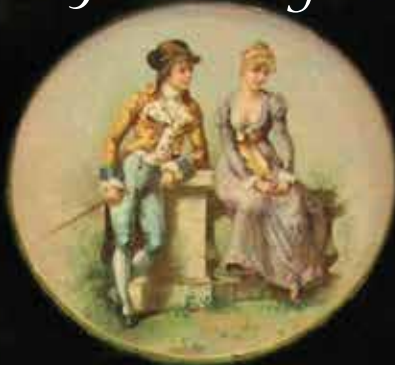


The **Music Box**

An International Journal of Mechanical Music



In this issue

Debain's Antiphonel

*Spotlight On ...
Niklas Roy*

*Historic Thoughts on the
Church Barrel Organ*

Diss Auction Success

The Journal of the Musical Box Society of Great Britain



NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM MBSGB

The Musical Box Society of Great Britain announces the publication of two new books
Published in September 2018



Supplement to The Disc Musical Box

Compiled and Edited by Kevin McElhone

ISBN 978-0-9557869-6-9

100pp Hard Back ISO A4 format [8.27" × 11.70"]; Profusely illustrated in colour throughout with

Additional Illustrations of Models, 89 Additional Lid Pictures;
Additions to Lists of Models, Patents, Tune Lists & Serial Numbers;
Combined Index of Images in the original book and its Supplement.

Originally published in 2012 and still available, see below for details,

The Disc Musical Box is a compendium of information about Disc Musical Boxes, their Makers and their Music; profusely illustrated throughout with Illustrations of each Disk Musical Box Model, and with Catalogue Scans, Lists of Models, Patents & Tune Lists.

Cost: **£25.00** to members; **£30.00** to Non-members; plus P&P at cost

Supplement to The Organette Book

Compiled and Edited by Kevin McElhone

ISBN 978-0-9557869-5-2

100pp Hard Back ISO A4 format [8.27" × 11.70"]; Profusely illustrated in colour throughout; Additional Illustrations of Models; Additions to Lists of Patents, Tune Lists & Tuning Scales; A New Section on Trade Cards; Combined Index of Images in the original book and its Supplement.

The Organette Book is a compendium of information about Organettes, their Makers and their Music. Originally published in 2002 but now out of print although 2nd Hand copies are occasionally available in on-line auctions.

Cost: **£20.00** to members; **£25.00** to Non-members; plus P&P at cost.



Other MBSGB PUBLICATIONS

Limited stocks remain available of the following MBSGB publications:



The Disc Musical Box

Compiled and Edited by Kevin McElhone

A compendium of information about the Disc Musical Boxes, their Makers and their Music. Profusely illustrated in colour throughout; complete with a supporting DVD of Catalogue Scans, Lists of Models Patents & Tune Lists & Additional Illustrations

Published in February 2012

Book - ISBN 978-0-9557869-4-5 DVD - ISBN 978-0-9557869-7-6

Cost: **£40.00**; plus P&P at cost

Musical Box TUNE SHEETS

and Supplements 1 to 4

by the late Anthony Bulleid and by his successor Tim Reed

including the accompanying

SEARCH ENGINE Version 3

Devised and compiled by the late Luuk Goldhoorn

Over 500 Cylinder Musical Box Tune Sheets Illustrated, Identified & Described
Invaluable aids to identifying the maker of a cylinder musical box.

Published in October 2000 ISBN 978-0-9505657-7-4

Cost: **£10.00**; plus P&P at cost

The Nicole Factor in Mechanical Music

by P Bellamy, A D Cunliffe and R Ison

A concise history of the Nicole family's involvement in and influence on the development of the Cylinder Musical Box industry during the 19th century.

Published in August 2006 ISBN 978-0-9505657-3-6

Cost: **£40.00**; plus P&P at cost



For all MBSGB Publications, please refer to the Musical Box Society of Great Britain website for further details including latest availability, discounted prices and information on how to order. - www.mbsgb.org.uk

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'Reading this made me cry ... it is hard to imagine Dyson or General Electric getting involved in a project like this.' (see 'Spotlight on ...' p 101)



'With the atmosphere ...like sales used to be... ' (see 'A Very British Affair' p 112)



*Front Cover: Symphonion disc musical box in Rococo style case, playing 11 7/8" discs, sold at auction in Diss for £1,400 (see p 112)
Photo courtesy T W Gaze Auctions*

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THE MUSICAL BOX SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN

An incorporated private company limited by guarantee
Reg. no. 10766572, reg. address:

Southgate Chambers, 37-39 Southgate Street,
Winchester, Hants., SO23 9EH.

Officers of the Society and their duties

Note: Unless stated otherwise, the undermentioned form
the Executive Committee of the Society

Vice-President: Alison Biden

Tel. 01962 861350, ali_biden@hotmail.com
(underscore between the two names)

Vice-President: Nicholas Simons

Tel: 01332 760576, njasmbs@btinternet.com

Treasurer & Subscriptions Secretary:

David Worrall MBE

Tel. 01962 882269, worrall.ercall87@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary: Kevin McElhone

Tel. 01536 726759, kevin_mcelhone@hotmail.com
(underscore between the two names)

To whom all applications and enquiries concerning new
membership should be addressed

Correspondence Secretary: Nicholas Simons

Tel. 01332 760576, njasmbs@btinternet.com

To whom all correspondence should be addressed

Business Secretary (Acting): Alison Biden

Tel. 01962 861350, ali_biden@hotmail.com

Advertising Secretary: Mark Singleton

preesallpremier@aol.com

Archivist: Alison Biden

Tel. 01962 861350, ali_biden@hotmail.com

Committee Members without Portfolio:

Keith Reedman: k@reedman.org.uk

**The following positions are fulfilled
by non-committee members:**

Webmaster Kathleen Turner, antiquekate@hotmail.com

Registrar: Arthur Cunliffe, adcunliffe@btinternet.com

Auction Organiser: John Farmer, john@musicanic.com

**NB: All correspondence to the Society and/or its
Officers should be addressed to:**

**The Musical Box Society of Great Britain,
c/o The Grange Musical Collection,
Palgrave, DISS, Norfolk, IP22 1AZ.**

Please support your Society by volunteering to help run it – most ‘jobs’ do not require being a Member of the Board (Committee.) We cannot stress too highly that although membership remains buoyant, the MBSGB cannot continue to operate at its current level of offering two national meetings, an AGM/Auction and four quality magazines per year without more organisational assistance. In particular it would be helpful to have a ‘local’ organiser for each potential national meeting. This need not be onerous, but just someone ‘on the ground’ who could vet potential venues and suggest activities. (Legitimately ‘inspecting’ hotels can be fun!) Also, we think we can exponentially raise the Society’s profile with more ‘expert’ exploitation of social media. Any ‘techies’ out there?

Please continue to submit your items and photographs, preferably as Word documents and JPEGs by electronic means to: editor@mbsgb.org.uk. (Alternatively hard copy may be sent via the Society’s correspondence address: MBSGB, c/o The Grange Musical Collection, Old Bury Road, Palgrave, DISS, Norfolk, IP22 1AZ.)

Articles, letters and other contributions relating to the study and appreciation of musical boxes and other mechanical musical instruments for publication in the Journal are welcome. The (Acting) 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.

**Please note that the deadline for next edition is
1st October, 2019.**

Copy deadlines are normally:

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

Publication dates:

1st March; 1st May; 1st August; 1st November.

**We reserve the right to amend these dates as
circumstances dictate.**

Editor's Column & Opinion

Is there such a thing as a mechanical musical instrument?

Why do people join the Musical Box Society of Great Britain? Some do in order to learn more about musical boxes (and by extension, other mechanical instruments.) That is certainly the reason I joined – and although I have my eccentricities, I don't think I am unique in that respect. So, from time to time one will have to expect and accept that we are going to state what must seem blindingly obvious to the 'old hands' for the benefit of the newer members, some of whom just may be a little confused by the plethora of different terms, playing mechanisms and instruments.

Take this last point, for example. We tend to carelessly apply the term 'mechanical music' to both machines for playing an instrument which nevertheless are separate from the actual instrument, but which select the notes to be played, as well as applying it to those actual instruments in which the note-selecting element is an integral part of the music 'machine' itself. Some people prefer to use terms such as 'self-playing' and 'automatic' when applied to musical instruments, since a musical instrument is de facto some sort of mechanical device, whether played by a human, a machine, or 'itself.' If you refer to an item as a 'mechanical musical instrument', aren't you effectively saying a 'mechanical machine', a duplication in terminology?

That aside, a couple of illustrations may help here to distinguish between a musical instrument played by means of an independent mechanism, and an

'automatic' musical instrument: a cylinder musical box, whether cartel or *sur plateau*, is arguably the most fundamental mechanical musical instrument. Without its pinned cylinder of music, there would not only be no means of pre-selecting the notes to be played, but no means of playing them either: there simply is no manually played equivalent of a musical box. However, moving on to the mechanisation of piano playing, first on the scene were devices, (piano players such as the Aeolian Pianola and Welte Vorsetzer), completely independent from the piano, which could be pushed up against, or placed over an ordinary piano keyboard, and which held in some form the programme of music. These were not instruments in themselves – and pianos could still be played manually. But after a while the means for selecting the notes to be played was built into the instrument itself, and became an integral part of it and the playing mechanism, resulting in the player piano. When studying the evolution of mechanical musical instruments, one can find a number of integrated devices which were preceded by an independent one.

I could be persuaded that it is we British who are careless in the use of our very own language, since in North America there is a much more evident use of the term 'automatic' instead. Once one starts to consider an instrument in terms of whether it plays itself, using 'self-playing' or 'automatic' and not the term 'mechanical', the distinction becomes clearer. However, the magazine published by our German 'sister' Society would appear to overlook such finer details, as it is called *Das*



A selection of images of discs for the Empire organette, as featured in the previous edition, Vol 29, No 2, Summer 2019

Mechanische Musikinstrument, whilst the Society's name itself (Gesellschaft für Selbstspielende Musikinstrument e.V.) reflects the more precise definition. Purists might object, but the terms are more or less interchangeable in much of common parlance.

Is any of this important? You tell me! The bottom line is we tend to accept without much questioning that the term 'mechanical musical instrument' can apply in some instances to machines which are not strictly speaking instruments themselves.

You will find an article about one such, the Antiphonel, in this magazine. This was an invention designed in part to provide more versatile music in churches. An article which complements this nicely comes from Roger Booty, in which we learn more about historic opinion of church barrel organs. As

a complete contrast and thrusting us into the 21st century we feature Niklas Roy in 'Spotlight on ...', an innovative German artist and educator who has used modern novelty musical movements in a number of his projects. Reflecting on his methods of learning about technology and transporting ourselves back 200 years, we are reminded that our 'antique' instruments were themselves once the product of 'cutting edge' technology.

There is also a report on the Richard Bartram collection sale held in Diss in May. This proved to be an exciting and interesting event in more ways than one. There was a time when auctions were routinely reported, but regrettably no one seems prepared to do this on a regular basis. Tracking auction results is a good way of monitoring the state of the interest, and a valuable service the Society can

offer. There will be those amongst our readers who will say all this is available on the internet for those who are really interested. However, a reader may still benefit from a mild interest without obsessively devoting hours to it. I wonder if there is anyone out there who would be willing to monitor sales and regularly write about a selection of them for this magazine? It is one way you could 'help' without leaving your seat! (Perhaps someone who in the past has volunteered to help 'in a small way'?)

Finally, as Editor I am indebted to those who have contributed to this edition of the magazine, in whatever way, and appreciative of the international dimension of our special interest. In particular I should like to acknowledge the help received from Kevin McElhone, who went the 'extra mile' providing ideas, advice and images.

New members

We are delighted to welcome the following members to The Musical Box Society of Great Britain:

Paul Baker	USA	Frederick W.Zaiser	USA	Jose L.Quintana	Spain
Otmar Seemann	Austria	Dr.John Beling	Middlesex	Dave Wright	Derbyshire
Robbie Wolters	Netherlands	Malcolm Jayson	Manchester	Terence Jenks	Staffs
Jon Ford	USA	Jon Polden	Essex	Magdalena Merello	Chile
Claire McGinn	Birmingham	Geoffrey Thompson	Staffs		
Andrew Smith	Herts	Roy Huddleston	London		

New members may take advantage of the special introductory rate, currently £15 (UK) for the first year of membership, after which they should renew at the standard rate.

Note: this introductory rate will apply to former members wishing to rejoin only after a lapse of five years or more. A special annual subscription rate of £15 is offered to the under-30s.

A Plea from Membership Secretary, Kevin McElhone:

I would be interested to know the reason for those members who do not attend their nearest local-area group as to why they do not come. Is it a problem of distance, dates, cost or something else so we can change things to encourage more participation in the four groups that meet in London, The Midlands, Worcestershire, and Wessex? Thank you.

STOP PRESS

We are sure that members would wish to be informed of the sad news of the death of former President and Honorary MBSGB Life Member, Alan Wyatt, who passed away peacefully on Sunday, 7th July, aged 92. Alan worked tirelessly to promote both the Society and mechanical music, and a full tribute will appear in a later edition.

2019 Society Auction



The customary Musical Box Society of Great Britain members' auction was held following the Annual General Meeting, on 1st June, 2019. Once again the auction was ably conducted by Alan Smith, with Mark Singleton and Kevin McElhone, with assistance from Nicholas Simons, managing the display of items, and David Worrall and John Farmer handling the recording of sales and financial transactions. A total of 65 lots was entered, with 45 being sold. Items included a number of both disc and cylinder musical boxes of diverse makes and sizes in varying conditions, organette cobs, discs, disc storage boxes and dividers, movements without cases and musical novelties. Arguably the most unusual instrument on offer was a Triola which realised £500, whilst a two-air snuff box with tune sheet in a cracked case fetched £200. An Ariston made £480, whilst a 28 note Tanzbar failed to sell.

The same fate befell a 13" Symphonion 'playing perfectly' with four discs, and an 11" Polyphon in a serpentine case. Conversely, a 11 3/4" Symphonion disc playing box achieved £500. A 12 air lever wound Ami Rivenc cylinder box and an 8



air lever wound PVF box fetched £500 and £400 respectively, while the hammer came down at £500 for an eight 'Sacred' air lever wound box by L'Epée.

It was good to see newer members taking an interest and making a purchase, in some cases to provide the basis of a future 'project,' whilst one longer-standing member was thrilled to leave with a cylinder box, playing a lively selection of tunes, which would fill a gap in her collection!

The total hammer price was £3,577, from which, after commissions, the total income to the Society was £753.

Our appreciation to the several individuals who were involved in running the auction.

(For results of a public auction, see page 112)



Dear Ma'am,

On behalf of my fellow members of the M.B.S.G.B, I would be most grateful if you could print the following, in the hope they shall please remember the classifieds section of the M.B.S.G.B journal should they wish to attain the best possible prices for their boxes.

Not only do we have both trade buyers and private buyers advertising, but an advert taken out in the journal has the potential to reach a global network. To date several private members who have used this service have been highly delighted:

For example a member from the Bristol Channel area sold a box to New Zealand, another member from the North East sold a box to Sweden. Each attaining their asking price in full!

Myself being fortunate enough to be offered the exact machine I'd lost touch with 30 years ago via a Wanted Ad, it had travelled around the country some, Penrith, Woburn Abbey, before it turned up a stone's throw from Cheddar Gorge. It also makes for enjoyable social occasions. In the early days of my membership, some of my best musical box friends and acquaintances have been met on this musical box merry-go-round.

Another wanted ad resulted in a retired gentleman from Australasia generating his full asking price for a top end piece which he subsequently shipped to Europe. There is a vibrancy out there, a refreshing change from the doom & gloom.

Mark Singleton, (Advertising Secretary.)



Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting of The Musical Box Society of Great Britain, held on 1st June 2019 at Roade Village Hall, Northamptonshire

After meeting was declared open at 11.00 a.m, nominations were taken for the Chair of the meeting.

Alison Biden was nominated and appointed unopposed. **Apologies for absence** were received from ten individuals.

The **Minutes of 2018 AGM** having been circulated in advance were taken as read; there were no amendments, and they minutes were adopted by the meeting. Under **Matters arising** it was reported that in the absence of an Editor and Business Secretary being elected at the 2018, Alison Biden had been fulfilling the functions as Acting Editor and Acting Business Secretary respectively; that John Farmer had successfully outsourced the Index of the journal to go on the Society website and put up a test version, which the meeting agreed should go 'live' on the website itself.

In her report, Hon Vice President Alison observed she made an error by not ensuring her successor from the beginning of her tenure as President; that the Society's activities had continued routinely over the last twelve months; that the Society had been represented at a number of public events and was receiving invitations to appear at more; that members of the Board age along with the rest of us and have less time and energy to devote to running the Society: more people were needed to share in the work, and concluded by expressing her appreciation of the support of fellow officers.

Membership Secretary Kevin McElhone reported that a number of new members had joined under the trial introductory subscription rate, and about half had renewed. In answer to a question, the Treasurer said the introductory subscription no longer covered the cost of posting out the magazine, and the situation should be reviewed after another twelve months' trial.

Correspondence Secretary Nicholas Simons summarised the enquiries he receives as being mainly on recommendations for restorers, bird box repairs and about novelty boxes.

Meetings Secretary David O' Connor gave a resume of the meetings held since the last AGM (2018 in Birmingham, Kent Spring 2019), and a preview of the forthcoming meetings planned (July trip to Paris, Autumn Meeting in Bradford area and plans for a meeting in Scarborough next Spring.) In addition, Nicholas Simons recommended the four-day trip to Waldkirch normally organised by Linda Paskins, and indicated he was intending to organise the 2020 Autumn meeting to take place in Wales.

Hon Treasurer and Subscription Secretary, David Worrall gave a lengthy presentation on the Society's accounts and the state of the Society finances with projections for the future. Under a later agenda item he recounted the long-running issues he had had with the Society's Bank, NatWest, over setting up a new account. The latter had finally been resolved satisfactorily within the last few days, with an apology from the bank and a compensatory payment, for which the meeting expressed its appreciation. Regarding costs of The Music Box, there is concern over the rising costs of artwork and layout, and distribution costs. The Treasurer said he thought it was down to incoming Committee to consider how the anticipated shortfall relating to the magazine was managed. A suggestion to reduce the number of magazines to three per year was put to the meeting, but this was rejected by the majority of those present.

As Acting Editor, Alison Biden highlighted the conflict between Editing the magazine and fulfilling a number of other posts, having the undesirable effect of diminishing 'accountability.' This could be resolved with new people taking on some of the other roles. As Archivist she received few enquiries, some of which should have been addressed to the Correspondence Secretary. The enquiry of note was from Spain, where someone was seeking information on piano rolls of Manuel De Falla. In the absence of the Auction Organiser, the Treasurer gave a report on the financial aspects of the 2018 Auction. AB explained some of the mitigating circumstances surrounding the absence of the Auction Organiser.

