



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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Page 1.

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and Walter T. Norris

EDITORIAL AND SECRETARIAL ADDRESS:

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NEW ZEALAND.

FROM ELLESMERE TO FERRYMEAD

In the middle of August in the 'Tenders' column of the Christchurch newspapers, an advertisement for the removal of the Ellesmere Methodist Church caught the eye of one of the members of the Executive of the Society. The wooden building which had been built in 1911 has a main room of 40' x 25', a vestry or school room of approximately 15' x 12' and a small entrance porch. Bill Flecknoe as acting convener of the Building Committee, contacted the solicitor for the Church Trustees and after reporting to our August meeting, was asked to view the building. This he did and as he gave a favourable report it was arranged for a viewing by other members of the Executive.

They found an attractive building, twenty-three feet high looking a little sad and neglected. It has a beautiful stained glass window above the entrance porch; the internal roof is of Kauri (an attractive native New Zealand wood) and there are decorative rafters which bolt to the walls. The walls themselves are plastered at the top and panelled at the bottom. They could see the potential of the building but were not blinded to its faults or to the work involved in bringing it to the standard of a fine clubroom and display room for the Society. The spouting needs replacing, there is some borer in the woodwork, the porch floor will have to be replaced and the building, both inside and outside needs painting. Nothing, it was felt, which could not be done with time, enthusiasm, effort and cash.

It was felt that we could not fulfil one of the conditions of tender, namely to remove the building within six weeks. However, at the request of the trustees, we finally supported our tender of \$100 with a letter requesting a maximum of six months to move the Church to Ferrymead. Before the tender was submitted Bill Flecknoe obtained quotations for transporting it. \$2,000 was set as a top limit for what we knew would be the most expensive part of the project and we breathed again when we heard that the lowest quote (at the time of writing) was just \$400 under that figure.

On September 18 we were advised that our tender and our conditions had been accepted. In the meantime we had begun unofficial negotiations with the Ferrymead Museum of Science and Industry who own the land we must rent in order to be part of the Historic Park. A suggested site was inspected on September 19th and we shall now proceed to make official application. Again we run into further and considerable expense, as to comply with Drainage Board requirements, we must 'fill' our section to a height of three and a half feet.

All this adds up to many hours in work and many dollars in finance but nothing worthwhile is achieved without sacrifice. We have been amazed and thrilled by the financial support we have already received from so many members. If any others are prepared to take up free-of-interest debentures or make a donation we shall be delighted to hear about it. And to those who intend

visiting us within the next twelve months don't forget to pack a paint brush as well as a toothbrush!

STOP PRESS: The above was written before the Society's Sixth Annual General Meeting. At the meeting on September 27th it was unanimously decided to purchase the Church. The balance required has been paid to the solicitor and we are at present trying to obtain 'fill' for the section. One of the senior students of Lincoln Agricultural College who are to plan the landscaping of our end of Ferrymead Historic Park, asked with interest whether all groups associated with the project were as active as we are!

A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY:

There are many members to whom I write individually, usually to answer specific questions, but there are many more who have written letters which, though they perhaps don't require a personal answer, I would like to acknowledge. Firstly I would like to thank all those who have expressed appreciation of the magazine; it takes quite an effort by quite a number of people, and to hear that it is well received is a great encouragement to us all. I have also been amazed and delighted by the interest shown by many members in the club building; some have shown their interest in a tangible form thus really making it a 'society' effort. It seems that we shall have the pleasure of meeting some of you in the next few years. You will be most welcome.

Thank you too for your patience earlier in the year. Your response to our lists of parts and reprints has been overwhelming and I am happy that we are able to fulfil your orders more promptly. I would like to apologise for the delay in replying to some of your letters. Some replies are held for investigation; others I suspect get answered twice and some I fear, when my filing system breaks down, not at all!

The last twelve months have been a busy year, but a good one and with the project of our clubroom so well advanced the next year will be even more exciting.

PAMELA G. ROGERS.

THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE RENEWED THEIR SUBSCRIPTION. To those who have not yet done so we would remind you that THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE OF 'THE PHONOGRAPHIC RECORD' YOU WILL RECEIVE UNTIL YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS RECEIVED.

A FEW RANDOM REMARKS ON EARLY RECORDINGS OF GILBERT & SULLIVAN -

PART II

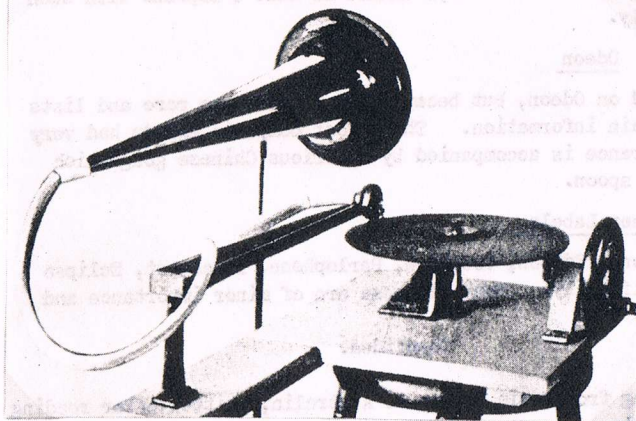
by Michael P. Walters

English Columbia

English Columbia, the most prolific recorder of Gilbert and Sullivan next to the Gramophone Company, began issuing records before the first war; on these records Walter Passmore figures prominently. Harold Williams was another who made many recordings for Columbia. In 1932, Columbia and H.M.V. merged to form E.M.I. and after that, few records were issued on Columbia's label, but even as late as 1958 one of the very oldest - DX17, of vocal gems from Iolanthe was still available. A great deal of the Columbia output consists of brass and military band selections and sets of Vocal Gems by the Columbia Light Opera Company (in which George Baker sang under the name of George Portland, one of his many pseudonyms).

Some of the most interesting things which appeared on Columbia were the four abridged recordings. The Mikado was the first and some of the discs in this set were to piano accompaniment, others to orchestral. This was followed by The Gondoliers, Iolanthe and The Yeoman of the Guard. The casts of these records included Alice Lilley, Joan Cross, Nellie Walker, Dan Jones, George Baker, Appleton Moore, William Heseltine, Sophie Rowlands, Randall Jackson, Catherine Stewart, Barrington Hooper, Robert Carr, Harold Eden and Edith Furmedge.

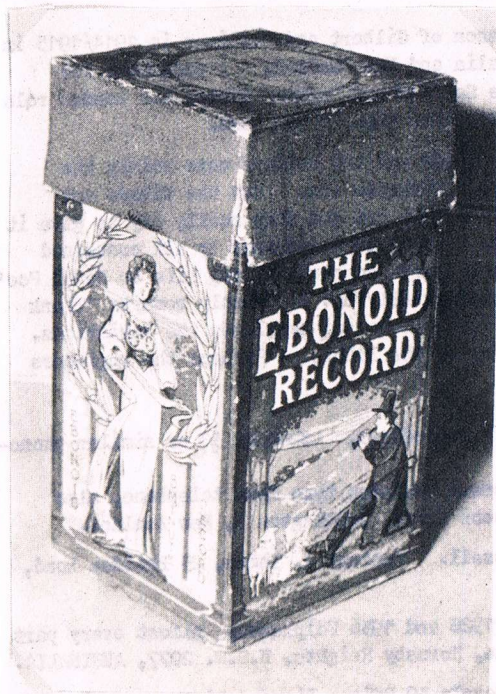
Unusual records include 'God shall wipe away all tears' from 'The Light of the World' by Clara Butt



