

# The Phonographic Record

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

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 1

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The twelfth Annual General Meeting was held on September 26th at St.Mary's Hall, Merivale. Walter Norris, Past President, took the chair for election of officers, which were as follows:-

President: J.Marshall  
Vice-President: G.East  
Treasurer: A.Otley  
Committee: S.Hobbs, P.Mattison, W.Dini  
Magazine Editor: W.Norris, L.Drummond was re-appointed Secretary.  
W.Dini was re-appointed as Ferrymead Trust representative  
with S.Hobbs as substitute.

The following duty proposals have been decided upon:-

<u>Joffre Marshall:</u>	Parts Manufacturer, Controller of Stock and Packing Officer
<u>Gavin East:</u>	Magazine Assistant, Ferrymead Display Officer
<u>Adair Otley:</u>	Treasurer's duties, Ferrymead roster, Library, Secretarial duties to Packing Team
<u>Walter Norris:</u>	Magazine Editor. Programme Co-ordinator.
<u>Bill Dini:</u>	Publicity and Advertising, Ferrymead Trust representative, Parts advisor. Supper.
<u>Stuart Hobbs:</u>	Assistant Ferrymead Trust representative. Gifts and Aquisitions Collector & Controller.
<u>Peter Mattison:</u>	Building Controller at Ferrymead. Supply and Packing Officer.

## CORRECTION

*A letter from John Baldwin points out that in February issue, 1977 page 22 we stated that the model Talk-o-phone illustrated was a different model from one described on page 45 of the August issue 1975 - one which is owned by him.*

*This statement was incorrect as pictures B and C are the same as the one illustrated on page 22. We thank him for pointing out this mistake and are sorry for the error.*

## OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Well, it took some doing, but we have managed to overcome Joffre Marshall's diffidence. After six years as Vice-President, he has agreed to take the chair. Joffre hails from the green pastures of South Canterbury, and has retained his feeling for country life through the promotions and moves of a highly successful career with New Zealand Railways. He is now Station Master of Rangiora Railway Station, which is twenty miles from Christchurch. Overseas readers may be unaware that N.Z. Railways are Government-owned.

Almost since the foundation of the Society, Joffre and Margaret Marshall have been towers of strength in all aspects of our activity. Joffre's engineering skill and exacting standards have been the mainstay of our parts service, while Margaret's culinary contributions and all-round assistance are an indispensable part of our success.

Even when not in his workshop, Joffre is a man of many parts. A keen gardener, he also maintains an interest in old bottles, vintage power farming equipment and country music. To see Joffre and Margaret on duty at our display, with their children, Diane and Andrew, is to see a true Society family in action. We can be confident that, under Joffre's leadership, the Society will continue to prosper.

### KAURI WOOD

#### NATIVE TIMBER TO NEW ZEALAND

We are pleased to announce that we have available machine turned stocks of Kauri. A very suitable fine grained wood for turning of knobs, handles, etc. for Phonographs and Gramophones. Ideal for carving. A limited quantity is now available in lengths of up to 18 inches diameter 1 in. to 1½ inch. All machine turned. Price: 60c per length. Remember Order Early.

### FIVE NEW PARTS

J.L.Marshall

We are pleased to advise members that the following new parts have been manufactured and are available (see Illustration).

#### A. Plated dome screws

These form the centre point of the turntable on H.M.V. Turntable Machines of early overhorn design and are often missing - \$1.40.

#### B. Adjustment screw for speed control of Edison Standard.

These are for early model standards where speed control knob is able to be adjusted from the top of the machine. Do not confuse with Triumph or Home. These have a different length and thread - \$1.90.

#### C. Horn clamp and screw,

These also fit H.M.V. overhorn disc machines of c.1904 onwards era, and also are often missing; we feel they will be a much needed part by a number of collectors.

This part is horse-shoe shaped and fits on to the support arm, fitting over the metal lip of the small end of the horn, in fact, holds the horn onto the machine - \$2.60 per set.

#### D. Edison Lead-Screw,

Over many weeks using a standard lathe I have been able to produce a prototype lead screw and gear which is identical to the lead screw and gear as fitted to the Edison Standard.

In order to gauge the number of these to manufacture, I would appreciate it if members would write and state their requirements. The greater number I tool up to produce, the cheaper the cost; no cost for this part has yet been assessed.

#### E. Lead Screw Cover.

This part was included in the photograph but is not a new part. These are listed on the Society Part List.

