

# The *Music Box*

*An International Journal of Mechanical Music*

## **In this issue:**

- 21st Century Mechanical Music
- Euterpephon & Serenada
- MBSGB in Longiano
- Inseperable Hat Racks



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

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Excellently playing rare musical box for 21 1/2 in. (55,3 cm) metal discs.

# From the Editors' Desk

In this issue we are definitely bidding farewell to summer and hello to our winter activities. The Society's visit to Italy reads as if it was a most enjoyable event and already next year's proposed trip to Prague is being flagged up for your diary. The meeting at Brentford in the Spring sounds wonderful for those who can get there. All this and the regional meetings as well do make for a lively and thriving Society.

This issue contains a very mixed bag of articles, if I may put it so, surely something for everyone. Internet users will be able to benefit from Luuk Goldhoorn's insight into accessing patent specifications and John Farmer's recommended web sites. For those of us with workshop facilities and a practical bent we are concluding Odd Job's "In the Workshop" series with the creation of a new cylinder for your existing movement. We do thank Odd Job for this intriguing set of articles. He has provoked a lot of discussion in our household and in future we shall look at 'pots' and their music in a wholly different light. For those of us who collect disc boxes it is great to have a contribution in this issue from one of our joint Vice Presidents on the rather rare Euterpephon. Luuk Goldhorn's article on hat racks throws light on the early days of the Paillard factory as well as describing a most interesting pair of griffin (griffon, gryphon – all are correct!) hat racks. Wonderful novelty items and still worth looking out for. The hares and foxes are quite amazingly life-like – rather like the carved wood whistler figures, where you can almost smell the alcohol fumes to the tune of "Show Me the Way to Go Home"!

Anthony Bulleid continues his Oddments with number 115 (over the

century and not out – Oddments that is, not Anthony!). In reading this we are struck yet again not only with the words of wisdom but with the sheer quality of the illustrations. The pictures are not just clear and well focussed, but also show us clearly the exact point he is making.

News from other Societies is always interesting, giving us a chance to broaden our horizons and keep an eye on their research, which occasionally coincides with ours. Closer to home is Kevin's last plea for any last-second additional information for the book on Disc Musical Boxes. This can be found under Letters to the Editors. It is important to act now if you can help, as he needs to go to print early next year.

## Two last things as we go to print:

Please take note of the message from Kevin about the National Vintage Communications Fair. This is run by our fellow Society, the British Vintage Wireless Society and deserves support anyway, BUT you are being offered FREE admission for helping our Society to raise awareness and even educate the public about our hobby.

We were very saddened to learn, literally as we go to press, of the death of member John Powell. We send our most sincere condolences to his family at this time. John was a popular and well respected Committee member, and a full obituary will be published in the next issue.

**Front cover:**  
Rare Serenada 11 3/8" disc  
machine.

See article on page 106

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# Dates for your Diary

**Chanctonbury Ring**  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> November –  
Christmas Meeting 2007  
10.30 Coffee for 11am start  
**Phone John Ward – 01438 743 7980**

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February - 2008  
**Please phone Ted Brown -  
01403 82 3533**

**Teme Valley Winders**  
Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December - Christmas  
Meeting 2007  
12 noon with Buffet lunch and  
Mince Pies  
**Phone John Phillips - 0158 47 81118**

**Saturday 22<sup>st</sup> March 2008**  
1pm for 1.30 start.  
Members are invited to bring  
something along to demonstrate.  
This meeting will be held at  
Nicholas Simons  
**Please phone Nicholas -  
01332 76 0576**

**Essex Meeting**  
Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2008  
**Phone Bruce Allen - 01702 23 2040**

**Spring Meeting 2008**  
**Brentford**  
Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April - Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>  
**Booking Form and Information  
sheet enclosed**

**Overseas Tour 2008**  
**Prague**  
Week of Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May  
Full details in next journal  
If interested please phone  
**Daphne Ladell - 01737 84 3644**

## President's Message No.6

## Chanctonbury Ring Open Day Meeting

14th July 2007  
By Alan K Clark

Recently two very early members of the society have decided to re-join and once more take an active part in society affairs. It is our good fortune as we will be able to hear at first hand some stories of the early days when our membership stood at less than fifty. I am sure their recollections will be of great interest to us all.

Nowadays falling membership numbers are a concern as young people seem not to be interested at all in musical boxes. Indeed it seems to be that all societies and clubs are suffering the same troubles. I hope that each and every one of you will strive to get people to join the society and to embark on a membership drive. I would ask all of you to think of ways to attract and interest younger people in mechanical music and let the committee know. Ted Brown tells me that by having visits to his museum from schools in the vicinity, he has brought the existence of things mechanical to many children. He is constantly delighted to see the look of wonder in the faces of youngsters who have never seen any mechanical music before or indeed something that does not need a battery to make it work. In years to come there will be some adults who will remember these visits and possibly have had their interest re-kindled in such things. It was interesting to see that in Italy people are providing workshops for children and schools to construct their own mechanical musical instruments.

By the time you read these words, I hope that changes to the journal will have taken place. Ideally the "Sales and Wants" section will have grown substantially with members offering items at a fair and reasonable price to both buyers and sellers. Now that certain auction houses are no longer interested in mechanical music, our journal could well fill

the gap. The fact of not having to pay commission and taxes is also worth consideration.

Another change I would like to see is the idea of a section of the journal being set aside for members to help each other with ideas and hints and tips on restoration. This of course is entirely up to the membership but please do try to pass on your ideas for the benefit of others.

Now that many more of us have come to terms with the vagaries of computers and the speed of emails, please feel free to make contact using these means. Do make sure that your subject heading makes mention of the society or mechanical music or a message may be consigned to the "trash" box without being read. There are many members in the Society who are willing and able to give advice on matters musical.

Recently we had our first visit abroad that was completely organised under the auspices of the Society. Daphne is to be congratulated on organising the visit to Italy to join in with the AMMI festival at Longiano. This proved to be an excellent event and highly enjoyable. There will be a full report elsewhere in the journal, but suffice to say that members who attended were delighted with the meeting.

Last year it was thought that there would be no more meetings abroad and indeed Daphne Ladell only volunteered to organise this one meeting to Italy. Now I am very pleased to say she has had a change of mind and further ventures will be undertaken from time to time. This is outstanding news and I confidently predict that before long these visits abroad will become so popular they will be quickly over subscribed. Look in this journal and see if you can spot the advance notice for the next one! Happy collecting!

Over 30 members, and guests attended the latest Chanctonbury Ring meeting hosted by Ted and Kay Brown at the Old School Bucks Green. The attendees included two couples attending their first Chanctonbury Ring meeting.

Under "Parish Notices" mention was made that the society committee had sent a get well card to Ralph Smolne the president of the German Musical Box Society who had been injured in an accident. The programme for the next Chanctonbury Ring meeting was discussed, and Ted made a request for members to suggest themes and topics for future meetings. The change to the Coventry Meeting Sunday programme was also mentioned.

The assembled members then tried to identify the tunes played on an early three air box by F Nicole with the grid pattern marked on the cylinder. Each of the tunes played for just over two minutes and all were excellent. One member later identified one of the tunes.

Following Ted's explanation of the various methods needed to gain access to the small musical movements fitted into items such as musical lighters and compacts, the first of the bell playing mechanisms was examined. This was a rare German Christmas novelty that played tunes solely on a set of 12 bells controlled by a metal disc, these were apparently only made for three years, and marketed prior to the Christmas period. We then heard one of Ted's early purchases, and serious repair jobs, a three bell box. The bells as Ted stated were

**Continued on Page 97...**

# Teme Valley Winders

22nd. September 2007 – Eastham Grange

Nicholas Simons was persuaded to kick off this meeting, with a small musical box he had bought at an AGM auction. A nice sounding box, it played four well-known tunes, Daisy Bell, Strolling about The Town, Men of Harlech and Annie Laurie.

Kevin McElhone followed up with a demonstration of a modern 20-note manivelle mechanism using paper strips as music. They come with instructions and a punch for creating your own music, and are very effective. Kevin's second "Instrument" was a "Birdie Horn" recently restored by John Farmer. This was an early fun car horn, operated manually and producing a loud "Cuckoo" sound. It is a very simple, hence reliable, mechanism consisting of a rocking double bellows assembly blowing the two whistles in sequence. Some members had seen one before, but they seem quite rare. Kevin followed up with a double-handled Cabinetto, made in 1879, serial number 349. This is a 25 note organette having a very large spool, and using paper-as-valve. Kevin explained differences between US and UK models, and the similar Tournaphone. He also noted that the bass reeds are blown slightly early, to give them time to "speak".

Alan Pratt explained in detail an unexpectedly difficult repair of two organ barrels he had recently undertaken. The job was to replace the worm wheels put on by a previous "restorer", which were off centre, had badly cut teeth, and had been fixed to the wrong ends of the barrels, thus giving intermittent, inverted, music. What seemed a straightforward job soon changed when the larger barrel started to come apart as he was turning off the old wheel.

However, Alan's usual ingenuity won the day, although he ended up strengthening badly worm-eaten wood with low viscosity super-glue, applying strengtheners to the insides of the barrel, and making a new end plate, as well as new worm wheels and re-fixing playing pins.

Nicholas returned to the front with a Melodia, a 14 note paper-as-valve organette (in fact, the instrument shown under that section of the Organette Book by Kevin). An interesting fact explained by Nicholas was that all paper-as-valve organettes of the era used the same hole spacing on their music and tracker bars, because they all used reed organ reeds. These were spaced at the key spacing found on an organ. (Unless, of course, anyone knows better). (It also means, I think, that, subject to the physical size of the paper and spools, they will all play the same music, if they have the same number of notes, since they also followed pretty much the same scale).

John Farmer then presented a Monopol 7 ½ inch disc musical box, which has an unusual "cheese-grater" edge drive system for the discs. It was originally bought on Internet auction working, but with a very poor box. JF had recently acquired a much better box in which the movement fitted with very little work, producing a quite respectable small instrument. John's second instrument was not strictly Mechanical Music, being a Theremin. The Theremin is a unique musical instrument played by moving the hands around (but not touching) two "aerials". One gives volume changes and the other gives pitch changes, making it a very difficult instrument to play, and which JF has not yet

mastered. Some representative tunes by virtuosos were played to demonstrate the instrument's capabilities. However, JF can produce a "Scary Science Fiction Film" sound !! For more information on the Theremin, see [www.thereminworld.com](http://www.thereminworld.com) on the internet.

Alan Pratt and Doug Pell followed, with a duet on Concertinas, showing how well they were able to play together, keeping perfect time. However, their secret was soon revealed. These Concertinas, by Theuringer Musikantenschmiede (see [www.ziehorgel.de/produkte\\_en.php](http://www.ziehorgel.de/produkte_en.php)), although hand blown, are electronically played, and the latest models have radio chips which allow the instruments to communicate. With one instrument set to "Send", any number of other instruments set to "Receive" will play the same tune, in time with the sender. Perhaps we will soon have a Concertina Orchestra in the Society.

To finish off the meeting, Nicholas returned to the front with an Edison Home model D phonograph. This instrument plays both 2 minute and 4 minute cylinders – Nicholas explained how this works. Several period tunes were played, starting with "It Jolly Well Serves You Right".

The next meeting of the Winders will be the "Christmas" meeting on Saturday 1st December, 2007, starting earlier at 12:00 noon, with a buffet lunch and mince pies provided. Those wishing to attend **must** contact John Phillips on **01584 781118** so that adequate catering can be arranged. Bring along any instruments to demonstrate – a seasonal theme preferred, but not essential.

## Chanctonbury Ring

...continued from Page 95

*Ted Brown demonstrates a small movement*

definitely not tuned to match the music. The next item was superior and consisted of a small six air movement with two bells, the bedplate of which stood on four metal posts. Following repairs this played very well. If any member could tell Ted what the original case for this movement looked like, it would be useful. The next item was also very unusual being a small hidden bell box by L'Epée which only played three airs, but all on one turn of the cylinder. This part of the programme continued with tunes played on a variety of bell boxes, followed by a special musical album, and an "album" which opened up to be a musical sewing companion.

The morning session finished with tunes played on the Orchestrelle, by Kevin, and the Pianola by Ted.

Following an excellent lunch supplied by Ted and Kay the afternoon continued with further demonstrations of items in the main hall, whilst those with a bent for playing or listening to organs headed for the playground where members played a number of organs ranging from a small barrel pipe organ of about 1850, through a paper roll playing organette, to modern paper roll playing pipe organs. After having our afternoon tea and cake, we all thanked Ted and Kay for their hard work in providing us with another very enjoyable meeting.



## The Amersham Fair Organ Museum

Unit 1, 28 Plantation Road  
Amersham. BUCKS, HP6 6HJ  
Tel: 01494 433948

### Open Day Dates: Winter 2007-2008

**Sunday 4th November 2007.**

**Sunday 9th December 2007.**

**Sunday 6th January 2008.**

**Sunday 3rd February 2008.**

**Sunday 2nd March 2008.**

A special evening event is planned to replace  
the April open day,  
An announcement will be made nearer the time.

**Refreshments Available  
Open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

# This, That and T'Other No: 1



Feeling rather royal one day my wife and I made a trip into Tetbury to have a look round. Not having anyone actually bow or even doff a hat in our direction, we decided to visit one of the many antique shops situated in that town. There, behind the usual array of so called antiques that had somehow missed the dust bin, sat an individual busy reading a magazine. He seemed to be intent on studying every dot and mark on the page. He barely looked up as we entered, but did condescend to give us a sort of grunt.

"Do you have anything musical?" I enquired.

A stony silence reigned.

"Do you ever get any musical powder compact cases?" I ventured to ask.

A pained look went across his face, but still no reply.

"Perhaps you see those old musical toys from time to time?" I queried almost anxiously.

Whether all this was too much for him one will ever know, but finally he gave up, reached behind him and started searching in a cardboard box that was on the floor. Out of the box

he pulled a teapot. Pausing only to grunt again before putting it down on the counter, he finally spoke.

"Twenty quid" he said.

"Fifteen," I replied.

"Done" he answered.

What an inauspicious way to buy a teapot! It did look quite encouraging though and after it was wound up, it began to play a very suitable melody, "Tea for Two." Further examination of the piece revealed that it had been made in Japan and obviously had a fairly modern movement in it. On the rim underneath was the legend, "Made in Japan" but nothing more. There were no chips anywhere and though the quality of the flower decoration would have caused raised eyebrows at Worcester, the painting really was not all that bad.

The owner of the shop now became positively animated and began to



rummage about under the counter. He finally reappeared with a very crumpled piece of newspaper and a carrier bag from Harrods.

"Better wrap it up", he muttered.

So we did!

Proudly showing off our new carrier bag, we walked back to the car park with an air of dignity and pride, feeling that we were now regal enough for the place and quite deserving of doffing of caps and touching of forelocks. However, we might have spoilt the illusion of grandeur when leaving Tetbury as we stopped off for a jacket potato and baked beans at one of those well known supermarkets, but please don't tell anyone.

Arthur Cunliffe

## FREE CLASSIFIED ADS FOR MEMBERS!

Space permitting, all members who wish to do so may place a FREE advertisement of up to 27 words in the classified section of The Music Box. This is for a limited period and does not include traders or non-members, for whom normal rates apply.

**If you are interested in this offer, please contact Ted Brown, advertising secretary, tel: 01403 823533.**



# ACCESS TO SWISS PATENTS

By Luuk Goldhoorn

Patents are an intriguing part of the history of musical boxes and until recently it was not so easy to find all the patents on a certain subject.

In the Mosoriak book of 1943(!) and in Ord-Hume's books you will find extensive lists of American and English patents. But is that all there is?

If you wanted to find out, it was necessary to visit the patent office and look in the indices most patent offices published on a regular base. You could look for names or for subjects, however you would not get to all what you could want to see: In England, for example, it was quite normal for foreigners to ask a patentee to deal with the procedure, in which case the name of the inventor is only mentioned in the patent itself and not in the index books.

Even if you look in the list of classifications you will not get a complete answer. If, for example, a governor is patented the patent can be used for different purposes, not necessarily only for musical boxes and therefore it is not excluded that you won't find it under the classification "mechanical music". That is because when, say, a governor is the subject, it can be used for different purposes, not only in musical boxes, and therefore you will not find it in the classification 'mechanical music'.

So, looking for a specific patent of which you know name and number no problems will arise, but if you want to have an insight in all that was patented related to our hobby, a time consuming procedure is what you may expect.

But times have changed thanks to computers. A number of programs are available, but, as may be

expected, they are not built for historians. So we have to wait, and in a couple of years I think that all the patents which you want to study will be found, even if you only have a vague idea about maker or subject.