Mark Singleton, Honorary Advertising Secretary, reported that advertising remains stable, with the general view of regular advertisers is that it is a show of support for the Society rather than of commercial benefit. Alison Biden thanked Advertising Secretary on behalf of the Society for the work he does, as well as thanking the actual advertisers.

There was no formal report from the Webmaster, Kathleen Turner, and no questions to her. She was thanked for the work she does looking after the website.

The Honorary Registrar, Arthur Cunliffe, had submitted a report informing that there were now 12,241 boxes registered; most information was coming in from Tim Reed. Alison Biden expressed the Society's appreciation for what the Registrar did and what he had achieved to date.

In his report from the Publications Sub Committee, David Worrall spoke about the English version of Dr Kowar's book, copies of which were available at the meeting. Supplements to the Organette and Disc Musical Box Book, both by Kevin McElhone, had also been published.

All the reports were adopted unanimously by the meeting.

The notified proposal of the **change to Articles of Association**, reducing the period of notification for announcing changes in the Articles of Association from four weeks to three, was approved unanimously.

Election of Officers

Once again there were no nominations for President/Chair. The following were elected unopposed and duly appointed as Officers of the Society:

Joint Vice Presidents: Alison Biden & Nicholas Simons; Treasurer: David E Worrall; Membership Secretary: Kevin McElhone; Advertising Secretary: Mark Singleton; Correspondence Secretary: Nicholas Simons; Archivist: Alison Biden; Member without

Portfolio: Keith Reedman.

The posts of president/Chair, Business Secretary, Meetings Secretary, Auction Organiser, and Editor remained vacant.

Alison Biden thanked David O Connor who was standing down as Meetings Secretary for all he had done in organising the Society meetings.

Recommendations and setting of subscription rate for 2019/2020

The meeting agreed to maintain the current rates of subscription.

There were no changes required to the Society's banking arrangements.

Date & Venue of 2020 AGM: Roade Village Hall, Saturday 6th June, 2020

Any Other Business: There was general discussion on whether the Society should be renamed as the Mechanical Music Society to reflect the wider interest, with feeling more or less equally divided: for as many that thought this would widen the Society's appeal or clarify its aims, there were as many who acknowledged it was the country's only musical box Society of note, with a long history as such.

There was also a general discussion about promoting the Society through greater use of Social media.

Gary Burns addressed the meeting, expressing the appreciation of the members for the work carried out by the Committee.

The Meeting closed at 2.10 p.m., having sustained an adjournment for lunch.

Automata Magazine T.Ware, Member No. 2522

I have been a member of the MBSGB for a number of years, although I have a limited interest in music boxes and mechanical music (not being very musically apt). My interests were associated with automata so as the Society also includes automata I found it offered a great deal of interest.

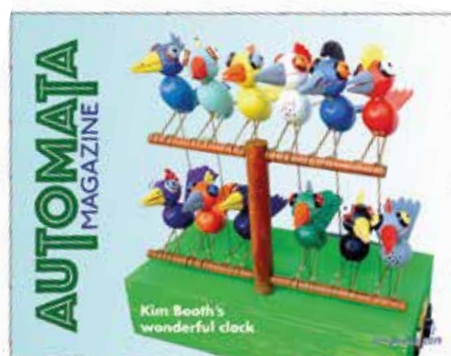
A few years ago I joined the Facebook internet website, mainly to keep up with young people at the school where I worked. After a few years using Facebook I became aware of user groups, which are groups with members who have an interest in various subjects. On investigation I discovered that there was a group called Automata/Automaton so I applied to become a member, which was very easy. It seems most people who apply are accepted.

The group has many members from all over the world. Many of these members, including myself, post information, pictures and videos on various aspects of automata. These posts are rated as the amount of members who liked your post, also how many shared your post. The members can also leave comments which sometimes include questions which can be responded to by the member who posted, or any other member (very useful) especially when one receives a thank you reply.

Towards the end of 2018 one of the members, Marc Horowitz posted that he was looking at starting an on line magazine on the subject of automata. He requested

members to submit articles to be included, and it was to be launched in early 2019. Over that New Year period I was staying with family near Kings Lynn and during my stay I discovered there was an exhibition related to automata at The Forum, Norwich, so off I went. As a result of my visit, I decided to write a short review and sent it to Marc Horowitz to see if it was suitable for publication. I was pleasantly surprised that it was accepted.

This inspired me to write something else so I decided that as I had a copy of a very comprehensive automata book called "Figures in the fourth dimension" (purchased through Kevin McElhone) I would write a review of this book and send to Marc Horowitz for his consideration. This has also been published. For someone who has never been good with comprehension, spelling and literature I felt quite pleased with myself (I must admit today's technology is my best friend and also my wife, who proof reads before submitting!)



www.automatamagazine.com

I have recently written another article hopefully for publication which endeavours to enlighten members of the Automata Magazine about the Music Box Society and their interest in automata.

I do hope this has been useful and informative to members, being my first article for The Music Box magazine.

The Musical Opinion and Church Barrel Organs

by Roger Booty

The Musical Opinion and Music Trade Review to give the full title, was a monthly publication first appearing in the mid 1800s at 2d.¹ per issue. It covered the subject of music from all angles, including mechanical music. The pieces following here all concern the use of church barrel organs.

Why did barrel organs come to be used in church? The August 1896 edition gave the reason churches came to be without organs in the 18th century: it was through the work of the Puritans – ‘... it is possible to forget the wholesale destruction dealt out by them [the Puritans]

at the time of the rebellion against all instruments and music books in churches. The choral service was one of the special abhorrences of the Puritans, and we find that even as early as 1563 a motion, lost by only one vote, was made in convocation, to put down “curious singing” and organs, which were both ranked with image worship! By the year 1567, as we learn from a tract still extant, “not so few as a hundred organs were taken down and the pipes sold to make pewter dishes.” More frequently, as in the case of the Westminster Abbey organ, the pipes were taken to the nearest ale house and bartered for beer by Cromwell’s soldiers.’

MUSICAL OPINION & MUSIC TRADE REVIEW.

125

I.—REV. C. SIMEON TO REV. THOS. HAWEIS.

My Dear Friend and Brother,—I have been so charmed with the singing at Aldwinkle that I have determined to leave no stone unturned in order to accomplish something of the kind in my own church. I have, therefore, ordered a barrel organ, which will cost me not less than £200, or rather £250, including all expenses, and another of a smaller construction that will cost £40, to teach my people in private.

You may well judge that I must have something more in view than good singing,—viz., the bringing the university to hear me, or else I should not put myself to so large an expense. I intend to play sixty tunes, and for the sake of my own congregation I shall print those tunes adapted to my own collection of psalms and hymns in a small size and at a very small price. And now I have to request of you that you will permit me to take three or perhaps four of your tunes—I will not exceed four without fresh application and permission—in order that I may have the comfort of singing them in my church; for I cannot sing them if I do not print them, for the reason I before assigned. And may I take the same liberty with your hymn book?

These two requests methinks are enough for a conscionable man to make at once; but yet I feel a boldness to ask of you, my brother, anything that you can grant me, and therefore I will venture yet further, and ask you to grant me a few (not exceeding eight) of the sweetest and most select tunes you can. Of course, all the expense of transcribing I should gladly pay, with ten thousand thanks for your kindness.

My God knows that my motive is—as far as an heart wicked as mine is will admit of it—simply to honour him and promote His cause; and as the Lord has endued you with much zeal for His name, I trust you will, for His sake, accede to my proposal and favour me with your assistance.

Wishing you an abundant increase of grace, mercy, and peace, I remain, with Christian love,
Your very affectionate friend, C. SIMEON.
King's College, Cambridge, Aug. 22, 1793.

II.—REV. THOS. HAWEIS TO REV. CHAS. SIMEON.

My Dear Brother,—My heart is as thy heart, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. Ask and it is granted, and more than thou sayest. Make any use of mine you please, and welcome. I have also several tunes that were designed soon for the graver that you are welcome to. Whether I publish them or not signifieth not if the great end is answered,—to convey sweetly to the conscience the knowledge of Him Who is “altogether lovely.” But as I know your object and end, I will first tell you my ideas respecting the means, and then you will command me to assist in what you shall ultimately decide.

In order to have good singing, attractive and commanding, it is not sufficient to have the notes on the barrel of an organ; perhaps that will prevent the very object in view. The pauses, the *appoggiatura*, the expression can never be thus given; and the effect produced by singing is not merely from the

notes sounded, but from the expression and taste given them.

You cannot have good singing if you have not a few leading treble voices,—bass ones are more easily formed. These must be together and lead the rest; because, though not difficult melodies should be used, yet the plainest and most simple require precision, time, and (what particularly strikes) pause; changes of women's parts, followed by the full chorus. One able leader who can teach and lead a band is far beyond any other help. By “able leader” I do not mean a professional singer; but such as I have at Bath and Aldwinkle,—a tyler (tyler) and shoemaker, who loves the truth, is naturally musical, and feels a pleasure in assisting the work.

Before you get any organ, which perhaps will require your further consideration, see if you cannot select a few good voices among your people, and practise them under some Assaph, till they begin to feel their way. Whatever tunes you prefer out of those published, use according to your pleasure; and whatever hymns you like, adopt them,—they are your own. I will send you also, as soon as I get my music (which I have not brought with me), either from London or Bath, some of my own hymns not published, which you may have heard, and some perhaps that you have not; also, other sweet ones which I have adopted, as “Sweet is the breath of morn” (Herschel), “Hark how the gospel trumpet sounds,” “Far above your glorious ceiling,” “Oh, my God, I've often mused” (Madan), “Why do we mourn” (Richards), “When musing on my pensive heart,” and some others. If you will mention any others that you remember to have pleased you, they shall be added. As to any expense of transcribing, you do not think I have so little zeal as not to be willing to do it with my own hand if needful; how much more easy if I can get another to do it for me!

But demur respecting the organ a little, least you should incur a considerable expense, and feel the mortification of disappointing your own views. My wish is that you should try two or three hymns which you have (easy), and that any person who plays the flute or violin has skill to teach. Get them true, remarking the women's parts, trebles, and the *pianos*, and filling and closing in chorus in tune and true time; and if you have a counter tenor, it will be a great addition. But I caution you to observe that you learn true, and execute not too rapidly; for I have always observed, if they get but a note wrong or the time becomes improper, there is less trouble to get up a new tune than to unlearn one fault. So here is a letter of music.....

I think I could get my chief singer, Isaac, to come to you of a Saturday evening, and return of a Monday morning, for a few times, to put you in the way; and the expense would be trifling to that you seem willing to bestow, and a few good practices would perhaps further your wishes more than anything besides. Have you any good materials, think you, to work upon? Three women who can sing, and two bass voices, once well taught, would lead the rest. “*Difficiles primi aditus.*”

Yours faithfully,
T. HAWEIS.
Brighton, Aug. 26, 1793.

III.—REV. C. SIMEON TO THOMAS HAWEIS.

My very Dear Friend,—I thank you for the kindness with which your letter abounds, and particularly for the advice which you give respecting the accomplishing of my wishes without an organ. Happy should I have been to have avoided that expense, but I have been for many years exerting myself, not only in the way that you propose, but in various other ways, to attain regard. All, however, has hitherto been in vain. Persons whom I employed left me; my people are not musically inclined; those who had learned to sing at my expense went away, &c. I have found, therefore, that it is necessary for me to be independent of all. Could I indeed have played as you do, I might have done better, but as I cannot, I have chosen the only effectual substitute, a barrel organ. What you suggest respecting *pianos*, pauses, &c., can all be accomplished this way to higher perfection than any except the very first musicians can execute, and it will be all under my direction. I have not, indeed, any scientific acquaintance with music, nor any taste to boast of, but perhaps sufficient for this purpose. I intend to have a barrel on purpose for teaching, so that I myself, ignorant as I am, shall be able to act as well as if I were a professional man. It would take up too much time to inform you of my plan upon paper; but it is such as some of the first judges highly approve of, and, I think, calculated to answer the end. I shall have two organs, a small one to teach my people in private, and the large one for the church. You will wonder, perhaps, when I tell you that the compass of the large one is to be from double G to F *altissimo*. The stops which it will have will be open diapason, long octaves, stopped diapason, principal, twelfth, fifteenth, sesquialter of three ranks, with a trumpet treble and clarion bass. It is to play with keys as well as barrels. My smaller organ will have only nineteen keys and four stops, but that will be very sufficient for my purpose.

A fuller account I will give if we live to meet again at Aldwinkle, together with the effect which it produces. It is to be opened in the beginning of March by the Professor of Music (Dr. Randall) in this place. I am wishing to get all the tunes in readiness immediately, because my small organ is to be ready with thirty-one tunes in the beginning of next month, and I shall have other tunes barrelled as soon as possible, that my people may be perfect in them before the large organ is opened.

I, indeed, am going to take a circuit through Lincolnshire to declare the glad tidings till the end of this month; but I shall leave proper directions in case your tunes should arrive before my return. This, however, may account for your not hearing from me as soon as you would otherwise do.

With all grateful acknowledgment to God for your love towards me, and with earnest prayer that it may be returned an hundred fold into your own bosom,

I remain, your very affectionate and much obliged friend,
CHAS. SIMEON.
King's College, Sept. 2, 1793.

Fig 1

¹ For younger and/or overseas readers not familiar with ‘d.’, this was the method of signifying ‘pence.’ Decimalisation of the British currency occurred in February, 1971 (well before accession to the European Union, or European Economic Community as it was then called.) Prior to that time, there were 240 pennies (pence) to the pound.

In time thoughts changed and music came back in the form of the church band. Never being noted for providing music of quality, the church band and singing from the congregation would provide many tales and problems. The following three letters were printed in the January 1892 edition but date originally from 1793. They illustrate how things were moving on and a desire was being felt for better music than that expected from the church band. The Rev C Simeon wanted to use a barrel organ but his good friend, Rev T Haweis who was, despite writing from Brighton, the Rector of Aldwinkle, near Oundle, Northamptonshire, tried in vain to keep him with home-produced music at cheaper price. [fig 1]

A leap forward now to the edition of November 1895 and a question asked about the continued existence of church barrel organs. [fig 2]

IT would be interesting to know if the barrel organ is still used in any church in England. The Rev. H. Parr, Vicar of Toxford, Suffolk, says that a barrel organ of good tone, playing both tunes and chants, was employed in his church up to 1868; and at Knoddishall, a small parish in Mr. Parr's neighbourhood, an instrument of the kind was in use in 1834. The author of "Chapters on Church Music," published last year, tells us that he was present at a service in a little country church in Derbyshire, some fifteen years ago, where there was a powerful mechanical organ, which, however, played only the psalm tunes. Perhaps chants were not included in the repertory of this instrument, or the operator may not have been skilful enough to accompany the chanting. Mr. Spencer Curwen so recently as 1880 met with a barrel organ in use at the old parish church of East Ham, Essex—not more than six miles from the G.P.O.—which had a total of forty-four tunes, including several chants and Cecil's anthem, "I will arise." The old man who had turned the handle for forty years was persuaded to give him a recital. It was of no use, the manipulator assured him, for anyone to play that organ who had no ear for music. He explained how, at the reciting notes of the chants, he had to pause in his turning; how he gave a *rallentando* at the end of the hymn; and how he piled on the stops at the successive lines of a repeating tune. The organ in question was built for St. John's Church, Stratford; but was turned out of that church over fifty years ago, when it was taken to East Ham. A correspondent writing from Newport, Salop, in 1890, told me that as a boy he used to frequently play on a barrel organ in Ryton Church, near Shifnal; and as recently as 1883 he went several times to repair a similar instrument at Woodcote Church, Salop. It is impossible that there can be many barrel organs now in actual use; but just for that reason it would be interesting to have a list of them. Will readers please tell us of any that they may know of?

Fig 2

The very next edition in December of that year was to provide three answers to the writer's question. [fig 3]

Barrel Organs in Churches.

To the Editor—

MUSICAL OPINION AND MUSIC TRADE REVIEW

MR. W. P. JONES writes:—In a church about two miles from Oswestry there are two barrel organs. I knew the late rector very well (lately deceased), and he, I believe, had a key-board fitted to one of the organs; but, of course, only certain keys in playing could be used. He also had a harmonium in the church, and it passed through my hands for overhauling some few years ago. Sometimes the organs, or one of them, were used, and sometimes the harmonium. If "Open Diapason" wishes, I shall be happy to give him what information I can upon receiving particulars from him.

MR. J. TRENGROVE writes:—Seeing that you are interested in barrel organs, I send you a sketch of a dumb organist: a machine supplied with small organs by the late Mr. Bates, of Ludgate Hill, organ builder and pianoforte maker. These machines were made so late as the year 1863. In case of there being no organist, you simply had to take out the desk, lower the machine on to the keys, fix on the handle, and all was ready. When not in use, you turned the machine back on its hinges, put the desk in again, and it was the same as any other organ. The barrels were interchangeable, so that new tunes could be had when desired. If I remember rightly, there were ten tunes on each barrel. [The sender is thanked for the sketch, and it is regretted that it is too large for engraving.—ED.]

MR. R. FOORT:—In answer to "Open Diapason's" enquiry, there is a barrel organ in Norton Church, near Daventry, in very good condition. It has three barrels, five or six stops, and plays I believe thirty-five tunes.

DEC 95

Fig 3

On to August 1896. Ousley was Sir Frederick Ousley, a composer, organist and priest who had passed away seven years before this piece was published. [fig 4]

The November 1899 edition carried the next item. [fig 5]

Here the comment on the mistake of pinning an 'Amen' at the end of hymn reminds me of a disc punched for an Amorette organette of the hymn *Son of my Soul*. It is only a short piece, so to fill the disc an 'Amen' was punched at the end.

