

# *The* **Music Box**

*An International Journal of Mechanical Music*

## *In this issue*

*Neither one Thing nor  
the Other*

*Young Collectors Exist*

*Ecce the Rusty Disc*

*The Czech Mechanical  
Music Society*

*A Spring Repair*

*Sacred Music on  
Cylinder Musical Boxes*

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**Cover photo:** The mainspring of a Polyphon, which broke when it was removed for cleaning, and was then repaired by Roy and Dennis Evett who tell the story on page 62.

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*Alexander Rose's Typatune.*  
*It was during the summer of 1992 that the late Jim Colley of Bristol drew my attention to this strange device ...*

Arthur  
W J G  
Ord-Hume  
P48



*A new five part series begins with how hymn-playing boxes and oratorio boxes differ, and delves into the history of Sacred Music on cylinder musical boxes ...*

By David  
Worrall  
P53



*Patrik Pařízek tells the story of Jan Brondra, and how he helped get off the ground the new Mechanical Music Society of the Czech Republic ...*

Patrik  
Pařízek P51



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## **Editorial**

This time we have a mix of shortish and light-hearted articles ranging from the curious tale of Alexander Roses's 'Typatune' by Arthur W J G Ord-Hume, to how to repair a large, strong spring by Roy and Dennis Evett (maybe you shouldn't try this at home!) Alongside these we have two meaty articles to get your teeth into. The first is the beginning of a five part series on Sacred Music by David Worrall – his magnum opus. The second is the first of a two part series on how to conserve your gently rusting musical discs by Paul Mellor.

Older readers often complain that the younger generation show little or no interest in mechanical music, preferring instead their smart phones and computers. Indeed in this edition we publish a letter expressing just these concerns. In contrast we also publish an article by one of our younger members who tells us about his great enthusiasm for mechanical music, and the collection which he is building up.

At the behest of the MBSGB Committee we are publishing on page 47 our Editorial Policy guidelines to refresh your memories about what you should bear in mind when you submit articles for publication in this journal. Please also note the disclaimer below, which is printed in every edition.

Richard Mendelsohn

**Please submit all material to the Editor for publication in the form of Word documents, JPEGs or PDF files, at richardmendelsohn@btinternet.com**  
**Material in the form of hard copy is equally acceptable, in which case please post it to me at my address at left.**

The Editor welcomes articles, letters and other contributions for publication in the Journal which relate to the study and appreciation of musical boxes and other mechanical musical instruments. The Editor reserves the right to amend or refuse any submissions. Any contribution is accepted for publication on the understanding that the author is solely responsible for the correctness of the facts stated therein, and also for any opinions expressed within. Its publication in the Journal does not necessarily imply that the Society, its officers or the Editor agree with those opinions. The Society, its officers and the Editor do not accept, and hereby disclaim any liability for the consequences of any inaccuracies, errors or omissions in contributions which are published in the Journal. The Music Box is published by the MBSGB quarterly.

**The deadline for copy for the next edition is:**

**1<sup>st</sup> July 2017**

**The Editor reserves the right to amend this date should circumstances dictate.**

No article or feature can be reproduced in another publication without the written consent of the Editor.



# Editorial Policy

The committee has decided that the Journal's editorial policy should be published in *The Music Box* as a guide for authors by way of a reminder of what they are.

- Remember *The Music Box* is read all over the world.
- Avoid writing any material which might be construed as politically sensitive, offensive, ethically ill-advised or otherwise ill-judged.
- The Journal is a respected publication, so avoid publication of sub-standard or irrelevant material.

The Editor is responsible generally for what is printed in the journal, and has the right to edit all material submitted for publication. It is always advisable to err on the side of caution, and not to seek the publication of any articles that could possibly be conceived of as being knowingly incorrect, libellous, vilifying, slanderous or defamatory. If an author refuses to allow editing or alterations to their work, then the Editor has the option to reject it.

A précis of any AGM or EGM should be published in the journal following that event so that members can be informed about what has taken place at those meetings.

The editor will ensure that the Society logo and the required ISSN number are placed in the front of the journal together with a suitable and adequate editorial disclaimer as follows:

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

Contributions are accepted on the understanding that their authors are solely responsible for the opinions expressed in them, and the publication of such contributions does not necessarily imply that any such opinions therein are those of the Society or its Editor.

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*The Music Box* is published quarterly on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 7<sup>th</sup> November.

The Editor, over and beyond the foregoing guidelines, is responsible for upholding the overall standards of *The Music Box*, in particular for:

1. Topical relevance in consultation with the Chair,
2. Grammatical correctness,
3. Style of expression in consultation with the contributor,
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Contributors are responsible for:

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# Neither one Thing nor the Other

## Alexander Rose's Typatune

by Arthur W J G Ord-Hume

*In virtually every walk of life there exists the parody substitute which, in some cases, becomes an entity in its own right and generates its personal idiom. Sometimes this is a falsehood, other times it is a whole new and indispensable spin-off. It is said that the gramophone was a spin-off from the musical box and it went on to usurp all before it because it could do the one thing a musical box couldn't – it could emulate the human voice. Of course it wasn't mechanically-made music, only mechanically-reproduced. Other times, it was an uncertain imitation that left its market observers and protagonists asking too many questions. One example of this was the Typatune.*

It was during the summer of 1992 that the late Jim Colley of Bristol drew my attention to this strange device which possessed a typewriter keyboard, the tuned steel sounding bars of a toy piano and was actually promoted as a play-it-yourself musical instrument. It was purely finger-operated and there was no barrel, perforated roll or other form of mechanical operation. At that particular time I took no further action since it was clearly not a mechanical musical instrument within the meaning of the expression.

However, in the intervening years I have had several requests for information, in particular from America. The instruments turn up from time to time, mainly in America but also in Great Britain.

The attached pictures show just about all that is required to know about this device which, like the toy pianos it emulates, sounds rather tinkly, tinny and impure to the tutored ear.

The *Typatune* has a typewriter's three-bank QWERTY keyboard possessing 32 lettered keys, 26 alphabetical and six representing fractions, punctuation and, crucially, the symbol for the US cent in currency.

Each key operates a linkage action to a striking hammer which throws a hammer to the underside of a tuned striking rod made of 3-mm bronze-



*Typatune mechanism*

coloured welding rods. These rods are well formed and located in a substantial cast-iron block bolted to a bracket on the rear of the keyboard. The length of welding rod (it looks just like a welding rod but it may not be) is, of course, crucial and some rods have had their diameters reduced by 98 to 58 thousandths of an inch, so improving the ringing quality as the diameter is reduced. Reduction of the diameter at the free end was also done in steps for a diameter of 90 thou. The pitch of the note rose as shown for increases of one sixteenth of an inch.

Reduced length	1	2	3	4	5	6
Pitch increase (cents)	25	55	70	80	90	115

The effect of reducing the diameter for a given length showed an increase in pitch of plus 50 cents for 80 thou/inch, and plus 85 cents for 70 thou/inch. The rod was initially tuned by reducing the overall length to produce a note of E<sup>5</sup>. It was found that the higher order harmonics were present with some rods, also that these could be reduced by wrapping a few turns of 12 thou/inch

soft iron wire round the end of the rod just beyond the reduced portion.

As originally manufactured, the rods would have been a very tight fit in the cast iron block, and they were riveted over. Even when this riveting was removed they still required some considerable force to punch them out. Care had to be taken in doing this so as not to shock the adjoining rods with the consequent risk of fracture: they were swathed in Blu-Tack mouldable adhesive dough.

It was discovered that the ends within the blocks were slightly grooved with parallel lines, and it is possible that the fit of the blocks within the blocks was improved by this grooving which could have been applied using the type of die used to produce 3-mm pinion wire. Lacking such a tool, the new rods were secured by cutting one shallow round-bottomed groove and securing the rod with a small steel taper pin driven in from the back of the block.

The lowest note sounded in A<sup>#3</sup> which is produced using the letter key Q. To produce a scale, the keyboard runs downwards diagonally across all three banks to produce as follows:

So what is known of the inventor of this curious device which can be neither a typewriter nor a musical teaching-aid, because of its use of a different form of notation? An exhaustive search



*Typatune inventor*




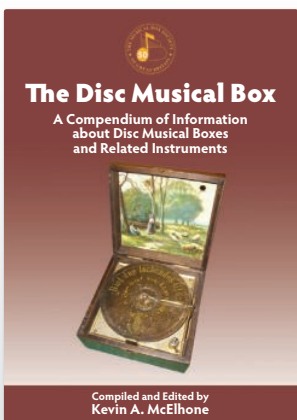
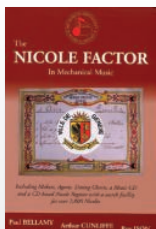
through United States patents produced the information that the *Typatune* was invented by a New York court stenographer named Alexander Rose. Born in Kings County, New York, on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1901, Rose seems to have been destined to make his curious invention through his choice of wife – one Clara Berger. She turns out to have been the daughter of a noted Hungarian inventor of toy typewriters named Samuel Israel Berger, who was working in America at that time.

This parallels the invention of the toy piano, usually in the shape of a grand with a simple piano-style keyboard.

The not-too distant association with the typewriter comes from an examination of the mechanism which is similar too, if itself no more than a simplified version of the mechanism of the well-known Swiss-made Hermes portable. Examination of several *Typatunes* reveals that originally they were made without a hinged lid to cover the keyboard, and all carry a label reading 'Made in Switzerland'.

Type key	Q	A	Z	W	S	X	E	D	C	R	F	V	T	G	B		
Note	A <sup>#</sup>	B	C	C <sup>#</sup>	D	D <sup>#</sup>	E	F	F <sup>#</sup>	G	G <sup>#</sup>	A	A <sup>#</sup>	B	C		
Type key	Y	H	N	U	J	M	I	K	?	O	L	,.	P	:	¾	¼	@
Note	C <sup>#</sup>	D	D <sup>#</sup>	E	F	F <sup>#</sup>	G	G <sup>#</sup>	A	A <sup>#</sup>	B	C	C <sup>#</sup>	D	D <sup>#</sup>	E	F





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However, Rose appears to have formed a distribution company called The Electronic Corporation of America through which distribution was arranged. A photograph exists dated August 1939, the month a US Patent was applied for. This was issued the following 23<sup>rd</sup> May, number 215494, but it seems the war created a moratorium on its manufacture and marketing because nothing further is found until just before Christmas 1945, when it became widely advertised.

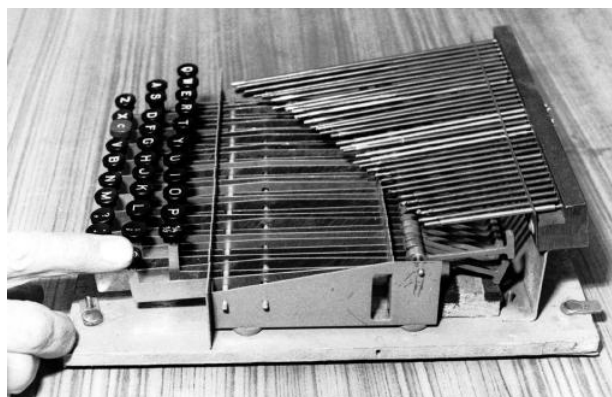
The purchaser of a *Typatune* received with it a spiral-bound booklet showing the keys to press in order to play a number of popular melodies. Measuring 10" wide, 11½" deep and 3½" high, two models have been identified, one in a red rexine case and the other in an off-white wooden case, each with a collapsing carry-handle.

Where does the *Typatune* fit in? The short answer is that it's best classified as a cross-over novelty, being adequate as a teaching instrument neither in the diverse realms of piano-playing nor of typing. Proficiency at either occupation is unlikely to be rewarded either way. Like the gramophone, it will lurk on the fringe of things better – and hoping to be accepted.

In truth, it was probably only intended as a bit of fun!



*Typatune*



*Typatune mechanism*



# *Jan Bondra and the Society of Mechanical Music in the Czech Republic*

by Patrik Pařízek



*Patrik Pařízek is a PhD student of the Department of Art History at Palacký University in Olomouc. He specialises in the artistic craftsmanship of historical clocks. He studied art education at the Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen.*

*He lives and works in Beroun in the Czech Republic. Between 2004 and 2015 he was the instigator of many conferences, exhibitions and children's activities in the Museum of Czech Karst in Beroun.*

*He is the secretary of Society of Mechanical Music in the Czech Republic.*

Jan Bondra was born in 1952 into the family of the village teacher in Třebesko, which is around 2 km from Vysoká u Příbrami, where the world-famous composer Antonín Dvořák lived for 20 years. There is also a very popular little lake here, which inspired him for his opera *Rusalka* among others. Dvořák often visited the church in Třebesko where he liked to play the organ. He also bought an antique organ for this church, which had hand painted ornaments and pipes. Mr Bondra's grandfather was the headmaster of the village school. Dvořák used to visit their family quite often, because he had his own pigeons in Vysoká, and sometimes they flew to the Bondras' farm.

In those days teachers had to be musicians, and also took care of the music in the village church. Bondra's family had a harmonium and a violin at home. The first song he learned was *We Greet you a Thousand Times* (which was also a favourite of Dvořák). Jan was baptised in the Třebesko church. Undoubtedly he had to listen to the church organ: maybe this was his first contact with this instrument, in which he became very interested for the rest of his life.

He began studying technical fields, as he worked in the office of a large company, which was constructing large room computers. Later he continued to study at music school, where he learned to play church organs and how to restore them. Twice he rebuilt the organ in the Old Town Hall in Prague. Another instrument he took care of was the replica of the organ in the church near Pařížská Street, which was built to old plans and was designed especially to play J S Bach's music. It has 48 ranks and 2,750 pipes.

Finally he took care of the organ in St Nicolaus Church on the Old Town Square. Here began the tradition of barrel organ street concerts during the Czech festival of mechanical music.

