



# The Phonographic Record

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

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

Volume 2 Issue 6

August 1967.

## Editorial and Secretarial Address

73 Flockton St., Christchurch 1, New Zealand.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held this year on Monday, September 25th 1967, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Norris "WAIPAPA" Swannanoa, RANGIORA R.D. We draw the attention of members to Section XV of the Constitution Rules regarding the election of Officers. The closing date for nominations this year is 10th September.

## THE 1967 PHONOGRAPH AND RECORD COLLECTORS CONVENTION

The 1967 Phonograph and Record Collectors Convention taught us many things. That people in this age of machine and boredom can become so enthusiastic over a hobby that they will travel many miles to attend such a Convention. That people are prepared to resurrect from neglected scraps the phonographs and gramophones that once held pride of place in the homes of years ago. That people are prepared to impart knowledge, and others are prepared to listen and learn. This made all the work worthwhile.

The evening of Friday, June 2nd was spent in setting up the exhibition of machines in the Conference Room of the Canterbury Manufacturers' Association, Cambridge Terrace, Christchurch where the Convention was held. We made a break at 7.45 to view a local television programme which featured our President Walter Norris and our Vice President Bill Dini.

Saturday morning started with a warm welcome to everyone and was followed by a demonstration of some of the machines. The first speaker in the afternoon was Miss Grace Green, one of New Zealand's earliest radio personalities, talking about the early days of broadcasting. This was followed by a showing of slides of some of the rarer celebrity labels by Bill Main of Wellington assisted by Donald Cameron also of that city.

Sunday was a free day and the "out of town" collectors took the opportunity of visiting the "locals." Monday morning began with a talk by Rod Cornelius of Dunedin on the Columbia Company with particular reference to the early days of the Company and Rod with Wally Gollidge of Nelson were, between them, able to display an excellent number of Columbia machines. The second session on Monday morning was an innovation. Having found at the monthly Society Meetings that one of the most enjoyable activities is the auctioning of machines and records with which collectors wish to part, we allowed an hour for this in the Convention programme. It proved again that what may be a discard to one collector is highly prized by another, and many records, cylinders and machines found new homes.

The final official speaker was a Christchurch personality, Colin Campbell who entertained us



with tales of recording personalities, who up until that time had been to many of us merely a name on record, Alexander Prince, Peter Dawson, and others became living personalities, and a tune or two on the concertina concluded a fascinating talk. Walter Norris briefly summed up, and after arranging for the next Convention to be held in Wellington in two years time, he declared the 1967 one closed.

A few facts and figures, our machine display was restricted by our space, but even so we had ninety-nine on display. This included two Edison Tin-foil machines. The attendance at the various sessions was about thirty. We had T.V. publicity as mentioned above, were mentioned over the radio news, and featured on the front page of both local newspapers. The holding of the Convention resulted in another five members for the Society. The more lasting effects are a much greater public interest in our hobby resulting in the unearthing of machines and records long since forgotten.

There are many people we have thanked individually for their help, but we would like to say to all who attended, thankyou for coming, without you we would have had no Convention.

James Heath asks for

H E L P !

Recently, at a dealer in Christchurch, I found three interesting records. So far I have been able to learn little about them and I would be pleased to hear from anyone who has any information.

They are 10 inch single-sided discs, marked ZON-O-PHONE RECORD INTERNATIONAL ZONOPHONE COMPANY, one adding New York, Berlin St., Petersburg, London. The labels are plain black with lettering in gold. All are preceded by an announcement giving the title, and the artist. These are:-

X-225 "The Sentry's Song"	Eric Farr
X-348 "Marching on Pretoria"	Ian Colquhoun
X-235 "Massa's in De Cole, Cole Ground"	Baker E. Belfhor

Only this last mentions the Zonophone Company in the introduction. Playing quality is good, the singing being clear, the accompaniment, though faint, rising well above the surface noise. (Note: To help with identification we have included a photograph of one of the labels on our illustrations page.)

#### MORE ABOUT REPRODUCERS

Walter T. Norris.