Another move forward – to the 20th century, to January 1900. The second of these two pieces contains a much embellished version of a tale related earlier in the August 1896 cutting. By the time of this telling it had seemingly acquired the status of what we would now call an 'urban legend,' a tale to believe if you wish. [fig 6]

TWENTY years ago Mr. Spencer Curwen recorded as a curious fact that he had met with a barrel organ in actual use at the old parish church of East Ham, Essex, not more than six miles from the General Post Office. Mr. F. G. Edwards now tells of having discovered a similar instrument doing regular duty on Sunday mornings at Trotterscliffe Church, in Kent. The instrument, placed at the extreme west end of the church, is, as we learn from Mr. Edwards, the handiwork of Messrs. T. C. Bates & Son, of Ludgate Hill. It has six stops,—bourdon, open diapason, stopped diapason, principal, dulciana, and fifteenth. There are six barrels, of which only three can be placed on the instrument at the same time, the three remaining barrels being in reserve for use when required. Each barrel contains ten tunes, so that there is a total of sixty tunes; not a bad number for a small country church. Some of the old repeat tunes have been replaced by modern examples, though such ancient specimens as "Job" and "Old Eleventh" still remain. There are no Amens to the tunes for an obvious reason. In this connection Mr. Edwards tells of a curious thing that happened. One of the barrels was sent to London to have an old tune exchanged for a modern one. The artificer inserted pins to produce the orthodox Amen, with the inevitable result that an Amen came forth at the end of every verse. Describing a service which he heard accompanied by this ancient organ, Mr. Edwards says that the effect was not altogether displeasing to a sympathetic listener. The tone of the instrument, which was of a sweetly mellowed quality, blended well with the voices, and the congregation sang heartily. "If the organist did not furnish much variety in the way of stop registration and expression, he played no wrong notes." The saving clause is surely unnecessary. It seems to be the sole recommendation of a barrel organ that you *can't* play wrong notes.

Fig 4

1. WHEN Ouseley first went to Tenbury, there was a church only a few miles off where the hymn tunes were ground out by a barrel organ for the necessary number of verses. Nobody sang, but the people read the words silently to themselves! Reading the Life of Sir George Elvey the other day, I came upon another story of what might, in the circumstances, be called the demon organ. At a village church a friend of Sir George had an organ constructed similarly to a musical box. The clerk had been taught to manipulate the instrument; but he fell ill on a Sunday, and a member of the choir undertook to manage it. There were two sets of barrels, one with hymn tunes, the other with secular melodies. The clergyman having given out the hymn, the organ at once struck up with "Drops o' Brandy," which, in spite of many attempts to stop it, was played to the end. Then, after a second's pause, it started off with another equally secular tune; and until, in despair, the horrified churchwardens made their way to the vicar, and expostulated with the unhappy choirman, who was of course helpless. Meanwhile, the congregation were convulsed with laughter. At last, in desperation, the officials procured four strong men, who ran the profane thing out of the church, and left it to finish its godless airs among the tombs.

Fig 5

WE have heard something lately about barrel organs in churches. In that connection came across the other day a very charming ketch of old time church choirs and orchestras written by Dr. J. H. Hinton. Dr. Hinton is speaking of a certain village church in England, which he does not name. The orchestra had been disbanded and the pitch pipe had done duty for a time. Then came the barrel organ. William King, being the village clerk, was entrusted with the care and working of the instrument. King's difficulty was to get one of the twelve tunes to which the organ's repertoire was limited, to fit the hymn given out. "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, Hymn 205," the parson would announce. King's spectacles were at once adjusted, his thumb well wetted, and the page turned up. Then the old man would count the syllables and hum over one of the twelve tunes he thought likely to suit. If words and music seemed to agree he pressed a button, turned the handle, and off they went. Sometimes, however, he made a mistake, when he set a four lined tune to a six lined verse. Then the delight of the boys in the gallery can be imagined as they heard him gabbling the last three lines of the verse into the one line left of the tune. The congregation meanwhile would sing line for line, and start the next verse at the fifth line of the first, with results that may be imagined. "Lawd a' mussy! Jimmy; warn't that a *twister*," Johnny would whisper to Jimmy. Occasionally the parson would give out a hymn to which no corresponding tune could be found. Then old King would shout from the other end of the church, "I say, Zur, 'taint on the organ." The obvious remark upon all this is that parson and clerk should have consulted beforehand. But these were free and easy unconventional times, when a little bit of dialogue in the church was rather enjoyed by everybody concerned.

THE kind of barrel organ referred to in the above paragraph was not so easy to work as the barrel organ which went by clockwork mechanism. But it was a safer instrument to have in the church, as another story told by Dr. Hinton abundantly shows. The story is connected with one Tim Crampton, who was the clerk at a village church in Wiltshire. The instrument which Tim controlled was a very small affair, playing only some four or five tunes. It had been in the church many years and had received scant attention and rough usage. One summer Sunday afternoon the hymn had been sung, and the next prayer commenced, when suddenly the organ started up playing another tune. Crampton in vain pushed in the button for stopping the instrument. Then he tried the next button, with the result that the organ began another tune. At last the parson had to stop his prayer and ask what was the matter. "We can't stop her nohow, parson," said Tim; "and she be wound up for an hour surely," giving the instrument at the same time a kick with his hob nailed boot. This had a very unexpected result, for there was a whirring sound, and the next moment the organ started off playing tunes in jig time! "Crampton," at last said the parson, "you had better carry the organ outside; it is disturbing the service." So four or five men got hold of it and took it with great difficulty down the belfry stairs. Just at the bottom one of them slipped, and they all fell together into the bell porch, the organ meantime going at sixty miles an hour. After getting their wind, they picked up the organ again, and took it into the churchyard, where they placed it on a flat tombstone. By this time the parson had gone into the pulpit and had given out the text. Suddenly disjointed fragments of tunes began to float in at the window. "Crampton," again said the parson, "you must take that instrument right away, *right out* of the churchyard altogether." So away they went again, took up the organ, and placed it against the palings of Gaffer Cross's farmyard, where the people found it when they left the church, "going like one o'clock," to the amazement of the pigs and poultry. I have heard stories of this kind before, but at this season of the year, so long as we get a good laugh, we must not be too particular.

Fig 6

Another January 1900 piece is more demeaning of the use of the barrel organ for church music.

‘After the band in our village church departed (says a writer in the *Church Gazette*) barrel organs had their “turn.” But these organs were never very popular. To say the least, their tone was unsympathetic and their range was inadequate. In a church in Surrey the organ could only play four tunes – long metre, common and six-eights. Be the hymn doleful or be it jubilant, the same tune had to serve. *Rockingham* which is a beautiful tune, was a favourite, but it was hardly suitable for a thanksgiving! Even if the range were greater, the old barrel had its limitations. A large one had about twenty tunes, including *God Save the Queen* and the anthem *I will Arise*. Even this became monotonous. All hymns in unusual metre were of course barred, and the parson often received a hint that he must make a fresh choice because of the poverty of the “barrel.” Peace to its memory!’

The final little tale from the pages of *The Musical Opinion* dates from February 1900.

‘The first stage in getting rid of the village orchestra was taken by the introduction of the barrel organ. I can well recall that stage. Now the barrel organ had but a limited range of tunes. Our organ had a vein of lightness and wantonness in it. How this came about I do not know. But one of the tunes ground out on it was *The Devil’s Hop*. After much consideration the difficulty was solved in this way. On the organ the title *The Devil’s Hop* was altered into *De Ville’s Hope*, and instructions were issued to the grinder to grind slowly and solemnly. By this means the air served for an Easter Psalm.’

Thus the time of the church barrel organ came and went. Use of the organ in the 20th century diminished further, some were converted to manual, others cannibalised for new instruments, or they were just scrapped. A small number did survive though to be restored to working order, but, for many of the same reasons originally put forward regarding their faults, they often supply little more than incidental music.

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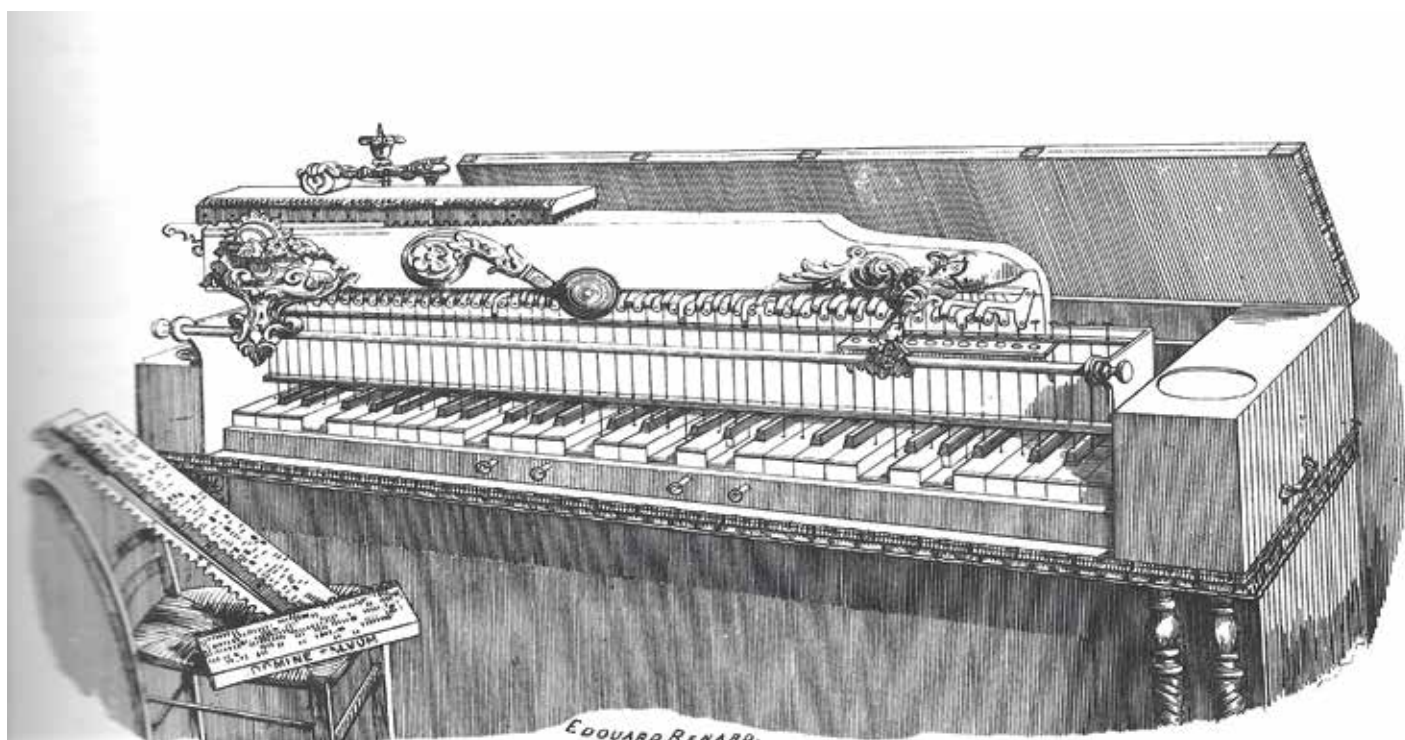
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Alexandre-François Debain's Antiphonel

Photographs & text by Alison Biden



While reviewing the Christmas 2018 edition of the journal of The North West Player Piano Association I came across an article entitled 'Early Attempts to play a Keyboard Instrument Automatically,' by Rodney B Barrett (who, I was to discover, is actually an anagrammatic *nom de plume* for Terry Broadbent.) Passing swiftly and vaguely in the first paragraph over its predecessors (which the author does not specify but might well have been variations of the 'dumb organist'), in the second paragraph he introduces us to the Antiphonel, a device patented by Alexandre Debain in 1846. This piqued my curiosity, as I realised that I had seen an example of just such a device in a private collection in September 2018 on a visit to the United States.

Alexandre-François Debain (1809 – 1877) was a French inventor, possibly best known for developing in 1840 the harmonium as we would know it today, although this is by no means his only claim to fame. I will let Rodney/Terry take up the story from here:

Trained initially as a cabinet maker, he completed his apprenticeship in 1825, and then worked in factories building pianos and organs, soon rising to the position of foreman. He set up his own firm of Debain & Cie in 1834, and, following the production of his harmonium, he came up with several inventions including the

Claviharmonium in 1846 (a combined piano and harmonium) and then the Organiphone (a reed organ working under suction instead of pressure), and the Harmonichorde (a more complex type of reed [sic]organ) in 1851.ⁱ However, ... Debain's invention in 1846 of a device he called the Antiphonel ... was the first true attempt to play a keyboard instrument automatically without using a pinned cylindrical barrel.ⁱⁱ

This last point is significant, because pinned cylindrical barrels had been around for a considerable time – and not merely as an integral part of a barrel organ (which would not have a keyboard), but as part of the aforementioned 'dumb organist.' The 'dumb organist' contained the musical programme pinned on a cylinder, one part of a larger mechanism which was placed over the existing organ keyboard.ⁱⁱⁱ As you can imagine, this was a heavy and cumbersome mechanism to employ. Debain's solution was instead to 'flatten out' the cylinder, and produce the musical programme on a series of studded wood strips, called *planchettes*. This method of operation allowed for its use with any type of keyboard instrument, such as a piano or harmonium, as well as an organ, thus making it more versatile than its predecessors.

This ingenious device was exhibited at the Great

Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, London, in 1851, and by 1862 was being advertised in *The Illustrated London News*, thus:

EVERY MAN HIS OWN ORGANIST.
Debain's Antiphonel, a substitute for an organist or harmonium player, by which any person, without knowledge of music, can play hymn tunes, psalms and chants. It is also adapted for the performance of overtures, quadrilles, waltzes, etc. It can be easily applied to or detached from any existing organ or harmonium and is not liable to derangement. Price 12 guineas ...^{iv}

It was endorsed by several French musical luminaries of the time such as composers Auber and Hector Berlioz and the organ builder, Devrainville.

Although this was apparently seen as a technological advance in its day, having seen one demonstrated, this author is of the opinion it is still a cumbersome device! Moreover, 'it can be easily applied' is somewhat of an exaggeration, judging by the instructions for use – unless of course, everything is relative, and 21st century Man is less used generally to complex mechanisms than his nineteenth century counterpart.



(Above) Alexandre Debain at the Antiphonel, from his publicity material.

So, what does it consist of, and how does it work?

It replaces the organist-composer's paper with a '*planchette*' [literally 'little plank'] on which the notes are transcribed with the aid of little projecting iron studs firmly fixed in the wood.

[The inventor] has then conceived a system of rockers, the lower part of which engages with each keyboard key, while their upper part engages with the iron studs of the *planchettes*. This mechanism is contained in a little box covered with a sheet of metal pierced along its length by a series of little openings, very close to each other, allowing the movement of the steel 'beaks' fitted to the upper end of the rockers that I have just mentioned ... it is activated by moving a lever^v which adapts to it. By moving this up and down, with each stroke one advances over the metal cover the *planchette* containing the sets of chords arranged in the iron studs; the machine works, itself selecting the keys as if it were the fingers of an organist, and the piece is executed with the greatest precision.^{vii}



(Top) 'Rocker' mechanism being lowered into place; (Below) detail of part of 'rocker' mechanism (this example damaged.)



This is probably better understood by referring to the sketches and photographs.

Further insight is gained by reading the instructions for use. There is advice on the use of registers, which should be opened before use, for the desired effects, and the player is further advised to operate it standing up. (This would be slightly easier than working it seated, although possibly more tiring in the end.) A good harmonium, says M Debain, should have powerful enough bellows for it to work pumping with



Mechanism for moving the planchettes. Note the turning handle (with knob) with ratchet lever behind, and the screw in the top of the frame holding them which is adjusted to determine which is used.



just one foot. In addition to the lever mentioned above, the Antiphonel was also furnished with a handle, but they weren't exactly interchangeable, as they were both used to move the *planchette* forwards but in a different way. The handle was used for playing ordinary, regular music, whereas the lever was employed for music composed only of chords, such as plain song. To use the handle, it was necessary to ensure that two toothed wheels meshed, by means of a screw, but the opposite applied when using the lever, and the wheels were disengaged.



Stops in place before Antiphonel is put to use

The *planchettes* to be used by operating the lever were identified by the musical signs indicating the value of the notes, and the rhythm of the piece of music, which was rendered accordingly by the depression or elevation of the lever to its extreme, as indicated by the signs.

The *planchettes* are fed in from left to right, and a degree of physical flexibility is required and considerable energy is expended, especially if one is using it on an organ. Someone described it as much akin to rubbing one's stomach while patting one's head. In addition to pumping the lever up and down, or winding the handle, to move the *planchettes* across the key frame, you have to be able to manhandle the *planchettes* into place – few can be lined up beforehand, even if you have them more or less ready in order to hand.

The manufacturer instructed the user to prepare the *planchettes* in advance, placing them in the correct order of play on a nearby table or chair. They would then be lifted in turn using the left hand, while the right hand operated the mechanism. They would then need to be rescued at the end of their journey along the course of the machine before they fell on the floor! Each *planchette* bore a number corresponding to the order in which it was to be played. In addition, the *planchettes* making up one piece of music often had



Feeding the planchettes from left to right: easier with some help!

additional patterns of little dots, indicating of how many *planchettes* in total each piece consisted. Things could get very confusing, and careful observation was required in advance to note where certain parts of the music might be repeated, necessitating the repeated use of a specific *planchette*. For example, if a *planchette* were labelled 1 – 3 – 5, it meant that it should be played to begin the tune, then repeated as the third *planchette* (after the playing of number 2) and then again as the fifth *planchette* (after the playing of number 4.) Great care was undoubtedly required, especially if the music was being played for the benefit of dancers to replace the *planchettes* in the correct order in their box to avoid getting into a muddle! Dance music of any length could thus be played; all one needed to do was turn the handle evenly and maintain one's concentration.

To maintain the metal parts subject to friction they needed to be oiled occasionally with a drop of clockmaker's oil, whilst the *planchettes* needed keeping in their storage boxes when not in use, kept out of sunlight, and occasionally cleaned with a stiff brush.

So, you are in the middle of the nineteenth century and totally blown away by the hyperbole surrounding this marvellous invention, and you decide you want to purchase one. In an age when there was no image on screen on which to 'click', it was necessary when ordering your Antiphonel to indicate whether it was for use on a pipe organ or a harmonium, and if possible the manufacturer of your instrument. If it was to go with a pipe organ, you needed to provide a little sketch showing the exact position of the registers in relation to the keyboard, and whether the keyboard protruded or was recessed. In addition, it was necessary to trace on a piece of paper the exact division of the 'sharp' keys. A separate version was available for fixing to pianos.

When it came to setting up the Antiphonel one then

had to check that the keys could be depressed by a minimum depth of nine millimetres. It had to be fixed in such a way that the lowest note corresponded to 'doh.' Understandably, everything had to line up perfectly, and minor adjustments through the use of a file, or packing with scraps of paper might be required, unless one could prevail upon a piano or organ builder to carry out the work.

Apart from its ease of use (!) its main selling point was that it enabled people to be able to play an instrument without needing to learn how to play it. This was thought to be of interest to numerous parish churches which could not afford the services of an organist, or had no one to call upon to play their organ.^{vii} Not only would it supply the organ music to enhance their services, but the music would be perfectly rendered.

