



# 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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Editors:- Pamela G. Rogers  
and Walter T. Norris

Editorial and Secretarial Address:-

73 Flockton Street,  
Christchurch, 1.  
New Zealand.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

IN THE NEWS. We were pleased to see recently a newspaper article about and excellent photographs of the collection of Rod Cornelius of Dunedin. Looking back through their scrapbooks the editors realise just how many members have been "in print" over the last few years. What may not be known to everyone is, that thanks to Walter Norris, the Society has its own scrapbook, and we would appreciate a cutting of any newspaper article concerning our members for inclusion. We would also be interested to hear from members who keep scrapbooks and who would also be glad to be informed of printed information concerning phonograph and record collecting.

THE SOCIETY BADGE. At the February Meeting, a vote was taken on four designs drawn at the Committee's request by James Heath. An overwhelming majority resulted in the adoption of the design showing a silhouette of the Berliner Dog-Model Gramophone, in black with a bright red horn, all against a gold background. There is no lettering. We feel that this badge will act as an "open sesame" to members visiting country museums etc. where as an ordinary observer they may be prevented from viewing special machines which may be stored out-of-sight. Supplies of the badge are expected by May 1st and will cost \$1 N.Z. (Postage included).

HONORARY MEMBER. At the last Committee Meeting, Mr. Arthur Alleyway, formerly of Christchurch and now of Leithfield was elected an Honorary Member of the Society. Mr. Alleyway, who has made considerable gifts of parts to the Society has been connected with the gramophone industry for many years and his assistance to many members has been invaluable.

BLOWING OUR OWN - HORN! Yes we really are - over the witches hat horns which are now on sale. They are a wonderful job and are obtainable at \$3.50 (plus postage) for each horn. The demand is heavy so contact the Secretary NOW.

PUBLIC DISPLAY. It has been decided to hold a public display of machines, records accessories etc. on the afternoon and evening of Saturday, June 1st (the Saturday of Queen's Birthday weekend), and we hope that some of our out-of-town members will be able to be there. The display will be held in the hall of St. Johns Anglican Church, Latimer Square, Christchurch. Any out-of-town member who can assist with the display is asked to advise the Secretary.

WANTED TO BUY. Any small records 7" diameter or less. Also children's record albums etc. Apply Jonathan Chaston, 255 Cashmere Road, Christchurch 3, New Zealand.



## More About the Pathe Company

CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS

In Volume 2 Issue 6, we told you a little of the beginnings of the Pathe Frere Company, and we have also printed illustrations of some of the machines produced by this Company. In this article we would like to continue the story and tell you a little about the Pathe cylinder phonograph.

The Company made a number of different models of both cylinder and disc machines, the exact number we do not know for, as with many other makes, models previously unheard of and apparently uncatalogued, keep turning up. The cylinder models were all well made and prices appear to have been reasonable. There was one small model called "The Aiglon"; it was priced at £1.7.6. and although there were many other models at reasonably low prices this is thought to have been one of the biggest sellers. From a catalogue of a number of machines we print the most elaborate, a Perfecta "Luxe" Reversible designed to play two sizes of cylinder, the standard and the 3 inch. The most interesting model is called the Celeste (also illustrated). This cost £30 and was designed not only to play the 5 inch cylinder but also the 5" diameter 8½" long cylinder. We have mentioned in a previous issue the sizes of cylinders advertised and sold by the Pathe Company, and the three smallest are known to exist; but although we in New Zealand have not seen the gigantic size from the catalogue it is clear that both the cylinders and the machines on which to play them, were made. We would certainly appreciate any information from members regarding these.

Owners of the small Pathe cylinder machines may have noticed on the side, two small holes where a shaft has been and wondered at their significance. They were to enable the shaft to be shifted to take the 3 inch mandrel and thus allow, with the aid of a reproducer extension, 3 inch cylinders to be played as well as the standard.

THE PLANET MOTOR

We reproduce an advertisement for one of the very cheap gramophone motors which were once available. The machine with this motor was very small - almost a toy. It is believed that one shipment came to Christchurch; from what is remembered there were two models, one with an external horn and one with an internal horn. The machines worked but were not very satisfactory. Our illustration is from Mr. Woledge's remarkable collection of information on the talking machine.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS

This issue, we are printing some photographs which illustrate articles which have appeared in previous issues.

