www.mbsgb.org.uk Volume 27 Number 7 Autumn 2016

The Music Box

An International Journal of Mechanical Music

In this issue

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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Cover photo: A bell comb of six teeth for six saucer bells played by three Chinese figures in the form of singing mandarins who nod their heads while striking their bells; in an Orchestral Cylinder Musical Box made by B A Bremond of Geneva in 1874; shown at this year's Winchester Organ Festival and reported on page 269.

Published on behalf of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain by the Short Publishing Company Ltd, and printed by Flo-Print Colour Ltd www.floprint.co.uk

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ISSN 0027-4275

Officers of the MBSGB and their duties

President: Alison Biden
St Giles Hilltop, Northbrook Close, Winchester SO23 0JR
Tel: 01962 861350 ali_biden@hotmail.com

US Vice-President: Robert Yates
901 Glenshaw Ave, Glenshaw, Pennsylvania PA15116 USA

Treasurer & Subscriptions Secretary: John Farmer
8 The Lea, Kidderminster, Worcs DY11 6JY
Tel: 01562 741108 john@musicanic.com
(to whom all enquiries about subscriptions should be addressed)

Membership Secretary: Kevin McElhone
Tel: 01536 726759 kevin_mcelhone@btinternet.com
(to whom all applications and enquiries about new membership should be addressed)

Correspondence Secretary:
Nicholas Simons
Tel: 01332 760576 njasmbs@btinternet.com
(to whom all correspondence should be sent)

Meetings Secretary: Position vacant.
Please consult another Committee member for details of who to contact regarding meetings enquiries.

Recording Secretary: David Worrall MBE
Tel: 01962 882269 worrall@ercall87.freeserve.co.uk

Editor: (Non-committee Member)
Richard Mendelsohn
18 Quarry Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 0JG
Tel: 01962 855068 richardmendelsohn@btinternet.com

Archivist: Alison Biden
Tel: 01962 861350 ali_biden@hotmail.com

Advertising Secretary: Mark Singleton
preesallpremier@aol.com

Auction Organiser: John Ward,
johnlawrenceward@btinternet.com

Webmaster: John Farmer
Tel: 01562 741108 john@musicanic.com

Member: Nicholas Newble
nicholas@newble.co.uk

Member: David O'Connor
davideoconnor@aol

Registrar (Non-committee Member): Arthur Cunliffe
adcunliffe@btinternet.com

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Editorial

In this edition we publish more technical details than we usually do. Gordon Bartlet explains fully how he restored the Dorset Museum Barrel Organ. There are many close-up pictures of the mechanisms of this fascinating instrument to show how he performed this impressive work. This is useful background for anyone planning similar restorations. And if this is not enough we have included a fully illustrated translation of Jean-Marc Lebout's restoration story of a musical box with automaton built by B A Brémond. I feel sure you will enjoy time poring over the photographs to properly understand how this complicated instrument works. But if you are of a more theoretical bent then Niko Wiegman's mathematical analysis of how long and short pins should be configured in a single-comb forte piano musical box will ensure you enjoy recalling the maths studies from your youth.

This was the second year of the Winchester Organ Festival and our report on it highlights that this year there was a special exhibition of musical boxes on display in the Undercroft. One of the really interesting exhibits is the cover feature of this issue.

Members will also want to catch up on the important change in the Society's legal status which is recorded in the Minutes of the EGM.

Richard Mendelsohn

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Deadlines for copy for future editions are:

1st October 2016

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The Dorset County Museum Barrel Organ - Part Two

by Gordon Bartlet

The story so far: Since moving to Dorset around 25 years ago Gordon had admired an old barrel organ in the Dorset County Museum. It struck him as a poor relation compared with the splendour of its surroundings. It appeared to be in basically original condition and typical of the small-to-medium-sized organs made between the late 18th and mid 19th centuries by dozens of British makers located mostly in London. Gordon found out about its origins, and described them in some detail in the last edition, The Music Box Vol 27 No 6. In Part 2 here Gordon deals with the technical aspects and the measures taken to return the organ to playing condition.

The organ in its original location

The Organ

Firstly the case: its dimensions are 710mm (2ft 4in) wide by 740mm (2ft 5in) tall excluding the arched centre section of its false front 150mm (6in) by 500mm (1ft 8in) deep. It stands on a cabinet 730mm (2ft 5in) wide by 630mm (2ft 1in) tall. The removable front with dummy pipes is of inferior manufacture to the rest of the case, which is mahogany with some delicate inlay. The John Gray order refers to the organ being supplied 'without case' (see Part 1, Fig 3). This must have referred only to the front removable portion. Other parts are integral with the workings, especially the right-hand side, which contains the crankshaft front bearing and the barrel latching device. The 1908 Puddletown Church Guide records that the front of the 'old barrel organ' had been made in the village and adapted as a covering for the small manual organ placed in the church in 1852. Thus the present front is either original having been reunited with the organ at some time, or perhaps it is another one also locally made.

Despite having some large wooden components, the organ is a piece of precision engineering, with pins and bridges less than 1.5 mm thick registering with keys, also less than 1.5 mm thick. Correct registration must be maintained across a barrel and key frame more than 500mm wide. We are left with enormous respect for the master craftsmen who were able to work with wood to such close tolerances. Materials were selected that would remain stable over many decades involving many changes in temperature and humidity. However, events were to prove that being bumped along over rough Dorset country roads, together with ill-advised attention by well-intentioned amateur repairers, has resulted in some inherent problems which came to light during the renovation.

The brass crankshaft (Fig 12) operates the bellows assembly, which consists of a pair of rocking-type (or butterfly) single-acting feeders and reservoir, via a wooden connecting rod. Air pressure in the reservoir is controlled at 25.4mm (1in) water gauge by a lead weight weighing 2.18kg (4.8lb). The crankshaft incorporates a worm which meshes with a wooden gear wheel with 51 teeth on the end of each barrel. The barrels are 540mm (1ft 9in) long by 150mm (6in) diameter.

As the organ has secure storage for only three barrels, one in the playing position and two in the cabinet underneath, the two barrels must always live elsewhere, possibly on the floor. The 1908 offer of

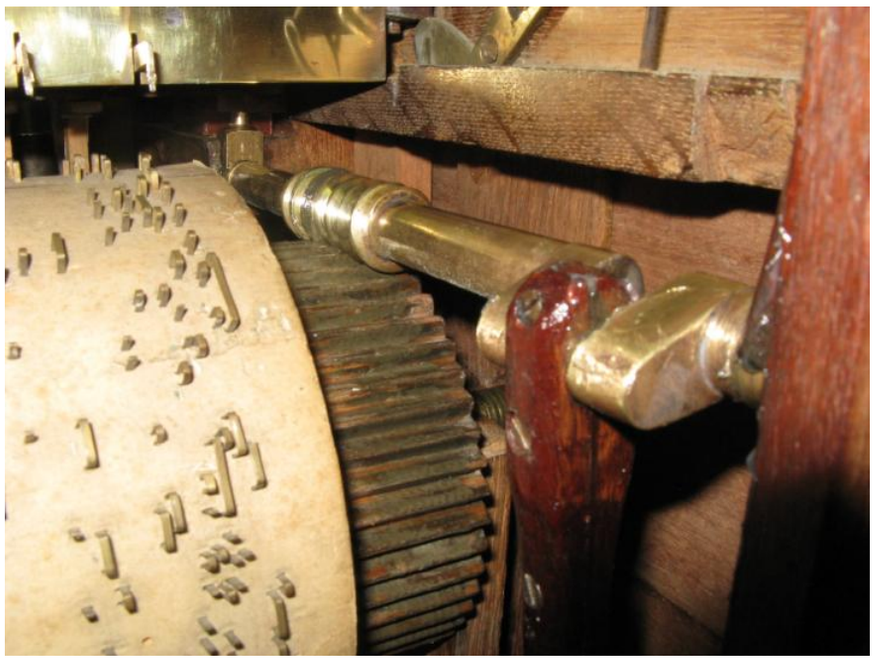

Figure 12 Brass crankshaft, showing the worm driving the wooden barrel gear, and the top of the wooden connecting rod which operates the feeders below.

the organ back to Bere Regis states that '... some of the tunes are done for' (see Part 1, Fig 7). Only barrels 1, 2 and 5 survive, so perhaps at some time barrels 3 and 4 were not in proper storage and had come to grief.

Barrels 2 and 5 can be moved laterally to register each of the ten tunes with the keys, and located by notches on a brass peg fixed to each barrel carrier. There is the usual arrangement of a vertical knife acting on these notches plus a horizontal bolt which latches the barrel in place and raises the key frame (Figs 13, 14 and 15).

The keys appear to be evenly spaced at around 25.4mm (1in) but there is, oddly, a significant variation in pitch from 23.92mm (0.941in) to 25.68mm (1.011in), the average being 24.88mm (0.978in). This variation has not occurred by accident at some later repair, as it is also present on the location of the keys embossed in pencil on barrel 5.

In the case of barrel 1 the peg on the barrel carrier is replaced by a lead screw forming an extension to the axis of the barrel (Fig 16). This advances the barrel as it rotates, giving continuous play. The pitch of this lead screw does not equate to any Imperial standard, but appears to be only 2mm. This compares with the notches on the 'one-rotation-per tune' barrels of 2.56mm (0.101in) pitch (Fig 16 lower), which results in the pins and bridges in barrel 1 being somewhat crowded.

The four ranks of pipes (Fig 17) are operated by stops on the left of the case:

1. Stopped, wooden, 8ft pitch.
2. Open, metal, playing one octave higher than 1 ('principal')
3. Open, metal, 12th
4. Open, metal, 15th

The 21 keys play pipes tuned to the following ascending pitch on ranks one, two, and four. The numbers indicate the location of the pipes, starting on the left. This shows the lowest pipe G at the far right next to low A with the next pipe B at the far left, and the other pipes following on in sequence. Tunes can be played in the major keys of C, G, or D with this tuning scale.

G	A	B	C	D	E	F	F#	G	A	B
21	20	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
C	C#	D	E	F	F#	G	A	B	C	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	

The Music

The music on each of the three surviving barrels is very different in character.

Fig 13 Barrel latching device. Horizontal bolts are pulled forward to raise the key frame, allowing a vertical knife to be raised so freeing the brass peg.

Fig 14 The knife is pushed down into the notch in the brass peg (tune six selected). The bolt is pushed back to secure the knife and the lower key frame.

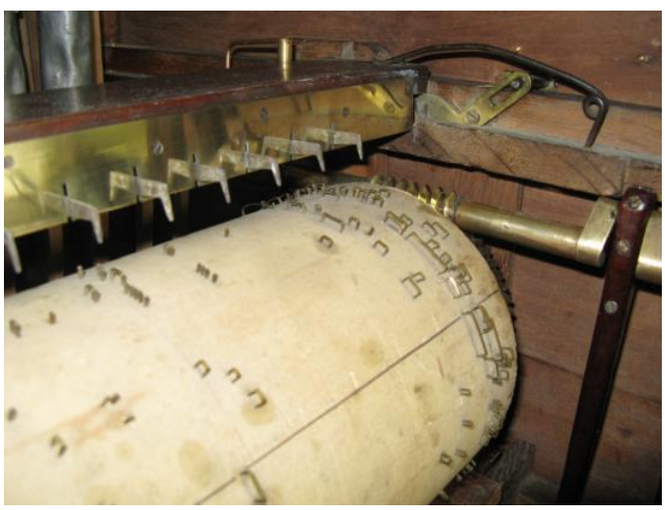

Fig 15 The key frame raised by a brass cam operated from a horizontal bolt on the end of the cabinet ready to index the barrel sideways.

Fig 16. Barrel 1 (top) with threaded peg forming extension to barrel axis. Barrel 2 (below) with wider spaced notches on barrel carrier peg.

Fig 17 The four ranks of pipes; stopped wooden ones on the left and three ranks of open metal ones. The key frame is on the right.

The tune sheets on the organ and barrel carrier (see Part 1, Figs 4 and 5) are very indistinct, even with the use of ultra-violet light. In 1985, determined attempts had been made by Mr Stanley Athill to identify the tunes when the organ was not in playing condition, as noted in Part 1. Mr Athill recorded that '… the ultimate verification of the tunes could only be possible by playing the organ, which after these many years is not practicable without virtually rebuilding the instrument.' We can now refine, and in some cases correct, the tunes that were previously identified.

Barrel 1 is the barrel which is spirally pinned for continuous playing, and is dedicated to music by Handel:

Coronation Anthem – part of the anthem *Zadok the Priest*.

Water Music – opening bars of of the second movement.

Harmonious Blacksmith – from the harpsichord suite.

As one rotation of the barrel, played at a comfortable speed, lasts for around 35 seconds, and with just over four rotations required to play the *Coronation Anthem,* there is clearly only room for short excerpts. Now that Barrel 1 is playing again, it has been possible to correct a misconception in previous attempts to identify the tunes from the tune sheets. The term *4 Rounds* appears between the *Coronation Anthem* and the *Water Music*. Four short country airs or dance tunes were expected, and in fact Mr Athill suggested that 'it is possible that Sellinger's Round could be one of these', but on playing the organ none appear. It was then realised that *4 Rounds* indicates that four rotations of the barrel are required to complete the first tune. This may bring to mind the confusion created in the *Four Candles* TV sketch performed by the *Two Ronnies*. Actually the first tune occupies four and a quarter rotations, the next three, and the final tune two and three quarters, giving a total of ten. Due to the 2mm pitch of the lead screw, there are then more than two blank rotations of the barrel before the pins start to foul the next keys in line.

Why was better use not made of the space available on the barrel? With the adoption of a lead screw with such a fine pitch there was the opportunity to pin music lasting twelve rotations. Alternatively a coarser pitch might have been used, making the pins less crowded. The reasoning for this will never be known. The closely-spaced pins would no doubt have performed satisfactorily on a new machine with only minimum wear on the keys, but with worn keys having a variety of profiles and a very ambitious arrangement with plenty of trills and grace notes, it has been difficult to get Barrel 1 to play satisfactorily.

This is unfortunate as the musical embellishments are representative of how music might have been performed in the first part of the 19th century. Without evidence preserved in machines like this barrel organ, such knowledge would be lost for ever.

Barrel 2:

1. *Duke of Gloucester's* [sic] *March*
2. *New Cold* ----- (indistinct)
3. *The Dorsetshire March*
4. *The Ballista* (indistinct)
5. *How Cheerful Along Ye* ----(indistinct)
6. *Surrey (The Lord My Pasture)*
7. *The Easter Hymn (Christ the Lord is Risen Today).*
8. *Psalm 104* or *Hanover* (*O Worship the King*).
9. *Psalm 100* (*The Old 100th*) (*All People that on Earth do Dwell*).
10. *Psalm 84* (*How Lovely is Your Dwelling Place*).

Like Barrel 1, the tunes on Barrel 2 have plenty of trills, grace notes, demi-semi-quavers, and other embellishments. We are therefore provided with further

evidence as to how music was performed in the early 19th century. The arranger who pinned the five religious tunes will have been aware that he was pinning music that would be appreciated in a sophisticated domestic environment rather than music to accompany singing in church.

Barrel 3: (no longer in existence)

1. *Hope thou* ----- (indistinct)
2. *Lovely Nymph*
3. *Sir Charles* (*Tisby?*) Minuet
4. *Lady Denby's Minuet*
5. *Martin's Minuet*
6. *Those Soft Flowing*
7. *Slings* (?Flings?) *by a* ------
8. *Marionette*
9. *Captain Glove*
10. *Lady Betty* ------

Barrel 4: (no longer in existence)

1. *The Charms of Ye Fair*
2. *The Grove*
3. *Les Plaisirs des Dames*
4. *Robinson Cruso* (sic) (or *Orison*?)
5. *Guild Hall Squabble*
6. *La Margaretta*
7. *Spa* (?) *Allemande*
8. *The Camp*
9. *Air Balloon*
10. *Jeptha Chorus*

Tune 3 reinforces the view that this barrel was never intended for playing in church.

