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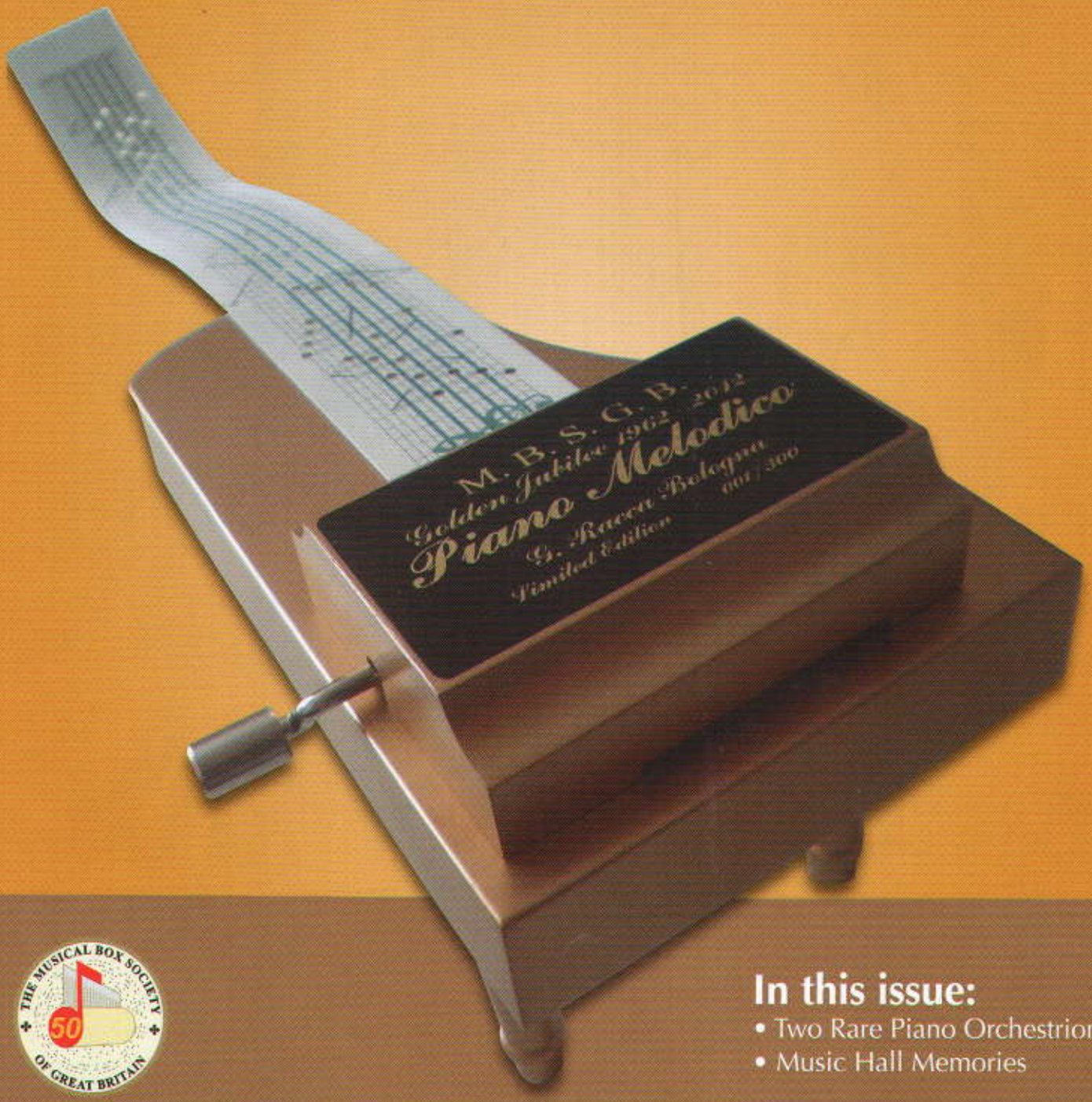
The Music Box

An International Journal of Mechanical Music



In this issue:

- Two Rare Piano Orchestrions
- Music Hall Memories

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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From the Editors' Desk

It is definitely Spring, and Summer is already in sight. We have been having strange weather so it is as well to know where we are!

By the time you receive this the 50th Anniversary meeting in Kent will already have happened. A preliminary taster of the meeting is in this issue, the full report will be in the next one. Jack Henley's collection is amongst the finest in the country and he is always a gracious host; Finchcocks is a gem – a visit there is never time wasted; the Welte organ at the Salomons house in Southborough is unique, being the specially commissioned combination of a Philharmonic organ complete with echo and an Orchestrion. We hope that the 50th Celebration was all that you hoped for, as it certainly had all the ingredients for an amazing weekend.

In this issue we are pleased to welcome to the Society the fifteen new members who have joined since the New Year. We hope you will take advantage of the Society's main meetings as well as the smaller, less formal, local gatherings. Thank you to those members who have written to the Letters page and those who have responded to the Registrar's request for information on the 'Chinese' box illustrated in the Spring edition or responded to other queries – that is partly the aim of the Society, to exchange information. The journal is always available for just that.

Please don't forget to keep an eye out for suitable topics for 'Stray Notes' items – it doesn't have to be pages, just something that interests you, as it is bound to interest somebody else too.

We have an article reminding us of what life was like fifty years ago when the Society was founded. Restoration Matters covers veneering techniques and makes it all seem 'do-able' and even includes information on sources of tools and materials. Indeed, we warmly thank all the contributors to this edition.

There are two book reviews. The first is of the new 'The Disc Musical Box'. Praise for this volume is flooding in and we congratulate Kevin McElhone as author and the Publications Committee – David Worrall, Paul Bellamy and Ted Brown who have all worked so hard to bring this work to fruition in this special year. We are finding our copy invaluable already!

At first glance the Music Trade in Georgian England does not sound as if we should need a review of it. We came across this book by a lucky chance and just in case you have not been so fortunate, we commend it to you. It is a surprisingly 'good read', shedding light on how earlier instruments were produced and distributed, as well as examining the laws of musical copyright as they existed (or largely didn't!) in those days. It is fascinating to look at our hobby from a different perspective and very refreshing to see it through scholarship in a different field.

We wish you a successful summer, happy outings with your instruments and good times meeting together!

Front cover illustration:

The 50th Anniversary Trophy - Gold Racca Piano.

Contents

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President's Message No. 24

During the last 50 years it has been the untiring work of the Committee that has ensured the survival of the Society. All the people who have served on the Committee have been dedicated volunteers who have given much of their free time to running the Society so successfully.

I suppose the one to hold the greatest burden of responsibility has always been the Editor. Producing four journals a year is a mammoth task and I can remember a previous editor saying that no sooner had one journal been completed than it was time to start the next. I believe we all need to remember that we can all do our bit to help any editor by sending in a contribution on a variety of topics. They may not be used straight away but they will always be useful.

Of course other Committee posts are important too and without the dedicated and largely unsung work of all post holders, the Society would soon cease to exist. However, we could always do with new blood on the Committee. It is a good idea for new members to serve for a short time before undertaking any post of responsibility. It is important to remember that it is a working committee and that after an initial introductory period; members should be willing to take on a suitable and substantial post. We are not looking for individuals who are looking for nothing more than establishing their kudos or importance.

All this may be a rather thinly disguised plea for more people to join the Committee, but I believe that we are at a time when new blood would be welcome, not to displace any existing member but to add to our administrative talents. Please consider very carefully the idea of putting your name forward for the Committee. You could be co-opted on to the committee for a year and if you are happy with the job then you could stand for election at the following AGM.

By the time you read these words, our spring meeting will have taken place. There will be reports and pictures elsewhere, and the event will have been of historical importance to the Society. The special commemorative souvenir I believe will become an interesting and sought after item in times to come especially as much of the music provided with the instrument has been specially arranged. John Phillips and the team dedicated to the production of these Racca pianos are to be congratulated on producing such an intriguing item.

It has been very encouraging to see that there have been so many replies to the various queries raised in the last journal. I wondered if anyone would respond to the queries about the Chinese musical box but helpful replies came in from all over the place. The conclusions are dealt with in the Register News section of the journal.

Another part of the journal which is being used more nowadays is the letters to the editor section. Admittedly I would like to see more letters, but we seem to be moving on from the stage where there were no letters for month after month. We can use this section as Nicholas Simons did last time to set people on the correct path of restoration. They can also be used as a line of appreciation as illustrated in Michael Start's letter. I cannot encourage you enough to use the letters pages enough to help and inspire others.

By now many of you will have purchased Kevin McElhone's excellent new book on Disc Musical Boxes. This is the latest book in our range of publications. It has been a monumental task to produce. Kevin and all his helpers are indeed to be congratulated. I have no doubt it will become the leading book on the subject and the ultimate reference work on the topic. It really is "a must have" for all those interested in mechanical music.

We are now enjoying our fiftieth year and by the time you read these words the spring meeting will be just a memory of a very exceptional occasion. There are many special events still to come so please help to make 2012 the best year ever for the Society. I hope that the remainder of the year for you all will be just as successful and free of the tribulations of modern living.

Arthur Cunliffe

Organ (piano, anyway - Ed) and Dancers, Hampstead Heath. Postcard from the Ted Brown Collection.

Teme Valley Winders

Spring Meeting – 10th March 2012 – from John Farmer

A pleasant spring day brought 24 "Winders" to Eastham for another interesting session of mechanical music and clocks. There were some new attendees – MBSGB member Ian Davies and his wife, all the way from Swansea, and horologist Chris Jeffery, as well as MBSGB Meetings Secretary, Daphne Ladell.

The presentations were started by John Harrold who showed a most unusual cuckoo clock he was currently restoring. It is a very large example by Emilian Wehrle of Furtwangen, and dates from around 1880. The substantial walnut veneered pinewood case, with applied stained carvings, contains a double fusee, wood plate movement, with lime wood carved cuckoo. The hour and half hour strike on a gong and the clock has finely carved and engraved bone hands. There is an activating mechanism on the hour, to start and stop a 13" Paillard, cylinder musical movement in the base. This plays 8 popular tunes. John explained that he had had to correct previous work on the operating mechanism to get it to work correctly.

Nicholas Simons showed the group a couple of videos that he had found on the Internet. The first was an East Anglian TV film from 1962 starting with an interview of George Cushing, owner of the organ collection in Thursford. He had just received his very first organ, the large Marenghi, from Ireland. He explained how he had music books for his organ produced by Chiappa in Eyre Street Hill, Clerkenwell, whereupon the film switched to the Chiappa works, where Mr Victor Chiappa was interviewed. He showed the

Cuckoo clock by Emilian Wehrle

process of marking and punching organ music, but the secret of arranging remained a secret. This was a very rare glimpse into the normally secretive world of the professional organ builder of the time. The second video was about the Welte Orchestrion at Zaharakos' ice cream parlour, and included a brief history of the Welte company.

Doug Pell had brought a couple of piano rolls, and followed with an F. Nicole key-wind cylinder musical box, Serial 20514 (c. 1850?). It is in a non-original case and has a 10.5" cylinder playing 6 tunes on a 102 tooth comb. It plays nicely, although with a little damper noise. There is no tune card, and only three tunes have so far been identified - Philomelen Valtz by Johann Strauss, Sir Roger de Coverley, and Hunting the Hare. John Farmer followed with another musical box, this time of unknown make from c. 1850 being a small movement in a large box and having 3 bells. It plays 10 tunes on just 32 teeth. When bought at an AGM auction, it obviously had a tuning problem, but John eventually tracked it down to just 2 teeth, which were subsequently re-tuned and the box now plays reasonably, although needs attention to the dampers. Tunes identified are Under the Double Eagle, Soldiers of the King (or Queen), and Honeymoon March.

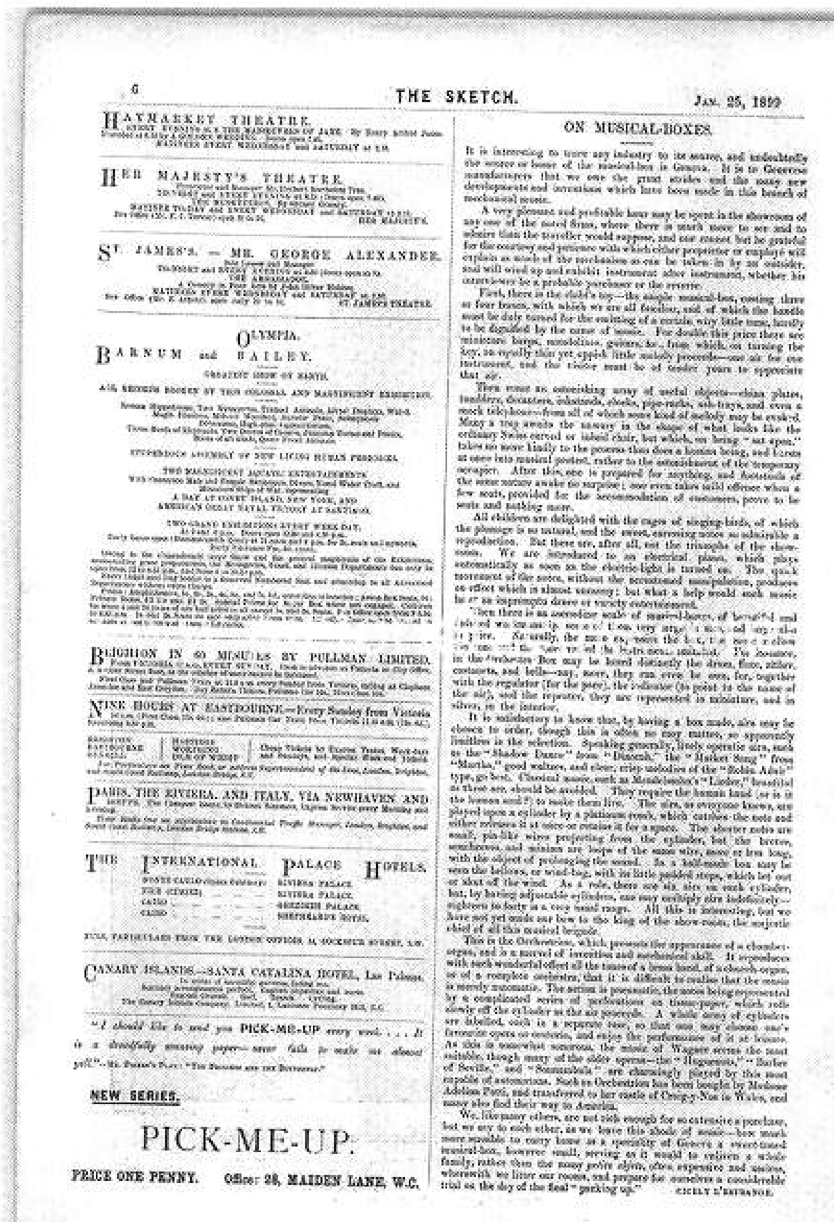
Alan Pratt took the stage next and gave an illustrated talk on a Nicole catalogue from the early 1900's. The catalogue includes some 1000 tunes, and some instruments never seen by collectors. The catalogue covers not just cylinder boxes, but disc boxes, organettes, pianos, phonographs, etc., from the time when Nicole had diversified to try and beat the decline of mechanical music. Another illustrated historical talk came from horologist Mike Page who has delved into the history of Ludlow clock maker Thomas Vernon. Vernon was making clocks in the 1700's, and Mike showed pictures of long case and bracket clocks as well as the location of a turret clock believed to be by Vernon, although no longer in situ. Vernon was also the "High Bailiff" of Ludlow for a time.

On a different note (!), Keith Reedman attempted to marry old and new technology using the words and music from the Invercargill March, composed around 1901. Keith had acquired a Mastertouch piano roll of the tune (roll number D461), and later discovered the words of the song were available as a "Karaoke" MIDI file. This can be played on a computer using software called Van Basco's Karaoke Player, and displays the words on screen whilst playing the tune through the computer speakers. However,

Keith demonstrated it by playing the tune on the Weber grand whilst the words were displayed on the big screen. Fortunately his ability to synchronise the piano with the words was excellent, although few members of the audience attempted to sing along. A large number of Karaoke files is now available on the internet, particularly through the web site of Richard Stibbons - http://www.stibbons.com/karaoke.html.

Another musical box, without tune sheet, was played by Bob Dyke, but only one of the 6 tunes was identified – God Bless the Prince of Wales. The box, which is in excellent condition following restoration, has no maker's marks or numbers. Bob was advised to try re-setting the comb to improve the synchronisation of melody and accompaniment. Our last, but by no means least, presentation is believed to have broken new ground. John Moorhouse, who is interested in the technology of singing bird boxes (partly due to his project to build a singing bird egg – a la Fabergé!), has been studying the cams which produce the bird song in Bruguier and Bontems bird boxes. His illustrated presentation showed the cams and his resulting hand-drawn traces showing the variations of the whistle cam (which sets the pitch), and the air valve (which controls the on-off and volume of the sounds). He had then produced combined traces which, effectively, provide a picture of the resulting bird song. From these pictures it is easy to imagine what the song would sound like. This is probably the first time such representations of bird song have been attempted. Hopefully, John will produce a detailed write-up for the journal.

As usual, Hilda and helpers had produced tea, coffee and cakes to refresh us during the afternoon, and a vote of thanks was given. The next meeting of the Teme Valley Winders is planned for Saturday 23rd June 2012, starting at 1:30p.m. prompt. Those wishing to attend should contact John Phillips on **01584 781118** to confirm and get directions if required. Any instruments, clocks or items of interest are welcome.


6 THE SKETCH. JAN. 25, 1899

ON MUSICAL-BOXES.

NEW SERIES.

PICK-ME-UP.

PRICE ONE PENNY. Office: 28, MAIDEN LANE, W.C.

