

The Music Box

An International Journal of Mechanical Music



In this issue:

- The 'Phuniphone' - a strange Organette
- Bringing the past to life
- Mechanical Music Library

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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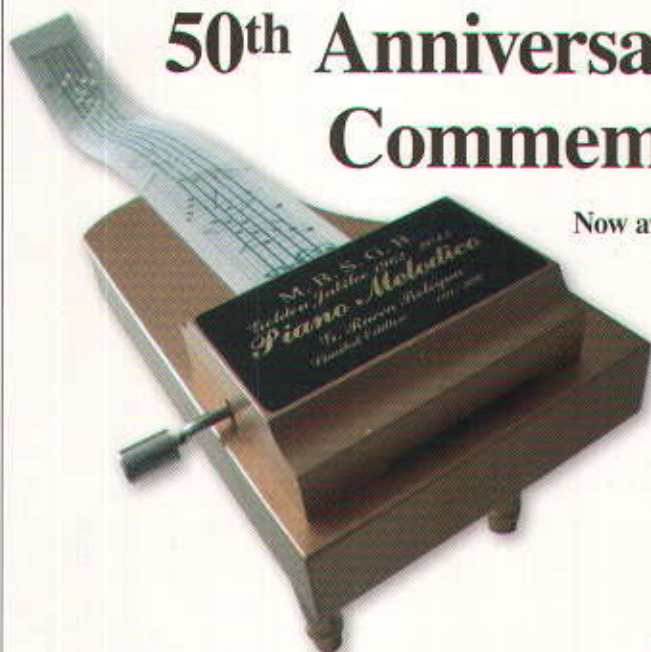
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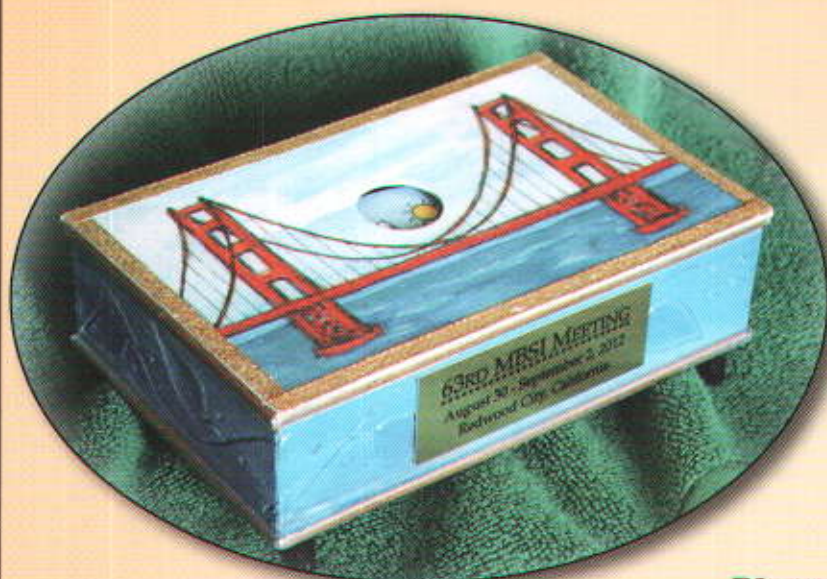


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From the Editors' Desk

Reading about the Society's proposed visit to the new museum at Brentford has made us quite nostalgic. We remember Frank Holland and the early days at the old church. Frank collected and saved from destruction many instruments in the 1950's and 60's when they were in real danger of disappearing. Society in general in those post-war years had no value for old instruments and player piano smashing competitions were popular pastimes for outdoor public events. The winner was the team that managed to get every part of the piano through a twelve inch square aperture first. It was a low spot for mechanical instruments, but the MBSGB was formed in 1962 and helped changed all that. It became respectable to collect musical machines and instruments were sought out and lovingly conserved and restored.

These things are unfortunately cyclical and we seem to be heading for another trough. Interest in all types of collectors' societies and groups is falling globally. An article in *Mechanical Music*, the journal of the MBSI, for January/February 2013, announces the formation of the Mechanical Music Library International Inc. See page 37 of this journal. A headline reads "Our hobby... is in decline". It starts:

Fact: membership in the Musical Box Society International (MBSI), The Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association (AMICA) and the Musical Box Society of Great Britain (MBSGB), the three largest collector organisations, has been decreasing for more than a decade.

Fact: younger people interested in collecting mechanical music are scarce.

Fact: reproducing pianos attract little interest save for a number of die-hard enthusiasts, and selling prices of these instruments have plummeted to sometimes below zero (there is a significant cost to moving a piano).

This is not only true of mechanical musical instruments – all collector groups seem to be suffering the same reduction in interest and we are all looking to the future with some trepidation. It seems right that, whilst looking ahead, we should be concerned with the present membership! Together with the collection and preservation of scholarship and the artefacts themselves, it is our duty to ensure that any future generation of collectors will have the 'tools' and information for them to continue with what we have done and learned, both in terms of history as well as restoration techniques and ethics. We have come a long way since John ET Clark and Roy Mosoriak. The published works of Arthur W J G Ord-Hume and Q David Bowers took us huge steps forward and these, together with other erudite scholars in parts of Europe and America, mean that we now have a wealth of information. Our own Society has made significant contributions with its works by H A V Bulleid, Paul Bellamy, Arthur Cunliffe, Roy Ison and Kevin McElhone as well as the many contributors to the Journal. We can be proud of the legacy we are passing on to collectors and scholars of the future. In this issue we say sad farewells to four members, all of whom will be missed. Peter was our long-time family friend and we send our love and condolences to Carolyn and the family, as well as to the other families.

Front cover illustration:

John Moorhouse's singing bird egg
- see report on page 8

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

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

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President's Message No. 27

It is with great sadness and regret that I have to report the passing of four of our members over the Christmas and New Year period. Arno van der Heijden, Peter Murray, Ken Stroud and, as we go to press, Etienne Blyelle have all passed away. All four of them were members who had been in the Society for many years and had attended meetings on a fairly regular basis. They will indeed be greatly missed. On behalf of the Society I have extended our condolences to members of their families. (*See Obituaries elsewhere in this journal – Ed*)

The late Ken Stroud has left his collection of mechanical music to the Society. When all arrangements have been concluded the Committee will decide how the bequest will be used for the benefit of all members. You will be kept fully informed of outcomes at a later date. We are all indebted to Ken for his thoughtfulness and forward thinking. He obviously had the well-being and survival of the Society in his thoughts and wishes. I am confident his bequest will be wisely used and that his name will be long remembered.

We have had a number of bequests to the Society in the past. Some have been used to publish books and others used for Society projects. Without these bequests the Society would not be in the sound financial position that it is today. Once again, I earnestly ask you to consider the idea for leaving something to the Society in your will. By doing so it will leave a

lasting acknowledgement of the pleasure you gained from being a member of this organization.

Whilst we endeavour to address all forms of mechanical music, the prime reason for the existence of the Society must be musical boxes. Whether they are disc or cylinder is of little consequence, but I hope articles sent in for publication will principally reflect this aim. The Editor(s) will always endeavour to produce a balanced journal, but they must have material to hand. I would ask new members to contribute to the journal either in the form of an article or a letter on musical items if they are able to do so. Only by doing this can we appreciate your views and possibly address your needs. I know this is a topic I have brought up many times, but I believe that varied articles and pictures about musical boxes and related items are of greater interest than long reports.

Talking to members, I have the view that practically all of them wish to attend meetings to hear mechanical music, especially musical boxes. A close second to this is that they also wish to meet old friends again and enjoy their company. A third aim is to visit places of interest, especially if there is some sort of mechanical music to listen to. I hope that the Society will continue in the future with these aims in mind.

Best wishes to you all.

Arthur Cunliffe

Journal Contributions

We are always grateful for contributions to the Music Box on any aspect of mechanical music, but would ask you to remember the dates by which such contributions must be received to be considered for the next edition. Where items are not time-sensitive we reserve the right to include them in a future edition of course. It is our intention to produce a publication with a balanced appeal as far as is possible. The final dates are always published on the Classified Ads page at the end of the magazine.

They are:

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

Submissions received after those deadline dates will be held over until the next edition in order to allow sufficient time for the printers (and the editors!) to get the Journal completed in time for mailing to you.

Thank you for your cooperation!

The Editors

MBSGB at Hitchin Priory, Hertfordshire.

Golden Jubilee Celebration Dinner & Meeting – 1st & 2nd December 2012.



Committee Members (in bold), present at the Celebrations: L to R – Jan Farmer, **John Farmer**, **Nicholas Simons**, **Alison Biden**, Eileen Simons, **Ted Brown**, **Daphne Ladell**, **Bob Ducat-Drown**, **Kathleen Turner**, Kay Brown, Sylvia Ducat-Brown, Clive Houghton, **Merry Bellamy**, **Paul Bellamy**, Lesley Worrall & **David Worrall**.
Committee Members not present: Arthur Cunliffe, Kevin McElhone, David & Lesley Evans and John Ward.

For the final event to celebrate its Golden Jubilee year, The Musical Box Society of Great Britain (MBSGB) held a Celebration Dinner and Meeting at Hitchin Priory, Hertfordshire, exactly 50 years to the day on which the Society had been founded in 1962. Fifty years ago, 30 Founder Members established the Society we enjoy to-day but of these, only two have survived the passage of years; unfortunately, neither was able to be present to join in our celebration of the work they began 50 years ago.

The Golden Jubilee Celebration Dinner and Meeting were held from Saturday afternoon to Sunday lunchtime, during which time a total of 40 members and their guests were present to mark the occasion. Following welcome drinks in the bar, the company repaired to the dining room; here, Vice-president

Paul Bellamy welcomed members to this very special occasion and then read a short address of greetings and congratulations from our President, Arthur Cunliffe, who was indisposed and unable to be with us.

After an excellent dinner, we enjoyed a form of entertainment unique in our experience at such Society events. Each table was presented with a box of crackers, which many thought was an oversight and should have been given out at the start of the dinner. However, when the crackers were pulled, the reason for the timing became clear; not only did they go "crack", with the usual motto & fancy paper hat falling out over the table and/or the floor, but each cracker also contained a small hand bell! There was more to this than first appeared; each of the eight bells in a box was tuned

to a different pitch, thus giving a complete octave of 8 musical notes; also supplied with the box was a selection of tunes that could be played on the eight bells. Each table was then instructed to find a "secluded spot" in the Priory building complex where, under the guidance of their Table Host, they could practice playing one of the tunes. After 30 minutes or so, we were called back to the dining room where each table was asked to play the tune they had rehearsed, with their efforts to be judged by the Hotel Manager. After much hilarity accompanied by some hand bell ringing, he adjudged that the performers on Table 3 were the winners. Cries of "Shame" & "Cheat" were heard in protest when the winners were announced – all because the winning table not only had the help of "Pirate" Roy Evett's parrot sitting on his shoulder, but



The Adjudged Winners - Table 3: Standing L-R: David Worrall, Kay Brown, Ted Brown & Clive Houghton; Seated L-R: Daphne Ladell, "Pirate" Roy Evett & Parrot, Pam Evett, Pauline Dicken, Lesley Worrall & Ken Dicken.

had also shown initiative and sang along with their bells, a move that helped in their timing and order of playing! Nonetheless, great fun and enjoyment was had by all through this rather novel form of entertainment.

Following this hilarity, the tone of the evening was changed somewhat, to quieten us down and prepare us for repose: a monologue, given by Paul Bellamy, of a Victorian tale of sad/happy events one Christmas Eve at Goodwood House, West Sussex.

On the Sunday morning, the programme began with what was for some, the highlight of the weekend. John Farmer had spent some considerable time in collecting and collating the many photographs and cine/video clips provided by members. From these he had put together, on a DVD, an hour long programme illustrating the history of the Society over the 50 years of its existence; from the early black and white cine clip of founder members at their very first meeting when, in a smoke filled room - yes, they were all male and all smoking, it was decided to form The Musical Box Society of Great Britain. A

selection of still and moving images from succeeding years followed, gradually changing from black and white through early colour to to-day's enhanced colours; whilst some of these did illustrate various mechanical music instruments, they were mainly images from the many Society meetings, organ grinds and fund raising events in which members of the Society had taken part over the years. It was all very nostalgic, with old friends and members no longer with us being recognized by those present in the room. Watching the DVD, however, one fact seemed to stand out; whilst a few early clips and photographs did show musical boxes, the majority seemed to be of members performing with other mechanical music instruments, particularly on their street organs at festivals and organ grinds. On reflection, this was because the human factor added a significant dimension of interest not to be found in photographs of cylinder or disk musical boxes as these are usually photographed in splendid isolation.

After a break, we enjoyed a period of entertainment; first provided by Doug Pell and Nicolas Simons with

a programme of music played on their linked Tanzbärs, followed by Ted Brown who gave us a short recital of pieces played on his Triola.

During the morning, a raffle was held for Society funds; several prizes were to be won and these included a bottle of perfume by Kylie Minogue, with the name "Music Box". The morning ended with a light lunch before members bade their farewells to one another and left for home.

So ended our Golden Jubilee Celebration Dinner and Meeting. Credits on this occasion go to those who contributed to the programme for the event; particularly so to John Farmer who had spent a considerable amount of time and effort in producing the DVD illustrating events from the life of the Society over the 50 years it has existed. Finally, to Daphne, our Meetings Secretary, for all the necessary background arrangements that made the week-end a fitting end to the celebrations to mark the **Golden Jubilee of The Musical Box Society of Great Britain, 1962-2012.**

Essex Meeting Report 3rd November

For several years Bruce Allen has organized this event twice a year, always making sure that everything is arranged from the venue and speakers down to the tea and biscuits. Bruce has unfortunately had to give up this responsibility for personal reasons. The fifteen members who attended this meeting showed their thanks in his absence by giving him a resounding round of applause and send their best wishes to Bruce and his wife Margaret.

First to take the floor was Alan Godier who showed videos of a cylinder musical box with a singing bird, which he has been working on. The bird moves and sings tunelessly, helped by a selection of small pipes.

Robert Ducat-Brown then demonstrated by means of the digital projector, three organs designed by John Smith that he has built, the latest being operated by MIDI.

Christopher and Sharron Pointeer showed us a selection of musical Teddy bears, which they had lovingly restored and then demonstrated a program on an iPad, with which you can create and print music rolls suitable for the miniature Racca piano given as a gift at the spring meeting.

After lunch John Natress demonstrated a Seraphone and then proceeded to amaze us as usual with some of the contents of his shed. On this occasion several pottery drunks leaning on lampposts and two toffs, also relying on lampposts for support.

Terry Longhurst showed us two beautiful sounding cylinder boxes; the first was a Ducommun-Girod and the other of unknown make. These boxes had a link, as both had been purchased in the Channel Islands.

Daphne Ladell then showed us

yet another Ducommun Girod box also of amazing sound quality. She also brought a cylinder musical box, which she had purchased in Prague following a battle of wills with the vendor. A story that kept us all enthralled. Daphne's third contribution was a musical box which had previously been bought by an opera singer many years ago and made another very interesting story.

Roger Booty played for us his first mechanical musical instrument, a Cabinetto. This played extremely well and worked its way through forty feet of music.

John Odgers showed us two key-wind musical boxes and also told us some stories of his past life as a musical box dealer in Portobello Road.

The next meeting will be at a new venue near Brentwood, see Dates for Your Diary.

Wessex Group inaugural meeting 28th October, 2012

Fifteen people attended the first meeting of the Wessex Group which was held at Littleton Memorial Hall near Winchester, on Sunday 28th October. These included one surprise (and very welcome) visitor who owns an organette and who was interested to learn more about mechanical music instruments. Participants travelled from Dorset, Hampshire and Surrey, with not everyone knowing each other beforehand.

There was inevitably some initial discussion about how future meetings might evolve. It was decided to experiment with alternating between Saturdays and Sundays to allow those who cannot make one of the days the

opportunity to attend at least once a year. The venue, with its convenient location, and other arrangements, met with general approval, and the suggested donation of £5 each towards costs covered them adequately.

Most people had brought along at least one item to demonstrate. Cylinder boxes dominated the programme with a wide variety shown and played, interspersed with a full rendition of the tunes on a Gavioli barrel organ, and a Serinette was also featured. A stunning small double comb Symphonion proved that excellent and interesting music is not limited to large discs, whilst the display of one member's current

woodworking projects with mechanical music connections earned him the admiration of all.

The meeting was deemed a success. Lively discussion accompanied the demonstrations, and most people left having learnt something new, as well as generally enjoying the entertainment. The unexpected visitor was not disappointed and concluded that she would like to trade up sometime from her organette to a musical box!

For further information on this and future meetings, contact Alison Biden (ali_biden@hotmail.com; tel. 01962 861350.)

Report of First Meeting of Midlands Group, MBSGB.

20 October 2012

Thirteen members attended the first meeting of the new Midlands Regional Group, at the home of Nicholas and Eileen in Derby. The format for the meeting was the one used successfully on the other regional meetings where attendees are invited to give a short presentation about some item of interest they have brought to the meeting.

Nicholas started the ball rolling with a few non-musical but clockwork driven items from his 'other' collection, which are lively tin toys, all in the form of trains and other moving vehicles. These date from the 1950's to the present day. Kevin followed with a demonstration of a rare model of the 6 1/2" Polyphon. This is unusual in having a shallow case with the comb set at 45 degrees and being centre wound. The stop-start is also unusual in utilising the edge cut-out in the disc, which is ignored on the majority of this size Polyphon.