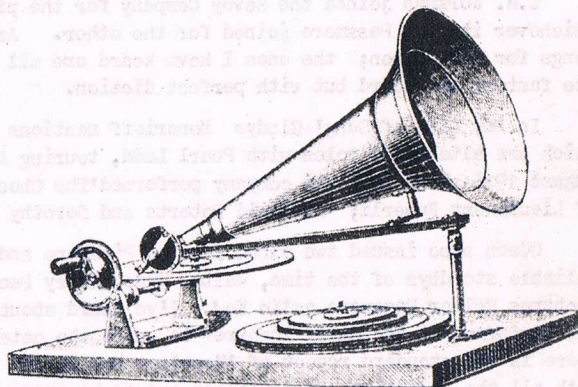
BERLINER

LEFT:- THE FIRST GRAMOPHONE

BELOW:- THE 1889 GRAMOPHONE



Photograph William Main, Wellington



and the Overture Di Ballo by the City of Birmingham Orchestra. Violet Essex recorded "The Sun Whose Rays" on this label, which is interesting as she sang it again in the H.M.V. acoustic Mikado (1918). Both versions are equally nauseating and it has always amazed me that a soprano with such a beautiful voice could have sung this so badly.

Odeon

A reasonable amount of music was recorded on Odeon, but because the records are rare and lists were rarely published, it is difficult to obtain information. The almost complete Mikado had very dubious orchestrations, thus the Mikado's entrance is accompanied by a curious Chinese gong which sounds like someone banging a saucepan with a spoon.

Other Labels

Labels such as American Columbia, Zonophone, Edison, Vocalion, Parlophone, Broadcast, Eclipse and Decca made records of Sullivan, some prolifically. Many of these are of minor importance and of others, information is difficult to obtain.

Concluded.

We were delighted to receive the following from Nevin Walker of Australia, written after reading the first instalment of Michael Walters' article:

C.H. Workman joined the Savoy Company for the premiere either of The Grand Duke or Utopia Ltd. Whichever it was, Passmore joined for the other. Around 1908 Workman recorded most of the patter songs for 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " Odeon; the ones I have heard are all good and the Dream Song from Iolanthe is surely the fastest on record but with perfect diction.

In 'My Life of Song' Gladys Moncrieff mentions a season of Gilbert and Sullivan in 1914/1915 in which she alternated roles with Pearl Ladd, touring Australia and New Zealand. A programme for August 1915 shows that the company performed 'The Chocolate Soldier' and Workman played his London role of Lieutenant Bumerli; Reginald Roberts and Dorothy Brunton were also in the cast.

Odeon also issued two album sets of Pinafore and the Mikado and the artists were mainly the reliable standbys of the time, Walter Hyde, Harry Dearth, Ada Florence etc. But the Mikado set features Walter Passmore as 'Ko Ko'. I've heard about half of this set and they really try to give it "as performed at the Savoy Theatre" to quote the catalogue. After much applause by all concerned there is the standard repeat of 'Here's a how de do' - Harry Dearth concludes 'long life to Nanki Poo' with all the variations of a Plancon and as he pauses a voice quietly but distinctly remarks "Thank you Harry." "I hadn't finished," he retorts in a most offended tone and completes the variations. Speeds in the set, incidentally vary from 74 to 80 according to the labels. Perhaps the engineers got into the spirit of the performance.

WANTED: Flower horn and crane for Edison Fireside, model H reproducer, Amberola 30 or similar phonograph.

AVAILABLE TO SWAP: Table model Diamond Disc machine, Ericsson skeleton type desk telephone, also Amberol cylinders and Diamond Discs. I.W. Clarke, 21 Queens Drive, Wellington 3, New Zealand.

WANTED TO OBTAIN: The book 'Electric Accumulators' by Cassell. Contact A. Yates, 23 Baidon Road, Auckland 2, New Zealand.

WANTED TO SWAP: A considerable quantity of new parts for 1928 and 1936 Ediphones; almost every part except motors. Contact Michael Tucker, 28 Meredith Avenue, Hornsby Heights, N.S.W. 2077, AUSTRALIA.