Barrel 5.

1. *La* (?query *Lauds; Sarum Melody*)
2. *Di..*? (unclear)
3. *Miles Lane* (*All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*)
4. *Arlington* (*Am I a Soldier of the Cross?*)
5. *Shirland* (in Methodist Hymnal) (*I Love Thy Kingdom Lord*)
6. *Portuguese Hymn* (*Adeste Fideles; O Come All Ye Faithful*)
7. *Irish*
8. *Abingdon*
9. *Evening Hymn* (*Glory Be To Thee O Lord*)
10. *Lord Mornington Chant*

The music on Barrel 5 is in contrast to those on Barrels 1 and 2 (Fig 18). It is much more suited to accompany singing, providing the melody plus simple harmony. With many long bridges, Barrel 5 is more robust than Barrels 1 and 2. There are plenty of chords and sustained notes, which create a greater demand for wind.

An experienced barrel organist would have been aware that he could run out of wind in the middle of a tune if he was too liberal with the number of stops in use.

Fig 18 Comparison of music styles as pinned on the barrels. It is mainly secular music on Barrel 2 (left). More sustained notes to accompany singing in church are on Barrel 5 (right).

The Renovation

It was resolved that the renovation would be sufficient to get the organ back into basic playing condition, but without a full restoration, which would be very expensive. It would involve many new pipes to replace those badly damaged plus a new set of keys to replace the present mixture of different profiles and thicknesses (Fig 19). Nothing would be done that might preclude a full restoration in the future. The bellows assembly would need to be overhauled to improve performance, allowing all four

Acknowledgements
Research into this organ would not have been possible without access to genealogy records and the help of numerous organisations and individuals. These include the British Institute of Organ Studies Special Collections at the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham, especially their archivist, Anne George; the Rev. Sarah Hillman, vicar of Puddletown and Mr David Illingworth of Puddletown; Mr John England and Mr John Pitfield, village historians from Bere Regis; the always-helpful staff at the Dorset History Centre; Mr Roger Peers, formerly Museum Curator; Dr Jon Murden, Director of the Dorset County Museum, who gave free access to investigate and dismantle the organ with the help of Mr David Ashford, volunteer assistant; Mr Reginald Saville historian, genealogist and nonagenarian of Langton Matravers, with his wonderful memory and encyclopaedic knowledge of the Bartlett family; Janet Bateson, Secretary

stops to be brought into use without the present feeders struggling to keep up. Joints in the case had sprung, and opened up over the years. It was necessary to clamp and glue these back into position. This was done voluntarily by Mr Peter Gwillim, cabinet-maker from the Isle of Portland. With the case now fit for travel to a workshop, attention could be paid by an experienced organ restorer to numerous defects in the key frame, wind chest and pipes.

The professional organ builder, Mr John Budgen, was formerly joint MD of Bishop and Son, one of the oldest and most respected organ builders in the country. John is semi-retired but still active in organ restoration. He has been responsible for many barrel organ restorations. For a sum far below any commercial figure Mr Budgen offered to bring the organ back to playing condition. When it was taken to his workshop in February 2015, a number of unexpected challenges were revealed. Many of the metal pipes were more damaged than originally thought, with evidence of misguided amateur repairs carried out in the past, including distortion caused by too vigorous gluing into the wind chest. As the organ could be made to play quite well in registers one, two and three it was decided that the very delicate pipes beyond repair in register four would not be replaced. The wind chest was opened up, and some defective pallet return springs were replaced. The sliders controlling air to each rank of pipes were also repaired and lubricated.

On its return from Mr Budgen's workshop further adjustments were made to the organ's mechanics. At some time in the distant past the organ must have suffered a major incident, resulting in a bent crankshaft (Fig 20) plus a longstanding repair to a broken winding handle. The crankshaft was straightened by annealing and then gently bending it. Final alignment was achieved by turning the tail end on a lathe and rebushing with an oversize bush (Fig 21). This also took care of excessive play in the rear bearing. The wooden connecting rod serving the feeders was weak, and had been repaired at some time with a brass-covered steel tube, which had probably started life as a stair rod. A replica connecting rod was made. Packing was discreetly added to the barrel carriers to compensate for wear, and to keep the barrels properly aligned during play. The tedious task of replacing missing, bent or unstable pins and bridges was shared between Mr Budgen and the author (Fig 22), and woodworm in the barrels was treated.

It is nice to record that all restoration work has been by volunteer effort and private subscription, with no cost to the Museum. We now have the opportunity to see and hear an early 19th century domestic barrel organ in basically original condition playing music in the fashion of the age.

A Brief Video

Like any musical instrument or machine, the reason for a barrel organ's existence is the music it plays. To illustrate the way in which the Museum's barrel organ performs, and to show the interaction between the barrel pins and the keys, a five-minute video can be accessed by entering the following link in your internet browser:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQVs1vITXQU

Please take care over the numerical 1 followed by the upper case I.

of the Hayward History Centre, covering the Lingfield era; Mr Frank Ferris of Lingfield with his personal memories of Agnes Debenham; Mr Peter Gwillim for work on the organ case; Mr John Budgen for his expert help in restoring the pipes and wind chest; And my friend and barrel organ expert Ian Alderman for his help and encouragement throughout this project. My apologies to those who I might have missed.

References

Acknowledgement should also be made to the following books on the subject to which reference was frequently made during the course of the project:

Ord-Hume, Barrel Organ, The Story of the Mechanical Organ and How to Restore It, 1978, George Allen & Unwin.

Langwill, L G, & Boston, Canon Noel, Church & Chamber Barrel Organs., Edinburgh, Langwill& Boston, 1967 & 1970.

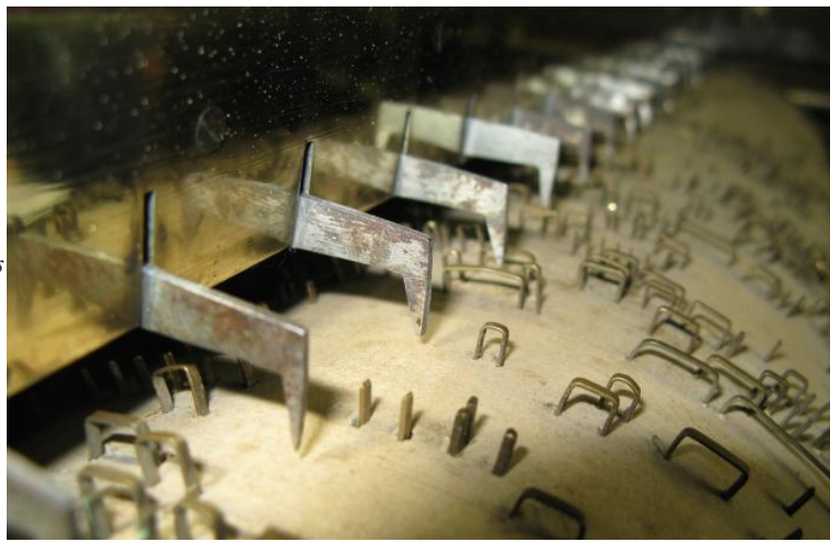

Fig 19 The keys are lowered to make contact with the pins and bridges

Fig 20 Clocking the runout on the bent crankshaft

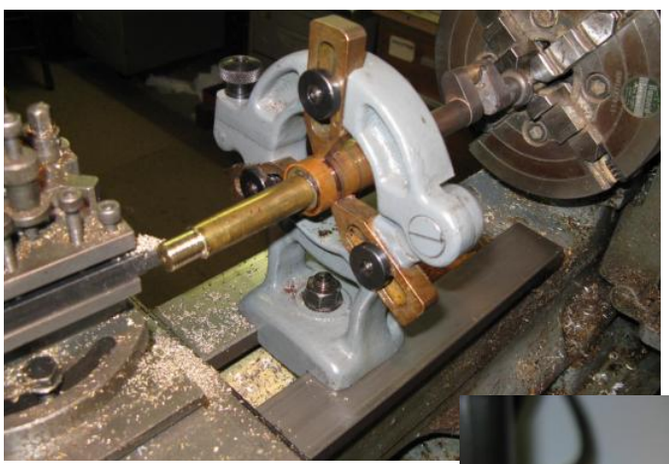

Fig 21 Machining the end of the crankshaft to take an oversized bush

Fig 22 Inserting a replacement bridge using a depthing device

A Musical Box with Automaton by Baptiste-Antoine Brémond

by Jean-Marc Lebout
translated by Alison Biden

'I have only ever seen this rare combination of musical box and automaton twice before: once at the time of the sale of the Jacques Courtois collection held at Galerie de Chartres in December 2014, and then a little later at Michel Bourgoz's.' (J-M Lebout)

The developments in musical box manufacture only gradually brought about changes in the form of musical additions, which we call accompaniments. At first they were in the shape of a drum and/or bells hidden under the bedplate, but would eventually become visible behind it. Castanets and vox celeste would more or less successfully complete the musical variety. If the arrangement on the cylinder takes account of the presence of accompaniments, and if a precise adjustment of all the orchestral elements is achieved, then a good balance of sound can be obtained and the end result can be very musical.

The accompaniments are played by means of pins on the cylinder and a non-musical tooth of the comb serves to transmit the information so that a hammer hits a bell, a drum, or the castanets. A line of pins is needed on the cylinder for each available hammer.

The presence of an automaton participating directly in the music played, is very rare in the history of the musical box. It does not move the comb teeth, but participates in the playing of the accompaniment, usually bells. Its functioning is programmed on the cylinder, and so the automaton is an intermediary element, an additional mechanical complication, but not required for the execution of the actual musical programme pinned on the cylinder.

Fig 1 General view of the automaton box by Baptiste-Antoine Brémond

I wish to make two important points here:

1) The musical box in general, and certainly the cartel that I am going to describe here are far removed from the notion of a character-automaton which plays a non-mechanical

Fig 1a The box attributed to Langdorff and sold at the Galerie de Chartres. Between the two combs can be seen four of the five keys of the 'voix celeste type' which activate the automaton, according to Denis Lambotte in the catalogue description.

instrument, like Jaquet-Droz's *Organ Player* in the Neuchâtel Museum, or Kinzing-Roentgen's *Dulcimer Player* in the Musée des Arts et Métiers in Paris. In both these cases, it's a mechanism incorporated in the body of the character, and which is therefore totally distinct from the musical instrument, which produces the tune: by activating the ten fingers of the Jaquet-Droz automaton, or the two sticks held by Kinzing's automaton.

Fig 2 The movement removed from its frame and the two decorative elements

2) I don't consider the little dancing dolls frequently found in station boxes or the big Parisian automata or a carousel decorating a cartel to be musical automata, but placed there only as a simple visual animation. In the same way, the cartels with visible bells struck by fixed characters of which only the arms move, cannot be considered as automata, the generally accepted definition of which implies at least four movements.

General Description

1 The Case

The case is of a totally unusual appearance. It is placed in a pretty box (perhaps for jewellery?) with concave sides decorated with a line of foliage, in bas-relief on the front, and in carved relief on the back.

The base and the lid are surrounded by a garland of carved pearls. The inside panel of the lid has been taken off, only keeping the frame which allows the automaton to emerge. This frame is screwed to the body of the case, and two decorative elements surround the automaton to reclose the opening.

The movement is therefore not visible. This curious presentation places this piece half-way between a musical box and a fine decorative object. It should be noted that the original hinges of the lid and the lock of the box have been kept, and even though they have become useless the casing could resume its original use.

Jean Marc will be joining us at the Autumn meeting to demonstrate some of the unusual items from his collection, including the subject of this article.

2 The Movement

The movement has a repertoire of four airs pinned on a cylinder 11.7cm in length and 5cm in diameter. It carries the initials *BAB* on the top of the governor assembly. The attribution to Baptiste-Antoine Brémond is therefore more than likely. This is borne out by the existence of a corner of a tune sheet, miraculously preserved, which also points to this maker. The musical part is formed of two combs each of 27 teeth, making a simple scale. The bedplate is grooved and gilded cast iron. It is screwed to two blocks of wood which sit on the floor of the box. The serial number #10146 is engraved on the cylinder great wheel. It is keywound, because the particular way it is mounted in the box and the limited size of the case itself do not allow for a lever. Even though the barrel bridges are screwed through the underside, there is still no instant stop. This cartel, which I can date to around 1868–1869, is on the cusp between the third and fourth epoch.

Fig 3 The mark 'BAB' which is found only on the brass plate which supports the automaton and the mechanical elements which activate it.

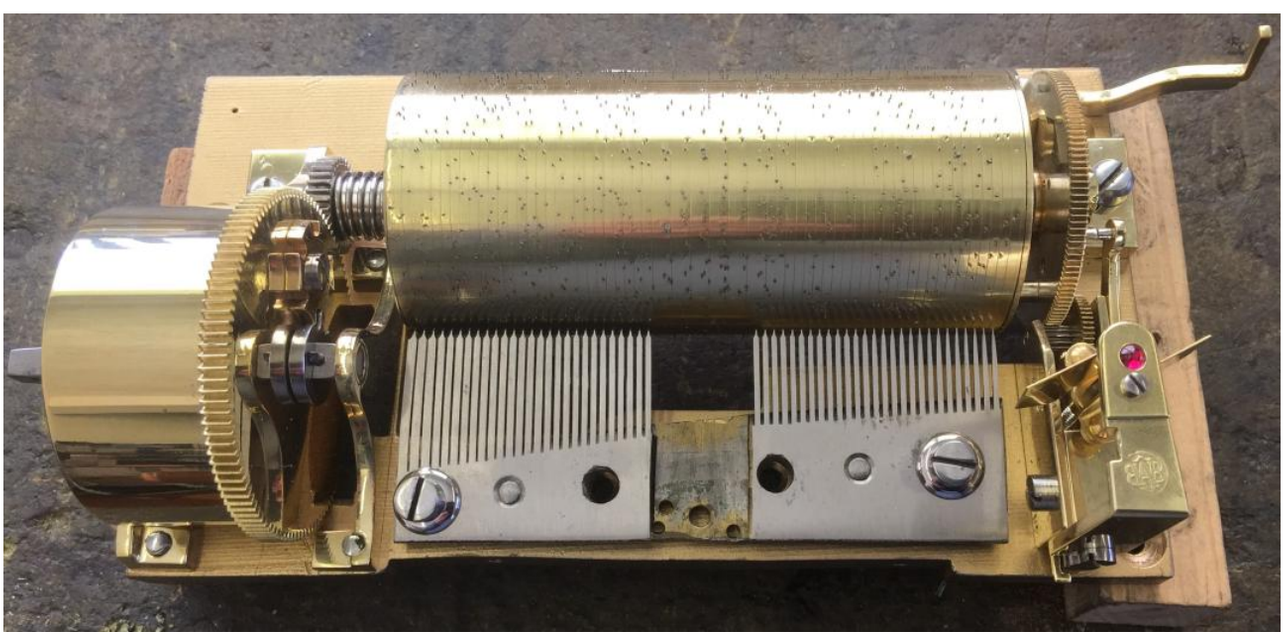

Fig 4 View of the movement removed from the case and disconnected from the automaton elements

Author's note: The third and fourth epoch: the collector, the late Etienne Blyelle, had sequenced the evolution of music boxes as four different periods. According to his system of classification the third period is around 1860 to 1880 and the fourth from 1880 to 1900.