**THE STROBOSCOPE:-** In Volume 2 Issue 6 under the heading "At Your Service" we described the Stroboscopes constructed by James Heath, now of 45 Bletscoe Avenue, Christchurch. The illustration shows one of the stroboscopes - if you are interested please contact James direct.

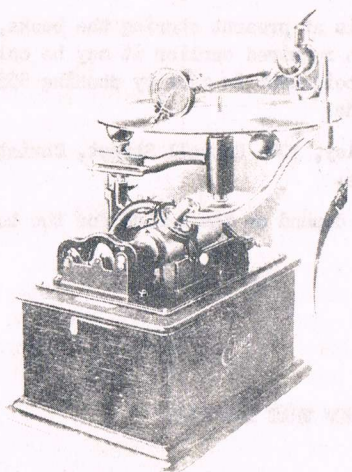
**BETTINI:-** We picture the label of the re-recording of the cylinder of Marcella Sembrich and also the shop of R. Wilkin in Christchurch from which much of the Bettini equipment and cylinders came. (See Volume 3 Issue 3.)

**RAPKE:-** Also in Volume 3 Issue 3 we told you a little of the manufacturer, Rapke and his horn crane. This issue shows an advertisement for this crane.

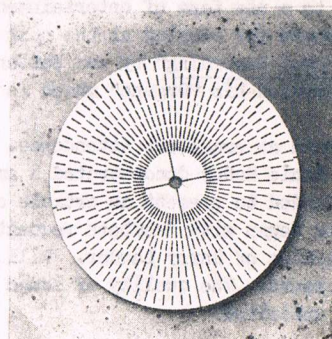
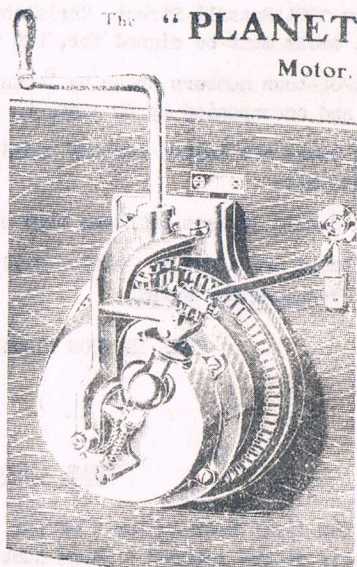
**DISC ATTACHMENT FOR A CYLINDER MACHINE:-** We feel that this rather poor photograph is worth printing in the hope that one of our members may know something about the attachment. From a technical point of view we doubt its success because of the small amount of power delivered by a cylinder motor. Any information welcomed!



# THE DISC ATTACHMENT



# ADVERTISING THE PLANET MOTOR



# THE "JAMES HEATH STROBOSCOPE"

BETTINI:- Above. THE RECORD LABEL  
Below. R. WILKIN'S SHOP.



# THE LIBRARY

We now list details of the issue of books from the library.

- (1) The service is for all New Zealand members. We are sorry we cannot extend it to overseas, but the cost of postage and the time delays make it prohibitive.
- (2) Christchurch members may request from Adair Otley who is at present storing the books, a book to be brought to the next Meeting. If the book is required earlier it may be collected from 108A Rossall Street, Christchurch, provided an appointment is made by phoning 555-339. All books must be signed for, but no charge will be made.
- (3) Out-of-town members order by letter direct to Adair Otley, 108A Rossall Street, Christchurch 1, and accompanied by 20 cents to cover outward postage.
- (4) All books are issued for ONE MONTH only. Renewal will depend on the demand for the book concerned.
- (5) All damage or loss of books must be paid for.
- (6) As books are added the titles will be listed in  
The Phonographic Record.

THIS IS YOUR LIBRARY - PLEASE LET US KNOW WHAT YOU WANT  
TO READ!

## THAT WAS THE MONTH THAT WAS

FEBRUARY. The first Meeting for 1968 was very well attended. The Committee had met the previous week and their report covered a large number of matters which have been dealt with elsewhere in this issue. The programme consisted of a brief recital of records played by Adair Otley. This was a prelude to a new form of entertainment by which members request certain records to be brought by fellow members for playing at the next Meeting. Pam Rogers then briefly reviewed the book "The Story of Sound Recording" by Joe Batten. We were then entertained by Mr. A.A. Baker of Christchurch who demonstrated his "Organn" which is a mechanical accordian of beautiful quality.

