 48 shown on the front cover of Vol 22, No.2 has the same six plus six layout of bells but they are arranged in a horizontal line and are largely hidden when the disc is in play.

As the bell Polyphons were made near the end of production they usually have different scenes in the pictures in the lid.

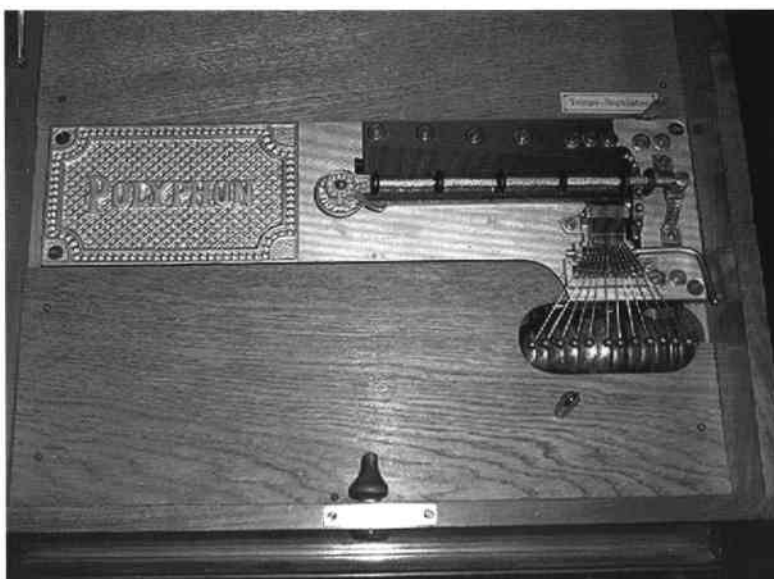


Fig 2. A single-comb Polyphon showing the nested bells.





44 Doppelstimmen (100 Stimmensaiten) und 18 Glocken.  
selbstspielend.  
Sehr voller Ton infolge Verwendung erster Stimmstämme.  
Bist. Kunstwerk  
In Ausstattung wie No. 48 B auf Seite 14.  
Größe 58 X 48 X 36 cm.  
Nettogewicht 31 kg.  
48er Holzkiste (Durchmesser 30 cm).

Fig 3. Polyphon Model 48  
showing two



## Another Giant?

*a tribute to the late Freddy Hill by O Carioca (Edward Murray-Harvey)*

As your Editors have already been sufficiently forbearing to be kind enough to publish a couple of articles by one who is only an Associate Member of the Society, I am pushing my luck once again. But I shall be neither offended nor surprised if this one is consigned to the editorial waste-paper-basket and never sees the light of day.

My memory was stirred by hearing about the recent sad death of Freddy Hill, and my mind went back to the late 1970s. In those days I used to go around the Norwich area giving talks about gramophones and phonographs to various groups of people such as Trefoil Guilds and Women's Institutes. And at one Women's Institute meeting a lady called Mrs Bingley came up to speak to me after my talk and told me that she had a neighbour who had something that might interest me. The talk was held in Thorpe Saint Andrew, a suburb of

Norwich, and I gave Mrs Bingley my telephone-number. A day or two later a Mrs Reavell rang me and suggested that I visit her.

So on the next Saturday morning I drove to Mrs Reavell's address in Thorpe Saint Andrew. I rang the front-door bell, and noticed some chips in the stonework surrounding the door-frame. Mrs Reavell appeared. She told me that she was a widow-woman in her nineties, and she also told me that the damage to the stonework was made by the guns of a German fighter-aircraft flying very low down past the house in daylight one day during World War Two. She had been standing by the front door, but when the aircraft approached she had dropped to the ground and had survived unscathed.

Then we adjourned to the garage, to see the "something that might interest me". In the front part of the garage was a small car. Mrs Reavell said that

she owned it, but she had given up driving. However she could ask her friends to drive her to places in her own car: that way she didn't feel beholden to whoever did the driving.

The garage was little more than a Victorian outhouse -- brick walls, a tiled roof and a bare earthen floor. And at the back, behind the car, was the "something".

The "something" was a church or chamber barrel-organ, or what was left of an old indoor barrel-organ. It was of the conventional type; the organ itself resting on a stand holding the spare barrels when they were not in use. The organ-front showed two lancet-shaped openings, as usually seen on church barrel-organs, and so I was led to think that it was one of the latter. Well, if I were lucky enough to acquire it, even a church barrel-organ would be better than no barrel-organ at all. The whole thing leaned over slightly to one side, as a result of the bare earthen

floor rotting-away the bottoms of the legs of the stand.

Some of the false pipes from the organ-front were missing, as were all the draw-stop knobs. Behind the remaining false pipes was hanging a piece of ragged green cloth, through a gaping hole in which I could see part of "the works". On the outside, some of the veneer stringing and decoration had gone. But I could read on the front the maker's name: Astor and Co, 79 Cornhill, London. I could also read the names of the five stops, which were Principal, Diapason, Fifteenth, Drum and Triangle.

I opened the lid. Mice had nibbled the tune-sheets, and they were unreadable. The drumsticks were there, but the drum had gone, as had some of the metal organ-pipes. Mrs Reavell told me that they had been removed and given to some children to use for playing at soldiers! There were seventeen keys; fifteen of them operated musical notes, and (as I learned later) the two remaining keys operated both the drum and the triangle. Two keys for that, to allow for rapid repeats. One of the barrels was in place in the organ. The winding-handle was still in place, and when I turned it, the barrel slowly revolved, but there was no sound.

I looked in the supporting stand. There were two other barrels, but one of them was a crude replacement. However two of the three barrels seemed to be original. On the whole, I liked what I could see. I knew that a barrel-organ in that condition would be the only sort of barrel-organ that I could afford. And so I asked Mrs Reavell if she would sell it to me, and if so,

for how much? "Yes", was the reply, "How about ten pounds?" I told Mrs Reavell that £10 was too little, and I offered her fifty pounds, which she accepted.

As it was now lunch-time, Mrs Reavell very kindly gave me some delicious home-made soup. While I was consuming the soup my hostess told me that she was the late Mr Reavell's second wife, and she claimed to have seen the ghost of her predecessor (recognised from photographs) who didn't appear to resent her in any way. Her late husband's family, the Reavells, had for generations been factors (i.e. estate-managers) to the Dukes of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle.

And that may give us a clue as to the provenance of the organ. I suppose it is not going too far to guess that the organ may have originally been built for, and owned by, a Duke of Northumberland; and that when it became out-dated, it was given to the factor's family? Anyway, Mr Reavell inherited the organ, which was brought to Thorpe Saint Andrew and dumped at the back of the garage some time in the 1920s. It spent a good fifty years there, awaiting my arrival.

I finished the soup, and then I made two journeys back home. Firstly I took the organ itself, and next I took the stand with the spare barrels. I paid Mrs Reavell the fifty pounds. I regret to have to tell you that I never saw her again. She was, of course over ninety years old at the time, and by the time the organ was restored and I tried to contact her to see if she would like to see it and hear it, she had gone. New people lived in the old house, and there was even a new house built on the site of the old garage.

So there I was, with a ruinous barrel-organ in my utility-room. Where did I go from there? Well, to start-with I entertained in my mind grandiose thoughts of Restore-It-Yourself. But that phase lasted only a few hours before I realised that such a project was quite beyond me. So I tried a local church-organ-builder, but he wouldn't touch it. Oh, dear! And the months passed by and I felt more and more despondent. Would I ever get that organ restored?

Then one Sunday, in a newspaper colour-supplement, I came across an article about John Page and Judith Howard building and restoring mechanical-organs in a railway-arch in London. So I wrote to Page and Howard and told them about my organ. A very kind and prompt reply told me that they could not do the restoration-work, but they gave me the name and address of Freddy Hill, who in those days lived at Shackleford, near Guildford in Surrey.

