

# *The Music Box*

*An International Journal of Mechanical Music*

## **In this issue:**

- Joint International Meeting report
- A Manopan Restoration
- Musical Oddments 107
- Collector's Showcase



Ted and Kay Brown at the  
Joint International Meeting

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



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MECHANICAL MUSIC AND TECHNICAL APPARATUS

*London, 31 May 2006*

CHRISTIE'S  
SINCE 1766

# From the Editors' Desk

**T**he summer is fading but the memories remain green - we have some excellent photographs of the International Meeting - and I'm sure that some of you will know how many shopping days are left to Christmas! May we be amongst the first to wish you all a happy and peaceful Yuletide and a prosperous New Year.

Further on in the Journal we draw your attention to the Baud Museum's Fiftieth Anniversary, but we have another half-century to celebrate. The Registrar has completed fifty editions of Register News. Of even more importance, there is now a central record of several thousands of boxes available to researchers and scholars as well as details for tracing missing items. If you have not yet registered some of your collection, perhaps now is the time to consider doing so. Confidentiality is assured, as a society we are very conscious of security matters. The Registrar is hoping to complete his century of News Reports - let us help him to reach his goal of 10,000 recorded boxes - go on - keep the Registrar busy recording facts all through the long winter nights!

We have been assembling an Aeolian residence pipe organ this week, which has kept us busy and we have been spring-cleaning the computer. Among the "unattributed items" we found this organ specification and thought you might enjoy a chuckle over it as it heads for the recycling bin...

This is the time of year when the Subscriptions Secretary likes to receive cheques from members. Make him happy in his voluntary work! We have some excellent articles lined up for the New Year, and feel sure you would not want to miss them. We could also publish your own research, experiences,

showcase an item from your collection, or (almost) anything else you would like to contribute. Here's to 2006!

## A New Proposal for a Self-Playing Organ (Circa 1920)

Built by Messrs Hackett & Bodge using pipes from an instrument designed by Messrs Faith, Hope & Charity. Some pipes are thought to date from the 20th century.

### Great Organ

Double Entendre	16ft
Lack of Principle	8ft
Flute	8ft
Hoot	4ft
Toot	2ft
Squeak	1ft
Furniture	III pce
Per Concha	16ft
Cornet	99p
Bombe	£1.50

### Swell Organ

Opening Time (Tennessee)	6pm
Stopped Diocesan (mitred)	5ft 8in
Vox Populi (muted)	Flat ft
Obituary	4 lines
Coup de Grace	2fi
Mixed Grill	V rk

### Solo Organ (Under expression)

Bassoon	16ft
Tenoroon	8ft
Oon	4ft
Octaroon	2ft
Macaroon	13/sq ft
Cream Horn	6ins
Carthorse (anag.)	4legs
Orchestra Manager	2legs
Acute Melancholia	II rks
Cornucopia	8ft min

### Positive Organ

Cor de Nuit	
Vase de Nuit	4p
Chimney Piece	
Squint	20/20

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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.

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## Organ Proposal *continued...*

Rausch

Piffle

Pas du Tout

Creme de Menthe

70a

Venison - Off

## Pedal Organ

Double Diaper

32ft

Geigantic

16ft

Bourbon (on the rocks)

16o

Bourdstiff

Doublorquitz

Chloral

4 fl.oz.

Ophicleide

16 FC

Couplers

G to Ped

Sw to Ped

Ch to Ped

and So to Bed

P to K4

Gone to T

Bourd on/Bourd off (reversible)

5 Thump pistons to each manual

5 toe pistons to boot

## Extras (off chest)

Faggott

5ft 4in

Forgotty Oboy Oboy

Organ blown by twin Vol-au-Vent units.

It is considered unlikely that such an instrument would be a Reproducing organ, though it may repeat.

## MBSI Awards

The President and Officers of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain would like to take this opportunity to express their heartiest congratulations to Ted and Kay Brown on receiving the Roehl Ambassador Award, to Lester Jones on receiving the Darlene Mirijanian Award, to Jean-Claude Piguet on receiving the Q David Bowers Literary Award and to William H Egerton on receiving the Trustees' Award. All these people have made very considerable contributions to the field of mechanical music, and their awards are richly deserved.



Text of After-Dinner Talk delivered at the Musical Box Society, Saturday, August 27th, 2005.

## After 43 years...a MBSGB Retrospect

by Arthur W J G Ord-Hume

People do not normally celebrate odd anniversaries. Ten, twenty, the inevitable 'twenty-first', certainly fifty – and even a cool hundred – but not 43. Somehow 43 does not carry the charisma of a centennial, a 'silver wedding anniversary', or diamond anniversary, let alone a quinqucentenary or a millennium. Yet 43 years it is since our Society was founded.

It is a measure of time more poignant than mere numerics that of the four of us who originally got together to create the Musical Box Society of Great Britain, I am now the sole survivor. Indeed, of the whole of the first twenty members, I am the last-remaining!

And now, 43 years on, we have the achievement of staging our first-ever international meeting!

So what have we actually accomplished in that awkward forty-three-year period? How have our original ideals been fulfilled and how have our subsequent goals been met?

Well, forty-three may be the number, but it was much earlier that I began collecting musical boxes. As a qualified engineer their mechanisms fascinated me. As a then-student musicologist I was equally fascinated by the music they played, especially since so much of it was, certainly at that time, no longer in the popular domain.

Having read the unlikely combination of science, engineering, history and music I was in the probably unique position of being able to appreciate mechanical music from the widest possible spectrum. This gave me a supreme confidence that launched me on a downward spiral from which I may not even now have recovered! The reason why is that I did not appreciate that mechanical music was the 'Flying Saucer' topic of the time. It was something nobody could ever take seriously.

Quickly I found out that having an interest in musical boxes set one apart from one's fellow men – not in the way that one might expect, though. It carried the credibility of claiming to play 'air-guitar' in a symphony orchestra, trying to promote shove ha'penny as an Olympic sport, or, even worse, confessing to a rather unpleasant personal habit. I learned that you were very careful to whom you revealed your interests in musical boxes.

Worse was to come, though, with the acquisition of a barrel organ, a player-piano and, Heaven forefend, a Wilcox & White Symphony player-organ. These were treasures to hide from friends, to play only quietly at night or behind closed doors.

Revealing an unhealthy interest in collecting ladies underwear and Communism seemed infinitely preferable to being found out playing with a Polyphon – let alone a Nicole!

But there were several other people across the country who shared my interests among them the man who became our charismatic founder – Cyril de Vere Green. Through a chance meeting with him I came to discover others who had a mutual interest in mechanical music.

It was a sort of spiritual 'coming out' and suddenly here was the freedom to discuss mechanical music with a fellow enthusiast – even if in the eyes of others we were but a pair of weirdoes.

One day Cyril dropped a bombshell by revealing that America was not all that it seemed from the outside and that in that far-off country there were actually quite a lot of these strange musical-box people and that they had actually formed themselves into a society. That evening we all went our separate ways deep in thought about this foreign land where musical-box collecting was an acceptable deviation.

We remembered that on December 5th in 1933 our American friends had ratified the 21st Amendment to the US Constitution! Obviously they had now progressed to an even wider liberality.

At that time, transatlantic air travel was anything but readily available to most people. The hugely long journey via Shannon and Gander in Newfoundland was both uncomfortable and expensive. In terms of numbers of pound notes, it was not dissimilar to today's costs, but expressed in actual value, it was between eight and ten times as expensive to fly to America. In today's money, the return fare to New York would cost around £4,000. Few could afford that sort of luxury.

This meant that opportunities to visit this rich land where lovers of mechanical music could be free were few and far between. But several wealthy American musical-box collectors did visit London for various reasons and one of these was the late Murtogh Guinness who lived for a time in Mayfair as well as New York.

...continued on Page 115

# Street Organ Festival in Tallinn, Estonia



## Dear Street-Organ Players

Street-organ music and culture is a part of the city culture in many places all over the world. Its influence to the life quality and local culture is the main reason why Estonian Theatre and Music Museum and Varkaus Mechanical Music Museum (Finland) have started a street-organ festival tradition in Tallinn, Estonia.

The Second International Street-Organ Festival in Tallinn will take place 29.06 – 02.07. in the year 2006. The festival includes many open-air, indoor and church concerts, festival clubs and other events in the most wonderful places in Tallinn and Estonia.

Organizing committee of the festival provides participants with free accommodation, food (twice a day), security (performers and instruments), local transport and sightseeing tours in Tallinn. The only expenses for the participants are the travelling costs to Tallinn and back.

The first festival was a success and the feedback from players and audience has been very positive. This has given us courage and energy to invite the best organ players to enjoy Estonia and Tallinn and to introduce street-organ culture to Estonia. In short, to organize the Second International Street-Organ Festival in Tallinn

Based on the previous information, we are looking for the street-organ players all over Europe who are interested in participating in our festival. We are gladly waiting for your response and for information about you and your music. It would be great if the responses will be posted **before the end of November**. This information helps us to organize the festival so that people from Estonia and abroad will remember you forever. The addresses for your response are following:

Jürgen Kempf  
Mechanical Music Museum in Varkaus  
Pelimanninkatu 8, 78850 Varkaus  
Finland

Risto Lehiste  
Estonian Theatre and Music Museum  
Müürivahe 12, 10146 Tallinn  
Estonia

More detailed information about the festival will be given before the end of this year. Until that, the information E-mails are: [jurgen.kempf@mekaanisenmusiiknimuseo.fi](mailto:jurgen.kempf@mekaanisenmusiiknimuseo.fi) and [risto.lehiste@tmm.ee](mailto:risto.lehiste@tmm.ee)

With best greetings

### Organizing Committee

Ülle Reimets – Director of the Festival (Estonian Theatre and Music Museum)  
Risto Lehiste – Main Organizer of the Festival (Estonian Theatre and Music Museum)  
Jürgen Kempf – Artistic Director of the Festival (Mechanical Music Museum in Varkaus)

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## Teme Valley Winders

from John Farmer

Sunday 10th July 2005 saw the first ever Eastham Grange Street Organ Festival, which was blessed with glorious sunshine. John and Hilda Phillips pulled out all the stops to stage the event in their grounds, assisted by some 18 Society members under the auspices of the Teme Valley Winders. Hilda, assisted by several lady members, produced 100 cream teas whilst 12 organs and organettes played to the visitors. Several neighbours also assisted and provided additional entertainment with bowls, raffles and 'treasure hunts'. John proved to be a capable Master of Ceremonies.

Everyone agreed that it was a resounding success, raising £800.93 for Eastham Memorial Hall. Will this be the first of many? Watch this space.

The next 'normal' meeting of the TVW took place on Saturday 10th September 2005 with 16 attendees, including several new faces: - Jason Fisher from Stockton, Mike Crumpton from Bewdley, Charles and Jean Hadwell from Abberley, Kath Turner from Lilleshall and Peter Murch from Bromsgrove. Kath and Peter are MBSGB members. After introductions, Kath Turner started the presentations with her Kalliope disc machine with 6 bells. She demonstrated several discs pointing out that the bells sounded better with some discs than others.

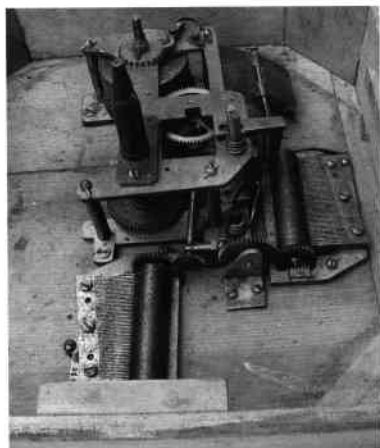
Alan Pratt had brought along an apparently straightforward clockwork motor unit, but as

his presentation progressed he revealed that this was but one component of his latest self-imposed challenge - to build an automaton. His intention is to create an automaton clown, riding a unicycle and playing a flute. The motor is, of course, the power unit for model and has output shafts for driving the musical and mechanical parts of the finished article. Alan outlined some of the basic requirements of an automaton mechanism, and discussed some of his own design concepts. Alan intends to give further presentations to our meetings as his work progresses.

John Farmer presented a small 14-note parlour barrel organ bought 2 years ago at the AGM auction. He had identified 5 of the 10 tunes and hoped the group could help with the others. Only one further tune was positively identified with some general view on 2 others. The organ does require replacement of some missing barrel pins, and attention to its registration. It may then be possible to identify the other tunes. Kevin McElhone followed with a 24 note Manopan. The Manopan uses cardboard 'books' consisting normally of two strips hinged together at each end to produce an endless band that can fold flat for storage. Kevin's machine came with 44 separate pieces of card that needed to be paired up. Kevin ended up with just 6 'orphans'. The Manopan has twin reeds, with the melody tuned celeste, giving it a very rich and pleasant tone. Longer

bands and books were also made.