3 The Automaton

This rises above the movement and rests on a brass plate 15cm by 9cm. The automaton is located on the top of the plate and all the linkage is fixed underneath. The number 3113 is visible on the upper surface of the plate. As it is different from the movement's serial number, I wondered if this creation was the work of another mechanic.

I don't have any proof, but the finding of a similar mechanism from another maker could support this hypothesis. Two different movements must be identified, which are produced differently:

1) The movement of the automaton's head, which goes from left to right and up and down, brings it to life. It is a special visual characteristic created by Brémond.

2) The musical playing by the automaton: he strikes one of the six bells grouped in two nests of three. The rotation of the body into three different

Fig 6 Cylinder great wheel of the movement. In its centre there is screwed a disc a few millimetres thick which has a cut-out profile on its horizontal plane, and whose outer edge has steps of different height, filed in the thickness of the piece. These are the two cams, perpendicular to each other, which are necessary for the two movements of the head.

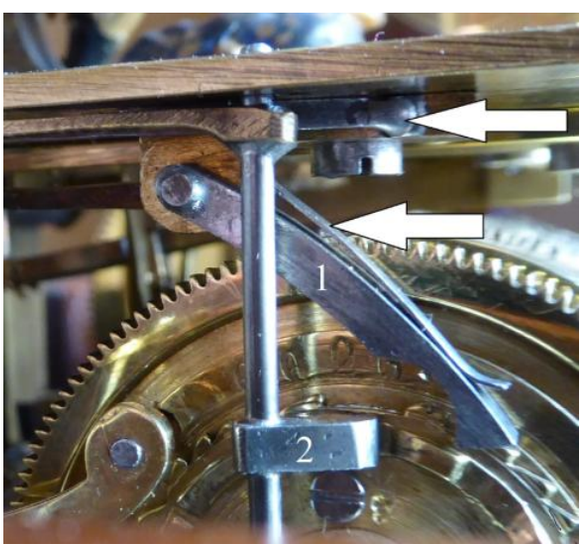

Fig 7 The cylinder great wheel showing the positioning of the two feelers (in blued metal – marked 1 and 2), one for each cam. The one which follows the edge of the disc (1) controls the up and down movement of the head, and the other (2) controls the left to right movement. The two arrows indicate the springs which hold the feelers against the cam.

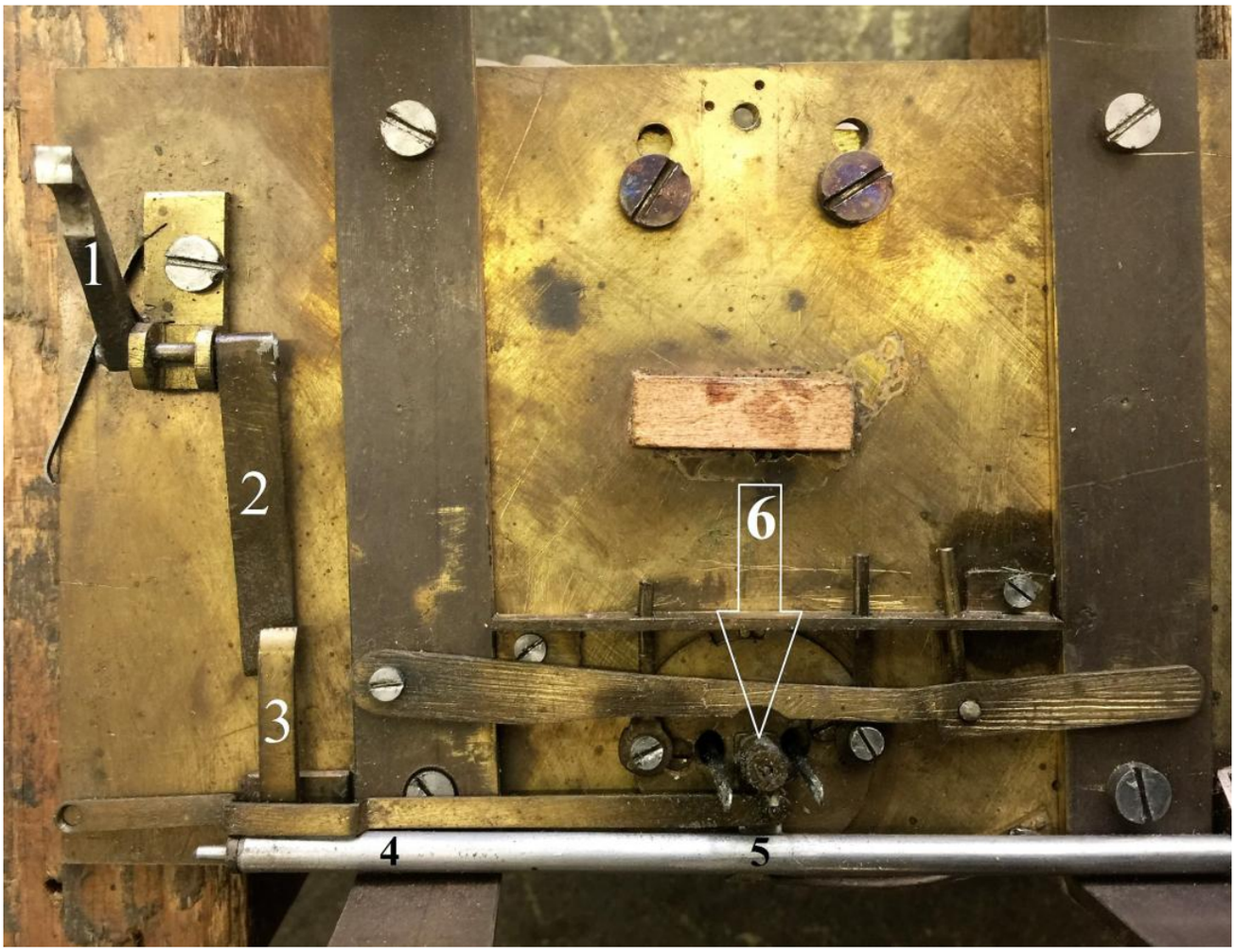

Fig 8 At top left can be seen the feeler (1) which, set upright by the cam, makes element (2) swing, which in turn causes element (3) to move. This strip (3) is fixed to the axle (4) which then rotates. At the marked position (5) on the axle is fixed another strip in the shape of a fork which pulls the cylinder marked with an arrow (6) downwards (but shown as upwards in this photo which is presented upside down). In the centre of this cylinder one makes out the end of a rod which is interlocked with it. This rod passes through the whole body of the automaton vertically towards the head, and is inserted, at its other end, into the head, which is pulled downwards by translation of movement.

positions allows each of the articulated arms to strike the bell in front of it.

Thus seven movements are executed. How do they work?

3.1.1 The Head Movements

The movement of the head is guided by a set of cams very cleverly sized and fixed against the outside end of the cylinder great wheel. They are arranged in the shape of a disc which carries the programme by means of cut out profiles

in both the upper surface and outside edge of the disc to produce the two movements. To avoid the feeler (1) rubbing against the cylinder wheel (with the risk of noise and braking of the rotation), the feeler is raised above the wheel by +/- half a millimetre. That allowed me to see that the disc is itself (at least in its periphary) slightly separated from the cylinder. Thus the feeler follows the cam along its whole width (+/- 1mm) without touching the cylinder wheel. The two movements thus produced must still be transmitted to the head of the automaton. The two photographs taken during restoration, (Figs 8 and 9), show the transmission elements under the little plate.

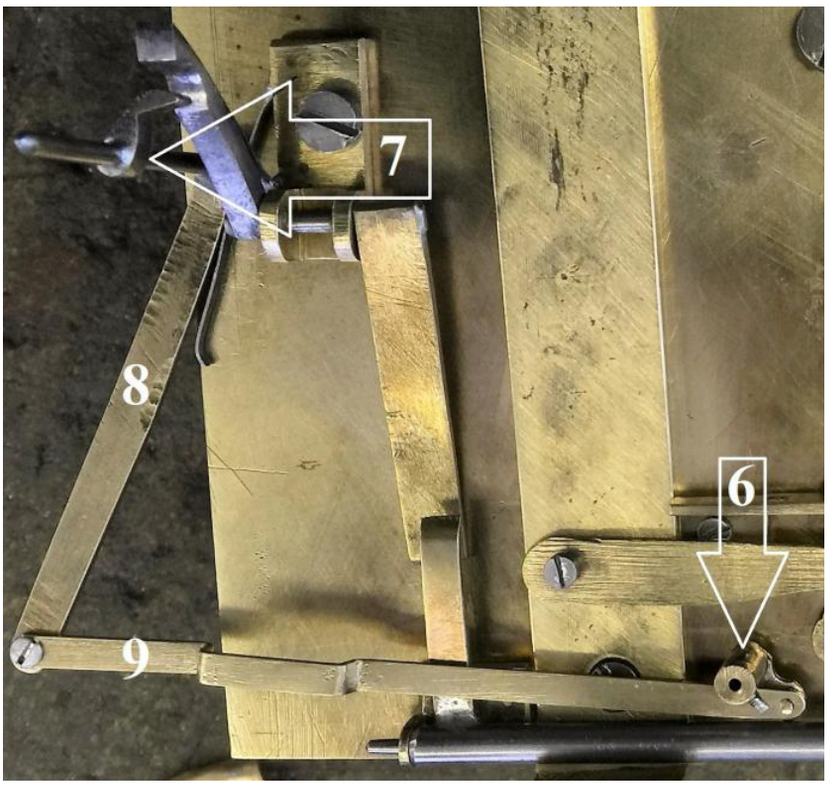

Fig 9 This view shows at top left the second feeler (7) and the two articulated links (8 and 9) which are fixed to the upper part of the cylinder (6), here out of position. The last articulation, on the right of the cylinder (6) allows the cylinder to pivot from left to right. This rotation is transmitted to the head by a fine tube which also passes right through the automaton's body, and in whose sight the shaft of the other movement is positioned.

3.1.2 Movement of the Head from Left to Right

At the level of the automaton's neck can also be seen the tube and the rod. The combination of the two movements generated allows any position of the head. At the end of each tune, the head returns to its upright position, looking towards the left. The head's cycle is identical: for each tune played, there is only one pair of cams repeatedly replayed.

Fig 10 View of the upper part of the automaton's body. One can see the head's central 'left-right' movement tube into which the up-down movement rod slots. On either side you can see the articulations of the automaton's arms.

Fig 11 The back of the head is fixed to the tube (2) by a flexible link. The head, interlocked with the tube, turns. The rod (1) crosses the tube and hooks onto a little spring fixed to an armature attached inside the head which is hollow. The spring is necessary as the rod also turns. Pulled downwards, the rod lowers the head. This last movement has a smaller range than the other.

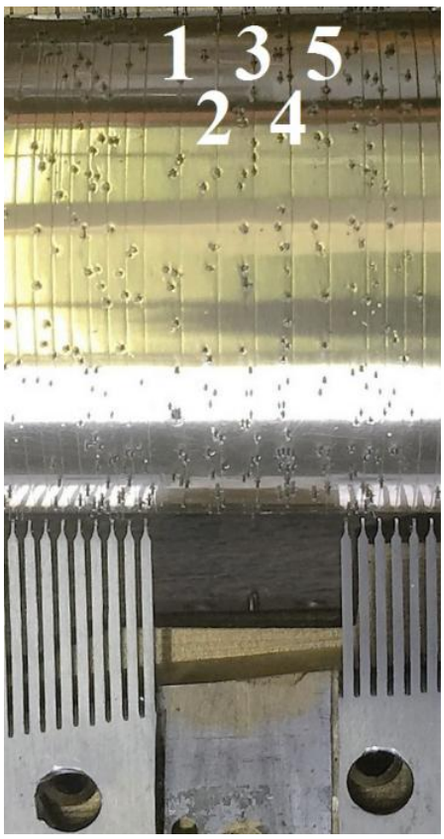

Fig 12 View of the central part of the cylinder. You can see six wide divisions there. It is the pinning of the central five lines which activates the automaton: 1-2-5 for the body's rotation and 3-4 for the left and right arm respectively.

3.2 The Musical Playing of the Automaton

This also results from the combination of two functions which must be perfectly coordinated for the accompaniment of the bells to be precise and therefore musical. One is the rotation of the automaton's body to allow him to present one of his arms opposite the bell to be struck, and the other is the actual striking of the bell.

The movement not being visible, a 'facility' has been introduced by Brémond. He has reversed the position of the movement in relation to the automaton; it isn't presented with the comb to the front and the cylinder towards the back, but with the cylinder to the front and the comb towards the back.

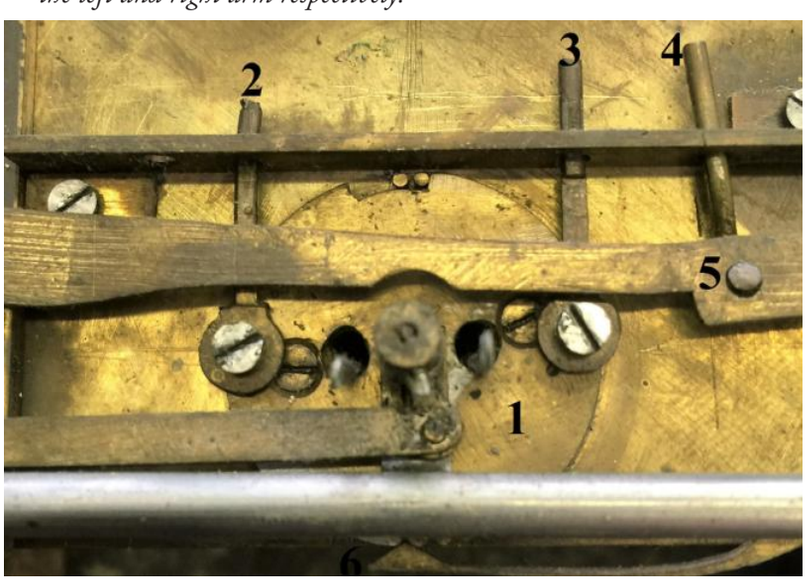

Fig 14 The central wheel (1) supports on its other side, the body of the automaton. When pushed lever (2) turns the body to the left, while lever (3) pushes it to the right. Lever (4) doesn't act directly on the wheel but brings the body back into the middle position. The brass rod (5), to which lever (4) is fixed, pushes back either lever (2) or lever (3). It does this by bumping against the screw on each lever and pushing it back. The strength of the push is determined by the shape of the rod(s), which is different for each lever. A notch in the wheel and a retaining spring (6) visible at the bottom, ensure the stability of the body.

The automaton is therefore positioned in front of the cylinder and the functioning of the automaton is achieved by a single and direct intermediary command.

Figs 13 This and Fig 14 show the feelers 2-3-4 which by pivoting backwards when a pin passes, push the levers 2-3-4.

(The cartel sold at Chartres, which has a traditional musical box set-up, thus has a transmission between the pin and the automaton which is obtained by means of a longer relay, likely hinged and so different from our case here since the automaton there is positioned behind the cylinder.)

The set of pins which guides these two functions is concentrated in the middle of the cylinder. These pins, identical to those which lift the teeth, are identifiable thanks to five wider divisions visible on the surface of the cylinder. The two on the left and the one on the right position the automaton's body; the two others activate the left and right arms. All the other little divisions on either side correspond with the vibrating teeth.