For American patents one has just go to [www.uspto.gov/](http://www.uspto.gov/) and it will get all the information you would like to have. But it is limited: you have to know the patent number.

For other countries there is a German system. It is for most countries in an early stage and, limiting ourselves to mechanical music, only the Swiss part is 'complete'.

You can browse through all the names (look in the Piguët book, for example) you can enter a search criterion such as *musique mécanique*, *Spieldose* etc., but looking for English terms doesn't bring results, I am afraid. Swiss patents were written in French or German.

So, sit down behind your pc and search for [www.Depatis.net](http://www.Depatis.net) and a wealth of information will come to you.

**Back numbers of  
Music Box are  
still available  
from:**

**Roy Ison  
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# 21st. Century Mechanical Music

by John Farmer

Most of the instruments we collect were made in the 19th or early 20th centuries, but we are now well into the 21st century - the age of Electronics and Computers. The aim of this column is to show how modern technology is relevant to our hobby, and can, perhaps, enhance our appreciation of mechanical, or automatic, music machines.

Some areas to be explored are the Internet, computer software, paper roll preservation, MIDI applications, DIY mechanical Music, modern Mechanical Musical Instruments and anything else that comes to mind in the meantime. Members are invited to contribute, either by writing articles for this column, asking relevant questions (which I, or someone else, will attempt to answer), or by providing me with information to write up.

Since many (although not all) members have Internet access these days, I will start off with some useful, or interesting, Web sites. I have dozens on my "Favourites" list, and hopefully you will find some of these useful. (If these don't work as printed, prefix with <http://> )

## Forums (or "Fora"?)

[www.foxtail.com](http://www.foxtail.com) - The web site of Mechanical Music Digest (MMD), an international e-mail forum. Sign up to receive a daily digest of e-mails with technical question and answers, or general discussion, about mechanical music in general. The web site also includes a very useful searchable Archive and Gallery.

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# Register News No. 57

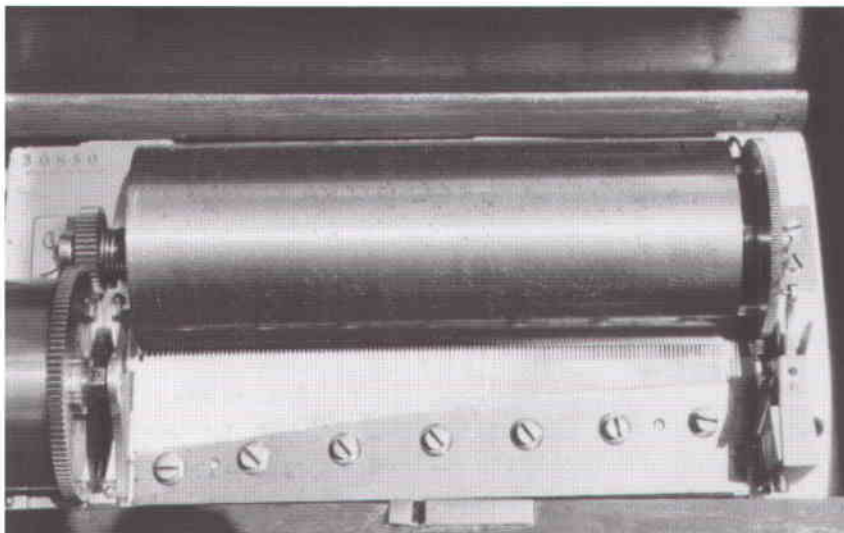
In the last issue of Register News, I requested your views on a box that purported to be a Ducommun box. Those who responded to this request feel that this box was indeed made by Ducommun and that somehow it escaped being stamped with his name. It is one of only two boxes recorded on the register that somehow escaped the name stamping system. The assumption that Ducommun stamped all his boxes with his name without fail may now have to be modified slightly to note that there have been boxes found that did not have the name stamped on the movement. How these two boxes got through the system without being marked is a mystery, but one would suspect that they slipped through at the end of the day or the die was not to hand or they were smuggled out surreptitiously! There is still no conclusive evidence that the Ducommun "Sun burst" tune card was used by any one else other than Ducommun.

It is quite some time since the Register was analysed so here are some of the latest facts and figures from the Register:-

There are now over 7,500 boxes registered. Of these boxes 3,739 had tune cards with the tunes listed. 4,138 of all the boxes are lever wind and the remainder are either keywind or ratchet winding.

Nicole remains the most prolific single manufacturer by far with 2,864 boxes listed. Of these boxes, 1,280 have their tune cards intact leaving just 584 without.

Looking at the Nicole gamme number file, we have 1,451 gamme numbers listed and out of that number only 226 do not have their tunes listed. There is now a reasonable chance that anyone being able to quote a Nicole gamme number will have access to the listed tunes.



*Movement of 8-air 2-per-turn box by Ducommun-Girod*

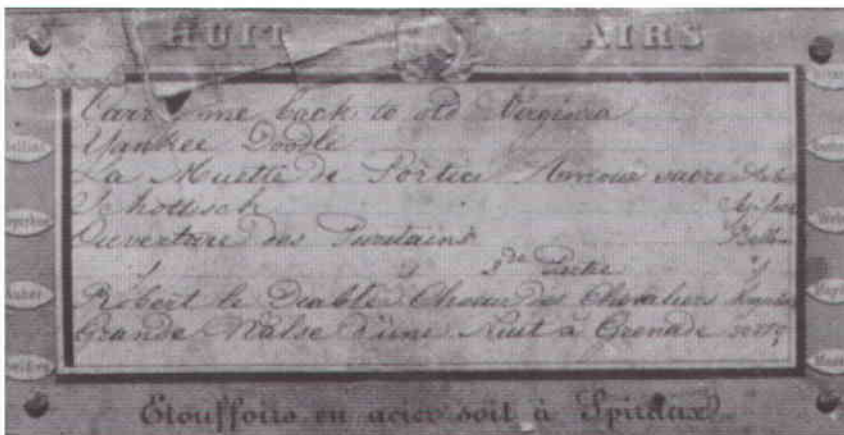
Looking at the overall picture of tune cards, out of the 7,500 boxes that are listed, 3,739 of them have their tune cards. However, 2,280 belong to Nicole boxes so that leaves the remaining 1,459 cards shared between all the other manufacturers. It begs the question why do tune cards survive on Nicole boxes so well as compared with other makers? Could it be that in the past Nicole boxes were so highly regarded that they were treated with much more care than other boxes?

Looking now at composers and how they feature in the Register, there have been changes to the early listings. In the first section below, the true classical composers are mentioned in numerical order of incidence on tune cards:-

691 Verdi	612 Bellini
574 Rossini	448 Donizetti
384 Meyerbeer	313 Gounod
287Auber	277 Balfe
238 Flotow	221 Weber
202 Mozart	178 Sullivan
75 Wagner	

Among the lesser composers the results have been influenced by the fact that their names are not always mentioned as indeed is the case in the listing above. Most of the composers listed below are those who wrote the popular tunes of the day:-

116 S. Jones	44 Costa
18 Stuart	15 Le Brun
14 Zeller	7 W.H.Penn
7 Moncton	



*Tune sheet of box by Ducommun-Girod*

## 21st. Century Mechanical Music

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Of course there are many names missing from these lists, but they do give an insight into what was popular in the Victorian days. Looking finally into the number of airs played by the boxes; it is not really surprising to find that the standard 8 air box is the most popular with the 6 air box close behind. Here are the listings:-

1082 8 air	1839 6 air
855 4 air	821 12 air
428 10 air	27 16 air
11 24 air	

The picture for this issue selected from the Register files is of another Ducommun box not uncommon but of a type we all wish we could find somewhere. It is a standard 8 air 2 per turn keywind box. It has all the correct markings for a Ducommun box but the tune card does not have their distinctive mask above lyre on the tune card. The other interesting fact to note is that the serial number is repeated after tune 8 on the tune card.

Arthur Cunliffe. (Registrar)

[groups.yahoo.com](http://groups.yahoo.com) – The Yahoo Groups facility has a number of relevant discussion groups including Orchestrelles, Organettes, Player\_Pump\_Organs, Organgrinders, Wurlitzer105b, Bandorganmusic, Rollscanners, e-valves (this last one to do with MIDI-operation of player pianos and organs).

[organ.10.forumer.com/](http://organ.10.forumer.com/) - IMOD – Independent Mechanical Organ Discussions.

### DIY Organs

[web.telia.com/~u43000075/Orgelb.html](http://web.telia.com/~u43000075/Orgelb.html)  
[www.petbusker.co.uk/index.htm](http://www.petbusker.co.uk/index.htm)  
[freespace.virgin.net/chris.doe/jsmith/jsmith.htm](http://freespace.virgin.net/chris.doe/jsmith/jsmith.htm)  
[www.teanola.com/](http://www.teanola.com/)

### Music Roll

**Scanning and Punching**  
[membres.lycos.fr/mid2car/US\\_mid2car.html](http://membres.lycos.fr/mid2car/US_mid2car.html) - (MIDI to printer software)  
[www.midioli.uku.co.uk/page14.html](http://www.midioli.uku.co.uk/page14.html) – (MIDI to printer software)

[members.cox.net/wmbusker/Puncher.htm](http://members.cox.net/wmbusker/Puncher.htm)  
[www.iammp.org/](http://www.iammp.org/) - International Association of Mechanical Music Preservationists.  
[members.shaw.ca/smythe/rebirth.htm](http://members.shaw.ca/smythe/rebirth.htm) – (Includes archive of piano rolls in MIDI form)

### Societies

[homepage.mac.com/ozorgans/](http://homepage.mac.com/ozorgans/) - Australian Organ Society  
[www.moos.org.uk/](http://www.moos.org.uk/)  
[www.reedsoc.org/](http://www.reedsoc.org/)  
[www.melright.com/boga/](http://www.melright.com/boga/)  
(See also links on MBSGB web site).

This is just a selection of sites I find interesting or useful. There are also several selling instruments or music. If you know of a useful/interesting site, send the details on for publication in this column.

Next time I will try and cover a few computer programmes that you might find interesting, useful, or just fun to play with.

## Antique Musical Box Repairs and Restoration

Comb Repairs

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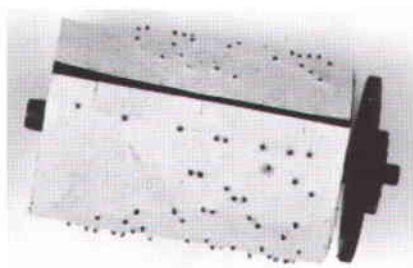
Email: [combwork@aol.com](mailto:combwork@aol.com)

After fully reorganising my workshop and installing new equipment I can now offer all manner of musical box work on disc or cylinder boxes. Services offered range from full restorations to individual comb repairs and cylinder repins. General comb and cylinder repair costs can be obtained by contacting me by phone or email.

Typical turnaround time for cylinder repinning is less than 3 months.

## *In The Workshop, Part 4: Small Musical Movements - By "Odd Job"*

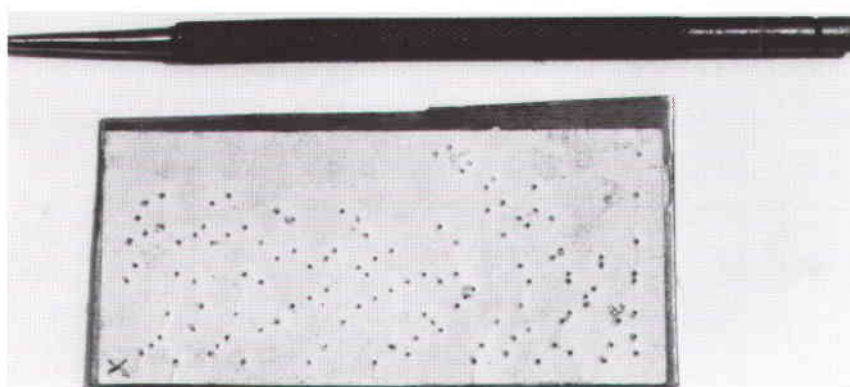
**Part's 1 to 3 of this 4-part article concerned the 'Three R's', of Repair, Restoration and Replication. This last article deals with a more difficult aspect of restoration, namely the replication of a movement's complete programme of music pinned onto the cylinder.**



*Fig. 1: Copying a pinned programme.*

The previous articles provide tips on repairs and replacement, including replication, of most of the component parts for small movements using fairly simple tools and equipment. They are practical methods that have allowed me to spend many a happy, and sometimes frustrating hour, bringing back to life damaged movements for tabatières (i.e. snuff boxes), Victorian children's manivelles, and various novelties. Most of these items were affordable to the modest pocket and give great personal satisfaction when restored. The real challenge for me came when we acquired a rare musical jug lacking its movement. There are quite a few collectors of these pots amongst our membership. In fact, one member has the finest and most comprehensive collection in the world. Those who have had the privilege of seeing this amazing display may understand that the novelty pots have a real niche in the field of mechanical music collection.

We know by now that most of the movements by the few makers (Thorens, Reuge, Lador, Cuendet) come in two basic sizes that I have notionally called 22-note and

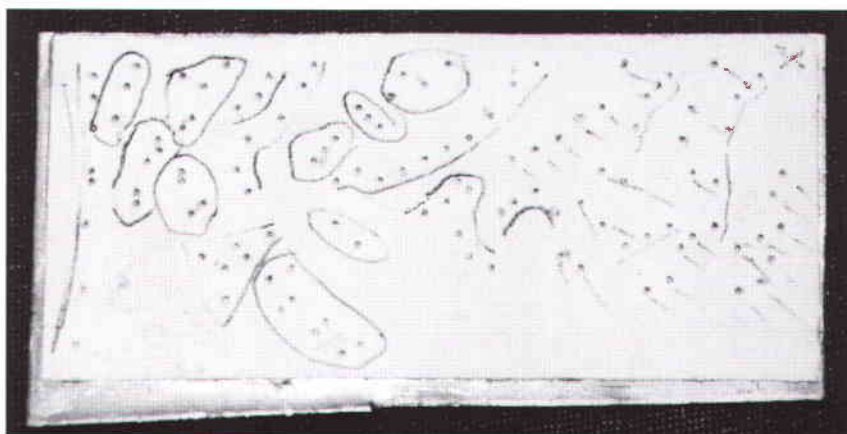


*Fig. 2: The programme laid out ready for pricking.*

28/30-note movements. For this rare jug I needed to find an exact copy of an original movement. It was a standard 28/30-note Reuge movement, so I committed the sin of taking one from the cheapest and most common source, a Fieldings Crown Devon John Peel small tankard. The task was to retune the comb to the correct tuning scale to match the musical programme originally fitted to the empty pot and then to replicate the cylinder. Retuning a comb was described in part 3. The difficult part is to find someone with an original movement

and convincing them that you will not damage it in the process of copying the arrangement. The small movements are very robust and, following the simple guidelines of part 1, easy to dismantle. In fact, the programme can be copied just by removing the comb.

Fieldings, fortunately, made a series of novelty items. I already had one in the desired series so it was a matter of finding a way to copy the programme. Fig. 1 shows how this is done, by wrapping a piece of paper around the cylinder. Start with



*Fig. 3: Checking that all the holes have been pricked.*



Fig. 4: Hand drilling the programme.

a straight edge 'along the dots', i.e. the gap between start and finish of the tune. Work the paper over the pins so that they pierce through. A ladies 'nail file' stick, or emery board, comprising abrasive paper on a wood strip, is ideal for rubbing gently over the paper as the pattern of the pins start to show. A slight rub and the pins pop through. When the paper has been worked completely around the circumference, the edges are trimmed with a scalpel. Also, lightly mark with the tip of the scalpel the exact line of overlap at the line of dots and scribe two lines across the overlap at each end of the cylinder. The lines are important for a later stage in the work.

The paper may look creased and untidy. Fear not! It is possible to produce an exact replica of the

original from this unlikely source. Before removing the paper, use an old scalpel blade to score the beginning and ends of the sheet plus the aligning marks. Now remove the paper by gently peeling it back to the starting point. Cut a piece of brass sheet just larger than the paper. The exact thickness of brass is not important, about 0.015-0.030ins. Apply a coating of PVA to the brass and gently roll out the paper from start to finish. Fig. 2 shows the paper in place with X marking the start of the programme. Note the scalpel cuts at beginning and end. These will be used to align the tune tracks when the sheet is pricked and drilled prior to wrapping around a mandrel.