## AN ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BERLINER DISC PHONOGRAPHS MODEL M.S.

1902

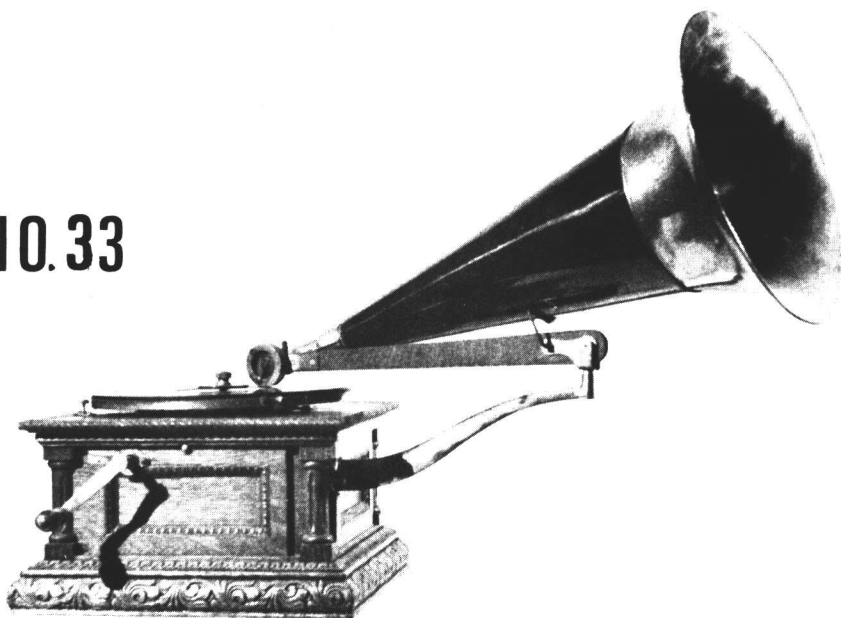
VICTOR MONARCH SPECIAL

NO.33

Another machine from the Schlick collection, one which its owner can be proud of. According to the 1901 catalogue, the Victor Monarch Special is the best at all points of any talking machine of any kind and at any price that has ever been made. Its triple spring motor runs longer and stronger than any disk talking machine heretofore made. It runs quieter and governs perfectly, as it is built on correct mechanical principles. This ensures an absolute evenness in tone. The materials used in its construction are the best. No expense has been spared to make a cabinet

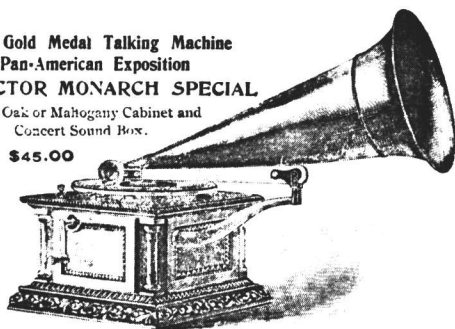
# VICTOR M S

## NO. 33



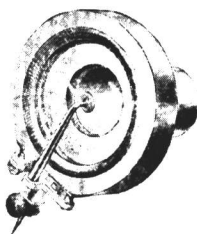
Only Gold Medal Talking Machine  
Pan-American Exposition  
**VICTOR MONARCH SPECIAL**  
Fancy Oak or Mahogany Cabinet and  
Concert Sound Box.

**\$45.00**



**TAKEN FROM 1901—1902**

**VICTOR CATALOGUE**



**PRICE, \$2.50**

### NEW CENTURY SOUND BOX

This Sound Box has been on the market for some time. I have just secured exclusive control of the patents, and made a number of changes in the Box, which give greatly improved results. Only those bearing my name have these improvements. The new "Century" will be furnished with any type Victor Talking Machine instead of our Standard Sound Box without extra charge when requested.

**ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON**

Stephen Girard Building, Philadelphia, Pa.

which is more elaborate in design and superior in finish to anything ever offered before. The construction of the cabinet is such (the top being designed with hinges) that it enables one to oil all portions of the machine by simply swinging it back.

Altogether, it is superior to anything that has ever been made in the talking machine line. Victor Monarch Special could be purchased in either a fancy oak or mahogany cabinet and fitted with the concert sound box. Selling price was \$45 U.S. Dollars in 1902. Larry Schlick claims this model to be an M.S. and says the case is the same size as the early model M.S. The model illustrated has an oak case, horn is 19 inches long, wood horn support is 14 inches long and metal horn support bracket extends 9½ inches from case. (Further information from anyone would be appreciated).