Roy and Eric brought along a pair of 28-note Tanzbaers, which along with the resident Tanzbaer demonstrated the progression of the design of these instruments. All three, being nominally identical, showed significant differences in design, construction and overall dimensions. David played three tunes on an early Ducommon Girod musical box. This had a plaque on the lid inscribed "Charlotte My Love Lt Phillips", and also included an old slip of paper explaining how to operate the box, no doubt written by Lt Phillips to Charlotte. The tone and musical arrangements were excellent.



Contrasting 6 1/2" Polyphons

Bob had brought along a very good Mira table model which played 18 1/2" discs. This had been beautifully restored and was well received. Other members of the group also spoke about instruments they had brought and then it was time for a break for afternoon tea.

After tea, everyone returned to listen to the resident instruments, which range from small organettes up to piano orchestrions and a dance organ. Although having a smaller attendance than some other regional groups, due to the more widely spaced nature of MBSGB members in this area, all those attending decided that it had been a success and that another meeting should be arranged.

Meetings will be held twice a year, with the next one on Saturday 23 March, 2013, in the

Kettering area. Full details are given on the meetings page of The Music Box.



Postcard from the Ted Brown Coll

THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS - *Continued*

MBSGB in the Teme Valley, Worcestershire

Society Members Golden Jubilee Year Autumn Meeting - 14th to 16th September 2012



Group relaxing with Ted Brown during an interval between talks

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain (MBSGB) continued the celebrations to mark its Golden Jubilee year with an Autumn Meeting, held on this occasion in the Teme Valley, Worcestershire. Our hosts were John and Hilda Phillips and the meeting was held at Eastham Grange, their home situated in a superb location in the Teme Valley in north-west Worcestershire.

The meeting was held over 2 days during which time a total of 58 members were present. The programme had promised a rather technical weekend and so it proved as we saw an extensive display of the varied skills and talents that many members of the Society possess.

The opening dinner was held on the Friday evening in The Hundred House Hotel after which there followed a formal presentation; on behalf of The Musical Box Society International, our President, Arthur Cunliffe, presented Kevin McElhone with the prestigious Q

David Bowers Literary Award for 'Outstanding Literary Contributions to the Field of Automatic Music', this being in consideration of his recently published book, **"The Disc Musical Box"**. Then, with no formal after-dinner entertainment arranged, members were free to relax and enjoy a series of informal displays and short talks from several members about their skills and interests - other than those connected with mechanical music. Eight members contributed to this and their subjects covered a very wide variety of skills and interests:

- Joan Rippengal, with her spinning, weaving and dyeing and the items she had made; all "sewn together" in her booklet "How to Dye in your Kitchen";
- Keith Reedman showing his book-binding skills, local history writing and his interest in meteorites and tektites;
- Roy Evett and his first Musical Box - A Karrer Hoffmann of the 1870's, his Twin Whistlers and the

laser cutting and carving of door frets;

- Juliet Fynes and her collection of small Steiff soft toys;
- John Phillips and the making of a silver box for his grand-daughter;
- Joan Chapman and the "Chapman Doll" that she had made and dressed - chapman being another name given in the past to people most of us have heard referred to as pedlars or tinkers;
- Ros Longhurst and her tapestry - an un-started design that she had purchased at a Society Auction some time ago and to her delight discovered that it had belonged to Jan Farmer; she had subsequently completed the tapestry herself;
- Maurice and Wendy Adams with their - well, they did not know what! But see below and all will be revealed!

On the Saturday morning, the meeting convened in the Music Room at Eastham Grange - a recent extension to the property for purpose of housing John & Hilda's collection as well as hosting meetings such as this Autumn Meeting.

The opening talk was by John Moorhouse, the first of two that he would give over the weekend about his project to design and make a Singing Bird Egg; this he was making in the style of the famous Faberge eggs, using a combination of precious and other metals. Though not yet completed, John gave us an overview of the work he had done to-date.

His first task had been the research, necessary to determine what had, and had not, been achieved in this field; and then to gain ideas as to design



Group listening to John Moorhouse

features of the egg, the mechanics involved in its construction and the skills and techniques that he would have to learn and/or develop in order to achieve his objective. From these researches, he realised that no one had attempted a Singing Bird Egg with twin birds and so, settling on that idea, he proceeded with the design and construction work involved.

He explained about the processes he used to form the shell of the egg, designing the decorations for the shell and the engine turning techniques used to apply them; he then described how he selected the colours for the enamelled decoration and the techniques required for that process. Finally, he talked about the continual challenge he faced to find means of hiding the necessary construction features that would otherwise detract from the overall appearance and appeal of the egg itself.

After a break for coffee, John Farmer gave a short introduction to the DVD he had produced with John Moorhouse and John Phillips concerning the Anatomy of a Singing Bird. Excerpts from this DVD were shown to the meeting

and copies were offered for sale.

The final talk on Saturday Morning was by Alan Pratt who talked about cylinder musical boxes. He explained their components, how they made up the instruments and the additional features that sometimes came with them, and also the mystique that lay behind some of the terms used on musical box Tune Sheets. His talk was based upon his experiences whilst working in the auction business and how, from these, it was necessary for members to beware of a very frequent visitor to these premises, the "unknowing expert", and of the risks that were to be run if the "knowledge" gained from such plausible "experts" was applied.

Following a buffet lunch an additional item was slipped into the programme. Much to everyone's surprise, Mike Biden had taken the unexplained item shown the previous evening by Maurice and Wendy Adams as a challenge and so had searched the Internet to find an answer. The results of his efforts surprised and delighted everybody. The object was a Sounding Bowl - a modern development of the very ancient Singing Bowl used

for centuries in Tibet and other countries in the Far East as an aid to meditation and spiritual healing. As well as being able to give a brief history, Mike was able to show a short video made by one of to-day's British makers of Sounding Bowls; in it the tuning was explained and also how the various woods, oak, walnut, ash and holly that are used can produce different tonal qualities from the nine strings with which each bowl is fitted. The meeting greatly appreciated Mike's efforts on behalf of Maurice and Wendy.

John Harrold then gave a talk on his work to restore an English Organ Clock. This clock had been made in or around 1840 and had had a long, hard life. However, much of his talk concentrated on his work to restore and repair what he considered to be the butchery performed on the organ movement of the clock by a "restorer" who had been unsympathetic, uncaring or ignorant, or most probably a brutal combination of all three, and all this as recently as 1997 and at considerable cost! He showed a selection of photographs to illustrate his point, including those of the damaged barrel which had been shortened; and yet others to show



Steel Band - Brian Chapman with his super-size Bongo-bongo Drums

to results of his skills and work to repair and correct the results of such butchery. Although some in the audience felt that fair wear and tear over time could have been responsible for some of the damage he referred to, John was adamant that his view was correct – and he had seen the clock first hand!

In addition to repairing the mechanical aspects, he had to repair the musical side, the pipes, bellows and wind-chest and, having done all this was then faced with tuning the instrument without any guide whatsoever as to the temperament or the musical scale required to play the music represented by the pinning and bridging on the barrel. After much trial and error, he finally considered that 425 temperament and scale seemed the most appropriate. His work complete, the owner sold the clock shortly afterwards and the present owner was unwilling either to loan the clock for the talk or to permit it being recorded.

The meeting, therefore, was denied the opportunity of hearing and assessing at first hand the results of John's work.

The next talk was given by Alan Pratt, his second of the week-end; although his subject this time shared some similarities to that given by John Moorhouse, being about the design and construction of an automaton, his end-product was in a completely different vein. His initial approach was similar, however, as he had researched the subject of Automata to determine what had not been attempted before, and as a result he decided to design and construct a Uni-cyclist Automaton. He then described the processes of designing and making the item, from the relatively straightforward task of making a clockwork motor, the linkage to the automaton, then the more complex processes of designing and making the cam-stack and cam-followers, then the uni-cycle itself and how to simulate

the movements of a uni-cyclist; the legs with their clown boots, the arms and then the head complete with clown face, moving eyes and the tongue that the clown cheekily protrudes from his mouth towards the end of his routine.

Alan made reference to each problem that he had encountered and how, on several occasions, his chosen approach had turned out to be a cul-de-sac and he was faced with undoing work and starting again. At the end of his talk he showed us the results of his efforts to-date and indeed, they looked very creditable, but he explained that he still had several design problems to solve before the Automaton could be considered complete. Finally, he asked for questions and was immediately bombarded from the floor by several members, each suggesting different, alternative approaches that would overcome, in one way or another, his still to be resolved problems. Alan had a "Yes,

but if you do that, then..." response to each of these suggestions. But the "would be helpful" critique kept coming and one was reminded of the old adage, "That a Camel is a Horse designed by a Committee!"

The final session on Saturday was given over to the display and play of two of the chamber organs in the John Phillips collection. This was managed by John Harrold and Nicholas Simons, both of whom had been closely associated with the restoration of these two instruments. The first instrument played was a chamber barrel organ that had been made from an instrument originally made around 1840 in the Black Forest for an Organ Clock but had since been converted into its present form; then we heard several tunes from an Imhof & Mukle chamber organ made in the late 1890's.

Members then returned to The Hundred House Hotel for the evening banquet, after which presentations were made; John Phillips presented special versions of the Racca Piano Melodica, originally made as table favours for the Golden Jubilee meeting held earlier in the year in Kent; these were presented to those who had helped in design and making of the table favours. He then presented the prizes won in the Golden Jubilee draw, one winner of which was John Moorhouse – a fitting reward for his contribution to the meeting.

After the presentations, we were entertained by the "Steel Pan Players" from the Bromyard Queen Elizabeth Humanities College Steel Band. Under their conductor, these youngsters entertained us with a wide selection of tunes, some of which managed to get the more responsive members of our gathering jigging and be-bopping in their chairs, if not on the floor. Towards the end of their performance, an invitation was made to Society members to "Have a Go" to which there was an immediate response from about 5 or 6 of our more outgoing members. After a short time

in which to familiarise themselves with the mechanics of playing the instruments, they achieved a very creditable performance of one of the pieces played by the band. A most original form of entertainment, the Society had not been entertained in this manner at any of its previous meetings. How many listening to the music, however, appreciated the link between the band and our Society – the tuned steel sound source; in the case of the band, this was in the form of the steel drums, and for the Society, the tuned steel combs of both cylinder and disc musical boxes!

On Sunday morning John Moorhouse gave the second of his two talks about his project to design and make a Singing Bird Egg. In this session he concentrated on the internal mechanisms, the bellows, the cam stack, the cam-followers, the bird platform and the birds themselves. He explained in some detail about the intricacies of cam design, then how he made them, and then went on to talk about the problems faced in linking the cam-followers to the various moving items of the instrument. Finally, John showed the meeting the results of his endeavours to-date, the Singing Bird Egg assembled to the point where all would perform, albeit without sound at this stage. Much remains to be done to complete the Singing Bird Egg, but what has been achieved to-date is precision work at its best and the results are a credit to John's patience, skills and knowledge.

After a break for coffee, John Phillips and John Farmer treated us to a programme of music played on Racca Piano Melodica instruments; these commenced with the smallest, the Table favour presented to members attending the April meeting to be followed by the slightly larger versions made especially for Saturday evenings presentations at this meeting. The next instrument played was the 30 Note Piano Orchestrion made in Germany by Spaethe under licence from Giovanni Racca of

Bologna, Italy, which John Farmer had completely restored himself from a collection of parts that were in poor condition when he purchased them. This was followed by a 48 Note Piano Melodica made by the Giovanni Racca company itself, on which John Phillips gave a much appreciated performance of Ave Maria. Finally, the largest instrument of all, the 73 Note Racca Piano Melodica; unfortunately, however, this instrument was not in the best of condition as, although completely assembled, work to fully restore it was still on-going and it had not been tuned and finely adjusted. The performance was abandoned part way through, out of respect for the instrument – to say nothing of those listening to it!

Nicholas Simons then ended the musical interlude with a performance on the Weber Pedal-Electric Duo-Art Piano; originally made in the 1920's this instrument had been completely restored whilst in the possession of John Phillips; the work being completed in 2008.

This was yet another enjoyable but rather different Society meeting, one that centred on the talents and skills that exist within our membership, from the short talks and displays of Friday evening through to the in-depth skills shown in the organ restoration work, the Uni-cyclist Automaton and the Singing Bird Egg. Credits on this occasion go to our hosts for the week-end, John and Hilda Phillips and their supporting team of presenters and backstage workers who, together, provided us with a very stimulating programme that was as interesting as it was revealing. Finally, to Daphne, our Meetings Secretary, for all the necessary background arrangements that made the week-end a fitting part of the on-going celebrations to mark the Golden Jubilee of The Musical Box Society of Great Britain, 1962-2012.

Teme Valley Winders

Christmas Meeting – 8th December 2012

John Phillips arranged special sunny weather for the Christmas meeting and welcomed 25 members from as far afield as Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Northamptonshire and the West Midlands who were soon treated to a sumptuous buffet lunch provided by Hilda. The entertainment was then started by John who demonstrated the ability to play computer MIDI files on his Yamaha Disklavier piano. Then, to everyone's surprise, he was able to switch the tune from this piano to his Weber Grand Duo-Art piano. This was achieved because John had recently fitted an "e-valve" system to the Weber which enables it to play from MIDI instructions, including the ability to control the Duo-Art expression mechanism. The computer programs MIDICat and Van Basco's Karaoke Player were used to achieve this. There was then some discussion about the pros and cons of fitting such a system to a traditional player piano.

Since the Weber is still capable of playing "normal" piano rolls, Kevin McElhone then played a roll by Ampico – Grandmother's Christmas Medley. Nicholas Simons followed up with a Blues Tone Roll, No. 137050, Top Liner Rag by Joseph Lamb, who was contemporary with Scott Joplin.

On a different theme, Alan Pratt continued the saga of his unicycling automaton explaining that, after the previous meeting, he had been encouraged to make an epicyclic gearbox for the wheel and pedals to exaggerate the pedal movement. Alan had originally considered making a rolling road mechanism to make the wheel appear to go faster, but John Phillips had suggested this alternative. Alan thus demonstrated his beautifully executed mechanism, built into the hub of the cyclist's wheel. The effect is to increase the movement range of the pedals providing a much

more convincing movement overall. We await completion of this Epic Cyclist! Next was a mass rendition of Happy Birthday for Doris Pratt (Sorry I can't reveal the age of this lady), followed by Tea and Birthday cakes.

Resuming, with Organettes, Roy Evett assisted by Nicholas (Roy had strained his wrist lifting his wife's handbag, or so he said), demonstrated his recently restored Autophone organette. Autophones were one of the earliest American organettes in which the tune card is advanced in steps as the bellow is squeezed. Roy and his friend Eric then demonstrated their two Tanzbär automatic accordions which were both fairly early models. The last organette was a Peerless demonstrated by John and Angie Harrold with a Christmas roll. This has the same scale as the Celestina and others, but plays better than most, being better made.

A few musical Christmas novelties were then demonstrated by various members, the items including a singing bear's head, an animated dog, a rocking reindeer and a train in a matchbox. Nicholas showed a modern, 1990's, Schuco Radio Car. This is a recreation of the classic Schuco Radio Car of 1938, which

is now very collectable. It is a clockwork tinplate model car which includes a small musical movement to replicate a car radio, which was at that time being introduced to luxury cars. Musical boxes were next with Bob Dyke demonstrating a very nice 12 tune instrument from the Bulleid collection. Dennis Evett then showed his "box of doom". This musical box seems to be a marriage of parts, with a heavily modified case, and a mechanism which seems to play several tunes at once – an ongoing project. John Phillips was then asked to play some of the instruments in his collection, including the Imhof & Mukle barrel organ, and the 48 note Racca piano.

The frequency of Winders meetings is being reduced to two per year, so the next meeting will be on Saturday 15th June 2013. The meeting will start at 11:00 a.m. and finish around 4:00 p.m. Members should bring packed lunches to consume during the lunch break. John and Hilda will provide tea and coffee during the day. Those wishing to attend should contact John Phillips on **01584 781118** to confirm. Bring along anything to wind, or just come along and talk to us

John Farmer



Restoration Matters!

13 - Self-Adhesive Vinyl Stencils



Fig. 1. Weeding out the waste vinyl

This article describes a method of producing very clean and accurate reproductions of original stencilling, as used on organettes and similar wooden cased instruments. The method can also be used for decorating new instruments. Because the process of making these varies according to the situation and job in hand, I will describe two projects from which the reader

should be able to gain sufficient knowledge to be able to use this method. The method uses modern computer technology and computer driven vinyl cutting equipment so some of our less computer-savvy members may need some assistance from the younger generation. Don't let this put you off as good results can be obtained.

Project one:

Some years ago I purchased at the Society auction a Mandolina organette (similar to a Celestina). Apart from requiring a complete pneumatic rebuild it also had a very bad case, which was without any polish and was almost black. I knew nothing about organettes and was surprised when another member said to me, "I suppose that you just forget the gold pattern when it is that bad", as I did not know that it should have one.

