



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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NEW ZEALAND.



The girl with the gramophone which is a colour poster we have for sale. Be in if you want one, only three dollars New Zealand.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

For New Zealand summer is over, what summer there was. We are looking forward to winter. In answer to our request for information we have had a letter from John Ely of Queensland, Australia. He quotes with photo enclosed....

This photo I am sending resembles the machine on the cover of October/December 1993 magazine. The book bracket, tone arm and horn were certainly from the same place and the transfer on mine says "Exposition".

We have been made aware from photographs which members send us that nearly all phonograph collectors collect something else!!!

Stamps, phone cards, post cards, radios, music boxes, film projectors, vintage cars, kerosine lamps, to name but a few.

Member Loyd Davis of the U.S.A. sent us pictures of electric fans, two of these are included in this issue.

We don't quite know how to thank the members who have taken the trouble to write and send pictures of their collections, articles, post cards, clippings from newspapers and magazines, all for inclusion in The Phonograph Record. Thank you.

Walter Norris

OBITUARY

Wally Golledge

A well known collector of Nelson died on March 8th 1994 at his home 179 Hampden Terrace.

For a number of years he was a member of the New Zealand Vintage Phonograph Society. He came to the first convention of phonograph and gramophone collectors which was held in Wellington in 1963. He not only collected phonographs but was also keenly interested in bottles, scales, music boxes and stamps.

His occupation was testing scales in the Nelson, Blenheim and West Coast area.

Wally was a perfectionist and manufactured reproduction parts which he exchanged with members and collectors both in New Zealand and abroad.

He lived a full life until his latter years when ill health caught up with him.

NOTES FROM THE SECRETARY

Our thanks to those members who continue to support the Society by contributions of articles, photos, etc. for inclusion in the magazine.

We now have a small supply of books members may be interested in purchasing:

'Hand-cranked Phonograph' — It all started with Edison.

An Introduction to Vintage Talking Machines, Records and Accessories, the Most Asked Questions and a Complete Section on Troubleshooting.'

By Neil Maken, with forwards by Oliver Berliner and George Tselos

Price is \$20.00 N.Z. plus packing and postage.

We also have folders for magazine (hold approximately 10) at \$5.00 each, and a new item — No. 58 small poster showing girl with horn gramophone, has now been produced in colour and is good value at \$3.00 each.

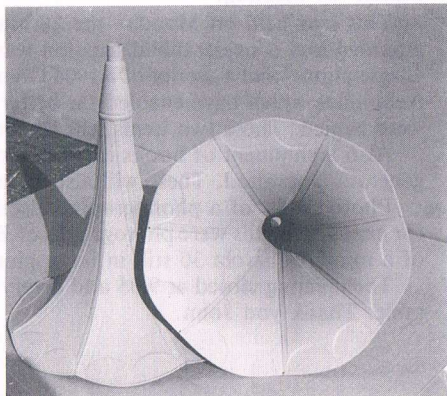
REPORT ON CHRISTMAS DINNER FUNCTION AND MARCH 28th MEETING

The annual dinner for Society members was taken by a good and representative number at the restaurant section of the Sandridge Hotel in Sydenham a week prior to Christmas.

Despite it being a Sunday all tastes were catered for and all evinced that they enjoyed the food, the company and all other forms of party fare available close at hand. After a 6.30 start all appetites had been sated and most topics of current interest had been thoroughly discussed by 10.00p.m. when the party dissolved. Where to at the end of '94?



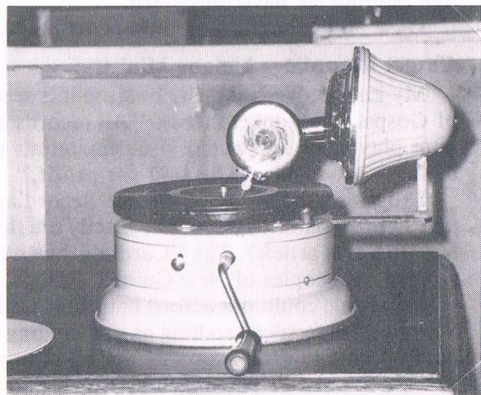
Limania Table Model



Columbia Petal Horn

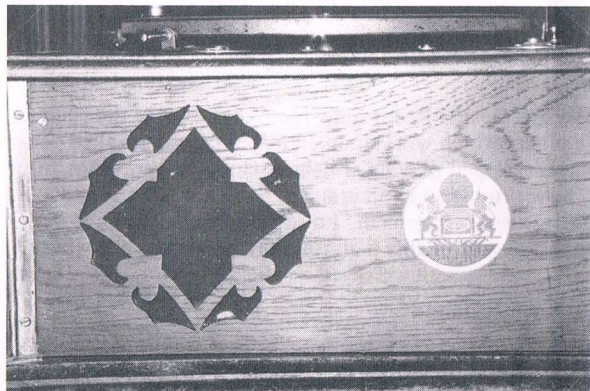


Open



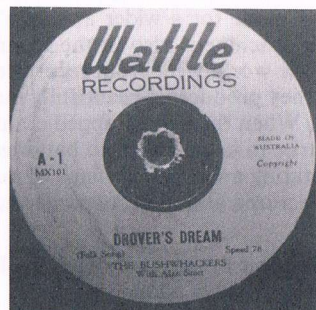
Niron

Photo — Hamil



Close-up

Photo — Hamil



March '94 Meeting:

This was held on Monday the 28th at the spacious home of John Hastilow. Fourteen members attended and considerable discussion was promoted on the colour reprints of the posters 'Girl and a Gramophone' and a reprint of a 1908 Gram-o-phone Catalogue 'De Luxe' done using modern duplicating techniques which have enabled far better definition to be realised than the originals from which they were copied. These two items will be for sale through the usual society channels.

Also a shipment of books called 'Hand Cranked Phonographs' from the U.S. was examined and generally appraised. These will also be offered for sale to members.

Photographs of a phonograph collection belonging to John Ely of Australia were passed around for examination as were photographs of Bill Tarling of Canada unwrapping his recent wedding present of a mint Amberola 30 still in its original packing case.

The meeting closed at 9.35 and a very pleasant half hour was passed around a well catered supper table. Thank you John.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Gospel Recording Unique Ministry pictures and information courtesy Bill Dunn.

When we were in Perth, Australia I was privileged to visit Richard Rennie who had a collection much like the one we have illustrated.

Dick Hill brought a cardphone to one of our meetings and demonstrated it. *Editor.*

Gospel Recordings Unique Ministry:

My knowledge is sketchy because it is second hand for the most part, and one of the stated policies of Gospel Recordings Inc. is: "All records are free to missionaries and missions. Gramophones, cassette playbacks and audio visual materials are available to missionaries at cost or under cost. **None of these products can be sold for profit.**"

I first became aware of Gospel Recordings Inc. a few years ago when I horse-traded for a "Card-talk" gramophone. It works in exactly the same way as "Tiny Tots Talking Tales Magic Gramophone" (see previous article). The "Cardtalk" was used to spread the gospel in the language of the tribes and indigenous peoples of New Guinea, Bolivia, Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Java, Brazil — anywhere where people could not afford batteries. Following the "Cardtalk", a winding gramophone appeared. It would run to speed so long as the winding crank was turned. Claimed to be waterproof!! A wind-up gramophone (a direct copy of the HMV) portable was manufactured in Australia and assembled by mission members. This machine was used at mission centres and carries a yellow/black decal on the inside of the lid.

Buenas Nuevas (Good News) Phonograph:

Made for Gospel Recordings Inc. There are two addresses — Los Angeles, U.S.A. and Eastwood N.S.W. Records with this label were also issued, but these did not have the second hole for pencil or stick — made for a wider audience?

This machine is also in the Dunn collection.

As the world went from record to cassette, so did Gospel Recordings Inc. As shown in the photograph they produced a beautifully made cassette player which worked on an in-built hand cranked generator. When the hand stopped cranking the player stopped playing. I believe Gospel Recordings Inc. being true to its policy of no batteries required, now produce a hand cranked generator that is capable of operating an extended range of audio and audio/visual equipment. I don't think records have been manufactured and used for some years, so a small amount of this material may be about, but where?

Bill Dunn

Contribution From: Folly Hamill, Invercargill, New Zealand:

Limania — Table Model Machine:

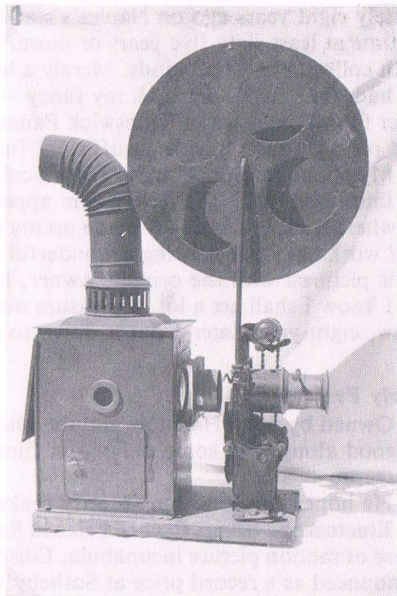
This is a German machine — quite a nice looking gramophone with its rounded lid and attractive doors. When you open the doors there is a panel with quite a bright logo on one side and the horn opening on the other. The internal horn itself is made of wood — looks like a fluted wooden tube which



Collectors Luck



Photos — Bill Tarling



Early Projector Photo — John Hastilow

goes right back and connects onto the reproducer arm which is metal. I would think its age would be about the 1915 era but stand to be corrected. If anyone knows anything about these machines or the company that made them I would be very pleased if they would write and let me know.

