



The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

Vol. 5. Issue 2.

December, 1969.

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

Editorial & Secretarial Address:
73 Flockton Street,
Christchurch 1.
New Zealand.

Whether you will be spending Christmas in the middle of summer or of winter we would like to wish you a very pleasant festive season. And may 1970 be for you particularly from a collecting point of view, a happy New Year because we do, after all, pursue our hobby first and foremost for pleasure.

BEGG'S CATALOGUE

Wally Gollidge reports many congratulatory comments on this catalogue reproduction. Our illustrations show the cover and a page of reproducers. Remember this catalogue is obtainable from the Secretary for 85 cents N.Z. plus postage.

FIBRE CUTTERS

In our recent article on fibre needles we mentioned the gentle art of fibre sharpening. Although we have heard of some talented members who can achieve this with a razor blade, we find it much easier with one of numerous makes of official cutter. These are not too difficult to find and we feature two of the best known.

ALL-U-NEED

Most of us have, at some time experimented with different needles for different records. Many of the Companies who produced needles, realised the idiosyncracies of the 'experts' and produced composite tins to save too much opening of tins (and the consequent risk of spilling needles.) One of the most attractive and elaborate tins we have seen is the 'All-U-Need' tin which we have illustrated and which contains 900 needles "assorted in the only five grades necessary to play any record to perfection."

MEET MR. EMERSON

by Walter Norris

Collectors of record labels may be interested to read a little about the man behind the Emerson label. Few will realize that Victor W. Emerson invented the 45 degree cut which is used today in the production of stereo records; the idea at that time was not of course for this purpose but to overcome the problem of the hill and dale cut versus the lateral cut. Both of these types of cut were well covered with patents so Emerson conceived the idea of this new cut, records of which could be played on either Edison or Victor machines. The new V cut was however, not a success. When played with the Edison diamond, the record, like other shellac ones, was torn to bits in a few playings.

Emerson, like many others, worked for Edison but left his employ to work for the Graphophone Company. While with this company he invented his new disc. He then formed his own company and produced records with a 45 degree cut. Just how many I do not know but as apparently none have been seen in New Zealand, I think they must be reasonably rare. The Emerson records which are seen here are of the common lateral cut which are of later date. Our illustration shows one of these.

Emerson apparently set up production in New York and was in business right up to the advent of electrically recorded discs. Many well-known artists recorded for him, some of whom had recorded for Edison. Among these are Cal Stewart, Billy Golden, Walter Scanlan and John Kimmel.

Emerson also made seven inch discs to be played with a ball sapphire similar to the Pathe. These discs are also very rare. I have a record packet (illustrated) and it seems, from the information on it, that Emerson may have produced machines as well. I would appreciate any further information about this man or his inventions.

MORE ABOUT REPRODUCERS

Early Edison Speaker

In this issue, we show the cross section of an early model speaker and with the aid of this illustration we can clearly name each part:

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. The speaker clamp ring | G. The rubber gasket |
| B. The tube plate | H. The reproducer arm |
| C. The limiting screw | I. The reproducing arm pin |
| D. The diaphragm | J. The sapphire |
| E. The hinge pin | K. The speaker lever |
| F. The cross head | L. The link |
| M. The speaker weight | |

These names were given to the reproducer parts by the Edison Company in 1900. Over the years, by common usage, other indentifications have been accepted. For instance, H is often referred to as the stylus bar and J as the stylus or jewel. The cross section is of the reproducer known as the Edison Automatic Reproducer illustrated on page 22 of Issue 3 Volume 4 of The Phonographic Record, and clearly shows the difference between it and the Model C. It also shows the threaded clamp ring which holds in the diaphragm and gaskets.