When I arrived home I looked very closely at the surface of the instrument with a bright light and a magnifying glass, and was just able to make out a very faint pattern. Before doing any further work on the case, I took some tracing paper and traced off as much of the pattern as could be seen. In some cases parts that were missing on one area could be found on another side and so with only a few gaps, I had a tracing of the gold pattern on all four sides and the top.

I then took these pieces of tracing paper to a young lady designer at work. She very kindly scanned these into her computer and then



Fig. 2. Stencil applied to workpiece

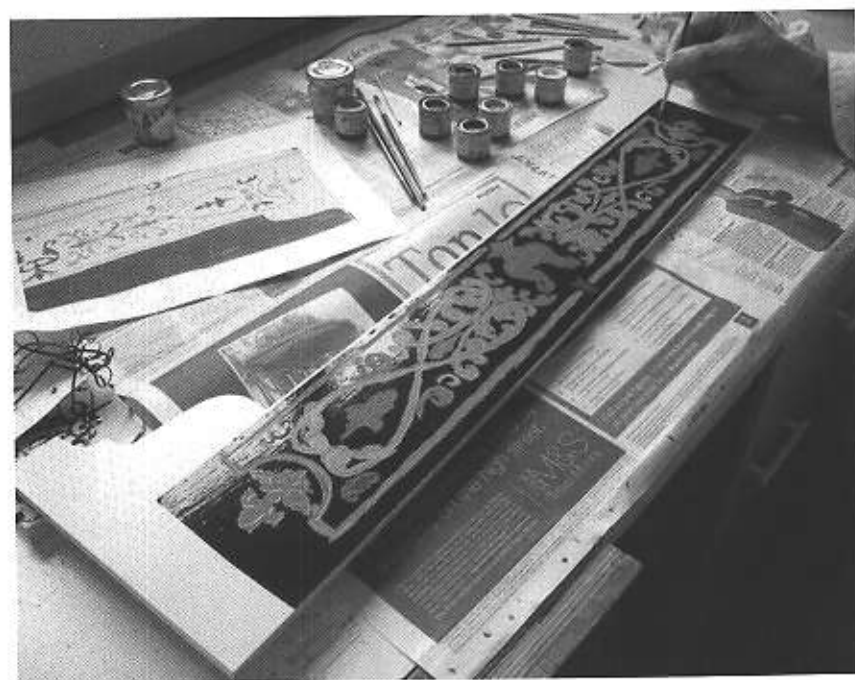


Fig. 3. Painting using the stencil

with skill, which I do not possess, redrew the pattern as a computer image and supplied me with a Vector file on a disc.

In the same building was a company, which produced laser cut vinyl lettering, for such things as shop signs, or advertising for the sides of vans.

I asked them to produce for me vinyl cut-outs of my images, which they kindly did for me, free, as they had quite a lot of old vinyl, which they never used.

Normally if the finished lettering were to be used for a sign, then the backing would be peeled away and the centres of letters such as As and Ds removed, leaving the lettering on a silicone backing sheet, which would be used on the shop window etc. I however wanted to keep the background to use as a stencil, but would need to peel away the pattern area, leaving me with the background to use as a self-adhesive stencil. There were a large number of little pieces to be removed which I had intended to do myself, as the job was free of charge, but a young lady employee took pity on me and weeded them out (the term

sometimes used in that trade). The point of a scalpel is ideal for this and can be used to lift out each piece of waste vinyl.

When the case of the organette had been polished I was ready to stick the vinyl on to the sides, front etc, of the refinished case. However to be on the safe side I had prepared a piece of wood using the same French polish, on which to carry out some tests. I was to use gold paint so I bought one that had a different solvent to French polish,

which has a methylated spirit solvent. I found a suitable one with a thinners base.

Spraying with an airbrush was unsuccessful, as the paint tended to build up around the edges and lifted off with the stencil when it was removed. I found it best to do one coat of the gold paint applied quite thinly with a very soft brush. With thinners based gold paint the vinyl must be peeled away almost at once, owing to its quick drying properties. Carrying out tests will determine how long. I would normally slightly cut back the glossy French polish on a mechanical instrument, but I was concerned that if I used the wax/wire wool method (See Restoration Matters Number 8) the paint may not stick to the surface, so I have left it a bright finish. Perhaps this could be done using a water and fine abrasive, but I have not tried.

Although these instruments normally have quite a matt finish when seen today, I noticed when I took it apart that the parts under joints that had not been exposed to light, were quite shiny.

Project Two

In this case I had built an organ

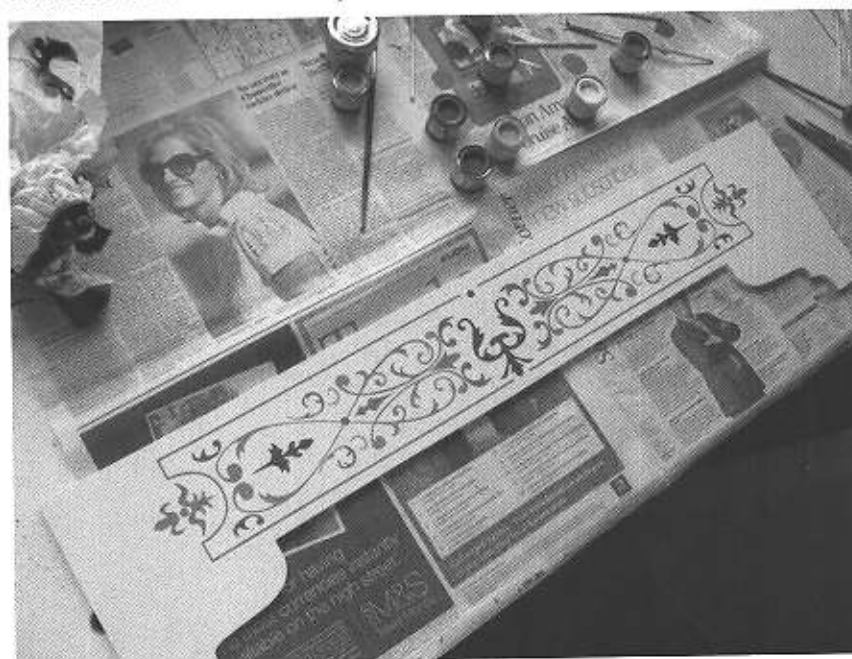


Fig. 4. After removing the stencil

and produced the cabinet using part of a design that I spotted in a book about early 20th century fair organs. I scanned the photograph and once again asked the clever young lady (who now had two children and works from home and is now the MBSGB web site designer) to do the same as she had done with my earlier tracings. As this process is beyond my capabilities the next few lines are written by her to explain the process:

Having received the file containing artwork or photograph, I use a program, which creates vector files. I use CorelDraw where I import the piece of artwork to be redrawn. I then use the vector tool to redraw and trace over the original artwork. If part of it is a mirror image I draw one half and copy and flip the drawing to the opposite side. Once it is all drawn, I then delete the original artwork and export as an .eps file. This is then sent to the vinyl cut-out supplier.

Donna Dennis

In this case having retired, I had lost my contact that produced the vinyl lettering. However, luckily in the next village there is a company who do the same process and produced my requirement for a reasonable price, plus a few spares.

It is worth pointing out here, that a certain thickness of line may require drawing as a box, or it may not reproduce as a solid block of vinyl, which can be removed. This did not occur with the former supplier, but was the case with the latter. The thickness, which gave the problem, in this case was about 2mm. The border on the organ pattern, as seen in Figs 4 & 6. The vinyl supplier dealt with this matter for me.

Again I did some tests on a piece of wood painted with the same paint as the organ.



Fig. 5. The finished Mandolina

In this case as I was using normal paint, it could be left on until all the colouring-in had been done before removing the stencil. Do not allow it to dry.

The process

Weed out the unwanted areas of vinyl; Fig 1. The process of applying the vinyl is as follows:

The vinyl is supplied on a silicone-backing sheet. If one were to just peel off the stencil, all the little pieces would fall out. So an intermediate self-adhesive material is supplied, this is called a release sheet. Having removed its backing sheet, it is applied to the face side of the vinyl and must be pressed down very hard, making sure that there are no air bubbles. This material is of a lower tack than the vinyl, but sticks more than that of the vinyl to the silicone-backing sheet.

The vinyl and release sheet can now be removed from the silicone-

backing sheet, leaving the very sticky vinyl exposed, but in reverse. This is now applied to the job and pressed down firmly, again making sure that there are no air bubbles, but bearing in mind that you have to peel it off again; Fig 2.

Some sort of spatula works well. At this stage you are ready to remove the release sheet leaving the stencil in place on the job, ready for painting; Fig. 3.

After painting, the vinyl must now be removed before the paint dries, but is at the tacky stage. (Try this on the test piece before starting) Any small pieces of vinyl can be carefully removed with a scalpel blade. All should come away cleanly, leaving an image as in Fig 4. Figs 5 & 6. are of the finished projects.

(For Fig. 6 see the colour section on page 20 - Ed)

The Role of Mechanical Music in Bringing the Past to Life and its Relevance for Today

By Alison Biden

What aspect of mechanical music first attracted you, or continues to interest you? Many people might say it is the startling sophistication and intricacy of the mechanisms, for others, it is the music the instruments play. For member Emily Baines, a D Mus student at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, it is the facility it offers to learn more about early music.

Emily's first real encounter with mechanical music was in the Museum van Pierement tot Speelklok, now known simply as the Speelklok Museum, in Utrecht. Having obtained a B Mus from Hull University, Emily went to further her studies at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague, where she spent four years specialising in early music and then voice. It was during her stay in the Netherlands that she visited the Speelklok Museum specifically to hear a Charles Clay musical clock on exhibit there, and 'was completely blown away' by it. Dating back to the 1730's, this clock plays music almost entirely by Handel, and it came as a surprise to Emily to hear it played very differently from the received way of interpreting the music today.

Emily explains: it is highly nuanced and contains more ornamentation than one would expect to hear today from a live performer. As the music is well-known, it is possible to make comparisons with the performance one would normally hear today, and get a better idea of how it was meant to sound when written. Many mechanical instruments are contemporary with the composers whose music is found on them, and from this the modern musicologist is able to gain an insight into the taste of the contemporary listener. This is invaluable when the period



Emily Baines

in question predates any form of recorded music or sound.

Emily makes an interesting point about music composed specifically for a mechanical instrument. Citing pieces by Mozart and Haydn found on flute clocks, for example, she says they should not be discounted as evidence of early musical tastes on the grounds of being thought of as otherwise unplayable. Whilst they might be unplayable on a keyboard instrument, they could be played by a flute ensemble. She herself is less concerned as to whether or not they were played by humans than as to what extent they were enjoyed by the listener of that era. It is not difficult to understand her obvious passion for the subject, and how mechanical instruments link us with real people from the past. This is the music they heard, not what we might imagine they might have heard.

This passion has been further fuelled

by the opportunity to spend hours turning the handle of the Holland barrel organ in the Colt Collection, in Kent – again somewhat of a revelation as to the interpretation of Handel's music. Dating to about 1790, it offers plenty of scope for study with its sixteen barrels of music, some of which have been recorded.

During the course of her research Emily has been surprised to find that many curators of collections containing such instruments are focused on and will talk enthusiastically at length about the mechanical aspect, whilst having little to say about the music. Having read books written by organ builders from as long ago as the eighteenth century, who indicated various ornamentation by their own form of shorthand above the stave, and learnt so much from her own observation, she is keen to draw together technicians and musicologists 'to forge (mechanical music) into a proper area of study.'

To further this aim she is currently organising a conference, in conjunction with NEMA (National Early Music Association), on the role of mechanical music as a serious research resource in the study of early music. Scheduled to take place on 7th and 8th July, 2013, at the Guildhall School, the conference will be open to any interested members of the public from whatever walk of life.

Needless to say, Emily has found the internet an invaluable aid to further her studies. She discovered the MBSGB via its website, and joined to learn more about the subject. Those members of the Society who subscribe to the Mechanical Music Digest may have seen, as I did, her original announcement

about the conference on MMD last October. At the time it was immensely encouraging to learn of a considerably younger person engaging with mechanical music, which is what prompted me to contact Emily and follow up by meeting her. To date she has leading musicologist Peter Holman, and mechanical music authority Arthur Ord-Hume, headlining the conference, with additional contributions from Jon Banks, speaking on Turkish music contained on mechanical instruments, Paul Bevan who has been looking at mechanical instruments exported to China, and hopefully others. Emily is willing to extend the original deadline for submissions for any MBSGB member reading this who would like to contribute, and who should contact her as soon as possible (Emily.Baines@stu.gsmd.ac.uk). It is hoped that MBSGB will have some form of exhibition at the conference.

This event is both significant and rare, if not unique, in placing mechanical music firmly in the domain of serious study from the musical point of view. As such it should be of special interest to our members and all mechanical music enthusiasts. We should be grateful to Emily for demonstrating publicly the relevance of mechanical music to the present day.

Further information on what promises to be an exciting and stimulating event will be posted in due course on the Guildhall School's website, www.gsmd.ac.uk.

(The point about being a hard copy of the music listened to at the time the instrument was made is something we frequently explain to members of the public when doing museum tours. A lady with a doctorate in music from a college in Calgary, Alberta was incensed that her tutors had never even mentioned the existence of early mechanical instruments – never mind that they might have relevance to her studies of early music - Ed)

Obituary

Etienne Blyelle, a life devoted to musical boxes



The late Etienne Blyelle in 2003 in Herzele (North of France) during an annual meeting of the French AAIMM. Credit: Photo Ph. Rouillé

With the passing of Etienne Blyelle, a few days ago, aged 83, we lost one of the most internationally acknowledged experts in the field of musical boxes, and also a friend, and, for many years, one of our French AAIMM vice-presidents. (Of which, with Claude Marchal, he was one of the founding members in 1976 of AAIMM. He was also an early member of the MBSGB, with membership number as low as 46).

I have known Etienne for forty years: not always an easy character, but always ready to share his knowledge with specialists and non specialists, even the youngsters in whom he was able to instil passion for exceptional musical box movements (and it is so important to interest the new generations to our hobby!).

He organized several beautiful exhibitions, the largest one being in 1997 in the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire in Geneva. He knew everybody in the field of musical

boxes, and every enthusiast knew him. He established friendly links with Murtoigh Guinness, spending much time studying his fabulous collection, and with the Ryder family, now in charge of the Morris Museum, for example.

He published many articles in the specialized journals, MBSI, MBSGB and AAIMM, and alas too few other personal publications, his sense of perfectionism preventing him to publish imperfect articles. His articles opened sometimes strong controversial discussions: that's how we go forth in knowledge.

He attended many conventions, often delivering talks. With a few enthusiastic friends, he founded in Geneva a very closed society, the CABAM (Conservatoire autonome des boîtes à musique), to collect the rare mechanisms he was so fond of, and published a very technical bulletin.

I stop here, because so much could be said about Etienne Blyelle. We are sad, he leaves a tremendous gap in our small world of musical boxes. His passing at his home was rather unexpected, as, after strong health alerts a few years ago, he seemed to have correctly recovered, and many of us saw him or called him these last weeks.

To his family, to his friends, we send our affectionate thoughts.

Philippe Rouillé,

Paris (France)

Vice president of the French society AAIMM

(First published in the Mechanical Music Digest on the Internet and reproduced by kind permission of Philippe Rouillé - Ed)

Obituary

Arno van der Heijden.
1950 – 2012



Arno, an ex-avionics engineer with 'Fokker', the Dutch aircraft company, first fell in love with mechanical music after a visit to the Yew Tree pub in Staffordshire, some thirty five years ago. His new hobby soon took him on a short vacation to the USA where he completed a training course with Nancy Fratti. He then studied music and learned to play the piano.

Eventually he left Fokker and his hobby became his business. He went on to become one of Holland's leading restorers taking on commissions from as far away as the USA, Australia and of course every corner of Europe.

Mechanical music was his life. His knowledge and experience of 'music machines' was vast and he contributed much to Kevin McElhone's recent book "The Disc Music Box".

Sadly, we lost for ever that fountain of knowledge on 30th December 2012 after a most unexpected but thankfully brief battle with cancer.

Obituary

Peter Murray
4th April 1939 – 3rd January 2013

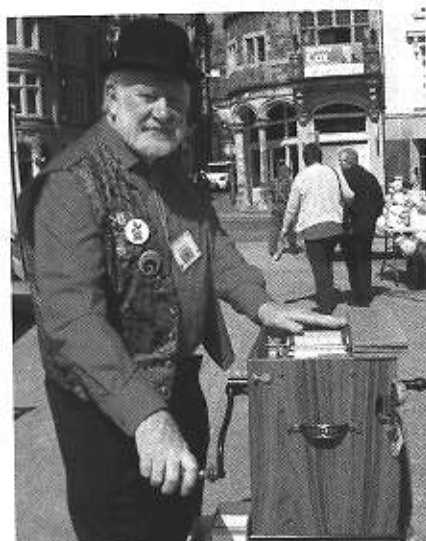
Peter was born in West Hartlepool in 1939. He moved south to London in the 1960's and secured work as a draughtsman. Peter was always a realist and he would recount how he was asked at his first job interview in London what salary he would be looking for. Being precise in nature he had calculated exactly what was required to live in London and asked for more than they were expecting. He did, however, get the job.