#### New Century Sound Box

Last issue we illustrated two well known reproducers (sound box) as fitted to early Eldridge Johnson Victor machines. In this issue, we illustrate a page from early catalogue, depicting a sound box that we have not heard of. Larry Schlick made the remark that he has never viewed a Victor with this model of reproducer.

#### RECORD LABEL

From Nevin Walker, Sydney, Australia, came the record label illustrated in this issue. He runs The Vintage Record Shop, and says this is one of two labels he has kept. (The illustration doesn't do it justice!) He says it is very colourful and needs colour to show it off. The selection (Collins and Harlan — in Timbuctoo) is apparently rubber-stamped onto a printed label. The Company was one of the early "pirates" companies, continually being taken to Court by either Victor or Columbia. Prescott, of course, later started Odeon. The disc is single sided, of blue material not unlike the later Blue Amberols. Detail on the Indian is very colourful.

From Tin Foil to Stereo - page 131 - states:-

In February of 1900 Hawthorne & Sheble introduced the "Discophone" licensed under the patents of the American Graphophone Co. In view of the closeness of dates, it seems rather obvious that this had been another carefully laid plan to trap Edison. Hawthorne & Sheble, together with Prescott, organized the American Record Co., and a record manufacturing plant was opened in Springfield, Mass. These discs were a rich blue with a colourful label with a white background. The machinations of 1899 and 1900 were nothing less than fantastic. Back of a gigantic conspiracy to gain control of the entire recording industry throughout the world were the legal batteries and financiers of the American Graphophone Co. The prime movers were Andrew Devine and the sagacious Easton. In the field at the close of every legal battle, as the smoke cleared, would be seen the inscrutable countenance of major strategist Philip Mauro. These clever, unscrupulous men had agents everywhere who sought out and bought off key men in every branch of the industry. These included Amden, Sheble, Tweksbury, Seamon, F.M.Prescott, LaDow, and others.

#### ANY OLD RECORDS?

*The Hocken Library in Dunedin has recently started building up an archive of all types of New Zealand music. The aim is to preserve every kind of New Zealand music for the benefit of future generations of New Zealanders. We are collecting records, tapes, sheet music, biographical information on recording artists, etc. The time span we are trying to cover ranges from the early cylindrical discs through 78's by people like Gil Dech to recent recordings by such groups as Split Enz.*

*Because records older than 2-3 years are not usually currently available from shops and record companies we are having to rely on purchases, loans of material (so we can tape the music, always with the permission of the copyright holder), and donations of any outdated or duplicate records nobody wants. If you can help us in any way please contact us at:*

*The Hocken Library,  
University of Otago,  
P.O. Box 56,  
DUNEDIN.*

## A COLLECTOR'S QUERY - What of the Next Century?

by G.B. East

I wonder if historians in 2077 unearthing our centenary issue will comment, "Of course, in those days they were actually still finding cylinders ..." To judge from the local eccentrics, collectors can to some extent be categorised by 'vintage':

- (1) The early enthusiasts who bought their machine(s) new and kept them out of nostalgia and/or extreme conservatism and/or historical appreciation. This group includes those aged ex-dealers of whom C.E. Woledge (1885-1969) was our most notable example. Unfortunately, this breed is very nearly extinct.
- (2) Closely related to the first species is the elderly gentleman of around 70 who grew up with an Edison phonograph, and kept the family Triumph or whatever for the reasons above. This type sometimes developed into a large-scale collector but perhaps more often could be found, say thirty years ago, picking up the odd Blue Amberol in a junk shop. Now rather scarce.
- (3) The 'classic' collector who, starting about 1955-60, quickly accumulated a large quantity of equipment for what now seems a ludicrously low financial outlay. The young (i.e. under 40) enthusiast of 1960 was in green pastures in that early machines were readily available and yet by now of some antiquarian interest. These enthusiasts, consciously saving machines and records for the future, usually sought all available information and so came into contact with (1) and (2). Secure in the knowledge that the supply of equipment was plentiful, these collectors stimulated and inspired many others.
- (4) The 'post-bonanza' collector, forced either to confine his or her ambition to a small representative machine collection (with perhaps even an external-horn gramophone) or to cultivate an interest in the variations between H.M.V. portables. To this type, pre-1915 machines are likely to be of academic interest.