The PVA sets very quickly and fills the holes in the paper which form small 'volcanoes'. Use a sharp-pointed scriber, place its tip in a 'volcano' and tap lightly. Repeat this for each pin. Fig. 3 shows how to avoid missing any holes by using pencil lines around groups of holes. Next, wash the paper off and anneal the brass to a dull red with a gas torch. Follow the steps in part 1 to drill the holes. Fig. 4 shows this being done with mini-drill and manufactured drills. Use a wooden backing, allow only the weight of

the mini-drill and use turpentine or similar as lubricant. With care, one drill should do the job. If the drill breaks or gets blunt, it is possible to re-sharpen the tip. Even the shank can be turned back into a drill as described in part 1.

The next job is to square off the ends where scribed. A disc sander will do most of the work although a file will do. The brass gets hot, so keep fingers and brass wet. Fig. 5 shows the cylinder crushed off a replacement movement to reveal crown wheel and end caps. (The observant reader will note that this is not the Reuge movement in this example). The mandrel is a piece of metal turned to the diameter of the end caps, (note that each cap is slightly recessed, so the diameter is that of the recess. A 'Jubilee' type clip is sufficient to bring the two edges of the annealed brass sheet together. If the fit is loose, remove the clip, file off a bit more and try again. Now use two clips as shown in fig. 6. 'EasyFlo' silver solder (low temper grade) is ideal to solder the joint. Apply a 'smidgen' of powder flux mixed in water to a paste and with a cherry stick or tooth pick. Snip two or three tiny pieces of solder and place as shown. These are on the outside but they

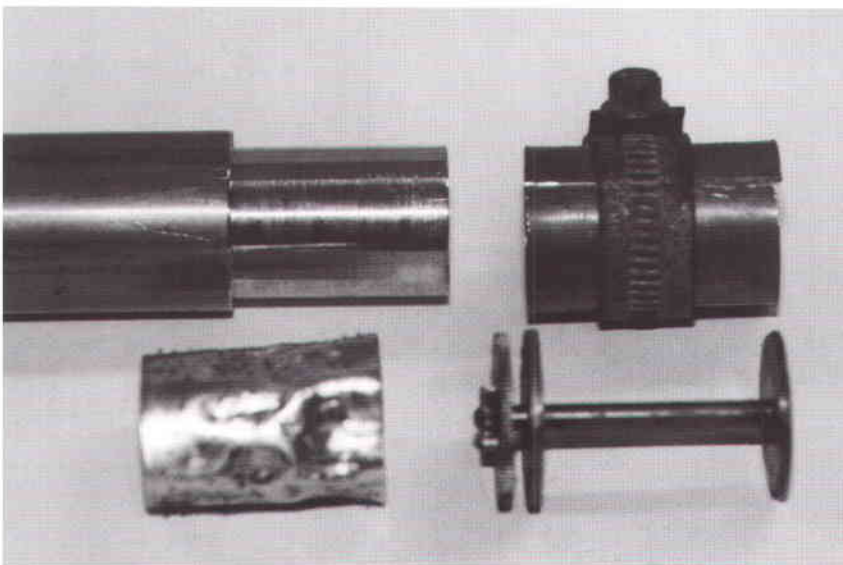


Fig. 5: Creating the cylinder from the flat sheet of brass.

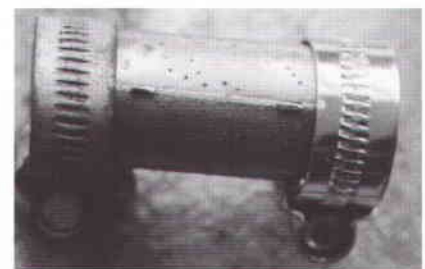


Fig. 6: Setting the cylinder for silver soldering.

can be placed on the inside instead. Make sure the scribe marks are exactly in line, (now hidden by the clips). Use the gas torch and solder up and clean up any excess flow on the inside if too much solder has been used.

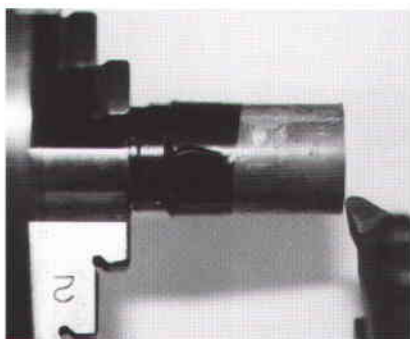


Fig. 7: Machining the ends of the cylinder.



Fig. 8: Fitting the new cylinder onto an original crown wheel assembly.

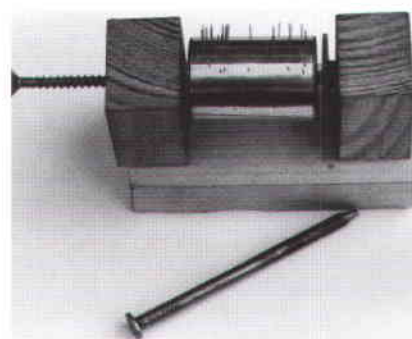


Fig. 9: Pinning the cylinder.

Slide the sleeve onto the mandrel. It helps to have a slight taper, use grease and work it from both ends. If the work is slightly too large then make up two new end caps. If too small, then machine off the mandrel and turn the end caps down to fit. Clean off the grease and use the mandrel as shown in fig. 7 to square the ends. If the insulation tape is wound so that rotation tends to tighten, it works well, provided light cuts are used. Polish the surface with emery cloth and then with metal polish. Mount the cylinder in reverse, machine and polish the other end. Fig. 8 shows the next stage with the cylinder fitted at one end. Centralise the open end by means of its cap and use a smidgen of solder to fix the other end. Load with finely ground, resin-based filler; fit the

other end cap and start pinning as shown in fig. 9. The job is completed by following the simple steps described in part 3.

Occasionally I have 'cheated' by creating my own music and making a replica movement. Several fairly common musical pots have the most terrible, inferior and inappropriate tunes and there are enough empty and cheap pots around to indulge in this frivolity. Thus, I now have a Carlton Ware Humpty Dumpty that was lacking its movement. It now plays, well, Humpty Dumpty and not the cheap and nasty little drinking song tune on the tiny  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch cylinder generally fitted to these otherwise attractive jugs. An empty Winton pot now plays my full version of Phil the Fluter's Ball and not the original shorter version.

Another lovely 1950's Burlington Ware Toby jug of Long John Silver plays 'the Sailor's Hornpipe' on a  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch cylinder, the maximum size for these movements.

A modern 20/30-note movement such as the Reuge 'Romance' or other modern type will do the job. Alternatively, convert or fabricate one as described in other parts of these articles. One needs an ability to arrange the music to suite the number of keys (typically 22, 28, or 30). I find organette music arrangements or small 20-note and 31-note organ music is a good starting point for a tune. The most important thing is to ensure the music track is not longer than the brass strip. This is 2.75 inches for a  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch diameter cylinder, 2.36 for  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch and 1.98 for  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch. Repeated notes are about 0.028ins apart. Depending on 3 or 4 beats to the bar, it is easy to get the number of bars that can be fitted onto the strip. Leave about  $\frac{3}{16}$ th to  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch for the tune gap. Use a 'filler' bar of music if the gap is larger by, for example, repeating the last bar or adding a cadence. Fig 10 illustrates the basic method for laying out the grid markings, upon which the notes are pricked. Half notes and 'grace' notes can be marked by eye between the grid lines. A fine-point felt-tip pen helps to keep track of the 'note' lines. The grid is laid out by using an old pair of callipers, as shown in fig. 11. An automatic centre punch set for very light

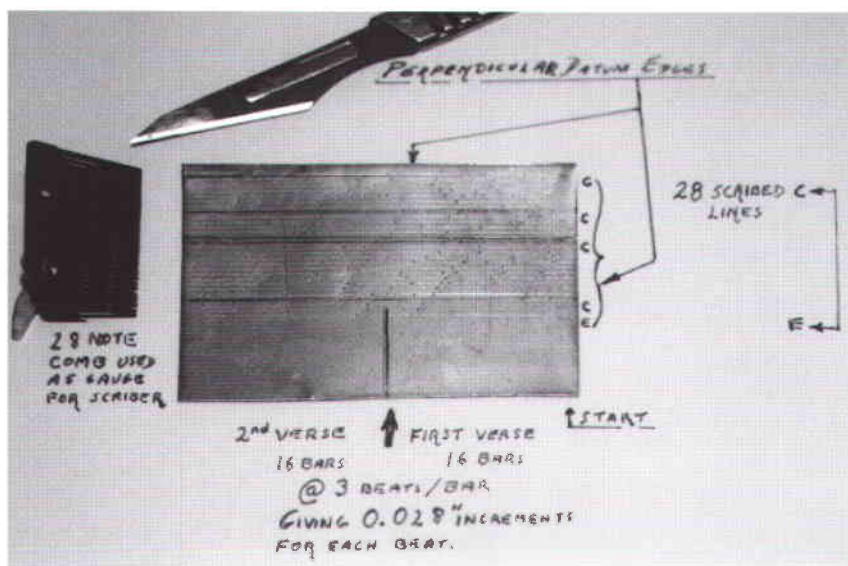


Fig. 10: A plate marked out and pricked ready for drilling.

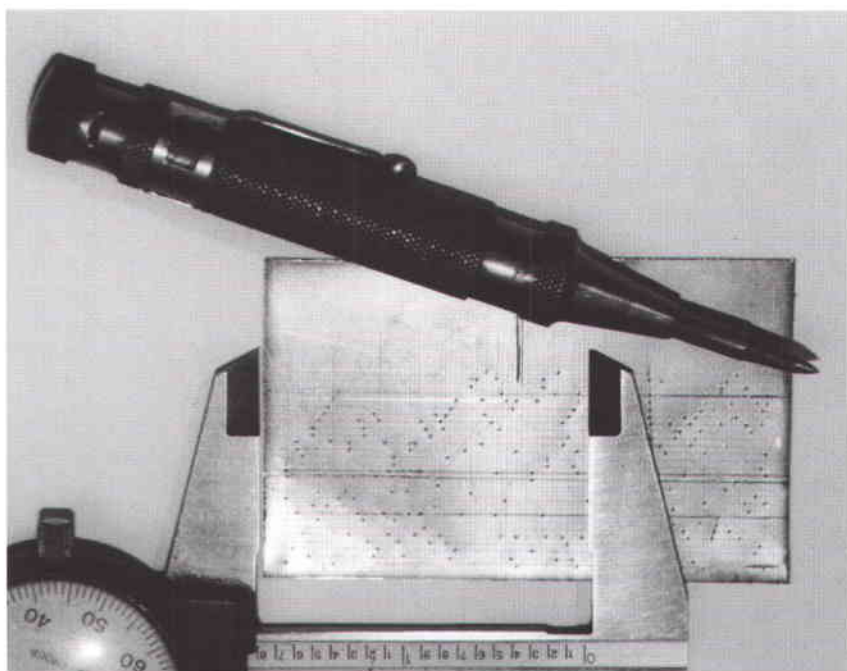


Fig. 11: The plate showing how it is scribed using a calliper and pricked using a self-acting centre punch.

pressure is an alternative to using the point of a scriber.

It is best to write the music in non-musical notation. Use a sheet of ruled A3 turned sideways so that the lines are vertical. Mark off every 3 or 4 lines to give the number of beats to the bar. Head each consecutively by number starting at 1 on the left side. Draw three or four horizontal lines for

each octave of music. The bass notes rarely go below middle C (i.e. Co) of a keyboard but the treble ones can go as high as the third octave above. Us suffix -1 for the octave below Co, and =1 etc for those above. Write the letters of the actual notes in the vertical bar columns, put them on the vertical lines if a half beat and do the same for 'grace' notes but use a different colour. Indicate a run of notes by

drawing a sloping line up to the target note. When transcribing this to the brass, use a scribe line in the same manner and prick each note exactly on this scribed line. Any note that repeats in less than half a bar (i.e. less than 0.028ins) needs two notes tuned to the same pitch. When writing out this notation on the A3 sheet, a different colour helps. Use an asterisk, \*, to indicate sharps. Do not bother with flats. B flat becomes A.

Thus endeth the last lesson. I am sure there are other and better ways of doing things. Some of the methods used have been gleaned from other sources. All of them have worked for me, given a lot of pleasure, re-claimed a lot of articles that would otherwise have been lost and are relatively inexpensive to pursue as a hobby. The methods are not intended for use on valuable items. This type of work is best left to the experts. However, with practice comes confidence and the possibility to do high quality work for yourself and the cost is mainly that of patience and time. Always read the standard works, seek expert advice before you start. That is what our society is about and it is there for the asking.

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**Scotland DD8 1UP**

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**Tel: 01307 840543**

# Euterpephon and Serenada- Rare Friends

By Coulson Conn



Fig. 1: Euterpephon closed

In 1981, I received a catalogue from Christie's London office, which offered the Freiberg collection for auction. One piece of particular interest to me was a Symphonion 21" upright box with bells. There were also three smaller boxes that piqued my interest, so when my dear friend, Norman Vince, agreed to attend the sale and bid for me, I asked him to also bid on these other three boxes. Afterwards, Norman told me in a phone call, that the Symphonion had too much wood worm damage, and that he had not bid on it. He had purchased the other three boxes, and at very good prices! It seems that there was a Hupfeld Violano in the sale, and so the sale was mobbed. Christie's had to set up a second room with television hookup, the sale started an hour late, and most people were in a bad mood. As a result, there was very little bidding on the first fifty or so items and they went at low prices. I was now the owner of an 11 3/4" Troubadour, an 8 "Celesta, and a Euterpephon, (Figs 1 & 2) which had no discs to give the exact size, and also had several other problems.

Norman later told me that he said to himself "Poor Coulson! He'll never get to hear this box play!" Nevertheless, he cleaned up the box for me, found a handle that would wind the box, and repaired the one broken tooth. This left it for me to indulge in one of my favourite activities- disc hunting, and I had tremendous luck! First I found from

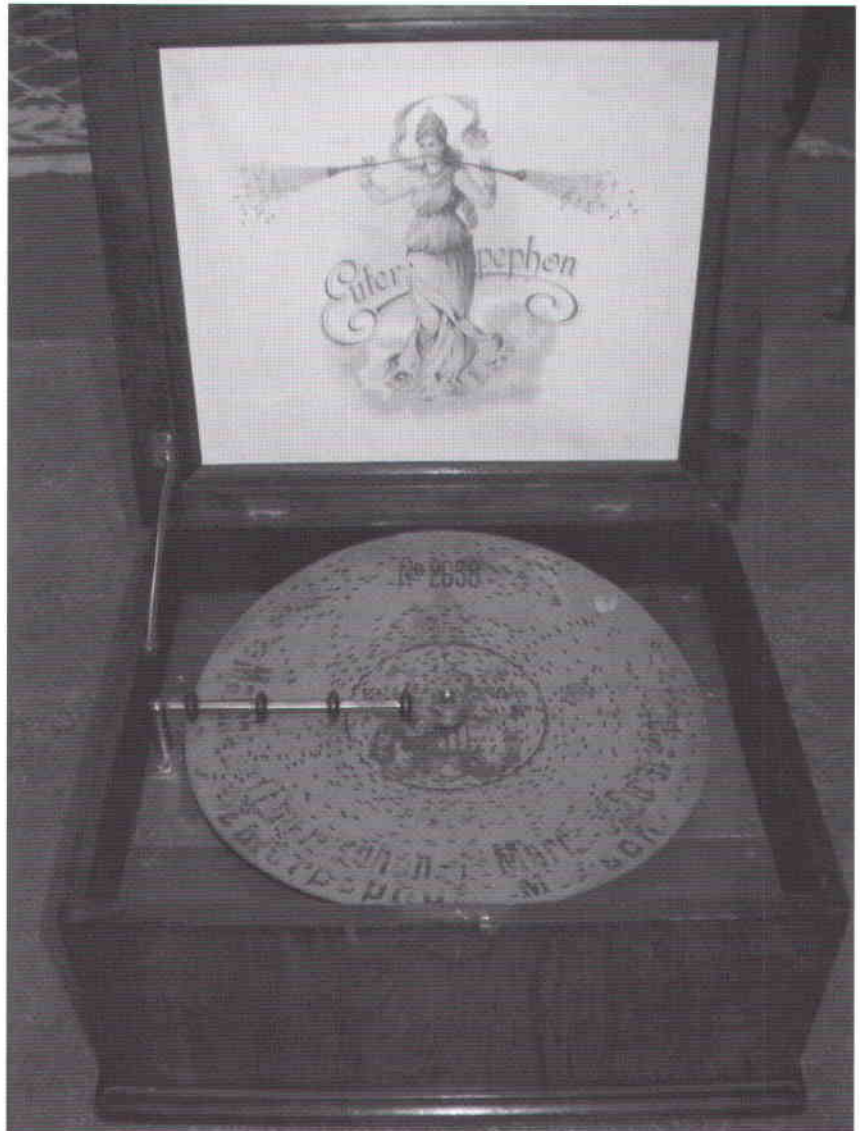


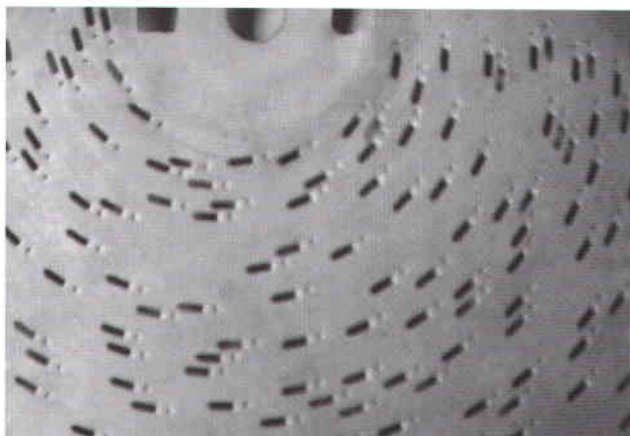
Fig. 2: Euterpephon open

Howard and Helen Fitch that they had bought fourteen of these discs eight years before because they were so pretty; and they were kind enough to sell them to me. Then I found a zinc disc with much of the markings gone, but bought it for a friend who collects discs, only to realise after many months that it was actually a Euterpephon disc! I went back to the store where I had found it, and found 24 other Euterpephon discs in their back room! (Helen later told me that the same store was where they had obtained their discs). This was a real bonanza, but also a puzzle. My first 14 discs had nine of the 12 1/16" size, but five of them were of

11 3/8" diameter. They all played on the same box, but while the smaller ones turned on the rollers, the larger ones turned on the outside of the box. I discovered that Walt Bellm had mentioned a Euterpephon that he had in an article written several years before, but it was not the topic of the article, was only mentioned in one small part, and I had forgotten this. When I had a chance to visit Walt's museum several years later, I found that his instrument would play the 12 1/16" on its rollers, since the box was slightly larger than mine.