Peter Murch brought along a large cylinder box with 6 bells for identification and advice on restoration. Although the comb has a couple of broken teeth and a few missing tips, the rest of the instrument seemed in good condition, although requiring a good clean. The bells are particularly attractive, being engraved with patterns and mounted in two pyramids. The style would suggest a date of around 1880. Inspection revealed a serial number and Peter was advised to send this and photographs to the registrar, who may be able to throw some light on the box's history. Doug Pell's presentation was in a lighter vein with a number of novelty items. First a Christmas tree stand, having 2 small cylinder movements, with a lever which switches the drive from one to the other as required. The name Eckardts was visible on part of the mechanism. Next a modern toy being a box with a wooden clown inside which gradually rises from the box as the music plays, followed by a tinsplate musical bird and a small two-part wooden contraption which makes a 'tweeting' sound when twisted. Finally a small Reuge bird box with a cylinder movement too. Whilst the bird was beautifully made, worked well and was quite tuneful, the cylinder movement was so quiet as to be almost useless since it was supposed to be an alarm!



*The movement of Doug Pell's unusual musical christmas tree stand*

Jason Fisher entertained the group with his HMV model 101 portable gramophone, which has surprising volume. This prompted some discussion about the history of this and similar models, and the various types of needles available, amongst those knowledgeable about gramophones. Jason has several other gramophones, a Duo-Art upright player piano, and a reed organ, for which he has recently made his own replacement reed.

After tea and Hilda's delicious cakes the group moved to another room for the remaining two presentations. Charles Hadwell, a member of the BHI (where he met John Phillips), brought the mechanism from his Samuel Thorpe clock which had originally hung on a wall in the servants quarters at Witley Court since 1818 when it was made. The clock strikes the hours and has a pull for repeating the last hour strike. It also has an alarm fixed at 04:30, presumably to wake the servants to light the fires in the house. Charles has carried out considerable research on Samuel Thorpe and his clocks. Thorpe was based in Abberley and made

many turret clocks in the area.

The last presentation was an organ tuning workshop by John Harrold, using John Phillips' recently acquired Pell 31 keyless street organ. John (H) explained that it is wrong to tune every pipe using a tuning meter, or indeed to tune to a particular pitch, since street organs do not normally need to be in tune with other instruments. His advice is to start with the violin pipes and tune them using the meter. Then compare the other ranks to the violins, tuning the Bourdons slightly flat, Panpipes slightly sharp, and piccolos to the same pitch. The amount of sharpening or flattening should be to give a nice sound, but will probably be no more than 20 cents for bass pipes, reducing with the higher notes, to give a fairly low but consistent beat frequency. John used a Melvyn Wright test roll which also checks tracker bar alignment and repetition capability for regulating the mechanism, and also plays chords and octaves, to check for balance and sufficient wind when notes played together.

The next meeting of the TVW will be, on Saturday 21st January 2006 at 1:30 p.m. prompt. All members are invited – ring John Phillips on 01584 781118 for directions and to confirm. If you wish to come early and bring a packed lunch, John and Hilda will provide a room to eat, (if you don't want to picnic in the grounds in the middle of winter!).

**See our colour pages - page 107 - for a colour picture of the happy participants**

## Forthcoming Events

for your diary:

Christmas Open Day at Ted and Kay Brown's The Old School (See Officers Panel to the left of this page) November 26th.

Christmas Get-Together at the Wyatt's December 10th. Chanctonbury Ring meeting February 12th 2006.

Trip to Switzerland 24th June - 2nd July 2006. For further information please contact Alan Wyatt on Email at [alan@wyatt102.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:alan@wyatt102.fsnet.co.uk) or Telephone/Fax 01233 860332.

## MBSGB to Feature in 'Collect It!' Again

As you may remember from Vol 21 No. 8 Winter 2004 issue of 'MusicBox' we appeared in 'Collect It!' magazine as Club of the Month. We are to appear once again in that journal, in the November 2005 issue, available in the shops by the time you read this.

Future collectors of musical box ephemera will, no doubt, expect you to have a copy in your archives...

We are grateful to the people at 'Collect It!' for giving us additional publicity.



## Chanctonbury Ring Open Day Meeting

from Alan K Clark

On Saturday 25th June approximately 30 Members, wives and their guests attended the Chanctonbury Ring Open Day Meeting held at Ted Brown's Old School, Bucks Green. The Christmas meeting was arranged for 26th November. As these meetings are very popular, early booking with Ted is advised.

The morning musical clock section really covered from the sublime to the ridiculous, but with Ted's well known expertise in presentation, he naturally kept the best for last. He started from the cheapest of the plastic musical alarm clocks, and progressed through 1950's art deco cased ones, to the pressed metal cased German/USA/Chinese/Japanese variety some of which played Turkish or oriental tunes. The next species to be demonstrated were German wall clocks which played one or two tunes on the hour. An example of the well known Symphonion disc playing clock where the 4 1/2 inch disc sits on the top of the clock came next. This was easily outdone by a musical clock base containing a cylinder movement of about 1848 by Ducommun Girod. It had a forte-piano movement playing 12 tunes via a two-per-turn arrangement and constructed to be released every hour by a clock.

The musical clock part of the meeting was brought to a close in a most entertaining and spectacular way by

David Worrall. His first clock was another Junghans musical wall clock, but this, and all the previous clocks were totally upstaged by his next offering, a Musical English Bracket Clock. Dating from about 1770-80, and made by John Ferry in London, it had a three train movement. It sounded the quarters by runs down the scale on 8 bells, followed on the hour by the playing of one of 4 delightful tunes on the same bells. This had to be repeated several times before the audience were satisfied. His next musical clock was very different, but no less interesting, being a Viennese clock in a very unusual portico case with a 4 inch cylinder movement by Olbrich in the base. It dated from about 1850, and had a grande sonnerie clock movement which released the music after the hour.

The lunch provided by Ted and Kay and their helpers was excellent as usual and well enjoyed. In the afternoon the weather conditions were perfect for the organs, and those playing them, as it was dry, dull and cooler than of late. Most of the organs being played and enjoyed were modern, but one original roll playing machine was demonstrated, being a very well preserved Symphonia 20 note organette by Wilcox and White. We had three organs by Raffin, of 31 and 20 key sizes. The Hofbauer organ had 20 keys and 33 pipes, and the Stuber had 20 keys. The owners of the two 20 note Raffin organs discovered they both had the

same roll with them so we were treated to a stereo version of "On the Street Where You Live". Meanwhile other members were enjoying different music on some of Ted's other machines within the museum.

Yet again grateful thanks are extended to Ted and Kay and their helpers for organising such entertaining and valuable meetings.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 12th 2006.

### Tune Sheet Book Supplement

The latest supplement to the Tune Book sheet, containing another fifty identified tune sheets, together with Luuk Goldhoorn's Search Engine (no computer needed!) is now available free to members who have already purchased the book. Please send £1 or \$2 to Ted Brown (address in the Officers panel on Page 98) in cash, cheque or money order (payable to MBSGB) to cover postage. Don't forget to include your own name and address too! If you do not have the book yet, please send £12 + £3 postage and packing to Ted or you may be able to purchase a copy from Kevin McElhorne at a local meeting. The price will include the book, both current supplements and a stiff cover to keep them in.

# Musical Box Connections

From Sue Titmuss

The story of how I acquired my first musical box has connections with North Africa, Prague, North London, and the illness Lupus! My older sister was born in 1943 and was two years old when my father saw her for the first time on his return from North Africa at the end of the war. Like so many ex-servicemen coming home, my father found it very difficult to find steady work. Women had been working in the factories and on the land and were enjoying their new independence.

My father did any work he could, mainly jobbing gardening for the more wealthy inhabitants of the North London suburbs where we lived. He used to take Valerie along, riding in the wheelbarrow, and everyone loved her, she was such a sweet child. When she developed a serious illness at the age of 6, the people he worked for were sympathetic and distressed.

She had contracted the then almost unknown disease now known as systemic lupus erythematosus. She spent the last two years of her life at Taplow Red Cross Memorial Hospital where they kept her alive with a newly developed drug called Cortisone while they tried desperately to find a cure. Cortisone could only be made in very small quantities then and was very expensive to produce. Eventually, it ran out and Valerie died at the age of 8.

While she was in hospital, one of my father's employers gave him an old musical box for Valerie to enjoy. It was in good working order but the case, egg-shaped and made of papier mache, was disintegrating from damp so my grandfather made a dog kennel from wood and housed the movement in it and stuck a china dog to the base. The box gave Valerie a lot of pleasure.

After she died, my father set great store by the musical box and my brother and I were never allowed to touch it but every night after we had heard our bedtime stories, my mother would wind it up and we were allowed one rewind and then had to go to sleep. It plays for 20 minutes on one full wind.

I had an uncle who was a skilled watch and clock repairer and every year, he would clean and oil the movement and set it to play one of its two tunes. These would be alternated from one year to the next. A few weeks before he died, my father gave me the musical box and insisted I took it away that day. It had not been played for years and he said it would need some work, at least a cleaning and lubrication. It remained silent in the car all the way home but started to play immediately I set it down on the table which was very strange and I felt it had been "meant" to come to me.

I took it to a very skilled

watch, clock, and automata maker in Cumbria who restored it for me. He explained that the movement was so early, it pre-dated the development of an automatic stop to protect the comb teeth, so he put one in for me, and also a lever mechanism, which enabled me to repeat the same tune or to alternate the two tunes.

It bears the following inscription on the bedplate "No.3619 1-7-2-12 Gustav Rebicek Musikwerk Fabrik in Prag". I would love to know more about this musical box. We know the approximate date is 1850-70 but perhaps we can get a closer date from the numbers. I would also like to identify the two tunes; one is 3/4 time and the other 4/4. Since it is not in its original case, and I am unlikely to find an empty original one, could anyone advise me as to an appropriate type of box in which to put the movement? Otherwise, I am thinking of having one made with a glass inner lid to observe the movement when it is playing. Does anyone know more as to what the original case would have looked like?

I do hope someone can help me go some way to solving this puzzle!

*Letters or information can be passed to Sue Titmuss via the Editor. Also, many questions of this nature may often be resolved at one of the informal regional meetings - Ed*

# Automatic Pianos

*A Collector's Guide to the Pianola, Barrel Piano and Aeolian Orchestrelle*

*By Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume*

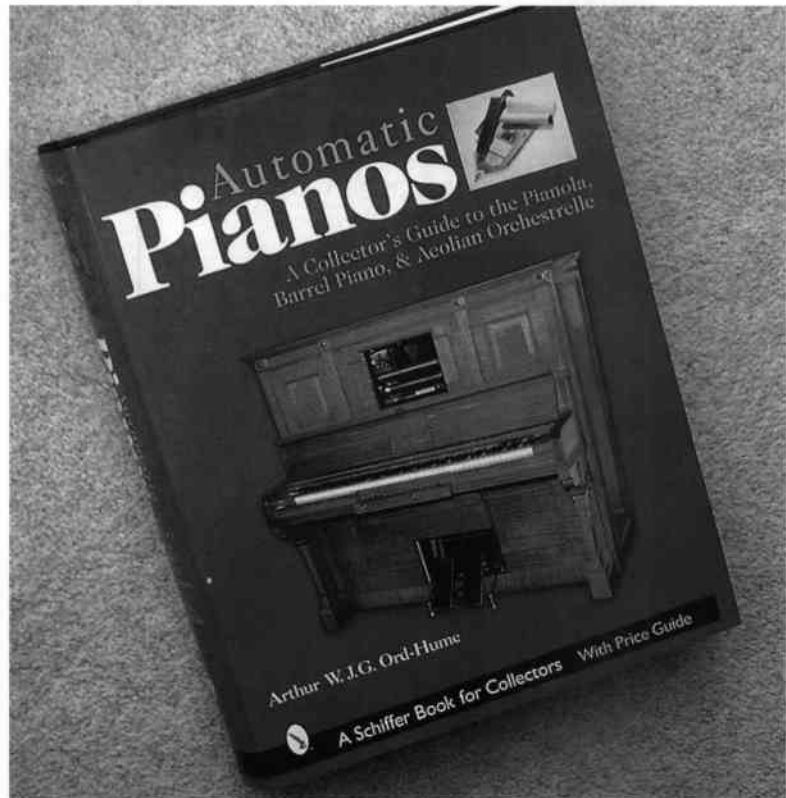
Reviewed by Alan Pratt

Although this new work from the pen of Arthur Ord-Hume sets out, according to the title, to deal with Pianolas and Barrel Pianos, in its early chapters it deals with the development of roll and book playing instruments as varied as the Triola, the Racca and carousel organs.