The watershed between types (3) and (4) was the price rise and increasing rarity which characterised the late 1960's. Despite recurrent mutters of 'The price must drop eventually' it hasn't happened yet. It is dangerous to exaggerate the opportunities of fifteen years ago — New Zealand collectors were not passing over 5-inch cylinders because they seemed to be not Edison but some Italian name. Even allowing for inflation, however, average prices have rocketed. If I were offered today an Edison Standard Model B with horn and 100 cylinders, I could not offer less than \$125 NZ. Ten years ago I would have considered Ten Pounds (\$20) ample. The record (disc, that is) collector is more fortunate, provided he or she takes care not to alienate people with the '10 cents each' offer. My own collecting is now largely confined to this area, and good G & T's can still be turned up in Christchurch. Collecting will continue to be popular, but it will turn more to what is still readily obtainable. I believe the day will come when the 10-inch LP's of c.1950 will be as coveted as Berliners are today. I can't see myself ever revering a Pye 'Black Box' but then I can hardly be expected to show much antiquarian interest in a machine roughly my own age. As the machines and records we think of as collectors' material cease to be found outside museums and the homes of the very wealthy, future enthusiasts will turn to the primitive but historically interesting contraptions of the mid-twentieth century (that is, assuming that records and the people that play them have much earthly future). Surviving owners of Edisons, Graphophones, Dog Models etc. may find it difficult to feel much in common with a collector of early stereo. One thing I can state with conviction: if collectors to come receive as much pleasure from the sight, sound and associations of their treasures as I do from mine, far be it for me to deprecate their interest in 'that electronic rubbish'.

### IN PASSING

R.Peggio

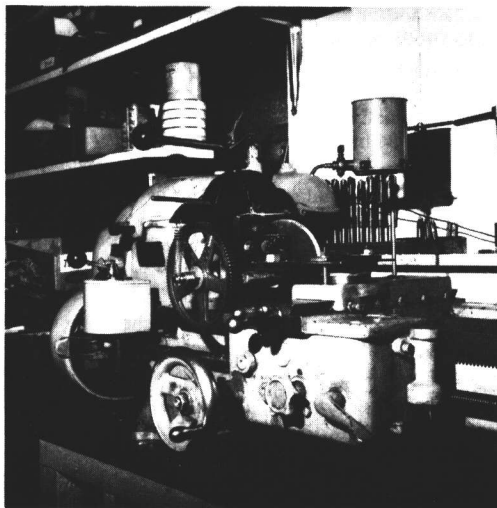
Well, Stokowski couldn't have hung on too much longer, long-term contract or not. Only two days before his death at 95, our local newspaper music critic noted his amazing vigour. He is likely to be remembered less as the enthusiast of inflated Bach arrangements than as the silhouetted maestro in Disney's *Fantasia* (1940), a film which just refuses to date. It was too soon for Maria Callas and Elvis Presley to join the ranks of the departed. Callas made a few 78's (Italian Cetras, issued in England by Parlophone-Odeon), Presley several: his turn up as black RCA and blue HMV. My brothers bought some new, but they take some finding in the shops now — indeed, I have already heard friends express surprise that 'the King' made 78's.

I seldom listen to the radio, but have caught most of Brian Salkeld's weekly series on the centenary of sound recording. A few errors, but not enough to detract from the programmes' interest and value. Amongst the very early recordings selected were the Gouraud cylinders of Tennyson and Browning and the 1900 telegraphophone recording of the Emperor Franz Joseph II of Austria-Hungary (1830-1916). For obvious reasons, Mr Salkeld does not specify his sources for these ancient non-commercial relics. I would like to have known the source of his 'Gladstone' recording, since it was worthy of suspicion. The Argo LP set *Wonder of the Age* (ZPR 122-3) contains some of Colonel Gouraud's recordings of 1888-90, including Gladstone's message to Edison. The notes for this set were written by Ernie

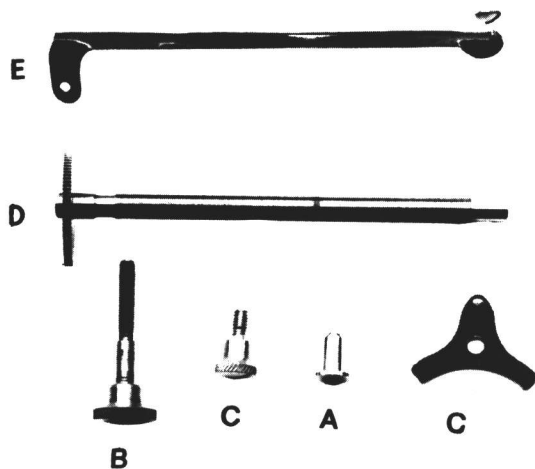
# OUR NEW PRESIDENT



JOFFRE MARSHALL & WIFE MARGARET



JOFFRE'S LATH SET UP  
TO CUT GEAR.