So I wrote to Freddy Hill. His reply was that he would have to see the organ before deciding whether or not to restore it. Unfortunately he did not drive a car, so I should have to take the organ to Shackleford. Well, luckily my employers were shortly due to send me and a colleague to a meeting in the Guildford area, and we would be staying overnight. I managed to commandeer an estate-car from the Office car-pool, and on the day, we got the organ and stand into the vehicle by laying them on their backs, and we drove off in it.

With directions given us by Freddy Hill we found Shackleford quite easily, and Freddy Hill turned out to be a delightfully unassuming but obviously

knowledgeable man. We were shown around the premises -- two tidy workshops: one for clocks and one for organs, and we saw his own collection of beautifully-restored organs. Eventually our host took a cursory look at the organ that I had brought with me. "Well", he said, "As you have taken the trouble to bring it all this way, I will do it for you!". He quoted fifteen hundred pounds and eighteen months. In the end both those estimates were slightly exceeded, but finally he contacted me and said that the organ was ready to be collected.

This time there was no meeting in the area to go to; and anyway, Freddy Hill said that the organ must now be kept upright. So I hired a small van and went and collected the organ in that. It was hard to recognise it as the same instrument.

The exterior woodwork was renewed where necessary, and beautifully polished. Newly-gilt false pipes adorned the front. New cast-brass draw-stop knobs were in place. Altogether it makes an elegant feature in my sitting-room.

As many as possible of the tunes on the two useable barrels had been recognised and written-down. In spite of the organ having a church-type front, it is in fact a secular organ, although there is one hymn-tune on one of the barrels: "Sicilian Mariners". The other useable barrel is a dance-barrel, pinned in such a way that there is no gap at the end of the tune, so that the barrel can go round and round continuously for accompanying dances.

And there are two clues as to the date of the organ. Two pieces of paper, giving

instructions for use, are pasted inside the lid. They are printed and can still be read. One is headed "Astor and Co." and the other is headed "Astor, Horwood and Co". It is known that George Astor, (who incidentally was a relative of the well-known American millionaire Joseph Astor), took a Mr Horwood as a partner in the year 1815. That year is remembered as the year of the Battle of Waterloo, and one of the tunes on one of the barrels is called "The Waterloo Dance". Thus it must be fairly conclusive that the year of manufacture of my organ must be 1815. And what about Freddy Hill's work on the inside of the organ? Missing pipes had been replaced with ones of similar date. The missing drum had been replaced. The key-frame, made of steel and brass, had been beautifully polished and burnished. The bellows-system had been renewed, and everything was working perfectly. In fact the only thing wrong, (and that was not Freddy Hill's fault) was that nothing could be done with the not-original replacement barrel. Perhaps one day I shall have another barrel made to replace the

missing one?

Anyway, as you can imagine, I was delighted, and I gladly paid Freddy Hill his fee. We loaded the organ into the hired van, and I drove back with it to Norwich, where the organ can be seen today.

Since those days I corresponded with Freddy Hill once or twice, to tell him that I had recognised one or two further tunes on the organ's barrels; and I met him personally once more within the last four or five years, at a meeting of the Musical Box Society -- I forget now where that was, but we had a nice chat remembering my organ and what he did for it.

Perhaps I didn't mention Freddy Hill in my first article about Giants, because at the time he was still alive. I was very sorry to hear of his death, and now that he has gone, I acknowledge my debt to his memory with lasting gratitude.



### SMALL PORTABLE ORGAN

This long suffering instrument was just small enough when folded to pass down a submarine hatch. The organ figured chiefly during evolutions and inspections and provided one of the few legitimate excuses for involving the Chaplain of the base or depot ship.

The following exchange of signals  
(made during Flag Officer Submarines inspection of  
H.M.S. Dolphin at the First Submarine Squadron in 1961)  
gives the general idea:

**"From S.M.1. to Thule, priority unclassified.  
Embark Chaplain and portable organ forthwith".**

**"From Thule to S.M.1., priority unclassified.  
Pardre on board and equipped for all sacraments except marriage.  
Request unmarried lady to be supplied".**

# Collectors' Showcase Bamboo Tables from the Jack Henley Collection

*compiled by Paul Bellamy*

This article is another in the series under this heading, which existed from Volume 13 number 3 to Volume 19, number 5. We hope that it will continue as a regular feature. Its purpose is to provide an opportunity for members to share some items in their collections with other members. Open houses and our annual meetings are some of the ways we can share but the magazine reaches all members. Some of us wish to remain anonymous for fairly obvious reasons. Others do not have the time or inclination to write articles or cannot attend meetings. We hope the 'Collectors Showcase' will provide another avenue. The items can be new or old, curious or rare or just have an interesting feature. Whether new member, restorer, or long established member, all of us have at least one item of interest. Just take enough time to provide some photographs plus a few guiding words and we will do the rest. If requested or necessary, and before publishing, we will check details with you.

Figs. 1 & 2 show two interesting and unusual musical occasional tables made from bamboo. Bamboo was a popular material for furniture at the time and cane furniture remains so today. The first table is more elaborate than the second, although the same maker made each one and both have the same high quality musical movement. The table has drop leaves on either side with surfaces of painted and decorated chinoiserie-type panels of coloured birds and floral swags on a black ground. The bamboo elements are held together by means of cast metal fittings. The second table is of much simpler design, smaller and without the side leaves.

The movement is mounted under the top of each table. Table 1 has a winding handle that can be seen projecting from the front panel. Table 2 is key wound. Fig. 3 shows the underside of the smaller table but the layout arrangement for both is the same. It also has its original tune sheet, fig. 4 that is stuck



*Fig 1. A patent Musical Bamboo Table with side leaves*



*Fig 2. A smaller version of the patented bamboo table.*

over the table maker's own sheet, although the legend 'Patent Musical Bamboo Table' can still be seen. It is a 4-air Swiss movement by Mermod Frères, as shown in fig. 5. Both combs are clearly stamped with their 'S on a cross' mark. The Mermod design is quite distinctive with spring barrel and governor on the right, spring and cylinder axis in line and unusual stop mechanism. This comprises



a lever on the right that protrudes through a plate carrying an inscription of the Mermod patents. The lever has forked ends. One fork engages a slot in the spring case at the line of dots i.e. tune end and, at the same time, the other fork interrupts the governor vane. The non-drive end carries the repeat/change mechanism. The combs have 32 teeth.

The photograph of the faded rose pink coloured tune sheet is slightly out of focus



Fig 3. Underside view of the smaller table showing the musical box case, tune sheet and key wind.

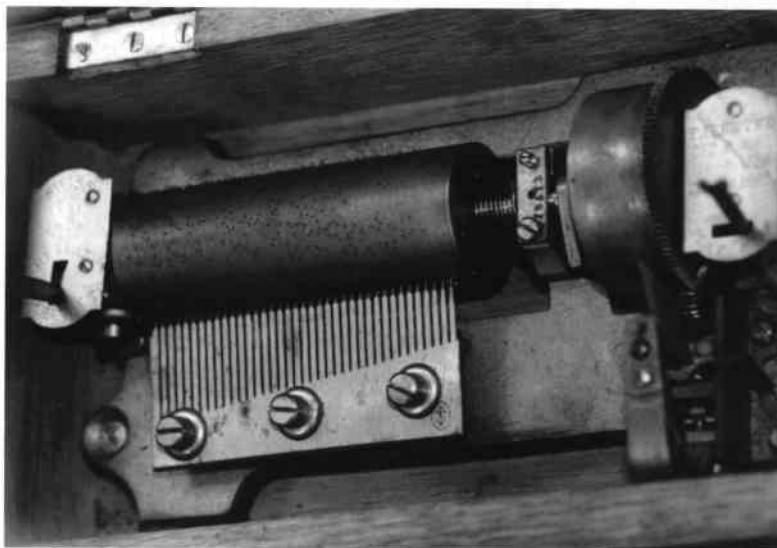


Fig 5. The 32 toothed comb of the typical Mermod movement fitted to both tables.