WANTED TO BUY: Any Brunswick, Panotrope (Gramophone), Amberola 30 Edison Diamond Disc, unusual needle tins, record labels etc. Also any 2-minute cylinders. I would also like to obtain a Columbia Grafanola Console Model 153A (oak) or No. 154A (mahogany). Tony Hosking, 63 Wilson Street, Timaru, New Zealand.

CORRECTION: We have been asked by Clarry Stewart, the owner of the Edison Fireside with the cedar cygnet horn referred to on page 50, Volume 6, Issue 6 in the report on the 1971 Convention to state that the recording of Caprice Viennois was played by George Hamilton Green on Blue Amberol cylinder No. 3155. It was not played by Charles Daab.

One of the highlights of the 1971 Convention was a talk and demonstration by one of the Antique Dealers of Christchurch, Mr. Gordon Garraway. Mr. Garraway demonstrated to us his method of cleaning off old finishes on wood and finally French polishing the objects involved. In a very happy compromise he neither talked down to us nor above our knowledge. One of the most helpful things he did was to supply us with notes and with his permission we shall print these in this and succeeding issues of the magazine. The first instalment deals with:

REQUIREMENTS AND STRIPPING WOOD

by Gordon Garraway

ARTICLES NEEDED:

Stainers: Burnt Umber, Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna. (These can be bought in powder form or in various shades of tinned Universal Tinters).

OTHER ARTICLES: Cork block; raw linseed oil, Basal Crystals, pure gum turps, Teribine (a drying agent), steel wool (fine), medium and fine grade sandpaper, stripper, 1" and 2" good quality brushes, soft fitches or brushes in various sizes including pencil type, a good old fashioned pocket knife with a two or three inch blade and a sharp point.

POINT TO REMEMBER! Whether painting or polishing, the preparatory work will dictate the standard of the final finish. Too many pieces are spoilt by the lack of an extra hour or two of sanding etc.

POLISH RECIPE: For rejuvenating and keeping polished surfaces in good order use equal parts of the following: raw linseed oil, Methylated Spirits, pure gum turpentine and vinegar. Shake well before using, apply with a soft cloth and rub up with a soft rag.

AN INTRODUCTION TO STRIPPING WOOD: Stripping good pieces of furniture needs care. Different types of timber, veneered work etc. all need different treatment when the old finish is being stripped. For example, veneered work should not be washed or stripped down by using Basal Crystals as continued soaking will lift the veneer. There are two types of finish suitable for old pieces: a French polish finish or the old English wax finish. A waxed surface will stand up to years of wear and will not scratch as readily as one French polished. Over a period, by the application of wax with vigorous rubbing a piece takes on a mellow finish which will outlast a French polish.

STRIPPING: Those with delicate skins should wear rubber gloves. For our first example I shall use an oak cabinet, surface not veneered. Put one packet of Basal Crystals in a bucket, cover with a normal sized household electric jug full of boiling water and swirl around until the crystals are dissolved. Use a short scrubbing brush with longer bristles at one end. Always put your hot solution on from the bottom of any piece and work up; if you start at the top and work down the solution will leave streaky marks. Once the solution has been applied, leave for three or four minutes then complete the process again. Do not scrub in a rough circular motion as this can leave score marks. When the old polish has softened, hose off and wash with copious quantities of luke warm water. On New Zealand Kauri it is very easy to have the wood 'fur up' causing a problem when sanding down to get an even surface.

On veneered pieces of furniture you can use Basal Crystals but only when you have become proficient and can complete a piece without taking too much time. The best process for veneered work is to use one of the conventional rapid paint strippers and follow the instructions on the container. I normally apply it with a paint brush and when the old varnish or polish has softened I scrape off as much as possible with a scraper (not a sharp edged one.) Once the surface is removed wash down with mineral turps. You can also put a quick coat of Basal Crystals on and wash it off straight away. A POINT TO REMEMBER - whatever you use to strip with, it is a must that you wash your article all over with vinegar. This is to neutralise any acid left in the pores of the timber. Never leave