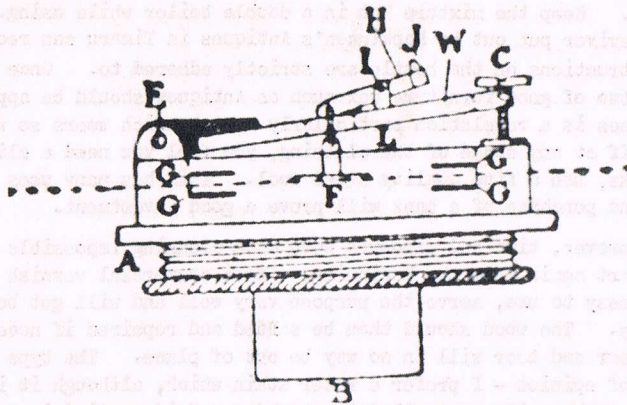
New Zealanders particularly, seem to have acquired a reputation for 'doing-it-oneself.' In order to foster this spirit at what is vacation time for many, we are including two further articles on the restoration of machines.

"PUTTING ON THE SHINE"

by Pamela Rogers

Opinions on the refinishing of a phonograph or gramophone case seem to differ widely from the 'let's leave it as it is no matter how battered' to the 'do it up to the original and disguise every sign of wear and character'. But most of us, I think, try to tread a middle path and only fully restore when the appearance is very poor or the cabinet is in danger of deteriorating because of exposure to the atmosphere.

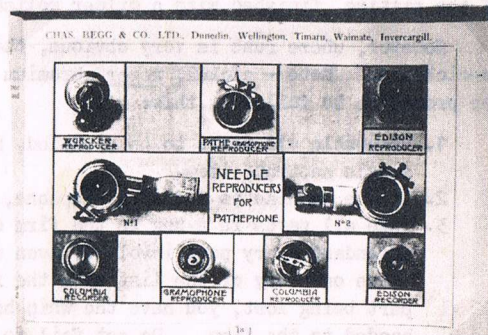
It is amazing what can be done to a cabinet which looks in a bad way but is in fact just dirty. Warm water, ordinary soap and a small scrubbing brush can work wonders but do not keep the wood too wet for too long. Alternatively a recommended mixture for cleaning is one quart of hot water, 1 tablespoon of turpentine and 3 tablespoons of boiled linseed oil. The turpentine helps to cut the dirt and the oil lubricates, feeds and



THE EARLY EDISON SPEAKER



EMERSON RECORD LABEL
AND RECORD COVER



THE COVER AND A SAMPLE
PAGE FROM THE BEGG'S CATALOGUE

polishes the wood. Keep the mixture hot in a double boiler while using. Those of us who have used a reviver put out by Hopkinson's Antiques in Timaru can recommend this providing the instructions on the bottle are strictly adhered to. Once the wood has dried, a coat or two of good furniture wax such as Antiquax should be applied. The final result in many cases is a revelation particularly on oak which wears so well but usually gets so dirty. If at any stage of the cleaning, you feel you need a slight abrasive to move stubborn marks, use a fine quality steel wool. This has many uses in cleaning and restoration and the purchase of a hank will prove a good investment.

Sometimes, however, time and exposure have made cleaning impossible and the only solution is to start again from the beginning. Most commercial varnish removers, although rather messy to use, serve the purpose very well and will get back to the basic wood quite quickly. The wood should then be sanded and repaired if necessary although the odd sign of wear and tear will in no way be out of place. The type of stain to be used is a matter of opinion - I prefer a water stain which, although it is inclined to lift the grain is more easily controlled than others and if applied in a too heavy-handed manner can be lightened by wiping with a damp cloth. The use of a grain filler is recommended but these are not easily available commercially these days. The varnish is a matter of personal taste - there are many good quality varnishes available to dry in a range from satin finish to high gloss. Satin with a little gloss mixed in seems to make a finish which sits happily on something which is not 'antique' in the true sense of the word but yet is just growing old gracefully.

REPAIR AND RESTORATION OF THE "BRIGHTWORK".

Roger Cole.

Often when a phonograph or gramophone is obtained, some or all of the nickel plated parts are very much the worse for wear. Each individual varies in the degree to which he wishes to return the machine to "as new" condition; many like their machines to look their age, while some prefer showroom condition. However, the degree to which restoration is taken will depend largely on the condition of the metalwork when the machine is obtained.