In 1964 Peter married his first wife, Tina, in South Africa and they were subsequently blessed with two daughters, Kirsty and Kate. Those of you who knew Peter in the 1960's will recall his devastation when Tina unexpectedly died of cancer leaving him to raise Kirsty and Kate whilst still maintaining his work in London. Everyone admired him for his commitment during this sad and difficult time juggling his work and his home life.

Peter had a particular eye for detail and he found the perfect outlet for this in his photography. He joined Esher Camera Club in the 1960's and his ability to capture a good photograph never diminished.

Peter was to remarry in 1988 when he met Carolyn, and they enjoyed many happy years together. A passion for gardening enabled him to nurture the tiniest seeds to fruition with enormous patience and when he and Carolyn moved to Hersham and then Walton he put a great deal of effort into making the gardens look lovely.

Another of Peter's hobbies was the Musical Box Society, which he joined in the early eighties. He was a family friend of John and Kay Mansfield and used to help with the original Chancetonbury Ring meetings. The annual strawberry teas were a special favourite of Peter and the girls, and he would play a small hand-wound organ during the afternoon. Other members of the MBSGB were



highly amused to read in one of the local newspaper's write-ups of the tea, "It was delightful and enhanced by the copper-knob playing music", from which you will gather that Peter had a wonderful head of red hair!

Trips abroad with the Society were much enjoyed, especially those to Holland and Paris. More recently he joined Brian Chapman in Berlin for the street organ festival. Peter also collected and played musical boxes and his fine player piano, which (grandchildren) April and Ross used to enjoy listening to when they were growing up.

As far as the Society is concerned, Peter's crowning achievement was the recognition of the importance of Daniel Imhof, founder of the famous Imhof and Mukle firm of orchestrion and organ builders of Vohrenbach, Germany and arranging for a suitable headstone to be laid at his grave in Croydon, Surrey. On 29th August 2005 an International group of both mechanical music enthusiasts and descendants of the Imhof family assembled to attend a tribute service to Daniel Imhof. Peter, as the organiser, was one of the main speakers. (See 'The Music Box' Vol. 22 No. 5 (Spring 2006) for a detailed review.)

Peter will be much missed.

The 'Phuniphone' - a strange Organette

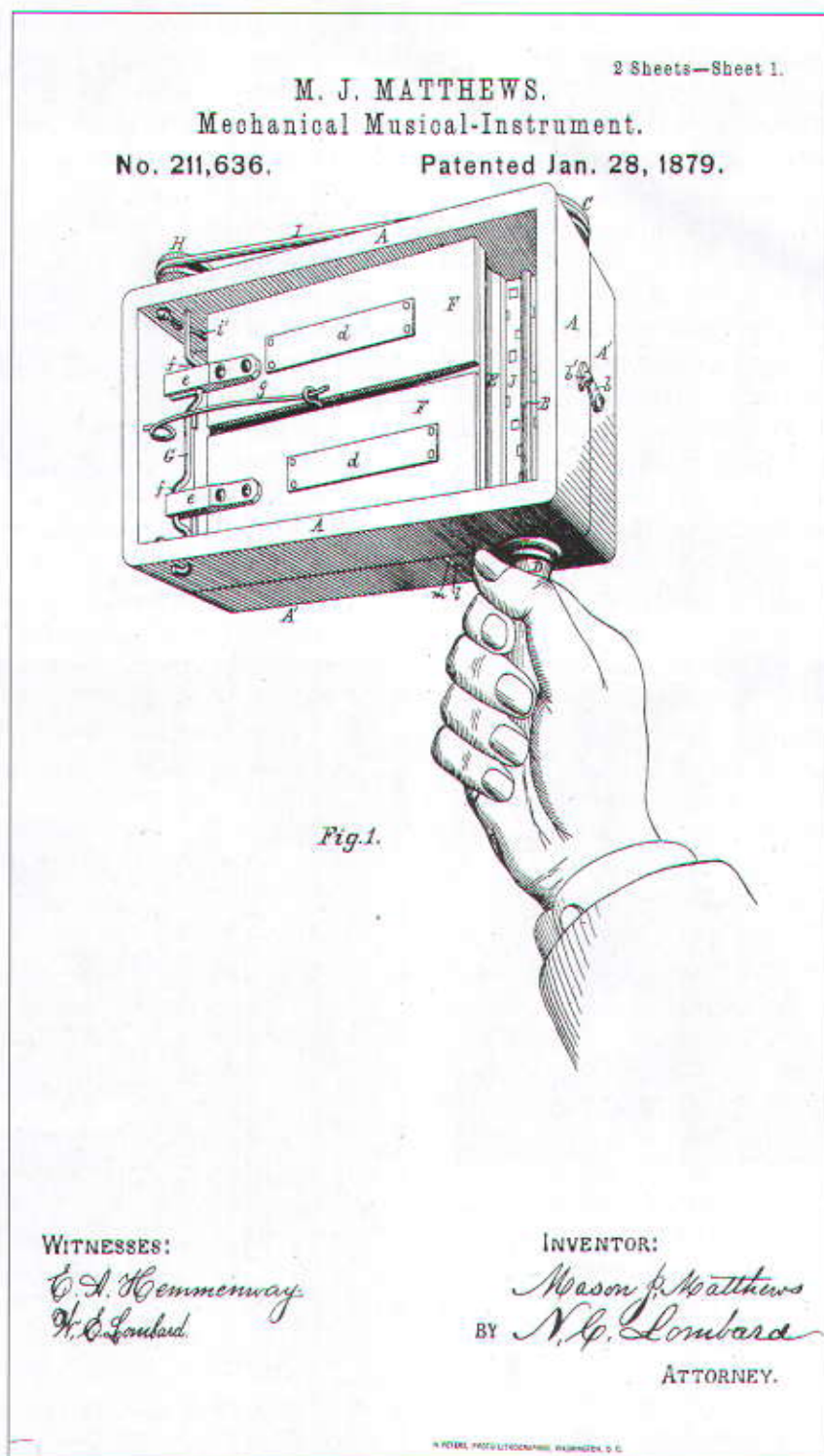
The Editors look at an American patent

US Patent number 211,636 was granted to Mason J Matthews of Boston, Massachusetts on January 28th 1879.

'My invention relates to a musical instrument which I term a "Phuniphone;" Mr Matthews states in his preamble and goes on to describe an organette that was indeed 'phuni'. 'It consists, first, in the method of operating musical instruments by holding the driving-shaft firmly in the hand, and causing the body of the instrument to revolve about said shaft, as will be described.'

Basically a football rattle containing reeds and a paper roll, it must have been somewhat tiring to operate.

'My invention further consists in the combination of suitable wind-moving bellows; a vacuum or reservoir chamber provided with a series of wind-passages; an endless band of perforated paper resting upon and covering said wind-passages, and passing around, carrying rolls or drums at either end of the instrument; a reed-chamber provided with wind-passages corresponding to those in the vacuum, or reservoir chamber, and with suitable reeds, and placed upon the opposite side of said paper band, all mounted within, a suitable frame or casing; and a shaft or rod passing through said casing at or near one end, in position to press upon the paper band where it passes around one of the carrying rolls or drums, and provided with an enlarged prolongation thereof beyond the exterior of the frame, in the form of a handle, to be grasped by the hand of the operator and held from revolving about its axis, while the body of the instrument is made



to revolve about said shaft, and thereby cause the endless band of paper to be moved along between the reed and vacuum chambers, and cause musical tones to be produced as the perforations in the paper are successively brought to coincide with the wind-passages

in the vacuum and reed chambers'.

'My invention further consists in a casing or frame made in two parts, hinged together at one end and detachably secured together at

(concluded on page 32...)

Barrel piano played to the delight of passers by in Cancicov Park, Romania

Saturday, the 16th of June, the people present in Cancicov Park were treated to a nice surprise: an original piano Barrel with a repertoire of old songs playing for them. The moment was part of an ample fundraising campaign organised by the Community Support Foundation. The piano raised the interest of a lot of passers-by, being a unique and extremely valuable object in perfect working condition. For three hours the alleys echoed with the melodic sounds of vintage songs. At the same time, volunteers dressed in vintage clothes danced and performed pantomime. The young children were offered balloons and face painting while the parents could buy objects and jewellery handmade by beneficiaries and volunteers in the FSC workshops. The barrel piano dates from 1900, being made by an Italian manufacturer, and came into the possession of the Williams family in Great Britain in 1980. It was donated to the Community Support Foundation by Mr Colin Williams for charity purposes, in loving memory of his wife Milly.



From the Community Support Foundation Bacau, Romania, Newsletter, www.fsc.ro



A splendidly-attired Paul Bellamy reads a Victorian monologue at the Golden Jubilee Celebration Dinner at Hinchin Priory - see report on page 4



The 'Jubilee' Organ complete with newly-made stencilled decoration - see Restoration article on page 13



Kevin McElhone proudly displays the Q David Bowers award for Outstanding Literary Contributions to the Field of Mechanical Music, presented by President Arthur Cunliffe on behalf of the MBSI - see report on page 8



The beautifully refinished Mandolina organette - see article on page 13



Members of the Bromyard Queen Elizabeth Humanities College Steel Band explain some of the intricacies to MBSGB members at the Jubilee celebration in Worcestershire - see report on page 8



Rapt attention as the attendees at the Celebration Dinner listen to Ted Brown and the Triola - see report on page 4

Stray Notes

An occasional series originated by Luuk Goldhoorn.

34. Ducat, Willmott & Co Player Piano by Robert Ducat-Brown

I recently received an email from our Membership Secretary Kevin McElhone, with some photographs to say that he had found a Player piano for sale on Ebay, which appeared to have my name on it, Ducat. I was able to write back and say that this was in fact my maternal grandfather Noah Ducat (1878-1955 – Fig 1). I was unaware that he made Player pianos, although I knew that he was a piano manufacturer. The name on the Player piano was Ducat, Willmott & Co; this was his company name until about the time of the First World War, when production was probably on hold while he served in the Royal Naval Air Service.

He later formed a partnership with his cousin Charles Ducat, who had been employed previously as a piano technician, but I'm not sure if this was in my grandfather's firm. The company name then became Ducat & Ducat. Incidentally Charles's daughter Nora married Noah's son Leslie, so she did not need to change her surname.



Fig 1. Noah Ducat



The factory was based in Elthorne Road, Holloway, London, N19, it was most likely at the eastern end, which is now called Courtauld Road and is the industrial part.

Like many other player piano manufacturers, the player actions were probably bought in and fitted in their adapted pianos. The piano company was one of many in the North London area at the time prior to and after the First World War.

When I was about twelve or thirteen, by which time my grandfather had semi-retired, I would sometimes visit him and watch as he worked in his large workshop at the end of his garden in North Finchley, where he produced high-class cabinetwork. Pianos by this time were out of fashion owing to gramophones and the start of television for everybody.

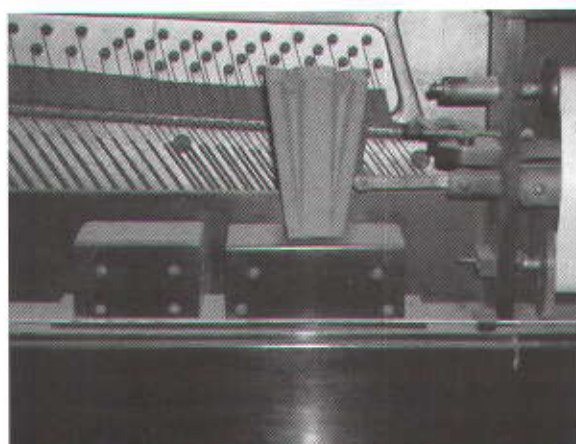
The gluepot would be on the coke stove, with a few components for a job warming beside it. I picked up some good tips from my grandfather in his workshop about cabinet making,

french polishing and veneering. This started an interest in these skills, which I followed up and has been an asset when restoring mechanical musical instruments.

There is still a Ducat, Willmott piano in the family, which is owned by my second cousin. He came across it by chance when looking for a piano for his daughter to practice on. I was not interested in purchasing the player piano which Kevin found on the Internet as I have a 65-note Steck, which I enjoyed restoring and have neither the space nor the inclination to restore another one.

During the time that I did this restoration and whilst I later restored a Hicks barrel piano, I had reason to visit a piano supplies company called Hechsher & Co, which was established 1883. They are based less than two and a half miles from Elthorne Road and as I waited in the trade counter queue, I often wondered if my grandfather had been in the same queue possibly a hundred years previously.

If anyone reading this can identify the make of player action shown in the pictures it would be interesting to hear from you. My telephone number and email address are on the Officers' page.



Automatic tracking device on the Ducat, Willmott player

Making a Musical Box

by Don Busby

Dividing a Cylinder for Music

A pinning machine described in the previous article is used for setting out music on a cylinder. Sizes of pin and drill bit for this task are considered by literature search, followed by tests and development of procedures.

A few notes across the range of the comb are pinned as a 'chord' to set and align the comb on the bed plate, the topic of a later article.

With cylinder size and speed of rotation having been decided earlier, tests are conducted to determine frequency at which teeth can be played for different tempos of music (i.e. repetition rate - Ed).

Then follows pinning of the first few bars of a well known tune to work up techniques for this and to assess quality of the resulting music. After some minor adjustment the full tune is pinned. A second tune is added to fill remaining cylinder space and redundant 'chords' are removed. The resulting tunes are recognisable, but quality of sound and musical embellishment need to be developed.

Cementing-in and grinding of pins was necessary before the tunes could be

played, assessed and fine-tuned: these operations are the topic of further articles.

The first thing to be determined before pinning music is the diameter of pinning wire to use, together with the most appropriate bit size for drilling the cylinder. Also to be decided are length and protrusion of pins. When pin size is known suitable punches can be made for driving pins into holes in the cylinder. Before tunes can be

pinned or played we shall need to set the comb up properly and also establish the time interval before a tooth can be replayed after use. Finally, a few bars of a well-known tune are pinned and evaluated to develop technique before the air is completed and a second tune added, prior to cementing and grinding pin ends to an envelope concentric with cylinder arbor.

The article "Cylinder End Caps, Dividers and Arbor" described how only the treble end cap had been temporarily pinned to the cylinder with only two pins. Since that earlier work the cylinder has been fitted to the bed plate and resulting comb geometry plus a method of securing interchangeable cylinders have been finalised. It seems prudent to now fully secure cylinder end caps as detailed in fig 1 before proceeding further.

Pin size

Literature deals with repair or re-pinning of existing cylinders with no direct guidance on what size of pin should be used for a given cylinder size. Usually advice is to use replacement

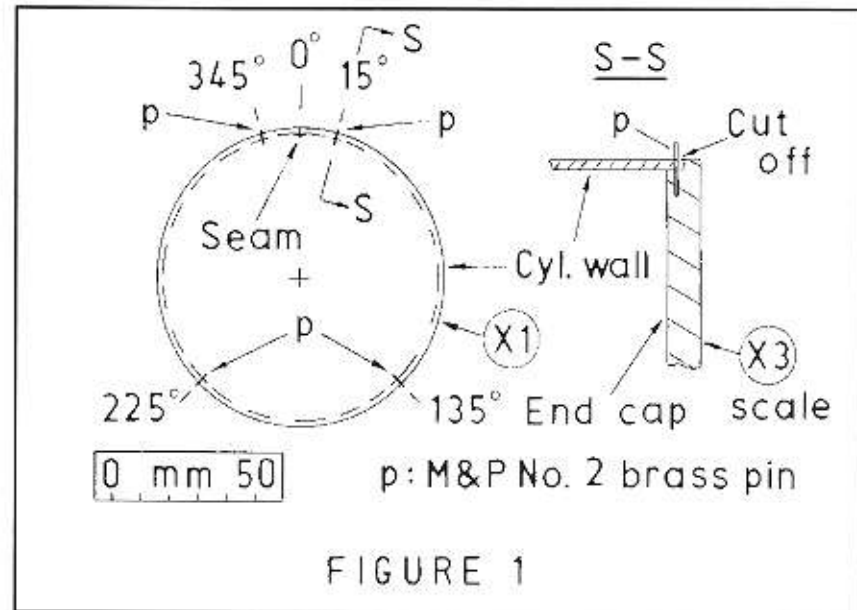


Fig 1. Securing of cylinder end caps

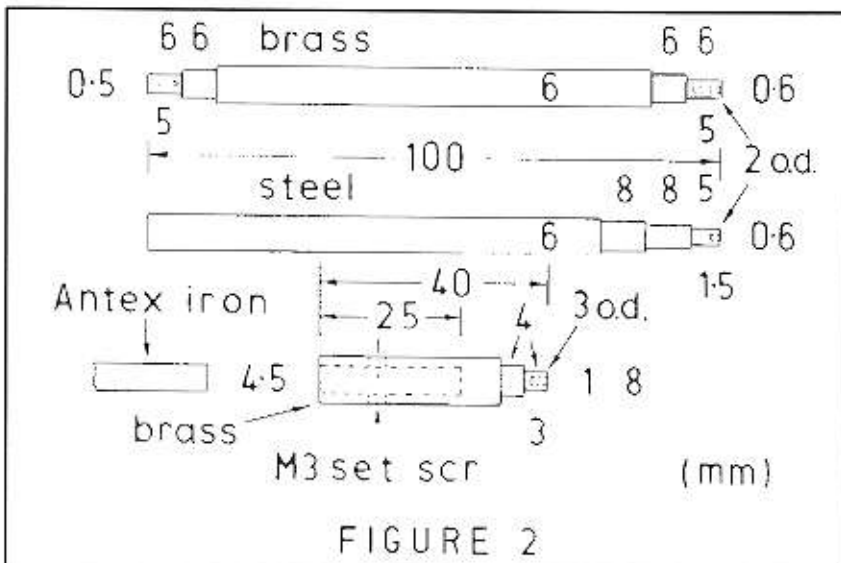


Fig 2. Pin punches

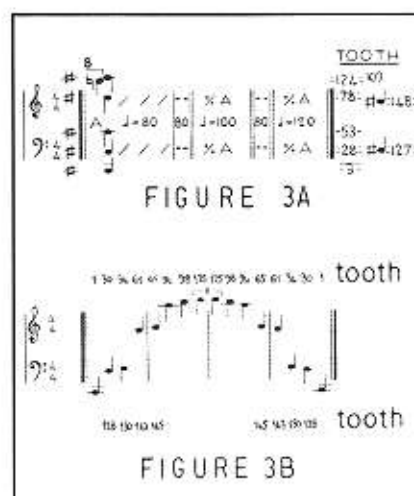


Fig 3. 'Chords' for setting comb and assessing tooth rest periods

wire of diameter as close as possible to the original and to use damper wire as wedges for pins if holes have become enlarged. One expert restorer is reported as never exceeding wire diameter of 0.013" (0.33mm). Generally commentators are considering quality musical boxes with multiple airs on a cylinder, calling for narrow pinning tracks and fine tolerance of lateral pin spacing. The author has some flexibility in choice of pin size as his machine has teeth at 2.9mm centres and a fixed cylinder. Upper limit of pin size will be determined only by quality of resulting music. Trials were carried out on a range of pin and drill sizes as in table 1 and seen in photo 1: brass plate 0.81 thick was used to simulate a cylinder wall. Results of tests are shown in the table with comment on ease or otherwise of drilling holes and matching of pin sizes. Dealing firstly with drill bit size, it was found that at diameters less than 0.4, success rates for drilling holes without shearing the bit was about 50%, whereas for 0.4 and 0.5 bits almost 100% success was achieved. Of course as a bit becomes noticeably blunt, or after much use, it should be sharpened or replaced by a new item. Since this project calls for hundreds, if not thousands, of holes to be drilled it was decided to plump for the 0.4 bit, the 0.5 producing holes too large for the range of wires being considered. Cost was a factor in this decision as 0.4 and 0.5 sizes are available as HSS polished drill bits for pence as opposed to pounds for the smaller sizes. A disadvantage of