The newer hoard of discs was even





*Fig. 3a 12 1/16" Euterpephon disc*



*Fig. 3b 11 3/8" Euterpephon disc*

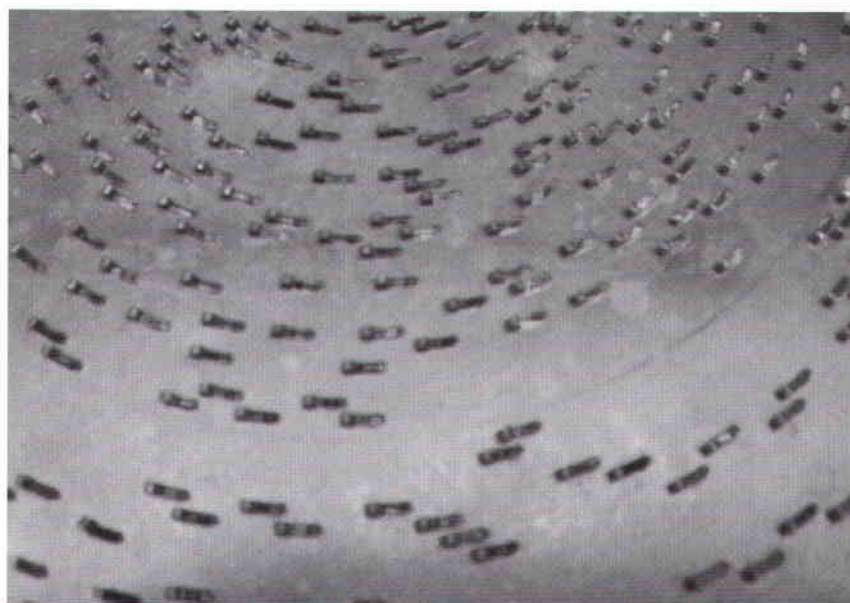
more interesting- there were three other sized discs as well as the original two sizes: 11 7/8", 12", and 12 1/8" discs were to be found. All played on the same combs, but with various degrees of overlap; all are centre driven. These discs are all made of zinc, but have a variation in their projections. The 12 1/16" discs have a form like the Polyphon/Regina discs, but at the trailing tip of the loop there is now a pointed end. Furthermore, there is a second indentation at the rear of the projection into which this pointed metal inserts, giving much more strength to these projections (Figs 3a, 3b). The 11 3/8" discs have neither the pointed end to their projections, nor the second indentation; they are Polyphon in style. The twenty three more recently acquired Euterpephon discs have four with the pointed end, second indentation style, but the rest do not, they have the points, but no second indentation (Fig 4). The last two discs are not Euterpephon at all, but are labelled "Serenada"; these do use the two punchings style.

Let us look at these Euterpephon discs and then at the box. First, the discs come in two formats. Either they have a lyre pattern with the Euterpephon superimposed in a banner and use gold colouring for the design of the lyre, banner, and surrounding sun rays, with black trimming and black printing of the words "Schutz

Marke", "Euterpephon" and "Trade Marke"(Fig 5), or else they have a gold lyre, but no black edging, with "Schutz Marke" and "Trade Marke" in gold printing and the name Euterpephon on the banner in a negative fashion and lacking in colour, that is, the zinc shows through the gold banner (Fig 6). These are found only in three of the 12 1/16" diameter discs. All discs have gold rays and have the number above and the tune title below in German, English, and French. The box, as seen in Fig. 2, has a lovely lid picture of the goddess, two roller bars, and a slightly ornate press down bar. No photo of the winding handle is shown, as this

is not original. The outside lid has the name Euterpephon placed in a horizontal stencil. A good friend, Bill Wineburgh, found one of these boxes in New Jersey; his box is larger than mine in case dimensions, but plays the same discs; his outside lid has the name Euterpephon incised in it diagonally (Fig 7). Bill has located another of these instruments in the collection of Arno van der Heijden, and this has its lid incised also, but horizontally. A fifth box, an upright model, is in the hands of a collector in Germany.

The dampers of these boxes also vary. My box and the one Walt had used wire dampers drilled through



*Fig. 4 The alternative pattern of disc.*

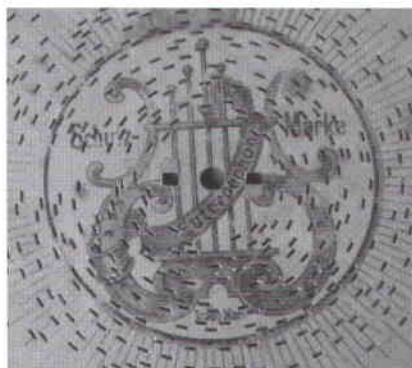


Fig. 5 The Gold Lyre version with black edging

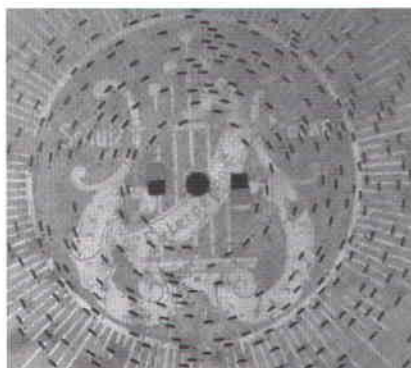


Fig. 6 Version without black edging



Fig. 7 Incised lid

the end of the teeth; the other three boxes use finger dampers. My box had these wires broken off, so we used Regina style dampers in restoration; you can see the ends of the wires in the teeth (Fig 8), but they are not functional.

For origin of these instruments, I turn to the writings of a former President of the MGSGB, Arthur Ord-Hume. He had photographed my instrument while at Freiberg's museum, and published it in *The Music Box*, Volume 7, no.4, page 140. Later, in Volume 9, No.8, Arthur described a second box that he saw in Walt Bellm's collection. He states, "The box has one comb, an inside lid picture of a robed female playing two trumpets, one to either side of her face, and a simple lid outer design with the name 'Euterpephon' in script. On the lid picture there is a small rubber stamp which reads 'Otto Pohland/ Chemnitz Uhren/ & Goldwaaren.' An examination of the directories of the early years of this century provides the information that Otto Pohland was indeed in business at Kronenstrasse 26, Chemnitz, Germany. Managed by Alfred Pohland (in 1906), the business was established in 1887 as an agent for clocks and gold jewellery and was a dealer in mechanical instruments, talking machines, and accessories." Arthur goes on to describe the discs with their projections, and

then states, "The patent for this type of projection was taken out by Otto Helbig & Pohlkeit, Leipzig. The British patent, numbered 3941, is dated February 21st, 1896, and was secured in the name of agent J. B. Howard.

Each of the square-tipped comb teeth in the bass to mid-range area (treble teeth are excluded) is drilled to accept a downward-projecting damper wire. Helbig & Pohlkeit were granted a patent for a disc machine damper system, the United Kingdom number of which is 18,507, taken out on October 3rd 1895 in the name of agent C. A. Jensen."

Bill and I quite enjoy our Euterpephons, and even brought the two together at a chapter meeting, where we had probably the only Euterpephon jam session, at least of the 20th century. I wrote up my box in the *Bulletin of the Musical Box Society International* in 1983, stating that now I would have to find a Serenada to use these discs. However, time passed until 2006, 25 years after I obtained the discs, and I never heard of any other Serenada discs or box. One day, Bill contacted me to let me know that there was an unusual box on eBay. I saw pictures of my first (and only) Serenada musical box! After making sure that Bill was not interested in acquiring

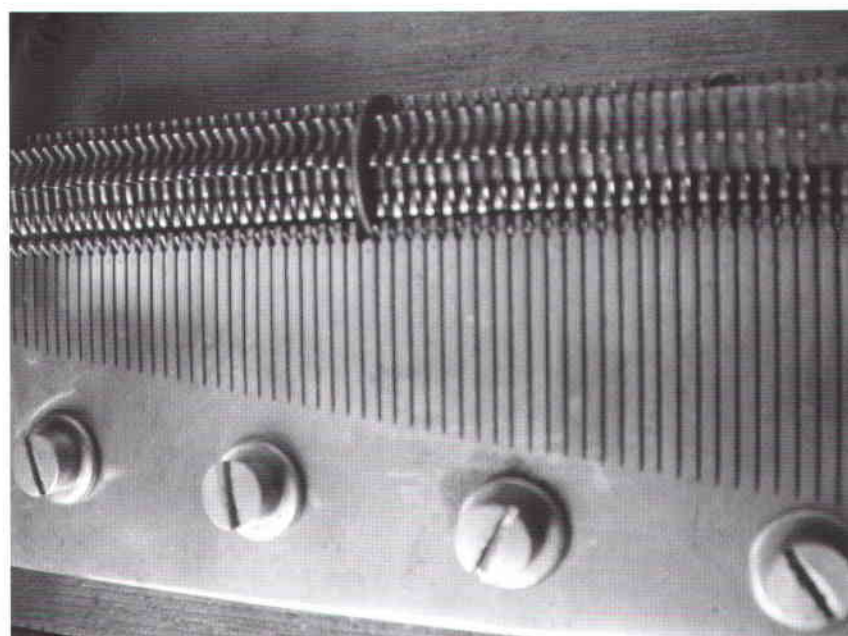


Fig. 8 Comb showing the damper wires just below the comb tips

the box, I had my son, Kevin, bid for it (whatever I try on the computer usually turns to disaster). It started at \$9.50 and wound up at about \$350, where Kevin got it. I was surprised that other people went so high, as the box had no discs, and had 16 of the 56 teeth broken. I had the great advantage of having the discs and having the Euterpephon to give us the tuning scale. Kevin tried to contact the other three bidders, all in Germany, through eBay to find out if they knew about this make, but only one responded, and he said that he knew nothing about this make, but wanted the case to use for other works.

The box arrived, as described, and I was delighted with the internal and external lid pictures, which are in excellent condition. They are both of a plastic like material, probably celluloid, which gives a three dimensional quality to these pictures (Figs 9 & 10). A handle is present, which works well in the Serenada, but does not fit the Euterpephon. The pressure bar is the same as that of the Euterpephon, as are the rollers and the centre clamp. The comb was as advertised, with lots of rust, and the 16 broken teeth. With a strobe tuner, Kevin and I worked out the tunings of the Serenada and the Euterpephon, and listed the two scales in parallel. They were not in the same key, but the intervals corresponded pretty well, considering the comb wear of the Serenada. I contacted a restorer, who said it would be some time before he could get to the box, but ship it to him. Fortunately, he became enamoured of the instrument, and I had it magnificently restored in a couple of months (Fig 10). Along the way he made a few discoveries. First, the tuning scale is the same as that of the 11 3/4" Troubadour, though when I tried switching the discs on these two boxes, they didn't play- the spacing is apparently different.



Fig. 9 Serenada inside decorative panel

Second, on removing the outside lid picture to restore the case, he found a diagonally incised Euterpephon lid cut down to size for the box.

This answers one of the questions about these boxes- the Euterpephon preceded the Serenada. Whether the Serenada was a newer and more ornate form of its sister, or whether it was a local issue made for a particular dealer (note Regina, Britannia, Stella, and others), we cannot say. Perhaps this article will stir someone to add information about these boxes. What I can say is that I now have two lovely instruments that play well and yet have different sounds, and that I

have had further confirmation that there is always hope of yet finding a rare instrument.

*Photo Credits: Kathleen Conn*

*Bibliography:*

1 Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume, "The Music Box," Volume 7, No. 4, Page 139.

2 Arthur W.J.G. Ord-Hume, "The Music Box," Volume 9, No. 8, Page 379.

3 Coulson Conn, "Bulletin of the Musical Box Society International," Volume XXIX, No.3, Page 17.

4 Bill Wineburgh "Mechanical Music," Volume 53, No.2, Page 11.

*In Greek mythology, Euterpe was one of the Muses, the daughters of Mnemosyne, fathered by Zeus. Called the "Giver of Pleasure", when later poets assigned roles to each of the Muses, she was the muse of music. In late Classical times she was named muse of lyric poetry and depicted holding a flute. A few say she invented the aulos or double-flute, though most mythographers credit Marsyas with its invention. Her name is from the Greek words 'eu' (good, or well) and 'terpe' (to please). See next page for a picture - Ed*



Fig. 10 Restored Serenada



*The Greek Muse of Music, Euterpe, with her flutes. See article on Page 106.*

## MBSGB VISIT TO ITALY

Pictured here are members in fancy dress for a party with Franco Severi, and opposite, clockwise from top left, are:

Street organ in Longiano, Gaetano Simoni barrel piano with xylophone, group photo of members with Franco Severi, Peter Rohrer with Terry & Ros Longhurst and Frati Harmoni-pan street organ, Frapelli Raffi barrel organ with automata, Peter & Hannah Rohrer with their Harmoni-pan organ.

See article on Page 112.



### MAUD MOLYNEUX'S MUSIC-BOX.

L

**S**AY what you will, there is something bewitching in the graceful runes of a music-box! One feels as though it were not a senseless machine, but an imprisoned spirit sighing forth its tender heart; piping dim remembrances of falling water, singing winds, green fields, soft skies, and smiling stars, forbidden by the limits of this Bawtle it inhabits; one feels impelled to make a desperate assault thereupon, shiver it in atoms, and restore the lonesome little sprite to the delights of the sun and wandering airs. At least it seems strange enough that music—this remnant of Eden, higher than aspiration, deeper than thought, broad as love, the speech of the gods, and silence of stars—should make this bit of rose-wood a temple wherein to perform its mysteries and choral rites. Behold I take the key and let it loose, and straightway, like some pet bird, it returns to its prison, ready to sing yet again at my bidding!

Maud Molyneux's world was shut up in her music-box; on rising in the morning she wound it up and let it tinkle a cheerful accompaniment to her pretty toilet—pity we couldn't all wind the world up to please our whims!—if she "sewed or sang," its melody kept step with glistening needle or gliding verse; and at night the moon and stars looked into her little chamber, and seemed to listen, well pleased, to the sweet measures that lulled her into perfect dreams.

Maud was scarcely of the kind who go music-mad. I fancy music hardly vouchsafed her a sentiment before this box came to hand, though the new organ at church had discoursed psalm and fugue in her unawakened ear. Don Giovanni and all the operatic corps thundered their open-sesame at the gate of this sleeping palace.