An old newspaper cutting from the Sketch dated January 25th 1899, supplied by Luuk Goldhoorn. The article is entitled 'On Musical Boxes', and describes the various forms available, everything from novelties to full orchestra boxes. We hope to include a transcription of the piece in the next issue of The Music Box.

Register News No 75

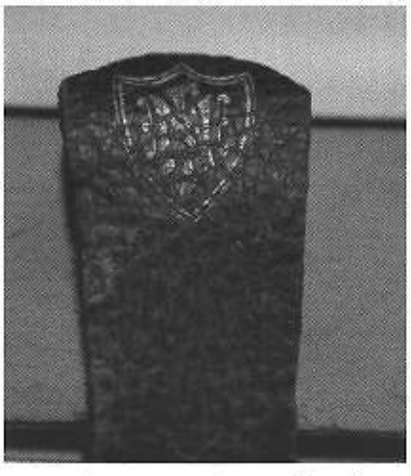
A Fine Interchangeable musical box by Allard

I have been delighted with the response from members about the highly decorated box that had been made for the Chinese market. This box originally mentioned in the This That and T'Other No 7 article had been purchased by a Society member. The case rather than the music had attracted the attention of the purchaser. The music seemed rather strange to a western ear as it was a succession of single notes with the melody being largely devoid of chords.

A second stroke of luck came when someone in Canada offered help with the translation of the Chinese characters on the rear of the case. Whilst waiting for their response, a further contact was made which turned out to come from a Professor of Music at an American University.

After establishing contact, it seems as though research is being undertaken in America on the subject of Chinese music in the world of mechanical music. The world of the Victorian musical box is of particular importance to this research.

After establishing the lines of communication, details of all the musical boxes on the Register where sent over and provided the University department with valuable information. Not surprisingly, the ornate Chinese box caused much interest in that nothing like it had been seen before. It is pleasing to note that the work and effort put into compiling the register is now being used in important levels in education and research which I am pleased to say is appreciated.



Nicole Frères embossed leather lid lifter tab on the Allard box

The final stroke of luck came when a translation of the Chinese text came to my attention. I am deeply indebted to the person who undertook this task. I believe that you will be interested in the translation as it shows that the Chinese people in the Victorian age had a high regard for the traditions and works of the past. Indeed this outlook may help to explain the recent desire of the Chinese to buy back their antiquities.

Five-character-ancient-verse

MOORING AT TWILIGHT IN YUYI DISTRICT
by Wei Yingwu

Furling my sail near the town of Huai,

I find for harbour a little cove

Where a sudden breeze whips up the waves.

The sun is growing dim now and sinks in the dusk.

People are coming home. The bright mountain-peak darkens.

Wildgeese fly down to an island of white weeds.

At midnight I think of a northern city-gate,

And I hear a bell tolling between me and sleep.

Wei Yingwu was a Chinese poet of the Tang Dynasty (AD 618 – 907). This is one of his poems that feature in the famous anthology 'Three Hundred Tang Poems'.

I would ask any member who has a musical box made for the Chinese market to contact me and let me have as much information as you can about the box. This is particularly important if the tune card is there. At the moment we only have 13 such boxes listed and

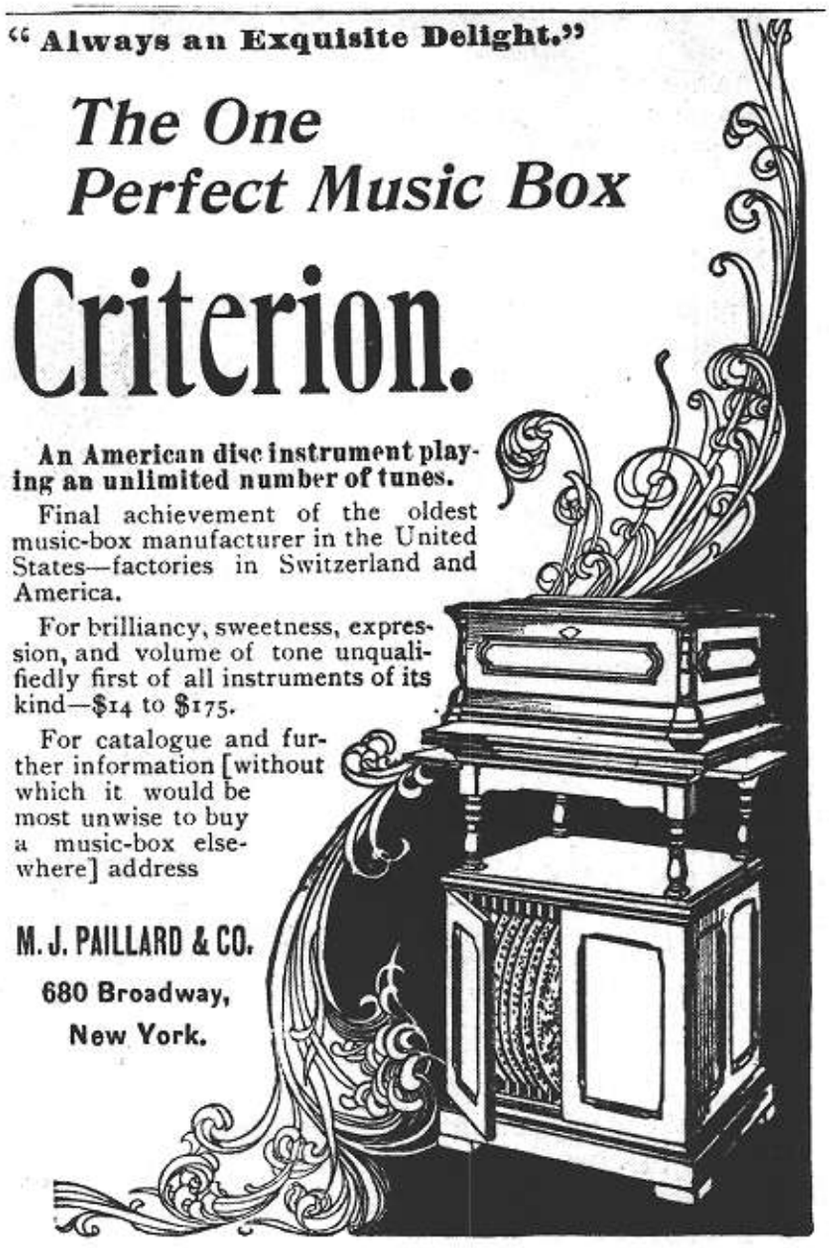
Distinctive tune indicator on the Allard box.

even that low number makes us number one in the research world! Anthony Bulleid provided us with an incredible amount of information in his lifetime and just recently I was told about a box that the owner wished to have placed on the Register. He also requested any further facts I was able to give him about the box. On searching all the reference books, I came across a note on page 18 of the first Tune Sheet Book. Under illustration number 26 where Anthony notes that, "The names on the top border are sometimes omitted, agents generally preferred tune sheets to be without a maker's name."

The tune sheet was a perfect example of this practice where Allard had almost certainly made the box, but Nicole had marketed it as agents. There was the Allard tune sheet with names and trade mark missing as Anthony had predicted. The box had an embossed leather lifter for the inner glass lid with the N.F. monogram on it. Putting all the evidence together I believe that Nicole sold the box as agents and added their own lid lifter before selling it.

The box is a later date interchangeable with nickel plated cylinders and parts. My one last query is who designed the mechanism for changing the cylinders? It has been suggested that Baker Troll may have. Please look at the photographs and tell me if you recognise that layout. Allard did make a number of quality boxes and this seems to be one of them.

Arthur Cunliffe



Left: M J Paillard advertisement for the Criterion disc musical box from Cosmopolitan Magazine, 1898. The maker was F G Otto & Sons, makers of the Capital 'Cuff' machine.

Editors' Collection

Some of the members who attended the 50th Anniversary Meeting of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain, gathered for a group photograph whilst visiting Jack Henley and his wonderful collection; a full report on the meeting will be published in the next issue of "The Music Box".

Things Aren't What They Used To Be...

A two-part article by Alison Biden looking at how things have changed during the lifetime of the MBSGB and reflecting on some of the implications.

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain, initially with thirty members, was founded fifty years ago in 1962. How different the world was then. In Britain, the education system was still largely two-tiered, with children who had passed their 'eleven-plus' exam going to grammar schools, and those who hadn't, going to the more practical/ less academic, 'secondary moderns.' The school leaving age was 15. The tiny minority going on to study at university was funded by a means-tested grant, and parents.

A proportion of households with telephones shared a 'party' line. Some households had no 'phone at all. Now nearly every member of society has his own mobile phone – or, more likely, something which not only enables telephone communication, but will be the channel for unlimited information, an entertainment centre, a music player, and take photos, if not films!

1962 was still the relatively early days of vinyl records, and machines upon which ten could be stacked at a time, enabling continuous music (more or less) for several minutes, without the necessity of having to change the disc.

There was no colour television, let alone 3D or high definition. Indeed, not every household had the luxury of a TV set. Of those which did, not all received more than the one existent BBC channel. Neither this, nor the rival commercal ITV, broadcast around the clock: programmes started in the afternoon (earlier on weekends), and finished sometime before midnight. 'Close-down', like the end of theatre performances, was marked by the national anthem, no less!

Domestic central heating was not that common and double glazing was a new, optional improvement one could add to one's home – if one could afford it. More affluent homes had washing machines – but not dishwashers. Freezers were a rarity. Our next-door neighbours didn't even have a 'fridge.

Fewer cars were in private ownership, and foreign travel was impeded by the limit of British currency one could take abroad – not to mention other financial constraints and lack of cheap transport. Charter flights were the only means of cheaper airtravel, and package holidays were in their infancy.

Leisure time was less, as the working week was longer in terms of hours. Pubs were places to socialise while drinking, rather than gastro-venues, and usually managed to rise to a dart board and the odd packet of plain crisps. Teenagers followed their favourite pop singers (groups were only just emerging) by listening to Radio Luxembourg on their crackling 'trannies.' The cinema-going public had a wider social profile, and hundreds of thousands would go to see a film at least once a week.

Stamp collecting was a popular interest, whilst bingo provided a night's entertainment for the masses. If you wanted to widen your knowledge on a subject, you went to 'night school', or the local library...

In 2012, not owning a (colour) television set is one criterion for defining poverty. We, society in general, have more disposable income – and more to spend it on. Things we used to regard as luxuries are now considered essentials. Not only have working hours been reduced, but we now have labour-saving devices. You can speed down the motorway network to the seaside within a few hours, instead of it taking two days. Millions of us regularly holiday abroad, whilst manufacturing and trade have gone global.

And, what has brought about arguably the *biggest* revolution in our time? The tiniest of 'chips.' Not just the world, but the universe, is literally at our fingertips.

Curiously, or maybe appropriately, the development of the computer is closely linked to that of many mechanical music instruments. Their music is programmed, often in a binary form. The concept of storing data by means of punched holes in metal, card or paper, is shared by both mechanical music and nascent information technologies. In the UK the 'world wide web' was launched in 1995. The resultant proliferation of internet use now poses a threat to some of our treasured traditions, whilst at the same time it offers once unimaginable opportunities.

In the concluding part some of the challenges to the Society resulting from these and other social and technological changes during its fifty year lifetime will be examined, with the evaluation of some of the possible responses we might make as we move forward into the future.

Restoration *Matters!*

10 - Traditional Hammer Veneering

Veneer is a thin layer of wood adhered to another thicker piece of material, normally another wood.

The reason may be to improve the appearance of a piece of furniture by veneering it with a more exotic timber, which maybe too expensive to use for the whole article. Also the exotic wood may not be strong enough, or may not be available in the size required.

In industry veneering is normally done by the use of modern glues such as PVA, this method requires large presses known as cauls. The method, which this article covers, is suitable for the home workshop, although in the past it was the main method used. It goes back at least 4000 years. Images of the process have been found on limestone murals in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. Veneer was probably much thicker then, possibly 6-8mm (¼")

As far as we are concerned, veneer was often used on musical boxes and other types of mechanical musical instruments. When restoring many of these items the existing veneer may be spoiled by damp or other damage. A certain amount of minor repair work can be done by cutting out small areas and fitting in matching veneer. Sometimes when veneer is very badly damaged, it is better to remove it and start again. You may be building a new mechanical musical instrument, or making a replacement box and veneering could be a suitable way to finish it. The photographs in this article relate to a box that required a tremendous amount of repair work. Although previously it had a wood grain finish, it was decided to veneer it.

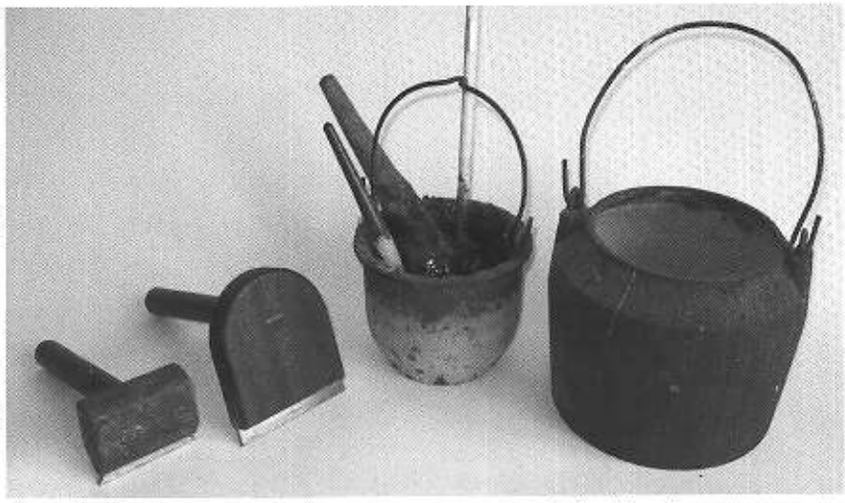


Fig 1. Two sizes of veneer hammer and double glue pot

To find suppliers of veneer it is probably best to look on the Internet. One used to be able to visit veneer lofts in London and choose what you required from vast stocks, but I doubt if this is now possible.

Removing old veneer can be rather difficult and at other times it will almost fall off. Sometimes a wet cloth and a hot iron may soften the old glue, followed by pushing a paint scraper under it. Any pieces which cannot be removed could be planed or scraped away. The damp may sink into the old veneer better if the polish is removed first. You will often find that the old veneer is quite a bit thicker than modern ones. Today, veneers are about 0.58mm (.023") thick, whereas Victorian veneers could be up to twice that or possibly more.

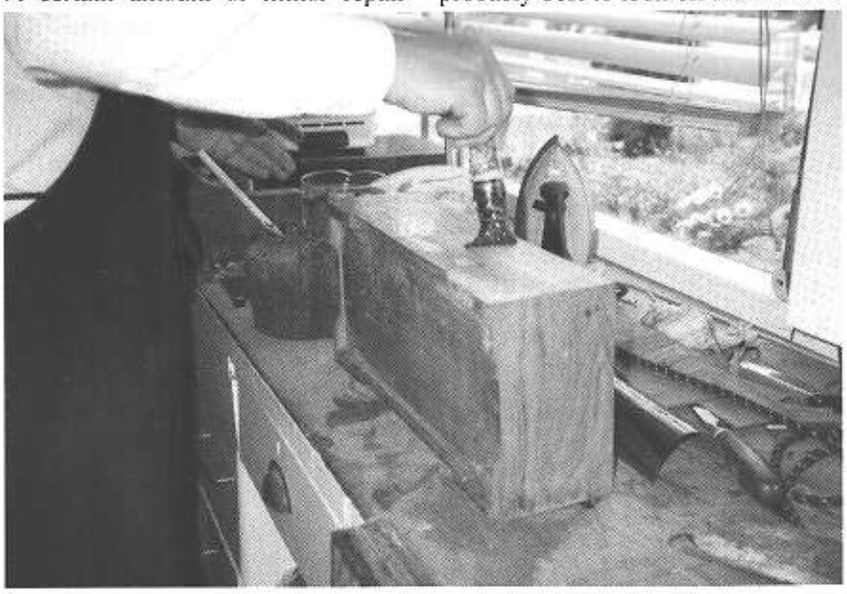


Fig 2. Applying the glue

Tools which will be required:
Veneer Hammer Fig 1
Sharp Stanley or other suitable knife
Safe straight edge
Double glue pot Fig 1
Large glue brush
Stirring stick
Small hammer
Iron, not steam

Materials
Selected veneer and stringing
Pearl/Animal glue beads
Veneer pins
Gummed or masking tape

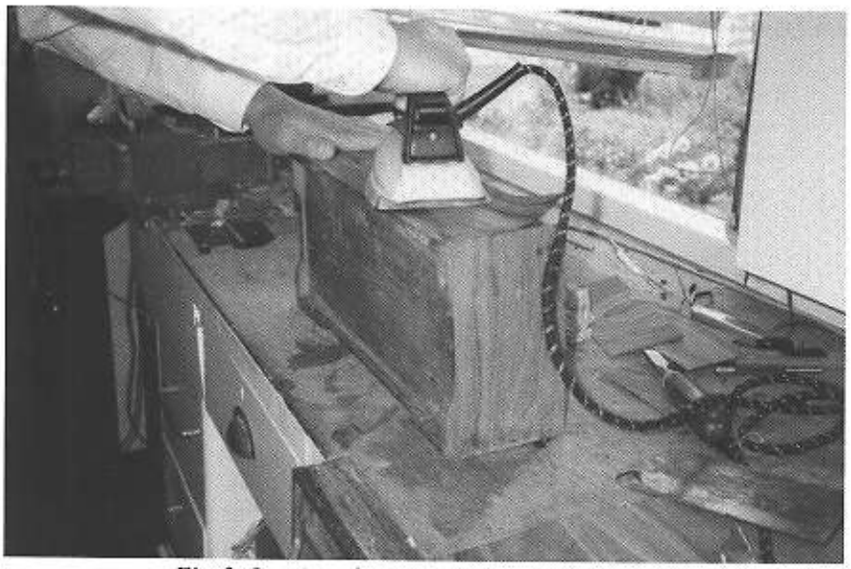


Fig 3. Ironing the veneer to soften the glue

Bowl of water
Cloth
Large sheets of newspaper

It is worth pointing out that bad workmanship cannot be hidden by veneer, although carefully undertaken repairs can become invisible.