the cheaper drills is their size tolerance of about ± 0.02 . We turn now to wire size, where a glance at the table shows that use of a 0.4 bit limits us to using only 0.45 wire which is about 30% up on what is authoritatively considered maximum. As stated earlier, our design should be robust enough to cope with a larger pin size. One aspect of fitting pins developed during the trial drilling was use of tapered broaches to match hole to wire size. Thus, if a 0.45 wire would not enter a hole, this was opened up with a 0.45 broach partly entered into the hole until fit was achieved. Similarly, if a hole proved too large for this wire, a 0.55 broach allowed use of a 0.50 pin. Broach taper of 1% was considered to be of no consequence in this application. References 1 and 2 give details of suppliers and suitable types of wire and broaches.

Turning now to pin length and production of a punch for driving pins home, it appears that a suitable pin protrusion length for a large cylinder box is about 0.04" (1mm). Since setting up of comb on bed plate is as yet an unknown quantity to the author he decided to set his pins 1.5mm long. This is not considered to be an excessive length because of the larger than normal diameter of pin chosen. The main problem might be cleanness of tooth release and quality of sound. Based on selected pin sizes, punches were made to designs shown in fig 2 and photo 2: these drive in pins to pass 4.5mm through and into the cylinder. Also shown is a soldering iron bit to fit over a pin. This was intended for sweating-in pins for the test phase. This process was rejected because it led to solder staining of cylinder surface. The bit is retained as having a possible application when modifying pinning, post cementing. Photo 3 shows tools used during pinning operations.



Photo 1. Sample of pins on brass flat

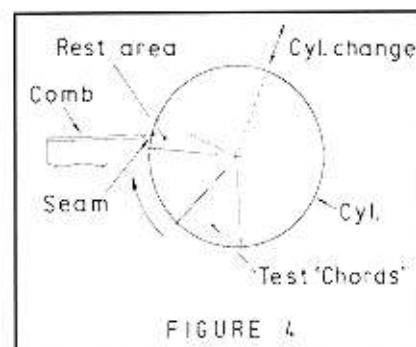


Fig 4. Location of 'chords' on cylinder

Setting comb on bed plate

Tips of bass end teeth need to be set below and also have a larger intermesh with cylinder pins than those at treble end. As an aid to setting the comb to these criteria, so that notes will play with correct timing, sets of notes across the range of the comb were pinned. Four such 'chords' defined by the first bar of fig 3A were formed to avoid a need for full rotation of the cylinder between adjustments of the comb. For those whose musical language, like the author's, borders on illiteracy, ref 3 is recommended reading. The subsequent bars in fig 3A are for another purpose described later. The rather unusual choice of notes for this work is to avoid those needed for the tune to be pinned later: the test 'chord' pins will then be clipped off. Additional notes to the right of fig 3A will be added to the 'chord' when the extra segment with teeth T126-150 is being set up. An alternative musical arrangement was pinned as per fig 3B: this is a hybrid scale C Major over the whole range of the comb. It is used to check for timing, hence comb setting, and can be arranged for the first 125 teeth or for all 150. Where on the cylinder should we set these 'chords'? At this stage we do not have a fully pinned cylinder with ends of pins ground to a cylindrical envelope. Earlier calibration tests have shown our cylinder to deviate from true circular form by approximately ± 0.1 mm, the mean being about 90° in either direction from the cylinder seam. Maximum oblateness occurs at the seam which will be the music quiet area. 'Chords' for setting the comb were therefore pinned in the vicinity of one of the regions of minimum deviation

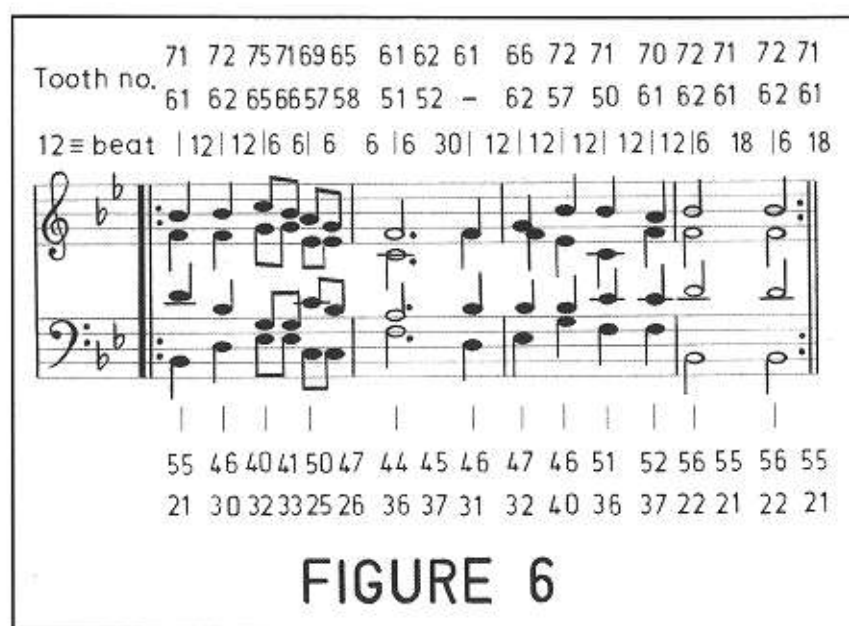


Fig 6. Example of sheet music annotated for pinning

which, as can be seen from fig 4, is a convenient location from which to turn the 'chords' to mesh with the comb after returning the cylinder from the pinning machine. Work of setting the comb onto the bed plate and transmission of vibrations to a sounding board will be the topic of a later article.

Frequency of using a tooth

Can a tooth be used for successive beats? Before pinning of music can start it is necessary to discover how soon after use a tooth can be replayed for different music tempos. Ideally it should be available for every beat. A simple divider was made for turning a cylinder when pinning; this was described in an earlier article. A major aspect of its design is that one turn of input represents one musical beat. The divider's six step-down ratios embrace 160:1, 200:1 and 240:1. We are pinning a cylinder of diameter 97.81mm which it is intended will take 2 minutes for one rotation: let us define this constant speed as v . Table 2 shows how the above data relates to pin separation for music which might be pinned using the divider as intended.

Returning to fig 3, the first bar will serve for comb setting. It will then be used to check if there is sufficient circumferential separation between pins of successive beats at a tempo of 80 crotchet beats per minute. The following two *noted* bars allow for

checks at tempos of 100 and 120, thus covering the anticipated range of music to be pinned. Bars carrying *minim rests* are inserted to separate the three sets of pins. The pinned 'chords' will be played at cylinder speed v to check if teeth can be played for two successive beats or must be rested for longer. The cylinder was returned to the musical box for evaluation of the various aspects of pinning discussed above. Firstly, the comb was set for optimum performance; the two aims were to achieve correct intermesh of pins with teeth and, to get notes of 'chords' to play in unison: full details will be set out in a later article. As will be explained in that paper,

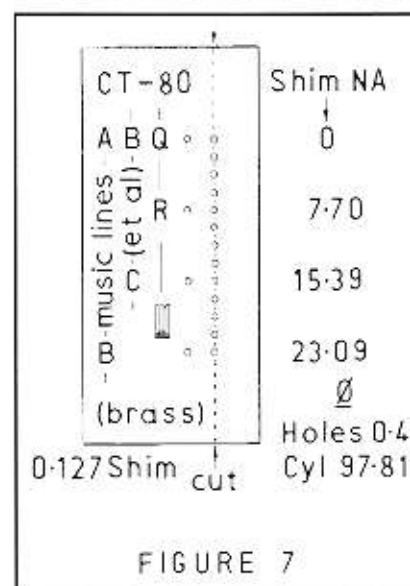


Fig 7. Bar and beat scale:
Common Time-80

difficulty was experienced in setting the comb without a sounding board to enable listening for any time difference between notes sounding. The most convenient way of mounting a sounding board was to build the box which will finally house the movement. Details of the build will also be given in the later article. At this stage pins have not been cemented in, nor have their ends been ground: allowances were made for this when adjusting the comb.

Next, with the comb now optimally set, the bars of 'chords' pinned at the three different tempos were played at cylinder speed v . Results of these tests, included in table 2, show that at all three tempos one beat must be skipped before any particular tooth can be replayed. Our double, triple, sometimes quadruple tuning across the comb will cater for such potential conflict when pinning music.

Pinning a tune

Having decided upon pin parameters and determined rest periods for teeth before they can be replayed, we can now pin a tune at last! First, a few bars will be pinned and resulting music evaluated before completing the air, adding a second and, cementing-in and grinding pin ends. Harking back for a moment to the first article of this series, "Comb Design", the author decided to produce a fully chromatic keyboard with a range of five octaves, all notes being duplicated, some triplicated which, with interchangeable cylinders, would allow any number of tunes to be pinned and cater for a wide variety of musical arrangements. Since then he has added a further two octaves, repeating notes around middle-C. Thus, likening the comb to a piano keyboard, it should be possible to translate a tune from sheet music into an array of pins on a cylinder. Ideally, we need to develop a mechanistic way of doing this. In the first instance it will be to present the music as written and without musical box embellishments, such as mandolin or Sublime Harmonic effects: it is hoped to introduce these later. The first tune to be pinned is "Ding Dong Merrily on High" This rendition will involve 24

Wire	Drill					
	0.30	0.32	0.35	0.38	0.40	0.50
0.29	L	(50% shear)		Loose		
0.31	S	L				
0.315	S	L				
0.355	T	T/S	Satis. L			
0.40			T	S	L	
0.45	Tight			T	S	L
0.50			used		T/S	L

TABLE 1

TABLE 1

Trials array - pin and drill sizes

bars which, being played at a tempo of 80 crotchet beats per minute, will occupy 60% of circumference on this 2 minute cylinder. Of the remaining space, 12 bars of "Silent Night" will be pinned at a tempo of 120, with rest periods and 'chords' for comb setting occupying the remainder.

What is the best way to translate sheet music into the correct arrangement of pins? Earlier, whilst developing his cylinder, the author pinned several bars of music to a hand-wound plastic cylinder. In that exercise each note of music was compared with a linear representation of teeth numbers associated with notes,

as shown below for a small part of the whole (see below - Ed):

The sheet music was annotated with corresponding tooth number, taking into account previous usage of that tooth. Drilling and pinning were done reading tooth numbers from the sheet music. With the experience of this earlier pinning exercise and, taking note of "Journal" articles by "Odd Job" and Essex Group presentations by experienced members of the Society, the following revised procedure was used.

A major change from the earlier pinning exercise is to have notes and

		2.5% - (Hz)		0.0 + 0 +	
		h	#	h	#
7	C			125	
	B			123	124
	A			119	120 121 122
	G			115	116 117 118
	F			111	112 113 114
6	E			109	110
	D			105	106 107 108
	C			100-2	103 104
	B			98	99
	A			94	95 96 97
5	G			90	91 92 93
	F			86	87 88 89
	E			84	85
	D			80	81 82 83
	C			75-77	78 79
4	B	150		73	74
	A	149		69	70 71 72
	G	147	148	65	66 67 68
	F	145	146	61	62 63 64
	E	143	144	59	60
3	D	142		55	56 57 58
	C	140	141	50	51 52 53 54
	B	138	139	48	49
	A	137		44	45 46 47
	G	135	136	40	41 42 43
2	F	133	134	36	37 38 39
	E	131	132	34	35
	D	130		30	31 32 33
	C	128	129	25	26 27 28 29
	B	126	127	23	24
1	A			19	20 21 22
	G			15	16 17 18
	F			11	12 13 14
	E			9	10
	D			5	6 7 8
0	C			1	2 3 4

FIGURE 5

Fig 5. Array for identifying tooth number by comparison with sheet music

associated teeth numbers in the form of an array similar to the form of a tune as presented by sheet music. This array is shown in fig 5 which highlights staves of bass and treble clef. Perusal of the sheet music in comparison with the array enables ready identification of tooth or teeth for the beat being

Tooth No. --	26	27	28	29	----	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	----	73	74	75	--
Note	3C	C	C#	C#		B	B	4C	C	C	C#	C#		B	B	5C	

tempo	turning ratio	pin sept. tips	pin sept. roots	mm	beat time(s)	beat No. bars	beat skip
80	160:1	1.98	1.92		0.75	40	1
100	200:1	1.58	1.54		0.60	50	1
120	240:1	1.32	1.28		0.50	60	1

TABLE 2

Pin separation for three music tempos

considered: tooth number(s) are then written above or below the relevant clef note(s) on the sheet music as in fig 6, which is a translation of the first four bars of, "Ding Dong.....".

* Staves of printed manuscript paper are used to represent lines and spaces, each thus representing a note. This suited the size of stencil being used to draft the figure

* (Hz) column headings indicate those notes which are true to pitch O or (O), those which are 2.5% low -- and those 2.5% high +. This information is listed for later trialling of Sublime Harmonic

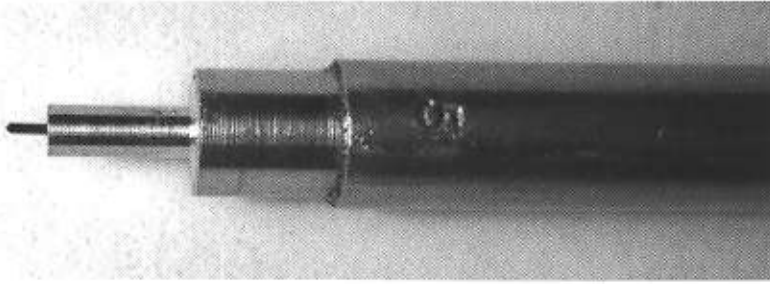


Photo 2. Brass punch with wire inserted

* Columns separate notes into naturals and sharps

Teeth 126-150 precede lower numbered teeth because the comb segment added

after "Comb Design" has been mounted at bass end of the comb: earlier articles have already defined numbering of the first 125 teeth.