*Maude Molyneux's Music Box (above) is taken from the New England Magazine, Vol 1 Issue 3 of September 1831.*



# MBSGB In LONGIANO

*Society Members Attend the 8th International Organ Festival organized by AMMI - Associazione Italiana Musica Meccanica - 8th & 9th September 2007*

On Wednesday 5th September 32 members of the Music Box Society of Great Britain assembled in the departure lounge of Stansted Airport, bound for Italy on the first Society overseas tour post the Alan & Daphne Wyatt era. Our destination was Cesenatico, a seaside resort on the Adriatic coast north of Rimini in the Emilia-Romagna Region of Italy and our purpose, to attend the Longiano Organ Festival organized by AMMI, the Associazione Italiana Musica Meccanica.

A very late arrival in Cesenatico followed by an early start the following morning did nothing to dampen enthusiasm as we left for a conducted tour of the Marini Museum near Ravenna. This privately owned museum, built up by the Marini family over several generations, held a comprehensive selection of mechanical music instruments from small fairground organs down to small cylinder musical boxes. An organ by a less often seen builder, Richter Bros of Dusseldorf, was noteworthy but the basement held the biggest surprise. It was filled with around 100 barrel pianos of various makes & types, several unique or rare survivors of their particular type. Also, lining the walls was an interesting selection of organs & street organs, some with automata displays. Most of the pianos did not play, and if they were playable they were somewhat cacophonous, to say the least. Some of the organs were played for us, however, with the one that was linked to an automata fairground scene

particularly impressive members. Circumstances surrounding the collection have made restoration of the items that form it difficult to achieve so, on reflection, mausoleum rather than museum might be a more appropriate title. However, on a brighter note, AMMI is now working towards getting some of these many interesting & unique items restored to working order.

Lunch followed at the adjacent La Gramadora restaurant where we were treated to an excellent five-course lunch in the Italian style, complete with 2 pasta courses!

We then left for the home of Franco Severi, our host for the tour, to see and hear his collection of Piano Melodica. His home is in a beautiful location in the Romagna Hills overlooking the coastal plain with lovely views out to the Adriatic shoreline. This was a fitting location for what is probably the largest collection of these instruments under one roof in the world as Longiano is only a few miles from Bologna where the Racca factory produced them in their thousands during the early part of the 20th century. Members were able to play Franco's own 72 note Racca. However, sad though it might seem to mechanical music enthusiasts, the show was stolen, if for male members only, by Franco's other prize possession, a 1922 Flint tourer motor car, one of only four ever built in the USA which Franco brought out from its garage and allowed his guests to subject it to a full examination and critique.

After a group photograph with Franco posing in our midst, we reluctantly left his home for the Villa Silvia also set in

the Romagna Hills, and now being established as the new seat of AMMI & its collection of mechanical music. Here, we were able to examine some of the items forming part of AMMI's collection before being welcomed officially by the Mayor of Cesena, Giordano Conti, Cesena being the provincial capital of the Forli/Cesena Province of the Emilia-Romagna Region in which Longiano is situated. Following the welcome speeches, we were treated to yet another five-course dinner in the Italian style. Two on the same day!

A late night and another early start saw us on the way to Ravenna for a cultural rest from mechanical music. Ravenna was established by the Romans, first as a port and then as the seat of government during the latter days of the Roman Empire when Rome itself was under threat from the Barbarian hordes. Ravenna was full of interest & we were told and that the mosaics there were far better than those of Venice. That might be a bit subjective, but, when we entered the Basilica di San Apollinare and the Tempio di San Vitale, the mosaics were truly outstanding. The intricacy of their designs and the brilliance of their colours were both most impressive.

From Ravenna we left for Longiano, a superb buffet lunch at Hotel delle Colline followed by an official welcome by the Mayor of Longiano in the Petrella Theatre. We then had a conducted tour of the Period Disc Museum, with its collections of musical discs ranging from those of the late 19th century through to the late 20th century with small collections of many

recent 20th century artistes. A guided cultural tour of Longiano followed, which for a rather small town with a population of only 7000 or so, was surprisingly extensive. First the Castle site, then the Italian Museum of Cast Iron, established in the 18th century Church of Santa Maria delle Lacrime, rebuilt after being devastated during the 2nd World War. Next, we were taken to the Museum of Sacred Art and then to the Museum of the Comedy Paintings of Domenico Neri. Finally, to a rural life museum stuffed full of bygones of rural and domestic life, many of which were recognized by our members from their younger days.

That evening, members from other countries attending the Festival joined us for dinner in a typical regional tavern. We all stood in tribute to Pavarotti, news of whose passing had greeted us on our arrival in Italy. Our hosts had arranged not only another Feast Italienne, but also entertainment in 21st Century style, with a singer & saxophonist complete with electronic background noises and amplification extraordinaire, to which the more energetic, if so disposed, could dance. However, for many, the highlights of that evening were the two short interludes in which L'Ammi Group, a group of seven male voice singers, sang several items for us. They were a delight to listen to and, as they were taking part in the Festival, we were to hear them again and again over the next two days.

A later start the following morning, to compensate for the late nights so far, was a welcome break. Many of us took the opportunity to walk to the seafront at Cesenatico,

only to find the beach covered from promenade to shoreline with sun-loungers as far as the eye could see. Then off to the Turki Olive Oil Mill, for refreshments and a lunch of fresh fish caught that morning, & then to Longiano for the opening of the Festival at 4pm. Here, until 10pm, we were able to stroll up and down the main street and listen to the forty or so Organs and other Mechanical Music Instruments that had been brought to the festival by fellow enthusiasts. Here, also, was a chance also to renew old acquaintances and to take up an offer to play their instrument. To add to the colour, some of our party changed into period costume for the remainder of the day.

In addition to the street musicians, AMMI had organized a number of inside events to run concurrently in several venues in the town. In the Teatro Petrella, the Arrivano dal Mare Company gave a Marionette & Puppet Show, "Don Giovanni Dentro L'Organo", literally "Don Giovanni Inside the Organ", an original version in pantomime style, of "Don Giovanni" with the accompanying music from Mozart's opera being played on a barrel organ which formed the centrepiece of the set. In the same venue at other times, a concert by Dorothea Walther from Berne, storytelling & singing to music she played on a Racca Piano Melodica. Then there were the open-air concerts by l'AMMI Group in which they made extensive use of a Racca Piano Melodica & Barrel Organ to provide them with an accompaniment as they sang an almost continuous selection of music from opera, operettas, Neapolitan songs and other items. Finally, a Concert of Classical Music was given in the College

Church of San Cristiforo played by Jeannette & Peter Biermann on their Bruns & Hofbauer Trumpet Organs, & Madeleine & Paul Fricker on their Zumbach Waltz and Raffin Trumpet Organs. This was notable for some well chosen and well presented musical items which were a delight to listen to, perhaps the most so being the Overture to Flotow's Opera "Martha", a nine minute "tour de force" which the Biermann's played without once losing synchronism between their two organs.

As the evening advanced, the sun went down and it picked out the red tones of the two churches on the hill in the centre of the town and the air was filled with the sound of the many musical instruments & the quiet buzz of human voices. The whole scene was very picturesque, emotive & evocative, and perhaps enabled one to appreciate how different is our noise-sodden world of today from that of a hundred or so years ago. One could not help being reminded too of "The Little World of Don Camillo", that classic of Italian humour, and to expect Guareschi's hero, Don Camillo, to appear round the corner with his rival, Peppone the Communist Mayor, in dispute over some aspect of life in the town.

Sunday morning saw our party split with those attending Mass in Church of SS mo Crocifisso in Longiano, leaving early from the hotel. The Mass was a formal part of the Festival and the music and the sung items provided by the AMMI Group, accompanied this time by their barrel organ. Afterwards, the remaining members of our party re-joined us and we had an opportunity to examine the many items of mechanical music for sale on

the open-air market, again, an organized part of the Festival. Many of the items on display were exceedingly tempting and, during the day, several of our members added to their collections, some substantially. Amongst the items purchased were a 48 Note Racca Piano Melodica in a polished wood case, a large interchangeable Cylinder Musical Box complete with matching table and storage drawer containing four cylinders, and three smaller cylinder musical boxes of various types, including one of Austrian or Czech origin most probably originally housed in a picture clock, but now mounted in a more conventional music box case.

The street musicians performed again from 3pm to 7pm and one item was specially staged for our party, the "Organ Player and the Marionette", performed by Sina and Arnold Gotthard from Heidelberg.

The Festival's Farewell Banquet for all the participants was held in the Il Settico restaurant, where we were served with another excellent Italian meal, followed by some rather boisterous ad-hoc entertainment by some of the various national groups, including, of course,

the l'AMMI Group. Votes of thanks and presentations followed, and when our President, Arthur Cunliffe, had expressed to Franco the gratitude of the MBSGB members, we spontaneously joined in "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow!" Typically British, very staid and sober, but nonetheless appreciated by our host. That concluded the evening and we returned very late to our hotel to pack for a very early start for home on the Monday.

The consensus of opinion was that the visit as a whole, whilst tiring for some, was very successful indeed with an excellent and enjoyable programme and our thanks and appreciation must go to Daphne, our tour organizer, for her part in arranging the visit and for putting up so patiently with our whims and fancies. However, our biggest thanks on this occasion must go to our Italian hosts, Franco and his team. So, to Franco and all his helpers who, in any way, worked so hard to make the Festival what it was, to make us so welcome and to provide us with such an entertaining and memorable visit to Italy, it is to you that our party owes a considerable debt of gratitude. Viva AMMI!

## New Members

We welcome the following new members who have joined us since the last journal was printed, with a special welcome to member number 3,000. If you would like to get in touch with members near to you please contact the correspondence secretary.

If you would like to start a NEW Local area group please contact Kevin McElhone on 01536 726759 or kevin\_mcelhone@hotmail.com or Ted Brown on 01403 823533, as either will be pleased to advise, having successfully set up a new group in Essex in 2006. Would any member consider holding a one-day meeting at their home?

2993 W. Irzykowski

2994 Mr. Andrew & Mrs. Gina Wright, Cheshire

2995 Dan Johansson, Stockholm, Sweden

2996 Mr. W. Cooper, W. Sussex

2997 Kerry Bins & Dan Herman, London

2998 Peter Schuhknecht, Germany

2999 Mr. Humphrey Hamlin

3000 Mrs. Anne Whittaker, East Sussex

## FREE CLASSIFIED ADS FOR MEMBERS!

Space permitting, all members who wish to do so may place a FREE advertisement of up to 27 words in the classified section of The Music Box. This is for a limited period and does not include traders or non-members, for whom normal rates apply.

If you are interested in this offer, please contact Ted Brown, advertising secretary, tel: 01403 823533.



# Two inseparable hat-racks

By Luuk Goldhoorn

Around 1880 the musical box industry entered into a new trading outlet for small musical works by putting them in all kinds of novelties. So the shops were overwhelmed with musical photo albums, cigar stands, glove boxes, beer mugs and hat racks. In the catalogues, many of which have been reprinted in the last 25 years, a wide variety of these products were depicted.

Although these items were made in the thousands, or may be even in the tens of thousands, very few have survived. The reason is of course that after a while they became out of fashion, and also the music, produced by cheap two-tune mechanisms, became boring instead of amusing. Especially when the article was intended to be used. That the photo albums survived in bigger numbers than any other novelty has of course to do with the photos, not with their musical quality!

The musical novelties which had no other task than to play music could be simply put away, even in the attic, and therefore their chance to survive was higher.

A novelty, quite regularly offered for sale in the last years, is the hat rack in the form of a hare or a fox. (Fig. 1). Two Swiss patents from 1898 and 1913 prove that they had a long commercial life, nevertheless a picture in one of the many reproduced catalogues has not been found.

In due course Larry Karp will publish an article about these musical animals. These patents indicate that production was started around 1900, but, as there is and was and never will be anything new under the sun, there were predecessors which I will show and describe for you.



Fig. 1 A hare as a hat-rack

The name 'hat-rack' suggests that it should be used for hanging your hat on, but I am taught that normally speaking a hat-rack is nowadays used to hang your coat on. But what is in a name? Didn't Shakespeare write that a long time ago? We also should bear in mind that hats and caps before 1900 were a normal part of a person's dressing, which were always taken off when entering a house.

Finding two almost identical musical hat-racks at the same address (fig. 2) is not an event which you would encounter often in your life, but discovering that the musical mechanisms have consecutive numbers makes this find extraordinary. Before discussing those works, a word about the rack itself. The hook in the form of a griffon's head is not useful for a coat; therefore I think we can name it as a real hat-rack.

What we expect, or at least would hope, is that when you put your hat on the hook the mechanism will start to play and stop at the end of the melody. But unfortunately,

the music plays until the hat is removed or the spring has lost its power.

A better construction would have been to act as follows: hanging your hat on the rack forces enough power to release the start stop handle, while the weight of the hat is low enough to let the stop handle return in its stop position.

As the hat-racks discussed here were offered to me as a pair, they could have been united long after their birth, except that each has a number written inside in pencil, namely 6 and 7, so we have to conclude that the items were made together, sold together and after more than 100 years, stayed together. (Fig. 3). Remarkable.

After finding the consecutive numbers the next step was to look closely at the works. (Fig. 4, 5) At first sight they looked similar, but careful inspection disclosed a number of differences.

Let me start with the similarities: The bedplates as well as the cylinders have the same dimensions.

Both bedplates are stamped at the upper side with C.Paillard & Cie.

The bedplates both have the number 1272 stamped on. (Was that a mistake?).

The comb bases are both scratched with the name of Amy C.

The underside of the bedplates both have the P, be it in one of them hardly readable.

On the one is stamped Q 24521, on the other Q 24522

So far the similarities, but now the differences:



Fig. 2 Two griffons as hat-racks, each 11.5" high

The comb-forms are different. Mark the left bass teeth and the cut-off right hand corners

One of the combs has the mark CP/& Cie, the other doesn't have it

The spring-barrels are different

The cocks have different forms

And the last that could be expected, all the four tunes are different

Of course there are a lot of other markings on combs and cylinders, but it wouldn't help to draw conclusions out of these. (One of the start stop handles was missing so it was replaced).

Unfortunately the tunes don't date the boxes: one is Martha's Last Rose, another is from Il Trovatore, the two others are unknown. But, knowing that Paillard started its factory in 1875 and in 1882 invented the horizontal fan, we may presume

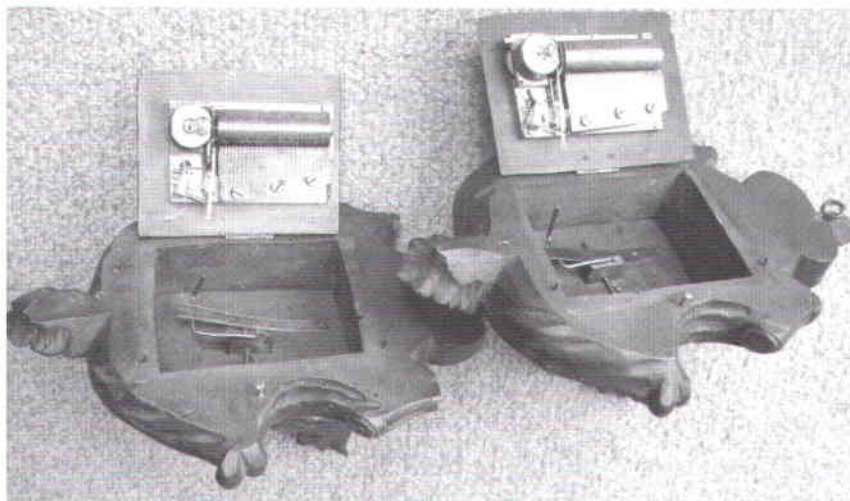


Fig. 3 The musical works in the griffons

that these works were made before 1882.

Small musical works produced by Paillard are marked with a letter and a number. Known are the letters H, M, Q and V. I presume that they indicate the assembler. The numbers, between 6000 and 67000 correspond too often to be considered as accidental with a composing year. (See at the end of this article.) So an estimate of the birth years can be made.

As both works in the hat-racks are marked with a Q, it could be that Mr. Q was responsible for the assembling. He started with two bedplates, stamping in them his letter Q and number (?). Next he grabbed in boxes to find regulators, cocks, combs and cylinders, bearing in mind that the tunes were different. The shop-owners would like to have as many different tunes as possible. The concept of line production was far ahead.

The Paillard factory started in 1875 with only 11 men, two years later this number increased to 17. In the factory the musical works were assembled, but most parts were bought or brought in by the home workers. That procedure changed in the coming years, but before the production of the horizontal fan in 1882, standardisation was limited.

