

The **Music Box**

An International Journal of Mechanical Music

In this issue

HARO's Organino

*Joseph Beloudy – an 18th
Century Genius*

*From Piano Score to
Disc or Cylinder*

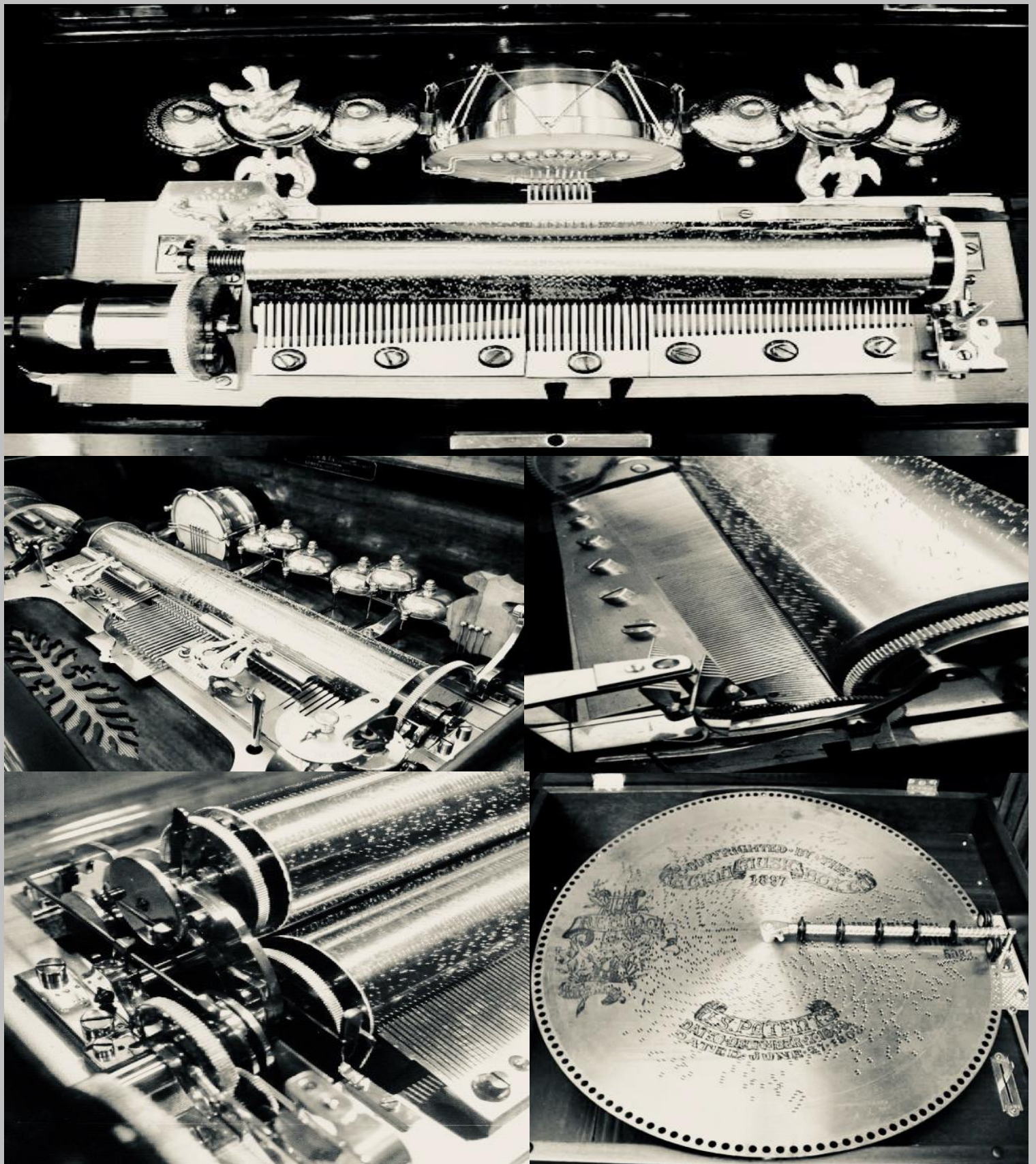
*Nostalgia's not what it
used to be ...*

*The 56cm Polyphon
Musical Box*

Sacred Music Part 5

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain

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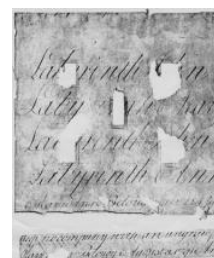


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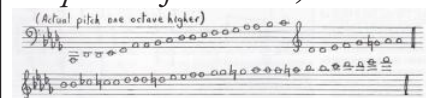
The purpose of this paper is important to remember. It is there to seal the grain of what is inevitably a thin panel of wood to ensure that air does not leak

through. ...' writes Arthur W J G Ord-Hume



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An important respect in which a musical box differs from some other forms of mechanical music is that it exists as an instrument in its own right ... (An old article by Robin Timms is reprinted for interest)



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It's not every day that one is fortunate enough to inherit a Polyphon disc musical box in reasonable working condition ...



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Editorial

Music is one theme main in this edition. As well as the final instalment of David Worrall's magnum opus on Sacred Music, we are reprinting an old article by Robert Timms (RIP) about transposing music from the piano to a disc or cylinder, and the big musical issues this entails. We decided to do this because this is a timeless matter for musical box owners, and this piece is very thorough and bears revisiting for new members and refreshing longer-serving ones.

This is my last edition as Editor of *The Music Box*. I have very much enjoyed editing this journal for the last three years. I have learnt so much about musical boxes from all the articles which have passed across my desk. I have enjoyed learning about all the activities of the Society's members at your many meetings. You have made great progress in taking musical boxes to both enthusiasts and the wider public. Your commitment and enthusiasm toward musical boxes is being successful in keeping this fascinating and entertaining subject alive. They are part of our worldwide heritage, and a cultural gem. I am standing down as editor to pursue other interests (as they say). I have recently been accepted into the Livery of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, and I need to allow myself more time to carry out duties for this charitable organisation. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve the members of the MBSGB.

Richard Mendelsohn

Please submit all material to the Editor for publication in the form of Word documents and JPEGs. Material in the form of hard copy is equally acceptable, in which case please post it. Until a new editor is appointed please send contributions for the next edition to my email address at richardmendelsohn@btinternet.com.

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.

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HARO's Organino

by Luuk Goldhoorn

This is Luuk Goldhoorn's last article. Niko Wiegman writes: Luuk was working on this article when I visited him on the 27th November 2017 just before his death. We discussed it, but he was not happy with it because he could not identify what the acronym HARO stood for. The following day we found it referred to the name of Hans Rölz. Hans Rölz had musical instrument factories in Klingenthal in Germany, and Graslitz (now Kraslice) in the Czech Republic. Luuk found much information about him, but he was denied the time to write an updated version of his article.

Suppose you had never seen a musical box, and knew only that it produces music with the help of tuned steel and a cylinder with pins. Now you are asked to make a cylinder. Do you think you would choose brass as the material? Brass is expensive, so why not use wood? It is far easier to hammer pins into a wooden rather than a brass cylinder. Self-playing organs had used wooden cylinders for centuries.

But Favre, the inventor of the musical box, was a watchmaker, and watchmakers don't use wood. So we had to wait until about 1930 before the wooden cylinder was placed in a musical box.

The heyday of cartel musical boxes was passed long before the wooden cylinder was put into a toy, a manivelle, intended for children. The mechanism was housed in a tin box with dimensions 10 x 6 x 7 cm. (See Fig 1 below.)



Fig 1 Organino with picture of three girls

The firm which brought these manivelles to the market was named HARO. Their trade mark was a mouth organ, which was held high by an arm. In the mouth

organ is printed 881 Mein Stolz, which means My Pride. The letters H and R are depicted in the trademark as well as 'Made in Germany'. (See Figs 2 and 3.)

Most probably the letters H and R are the initials of the maker, but even with these letters no traces of him or his firm could be found.

Their new product was called Organino. It must have been some sort of a success, because I found two almost identical examples. The difference was the tin used for the housing, which in one case was bright while the other had a dull finish. The printing on the boxes was also different. On the dull one the trade mark was printed as well as HARO and Organino. On the other HARO is missed out. Also the inside is different: the plate on which the teeth are screwed is painted brass in only one of the instruments. (See Fig 4.)

On the top of the box is a little picture of three girls, the first one turning the Organino, which is hung around her neck with a cord. Such a cord seems never to have been on the real instrument. The handle which turns the cylinder is not directly fastened to the rod, so if you try to turn it backwards the cylinder won't turn. I assume that when it was used the handle was delivered solid to the rod, and by turning

it backwards teeth were broken. In fact in both manivelles this has occurred. In one, three teeth are broken; in the other two.



Fig 2 Trade mark with only the Organino name



Fig 3 Trade mark with Organino and HARO name

The bass teeth are loaded, and as is to be expected, there are no dampers. The teeth are so delicate that I assume they were also used in the mouth organs which they made. The music was not typically children's. *Home Sweet Home* and *Silent*

Night were pinned to the cylinders.

The attempt to exchange the brass cylinder for a wooden one did not cause a furore. Musical box makers didn't see the advantages, and maybe they were right.



Fig 4 Two Organino movements, each with a wooden cylinder but one movement painted brass and the other not painted

Joseph Beloudy

An unsung genius of the 18th Century

by Arthur W J G Ord-Hume

Those involved with the restoration of early barrel organs know the excitement when an organ chest or a bellows reservoir is opened allowing us to see inside. That this might be the first time in around 250 years that the hidden interior has seen the light of day adds a sort of frisson to the experience. And the discoveries made therein are not always restricted to merely the name of the builder or the date. Sometimes the discovery is of an old newspaper or, as I once found in a Parisian street organ, a printer's uncut sheet of tram tickets printed on fibrous stock. On another occasion, inside one Henry Bryceson barrel organ I found several sheets of barrel-organ specifications that must at one time have formed a promotional leaflet for the maker and his instruments. Scraps of sheet music are also often found, often hand-written rather than printed. In all cases, it is a use of paper that forms the kernel of the discovery.

The purpose of this paper is important to remember. It is there to seal the grain of what is inevitably a thin panel of wood to ensure that air does not leak through. Papering the inside of a windchest seals potential leaks in corners, joins or around openings. From this it will be appreciated that the paper should be of reasonably good quality. With newspaper, itself inherently porous, it would be sealed with several coats of brown glue. The better the quality of paper, the less glue would be required.

Now this economy of adhesive had

certain benefits. A thick coat of glue could in itself dry out and actually bend the wood by warping. It could generate its own cracks, even tearing the underlying paper that it was intended to protect through contraction. This is why better-quality organ-builders used the best quality paper they could find.

There was one particular type of paper which was suitable, and that was quality writing paper. The paper which was used for writing letters on had to be smooth and thick enough to take the passage of a writing quill or, later, a metal nib, so as to transfer the ink from pen to paper smoothly, free of blotches and with no tendency to 'pick' at the surface.

The problem in the old days was that, unlike today when we take paper for granted, writing paper was once a scarce commodity and expensive. It was hardly the type of material you would buy merely to glue onto the inside of a bellows board or a pallet chest. Unless, that is, it had already been used by being written on and was now no longer needed. In that case, its reuse as an organ-building aid was an acceptable form of recycling at a time when the concept of recycling did not exist.

During my many years as a restorer of rare and high-quality automatic organs I have regularly come across the work of one particular organ-builder, who has left his unique mark on the interior of his mechanisms – he papered the insides with the sheets of paper, upon which his daughter used to

practise her hand-writing. And she has left us rare and repeated evidence of dates and addresses.

That this organ-builder is not in the van of those master organ-builders with a name that is instantly recognisable is both interesting and offers a key to the method in which artisans conducted commissions. The name associated with the finished piece was not necessarily the same as that of the craftsman who made these extraordinary organs. As an example, the cabinet-maker who was asked to build an organ to fit in with the furnishings of a specific location might find himself involved with decorative metalwork, organ-building and even artistic painting.

We know that it was common practice for craftsmen to work together on objects, each one being a master of his own specialism, and having responsibility to the person from whom the finished piece was commissioned for one aspect of the completed item. A case in point is the musical clocks by Charles Clay, where it is well-documented that the exteriors were decorated by decorative cast metalwork by a third party, and quality paintings provided by a notable artist. Sometimes we find a centrepiece clock of this style by two different named makers – their names inscribed upon the clock face – but the decorative metalwork used to embellish the case clearly came from a common third-party workshop.

The freedom of expression in these pieces is often remarkable and we

have only to see the instruments that emerged from the Augsburg makers in the period from 1780 to 1820 to appreciate this. Here the standard juxtaposition of the component parts of the organ mechanism would be dictated by the shape and form of the piece. Sometimes, then, we find the musical programme (barrel) at the bottom, the organ in the centre and the bellows on top, while on other pieces we see other and almost impossible-sounding dispositions, each, however, working perfectly and engineered impeccably and with consummate imagination and craftsmanship.

While Augsburg was an early centre of this design expressionism, that is not to suggest it did not materialise elsewhere, and we have seen examples of such imaginative construction emerging from some of the late 18th century–early 19th century London makers.

In its simplest form, the Windsor Castle Charles Clay organ clock demonstrates this. Here is a cabinet organ standing less than four feet high, yet this weight-driven Handel-playing clockwork pipe organ performs perfectly although the weight drop is a mere two feet thanks to an application of simple pulleys in the drive train. I was privileged to work on this piece at the invitation of the Queen's Clockmaker more than 40 years ago. I was also permitted to record it, its music being featured in one of my BBC Third Programme broadcasts on the music of Handel. The purpose of this present article is, though, not merely to highlight the extraordinary inventiveness of London-based clockwork organ-makers, but to relate the story of one man – Joseph Beloudy.

Not so long ago I was asked to undertake a high security job for a famous and top-quality London jewellers and goldsmiths, who had been selected by a Far Eastern potentate to undertake the restoration of a priceless and unique musical and automaton clock in his collection. The commission was heralded by a visit from a firm of security consultants who rejected my workshop out of hand, asserting that it was not secure enough. Indeed, the final contract committed me to keeping the piece in my house the entire time it was in my care, and to guarantee that at no time would the house be unoccupied while work progressed.

In due course a large black security van backed into my driveway and four large men carried in what was clearly the heaviest piece of automata I have ever seen. My immediate feeling was that this was unlikely to be stolen by anyone with equipment short of a JCB. Sitting defiantly on my dining-room table this was indeed a huge and heavy piece the operation of which was unique. The central function was a large decorative pagoda. When selected 'on', the organ played and the pagoda, which it turned out was telescopic, rose to an extended height of several feet before settling back down again as the music drew to a close. My task was not to touch the gold and diamond decoration, merely to rebuild the pipe organ so that it played. It appeared not to have worked for a very long time.

Due to the terms of this contract, I am prevented from divulging too much detail on the automaton, nor even may I show you a photograph, but I can say that it bore the very familiar and famous name of an

automaton and musical clock maker known to us all. We were talking in the league of Pyke, Cox, Clay, Merlin, van Kamp, Weekes – the elite group.

As I dismantled the piece I made the astonishing discovery that the entire pagoda mechanism with its telescoping components passed straight through the centre of the organ mechanism, the pallet chest being built around the clockwork gearing that timed and executed the pagoda operation.

The upshot was that the organ chest was most complicated, having an airtight passageway at its centre. The wooden musical barrel was very large in diameter, being about eight inches in length and ten inches in diameter and controlling a two-rank organ of all-wood pipes, all arranged around the pagoda system.

Opening up the organ revealed that this instrument had been created by a visionary craftsman who chose not to leave his name anywhere on the mechanism. However, the clues were plain to see, for he had papered the inside of the complex wooden chest with the old handwriting copybook pages upon which was inscribed the name of his daughter – Mary Ann Beloudy. She had also written the date when the sheets had been first written upon at school. This revealed that the organ was the work of Joseph Beloudy, a name I have found on a great number of occasions, invariably when I have worked on unusual and unique mechanical organs.

Over the years, Beloudy's work has appeared regularly, and been identified entirely through his habit

of papering the insides of chests and bellows boards with his daughter's school copybook papers. This has enabled me to build up a picture of the man and his work that must be unique in the mechanical organ world.

Other than three very early street organs of the portable style, every Beloudy organ found has been a key component of another and otherwise-signed instrument. The earliest date seen on the writing papers has been 1783. This not to say that this is an accurate date for the construction of the organ itself, only that this sheet of paper was available when Beloudy was at his workbench, so it could have been 1783 or later. It does, though, seem unlikely that unused stacks of pre-written-upon manuscript paper would have hung around long.