He fell in love with these instruments, and he started to collect and restore them. He acquired quite a comprehensive collection from small snuffboxes with singing birds up to large street organs. He also had lots of extraordinary pieces. In the Czech Republic he began to cooperate in the realisation of exhibitions of mechanical music with Patrik Pařízek, who has arranged many exhibitions of old clocks, music machines and automata. Together with other members of the Czech society they are trying to get these fine instruments back to the public, because until 1989, during the communist era, this kind of hobby was prohibited. Street organs and musical machines were seen as symbols of bourgeois times. It is a shame that this political era damaged the quite famous tradition of barrel organ makers, and also damaged many of the instruments. There were more than 30 makers.

Some instruments were famous and of very high quality. Thanks to Jiří Volný, a specialist from the City Museum in Liberec, there began a tradition of festivals of mechanical music in our country. He organised the first festival in Liberec in 2010. From 2014 the festival became more comprehensive. Other cities have also joined this tradition. Now we are planning the eighth festival of mechanical music. We start in Prague (National Museum – Czech Museum of Music); then the participants move to Liberec (City Museum Liberec), Pekařov and Velké Losiny (Association Vřesovka) and finally Brno (Technical Museum Brno). So the festival is quite long and possibly there is no other mechanical

music festival in the world which carries on for so long.

In 2012 we established the Czech Society of Mechanical Music under the patronage of the Technical Museum in Brno. In the beginning Jan Brondra was elected president. He visits and plays at lots of events in our country and abroad. In 2016 we became part of the European Project of European Mechanical Music

Glossary (EUMMG). We are pleased to be part of it and we will try to do the best for it. We have also started the cz/eng website [www.flasinet.cz](http://www.flasinet.cz) where we share information about mechanical music events, public and private collections, exhibitions, interesting and historical facts about the history of special music machines in the Czech Republic.



*Jan Brondra*



# Sacred Music on Cylinder Musical Boxes - Part One

by David Worrall

*This article arises from research prompted by the extracts from MMD referred to in the Introduction here. Originally it was intended to be short and so published in one edition of this magazine. However, as the research progressed its scope increased to the extent that now necessitates publication in five parts to be published in consecutive editions. The scope of each part will be explained at the start of each article.*

## Introduction

Recently, on *Mechanical Music Digest* (MMD - the online information exchange provided by and for mechanical music enthusiasts) there appeared a request from an American collector for a 'hymn box' to add to his collection. A short while later a further note appeared from the same collector thanking the vendor for satisfying his request and then posing the questions: 'Can anyone tell me what is the difference between a hymn-playing box and an oratorio box? Is there indeed a difference?' To anyone else posing these questions this article will hopefully help to provide the answer - that indeed there is a difference.

Over the years cylinder musical boxes pinned with complete programmes of music associated with the Christian faith have attracted the generic description or sobriquet *Hymn Box*. During the research for this article a search of Arthur D. Cunliffe's *Register of Cylinder Musical Boxes* (The Register)<sup>1</sup> I revealed that 281 musical boxes have been specifically notified to the Registrar by their owners using that generic term, with a further two described with the similar 'Plays Hymns' or 'Hymn Playing'. However, these easily applied generic terms can inaccurately describe the programme of music pinned on a musical box and so mislead the researcher. This can best be illustrated by an extreme example noted during the research. It concerns two musical boxes made by Nicole Frères, Serial Nos 43639 and 44879, both to Gamme No 2732, and, although the 18 airs do include some genuine hymns, the musical programme also has several arrangements of arias and choruses from oratorios by Handel, Haydn and Mendelssohn. See Fig 1.

Some hymns! Exactly what Handel or Haydn would have said if they knew that the *Hallelujah Chorus* from *Messiah*,

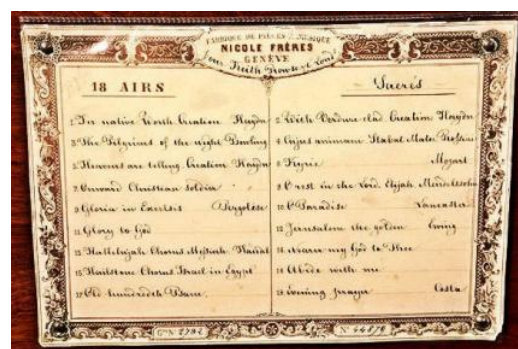


Fig 1 Nicole Frères 44879 to Gamme 2732 pinned with a mix of arias and choruses from oratorios and hymns and registered using the generic term hymn box

or *The Hallelujah Chorus* from *Messiah* in *Egypt* or *The Heavens are Telling* from *The Creation* were being considered as just hymns is, indeed, an interesting line of thought.

As this example shows the programmes of musical boxes so described often represent much more than what one might imagine by the use of the word hymn and so, to refer to them as just hymn boxes is surely inappropriate and could, indeed, would be considered by some people as denigrating. An alternative generic term for *Hymn Box* should be used when describing such musical boxes, but one that still conveys the general nature of their musical programmes.

The general nature of the type of music illustrated in Fig 1 can be defined as follows:

Music that has either been written for, or become particularly associated with words that express the beliefs, allegories, metaphors and biblical stories associated with the Christian faith and has, therefore come to be used by Christians to express, through singing, their faith and beliefs.

The tune sheet in Fig 1 helps this choice as it bears at the top a descriptive term appropriate for its entire musical programme - 'Sacrés' or 'Sacred'. Thus,

the terms Sacred Air(s) or Sacred Music are more appropriate generic terms than hymn box. This article therefore uses *Sacred Music* as the generic term and *Sacred Air(s)* when reference to single or specific item(s) of such music is made.

However, even the term *sacred music* itself is a generalisation, for within its compass can be found some very different types of music associated with the Christian faith. For more detailed consideration this article therefore identifies and defines three broad sub-groups of sacred music:

- Classical: arias and choruses from oratorios, Masses and, indeed operas.
- Hymns: used by main-stream churches and congregations of the Christian faith.
- Evangelical and gospel songs used by Evangelicals in the Christian faith.

These definitions are nevertheless broad and rather loose with the divide between them by no means watertight, or (sacred) airtight if the reader will excuse the play on words. Sacred airs and/or their associated words originating in one could and did become part of another; as an example, the melody for *See the Conquering Hero Comes* from Handel's Oratorio *Judas Maccabeus*, found during research to be pinned on at least 65 musical boxes, has its origins in the Classical group. However over the years it came to be associated with the words of French author Edmond Budry's hymn, *A Toi la Gloire, O Ressuscité (Thine be the Glory, Risen, Conquering Son)*, and used as an Eastertide hymn by many mainstream churches. Similarly, words and music of evangelical or gospel songs came to be considered by the mainstream churches as suitable for inclusion in their hymnals for general use during church services. Unfortunately none that could be used to illustrate this point seem to have made their way into the musical programmes of the cylinder musical boxes found registered to date.

But in all facets of life fashions change, and no more so than in the popular taste for music and words with which

people seek to express their Christian faith in song. Thus many of the items found during this analysis to have been pinned on musical boxes made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century will no longer be in use today.

\*\*\*\*\*

Both subjectively and anecdotally one might be led to the view that sacred music, as defined above, featured extensively in the musical programmes of cylinder musical boxes. To determine the extent more objectively, however, a detailed analysis has been made of the tune sheet information held on The Register. The approach adopted was twofold: to search the information held methodically, using known titles of classical sacred airs and hymn tunes; or more intuitively, using specific words and phrases associated with the Christian faith and so likely to have been included on musical box tune sheets to form part of a tune title notified when the musical box was registered. Altogether over 200 separate searches were made of this resource to compile the results on which much of this article is based.

In addition, the tune sheets in H A V Bulleid's *Musical Box Tune Sheets* <sup>2</sup> and its four Supplements, plus those appearing in Appendix 2 to A W J G Orde-Hume's book *The Musical Box* <sup>3</sup> were also analysed. Where the musical boxes in these two sources were found not to have been registered, they are included in the findings discussed in this article.

Other potential sources of information are the makers' tune lists produced to advertise the availability and choice of cylinders for their interchangeable musical boxes. However, to avoid confusion with and duplication of information obtained from interchangeable instruments already registered, these sources were not included in the main researches described above, and so do not reflect in the tables that follow. Instead, they have been analysed separately and the results



presented in a separate set of tables at the end of the article.

The results from the main searches of the information sources referred to above are in Table 1. They include

Further analysis determined the extent to which the programmes of these 668 musical boxes consisted of sacred music, either completely, partially (two or more items but not a complete programme), or with just a single sacred air. The results are in Table 2.

<b>A:</b> Total Register Entries <i>[As at Feb 2017]</i>	<b>B:</b> Total Registered without Tune Sheets or Music Programme Information	<b>C:</b> Total With Tune Sheets	<b>D:</b> Total of Musical Boxes at <b>C</b> playing only Secular Music	<b>E:</b> Total of Musical Boxes at <b>C</b> playing Sacred Music	<b>F:</b> Percentage of Musical Boxes at <b>C</b> playing Sacred Music
11285	5293	5992	5362	630	10.51%
Tune Sheets Analysed from Other Sources & NOT on The Register				38	
Total Musical Boxes Found With Sacred Music				668	

Table 1 Number of musical boxes pinned with Sacred Music

Programme Extent	Number of MBs	Percentage
<b>Complete</b> Programme of Sacred Airs	351	52.54%
<b>Partial</b> Programme of Sacred Music - Two or More Sacred Airs	78	11.68%
<b>Single</b> Sacred Air	180	26.95%
SUB-TOTAL	609	91.17%
<b>Unidentified</b> - Registered or described as 'Hymn Box', 'Plays Hymns' or 'Hymn Playing', but without any details - both terms assumed hereinafter as referring to the complete programme.	59	8.83%
OVERALL TOTAL	668	100.00%

Table 2 Programme extent of musical boxes pinned with Sacred Music

all single cylinder instruments and some interchangeable musical boxes for which information concerning the musical programmes of their associated cylinders had been registered. Perhaps the first impression to be gained is that a surprising, and rather disappointingly large percentage (47%) of musical boxes registered do not have any information about their musical programmes. This is due mainly to missing tune sheets, but sometimes to the failure or unwillingness of owners to provide the Registrar with that information. Nevertheless, from the 53% that do have this information, the sample can be considered sufficiently large to make, by extrapolation, the reasonably sound overall estimate that sacred music was pinned to some extent on approximately 10-11% of cylinder musical boxes made in their heyday in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This leads to the second impression to be gained from these figures, that the incidence of sacred music is, perhaps not as extensive as might have been thought hitherto.

Overall the research confirmed that most if not all makers known to have been producing cylinder musical boxes during the 19<sup>th</sup> century included in their output some that were pinned to one extent or another with sacred music. See Table 3.

As might be expected, Nicole Frères led the way and by a significant margin, whilst the majority of other makers seem to have produced very few musical boxes pinned with sacred music. Indeed, Table 3 shows that for 26 (54%) of the 48 makers listed,

output was confined to just one or two examples, and that 181 musical boxes (about 27% of the sample), were pinned with a single sacred air. The reasonable conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that as far as sacred music is concerned, most makers seemed to have been responding to specific requests from customers for a musical box pinned with one or a selection of two or more specific, probably favourite sacred airs.

The often expressed theory as to why many musical boxes were pinned with a single sacred air is that it reflects part of our social and cultural history, that in strict Victorian society and certainly so in Britain, only music which could be regarded as being associated with the Christian faith should be played on Sundays. The remaining secular tunes pinned on the same musical box were for the other six days of the week. If this was case then an example of this practice can be seen in Fig 2. This tune sheet is from an eight-air instrument

MAKER	Total Number	Complete Programme	Partial Programme	Single Air	MAKER	Total Number	Complete Programme	Partial Programme	Single Air
Nicole Frères	351	275	36	40	Heller J H	2	0	1	1
Ami-Rivenc	47	26	4	17	J G M	2	0	0	2
Bremond	35	13	5	17	Malignon	2	1	0	1
Paillard	24	7	4	13	Nicole Reymond	2	0	0	2
P V F	19	14	2	3	Paillard Charlotte	2	1	1	0
L'Epée	14	12	0	2	Baker G	1	0	1	0
Mermod	12	1	2	9	Bruger and Staub	1	1	0	0
Ducommon-Girod	8	1	1	6	Cuendet J	1	0	1	0
Lecoultre	8	4	0	4	Ducommon & Cie	1	0	1	0
Concho F	6	1	2	3	Greiner	1	0	0	1
Cuendet	5	2	1	2	Jaccard	1	1	0	0
Langdorff	5	0	1	4	Junod & Aubert	1	1	0	0
Troll S	5	0	1	4	Karrer Hoffmann E	1	0	0	1
Baker Troll	4	1	0	3	Karrer R	1	0	0	1
Gueissaz Fils & Cie	4	1	0	3	Lador	1	1	0	0
Junod	4	2	1	1	Lecoultre C	1	1	0	0
National Music Box Co	4	3	0	1	Lecoultre F C	1	0	1	0
Allard D	3	1	1	1	Manger J	1	1	0	0
Bendon G	3	1	0	2	Reuge	1	1	0	0
Mojon Manger	3	1	1	1	Sallaz & Oboussier	1	0	0	1
Nicole F	3	2	0	1	Soualle Andre	1	0	0	1
Weill & Harburg	3	2	0	1	Ullmann C	1	0	0	1
Barnett & Sons Samuel	2	2	0	0	Stauffer	1	0	0	1
Capt H	2	2	0	0	Vidoudez H	1	0	1	0
					Unknown	65	27	9	29
Number of Makers	48				TOTALS	668	407	78	181

Table 3 Analysis of entries for makers of musical boxes registered with Sacred Music

made around 1875 by the Geneva maker Grosclaude and marketed by Weill & Harburg of Geneva and London. The music for Sundays is at Tune 7 - the

Aria *I Know that My Redeemer Liveth* from Handel's oratorio *Messiah*, which sits uncomfortably with most if not all of the remaining secular items on the programme.

Further detailed analysis summarised in Table 4 has determined how the sacred music

pinned on the 668 musical boxes identified in Table 1 is spread between the three broad groups of sacred music determined earlier. Each of the groups has been examined in further detail and these results will be the subject of more detailed discussion in subsequent parts of this article which will be published in future editions of *The Music Box*.