The divisions for making the rotation are wider because they must take into account the width necessary for the feelers' supports. For the arm movements,

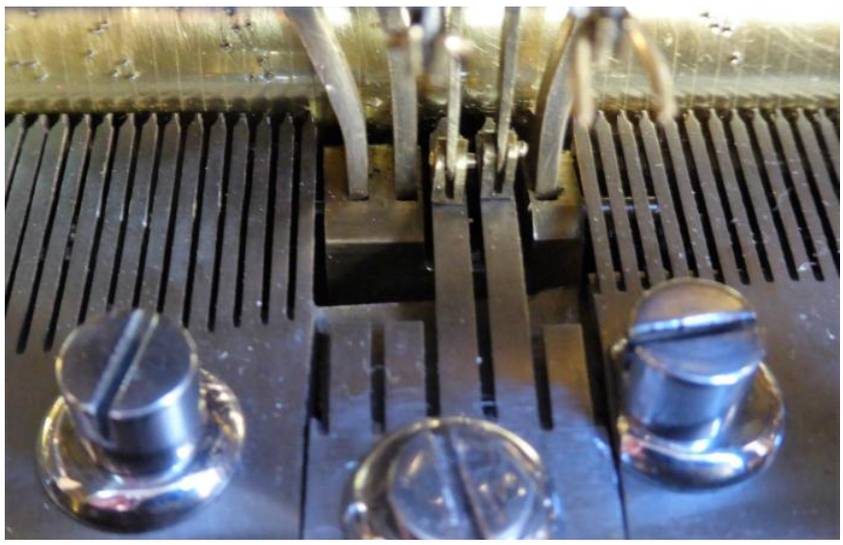

Fig 15 Inserted between the two musical combs, the little non-vibrating comb has retained only the two wide teeth necessary for each arm. Normally in bell-boxes the linkage is fixed below the tooth, while here it is above.

Brémond has used a little comb with teeth which are a lot wider. However, because the speed of the cochlea must be the same for the vibrating teeth as for the five functions of the automaton, it can be seen that only the right-hand half of the wide divisions is pinned (Fig 12).

Fig 16 This view shows in part the linkage necessary for moving the arms. The rods (1) linked to the tooth at one end are fixed to their corresponding rods (2) which they raise. At the end of rod (2), which is in the shape of a fork, is fixed a third rod (3 or 4, not visible) which passes through one of the two holes cut in the wheel and which rises through the automaton's body, up to the shoulder joint. (See Fig 11.)

3.2.1 Rotation of the Automaton's Body

This rotation has three different positions which allows the arm supporting the hammer to be aligned with one of the three bells which is accessible to it and to strike it; the lateral range of the hammer's movement is 1cm. The three positions are achieved by the two wide divisions on the left and the one on the right in the middle of the cylinder.

How does this movement work? The system for returning to the median position is ingenious in that, independent of the two other movements, it allows a quick and regular passage to each of the three positions which can all be used to strike a bell.

3.2.2 The Striking of the Bells

This is achieved by two lines of pins on the cylinder. The pin raises the tooth, which by means of a set of three links forces the raising of the arm which falls under the action of its own weight when the pin releases the tooth. The bell-striking elements are situated either side of the central axis of the automaton. In this way the rotation of the body, which has only a very small range here, hardly disturbs the raising of the arm, and therefore of the hammer.

The precision of the placing of these five lines of pins is thus as important as that necessary for the music. At the end of each tune, the automaton always returns to the same position of rest. It is important never to displace the automaton manually from its neutral position of rest. Indeed the bells would not be played properly as it would result in the mechanism not being driven hard enough since it would no longer enjoy the freedom of movement which it is meant to have.

4 The Sonority of the Box

The charm of the cartel invariably depends on a good balance of sound between the tunes played by the movement and the playing of the bells. The presence of openings either side of the automaton cannot have proved to be sufficient to obtain the quality of sound desired by the artisan, so he had to make a sounding box, placed under the instrument. This gives an excellent and surprising result on a level with the mechanical difficulty which this construction required.

Brémond does not have the fame and

A video of this musical box is posted on the AAIMM website, at www.aaimm.org

aura enjoyed by certain other musical box manufacturers. Nor did he have the initiative of individual patents, but he always made very good quality items when his clients required them. The box described in this article shows the full extent of his capability for creation and innovation. He is moreover the last great maker of creativity and innovation to have been active in Geneva.

This article first appeared in Musiques Mecaniques Vivantes, the journal of the French Society AAIMM, No. 98, 2nd Quarter, 2016. We are grateful for permission from both its author, Jean-Marc Lebout, and AAIMM to reproduce it together with Jean-Marc's photos.

One of the founder members of the MBSGB, Arthur W. J. G. Ord-Hume, was awarded the status of Honorary Associate of the Player Piano Group at a ceremony in the Musical Museum in Brentford, West London, on 14th May 2016. Announcing the award as part of the PPG's Annual General Meeting, chairman Roland Lee related that Ord-Hume had been actively promoting the interests of mechanical music and mechanical musical instruments for more than half a century. Older members will recall that in those days there was very little understanding of the instruments of mechanical music and even that Bible of musical history, Groves Dictionary of Music and Musicians, contained many omissions, not to mention countless incorrect statements and definitions on this subject. It was through Ord-Hume's sustained effort that he was eventually invited by the then editor of Grove, the late Stanley Sadie, to join the exclusive team of contributing editors. The ten-volume post-war edition of this dictionary subsequently expanded to 29 volumes as The New Grove Dictionary of Music & Musicians. In a brief acceptance speech, Arthur Ord-Hume related how he had known Player Piano Group founder Frank Holland since the 1950s – the PPG was founded in 1959 – and recalled with a mixture of fondness and trepidation the crumbling old Victorian Church of St George's in Brentford High Street which had been the home of Frank Holland's collection since 1963. Incredibly it still stands a few hundred yards from the Musical Museum's new building. PPG

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This, That and t'Other No 16

by Arthur Cunliffe

Arthur covers two subjects in this edition of his regular feature article. Quadrilles were the popular dance of the day in the early 19th century, and this dance music was captured on several musical boxes. More prosaically he returns to the annual bugbear of how to deal with woodworm.

Some cylinder boxes play a series of tunes called Quadrilles. This ballroom dance was popular in the second half of the 19th century having come over to England from France by about the end of 1816. Usually a Quadrille is in five movements, the first part being the name of the Quadrille itself, followed by four further dances called *Ete*, *Poule*, *Pastourelle* or *Trense* and finally *Finale*. They seem to have become very popular and fitted perfectly into the strict courtship etiquette of the Victorian era. The dances were written in 2/4 time and designed to be performed to a set series of dance steps and moves. I have no doubt any gentleman or lady of the time who made a wrong step would incur the displeasure of those elders watching from afar. Those who have seen the excellent productions of *Pride and Prejudice* on television will have seen the dance scenes where Quadrilles were being performed with the behaviour of the time.

Although many Quadrilles were composed for the purpose of dancing, other melodies were adapted to become Quadrilles. The firm of Nicole did this more than any of the manufacturers, with one typical example taken from their 20,000 series which played a single Quadrille entitled:

Of the Lady
Postillion of Madame Adlore
Summer by the Water
The Court of St James.

Having said all this, the majority of boxes playing Quadrilles did play all the usual five parts with titles that were well known in their day. The composer Jullien cashed in on the market by composing a whole series of new quadrilles such as:

The Royal Scotch
The Royal Irish
The Royal English
The British Army,
Grande Quadrille d'Ernani
The Swiss
The Lancers
The Caledonian Quadrille
The Giselle Quadrille

Other composers featured on boxes are Strauss, Metra, Musard and d'Alibert.

There will be many more, too. I find the most unusual example was again a Nicole box which had the airs from the *Mikado* turned into a set of Quadrilles. There is only one box with this arrangement so I presume it must have been a special order with some unknown person being responsible for arranging the music.

In the my last report I mentioned the importance of railways when transporting musical boxes, so it is not very surprising that there is a *Railway Quadrille*, not this time by Jullien but by a composer called Weippert. The only Weippert I can find is the composer John Michael who lived from 1773 to 1863. I am sure that this is the correct person as he is listed in one reference document as being the Director of HM Quadrille Band.

Years ago I remember an elderly antique dealer saying that woodworm in furniture is a sign of a lazy housewife. This unjust and sexist remark does have a grain of truth in it as regular dusting and polishing of your treasured boxes will ensure that they remain free of infection. Interrupting the life cycle of the woodworm is best done at the time when they are still on the surface of furniture before they begin their tunnelling. Regular dusting and polishing during the spring and summer and through to autumn is the answer. The entrance holes, unlike the exit holes, are not easy to see. By the time you spot the exit holes the damage has been done. I have found the most effective way of dealing with

Fig 1

Figs 2 and 3

active woodworm in a cylinder box case is to remove the movement and store it in a safe place where it will not be damaged. Next get a length of Polythene tubing that is large enough to hold the box and long enough to tie up both ends with bag ties. Treat the case with an appropriate woodworm killer and store it in the sealed plastic tube for a week or two. This will ensure that any grubs are killed and you, with any luck, may spot them coming out coughing and sneezing.

I find also that it is better before starting to remove temporarily tune sheets along with other fittings that may be damaged by woodworm fluid. Once it is removed from the plastic tube, it is better to leave the case in an airy place where the woodworm fluid can dry off and the smell disappear. It is a long job to do all of this, but once done you should not have any more problems with woodworm.

How you choose to finish off the job is really up to how much in the way of appearances you are prepared to accept. Some are content to leave old woodworm holes as they are, but others feel that every hole has to be filled with wax filler. However, very badly infected boxes with the woodworm holding hands to keep them together are probably better being replaced. It would be interesting to hear your points of view on the topic of worm and cases.

I conclude with a few pictures with no particular theme but simply of interest. In Fig 1 I am sure that a clock hand has been adapted to become a pointer on a tune selector. Figs 2 and 3 are typical lid pictures of inlays using brass and mother of pearl for decoration.

Winchester Musical Box and Mechanical Organ Festival in 2016

by Richard Mendelsohn

The grounds of Winchester's cathedral were once again the bedecked with mechanical organs and musical boxes at the 2016 Organ Festival held on Bank Holiday Monday 2nd May. The event was opened by the Very Reverend James Atwell, Dean of Winchester, joined by Graham Kidd of the Fair Organ Preservation Society and the MBSGB President, Alison Biden. The Dean is himself an organ enthusiast. The aim again was to raise funds for the Friends of Winchester Cathedral's Windows Appeal. This Appeal aims to raise £800,000 for the conservation of much of the medieval stained glass in the cathedral. Urgent and essential work is required to protect the windows from further and potentially catastrophic decay. The work that is needed will be painstaking and costly, but it will reveal the glass in its former beauty, allowing sunlight once again to stream through the stained glass and light up the inner sanctuary. £1,200 was raised on the day.

The Very Reverend James Atwell takes the opening turn

Twenty-one organs were on display and their melodies floated over the grounds to entertain fascinated crowds of visitors. This year's festival was enlarged to include a special exhibition of musical boxes in the Undercroft.

Musical Boxes in the Undercroft

An undercroft is traditionally a cellar or storage room, often brick-lined and vaulted, and used for storage in buildings since medieval times. In modern usage this undercroft is at ground level and is used by Winchester Cathedral for meetings and small exhibitions.

Visitors in the Undercroft

Curious visitors to the musical box part of the Festival were intrigued by the variety of the fine objects displayed and explained by the endlessly patient and kind team of presenters, David and Lesley Worrall and Terry and Ros Longhurst and Brian Chapman.

People were surprised to learn that several of the boxes were up to 200 years old. Many expressed their admiration for the precision engineering involved, and for the high degree of skill shown in their manufacture. The fine quality of the marquetry was particularly remarked upon.

Given this new-found curiosity, people were encouraged to scour lofts and cellars for forgotten and neglected specimens. There are 11,000 recorded in the Register, and many others lying unknown in private collections. There are quite possibly as many again still to be found and restored.

David Worrall demsonstrates to fascinated and curious visitors of all ages his orchestral cylinder musical box by B A Brémond.

Three manivelles

A Tabatière, or Snuff Box *showing the figure of a popular dancer called Fanny Elsseer (around 1850), who was Austrian by birth. She is dancing a 'Cachuka' and a 'Cracovienne'.*

Junghans' 4 1/2 inch (11.5cm) disc musical clock with a Synphonion mechanism

Gebrüder Junghans, of Schwenningen in the Black Forest area of Germany, produced several items utilising small Synphonion made movements. These included small mantel clocks in a wide variety of case styles. In addition, 4 1/2 inch disc mechanisms were fitted into conventional cases and sold under the Junghans' name in Germany, and in cases labelled 'Coronation' to mark the coronation of King Edward VII in Britain in 1902. This specimen was shown by Gary Burns, its owner. Its mechanism is shown in the lower picture.

Orchestral Cylinder Musical Box

Built in 1874 by B A Bremond of Geneva, Serial No 39298. Plays a programme of eight popular airs upon a musical comb with 88 teeth, and a bell comb of six teeth for the six saucer bells played by three Chinese figures in the form of singing mandarins who nod their heads while striking their bells. There are approximately 4392 pins. The case has been restored. A close-up picture of one of the Chinese characters features on this month's front cover.

A Brand New Musical Box made in France
A brand new musical box completed in 2016. A very fine example of how all the old skills remain alive today. It contains a modern Swiss 72-teeth movement playing 3 Airs, made by Reuge of Ste Croix, Switzerland. The box however, was made in France by a husband and wife team, the very fine marquetry being her work. This exquisite object attracted a great deal of public curiosity at the exhibition. It was widely admired, and people were impressed that such fine work can be produced today.