At the Grosvenor House Antiques Fair in 1977, the Bond Street jewellers Asprey displayed a musical centre-piece clock made for the Turkish market and signed by Perigal of London. This had a clock (timepiece) mechanism bearing the marks of Thwaites and the date 1799, but the organ chest was papered by the copybook sheets of Mary Ann Beloudy and the date July 1791.

A small and attractive mechanical organ was installed in a longcase clock cabinet and the organ was built on each side of the clock mechanism with a central plinth to take the timepiece. Signed by Charles Clay, the piece performed eight airs on 15 pipes.

Inside the bellows, there were papers bearing manuscript in two hands. Besides that of Mary Ann Beloudy there was John Boldero

with the date September 19th, 1782. Curiously another incomplete signature in a different hand reads 'Jean Boldero'. This would suggest a brother and sister rather than a Frenchified variant of one name.

The property of The National Trust, a large unnamed barrel organ in Calke Abbey in Derbyshire plays, unusually, the music of Charles Dibdin's opera *The Padlock* (Drury Lane, 1768). There are five barrels with this remarkable instrument. The organ was fully restored in the summer of 1988. The inside of the bellows was found to be papered with Mary Ann Beloudy's copybook. Tellingly there is also a later manuscript note on the bottom of the windchest reading 'Built by Belloudy [sic] about 1793. Repd. 1838 CL.'

So what can be gleaned on the history of Joseph Beloudy? First it should be pointed out that there are numerous contemporary references to him and his work and in these his name is subjected to a number of spelling variations including Belowdie, Belloyudie and Beloudi. Joan Jeffery's fire insurance records study gives a reference to Joseph Beloudy dated January 11th, 1781 'in a Coachmakers Yard near the Coach & Horses in Newtners (Lewtners?) Lane'. This lane appears in 17th century parish records as Lukeners-lane, and on 1740s maps as Lutenors-lane. Other sources give 'Leewkin Lane', which adjoins Drury Lane.

Examination of contemporary directories refines this to Lewkin Lane, Drury Lane, but the exact dates are uncertain, especially when we find that Mary Ann Beloudy gives her address as No 2 Collier Street, Pentonville. Pentonville,

close to Holloway, was a small village settlement to the north of London, later renowned for its location as a penitentiary. However, the street layout which includes Collier Street still exists although the area has been built over at least twice: it was heavily bombed during the 1939–45 war and was later the focus of a slum clearance. Old records show that Collier Street and its environs was the home to a number of small trades and occupations, the houses having yards or courts in which could be house workshops. Listed among the occupations of occupants are two organ builders, one of whom was Beloudy, who described himself as maker of church and chamber barrel organs.

Records suggest that there were at least two generations of organ-builders named Beloudy, there being one Anthony Beloudy, whose death is registered as being in 1810. Joseph Beloudy was born in 1759 and died in 1838. It is evident from the number and quality of pieces attributed to his hand that he must have learned his craft at an early age and thus probably from his father. That he was also an inventive genius is obvious to all who have worked on his pieces.

Besides making barrel organs under his own name we know he constructed mechanical organs for, among others, James Cox's museum, while those such as Joseph Merlin and Charles Clay were among his business clients. Unusual and exotic automaton pieces of the third quarter of the 18th century usually contain Beloudy's instruments. The other extraordinary 'Peacock and Pagoda' automaton compound musical clock attributed to Cox contained

one of his instruments. While the signed papers of Mary Ann Beloudy provide us the most convincing evidence of Joseph Beloudy's work ethic, a separate copybook scrap has recently been seen which is signed 'Elizabeth Beloudy'. It remains to be confirmed as to Beloudy's origins although he was almost certainly French and possible Huguenot. The Collier Street address which appears on the manuscript sheets is corroborated by the discovery of one portable street barrel organ, which bears a metal plaque on the case-front marked 'Joseph Beloudy, Collier Street, Pentonville, London'. Of Beloudy's customers, the one with whom he is most associated is undoubtedly Cox.

James Cox worked at 103 Shoe Lane, London, and was a maker of many automata and ingenious clockwork pieces which included in their construction mechanical organs. In 1772 he opened a museum in Spring Gardens by Charing Cross. A contemporary account tells us he was 'a clever mechanic who opened a museum of quaint clocks singing birds and costly mechanical toys at the Spring Gardens. There were 56 pieces in the collection and the charge for admission was half a guinea per person; a regulation providing for the presence of but few visitors at one time and, needless to say, quite unnecessary.' Cox is renowned for his complex automaton musical clocks, some of which were built for the Chinese market. Harcourt-Smith (A Catalogue of the Various Clocks ... in the Palace Museum, Pieping) comments '... those (pieces) signed 'Cox' are known to have originally formed part of that maker's famous museum of mechanical curiosities

exhibited in Spring Gardens in 1773 and subsequently sent out to his shop in Canton.'

While Cox put his name to the finished piece, there has always been some doubt as to how much of the pieces represented his own work. Now we know with reasonable certainty that he worked with, or commissioned from, Joseph Beloudy the components which together formed his organ mechanisms.

Other names are associated with Cox: several of his complex automaton clocks bear the name of John Mottram. Cox's chief mechanic at the Spring Gardens museum was Joseph Merlin. While the precise date of Cox's death is unrecorded, it was either late in 1791 or early 1792. His remaining museum attractions were taken over by Thomas Weekes.

For a long while, Merlin was a somewhat shadowy figure until the Victoria & Albert Museum was associated with a special Merlin exhibition at Kenwood House in Hampstead in 1985. This revealed what an extraordinary genius he was and illustrates how he must have blended into the coterie of craftsmen which had Beloudy as a key member.

John Joseph Merlin was probably born at Huys near Liege in Belgium on September 17th, 1735. After working in Paris for some years, where he rapidly gained a reputation for his inventiveness and his mechanical skills, he came to London in 1760 when he described himself as a 'mathematical instrument maker'. In 1763 his address was that of the goldsmith Joseph Sutton who lived at the

Sign of the Acorn, 12 New Street, Covent Garden. Merlin worked with Thomas Valrot, a one-time employee of organ-builder Flight, in the construction of a mechanical organ for the Princess of Wales.

Some time later, he went to work for James Cox in the creation of mechanical organs, musical automata and musical clocks. One watch and one clock made by Merlin and signed by him survive, but his high degree of involvement in other pieces such as Cox's Perpetual Motion clock can neither be denied nor, unfortunately, corroborated. Merlin was one of that rich coterie of craftsman amongst whom we find the best makers of organ-playing clocks and, of course, Joseph Beloudy, who at that time must have been but a young man.

Merlin ran a curious exhibition called 'Merlin's Cave' in Prince's Street, Hanover Square, where, amongst many strange objects, was 'an automatic organ, imitating the performance of a full band'. Merlin died on May 4th, 1803.

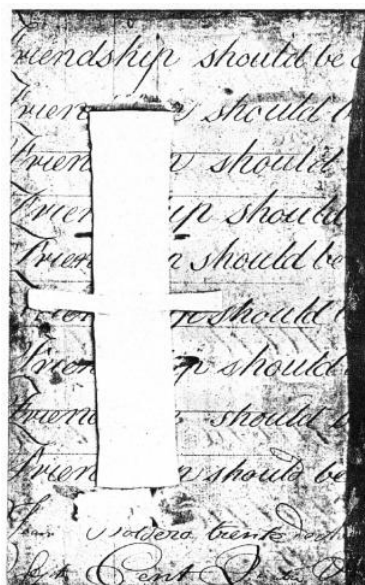
And finally there was Weekes. Thomas Weekes of Tichborne Street, London, acquired much of the museum of James Cox following his death and allegedly improved Cox's celebrated Perpetual Motion clock, now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. He then seems assiduously to have added to the collection to form his own Weekes (*sic*) Royal Mechanical Museum, 3 and 4 Tichborne Street. The first reference under this name is in *Holden's Directory* for 1802; *Boyle's City Guide* of 1803 described Weeks as an umbrella-maker living at No 4 and the Museum above No 3 (the

Black Horse Inn). Weekes, also a silversmith, made clockwork barrel organs, the earliest of which appears to be c.1800 and, like Cox before him, employed Joseph Beloudy (whom he, too, spelled 'Bellowdi') to make organs for him. A 19-key clockwork barrel organ survived in the former Vaux Collection bearing the inscription 'Weekes's Museum, Tichbourne Street, Haymarket'. Thomas Weekes died in 1834 after which his exhibition was sustained by his son Charles until, in 1844, he moved it to 202 Piccadilly: Charles died on March 23rd, 1864 and soon afterwards all references to the collection cease.

The illustrations that accompany this article represent the bellows and chest papers from several of his instruments, and it will be seen that, as is to be expected, in parts windways have been cut through the papers.

I would be delighted to hear from any other Members who have discovered the work of Joseph Beloudy.

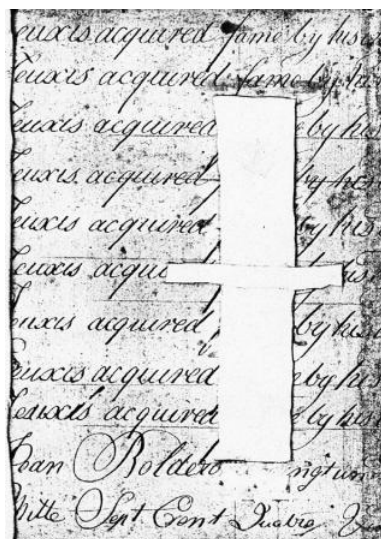
For an excellent summary of the life and work of Merlin, see Anne French's article in the book produced to mark an exhibition of his work at Kenwood in London (*John Joseph Merlin: The Ingenious Mechanick*, Greater London Council, 1985.) See also Charles K Aked 'The Emperor's Clock' article in *Clocks Magazine* Volume 9, No 4, October 1986, pp.29-34; also Meyrick: *A Short Account of the Remarkable Clock ...*, London, 1868; also *Music & Automata*, No. 13, September 1989, p.278 and 180.



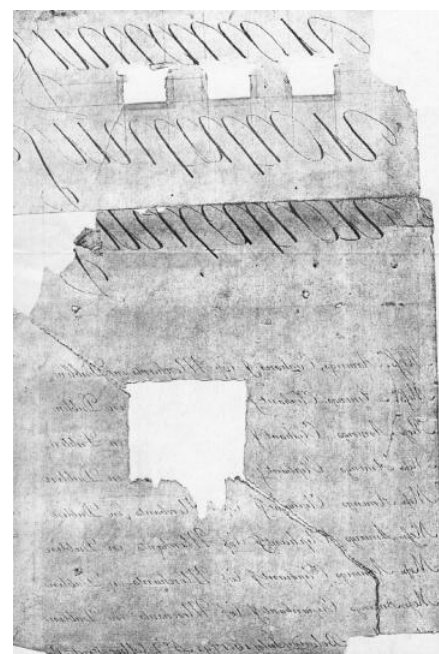
From the inside of a bellows board, this copybook sheet has at the bottom the name 'Jean Boldero' and the word 'trente' which is French for 'thirty'.



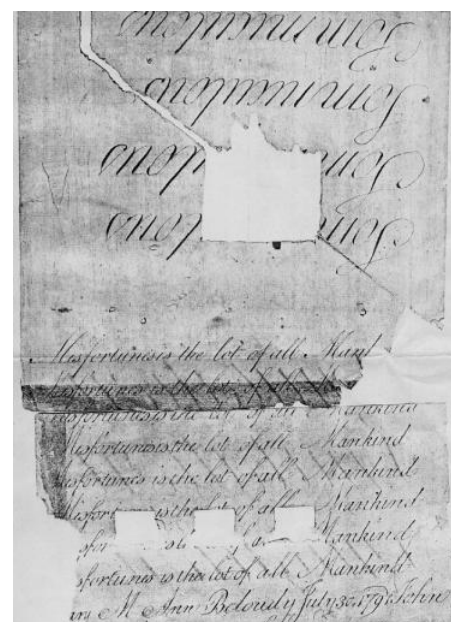
Another page from a school writing copybook with the last line reading 'John Boldero September 19th, 1782'.



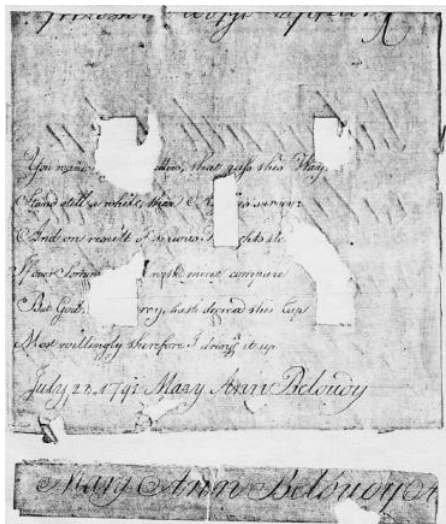
Here another signature of John Boldero and the words 'Mille Sept Cent Quatre' at the bottom, which mean 'seventeen eighty' or even possibly 'ninety' if there is a missing 'dix' at the end.



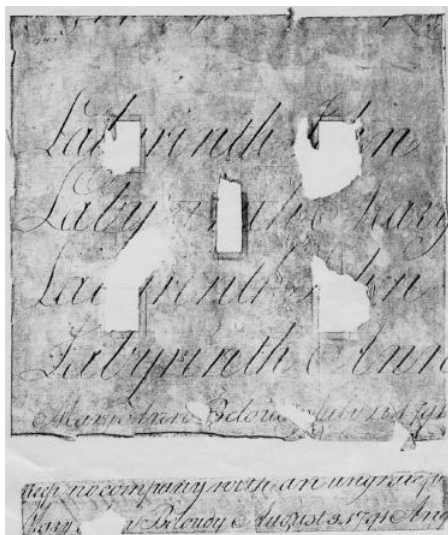
This is interesting in that it appears to be practising book-keeping entries. The copied lines, written eight times, read: 'Messrs. Annings Oliphant Co Merchants in Dublin.' The bottom line, partially missing, reads: 'Beloudy, July 16th 1791 No. 2 Collier Street, Pen[tonville]'.



'Misfortune is the lot of all Mankind' appears eight times followed by the confident signature of 'M Ann Beloudy July 30th 1791' followed by the isolated name 'John'.



Here is an interesting transcription from a windchest paper pierced with openings. The six line available text begins: 'You roam [...]' Hero, that [...] as this Way' and ends: 'Most willingly therefore I drink it up.' Perhaps somebody can identify this text. The last line clearly reads 'July 26th 1791 Mary Ann Beloudy'. The lower separate strip is a random piece revealing the signature again.



More well-formed copperplate handwriting on this piece ends with Mary Ann Beloudy's signature and the date 'July 28th 1791', while the lower, separate strip begins 'Keep no company with an ungrateful[l]' followed by Mary Ann's signature and the date 'August 3, 1791.'



An engraving of Collier Street, Pentonville, c.1828 looking towards Cumming Street. On the left is the Pentonville Charity School and a shop on the corner of Wellington Street, later re-named Busaco Street. This might well have been Mary Ann Beloudy's school as it was only about 125 yards from the Beloudy home and workshop. All the buildings seen here were long demolished and the area is quite different today although there is a modern school on the site of the building seen here. Incidentally, Wellington Street, named after the Duke of Wellington, later took its new name from his success at the battle against Masseno in 1910. This was at Busaco in Central Portugal.

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Sacred Music on Cylinder Musical Boxes – Part 5

by David Worrall

Some thoughts and background notes

Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of this article, published in earlier editions of *The Music Box*, gave background to the article, defined Sacred Music, gave overall statistical details of its extent on cylinder musical boxes and discussed results from the analysis of Classical Sacred Music, Hymns, Evangelical and Gospel Songs. Part 5 here addresses hybrid and interchangeable programmes of Sacred Music, and gives a summary and a conclusion to the research.

Hybrid, interchangeable and unusual programmes

General

Since this series of articles went to press, further musical boxes have come to light with sacred airs in their programmes. Their number has not dramatically

changed the information originally given in Tables 1, 2 and 4 in Part 1, but they are here repeated below with the latest figures shown for comparative interest. Extrapolating the data in this research overall, they show that items of Sacred Music (*Musique Sacré*), in one form or another, are found pinned on between 10–11% of cylinder musical boxes.