Aknowledgements:

1 Most of the statistical information in this article has been obtained from the Arthur D. Cunliffe Register of Cylinder Musical Boxes (*The Register*) and is used with the kind permission of the Registrar. It illustrates how powerful and useful *The Register* is now as a source of information when writing articles of this nature. Those readers who own cylinder

musical boxes who have not registered them with *The Registrar* are encouraged to do so and thereby extend the value of this powerful research tool.

2 *Musical Box Tune Sheets* by H A V Bulleid and its four Supplements, published in 2000 by the MBSGB.

3 *The Musical Box* by A W J G Orde-Hume, published in 1995 by Schiffer Publishing Ltd of Atglen, Pennsylvania USA.

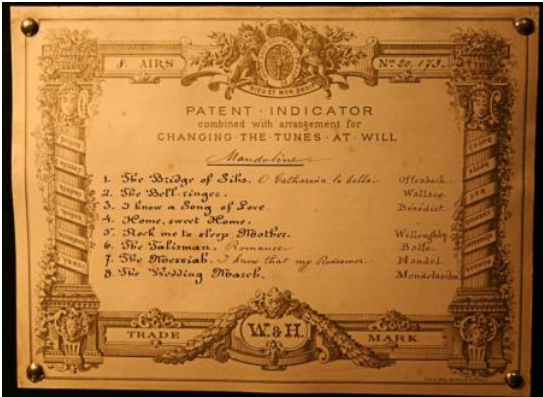


Fig 2 Example of an eight-air programme with a single item of sacred music at Tune 7. Note the special features fitted to this musical box.

Description	Number of Musical Boxes	Percentage of Musical Boxes	Sacred Airs Identified	Incidence of Sacred Airs
Classical Sacred Music - from Oratorios, Masses and Operas	195	29.19%	62	564
Hymns	123	18.41%	144	439
Evangelical & Gospel Songs	78	11.68%	70	537
Hybrid Programmes: Of Classical, and/or Hymns and/or Evangelical & Gospel Songs	213	31.89%		1646
Unidentifiable Programmes	59	8.83%		447
OVERALL TOTALS	668	100.00%	276	3633

Table 4 Spread of the groups of sacred music



# *This, That and t'Other No 19*

by Arthur Cunliffe

Over time it has become apparent that manufacturers who sent musical boxes over to America designed movements and tune sheets especially for that market. The late Anthony Bulleid spotted this a long time ago but it is only recently that undisputed evidence has come to hand that this was correct.

As the internet, and especially eBay, has developed it is now possible to spot accurately where boxes are located. Looking at the information it is often possible to identify a particular tune sheet as one that Anthony noted as being used often in America. The Register has now picked up that, in the case of tune sheet number 89, it has turned up proportionally many times on boxes in America.

Fig 1 shows the tune sheet for a Paillard box which is interesting in that some of the songs were well known in America, and obviously Paillard selected the programme with this in mind. *Sunshine Will Come Again* was taken from the production of *Casper the Yodler* written by Charles T Ellis in 1888. The song *Echoes of the Ball* was composed by Louis Wallis in 1888, and *Till the Snowflakes Come Again* was written by Gussie L Davis in 1837. Taking all this information into account, it would be reasonable to assume that Paillard



Fig 1 Tune sheet for a Paillard box

made this box around the year 1889, or possibly a year later. It has proved impossible to be sure about the tune *Highland Gavotte* as it could have come from a traditional Gaelic tune.

This brings me to the topic of dating musical boxes. Some people want to know the exact year when a box was made. Unlike a motor vehicle, I don't think it matters all that much, provided it is possible to have a reasonable idea of approximately when a box was made within say a span of five to ten years. Serial numbers are still the best way of dating a box, but this can be fraught with pitfalls when boxes have had incorrect replacement tune sheets fitted later. I well remember a dealer of long ago who, when he took in a box without a tune sheet, used to attach any spare tune sheet he had to hand just to make it look better. His past work makes the task of present researchers much more difficult.

Another useful way to date a box is to look at the tunes it plays. Manufacturers seemed to pin the latest tune to a cylinder as soon as they could, which was often the year after it was written. With a little research it is possible to find when a tune was composed, although it does become a lot more difficult when



Fig 2 A twelve-air box

someone insists the box was made many years before the tune was written. A degree of tact is awfully useful on these occasions.

I wonder if the person pinning a cylinder, or cutting out a comb, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century ever paused to wonder what was going to happen to their work in future years. These people were not at all famous and probably had no idea that their work would be admired over a century later. By looking after our musical boxes we are taking our turn to preserve what they made for future generations. Sadly looking even further ahead I suspect that musical boxes will have become scarcer with fewer people interested in preserving them.

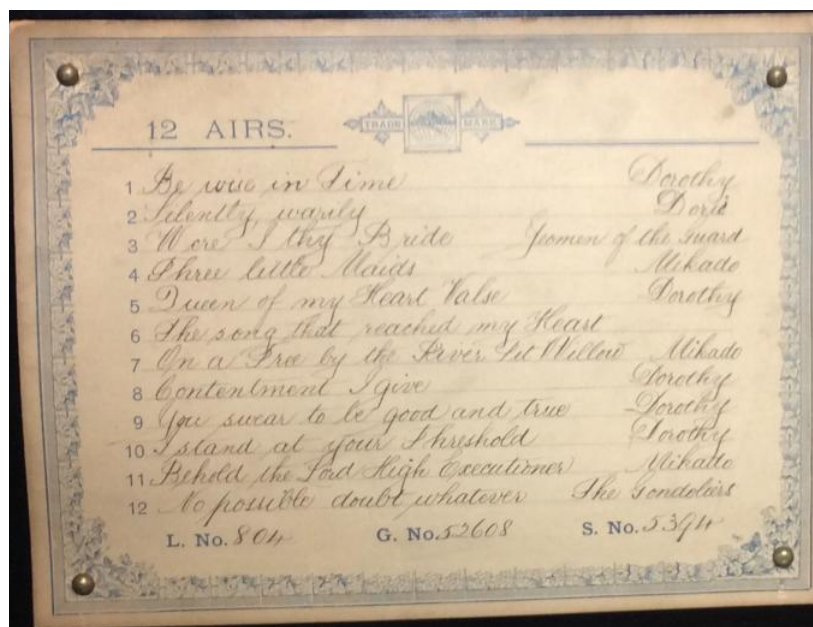
At one time twelve-air boxes were not the most popular types. Their combs had teeth which were widely spaced apart, and it was thought that that indicated poorer quality. Now we know better and realise that the space was needed in order to pin twelve airs on a cylinder. See Fig 2. The only other way of achieving this was to make a box that played two tunes on one turn of the cylinder or, in other words, a two-per-turn box.

When manufacturers realised they had

ten or twelve airs to find they started producing boxes that played many airs from a specific work, so you had say five songs from one production, five more from another, with two airs selected from traditional works to complete the programme. To illustrate this point I have selected a twelve-air late period box that illustrates perfectly what manufacturers were trying to achieve. Five airs are from the operetta *Dorothy* with five more from Gilbert and Sullivan, with the last two being the popular airs *The Song that Reached my Heart* and *Silently, Warily*. To a lover of Gilbert and Sullivan this box would be an absolute treasure. See Fig 3.

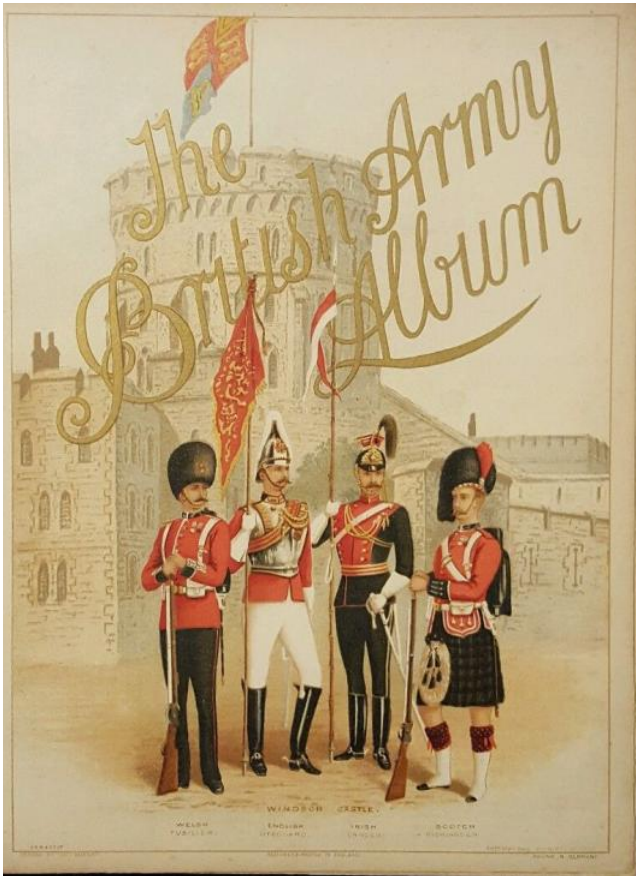
I am always looking for topics to bring to your attention, so if you have found anything at all out of the ordinary please contact me and maybe we can find something new to share with everyone.

To conclude I have selected one or two boxes completely at random just to illustrate what is still out there in the world. I have not chosen particularly valuable or unusual boxes but rather the type that we still have a chance of finding and adding to our collections. Fig 4 illustrates The British Army Photograph Album cover page, and Fig 5 shows a box that has just the bare minimum to be described as a Drum, Bell and Castanet box with only five drum beaters, two for bells and two teeth to operate four castanet beaters. Cut down on that one if you can!

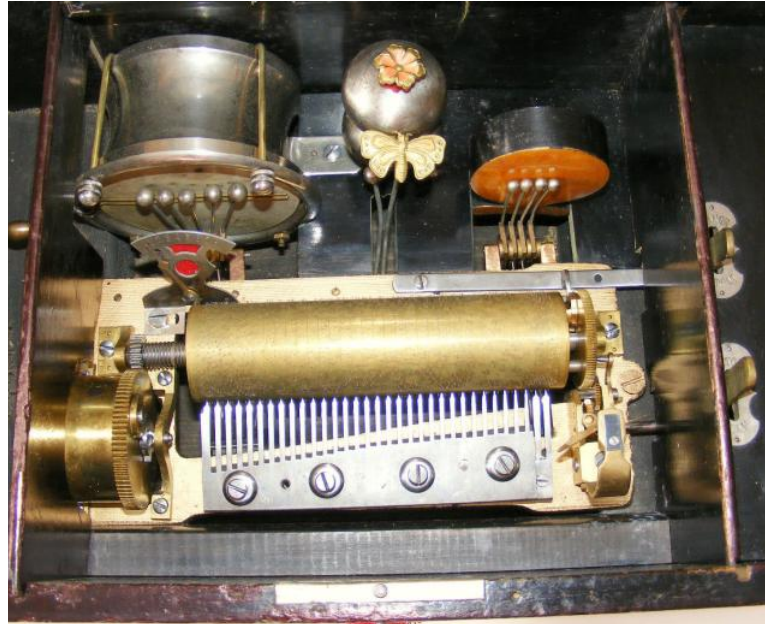


*Fig 3 A late twelve-air box tune sheet*





*Fig 4 British Army Photograph Album cover page*



*Fig 5 Drum, Bell and Castanet box*

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# Register News No 94

By Arthur Cunliffe

A short time ago many people believed that the collecting world was in decline with the modern generation being no longer interested in such matters. Now I believe the opposite might be the case. The arrival of computers and the internet has changed the way people access information, and there might be even more people looking for musical boxes than ever before. Not only that, but they have found a very different and exciting way to do it. What is certainly true is that these people are widely dispersed throughout the world, identified only by their web address.

Just a decade or so ago these modern tools were unavailable to many of us. Those who have still not come to terms with computers and new communication systems need now to go back to school, bite the bullet and take a leap into the unknown. It is rewarding, but at the same time frustrating, especially to those of a certain age who have found modern technology so frightening and unforgiving. We have all had occasions when a machine seems to be in charge and doing things that are unclear and irritating.

When I started the Register many years ago I had no idea that it would become a source of information that would spread all over the world. Now with 11,500 boxes registered, information about anything to do with these boxes can be sent in an instant to anyone with a computer. From not knowing how it would develop, the Register has now reached a state where facts and figures can be sent at the press of a button to anywhere so speedily without any problems at all.

I have become well aware that spreading misinformation is now doubly serious as there is no time to correct any mistakes. Press the send button and there is nothing anyone can do to stop the message going, and it makes no difference whether it is to the next street or the other side of the word. Those who know all about computers realise only too well that they are completely unforgiving animals with what appears to be a mind of their own.

The latest count of boxes registered is in excess of 11,500 with Nicole boxes being the largest number by a long way. I think Nicoles were always regarded as the top maker, so it is not surprising that people have always been loath to discard them. As it is often difficult to positively identify other makers it has taken a long time for survival rates to become known. Nowadays makers such as Paillard, Bremond and Lecoultré are recorded in sufficient numbers to be analysed albeit in a limited way.

For those who are interested I have listed below the numbers of surviving boxes of a few of the most prolific makers:

Ami-Rivenc	312 boxes
Paillard	390 boxes
Bremond	489 boxes
L'Épée	490 boxes
Langdorff	173 boxes
Ducommun-Girod	288 boxes
Lecoultré	500 boxes
Mermod	327 boxes
Unknown maker	2,588 boxes

Compared with the survival rate of Nicole boxes these numbers are most surprising.

Reading and understanding tune sheets has always been difficult with interpreting Victorian handwriting being far from easy. One rather amusing example turned up when I was given *So Biers in the Bark*. Fortunately the composer's name was easy to read. Having helpfully been given a picture of the tune sheet as well, it was relatively easy to solve the problem as *Soldiers in the Park* by Moncton. Of course these tunes were written down by people with little understanding of English so mistakes were frequent. The late Anthony Bulleid was very good at spotting mistakes and he always corrected them. In the interest of historical accuracy I always copy as given with a *sic* warning after the offending word.