COB Cabinet 20-note Organette (Roller Organ); *made by the Autophone Company of Ithaca, New York in 1885. Many of the tunes originally supplied were hymn tunes, which would have been played in homes or small chapels. Played here by Lesley Worrall.*

Six-air Interchangeable Cylinder Musical Box *Manufactured in 1890 by Paillard Vaucher Fils & Co, St Croix, Switzerland Serial No 93741. A Paillard style 801 Gloria playing a programme of popular airs upon a musical comb of 77 teeth and fitted with Tune Selector, a two-tune Indicator, an optional zither attachment and Paillard's patent cylinder shifting mechanism complete with three six-air cylinders. There are approximatley 4108 pins..*

Nicole Frères Six-air Lever Wind Musical Box *Manufactured in 1864. It has a hidden bell and drum. The cylinder is 13" long and it has 101 musical teeth, of which 10 are for the drums and 15 for the bells.*

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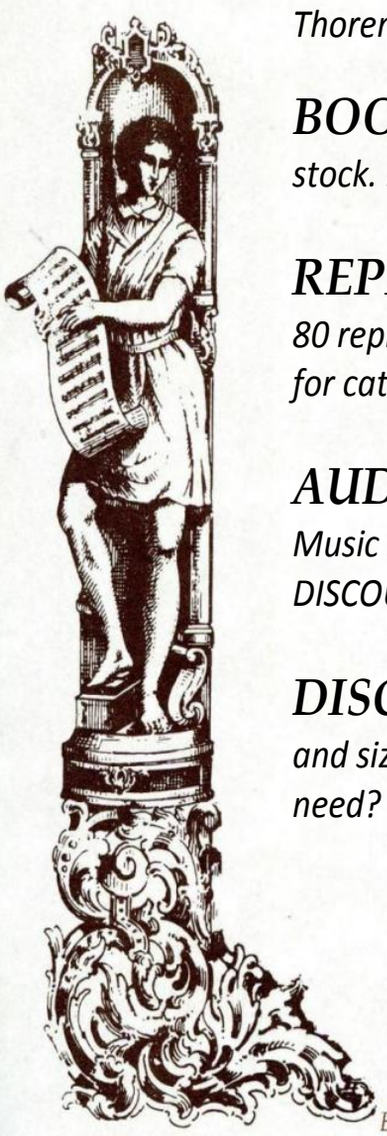

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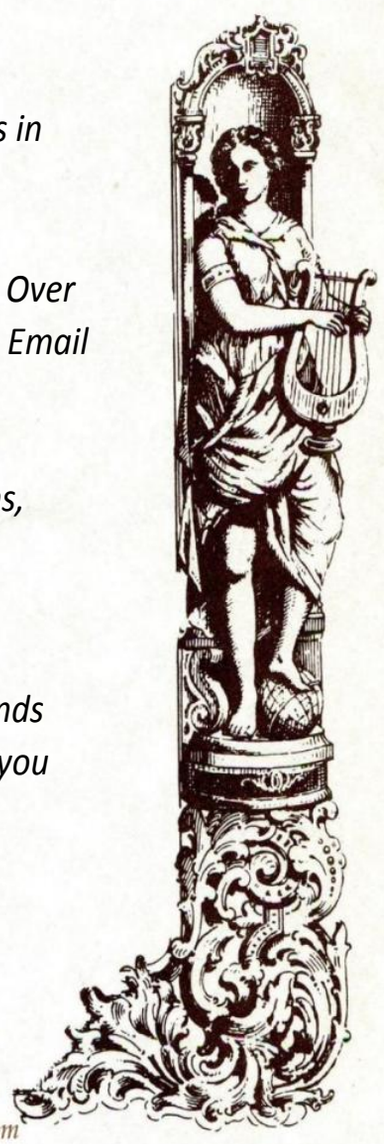

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Register News No 91

By Arthur Cunliffe

There are quite a number of boxes playing tunes composed by Arthur Sullivan, and most of them are from the *Savoy Operas,* which were written jointly by W S Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. One of their late operas, *Utopia Ltd* or *The Flowers of Progress*, although reasonably popular at the time it was produced, on the 7th October 1893, did not prove to be a favourite of the musical box manufacturers. To date only one box made by Cuendet has turned up playing airs from *Utopia*. We will have to wait and see if any more turn up in the future or whether this one box was a special order.

John Blockley is a name that turns up on tune sheets fairly regularly. He was born in London in 1801 and died in Hampstead in December 1882. He was a composer of songs and hymns as well as being a music publisher. His works were picked up and used by many makers of boxes. A list of his tunes found on the Register is given below:

Many Happy Returns of the Day (most popular)	*The Bird that sings in May*
Sun of my Soul	*Dixie's Land*
Break, Break, Break	*John Barleycorn is a Hero*
Love Not	*The Englishman*
Nearer my God to Thee	*The Bloomer Polka*

I think this illustrates very well the usefulness of the Register and just how powerful modern computer systems are at accessing the information stored within them. This is especially useful when one is presented with a torn tune sheet and when only some of the tune list is showing. One example was '---- -- *that sings in May*', so the chances that it was '*The Bird that sings in May*' are very great indeed.

Recently details of a Junod box were sent in noting that it had a missing tune sheet. The box had been on the Register many years before, and to my surprise the tunes were listed then and it had a tune sheet. What had happened to the tune sheet in the intervening years is anybody's guess, but it may have been one box that had been stolen and had the tune sheet removed to prevent identification. Who knows?

Unfortunately, there were some thefts around 30 to 40 years ago when thieves did take off tune sheets and try to blank out serial numbers to hide their activities. Fortunately these particular individuals were caught early on, and their activities came to an end. The Register, with all the information stored within, helped to restore the status quo.

I have been looking recently at Mermod boxes listed in the Register, and I am now pretty confident that the numbers noted on the tune sheets were the numbers for that particular list of tunes and not the serial numbers for the boxes. When the cylinders were issued to an interchangeable box there is a three-digit number preceding a five-digit cylinder number. The five-digit number acts rather like a gamme number.

I think this three-digit numbering was the identification system devised by Mermod so they knew the length and diameter and type of cylinder. Thus it was easy for anyone to order another cylinder for any interchangeable box. The five-digit numbers seem to have been Mermod's numbering system for a group of tunes. (They must have had some sort of catalogue listing the available tunes but none has turned up to date. Nor have I ever seen any advertising of available tunes from agents.)

As an example, cylinder numbered 117902 (136) does not match the serial number of the box in question but lists six popular airs. I believe the 136 number is the key to identifying the cylinder type, but this is only my theory. The Register of Mermod boxes (Fig 1) is not yet large enough for any cylinder number to have turned up twice, so my theory cannot be tested. Many of the surviving Mermod boxes are now in America, and gaining access to them is almost impossible. Fig 3 shows the early type of Mermod speed check mechanism, and Fig 2 shows their uncommon and possibly early design of tune selector.

In conclusion, the Register is going well with much help coming from America and Australia. Contributions from the UK have largely dried up and I could really do with hearing from more British members. There are now over 11,000 boxes registered with 6,500 pictures to accompany the Register. The new file on tunes and composers is being fine-tuned at the moment with over 1,800 tunes listed. I am sure that this will help in the future when boxes with torn and missing parts of their sheets are found, and the computer will be able to recognise what is missing. It is nearly there.

Cuendet box serial number 1747 is illustrated in Fig 4. It has only the remains of a tune sheet, but the computer found all of the tunes without too much trouble, even checking that the wedding referred to was Turner's *The Fairy Wedding* and not Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*. The view of the Terrace on the right gave the clue to the box being made by Cuendet, and the serial number fitted in perfectly with that maker's serial number sequence. I wonder how many of you looking at tune five came up with the answer *Dixie's Land*?

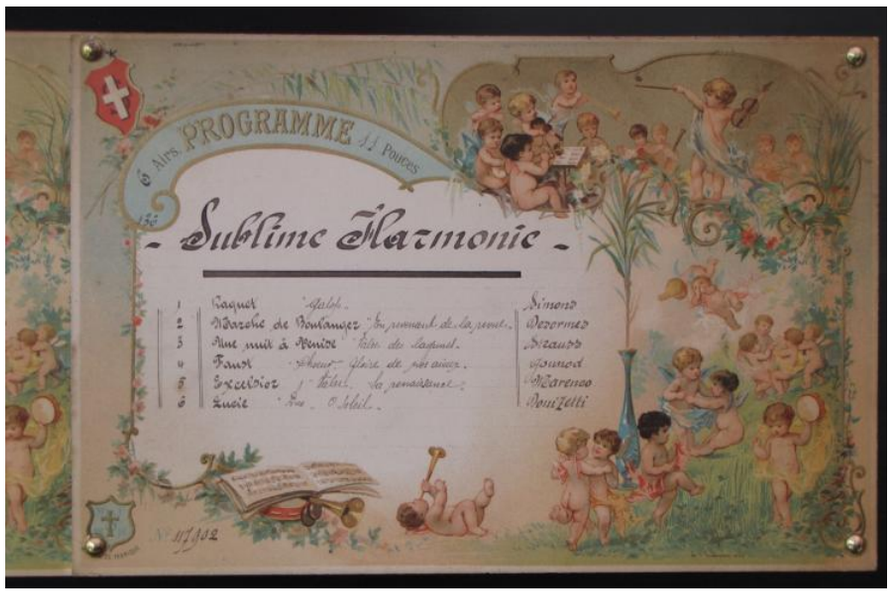


Fig 1 A Mermod tune sheet on an interchangeable box

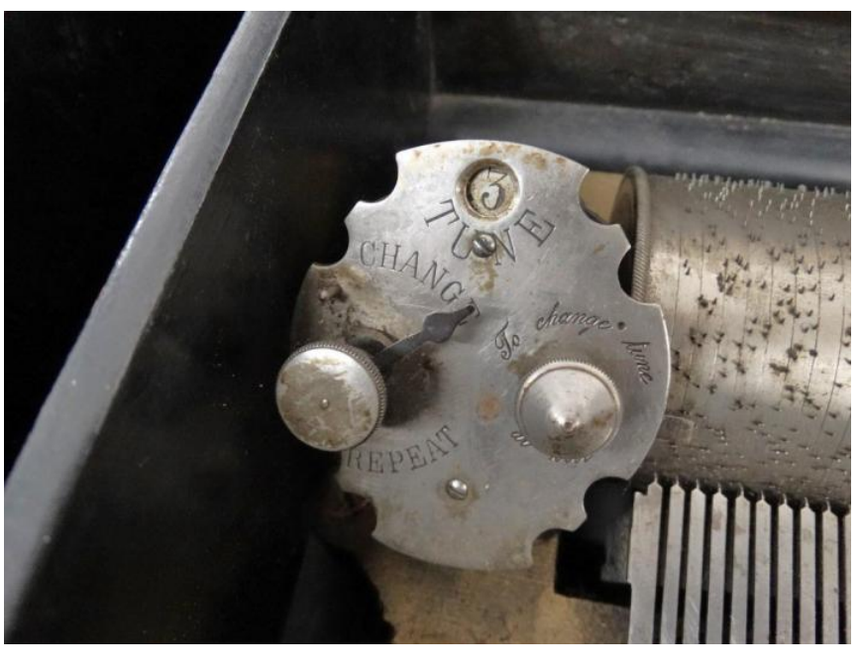


Fig 2 Unusual Mermod tune selector mechanism

Fig 3 Early Mermod speed check mechanism

Fig 4 A badly torn Cuendet tune sheet

Long-Short Pin, Theory and Practice

by Niko Wiegman

Single-comb forte piano musical boxes are amongst the most intriguing and complex mechanical music machines ever made. The forte piano effect is achieved by using long and short pins.

A longer forte pin lifts the tooth higher than a shorter piano pin, but it also releases it later if the pins, as in a normal movement, are set on the same line along the length of the cylinder.

There are two options for correcting this so as to achieve simultaneous release. The first is to keep the forte pin straight but drill its hole further forward in the cylinder in relation to the piano pin.

The second option is to keep the pins on the same line along the cylinder length, and then to rake or bend the longer forte pin forward so only its pin tip is in the correct place for simultaneous release. A third option would of course be a combination of the two.

It is therefore that in long-short pin forte piano movements the raked pin is the one that plays the forte note and not, as has been recently written, the other way round.

The actual length of this raked forte pin needs to be greater than the straight forte pin, although its effective length is the same. So as to simplify the calculations, an extra long bass tooth has been assumed, together with the comb-bedplate angle set to zero. Consequently the path that the tooth tip then takes during lift is close to the vertical.

In the not-to-scale diagram the cylinder circumference and the paths of the piano and forte pin tip are shown. Point A is the release point of the piano pin AC at angle α with the horizontal, CM is the radius of the cylinder.

Angle α is determined by the height of the comb tip in relation to the cylinder and the amount of tooth lift. If a vertical line is drawn through point A we get the straight line of release on which all other release points of the longer pins must lie to have simultaneous release with piano pin AC.

The intersection of the forte pin tip path and the line of release gives point B, the release point of the forte pin. If line BM is drawn then F is the point where the hole for the straight forte pin BF must be drilled in the cylinder in order to play in time with the piano pin AC. BC is the length the raked forte pin must have to give the same tooth lift as the straight forte pin BF.

According to Pythagoras, a formula for BC can be stated as follows:

$$BC = \sqrt{BE^2 + EC^2}$$

EC = AC cos α (where AC is the length of the piano pin).

Calculation of the length BE is more complicated:

$$BE = BD - ED = BD - CM \sin \alpha$$

BD = BM sin β , which is re-written as: $BD = BM \sqrt{1 - \cos^2 \beta}$

$\cos \beta = \frac{DM}{BM}$ where DM = AM cos α

gives $\cos \beta = \frac{AM}{BM} \cos \alpha$

This gives:

$$BD = BM \sqrt{1 - (AM/BM \cos \alpha)^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{BM^2 - (AM \cos \alpha)^2}$$

Then BE becomes:

$$\sqrt{BM^2 - (AM \cos \alpha)^2} - CM \sin \alpha$$

This gives the following formula for the raked forte pin length BC:

$$BC = \sqrt{(\sqrt{BM^2 - (AM \cos \alpha)^2} - CM \sin \alpha)^2 + (AC \cos \alpha)^2}$$

Now let's insert some sample numbers to see what results:

CM = 30mm (radius of a 60mm diameter cylinder tube).
AC = 0.7mm (length of the piano pin).
AM = CM + AC=30 + 0.7=30.7mm
BF = 0.9mm (length of a straight forte pin).
BM = CM + BF=30 + 0.9=30.9mm
Angle α = 20°

Which gives a raked pin length of:

$$BC = \sqrt{(\sqrt{30.9^2 - (30.7 \cos 20)^2} - 30 \sin 20)^2 + (0.7 \cos 20)^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{(0.65698 + 0.43268)}$$

$$= \sqrt{(1.08966)} = 1.04mm$$

We can calculate the rake angle γ that this pin needs to have for an effective length of 0.9mm

$$\cos(\alpha + \gamma) = \frac{EC}{BC} = \frac{AC \cos \alpha}{1.04}$$

$$= \frac{0.7 \cos 20}{1.04} = 0.6301$$

This makes $\gamma = (\cos^{-1} 0.6301) - 20$

$$= 50.9 - 20 = 30.9°$$

Further calculations give the extra lift (length AB) of the forte pin in relation to the piano pin. For this we must first know the angle of β.

$$\cos \beta = \frac{AM}{BM} \cos \alpha = \frac{30.7}{30.9} \cos 20$$

which makes β = 20.995°

AB = BM sin β – AM sin α
= (30.9 sin 20.995)–(30.7 sin 20)
= 0.57mm extra lift by the forte pin.

If a straight forte pin with a length of 0.9mm is used instead of a raked pin, then we can calculate how much forward in the cylinder that pin needs to be placed in order to play in time with the piano pin.

For that we subtract angle α from angle β which gives 0.995° angle of displacement.

In mm arc CF

$$= \frac{0.995}{360} \times 60\pi$$

= 0.52mm.

This is the amount forward in the cylinder the hole of a straight forte pin needs to be drilled for it to have simultaneous release with the piano pin.

That is around twice the thickness of a pin, and this would be clearly audible if such a cylinder was re-pinned with pins of all the same length.

If a cylinder revolution takes one minute, then the timing error with pins of all the same length becomes:

Peripheral speed of the cylinder

$$= \frac{\pi \times \text{diameter cylinder}}{60} = \frac{60\pi}{60}$$

= 3.14mm/s

With a pin placement error of 0.52 mm this results in a timing error of $\frac{0.52}{3.14}$ = 0.16 seconds.

The cylinder diameter has very little influence on this, but angle α has two other points of interest at 0° and 90°

At α = 0° the effect of 0.2mm difference in pin length between the forte and the piano pin is at its greatest with:

$$BC = \sqrt{\sqrt{(30.9^2 - 30.7^2)^2 + 0.7^2}}$$

=3.58 mm,

at rake angle γ = 79°, and extra lift AB = 3.51mm.

At α = 90° the effect of a 0.2mm difference in length is at its minimum with

$$BC = \sqrt{(\sqrt{30.9^2} - 30)^2} + 0 = 0.9\text{mm}$$

at rake angle γ = 0°, and extra lift AB = 0.2mm.

This now means there is no timing difference between the longer forte and shorter piano pin.

It would make for a strange comb position, but if you have a barrel organ it is of course the ideal place for the levers. Any difference in heights of the bridges, etc. would have no influence on their timing.

All nice theory but in practice it makes it much more difficult.

The complicating factor is that tooth lift at the bass can be much greater than at the treble end. Normally it is adjusted with the comb setting, but with long and short pins that will also alter the piano lift.