A: Total Register Entries <i>[As at Feb 2017]</i>	B: Total Registered without Tune Sheets or Music Programme Information	C: Total With Tune Sheets	D: Total of Musical Boxes at C playing only Secular Music	E: Total of Musical Boxes at C playing Sacred Music	F: Percentage of Musical Boxes at C playing Sacred Music
11285 11581	5293 5358	5992 6223	5362 5559	630 664	10.51% 10.67%
Tune Sheets analysed from other sources and not on the Register				38 48	
Total Musical Boxes found with Sacred Music				668 712	

Table 1 Modified: Number of musical boxes pinned with Sacred Music – as at March 2018

Programme Extent	Number of MBs	Percentage
Complete Programme of Sacred Airs	351 368	52.54% 51.69%
Partial Programme of Sacred Music - Two or more Sacred Airs	78 83	11.68% 11.66%
Single Sacred Air	180 200	26.95% 28.09%
SUB-TOTAL	609 651	91.17% 91.41%
Unidentified – 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 61	8.83% 8.57%
OVERALL TOTAL	668 712	100.00%

Table 2 Modified: Programme extent of musical boxes pinned with Sacred Music – as at March 2018

Description	Number of Musical Boxes	Percentage of Musical Boxes	Sacred Airs Identified	Incidence of Sacred Airs
Classical Sacred Music - from Oratorios, Masses and Operas	195 209	29.19% 29.35%	62 76	564 596
Hymns	123 131	18.41% 18.40%	144	439 467
Evangelical and Gospel Songs	78 84	11.68% 11.80%	70 74	537 546
Hybrid Programmes: <i>Of Classical, and/or Hymns and/or Evangelical & Gospel Songs</i>	213 227	31.89% 31.88%		1646 1740
Unidentifiable Programmes	59 61	8.83% 8.57%		447 461
OVERALL TOTALS	668 712	100.00%	276 294	3633 3810

Table 4 Modified – Spread of the groups of Sacred Music – as at March 2018

Musical Boxes with Hybrid Programmes of Sacred Music

A total of 227 musical boxes have now been identified as having mixed programmes of Sacred Music. They reflect the diversity of such music that was available to suit the customers' tastes for this type of music at the time the musical box was made. The programmes of these hybrids typically bridge at least two of the three groups of Sacred Music identified earlier. The Tune Sheets reproduced at Fig 1 in Part 1 of this series, and also that shown at Fig 7 below, are both typical examples of this type of programme. The latter comes from a late Nicole Frères musical box, Serial No 43666, a ten-air (two per/turn) forte-piano musical box made circa 1868, and pinned with



Fig 7 A ten-air Nicole with oratorio items and hymn tunes

five items from oratorios – tunes 1 and 3 being arias while tunes 2, 4 and 7 are choruses. The remaining five tunes are standard hymns which would have been found in church hymnals of the time under the tune title given on the tune sheet, except that for Tune 6, which happens to be the first line of a hymn sometimes set to be sung to a version of the tune *Old Hundredth* (*Old 100th*). It is an arrangement of this tune that is pinned on this particular musical box.

Another similar hybrid example of interest came to light recently. This was a twelve-air six bell box by Junod of Ste Croix, Serial No. 16249 and registered as an oratorio box – see the tune sheet in Fig 8 below.



Fig 8 The 'Waving Shepherd' tune sheet of Junod Serial No 16249.

In its musical programme are three oratorio items hitherto unrecorded in the research for these articles

Its musical programme, also listed in Table 13 below for purposes of clarity, consists of nine arias and choruses intermixed with two standard hymns and Mozart's *Kyrie Eleison*. This is an interesting programme for it includes no fewer than three items occurring for the first time in the research for this series of articles: the chorus *Baal! We Cry to Thee* and the semi-chorus *Lift Thine Eyes*, both from Mendelssohn's *Elijah*; and, most intriguingly from *The Creation* by Haydn, the recitative, *In Splendour Bright Rises Now the Sun* that immediately precedes the chorus *The Heavens are telling the Glory of God*. It is unusual to find recitatives, often not the most melodic of music to listen to, pinned on a cylinder musical box. In this case it would have been more appropriate perhaps, if the two had been pinned consecutively, and so could be played as they occur in the oratorio itself. For each of these three items, this is the only recorded occurrence and, unless and until evidence is found to the contrary, the inevitable conclusion is that they were included to meet a particular customer's request.

Musical Programme of Junod's Serial No. 16249	
Item	Notes
1 Messiah: Hallelujah Chorus - Handel.	
2 Elijah: <i>Baal</i> We Cry To Thee - Mendelssohn	This chorus comes from Part 1 of <i>Elijah</i> and describes the Israelites attempt to invoke their god, Baal, to light a sacrificial fire for them. It opens with the repeated words <i>Baal! We cry to Thee.</i>
3 Judas Machabee: Chorus - Handel.	Most probably <i>See The Conquering Hero Comes</i> - the tune being used for the Eastertide hymn <i>Thine be the Glory, Risen, Conquering Son</i> - see Part 3 of this series of articles on Sacred Music on Cylinder Musical Boxes.
4 The Creation: In Splendour Bright - Haydn.	Uriel's Recitative at the end of Part 1, sung immediately prior to the final chorus.
5 Hymn: Old Hundredth.	The second most popular item of Sacred Music in this research with 99 occurrences.
6 The Messiah: Thou That Tellest - Handel.	
7 The Creation: The Heavens are Telling. Chorus - Haydn.	Chorus sung at the end of Part 1 of the oratorio. This has proved to be the most popular sacred air, not only in its category of Classical Sacred Airs, but overall with 118 occurrences.
8 Elijah. Lift Thine Eyes - Mendelssohn.	Performed either as a trio, or a semi-chorus of Angels. Comes in Part II of the oratorio and is scored for three voices - Soprano 1 and 2 and Contralto.
9 Kyrie Eleison de la Messe - Mozart.	Understood to be from Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor
10 Hymn: Morning Hymn. Glory to Thee.	
11 The Creation. With Verdure Clad - Haydn.	
12 Messiah. He Shall Feed His Flock - Handel.	

Table 13 Musical programme from Junod Serial No 16249

Musical Boxes with Interchangeable Cylinders

Generally, makers' tune list catalogues, which they produced to advertise the availability and choice of cylinders for their interchangeable musical boxes, have not been included in this research for several reasons: the lack of availability of the catalogues in question, uncertainty as to how many of these advertised cylinders were made and sold; and of those that were, perchance their information duplicates that obtained already from the Register.

Nevertheless, the research generally has highlighted some interesting instances of Sacred Music pinned to cylinders for interchangeable boxes. A most unusual, and perhaps extreme example, can be seen at tune sheet No 424 in H A V Bulleid's work 'Musical Box Tune Sheets'. This particular tune sheet is from a large interchangeable made with three six-air cylinders which, in Bulleid's view 'Nicole must have asked Cuendet

to make in 1879 as by that date their own Geneva production had come to an end.' The cylinders are numbered 1, 2 and 3, and together they present a hybrid programme of Sacred Music. The programme for Cylinder No 1 is hymn tunes; that for No 3 is classical oratorio items, whilst Cylinder No 2 does have a more eclectic mix of tunes, of which at least one is of a more secular origin. The tunes on all three cylinders are arranged to be played on two combs tuned to Gamme No 3355. The image in the booklet is of insufficient clarity to reproduce here, and in several cases to identify the tune titles. Those that can be identified are listed in Table 14 below.

Although entire programmes of sacred music are not unknown for single cylinders, both fixed and interchangeable, it must be very unusual for a single, interchangeable musical box to have been commissioned specifically with three cylinders, the musical programmes for each of which consist almost entirely of sacred music.

Musical Programme of Junod's Serial No. 16249	
Item	Notes
1 Messiah: Hallelujah Chorus - Handel.	
2 Elijah: <i>Baal</i> We Cry To Thee - Mendelssohn	This chorus comes from Part 1 of <i>Elijah</i> and describes the Israelites attempt to invoke their god, Baal, to light a sacrificial fire for them. It opens with the repeated words <i>Baal! We cry to Thee</i> .
3 Judas Machabee: Chorus - Handel.	Most probably <i>See The Conquering Hero Comes</i> – the tune being used for the Eastertide hymn <i>Thine be the Glory, Risen, Conquering Son</i> – see Part 3 of this series of articles on Sacred Music on Cylinder Musical Boxes.
4 The Creation: In Splendour Bright - Haydn.	Uriel's Recitative at the end of Part 1, sung immediately prior to the final chorus.
5 Hymn: Old Hundredth.	The second most popular item of Sacred Music in this research with 99 occurrences.
6 The Messiah: Thou That Tellest - Handel.	
7 The Creation: The Heavens are Telling. Chorus - Haydn.	Chorus sung at the end of Part 1 of the oratorio. This has proved to be the most popular sacred air, not only in its category of Classical Sacred Airs, but overall with 118 occurrences.
8 Elijah. Lift Thine Eyes - Mendelssohn.	Performed either as a trio, or a semi-chorus of Angels. Comes in Part II of the oratorio and is scored for three voices – Soprano 1 and 2 and Contralto.
9 Kyrie Eleison de la Messe - Mozart.	Understood to be from Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor

Table 14 Sacred Music pinned for Cuendet/Nicole Interchangeable Serial No 47648



Fig 9 Echoes of Massabielle – Tune sheet at #438 of ‘Musical Box Tune Sheets’ by H A V Bulleid. It is from a six-air box sold as a souvenir of a pilgrimage to Lourdes in France. Note that although a six-air box, seven tunes are listed; in fact tune No 7 is just a suggestion to the owner to repeat playing tune No 1, the Basilica’s carillon, at will.



Fig 10 Tune Sheet for L'Épée Serial No.20930, a 12 Sacred Air wo per turn box – circa 1862

Unusual Items

Of note under this heading are two examples of commissioned programmes of special Sacred Music. The first concerns the Roman Catholic Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, located at Lourdes in the Hautes-Pyrenées in southwestern France. For Catholics this is a place of pilgrimage, where pilgrims gather from all over the world, and have done so for well over 100 years. Towards the end of the 19th century, musical boxes were commissioned and retailed by the agent F-X Thomas as souvenirs for a pilgrimage undertaken to Lourdes. The tune sheet for one of these can be seen at #438 in H A V Bulleid’s work ‘Musical Box Tune Sheets’. It is from a six-air box by an unattributed maker, and it bears images of the two sites of pilgrimage, the Cave of Massabielle and the Rosary Basilica. The latter is one of the largest churches in the world, with a capacity for 20,000 people. Tune 1 of the box is an arrangement played by the carillon of the Rosary Basilica. Tune No 2 is the Bach/ Gounod *Ave Maria*, while tunes 3–6 relate to the ceremonies at Lourdes. See Fig 9 at left (with apologies for the rather poor quality of the original.)

The second example is from what must have been an extreme request for a musical programme of sacred airs to be pinned on a cylinder musical box. The tune sheet is at Fig 10 above, but as the image, the best available, is rather blurred, the tunes are listed below in Table 15. It is a complete programme of twelve sacred airs, all previously unrecorded, possibly from a complete Mass. Just what the cost would have been

in the 19th century specifically in mind, Sacred Music from each of the three groups identified was arranged by the makers of other forms of mechanical music, notably disc musical boxes, barrel organs and organettes. Many of the sacred airs identified above and others will be found on the discs, rolls and barrels produced by the makers of these instruments over the later years of the 19th and early years of the 20th centuries.

Musical Programme of L'Epée's Serial No 20930	
1. Domine Salvum fac	7. Veni Creator.
2. Pange Lingua de Mozart	8. Adoremus pour les Sts Sacrements.
3. Vexilla Regis	9. Adoro te.
4. Priere de Salieri - Cantique a la Croix	10. Gloria in Excelsis.
5. Silence Ciel! Silence Terre!	11. O Salutaris hostia.
6. O Roi de Cieux.	12. Tantum Ergo.

Table 15 Musical programme of l'Epée Serial No. 20930

to have all this music specially arranged for this twelve-air two per turn box made by l'Epée circa 1862 is unrecorded. However, perhaps it illustrates the importance attached to a musical box in mid-19th century as a means of providing music for those who lacked the skills to play a musical instrument themselves.

A third example of unusual Sacred Music is more modern in its origin. During the research for this series, it was interesting to discover that a series of small musical boxes, mostly two-air with about 40 teeth in their combs, were produced in the late 1930s by Lador of St Croix, Switzerland. The musical programmes of these were specifically the hymns of the Christian Science movement, attributed to its founder Mrs Mary Baker Eddy. These are described in more detail in an article by Robin Biggins that appeared in 'Mechanical Music', the journal of the Musical Box Society International in its September/October 2007 edition.

In Conclusion – Final Thoughts

Although this article has been written with cylinder musical boxes produced

As musical boxes were discovered and added to the research, the inescapable conclusion has been that many, if not most were pinned either in part or in whole with Sacred Music to meet specific requests from customers. The evidence for making this rather bold assertion lies in several observations that have stood out during the research, and analysis for all three categories of Sacred Music, but particularly so in respect of both Hymns and Evangelical and Gospel Songs:

- The number of tunes for which only one or two instances were found:
 - 71 Hymns occurred once and eleven only twice – i.e. well over 50% of the 152 hymns identified altogether;
 - 26 Evangelical Songs occurred once and 7 more only twice – slightly less than 50% of the 71 identified altogether.
- The number of makers and agents, 19 (40%) out of 48, for whom only a single musical box with Sacred Music was found; for some, e.g. Manger & Jaccard this was a complete programme of sacred music, while for others, e.g. Greiner and Soualle, only one sacred air was found on one box.
- The obscure nature of many of the hymns identified with regards to the tunes and/or words associated with them; an example of this came to light during the latter stages of the research: the hymn *A Few More Years Shall Roll* by the Rev'd H Bonar was found on two musical boxes from different makers, P V F of Ste Croix

and S Troll of Geneva. The words were written in 1844 and are very doleful and to my mind very 19th century – looking forward to death to end life's miseries and a better life in the hereafter. The tune pinned on the cylinder, *Chalvey* composed in 1868 by Dr L G Hayne, is named after a village then near, and now a suburb of Slough, in the UK.

- Some Evangelic and Gospel items, such as *Oh to be Nothing* and *The Better Land* occurred once only, and have not survived the years to be in church hymnody today.

It is difficult to accept that Swiss and French makers on their own could have identified such items of music as ones that would stimulate the sale of their musical boxes, and having done so, then commit to the double expense of commissioning an arrangement and the pinning of the cylinder for this music, unless otherwise assured beforehand of a sale for the finished item.

In addition to the main objective of the research behind this series of articles, to identify the extent to which Sacred Music was pinned on cylinder musical boxes, it is hoped that in doing so, it has served also to illustrate how the Arthur D Cunliffe 'Register of Cylinder Musical Boxes' has been developed now to a point where it is a very useful and powerful tool for undertaking research of this nature. Furthermore, the hope is that it will encourage or stimulate those who have not yet registered their musical boxes with the Registrar to do so. Such a step can only increase its usefulness as a valuable research tool.

Finally, to conclude on a more philosophical note; this series of articles began with two intentions:

- to show that Sacred Music (Musique Sacrée) is the appropriate and descriptive generic term for use rather than 'Hymn Box', or indeed

'Oratorio Box'; and

- to provide answers to the two questions posed by the collector who asked through MMD 'Can anyone tell me what is the difference between a Hymn playing box and an Oratorio box? Is there indeed a difference?'

Hopefully both have been met; that Sacred Music is the most appropriate overall generic term and that there is indeed a difference between an Oratorio Box and a Hymn Box; and that, where musical boxes with complete programmes of oratorio and hymn tunes are identified, collectors and others will be encouraged to use their respective and more appropriate generic terms.

However, there is an old adage that says – 'You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink!'; and so, I expect 'hymn box' and 'oratorio box' will continue to be applied and used as inappropriately as they have been hitherto – but should we be concerned? As long as interest in cylinder musical boxes continues and their programmes of music are enjoyed by fellow enthusiasts, then perhaps not.

Credits and further reading.

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. Those readers who own cylinder musical boxes who have not registered them with The Registrar are encouraged to do so and 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 AWJG Orde-Hume, published in 1995 by Schiffer Publishing Ltd. of Atglen, Pennsylvania USA.*

4 *'Abide With Me - The World of Victorian Hymns' by Ian Bradley Published in 1997 by SCM Press ISBN 0 334-02703-9*

5 *The internet websites 'Hymnary.Org' and Wikipedia have been used to cross-check and verify tune titles and words appearing on musical box tune sheets and also the brief biographic notes and anecdotes relating to Evangelical and Gospel Songs and their composers and authors.*

From Piano Score to Disc or Cylinder

by Robin Timms

An important respect in which a musical box differs from some other forms of mechanical music is that it exists as an instrument in its own right. A mechanical organ or player piano for example attempts to reproduce what a human performer might play on a non-mechanical instrument. At best it does this very well; indeed its success is judged by the extent to which it creates an illusion, to its own self-effacement. The musical box however in its purest form does not pretend to imitate other instruments: it exists in its own right as an individual art form.