^{ix} 'There is nothing more sad than to hear a beautiful melody distorted and wrecked by wrong, incoherent or illogical chords, misplaced by an unqualified organist,' claimed Debain. It was a 'musical sacrilege, which brought nought but agitation, anxiety, distraction



A planchette. Note the numbers '2' towards the bottom to denote the order in which it is played, and '92' referring to the music.

and disinterest.^x Its promoters speculated that it would even encourage, by some sort of intellectual osmosis, the young boys prevailed upon to operate it to take up the study of music and become proficient organists themselves. How could they not be inspired by the sounds produced and want to do the same themselves, while at the same time becoming aware of the relationship between the notes and the resultant sound?^{xi} It would also be attractive to those whose organ had fallen into disrepair since it was possible to buy a 'package' consisting of a harmonium and Antiphonel for possibly half the cost of repairing the original, thus solving two problems at once.

A final selling point was that the *planchettes* were allegedly relatively cheap to produce.



Close up of planchette showing the studs

Acknowledgements: The author is indebted for the help in the writing of this article to Jean-Marc Lebout, and the Mechanical Music Museum, Les Gets for copies of historical documents. Also to Janet & Dale Dohler of Ann Arbor, USA for permission to use the photographs.



Side of planchette. According to the operating instructions, the number on the left identifies the piece of music, the dots slightly to the right of this indicates how many planchettes form the entire piece and the final set of figures on the right indicate when this particular planchette should be repeated, i.e. it starts with this one (1), and then gets repeated alternating with other planchettes, so after the second planchette, to be no. (3), and again after the fourth to be no. (5). No idea why the numbers are reversed.

ⁱ Harmonium or reed organ – what is the difference? MBSGB & Reed Organ Society member Mark Jefford explains: 'I generalise the difference between Reed Organ (usually American) and Harmonium (usually European) as respectively sucking (suction) or blowing (pressure) the air through the reeds though there are of course exceptions to this generalisation.'

ⁱⁱ Terry Broadbent.

ⁱⁱⁱ Further reading on the dumb organist can be found in these editions of *The Music Box*: Vol 5, No 1, p 44; Vol 8 No 7 pp 296 -298; Vol 20 No 7 p 216, from which the following quote is taken: 'The dumb organist represents one of the earliest forms of key top players. It has the musical advantage of being able to play a full scale (chromatically) unlike many of its barrel organ cousins.' Bernie Brown.

^{iv} Arthur W J G Ord-Hume, *Barrel Organ*, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1978, p 254. The author also informs us that the *planchettes* were priced by the yard. This promotional material in turn appears to be a direct translation of Debain's own self-promotion in French.

^v It is additionally furnished with a handle

^{vi} In this mode the *planchette* is moved along the surface of the metal plate covering the mechanism by a ratcheting process.

^{vii} Hector Berlioz

^{viii} An interesting note from the historical documents indicates that good organists literally would seek their fortunes elsewhere as a small parish would not be able to afford them or offer them a desirable lifestyle.

^{ix} Half a century or so later, Italian priest, Don Angelo Barbieri, was inspired to invent a reproducing organ for the same reasons.

^x Quoted in documents from Mechanical Music Museum, Les Gets

^{xi} There is anecdotal evidence that some ragtime pianists learned music from pumping player pianos.

Spotlight on ... Niklas Roy

'Who's Niklas Roy?' you probably ask. I don't know how the good folks at MOOS stumbled across him, but I found the reference to him in an edition of their magazine *Vox Humana*, and decided to take a closer look. An exchange of emails later and this is what you get:

Niklas Roy is an installation artist and educator, living in Berlin.

'Through my work, I explore art, science and technology, often in the form of humorous installations and machines. I like to make as much as possible by myself, because engineering, constructing and coding is a nice way to keep learning new things. This very hands-on DIY approach also produces many ideas, which inspire projects yet to come.'

Who could disagree with a philosophy like that? He goes on:

'Additionally, I'm interested in the history and imaginary futures of technology, such as renewable energy and space travel.'

Before he started working as a freelance artist, he worked as a 3D artist, visual effect supervisor and second unit director in the film industry. This experience helps him to film his projects – see, for example, the one about working with children on making and monitoring water



Part of the basic mechanism

rockets. (What an inspirational way to teach technology.) Niklas has been responsible for projects all around the world and descriptions and videos of his projects can be found on his website, www.niklasroy.com, as well as plans for many of them for those who are interested to learn how they work, or even wish to replicate them.

'I like to teach others how to use technology in a creative, fun and reflected way,' explains Niklas. This is often realised through workshops which he runs with his partner, Kati Hyyppä which take place at museums, festivals, art schools and other institutions.



Detail of the art installation

The installation which first attracted me as highlighted in the MOOS magazine was an installation commissioned by KIKK Festival, which took place in Namur, Belgium in 2017. Niklas's work was placed directly in front of the Gallerie du Beffroi. It consisted of a cluster of windmills installed above the heads of the pedestrians. When the wind blows, each propeller powers a little music box that plays "Für Elise". Since all music boxes are driven asynchronously, the single notes and chords of Beethoven's iconic music piece are constantly re-arranged. The result is a wind powered sound installation which scrambles the original and permanently produces new compositions based on one



Niklas Roy

of the world's most well known melodies. Opposite the belfry tower, it was susceptible to 'interesting' wind turbulence, adding to the random musical effect, which every hour was augmented by the sound of the tower bells ringing. (And, probably sounded like an out-of-register cylinder box on a bad day, but nonetheless thought-provoking!)



The full installation in Namur

While constructing this installation in his Berlin workshop (in the district which was formerly East Berlin), Niklas's 80 year old neighbour became so intrigued that he was inspired to make one himself, assembling it in an afternoon. Many of the tools he used date back to the GDR.

The basic windmill is built out of a couple of 3D printed parts and some soft plastic sheet material.

As the construction is relatively easy to replicate, Niklas decided to make several to show at the KIKK Festival. Even before this happened, his creation was a success. This is what happened to the prototype: 'I set it up in front of my workshop, where it was entertaining the entire neighbourhood. People really seemed to like it - quite many took photos of it with their smartphones and spent long time watching it and listening to it. Unfortunately one person liked it a bit too much and stole it during one night.'



Trialing the prototype in the neighbourhood

If you are feeling inspired, the following list of what you will need is a taster. There is a 'how to ...' video accessible on his website.

Niklas's interest in incorporating a musical dimension in his work is not limited to just this one project. Several others can be found by perusing his extensive website. (Note: this is an extremely user-friendly site, and very easy to navigate. And – it's all in English!) Thus I came across the *Wasserorgel von Winnenden*,



Niklas's neighbour constructs his own windmill

Materials list

Amount	Piece	Purpose / Resource
1 Set	3D printed parts	Download from youmagine or from my server
1 Set	Paper templates	Download them here
1 Piece	Hand crank music box	This will make the music!
1 Sheet	3mm thick sheet material (e.g. Forex, Alu-Dibond or Coroplast)	For base plate and windmill blades
1 Piece	Hard sheet material (e.g. a cutting board)	Used as resonator
1 Piece	Driving belt (worst case a long household rubberband will do the job)	Connects windmill rotor with music box
1 Piece	4mm diameter steel rod (18cm long)	Used as axle for the rotor
2 Pieces	Ball bearings 26mm outside diameter, 10mm inside diameter, 8mm thick	Used for the rotor
2 Pieces	Ball bearings 13mm outside diameter, 4mm inside diameter, 5mm thick	Used to mount the base plate
5 Pieces	Short M3 screws (e.g. 10mm)	Used as set screws for the pulleys & to fix the music box on the resonator
2 Pieces	20mm long M3 screws & nuts	Used as set screws for the rotor parts
4 Pieces	Short M3 screws (e.g. 7mm)	Used to fix the music box on the resonator
4 Pieces	Long M3 screws (e.g. 40mm)	Used to fix the resonator on the base plate
12 Pieces	M3 nuts & washers	Used to fix the resonator on the base plate
14 Pieces	M4 x 20mm screws & nuts	Used to fix the wings on the rotor and the bearing mounts on the base plate
1 Piece	M10 threaded rod (70cm - 1m)	Used to hold the windmill
4 Pieces	M10 nuts	Used to lock the windmill on the threaded rod

although strictly speaking, the roles are reversed in this instance, and the 'organ' activates a fountain,



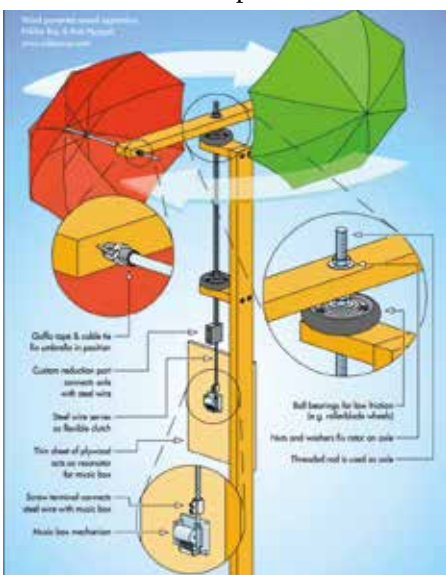
rather than vice versa. Winnenden is in Swabia, a region in south west Germany, and where the Kärcher company is located, so Niklas got a lot of help from Kärcher, as well as the local community. Reading about it made me cry – it is hard to imagine Dyson or General Electric getting involved in a project like this.

Another project, exhibited in 2016 in the Goethe-Institut Pop Up Pavillon, Wrocław, Poland was the Music Construction Machine, described as a large, public, generative music box. It was part of the city's European capital of culture programme. The

idea was people could operate it via a big hand crank. Rotating the crank moved various mechanisms inside the giant box, producing ever-changing melodies and rhythmic patterns, played with an electric guitar, a keyboard and a drum set. As the machine was contained in a transparent glass pavillion, people could observe and contemplate on its inner workings while cranking.

Niklas: 'As we all have different tastes in music, I decided to abandon the traditional concept of a music box, which would play a pre-programmed melody repeatedly. That would satisfy the musical taste of only a small fraction of the crankers and listeners. Instead, the music is generated by an algorithm, which is implemented entirely in mechanical hardware and which iterates through all kinds of possible sequences of beats and tones. Thus, the machine permanently 'constructs' new 'music' while it is being operated, hence the name "Music Construction Machine". (As a caveat Niklas posits the possibility that it might not constitute what is conventionally thought of as music, but asks the question what is music and what is sound?)

In 2011 Niklas had created an installation in Sao Paolo, Brazil, called the Umbrellaphone, which



Plans for the installation in Sao Paolo

prefigured the windmill 'boxes' by using umbrellas blowing in the wind to power the tiny movements. Another using these small 'novelty' musical movements was set up for the 2011 Berlin Museum Night, called the *Wasserklang Modulsystem*. It used the waterwheel of the Deutsches Technikmuseum to activate the movements. Strollers in the museum's surrounding park would be delighted by the tinkling music produced by the movements, creating a magical atmosphere on a rainy evening.



The Deutsches Technikmuseum waterwheel



Detail of pulley system to activate the movement in the museum grounds



Visitors to the museum enjoying some nighttime magic

Niklas has a very extensive portfolio. It was the original intention to list most, if not all, of his projects, but it soon became obvious they would fill this entire magazine. I shall therefore leave it to the reader to explore his website, and/or the

various social media and other platforms he uses: Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Youmagine, Github, Google Photo Archive, Internet Archive and Soundcloud. (I dare you to watch the *Forbidden Fruit Machine video*.)

We leave the last word to Niklas:

'If you want me to do a project, a workshop or a presentation, feel free to invite me! I'm always happy to hear about possibilities to make new projects. Just get in touch!'

See:

<https://niklasroy.com/20windmills/>

<https://www.niklasroy.com/windmill/>

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/GIDZ03h53ykDf2i33>

https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipPrY7KclWym1CKAQtw-x4eLEnz_F2QLOcdKIYS9bZf3IP_-TEuc3zLq8WkWM0CQ?key=amZZSXhQRnY1ekZJSI9lWlVURGrKc2dCSIU1OWV3

<https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipOJXyt-WGS896zDxYrffkdsplpFYpyYvXntp1MGJQC6H9SC7X9c7-kKn0EcjmQXI1g?key=ZFJaYnRuMjBPRGNfQkxzLUItRWVViNDBuVGpxTVJ3>

<https://photos.google.com/share/AF1QipNkHDPGeC8N13TIPCJKTYFL6CrA2la3w2E7cjKsELBtImRHGvB2HksL5yeZVXDA5Q?key=Q1ZGWE9MMnY2VEJsaThVMEI BSWJhdjhXVWlFYkN3>

<https://www.niklasroy.com/workshop/144/>

<https://www.niklasroy.com/project/191/MCM>

For his latest work, located this Summer in Le Havre:

<https://letetris.fr/exhibit/exhibit-2019>

Acknowledgement: Niklas has been very generous with sharing his work and information, giving permission to use the material on his website, from which much of this article was constructed.

The Great MBSGB Kent Spring Extravaganza



The 2019 Spring Meeting of The Musical Box Society of Great Britain was always destined to be a huge success with the advertised programme attracting a good attendance (so much so that the Society had to use an 'overspill' hotel as extra accommodation.) We were pleased to welcome back not only Arlette Rusticelli and Michel Burgoz from the Musée Baud, Switzerland, but on a first time visit to the UK, the Vice President of MBSI, Tom Kuehn along with his delightful wife, Hongyang. Regular Peter Ruf was also in attendance, as well as a handful of other members we haven't seen in a while.

The Salomons Estate, now simply 'Salomons' an event venue and Conference Centre, consists of a large property just outside Tunbridge Wells, formerly known as Broomhill. The main house built in stone in a Georgian style has had a somewhat incongruously modern conservatory tacked on the side and refurbished in a very modern style, but it made a lovely spot for one's breakfast, as it afforded great views over some of the extensive grounds. Visitors could wander round these at will, as well as visit for free the Salomons museum, housed to the side of the hotel's reception and containing much of Sir David Salomons' collection of scientific instruments and apparatus. The first Sir David Salomons was succeeded by his nephew, David Lionel Salomons who had a scientific bent himself and built the first electrically

powered automobile in 1874, as well as making Broomhill one of the first houses in the country to be lit by electric lighting.

As a complete contrast, the accommodation was housed in separate annexes, dating back to the second half of the 20th century when the estate had been used as a training centre. Although the rooms were well appointed and recently redecorated, access to some of them was quite challenging for those of more advanced years!

Based at the Salomons Estate, Tunbridge Wells, Kent (conveniently now a hotel and conference centre), we were given ample time to sample the fabled Welte Residence organ. To do this, the meeting started on the afternoon of the Thursday, as opposed to the more normal Friday. Salomons is also close a local beauty spot, or more precisely, site of geological interest, the Toad Rock.

Once members had checked in they were invited along to the Theatre, where they were treated to many hours of music from the organ. Various descriptions as a Residence Organ, or a Philharmonic Organ, this unique instrument is one of a kind, as its original owner, Sir David Lionel Salomons already had a Welte Style 10 orchestrion and wanted his new organ to be able to play the orchestrion rolls. Meeting organiser David O' Connor was only too keen to demonstrate that the organ could in fact do this, with a selection from the many rolls stored on site. David confessed to having had some anxious moments earlier in the day when there was a technical hitch, despite the organ working perfectly the day before. Fortunately it was only minor, and was fixed with a trip to the local hardware store, thus avoiding calling upon the 'organist in residence' who normally looks after things.





During a break in the 'performance' John Harrold took the stage and spoke about that part of the organ's history when there were various efforts being made to rescue it from dereliction and possible scrapping. One of the most ardent campaigners was none other than Frank Holland, who even lobbied members of Parliament, before the campaign was finally successful with a grant from the National Lottery.

The organ's true versatility became apparent when we listened to the instrument play some of the organ rolls, despite the echo chamber not being in working order. The music really came alive, with a much greater depth of expression, as it should, given that the rolls were 'cut' from the performance of some of the most eminent players at the time.

Further variation and lively entertainment was provided by Richard Cole, who played the organ manually and also demonstrated the various 'special effects' of which it was capable. Coincidentally, we found a mention of him in the little free booklet supplied by the hotel, referring to the time when he was asked to give an expert's opinion on the potential future of the instrument.

The recital continued over dinner and afterwards. Members were able to catch up with each other in the lulls (of which there were inevitably several at the change of roll.)

The following day we headed off to Jack Henley's superb collection, always popular with members. As we all know, Jack is very discerning about what he has in his collection, and in addition, makes sure it is well displayed. All items on display in the main building are



in tip-top condition. As on previous visits, the visitors were divided into two groups so that one group could tour the house collection while the others were entertained in the coach house (quaintly referred to as the Toy Cupboard), before exchanging places. A splendid buffet lunch was provided after which there was time to revisit favourite areas, and stroll around the immaculately kept garden – not without its own share of attractions. Jack had arranged his extensive car collection out on the lawn ready for inspection, and if you tired of this, there was always the old red telephone kiosk and vintage post boxes. Our visit was the first in a series of several due to take place over the forthcoming week as our host celebrated a significant birthday with friends and fellow enthusiasts from a number of organisations of which he is a member. Friday was rounded off by yet another excellent meal at the hotel, with more time for socialising afterwards.

Saturday saw us heading off to the organ collection of Nick and Barbara Seymour at their agricultural business premises. Nick and Barbara are not



members of MBSGB, but nonetheless are deservedly well known in organ circles. We were introduced to Nick's young colleague, Alistair, an organ builder who helps Nick keep the instruments in tip-top condition.

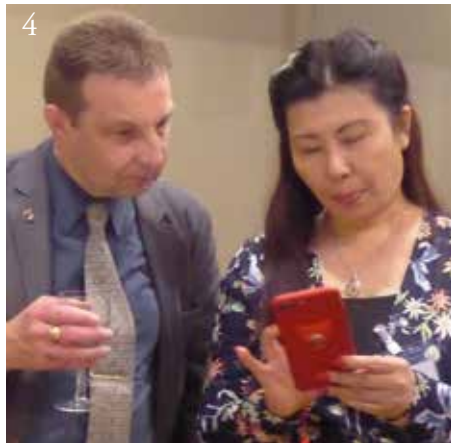
Among those we were privileged to listen to was a magnificent Mortier dance organ, the façade of which has been beautifully restored (along with the organ), which is now set up to be played by a MIDI system. There was also a small Chiappa, and a De Cap. The Seymours also have a handful of small musical boxes.

After being royally entertained by a selection of instruments we were treated to an outstanding, home-produced buffet lunch, to the accompaniment of hailstones thundering on the roof. It was then time to bid farewell until next time. Many thanks to all those who contributed to the success of this meeting, not the least our hosts Jack Henley, Nick and Barbara Seymour, and organiser David O' Connor.