MARCH. Again an excellent attendance. Bill Dini showed the witches hat horns which are a fine product. Ernie McKay demonstrated a small device for trueing the inside of Blue Amberol cylinders. (It is intended to present an article on this at a later date - Editor.) The entertainment side of the evening began with "members requests"; this was followed by Walter Norris's review of the autobiographies of Harry Lauder. Bill Dini then demonstrated his method of making phonograph horns from pasteboard. The quality of sound from these horns is remarkable and the variety of possible shapes is unlimited.

## AT YOUR SERVICE

We have been pleased to hear that Wally Colledge, 179 Hampden Terrace, New Zealand has been busy making parts for members. He and others are doing valuable work and we commend their efforts to you. Wally has forwarded to us samples of rubber reproducer gaskets he is making for Edison cylinder reproducers. He makes both sizes and they are available at 10 cents a pair plus postage. Please apply direct to Wally who also will make the following:- Gem wooden bases, wooden winding handle cranks - any pattern, Gem and Fireside gear guards - 3 models, Amberola Governor guards, Gem of 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 pillars for Opera, Triumphs and Columbias, Gem keys - 2 types, Pathe, Columbia and Paillard winding-keys, Edison screws - for various parts, crane clamps for holding morning-glory cranes on Standards and Homes, Amberola 30 oak grained grilles.

#### TALKING MACHINE MEMORIES - The phonograph and Spiritualism (Part 2) by C.E. Woledge

In the Talking Machine and Music business as in most other callings will be encountered numerous experiences both dramatic and humorous which will long be remembered. In my case, after sixty years in this occupation I remember several instances which stand out and are not likely to be forgotten. As the phonograph plays a part in each case they may be of interest to society members so here are details of the second episode which took place. Although those persons involved are now probably all deceased, their names were remembered, will not be committed to paper, because some were of well known Christ-church families. At the time, about 1924, we had four sound-proof audition rooms at Edison Hall, and as home-made recording was fairly popular, quite a number of clients came to have their voices recorded. Among these was the Manager of a large Company, very well known particularly because of his activities in spiritualism. He asked me if the phonograph would record spirit voices. I said that if there was any audible sound from the voices, the instrument would record them. He was pleased to know this, and said he would arrange for me to go to a seance, and make some recordings, but advised me that I would have to remain with my apparatus outside the spirit room. I told him that such an arrangement was impossible because any sounds to be recorded had to be directed into the horn of the phonograph. So apparently the matter ended there and he departed. When he had gone, I realised how foolish I had been in not attempting to sell him an outfit. So a few days later, I approached him and succeeded in selling him an Amberola 30 with recording outfit and half a dozen blank records. After being well schooled in the way to make a recording, he decided to operate at the next seance he attended. He carried out this programme and brought in the recordings for me to hear. To describe them would be most difficult because they were not like anything I had heard before; just a jabbering of many voices in some unknown language if it could be defined as such, with many intrusions of a deep loud voice which, I was told, was from a male spirit named Ulto or a similar name. He was a real pest and upset many seances. However, the listening was most dreary, but at the same time uncanny to the extent of creating a desire to get away from it, and I was glad it was not in the dark. Finally at about the centre of the last recording, a female voice came through singing "Love's Old Sweet Song", and I have never heard anything more beautiful - there was something different about it when compared with the human voice as I knew it.