The player piano, and its near relative the piano player, are shown as the culmination of roll playing technology; a product of the late Victorian period renowned for technological innovation. Yet these marvels of design were destined for a short life – driven out by factors as varied as war, the stock market crash and even the humble wireless.

Supported by some excellent graphics and a wealth of photographs, the workings of the player piano are explained, in largely non-technical language. The different playing systems are comprehensively covered – including a few I had not heard of before. And all of this is presented in a style which the non-specialist will not find overpowering, but which should satisfy the most ardent collector or restorer.

Throughout the book there are interesting anecdotes of the period and details of the battles over copyright of music on rolls where publishers sought to protect their interests from these upstarts with their self-playing pianos. We see the same today almost a hundred years later, as music publishers fight to protect themselves from the



new 'upstart' – DVDs.

As a bonus, there is a substantial section on understanding and restoring the Aeolian Orchestrelle with instructions so detailed that you want to make a start straight away! Arthur Ord-Hume also shares with us his accumulated knowledge on playing techniques to get the best performance from the Orchestrelle.

Whether your interest lies in the instruments, their history and development, their maintenance, the advertising of the period or simply the rolls and their many producers, there is something for you in this book. The information contained in the index and appendix sections alone is prodigious – did you

know, for instance, that there were more than 360 trade names under which player pianos were sold?

Printed on heavyweight art paper, the presentation is excellent with good layout, clear text and with over 640 photographs in both colour and black & white, it is the volume you would turn to when faced with any question or problem in this area of mechanical music.

First rate!

Alan Pratt

*The book is available from Kevin McElhone (01536 726759 or e-mail kevinmcelhone@supanel.com) priced £75 including UK postage (£70 if collected at a Society meeting).*



# Bewley Pottery Coronation Ewer

By Paul Bellamy

Those of us who attended the spring meeting of 2004 had the privilege of visiting the most prolific collection of musical pottery items ever assembled, covering all makes from many different countries. In fact, many of the illustrations used by Alan H Roberts, the noted author of the 'bible', entitled 'Crown Devon Musical Novelties', come from this member's collection. Amongst that collection were two unusual and distinctive musical jugs. Another member also had an example of the same jug, or ewer. The jugs are identical with one exception in that, of the three jugs, two are decorated the same but the third has a distinctly different coloured 'bluish' background whereas the other two have a cream background similar to Fieldings wares.

Over the past few years, the pages of *The Music Box* have addressed this much-neglected area of mechanical music, namely the English Pottery musical novelties by makers such as Fielding's Crown Devon, Winton and Carlton Ware. Most makers did not survive the world recession of the 1980's. Since that time, collector's societies have become well established, specialising in their wares. There are societies for Crown Devon, Carlton Ware etc. Some individual collectors specialise only in the unique musical novelties of one maker,

mainly Fieldings. Others have a more catholic approach and will collect the musical products of lesser-known makers. In the past ten years or so there are now a number of our members who have quite a significant number of these novelties in their collections. In all this time there appears to be no record of this particular example.

It is now established that they were made by another English pottery called Bewley. Bewley wares are sometimes seen 'on the net' and apparently specialised in art deco. The inside foot rim carries the mark 'Made in England'. It also has the word 'Bewley' but, on all three jugs, the under-glazed print was so smudged as to be almost illegible. Being a commemorative item for the coronation of King George VI accompanied by his Queen, the late 'Queen Mother', the date is not in question, namely 1937. This is only 6 years after Fielding's launched their first, and possibly most popular product line, the John Peel series.

Many other potteries catered for the general 'commemoratives' market at that time. Only a few, such as Winton, Bretby and Wade Heath tried to take advantage of the fledgling musical novelty sector. The fact that Bewley were also trying to corner their market share of the musical commemoratives seems to

be unrecorded and this particular jug appears to be quite rare and in direct competition with them.

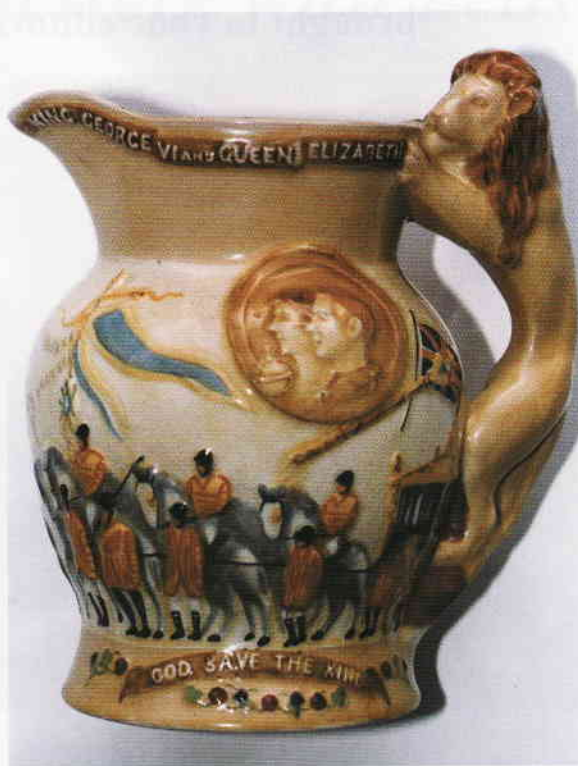
Winton never made jugs and this one is, at first sight, similar to the Fieldings jugs in all respects. It stands at the same height of 8 inches, has the same hollow base containing the movement with a diameter of about 4 inches. The body is also equally heavily embossed and hand painted. The handle is particularly impressive with the figure of the British Lion. The movements all appear to be the 30-note type and possibly only supplied by Thorens. The glaze is as distinctive as the Fieldings pots of those pre-war years, having the typical crazed surface. Unlike Fieldings, however, where pots have a distinctive front and back, the artist has designed a scene of the state coach around the entire body of the pot. It is unusual because the perspective of the scene is such that, as one views the line of coach and horses from front to back, the leading horses become larger and hence nearer. The front carries a simple cartouche of the king and queen. The colours are also vibrant, with bright scarlet braid and yellow jackets.

Our thanks for this contribution to Collectors Showcase.

See opposite for colour pictures of this very rare item.



*Fig. 1: The Bewley pottery's version of a musical commemorative ewer for the coronation of King George VI, May 12 1936.*



*Fig.2: A rear view of the ewer. Note the scale of the horses ahead of the coach team is much larger, giving an impression of perspective.*



*The Teme Valley Winders enjoy the Eastham Grange Street Organ Festival held in grounds of Eastham Grange, home of John and Hilda Phillips.*



## Christmas Wish List? Some exceptional pieces which have been brought to your editors' notice in the last year



A rare **musical zarf**, or coffee cup holder. See the article in Vol 22 No. 3, Autumn 2005. Picture by courtesy of Luuk Goldhoorn.



**Barrel organ?** Organ builder Alan Pell's interpretation, spotted by John Farmer at the Great Dorset Steam Fair. The Glass Harmonica stop is unusual...



A fine **Nicole Frères** overture box. Picture by courtesy of Brian Chesters

**Musical chairs - and table?** Actually only one chair is musical, but a rare set anyway. Pictures reproduced, with permission, from an eBay auction.





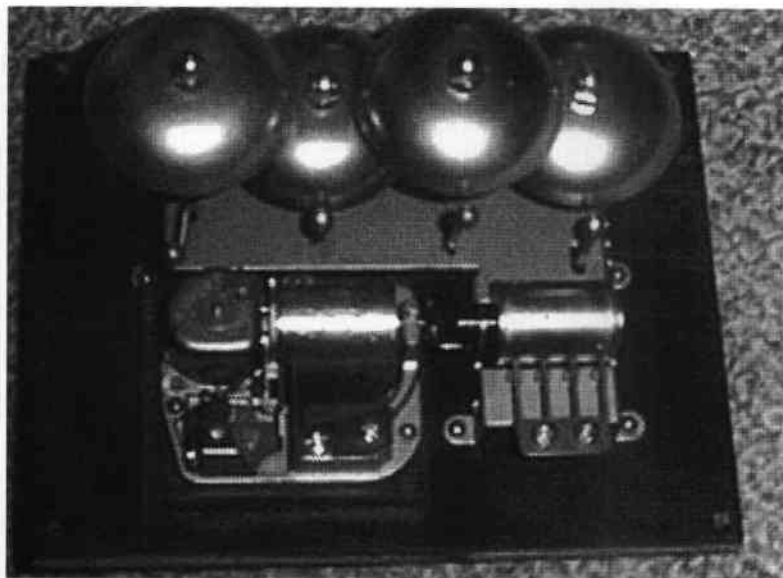
# A Strange Musical Work with Bells

by Luuk Goldhoorn

Combining the sound of bells and combs was a long lasting practice in the musical box industry. Starting in the mid 1840's they had their peak in the last years of the 19th century. In the early years the quality of the music is improved by the bells, but later, more and more they only added more din to the music, and sometimes all the bells were even tuned to the same pitch.

When the production in Switzerland dropped rapidly after 1900, the bell boxes disappeared and only small novelty works with not over 36 teeth and mostly only 12 or 18, stayed on the market. But why not re-invent a successful theme?

Some Reuge boxes are known with 3 and even 6 bells. A comb is screwed near the musical comb and on the cylinder are the pins that activate these extra teeth that strike the bells. In essence, it is the same construction which was used in the 19th century.

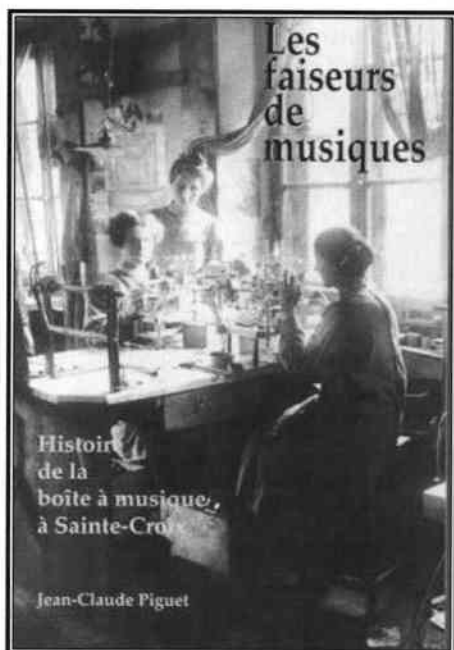


Sankyo, the big competitor to Reuge, also made boxes with added bells, all constructed in the usual way.

At least almost. For once upon a time they made quite a different and rather intricate construction: a musical box with two combs and two cylinders. The cylinders are connected by means of a rod, which can be seen in the photo. And there is a specific bell comb with only 4 teeth!

The spacing is remarkable. All bells have a different pitch. Nevertheless it certainly was not an expensive work. It has no start/stop lever, and it plays only one tune (Home, Sweet Home in this case).

Whether they were produced in quantities and in what kind of housing they were brought into the market, unfortunately I can't tell you: My example is mounted on a wooden plate.



## The Music Box Makers, The History of the Music Box in Ste. Croix

Jean-Claude Piguet's compilation of two separate works chronicles the development of the musical box industry in the Ste. Croix region of Switzerland. Beginning in the early 1800's before mass communication and electricity were common and continuing through to the age of assembly lines, this fascinating story describes the erratic fortunes of the people who were involved, their companies, and the social and economic climate they endured. An outstanding and important work, originally in French, now in English.

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# Register News No. 50

## Winter 2005

A short time ago, someone sent in details of two of their boxes for Registration. Unfortunately, they forgot to include their name or an address, so I have been unable to make contact or send any details of the Registration numbers. Would the member who sent in details of a Thibouville-Lamy box serial number 43006 and the L'Epee box serial number 36282, please contact me again as soon as possible. I believe that the person concerned lives in this country.

This issue of Register News has reached the fiftieth number, so to assist me in the future I propose to continue with the numbering system for future editions. Having written for such a long time, it becomes difficult to remember the topics covered, so numbering each and every contribution will make cross referencing in the future much easier. I also hope to change direction slightly to include a photograph or two with each and every issue. I have been aware for some time that that this section of the journal has seldom had a photograph or an illustration largely due to the difficulties of getting suitable material into the hands of an editor or a printer. Appropriate photographs will be selected from the prints that have been sent in to be filed with the Register. Other photographs will be used from time to time. It is said that a photograph says more than a thousand words and certainly a photograph is much more interesting to



look at than a block of text.