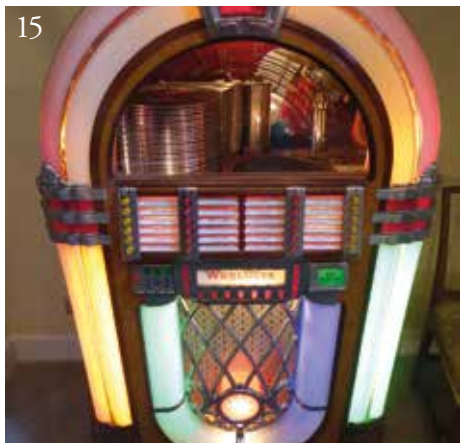
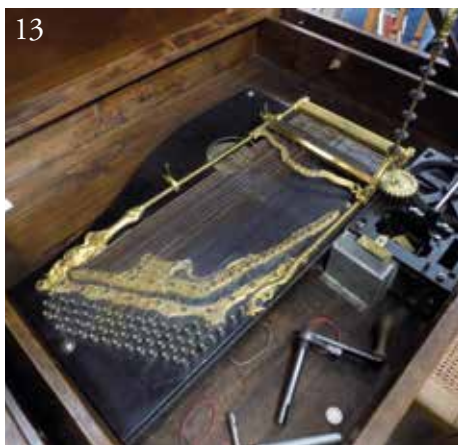
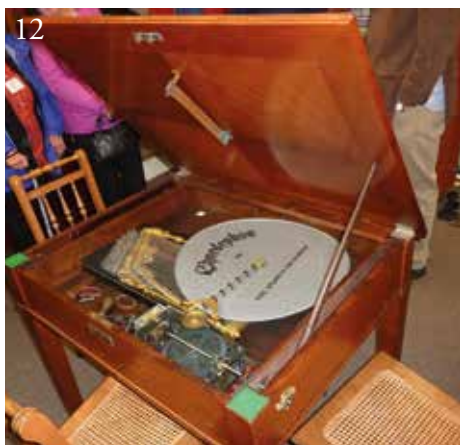
Photographs at Salomons showing the venue and Welte organ. Photograph credits: Alison Biden, Gary Burns and Kevin McElhone.



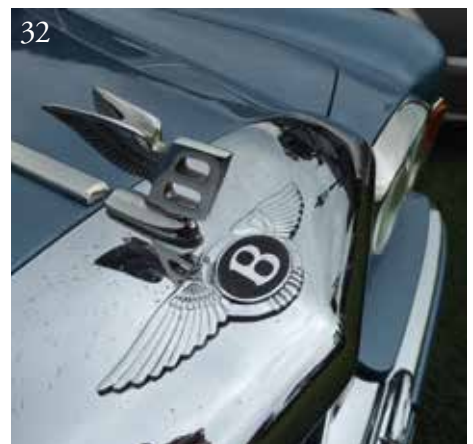
Exhibit in Sir David Lionel Salomons private museum



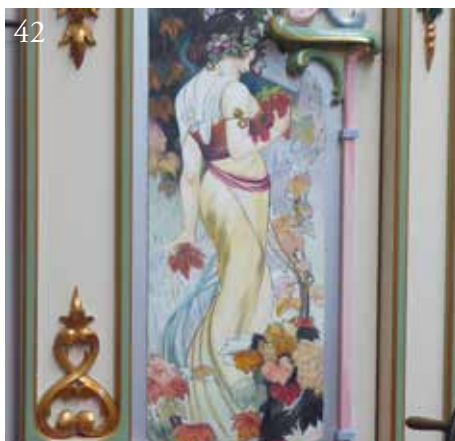
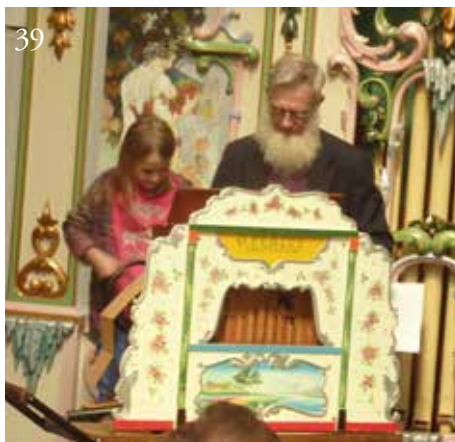
IMAGES 1-11 1. Lesley Worrall, Gary Burns, Hongyang Kuehn 2. L to R: Peter Ruf, Alan Godier, Philip Chandler enjoying the Salomons Welte organ 3. L to R: Margaret Pankhurst, Roland Fisher, Terry Pankhurst 4. Gary Burns discussing IT with Hongyang Kuehn 5. Studying the table piano 6. 'How do we do this?' 7. 'Got it! That's a relief!' 8. A Tournaphone Organette 9. Inside the Tournaphone organette 10. A 'revolver' box 11. It says it's a Messerschmitt – but where are the wings?



IMAGES 12-22 12. A Chordephon with disc 13. The Chordephon (it always works better with a few elastic bands!) 14. Birthday boy and host, Jack 15. One of the juke boxes 16. Libellion 17. The Libellion 18. 'Jack doesn't collect just mechanical music ...' 19. Another example of the disc box lid picture as seen on the cover 20. Detail from a disc box lid – no information available as to what it depicts 21. L to R: Kevin McElhone, Robert Cowen and Maureen Collinge 22. L to R: Philip Chandler, John and Hilda Phillips



IMAGES 23-32 23. Hongyang and Thomas Kuehn with Alison Biden 24. David O' Connor and Gill Maxim enjoy lunch at Jack Henley's 25. Ian and Alison Barnes 26. Detail of 'Chicago Coin's Band-Box'/'Strike up the band' 27. Detail of coin slots for juke box made for US market 28. Host Jack Henley 29. L to R: John Farmer and Peter Ruf 30. Centre trio, L to R: Michel Burgoz, Clive and Joyce Houghton 31. L to R: Alan Godier, Peter Kerr, Alan Clark 32. Seen in the garden!



IMAGES 33-43 33. L to R: Keith Reedman, Ann Sanders and Joan Rippengal 34. Large orchestra box 35. The curious 'Toad Rock' 36. At Nick Seymour's collection 37. Nick Seymour's Mortier Dance Organ 38. Chiappa organ once owned by Mr Piper 39. Nick Seymour and young 'assistant' with his Perlee 40. Ruth organ at Nick Seymour's 41. Detail of Mortier Dance Organ 42. Detail of Mortier Dance Organ 43. Nick Seymour's magnificent De Cap Dance Organ

This That and T'Other No: 27

Arthur Cunliffe

Looking at the list of tunes written on many tune sheets I am at a loss to understand why sometimes the tunes are written up very carefully and in full and at other times they are noted only briefly. If this happened only when one maker was involved it would be understandable but this is not the case.

Looking the other day for the *Gypsy Baron* composition, I discovered that there were at least eighteen boxes noted as playing the air. Most credited the tune to Strauss, but there were variations. One box mentioned the tune with the extra words "Heel and toe are alright" whilst others listed it as a song or a march, some as a gallop or even as a waltz. The melody has also been credited to someone called Spenser. I now wonder if there are at least two *Gypsy Baron* Compositions. I have seen the name Spenser on occasions on a tune sheet for this melody and have assumed he was an arranger.

On occasions one can spot the difficulty arrangers had with the English language. One recent example came up as "I dreams I dwelt" instead of "I dreamt I dwelt". In the interest of accuracy I always try to note exactly what is written on a tune sheet mistakes and all.

Only a few years ago corresponding with a fellow member meant posting off a letter and waiting for a reply. Now with the development of almost instantaneous communications, emails have made correspondence so much easier. There is always a downside to such developments in that touching a wrong key, off goes the message with no chance of making a correction or sometimes ever finding it again.

I am finding it much harder to find and write about suitable topics related to musical boxes. I am hoping that among the membership there is someone who feels they are able to write an article or two for the journal. Ideally articles of around 700 words are the best and if you can write four pieces, then you will have contributed enough for a whole year!

Printing firms can cope with Microsoft Word and I believe that nowadays most people will have the Word programme on their computers. This is an ideal platform to use when submitting a contribution for the journal as this programme is understood by everyone in the publishing world.

Two people in the Victorian era greatly influenced music in general. One was Queen Victoria herself and the other was Prince Albert. Victoria was an accomplished musician as was Prince Albert.

Victoria is said to have been particularly fond of the music of Wagner and Mendelssohn. This is hardly surprising given her German background and upbringing. She also admired the music of Sir Henry Bishop. On the instigation of Prince Albert, she was responsible for the granting of a Knighthood to Bishop in 1842. Of the music composed by Bishop it is said that Victoria particularly enjoyed singing *Home Sweet Home*. Composed by Bishop in 1829 the song has remained popular on musical boxes till this day.

Other compositions by Sir Henry Bishop are *Bid me Discourse* (1820) and *Anna Bolina*. (1830) both are very pleasing and are found on early period key wind boxes.

Other tunes by Bishop are:-

My Heart and Lute.

Lest he upbraid.

Chime Again.

Pretty as a picture.

The Pilgrim of Love.

My Pretty Jane.

Tho' tis all but a dream.

Well over 150 boxes play music by Bishop the majority of which are pinned to play *Home Sweet Home* and *Bid me Discourse*.

Bishop was born in 1786 and died in 1855 at the age of 69 which for the day was a good long life. His music is found mainly on early to mid-period boxes. Just the sort that is becoming difficult to find.

Good collecting. Arthur Cunliffe.

Register News No 102

There are relatively few new boxes added to the Register recently and the Register now stands at 12,230 which mean that only 98 previously

unregistered boxes have been added. It is interesting to see that most of these 98 boxes have been located in America and were found and listed

by Tim Reed.

Strangely there seem to be no large collections in Switzerland, France or Spain. Musical boxes do not appear

to be anywhere as popular in those countries either now or in the past. I can offer no explanation as to why this should be it is just a fact!

The invention of the computer and database programmes mean that masses of information can be stored and shared quite easily. However those who use computers will understand it is also very easy to throw away important files. When this happens it can be difficult to find and restore these files. A sense of panic is generated in an instance. A foreign friend of mine once referred to all of this as "confusion reigns in great abundance." I have been subject to these feelings so many times I have now made copies of the Register and saved it to at least two computers and I am even thinking of saving one as Confusion Reigns. Being a belt and braces type of person, I have also passed it on to trusted and willing members of the Society.

Hymn and Oratorio boxes seem at a casual glance to be quite common. They were made to comply with the strict observance of Sunday customs of the Victorian era. As at May 2019 there are 302 boxes that play hymns and 83 that could

be described as oratorio boxes. I suppose that out of the 12,200 boxes on the Register that is really a low total. I always think of them as play on Sunday boxes!

2 per turn boxes are very common, but forte piano 2 per turn all playing the same tunes are not. Gamme number 1845 is a common 2 per turn which plays the following:-

1. *My Own My Guiding star.*
2. *Ye banks and Braes.*
3. *The Swiss Boy.*
4. *Beautiful Star. Foster.*
5. *Robert toi que j'Aime, Robert le Diable. Meyerbeer.*
6. *Last Rose of Summer. Flotow.*

A recent addition to the Register was a hymn box made by Bremond that featured a programme that I have never seen before. It noted a hymn number after all of the hymns. It is the titles of the hymns that are very rare and most unusual. I am at a complete loss as to who composed the original music for all of these hymns! I don't think they are Church of England hymns and I wonder if they are Methodist ones.

1. *One of the two who heard*

John speak.

Hymn 156

2. *The Lord is risen indeed*

Hymn 136

3. *Christ our Saviour is purified for us.*

Hymn 128

4. *Come for all things are ready.*

Hymn 212

5. *Although the fields yield us music.*

Hymn 267

6. *He that is lost in the Kingdom of God.*

Hymn 178

The box was sold in Stroud auctions in April 2019 Lot 745. If you bought this box or know who purchased this box, please contact me with further details

A few more unusual tune titles have turned up in 2019, so I will conclude by mentioning just a few of them:-

Penny Jones money

The Gypsy King

The Jolly Nose

Le petit vin de Chaubertin

Arthur Cunliffe.



Found: unusual business card for French repairer based in London

A Very British Affair

The Sale of the Richard Bartram Collection, May 2019



Elizabeth Talbot

‘Extraordinarily successful!’ This is the verdict on the 17th May, 2019 auction of the Richard Bartram collection as delivered by auctioneer Elizabeth Talbot. ‘Every single lot sold ... many realising sums beyond what was expected.’ The enthusiasm and positivity was still palpable during the twenty-minute interview conducted several weeks after the event.

Elizabeth has been in the business longer than she wishes to admit, but when pressed gave a date of 1985 as her inaugural year. During that time she has naturally gained a lot of valuable experience, and was able to guide her client based on her ‘interpretation of the market at the moment.’ Aware that values were depressed as compared to a few years ago, she advised on not being

too ambitious in one’s expectations as to what might be realised. Her strategy evidently paid off, with a good attendance in the sale room itself, provoking lively bidding as well as many telephone and commission bids from individuals and museums alike.

‘And when “the” Nicole took off, well ...’ Elizabeth pauses, whether searching for an appropriate expression or allowing the listener to fill in the gaps for him- or herself. It’s what an auctioneer always says: ‘You just need two people wanting it.’ Lot 5019, a lever-wind, Nicole Frères piano-forte 4 air overture cylinder box was always expected to reach a high price, but it had unfortunately shifted on its carriage before the sale. Although the bidders were aware, it still fetched well in excess of what had been anticipated, even had it not suffered any ill-effects. One had to smile: Elizabeth was unaware of the legendary rivalry between personalities for such boxes as this; news of the result had long echoed around musical box circles.

This sale had attracted a lot of interest, partly due to the popularity and respect for the vendor, and the fact that many of the potential buyers were familiar with him and



A Polyphon Autochange, sold for £14,000

the collection. Lots ranged from the modest (a set of five French manivelles) to the sublime (in addition to the Nicole, there was a fine Hicks street barrel piano.) Several cylinder boxes of different makes and styles were on offer, as were disc musical boxes, the prices of the latter generally holding up well. Elizabeth believes some buyers were prompted to bid by the desire to have for themselves a piece by which to remember him. ‘It was personal,’ she said. ‘A tribute, if you like. There was a very interesting dynamic at play. It was very much the vendor’s event.’

If you wished to experience the England of yore, you could do worse than immerse yourself in the market town of Diss, Norfolk, where its distant remove from the hustle and bustle of metropolitan life recalls a more genteel way of life. It was fitting then, that the vendor, described as being ‘a gentleman of the “old school”’, should approach the local auction house to handle his collection. Elizabeth was able, as she says, to ‘go the journey with him’ and to develop the relationship



Star ‘lot’ from the auction: Lever wind, Nicole Frères Piano-Forte overture box, sold for £26,000



A 21" Symphonion coin-in-the-slot with bells, sold for £7,500

which was very much needed. She feels a sale by one of the big, London based houses would have been inappropriate in this case as he would have received less attention – and netted less revenue once the higher commissions had been raked off. She also believes the Diss venue

was successful because there is an adverse psychological impact at sales in the big houses, where some buyers become mesmerised or intimidated by the bidding. In a provincial auction they have more confidence that they might just pick up a bargain or something special away from the glare of publicity, whether this is true or not.

Not that this sale was not well attended. Some enthusiasts had travelled great distances to be present ('the length and breadth of the country'), going to the viewing one day and stopping overnight. Thanks to the intervention of the vendor himself, who drew the auction house's attention to the MBSGB, auction house T W Gaze were able to rush

in an advertisement to the magazine at the very last moment. Elizabeth thinks this encouraged more MBSGB members to take an active part.

'It was great being able to interact with people who were genuinely interested in the sale, the collection and the individual items,' says Elizabeth. 'It was a very "British" sale,' (despite the Nicole going to an overseas buyer), 'very old-fashioned, such an atmosphere. Like sales used to be' she concludes on a note of satisfaction.

(Full results may be found on the T W Gaze website, by searching their catalogue archive. Sale prices quoted are the hammer price, excluding the additional combined commission and VAT of 21.6% .)



Detail of early 19th century portable street piano, sold for £650



Oak cased Polyphon style clock, sold for £310



A Piccolo 8 air cylinder box by P van Seeuwen, Amsterdam

Other British Saleroom News:

Whilst those with a keen interest in following what prices are realised at sales may keep up to date with activity in the bigger/ London houses, some of the lesser known provincial sales may go 'under the radar.' Shortly before going to press we received news that a Baker Troll box, with drum and bells in view, (illustrated) reached the upper end of its estimate at a sale in the north of England, at £656.54.

Image credit: Gerrards Auction Rooms, Lytham St Annes, Tel. 01253 725476, www.gerrardsauctionrooms.com, info@gerrardsauctionrooms.com, who tell us they 'often' have consignments of musical boxes and/or related items and ephemera.

Editor: If there is anyone willing to monitor sales on behalf of The Music Box with a view to producing a quarterly 'round up' as in the past, please contact me! (editor@mbsgb.org.uk)



The Performance of Manuel de Falla on Piano Rolls

Many enquiries MBSGB receives from outside the Society tend to be requests for a valuation on an item, or information on how to get a piece restored. One of the more unusual enquiries we received recently was to see if the MBSGB Archive contained any piano rolls cut from original performances of his own compositions, by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla. The request came from a Jose María Martín Valverde behalf of the Fundación Manuel de Falla, Granada, Spain:

Dear Mrs:

on behalf of the Manuel de Falla Foundation in Granada (Spain) I am looking for collectors or museums, archives, music libraries that may have pianola rolls with music by Spanish composer Manuel de Falla.

We know that maestro Falla hired pianola version of some of his works under the Pleyel and Pleyela brand. Specifically the suite *Le Tricorne* (rolls ns Pleyel 8401-8405) and also the 7 Spanish popular songs (Pleyela 9334-93), apart from some others. Also master Falla give his work *Fantasia Baetica* to Spanish Piano rolls Princesa Brand.

We look for all these rolls.

We include a concert program from the period in which the works of Manuel de Falla are mentioned in Pleyel's catalogs.

Could you tell me where or whom I should contact to get information about this topic?

Grateful in advance, yours sincerely

José M^a Martín Valverde

Sevilla-España-

jm.martinvall@gmail.com

As has been noted on occasions in the pastⁱ, mechanical music can provide a valuable research resource, whether (amongst other things) it be arrangements on an organ barrel, or the expression captured on a piano roll. Some composers had their performance recorded on piano rolls – with the attendant ‘immediate’ effect of a live performance – before the time of gramophone records. Furthermore, records were not necessarily always a reliable medium, as the performance could

become distorted by the recording conditions and the location. As part of her music degree examination, my husband's niece played George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, and won high acclaim for an interpretation close to Gershwin's own. I wonder if having heard our piano roll of this piece played by the composer himself had anything to do with it!