Niron:

A small round machine, different again from the ones in our last magazine. I don't know anything about this machine so would be interested in any information supplied.

Columbia Petal Horn:

Thanks to John Hastilow we have a good illustration of the second size Columbia horn, fits the jewel, etc. These are perfect reproductions.

80 Years in Storage:

Bill Tarling who's wedding photo we included in our last issue has kindly sent us photographs of an Amberola 30 which has remained unpacked after 80 years.

He does not tell us how he came to find it but took it to the March meeting of the Canadian Antique Phonograph Society where he and his new wife Elsie unpacked it in front of 69 members.

He says this was the biggest turn out the Canadian Antique Society has had in years.

The first photograph is of Elsie and Bill preparing to unpack the Amberola 30.

The second "The big lift", Bill Tarling removing the Amberola from its packing case.

Darrin Wallace, Domince De Bernardo and Canadian Antique Phonograph Society president (with arms crossed) Ed Moran.

The third picture; Elsie Tarling looks on as Bill holds up oil can, jar of Edison diamond grease. Machine is now ready to go.

Collectors Luck:

There is a saying 'Good things come to those who wait'. In this instance, it came true. Approximately eight years ago on Napier's stately Bluff Hill, I attended a house sale/auction, stepping back in time at least sixty-five years or more. What magic — the Edwardian grandeur. I came face to face with collectables of all kinds. Merely a humble lad at the time money was short and bargains were to be had. One such item took my fancy — a combination radio gramophone of about 1930 vintage. I later found out it was a Brunswick Panatrope manufactured by Bremer Tully. Unfortunately I missed out on it through having insufficient funds at the time and of course I was upset, until recently.

My phone rang one Sunday from a collector of sorts who had this radio for sale and asked if I would be interested in it. The description appeared to have the article more as a piece of furniture and as to where it came from — I made up my mind immediately. Now I am the owner of the piece and it's still working. Besides being a wonderful piece of furniture, I've been lucky enough to obtain a photo of it pictured with the original owner, Miss Betsabee O'Connell, now deceased.

I know I shall get a lot of pleasure out of it as she did. You never know what's around the corner. Now, eight years later I put it down to collector's luck.

Mark Dawson, Napier, New Zealand.

Early Projector:

Owned by John Hastilow and the photograph supplied by him. He says he purchased it from Ron Osgood along with some old 35mm film which he had to destroy because it had become sticky and dangerous.

He hopes someone can identify make, age, etc.

Kinetoscope Brings Record Price in Sothbey's London Sale: London, England — An extremely rare piece of motion picture incunabula, Edison Kinetoscope No. 141, of 1894, brought what the auctioneer announced as a record price at Sothbey's, London, in late 1992. Bidding started at 5,000 pounds and advanced rapidly. The machine was knocked down to Ray Phillips of Studio City, California, for 19,500 pounds (with Sothbey's 10% buyer's premium and some taxes, 21,791 pounds). It is rumoured that the underbidder was a prominent New Jersey collector of Edisonia.

Thomas A. Edison introduced his kinetoscope, the first viewer for 35mm film, which he also introduced, in April, 1894 in New York City. Research by Sothbey's George Glastris determined that

this machine was one of ten shipped to London in September 1894 to establish the first kinetoscope parlour in England. The kinetoscope was made obsolete in 1896 with the introduction of projection, so only about a dozen of these primitive machines survive. With all except No. 141 in museums, it becomes the only original machine in private hands. It had been stored in a shed in Devon, England with a blanket thrown over it for the last 60 or so years.

Phillips has been interested in kinetoscopes for some years, having made several replicas, one of which is in the Museum of the Moving Image, New York, two in the Museum of the Moving Image, London. These last two have had coin-slots added and have been viewed by several tens of thousands of visitors over the last several years. A book, *Edison's Kinetoscope and Its Films Through 1896*, is due to be published in 1993.

*Taken from: Film Buffs — September 1993 Newsletter
Contributor: Bryan Blanchard, Timaru.*

Electric Fans:

Lloyd Davis has made a collection of these and sent us the pictures included in this issue.

Exposicion:

This machine is claimed to be like the one illustrated on the cover of our previous magazine. John Ely photo.

Silvertone Thru-phonc Phonograph:

An unusual gramophone which Tony McCarthy has discovered in Dunedin. He says manufactured about 1927, has a writing desk built into it and a damper lever beside the winding handle which when pushed blocks off the sound going to the internal horn and the sound goes into a (Nathaniel Baldwin Inc.) magnetic type device and has two leads coming off it. May be it goes to an electric pickup.

The reproducer is a silver tone thru-phonc M.F.D. for Sears Roebuck Co., Chicago. Patent 1926. This is not what we call a phonograph but plays 78s.

MARKET REPORT

Although one might think that most phonographs and gramophones worth collecting have already been procured by collectors or dealers, there still are machines out there waiting to be found!