If you have a two-minute Model C reproducer in which the jewel is missing a replacement can be made of glass. I have found Pyrex glass quite good but Mr. Woledge tells me he has made them from Buramese glass. This was recommended as the toughest glass by a leadlight maker. The glass is heated with a gas flame and then drawn out like chewing gum into long thin lengths. These lengths can be broken into smaller pieces, and then heated at the end. Hold the short length upright while heating; this will form a bead on the end. All that is necessary then is to glue the glass in the hole on the stylus arm of the reproducer.

To repair a reproducer which has a worn jewel, all that is required is to turn the jewel. This can be done by heating the holder with a small soldering iron to soften the glue and then give the jewel a quarter turn with a small pair of tweezers or forceps. If the model needing repair is a Model H then this method will be more difficult as the jewel is held sideways in the stylus arm.

One of our members, Mr. Bill Dini has been successful in grinding glass stylus as used by the two-minute reproducer so as to narrow the width of the bead to play a four-minute cylinder. Those who have a machine designed to play Blue Amberols, but having a 2-4 minute speed change should note that a Model B Reproducer can be made so that it will play both two and four minute cylinders of the black wax type. To do this, Mr. Woledge found he had to cut the weight down till it was approximately one ounce. Our illustration shows such a Reproducer. He also made, for his Amberola A a reproducer of







this type, and this time he used a Diamond Disc reproducer, as he explains:-

"The Edison Diamond Stylus is made in three sizes (a) a very fine rounded point for 40 minute discs (b) a slightly blunter point for Blue Amberols and (c) a still blunter point for Standard Diamond Discs. The stylus bar mounting for cylinders is shorter than for the Diamond Disc. The larger stylus bar for the disc is necessary in order to give sufficient activity to the larger diaphragm. For a start, I tried a standard Diamond reproducer on a four minute wax record and found that it immediately damaged the record. This I attributed to the extra heavy floating weight so I cut away its sides and reduced its weight to a stage where it did not tear the record. The musical result was fair but the volume was slightly reduced.

To try out the standard Diamond Disc reproducer on wax records was my next move which entailed a fair amount of work. I had to remove the horn entrance tube of the Diamond Disc model and replace it with a right angle bend tube to fit my particular instrument. The Amberola A and the Opera are the only two instruments which require this tube. (Model A. Diamond.) After cutting away slices of eight and drilling holes until reduced to about one ounce, the reproducer gives good results on all cylinder records, even including two minute with, however, a slight reduction in volume. This outfit is now entirely Diamond Disc with large diaphragm and longer stylus bar". - C.E. WOLEDGE.

The writer has seen a machine made up by a collector using the motor from an Amberola 30 and using Diamond Disc reproducer which had been fitted up to give a top or vertical outlet on to a cygnet horn. This machine gave very good sound; it was designed to play Blue Amberols only.

CORRECTION: In an earlier article on Diamond Disc Reproducers we stated that the stylus point sizes were .03 and .06 of an inch. This was an error missed by both editors and for this we apologise. The correct measurements are of course, .003 and .006 of an inch. We thank the member who drew our attention to this.

#### THE ELECTROLA LABEL

By W. Keessen

After World War I, the Gramophone Company (H.M.V.) found herself faced with the problem that her subsidiary in Germany, the Deutsche Grammophon Aktiengesellschaft (at the moment known as the Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft (D.G.G.) had been purchased by the Polyphon Musikwerke Aktiengesellschaft at Leipzig (Germany). This was a result of the counter-measures of the German Government of that time with relation to the confiscation of British fortunes. Some years of struggle about the question of the use of the trademark "Die Stimme seines Herrn" (H.M.V.) followed, between the former subsidiary and the Gramophone Company. Finally, in 1924, this matter was finalised. Only for Germany, the Deutsche Grammophon Aktiengesellschaft had the right to use the trade-marks "Grammophon" and "Die Stimme seines Herrn". To get back the lost territory in Germany, the Gramophone Company established in 1925 a new subsidiary, named the Electrola Gesellschaft. The trademark Electrola was chosen just when the first electric recordings appeared. Electrola soon became one of the leading producers of records as can be seen from the following summary dated 1934:- Electrola 6000 titles, Columbia 1000 titles, Odeon and Parlophon 4000 titles, Deutsche Grammophon 5000 titles and Telefunken 900 titles. The original factory at Nowawes, Berlin was vacated in 1932, when the Electrola Company put into use the factory of the Carl Lindstrom Gesellschaft (Odeon/Parlophon) at Berlin.