There are two reasons for controlling order of use of teeth of a given note; firstly to prevent a possible clash with following pins depending on the tempo (table 2 refers), secondly to spread wear and tear across the comb. A board was made to the format of fig 5 with a tally pin for each tooth. For any given note, taking account of natural and sharp sub-sets, a tally washer will be placed over the pin of the last tooth used, starting from left and progressing to the right; initially, tallies are stored on pins to the left of note letters. An example of its use is displayed in fig 5

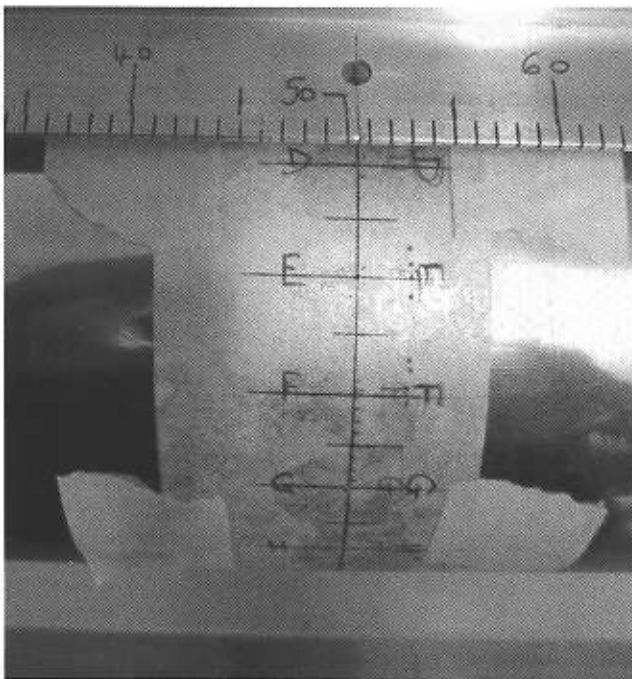


Photo 4. Paper rule marking music bars for 80 tempo

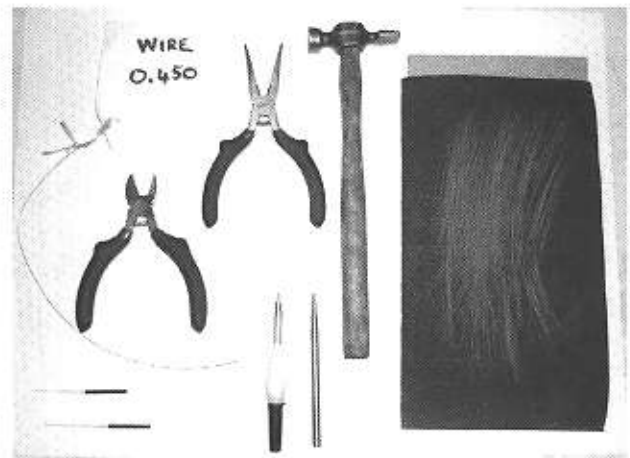


Photo 3. Tools used when pinning

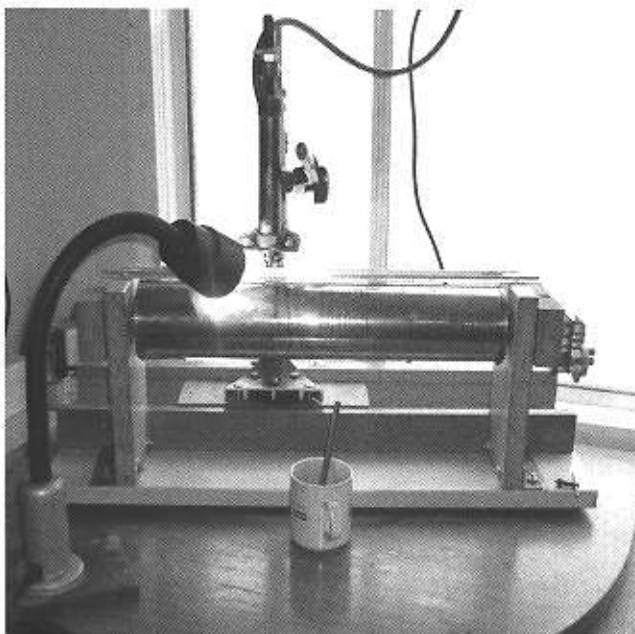



Photo 5. Drilling work station



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as now explained. Middle C has been used twice, the second time with tooth 50 (T50), following T138; the next call will be on T51. Higher up that octave B has been used three times T149, 73 and 74, next will be T149. One semitone lower, A sharp has been used twice, at T148 and T71.

The above examples are for an air in the scale of C Major. In the case of a tune such as, "Ding Dong....", which is written in the scale of B Flat Major, tallies are removed from all notes B and E to the notes of A sharp and D sharp immediately below. Initially they are stored on pins to the right of the lower notes as illustrated by solid arrows for one pair of B and E notes. A second example is for the scale of G Major, where tallies of all F-noted teeth start off at the extreme right hand side of the board: one example is shown by a dotted arrow. The reader is left to visualise treatment of other scales. Finally, temporary changes of pitch by accidentals are dealt with on an ad hoc basis.

A final exercise before pinning can start is to determine timing between notes and/or chords. As stated earlier, the simple divider had been devised so that one input turn would rotate the cylinder the equivalent of one beat of music. Inter-beat notes would be located by fractional turns of the input handle of which the register plate has 12 sub-divisions. As shown in fig 6, timing data are recorded above the two music clefs as the number of twelfths of a turn of the divider input handle. The total for each bar should check out at 48 since one turn represents one beat.

Experience of using the divider highlighted the presence of a few high spots in cylinder rotation, manifested by slight jerking resulting in a few slight inaccuracies of setting. A saving grace was that 160 input turns produced one full cylinder turn as expected. The jerking was therefore not caused by slipping gears within the divider but was due to cylinder turning friction and/or inertia affecting



Photo 6. Hole drilled for pin at tooth 27

gear back lash. The method of dividing needed re-thinking as follows:

A linear scale was drawn on *thin* tracing paper, dividing cylinder circumference into 40 equal parts, labelled 0-40, each representing one bar of music at the tempo of 80 for the first chosen tune. The scale was then fastened around the cylinder at the inter-segment gap at comb centre, with 0 and 40 of the scale at cylinder seam: two bars fall between successive letters as seen in photo 4. The first beat of music would be at graduation mark 1, the next bar would start at 2 and so on. Starting at mark 1, pinning holes were drilled at comb centre and at *ghost* tooth positions 0 and 125A, the three positions to provide a datum line for the start of the first bar. Successive sets of three such holes were then drilled at every second bar. These datum holes would be fitted with pins protruding 0.75mm to distinguish them from music pins, notwithstanding the fact that they track along tooth gaps. Datum lines so defined were drawn across cylinder length using a spirit-based pen such as used for titling CDs. These would be used for guiding drilling and pinning, both initially and later when making fine adjustments to pins or adding musical embellishment: lines can be cleaned off and re-drawn as required. Whilst forming datum pin holes, successive bar starting points were located using the rotary divider,

adjusting if necessary before drilling: in most cases the divider positioned the cylinder correctly. A further aid for ensuring correct turning of the cylinder was prepared in the form of an accurate scale for dividing bars into individual beats and inter-beat spacings. This was made from 5-thou" (0.127mm) brass shim as detailed in fig 7. If bent around the whole cylinder, the Neutral Axis (NA) of an elastic brass shim of this thickness would be 0.4mm longer than cylinder circumference. Although this lengthening effect is marginal over the three bars spanned by the scale, distances between beat holes were calculated as $1/160^{\text{th}}$ of the circumference of the NA. Holes in the shim were drilled with it clamped atop a copper sheet to hold it rigid. The dotted "cut" line in fig 7 is the finished edge of the scale. In fact the initial cut with scissors was tangential and to the right of the holes. The edge was then reduced on a flat sheet of emery to the dotted line. The scale is of course specific to this 2-minute cylinder with a tune in Common Time (CT), playing at a tempo of 80 beats per minute (CT-80). Finer scales would be needed for faster tempos. The legends within the (brass) rectangle are by way of clarification and are not marked-up on the scale itself, which can be used at all music bars on the cylinder. Pin positions for inter-beat notes will be located by visual interpolation.

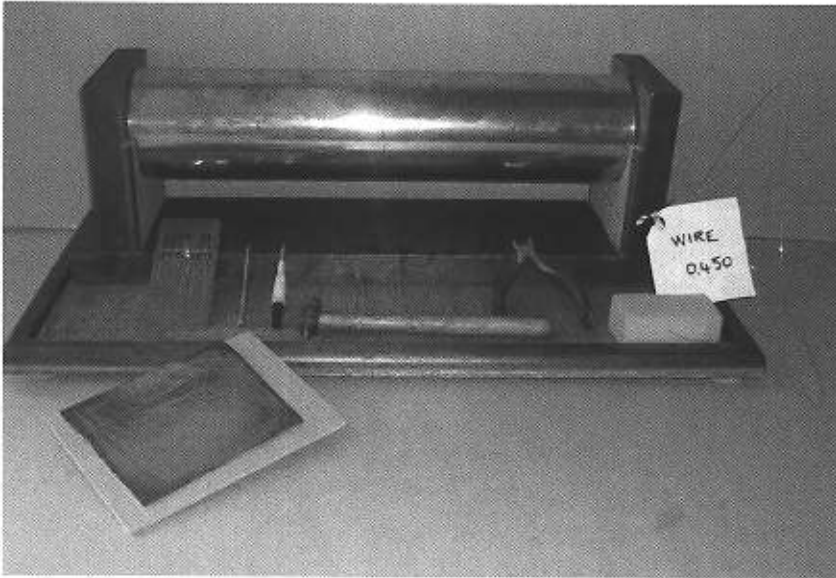


Photo 7. Pinning work station

It was decided to drill and pin this first cylinder using the rotary divider supported by the checking aids described above. However, for subsequent cylinders the rotary divider of the pinning machine will be substituted by the dividing head from the author's lathe inventory. In the event that further musical box development is undertaken, cylinder size will be limited to what can be divided and drilled on the lathe. Use of worm and wheel would be an alternative method of division.

Drilling commenced at bar datum 1, all holes at this position being formed before using the rotary divider to turn to the next note(s). After checking accuracy of winding against datum lines, supplemented by the inter-beat scale, holes(s) were drilled before winding on. A new drill bit was fitted at the start of each line of music, or earlier if a bit was felt to be blunt. A good supply of bits was to hand, dull bits would be sharpened later. A useful aid during drilling is to carry a cursor along the sheet music marking the note or chord being processed. Photos 5 and 6 show aspects of drilling operations. A mix of white spirit and machine oil is brushed on as lubricant. After completing holes for two-thirds of "Ding Dong...", the bars were pinned as described below. The cylinder was then returned to the bed plate for evaluation of resulting music. The tune was recognisable,

but poor in quality: hopefully it will improve after cementing-in pins and grinding their ends to a circular envelope followed by fine adjustment of them and damper wires.

The final part of this exercise is to fit pins into all drilled holes in the cylinder. The author's work station for pinning a cylinder is shown by photo 7. Aspects of this work listed below stem from literature searches, a demonstration of pinning at an Essex Group meeting, helpful advice given by fellow Society members and the author's own experiences. The following points, additional to many made throughout this article, are intended to help a novice in his first attempts at pinning a new cylinder:

- * Maintain a sharp bit to prevent over-size holes
- * Select wire slightly larger than bit size. Observing the first point should ensure consistency of wire size
- * Start with lengths of wire, say 2m long, the different thicknesses likely to be used being clearly labelled
- * Hold and feed wire stock through a foam rubber pad fixed to the work station
- * De-burr end of selected wire with 150 grit emery sheet, forming a slight end taper
- * Insert end in brass punch, the unused end of which is protected from 'hammering' damage by a taped-on

biro pen cap: this also eliminates the need to seek out the correct end for the chosen wire size

- * Snip the wire to leave 1mm protruding from the punch
- * With wire still in punch, square off end on flat emery pad and/or carborundum stone
- * Reverse wire in brass punch
- * Position tapered end of wire in cylinder hole and tap lightly with a small hammer until entry is felt
- * Use steel punch to gently tap pin down to required protruding length of 1.5mm
- * Start pinning at the first beat and work progressively through the tune, fully pinning each beat, checking against the sheet music translation and graduated scale for possible errors. Although not in position in the picture, the scale is transferred to the top of the pinning jig for this operation.

The two airs called for 709 pins to be inserted before the next phase of cementing-in and grinding their ends to a cylindrical envelope. Only after these operations, which are topics of another article, can the tunes be properly evaluated for accuracy and quality of reproduction.

A later article will detail actions and design for setting the comb on the bed plate and amplifying tooth vibrations with a sounding board.

Footnote 1

Experience gained whilst drilling and pinning the two airs on this prototype cylinder led to changes in procedure as follows:

It was unnecessary to change drill bits as often as suggested: in fact, well over 400 holes were drilled before one particular bit was replaced.

Squaring off the end of a pin (eighth bullet point towards the end of the text) was much quicker and easier against the side of a carborundum cutting wheel, in a Dremel drill. This brought pinning times down from 2 to

¾ minutes per pin: these times include checking for correctness of drilling (the last bullet point).

Footnote 2

Erratum and Addendum to "Making a Musical Box - Cementing and Grinding a Pinned Cylinder - Conclusion" (Vol 25, No 6 page 230)

1. The middle of the last sentence of the penultimate paragraph under heading "Measuring the cylinder before grinding" should read: "...with first contact occurring at P1, thus..."

2. Add the following to the paragraph: "The 10% of cylinder radii falling outside the range shown in fig 2 will have similar effects on final pin lengths. However, actual reduction of pin lengths was not as drastic as anticipated, as evidenced by data leading to Table 2: these data resulted from accurate measurement by the dial gauge compared with greater variance of pin lengths deduced from use of the less accurate vertical digital scale."

References

1. Ormiston Wire Limited, 1 Fleming Way, Worton Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 6EU Tel: 0208 569 7287

(Sold by part no. and weight-e.g. 101-0450, spring steel Wire, 0.45 dia, 500 grams approx length 400m.)

2. Meadows & Passmore Ltd, Brighton BN41 1EU Tel: 01273 421 321 (Cutting brochures: No. 76 dia 0.45mm, 36 long No. 74 dia 0.55mm, 40 long)

3. "The Right Way to Read Music" Harry & Michael Baxter ISBN 0-7160-2008-4

A further footnote

Erratum to "Making a Musical Box - Dividing a Cylinder for Music" (Vol 25 No 8) Fig 1C shows a Tempo of 160 selected, not 80 as in the title and as incorrectly stated in the text.

Arthur Bursens Funeral Programme

Amongst our collection of ephemera we came across the item illustrated below. It lists many of the Bursens family members and relations who attended the funeral of one of Belgium's finest street and dance organ makers. Arthur was born on November 23rd 1890 and died on September 28th 1982. His wife, Joanna Kerremans, had predeceased him. Of some significance was the presence of Mrs Alfons Bursens with her children and grandchildren. Alfons was Arthur's brother and had already passed on. He was a specialist in pipe voicing, though did build a few organs in his own right. - Ed



De Heer Ferdinand DEFOSSÉ - BURSENS,
de Heer en Mevrouw Jules PEETERS - BURSENS,
de Heer en Mevrouw John SCHREY - BURSENS, zijn kinderen,
de Heer en Mevrouw Vital DEFOSSÉ - DE KEULENAER en hun kinderen Bob en Karin,
de Heer en Mevrouw Charles GIOANNINI - DEFOSSÉ en hun kinderen Tonny en Linda,
de Heer en Mevrouw Emile PEETERS - VAN CAMP en kinderen Julien, Lucien en Carl,
de Heer en Mevrouw Rudy VAN HOOFF - PEETERS en kinderen Danny en Alain,
de Heer Arthur SCHREY en verloofde Majuffrouw Viola,
Mevrouw Mariette BURSENS en dochter, zijn kleinkinderen en achterkleinkinderen,
Mevrouw weduwe Alfons BURSENS - MAC MAHON, kinderen en kleinkinderen,
Mevrouw weduwe Joos NOOTBAERT - BURSENS en zoon,
de Heer en Mevrouw Pierre DE BAKKER - BURSENS, kinderen en kleinkinderen,
de Heer en Mevrouw Frans VAN de VELDE - BURSENS,
de Heer en Mevrouw Charles HUET - BURSENS,
de Heer Louis KERREMANS - ANDRIES, kinderen en kleinkinderen,
Mevrouw weduwe André KERREMANS - VEN, kinderen en kleinkinderen,
zijn zusters, schoonbroers, schoonzusters, neven en nichten,
de Families BURSENS, KERREMANS, VAN RAEMDONCK en LUYKEN

melden U met droefheid het overlijden van

DE HEER

Arthur BURSENS

Gepensioneerd orgelmaker - fabrikant
Lid van de Christ. Bond van gepensioneerden

weduwnaar van Mevrouw Joanna KERREMANS,

geboren te Rupelmonde op 23 november 1890 en overleden te Hoboken in het
ziekenhuis Hoge Beuken op 28 september 1982

Gesterkt door het H. Sakrament der zieken.

De plechtige rouwliturgie, waarop U vriendelijk wordt uitgenodigd, heeft plaats in de
parochiekerk H. - Familie te Hoboken (Don Bosco, St. - Bernardssteenweg), op
zaterdag 2 oktober 1982, om 11 uur.

Samenkomst in de kerk.

De teraardebestelling geschiedt in de familiegrond op de begraafplaats van Hoboken.