It is tempting to presume Paillard responsible for the inventing of the hat-racks. But we know hardly anything about the process of boxing and selling. On the other hand, it is most unlikely that a shop owner jumped into the idea of asking Paillard about making musical hat-racks, and even more unlikely is the idea that a woodworker thought of such a novelty. So let us jump to

the conclusion that Paillard was responsible for these hat-racks. But was he also the inventor of the idea?

May be not. In fig 6 another hat-rack is depicted, this time in the form of a unicorn. The musical work is quite small; the cylinder measures about 3 cm. There is only one tune, which unfortunately can't be dated. The teeth are nevertheless pointed because those combs were also used in two-tune works. The work is stamped with the mark of J Cuendet. The number 220 is stamped on the bedplate and scratched at several parts of the work. As stated before, the Paillard hat-racks could, but did not, stop at the end of a melody, but here even the start/stop handle is omitted. (Fig 7). Nevertheless this rack has one big advantage over the others: a switch is added so if that is set in the off position the music will not start at all. Most probably the original owner decided that, after all his friends and neighbours had placed their cap or hat several times on the unicorn, they knew the music by heart. He switched the music off, and as an unexpected result all the dampers are still there.

The following numbers (and letters) indicate in my opinion the manufacturing year

M 5958 airs from 1862,  
1865, 1867  
Q 10117 airs from 1869, 1872  
Q 24521 hat-rack 1  
Q 24522 hat-rack 2  
H 38702 airs from 1874, 1879  
M 67611 patent 18-11-1882  
V 79194 patent 18-11-1882  
V 92823 change button under cylinder

Additions to this list will be very welcome.

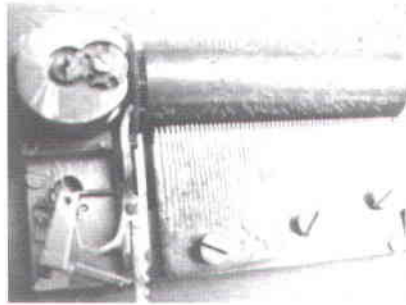


Fig. 4 The musical work in one of the griffons

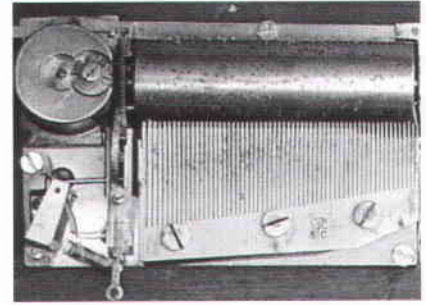


Fig. 5 The musical work in the other griffon

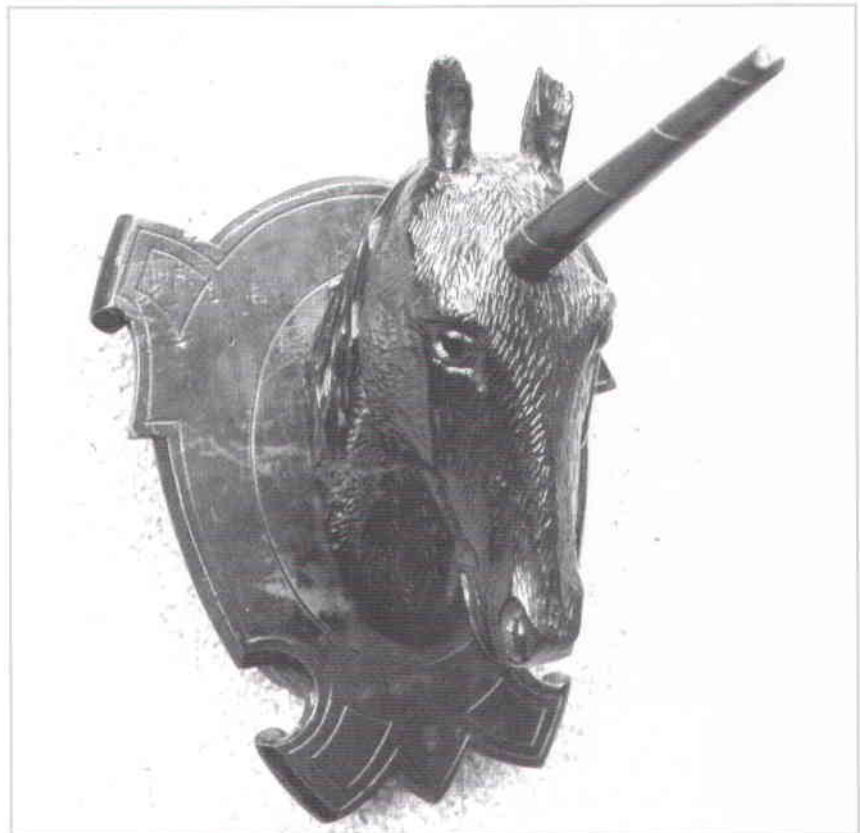


Fig. 6 The unicorn as a hat-rack, 12" high



Fig. 7 The musical work in the unicorn.

#### TO ACCESS THE MBSGB FORUM ON THE WEB SITE

In order to prevent large amounts of 'spam' being posted on our web site, you now need a user name and a password to access the forum. The password will change regularly. Currently it is:

User name: **musicalbox**

Password: **BABREMOND**

# Musical Box Oddments No. 115

by Anthony Bulleid

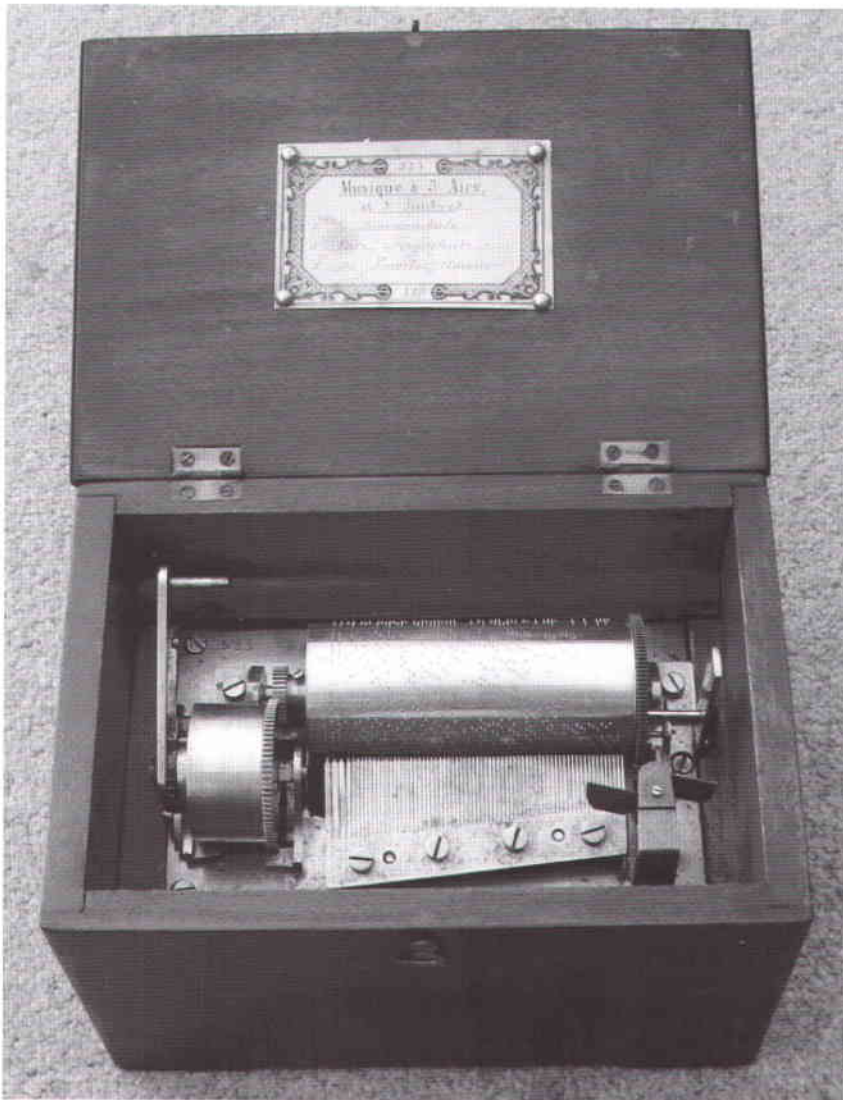


Fig. 1. Modest case; knob-free winding lever; single operating lever with attached rod to lift the stop arm.

by 5.5" (20 by 14 cm) but unusually deep at 5.5 inches on account of the bells. A simple side-hook secures the lid, and opening it reveals a red interior, not polished, and the anonymous tune sheet, - Figs. 1, 2, and 3.

The 3.7" by 1.67" diameter (94 by 42mm) cylinder plays its three airs at 3-per-turn, so it is fixed to its arbor and to the great wheel, and all the tune-change gadgetry is omitted. That in turn allows the remaining on/off lever to be simply pivoted from the bedplate edge. Another economy is the soldered-in leaf spring for the stop arm, Fig. 4.

The comb with cast iron base has 67 music teeth, the first 37 at bass end having anvils for attaching the feather dampers. Their widths vary from 0.03" down to about 0.02" The tips are 0.025" wide and the tune tracks 0.048". The three bell teeth and the extreme bass tooth are wider, and their tune tracks are 0.075". The bell teeth have attached leads 0.9" long to which the bell strikers were soldered. So the scribing on the bass lead (probably 523) is hidden and some faint scribing on the bass end bell lead is indecipherable.

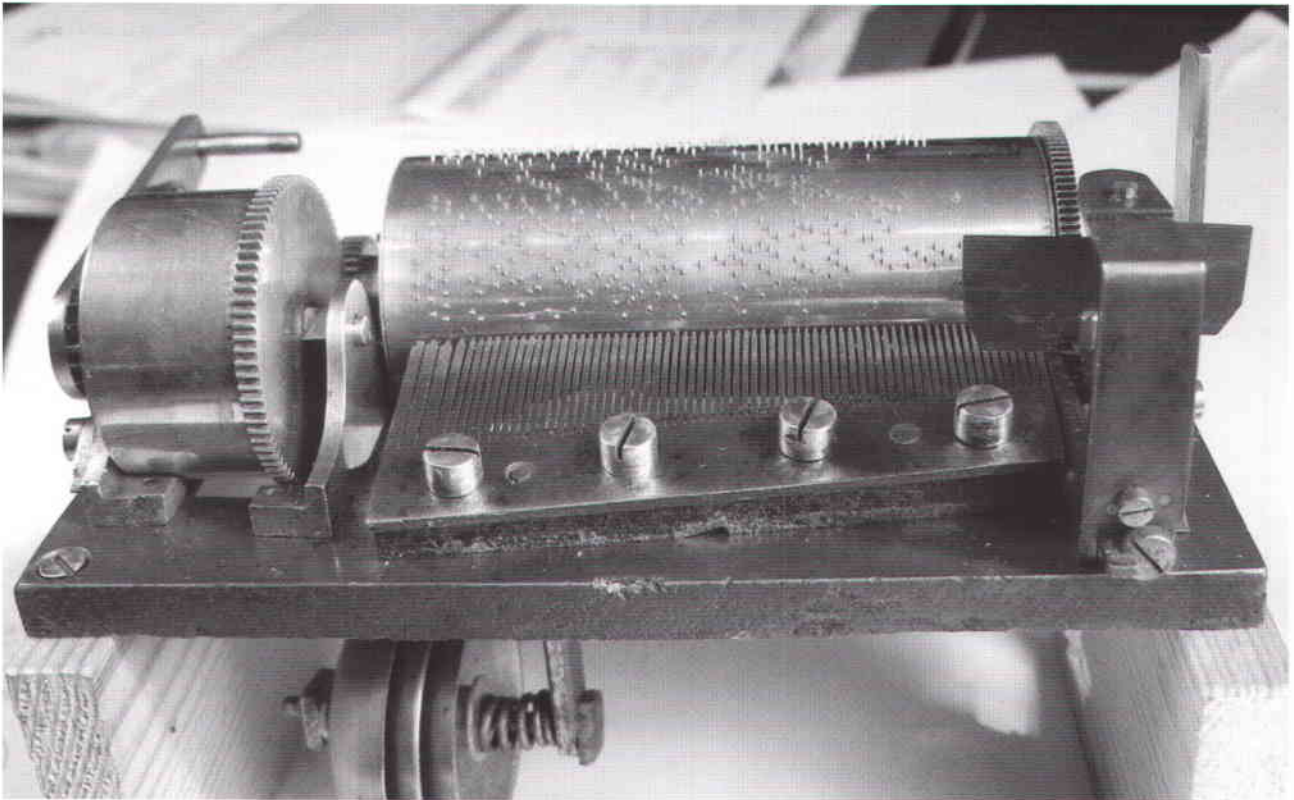
## L'Epee 523

In the late 1870s L'Epee were making fine cartel boxes at about thirty a week, together with their large output of petites musiques and manivelles. They seem to have spotted a possible market for a cheaper cartel box but with musical quality maintained. A probable result of such thinking is their serial 523, made about 1880. It plays three tunes on a 70-teeth comb, which includes three for three hidden bells.

Clearly, L'Epee meant to sell 523 as a modest item but with superior music. The plain stained case is 8"



Fig. 2. Modest black-on-white 3.25" by 2" (82 by 53mm) tune sheet with stylish 4-border design allowing a top cartouche for serial 523 and bottom ditto for mystery 32.



*Fig. 3. Deep case to house three tuned bells. No holes were provided to assist escaping sound, as generally done by the Swiss makers.*

The simple flat cast iron bedplate is 6 by 4 inches and 0.34" thick (154 by 96 and 9mm) with their usual 'silvered' finish. Serial 523 is stamped at left back and on

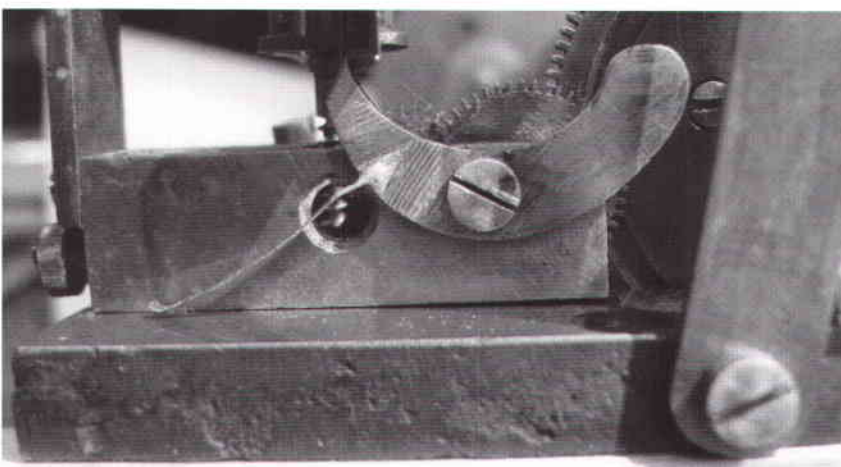
the spring cover, and on the great wheel below the two screws fixing it on the treble end cylinder cap.

L'Epee made their own blanks

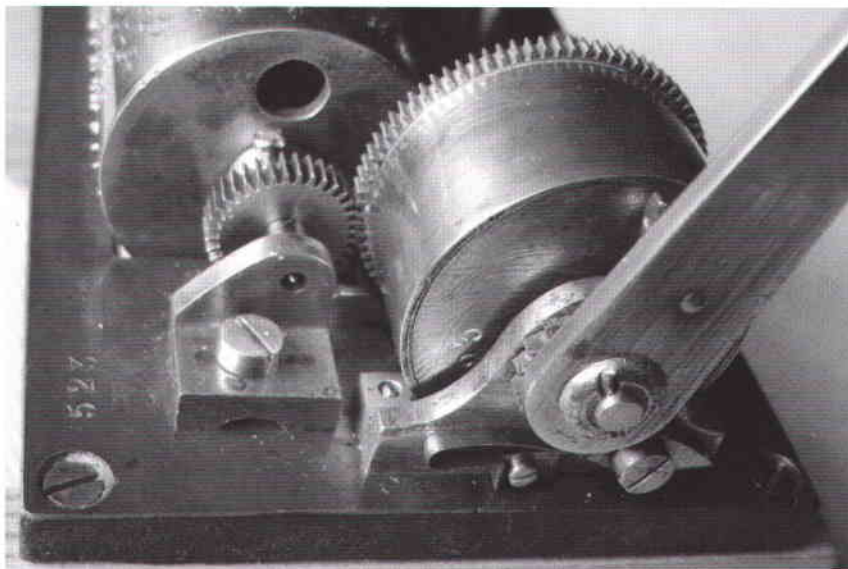
but naturally needed some code numbers on certain components. Here no. 15 is stamped on the bedplate under the comb and on the spring bearings. The only others are no.56 twice under the governor. There are no markings on the comb base.