The Glue

It is most important that the glue is prepared properly. To do this we require a special double glue pot. It has an outer pot, which holds water, and an inner pot in which the glue is melted, so that it is melted by hot water and not direct heat, which would burn the glue. These pots are now available as special thermostatically controlled electric units, although mine is of the old cast iron type, which can be heated on a gas or electric ring. For a small job and with a little ingenuity you may be able to make something up with an inner tin and an outer saucepan. You would need something to keep the inner tin away from the base of the outer pot.

The glue should be prepared the night before. Half fill the inner pot with glue beads and cover with water, allowing an extra 12mm (½"). Allow this to soak overnight. There is no need to discard any old glue in the pot, as it can be re-melted many times. In fact there is an old story that it is most important to leave the old glue in the pot. An apprentice was told to make up the glue for the next day. In the morning he reported to the foreman that the glue would not stick. The foreman asked him if he had cleaned out the old glue and when the lad said that he had, the foreman told him "Ah! That is the problem; always leave the old glue in the pot as it shows the new glue what to do".

Hammer Veneering

An hour or two before you start veneering, heat up the glue, first adding water to the outer pot. The glue needs to be hot but not boiling, about 48 degrees C or 120 F. It must be of the correct viscosity. Dip your brush or stick into the glue, when you lift it above the surface, it should run off in a nice straight line. If it comes off in drips, it is too runny, if it comes off in a line with lumps in it, it is too thick. We are looking for a nice continuous thin line of glue with no lumps. Add glue beads or water as necessary.

Cut your veneer to size with a Stanley or other suitable knife, you should use a safe straight edge for this and all other cutting. Make the veneer about 12mm (½") larger than the area to be veneered. Have your veneer hammer, a bowl of warm water, a cloth, the glue and iron ready. The brush should be in the glue pot, so that it is charged with

Fig 4. Squeezing the glue to the edge of the work

glue and soft (never leave the brush out of the glue).

Spread out some large sheets of newspaper to work on. The room should be warm, but in cool conditions you can run your iron over the veneer and the work piece to warm them up. Apply a thin layer of glue to the veneer and the work piece, Fig 2. Lay the veneer in position with the two glued surfaces together. Now dampen the veneer with warm water on a cloth. Holding one half in position, iron the other half, Fig 3. Don't have the iron very hot, just enough to soften the glue. If it is too hot it will cause the glue to come through the pores of the veneer and spoil the surface. Now take your veneer hammer and using a sort of squeegee pushing action squeeze the glue to the edge of the work, Fig 4. When you come to the edge, make sure that at least two thirds of the hammer stays on the work at about a 45-degree angle. Fig 5. It is very easy to break the veneer if your hammer goes too far. Repeat this process several times, re-dampening and ironing if necessary until no more glue comes out, and then do the other end in the same way. Make sure that there is not a build up of glue in the centre.

If veneering something such as a musical box, start with the back, the two ends and then the front. You will obviously need to trim each before veneering the next side. The time to trim the edges is when the glue is like a stiff jelly. Too soon and it will be messy and too late and it will be too hard. Trim across the veneer grain first, using a sharp knife held against

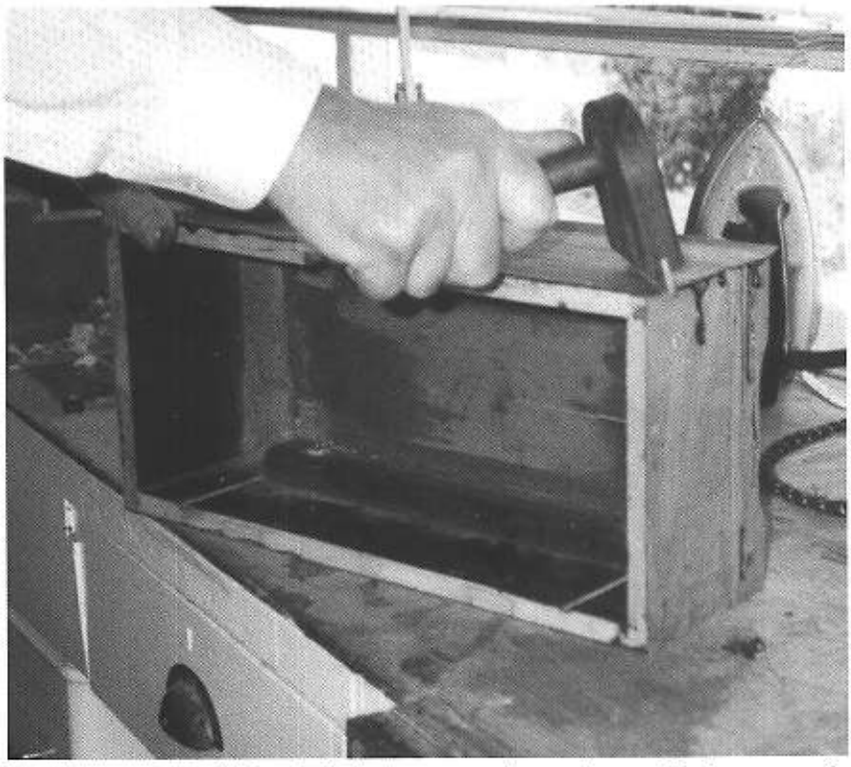


Fig 5. Keep two thirds of the hammer on the work at a 45-degree angle

the box, Fig 6. As you trim with the grain be very careful that the knife does not run with the grain instead of in a straight line. Score lightly first which will help to avoid the problem. Later you will need to very gently sand the corners. Don't round them too much, just enough to stop them catching on anything. Certainly no more than the veneer thickness.

You should not get any air or glue bubbles, but if you do, cut into the veneer with your knife to let any out, dampen and warm with the iron, then go over it with the veneer hammer.

Joins

Although the length of veneer is not normally a problem, often the veneer will not be wide enough. In this case it is necessary to make a join. Select two pieces of the veneer that you wish to join. If not a straight-grained wood, make sure you are happy with the matching up. Allow an overlap of about 12mm (½"). Hammer veneer the first piece in position, scraping away most of the excess glue along the joining edge. Now hammer veneer the second piece in place overlapping the first by about 12mm (½"). Work as far as possible as if the other half is not there, but take great care not to cause damage at the overlap. Leave for a while until the glue has gone off a little, then using your straight edge, cut through both layers of veneer. Soften the glue by damping and ironing. Peel away the top layer, now gently lift up the upper veneer and pull out the spare piece underneath. This should come out quite easily, but if not dampen and use your iron again.

As it dries, the veneer will have a tendency to shrink and leave a gap, the best way to stop this is to tape the joint up. I use old-fashioned gummed

Fig 7. Taped join and pinned crack in veneer

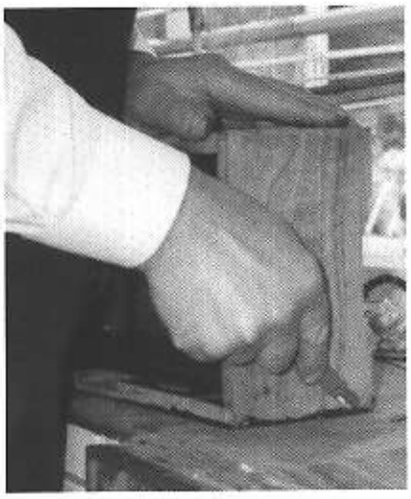


Fig 6. Trimming the veneer

tape for this, but if this is not available masking tape should work, provided that the surface is dry. Fig 7.

Sometimes however careful you are, a crack may appear in the veneer, or may have been there from the start. This is where the veneer pins are required; they should be tapped in along both sides of the crack, Fig 7. Both tape and pins should be left overnight. Some people use pins in both cases and you may prefer to do so. The pin holes will not show once filled and polished. If you used gummed tape it will need to be scraped off with the edge of a Stanley blade (without a handle) and may require damping first. Masking tape should peel off.

Banding and Stringing

Musical boxes and many other mechanical musical instruments have banding or stringing set in to the veneer. Stringing is normally straight lengths of boxwood of various widths. Banding is made up of various woods in patterns such as small squares or herringbone. Normally musical boxes tend to have plain stringing, sometimes with more than one width, with a gap between them, or herringbone banding around the edge, Fig 8.

For stringing, using your straight edge and knife cut two lines through the veneer where required and the same width apart as your stringing. There are special tools available to

Fig 8. Front of a musical box with herringbone banding

do this, or with a little ingenuity you could make up a double bladed knife from sharpened pieces of old hacksaw blade and a handle. If you are using a straight edge, a good way to stop it slipping is to clamp it to the surface, which you wish to cut into Fig 9. The spare must now be removed with a very thin chisel. I have ground one down to suit this job, although suitable ones are available. You may find that it is easier to remove if dampened and heated with the tip of your iron. You may then be able to lift it out. Cut the stringing to a little longer than required. Apply glue and press it into the groove with your veneer hammer, Fig 10. Normally stringing is set in a square and mitred corners are required. Glue both pieces of stringing in place with their ends overlapping, cut through both together to form a mitre joint, Fig 11 and use the hammer to press into place. The damp cloth and iron may also be needed to soften the glue. Stringing material is normally thicker than veneer, so unless you make a deeper channel than the veneer it will need to be reduced in thickness later, preferably by scraping, as described later.

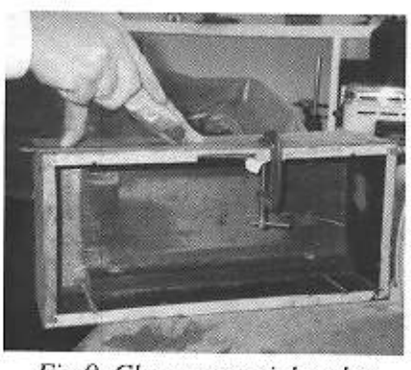


Fig 9. Clamp a straight edge to the work to stop it slipping whilst cutting

Cross Banding

For musical boxes which are veneered as in Fig 8, I have found it best to use a different method.

Lay the centrepiece of veneer oversize and then trim to the exact size required. Then glue and lay the stringing alongside it and mitre the corners. Follow this with strips of the background veneer and then the next piece of stringing. The herringbone effect is cut out as eight pieces of veneer and glued in place using the hammer veneering and joining techniques previously described.

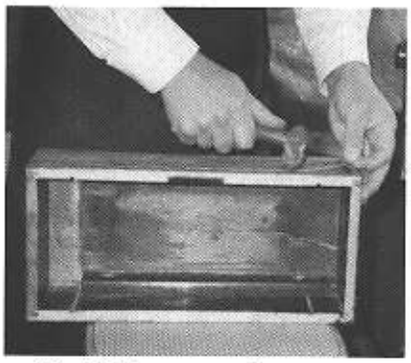


Fig 10 Use veneer hammer to press stringing into the groove

Inlay Motifs

Many musical boxes have a marquetry motif, usually of musical instruments or flowers on the lid and sometimes the front. I have always bought these, but others may have the skill to make their own. To insert these cut into your veneered surface around the motive with a sharp knife, carefully remove the unwanted area of veneer. You will probably need to soften it by dampening and warming with an iron. Glue the back of the motif only and insert it in the space, then use your iron and veneer hammer. Use very little glue and try not to use water as it may spoil the motif colour or adhesive.

Finishing

There is no better way to finish a

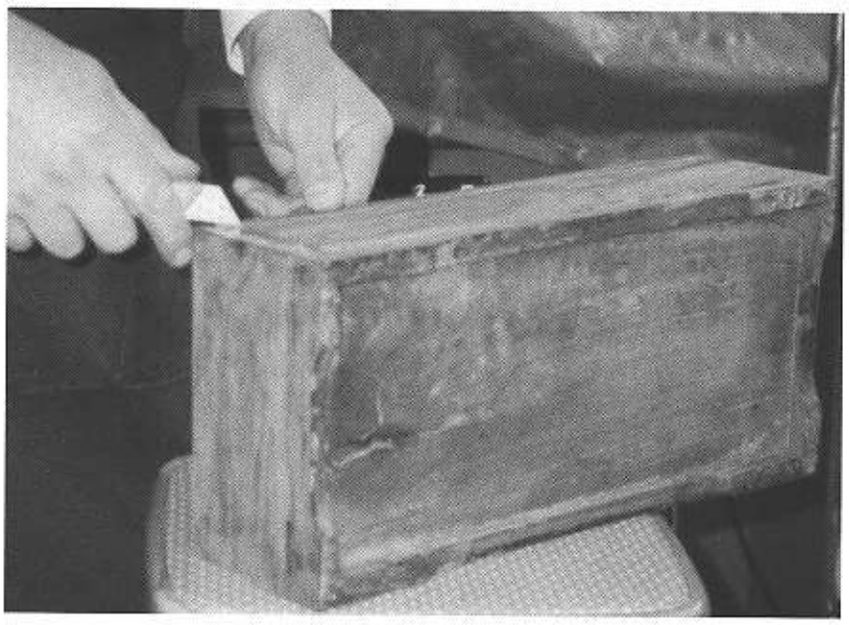


Fig 11. Cut through both strips of stringing to make the mitre joint

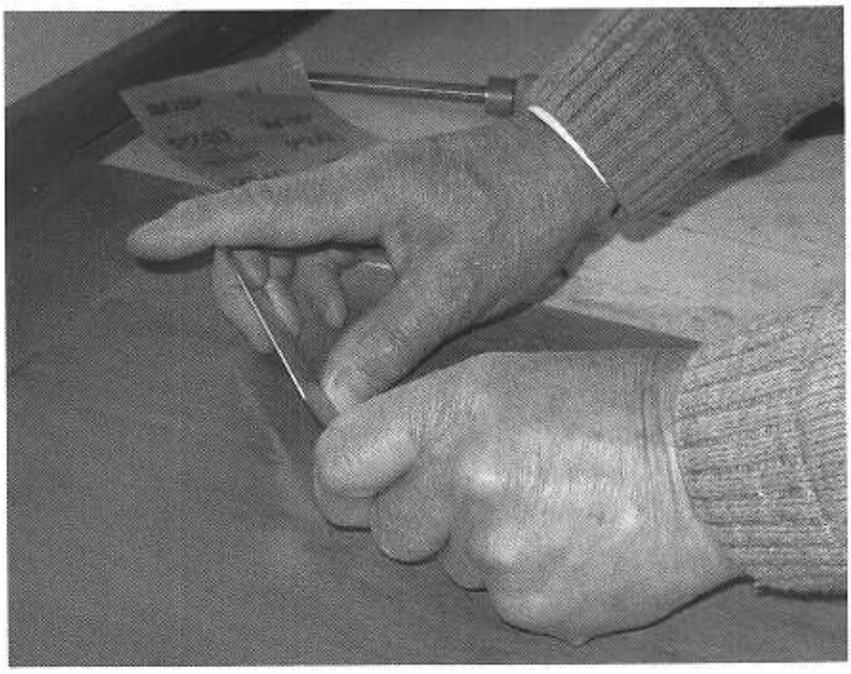


Fig 12. Using the scraper

veneering job than a cabinet scraper. This is a flat piece of steel with a slight burr along the edge. The edge is maintained by the use of a scraper burnisher, a hardened rod, which is run along the edge to retain the burr. I think the use of the scraper is best described in the photograph, Fig 12. It should only be used with the grain or diagonally, never across the grain.

When the edge of this tool becomes too rounded to get a burr using the burnisher, you will need to file the scraper, holding the file long ways along the edge of it and then rub the edge long ways against the side of an oilstone. Make sure that it is held true. The burnisher can then be used to replace the burr.

New or Replacement boxes

Most musical boxes were originally made from fruitwoods. Although this is available, I have found that a good modern alterative if you are going to veneer it, is birch plywood (not cheap DIY shop ply)

If the lid of your new box requires rounded edges, it is best to use the method shown in Fig 13. The hardwood edges in this case were fixed with biscuit joints (small tablets of plywood fitted into routed or hand cut groves) and modern adhesive. When veneered the joins will be invisible.

The final result is shown in Fig 14. This has been French polished and fitted with a decal to the front, both as described previously in Restoration articles.

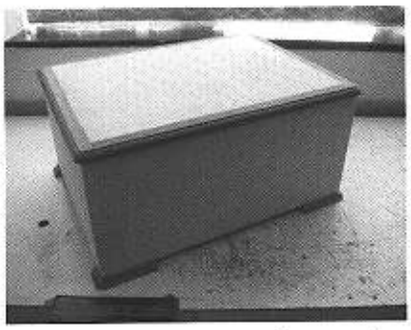


Fig 13. Replacement box ready for veneeringpress stringing into the groove

Suppliers (UK)

Veneer hammers, all tools mentioned and some veneers, are available from: Tilgear www.tilgear.info Telephone: 0845 099 0220

There are obviously many other suppliers, this just happens to be one which I use.

Veneer motifs are available from www.originalmarquetry.co.uk. A firm I have not used but found on the Internet and appear to stock suitable images for musical boxes.