This article originally appeared in Vol 6 No 3 and was then reprinted in Vol 12 No 4 of The Music Box. The author Robin Timms has since sadly passed away. It is a valuable study of how to transpose original music for the musical box, and it complements the article published in the Winter 2017 edition about new music on discs

The purpose of this article is to show by means of a little detailed analysis of a few bars of music something of how the musical box comes to possess its highly individual character.

Taking the first three phrases of *God Save the Queen* (this tune will be familiar to most musical box collectors!) we will put ourselves in the place of one of the original music arrangers and set the music up for a medium-sized box with 54 notes. The form of the music which we shall be working towards is the actual arrangement used for the 11" Polyphon.

First we take a hymn book from the shelf and turn up the National Anthem, where we find something like this below:



The opening bars of the National Anthem

The double bar lines indicate the ends of the phrases.

The music as it stands can be played on piano or organ, though it is primarily intended for singing in four part harmony. It was usual for musical box arrangers to work from the piano score – but this is only the beginning of the exercise, because the piano and the musical box are poles apart and an arrangement which suits the one is useless for the other.

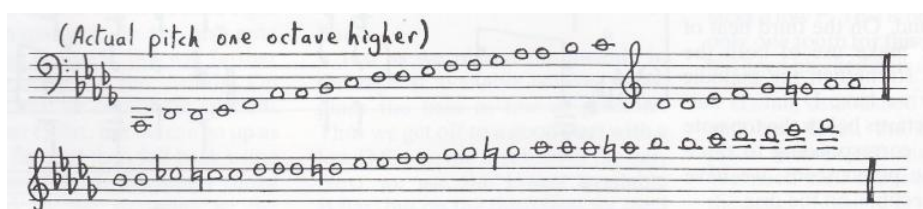
Consider some of the differences between the two instruments. The piano has 88 notes; our musical box only 36 different notes. The piano uses all the notes of the chromatic scale throughout its 7¼ octaves; our musical box which spans 4¾ octaves uses in general only the notes of the diatonic scale, with an occasional accidental inserted in certain octaves. One note of the chromatic scale, the sharpened supertonic, does not appear at all; while in the bass octave only four

notes are used – dominant, tonic, supertonic and mediant. The piano can be played with equal facility in any key; our musical box can use

only one basic key, with occasional excursions into the relative minor and the key of the dominant. With the piano it is possible to control the duration of a single note or chord and, very important, to accentuate a single note, chord or melodic line thereby giving shape and meaning to the music as a whole. With the musical box each tooth is plucked in the same way on each occasion, and therefore the note always has the same volume and duration. With the piano it is possible to repeat a single note rapidly; to achieve this on a musical box, it is necessary to have two, three or four teeth tuned to the same note.

But the music arranger is not daunted by the apparent limitations of his instrument; he is going to make a virtue of necessity.

Having before us the score of *God Save the Queen*, we now need to work out the tuning scale of the musical comb. It is as follows:



The tuning scale of 'God Save the Queen'

We compare the score with the tuning scale only to find that hardly any of the notes in the score are available. We must transpose the music into the key in which our comb is tuned.

Still we have barely started; for to transcribe this onto disc or cylinder, even though many of the notes are now available, would be to fail to recognise the character and spirit of the instrument: it would sound very thin and dull.

We will consider the melody first.

It is usual to place the melody in the highest available octave, so that it is prominent, and sings out above the rest of the music. In the first phrase this works out very conveniently, but in the second phrase the highest note, G flat, takes us beyond the highest note on the comb, so that is necessary to jump down an octave. To do this just for one note would sound strange, so we bring the whole phrase down an octave. The third phrase goes into a higher octave.

We shall now consider in more detail the treatment of the melody in a bar-by-bar analysis, but first, to avoid superfluous musical examples, here for reference is what our musical box will finally play. Square note heads indicate that two teeth tuned to the same note are plucked simultaneously. It should also be noted that the music sounds an octave higher than written.

Bar 1

The melody can often be made more prominent by being duplicated in the octave below, and even in the octave below that. The melody in the top octave reads D flat, D flat, E flat. It so happens that there are two D flats on the



The music is transposed into key in which the comb is tuned



Jumping down an octave



This is what the musical box will finally play

comb in this octave so that one can be used for the first melodic note and the other for the second, without fear of using the same tooth in too rapid succession – that is to say, in the case of a disc box, before the star wheel is again in the correct position. In the octave below there are three D flats and two E flats. We therefore use two of

the D flats in the first chord, one being on the strong beat of the bar, and the other on the second. On the third beat we make use of both the E flats. To strengthen the melodic line further we have D flat, D flat, E flat two octaves below the top note also. Thus, corresponding to three notes in the piano score, we have eleven projections on the disc.

Because the melody is fairly slow moving, the notes of the top octave of each chord are spread to give an *arpeggiando* effect, so that the sound is kept alive and we do not just have a series of chunky chords which quickly die away.

Bar 2

The first melodic note has to last a beat and a half. As the sound of a single plucking of the tooth will not last that long, we repeat the note, again in the highest octave, on the second beat of the bar. It is not also repeated in the lower octaves, because we do not want to make it too prominent here, merely to give a sustaining effect. The harmonies will move with the following note of the tune, as in the piano score. Returning to the long first note of the bar, we fill up the first beat, having struck the melodic C, with a run of demisemiquavers which led naturally to the repetition of the C at the beginning of the second beat. The melodic D flat, lasting but half a beat, needs no ornamentation. The E flat on the third beat however does call for some simple elaboration. In the highest octave there is only one E flat, so that no trill is possible here. In the octave below however there are two E flats and two Fs so that a rapid trill is possible to keep the sound alive using the melodic note, E flat, and the note above. However, having played each of these four teeth, F, E flat, F, E flat, in rapid succession, we cannot use them again till the next beat. Hence the rest at the end of the bar in this part of the music.

Bar 3

Because of the absence of a very high G flat, the melody had to be brought down an octave. To count up the change and make use of the

higher notes on the comb where possible we shall make use of upward runs in demisemiquavers. In the case of the two melodic Fs we can conveniently run up the scale to the higher F, the top note of the comb, using the eight notes of the scale in sequence to give us the needed eight demisemiquavers. As the first note of the run is also F, this will further serve to bring out the melody. On the third beat we cannot run upwards to a higher G flat, but we can go up as far as E flat and then fall back using the notes of the E flat minor chord indicated by the harmony to the G flat on which we started. All three melodic notes in this bar are emphasised by making use of both adjacent teeth which are tuned to them. Corresponding to the three melodic notes in this bar of the music, there are no fewer than 27 projections on the disc – a real field day for the arranger! It is in ways like this that he not only overcomes apparent limitations, but goes beyond this to create a new and subtle form of art.

Bar 4

We start on F again, but this time the note is to last a beat and a half. As with the C in bar 1 we repeat the F on the second beat of the bar, but this time we can run up to it with eight demisemiquavers and then remain in the highest octave. Whereas the upward runs from F in the previous bar finished on F, in this case we want F to come at the beginning of the second beat, and at the end of the first. This can be achieved by inserting an extra note, G natural, in the run of eight so that the last of the demisemiquaver is E flat, not F. On the last beat of this bar the melodic D flat is kept alive by being played in rapid succession with the D flats an

octave below. (There are two D flats available in the highest octave.)

Bars 5 and 6

As in bar 1, the melody appears in three octaves, the top octave being played *arpeggiando* and two teeth being plucked simultaneously in the second octave.

Scarcely less important than a carefully considered melodic line is a sound bass. In the case of a disc, bass teeth can be plucked a second time less rapidly than teeth near the top of the comb. However, the bass is slower moving, and presumably this is why the bass notes are nearest the centre of a disc. It needs to be remembered too that the duration of sound of the bass notes is greater than that of the treble.

Bar 1

Just as we placed the melody in the highest available octave, so we place the bass as low as possible. Thus we get off to a good start with a low D flat on the first beat of the bar. Next we use the lowest available B flat; but on the third beat we used a low E flat in place of the G flat in the transposed piano score. This is because there is no really low G flat available. This produces a supertonic chord in the root position instead of in the first inversion, which is preferable to a first inversion chord lacking a really low bass note.

Bars 2 and 3

The bass line is kept alive matching the busy treble by moving in quavers instead of crotchets. The low A flat is repeated at the octave on the second beat of bar 2, and the quaver movement is maintained in bar 3 with a descending figure which starts in the middle register and is taken over by the bass.

Bar 4

The quaver movement is continued in the tenor register during the one and a half beats of the low A flat. This should be followed by an A natural, but no such note is available in the bass, and even if it were, it might not sound effective, but rather smudgy, as the A flat would need to be dampened when the A natural sounded, and the A natural would need to be dampened when the B flat followed it at the distance of half a beat. Since this could not easily be achieved it is perhaps just as well that there are not too many bass notes available which might conflict with one another if sounded in too quick succession. Perhaps this is why a low G flat is omitted from the comb: it would create a dissonant semitonal clash if sounded close to the F. Instead of A natural, then, A flat is used again giving a simple dominant chord instead of a diminished seventh – which some

might regard in dubious taste anyway!*

Bars 5 and 6

At the beginning of bar 5, E flat replaces G flat as at the end of bar 1; and in bar 6 the single chord is kept alive by quaver movement on the tonic chord which will lead back to a low D flat at the beginning of the next bar. Notice that the final octave lacks a low F. This is because there is only one tooth for this note, and that was plucked only a moment ago.

Having established good melodic and bass lines, the rest falls into place without too much difficulty. We need well-spaced chords using the notes indicated in the transposed piano score, but modified sometimes where the bass line has been changed. The top octave of certain chords has been marked *arpeggiando*, but there is a slight tendency for all chords to be played in this way, the

arpeggiando however being so rapid that the ear is scarcely aware of it, except that sometimes a tendency for the lowest note of a chord to anticipate the rest by the slightest fraction is noticeable.

Whereas the piano score contains 64 notes – 16 notes of melody supported by four part harmony – the corresponding bars on the musical box use 203 notes. Trills, runs, arpeggios, oramental figures, spread chords, repeated notes – a determination to use the full range of the musical comb – these are the ways in which the music arranger not only triumphs over the limitations of his instrument, but creates a distinctive form of musical expression of great subtlety and charm.

* *The diminished seventh came into its own with those pianists whose job it was to accompany silent films. In this instance it formed a musical rouse not entirely unsuited to its medium.*

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A Victorian Glass Dome

The base with a musical movement 27 inches high

by David Worrall

'A hidden gem' in the base of a Victorian glass dome leads to evidence of an early one-piece comb, and a possible connection between François-Louis Lecoultré and M. Bordier.

The arrival one Tuesday morning of an email with a title 'I wish I could be in Surrey on Thursday', raised an eyebrow of curiosity. It had come from an American contact and contained a link to a UK auction house website offering for sale 'A Victorian Glass Dome, the base with a musical movement, 27" high', which was to be sold the following Thursday – two days later. (See Fig 1.)



Fig 1 The 24" high dome mounted on its 3" base containing the musical movement. Total height 27"

The catalogue did not contain any more information, and though the auction house had provided some pictures of the movement, these were inconclusive; it could well be a three-air movement; the comb, which appeared to be missing an extreme bass tooth, had a marque

on the comb stock which, when enlarged, could just be made out to read 'F. Lecoultré'. (See Figs 2 and 3.)



Fig 2 The base opened to reveal the musical movement



Fig 3 The marque on the comb stock with 'F. Lecoultré' just discernible when enlarged

The pictures seemed to show the movement having several of the features associated with early Lecoultré work. At this stage, however, it could not be established if the 'F. Lecoultré' marque was that of François-Louis Lecoultré – working between 1812 and 1829, and who, 'In 1814 ... got the idea of substituting a one-piece comb for single teeth, or sections of teeth in groups of two or more' ¹, or whether the marque was that of the later François-Charles Lecoultré who worked from 1828 to 1855.

With interest now piqued, a visit to the auctioneers confirmed that it was a three-air movement with F. Lecoultré stamped on the comb. (See Fig 4.)



Fig 4 The comb with 'F. Lecoultré' clearly visible on the comb stock

However, it lacked any evidence of a serial number or a tune sheet. The additional extreme bass tooth had been screwed to the stock of the 10.5 cm comb, but was now missing. The 93 surviving teeth looked good. The cylinder, at 12.25cm in length, was much longer than the comb. There was no obvious evidence of pin damage, and the pinning towards the bass end for the missing tooth could be seen quite clearly. (See Fig 5.)

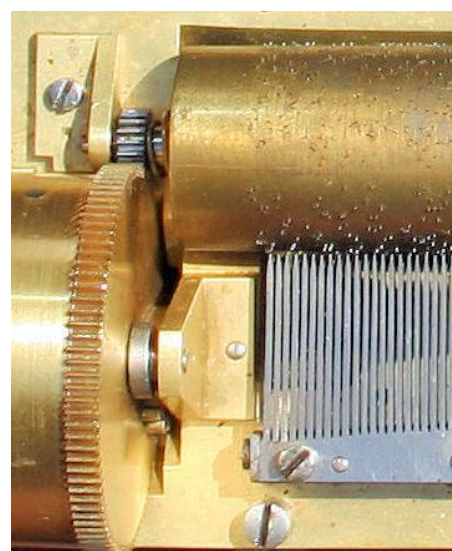


Fig 5 The additional bass tooth, now missing (broken off at its stock), and its pinning

Overall, the movement played well enough, albeit with a few squeaks, but the tunes were not recognised.

With interest now thoroughly raised, the subsequent purchase enabled the movement to be examined in detail, including the underside of the bedplate. (See Fig 6.)



Fig 6 The underside of the bedplate. The inscription is to the right of the cylinder.

At first sight this was disappointing: apart from a blank number '2' on some components, the absence of a serial number stamped or scratched on any part of the movement made it impossible to date the instrument by using the Bulleid dating charts.² However, examination with a magnifying glass revealed this script scratched on the underside of the bedplate:

*Marc Bordier
avril 1821*

albeit that the final 'r' of 'Bordier' had been lost when drilling the hole necessary to fix the movement into the base. (See Fig 7.)



Fig 7 The 'Marc Bordier avril 1821' inscription scratched to the right of the cylinder

The finding of such an inscription was quite a surprise; indeed not only did it give evidence of an early maker associated with the movement, but also a precise date when it was made. It also fitted neatly with the general description of Bordier's work sometimes found in other reference books, that his work 'is most commonly found

incorporated ... by clock makers ... into the bases of ormolu-decorated mantel clocks.'³ It is this style of time-piece that probably once occupied the space in the now empty dome, and for some reason the two pieces had become separated.

Perhaps, and more significantly so from an historical research point of view, this discovery leads to other intriguing and interesting lines of thought and speculation:

- Can this inscription be accepted as evidence for the first name of the maker hitherto only known and referred to as M. Bordier, and about whom little else appears to be known?
- Does this inscription now date the 'F. Lecoultré' marque on the comb to being that of the earlier François-Louis, and if so, the comb to be one of the earliest one-piece examples to have survived?
- And finally what was the nature of the business relationship between Bordier and Lecoultré now evidenced by this movement, and how long did it last?

These are interesting questions that I leave to those with

more background information and knowledge over which to ponder.

Incidentally, the strange-looking items resting in the base seem to have been part of the linkage that enabled whatever was housed under the dome to release and/or select the music to be played by the movement. (See Fig 8.)



Fig 8 The movement release linkage. Exactly how this worked has yet to be determined.

It is also interesting to speculate what was under the dome: clock, automata, singing birds – whatever was there? It had to be of significant height to justify a 24" dome. The search is on now to find a suitable replacement item.

Finally, all credit for this find is due to my American contact whose assiduous searching of internet venues for musical boxes brought this item to light.

References

1. *The History of The Musical Box and of Mechanical Music* by Alfred Chapuis; English translation published in 1980 by MBSI. ISBN 0915000016
2. *Musical Box Tune Sheets and Dating Charts* by Anthony Bulleid, published in 2000. The original booklet and its four Supplements were published by, and are still available from The Musical Box Society of Great Britain. www.MBSGB.org.uk ISBN 9780950565774
3. *The Musical Box – A Guide for Collectors* by Arthur W J G Ord-Hume. Published in 1995 by Schiffer Publishing Ltd. ISBN 0887407641

The 56cm Polyphon Musical Box

A technological marvel

by Gotthard Arnold, Sina Hildebrand and Edi Niederberger

It's not every day that one is fortunate enough to inherit a Polyphon disc musical box in reasonable working condition. But that is just what happened to Peter Rohrer of Basel, now the proud owner of just such an instrument. The 166 cm tall and 104 kg upper case is truly a technological marvel. It stands on a lower case with compartments for additional metal discs, making up its total height around 2.4 m. The side walls are made of solid alder, and the front is trimmed with walnut. The floral Jugendstil carving in the upper part of the doors is also walnut. The experienced restorer Raphael Lüthi estimates its production date as between 1905–1910. The disc changer was patented in 1897 by Gustave Brachhausen (see *Encyclopedia of Automatic Musical Instruments* by Q. David Bowers, New York 1972 p145).