Looking at the latest auction room catalogues, I cannot help but notice that many boxes are being listed that have never been seen on the market before. I presume these boxes have been held in private collections for years and years and they are now only appearing on the open market because the owners have reached an age when they feel the time has come to dispose of their collections. It seems to be very uncommon nowadays for the next generation to have any interest in family heirlooms. Time and time again we see programmes on television with younger people wishing to dispose of quite beautiful family antiques just to fund a good party. Sad as this is, it does release some delightful items for others who do have an interest in older things and a love of our past and culture. The upshot of all this rambling is that anyone who is now in that delightful period of being "middle aged", or, if you are lucky, "young" now has an opportunity to buy some quality items the like of

which have not been seen on the market for many a long year.

Another indication of these changing times came from an antique dealer who has been in the business for many years. He told me that the days of a collector building up a serious collection appear to have gone and that customers seem only interested in owning one musical box as a conversation piece. He now keeps just one box in his general stock which may take anything up to a year or so to sell. I suppose with houses becoming smaller and increasingly filled with all sorts of electronic devices, space for large musical boxes and disc machines becomes harder and harder to find.

Returning to the Register once more, the number of boxes listed is over the 7.100 mark. Finding time to register a new box is always time consuming and as every entry takes over half an hour to finalise a back log of work soon arises. However, it is always rewarding when a particularly interesting box turns up. Recently a Weill and Harburg 8 air box with an unusual tune sheet came along. It was the type used by George Bendon as illustrated in the Tune Sheet book number 76, but in this instance under the large Royal Coat of Arms were the letters "W & H". This must be a further example of a slight alteration by a printer to satisfy the needs of an agent or manufacturer. This also illustrates the point that

manufacturers and their agents used pretty well whatever was to hand. One can imagine that in the severe winter weather of Switzerland the difficulties of obtaining another batch of tune cards from a printer who may have been 50 miles away. Better to borrow or buy one from the competition just down the road. I am more convinced than ever that the manufacturers did help each other frequently and used common parts obtained from the blank makers.

Details of a Nicole box sent in recently from America proved to be unusual. It is the first example on the Register that has a rather rare and unusual design of tune card. The tune sheet has the letters N, F, A, G in the four corners. Its heading was "Musique de Geneve" and the bottom margin had the legend "Fabrique de Nicole Freres". The serial number of the box was in the 23,000 series which means that the box must have been produced in the early to mid 1830's. This design of card must have been seen previously as it is number 46 in the series of

reproduction tune cards. The N and F are almost certain to stand for Nicole Freres, but what about the A and the G? Could that stand for "à Genève" or something else?

Whilst on the subject of reproduction tune cards, the very first person to have the idea of making reproduction cards was the late Mr. D. E. Lubbock of Leatherhead in Surrey. He was a founder member of the society holding the number 18 in the membership list. That was way back in the winter of 1962. His pioneer work in those early days has been invaluable and should be remembered with gratitude as reproduction cards are still available today. It was possible then to buy a complete batch of all the cards he had produced and there are a few people still holding a complete set! Since then others have enhanced the scheme, but all credit to Mr. Lubbock for his original idea.

What better than to conclude this edition of Register News with the first photograph that is filed in the Register filing cabinet. Of course it is not

the register entry number 1 but it is certainly a most interesting item. This ornamental clock base was made by Alibert. Both the clock and the base are signed by Alibert and extensively gilded. The oval base is in a fine burr wood with the operating levers to the front. The Napoleonic figure is very impressive and the whole item has a very French flavour.

Please send completed Register forms to The Registrar, c/o 5, East Bight, Lincoln LN2 1QH. The new and improved Register forms are available on the society website.

## Subscriptions for 2006 due

MBSGB Subscriptions fall due on January 1st 2006. There will be a flyer with all the information you need to renew your subscription with this issue of 'Music Box'. If you should have any questions regarding subscription matters, they should be addressed to Richard Kerridge, whose contact details appear on Page 98.

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# Manopan 39-key Organette Restoration

by Norman Dicker with Brian Chapman



Fig 1. The Manopan 39-key Organette, just unpacked after it's journey from Austria

In September 2003 I saw a Manopan organette advertised for sale in Austria. A computer translation of the advert stated that it was complete but in need of restoration. There were also two endless bands of music with it. It was the 39-key model. A comparison of the dimensions given in the advert with those in the MBSGB's publication, *The Organette Book*, showed that it was the superior model with double reeds. The advertisement also included a number of pictures and, having looked at these very carefully, I decided to buy the instrument.

Ten days later the carriers delivered a large, well-wrapped, box to the door. As it was a fine day, the box was taken into the garden and the unwrapping began - yards of bubble-wrap and tape before an inner box was found. More bubble wrap, polystyrene chippings discarded, and there was the Manopan with its two loops of music. I now realise just how big it is. It was soon out of the box and onto the

garden table but where was the winding handle? Back to all that packing and the handle, again wrapped in yards of bubble-wrap, was retrieved. Now it was out with the camera for a photographic session, some of which are used to illustrate this article. Fig. 1 shows the instrument when unpacked.

*The Organette Book*, by author Kevin McElhone with its chapter on restoration by past-President, Ted Brown, proved invaluable. It was exactly as illustrated on page 147 and fig. 318. The 'table of model notes' gave details of the organette and its

reeds. This was model 4, having 78 double reeds with harmonium tongues and with Forte, a device enabling the instrument to provide soft and loud passages of musical interpretation, (see fig. 2). An interesting point was that the Manopan twin-reed, or 'doppel', arrangement is different to that for most other twin-reed organettes. Most makers tune their instruments 'voix celeste' to give a pleasant wavering sound. This effect is created by the interaction of the two reeds vibrating together but at slightly different frequencies, typically four to eight cycles per second apart. With the 39-note Manopan, however, the top 36 notes are tuned 'celeste' but the bottom three notes are tuned 'contra bass', one reed being an octave below the other.

During this session, the date 1 Feb. 89 was found stamped on the bottom of the box along with a number of words/initials written in pencil. When the bottom cover was removed, further writing was found, (See fig. 3). Also, embossed into the frame were the number 18 and the letters AE, (fig 4.). The number 18 appears

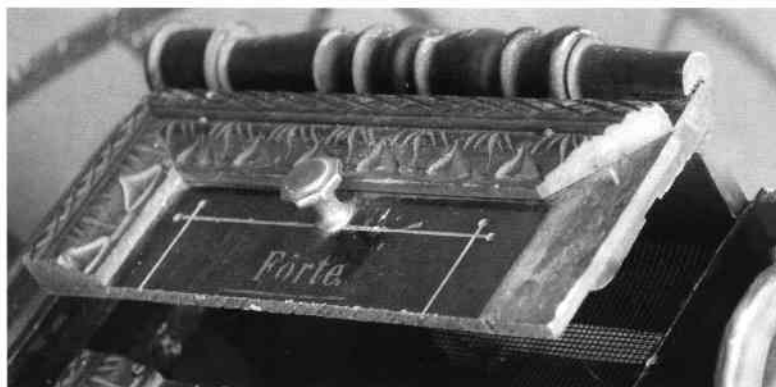


Fig 2. The Manopan 'Forte' device, allowing the operator to create louder passages.



Fig 3. Writing found on the underside 'Schrutz' after the bottom cover was removed.

again in a different place on the frame but not the letters AE.

On the side of the key frame box there is a nickel-plated brass plaque of Joseph Pick from Vienna, (fig. 5). The address from where I had purchased the Manopan is about twenty-five miles from Vienna.

Whilst waiting for delivery I had spoken to Brian Chapman about my purchase and he was eager to see it when it arrived. As I had never restored an instrument before, Brian had very kindly offered to undertake the restoration with my inexperienced help. I duly phoned Brian and arranged for him and his wife, Joan to come to examine the Manopan. Brian's first comment when he came was "Have you got a screwdriver?" but he would have to wait as we had booked a table for lunch at a local Pub. As soon as we returned home, Brian got to work with the screwdriver and the key frame pressure bar was soon removed. The rubber rollers were in poor condition and would need to



Fig 4. Letters AE stamped into the frame. The number 18 appears elsewhere but without the AE.



Fig 5. Nickel plated brass nameplate of Josef Pick of 78 Neubaugasse, Vienna, the 'First Large Music Warehouse'.

be renewed, but this had been pointed out in the advertisement.

The remaining screws holding the top cover were removed but the top would not budge. A closer examination showed that when the top had last been put back two layers of double sided sticky foam tape was used as a gasket. With a sharp kitchen knife this was carefully slit and the top removed.

Everything appeared to be intact although the four feeders had been painted a pale green colour in an attempt to seal them, (fig. 6). There was no sign of woodworm anywhere in the organ. Inside we found a small paper sticker, about the size of a 10p coin, for a firm of paper and card suppliers, Karl Rothhauer, from Bad Ischl, (fig. 7). I have searched on the Internet for any reference to this firm but so far have drawn a blank. The word Ischel (sic) had been written in pencil on the bottom of the organ. Before putting the top back we



Fig 6. View of the feeders. Note the circular valves and the valve-actuating rod driving 4 feeders linked in pairs.

covered the foam with masking tape so that next time it would be easier to remove. Next Brian wanted to look at the reeds so the screws from the cover were removed, the sticky foam tape attacked - this time only one layer - and the cover was removed. This confirmed that the organette had double reeds and they were all in place. The reeds all appear to be numbered, (fig 8).

Next to come off was the key-frame top that looked badly warped and had a number of splits in the top veneer. As soon as the top was off we could see that at some time in the past a groove had been cut across the board where it sat over the bottom roller bar that was of square section, (fig. 9). At the inner edge the drive shaft had been rubbing on the wooden top, which had worn very thin. This will need attending to during the restoration so the top was carefully replaced. Whilst waiting for the restoration to begin Brian suggested that I



Fig 7. A small blue label with white lettering of the agent, Karl Rothauer



Fig 8. The reed bank. Note that each of the three banks carries pairs of reeds, one on top and the other underneath.

should clean off the foam tape that had been used to seal the top and reed box cover. I also cleaned up the carved trims that were full of years of accumulated dirt.

Before I had purchased the Manopan I knew from searching on the Internet that music for this scale was included on some Continental suppliers lists. I ordered five books from Le Ludion and was quoted a three-month delivery time because of the unusual scale and card required. As the Manopan needed restoring the time scale quoted for delivery was not a problem for me. I also made contact with a supplier in Germany who could produce a few books but not until spring 2004 as he was currently producing 28-note Tanzbar music. Fig. 10 shows part of the programme purchased with the organette.

In order to get the rubber rollers replaced we needed to find out the correct

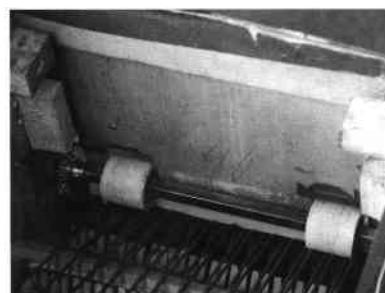


Fig 9. The square-sectioned drive shaft for the rollers.



Fig 10. A piece of the musical programme, with the Manopan trademark.

diameter and an email to Kevin McElhone, who soon produced the answer and the offer of some music. This music has now arrived and has greatly increased the repertoire already available.

I was keen to hear the two original books of music that came with the organette so I input the notes into a computer programme called Sonar using the piano roll view. I do not read music, so in order to transfer from the books to Sonar I created a scale card showing the Midi note number corresponding to each row on the book. I now have two files that I can play using the reed organ setting to hear these pieces. I can also use these files to print templates of the books, which at some time will need re-cutting. These books are 1.3 meters in length and play for 65 seconds each.

Just before Christmas we were due to have some ceilings replaced at home so the Manopan was taken to Brian's, where the restoration work was to be carried out. Soon after Christmas I received a phone call to say that it had been dismantled, but it had been a very difficult job as the last person to work on it had used PVA glue when re-assembling. (I think at that time my name was not

mentioned at Brian's!).

I collected some of the pieces from Brian so that I could clean off all the glue and sticky foam that had been used previously. We had also found that a hard grey/brown compound had been used in places to try to seal air leaks. (It looked similar to the old GumGum compound used to seal leaking car exhausts.) This had even been put over screw heads on one set of feeders. The backboard of one pair of feeders had a bad split across the width of the board. This split was 3mm in width at one edge.

Whilst I was cleaning up the key frame box I looked at the reeds through a magnifying glass and started to make a note of the position and numbers. I found that there are no numbers 11, 27 or 33 in the sequence and the top three reeds are not numbered.