If the forte pins are kept all the same length along the cylinder, then it will give either excessive forte lift at the treble, or too little at the bass end. This means that the difference in length between forte and piano pins has to be greater at the bass end rather than at the treble end.

A possible way to correct this would be to place the cylinder at the treble end closer to the grinding wheel, so that the forte pins become gradually shorter towards the treble.

But how then do you rake these forte pins, if done in the same set-up as grinding, that is with the treble end closer to the raking tool? You either rake the treble pins too much, or the bass pins too little, since the longer the forte pin the further forward you have to rake it to correct the timing.

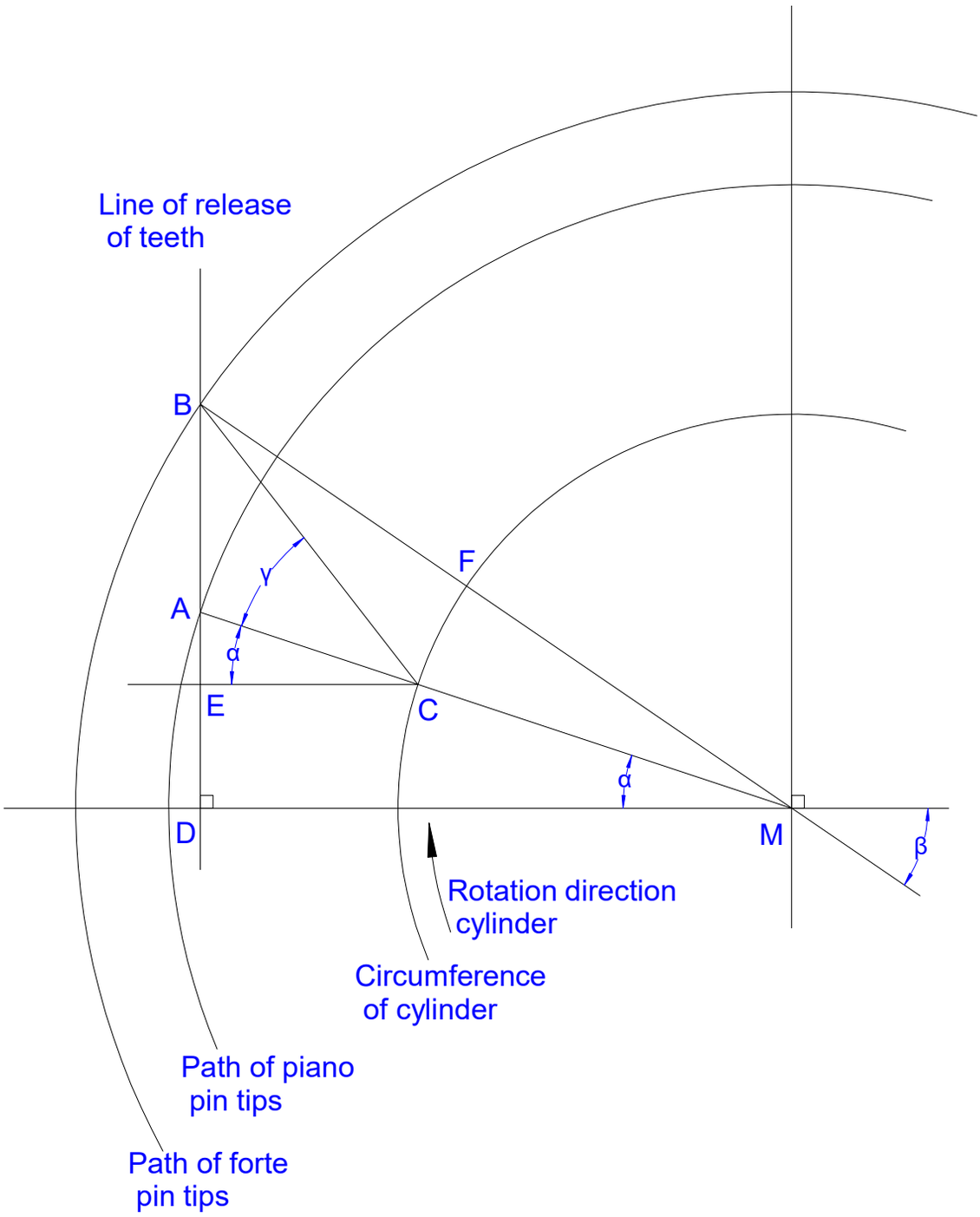
On the other hand if the cylinder is again set parallel to the raking tool, and the forte pins are raked that way, then the difference in forte pin length between bass and treble is nullified, which is not what is wanted.

One way would be to use the same set-up as grinding, and then rake until the angle of the forte pins in the treble is correct and play is in time with the piano pins, and finally correct all the other forte pins by hand. But whatever way it is done it would involve a lot of correction by hand.

These cylinders were drilled without leaving a trace of which hole is for a forte and which for a piano pin.

For two pin lengths an option would be to drill the piano holes, and with the same drill make only a centre mark for the forte pins. After the piano pins are placed and finished, the holes for the forte pins are drilled. In this way drilling and marking can be done in one session without the need to reposition the cylinder in the drilling set-up. A cylinder prepared like this would play as well as a normal cylinder when re-pinned with pins of all the same length.

But movements with more than two pin lengths have been made, and three different lengths are



Schematic diagram of a cross-section on the cylinder (not to scale)

certainly possible. Even movements with more than three lengths are known.

What comes to mind is the possibility that drilling was performed in stages; after one stage was finished with the pins placed, ground and corrected for play, the cylinder was repositioned in the drilling set-up for the next stage of slightly longer forte pins.

The accuracy of repositioning the cylinder should be very good, but since almost every pin has to be corrected for accuracy of play by hand anyway, the exercise would not have been extremely critical.

The only conclusion is that those who made these movements were great craftsmen who combined it with a fine musical ear. Give them a deep bow and enjoy the music.

Niko Wiegman is an occasional contributor to the magazine, and he has submitted this article in response to a recent publication. He offers an alternative theory concerning long–short pins in single-comb piano forte musical box movements. The theory expounded in the article is the author's own, and both he and we would welcome further theories or views on this topic

Stephen T.P. Kember Ltd

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The President's Message No 13

Since my last message we have had the EGM at which members voted overwhelmingly in favour of incorporating the Society as a company limited by guarantee. I would like to thank those few who took the time to write in advance to let the Committee know your views, especially those from whom we seldom hear at other times. It would appear from one such letter that remarks I made in a previous message (No 11) had been misinterpreted, and I would like to reassure the correspondent, and any other members in doubt, that it is not I who sees mechanical musical instruments as 'fossilised antiques' – far from it. Were it the case I should definitely not be holding this office.

As if to prove my point that mechanical musical instruments are still relevant today as musical instruments, recently BBC Radio 2 featured Luke Daniels, a popular contemporary folk singer who has produced an album of his work on which he uses a 19 5/8 Polyphon as an accompaniment to some of the songs. Ironically during the interview he managed to credit most of the people who assisted him in this venture except MBSGB member Lester Jones, who both restored the Polyphon in question and made the discs of Daniels' own compositions. I am aware of least one other British folk singer who sometimes uses a musical box as an accompaniment to her songs.

Elsewhere you will find précis minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting for your information, and over the coming months I hope to be able to report on how the change in our status affects what we can achieve as a Society, without noticeably changing its character in any way.

Alison and her Gebruder Bruder organ

On a more sombre note: at the time of writing Britain is only just beginning to take stock of the ramifications of the unexpected vote to leave the European Union, although by the time this reaches you the situation may be clearer. I am relieved that matters in the MBSGB do not move at the same frantic pace as public reaction to politics, although personal views can be equally as passionate. We wait to find out what the consequences will be for us mechanical music lovers.

Having recently made purchases at an overseas auction, I am acutely aware that this will not be such an attractive proposition in the future, due to the fall in the value of the pound, and that our trips to Europe and further afield will be considerably more expensive. Hopefully it will encourage more of our friends from 'across the pond' to pay us a visit.

A long shadow has been cast over the mechanical music community by the shocking news of the unnatural death of Swiss collector and organ expert, Fredy Künzle. Many of you may have met Fredy, and maybe visited his collection in Lichtensteig on one or other of the European trips which have taken place over the years. Two years ago at the Waldkirch Organ Festival Fredy recognised the Gebruder Bruder organ I now own which he had apparently restored about 25 years previously. I will leave it to others more qualified than me to write a fuller tribute to this extraordinary and much loved man in due course.

Finally, in my other role as Archivist I get to review the magazines of our sister Societies. As I was doing so, I found this quote from Michael Hendron of the Reed Organ Society particularly inspiring, and wish to share it with you now, in an edited form. 'Enjoy the instruments that interest you. If you have specific collecting goals, keep looking – they're out there somewhere. Cultivate your contacts … Each one [of your instruments] will teach you something, musically or technologically … share the music they play well … all [of my instruments] deserved to be preserved and played.' Music is a great healer. Enjoy!

Charmaine holding her Polyphon disc with her proud father, David

We are pleased to print this delightful photograph of David Butler with his daughter, Charmaine, a young enthusiast. It was unfortunately omitted from Vol 27 No 6 and should have accompanied his article entitled 'Charmaine'.

Editor

Letters to the Editor

From Robbie Gordon

I write to congratulate you on the splendid work you are doing on the Music Box journal. I do like the variety of interesting articles, the auction news and the increasing number of items being offered for sale in Classified Advertisements. The photos that include members are great for bringing back happy memories of friendships made over the years at meetings in this country and abroad. It is also nice in helping to put names to the faces of new members.

I am now an octoganerian so my wife Joyce and I are unable to attend as many meetings as previously, but we're greatly privileged to have enjoyed the Music Box Society; it is the best one could wish for.

Our Editor and Committee must be doing something right and I find it encouraging that the membership numbers are in such a healthy state.

Keep up the good work; it is much appreciated thank you.

Thank you for your support in what we are doing. Editor

From Tony Waddell

About four years ago I saw a Lecoultre cylinder box in need of repairs advertised on eBay from, I think, Dorking in Surrey.

Nothing unusual about that except that I suddenly realised the Serial No was either side of one I own. My box is a lever-wind, six-air mandolin with 158 teeth, Serial No 31621. The box advertsied was either 31620 or 31622.

In hindsight I should have bought it but at the time I could not afford the repairs. I wonder if a member of MBSGB eventually bought it? If so it would be nice to make contact just maybe to hear it and compare notes.

I live in Hampshire and my box can be seen and heard on YouTube if the person is interested.

Tony is MBSGB member No 3052, and he asks that you reply to him by writing to this magazine.

New Members of the MBSGB since the last journal was published

We welcome the following new members who have joined the MBSGB since the last journal was published:

3241	Suzanne Farrar	Cheshire	
3242	Chaim Gluck	Switzerland	
3243	Nadia Alvarez	Spain	
3244	David N. Adams	Hampshire	
3245	Michael A. Roberts	Hampshire	
3246	David Barker	Isle of Man	
1344	Roger & Anne Kempson	Bristol	(Rejoining after 30+ years)

If you would like to get in touch with members near you, please contact the Correspondence Secretary, whose contact details are on the Officers' page.

There are four Local Area Groups so we hope more members will come along and join in.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2016

24th September 2016	**MBSGB Home Counties Group**. The Musical Museum, Brentford. www.musicalmuseum.co.uk Please contact Kevin McElhone: kevin_mcelhone@btinternet.com 01536 726759
30th September to 2nd October 2016	**MBSGB National Meeting**. Hayling Island, Portsmouth. Includes visits to West Dean College and Hollycombe Steam Collection. See flyer for details or contact Alison Biden, 01962 861350.
8th – 9th October 2016	Milton Keynes Organ Festival. Milton Keynes Museum, McConnell Drive, Wolverton, Milton Keynes MK12 5EL
15th October 2016	**MBSGB Midlands Group**. Long Eaton, near Nottingham. Please contact host Keith Reedman, 01159 732150 k@reedman.org.uk
16th October 2016	Oktoberfest. Organ rally with traditional German organs. Mizens Railway, Barrs Lane, Woking, Surrey GU21 2JW. Noon – 5pm. Mizens Railway is a 7 ¼" gauge steam railway over one mile in length.
3th December 2016	**MBSGB Teme Valley Winders**. Christmas meeting. Eastham, Tenbury Wells, Worcs. 11am start. Details from John Phillips. 01584 781118

The international mechanical music world was shocked to learn of the death of the well-known Swiss collector and organ expert, Fredy Künzle, which occurred in the first week of May earlier this year. As has been reported in the Swiss press, a man has been arrested on suspicion of Fredy's murder. Fredy was a hugely popular person with many friends world-wide and he will be greatly missed. We hope to publish a more comprehensive tribute to him later this year.

The Society web site now has a Members page http://www.mbsgb.org.uk/membership/members/ which contains precis minutes of recent meetings and other useful business documents. The password can be obtained from Kevin McElhone. If you would like to see other information on this members-only page, please contact the Correspondence Secretary.

THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN

Précis Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting held on 15th April 2016 at the Webbington Hotel & Spa, Loxton, Somerset.

Present: Alison Biden [Chair], John Phillips [Vice-president], John Farmer [Treasurer], Nicholas Simons [Correspondence Secretary], Kevin McElhone [Membership Secretary], and David Worrall [Recording Secretary].

Apologies: John Ward. Mark Singleton [Advertising Secretary].

Business Discussed: As set out hereunder.

Printing & Distribution of *The Music Box*: Contract placed with Flo-print Colour Ltd. to print *The Music Box* issues for 2016–2017, after which it would be the subject of open tender action again.

Website: New website, designed by 3B Designs, is now live; information on the new site could be changed without further input from the developer. Tune Lists and further videos are to be added.

MBSGB Property: Mr Bellamy continues to hold MBSGB property to which he is not legally entitled; next actions for MBSGB to regain total possession remain under consideration.

Society Archives: Will not be valued for the Annual Accounts in view of the difficulty in determining realistic values and of the unlikelihood of realising them by sale or auction.

Society Meetings: Arrangements for the Autumn National Meeting at the Langstone Hotel, Hayling Island agreed.

Frequency & Days of National Meetings: A proposal to reduce to one per annum was rejected; a second proposal that mid-week meetings should be considered as the rates at some hotels were lower, was referred to the 2016 AGM for members to discuss.

Local Group Meetings: Details of meetings for the Midlands Group, the new London & Home Counties Group, the Teme Valley Winders and the Wessex Group were noted.

2016 AGM: Arrangements agreed; nominations for office agreed; concerns expressed over declining number of active, serving officers; AGM charges to be held at £10.00 per head, to cover costs of lunch; any overall loss on the day be set against hire of the venue which should be a charge against the Society.

2017 Subscriptions: Agreed that there be no change in the Subscription Rates for 2017.

Change of AGM Venue: Concerns that Roade was deterring attendance due to its relative lack of access by public transport were discussed; agreed that a search be undertaken to locate suitable venues with better public transport access and, if one is found in time, to move the 2017 AGM.

Governance of the Society: Arrangements agreed to call an EGM to place before the members the motion to change the status of MBSGB from Unincorporated to Incorporated. Agreed that the Reasons for Incorporation be restated for the benefit of all as being:

- MBSGB is given legal status
- Protection is given for individual members
- MBSGB rights are established for it to be the legal owner of assets and artefacts, whether in real or digital form, and whether or not they are physically in its possession at the date of incorporation.

MBSGB PO Box: Will not be renewed from Sept 2016 due to expense and lack of use. AB's home address to be the Company Address; published contact details to be restricted to The Society's email address, the Correspondence Secretary's Telephone Number and the Treasurer's Address on Membership Renewal/Application Forms.