but typical of those found on Paillard-Vaucher, (See Anthony Bulleid's Tune Sheet Book Numbers 38 and 39, pages 24 and 25). This is unusual because Mermod tune sheets were quite distinctive, (Tune Sheet Book numbers 1-19). Anthony has recorded only one other Mermod box with a different tune sheet. This is serial number 59029 with a Nicole tune sheet, (Reference page 82 of the Tune Sheet book). He describes the Paillard version as the 'curved damper panels' and 'two draped columns' design. The bottom central cartouche is inscribed MSF with the foundation date 1816. The curved panels to the left and

right of the cartouche carry the standard quality terminology of the period: 'étouffoirs en acier' and 'soit à spiraux' respectively. The top panel has '4' written on the left panel pre printed as 'airs', and '3 1/2 pouces' written in the right panel. The four airs are 'March of the men of Harlech', 'Rule Britannia', 'Within a mile of Edinburgh' (rather unusual, this) and a Waldteufel waltz. The serial number is 73472. Fig. 6 shows the tune sheet for the larger table. It is identical to the other one except that it is marked as '6' in the 'airs' panel, although only four airs are pinned. The serial number is 73730, 258 movements apart from the other table. The airs



Fig 4. Close-up of the unusual tune sheet, usually associated with Paillard-Vaucher.



Fig 6. Close up of the larger table's tunesheet overlaid on the Patent Bamboo label

are 'Rolling home to bonnie Scotland' another unusual air, 'Home sweet home', 'Campbells are coming' and a waltz from Sullivan's 'Gondoliers'. A separate folded card about 4 inches square with the same printing on each of its four sides is shown in fig. 7. Details of the patent and the whereabouts of Puzzle House Antiques are as yet unknown. Anthony Bulleid's dating charts for Mermod Frères indicates a date of 1894.

Our thanks to Jack Henley for this contribution to Collectors Showcase.



Fig 2. A piece of advertising memorabilia used by Puzzle House antiques

# David Lecoultre

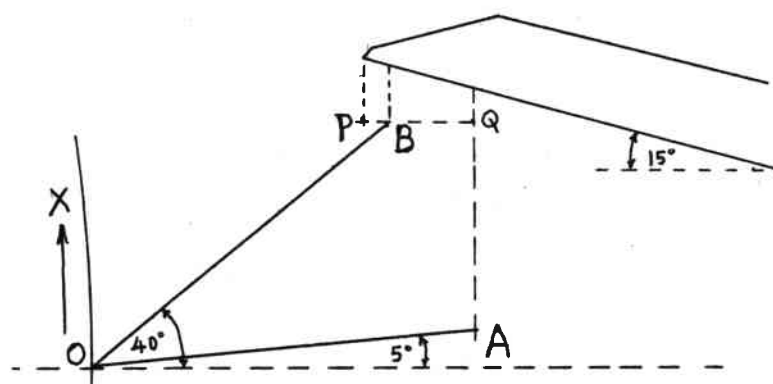
Among the eminent craftsmen of the Vallée de Joux (25 miles N. of Geneva and 3000 ft. higher) David Lecoultre was pre-eminent in the 1830s and 40s for his forte piano "expression" musical boxes. He used cylinder pins with minimum rake for forte and with increased rake for piano passages. Henri Lecoultre in Geneva got the same effect with long and short pins, all of normal rake. A plus for these two methods is that all the comb teeth are available for both forte and piano.

Both these methods require a two-stage pinning procedure, which for David Lecoultre was probably as follows:

1. Set up, prick, drill and pin the piano notes.
2. Centrifuge for thin cement fixing.
3. Dress and rake pins.
4. Set up, prick, drill and pin the forte notes, making allowance for their quarter-second delay.
5. Centrifuge for normal cement thickness.
6. Dress and rake forte pins.

On a typical David Lecoultre Expression forte piano box, the cylinder pin length is 0.03". The forte pins are raked only about 5°. The piano pins are raked 40°. That reduces the pin/tooth engagement by 0.007" and advances the moment of tooth release by a quarter of a second, as explained in Fig. 1.

The extra cost compared with a standard movement was only for items 2 and 3 and the second set-up for item 4. It probably cost



**Fig. 1.** Diagram showing the reduced tooth engagement and earlier release from a cylinder pin raked 40 degrees. The engagement varies proportionally along the comb. PB is the engagement of pin OB with a comb tooth. BQ is the extra engagement of pin OA, 0.007". X indicates the cylinder surface, moving at 0.08" per second.

AQ measures the delay,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a second, in tooth release by pin OA compared with pin OB.

about the same as supplying a separate smaller piano comb, and it gave the advantage of all comb teeth being available for both piano and forte. Its two disadvantages were the limited contrast available from different tooth lengths and the impossibility of restoration.

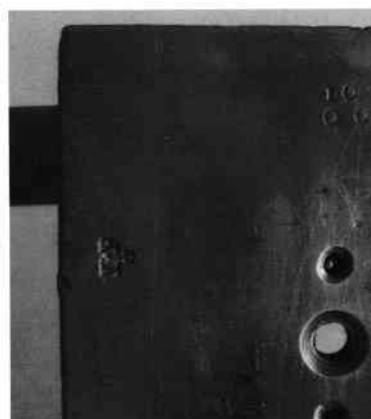
Therefore caution is needed before repinning these boxes. If only one tune is damaged, repinning will result in that tune still not being properly restored and all the others being spoiled. Whether to repin is still debatable if only half the tunes, or even less, have all their pins intact.

The difference in pin/tooth engagement between piano and forte pins, BQ in Fig. 1. was chosen at about 0.008". That provides adequate difference in volume, but damper problems arise. A damper having to function with only 0.004" engagement will have to be set right up to the end of the tooth tip. But then a forte pin will push it three times that distance, - asking for

trouble.

Both the Lecoultres overcame this damper problem by machining a small hollow behind the tip into which the damper can be pushed by forte pins. Hence the teeth with damper relief, now always referred to as "hooked teeth."

The typical D. Lecoultre box here discussed displays his early system of numbering which is still wrapped in mystery. There is a pseudo



**Fig. 2.** The pseudo serial number, 10 and double 0, and the T.F/o mark probably added by a repairer.



**Fig. 3.** *The great wheel is also stamped blank no. 5 for the cylinder assembly.*

serial number, 10 and 00, stamped in the usual bedplate position as shown in Fig. 2. This same number is stamped on the cylinder bass end, and on the great wheel, Fig. 3. It is also scribed on the bass lead, Fig. 4. That is the only marking under the comb except for a few pitch lines on its cast iron base (not clarified by rusting!)



**Fig. 4.** *Here is that number, 10 and double 0, on the bass lead - a position usually reserved for the gamme number.*



**Fig. 5.** *Stamped I PR and 495 on the bedplate under the comb. (Also seen on Nicole 22980, with 364, in the same position). Possibly a repairer*

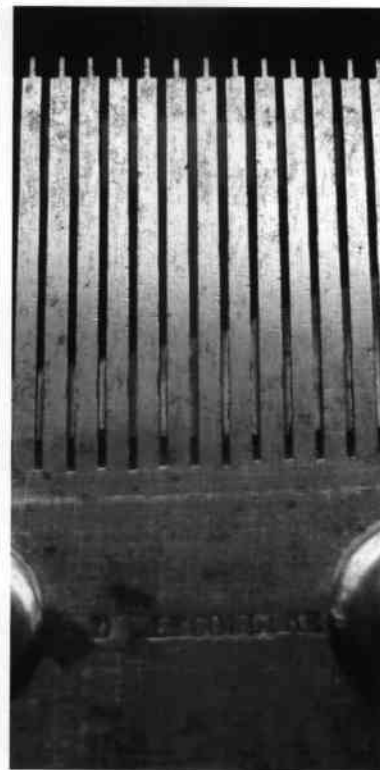
The bass edge of the bedplate is stamped with three separate figures; 5 which is the cylinder blank number, and 1 and 2 which also appear, well separated, on the cylinder and spring bearings.