I have seen or heard of a number of machines available lately, both through auction and direct sale. Recent transaction prices I know of among collectors are Amberola 30 \$480.00, Decca portable with fruit bowl lid \$50.00, Columbia overhorn machine \$900.00, Edison chppendale floor model with three dozen d/discs \$1,000.00, Cheney \$425.00, Edison-Bell Black Gem \$450.00 (no horn, not going), Columbia portable \$85.00.

On the retail scene prices vary greatly from shop to shop. Portable models in less than superior condition can be found for as little as \$40.00, while other more original examples are tagged at a rather optimistic \$180.00 or more.

Table top models seem to run out at between \$180.00 and \$260.00 for a tidy example, while most floor models sell from around \$300.00 upwards.

Cylinder machines generally start at around \$1,000.00 for the smaller models although the Amberolas still creep in at around \$750.00. There has been a noticeable lack of over horn gramophones for sale over the past few months, so a price range for these is anybody's guess. One retailer in Christchurch had two Edison home machines with reproduction witches hat speakers at \$1,200.00 each, plus an Amberola 30 for \$850.00. All have now disappeared and rumour has it that an Asian purchaser had been in town.

Diamond Disc records are by no means common these days. An antique shop sold about thirty to a friend of mine not so long ago for \$2.00 each, which is not a bad price at all!

Something I found of interest recently was an Edison Ediphone. This early electric machine was apparently the latest and greatest in dictation devices in it's time, cutting spoken messages and letters onto wax cylinders for playback at a later time. I am not particularly familiar with these machines my-

self but with the famous name and trade mark on the front, I felt it had to be added to the collection, even though it does have a plug on the back of it!

For those interested in Pianollas, a mahogany Gulbransen in tidy condition and good working order was sold at auction near Christchurch for \$1,600.00 recently, with approximately 140 rolls. A Victorian era walnut cased musical box sold for \$2,100.00 at another auction. It was quite large, measuring approximately 24" x 12" x 6" and played eight airs.

Best wishes to all members.

David Peterson

Editor: At a recent auction held at Kaiapoi a rare model for New Zealand an Amberola 3 in good working order was sold for NZ\$1,300 and an Amberola 30 for NZ\$700. A Lyric Phone overhorn disc with a metal horn sold for NZ\$1,150.

An Avonia which is a Christchurch made machine sold for NZ\$150.

Reproducers C and H \$100 and cylinders \$3 each.

DEVICE CUTS VIDEO ADVERTS

For most TV addicts, the fast-forward button on a VCR has a single, simple function: to zap through the commercial breaks in recorded programmes. This however, takes effort — which is where Arists Technologies' Commercial Brake comes in. The US\$199 black box, which goes on sale later this year, automatically spots and skips over the commercials in any recording. That could save the average American couch potato from sitting through 200 hours of advertisements each year.

Arista, which is based in Long Island, licensed Commercial Brake's technology from Jerry Iggulden, an American inventor, and Arthur D. Little Enterprises (ADLE), a consultancy specialising in promoting new technologies. The system developed by ADLE for a modest US\$500,000, works by monitoring recordings for "black frames" (which separate ads from programmes, and from each other) and complete breaks in the sound (which tend to accompany black frames).

Once a TV programme is recorded, Commercial Brake analyses the tape for matching clusters of black frames and breaks in sound — a process that takes up to five minutes and which, claims Mr Iggulden, identifies commercial breaks with almost total accuracy. On playback, the device instructs the VCR to fast-forward at the appropriate times. The viewer is left with a few seconds of black blue screen before the show resumes.

Mr Iggulden reckons sales of Commercial Brake could hit one million units in its first year, compared with global VCR sales of 50 million. The technology will really take off, he believes, when it is fitted inside VCRs. To that end, ADLE is talking to VCR makers in America, Europe and Japan.

The advertising industry, seemingly resigned to the obliteration of recorded advertisements, has so far kept quiet about the threat to its livelihood but Mr Iggulden nonetheless fears he may be a marked man: "These days I'm always a little wary as I leave my house."

The Economist

("The Press" 11th February 1994)

Contributed by Bryan Blanchard, Timaru, New Zealand

BOOK REVIEW — MUSIC BOXES

The Collector's Guide to Selecting, Restoring and Enjoying New and Vintage Music Boxes by Gilbert Bahl.

We were kindly loaned his book and thought it worth a mention, as we feel music box collectors will wish to obtain a copy.

Published by The Apple Press, 6 Blundell Street, London N79BH and manufactured in Hong Kong by Regent Publishing Services Limited.

Illustrations, all one hundred and eighteen of them, are all in colour in a book with hard back cover 23cm x 30cm and has 80 pages.

Was obtained in New Zealand from Technical Books, 20 Windmill Centre, Riccarton, Christchurch for NZ\$26.00.

We also have another article which is taken from The Radio Record of the 24th February 1928 which records a programme marking Thomas Alva Edison's 81st birthday.