Fig 14. Finished musical box after hammer veneering

Two Rare Piano Orchestrions

By Nicholas Simons

This article is prompted by my recent trip to the 10th Waldkirch Organ Festival in the Black Forest region of Germany. Mechanical organ building has gone on uninterrupted in Waldkirch for over 200 years and the town is very proud of its heritage. Four organ works still exist in the town and the largest of these is Jager and Brommer who export both mechanical and church organs around the world. In an old workshop adjacent to their current works Jager and Brommer have set up the Waldkirch Organ Foundation, and there they exhibit a wide range of Waldkirch-built instruments, with the financial support of local benefactors. Instruments exhibited range from the very early barrel organs by Ignaz Blasius Bruder, characterised by their automata tableaux, up to the excruciatingly loud 66 key Ruth trumpet barrel organ of 1882. Recently, the foundation has acquired two rare piano orchestrions made by the Waldkircher Orchestrionfabrik of Gebruder Weber. The Weber factory was a small orchestrion factory based in Waldkirch which made orchestrions of the highest quality and musical ability. There is no connection between this company and the Weber firm who built pianos fitted with player and reproducing actions. The two orchestrions are the Weber Violano and the Weber Grandezza, the first of these being extremely rare. Both instruments have been restored and were being demonstrated during the festival, particularly at a special event where each piano played a selection of its repertoire.

Weber Grandezza Piano-Orchestrion, with xylophone and expression.

Weber Violano piano orchstrion

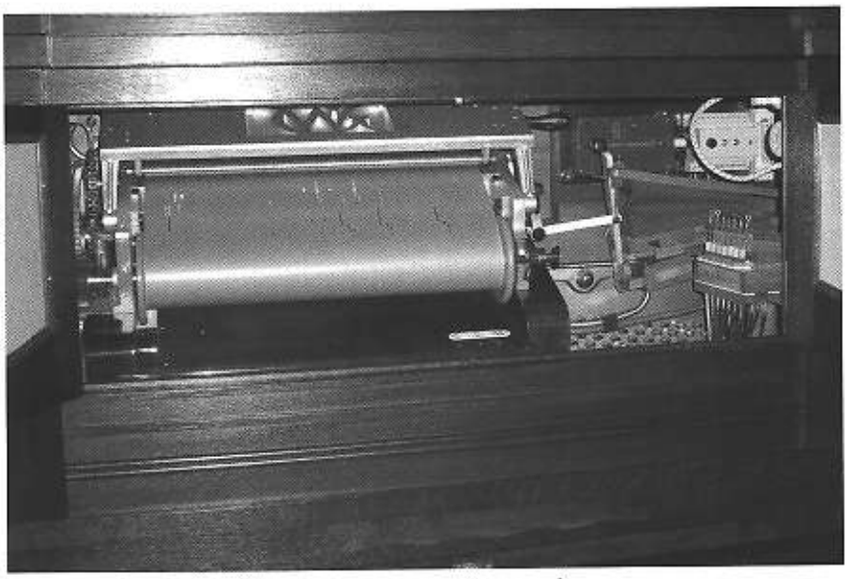
Gebruder Weber, Waldkircher Orchestrionfabrik.

August Weber (1861 – 1918) founded his orchestrion factory in Waldkirch in 1883. Initially they built organ based orchestrions played by barrels. In 1902 they changed from barrels to cardboard books, then being introduced into fairground organs. Weber made large orchestrions for hotels and public places, many of which included groups of automata

which played along with the music. A really splendid example of one of these, the Automatische Capelle, can be seen today in the Elztalmuseum in the town. This includes a group of five musicians playing a variety of instruments which are operated by their own keys in the music book.

Around 1904, Weber moved on to paper rolls and from then on all orchestrions contained a piano. One major difference between the Weber design and all others is that they used a combined pressure - suction system for operating the piano stack. Weber stacks use a pressure primary valve and a suction secondary valve. The paper roll is slightly thicker than convention rolls and is held against the tracker bar by a grooved roller under its own weight. The advantage here is that there will be no ingress of paper dust during play and the piano will be more reliable as a result. The roll frame is heavily engineered and even the longest roll will run true without the need for any automatic tracking system. Another clever innovation is that the roll runs at a constant speed (70mm / sec) throughout its entire length. No spiral compensation is required in the music arrangements and multi-tune rolls can be marked from a common master wherever that tune appears along the roll. This is achieved by the use of a pair of pinch rollers that pull the paper across the tracker bar, with the paper being wound onto the take-up spool with a friction clutch drive.

Weber orchestrions were built with the emphasis on musicianship. They combined good design and engineering with excellent musical arrangements. One of their great achievements was to build an orchestrion that could play quietly. Anyone could build a loud instrument but it takes great skill and understanding in order to build an instrument that can play classical music with great expression and quietly when required. It is this ability that characterises the first instrument I am to describe.



The Roll Frame of the Violano

Weber Violano

One of the challenges facing designers was to create an instrument that mimicked a piano – violin duo. The Mills Novelty Company in the USA produced the Violano Virtuoso, which employed a 44 note piano, a real violin and was totally electrically operated. Hupfeld, in Leipzig, made the Phonoliszt Violina which was a full scale piano supplemented by three real violins. Both instruments were temperamental and difficult to keep in tune. (*This is not our experience – the Mills Novelty Co made over 5,000 Violanos, which were very reliable in use. Ours has performed well for many years with just regular maintenance. – Ed*) In good order, they can both sound very good, but only a very small percentage of extant Mills machines sound better than a scalded cat, and Hupfeld instruments are ridiculously expensive these days. Weber chose not to go down the road of using a real violin. August Weber was a master pipe maker and his violin pipes are amongst the finest ever made. He died in 1918 and his son, Otto, took over the company and continued to make the violin pipes for their orchestrions. As a result, their violin registers sound most lifelike, especially with the added benefit of vibrato and swell. They are also very reliable.

The Violano was made from around 1910 to 1920, and very few are known to have survived. It comprises an instrument of immense proportions, being 8" 10" high, and incorporates a rank of 32 violin toned organ pipes in its upper case. It is shown in Fig 1. The intention of the designers was clearly to be able to play the violin section independently of the piano. The vast majority of orchestrions have pipe ranks and extra instruments that play the same notes as a section of the piano notes, usually the melody but sometimes extending into the bass. Most of these orchestrions cannot cut off the piano notes when the extra instruments play. Some of the more sophisticated can, which allows instrumental solos to be performed, with a lower accompaniment on the piano. The Violano, however, permits violin solos with a piano accompaniment in the same musical range. For this, it must duplicate the piano and violin playing notes on the tracker bar. The tracker bar has 106 holes spaced at the Weber standard of 4mm giving a paper width of 432mm. The roll mechanism is shown in Fig 2. This has the usual front-to-back orientation of the roll and the sturdy engineering is plain to see. Also visible to the right is the bank of seven register control pneumatics. The roll plays 58 piano notes, from C to A and 32 violin notes from D (one note above middle C) to A. Only the bottom 20 violin notes are totally independent of the

corresponding piano notes. The top 12 notes on the violin and piano share the same tracker bar holes and registers control when either or both will play. The scale contains many expression tracks plus couplers.

The 32 violin pipes are situated above the entire piano section in a separate chamber fitted with swell shutters to the top. The piano and violin sections are therefore totally independent and with the use of the usual pneumatic expression, half blow and swell shutter controls, extremely musical results can be obtained. The pianissimo effects, mentioned earlier, are obtained by using a duplicate set of small pneumatics pulling down on the piano stack pneumatics when commanded by the music roll. The Violano would have been a very expensive instrument and suitable for the luxury end of the market, such as quality restaurants and private mansions.

Weber Standard Scale

Prior to 1920 Weber standardised its musical scale and introduced the Unika. This was to replace the Violano as their premier violin orchestrion. It was still able to play violin solos but lost the ability to play different melodies on the violin and piano simultaneously. With the highly musical arrangements of Gustav Bruder, however, this 'limitation' is indiscernible to all but the most knowledgeable listener.

The standard Weber scale comprises only 52 playing notes and the Unika roll has 66 holes at 4mm pitch and a roll width of 272mm. In spite of this apparently small scale, the Unika plays 61 piano notes, 28 violins either coupled to the piano or solo, violin vibrato, sustain pedal, a split half-blow pedal, a pneumatic regulator for the stack, a mandolin rail and swell shutters in the roof of the case. Details of these wonders will be included in a future article.

The same musical scale of 52 notes was used in all orchestrions made subsequently. The Grandezza, Brabo, Styria and Otero use a roll of 79 holes and a width of 324mm. The Maesto and Solea use an 88 hole roll of 360mm width. By using a common musical scale and a constant roll speed it was possible to use the same musical arrangements on all these instruments, with registration designed specifically for the relevant instrumentation.

Weber Grandezza

The Weber Grandezza is one of the more popular Weber orchestrions and can be seen in many collections today. It comprises a full scale piano with expression, sustain and half-blow pedal controls. It can be seen in Fig 3. It also has a mandolin attachment which comprises a rail fitted with vertical leather strips fitted with wooden buttons at the bottom end. When required, this rail is lowered between the hammers and the strings to give a mandolin effect, especially if the piano is marked as an intermittent chain at the same time. It is best used sparingly. The Grandezza uses a xylophone as its featured instrument. This plays 28 notes from E (directly above middle C) to G. The xylophone hammers are fitted with a reiterating mechanism and it can also play solo with the corresponding piano notes turned off. The roll will also play a range of percussion effects plus pipe ranks. These controls are ignored in the Grandezza but are used in the other orchestrions that play this style of roll. As with any orchestrion it is important to regulate the different instruments and pipes to be in concert with one another, and I have often found that Grandezzas suffer from an over-loud xylophone, made worse by playing poorly arranged music from commercial suppliers rather than original Weber music. I'm pleased to say that this Grandezza had a well regulated xylophone and sounded very musical.

These two piano orchestrions make suitable additions to the exhibits in the Organ Builders' Hall of the Waldkirch Organ Foundation. They will soon be joined by a Unika which was sitting quietly in a corner awaiting restoration. Wolfgang Brommer was heard to say that he is looking for a Weber Otero to join the collection. I fear he may have a long wait.

Not too long - there was one in the Milhous Collection auction in Florida last February. It made $150,000 - half the lower estimate. There was also a Violino, a Grandezza and two Unikas, together with several other Weber orchestrions - Ed.

Operating a Polyphon between the Wars

The late John Mansfield recalls:

In circa 1922 my father, who owned a music shop which was one of the old type which stocked all the bits and pieces from violin strings to player pianos, also owned a 24 ½" Polyphon. This he placed in a tea room (*i.e. café – Ed*) on a 50/50 share of the takings with the premises and as far as I could gather did very well. The tea place was just outside Worthing and had been an old windmill, standing on a very high hill (*Salvington Mill at High Salvington – Ed*) approachable on one side up a long but gradual lane and on the other side up a very steep side of a grass covered hill with gorse bushes growing. I remember when I was about 8 years old going with Father to empty the coins from the machine and, as it was Easter, to make sure all was well. The trip was made on a bicycle with a small wooden seat on the cross bar. Father would hang the bag full of coins on the handle bars on the return journey and I would sit on the little wooden seat.

I remember on one occasion Father jumping up and down in rage. "Someone has stolen the bicycle!" he roared, charging off down the hill swinging the bag of pennies like a club, leaving me to trot along behind as fast as I could. I don't recall whether he caught the culprit!

John Mansfield, dated 1977.

MUSIC HALL MEMORIES

By Edward Murray-Harvey

This time Edward looks at some favourite old songs that were issued on a weekly basis in the 1930's.

The other evening I came across my copy of "Music Hall Memories". A delightful selection of old songs, which was issued in 1935 and 1936 as a part-work with that title. A part-work is a way of publishing a book piecemeal in weekly parts; in fact part-works are still sometimes issued today. It is a way of spreading the cost so that the average wage-earner doesn't have to spend the money to buy the complete set all at once. At the end of the run of the parts, there was sometimes the chance of sending the parts to the publishers and having the items bound into a volume or volumes at a special price.

In the particular case of "Music Hall Memories" in the nineteen-thirties, the publishers, Messrs Amalgamated Press, released every week for twenty weeks, a sort of magazine containing the words and music of six or seven Music Hall songs. Included among the songs were articles about those songs, and about the great artistes of the past. A number of pictures of the artistes were also included. Most of the articles were written by Mr M. Willson Disher, who was a Music Hall expert well-known in the nineteen-thirties. Actually, in spite of the title "Music Hall Memories", not all of the songs are Music hall songs. For example we have "Hitchy Koo", which is an American ragtime number of 1912, and "I'm Tickled to Death I'm Single", a popular song from the 1920's. Nevertheless the great majority of the numbers are genuine Music Hall songs.

Each of the weekly issues was originally priced at seven pence in old money (roughly 3p today), and so to buy the whole twenty issues at once would have cost a total of eleven shillings and eight pence. A lot of money to spend at one go in 1935 or1936, so it was a real blessing to be able to spread the cost over twenty weeks.

I first found out about this set of numbers when I began, more than fifty years ago, to collect second-hand sheet-music. I would come across odd single issues of the work and I used to be really fascinated by them, because they almost literally took me back to Victorian Music Hall days. There I was with in my hands the words and music of the songs, the pictures of the artistes, and Mr Willson Disher's descriptions. It was as near to the old time Music Hall as I was ever likely to get. But I was beginning to despair of ever finding a complete set of them.

And then one day in 1989 I walked into a Charity Shop in Norwich. There, among a lot of other bits and pieces, I found quite a number of the parts of "Music Hall Memories". They were not too tatty, and they were priced at 2p each. Carefully I sorted them into the correct order. Was it, or wasn't it, a complete set of the twenty issues? I checked them over very carefully. To my great delight I found that Yes, it was a complete set. Happily I paid the forty pence for the lot and took them home.

I suppose the original owner could not afford to have had the pieces bound together, but they must have carefully looked after them, so that at last I had got them all. As you can imagine I had great pleasure in perusing the numbers, and so I decided to go to the expense of having them bound myself. I saved-up some money and I did have them bound. I had found that on the inside of the cover-pages, were printed parts of the articles by Mr Wilson Disher, so I had the items bound into two volumes just as they were without any pages or covers being removed. The only thing missing (which would have been added by the original publishers, had they themselves done the binding) is an Index or Table of Contents. However I was able to type-out an index, which is perfectly adequate and useable.

The original owner's name was handwritten in ink on the cover of each issue, and it is still there. The name is V. Walkinshaw. Not a name local to Norwich; I would guess that he or she must have come from up North somewhere. It is very sad to think that they could not themselves afford to have the numbers bound into volumes, but I hope that they would have been pleased to know that I have taken steps to preserve the items for the years to come. Bless you, V. Walkinshaw, wherever you are!

Postcard from the Ted Brown Collection

Musical Box Society International | San Francisco, California

63rd Annual Meeting

Open Your Golden Gate!

Paramount/Victorian Tour

Art Deco to Victorian

Enjoy the day spanning the 1920's to the 1890's. This tour includes the beautiful Paramount Theater organ of Oakland and the fabulous Painted Ladies of San Francisco, with their collections of automatic musical instruments. This tour has it all!

Lunch will be served on stage, accompanied by Dave Calendine on the theater organ.

Paramount Theater Exterior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It Only Takes A Tiny Corner Of This Great Big World To Make The Place We Love....

The Musical Box Society International — Golden Gate Chapter

Souvenirs of the Overseas Trip to Switzerland in October 2011

A fine display of Wurlitzer products seen at Speyer.

Peter Rohrer, our host and guide.

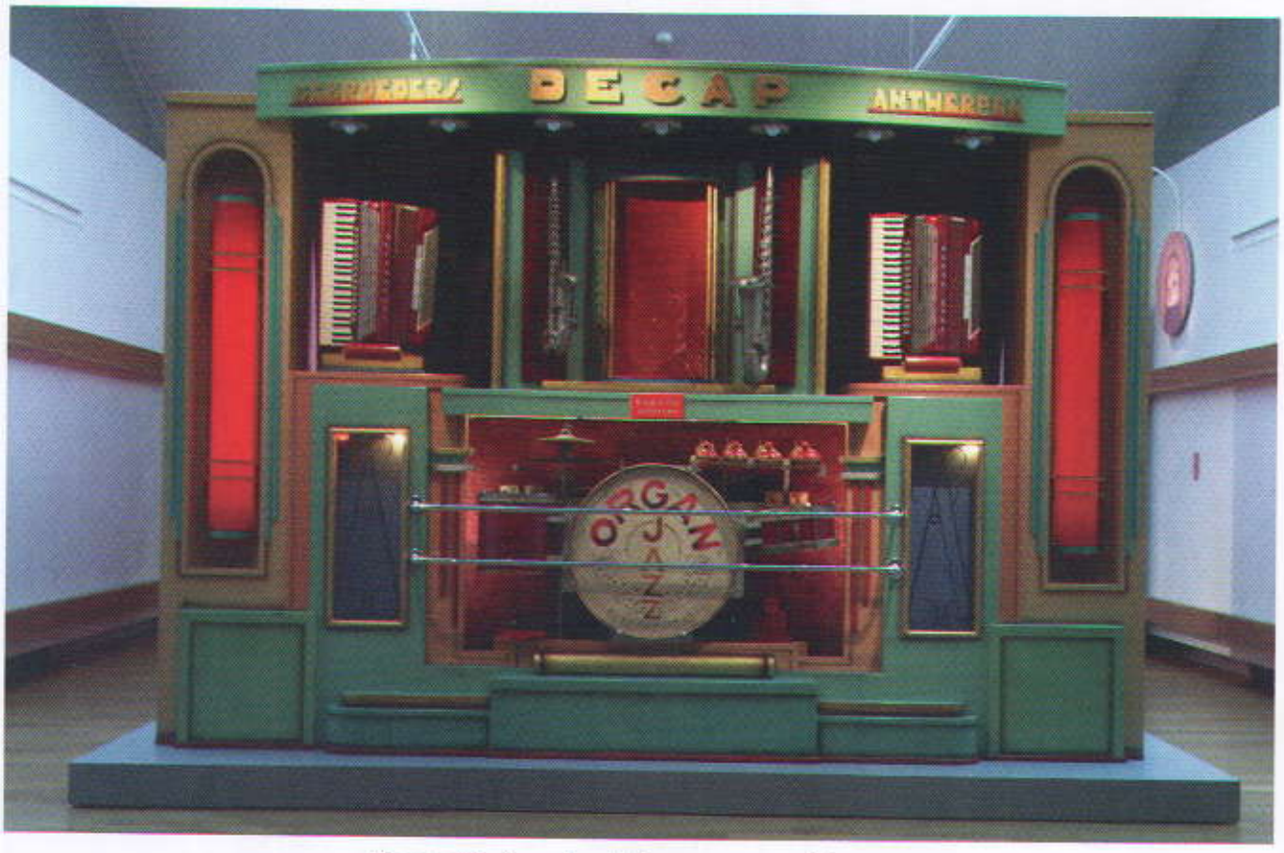
A fine Junod 'Conjuror' automaton.