There are two other stampings on the bedplate; that unexplained T.F/o mark seen in Fig. 2 and on many pre-1840 boxes, and discussed on page 134 of Vol. 17, Spring 1996. Also the equally unexplained I PR as shown in Fig. 5.

The 9.1" (23cm) cylinder plays 4 airs with tune 1 pinned on the track lines. The box looks just like most key-winds except that the governor has three blades mounted on a flywheel needed to smooth the transitions between loud and soft music.

The comb is very well equipped, with 126 teeth. The track widths are just under 0.018" and the square tooth tips are a couple of thous wider than normal, see Fig. 6. The comb has two dowels, near the extreme ends and not visible from above.

This box has been repinned, so it has entirely lost its important forte piano feature, "Expression," that is



**Fig. 6.** *David's square and comparatively wide tooth tips. His D on the comb is a bit distant from the one-piece LECOULTRE stamp, which is not in prime condition... nor very clearly photographed.*

emphasized on its original tune sheet, Fig. 7. It is a particularly big loss on this type of box because the tune arranger was able to use all the 126 comb teeth in both forte and piano passages. It is still a delight to hear, with various nice effects in all four appealing tunes; but anyone who does not know what he is missing will be tempted to say that, for the music provided, the arranger had a luxurious quantity of teeth.

#### Limited Percussion

There have been musical boxes with bells only since way back, but I for one had never heard of a drum only box till I saw Fig. 8. It has a 10½" (27cm) cylinder and



Fig. 7. The tune sheet, with *Forté Piano* in the top margin and underlined *Piece à Expression* both added in red. The latter is printed on later tune sheets. Tune 4 is the *Cachucha*, a fine old Spanish dance. Tune 3 was composed by Boiëldieu Junior in 1838.

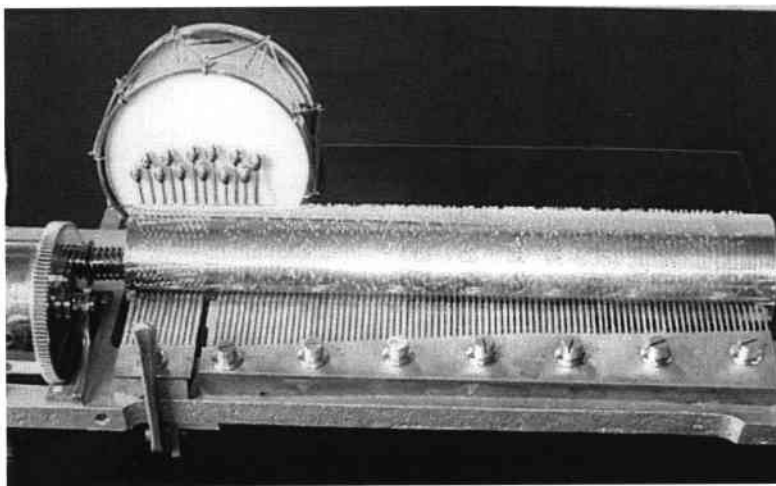


Fig. 8. An interesting rarity, drum box without bells, though there was plenty of room for them. It's serial no. is 44142, tune 1 on dots, probably made in the late 1860s, maker a mystery. Thanks to Rod Cornelius for Figs. 8 to 11.

plays six operatic airs on 88 music plus 12 drum teeth. The only three minor unusual features are the straight on/off lever; the gap of two teeth between the two

combs; and the arrangement of the drum strikers... having to be in two rows, they are not symmetrical! I think the same blank was normally used for drum-and-

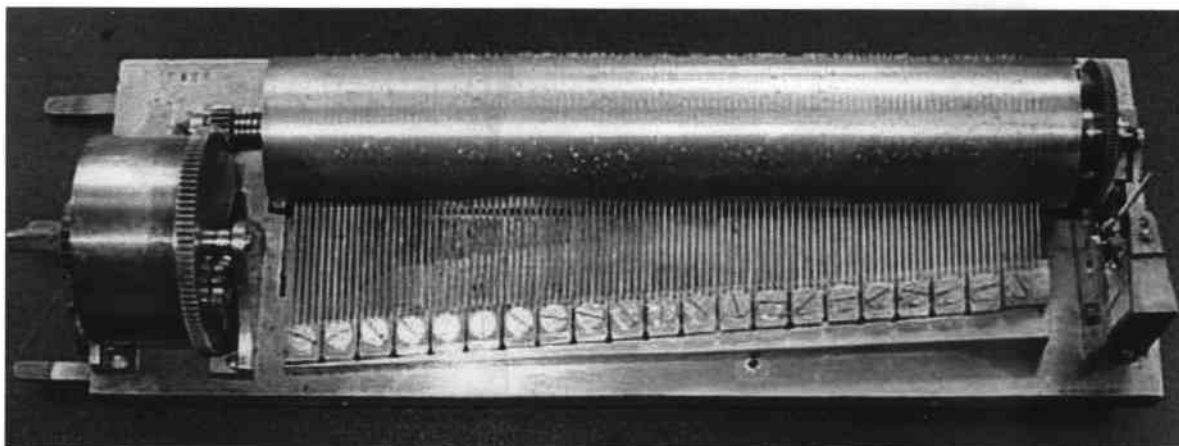
six-bells, with 8 drum and 6 bell teeth, accounting for the 2-tooth gap.

Its tune sheet is the "curved damper panels" type, - as no. 233 but with the cartouche left blank. The tune list is headed *Tambour Visible* - not as bizarre as it might seem because when written drums had often been hidden.

#### An Early Amplifier.

Some early cartel boxes had, and are still having, quite an adventurous life. Serial 5855 was made in Geneva about 1828 and is a typical 4-air box with  $7\frac{3}{4}$ " (20cm) cylinder, as shown in Fig. 9. It has a typical close-fitting key-wind case and was very soon acquired in England by someone who wanted more volume and knew how to get it.





**Fig. 9.** Serial 5855 with  $7\frac{3}{4}$ " by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (195 by 38mm) cylinder, exposed controls, and 106 comb teeth in twenty sections of 5 teeth and one of 6 teeth.

He decided to mount it permanently on top of a large mahogany box, which would give it about four times the existing



**Fig. 10.** Side door of the top box opened for access to controls. Plenty of headroom inside, and the musical box lid can be opened – if its side-hook is disengaged.

soundboard area. But the existing fruit wood case would look odd on the mahogany, so he had a smaller mahogany case built on top, into which the musical box was a tight slide-in fit. A hinged door at



**Fig. 11.** The musical box case is 12 by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches (305 by 114 mm) making 54 square inches (348 square cm). The large box is  $19\frac{1}{2}$  by 12 inches (495 by 114 mm) making 234 square inches (564 square cm) – more than four times bigger.

the bass end gave access for controls and winding, see Fig. 10.

The result was, and still is, an undoubted success. Very luckily, the craftsman concerned in the enterprise added a note: T. Chard,

joiner and cabinet maker, Oct. 25, 1832. It is pictorially captured, with the box temporarily out of its cage, in Fig. 11.

The soundboard periphery of the musical box is 31" (79cm) and that of the large



**Fig. 12. Frères Nicole 13432 made in 1833. Cylinder diameter  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm), 37-tooth comb, twelve airs. Complete programme lasts 7 minutes.**

box is just over double, at 63" (160cm). The volume of sound radiated is directly proportional to the periphery, so it has been doubled by this scheme. And there is a further advantage at the bass end where the original case is too small to allow adequate radiation of the lowest notes. This serial 5855, with its two accessory cases (aka its volume booster), left England in 1910 for Auckland, New Zealand where it still resides. Its present owner, our member Rod Cornelius, kindly supplied the data and Figs. 8 to 11.