The thoroughly unconventional part is the cylinder assembly, Figs. 5 and 6.

The cylinder arbor has the traditional male centres and bearings at each end. The next item at the bass end is the cylinder drive pinion, with integral collar and set-screw to engage with a slot in the arbor. Then comes the bass end cylinder cap, in zinc, soldered to the arbor and with a large hole through which the (non-centrifuged!) cement filling can easily be seen. Next the treble end cap, also zinc and soldered to the arbor. To it the great wheel is attached with two screws, cannily



*Fig. 4. The 10-thou leaf spring is amply strong enough to push the stop arm pin down into a tune-end slot, thereby lifting the tail end to stop the butterfly. I'm sorry the governor base is not flush with the bedplate - its screw is tight and the fault must lie with the maker. But it has worked OK for about 130 years so why start worrying now? I'm sorry the spring tail is not grounded on the bedplate, but it has just done its job of pushing the stop arm pin into a slot and is resting.*



*Fig. 5. Cylinder bass end with hole for cement filling. Set screw on drive pinion. Typical L'Epee click spring on winder, and 523 on bedplate and spring cover.*

so arranged that it can only be fitted in the correct rotational position, with the cylinder dots in the main stopping position.

The pinning seems to have been even finer than the 'high quality' 0.06" per second, because one rev. of the cylinder takes about 95 seconds, allowing three thirty-second tunes. And with 67 teeth the musical performance is highly satisfactory. The tunes are well contrasted and the bells a neat piccolo extra. I think anyone first hearing this unusual trio would quickly ask for a repeat.

**Bomb Damage.**

A bomb dropped in Kennington near the Elephant and Castle in 1941 caused a lot of damage to buildings and contents including the case of a musical box serial 6676 which played twenty popular tunes of the 1890s.

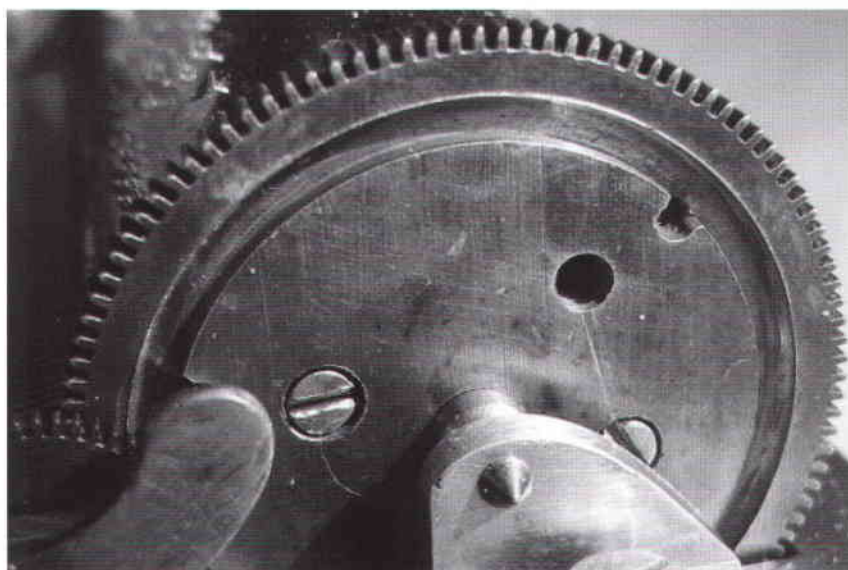
This box, with its impressive veneered case, was acquired at the turn of the Century by the James family in Kennington. Two generations later, in 1941, it had become revered as 'the Victorian musical box,' and there was quite a tussle for it between

two of the James grand-daughters as observed by the eight-year-old son of the winner! But whereas in 1896 it provided the only way of hearing popular stage hits at home, in 1941 it had been ousted by the gramophone and wireless. However, it was still revered as a family link with the past, and was duly provided with a home-made new case. This was extremely sturdy, and 21 by 10 inches (53 by 26cms), and it is still protecting the music as can be seen in Fig. 7. In 1970 this box came to Ifold, Sussex

with the great-grandson of the original owners, who felt someone else might find it and the tunes more interesting. The tunes lost their topical value over a hundred years ago, he remarked, and now, when you'd heard them, you'd heard them.

It is a sturdy 2-per-turn 'fat' cylinder movement, never previously dismantled I can safely say, and mechanically almost perfect, but with the assembled dirt of over 100 years. The new case disdained control levers, the procedure being: "To start, lift the stop arm. To change tunes, pull the lever from outer to inner stop slot." The latter was dicey, because the tune change lever is the one rogue in the movement. It is stamped 12, while the correct blank number is 56. It is too long so a pivot hole in nearly the correct place was badly drilled, and the finger bent to reach the cam.

All the other parts are OK but need a bit of mechanical and cosmetic polish. The case interior is quite impressive with its lining of green baize, which has the drawback of being a notorious noise-muffler. Volume could be increased with a normal pattern of case, but the new case is adequate and really a bit historic, so why change?



*Fig. 6. Great wheel fixed by two csk screws to the treble end cap.*

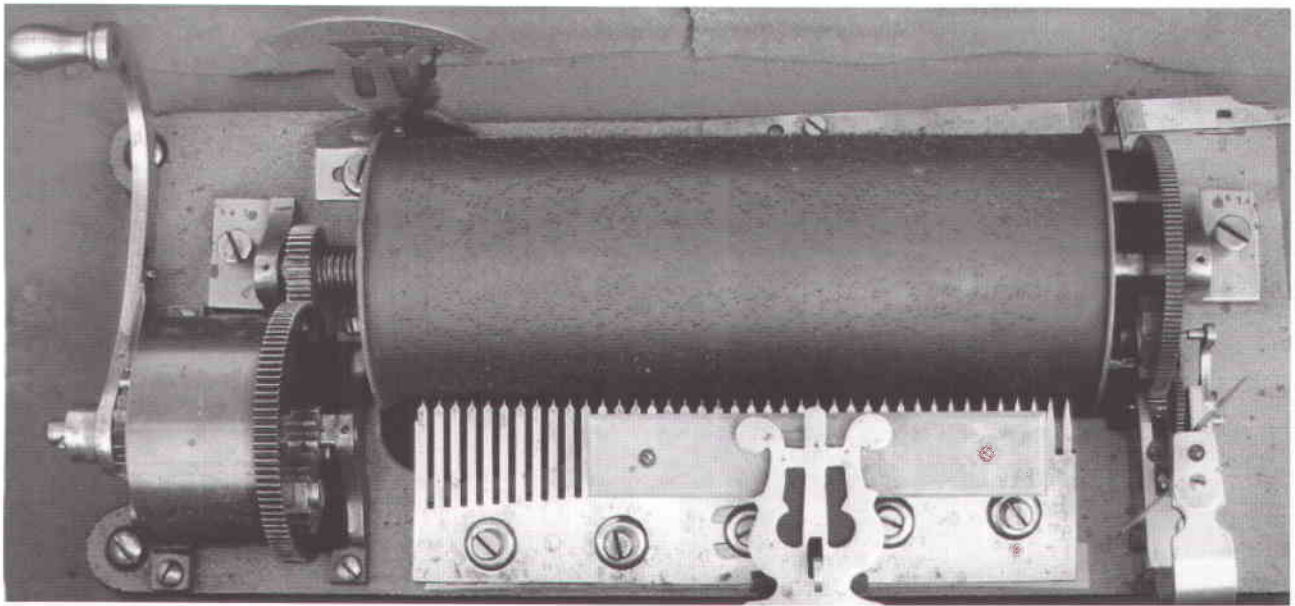


Fig. 7. Typical late Ste. Croix movement playing 20 airs, 2-per-turn, with 7.5" by 2.8" diameter cylinder and 40 teeth. The snail cam is near the governor and the cylinder peg is on the highest cam step, so it has just played tune 19. The zither, shown switched off, is secured by comb screws 3 and 4. Spring and cylinder bearings have oil holes. The cylinder has knurled end caps.

As for the 20 tunes, the Chanctonbury Ring assembly at Ted Brown's museum had a good go at them on May 20th, '07, and

managed to name ten with certainty. Tune 2 is 'If it wasn't for the houses in between' Tune 6, 'Two little girls in blue' and tune 13 'Linger Longer

Loo' All typical late Victorian stage tunes, the box made in 1896 at Ste. Croix, serial 6676 in miniscule figures on the cylinder bearings.



Fig. 8. The centre part of C. Paillard's main tune sheet design as no. 134. It was expanded to 15 inches wide on serial 2699. Cylinder measurements detailed, and elaborate coloured and high-lighted and shaded tune list heading. Tunes last 90 seconds.

### 3-comb Sublime Harmonic.

(By this heading I mean boxes with three matching sublime harmonic combs. It got debased years ago to describe sublime harmonic 2-comb boxes with added tremolo comb.)

Despite being covered by the patent, and being capable of worthwhile Expression, these boxes are extremely rare. Paillard serial 2699, made in August 1874, may have been a launching special; its standard Paillard tune sheet design (no. 134) was enlarged for it, up to 15 by 9.8" (38 by 25 cm) and printed on thick card. It was sold through a prestigious agent. And the tune list heading gave a loud and clear message, see Fig. 8.

Yet only two or three years later, in 1877, serial 16949 turns up with exactly the same three 54-tooth combs but cylinder diameter reduced from 31 to 27 lignes, i.e.

from 2.75 to 2.4 inches, i.e. from 7 to 6 cm. And, while keeping up the powerful Sublime Harmonic heading, it makes no mention of Expression. See Fig. 9.

The terms Expressif and Expression certainly lost their meaning, as understood in the days of Henri and David Lecoultre up to about 1850. But the better tune arrangers became more able to add these effects, as extra comb teeth were available, particularly in all sublime harmonic movements. So perhaps Paillard were right in keeping the accent firmly on Sublime Harmonie. Anyone wanting to chart the decline of the expressions 'Expression' or 'Expressive' can find about twenty examples in the Tune Sheet Series.

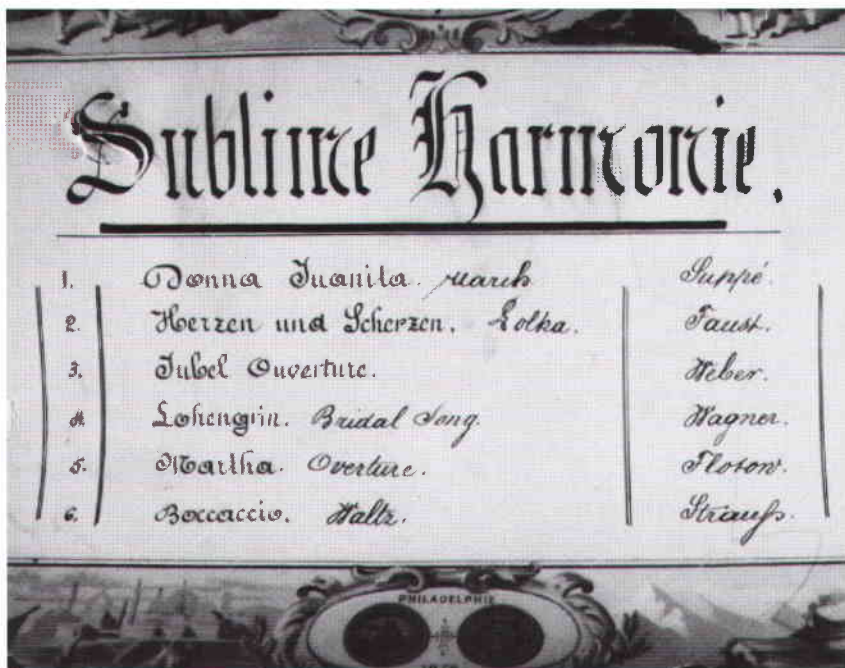


Fig. 9. Remains of the same tune sheet design on serial 16949 but 8" wide and simple yet emphatic tune list heading. It is rare because the lower border has been temporarily altered to proclaim Paillard's award gained at the 1876 Philadelphia Exhibition

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## News from Other Societies from John Farmer

### Het Pierement – July 2007

The star feature of this quarter's issue of *Het Pierement* is the discovery of three original catalogues from the factories of Marengi, Gasparini and Limonaire, which were recently bought by a Belgian collector at a car boot sale. The most interesting of the three is the Limonaire catalogue, particularly because it seems to date from 1889, and its covers are in turn used to grace the front and back covers of this copy of *Het Pierement* (the address of Limonaire's London branch, incidentally, in Camden Town, is featured with some pride). The Belgian collector has very kindly put the three catalogues at the disposal of the Dutch organ society, the KdV, for them to be copied. The Limonaire publication is considered in detail, and contains fine lithographs of organ models then available (and fair organs, dance organs and organs for export were, it seems, manufactured in separate departments of the 'steam powered' factory). Although a very large selection of different organ models was available, it is doubtful whether many of each type were actually made. It is remarkable, for instance, that there are few, if any, portable Limonaire organs still in existence, in contrast with the situation of other organ makers, such as Gavioli, Wrede, Bacigalupo and Bruder.

For those at a loss as to what to fill the long winter months with, there is a very short review of a do-it-yourself organ building book, *Bau einer Drehorgel*, by Walter Höffle. Although this is in German, they say that the pictures explain it all very well, and that it is a useful item for those who have never built an organ before, offering a traditional method of construction. Might be available elsewhere, but it costs €18.50 at the KdV shop.

### Mechanical Music, Vol 53, No.4, July/August 2007

"So you want to buy a Music Box" (or a Musical Box !! – JF), is Nancy Fratti's questioning title when she explains a number of things to look for, covering the case, governor, comb, cylinder and spring, when buying a cylinder or disc box. Larry Karp then describes a number of features on an unusual two-per-turn, 12 tune, Eastern European cylinder box. Shop Notes by Joseph E. Roesch provides Part Two of Mainspring Arbor Repair.

The main article in this issue is by Steve Boehck and covers the Regina Musical Savings Bank, a rare and elusive machine. Although savings banks based on Swiss cylinder boxes had been around since the 1880s or earlier, it is believed that Regina were the first to produce a disc type bank. Based on the 8 ¼ inch style 21 and 22 mechanism, it was introduced in 1894, as style 23. Production numbers are difficult to ascertain, but it is rarely seen in musical box collections, possibly because it was originally seen as a "toy" and thus not well looked after, or because it is also collected by toy collectors, coin-op collectors, etc. Steve goes on to cover the few variations found, and gives details of cases and some snippets of Regina history. The article includes many pictures of the banks, their mechanisms, and various adverts and catalogue extracts.

### The Key Frame (Issue KF2-07)

Fred Dahlinger writes about the MBSI Great Lakes chapter visit to the Sanfilippo collection in May, 2007, with particular emphasis on the newly acquired 110-key "Gavioliphone". Mike Green reports on the 2007 Bromyard Gala, and Dave Smith reviews the first FOPS South West Organ

Rally at Dingles in May, 2007. Valerie Skora recounts her trip to the 4th Organ Gathering at Veurne in Belgium in June, 2007.

Colin Middle was inspired by a dig through his photo box, to remind members of the small hand-turned organ section, covering various events at home and abroad. From Australia, David Kerr covers the history of the Gebruder Bruder Elite Apollo Orchestra, otherwise known as the Canberra Carousel Organ. Andy Hinds continues his series with a biography of Felix Burns (1864 – 1920), composer of "Household Brigade", and David Leach writes about the waltz melodies of Emile Walldteufel. This issue includes a 2008 calendar with colour pictures to celebrate next year's 50th anniversary of FOPS.

### Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Vol XXVI, No.2, 2007

Harold Alpheus Henderson tells the story of the Sears Roebuck Grand Imperial organ, which is now owned and played by his wife, Joanna. The organ was originally purchased by Al's Grandmother, Mattie Henderson, in 1905 for the grand sum of \$56, which she had earned in a local woodyard. The much-loved organ has inspired many family members, and friends, to learn to play, some of whom went on to teach music, and others to play other instruments. The organ was fully restored in 1997, and is still going strong.

Landon and Barbara Thompson obtained their Moline organ in 1988, when a client was selling his house. The organ was in the basement of the house and had reputedly been there 60 years, unplayed. Research established that it had been given to the vendor's father when it was retired from the Swedish

Evangelical church in Portland. He had been a devoted organist there for many years. It had originally cost the church \$101.70 in 1888, and the Thompsons paid \$100 for it in 1988.

Anthony Cooke from Australia has sent in several pictures showing some of his large collection of organs. James Bratton and James Hill tell how their Hinners organ came to the rescue when the local church organ expired. Mark Jefford continues his series (part 4), covering his Hillier and Cable Co. single manual organs.