NEW PARTS

Bayly, whose knowledge and scrupulous accuracy are well-known. The Gladstone recording on this Argo disc is faint and heavy with surface noise, like the Gouraud Browning and Tennyson fragments. The message is delivered in a restrained manner by an old man with a worn voice and a slight North Country accent. So far, so good. Now Mr Salkeld's 'Gladstone' message, presumably taken from some other LP (perhaps the mysterious Gotham disc) is another matter — the same text but delivered in a very forceful, exaggeratedly oratorical manner in a particularly forward recording. Edisonia brown wax cylinder catalogues of the 1890's listed Mr Gladstone's message to Mr Edison, recorded of course by a studio elocutionist. I am inclined to suspect that it is a copy of this that has, unfortunately, found its way on to an LP.

## NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST ELECTRIC LOUD-SPEAKER

H.M. Sansum

In the infancy of wireless-broadcasting in New Zealand, the use of headphones was essential. The annual cost of a "License to Operate a Wireless Station" (issued by the P & T Department) was five shillings, and by the year 1921 it was possible to fit a rectifier-valve in order to eliminate the need for crystal and cat's-whisker. But one could still not avoid the use of headphones. Early in 1922, I noticed an advert in our evening paper inviting "businessmen" to attend a demonstration of the "first electric loud-speaker to reach New Zealand". I was no businessman, but a mere 17-year-old Civil Service Cadet, but I decided to go along anyway.

The advert had been inserted by the well-known firm dealing in musical instruments etc., Messrs Hamilton Nimmo & Sons Ltd. of Lower Willis Street, Wellington, where it still flourishes. Hamilton Nimmo himself was then in retirement, but his sons Bert and Alton were active in the business. Both have long since passed away. The demonstration was to be given one evening, at an hour and place which was stated, and which I had no difficulty in finding. The place appointed was a fair-sized room which contained only one item of furniture — a table. On the table stood an ordinary table-gramophone, and beside it was the electric loud-speaker — a free-standing device with a bell-mouthed horn facing forward. There would also have been an electric power-source somewhere about, but that I did not notice. There was no seating provided, and those present, perhaps 30 "businessmen", stood in a silent semi-circle looking at the gear on the table. There were no ladies present. The Nimmo brothers moved around the apparatus displayed. If anyone spoke to anyone else, it must have been done in whispers. I, standing modestly in the rear, did not hear anything being said. There was no preliminary address and explanation. Looking back on it, someone should have spoken in a loud, clear voice, explaining what was what, and how it was to be done. It was a "demonstration" which had been advertised, and a "demonstration" it was going to be. A 10-inch disc lay on the turntable of the gramophone, and the driving-spring was already wound. Finally, the motor was started, and the "sound-box" placed gently in position. Then came musical sounds from the free-standing horn — an orchestral piece which I'd not heard before, but which I thought entrancing. It might have been supposed that the record would have been allowed to run its 3-minute length, in order to show what the new loud-speaker could do, but it didn't work out that way.

After only a few bars of the music had been heard, one of those present stepped forward to confer with the Nimmo brothers. The gramophone was immediately stopped, and a "confidential" conversation followed. Evidently "businessmen" keep their business to themselves as much as they can. When the businessman had finished his discussion and had retired into the semi-circle (which was formed nowhere near the table), the gramophone was started again, and again there were heard the opening bars of the melody. Almost immediately, someone else stepped forward and engaged the Nimmo brothers in confidential conversation. Again the gramophone was stopped, and this time it was a long, long pause. The Nimmo brothers seemed to have forgotten about the "demonstration", and conducted conversations among many of those present. It seemed as if the show was over. People present started to go away. I went forward and peeped at the loud-speaker. It bore the trade-name "MAGNAVOX". And the gramophone-record, of which I had heard only a few bars, was Herman Finck's "In The Shadows", which was probably getting its first airing in New Zealand. It was new in New Zealand then, but I understand that it was at that time "all the rage" in Britain. When well-rendered, it is still one of my favourite instrumental items today. There's nothing high-brow about me.