In the same year (1952) that Electrola opened at Koln-Braunsfeld (Cologne) one of the most modern factories in the world, this firm bought the rights of the Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft to use, also for Germany, the trademark "Die Stimme seines Herrn". Also there, the famous Nipper appeared again on the labels of the original owner of the world-wide known trademark.

#### THE PATHE COMPANY

By W.T. Norris

The Pathe Company interests most collectors in some way or other, whether he be cylinder collector or disc collector to say nothing of the machine collector. This company was early in the field with cylinders and discs and made cylinders of the young Caruso. These were later transferred by an in-



teresting process onto disc, both being of the hill-and-dale cut. But let us trace back to the Company's beginnings - and in doing this we meet up with the two brothers,, Charles and Emile Pathe of Paris, France. By occupation they ran a bistro in Pigalle. Charles saw an Edison machine used to attract a crowd at a fair, and decided to import one for the purpose of attracting customers to drink at the Rue Fontaine.

This proved very successful with patrons who wanted not only to hear the phonograph, but to buy and own one of their own. Realising the potentiality, the brothers bought a machine shop at Belleville and started producing phonographs themselves. Later they built a small factory in Chatou in 1894. Here cylinder blanks were manufactured. The shop in Belleville was employing two hundred men by 1900; the machine model in production was in great demand. This was a cheap cylinder machine, known as "Le Coq", a copy of the Columbia model called "The Eagle" (which sold for one American "Eagle"). The cock was then adopted as the Pathe trademark and has remained so to the present day. From this time on this company produced a number of machine models and a variety of sizes of cylinders and discs.

Discs were made in many sizes, the largest the writer has seen has a diameter of 20". Mr. Woledge claims that there was a disc of 34" diameter and these were nicknamed "the yard record". Some say "on what would one play a 34" record?" For the answer see the next issue of "The Phonographic Record".

As far as we know, Pathe stayed with the hill-and-dale disc longer than any other company. All early recordings played from the centre out and ran at a comparatively high speed of 90 revolutions per minute. The 20" disc ran even faster - at 120 revolutions per minute. The company also manufactured four sizes of cylinders, the ordinary or Standard cylinder ( $1\frac{3}{4}" \times 4\frac{1}{4}"$ ), the Salon ( $3\frac{1}{2}" \times 4\frac{1}{4}"$ ), the Grand Concert ( $4\frac{1}{2}" \times 4\frac{1}{4}"$ ) and the largest the Celeste ( $4\frac{1}{2}" \times 8\frac{1}{2}"$ ).

Pathe used a ball sapphire stylus in a reproducer fitted directly onto a tone arm and in this position would play hill-and-dale discs. The Pathe Company produced hill-and-dale discs right up until 1935 and through the production of both machines and recordings, hold an important place in the history of the talking machine world.

#### EDISON DIAMOND DISCS - THE ARTISTS.

To conclude our series of articles we turn to a later edition of the Record Catalogue to find just who did record on Edison Diamond Disc.

There must have been a few record collectors disappointed in the selection as it covered a remarkable range of artists, and types of entertainment, musical, and the spoken word as well as novelty items. If your choice was operatic singing you could have chosen from such first class artists as Lucrezia Bori, Frieda Hempel, Claudia Muzio, Elizabeth Schumann, Maggie Teyte, Margaret Matzenauer, Alessandro Bonci, Karl Jorn, Giovanni Zenatello and many others - quite an imposing list. But as always, Edison's own lack of interest in classical music has strongly influenced the selections available. For instance although the delightful Maggie Teyte is introduced to the record collector in a paragraph which makes reference to her as "a marvellous interpreter of song", and especially those of the great composer Debussy, the selection of her recordings available is limited to "Believe me if all those Endearing Young Charms", "My Ain Folk" etc., in fact no real classics at all. On the other hand Claudia Muzio could be heard singing a fine list of operatic selections with Victor Herbert's "Kiss in the Dark" standing out in odd contrast.