2710 Hoboken, 28 september 1982.
St. - Bernardssteenweg, 635.

Firma DE COCK - Begraafplaats - Crematoria - Rouwcentrum
De Broynleer, 177 - 2710 Hoboken - Tel. 527 34 77 - 528 04 28

Obituary Kenneth Stroud

Ken Stroud, who died in November last year, joined the Society in 1999 and was a regular attendee at the Chanctonbury Ring. He was a guide for the National Trust at Chartwell (Sir Winston Churchill's home), which duties made it difficult for him to attend our main meetings. Ken was a long-time member of the Vintage Motor Cycle Club and an avid collector of motor cycle lamps and badges. He had a collection of gramophones and mechanical musical instruments, some of which he generously donated to the Society in his Will. His estate is still subject to probate being finalised, but there is a bequest about which members will be kept informed. **Ted Brown**

Dates for your Diary 2013

compiled by Daphne Ladell

SOCIETY MEETINGS

Spring Meeting 2013

Friday 12th – 14th April
Venue – Cuckoo Land, Cheshire
Host Mark Singleton
Don't forget to book

Annual General Meeting & Society Auction

Saturday 1st June 2013
Roade Village Hall,
Near Northampton, NN7 2LT
11.00a.m. Start -
followed by buffet lunch
After lunch - Society Auction

Autumn Meeting 2013

Friday 27th – Sunday 29th September
The Museum of Mechanical Music
and Bygones – Cotton, Suffolk
More details in next Journal

REGIONAL MEETINGS

Chanctonbury Ring

(Open Day and Organ Grind)
Sunday 17th March 2013
10.30 Coffee / Tea for an 11am start
Lunch provided
Please contact Ted Brown on
01403823533

Midlands Group Meeting (New Meeting)

Saturday 23rd March 2013
Kettering Area
Arrive 10.30 for 11am start
Bring your own lunch
Depart 1600 hours
Please phone Nicholas Simons or
Kevin McElhone (numbers in Journal)
We will be holding another meeting on
Saturday 19th October, location and
timings to be published nearer the time

Essex Meeting

Saturday 27th April 2013
Coffee 10.30am, Start 11.00am

NEW VENUE

Hutton Poplars Lodge
Poplars Drive (off Rayleigh Road)
Hutton, Brentwood, Essex, CM13 1BA
Disc Musical Boxes will be the main
subject for this meeting why not bring
along your own musical items
Please bring your own lunch -
tea and coffee provided by us.
For information and directions.

Please contact Robert Ducat-Brown
01438 712585

Chanctonbury Ring

May 2013
Date to be advised

Teme Valley Winders

Saturday 15th June 2013
11.00 till 16.00
Please contact John Phillips on
01584 78 1118

Chanctonbury Ring

Sunday 13th October 2013
10.30 Coffee / Tea for an 11am start
Bring your own sandwiches,
school puddings provided
Please contact Ted Brown
on 01403823533

Teme Valley Winders (Christmas Meeting)

Saturday 7th December 2013
11.00 till 16.00
Please contact John Phillips on
01584 78 1118

Chanctonbury Ring (Christmas Meeting)

Sunday 30th December 2013
10.30 Coffee / Tea for an 11am start
Lunch provided
Please contact Ted Brown on
01403823533

Teme Valley Winders

Message from John Phillips

First I should explain that with the advent of the new Midlands Group I have decided that the TVW meetings should be reduced so as not to compete with them. We now propose to hold the TVW meetings in the Summer and at Christmas only leaving Spring and Autumn open for other things, not least the new Midlands Group.

We do however have thoughts of trying to arrange some local visits and the first one that comes to mind is to visit "Nicholson's" the Organ builders based in Malvern. www.nicholsonorgans.co.uk

If members are interested in such visits or would like to put forward suggestions for other suitable visits. Could they contact me or John Farmer, and to say if they are interested in visiting "Nicholson's" as unless there is sufficient interest no approach will be made.

John

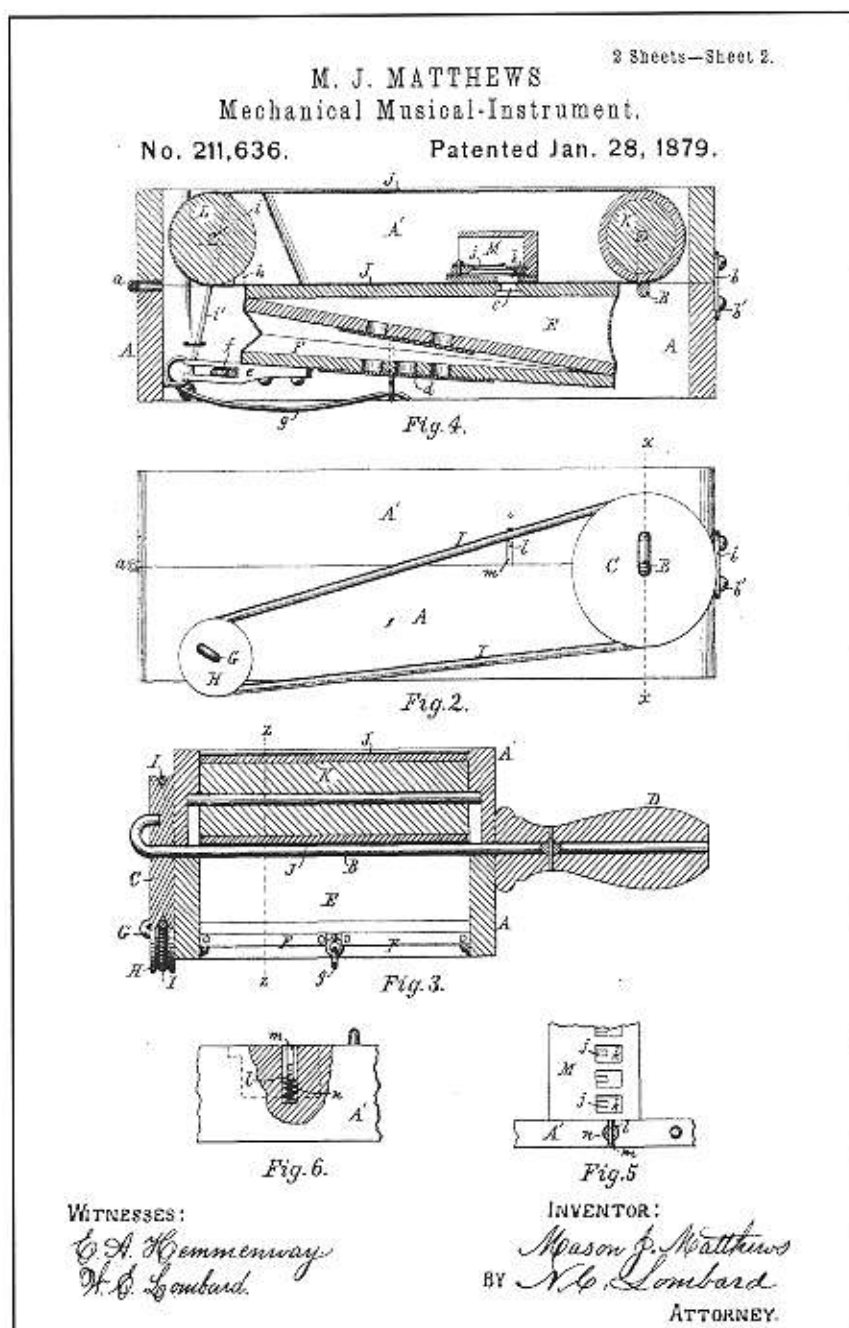
The 'Phuniphone'

(concluded from page 19)

the other end, in combination with a driving or operating shaft provided with an enlarged prolongation beyond the frame in the form of a handle; suitable wind-moving bellows, connecting with a series of wind-passages, and mechanism for operating said bellows, all mounted in one portion of the casing or frame, and a reed-chamber provided with a series of reeds and wind-passages; a pair of rolls or drums, and an endless band of perforated paper stretched around said rolls or drums, all detachably mounted in the other portion of the casing or frame, in such a manner that when the frame is closed and secured together the paper shall rest upon and cover the wind-passages leading from the bellows, and pass between such passages and the reed-chamber, and when the casing or frame is opened the endless band of paper may be readily removed and another put in its place when it is desired to change the tune.'

'My invention further consists in a novel method of operating the wind-bellows of a musical instrument by causing said bellows to be revolved about a stationary pulley, as will be further described.'

'My invention further consists in so mounting one of the removable paper-carrying rolls or drums in one portion of the divided frame or casing that when said casing is opened said roll or drum is free to be moved toward the other paper-carrying roll to loosen the endless band of paper, in combination, with a pair of springs secured to the other



portion, of the casing, and adapted to engage with the shaft of said roll or drum when the casing is closed, and force said roll away from the other paper-carrying roll and into the light of the endless band of perforated paper'. Paul Ehrlich also patented

something along these lines some five years later. Did he, perhaps, have a Phuniphone to examine? Did he correspond with Mason Matthews? Does anyone have an example?

It isn't April 1st yet either!

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News from Other Societies

Compiled by Alison Biden and Nicholas Simons

Mechanical Music, Vol 58, No.8, November/December 2012

(See also www.mbsi.org)

In this issue Steve Boehck's feature on the Regina gum dispensing machine contains for good measure a history of chewing gum. It became globally popular during WWII spread by the American GIs. Hendrik Strengers presents a short article on copyright stamps on gramophone records. Here I am indebted to him for solving a mystery from my childhood! His statement 'With the advent of music reproduction on media that required mechanical devices for its reproduction... a new form of Mechanical Copyright was required' reflects a problem which is as apt for today's electronic age as it was for the mechanical one of a century ago. Luuk Goldhoorn speculates whether François Nicole, born in 1766 was involved in the early development of the musical box. In the minutes of the Trustees meeting which took place at the time of the convention, it is noted that 72% of new members joined via the MBSI website. MBSI has experienced the first increase in member numbers for 15 years. However, the Society's facebook page was deemed not worthwhile due to insignificant traffic. There follows a report on the 63rd Convention, where Daphne Ladell accepted the MBSI Q David Bowers Literary Award on behalf of Kevin McElhone for his Disc Musical Box Book.

Mechanical Music, Vol 59, No.1, January/February 2013

(See also www.mbsi.org)

Kathleen Eric displays her (additional) skill as a humorous writer in an article about a musical pendant, dated about 1810. 'De Grote Blauwe' is a translation of the history of the famous Dutch

street organ originally printed in *Het Pierement*. The organ, dating back to 1930, has survived many disasters, and, now restored so it sounds as it did originally, regularly plays at the Haarlem Organ Museum, Netherlands. Larry Karp treats us to an array of papier maché musical box cases; Johan Goyvaerts writes about 'sur plateau' musical keys and Christian Eric describes a rare, curved 'sur plateau' snuff box by Golay. Dave Bowers invites readers to reserve their copy of his forthcoming book, on disc musical boxes, or even to sponsor its publication by AMICA.

The AMICA Bulletin, Vol 49 No 5 Sept/Oct 2012

(see also www.Amica.org)

Anyone who ever wonders what the Archivist does should note that this single magazine consisted of 80 pages, all viewed in electronic form. The magazine's main content opens with a certificate signed by the Mayor of Pittsburgh that 12th July 2012 be declared 'Automatic Musical Instrument Collectors' Association Day', in conjunction with AMICA's convention there, followed by a detailed announcement of this year's forthcoming convention, 11th – 14th July in San Francisco. Jared Leto's regular item 'Nickel Notes' features the collection of Paul Ciancia, of New Jersey. Next up is a fascinating and detailed article about Mecca Flats. The title of a tune composed by Jimmy Blythe, this tenement building on South-Side Chicago (since demolished) was the home of many blues musicians in its time, located in The Stroll district famous for its music venues and the musicians associated with it, many of whom are featured in this article. The next item is about the Footsie – nothing to do with

financial markets, but the prize awarded on an almost annual basis since 1989 for the winner of the 'Pumper Contest' (i.e. piano pedalling). The history, of which this is but the first part, is written by the current champion, John R Grant. There then follows an update of the material in AMICA's on-line research library. This is followed by the announcement that at date of writing there remained for sale fewer than 40 of the 750 copies of Q David Bowers' book *Violin-Playing Machines*, and that AMICA's next publication will be his *Encyclopedia of Disc Playing Machines*. The AMICAn in the spotlight in this issue is Randolph Herr, as featured in *The New York Times* of 7th September, 2012. He is a repairer, restorer, collector and player of pianos, who, while growing up, eschewed Elvis and the Beatles in favour of Ragtime. I love this quote: 'Recorded music is no match for hearing a piano played live ... That's why it's called recorded – the last syllable is "dead"'. Randolph also claims that his Steinway is the first video game, 'You don't sit and listen, you actually play it.' Several pages are devoted to the Annual Board reports. Peter Phillips launches into a detailed technical account of how he converted his Ampico roll recordings to play on a PianoDisc system. The regular item, 'In the News', taken from other publications, features an article from *The Music Trades* of 14th May, 1921 concerning the demise of the hand-organ man – possibly due to becoming too much of a nuisance and paying the price through tighter licensing regulations; an article from the *New York Times*, of 30th July, 2012 on the distressing loss of pianos broken up through lack of interest: between 1900 and 1930 American factories produced them in their millions; now they can't be given

away. This has led to the setting up of a website for piano adoption! Finally, in an article from the *Houston Chronicle* of 26th July, 2012, we learn of Glen Douglas, whose passion should be a warning: he virtually lives inside his organ, which he has been building over the years from reclaimed parts, and currently consists of roughly 7,000 pipes in 110 ranks, with three consoles. This is located in a dome specially constructed for its acoustic qualities, which also houses his modest living quarters. I mentioned I read this on-line: as I scrolled down the final two pages I realised I was looking at a painting of our own dear late Frank Holland, recognisable by his fez, demonstrating instruments from his collection at the original Musical Museum!

The Key Frame (Issue KF03-12)
(See also www.fops.org)

This issue starts with an obituary to Margaret Cook, who was well known as the owner of a Model 38 Ruth organ which she travelled extensively.

Musical Roots looks at Albert Ketèlbey, who in spite of his exotic sounding name was born in Birmingham. He was a talented composer, who found favour with his operettas and descriptive works, the latter being popular amongst the cinema organists of the time, and to this day. Most of us will be familiar with 'In a Persian Market', 'In a Monastery Garden' and 'Bells across the Meadows'. His musical legacy lives on in the form of cardboard books and paper rolls for organs and orchestrions.

An extensive article is presented by David Dingwall about the musical life of Arthur Prinsen, who is known to many of us as the one person who kept so many organs fed with new cardboard during the early days of preservation. He had been a professional dance band musician who found his niche as an arranger for so many organs worldwide. He also found time to build

a few organs. The 80th birthday of Josef Raffin is celebrated. His name has become synonymous with small street organs, having manufactured them for 35 years.

The Key Frame (Issue KF04-12)
(See also www.fops.org)

This issue starts with an extensive article about the Herbert Slack 87 key Gavioli. This was one of the first large organs in preservation, in the ownership of Mr Slack from 1946 until Derbyshire Council acquired it in 1983. This unfortunate move resulted in the organ being in store until 1993 when it moved to the Tramway Museum at Crich, and until recently it was hardly ever played. Still owned by the council, its custodianship has now been transferred to a local family who will maintain and exhibit it.

The regular Musical Roots looks at Euday Bowman, who wrote '12th Street Rag'. Although written in 1905 and published in 1914, this tune did not become popular until 1948 when it became the best selling record of that year, selling over 3 million. Bowman wrote other 'Street' rags, namely 6th, 10th and 11th, but none achieved such popularity as the 12th, so Bowman goes down in history as yet another 'one hit wonder'. Elsewhere are the usual reports from organ events and rallies, including the very popular end of season gathering at the Cotton Museum near Stowmarket.

Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Vol XXXI, No.3 2012
(See also www.reedsoc.org)

The main item of interest amongst the various officers' messages is the announcement of the introduction of an intermittent email newsletter to be sent to all members of ROS who sign up for it. The first 'proper' article, which is a transcription of a draft by the late Rev Keith C Jarrett of Solihull, describes the percussion action and how to maintain or repair it.

The next feature looks at the organ companies of Huntingdon, Quebec. The Huntingdon Organ Company, founded in 1884, went bust by 1888, as it was undercapitalised. It was bought up by G W Cornwall, who recruited Joseph White from the Estey Organ Company, resulting in the Cornwall organ becoming known as 'the Estey of Canada.' Alas it too collapsed, and Cornwall himself committed suicide on a train near Liverpool, England. The regular music manuscript item features two compositions by R F Raymond, Reverie and The Witches Revel. Emma Louise Hindle Ashford is the subject of the 'Composer Spotlight'. Evidently extremely talented, she was a church organist by the age of twelve, and went on to become a prolific composer. Pam Fluke then writes about 'Combination Instruments – Piano and Reed Organ,' starting with the Harmonicorde invented in 1851 by Dubain of Paris, an example of which is to be found in the Bowes Collection, Co Durham. Liszt commissioned a combination instrument from Alexandre of Paris, like a grand piano, which is now in the Vienna Museum. He was obviously impressed by it and commissioned a second, smaller one, for his bedroom. The author follows this with the description of a number of combination instruments in her own collection.

North West Player Piano Association Journal – Christmas 2012
(See also www.nwppa.freemove.co.uk)

Although only a twice yearly publication, this makes up for it by being the largest magazine of all similar societies at 64 pages. All meetings for the forthcoming year are listed, and these make a good introduction to the society as non-members are always welcome. In spite of the society's name, meeting venues range from the East Midlands up to Yorkshire and Lancashire.

Miniature piano rolls were made

by a few suppliers, not to play on any instrument, but as advertising novelties. Four are described, from the earliest Aeolian of 1901, through a Duo-Art of 1919 to a modern Mastertouch roll of 1994. Francis Planté is the featured famous musician. He was born in 1839, and as a youngster heard Chopin play. He lived right through the era of the self-playing piano, recording exclusively for Hupfeld, and went on to record on disc at the age of 89. He died at the age of 95 and can still be heard on CD's today, a true link between the 21st Century and Chopin. Elsewhere are reported the home visits where members gather to enjoy piano music and the company of like-minded friends.