Where deterioration in finish is small, it is often possible to restore the shine by judicious use of a preparation such as Brasso, or a chrome cleaner, to remove the worst of the pitting, finished with a milder polish such as Silvo.

However, where rust is very obvious, the only solution is to have the parts re-nickled. Note - nickel, never chromium plate; the latter is a modern invention. The procedure to follow is this:

1. Dismantle all parts to be nickled, making a duplicate list as you go of every single separate item.
2. If the machine is a disc gramophone, remove the felt from the turntable.
3. Take all parts in a box to the firm doing the job, and check off with the attendant every part involved, even numbering each separate screw and nut, and leave one copy of the list with the firm. This means that in the event of a part being lost, you have the whip hand and can prove that the part was actually handed to the firm. Do not fail to do this - I had a part go missing, and waited over six months for the firm to obtain a replacement, which had to be specially made.
4. Check off the parts against your list when collecting the finished job, before leaving the shop.

Now you have all your parts beautifully shiny, all that is necessary is re-assembly. Grease sparingly moving parts, such as the bush mounting of the U shaped portion of the tone arm, and the mounting of the tone arm in its base. The turntable of a disc machine

will now need re-covering. Proceed as follows:

Take a piece of felt of the appropriate colour, ensure that it is large enough, and iron to perfectly smooth. Many turntables are "dished" i.e. they have a depressed centre. To get the cloth to adhere to this, cut some cardboard to fit neatly into the dishing; this cardboard should be almost flush with the top of the turntable. Now take a tube of P.V.A. glue, and apply this to the top of the turntable, beginning at the centre and working in spirals to the outside edge, then repeat in the opposite direction. Ensure plenty of glue is present in the centre of the turntable, and at the outside edge.

Now invert the turntable and place it squarely on the cloth; turn the whole thing right way up again and put your cardboard disc in the centre on top of the felt. On top of this put a flat board (a breadboard is ideal if large enough), turn upside down again, place plenty of weight on top, and leave for 12 hours. Trim the felt with a sharp knife, cutting with the turntable upside down, put a hole in the centre for the spindle; I do this with a punch, which although a little hard on the punch makes an excellent job.

MARIE LLOYD - QUEEN OF THE MUSIC HALL

A.J.R.

Next year, 1970, will mark the centenary of the birth of one of the greatest stars of Music Hall. Marie Lloyd, or Matilda Alice Victoria Wood to give her her correct name, was born on February 12th, 1870, in Hoxton. She was the eldest of a family of eleven, several of whom also appeared on the stage.

Her first appearance was at the Grecian when she was aged fifteen. Her salary was fifteen shillings a week, but a year later she was receiving one hundred pounds a week appearing at the top Music Halls in the West End.

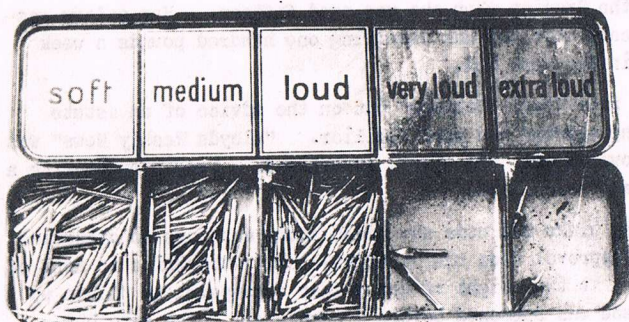
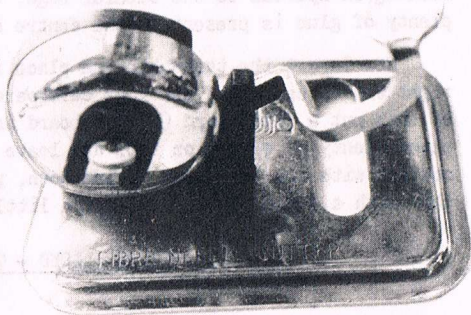
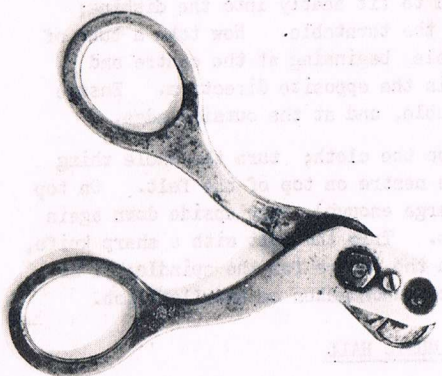
She first appeared under the name "Bella Delmore" but on the advice of an astute manager she changed it to something shorter and more familiar. "Lloyds Weekly News" was a popular newspaper of the time, known to all, and widely advertised. Combining it with a favourite christian name she became Marie Lloyd.