If you are wondering what is the title of the most prolific melody found on musical boxes I am sure many of you will come up with *Auld Lang Syne* and you would be correct. There are nearly 500 boxes playing that air. I am sure many of you will smile and say, 'Yes I have one of those.'

Fig 1 shows an example of a six-air three-bell box, which were made in their thousands. Unfortunately in most cases the bells were not tuned and added little or nothing to the box except that it was sure to be noticed. Fig 2 Shows a tune sheet that I believe has been cut down on the right-hand side, but I cannot be absolutely sure. Why would anyone do that anyway? It is still very pleasing.



Fig 2 Tune sheet cut down on its right-hand side

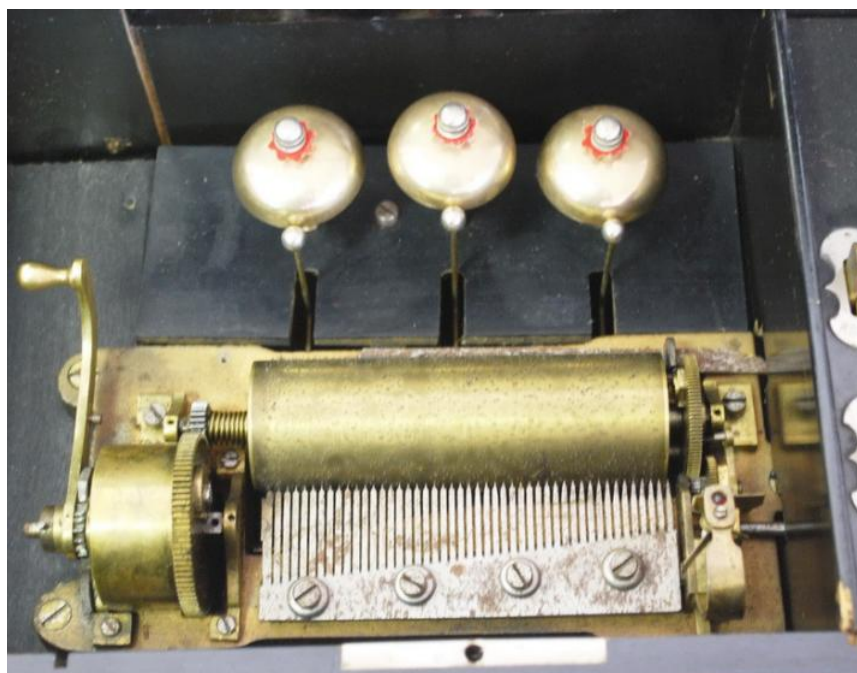


Fig 1 Six-air, three-bell box which were made in their thousands



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# *Restoration Matters!*

## *22 - A Polyphon Spring Repair*

by Roy and Dennis Evett

During the restoration of a Polyphon 15½ inch duplex it was decided to remove and clean the mainspring. Spring maintenance should form part of any thorough restoration.

The spring was wound to about half way whilst in the motor. It was then held safe in its half wound state by a jubilee clip and removed from the motor.

The next step was to mount the spring on an arbor in a lathe. The idea was to wind the spring until the jubilee clip could be removed and allow the lathe to reverse, thus completely unwinding and releasing all tension.

After just a couple of turns there was a loud bang and the spring broke. The spring was still held by the jubilee clip so all was safe. It would have been a different matter had the spring had broken after the clip had been removed.

We were now confronted by two problems. First, the spring had broken several loops from the centre, and second, it was still contained in its half wound state by the jubilee clip. How did we get it out of the clip safely?

The broken end was carefully lifted away from the adjacent coil and wedged in that position. Then, using a micro motor and a combination of worn down cut-off wheels and tiny grindstones, a hole was made in the end of the spring. A very large arbor was then made.



*Fig 1*

It was made about half an inch smaller in diameter than the inside diameter of the broken spring. That equated to about 2¼ inches, and was done so as not to distort the end of the spring. A small wooden wedge was left in to hold the broken end out to a position where the arbor hook could pick up the new hole.

The spring was then transferred back to the lathe, and the process continued from where we were before the break.

With the spring now unwound and safe, a decision had to be made about what should be done next. A new spring was not

readily available. The break was far enough from the end that to shorten the spring by this amount would have compromised its operation. It was decided to attempt riveting the break.

It was necessary to hold the spring in a rigid position and draw out the broken end. A variety of clamps, wooden blocks and bolts were arranged to hold the majority of the spring loops in place whilst the end was drawn out and wedged with wood and bolts.

In order to keep the two ends in perfect alignment, the broken piece was placed in position and clamped with two six mm bolts passed through the coils. See Fig 1. A second hole was now ground through the hole made for the temporary hook. See Fig 2. The two holes were then carefully ground together until they were round, or very close. This ensured the spring would stay in alignment when riveted.



*Fig 2*



A rivet was then made, and the head contoured to suit the radius of the spring. Of course this would be a compromise as the radius of the spring loops varies with winding.

Next a steel bar was fixed in the vice and forced between the coils to act as an anvil whilst riveting. See Fig 3. The rivet was then peened over using a punch. The rivet was only allowed to protrude above and below the joint by one millimetre so as to minimise distortion when the spring was wound. See Fig 4.



Fig 3



Fig 4

With clamps and bolts removed, the care taken over alignment proved to have been worthwhile.

The spring is now back in operation and performs correctly without bumps and bangs. See Fig 5.

*Please note: This procedure can be dangerous. Eye and hand protection should be used. A well-equipped workshop is essential.*



Fig 5

# *Ecce The Rusty Disc – Part 1*

by Dr Paul Mellor

*In 2012, Señora Gimenez, an 80 year-old lady of the town of Borja in Spain, was thrust into the harsh glare of the conservator community via the lenses of the world's press.<sup>1</sup> As a local volunteer she had kindly taken it upon herself to touch up a damaged fresco at her local church, but as her efforts progressed a series of mistakes and subsequent cover-ups led to what can only be described as the vandalous ruination of this religious artifact. With more than a touch of tragic-comedy to the story of this restoration, the painting was retitled 'Ecce Mono'... or 'Behold the Monkey!'*

*This article will be published in two parts. In this part David discusses the options available to conserve corroded discs, and argues their relative merits. In the next edition he will describe the techniques he has chosen for himself.*

As the fortunate custodians of antique musical boxes, how do we look for relevant evidence in the care, preservation and restoration of these marvellous mechanical creations?

Well, it's certainly not easy. One problem is that the key critics of professional restorers are other professional restorers themselves.<sup>2</sup> This difference between experts is exacerbated because some come from an experiential background, whilst others take an evidence (scientific) based approach. Materials conservation is a maturing science, and nowadays large institutions such as museums will focus their employment on conservators with scientific training. Like every other area of science in the 20<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, material sciences knowledge has improved exponentially. For example, the detail of precisely what is happening during rust corrosion is understood from the macro level (e.g. a structural engineering perspective) through to the micro level (such as scanning electron microscope views of a material surface), the fundamental chemistry implications, even down to insights at sub-atomic level.

However, despite this snowball of scientific knowledge, what conservation science still appears to have a relative lack of, is the discipline of prospective measurements regarding long term outcomes. Instead of examining a so-called improved technique of restoration versus an established technique, and then comparing the short term and long term benefits of the two techniques, there tends to be a focus around the scientific



*Image 1 Ecce Homo by Elias Garcia Martinez (pre-restoration)*

*Image 2 Ecce Homo by Señora Gimenez (post-restoration)*

*Reproduced by kind permission of Vladimir Quiroz Mendieta*

details of a short term project. As one leading conservator has recently pointed out 'Few defined preservation and test standards exist within conservation at the time of writing (2008)'.<sup>3</sup> This is understandable to a large extent; it's expensive to conduct long term studies, and how do you manage this in the field of conservation studies over years, decades or centuries? However, it is important to recognise that this type of long term or simulated long term testing can actually be done. A commercial example is provided by IKEA. They didn't wait a decade in real time to understand whether their kitchen drawers could stand up to repeated use. Instead an experimental set-up allowed some level of confidence in the longevity of their drawer mechanisms before going to market. (Look on YouTube to find their old advert on product testing - it's a fine example of a particularly irritating TV commercial).<sup>4</sup>

I am not someone with a background in conservation science. However, as someone with medical sciences training, it might be useful to step sideways a little



and comment on how this is approached from an alternate scientific perspective. For example, in medicine, demonstrating that a treatment has certain effects and achieves beneficial short-term goals is an essential part of the scientific process. But critical to the patient is whether that treatment improves their condition (objectively and relative to another treatment or placebo) over the long term, and the balance of any gain versus the risk of adverse effects. Take the example of a drug for use in cancer (or for any other chronic disease for that matter) - whilst there are many, many things that can be assessed (with more or less clinical relevance), there are also some pretty categoric measurements that will be examined over years. A very clear-cut example, is that patients receiving new drug Y, either do, or do not survive for longer than patients receiving the old drug X. This is a simplistic example, but medical sciences have led the way in establishing many of the ground rules for defining relevant outcomes along with the assessment of levels of scientific evidence. This very rigorous view of how confident you can be with certain types of evidence is now being applied across a diversity of other scientific fields.

confidence in scientific evidence in the ultimate pursuit of truth. The gold scientific standard in medicine is Level one evidence. Notice how expert opinion is ranked at the lowest level (Level five in medicine). That is not to say it isn't useful (there are still plenty of areas in medicine and life where scientific expert opinion is the primary source of information), but it cannot be taken as the same level as proof as that achieved by multiple scientific studies as you climb the staircase of evidence. I have inserted a gap and then Level six below, to reflect where personal opinion and commercial information would rank in relation to scientific expert opinion.

Although there are plenty of well founded conservation science studies, it appears that this sort of ranking of evidence and the attainment of long-term scientific proofs is only just coming into play. For example, randomised controlled trials in conservation materials science are still uncommon.<sup>6</sup>

At this autumn's West Dean College meeting, John Farmer and Roy Evett gave a very helpful lecture on the repair and preservation of musical discs. It sparked a diverse and interesting set of opinions from an array of experienced members on the best ways to clean discs and/or how to keep them clean.

Below, I'm going to present a scientific view on the conservation of musical discs that is a form of critical appraisal. I will attempt to lay out some of the evidence for steel discs only, and please keep referring back to the image above (the *Staircase of Evidence*) to understand the confidence in that evidence. I have attempted to sanitise this report by seeking expert inputs and critical review. (See acknowledgements).

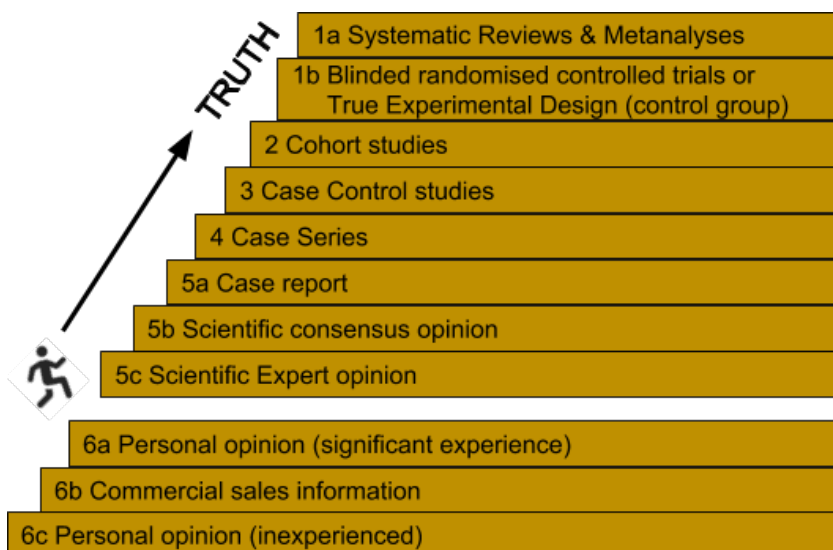


Image 3 Levels of Evidence

Levels of Evidence are often referred to as the pyramid, or staircase of levels of evidence.<sup>5</sup> It's an aid to understanding

### Why conserve musical box discs?

It is a fact that these items are not just collected, they are used - and anything



that is used will inevitably wear out at a faster rate than an item that is not used. One could take the view, that new discs can be produced so there is little value in retaining the old ones. But the original item has its own unique, sometimes intangible value. It is surely beholden upon us to conserve this item of cultural heritage for as long as it is possible (even beyond its functional use). Most certainly custodians of the future would wish that of us.

### **What to conserve of a disc?**

In the first instance, this question sounds a little strange. But a conservator would approach the issue from multiple perspectives: What is the object's historic use versus current use? What historic damage has the object suffered, and what are the current risks of damage to its structural integrity/functional use/aesthetic appearance? Do we restore to new or conserve the current aesthetic form? Should rust just be accepted as patina? How do we preserve the original labelling? Do we restore function to new or not? For any restoration that we carry out, is the restoration itself reversible or what level of irreversible damage does the restoration cause?

### **Is a bit of rust on a disc really that significant?**

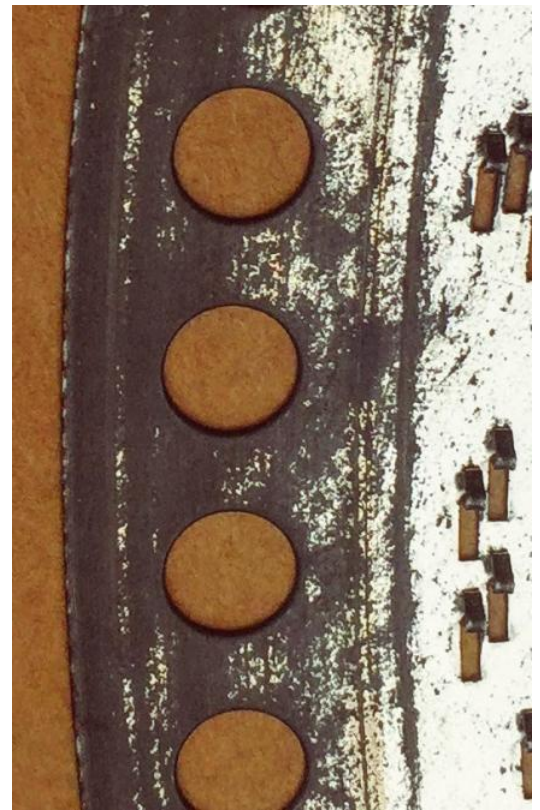
Whilst early musical box discs were made from zinc, the vast majority have been made from tinplate, a colloquial description for what is actually sheet steel.<sup>7,8</sup> Of course, from a metallurgist's viewpoint there are many types and quality levels of steel.

