



# The Phonographic Record

*The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand*

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MILESTONES During the last few weeks we have passed several milestones in the Society's history. Firstly our financial membership has passed fifty - the exact total at the time of writing this is fifty-one. This is very gratifying considering the Society has been in existence only nine months. The other milestone to report is that the Incorporation is now complete and the Secretary-Treasurer holds the certificate acknowledging it. The main advantages of incorporation are that our Society's name is now listed in the Register of Incorporated Societies and perhaps even more important to individual members, is the fact that any debts the Society incurs and is unable to pay, the onus is no longer on the individual members. In return we supply the Registrar of Incorporated Societies with our Annual accounts etc.

A REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE The following matters are brought to your attention by the Committee:- Of the gifts of records and machines etc. given to the Society, it has been decided to offer Blue Amberol Cylinders and any printed matter to all members who have expressed interest in them in their questionnaire. Lists of wax cylinders and details of machines will be supplied to out-of-town members ONLY IF REQUESTED IN WRITING as it is felt that the packing and posting of such goods is beyond the scope of the committee. If any out-of-town member wishes to be included in any ballot or auction for goods, he must appoint someone to receive goods on his behalf and pack and post for him. However any member who specifically mentions a certain record or a machine on his questionnaire, will be advised if such comes into the hands of the Society. Any parts made for members of the Society will be advertised either by letter or in "The Phonographic Record" and are thus obtainable by all members. It is realised that this does mean some advantages to the Christchurch members but this is reflected in the scale of annual subscriptions.

ANNUAL CONVENTION It has been decided not to hold a Convention in Christchurch this year but one is planned for 1967.

THE MAY MEETING Our monthly meetings seem to be fated by very wet weather (it does rain in Christchurch occasionally) and it was no exception when we travelled the 22 miles from the city to the home of our President, Walter Norris, at "Waipapa", Swannanoa. Walter had worked hard (with the help of fellow member Bob Bennett) to display his machines to the greatest advantage and that he had succeeded in doing this was proved by the delight expressed by members especially those who had not realised the extent of the collection. Many years of phonograph, gramophone and recording history are housed at "Waipapa" and it would take many hours to poke, peer and play one's way through even a fraction of it. Apart from the historical value which is considerable, such a collection is an inspiration to other members, particularly considering the fact that with the exception of one machine, all have been obtained in this country. In a later issue we shall ask Walter to tell us about his most interesting machines. In the meantime we would like to say to both Walter and his wife Kathleen, many thanks for a wonderful evening.

## TALKING MACHINE NEEDLES (Contd.)

C.E. WOLEDGE

In the needle field, one of the most ingenious appliances ever introduced was that of the Edison Bell "Sympathetic Chromic Needle". It contained practically all the virtues of all the other needles



put together. In short, it would play Loud, Medium or Soft with little surface noise and was most kind to the record. The needle itself was considerably longer than usual and very thin - about half the thickness of the average. It was gold plated and pointed at both ends. To hold the needle there was a round metal block, known as the grip, with a thin tube through it which protruded about half an inch, the other end of the tube being flush. The protruding tube was inserted into the needle hole of the stylus bar and held in place by means of the needle screw. The tube was of a size which could take the needle and could be freely moved and held in position by means of a screw in the block. Thus the needle could be adjusted to give the required volume in accordance with the length protruding at the playing point. Including both points, forty playings were claimed. Price, complete with grip and 100 needles - 3/6. This company also put out a "Full Tone Semi-Permanent Gold Plated Chrome Needle" which stood up to 10 records. This needle was supplied in tins of 100 at 1/3 a tin in England and 2/6 in New Zealand. The "Everplay Needle" - this clever innovation did away with the trouble of changing the needle after each playing of the record and at the same time, by the mere turn of a screw, it could be adjusted to give loud, medium or soft tone. In place of the usual standard type of needle a very thin steel wire of a thickness which would fit into the grooves of the record, was substituted. Without diagrams it would be difficult to convey details of construction of this appliance but it was of such a nature that the wire on a tiny bobbin could be fed at will to bring the end, which became the reproducing point, in contact with the record. According to the length of wire protruding, so various volumes were obtained. One spool of wire would play 1000 records, but unfortunately at no time did the wire have an actual point other than a worn one, thus all the time it was provided with a cutting edge which played havoc with the record. Although I did not have the opportunity of trying out this appliance, I was in touch with several users and reports were not favourable and it soon faded out. Another novel type of needle called the "Universal" was on the market for a long time and was offered in three grades, Loud, Medium and Soft. It was slightly longer than the average and its novelty was that a small washer, about the size of those used on governor springs, was welded on each needle. The washer acted as a stop and regulated the distance the needle would go into the hole in the stylus bar. The washer was situated in one of three positions - (a) near the point (b) about the centre and (c) near the thick end. And as the volume was governed by the length of needle so the loud, medium or soft tone was obtained by the "Universal". They were supplied in tins of 100 either in individual tones or assorted. The foregoing is merely an outline of the needle market in New Zealand previous to electric recording and reproduction. Many other brands of needles were offered some of them bearing a registered trademark.

(Concluded.)

#### TALKING OF CYLINDERS

"A.J.R."

#### "WHO'S WHO" or "COME BACK PETER"

In the first article of this series I wrote about Peter Dawson and the various aliases he used, two of which were Frank Danby and Will Strong. Recently I obtained a White Record, "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree", a parody by Will Danby. The thing that puzzles me now is this - "Is 'Will Danby' really Peter Dawson, and did Peter Dawson make a mistake in his autobiography?" Perhaps he meant to say that he used the names Will Danby and Frank Strong.