Through cunning use of knowing winks and nods she added saucy meanings to otherwise innocuous songs which met with disapproval from the straight-laced authorities in many of the towns in which she performed. At the height of her career a campaign to "Clean up the Music Halls" was mounted and she was summoned before a committee. She sang her repertoire minus any embellishments and naturally the Committee could find nothing objectionable in her performance. She then gave the august gentlemen a piece of her mind for wasting her time and then sang them two unasked-for encores, songs popular in drawing-room musical evenings. One song was Lord Tennyson's "Come Into the Garden Maud" which, with the aid of a few winks and smiles took on a meaning the noble Lord could never have imagined. With that Marie swept from the room leaving the poor committee stunned and blushing furiously. The songs she made popular included "Oh! Mr Porter", "One of the Ruins that Cromwell knocked about a bit", "My Old Man said to Follow the Van", "A Little of What You Fancy", "Coster Girl in Paris", "Every Little Movement", "Everything in the Garden's Lovely".

Even today many of her songs are still heard, but rarely sung exactly as she sang the

She died in 1922, when only fifty-two, but despite this she left very few recordings, and those which do exist convey very little of the personality she must have possessed.

A musical based on her life is now touring in England and that well-known devotee of Music Hall, Mr. Daniel Farson, is writing a biography for publication next year.



ABOVE:- FIBRE NEEDLE CUTTERS

LEFT:- COLUMBIA

RIGHT:- HIS MASTERS VOICE



LEFT:- ALL-U-NEED

NEEDLE TIN — OPEN AND CLOSED

We are fortunate in already having two excellent biographies of this wonderful woman, one by Naomi Jacob and one by W. MacQueen-Pope, and hope that Mr. Farson will show us new aspects of this star who, one encyclopaedia sums up as "English Music Hall artist and genius of Cockney comedy."

BOOK REVIEW

"Sweet Saturday Night" by Colin MacInnes. Pub. MacGibbon & Kee.

A.J.R.

That famous phenomenon, the British Music Hall, existed from around 1850 until the 1930's, dying a lingering death in its latter years. Comparatively few books have been written about Music Hall and as time goes by fewer authors can write from first-hand knowledge of the "Halls".

One of the few is Colin MacInnes whose volume "Sweet Saturday Night" I have recently had the pleasure of reading. In addition to having seen and heard many of the "greats" perform Mr. MacInnes was very fortunate in working for some time with the B.B.C. where he had access to their unique gramophone library and their sheet music collection.

Despite these resources, I did catch Mr. MacInnes napping on two occasions. Once when speaking of Billy Williams he says....."Some twenty of his songs survive....." Actually he recorded over forty songs on 2 minute wax records and at least fifteen Blue Amberols. Referring to Marie Lloyd's "Coster Girl in Paris" he says "...I haven't been able to trace the authors of this..." from which we may infer that the composers' names are not known. According to the label on my record the composer was one O. Powell.

Good points about this book are first of all its excellent index of both performers and songs. The value of any book is greatly enhanced by an adequate index. Secondly, I was very appreciative of Mr. MacInnes' practice of artists' dates of birth and death - a little extra which adds to the value. But the most important thing about this book was its essential "readability". Mr. MacInnes is an accomplished writer with many publications to his credit. He speaks his mind with refreshing honesty.