Various Jacquet androids....

Edi Niederberger and friend.

Right: Dr Wyss in his re-created musical box factory - see article in The Music Box Vol 25 No. 4, Winter 2011.

Left: Daphne, Arlette and Michel.



Decap 'Modern Jazz' dance organ at Seewen.

A rare Weber Violino piano orchestrion with 32 violin pipes - see article on page 216

A fine Allard interchangeable musical box. See Register News article on page 207

Book Review:

The Disc Musical Box

compiled and edited by Kevin McElhone

reviewed by Alison Biden

The Disc Musical Box, compiled and edited by Kevin McElhone, at over 400 pages, and encompassing a vast subject, must surely be the most ambitious publication by the MBSGB to date. Described as 'A Compendium of Information about Disc Musical Boxes and Related Instruments' it offers an invaluable reference book and in- depth overview of the field of disc musical boxes. In his introduction Kevin McElhone states that he became interested in mechanical music instruments, yet with very little knowledge of the subject, more than two and half decades ago. My own interest parallels his in both respects, and when I read he was inspired to compile this book in order to draw all the information on disc musical boxes together in one place and fill in some of the gaps, I wished such a product had been available when I too first started collecting.

At a first glance at the contents list this book might look as though it is all things to all men. However, at no point does Kevin suggest it contains detailed technical information, as indeed it does not. Anyone interested in learning about the intricacies of mechanisms or how they might be repaired must look elsewhere. That aside, it can probably lay claim to revealing everything you ever wanted to know about disc musical boxes,(as well as what you didn't know you wanted to know), that is known to date. Kevin himself lists eighteen from what I suspect is a far greater number of questions about disc musical boxes which piqued his curiosity and framed his research, from what is the diameter of the smallest disc to which companies produced the most models or which disc musical box plays for the longest period of time on a fully wound spring.

The result is not a book to read from cover to cover, although I found the task set me more enjoyable than I had anticipated, peppered as the content is with fascinating detail. One is struck by the sheer amount of material Kevin has had to marshal, an indication as to how much he is indebted to the many contributors for the information they generously provided, and the assistance he received with the editing. He has successfully managed to organise a wealth of disparate details into sensible, accessible chapters, covering everything from the history of the industry, notes on the manufacturers and suppliers, and descriptions of the instruments. Other chapters amount to tables or lists of serial numbers, patents, and tuning scales, with thirty pages dedicated to tune lists. Somewhat surprisingly, these only detail the known tune titles and disc numbers for three sizes of Polyphon discs, with detailed directions of where to find other titles. This is an indication in itself of how vast the subject is. One senses that originally the intention had been to include many more titles, but the volume made it impracticable. It is an area I found unexpectedly absorbing, albeit eye-straining and mind-boggling to read for too long, as it revealed which tunes and composers were popular, and where the market (not always obvious!) for them was.

A less welcome reaction I experienced was a sense of imbalance in the sections dealing with disc box styles, makers and suppliers. Some examples get columns of text dedicated to them, whilst others only a sentence or two. This is understandable, given the availability of the source material, and can be seen as both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand there is no standardisation as to what shall or shall not be included; on the other, Kevin might be congratulated for not leaving out some of the smaller details. Less fluent than some writers, he is, in the main - but not always, to the point, and by and large fairly engaging.

My other criticism would be that some of the technical diagrams are too much on the small side to be properly appreciated. However, the profusion of colour illustrations (or black and white where they are copies of old originals) goes a long way to compensate. My personal preference would have been to have fewer photographs in order to allow space for the inclusion of a greater number of larger ones, but this would have compromised the comprehensive nature of the work.

In conclusion *The Disc Music Box* incorporates as many previously known facts as possible, and goes beyond any previous publication on the subject, by correcting a number of earlier errors or assumptions, and including the results of more recent research; for example, although the wholesaler and retailer J H Zimmerman eventually bought Adler and renamed the brand Fortuna, Kevin refutes finally the notion that Zimmerman's company itself was ever a manufacturer. He claims that every model of disc musical box known to date is included in this tome. I am not one to argue with him on that, although he acknowledges new discoveries are still being and will continue to be made. Anyone interested in the Chordephon, Guitarophone, Pianette, Libellion,

Arno and Roepke instruments are advised to buy this book: although not disc musical boxes, they are covered simply because its compiler feels they are 'unlikely to fit easily into any other book about a particular group of mechanical music instruments.' Finally, if at any point when reading this book you find your attention waning, turn to the chapter on case lid pictures and feast your tired eyes on over three hundred examples of beautiful colour illustrations to be found on the inside of disc box lids. You will be surprised by the variety of subjects, just as any reader, hopefully, will be surprised by the wealth of information contained in this epic work.

Note: at time of writing this the book's accompanying disc was unavailable for review.

For how to purchase your copy, please see the inside front cover.
Published by MBSGB, 2012.

ISBN 978-0-9557869-4-5

A Polyphon 19 5/8" clock, illustrated in colour in The Disc Musical Box book.

The Disc Musical Box
by Kevin McElhone

".... this long awaited work is really a must for the mechanical music community..." - London UK

"A real document for every collector"- Luxemburg

".....this amazing compendium...a fabulous reference book...." - New Jersey USA

"...everything worth knowing about disc musical boxes..." – Birmingham UK

"...fully illustrated throughout with lovely, clear photographs..." - Birmingham UK

"The photos are excellent. I'm sure I'll be using it as a reference for years to come. "- New Jersey USA

"....especially nice to see that you dedicated the book to ..... Coulson Conn." - New Jersey USA

".....wonderful book, "The Disc Musical Box". - California USA

"Excellently laid out and presented, key information is easily obtainable..." - London UK

What an amazing work this is! Georgia USA

"...this fascinating book: a veritable bible of the disc musical box." Europe.

Some of the compliments received to-date.

Stray Notes

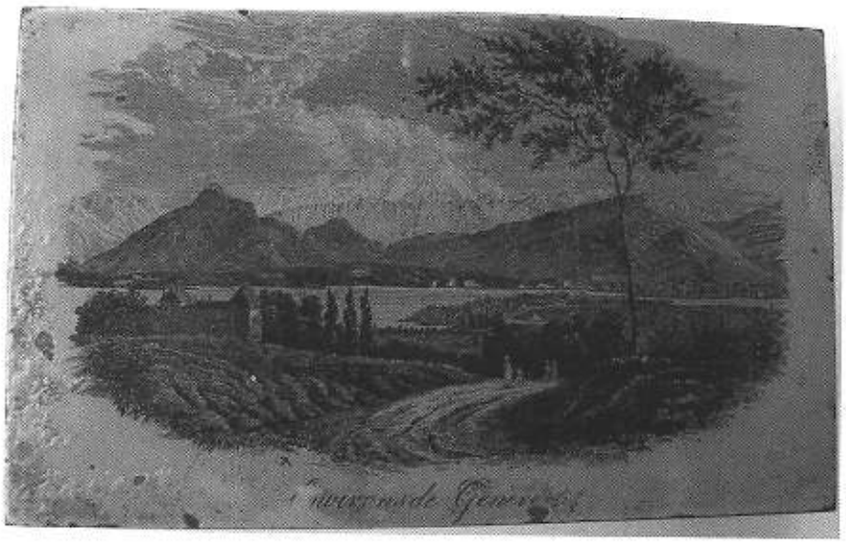
An occasional series originated by Luuk Goldhoorn

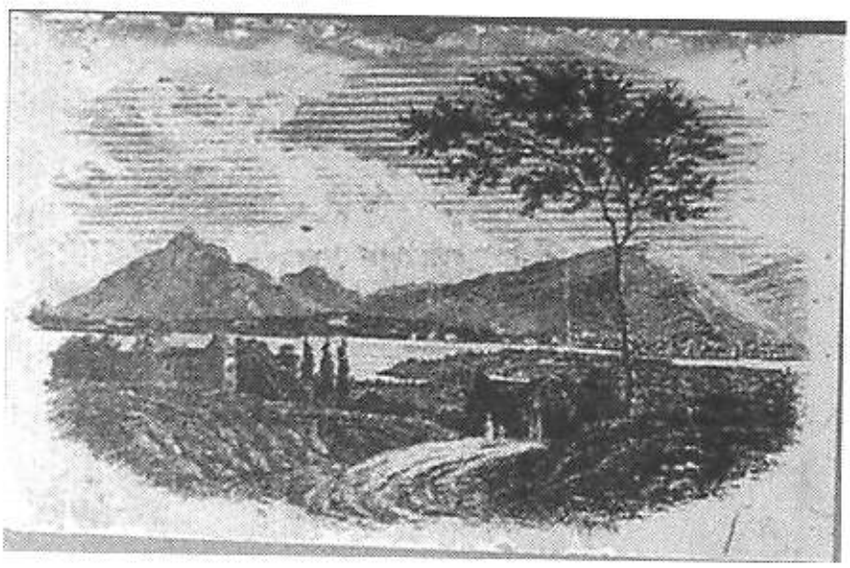
27. Quite a number of Austrian musical works were build into paintings which were made in the Hoffmann-school. All different but all also very much look-a-likes.

Was there also such a school in Switzerland?

In any case these two lids were painted by one and the same painter or in such a school.

See Figs 27.1 & 27.2.

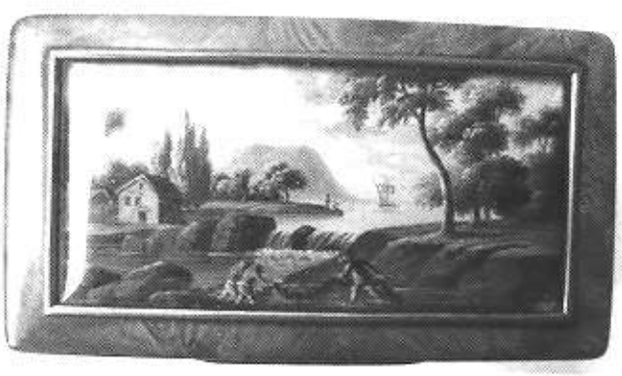




28. Although the housing as well as the musical work in snuff boxes were made in identical series, finding a pair is almost impossible. Even though these two boxes bear the same picture, one is a bit smaller than the other. In the smaller one a three tune François Nicole work was build, in the other a three tune mandoline work by Henry Capt. Both to be dated around 1825.

See Figs 28.1 & 28.2.

And believe it or not a third one was discovered by a friend of mine. It is the smaller version and the work was not signed.



Top Right: Fig 27.1
Top left: Fig 27.2
Above: Fig 28.1
Right: Fig 28.2

Dates for your Diary 2012

compiled by Daphne Ladell

Chanctonbury Ring

Sunday 20th May 2012

10.30 Coffee/Tea for an 11am start

Bring your own sandwiches

Please contact Ted Brown on

01403823533

Annual General Meeting & Society Auction

(1 week later than normal)

Saturday 9th June 2012

Roade Village Hall

Near Northampton

11a.m. Start - followed by buffet lunch

After lunch - Society Auction

Teme Valley Winders

Saturday 23rd June 2012

1.30 p.m. start

Please contact John Phillips on

01584 78 1118

Chanctonbury Ring Open Day

(Bring your Organ)

Saturday 14th July

10.30 Coffee / Tea for an 11am start

Lunch provided

Please contact Ted Brown on

01403823533

Autumn Meeting 2012

John & Hilda Phillips are our hosts for the meeting

Friday 14th – Sunday 16th September

Booking form in journal

Chanctonbury Ring

Sunday 23rd September 2012

10.30 Coffee / Tea for an 11am start

Lunch provided

Please contact Ted Brown on

01403823533

Chanctonbury Ring Christmas Meeting

Saturday 24th November 2012

10.30 Coffee / Tea for an 11am start

Lunch provided

Please contact Ted Brown on

01403823533

Teme Valley Winders

Christmas Meeting

Saturday 8th December 2012

12 Noon start

Please contact John Phillips on

01584 78 1118

Special 50th Anniversary Inaugural Dinner

Saturday 1st – Sunday 2nd December 2012

Venue: Hitchin Priory

Hitchin

Hertfordshire

(more details in next Journal)

Making a Musical Box

by Don Busby

Cementing and Grinding a Pinned Cylinder – Conclusion

Cementing pins in a cylinder was described in the last issue of The Journal. Equipment and procedures for grinding the ends of pins to a cylindrical envelope and measuring results are now described. Statistical analyses of measurements are presented pictorially.

A comprehensive description of grinding pins of musical box cylinders is given by ref 1: it was followed as closely as practicable for this bespoke cylinder. It was necessary to deviate on some points as now discussed.

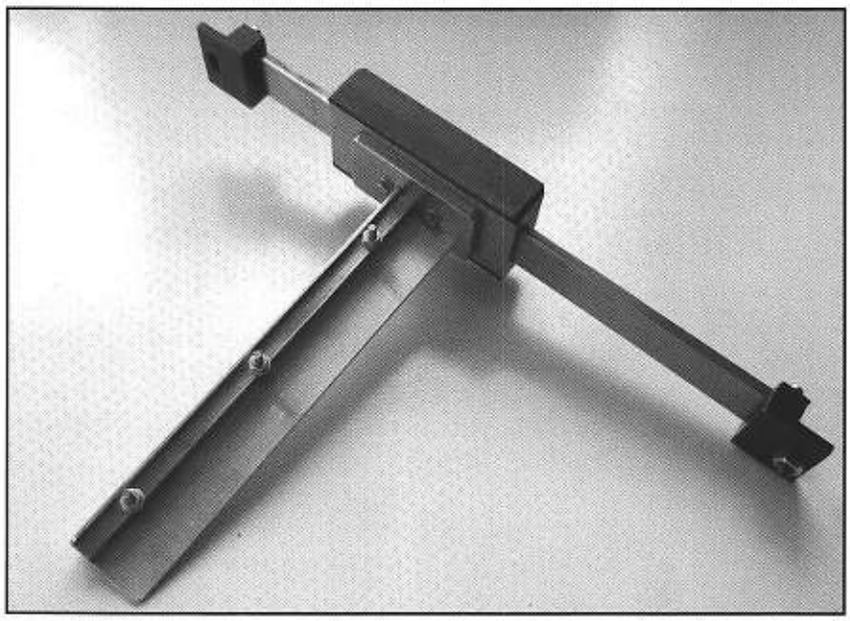
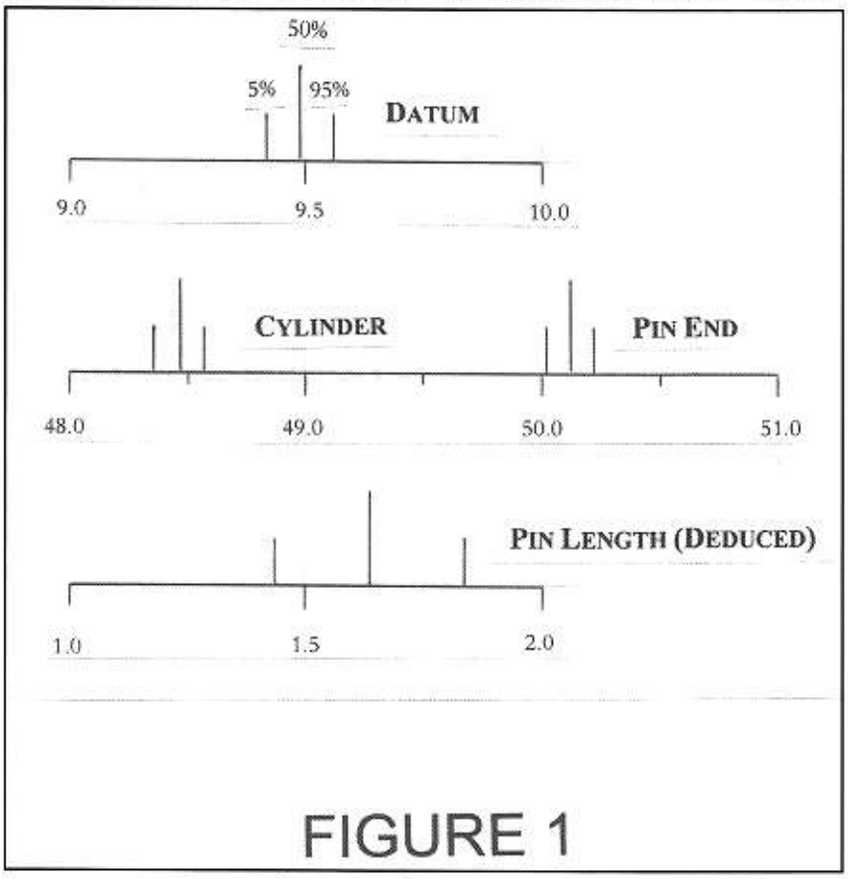


Photo 1. Modified vertical digital scale

Finished length of pins

It is usual to finish pin length at around 1mm. The author decided to leave his pins somewhat longer, reducing as little as possible from a starting length of 1.5mm. This was deemed acceptable as his pins are thicker than normal at 0.405mm diameter: it will allow for tolerances in cylinder diameter as subsequent interchangeable cylinders are formed from brass sheet. Pin lengths of later cylinders, and this one if necessary, can then be adjusted to produce matching pin end envelope diameters.