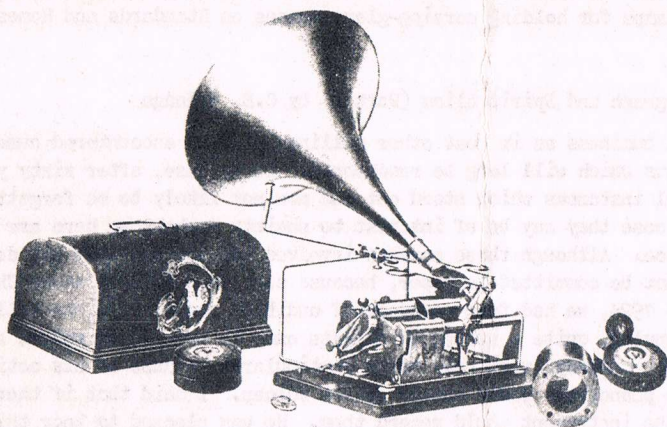
When the playing finished, I opened the door and beckoned to one of our office girls and told her to see my chief and ask him to come at once. He arrived almost immediately and the recording was re-started from about the centre: at this point some of the jabbering was still coming through, and the chief was annoyed and said, "what is all this rot?". Then "Love's Old Sweet Song" came through. It is hard to say how it affected the chief, but he certainly became agitated and as I watched him, he turned from side to side, looked behind him, closed his eyes, then turned and hastened out of the door before the item was finished. This looked like the end of the ordeal, but there was more to follow because apparently he told his son of the experience and the son in turn, told a bookkeeper in the office. They both came to me and wanted to know all details of the whole show and expressed their desire to go to a seance. They thought it would be great fun. They went and here is the account of their adventure. They were ushered into the spirit room and invited to sit by the door where the light switch was within reach. The medium explained to them that two essentials were necessary when contacting the spirits; they were darkness and music - the former to get better reception as is the case with radio, and the latter because any sound of a pleasant nature attracted the spirits. Silence was necessary, but any member of the company was at liberty to leave the room at any time. The medium sat down, lights were turned off and a simple tune was played on a small organ. Gradually over the room came



# PATHE' CYLINDER MACHINES

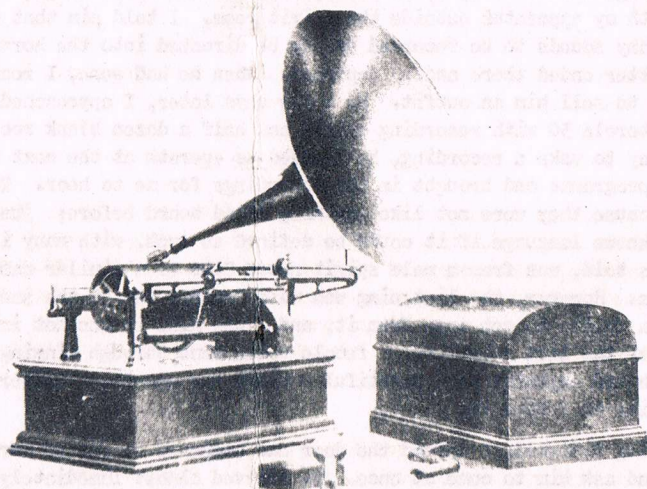
Left:-

"PERFECTA"



Right:-

"CELESTE"



## Rapke Horn Crane, No. 15

**S**IMPLEST and best ever produced. Will support any horn up to and including 36 inches. Is nicked throughout, and fits into small space. Weighs only 13½ lbs. can be attached in an instant to any Phonograph without injury to cabinet.

**RAPKE HORN  
CRANE, No. 15**

PATENTS PENDING



ADVERTISING

THE

RAPKE HORN CRANE



a haze which could be seen even in the darkness; then voices and whispering of a peculiar nature could be heard and talking in a peculiar jabbering language came to the fore. This was most uncanny, and at this point one of the lads lost his nerve and switched on the light. Everything seemed in order; the medium was, with his eyes closed, sitting in his chair and the members sat undisturbed, but there was a mist over the room which had become uncomfortably hot. However the uncanny factor was the way the voices gradually died away and seemed to fade into the corners of the room. The lads plucked up enough courage for another session and switched off the light. This time the mist was more intense and in front of one of the lads, what started as a thick ball of mist, gradually appeared to turn into the figure of a girl dressed in white. She held a bunch of flowers in her hand; she floated towards him, and held out the flowers which he instinctively grasped. He stated that he distinctly felt them and they were cold and wet. The shock panicked him, and he switched on the light and with his mate, hurried through the door. They were both badly shaken and said they, under no circumstances would again go through such an experience. Strange to say, the lad's hand was actually wet, not with sweat because his other hand was quite dry.

To the thinking person all the foregoing could be classed as a clever fake which could be performed by a good magician; on the stage I have seen illusions with floating and disappearing ghosts which are admittedly fakes, but in the spiritualism cases the performance would have to be done with accomplices - but there was no such evidence there. At the time there were about six spirit mediums in Christchurch each with followers. Three of these I personally knew, but of the other three I had only heard. However there was no suspicion of any connection between them; in fact they seemed to be in competition. Pertinent questions I have put to spiritualists have been satisfactorily answered.