The next part of this article will show how the work progressed, some of the difficulties encountered and how they were overcome. Amongst further illustrations there will be ones of the key-frame and linkage to air motors, the attractive engraved casework and a close-up of the beautifully patterned winding handle.



It was then suggested that British mechanical music enthusiasts should form a British Chapter of the American-based Musical Box Society International. Four of us huddled round a table in Cyril's back room in Devonshire Place and decided that, being British, we ought to distance ourselves from these Yanks and, while retaining friendly relations, create our own British musical-box society.

By now we had around thirty people nationwide who had 'come clean' and put their hands up to being collectors. On December 1st 1962 we staged a meeting at the Mandeville Hotel in West London to see if we could formulate a future.

At 12.35 pm the invited people present unanimously voted to inaugurate a body to be called The Musical Box Society of Great Britain. Quickly, an executive committee emerged. For president there was no question that John E T Clark, author of the only British book on musical boxes, was the ideal person. The man who had done so much to bring everybody together – respected dental surgeon Cyril de Vere Green – was an obvious choice for secretary.

For vice-president Gerry Planus, the tall, large and witty South London cockney sewing-machine-shop owner, was a popular choice. It was, after all, in Gerry's shop where so many of us used to go on a Saturday morning. In those days, most of us were, by residence, cispointines, so we had the burden of a transpointine journey (a culture-shock, we used to proclaim rather tongue-in-cheek) to find this 'safe-house' for our hobby. We would enter rather furtively, quickly pass the displays of machines, needles and accessories and then, after a hasty look behind to make certain nobody had followed us in, it was a quick dash behind a curtain and into the little back room kitchen where, in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke and mugs of tea, we listened in rapture to his instruments.

The first treasurer was Frank Greenacre, the amiable banker from Gorleston-on-Sea in Suffolk. Frank's wonderful humour and financial expertise got our fledgling society off to a sound start.

That left the matter of somebody to run the Society newsletter for it was understood that regular communication with all members was the very cornerstone of the Society's operation. For that job it was felt that I was probably the only one present who might have sufficient talent (and stamina) for the task.

My job was to establish and run the journal and from the start we called it The Music Box on the grounds that the objects we collected were 'musical boxes' and a 'music box' was merely a receptacle in which to keep things musical.

The first issue, typed out by myself on an elderly portable typewriter using strange-smelling 'skin' stencils and hand-printed on a flat-bed Ellams oil-ink duplicator (purchased new in 1938 for 37s.6d.) was dated 'Winter 1962/63'. In it I expressed the aims of the Journal in the following terms:

The Journal is intended as a clearing house for information, news, views, opinions and relevant material. It is thus dependent on the support of you, the individual member, to contribute matter of interest to others.

These words reflected my own realisation that none of us really knew anything much about the pieces that we collected but that each of us knew something – we each had a little piece of the jigsaw in our hands. If only I could use the magazine as a means of bringing those pieces together, then we might all benefit. In this respect the magazine would lean towards the scholarly approach rather than the popular or social side.

Well, we succeeded and our little Society went from strength to strength. The magazine remained hand-printed for several years until we changed to lithography, still from my typewritten masters. We moved to IBM 'golf-ball' typewriter to improve the appearance of the text. Ultimately, with the acquisition of a curious device called a Varityper, we went to 'imitation typesetting'.

When the magazine started, a rather basic problem was its physical size and it made sense to use the largest-sized standard sheet of office paper which was the curiously-named foolscap. This could be folded in half to produce four decent-sized pages and it was this that dictated the size of the magazine until the end of 1974.

By now, though, the world of printing had changed dramatically and already the ancient foolscap-sized paper was presenting limitations. I decided that The Music Box should become much larger and, at the cost of the undoubted advantages in having all bound volumes the same size, took the decision to propose a change to A4 supported by benefits in cost of printing and flexibility of layout. After an admittedly difficult Committee debate, I won and in Spring 1975 we started Volume 7 with a full computer-graphic set and properly printed A4 magazine. Also, for the first time, it bore the strapline 'an international magazine of mechanical music'. I secured a contract price for our half-tone printing blocks and for each issue I amassed a great and heavy stack of expensive etched copper.

Editorially, The Music Box was professionally demanding. Having established a certain

quality of content, it was inevitable that some contributions which did not measure up to the depth of research and scholarship that the editorial policy demanded had to be rejected. Naturally this caused some controversy in some quarters but it enabled the high quality of editorial content to be maintained.

I also attached considerable importance to the appearance and layout of the magazine and every page had to be individually and collectively attractive to the eye before I would seal it. I avoided the pitfalls of typography and clutter, selecting carefully not just the family font but the typeface weights for each headline and department – in the belief that readers would react to familiar signposts in text.

It was at this time that I was paid the supreme compliment by the then presidents of the German and the French societies. Their goals, they said independently, was to produce a journal of the same standard as that of ours. This was in 1975 and it positioned *The Music Box* as the top magazine in its limited field.

Perhaps curiously, I was not wholly at ease with this and so when invited to address the annual general meeting of the German society in Hanover I decided to adopt a psychological approach. I berated our German friends for their lack of scholarship, reminding them that they sat on a vast archive of early published material access to much of which was denied to non-German researchers.

A hushed audience listened in horror to this upstart Englishman telling them what to do – and in rather bad German as well! But my words fell, as intended, on receptive ears and within a very short while the German society, of which I am proud to be an executive member, was to produce the most informed and consistently important journal in the whole field of mechanical music.

The French society also advanced significantly into the field of historical research and this is still reflected in the pages of its excellent journal to this day.

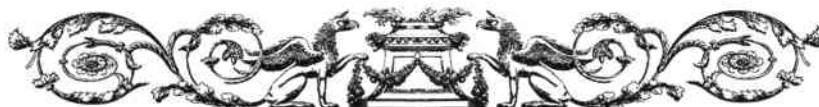
But *The Music Box* was always hard work for me as a pro-active editor, requiring extensive travel, attending meetings, auctions and events up and down the country, following events that concerned members, commenting in an informed way on matters parochial and national. In 1981, by which time I was President of the Society, I handed over the reins.

...continued on Page 129

## *New Forest Antique Restoration Ltd.*



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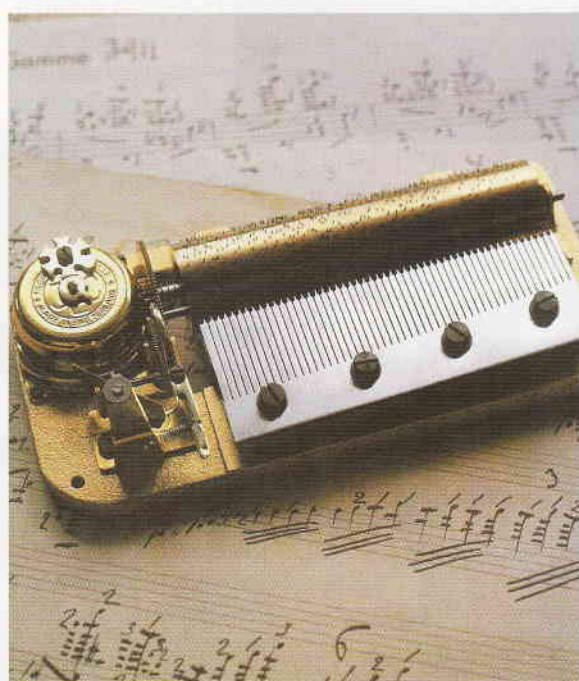
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*A selection of illustrations celebrating  
the 50th Anniversary of the Baud  
Museum at L'Auberson, Ste Croix,  
Switzerland*

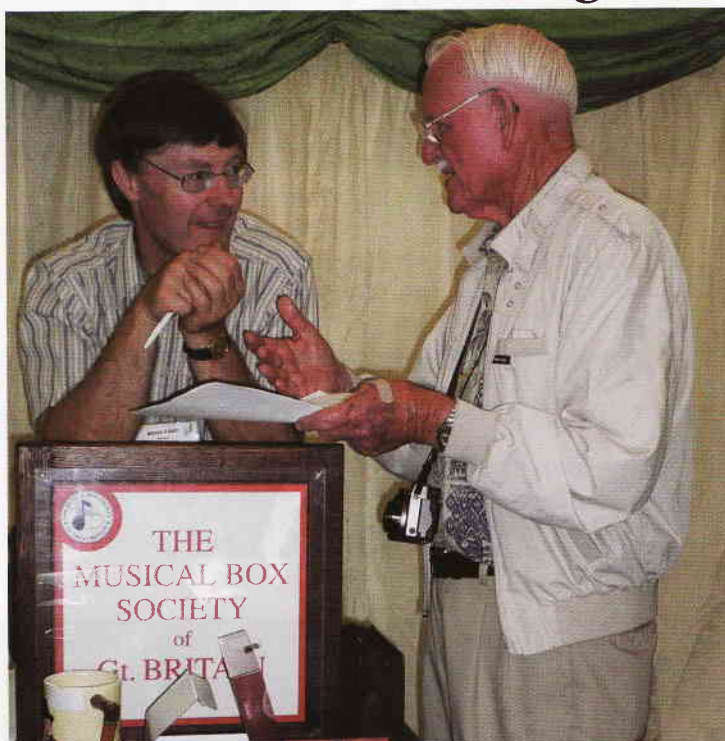






## International Meeting 2005

*Clockwise from top left, members and guests study prospective purchases at the Auction, Lester Jones (2nd from left) demonstrates his fine collection at Portfield, Chichester, guests enjoying the Banquet Dinner, and a jolly ride on the early double-decker bus at Amberly Chalkpits Museum.*



*Centre: President and auctioneer Christopher Proudfoot discusses auction procedure with a guest.*

*Pictures kindly provided by Keith Reedman.*





# Joint International Meeting 2005

## Daphne Ladell reports

I am very pleased to report that our first ever International joint meeting with the MBSI was a great success, or as one American put it "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" We had a total of 151 visitors from all around the world who registered with us, America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Sweden, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Holland and of course England.

The highlight for us was at the Banquet Dinner when the MBSI awards were presented and two awards went to English members, having 2 out of the 4 awards going to English members was an extremely good result. Awards in the order they were presented were:

*The Darlene Mirijanian Award went to Lester Jones.*

*The Roehl Ambassador Award went to Ted and Kay Brown*

*David Bowers Literary Award went to Jean-Claude Piquet*

*Trustees' Award went to William H. Edgerton*

Table favours that were given out at the Banquet Dinner, made by John and Hilda Phillips, were a great success. These were in the form of a limited addition of London Transport red double-decker bus with musical movement, and they created a lot of excitement. We have a few left over, so if you were unable attend and would like one; the Closed Top Bus Limited addition, range 1 to 240, is £14. There are also a few Open Top Bus Limited addition, range 1 to 48, at £18. Anyone interested should contact me, both these prices exclude postage.

The hotel accommodation and services were to a very high

standard. Initially some of our visitors were a little dismayed to see that all dinners and entertainment were to be held in a marquee (the Americans called it a tent), but once they experienced the atmosphere and quality of the décor and facilities on offer, dismay turned to complete satisfaction. The hotel gave us superb support and service. All the staff were extremely willing and helpful, always on hand to deal with a situation before it became a problem. The food was first class and served hot and quickly. The spit roast suckling pig for the BBQ on Thursday night got the cameras going and had people's mouths watering.

The meeting ran very smoothly, all coaches were on time; even if some coaches encountered less traffic than expected for a Bank holiday weekend and reached their venue early, they were never late. Hugh Morgan and Kay Brown the Coach Marshals, ran around making sure all our members were out of the hotel and directed to their coaches where our Coach Deputies took over. The Coach Deputies did an excellent job. They explained about the venue to be visited, and even managed to mention a little about the countryside as they travelled through it, and never lost anybody. In fact John Ward, who looked after 2 trips was such a hit with our visitors he was asked if he would Coach Marshal at next year's meeting in the States.

Thanks to the coach deputies - *Paul Bellamy, Gordon and Kay Copper, Bob and Sylvia Ducat-Brown, Alan Godier, Allan and Sanchia Licalsi, David and Jean Pilgrim, Joan Rippengal and John Ward*

Many people expressed their appreciation for the wide range of tours on offer to musical collections. I met each coach

when it returned, to make sure there were no problems for me to sort out, and from comments I received it is clear that every one thoroughly enjoyed their choice of tours and most people said they wished they could have stayed longer. Also, many added that they were extremely pleased to see and hear such a wide variety of music and musical instruments.