Published Weekly

REGISTERED G.P.O., WELLINGTON, N.Z., AS A NEWSPAPER

Price 3d.

VOL. I, NO. 32.

WELLINGTON, N.Z., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1928.

2YA HONOURS EDISON

On Saturday evening last 2YA gave listeners a special "Edison night" on the occasion of the 81st birthday of Thomas Alva Edison. For the occasion a special personal message was received from the aged inventor to the people of New Zealand. This was spoken by him on to a gramophone record, then being mailed to New Zealand and broadcast by 2YA to the New Zealand listeners. The evening's programme was made memorable by supporting speeches from Sir Frederick Chapman, ex-judge of the Supreme Court and president of the English Speaking Union, and Mr W. L. Lowrie, American Consul-General, by his deputy for the occasion, Mr F. W. Tufts. The items throughout were of American origin, and as a finale community singing was "put over" by a group of American residents who specially attended for the occasion. This original feature was very successful, the "amateurs" performing in quite good style. The evening as a whole was memorable and distinctive, and rebroadcasts by other stations were very satisfactory.

Mr Edison's Message to Dominion:

It is a far cry from my laboratory here in this Northern land, in its garb of ice and snow, to you in your land of sunshine and flowers under the Southern Cross, but science with its magic makes it possible for me to greet you with the spoken word, though thousands of miles apart. Surveying the progress of New Zealand in world affairs, it is difficult for me to realise that its establishment as a colony of the Mother country was practically coincident with the year of my birth. During my lifetime I have witnessed many changes, but nothing quite impresses me so much as the remarkable growth of New Zealand. From a handful of sturdy British emigrants who established the Colony in 1840, the population of the Dominion now totals nearly one and a half million. The scattered parts of the Colony have expanded into many thousands of acres teeming with agricultural activity — a remarkable monument to the grit and enterprise of those who have so rapidly developed the land. Your harbours filled with shipping carrying products to all parts of the world is another demonstration of growth. Not so long ago I saw some statistics issued by the United States Government at Washington revealing the amazing fact that New Zealand occupies the conspicuous position of enjoying the highest export trade per capita of any country in the entire world — a marvellous showing. This present day aspect of the country added to its agricultural and industrial life is a tribute to the dominant spirit of the people of the Dominion — all this practically in the span of a single lifetime. We here in the United States find much to admire in the growth of the simple school of the early pioneer days in Wellington, to the present splendid educational institutions with their realistic application of the democratic principle of unlimited opportunity for the youth of the land. Looking ahead into the future one feels secure in predicting a country alive with agricultural and industrial growth, its rivers giving an abundance of power development aiding its progress, and a people steadily and courageously fighting forward to make their land one of happiness and contentment. I am glad of this opportunity to greet you and to extend my cordial good wishes for the continued prosperity of your land and people.

A Generous Tribute:

Sir Frederick Chapman, president of the English Speaking Union, in his tribute said:— It is my privilege to address to you a tribute to Thomas Alva Edison. Not in all the world can you find another who so personifies persistent, unflagging effort and triumphant achievement as the great American inventor whose eighty-first birthday is this evening being commemorated in New Zealand by the broadcasting of a programme specially arranged for the occasion. In this way does station 2YA Wellington, New Zealand, do honour to one of the world's most brilliant and most useful citizens, at the same time re-joining in the brotherhood of the English-speaking peoples which gives to the humblest New Zealander kinship with so great a genius. Not to inborn genius, but to hard work and hard thinking does the man himself attribute the wonderful discoveries with which he has blessed humanity; but, surely, behind his indomitable perseverance, his unquenchable thirst for knowledge, his unbending determination to secure the things he sought, his unparalleled record of successful achievement, there must have been the inspiration of genius coupled with an almost uncanny intuition. Think of it? Here is a man, rich beyond measure in the sum total of his amazing accomplishments, who, in his childhood days, is said to have been so unpromising as to be likely to prove a life-long care to his parents, yet who today stands out as the supreme embodiment of mental power and human utility. Happily he was blessed with a mother, loving, observing, wise — who knew and understood the son who was not as other boys, who sensed the dormant attributes of a strong personality, and who with loving care and able tuition guided him safely to the starting point of the distinguished career he was destined to carve out for himself. For him there has been no looking back. With tireless energy and dauntless courage he has marked the passing years with wondrous monuments of imperishable achievements, continually enlarging the world's indebtedness to his creative genius, and finding the joy of life not in the mere acquisition of that wealth which is the due reward of his successful labours, but in the facing and overcoming of seemingly insuperable difficulties. He has lived to conquer, and every one of his innumerable conquests has been a victory gained for the benefit of his fellow man. Could Roman Caesar or French Napoleon lay claim to so glorious a record?