Next Meeting: Friday 30th September 2016 at 3 pm at The Langstone Hotel, Hayling Island, PO11 0NQ

After Meeting Note: Alternatives to replace the Society's PO Box have since been suggested and are being explored.

THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN

Précis Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting held on 4th June 2016 at Roade, Northamptonshire.

NOTE 1. Members are advised that the following is a précis only, presented in note format of the full Minutes; it is for information only and must not be taken as being a definitive statement of the full nature and extent of the decisions taken on any particular item of business referred to in therein.
NOTE 2. Members wishing for a more detailed account may request a set of Minutes on application to the Recording Secretary. It should be noted that such Minutes will remain unapproved until the next General Meeting.

Opening: The President/Chair, Alison Biden, took the Chair of the Meeting and declared the AGM open at 10.30 am. A total of 44 Officers and Members were present.

Apologies: 17 members sent their apologies.

Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting 6th June 2015: The 2015 AGM Minutes were approved.

Matters Arising: The Florence Kennard Film has been produced successfully; the matter of a reduced subscription for students to be considered by the EC; the market for RACCA Piano Souvenirs appears exhausted with substantial stocks still in store.

President's report: In her report, the President drew attention to: publication of the Fourth Supplement to *Musical Box Tune Sheets*, Florence Kennard's film; a renegotiated reduction in the printing cost of *The Music Box*; a donation from the USA; the new Society website; continuing support for the European Project; more interaction with the public at the 2015 Spring Meeting and the Winchester Organ Festival; thanked the members of the Executive Committee for their work and support and appealed for more help from members in running the Society and promoting its interests.

Vice-President's Report: In his report, John Phillips drew attention to the following: that he had been driven to stand for office at a time of turmoil within the Society; he was standing down after three years during which he had had the honour of serving as Vice-President; that the Society was now much stronger, a recovery due not only to the Executive Committee but also to the support from members; thanked all members of the Society and colleagues on the Committee for their support; his disappointment that in some matters there had been little progress during his tenure of office and of his reservations over the proposed move for the Society to be Incorporated; finally, he drew attention to the vacancies on the Executive Committee, the increase in responsibilities taken on by the remaining officers as a consequence, particularly the President, and appealed for more help from members in running the Society.

Secretarial & Officer Reports: Reports were received and accepted from the following:
Subscriptions Secretary, Membership Secretary, Meetings Secretary & Correspondence Secretary.

Treasurer: The 2015 Accounts were reported and adopted.

Other Officer Reports were received and accepted from: Editor, Archivist, Auction Organiser, Advertising Secretary, Web Master - including the development of the new Society Website; Registrar and Authorised Sub-Committees and Working Parties.

Propositions under Bye Laws Article 1 Section 4: None had been submitted.

Election of Society Officers for the Forthcoming Year

Election of Hon President/Chairman: Alison Biden was re-elected President/Chair.

Election of Committee Members: The following were appointed to serve as Officers of the Society for the year 2016-2017:

Appointments Filled:

Joint Vice-President [US]	- Robert Yates	Archivist	- Alison Biden
Membership Secretary	- Kevin McElhone	Advertising Secretary	- Mark Singleton
Treasurer	- John Farmer	Auction Organiser	- John Ward
Subscriptions Secretary	- John Farmer	Webmaster	- John Farmer
Correspondence Secretary	- Nicholas Simons	Member and Recording Secretary	- David Worrall
Editor (Paid Appointment)	- Richard Mendelsohn	Members without Portfolio	- Nicholas Newble
			- David O'Connor

Appointments Unfilled: Vice-President; Meetings Secretary; Member without Portfolio.
Note: Arthur Cunliffe continues his work as Registrar outside the Executive Committee.

Set Level of Subscriptions/Fees for 2017: Membership Fees for 2017 were agreed as those applying for 2016.

Banking Arrangements: Closure of the Meetings and Bonus Saver Accounts and changes to authorised cheque signatories approved.

Date and Venue for 2017 AGM: Saturday 3rd June 2017 at 11 am venue to be advised.
Note: A venue more accessible by public transport is being researched by the EC.

Any Other Business
- Society PO Box Number will not be renewed from September; a practical low cost replacement to be announced.
- Society property held by members to be either returned or reported as being held.
- Society national meetings in mid-week to be considered as some hotel rates were much cheaper mid-week.
- A new auction venue, specialising in mechanical music to open in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent on 2nd November 2016.
- More overseas trips to be considered.
- The EC authorised to spend funds, at its discretion on promotional material and events.
- A number of proposals for EC consideration were made about Society property held by Mr Bellamy to which he is not entitled.

Note: The meeting was adjourned at 11.58 am in order to hold the EGM at 12.13 pm; the EGM was reconvened at 13.44 pm after a lunch break and closed at 13.47 pm.

Précis Minutes of the of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 4th June 2016 at Roade, Northamptonshire.

NOTE 1. Members are advised that the following is a précis only, presented in note format of the full Minutes; it is for information only and must not be taken as being a definitive statement of the full nature and extent of the decisions taken on any particular item of business referred to in therein.
NOTE 2. Members wishing for a more detailed account may request a set of Minutes on application to the Recording Secretary. It should be noted that such Minutes will remain unapproved until the next General Meeting.

The Hon President Alison Biden took the Chair and declared the Extraordinary General Meeting [EGM] open at 12.13 pm. 44 Officers and Members were in attendance. 17 members had sent their apologies.

The Chair outlined why the EGM had been called; the Order of Business to be followed; introduced Mr Paul Morrison who had worked with and advised the Executive Committee [EC] during its deliberations concerning Incorporation and was in attendance to answer member's questions. The Meeting was advised further that a number of members had written to the EC expressing their reasons for accepting or rejecting the proposed change; 3 for, 1 equivocal and 1 against. This latter number could be considered 4: one member left prior to the votes being taken but gave reasons for opposing the proposed change prior to leaving; another member had submitted a letter containing 2 [two] proxy "NO" votes without expressing reasons. [Note: The MBSGB Constitution does not allow for proxy voting on ordinary business matters.]

The Case for Incorporation was formally put by John Ward; although invited to do so by the Chair none of the members present offered to formally put the Case against Incorporation; however, John Phillips spoke considering the change unnecessary as the protection benefits for members serving on the EC claimed for Incorporation were already present through the Society's printed disclaimers and Insurance policy provisions.

In response to this challenge and to other questions from the floor, the meeting was advised as follows:

By the Hon. President/Chair:
- the most important aspect of Incorporation was establishing legal status for the Society and with that the right to legally own property;
- the benefit of legal and financial protection under Incorporation extended to all members as well as those serving on the EC.

By Mr Morrison:
- the risks to individuals in an Unincorporated Society posed by unforeseen litigation were emphasised, citing several examples where unsuspecting individuals in other societies had been faced with substantial court and/or legal costs through no fault of their own;
- Company Law developed over 200 years protected and enabled an Incorporated Society to best manage situations should all officers of the Society resign; the present Unincorporated Constitution does not cover such situations;
- Duties of Directors of an Incorporated Company are set out in the Companies Act; those for the Officers of an

Unincorporated Society are far from clear and being uncodified, interpretation at law is very dependent upon that made by individual representatives of the law during a court hearing and that such interpretations could vary from court to court;
• Many Unincorporated Societies had taken the Incorporation route - 62,000 in 2014; some into charitable companies, some into public interest companies and others into companies limited by guarantee;
• Legal costs had risen to unsustainable levels for any unincorporated society to bear if faced with litigation;
• Incorporation allows the Society to hold property and gives added protection to Society assets including copyright;
• Administration of bank accounts was much reduced as the banks followed procedures laid down in company law;
• The cost of being incorporated was £17.00 annually, being the fee charged by Companies House to maintain the registration.

By the Hon. Treasurer:
• As the Society already submitted Corporation Tax returns annually to HMRC, there would be very little additional work involved in submitting the full tax return for an Incorporated Society.
• HMRC automatically passed copies of submitted returns to Companies House.
• The Society's banker, National Westminster Bank, had advised that beyond being given formal notification of the change of status both the relationship with MBSGB and its bank accounts would be unaffected by the change.
• The Society's insurers had advised similarly with regard to the insurance policy; formal notification of the change was all that was required and the policy remained in force, its provisions unchanged.

During these discussions and exchanges several Members spoke in favour, some strongly; a few spoke against the change considering it either unnecessary or out of concern over its potential to impact on the friendly nature of the Society.

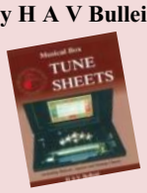
After an Adjournment for lunch, the Meeting was advised that informal discussions between Mr Morrison and some concerned members had taken place; these had determined that the Articles of Association as circulated with the Calling Notice need not apply in total; instead The Articles of Association to go to Companies House with the registration documents need comprise only Articles 1 & 2 from those circulated, together with Article 3 et seq of the Society's Constitution as presently written and approved at the 2014 AGM; together these would become the Articles of Association of the Incorporated Society - The Musical Box Society of Great Britain.

The Resolutions circulated with the EGM Calling Notice were then put to the vote by show of hands of those members present in the room with the following results:

For Resolution 1 -
For Incorporation - 38;
Against - 3;
Abstentions - 1;
For Resolution 2 -
For - 42;
Against - 0;
Abstentions - 0;

Members were thanked for their attendance and the reconvened EGM was declared closed at 1.47 pm.

Fourth Supplement
to
Musical Box TUNE SHEETS
By H A V Bulleid



The Musical Box Society of Great Britain
is pleased to announce the publication of the
Fourth Supplement
to the late H A V Bulleid's original work
Musical Box TUNE SHEETS

Published with the **kind permission of The Musical Box Society International [MBSI]** and in an all-colour A5 format, this Supplement brings together the images of a further 114 Tune Sheets, 110 of which have been published previously by MBSI in its Journal, ***Mechanical Music***.
50 of the Tune Sheets had been collected by the late Antony Bulleid prior to his death; a further 64 have been collected since by Timothy Reed who continued the project at Antony Bulleid's request.

In addition to the images of Tune Sheet Nos 401 to 514 in the series, the **Fourth Supplement** also incorporates **Version 3** of the
Musical Box Tune Sheets SEARCH ENGINE
Devised and Compiled by Luuk Goldhoorn.

*****

In line with the policy adopted for previous Supplements, this combined publication is available from The Musical Box Society of Great Britain
Free of Charge plus Postage & Packing at cost.
However, The Society welcomes donations towards the publication costs it has incurred.

*****

For those requiring the complete MBSGB library of Cylinder Musical Box Tune Sheet publications, a package comprising the original book, its four Supplements and Search Engine V3 is available at a combined price of **£10.00, plus post and packing at cost**.
Copies of individual booklets may also be purchased at reasonable rates.

*****

Orders: Please refer to the Musical Box Society of Great Britain website for information on how to order and details of charges for individual booklets, Postage and Packing - www.mbsgb.org.uk

*****

*During his lifetime Anthony Bullied gave permission for MBSGB to use his work and so The Society is keen to ensure that the Tune Sheet Project should be ongoing and that its integrity remains intact; images of unrecorded cylinder musical box tune sheets are welcomed and should be sent to either Timothy Reed at **treed402@msn.com** or to The Musical Box Society of Great Britain at **www.mbsgb.org.uk**; they can then be made available to the wider interest.*

Derailment High Drama and Unforgettable Magical Mechanical Music Moments – Report on the Society's Spring Meeting in Somerset

Fifty-two members joined the Spring Meeting in Somerset. We were delighted to be joined on the second day by Anne and Roger Kempson, two former members who have subsequently re-joined the Society, and by Kathleen Watts, daughter of our late friend, Joe.

Bernie and the Christie cinema organ at Clevedon's Curzon cinema

Friday night was an informal affair, with friends catching up in the bar and over dinner, where we were also joined by local members Pete and Maddy Hughes.

Saturday morning saw the group off bright and early on the coach, which trundled its way through the picturesque Somerset countryside to the Victorian seaside town of Clevedon. Here the first stop was the historic Curzon cinema, whose claim to fame is that it is the one with the longest continuous use as a cinema in the country. After refreshments we were split into smaller groups for a tour of the premises, where we learned more about its fascinating history and how a cinema functions. Of particular note was the curious wall cladding made of pressed tin, but having the appearance of being either carved wood or moulded plaster.

The Curzon's role as a community cinema means it is also used by schools and other groups to learn about film, filmmaking and the film industry. It was an appropriate venue then to show the short film *Automatic Dreams* on the big screen. This was followed by a screening of a Buster Keaton silent film, energetically accompanied by the local organist in residence, and our host for the weekend, the very talented Bernie Brown.

We then de-camped to local pub, the Salthouse, on the sea-front, for a quick lunch, before moving on to the Clevedon Community Centre for the afternoon. Here Geoff, a representative of the community association which runs the centre, gave us an impromptu talk about the history of the house, which had sparked our curiosity with its various ornate and beautiful architectural features, from stained glass windows, high ceilings, exquisite original Art Nouveau tiled fireplaces, to wood-shuttered windows. Apparently one of the rooms, fortunately not the one we were using, is thought to be haunted, although the only extraneous noises we heard were the gentle clumping from the children's ballet classes being conducted in the room above.

Nicholas Simons continued the theme of silent movie entertainment by showing a hilarious piece of film about driving round New York in the early twentieth century. As someone observed, all very daring, made before the days of CGI. Next we were treated to film of a Hupfeld Phonoliszt Violina, fully restored by Fred Bernouw Restorations in the Netherlands, playing Frederic Chopin's *Andante* and selected as an example of an instrument in particularly good playing order. It can be seen on: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBzaSVbCWxM

By contrast, John Farmer spent some time explaining how Arthur Cunliffe had developed his cylinder musical box register, and demonstrating its value as a research resource. John concluded his presentation by demonstrating a fine early super mandolin box, by an unknown maker, believed to have come from the collection of John Entwhistle, who restored it along with George Worswick.

This was followed by Nicholas taking the floor again to give an excellently illustrated presentation on how a player piano works, demystifying the operation with a series of very clear, animated graphics for those of us less mechanically minded.

Quote from the weekend: 'It's like joining a group of instant friends.' (First-time attendee).

We were played out of the meeting room by music from a video of Michael Jackson's *Smooth Criminal* on Patrick Mathis' Odin organ (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnb7EqfykF4.)

The afternoon concluded with a cream tea served in the adjacent cafeteria, where the sun was now streaming in through the windows, tempting the more energetic to take a stroll around the gardens before boarding the coach to go back to the hotel.

Saturday evening we enjoyed some home-spun entertainment from our regular musicians on their Konzertinas and accordion. Rumour has it that some members are talented enough to play proper instruments, so we live in hope of hearing our own home-reared combo one day.

Dinner with friends at the hotel

After some very 'iffy' weather throughout Saturday, and a not too encouraging weather forecast, we were relieved to wake on Sunday to a cloudless blue sky. It remained clement all day, despite a chill breeze, allowing us to enjoy fully the various attractions that Bernie had laid on for us at his collection. These ranged from the minute – his own miniature railway in his back yard – to the enormous huge steam traction engine out front, which puffed away gently all day. These were joined by the 52 key 'Glorie' Dutch street organ presented by Gerald and Hazel Atherton, a John Smith organ, a display of miniature steam engines, and a barrel piano, the latter having been brought all the way from Hampshire by its owner, Paul Baker.