The word corrosion stems from the Latin 'corrodere' which in literal translation means 'to gnaw to pieces'. The modern definition of corrosion hasn't really moved the subject on

in linguistic terms: 'the damage and destruction of a material, particularly metals'. More specifically, rust can be classified in many ways, be that a colloquial comment (surface, powder, aggressive etc), or a metallurgist's top line description (pitting, de-alloying, erosion fatigue etc.)<sup>9</sup> through to molecular science categorisation.<sup>10</sup> Note that unlike some corrosion surface changes seen in other metals, rust does not act as a protective layer to the underlying ferrous metal.<sup>11</sup> So at the end of the day, its presence is never good news from a conservation perspective. One might argue its presence is acceptable on some large scale architectural sculptures as a form of patina, but even then you have to accept that the sculpture's lifespan will be dramatically foreshortened. In ancient artefacts, rust can be interpreted as an inherent but irremovable evil, for to remove it would be to destroy the artefact completely or damage it beyond recognition. Personally, I think it's more difficult to take a non-restoration, non-conservation position for the majority of light to moderately rusted musical box discs at this stage of their evolution (say 130 years old, tops).<sup>12</sup> Incidentally, rust will continue to worsen even when discs are stored in an indoor environment. And this occurs principally by atmospheric corrosion, but also by microbial biofilm corrosion (via our fingerprints), and by stress corrosion (cracking through physical stress i.e. the playing of the discs).<sup>13</sup>



*Image 4 100 year old musical disc with both surface rust and powdery corrosion*



Images 5 and 6 A new, 20-year old, musical disc. Still shiny, but covered with multiple fingerprint (microbial) corrosion marks (this is a close up of one fingerprint). Note also the corrosion of the disc drive hole region on the adjacent image of the same new disc – likely affected by bi-metallic corrosion through contact with the musical box

Our discs are inherently fragile. They are old; made of steel of variable type and quality; they are thin; they come into contact with corrosion promoting human fingers; and for those discs with projections, the functional parts (the projections) are tiny and not at all robust from a conservation perspective.

#### **Restoration Science - mechanical removal of rust:**

In comparison to chemical removal, I could find very little information on Google or Google Scholar regarding definitive advice on the mechanical removal of rust from conservation items.

An author from the Canadian Conservation Institute, has produced a helpful document entitled *Mechanical Removal of Rust from Machined Ferrous Surfaces*. If one views musical discs as primarily a working, functional steel surface, then one may consider the following advice. He regards current conservation techniques to include:

‘The use of glass bristle brushes, electric erasers, and rust erasers (fine abrasives embedded in a rubber-like material)’. Fine steel wool with light oil can also be considered, but be aware that ‘the debris (fine steel particles) can cause further rust staining’. The use of sand blasting, wire cup wheels, radial brushes, and emery paper are regarded as techniques that ‘are too aggressive to be used on artifacts’ as they result in severe pitting and scratching.<sup>14</sup> Note also that brass brushes are not recommended, as small particles of brass can be left behind or become embedded in the surface - and this will cause bi-metallic corrosion.<sup>15</sup>

5c Scientific Expert opinion

#### **Restoration Science - chemical removal of rust:**

There is an abundance of scientific information on the chemical removal of rust, but the evidence appears to be in a period of rapid transition. Probably the easiest way to approach the subject is to

comment on what not to do first. The V&A Museum prevails against home remedies for the use of metal cleaning: 'harsh abrasives, acids or alkalis should be avoided. The use of cola, baking soda, false teeth cleaner or lemon juice is aggressive and uncontrolled. Ammonia - will cause irreversible damage to many materials. Avoid commercial polishing products'.<sup>16</sup>

5c Scientific Expert opinion

In recent conservation history, common practice has been the inhibition of corrosion by tannic acid.<sup>15</sup> Common products containing tannic acid include Rust-oleum® and Rust Reformer®. However, tannic acid causes significant darkening of metal, it can obscure surface details and can even act as a corrosion accelerator for bare steel in neutral solutions.<sup>17, 18</sup> It has been reported that conservators are now moving away from this treatment.<sup>18</sup>

1b True Experimental Design (control group) &  
5c Scientific Expert opinion

Similarly, chemical electrolysis, a commonly employed technique by conservators is now recognised to cause irreversible damage including pitting, delaminating and surface aesthetic changes.<sup>18</sup>

5c Scientific Expert opinion

It would appear that conservation science appears to be behind the times when it comes to dealing with ferrous metals. An example is given in a paper in 2015 concerning historic wrought iron and stating: 'In contrast to industrial and engineering treatment of modern steel, conservation practice is not regulated by accepted national and international standards or underpinned by empirical evidence'.<sup>19</sup>

### **Other scientific reports (outside of conservation/restoration science):**

Again there is an abundance of scientific information on the control of rust in modern metallurgy.<sup>9</sup> And where there are not significant concerns regarding conservation, then a very modern and pragmatic approach to dealing with rust exists; remove it mechanically (by almost any efficient means), and/or chemically. It's about getting it back to bare metal and then protecting it.

### **Non-scientific reports on rust removal:**

A variety of commercial products are available for de-rusting. A significant number are health safe, environmentally safe, efficacious and have become commercially widespread. They fall into two groups: gels and liquids. Examples of gels include Hammerite Rust Remover Gel® and Biox gel®. Examples of liquids include Biox liquid®, Evapo-Rust® and Restore Rust Remover®.

Although detailed ingredients are not available for all products for commercial reasons, the mechanisms of de-rusting are described as follows: Biox® products de-rust through a biological cleaning mechanism, the others function via detergent and chelation action.<sup>20-23</sup> All of the manufacturers claim that these solutions will remove even heavy rust. Material data safety sheets show that the products are generally non-toxic, non-corrosive and relatively safe on skin. They are biodegradable, water soluble and there are no chemical fumes associated with their use. They do not harm unrusted steel.

5b Scientific consensus opinion  
6b Commercial sales information

I have used all of the above products. They will remove some light rust in 20 minutes, but in practice most light to moderately rusted musical box discs, will require soaking for several hours or even overnight, plus light brushing to



achieve effective rust removal. Personally, I found total disc immersion in a liquid to be a more time efficient and efficacious method versus the gels. Furthermore, my impression was that there was no overall advantage with regard to label preservation with the gels (versus liquid immersion), so long as the label had already been protected. Disc label protection was achieved with a layer of painted on vaseline over any printed areas on the disc (see the box below for details of 'How I de-rust my discs').

6c Personal opinion (inexperienced)

### **Conservation Science - inhibition of rust:**

So if you've removed rust and restored an object, and/or you simply wish to prevent further corrosion, what can you do to inhibit rust? English Heritage take a pragmatic approach to conserving metalwork. In the 'Guidelines for the Storage and Display of Archaeological Metalwork', their main focus is on controlling atmospheric corrosion by reducing humidity and atmospheric pollutants through the use of environmentally controlled display cabinets.<sup>24</sup> Professor David Watkinson, an expert in metals conservation based at the University of Cardiff, reports that if the lowering of atmospheric humidity can be achieved, (below 40%, or preferably below 15%), then this is an effective method of inhibiting the corrosion process.<sup>25</sup> However, achieving lower levels of humidity is not necessarily practicable or cheap within the domestic setting.

English Heritage also stress the avoidance of direct handling of metals ('Disposable gloves are better than cotton gloves, which can leave fibres on objects or snag on loose fragments. Chloride has been detected penetrating through cotton gloves after just a single use. Their use is not recommended for archaeological metals').<sup>24</sup> Even

storage of objects in paper or cardboard can cause issues. Packaging involving paper-based products, (inevitably with adhesives), contain sulphur compounds, formaldehyde, water and a wide variety of other damaging compounds. These problems are also found in acid-free paper.<sup>26</sup>

5c Scientific Expert opinion

Whilst it's important to keep musical box discs in dry conditions, most of us are not going to seal them within environmentally controlled display cabinets, and we don't generally monitor and control household humidity. Are there other methods to inhibit corrosion?

Coatings are used extensively within conservation science. However, once again 'the absence of industry standards makes it difficult to identify the best coating'.<sup>3</sup> I have not found information regarding the use of old-fashioned shellac coating in ferrous metal conservation. Nitrocellulose lacquers tended to replace shellac as a generic metal coating by the 1930s, but they in turn were discontinued due to poor efficacy.<sup>3</sup> A conservator, Professor Watkinson states: 'There are a small range of generic coatings in general use within conservation... Renaissance™ and Cosmoloid 80H™ waxes are the most commonly cited microcrystalline waxes. Typically in conservation, particular commercial products tend to be preferred for use over long time periods. In what is often a non-evidence based manner the perception grows that they are proven products.'<sup>3</sup>

It is uncertain as to whether microcrystalline waxes are better than silane or acrylic coatings.<sup>3</sup> One difficulty with microcrystalline waxes is that they are semi-sticky, and like all wax, oil and grease based coatings they attract dust and retain dirt and metal particles. Waxes may not be the perfect solution



*Image 7 The iron clocktower of the Salah El-Din Citadel in Cairo  
By kind permission of Hanneorla Hanneorla*



*Image 8 Oldenburg's sculpture 'Giant Three Way Plug'*

*Both these historical iron objects have been protected by acrylic coatings.*

for musical discs – in the ideal world, we want minimum attraction of dirt to a functional surface that contacts the musical box mechanism and can then in turn transfer particulate matter to it.

There is insufficient conservation science experience to know if silanes can outperform these above-mentioned

coatings, but they do carry the disadvantage of some level of irreversible ferrous metal damage.<sup>3</sup>

Acrylics (such as Acryloid®, Incralac® or Permalac®) are non-damaging reversible coatings (they can be removed with acetone), and according to the manufacturers offer up to five years protection from rust. They are ultra-thin coatings and not sticky like greases or wax. These have been increasingly described in conservation science, but in the form of isolated case reports. An example would be the preservation of Claes Oldenburg's sculptures of the 'Giant Three Way Plug' based in the USA.<sup>27</sup> In another case study, it was found that Permalac outperformed other acrylics in terms of longevity of preservation, and so it was used in the conservation of the iron clock tower of the Salah El-Din Citadel in Cairo.<sup>28</sup>

#### 5a Case reports

Could Permalac or other acrylic coatings assist in the protection of musical box discs? As a functional work surface, the coating could be expected to be rapidly removed by abrasion from all points of disc contact with the machine. Furthermore, discs are flexible and are naturally bent when placed within the musical box, which could lead to further cracking of the coating. In general, we wish to avoid the introduction of unnecessary material/dust into the working machinery of the musical box. Information from the manufacturer of Permalac shows that as an acrylic coating, it has measurable high flexibility.<sup>29a</sup> Extrapolating from published abrasion tests<sup>29b</sup>, a crude estimate can be made of the powder release: approximately 1gm (equal to around a ¼ teaspoon of powder) would be abraded from the contact zone of two musical discs 19½" in diameter. This is not an insignificant amount of material to be released over time, and is cumulative per disc



played. Furthermore, two professional conservators, report that there can be problems with the use of acrylic coatings (surface aesthetic change, imperfect coverage and differential protection) and they see it's use as overkill in the context of working musical discs.<sup>15, 30</sup>

So if coatings are not necessarily the best way forward for musical discs, are there any other practicable alternatives to keeping discs rust-free? Luckily for us, there are.

Vapour Corrosion Inhibitors (VCIs) are chemicals with a low vapour pressure that vaporise and condense on a metal surface, forming an adsorbed layer that then protects the metal from atmospheric corrosion. The use of VCI's to prevent rusting has been established over decades. For example, VCIs are extensively used by the military to protect munitions and stored weaponry. There is no damage to the metal surface and they have proven efficacy. Historically, VCI packaging materials contained significant toxic components such as amines, nitrates and heavy metals. For this reason,



*Image 9 A steel part stored in VCI remains rust free long term - versus the same part not stored in VCI packaging*

conservators were reluctant to use these toxic products in public spaces. However, the technology has moved on, and new-generation VCI packaging that remain highly protective of ferrous metals, but exclude toxic components have been developed. These new-generation VCIs have been investigated by a slew of public bodies (USA, UK, EU etc.) and declared health safe.<sup>31</sup>

So all this information is somewhat interesting, but at the end of the day, what should we do with our musical box discs? Well, there is at least some evidence to support a proven scientific route. In Part 2 of this article to be published in the next edition of *The Music Box* I will describe what I am doing to restore and conserve my own discs



*Image 10 Military forces routinely protect materiel in VCI impregnated plastic bags*

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## *The President's Message No 16*

From time to time it doesn't hurt to revisit the aims and objectives of our organisation and remind ourselves why we are here.

I joined the MBSGB in 1980 because I had been stricken by that all too familiar *disease* of having seen and heard a musical box, and as many of you will know, once you have seen or heard a particular mechanical musical instrument, you are smitten. It, or something similar, then becomes the object of your desires. I needed to learn more about them, and in the days before the internet the most obvious place was the Society. So in my case I was responding to its role of educating the wider public about musical boxes.

I imagine that others might have joined to learn more about how to look after and restore items they had acquired. And there may have been those who joined simply for the sociability. Although this is not a primary aim of the Society, there is no doubt that sharing one's interest on a personal basis with others affords a lot of convivial companionship. The subject does over time become infectious.