What We Owe to Him:

For what are we indebted to Thomas Alva Edison? Not in the compass of a brief address is it possible to enumerate in detail the almost countless items of our debt. Had he but given us the automatic telegraph system, the gramophone, and the incandescent lamp, 'twould indeed have been a surpassingly rich endowment, yet to these must be added the tens and the hundreds of mechanical, electrical and chemical inventions which are the creatures of his brain. Edison is eighty-one years of age, and still, with zeal and energy unimpaired, his daily work and pleasure lies in the ceaseless quest and practical development of new ideas. Time, as measured by the clock, is with him a matter of no moment. For him the hours of labour are limited neither by statute nor inclination. To him day and night are as one. His average of daily toil, even from early boyhood, is credited as sixteen hours, so that, as men measure the hours of work in these days it may be said of Edison that he has crowded the work of two long lives into one. May he be spared for yet more years to further enrich humanity and enjoy the well-earned fruits of his splendid labours.

A Common Kinship:

May I, as president of the English Speaking Union, of Wellington, New Zealand, say something on my own part concerning that kinship to which brief reference has already been made. The institution which I represent this evening may be making but slow progress, but it is always making some. Statesmen may do much to unite in great common aims the nations and dominions which use our own language, but the real impulse towards united action must come from people like those here assembled and the institution in which they are interested. Community of language is a great bond even between peoples severed by political conditions. It is the platform on which we must lay out our plans for closer sympathetic union. Here we are gathered to do honour to the great name of a living American, but we unite in honouring his name irrespective of his particular allegiance because we recognise that his allegiance to humanity stands apart, though not above his citizenship.

American Appreciation:

In the unavoidable absence of the American Consul-General, Mr W. L. Lowrie, this tribute to Thomas A. Edison was read by Mr F. W. Tufts, of Detroit, Mich., now resident in New Zealand:—

“The name of Thomas A. Edison is one which is spoken by every American citizen with a deep feeling of pride, honour, admiration and affectionate esteem. We are proud of his wonderful achievements, we honour him for the comfort, pleasure and happiness he has placed within reach of millions of people throughout the universe, we admire the wonderful spirit and ceaseless effort which has disclosed so many marvels of nature, and we hold him in affectionate esteem for his splendid character and for his fine patriotism as an American citizen.

“Genius has been described as ‘an infinite capacity for taking pains’, but Mr Edison’s own definition is ‘Two per cent inspiration, and ninety-eight per cent perspiration’. The story of his long life which we all trust may be continued for many years, is one of ceaseless hard work, extending often through sleepless nights until the result he sought has been accomplished. It is said that he never carries a watch, and that no clock is found in his laboratories. Hours mean nothing to this wonderful worker, and meals are frequently forgotten while he is following strange paths. His name is a household word throughout the universe, and he has become indeed an international character. A great many years ago, at a private exhibition of the phonograph in London, Mr Gladstone, Prime Minister of England, spoke into the receiver these words addressed to Mr Edison:

“‘I am profoundly indebted to you for not the entertainment only, but the instruction and marvels of one of the most remarkable evenings which it has been my privilege to enjoy. Your great country is leading the way in the important work of invention. Heartily do we wish it well, and to you, as one of its greatest celebrities, allow me to offer my hearty good wishes and earnest prayers that you may long live to witness its triumphs of all that appertains to the well-being of mankind.’

“This greeting was given by Mr Gladstone in the presence of a distinguished gathering, including some of the men who have achieved great things for the glory of the British Empire. Americans who are now enjoying the hospitality of your beautiful and prosperous country are most glad of this opportunity to join with the citizens of the Dominion in this tribute to Thomas A. Edison, whose life and works could be studied to advantage by everyone interested in worth-while achievements.”

This item has been sent in by Hugh Hanna, Auckland. There are two deliberate errors can you spot them?

THE DOG WHO'S HAD HIS DAY

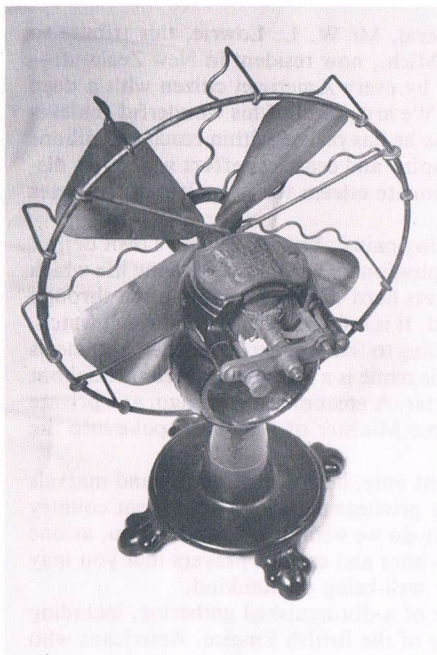
EMI want Nipper put down. Richard Boston say's they're barking up the wrong tree

Who is Top Dog in the canine Hall of Fame? The Hound Of The Baskervilles is a strong contender, as are Lassie and the lazy dog that was jumped over by the quick brown fox, but the champ, the pooch in kennel numero uno, is surely Nipper. Do I see an eyebrow raised as if to inquire: “Nipper, who’s he?” Well, you may not know Nipper by name but you’d certainly recognise him by sight because he’s the fox terrier who listens with cocked head to His Master’s Voice coming from the horn of a wind-up gramophone.