Those who have heard this record think that it could possibly be Peter Dawson, and yet those who have heard "Hector Grant" are surprised to find out who he really was, saying that they would never have guessed.

If any members can throw some light on this matter I would be very pleased to hear from them.



"HERE'S A HOW-DE-DO!"

Recently I heard two complaints from members about "The Phonographic Record." They were (i) that the articles were not "chatty" enough and (ii) that there should be more contributors. I quite agree! The three standard answers I get when I ask someone to write an article are (a) "I'm no good at writing", and (b) "I haven't got time", and (c) "I wouldn't know what to write about, anyway".

If you feel like using some of those excuses I can only say to you:- "Have you ever tried writing an article?" (Usually the answer is a reluctant "Well, no, I haven't".) If you really think you can't write an article, but have some information which could make a good story, I am prepared to write it for you. Just give me a ring - Phone 557-726 - and I'll do the rest.

As for the second excuse - lack of time - I think most of our members could find time if they wanted to, so don't serve that one up to me.

The third excuse - "don't know what to write about" is also a very lame one. There are many topics which could make interesting reading, e.g., how you came to be interested in phonographs, some details of your collection or favourite records, any work you have done restoring machines, any advice you could give to anyone who intends to restore machines. The list is endless!

WANTED TO BUY Records of Tenors on Pre-War Polydor 78's

Also Gigli singing Surdato Nnamorata. Tino Rossi singing Serenade in the Night, The Gondolier's Song, Shadows of the Past, The Progress of Love. Joseph Schmidt singing I'll Wait For You. Emilio Livi singing Chi E Piu Felice Di Me. Caruso singing Les Rameaux (Re-creation DB 3122). Apply Noel McSweeney, 86 Byron Street, Christchurch.

PARTS FOR SALE Thanks to the enterprise and enthusiasm of some of the members we are able to offer for sale the following:-

Flexible rubber horn connectors - reproducer to horn cut to size	3d. per inch
Leather material for belts, sufficient for one belt, and including instructions for gluing	1/6 each
Gear covers for Amberola (Reproductions)	16/- each
Grille cloth for Edison Amberola etc. 8" x 12"	9d. piece
16" x 12"	1/6 piece
Spring tensioning screw fitting for cygnet horn support	8/6 each
Wooden part of top carrying handle for phonographs	2/- each

All the above, postage extra.

Obtainable from the Secretary, P.G. Rogers, 73 Flockton Street, Christchurch 1.

Transfers of the word EDISON - for those who are repolishing phonographs. Obtainable from Jonathan Chaston, 255 Cashmere Road, Christchurch 3. Price 1/- each.



MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF MACHINES  
CLEANING THE MOTOR AND THE METALWORK OF A PHONOGRAPH

No. 3

R.W. CORNELIUS

Most of the cylinder machines I have in my collection would tell you, if they could talk, that before they arrived at 234 Musselburgh Rise, they had spent the previous twenty or thirty years of their lives tucked away in some dark attic or cobweb clothed in a back garden shed. No matter how carefully the original owner put them away for probably what he thought would be but a short time, invariably when they are found these many years later they are covered with dust and hardened oil. When I first get a machine I always want to get stuck straight in and get it cleaned up and I think it is a wise thing to do otherwise it is left sitting and before long another machine arrives and the first one is forgotten about and so just collects more dust and more dirt. So firstly, I completely strip the machine down, motor, deck-pieces etc., putting all the screws into a jar filled with clean petrol. I remove all the parts from the base plate, leaving only the metal casting. Sometimes removal of these top pieces is not as easy as is thought at first glance. However for any mandrels, rest-bars etc. that will not come away with just a gentle tap from one end, use a drop of penetrating oil and leave it for a while giving it a chance to soak in. This helps immensely and the parts should slide out without any trouble - do not be afraid to hit them hard on the end as long as it is with a piece of wood.

Now for the deck - first of all wipe it over with turpentine; this will remove any surface oil, dirt etc. Do not use petrol as it gets under the paint and gives the enamel a cracked appearance. Next get some car cutter (used for cutting the paintwork down on cars before repainting); it is marvellous for removing those hard patches of old dirt and grease that have become embedded in the surface enamel. This cutter can be used in several ways. On most tins, instructions about leaving it on to dry before it is removed are given. For this sort of work this practice is not necessary and just wastes time. Use a clean piece of non fluffing material and just rub it on; use a damp cloth, this helps if the patch is particularly hard or if it is necessary to cover a large area. Generally however, there is enough moisture in the cutter itself and it is best to do only a small area at a time. The action of the cutter is similar to that of Brasso but increased about ten times. It simply cuts away the top layer of grease or enamel leaving a beautiful clean new surface below. Be careful not to overdo it as it is possible to get right through the enamel to the metal surface underneath but this would take a great deal of rubbing and will not happen if the surface which is being worked is kept wiped clean. This is advisable anyway to see how near the grease stain is to being removed. Another point to watch is that the cutter is used only very lightly over the transfers on the deck. Recently I cleaned the deck of a Columbia BC Model. All the beautiful Graphophone transfers had been painted over and the casing left just plain black. However by using the cutter, in one evening I was able to take the new layer of paint off from on top of the transfers and bring them back to their beautiful red and gold colour. Once all the stains have been removed from the deck and casing, give it a light rub over with a metal polish. Here again a car polish does the trick - it is surprising how well they come up after this treatment. The cutter can also be most effectively used to clean the nickelled parts of the machine - it will even remove the rust spots and parts looking as though they need replating, won't. An ordinary car chrome cleaner is a light cutter and will do the same job but the paint cutter is just that much more effective.

To be continued .....