I would like to thank Finchcocks for a very interesting visit to their museum. But even more, to thank Ted Brown, Barry Wilson for opening their homes and *Clive Jones* for opening his museum free of charge, and the 'Northern members' who presented such an excellent display of instruments in Box Hill village pub. Some of these instruments had travelled hundreds of miles for the display. For my part I would like to thank those members that helped me to open my home as I was not able to devote all my time to show my instruments.

The Play and Display (Workshops) on Sunday covered a wide range of interesting subjects, all were well attended. Feedback from both 'Speakers' and audience indicated they could well have done with several days to cover everything that was being discussed.

My apologies to any one, or any item missed in this short article giving an initial report on the MBSGB / MBSI Joint International meeting held at Guildford in August 2005.

In the next issue of our Journal we will be inserting a Special Souvenir Supplement which will have lots of pictures and fuller descriptions on each of the Tours and Trips, the various evening's entertainment and the Sunday Play and Display subjects, and a full list of thanks to all the helpers.

# **Paillard -Vaucher and Large Musical Boxes.**

August Paillard-Vaucher was a maker and trader since the 1830s, and became Paillard-Vaucher et Fils in 1867 when his son Arthur took over. They were noted for making "large cylinder boxes" and they gained a medal at the 1867 Paris Exhibition. They also ran their P.V.F. agency in London.

I think serial 12621 shown in Fig. 1 is a fair example of their output. The 15" (38cm) cylinder plays only six airs which allows two 61-tooth sublime harmonie combs, promising good music quality. The third comb, of 18 teeth for the 9 bells and 9 drum beaters promises good percussion - which can, however, be silenced at will (or at command).

The mechanism is quite typical, with blank numbers 2 for the spring and bedplate edge, and 14 for the cylinder and governor, Fig. 2. The serial number is scribed on the comb bases and on some percussion components, and stamped on the bass end cylinder bearing, in usual St. Croix style, see Fig. 3. So as expected the first tune is



Fig. 2. Blank 14 on governor blade and on cylinder bearing ( the latter less well seen by sulky digital camera despite the screen I put in front of the great wheel to remove distractions)

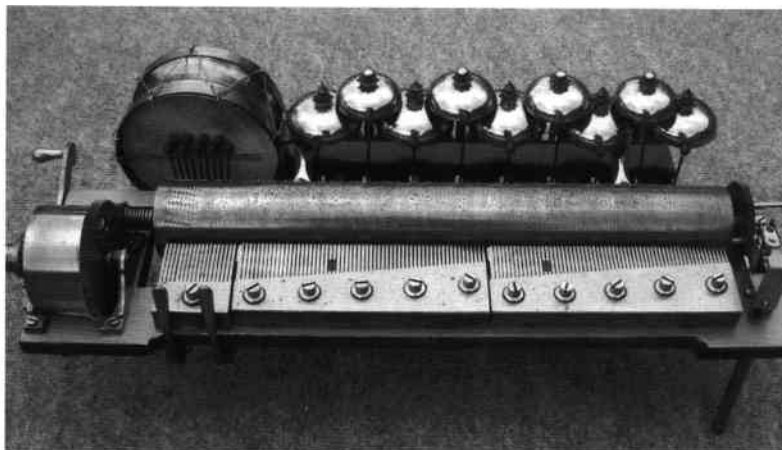


Fig. 1. P.V.F. 12621 with separate comb at bass end for 9 drum and 9 bell strikers. The 440Hz a teeth are marked on the music combs, which have most teeth tuned in pairs making groups of four available to the arrangers.

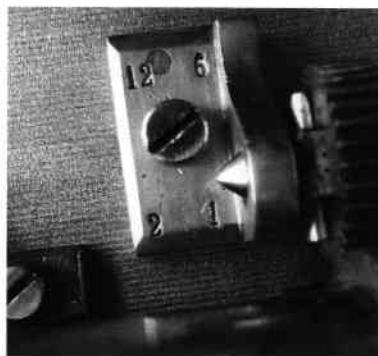


Fig. 3. Serial 12621 stamped in usual Ste. Croix style on the bass end cylinder bearing.

pinned on the cylinder dots and track lines. There are no markings on the cylinder end caps nor on the bedplate. The bass lead is scribed 675, the gamme number; and two other marks, one like the Greek letter pi.

The comb bases are SBI castings and heavier than usual; the two surfaces resting on the bedplate are both 10mm wide tapering to 7mm at their treble ends. Three 10mm legs 94mm (3.7") long support the bedplate and keep the drum resonator about 10mm clear of the case bottom, the sound board.

Unusual features include the two gaps between the three combs, which equal one



Fig. 4. Unpinned track between the bell teeth and the fat bass tooth.

missing tooth each, so there are two unpinned tracks on the cylinder, see Fig. 4. Also, the tune change lever is abnormally long, technically OK and shown in Fig. 5.

The bells and drum are mounted on a brass bar fixed to brackets above the bedplate.

Two iron straps under the bedplate support the slotted wood cover for the bell strikers.

The case is 26 by 12 1/2" by 10 inches (66 by 32 by 26cms). It is impressive rather than "fetching," and was concisely catalogued by

Christies as “Amboyna case with stringing, ebonised margins and ormolu handles” - Fig. 6. Despite reminders I can never remember what ormolu means. Probably the nearest is Oxford’s “Gilded bronze used in decorating furniture.” Snag is, it can be “gilded shoddy brass castings”, hence the advice not to trust them too far when lifting.

Opening the case (luckily with a folding stay for its heavy lid) reveals the tune sheet of serial 12621. It appears in the tune sheet book as no. 42 and the same design is at no.112 with P.V.F. added in the bottom margin. The significance of this sometimes added P.V.F. is not known; it could equally be “this sometimes removed P.V.F.” for agents who pretended to be makers. But the “lyres and stars” design when printed by Vve. Valluet at Besançon is firmly attributed to Paillard-Vaucher. It is reproduced again here with tune dates and the Johann Strauss II Opus numbers added, see Fig. 7.

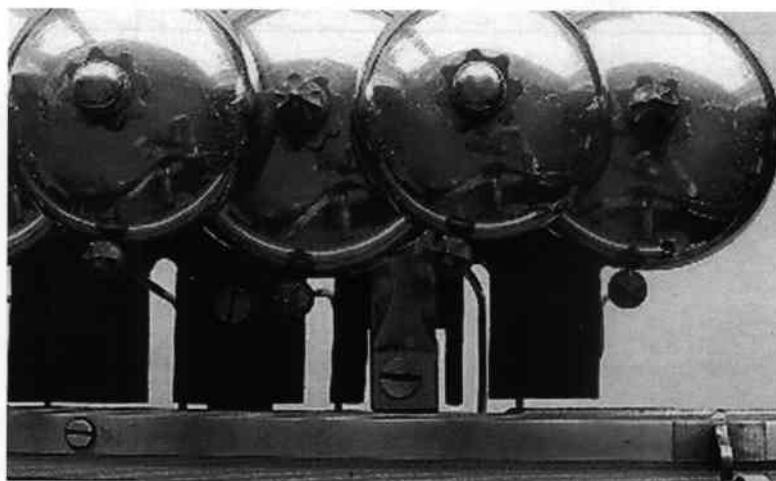


Fig. 5. The tune change lever measures 5.3" (133mm) from pivot screw to finger operating snail cam. The screw beside the lever supports the treble end of the bells-and-drum gantry. The other screw secures the black polished board under the bells.



Fig. 6. Quadrant corners on the inner lines of stringing. Another extra touch of class for serial 12621.



Fig. 7. Paillard-Vaucher et fils “lyres and stars” tune sheet on 12621. The German title for tune 2 is Freikugeln (literally, free roll). Tune 4 is the Blessing of the swords, and that ranks with tunes 5 and 6 as potentially Grand-Pompous-Majestic, in the terminology used in H. M. V’s Mood Music catalogue of the 1940s.



Fig. 8. The same "lyres and stars" design on a 15" box with drum, bells and castanet, serial number not known. Latest tune no.11, 1880. This tune sheet with its affected calligraphy must have been re-written in the P.V.F. Holborn office before delivery to agent J. Hebblewhite at 41, Houndsditch. Perhaps the faded lyre panels were already faded.

Tune 1 with Brussels premiere in December 1872 was an instant hit and its tunes often headed tune sheet lists. Grand opera provided tunes 4 and 5, the latter now usually called The Wedding March. Tune 6 translates as Town and Country, with country in the sense of a nation, and is a bit like a national anthem. It makes a good final tune for a good batch, of which the latest is no. 1, effectively 1873.

### Sublime Harmonie.

The Sublime Harmonie patent was first published in 1874 by Charles Paillard and it was soon taken up by Ste. Croix makers including Paillard-Vaucher. It progressed to larger combs, then a third comb for adding tremolo etc. and then

percussion. I think it took around ten years, though that is hard to estimate because sublime harmonie boxes with percussion are exceedingly rare, and surely limited to the "larger cartels." But Paillard-Vaucher et Fils had financial troubles in 1881 and closed down in Ste. Croix in 1885. So serial 12621, which has almost the longest possible combs, with above-average percussion, must have been made before 1881.

It could even be as early as 1875, if they had decided to "have a go" at pepping up the sublime harmonie invention with a bit of extra. Their "larger cartels" ranged from 16-air 2-per-turn boxes with fat 15" cylinders (like in Fig. 8) right through to revolver boxes with four 12" 6-air cylinders. The design

of tune sheets for the revolver boxes was the same as no. 296, and good music was supplied from about 120 comb teeth.

As an old-established Ste. Croix maker they probably got instant and effective service from tune arrangers. The Book of Tunes includes sublime harmonie arrangements for combs of 125 teeth; they are listed for "6 airs, 12 pouces or 8 airs, 16 pouces." Tunes 5 and 6 are among those listed. There are no listings for sublime harmonie combined with percussion.

### Musical quality.

The arrangers certainly took a lot of care with serial 12621. They managed to emphasize the different styles of the six tunes, and they made the bells add their



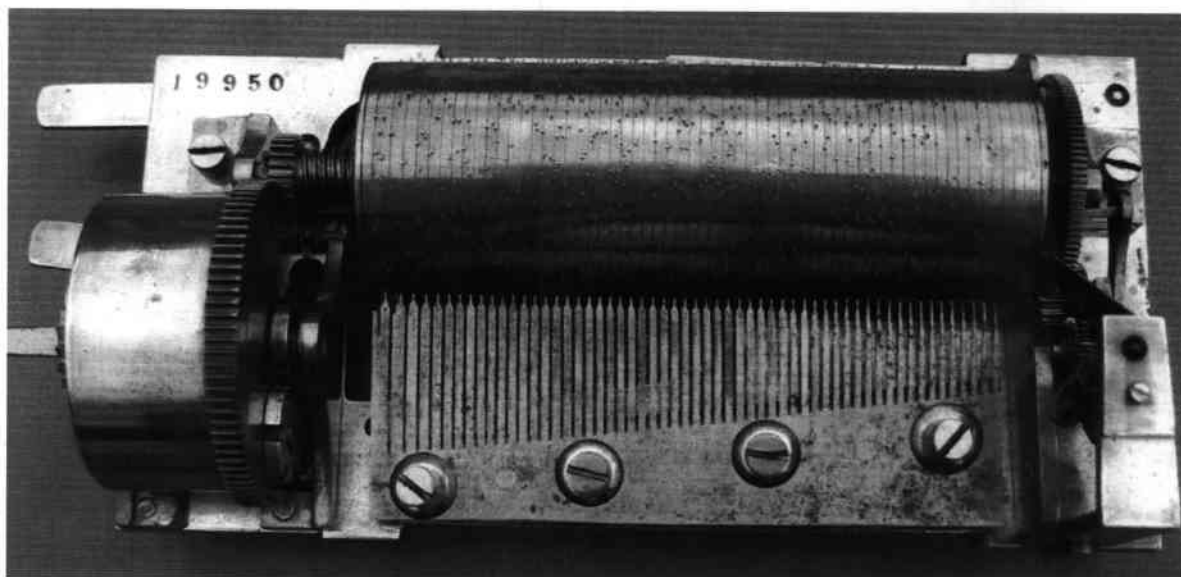


Fig. 9. Typical key-wind, with  $4\frac{1}{4}$ " by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter (108 by 38mm) cylinder playing four airs on 57 teeth. Domed brass comb washers.

distinctive sound to every tune. As for the drum, it is easily switched off. I think it makes a useful appearance in tune 6 (allowably pompous) and in tune 4 where my own appreciation, coming 125 years after the box was made and 150 after the tune was composed, has been moulded by several filmic weddings. The first few bars are repeated and repeated as routine chords at the end of *The Philadelphia Story* (M.G.M. 1940) where they are significantly outclassed by serial 12621 (P.V.F.1880)

#### Who made this one?

More detective work was requested for the commonplace key-wind shown in Fig. 9. "Look at this, key-wind and high serial number, nearly 20,000" they said, "it must be a doddle to trace the maker."