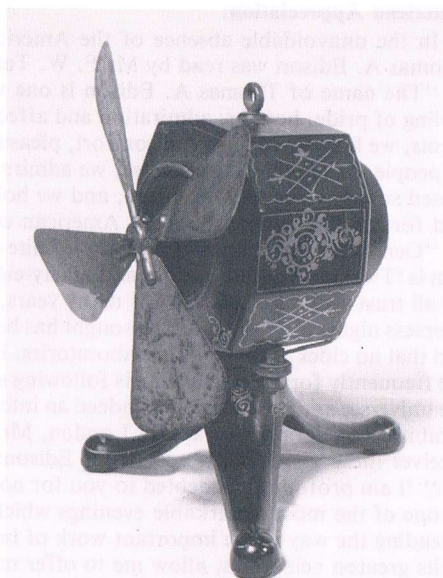
There are many visual images that are understandable worldwide to speakers of all languages. One thinks of the swastika, the hammer-and-sickle, the CND symbol. Because these proclaim political allegiances: you are either for them or against them.

Nipper’s different. Everyone likes Nipper, just as everyone liked the old red telephone kiosks. So, like the red telephone kiosks, Nipper must go. He is to be replaced by a white on red logo which says EMI on one line and CLASSICS on the other, and that’s it. It’s very neat and tidy but it could just as easily be on the packaging for toothpaste or a sparking-plug. Whereas Nipper says, quite plainly, gramophone records.

Perhaps that’s why EMI are trying to have him put down. probably an EMI executive one day thought to himself: “This damned dog is selling gramophone records. And we don’t make gramophone records. We make discs (though for how much longer?) and we make cassettes and we make CDs — but gramo-



Manhattan No. 2



Edison Ironclad — Loyd Davis collection, U.S.A.



Exposition Photo — John Ely



Silvertone Thru-phonograph



Photos — Tony McCarthy

phone records for Chrissake? Come back Methusaleh, it's OK Noah you can get off the boat, it's stopped raining."

Such reasoning represents the kind of stupidity against which the Gods themselves struggle in vain. Did EMI even once receive a complaint from a disgruntled customer who had bought something with a Nipper HMV trade-mark thinking it would be a shellac record to be played at 78 revolutions per minute and was confounded by the discovery that it was a vinyl record to be played at 33 revolutions per minute?

The real wonder is that Nipper survived the Sixties. That tawdry decade saw iconoclasm unparalleled since Cromwell's time. Brewers gleefully destroyed the mahogany furnishings of their pubs, smashed engraved glass and tiles, and generally fornicated their pubs (remember Formica?). Graphic designers went on the rampage, Sans Serif ruled OK. If something was old, familiar and legible it was OUT. The corporate image was IN.

Nipper was thus an anachronism. He wasn't even the trade mark of HMV, because (as far as I know) HMV didn't exist. If you find an old record with Nipper on, it says underneath "Regd. Trade Mark of The Gramophone Co. Ltd." That takes you back a bit. To a time when a trademark was a Trade Mark, when there were Co. Ltds rather than PLCs, and gramophones rather than record-players or even music centres.

Every child or grandchild of the Sixties knows the way to go about these things is for the XYZ company to have brain-storming sessions with graphic designers and consumer researchers and image consultants and Uncle Tom Cobbleigh and come up with a logo or whatever which will cost squillions and project the desired youthful, vigorous, abrasive, up-to-the-minuteness of the outfit. Nipper broke these rules because he was not conceived in a design department and was not intended to adorn a product. His Master's Voice was a painting, intended to hang on a wall.



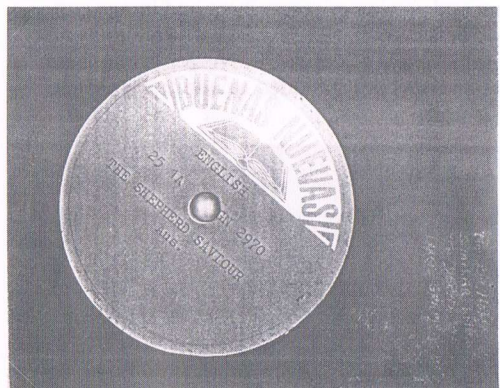
Top dog . . . Nipper in Francis Barraud's painting His Master's Voice first used by The Gramophone Company in 1990.