For the collector of ballads such as Thomas Edison's own favourite song "I'll take you home again Kathleen" the choice was endless and no doubt, the only restriction of choice was the buyers own financial one. The composition mentioned above was available on bells, by an instrumental quartet, as a vocal duet or by a singer with chorus. The collector of instrumental records was also well catered for by his choice, the bagpipe, the bassoon, the zimbalon or the dulcimer - in fact almost any instrument he could name. For those who wanted a "potted" Church Service, there were three Doctors of Divinity ready to provide you - at the placing of the stylus - with a reading and a hymn.



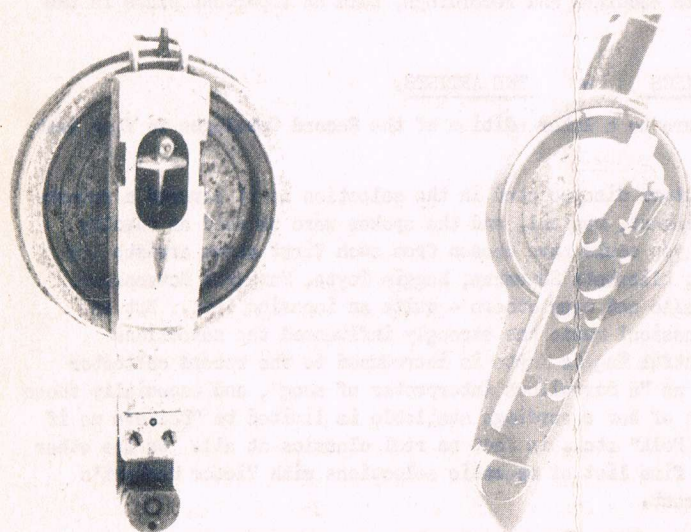


EARLY



LATER

## Two ELECTROLA LABELS



THE ZON-O-PHONE LABEL

## MODEL B DIAMOND DISC

WITH SIDES REMOVED

WITH WEIGHT REDUCED



Elecutionists, comedians, vaudeville entertainers had all recorded for your pleasure. All you needed was the cash and the storage space.

Although the majority of records are in English there are lists of foreign records - from Sweden to Cuba, on to Germany and back to Mexico with all countries in between.

And for those who wanted to hear the voice of that great American himself, Thomas A. Edison, all that was necessary was to order Diamond Disc No. 50509 and his famous speech to the American people was always at hand.

Thousands and thousands of Diamond Discs were available at the time of this catalogue and the 567 pages of it are packed with interesting information and talking machine history. In the series of articles on Edison and his remarkable invention, the Diamond Disc, both machine and record, we hope we have provided collectors with information, some taken from publications of the time, and some from the view of "looking back from today" which will make them appreciate its place in talking machine history. New Zealand collectors are fortunate in that excellent records and machines are reasonably and easily obtained and the search for both is well worthwhile.

WANTED TO BUY Mikkiphone. Apply George Whittle, School of Engineering, University of Canterbury, Croyke Road, Christchurch, 4.

WANTED TO BUY OR EXCHANGE Gramophone needle tins, boxes, packets etc. Apply Pam Rogers, 73 Flockton Street, Christchurch, 1.

WANTED TO BUY Operatic discs especially on rare or interesting labels. Also recordings (78's, 45's and 33's) of Oriental or other Non-European music. Apply James Heath, 4 Deloraine Street, Christchurch, 2.

We have heard of a man who would cut off his right arm for a copy of the recording of Ella Fitzgerald singing with Count Basie and his orchestra "April in Paris". Sounds messy but can anyone help. Apply to the Secretary. It's a Columbia Recording.....

Mr. H.M. Sansum of 94 Daniell Street, Wellington S.1. is still looking for a disc or cylinder or sheet music of date 1920, named by an old time dancer as either "Tender Memories" or "By the Blue Lagoon".

#### AT YOUR SERVICE

In this issue we introduce a new section which, we hope will become a regular part of our magazine. In it we will publicise services offered by members to other members. The publicity will be free, provided that the services and goods are of assistance to collectors and not purely a request for records, machines etc. (Advertisements for these will still be accepted at 15c an inch.) We shall leave it to members to get in touch with the "advertisers" and arrange the deal direct, whether by cash or exchange.

Joffre Marshall of 77 Hilton Street, Kaiapoi has indicated that he will attempt the making of small machine parts particularly those constructed on a small lathe.