Well, it was made from a blank which was only slightly unusual in having iron control levers and showing the screwed tips of its four legs in full view

above the bedplate, see Fig. 10. Also, the only blank number was 6, stamped only on the bedplate and governor and the tune change control lever, though a casually scribed 50 on the bearing brackets might be a substitute. A scribed marking 866 was on comb and bass lead, surely the gamme number. The serial 19950 was stamped on the bedplate and scribed on the cylinder bass end, as per usual practice.

Tune 1 is pinned on the cylinder dots, which strongly suggests Ste. Croix area manufacture. The only Geneva possibles, making key-winds in serial numbers around 20,000, are Ducommun Girod and Lecoultré; but both had distinctive features missing from this movement. Similarly, Karrer can be excluded at this high serial number; and L'Epée for its own distinctive blanks.

Why do I not mention possible clues from the tune sheet and the case? Because both were missing. The movement came in a very

second-hand cardboard box, packed with two buff envelopes, both empty. But it played, and was bought simply because it played a very attractive arrangement of the antique Irish melody, Robin Adair.

The Piguet book, now more available since the English translation was published last year by the MBSI, has an excellent bar chart showing the productive years of 85 Ste. Croix area makers, from 1812 until 1996. Unfortunately the output of these makers is still veiled in mystery because (1) it is not known if their serial numbers include the petites musiques most of them made and (2) it is not known whether or when they started a new series when the company changed its boss or its name. So I made two assumptions; that they did include small boxes with cartels (like Nicole did but Bremond didn't); and that we would watch out for possible new series of numbers.

An extra clue comes from



Fig. 10. Brass-tipped end for the control lever. Polished top of bedplate leg visible in screwed hole, countersunk for stylish finish. (Another is at top right of Fig. 9.)

the fact that the 19950 blank was quite likely made in Ste. Croix, - and before 1860, being key-wind. It may have been an Edmond Fornachon casting (though it has no EF casting mark) with supplies of parts from local cottage industry... for example the stop arm pin is tapered on two flat faces over its whole length, which I have never seen before. Luckily, Fornachon gets more space in the English version of the Piguet book, which confirms that he did make blanks, - from about 1850.

So then it seemed worthwhile to list from the bar chart all makers active from 1830 or earlier up to 1860, who could have attained 19950 serial number by 1860.

There are eleven such makers, - 2 Bornands, Jules Cuendet, 2 Jaccards, 2 Jaques, Salomon Junod, Mermod, Paillard and Paillard-Vaucher. By eliminating those known not to have reached that serial number by 1860, that list can be reduced to four, namely Bornand Freres, Jules Cuendet, Jaccard Freres and Paillard.

I am tempted to add Abraham Cuendet, whose serial number 16593 still

had comb teeth in groups of five. He could have reached 19950 by about 1850, when Piguet says he gave up industrial work; but the bar chart shows him closed at 1842.

However, reduction to four possibilities brought some hope, and it seemed safe to eliminate Cuendet despite the rather weak argument that key-wind cartels by him are not known. Piguet also repeats that the Paillards started slowly, and if so they could not have reached 19950 in time. That leaves, as favourites, Bornand Freres and Jaccard Freres. About their products, practically nothing is known except a few Exhibition awards for boxes of unknown serial numbers. The total Bornand presence on the Register in March 2005 is two key-winds by E. Bornand and two lever-winds by Justin Bornand though they made well over 20,000 boxes. The total Jaccard presence is: Edouard 3; Salomon 2; and Jaccard Freres 2.... out of a total exceeding 45,000.

So, despite many clues carefully considered, we are still not very near naming the maker of the Fig. 9 box, leaving these notes disconsolately fizzling out.

## 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.

2921 Paul Vickers  
Somerset

2922 Mrs. Marion Shead,  
Essex

2923 Rudy Vervoort.  
Belgium

2924 Derek Rowland.  
Suffolk

2925 Rowland Lee.  
Lincs

## Alan & Daphne Wyatt

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Cambridge**

on

**Saturday 10th December**

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or

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# News from Other Societies

from John Farmer

## Het Pierement – July 2005 (Reviewed by Peter Whitehead)

The restoration of two organs, the Pelican, originally a 52 key Limonaire, and the Nuberg Marengi is described in different articles in this issue. Both organs were, it seems, given the Carl Frei treatment in the late 1920's and their similarities (both having been through Carl Frei's hands at roughly the same time) and differences (being of different factory origin) are described. The Pelican had been in De Efteling, a Dutch theme park, for 50 odd years and, last year, having faithfully performed day in day out over all that time, finally ceased to function any more, suffering the indignity of having its sound replaced by a sound system. The organ had been the centrepiece in a roundabout over the years, the pipework was discovered to be badly affected by damp and many pipes were mouldy, quite apart from the bird's nest found in a side section of the instrument. The Nuberg Marengi, on the other hand, after serving initially as a dance organ in Antwerp then played on the streets of Amsterdam (under the ownership of Hein Nuberg, after whom it has been named) and other towns, even doing duty for a while in a fairground ride. A change of ownership in 2001 was the stimulus for this particular organ's restoration.

"Glorious Organ Days", a series of articles on Haarlem's past, especially with reference to the Jupiter organ, continues with another good dose of nostalgia, as

does a further episode on Brabant's organ past, which makes mention of the factory of Fasani & Co in Antwerp. Eusebius Fasani had originally worked for Gavioli in Paris, before setting up on his own in Belgium, but fled to England for a while after the attack on Antwerp at the beginning of World War one. The importance of the small villages in the border (Holland/Belgium) area along the old Bredabaan, the main road between Breda and Antwerp, which had originally been constructed in the time of Napoleon in 1811, has, it appears, largely gone, due to the construction of the road that is now the E19 motorway (a bit like that of Stamford, now by-passed by the modern A1?). Many of these villages, it seems, had cafes with automatic musical instruments of various sorts and these were frequented by day-trippers to Antwerp.

An update on the Leon Warnies Stichting, a foundation to support the restoration and acquisition of organs otherwise threatened by export from Holland or by deterioration, is given by its new chairman, Rein Schenk. Over the 40 years of existence of the foundation there has been an increasing tendency for organs to end up in private hands, rather than, as before, in the hands of commercial firms hiring out the instruments to be played on the streets. Consequently a fundamental change in the constitution and aims of the foundation has been necessary. Although a board member may now also be an organ owner, there is exclusion from receiving financial aid from the foundation, and he or she is

expected not to participate in any discussions on aid for any project in which he/she is in any way involved. Organs originally made by recognised firms, whether in original condition or professionally altered and maintained, as well as replica organs, which are considered to promote the culture of street organs, are all eligible for financial assistance.

Financial help with acquisition of an organ is only available to other foundations, not to private owners, for fear of price inflation, though private owners may apply for help with restoration. Provisionally, there is a ceiling of 40% of reimbursable costs of purchase and restoration and a maximum of 25% for goods involved in the particular organ project. Provision for repayment of assistance when the organ is sold within 10 years has been established, though generally if the new owner fulfils the same conditions on promotion of the culture of organs in Holland no repayment will occur. The Leon Warnies Stichting works fairly closely in hand with the KvD and will soon have its own pages within the KvD website. ([www.draaiorgel.org](http://www.draaiorgel.org))

A reader's letter, by Jan van Dinteren, expresses considerable concern at the virtual sidelining, by organ event organisers, of the larger organs, especially at events held in Switzerland and Germany. It seems that there is an increasing tendency for the larger organs to be thought a nuisance, for reasons of noise, at many

events, including those held in city centres, and for pride of place to be given to the smaller, often new-built, hand cranked organs, to the detriment of the large organs, whose owners are made to feel unwelcome as a result.

Mention is made of the high quality of a series of 6 Welte CDs, produced by the Pierian Recording Society in Texas - Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel and Alexander Scriabin being amongst the composers and pianists. A Feuerich grand piano was possibly used by the Welte recording studios in Freiburg, and for this series of recordings a fully restored Feuerich grand piano dating from 1923 has also been used. The CDs are available on the Internet from Amazon UK (quote the name 'Pierian', though).

#### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 185, July/August 2005**

Ralph Schack's President's message for this issue is that we should be making every effort to introduce young children to mechanical music, since they are the ones that will be fascinated, and we could be sowing the seeds for future collectors. If you have grandchildren, involve them, other wise look for opportunities at local playgroups, schools, etc.

Amongst the chapter reports is one from the Southeast on their April meeting held in New Orleans. I hope they and all the other MBSI members in that part of the USA have survived the ravages of Katrina, and will be able to visit New Orleans again in the future. Also in this issue is an 11 page tribute to Ralph Heinz who passed away in April. Several MBSI members, and Ralph's family, have written

of their memories of him.

#### **MBSI News Bulletin, Issue 186, September/October 2005**

Latest news in this issue from Publications Chairman Robin Biggins is that the MBSI is to merge its two publications, the News Bulletin and the main journal Mechanical Music. This will take place early in 2006 and the single publication, called Mechanical Music, The Journal of the Musical Box Society International, will be produced 6 times a year. The intention is to limit costs whilst enabling a part colour publication which is more up to date. I look forward to reviewing it.

The newly formed Lake Michigan Chapter submits its first report, covering the May 14th visit to Jasper and Marian Sanfilippo's extremely comprehensive collection at Barrington Hills, Illinois. The Chapter intends to have two "featured" instruments at each meeting, and for this one they were the Welte Style 3 Orchestrion, and the Gavioli Piano Quartet piano orchestrion. A short feature article on each instrument follows the report.

#### **The Key Frame Issue KF1/05**

Jonathan N Smith gives a summary of his progress in restoring a 92 key Mortier at the Grampian Transport Museum in Alford, Aberdeenshire, and Nick Williams provides a very detailed description, with illustrations, of the restoration of the 38 key Catri Opdam street organ "De Toren" (The Tower). Peter Clarke reviews the Gavioli Gathering at North Newington, Banbury, and Michael Clark recounts the

2004 MOOS Tour, The Haarlem Phoenix. This issue also includes a list of Museums and Collections in the UK, and an events calendar from March to June.

#### **The Key Frame Issue KF2/05**

Fred Dahlinger Jr.'s extensive article on Alexander Gasparini and Foucher-Gasparini originally appeared in the 'Carousel Organ', the journal of the Carousel Organ Association of America. Dating of the business is not definitive, but it seems to have started around 1880 and survived, as Foucher-Gasparini, until at least 1911. The company made several different types of organs and Fred has included several lists of style numbers and key sizes for various types. Gasparini also made the majority of Pierement (Dutch street organs) prior to 1910. After then, Limonaire Frères was the major supplier and there is conjecture that Limonaire actually took over Gasparini in 1912.

The restoration of a 35 key Limonaire is detailed by WH Kromer supported by a large number of photographs of the various components. The restoration required was extensive due mostly to the fact that the lower part of the organ had suffered flooding. Elsewhere in this issue is a list of Museums and Collections outside the UK, and an events calendar from July 2005 to January 2006.

#### **Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Summer, 2005, Vol XXIV, No.2**

The first two articles in this issue are about serial numbers on Estey Grand Salon organs. It has been discovered that at least 2 such organs bear marking on the back showing "No.



100,000" in large black letters. However, further investigation has shown that only one of these carries the proper serial number 100,000 on its internal label, the other was found to be 100,009. The reason for these is not clear but it is assumed that Estey possibly produced a limited edition, which set them apart from other examples, but no others have yet been found.

John Morley tells of his acquisition of a most unusual instrument in the form of a Wick Organ, which looks like a writing desk, and functions as such, but unfolds to produce a single manual organ. Brenda Ebie tells of the Wainwright's Reed Organ Museum in Woodville, New Zealand. The Wainwrights purchased their first organ in 2001, and by 2003 had accumulated thirteen. This led them to buy and convert a

redundant church social hall, which opened in November 2004 with 61 organs. Finally, Coleman Kimbrell relates his restoration of an 1892 Moline organ, with several pictures (one of which traditionally includes Miss Opuss the cat, inspecting the finished article).

### **Organ Grinders News, Issue No. 53, Summer 2005**

The annual gathering is announced for 15-16th October 2005 at the Steam Museum (GWR), Swindon, Wiltshire, with an invitation to play in the neighbouring McArthur Glen Designer outlet. Also in this issue is a list of members. The first event report covers the "Hand Turned Organ Enthusiasts' Gathering" at Grundisburgh, Suffolk on 19-29th March 2005. This appeared to be mostly for those who had built, or were

building, John Smith organs of various sizes, although there was also a 31 note Raffin and a 20 note McCarthy. There were several talks covering various aspects of construction, MIDI, and book music production. (This was not a BOGA meeting, although most of those attending were BOGA members – JF).