Some of his comments on famous music hall artistes and the songs are worth quoting:- on "The Man Who Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo" - "I don't think that (it)... is a really notable song"; on "Let's all go down the Strand"..."a dreary ditty (like the street) with immemorable words and a tune that's hard to sing convincingly"; on Charlie Chaplin... "chiefly embarrassing"; on Albert Chevalier and "My Old Dutch"..."the lyric is quite an astute one, though the tune lugubrious, and Chevalier delivered it with such oleaginous dollops of sentiment that an admirer of the art of the Halls, masking his blushes, feels he ought really to keep quiet about it".

Well, Mr. MacInnes, I happen to like Old Albert's singing of that song, but I also like your book and shall be purchasing a copy for my own collection.

COLLECTOR'S LUCK

by Roger Cole

Some time ago, I decided that my collection needed considerable expansion, so along with my girlfriend's father David Williams, (now my father-in-law) and also a member of our Society, I placed an advertisement in each of Christchurch's two papers, on a Saturday. Over fifty replies ensued and following them up was a most interesting experience - and a financial strain, I might add. From this one advertisement came the Edison Diamond Disc Machine No C25 designed to play the long-playing diamond discs as well as the standard ones, together with the Oro-Tone attachment and a Pathe recording blank for use therewith, along with about seventy diamond discs and four long-playing discs, two 10" and two 12". All this for \$20, so you can imagine my response when, later on I was offered four diamond discs at

the 'sacrifice' price of only \$4.00 each! Also came an Excelda, mini Cameraphone, the beautiful Apollo floor 78 r.p.m. model, several portables and table models. One of my best buys was a floor model Raxonola 'Prismaphonic' with a spring broken for \$2. Repair of this, disclosed one of the best tone of any acoustic machine I have heard.

The best 'laugh' was over a very dilapidated Amberola 30 with damaged grille and a very noisy motor, which I was offered for \$80. And this in a tone which indicated that this price was, it was realized, very low! Needless to say, the machine is probably still there.

A number of people offered records and I soon learnt never to pass any by. One which seemed unpromising yielded several Durium in original packets, including a 4" advertising record also made by the Durium Company. All for two cents each. Another answer resulted in a large pile of 'trash' but included one or two beautiful classical vocals - this made the trip very worthwhile. And remember - one man's trash is another man's collection! I have been able to sell and exchange to my satisfaction, most of the surplus.

So take heart, there appears to still be a great number of early recordings and equipment still in existence. All you have to do is to find it!

MAINTAINING YOUR PHONOGRAPH

A.J.R.

One of the most common faults on a phonograph is incorrect speed and it is also a very simple matter to rectify. No elaborate equipment such as a stroboscope is needed as most phonographs come "ready equipped." All you need is a watch!

If you look carefully at the rod on which the reproduction carriage travels you will probably find two rings encircling the rod. These rings are $1 \frac{9}{16}$ inches apart and when your phonograph is playing a two minute record it should take exactly one minute to travel between these two points. If it does not take this time your machine is not running at 160 revolutions per minute and you should adjust the screw underneath the deck to correct it.

If your machine has a plain rod on which the reproduction carriage slides it is quite a simple matter to make two marks on the rod.

If your machine plays only 4 minute records then naturally the time taken to travel between the two points should be two minutes.

One thing to remember is that you should time your machine when it is actually playing a record with the horn in position.

"EROICA" SYMPHONY-Part 5 (Scherzo),

" " -Part 6 (Finale, Allegro Molto). (Beethoven, Opus 55).

By Sir Henry J. Wood conducting the New Queen's Hall Orchestra. 12-in. blue label Columbia, No. L 1449. It may seem a trifle odd to deal with a single record from a set, as I am doing here, especially when that record is one of those "loners" which lie in wait so annoyingly for the collector as he rummages through an auction-room pile. Furthermore, the recording itself is no more than what one would expect from an acoustic orchestral disc - nothing thrilling to listen to. The interesting part of this record comes, of all places, in the very last groove of the very last side; I am referring to the deep "