According to its website, The Fundación Manuel de Falla ‘is a public institution which preserves the library and the documental legacy of the composer.’ⁱⁱ Before emigrating to Argentina, Manuel de Falla (23 November, 1876 – 14 November, 1946) lived for several years in Granada, Spain, which is where the foundation has been based since 1991. ‘Manuel de Falla was closely associated with the most important figures of his time “musicians, writers, painters, politicians, etc.” and documentary evidence of those relationships is preserved in the archive. A bibliophile and a remarkably meticulous man, Falla kept almost everything that came into his hands, from musical scores to electricity meter receipts.’ⁱⁱⁱ Not only is it therefore an important collection of material relating to the composer, but one of the most comprehensive documenting the milieu and epoch in which he lived. It is the aim of the Fundación not only to conserve the documentary holdings, but also to promote them for the benefit of the musicological community and the wider public.

Falla's papers had been dispersed around various locations in Spain when he went to Argentina shortly after the end of the Spanish Civil War, and it was only on his death in 1946 that his brother began collecting them together in Cadiz. They were subsequently removed to Madrid in the 1960s. In 1965 Falla's house in Granada was opened as a museum, and eventually what was to become the basis of his archive was transferred to the Centro Cultural Manuel de Falla in that city. The archive continues to be added to.

When he was a boy, Falla's piano teacher in Madrid inspired him with his own enthusiasm for 16th-century Spanish church music, folk music and *zarzuela* (a Spanish version of opera.) From 1907 to 1914 he lived in Paris where he met Claude Debussy, Paul Dukas and Maurice Ravel, the latter influencing his own

ⁱ Not least the conference at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama on Mechanical Music as a Resource for Research into Early Performance Practice, held 7th & 8th July, 2013, see *The Music Box*, Vol 26 No 4, page 134, & No 5, page 178. See also *The Music Box*, Vol 29, No 2 p 46.

ⁱⁱ Fundación Manuel de Falla website, www.manueldefalla.com

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Manuel-de-Falla>

music. Amongst international audiences, he is probably best known for his ballets *The Three-Cornered Hat*, and *Love, the Magician* (including the compelling *Ritual Fire Dance*), and the suite *Nights in the Garden of Spain*, this latter described as ‘evok[ing] the Andalusian atmosphere through erotic and suggestive orchestration,’^{iv} and said to have been inspired by the Generalife gardens in Granada. According to <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Manuel-de-Falla> ‘in his music he achieved a fusion of poetry, asceticism, and ardour that represents the spirit of Spain at its purest.’ I couldn’t put it better myself (By the way, in case you are wondering, the Archive does not keep any piano rolls.



And Sr Martín Valverde was advised of other avenues to follow, one of which he evidently took up, generating considerable traffic on the internet-based email forum Mechanical Music Digest. If you have any of the rolls sought, or know of any, please let him – and us – know.)

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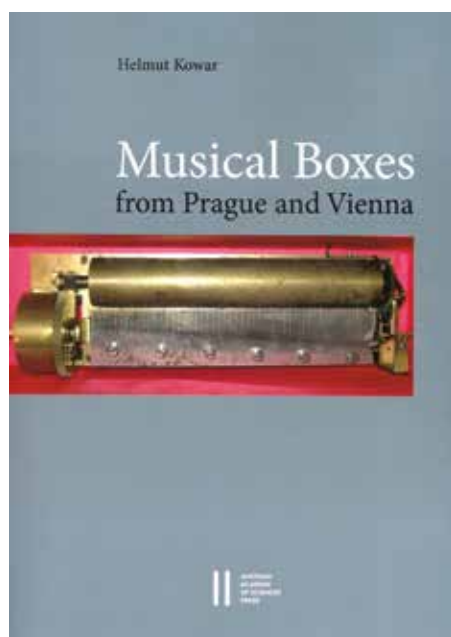
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Book Reviews



Musical Boxes from Prague and Vienna, Helmut Kowar, Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2019, 246 pages, illustrated in colour (softback)

From time to time the Musical Box Society of Great Britain has published a book of interest to mechanical music enthusiasts, and musical box collectors in particular. It is therefore fitting that the Society, along with its 'sister' organisation, the Musical Box Society International was instrumental in bringing this book by Dr Kowar to a wider readership through the funding of the printing of the English version.

Reaction to the original German version was mixed: there were those who saw it as an important piece of work, whereas others wondered whether it had anything to add to Luuk Goldhoorn's book *Die Osterreichische Spielwerkemanufaktur im 19. Jahrhundert* (publication date unknown.) As a non-German speaker, this reviewer cannot comment on this, although the two publications look very different visually, and the summary of Goldhoorn's book, appearing at

its end and (significantly?) written in English, is tantalising. What is beyond doubt is that a book in English on the subject greatly enhances one's knowledge of the boxes produced in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Kowar describes a number of differences between these movements and their Swiss counterparts, not just the 'reversed' order of the comb teeth which is commonly known, and which I will leave for the book itself to reveal.

In addition to giving an account of the various makers (Olbrich of Vienna and Rzebitschek of Prague being the most familiar, but by no means the sole ones), Dr Kowar offers a checklist of characteristics which assist in distinguishing between a 'Prague' and a 'Vienna' box where the maker is unknown. There is also an extensive catalogue of known movements attributed to these two places of origin, a useful research resource, which has been augmented since the original German version was published.

Where this book shows its true scholarship is in the detailed analysis of the music found on these Austro-Hungarian movements, which occupies an extensive section of the book, and should be of interest to the serious musicologist. Studying the contents of these pages may well provide the answers to some of the 'frequently asked questions' about musical box arrangements, a topic but sparsely covered elsewhere in musical box literature. As the author states: 'The following analyses ... discuss three main aspects: 1) the formal structure of the arrangement and the modification of the harmony as compared to the original, 2) the design of the melodic line as well as of the other voices, 3) the

structure of the accompaniment, demonstrated in detail through the use of several examples.' At the conclusion of his first analysis he writes: 'Unlike the original, the arrangement reveals flowing transitions between its sections; not even the caesura before the *piu mosso* survived the arranger's rigor. A completely new entity had been created.' This theme is repeated elsewhere in the analyses, with attention being drawn to the 'new' musical piece created as a consequence of the adaptation of an original piece to the strictures imposed by a musical box movement.

Meanwhile, possibly unintentionally, in the opening chapter 'General Remarks and Basics' light is shed on another fascinating area, that of the different terminology applied to a musical box mechanism, and the fact that the German can be very expressive, whereas a more general term is all we can fall back on in English. The last word goes to a Society member who bought a copy; notwithstanding the section on the musical arrangements was 'somewhat over [his] head' he was very pleased with the purchase.

Copies of this book can be bought at £70, plus p&cp, by contacting David Worrall, T.01962 861350; worrall.ercall87@btinternet.com

Musée Baud, L'Auberson: Au Royaume de la Musique Mécanique (in German, French and English) 2018, 221 pages, illustrated in colour (hardback)

This is a delightful publication, and would grace any coffee table or library shelf. With the Musée Baud collection due to move from its current home in about two years' time, this is a timely souvenir. However, it should not be regarded



simply as that, but a biography of the dedicated family who created it over the years. From its humble beginnings with Emile Baud, the 'farmer-watchmaker' to the

internationally renowned museum it has become today, we are taken on two journeys: that of its evolution through five generations of a single family as well as on a virtual tour through the collection, entertained as we go with personal anecdotes, and via the history of the restoration side of the enterprise. Musée Baud believes itself to be unique among private collections, prospering as it has through many years without public grants or powerful sponsors.

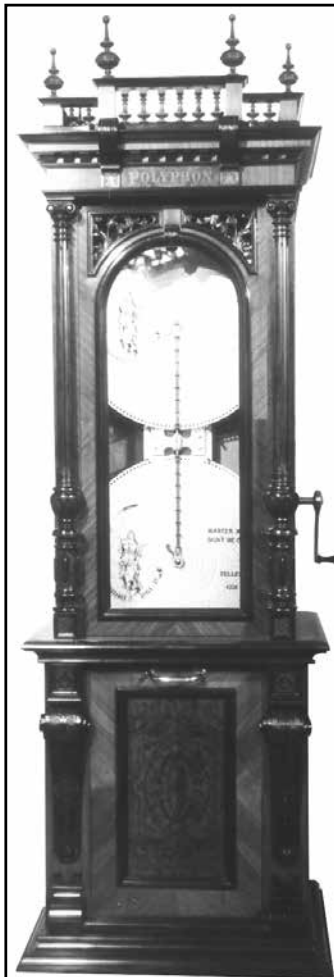
The Museum/Baud family have rightfully earned a reputation for supporting their own community; in 1996 they were heavily involved in organising the celebrations in L'Auberson and Ste Croix of the 200th anniversary of the musical box. You will find this and many other activities are chronicled in

the book.

Highly accessible, as you might expect, this book is richly illustrated, with old photographs and images mingling with the modern. Many of the illustrations are magical in the atmosphere they evoke, recalling a bygone time, or the wonder one experiences on encountering an astonishing automaton, or maybe a stunning musical box.

Those in UK wishing to buy a copy may do so at the special price of £45 through Kevin McElhone, with the added benefit of free delivery to a Society meeting (alternatively, normal p&xp apply),

kevin_mcelhone@hotmail.com (note the underscore between the two names.)



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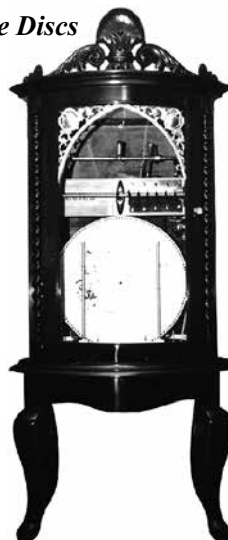
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London and Home Counties Group Meeting

We usually try to meet north of the Thames in the Spring and South in the Autumn so chose to return to St.Albans Organ Theatre on Saturday 6th April. The meeting was also open to SAMMS (St.Albans Museums supporters) and non-members as well to help spread the hire cost.

A total of 30 people enjoyed the meeting which started at 10.30 for welcome drinks. We played a selection of instruments belonging to members in the morning and after lunch listened to the large collection of instruments in the museum collection. Lunch of sandwiches and cakes was provided by the museum as well as tea/coffee on arrival and in the afternoon.

The items brought along by members were played in order of increasing volume, starting with two musical snuff boxes and a singing bird which were played and demonstrated around the room. A Ducommun-Girod 4-air Overture musical box with approximately 130 teeth was the only cylinder musical box. There was a very nice Kalliope 13 inch disc musical box which sounded truly resonant when the microphone was held on the casework. We had a bit of an organette 'fest' and listened to a Clariona 14-note, Draper's 14-note Orchestral with 2 sets of reeds, an Aurephone 17-note, and Empire double-tune disc player (see article in *The Music Box*, Vol 29 No 2 about this one), and a 25-note Cabinetto playing a 13 inch wide paper roll. There was a diversion to see a rare Peter Pan Gramophone in a small leather case, made for only one year in 1926 and very compact indeed when packed away. We ended the members' instruments with a MIDI played street organ of 56 notes and 80 pipes made by Terry Pankhurst, currently acting chairman of B.O.G.A., and winner of second prize at a model engineering exhibition.

We then moved on to the museum's collection of small



The Rutt organ



A corner of the museum

instruments including a Nicole Frères 8-air box from 1870, a Britannia 12 inch, Polyphon 9½ and Polyphon 15 in a very modern case (c.1960) with duplex combs.

After an hour's break for lunch we heard the rest of the museum collection including the Steinway Duo-Art



Lots on show



Andrew Smith demonstrates organettes



Rutt organ changing colour

Piano, Welte Red Keyboardless Piano, Mills Violano, and four enormous dance organs, one of which, at 121 keys, even has a second counter-melody rank.

We are very grateful to Richard Cole who kindly agreed to play the two cinema organs made by Spurdon Rutt and Wurlitzer, and to our members David Dingwall and Andrew Smith who are also volunteers at

the museum, who demonstrated the collection to us. As Andrew only lives a mile from the museum he issued an open invitation for anyone with time to visit his collection a mile away once we finished at 16.00.

The next meeting will be at the home of Richard Cole and Owen Cooper Saturday 14th September, please book with Kevin McElhone if you would like to attend.

Teme Valley Winders

Summer meeting – June 2019

The wet weather unexpectedly gave way to a relatively dry and sometime sunny day to attract 27 attendees to the meeting. John welcomed everyone including first-timers Steve and Darla Thomas (authors in the clock world) and Sarah Shanahan, a jeweller who is keen to introduce automata into some of her commissions. John invited Dennis Evett to start things off. Dennis had brought along a 15 ½” table-top Polyphon with an ornately carved case which, it seems, is quite rare. The case includes a drawer for spare discs. It is quite an early model and plays very delicately. It was compared with the sounds of two later Polyphons which gave a more robust sound.

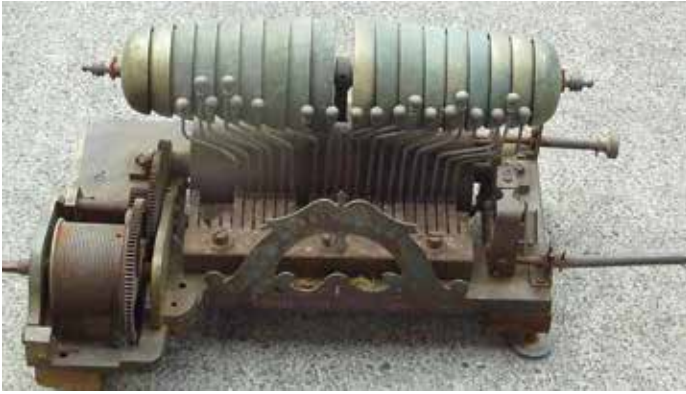
Recently joined member Deimantas, who is learning how to restore musical boxes, showed two examples which he has begun to restore. First was a small cylinder box with 3 bells in a plain black case. The bells had been disabled by breaking off the comb teeth and removing the links and hammers to the bells. Deimantas has cleaned the mechanism, and replaced the missing teeth, links and hammers. The box now plays reasonably well but needs a little tuning and damper work and Deimantas intends to also restore the case. The second box has a longer cylinder (no bells) and the lid of the case has an ornate moulding around the top. It was partly dismantled when bought, but Deimantas has spent a week cleaning it as well as

soldering no fewer than 26 new tips, and making 3 new control levers. It now plays well with only minor additional work required.

David Henthorn took us into the realm of gramophones with a “Peter Pan” portable gramophone which, at first, looks like a box Brownie camera. When opened up, and the various components put in place, it plays 8” discs quite well, as demonstrated by David. A discussion about these and similar models from the era ensued. On a similar vein, Doug Pell showed a Chad Valley child’s portable record player, possibly from the



The ornate Polyphon lid



Set of bells and a musical movement, thought to be for a clock

1960s. This plays EPs and has the stylus fitted to an automatic arm in the lid. The user places the disc on the turntable and closes the lid whereupon the disc plays. We heard "Teddy Bear's Picnic". It is powered by two "D" cell batteries. Doug then showed a mechanical toy – a Skyway roller coaster (a reproduction of the original German toy). Still on toys, John Phillips showed a Crossley (made in China) electric disc musical box which plays small discs (about 4"). The discs are like miniature versions of Polyphon discs with similar projections. The musical box was a purchase at the recent Society auction at a bargain price.

The Weber Duo-Art was then exercised with a roll brought along by Jack Lowther. Jack bought the roll some years ago, when he intended to buy a piano, but had an Orchestrelle instead, so he had never heard the roll play. It was *Memories of You*, composed and



'Peter Pan' portable gramophone

played by Eubie Blake. He was followed by Gary Burns who showed a (very rusty) mechanism which he originally bought for its bells, which he thought might be useful for restoring musical clocks. However, on closer inspection he realised this was a rather unusual musical box mechanism, possibly from a large clock. Whilst it has a pinned cylinder and comb, the comb teeth actually operate hammers for the 18 tuned bells. There is no spring drum, but instead a grooved barrel, suggesting it was designed to be weight driver. On the front is an (incomplete) tune indicator inscribed "Londres. Nicole Frères. Geneve", although this may be a later addition. It seems there may be a similar item in the Utrecht museum, but it is obviously a rare item. Gary was encouraged to consider restoring it. He would also like to hear from anyone who can throw more light onto the origins of this mechanism, or knows of other similar items.

Roy Evett was next up to demonstrate a 4 tune Hoffman Karrer musical box. When bought it "hosted a lot of wildlife", which had nearly eaten all but the base and lid of the box. Roy set about replacing these well chewed panels, refitted the base and top and installed the mechanism to produce a very presentable musical box which plays well. Geoff Dalby had brought along a small box he had bought which housed a snuff box movement with groups of 5 teeth. The movement plays quite well although a little attention would not come amiss. The box was not original and has no facility for operating the movement. Seeking advice, Geoff was encouraged to make a suitable box and get the movement restored. John Phillips showed a couple of similar movements in original cases to provide some ideas. A Snuff Box with groups of 3 was demonstrated by Alan Godier. The Tortoise shell box has a picture of mountains on the front and is of Swiss origin.

John Harrold played a music roll on John Phillips' Pell 31 street organ, but it was misbehaving a little for the first few minutes. John P demonstrated a little magic with a bottle which has a hole drilled through each side and a wooden "arrow" which passes through the holes, yet appears to be too big to go through. The arrow also carries a wooden ring inside the bottle, so the trick is how to get it all to work. The bottle was stood on a musical stand (from an M&S Christmas novelty). John will be pleased to explain its construction and the method of operation to anyone who is interested. Kevin McElhone demonstrated some tunes on the Gem Roller organ belonging to John P., and also played a music roll on John's Aeolian Pianola "push-up".