The changer is built for ten discs with a diameter of 56 cm (22 ½"). Except for one particular model (the twelve-disc 62.5 cm) all Polyphon changers carry ten discs. The protrusions on the punched-out holes on the rear side of the disc move 134 star wheels. 118 of these mesh with the teeth of the two combs, and 16 operate the mechanism that strikes the eight 'bell bars' (Klangplatten) hanging on each side in the upper part of the case. The model number is 5 K (K = Klangplatten), and the serial number is 2505. In the company's



Peter Rohrer's Model K5 Polyphon restored in Switzerland

catalogue this model is listed as an automaton because it starts automatically as soon as a coin is slotted in.

The upper and lower combs are unequal here, which is not normally the case.



The two unequal combs and (right) the tone bar release mechanism

In this changer the upper comb comprises the notes (bass to treble) G A B CC D F F# GG A B CC D EE F GG G# A B CC DD EE F F# GG G# A Bb BB CC C# DD EE F F#F# GG G# AA BB C C# D E F# and the lower comb the notes C G A B C D E F F# G A Bb B C D D# E F F# G (Radspur) A Bb B C C# D D# E FF F# GG AA BB CC (wheel track) DD D# EE FF F# GG AA Bb B CC DD E. The tone bars are tuned to F# GG AA BB CCC DD EE F F#. The mechanism is tuned to a = 385 Hz.

The drive fulfils five different functions:

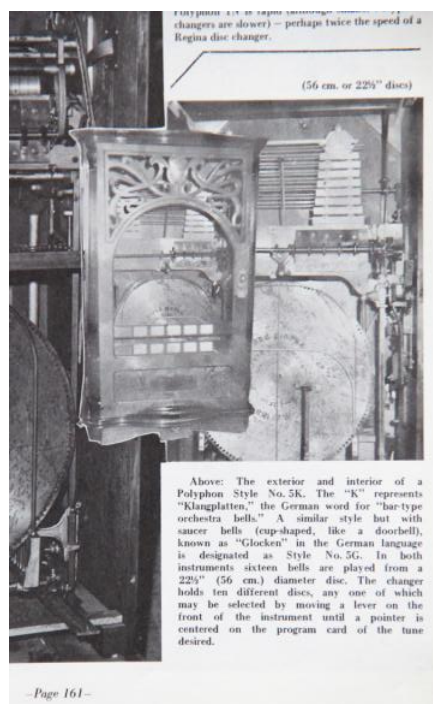
- 1 Raising, and precise laying of the selected disc onto the central pin,
- 2 movement of the bracket that holds the disc onto the star wheels,
- 3 rotation of the disc
- 4 release of the disc-retaining bracket,
- 5 lowering the disc precisely onto the groove intended for it.

Exactly this model is found in David Bowers (see above) p161. The changer is also shown in *The Disc Musical*

Box by Kevin A. McElhone, first published in 2012 by the Musical Box Society of Great Britain (p370, fig 1035).

Its operation begins with winding up the torsion spring that covers the entire width of the instrument to just the right point using the side-mounted crank. A correctly positioned 'Maltese Cross' makes overwinding impossible. The choice of disc is made using a lever that points to the title card selected with an elegantly curved arrow. Inserting a coin of the right weight releases the coin scales, and the mechanism starts to turn. Now the disc is picked up on both sides by the disc hoist and raised, while the coin is released into the drawer.

The disc is laid on the central pin and held in place by the pressure bar on the star wheels, while the drive wheel with sprung teeth interlocks with the perforations on the rim of the disc. The disc rotates



*Excerpt from Bowers' Encyclopedia:
Model 5K*

clockwise and the music is played as the star wheels pluck the teeth of the combs, or cause the tone bars to be struck. After a set number of perforations have been reeled off, the drive wheel stops and the pressure bar opens automatically. The disc is slowly lowered into the store, and the previously emptied coin scales are switched to await the introduction of another coin. Now the operator can choose another disc and start the process again by inserting another coin.

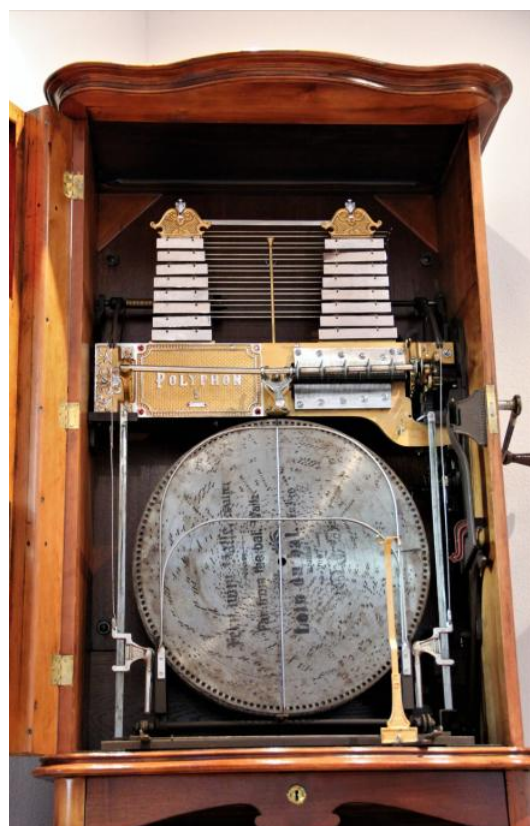
The changer required several painstaking restoration processes, which were, however, worthwhile. The fundamentals were all in excellent working order. But numerous individual defects had to be resolved. The end-piece of the torsion spring was overwound. In

general the mechanism was soiled and gummed up with dirt. This was worst in the dampers. These sit between the individual star wheels, which are ingeniously pre-tensioned, and are responsible on the one hand for braking and on the other for damping. Numerous solvents were tried out without success, e.g. white spirit, ethanol, paint-thinner and so-called 'absolute' cleaner. Only mechanical cleaning remained an option, aided by dilute acetone: that is, very careful abrasion with fine brass-wire brushes and bottle-cleaners. The combs, fortunately, were only slightly affected by lead rot, but had to be retuned once the cleaning was complete.



The large torsion spring with the overwound end piece (view from rear)

To show how tricky the nitty-gritty of the mechanism is, even when playing new discs (manufactured by Lester Jones) now and then star wheels do not cleanly return to their original positions. This can have consequences not only for the sounding of the note the next time round, but can also damage the



The upper case weighs 104 kg

projections on the rear side of the disc. The hammers that strike the tone bars were bent and afflicted with lead rot. This was able to be rectified. Inserted reinforcement bars stabilised the solid housing, as among other things the mounting of the torsion spring, attached on the outside of the housing, has to withstand intense pressure.



The bent tone bar weights afflicted with lead rot

Now the entire mechanism had to be replaced inside, and the interlocking elements precisely adjusted. The hammers were also arranged now with utmost precision within the striking mechanism so that they had enough distance, but not too much, between them and the tone bars. A test run completed the large-scale restoration works. This went off not only satisfactorily but even exceeded all expectations.

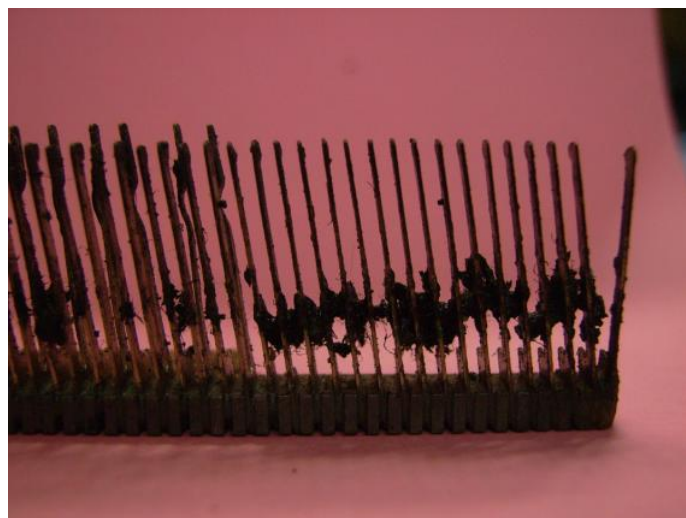
It was with great pleasure that Gotthard Arnold was finally able to state: 'All in all, such a changer

as this could be the ultimate in disc music boxes!'

The Polyphon disc music box can be seen in the Wunderwelt der Mechanischen Musik Museum (World of Mechanical Musical Wonders), Claragraben 37, Basel. Please call ahead to Tel +41 078 683 48 95.



Drive wheel with sprung teeth and automatic disc-retaining bracket



Dampers and brakes: lots of work to do here!

*Our thanks to the authors and the the **Schweizer Freunde Mechanischer Musik** for sharing this article with us, which was published in their magazine number 128 in April 2017.*

This, That and t'Other No 23

by Arthur Cunliffe

With improvements in communications I can now find and save more tunes than I ever did before. It is interesting to find all the unusual tunes that were pinned to musical boxes, especially those made in the 1890s. Most of these tunes are never heard today except for the time-honoured classic melodies like Annie Laurie, Home Sweet Home and Coming through the Rye. There are nearly 2,000 tunes on the Register now, so I can find tunes when only part of the tune sheet exists. By scrolling through the Register, I can also spot tunes that are never heard today and which have long been forgotten.

Occasionally the trade mark of a maker turns up, and no one has a clue to whom it belonged. The one illustrated here below has puzzled everyone for years, so if you have a tune sheet with this mark and there is a name anywhere else on the box, please let me know so we can solve another puzzle. Someone somewhere must have designed this trade mark so his work would be remembered, but who?

It would be interesting to hear from anyone who joined the Society within the past five years what your interests are and the size of your collection. There will be those who have only one box, and others who have a modest collection. If you have a particular type of instrument and collect only those, it could be interesting to see if others have similar preferences. Some people collect only tabatière boxes, sublime harmony, forte piano, mandolin or overture boxes. Yes, there really were some people in the early days of the Society who collected nothing except overture boxes. How times have changed. I hope that there will always be people in the Society who are keen and sufficiently able to amass a sizeable collection over the years. It is likely to cost a great deal more to do this than in the olden days with prices fluctuating a lot, but that is the way of the world. In my particular case I don't care if a box has halved in value since yesterday morning, as I

bought it to listen to and enjoy.

A non-member sent me details of her Nicole box the other day, and it was doubly interesting because the gamme number was previously unrecorded, and some tunes were by the composer Mercadante. One in particular was the duet from his opera *Regina di Spagna*. Search as I might I can find no reference of him ever having written a work with that title. Please can someone help me here, as somewhere an error must have crept in. I don't think Nicole ever pinned a tune from an opera that was not written. The gamme number for this new box is 735. If you have this number in your records or on a movement, please let me know as it relates to the mid period of Nicole's production.

There are 3,488 Nicole boxes currently registered, which is only a fraction of their total production. Of the surviving boxes there must still be thousands out there completely unknown except to their owners. Would those members who have not yet sent me details about an unregistered Nicole please do so as soon as you can. Each new box really does add to our knowledge about this maker. Please email me and I will have no trouble reading any attachments. We keep no records of the owner or the place where it is kept, so privacy is assured.



Who is this maker?

As the years pass by collecting such information will become more difficult, so I would ask you all to make a special effort to increase our knowledge about Nicole boxes that are still with us. It is sad to think that every year some boxes will have a nasty accident and be scrapped. There are at least two Nicole boxes that were put on the Register originally which have now been scrapped for parts.

I am looking forward to your emails.

Register News No 98

by Arthur Cunliffe

The number of boxes on the Register has reached 11,748 largely due to the efforts of Tim Reed in America, who sends me regular updates of all the boxes he has found over there. We owe him our thanks for his untiring efforts.

The result of all this new information is that the number of Mermod boxes registered is far greater than I previously thought. I think they nearly match the number of Nicole boxes in America. Relatively few Mermod boxes are to be found in this country, which surprises me somewhat, but it is an indication of where their sales were aimed. They have a distinctive and pleasant sound, and have features which are common to most of them. One of these is the safety device to arrest a run, should one happen. I strongly advise that you take their word for it rather than test this for yourself.

After thinking for a long time about the quality and purity of sound coming from musical boxes, I have reached the conclusion that the older the box the better they are. Early boxes usually have superb arrangements of the melody with the combs having longer and softer sounding teeth. What also helps the sound quality is the fact they were often housed in a plain fruit wood case, which was designed to be the best possible sounding board. For many years these boxes were not as popular as those which were fitted into ornate cases with exotic veneers and marquetry. It did mean however, that the collector whose main concern was with the quality of music had a much better chance of finding musically superb boxes. Over time this has all changed, and

there are now distinct groups of collectors who limit their collecting either to a particular type of box or to a set period of time. Some look for early key-wind boxes, considering nothing else, while others look for boxes with bells or automata. Some look for cases that are fine pieces of furniture in their own right and pay scant attention to the mechanism housed inside. What a change to the times when empty musical box cases were used as slipper or magazine boxes or, even in one particular case became a door wedge for an antique shop. Yes, I really have seen this and had the problem of the shop owner not really being ready to relinquish his door stop.

Due to the changes and improvements in communications and the invention of powerful database programs, I am now able to find and save more tunes than ever before. There are about 2,000 tunes saved on the Register now. By scrolling through the Register, it is possible to spot tunes that are never heard today. I wonder if anyone could recognise or sing the melody to any of the following:

Cuban Giants
Tramway Gallop
Listen to my tale of Woe
Shall I be an Angel Daddy?
Tar and Tartar
Ring de Banjo
Derby Galop
Tripping Through the Meadow
It's a Wonder I'm Alive to Tell

As the Registrar, I am constantly on the lookout for new names turning up as a manufacturer or an agent. I think that the number of people conducting a business of manufacturing a musical box in

the late 18th century is fairly small. These people were perfectly happy to make boxes for an agent, and did not seem to mind if they added their own name to the product. It is often difficult to distinguish between who is a maker and who is an agent. This area requires much more research and I hope that in the future someone will take on this task and contribute to our knowledge about musical boxes. Illustrated here are two types of mechanical instrument which, if you stretch your imagination a little, can be categorised as musical boxes. The first is a Chordephon, which is an instrument that is seldom seen today mainly because few were made. This example was seen during a Society visit to Germany. Instead of relying on tuned teeth it uses strings which need tuning from time to time. I suspect that is why they were not very popular.

The second is of the ever popular maneville. Mainly produced as a children's toy, these were made in their thousands. Pictures of kittens were very popular along with other animals. These pictures are nearly always marked with circular scratches where finger nails have caught the lid over the years. Most were circular in shape but some were housed in square wooden boxes.

I would like those members having a maneville in their collection to photograph it and send me the picture as an attachment to an email. I can then make a file for posterity. I think we are so used to seeing these items that no one has really bothered to list them for the future. I am sure most members



Maneville

would enjoy scrolling through such a file to look at all of the illustrations.

Happy collecting!



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Nostalgia's not what it used to be ...

by Patrick Handscombe

Recently a PPG member asked me how I came to own a player piano, and pressed me to put the story on paper. So here goes ...

In my late teens I took up the piano again after a break and was taught piano and organ by the Rev'd Paul Faunch, Rector of the neighbouring Essex parish of East Donyland. He was an extraordinarily able and notable musician: pianist, organist, Principal of the Curwen (Tonic Sol Fa) College and ex Precentor of Guildford Cathedral. His tuition fees could have been high, but he took pity on me as a poor vicar's son and taught me free in return for serving at Saturday morning Communion. Quite often, rather than return to the distant rectory for a lesson, we would use the church organ and a large upright piano in the church hall. There was something strange about this piano: it was plain oak, tall and hugely thick, had a sliding door in front and lots of unfathomable gubbins inside. But it was a fine-sounding instrument, if well used.

Some time in 1969 Fr Faunch announced that the hall was to be sold and demolished. What would become of the hall piano? It would have to go. My old upright at home needed replacing. How much did he want for the hall piano? 'Make me an offer.' Me, cheekily: '£10?' Done! I duly examined closely the instrument I had purchased. It had Keith Prowse stencilled on the fall, Ludwig Hupfeld cast into the frame, an electric motor in the bottom and a player action with aluminium unit valves. I measured it up for eventual removal to my parents' house. A modern country vicarage, it had rather narrow

Crittall metal entrance doors, and the Hupfeld was too fat to go through any of them. (I didn't know then the keyboard was removable.) Insoluble! Hard luck! But next day the Bishop came to dinner and my father mentioned the fact to him. His wife was a pianist and they owned a fine big Broadwood grand. 'We can't have a vicarage that can't take a good piano!' he said. 'Leave it to me.' Two days later the Archdeacon and the diocesan architect arrived, and arranged shortly to replace the narrow front door with wide double doors.