### **Player Piano Group – Bulletin 183, June, 2007**

The major part of this issue is taken up by Julian Dyer's detailed explanation of Aeolian's "The World's Music" Audiographic rolls. Launched in 1926, these rolls included words and illustrations (hence Audiographic), and were of 4 categories. Biographical rolls brought the composer to life, Analytical rolls analysed the construction of the music, Running Comment rolls were a simpler version of the analytical (but more popular), and Annotated rolls just had an introductory text at the beginning. The rolls were produced in Duo-Art and Pianola form. Julian's article includes recollections of the illustrators, extracts from publicity material, and a catalogue amounting to some 263 different performances, issued in multiple variants to make some 600 or so issues.

Apart from the AGM reports, the rest of the bulletin is given to an obituary of John Farrell, and tributes to him by several members. John, who died on 30th May, 2007, was well known for his Jazzmaster and Ragmaster piano rolls.

### **North West Player Piano Association.**

Having recently agreed a reciprocal journal arrangement with the NWPPA, I have just received their Christmas 2006, and Spring/Summer 2007 journals, and expect to receive

future issues for review here.

### **NWPPA Journal Christmas 2006**

Appropriately for the season, Terry Broadbent gives a brief history of "Silent Night". The words were written as a poem in 1816, in German, by Father Joseph Mohr, a young priest at the village church in Mariapfarr, Austria. He was eventually transferred to a church at Obendorf where he met organist and choirmaster Franz Xaver Gruber. On Christmas Eve 1818, Mohr asked Gruber to compose music for his poem, for midnight mass – hence the relatively simple, but beautiful tune we know. Terry then goes on to remind us that 2006 was the Centenary of the invention of the Telharmonium, or Dynamophone. Invented by American Thaddeus Cahill, it was a device similar to the much later tone-wheel Hammond organ, but it weighed 200 tons, and was very short-lived.

No. 56 of "Famous Musicians" is Egon Petri (1881 – 1962), who recorded 23 piano rolls for Welte and Triphonola. Norbert Treadby discusses the reasons why pianists used pseudonyms for their roll recordings, and provides a long list, some pianists working under a dozen or so names. Reneta Drobby explains the history of the Foxtrot, apparently named after Harry Fox (1882 – 1959), an American Vaudeville artist. [If you are good at anagrams, you will understand the rather unusual names of these last two authors – JF]. Terry goes on to discover the Rolmonica, whilst John Goff [who sadly died in September, 2007], takes on his roll of technical adviser with notes about the roll motor. Ivor Novello is the subject of "When they were young" No. 17, and "God Save the Queen" is explored by "Rodney B. Barrett".

### **NWPPA Journal Spring/Summer 2007**

Anyone familiar with Player Pianos will probably have come across a transposing tracker bar, where the holes can be moved sideways

in relation to the roll, thus moving the music up or down a few semi-tones. Apparently there are (or were) transposing pianos too, where the whole piano mechanism moves. Some had up to 100 keys too.

Chopin fans might want to visit Hatchlands in Surrey, which is now the home of the Pleyel grand piano used by Chopin in 1848 when he went "on tour" in England. He sold it after the tour, and its history was only recently discovered.

The song "Amy, Wonderful Amy", written to commemorate the exploits of Amy Johnson, was created by Horatio Nicholls and Joe Gilbert. Terry Broadbent (or Bryan Orde Brett) tells more of the story. Jim Spriggs follows with the story of "The Maiden's Prayer". Famous Musicians No. 57 is Pauline Alpert (1900 – 1988), and When They Were Young No. 18 features Irving Berlin (1888 – 1989) [Yes – he reached the age of 101].

A couple of new "Series" are started, one being Less Well Known Reproducing Systems, which begins with the German Duca and Ducartist system, the other series being From our Song Roll Collection, which aims to delve into the history of these songs, No. 1 being "Passing By". Other articles include "What is it about Odessa" which modest town produced and exceptional number of pianists, "Mendelssohn in Manchester", and various re-prints from journals of the Player Piano era, finishing with a directory of Suppliers and Repairers.

### **Other Non-English journals Musiques Mecaniques Vivantes – 3rd Quarter, 2007**

*Highlights:* - A Bremond from heaven. Sound Movies – two toys for Spanish children. Galvanoplasty in Musical Boxes. (Electroplating, I think – JF). A Gavioli Fairground Organ. Strange Oval Snuffboxes. The Thomes Edison Phonograph.

## Letters to the Editors

**From Mr G R East, Enfield, Middx.**

Sir

Register News No. 56 (Vol 23 No. 3 Autumn 2007)

I read your concluding item on another box made by Ducommun-Girod with great interest.

I have an identical box serial no. 2850.

The tune sheet is the same, in the same handwriting, with all the same tunes. The eight stacked bells, one piece comb etc are all the same. My box does not have a name that I can find – nothing on the winding lever.

I am certain that mine has the original lever because it has the number 19 stamped on it, as have all the other components. Has this been checked on the box in your article?

If these boxes were made by another maker, surely it must have been with Ducommun-Girod consent to have used their tune card. Also the serial numbers do tie in with the dating chart 3.

My serial number is written obliquely under the tune writers on the tune card.

I feel they are genuine boxes. It could be the name stamping was missed due to the change/mixture of key and lever wind boxes produced at this time.

Finally mine has the number 37/3610 written on the bottom of the soundboard. Is my box registered with the previous owner, or what does this convey? Can you help?

**From Mr W Cooper, West Sussex**

Sir

Being an old member rejoined, perhaps a letter would be a good idea, I am 93 years of age, and have

been collecting musical boxes since I was 12 years old. The first box I had was an Alexandra 36 air box almost as new condition, it cost 10/-.

It was stolen in 1994. The second box was a 3-bell box £5.00. I had eight boxes stolen in 1994, all were serial numbered, every one stamped underneath the movement.

Also five photograph albums- I did not get any of them back, but I started collecting again.

I now have a number of cylinder and disc boxes also several manivelles. Most of the boxes I bought at auction, most need repinning or new teeth. I feel very sorry for young members. It was quite common to see boxes for sale in The Lanes in Brighton, not now.

Years ago I sent in directions for making a good cleaner for getting the muck from furniture or musical boxes:

1 part linseed oil  
1 part turps  
1 part vinegar  
¼ methylated spirit  
Shake well and use with wadding  
(Not good to drink)

All the best of luck.

*We are delighted to welcome Mr Cooper back to the Society. We use his recipe for cleaning too – it is very effective! - Ed*

**From Kevin McElhone, Northampton**

I am writing to request members help in writing my next book which is on Disc Musical Boxes. I have so far found over 1,400 different factory designated models in old adverts and catalogues but I am sure there are many more still to be found. Do you know of any original catalogue which I might copy or scan for information?

There will be a table for all models found, rather like in 'The Organette Book', which will include information often found in original literature including make, model, price, diameter of disc, number of teeth, comb layout type and number, weight, case details, unusual observations or comments, width, depth and height.

There will be a number of old catalogues reproduced, also a large number of tune lists may be included on a disc at the back of the work, suitable for use on a computer or a Television DVD player.

I am looking for pictures of unusual Disc or Book playing Musical Boxes, preferably taken outside if possible, but if photos are taken indoors they need to be at a slight angle to prevent bounce-back from a flash gun.

I am looking for pictures of unusual types perhaps including:-

1. Three quarter view from the front
2. Inlaid design on the top of the box
3. The coloured lid picture on the inside of the lid - there are many different designs within each make.
4. close-up of unusual comb types.
5. pictures of the makers 'logo' or picture on discs -
6. pictures of discs or instruments you cannot identify
7. funny spelling mistakes in tune titles.

Tuning scales are also needed, particularly any corrections to earlier works. [I have 110 so far...]

It might be easier if you tell me what boxes you have and then I can let you know which ones I already have to save any duplicated effort, although I would particularly welcome information on the following makes and models:- Alexandria, Arion, Ariophon, Arno, Bascanion, Britannia, Chevob, Euphonion, Euterpe, Gloria, Gloriosa, Graf, Harmonieuse, Harmonyphon, Imperial Symphonion, Junghans,

Kalliophon, Komet, Libellion, Lipsia, Lyrathon, Mira, Monarch, Monopol, New Century, Olympia, Orphenion, Orpheus, Perfection, Pianette, Polyhymnia, Princess, Roepke, Saxonia, Silvanigra, Stella, Sun, Tannhauser, Thorens. Troubadour, Unikon.

I can receive pictures through my e-mail address kevin\_mcelhone@hotmail.com up to 8mb per message, any larger selections of pictures should be split into multiple e-mails please. I will be happy to give a 'thank you' to everyone who contributes but will not link instruments to owners for security reasons unless you ask me to.

Many Thanks in advance, Kevin McElhone - Membership Secretary.

**From Mr Alan Pratt**

Sir,  
The letter from Alison Biden in the last issue of The Music Box raises some interesting points but I am not altogether convinced by some of the arguments.

We all want to attract new members but the idea that younger people will be attracted because we have the magazine 'on line' seems a little far-fetched. Will someone decide to join the Society just from seeing some articles on a web-site? Also,

it is a fact that the fastest growing sector of web users are the so-called 'silver surfers' – the over sixties.

To place all of the copies of The Music Box on-line is a substantial task involving around 5000 pages. The easy bit is scanning the pages. After that each article must be edited, as they frequently cover more than one page in the magazine and are sometimes spread over more than one issue. Each must then be indexed and finally converted to PDFs for use on the web. Alison is right when she says that this is a task for the professionals.

But the question remains; is this a good use of Society funds and does it bring benefit to the present members who are funding it?

My own reasons for being a member of MBSGB are the personal contacts that our meetings offer with the opportunity to see and hear instruments and collections that we might never know about, let alone see. But less than 15% of members (plus their partners) attend meetings, which means that for 85% the magazine is the real membership benefit. If we place all the material freely available on-line, why would anyone need to join?

May I suggest that we approach this in a staged process?

Firstly we must bring the Index up to date. At present it runs only to Vol.20 which means that over four years remain unindexed.

Secondly, we should set about placing all the magazines onto DVD. This will ensure that the accumulated knowledge and wisdom contained therein is preserved for future generations. Members wishing to access this material would be able to do so using the updated index. Whatever course we adopt we must plan for an ongoing annual cost in order to keep the index and content up to date. Unless this is done, the material will steadily become outdated.

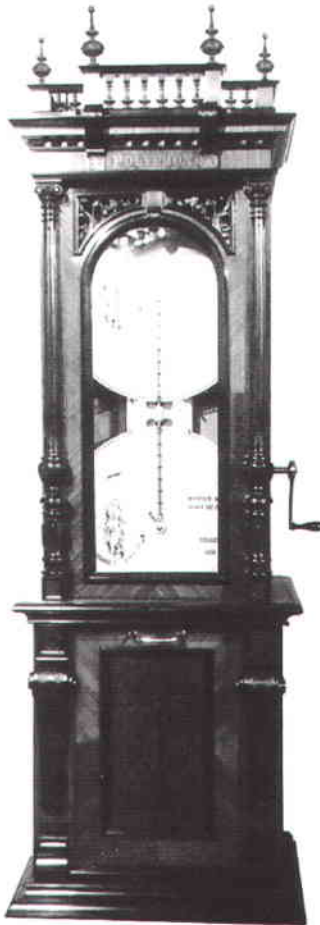
Finally, having completed stages one and two, we will be in a position to place material on-line at some future date should this be deemed prudent. Costs can be kept at a reasonable level and we will have time to assess future requirements. In the meantime, funds will be available to 'prime the pump' on the production of books of the quality of the Tune Sheet Book, the Organette Book and The Nicole Factor which I believe are equally important to the future of the Society.

Clearly more discussion is needed on this subject together with costings which I understand are being prepared. I hope other members will use these columns to express their views so that a firm decision can be made at the next AGM.



*Keith Harding*  
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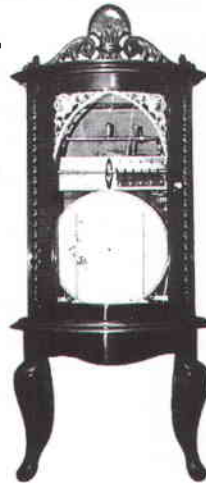
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**Restoration Supplies.** EVAPO-RUST non-acidic, non-toxic rust remover now available in UK (as featured in Mechanical Music). Also, 4 grades of rubber cloth (pianolas, organettes etc), 14 sizes of silicone tube (pianolas, organs, orchestrions), leather and other items. John Farmer, 01562 741108, e-mail [info@musicanic.com](mailto:info@musicanic.com). Web: [www.musicanic.com](http://www.musicanic.com)

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

## CLASSIFIED WANTS

**Box only - 8 1/8" Polyphon**, any condition providing all parts intact. Phone Terry France 01983 867096.

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

**Organette music wanted.** Any Dolcina card music, Organetta, 14-note Melodia & Clarion music. All other organette music, bands, spools and discs considered.

Contact Ted Brown on 01403 823 533.

ACCESS CODE FOR WEB SITE: BABREMOND

### RATES FOR DISPLAY ADVERTS

**SPECIAL POSITIONS** (offered as available)

Outside back cover (tone or two colours)

Full page only £249

(full colour, one photograph to maximum size of 8" x 6")

Full page only £560

Inside covers

Full page £218

**POSITIONS INSIDE JOURNAL** (as available)

Full page £150. Half Page £86. Quarter Page £54. Eighth Page £36.

5cm box in classified area £32, 3cm box in classified area £22

These charges include typesetting, but are exclusive of any artwork which may be required.

Half tone, artwork and design can be provided at additional cost. Black and white half tones

£15 each. Design and artwork quotes on request.

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

Four or more consecutive insertions: Area rate less 20%. A further 5% discount is given if payment is in advance.

**MECHANICAL DATA TYPE AREA**

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

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

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

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

*Closing date for the next issue is*

**1st February 2008**

### Deadline dates for Display Advertising Copy

1st April; 1st July;

1st October; 1st February

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

### Posting of magazine:

27th February; 27th April;

7th August; 7th November

### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF ADVERTISEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN NEXT ISSUE: *1st February 2008*

**Minimum cost each advertisement £5.00.**

Members: 16p per word

(bold type 8p per word extra)

**Minimum cost each advertisement £9.50**

Non-members 32p per word

(bold type 16p per word extra)

### CASH WITH ORDER PLEASE TO:

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

### NOTICE

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

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# MAKE YOUR OWN WADE BROCHURE!

Something to do over Christmas! Photocopy, scan or cut out the two pictures of an original Wade brochure from the 1950s. Carefully glue them together 'back-to-back'. When dry, fold them in a concertina fashion and you have your own copy of a nice brochure to go with your Wade musical collection! If you have trouble doing this, ask an adult to help... remember, scissors can be sharp!

Images of the Wade brochure kindly supplied by Alan Clark.

## Mechanical Music Display

Just an initial announcement to say that MBSGB have been invited to put on a display & play at the National Vintage Communications Fair to be held on Sunday 11th May 2008 at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre in Leamington Spa area - see

[www.nvcf.org.uk](http://www.nvcf.org.uk) and  
[www.warwickshireexhibitioncentre.co.uk](http://www.warwickshireexhibitioncentre.co.uk).

It is now run by the British Vintage Wireless Society, rather than as a commercial event as was the case when the venue was the N.E.C. in Birmingham. You will be given a free entry pass for the day - we have a large area to fill. Volunteers are needed to display instruments, play them, speak to members of the public, encourage them to join us etc.

Please contact Kevin McElhone in the first instance - a lot more details will be given in the next journal. The Warwickshire Exhibition Centre is on the Fosse Way, Leamington Spa.

[kevin\\_mcelhone@hotmail.com](mailto:kevin_mcelhone@hotmail.com)  
 01536 726759.



Bonhams<sup>1793</sup>

## Mechanical Music, Railwayana & Cameras

Tuesday 13 May 2008

Knowle

Entries invited



We are currently accepting entries for our forthcoming sale.

Closing date for entries is  
Friday 11 April 2008.

**Enquiries:**

Mark Hannam  
01564 776 151  
mark.hannam@bonhams.com

Laurence Fisher  
08700 273 633  
laurence.fisher@bonhams.com

Illustrated: Lot 143

A Nicole Freres key-wind Forte-piano  
musical box, No. 33707,  
playing eight airs  
Offered in our Tuesday 16 October sale,  
sold for £2,640

**Bonhams**

The Old House  
Station Road  
Knowle, Solihull  
West Midlands B93 0HT  
[www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)