John Moorhouse presented an illustrated update on his



Early Polyphon in rare carved case

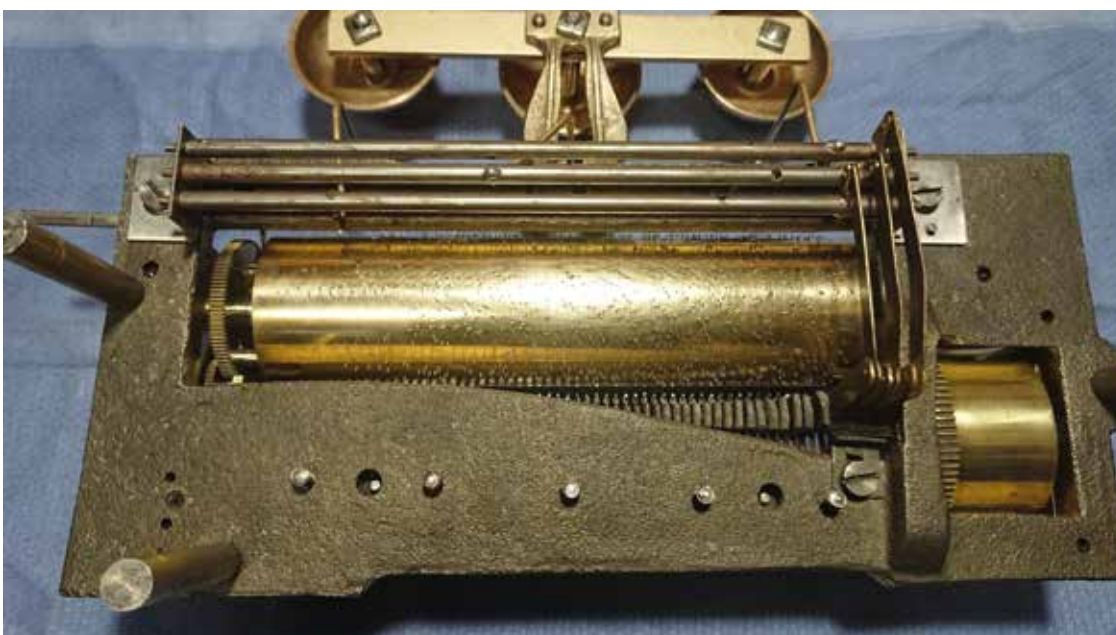


Crossley electric musical box, bought at the Society auction

guitar-shaped watch case originally shown at the Christmas 2017 TVW meeting, reported on in the Spring 2018 journal. John explained that since the case was made and enamelled he has designed and installed a mechanism which presents two feathered birds when the lid is opened. He explained the mechanisms behind the birds' operation. Whilst they are not musical John has been able to design a simple "tweeting" device based on the simple mechanical bird callers which consist of a piece of Birch wood with a metal rod through the middle which, when turned, creates a "tweeting" noise. We were unable to see the real item

because it was on display at the School of Jewellery. The meeting ended with Doug Pell's videos of the Midlands October meeting (at Doug's home) and the Spring meeting based at Salomons.

Hilda and helpers provided refreshments and cakes during the lunch break, and mid-afternoon. It was a very good day as usual. The next meeting of the Winders will be the Christmas meeting on Saturday 7th December 2019, starting at 11:00 a.m. as usual – bring your own packed lunch. Please let John Phillips know on 01584 781118 nearer the day if you wish to attend.



Deimantas' restoration project

There will be music! MBSGB AUTUMN MEETING

27 - 29th September, 2019

Yorkshire is renowned for its beautiful natural scenery. Not for nothing is it referred to as 'God's own country.' But that's not all: it also boasts a concentration of historic towns and sites, and in particular many related to the wool trade, on which medieval England's economy was based, and then the Industrial Revolution. If you are planning to come to the MBSGB Autumn meeting, you could do worse than extend your stay and explore some of the surrounding attractions.

We will be based at the 4-star Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford, BD5 8HW, which is conveniently located for easy motorway access. Should you wish to stop additional nights, you can enjoy the favourable bed and breakfast group rate if you mention that you will already be there for the meeting.

The programme for the weekend includes a visit to the Bankfield Museum in Halifax. This is one museum which has a musical box it is happy for the public to hear, and the intention is to augment the collection of discs for its 25 ½ coin in the slot Polyphon during our visit. We should also have the opportunity to meet the gentleman museum volunteer who got the machine going. Whilst at the Bankfield, take the time to learn more about the area's fascinating history and

see the exhibition on World War II. Ahead of the curve, the MBSGB had already settled on Halifax/Bradford as the venue for this meeting before the stunning success of the recent BBC drama series, *Gentleman Jack*. Ladies in particular may be interested to view the costumes for this on view at the Bankfield, while there is the opportunity to visit the real Shibden Hall, the drama's main location, if you extend your stay beyond the weekend. (There is a musical clock there, but not working.) If the Bankfield doesn't 'float your boat', then the Calderdale Industrial Museum is also worth a visit. (You would be surprised at how many different things were made in Halifax!)

Vintage steam trains are always popular, and we have arranged a Society trip on the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway. Approximately 25 minutes journey from one end to the other, there are opportunities to alight along the way and look at special rail exhibits. We also intend to have some organs playing at one or more of the stations. Saturday evening we shall have our traditional Society dinner, followed by an entertaining film about organettes.

Sunday we shall be in the hotel for a morning of presentations, to include one about an unusual musical box.

As usual, members are encouraged to

bring along items for 'show and tell.' Finally, we round off the meeting with a snack lunch.

If you are extending your stay, you may find a visit to the Temple Newsham Museum of interest, to see the George Pyke clock (see *The Music Box* Vol 27 No 8, Winter 2016, p 326-7) or the attractively restored Piece Hall, Halifax (where cloth was traded), and/or an exploration of the beautiful Brönte country.

Hurry and book if you haven't yet done so! **Cost £155/£165** (sharing/single) for the weekend, to include two nights' dinner, bed & breakfast, Sunday snack lunch and KWVR train ride.

Contact Keith Reedman, k@reedman.org.uk, with your requirements (room type, any special requirements, and your own contact details) and remit full amount to Musical Box Society of Great Britain, sort code 60-17-21, a/c no. 99256940; ref. your surname + 'meet.' Or send cheque, made out to 'MBSGB' to Keith Reedman, 107 Curzon Street, Long Eaton, Derbyshire, NG10 4FH. **Cut off dates: 15th August (cheque payments), 20th August (others.)**

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2019

14 Sept 2019	MBSGB London and Home Counties Group. Meeting at the home of Richard Cole and Owen Cooper. Collection includes an Aeolian pipe organ and Wurlitzer cinema organ. Please book early. Lunch available at £8 or bring your own, but please inform Kevin of your choice. Small instruments welcome for demonstration. Contact Kevin McElhone, 01536 726759, kevin_mcelhone@btinternet.com
27 – 29 Sept 2019	MBSGB Autumn Meeting. Cedar Court Hotel, Leeds / Bradford, Rooley Lane, Bradford, BD5 8HW. This is a four star hotel conveniently located just off the M62 and only 1 ½ miles from Bradford station. A full weekend is being arranged to include mechanical music and local visits of general interest. Full details elsewhere. This will be a great value weekend.
6 Oct 2019	The Grange Musical Collection. Annual celebration of Bob Finbow of the Cotton Museum. The Grange, Palgrave, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 1AZ.
12 -13 Oct 2019	Milton Keynes Organ Festival at the Milton Keynes Museum, McConnel Drive, Wolverton, MK12 5EL. Please contact Ernie, 01908 379748 or Calvin, 07812 482097.
19 Oct 2019	MBSGB Midlands Group. Meeting at the home of new member Terry Bennett, Derby. Terry has an interesting collection of musical instruments, including a residence pipe organ. Please contact Terry on 01332 670999. tb@chamades.co.uk
7 Dec 2019	MBSGB Teme Valley Winders. Eastham, Tenbury Wells, Worcs. 11.00am start. Please contact John Phillips, 01584 781118.

Waldkirch Organ Festival 2020

The 13th International Waldkirch Organ Festival is just around the corner. We would be delighted if you indicated in your journal that special celebration in your event calendar:



13th International Waldkirch Organ Festival 2020

From the 19th to the 21st of June 2020 many small and big organs will be played and admired throughout Waldkirch. An accompanying and supporting program with concerts, cabaret, minstrels, lectures and street art is prepared by the organ festival committee.

For interested or active organ players there is the possibility under the email orgelfest@stadt-waldkirch.de to register to be admitted to the selection process for active participation.

Les Gets International Organ Festival, 2020

By the time you read this, it will be too late for you to enjoy the annual organ event in Les Gets, but not too soon to mark up your diary for next year's bigger, biennial International event. The date is 19th July, 2020, and will mark the 40th Summer event since the creation of the Association de la Musique Mecanique Les Gets, and the 30th consecutive 3rd Sunday in July they have held something. Further information from the AMMG, and/or the tourist office in Les Gets.



Image from www.musicmecalessgets.org

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News from Other Societies

Periodicals published in English:

AMICA Bulletin Vol 56, No6 November/December, 2018

(see also www.amica.org)

I can certainly identify with remarks President Joel C Cluskey makes in his column in this edition: 'It's amazing how specific articles that you overlook the first time around are "just what you are looking for" the second time around.' This doesn't apply in this case, but this edition leads with a lengthy item on 'Wurlitzer Automatic Player Piano ("APP") Music.' Matt Jaro's regular feature 'Nickel Notes' is entitled 'Plugging the Songs' explaining how songs were promoted before the time of radio and phonographs into the 1920s. It would appear there was no advertising of songs before 1900. Between 1900 and 1910 music tended to be alluded to in advertisements for instruments, and then from 1911 until 1915 the outlets for promotion were sheet music dealers, including piano dealers; phonograph records; player piano rolls; motion picture theatres; coin-operated pianos, and live theatre and Vaudeville. Perhaps on a more recondite topic, the next article is about Lithuanian Piano Rolls: Collection and Research. As author Darius Kučinskas explains, 'Issued mainly in the US in the first part of the twentieth century, ethnic piano rolls encapsulate the musical life of various US ethnic communities and are now a valuable source for the research of US music history.' (A theme we hear elsewhere from time to time.) We are treated to a preview of the 2019 AMICA convention, which by the time you read this will have taken place in Seattle. For the technophiles John Chaplain describes 'A Homemade Laser Burner for Player Piano Rolls.' With tributes to no fewer than five deceased members it is good to be introduced to one from the 'younger generation,' Andrew Lardieri who says, 'I love mechanical music because it is a special type of music that was popular before modern electronic musical devices.' (Too true.) Finally, there are reports from the Boston, Heart of America, Northern Lights, Southern California, Sowny and Texas Chapters.



64 packed pages! After the Editor's note, this edition opens with a 'revision' of one of the handouts from the March 2018 technical workshop, on 'Setting up Player Components.' This is complemented a few pages later by 'Some Materials and Technical Updates, October 2018.' A chunk of this edition is given over to reporting on the Association's Annual General Meeting, and the following social gathering. An intriguing, if brief article, deals with 'The Neo-Bechstein Electric Grand Piano' which author Barry Ottenberd tells us was a failure, while Terry Broadbent shares with us some 'Player-Piano Notes from "The Musical Times".' Carl Reinecke is the 80th subject in a series on famous musicians. A notable pianist, teacher and composer, his main claim to fame is that he was earliest born person to have recorded piano rolls. Regard as German, he was actually born Danish. He studied in Leipzig under Schumann, Mendelssohn and Liszt, then travelled all over Europe giving piano recitals, before receiving a succession of appointments. This biography is quite lengthy, and continues to chronicle his activities until his death at age 85 in 1910. Brett Drayborne then writes about the Komet Giant Musical Box, recalling in his article that of former/late member of MBSGB, Geoff Worrall, who had acquired his from Keith Harding. Susan Clews writes about player pianos they came across on their European travels, while Rodney B Barrett describes 'Early Attempts to Play a Keyboard Instrument Automatically.' The next item invites controversy with its title 'Beethoven didn't Write Classical Music', and then proceeds to render an entertaining 'opinion' on the genre of Beethoven's music in the composer's own lifetime, as well as fill us in on some of the more eccentric aspects of Beethoven's lifestyle. Now for something completely different: Music Typewriters – machines (akin to regular typewriters) designed for writing musical scripts. The contents of this edition conclude with an item on Steinway Pianos and Player Pianos, followed by one on Steinway Pianos with Ampico actions, and a report of the Association's meeting held at Pipes in the Peaks, Derbyshire on 8th September, 2018.

North West Player Piano Association Christmas 2018

(see also www.pianola.org.uk)



Organ Grinders News No 104 – Spring 2018

(see also www.BOGA.co.uk)

Somewhat belatedly ... as is common with the BOGA newsletters, this contains 'news' in form of events attended and notifications of deaths. Additional material consists of an account by Geoff and Joan Todd from Banbury of how they got started with organ grinding (to be continued.) It all started with an organ event in a very small town in France – which doesn't surprise me as there are several of both; what does surprise me is how much more vibrant the French organ scene is. Other notable occasions covered in this newsletter are The Lord Mayor of London's New Year's Day Parade (John Webb) and attendance at 'Conkers' (Margaret Dilks.)



Organ Grinders News No 105 – Summer 2018

(see also www.BOGA.co.uk)

This issue is entirely dedicated to a full report of the 20-18 BOGA AGM, including full Officer reports, and an 'introduction' to two new Officers.



Organ Grinders News No 106 – Autumn 2018

(see also www.BOGA.co.uk)

Three 'In memoriam' are balanced by an introduction to new members, Bernard and Madeleine Weatherley. Madeleine most likely has organs in her blood, having been born to an English mother and Belgian father at the end of WWII, and being sent initially back to Belgium, where she spent some of her early years, exposed to organs in cafes, etc. Other items include reports on a gathering at Hollycombe Steam Collection, one at the time of the AGM, one in Llandrindod Wells and more history of BOGA from the Todds.



Organ Grinders News No 107 – Winter 2018

(see also www.BOGA.co.uk)

This carries information about the new website, now handed back by Melvyn Wright to control by BOGA. There



is a second instalment of the Todds' organ grinding experiences. They bought their organ originally to participate in events in France, but their first overseas events were in Holland. Not many Brits do this sort of thing! John Webb writes about the September Banbury Organ Festival, and Andy Hinds reports on the annual Oktoberfest in Woking, and news that Sydney Harbour (an organ grinder, not the place) is recognised by the RNIB for his many years of work in support of the organisation.

Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Vol XXXVII, No 3 2018

(see also www.reedsoc.org)



Allen Myers tells of how he visited the Isle au Haut, off the coast of Maine, to fix the Church's reed organ problem, and took the opportunity to visit 13 out of 14 of its other reed organs! As he says, 'an island provides a microcosm of the reed organ world.' Current residents also have many memories from the past. The next item is about the Packard Chapel Organ, about which author Richard Epler opines "[h]d never heard a one-manual parlor organ with such a large, expressive and beautiful sound!" Family histories seem to be an overriding theme in this edition, with one article, 'Life of the Doeling Girl's Wing & Son Reed Organ' focusing far more on the Doeling family and its off-shoots than said organ. The regular centre page manuscript is dedicated to *Prière* composed by Charles Magin. This is followed by a helpful item, 'Playing the Reed Organ' in which author Bruce Alan Wilson gives some pointers as to what to look out for in choice of music. Articles in this publication tend to be on the brief side, hence there being no fewer than three more. The first is about The George P. Bent Company (Manufacturers of Crown Pianos and Organs); the next is 'Laura Ingalls Wilder and the Reed Organ Connection' (do I detect yet more 'family history?'), and the last is 'A Pilgrimage to Nancy, France.' (Laura Ingalls, it turns out, is the author of several *Little House ... children's books.*)

Reed Organ Society Quarterly, Vol XXXVII, No 4 2018

(see also www.reedsoc.org)



An unusually long (for this publication) article occupies almost the entire contents of this edition. It is 'Buffalo, New York, Reed Organ Manufacturing', by Milton Bacheller, and can be regarded as a

companion to his recently published book *Worcester, Massachusetts Organ Manufacturers*. The other item of any size is about Estey Organs which can be heard on a CD (which is reviewed), which itself accompanied Dennis Waring's book, *Manufacturing the Muse: Estey Organs and Consumer Culture in Victorian America* (2002.)

Vox Humana December 2018

(see also www.moos.org.uk)



This edition contains a report from the 2018 MOOS AGM, a copy of the item about the St Albans Museum by David Dingwall, which was also published in *The Music Box* at the time, and reviews of the two McElhone books which were published in 2018. Part three of Paul Bellamy's 'All Organs Bright and Beautiful All Organs Great and Small' follows; most of the images are (unusually for *Vox Humana*) in colour, and there is almost as much text in the title as in the article. We then have a feature entitled 'Self-build organ selection', which would appear to be yet more colour images taken at various organ rallies. *Wagga Wagga* is not somewhere most of us are familiar with, but apparently it was the venue for the Australian Mechanical Organ Society's annual rally in October 2018. Foreign trips are topical in this edition, and Rosemary Hood writes about her travels in USA, visiting, amongst others, the collections of Bill & Rosanna Harris, and Tom Kuehn. (The Hoods very kindly took the Kuehn's to see the Grange Musical Collection during their recent trip to UK.) This edition also contains some random snippets from the MOOS annual trip to the continent.

I should also say at this juncture that Mark Jefford regularly churns out a very informative MOOS newsletter crammed with information and details of events and places to see, which would be impossible to review.

NON-ENGLISH PERIODICALS

Das Mechanische Musikinstrument, No 132, August 2018

(see also www.musica-mechanica.de)

As ever a weighty tome, this one being no fewer than 94 pages long! The first article in this edition relates to new research in Welte research, and is a reprint from *Ars Organi* no 4 2017.) The next is about the Triola – 'a half-self-playing mandolin zither', by Helga Behr, an experienced



collector and Triola player. This is followed by an item intriguingly called 'Top Hits of the eighteen-hundreds chime-playing clocks.' Naturally, this being the publication it is, every opportunity is taken to branch off into tangential details. There are then four pages dedicated to the Industrial town of Leipzig, which as we all know, was big in making musical instruments. Next we have six pages about Hupfeld's Phonola. Google informs me that the next mystifying (but impressive-looking) article is about 'Interpretation of music data carriers.' It all looks very scientific, and appears to use lots of computer graphics. The only images not of 'data' are two of the art cabinet in Rosenborg Castle, which appears to conceal not one but three instruments. Six pages about the relationship between Ludwig Hupfeld and architect Emil Franz Hänsel follow, with another two (again accompanied by scientific graphics) still on the topic of Hupfeld, giving an account of its export revenues. Ralf Smolne then shares with us, under a general heading of 'Professional restoration,' an article entitled 'Failed repairs of a mechanical musical instrument.' Creepily, although I don't understand German, it looks horribly apposite to a couple of (other people's) projects about which I have recently learned. Still on the depressing theme of failure, the next article, by Uwe Gernert, recounts the failed attempt to rescue a tanzbar. (You may remember we recently published an article on Tanzbars by Uwe in *The Music Box*.) Daniel Becki writes in the series on 'exceptional instruments' about the Polyphon 105P in his collection. Hans Kunz writes about the modification of a Philpps instrument. I have been to Lindau three times – but the next article is the first I have been aware of the mechanical musical instrument collection in the town's museum. Another collection is the topic of the next item, this time in Westerlo, Belgium. The contents conclude with a review of a special exhibition in Swiss museums, news of other museums, both in Germany and Switzerland, and notification of a new publication about Leipzig's being the centre of mechanical musical instrument manufacture from 1880 to 1930.