Non-English journals

Het Pierement – October 2012

(See also www.draaiorgel.org)

The first feature concerns some Carl Frei organs: a 52 key one was bought in 2010 by the Museum in Breda from the well known fairground family Hoefnagels in Echt, to rectify the fact that for too long Carl Frei had been overlooked and yet he was such an important part of its history.

It is the only surviving small fair organ in Holland of four made by Carl Frei. It underwent regular maintenance during its working life, and was rebuilt by Carl Frei's son. In the 1970's the front was changed, making it less visually attractive. Three other small fair organs of Carl Frei have perished and nothing is known about them. The Giezen/Vermolen, the Dauphin/Van Eijk and the Boering Carl Frei organs are also featured in the article. This is followed by an account of '50 years of organ playing in Zaltbommel.' A note of concern pervades the next item as it ponders the uncertain future of the Helmond Organ Museum with its famous Gavioli Room. Next up are details of proposed alterations to the Speelklok Museum in Utrecht,

which include the installation of a replica church tower. Hendrik Strengers writes briefly about the Aeolian Orchestrelle. This is followed by the second instalment of Marc Veeningen's biography of his father, Henk. The remaining contents of this issue include such regular features as the Glorious Organ Days, Rediscovered Lost Archives and various short reports.

Het Pierement – January 2013

(See also www.draaiorgel.org)

The first article of this issue concerns the history of the 'Stichting Draaiorgelvrienden Assen' (Assen Friends of Cranked Organs Foundation) from 1975 – 2012, including the founding of its museum. This is followed by a six-page profile of Arthur and Paula Prinsen. Maarten van der Vlugt writes about the Weber Maestro in the Speelklok Museum, and Jacq van der Meer about Holvoet's organ 'The White (One)' and its chequered history. The Italian composer Eldo di Lazzaro is the subject of the next feature. There is a certain amount of overlap between this magazine and the Belgian one reviewed elsewhere, as both Marten Conrads and *Rumba en Cinco* form part of the 'Short Reports' section. Another 'short report' brings the reader up to date with the fate of the Helmond Organ Museum which has been reprieved for the time being thanks to the economic downturn which has put the brakes on the redevelopment of the site for a shopping centre. Other regular features include the Glorious Organ Days, Rediscovered Lost Archives, CD reviews and members' notices.

Musiques Mécaniques Vivantes – 4th Quarter, 2012

(See also www.aaimm.org)

A real-life 'Spot the Errors' feature by Jean Nimal invites the reader to look for the mistakes made by the illustrator of the Serinette in the *Encyclopédie de Diderot et d'Alembert*. Another article,

by Gerard Dabonot, features the composer Offenbach and the prolific incidence of some of his compositions on mechanical musical instruments. Besides being found on many Serinette cylinders and Swiss boxes, there are more than 35 of his compositions on Ariston discs. As if that were not enough, more have been recently arranged for the 27/29 note Raffin organ. The 2012 Festival of Les Gets had as its theme Mechanical Music and Love. Spanning nine days this was the 15th such Festival, the first being held 30 years ago. Over 450 participants attended. The next Festival, scheduled for 2014, will have as its mouth-watering theme Mechanical Music and Gastronomy. This is followed by a round-up of the recent acquisitions of the Les Gets museum, including the Charmeuse organette featured in earlier issues. In addition to an 1820 flute clock, a Herophon, a Nallino instrument and a rare mandolin piano-organ, the Museum acquired a framed set of medals presented to the Limonaire firm. The name 'Limonaire' has now passed into the French language as a generic word for carousel organ. Of further interest to linguists Yves Strobbe looks at the problems raised by terminology, such as the definition of 'Carillon,' 'Cloches' (bells), 'Glockenspiel', 'Metallophone' and 'Siderophone' and suggests some solutions. The following article by Johan Goyvaerts and Jean-Marc Lebout consists of a description of two 'Duplex' cartel boxes, apparently made by an E Flonck. Several 'experts' are agreed on one thing: no one knows about this maker. So thoroughly detailed in its analysis of these unusual boxes, it spans twelve pages. The author concludes they are the work of a veritable craftsman not short of musical talent. A short recording of one of these boxes can be seen and heard on YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vyxLUcXD810>. Many shorter articles fill the remaining

pages, including subjects such as a group visit to Saint-Fargeau in Burgundy to see and hear a collection of gramophones and musical boxes, and one originally written for *Le Figaro* about the discovery of a number of wax Phonograph recordings in the USA. A number of these are noteworthy as amongst them is the recorded voice of Otto von Bismarck, and of Helmut von Moltke – who was born, we are reminded, in 1800. Another item highlights the demise of the Les Halles carousel, a casualty of the redevelopment of the area. Finally, there is the regular compilation by Jean Nimal and Yves Strobbe of interesting items on Youtube.

Das Mechanische Musikinstrument (Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrumente), December, 2012
(See also www.musica-mechanica.de)

The first seven pages of the main content of this journal are devoted to the lecture by the Viennese musicologist, Dr Helmut Kowar, delivered at the German Society's meeting on 15th September, 2012. The subject of the lecture is P Primitivus Niemecz, who lived from 1750-1806, and his 'musical clocks and machines.' The rubric at the top of the article promises a detailed and interesting work, and the article lives up to expectation. Matthias Naeschke then writes about 'Flute clock music, an independent area of music.' The author is an organist, flute clock restorer, flute clock builder and master clockmaker; the article is partly based on a lecture he gave in 2004. The Carillon of Heiligenkreuz and its pre-history is next featured. An article based on a previous lecture, given at the annual meeting of the Bundes Deutscher Klavierbauer in June 2011, concerns the discovery of a piano thought to be Mozart's. This is followed by a technical article by Ralf Smolne in the series *Fachgerechtes Restaurieren* (loosely translated as 'Professional Restoration') featuring a small

musical box of Karrer-Hoffmann 'brought back to life.' This maker had been the subject of an article by their member (and ours!) David Snelling, published posthumously in 2001/2002, piquing Ralf's interest. Ralf also contributes the next short article, in the regular series, 'The Unusual Instrument', featuring a Swiss cylinder box with a cylinder of 165 mm and a comb with 51 teeth which plays six tunes. Again, it contains much technical detail. Two short pieces by Dr Werner König follow, one of them about 'a life with Welte.'

L'antico Organetto (Associazione Musica Meccanica Italiana), December 2012

(See also www.ammi-italia.com, or www.ammi-mm.it)

The first item in this magazine is an account of a two-day pilgrimage in Rome, on 30th November and 1st December, for migrant and itinerant people, including an audience with the Pope, and at which members of AMMI played barrel organs. An ambitious-sounding project to introduce students and interested members of the public to mechanical/self-playing musical instruments at the Villa Silvia in Lizzano is featured; this is a collaboration between AMMI and the State Conservatory of Music, Bruno Maderna, Cesena. There follows a two-page illustrated article about the piano melodico of poet Giovanni Pascoli, who was inspired by the instrument's unique characteristics, and its rendering of Gounod's *Ave Maria*. Next up is an item entitled 'The Automusicograph of Angelo Barbieri', a machine invented in the early 1900's with which to write music as it was performed on the piano, obviating the need to write down the music manually (an exercise to which the priest Barbieri was particularly averse.) Although The Music Typewriter Co Ltd was registered to go into production of these devices, the author has found traces of only two examples, one owned by the composer Mascagni, the other Barbieri's own. Anyone

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.

3141 National Trust – Overbecks
Devon

1924 re-join Mark James, Herts

3142 Sina Hildebrand Germany

3143 David Toplas Surrey

3144 Damon O'Donoghue
Australia

3145 Robert Petoine Canada

3146 David Burlinson London

3147 Jerry Maler U.S.A.

3148 Mrs.Claire S.Petrie Surrey

2701 re-join Bob Porter Bristol

3149 Douglas M.Wiggins U.S.A.

3150 Andrew Truman U.S.A.

3151 Andrew J.McCallum Devon

3152 Philip Chandler Kent

Now that there are 5 Local Area groups I hope that even more members will come along and join in. Most are informal meetings and give a good chance to ask questions and have a look at instruments.

having further knowledge of these or any other examples, Georgio Frabegoli would love to hear from

you! The subject of the next item is the restoration of an organ clock, having 61 pipes and two registers, which although found in Italy might have originally been German, French or English. In an article entitled 'The Gramophone' Franco Costi shares with us some of his recent bargains found in the flea market.

Nieuwsbrief from MechaMusica (Belgian Society). December, 2012
(See also www.mechamusica.be)

'A picture's worth a thousand words' goes the saying. Let's hope there's some truth in it, as this magazine has many lovely colour photographs of various organs, but the text is difficult to understand! What I *can* tell you is that there is an account of the first (cranked) Organ Festival of Heist an Zee which took place one hot sunny day last summer (was there one?), a photograph of some very cute-looking St Bernard dogs in front of an organ during the St Bernard Festival in Newport (Nieuwport), and an account of yet another event in Antwerp. People feature in the photos accompanying the next article, which brings our Belgian cousins up to date with developments in the European Project. There is little or no text accompanying the photographs of the organ gathering in Dijon last year. Next we move to the Hooghuis Festival in Geraardsbergen where there was also a symposium entitled 'From the Musical Box to the Hooghuis.' There follows a feature on Martin Conrads, who in his forties, is an organ restorer and builder of international renown, and still finds time to play his organ in the town of Zaltbommel on Saturdays. The second organ concert of the year to be held in the Speelklok museum was greeted with the announcement that the museum was undergoing a radical facelift. One of the tunes played was *Rumba en Cinco* (Rumba in Five), written in 5/4 time by Malando in 1962, and inspired by the well-known Dave Brubeck piece *Take Five*, also written in 5/4

– all as explained in the following article. Tom Meijer has arranged it for the Mortier in the Speelklok Museum, and it will be available on a forthcoming CD. Another piece written in 5/4 time, *Poco Cinco*, played on the Bursens Sint Bernard organ, is already available on a CD entitled *Bernardissimo*. A small hand cranked organ played a part in promoting the James Bond film, *Skyfall*, featuring briefly in the Coca Cola sponsored trailer on the internet, which has subsequently become a huge 'hit': a lot of column inches were expended on a very brief appearance! Finally the Belgian Society arranged a visit to three organ locations last November – lots more beautiful illustrations, with detailed descriptions in the text.

Society Auction Catalogue on the Internet

Details of some lots available at the Society Auction, which is held after the AGM may be viewed on the Auction page of the web site www.mbsgb.org.uk. If you have items to sell, please send details and photographs to robert.ducat-brown@virgin.net for inclusion in the online catalogue. Photographs will be used at the discretion of the Web Master. This should increase interest in your lots and allow members to see what will be for sale.

The Mechanical Music Library, International, Inc.

Since ephemera tends to be vulnerable to disposal by those whose interests lie elsewhere, something that can easily happen even today when a collector passes on, a new library project has been set up in Connecticut, USA, to preserve items on a permanent basis for future generations. The purpose, as stated in its Certificate of Incorporation, is: "To collect and make available for reference or dissemination the following items pertaining to mechanical music and mechanical musical instruments: books, pamphlets, journals, audio tapes, video tapes, CDs, DVDs, posters, photographs, patents, postcards, correspondence, catalogs (sic) and other ephemera". It is a non-profit corporation with directors Q David Bowers (Hon Chairman), William H Egerton (President) and Ann S Egerton (Secretary-Treasurer). Officers and Directors are not compensated.

Most library materials are paper, and the library will be placing such items in acid-free and anti-microbial folders and stored at as close as possible to 60 degrees Fahrenheit and 30% relative humidity, which are ideal conditions for the long-term storage of paper. A web site

has been created and can be seen at www.mechanicalmusiclibrary.com; the catalogue is viewable and searchable by keyword. There is at present no charge for this, though eventually there may be a modest charge for full use of the facility.

The collection has been formed around a generous donation by Bill and Ann Egerton of more than a thousand items from their collection and augmented by the extensive library of the Musical Box Society International which is on loan to the new library. Nearly two thousand items have so far been scanned and catalogued.

The library is seeking donations of all sorts to add to the collection – cash to acquire materials etc and material itself, especially original items to replace items they only have as copies. It has issued a wants list to complete runs of journals etc.

The library can be contacted by phone (prefix 001 from UK) on 203-857-0240, by mail to Mechanical Music Library, International, Inc., P O Box 1007, Darien, CT 06820, USA or through its web site www.mechanicalmusiclibrary.com.

Letters to the Editor

From Damon O'Donoghue, Daylesford, Australia

Sir,

As I was writing my shopping list in the lead-up to Christmas, I added a name I normally skip: mine! After a little searching, I settled on a couple of books as I hadn't added to my reference library for quite some time. The two books I chose were "The Nicole Factor" (by Paul Bellamy, Arthur Cunliffe and Roy Ison) and "The Disc Musical Box" (by Kevin McElhone).

I was delighted when they both arrived in just eight days, in time for Christmas, and well packed with not a mark on them. As for the books themselves, what a pair of beauties -- production and content are first class and as for the glossy pages -- ahh, what a lovely smell (yes, I'm a secret book sniffer. Am I alone in this?) (*No! - Ed*). The discs that accompany each book are a bonus indeed.

Anyhow, I got to thinking just how wonderful real books are and how, in this modern world of the Internet and e-books, they may one day largely disappear as it's hard to compete with the convenience and economy of a computer. (I tried smelling my old keyboard -- what a mistake. One advantage that it's safe.)

Authors such as these have my total admiration and I for one will continue to support them by buying their work. I hope others do likewise.

(First printed on the Mechanical Music Digest on the Internet - Ed)

From Alison Biden:

Dear Sir,

Thank you for publishing my piece about Benjamin Franklin's invention, the glass (H)armonica. I appreciate its relevance to mechanical music is debatable, and it probably would not pass at least some definitions, if not all. Notwithstanding, apparently one reader found it interesting, telephoning me at 8.40 a.m. on the day he received his copy to inform me that Mozart had composed specifically for this instrument (Adagio for Glass Harmonica, opus KV617.) The same member subsequently telephoned just before Christmas to alert me to a 45-minute programme being broadcast by BBC Radio 3 on the subject of Franklin's invention, which turned out to be a repeat of a broadcast from earlier in 2012. From this I learned that there is an original example in the Horniman Museum, London, SE23.

Yours sincerely
Alison Biden

And another from Alison Biden

I may have been a bit premature with the letter on the glass (H)armonica. Last night I just happened to catch the last few minutes of a programme broadcast on BBC 1 tv, 7.00 - 7.30 GMT (a programme I don't normally watch), and they had someone actually playing a glass harmonica. As I only got the end of the programme, I don't know who the musician was, (and I can't get the 'replay' facility in France), but he said that over 400 pieces of music had been composed specifically for this instrument in all.

I was amazed that it had reached mainstream TV!

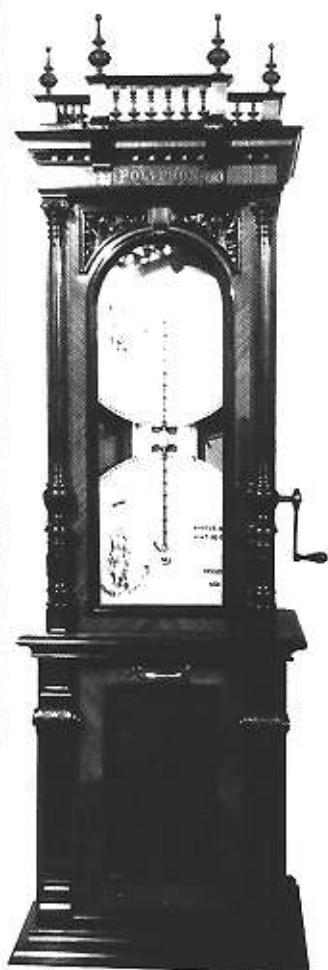
Sincerely
Alison

From Roy Evett

An Epitaph to Arno

I find it hard to comprehend
That I have lost my
long time friend
No longer to share a pint of beer
In those English pubs
he found so dear
Those late hours with
the whisky glass
Are now just memories of the past
Governor wheels and
endless screws
Springs and ratchets,
comb teeth too
Discs and gantries, Geneva stops
Dampers making clicks and pops
Cylinders with bent
and broken pins
How does he know
where to begin?
Just give him time to prepare
Whatever's broken,
he would repair
And soon he'd give
your ears a treat
With beautiful music,
so mellow, so sweet
His workshop is so silent now
Gone is that melodious row
But up amongst the star wheels
and the moon
He's sure to find
the angels' harps to tune

*(See Obituary for
Arno van der Heijden
on page 18 - Ed)*



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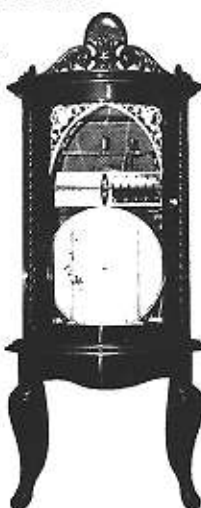
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kevin_mcelhone@btinternet.com 01530 726768 Please note underscore between names.

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