#### **A rather special Nicole.**

Back in Oddments 98, Autumn 2003, I made two frightful mistakes in the text and in the caption to Fig. 8, which showed Nicole 13432. I said it played 4 airs; but the truth is that its  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " by 0.75" diameter (70 by 19mm) cylinder plays 12 airs, 2-per-turn, on its 37-tooth comb. And here is its extra claim to fame – despite the cylinder circumference being only 2.35 inches, the tunes all last 30 seconds. One turn of the cylinder takes 70 seconds for

its two tunes and two tune gaps, and that is undoubtedly the correct playing speed. It means that the cylinder surface speed is only 0.034 inches per second. That is nearly half the 0.06" noted on a few petites musiques and way below the usual tenth-of-an-inch-per-second on cartels. It is astonishingly slow and demands super accuracy in pinning, which must be classed as a great achievement in the year 1833.

The pins are slightly under 0.008" diameter and the tune track widths are reduced to 0.012". There are no track lines. The usual dots are in the tune change gap. Tunes 1 and 2 are pinned on the dots.

The movement is the usual snug fit in its 4" by  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " (10 by 6cm) tin case, - with orange finish and a dramatic ruined castle transfer engraving on the lid. The twelve tunes are numbered and written inside the lid, but the writing is withered by age. Tune 12 can be read and it is that classic Tyrolienne borrowed from a folk tune by Rossini in 1829.

The performance is well up to normal expectation from a

37-tooth comb. Both the playing speed and the musical quality were quite enthusiastically confirmed at a well-attended Chanctonbury Ring meeting at Ted Brown's museum on Feb. 13th, 2005. It certainly shows that pinning could be done to the finer tolerances demanded. But I think it was a passing experiment by Nicole, - too risky to adopt as a new standard. News of any other petites musiques with cylinder surface speed of 0.034 inches per second would be extremely welcome. That is, a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " (19mm) diameter cylinder taking 70 seconds per turn, or a 1" (25mm) cylinder taking 92 seconds. Or, pro rata.

## **Alan & Daphne Wyatt**

will be pleased to welcome you to a

### **Christmas 'Get Together'**

at

**Landbeach,  
Cambridge**

on

**Saturday 10th December**

11 - 4pm.

Lunch provided.

To book a place please Email to

[alan@wyatt102.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:alan@wyatt102.fsnet.co.uk)

or

**Telephone 01223 860332**

# Daniel Imhof Update

from **Peter Murray**

Firstly, thank you to the relatives, Societies, and individuals who contributed to providing a grave headstone.

The headstone has now been ordered to the following details and arrangements.

## Grave Headstone

M.P. White Granite  
Gothic shape top  
Set direct into the ground  
2' wide 2' 6" above ground level  
Front polished  
Back and sides unpolished  
Maintenance free lettering with background cut away to approx 3 mm  
Hand carved deep cut ornament to top 5" high based on Imhof Street Organ

## Inscription

In memory of  
Daniel Imhof  
Builder of Orchestrions  
And Barrel Organs

25.3.1825  
Unterspitzenbach  
26.5.1900 Croydon  
  
Anna Elisabeth Imhof-  
Fackler

16.10.1824 Amsterdam  
12.10.1908 Croydon

## Arrangements

Due to no suitable date for everyone to attend the Tribute/Dedication there will be two separate dates.

## Tribute on 29th August 2005 at 2 p.m.

At Croydon Crematorium Mitcham Road in the West Chapel. Everyone is welcome.

The proposed format will be:-

Music of the Herold Orchestrion in Vohrenbach.

A spoken tribute

Playing of a small Imhof and Muckle Barrel Organ

A spoken poem in German.

Playing of a tape of an Imhof Street Organ.

There will be two tribute memorial cards to be signed. One to be given to Sir Christopher Frayling, the great, great grandson of Daniel

Imhof and owner of the grave; the other to Mrs. L. Heyman-Imhof (Zurich).

The tribute will take about 30 minutes in total and will be followed by a visit to the grave site at Queen's Road Cemetery, one mile away, to view the headstone, place a spray of flowers and play a small Imhof and Muckle barrel organ.

## Family Graveside Dedication

At Queen's Road Cemetery (date and time to be advised)

The Dedication will be taken by The Very Reverend Nicholas Frayling, The Dean of Chichester Cathedral, with his brother Sir Christopher Frayling, who are the great, great, grandsons of Daniel Imhof, and other members of Daniel Imhof's family.

All are welcome at this service.

For any further details please contact  
Peter Murray  
Tel: 01932 241 849.

# Hands Across the Sea!

*Paul Bellamy looks at the theme of our joint MBSI - MBSGB autumn Meeting, 2005*

MBSGB committee members organising the joint MBSI - MBSGB Autumn meeting are also MBSI members with happy experience of the MBSI annual meetings. Each of these has a theme and a unique 'table favour', a mechanical musical novelty that is now a collector's piece in its own right. We, your MBSGB hosts have, of course, designed a table favour, but that remains a secret. The theme, however, had to be an early decision: **HANDS ACROSS THE SEA**. It is represented by the image of the beautiful and rare musical novelty ewer (or jug) as illustrated on the cover, (courtesy, Jack Henley).

Designed by Fieldings, a famous Stoke on Trent pottery, as part of its 'Crown Devon' Patriots series, the ewer celebrates a unique relationship between the UK and the USA. Known also as the Friendship Jug, the body of the ewer comes in two versions, both having the same relief-moulded, hand-painted front. The reverse side, as shown in fig. 1 has a montage of skyscrapers and English cottage scenes. John Bull and Uncle Sam, bearing their respective flags, stand proudly either side of a cartouche with the entwined letters GB/US. The moulded handle is of UK and US hands clasped firmly in friendship.

The versions differ slightly in that one has the words of The Star Spangled Banner on the side opposite to the handle, Fig 2, and the other has two bells ringing in celebration.



Obviously, one version was intended for the US market and the other for the UK. For the bells, Fieldings used the same transfer prints that appear on the 'Daisy Bell' series of musical novelties.

The musical movement is a typical Thorens die-cast 28-30-type movement, Fig 3. One version plays, not surprisingly, the Star Spangled Banner and the other versions are known to be the Westminster Chimes and the Bells of Saint Mary's. The Fieldings stamp, always on the inside foot-rim, shows that an application had been made to register the pattern. The initials AL has also been painted on the underside of the hollow base, presumably those of the painter.

Somewhat surprising is that none of the musical movements discovered so far actually play Hands Across the Sea. This air was written some time in the late 1890's by that renowned American composer of military music and marches, John Philip Sousa. Sousa's boyhood coincided with the American civil war. He was leader of

the Marines band for many years but then resigned and travelled the world, being decorated by the royal families of Europe and Great Britain. Hands Across the Sea remains, amongst many other of his works, in the repertoire of British military band music.

The theme has a certain degree of poignancy and was popular on postcards. It illustrates the bonds that tie people, loved ones and nations in various ways such as separation through times of war and emigration. Those illustrated here are just a two examples. It reminds us that there is at least one common language, music. That should be in plenty for the unique 2005 joint MBSI - MBSGB convention.

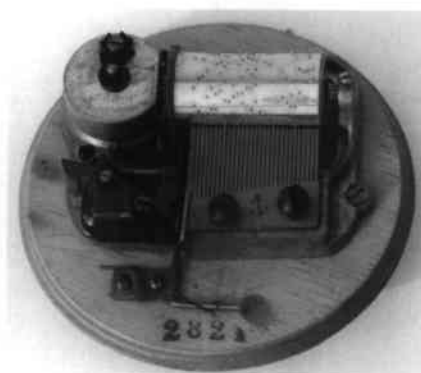
The story of Fielding's Crown Devon musical novelties, including Hands Across The Sea, is one of many interesting talks that will be given on the Workshop day, the theme of which is Play and Display.

Front Cover and figs 1 - 3 are courtesy of Jack Henley.