Accuracy of measurements

Measuring the pin end envelope

Pin density of this first cylinder is very much lower than normal for three reasons:

- cylinder is single-track with comb tooth centres of 2.9mm
- comb is fully chromatic over five octaves with double and some triple tuning of notes, as yet with no introduction of mandolin effects
- embellishment has not yet been added to airs.

This rules out the use of callipers to measure the diameter of the pin end envelope because pairs of directly opposite pins are thin on the ground.

It was necessary to devise an alternative means of checking the envelope, effected by measuring its radius as follows. A vertical digital scale is mounted on the angled

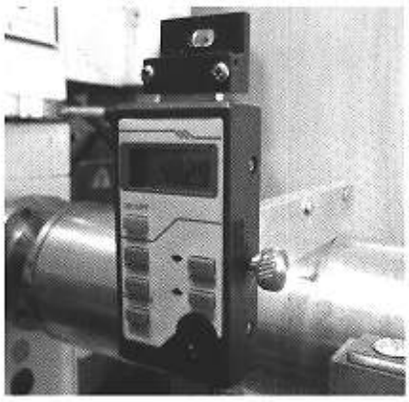
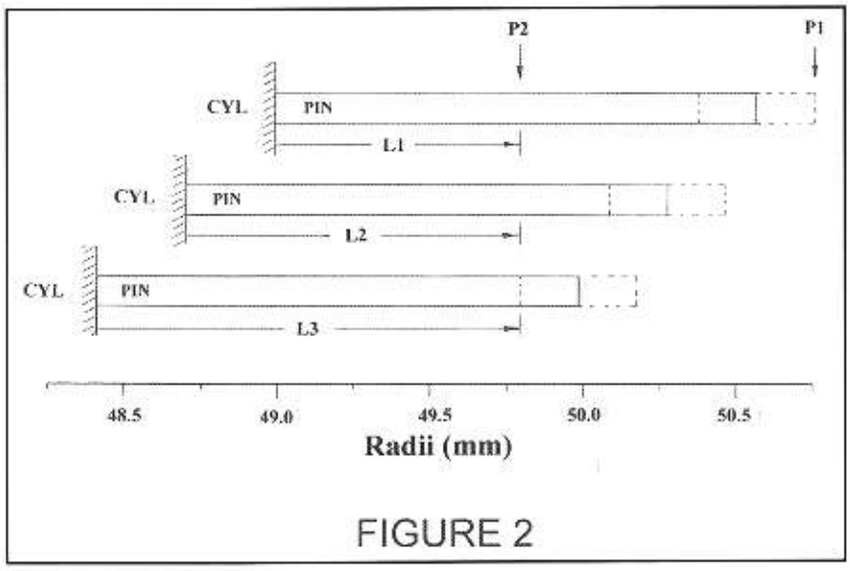


Photo 2. Measuring radius of cylinderscale

plate which carries the grindstone. A cantilever arm is fabricated from brass U-channel with a brass rod sweated along the channel and into a brass plate which is bolted to the back of the sliding part of the digital scale. An aluminium angle is bolted to the side of the cantilever to allow placement of its thin arm between pins.

To carry out measurements the device is initially calibrated by bringing its arm down onto the 19mm diameter lathe spindle arbor and setting a reading of 9.5mm on the scale. The radius of any point on the cylinder, or at the end of a pin, can then be read directly after lowering the arm onto that point. The device and its operation are shown by photos 1-3. For this exercise, cylinder and adjacent pin end radii were recorded, their difference giving pin length at that point.

How accurate are these measurements? This was checked as follows, with the proviso that all is carried out at constant cross bed setting, as close as possible to the cylinder. Firstly, the datum was iteratively set as accurately as possible to 9.5mm, then re-measured 20 times. Next, cylinder and pin end radii at a single pin location were measured, again 20 times. Measurement errors will have a normal (Gaussian) probability function. *Means* and *standard deviations* were calculated for the measured data. Figure 1 shows the results where the longer central vertical lines are *mean* values and



Schematic of pins protruding from a cylinder

the shorter verticals 'bracket' 90% of the population. In the cases of cylinder and pin end radii, errors of measurement are +/- 0.1mm of the correct value. Deduced pin lengths can therefore be up to +/- 0.2mm of their true value. A more accurate method of determining lengths of pins is developed later.

Now, having a feeling for the accuracy of resulting data, we can measure the cylinder with its cemented pins before the grinding exercise is started.

Measuring the cylinder before grinding

It was thought prudent to have an idea of the values of the three measurements, namely cylinder radius, pin end radius and calculated pin length, before grinding commenced.

Samples of up to 49 measurements were taken at 7 roughly equal distances along the cylinder and 7 points around its circumference, size of sample depended on density of pins at the 49 locations so defined. From the data, *mean* values and the upper and lower limits between which 90% of each population is expected to fall were calculated. Results are shown as the first line of table 1: the rest of this table records measurements taken after each of several grinding runs, to be defined later. It is noted that a pin length is not the difference between the *means* of the two radii, but is the *mean* of their differences for all measurements at a given stage of cut.

Let us now consider what the first line of data tells us and how it will guide the grinding process. The aim is to grind the pins so that all ends are the same distance from the centre of the cylinder arbor, at the same time ensuring that pin lengths from cylinder surface are not greatly reduced from our starting length of 1.5mm.

Cut	Cyl. Rad.	Pin Rad.	Pin Length	Pins Ground %
mm	<----------Means---------->			Visual Check
0	48.70	50.18	1.57	0
Aluminium Carbide Stone				
0.2	48.69	50.25	1.54	10
0.4	48.51	50.05	1.53	30
0.6	48.42	50.05	1.66	75
Silicon Oxide Stone				
0.8	48.50	49.96	1.47	95

Table 1: Measured data before and during grinding

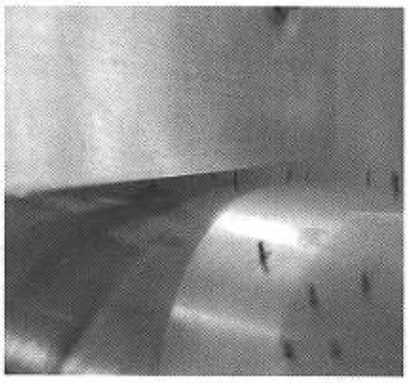


Photo 3. Measuring pin end radius

Fig 2 is a schematic representation of pins protruding from a cylinder. At the left of the figure, the three "CYLs" cover the range of cylinder radius within which 90% of all values are expected to fall. To the right of these, pins are depicted, their length (solid line) being the *mean* calculated value as in table 1. The dotted lines show the range of pin lengths for 90% of the population. Ignoring for the moment the10% of pins which fall equally each side of this range, it is obvious that for all pin ends to form one cylindrical envelope they need to be ground down from P1 to P2, viz grinding-in 0.95mm from first pin contact with the stone. This would leave pins of length L1 through L2 to L3. Reading from the figure, resulting pin lengths would range from about 0.8 to 1.4mm, a more vicious reduction than wanted.

Consider now pins falling outside the range P1-P2. The shorter 5% might need to be replaced, or perhaps eased out from the cement and ground to correct length. The longer 5%, however, will grind down to match the 90% within the range P1-P2. They will also result in the cross bed index being set to zero earlier than with first contact occurring at P2, thus causing the 90% between P1 and P2 to be somewhat under-cut: a 'fail-safe' feature.

Taking all above into consideration, it was decided to grind then measure the two radii after each advance of 0.2mm of the cross bed.

Grinding

An aluminium carbide section, 100x50x25mm, was cut from a standard stone using a hacksaw. It was drilled with a masonry bit for bolting down to a vertical angle piece with its fine side towards the cylinder, as shown in photo 4. Parts of this cylinder carry no pins, so the loosely fitted stone was brought gently to the cylinder with a thin steel shim between to protect the cylinder. Tightening of all fasteners left the face of the stone in line with the cylinder arbor. The vertical centre of the stone was lined up with the cylinder arbor as recommended by ref 1: your author suggests that a small deviation from vertical centre would allow for the stone to be turned over to provide a fresh cutting line after the first becomes worn. Next the stone was backed off and gradually advanced towards a pinned area. Between each cross bed move the stone was traversed in steps equal to its length along the full length of the cylinder,

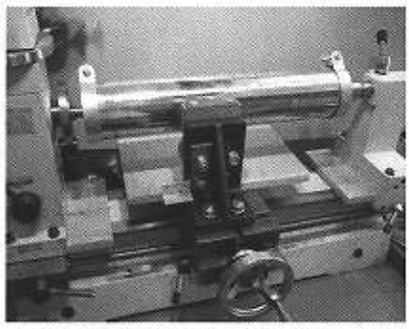


Photo 4. Mounting of aluminium carbide stone

manually turning the cylinder whilst listening for the first contact between stone and pins. The cross bed index was then set to zero and the stone eased back a fraction.

Grinding could now start in earnest. The stone was advanced towards the cylinder in cross bed moves of 0.025mm (1 thou"). After each move the cylinder was traversed until pin contact was re-established, at which

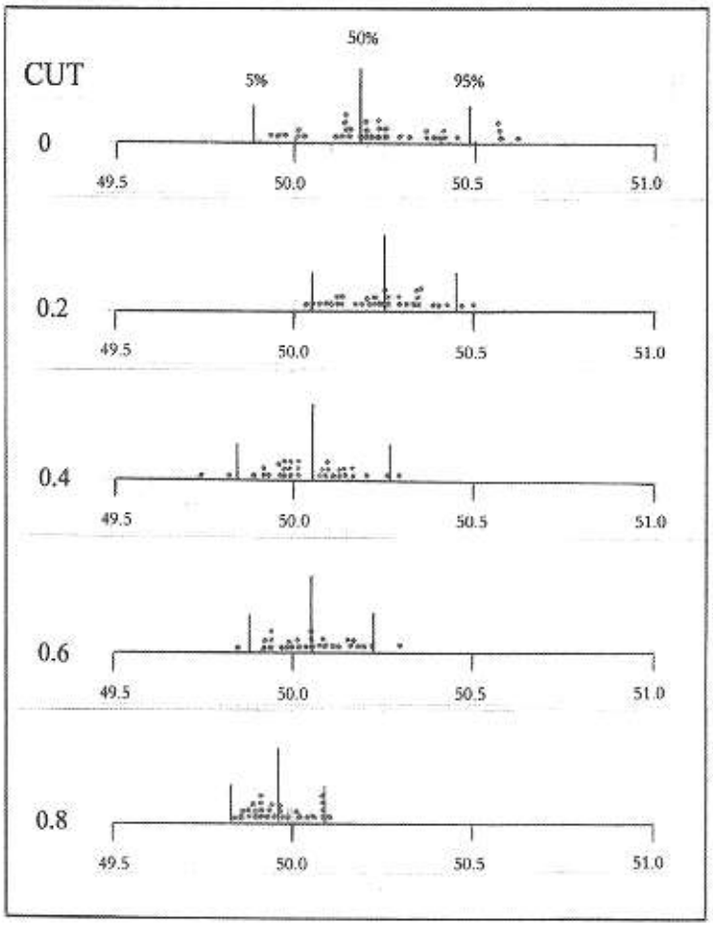
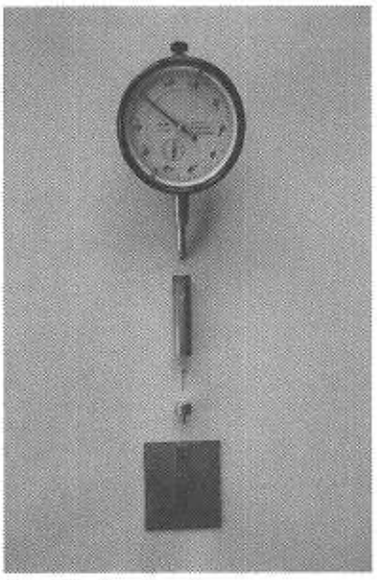


FIGURE 3

Distribution of pin end radii as cuts progress



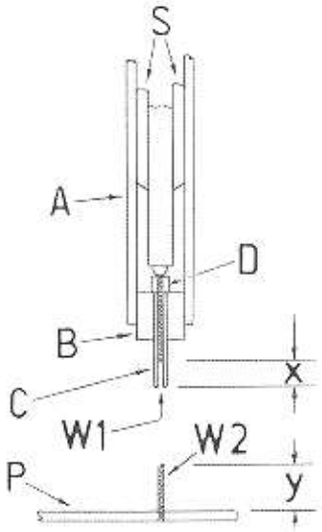


FIGURE 4

point the index was re-set to zero and grinding continued for a total stone advance of 0.2mm between measurements. After each advance of 0.025mm, at least two passes were made across the cylinder, more if called for by 'noisy' pin/stone contact.

Table 1 lists mean values of measurements after each 0.2mm advance of the cross bed. Pin end radii data are plotted at fig 3 which shows *mean* and *deviation* from the mean of 90% of the population; dots represent each reading taken. It can be seen that *mean* and *deviation* have reduced from Cut 0 to Cut 0.6, indicating that out-reaching pins are being ground down. Reductions, however, are diminishing by Cut 0.6. At this stage the stone was removed for inspection. It had worn more than expected, having a concave groove, about 2.5mm deep, along the line of pin contact. The ease with which it had been cut and drilled should have been a forewarning! It was therefore replaced by an Indian stone of silicon oxide as recommended by ref 1. Such a stone, 200x75x12mm was cut in half using a water-cooled, diamond coated disc on an electric tile cutter, allowing the arrangement shown at photo 5; it is noted that this would potentially allow for 8 new cutting faces. Measurements after Cut 0.8 indicate that the new stone is an effective cutter, also evidenced by the sound of its action on the pins. The distribution at Cut 0.8 of fig 3 shows that *mean* pin end radius has been reduced by about 0.2mm from the start, with 90% of pins being within +/- 0.127mm of the *mean*, which approximates to the expected errors of measurement discussed earlier. Also, as longer pins are reduced in length the distribution is being skewed towards the upper end.

It was considered that a further cut of between 0.1 and 0.3mm might reduce *deviation* to a minimal value and the *mean* by another 0.1mm. However, it was decided not to grind further pending a check of residual pin length followed by trials against the comb on the bed plate.

Checking residual pin length

In previous articles which described making this cylinder and fitting end caps and dividers, the outer diameter was measured with callipers at 97.81, a radius of 48.905. A dial gauge set on the rotating cylinder showed its radius to vary +/- 0.15mm about the average value. These data are in line with cylinder radii found and listed in table 1: they do, however, raise the question, "Have some pins been ground unduly short?" It was decided to measure lengths of a large sample of pins over the whole cylinder.

At first, measurements were attempted using the 'depth gauge' at the end of digital callipers. These were clumsy to use, with accuracy dependent on careful placing of the probe on the curved surface of the cylinder.

In the end, a specially modified dial gauge was found much easier to use; it is illustrated and described in fig 4 and photo 6.

Key to Schematic Figure 4

A. Brass tubing - diameters 9.5 x 8mm. A tight push fit onto stem of dial gauge.

S. Stem of dial gauge.

B. Brass rod - diameter 8mm. A tight push fit into A.

C. Bushing wire - diameters 1.75 x 0.50mm. Sweated into B.

D. Ferrule - a short length of bushing wire. Distorted by hammering to grip W1.

W1 & W2. Pinning wire - diameter 0.405mm.

W1 is a close, loose fit within C.

P. Brass plate with W2 sweated-in.

The dial gauge was set up for measuring pins about 1 to 1.5mm long as follows. Initially, W1 was made the same length as C, making x=0, and W2 was of length y=2mm. Withdrawing D+W1 temporarily, about 0.75mm of W1 was snipped off and its end squared-up, making x=0.75 approximately. With the dial gauge set to zero, C was iteratively lowered onto W2, each time having reduced the length of W2 slightly by 2 or 3 light passes of its end along a carborundum stone, changing to single passes towards the finish. This was continued until the gauge reading completed 1 revolution, returning to zero; initially it had registered about 1.25mm (y-x). The final value of y was measured as 1.85mm, so x=(y-1)=0.85mm.

Lengths of pins can now be measured by setting the modified gauge at 0.85mm, as shown by photo 6, placing

C over a pin and reading its length directly from the gauge scale: its pointer will have approached or passed scale zero which represents pin length of 1mm.This particular calibration of the gauge enables measurement of pins of length 0.86mm upwards: an upper value of about 2mm is set by the need for W1 to be supported by C as it pushes against the dial gauge spring. At some pins it was found necessary to remove grinding burrs in order for the pin to enter C.

The *mean* values of samples of 10 measurements in each of 49 areas around and across the cylinder were calculated from measurements using the dial gauge: they are listed in table 2. This shows that pin length is shortest at 180-240 degrees from the seam, but still acceptable with a minimum of 1.2mm. It appears that there is scope for further light grinding, but this will be kept in reserve pending a check on how well pins mesh with comb teeth when set on the bed plate, a process to be described in the next article.