Recently our member Alan Robb was over in Australia and we asked him to report on anything of interest. Here in his story which he has entitled:-

"WHEN IN SYDNEY ....."

A.S.C.

Well, I didn't expect to see any kangaroos hopping down Pitt Street, but I was surprised to discover a museum which actually encourages visitors to operate many of its mechanical exhibits. This enlightened organisation is The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, located in Harris Street, Ultimo, Sydney. It is a museum of technology and abounds in displays of all types of technology and abounds in displays of all types of Technological achievement. At the touch of a button you can operate model steam engines (running on compressed air), you can play noughts and crosses with an electronic computer (and beat it if it is not functioning properly); you can see a replica of the famous Strasbourg Clock - this replica incidentally, was built by a man who at one time worked with Thomas Edison.

To me the most interesting display was the collection of phonographs and musical boxes. Although there were only three phonographs on display, they were quite interesting specimens and were in very good condition. The oldest was an 1878 weight-driven "tinfoil" (a reproduction of a machine very similar to the one on page 13 in the book, "Talking Machines"). There was also an Edison Bijou Phonograph which had been presented to the Museum by Thomas A. Edison Ltd. It was a coin-operated machine with what appeared to be a Gem motor. A nicely kept "Home" was also on display. Another phonograph which caught my eye was an "Excelsior". This was a small keywind machine with an open ended mandrel.

What really took my fancy, however were the musical boxes, and in particular, the disc musical boxes. The coin in the slot Polyphons were all in working condition and I spent quite some time playing them. Attendants were on hand to provide change and I found them only too happy to change the discs or play some of the smaller non-coin-operated boxes which were kept under glass. One unusual Polyphon was an 1886 model on which the disc was not visible - the whole front panel was wood. Although it had a good tone, it did not seem as attractive as the other instruments on which one could see the disc revolving. A Tanzbar accordion and a Gem Roller Organ were also on display, and one of the attendants kindly played the latter for me.



It is a shame that more museums do not model themselves on the lines of this one. One cannot fail to have an enjoyable and instructive time when the staff are so helpful and the exhibits made so accessible to the public. When you go to Sydney, I would recommend that you allow yourself plenty of time to savour the delights of this museum. And another word of advice - the only kangaroos you'll see will be at the zoo!

A FAIR DEAL by Pamela Rogers

During my years of working in a legal office, I was reminded time and time again, how easy it is to be too casual over matters of money and how often this can lead to break up of families and friendships. Because this was so often the sad result - that the closer the relationship between the people involved, the stronger was the feeling and so often the more irreparable the situation. You may be wondering what connection this has with the collecting of phonographs and records. From time to time I have heard of collectors (by no means always members) who make vague trading arrangements which drag on unsettled for months, and in that time turn from a molehill into a bitterly represented mountain. I am not attempting to tell you how to carry out your trading, that is over to you, but I can think of so many cases where these uncompleted deals have turned sour on both collectors involved, that I decided to list a few principles which, had they been followed would have saved much ill feeling.

To the seller:-

FIRSTLY make sure you want to sell; once goods are handed over on acceptance of cash there can be no change of heart - the deal is then final.

DON'T part with goods until you receive the money. If exchanging goods - until you receive the goods. If the transaction cannot be completed, set a value on the goods to be received and write it down.

DON'T let a transaction drag on for months - if you are unhappy at not receiving goods in exchange, offer to take back the subject of the exchange. At least this will bring some action.

IF you are in doubt as to the fairness of the exchange, you may appeal to a Committee Member to be referee, but remember, no one but YOU knows the value to you of the goods concerned.

ISSUE a receipt - then ownership is definitely established.

To the buyer:-

DON'T conclude a transaction until you are sure the seller is happy with the price, and if it is in cash DON'T buy unless you have the money NOW - if you can't pay cash you can't afford it.

IF you do owe goods under an agreement, write down what you owe, to whom and the date and then endeavour to clear the debt as soon as possible.

If you GIVE goods to anyone, make it clear it is a gift and also don't expect them to be returned at a later date. If it is a LOAN, make equally sure this is made clear - it is so easy to be too casual.

There is, of course, provision in our Constitution Rules for these matters to be settled by the Executive Committee. With a little common courtesy, this rule need never be used.

When we meet, we want to do so in the atmosphere of a club room, not a court house.