A True Mirror of Sound

BETTINI

MICRO-
PHONOGRAPH

MICRO-DIAPHRAGMS
FOR PHONOGRAPH AND
GRAPHOPHONE

BETTINI
CELEBRATED
"OPERATIC MUSICAL RECORDS"
AND
AUTOGRAPH RECORDS
OF
WORLD FAMOUS ARTISTS



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BETTINI PHONOGRAPH
LABORATORY
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WHAT WILL YOU DO IN THE LONG, COLD, DARK, SHIVERY EVENINGS, WHEN YOUR HEALTH AND CONVENIENCE COMPEL YOU TO STAY INDOORS?

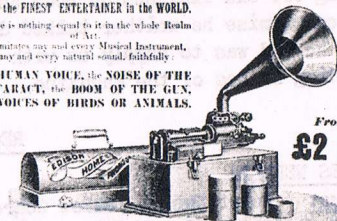
WHY!!! HAVE A PHONOGRAPH, OF COURSE.

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There is nothing equal to it in the whole Realm of Art.

It imitates any and every Musical Instrument, any and every natural sound, faithfully.

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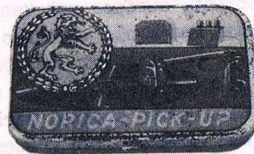
EVERY HOME WILL sooner or later have the PHONOGRAPH as a NECESSITY.

HAVE YOURS NOW; you will enjoy it longer.

Brought within the reach of every family by Mr. Edison's last production at **£2 2s.**

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and 21, Chancery Lane, E.C.

THE ORIGINAL POSTER FROM WHICH
THE TEA TOWEL IS DESIGNED



TWO GERMAN NEEDLE TINS

Above:- 'MARSHAL' Obtainable in several colours

Below:- 'NORICA' Pick Up

RECORDING TRACKS:- LEFT STANDARD

RIGHT BETTINI



a piece to dry in the hot sun or by a warm fire as this can cause warping or cracking. It can be left in the sun for half an hour then put away to dry out slowly. Don't forget after washing down to dry as much excess water as possible with a piece of old towelling. Sometimes you will come across a very tough old resinous finish on gramophone cases etc. In days gone by the old masters used resin in the French polish and built up coat after coat by sablebrush and in between coats they used pumice blocks to buff back, hence the surfaces on old pianos etc. are hard to remove. There is only one way to remove this and that is by the use of rapid paint stripper. While the stripper has softened up the varnish or polish, you can put a hot Basal Crystal solution straight on top of the stripper; this will cause a foaming action but do not let that worry you. You will find the hot Basal Crystals will clean out the stripper from awkward little corners, moulding etc. Make sure to wash it off with hot water.

To be continued.

GIANNI BETTINI

New Zealand collectors in particular must be grateful to past generations of music lovers for the vast amount of valuable material connected with the early days of the talking machine which has been preserved. Much of this material is rare even by world standards and we are fortunate indeed to have among local collections a considerable amount of material produced by the pioneer recorder Gianni Bettini. In this issue we illustrate the cover of one of the Bettini catalogues reproduced by the Archive of Recorded Sound, The Knoll, Stanford, California, U.S.A. The three catalogues are well illustrated and beautifully produced. It is some years now since we obtained our copies but members interested would be well advised to contact the Stanford Archive for information regarding availability. This design also appeared as a coloured poster, lithographed in four colours. It was amongst the Bettini material owned by the late Mr. C.E. Woledge, the Society's first Patron; it is now in the collection of a Wellington member. The machine pictured appears to be an elaborate Edison 5" early Concert fitted with a Bettini reproducer and horn. Mr. Woledge told us that he had seen the carved marble stand in Christchurch so collectors should watch out for both this and the machine.

A fact that is not generally known is that Bettini concert sized cylinders were sold in New Zealand by a Wellington firm. According to Seymour, Bettini had a special way of grinding his recording sapphires and this method is discussed in Seymour's book. Our illustration shows the track made by a standard recorder compared with that made by a Bettini recorder.