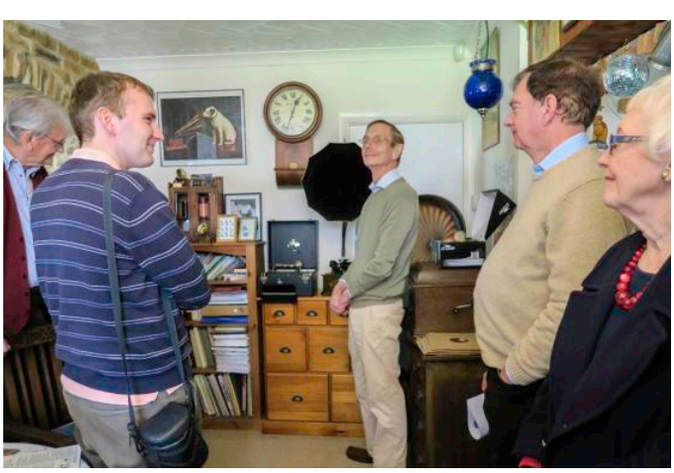
Paul Baker entertains

Inside, the full extent of the Browns' warm and generous hospitality was revealed.

Quote from the weekend: 'Comfortable hotel with lovely views, good weather, great visits, splendid music and good company. That's all we needed!' (Regular)

An army of helpers was laying out an extensive and appetising buffet lunch, yet still had time to offer a welcome cup of tea or coffee. Once again the group was divided up, with one group having a demonstration of the various phonographs and early gramophones in Bernie's collection, ably conducted by his colleague, Paul Collinette, and the other having a tour of the organs and pianos, conducted by Bernie himself. After both groups had seen both areas, it was time to attack the buffet lunch, a sumptuous feast (who said it was going to be a light lunch?).

Once refreshed we had the opportunity to wander at leisure around the collection, both outside and indoors, sit and chat, or explore the bowels of the Aeolian pipe organ's pipe chamber. The installation is still a work in



Demonstrating Bernie's fine collection of gramophones and phonographs

Raising steam in Bernie's front yard

progress, and we look forward hopefully to seeing and hearing the finished result on another visit.

During the afternoon people began to take their leave, but those who stayed to the very end had one more treat in store: Bernie did another tour of the organs and pianos for those who had been unable to squeeze in to either of the demonstrations before lunch. As a grand finale he played a roll of *Blaze Away* on the Aeolian reed organ, exciting enough by itself, but on this occasion further enhanced by Paul Baker delivering an impromptu manual accompaniment on the adjacent Hupfeld piano. For those lucky enough to experience it (it wasn't a question of merely hearing it), it was one of those unforgettable magical moments of mechanical music that you wish will never end.

It was apparent as the weekend evolved that neither Bernie nor Anne does things by half: Bernie had worked late Saturday night to make sure everything would be in tip-top order for our visit on Sunday. This was after expending much time and energy during our visit to the Curzon. This was complemented by Anne extending her own warm welcome to their home, organising and providing for us a splendid repast. We are exceptionally indebted to them and their band of many helpers for making our Spring Meeting such a success and so hugely enjoyable.

Quotes from the weekend: 'I just thought I would say Hello. Me and my wife were in the same room having dinner, and a lovely lady asked us if we minded if she just made a short speech. Please say hello to her. We enjoyed the whole thing and we may just join, but if not, I do hope we meet you all again.' (Independent hotel guest, via email/ website.)

High drama on Sunday as Bernie's miniature steam train derails

News from other Societies

AMICA Bulletin Vol 53 No 4 July/August 2016

See also www.amica.org

This edition anticipates to a certain extent the forthcoming convention to be held in August in Princeton, New Jersey. However, the first feature by Matthew Jaro describes a visit to the Californian collection of Diane and Bob Lloyd. Matthew starts his article with an account of how the couple met, before going on to write about their collection of clocks, phonographs, organs, orchestrions, and a number of other things. Several pages of the magazine are devoted to an article about the restoration of a Wurlitzer Style 175 Band Organ by Joe Hilferty. This is followed by a write-up on the Blessing Orchestrion at the Arnold Chase Collection – the Arnold Chase Collection will be visited as part of the AMICA convention. Another feature of this particular edition is the number of articles which are about the 'history of'. First up Terry Smythe writes about the scanning of music rolls into MIDI. Another article is Part 1 of the history of the Melville and Clark Piano Company, by Jere DeBacker. Another is the History of the Link Piano Company, by Nathan S Bello. MIDI is again the topic of another article, this time by arranger Tom Meijer, who makes the case for using MIDI and includes the views of the Dutch organ grinder fraternity. Tom favours the use of MIDI, whereas many of the organ grinders in the Netherlands are of the opinion that cardboard books should not be replaced by MIDI. Is it possible to tell the difference? Apparently, it is. MIDI has a faster reaction than the mechanical way of operation. Also, when arranging cardboard music for organs, arrangers have to take into account the shape of the holes, because the pages have to remain solid; the MIDI allows greater flexibility. I am grateful to Tom for writing this because, like many traditionalists I regret the loss of the old craftsmanship, but he points out the same argument was probably made when cardboard books replaced wooden barrels. The result was a wider range of music available at a cheaper price, and which was easier to obtain. MIDI is perhaps a continuation of the same evolution, and although the Dutch are of the opinion that the MIDI should not replace the book, perhaps there is an argument that by using MIDI the musical scope is widened, and so is the audience for the organs. Besides two Chapter reports from the Founding Chapter, and reports from the Lady Liberty, Pacific Can-Am, and Sowny Chapters, there is also an article about the Restoration and Provenance of a 1929 Seeburg Audiophone.

Mechanical Music Vol 62 No 3 May/June 2016

See also www.mbsi.org

Warren Stiska, in his new role as Membership Chair, suggests members create themselves a business card to help promote the MBSI, and he writes about how to achieve this. There is a one-page letter from Nancy Fratti, pointing out some of the omissions in Troy Duncan's article in the previous edition, followed by Rick Swaney giving an update on the new MBSI website. Matthew Jaro then follows with his regular column of Nickel Notes. His subject this time is Edward Freyer, known as 'the Master' of re-cut nickelodeon rolls. Jere Ryder informs us of a new acquisition at the Morris Museum – a Stella Grand Orchestral disc musical box, which dwarfs the members of the donor Schaal family. Six pages are dedicated to a report of the mid-term Trustees' meeting. A short item by Luuk Goldhoorn comments on the lack of communication between the various parties involved in the production of a musical sewing case, leading to the impression that it played only one tune, whereas in fact it plays two. In an article entitled Silent Symphony, Andrew Baron writes about the Maillardet automaton, 'the most sophisticated surviving example of the rare, early Writer-Draughtsmen automata in the Western world', and key inspiration for the book *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* which was subsequently made into the Oscar-winning film *Hugo*. A little like our *Stray Notes* the MBSI magazine has a feature called *Interesting Tidbits*, and this time Steve Boehck writes about what he discovered in an 'eclectic private collection'.

Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Vol XXXV, No.2

See also www.reedsoc.org

New President Michael Hendron treats us to an account of his collecting over the past several years. He concludes with 'Enjoy the instruments that interest you. Keep looking – they're out there somewhere.' The first

article, by Nelson Waller, is a bit puzzling: 'The Great Twenty-Fours, Part Two: André Fleury,' simply because I cannot remember a part1! 'Reed organ repertoire is quite extensive and international', writes Waller, 'but it's a sure thing that the French Romantics contributed its largest solo works. He says that Fleury is possibly the last-deceased member of this club. Joop Rodenburg then writes about 'An Interesting Hinners Reed Organ' advertised last August on eBay and bought by a Franciscan church in Brooklyn. Brian D Ebie then writes at length about his mother, Brenda, a long-time member of the Reed Organ Society and one of its past Presidents, who passed away earlier this year. Pam Fluke provides a review of a harmonium concert in London last February, whilst elsewhere Rev Tony Newnhma reviews a CD of Wagner Operas for Harmonium and Piano. Another lengthy article from Allen Myers, again inspired by the Day's Ferry instrument (see above) entitled 'What happened to Wilcox?' examines and compares a number of Wilcox & White organs.

Non-English language journals

Musiques Mécaniques Vivantes 2nd Quarter 2016

See also www.aaimm.org

The cover of this edition features an intriguing musical box with automaton-played bells, which is the subject of an article by Jean-Marc Lebout, and which, if you have read this far, you will see has been reprinted in this edition of The Music Box, by kind permission of Jean-Marc and AAIMM. Patrick Mathis writes about how he came to arrange Michael Jackson's composition, 'Smooth Criminal', for the crank organ. (A video of this was shown at the MBSGB Spring meeting, and for those with internet, a look at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnb7EqfykF4 will be rewarding.) The next contributor, Raymond Messelier, writes that he collects postcards of mechanical musical items, especially fair organs and Belgian dance organs. Amongst his collection is a series of mechanical piano which features a woman called Caroline. In a separate article, the same author looks at postage stamps featuring mechanical organs and musical boxes. I have in my possession a large stamp collection which my late father left to my son – but none, unfortunately, with a mechanical music theme! Jalal Aro and Jean-Pierre Arnault then attempt to explain the purpose of a 'Strohviol,' invented by Auguste Striol, who was involved in the development of the 'talking machine'. Philippe Beau then supplies the third instalment in a non-comprehensive list of retailers of mechanical and automatic pianos in France. The final article is a report of an exceptional public auction which took place in Druout of almost 70 automata from the collection of a Dr Max Tassel.

L'antico Organetto (Associazione Musica Meccanica Italiana) April 2016

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

The first item in this edition is an article by Flavio Pedrazzini and Manuela Cesana about the restoration of an organ made by Giorgio Denis. At first it looked like a French-built organ, but turned out to be Italian. This is not an organ for the street, but a parlour. It was bought in Rudesheim, and needed a lot of work on it, which the article then describes. The next article is entitled 'A Strange Discovery', but perhaps better rendered as 'unusual' or 'odd'. It refers to an organ found in church with the maker's name of Aletti, which appeared to be fitted with the Barbieri playing system. Venanzio Lapore writes about another discovery, one made in the attic, of an old family gramophone, which piqued his curiosity. Towards the end of 2015 the Italian Society AMMI had a windfall in the form of the donation of a Hupfeld reproducing piano DEA Rönisch from a Swiss lady whose father was of Italian origin. The next item poses the question: 'What sparked your passion for mechanical music?' This was asked of AMMI members at the end of last year, and this item, Part 1, prints some of the responses.

Newsletter from Schweizerischer Verein der Freunde, No 125 April 2016

See also www.sfmm.ch

DAS MECHANISCHE MUSIKINSTRUMENT

This edition gets going with tips for members of the Swiss society on how to organise their organ festival. Next, unusually, there is an appeal to all members for any information they have about *Silent Night* on their musical boxes (this much loved Christmas carol is 200 years old). In an article entitled 'Original or technically optimised music record' André Ginesta writes about Aeolian's successful Duo Art reproducing piano, with reference

to composer-pianist Harold Baeur. The next item, ‘How it all began …’ is particularly poignant, based, as it is, on an interview with Fredy Künzle. Götthard Arnold contributes an item entitled ‘Great musical box completes Wilhelmsbau collection in Speyer’, to which he adds ‘a challenge to my person’, From the photographs printed alongside, it is certainly of massive proportions. Next Raphael Lüthi writes about the Special Instrument’ – in this case it is a hybrid Regina disc musical box and gramophone, the eginaphone Model 226. Finally there is another piece by André Ginesta, this time about an exhibition in the Ortsmuseum, Meilen.

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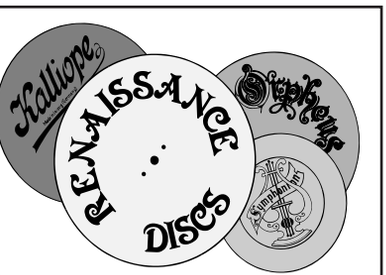

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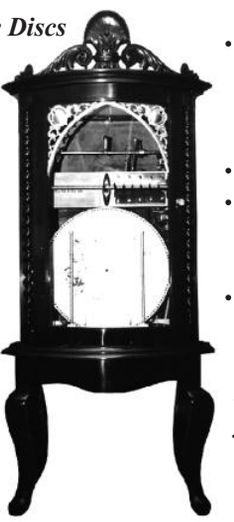

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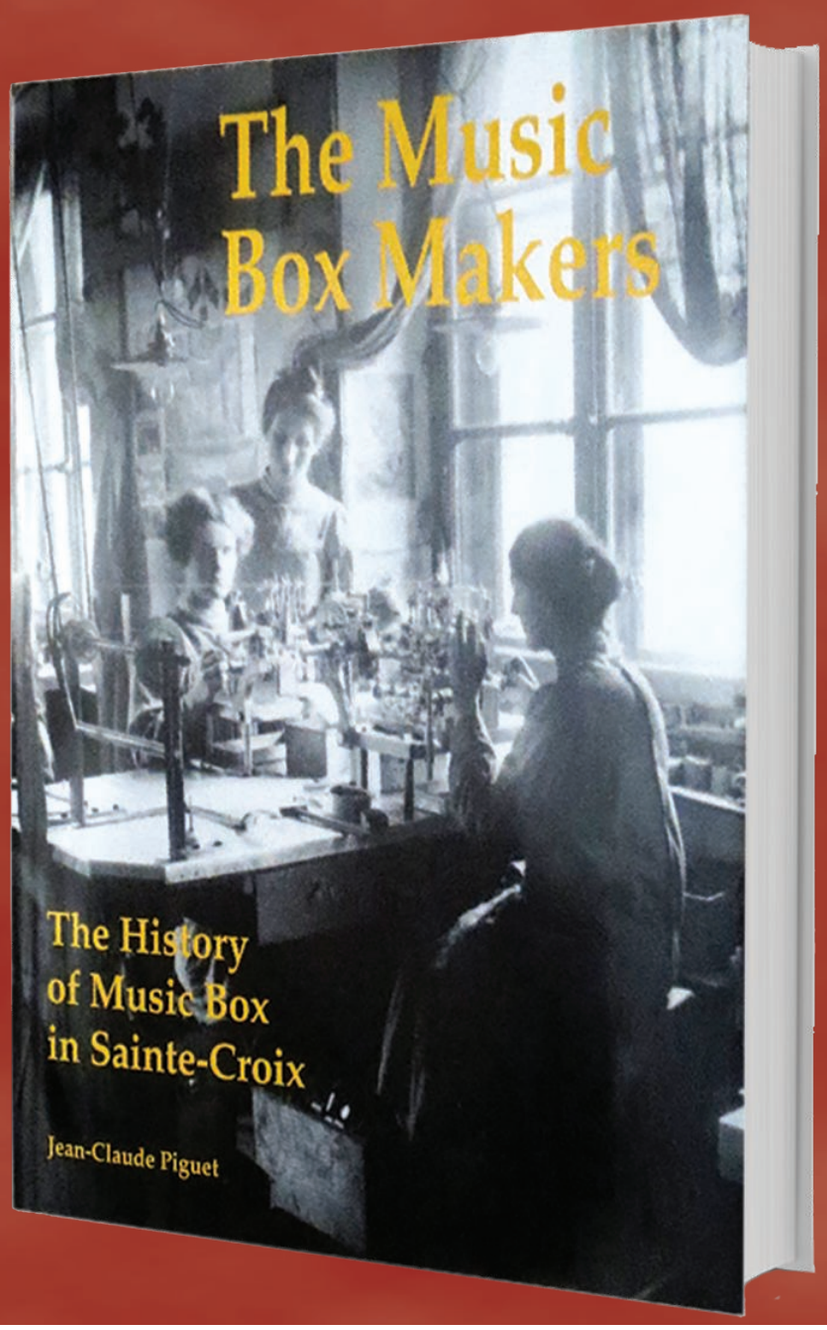

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