James Heath of 4 Deloraine Street, Christchurch has spent a considerable time in constructing a stroboscope which enables the turntable speed to be set accurately (to within 0.5% or less) to any speed from 74 r.p.m. to 86 r.p.m. The stroboscope, which is mounted on cardboard and supplied with a sheet of instructions costs N.Z. 50c and must be viewed by a lamp running on the standard New Zealand supply of 50 cycles a second. James is willing to also make a stroboscope to order for any speed or speeds or for any mains frequency.

A recent letter from Frank James of 23 Chelford Street, Alderley Heights, Brisbane, Australia, enclosed a beautifully printed piece of "Edison cylinder box maintenance equipment". This is a replacement lid label for Blue Amberol cylinders, in the traditional blue colour and with room for number, title and artist. It would be perfect for converting a plain box into a blue Amberol container or altering the title etc. on an existing box. Frank is offering these labels (which need to be cut out and glued) at the amazingly reasonable prices as follows:- 25 for 16c plus 4c postage, 50 for 30c plus



7c postage, 75 for 44c plus 7c postage, 100 for 58c plus 10c postage. (All prices in Australian Currency.)

Wally Gollidge of 179 Hampden Terrace, Nelson offers to make a wide variety of parts including Gem Wooden Bases, Wooden winding handle cranks - any pattern, Gem and Fireside gear guards - 3 models, Amberola governor guards, Gem or Fireside Cranes (nickel plated), Large Standard cranes, Cygnet horn cranes, wooden grilles - Amberola 50 etc. Envelopes - 5 styles Puck, Lambert, Edison, Pathe and Tinfoil, Corner "pillar" mouldings for Operas, Triumphs and Columbias, Gem keys - 2 types, Pathe, Columbia, Paillard winding-keys, Edison screws - for various parts, crane clamps for holding morning glory cranes on Standards and Homes, Amberola 30 oak grained grilles. Wally will make any part except gears or a very complicated part. All his manufactured pieces are finished and painted - in the case of the gear covers for Red Gems and Firesides they are gold lines as well.

These members are helping to make clear the reason why the Society was formed - for the mutual benefit of collectors. We are grateful to them for offering their services.

#### A RECORD OF RECORDS

G.B.E.

Mendelssohns Spring Song - Violin Solo by Albert Southern?  
Clarion No. 215

This is, I feel, a typical instrumental solo of the early days of recording. The "Spring Song" is a beautiful piece of music, obviously very popular in those Edwardian days as it was recorded in many "shapes and sizes" and an example will generally pop up in a large cylinder collection. Being a Clarion, the quality is inferior to that of say, an Edison, but nevertheless, it can be heard quite well. On many cylinders, when listening to the "honky-tonk" piano accompaniment, one can imagine the pianist, with his mop of wild hair, bent over the keyboard, pounding it for dear life but in this record the piano is reasonably quiet. G.B.E. is uncertain of the artist's surname as the cylinder box lid is "tatty" and the announcement not very clear. - We are thus open to correction on this point.

#### THE SPOKEN WORD

"Stylus"

It is a strange fact that, at gramophone record sales there is generally quite a pile of discs which could be filed only under "the spoken word". And yet when the speakers, usually world figures in politics or the arts have faded into history, such records are in demand. For the collector of early records this is a fascinating subject. In this article I shall deal only with records I have in my collection. Although very interested in such records I have not gone out of my way to find them, but in the course of poking round the junkshops I have acquired quite a few examples and have managed to exchange others. The record which seems to hold the most fascination is a Blue Amberol of Thomas A. Edison himself. Also on Blue Amberols are three by the American President, Theodore Roosevelt; of these I have two. Turning to 78's and still on American politics there is an interesting record by the American President, Woodrow Wilson. Pope Pius the Twelfth and General William Booth the founder of the Salvation Army have both made records and the British Royal family from George V and Queen Mary have made numerous contributions to the Record Catalogues. Winston Churchill's records bring back memories of the second world war. The theatre naturally enough provides many recordings; Dame Sybil Thorndyke and Lewis Casson of more recent times; Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson the famous Shakespearian actor of former days.

As I stated above, the records referred to are my own collection; there were dozens and dozens more made, and many are worth acquiring and keeping.