Like most people I knew little about pianolas, but recalled some friends had one, a rather nice Steck pedal upright. I drove over, sussed it out somewhat and borrowed an 88-note roll. It would not fit the Hupfeld at all. Wrong ends, different tracker bar hole pitch. What had I acquired? Whatever, it was going to take a lot to get it to work. I remembered that there were advertisers of music rolls in Exchange and Mart, and phoned up one Cyril Grainger, a now fondly-remembered PPG member, in Epping Green. 'Gosh!' he said when I described the Hupfeld. 'You've got an Animatic Clavist. You're unlikely to find any rolls for it. You should talk to Frank Holland at the Piano Museum.' I rang up Frank: he was ecstatic, and arrived post-haste by train and taxi to see the Hupfeld the very next morning. It was the first to be found of only three of the same model café piano listed in the Keith Prowse ledgers which had been supplied to yacht clubs in East Anglia. Mine had ended up as a gift to the church via the Royal Oak pub. Frank wanted it for the

Piano Museum. None of the few particular rolls to fit it could be spared so it was useless to me as a player. Would I accept £350 for it? Hmmm ... At that point in my life, I was more concerned to have a decent practice piano.

My parents were amused by Frank Holland's eccentricity. At lunch he told us that once I'd got a player piano I'd never be the same. How right he was. He invited me to visit the museum the next Saturday. Meanwhile, other collectors had heard about the Hupfeld and were canvassing me hard. Norman Evans immediately offered me a small rebuilt Aeolian pedal grand in exchange.

One look into the Aladdin's cave that was the Piano Museum and I was hooked. Frank made various slender offers for the Hupfeld. But no, what I now wanted, of course, was a Steinway Duo-Art grand. Fat chance! But I could have a Weber electric-only Duo-Art grand for the Hupfeld plus £100. Hmmm ... I took home a free(!) copy of the fascinating Duo-Art service manual and grew inclined to say yes. Two days later Frank phoned to press me. My mother, answering, told him she really didn't want a grand in the sitting room, but was more unhappy about me spending all my schoolboy savings. 'OK he can have it as a direct swap,' said Frank. Yesss!

By the time the removal van arrived to collect the Hupfeld, still in the church hall, and deliver the grand, a couple of weeks later, the Vicarage front door had been comprehensively widened, but the Weber came straight into the

sitting room on its side through a garden door. I understood it needed work but even so it was, frankly, a disappointment. The action needed refurbishing, the steamboat pump sucked – barely, and it tinkled weakly. My dear aged grandpapa became so convulsed with laughter by this and the busily pulsating elephant's trunk from the pump, that he had to hold onto something and nearly had a heart attack. But after a few days' work I had it reproducing respectably.

Great aunt Fanny (indeed), visiting, said, 'Oh yes, we had a Steinway upright Duo-Art in the billiard room.' My father recalled it as a lad. Techno-enthusiast great uncle Percy had been in airships in WW1 and had advanced motor cars and early

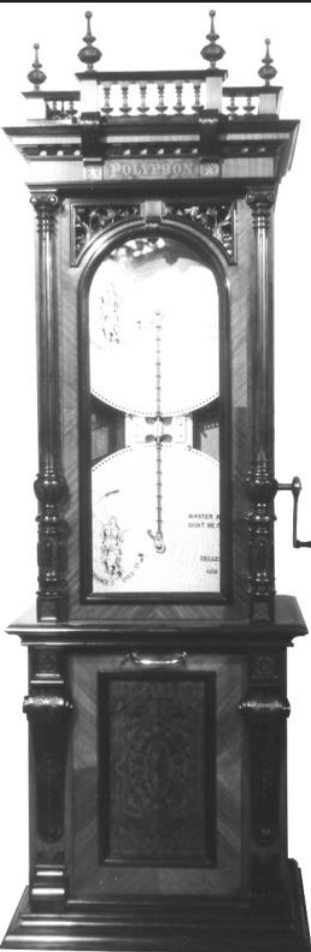
television sets as well as the Duo-Art. What happened to it? 'We gave it to the parish church a few years back. You could have had it if you wanted.' Duh! I phoned the vicar, whom my father knew. Yes, it was still in the church hall; naturally to turn it back into a normal piano they had removed all the pianola nonsense and burned it with the rolls ...

Grandmama was intrigued by me fiddling under the Weber. 'A pianola? I must tell my pianist friend Frank Laffitte,' she said. 'He will be interested.' And so he was. He immediately invited me to tea, when he glowed recounting for the first time in years his Duo-Art recordings. What a serendipitous encounter! I shortly took him to

meet Frank Holland, and so began, as Roger Buckley could tell, another most gratifying story.

Since those halcyon days I've owned eight more players of various sorts, made many good PPG friends, and happily become hopelessly immersed in the music, history and technology of the player piano. The Weber, which was used at several South Bank concerts, I kept for some 35 years. The Hupfeld Animatic Clavist is still in the Piano Museum.

This article has been reproduced by courtesy of both its author and the Player Piano Group. It originally appeared in their Bulletin number 214 Summer/Autumn 2017.



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The President's Message No 20

As I conclude my fifth year in office I reflect on the long list of aspirations for the Society that I set out with five years ago, and measure to what extent they have been achieved.

Probably the most significant has been the incorporation of the Society as a company. This was to protect its assets and officers and directors, and to enshrine good governance in its operation. An example of the latter has been a thorough analysis of the new Data Protection law (GDPR) and its implications for MBSGB. This is not a trivial matter, and even were the Society still an unincorporated association the law would still apply. I therefore urge every member to follow the advice elsewhere in this magazine and on the flyer to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by omitting to act.

My primary sponsor, when I stood for office, believed I was the person to bring the Society into the 21st century. This showed great confidence on his part, and I regret he is probably still waiting for most of what he was hoping for! However, I do know that social media was one area we agreed could be better exploited by the Society. The active members of the Committee and of the Society, in general tending to be of more mature years and of a somewhat conservative outlook, I have found an almost innate resistance to engaging with such things as Facebook. Matters have not been improved by recent revelations in the national media of abuse of



*President of the MBSGB
Alison Biden*

harvested data. Notwithstanding this I hope we are now poised to have a more significant and long overdue social media presence.

Another milestone during the past half-decade has been the publication of the Fourth Supplement to the Musical Box Tune Sheet Book, which came out in record time, and we have also enjoyed a period of reduced magazine production costs. We have a new website for which our own webmaster can manage the content, instead of resorting to the intervention of third parties. The MBSGB is also a signatory to a collaborative agreement drawn up between the various European mechanical music organisations – although with the advent of Brexit it remains to be seen whether the MBSGB can continue to participate in any projects funded by the EU.

While representing and promoting the MBSGB to the outside world, being President has brought the unexpected personal rewards of

forging new friendships, near and far, and developing a working relationship with fellow enthusiasts. Whilst I take very seriously the fostering of an ongoing interest and the encouragement of more research, I am aware that the most important aspect of this interest of ours is for people to have fun and enjoy themselves. The Society is here both to promote mechanical music and provide a friendly environment where enthusiasts can share their passion.

This is my twentieth message, and it won't be the first where I have focused on sharing. There are many of us whose greatest pleasure comes from demonstrating our instruments to like-minded others, and to those who are yet discover the delights of our interest. At the time of writing there are three events on the horizon which offer us the opportunity to do this, and there may well be more as time goes on. If you would like a day out please come along and support and/or participate in Diss, Norfolk (19th and 20th May), at the Bursledon Steam Brickworks, Hampshire (Sunday 27th May) and the Wield and Downland Museum, near Chichester, on 18th and 19th August. Please register your interest and obtain more information from me.

Helping to organise Society activities can be very rewarding, and a great opportunity to develop greater camaraderie, whilst taking part can be a lot of fun. You do not have to be a member of Committee to assist. I hope going forward the members will continue

to support their Committee. I personally have been overwhelmed by the dedication to the Society of individual Committee members, and without whose support and

hard work we would not still be here. Like me, they took the decision to put something back into an organisation from which they derive so much pleasure. Thank

you to them, and to all MBSGB members, for giving me the opportunity to serve the Society, widen my experience and make many new friends.

Results of the Disc Survey

On page 158 of the Winter 2017 edition of *The Music Box* Vol 28 No 4 the committee announced its new initiative that the Society should sponsor the production of new musical box arrangements for 15½” Polyphon discs. Although modern tunes are already available for many sizes of musical box disc from Hens Tooth Discs and Porter Music Box Company, and recuts of an enormous range of original discs are available from Lester Jones, it had been suggested that the Society should lead the way in the production of new arrangements as chosen by the members. The article explained how the project would work, and the selection of tunes.

The idea was that the Society would pay for the new arrangements, and facilitate shipping of new discs from USA to UK. The members ordering discs would pay for their individual production and local carriage in the

UK. If enough discs were ordered they would benefit from economies of scale on both the disc production and shipping costs.

The project would be viable only if enough members firstly showed interest in being involved, and then only if enough people wanted the same tunes. It would not be worth the Society paying a lot for a new arrangement if only one disc was ordered. So the project was announced, and members were asked to reply if they were interested in either of the tune options proposed.

Over Christmas 2017, I sent out an end-of-Year message to all members who had declared their agreement to be contacted by the Society by email. Due to the new Data Protection Act I am unable to email every member, and can only contact those members who have specifically given permission, which we request you give in your annual

renewal of membership. Emails went to around 95 members. The article also requested a response to me, as Correspondence Secretary, either by email or by post to our correspondence address.

I have now analysed all responses, which didn’t take long. I have had no responses directly from the article and only twelve from my email. Of those, only four gave the project their support with a possible interest in buying the new discs. I am disappointed at such a low level of interest in a project which has been suggested strongly by some members in the past. The Committee takes the view that there is insufficient potential uptake to justify proceeding with the project as outlined. Members can still buy new arrangements for their disc musical boxes from the extensive range of the two aforementioned suppliers above.

Nicholas Simons.

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:

3279	Karen Gregory	Warwickshire
3280	Robert Bliss	Warwickshire
3281	Harold Stebelton	USA

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. Groups meet in London and Home Counties, the Midlands, Hants and Worcs.

<i>DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2018</i>	
13 th May 2018	National Vintage Communications Fair. Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, The Fosse, Fosse Way, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 1XN
19 th May 2018	Grand reopening of The Grange Musical Collection, now including the Cotton Collection. The Grange, Old Bury Road, Palgrave, Diss, Norfolk IP22 1AZ. 01379 783350
19 th May 2018	MBSGB member, Steve Greatrex, is having a player piano meeting. Steve has a wide-ranging collection, including a large Steinway Model B Duo-Art grand. Please contact Steve on 01752 767936 (Plymouth) if you are interested in attending the meeting. This is a postponement of the 28 th April meeting given last time, due to a clash of dates.
20 th May 2018	Diss Organ Festival. A large festival around this picturesque town, including organs of all sizes, and including a presentation by the MBSGB .
2 nd June 2018	MBSGB AGM . Roade Village Hall. NN7 2LS.
16 th June 2018	MBSGB Teme Valley Winders Eastham, Tenbury Wells, Worcs. 11 a.m. start Contact John Philips 01584 781118
24 th –25 th August	Llandrindod Wells Organ Festival. Part of the Victorian Festival. MBSGB members are invited to participate in this friendly organ festival. Full details from Nicholas Simons, 01332 760576, njasmbs@btinternet.com
28 th –30 th September	MBSGB Autumn Weekend 2018 will take place in the Plough and Harrow Hotel in Birmingham. An economical package has been negotiated at this recently refurbished hotel and the meeting will include visits to places steeped in the industrial history of this city, including the famous Jewellery Quarter. Please see the flyer for details.
6 th –7 th October	Milton Keynes Organ Festival at the Milton Keynes Museum, McConnel Drive, Wolverton, MK12 5EL. Please contact Ernie, 01908 379748 or Calvin, 07812 482097.
1 st December	MBSGB Teme Valley Winders Christmas Meeting Eastham, Tenbury Wells, Worcs. 11am start Contact John Philips 01584 781118

Llandrindod Wells Organ Festival 2018

The Llandrindod Wells Victorian Festival will take place again this year in the week up to and including the August Bank Holiday. This year will be the 37th Victorian Festival. Since 1987 an organ festival has been held over the second weekend of the festival. This was started by Geoff Alford, who did so much to popularise hand-cranked street organ playing in Great Britain. He later handed over the reins to a series of other enthusiasts with the result that the organ festival has had an unbroken history to date. The MBSGB held its Autumn meeting at the Victorian Festival in 1988, and MBSGB members have been involved in the festival ever since. The photo on the next page shows a more recent festival attended by members Nicholas Simons, John Farmer, Kath Turner and Norman Dicker. Organs will be played in the streets on Friday and Saturday, 24th and 25th August. In addition to the organs, the Victorian Festival includes a full programme of both indoor and outdoor entertainment, see: www.victorian-festival.co.uk

Due to a change in management and the ageing of some participants, there is the opportunity for new organ grinders to join the festival this year. Any design of hand-cranked organ is welcome. There are many good hotels and guest houses in the area, and the organiser can assist anyone interested. If you are interested in joining this enjoyable social event please contact Nicholas Simons for more details: 01332 760576 njasmbs@btinternet.com



Four MBSGB minstrels at Llandrindod Wells

***Come and join us at these events – help, participate or just enjoy ...
Fun guaranteed!***

Diss, Norfolk (19th and 20th May). Grand re-opening of Jonny Ling's Grange Musical Collection incorporating much of the former Cotton Collection, at Palgrave near Diss, on Saturday 19th May. The MBSGB will be attending this and promoting the Society. The following day, Sunday 20th May, is the second Diss Organ Festival in this Norfolk market town, with dozens of organs big and small scattered about the main thoroughfares. As before, the MBSGB will be demonstrating musical boxes and other mechanical instruments in the Corn Hall. Last year we had over 2,000 people pass through just the exhibition. Please join us and make the weekend of it.

Bursledon Steam Brickworks, Hampshire (Sunday 27th May). This, a Victoriana and Steampunk Day, is one of many one-day public events at the Brickworks. We know from experience that mechanical musical instruments hold a fascination for Steampunks, whilst organs are always popular. Organ grinders and demonstrators welcome – please come along and help even if you don't have an instrument of your own.

Wield and Downland Museum, near Chichester (18th and 19th August). Another two-day event at which the MBSGB has been invited to participate, both with organs and indoor demonstrations of musical boxes. For further details of all these and registration of interest, please contact Alison Biden, 01962 861350, ali_biden@hotmail.com

Llandrindod Wells, (24th and 25th August – Bank Holiday Friday and Saturday). Organ grinders wanted for this long-running traditional annual event held in the quintessential Victorian town. Further information from Nicholas Simons, 01332 760576, njasmbs@btinternet.com.



THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN

Précis Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 3rd June 2017 at Roade, Northamptonshire.

Opening: The President/Chair, Alison Biden, took the Chair of the Meeting and declared the AGM open at 11.00 am. A total of 41 Officers and Members were present. Twenty members sent their apologies.

Minutes of Previous General Meetings held on 4th June 2016. The 2016 AGM and 2016 EGM Minutes were approved.

Matters Arising:

Incorporation: The Society became an **Incorporated Private Company Limited by Guarantee, Registration No 10766572** on 11th May 2017; its Constitution became thereby its Articles of Association and its assets were transferred on that date. (See separate details.)

Society Property held by Mr Bellamy: Mr Bellamy had rebuffed separate initiatives by two independent intermediaries to retrieve this since the 2016 AGM. Having slipped into the room without registering as the guest of a bona fide member, Mr Bellamy was permitted by the meeting to state why he continued to hold this property. In his statement, Mr Bellamy claimed inter alia that an offer by him to discuss the matter had been declined by the President; that he had a right to continue to hold the items as a bailee; and that he would return the items provided a full probate list was published.

In response to Mr Bellamy's claims, the Meeting was advised by the Executive Committee that the agreement to meet for discussion had been withdrawn because Mr Bellamy substituted the agenda with one to discuss copyright and insisted that a qualified legal representative be present at the expense of either the Society or the President; that by law, a bailee (Mr Bellamy) is required to return the items to the rightful owner (MBSGB) on demand, immediately and unconditionally; that under the terms of the will, the bequest was in benefit absolute to MBSGB members, without any conditions as to its use; and that the list of items concerned had been published in *The Music Box* - vide Volume 26 No 5 Spring 2014 Page 187 Column 2 last Paragraph. In a civil exchange with the Chair, Mr Bellamy agreed to discuss the matter immediately after the AGM, and vacated the room.