References

1. "Restoring Musical Boxes & Musical Clocks"

Arthur WJG Ord-Hume ISBN 0 9523270 2 3

1997 (2005 Reprint) pp 107-110

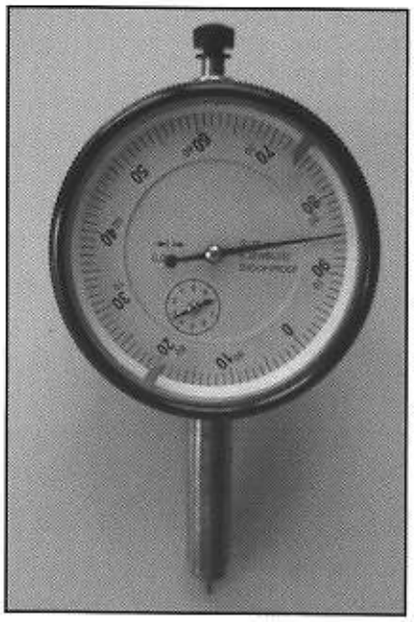


Photo 6. Ready to measure pin length

Sector*	Band across cylinder						All bands	
010-060	1.51	1.56	--	1.63	1.65	1.60	--	1.59
60-120	1.55	1.57	--	1.54	1.50	1.53	1.51	1.53
120-180	1.56	1.52	--	1.39	1.35	1.31	--	1.42
180-240	1.54	1.49	1.34	1.31	1.24	1.21	1.21	1.33
240-300	--	--	1.32	1.30	1.29	1.32	1.27	1.30
300-350	--	--	1.44	1.46	1.48	1.46	--	1.46
All	1.54	1.53	1.37	1.44	1.42	1.40	1.33	1.43
*Sector (Degrees from seam – rotation as for playing)								
Near the Seam								
350-010	1.45	1.48	--	1.45	1.43	1.45	--	1.45

Table 2: Means of pin lengths measured with dial gauge

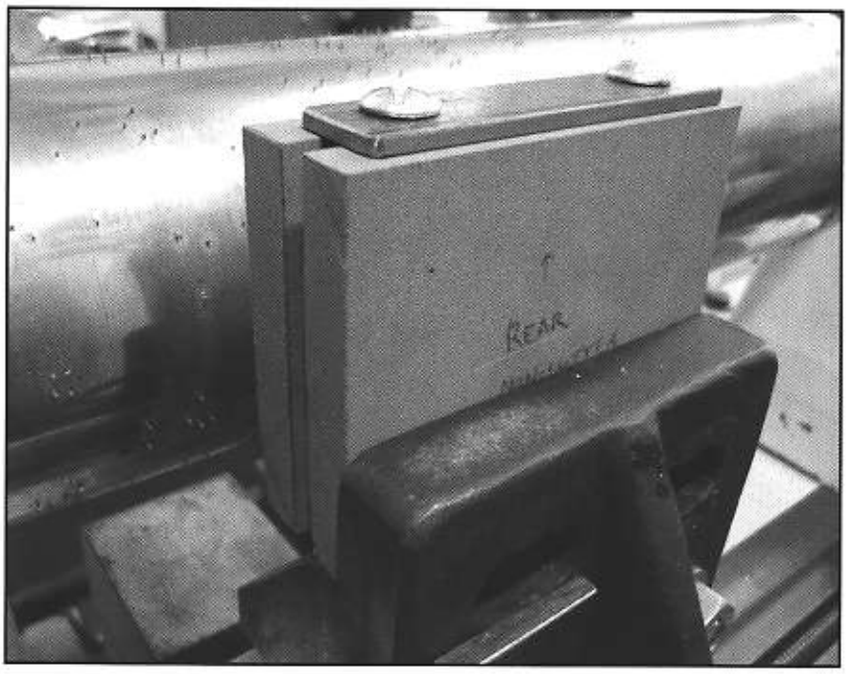


Photo 5. Mounting of silicon oxide stone

Book Review:

The Music Trade in Georgian England

Reviewed by the Editors

Edited by **Michael Kassler**, an Australian musicologist, with contributions from **Yu Lee An**, librarian in Scholarly Information, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia, **Jenny Nex**, curator of Musical instruments, Royal College of Music, London, **David Rowland**, Professor of Music and Dean of Arts at the Open University, Director of Music at Christ's College, Cambridge, and **John Small**, a private Australian researcher who has worked for the National Library of Australia.

Published in 2011 by Ashgate Publishing Ltd of Farnham, Surrey.

ISBN 97807754660651

The music trade in Georgian England was based upon shopkeepers called 'music sellers' who sold printed music and instruments on which it could be played. They bought copyrights from composers, arranged for music to be engraved, printed and advertised and organised the manufacture of musical instruments that they sold under their own names. They engaged external specialists to do the engraving, printing and much of the instrument making, although larger sellers acquired patent rights for instrument inventions and hired their own makers.

Longman & Broderip, better known to at least some of the readers of The Music Box as makers of barrel organs, were arguably the foremost English music sellers in the late eighteenth century, as were their successors – Broderip & Wilkinson and Muzio Clementi's various partnerships. The book traces the progress of James (not John, as stated in certain quarters) Longman's partnership with first Charles Lukey and then (from 1773) Francis Fane Broderip as they built an international business and reputation, including the Royal warrant from the Prince of Wales, acquiring three addresses in London, going bankrupt in 1795, operating the business under the control of assignees and the eventual division of the firm's assets between two successors after the two principals spent a year in Fleet Prison for failing to pay off debts. The first successor became Broderip & Wilkinson when Broderip entered into partnership with Charles Wilkinson Junior working at the Haymarket address, the second when James Longman's brother John did the same with Clementi and several others. This firm occupied the Cheapside and Tottenham Court Road premises.

The first successor went through several changes of name and eventually became Wilkinson & Wornum, makers of pianos, by the end of 1812. The second also had many changes, involving Clementi and various partners until his retirement in 1831, when it became Collard & Collard, also makers of pianos.

Thus far we have only encountered the Preface and one table of dates!

The book is divided into four parts. The first examines the firm Longman & Broderip in great detail, the information gleaned from many respected sources, and describes the growth of their business, not only in London, but overseas as well. The catalogues of music they printed and published, the entering of the details of musical compositions at Stationers' Hall, dealing with rivals, including many court appearances over copyright infringement, listing the instruments and other stock they sold (harpsichords, pianos, flutes, oboes, bassoons, clarinets, bagpipes, violins, guitars, mandolins, harps, citterns, violas etc) are all covered. Their 1789 catalogue listed some 500 musical works for sale.

Thomas Busby, writing in 1825, stated:

"The musical genius of this country was much promoted by the liberal spirit of the house of Longman & Broderip, which flourished between the years 1780 and 1800, and still continues under the firm of Clementi, Collard & Co. Those tradesmen, by bringing a respectable capital and extensive credit to bear on the interests of music, not only improved every kind of musical instrument, and created a commerce in them with every part of the world, but gave prices for copyrights, far surpassing any thing that had been anticipated by the previous generation. ….. Nor was the benefit merely confined to the purse; but they conferred a nearly equal service by keeping an open table at which professors and amateurs, from every part of the world, had the opportunity of meeting, and of eliciting from each other information of mutual and considerable advantage."

That Broderip was much involved in the promotion of printed music is revealed by the occasion in December 1791 on which the composer Haydn dropped into the Cheapside shop and chatted to Francis Broderip. The latter remarked that W A Mozart's wife had offered him some of her late husband's manuscripts and Broderip asked Haydn if he thought they were worth purchasing. Haydn replied:

"Purchase them by all means. He was a truly great musician. I have been often flattered by my friends with having some genius; but he was much my superior."

The result was the publication by Longman & Broderip of some twenty books of Mozart's works.

The second part of the book is devoted to a rival music seller, John Bland, and has a detailed look at his music seller's catalogues. Bland is chosen as an example of many music sellers operating at the time.

The third section looks at the development of musical copyright. The question is asked: who is the owner of copyright on a piece of music? Is it the composer, the publisher, the performer? Music was quite often composed specifically for a particular performer, but was published by a firm such as Longman and Broderip. These last, through the law courts, greatly helped to define the law of copyright we have now.

The final part takes a peek at the (then) latest technology to appear in instrument design and construction and in methods of notating music. The Earl Stanhope's 'Letter-Music' and his designs for novel musical instruments are examined, as is Vollweiler's introduction of music lithography into England.

Altogether a fascinating work, which looks at music from an entirely different view point, and we heartily recommend it. The book comes with a good index, thirty-five illustrations, a list of tables, a summary of legal cases and a comprehensive contents page. It is hard bound with gloss covers.

Obtainable from Ashgate Publishing in Farnham, Surrey or from their Burlington, Vermont office in USA, or from most good book shops, including Amazon.

Need Photos of historic significance

"Now that we are approaching the Society's 50th Anniversary I would like to attempt to put together Video "Montage" of people and events from those 50 years. I have some of my own video from the last few years, and some from one or two other members going back to the 90's, but there is very little before then. This is therefore an appeal to any of you who have photographs or film of interesting people or events, to let me have copies for possible inclusion in this project. I cannot guarantee to include everything you come up with, but I will endeavour to make it interesting. Ideally I need this in "digital" form, but photographs can be scanned, and celluloid film can be "digitised" (albeit at a cost), so if you have something you think is appropriate, please get in touch. The aim will be to get it completed before December, so please get in touch as soon as possible if you have suitable material. My contact details are on the "Officers" page.

John Farmer

News from Other Societies

Compiled by Alison Biden and Nicholas Simons

The AMICA Bulletin, Vol. 48, No.6, November/December 2011
(see also www.amica.org)

A hefty volume of almost 70 pages. AMICA's Vice President, Alan Turner, devotes a page to encouraging the use of the internet, especially YouTube, for promoting mechanical music, whilst the very energetic Editor reflects on his 80th birthday celebrations! Shirley Nix reports on the AMICA visit to the UK late summer 2011. Cheryl & Dick Hack feature in Matthew Jaro's article 'Nickel Notes,' which describes how they built up their collection. Marc Sachnoff interviews Wayne Stanke who produces the Live Performance LX player system. Many pages are given over to Chapter reports and other AMICA business. Q David Bowers writes about a visit to the Popper & Co showroom. The firm was founded in 1891 in Leipzig as a wholesaler of small musical goods. Hugo Popper sounds a very colourful character, and with Karl Bockisch and Edwin Welte worked on developing the Welte Mignon. Paul Morris writes about his Aeolian Duo-Art Pipe organ Concertola. There is a report on a concert given in Denver by AMICA member Dick Kroekel and Dave Wickerham, curator and chief organist at the Milhous Collection, Florida. Finally, several pages are devoted to a tribute by Q David Bowers, Wally Donoghue and Art Reblitz to the late Larry Givens, widely known amongst the mechanical music fraternity.

The AMICA Bulletin, Vol 49, No 1, January/February 2012
(see also www.amica.org)

President Tim Baxter, Vice President Alan Turner and Editor Terry Smythe all have messages with the same theme: increasing membership. Local groups ('chapters') are seen as the front line in these initiatives, and members are encouraged: 'Don't fear change, embrace it and grow.' New technology to be embraced includes electronic player mechanisms which have been fitted to about 30% of all acoustic pianos sold in recent years. Details of the upcoming AMICA convention in Pittsburgh are followed by an excellent article by Stephen Kent Goodman about the restoration of a Wurlitzer coin operated piano, to grace the home of Pulitzer Prize winning American playwright Eugene O Neill, now run by the US National Parks authority, replacing the original known as 'Rosie' which has now been lost. In his regular feature "Nickel Notes' Matthew Jaro writes about Jack and Mildred Hardman of Great Falls, Virginia, who have a *four* manual Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ at their home! Jack's interest in theatre organs stems from when he was five years old. The article also describes the Wurlitzer's restoration and other instruments in the Hardman's collection. Buckinghamshire based player piano restorer Ron Hartwell features in another regular slot, 'AMICAns in the Spotlight.' A short article on Mike Krukal's player piano collection is followed by extensive reports from local chapters. Several pages are devoted to photographs taken during the AMICA convention/visit in the UK late last summer. These complement Shirley Nix's report in a previous issue, in which she refers frequently to the bad weather, yet it looks glorious in almost all the photographs! Steve Rattle writes about Jessie Masson. 'Melbourne's forgotten pianist and Duo-Art roll artist.' Finally, a fascinating article focuses on the Maillardet automaton now housed in the Franklin Institute, which inspired Brian Selznick's story *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, made into a multi Oscar award nominated film, Hugo, by Martin Scorsese. Selznick's interest led to the restoration by Andrew Baron of the automaton.

The Key Frame (Issue KF1-12)
(See also www.fops.org)

This issue includes news of a new charity, The Gavioli Organ Trust, which has been set up to restore and display historic Gavioli organs. Its first acquisition is a splendid organ built to the now rare 89 key G2 scale. It still retains all its original pipes, its top proscenium and a full complement of five figures. After restoration it will be a stunning instrument.

The late Jan van Dinteren is remembered in an extensive article. Jan was one of the major promoters of classic organs and travelled widely across Europe supporting the hobby. Colour photos adorn the report of the fourth Oktoberfest at Woking. This has now become an annual, end of season, event where only the best classic organs can be seen and heard. A 'must visit' event for the enthusiast. The regular 'Musical Roots' article looks at Hart Pease Danks who is unknown as a name today but actually wrote the famous 'Silver Threads Among The Gold'. This sold 300,000 copies of the sheet music in the first ten years in the USA and even more in GB, so Danks had made the biggest mistake of his life by selling the copyright outright for only $30.

Mechanical Music, Vol 58, No 2, March/April 2012
(see also www.mbsi.org)

President Annie Tyvand refers to falling prices of mechanical music instruments and how this might encourage more new collectors. Museum Committee Chairman Joe Berman briefly reports on Society

instruments which are currently on loan to Lake County Historical Society, Ohio. On a similar theme, Membership Chairman Ardis Prescott describes her visit to Arizona, where she was able to view the instruments on loan by the Society to the Musical Instrument Museum (MIM) in Phoenix. With the exception of reports of Meetings from the Mid America, Snowbelt, National, Northwest International and Southern California Chapters, the remaining content of this issue consists of a very lengthy article by Q David Bowers, entitled 'Music Boxes "For the Parlors of the Millionaire" by Mermod Freres, Ste Croix, Switzerland.' This focuses in depth on the firm of Mermod and its two largest models of cylinder musical box, a fascinating topic which complements the information on the Stella and Mira disc machines to be featured in Bowers' forthcoming book on disc musical boxes.

MOOS News, Jan/Feb 2012

The Mechanical Organ Owners Society seems to be a very energetic lot. This newsletter previews various events and proposed trips. I feel exhausted just reading about them! On a more serious note, there are two lengthy obituaries: Jan van Dinteren – 'an authority on European fair organs' – and Henk Veenigen, restorer and builder of organs.

Player Piano Group – Bulletin 201, Winter 2011 -2012
(See also www.PlayerPianoGroup.org.uk)

This issue sees the continuation of Peter Phillips' excellent series of articles about conserving a pedal electric Duo-Art piano. Here he talks about restoring the wood and metalwork before moving on to reassembly of the various parts.

Social meetings reported include one at Kettering and one in Exeter. At the former, they were entertained by a magnificent Gotha Steck grand player piano, which is so large that it had to be delivered through three neighbouring back gardens. In Exeter, Paul Morris entertained the members with his Steck Duo-Art piano and, of course, his Aeolian pipe organ which is fitted with a Concertola roll changer. This can be fitted with ten rolls which can be selected at will via a remote selector box, and you think the modern TV remote control is a new idea!

Elsewhere is described a very rare Angelus / Marshall and Rose grand player piano, which has its player action fitted into a drawer under the keyboard, like the Ampico, but is actually a foot pumped player rather than a reproducer.

Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Vol XXX, No 4, 2011
(see also www.reedsoc.org)

In his message the Editor apologises for the delayed appearance of this issue, due to computer complications (how I can sympathise!) and rounds up some news snippets. The retiring President reflects on the biennial Organ Fest held in Moline, Illinois, in October 2011. Far from seeming irrelevant to MBSGB, a glance at the ROS Council meeting minutes demonstrates how universal some issues are: membership, how to manage archive material, how to exploit the internet, the value of digitization, and so forth. The reader is left with the impression that there are some very energetic and switched on members of ROS, passionate to record for posterity as much information on their interest subject as is humanly possible. A short but fascinating article about a Weaver Organ located in a church in South Carolina precedes several pages dedicated to recording the Moline Organ Fest (including a good 'shot' of an MBSGB member who is a leading light in ROS!) Reed Fennell analyses data on extant Estey Grand Salon Organs (only thirteen of these rare instruments feature on the current database), followed by an article about the restoration of his own Grand Salon Organ; an epic, lively tale, enhanced by numerous historical references and quirky details.

L'Antico Organetto, (Associazione Musica Meccanica Italiana), December 2011
(see also www.ammi-italia.com or www.ammi-mm.it)

This issue opens with an effusive reflection (so Italian!) on the 10th International Festival at Longiano, in September 2011, and expression of thanks by the organiser to her supporters, assistants and the participants. An article about the restoration of an Antonio Massa 'Jazz Band' barrel piano follows. This was a challenging project; much of the case had been ravaged by woodworm, but the finished results look stunning. There is an update on current progress at the Museum of Mechanical Music at the Villa Sylvia, Cesena; with further funding from the local authority plans are now being drawn up for a climate control system and toilet facilities to be added. A tour of the garden of the Villa Sylvia allows visitors, with the aid of an audio guide, to learn about the eponymous Countess Sylvia and the literary circle she entertained at the villa. Familiar faces grace the next feature – the Italians' report of last summer meeting at Ted Brown's to discuss further the European project. Two short articles, one about a rare Swiss instrument, the Harp Piano, the other a report of the 2011 San Rocco Fair, round out the contents of this issue.

Musiques Mecaniques Vivantes (Association des Amis des Instruments et de la Musique Mecanique)1st Quarter 2012
(see also www.aaimm.org and www.musicamecanica.org)

A hefty volume this, so comments will be somewhat selective. The most outstanding feature is the fact it comes with a DVD, 'La Passion des

Automates,' a high-quality offering looking at what makes an enthusiast tick. Much of the magazine is taken up with AAIMM business, as it looks forward to its AGM on 1st April, and reviews what it has accomplished during the previous twelve months. Activities and achievements abound: new enrolments, better financial position, various projects in the pipeline, visits made and planned, and the relocation of its two tonnes of archive to an obliging Town Hall. Several pages are dedicated to reporting on AAIMM's trip last autumn, which took in amongst others, a visit to the organ builder Raffin, the Mulhouse museum of vintage cars, and the Seewen Museum. Jean-Francois Braun writes about his grandfather, Charles Braun, a composer whose dance music appears on several piano rolls. There are reports on various organ and other music festivals, a round up of significant sales in Europe, and the regular feature on interesting websites. Finally, Jerome Collomb and Pierre-Louis Freydiere take a close look at fair organ gammes.