The second report is of the BOGA Spring Gathering at the Black Country Museum, Dudley, on 14-15th May 2005, organised by John and Angie Harrold. There were a dozen or more organs in attendance spread around the 26 acre site amongst the various examples of 19th century housing, commerce and industry (of which the traditional Fried Fish shop apparently proved irresistible to many members). Finally, Dirk Meertans writes of the Life and Times of Derek Deane, an antiquarian horologist in Australia. Derek was born in Middlesex in 1932 and emigrated to Australia 1969, where he was soon well known for his restoration skills on clocks and various items of mechanical music. After bypass surgery in 1990, Derek decided to build himself an organ resulting, in 1992, in his 84 pipe "Deaneoli". 7 more have followed, the latest being based on the John Smith 26 note, but with 5 animated musicians on the front!

### **Player Piano Group – Bulletin 175, June 2005**

The bulk of this issue comprises a history of Mastertouch Piano Rolls of Australia, at least up until June 2005. In brief, George Harry Horton started manufacturing piano rolls in 1919, and introduced the name Mastertouch in 1923.



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Over the years the company absorbed QRS Australia (in 1929) and Broadway (in 1958), diversified into stationery items until, in 1960, G. H. Horton decided to abandon piano roll production. He agreed to establish a separate company to continue making rolls, resulting in the formation of The Mastertouch Piano Roll Company in 1961 run by Barclay Wright and Graham Heimann. Barclay Wright's desire to eventually create a Mechanical Music Museum out of the Mastertouch collection (which by 1970 included many players), eventually led to the creation of Music Roll Australia (MRA) in 1984. MRA was set up as a non-profit limited company based on voluntary membership which could eventually take over Mastertouch (as and when Barclay Wright chose to quit), and turn it into a non-profit working museum.

Following the closure of various support industries, due to the gradual decline in roll production, Mastertouch started producing its own boxes, and in 1982 expanded to produce a packaging division which produced boxes for other purposes. In July 2004, MRA took over management of Mastertouch, under a lease with Barclay Wright, and found the company was heavily in debt. A subsequent analysis of the business showed that the packaging division was losing \$100,000 a year, and the roll business was losing \$20,000 a year. This led the board to consider staff reductions and limit box production to roll boxes only. Shortly afterwards, Barclay Wright announced that he didn't wish to reclaim the company and was willing to sell its assets to MRA. Subsequently, at an AGM in May 2005, the existing Board

was voted out and a new Board formed who wanted to retain the staff if possible, but they are faced with the problem of finding funds to buy out the factory. The outcome is not yet known.

Elsewhere in this issue, Christine Robinson gives some background to the composer and pianist Max Vogrich, after she discovered his delightful composition, Staccato Caprice. There is also an update on the relationship between QRS and Welte-Mignon licensee rolls, and Mick Hamer explains recent developments in computer software capable of converting a recording of piano music direct to MIDI, which can then be used to create piano rolls.

### **The Musical Museum and Friends Newsletter, issue 2, August 2005**

The Friends' next organised visit is to the Royal College of Music to see the Museum of Instruments, on 22nd October 2005. The museum houses some 800 instruments and accessories. The Friends' AGM was held on 9th July at the old museum, and was followed by a tour of the new building. Bob Holness, the president, presented a substantial cheque to the Museum, following an appeal to the Friends for help towards the fitting out of the new building. The Heritage Lottery Fund (which has agreed to a grant of £1.6m) has now (29th July 2005) given approval for the project (internal fitting) to proceed. The newsletter reports the passing of Jim Lovell, a volunteer for over 20 years.

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

### **Musiques Vivantes – Mécaniques – 3rd Quarter,**

**2005**

Highlights: -  
Limonaire Frères (3rd part)  
Zither – an historical and esthetical approach, with some curiosities.  
The “Wiener Schrammel” Popper Orchestration.  
How to get free scores from the web.  
Agenda of Marts, map of festivals, recent auctions, etc.

### **Das Mechanische Musikinstrument (Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente), August 2005**

Highlights: -  
The Richter family – Organ Builders  
Limonaire Frères, Paris, 1839 – 1936  
Restoration - Making cardboard pipes (for a Popper orchestration).  
An unusually constructed “Flötenuhre”.  
Portrait of Hendrik Strengers Museum Ettlingen, Schloss and Stadtmuseum, Berlin.  
Also with this issue – a reproduction catalogue for Fabrik Leipziger Musikwerke.

### **L'antico Organetto (Associazione Musica Meccanica Italiana), April 2005**

Highlights: -  
Making a new barrel for a piano.  
Restoring a Frati Orchestration.  
The musical machine and the calculator.

### **L'antico Organetto ,August 2005**

Highlights: -  
A complex restoration (chamber barrel organ).  
Grand marionette theatre.  
The Saltzburg bull – part1.  
The Buonincontro collection.

Across the years, the tenets established all that time ago in the delightful surroundings of Devonshire Place, Cyril de Vere Green's North London home, have been upheld by successive administrations and, although scholarship has often had to play second fiddle to the interests of a changing membership and membership emphasis, our journal retains its position as a clearing house for information and supports as strongly as ever the founding editor's original assertion that each of us knows something, but together we may know everything!

Were we right not to become a Chapter of the older-established Musical Box Society International? With hindsight I think we did the right thing because from the beginning we went about things in a slightly different way.

In those far-off days, the MBSI was, I think it fair to say, less interested in history and more interested in the social side of mechanical music. That has changed over the years, first with the outstanding editorship of Howard and Helen Fitch, and sustained by Angelo Rulli and his successors. Nevertheless, I believe that the MBSOGB came along at the right time to bring some 'hard learning' into the picture.

This was eventually to the benefit of both our societies, for the MBSOGB and the MBSI followed similar paths but with different priorities so many people became members of both organisations. We learned, then as now, from one another. We benefited from the cross-fertilisation of ideas and the formation of ideals. America and Britain developed coevally and in a mutually beneficial manner.

The history of mechanical music has been charted by our two organisations. To our German members and our French members, their work in concentrating on their own national contributions to mechanical music has been as invaluable as it has been formidable. It is thus to everybody's benefit that our societies exist as individuals for it is this individuality that allows us the unique opportunity to focus on the minutiae.

The real treasury of mechanical music history thereby exists outside the aegis of any individual society, but is the result of the absorption of all the work we have all achieved. It is a distillation into a purity that is beyond the reasonable expectations of capability of any one society to produce.

So where have we really travelled in those 43 years? For a start, the world of music understands fully the important part that mechanical instruments of music occupy in contributing to the history of music as a whole. Much of this achievement, I have to say, has been down to my own pig-headed insistence and often unpopular determination. I produced for Cardiff University a dissertation on Haydn and the 32 pieces of music he wrote for mechanical organ. Its eventual publication altered musicology for good.

Forty years ago, the great musical dictionaries wrote little and disparagingly on mechanical music. Having persisted in my criticism both in print and in numerous radio programmes, they caved in and I found myself in the privileged position of being appointed to the editorial boards of those self-same encyclopaedias which in the past had no time of day for clockwork music. Now I was in the position to write the reference material!

In a subsequent lecture to the music faculty of one of our primary universities, I stated that it was unequivocal that the physical presence of pinned wooden barrels held the secrets of early music and its interpretation. My words fell on the receptive and informed young ears of those who would probably formulate the musical future.

I could not help thinking how different from the time more than a quarter of a century ago when, in addressing an audience of hardened musical academics in one of the lesser London musical institutions, I was hounded by a certain then well-known (but now deceased) musical professor who proclaimed that clockwork music was 'too artificial to be of any importance whatsoever'.

So here's the fulfilment of a 43-year dream! The world has, for better or for worse, become a smaller and tighter place thanks to the successive benefits brought about by the wheel, the ship, the telephone, the flying-machine, radio, the internet and satellite communication. We really are all one family now and that gives us the unique opportunity to expand our knowledge both individually and collectively at an ever-increasing rate.

And still it is as valid today as it was all those years ago: each of us knows something: together we may truly know everything!

Forty-three years may be a mere blip in cosmic time but, for us all, it has created access to fields of knowledge, understanding, and awareness of other cultures that were hitherto unheard of. Above all, it has generated friendships that span the world.

As individuals we have all travelled a vast distance since those far-off days when an interest in mechanical music – and automata – was, if you valued your reputation, something you kept quiet about.

It is thus with pride that I salute you all as the current and future generation of historians and researchers. Keep up the good work!

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Members,

Our congratulations to Daphne Ladell and all her team of helpers for staging what must have been the most successful and entertaining meeting ever. Those who were fortunate enough to attend this joint MBSI/MBSGB meeting at Guildford will remember the event for many years.

Members met like minded souls from all parts of the world and the quality and quantity of workshops and other events provided a wonderful experience. No doubt elsewhere in this journal will be full reports on all that took place, but unless one was actually there, it is difficult to find words to describe the wonderful atmosphere the event generated. It was interesting, rewarding, instructive and above all great fun.

Thanks to all for a wonderful time.

Noreen and Arthur Cunliffe.



*Fredy Baud at work on a musical box cylinder. Picture supplied by the Baud Museum press release.*

### Baud Museum, l'Auberson, Ste Croix, Switzerland Celebrates its 50th Anniversary

This superb collection was officially opened to the public on 10th October 1955. It is visited by people from all over the world, including our own society recently, and features not only musical boxes but organs and other mechanical musical instruments as well.

Following their father into business, Fredy, Robert and Auguste Baud were making 18-note musical movements, creating small animated dolls and restoring older musical boxes in the 1940s and 50s. The brothers became interested in mechanical organs and orchestrions and began to collect and restore these also. As the collection became better known the brothers were persuaded to create a proper site where collectors could visit and enjoy the whole range of mechanical musical instruments, which they have continued to do to the present day. To celebrate the Museum's fifty years in existence, there have been several promotional events during the year, including a long week-end festival on 26th - 28th August and continuing into October 2005. The museum is now run by Madame Arlette Baud and Michel Bourgoz, a nephew, thus continuing the family tradition. It is possible to become a Friend of the Baud Museum for a modest subscription - details of this and more of the history can be found on the Museum web site - [www.museebaud.ch](http://www.museebaud.ch).

While exhibiting some of his boxes in Zurich, Fredy met Professor Alfred Chapuis. This fruitful friendship was to benefit all musical box collectors when in 1955 Chapuis published (in French) 'Le Histoire de la Boîte à Musique Mécanique' in collaboration with Louis Cottier and Fredy Baud. An English edition was later produced by our friends the Musical Box Society International in 1980. Fredy died in December 1998.

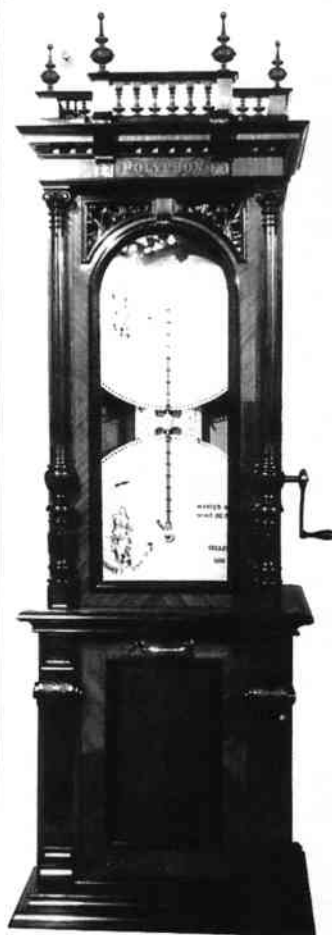
The editors are indebted to M. Jean-Claude Piguet for his article on the 50th anniversary of the museum, and to the press release issued by the museum on the subject, from which the illustrations are taken.



**Keith Harding**  
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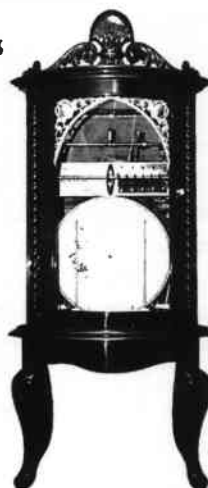
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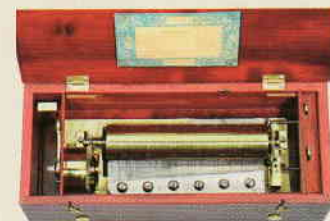
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