After due discussion, the meeting voted overwhelmingly not to write off the collection and that it was in the best interests of the Society to maintain the status quo and not take further action for the time being. A further motion proposed from the floor that in the event Mr Bellamy continued to withhold the property, action would ultimately be taken against his estate was well supported.

President's Report: The following points were made: the Society had turned a corner; the administration was managing the Society efficiently; the trend of expenditure exceeding income had been reversed through making savings; the decline in membership had slowed; innovative ways were being researched to promote the Society and serve its members; becoming an Incorporated Private Company Limited by Guarantee was a major milestone in its history and, in the process had demonstrated to the satisfaction of Companies House that The Musical Box Society of Great Britain is in its field the foremost organisation in this country and a leading organisation internationally. This change in status gives an opportunity for the Executive Committee to review its business procedures and practices, explore better use of the internet and social media and make best use of its funds. The MBSGB had continued to interface with the public at large events as well as local initiatives undertaken by individual members; interest generated showed that more similar activities were needed. Members of the Executive Committee were thanked for their work and support and the President appealed for more help from members in running the Society and promoting its interests.

Secretarial Reports: Reports were received from the Subscriptions, Membership, Meetings and Correspondence Secretaries.

Treasurer: The 2016 Accounts were reported and adopted.

Reports: Were received from the Archivist, Auction Organiser, Advertising Secretary, Web Master, Registrar and the Editor.

Propositions under Bye Laws Article 1 Section 4: The following changes to the Society's Articles of Association were approved:

- **Articles 4 and 5:** The Office of Subscriptions Secretary be abolished and its duties combined with those of the Treasurer.
- **Article 4.4:** The requirement was added that Nominees for office should have been a member of the Society in good standing for a continuous period of not less than three years.
- **New Article 6.12** was added. With the agreement of the Executive Committee, which shall not be withheld unreasonably, members of the Society may attend EC meetings without speaking rights, unless invited by the chair, and without voting rights.

Election of Society Officers for the Forthcoming Year:

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

Executive Committee Members: The following were appointed to serve as Officers of the Society for the year 2017-2018:

Vice-President	Nicholas Simons	Archivist	Alison Biden
Membership Secretary	Kevin McElhone	Advertising Secretary	Mark Singleton
Treasurer	John Farmer	Auction Organiser	John Ward
Meetings Secretary	David O'Connor	Webmaster	John Farmer
Correspondence Secretary	Nicholas Simons	Recording Secretary	David Worrall
Editor – Paid appointment	Richard Mendelsohn	Members without Portfolio	John Moorhouse and Keith Reedman

Appointments Unfilled: Second Vice-President; Third Member without Portfolio.

Note: Arthur Cunliffe continues his work as Registrar outside the Executive Committee.

Set Level of Subscriptions/Fees for 2018: Membership Fees for 2018 were agreed as those applying for 2017.

Date and Venue for 2018 AGM - Date: Saturday 2nd June 2018 at 11 a.m. at the Village Hall, Roade, Northamptonshire.

Any Other Business: The EC was requested to consider the following: The policy of charging for lunch at the AGM; Advertising Members' articles for sale on the Society website; Society Sponsorship of apprentice restorers; and Reduced Membership Fees for Students.

A request to fund an advertisement in the programme of a charitable fund raising concert was rejected.

Honorary Life Membership was awarded to Kevin McElhone in recognition of his work for the Society and the wider interests of mechanical music.

The meeting closed at 1.10pm.

Post Meeting Note: Mr Bellamy did not make himself available after the meeting for further discussion on MBSGB property held by him.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL MBSGB MEMBERS

Concerning the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

The existing Data Protection Act, which is concerned with the protection of Personal Data held by organisations, is being replaced by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which comes into force on 25th May 2018. On and from that date all organisations will be required to comply with GDPR requirements, which apply to all automated and manual filing systems in which Personal Data is held by or on behalf of an organisation in support of its business.

The Executive Committee is reviewing the extent to which it needs to take action by 25th May in order to comply with GDPR. Whilst some is administrative within the EC, there is also a requirement to hold positive, explicit and signed Consent so that some items of Personal Data may be held and processed by the Society. This means that members will be required to complete a Consent Form in order for MBSGB to continue providing some of its services to a member.

An appropriate Consent Form is enclosed with this issue of The Music Box. Please complete, sign and return it as soon as possible to the address shown on the form. It is also acceptable to provide your consent by sending an email to musicalboxsociety@hotmail.co.uk using the same consent wording as on the enclosed form, or by use of the online consent form available here: www.mbsgb.org.uk/gdpr

You are able to ask the MBSGB to delete any or all of your personal data from its files and records at any time. However, doing this may prevent the MBSGB from sending you The Music Box. Your personal data will be similarly deleted if you cancel your membership or fail to renew it by paying your annual subscription before 1st April in any year.

Please remember that the GDPR places control of the use of your personal data in your hands. Failure to return the form duly dated and signed means that MBSGB will no longer be able to meet its obligation to provide you with its member services that rely upon its use of your Personal Data.

MBSGB Executive Committee. March 2018

News from other Societies

AMICA Bulletin Vol 55 No 1 Jan/Feb 2018

See also www.amica.org

Editor Glenn

Thomas

introduces readers to an internet site, 'Dismuke', which plays 'great fidelity versions'

of original band recordings from the 1920s and 30s. This is joined by some lengthy notes from the proprietor of the site. Nothing to do with mechanical music – but many people who enjoy our interest enjoy big bands too. Matthew Jaro turns his talents to writing nine pages of Part 1 of Music Roll Perforating Machines. This is followed by an item about Richard M Jones, who, according to the author, Frank Himpsl, 'likely grew up playing piano, (possibly while underage) at the infamous houses of ill-repute in the Storyville District of New Orleans.' He went on to become a great jazz/blues composer, and features on a number of piano rolls. Frank also interposes an anecdote of how he, Frank, met Louis Armstrong one hot July night in 1967 or 68. Frank follows this with a two-page item about Options for MIDI file playback. The theme is taken up by Terry Smythe, explaining that Frank Himsel's scans of rolls are generously being made available to all AMICA members on the AMICA website. This is followed by a reprint from *The Music Box* of Paul Mellor's article on rusty discs. There is a preview of this year's convention in June in South Dakota – any MBSGB members thinking of going will have to forgo the MBSGB AGM as it is the same weekend! This edition concludes with some reprints from



early bulletins, and reports from the Boston Area, Heart of America, Lady Liberty, Southern California, and Texas Chapters.

AMICA Bulletin Vol 55 No 2 March/April 2018

See also www.amica.org

How's this for an opener? – Q David Bowers writing about ... Q David Bowers. (AMICA Editor believes this is the first time Bowers himself has been the subject of an article.) Entitled 'Adventures in Automatic Musical Instruments' the author relates how he became interested in the topic and several of his experiences. In his regular column, Nickel Notes, Matt Jaro delivers the second instalment about Music Roll Perforating Machines, featuring the Leabarjan and Star perforators before turning to modern ones, such as Ed Gaida and Richard and Janet Tonnesen. Frank Himpsl writes about James P Johnson – 'the father of the Stride piano style'. Two articles concern climate control – one by Ray Palmer, with reference to pianos, and one by Glenn Thomas, with reference to 'larger instruments'. In an article entitled 'The Ampico B: as Different as You Think?' author Robert W Taylor focuses on the operation of the amplifier, which all too often got overlooked. Whilst often not considered as significant as it should be, as if to demonstrate the point, this article stretches to five pages in length. There is then a preview of the next AMICA convention, as well as reports from the Heart of America, Lady Liberty, Northern Lights, Pacific Can-Am, Southern California and Sowny Chapters.

Mechanical Music Vol 63 No 5 Sep/Oct 2017

See also www.mbsi.org

In his regular column,

Nickel Notes, Mathew

Jaro writes about piano

rolls. This

is followed by a fascinating and entertaining item entitled 'The Mummy, the Hummingbird, and the Italian Organ Grinder.' (No, it is not a film by Paul Greenaway.) 'The Mummy and the Hummingbird' appears on an old theatre poster, seen by the author, Robert Penna, PhD, whilst cruising aboard Cunard's Queen Victoria. Robert tells us, 'The play tells the melodramatic story of a scientist, his wife, her intended lover and revenge.' (Definitely sounds like a Paul Greenaway movie!) The intended lover is the organ grinder of the title. On a more serious note – the Guinness Collection Exhibit at the Morris Museum, Morristown, New Jersey, celebrates its first ten years. Bob Caletti then very helpfully describes how to pack a Regina Changer for shipment. This is followed by ten pages about collecting roller organ cobs, by Richard L Dutton. Robin Drew then gives instructions on how to make a Marotte. This is followed by three pages by Ron Bopp on A Peerless Model F (3) Orchestrion, while Jay Carsman writes about his Adventures in Regina Land – working with my Regina Model 35. Reports from the Sunbelt, Southern California, and National Capitol Chapters, and 'In Memoriam' for Anthony Ciuffini and Donald Day conclude the contents.



***Mechanical Music Vol 63 No 6
Nov/Dec 2017***

See also www.mbsi.org

Much of this issue relates to the 2017 MBSI convention in New Jersey, the programme, attendees, business and awards. Following on, several pages of text and photographs focus on the collection of Dick and Cheryl Hack in the regular feature 'Nickel Notes'. The collection contains some fine examples of orchestrions and large organs. The contents conclude with three Chapter meeting reports (Southern California, Golden Gate and North West International) and 'In Memoriam' for Ron Yancy and Jim Heyworth.

***Mechanical Music Vol 64 No 1
Jan/Feb 2018***

See also www.mbsi.org

This edition opens with two short articles on interacting with school-age children through running workshops where they can make their own musical boxes. Jack and Mildred Hardman and their collection are the subject of the regular Matt Jaro feature 'Nickel Notes'. A four-manual Wurlitzer organ is housed in a barn specially constructed to accommodate an audience during recitals. It is always most helpful when a technical article is accompanied by lots of large, clear images, and no fewer than eleven pages are dedicated to a description by Bob Caletti of Robin Biggins demonstrating how to replace a tooth tip in a comb. Also described are soldering a detached bell linkage to a comb tooth and replacing teeth. Ken Gordon has done extensive research on the discs available for the Symphonion Eroica disc machine and publishes a list of almost 200 different discs, with about a half dozen disc numbers for which he

cannot attribute a title. This is followed by a fascination article about the disappearance of organ grinders from the streets of New York, with the consequential loss of the record of the songs contained on the barrels of their instruments. This topic is expanded to a discussion of the depiction of organ grinders in cartoon films. There are reports from the Golden Gate, Sunbelt, National Capital, Southeast and Southern California Chapters, while the late Kathleen Kananen, Louise Brown Alden Cassidy and Merriel Bellamy are all remembered.

***Player
Piano
Group***



– No 214

Summer/Autumn 2017

See also www.playerpianogroup.org.uk

This edition opens with a review of a concert rendered by means of a Welte Vorsetzer at the PPG AGM 2017. Author Rowland Lee conveys his enthusiasm with such statements as: 'PPG member James Eggleston, the owner of this Vorsetzer ... is a music publisher and distinguished musicologist in his own right, and introduced each roll with interesting and well-researched historical details.' As Rowland observes, the Welte rolls were the first means of recording many well-known pianists at the time. Paddy Handscombe delivers an entertaining account of how he became the owner of a Hupfeld Animatic Clavist, which led to his encounter with Frank Holland, while Robert Cowan gives an account of a visit to the Museum of Clocks and Mechanical Museum at Oberhofen, Switzerland. This is followed by a biography of Len Luscombe, 'Australia's Premier Piano Roll Pianist and Arranger'.

There are six pages of reprinted Duo-Art dealers' instruction manual, concerning instructions for playing Duo-Art, and elsewhere in this edition, from The Music Trade Review 26th May 1917, 'Chopin and the Player: The Second of a Series of Articles Which Will Appear in The Review on the Interpretation of Chopin By Means of the Player Piano, Which Will Prove of Much Interest to Those Player-Pianists Who Are Followers of Chopin.' A number of social events are also reported on.

***Player Piano Group – No 215
Spring 2018***

See also www.playerpianogroup.org.uk

MBSGB member Robert Cowan reports on last Autumn's trip to Northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands. This is followed by an item taken from Vol 8 No 51 of The Connoisseur magazine about 'The Evolution of the Pianoforte'. More from the past again with a reprint of an article from PPG's own bulletin of 30 years ago, the subject of which is the Disklavier Piano. The subject of the next article is 'Muriel Pollock and the Player Piano'. We are obligingly informed by the Editor, Edward Cheese, that this article was suggested by Steve Greatrex, and reproduced with kind permission of its researcher and author, Bill Edwards, who is a ragtime pianist and historian. For more information, including on other composers, readers are invited to go to ragpiano.com. Ken Wakeman writes about his favourite piano roll, the Jazz version of Robin's Return played by Neville Dickie. This edition seems heavily dependent on the archives, as we have yet two more items from that source: a description of the reproducing piano, originally published in Bulletin 84 of April

1982, and a piece of ephemera. Two social gatherings are reported, and the bulletin concludes with the third in a series on 'Chopin and the Player'.

North West Player Piano Association Journal – Christmas 2017

see also www.pianola.org.uk

This hefty edition is full of really interesting articles, not all of them entirely devoted to player pianos. For example, a violin prodigy, Joseph Joachim, a contemporary of Queen Victoria, who was acknowledged as the world's foremost violinist of the era, is the subject of the latest in the series 'When they were young'. Another article is dedicated to 'A Brief History of Tape Recording', a slight misnomer as it is several pages long, whilst yet another is about automatic saxophones. There is also Part 2 of the item about The 1928 Daily Express Piano Playing Contest Rolls. An account, full of background detail, of the contest is followed by speculation as to why Aeolian produced five Duo-Art rolls of the test pieces of music. An unattributed item discusses adhesives, followed by a list of the Fifty Most popular Duo-Art Ballads, from 1928. Another feature, No 13 in the series 'From our song roll collections', is about the song, *Roses of Picardy*, whilst another considers the origins of the Christmas carol, *Adeste Fideles*. A biography of Eileen Joyce is the subject of a long article, and the magazine carries write-ups of a number of different meetings and social events.

Reed Organ Society Quarterly Vol XXXVI, No 2, 2017

see also www.reedsoc.org

A longish article by Milton

Bacheller describes the difficulty encountered in trying to donate a Randall Brothers organ to a local history society museum. With such difficulty in communications with the society, he was tempted to hand it over 'as found'. Fortunately it went against his better judgement, and his labours were rewarded with knowing that a very rare organ had been preserved. The article is extended with some notes on the Randall firm. Michael Hendron writes about the featured centre-spread score, *Prelude and Fugue in D Minor*. This is followed by an item about 'Two Pioneering Organ Builders in North Bridgewater, Massachusetts', Caleb H Packard and Arthur B Marston. The other item of interest in this edition is about the demise of the Estey organ firm, hastened by the maladministration of its President, Henry Hancock – who was later exposed as an illegal immigrant!

Reed Organ Society Quarterly Vol XXXVI, No 3, 2017

see also www.reedsoc.org

From reading the President's column one learns that the organ music by French composer Alfred Lefébure-Wély is 'easy to listen to and fun to play.' Several pages are dedicated to a review of the ROS gathering in York, PA, whilst a useful item consists of a Stop Dictionary for the American Organ. The author of an article entitled 'Variations, Variety and Variants of Playing Reed Organs' informs us its purpose is 'to show that suction reed organs can be expressive, artistic and musical.' This is illustrated with an annotated score of *Sweet Hour of Prayer* giving guidance on how



to imbue it with expression. It is not often one comments on an advertisement; however one for the Pease Collection of Historical Instruments in Massachusetts is particularly eye-catching. Not only is it in full colour (in a predominantly monochrome publication), but it consists of an advertisement within an advertisement, containing as it does an advertisement for 'The Wonderful Roller Organ.'. Referencing the Gem Roller Organ it actually depicts a child or young lady playing a Concert Roller Organ.

Vox Humana December 2017

see also www.moos.org.uk

The MOOS 2017 AGM is reported in this edition, hosted at the home

of MBSGB Committee member, David O' Connor. There is a report of the Panne Organ Festival, which had first appeared in the Belgian society's journal, Mechamusica. Also featured are the Bedfordshire Steam and Country Fayre and last year's Great Dorset Steam Fair. We then have 'All Organs Bright and Musical', part 1 of a promised three, penned by a P Bellamy. Those of you curious to know what he has to say could do worse than consult his opus magnus about Christie's Old Organ which appeared in *The Music Box* several years ago, as this appears to be very similar, if not the same piece of work. The magazine concludes with an item about the Finbow Collection at Cotton, which is shortly to be relocated to Jonny Ling's.