The picture was painted by his owner, a man called Barraud. (When I say his owner perhaps it should be her owner: the picture is ambiguous). The only Barraud in the Dictionary of National Biography is Henry Barraud (1811-1874) who painted portraits and animals, sometimes in collaboration with his brother William, also an animal painter. Henry Barraud exhibited at the Royal Academy and his best-known pictures had such titles as We Praise Thee, O God, A Scene In Hyde Park, Lord's Cricket Ground, and the hit of 1842, The Pope Blessing The Animals. It sounds as though Nipper would have been right up this artist's street, but it turns out that we're barking up the wrong tree because Nipper belonged to Francis Barraud (1856-1924) who was presumably of the same family as the artist of The Pope Blessing The Animals but not the same chap.

GOSPEL RECORDINGS

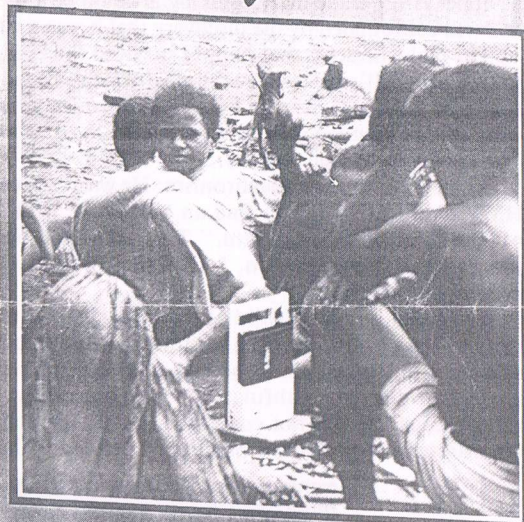


With 2nd hole for use with "Cardtalk" Gramophone



No 2nd hole, similar label to decal on large Gramophone

For Your Information...



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Photos — Bill Dunn

Anyway Nipper was born in 1884 and died in 1895 and his or her grave is marked with a plaque that says so in Eden Street, Kingston upon Thames. In the original painting Nipper was listening to a cylinder phonograph of the type patented by Edison in 1877. Evidently Barraud had difficulty in selling the picture and decided to update it with a gramophone of the kind patented by Emile Berliner in 1887, and it was this picture that in 1899 (four years after Nipper's death) he sold to The Gramophone Company, which first used it for its catalogue of 1900. Subsequently the US rights on the picture were acquired for the Columbia Phonograph Company by none other than Emile Berliner himself, so Nipper's associations with the gramophone go right back to its very beginnings.

EMI have been playing down Nipper for some time but his fate is not one that is to be settled by a board-room decision. As it happens his lasting quality is to be seen in an exhibition showing at the Victoria and Albert Museum until June 23. It is called *The Art Of Selling Songs: Graphics For The Music Business 1690-1990*. The theme of how music is translated into visual terms is an interesting one, but the inquirer will not get much help from the accompanying book, which is a dog's breakfast of socio-economico-semiologico-babble. It is the cultural studies equivalent of Pentagon-speak, full of words like reification and commodification, where music is "a succession of aural events" and if you like it then it's a "pleasing aural experience".

The book and exhibition are also hamstrung by the self-imposed restriction to printed matter, sheet-music, record-covers and posters. This alone can explain the extraordinary absence of, and not one single reference to, Fantasia, the most ambitious and the most inventive attempt at turning music into pictures ever.

Like the accompanying book, the exhibition itself is very much a product of the Sixties and Seventies. The psychedelic posters, the air-brush work, the illegible lettering, the pastel colours of Victor Moscoso and of Hapshash and the Coloured Coat (Michael English and Nigel Waymouth) for UFO, the Pink Floyd and others, look even more feeble now than they did at the time. Like the excessive volume of the music, the clamouring for attention of the recent visual material fails to a degree that is almost touching.

The book of the exhibition says in its constipated way that: "It is common in the music business to employ the best artists, designers and illustrators of the day to generate graphics with the requisite powers of communication. Witness the business employing the talents of Gravelot, Cruikshank and Concanen through to Picasso, Warhol and Brody." Witness away, the evidence is to the contrary. The best artists have been used hardly at all. Picasso did virtually nothing in this line, the Warhol example (in a cover by Reid Miles who did memorable work for the Blue Note jazz records) serves only to remind us how weak Warhol's drawing was, and if the Neville Brody examples are the best of anything then it's something very dull indeed. A striking exception is a very simple piece of typography by Man Ray, a song sheet for *Garage*, a poem by Philippe Soupault set to music by the surrealist E. L. T. Mesens.

Otherwise the best work, and what makes the exhibition worth looking at, is (as so often) by Anon. And the one enduring image, forever inseparable from the genre, is that of a fox terrier listening to the sound from the horn of a wind-up gramophone. Speaking as someone who has not bought a copy of the *Sunday Times* since it moved to Wapping I intend to make further savings by not buying anything from EMI until Nipper comes home.

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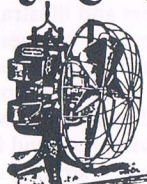
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