At this time of year as we anticipate the AGM I compare what we have achieved over the year with the aims of the Society, to see if we, the Committee, but especially myself, have met the criteria. I look to see where we have failed, or where there could be improvement, and consider how we might address this in the coming year. Delivering reports is a good discipline to make



*President of the MBSGB  
Alison Biden*

one focus on the job.

One of the challenges is how to carry through the work of the Society in an environment which is now very different from that of 55 years ago when it was founded. As I said, there was no internet then, and the manner in which people engaged with their special interests was vastly different from today.

One of the perennial issues with virtually all organisations these days is the ageing membership, and the difficulty in attracting younger members. I could write a book about this but won't, as one has already been written.\*

We all know the problem, but fixing it is harder. Organisations, ourselves included, can get into a vicious circle where we need more members just to be able to reach out to more potential members. It doesn't just happen by magic. Having observed a few organisations which seem to be

coping in the current climate, I firmly believe we need to have a stronger presence on social media. However, the Committee is aging along with the membership, and few, if any, of us have sufficient skills and understanding of these media to manipulate them to our best advantage.

At the AGM we will be voting for a new Committee. I am anticipating some new blood joining, which I hope will both bring in new ideas and energy for tackling some of the challenges facing us, as well as adding to the resources we have for effecting them.

Over the coming year I hope the Committee will have the opportunity to reappraise how it is measuring up to enacting the aims of the Society, and how we can build on the strong base we already have and perhaps be a little more innovative and daring in our approach to achieving our aspirations and taking the Society yet further forward. Please do come along to the meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> June – it is your Society, and this is your opportunity to let us know how you think we are measuring up, and to share with the Committee your aspirations for it. Don't just leave it to others – get involved yourself!

We look forward to seeing you there.

\* *Bowling Alone*, by Robert Putnam, published in 2000.

Alison Biden

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir

There seems to be a lack of public interest in mechanical music.

Unfortunately street organs are not computers, and in our view, if it is not a computer they are not interested, and even if an organ is run by micro chip, it is still an old fashioned ‘uncool’ instrument to young people.

We are of an age when barrel organs and street organs were still on the streets, and we find our audience are more inclined to be of our age group. We have encountered derogatory remarks, which many of you may have done, about not being ‘cool’, wherefore the older generation give us nothing but praise, as we found last year when we were in Arundel Music Festival, a rather upmarket town and event.

We are trying to do our bit to keep street organs in the limelight. We appeared on Angel Radio (which unfortunately only covers the Havant/Portsmouth area) in November and December 2016 in four quarter-hour programmes on barrel organs, and how we became interested in them in Portobello Road as children, plus further two programmes with ‘pipes and reeds’ – street pipe organs and reed organs. You can hear Angel Radio online.

These programmes were done purely to try to promote our type of mechanical music and were done free of charge and not for any gain on our part. We were previously refused coverage by the local BBC, whose excuse was that they had lost our correspondence.

We feel this is the direction to take to promote our type of music, after all, you only have to tune

your radio on to any local station or the BBC to hear what would call ‘muzak’ - rarely do you hear beautiful melodies which are capable of being played on our instruments.

Angel Radio have informed us that they intend to repeat the programmes in the evenings, which should attract more listeners than the original broadcasts, which were at midday on a weekday. We hope to inform Worlds Fair when the programmes are to be repeated, hoping that they will put the details in ‘What’s On’.

Yours

Richard Kerridge and Keith Hilson

*Editor’s note: The MBSGB Archive recently received CD copies of the radio broadcasts mentioned along with the above letter.*

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:

3261	Brian Sallery	Herts
3262	Trevor Choppin	Yorkshire
3263	Jorge Leite	Portugal

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.

You will get more value from your membership if you come along to one of our four local area groups where you can ask for advice, meet other members present and have a go at tune identification. Currently the local groups meet in London and Home Counties, the Midlands, Hampshire and in Worcestershire.



<b><i>DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2017</i></b>	
21 <sup>st</sup> - 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2017	<b>MBSGB National Meeting.</b> Valley Hotel, Ironbridge, Shropshire. Contact njasmbs@btinternet.com or phone 01332 760576 to check for vacancies.
13 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	Open Day at Jonny Ling's Grange Musical Collection. The Grange, Old Bury Road, Palgrave IP22 1AZ. 10am – 5pm 01379 783350. musicmuseum54@yahoo.co.uk
14 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	Diss Organ Festival. Fairground and Street Organs, Steam Engines and Vintage Vehicles. 10.00am – 4.00pm. Display by MBSGB. www.dissorganfestival.co.uk
14 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	National Vintage Communications Fair. The Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, The Fosse, Fosse Way CV31 1XN.
20 <sup>th</sup> May 2017	<b>MBSGB Teme Valley Winders.</b> Eastham, Tenbury Wells, Worcs. 11am start. Contact John Phillips 01584 781118
3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2017	<b>MBSGB AGM.</b> Roade Village Hall. Details in flyer
23 <sup>rd</sup> - 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2017	Waldkirch International Organ Festival. The world's best organ festival, which happens every three years. Coach and train tours are arranged by Linda Paskins of Melody Tours, 01271 879621, linda@melody.tours
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2017	<b>MBSGB London and Home Counties Group.</b> Meeting at the home of Richard Cole and Owen Cooper. Collection includes an Aeolian Residence pipe organ and a Wurlitzer cinema organ. Contact Kevin McElhone 01536 726759, kevin_mcelhone@btinternet.com
30 <sup>th</sup> September - 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2017	<b>MBSGB European Trip</b> to Bakkersmolen Museum in Amsterdam, Pianola Museum, Perlee Organ Works, Utrecht Museum, Museum Dansant and Ferme des Orgues. Further details from David O'Connor davidcoconnor@aol.com See article flyer for details on how to book.
7 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	Milton Keynes Organ Festival. Milton Keynes Museum, McConnell Drive, Wolverton MK12 5EL. 01908 316222
14 <sup>th</sup> October 2017	<b>MBSGB Midlands Group.</b> Special visit to Beamhurst Museum on A522 near Uttoxeter, Staffs, ST14 5EA. www.beamhurstmuseum.co.uk This is a private collection of over 1000 items of nostalgia. Arrive at 11am, bring your own packed lunch. Free entry with a small charge for refreshments. The meeting will include our usual 'show and tell'. <i>Note: It is intended to make this into a mini-National Meeting by arranging a local quality hotel and other events during the weekend. More details in the next Music Box.</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2017	<b>MBSGB Teme Valley Winders.</b> Eastham, Tenbury Wells, Worcs. 11am start. Contact John Phillips, 01584 781118

# *Don't panic! Young collectors do exist!*

*by Thomas Macey*

Having been a member of the MBSGB and other similar societies for some time now, I often read with interest articles on attracting new members, and trying to capture the imagination of younger collectors.

At 29 years I don't know if I'm the youngest member of the MBSGB, but I have had a love of mechanical music all my life. My interest came about through my great uncle, Sid Taylor, who was himself a member from the very beginning of the Society. In the corner of his living room was a 19 5/8 upright Polyphon, which he had restored from very derelict condition back in the 1950s. As a self-employed electrician he often visited homes and businesses, and on one such occasion he came across the Polyphon in a pub in Staines.

The case had been left out in the courtyard for many years, and the mechanism was in a cardboard box. Saving as much of the case as he could – sadly much had rotted with time he took the instrument home and restored it. Having no discs, he placed an advertisement in the local paper and within days people had offered him discs from all over the place.

This Polyphon not only introduced my uncle to collecting musical boxes, and his collection soon featured some very fine cylinder boxes, but also introduced me to the fascinating world of mechanical music. With a handheld torch I would watch with wonder when the



*Thomas Macey*

penny dropped and the instrument played *I must love someone* from Floradora, my uncle's favourite disc.

As time went on I played other instruments in his collection, and very soon my love of musical boxes grew. It wasn't until 2009, when I inherited a Nicole Frères cylinder box from his collection, that I started my own collection. My uncle had purchased it as a restoration job, which was another part of the hobby he enjoyed, but sadly he never got round to working on it. As it had suffered a run some time in its life, I had the box and mechanism fully restored, including repinning the cylinder. It now sits in pride of place amongst my other musical boxes.

As with many collectors one box became two, then three and before long my wages were being spent

on new additions and new discs. The 19 5/8 Polyphon that had started it all joined the collection together with barrel organs, cylinder musical boxes, phonographs, gramophones and a simplex piano player. Coming home after a day's work, and for me playing one of my boxes was the best entertainment I could have wished for. Joining the Society is one of the best decisions I have made, and together with my uncle's collection of past copies of the MBSGB magazine (he kept every from 1963 onwards) I have a wonderful source of reference material for many years to come.

I hope one day to attend one of the meetings, and so be able to talk with fellow collectors and make some new friends. At the moment I am saving up to have my interchangeable musical box restored. This is a late example retailed by Nicole Frères with a nickel-plated mechanism, and I hope to share this very soon once it is completed. One of my friends at work, who is much the same age as me, is also interested in mechanical music and I will do my best to ensure he becomes a member. In the meantime, don't worry, young collectors do exist!





# THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN

**Précis Minutes of the 2016 AGM, Roade Village Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

*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 a.m. A total of 44 Officers and Members were present.

**Apologies for Absence:** 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, and 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 and 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:

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	- Richard Mendelsohn	Members without Portfolio	- Nicholas Newble
Paid Appointment	- 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 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 at 11 a.m. 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.
- Several 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 in order to hold the EGM; it was reconvened at 13.44 and closed at 13.47.



# ***THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN***

## **Précis Minutes of the 2016 Extraordinary General Meeting, Roade Village Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

*NOTE 1. Members are advised that the following is a precis 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/Chair Alison Biden took the Chair and declared the Extraordinary General Meeting [EGM] open at 12.13 p.m. 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 members' 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 other questions 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 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 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 EGM was declared closed at 13.43.p.m.

Note: The meeting was adjourned at 11.58 in order to hold the EGM; it was reconvened at 13.44 and closed at 13.47





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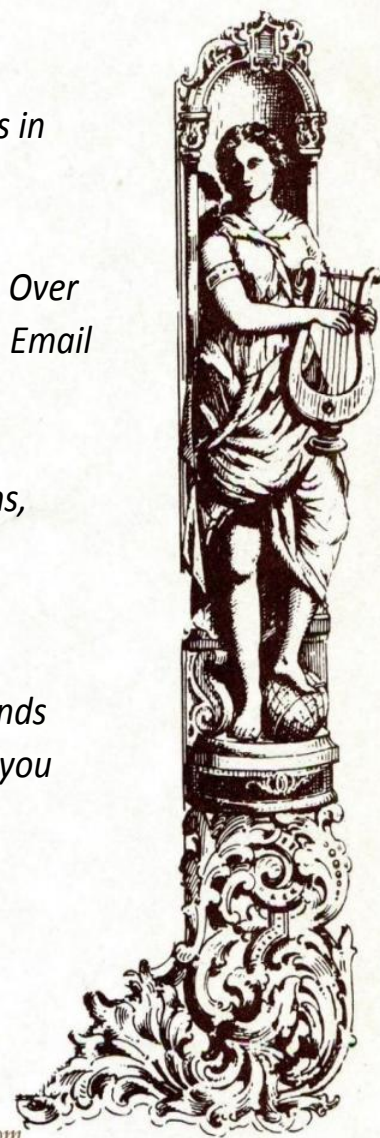
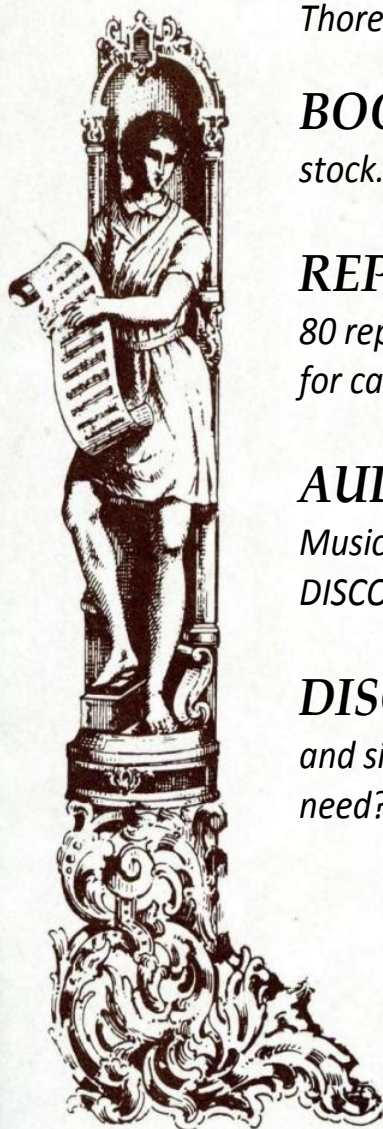
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# Wessex Group Meeting

Saturday, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2017

After the usual socialising over tea and coffee on arrival, the meeting was brought to order by playing the Sailor's *Hornpipe* on a 15 ½ inch Regina, and people were asked to be seated when the music stopped.

The theme for this meeting was *America*, which could be interpreted in any way, including stretches of the imagination – as proved the case. Not unexpectedly we started with an early, rare cob organ, which the current owner had found in a Wessex auction. Relatively few of these pressure-operated instruments were made in the two-year window of production, 1888-90. The attraction of such an instrument was it was very light, and therefore eminently portable. Conversely its successor, which worked on suction, was made in the hundreds of thousands from the 1890s onwards. This section of the meeting concluded with the playing of a few tunes on an even larger instrument, a Cabinet Roller Organ, made by the Autophone Company of Ithaca, New York, some time in the 1890s. These types of instruments were associated with Methodism,



Brian Chapman demonstrates his American paper roll playing 14-note organette

and became known as *Methodist Boxes*. Still portable and versatile, they were a lot heavier compared with the other two examples demonstrated.

A 14-note paper-operated original organette was also demonstrated. Often mistaken for the British made *Draper*, this example was in fact an American model.