We also picture another machine with a Bettini attachment; this is the first model Home produced by Edison and is spring driven. This machine is the second spring driven model produced and was first on sale between 1895 and 1896; this 'suitcase' model has the distinctive clips which hold on the lid. Most collectors will be familiar with the advertisement having seen it used as a design for a tea towel. There the words 'Edison' and 'Home' have been blacked out but most of the rest of the poster remains. These tea towels are a most attractive accessory to a display and can be framed or used as a wall hanging. We have been exhibiting such a tea towel at our display at Ferryhead and have been impressed by the interest it has provoked.

A MESSAGE FROM FRED FERRYMEAD: You will note that Fred and his fund raising barometer do not appear in this issue. Fred is a grateful but confused man. He has had several gifts in the form of donations but he has invested some of his money in Christmas cards. These he is selling well and making money for his building but he has asked us to tell you there are some left for those who HURRY. Fred has spent days trying to balance his cash in hand against the cards he has sold etc. etc. and it's been too much but he'll have it worked out before the Christmas issue of The Phonographic Record.

HELP FROM THE U.S.A.: In Volume 6, Issue 5 of The Phonographic Record, we asked for information regarding a reproducer with a removable diaphragm. Mr. J.F. Hamilton of Phoenix, Arizona tells us that he has a Yankee Prince machine, sold by the O'Neill James Company which has a reproducer identical to the one pictured.

H.M.V. GRAMOPHONE KEYS: As a fund raising effort, Roger Cole, 5 Clearbrook Street, Christchurch 5, New Zealand has for sale keys which fit H.M.V. machines which have a straight slot. They fit several machines including the 'Lumiere'. Inquiries direct please.

AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BERLINER DISC PHONOGRAPHS

In this issue we illustrate two of the earliest phonographs. One is of Berliner's first machine and the other is of his 1889 machine which we feel is his second because the design is still primitive. We have not heard of the existence of either machine and would be pleased to hear from anyone who has.

THE EBONOID RECORD

This record and its accompanying box are something of a rarity in New Zealand so it was with great interest we heard that Clive Morrison of Dunedin had acquired two boxes, one with a complete cylinder, the other with a cylinder which had been shortened. Both boxes are in very good order and the colours of the most attractive design have weathered the years very well. On three of the four sides it is proudly stated that the box contains a 'five minute record' and on one side a considerable list of 'conditions of purchase.' The cylinders were manufactured and sold by The Premier Manufacturing Co. Ltd., The Point, Wandsworth, London S.W.

THE BUTTERFLY RECORD

Just a photograph of a not so rare but rather attractive record. The ones we have seen are a rather attractive dark red but there could have been other colours. Any information?

RECORDS OF RECORDS

by G.B.E.

"Chanson de Fleur" ("Carmen"-Bizet), sung by Mme. Jomelli;
Edison-Bell 2-minute black wax cylinder No. 10383. (piano acc.)

This record can claim the doubtful distinction of being my only wax vocal operatic recording and must be, on reflection, one of the few such made by the Edison-Bell Co. in its cylinder days. Although of course, not in the same class as the Edison 2 and 4-minute "B's" and even more super rare Pathe celebrity cylinders (not to mention Lieut. Bettini's contributions), it is an interesting item by a recognised artist. Jeanne Jomelli is given in Bauer as having been born in 1879 (died 1932); although he makes no mention of her Edison-Bell recordings she has turned up on one side of a Minstrel disc of c.1911, backed by one Jeanne Brola (readers will of course remember an earlier article, Vol. 2, Issue 5, pp. 35 and 37, about Edison-Bell recordings on this locally issued label).

The recording is very good, Madame announcing it herself in a delightful accent and especially through hearing tubes, gives a sound which is wonderfully real and at the same time "antique" (to misuse that unfortunate word even further). All in all a charming piece by a capable, if not outstanding soprano, for a company usually associated more with Music Hall, brass band and orchestral recording.