Looking back, it was a disappointing "demonstration". The loud-speaker had not been allowed to show what it could do. Just a few bars of instrumental music, coming over very clearly, but there had been nothing more than that. There had been no attempt to give the device a chance to show its paces during a period of even three minutes. And the use of the loud-speaker in bringing out the human voice had not been even allowed for. I tell this little story of what was said to be New Zealand's first loud-speaker because perhaps it has not been told before, and because I am the last person left who could tell it. I was by far the youngest person present on the occasion of the "demonstration", and I am now old and infirm. If the little story has any interesting aspects, such aspects might

as well be put on record somewhere.

I still regret that there was so much "business" about that "demonstration", and so little music. And it made no difference to me — if I wanted a few gramophone-records from our local low-power half-commercial, half-amateur wireless station (2ZW was its call-sign, I think) I still had to use head-phones.

#### MY FATHER'S USE OF AN EDISON PHONOGRAPH — Harry Buckley

In the 1930's, during the depression I lived with my father, mother and two sisters in a small town called Stratford, in Taranaki, N.Z., where also lived my grandparents on my father's side. Things were pretty tough during this period and I can remember my father getting two days work a week on the dole, and on a couple of the other days in the week, he would push-bike 8 miles to the foot of Mt. Egmont where he would cut wood for fencing posts and then bike home again. During school holidays, I would sometimes go with him, and I would always look forward to the ride home as it was down hill all the way. I would have dearly loved to have learnt to play the piano at this time, when I was nine years old, but my parents could not afford the lessons, let alone the piano. Anyway, my father wanted me to learn a musical instrument of some sort, so he joined me up along with himself, with the Stratford Brass Band, where instruments were supplied and tuition was free. My father played the Bass Drum and I learnt the Cornet, which I played for many years. Each year when the Annual Show was on, the Band Committee would get together to arrange some sort of a stall for the Show, to raise funds. One year my father who was a Committee member came up with the idea of running a shooting gallery which he claimed was always popular and a good money spinner.

Being a little bit on the inventive side, he believed he could make a shooting gallery with the help of some other members of the Band for a minimal cost, so his idea was given the go ahead. Apparently he had it all worked out how he was going to make it, for he wasted no time in setting about the project. The first thing he did, was to get a spare push-bike wheel out of the shed and place around it about six figures of various animals which he cut out of some fairly solid tin plate. He devised a means of wiring these to the bike wheel so that as the wheel rotated the figures would right themselves if they were knocked down. The wheel was placed at the end of a round tin pipe about 3' across and 15' long, supplied by another band member. At the other end of the pipe a bench was placed to rest on and fire the air rifles which were used and loaned by another bandsman. I can remember wondering how he was going to drive the bike-wheel with the figures attached, but I was soon to find out. From my grandparents he borrowed a Type D Standard Edison Phonograph, which my sisters and I used to listen to when we visited them. He made a long belt of leather which was supplied by the Band conductor, who was a saddler. The belt was placed around the bike-wheel and the mandrel of the Edison Phonograph with some guides he rigged up to keep it in place. I can well remember spending all day and part of the evening on the day of the show keeping the Edison wound up to keep the bike-wheel turning. I was relieved at times by my younger sister and mates from school, who soon discovered it was not such a novelty to keep the Edison wound up and they soon found some excuse to disappear and leave me to carry on. I can recall the shooting gallery being run on at least three occasions, and it turned out a good money maker. I have the very same Edison to-day with the same cabinet, motor, and spring which I know has never been replaced. The reproducers and horn somehow were lost during the many shifts that we made. It is now fitted with a petal horn and a diamond reproducer. I also have a Model K Reproducer which fits into the Reproducer carrier that is on it, and so I can play 2 and 4..... wax records and also Blue Amberols on the one machine. This Edison Phonograph which belonged to my grandparents has many memories for me and it will be passed on by me to my son and by him to his sons, and so will, I hope, remain in the Buckley family for many years to come.

#### CAN SOMEONE HELP!

*We have had enquiries on how to straighten long playing records. These, if left in the sun, tend to curl and this can render them useless. We would like to hear from any member who has successfully straightened records which are bent in this way. Also would like to hear from members as to what they use to clean long playing records. We would be pleased to print any worthwhile ideas for record storage.*

#### HOT AIR ENGINE — any type wanted to buy

Please reply to: Mr J.Wheeler,  
30 Dora Street,  
Dora Creek,  
Newcastle,  
N.S.W., Australia.