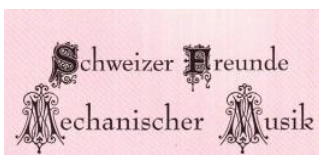


Non-English language journals

**Schweizerischer Verein der
Freunde No 130
December 2017**

See also www.sfm.ch

This edition contains a report on



the Swiss Society's members' trip to the Waadtländer Jura (Ste Croix and L'Auberson), by train. Understandably this involved a visit to CIMA, Dr Wyss's workshop, François Junod's automata factory, and the Musée Baud. In their series about 'Madness or passionate fascination' Peter and Jacqueline Both write about the Welte-Flügel (grand piano). There is a write-up about an organ gathering in August 2017, a large event, at which both new and old organs were playing. This is followed by a long and detailed feature by Raphael Lüthi and Edi Niederberger about a nine-piece monkey automaton orchestra, a barrel organ attributed to Alexandre Theroude, dating to 1850-60, once in the Roy Mickleburgh collection and restored by Raphael. It is now in the Wunderwelt der mechanischer Musik, Basel. The series on special instruments features this time 'a mysterious music player'. The accompanying images show that not only it is an item of mystery, but also rather exquisite and beautiful. In the form of a miniature replica of an elaborate chest of drawers, it is in fact a bird box. The final item in this edition is a visit to the museum of Urs Bertschinger, the 'Klang-Maschinen Museum' (= sound machines. 'Klang' sounds so much more descriptive!) in Dürnten. This

is no small collection, and consists of a wide range of instruments, from Polyphons to a Welte Cottage orchestrion, Ruth barrel organ, Edison Dictaphone, dance organs and cylinder boxes, all beautifully displayed.

**L'antico Organetto
(Associazione Musica
Meccanica Italiana)
August 2017**

see also
www.amm-m.it



The opening article of this edition is about the Autopianista, developed by Giovanni Racca, which seems to exist only as a prototype. Although described as a mechanical musical instrument, it was effectively Racca's version of a 'push-up' piano player. This is followed by a brief report about a conference held under the auspices of the Italian Research Council of the Institute of Industrial Technologies and Automation, on certain aspects of the interface between modern technology and mechanical music, at which AMMI participated. AMMI's experimental laboratory arm, AMMILAB, was invited also to take part in a Makers Fair in China. Intriguingly there is a reference to another participant, from London, who makes music from strange mechanisms, but who is not named. The next item is the first of two parts about an electro-pneumatic device discovered on the premises of the company SPRAE, which the author, Serafino Corno, concluded had been invented by Don Angelo Barbieri. There is then a report of the first European meeting on auto piano rolls, hosted by the Department of Musicology and Cultural Heritage of Cremona

(University of Pavia). This edition of the magazine concludes with some memories written for AMMI President, Franco Severi, by the late Vincenzo Sgaramella.

**L'antico Organetto
(Associazione Musica
Meccanica Italiana)
December 2017**

see also www.amm-m.it

The first item in this edition features another of AMMILAB's creations, MelodyName, demonstrated (as most of AMMILAB's ideas are) at the Makers Fair in Rome. MelodyName interprets the letters of a person's name as musical notes, which are then punched into a strip to be played in a musical movement. The article also notes the historical antecedents to this idea. This is followed by the second part of 'The Auto-Organs of Giuseppe Rossi of SPRAE and the strange electro-pneumatic devise of SABBAEM'. Another item in this edition consists of the fourth part in the series about Mechanical Instruments Powered by Stirling Engine, and focuses on the accordion production of the Berlin family firm of Pietschmann, known for their disc boxes and reed organs, including the Herophon and Manopan. This series of articles has also been published by the German Society. The final feature concerns the electro-chemical 'melografo' (melograph) of Antonio Roncalli. Never short of words, there is quite a lengthy explanation as to what one of these machines does, but I shall leave it to the quote from Arthur W J G Ord-Hume to enlighten us: 'A machine for recording music on paper' (directly from being played on an instrument).

Musiques Mécaniques Vivantes **No 104 4th Quarter 2017**

see also www.aaimm.org



This edition previews an exhibition at the Paris Museum of Fairground Arts, scheduled for 26th December till 7th January. This is followed by yet another performance of the Marie Tournel group, this time in Alsace. A brief item from Jean-Marc Lebout shares with us some old photographs of a mechanical piano on a trailer pulled by a horse. The year 2017 marked the 40th anniversary of the Pianocorder. This is a long article, although given the scope, somewhat brief, about the evolution of the automatisisation of the playing of the piano, starting with Alexandre Debain, culminating with the Pianocorder, and taking in en route the PianoDisc. The next article is also a plea for information from members as to the whereabouts of any surviving instruments made by the Florein family. This was active in the Cloudekerque-Branche-lez-Dunkerque area in the early 1900s making automatic pianos and organs operated by barrel and perforated card. Jean-Marc Lebout then shares with us some material from the Baptiste-Antoine Brémont archive, over several pages. After a disc review by Jérôme Collomb of 'Pianola Party', there is a report on the musical festival in Les Gets, held on 15th and 16th July, with the theme of the five senses.

Das Mechanische **Musikinstrument, No 129,** **August 2017**

see also www.musica-mechanica.de

**DAS MECHANISCHE
MUSIKINSTRUMENT**

In his opening remarks, President Ralf Smolne reports on the change of editor for the German Society's magazine, after 20 years. Some of his comments would not be amiss in MBSGB, especially after the reaction to our last edition. 'A living society lives from change ... the style cultivated by Bernhard Häberle (the out-going editor) will not be continued on a 1:1 basis, for after all, up till now every editor has always put his own personal stamp on his editions of the journal. This is quite normal.' Our German colleagues have been blessed with a volunteer from their own ranks willing to take over this important task. The German magazine always carries excellent articles of high scholarship and presentation. This particular edition opens with one by Hannah Maria Lang entitled *Der Gothaer Flötensekretär*, featuring a beautifully cased desk containing a barrel organ. This is based on her master thesis about the desk in Schloss Fridenstein in Gotha, and runs for 25 pages, describing the instrument itself as well as giving a lot of additional background information. It is well illustrated with high quality photographs and line drawings. This is followed by an item running into several pages about Ludwig Hupfeld, on the 125th anniversary of the firm. We then enjoy a less formal tone as we are introduced to the new magazine editor, Uwe Gernert, and Heike Bohbrik, the Society's new Secretary. A number of reports on various events includes one lengthy one about last year's Organ Festival in Waldkirch, which amongst other attractions featured 'de Lange Gavioli' from the Speelklok museum in Utrecht (and which some members of MBSGB will have had the opportunity to see and hear in UK when it visited

the annual 'Oktoberfest' event in Woking in 2016).

Das Mechanische **Musikinstrument, No 130,** **December 2017**

see also www.musica-mechanica.de

The opening feature of this edition concerns part four of the series about machines powered by Stirling engines, published simultaneously in the magazine of the Italian society (although the German version seems considerably longer!). Next to feature is the Belgian organ-building family of Hooguyts in a lengthy item submitted by Björn Isebaert. Two portraits are included in this edition: one of Marian van Dijk, the director of the Speelklok Museum in Utrecht, Netherlands, and one of the former editor of the German Society's magazine, Bernhard Häberle. Several pages are devoted to the proceedings of the GSM's AGM, before the magazine concludes with a number of short items of news and notifications.

Het Pierement July 2017

See also www.draaiorgel.org

In an item entitled 'Memories of Bremen and Hamburg' Wim Snoerwang reminisces about times past in these towns, as recalled through his collection of photographic slides, which he revisited after seeing something on Facebook. He realised that many of the organs he photographed in the 1970s were unknown today. It appears that this is the first of a series on this topic. Another first instalment follows under the title 'Between Fair and Dance-tent.' This consists of photographs from the KVD's archives.



Silvertone Music Boxes is a new company providing a quality service for collectors and investors interested in buying and selling musical boxes, musical clocks and any other item of mechanical music, whilst providing a platform to showcase the very best mechanical music around the globe. It has been created by Mark Singleton and Steve Greatrex. Together they have over 80 years shared experience in this field, being compulsive collectors themselves.

Silvertone Music Boxes provides a premier service for the buying and selling of these specialist instruments by attracting an audience from around the world. If you are looking for the best possible price for your items, or the disposal of a complete collection, the company can offer them for sale to a worldwide market – a far more cost-effective alternative to auction houses! With Silvertone's word wide contacts, they can maximise the return on your investment.

The company also offers a purchase option and features a free-to-use Classified page which allows you to manage your own sale. Silvertone is increasing the awareness and appreciation of these early technologies, by reaching out and sharing much of the fun, thrills and hard-earned knowledge to others via a new, state of the art, multi-lingual website www.silvertonemusicboxes.co.uk, complemented by social media, newsletters and a blog. The Silvertone website has been designed to allow collectors and enthusiasts from around the globe to share their interest, attract new members to our societies and promote our special interest groups.

The company aims to increase the public arena for this wonderful hobby by bringing together all enthusiasts, whether young or old. Silvertone plans to showcase collections large and small (anonymously if required), allowing anyone interested to be able to enjoy the diversity of what the world of Mechanical Music has to offer and to experience the 'Silvertones' of these instruments, from the comfort of their own homes. Please do look at the **Silvertone** website: silvertonemusicboxes.co.uk. For further details, or if you have any questions, please feel free to call 07774 418 706 / 07905 554 830 or email: info@silvertonemusicboxes.co.uk

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Mechanical Music Radio is broadcasting 24 hours a day, and boasts the best variety of automatic musical instruments.

James Dundon, Programme Controller of the station said, 'We've got mechanical organs of every type: pianolas, music boxes, Orchestrions and more. We've done our research and picked the most iconic instruments from around the world, playing music from the best arrangers, past and present.'

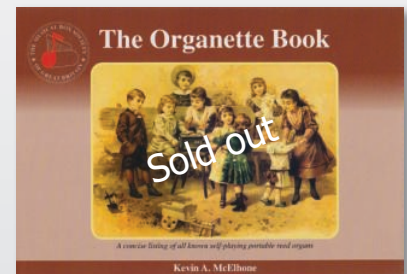
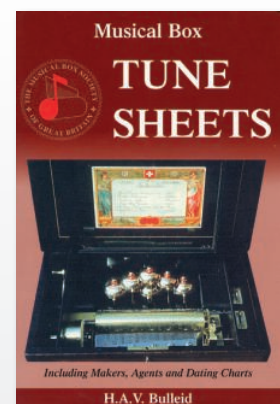
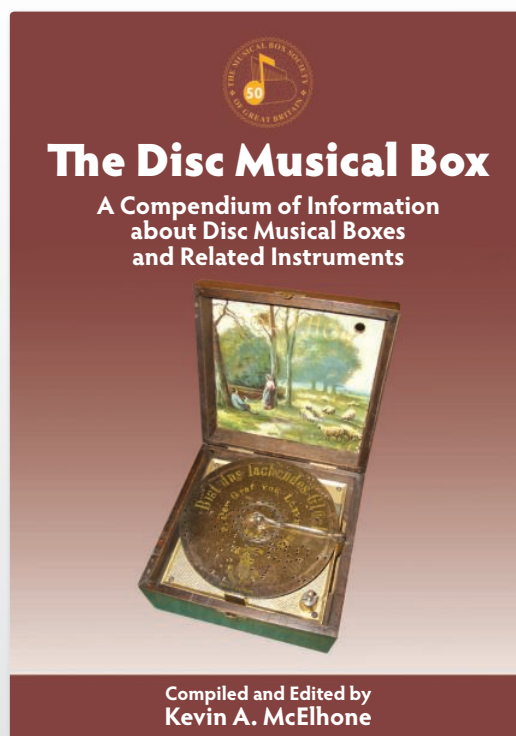
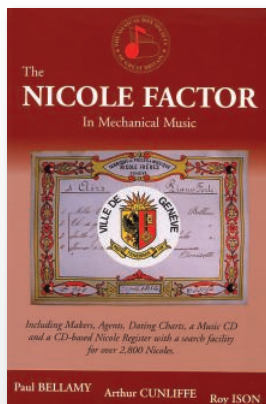
The station is powered by computer technology, which is used by stations such as Classic FM and Radio 2.

'The most popular tracks will get the more favoured plays across a week, and with such a wide database of music (over 10,000 unique songs), each hour is bound to be full of surprises.'

James is a full-time radio presenter and programmer based in Cornwall, and is doing this project at his own expense. 'It's been a long-time ambition of mine to put Mechanical Music on the map. There is a radio station for every other genre of music. I hope **Mechanical Music Radio** can bring some quality recordings to loyal enthusiasts and also target a new audience.'

James would appreciate your support by tuning in, sending music to feature on MMR and if you enjoy the station, a donation to help with the annual running costs would be very much appreciated. Because the station is crowdfunded, it means there are no adverts getting in the way of the music.

You can listen with just 'one click' at www.mechanicalmusicradio.com or download our mobile app. Search 'Mechanical Music Radio' in the app store. We're also on Facebook and Twitter; search for **Mechanical Music Radio**. With so many instruments to discover, be sure to tune in whenever you can. It's completely free!



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The remaining stock of other society publications illustrated above is available, ex p&p as follows:

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The Daphne Ladell Collection still has around 90 items remaining for sale. Please register your interest to receive the online catalogue and details of buying or bidding for items including automata, cylinder musical boxes, gramophones, novelties, fairground organ, harmonium, etc. kevin_mcelhone@hotmail.com or 01536 726759

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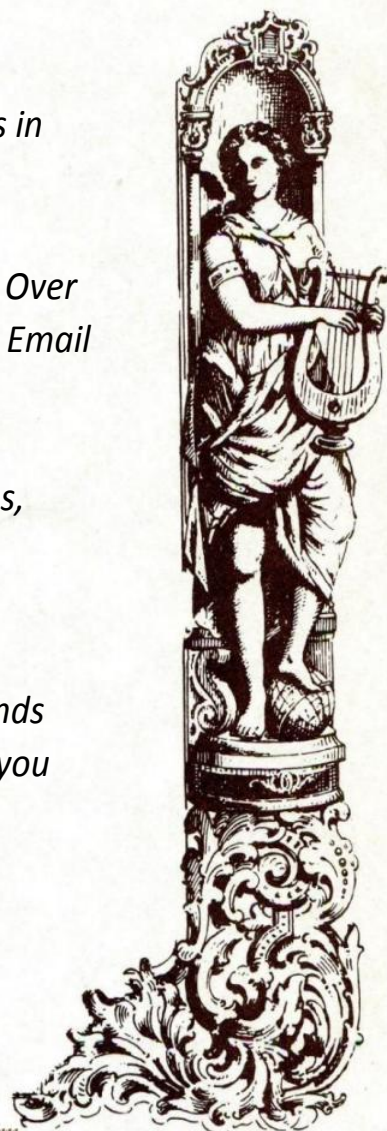
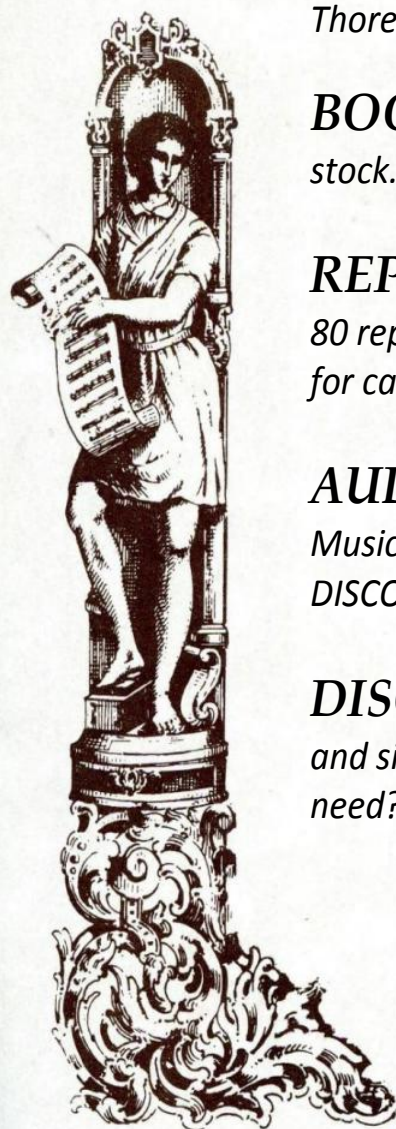
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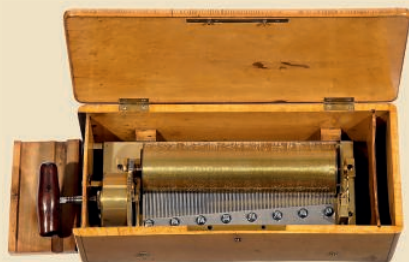


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