Several cylinder boxes were demonstrated. First up was a snuff box, which played two airs, the first of which, *The Boatman's Dance*, is American. This was followed by an exquisite six-air box of unknown make, but possibly a Lecoultre, from 1832-33, which played *Yankee Doodle*. As it sounded so nice and it had an interesting embellishment which sounded like bells, we asked for some more tunes, although not strictly American, and were able to identify *The Lincolnshire Poacher* for the owner. Another fine box, a

Ducommun Girod, had once been badly converted to lever wind, but has now been returned to a key wind. It also played *Yankee Doodle*. The last cylinder box in this section was a lever-wound two-per-turn by Lecoultre and this was another stunning-sounding box, so much so that we listened to the best part of the entire repertoire. It was noted that this was a transitional box as it had obviously been set up as a key wind box, but showed no evidence of having ever been wound by key. It had been made about 1850, but an accompanying original letter showed that it had been re-sold in 1870, with the vendor explaining to the new lady owner how to operate it.

The next box, a small early four-air cylinder box, was European with American connections. A Nicole Frères from the 1820s, it had no gamme number and the tunes had not been identified. The present owner had acquired it at an MBSI auction some years ago, and it bears an old 'Bornand' sticker on the underside. Much to his consternation it needed a considerable amount of work doing to it, but now completed, the result is worth it, with the last air having an exceptionally pretty embellishment to the arrangement.

A large Ami Rivenc, which the current owner had acquired about nine months ago from the Continent, only having heard it over the telephone, fell into the category 'I have brought this along as one of my latest acquisitions' but was also thought to have been to the USA and back during its career. It proved very popular with the audience, who requested more



American 14-note paper roll organette

tunes both immediately and later on. Many agreed that although most, if not all, were fine renditions of popular operatic airs, all of them sounding somewhat poignant, Schubert's *Serenade* was worth the box alone. The last box before lunchtime was a Paillard, this time an 'alternate tip', which had sparked the inspiration for the theme, as at least three of

its airs are associated with America: *Yankee Doodle*, *Star Spangled Banner* and *Silver Threads Among the Gold*.

The lunch break was curtailed by a not entirely unexpected visit from local resident Matthew Feldwick, who for a good half hour entertained us with his account of how he was instrumental in the preservation of the Wurlitzer cinema organ in the Burberry retail shop in central London. Burberry do not appreciate it as much as the previous owners, Habitat, and it is currently maintained but not played very often. The same applies to the Compton organ in the former Southampton Guildhall, which we must now all call the Southampton O2. Following Matthew's success, he has since listed three

more cinema organs in London. Matthew is also responsible for the restoration of the local Twyford Victorian Waterworks, and invited members along after the meeting.

After Matthew's departure we had a change of topic, with one of our very talented members demonstrating his handiwork. His first item was a German musical novelty, which he had found in an auction, and which was described as being made by Wentz & Kuhn, in 1880. However, he subsequently discovered that Wentz & Kuhn did not make things as early as this date, and it was early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It comprised a main figure on a pedestal, thought to be the Virgin Mary, holding a baby, and surrounded by a circle of smaller, winged figures, which revolved as



1880 cylinder movement with six bells, now rehoused in brand new case

a group as the music played. The tune played on a small 36-note movement was quickly identified as a German Christmas carol. When first acquired the small figures were lacking several limbs and instruments, which the new owner has now rectified. We were also shown an 1880 cylinder movement with six bells, now housed in a completely new, but

very authentic-looking case. The marquetry motif on the top of the lid had been achieved by cannibalising a cheap decorative tray found on eBay. A Celestina organette was demonstrated with a roll of American tunes, the first *The Star Spangled Banner*, followed by *Marching through Georgia*. The last tune was titled *Trump! Trump!* although was at first misread as *Trump! Trump!* to everyone's consternation. Yet more American tunes were played on a Seraphone, an English-made organette.

Two American disc boxes also featured in the day: a 12¼ inch oak-cased Regina, from 1904, and a 15½ inch Regina.

Report Alison Biden; photographs David Worrall



# London and Home Counties Group Gathering

25<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Colney Heath, Hertfordshire

When a meeting is held in a local hall rather than a venue with a resident collection, it is always a concern as to how many instruments will turn up to be demonstrated. This was not a problem at this meeting as there were in excess of 25 musical boxes, organettes, musical novelties and unusual instruments. We also had four films and presentations. As there were so many I will mention just a few of the more unusual items which were demonstrated.

We had two very different 44-note chordephons, slightly different models, but both able to play the same discs. We were given a talk by a guest speaker on the history of chordephons. The models shown were thought to be made in 1896 and 1897.

Ray Chirgwin brought along his late grandfather's George Bendon



*Ray Chirgwin with his grandfather's George Bendon musical box*



*A pair of very different 44-note chordephons*

musical box. Ray joined the society a year ago to seek advice on how to restore it, as it was rather distressed, had a broken governor and several tips missing. With the help of another member he was able to bring grandad's musical box back to life. As this box had a tune sheet there was no need for us to try and identify the tunes. So instead Ray produced an excellent computer presentation describing the restoration and showing pictures to represent the tunes, which we had to guess before they were played. A field of Scottish bluebells and an unhappy policeman were quite easy, while some were more difficult, but we got four of the six tunes.

A member from Kent brought several interesting items including a Nicole overture box, a lovely necessaire with a gilt frame, and mother of pearl panels, and also a singing bird box with a

clock above on pillars.

Roger Booty, well known for his expertise on organettes, played a rare patent Gem Organette made by Maxfield of 326, Liverpool Road, London, for which he had to create the music from an instrument with the same scale, but on a much wider paper roll, as the ones which he had with the organette had been partially devoured by mice.

Tony King showed an excellent film he had made of a trip to Germany in 2002 which showed several interesting musical museums. Another member showed a selection of pictures taken on a recent trip to Brussels, which was to celebrate his wedding anniversary, but he managed to slip in a few musical venues.

We had a presentation on how to do French polishing, accompanied by Powerpoint slides which included film of the actual process.

David Dingwall demonstrated his latest acquisition, a Kalliope 13 inch disc musical box. This had one comb with 60 teeth.

Phillip Chandler demonstrated

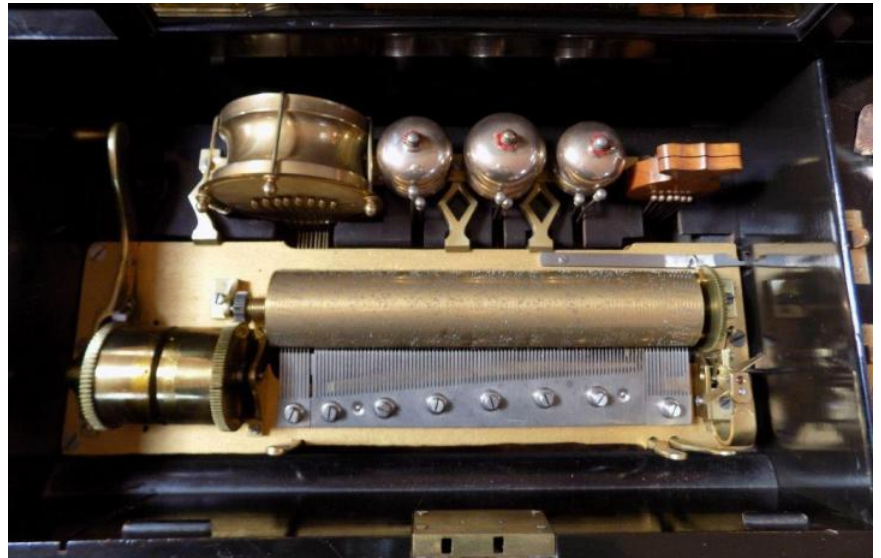


*Members enjoying the sound of a Nicole musical box*



*An impressive necessaire*

his musical box which had the National Music Box tune sheet, and also markings to show that it was made by Ami Rivenc. Ray



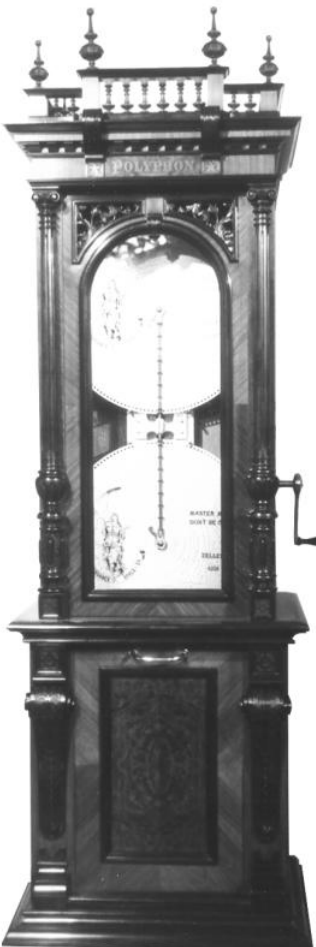
*A Nicole with all the extras*

Wilderspin explained about his rollmonica and played a tune.

Many other instruments were brought along and demonstrated. We would like to thank all those who contributed including Roz,

Sylvia and Toni for keeping us supplied with tea and coffee throughout the day.

Robert Ducat-Brown



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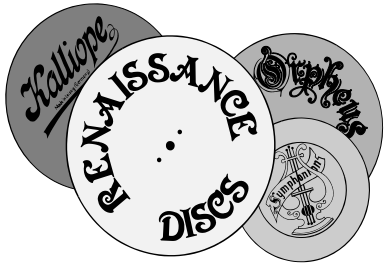
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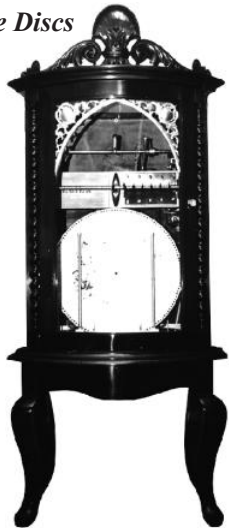
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## News from other Societies

### **AMICA Bulletin Vol 54 No 26** **Jan/Feb 2017**

See also [www.amica.org](http://www.amica.org)

In his column, editor Glenn Thomas warns us that this edition is their annual MIDI-focused one. Matthew



Jaro submits a feature in his regular Nickel Notes (which also appears in the MBSI's 'Mechanical Music') on the subject of Marty Persky. Seven pages long, it amounts to a small biography. We then have a preview of the AMICA 2017 convention, which this year will take place in Winnipeg, Canada. A feature of this convention is getting there, with the option of taking a scenic rail trip. We then embark on the MIDI core of this edition, introduced by editor Glenn Thomas with his 'Hardware and Software Guide to MIDI'. Terry Smythe then presents us with 'An Historical Perspective on Roll Scanning'. Peter Phillips writes about 'Australian Roll Collections', inspired by his borrowings of rolls over the years in order to preserve them as MIDI files. This is followed by an offering from Nathan S Bello about Johnny Maddox, 'considered one of the most authentic performers of ragtime music to record in recent times.' There is one more item, by Glenn Thomas, about the 'rare B A B Perforator Acquired by Herschell Carrousel Factory Museum' before this edition concludes with reports from Boston Area, Heart of America, Lady Liberty, Northern Lights, Southern California, and Sowmy Chapters.

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### **Mechanical Music Vol 63 No 1** **Jan/Feb 2017**

See also [www.mbsi.org](http://www.mbsi.org)

Before we get into the main content of this edition there are several routine and small

announcements. The first article is the regular feature Nickel Notes by Matthew Jaro whose topic this time is the actual music found on mechanical instruments, focusing on a small number of collectors who have a large collection of music rolls: John Motto-Ros; Steve Cobb; Ed Gaida; David Ramey Jnr; Jerry Biasella; Mike Argain; Brad McClincy; Tim Trager and Richard Groman. A number of these people also produce new rolls. This is followed by Part V of the exceptional series 'Silent Symphony' about the restoration of the Maillardet automaton. Just from the images alone one can appreciate what a complex machine this is. A product of the Henri Maillardet workshop in London, it travelled far and wide during two centuries, particularly around the USA. Bill Wineburgh then introduces us to two more examples of the elusive Euterpephon disc musical box, manufactured by Albert Wilhelm Neumann of Leipzig in 1893–4. We then move from disc boxes to pianos, and a pair of Nelson-Wiggen Casino-X Pianos restored by Edward F Hatstrup. There are reports from the National Capital, Northwest International, Golden Gate, Southeast, and Southern California Chapters. The contents conclude with an obituary for Daphne Ladell and one for Larry Karp.



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### **Mechanical Music Vol 63 No 2** **Mar/Apr 2017**

This edition introduces members

to their new Treasurer. A small but interesting item notes that 2017 is the tenth anniversary of the M D Guinness Collection's permanent installation in the Morris Museum in Morristown. During that period the museum has had nearly a million visitors. Guinness's endowment does not make provision for capital improvements, so the Museum has launched an appeal. The work they hope to carry out will improve traffic flow and Popper's 1913 'Rex' orchestrion will play to greet everyone. Getting down to the more substantial articles, in his regular feature Nickel Notes, Matthew Jaro discusses how recordings from famous collections are a way of enjoying mechanical music without owning a machine. This is slightly misleading as the article does more, and details some of the actual collections, and interesting snippets about their owners. Andrew Baron concludes his excellent series, Silent Symphony, on the restoration of the Maillardet automaton. The innovative Dr Wayne Finger then writes about Printing Replacement Parts at Home. Yes, folks, you did read that correctly – we have truly entered the digital age with mechanical music. Whilst Dr Finger advocates that it is always preferable to maintain the original or, if a replacement is required, find an original to replace the part, when all else fails, there is now the option of using a 3D printer to fabricate one. In this



article he shows examples of a printed Seeburg KT Special coin box, a view hood for a Mills Autostereoscope, a Wurlitzer unit valve adapter used to animate an orchestrion conductor, and spool flanges for a Popper orchestrion. He then describes the process – which I am not going into here. Dr Finger also supplies a review of a book, *The Robot*, by Lisa Nocks. This is not a recent publication, and it languished a while in his pile of books to be read. He says: ‘If you read the entire book ... you will be left with a deep understanding and appreciation of how the clockmakers, musical box makers, automata makers and others laid the foundation which has enabled the multitude of automata and robotic capabilities we enjoy today.’ This is followed by an article entitled ‘The Pouce and the Ligne’ by Paul Bellamy. Without reading it in its entirety it appears to be largely an expanded commentary on work already published by H A V Bulleid. Bill Wineburgh follows this with a report on a visit to the Cranker’s Collection, a private collection of antique cars and mechanical musical machines in north-eastern Pennsylvania. There are reports from the Japanese International, National Capital, Southeast, and Southern California Chapters. Finally, Ernest William Blair, Jnr and John Birkitt are remembered.