*Figs 1 & 2: The reverse and front of our emblem, the Hands Across the Sea jug.*

*The postcards illustrated on the previous page and right date from the First World War period and were popular mementoes for wartime families.*



*Fig 3: the Thorens movement from the jug.*



**Insure your collection  
at home and away—  
apply online at**

**[www.connoisseurpolicies.com](http://www.connoisseurpolicies.com)**

Follow the simple instructions on the "buy online" pages on our website and you should be able to buy up to £50,000 of specialist insurance cover within a matter of minutes

Connoisseur Policies Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary and appointed representative of Anthony Wakefield and Company Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Telephone: 0870-241-0-142  
Information@connoisseurpolicies.com

'Connoisseur'® is a registered trademark of Connoisseur Policies Limited





# Alf Rules -OK?

by Alison Biden

As many of you will know, the music to Rule Britannia is frequently featured on musical boxes. But how many know the connection with King Alfred the Great? Not having studied music or history, I assumed for several years that the anthem, celebrating British supremacy on the high seas, must refer to the times of Nelson and/or the British Empire. Not so. Rule Britannia was written in 1740 – sixty five years before the Battle of Trafalgar. It forms the finale of Alfred, a three act masque, based on the struggles of King Alfred the Great against the Danish invaders of the ninth century. With words by the poet James Thomson, collaborating with David Mallet, and set to music by Thomas Arne, the masque was commissioned by Frederick, the then Prince of Wales, as part of an entertainment on the occasion of his daughter's birthday.

Alfred was seen as a benevolent and enlightened ruler, and (erroneously) the unifier of the country. It is believed he was chosen as the subject of the masque so that Frederick, by association, would be well regarded. Thus he expected his own succession to the throne to be favourably anticipated after that of his unpopular father. In the event Frederick predeceased George II.

In addition to being famous for his poor culinary skills (a scurrilous myth) Alfred was attributed with founding the English navy (another dubious claim.) Ironically, at the time Rule Britannia

was written, Britain was not a great naval power. The previous year she had been embroiled in an ignominious war with Spain (known as the 'War of Captain Jenkins' Ear'!)

Over the years the words have been altered on a number of occasions for different purposes. It was first performed in London in 1745 and Rule Britannia became an instant hit, with the Jacobites adapting it for an anthem. The musical theme impressed Handel, who referred to it in his Occasional Oratorio, and was used by Beethoven as a basis for a set of variations for piano. This year being the bi-centenary of Trafalgar we shall no doubt be hearing plenty of this rousing favourite, but it is the 'naval hero' and events of over eleven hundred years ago which it actually commemorates.

Author's Footnote: I am indebted to David Sturdy's book, Alfred the Great, for first drawing my attention to the origins of Rule Britannia. Anyone wishing to hear more convincing reasons why Alfred should be 'Great' should contact me.

---

**Have you seen the portable (hand-played) organ on page 81? It was a popular adjunct to Naval submarine life and usually accompanied the ship's spadre! See the label illustrated. Thanks to Peter Howard for supplying this item!**

# News from Other Societies

from John Farmer

First, Errata – In the last "News", on page 52, the review entitled "Organ Grinders News, No.50, Autumn 2004" was actually for OGN issue 52, Spring 2005.

## Het Pierement - April 2005 (Reviewed by Peter Whitehead)

The complex history of the Bruder family and its various branches in Waldkirch is sketched in an article by Hendrik Strengers, and accompanied by three picture postcards, dating from 1930, showing tuning of organ pipes, assembly of pipes into an organ, and music-card punching, all in the works of Gebrüder Bruder.

A nostalgic description of life in Den Bosch at fair time during the first half of the twentieth century reveals that at that time there were 265 public houses, or one per 94 inhabitants!

Haarlem's place in the world of fair organs was assured 50 years ago by a combination of events – the holiday week fair at the end of April/beginning of May was moved to a new more extensive venue; at the end of this week a fair organ competition was organised by the Dutch Street Organ Friends (KDV) and as a consequence 'the Jupiter', the legendary organ, arrived in Haarlem.

In a previous article on this same event, written by the KDV chairman in 2001, it seems that in one of the side-shows, the 'autoscooter', you could drive your dodgem into a figure dressed as a policeman to your heart's content (apologies to Ted Brown for including this).

Brabant's organ history is further described in the series by Jack Jacobs, with an

interesting anecdote detailing the removal of a large window by two regular clients from one of the cafes containing a dance organ, so that the organ could be seen and heard better by them. This was permitted, with the proviso that the window should be reinstated by the said pair at the end of the week.

A picture of a Scandalli accordion, measuring 1.90 meter high (this must be over 6 feet high, in English) which formed part of a 101 key Mortier, is shown.

On a more sober note, mention is made of another Mortier organ which was damaged by shrapnel during the fighting involved in the liberation towards the end of World War II. Apparently most damage to life and property in the area at that time was caused by allied air raids and artillery fire, though the departing German troops made their mark too.

The water organs of the Villa d'Este are dealt with by Alois Broeke in a very detailed article. The existence of these organs has been known about since the mid 1500's. Very briefly, the rotation of the organ barrel is achieved by means of a stream of water rotating a paddle wheel, with the wind pressure for the organ pipes being supplied by a whirlpool system, in which a rotating stream of water picks up air, then is led to a sealed 'aeolian chamber', in which the water is piped so as to fall a short distance to the bottom of the chamber; the air is thereby released and piped away to supply wind to the organ pipes. Rodney Briscoe, the English organ builder, was recently commissioned to restore two of the organs at the Villa d'Este, which was happily achieved using the original air supply system from 1568! A fascinating story. A biography of Vincent Youmans, who wrote the music for the musical 'No, No, Nanette', in which 'Tea for Two' and 'I want to be Happy'

feature, also appears in this edition of 'Het Pierement' An exhibition, '100 years of Welte, the history of M. Welte & Söhne, Freiburg and New York' will be held in the Augustiner Museum in Freiburg im Bresgau in the Black Forest between the dates of 15th. September 2005 and 8th. January 2006. The firm produced automatic musical instruments of high quality from 1832 to 1932, later producing church and special organs, finally ceasing production due to Edwin Welte having a Jewish wife; the industrial complex was completely destroyed in an air raid in November 1944.

#### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 183, March/April 2005**

In his President's message, Ralph Shack announces the formation of a new MBSI chapter – the Lake Michigan Chapter. It will be focussing its activities on the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin, with its first meeting on 14th May 2005.

The regular Chapter reports are followed by News from the Netherlands in which Hendrick Strengers summarises the recent restoration of the Haydn-Niemecz Organ Clock of 1793. The clock is in the Utrecht museum van Speelklok tot Pierement. Hendrick follows this with a note about the 100 Years Welte exhibition at the Augustiner Museum, Freiburg im Breisgau, and gives a potted history of M. Welte & Sons.

#### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 184, May/June 2005**

This issue gives two examples of MBSI chapters working to educate the public. The Piedmont Chapter arranged a half-day exhibition of mechanical music at the Cannon Memorial Library in Concord. Planning and publicity paid off with 200 to 300 people (including many children) visiting the display in

the 4 hours it was open.

The Southeast Chapter sponsored an exhibition of Mechanical Music at the Cornell Museum, Delray Beach, Florida. The members supplied the instruments, and Ray Zapata, whose idea it was, spent much time overseeing and guiding visitors.

#### **Mechanical Music, Vol 51, No.1, Spring 2005**

This issue is dedicated to Ralph Heintz, former Publications Committee Chairman, who died earlier this year. Ralph had written many articles for Mechanical Music, and 35 are listed in this issue. The first two articles in the journal are reprints of articles by Ralph. The first, entitled "First, Pluck your Peacock" is about his investigations into the use of 'Peacock Herl' for feather dampers. Herl is the glistening-black flat fibre from the fronds of the peacock's tail. Ralph used instant-setting adhesive making the job very quick and enabling testing to follow immediately. The second article from Ralph was "Archimedes and Hero – an Historical Note". The subject is the issue of whether Archimedes or Hero of Alexandria was "The Father of Mechanical Music". Ralph's investigations and deductions led him to the view that Archimedes was the first.