Het Pierement (Kring van Draaiorgelvrienden), Vol 58, No 4, October 2011
(see also www.draaiorgel.org)

Forty two beautifully produced and illustrated pages of articles, including the reminiscences of Jeanne Berge, a pianist and arranger of punched card organ music and widow of Wim Stelleman, an organ builder and restorer; a report of the 2011 Waldkirch Organ Festival, and an item about the Fata Morgana street organ; the report of the return of Gerbruder Bruder model 104 to the Netherlands, and feature about Wilhelm Bruder Sohne models 76 and 77 'Starkton' organs. A three page article by Jan L M van Dinteren is an expanded version of a lecture given at the tenth Waldkirch Festival commemorating Waldkirch's history, interest in which was revived when the Festival was instigated. The centre page spread is dedicated to a feature about an event staged in Amersfoort by the Olga van Koningsbrugge dance school in collaboration with the Museum Speelklok and featuring the Keistad organ from Amersfoort. From the photographs it all looks great fun: I wish I could understand more of it! Henk Hiddiga writes about the composer Karl Berbuer, whilst John Wempe and Robert Blinkhof delve into old periodicals for reports on various organ events from the 1950's and '60's.

Het Pierement, Vol 59, No1, January 2012
(see also www.draaiorgel.org)

Not surprisingly, given his eminence, the first item is a lengthy obituary of Jan van Dinteren who sadly passed away in November 2011. This is followed by an article which appears to be a reprint of a collaboration between the late Jan van Dinteren and the late John Turner about Tomasso and Sons and their barrel piano business. Jan van Dinteren also authored another article in this issue, about the Gavioli G2 no. 8689, rescued from Frankfurt. Other organs featured in this issue are 'De Grote Blauwe' and 'De Wimmies' ('small box, large sound', 'the surprise of 2011.') John Wempe and Robert Blinkhof find more treasures hidden in forgotten archives, and the historical theme continues in the series entitled 'Glorious Organ Days.' Gerhard Jussenhoven is the subject of Henk Hiddinga's regular feature on composers. The rest of this forty five page issue is given over to local/regional news items, announcements and advertisements.

Das Mechanische Musikinstrument (Gesellschaft fur Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente)
No 112, December 2011

(see also www.musica-mechanica.de)
Reviewing the Dutch and German language magazines has temporarily reverted to a non-speaker of these languages, somewhat challenging even with the assistance of 'google translate.' The easy bit is Ralf Smolne's foreword – it's printed in English as well! Who could argue with his plea that we should ensure our instruments are all in good playing order and that their sound acts as a good advertisement for mechanical instruments? Moreover, Ralf assures us there are the competent restorers around to achieve this. He also celebrates the fact that present day composers and arrangers are willing to take

NEW MEMBERS

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

If you would like to get in touch with members near to you please look at the new members list or 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@btinternet.com** or Ted Brown on 01403 823533 as either will be pleased to advise.

You will get far more out of your membership if you come along to a local or national meeting, you might make some new friends and hear wonderful instruments... If you are not sure then just book in with our meetings organiser as a day visitor the first time.

3126 Dennis Evett Staffs

3127 Christopher Dean Norfolk

3128 Dennis Gabriel U.S.A.

3129 Rik Linkens Belgium

3130 Rick Willeman U.S.A.

on the challenge of producing new music for them. I would like to thank him for drawing our attention to these points.

The magazine's contents include a very academic account of the Hupfeld works in Bohlitz-Ehrenberg during the 1930's and 40's based on hitherto unseen material; a long, illustrated article dealing with the history of the Kalliope Musikwerke; news about museums* and collections; minutes of the 2011 AGM, other news and listings for museums and private collections in Germany and abroad (one has to admire their thoroughness.) Finally, anyone wondering what to do with □999 might be interested in Hr Werner Baus' private archive available on hard disc, with 2500 folders and 55 500 files.

(* In the centenary year of the sinking of the Titanic, references to the Welte-Philharmonie-Orgel thought to be for her sister ship, the Britannic and now in the Seewen museum are topical, tantalising and intriguing.)

Obituary

Dr Jürgen Hocker 1937 - 2012

The world of mechanical music has lost one of its most influential figures with the recent death of the former President of our German sister society, Dr Jürgen Hocker.

Born on September 21st 1937, Jürgen Hocker's life-long interest was in self-playing pianos and their music but it was his broader and profound interest in music and mechanical music as a whole that he brought to his inspired presidency of the *Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musik-instrumente* and its learned quarterly journal.

His expertise lay in the reproducing piano and its music and it was this passion that inspired him to follow up present-day composers of music for player-piano, such as the Hungarian Györgi Ligeti. In particular, however, Hocker was drawn to the then almost unknown Conlon Nancarrow. American-born Nancarrow had fallen out with the United States authorities and exiled himself to Mexico where he took up both residence and citizenship. Here he composed much avant-garde 'pianola music'.

Jürgen Hocker visited Nancarrow in his somewhat austere home in Mexico City and at once recognised his genius. The outcome that Hocker and his wife, Beatrix, together took Nancarrow under their sponsorship

Dr Jürgen Hocker with one of his Hupfeld player grand pianos.

and eventually presented him and his music to the greater world. Indeed, Hocker provided the ailing adopted Mexican with a reproducing piano and undertook the transport of both man and piano for 'live' concerts around the world. Nancarrow's triumphant return to his native USA was largely through Hocker's endeavours.

Nancarrow's untimely death in 1997 robbed us of this controversial musician but soon one of Germany's leading music-publishers commissioned a book on Nancarrow and his music.

Jürgen Hocker's masterful work *Begegnungen mit Conlon Nancarrow* (*'An Encounter with Conlon Nancarrow'*) was published in 2002 to wide acclaim and the present writer had been assisting in the preparation of an English edition.

In 2009, Jürgen's long-term masterpiece was published under the title of *Faszination Player Piano* ('The Fascination of the Player Piano'), by far the most important and thoughtful analysis of the reproducing piano and its corpus of music produced anywhere in the world.

A dozen years ago, at a meeting of the MBSI in Philadelphia, Jürgen Hocker, Frank Metzger and the present writer, at that time all current Presidents of our respective mechanical-music societies, held extensive discussions as to how we might form a 'working coalition' to the benefit of all our members and we discussed possible joint projects, the first of which is currently in process of realisation.

Jürgen Hocker died on February 10th, 2012. He was a man who exuded friendship and quiet expertise and those of us who were privileged to have known him well will treasure that friendship for

all time. In extending condolences to Beatrix and their children it is, perhaps, to end with a brief quotation from that great 18th century German poet and playwright, Friedrich Schiller: *Wenn der Leib in Staub zerfallen Lebt der grosse Name noch* (When the life of a great man has fallen to the dust, his name still lives on.)

Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume

Letters to the Editor

From Professor Tony Sheppard

I am a music historian, based at Williams College and currently visiting at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, and I have recently embarked on a large scale research project focusing on the use of Chinese tunes in all forms of mechanical music in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. My focus so far has been on cylinder and disc music boxes and I am particularly interested in Swiss cylinder boxes manufactured in the 1860's-1880's. I have worked closely with Jere Ryder at the Morris Museum here in New Jersey and he suggested that I should contact you directly.

At this point I need to gather data from as many tune cards as possible that list Chinese melodies. I also need to hear recordings of as many boxes with Chinese tunes as possible. I would like to trace how many times particular tunes appeared, when and where these music boxes were made, and how the tunes were actually pinned/set on these boxes.

Another important goal is to locate the original manuscript transcriptions and instructions for transferring these tunes to the mechanical instruments. My ultimate goal is determine the original written/published sources that were used for creating boxes with such tunes as "Sinfa," "She pah moh" (or "Shc pah mah"), "Shanghai Mody," "Poutzi," and "Loe Tee Kun Stin." Each of these tunes appears on cards with slightly different spellings. The first two tunes are by far the most important for my research.

Would it be possible to send this research plea to your organization? I would be very grateful for any information that you or your members might be able to provide and would certainly acknowledge this assistance in my final published article. Please also let me know whether you are aware of articles that have been written on Chinese music boxes from this period. I am also interested in the use of Japanese tunes on music boxes but have not had much luck with such searches.

Thank you so much for your time and any help that you are able to offer.

(Replies may be sent via the editor)

From Bill Wineburgh, USA:

I received and have read through (well, once) this amazing compendium. What a fabulous reference book this is for us collectors. Your (i.e. Kevin McElhone) many years of collecting and sorting information about disc musical boxes was a monumental task and has resulted in a wonderful book. My personal thanks for taking on this enormous project and seeing it to completion.

It was especially nice to see that you dedicated the book to our dear friend, Coulson Conn. He and his wife, Kathleen, were some of the first MBSI members that we met the year we joined the society, and they have remained good friends. Coulson was always so generous with his time and knowledge and he and I shared a love for disc boxes.

Congratulations again. I hope that you are not now suffering from "post-partum" depression and you are tackling yet another great project.

The 'you' that Bill refers to, of course, refers to both Kevin and the unsung heroes of the Publications Committee: David Worral MBE, who spent three years as proof reader for both the text and the pdf formatting process, Vice-President Paul Bellamy and past President Ted Brown in liaising on behalf of MBSGB in the production and information process. It is the Pubs Com that deals with all financial, quality and layout issues plus funding, tender process, contract placement, cost recovery, pricing and sales policy, ISBN registration, UK library and other library donations.- Ed

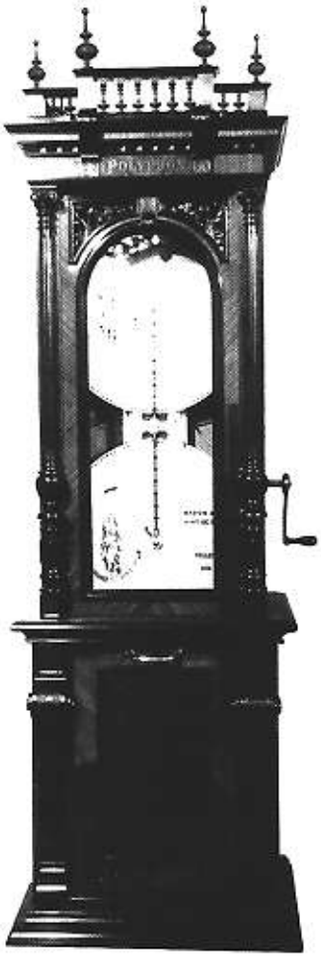
From Algernon Baskett-Caese

I have just been reading a most interesting account of how to do French Polishing (*The Music Box Vol 25, No.4 – Winter 2011 – Ed*). This was not the way musical box cases were originally finished however. I quote from Wikipedia:

"French polishing became prominent in the 18th century. In the Victorian era French polishing was commonly used on mahogany and other expensive woods. It was considered the best finish for fine furniture and string instruments such as pianos, lutes and guitars. The process was very labour intensive, and many manufacturers abandoned the technique around 1930, preferring the cheaper and quicker techniques of spray finishing nitrocellulose lacquer and abrasive buffing. In Britain, instead of abrasive buffing, a pad of "pullover" is used in much the same way as traditional French polishing. This slightly melts the sprayed surface and has the effect of filling the grain and burnishing at the same time to leave a "French polished" look.

Another reason shellac fell from favour is its tendency to melt under low heat; for example, hot cups can leave marks on it. However, French polish is far more forgiving than any other finish in the sense that, unlike lacquers, it can be easily repaired. The finish is considered to be one of the most beautiful ways to finish highly figured wood."

Musical boxes in general were hardly considered to be 'fine furniture', nor were they typically made from highly figured wood, with their scumbled sides and often relatively simple veneered and mass-produced marquetry inlaid lids. They were finished with a relatively tough varnish, which was judged to be better considering that they were dispatched over a wide area of Europe and often overseas as well.



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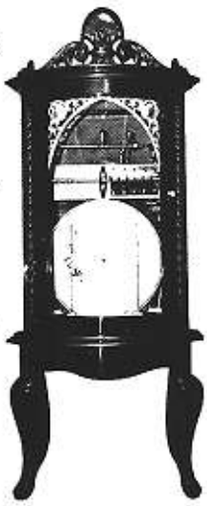

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1st April; 1st July;
1st October; 1st February

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

Posting of magazine:

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

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1st July 2012

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Musical Automaton »Buffalo Bill« by Gustave Vichy, Paris, c. 1890
Extremely rare smoking „Western Hero". – 28 in. (71 cm) high.
(Estimate: € 18.000 – 25.000) / US$ 23,000 – 32,000)

Gustave Vichy: Monkey Marquis Harpist, c. 1880
Musical automaton in superb all original condition, 19 in. (48 cm) high.
(Estimate: € 3.000 – 5.000 / US$ 4,000 – 6,500)

»Clown Playing Guitar« by Leopold Lambert, c. 1910
23 in. (58 cm) high. –
(Estimate: € 8.000 – 12.000 / US$ 10,000 – 15,000)

Gustave Vichy: »Organ-Grinder with Dancing Dolls«, c. 1880
With rare bisque character head, 25 2/3 in. (65 cm) high.
(Estimate: € 15.000 – 20.000 / US$ 18,000 – 25,000)

»Clown Playing Mandoline« by Leopold Lambert, c. 1890
23 in. (58 cm) high.
(Estimate: € 8.000 – 12.000 / US$ 10,000 – 15,000)

Extraordinary Phalibois Automaton »Dancer on a Chair«, c. 1890
With 'stereo' musical accompaniment.
(Estimate: € 20.000 – 30.000 / US$ 25,000 – 40,000)

»Mechanical Music Instruments & Automata«

26 May 2012

Miniature Fairground Merry-Go-Rounds and Band Organs
An entire collection.

DeLuxe Phonograph »Edison Opera«, 1911
Estimate: US $ 5,000 – 6,500 / € 4.000 – 5.000

Barrel Organ »Cecchi, Bacigalupo & Graffigna, Berlin«, c. 1895
(Estimate: € 10.000 – 15.000 / US$ 13,000 – 19,000)

Original American Casino Slot Machines, c. 1950
Life-size vulcanized rubber figures, **'Bandit'** (1,78 m / 70 in.) and **'Sheriff'** (1,70 m / 69 in.), with 'Mills High Top' slot machines. – Top condition!
(Estimate: € 15.000 – 20.000 / US$ 20,000 – 26,000 / each)

Juke-Box »Wurlitzer 1080 (Colonial)«, 1947
One of the nicest juke box designs ever.
(Estimate: € 10.000 – 12.000 / US$ 13,000 – 15,000)

Fine Silver-gilt Singing Bird Automaton by Bruguier, c. 1835
Superb collector's item. –
Estimate: US $ 22,000 – 32,000 / € 18,000 – 25,000

Fine Musical Gold Vinaigrette, c. 1810
A spectacular objet du vertu. –
Estimate: US $ 15,000 – 20,000 / € 12.000 – 15.000

Gramophone with spectacular illuminated Mirror Front, c. 1920
Extraordinarily rare!
(Estimate: US $ 5,000 – 8,000 / € 4.000 – 6.000

Barrel Organ »H. Pettersen, Copenhagen«, c. 1910
Excellent working condition. – Estimate: US $ 5,000 – 8,000 / € 4.000 – 6.000

Organette »Kalliston«, c. 1900
(Estimate: US$ 2,600 – 4,000 / € 2.000 – 3.000)

Singing Bird Automaton by Blaise Bontemps, Paris, c. 1880
Extremely rare model!!
(Estimate: € 12.000 – 15.000 / US$ 15,000 – 19,000)

Working Model »The English Executioner«, c. 1928
Coin-operated automaton, the picture signed H. Taylor, 1928
(Estimate: € 7.000 – 10.000 / US$ 9,000 – 13,000)

Piano-Orchestrion »J. Klepetar, Prague«, c. 1900
2 wooden barrels with 8 tunes each.
(Estimate: US$ 6,500 – 10,000 / € 5,000 – 8,000)

The Very Decorative Facade of a Fairground Organ by Richter
(Estimate: € 2.500 – 3.500 / US$ 3,000 – 4,500)

Black Forest Flute clock w./automaton, c. 1820
(Estimate: US $ 5,500 – 7,500 / € 4.500 – 6.000)

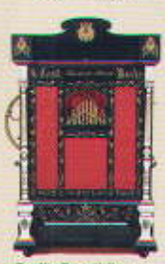
Fine English Chiming Bracket Clock with 8 Bells and 5 Spiral Gongs
(Estimate: € 2.800 – 3.500 / US$ 3,500 – 4,500)

Swiss Interchangeable Musical Box »George Baker, Geneve«, c. 1880
(Estimate: US $ 14,000 – 19,000 / € 11.000 – 15.000)

Unusual Ballroom Gramophone, c. 1920
Estimate: US $ 2,000 – 3,000 / € 1.500 – 2.500

Dance Organ by Decap
(Estimate: € 5.000 – 8.000 / US$ 6,000 – 10,000)

Rare Disc Musical Instrument »Sirius«, c. 1900
With 25 discs (22 in. / 57,5 cm)
(Estimate: € 18.000 – 25.000 / US$ 23,000 – 32,000)



Berlin Barrel Organ »Bacigalupo«, c. 1895
Cabinet by Lenk, Berlin
(Estimate: € 12.000 – 18.000 / US$ 15,000 – 23,000)

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