Das Mechanische Musikinstrument, No 133, December 2018

(see also www.musica-mechanica.de)

President Ralf Smolne has some news for us: Although by the time you receive this edition of *The Music Box*



this German journal will be eight or nine months old, it is still in time for you to learn that the annual collectors' meeting that takes place in Rudesheim will coincide with the 50th anniversary of Siegfried's Mechanical Music Cabinet. Also, the German Society is planning a trip to Russia in September 2019. The first article in this edition is about organs in the Swedish newspapers of the 1840s. Even by the normal, high standards of this magazine, it is exceptionally detailed, and it would seem, judging from the accompanying images, that in Sweden organs were just as much of a public nuisance as elsewhere at the time. I regret my German is not up to examining the text in detail. Ralf Smolne then deals with the tricky topic of sorting out a broken musical box spring, in the regular series on restoration. Next we meet the new addition to the German Society's editorial team, Paul Bellamy. Amongst his credentials is his apparent membership of MBSI's Publications Committee – not a lot of MBSI members know this. Passing over the tribute to the late Hendrik Strengers we come to an item about the Junghans Terrace Building Museum in Schramberg – one in a series on museums, with exhibits of clocks and mechanical instruments, and a clock workshop. There is a report on the GSM's annual general meeting, and the visit which took place afterwards in Espelkamp. This is followed by a report on a seminar on self-playing pianos held at the workshop/collection of Thomas Richter. Waldkirch is no stranger to organ gatherings, and although not one of the three-yearly international events, there is nonetheless a report on a five-day event featuring fair organs. We then have a humorously titled report on yet another organ gathering, this time in Switzerland. ('A Belgian dance organ, a Dutch street organ and a German fair organ – where is it? Switzerland.') Lichtensteig, to be precise (I can never think of it without remembering Fredy Kunzle), and an exhibition in the MUSE-O in Stuttgart-Gablenberg. Finally, there is notification of a mechanical musical instrument exhibition to take place in Wolfach Castle from December 2018 until February 2019, organised by Raphael Luthi and Bernd Fritsch.

Het Pierement No 1 January 2018

(see also www.draaiorgel.org)

The KVD (roughly translated as



'Circle of Friends of Handturned Organs) produces four thick magazine per year, all in Dutch, and always full of news and articles about organs. As Dutch is not a common language, and at times a challenge to readily understand, the magazines do not get priority for reviewing. Apologies for the delay in the following:

This edition opens with a report on the KDV's visit to their neighbours, MechaMusica, in Belgium, in late 2017. This commemorated the 10th Anniversary of KDV and MechaMusica's relationship with each other, and an account of some of the occasions they have shared in the intervening years. This is followed by the 4th instalment of a series entitled 'Voor ik het vergeet' ('Before I forget ...') by Joop Walter. Four pages of text and old photographs of caravans, a bear, a man with a monkey on his shoulder, horse drawn carts, people dancing on wet streets, and even Queen Juliana vividly bring to life more of Joop's memories from decades ago. Jan Kees de Ruijter writes about the 89 key 'Leeuw' ('Lion') organ, while Wim Snoerwang recalls memories from Bremen and Hamburg. Henk Hiddinga informs us of the 25 year anniversary of the Museum Musica in Stadskaal, with its fine collection of organs, and from Maarten van der Vlugt we learn about the restoration of a 67 note Bursens orchestrion. Maarten also gives us instalment 7 of the Symphonia Archive. If you are Dutch, of a certain age, the name Pierre Eich will be familiar to you, as there are many examples of his work. There is a feature about Paul Misraki, French composer of a well-loved tune amongst the Dutch older generation, titled *Maria van Bahia*. His 'colourful' (?) life story is a testament to the exciting and turbulent times of the 20th century. He was born in Constantinople in January 1908, to a Jewish French family of Italian extraction. After an early childhood in Bucharest, he lived in Paris. He seems to have been precocious, writing his first composition at six. After studying music, he joined a band in Paris, which enjoyed much success, and fortuitously appears to have spent the war years first in South America and then in Hollywood, where he wrote film music. On his return to France in 1946 he discovered his mother and Aunt had been sent to Auschwitz, and all his belongings stolen, except for his Pleyel piano saved by a friend. He worked with famous names such as Orson Welles,

Jean-Luc Godard and Edith Piaf. In the '50s he composed music for about half a dozen films a year, and 145 in all, including Roger Vadim's 1956 'And God Created Woman ...', starring Brigitte Bardot, as well as for many 'nouvelle vague' films. In the '60s his output declined, but he still worked with many of the luminaries of French cinema. Before his death in 1998, he worked a lot in French television, and in 1993 much of Sacha Distel's programme at the Olympia consisted of Misraki compositions. He had converted to Catholicism in 1933. He had a number of interests besides music, and even wrote a book published in 1965, *Flying Saucers Through the Ages*, under the pen name of Paul Thomas. (You couldn't make it up, could you!) He had a number of notable awards conferred on him, including the 'Legion d'Honneur' in 1990. Tom Meijer adds a footnote to this biography from Henk Hiddinga about Misraki's works found on street, dance and fair organs. The contents of this edition conclude with reports of varying lengths on organ events in Tilburg, Leeuwarden, Amsterdam and Lichtensteig (Switzerland), and the inevitable 'In Memoriam.'

Het Pierement No 2, April 2018

(see also www.draaiorgel.org)

My eye was caught by the front and back covers of this edition – something familiar about the photographs of the two organs gracing them. Normally a little lazy on finding out about the magazine covers, this time I had to check out my suspicions – indeed I had seen both, as they are now in the Stahl Collection in Michigan, USA. One is a 125 note Verbeeck-Gaudin which found its way to its current home via the Milhous collection, and the other 97 note Mortier. Not surprisingly they herald a four-page illustrated description of the Stahl Collection from Stefan Batist. Elsewhere in this edition, Joop Walter continues his reminiscing before he forgets, the black-and-white photograph of Queen Juliana in the previous edition now replaced by a colour one of Queen Beatrix. More childhood memories, this time from Jaap Tuyn, of *De Twee Engelen* (The Two Angels), in Haarlem, and Part 8 of the Symphonia Archive. Maarten van der Vlugt explains that a number of De Cap dance organs, from De Cap Antwerp and De Cap Herentals, escaped being exported overseas to such



places as England and USA in the 1960s, as they were still being successfully exploited at home. Bohemian born composer Karl Hoschna is less well-known than his music, especially *Komm' in meine Liebslaube*, which author Henk Hiddinga tells us is beautifully arranged for German fair organs. Moving to USA, Hoschna became a quick composer, in one year penning no fewer than five musicals! *Komm' in Meine Liebslaube* was popular light music in Berlin around 1910. Versions of it with English lyrics have been recorded by Doris Day, Judy Garland and Peggy Cummins. In an unusual departure from organs, player pianos are the subject of a plea to save Amsterdam's Pianola Museum, threatened with closure as the local government want to sell the premises on the open market. The reader is invited to sign a petition demanding that the museum stay. Other contents of this edition include photographs of the Hinzen family's organ collection, a preview of the AMICA convention in the Black Hills, South Dakota, USA, taking in a visit of Bill and Rosanna Harris's collection, and a couple of 'In Memoriam.'

Het Pierement No 3, July 2018

(see also www.draaiorgel.org)

This edition opens with an article about the Carl Frei organ *De Gouwe*, now in the SKO (*Stichting 'Het Kunkels Orgel'* Haarlem), and another about its restoration, facilitated by funding from the *Stichting Nationaal Fonds Draaiorgelbehoud* (National Organ Restoration Fund Foundation.) Continuing on a theme, the next item is about the raising of the *Stichting Nationaal Fonds Draaiorgelbehoud*. The foundation was started in 1964 by Romke de Waard, and on his death in 2003 entered a new phase. Yet another item about *de Gouwe* follows chronicling its history and resurrection. (It suffered a collision in 1957, amongst other things.) Willem Parel is the subject of an interesting (for non-Dutch readers) feature about this promoter of the organ culture. That someone was so famous and popular in this field, and there was even a film made about him demonstrates how embedded organs are in the Dutch psyche, something we non-Dutch can be admire and be envious of. There is a brief report on the restoration of Mortier orchestration, serial 88, which had



suffered from water damage and no longer played, but which can now be seen and heard on YouTube (see 'mortier orchestrion 88'), and the 9th instalment of Maarten van der Vlugt's Symphonia Archive. Danish composer Jacob Thune Hansen Gade is the subject of the regular feature by Henk Hiddinga, best known for his composition *Jalousi'* ('Jealousy') or *Jalousie Tango*. The contents of this edition conclude as usual with short news items, and the regrettable notifications of deaths.

Het Pierement No 4, October 2018

(see also www.draaiorgel.org)

This edition opens with a lavishly illustrated item by Tom Meijer about the Helmond organ collection, which will be known to those of our members who regularly go on the MOOS trips to the continent. Joop Walter continues his reminiscences 'Before [he] forget [s]', with a 7th instalment featuring this time Cuba, Holland and the Hoorn fair. Looking at the myriad black and white images, one feels a tremendous sense of nostalgia. Another regular, the Symphonia Archive, follows (this is the 10th in the series), which appears to feature the arrangers Alphonse Bursens and Bernard de Backer. The subject of the regular composer item, by Henk Hiddinga, is Swede Emanuel Jonasson, best known (at least by organ lovers) for his work *The Cukoo Waltz*. Unsurprisingly, with an early military background, he also composed a number of marches. There is no difficulty in understanding the next item – it is obligingly repeated in English! At The KDV's 2018 AGM in Helmond it was announced that work on the long-awaited book about orchestrions and dance organs built by the Theofil Mortier firm had begun, with the intention of releasing it on the occasion of the KDV's 65th anniversary at the 2019 gathering in Arnhem. It is anticipated that it will be a comprehensive reference book of 300-400 pages, with text in both Dutch and English. There is also an English touch to the next item - our own David Dingwall's account of the celebrations held at the St Albans Museum, previously reported in *The Music Box*. A number of brief news items complete the contents of this edition.



L'Antico Organetto December 2018

(see also www.ammi-mm.it)



Taken from the English-language Editorial (though edited here): 'News on mechanical music is not lacking, especially as regards the new acquisition of the Franco Severi Foundation ... Steinway-Welte Grand Piano: This article presents an important purchase of the Franco Severi Foundation, a grand piano of the famous Steinway & Sons factory, equipped with the best reproduction system of piano performances of the time, the Welte-Mignon system. This device can be dated to the year 1927, and is perfectly restored and functioning. The Musicalia Museum plans to transfer this Steinway-Welte piano to the 'Bruno Maderna' Music Conservatory in Cesena, also providing reference rollers for listening. Fortune and troubles of Italian emigrant organ players. This interesting writing by Henri Noubel, taken from 'illustrated anthology of the organ of the Barbary organ, 1742-1946,' describes the street organ player in its most diverse aspects, as was painted by articles published in French newspapers and magazines of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Edison Diamond Disc Gramophone: This article deals with the reading of the record made by the Edison Record Industry in the period between 1912 and 1929, which Thomas Edison commercialised to enter the increasingly florid gramophone market with 78 rpm records. It was a very particular device, and here it is described with some photos of the table version present at the Musicalia Museum and owned by the Franco Severi Foundation. Our Italian Stay in Cesena, in Emilia Romagna: Mr Jean-Marc Lebout describes, in this interesting and pleasant article, the visit to the Musicalia Museum of a group of French people, fond of mechanical music. This visit was also an opportunity to listen to the Steinway-Welte piano live with music by Leoncavallo, recorded at the time by the composer himself, and then with the current interpretation of the same piece performed by the pianist Pia Zanca. In Memory Of Guido Ceronetti and In Memory of Tiziana: Unfortunately in the latter part of the year, these two very dear people left us, Guido and Tiziana and whom we want to remember with two short articles in this magazine.'

Classified Advertisements

FOR SALE

For sale: The John Hensell collection, Hampshire, now 35 instruments including Player Reed Organ, Player Piano, Pianola Pushup, Chamber Barrel P.O., Church Barrel Organ, Fairground Organ, Organettes, Barrel pianos; Cylinder and Disc Musical Boxes, selection of manivelles and books. List & photos by e-mail.

Ampico upright Player Piano [Cambridgeshire]; Aeolian model "F" Orchestrelle 8 feet tall, 116 note, fully rebuilt new bellows, pouches and valves etc; Another five smaller Orchestrelles; Set of wad-punches for punching out leather & felt, I will not need these any more; Small Cylinder box 6 Hymns all in German, unusual; Polyphon 11" curved Serpentine case; Symphonion 13 1/4" edge drive nice clean working well; Thorens 4 1/4" disc musical box, also new (old-stock) movement; Other larger upright Disc Boxes; 1,000 Musical box Discs, reduced prices to clear before retirement. Cabinetto paper roll 25-note ex-Keith Harding Museum working well; Concert Roller Organ, fully restored; Card discs for Bascanion Musical Box; also Piano and Aeolian rolls including newly made Boogie and upbeat Dance titles [sample sound files available]; Hundreds of new & original tunes for Organette, new piano roll boxes, Disc storage bags, Clearing last pre-punched 20-note music for card-strip playing musical boxes and blank card for the 15-note size. Wooden disc storage boxes to clear space. Pianola rolls *THREE THOUSAND* available, all listed and priced separately, but also available much cheaper by the 100 – 58, 65, 73, 88 note & others. Roll of thick pneumatic cloth, reduced price to clear; Nickelodeon "O" rolls, all recuts in good condition. About 100 other instruments all around the UK, **please ask for 200 page list & photos** available by e-mail only.

Kevin McElhone 01536 - 726759 kevin_mcelhone@hotmail.com (note the underscore _ between my 2 names)

For Sale: 24 1/2" Komet Disc Music Box, Model 200. This rare model of Disc Music Box is nicely restored and has a good tone. It has an integral disc bin (similar to the Mikado Polyphon) and is supplied with a collection of Discs.

8 Air, Mandolin Expressive Cylinder Music Box by PVF. The 13" Cylinder, Double Spring Motor and Comb are in excellent condition but the dampers will need replacing. Has the Original Tune Sheet. Disc Bin for a 19 5/8" Polyphon. A good quality reproduction bin made by Phil Rose, with lovely quartered, walnut veneer. Supplied 'in the white' and ready for polishing.

Reproduction Pediment for a 19 5/8" Polyphon.

Various Case Parts, including Motor Covers for 19 5/8" and 24 1/2" Polyphon.

Original "Clock" Pediment from a Symphonion 25 1/4"

For more details contact: Steve Greatrex 07774 418 706 or email spg1@hotmail.co.uk.

WANTED

Wanted: this is a large selection from the 'wanted list' that I hold on file for members and friends.

Perhaps if you are considering thinning out your collection you would let me know if you have any of these items please:

Instruments

musical clock; Snuff box – segmented combs only; Cylinder box + BUTTERFLY strikers;

Cylinder box – forte-piano; musical box with interchangeable cylinders; Cylinder musical box + reed organ. For Spanish collector Polyphon 8" costing up to £275; Symphonion with automata;

Gloriosa Christmas Tree Stand – prefer + bells, needing woodwork is OK.

Britannia 9 or 12 inch Upright; Upright Bell Disc Box. table-top Musical Clock + Bells.

Mira 12/15/18" any case format; small Upright Disc Box say 11" (must be working).

Polyphon 11" or 15 1/2" upright [or 19 if cheap / small model] 2 people.

Empty case for Symphonion 25 inch. Victorian musical Automaton; Stella 26"; Polyphon 19 or 24 complete motor;

Symphonion 9 1/2" Disc musical box;

Drapers Victoria Organette or similar, Play-a-sax, phonographic cornet Herophon, any complete no woodworm condition.

Thibouville Lamy – book playing organette larger than 16-note

Thuringer Konzertina - the earlier model. Chien / Tinplate organette.

French Serinette; Chamber Barrel Organ - small Table-Top.

Chamber B.O. working max budget £1,000.

Ariston 36-note disc playing piano playing device / Pushup;

Hupfeld piano player + endless loops;

PEDA or EDA upright; Racca Piano 73-note. Must be working perfectly.

Suction unit wanted for use in Aeolian pipe organ for the 'action' Also PEDA

A Clavichord; A Celeste; Raffin 31 note Street Organ or similar;

Street trumpet Organ with fairground history preferably,

Street Organ with rolls; Mills Violano + Orchestrion; Hicks / Distin Barrel Piano.

Music Wanted

Hallelujah Chorus - 14 note organette.

Ariston discs any size, Melodia 14-note rolls; Herophon 24-note discs; Celestina rolls No. 520 a selection from The Mikado + Celestina roll Invitation to the Dance.

London Verbeeck 36 music books; Red and Green Welte, Ampico, Duo-Art Piano rolls.

Musical Box Discs Wanted

Any Christmas music; Capital Cuff – any size;

Chordephon 60 note; Fortuna 8 inch marked D; 7 inch but 27 teeth;

Harmonia 10 inch; Kalliope – 9 1/2" (23.5cm), 25.3cm edge driven, 13" (33cm) 17 inch, 52.5cm, 23" (58cm); Komet 17 inch, 64cm; Mira 9, 12, 18 1/2 inch; Monopol 11 7/8";

Polyphon 6" or 8", Polyphon 19 5/8 inch; 24 1/2"; Symphonion 4 1/2", 11 7/8" 19" (48.5cm) - must be excellent condition; 25" but 4,000 series titles.

Kevin McElhone 01536 - 726759 kevin_mcelhone@hotmail.com (note the underscore _ between my 2 names)

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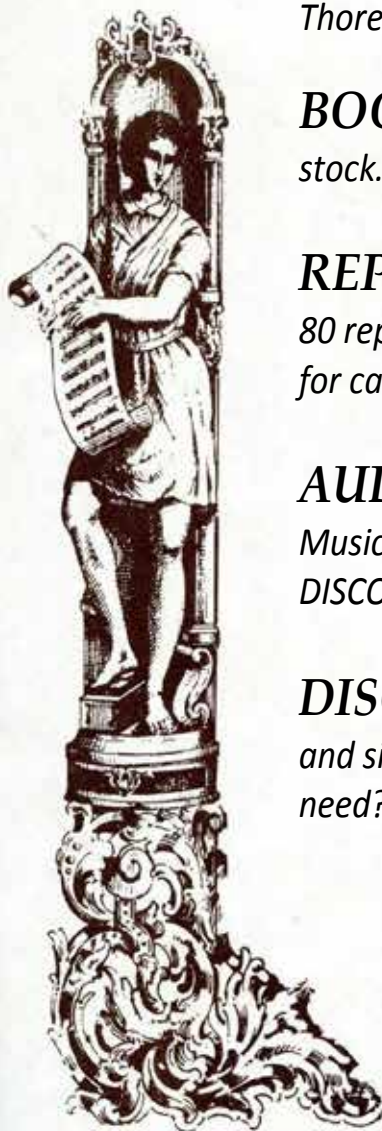
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