Steve Boehk's article, "Some classic Welte Orchestrions – Where are they now?" details the known history of his own style IV Concert Orchestrion, and the results of some of his researches into the whereabouts of other Welte machines. From a reproduction catalogue and other ephemera, Steve tried to track down one machine originally installed on the river steamer Pocahontas, and a second described as the "Finest Orchestrion in the World", installed in a Troy (NY) café. Both these trails failed to lead him to the

present day whereabouts of the instruments. He also recalls the appearance of what was thought to be his own Orchestron in a 1920's silent movie. Further research revealed that it was actually a style III.

Larry Karp, David Beck and Carol Beck write about the connection between H J Lecoultre and A Malignon in the manufacture of single-comb, long-short pin forte piano cylinder boxes. Olin Tillotson had originally researched this type of box and attributed most to Malignon, but this article describes further research and comparison of boxes, which now suggests that all the boxes were actually made by H J Lecoultre. The team would be interested to hear of other examples of such boxes stamped with H Lecoultre's name or Malignon's. Also in this issue is a reprint of The Single Comb Forte-Piano Musical Box, by A M Godier and J M Powell, from The Music Box Vol.20, No.5, explaining how the effect was achieved by reference to specific examples of the type. F Einsidl and J Sagan in Vienna is the subject of Helmut Kowar's contribution. He presents details of current research on these Viennese movement makers and includes a list of 54 examples with either Einsidl's name, or both names, inscribed. They are generally to be found in clocks. Helmut has also researched the life of Franz Einsidl and gives a potted history of his career. He believes Sagan was essentially a wood turner who worked with Einsidl for a while.

#### **Player Piano Group – Bulletin 174, March 2005**

"Rebuilding – you can do it" are Peter Davis' words of encouragement to would-be Player restorers. Peter gives a 20-point list of things to do, and encourages members to join one of the PPG's recently

introduced workshops on restoration. Paul Roberts covers restoration in a little more detail in his description of the work he did on a Steck Pedal Electric Duo-Art and Broadwood Barless Solophonola Grand. Apart from some repairs to his Grandparent's piano, at the age of 14, Paul had no previous experience, but succeeded with the help of Reblitz's books and advice from PPG members.

June Willis recounts some of her memories with her Pianola, which was her mother's, and has been part of her life for 75 years. Stuart Barnes gives the background to Hog's Back Rolls, a project to make rolls which reproduce, as near as possible, original recordings by the blues and boogie greats, and John Farmer (another one – not me!), describes the trials and tribulations of creating the 'Pianola Playtime' LP in the 1960's.

Kevin McElhone considers Combination Instruments, i.e. instruments that combine reed organ and piano, and Christine Robinson discovers Xaver Scharwenka (1850 – 1924) on a piano roll in a charity shop. She goes on to describe his life as a pianist, composer and teacher. Finally, Julian Dyer gives a detailed explanation of the work which has gone in to converting MIDI files into music rolls.

#### **The Musical Museum and Friends Newsletter, issue 37, 2005**

The Stop Press News in this edition of the Newsletter is that the Museum has acquired its new home at last. A 50-year lease on the new building was completed on 19th April 2005. The new building provides a 300% increase in floor space, and hugely improved facilities. However, there is still a great deal of work to do to complete the interior of the building and to move in the exhibits. It will be at least 9 months before the

Friends can open at least part of the building to the public. There may be some 'Friends' preview days before then. Elsewhere in the Newsletter Bob Dean explains how he and two other Friends learned to move four of the nine player grand pianos using piano cradles. This included realising that player grands have different weight distribution to normal pianos and required virtually custom-made cradles. Michael Woolf writes from New Zealand with the story of his acquisition of a Violano from Frank Holland. Having spotted it in a sorry state in the museum in 1976, it took him till 1980 to actually get it to New Zealand where it was eventually restored. It still bears, in Frank's handwriting, the words "Keep for Spares" on the back.

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

##### **Musiques Mecaniques Vivantes – 2nd Quarter, 2005**

Highlights:-

Limonaire Frères, part 2(1886-1920).

How to restore an Orchestrelle.

A device to read Musical Box cylinders

Zither attachment in Musical Boxes – how it works, how to restore it.

About the design of large Organ facades.

##### **Das Mechanische Musikinstrument (Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente), No.92, April 2005**

Highlights:

Polyhymnia, A Russian Zimmerman Musical Box, A Musical Box with the main spring in the cylinder. What do you do when the Musical Box squeaks even though the dampers are in good order?

Piano roll scanning, An unusual little chamber organ, More about the Imperator disc box.

## Auction Report

from Frank Barnett

More than 50 lots of mechanical music, not including gramophones and phonographs, were on offer at the Bonhams auction on May 10th.

Among the cylinder boxes Nicole Frères continued to command good prices with Lot 32, a forte piano box (no. 35354), playing eight airs making £4200.

Another Nicole, this one with a 22" cylinder (no.37144) realised £3500. This box was on display at the previous Bonhams' auction in October 2004 where it attracted considerable interest. A slightly later Sublime Harmonie box also by Nicole Frères (no.44511) was very attractive in an inlaid rosewood case and made £2600.

An organ celeste cylinder box with sixteen key reed organ sounded better than most boxes of this type and made £2450.

Disc boxes were also in demand and a 104P 195/8" Polyphon in clean condition with 15 discs was good value at £2900. Another Polyphon, this time a 15½" Style 45 in

a carved walnut case, realised £1450. A Stella with two teeth off and lacking part of the sound board made £1150.

Among the smaller items were some 20th century singing bird boxes with a top price of £800, and a small four figure automaton under a glass dome which made £750. A Crown Devon Fieldings jug playing Widdicombe Fair showed that these remain popular reaching £105.

The next Bonhams' sale of mechanical music will be at Knowle on November 1st.

## New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined us since the last journal was printed.

If you would like to get in touch with members near to you please contact the correspondence secretary.

2912 Greg Connell Australia

2913 Bernard Weeks

Gloucestershire

2914 Chris Rodwell Leicestershire

2915 Peter Murch Worcestershire

2916 George Whitla Scotland

2917 Mr.B.King Buckinghamshire

2918 Gerald East Middlesex

2919 Alan Bradley Wiltshire

re-join on old number Steve Ryder, USA.

## Letters to the Editor

From Greg Connell:

Sir,

My name is Greg Connell, a new member in Australia. I would very much like other Australian members to contact me, so that I have someone of similar interest to chat and email with. If you feel so inclined please email me at [gconnell@ncable.net.au](mailto:gconnell@ncable.net.au).

Thanks for your help

*(Or letters can be forwarded via the Editor - Ed)*

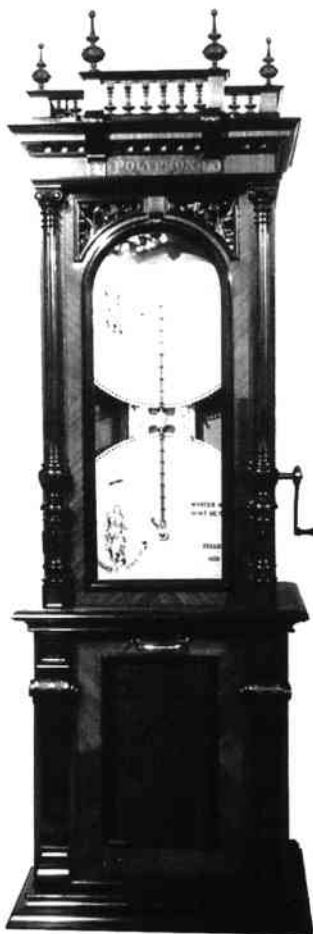


**Keith Harding**  
**MUSICAL BOXES**  
*Sales & Restorations*

World of Mechanical Music, Northleach, Nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL54 3EU