### ***Vox Humana – January 2017***

See also [www.moos.org.uk](http://www.moos.org.uk)  
I get exhausted just reading the MOOS News – the first item in

this edition – so much is going on. This is followed by the minutes of last year’s AGM. David Dingwall then writes at considerable length about one of my personal favourites – a Decap organ. This specific one is the 92 key ‘Jeanneke’ of St Albans Organ Theatre. The forthcoming Diss Organ Festival (14<sup>th</sup> May – you still have time to plan a visit), is previewed, appropriately followed by a description of the Great Dorset Steam Fair. Another more intimate festival is the subject of the next feature: the 2016 Oktoberfest at Mizens Railway, and this year 2016’s guest organ, De Lange Gavioli. A brief comparison of the only two Alfred Bruder organs in Britain follows, their respective owners having met on the 2016 MOOS trip. Peter Craig then relates how he came to see the 121-key Decap organ De Forum, when it visited the Hooze Platen in Breskens in the Netherlands. The description of the journey itself is intriguing, never mind the organ. This particular example is considered to be the last original 121-key Decap organ which is still travelling, thanks to its owners Leo and Joke van Thillo. Peter certainly packed a lot into a two-day trip, visiting the town of Goes (I know it well) and its steam railway link to Borsele on the Sunday. Just shows what you can do. The Russell Cook collection is then reviewed by David Dingwall following the visit of the MOOS on the occasion of its 2016 AGM. This is located in Shropshire, and such is its fame it attracted a good attendance of MOOS members from far afield. Peter Craig must be the master of intrigue, as another article by him is entitled ‘Eleven Boxes of



Pommes Frites’. One wonders what this has to do with organs. It turns out the cardboard boxes thus labelled contained a large number of 84-key Mortier music books, which had been sold on eBay, and which Peter was trying to unite with their new owner in the US. (It’s a very long, almost shaggy dog story, but one of those things that frequently happens with an interest like ours.) This developed into somewhat of a project, as Peter sorted the fragments of books until he established there were 98 books in all, and played them on his own organ, although many were not cut to suit his particular model in terms of registration. Surprisingly, eight of the books were by Chiappa Ltd. With the fall in the value of the pound following last year’s referendum, the new owner finally decided to have the books shipped to him in the USA. A piece from the archive follows: the reproduction of the MOOS newsletter No 3 as written by the late Boz Oram. The final piece in this edition is another offering from Peter Craig, about the Arnett Mortier – a rather special Mortier. One of two similar organs built in about 1927 it is the only one to survive in its original condition.

### ***Reed Organ Society Quarterly Vol XXXV No 4 2016***

See also [www.reedsoc.org](http://www.reedsoc.org)

This edition opens with a delightful anecdote by the President, Michael Hendron, of how he discovered a big Rodolphe Harmonium in a church during his trip to France. For those of practical bent, there is then an article by Jim Tyler, ‘Making New Plungers’. This is followed by an item about composer Jean Langlais (1907 –



1991) focusing on his *Vingt-Quatre Pièces* op 6 written 1934–39. This is an article in which his music is analysed and reviewed by someone (Nelson Waller) who has more than a passing knowledge of music. Just a taste: ‘Central to his art are medieval traits stemming from his devout Catholicism: a love of modes and quartal/quintal harmonies, inverted chords in parallel motion like fauxbourdon and so forth.’ Intriguing enough to make me want to listen! There is a rather brief mention of each of two festivals that had taken place: one in Bern last Summer (no further information) and an Estey Songfest in Texas. Ron Manzow however gives more detail in his account of ‘Discovering My First Organ’. Reading like an extract from a Stephen King novel, Ron describes how he made the discovery in an abandoned log cabin in the wilds of Wisconsin. The instrument in question is a six-octave ‘Western Home’ made by the Bergh Piano Company of La Crosse, Wisconsin. The author successfully restored it, and judging by the photograph it is a truly handsome piece. He went on to restore over 50 more organs. Marilyn Swett describes giving reed organ recitals in a Denver cemetery. Despite experimenting with playing a duet with a ‘cello which had some dubious results’, she concludes: ‘The use of both the Estey reed organs along with the cello was well received by the tour audience, and I was glad to be able to show off the capabilities of the reed organ and talk about the history of these wonderful instruments to today’s public.’ Four old photographs of reed organs being put to good use in African missions are reproduced and prompt the question of the reader: Can you identify any of these reed organs? If I have one

criticism of this magazine, it is that a large part of the content consists of lots of very small items. I shall not mention them all. One is a reminder that The Reed Organ Society is keeping a register of all existing reed organs. The last substantial piece in this edition is entitled ‘An Introduction to the American Reed Organ, History, Advertising and How it Works’.

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### ***Organ Grinders’ News No 100 Spring 2017***

See also [www.boga.co.uk](http://www.boga.co.uk)

The cover page of this issue is dedicated to comments from two Committee members, on the future viability or desirability of what we would call ‘national’ meetings, requiring members to travel considerable distances and overnight stays. A Bernard Jones writes how he made an organ in four days over Christmas – only, the case was a one-fifth scale, and the actual music is produced by means of a modern movement purchased from Kevin McElhone. There is a brief review of three venues holding events of interest to BOGA members: St Albans Organ Theatre (and its Christmas concert), Milton Keynes Museum, and the summer camp for organ grinders at Lavenham. Norman Dicker writes about his W Raap 20 key barrel organ. This issue marks the 25th anniversary of the Association, and the rest of the contents are dedicated to looking back over its history.



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### ***Non-English Language Journals***

***Het Pierement October 2016***

See also [www.draaiorgel.org](http://www.draaiorgel.org)

This edition opens with a brief item about a 100-key Gavioli which accompanied a carousel at Revere Beach in Massachusetts. From there it had a very itinerant life around the USA. It played 82-note BAB rolls. As with most instruments, it finally underwent restoration. A new series by Tom Meijer begins about Organ Adventures in Amsterdam. The first photograph acts as a transition from his previous series. Once again it is very much about the personalities and organs from the past. This is followed by a two-page spread about the renovation of the Speelklok Museum in Utrecht. This would appear to incorporate a remodelling of the interior to display organs in a more natural context. Fred Dahlinger Jr writes about the Limonaires Frères operation in Waldkirch and some of its productions. We then have a feature on Adolphe Adam, born in Paris in 1803, who composed for Parisian vaudeville, before going on to write what we would consider more serious music. Inevitably many of his compositions are found amongst organ music. This is followed by a two-page article on self-build organs. All the items in this edition seem to be two pages long – and the next up is a report on the 40<sup>th</sup> Organ Day in the Open Air Museum in Arnhem. Maarten van der Vlugt presents a three-pager which is the second in the series about the Symphonia archive. This is followed by an account of manhandling an organ on a very hot day, with very little help, through (the presumably French ski resort of) Alpe d’Huez, although my Dutch is insufficient to understand as to why this massive





operation was undertaken. An item about a 100-year-old fair in Dorset is followed appropriately by one about a hundred-year-old organ on its new trailer. The contents of this edition conclude with a short piece about the tune *Tango Yvonne*, and an even shorter item on an exhibition in Wohlhausen, Germany.

### *Musiques Mécaniques Vivantes* No 101 2017

See also [www.aaimm.org](http://www.aaimm.org)



The first five pages of this edition deal with the minutes and business of last year's AAIMM AGM, followed by two more pages previewing this year's AGM weekend. Next we have the article by Philippe Beau about his Hicks piano, which featured in the last edition of *The Music Box*. Jean Marc Lebout then gives an account of last November's regular mart in Rüdesheim dedicated on this occasion to the memory of Siegfried Wendel following his death the previous month. We then have a two-page report on the 10<sup>th</sup> International Festival in Iasi, Romania, by Henri Noubel. Antony Chabrol writes about a complete tuning of the reeds of an Aeolian Orchestrelle. This is followed by another of Philippe Beau's occasional series listing makers and retailers of mechanical pianos in France. This particular one features those in the 71 – 75 Départements of France. Six pages delivered by Jean-Marc Lebout inform us of the bargains or treasures we missed in recent auctions, followed by his regular column, Serinet (get it?) drawing attention to items of interest on the internet. Next we have an article

by Jérôme Collomb about Jean Ducloux's 87-key Gavioli, believed originally to have been by Limonaire. Operated by barrel, it was converted to book. One of the tunes carried an intriguing title of *Valse TB*. It transpired that the 'TB' stood for 'très bien' (= very good), an opinion recorded by a former owner. The waltz turned out to be titled *Aimer*, and had been composed by none other than Lodovico Gavioli himself. Lost in a fire in 1977, this organ now survives in a number of sound recordings. An article about a Polyphon automatic disc changer comes from the pen of Arnold Gotthard, translated into French by Sebastien Schuetz. Henri Noubel gives us a taste of an *Anthologie Illustrée de l'Orgue de Barbarie 1742 – 1946*. This publication contains numerous diverse writings gathered from over the years on the subject of mechanical organs, from those who loved them to those who hated them. Perhaps I should have termed those organs not mechanical but automatic, as Yves Strobbe argues in the final article on the finer points of terminology to describe

the objects of our affections. The distinction becomes more acute when you factor in the use of

electricity and electronics. He is right, and as a linguist I find this fascinating, but it would not be appropriate to expend more space here on this topic. We have enough trouble educating the public that our various instruments are not hurdy gurdies! Lastly, looking at the advertisements, if you have a fine card-book playing organ and fancy some special music for it, you could do worse than commission Patrick and Jonathan Mathis to produce something for it.

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royevett@talktalk.net. Tel: 01538 372299.

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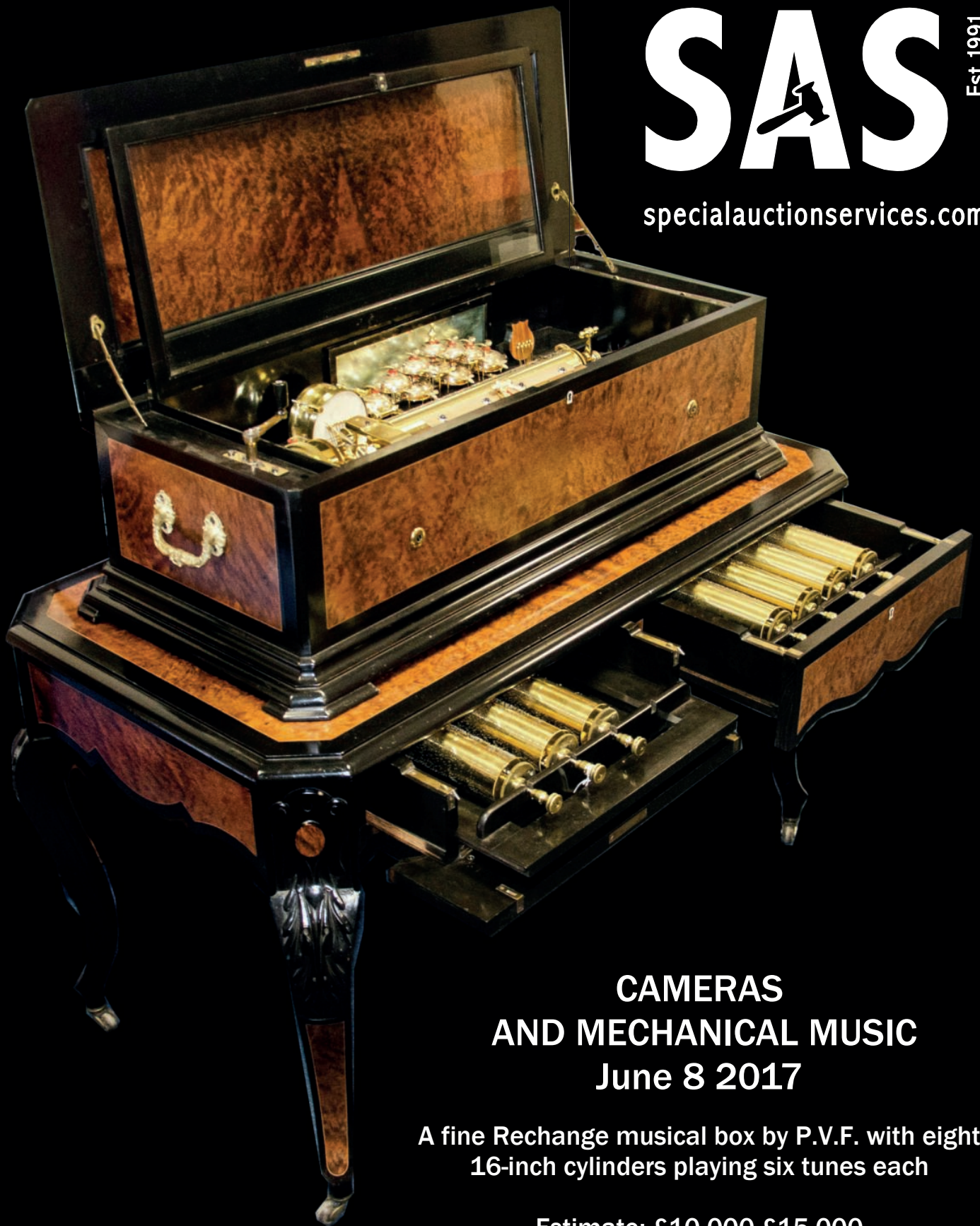
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