**Telephone: 01451 860181 Fax: 01451 861133**

Museum & Shop open 7 days a week 10am - 6pm



# Renaissance Discs

## New Discs for all Musical Boxes

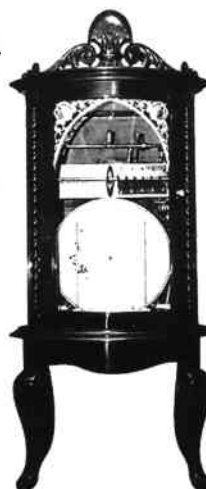
- correct quality steel & original style artwork
- 115 different types available
- efficient worldwide delivery service
- send for the tune lists for your instruments
- treat yourself to perfect copies of you favourite discs
- great value – eg. new 15 1/2" discs only £23 + VAT each

*Quality instruments deserve Renaissance Discs*

## New Double Disc Musical Boxes

- magnificent brand new instruments playing two 24 1/2" discs
- available now
- eight combs produce superb harmonies
- an unforgettable experience!
- massive spring-driven clockwork motors are quiet, smooth & powerful
- beautiful cases, exquisitely carved and veneered in walnut

*"arguably the finest sounding instrument I have ever heard in the disc-playing musical box world"*  
Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume



## Restorations & Sales

- quality restoration to the highest standard on all types of musical box movements and cases
- free quotations given
- fully restored musical boxes for sale, both disc and cylinder
- instruments shipped around the world

*Let the experts ensure your musical box looks and plays as it did when it was new!*

Lester Jones, 16 Penny Lane, EMSWORTH, Hants, PO10 8HE, England

Phone: + 44 (0) 1243 372646 Fax: + 44 (0) 1243 370299 (visitors welcome by appointment)

# John Cowderoy Antiques

Website [www.cowderoyantiques.co.uk](http://www.cowderoyantiques.co.uk)



This friendly Family business was established in 1973 by John and Ruth Cowderoy, and is continued by their sons David and Richard.

We are members of the Guild of Master Craftsmen and of L.A.P.A.D.A. the country's largest association of Antique Dealers

**We believe our comprehensive repair and restoration service is second to none.**

Free estimates without obligation.

42 South Street Eastbourne BN21 4XB

Tel. (01323) 720058

# The Music Box Shop

New Cylinder & Disc Musical Boxes

New Singing Bird Cages

Musical Jewellery Boxes

Clockwork Musical Gifts & Collectibles

Mechanical Music CD's, Cassettes & Books

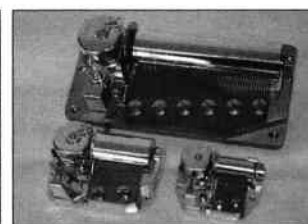
New Mechanical Organs To Order

## Luxury Musical Movements

*Now Available For Your Own Boxes*

18, 30, 50 & 78 note Pinned Cylinder Movements

48 Key Disc Movements with 6 Brass Bells



**Please Feel Free To Visit Our Shop**

**On The A37 in Whitchurch Village, Bristol**

Open Mon - Sat 9am - 5pm (Closed Wed, Sun & Bank Holidays)

Dean Organs, "The Music Box", 40 Bristol Road, Whitchurch, Bristol.

Tel 01275 834474 Fax 01275 838687

**Please Visit Our Website at**

[www.themusicboxshop.co.uk](http://www.themusicboxshop.co.uk)



## classified advertisements

### CLASSIFIED SALES

**Coin-Operated 48-note** barrel piano, fully restored, good music hall tunes, mandoline rail operated at will. Gold oak case. Plays well.  
Tel: 020 8224 9204

**Symphonion 9 5/8"** discs available, some light rust. Came with original card separators. For details tel: 01403 823533.

**Chappell 88-note player** piano, 1930s, mahogany. Good playing order, re-tubed in neoprene, 27 rolls, books on repair etc. £500 o.n.o. Tel: 01242 241110 (Photo)

**Lochmann 24 1/2"** disc musical box with bells, excellent condition. For details tel: 0161 681 3656.

### FOR MORE SALES ADVERTISEMENTS SEE PAGE 68

**Musical Box Repairs** Gears, comb work etc. Small repairs to full restoration. Arno van der Heijden, Apollolaan 70, 10077BD. Amsterdam. Holland Web: [www.arnovanderheijden.nl](http://www.arnovanderheijden.nl)

### CLASSIFIED WANTS

**Triola Rolls** in fair to reasonable condition. Contact Terry France on 01983 867096

**Any old catalogues** and musical box ephemera. Please contact Ted Brown on 01403 823 533.

**Organette music wanted.** Any Dolcina card music, Organetta, 14-note Melodia & Clarion music. All other organette music, bands, spools and discs considered. Contact Ted Brown on 01403 823 533.

**Thorens/Reuge 4 1/2"** disc musical box with or without discs. 01923 867096.

**48-Note Racca music books.** Any titles. R Ison, 5 East Bight, Lincoln LN2 1QH 01522 540406 email: [adcunliffe@btinternet.com](mailto:adcunliffe@btinternet.com)

### RATES FOR DISPLAY ADVERTS

#### SPECIAL POSITIONS (offered as available)

Outside back cover (tone or two colours)  
(full colour, one photograph to maximum size of 8" x 6")  
Inside covers

Full page only £249  
Full page only £560  
Full page £218

#### POSITIONS INSIDE JOURNAL (as available)

Full page £150. Half Page £86. Quarter Page £54. Eighth Page £36.  
5cm box in classified area £32, 3cm box in classified area £22

These charges include typesetting, but are exclusive of any artwork which may be required. Half tone, artwork and design can be provided at additional cost. Black and white half tones £15 each. Design and artwork quotes on request.

**DISCOUNTS** (applicable only on accounts settled within 30 days, otherwise strictly nett). Four or more consecutive insertions: Area rate less 20%. A further 5% discount is given if payment is in advance.

#### MECHANICAL DATA TYPE AREA

Full page 10 5/8" x 7 1/8" (270mm x 180mm), Half page 10 5/8" x 3 1/2" (270mm x 88mm) or 7 1/8" x 5 1/16" (180mm x 135mm), Quarter page 5 5/16" x 3 1/2" (135mm x 88mm).

Looking for something special - or have some items for sale? Remember, Music Box goes to over 600 enthusiasts worldwide.

For as little as £5.00 (£9.50 for non members) you can reach these people with your Sales & Wants.

*Closing date for the next issue is*

**1st October 2005**

#### Deadline dates for Display Advertising Copy

1st April; 1st July; 1st October; 1st February

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

#### Posting of magazine:

27th February; 27th April; 7th August; 7th November

### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN NEXT ISSUE: **1st October 2005**

**Minimum cost each advertisement £5.00.**

Members: 16p per word  
(bold type 8p per word extra)

**Minimum cost each advertisement £9.50**

Non-members 32p per word  
(bold type 16p per word extra)

#### CASH WITH ORDER PLEASE TO:

Advertising Secretary Ted Brown,  
The Old School, Guildford Road,  
Bucks Green, Horsham,  
West Sussex RH123JP  
Tel: 01403 823533

#### NOTICE

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

Printed by Flo-Print Colour Ltd  
**[www.floprint.co.uk](http://www.floprint.co.uk)**

# Mechanical Music at Bonhams

## Tuesday 1 November 2005



We are currently accepting entries for our forthcoming Mechanical Music sale.

### Enquiries

Frank Barnett  
+44 (0) 1564 776 151  
[frank.barnett@bonhams.com](mailto:frank.barnett@bonhams.com)

Illustrated: A Nicole Freres forte piano musical box, serial no. 35354, playing eight airs recently sold for £4,220.

### Bonhams

The Old House  
Station Road  
Knowle, Solihull  
West Midlands B93 0HT  
+44 (0) 1564 776 151  
+44 (0) 1564 778 069 fax  
[www.bonhams.com/knowle](http://www.bonhams.com/knowle)